English: Unlocked Literal Bible for 1 Chronicles, 1 Corinthians, 1 John, 1 Kings, 1 Peter, 1 Samuel, 1 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Chronicles, 2 Corinthians, 2 John, 2 Kings, 2 Peter, 2 Samuel, 2 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, 3 John, Acts, Amos, Colossians, Daniel, Deuteronomy, Ecclesiastes, Ephesians, Esther, Exodus, Ezekiel, Ezra, Galatians, Genesis, Habakkuk, Haggai, Hebrews, Hosea, Isaiah, James, Jeremiah, Job, Joel, John, Jonah, Joshua, Jude, Judges, Lamentations, Leviticus, Luke, Malachi, Mark, Matthew, Micah, Nahum, Nehemiah, Numbers, Obadiah, Philemon, Philippians, Proverbs, Psalms, Revelation, Romans, Ruth, Song of songs, Titus, Zechariah, Zephaniah

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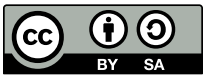
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Introduction to Genesis

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Genesis

From the Creation to the Tower of Babel The account of the creation of the heavens and the earth (1:1–4:26) The account of Adam (5:1–6:8) The account of Noah (6:9–11:9) The account of Shem (11:10–11:26) The account of Terah (11:27–11:32)

The accounts of the Patriarchs The account of Abraham (12:1-25:11) The account of Ishmael (25:12–25:18) The account of Isaac, focusing on Jacob (25:19–35:29) The account of Esau (36:1–37:1) The account of Jacob, focusing on Joseph (37:2–50:26)

What is Genesis about?

Genesis begins with the early years of creation. It tells about God creating heaven, earth, and the first humans. It also tells about the first time humans sinned. This caused humans to be separated from God and to eventually die. Genesis 1-11 briefly tells about other important events that occurred over many hundreds of years. (See: sin and death)

Genesis is also about the beginning of God's people. Genesis 12-50 tells about how God remained faithful to Abraham and his descendants. Abraham's descendants became known as the Hebrews and later as the Israelites. These people would worship Yahweh and be his people.

Genesis ends with Abraham's descendants living in Egypt with the hope of returning one day to the Promised Land. (See: promisedland)

How should the title of this book be translated?

"Genesis" means "beginning," so translators should express this idea in their title. Titles such as "The Beginning of Things" may be suitable.

Who wrote Genesis?

The writers of both the Old and New Testaments presented Moses as being very involved with writing the book of Genesis. Since ancient times, both Jews and Christians have thought that Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What are the covenants mentioned in Genesis?

A covenant is a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

God made three covenants in Genesis. In the covenant with Adam, God promised to bless Adam and cause him to prosper. Adam was not allowed to eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God promised that Adam would die if he disobeyed what he commanded.

In the covenant with Noah, God promised to never again destroy the world with a flood.

In the covenant with Abraham, God promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation. He also promised to protect them and to give them a land of their own.

What was God's purpose for the book of Genesis?

The book of Genesis says that God created a very good world. However, the world became cursed because human beings began to sin. But Genesis shows that God continues to have complete control over the world.

Genesis also describes the start of God's plan to bless the whole world again. This is shown when God makes a covenant with Abraham. With this covenant, God chose Abraham and his descendants to be his people. God promised to bless the world through Abraham's descendants.

What was the custom for inheritance as described by Genesis?

There are several passages in Genesis that show the customs of a father who is about to die passing on a blessing to his son. Abraham blessed his son, Isaac, and made him the ancestor of the people of Israel. However, Ishmael, Abraham's other son, did not receive that same divine blessing. Likewise, Isaac's older son Esau did not receive the blessing. Isaac's younger son, Jacob, received it instead. (See: inherit and bless)

Also, it was the custom for a man to divide among his sons his material wealth and land. All his sons received equal portions except the oldest son. The firstborn son received twice as much. His portion was called a double portion. Esau gave up his right to receive the double portion.

How does Genesis present sin and evil?

Genesis presents sin as doing things that are against God’s word and God's ways. It presents evil as the opposite of good. Sin and evil have affected all people. This started when Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is one way in which Genesis marks the beginning of important sections?

Genesis uses one Hebrew phrase that the ULB translates as "this is the record of," "these were the events concerning," or

"these were the descendants of." The information in these sections may have come from sources much older than Moses. These passages are 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2.
If the translator wants to translate in only two ways, we recommend for most passages a phrase such as, "this is the record about" or "this is information about." Some passages will be better translated, however, as "These were the descendants of."

Why are the beginnings of some narrative sections in Genesis difficult to translate?

Often in Genesis, the author first summarizes what is about to happen. Then in the following verses, the author tells the details of what happened. Probable examples of this style occur in Gen. 1:1, 6:22, 18:1, 21:1 and 22:1.
However, in many languages, it is preferred to write summaries at the end of a narrative. In this case, translators may choose a different approach. For example, in Gen. 1:1 ("In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"), translators may decide to translate like this: "This is about how God made the heavens and the earth in the beginning."

What is the difference between "people" and "peoples"?

The word "people" refers to the individuals who belong to a group, such as "the people of Israel." The word "peoples" refers to multiple groups of people. Each group might speak their own language, have their own customs, and worship their own gods. Some different peoples in the ancient Near East were those of Israel, Egypt, Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

What is the relationship between individuals and peoples that have similar names?

Many individuals in Genesis eventually had large numbers of descendants who were called after their ancestor's name. For example, Cush was the name of an individual. But, "Cush" also became the name of nation that his descendants formed. They were called "Cushites." If possible, when translating these names, the translator should make the individual's name and the nation's name similar. Examples of this are "Cush" and "Cushite" or "Moab" and "Moabite." Otherwise, the translator may say, "the descendants of Cush" or "the descendants of Moab."

What do the phrases "to this day" or "of today" mean?

These phrases were used by the narrator to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" and "of today" refer to a time already passed. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written," or, "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in Gen. 19:37, 19:38, 22:14, 26:33, 32:32, 35:20, 47:26, 48:18.

Genesis

1 [1]In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.[2]The earth was without form and empty. Darkness was upon the surface of the deep. The Spirit of God was moving above the surface of the waters.

[3]God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.[4]God saw the light, that it was good. He divided the light from the darkness.[5]God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

[6]God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."[7]God made the expanse and divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse. It was so.
[8]God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

[9]God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear." It was so.[10]God called the dry land "earth," and the gathered waters he called "seas." He saw that it was good.

[11]God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit whose seed is in the fruit, each according to its own kind." It was so.[12]The earth produced vegetation, plants producing seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit whose seed was in it, after their kind. God saw that it was good.[13]And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

[14]God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night and let them be as signs, for seasons, for days and years.[15]Let them be lights in the sky to give light upon the earth." It was so.
[16]God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.[17]God set them in the sky to give light upon the earth,[18]to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good.[19]And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

[20]God said, "Let the waters be filled with great numbers of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the expanse of the sky."[21]God created the great sea creatures, as well as every living creature after its kind, creatures that move and which fill the waters everywhere, and every winged bird after its kind. God saw that it was good.

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[22]God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas. Let birds multiply on the earth."[23]And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

[24]God said, "Let the earth produce living creatures, each according to its own kind, livestock, creeping things, and wild animals, each according to its own kind." It was so.[25]God made the wild animals after their kind, the livestock after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground after its kind. He saw that it was good.

[26]God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."[1]
[27]God created man in his own image. In his own image he created him. Male and female he created them.

[28]God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill the earth, and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."
[29]God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the surface of all the earth, and every tree with fruit which has seed in it. They will be food to you.
[30]To every beast of the earth, to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, and to every creature that has the breath of life I have given every green plant for food." It was so.
[31]God saw everything that he had made. Behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

[1]Some ancient copies have: ... over the livestock, over all the animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

Genesis 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter presents the first account of God creating the world. There is a pattern to this account: "God said ... God saw that it was good ... This was evening and morning, the first day." Translators should preserve this pattern in their versions.

Special concepts in this chapter

The universe

This account of creation is told within the framework of ancient Hebrew ideas about the universe: the earth was resting with water around it and below it. Over the earth was something like a vast dome, called "an expanse between the waters" (1:6), on top of which was more water. Translators should try to keep these original images in their work, even though readers in their project language might have a completely different idea of what the universe is like.

Evening and morning

Genesis 1 presents the ancient Hebrew idea of a day: it begins with sunset, lasts through the night and continues through the daylight hours until the next sunset. This pattern should be preserved in translation, even if readers in the project language define "day" differently.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"In the beginning"

Some languages and cultures speak of the world as if it has always existed, as if it had no beginning. But "very long ago" is different from "in the beginning," and you need to be sure that your translation communicates correctly.

"God said, 'Let there be'"

This expression occurs often in this chapter. It can be difficult to translate, because God is not shown as talking to a particular person. If God is talking to a thing, it is something not yet in existence. Translators should find the most natural way in the project language to signal the idea that God spoke things into existence; he created the world and the things in it by simply commanding that they should exist.

Links:

Genesis 1:1 Notes Genesis intro

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth

"This is about how God made the heavens and the earth in the beginning." This statement summarizes the rest of the chapter. Some languages translate it as "A very long time ago God created the heavens and the earth." Translate it in a way that shows this actually happened and is not just a folk story.

In the beginning

This refers to the start of the world and everything in it.

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the heavens and the earth
"the sky, the ground, and everything in them"
heavens
This refers here to the sky.
Genesis 1:2
without form and empty
God had not yet put the world in order.
the deep
"the water" or "the deep water" or "the vast water"
the surface of the waters
"the surface of the water" or "the water"
Genesis 1:3
Let there be light
This is a command. By commanding that light should exist, God made it exist.
Genesis 1:4
God saw the light, that it was good
"God considered the light and was pleased with it." "Good" here means "pleasing" or "suitable."
divided the light from the darkness
"separated the light and the darkness" or "made it light at one time and dark at another." This refers to God creating the daytime and the night time.
Genesis 1:5
And there was evening and there was morning, the first day
God did these things on the first day that the universe existed.
evening and ... morning
This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets.
Genesis 1:6
Let there be an expanse ... let it divide
These are commands. By commanding that the expanse should exist and that it divide the waters, God made it exist and divide the waters.
expanse
large empty space. The Jewish people thought of this space as being shaped like the inside of dome or the inside of a bowl that is turned upside down.
between the waters
"in the water"
Genesis 1:7
God made the expanse and divided the waters
"In this way God made the expanse and divided the waters." When God spoke, it happened. This sentence explains what God did when he spoke.
It was so
"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears.
Genesis 1:8
And there was evening and there was morning
This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:5]
the second day
This refers to the second day that the universe existed. See how you translated "the first day" in Genesis 1:5 and decide if you should translate this the same way.
Genesis 1:9
Let the waters ... be gathered
This can be translated with an active verb. This is a command. By commanding that the waters gather together, God made them gather together. Alternate translation: "Let the waters ... gather" or "Let the waters ... come together"
let the dry land appear
The water had covered the land. Now the water would move aside and some of the land would be uncovered. This is a command. By commanding that dry land should appear, God made it appear. Alternate translation: "let dry land become visible" or "let the dry land become clear" or "let the land be uncovered"
dry land
This refers to land that is not covered with water. It does not refer to land that is too dry for farming.
It was so
"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears. See how you translated it in Genesis 1:7.
Genesis 1:10
the dry land "earth," and
"the part that was dry 'earth,' and"
He saw that it was good
Here "it" refers to the land and the sea. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:4.
Genesis 1:11
Let the earth sprout vegetation
This is a command. By commanding that vegetation should sprout on the earth, God made it sprout. Alternate translation: "Let vegetation sprout up on the earth" or "Let vegetation grow on the earth"
vegetation: plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit
"vegetation, each plant that bears seed and each tree that bears fruit" or "vegetation. Let them be plants that produce seeds and fruit trees that produce fruit." Here "vegetation" is used here as a general term that includes all plants and trees.
plants
These are kinds of vegetation that have soft stems, rather than woody stems.
fruit trees bearing fruit whose seed is in the fruit
"trees that bear fruit with seeds in them"
each according to its own kind
The seeds would produce plants and trees that would be like the ones they came from. In this way, the plants and trees would "reproduce themselves" .
It was so
"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning wherever it appears. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:7.
Genesis 1:12

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God saw that it was good
Here "it" refers to the vegetation, plants, and trees. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:10.
Genesis 1:13
And there was evening and there was morning
This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:5]
the third day
This refers to the third day that the universe existed. See how you translated "the first day" in Genesis 1:5 and decide if you should translate this the same way.
Genesis 1:14
Let there be lights in the sky
This is a command. By commanding that lights should exist, God made them exist.
lights in the sky
"things that shine in the sky" or "things that give light in the sky." This refers to the sun, moon, and stars.
in the sky
"in the expanse of the sky" or "in the large space of the sky"
to divide the day from the night
"to separate the day from the night." This means "to help us tell the difference between day and night." The sun means it is daytime, and the moon and stars mean it is nighttime.
let them be as signs
This is a command. By commanding that they should serve as signs, God made them serve as signs. Alternate translation: "Let them serve as signs" or "let them show"
signs
Here this means something that reveals or points to something.
for seasons, for days and years
The sun, moon, and stars show the passing of time. This enables us to know when it is time for events that happen each week, month, or year.
seasons
times that are set aside for festivals and other things that people do
Genesis 1:15
Let them be lights in the sky to give light upon the earth
This is a command. By commanding that they should light the earth, God made them light the earth.
to give light upon the earth
"to shine light on the earth" or "to brighten the earth." The earth does not self-shine but it is lit and so reflects light.
It was so
"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:7.
Genesis 1:16
God made the two great lights
"In this way God made the two great lights." This sentence explains what God did when he spoke.
the two great lights
"the two large lights" or "the two bright lights." The two great lights are the sun and the moon.
to rule the day
The lights that controlled the day are spoken of as if they were a human ruler that controlled what people do. Alternate translation: "to direct the daytime as a ruler directs a group of people" or "to mark the times of the day"
day
This refers only to the daylight hours.
the lesser light
"the smaller light" or "the dimmer light"
Genesis 1:17
in the sky
"in the heavens" or "in the open space of the sky"
Genesis 1:18
to divide the light from the darkness
"to separate the light from the darkness" or "to make it light at one time and dark at another." See how you translated this in Genesis 1:4.
God saw that it was good
Here "it" refers to the sun, moon, and stars. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:4.
Genesis 1:19
And there was evening and there was morning
This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:5]
the fourth day
This refers to the fourth day that the universe existed. See how you translated "the first day" in Genesis 1:5 and decide if you should translate this the same way.
Genesis 1:20
Let the waters be filled with great numbers of living creatures
This is a command. By commanding that living creatures should fill the waters, God made them exist. Some languages may have one word that refers to all kinds of fish and sea animals. Alternate translation: "Let the waters be full of many living things" or "Let many animals that swim live in the oceans"
let birds fly
This is a command. By commanding that birds should fly, God made them fly.
birds
"animals that fly" or "flying things"
the expanse of the sky
"the open space of the sky" or "the sky"
Genesis 1:21
God created
"In this way God created"
great sea creatures
"large animals that live in the sea"
after its kind
Living things of the same "kind" are like the ones they came from. See how you translated "kind" in Genesis 1:11,12.
every winged bird
"every flying thing that has wings." If the word for birds is used, it may be more natural in some languages to simply say "every bird," since all birds have wings.
God saw that it was good
Here "it" refers to the birds and the fish. See how you

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translated this in Genesis 1:4.

Genesis 1:22

blessed them

"blessed the animals that he had made"

Be fruitful and multiply

This is God's blessing. He told the sea animals to produce more sea animals like themselves, so that there would be many of them in the seas. The word "multiply" explains how they are to be "fruitful."

multiply

increase greatly in number

Let birds multiply

This is a command. By commanding that birds should multiply, God made birds multiply.

birds

"animals that fly" or "flying things." See how you translated this in Genesis 1:20.

Genesis 1:23

And there was evening and there was morning

This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:5]

the fifth day

This refers to the fifth day that the universe existed. See how you translated "the first day" in Genesis 1:5 and decide if you should translate this the same way.

Genesis 1:24

Let the earth produce living creatures

"Let the earth produce living things" or "Let many living animals live on the earth." This is a command. By commanding that the earth should produce living creatures, God made the earth produce living creatures.

each according to its own kind

"so that each kind of animal will produce more of its own kind"

livestock, creeping things, and wild animals

This shows that God created all kinds of animals. If your language has another way of grouping all the animals, you can use that, or you can use these groups.

livestock

These are animals that people look after.

creeping things

"small animals"

wild animals

These are animals that live in the wild. People do not take care of them.

It was so

"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:7.

Genesis 1:25

God made the wild animals

"In this way God made the wild animals"

He saw that it was good

Here "it" refers to the living creatures on the earth. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:4.

Genesis 1:26

Let us make

The word "us" here refers to God. God was saying what he intended to do. The pronoun "us" is plural. Possible reasons for the plural use are 1) the plural form suggests that God is discussing something with the angels that make up his heavenly court or 2) the plural form foreshadows the later New Testament implications that God exists in the form of the Holy Trinity. Some translate it as "Let me make" or "I will make." If you do this, consider adding a footnote to say that the word is plural.

man

human beings

in our image, after our likeness

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that God made mankind to be like him. This verse does not tell in what ways God made people to be like himself. God does not have a body, so it does not mean that people would look like God. Alternate translation: "to truly be like us"

have dominion over

"rule over" or "have authority over"

Genesis 1:27

God created man ... he created him

These two sentences mean the same thing and emphasize that God created people in his own image.

God created man

The way that God created man was different from the way he created everything else. Do not specify that he created man by simply speaking, as in the preceding verses.

Genesis 1:28

God blessed them

The word "them" refers to the man and woman God had created.

Be fruitful, and multiply

God told the man and the woman to produce more people like themselves so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how they are to be "fruitful." See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:22]

Fill the earth

Fill the earth with people.

Genesis 1:30

General Information:

God continues speaking.

every bird of the heavens

"all the birds that fly in the sky"

that has the breath of life

"that breathes." This phrase emphasizes that these animals had a different kind of life than the plants. Plants do not breathe, and were to be used as food for the animals. Here "life" means physical life.

It was so

"It happened like that" or "That is what happened." What God commanded happened just as he said it should. This phrase appears throughout the chapter and has the same meaning. See how you translated it in Genesis 1:7.

Genesis 1:31

Behold, it

"This is true and important: it"

it was very good

Now when God looked at everything he had made, it was

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"very good. "See how you translated "it was good" in Genesis 1:10.

And there was evening and there was morning

This refers to the whole day. The writer speaks of the whole day as if it were these two parts. In the Jewish culture, a day begins when the sun sets. See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:5]

the sixth day

This refers to the sixth day that the universe existed. See how you translated "the first day" in Genesis 1:5 and decide if you should translate this the same way.

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2 [1]Then the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the living things that filled them.

[2]On the seventh day God came to the end of his work which he had done, and so he rested on the seventh day from all his work.[3]God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had created and made.

[4]This is the account of the heavens and the earth, when they were created, on the day that Yahweh God made the earth and the heavens.
[5]No bush of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for Yahweh God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.[6]But a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground.
[7]Yahweh God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.[8]Yahweh God planted a garden eastward, in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed.
[9]Out of the ground Yahweh God made every tree to grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. This included the tree of life that was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.[10]A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became four rivers.
[11]The name of the first is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.[12]The gold of that land is good. There are also bdellium and the onyx stone.
[13]The name of the second river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush.[14]The name of the third river is Tigris, and it flows east of Ashur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.
[15]Yahweh God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to work it and to maintain it.[16]Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, "From every tree in the garden you may freely eat.[17]But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you must not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die."

[18]Then Yahweh God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him."[19]Out of the ground Yahweh God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the sky. Then he brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.[20]The man gave names to all the livestock, to all the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field. But for the man himself there was found no helper suitable for him.
[21]Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, so the man slept. Yahweh God took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh where he took the rib.[22]With the rib that Yahweh God had taken from the man, he made a woman and brought her to the man.[23]The man said,

"This time, this one is bone of my bones,
and flesh of my flesh.
She will be called 'woman,'
because she was taken out of man."

[24]Therefore a man will leave his father and his mother, he will be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.[25]They were both naked, the man and his wife, but were not ashamed.

Genesis 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Gen. 2:1-3 ends the first creation account, begun in the previous chapter. The second creation account, beginning in 2:4, is very different, using a more natural, story-telling style instead of following a set formula using repeated phrases. Translators should try to imitate this difference in their versions.

Special concepts in this chapter

The second creation account in Gen. 2:4-25

Gen. 2:4-25 presents an account of creation from a different viewpoint than the one given in Gen. 1:1-2:3. This second account should be regarded as filling out the first account, not as conflicting with it.

Yahweh, the name of God

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"Yahweh," the personal name of God in the Old Testament, appears for the first time in this chapter. Translators must decide how to represent it in their versions. For 2,000 years, it has been traditional for many Christians to represent it with the term "the Lord." Indeed, it is demanded by Roman Catholics for their Bible versions to continue doing this. Of course, the disadvantage of using "the Lord" is that this is a title for God, not a personal name. (See: yahweh)
Translators who are not producing versions for Roman Catholics can consider transliterating the name "Yahweh," approximating the name as best as their project languages allow.
Or translators can consider using expressions for the supreme god that might exist in their project languages, such as, "The Great One," "The Ruler of All," "The One who Never Sleeps," etc. Of course, these are descriptive titles, not personal names, so they suffer from the same disadvantages that "the Lord" has.
Translators can also consider pairing a transliteration of "Yahweh" with a meaningful title for the supreme god in the project language. Whatever solution is found should be followed consistently when the name "Yahweh" occurs in the Scriptures.
The Garden of Eden
This was not a vegetable garden or cultivated field. Instead, it was probably a large area of land with fruit trees and other plants bearing leaves, etc., that were good to eat. A river flowed out from the Garden of Eden, giving the impression that the Garden was a holy place; in the ancient Near East, temples had gardens and waterways. In Rev. 22:1-2, the throne of God in the New Jerusalem is pictured with a river flowing out from it. (See: holy)

Links:

Genesis 2:1 Notes

Genesis 2:1
the heavens
"the sky" or "the skies"
and all the living things that filled them
"and all the many living things that are in them" or "and all the crowds of living things in them"
were finished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God had finished creating them"
Genesis 2:2
On the seventh day God came to the end of his work
God did not work at all on the seventh day.
came to the end of
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "had finished"
he rested on the seventh day from all his work
"on that day he did not work"
Genesis 2:3
God blessed the seventh day
Possible meanings are 1) God caused the seventh day to produce good result or 2) God said that the seventh day was good.
sanctified it
"made it holy" or "set it apart"
Genesis 2:4
General Information:
The rest of Genesis 2 tells about how God created people on the sixth day.
This is the account of the heavens and the earth
"This is the story about the heavens and the earth." Possible meanings are 1) it is a summary of the events described in Genesis 1:1-2:3 or 2) it introduces the events to follow. If possible, translate this so that people can understood it either way.
they were created
"Yahweh God created them." In chapter 1 the writer always speaks of God as "God," but in chapter 2 he always speaks of God as "Yahweh God."
on the day that Yahweh God made
"when Yahweh God created." The word "day" refers to the whole time span of the creation, not to just one particular day.
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
Genesis 2:5
No bush of the field
no shrubs growing in the wild that animals might eat
no plant of the field
no leafy plants like vegetables or greens that both animals and humans can eat
to cultivate
to do everything he needed to do so that the plants would grow well
Genesis 2:6
mist
Possible meanings are 1) something like dew or morning fog o 2) springs from underground streams.
the whole surface of the ground
the entire earth
Genesis 2:7
formed man
"molded man" or "shaped man" or "created man"
man ... man
"a human being ... the human" or "a person ... the person" not specifically a male
his nostrils
"his nose"
breath of life
"breath that makes things live." Here "life" refers to physical life.
Genesis 2:8
a garden
This could have been an orchard of fruit trees or an area with all kinds of trees.
eastward

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in the east
Genesis 2:9
the tree of life
"the tree that gives people life"
life
Here this means "eternal life" or life that does not end.
the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
"the tree that gives people the ability to understand both good and evil" or "the tree that makes people who eat its fruit able to know good things and bad things"
good and evil
This is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. Alternate translation: "everything, including both good and evil"
in the midst of the garden
"in the middle of the garden." The two trees may not have been in the exact center of the garden.
Genesis 2:10
A river went out of Eden to water the garden
The garden was in Eden. The river continued to flow outside of Eden. "A river flowed through Eden to water the garden"
Genesis 2:11
Pishon
This is the only time this river is referred to in the Bible.
the whole land of Havilah
"the whole land called Havilah." It was somewhere in the Arabian Desert.
where there is gold
This phrase gives information about Havilah. Some languages would translate it as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "There is gold in Havilah"
Genesis 2:12
There are also bdellium and the onyx stone
The word "there" is placed first in the sentence for emphasis. Alternate translation: "This is also where people can find bdellium and onyx stones"
bdellium
This resin comes from a tree and smells nice. A resin is sticky stuff that comes out of some trees and can burn.
the onyx stone
"onyx stones." Onyx is a certain kind of beautiful stone.
Genesis 2:13
Gihon
This is the only mention of this river in the Bible.
flows throughout the whole land of Cush
The river did not cover the whole land, but wound through various parts of the land.
the whole land of Cush
"the entire land called Cush"
Genesis 2:14
it flows east of Ashur
The Tigris River flows from north to south. If people do not know what Ashur was, it can be made clear that it was a city. Alternate translation: "it flows in the land east of the city of Ashur"
Genesis 2:15
the garden of Eden
"the garden that was in Eden"
to work it
"to cultivate it." This means to do everything necessary so that the plants will grow well.
to maintain it
to guard against anything bad happening in it
Genesis 2:16
From every tree in the garden
"The fruit of every tree in the garden"
you
This pronoun is singular.
may freely eat
"may eat without restriction"
Genesis 2:17
the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
"the tree that gives people the ability to understand both good and evil" or "the tree that makes people who eat its fruit able to know good things and bad things." See how you translated this in Genesis 2:9.
Genesis 2:18
I will make him a helper suitable for him
"I will make a helper who is just right for him"
Genesis 2:19
every animal of the field and every bird of the sky
The phrases "of the field" and "of the sky" tell where the animals and birds are usually found. Alternate translation: "all kinds of animals and birds"
Genesis 2:20
all the livestock
"all the animals that people look after"
there was found no helper suitable for him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there was no companion that was right for him"
Genesis 2:21
caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man
"caused the man to sleep intensely." A deep sleep is a time of sleeping in which a person is not easily disturbed or wakened.
flesh
This refers to the soft parts of the body like skin and muscle.
Genesis 2:22
With the rib ... he made a woman
"From the rib ... he formed a woman." The rib was the material God made the woman from.
Genesis 2:23
This time, this one is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh
"Finally, this one's bones are like my bones, and her flesh is like my flesh." After looking among all the animals for a partner and not finding one, he finally saw someone who was like him and could be his partner. The man was probably expressing his feeling of relief and joy.
She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of man
The translator may want to write a footnote saying "The Hebrew word for 'woman' sounds like the Hebrew word for 'man.'
Genesis 2:24
General Information:
What follows is written by the author. The man did not say these things.

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Therefore a man
"That is why a man"
a man will leave his father and his mother
"a man will stop living in his father and mother's home." This is about men in general. It does not refer to any particular man at any particular time.
they will become one flesh
This idiom speaks of sexual activity as though the bodies that are together become one body. Alternate translation: "their two bodies will become one body"
Genesis 2:25
They were both naked
The word "they" refers to the man and the woman that God had created.
naked
"not wearing clothing"
but were not ashamed
"they were not ashamed about being naked"

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3 [1]Now the serpent was more shrewd than any other beast of the field which Yahweh God had made. He said to the
woman, "Has God really said, 'You must not eat from any tree of the garden'?"[2]The woman said to the serpent, "We may
eat the fruit from the trees of the garden,[3]but concerning the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God
said, 'You must not eat it, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"
[4]The serpent said to the woman, "You will surely not die.[5]For God knows that the day you eat it your eyes will be opened,
and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."[6]When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a
delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. Then she also
gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.
[7]The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. So they sewed fig leaves together and made
coverings for their loins.[8]They heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, so the man
and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden.

[9]Yahweh God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"[10]The man said, "I heard you in the garden, and I was
afraid, because I was naked. So I hid myself."[11]God said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the
tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"
[12]The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it."[13]Yahweh God
said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

[14]Yahweh God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this,
cursed are you alone among all the livestock
and all the beasts of the field.
It is on your stomach that you will go,
and it is dust that you will eat
all the days of your life.
15 I will put hostility between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed.
He will bruise your head,
and you will bruise his heel."

[16]To the woman he said,
"I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth;
it is in pain that you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
but he will rule over you."

[17]To Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree, concerning which I
commanded you, saying, 'You may not eat from it,'
Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful work you will eat from it
all the days of your life.
18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your face
you will eat bread,
until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken.
For dust you are,

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and to dust you will return."

[20]The man called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all the living.[21]Yahweh God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

[22]Yahweh God said, "Now the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. So now he must not be allowed to reach out with his hand, take from the tree of life, eat it, and live forever."[23]Therefore Yahweh God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken.[24]So God drove the man out of the garden, and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword that turned every way, in order to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the second creation account that began in Gen. 2:4. But a new section of this account begins in 3:1. The ULB reads, "Now the serpent was more shrewd than any other beast of the field which Yahweh God had made," because this is how the Scriptures introduce the serpent into the account. However, many languages prefer different ways to introduce new characters or things into stories, for example, "One of the wild animals made by God was the serpent" or "This is about the serpent, one of the wild animals that God had made."

Scholars typically refer to the events of this chapter as "the fall" or "the fall of man" because sin is introduced into creation. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Curses

In this chapter, God curses the man, the woman, and the serpent for their sins. In general, cursing is calling down God's punishment on someone or something. In this chapter, however, it is God himself who is doing the cursing. Of course, he does not call down punishment on the man, the woman, and the serpent from someone else. Instead, he is promising that he himself will punish them. (See: curse)

Serpent

Most scholars believe that the serpent is Satan, even though his name is not used in this chapter. There are other places in Scripture where the serpent is used as an image for Satan.)

Links:

Genesis 3:1 Notes

Genesis 3:1

Now

The writer is beginning a new part of the story.

more shrewd

"more cunning" or "smarter at getting what he wanted by telling lies"

Has God really said, 'You ... garden'?

The snake is pretending to be surprised that God has made this rule. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that God said, 'You ... garden.'"

You must not eat

The word "you" is plural and refers to the man and the woman.

Genesis 3:2

We may eat

"We are allowed to eat" or "We have permission to eat"

Genesis 3:3

You must not ... and you must not ... you will die

The word "you" is plural and refers to the man and the woman.

You must not eat it, and you must not touch it

"Do not eat it, and do not touch it" or "You must not eat it or touch it"

or you will die

This tells what would happen if they ate or touched the fruit of that tree. Alternate translation: "If you eat it or touch it, you will die"

Genesis 3:4

You will ... not die

These words refer to the man and the woman and so are dual or plural.

Genesis 3:5

you ... your ... you

These words refer to the man and the woman and so are dual or plural.

your eyes will be opened

"your eyes will open." This idiom means "you will become aware of things" or "you will understand new things." This meaning can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "It will be as though your eyes were opened"

knowing good and evil

Here "good and evil" is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. See how you translated "knowledge of good and evil" in [Genesis 2:9]

Genesis 3:6

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it was a delight to the eyes
"the tree was delightful to look at" or "it was nice to look at" or "it was very beautiful"
that the tree was desirable to make one wise
"she wanted the tree's fruit because it could make a person wise" or "she wanted its fruit because it could make her understand what was right and wrong just as God does"
Genesis 3:7
The eyes of both of them were opened
"Then their eyes opened" or "They became aware" or "They understood." See how you translated "your eyes will be opened" in Genesis 3:5.
sewed
put together, probably using vines as thread
fig leaves
If people do not know what fig leaves are like, this can be translated as "large leaves from a fig tree" or simply "large leaves."
made coverings for their loins
They did this because they were ashamed. This implicit information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "clothed themselves with them because they were ashamed"
Genesis 3:8
in the cool of the day
"at the time of day when a cool breeze blows"
from the presence of Yahweh God
"from Yahweh God's sight" or "so that Yahweh God would not see them" or "from Yahweh God"
Genesis 3:9
Where are you?
"Why are you trying to hide from me?" God knew where the man was. When the man answered, he did not say where he was but why he was hiding.
you
In verses 9 and 11, God was speaking to the man. Languages that have a singular form of "you" would use that here.
Genesis 3:10
I heard you
"I heard the sound you were making"
Genesis 3:11
Who told you
God knew the answer to this question. He asked it in order to help Adam to confess that he had disobeyed God.
Have you eaten from ... from?
Again, God knew that Adam had eaten from that tree. Translate this question in a form that shows that God was speaking about Adam's disobedience. The sentence can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You must have eaten from ... from."
Genesis 3:13
What is this you have done?
God already knew what the woman had done. When he asked this question, he was giving her the opportunity to tell him about it, and he was expressing his disappointment with what she had done. Many languages use rhetorical questions for scolding or rebuking. If possible, use a form that expresses this disappointment. It can also be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have done a terrible thing."
Genesis 3:14
cursed are you alone
"you alone are cursed." The word "curse" is first in Hebrew in order to emphasize the contrast between God's blessing on the animals and this curse on the serpent. This is a "curse formula," or the way that curses were expressed. By saying this curse, God made it happen.
all the livestock and all the beasts of the field
"all domestic animals and all wild animals"
It is on your stomach that you will go
"You will move along the ground on your stomach." The words "it is upon your stomach" comes first to emphasize the contrast between the way other animals would move along using their legs and the way the serpent would slither along on its stomach. This is also part of the curse formula.
it is dust that you will eat
"you will eat dust." The words "it is dust" comes first to emphasize the contrast between the plants above the ground that other animals would eat and the dirty food on the ground that the serpent would eat. This is part of the curse formula.
Genesis 3:15
hostility between you and the woman
This means that the serpent and the woman would become enemies.
seed
The word "seed" refers to what a man puts into a woman to cause a baby to grow inside the woman. Like the word "offspring," it can refer to more than one person. Try to find a word that is singular but can refer to more than one person.
He will bruise ... his heel
The words "he" and "his" refer to the woman's descendant. If "seed" was translated as plural, this can be translated as "they will bruise ... their heel"; in this case, consider inserting footnotes to say that the "they" and "their" are used to translate a singular pronoun.
bruise
"crush" or "strike" or "attack"
Genesis 3:16
I will greatly multiply your pain
"I will make your pain increase much" or "I will make your pain to be very severe"
in childbirth
"in giving birth to children" or "when you give birth to children"
Your desire will be for your husband
"You will have a strong desire for your husband." Possible meanings are 1) "You will want very much to be with your husband" or 2) "You will want to control your husband"
he will rule over you
"he will be your master" or "he will control you"
Genesis 3:17
Adam
The name Adam is the same as the Hebrew word for "man." Some translations say "Adam" and some say "the man." You may use either form as it refers to the same person.

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you have listened to the voice of your wife
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you have obeyed what your wife said"
have eaten from the tree
You can say what it was that they ate. Alternate translation: "have eaten the fruit of the tree" or "have eaten some of the fruit of the tree"
You may not eat from it
"You must not eat from it" or "Do not eat its fruit"
cursed is the ground
The word "curse" comes first in the sentence to emphasize that the ground, which had been "good"
through painful work
"by doing hard work"
you will eat from it
The word "it" refers to the ground and is a metonym for the parts of the plants, which grow in the ground, that people eat. Alternate translation: "you will eat what grows from it"
Genesis 3:18
the plants of the field
Possible meanings are 1) "the plants that you take care of in your fields" or 2) "the wild plants that grow in the open fields."
Genesis 3:19
By the sweat of your face
"By doing hard work that makes your face sweat"
you will eat bread
Here the word "bread" is a synecdoche for food in general. Alternate translation: "you will eat food"
until you return to the ground
"until you die and your body is put in the ground." In some cultures, they put the bodies of people who have died in a hole in the ground. Man's hard work does not end until the time of his death and burial.
For dust you are, and to dust you will return
"I made you from soil, so your body will become soil again." Translate both occurrences of "dust" with the same word in order to show that man begins and ends in the same condition.
Genesis 3:20
The man
Some translations say "Adam."
called his wife's name Eve
"gave his wife the name Eve" or "named his wife Eve"
Eve
Translators may write a footnote saying "The name Eve sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'living.'"
all the living
The word "living" refers to people. Alternate translation: "all people" or "all living people"
Genesis 3:21
garments of skins
"clothing made out of animal skins"
Genesis 3:22
the man
Possible meanings are 1) God was referring to one human, the man, or 2) God was referring to humans in general, so this would mean the man and his wife. Even if God was speaking about one person, what he said applied to both of them.
like one of us
"like us." The pronoun "us" is plural. See how you translated "Let us make" in Genesis 1:26.
knowing good and evil
Here "good and evil" is a figure of speech that refers to both extremes and everything in between. See how you translated "knowledge of good and evil" in [Genesis 2:9]
he must not be allowed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not allow him"
tree of life
"the tree that gives people life." See how you translated this in Genesis 2:9.
Genesis 3:23
the ground from which he had been taken
"dirt because he had been taken from dirt." This does not refer to the particular place on the land that the God took man from.
to cultivate
This means to what is needed so that plants grow well. See how you translated this in Genesis 2:5.
Genesis 3:24
So God drove the man out of the garden
"God forced the man to leave the garden." This refers to the event in Genesis 3:23, where it says "Yahweh God sent him out of the garden of Eden." God did not send the man out a second time.
in order to guard the way to the tree of life
"in order to stop people from going to the tree of life"
flaming sword
Possible meanings are 1) a sword that had flames coming from it or 2) a fire that was shaped like a sword. Languages that do not have swords could use another weapon such as a spear or arrow.

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4 [1]The man knew Eve his wife and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I have produced a man with Yahweh's help."[2]Then she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel became a keeper of flocks, but Cain cultivated the soil.
[3]It came about that in the course of time Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground as an offering to Yahweh.[4]As for Abel, he brought some of the firstborn of his flock and some of the fat. Yahweh accepted Abel and his offering,[5]but Cain and his offering he did not accept. So Cain was very angry, and he scowled.
[6]Yahweh said to Cain, "Why are you angry and why are you scowling?[7]If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin crouches at the door and desires to control you, but you must rule over it."
[8]Cain spoke to Abel his brother. It came about that while they were in the fields, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.[1]
[9]Then Yahweh said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

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[10]Yahweh said, "What have you done? Your brother's blood is calling out to me from the ground.[11]Now cursed are you
from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.[12]When you cultivate the
ground, from now on it will not yield to you its strength. A fugitive and a wanderer you will be in the earth."
[13]Cain said to Yahweh, "My punishment is greater than I can bear.[14]Indeed, you have driven me out this day from this
ground, and I will be hidden from your face. I will be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth, and whoever finds me will
kill me."[15]Yahweh said to him, "If anyone kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." Then Yahweh put a mark
on Cain, so that if anyone found him, that person would not attack him.

[16]So Cain went out from the presence of Yahweh and lived in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.[17]Cain knew his wife and
she conceived. She gave birth to Enoch. He built a city and named it after his son Enoch.
[18]To Enoch was born Irad. Irad became the father of Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael
became the father of Lamech.[19]Lamech took for himself two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the
other was Zillah.
[20]Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who live in tents and have livestock.[21]His brother's name was Jubal.
He was the father of those who play the harp and pipe.[22]As for Zillah, she bore Tubal-Cain, the forger of tools of bronze
and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.
[23]Lamech said to his wives,
"Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice;
you wives of Lamech, listen to my words.
For I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for bruising me.
[24] If Cain is avenged seven times,
then Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times."

[25]Adam knew his wife again, and she bore another son. She called his name Seth and said, "God has given me another son
in the place of Abel, for Cain killed him."[26]A son was born to Seth and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began
to call on the name of Yahweh.

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[1]The best ancient copies read in this way. However, some old translations and some modern translations read Cain said to Abel his brother, "Let us go into the fields." It came about that while they were in the fields, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Genesis 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Most of the text in this chapter is prose, but 4:23-24 is poetry. It would be good if the translator could put these two verses into poetic form, or at least into elegant speech, so that they are different from the rest of the chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Vengeance

The theme of vengeance is important in this chapter. Ancient Hebrew society allowed for people to seek revenge if a relative was murdered. After Cain murdered his brother Abel, he thought that he would be helpless against this danger because he had been driven away from God's protection. (See: avenge)

The theme of vengeance continues with the words of Lamech, who had killed someone for injuring him: "I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for bruising me. If Cain is avenged seven times as much, truly Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times as much" (Gen. 4:23b-24).

Links:

Genesis 4:1 Notes

Genesis 4:1

The man knew Eve

This is a polite way of saying that the man had sexual relations with Eve. You may need to use another euphemism in your language.

The man

"the human being" or "Adam"

I have produced a man

The word for "man" typically describes an adult male, rather than a baby or child. If that would cause confusion, it could be translated as "manchild" or "boy" or "baby boy" or "son."

Cain

Translators may want to include a footnote that says "The name Cain sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'produce.' Eve named him Cain because she produced him."

Genesis 4:2

Then she gave birth

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We do not know how much time passed between the births of Cain and Abel. They may have been twins, or Abel may have been born after Eve became pregnant again. If possible, use an expression that does not tell how much time passed.

cultivated

This means he did everything he needed to do so that the plants would grow well. See how "cultivate" is translated in Genesis 2:5.

Genesis 4:3

It came about that

This phrase is used to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using that method here.

in the course of time

Possible meanings are 1) "after some time had passed" or 2) "at the right time"

fruit of the ground

This refers to the food that came from plants he had tended. Alternate translation: "crops" or "harvest"

Genesis 4:4

some of the fat

This refers to the fatty parts of the lambs that he had killed, it was the best part of the animal. Alternate translation: "some of their fat parts"

accepted

"looked favorably upon" or "was pleased with"

Genesis 4:5

did not accept

"did not look favorably upon" or "was not pleased with"

was very angry

Some languages have an idiom for anger such as "He burned" or "His anger burned."

he scowled

This means that the expression on his face showed that he was angry or jealous. Some languages have an idiom that describes what a person's face looks like when he is angry.

Genesis 4:6

Why are you angry and why are you scowling?

God used these rhetorical questions to tell Cain that he was wrong to be angry and scowl. They may also have been intended to give Cain an opportunity to confess that he was wrong.

Genesis 4:7

If you ... will you not be accepted?

God used this rhetorical question to remind Cain of something Cain should have already known. Alternate translation: "You know that if you do what is right, I will accept you"

But if you do not ... you must rule over it

God speaks of sin as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "But if you do not do what is right, you will desire to sin even more, and then you will do sinful things. You must refuse to obey it"

sin crouches ... to control you

Here sin is spoken of as a dangerous wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack Cain. Alternate translation: "you will become so angry that you will not be able to stop sin"

sin

Languages that do not have a noun that means "sin" could translate this as "your desire to sin" or "the bad things you want to do."

you must rule over it

Yahweh speaks of Cain's desire to sin as if it were a person over whom Cain should rule. Alternate translation: "you must control it so you do not sin"

Genesis 4:8

Cain spoke to Abel his brother.

Some early translations tell explicitly what Cain said to his brother. You may want to do the same if it is present in your national version. Alternate translation: "Cain said to Abel his brother, 'Let us go into the fields.'"

brother

Abel was Cain's younger brother. Some languages may need to use the word for "younger brother."

rose up against

Standing up to fight against a person is an idiom for attacking him. Alternate translation: "attacked"

Genesis 4:9

Where is Abel your brother

God knew that Cain had killed Abel, but he asked Cain this question so that Cain would have to answer.

Am I my brother's keeper?

Cain used this rhetorical question so that he would not have to tell the truth. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am not my brother's keeper!" or "You know that taking care of my brother is not my job!"

Genesis 4:10

What have you done?

God uses a rhetorical question to rebuke Cain. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "What you have done is terrible!"

Your brother's blood is calling out to me

Abel's blood is a metonym for his death, as if it were a person calling out for God to punish Cain. Alternate translation: "Your brother's blood is like a person calling out to me to punish the person who killed him"

Genesis 4:11

Now cursed are you from the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am cursing you so that you will not be able to grow food from the ground"

which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood

God speaks of the earth as if it were a person who could drink Abel's blood. Alternate translation: "which is soaked with your brother's blood"

from your hand

Here Cain is represented by his "hand," to emphasize that he personally had killed his brother. Alternate translation: "that spilled when you killed him" or "from you"

Genesis 4:12

cultivate

This means to do everything necessary to do so that the plants would grow well. See how "cultivate" is translated in Genesis 2:5.

it will not yield to you its strength

The ground is personified as if it were a person who loses

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strength. Alternate translation: "the ground will not produce much food for you"

A fugitive and a wanderer

You can join these words together. Alternate translation: "A homeless wanderer"

Genesis 4:14

I will be hidden from your face

The term "your face" represents God's presence. Alternate translation: "I will not be able to speak to you"

a fugitive and a wanderer

See how you translated this in Genesis 4:12

Genesis 4:15

vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will take vengeance on him seven times" or "I will punish that person seven times as severely as I am punishing you"

would not attack him

"would not kill Cain"

Genesis 4:16

went out from the presence of Yahweh

Even though Yahweh is everywhere, this idiom speaks of Cain as though he went far away. Alternate translation: "went away from where Yahweh spoke to him"

Nod

Translators may add a footnote saying "The word Nod means 'wandering.'"

Genesis 4:17

Cain knew his wife

This is a polite way of saying that Cain had sexual relations with his wife. You may need to use another euphemism in your language. See how you translated this in [Genesis 4:1]

He built a city

"Cain built a city"

Genesis 4:18

To Enoch was born Irad

It is implied that Enoch grew up and married a woman. Alternate translation: "Enoch grew up and married and became the father of a son whom he named Irad"

Irad

This is a man's name.

Genesis 4:19

Adah ... Zillah

women's names

Genesis 4:20

Adah

See how you translated this woman's name in Genesis 4:19.

He was the father of those who live in tents and have livestock

Possible meanings are 1) "He was the first person to live in a tent and have livestock" or 2) "his descendants live in tents and have livestock."

Genesis 4:21

He was the father of those who play the harp and pipe

Possible meanings are 1) "He was the first person to play the harp and pipe" or 2) "He and his descendants played the harp and pipe."

Genesis 4:22

Zillah

See how you translated this woman's name in Genesis 4:19.

Tubal-Cain

the name of a man

the forger of tools of bronze and iron

"who made tools out of bronze and iron"

iron

a very strong metal used to make tools and weapons.

Genesis 4:23

Adah ... Zillah

See how you translated these women's names in Genesis 4:19.

listen to my voice ... listen to my words

Lamech said the same thing twice for emphasis. His voice is a synecdoche for his whole person. Alternate translation: "listen carefully to me"

a man for wounding me, a young man for bruising me

Lamech killed only one person. These two phrases means the same thing and are repeated to emphasize the certainly of his action. Alternate translation: "a young man because he hurt me"

Genesis 4:24

If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech

Lamech knows that God will avenge Cain seven times. Alternate translation: "Since God will punish anyone who kills Cain seven times, Lamech"

then Lamech will be avenged seventy-seven times

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whoever kills me, God will punish seventy-seven times"

seventy-seven

77

Genesis 4:25

Adam knew his wife

This is a polite way of saying that Adam had sexual relations with his wife. You may need to use another euphemism in your language. See how you translated this in [Genesis 4:1]

said, "God has given me another son

This is the reason that she named him Seth. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "explained, 'God has given me another child"

Seth

Translators may add a footnote that says "This name sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'has given.'"

Genesis 4:26

A son was born to Seth

This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Seth's wife bore him a son"

to call on the name of Yahweh

This is the first time people called God by the name Yahweh. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "to worship God by using the name Yahweh"

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5 [1]This is the record of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created mankind, he made them in his own likeness.[2]Male and female he created them. He blessed them and named them mankind when they were created.

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[3]When Adam had lived 130 years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth.[4]After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived eight hundred years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[5]Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

[6]When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh.[7]After he became the father of Enosh, he lived 807 years and became the father of more sons and daughters.[8]Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

[9]When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan.[10]After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[11]Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

[12]When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel.[13]After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[14]Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

[15]When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared.[16]After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[17]Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

[18]When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch.[19]After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[20]Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

[21]When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah.[22]Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[23]Enoch lived 365 years.[24]Enoch walked with God, and then he was gone, for God took him.

[25]When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech.[26]After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[27]Methuselah lived 969 years. Then he died.

[28]When Lamech had lived 182 years, he became the father of a son.[29]He called his name Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the painful labor of our hands, which we must do because of the ground that Yahweh has cursed."
[30]Lamech lived 595 years after he became the father of Noah. He became the father of more sons and daughters.[31]Lamech lived 777 years. Then he died.

[32]After Noah had lived five hundred years, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Genesis 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter provides the first of many lists of descendants in the Bible. This is not a simple list, because the author makes comments about each person. Translators should format this text in the way that is clearest in the project language. Many may choose to introduce each new person in a separate paragraph, as the ULB and UDB do.

Links:

Genesis 5:1 Notes

Genesis 5:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of the list of Adam's descendants.
in his own likeness
This phrase means that God made mankind to be like him. This verse does not tell in what ways God made people to be like himself. God does not have a body, so it does not mean that people would look like God. See how "after our likeness" is translated in [Genesis 1:26]
Genesis 5:2
when they were created
This can be made active. Alternate translation: "when he created them"
Genesis 5:3
130
Translators may write the words "one hundred thirty."
he became the father of a son
"he had a son"
in his own likeness, after his image
These two phrases mean the same thing. They are used as a reminder that God made man in his own image. See how you translated similar phrases in Genesis 1:26.
Seth
See how you translated this name in Genesis 4:25.
Genesis 5:4
eight hundred
Translators may write the numerals "800."
He became the father of more sons and daughters

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"He had more sons and daughters"
Genesis 5:5
then he died
This phrase will be repeated throughout the chapter. Use the ordinary word for "died."
Adam lived 930 years
"Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years." People used to live a very long time. Use your ordinary word for "years."
Alternate translation: "Adam lived a total of 930 years"
Genesis 5:6
105 years
"one hundred and five years"
he became the father of Enosh
Here "father" means his actual father, not his grandfather.
Alternate translation: "he had his son Enosh"
Enosh
This is the name of a person.
Genesis 5:7
807 years
"eight hundred and seven years"
and became the father of more sons and daughters
"and had more sons and daughters"
Genesis 5:8
Seth lived 912 years
"Seth lived nine hundred and twelve years." Seth lived a total of 912 years.
then he died
This phrase is repeated throughout the chapter. Use the ordinary word for "died."
Genesis 5:9
General Information:
The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format.
Translate them according to the notes in [Genesis 5:6-8]
ninety years
"90 years"
Genesis 5:10
815 years
"eight hundred and fifteen years"
Genesis 5:11
905 years
"nine hundred and give years"
Genesis 5:12
General Information:
The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format.
Translate them according to the notes in [Genesis 5:6-8]
seventy years
"70 years"
Genesis 5:13
840 years
"eight hundred and forty years"
Genesis 5:14
910 years
"nine hundred and ten years"
Genesis 5:15
General Information:
The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format.
Translate them according to the notes in [Genesis 5:6-8]
Genesis 5:18
General Information:
The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format.
Translate them according to the notes in [Genesis 5:6-8]
Genesis 5:21
he became the father of Methuselah
"he had his son Methuselah"
Methuselah
This is the name of a man.
Genesis 5:22
Enoch walked with God
To walk with someone is a metaphor for being in a close relationship with him. Alternate translation: "Enoch had a close relationship with God" or "Enoch lived in union with God"
He became the father of more sons and daughters
"He had more sons and daughters"
Genesis 5:23
Enoch lived 365 years
"Enoch lived three hundred and sixty-five years." Enoch lived a total of 365 years.
Genesis 5:24
then he was gone
The word "he" refers to Enoch. He was no longer on earth.
for God took him
This means that God took Enoch to be with himself (God).
Genesis 5:25
General Information:
The records in Genesis 5:6-27 have the same format.
Translate them according to the notes in [Genesis 5:6-8]
Lamech
This Lamech is different from the Lamech in Genesis 4:18.
Genesis 5:28
182 years
"one hundred and eighty-two years"
became the father of a son
"had a son"
Genesis 5:29
Noah
Translators may want to add a footnote that says: "This name sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'rest.'"
from our work and from the painful labor of our hands
Lamech says the same thing twice to emphasize how hard the work was. Alternate translation: "from working so hard with our hands"
Genesis 5:30
595 years
"five hundred and ninety-five years"
Genesis 5:31
Lamech lived 777 years
"Lamech lived seven hundred seventy-seven years."
Lamech lived a total of 777 years"
Genesis 5:32
he became the father of
"he had his sons." This does not tell us whether the sons were born on the same day or in different years.
Shem, Ham, and Japheth
These sons may not be listed in the order of their birth. There is disagreement about which one was the oldest. Avoid translating this in a way that implies that the list is in the order of their ages.

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6 [1]It came about when mankind began to multiply on the earth and daughters were born to them,[2]that the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were attractive. They took for themselves wives, any of them that they chose.
[3]Yahweh said, "My spirit will not remain in mankind forever, for they are flesh. They will live 120 years."
[4]The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward. This happened when the sons of God married daughters of men, and they had children with them. These were the mighty men of old, men of renown.

[5]Yahweh saw that the wickedness of mankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually.[6]Yahweh regretted that he had made mankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.
[7]So Yahweh said, "I will wipe away mankind whom I have created from the surface of the earth—mankind and animals, and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I regret that I have made them."[8]But Noah found favor in the eyes of Yahweh.

[9]This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and blameless among the people of his time. Noah walked with God.[10]Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
[11]The earth was corrupt before God, and it was filled with violence.[12]God saw the earth; behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.

[13]God said to Noah, "I can see that it is time to put an end to all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Indeed, I will destroy them with the earth.[14]Make for yourself an ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it with pitch within and without.[15]This is how you will make it: The length of the ark is to be three hundred cubits; the breadth of it is to be fifty cubits, and the height of it is to be thirty cubits.
[16]Make a roof for the ark, and finish it at a cubit from the top of the side. Place a door in the side of the ark and make a lower, a second, and a third deck.[17]Listen, I am about to bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh that has in it the breath of life from under heaven. Everything that is on the earth will die.
[18]But I will establish my covenant with you. You will come into the ark, you, and your sons, and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.[19]Of every living creature of all flesh, two of every kind you must bring into the ark, to keep them alive with you, both male and female.
[20]Of the birds after their kind, and of animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort will come to you to keep them alive.[21]Gather for yourself every kind of food that is eaten and store it, so that it will be food for you and for them."[22]So Noah did this. According to all that God commanded him, so he did.

Genesis 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Beginning in 6:22, the author gives statements summarizing events he tells about again in the text that follows. In the next chapter, the author sometimes gives summary statements that introduce events for the first time. If these statements, and the surrounding events, are not carefully translated, readers can believe that the same events happened twice or three times instead of only one time. Translators should be careful not to give this impression.

Links:

Genesis 6:1 Notes

Genesis 6:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

daughters were born to them

This can be active. Alternate translation: "the women bore daughters"

Genesis 6:2

sons of God

Translators could add a footnote saying: "It is not clear whether this refers to heavenly beings or human beings. In either case, they were beings that God created." Some believe these words refer to angels who rebelled against God, that is, evil spirits or demons. Others think this may refer to powerful political rulers, and others think this may refer to the descendants of Seth.

Genesis 6:3

My spirit

Here Yahweh is talking about himself and his spirit, which is the Spirit of God.

flesh

This means that they have physical bodies that will one day die.

They will live 120 years

"They will live one hundred and twenty years." Possible meanings are 1) the normal lifespan of people would decrease to 120 years. Alternate translation: "They will not live more than 120 years" or 2) in 120 years everyone would die. Alternate translation: "They will live only 120

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years"
Genesis 6:4
The Nephilim
These seem to have been giants, very tall, large people.
This happened when
"The Nephilim were born because"
sons of God
See how you translated this in Genesis 6:2.
These were the mighty men of old
"These Nephilim were the mighty men who lived long ago" or "These children grew to become the powerful fighters who lived long ago"
mighty men
men who are courageous and victorious in battle
men of renown
"famous men"
Genesis 6:5
every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts
"everything their hearts wanted to think about"
the thoughts of their hearts
The writer speaks of the heart as if it were the part of the body that thinks. Your language may use a word other than "heart" to talk about the part of people that thinks. Alternate translation: "their inner, secret thoughts"
Genesis 6:6
it grieved him to his heart
The writer speaks of the heart as if it were the part of the body that feels sadness. Your language may use a word other than "heart" to talk about the emotions. Alternate translation: "he was very, very sad about it"
Genesis 6:7
I will wipe away mankind ... from the surface of the earth
The writer speaks of God killing people as if God were wiping dirt off a flat surface. Alternate translation: "I will destroy mankind ... so that there will not be any people on the earth"
I will wipe away mankind whom I have created
Some languages would need to translate this as two sentences. Alternate translation: "I created mankind. I will wipe them away"
wipe away
"completely destroy." Here "wipe away" is used in a negative sense, for God is talking about destroying the people because of their sin.
Genesis 6:8
Noah found favor in the eyes of Yahweh
The phrase "found favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "Yahweh looked favorably on Noah" or "Yahweh was pleased with Noah"
Genesis 6:9
General Information:
This begins the story of Noah, which continues into chapter 9.
walked with God
See how you translated this in Genesis 5:21.
Genesis 6:10
Noah became the father of three sons
"Noah had three sons" or "Noah's wife had three sons"
Shem, Ham, and Japheth
Translators may add the following footnote: "The sons are not listed in the order in which they were born."
Genesis 6:11
The earth
Possible meanings are 1) the people who lived on the earth or 2) "The earth itself."
was corrupt
The people doing what is evil is spoken of as if they were food that has become rotten. Alternate translation: "was rotten" or "was completely evil"
before God
Possible meanings are 1) "in God's sight" or 2) "in the presence of Yahweh" as in Genesis 4:16.
and it was filled with violence
The writer speaks of violence as if it were something that could be put into a container and of the earth as a container. Alternate translation: "and there were very many violent people on the earth" or "because it was full of people who did evil things to each other"
Genesis 6:12
behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
all flesh
Possible meanings for what "all flesh" represents are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animal.
had corrupted their way
How a person behaves is spoken of as if it were a way or road. Alternate translation: "had stopped living the way God wanted" or "had behaved in an evil way"
Genesis 6:13
all flesh
See how you translated these words in Genesis 6:12.
the earth is filled with violence through them
"people everywhere on earth are violent"
I will destroy them with the earth
"I will destroy both them and the earth" or "I will destroy them when I destroy the earth"
Genesis 6:14
an ark
This refers to a very large box that would be able to float on water even in a very bad storm. "a large boat" or "a ship" or "a barge"
cypress wood
People do not know exactly what kind of tree this was. "wood used for building boats" or "good wood"
cover it with pitch
The reason for doing this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "spread pitch on it" or "paint tar on it" or "cover it with pitch to make it waterproof"
pitch
This is a thick, sticky or oily liquid that people put on the outside of a boat to stop water from going through gaps in the wood into the boat.
Genesis 6:15
cubits

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A cubit was a unit of measure, a little less than half a meter long.

three hundred cubits

"138 meters." You may use the Hebrew measuring units from the ULB or the metric units from the UDB or your own culture's units if you know how they compare to the metric units. You may also write a footnote that says: "Three hundred cubits is about 138 meters."

fifty cubits

"twenty-three meters"

thirty cubits

"fourteen meters"

Genesis 6:16

a roof for the ark

This was probably a peaked or slanted roof. Its purpose was to protect everything in the ark from the rain.

cubit

A cubit was a little less than half a meter long. See how you translated this in [Genesis 6:15]

a lower, a second, and a third deck

"a lower deck, a middle deck, and an upper deck" or "three decks inside"

deck

"floor" or "level"

Genesis 6:17

Listen

God said this in order to emphasize that he would do what he was about to say. "Pay attention" or "Listen to what I am saying"

I am about to bring the flood of waters

In some languages it may b e better to say "to send" instead of "to bring. It is also possible to avoid the direction and say "to cause." Alternate translation: "I am about to send a flood of waters" or "I am about to cause a flood"

all flesh

Here "flesh" represents all physical beings, including humans and animals.

that has in it the breath of life

Here "breath" represents life. Alternate translation: "that lives"

Genesis 6:18

establish my covenant with you

"make a covenant between you and me"

with you

with Noah

You will come into the ark

"You will enter the ark." Some translations say "You will go into the ark."

Genesis 6:19

Of every living creature of all flesh, two of every kind you must bring into the ark

"You must bring into the ark two of every kind of living creature"

creature

an animal God created

all flesh

See how you translated these words in Genesis 6:12.

Genesis 6:20

after their kind

"of each different kind"

creeping thing of the ground

This refers to small animals that move on the ground .

two of every sort

This refers to two of every kind of bird and animal.

to you

This refers to Noah and so is singular.

to keep them alive

"so you can keep them alive"

Genesis 6:21

yourself ... you

These refer to Noah and are singular.

food that is eaten

"food that people and animals eat"

Genesis 6:22

So Noah did this. According to all that God commanded him, so he did

These two sentences mean the same thing. The second sentence explains the first and emphasizes that Noah obeyed God. These parallel sentences can be combined into one. Alternate translation: "So Noah did everything that God commanded him to do"

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7 [1]Yahweh said to Noah, "Come, you and all your household, into the ark, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.[2]Of every clean animal you will bring with you seven males and seven females. From the animals that are not clean, of them bring two, the male and his mate.[3]Also of the birds of the sky, bring seven males and seven females, to keep their offspring alive upon the surface of all the earth.
[4]For in seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth for forty days and forty nights. I will destroy from off the surface of the ground every living thing that I have made."[5]Noah did all that Yahweh commanded him.

[6]Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came upon the earth.[7]Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood.
[8]Clean animals and unclean animals, birds, and everything that creeps upon the ground,[9]two by two, male and female, came to Noah and went into the ark, just as God had commanded Noah.[10]It came about that after the seven days, the waters of the flood came upon the earth.
[11]In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day, all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the windows of heaven were opened.[12]The rain began and fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

[13]On that very same day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, entered into the ark.[14]They entered along with each wild animal according to its kind, and each sort of

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livestock according to its kind, and each creeping thing that creeps upon the earth according to its kind, and every sort of bird according to its kind, each kind of creature with wings.
[15]Two of all flesh in which was the breath of life came to Noah and entered into the ark.[16]The animals that went in were male and female of all flesh; they entered in just as God had commanded him. Then Yahweh shut the door after them.
[17]Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted the ark and raised it above the earth.[18]The waters completely covered over the earth, and the ark floated upon the surface of the water.
[19]The waters rose greatly on the earth so that all the high mountains that were under the entire sky were covered.[20]The waters rose fifteen cubits above the tops of the mountains.
[21]All living beings that moved upon the earth died—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the living creatures that lived in great numbers upon the earth, and all mankind.[22]All living creatures who lived on the land, who breathed the breath of life through their noses, died.
[23]So every living thing that was on the surface of the earth was wiped out, mankind and animals and creeping things and birds of the sky. They were all destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those with him in the ark were left.[24]The waters stayed upon the earth for 150 days.

Genesis 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, the author continues his pattern of statements that summarize events already described, and of repeating events that have already happened. Again, careful translation is necessary so that readers do not think that the same events happened more than one time in the story. Special attention in this regard should be given to 7:5,10,13, and 17.

Special concepts in this chapter

Clean animals and birds

Noah sacrificed to Yahweh some of the "clean" animals and birds that he had with him (8:20). These were animals and birds that the Hebrew people would later consider to be fit to eat and to sacrifice to God. (See: clean)

Water underneath and over the earth

The flood is presented as occurring because of rain pouring out of the sky and because of seawater rising from under the earth. This is because the ancient Hebrews pictured the earth as resting on top of the sea. They also pictured the sky as containing water above the earth that poured down through windows in the sky when God allowed it to rain. Translators should not try to change this picture in order to suit what readers believe about the world. (See: heaven)

Links:

Genesis 7:1 Notes

Genesis 7:1

General Information:

The events in this chapter take place after Noah built the ark, gathered the food, and put it in the ark.

Come ... into the ark

"Enter ... into the ark." Many translations read "Go ... into the ark."

you

The word "you" refers to Noah and is singular.

your household

"your family"

righteous before me

This means that God saw Noah as righteous.

in this generation

This refers to all the people who were living at that time. Alternate translation: "among all the people who are now living"

Genesis 7:2

you will bring

"take." Many translations read "you will take."

clean animal

This was an animal that God allowed his people to eat and to sacrifice.

animals that are not clean

These were animals that God did not allow people to eat or to sacrifice.

Genesis 7:3

to keep their offspring alive

"so that they will have offspring that will live" or "so that, after the flood, animals will continue to live"

Genesis 7:4

forty days and forty nights

This was a full forty days. It was not a total of eighty days. Alternate translation: "forty days and nights"

living

This refers to physical life.

Genesis 7:6

General Information:

Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.

came upon the earth

"happened" or "came on the earth"

Genesis 7:7

because of the waters of the flood

"because of the flood that would come" or "to escape the flood water"

Genesis 7:8

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General Information:
Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
clean animals
These were animals that God allowed people to eat and to give to him as sacrifices.
unclean animals
These were animals that God did not allow people to eat or to give to him as sacrifices.
Genesis 7:9
two by two
The animals entered the boat in pairs of one male and one female.
Genesis 7:10
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story: the start of the flood. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
after the seven days
"after seven days" or "seven days later"
the waters of the flood came upon the earth
The implicit information, "it started to rain" can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "it started to rain and the waters of the flood came upon the earth"
Genesis 7:11
General Information:
Verses 6-12 repeat for a second time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
In the six hundredth year of Noah's life
"When Noah was 600 years old"
the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month
Since Moses wrote this book, it is possible he is referring to the second month of the Hebrew calendar. But this is uncertain.
on the same day
This refers to the specific day when the rain began. This phrase emphasizes how all of these major events happened quickly when the time arrived.
the fountains of the great deep burst open
"water from under the earth rushed up to the earth's surface"
the great deep
This refers to the sea that was thought to be under the earth.
the windows of heaven were opened
This refers to rain. It describes the sky as a ceiling that keeps the waters above it from falling down to the earth. When the windows, or doors, in the sky were opened, the water came down through them. Alternate translation: "the sky opened" or "the doors in the sky opened"
Genesis 7:12
rain
If your language has a word for a great amount of rain, it would be appropriate here.
Genesis 7:13
General Information:
Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
On that very same day
"On that exact day." This refers to the day that the rain started. Verses 13-16 tell what Noah did immediately before the rain began.
Genesis 7:14
wild animal ... livestock ... creeping thing ... bird
These four groups are listed to show that every kind of animal was included. If your language has another way of grouping all the animals, you can use that, or you can use these groups. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:24.
creeping thing
This refers to animals that crawl on the ground, like rodents, insects, lizards, and snakes.
according to its kind
"so that each kind of animal will produce more of its own kind." See how you translated this in Genesis 1:24.
Genesis 7:15
General Information:
Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
Two of all flesh
Here "flesh" represents animals.
in which was the breath of life
Here "breath" represents life. Alternate translation: "that lived"
came to Noah
The word "came" can be translated as "went."
of all flesh
Here "flesh" represents animals. Alternate translation: "of every kind of animal"
Genesis 7:16
after them
The full meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "after they entered the ark"
Genesis 7:17
General Information:
Verses 13-18 repeat for a third time and give more detail about how Noah went into the ark with his family and the animals in Genesis 7:1-5. This is not a new event.
the water increased
"the water became very deep." This happened during the forty days while the water kept coming.
lifted the ark
"it caused the ark to float"
raised it above the earth
"causes the ark to rise up high over the ground" or "he ark floated on top of the deep water"
Genesis 7:19
The waters rose greatly on the earth
"The water totally overwhelmed the earth"
Genesis 7:20
fifteen cubits
"six meters." See how you translated this in Genesis 6:15.
Genesis 7:21
moved upon
"moved about" or "roamed"

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all the living creatures that lived in great numbers upon the earth
This refers to all the animals that move around on the ground in large groups.
Genesis 7:22
who breathed the breath of life through their noses
Here "noses" represent the whole animal or human. Alternate translation: "everyone that breathed"
the breath of life
The words "breath" and "life" represent the power that causes people and animals to be alive.
Genesis 7:23
So every living thing ... was wiped out
If necessary, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So every living thing ... perished" or "So the flood completely destroyed every living thing"
They were all destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God destroyed them all"
from the earth
"so they were no longer on the earth"
those with him
"the people and animals that were with him"
were left
"remained" or "lived" or "remained alive"

8 [1]God remembered Noah, all the wild animals, and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. God made a wind
blow over the earth, and the waters started going down.[2]The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were
closed, and it stopped raining.[3]The flood waters went down slowly from the earth, and after the end of 150 days the
waters had gone down.
[4]The ark came to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.[5]The
waters continued to go down until the tenth month. On the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

[6]It came about after forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made.[7]He sent out a raven and it
flew back and forth until the waters were dried up from the earth.
[8]Then he sent out a dove to see if the waters had gone down from the surface of the earth,[9]but the dove found no place to
rest her foot, and she returned to him in the ark, for the waters were still covering the whole earth. He reached out with
his hand, and took and brought her into the ark with him.
[10]He waited another seven days and again he sent out the dove from the ark.[11]The dove returned to him in the evening.
Look! In her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had gone down from the earth.[12]He
waited another seven days, and sent out the dove again. She did not return again to him.

[13]It came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, that the waters were
dried up from off the earth. Noah removed the covering of the ark, looked out, and saw that, behold, the surface of the
ground was dry.[14]In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.
[15]God said to Noah,[16]"Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you.[17]Take out with you every
living creature of all flesh that is with you—the birds, the animals, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth—
so that they may increase greatly on the earth, that they may be fruitful and multiply upon the earth."
[18]So Noah went out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives with him.[19]Every living creature, every creeping thing, and
every bird, everything that moves on the earth, according to their families, left the ark.

[20]Noah built an altar to Yahweh. He took some of the clean animals and some of the clean birds, and offered burnt
offerings on the altar.[21]Yahweh smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart, "I will not again curse the ground
because of mankind, even though the intention of mankind's heart is evil from childhood. Nor will I again destroy
everything living, as I have done.
[22] While the earth remains,
seed time and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
and day and night
will not cease."

Genesis 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:22, which is part of what Yahweh was telling Noah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Flood waters

The waters receded after this great flood. Because there was so much water, and it came from God, it is described in a

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unique way.
The mountains of Ararat
It is unclear where Ararat was located. Many people believe it is located in the modern country of Turkey.

Links:

Genesis 8 1 Notes

Genesis 8:1
God remembered Noah
This does not mean that God had forgotten about Noah and suddenly remembered him. The words "God remembered Noah" mean that God was now going to help Noah after the flood. Alternate translation: "God had not forgotten Noah" or "God thought of Noah" or "God decided to help Noah"
ark
This refers to a very large box that would be able to float on water even in a very bad storm. See how you translated this in Genesis 6:14. Alternate translation: "a large boat" or "a ship" or "a barge"
Genesis 8:2
The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed
"The water stopped coming out of the ground and the rain stopped falling." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God closed the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven"
fountains of the deep
"water from under the earth." See how this is translated in Genesis 7:11.
the windows of heaven were closed
This refers to the rain stopping. It describes the sky as a ceiling that keeps the waters above it from falling down to the earth. When the windows, or doors, in the sky were closed, the water stopped coming through them. See how "the windows of heaven" is translated in Genesis 7:11. Alternate translation: "the sky closed" or "the doors in the sky closed"
Genesis 8:4
came to rest
"landed" or "stopped on solid ground"
in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month
Because Moses wrote this book, it is possible he is referring to the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain.
Genesis 8:5
tenth month
Because Moses wrote this book, it is possible he is referring to the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain.
On the first day of the month
"On the first day of the tenth month"
appeared
This can be made more explicit: "appeared above the surface of the water."
Genesis 8:6
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. Alternate translation: "It happened that"
It came about ... the window of the ark which he had made
The phrase "which he had made" tells about the window. Some languages may need to make this phrase a separate sentence: "Noah had made a window in the boat. It came about after forty days that he opened the window"
Genesis 8:7
raven
a black bird that eats mainly the flesh of dead animals
it flew back and forth
This means that the raven kept leaving the boat and returning.
until the waters were dried up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the wind dried up the waters" or "until the waters dried up"
Genesis 8:8
he sent out a dove
If you use masculine pronouns for the word "dove," you may need to insert Noah's name here to avoid confusion: "Noah sent out a dove."
Genesis 8:9
to rest her foot
"to land" or "to perch." It means to land on something in order to rest from flying.
her foot ... she returned ... and brought her
The word "dove" is feminine in the author's language. You could translate these phrases with the pronouns "its ... it ... it" or "his ... he ... him," depending on how your language refers to a dove.
he ... him
If you use masculine pronouns for the word "dove," you may need to insert Noah's name here to avoid confusion: "Noah sent out a dove," "Noah stretched forth his hand," etc.
Genesis 8:10
He waited another seven days
"He again waited for seven days"
Genesis 8:11
Look
"Pay attention" or "This is important"
a freshly plucked olive leaf
"a leaf that she had just plucked from an olive tree"
plucked
"broken off"
Genesis 8:12
She did not return again to him
If people would not understand, you could state the reason explicitly: "She did not return again to him because she found a place to land."
Genesis 8:13
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new

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part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the six hundred and first year

"when Noah was 601 years old"

the first month, on the first day of the month

Since Moses wrote this book it is possible he is referring to the first month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain.

the waters were dried up from off the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the waters covering the earth dried up" or "the wind dried up the waters covering the earth"

the covering of the ark

This refers to a cover that kept the rain water from going into the ark.

behold

The word "behold" tells us to pay attention to the important information that comes next.

Genesis 8:14

In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month

"On the twenty seventh day of the second month." This may refer to the second month of the Hebrew calendar, but this is uncertain.

the earth was dry

"the ground was completely dry"

Genesis 8:16

Go out of

"Leave." Some translations read "Come out."

Genesis 8:17

Take out

"Take." Some translations read "Bring out."

every living creature of all flesh

"every kind of living creature." See how "all flesh" is translated in Genesis 6:12.

be fruitful and multiply

This is an idiom. See how this is translated in [Genesis 1:28]

Genesis 8:18

Noah went out

Some translations read "Noah came out."

Genesis 8:19

according to their families

"in groups of their own kinds"

Genesis 8:20

built an altar to Yahweh

"built an altar dedicated to Yahweh" or "built an altar for worshiping Yahweh." He may have built it with stones.

clean animals ... clean birds

Here "clean" means that God allowed these animals to be used in sacrifice. Some animals were not used for sacrifices and were called "unclean."

offered burnt offerings

Noah killed the animals and then completely burned them up as an offering to God. Alternate translation: "burned the animals as offerings to Yahweh"

Genesis 8:21

pleasing aroma

This refers to the good smell of the roasted meat.

said in his heart

Here the word "heart" refers to God's thoughts and emotions.

curse the ground

"do very serious harm to the earth"

because of mankind

This can be made more explicit: "because mankind is sinful."

the intention of mankind's heart is evil from childhood

"from their earliest years they tend to do evil things" or "when they are young, they want to do evil things"

the intention of mankind's heart

Here the word "heart" refers to people's thoughts, emotions, desires, and will. Alternate translation: "their tendency" or "their habit"

from childhood

This refers to an older child. Alternate translation: "from their youth"

Genesis 8:22

While the earth remains

"While the earth lasts" or "As long as the earth exists"

seed time

"the season for planting"

cold and heat, summer and winter

These expressions both refer to two major weather conditions in the year. Translators may use local expressions.

summer

the hot, dry time of the year

winter

the cool, wet or snowy time of the year

will not cease

"will continue"

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9 [1]Then God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth.[2]The fear of you and the
dread of you will be upon every living thing on the earth, upon every bird of the sky, upon everything that moves on
the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.
[3]Every moving thing that lives will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.[4]But you
must not eat meat with its life—that is its blood—in it.
[5]But for your blood, the life that is in your blood, I will require payment. From the hand of every animal I will require it.
From the hand of any man, that is, from the hand of one who has murdered his brother, I will require an accounting for
the life of that man.
6 Whoever sheds man's blood,
by man will his blood be shed,
for it was in the image of God that he made man.

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[7]As for you, be fruitful and multiply, spread throughout the earth and multiply on it."

[8]Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying,[9]"As for me, listen! I am going to confirm my covenant with you and with your descendants after you,[10]and with every living creature that is with you, with the birds, the livestock, and every creature of the earth with you, from all that came out of the ark, to every living creature on the earth.
[11]I hereby confirm my covenant with you, that never again will all flesh be destroyed by the waters of a flood. Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."
[12]God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:[13]I have set my rainbow in the cloud, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.
[14]It will come about when I bring a cloud over the earth and the rainbow is seen in the cloud,[15]then I will call to mind my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. The waters will never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.
[16]The rainbow will be in the clouds and I will see it, in order to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."
[17]Then God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have confirmed between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

[18]The sons of Noah that came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan.[19]These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

[20]Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard.[21]He drank some of the wine and became drunk. He was lying uncovered in his tent.
[22]Then Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside.[23]So Shem and Japheth took a robe and laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned the other way, so they did not see their father's nakedness.
[24]When Noah awoke from his wine, he learned what his youngest son had done to him.[25]So he said,
"Cursed be Canaan.
May he be a servant to his brothers' servants."

[26]He also said,
"May Yahweh, the God of Shem, be blessed,
and may Canaan be his servant.
[27] May God extend the territory of Japheth,
and let him make his home in the tents of Shem.
May Canaan be his servant."

[28]After the flood, Noah lived three hundred fifty years.[29]All the days of Noah were nine hundred fifty years, and then he died.

Genesis 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 9:6-7, which is the poetic part of the quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. They also set apart 9:25-27, which contains two quotations.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 9:6 and 9:25-27.

Special concepts in this chapter

Man's relationship to animals
There is a noticeable shift in man's relationship with the animals on the earth. Before the flood, there apparently was harmony between man and the animals. After the flood, the animals fear man and man is permitted to eat the animals, something he was not allowed to do previously.
Life in the blood
This chapter introduces the concept that there is life in the blood of an animal and in man. In Hebrew thought, blood represents the life present in a living thing. This is an image used throughout Scripture. (See: life and blood)
Covenant with Noah

God made a covenant with Noah. This covenant was an unconditional promise God made to never destroy the whole world with a flood. Rainbows are a perpetual sign of this covenant. (See: covenant and promise)

A father's nakedness

In Noah's culture, it was unacceptable to see a father's nakedness. It was wrong for Ham to show his brothers their father's nakedness. Ham's actions were insulting or disrespectful.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth"

This is a command that God gives. He expects Noah to obey him.

Links:

Genesis 9:1 Notes

Genesis 9:1

Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth

This is God's blessing. He told Noah and his family to produce more humans like themselves, so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how they are to be "fruitful." See how you translated these commands in [Genesis 1:28]

Genesis 9:2

The fear of you and the dread of you will be upon every living thing ... and upon all the fish of the sea

The writer speaks of fear and dread as if they were physical objects that could be upon the animals. Alternate translation: "Every living thing ... and all the fish of the sea will be dreadfully afraid of you"

The fear of you and the dread of you

The words "fear" and "dread" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how afraid the animals will be of mankind. Alternate translation: "A dreadful fear of you" or "A terrible fear of you"

every living thing on the earth

"every animal on the earth." This is the first of the four categories of animals that the writer lists, and not a summary of the rest of the animals that he mentions next. Here, the writer is referring to larger animals that walk on the earth.

bird

This is a general term for things that fly. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:21.

upon everything that moves on the ground

This includes all types of small animals. See how you translated this in Genesis 1:25.

They are given into your hand

The hand represents control. This can be made active. Alternate translation: "They are given into your control" or "I have put them under your control"

Genesis 9:3

General Information:

God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.

Genesis 9:4

life ... blood

Translators may add a footnote such as this: "The blood is a symbol for life." They may also add a footnote that says something like this: "God was commanding people not to eat meat while the blood was still in it. They had to drain out the blood first."

Genesis 9:5

General Information:

God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.

But for your blood

This contrasts man's blood with the blood of animals (Genesis 9:4).

for your blood, the life that is in your blood

It is implied that the blood is shed, or poured out, or spilled out. Alternate translation: "if anyone causes your blood to pour out" or "if anyone spills your blood" or "if anyone kills you"

life

This refers to physical life.

I will require payment

This payment refers to the death of the murderer, not to money. Alternate translation: "I will require anyone who kills you to pay"

from the hand

Here the word "hand" refers to the one who is responsible for something happening.

From the hand of every animal I will require it

"I will require any animal that takes your life to pay"

From the hand of any man, that is, from the hand of one who has murdered his brother, I will require an accounting for the life of that man

"I will require anyone who takes the life of another person to pay"

From the hand of

This phrase refers to the person in a very personal way. Alternate translation: "From that very man"

brother

Here "brother" is used as a general reference to relatives, such as members of the same tribe, clan, or people group.

Genesis 9:6

Whoever sheds man's blood, by man will his blood be shed

The shedding of blood is a metaphor for killing someone. This means that if a person murders someone, someone else must kill the murderer. However, "blood" is very significant in this passage and should be used in the translation if possible. Translate "sheds blood" with words that indicate a major loss of blood that causes death.

for it was in the image of God that he made man

"because God made people to be like him" or "because I made people in my own image"

Genesis 9:7

be fruitful and multiply

This is God's blessing. He told Noah and his family to produce more humans like themselves, so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how they

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are to be "fruitful." See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:28]

Genesis 9:8

Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him

God was already speaking to them. This phrase marks a change in what God was going to speak about. Alternate translation: "God continued speaking to Noah and his sons" or "Then God went on to say"

Genesis 9:9

As for me

This phrase is used in English to mark the change from God talking about what Noah and his sons must do to talking about what God would do.

confirm my covenant with you

"make a covenant between you and me." See how you translated this in Genesis 6:18.

Genesis 9:11

General Information:

God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.

I hereby confirm my covenant with you

"By saying this, I make my covenant with you." See how similar words are translated in Genesis 6:18.

all flesh

Possible meanings for what "all flesh" represents are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animal. See how this is translated in [Genesis 6:12]

Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth

"There will never again be a flood that destroys the earth." There would be floods, but they would not destroy the whole earth.

Genesis 9:12

sign

This means a reminder of something that was promised.

covenant ... for all future generations

The covenant applies to Noah and his family and also to all generations that follow.

Genesis 9:14

General Information:

God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.

It will come about when

"Whenever." It is something that would happen many times.

the rainbow is seen

It is not clear who will see the rainbow, but because the covenant is between Yahweh and people, if you need to say who it is who will see the rainbow, it would be best to name both Yahweh and people. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people and I see the rainbow"

rainbow

the colorful strip of light that appears in the rain when the sun shines from behind the viewer

Genesis 9:15

I will call to mind my covenant

This does not mean that God would first forget. Alternate translation: "I will think about my covenant"

me and you

The word "you" is plural. God was speaking to Noah and Noah's sons.

every living creature of all flesh

"every kind of living being"

all flesh

Possible meanings for what "all flesh" represents are 1) all human beings or 2) all physical beings, including humans and animal. See how this is translated in [Genesis 6:12]

Genesis 9:16

General Information:

God continues speaking to Noah and his sons.

in order to remember

"so that I will remember" or "so that I will think about"

between God and every living creature

God is speaking here. Alternate translation: "between me and every living creature"

every living creature of all flesh

"every kind of living being." See how you translated this in Genesis 9:15.

Genesis 9:17

Then God said to Noah

God was already talking to Noah. This phrase marks the final part of what God was saying. Alternate translation: "God finished by saying to Noah" or "So God said to Noah"

Genesis 9:18

General Information:

Verses 18-19 introduce the three sons of Noah, who will be an important part of the next story.

father

Ham was Canaan's true father.

Genesis 9:20

man of the soil

person who raises plants for food

Genesis 9:21

became drunk

"drank too much wine"

uncovered

The text does not specify how much of Noah's body was uncovered as he lay drunk. His sons' reactions show us that it was shameful.

Genesis 9:22

his father

This refers to Noah.

Genesis 9:24

awoke from his wine

He awoke after drinking wine and becoming drunk. He "became sober."

his youngest son

This refers to Ham. Alternate translation: "his youngest son, Ham"

Genesis 9:25

General Information:

In verses 25-27 Noah pronounced a curse on Ham's son and blessings on Ham's brothers. What Noah said about them also applied to their descendants, as shown in the UDB. Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in Noah's curse and blessings in verses 25-27.

Cursed be Canaan

"I curse Canaan" or "May bad things happen to Canaan"

Canaan

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This was one of Ham's sons. Alternate translation: "Ham's son Canaan"

a servant to his brothers' servants

"the lowest servant of his brothers" or "the least important servant of his brothers"

his brothers

This could refer either to Canaan's brothers or to his relatives in general.

Genesis 9:26

General Information:

If you can, format these verses as they are formatted here to show your readers that this is poetry.

May Yahweh, the God of Shem, be blessed

"Praised be Yahweh, the God of Shem," or "Yahweh, the God of Shem, is worthy of praise" or "I praise Yahweh, the God of Shem"

Genesis 9:27

May Canaan be his servant

"And let Canaan be Shem's servant." This includes Canaan's and Shem's descendants.

May God extend the territory of Japheth

Possible meanings are 1) "May God make Japheth's territory larger" or 2) "May God cause Japheth to have many descendants."

let him make his home in the tents of Shem

"let him leave peacefully with Shem." This includes Japheth's and Shem's descendants.

May Canaan be his servant

"Let Canaan be Japheth's servant." This includes Canaan's and Japheth's descendants.

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10 [1]These were the descendants of the sons of Noah, that is, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood.

[2]The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
[3]The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.
[4]The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites,[1] and Dodanim.[5]From these the coastland peoples separated and went into their lands, every one with its own language, according to their clans, by their nations.

[6]The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
[7]The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteka. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

[8]Cush became the father of Nimrod, who was a mighty one on the earth.[9]He was a mighty hunter before Yahweh. That is why it is said, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before Yahweh."[10]The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad, and Kalneh, in the land of Shinar.
[11]Out of that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah,[12]and Resen, which was between Nineveh and Calah. It was a large city.
[13]Mizraim became the father of the Ludites, the Anamites, the Lehabites, the Naphtuhites,[14]the Pathrusites, the Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines came), and the Caphtorites.

[15]Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and of Heth,[16]also of the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,[17]the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,[18]the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites spread out.
[19]The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and as one goes toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim, as far as Lasha.[20]These were the sons of Ham, by their clans, by their languages, in their lands, and in their nations.

[21]Sons also were born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth. Shem was also the ancestor of all the people of Eber.
[22]The sons of Shem were Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.
[23]The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.

[24]Arphaxad became the father of Shelah, and Shelah became the father of Eber.
[25]Eber had two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided. His brother's name was Joktan.

[26]Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,[27]Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,[28]Obal, Abimael, Sheba,
[29]Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

[30]Their territory was from Mesha, all the way to Sephar, the mountain of the east.[31]These were the sons of Shem, according to their clans and their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

[32]These were the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations. From these the nations separated and went over the earth after the flood.

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[1]Some modern English translations read, Kittim.

Genesis 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a genealogical record. It also records the location of ancient people groups.

Special concepts in this chapter

Assyria and Nineveh

While these places may be located in the same area as the Assyria mentioned later in Scripture, they are not the same kingdom.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Sons were born to"

This is an unusual phrase meaning "were sons of."

Links:

Genesis 10:1 Notes

Genesis 10:1

These were the descendants of the sons of Noah

"This is the account of Noah's sons." This sentence introduces the account of Noah's descendants in Genesis 10:1-11:9.

Genesis 10:5

From these the coastland peoples separated and went into their lands

"Javan's sons and descendants separated and moved to the coastlands and islands"

coastland peoples

This refers to people who lived along the coast and on the islands.

their lands

"their homelands." These are the places that the people moved to and lived in.

every one with its own language

"Each people group spoke its own language" or "The people groups divided themselves according to their languages"

Genesis 10:6

Mizraim

Mizraim is the Hebrew name for "Egypt."

Genesis 10:8

mighty one

Possible meanings are 1) "mighty warrior" or 2) "mighty man" or 3) "powerful ruler."

Genesis 10:9

before Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) "in Yahweh's sight" or 2) "with Yahweh's help"

That is why it is said

This introduces a proverb. Your language may introduce proverbs and sayings in a different way. Alternate translation: "This is the reason people say"

Genesis 10:10

The first centers

Possible meanings are 1) the first centers he developed or 2) the important cities.

Genesis 10:11

he went to Assyria

"Nimrod went into Assyria"

Genesis 10:13

Mizraim became

The list of Noah's descendants continues.

Mizraim

Mizraim was one of Ham's sons. His descendants became the people of Egypt. Mizraim is the Hebrew name for Egypt.

Genesis 10:16

Jebusites ... Amorites ... Girgashites

These names refer to larger groups of people that descended from Canaan.

Genesis 10:19

border

line between one person's land and another person's land

from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza

The direction south can be stated explicitly if needed. Alternate translation: "from Sidon city in the north as far south as Gaza town, which is near Gerar"

as one goes toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim, as far as Lasha

The direction "east" or "inland" can be stated explicitly if needed. Alternate translation: "then east toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim towns, as far as Lasha"

Genesis 10:20

These were the sons of Ham

The word "these" refers to the people and people groups who were listed in verses Genesis 6-19.

by their languages

"broken up according to their different languages"

in their lands

"in their homelands"

Genesis 10:24

Arphaxad

Arphaxad was one of Shem's sons.

Genesis 10:25

Peleg

Translators may add a footnote note that says: "The name Peleg means 'division.'"

the earth was divided

This can be made active. Alternate translation: "the people of the earth divided themselves" or "the people of the earth separated from one another" or "God divided the people of the earth"

Genesis 10:26

Joktan

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Joktan was one of Eber's sons.
Genesis 10:29
All these
"These" here refers to the sons of Joktan.
Genesis 10:30
Their territory
"The land they controlled" or "The land they lived in"
Genesis 10:31
These were the sons of Shem
The word "these" refers to the descendants of Shem (Genesis 10:21-29).
Genesis 10:32
These were the clans
This refers back to all the people listed in Genesis 10:1-31.
according to
"listed by"
From these the nations separated and went over the earth
"From these clans the nations divided and spread over the earth" or "These clans divided from each other and formed the nations of the earth"
after the flood
This can be stated clearly or more explicitly. Alternate translation: "after the flood destroyed the earth"

11 [1]Now the whole earth used one language and had the same words.[2]As they journeyed in the east, they found a plain
in the land of Shinar and they settled there.
[3]They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They had brick instead of stone and tar as mortar.[4]They said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top will reach to the sky, and let us make a name for ourselves. If we do not, we will be scattered across the surface of the whole earth."
[5]So Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower which the descendants of Adam had built.[6]Yahweh said, "Look, they are one people with the same language, and they are beginning to do this! Soon nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them.[7]Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that they may not understand each other."
[8]So Yahweh scattered them from there across the surface of all the earth and they stopped building the city.[9]Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there Yahweh confused the language of the whole earth and from there Yahweh scattered them abroad over the surface of all the earth.

[10]These were the descendants of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old, and he became the father of Arphaxad two years after the flood.[11]Shem lived five hundred years after he became the father of Arphaxad. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[12]When Arphaxad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah.[13]Arphaxad lived 403 years after he became the father of Shelah. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[14]When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber.[15]Shelah lived 403 years after he became the father of Eber. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[16]When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg.[17]Eber lived 430 years after he became the father of Peleg. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[18]When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu.[19]Peleg lived 209 years after he became the father of Reu. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[20]When Reu had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug.[21]Reu lived 207 years after he became the father of Serug. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[22]When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor.[23]Serug lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.

[24]When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah.[25]Nahor lived 119 years after he became the father of Terah. He also became the father of other sons and daughters.
[26]After Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

[27]Now these were the descendants of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran became the father of Lot.[28]Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.
[29]Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife was Milkah, a daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milkah and Iskah.[30]Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

[31]Terah took Abram his son, Lot the son of his son Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and

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together they left Ur of the Chaldeans, to go into the land of Canaan. But they came to Haran and stayed there.[32]Terah lived 205 years and then died in Haran.

Genesis 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a story traditionally referred to as the "Tower of Babel."
This chapter seeks to answer the questions: why do people speak different languages? how did people become so dispersed across the earth? God's punishment described in this chapter may also explain why the world has racial and ethnic divisions.

Special concepts in this chapter

Age of people when they die
After the flood, people began to live shorter lives. This chapter begins to record the shortening of the average lifespan.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Personification
The statement "Yahweh came down to see" is a type of personification. Yahweh always knows what happens on earth. This statement indicates that Yahweh is about to bring judgment on mankind. (See: and judge)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top will reach to the sky"
The people were very full of pride and rebelled against God in this action.

Links:

Genesis 11:1

Genesis 11:1
Now
This word shows that the writer is beginning a new part of the story.
the whole earth
This represents all the people on the earth. Alternate translation: "all the people on the earth"
used one language and had the same words
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that all people spoke the same language.
Genesis 11:2
they journeyed
"they moved around"
in the east
Possible meanings are 1) "in the east" or 2) "from the east" or 3) "to the east." The preferred choice is "in the east" because Shinar is to the east of where scholars believe the ark came to rest.
settled
stopped moving from one place to another and began to live at one location
Genesis 11:3
Come
If your language has a way of urging or commanding people to begin work, like the English "Come on!" you might use it here.
bake them thoroughly
People make bricks out of clay and heat them in a very hot oven to make them hard and strong.
tar
a thick, sticky, black liquid that comes up from the ground
mortar
This is a thick substance made of lime powder, clay, sand, and water used to make stones or bricks stick together.
Genesis 11:4
let us make a name for ourselves
"let us make our reputation great"
name
reputation
we will be scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we will separate from each other and live in different places"
Genesis 11:5
the descendants of Adam
"the people"
came down
The information about where he came down from can be made explicit: "came down from heaven." This does not tell how he came down. Use a general word meaning "came down."
to see
"to observe" or "to look more closely"
Genesis 11:6
one people with the same language
All the people were one big group and they all spoke the same language.
they are beginning to do this
Possible meanings are 1) "they have begun to do this," meaning that they have begun to build the tower but it is not finished, or 2) "this is just the first thing they have done," meaning that in future they will do greater things.
nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "anything they intend to do will be possible for them" or "they will be able to do anything they want to do"
Genesis 11:7

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Come
If your language has a way of urging or commanding people to begin work, like the English "Come on!" you might use it here. See how this is translated in Genesis 11:3.
let us go down
The word "us" is plural even though it refers to God. Some translate it as "let me go down" or "I will go down." If you do this, consider adding a footnote to say that the pronoun is plural. See the note on "Let us make" in [Genesis 1:26]
confuse their language
This means that Yahweh would cause the people all over the earth to stop speaking the same language. Alternate translation: "mix up their language"
so that they may not understand each other
This was the purpose of confusing their language. Alternate translation: "so that they will not be able to understand what each other is saying"
Genesis 11:8
from there
"from the city"
Genesis 11:9
its name was called Babel, because there Yahweh confused
The name "Babel" sounds like the word that means "confused." Translators may want to add a footnote about this.
confused the language of the whole earth
It means that Yahweh caused the people all over the earth to no longer speak the same language. Alternate translation: "mixed up the language of the whole earth"
Genesis 11:10
General Information:
The rest of this chapter lists the line of Shem's descendants down to Abram.
These were the descendants of Shem
This sentence begins the list of Shem's descendants.
flood
This is the flood from Noah's time when people had become so evil that God sent a worldwide flood to cover the earth.
became the father of Arphaxad
"had his son Arphaxad" or "his son Arphaxad was born"
Arphaxad
a man's name
a hundred ... two
Translators may write the words or the numerals "100" and "2."
Genesis 11:11
five hundred
Translators may write the words or the numeral "500."
Genesis 11:12
he became the father of Shelah
"his son Shelah was born"
Shelah
This is a man's name.
Genesis 11:13
403 years
"four hundred and three years"
Genesis 11:14
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them in [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:16
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:18
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them in [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:20
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them in [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:22
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them in [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:24
General Information:
The records in Genesis 11:12-25 have the same format. See how you translated them in [Genesis 11:12-13]
Genesis 11:26
Abram, Nahor, and Haran
We do not know the birth order of his sons.
Genesis 11:27
Now these were the descendants of Terah
This sentence introduces the account of Terah's descendants. Genesis 11:27-25:11 tells about Terah's descendants, particularly his son Abraham. Alternate translation: "This is the account of Terah's descendants"
Genesis 11:28
Haran died in the presence of his father Terah
This means that Haran died while his father was still living. Alternate translation: "Haran died while his father, Terah, was with him"
Genesis 11:29
took wives
"married wives"
Iskah
This is a female name.
Genesis 11:30
Now
This word is used to introduce new information about Sarai that will become important in later chapters.
barren
This term describes a woman who is physically unable to conceive or bear a child.
Genesis 11:31
his
Here the word "his" refers to Terah.
Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife
"his daughter-in-law Sarai, who was the wife of his son Abram"
Haran ... Haran
These are two different names and they are spelled differently in Hebrew. One refers to a person and the other refers to a city. (The "h" sound in the city's name is louder than the "h" sound in the person's name.) You might choose to spell them differently in your language to show this.

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Genesis 11:32
205 years

"two hundred and five years"

12 [1]Now Yahweh said to Abram, "Go from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's household, to
the land that I will show you.

[2] I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you,
and make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

[3] I will bless those who bless you, but whoever dishonors you I will curse.
Through you will all the families of the earth be blessed."

[4]So Abram went, as Yahweh had told him to do, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.[5]Abram took Sarai, his wife, Lot, his brother's son, all their possessions that they had accumulated, and the people that they had acquired in Haran. They left to go into the land of Canaan, and came to the land of Canaan.
[6]Abram passed through the land as far as Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites lived in the land.
[7]Yahweh appeared to Abram, and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So there Abram built an altar to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.
[8]From there he moved to the hill country to the east of Bethel, where he pitched his tent, with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. There he built an altar to Yahweh and called on the name of Yahweh.[9]Then Abram continued journeying, going toward the Negev.

[10]There was a famine in the land, so Abram went down into Egypt to stay, for the famine was severe in the land.[11]When he was about to enter into Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman.[12]When the Egyptians see you they will say, 'This is his wife,' and they will kill me, but they will keep you alive.[13]Say that you are my sister, so that it may be well with me because of you, and so that my life will be spared because of you."
[14]It came about that when Abram entered into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was very beautiful.[15]The princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's household.[16]Pharaoh treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram received sheep and cattle, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels.
[17]Then Yahweh afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.[18]Pharaoh summoned Abram, and said, "What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?[19]Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now therefore, here is your wife. Take her, and go your way."[20]Then Pharaoh gave orders to his men concerning him, and they sent him away, along with his wife and all that he had.

Genesis 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abram
When God said, "Go from your country, and from your relatives," he established several new people groups. These groups descended from Abram.
God's covenant with Abram
God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abram needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. (See: covenant and fulfill and promise)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"They will kill me"
Abram was afraid the Egyptians would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Sarai to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Abram's sister, they would have shown favor to him. (See: and favor)

Links:

Genesis 12:1 Notes

Genesis 12:1
Now

This word is used to mark a new part of the story.
Go from your country, and from your relatives

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"Go from your land, from your family"
Genesis 12:2
I will make of you a great nation
Here "you" is singular and refers to Abram, but Abram represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "I will start a great nation through you" or "I will make your descendants become a great nation"
make your name great
The word "name" represents the person's reputation. Alternate translation: "make you famous"
you will be a blessing
The words "to other people" are understood. Alternate translation: "you will be a blessing to other people"
Genesis 12:3
whoever dishonors you I will curse
"I will curse whoever treats you in a shameful way" or "if anyone treats you as worthless, I will curse him"
Through you will all the families of the earth be blessed
This can be made active. Alternate translation: "I will bless all the families of the earth through you"
Through you
"Because of you" or "Because I have blessed you"
Genesis 12:5
possessions
This includes animals and non-living property.
the people that they had acquired
Possible meanings are 1) "slaves that they had accumulated" or 2) "the people whom they had gathered to be with them."
Genesis 12:6
Abram passed through the land
Only Abram's name is mentioned because he was the head of the family. God had given him the command to take his family and go there. Alternate translation: "So Abram and his family went through the land"
the land
"the land of Canaan"
the oak of Moreh
Moreh was probably the name of a place.
Genesis 12:7
Yahweh, who had appeared to him
"Yahweh, because he had appeared to him"
Genesis 12:8
he pitched his tent
Abram had many people with him as he traveled. People who moved from place to place lived in tents. Alternate translation: "they set up their tents"
called on the name of Yahweh
"prayed in the name of Yahweh" or "worshiped Yahweh"
Genesis 12:9
Then Abram continued journeying
You may need to make explicit that he took his tent with him. "Then Abram took his tent and continued journeying."
toward the Negev
"toward the Negev region" or "toward the south" or "south to the Negev desert"
Genesis 12:10
There was a famine
The crops did not grow well that season. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "There was a shortage of food"
in the land
"in the area" or "in the land where Abram was living"
went down into
Possible meanings are 1) "went further south" or 2) "went away from Canaan into." It would be best to translate this using your usual words for going from a higher place to a lower place.
Genesis 12:11
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I"
Genesis 12:12
they will kill me ... you alive
The reason they would kill Abram can be made explicit: "they will kill me so that they can marry you"
Genesis 12:13
so that my life will be spared because of you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that, because of you, they will not kill me"
Genesis 12:14
It came about that
Possible meanings are 1) This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts, and if your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here, or 2) "And that was what happened" .
Genesis 12:15
The princes of Pharaoh saw her
"Pharaoh's officials saw Sarai" or "the king's officials saw her"
the woman was taken into Pharaoh's household
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh took her into his household" or "Pharaoh had his soldiers take her into his household"
the woman
Sarai
Pharaoh's household
Possible meanings are 1) "Pharoah's family," that is, as a wife, or 2) "Pharaoah's house" or "Pharaoh's palace," a euphemism for Pharaoh making her one of his wives.
Genesis 12:16
for her sake
"for Sarai's sake" or "because of her"
Genesis 12:17
because of Sarai, Abram's wife
This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "because Pharaoh intended to take Sarai, Abram's wife, to be his own wife"
Genesis 12:18
Pharaoh summoned Abram
"Pharaoh called Abram" or "Pharaoh ordered Abram to come to him"
What is this that you have done to me?
Pharaoh used this rhetorical question to show how angry he was about what Abram had done to him. It can also be stated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have done a terrible thing to me!"

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Genesis 12:20
Then Pharaoh gave orders to his men concerning him
"Then Pharaoh directed his officials concerning Abram"
they sent him away, along with his wife and all that he had
"the officials sent Abram away from Pharoah, with his wife and all his possessions"

13 [1]So Abram went up from Egypt and went into the Negev, he, his wife, and all that he had. Lot also went with them.
[2]Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.
[3]He continued on his journey from the Negev to Bethel, to the place where his tent had been before, between Bethel and Ai.[4]He went to the place where the altar was that he had built previously. Here he called on the name of Yahweh.
[5]Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents.[6]The land was not able to support them both living close together, because their possessions were very many, so that they could not stay together.[7]Also, there was a dispute between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time.
[8]So Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen; after all, we are family.[9]Is not the whole land before you? Go ahead and separate yourself from me. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right. Or if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."
[10]So Lot looked around, and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan was well watered everywhere all the way to Zoar, like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt. This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.[11]So Lot chose for himself all the plain of the Jordan and traveled east, and the relatives separated from each other.
[12]Abram lived in the land of Canaan, and Lot lived among the cities of the plain. He set up his tents as far away as Sodom.
[13]Now the men of Sodom were very wicked sinners against Yahweh.

[14]Yahweh said to Abram after Lot had departed from him, "Look from the place where you are standing to the north, south, east, and west.[15]All this land which you see, I will give to you and to your descendants forever.
[16]I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your descendants also can be counted.[17]Arise, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I will give it to you."[18]So Abram picked up his tent, and came and lived by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there built an altar to Yahweh.

Genesis 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abram's faith

Since the land could not support both Lot's and Abram's family, they each went their own way. Even though good land was not plentiful, Abram allowed Lot to choose the better land because he trusted in God to fulfill his promises. (See: trust and fulfill and promise)

God's covenant with Abram

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abram needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. This chapter continues the covenant which began in the previous chapter. (See: covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Built an altar

Abram would have built an altar in order to offer sacrifices to Yahweh. There is an implicit understanding that building an altar was an act of worship.

Links:

Genesis 13:1 Notes

Genesis 13:1
went up from
"left" or "departed from"
went into the Negev
The Negev was a desert region in southern Canaan, east of Egypt. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "went back to the Negev desert"
Genesis 13:2
Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold
"Abram had many livestock, much silver, and much gold"
Genesis 13:3
He continued on his journey
Abram and his family traveled by stages, going from place to place. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "They continued on their journey"
to the place where his tent had been before
Translators may add a footnote that says "See Genesis 12:8." The time of his travel can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "to the place where he had set up his tent before he went to Egypt"
Genesis 13:4
called on the name of Yahweh

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"prayed in the name of Yahweh" or "worshiped Yahweh." See how you translated this in Genesis 12:8.

Genesis 13:5

Now

This word is used to show what follows is background information to help the reader understand the events that follow.

Genesis 13:6

The land was not able to support them

There was not enough grazing land and water for all their animals.

their possessions

This includes livestock, which need pasture and water.

could not stay together

"could not live together"

Genesis 13:7

The Canaanites and the Perizzites were living in the land at that time

This is another reason that the land could not support them all.

Genesis 13:8

Let there be no strife between you and me

"Let's not quarrel"

strife

arguments or fights

between your herdsmen and my herdsmen

"let's stop the men who take care of our animals from quarreling"

after all, we are family

"because we are family"

family

"kinsmen" or "relatives." Lot was Abraham's nephew.

Genesis 13:9

Is not the whole land before you?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "The whole land is available for you to use."

Go ahead and separate yourself from me

Abraham was speaking kindly to Lot and encouraging him to do something that would help them both. "Let's separate."

If you go to the left, then I will go to the right

Possible meanings are 1) "If you go one way, then I will go the other" or 2) "If you go to the north, I will go to the south." Abram let Lot choose the part of the land he wanted, and Abram would take what remained.

Genesis 13:10

the whole plain of the Jordan

This refers to the general region of the Jordan River.

was well watered

"had much water"

like the garden of Yahweh, like the land of Egypt

"like the garden of Yahweh or like the land of Egypt." These were two different places.

the garden of Yahweh

This is another name for the garden of Eden.

garden

Use the same word for "garden" as you used in Genesis 2:8.

This was before Yahweh destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah

This anticipates something that would happen later. It is important here because it explains why Lot settled in a region that later was not fertile.

Genesis 13:11

the relatives

"the kinsmen" or "the families." This refers to Lot and Abram with their households.

Genesis 13:12

Abram lived

"Abram made his home" or "Abram stayed"

the land of Canaan

"the land of the Canaanites"

He set up his tents as far away as Sodom

Possible meanings are 1) "He set up his tents near Sodom" or 2) "He moved his tents around in an area that reached all the way to Sodom."

Genesis 13:14

after Lot had departed from him

"after Lot left Abraham"

Genesis 13:16

I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth

This is a simile. God is saying that he will give Abram very many descendants.

Genesis 13:17

walk through the length and breadth of the land

"walk around all over the whole land"

Genesis 13:18

Mamre

This was the name of the man who owned the oak trees.

Hebron

This is the name of a place.

an altar to Yahweh

"an altar for worshiping Yahweh"

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14 [1]It came about in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of Goyim,[2]that they made war against Bera, king of Sodom, Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinab, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar).
[3]These latter five kings joined together in the Valley of Siddim (also called the Salt Sea).[4]Twelve years they had served Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.[5]Then in the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites in Shaveh Kiriathaim, [6]and the Horites in their hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is near the desert.
[7]Then they turned and came to En Mishpat (also called Kadesh), and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who lived in Hazezon Tamar.
[8]Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela (also called Zoar) went out and prepared for battle in the Valley of Siddim[9]against Kedorlaomer, king of Elam, Tidal, king of Goyim, Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar; four kings against the five.

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[10]Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell in there. Those who were left fled to the mountains.[11]So the kings took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their provisions, and went their way.[12]When they went, they also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who was living in Sodom, along with all his possessions.

[13]One who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew. He was living by the oaks that belonged to Mamre, the Amorite, who was the brother of Eshkol and Aner, who were all allies of Abram.[14]Now when Abram heard that enemies had captured his relative, he led out his 318 trained men who had been born in his house, and he pursued them as far as Dan.
[15]He divided his men against them at night, he and his servants, and he pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.[16]Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his relative Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the other people.

[17]After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (also called the King's Valley).
[18]Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High.
[19]He blessed him saying,
"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Creator of heaven and earth.
[20] Blessed be God Most High,
who has given your enemies into your hand."
Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

[21]The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the people, and take the goods for yourself."[22]Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth,[23]that I will not take a thread, a sandal strap, or anything that is yours, so that you can never say, 'I have made Abram rich.'[24]I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten and the share of the men that went with me. Let Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre take their portion."

Genesis 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. ULB does this with the poetry in 14:19-20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Names of places

Sometimes the names of places in Scripture are referred to by the name used during the time of the writer. For example, the location referred to as Dan was not yet known by that name because Dan had not yet come to live there. Moses, the author of Genesis, would have known this location as Dan.

Melchizedek

Melchizedek was both a priest and a king. Because of this, he parallels the roles of Jesus. Melchizedek is an important figure in the book of Hebrews. (See: priest)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God Most High

Melchizedek worshiped the God Most High. This is probably a reference to the true and only God who created the heavens and the earth and came to be known as Yahweh. (See: heaven)

Links:

Genesis 14:1 Notes

Genesis 14:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the days of

"in the time of"

Amraphel ... Arioch ... Kedorlaomer ... Tidal

These are names of men.

Shinar ... Ellasar ... Elam ... Goyim

These are names of places. See how you translated "Shinar" in Genesis 10:10

Genesis 14:2

they made war

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"they went to war" or "they started a war" or "they prepared for war"

Genesis 14:3

These latter five kings joined together

The information that their armies were with them can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "These latter five kings and their armies joined together"

Genesis 14:4

Twelve years they had served

The events in verses 4-7 happened before verse 3. Your language may have a way of showing this.

they had served Kedorlaomer

They probably had to pay him taxes and serve in his army. Alternate translation: "they had been under the control of Kedorlaomer"

they rebelled

"they refused to serve him" or "they stopped serving him"

Genesis 14:5

came and attacked

They did this because the other kings rebelled.

the Rephaim ... the Zuzites ... the Emites

These are the names of people groups.

Ashteroth Karnaim ... Ham ... Shaveh Kiriathaim

These are the names of places.

Ham

This name in Hebrew is different from the name of Noah's son, which is spelled the same way in English.

Genesis 14:6

the Horites

This is the name of a people group.

Seir ... El Paran

These are the names of places.

El Paran, which is near the desert

This phrase helps readers understand where El Paran was. It can be translated as a separate sentence if necessary. Alternate translation: "El Paran. El Paran is near the desert"

Genesis 14:7

General Information:

Verses 8 and 9 repeats what was said in Genesis 14:3 and continues to tell what happened when the kings came together to fight.

they turned and came

The word "they" refers to the four foreign kings who were attacking the region of Canaan. Their names were Amraphel, Arioch, Chedorlaomer, and Tidal. Alternate translation: "they turned and went"

the Amorites who lived in Hazezon Tamar

This phrase tells which Amorite people were defeated. There were other Amorite people who lived in other places.

Genesis 14:8

the king of Bela (also called Zoar)

The city of Bela was also called Zoar. This information could also be put at the end of the sentence. "the king of Bela went out and prepared for battle. Bela is also called Zoar."

prepared for battle

"joined battle" or "drew up battle lines." Some translators may need to also say that the armies fought, as the UDB does in verse 9.

Genesis 14:9

four kings against the five

Since the five kings were listed first, some languages might prefer to translate this as "five kings against four."

Genesis 14:10

Now

This word introduces background information about the valley of Siddim. Your language may have another way of introducing background information.

was full of tar pits

"had many tar pits." These were holes in the ground that had tar in them.

tar

a thick, sticky, black liquid that comes up from the ground. See how this is translated in Genesis 11:3.

the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah

Here the kings represent themselves and their armies. Alternate translation: the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and their armies"

they fell in there

Possible meanings are 1) some of their soldiers fell in the tar pits or 2) the kings themselves fell in the tar pits. Since [Genesis 14:17]

Those who were left

"Those who did not die in battle and did not fall in the pits"

Genesis 14:11

the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah

The words "Sodom" and "Gomorrah" are metonyms for the people who lived in those cities. Alternate translation: "the wealth of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah" or "the property of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah"

their provisions

"their food and drink"

went their way

"they went away"

Genesis 14:12

they also took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who was living in Sodom, along with all his possessions

The phrases "Abram's brother's son" and "who was living in Sodom" remind the reader of things that were written earlier about Lot. Alternate translation: "they also took Lot, along with all his possessions. Lot was Abram's brother's son and was living in Sodom at that time"

Genesis 14:13

One who had escaped came

"A man escaped from the battle and came"

He was living

"Abram was living." This introduces background information.

were all allies of Abram

"were treaty-partners with Abram" or "had a peace agreement with Abram"

Genesis 14:14

his relative

This is a reference to Abram's nephew Lot.

318 trained men

"three hundred and eighteen trained men"

trained men

"men who were trained to fight"

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men who had been born in his house
"men who were born in Abram's household." They were children of Abram's servants.
pursued them
"chased them"
Dan
This is a city in the far north of Canaan, far from Abram's camp.
Genesis 14:15
He divided his men against them at night, he and his servants, and
This elliptical statement probably refers to a battle strategy. Alternate translation: "At night Abram divided his men—he attacked them from one side and his servants attacked them from another—and"
servants
"men of war." They served him by fighting for him.
Genesis 14:16
all the possessions
This refers to the things that the enemies had stolen from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
his goods
"Lot's property that the enemies had stolen from Lot"
as well as the women and the other people
"as well as the women and other people that the four kings had captured"
Genesis 14:17
returned
The implied information about where he was returning to can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "returned to where he was living"
Genesis 14:18
Melchizedek, king of Salem
This is the first time this king is mentioned.
bread and wine
People commonly ate bread and wine. See how you translated "bread" in Genesis 3:19 and "wine" in Genesis 9:21.
Genesis 14:19
He blessed him
King Melchizedek blessed Abram.
Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless Abram"
heaven
This refers to the place where God lives.
Genesis 14:20
God Most High, who has given
"God Most High, because he has given." The phrase starting with "who has given" tells us something more about God Most High.
Blessed be God Most High
This is a way of praising God. See how you translated "blessed be" in Genesis 9:26.
into your hand
"into your control" or "into your power"
Genesis 14:21
Give me the people
The phrase "the people" may refer to the people of Sodom that the enemies had captured. Abram rescued them when he rescued Lot.
Genesis 14:22
I have lifted up my hand
This means "I have taken an oath" or "I have made a promise."
Genesis 14:24
I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten
This double negative emphasizes that what the young men have eaten is all that Abram would take. Alternate translation: "I will take from you only what my young men have eaten."
what the young men have eaten
It seems that Abram's soldiers had eaten some of the supplies during the journey back to Sodom after the battle.
the share of the men that went with me
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the share of the recovered property that belongs to the men who helped me get it back"
Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre
These are the allies of Abram (Genesis 14:13). Because they were Abram's allies they fought battles alongside him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "my allies Aner, Eshkol, and Mamre"

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15 [1]After these things the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Fear not, Abram! I am your shield and your very great reward."

[2]Abram said, "Lord Yahweh, what will you give me, since I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"[3]Abram said, "Since you have given me no descendant, see, one born in my house will be my heir!"
[4]Then, behold, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but rather the one who will come from your own body will be your heir."[5]Then he brought him outside, and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So will your descendants be."
[6]He believed Yahweh, and he counted it to him as righteousness.[7]He said to him, "I am Yahweh, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."[8]He said, "Lord Yahweh, how will I know that I will inherit it?"
[9]Then he said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a dove, and a young pigeon."[10]He brought him all these, and cut them in two, and placed each half opposite the other, but he did not divide the birds.[11]When the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

[12]Then when the sun was going down, Abram fell sound asleep and, behold, a deep and terrifying darkness overwhelmed

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him.[13]Then Yahweh said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years.
[14]I will judge that nation that they will serve, and afterward they will come out with abundant possessions.[15]But you will go to your fathers in peace, and you will be buried in a good old age.[16]In the fourth generation they will come here again, for the iniquity of the Amorites has not yet reached its limit."
[17]When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch passed between the pieces.
[18]On that day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I hereby give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—[19]the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites,[20]the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaites,[21]the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

Genesis 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Inheritance

In the ancient Near East, a person's children inherited the property and land of their parents. Abram doubted the fulfillment of God's covenant because he did not have any children to whom to give his land. This showed a lack of faith. (See: inherit and fulfill,covenant and faith)

Fulfilling a promise

In the ancient Near East, two people performed a similar sacrifice by dividing animals in half. It was a way to say to the other person, "may this happen to me if I do not fulfill my promise." The event recorded here indicates that God will fulfill his promise and only he is responsible for bringing it about. (See: fulfill and promise)

God's covenant with Abram

God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abram needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. This covenant has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety.

Links:

Genesis 15:1 Notes

Genesis 15:1

After these things

"These things" refers to when the kings fought and Abram rescued Lot.

the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Fear

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Abram in a vision. He said, 'Fear" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Abram in a vision: 'Fear"

shield ... reward

God used these two metaphors to tell Abram about his character and his relationship to Abram.

I am your shield

Soldiers use a shield to protect themselves from their enemies. Alternate translation: "I will protect you like shield" or "I am your shield to protect you"

I am ... your very great reward

Possible meanings are 1) "I myself will be all that you need" or 2) "I will give you all you need."

reward

the result of a person's actions. This seems to be a metonym for the gracious blessing God would give Abram.

Genesis 15:3

Abram said, "Since you have given me

"Abram continued speaking and said, 'Since you have given me'"

Genesis 15:4

Then, behold

The word "behold" emphasizes the fact that the word of Yahweh came to Abraham again.

the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, "This

The idiom "The word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this idiom in [Genesis 15:1]

This man

This refers to Eliezer of Damascus.

the one who will come from your own body

"the one that you will father" or "your very own son." Abram's own son would become his heir.

Genesis 15:5

number the stars

"count the stars"

So will your descendants be

Just as Abram would not be able to count all the stars, he would not be able to count all his descendants because there would be so many.

Genesis 15:6

He believed Yahweh

This means he accepted and trusted what Yahweh said was true.

he counted it to him as righteousness

"Yahweh counted Abram's belief as righteousness" or "Yahweh considered Abram righteous because Abram believed him"

Genesis 15:7

I am Yahweh, who brought you out of Ur

Yahweh was reminding Abraham of what he had already

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done so that Abraham would know that Yahweh had the power to give Abram what he promised him.

to inherit it

"to receive it" or "so that you will possess it"

Genesis 15:8

how will I know

Abram was asking for more proof that Yahweh would give him the land.

Genesis 15:11

the carcasses

"the dead bodies of the animals and birds"

Abram drove them away

"Abram chased the birds away." He made sure the birds did not eat the dead animals.

Genesis 15:12

Abram fell sound asleep

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Abraham slept deeply"

a deep and terrifying darkness

"an extreme darkness that terrified him"

overwhelmed him

"surrounded him"

Genesis 15:13

strangers

people who are at home in one place but have to live in another place

will be enslaved and oppressed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the owners of that land will enslave your descendants and oppress them"

Genesis 15:14

General Information:

Yahweh continued to speak to Abram while Abram dreamed.

I will judge

Here "judge" is a metonym for what will happen after God makes the judgment. Alternate translation: "I will punish"

that they will serve

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "that your descendants will serve"

abundant possessions

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "many possessions" or "great wealth"

Genesis 15:15

you will go to your fathers

This is a polite way of saying "you will die."

fathers

The word "fathers" is a synecdoche for all ancestors.

Alternate translation: "ancestors" or "ancestral fathers"

you will be buried in a good old age

"you will be very old when you die and your family buries your body"

Genesis 15:16

In the fourth generation

Here one generation refers to a lifespan of 100 years. "After four hundred years"

they will come here again

"your descendants will come back here." Abraham's descendants would come to the land where Abram was then living, the land that Yahweh had promised to give to him.

has not yet reached its limit

"is not yet complete" or "will get much worse before I punish them"

Genesis 15:17

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

a smoking firepot and a flaming torch passed between the pieces

God did this to show Abram that he was making a covenant with him.

passed between the pieces

"passed through between the two rows of animal pieces"

Genesis 15:18

covenant

In this covenant God promises to bless Abram, and he will continue to bless him as long as Abram follows him.

I hereby give this land

By saying this, God was giving the land to Abram's descendants. God was doing this then, but the descendants would not go into the land until many years later.

Genesis 15:19

the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites

These are the names of groups of people who lived in that land. God would allow Abraham's descendants to conquer these people and take their land.

Genesis 15:20

the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaites

These are the names of groups of people who lived in that land. God would allow Abraham's descendants to conquer these people and take their land.

Genesis 15:21

the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites

These are the names of groups of people who lived in that land. God would allow Abraham's descendants to conquer these people and take their land.

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16 [1]Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had not borne any children for him, but she had a female servant, an Egyptian, whose
name was Hagar.[2]So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, Yahweh has kept me from having children. Please go to my
servant. It may be that I will have children by her." Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.[3]It was after Abram had lived ten
years in the land of Canaan that Sarai, Abram's wife, gave Hagar, her Egyptian servant, to her husband as a wife.[4]So he
went to Hagar, and she conceived. When she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.
[5]Then Sarai said to Abram, "This wrong on me is because of you. I gave my servant woman into your embrace, and when
she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes. Let Yahweh judge between me and you."[6]But Abram said to
Sarai, "See here, your servant woman is in your power, do to her what you think best." So Sarai dealt harshly with her,
and she fled from her.

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[7]The angel of Yahweh found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring that is on the way to Shur.[8]He said, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where did you come from and where are you going?" Then she said, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai."
[9]The angel of Yahweh said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority."[10]Then the angel of Yahweh said to her, "I will greatly multiply your descendants, so that they will be too numerous to count."
[11]The angel of Yahweh also said to her,
"Behold, you are pregnant
and will bear a son,
and you will call his name Ishmael,
because Yahweh has heard your affliction.
[12] He will be a wild donkey of a man.
He will be hostile against every man,
and every man will be hostile to him,
and he will live apart from all his brothers."

[13]Then she gave this name to Yahweh who spoke to her, "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?"[14]Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

[15]Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.[16]Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

Genesis 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 16:11-12.

Special concepts in this chapter

Plural marriage

Abram married Hagar while he was also married to Sarai. Even though Abram had his wife's permission, this was an immoral and sinful action. It also showed a lack of faith in God. Sarai quickly became jealous of Hagar.

Links:

Genesis 16:1 Notes

Genesis 16:1

Now

This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story and background information about Sarai.

female servant

"slave-girl." This type of slave would serve the woman of the household.

Genesis 16:2

See now, Yahweh

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: Yahweh" See how you translated similar words in Genesis 12:11.

from having children

"from giving birth to children"

Please go to my servant

This is a polite way of telling him to have sexual relations with her servant. You may need to use another euphemism in your language. Alternate translation: "Please have sexual relations with my servant" or "Please lie with my servant"

I will have children by her

"I will build my family through her"

Abram listened to the voice of Sarai

"Abram did what Sarai said"

Genesis 16:4

So he went to Hagar

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with Hagar. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

she looked with contempt on her mistress

"she despised her mistress" or "she thought that she was more valuable than her mistress"

her mistress

Here this refers to Sarai. A mistress has authority over her slave. Alternate translation: "her owner" or "Sarai"

Genesis 16:5

This wrong on me

"This injustice against me"

is because of you

"is your responsibility" or "is your fault"

I gave my servant woman into your embrace

Sarai used the word "embrace" here to refer to him sleeping with her. Alternate translation: "I gave you my servant so that you would sleep with her"

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I was despised in her eyes

This can be active. Alternate translation: "she hated me" or "she began to hate me" or "she thought she was better than me"

Let Yahweh judge between me and you

"I want Yahweh to say whether this is my fault or your fault" or "I want Yahweh to decide which one of us is right." The phrase "to judge between" means to decide which person is right in a dispute between them.

Genesis 16:6

See here

"Listen to me" or "Pay attention"

in your power

"under your authority"

Sarai dealt harshly with her

"Sarai treated Hagar very badly"

she fled from her

"Hagar fled from Sarai"

Genesis 16:7

The angel of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh's angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as "the angel of Yahweh" using the normal word that you use for "angel."

wilderness

The wilderness area she went to was a desert. Alternate translation: "desert"

Shur

This was the name of a place south of Canaan and east of Egypt.

Genesis 16:8

my mistress

Here this refers to Sarai. A mistress has authority over her slave. See how "her mistress" is translated in Genesis 16:4. Alternate translation: "my owner"

Genesis 16:9

The angel of Yahweh said to her

"The angel of Yahweh said to Hagar"

your mistress

Sarai. See how "her mistress" is translated in Genesis 16:4.

Genesis 16:10

the angel of Yahweh

See the note about this phrase in Genesis 16:7.

the angel of Yahweh said to her, "I

When he said "I," he was referring to Yahweh. When translating what is in the quote, do it as the angel of Yahweh did and use the word "I" when referring to Yahweh.

I will greatly multiply your descendants

"I will give you very many descendants"

too numerous to count

"so many that no one will be able to count them"

Genesis 16:11

The angel of Yahweh

See the note about this phrase in Genesis 16:7.

Behold

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention"

bear a son

"give birth to a son"

you will call his name

"you will name him." The word "you" refers to Hagar.

Ishmael, because Yahweh has heard

Translators may add a footnote that says "The name 'Ishmael' means 'God has heard.'"

affliction

She has been afflicted by distress and suffering.

Genesis 16:12

He will be a wild donkey of a man

This was not an insult. It may mean that Ishmael would be independent and strong like a wild donkey. Alternate translation: "He will be like a wild donkey among men"

He will be hostile against every man

"He will be every man's enemy"

every man will be hostile to him

"everyone will be his enemy"

he will live apart from

This can also mean "he will live in hostility with."

his brothers

"his relatives" or "the other members of his family"

Genesis 16:13

Yahweh who spoke to her

"Yahweh, because he spoke to her"

Do I really continue to see, ... me?

Hagar used this rhetorical question to express her amazement that she was still alive even after she met God. People expected that if they met God, they would die. Here seeing represents living. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that I am still alive, ... me."

Genesis 16:14

Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi

Translators may add a footnote that says "Beer Lahai Roi means 'the well of the living one who sees me.'"

behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered

The word "behold" here draws attention to the fact that the well was in a place that the author and his readers knew. Alternate translation: "in fact, it is between Kadesh and Bered"

Genesis 16:15

Hagar gave birth

Hagar's return to Sarai and Abram is implict. You can make this more explicit. Alternate translation: "So Hagar went back and gave birth"

named his son, whom Hagar bore

"named his son by Hagar" or "named his and Hagar's son"

Genesis 16:16

Abram was

This introduces background information about Abram's age when these things happened. Your language may have a special way to mark background information.

bore Ishmael to Abram

This means "gave birth to Abram's son, Ishmael." The focus is on Abram having a son.

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17 [1]When Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty. Walk before me, and be blameless.[2]Then I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."
[3]Abram bowed low with his face to the ground and God talked with him, saying,[4]"As for me, behold, my covenant is with you. You will be the father of a multitude of nations.[5]No longer will your name be Abram, but your name will be Abraham —for I appoint you to be the father of a multitude of nations.[6]I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you.
[7]I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you, throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.[8]I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land where you have been sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

[9]Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.[10]This is my covenant, which you must keep, between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you must be circumcised.[11]You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and this will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.
[12]Every male among you that is eight days old must be circumcised, throughout your people's generations. This includes him who is born into your household and him who is bought with money from any foreigner who is not one of your descendants.[13]He who is born into your household and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised. Thus my covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.[14]Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin will be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant."

[15]God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, do not call her Sarai any more. Instead, her name will be Sarah.[16]I will bless her, and I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will become the mother of nations. Kings of peoples will come from her."
[17]Then Abraham bowed low with his face to the ground, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? How can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son?"[18]Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"
[19]God said, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you must name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant with his descendants after him.[20]As for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and will multiply him abundantly. He will be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him become a great nation.[21]But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time in the next year."

[22]When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.[23]Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all those who were born into his household, and all those who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in that same day, as God had said to him.
[24]Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.[25]Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.[26]On the very same day Abraham and Ishmael his son were both circumcised.[27]All the men of his household were circumcised with him, including those born into the household and those bought with money from a foreigner.

Genesis 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The father of a multitude of nations"
Abram came to have many descendants. He had so many descendants that many of his immediate descendants became large people groups and nations.
God's covenant with Abram
God made a covenant with Abram. This covenant was not conditioned upon anything that Abram needed to do, but the fulfillment of its promises is conditioned upon the actions of each generation of his descendants. It has not yet been fulfilled in its entirety. It is important to note in this chapter that Isaac is the son who receives the promises associated with the covenant and not Ishmael. (See: covenant and fulfill and promise)
Circumcision
Circumcision was an unusual practice in the ancient Near East. It served to separate the Hebrew people from the rest of the world. This chapter records the beginning of this practice among Abram and his descendants. (See: circumcise)
Name change
In this chapter, God changed Abram's name to "Abraham." In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly

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significant point in a person's life. The beginning of the practice of circumcision was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Links:

Genesis 17:1 Notes

Genesis 17:1

When Abram was ninety-nine years old

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

God Almighty

"the all-powerful God" or "the God who has all power"

Walk before me

Walking is a metaphor for living, and "before me" or "in my presence" here is a metaphor for obedience. Alternate translation: "Live the way I want you to" or "Obey me"

Genesis 17:2

Then I will confirm

"If you do this, then I will confirm"

I will confirm my covenant

"I will give my covenant" or "I will make my covenant"

covenant

In this covenant God promises to bless Abram, but he also requires Abram to obey him.

multiply you exceedingly

Here "multiply you" is an idiom that means he will give him more descendants. Alternate translation: "greatly increase the number of your descendants" or "give you very many descendants"

Genesis 17:3

Abram bowed low with his face to the ground

"Abram threw himself face down on the ground" or "Abraham immediately lay down with his face to the ground." He did this to show that he respected God and would obey him.

Genesis 17:4

As for me

God used this phrase to introduce what he would do for Abram as part of his covenant with Abram.

behold, my covenant is with you

The word "behold" here says that what comes next is certain: "my covenant is certainly with you."

the father of a multitude of nations

"the father of a great number of nations" or "the one after whom many nations name themselves"

Genesis 17:6

I will make you exceedingly fruitful

"I will cause you to have very many descendants"

I will make nations of you

"I will cause your descendants to become nations"

kings will descend from you

"among your descendants there will be kings" or "some of your descendants will be kings"

Genesis 17:7

General Information:

God continues speaking to Abraham.

throughout their generations

"for each generation"

for an everlasting covenant

"as a covenant that will last forever"

to be God to you and to your descendants after you

"to be your God and your descendants' God" or "covenant"

Genesis 17:8

Canaan, for an everlasting possession

"Canaan, as an everlasting possession" or "Canaan, to possess forever"

Genesis 17:9

As for you

God uses this phrase to introduce what Abram would have to do as part of God's covenant with him.

keep my covenant

"observe my covenant" or "honor my covenant" or "obey my covenant"

Genesis 17:10

This is my covenant

"This is a requirement of my covenant" or "This is part of my covenant." This sentence introduces the part of the covenant that Abram must do.

Every male among you must be circumcised

This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "You must circumcise every male among you"

Every male

This refers to human males.

Genesis 17:11

You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin

Some communities may prefer a less descriptive expression such as "You must be circumcised." If your translation of "be circumcised" already includes the word for "foreskin", you do not need to repeat it. This can be made active. Alternate translation: "You must circumcise every male among you"

the sign of the covenant

"the sign that shows that the covenant exists"

the sign

Possible meanings are 1) "the sign" or 2) "a sign." The first means that there was one sign, and the second means that there may have been more than one sign. Here the word "sign" means a reminder of something that God had promised.

Genesis 17:12

General Information:

God continues speaking to Abraham.

Every male

"Every human male"

throughout your people's generations

"in every generation"

him who is bought with money

This refers to slaves. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "any male that you buy"

Genesis 17:13

my covenant will be in your flesh

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will mark my covenant in your flesh"

for an everlasting covenant

"as a permanent covenant." Because it was marked in flesh, no one could easily erase it.

Genesis 17:14

uncircumcised male who is not circumcised

This can be stated in active form, and you may leave out words that will give wrong meaning in your language. Alternate translation: "male whom you have not circumcised"

Any uncircumcised male ... foreskin will be cut off from his people

Possible meanings are 1) "I will cut off any uncircumcised male ... foreskin from his people" or 2) "I want you to cut off any uncircumcised male ... foreskin from his people."

cut off from his people

Possible meanings are 1) "killed" or 2) "sent away from the community."

He has broken my covenant

"He has not obeyed the rules of my covenant." This is the reason that he would be cut off from his people.

Genesis 17:15

As for Sarai

The words "As for" introduce the next person God talks about.

Genesis 17:16

I will give you a son by her

"I will make her bear a son for you"

she will become the mother of nations

"she will be the ancestor of many nations" or "her descendants will become nations"

Kings of peoples will come from her

"Kings of peoples will descend from her" or "Some of her descendants will be kings of peoples"

Genesis 17:17

said in his heart

"thought to himself" or "said to himself silently"

Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old?

Abraham used this rhetorical question because he did not believe that this could happen. Alternate translation: "Surely a man who is a hundred years old cannot father a child!"

How can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a son?

Again Abraham used a rhetorical question because he did not believe this could happen. The phrase "who is ninety years old" tells why Abraham did not believe that Sarah could bear a son. Alternate translation: "Sarah is ninety years old. Could she bear a son?" or "Sarah is ninety years old. Surely she could not bear a son!"

Genesis 17:18

Oh that Ishmael might live before you

"Please let Ishmael inherit the covenant that you have made with me" or "Perhaps Ishmael could receive your covenant blessing." Abraham suggested something that he believed really could happen.

Genesis 17:19

No, but Sarah your wife will bear

God said this to correct Abraham's belief that Sarah could not have a son.

you must name him

The word "you" refers to Abraham.

Genesis 17:20

As for Ishmael

The words "As for" show that God is switching from talking about the baby that would be born to talking about Ishmael.

Behold

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

will make him fruitful

This is an idiom that means "will cause him to have many children."

will multiply him abundantly

"I will cause him to have many descendants"

princes

"chiefs" or "rulers." Ishmael's twelve sons are different from the twelve sons of Jacob who were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Genesis 17:21

But my covenant I will establish with Isaac

God returns to talking about his covenant with Abraham and emphasizes that he would fulfill his promise with Isaac, not with Ishmael.

Genesis 17:22

When he had finished talking with him

"When God had finished talking with Abraham"

God went up from Abraham

"God left Abraham"

Genesis 17:23

every male among the men of Abraham's household

"every human male in Abraham's household" or "every male person in Abraham's household." It refers to human males of all ages: babies, boys, and men.

Genesis 17:27

including those born into the household and those bought with money from a foreigner

"This includes those who were born in his household and those he had bought from foreigners"

those bought with money from a foreigner

This refers to servants or slaves.

those bought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom he had bought"

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18 [1]Yahweh appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent doorway in the heat of the day.[2]He looked up and, behold, he saw three men standing across from him. When he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door and bowed low to the ground.

[3]He said, "My Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass by your servant."[4]Let a little water be brought, wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.[5]Let me bring a little food, so that you may refresh yourselves. Afterwards you can go your way, since you have come to your servant." They replied, "Do as you have said."

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[6]Then Abraham quickly went into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Hurry, get three seahs of fine flour, knead it, and make bread."[7]Then Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf that was tender and good, and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it.[8]He took curds and milk, and the calf that had been prepared, and placed the food before them, and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

[9]They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" He replied, "There, in the tent."[10]He said, "I will certainly return to you in the springtime, and see, Sarah your wife will have a son." Sarah was listening in the tent doorway, which was behind him.
[11]Now Abraham and Sarah were old, very advanced in age, and Sarah had passed the age when women could bear children.[12]So Sarah laughed to herself, saying to herself, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"
[13]Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really bear a child, when I am old'?[14]Is anything too hard for Yahweh? At the time appointed by me, in the spring, I will return to you. About this time next year Sarah will have a son."[15]Then Sarah denied it and said, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He replied, "No, you did laugh."

[16]Then the men arose to leave and looked down toward Sodom. Abraham went with them to see them on their way.[17]But Yahweh said, "Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,[18]since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him?[19]For I have chosen him so that he may instruct his children and his household after him to keep the way of Yahweh, to do righteousness and justice, so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham what he has said to him."
[20]Then Yahweh said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and because their sin is so serious,[21]I will now go down there and see the outcry against her that has come to me, whether they have really done it. If not, I will know."

[22]So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before Yahweh.[23]Then Abraham approached and said, "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked?
[24]Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city. Will you sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there?[25]Far be it from you to do such a thing, killing the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be treated the same as the wicked. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?"[26]Yahweh said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sake."
[27]Abraham answered and said, "See now, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!
[28]What if there are five less than fifty righteous? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" Then he said, "I will not destroy it, if I find there forty-five."
[29]He spoke to him yet again, and said, "What if there are forty found there?" He replied, "I will not do it for the forty's sake."[30]He said, "Please do not be angry, Lord, so I may speak. Perhaps thirty will be found there." He replied, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there."[31]He said, "See now, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord! Perhaps twenty will be found there." He replied, "I will not destroy it for the twenty's sake."
[32]He said, "Please do not be angry, Lord, and I will speak this one last time. Perhaps ten will be found there." Then he said, "I will not destroy it for the ten's sake."[33]Yahweh went on his way as soon as he had finished talking with Abraham, and Abraham returned home.

Genesis 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Three men

The three men who visited Abraham were probably angels. This is evident from Abraham's reaction to them. Also, it appears Abraham knew that he was speaking directly to Yahweh through these men.

Disbelief

When Sarah heard the news that she was going to have a baby, she laughed in disbelief because she was considered too old to have a baby. She also asked a rhetorical question in order to further show her disbelief. This would have been considered an insult to God.
In his exchange with God, Abraham did not show any sign of unbelief. Instead, he is asking God for mercy because he trusted in the character of God. He does not question God's power to accomplish things as Sarah had done. (See: trust)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sarah's age

It should be apparent that Sarah was physically no longer able to have children because of her age. There is a natural period in a woman's life when she stops being able to have children. The text assumes the reader understands that Sarah has already experienced this event. In English, this is called "menopause."

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Links:

Genesis 18:1 Notes

Genesis 18:1

Mamre

This was the name of the man who owned the oak trees.

in the tent doorway

"at the opening of the tent" or "at the entrance of the tent"

heat of the day

"hottest time of day"

Genesis 18:2

He looked up and, behold, he saw three men standing

"He looked up and saw, and behold, three men were standing"

behold, he saw

"he was surprised because he saw"

across from him

"nearby" or "there." They were near him, but far enough away for him to run to them.

bowed

This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.

Genesis 18:3

Lord

This is a title of respect. Possible meanings are 1) Abraham knew that one of these men was God or 2) Abraham knew that these men came on behalf of God.

if I have found favor in your sight

Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that the Lord is pleased with him, and "your sight" is a metaphor representing the Lord's evaluation. Alternate translation: "if you have evaluated me and approve" or "if you are pleased with me"

in your sight

Abraham is speaking to one of the men.

do not pass by

"please do not keep on going past"

your servant

"me." Abraham refers to himself this way in order to show respect to his guest.

Genesis 18:4

Let a little water be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let me bring you some water" or "My servant will bring you some water"

a little water

"some water." Saying "little" was a polite way of showing generosity. Abraham would give them more than enough water.

wash your feet

This custom helped tired travelers to refresh themselves after walking long distances.

Genesis 18:5

a little food

"some food." Saying "little" was a polite way of showing generosity. Abraham would give them more than enough food.

your ... you

Abraham speaks to all three of the men, so "you" and "your" are plural.

Genesis 18:6

three seahs

about 22 liters

bread

This bread was probably cooked quickly on a hot stone. It may have been flat or round like small loaves or rolls.

Genesis 18:7

he hurried

"the servant hurried"

to prepare it

"to cut it up and roast it"

Genesis 18:8

curds

This refers to the solid part of fermented milk. It may have been yogurt or cheese.

the calf that had been prepared

"the roasted calf"

before them

"before the three visitors"

Genesis 18:9

They said to him

"Then they said to Abraham"

Genesis 18:10

He said, "I will certainly return to you

The word "He" refers to the man whom Abraham called "Lord" in Genesis 18:3.

in the springtime

"when this same season comes next year" or "about this time next year"

see

The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

in the tent doorway

"at the opening of the tent" or "at the entrance of the tent"

Genesis 18:12

After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?

You may want to make explicit that Sarah is speaking of the pleasure of having a baby. Sarah used this rhetorical question because she did not believe that she could have a child. Alternate translation: "I am worn out and my master is old, so I cannot believe that I will experience the joy of having a child.""

I am worn out

"I am too old to conceive a child"

my master is old

This means "since my husband is also old."

my master

This is a title of respect that Sarah gave to her husband Abraham.

Genesis 18:13

Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really bear a child, when I am old'?

God used this rhetorical question to show that he knew

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what Sarah was thinking and that he was not pleased with it. He repeats Sarah's rhetorical question

Genesis 18:14

Is anything too hard for Yahweh?

"Is there anything that Yahweh cannot do?" Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were speaking of someone else to remind Abraham that he, Yahweh, is great and can do anything. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that I, Yahweh, cannot do!"

At the time appointed by me, in the spring

"At the time I have appointed, which is in the spring"

Genesis 18:15

Then Sarah denied it and said

"The Sarah denied it by saying"

He replied

"Yahweh replied"

No, you did laugh

"Yes, you did laugh." This means "No, that is not true; you did in fact laugh."

Genesis 18:16

to see them on their way

"to send them on their way" or "to say 'Farewell' to them." It was polite to go some distance with guests as they were leaving.

Genesis 18:17

Should I hide from Abraham what I am about to do

God used this rhetorical question to say that he was going to talk to Abraham about something very important and that it was best for him to do so. Alternate translation: "I should not and will not hide from Abraham what I am about to do" or "I should and will tell Abraham what I am about to do"

Genesis 18:18

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Should I hide" in verse 17 ends here.

since Abraham ... in him?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Should I hide" in verse 17 ends here. God uses this rhetorical question to say that he was going to talk to Abraham about something very important and that it was best for him to do so. "I should not and will not hide ... since Abraham in him." or "I should and will tell ... since Abraham in him"

since ... him?

"This is because ... him"

all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham"

will be blessed in him

"will be blessed because of Abraham" or "will be blessed because I have blessed Abraham." For translating "in him" see how you translated "through you" in Genesis 12:3.

Genesis 18:19

that he may instruct

"that he will direct" or "so that he will command"

to keep the way of Yahweh ... Yahweh may bring ... he has said

Yahweh is speaking about himself as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "to obey what I, Yahweh, require ... I, Yahweh, may bring ... I have said"

to keep the way of Yahweh

"to obey the commands of Yahweh"

to do righteousness and justice

"by doing righteousness and justice." This tells how to keep the way of Yahweh.

so that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham what he has said to him

"so that Yahweh may bless Abraham just as he said he would." This refers to the covenant promise to bless Abraham and make him a great nation.

Genesis 18:20

the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "outcry" is expressed as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "so many people have been accusing the people of Sodom and Gomorrah of doing evil things"

their sin is so serious

"they have sinned so much"

Genesis 18:21

I will now go down there

"I will now go down to Sodom and Gomorrah"

go down there and see

"go down there to find out" or "go down there to decide"

see the outcry ... that has come to me

Yahweh speaks as if he knew about this matter because he had heard the cries and accusations coming from the people who had suffered. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "outcry" is expressed as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "as wicked as those who are accusing them say that they are"

If not

"If they are not as wicked as the outcry suggests"

Genesis 18:22

turned from there

"went out from Abraham's camp"

Abraham remained standing before Yahweh

"Abraham and Yahweh remained together"

Genesis 18:23

approached and said

"approached Yahweh and said" or "stepped closer to Yahweh and said"

sweep away

Abraham speaks of destroying people as if it were sweeping dirt with a broom. Alternate translation: "destroy"

the righteous with the wicked

"the righteous people with the wicked people"

Genesis 18:24

General Information:

Abraham continues talking to Yahweh.

Perhaps there are

"Suppose there are"

Will you sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there?

Abraham was hoping that Yahweh would say, "I will not sweep it away." Alternate translation: "I think you would not sweep it away. Instead, you would spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there"

sweep it away

"destroy it." Abraham speaks of destroying people as if it were sweeping dirt with a broom. Alternate translation:

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"destroy the people who live there"
not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are there?
Abraham was hoping that God would say "I will spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people there."
spare the place
"let the people live"
for the sake of
"because of"
Genesis 18:25
Far be it from you to do such a thing
Here "Far be it from you" is an idiom that means the person should never do something like that. Alternate translation: "I would never want you to do something like that" or "You should not want to do something like that"
such a thing, killing
"such a thing as killing" or "such a thing, that is, killing"
the righteous should be treated the same as the wicked
This can be stated in active from. Alternate translation: "you should treat the righteous the same way you treat the wicked"
Will not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?
Abraham used this rhetorical question to say what he expected God to do. Alternate translation: "The Judge of all the earth will certainly do what is just!" or "Since you are the Judge of all the earth, you will surely do what is right!"
Judge
God is often referred to as a judge because he is the one perfect judge who makes the final decisions about what is right or wrong.
Genesis 18:27
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.
I have undertaken to speak
"Pardon me for being so bold as to speak to you" or "Excuse me for daring to speak"
to my Lord
Abraham shows his respect to Yahweh by speaking to Yahweh as if he were speaking to someone else. Alternate translation: "to you, my Lord"
only dust and ashes
This metaphor describes Abraham as a human being, who will die and whose body will turn into to dust and ashes. Alternate translation: "only a mortal man" or "as unimportant as dust and ashes"
Genesis 18:28
five less than fifty righteous
"only forty-five righteous people"
for lack of five
"if there are five fewer righteous people"
I will not destroy it
"I will not destroy Sodom"
Genesis 18:29
He spoke to him
"Abraham spoke to Yahweh"
if there are forty found there
This can be translated in active form. You may have to fill in the ellipsis, "righteous people." Alternate translation: "if you find forty righteous people there"
for the forty's sake
"for the sake of the forty" or "if I find forty there." You may have to fill in the ellipsis, "righteous people." Alternate translation: "for the sake of the forty righteous people" or "if I find forty righteous people there"
He replied
"Yahweh answered"
I will not do it for the forty's sake
"I will not destroy the cities if I find forty righteous people there"
Genesis 18:30
thirty will be found there
This can be translated in active form. You may have to fill in the ellipsis, "righteous people." Alternate translation: "you will find thirty righteous people there"
Genesis 18:31
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated similar words in Genesis 12:11.
I have undertaken to speak
"Pardon me for being so bold as to speak to you" or "Excuse me for daring to speak." See how this is translated in Genesis 18:27.
twenty will be found there
This can be translated in active form. You may have to fill in the ellipsis, "righteous people." Alternate translation: "you will find twenty righteous people there"
for the twenty's sake
"for the sake of the twenty" or "if I find twenty there." You may have to fill in the ellipsis, "righteous people." Alternate translation: "for the sake of the twenty righteous people" or "if I find twenty righteous people there"
Genesis 18:32
Perhaps ten will be found there
"Perhaps you will find ten righteous people there"
Perhaps ten
"Perhaps ten righteous people" or "ten good people"
Then he said
"And Yahweh answered"
for the ten's sake
"if I find ten righteous people there"
Genesis 18:33
Yahweh went on his way
Here "went on his way" is an idiom that means he left, or he continued his journey. Yahweh appeared to Abraham in human form as a traveler. Alternate translation: "Yahweh departed" or "Yahweh continued on his journey"

19 [1]The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, while Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. Lot saw them, arose to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground.[2]He said, "See now, my masters, please turn aside into your servant's house, stay for the night, and wash your feet. Then you can rise up early and go on your way." They replied, "No,

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we will spend the night in the town square."[3]But he urged them strongly, so they went with him, and entered into his house. He prepared a meal and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.
[4]But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, surrounded the house, both young and old, all the men from every part of the city.[5]They called to Lot, and said to him, "Where are the men that came in to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know them."
[6]So Lot went out the door to them and shut the door after himself.[7]He said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly.
[8]See now, I have two daughters who have not known any man. Please let me bring them out to you, and you do to them whatever is good in your eyes. Only do nothing to these men, because they have come under the shadow of my roof."
[9]They said, "Stand back!" They also said, "This one came here to live as a foreigner, and now he has become our judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." They pressed hard against the man, against Lot, and came near to break down the door.
[10]But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them and shut the door.[11]Then Lot's visitors struck with blindness the men who were outside the door of the house, both small and great, so that they became exhausted when they were trying to find the door.

[12]Then the men said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here? Any sons-in-law, your sons and your daughters, and whoever you have in the city, get them out of here.[13]For we are about to destroy this place, because the accusations against it before Yahweh have become so loud that he has sent us to destroy it."
[14]Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, the men who had promised to marry his daughters, and said, "Quick, get out of this place, for Yahweh is about to destroy the city." But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.[15]When dawn came, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Get going, take your wife and your two daughters that are here, so you are not swept away in the punishment of the city."
[16]But he lingered. So the men grabbed his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hands of his two daughters, because Yahweh was merciful to him. They brought them out, and set them outside the city.[17]When they had brought them out, one of the men said, "Run for your lives! Do not look back, or stay anywhere on the plain. Escape to the mountains so you are not swept away."
[18]Lot said to them, "No, please, my masters![19]See now, your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life, but I cannot escape to the mountains, because the disaster will overtake me, and I will die.[20]See now, the city over there is a little one. Please, let me escape there—Is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved."
[21]He said to him, "Alright, I am granting this request also, that I will not destroy the city which you have mentioned.
[22]Hurry! Escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the city was named Zoar.

[23]The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot reached Zoar.[24]Then Yahweh rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of the sky.[25]He destroyed those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and the plants that grew on the ground.
[26]But Lot's wife, who was behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.
[27]Abraham got up early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before Yahweh.[28]He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain. He looked and behold, smoke was rising from the land like the smoke of a furnace.

[29]So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God called Abraham to mind. He sent Lot out of the midst of the destruction when he destroyed the cities in which Lot had lived.

[30]But Lot went up from Zoar to live in the mountains with his two daughters, because he was afraid to live in Zoar. So he lived in a cave, he and his two daughters.
[31]The firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man anywhere to lie with us according to the way of all the world.[32]Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, so that we may keep our family line alive through our father."[33]So they made their father drink wine that night. Then the firstborn went in and lay with her father; he did not know when she lay down, nor when she got up.
[34]The next day the firstborn said to the younger, "Listen, here I lay last night with my father. Let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you should go and lie with him, so that we may keep our family line alive through our father."[35]So they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger went and lay with him. He did not know when she lay down or when she got up.
[36]So both the daughters of Lot conceived by their father.[37]The firstborn gave birth to a son, and named him Moab. He became the ancestor of the Moabites of today.[38]As for the younger daughter, she also gave birth to a son, and named him Ben-Ammi. He became the ancestor of the people of Ammon of today.

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Genesis 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The evil desires of the Sodomites

The men of Sodom desired to forcibly have sexual relations with the angels who came to the city appearing as men. Such action is known as "rape." Their desire was viewed as especially evil because Lot was obligated to protect his guests at all costs, even that of sacrificing his own children for his guests. (See: evil)

Hospitality

Hospitality, or being kind to a visitor, was very important in the Ancient Near East. Lot showed his guests loyalty by doing his utmost to protect them from the people of Sodom.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Contrasts

It is probable that Abraham's faith and actions in chapter 18 are intended to contrast with the actions of the worldly Sodomites. (See: faith)

Links:

Genesis 19:1 Notes

Genesis 19:1

The two angels

The two men who have gone to Sodom (Genesis 18:22) are really angels.

the gate of Sodom

"the entrance to the city of Sodom." The city had a wall around it, and people had to go through a gate to get into it. This was a very important place in a city. Important people often spent time there.

bowed down with his face to the ground

He put his knees on the ground then touched his forehead and nose to the ground.

Genesis 19:2

See now, my masters

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: my masters" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.

my masters

This was a term of respect Lot used for the angels.

please turn aside into your servant's house

"Please come and stay in your servant's house"

your servant's house

Lot refers to himself as their servant in order to show them respect.

wash your feet

People liked to wash their feet after traveling.

rise up early

"wake up early"

we will spend the night

When the two angels said this, they were referring only to themselves, not to Lot. The two of them planned to spend the night in the square. Some languages would use the exclusive form of "we" here.

town square

This is a public, outdoor place in the town.

Genesis 19:3

they went with him

"they turned and went with him"

Genesis 19:4

before they lay down

"before the people in Lot's house lay down to go to sleep"

the men of the city, the men of Sodom

"the men of the city, that is, the men of Sodom" or just "the men of the city of Sodom"

the house

"Lot's house"

both young and old

"from the youngest to the oldest." This means "men of all ages" and refers to the men of Sodom who were surrounding Lot's house.

Genesis 19:5

that came in to you

"that went into your house"

that we may know them

The phrase "know them" is a polite way of saying "have sexual relations with them." The men probably were not trying to be polite.

Genesis 19:6

after himself

"behind him" or "after he went through"

Genesis 19:7

I beg you, my brothers

"I plead with you, my brothers"

my brothers

Lot spoke in a friendly way to the men of the city hoping that they would listen to him. Alternate translation: "my friends"

do not act so wickedly

"do not do something so wicked" or "do not do such a wicked thing"

Genesis 19:8

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.

who have not known any man

This is a polite way of saying that the daughters had not had sexual relations with any man. You may need to use

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another euphemism in your language. See how you translated similar words in [Genesis 4:1]

whatever is good in your eyes

"whatever you desire" or "whatever you think is right"

under the shadow of my roof

The two men were guests in Lot's home, so he needed to protect them. The word "roof" is a synecdoche for the whole house and a metaphor for Lot protecting them. Alternate translation: "into my house, and God expects me to protect them"

Genesis 19:9

Stand back!

"Step aside!" or "Get out of our way!"

This one came here to live as a foreigner

"This one came here as an outsider" or "This foreigner came to live here"

This one

"Lot." The men are speaking to each other. If this would be unclear in your language, you may have the men speak to Lot here, as in UDB.

and now

The speaker would not expect a foreigner to judge the people of that land. Alternate translation: "but even though he has no good reason to"

he has become our judge

Here "has become our judge" is an idiom that means Lot is acting as if he can tell the men what actions are right or wrong. Alternate translation: "he acts as if he has the authority to tell us what is right and what is wrong"

Now we

"Because you are telling us that what we are doing is wrong, we"

we will deal worse with you than with them

The men are angry that Lot said, "Do not act so wickedly" (Genesis 19:7), so they are threatening to act more wickedly than Lot had feared at first. Alternate translation: "we will act more wickedly with you than we will with them"

They pressed hard against the man, against Lot, and came near to break down the door

Possible meanings are 1) "They kept coming closer to the man, to Lot, until they were close enough to break down the door" or 2) they physically pushed Lot up against the wall or door of the house and were about to break the door down.

the man ... Lot

This is two ways of referring to Lot.

Genesis 19:10

But the men

"But Lot's two guests" or "But the two angels"

the men reached out their hands and brought ... them and shut

Your language may need to add that the men opened the door first. Alternate translation: 'the men opened the door far enough so they could reach out their hands and pull ... them, and then they shut"

Genesis 19:11

Lot's visitors struck with blindness the men

The phrase "struck with blindness" is a metaphor; the visitors did not physically hit the men. Alternate translation: "Lot's visitors blinded the men" or "they took away their sight"

both small and great

Possible meanings are 1) this refers to age. Alternate translation: "both the young men and the old men" or 2) this refers to status. Alternate translation: "both the unimportant men and the important men"

both small and great

This merism emphasizes that the visitors blinded all the men. Alternate translation: "men of all ages" or "men of every status"

Genesis 19:12

Then the men said

"Then the two men said" or "Then the angels said"

Do you have anyone else here?

"Are there any other members of your family in the city?" or "Do you have any other family members in this place?"

whoever you have in the city

"any other members of your family living in this city"

Genesis 19:13

we are about to destroy

The word "we" here is exclusive. Only the two angels would destroy the city; Lot would not destroy it. If your language has an exclusive form of "we," use it here.

the accusations against it before Yahweh have become so loud

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "accusations" is expressed as a verb. See how similar words are translated in [Genesis 18:20]

Genesis 19:14

Lot went out

"So Lot left the house"

his sons-in-law, the men who had promised to marry his daughters

The phrase "the men who had promised to marry his daughters" explains what "sons-in-law" means here. Alternate translation: "the men who were going to marry his daughters" or "his daughters' fiancés"

Genesis 19:15

When dawn came

"Just before the sun came up"

Get going

"Go now"

you are not swept away in the punishment of the city

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so Yahweh does not also destroy you when he punishes the people of this city"

not swept away in the punishment

God destroying the people of the city is spoken of as if a person were sweeping away dust.

of the city

Here "city" stands for the people.

Genesis 19:16

But he lingered

"But Lot hesitated" or "But Lot did not start to leave"

So the men grabbed

"So the two men grabbed" or "So the angels grabbed"

was merciful to him

"had compassion on Lot." Yahweh is described as being "merciful" because he was sparing the lives of Lot and his family instead of destroying them when he destroyed the

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people of Sodom for the wrong they had done.
Genesis 19:17
When they had brought them out
"When the two men had brought Lot's family out"
Run for your lives!
This is a way of telling them to run so that they do not die. Alternate translation: "Run away and save your lives!"
Do not look back
The phrase "at the city" is understood. Alternate translation: "Do not look back at the city" or "Do not look back at Sodom"
on the plain
This means the plain of the Jordan River. This refers to the general region of the Jordan River.
so you are not swept away
It is understood that they would swept away with the people of the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "or else God will destroy you along with the people of the city"
not swept away
God destroying the people of the city is spoken of as if a person were sweeping away dust.
Genesis 19:19
See now, your servant
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: your servant" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.
your servant has found favor in your eyes
The phrase "found favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "you have been pleased with me"
your servant has
Lot was showing respect by referring to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "I, your servant, have"
you have shown me great kindness in saving my life
The abstract noun "kindness" can be stated as "kind." Alternate translation: "you have been very kind to me by saving my life"
I cannot escape to the mountains, because the disaster will overtake me, and I will die
Being unable to get far enough away from Sodom when God destroys the city is spoken of as if "disaster" is a person that will chase and catch up with Lot. Alternate translation: "My family and I will certainly die when God destroys the people of Sodom, because the mountains are too far away for us to get there safely"
my life ... I cannot escape ... overtake me, and I will die
It is implied that Lot's family would die along with him. Alternate translation: "our lives ... we cannot escape ... overtake us, and we will die"
Genesis 19:20
See now, the city
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: the city" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.
let me escape there—Is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved
Lot used this rhetorical question to get the angels to notice that the city really is a small one. Alternate translation: "let me escape there. You can see how small it is. If you let us go there we will live"
let me escape there
Lot's full request can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "instead of destroying that city, let me escape there"
my life will be saved
It is implied that the lives of Lot's family will be saved along with his. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that we will live" or "so that we will survive"
Genesis 19:21
I am granting this request also
"I will do what you have asked"
Genesis 19:22
cannot do anything
This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "cannot destroy the other cities"
Zoar
Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Zoar sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'little.' Lot called this town 'little' in Genesis 19:20."
Genesis 19:23
The sun had risen upon the earth
"The sun had risen over the earth." The phrase "upon the earth" can be left implicit as it is in the UDB where it is not translated.
when Lot reached Zoar
It is implied that Lot's family is with him. Alternate translation: "when Lot and his family arrived at Zoar"
Genesis 19:24
Yahweh rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of the sky
The phrase "from Yahweh" stands for God's power to cause the sulfur and fire to fall on the city. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused sulfur and fire to fall from the sky onto Sodom and Gomorrah"
sulfur and fire
These two words are used together to describe one object. Alternate translation: "burning sulfur" or "fiery rain"
Genesis 19:25
those cities
This refers primarily to Sodom and Gomorrah, but also to three other towns.
the inhabitants of the cities
"the people who lived in the cities"
Genesis 19:26
she became a pillar of salt
"she became like a statue of salt" or "her body became like a tall stone of salt." Because she disobeyed the angel who told them not to look back at the city, God caused her to become something like a statue made out of rock salt.
Genesis 19:28
behold
The word "behold" draws attention to the surprising information that follows.
like the smoke of a furnace

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This shows that it was a very large amount of smoke. Alternate translation: "like the smoke from a very large fire"
Genesis 19:29
General Information:
Verse 29 is a summary of this chapter.
God called Abraham to mind
This tells why God rescued Lot. To "call to mind" is a way of saying "remember." This does not imply that God forgot about Abraham. It means he considered Abraham and had mercy on him. Alternate translation: "God thought about Abraham and had mercy on him"
out of the midst of the destruction
"away from the destruction" or "away from danger"
Genesis 19:30
Lot went up from Zoar to live in the mountains
The phrase "went up from" is used because Lot went to a higher elevation in the mountains.
Genesis 19:31
The firstborn ... the younger
Here "firstborn" and "younger" are nominal adjectives that refer to Lot's two daughters according to their birth order. Alternate translation: "Lot's first daughter ... Lot's last daughter" or "The older daughter ... the younger daughter"
to lie with us
These words are a euphemism for sexual relations.
according to the way of all the world
Here "the world" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "as people everywhere do"
Genesis 19:32
drink wine
It can be made explicit that their goal was to get him drunk. Alternate translation: "drink wine until he gets drunk" or "get drunk with wine"
we will lie with him
To "lie with" someone is a euphemism for having sexual relations with that person. Alternate translation: "we will have sexual relations with him"
so that we may keep our family line alive through our father
This speaks about giving Lot descendants as if his family were a line that they are making longer. Alternate translation: "so that we can bear children who will be our father's descendants"
Genesis 19:33
lay with her father
This is probably a euphemism for sexual activity. Alternate translation:"had sexual relations with her father"
when she lay down
Possible meanings are 1) these words are literal, a complement to "when she got up," or 2) they are a euphemism for sexual relations. Alternate translation: "when she had sexual relations with him"
Genesis 19:34
I lay last night with my father ... lie with him
The phrase "lay with" is a euphemism meaning that she had sexual relations with her father. Alternate translation: "I had sexual relations with my father ... have sexual relations with him"
Let us make him drink wine ... family line
See how you translated these phrases in Genesis 19:32.
drink wine
It can be made explicit that their goal was to get him drunk. Alternate translation: "drink wine until he gets drunk" or "get drunk with wine"
so that we may keep our family line alive through our father
This speaks about giving Lot descendants as if his family were a line that they are making longer. Alternate translation: "so that we can bear children who will be our father's descendants"
Genesis 19:35
So they made ... or when she got up
See how you translated similar phrases in Genesis 19:33.
lay with him
This is probably a euphemism for sexual activity. Alternate translation:"had sexual relations with him"
when she lay down
Possible meanings are 1) these words are literal, a complement to "when she got up," or 2) they are a euphemism for sexual relations. See how these words are translated in Genesis 19:33. Alternate translation: "when she had sexual relations with him"
Genesis 19:36
conceived by their father
"became pregnant by their father" or "conceived children with their father"
Genesis 19:37
He became
"He is"
the Moabites of today
"the Moab people who are now living"
of today
The word "today" refers to the time when the author of Genesis was living. The author was born and wrote this many years after Lot's family lived and died.
Genesis 19:38
Ben-Ammi
This is a male name.
the people of Ammon
"the descendants of Ammon" or "the Ammon people"

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20 [1]Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and lived between Kadesh and Shur. He was a foreigner living in Gerar.[2]Abraham said concerning Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.[3]But God came to Abimelek in a dream in the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."
[4]Now Abimelek had not come near her and he said, "Lord, would you kill even a righteous nation?[5]Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?' Even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' I have done this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands."

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[6]Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I also know that in the integrity of your heart you did this, and I also kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not allow you to touch her.[7]Therefore, return the man's wife, for he is a prophet. He will pray for you, and you will live. But if you do not restore her, know that you and all who are yours will surely die."

[8]Abimelek rose early in the morning and called all of his servants to himself. He told all these things to them, and the men were very afraid.[9]Then Abimelek called for Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done to me deeds that ought not to be done."
[10]Abimelek said to Abraham, "What prompted you to do this thing?"[11]Abraham said, "Because I thought, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'[12]Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.
[13]When God caused me to leave my father's house and travel from place to place, I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "He is my brother."'"[14]Then Abimelek took sheep and cattle, and male slaves and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham. Then he returned Sarah, Abraham's wife, to him.
[15]Abimelek said, "Look, my land is before you. Settle wherever it pleases you."[16]To Sarah he said, "Look, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. It is to cover any offense against you in the eyes of all who are with you, and before everyone, you are completely made right."
[17]Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife, and his female slaves so that they were able to have children.[18]For Yahweh had closed all the wombs of the household of Abimelek because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Genesis 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"She is my sister"

Abraham was afraid the people of Gerar would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Sarah to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Abraham's sister, they would have shown favor to him. (See: and favor)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Irony

Abraham believed that the people of Gerar did not fear Yahweh, but when confronted by Yahweh, the king showed that he feared Yahweh. Instead, it was Abraham who did not show any fear of Yahweh when he sinned. This is irony. (See: fear and sin)

Links:

Genesis 20:1 Notes

Genesis 20:1

Shur

This is a desert region on the eastern border of Egypt.

Genesis 20:2

sent for Sarah and took her

"made his men go get Sarah and bring her to him"

Genesis 20:3

God came to Abimelek

"God appeared to Abimelek"

Behold

"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: "

you are a dead man

This is a strong way of saying the king will die. Alternate translation: "you will certainly die soon" or "I will kill you"

a man's wife

"a married woman"

Genesis 20:4

Now ... her

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to information about Abimelech.

Abimelek had not come near her

This is a polite way of saying he did not have sex with her. Alternate translation: "Abimelek had not had sexual relations with Sarah"

even a righteous nation

Here "nation" stands for the people. Abimelech is worried that God will punish not only him, but his people also. Alternate translation: "even a people who are innocent"

Genesis 20:5

Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?' Even she herself said, 'He is my brother.'

This has quotations within a quotation. They can be stated as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "Did he himself not tell me that she is his sister? Even she herself told me that he is her brother."

Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister?'

Abimelech used this rhetorical question to remind God of something God already knew. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Abraham himself told me, 'She is my sister.'" or "Abraham said that she is his sister."

Did he not himself say ... Even she herself

The words "he himself" and "she herself" are used for emphasis to bring attention to Abraham and Sarah and to

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blame them for what happened.

I have done this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands

Here "heart" stands for his thoughts or intentions. Also "hands" stands for his actions. Alternate translation: "I have done this with good intentions and actions" or "I have done this with no evil thoughts or actions"

Genesis 20:6

God said to him

"God said to Abimelech"

in the integrity of your heart you did this

Here "heart" stands for his thoughts or intentions. Alternate translation: "you did this with good intentions" or "you did this without evil intentions"

to touch her

This is a euphemism for having sex with Sarah. Alternate translation: "to sleep with her"

Genesis 20:7

the man's wife

"Abraham's wife"

you will live

"I will let you live"

all who are yours

"all of your people"

Genesis 20:8

He told all these things to them

"He told them everything that God had told him"

Genesis 20:9

What have you done to us?

Abimelech used this rhetorical question to accuse Abraham. Alternate translation: "You have done something bad to us!" or "Look what you have done to us!"

to us

The word "us" here is exclusive and does not include Abraham and Sarah. If your language uses an exclusive form of "we" or "us," use it here.

How have I sinned against you, that you have brought ... sin?

Abimelech used this rhetorical question to remind Abraham that he had not sinned against Abraham. Alternate translation: "I have done nothing against you to cause you to bring ... sin."

that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin

To cause someone to be guilty of sinning is spoken of as if "sin" was a thing that could be placed on a person. Alternate translation: "that you should make me and my kingdom guilty of such a terrible sin"

on my kingdom

Here "kingdom" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "on the people of my kingdom"

You have done to me deeds that ought not to be done

"You should not have done this to me"

Genesis 20:10

What prompted you to do this thing?

"What caused you to do this?" or "Why did you do this?"

What Abraham did can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Why did you tell me that Sarah is your sister?"

Genesis 20:11

Because I thought, 'Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Because I thought that since no one here fears God, someone may kill me so they can take my wife."

no fear of God in this place

Here "place" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "no one here in Gerar fears God"

fear of God

This means to deeply respect God and show that respect by obeying him.

Genesis 20:12

Besides, she is indeed my sister

"Also, it is true that Sarah is my sister" or "Also, Sarah really is my sister"

the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother

"we have the same father, but we have different mothers"

Genesis 20:13

General Information:

Verse 13 is a continuation of Abraham's answer to Abimelech.

my father's house

Here "house" stands for Abraham's family. Alternate translation: "my father and the rest of my family" or "my father's household"

I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "He is my brother."'

This has quotations within quotations. They can be stated as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "I said to Sarah that I wanted her to be faithful to me by telling people everywhere we go that I am her brother"

Genesis 20:14

Abimelek took

"Abimelek brought some"

Genesis 20:15

Abimelek said

"Abimelek said to Abraham"

Look

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

my land is before you

This is a way of saying "I make all of my land available to you"

Settle wherever it pleases you

"Live wherever you want"

Genesis 20:16

a thousand

"1,000"

It is to cover any offense against you in the eyes of all who are with you

Giving money to prove to others that Sarah is innocent is spoken of as if he is placing a cover over an offense so no one can see it. Alternate translation: "I am giving this to him, so that those who are with you will know that you have done nothing wrong"

in the eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in the opinion" or "in the judgement"

before everyone, you are completely made right

The passive phrase "made right" can be stated in active

form. Alternate translation: "everyone will know that you are innocent"

Genesis 20:18

closed all the wombs of the household of Abimelek

"made all the women of Abimelek's household totally unable to have children"

because of Sarah, Abraham's wife

The full meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "because Abimelech had taken Abraham's wife Sarah"

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21 [1]Yahweh paid attention to Sarah as he had said he would, and Yahweh did for Sarah just as he had promised.[2]Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.[3]Abraham named his son, the one who had been born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.[4]Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, just as God had commanded him.
[5]Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.[6]Sarah said, "God has made me laugh; every one who hears will laugh with me."[7]She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children, and yet I have borne him a son in his old age!"

[8]The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.[9]Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.
[10]So she said to Abraham, "Drive out this slave woman and her son, for the son of this slave woman will not be heir with my son, with Isaac."[11]This thing was very grievous to Abraham because of his son.
[12]But God said to Abraham, "Do not be grieved because of the young man and because of your servant girl. Listen to Sarah's words in all she says to you about this matter, because it is through Isaac that your descendants will be named.[13]I will also make the son of the servant woman into a nation, because he is your descendant."
[14]Abraham rose up early in the morning, took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder. He gave her the boy and sent her away. She departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.[15]When the water in the waterskin was gone, she abandoned the child under one of the bushes.[16]Then she went, and sat down a short distance from him, about the distance of a bowshot away, for she said, "Let me not look upon the death of the child." As she sat there across from him, she lifted up her voice and wept.
[17]God heard the voice of the young man, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the young man where he is.[18]Get up, raise up the young man, and encourage him; for I will make him into a great nation."
[19]Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water and gave the young man a drink.[20]God was with the young man, and he grew. He lived in the wilderness and became an archer.[21]He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

[22]It came about at that time that Abimelek and Phicol the captain of his army spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do.[23]Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, nor with my offspring, nor with my descendants. Show to me and to the land in which you have been staying the same covenant faithfulness that I have shown to you."[24]Abraham said, "I swear."
[25]Abraham also complained to Abimelek concerning a well of water that Abimelek's servants had seized from him.
[26]Abimelek said, "I do not know who has done this thing. You did not tell me before now; I have not heard of it until today."[27]So Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelek, and the two men made a covenant.
[28]Then Abraham set seven female lambs of the flock by themselves.[29]Abimelek said to Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven female lambs that you have set by themselves?"[30]He replied, "These seven female lambs you will receive from my hand, so that it may be a witness for me, that I dug this well."
[31]So he called that place Beersheba, because there they both swore an oath.[32]They made a covenant at Beersheba, and then Abimelek and Phicol, the captain of his army, returned to the land of the Philistines.
[33]Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba. There he called on the name of Yahweh, the eternal God.[34]Abraham remained as a foreigner in the land of the Philistines many days.

Genesis 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sarah's anger

After Sarah was able to have her own child, and he survived infancy, she began to get angry with Abraham's other son, Ishmael. He would have been a constant reminder of her own sin. God blessed Ishmael, but he was not able to inherit the promises given to Abraham. (See: sin, inherit and promise and bless)

Abandoning Ishmael

According to the law at this time, Hagar was able to gain her freedom from slavery by abandoning any claim to receive an inheritance. This is why Hagar would have abandoned her son under the tree.

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Treaty
The Gentile king, Abimelech, made a covenant or treaty with Abraham. It is possible that he did this because he recognized the power of Abraham's God, but his exact reasons are unknown. (See: covenant)

Links:

Genesis 21:1 Notes

Genesis 21:1
Yahweh paid attention to Sarah
Here the phrase "paid attention to" refers to Yahweh helping Sarah have a baby. Alternate translation: "Yahweh helped Sarah"
Genesis 21:2
bore a son to Abraham
"gave birth to Abraham's son"
in his old age
"when Abraham was very old"
at the set time of which God had spoken to him
"at the exact time that God had told him it would happen"
Genesis 21:3
Abraham named his son, the one who had been born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac
"Abraham named his newborn son, the one Sarah gave birth to, Isaac" or "Abraham named their newborn son Isaac"
Genesis 21:4
Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old
"When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him"
eight days
"8 days"
had commanded him
"had commanded Abraham to do"
Genesis 21:5
one hundred
"100"
Genesis 21:6
God has made me laugh
Sarah was laughing because she was surprised and happy. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "God has caused me to laugh joyfully"
every one who hears
What people would hear can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "everyone who hears about what God has done for me"
Genesis 21:7
Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one would have ever said to Abraham that Sarah will nurse children"
nurse children
This is a polite way of referring to breast-feeding babies. Alternate translation: "feed a baby her own milk"
Genesis 21:8
The child grew and ... Isaac was weaned
"Wean" here is a polite way of saying the child was finished with breast feeding. Alternate translation: "Isaac grew, and when he no longer needed his mother's milk, Abraham had a large feast"
Genesis 21:9
the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham
The name of Hagar's son can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian and Abraham"
mocking
It can be stated explicitly that he was jeering or laughing at Isaac. Alternate translation: "laughing at Isaac"
Genesis 21:10
she said to Abraham
"Sarah said to Abraham"
Drive out
"send away" or "get rid of"
this slave woman and her son
This refers to Hagar and Ishmael. Sarah probably did not refer to them by name because she was angry with them.
with my son, with Isaac
"with my son Isaac"
Genesis 21:11
This thing was very grievous to Abraham
"Abraham was very unhappy about what Sarah said"
because of his son
"because it was about his son." It is implied that this means his son, Ishmael.
Genesis 21:12
Do not be grieved because of the young man and because of your servant girl
"Do not be upset about the boy and your handmaid"
Listen to Sarah's words in all she says to you about this matter
"Do everything that Sarah says to you about them"
it is through Isaac that your descendants will be named
The phrase "will be named" means those born through Isaac are the ones God considers to be the descendants that he promised Abraham. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Isaac is the one who will be the forefather of the descendants I promised to give you"
Genesis 21:13
I will also make the son of the servant woman into a nation
The word "nation" means God will give him many descendants so that they become a great nation of people. Alternate translation: "I will make the servant woman's son also become the father of a great nation"
Genesis 21:14
took bread
These words could refer to 1) food in general or 2) bread specifically.
a skin of water
"a bag of water." The water container was made out of animal skin.
Genesis 21:15
When the water in the waterskin was gone
"When the water bag was empty" or "When they had drank

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all of the water"
Genesis 21:16
about the distance of a bowshot away
This refers to the distance that a person could shoot an arrow with a bow. This is about 100 meters.
Let me not look upon the death of the child
The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "die." Alternate translation: "I do not want to watch the boy die"
she lifted up her voice and wept
Here "voice" stands for the sound of her crying. To "life up her voice" means to cry loudly. Alternate translation: "she cried out loudly and wept" or "she wept loudly"
Genesis 21:17
the voice of the young man
"the young man's voice." Here "voice" stands for the sound of the young man crying or speaking. Alternate translation: "the sound of Ishmael"
the angel of God
"a messenger from God" or "God's messenger"
out of heaven
Here "heaven" means the place where God lives.
What troubles you
"What is wrong" or "Why are you crying"
the voice of the young man where he is
Here "voice" stands for the sound of the young man crying or speaking. Alternate translation: "the sound of the young man lying over there"
Genesis 21:18
raise up the young man
"help the young man stand up"
I will make him into a great nation
To make Ishmael into a great nation means God will give him many descendants who will become a great nation. Alternate translation: "I will make his descendants become a great nation" or "I will make him become the ancestor of a great nation"
Genesis 21:19
God opened her eyes, and she saw
God making Hagar aware of the well is spoken of as if he literally opened her eyes. Alternate translation: "God caused Hagar to see" or "God showed her"
the skin
"the container made of skin" or "the bag"
the young man
"the boy" or "Ishmael"
Genesis 21:20
God was with the young man
Here the phrase "was with" is an idiom that means God helped or blessed the young man. Alternate translation: "God guided the young man" or "God blessed the young man"
became an archer
"became very skilled at using a bow and arrows"
Genesis 21:21
got a wife
"found a wife"
Genesis 21:22
It came about at that time
This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Phicol
This is the name of a man.
captain of his army
"commander of his army"
his army
The word "his" refers to Abimelech.
God is with you in all that you do
Here the phrase "is with you" is an idiom that means God helps or blesses Abraham. Alternate translation: "God blesses everything you do"
Genesis 21:23
Now therefore
The word "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows. Alternate translation: "Therefore"
swear to me here by God
This is an idiom meaning to make a solemn oath witnessed by a higher authority, in this instance, God. Alternate translation: "promise me with God as your witness"
that you will not deal falsely with me
"that you will not lie to me"
will not deal falsely ... with my descendants
"will deal honestly with me and my descendants"
Show to me ... covenant faithfulness that I have shown to you
The two men had made a covenant with each other. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "loyal." Alternate translation: "Be as faithful to me and to the land as I have been to you"
to the land
Here "land" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "to the people of the land"
Genesis 21:24
I swear
This can be stated with the understood information. Alternate translation: "I swear to be as faithful to you and your people as you have been to me"
Genesis 21:25
Abraham also complained to Abimelek
Possible meanings are 1) Abraham was complaining about what happened or 2) "Abraham also rebuked Abimelek"
concerning a well of water that Abimelek's servants had seized from him
"because Abimelek's servants had taken one of Abraham's wells"
seized from him
"taken from Abraham" or "had taken control of"
Genesis 21:26
I have not heard of it until today
"This is the first time I have heard about it"
Genesis 21:27
Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelek
This is a sign of friendship and that Abraham agrees to make covenant with Abimelek.
Genesis 21:28
Abraham set seven female lambs of the flock by themselves
"Abraham separated seven female lambs from the flock"
Genesis 21:29

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What is the meaning of these seven female lambs that you have set by themselves?
"Why have you separated these seven lambs from the flock?"
Genesis 21:30
you will receive
"you will take"
from my hand
Here "hand" stands for Abraham. Alternate translation: "from me"
it may be a witness
The word "it" refers to the gift of seven lambs.
so that it may be a witness for me
The abstract noun "witness" can be stated as "to prove." Alternate translation: "to prove to everyone"
Genesis 21:31
he called that place
"Abraham called that place"
Beersheba
Translators may add a footnote saying "Beersheba can mean either "well of the oath" or "well of seven."
they both
"Abraham and Abimelech"
Genesis 21:32
Phicol
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in Genesis 21:22.
Genesis 21:33
a tamarisk tree
This is an evergreen tree that can grow in the desert. It can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "a tree"
the eternal God
"the God who lives forever"
Genesis 21:34
many days
"for a long time"

22 [1]It came about after these things that God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" Abraham said, "Here I am."[2]Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains there, which I will tell you about."[3]So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, along with Isaac his son. He cut the wood for the burnt offering, then set out on his journey to the place that God had told him about.
[4]On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place afar off.[5]Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the young man will go over there. We will worship and come again to you."[6]Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and put it on Isaac his son. He took in his own hand the fire and the knife; and they went both of them together.
[7]Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father," and he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "See, here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"[8]Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So they went on, both of them together.

[9]When they came to the place that God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood on it. Then he bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.[10]Abraham reached out with his hand and took up the knife to kill his son.
[11]Then the angel of Yahweh called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" and he said, "Here I am."[12]He said, "Do not lay your hand upon the young man, nor do anything to harm him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."
[13]Abraham looked up and behold, behind him was a ram caught in the bushes by his horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up as a burnt offering instead of his son.[14]So Abraham named that place, "Yahweh will provide," and it is said to this day, "On the mountain of Yahweh it will be provided."
[15]The angel of Yahweh called to Abraham a second time from heaven[16]and said—this is Yahweh's declaration—by myself I have sworn that because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son,[17]I will surely bless you and I will greatly multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and your descendants will possess the gate of their enemies.
[18]Through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."[19]So Abraham returned to his young men, and they departed and went together to Beersheba, and he lived at Beersheba.

[20]It came about after these things that Abraham was told, "Milkah has borne children, as well, to your brother Nahor."[21]They were Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram,[22]Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.
[23]Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. These were the eight children that Milkah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.[24]His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maakah.

Genesis 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrificing his son

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Although Isaac was not Abraham's only son, he was the son who was to inherit Abraham's promised blessings. It is possible this parallels God's actual sacrifice of his son, Jesus, for the sins of man. (See: inherit and promise and sin)
Covenant affirmation
After important events, it is common for Scripture to affirm the tenets of a covenant. This serves as a reminder of the covenant and affirms it. (See: covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God tests Abraham
Extra care should be taken when translating "testing." It is best to avoid using the same word used for "tempting" even though they overlap in meaning. This is because Scripture also says God does not tempt anyone. (See: test and tempt and James 2:13)

Links:

Genesis 22:1 Notes

Genesis 22:1
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
after these things
This phrase refers to the events in chapter 21.
God tested Abraham
It is implied that God tests Abraham to learn if Abraham will be faithful to him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: God tested Abraham's faithfulness"
Here I am
"Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?"
Genesis 22:2
your only son
It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "your only son whom I have promised"
whom you love
This emphasizes Abraham's love for his son, Isaac.
the land of Moriah
"the land called Moriah"
Genesis 22:3
saddled his donkey
"loaded his donkey" or "put on his donkey what he needed for the journey"
young men
"servants"
set out on his journey
"started his journey" or "started traveling"
Genesis 22:4
On the third day
The word "third" is the ordinal number for three. Alternate translation: "After traveling for three days"
saw the place afar off
"saw far away the place that God had spoken of"
Genesis 22:5
young men
"servants"
We will worship
The word "we" refers only to Abraham and Isaac, but not to the young men.
come again to you
"return to you"
Genesis 22:6
put it on Isaac his son
"had Isaac, his son, carry it"
He took in his own hand
Here "his own hand" emphasizes that Abraham himself carried these things. Alternate translation: "Abraham himself carried"
the fire
Here "fire" stands for a pan containing burning coals or a torch or lamp. Alternate translation: "something for starting a fire"
they went both of them together
"they left together" or "the two of them went together"
Genesis 22:7
My father
This is a loving way for a son to speak to his father.
Here I am
"Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?" See how you translated this in Genesis 22:1.
my son
This is a loving way for a father to speak to his son.
the fire
Here "fire" stands for a pan containing burning coals or a torch or lamp. See how you translated this in [Genesis 22:6]
the lamb for the burnt offering
"the lamb that you will give as a burnt offering"
Genesis 22:8
God himself
Here "himself" emphasizes that it is God who will provide the lamb.
will provide
"will give us"
Genesis 22:9
When they came to the place
"When Abraham and Isaac arrived at the place"
he bound
"he tied up"
on the altar, on top of the wood
"on top of the wood that was on the altar"
Genesis 22:10
reached out with his hand and took up the knife
"picked up the knife"
Genesis 22:11

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the angel of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh's angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as "the angel of Yahweh" using the normal word that you use for "angel." See the note about this phrase in Genesis 16:7.

from heaven

This refers to the place where God lives.

Here I am

"Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?" See how you translated this in Genesis 22:1.

Genesis 22:12

Do not lay your hand upon the young man, nor do anything to harm him

The phrase "Do not lay your hand upon" is a way of saying "do not harm." God said basically the same thing twice to emphasize that Abraham should not hurt Isaac. Alternate translation: "Do not hurt the boy in any way"

now I know ... from me

The words "I" and "me" refer to Yahweh. When translating what is in the quote, do it as the angel of Yahweh did and use the words "I" and "me" when referring to Yahweh.

you fear God

This refers to deeply respecting God and showing that respect by obeying him.

seeing that

"because I see that"

you have not withheld your son ... from me

"you have not held back your son ... from me." or "you were willing to offer your son ... to me"

your son, your only son

It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 22:2]

Genesis 22:13

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

was a ram caught in the bushes by his horns

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "was a ram whose horns were stuck in the bushes" or "was a ram stuck in the bushes"

went and took the ram

"Abraham went over to the ram and took it"

Genesis 22:14

will provide ... will be provided

Use the same word for "provide" as you used in Genesis 22:8.

to this day

"even now." This means even to the time that the author was writing this book.

it will be provided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will provide"

Genesis 22:15

The angel of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made himself look like an angel or 2) this was one of Yahweh's angels or 3) this was a special messenger from God (some scholars think it was Jesus). Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as "The angel of Yahweh" using the normal word that you use for "angel." See the note about this phrase in Genesis 16:7.

a second time

The word "second" is the ordinal number for two. Alternate translation: "again"

from heaven

Here the word "heaven" refers to the place where God lives.

Genesis 22:16

said—this is Yahweh's declaration

"spoke this message from Yahweh" or "declared these words of Yahweh." This is a formal way of saying that the words that follow come directly from Yahweh.

by myself I have sworn

"I have promised and I am my witness." To swear means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made. There is nothing more powerful for Yahweh to swear by than himself.

you have done this thing

"you obeyed me"

have not withheld your son

"have not kept back your son" or "were willing to offer your son to me"

your son, your only son

It is implied that God knows that Abraham has another son, Ishmael. This emphasizes that Isaac is the son that God promised to give Abraham. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 22:2]

Genesis 22:17

surely bless

"certainly bless"

I will greatly multiply your descendants

"I will cause your descendants to increase again and again" or "I will cause your descendants to be very many"

as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore

God compared Abraham's descendants to the stars and the sand. Just as people cannot count the huge number of stars or the grains of sand, so there would be so many of Abraham's descendants that people would not be able to count them. Alternate translation: "beyond what you can count"

as the stars of the heavens

Here the word "heavens" refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars.

will possess the gate of their enemies

Here "gate" represents the whole city. To "possess the gate of their enemies" means destroying their enemies. Alternate translation: "will completely triumph over their enemies"

Genesis 22:18

General Information:

The angel of Yahweh continues speaking to Abraham.

all the nations of the earth will be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord, will bless all the people living everywhere"

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nations of the earth
Here "nations" stands for the people of the nations.
you have obeyed my voice
Here "voice" stands for what God said. Alternate translation: "you have obeyed what I said" or "you have obeyed me"
Genesis 22:19
Abraham returned
Only Abraham was named because he was the father, but it was implied that his son went with him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Abraham and his son went back"
young men
"servants"
they departed
"they left that place"
he lived at Beersheba
Only Abraham was mentioned because he was the leader of his family and servants, but it was implied that they were with him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Abraham and his people stayed in Beersheba"
Genesis 22:20
It came about after these things
"After these events." The phrase "these things" refers to the events of Genesis 22:1-19.
Abraham was told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told Abraham"
Milkah has borne children, as well
"Milkah has also borne children"
Milkah
This is the name of a woman.
Genesis 22:21
They were Uz his firstborn, Buz his brother
"The name of his firstborn was Uz, and the names of the rest of his children were Buz his brother"
Uz ... Buz ... Kemuel ... Aram
These are all names of men. Translate this so that it is clear that all of these except Aram are the sons of Nahor and Milkah.
Genesis 22:22
Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel
These are all names of men. Translate this so that it is clear that all of these are the sons of Nahor and Milkah.
Genesis 22:23
Bethuel became the father of Rebekah
"Later Bethel became the father of Rebekah"
These were the eight children that Milkah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother
"These were the eight children of Milkah and Nahor, Abraham's brother." This refers to the children that were listed in Genesis 22:21-22.
Genesis 22:24
His concubine
"Nahor's concubine"
Reumah
This is the name of a woman.
also bore
"also gave birth to"
Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maakah
These are all names of men.

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23 [1]Sarah lived 127 years. These were the years of the life of Sarah.[2]Sarah died in Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan. Abraham mourned and wept for Sarah.
[3]Then Abraham rose up and went from his dead wife, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying,[4]"I am a foreigner and sojourner among you. Please grant me a property for a burial place among you, so that I may bury my dead."
[5]The sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying,[6]"Listen to us, my master. You are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb, so that you may bury your dead."
[7]Abraham arose and bowed down to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth.[8]He spoke to them, saying, "If you agree that I should bury my dead, then hear me and plead with Ephron son of Zohar, for me.[9]Ask him to sell me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns, which is at the end of his field. For the full price let him sell it to me publicly as a property for a burial place."
[10]Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth, and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth, of all those who had come into the gate of his city, saying,[11]"No, my master, hear me. I give you the field, and the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you to bury your dead."
[12]Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land.[13]He spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, "But if you are willing, please hear me. I will pay for the field. Take the money from me, and I will bury my dead there."
[14]Ephron answered Abraham, saying,[15]"Please, my master, listen to me. A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you? Bury your dead."[16]Abraham listened to Ephron and Abraham weighed out to Ephron the amount of silver that he had spoken in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the standard measurement of the merchants.

[17]So the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was next to Mamre, that is, the field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees that were in the field and all around its border, passed[18]to Abraham by purchase in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all those who had come into the gate of his city.
[19]After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which is next to Mamre, that is, Hebron, in the land of Canaan.[20]So the field and the cave in it passed to Abraham as a property for a burial place from the sons of Heth.

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Genesis 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abraham's character

Abraham's interaction with the people show that he was greatly respected. This would have been unusual for a foreigner and indicates that Abraham was a man of great character.

Burial

Burial was a common practice when Abraham lived, but only the wealthy were able to bury their dead relatives in this way.

Links:

Genesis 23:1 Notes

Genesis 23:1

These were the years of the life of Sarah

Some translations do not include this sentence.

Genesis 23:2

Kiriath Arba

This is the name of a city.

Abraham mourned and wept for Sarah

"Abraham was very sad and cried because Sarah died"

Genesis 23:3

rose up and went from his dead wife

"got up and left his wife's body"

the sons of Heth

Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Heth" or "the Hittites"

Genesis 23:4

among you

This idea may be expressed in terms of location. "in your country" or "here"

Please grant me a property

"Sell me some land" or "Allow me to buy a piece of land"

my dead

The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as an adjective or a verb. Alternate translation: "my dead wife" or "my wife who has died"

Genesis 23:5

The sons of Heth

Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]

Genesis 23:6

my master

This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.

a prince of God

This is an idiom. This probably means "a powerful man" or "a mighty leader."

your dead

The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." Alternate translation: "your wife who has died" or "your wife"

the choicest of our tombs

"the best of our burial places"

refuse you his tomb

"withhold his burial place from you" or "refuse to give to you his tomb"

Genesis 23:7

bowed down

This means to bend over or kneel down very low to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.

to the people of the land, to the sons of Heth

"to the sons of Heth who lived in the area"

the sons of Heth

Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]

Genesis 23:8

my dead

The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." Alternate translation: "my wife who has died" or "my wife"

Ephron ... Zohar

These are names of men.

Genesis 23:9

the cave of Machpelah, which he owns, which is at the end of his field

"his cave that is at the end of his field in Machpelah"

the cave of Machpelah

"the cave in Machpela." Machpela was the name of an area or region. Ephron owned a field in Machpela and the cave that was in the field.

which he owns

This tells something about the cave. Ephron owned the cave.

which is at the end of his field

This also tells something about the cave. The cave was at the end of Ephron's field.

sell it to me publicly

"sell it to me in front of you all" or "sell it to me in your presence"

as a property

"as a piece of land that I may own and use"

Genesis 23:10

Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth

Here "Now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Ephron.

Ephron

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:8]

the sons of Heth

Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]

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in the hearing of the sons of Heth
The abstract noun "the hearing" can be stated as "hear" or "listening." Alternate translation: "so that all the sons of Heth could hear him" or "while all the sons of Heth were listening"
all those who had come into the gate of his city
This tells which sons of Heth were listening. Alternate translation: "all those who had gathered at the gate of his city"
gate of his city
The city gate was where the leaders of the city would meet to make important decisions.
his city
"the city where he lived." This phrase shows that Ephron belonged to that city. It does not mean that he owned it.
Genesis 23:11
my master
This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.
in the presence of the sons of my people
Here "presence" stands for the people serving as witnesses. Alternate translation: "with my fellow countrymen as my witnesses"
sons of my people
This means "my fellow countrymen" or "my fellow Hittites"
my people
This phrase shows that Ephron was part of that group of people. It does not mean that he was their leader.
I give it to you to bury your dead
"I give it to you. Bury your dead"
your dead
The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." Alternate translation: "your wife who has died" or "your wife"
Genesis 23:12
bowed down
This means to bend over or kneel down very low to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.
people of the land
"people who lived in that area"
Genesis 23:13
in the hearing of the people of the land
The abstract noun "the hearing" can be stated as "hear" or "listening" Alternate translation: "so that the people who lived in the area could hear" or "while the people who lived in the area were listening"
But if you are willing
The word "but" shows a contrast. Ephron wanted to give the field to Abraham; Abraham wanted to pay for it. Alternate translation: "No, but if you are willing" or "No, but if you agree with this"
I will pay for the field
"I will give you money for the field"
my dead
The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." Alternate translation: "my wife who has died" or "my wife"
Genesis 23:14
Ephron
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:8]
Genesis 23:15
Please, my master, listen to me
"Hear me, my master" or "Listen to me, kind sir"
my master
This phrase is used to show respect to Abraham.
A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you?
Ephron meant that since he and Abraham were both so wealthy, 400 pieces of silver was a small amount. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The piece of land is worth only four hundred shekels of silver. For you and me, that is nothing."
four hundred shekels of silver
This is about 4.5 kilograms of silver.
four hundred
"400"
Bury your dead
The nominal adjective "dead" can be stated as a verb or simply as "wife." Alternate translation: "Go bury your wife who has died" or "Go bury your wife"
Genesis 23:16
Abraham weighed out to Ephron the amount of silver
"Abraham weighed the silver and gave Ephron the amount" or "Abraham counted out to Ephron the amount of silver"
the amount of silver that he had spoken
"the amount of silver that Ephron had said"
in the hearing of the sons of Heth
The abstract noun "the hearing" can be stated as "hear" or "listening." Alternate translation: "so that all the sons of Heth could hear him" or "while all the sons of Heth were listening"
the sons of Heth
Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]
according to the standard measurement of the merchants
"using the standard measurement of weight that merchants used." This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "He weighed the silver the same way that the merchants used to weigh it"
Genesis 23:17
Machpelah
Machpela was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:9]
Mamre
This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there.
that is, the field, the cave that was in it, and all the trees
This phrase explains what the author meant when he wrote "the field of Ephron." It was not only the field, but also the cave and trees in the field.
passed
"became property that belonged"
Genesis 23:18
to Abraham by purchase
These words complete the idea that begins with the word "passed" in verse 17. "became Abraham's possession when he purchased it" or "belonged to Abraham after he bought

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it"
in the presence of the sons of Heth
Here "presence" stands for the people serving as witnesses. Alternate translation: "with the people of Heth watching as witnesses"
the sons of Heth
Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]
all those who had come into the gate of his city
This tells which sons of Heth saw Abraham buy the property. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:10]
gate of his city
The city gate was where the leaders of the city would meet to make important decisions.
his city
"the city where he lived." This phrase shows that Ephron belonged to that city. It does not mean that he owned it.
Genesis 23:19
After this
"After he bought the field"
the cave of the field
"the cave in the field"
the field of Machpelah
"the field in Machpelah"
that is, Hebron
Possible meanings are 1) Mamre was another name for Hebron or 2) Hebron was formerly called Mamre or 3) Mamre was very near the larger city of Hebron, so people usually called it Hebron.
Genesis 23:20
passed to Abraham as a property for a burial place from the sons of Heth
"became Abraham's property for a burial ground when he bought it from the sons of Heth"
the sons of Heth
Here "sons" stands for those who descended from Heth. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:3]

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24 [1]Now Abraham was very old and Yahweh had blessed Abraham in all things.[2]Abraham said to his servant, the one who was the oldest of his household and who was in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh[3]and I will make you swear by Yahweh, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I make my home.[4]But you will go to my country, and to my relatives, and get a wife for my son Isaac."
[5]The servant said to him, "What if the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land? Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?"[6]Abraham said to him, "Make sure that you do not take my son back there![7]Yahweh, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my relatives, and who promised me with a solemn oath saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you, and you will get a wife for my son from there.
[8]But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine. Only you are not to take my son back there."[9]So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

[10]The servant took ten of his master's camels and departed. He also took with him all kinds of goods from his master. He departed and went to the region of Aram Naharaim, to the city of Nahor.[11]He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water. It was evening, the time that women go out to draw water.
[12]Then he said, "Yahweh, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today and show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham.[13]Look, here I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.[14]Let it happen like this. When I say to a young woman, 'Please lower your pitcher so that I may drink,' and she says to me, 'Drink, and I will water your camels too,' then let her be the one that you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown covenant faithfulness to my master."
[15]It came about that even before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah came out with her water pitcher on her shoulder. Rebekah was born to Bethuel son of Milkah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother.[16]The young woman was very beautiful and a virgin. No man had ever known her. She went down to the spring, filled her pitcher and came up.
[17]Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little drink of water from your pitcher."[18]She said, "Drink, my master," and she quickly let down her pitcher on her hand, and gave him a drink.
[19]When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking."[20]So she hurried and emptied her pitcher into the trough, then ran again to the well to draw water, and drew water for all his camels.
[21]The man watched her in silence to see whether Yahweh had prospered his journey or not.[22]As the camels finished drinking, the man brought out a gold nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two gold bracelets for her arms weighing ten shekels,[23]and asked, "Whose daughter are you? Tell me please, is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?"
[24]She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkah, whom she bore to Nahor."[25]She also said to him, "We have plenty of both straw and feed, and also room for you to spend the night."
[26]Then the man bowed down and worshiped Yahweh.[27]He said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his covenant faithfulness and his trustworthiness toward my master. As for me, Yahweh has led me directly to the house of my master's relatives."

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[28]Then the young woman ran and told her mother's household about all of these things.[29]Now Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban. Laban ran to the man who was out at the road by the spring.[30]When he had seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister, "This is what the man said to me," he went to the man, and, behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring.
[31]Then Laban said, "Come, you blessed of Yahweh. Why are you standing outside? I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels."[32]So the man came to the house and he unloaded the camels. The camels were given straw and feed, and water was provided to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.
[33]They set food before him to eat, but he said, "I will not eat until I have said what I have to say." So Laban said, "Speak on."[34]He said, "I am Abraham's servant.[35]Yahweh has blessed my master very much and he has become great. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, and camels and donkeys.
[36]Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master when she was old, and he has given everything that he owns to him.
[37]My master made me swear, saying, 'You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I make my home.[38]Instead, you must go to my father's family, and to my relatives, and get a wife for my son.'
[39]I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.'[40]But he said to me, 'Yahweh, before whom I walk, will send his angel with you and he will prosper your way, so that you will get a wife for my son from among my relatives and from my father's family line.[41]But you will be free from my oath if you come to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath.'
[42]So I arrived today at the spring, and said, 'O Yahweh, God of my master Abraham, please, if you do indeed intend to make my journey successful—[43]here I am, standing by the spring of water—let the young woman who comes out to draw water, the woman to whom I say, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,"[44]the woman who says to me, "Drink, and I will also draw water for your camels"—let her be the woman whom you, Yahweh, have chosen for my master's son.'
[45]Even before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her pitcher on her shoulder and she went down to the spring and drew water. So I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'[46]She quickly lowered her pitcher from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels water also.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also.
[47]I asked her and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milkah bore to him.' Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms.[48]Then I bowed down and worshiped Yahweh, and blessed Yahweh, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the way that is right to find the daughter of my master's relative for his son.
[49]Now therefore, if you are prepared to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me. But if not, tell me, so that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

[50]Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing has come from Yahweh; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.[51]Look, Rebekah is before you. Take her and go, so she may be the wife of your master's son, as Yahweh has spoken."
[52]When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed down to the ground before Yahweh.[53]The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious gifts to her brother and to her mother.
[54]Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank. They stayed there overnight, and when they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master."[55]Her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us for a few more days, at least ten. After that she may go."
[56]But he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since Yahweh has prospered my way. Send me on my way so that I may go to my master."[57]They said, "We will call the young woman and ask her."[58]So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?" She replied, "I will go."
[59]So they sent their sister Rebekah, along with her female servant, on her journey with Abraham's servant and his men.
[60]They blessed Rebekah, and said to her,

"Our sister, may you be the mother
of thousands of ten thousands,
and may your descendants possess
the gate of those who hate them."

[61]Then Rebekah arose, and she and her servant girls mounted the camels, and followed the man. Thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.
[62]Now Isaac was living in the Negev, and had just returned from Beer Lahai Roi.
[63]Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening. When he looked up and saw, behold, there were camels coming!
[64]Rebekah looked, and when she saw Isaac, she jumped down from the camel.[65]She said to the servant, "Who is that man who is walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil, and covered herself.
[66]The servant recounted to Isaac all the things that he had done.[67]Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

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Genesis 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 24:60.

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriage

Abraham would not allow his son to marry anyone from the people of Canaan. This is because it would cause his son to worship other gods. Intermarriage and worshiping false gods are things that frequently caused Abraham's descendants to struggle. (See: falsegod)

Abraham's wealth

There are many instances recorded in this chapter which highlight Abraham's significant wealth. He owned more than 10 camels and had large amounts of gold.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Put your hand under my thigh"

Many scholars believe this is a euphemism. Putting one's hand on a man's genitals was a way to make an important oath. It represented power and progeny.

Links:

Genesis 24:1 Notes

Genesis 24:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.

Genesis 24:2

Put your hand under my thigh

Abraham was about to ask the servant to swear to do something. Putting his hand under Abraham's thigh would show that he would certainly do what he would swear to do.

Genesis 24:3

I will make you swear

This can be expressed as a command. Alternate translation: "swear"

swear by Yahweh

The term "swear by" means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made. "promise me with Yahweh as your witness"

the God of heaven and the God of the earth

"the God of heaven and earth." The words "heaven" and "earth" are used together to mean every thing that God created. Alternate translation: "the God of everything in heaven and earth"

heaven

This refers to the place where God lives.

from the daughters of the Canaanites

"from the Canaanite women" or "from the Canaanites." This refers to Canaanite females.

among whom I make my home

"among whom I live." Here, "I" stands for Abraham and all of his family and servants. Alternate translation: "among whom we live"

Genesis 24:4

But you will go

This can be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "Swear that you will go" or "But go"

my relatives

"my family"

Genesis 24:5

What if

"What should I do if"

will not be willing to follow me

"will not follow me" or "refuses to come back with me"

Must I take your son back to the land from which you came

"Should I take you son to live in the land from which you came"

Genesis 24:6

Make sure that you do not take my son back there

The phrase "Make sure" emphasizes the command that follows. "Be careful not to take my son back there" or "You definitely must not take my son there"

Genesis 24:7

who took me from my father's house

Here "house" stands for the people in his family. Alternate translation: "who took me from my father and the rest of my family"

promised me with a solemn oath

"swore an oath to me"

saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "saying that he would give this land to my descendants"

he will send his angel

The words "he" and "his" refer to Yahweh.

Genesis 24:8

General Information:

Verse 8 is a continuation of the instructions Abraham gave his servant.

But if the woman is not willing to follow you

"But if the woman refuses to come with you." Abraham was

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answering the servant's question from Genesis 24:5.

you will be free from this oath of mine

"you will be released from the oath you made to me." Not having to fulfill an oath is spoken of as if the person is free from an object to which he was bound. Alternate translation: "you will not have to do what you swore to me that you would do"

Genesis 24:9

put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master

This was to show that he would certainly do what he was swearing to do.

swore to him

"made an oath to him"

concerning this matter

"concerning Abraham's request" or "that he would do what Abraham said"

Genesis 24:10

departed. He also took

The sentence starting with "He also took" gives additional information about what the servant took with him on the journey. He gathered them before he departed.

He also took with him all kinds of goods from his master

This means he also took many good things that his master wanted to give to the woman's family.

departed and went

"set out and went" or "he left and went"

the city of Nahor

Possible meanings are 1) the city where Nahor lived" or 2) "the city called Nahor." If you can translate it without choosing a meaning, do so.

Genesis 24:11

He made the camels kneel down

Camels are tall animals with long legs. He made them bend their legs and lower their bodies to the ground. "He made the camels lie down"

well of water

"water well" or "well"

draw water

"get water"

Genesis 24:12

Then he said

"Then the servant said"

grant me success today and show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham

You can state this with the connecting word "by." This makes clear how the servant wants God to show covenant faithfulness. Alternate translation: "Show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham by granting me success today"

grant me success

"give me success." The servant wanted to find a good wife for Abraham's son. The abstract noun "success" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "help me to succeed" or "make me able to do what I have come here to do"

show covenant faithfulness to my master Abraham

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." Alternate translation: "be faithful to the covenant you have with my master Abraham" or "be faithful to my master Abraham"

Genesis 24:13

Look, here I am standing

"You can see me standing here"

the spring of water

"the spring" or "the well"

the daughters of the men of the city

"the young women of the city"

Genesis 24:14

Let it happen like this

"Let it happen this way" or "Make this happen"

When I say to a young woman, 'Please lower your pitcher so that I may drink,'

This is a quotation within a quotation. This can be expressed with an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "When I ask a young woman to let me have a drink of water from her jar"

Please lower your pitcher

The women carried the pitchers on their shoulder. She would have to lower it to give the man a drink.

pitcher

a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids

that you have shown covenant faithfulness to my master

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "been faithful." Alternate translation: "that you have been faithful to the covenant you have with my master Abraham" or "you have been faithful to my master Abraham"

Genesis 24:15

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

pitcher

This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in Genesis 24:14.

Rebekah was born to Bethuel son of Milkah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother

"Rebekah's father was Bethuel. Bethuel's parents were Milkah and Nahor. Nahor was Abraham's brother"

Bethuel

Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 22:22]

Nahor

This is the name of a man. See how you translated his name in [Genesis 11:22]

Milkah

Milkah was Nahor's wife and Bethuel's mother. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 11:29]

Genesis 24:16

No man had ever known her

This is a polite way of saying that the she had not had sexual relations with any man. You may need to use another euphemism in your language.

She went down to the spring ... and came up

The spring was somewhere lower in elevation than where

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the servant was standing.
Genesis 24:17
to meet her
"to meet the young woman"
a little drink of water
"a little water"
pitcher
This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in Genesis 24:14.
Genesis 24:18
my master
"sir." Here the woman uses this term of respect to refer to the man, though she is not his slave.
she quickly let down her pitcher on her hand
"she quickly lowered her pitcher." She was carrying the pitcher on her shoulder. She had to lower it to get water for the servant.
Genesis 24:19
I will draw water
"I will get water"
Genesis 24:20
So she hurried and emptied her pitcher
"So she quickly emptied her pitcher"
the trough
"the animals' water trough." A trough is a long open container for holding water for animals to drink.
Genesis 24:21
The man
"The servant"
watched her
"watched Rebekah" or "watched the young woman"
to see
Learning something is often spoken of as if it were seeing. Alternate translation: "to know" or "to determine"
had prospered his journey
"had fulfilled the purpose of his journey" or "had made his journey successful." You can make explicit what specifically the servant was trying to determine. Alternate translation: "was showing him the woman who would become Isaac's wife"
or not
You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "or not prospered his journey"
Genesis 24:22
a gold nose ring weighing half a shekel
"a gold nose ring that weighed six grams." The weight indicates the value of the ring. Alternate translation: "an expensive gold nose ring"
two gold bracelets for her arms weighing ten shekels
"two gold bracelets for her arms that weighed 110 grams." The weight shows their size and value. Alternate translation: "two large gold bracelets for her arms"
Genesis 24:23
Whose daughter are you
"Who is your father"
is there room in your father's house
"is there a place in your father's house"
for us
Apparently other men went on this journey with Abraham's servant. Here "us" refers to the servant and those traveling with him, but not to those to whom he was speaking.
to spend the night
"to stay tonight" or "to stay for the night"
Genesis 24:24
She said
"Rebekah said" or "the young woman said"
to him
"to the servant"
I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkah, whom she bore to Nahor
"Bethuel is my father, and his parents are Milkah and Nahor"
Genesis 24:25
We have plenty of both straw and feed
It is understood that the straw and feed are for the camels. You can make clear this understood information. Alternate translation: "We have plenty of straw and feed for the camels"
for you to spend the night
"for you to stay tonight" or "where you can stay for the night"
for you
Here "you" refers to the servant and those traveling with him.
Genesis 24:26
the man
"the servant"
bowed down
This is a sign of humility before God.
Genesis 24:27
has not abandoned his covenant faithfulness and his trustworthiness toward my master
"has not stopped showing his covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness to my master." The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "trustworthiness" can be stated as "to be faithful and trustworthy." Alternate translation: "has not stopped being faithful to his covenant and trustworthy toward my master" or "has not stopped being faithful and trustworthy to my master"
has not abandoned
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "continues to show"
my master's relatives
"my master's family" or "my master's clan"
Genesis 24:28
ran and told her mother's household
Here "household" stands for all the people living in her mother's house. Alternate translation: "ran to the house and told her mother and everyone there"
all of these things
"everything that had just happened"
Genesis 24:29
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells background information about Rebekah. The author introduces her brother, Laban, to the story.

Genesis 24:30
When he had seen the nose ring ... and when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister
These things happened before he ran out to the man. This tells why Laban ran out to the man.
when he had heard the words of Rebekah his sister, "This is what the man said to me,"
This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "when he had heard his sister Rebekah tell what the man had said to her"
behold, he
The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. "it was just as she had said: he"
Genesis 24:31
Come, you
"Come in, you" or "Enter, you"
you blessed of Yahweh
"you whom Yahweh has blessed"
you
Here the word "you" refers to Abraham's servant.
Why are you standing outside?
Laban used this question to invite Abraham's servant into his house. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not need to stay outside."
Genesis 24:32
So the man came to the house
The word "came" can be translated as "went."
he unloaded the camels
It is not clear who did this work. This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Laban's servants unloaded the camels" or "the camels were unloaded"
The camels were given straw and feed, and water was provided
This does not say who did the work. If you state this in active form use "Laban's servants" as the subject. Alternate translation: "Laban's servants gave straw and feed to the camels, and they provided water"
to wash his feet ... him
"for Abraham's servant and the men who were with him to wash their feet"
Genesis 24:33
They set
Here, the word "they" refers to Laban's family members or to the household servants.
set food before him
"gave food to the servant"
said what I have to say
"spoken my words" or "told you why I am here"
Genesis 24:35
he has become great
Here the word "he" refers to Abraham.
become great
"become very wealthy"
He has given
The word "he" refers to Yahweh.
Genesis 24:36
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
bore a son to my master
"gave birth to a son"
he has given ... to him
"my master has given ... to his son"
Genesis 24:37
My master made me swear, saying
"My master made me swear that I would do what he told me to do. He said"
from the daughters of the Canaanites
This refers to Canaanite females. Alternate translation: "from the Canaanite women" or "from the Canaanites"
in whose land I make my home
"among whom I live." Here, "I" stands for Abraham and all of his family and servants. Alternate translation: "among whom we live"
Genesis 24:38
to my relatives
"to my own clan"
Genesis 24:39
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
Perhaps the woman will not follow me.
This is something that could possibly happen. The servant wanted to know what he should do if that happened. Alternate translation: "What if the woman will not come back with me?" or "What should I do if the woman will not come back with me?"
Genesis 24:40
before whom I walk
Serving Yahweh is spoken of as if Abraham were walking in Yahweh's presence. Alternate translation: "whom I serve"
he will prosper your way
"he will make your journey successful"
family line
"family"
Genesis 24:41
you will be free from my oath
"you will be released from the oath you made to me." Not having to fulfill an oath is spoken of as if the person is free from an object to which he was bound. Alternate translation: "you will not have to do what you swore to me that you would do"
if you come to my relatives
Languages use the words come and go differently. Alternate translation: "if you arrive at my relatives' home" or "if you go to my relatives"
Genesis 24:42
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
the spring
"the well"
Genesis 24:43
let the young woman who comes ... the woman to whom I say
The servant goes back to stating his request. These are the first two things he has to say about the woman whom he hopes will come.
to draw water
"to get water"
pitcher
This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in Genesis

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24:14.
Genesis 24:44
the woman who says to me, "Drink ... camels"
The thought that begins with the words "let the young woman who comes" in verse 43 ends here. This is the third of the three things the servant has to say about the woman whom he hopes will come.
let her be the woman
The servant finishes his request.
Genesis 24:45
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
speaking in my heart
To pray silently in one's mind is spoken of as if he were speaking in his heart. The word "heart" refers to his thoughts and his mind. Alternate translation: "praying" or "praying quietly"
behold, Rebekah came
"suddenly Rebekah came" or "I was surprised because I saw Rebekah coming"
pitcher
This is a medium-size jar made of clay used for holding and pouring liquids. See how you translated this in Genesis 24:14.
she went down to the spring
The phrase "went down" is used because the spring was somewhere lower than where the servant was standing.
spring
opening in the ground from which fresh water comes
Genesis 24:46
watered the camels
"gave water to the camels"
Genesis 24:47
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milkah bore to him
"My father is Bethuel. His parents are Nahor and Milkah"
ring ... bracelets
In this story, all of these items were made of gold. See how you translated these in Genesis 24:22.
Genesis 24:48
I bowed down
This is a sign of humility before God.
led me by the way that is right
"brought me here"
who had led me
The connecting word "because" can be used to show this is why the servant worshiped God. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh led me"
my master's relative
This refers to Bethuel, the son of Abraham's brother Nahor.
Genesis 24:49
General Information:
Abraham's servant continues speaking to Rebekah's family.
Now therefore
"Now." Here "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
if you are prepared to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Also, you could state explicitly how they could show the "steadfast love and faithfulness." Alternate translation: "tell me if you will love my master and be faithful to him by giving Rebekah to be his son's wife"
you
The word "you" refers to Laban and Bethuel.
But if not
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "But if you are not prepared to treat my master with steadfast love and faithfulness"
so that I may turn to the right hand or to the left
Possible meanings are 1) deciding what to do is spoken of as if the person will physically turn one direction or another. Alternate translation: "so that I will know what do" or 2) the servant wants to know if he needs to travel somewhere else. Alternate translation: "so that I may continue on my journey"
Genesis 24:50
Bethuel
This was the father of Laban and Rebekah.
The thing has come from Yahweh
"Yahweh has caused all of this to happen"
we cannot speak to you either bad or good
They are saying they do not have the authority to decide whether what God has done is good or bad. Alternate translation: "we dare not judge what Yahweh is doing"
Genesis 24:51
Look, Rebekah is
"You can see Rebekah here"
Rebekah is before you
"Here is Rebekah"
Genesis 24:52
their words
"what Laban and Bethuel said"
he bowed down
Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
Genesis 24:53
articles of silver and articles of gold
"silver and gold items" or "things made of silver and gold"
precious gifts
"expensive gifts" or "valuable gifts"
Genesis 24:54
he and the men who were with him
"Abraham's servant and his men"
stayed there overnight
"slept there that night"
arose in the morning
"got up the next morning"
Send me away
"Let me leave and return"
Genesis 24:55
a few more days, at least ten
"at least ten more days"
After that
"Then"
Genesis 24:56

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he said
"Abraham's servant said"
to them
"to Rebekah's brother and mother"
Do not hinder me
"Do not delay me" or "Do not make me wait"
Yahweh has prospered my way
Here "way" stands for a journey. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has caused me to succeed in the purpose my journey"
Send me on my way
"Allow me to leave"
Genesis 24:59
So they sent their sister Rebekah
"So the family sent Rebekah"
their sister
Rebekah was Laban's sister. Alternate translation: "their relative" or "Laban's sister"
her female servant
This refers to the female servant who had fed Rebekah when she was a baby, cared for her when she was a child, and still served her.
Genesis 24:60
Our sister
Rebekah was not the sister to everyone in her family. But they called her this to show that they loved her. Alternate translation: "Our dear Rebekah"
may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands
Here "mother" stands for ancestor. Alternate translation: "may you be the ancestor of millions of people" or "may you have very many descendants"
thousands of ten thousands
This means a very large number or an uncountable number.
may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them
Armies would break through the gate of their enemies' cities and conquer the people. Alternate translation: "may your descendants completely defeat those who hate them"
Genesis 24:61
Then Rebekah arose, and she and her servant girls mounted the camels
"Then Rebekah and her servant girls went and got on the camels"
Thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way
"In this way Abraham's servant took Rebekah with him and returned to where he had come from"
Genesis 24:62
Now
This word marks a change in the story. It was telling about the servant finding a wife, and now it will tell about Isaac.
Beer Lahai Roi
This is the name of a water well in the Negev. See how you translated it in Genesis 16:14.
Genesis 24:63
Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening
"One evening Isaac went out to the field to think." This must have been a long time after the servant and Rebekah left her home since they had to travel a long distance.
When he looked up and saw, behold, there were camels coming!
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. "When he looked up he was surprised to see camels coming"
Genesis 24:64
Rebekah looked
"Rebekah looked up"
she jumped down from the camel
"she quickly got off the camel"
Genesis 24:65
So she took her veil, and covered herself
"So she covered her face with her veil." This is a sign of respect and modesty towards the man she will marry. The full meaning of this can be made explicit.
veil
a piece of cloth used to cover a person's head, shoulders and face
Genesis 24:67
took Rebekah, and she became his wife
Both of these phrases mean that Isaac married Rebekah. Alternate translation: "married Rebekah" or "took her as his wife"
So Isaac was comforted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So Rebekah comforted Isaac"

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25 [1]Abraham took another wife; her name was Keturah.[2]She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.[3]Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Assyrian people, the Letush people, and the Leum people.[4]Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanok, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's descendants.
[5]Abraham gave all that he owned to Isaac.[6]However, while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them to the land of the east, away from Isaac, his son.
[7]These were the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, 175 years.[8]Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man with a full life, and he was gathered to his people.
[9]Isaac and Ishmael, his sons, buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, which is near Mamre.[10]This field Abraham had bought from the sons of Heth. Abraham was buried there with Sarah his wife.
[11]After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac lived near Beer Lahai Roi.

[12]Now these were the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham.

[13]These were the names of Ishmael's sons, according to their birth order: Nebaioth—the firstborn of Ishmael, Kedar,

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Adbeel, Mibsam,[14]Mishma, Dumah, Massa,[15]Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.[16]These were Ishmael's sons, and these were their names, by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their tribes.
[17]These were the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.
[18]They lived from Havilah to Ashhur, which is near Egypt, as one goes toward Assyria. They lived in hostility with each other.

[19]This is the account of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham became the father of Isaac.[20]Isaac was forty years old when he took as his wife Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean.
[21]Isaac prayed to Yahweh for his wife because she was barren, and Yahweh answered his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.[22]The children struggled together within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" She went to ask Yahweh about this.
[23]Yahweh said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples will be separated from within you.
One people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger."

[24]When it was time for her to give birth, behold, there were twins in her womb.[25]The first child came out red all over like a hairy garment. They called his name Esau.[26]After that, his brother came out. His hand was grasping Esau's heel. He was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when his wife bore them.

[27]The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a quiet man, who spent his time in the tents.[28]Now Isaac loved Esau because he ate the animals that he had hunted, but Rebekah loved Jacob.
[29]Jacob cooked some stew. Esau came in from the field, and he was weak from hunger.[30]Esau said to Jacob, "Feed me with that red stew. Please, I am exhausted!" That is why his name was called Edom.
[31]Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright."[32]Esau said, "Look, I am about to die. What good is the birthright to me?"[33]Jacob said, "First swear to me," so Esau swore an oath and in that way he sold his birthright to Jacob.[34]Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, then got up and went on his way. In this manner Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 25:23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Polygamy

Abraham married another wife. This was sinful of him. Many other Hebrew leaders came to marry multiple wives. This is known as "polygamy." It has never been an acceptable practice. (See: sin)

Inheritance

In the ancient Near East, inheritance was passed on through the eldest son. Even though Esau and Jacob were twins, it is very important that Esau was born first. It was his birthright to receive his inheritance, but he foolishly gave it up. (See: inherit and birthright and foolish)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God fulfills his promise

God begins to fulfill the promise he gave to Abraham about making his descendants numerous. Many of these children through his concubines would become large people groups. This may not be easy to understand without the remainder of the Old Testament and the history it records.

Links:

Genesis 25:1 Notes

Genesis 25:1
General Information:
See.
Genesis 25:4
All these
This refers to the people named in verses 2-4.
Genesis 25:5
Abraham gave all that he owned to Isaac
"Isaac inherited all that Abraham owned." It was normal for the father to divide his wealth when he was old and not leave that for others to do after he died.
Genesis 25:7

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These were the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, 175 years
"These were ... he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years." Abraham lived 175 years.
Genesis 25:8
Abraham breathed his last and died
"Abraham took his last breath and died." The phrases "breathed his last" and "died" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Abraham died"
breathed his last
This is a polite way of saying a person died.
at a good old age, an old man with a full life
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Abraham lived a very long time. Alternate translation: "when he had lived a very long time and was very old"
an old man with a full life
Living a long life is spoken of as if life were a container that becomes full.
he was gathered to his people
This means that after Abraham died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he joined his family members who had already died"
Genesis 25:9
the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron
Ephron owned a field in Machpelah and the cave that was in that field. Abraham bought the field from Ephron.
Machpelah
Machpelah was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:9]
Ephron ... Zohar
These are names of men. See how you translated these men's names in [Genesis 23:8]
which is near Mamre
Machpela was near Mamre.
Mamre
This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this place name in [Genesis 23:17]
Genesis 25:10
This field Abraham had bought
"Abraham had bought this field"
sons of Heth
"the descendants of Heth" or "the Hittites." See how you translated this in Genesis 23:5.
Abraham was buried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They buried Abraham"
Genesis 25:11
Beer Lahai Roi
This name means "the well of the living one who sees me." See how you translated this place name in [Genesis 16:14]
Genesis 25:12
Now
This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story and information about Ishmael.
Genesis 25:13
General Information:
See.
Genesis 25:16
These were Ishmael's sons, and these were their names, by their villages, and by their encampments; twelve princes according to their tribes
This can be stated as two sentences. "These were the names of Ishmael's twelve sons. They led tribes that were named after them, and they each had their own villages and campsites"
twelve
"12"
princes
Here the word "princes" means that the men were leaders or rules of the tribes; it does not mean that they were the sons of a king.
Genesis 25:17
These were the years of the life of Ishmael, 137 years
"These were ... Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years." Ishmael lived 137 years.
breathed his last and died
The terms "breathed his last" and "died" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "died"
was gathered to his people
This means that after Ishmael died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he joined his family members who had already died"
Genesis 25:18
They lived
"His descendants settled"
from Havilah to Ashhur
"between Havilah and Ashhur"
Havilah
Havilah was located somewhere in the Arabian Desert. See how you translated this in [Genesis 2:11]
as one goes toward
"in the direction of"
They lived in hostility with each other
Possible meanings are 1) "they did not live in peace together," or 2) "they lived away from their other relatives."
Genesis 25:20
forty years old
"40 years old"
when he took as his wife Rebekah
"when he married Rebekah"
Bethuel
Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 22:22]
Paddan Aram
This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq.
Genesis 25:21
she was barren
"she was unable to become pregnant"
Rebekah his wife conceived
It can be made explicit that Rebekah was pregnant with two babies at the same time: "Rebekah, his wife, became pregnant with twins"

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Genesis 25:22

The children struggled together within her

"the babies inside her kept bumping against each other" or "The babies pushed against each other within her"

The children ... within her

Rebekah was pregnant with twins.

She went to ask Yahweh about this

"She went and asked Yahweh about this." It is not clear where she went. She may have gone somewhere private to pray, or she may have gone somewhere to offer a sacrifice.

Genesis 25:23

said to her

"said to Rebekah"

Two nations ... serve the younger

This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here.

Two nations are in your womb

Here "two nations" stands for the two children. Each child will be the father of a nation. Alternate translation: "Two nations will come from the twins within you"

two peoples will be separated from within you

Here "two peoples" stands for the two children. Each child will be the father of a people. This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "when you give birth to these two children they will be rivals"

the older will serve the younger

Possible meanings are 1) "the older son will serve the younger son" or 2) "the descendants of the older son will serve the descendants of the younger son." If possible, translate it so that people could understand either meaning.

Genesis 25:24

behold, there

"she was surprised to learn that there"

Genesis 25:25

red all over like a hairy garment

Possible meanings are 1) his skin was red and he had a lot of hair on his body or 2) he had a lot of red hair on his body. Alternate translation: "red and hairy like a garment made of animal hair"

Esau

Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Esau sounds like the word 'hairy.'"

Genesis 25:26

grasping Esau's heel

"holding the back part of Esau's foot"

Jacob

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Jacob means 'he grasps the heel.'"

sixty years old

"60 years old"

Genesis 25:27

became a skillful hunter

"became good at hunting and killing animals for food"

a quiet man

"a peaceful man" or "a less active man"

who spent his time in the tents

This speaks about time as if it were a commodity that someone could spend. Alternate translation: "who remained in the tents much of the time"

Genesis 25:28

Now

This word is used to mark a change in focus, shifting from the story to background information about Isaac and Rebekah.

Isaac loved

Here the word "loved" means "favored" or "preferred."

because he ate the animals that he had hunted

"because he ate the animals that Esau had hunted" or "because he enjoyed eating the wild animal meat that Esau caught"

Genesis 25:29

Jacob cooked

Since this is the beginning of a story about something that happened one time, some translators may want to start it with a phrase like "One day, Jacob cooked" in a similar manner to the UDB.

cooked some stew

"boiled some food" or "cooked some soup." This stew was made of boiled lentils (Genesis 25:34).

he was weak from hunger

"he was weak because he was very hungry" or "he was very hungry"

Genesis 25:30

I am exhausted

"I am weak from hunger" or "I am very hungry"

Edom

Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Edom means 'red.'"

Genesis 25:31

birthright

right as firstborn to inherit most of the father's wealth

Genesis 25:32

I am about to die

Esau was exaggerating to emphasize how hungry he was. Alternate translation: "I am so hungry I feel like I could die"

What good is the birthright to me?

Esau used a question to emphasize that eating was more important than a birthright. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My inheritance is no good to me if I die of hunger!"

Genesis 25:33

First swear to me

What Jacob wanted Esau to swear can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "First swear to me that you will sell me your birthright"

Genesis 25:34

lentils

These are like beans, but their seeds are very small, round, and somewhat flat.

Esau despised his birthright

"Esau showed that he did not value his birthright"

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26 [1]Now a famine happened in the land, besides the first famine that had been in the days of Abraham. Isaac went to Abimelek, king of the Philistines at Gerar.

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[2]Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land that I tell you to live in.[3]Stay in this very land, and I will be with you and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants, I will give all these lands, and I will fulfill the oath that I swore to Abraham your father.
[4]I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and will give to your descendants all these lands. Through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed.[5]I will do this because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
[6]So Isaac settled in Gerar.[7]When the men of the place asked him about his wife, he said, "She is my sister." He feared to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "The men of this place will kill me to get Rebekah, because she is so beautiful."[8]After Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelek king of the Philistines happened to look out of a window. He saw, behold, Isaac was caressing Rebekah, his wife.
[9]Abimelek called Isaac to him and said, "Look, certainly she is your wife. Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought someone might kill me to get her."[10]Abimelek said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us."[11]So Abimelek commanded all the people and said, "Whoever touches this man or his wife will surely be put to death."

[12]Isaac planted crops in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold, because Yahweh blessed him.[13]The man became rich, and grew more and more until he became very great.[14]He had many sheep and cattle, and a large household. The Philistines envied him.
[15]Now all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped them up by filling them with earth.[16]Abimelek said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we."[17]So Isaac departed from there and camped in the Valley of Gerar, and lived there.

[18]Once again Isaac dug out the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father. The Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham's death. Isaac called the wells by the same names that his father had called them.
[19]When Isaac's servants dug in the valley, they found there a well of flowing water.[20]The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, and said, "This water is ours." So Isaac named that well "Esek," because they had quarreled with him.
[21]Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that, too, so he gave it the name of "Sitnah."[22]He left there and dug yet another well, but they did not quarrel over that one. So he called it Rehoboth, and he said, "Now Yahweh has made room for us, and we will prosper in the land."

[23]Then Isaac went up from there to Beersheba.[24]Yahweh appeared to him that same night and said, "I am the God of Abraham your father. Do not fear, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your descendants, for my servant Abraham's sake."[25]Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of Yahweh. There he pitched his tent, and his servants dug a well.

[26]Then Abimelek went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath, his friend, and Phicol, the captain of his army.[27]Isaac said to them, "Why are you coming to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?"
[28]Then they said, "We have clearly seen that Yahweh has been with you. So we decided that there should be an oath between us, yes, between us and you. So let us make a covenant with you,[29]that you will do us no harm, just as we have not harmed you, and as we have treated you well and have sent you away in peace. Indeed, you are blessed by Yahweh."
[30]So Isaac made a feast for them, and they ate and drank.[31]They rose early in the morning and swore an oath with each other. Then Isaac sent them away, and they left him in peace.
[32]That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug. They said, "We have found water."[33]He called the well Shibah, so the name of that city is Beersheba to this day.

[34]When Esau was forty years old, he took a wife, Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and also Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.[35]They brought sorrow to Isaac and Rebekah.

Genesis 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

When things in the land were bad, Isaac did not trust in Yahweh. Instead, he ran to the safety of Egypt. Even when Abraham's descendants did not trust in Yahweh's faithfulness to fulfill his covenant, Yahweh remained faithful to his covenant and blessed Isaac. (See: trust, faithful and fulfill and covenant)

Wells

In the ancient Near East, wells were very important strategically. Therefore, they were a sign of power and a sign of God's

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blessing being upon Isaac.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"She is my sister"

Isaac was afraid the Egyptians would see him as a foreigner and upon seeing his beautiful wife, they would try to kill him. This would free Rebekah to marry someone else. Apparently, it would have been easy for them to kill a foreigner without punishment. If she was Isaac's sister, they would have shown favor to him. This is the same thing his father, Abraham, did. (See: and favor)

Links:

Genesis 26:1 Notes

Genesis 26:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

a famine happened

"there was a famine" or "there was another famine"

in the land

You can state explicitly the land to which this refers. Alternate translation: "in the land where Isaac and his family lived"

that had been in the days of Abraham

"that had happened during Abraham's life" or "that had happened while Abraham was alive"

Genesis 26:2

General Information:

Yahweh begins to speak to Isaac.

appeared to him

"appeared to Isaac"

Do not go down to Egypt

It was common to speak of leaving the promised land as "going down" to another place.

Genesis 26:3

for to you and to your descendants, I will give all these lands

"for I will give all these lands to you and your descendants"

I will fulfill the oath that I swore to Abraham your father

"I will do what I promised Abraham your father I would do"

Genesis 26:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Isaac.

I will multiply your descendants

"I will cause you to have very many descendants."

like the stars of heaven

This speaks about the number of Isaac's descendants as if they were the same as the number of stars. See how you translated this in [Genesis 22:17]

heaven

This refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars.

all the nations of the earth will be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless all the nations of the earth"

Genesis 26:5

Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws

The phrases "obeyed my voice" and "kept my instructions, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Abraham obeyed me and did everything I commanded him to do"

obeyed my voice

Here "voice" stands for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "obeyed me"

Genesis 26:6

So Isaac settled in Gerar

Only Isaac is mentioned because he is the leader of the family, but his whole family was with him. Alternate translation: "So Isaac and his family settled in Gerar"

Genesis 26:7

He feared to say

Here "fear" refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others. "He was afraid to say"

to get Rebekah

"in order to take Rebekah"

Genesis 26:8

He saw, behold, Isaac

The word "behold" shows that what Abimelech saw surprised him. Alternate translation: "And he was surprised to see that Isaac"

was caressing Rebekah

Possible meanings are 1) he was touching her the way a husband touches his wife or 2) he was laughing and talking with her the way a husband talks with his wife.

Genesis 26:9

Abimelek called Isaac to him

Abimelek probably sent someone to tell Isaac that Abimelek wanted to see him. Alternate translation: "Abimelek sent someone to bring Isaac to him"

Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Why did you say that she is your sister?"

to get her

"so he could take her"

Genesis 26:10

What is this you have done to us?

Abimelech used this question to scold Isaac. Alternate translation: "You should not have done this to us!"

might easily have lain with your wife

The word "lain" here is a euphemism for "had sexual relations."

you would have brought guilt upon us

This speaks about causing someone to be guilty as if "guilt" were an object that is placed on someone. Alternate translation: "you would have caused us to be guilty of taking a man's wife"

upon us

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Here "us" refers to Abimelech and his people.
Genesis 26:11
Whoever touches this man
Here "touches" means to touch in a harmful way. Alternate translation: "Whoever harms this man"
will surely be put to death
Abimelech may have intended to tell someone to kill anyone who might harm Isaac or Rebekah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will put him to death" or "I will order my men to kill him"
Genesis 26:12
General Information:
This begins a new part of the story. It changes from telling about Isaac calling Rebekah his sister, and it starts to tell about how Isaac became very rich and the Philistines were jealous of him.
in that land
"in Gerar"
a hundredfold
This means "one hundred times as much as he planted." It can be translated more generally as "a very large crop."
Genesis 26:13
The man became rich
"Isaac became rich" or "He became rich"
grew more and more until he became very great
"he gained more and more until he became very wealthy"
Genesis 26:14
sheep
This may also include goats.
a large household
Here "household" stands for workers or servants. Alternate translation: "many servants"
The Philistines envied him
"The Philistines were jealous of him"
Genesis 26:15
Now
Here this word does not mean "at this moment." It is indicating where the action in the story begins. It can be translated with the connecting word "So" to show that this is a result of what happened in [Genesis 26:12-14]
in the days of Abraham his father
The phrase "in the days of" stands for a person's lifetime. Alternate translation: "when Abraham, his father, was living" or "during his father Abraham's lifetime"
Genesis 26:16
Abimelek said
Possible meanings are 1) this is another action to force Isaac and his people to leave. Alternate translation: "Then Abimelek said" or "Finally Abimelek said" or 2) Abimelek made this decision because he saw that his people were jealous and acting in a hostile way towards Isaac. Alternate translation: "Therefore Abimelek said"
much mightier than we
"much stronger than we are"
Genesis 26:17
So Isaac departed
Only Isaac is mentioned because he is the leader, but his family and servants went with him. Alternate translation: "So Isaac and his household left"
Genesis 26:18
Isaac dug out
Here "Isaac" stands for Isaac and his servants. Alternate translation: "Isaac and his servants dug out"
which they had dug
"which Abraham's servants had dug"
in the days of Abraham his father
"during his father Abraham's lifetime" or "when Abraham, his father, was living"
The Philistines had stopped them up
This was the reason that Isaac dug them out. Possible ways to translate this are: 1) Since this happened first, this sentence can come before the sentence about Isaac digging them out, as in the UDB. or 2) This sentence can start with "Isaac did this because the Philistines had stopped them up."
had stopped them up
"had filled them with earth"
Genesis 26:19
flowing water
This phrase refers to a natural spring they uncovered when they were digging a new well. It provided a continuous flow of fresh drinking water. Alternate translation: "fresh water"
Genesis 26:20
herdsmen
men who tended livestock
This water is ours
Here "ours" refers to the herdsmen of Gerar.
Esek
Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Esek means 'quarrel' or 'argue.'"
Genesis 26:21
Then they dug
"Then Isaac's servants dug"
they quarreled
"the herdsmen of Gerar argued with Isaac's herdsmen"
so he gave it
"so Isaac gave it"
Sitnah
Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Sitnah means 'oppose' or 'accuse.'"
Genesis 26:22
Rehoboth
Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Rehoboth means 'make room for' or 'empty place.'"
us ... we
Isaac was speaking about himself and his household.
Genesis 26:23
Isaac went up from there to Beersheba
Here "went up" is probably a reference to going north. Say that he departed in the most natural way for your language. Alternate translation: "Isaac left there and went to Beersheba"
Genesis 26:24
multiply your descendants
"will cause your descendants to increase greatly" or "will cause your descendants to be very many"
for my servant Abraham's sake
"for my servant Abraham" or you can make the full

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meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "because I promised my servant Abraham that I would do this"

Genesis 26:25

Isaac built an altar there

You can make explicit why Isaac built an altar. Alternate translation: "Isaac built an altar there to sacrifice to Yahweh"

called on the name of Yahweh

To "call on" means to pray or to worship. Here "name" stands for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "prayed to Yahweh" or "worshiped Yahweh"

Genesis 26:26

went to him

"went to Isaac"

Ahuzzath

This is the name of a man.

his friend

Possible meanings are 1) "Abimelech's friend" or 2) "Abimelech's advisor."

Phicol

This is the name of a man. See how you translated his name in Genesis 21:22.

Genesis 26:28

they said

This refers to Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol. One of them spoke and the other two agreed with what he said. It does not mean they all spoke at the same time. Alternate translation: "one of them said"

We have clearly seen

"We know" or "We are certain"

So let us make a covenant

"So we want to make a covenant"

Genesis 26:29

and as we have treated you well

This can also be translated as the beginning of a new sentence. "We have done only good to you"

you are blessed by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has blessed you"

Genesis 26:30

Isaac made a feast for them, and they ate and drank

Eating a meal together was a part of making a covenant with one another.

for them

Here "them" refers to "Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol"

they ate

Here "they" refers to Isaac, Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol. Alternate translation: "they all ate"

Genesis 26:31

They rose early

"They awoke early"

Genesis 26:33

He called the well Shibah

"So he called the well Shibah." Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Shibah sounds like the word that means 'oath.'"

Beersheba

Translators may add a footnote saying "Beersheba can mean either "well of the oath" or "well of seven." (See note on Genesis 21:32)

Genesis 26:34

General Information:

Most of Genesis 26 was about Isaac. These verses are about his older son Esau.

forty

"40"

he took a wife

"he married." You can state explicitly that he married two women. Alternate translation: "he took two wives"

Judith ... Basemath

These are the names of Esau's wives.

Beeri ... Elon

These are names of men.

the Hittite

"the descendant of Heth" or "a descendant of Heth." The Hittite people were the descendants of Heth.

Genesis 26:35

They brought sorrow to Isaac and Rebekah

Here "they" refers to Judith and Basemath. To make someone sorrowful or miserable is spoken of as if "sorrow" were an object that a person could bring to another person. Alternate translation: "They made Isaac and Rebekah sorrowful" or "Isaac and Rebekah were miserable because of them"

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27 [1]When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called Esau, his older son, and said to him, "My son." Esau said to him, "Here I am,"[2]and Isaac said, "See now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death.
[3]Therefore take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me.[4]Make delicious food for me, the sort that I love, and bring it to me so I can eat it and bless you before I die."

[5]Now Rebekah heard it when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it back.
[6]Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son and said, "See here, I heard your father speak to Esau your brother. He said,[7]'Bring me game and make me delicious food, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of Yahweh before my death.'
[8]Now therefore, my son, obey my voice as I command you.[9]Go to the flock, and bring me two good kids; and I will make delicious food from them for your father, just like he loves.[10]You will take it to your father, so that he may eat it, so that he may bless you before his death."
[11]Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "See, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.[12]Perhaps my father will touch me, and I will seem to him as a deceiver. I will bring a curse upon me and not a blessing."
[13]His mother said to him, "My son, let any curse fall on me. Just obey my voice, and go, bring them to me."[14]So Jacob went and got the young goats and brought them to his mother, and his mother made delicious food, just like his father loved.

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[15]Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau, her older son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob, her younger son.[16]She put the skins of the kids on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.[17]She put the delicious food and the bread that she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob.

[18]Jacob went to his father and said, "My father." His father said, "Here I am; who are you, my son?"[19]Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you said to me. Now sit up and eat some of my game, that you may bless me."
[20]Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" He said, "Because Yahweh your God brought it to me."[21]Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near me, so I may touch you, my son, and learn whether you are my true son Esau or not."
[22]Jacob went over to Isaac his father; and Isaac touched him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."[23]Isaac did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy, like his brother Esau's hands, so Isaac blessed him.
[24]He said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He replied, "I am."[25]Isaac said, "Bring the food to me, and I will eat of your game, so that I may bless you." Jacob brought the food to him. Isaac ate, and Jacob brought him wine, and he drank.
[26]Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son."[27]Jacob came near and kissed him, and he smelled the smell of his clothes and blessed him. He said,

"See, the smell of my son
is like the smell of a field
that Yahweh has blessed.
[28] May God give you a portion of the dew of heaven,
a portion of the fatness of the earth,
and plenty of grain and new wine.

[29] May peoples serve you
and nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brothers,
and may your mother's sons bow down to you.
May every one who curses you be cursed;
may every one who blesses you be blessed."

[30]As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, Esau his brother came in from his hunting.[31]He also made delicious food and brought it to his father. He said to his father, "Father, get up and eat some of your son's game, so that you may bless me."
[32]Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."[33]Isaac trembled very much and said, "Who was it that hunted this game and brought it to me? I ate it all before you came, and I have blessed him. Indeed, he will be blessed."
[34]When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a very great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, me also, my father."[35]Isaac said, "Your brother came here deceitfully and has taken away your blessing."
[36]Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has cheated me these two times. He took away my birthright, and, see, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?"[37]Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Look, I have made him your master, and I have given to him all his brothers as servants, and I have given him grain and new wine. What more can I do for you, my son?"
[38]Esau said to his father, "Have you not even one blessing for me, my father? Bless me, even me too, my father." Esau wept loudly.
[39]Isaac his father answered and said to him,

"Look, the place where you live will be
far from the richness of the earth,
away from the dew of the sky above.
[40] By your sword you will live,
and you will serve your brother.
But when you rebel,
you will break his yoke off of your neck."

[41]Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing that his father had given him. Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are near; after that I will kill my brother Jacob."[42]The words of Esau her older son were told to

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Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son and said to him, "See, your brother Esau is consoling himself about you by planning to kill you.
[43]Now therefore, my son, obey me and flee to Laban, my brother, in Haran.[44]Stay with him for a while, until your brother's fury subsides,[45]until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and bring you back from there. Why should I lose you both in one day?

[46]Rebekah said to Isaac, "I abhor life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes one of the daughters of Heth as a wife, like these women, some of the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

Genesis 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 27:27-29 and in 27:39-40.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessing

In the ancient Near East, a father's blessing was very important. This spoken blessing was legally binding. Jacob previously received the birthright from Esau and was guaranteed the double portion of land money that was supposed to be inherited by the older son, Esau. In this chapter, Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him Esau's blessing. This means that he is to inherit the promises of the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham. (See: bless, birthright, inherit and promise and covenant)

Links:

Genesis 27:1 Notes

Genesis 27:1

his eyes were dim

This speaks about being nearly blind as if the eyes were a lamp and the light has nearly gone out. Alternate translation: "he was nearly blind" or "he was almost blind"

Here I am

"I am here" or "I am listening." See how you translated this in Genesis 22:1.

Genesis 27:2

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 12:11.

I do not know the day of my death

It is implied that Isaac knows he will die soon. Alternate translation: "I may die any day now"

death

This refers to physical death.

Genesis 27:3

General Information:

Isaac continues giving instructions to his older son Isaac.

your weapons

"your hunting equipment"

your quiver

A quiver is a case for holding arrows. Alternate translation: "your quiver of arrows"

hunt game for me

"hunt a wild animal for me"

Genesis 27:4

Make delicious food for me, the sort that I love

The word "delicious" refers to something that tastes very good. Alternate translation: "Cook for me the tasty meat that I love"

bless you

In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.

Genesis 27:5

Connecting Statement:

This verse is background information for the description of the events that follow.

Now

This verse is background information for the description of the events that follow. The word "now" shows that the author is going to begin to talk about Rebekah and Jacob.

Rebekah heard it when Isaac spoke to Esau his son

"Rebekah heard Isaac speaking to his son Esau"

to Esau his son

Esau was the son of both Isaac and Rebekah. The author calls Esau "his son" to emphasize that Isaac preferred Esau over Isaac.

Genesis 27:6

Connecting Statement:

This verse continues the background information that begins with the words "Now Rebekah heard" in verse 5. It is background information for the description of the events that follow.

Rebekah spoke to Jacob

This verse continues the background information that begins with the words "Esau went ... bring it back" in verse 5. It is background information for the description of the events that follow. After Esau leaves, Rebekah speaks to Jacob because of what she has heard. "So when Esau went ... bring it back, Rebekah spoke to Jacob"

to Jacob her son

Jacob was the son of both Isaac and Rebekah. The author

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calls Jacob "her son" here to emphasize that Rebekah preferred Jacob over Esau.

See here

The phrase "see here" adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully"

Genesis 27:7

'Bring me game and make me delicious food, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of Yahweh before my death.'

These are the words that the author introduces with the words "He said" in verse 6. This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. "He told Esau to hunt a wild animal, and to make the tasty meat that he loves. Then before he dies, your father will bless Esau in the presence of Yahweh."

Bring me game

"Bring me a wild animal that you hunt and kill"

make me delicious food

"cook for me the tasty meat that I love." See how this was translated in Genesis 27:4.

bless you in the presence of Yahweh

"bless you before Yahweh"

before my death

"before I die"

Genesis 27:8

General Information:

Rebekah continues to speak to her younger son Jacob.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

obey my voice as I command you

Rebekah said "my voice" to refer to what she was saying. Alternate translation: "obey me and do what I tell you"

Genesis 27:9

I will make delicious food from them for your father, just like he loves

The word "delicious" refers to something that tastes very good. See how a similar sentence was translated in Genesis 27:4.

Genesis 27:10

You will take it to your father

"Then take it to your father"

so that he may eat it, so that he may bless you

"and after he eats it, he will bless you"

he may bless you

The word "bless" refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.

before his death

"before he dies"

Genesis 27:11

I am a smooth man

"I am a man with smooth skin" or "I am not hairy"

Genesis 27:12

I will seem to him as a deceiver

"he will think that I am a liar" or "he will know that I am deceiving him"

I will bring a curse upon me and not a blessing

Being cursed or blessed is spoken of as if a curse and a blessing are objects that are placed on a person. Alternate translation: "Then because of this, he will curse me and not bless me"

Genesis 27:13

My son, let any curse fall on me

"let your curse be on me, my son." Being cursed is spoken of as if the curse were on object that is placed on the person. Alternate translation: "let your father curse me instead of you, my son"

obey my voice

Rebekah said "my voice" to refer to what she was saying. Alternate translation: "obey what I tell you" or "obey me"

bring them to me

"bring me the young goats"

Genesis 27:14

made delicious food, just like his father loved

The word "delicious" refers to something that tastes very good. See how a similar sentence was translated in Genesis 27:4.

Genesis 27:16

She put the skins of the kids on his hands

The goat skins still had the hair on them.

Genesis 27:17

She put the delicious food and the bread that she had prepared into the hand of her son Jacob

"She gave to her son Jacob the delicious food and bread which she had prepared"

Genesis 27:18

Here I am

"Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?" See how you translated this in Genesis 22:1.

Genesis 27:19

I have done as you said to me

"I have done what you told me to do"

some of my game

The word "game" refers to wild animals that someone hunts and kills. See how "game" was translated in Genesis 27:3.

Genesis 27:20

He said

"Jacob replied"

brought it to me

This is an idiom meaning that God caused it to happen. Alternate translation: "helped me to succeed while hunting"

Genesis 27:21

whether you are my true son Esau or not

"if you are really my son Esau"

Genesis 27:22

Jacob went over to Isaac his father

"Jacob approached Isaac his father"

The voice is Jacob's voice

Here Issac speaks of Jacob's voice as representing Jacob. Alternate translation: "You sound like Jacob"

but the hands are the hands of Esau

Here Issac speaks of Esau's hands as representing Esau. Alternate translation: "but your hands feel like Esau's hands"

Genesis 27:24

He said

Isaac asks this question before blessing his son. Alternate translation: "But first Isaac asked"

Genesis 27:25

eat of your game
The word "game" refers to a wild animal that people hunt and kill. See how "game" was translated in Genesis 27:7.
he drank
"Isaac drank it"
Genesis 27:27
he smelled the smell of his clothes and blessed him
It can be made explicit that the clothes smelled like Esau's clothes. Alternate translation: "he smelled his clothes and they smelled like Esau's clothes, so Isaac blessed him"
he smelled
"Isaac smelled"
the smell
"the scent"
blessed him
"then he blessed him." This refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.
See, the smell of my son
The word "see" is used as an emphatic figure of speech to mean "it is true." Alternate translation: "Truly, the smell of my son"
that Yahweh has blessed
Here the word "blessed" means that Yahweh has caused good things to happen to the field and it has become fruitful. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh has caused to be very productive"
Genesis 27:28
General Information:
This is Isaac's blessing. He thought he was speaking to Esau, but he was speaking to Jacob.
give you
Here "you" is singular and refers to Jacob. But the blessing would also apply to Jacob's descendants.
dew of heaven
"Dew" is drops of water that form on the plants during the night. This can be made explicit in the translation. Alternate translation: "night mist from heaven to water your crops"
fatness of the earth
Having fertile land is spoken of as if the earth were fat or rich. Alternate translation: "good soil for producing crops"
plenty of grain and new wine
If "grain" and "wine" are unknown, this can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "plenty of food and drink"
Genesis 27:29
you ... your
Here these pronouns are singular and refer to Jacob. But the blessing also applies to Jacob's descendants.
nations bow down
Here "nations" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "people from all nations bow down"
bow down
This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.
Be master over your brothers
"Become a master over your brothers"
your brothers ... your mother's sons
Isaac is speaking this blessing directly to Jacob. But, it also applies to Jacob's descendants who will rule over the descendants of Esau and the descendants of any other of Jacob's brothers that he may have.
may your mother's sons bow down to you
"your mother's sons will bow down to you"
May every one who curses you be cursed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God curse everyone who curses you"
may every one who blesses you be blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God bless everyone who blesses you"
Genesis 27:30
had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father
"had just left the tent of Isaac his father"
Genesis 27:31
delicious food
"tasty meat that I love." See how this was translated in Genesis 27:3.
some of your son's game
Here "your son's" was a polite way of Esau referring to his own food he prepared.
your son's game
The word "game" refers to wild animals that people hunt to eat. See how "game" was translated in Genesis 27:7.
bless me
This refers to the formal blessing a father pronounces on his children.
Genesis 27:32
said to him
"said to Esau"
Genesis 27:33
Isaac trembled
"Isaac began to shake"
hunted this game
Game refers to a wild animal that people hunt and kill. See how "game" was translated in Genesis 27:7.
Genesis 27:34
he cried with a very great and bitter cry
Esau's anguish was similar to the taste of something bitter. Alternate translation: "he cried loudly"
Genesis 27:35
has taken away your blessing
This is a figure of speech meaning Jacob took what was Esau's. Alternate translation: "I have blessed him instead of you"
Genesis 27:36
Is he not rightly named Jacob?
Esau uses a question to emphasize his anger at Jacob. Alternate translation: "Jacob is certainly the right name for my brother!"
Jacob
Translators may also add a footnote that says: "The name Jacob means 'he grasps the heel.' In the original language the name 'Jacob' also sounds like the word for 'he deceives.'"
He took away my birthright
This speaks about a birthright as if it were an object that a person could take away. Alternate translation: "What was once my birthright is now his because he tricked me"
now he has taken away my blessing

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This speaks about a blessing as if it were an object that person could take away. Alternate translation: "now he has tricked you into blessing him instead of me"

Have you not reserved a blessing for me

Esau knows that his father cannot bless him with the same things that he blessed Jacob. Esau is asking if there is anything left to say to him that Isaac did not say while blessing Jacob.

Genesis 27:37

What more can I do for you, my son?

Isaac uses a question to emphasize that there is nothing else he can do. Alternate translation: "There is nothing else I can do for you!"

Genesis 27:38

Have you not even one blessing for me, my father

This can be stated in positive form. "My father, do you have one more blessing for me"

Genesis 27:39

said to him

"said to Esau"

Look, the place

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: the place"

far from the richness of the earth

This is a figure of speech referring to the earth's fertility. Alternate translation: "far from the fertile soil"

dew of the sky above

"Dew" is drops of water that form on the plants during the night. This can be made explicit in the translation. Alternate translation: "the night mist from the sky to water your crops"

Genesis 27:40

your ... you

In 27:39-40 these pronouns are singular and refer to Esau, but what Isaac says also applies to Esau's descendants

By your sword you will live

Here "sword" stands for violence. Alternate translation: "You will rob and kill people in order to get what you need to live"

you will break his yoke off of your neck

This speaks about someone having a master as if the master's control over the person were a yoke that the person had to carry. Alternate translation: "you will free yourself from his control"

Genesis 27:41

Esau bore a grudge against Jacob

Esau believed that Jacob had wronged him, and so Esau did not want to forgive Jacob.

Esau said in his heart

Here "heart" stands for Esau himself. Alternate translation: "Esau said to himself"

days of mourning for my father are near

This refers to a number of days a person grieves when a family member dies.

Genesis 27:42

The words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Rebekah about Esau's plan"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

is consoling himself

"is making himself feel better"

Genesis 27:43

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

flee to Laban

"leave here quickly and go to Laban"

Genesis 27:44

for a while

"for a period of time"

until your brother's fury subsides

"until you brother calms down"

Genesis 27:45

until your brother's anger turns away from you

No longer being angry is spoken of as if the anger turns to a different direction away from the person. Alternate translation: "until he is no longer angry with you"

Why should I lose you both in one day?

Rebekah uses a question to emphasize her concern. Alternate translation: "I do not want to lose both of you in one day!"

I lose you both in one day

It is implied that if Esau kills Jacob, then they will execute Esau as a murderer.

I lose

This is a polite way of referring to her sons dying.

Genesis 27:46

I abhor life

Rebekah is exaggerating to emphasize how upset she is about the Hittite women that Esau married. Alternate translation: "I am terribly upset"

the daughters of Heth

"these Hittite women" or "descendants of Heth"

like these women, some of the daughters of the land

The phrase "daughters of the land" means the local females. Alternate translation: "like these women who live in this land"

what good will my life be to me?

Rebekah uses a question to emphasize how upset she would be if Jacob marries a Hittite woman. Alternate translation: "My life will be awful!"

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28 [1]Isaac called Jacob, blessed him, and commanded him, "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women.[2]Arise, go to Paddan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take a wife from there, one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

[3]May God Almighty bless you, make you fruitful and multiply you, so that you may become a community of peoples.[4]May he give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your descendants after you, that you may inherit the land where you have been sojourning, which God gave to Abraham."

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[5]So Isaac sent Jacob away. Jacob went to Paddan Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

[6]Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan Aram, to take a wife from there. He also saw that Isaac had blessed him and given him a command, saying, "You must not take a wife from the women of Canaan."[7]Esau also saw that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother, and had gone to Paddan Aram.
[8]Esau saw that the women of Canaan did not please Isaac his father.[9]So he went to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife.

[10]Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran.[11]He came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones in that place, put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.
[12]He dreamed and saw a stairway set up on the earth. Its top reached to heaven and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.[13]Behold, Yahweh stood above it and said, "I am Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are lying, I will give to you and to your descendants.
[14]Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread far out to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south. Through you and through your descendants will all the families of the earth be blessed.[15]Behold, I am with you, and I will keep you wherever you go. I will bring you into this land again; for I will not leave you. I will do all that I have promised to you."
[16]Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely Yahweh is in this place, and I did not know it."[17]He was afraid and said, "How terrifying is this place! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven."

[18]Jacob arose early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head. He set it up as a pillar and poured oil upon the top of it.[19]He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city originally was Luz.
[20]Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will protect me on this road on which I am walking, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to wear,[21]so that I return safely to my father's house, then Yahweh will be my God.[22]Then this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be a sacred stone. From everything that you give me, I will surely give a tenth back to you."

Genesis 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Even though Jacob tricked his father in order to receive Esau's blessing, the chapter repeats the blessing, ensuring he inherits the blessings promised to Abraham. (See: bless and inherit and promise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob's dream

Jacob had a dream or received a vision. The purpose of this dream is to show that, despite Jacob's sin, God is giving Abraham's covenant promises to Jacob and his descendants. (See: sin and covenant and promise)

Bethel

This was an important city for Abraham and his descendants. It is possible that there is some theological significance to the city of Bethel.

Links:

Genesis 28:1 Notes

Genesis 28:1

You must not take

"Do not take"

Genesis 28:2

Arise, go

"Go right away"

Paddan Aram

This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [Genesis 25:20]

house of

This refers to a person's descendants or other relatives. Alternate translation: "family"

Bethuel

Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 22:22]

your mother's father

"your grandfather"

one of the daughters

"from the daughters"

your mother's brother

"your uncle"

Genesis 28:3

General Information:

Isaac continues speaking to Jacob

make you fruitful and multiply you

The word "multiply" explains how God would make Jacob "fruitful." Alternate translation: "give you many children

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and descendants"
Genesis 28:4
May he give you the blessing of Abraham, to you, and to your descendants after you
This speaks about blessing someone as if a blessing were an object that a person can give. The abstract noun "the blessing" can be stated as "bless." Alternate translation: "May God bless you and your descendants as he blessed Abraham" or "May God give to you and your descendants what he promised to Abraham"
that you may inherit the land
God giving the land of Canaan to Jacob and his descendants is spoken of as if a child were inheriting money or possessions from his father.
the land where you have been sojourning
"the land where you have been staying"
which God gave to Abraham
"which God promised to Abraham"
Genesis 28:5
Paddan Aram
This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [Genesis 25:20]
Bethuel
Bethuel was Rebekah's father. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 22:22]
Genesis 28:6
General Information:
The story changes from Jacob to Esau
Now
This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Esau.
Paddan Aram
This was another name for the region of Mesopotamia, which about the same location as modern Iraq. See how this was translated in [Genesis 25:20]
to take a wife
"to take a wife for himself"
He also saw that Isaac had blessed him
"Esau also saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob"
You must not take
"Do not take"
women of Canaan
"daughters of Canaan" or "Canaanite women"
Genesis 28:8
General Information:
This continues the background information about Esau.
Esau saw
"Esau realized"
the women of Canaan did not please Isaac his father
"his father Isaac did not approve of the women of Canaan"
women of Canaan
"daughters of Canaan" or "the Canaanite women"
Genesis 28:9
So he went
"Because of that, he went"
besides the wives that he had
"in addition to the wives that he already had"
Mahalath
This is the name of one of Ishmael's daughters.
Nebaioth
This is the name of one of Ishmael's sons.
Genesis 28:10
General Information:
The story switches back to Jacob
Genesis 28:11
He came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set
"He came to a certain place and, because the sun had set, he decided to stay for the night"
Genesis 28:12
He dreamed
"Jacob had a dream"
set up on the earth
"with the bottom of it touching the ground"
reached to heaven
This refers to the place where God lives.
Genesis 28:13
Behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
Yahweh stood above it
Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh was standing at the top of the stairway" or 2) "Yahweh was standing next to Jacob"
Abraham your father
Here "father" means "ancestor." Alternate translation: "Abraham your ancestor" or "Abraham your forefather"
Genesis 28:14
General Information:
God continues to talk to Jacob in a dream.
Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth
God compares Jacob's descendants to the dust of the earth to emphasize their huge number. Alternate translation: "You will have more descendants than you can count"
you will spread far out to the west
The word "you" is singular and refers to Jacob. Here Jacob represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "your descendants will spread out to the west"
you will spread far out
This means the people will extend the borders of their land and occupy more territory.
to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south
This phrases are used together to mean "all directions." Alternate translation: "in all directions"
Through you and through your descendants will all the families of the earth be blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless all families on the earth through you and your descendants"
Genesis 28:15
Behold, I am
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I am"
for I will not leave you. I will do all
"for I will not leave you until I have done all"
I will keep you
"I will keep you safe" or "I will protect you"
I will bring you into this land again

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"I will bring you back to this land"

Genesis 28:16

awoke out of his sleep

"woke up from his sleep"

Genesis 28:17

the house of God ... the gate of heaven

The phrase "the gate of heaven" explains that this place is the entrance to "the house of God" and "the entrance to where God lives."

This is the gate of heaven

This speaks about the entrance to the place where God lives as if it were a literal kingdom that had a gate that someone has to open to let people in.

Genesis 28:18

pillar

This is a memorial pillar, that is, simply a large stone or boulder set up on its end.

poured oil upon the top of it

This action symbolizes that Jacob is dedicating the pillar to God. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "poured oil on the top of it in order to dedicate the pillar to God"

Genesis 28:19

Bethel

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Bethel means 'house of God.'"

Luz

This is the name of a city.

Genesis 28:20

Connecting Statement:

Jacob begins to make a vow to Yahweh.

vowed a vow

"made a vow" or "solemnly promised God"

If God will ... clothes to wear

Jacob is speaking to God in the third person. This can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "If you will ... clothes to wear"

on this road on which I am walking

This stands for Jacob's journey to find a wife and to return home. Alternate translation: "on this journey"

will give me bread to eat

Here "bread" stands for food in general.

Genesis 28:21

Connecting Statement:

The vow that began with the words "If God will ... clothes to wear" in verse 20 continues here.

so that I return safely ... then Yahweh will be my God

The vow that began with the words "If God will ... clothes to wear" in verse 20 continues here. Jacob is speaking to God in the third person. This can be stated in the second person. "If you will ... clothes to wear ... so that I return safely ... then you, Yahweh, will be the God that I will worship"

to my father's house

Here "house" stands for Jacob's family. Alternate translation: "to my father and the rest of my family"

Genesis 28:22

a sacred stone

This means that the stone will mark the place where God appeared to him and it will be a place where people can worship God. Alternate translation: "God's house" or "God's place"

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29 [1]Then Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east.[2]As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and, behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there by it. For out of that well they would water the flocks, and the stone over the well's mouth was large.[3]When all the flocks had gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the well's mouth and water the sheep, and then put the stone again over the well's mouth, back in its place.
[4]Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" They replied, "We are from Haran."[5]He said to them, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We know him."[6]He said to them, "Is he well?" They said, "He is well, and, look there, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep."
[7]Jacob said, "See, it is the middle of the day. It is not the time for the flocks to be gathered together. You should water the sheep and then go and let them graze."[8]They said, "We cannot water them until all the flocks are gathered together. The men will then roll the stone from the well's mouth, and we will water the sheep."
[9]While Jacob was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was tending them.[10]When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, Jacob came over, rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.
[11]Jacob kissed Rachel and wept loudly.[12]Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative, and that he was Rebekah's son. Then she ran and told her father.

[13]When Laban heard the news about Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, embraced him, kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things.[14]Laban said to him, "You are indeed my bone and my flesh." Then Jacob stayed with him for about one month.
[15]Then Laban said to Jacob, "Should you serve me for nothing because you are my relative? Tell me, what will your wages be?"[16]Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.[17]Leah's eyes were tender, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance.[18]Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter."
[19]Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you, than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me."[20]So Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him only a few days, for the love he had for her.

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[21]Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days have been completed—so that I may go to her!"[22]So Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast.
[23]In the evening, Laban took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob, who went to her.[24]Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah, to be her servant.[25]In the morning, behold, it was Leah! Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?"
[26]Laban said, "It is not our custom to give the younger daughter before the firstborn.[27]Complete the bridal week of this daughter, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years."
[28]Jacob did so, and completed Leah's week. Then Laban gave him Rachel his daughter as his wife also.[29]Laban also gave Bilhah to his daughter Rachel, to be her servant.[30]So Jacob went to Rachel, too, but he loved Rachel more than Leah. So Jacob served Laban for seven more years.

[31]Yahweh saw that Leah was not loved, so he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.[32]Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben. For she said, "Because Yahweh has looked upon my affliction; surely now my husband will love me."
[33]Then she conceived again and bore a son. She said, "Because Yahweh has heard that I am unloved, he has therefore given me this son also," and she called his name Simeon.[34]Then she conceived again and bore a son. She said, "Now this time will my husband be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.
[35]She conceived again and bore a son. She said, "This time I will praise Yahweh." Therefore she called his name Judah; then she stopped having children.

Genesis 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the conflict between Jacob's wives, Rachel and Leah. This account continues into the next chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Shepherds

Although the exact reasoning for the shepherds' unwillingness to give water to the sheep is unknown, it is probable they were being lazy. The actions of these shepherds contrast Jacob's actions.

Kissing

It was common in the ancient Near East for relatives to greet each other with a kiss. There was nothing sexual about this type of kissing.

Marriage

It was customary in the ancient Near East for a man to work for a woman's father in order to earn the right to marry her. It is unknown how common it was for a father to have his younger daughter marry before an older daughter. It was also sinful for Jacob to marry more than one wife. (See: sin)

Links:

Genesis 29:1 Notes

Genesis 29:1
the people of the east
This means the people of Paddan Aram, which is a land east of the land of Canaan.
Genesis 29:2
and, behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there by it
The word "behold" marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
For out of that well
"For from that well." This phrase marks a change from the story to background information about how the shepherds watered the flocks.
they would water
"the shepherds would water" or "those taking care of the sheep would water"
the well's mouth
Here "mouth" is a way of referring to an opening. Alternate translation: "the opening of the well"
Genesis 29:4
Jacob said to them
"Jacob said to the shepherds"
My brothers
This is a polite way to greet a stranger.
Genesis 29:5
Laban son of Nahor
Here "son" refers to a male descendant. Another possible meaning is "Laban the grandson of Nahor."
Genesis 29:6
and, look there, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep
"Now look! Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep"
Genesis 29:7
it is the middle of the day
"the sun is still high in the sky" or "the sun is still shining brightly"
for the flocks to be gathered together

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for you to gather the flocks"

to be gathered together

This means to gather them together inside a fence for them to stay for the night. The full meaning of this can be made explicit.

let them graze

"let them eat grass in the field"

Genesis 29:8

We cannot water them

"We have to wait to water them." This has to do with timing, not permission.

until all the flocks are gathered together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the other shepherds gather their flocks"

from the well's mouth

Here "mouth" is way of referring to an opening. Alternate translation: "from the well" or "from the opening of the well"

and we will water the sheep

"then we will water the sheep"

Genesis 29:10

his mother's brother

"his uncle"

the well's mouth

Here "mouth" is a way of referring to an opening. Alternate translation: "the well" or "the opening of the well"

Genesis 29:11

Jacob kissed Rachel

In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. However, it is normally done between men. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.

wept loudly

Jacob weeps because he is so happy. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Genesis 29:12

her father's relative

"related to her father"

Genesis 29:13

his sister's son

"his nephew"

embraced him

"hugged him"

kissed him

In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. However, it is normally done between men. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.

Jacob told Laban all these things

"then Jacob told Laban everything he told Rachel"

Genesis 29:14

my bone and my flesh

This phrase means they are directly related. Alternate translation: "my relative" or "a member of my family"

Genesis 29:15

Should you serve me for nothing ... my relative?

Laban uses a question to emphasize that he should pay Jacob for working for him. The question can be translated as a statement. This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "It is certainly right that I should pay you for working for me even though you are my relative."

Genesis 29:16

Now Laban had

The word "now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Laban and his daughters.

Genesis 29:17

Leah's eyes were tender

Possible meanings are 1) "Leah's eyes were pretty" or 2) "Leah's eyes were plain"

Genesis 29:18

Jacob loved Rachel

Here the word "loved" refers to a romantic attraction between a man and a woman.

Genesis 29:19

than that I should give her to another man

"rather than give her to another man"

Genesis 29:20

and they seemed to him only a few days

"but the time seemed to him to be only a few days"

for the love he had for her

"on account of the love he had for her" or "because of his love for her"

Genesis 29:21

for my days have been completed

The phrase "my days" refers to the seven years Jacob had to work for Laban. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for my days of working for you have been completed" or "For I have completed the length of time that I was to work for you"

so that I may go to her

This is a polite way of referring to having sexual relations with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

Genesis 29:22

made a feast

"prepared a wedding feast." Most likely Laban had others prepare the feast. Alternate translation: "had others prepare a wedding feast"

Genesis 29:23

who went to her

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

Genesis 29:24

Laban gave his female servant Zilpah ... her servant

Here the author gives background information about Laban giving Zilpah to Leah. Most likely he gave Zilpah to Leah before the wedding.

Zilpah

This is the name of Leah's female servant.

Genesis 29:25

behold, it was Leah

"Jacob was surprised to see it was Leah in bed with him." The word "behold" here shows that Jacob was surprised by what he saw.

What is this you have done to me?

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Jacob uses a question to express his anger and surprise. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe you did this to me!"

Did I not serve you for Rachel?

Jacob uses these questions to express his hurt that Laban had tricked him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I served you for seven years to marry Rachel!"

Genesis 29:26

It is not our custom to give

"In our family we do not give"

Genesis 29:27

Complete the bridal week of this daughter

"Finish celebrating Leah's bridal week"

we will give you the other also

The full meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "next week we will give you Rachel also"

Genesis 29:28

Jacob did so, and completed Leah's week

"And Jacob did what Laban asked, and finished celebrating Leah's bridal week"

Genesis 29:29

Bilhah

This is the name of Rachel's female servant.

Genesis 29:30

Jacob went to Rachel

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

he loved Rachel

This refers to the romantic love between a man and a woman.

Genesis 29:31

Leah was not loved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jacob did not love Leah"

not loved

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. Alternate translation: "loved less than Rachel"

so he opened her womb

God causing Leah to be able to become pregnant is spoken of as if God is opening her womb.

was barren

"was not able to become pregnant"

Genesis 29:32

Leah conceived and bore a son

"Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son"

she called his name Reuben

Translators may also add a footnote that says: "The name Reuben means 'See, a son.'"

Yahweh has looked upon my affliction

Leah was experiencing emotional pain because Jacob had rejected her. The abstract noun "affliction" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Yahweh saw that I was suffering"

Genesis 29:33

Then she conceived

"Then Leah became pregnant"

bore a son

"gave birth to a son"

Yahweh has heard that I am unloved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has heard that my husband does not love me"

she called his name Simeon

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Simeon means 'heard.'"

Genesis 29:34

will my husband be attached to me

"my husband will embrace me"

I have borne him three sons

"I have given birth to three sons for him"

his name was called Levi

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Levi means 'attached.'"

Genesis 29:35

She conceived again

"Leah became pregnant again"

bore a son

"gave birth to a son"

she called his name Judah

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Judah means 'praise.'"

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30 [1]When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel was jealous of her sister. She said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I will die."[2]Jacob's anger burned against Rachel. He said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"
[3]She said, "See, there is my servant Bilhah. Go to her, so she might give birth to children on my knees, and I will have children by her."[4]So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went to her.
[5]Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.[6]Then Rachel said, "God has vindicated me, and he has heard my voice and given me a son." For this reason she called his name Dan.
[7]Bilhah, Rachel's servant, conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.[8]Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister and have prevailed." She called his name Naphtali.

[9]When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took Zilpah, her servant, and gave her to Jacob as a wife.
[10]Zilpah, Leah's servant, bore Jacob a son.[11]Leah said, "This is fortunate!" so she called his name Gad.
[12]Then Zilpah, Leah's servant, bore Jacob a second son.[13]Leah said, "I am happy! For the daughters will call me happy." So she called his name Asher.

[14]Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field. He brought them to his mother Leah. Then

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Rachel said to Leah, "Give me some of your son's mandrakes."[15]Leah said to her, "Is it a small matter to you, that you have taken away my husband? Do you now want to take away my son's mandrakes, too?" Rachel said, "Then he will lie with you tonight, in exchange for your son's mandrakes."
[16]Jacob came from the field in the evening. Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come to me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So Jacob lay with Leah that night.[17]God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.[18]Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I gave my servant woman to my husband." She called his name Issachar.
[19]Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob.[20]Leah said, "God has given me a good gift. Now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons." She called his name Zebulun.[21]Afterwards she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah.
[22]God called Rachel to mind and listened to her. He caused her to become pregnant.[23]She conceived and bore a son. She said, "God has taken away my shame."[24]She called his name Joseph, saying, "Yahweh has added to me another son."

[25]After Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, so that I may go to my own home and to my country.
[26]Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go, for you know the service I have given you."
[27]Laban said to him, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, wait, because I have learned by using divination that Yahweh has blessed me for your sake."[28]Then he said, "Name your wages, and I will pay them."
[29]Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you, and how your livestock have fared with me.[30]For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly. Yahweh has blessed you wherever I worked. Now when will I provide for my own household also?"
[31]So Laban said, "What will I pay you?" Jacob said, "You will not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed your flock and keep it.[32]Let me walk through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats. These will be my wages.
[33]My integrity will testify for me later on, when you come to check on my wages. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, if any are found with me, will be considered to be stolen."[34]Laban said, "Agreed. Let it be according to your word."
[35]That day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons.
[36]Laban also put three days' journey between himself and Jacob. So Jacob kept tending the rest of Laban's flocks.

[37]Jacob took fresh cut branches of the poplar, almond, and plane trees, and he peeled white streaks in them and made the white inner wood appear that was in the sticks.[38]Then he set the sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks, in front of the watering troughs where they came to drink. They conceived when they came to drink.
[39]The flocks bred in front of the sticks; and the flocks produced striped, speckled, and spotted young.[40]Jacob separated out these lambs, but made the rest of them face toward the striped animals and all the black sheep in the flock of Laban. Then he separated out his flocks for himself alone and did not put them together with Laban's flocks.
[41]Whenever the stronger sheep in the flock were breeding, then Jacob would lay the sticks in the watering troughs before the eyes of the flock, so that they might conceive among the sticks.[42]But when the feebler animals in the flock came, he did not put the sticks in front of them. So the feebler animals were Laban's, and the stronger were Jacob's.
[43]The man became very prosperous. He had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Genesis 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the story of the conflict between Rachel and Leah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Women and their children

In the ancient Near East, it was important for a married woman to have many children. If a woman did not have many children, people believed it brought shame upon her. This is one of the reasons why Rachel and Leah were always jealous of each other. (See: jealous)

Speckled and spotted

Speckled and spotted sheep were considered to be imperfect. Therefore, they were considered to be much less valuable than the spotless sheep. Despite Jacob's fair offer, Laban once again tried to cheat him out of something he deserved. Jacob anticipated Laban's cheating.

Links:

Genesis 30:1 Notes

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Genesis 30:1

When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children

"When Rachel realized that she was unable to become preganant"

I will die

Rachel is exaggerating to show how upset she is about not having children. Alternate translation: "I will feel completely worthless"

Give me children

"Cause me to become pregnant"

Genesis 30:2

Jacob's anger burned against Rachel

Jacob's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "Jacob was very angry with Rachel"

Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?

This is a rhetorical question that Jacob uses to scold Rachel. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am not God! I am not the one who is preventing you from having children!"

Genesis 30:3

She said

"Rachel said"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

there is my servant Bilhah ... I will have children by her

At that time, this was an acceptable way for a barren woman to have children that would legally belong to her. The full meaning of this may be made explicit.

Bilhah

This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in Genesis 29:29.

Go to her

This is a polite way of asking him to have sexual relations with her servant. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

on my knees

This is a way of saying that the child that Bilhah gives birth to will belong to Rachel. Alternate translation: "for me"

I will have children by her

"and in this way she will cause me to have children"

Genesis 30:4

Jacob went to her

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with Bilhah. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]

Genesis 30:5

Bilhah

This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in Genesis 29:29.

bore Jacob a son

"gave birth to a son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:6

she called his name

"Rachel gave him the name"

called his name Dan

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Dan means 'he judged.'"

Genesis 30:7

Bilhah ... conceived again

"Bilhah ... became pregnant again"

bore Jacob a second son

"gave birth to a second son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:8

With mighty wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister

The phrase "wrestlings have I wrestled" is an idiom used for emphasis. It is also a metaphor that speaks of Rachel's attempts to have a child like her sister as if she were having a physical fight with Leah. Alternate translation: "I have had a great struggle to have children like my older sister, Leah"

have prevailed

"I have won" or "I have succeeded"

called his name Naphtali

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Naphtali means 'my struggle.'"

Genesis 30:9

When Leah saw that

"When Leah became aware that"

she took Zilpah, her servant, and gave her to Jacob as a wife

"she gave Zilpah, her servant, to Jacob as a wife"

Zilpah

This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this in Genesis 29:24.

Genesis 30:10

bore Jacob a son

"gave birth to a son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:11

This is fortunate!

"How fortunate!" or "What good luck!"

called his name Gad

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Gad means 'fortunate.'"

Genesis 30:12

Zilpah

This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:24]

bore Jacob a second son

"gave birth to a second son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:13

I am happy!

"How blessed I am!" or "How happy I am!"

the daughters

"the women" or "the young women"

called his name Asher

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Asher means 'happy.'"

Genesis 30:14

Reuben went

"Reuben went out"

in the days of wheat harvest

Here the phrase "in the days of" is an idiom that refers to the season or time of year. Alternate translation: "at the

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time of year of the wheat harvest" or "during the wheat harvest"

mandrakes

This is a fruit that was said to increase fertility and the desire to sleep with one's lover. Alternate translation: "love fruit"

Genesis 30:15

Is it a small matter to you ... my husband?

"Do you not care ... my husband?" This is a rhetorical question used to scold Rachel. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is bad enough ... my husband."

Do you now want ... too?

This is a rhetorical question, used to scold Rachel. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now you want ... too!"

Then he will lie with you

Here "lie with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Then Jacob will have sexual relations with you"

Genesis 30:16

You must come to me

Here "come to" is a euphemism for sexual relations. Alternate translation: "You must have sexual intercourse with me"

with my son's mandrakes

"for the price of my son's mandrakes." See how you translated "mandrake" in Genesis 30:14.

Jacob lay with Leah

Here "lay with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Jacob had sexual relations with Leah"

Genesis 30:17

she conceived

"She became pregnant"

bore Jacob a fifth son

"gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:18

God has given me my wages

God rewarding Leah is spoken of as if he were a boss paying wages to someone who works for him. Alternate translation: "God has given my due" or "God has rewarded me"

She called his name Issachar

Translators may also add a footnote that says: "The name Issachar means 'there is a reward.'"

Genesis 30:19

Leah conceived again

"Leah became pregnant again"

bore a sixth son to Jacob

"gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob"

Genesis 30:20

She called his name Zebulun

Translators may also add a footnote that says: "The name Zebulun means 'honor.'"

Genesis 30:21

called her name Dinah

This is the name of Leah's daughter.

Genesis 30:22

God called Rachel to mind and listened to her

The phrase "call to mind" means to remember. This does not mean God forgot about Rachel. It means he considered her request. Alternate translation: "God considered Rachel and granted to her what she wanted"

Genesis 30:23

God has taken away my shame

God causing Rachel to no longer feel ashamed is spoken of as if "shame" were an object that person could take away from someone else. The abstract noun "shame" can be stated as "ashamed." Alternate translation: "God has caused me to no longer feel ashamed"

Genesis 30:24

She called his name Joseph

Translators may also add a footnote that says: "The name Joseph means 'may he add.'"

Yahweh has added to me another son

Rachel's first sons were through her female servant Bilhah.

Genesis 30:25

After Rachel had borne Joseph

"After Rachel gave birth to Joseph"

Genesis 30:26

and let me go

"so I can go"

you know the service I have given you

Jacob is reminding Laban of their contract

Genesis 30:27

Laban said to him

"Laban said to Jacob"

If now I have found favor in your eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "If I have found favor with you" or "If you are pleased with me"

found favor

This is an idiom that means that someone is approved of by someone else.

wait, because

"please stay, because"

I have learned by using divination

"I have discovered by my own spiritual and magical practices"

for your sake

"because of you"

Genesis 30:28

Name your wages

This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "Tell me how much I have to pay to keep you here"

Genesis 30:29

Jacob said to him

"Jacob said to Laban"

how your livestock have fared with me

"how well your livestock have done since I started taking care of them"

Genesis 30:30

For you had little before I came

"your herds were small before I worked for you"

and it has increased abundantly

"but now your wealth has greatly increased"

Now when will I provide for my own household also?

"Now when will I take care of my own family?" Jacob uses a question to emphasize that he wants to start providing for

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his own family. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now I want to take care of my family!"
Genesis 30:31
What will I pay you
"What can I pay you" or "What can I give you." This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "What can I pay you so that you stay and work for me"
If you will do this thing for me
The connecting word "But" can be used at the beginning to show that what Jacob is about to say contrasts with what he just said. Alternate translation: "But if you will do this thing for me"
this thing
The phrase "this thing" refers to what Jacob will propose in verse 32.
feed your flock and keep it
"feed and take care of your flock"
Genesis 30:32
removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats
"and remove every sheep with spots, every black sheep, and every goat with spots"
These will be my wages
"This will be the cost of keeping me here"
Genesis 30:33
My integrity will testify for me later on
The word "integrity" means "honesty." This speaks about integrity as if it were a person who could testify for or against another person. Alternate translation: "And later you will know if I have been honest with you or not"
Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, if any are found with me, will be considered to be stolen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you find any goats without spots or any sheep that are not black, you can consider them stolen"
Genesis 30:34
Let it be according to your word
"Let it be as you say" or "We will do what you have said"
Genesis 30:35
that were striped and spotted
"that had stripes and spots"
that were speckled and spotted
"that had spots"
every one that had white in it
"every goat that had some white in it"
all the black ones among the sheep
"all the black sheep"
gave them into the hand
Here "hand" stands for control or care. Alternate translation: "had his sons take care of them"
Genesis 30:37
poplar, almond, and plane trees
These are all trees with white wood.
he peeled white streaks in them and made the white inner wood appear that was in the sticks
"he peeled off pieces of bark so that the white wood underneath would show"
Genesis 30:38
the watering troughs
long open containers for holding water for animals to drink
Genesis 30:39
The flocks bred
"The animals of the flocks conceived" or "The animals mated"
produced striped, speckled, and spotted young
"gave birth to babies with stripes and spots"
Genesis 30:40
Jacob separated
It can be made explicit that this happened over several years. Alternate translation: "During the several years following, Jacob separated"
face toward
"look toward"
he separated out his flocks for himself alone
"he set his flocks apart"
Genesis 30:41
before the eyes of the flock
Here the flock's "eyes" represent the sheep and emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "so that the flock could see them"
among the sticks
"in front of the sticks"
Genesis 30:42
the feebler animals
"the weaker animals"
So the feebler animals were Laban's, and the stronger were Jacob's
"So the weaker offspring belonged to Laban, while the stronger offspring belonged to Jacob." You can make this even more explicit. Alternate translation: "So the weaker offspring did not have stripes or spots and so belonged to Laban, while the stronger offspring did have stripes or spots and so belonged to Jacob"
Genesis 30:43
The man
"Jacob"
became very prosperous
"greatly prospered" or "became very wealthy"

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31 [1]Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, that they said, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and it is from our father's possessions that he has gotten all this wealth."[2]Jacob saw the look on Laban's face. He saw that his attitude toward him had changed.[3]Then Yahweh said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."
[4]Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock[5]and said to them, "I see your father's attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me.[6]You know that it is with all my strength that I have served your father.

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[7]Your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God has not permitted him to hurt me.[8]If he said, 'The speckled animals will be your wages,' then all the flock bore speckled young. If he said, 'The striped will be your wages,' then the whole flock bore striped young.[9]In this way God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.
[10]Once at the time of breeding season, I saw in a dream the male goats that were mating with the flock. The male goats were striped, speckled, and spotted.[11]The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I said, 'Here I am.'
[12]He said, 'Lift up your eyes and see all the male goats that are breeding with the flock. They are striped, speckled, and spotted, for I have seen everything that Laban is doing to you.[13]I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to me. Now rise up and leave this land and return to the land of your birth.'"
[14]Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?[15]Are we not treated by him as foreigners? For he has sold us and has also completely devoured our money.[16]For all the riches that God has taken away from our father are now ours and our children's. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

[17]Then Jacob arose and placed his sons and his wives upon the camels.[18]He drove all his livestock ahead of him, along with all his property, including the livestock he had acquired in Paddan Aram. Then he set out to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.
[19]When Laban had gone to shear his flock, Rachel stole her father's household gods.[20]Jacob also deceived Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he was fleeing.[21]So he fled with all that he had and quickly passed over the River, and headed toward the hill country of Gilead.

[22]On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled.[23]So he took his relatives with him and pursued him for a seven days' journey. He overtook him in the hill country of Gilead.
[24]Now God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."[25]Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country. Laban also camped with his relatives in the hill country of Gilead.[1]
[26]Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you deceived me and carried away my daughters like captives of the sword?[27]Why did you flee secretly and trick me and did not tell me? I would have sent you away with celebration and with songs, with tambourine and with harps.[28]You did not allow me to kiss my grandsons and my daughters good bye. Now you have acted foolishly.
[29]It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night and said, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.'[30]Now you have gone away because you longed to return to your father's house. But why did you steal my gods?"
[31]Jacob answered and said to Laban, "I fled secretly because I was afraid and thought that you would take your daughters from me by force.[32]Whoever has stolen your gods will not continue to live. In the presence of our relatives, identify whatever with me is yours and take it." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

[33]Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. He went out of Leah's tent and entered into Rachel's tent.
[34]Now Rachel had taken the household gods, put them in a camel's saddle, and sat upon them. Laban searched the whole tent, but did not find them.[35]She said to her father, "Do not be angry, my master, that I cannot stand up before you, for I am having my period." So he searched but did not find his household gods.

[36]Jacob was angry and argued with Laban. He said to him, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me?[37]For you have searched all my possessions. What have you found of all your household goods? Set them here before our relatives, so that they may judge between the two of us.
[38]For twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten any rams from your flocks.[39]What was torn by beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it. You demanded payment from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.[40]There I was; in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night; and I went without sleep.
[41]These twenty years I have been in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock. You have changed my wages ten times.[42]Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the one Isaac fears, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and my toil, and he rebuked you last night."

[43]Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the grandchildren are my grandchildren, and the flocks are my flocks. All that you see is mine. But what can I do today to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have borne?[44]So now, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be for a witness between you and me."
[45]So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.[46]Jacob said to his relatives, "Gather stones." So they took stones and made a pile. Then they ate there by the pile.[47]Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.

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[48]Laban said, "This pile is a witness between me and you today." Therefore its name was called Galeed.[49]It is also called Mizpah, because Laban said, "May Yahweh watch between you and me, when we are out of sight one from another.[50]If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take any wives besides my daughters, although no one else is with us, see, God is witness between you and me."
[51]Laban said to Jacob, "Look at this pile, and look at the pillar, which I have set between you and me.[52]This pile is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this pile to you, and that you will not pass beyond this pile and this pillar to me, to do harm.[53]May the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us." Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac.
[54]Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain and called his relatives to eat a meal. They ate and spent the entire night on the mountain.[55]Early in the morning Laban got up, kissed his grandsons and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban left and returned home.

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[1]Some modern translations have Laban also camped in the hill country of Gilead.

Genesis 31 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's blessing

When Jacob left Paddam Aram, he left very wealthy. Despite his punishment of exile from Canaan, God still blessed Jacob and his family. (See: bless)

Household gods

Although a few scholars believe the possession of the household gods was a sign of inheritance, this seems unlikely. It is probable that Rachel believed these idols would bring them "good luck" and would bring them great blessing. This was sinful because they were to trust in Yahweh, who already promised to bless them. (See: falsegod and inherit and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Irony

Laban's sons complained that Jacob cheated them out of their father's possessions. It was their father who tried to cheat Jacob out of what he promised to give Jacob. Jacob treated his brother Esau in the same way. Jacob cheated Esau out of their father's blessing.

Links:

Genesis 31:1 Notes

Genesis 31:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.

Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, that they said

"Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying"

Jacob has taken away all that was our father's

Laban's sons were exaggerating because they were angry. Alternate translation: "Everything that Jacob has taken belonged to our father"

Genesis 31:2

Jacob saw the look on Laban's face. He saw that his attitude toward him had changed

These two sentences mean basically the same thing. The second explains the look that Jacob saw on Laban's face. Alternate translation: "Jacob noticed that Laban was no longer pleased with him"

Genesis 31:3

your fathers

"your father Isaac and your grandfather Abraham"

Genesis 31:4

Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock

"Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah and told them to meet him out in the field with the flocks"

Genesis 31:5

and said to them

You can start a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "He said to them"

I see your father's attitude toward me has changed

"I have noticed your father is no longer pleased with me"

Genesis 31:6

You know that it is with all my strength that I have served your father

The word "you" here refers to both Rachel and Leah. It also adds emphasis. Alternate translation: "You yourselves know that I have served your father with all my strength"

Genesis 31:7

has deceived me

"has lied to me" or "has not treated me fairly"

my wages

"what he said he would pay me"

to hurt me

Possible meanings are 1) physical harm or 2) to cause Jacob to suffer in any way.

Genesis 31:8

The speckled animals

"The animals with spots"

the flock bore

"the flock gave birth to"

The striped

"The animals with stripes"

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Genesis 31:9
In this way God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me
"This is how God gave your father's animals to me"
Genesis 31:10
General Information:
Jacob continues his story to his wives Leah and Rachel.
Once at the time of breeding season
"During the breeding season"
mating with the flock
Here "flock" represents only the female goats. Alternate translation: "mating with the female goats of the flock"
were striped, speckled, and spotted
"had stripes, little spots, and big spots"
Genesis 31:11
angel of God
Possible meanings are 1) God himself appeared as a man or 2) one of God's messengers appeared. Since the phrase is not well understood, it is best to simply translate it as "the angel of God," using the normal word that you use for "angel."
I said
"And I answered"
Here I am
"Yes, I am listening" or "Yes, what is it?" See how you translated this in Genesis 22:1.
Genesis 31:12
General Information:
The angel of the Lord continues to talk to Jacob (Genesis 31:10).
Lift up your eyes
This is a way of saying "Look up."
that are breeding with the flock
Here "flock" stands for only the female goats. Alternate translation: "that are breeding with the female goats of the flock"
are striped, speckled, and spotted
"have stripes and spots"
Genesis 31:13
where you anointed a pillar
Jacob poured oil on the pillar to dedicate it to God.
the land of your birth
"the land where you were born"
Genesis 31:14
Rachel and Leah answered and said to him
This does not mean they talked at the same time. It emphasizes they agreed with each other.
Is there any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?
Rachel and Leah use a question to emphasize that there is nothing left for their father to give. Alternate translation: "There is absolutely nothing left for us to inherit from our father!"
Genesis 31:15
Are we not treated by him as foreigners?
They use a question to show their anger about how their father treats them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Our father treats us like a foreign women instead of daughters!"
For he has sold us
This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "He has sold us for his own gain"
has also completely devoured our money
Laban completely using up the money that he should have given to his daughters is spoken of as if he were a wild beast that ate the money as if it were food. Alternate translation: "he completely used up our money"
Genesis 31:16
are now ours and our children's
"belongs to us and to our children"
Now then
Here "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
whatever God has said to you, do it
"do all that God has told you"
Genesis 31:17
his sons
Jacob took all of his children. It only mentions the sons because they are important as his heirs. Alternate translation: "his children"
Genesis 31:18
He drove all his livestock
"He drove all his cattle." Here "livestock" is referring to all his domesticate animals.
including the livestock he had acquired in Paddan Aram
"and the other herd of cattle which he took ownership of when he was in Paddan Aram"
Then he set out to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan
"He went to the land of Canaan, where his father Isaac lived"
Genesis 31:19
When Laban had gone to shear his flock
"When Laban had left to cut the wool off of the sheep in his flock"
Genesis 31:21
the River
This refers to the Euphrates River.
headed toward
"traveled toward"
the hill country of Gilead
"the mountains of Gilead" or "Mount Gilead"
Genesis 31:22
On the third day
It was Jewish custom to count the day of departure as day one. Alternate translation: "Two days after they had left"
Laban was told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told Laban"
that Jacob had fled
Only Jacob is mentioned because he is the leader of the family. It can be made explicit that his family went with him. Alternate translation: "that Jacob had fled with his wives and children"
Genesis 31:23
So he took
"So Laban took"
pursued him
"chased after Jacob"
for a seven days' journey

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Laban spent seven days walking to catch up to Jacob.

He overtook him

"He caught up to him"

Genesis 31:24

Now God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night

The word "now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Laban. Alternate translation: "That night God came to Laban in a dream"

Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad

The phrase "good nor bad" are used together to mean "anything." Alternate translation: "Do not say anything to try and stop Jacob from leaving"

Genesis 31:25

Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country. Laban also camped with his relatives in the hill country of Gilead

The word "now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jacob and Laban. Alternate translation: "When Laban caught up with Jacob, Jacob had set up camp in the hill country. Then Laban and his relatives also camped in the hill country of Gilead"

Genesis 31:26

carried away my daughters like captives of the sword

Laban speaks about Jacob taking his family with him back to the land of Canaan as if Jacob took them as prisoners after a battle and is forcing them to go with him. Laban is exaggerating because he is angry and is trying to make Jacob feel guilty for what he did.

Genesis 31:27

flee secretly

"run away in secret"

with celebration

"with joy"

with tambourine and with harps

These instruments stand for music. Alternate translation: "and with music"

tambourine

a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken

Genesis 31:28

to kiss my grandsons

Here "grandsons" would include all grandchildren whether male or female. Alternate translation: "to kiss my grandchildren"

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Genesis 31:29

It is in my power to do you harm

The word "you" is plural and refers to everyone with Jacob. Alternate translation: "I have enough people with me to harm all of you"

Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad

The words "good nor bad" are used together to mean "anything." See how you translated this in [Genesis 31:24]

Genesis 31:30

you have gone away

This "you" is singular and refers to Jacob.

to your father's house

Here "house" stands for family. Alternate translation: "to be home with your father and the rest of your family"

my gods

"my idols"

Genesis 31:32

Whoever has stolen your gods will not continue to live

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "We will kill whoever has stolen your gods"

In the presence of our relatives

The word "our" refers to Jacob's relatives and includes Laban's relatives. All the relatives will watch to make sure everything is fair and honest.

identify whatever with me is yours and take it

"look for whatever we have that is yours and take it"

For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them

This changes from the story to background information about Jacob.

Genesis 31:33

the two female servants

This refers to Zilpah and Bilhah.

he did not find them

"he did not find his idols"

Genesis 31:34

Now Rachel ... upon them

The word "now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Rachel.

saddle

a seat placed on the back of an animal so a person can ride on it

Genesis 31:35

my master

Calling someone "my master" is a way of honoring them.

that I cannot stand up before you

"because I am unable to stand up in your presence"

for I am having my period

This refers to the time of the month when a woman bleeds from her womb.

Genesis 31:36

He said to him

"Jacob said to Laban"

What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me?

The phrases "What is my offense" and "What is my sin" mean basically the same thing. Jacob is asking Laban to tell him what he did wrong. Alternate translation: "What have I done wrong that you should pursue me like this?"

hotly pursued me

Here the word "hotly" means Laban urgently chased Jacob intending to capture him.

Genesis 31:37

What have you found of all your household goods?

"What have you found that belongs to you?"

Set them here before our relatives

Here the word "our" refers to Jacob's relatives and includes Laban's relatives. Alternate translation: "Lay anything you have found in front of our relatives"

they may judge between the two of us

Here "two of us" refers to Jacob and Laban. The phrase "to judge between" means to decide which person is right in a

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dispute. Alternate translation: "they may judge between the two of us"
Genesis 31:38
General Information:
Jacob continues to speak to Laban.
twenty years
"20 years"
ewes
female sheep
have not miscarried
This means they have not had a pregnancy end early and unexpectedly with the lamb or kid born dead.
Genesis 31:39
What was torn by beasts I did not bring to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I did not bring to you any of your animals that a wild beast tore apart" or "When a wild animal killed any of your animals I did not bring it to you"
I bore the loss of it
For Jacob to count Laban's dead animals as a loss from his own flock is spoken of as if it was a burden he would bear on his shoulders. Alternate translation: "Instead of counting it a loss from your flock, I counted it as a loss from my flock"
You demanded payment from my hand
It can be made explicit what Jacob had to pay for. Alternate translation "You demanded that I pay you for any animal of yours that was missing"
whether stolen by day or stolen by night
"whether it was taken during the day or at night". Possble meanings are 1) "whether someone stole it during the day or at night" or 2) "whether an animal took it during the day or night."
Genesis 31:40
There I was; in the day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night
Suffering in the hot and cold temperatures is spoken of as if the temperatures were animals that were eating Jacob. Alternate translation: "I stayed with your flocks even during hottest part of the day and the coldest part of the night"
Genesis 31:41
General Information:
Jacob continues to speak to Laban.
These twenty years
"These last 20 years"
fourteen years
"14 years"
changed my wages ten times
"changed what he said he would pay me ten times." See how you translated "my wages" in Genesis 31:7.
Genesis 31:42
Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the one Isaac fears, had been with me
Jacob is referring to the same God not to three different gods. Alternate translation: "If the God of Abraham and Isaac, my father, had not been with me"
the God of my father
Here the word "father" refers to his parent, Isaac.
the one Isaac fears
Here the word "fears" refers to the "fear of Yahweh," which means to deeply respect him and show that respect by obeying him.
empty-handed
This stands for having nothing. Alternate translation: "with absolutely nothing"
God has seen my affliction and my toil
The abstract noun "affliction" can be stated as "afflicted." Alternate translation: "God has seen how hard I worked and how you afflicted me"
Genesis 31:43
But what can I do today to these my daughters, or to their children whom they have borne?
Laban uses a question to emphasize that there is nothing he can do. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "But, there is nothing I can do to bring my daughters and grandchildren back with me."
Genesis 31:44
let it be for a witness
Here the word "witness" does not refer to a person, but it is used figuratively and refers to the covenant that Jacob and Laban are making. The covenant is spoken of as if it were a person who is there when they agree to act peacefully to one another.
Genesis 31:45
pillar
This means that a large stone was simply set up on its end to mark the place where this important event happened.
Genesis 31:46
made a pile
"stacked them on top of each other"
Then they ate there by the pile
Eating a meal together was a part of making the covenant with one another. The full meaning of this may be made explicit.
Genesis 31:47
Jegar Sahadutha
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Jegar Sahadutha means 'heap of witness' in Laban's language."
Galeed
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Galeed means 'heap of witness' in Jacob's language.
Genesis 31:48
This pile is a witness between me and you
The stones do not actually bear witness as a person. Alternate translation: "This pile will be a reminder between me and you"
Galeed
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Galeed means 'heap of witness' in Jacob's language. See how you translated this in [Genesis 31:47]
Genesis 31:49
Mizpah
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Mizpah means 'watchtower.'"
when we are out of sight one from another
Here "out of sight" stands for no longer being in each other's presence. Alternate translation: "when we are no

longer with each other"
Genesis 31:50
although no one else is with us
Here "us" refers to Laban and Jacob. Alternate translation: "even if no one else is there to see us"
see
"look" or "remember" or "pay attention to what i am about to tell you"
Genesis 31:52
This pile is a witness, and the pillar is a witness
These piles of stones were to act as a remembrance and a boundary marker for Jacob and Laban regarding their peace agreement. They are spoken of as if they are human witnesses.
Genesis 31:53
May the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the gods of their father, judge between us
Abraham is Jacob's grandfather. Nahor is Laban's grandfather. The father of Abraham and Nahor is Terah.
Not all of them worshipped Yahweh.
the Fear of his father Isaac
Here the word "Fear" refers to Yahweh, who Isaac deeply respected and showed that respect by obeying him.
Genesis 31:54
called his relatives to eat a meal
Eating a meal together was part of making the covenant with one another. The full meaning of this may be made explicit.
Genesis 31:55
Early in the morning ... returned home
Verse 55 is the first verse of chapter 32 in the original Hebrew text, but the last verse of chapter 31 in most modern Bibles. We suggest that you follow the numbering of Bibles in your national language.
blessed
This means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to someone.

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32 [1]Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him.[2]When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp," so he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

[3]Jacob sent messengers on ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, in the region of Edom.[4]He commanded them, saying, "This is what you will say to my master Esau: This is what your servant Jacob says: 'I have been staying with Laban, and have delayed my return until now.[5]I have cattle and donkeys, and flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent this message to my master, so that I may find favor in your eyes.'"
[6]The messengers returned to Jacob and said, "We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."[7]Then Jacob was very afraid and upset. So he divided the people who were with him into two camps, and also the flocks, the herds, and the camels.[8]He said, "If Esau comes to one camp and attacks it, then the camp that remains will escape."
[9]Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, Yahweh, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will prosper you,'[10]I am not worthy of all your acts of covenant faithfulness and of all the trustworthiness that you have done for your servant. For with only my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.
[11]Please rescue me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children.[12]But you said, 'I will certainly make you prosper. I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for their number.'"

[13]Jacob stayed there that night. He took some of what he had with him as a gift for Esau, his brother:[14]two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,[15]thirty milking camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys.[16]These he gave into the hand of his servants, every herd by itself. He said to his servants, "Go on ahead of me and put a space between each of the herds."
[17]He instructed the first servant, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Whose animals are these that are in front of you?'[18]Then you will say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. They are a gift sent to my master Esau. See, he is also coming after us.'"
[19]Jacob also gave instructions to the second group, the third, and all the men who followed the herds. He said, "You will say the same thing to Esau when you meet him.[20]You must also say, 'Your servant Jacob is coming after us.'" For he thought, "I will appease him with the gifts that I am sending ahead of me. Then later, when I will see him, perhaps he will receive me."[21]So the gifts went on ahead of him. He himself stayed that night in the camp.

[22]Jacob got up during the night, and he took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons. He sent them across the ford of the Jabbok.[23]In this way he sent them across the stream along with all his possessions.
[24]Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until dawn.[25]When the man saw that he could not defeat him, he struck Jacob's hip, so that his hip was dislocated as he wrestled with him.[26]The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."
[27]The man said to him, "What is your name?" Jacob said, "Jacob."[28]The man said, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel. For you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed."

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[29]Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." He said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.
[30]Jacob called the name of the place Peniel for he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is delivered."
[31]The sun rose on Jacob as he passed Peniel. He was limping because of his hip.[32]That is why to this day the people of Israel do not eat the ligaments of the hip which are at the hip joint, because the man injured those ligaments while dislocating Jacob's hip.

Genesis 32 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob does not trust Yahweh

Jacob does not trust in Yahweh. Instead, he fears that his brother Esau could kill him and his family. He should have known that Yahweh would continue to bless him and protect his family. He should have trusted in Yahweh's covenant faithfulness. (See: bless and trust and covenantfaith)

Name change

In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly significant point in a person's life. The return of Jacob to Canaan was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"A man wrestled with him"

Scholars are divided over the identity of the person Jacob wrestled with. It was probably an angel, but some believe he wrestled with Jesus before he came to earth. The translator will probably have difficulty trying to keep ambiguity in identifying this individual because the word "man" usually indicates a normal, living person.

Links:

Genesis 32:1 Notes

Genesis 32:2

Mahanaim

Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Mahanaim means 'two camps.'"

Genesis 32:3

Seir

This is a mountainous area in the region of Edom.

Genesis 32:4

This is what you will say to my master Esau: This is what your servant Jacob says: 'I have been ... have delayed my return until now.

This has a quotation within a quotation. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "'This is what I want you to tell my master Esau. Tell him that I have been ... have delayed my return until now.'"

my master Esau

Jacob is using polite language and refers to his brother as "my master."

your servant Jacob

Jacob is using polite language and refers to himself as "your servant."

Genesis 32:5

I have cattle ... in your eyes.

This continues the quotation within a quotation that begins with the words "I have been" in verse 4. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. "This is what I want you to tell my master Esau. Tell him that I have been ... Tell him that I have cattle ... in his eyes."

that I may find favor in your eyes

When a person finds favor in the eyes of another, the second person approves of the first person. Here "eyes" are a metonym for the person seeing something, and seeing a person is a metaphor for deciding whether what that person sees is good or bad. Alternate translation: "that you may approve of me"

Genesis 32:6

four hundred men

"400 men"

Genesis 32:7

afraid

This refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.

upset

distressed, troubled

Genesis 32:8

to one camp and attacks it, then the camp that remains will escape

Here "camp" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "to attack the people in one camp, then the people in the other camp will escape"

Genesis 32:9

God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, Yahweh

This does not refer to different gods, but to the one God they all worship. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who is God of my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac"

Yahweh, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will prosper you,'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you who said that I should return to my country and to my kindred, and that you would prosper me,"

to your kindred

"to your family"

I will prosper you

"I will do good for you" or "I will treat you well"

Genesis 32:10

I am not worthy of all your acts of covenant faithfulness and of all the

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trustworthiness that you have done for your servant
The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "trustworthiness" can be stated as "faithful" and "loyal." Alternate translation: "I do not deserve for you to remain faithful to your covenant or for you to be loyal to me, your servant"
your servant
This is a polite way of saying "me."
now I have become two camps
Here the phrase "I have become" is an idiom meaning what he now possesses. Alternate translation: "and now I have enough people, flocks, and possessions with me to make two camps"
Genesis 32:11
rescue me
"save me"
from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau
Here the word "hand" refers to power. The two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second clarifies that the brother whom Jacob intended was Esau. Alternate translation: "from the power of my brother, Esau" or "from my brother, Esau"
I am afraid of him, that he will
"I am afraid that he will"
Genesis 32:12
But you said, 'I will certainly make you prosper. I will make your descendants ... number.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated an an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "But you said that you would certainly prosper me, and that you would make my descendants ... number"
make you prosper
"do good to you" or "treat you well"
I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea
This speaks about the very large number of Jacob's descendants as if their number will be like the grains of sand on the seashore.
which cannot be numbered for their number
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which no one can count because of their number"
Genesis 32:14
two hundred
"200"
twenty
"20"
Genesis 32:15
thirty ... forty ... ten
"30 ... 40 ... 10"
their colts
"their young"
Genesis 32:16
These he gave into the hand of his servants, every herd by itself
Here "into the hand" means to give control over them. Alternate translation: "He divided them into small herds, and gave each of his servants control over one herd"
put a space between each of the herds
"let each herd travel at a distance from the other herds"
Genesis 32:17
He instructed
"He commanded"
asks you ... that are in front of you?'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "asks you who your master is, where you are going, and who owns these animals that are ahead of you"
To whom do you belong?
"Who is your master?"
Whose animals are these that are in front of you?
"Who owns these animals that are in front of you?"
Genesis 32:18
Then you will say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. They are a gift sent to my master Esau. See, he is also coming after us.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Then I want you to tell him that all of these things belong to Jacob, his servant, and he his giving them to his master, Esau. And tell him that Jacob is on the way to meet him"
your servant Jacob's
Jacob is referring to himself in a polite way as Esau's servant.
to my master Esau
Jacob is referring to Esau is a polite way as his master.
coming after us
Here "us" refers to the servant speaking and the other servants bringing herds to Esau.
Genesis 32:19
gave instructions to the second group
"commanded the second group"
Genesis 32:20
You must also say, 'Your servant Jacob
Possible meanings are 1) "You will say also, 'Your servant Jacob'" or 2) "You will say, 'Also, Your servant Jacob.'"
I will appease him
"I will calm him down" or "I will make his anger go away"
he will receive me
"he will welcome me kindly"
Genesis 32:21
So the gifts went on ahead of him
Here "gifts" stands for the servants taking the gifts.
He himself stayed
Here "himself" emphasizes that Jacob did not go with the servants.
Genesis 32:22
his two women servants
"his two servant wives." This means Zilpah and Bilhah.
ford
a shallow place in a river that is easy to cross
Jabbok
This is the name of a river.
Genesis 32:23
all his possessions
"all that he had"
Genesis 32:25
he struck Jacob's hip, so that his hip was dislocated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he struck Jacob's hip and dislocated it" or "he struck Jacob's hip and injured it"
his hip was dislocated
Possible meanings are that 1) the top of Jacob's leg bone

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moved out of the hole in the hip where it normally is, or 2) a muscle or something that attaches the top of the leg to the hip was torn.
Genesis 32:26
for the dawn is breaking
"the sun will rise soon"
bless
Here "bless" means to pronounce a formal blessing on someone and to cause good things to happen to that person.
I will not let you go unless you bless me
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will let you go only if you bless me" or "Absolutely not! You must bless me first, then I will let you go"
Genesis 32:28
Israel
Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Israel means 'He struggles with God.'"
with men
Here "men" means "people" in general.
Genesis 32:29
He said, "Why is it that you ask my name?"
"He said, 'Why would you ask about my name?'" This rhetorical question was meant to shock, rebuke and cause Jacob to ponder over what just happened between him and the other man he just wrestled with. Alternate translation: "Do not ask me for my name!"
Genesis 32:30
Peniel
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Peniel means 'the face of God.'"
face to face
Being "face to face" means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
and my life is delivered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "yet he spared my life"
Genesis 32:32
That is why to this day
This marks a change from the story to background information about the descendants of Israel.
to this day
This means to the day that the author was writing this.
ligaments of the hip
This refers to the muscle that connects the thigh bone to the thigh socket.
hip joint
"thigh socket"
while dislocating
"while striking"

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33 [1]Jacob looked up and, behold, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. Jacob divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two female servants.[2]Then he put the female servants and their children in front, followed by Leah and her children, and followed by Rachel and Joseph last of all.[3]He himself went on ahead of them. He bowed toward the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.
[4]Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him. Then they wept.[5]When Esau looked up, he saw the women and the children. He said, "Who are these people with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant."
[6]Then the female servants came forward with their children, and they bowed down.[7]Next Leah also and her children came forward and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed down.[8]Esau said, "What do you mean by all these groups that I met?" Jacob said, "To find favor in the sight of my master."
[9]Esau said, "I have enough, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself."[10]Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your eyes, then accept my gift from my hand, for indeed, I have seen your face, and it is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me.[11]Please accept my gift that was brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." Thus Jacob urged him, and Esau accepted it.
[12]Then Esau said, "Let us be on our way. I will go before you."[13]Jacob said to him, "My master knows that the children are young, and that the sheep and the cattle are nursing their young. If they are driven hard even one day, all the animals will die.[14]Please let my master go on ahead of his servant. I will travel more slowly, at the pace of the livestock that are before me, and at the pace of the children, until I come to my master in Seir."
[15]Esau said, "Let me leave with you some of my men who are with me." But Jacob said, "Why do that? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord."[16]So Esau that day started on his way back to Seir.[17]Jacob traveled to Sukkoth, built himself a house, and made shelters for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Sukkoth.

[18]When Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan. He camped near the city.[19]Then he bought the piece of ground where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of silver.[20]There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

Genesis 33 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob's fear
Jacob feared his brother. He showed Esau great respect and sought to protect his family from Esau's power. He did not fear and trust Yahweh. (See: fear and trust)

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Favoritism

Jacob showed favoritism towards Rachel and Joseph. He arranged the family according to those he loved the most. Rachel and Joseph were the most protected from a potential attack by Esau. He would have rather had everyone else die, in order to spare their lives.

Links:

Genesis 33:1 Notes

Genesis 33:1

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to a surprising new part of the story.

four hundred men

"400 men"

Jacob divided the children ... female servants

This does not mean Jacob divided the children evenly so that each woman had the same amount of children with her. Jacob divided the children so that each one went with his or her mother.

female servants

"servant wives." This refers to Bilhah and Zilpah.

Genesis 33:3

He himself went on ahead of them

Here "himself" emphasizes that Jacob went alone in front of the others.

He bowed

Here the word "bow" means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.

Genesis 33:4

meet him

"meet Jacob"

embraced him, hugged his neck, and kissed him

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "Esau put his arms around Jacob, hugged him, and kissed him"

Then they wept

This can be translated more explicitly. Alternate translation: "Then Esau and Jacob cried because they were happy to see each other again"

Genesis 33:5

he saw the women and the children

"he saw the women and children who were with Jacob"

The children whom God has graciously given your servant

The phrase "your servant" is a polite way for Jacob to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "These are the children God has kindly given me, your servant"

Genesis 33:6

female servants

"servant wives." This refers to Bilhah and Zilpah.

bowed down

This is a sign of humility and respect before another person.

Genesis 33:8

What do you mean by all these groups that I met?

The phrase "all these groups" refers to the groups of servants that Jacob sent to give gifts to Esau. Alternate translation: "Why did you send all of those different groups to meet me?"

To find favor in the sight of my master

The phrase "find favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "So that you, my master, would be pleased with me"

my master

The phrase "my master" is a polite way of referring to Esau.

Genesis 33:9

I have enough

The word "animals" or "property" is understood. Alternate translation: "I have enough animals" or "I have enough property"

Genesis 33:10

if I have found favor in your eyes

The phrase "found favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "if you are pleased with me"

my gift from my hand

Here "hand" refers to Jacob. Alternate translation: "this gift that I am giving to you"

my hand, for indeed

This can be translated as a new sentence: "my hand. For certainly"

I have seen your face, and it is like seeing the face of God

The meaning of this simile is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) Jacob is happy that Esau has forgiven him like God has forgiven him or 2) Jacob is amazed to see his brother again like he was amazed to see God or 3) Jacob is humbled to be in Esau's presence like he was humbled to be in God's presence.

I have seen your face

Here "face" stands for Esau. It may be best to translate as "face" because of the importance of the word "face" here with "face of God" and "face to face" in Genesis 32:30.

Genesis 33:11

that was brought to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that my servants brought to you"

God has dealt graciously with me

"God has treated me very well" or "God has blessed me very much"

Thus Jacob urged him, and Esau accepted it

It was customary to refuse a gift first, but then to accept the gift before the giver was offended.

Genesis 33:13

My master knows

This is a polite and formal way of referring to Esau. Alternate translation: "You, my master, know"

the children are young

The meaning can be stated more explicitly. Alternate translation: "the children are too young to travel fast"

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If they are driven hard even one day
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If we force them to go too fast even for one day"
Genesis 33:14
Please let my master go on ahead of his servant
This is a polite and formal way of Jacob referring to himself. Alternate translation: "My lord, I am your servant. Please go ahead of me"
at the pace of the livestock that are before me
"at the speed the animals I am looking after can go"
Seir
This is a mountainous area in the region of Edom. See how you translated this in [Genesis 32:3]
Genesis 33:15
Why do that?
Jacob uses a question to emphasize that Esau does not need to leave men. Alternate translation: "Do not do that!" or "You do not need to do that!"
my lord
This is a polite and formal way of referring to Esau. Alternate translation: "you, my lord"
Genesis 33:17
Sukkoth
Translators may also add a footnote that says, "The name Sukkoth means 'shelters.'"
built himself a house
It is implied that the house is also for his family. Alternate translation: "built a house for himself and his family"
for his livestock
"for the animals he looked after"
Genesis 33:18
General Information:
This starts a new part of the story. The author describes what Jacob did after he rested in Sukkoth.
When Jacob came from Paddan Aram
"After Jacob left Paddan Aram"
When Jacob ... he arrived ... He camped
This only mentions Jacob because he is the leader of the family. It is implied that his family was with him.
He camped near
"He set up his camp near"
Genesis 33:19
piece of ground
"piece of land"
Hamor
This is the name of a man.
Shechem's father
Shechem is the name of a city and the name of a man.
a hundred
"100"
Genesis 33:20
El Elohe Israel
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name El Elohe Israel means 'God, the God of Israel.'"

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34 [1]Now Dinah, Leah's daughter whom she bore to Jacob, went out to meet the young women of the land.[2]Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her. He took her and lay with her, and he humiliated her.[3]He was drawn to Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her.
[4]Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get this young woman for me as a wife."[5]Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. His sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came.
[6]Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him.[7]The sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard of the matter. The men were offended. They were very angry because he had disgraced Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing should not have been done.
[8]Hamor spoke with them, saying, "My son Shechem loves your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife.[9]Intermarry with us, give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves.[10]You will live with us, and the land will be open to you to live and trade in, and to acquire property."
[11]Shechem said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you tell me I will give.
[12]Ask me for as great a bride price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me, but give me the young woman as a wife."[13]The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit, because Shechem had defiled Dinah their sister.
[14]They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to anyone who is uncircumcised; for that would be a disgrace to us.[15]Only on this condition will we agree with you: If you will become circumcised as we are, if every male among you is circumcised.[16]Then will we give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people.[17]But if you do not listen to us and become circumcised, then we will take our sister and we will leave."

[18]Their words pleased Hamor and his son Shechem.[19]The young man did not delay to do what they said, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter, and because he was the most honored person in all his father's household.
[20]Hamor and Shechem his son went to the gate of their city and spoke with the men of their city, saying,[21]"These men are at peace with us, so let them live in the land and trade in it for, really, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters.
[22]Only on this condition will the men agree to live with us and become one people: If every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised.[23]Will not their livestock and their property—all their animals be ours? So let us agree with them, and they will live among us."
[24]All who went out to the gates of his city listened to Hamor and Shechem, his son. All males were circumcised, all who went out to the gates of his city.[25]On the third day, when they were still in pain, two of the sons of Jacob (Simeon and Levi,

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Dinah's brothers), each took his sword and they attacked the city that was certain of its security, and they killed all the males.[26]They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword. They took Dinah from Shechem's house and went away.
[27]The other sons of Jacob came to the dead bodies and plundered the city, because the people had defiled their sister.
[28]They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, and everything in the city and in the surrounding fields.[29]They captured all their wealth, all their children, and their wives. They even plundered everything that was in the houses.
[30]Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me, to make me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. I am few in number. If they gather themselves together against me and attack me, then I will be destroyed, I and my household."[31]But Simeon and Levi said, "Should Shechem have dealt with our sister as with a prostitute?"

Genesis 34 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel

Jacob's name was changed to Israel. It is his descendants who inherited the promised blessings given to him and to Isaac and Abraham. This is the first time his descendants are collectively referred to as the people group Israel. The people group Israel is identified through the covenant of circumcision. (See: inherit, promise, bless and covenant and circumcise)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Jacob's reacted to the rape of Dinah with indifference. This is possibly because she was not a daughter of Rachel. His reaction was both unwise and improper. This action brought shame on the whole family. Therefore, Jacob's sons corrected this wrong and plotted against Hamor and Shechem.

Shechem raped Dinah, but then he said he loved her. By raping her, he ensured that no one else would want to marry her. This is not love.

Links:

Genesis 34:1 Notes

Genesis 34:1

Now

Here this word is used to mark a new part of the story.

Dinah

This is the name of Leah's daughter. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 30:21]

Genesis 34:2

the Hivite

This is the name of a people group. See how you translated the similar word "Hivites" in [Genesis 10:17]

the prince of the land

This is referring to Hamor not Shechem. Also, "prince" here does not mean son of a king. It means Hamor was the leader of the people in that area.

He took her and lay with her

Possible meanings are 1) "took" and "lay with" are two separate actions. Alternate translation: "he grabbed her and had sexual relations with her" or 2) "took" and "lay with" are a hendiadys, two words used to describe one action, Alternate translation: "raped her"

lay with her

This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "had sexual relations with her"

Genesis 34:3

He was drawn to Dinah

"He was very attracted to her." This speaks about Shechem loving Dinah and wanting to be with her as if something were forcing him to come to Dinah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He wanted very much to be with Dinah"

spoke tenderly to her

He tried to convince her that he loved her and that he wanted her to love him also.

Genesis 34:5

Now Jacob

"Now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jacob.

Jacob heard that he

The word "he" refers to Shechem.

he had defiled

This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him.

held his peace

This is a way of saying that Jacob did not say or do anything about the matter.

Genesis 34:6

Hamor ... went out to Jacob

"Hamor ... went to meet Jacob"

Genesis 34:7

The men were offended

"The men were very insulted" or "They were shocked"

he had disgraced Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to every member of Jacob's family. Israel as a people group was disgraced. Alternate translation: "he had humiliated the family of Israel" or "he had brought shame on the people of Israel"

lying with Jacob's daughter

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Here "lying with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "having sexual relations with Jacob's daughter"

for such a thing should not have been done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for he should not have done such a terrible thing"

Genesis 34:8

Hamor spoke with them

"Hamor spoke with Jacob and his sons"

loves your daughter

Here the word "love" refers to romantic love between a man and a woman. Alternate translation: "loves her and wants to marry her"

give her to him as a wife

In some cultures, the parents decide whom their children will marry.

Genesis 34:9

Intermarry with us

To intermarry is to marry a member of a different racial, social, religious or tribal group. Alternate translation: "Allow marriages between your people and ours"

Genesis 34:10

the land will be open to you

"the land will be available to you"

Genesis 34:11

Shechem said to her father

"Shechem said to Dinah's father Jacob"

Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you tell me I will give

The phrase "find favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "If you will approve of me, then I will give you whatever you ask"

Genesis 34:12

bride price

In some cultures, it is customary for a man to give money, property, cattle, and other gifts to the bride's family at the time of marriage.

Genesis 34:13

The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with deceit

The abstract noun "deceit" can be stated as the verb "lied." Alternate translation: "But the sons of Jacob lied to Shechem and Hamor when they answered them"

Shechem had defiled Dinah

This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him. See how you translated "defiled" in Genesis 34:5.

Genesis 34:14

They said to them

"Jacob's sons said to Shechem and Hamor"

We cannot do this thing, to give our sister

"We cannot agree to give Dinah in marriage"

for that would be a disgrace to us

"for that would cause us shame." Here "us" refers to Jacob's sons and all the people of Israel.

Genesis 34:16

give our daughters to you ... take your daughters to ourselves

This means they will allow a person from Jacob's family to marry a person who lives in Hamor's land.

Genesis 34:18

Their words pleased Hamor and his son Shechem

"Hamor and his son Shechem agreed with what Jacob's sons said"

Genesis 34:19

to do what they said

"to become circumcised"

Jacob's daughter

"Jacob's daughter Dinah"

because he was the most honored person in all his father's household

This can be translated as a new sentence. It can be made explicit that Shechem knew the other men would agree to be circumcised because they greatly respected him. Alternate translation: "Shechem knew all the men in his father's household would agree with him because he was the most honored among them"

Genesis 34:20

the gate of their city

It was common for leaders to meet at the city gate to make official decisions.

Genesis 34:21

These men

"Jacob, his sons, and the people of Israel"

peace with us

Here "us" includes Hamor, his son and all the people they spoke with at the city gate.

let them live in the land and trade in it

"let them live and trade in the land"

for, really, the land is large enough for them

Shechem uses the word "really" to add emphasis to his statement. "because, certainly, the land is large enough for them" or "because, indeed, there is plenty of land for them"

take their daughters ... give them our daughters

This refers to marriages between the women of one group and the men of the other group. See how you translated similar phrases in Genesis 34:9.

Genesis 34:22

General Information:

Hamor and Shechem his son continue to talk to the city elders.

Only on this condition will the men agree to live with us and become one people: If every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised

"Only if every man among us is circumcised, as the men of Israel are circumcised, will they agree to live among us and unite with us as one people"

Genesis 34:23

Will not their livestock and their property—all their animals be ours?

Shechem uses a question to emphasize that Jacob's livestock and property will belong to the people of Shechem. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "All of their animals and property will be ours."

Genesis 34:24

All who went out to the gates of his city

This refers to men old enough to gather at the city gates to discuss community affairs. The word "his" probably refers to Hamor, who was the king.

All males were circumcised

The meaning of this statement is clarified, not contradicted, by the words "all who went out to the gates." If a literal

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translation would be misunderstood, you can specify that this refers only to adult males. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All adult males were circumcised" or "So Hamor and Shechem had someone circumcise all the adult men"

Genesis 34:25

On the third day

"third" is the ordinal number for three. It can be stated without the ordinal number. Alternate translation: "After two days"

when they were still in pain

"when the men of the city were still in pain"

each took his sword

"took their swords"

they attacked the city

Here "city" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "they attacked the people of the city"

security, and they killed all the males

This can be translated as a new sentence. "security. Simeon and Levi killed all the men of the city"

Genesis 34:27

the dead bodies

"the dead bodies of Hamor, Shechem, and their men"

plundered the city

"stole everything in the city that was valuable"

because the people had defiled their sister

Shechem alone had defiled Dinah, but Jacob's sons considered Shechem's entire family and everyone in the city responsible for this act.

had defiled

This means that Shechem had greatly dishonored and disgraced Dinah by forcing her to sleep with him. See how you translated "defiled" in Genesis 34:5.

Genesis 34:28

They took their flocks, their herds, their donkeys, and everything

"Jacob's sons took the people's flocks, herds, and donkeys, as well as everything"

Genesis 34:29

They captured all their wealth, all their children, and their wives

"They took all their wealth, and they captured all their children and their wives"

their wealth ... their children ... their wives

The word "their" refers to the people of Shechem.

all their wealth

"all their possessions and money"

Genesis 34:30

brought trouble on me

Causing someone to experience trouble is spoken of as if trouble were an object that is brought and placed on a person. Alternate translation: "caused great problems for me"

to make me stink to the inhabitants of the land

Causing the people in the surrounding areas to hate Jacob is spoken of as if Jacob's sons made him smell bad physically. This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "You have made me repulsive to the people who live in the land"

I am few in number ... against me and attack me, then I will be destroyed, I and my household

Here the words "I" and "me" refer to all of Jacob's household. Jacob only says "I" or "me" since he is the leader. Alternate translation: "My household is small ... against us and attack us, then they will destroy all of us"

gather themselves together against me and attack me

"form an army and attack me" or "form an army and attack us"

then I will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will destroy me" or "they will destroy us"

Genesis 34:31

Should Shechem have dealt with our sister as with a prostitute?

Simeon and Levi use a question to emphasize that Shechem did what was wrong and deserved to die. Alternate translation: "Shechem should not have treated our sister as if she were a prostitute!"

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35 [1]God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there. Build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from Esau your brother."[2]Then Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Get rid of the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your clothes.[3]Then let us depart and go up to Bethel. I will build an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and has been with me wherever I have gone."
[4]So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that were in their hand, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob buried them under the oak that was near Shechem.[5]As they traveled, God made panic to fall on the cities that were around them, so those people did not pursue the sons of Jacob.
[6]So Jacob arrived at Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him.[7]He built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him, when he was fleeing from his brother.[8]Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died. She was buried down from Bethel under the oak tree, so it was called Allon Bakuth.

[9]When Jacob came from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him.[10]God said to him, "Your name is Jacob, but your name will no longer be called Jacob. Your name will be Israel." So God called his name Israel.
[11]God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants.[12]The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give to you. To your descendants after you I also give the land."[13]God went up from him in the place where he spoke with him.
[14]Jacob set up a pillar in the place where God had spoken to him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering over it and poured oil on it.[15]Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

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[16]They journeyed on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor. She had hard labor.[17]While she was in hardest labor, the midwife said to her, "Do not be afraid, for now you will have another son."[18]As she was dying, with her dying breath she named him Ben-Oni, but his father called him Benjamin.[19]Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).[20]Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave. It is the marker of Rachel's grave to this day.
[21]Israel traveled on and pitched his tent beyond the watchtower of the flock.[22]While Israel was living in that land, Reuben lay with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it.Now Jacob had twelve sons.

[23]His sons by Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.
[24]His sons by Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.
[25]His sons by Bilhah, Rachel's female servant, were Dan and Naphtali.

[26]The sons of Zilpah, Leah's female servant, were Gad and Asher. All these were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan Aram.
[27]Jacob came to Isaac, his father, in Mamre in Kiriath Arba (the same as Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had lived.

[28]Isaac lived for one hundred eighty years.[29]Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his ancestors, an old man full of days. Esau and Jacob, his sons, buried him.

Genesis 35 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Name change

In Scripture, a change in name always occurs at a highly significant point in a person's life. The return of Jacob to Canaan was a significant event in the history of the Hebrew people.

Covenant

The covenant God made with Abraham is repeated here. It indicates that all of Jacob's descendants will inherit the promises of this covenant. (See: covenant and inherit and promise)

Links:

Genesis 35:1 Notes

Genesis 35:1

go up to Bethel

The phrase "go up" is used because Bethel is higher in elevation than Shechem.

dwell there

"live there"

Build an altar there to God

God speaks about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Build an altar there to me, your God"

Genesis 35:2

said to his household

"said to his family"

Get rid of the foreign gods that are among you

"Throw away your idols" or "Get rid of your false gods"

purify yourselves, and change your clothes

This was the custom of cleansing oneself morally and physically before going to worship God.

change your clothes

Putting on a new clothes was a sign that they had made themselves clean before approaching God.

Genesis 35:3

in the day of my distress

"in the time of my distress" or "when I was in trouble"

Genesis 35:4

So they gave

"so everyone in Jacob's household gave" or "so all of his family and servants gave"

that were in their hand

Here "in their hand" stands for what they own. Alternate translation: "that were in their possession" or "that they had"

the rings that were in their ears

"their earrings." Possible meanings are 1) the gold in the earrings could have been used to make more idols or 2) they took these earrings from the city of Shechem after they attacked it and killed all the people. The earrings would have reminded them of their sin.

Genesis 35:5

God made panic to fall on the cities

God causing the people of the cities to be afraid of Jacob and his family is spoken of as if panic were an object that fell on the cities. The abstract noun "panic" can be stated as "afraid." Alternate translation: "God made the people in the surrounding cities afraid of Jacob and those with him"

on the cities

Here "cities" stands for the people who live in the cities.

the sons of Jacob

It is implied that no one attacked anyone in Jacob's family. But two of the sons, Simeon and Levi had attacked the Canaanites relatives of Shechem after he seized and slept

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with Jacob's daughter. Jacob was afraid they would seek revenge in [Genesis 34:30]
Genesis 35:6
Luz
This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Genesis 28:19]
Genesis 35:7
El Bethel
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name El Bethel means 'God of Bethel.'"
there God had revealed himself to him
"there God made himself known to Jacob"
Genesis 35:8
Deborah
This is the name of a woman.
Rebekah's nurse
A nurse is a woman who takes care of another woman's child. The nurse was highly honored and important to the family.
She was buried down from Bethel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They buried her down from Bethel"
down from Bethel
The phrase "down from" is used because they buried her in a place that was lower in elevation than Bethel.
Allon Bakuth
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Allon Bakuth means 'Oak tree where there is weeping.'"
Genesis 35:9
When Jacob came from Paddan Aram
It can be made explicit that they were in Bethel. Alternate translation: "After Jacob left Paddan Aram, and while he was in Bethel"
blessed
Here "bless" means to pronounce a formal blessing on someone and to cause good things to happen to that person.
Genesis 35:10
but your name will no longer be called Jacob
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but your name will no longer be Jacob"
Genesis 35:11
God said to him
"God said to Jacob"
Be fruitful and multiply
God told Jacob to produce children so that there would be many of them. The word "multiply" explains how he was to be "fruitful." See how you translated this in [Genesis 1:22]
A nation and a company of nations will come from you
Here "nation" and "nations" refer to Jacob's descendants who will establish these nations.
Genesis 35:13
God went up from him
Here "went up" is used because where God dwells is typically thought of as being up or above the world. Alternate translation: "God left him"
Genesis 35:14
pillar
This is a memorial pillar which was simply a large stone or boulder set up on its end.
He poured out a drink offering over it and poured oil on it
This is a sign that he is dedicating the pillar to God.
Genesis 35:15
Bethel
Translators may also add a footnote that says "The name Bethel means 'house of God.'"
Genesis 35:16
Ephrath
This is another name for the town of Bethlehem.
She had hard labor
"She was having a very difficult time giving birth to the child"
Genesis 35:17
While she was in hardest labor
"When the labor pain was at its worst"
midwife
a person who helps a woman when she is giving birth to a child
Genesis 35:18
As she was dying, with her dying breath
A "dying breath" is a person's last breath before he or she dies. Alternate translation: "Just before she died, as she was taking her last breath"
Ben-Oni
Translator may add a footnote that says "The name Ben-Oni means 'son of my sorrow.'"
Benjamin
Translator may add a footnote that says "The name Benjamin means 'son of the right hand.'" The phrase "right hand" indicates a place of special favor.
Genesis 35:19
was buried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried her"
on the way
"alongside the road"
Genesis 35:20
It is the marker of Rachel's grave to this day
"It marks Rachel's grave still to this day"
to this day
"up to the present time." This means to the time that the author was writing this.
Genesis 35:21
Israel traveled on
It is implied that Israel's family and servants are with him. The full meaning of this information can be made explicit.
the watchtower of the flock
Some English translations understand this phrase as a proper name, either "Migdal Eder" or "the tower of Eder."
Genesis 35:22
lay with
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "had sexual relations with"
Bilhah
This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:29]
Now Jacob had twelve sons
This sentence begins a new paragraph, which continues into the following verses.

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twelve sons
"12 sons"
Genesis 35:25
Bilhah
This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:29]
Genesis 35:26
Zilpah
This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:24]
who were born to him in Paddan Aram
It is implied that this does not include Benjamin who was born in the land of Canaan near Bethlehem. It only mentions Paddan Aram since that is where most of them were born. The full meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "who were born to him in Paddan Aram, except Benjamin who was born in the land of Canaan"
Genesis 35:27
Jacob came to Isaac
Here "came" can be stated as "went."
Mamre
This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [Genesis 13:18]
Kiriath Arba
This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:2]
Genesis 35:28
one hundred eighty years
"180 years"
Genesis 35:29
Isaac breathed his last and died
"Isaac took his last breath and died." The phrases "breathed his last" and "died" mean basically the same thing. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 25:8]
breathed his last
This is a polite way of saying a person died. See how you translated this in [Genesis 25:8]
was gathered to his ancestors
This means that after Isaac died, his soul went to the same place as his relatives who died before him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he joined his family members who had already died"
an old man full of days
The phrases "old man" and "full of days" mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that Isaac lived a very long time. Alternate translation: "after he had lived a very long time and was very old"

36

[1]These were the descendants of Esau (also called Edom).

[2]Esau took his wives from the Canaanites. These were his wives: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite;[3]and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth.
[4]Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel.[5]Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.
[6]Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock—all his other animals, and all his possessions, which he had gathered in the land of Canaan, and went into a land away from his brother Jacob.
[7]He did this because their possessions were too many for them to stay together. The land where they were sojourning could not support them because of their livestock.[8]So Esau, also known as Edom, settled in the hill country of Seir.

[9]These were the descendants of Esau, the ancestor of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.
[10]These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz son of Adah, the wife of Esau; Reuel son of Basemath, the wife of Esau.
[11]The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.
[12]Timna, a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, bore Amalek. These were the grandsons of Adah, Esau's wife.

[13]These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the grandsons of Basemath, Esau's wife.
[14]These were the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife, who was the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon. She bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

[15]These were the clans among Esau's descendants: the descendants of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz,[16]Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These were the clans descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the grandsons of Adah.

[17]These were the clans from Reuel, Esau's son: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah. These were the clans descended from Reuel in the land of Edom. They were the grandsons of Basemath, Esau's wife.
[18]These were the clans of Oholibamah, Esau's wife: Jeush, Jalam, Korah. These are the clans that descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, daughter of Anah.[19]These were the sons of Esau (who was known as Edom), and these were their chiefs.

[20]These were the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah,[21]Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the clans of the Horites, the inhabitants of Seir in the land of Edom.
[22]The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman, and Timna was Lotan's sister.

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[23]These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.
[24]These were the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. This is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he was pasturing donkeys of Zibeon his father.

[25]These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.
[26]These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.
[27]These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.
[28]These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

[29]These were the clans of the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah,[30]Dishon, Ezer, Dishan: These were clans of the Horites, according to their clan lists in the land of Seir.

[31]These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel:
[32]Bela son of Beor, reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.
[33]When Bela died, then Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his place.

[34]When Jobab died, Husham who was of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his place.
[35]When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad who defeated the Midianites in the land of Moab, reigned in his place. The name of his city was Avith.
[36]When Hadad died, then Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.

[37]When Samlah died, then Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his place.
[38]When Shaul died, then Baal-Hanan son of Akbor reigned in his place.
[39]When Baal-Hanan son of Akbor died, then Hadar reigned in his place. The name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the granddaughter of Me-Zahab.

[40]These were the names of the heads of clans from Esau's descendants, according to their clans and their regions, by their names: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth,[41]Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,[42]Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar,[43]Magdiel, and Iram. These were the clan heads of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they possessed. This was Esau, the father of the Edomites.

Genesis 36 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Esau's descendants

Esau's descendants became known as the Edomite people group. They also become a great nation. This nation is prominent in the rest of the Old Testament. God graciously blessed Esau and he had many descendants. (See: grace and bless)

Links:

Genesis 36:1 Notes

Genesis 36:1

These were the descendants of Esau (also called Edom)

"These are the descendants of Esau, who is also called Edom." This sentence introduces the account of Esau's descendants in Genesis 36:1-8. Alternate translation: "This is an account of the descendants of Esau, who is also called Edom"

Genesis 36:2

Adah ... Oholibamah

These are names of Esau's wives.

Elon the Hittite

"Elon the descendant of Heth" or "Elon a descendant of Heth." This is the name of a man. See how you translate this in Genesis 26:34.

Anah ... Zibeon

These are names of men.

Hivite

This refers to a larger group of people. See how you translated it in Genesis 10:17.

Genesis 36:3

Nebaioth

a man's name

Basemath

This is the name of one of Esau's wives. See how you translated this in Genesis 26:34.

Nebaioth

This is the name of one of Ishmael's sons. See how you translated this in Genesis 28:9.

Genesis 36:4

Adah ... Basemath

These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these in [Genesis 36:2-3]

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Eliphaz ... Reuel
These are names of Esau's sons.
Genesis 36:5
Oholibamah
These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these in [Genesis 36:2]
Jeush ... Jalam ... Korah
These are names of Esau's sons.
Genesis 36:6
which he had gathered in the land of Canaan
This refers to all of the things that he had accumulated while living in the land of Canaan. Alternate translation: "which he had accumulated while living in the land of Canaan"
went into a land
This means to moved to another place and live there. Alternate translation: "went to live in another land"
Genesis 36:7
their possessions
"Esau's and Jacob's possessions"
could not support them because of their livestock
The land was not large enough to support all of the livestock that Jacob and Esau owned. Alternate translation: "was not big enough to support all of their livestock" or "was not big enough for both Esau's flocks and Jacob's flocks"
where they were sojourning
The word "settled" means to move somewhere and live there. Alternate translation: "where they were living as foreigners"
Genesis 36:9
These were the descendants of Esau
This sentence introduces the account of Esau's descendants in Genesis 36:9-43. Alternate translation: "This is an account of the descendants of Esau"
in the hill country of Seir
This means that they lived in the hill country of Seir. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. Alternate translation: "who lived in the hill country of Seir"
Genesis 36:10
Eliphaz ... Reuel
These are names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:4]
Adah ... Basemath
These are names of Esau's wives. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:2-3]
Genesis 36:11
Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz
These are names of the sons of Eliphaz.
Genesis 36:12
Amalek
a son of Eliphaz
Timna
This is the name of Eliphaz's concubine.
Genesis 36:13
Reuel
This is the name of a son of Esau. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:4]
Nahath ... Zerah ... Shammah ... Mizzah
These are names of Reuel's sons.
Basemath
This is the name of a wife of Esau. See how you translated this in Genesis 36:3.
Genesis 36:14
Oholibamah
This is the name of a wife of Esau. See how you translated these in [Genesis 36:2]
Anah ... Zibeon
These are the names of men.
Jeush, Jalam, and Korah
These are names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in Genesis 36:5.
Genesis 36:15
Eliphaz
This is the name of one of Esau's sons. See how you translated his name in [Genesis 36:4]
Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz
These are names of Eliphaz's sons.
Genesis 36:16
Korah, Gatam, and Amalek
These are names of Eliphaz's sons.
Adah
This is the name of one of Esau's wives. See how you translated her name in Genesis 36:2.
Genesis 36:17
Reuel
This is the name of a son of Esau. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:4]
Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah
These are the names of Reuel's sons. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:13]
in the land of Edom
This means that they lived in the land of Edom. Alternate translation: "who lived in the land of Edom"
Basemath
This is the name of a wife of Esau. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:3]
Genesis 36:18
Oholibamah
This is the name of a wife of Esau. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:2]
Jeush, Jalam, Korah
These are the names of Esau's sons. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:5]
Anah
This the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:2]
Genesis 36:20
Seir
The word "Seir" is the name of a man and of a country.
the Horite
The word "Horite" refers to a people group. See how you translated it in Genesis 14:6.
the inhabitants of the land
"who lived in the land of Seir, which is also called Edom"
Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah
These are names of men.
Genesis 36:21

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Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan
These are names of men.
Genesis 36:22
Lotan ... Hori and Heman
These are names of men.
Timna
This is the name of a woman.
Genesis 36:23
Shobal
This is the name of man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:20]
Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam
These are names of men.
Genesis 36:24
Zibeon
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:20]
Aiah and Anah
These are names of men.
Genesis 36:25
Anah ... Dishon
These are names of men. See how you translated "Anah" in Genesis 36:20.
Oholibamah
This is the name of a woman.
Genesis 36:26
Dishon ... Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran
These are names of men. See how you translated "Dishon" in [Genesis 36:21]
Genesis 36:27
Ezer ... Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan
These are names of men. See how you translated "Ezer" in [Genesis 36:20-21]
Genesis 36:28
Dishan ... Uz and Aran
These are names of men. See how you translated "Dishan" in [Genesis 36:21]
Genesis 36:29
the Horites
This is the name of a people group. See how you translated this in [Genesis 14:6]
Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah
These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:20]
Genesis 36:30
Dishon, Ezer, Dishan
These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in [Genesis 36:21]
in the land of Seir
This means that they lived in the land of Seir. Alternate translation: "of those who lived in the land of Seir"
Genesis 36:32
Bela ... Beor
These are names of men.
the name of his city
This means that this was the city where he lived. Alternate translation: "the name of the city where he lived"
Dinhabah
This is the name of a place.
Genesis 36:33
Bela ... Jobab ... Zerah
These are names of men.
Bozrah
This is the name of a place.
reigned in his place
"reigned in Bela's place" or "reigned instead of Bela." This means that Jobab became king after Bela. Alternate translation: "succeeded Bela as king" or "became king after him"
Genesis 36:34
Jobab
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:33]
Husham
This is the name of a man.
Husham who was of the land of the Temanites
This means that Husham lived in the land of the Temanites. Alternate translation: "Husham who lived in the land of the Temanites"
Temanites
descendants of a man named Teman
Genesis 36:35
Husham ... Hadad ... Bedad
These are names of men.
The name of his city
This means that this was the city where he lived. Alternate translation: "The name of the city where he lived"
Avith
These are names of places.
Genesis 36:36
Hadad ... Samlah
These are names of men.
Samlah of Masrekah
"Samlah from Masrekah"
Masrekah
These are names of places.
Genesis 36:37
Samlah
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 36:36]
then Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his place
Shaul lived in Rehoboth. Rehoboth was by the Euphrates river. This information may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "then Shaul reigned in his place. He was from Rehoboth which is by the Euphrates River"
Shaul
This is the name of a man.
Rehoboth
This is the name of a place.
Genesis 36:38
Shaul ... Baal-Hanan ... Akbor
These are names of men.
Genesis 36:39
Baal-Hanan ... Akbor ... Hadar ... Matred ... Me-Zahab
These are names of men.
The name of his city
This means that this was the city where he lived. Alternate translation: "The name of the city where he lived"

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Pau
These are names of places.
Mehetabel
This is the name of a woman.
the daughter of Matred, the granddaughter of Me-Zahab
"she was the daughter of Matred, and the granddaughter of Me-Zahab"
Genesis 36:40
the heads of clans
"the leaders of the clans"
according to their clans and their regions, by their names
The clans and the regions were named after the heads of the clans. Alternate translation: "the names of their clans and the regions where they lived were named after them. These are their names"
Timna, Alvah, Jetheth
These are names of people groups.
Genesis 36:41
Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon
These are names of people groups.
Genesis 36:42
Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar
These are names of people groups.
Genesis 36:43
Magdiel, and Iram
These are names of people groups.
their settlements
"their dwelling places" or "the places they lived"
This was Esau
This list is said "to be" Esau, which means that it is the whole list of his descendants. Alternate translation: "This is the list of the descendants of Esau"

37 [1]Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan.

[2]This is the account of Jacob. Joseph, who was a young man seventeen years old, was guarding the flock with his brothers. He was with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. Joseph brought an unfavorable report about them to their father.
[3]Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons because he was the son of his old age. He made him a beautifully decorated garment.[4]His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers. They hated him and would not speak peaceably to him.

[5]Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told his brothers about it. They hated him even more.[6]He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I dreamed.
[7]Behold, we were tying bundles of grain in the field and behold, my bundle rose and stood upright, and behold, your bundles came around and bowed down to my bundle."[8]His brothers said to him, "Will you really reign over us? Will you actually rule over us?" They hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.
[9]He dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers. He said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream: The sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me."[10]He told it to his father just as to his brothers, and his father rebuked him. He said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come to bow down to the ground to you?"[11]His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

[12]His brothers went to tend their father's flock in Shechem.[13]Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers tending the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." Joseph said to him, "I am ready."[14]He said to him, "Go now, see whether it is well with your brothers and well with the flock, and bring me word." So Jacob sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and Joseph went to Shechem.
[15]A certain man found Joseph. Behold, Joseph was wandering in a field. The man asked him, "What do you seek?"[16]Joseph said, "I am seeking my brothers. Tell me, please, where they are tending the flock."[17]The man said, "They left this place, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

[18]They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they plotted against him to kill him.[19]His brothers said to one another, "Look, this master of dreams is approaching.[20]Come now, therefore, let us kill him and cast him into one of the pits. We will say, 'A wild animal has devoured him.' We will see what will become of his dreams."
[21]Reuben heard it and rescued him from their hand. He said, "Let us not take his life."[22]Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand to bring him back to his father.
[23]It came about that when Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his beautifully decorated garment.[24]They took him and threw him into the pit. The pit was empty with no water in it.

[25]They sat down to eat bread. They lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing spices and balm and myrrh. They were traveling to carry them down to Egypt.[26]Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?
[27]Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands upon him. For he is our brother, our flesh." His brothers listened to him.[28]The Midianite merchants passed by. His brothers drew Joseph up and lifted him up out of the pit. They sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. The Ishmaelites carried Joseph into Egypt.

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[29]Reuben returned to the pit, and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit. He tore his clothes.[30]He returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is not there! And I, where can I go?"
[31]They slaughtered a goat and then took Joseph's garment and dipped it into the blood.[32]Then they brought the beautifully decorated garment to their father and said, "We found this. Please see whether it is your son's garment or not."[33]Jacob recognized it and said, "It is my son's clothing. A wild animal has devoured him. Joseph has certainly been torn to pieces."
[34]Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth upon his loins. He mourned for his son many days.[35]All his sons and daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said, "Indeed I will go down to Sheol mourning for my son." His father wept for him.[36]The Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard.

Genesis 37 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins to record the account of Jacob's sons. The rest of the book of Genesis focuses on Jacob's sons, especially Joseph. This chapter also references Jacob as "Israel" beginning in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Favoritism

Jacob's favoritism became a great problem for his sons. They are always jealous of Joseph because he is the favorite son. The beautiful garment Jacob gave to Joseph greatly strained the relationship between Joseph and his brothers. Joseph dreams he will rule all of his brothers, even though he is not the oldest son. (See: favor)

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: peopleofgod and bless)

Links:

Genesis 37:1 Notes

Genesis 37:1

the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan

"in the land of Canaan where his father had lived as a foreigner"

Genesis 37:2

seventeen years old

"17 years old"

Bilhah

This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:29]

Zilpah

This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:24]

wives

These women were servants of Leah and Rachel whom they had given to Jacob to produce children.

an unfavorable report about them

"a bad report about his brothers"

Genesis 37:3

Now

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Israel and Joseph.

loved

This refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member. This is natural human love between friends or relatives.

of his old age

This means that Joseph was born when Israel was an old man. Alternate translation: "who was born when Israel was an old man"

He made him

"Israel made Joseph"

a beautifully decorated garment

"a beautiful robe"

Genesis 37:5

Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told his brothers about it. They hated him even more

This is a summary of the events that will happen in 37:6-11.

They hated him even more

"And Joseph's brothers hated him even more than they hated him before"

Genesis 37:6

Please listen to this dream which I dreamed

"Please listen to this dream that I had"

Genesis 37:7

General Information:

Joseph tells his brothers about his dream.

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

we were

The word "we" refers to Joseph and includes all of his brothers.

tying bundles of grain

When grain is reaped it is tied into bundles and stacked until it is time to separate the grain from the straw.

behold

Here the word "behold" here shows that Joseph was surprised by what he saw.

my bundle rose and stood upright ... your bundles came around and

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bowed down

Here the bundles of grain are standing and kneeling as if they were people. These bundle represent Joseph and his brothers.

Genesis 37:8

Will you really reign over us? Will you actually rule over us?

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. Joseph's brothers are using questions to mock Joseph. They can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You will never be our king, and we will never bow down to you!"

reign over us

The word "us" refers to Joseph's brothers but not Joseph.

for his dreams and for his words

"because of his dreams and what he said"

Genesis 37:9

He dreamed another dream

"Joseph had another dream"

eleven stars

"11 stars"

Genesis 37:10

his father rebuked him. He said to him

"Israel scolded him, saying"

What is this dream that you have dreamed? Will your mother ... to the ground to you?

Israel uses questions to correct Joseph. This can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "This dream you had is not real. Your mother, brothers, and I will not bow down before you!"

Genesis 37:11

jealous

This means being angry because someone else is successful or more popular.

kept the matter in mind

The means that he kept thinking about the meaning of Joseph's dream. Alternate translation: "kept thinking about what the dream might mean"

Genesis 37:13

Are not your brothers tending the flock in Shechem?

Israel uses a question to begin a conversation. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You brothers are tending the flock in Shechem."

Come

Here it is implied that Israel is asking Joseph to prepare himself to leave and go see his brothers. Alternate translation: "Get ready"

I am ready

He is ready to leave. "I am ready to go"

Genesis 37:14

He said to him

"Israel said to Joseph"

bring me word

Israel wants Joseph to come back and tell him about how his brother and flocks are doing. Alternate translation: "come tell me what you find out" or "give me a report"

out of the Valley

"from the Valley"

Genesis 37:15

A certain man found Joseph. Behold, Joseph was wandering in a field

"A certain man found Joseph wandering in a field"

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

What do you seek?

"What are you looking for?"

Genesis 37:16

Tell me, please, where

"Please tell me where"

tending the flock

"shepherding their flock"

Genesis 37:17

Dothan

This is the name of a place that is about 22 kilometers from Shechem.

Genesis 37:18

They saw him from a distance

"Joseph's brothers saw him while he was far away"

they plotted against him to kill him

"they made evil plans to kill him"

Genesis 37:19

this master of dreams is approaching

"here comes the wonderful person who has great dreams."

The phrase "this master of dreams" is sarcastic. If your language has a way of showing that the brothers used these words to show that they hated Joseph, you may want to use it here.

Genesis 37:20

Come now, therefore

This wording shows that the brothers acted upon their plans. Alternate translation: "So now"

wild animal

"dangerous animal" or "ferocious animal"

devoured

to eagerly have eaten

We will see what will become of his dreams

His brothers planned to kill him, therefore it is ironic that they would speak of his dream coming true, since he would be dead. Alternate translation: "That way we will make sure his dreams do not come true"

Genesis 37:21

heard it

"heard what they were saying"

from their hand

The phrase "their hand" refers to the brothers' plan to kill him. Alternate translation: "from them" or "from their plans"

Let us not take his life

The phrase "take his life" is a euphemism for killing someone. Alternate translation: "Let us not kill Joseph"

Genesis 37:22

Shed no blood

The negation can be placed on the verb. Also, "shedding blood" is a euphemism for killing someone. Alternate translation: "Do not spill any blood" or "Do not kill him"

that he might rescue him

This can be translated as a new sentence: "Rueben said this so that he might rescue Joseph"

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out of their hand
The phrase "their hand" refers to the brothers' plan to kill him. Alternate translation: "from them" or "from their plans"
to bring him back
"and return him"
Genesis 37:23
It came about that when
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
they stripped him of his beautifully decorated garment
"they tore his beautiful garment off of him"
beautifully decorated garment
"beautiful robe." See how you translated this in Genesis 37:3.
Genesis 37:25
They sat down to eat bread
"Bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "They sat down to eat food" or "Joseph's brothers sat down to eat"
They lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan
Here looking up is spoken of as if a person literally lifted up his eyes. Also, the word "behold" is used here to draw the reader's attention to what the men saw. Alternate translation: "They looked up and they suddenly saw a caravan"
bearing
carrying
spices
seasonings
balm
an oily substance with a sweet smell used for healing and protecting skin. "medicine"
traveling to carry them down to Egypt
"bringing them down to Egypt." This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "bringing them down to Egypt to sell them"
Genesis 37:26
What profit is it if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We do not gain a profit by killing our brother and covering up his blood"
cover up his blood
This is a figure of speech referring to hiding Joseph's death. Alternate translation: "hide his murder"
Genesis 37:27
to the Ishmaelites
"to these men who are descendants of Ishmael"
not lay our hands upon him
This means not to harm or injure him. Alternate translation: "not hurt him"
he is our brother, our flesh
The word "flesh" is a metonym that stands for a relative. Alternate translation: "he is our blood relative"
His brothers listened to him
"Judah's brothers listened to him" or "Judah's brothers agreed with him"
Genesis 37:28
Midianite ... Ishmaelites
Both names refer to the same group of traders that Joseph's brothers meet.
for twenty pieces of silver
"for the price of 20 pieces of silver"
carried Joseph into Egypt
"took Joseph to Egypt"
Genesis 37:29
Reuben returned to the pit, and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit
"Reuben returned to the pit, and was surprised to see that Joseph was not there." The word "behold" here shows that Reuben was surprised to find out Joseph was gone.
He tore his clothes
This is an act of deep distress and grief. This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "He was so grieved that he tore his clothes"
Genesis 37:30
The boy is not there! And I, where can I go?
Reuben uses questions for emphasis the problem that Joseph was missing. These can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "The boy is gone! I cannot go back home now!"
Genesis 37:31
Joseph's garment
This refers to the beautiful garment that his father made for him.
the blood
"the goat's blood"
Genesis 37:33
has devoured him
"has eaten him"
Joseph has certainly been torn to pieces
Jacob thinks that a wild animal has torn Joseph's body apart. Alternate translation: "It has certainly torn Joseph to pieces"
Genesis 37:34
Jacob tore his garments
This is an act of deep distress and grief. This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "Jacob was so grieved that he tore his garments"
put sackcloth upon his loins
Here "loins" refers to the middle part of the body or the waist. Alternate translation: "put on sackcloth"
Genesis 37:35
rose up
Here the childrens' coming to their father is spoke of as "rising up." Alternate translation: "came to him"
but he refused to be comforted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but he would not let them comfort him"
Indeed I will go down to Sheol mourning
The means that he be mourning from now until when he dies. Alternate translation: "Indeed when I die and go down to Sheol I will still be mourning"
Genesis 37:36
The Midianites sold him
"The Midianites sold Joseph"
the captain of the bodyguard
"the leader of the soldiers who guarded the king"

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38 [1]It came about at that time that Judah left his brothers and stayed with a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.
[2]He met there a daughter of a Canaanite man whose name was Shua. He took her and went to her.
[3]She conceived and had a son. He was named Er.[4]She conceived again and had a son. She called his name Onan.[5]She again had a son and called his name Shelah. It was at Kezib where she gave birth to him.
[6]Judah found a wife for Er, his firstborn. Her name was Tamar.[7]Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Yahweh. Yahweh killed him.
[8]Judah said to Onan, "Go to your brother's wife. Do the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up a child for your brother."[9]Onan knew that the child would not be his. Whenever he went to his brother's wife, he wasted it on the ground so he would not have a child for his brother.[10]What he did was evil in the sight of Yahweh. Yahweh killed him also.
[11]Then Judah said to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house until Shelah, my son, grows up." For he feared, "He might also die, just like his brothers." Tamar left and lived in her father's house.

[12]After a long time, Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died. Judah was comforted and went up to the shearers of his sheep at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.[13]Tamar was told, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep."[14]She took off the clothing of her widowhood and covered herself with her veil and wrapped herself. She sat in the gate of Enaim, which is by the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah had grown up but she had not been given to him as a wife.
[15]When Judah saw her he thought that she was a prostitute because she had covered her face.[16]He went to her by the road and said, "Come, please let me come to you"—for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law—and she said, "What will you give me so you can come to me?"
[17]He said, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." She said, "Will you give me a pledge until you send it?"[18]He said, "What pledge can I give you?" She replied, "Your seal and cord, and the staff that is in your hand." He gave them to her and he went to her, and she conceived by him.
[19]She got up and went away. She took off her veil and put on the clothing of her widowhood.[20]Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite in order that he might receive the pledge back from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.
[21]Then the Adullamite asked the men of the place, "Where is the cultic prostitute who was at Enaim by the road?" They said, "There has not been a cultic prostitute here."[22]He returned to Judah and said, "I did not find her. Also, the men of the place said, 'There has not been a cultic prostitute here.'"[23]Judah said, "Let her keep the things, that we not be put to shame. Indeed, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her."

[24]It came about after about three months that it was told to Judah, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has committed prostitution, and indeed, she is pregnant by it." Judah said, "Bring her here and let her be burned."[25]When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law a message, "By the man who owns these I am pregnant." She said, "Determine please whose these are, the seal and cords and staff."[26]Judah recognized them and said, "She is more righteous than I am, since I did not give her as a wife to Shelah, my son." He did not know her again.
[27]It came about at the time for her to give birth that, behold, twins were in her womb.[28]It came about as she was giving birth one put out a hand, and the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his hand and said, "This one came out first."
[29]But then he drew back his hand, and, behold, his brother came out first. The midwife said, "How you have broken out!" So he was named Perez.[30]Then his brother came out, who had the scarlet thread upon his hand, and he was named Zerah.

Genesis 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter focuses on Jacob's son Judah.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Spilling his seed"

Onan was to provide for his brother's widow and give her an heir. This phrase indicates that he used Tamar to fulfill his own sexual desires rather than help her. This was sinful. (See: and sin)

God preserves Judah's line

The Canaanite woman, Tamar, deceived her father-in-law, Judah, into having sexual relations with her. If it had not been for this act, Judah would not have any descendants to carry on his family line. Although her actions were wrong, God used them to protect his people. (See: peopleofgod)

Links:

Genesis 38:1 Notes

Genesis 38:1 It came about at that time that Judah	This introduces a new part of the story that focuses on Judah.

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a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah
Hirah is the name of a man who lived in the village of Adullam.
Genesis 38:2
whose name was Shua
Shua is a Canaanite woman who married Judah.
he ... went to her
This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]
Genesis 38:3
She conceived
"Judah's wife became pregnant"
He was named Er
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "His father named him Er"
Er
Judah's son
Genesis 38:4
called his name
"named him"
Onan
Judah's son
Genesis 38:5
Shelah
Judah's son
Kezib
This is the name of a place.
Genesis 38:6
Er
This is the name of one of Judah's sons. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 38:3]
Genesis 38:7
was wicked in the sight of Yahweh
The phrase "in the sight" refers to Yahweh seeing Er's wickedness. Alternate translation: "was wicked and Yahweh saw it"
Yahweh killed him
Yahweh killed him because he was wicked. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "So Yahweh killed him"
Genesis 38:8
Onan
This is the name of one of Judah's sons. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 38:4]
Go to your brother's wife
This is a polite way of telling him to have sexual relations with his brother's wife. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]
Do the duty of a brother-in-law to her
This refers to a custom that when the oldest brother dies before he and his wife have a son, the next oldest brother would marry and have sexual relations with the widow. When the widow gave birth to the first son, that son was considered the son of the oldest brother and he would receive the oldest brother's inheritance.
Genesis 38:9
he went to his brother's wife
This is a polite way of referring to having sexual relations with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]
he wasted it on the ground
You may need to make explicit that the word "it" refers to Onan's semen. Alternate translation: "he destroyed his semen by having it flow on the ground" or "he did not send his semen into her"
on the ground
This is probably a euphemism for any place that it should not have gone.
Genesis 38:10
was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The phrase "in the sight" refers to Yahweh seeing Onan's wickedness. Alternate translation: "was evil and Yahweh saw it"
Yahweh killed him also
Yahweh killed him because what he did was evil. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "So Yahweh killed him also"
Genesis 38:11
his daughter-in-law
"his oldest son's wife"
in your father's house
This means her to live in here father's house. Alternate translation: "and live in your father's house"
until Shelah, my son, grows up
Judah intends for Tamar to marry Shelah when he grows up. Alternate translation: "and when Shelah, my son, grows up, he can marry you"
Shelah
This is the name of one of Judah's sons. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 38:5]
For he feared, "He might also die, just like his brothers
Judah feared that if Shelah married Tamar he would also die like his brothers did. Alternate translation: "For he feared, 'If he marries her he may also die like his brothers did"
Genesis 38:12
Shua's
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 38:2]
Judah was comforted and
"When Judah was no longer grieving, he"
the shearers of his sheep at Timnah
"Timnah, where his men were shearing sheep"
Timnah
This is the name of a place.
he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite
"His friend Hiram, from Adullam, went with him"
Hirah the Adullamite
"Hiram" is the name of a man, and "Adullam" is the name of a village where he lived. See how you translated this name in Genesis 38:1.
Genesis 38:13
Tamar was told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Tamar"
Look, your father-in-law
"Listen." Here the word "look" is used to get Tamar attention.

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your father-in-law
"your husband's father"
Genesis 38:14
Enaim
This is the name of a place.
of her widowhood
"that widows wear"
veil
a very thin material used to cover a woman's head and face
wrapped herself
This means that she hid herself with her clothing so that people would not recognize her. Traditionally, part of women's clothing were large pieces of cloth they wrapped themselves with. Alternate translation: "wrapped herself in her clothing so that people would not recognize her"
by the road
"along the road" or "on the way"
she had not been given to him as a wife
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Judah had not given her to Shelah as a wife"
Genesis 38:15
When Judah saw her
The word "her" here refers to Tamar, but your reader should understand that Judah did not know that the woman he was looking at was Tamar.
because she had covered her face
Judah did not think she was a prostitute just because her face was covered but also because she was sitting in the gate. Alternate translation: "because she had covered her head and sat where prostitutes often sat"
Genesis 38:16
He went to her by the road
Tamar was sitting by the road. Alternate translation: "He went to where she was sitting by the road"
Come, please
"Come with me, please" or "Come now, please"
please let me come to you
This is a polite way of asking her to have sexual relations with him. You may need to use another euphemism in your language. Alternate translation: "Please have sexual relations with me" or "Please lie with me"
Genesis 38:17
from the flock
"from my flock of goats"
Genesis 38:18
seal and cord ... staff
A "seal" is similar to a coin with a design engraved on it, used to imprint melted wax. The "cord" was put through the seal so the owner could wear it around his neck. A staff was long wooden stick that helped in walking over rough ground.
he went to her
This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with Hagar. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 16:2]
she conceived by him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he caused her to become pregnant"
Genesis 38:19
veil
This was a very thin material used to cover a woman's head and face. See how you translated these in Genesis 38:14.
clothing of her widowhood
"clothing that widows wear." See how you translated these in Genesis 38:14.
Genesis 38:20
Adullamite
a person who lives in the village of Adullam. See how you translated this in [Genesis 38:1]
receive the pledge
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "take back the pledge"
from the woman's hand
Here "hand" emphasizes that they were in here possession. The woman's hand refers to the woman. Alternate translation: "from the woman"
Genesis 38:21
Adullamite
a person who lives in the village of Adullam. See how you translated this in [Genesis 38:1]
the men of the place
"some of the men who lived there"
cultic prostitute
"prostitute who serves in the temple"
Enaim
This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in [Genesis 38:14]
Genesis 38:23
that we not be put to shame
When people found out what had happened they would ridicule Judah and laugh at him. This can be made clear and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "or else people will laugh at us when they find out what happened"
Genesis 38:24
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.
it was told to Judah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told Judah"
Tamar your daughter-in-law
"Tamar, your oldest son's wife"
she is pregnant by it
Here the word "it" refers to the "prostitution" that she committed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it has made her pregnant" or "she is pregnant"
Bring her here
"Bring her out"
let her be burned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we will burn her to death"
Genesis 38:25
When she was brought out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they brought her out"
her father-in-law
"her husband's father"
seal and cords and staff

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A "seal" is similar to a coin with a design engraved on it, used to make an impression in melted wax. The "cord" was put through the seal so the owner could wear it around his neck. A staff was long wooden stick that helped in walking over rough ground. See how you translated this in Genesis 38:18.

Genesis 38:26

Shelah

This is the name of one of Judah's sons. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 38:5]

He did not know her again

This is a polite way of saying that Judah did not have sexual relations with her again. You may need to use another euphemism in your language.

Genesis 38:27

It came about at the time

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to the surprise that Tamar was carrying twins, which was previously unknown.

Genesis 38:28

It came about as she was giving birth

This phrase "It came about" marks an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

one put out a hand

"one of the babies put out his hand"

midwife

This is a person who helps a woman when she is giving birth to a child. See how you translated this in Genesis 35:17.

scarlet thread

"bright red thread"

on his hand

"around his wrist"

Genesis 38:29

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

How you have broken out!

This shows the midwife's surprise to seeing the second baby come out first. Alternate translation: "So this is how you break your way out first!" or "You have burst out first!"

he was named

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she named him"

Perez

This is the name of a boy. Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Perez means 'breaking out.'"

Genesis 38:30

Zerah

This is the name of a boy. Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Zerah means 'scarlet or bright red.'"

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39 [1]Joseph was brought down to Egypt. Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh who was captain of the guard and an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had brought him down there.[2]Yahweh was with Joseph and he became a prosperous man. He lived in the house of his Egyptian master.
[3]His master saw that Yahweh was with him and that Yahweh prospered everything that he did.[4]Joseph found favor in his sight. He served Potiphar. Potiphar made Joseph manager over his house, and everything that he possessed, he put under his care.
[5]It came about from the time that he made him manager over his house and over everything he possessed, that Yahweh blessed the Egyptian's house because of Joseph. The blessing of Yahweh was on everything that Potiphar had in the house and in the field.[6]Potiphar put everything that he had under Joseph's care. He did not have to think about anything except the food that he ate. Now Joseph was handsome and attractive.
[7]It came about after this that his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me."[8]But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not pay attention to what I do in the house, and he has put everything that he owns under my care.[9]No one is greater in this house than I am. He has not kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"
[10]She spoke to Joseph day after day, but he refused to lie with her or to be with her.[11]It came about one day that he went into the house to do his work. None of the men of the house were there in the house.[12]She caught him by his clothes and said, "Lie with me." He left his clothing in her hand, fled, and went outside.
[13]It came about, when she saw that he had left his clothing in her hand and had fled outside,[14]that she called to the men of her house and told them, "See, Potiphar has brought in a Hebrew to mock us. He came to me to lie with me, and I screamed.[15]It came about when he heard me scream, that he left his clothing with me, fled, and went outside."
[16]She set his clothing next to her until his master came home.[17]She told him this explanation, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us, came in to mock me.[18]It came about that when I screamed, he left his clothing with me and fled outside."

[19]It came about that, when his master heard the explanation his wife told him, "This is what your servant did to me," he became very angry.[20]Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. He was there in the prison.
[21]But Yahweh was with Joseph and showed covenant faithfulness to him. He gave him favor in the sight of the prison warden.[22]The prison warden gave into Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever they did there, Joseph was in charge of it.[23]The prison warden did not worry about anything that was in his hand, because Yahweh was with him. Whatever he did, Yahweh prospered.

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Genesis 39 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. This is a sign of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness. (See: peopleofgod, bless and sign and covenantfaith)

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. He chose to do what was right, even when it could cause him harm. (See: sin)

Links:

Genesis 39:1 Notes

Genesis 39:1

Joseph was brought down to Egypt

Traveling to Egypt is always considered as going "down" in contrast to going "up" to the promised land. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Ishmaelites had taken Joseph to Egypt"

Genesis 39:2

Yahweh was with Joseph

This means that Yahweh helped Joseph and was always with him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh guided Joseph and helped him"

He lived in the house

Here the author speaks of working in the master's house as if it were living in the master's house. Only the most trusted servants were permitted to work in their master's house. Alternate translation: "he worked in the house"

his Egyptian master

Joseph was now Potiphar's slave.

Genesis 39:3

His master saw that Yahweh was with him

This means that the master saw how Yahweh was helping Joseph. Alternate translation: "His master saw that Yahweh was helping him"

that Yahweh prospered everything that he did

"Yahweh caused everything that Joseph did to prosper"

Genesis 39:4

Joseph found favor in his sight

"To find favor" means to be approved by someone. The idiom "in his sight" refers to a person's opinion. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "Potiphar was pleased with Joseph" or 2) Alternate translation: "Yahweh was pleased with Joseph"

He served Potiphar

This means that he was Potiphar's personal servant.

Potiphar made Joseph manager over his house, and everything that he possessed

"Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household and everything that belonged to Potiphar"

put under his care

When something is "put under someone's care," it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. Alternate translation: "he had Joseph care for"

Genesis 39:5

It came about from the time that he made him manager over his house and over everything he possessed, that Yahweh blessed the Egyptian's house because of Joseph

You may need to use the words "Joseph" and "the Egyptian" before using pronouns to refer to them. "The Egyptian made Joseph manager over his house and over everything he possessed, and it came about from the time that that Yahweh blessed the Egyptian's house because of Joseph"

It came about

This phrase is used here to tell the reader that these two verses are background information for the next event.

he made him manager over his house and over everything he possessed

"Potiphar put Joseph in charge of his household and everything that belonged to him"

blessed

Here "blessed" means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

The blessing of Yahweh was on

Here the author speaks of the blessing that Yahweh gave as if it were a physical covering put over something. Alternate translation: "Yahweh blessed"

everything that Potiphar had in the house and in the field

This refers his household and his crops and livestock. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Potiphar's household and all of his crops and livestock"

Genesis 39:6

Potiphar put everything that he had under Joseph's care

When something is "put under someone's care," it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. Alternate translation: "So Potiphar put Joseph in charge of everything that he had"

He did not have to think about anything except the food that he ate

This double negative emphasizes that the food that he ate was the only thing he had to think about. This is probably an exaggeration or metaphor to say that Joseph took care of all the important business of the house while Potiphar thought only about minor personal affairs. Alternate translation: "The only thing he had to think about was the food that he ate"

Now

The word "now" marks a stop in the story as the author gives background information about Joseph.

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handsome and attractive
Both of the words have same meaning. They refer to Joseph's pleasing appearance. He was likely good-looking and strong. Alternate translation: "handsome and strong"
Genesis 39:7
It came about after this that
"And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event.
Lie with me
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Have sexual relations with me"
Genesis 39:8
Look
"Listen." Joseph uses this word to get Potiphar's wife's attention.
my master does not pay attention to what I do in the house
"my master has no concern about his household with me in charge" or "my master trusts me with his household"
he has put everything that he owns under my care
When something is "put under someone's care," it means that the person is responsible for its care and safe-keeping. Alternate translation: "he has put me in charge of everything that belongs to him"
Genesis 39:9
No one is greater in this house than I am
Here the author speaks of authority as if it were greatness. Alternate translation: "I have more authority in this house than anyone else"
He has not kept back anything from me but you
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He has given me everything except you"
How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?
Joseph uses a question for emphasis. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I certainly cannot do such a wicked thing and sin against God."
Genesis 39:10
She spoke to Joseph day after day
This means that she kept asking him to sleep with her. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "She kept on asking Joseph to sleep with her"
to lie with her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "to have sexual relations with her"
to be with her
"to be near her"
Genesis 39:11
It came about
"And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story.
None of the men of the house
"None of the other men who worked in the house"
Genesis 39:12
Lie with me
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Have sexual relations with me"
fled, and went outside
"and quickly ran outside" or "and quickly ran out of the house"
Genesis 39:13
It came about
"Then" The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark the next event in the story.
had fled outside
"had quickly ran out of the house"
Genesis 39:14
the men of her house
"the men who worked in her house"
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."
He came to me to lie with me
Here Potiphar's wife is accusing Joseph of trying to seize her and have sexual relations with her. Alternate translation: "He came into my room to have sexual relations with me"
Genesis 39:15
It came about when he heard me scream, that he
"When he heard me scream, he." The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark the next event in the story.
Genesis 39:16
his master
"Joseph's master." This refers to Potiphar.
Genesis 39:17
She told him this explanation
"She explained it like this"
brought to us
The word "us" refers to Potiphar, his wife, and includes the rest of the household.
came in to mock me
"came in to make a fool of me." Here, the word "mock" is a euphemism for "to seize and to sleep with." Alternate translation: "came into where I was and tried to force me to sleep with him"
Genesis 39:18
It came about that
"Then." Potiphar's wife uses this phrase to mark the next event in the account she is telling him about Joseph trying to sleep with her.
fled outside
"ran quickly out of the house"
Genesis 39:19
It came about that
"And so." This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story.
his master
"Joseph's master." This refers to Potiphar. This information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Joseph's master, Potiphar"
heard the explanation his wife told him
"heard his wife explain to him." The word "his" and "him" here refer to Potiphar.
he became very angry
"Potiphar became very angry"
Genesis 39:20
the place where the king's prisoners were confined
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place where the king put his prisoners"
He was there

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"Joseph stayed there"

Genesis 39:21

But Yahweh was with Joseph

This refers to how Yahweh took care of Joseph and was kind to him. Alternate translation: "But Yahweh was kind to Joseph" or "But Yahweh took care of Joseph"

showed covenant faithfulness to him

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "was faithful to his covenant with him" or "faithfully loved him"

He gave him favor in the sight of the prison warden

This means Yahweh caused the prison warden to approve of Joseph and to treat him well. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused the prison warden to be pleased with Joseph"

the prison warden

"the prison manager" or "the man in charge of the prison"

Genesis 39:22

gave into Joseph's hand

Here "hand" represents Joseph's power or trust. Alternate translation: "put Joseph in charge of"

Whatever they did there, Joseph was in charge of it

"Joseph was in charge of everything they did there"

Genesis 39:23

because Yahweh was with him

This refers to how Yahweh helped Joseph and guided him. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh guided Joseph"

Whatever he did, Yahweh prospered

"Yahweh caused everything that Joseph did to prosper"

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40 [1]It came about that after these things, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and king's baker offended their master, the king of Egypt.[2]Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief of the cupbearers and the chief of the bakers.[3]He put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was confined.
[4]The captain of the guard assigned Joseph to them, and he served them. They remained in custody for some time.[5]Both of them dreamed a dream—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt who were confined in the prison—each man had his own dream in the same night, and each dream had its own interpretation.
[6]Joseph came to them in the morning and saw them. Behold, they were upset.[7]He asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in custody in his master's house, saying, "Why do you look so sad today?"[8]They said to him, "We have both dreamed a dream and no one can interpret it." Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me, please."

[9]The chief of the cupbearers told his dream to Joseph. He said to him, "In my dream, behold, a vine was in front of me.[10]In the vine were three branches. As it budded, its blossoms came out and the clusters of grapes ripened.[11]Pharaoh's cup was in my hand. I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I placed the cup into Pharaoh's hand."
[12]Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it. The three branches are three days.[13]Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office. You will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand, just as when you were his cupbearer.
[14]But think of me when it goes well with you, and please show kindness to me. Mention me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this prison.[15]For indeed I was abducted out of the land of the Hebrews. Here also have I done nothing that they should put me in this dungeon."

[16]When the chief of the bakers saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream, and, behold, three baskets of bread were on my head.[17]In the top basket there were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."
[18]Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation. The three baskets are three days.[19]Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you and will hang you on a tree. The birds will eat your flesh off you."
[20]It came about on the third day that it was Pharaoh's birthday. He made a feast for all his servants. He lifted up the head of the chief of the cupbearers and the head of the chief of the bakers, among his servants.[21]He restored the chief of the cupbearers to his responsibility, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand again.[22]But he hanged the chief of the bakers, just as Joseph had interpreted to them.[23]Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot about him.

Genesis 40 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: peopleofgod and bless)

Interpretation of dreams

The interpretation of dreams was important in the ancient Near East. It was seen as possible only through divine power. Yahweh gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams in order to bring himself glory and to protect Joseph and the Hebrew people. (See: glory)

Links:

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Genesis 40:1

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark a new event in the story.

the cupbearer

This is the person who brought drinks to the king.

king's baker

This is the person who made food for the king.

offended their master

"upset their master"

Genesis 40:2

the chief of the cupbearers and the chief of the bakers

"the leading cupbearer and the leading baker"

Genesis 40:3

He put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard

"He put them in the prison that was in the house that was overseen by the captain of the guard"

He put them

The king did not put them in prison but rather he commanded for them to be imprisoned. Alternate translation: "He had them put" or "He commanded his guard to put"

in the same prison where Joseph was confined

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This was the same prison that Joseph was in" or "This was the same prison Potiphar put Joseph in"

Genesis 40:4

They remained in custody for some time

"They remained in prison for a long time"

Genesis 40:6

Joseph came to them

"Joseph came to the cupbearer and the baker"

Behold, they were upset

The word "behold" here shows that Joseph was surprised by what he saw. Alternate translation: "He was surprised to see that they were upset"

Genesis 40:7

Pharaoh's officials who were with him

This refers to the cupbearer and the baker.

in custody in his master's house

"In prison in him master's house." "His master" refers to Joseph's master, the captain of the guard.

Genesis 40:8

Do not interpretations belong to God?

Joseph uses a question for emphasis. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Interpretations belong to God!" or "It is God who can tell the meaning of dreams!"

Tell me, please

Joseph asks for them to tell him their dreams. Alternate translation: "Tell me the dreams, please"

Genesis 40:9

The chief of the cupbearers

The most important person who brings drinks to the king. See how you translated this in Genesis 40:2.

In my dream, behold, a vine was in front of me

"In my dream, I saw a vine in front of me!" The cupbearer uses word "behold" here to show that he was surprised by what he saw in his dream and to alert Joseph to pay attention.

Genesis 40:10

the clusters of grapes ripened

"its clusters ripened into grapes"

Genesis 40:11

squeezed them

This means that he squeezed the juice out of them. Alternate translation: "squeezed the juice from them"

Genesis 40:12

This is the interpretation of it

"Here is what the dream means"

The three branches are three days

"The three branches represent three days"

Genesis 40:13

Within three days

"In three more days"

will lift up your head

Here "lift up your head" is a metaphor for "restore your honor." If the meaning is not clear, it can be explained in the text or a footnote. Alternate translation: "will lift up your head in honor"

restore you to your office

"will give you back your job"

just as when

"just as you did when"

Genesis 40:14

please show kindness to me

"please be kind to me"

Mention me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this prison

Joseph means for the cupbearer to tell Pharaoh about him so that Pharaoh will release him from prison. Alternate translation: "Help me get out of this prison by telling Pharaoh about me"

Genesis 40:15

For indeed I was abducted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For indeed people took me" or "For indeed the Ishmaelites took me"

the land of the Hebrews

"the land where the Hebrew people live"

Here also have I done nothing that they should put me in this dungeon

"and also while I have been here in Egypt, I have done nothing for which I deserved to be put in prison"

Genesis 40:16

the chief of the bakers

This refers to the leading person who made food for the king. See how this was translated in Genesis 40:2.

I also had a dream, and

"I also had a dream, and in my dream,"

behold, three baskets of bread were on my head

"there were three baskets of bread on my head!" The baker uses word "behold" here to show that he was surprised by what he saw in his dream and to alert Joseph to pay attention.

Genesis 40:17

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baked goods for Pharaoh
"baked foods for Pharaoh"
Genesis 40:18
This is the interpretation
"Here is what the dream means"
The three baskets are three days
"The three baskets represent three days"
Genesis 40:19
will lift up your head from you
In verse 13 Joseph said "lift up your head," but there it had a different meaning. Here "lift up your head from you" means either that the prisoner's head would be cut off his body, or the prisoner's head would be lifted when a noose was put around his neck and he was hanged. Alternate translation: "will lift up your head with a knife" or "will lift up your head with a noose"
flesh
Here "flesh" literally means the soft tissue on a person's body.
Genesis 40:20
It came about on the third day that
"Afterward, on the third day." The phrase "it came about" is used here to mark a new event in the story.
He made a feast
"He had a feast"
He lifted up the head of the chief of the cupbearers and the head of the chief of the bakers
The author writes that Pharaoh lifted up both men's heads so that it would sound like he did the same thing to both men. But the meaning of "lift up the head" for each man is different and is explained in verses 21 and 22. This can also be shortened. Alternate translation: "He lifted up the heads of the chief of the cupbearers and the chief of the bakers"
the chief of the cupbearers
This was the leading person who prepared and served drinks to the king. See how these were translated in Genesis 40:2.
the chief of the bakers
This refers to the leading person who made food for the king. See how this was translated in Genesis 40:2.
Genesis 40:21
He restored the chief of the cupbearers to his responsibility
The chief of the cupbearer's "responsibility" refers to his job as chief of the cupbearers. Alternate translation: "He gave the chief of the cupbearers his job back"
Genesis 40:22
But he hanged the chief of the bakers
Pharaoh did not personally hang the baker, rather he commanded for him to be hanged. Alternate translation: "But he commanded for the chief of the bakers to be hanged" or "But he commanded his guards to hang the chief of the bakers"
just as Joseph had interpreted to them
This refers to when Joseph interpreted their dreams. Alternate translation: "just as Joseph had said would happen when he interpreted the two men's dreams"

41 [1]It came about at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream. Behold, he stood by the Nile.[2]Behold, seven cows came up out of the Nile, desirable and fat, and they grazed in the reeds.[3]Behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the Nile, undesirable and thin. They stood by the other cows on the bank of the river.
[4]Then the undesirable and thin cows ate the seven desirable and fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.[5]Then he slept and dreamed a second time. Behold, seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, wholesome and good.[6]Behold, seven heads, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them.
[7]The thin heads swallowed up the seven wholesome and full heads. Pharaoh woke up, and, behold, it was a dream.[8]It came about in the morning that his spirit was troubled. He sent and called for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

[9]Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I have remembered my sins today.[10]Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, the chief baker and me.[11]We dreamed a dream the same night, he and I. We dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.
[12]There was with us there a young Hebrew man, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him and he interpreted for us our dreams. He interpreted for each of us according to his dream.[13]It came about as he interpreted for us, so it happened. Pharaoh restored me to my post, but the other one he hanged."

[14]Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph. They quickly took him out of the dungeon. He shaved himself, changed his clothes, and came in to Pharaoh.[15]Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, but there is no interpreter for it. But I have heard about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."[16]Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me. God will answer Pharaoh with favor."
[17]Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, behold, I stood on the bank of the Nile.[18]Behold, seven cows came up out of the Nile, fat and desirable, and they grazed among the reeds.
[19]Behold, seven other cows came up after them, weak, very undesirable, and thin. I never saw in all the land of Egypt such undesirableness like them.[20]The thin and undesirable cows ate up the first seven fat cows.[21]When they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them, for they were still as undesirable as before. Then I awoke.
[22]I looked in my dream, and, behold, seven heads came up upon one stalk, full and good.[23]Behold, seven more heads—withered, thin, and scorched by the east wind—sprang up after them.[24]The thin heads swallowed up the seven good heads. I told these dreams to the magicians, but there was none that could explain it to me."

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[25]Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are the same. What God is about to do, he has declared to Pharaoh.[26]The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years. The dreams are the same.
[27]The seven thin and undesirable cows that came up after them are seven years, and also the seven thin heads scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine.[28]That is the thing which I spoke to Pharaoh. What God is about to do he has revealed to Pharaoh.[29]Look, seven years of great abundance will come throughout all the land of Egypt.
[30]Seven years of famine will come after them, and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, and the famine will devastate the land.[31]The abundance will not be remembered in the land because of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe.[32]That the dream was repeated to Pharaoh is because the matter has been established by God, and God will soon do it.
[33]Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and put him over the land of Egypt.[34]Let Pharaoh appoint officials over the land, and let them take a fifth of the crops of Egypt in the seven abundant years.
[35]Let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, for food to be used in the cities. They should preserve it.[36]The food will be a supply for the land for the seven years of famine which will be in the land of Egypt. In this way the land will not be devastated by the famine."

[37]This advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants.[38]Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a man as this, in whom is the Spirit of God?"
[39]So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you.[40]You will be over my house, and according to your word will all my people be ruled. Only in the throne will I be greater than you."[41]Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have put you over all the land of Egypt."
[42]Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand. He clothed him with clothes of fine linen, and put a gold chain on his neck.[43]He had him ride in the second chariot which he possessed. Men shouted before him, "Bend the knee." Pharaoh put him over all the land of Egypt.
[44]Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and apart from you, no man will lift his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt."[45]Pharaoh called Joseph's name "Zaphenath-Paneah." He gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife. Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

[46]Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.[47]In the seven bountiful years the land produced abundantly.
[48]He gathered up all the food of the seven years that was in the land of Egypt and put the food in the cities. He put into each city the food from the fields that surrounded it.[49]Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea, so much that he stopped counting, because it was beyond counting.
[50]Joseph had two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore to him.[51]Joseph called the name of his firstborn Manasseh, for he said, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household."[52]He called the name of the second son Ephraim, for he said, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."
[53]The seven years of abundance that was in the land of Egypt came to an end.[54]The seven years of famine began, as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was food.
[55]When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people loudly called on Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph and do what he says."[56]The famine was over all the face of the whole land. Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. The famine was severe in the land of Egypt.[57]All the earth was coming to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe in all the earth.

Genesis 41 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: peopleofgod and bless)

Interpretation of dreams

The interpretation of dreams was important in the ancient Near East. It was seen as possible only through divine power. Yahweh gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams in order to bring himself glory and to protect Joseph and the Hebrew people. (See: glory)

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. It gained him great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh and helped to save his people. (See: sin, righteous and save)

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Links:

Genesis 41:1 Notes

Genesis 41:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

at the end of two full years

Two years passed after Joseph correctly interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's cupbearer and baker, who had been in prison with Joseph.

Behold, he stood

The word "behold" here marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "He was surprised because he was standing"

he stood

"Pharaoh was standing"

Genesis 41:2

desirable and fat

"healthy and fat"

grazed in the reeds

"were eating the grass along the side of the river"

reeds

tall, thin grasses that grow in wet areas

Genesis 41:3

Behold, seven other cows

The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was again surprised by what he saw.

undesirable and thin

"sick and thin"

bank of the river

"beside the river" or "riverside." This is the higher ground along the edge of a river.

Genesis 41:4

undesirable and thin

"weak and skinny." See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 41:3.

desirable and fat

"healthy and well-fed." See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 41:2.

woke up

"awakened"

Genesis 41:5

a second time

The word "second" is an ordinal number. Alternate translation: "again"

Behold, seven heads

The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he saw.

heads of grain

The heads are parts of the corn plant on which the seeds grow.

came up on one stalk

"grew up on one stem." The stalk is the thick or tall part of a plant.

on one stalk, wholesome and good

"on one stock and they were healthy and beautiful"

Genesis 41:6

thin and scorched by the east wind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that were thin and burned because of the hot wind from the east"

the east wind

Wind from the east blew in from the desert. The heat of the east wind was often very destructive.

sprouted up

"grew up" or "developed"

Genesis 41:7

The thin heads

The words "of grain" are understood. Alternate translation: "The thin heads of grain"

swallowed up

"ate." Pharaoh is dreaming that unhealthy corn could eat healthy corn just like a person eats food.

wholesome and full heads

"healthy and good heads." See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:5.

woke up

"awakened"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he had seen.

it was a dream

"he had been dreaming"

Genesis 41:8

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

his spirit was troubled

Here the word "spirit" refers to his inner being or his emotions. Alternate translation: "he was troubled in his inner being" or "he was troubled"

He sent and called

It is understood that he sent servants. Alternate translation: "He sent his servants to call" or "He sent his servants to summon"

all the magicians and wise men of Egypt

Ancient kings and rulers used magicians and wise men as advisers.

Genesis 41:9

chief cupbearer

The most important person who brings drinks to the king. See how you translated this in Genesis 40:2.

I have remembered my sins today

"I realize now that I have sinned." The phrase "my sins" is used for emphasis. His "sins" are that he should have told Pharaoh something much earlier but he did not.

Genesis 41:10

Pharaoh was angry

The cupbearer is referring to Pharaoh in third person. This

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is a common way for someone with less power to speak to someone with greater power. Alternate translation: "You, Pharaoh, were angry"

with his servants

Here "his" refers to Pharaoh. Here "servants" refers to the cupbearer and the chief baker. Alternate translation: "with us, your servants"

put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, the chief baker and me

"put the chief baker and me in the prison where the captain of the guard was in charge." Here "house" refers to the prison.

the captain of the guard

The soldier in charge of the royal guards. See how you translated this in Genesis 40:3.

the chief baker

The most important person who made food for the king. See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 40:2.

Genesis 41:11

We dreamed a dream the same night, he and I

"One night we both had dreams"

We dreamed

Here "We" refers to the chief cupbearer and the chief baker.

We dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream

"Our dreams had different meanings"

Genesis 41:12

General Information:

The chief cupbearer continues to speak to Pharaoh.

There was with us there

"In prison there was with the chief baker and me"

the captain of the guard

The soldier in charge of the royal guards. See how you translated this in Genesis 40:3.

We told him and he interpreted for us our dreams

"We told him our dreams and he explained their meanings to us"

He interpreted for each of us according to his dream

Here "his" refers to the cupbearer and baker individually, not to the one interpreting the dream. Alternate translation: "He explained what was going to happen to both of us"

Genesis 41:13

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

as he interpreted for us, so it happened

"what he explained about the dreams is what later happened"

Pharaoh restored me to my post

Here the cupbearer uses Pharaoh's title in speaking to him as a way of honoring him. Alternate translation: "You allowed me to return to my job"

the other one

"the chief baker"

he hanged

Here "he" refers to Pharaoh. And, it stands for the soldiers that Pharaoh commanded to hang the chief baker. Alternate translation: "you ordered your soldiers to hang"

Genesis 41:14

Pharaoh sent and called for

It is understood that Pharaoh sent servants. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh sent his servants to get Joseph"

out of the dungeon

"out of the jail" or "out of the prison"

He shaved himself

It was common practice to shave both the facial and head hair when preparing to go before Pharaoh.

came in to Pharaoh

Here "came" can be stated as "went." Alternate translation: "went before Pharaoh"

Genesis 41:15

there is no interpreter for it

"no one can explain the meaning"

you can interpret it

"you can explain its meaning"

Genesis 41:16

It is not in me

"I am not the one who can explain the meaning"

God will answer Pharaoh with favor

"God will answer Pharaoh favorably"

Genesis 41:17

behold, I stood

Pharaoh uses the word "behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.

bank of the Nile

This is the higher ground along the edge of the Nile River. See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:3. Alternate translation: "beside the Nile"

Genesis 41:18

Behold, seven cows

Pharaoh uses the word "Behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.

fat and desirable

"well-fed and healthy." See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 41:2.

grazed among the reeds

"were eating the grass along the side of the river." See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:2.

Genesis 41:19

Behold, seven other cows

Pharaoh uses the word "Behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.

undesirable, and thin

"weak, and skinny." See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 41:3.

such undesirableness

The abstract noun "undesirableness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "such ugly cows" or "such worthless looking cows"

Genesis 41:20

fat cows

"well-fed cows." See how you translated this phrase in Genesis 41:2.

Genesis 41:21

it could not be known that they had eaten them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no

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one would have been able to tell that the thin cows had eaten the fat cows"
Genesis 41:22
General Information:
Pharaoh continues telling Joseph his dreams.
I looked in my dream
This begins Pharaoh's next dream after he woke up and went back to sleep. Alternate translation: "Then I dreamed again"
behold, seven heads
Pharaoh uses the word "Behold" to make Joseph pay attention to surprising information.
seven heads
The words "of grain" are understood. Alternate translation: "seven heads of grain"
came up upon one stalk
"grew up on one stem." The stalk is the thick or tall part of a plant. See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:5.
Genesis 41:23
withered
dead and dried
sprang up
"grew up" or "developed"
Genesis 41:24
The thin heads
The words "of grain" are understood. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:7]
swallowed up
"ate." Pharaoh is dreaming that unhealthy corn could eat healthy corn just like a person eats food. See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:7.
there was none that could
"there was not a single one that could" or "none of them could"
Genesis 41:25
The dreams of Pharaoh are the same
It is implied that the meanings are the same. Alternate translation: "Both dreams mean the same thing"
What God is about to do, he has declared to Pharaoh
Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in the third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "God is showing you what he will soon do"
Genesis 41:26
seven good heads
The words "of grain" are understood. Alternate translation: "seven good heads of grain"
Genesis 41:27
General Information:
Joseph continues his interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams
thin and undesirable cows
"skinny and weak cows." See how you translated a similar phrase in Genesis 41:3.
seven thin heads scorched by the east wind
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "seven thin heads of grain scorched because of the hot wind from the east"
Genesis 41:28
That is the thing which I spoke to Pharaoh ... revealed to Pharaoh
Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in the third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "These events will happen just as I have told you ... revealed to you, Pharaoh"
he has revealed
"he has made known"
Genesis 41:29
Look, seven
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: seven"
seven years of great abundance will come throughout all the land of Egypt
This speaks about the years of abundance as if time is something that travels and comes to a place. Alternate translation: "there will be seven years in which there will be plenty of food throughout the land of Egypt"
Genesis 41:30
General Information:
Joseph continues interpreting Pharaoh's dreams.
Seven years of famine will come after them
This speaks about the seven years of famine as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. Alternate translation: "Then there will be seven years when there is very little food"
all the abundance will be forgotten ... and the famine will devastate the land
Joseph expresses an idea in two ways to emphasize its importance.
all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt
Here "land" refers to the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Egypt will forget about the years in which there was plenty of food"
will devastate the land
Here "land" refers to the soil, the people, and the entire country.
Genesis 41:31
The abundance will not be remembered ... because of the famine that will follow
Joseph expresses an idea in two ways to emphasize its importance.
because of the famine that will follow
This speaks about the famine as if it were a thing that travels and follows behind something else. Alternate translation: "because of the time of famine that will happen afterwards"
Genesis 41:32
That the dream was repeated to Pharaoh is because the matter has been established by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave you two dreams to show you that he will certainly cause these things to happen"
Genesis 41:33
General Information:
Joseph continues to address Pharaoh
Now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
let Pharaoh look

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Joseph speaks to Pharaoh in third person. This is a way of showing respect. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "You, Pharaoh, should look"

put him over the land of Egypt

The phrase "put him over" means to give someone authority. Alternate translation: "give him authority over the kingdom of Egypt" or "put him in charge of the kingdom of Egypt"

land of Egypt

Here "land" stands for all the people and everything in Egypt.

Genesis 41:34

let them take a fifth of the crops of Egypt

The word "fifth" is a fraction. Alternate translation: "let them divide the crops of Egypt into five equal parts, then take one of those parts"

in the seven abundant years

"during the seven years in which there is plenty of food"

Genesis 41:35

General Information:

Joseph continues to counsel Pharaoh

Let them gather

"Allow the overseers to gather"

of these good years that are coming

This speaks of years as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. Alternate translation: "during the good years that will soon happen"

store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh

The phrase "under the authority of Pharaoh" means Pharaoh gives them authority. Alternate translation: "use the authority of Pharaoh to store the grain"

They should preserve it

The word "they" refers to the overseers and represents the soldiers that they should command to guard the grain. Alternate translation: "The overseers should leave soldiers there to guard the grain"

Genesis 41:36

The food will be a supply for the land

Here "land" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "This food will be for the people"

In this way the land will not be devastated by the famine

Here "land" stands for the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This way the people will not starve during the famine"

Genesis 41:37

This advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh and his servants thought this was a good plan"

his servants

This means Pharaoh's officials.

Genesis 41:38

such a man as this

"a man like the one Joseph described"

in whom is the Spirit of God

"in whom the Spirit of God lives"

Genesis 41:39

there is none so discerning

"no one else is as capable in making decisions." See how you translated "discerning" in Genesis 41:33.

Genesis 41:40

You will be over my house

Here "house" stands for Pharaoh's palace and the people in the palace. The phrase "will be over" means Joseph will have authority over. Alternate translation: "You will be in charge of everyone in my palace"

according to your word will all my people be ruled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will rule over my people and they will do what you command"

Only in the throne

Here "throne" stands for Pharaoh's rule as king. Alternate translation: "Only in my role as king"

Genesis 41:41

See, I have put you

The word "See" adds emphasis to what Pharaoh says next. Alternate translation: "Look, I have put you"

I have put you over all the land of Egypt

The phrase "put you over" means to give authority. Here "land" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "I put you in charge of everyone in Egypt"

Genesis 41:42

Pharaoh took off his signet ring ... gold chain on his neck

All of these actions symbolize that Pharaoh is giving Joseph the authority to do everything that Joseph planned.

signet ring

This ring had Pharaoh's seal engraved on it. This gave Joseph the authority and money needed to carry out his plans.

clothes of fine linen

"Linen" here is a smooth, strong cloth made from the blue-flowered flax plant.

Genesis 41:43

He had him ride in the second chariot which he possessed

This act makes clear to the people that Joseph is second only to Pharaoh.

Bend the knee

"Bow down and honor Joseph." To bend the knee and bow down was a sign of honor and respect.

Pharaoh put him over all the land

The phrase "put you over" means to give authority. Here "land" refers to the people. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Genesis 41:41]

Genesis 41:44

I am Pharaoh, and apart from you

Pharaoh is emphasizing his authority. Alternate translation: "As Pharaoh, I command that apart from you"

apart from you, no man will lift his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt

Here "hand" and "foot" stand for a person's actions. Alternate translation: "no person in Egypt will do anything without your permission" or "every person in Egypt must ask your permission before they do anything"

no man

Here "man" refers to any person in general, whether male or female.

Genesis 41:45

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Zaphenath-Paneah
Translators may add the following footnote: The name Zaphenath-Paneah means "a revealer of secrets."
He gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, as a wife
Priests in Egypt were the highest and most privileged caste. This marriage signifies Joseph's place of honor and privilege.
gave him Asenath
"Asenath" is the name of the woman whom Pharaoh gave to Joseph as his wife.
daughter of Potiphera
"Potiphera" is the father of Asenath.
priest of On
On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was "the City of the Sun" and the center of worship of the sun god Ra.
Joseph went out over the land of Egypt
Joseph traveled over the land to supervise the preparations for the coming drought.
Genesis 41:46
thirty years old
"30 years old"
when he stood before Pharaoh
Here "stood before" stands for Joseph starting to serve Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "when he started to serve Pharaoh"
went throughout all the land of Egypt
Joseph is inspecting the country as he prepares to carry out his plans.
Genesis 41:47
In the seven bountiful years
"During the seven good years"
the land produced abundantly
"the land produced big harvests"
Genesis 41:48
He gathered up ... He put
Here "He" stands for Joseph's servants. Alternate translation: "Joseph ordered his servants to gather ... They put"
Genesis 41:49
Joseph stored up grain like the sand of the sea
This compares the grain to the sand of sea to emphasize its great quantity. Alternate translation: "The grain that Joseph stored was as plentiful as the sand on the seashore"
Joseph stored up ... he stopped
Here "Joseph" and "he" stand for Joseph's servants. Alternate translation: "Joseph had his servants store up ... they stopped"
Genesis 41:50
before the years of famine came
This speaks about years as if they are something that travels and comes to a place. Alternate translation: "before the seven years of the famine began"
Asenath
a woman's name. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
daughter of Potiphera
"Potiphera" is the father of Asenath. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
priest of On
On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was "the City of the Sun" and the center of worship of the sun god Ra. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
Genesis 41:51
Manasseh
Translators may also add a footnote that says, "The name 'Manasseh' means 'to cause to forget.'"
father's household
This refers to Joseph's father Jacob and his family.
Genesis 41:52
Ephraim
Translators may also add a footnote that says, "The name 'Ephraim' means 'to be fruitful' or 'to have children.'"
made me fruitful
Here "fruitful" means to prosper or to have children.
in the land of my affliction
The abstract noun "affliction" can be stated as "I have suffered." Alternate translation: "in this land where I have suffered"
Genesis 41:54
in all lands
In all the surrounding nations beyond Egypt, including the land of Canaan.
but in all the land of Egypt there was food
It is implied that there was food because of Joseph commanded his people to store food during the seven good years.
Genesis 41:55
When all the land of Egypt was famished
Here "land" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "When all the Egyptians were starving"
Genesis 41:56
The famine was over all the face of the whole land
The word "face" refers to the surface of the land. Alternate translation: "The famine had spread throughout the land"
Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians
Here "Joseph" stands for Joseph's servants. Alternate translation: "Joseph had his servants open all the storehouses and sell grain to the Egyptians"
Genesis 41:57
All the earth was coming to Egypt
Here "earth" stands for the people from all regions. Alternate translation: "People were coming to Egypt from all the surrounding regions"
in all the earth
"throughout the land." It is likely that all the different trading partners and nations that were part of the Egyptian trading routes effected by the drought came to Egypt for grain.

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42 [1]Now Jacob became aware that there was grain in Egypt. He said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?"[2]He said, "See here, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy for us from there so we may live and not die."[3]Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.[4]But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his brothers, for he said, "I fear that harm might come to him."

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[5]The sons of Israel came to buy among those who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.[6]Now Joseph was the governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground.
[7]Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke severely with them. He said to them, "Where have you come from?" They said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."[8]Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.
[9]Then Joseph remembered the dreams he had dreamed about them, and he said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the undefended parts of the land."[10]They said to him, "No, my master. Your servants have come to buy food.[11]We are all one man's sons. We are honest men. Your servants are not spies."
[12]He said to them, "No, you have come to see the undefended parts of the land."[13]They said, "We your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. See, the youngest is this day with our father, and one brother is no longer alive."
[14]Joseph said to them, "It is what I said to you; you are spies.[15]By this you will be tested. By the life of Pharaoh, you will not leave here, unless your youngest brother comes here.[16]Send one of yourselves and let him get your brother. You will remain in prison, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies."[17]He put them all in custody for three days.

[18]Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God.[19]If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in this prison, but you go, carry grain for the famine of your houses.[20]Bring your youngest brother to me so your words will be verified and you will not die." So they did so.
[21]They said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother in that we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us and we would not listen. Therefore this distress has come upon us."[22]Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy,' but you would not listen? Now, see, his blood is required of us."
[23]They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them.[24]He turned from them and wept. He returned to them and spoke to them. He took Simeon from among them and bound him before their eyes.[25]Then Joseph commanded his servants to fill his brothers' bags with grain, and to put every man's money back into his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. It was done for them.

[26]The brothers loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there.[27]As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed in the lodging place, he saw his money. Behold, it was in the opening of his sack.[28]He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back. Look at it; it is in my sack." Their hearts sank and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"
[29]They went to Jacob, their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them. They said,[30]"The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly with us and thought that we were spies in the land.[31]We said to him, 'We are honest men. We are not spies.[32]We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no longer alive, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.'
[33]The man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers with me, take grain for the famine in your houses, and go your way.[34]Bring your youngest brother to me. Then I will know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. Then I will release your brother to you, and you will trade in the land.'"

[35]It came about as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bag of silver was in his sack. When they and their father saw their bags of silver, they were afraid.[36]Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children. Joseph is no longer alive, Simeon is gone, and you will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me."
[37]Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "You may kill my two sons if I do not bring Benjamin back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him to you again."[38]Jacob said, "My son will not go down with you. For his brother is dead and he alone is left. If harm comes to him on the road in which you go, then you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol."

Genesis 42 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Famine

Apparently this famine extended beyond Egypt and encompassed the land of Canaan too. Because of Egypt's size and power, it would not have been unusual for people to go there in times of need.

Joseph's test

Joseph tests his brothers to see if they are good. They treat their brother Benjamin better than they treated Joseph and tried to protect him.

Links:

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Genesis 42:1

Now Jacob became

The word "Now" marks a new part of the story.

Why do you look at one another?

Jacob uses a question to scold his sons for not doing anything about the grain. Alternate translation: "Do not just sit here!"

Genesis 42:2

Go down there

It was common to speak of going from Canaan to Egypt as going "down."

Genesis 42:3

went down

It was common to speak of going from Canaan to Egypt as going "down."

from Egypt

Here "Egypt" refers to the people selling grain. Alternate translation: "from those selling grain in Egypt"

Genesis 42:4

Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his brothers

Benjamin and Joseph had the same father and mother; their mother was different from the mothers of the other brothers. Jacob did not want to risk sending Rachel's last son.

Genesis 42:5

The sons of Israel came to buy among those who came

The word "came" can be translated as "went." Also, the words "grain" and "Egypt" are understood. Alternate translation: "The sons of Israel went to by grain along with other people who went to Egypt"

Genesis 42:6

Now Joseph

"Now" marks a change from the story to background information about Joseph.

over the land

Here "land" refers to Egypt. Alternate translation: "over Egypt"

all the people of the land

Here "land" includes Egypt and other surrounding countries. Alternate translation: "all the people of all the nations that came to buy grain"

Joseph's brothers came

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

bowed down to him with their faces to the ground

This is a way of showing respect.

Genesis 42:7

Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them

"When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them"

he disguised himself to them

"he acted like he was not their brother" or "he did not let them know that he was their brother"

Where have you come from?

This was not a rhetorical question even though Joseph knew the answer. It was part of his choice to keep his identity from his brothers.

Genesis 42:9

You are spies

Spies are people who secretly try to get information about a country to help another country.

You have come to see the undefended parts of the land

The full meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "You have come to find out where we are not guarding our land so that you can attack us"

Genesis 42:10

my master

This is a way to refer to someone to honor them.

Your servants have

The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "We, your servants, have" or "We have"

Genesis 42:12

He said to them

"Joseph said to his brothers"

No, you have come to see the undefended parts of the land

The full meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "No, you have come to find out where we are not guarding our land so that you can attack us"

Genesis 42:13

twelve brothers

"12 brothers"

See, the youngest

"Listen to us, the youngest." The word "See" is used to emphasize what they say next.

the youngest is this day with our father

"right now our youngest brother is with our father"

Genesis 42:14

It is what I said to you; you are spies

"like I already said, you are spies." See how you translated "spies" in Genesis 42:9.

Genesis 42:15

By this you will be tested

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is how I will test you"

By the life of Pharaoh

This phrase indicates a solemn oath. Alternate translation: "I swear by the life of Pharaoh"

Genesis 42:16

Send one of yourselves and let him get your brother

"Choose one of you to go get your brother"

You will remain in prison

"The rest of you will remain in prison"

that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that I may find out if you are telling the truth"

Genesis 42:17

in custody

"in prison"

Genesis 42:18

on the third day

The word "third" is an ordinal number. Alternate translation: "after the second day"

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Do this and live
"If you will do what I say, I will let you live"
fear God
This refers to deeply respecting God and showing that respect by obeying him.
Genesis 42:19
let one of your brothers be confined in this prison
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "leave one of your brothers here in prison"
but you go
Here "you" is plural and refers to all the brothers that will not stay in prison. Alternate translation: "but the rest of you go"
carry grain for the famine of your houses
Here "houses" stands for families. Alternate translation: "carry grain home to help your family during this famine"
Genesis 42:20
so your words will be verified
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so I may know what you say is true"
you will not die
This implies that Joseph would have his soldiers execute the brothers if he finds out they are spies.
Genesis 42:21
in that we saw the distress of his soul
The word "soul" stands for Joseph. Alternate translation: "because we saw how distressed Joseph was" or "because we saw that Joseph was suffering"
Therefore this distress has come upon us
The abstract noun "distress" can be stated as the verb "suffering." Alternate translation: "That is why we are suffering like this now"
Genesis 42:22
Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy,' but you would not listen?
Reuben uses a question to scold his brothers. Alternate translation: "I told you not to hurt the boy, but you would not listen!"
Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy,' but
This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy, but" or "I told you not to harm the boy, but"
Now, see
Here "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but both "Now" and "see" are used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
his blood is required of us
Here "blood" stands for Joseph's death. His brothers thought Joseph was dead. The phrase "is required of us" means they must be punished for what they did. Alternate translation: "we are getting what we deserve for his death" or "we are suffering for having killed him"
Genesis 42:23
They did not know ... an interpreter between them
This changes from the main story to background information that explains why the brothers thought Joseph could not understand them.
an interpreter
An "interpreter" is someone who translates what one person says into another language. Joseph placed an interpreter between himself and his brothers to make it seem like he did not speak their language.
Genesis 42:24
He turned from them and wept
It is implied that Joseph wept because he was emotional after hearing what his brothers said.
spoke to them
Joseph was still speaking a different language and using the interpreter to speak to his brothers.
bound him before their eyes
Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "bound him in their sight" or "bound him as they watched"
Genesis 42:25
to give them provisions
"to give them the supplies they needed"
It was done for them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The servants did for them everything that Joseph commanded"
Genesis 42:27
As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed in the lodging place, he saw his money. Behold, it was in the opening of his sack
"When they stopped at a place for the night, one of the brothers opened his sack to get food for his donkey. In the sack he saw his money!"
Behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
Genesis 42:28
My money has been put back
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has put my money back"
Look at it
"Look in my sack!"
Their hearts sank
To become afraid is spoken of as if their heart were sinking. Here "hearts" stands for courage. Alternate translation: "They became very afraid"
Genesis 42:30
lord of the land
"the lord of Egypt"
spoke roughly
"spoke harshly"
we were spies
Spies are people who secretly try to get information about a country to help another country. See how you translated "spies" in Genesis 42:9.
Genesis 42:31
We said to him, 'We are honest men. We are not spies.
This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. "We told him that we are honest men and not spies."
Genesis 42:32
We are twelve brothers, sons of our father. One is no longer alive ... land of Canaan.'
The quotation within a quotation that began with the words "We said to him, 'We are honest men ... not spies. It

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can be stated as an indirect quotation. "We told him that we are honest men ... not spies. We said that we are twelve brothers, sons of our father, and that one brother is no longer alive ... land of Canaan"

One is no longer alive

The word "brother" is understood. Alternate translation: "One brother is no longer alive"

the youngest is this day with our father

The word "brother" is understood. Alternate translation: "the youngest brother is with our father right now"

Genesis 42:33

the lord of the land

"The lord of Egypt"

take grain for the famine in your houses

Here "houses" stands for "family." Alternate translation: "take grain to help your family during the famine"

go your way

"go home" or "leave"

Genesis 42:34

you will trade in the land

"I will allow you to buy and sell in this land"

Genesis 42:35

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

behold, every

"they were surprised because every"

Genesis 42:36

You have bereaved me of my children

"you have deprived me of my children" or "you have caused me to lose two of my children"

All these things are against me

"all these things hurt me"

Genesis 42:37

Put him in my hands

This is a request for Reuben to take Joseph with him and to care for him on the journey. Alternate translation: "Put me in charge of him" or "Let me take care of him"

Genesis 42:38

My son will not go down with you

It was common to use the phrase "go down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. Alternate translation: "My son, Benjamin, will not go with you to Egypt"

with you

Here "you" is plural and refers to Jacob's older sons.

For his brother is dead and he alone is left

The full meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "For my wife, Rachel, only had two children. Joseph is dead and Benjamin is the only one left"

on the road in which you go

"while you a traveling to Egypt and back" or "while you are away." Here "road" stands for traveling.

then you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol

To "bring down ... to Sheol" is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word "down" because it was commonly believed sheol is somewhere underground. Alternate translation: "then you will cause me, an old man, to die of sorrow"

my gray hair

This stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. Alternate translation: "me, an old man"

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43 [1]The famine was severe in the land.[2]It came about when they had eaten the grain that they had brought out of Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again; buy us some food."
[3]Judah told him, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'[4]If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.[5]But if you do not send him, we will not go down. For the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"
[6]Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man that you had another brother?"[7]They said, "The man asked details about us and our family. He said, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' We answered him according to these questions. How could we have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"
[8]Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the boy with me. We will rise and go that we may live and not die, both we, you, and also our children.[9]I will be a guarantee for him. You will hold me responsible. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.[10]For if we had not delayed, surely by now we would have come back here a second time."
[11]Their father Israel said to them, "If it be so, now do this. Take some of the best products of the land in your bags. Carry down to the man a gift—some balm and honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.[12]Take double money in your hand. The money that was returned in the opening of your sacks, carry again in your hand. Perhaps it was a mistake.
[13]Take also your brother. Rise and go again to the man.[14]May God Almighty give you mercy before the man, so that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."[15]The men took this gift, and in their hand they took double the amount of money, along with Benjamin. They got up and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

[16]When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Bring the men into the house, slaughter an animal and prepare it, for the men will eat with me at noon."[17]The steward did as Joseph said. He brought the men to Joseph's house.
[18]The men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house. They said, "It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time we were brought in, that he may seek an opportunity against us. He might arrest us

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and take us as slaves, and take our donkeys."[19]They approached the steward of Joseph's house, and they spoke to him at the door of the house,[20]saying, "My master, we came down the first time to buy food.
[21]It came about, when we reached the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the opening of his sack, our money in full weight. We have brought it back in our hands.[22]Other money we have also brought down in our hand to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks."[23]The steward said, "Peace be to you, do not fear. Your God and the God of your father must have put your money in your sacks. I received your money." The steward then brought Simeon out to them.
[24]The steward took the men into Joseph's house. He gave them water, and they washed their feet. He gave feed to their donkeys.[25]They prepared the gifts for Joseph's coming at noon, for they had heard that they would eat there.

[26]When Joseph came home, they brought the gifts which were in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the ground.[27]He asked them about their welfare and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"
[28]They said, "Your servant our father is well. He is still alive." And they bowed down and gave him honor.[29]When he lifted up his eyes he saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and he said, "Is this your youngest brother of whom you spoke to me?" Then he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son."
[30]Joseph hurried to go out of the room, for he was deeply moved about his brother. He sought somewhere to weep. He went to his room and wept there.[31]He washed his face and came out. He controlled himself, saying, "Serve the food."
[32]The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves. The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is detestable to the Egyptians.[33]The brothers sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth. The men were astonished together.[34]Joseph sent portions to them from the food in front of him. But Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of his brothers. They drank freely and were merry with him.

Genesis 43 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's concern

Israel is concerned over his favored son, Benjamin. He is also confused about the reason the Egyptian official treated them so kindly. This caused him some concern. It is possible he thought his sons were lying to him. (See: favor)

Links:

Genesis 43:1 Notes

Genesis 43:1

The famine was severe in the land

The word "Canaan" is understood. This information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The famine was severe in the land of Canaan"

Genesis 43:2

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when they had eaten

"when Jacob and his family had eaten"

they had brought

"Jacob's older sons had brought"

buy us

Here "us" refers to Jacob, his sons, and the rest of the family.

Genesis 43:3

Judah told him

"Judah told his father Jacob"

The man

This refers to Joseph, but the brothers did not know it was Joseph. They referred to him as "the man" or "the man, the lord of the land" as in Genesis 42:30.

warned us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "warned us that we would not see his face unless we brought our youngest brother with us"

solemnly warned us

"was very serious when he warned us, saying"

You will not see my face

Judah uses this phrase twice in 43:3-5 to emphasize to his father that they cannot return to Egypt without Benjamin. The phrase "my face" refers to the man, who is Joseph. Alternate translation: "You will not see me"

your brother is with you

Judah is referring to Benjamin, Rachel's last born before she died.

Genesis 43:5

we will not go down

It was common to use the phrase "go down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Genesis 43:6

Why did you treat me so badly

"Why did you cause me so much trouble"

Genesis 43:7

The man asked details

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"The man asked many questions"

about us

Here "us" is exclusive and refers to the brothers who went to Egypt and spoke with "the man."

He said, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "He asked us directly if our father was still alive and if we had another brother."

We answered him according to these questions

"We answered the questions he asked us"

How could we have known that he would say ... down?

The sons use a question emphasize that the did not know what the man would tell them to do. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We did not know he would say ... down!"

he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "he would tell us to bring our brother down to Egypt."

Bring your brother down

It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Genesis 43:8

We will rise and go that we may live and not die, both we, you, and also our children

The phrases "we may live" and "not die" mean the same thing. Judah is emphasizing that they have to buy food in Egypt in order to survive. Alternate translation: "We will go now to Egypt and get grain so our whole family will live"

We will rise

Here "We" refers to the brothers who will travel to Egypt.

we may live

Here "we" refers to the brothers, Israel, and the whole family.

both we

Here "we" refers to the brothers.

we, you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Israel.

also our children

Here "our" refers to the brothers. This refers to the small children who were most likely to die during a famine.

Genesis 43:9

I will be a guarantee for him

The abstract noun "guarantee" can be stated as the verb "promise." Alternate translation: "I will promise to bring him back"

You will hold me responsible

How Jacob will hold Judah responsible can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You will make me answer to you about what happens to Benjamin"

let me bear the blame

This speaks about "blame" as if it were an object that a person has to carry. Alternate translation: "you may blame me"

Genesis 43:10

For if we had not delayed, surely by now we would have come back here a second time

They delayed because their father waited so long to send his sons to Egypt to get more food. Judah is complaining that they could not go sooner. He wishes that they had not delayed.

we would have come back here a second time

"we could have gone and returned twice"

Genesis 43:11

If it be so, now do this

"If this is our only choice, then do it"

Carry down

It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

balm

an oily substance with a sweet smell used for healing and protecting skin. See how you translated this word in Genesis 37:25. Alternate translation: "medicine"

spices

seasonings. See how you translated these words in Genesis 37:25.

pistachio nuts

small, green tree nuts

almonds

tree nuts with a sweet flavor

Genesis 43:12

Take double money in your hand

Here "hand" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Take double the money with you"

The money that was returned in the opening of your sacks, carry again in your hand

Here "hand" stands for the whole person. The phrase "that was returned" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "take back to Egypt the money someone put in your sacks"

Genesis 43:13

Take also your brother

"Take also Benjamin"

go again

"return"

Genesis 43:14

May God Almighty give you mercy before the man

The abstract noun "mercy" can be stated as the adjective "kind." Alternate translation: "May God Almighty cause the man to be kind to you"

your other brother

"Simeon"

If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved

"If I lose my children, then I lose my children." This means that Jacob knows he must accept whatever happens to his sons.

Genesis 43:15

in their hand they took

Here "hand" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "they took"

went down to Egypt

It was common to use the phrase "went down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Genesis 43:16

Benjamin with them

"Benjamin with Joseph's older brothers"

the steward of his house

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The "steward" was responsible for managing Joseph's household activities.
Genesis 43:17
He brought the men
Here "brought" can be translated as "took."
to Joseph's house
"into Joseph's house"
Genesis 43:18
The men were afraid
"Joseph's brothers were afraid"
they were brought to Joseph's house
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were going into Joseph's house" or "the steward was taking them into Joseph's house"
It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time we were brought in
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The steward is bringing us into the house because of the money that someone put back in our sacks"
that he may seek an opportunity against us. He might arrest us
This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "He is waiting for the opportunity to accuse us, so that he might arrest us"
Genesis 43:20
we came down
It is common to use the phrase "came down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
Genesis 43:21
Connecting Statement:
The brothers continue speaking to the steward of the house.
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
when we reached the lodging place
"when we came to the place that we were going to stay for the night"
behold
The word "behold" here shows that the brothers were surprised by what they saw.
every man's money was in the opening of his sack, our money in full weight
"each one of us found the full amount of his money in his sack"
We have brought it back in our hands
Here "hands" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "We have brought the money back with us"
Genesis 43:22
Other money we have also brought down in our hand to buy food
Here "hand" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "We have also brought more money to buy food"
brought down
It common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
Genesis 43:23
Peace be to you
The abstract noun "Peace" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Relax" or "Calm yourselves"
Your God and the God of your father
The stewards is not speaking about two different Gods. Alternate translation: "Your God, the God your father worships"
Genesis 43:24
washed their feet
This custom helped tired travelers to refresh themselves after walking long distances. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit.
feed to their donkeys
"Feed" is dry food that is set aside for animals
Genesis 43:26
they brought the gifts which were in their hand
Here "hand" stands for the entire person. Alternate translation: "the brothers brought the gifts they had with them"
bowed down before him
This is a way of showing honor and respect.
Genesis 43:28
Your servant our father
They refer to their father as "Your servant" to show respect. Alternate translation: "Our father who serves you"
they bowed down and gave him honor
They lay down in front of the man to show him respect.
Genesis 43:29
he lifted up his eyes
This means "he looked up."
his mother's son, and he said
This can be translated with a new sentence. Alternate translation: "his mother's son. Joseph said"
Is this your youngest brother ... me?
Possible meanings are 1) Joseph is truly asking a question to confirm that this man is Benjamin, or 2) it is a rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "So this is your youngest brother ... me."
my son
This is a friendly way one man speaks to another man of lower rank. Alternate translation: "young man"
Genesis 43:30
hurried to go out of the room
"hurried out of the room"
for he was deeply moved about his brother
The phrase "deeply moved" refers to having a strong feeling or emotion when something important happens. Alternate translation: "for he had strong feelings of compassion for his brother" or "for he had strong feelings of affection for his brother"
Genesis 43:31
saying
It can be made explicit to whom Joseph is speaking. Alternate translation: "and said to his servants"
Serve the food
This means to distribute the food so that people may eat.
Genesis 43:32
The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves.
The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves
This means that Joseph, the brothers, and the other Egyptians are eating in three different places within the

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same room. Alternate translation: "The servants served Joseph by himself and the brothers by themselves and the Egyptians, who were eating with him, by themselves"

The Egyptians there ate with him by themselves

These are probably other Egyptian officials who ate with Joseph, but they still sat separately from him and the Hebrew brothers.

because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is detestable to the Egyptians

This can be translated as a new sentence: "They did this because the Egyptians thought it was shameful to eat with the Hebrews"

could not eat bread

Here "bread" stands for food in general.

Genesis 43:33

The brothers sat before him

It is implied that Joseph had arranged where each brother would sit. You can make clear the implied information. Alternate translation: "The brothers sat across from the man, according to how he arranged their places"

the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth

The "firstborn" and the "youngest" are used together to mean all the brothers were sitting in order according to their age.

The men were astonished together

"The men were very surprised when they realized this"

Genesis 43:34

But Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of his brothers

The phrase "five times" can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "But Benjamin received a portion that was much bigger than what his brothers received"

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44 [1]Joseph commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's opening.[2]Put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's opening of the youngest, and also his money for the grain." The steward did as Joseph had said.
[3]The morning dawned, and the men were sent away, they and their donkeys.[4]When they were out of the city but were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow after the men, and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you returned evil for good?[5]Is this not the cup from which my master drinks, and the cup that he uses for divination? You have done evil, this thing that you have done.'"
[6]The steward overtook them and spoke these words to them.[7]They said to him, "Why does my master speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants that they would do such a thing.
[8]Look, the money that we found in our sacks' openings, we brought again to you out of the land of Canaan. How then could we steal out of your master's house silver or gold?[9]If any of your servants is found with it, let him die, and we also will be my master's slaves."[10]The steward said, "Now also let it be according to your words. He with whom the cup is found will be my slave, and you others will be innocent."
[11]Then each man hurried and brought his sack down to the ground, and each man opened his sack.[12]The steward searched. He began with the oldest and finished with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.[13]Then they tore their clothes. Each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

[14]Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house. He was still there, and they bowed before him to the ground.[15]Joseph said to them, "What is this that you have done? Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?"
[16]Judah said, "What can we say to my master? What can we speak? Or how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants. Look, we are my master's slaves, both we and he also in whose hand the cup was found."[17]Joseph said, "Far be it from me that I should do so. The man in whose hand the cup was found, that person will be my slave, but as for you others, go up in peace to your father."

[18]Then Judah came near to him and said, "My master, please let your servant speak a word in my master's ears, and do not let your anger burn against your servant, for you are just like Pharaoh.[19]My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'
[20]We said to my master, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one. But his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.'[21]Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me that I may see him.'[22]After that, we said to my master, 'The boy cannot leave his father. For if he should leave his father his father would die.'
[23]Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.'[24]Then it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my master.[25]Our father said, 'Go again, buy us some food.'[26]Then we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then will we go down, for we will not be able to see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.'
[27]Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons.[28]One of them went out from me and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since."[29]Now if you also take this one from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol.'
[30]Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the young man is not with us, since his life is bound up in the boy's life,[31]it will come about, when he sees the boy is not with us, he will die. Your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol.[32]For your servant became a guarantee for the boy to my father and said, 'If I do not bring him to you, then I will bear the guilt to my father forever.'

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[33]Now therefore, please let your servant stay instead of the boy as slave to my master, and let the boy go up with his brothers.[34]For how can I go up to my father if the boy is not with me? I am afraid to see the evil that would come on my father."

Genesis 44 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah's sacrifice

Judah is willing to sacrifice himself in order to save Benjamin, the favored son of Jacob. Judah's descendants will become the leaders of the Israelites and the godliest of the twelve tribes of Israel. (See: favor and godly)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Joseph's test

Joseph tests his brothers to see if they are good. They treat their brother Benjamin better than they treated Joseph and tried to protect him. (See: test)

Links:

Genesis 44:1 Notes

Genesis 44:1

General Information:

This begins a new event in the story. Most likely this is the next morning after the feast.

steward of his house

The "steward" was responsible for managing Joseph's household activities.

every man's money

Their money was silver coins most likely in a small bag.

in his sack's opening

"in his sack"

Genesis 44:2

Put my cup, the silver cup

"Put my silver cup"

in the sack's opening of the youngest

The word "brother" is understood. Alternate translation: "in the youngest brother's sack"

Genesis 44:3

The morning dawned

"The morning light shown"

the men were sent away, they and their donkeys

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they sent the men away, along with their donkeys"

Genesis 44:4

Why have you returned evil for good?

This question is used to scold the brothers. Alternate translation: "You have treated us badly, after we were good to you!"

Genesis 44:5

Is this not the cup from which my master drinks, and the cup that he uses for divination?

This question is used to scold the brothers. Alternate translation: "You already know that this is the cup that my master uses for drinking and for fortune telling!"

You have done evil, this thing that you have done

This repeats "you have done" for emphasis. Alternate translation: "What you have done is very evil"

Genesis 44:6

spoke these words to them

"spoke what Joseph told him to say"

Genesis 44:7

Why does my master speak such words as these?

Here "words" stands for what was said. The brothers refer to the steward as "my master." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "Why are you saying this, my master?"

Far be it from your servants that they would do such a thing.

The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants" and "they." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "We would never do such a thing!"

Far be it from your servants

Something that a person would never do is spoken of as if it were an object that person wants to put very far from himself.

Genesis 44:8

Look, the money

"Listen to what we are about to say and you will see that we are speaking the truth: the money"

the money that we found in our sacks' openings

"you know the money that we found in our sacks"

we brought again to you out of the land of Canaan

"we brought back to you from Canaan"

How then could we steal out of your master's house silver or gold?

The brothers use a question to emphasize that they would not steal from the lord of Egypt. Alternate translation: "So we would never take anything from your master's house!"

silver or gold

These words are used together to mean that they would not steal anything of any value.

Genesis 44:9

If any of your servants is found with it

The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in the first person. Also, "is found with it" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you find that one of us has stolen the cup"

we also will be my master's slaves

The phrase "my master" refers to the steward. This can be

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stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "you may take us as your slaves"

Genesis 44:10

Now also let it be according to your words

"Very well. I will do what you said." Here "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

He with whom the cup is found will be my slave

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If I find the cup in one of your sacks, that person will be my slave"

Genesis 44:11

brought his sack down

"lowered his sack"

Genesis 44:12

the oldest ... the youngest

The word "brother" is understood. Alternate translation: "the oldest brother ... the youngest brother"

youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack

This can be translated as a new sentence and in active form. Alternate translation: "youngest. The steward found the cup in Benjamin's sack"

Genesis 44:13

Then they tore their clothes

The word "they" refers to the brothers. Tearing clothes was a sign of great distress and sorrow.

donkey and returned

"donkey, and they returned"

Genesis 44:14

He was still there

"Joseph was still there"

they bowed before him

"they fell before him." This is a sign of the brothers wanting the lord to be merciful to them.

Genesis 44:15

Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?

Joseph uses a question to scold his brothers. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that a man like me can learn things by magic!"

Genesis 44:16

What can we say to my master? What can we speak? Or how can we justify ourselves?

All 3 questions mean basically the same thing. They use these questions to emphasize that there is nothing they can say to explain what happened. Alternate translation: "We have nothing to say, my master. We cannot speak anything of value. We cannot justify ourselves."

What can we say to my master ... my master's slaves

Here "my master" refers to Joseph. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "What can we say to you ... your slaves"

God has found out the iniquity of your servants

Here "found out" does not mean God just found out what the brothers did. It means God is now punishing them for what they did. Alternate translation: "God is punishing us for our past sins"

the iniquity of your servants

The brothers refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "our iniquity"

he also in whose hand the cup was found

Here "hand" stands for the whole person. Also, "was found" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who had your cup"

Genesis 44:17

Far be it from me that I should do so

Something that a person would never do is spoken of as if it were an object the person wants put far away from him. Alternate translation: "It is not like me to do something like that"

The man in whose hand the cup was found

Here "hand" stands for the whole person. Also, "was found" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The man who had my cup"

Genesis 44:18

came near to

"approached"

let your servant

Judah refers to himself as "your servant." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "let me, your servant"

speak a word in my master's ears

The word "ear" is a synecdoche that stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "speak to you, my master"

in my master's ears

Here "my master" refers to Joseph. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "to you"

do not let your anger burn against your servant

Being angry is spoke of as if it were a burning fire. Alternate translation: "please do not be angry with me, your servant"

for you are just like Pharaoh

Judah compares the master to Pharaoh to emphasize the great power that the master has. He is also implying that he does want the master to become angry and execute him. Alternate translation: "for you are as powerful as Pharaoh and could have your soldiers kill me"

Genesis 44:19

My master asked his servants, saying, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "My master asked us if we have a father or a brother."

My master asked his servants

Judah refers to Joseph with the words "my master" and "his." He also refers to himself and his brothers as "his servants." Alternate translation: "You, my master, asked us, your servants" or "You asked us"

Genesis 44:20

General Information:

Judah continues to speak before Joseph

We said to my master, 'We have a father ... his father loves him.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "And we said to

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my master that we have a father ... his father loves him"
his father loves him
This refers to love for a friend or family member.
Genesis 44:21
Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me that I may see him.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "And you said to your servants that we should bring our youngest brother to you so that you may see him"
Then you said to your servants
Judah refers to himself and his brothers as "your servants." Alternate translation: "Then you said to us, your servants"
Bring him down to me
It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. Alternate translation: "Bring him to me"
Genesis 44:22
we said to my master
Judah refers to Joseph as "my master." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "we said to you, my master"
After that, we said to my master, 'The boy cannot ... father would die.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "In response, we said to my master that the boy cannot ... father would die"
his father would die
It is implied that their father would die from sorrow.
Genesis 44:23
General Information:
Judah continues his story to Joseph
Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Then you said to your servants that unless our youngest brother comes with us, we would not see you again."
Then you said to your servants
Judah refers to himself and his brothers as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "Then you said to us, your servants"
comes down
It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
you will not see my face again
Here "face" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "you will not see me again"
Genesis 44:24
Then it came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
we went up to your servant my father
It was common to use the phrase "went up" when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
we told him the words of my master
Judah refers to Joseph as "my master." Alternate translation: "we told him what you said, my master"
Genesis 44:25
Our father said, 'Go again, buy us some food.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Our father told us to go again to Egypt to buy food for us and our families."
Genesis 44:26
go down
It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.
Then we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother ... is with us.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Then we said to him that we cannot go down to Egypt. We told him that if our youngest brother is with us ... is with us"
to see the man's face
Here "face" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "to see the man"
Genesis 44:27
General Information:
Judah continues his story to Joseph.
Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of a three-level quote.
said to us
Here "us" does not include Joseph.
You know
Here "You" is plural and refers to the brothers.
Genesis 44:28
Connecting Statement:
The three-level quote that began in verse 27 continues.
he is torn in pieces
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a wild animal has torn him to pieces"
Genesis 44:29
Connecting Statement:
The three-level quote that began in verse 27 ends here.
Now if you also take this one from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol
The three-level quote that began with the words "Your servant ... said to us, 'You know ... two sons" in verse 27 and continued with the words "and I said, 'Surely ... since" in verse 28 ends here. You may need to change one or more of these levels to indirect quotes. "This is what your servant my father said to us: 'You know that my wife bore me two sons. One of them went out from me and I said that surely he had been torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since. Now if you also take this one from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol.'" or "Your servant my father told us that we knew that his wife had borne him two sons. One of them went out from him, and he said that surely that son had been torn in pieces, and he has not seen him since. He then said that if we also took this one from him, and harm came to him, we would bring down his gray hair with sorrow to Sheol."
harm comes to him
Something bad happening to a person is spoken of as if "harm" were something that travels and comes to a person.
you will bring down my gray hair with sorrow to Sheol

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To "bring down ... to Sheol" is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word "down" because it was commonly believed Sheol is somewhere underground. Alternate translation: "then you will cause me, an old man, to die of sorrow"

my gray hair

This stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. Alternate translation: "me, an old man"

Genesis 44:30

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

therefore, when I come to your servant my father

Judah begins to describe what he expects will happen to Jacob if he returns to Jacob without Benjamin. Here "come" can be translated as "go" or "return."

since his life is bound up in the boy's life

The father saying he would die if his son died is spoken of as if their two lives were physically bound together. Alternate translation: "since he said he would die if the boy did not come back"

Genesis 44:31

Connecting Statement:

Judah finishes describing what he expects to happen to Jacob if he returns to Jacob without Benjamin.

Your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol

To "bring down ... to Sheol" is way of saying they will cause him to die and go to Sheol. He uses the word "down" because it was commonly believed Sheol is somewhere underground. Alternate translation: "And we your servants will have caused our old father to die of sorrow"

Your servants

Judah refers to himself and his brothers as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone who has greater authority. Alternate translation: "And we, your servants" or "And we"

the gray hair of your servant our father

Here "gray hair" stands for Jacob and emphasizes his old age. Alternate translation: "our old father"

Genesis 44:32

For your servant became a guarantee for the boy to my father

The abstract noun "guarantee" can be stated with the verb "promised." Alternate translation: "For I promised my father concerning the boy"

For your servant

Judah refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "For I, your servant" or "For I"

then I will bear the guilt to my father

Being considered guilty is spoken of as if "guilt" were something that a person carries. Alternate translation: "then my father may blame me"

Genesis 44:33

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

let your servant stay instead of the boy as slave to my master

"let your servant remain as a slave to my master instead of the boy"

let your servant

Judah refers to himself as "your servant." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "let me, your servant" or "let me"

to my master

Judah refers to Joseph as "my master." Alternate translation: "to you, my master" or "to you"

let the boy go up

It was going to use the phrase "go up" when speaking about traveling from Egypt to Canaan.

Genesis 44:34

For how can I go up to my father if the boy is not with me?

Judah uses a question to emphasize the grief he would have if Benjamin did not return home. Alternate translation: "I cannot return to my father if the boy is not with me."

I am afraid to see the evil that would come on my father

A person suffering terribly is spoken of as if "evil" were a thing that comes upon a person. Alternate translation: "I am afraid to see how much my father would suffer"

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45 [1]Then Joseph could not control himself before all the servants who stood by him. He said loudly, "Everyone must leave me." So no servant stood by him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers.[2]He wept loudly, the Egyptians heard it, and the house of Pharaoh heard of it.[3]Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" His brothers could not answer him, for they were shocked in his presence.

[4]Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." They came near. He said, "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt.[5]Do not be grieved or angry with yourselves that you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to preserve life.[6]For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.

[7]God sent me ahead of you to preserve you as a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.[8]So now it was not you who sent me here but God, and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, master of all his house, and ruler of all the land of Egypt.

[9]Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'This is what your son Joseph says, "God has made me master of all Egypt. Come down to me, do not delay.[10]You will live in the land of Goshen, and you will be near me, you and your children and your children's children, and your flocks and your herds, and all that you have.[11]I will provide for you there, for there are still five years of famine, so that you do not come to poverty, you, your household, and all that you have."'

[12]Look, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaks to you.[13]You will tell my father about all my honor in Egypt and of all that you have seen. You will hurry and bring my father down here."

[14]He hugged his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.[15]He kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that his brothers talked with him.

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[16]The news of the matter was told in Pharaoh's house: "Joseph's brothers have come." It pleased Pharaoh and his servants very much.[17]Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and go to the land of Canaan.[18]Get your father and your households and come to me. I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'
[19]Now you are commanded, 'Do this, take carts out of the land of Egypt for your children and for your wives. Get your father and come.[20]Do not be concerned about your possessions, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

[21]The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey.[22]To all of them he gave each man changes of clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothing.[23]For his father he sent this: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt; and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and other supplies for his father for the journey.
[24]So he sent his brothers away and they left. He said to them, "See that you do not quarrel on the journey."[25]They went up out of Egypt and came to the land of Canaan, to Jacob their father.[26]They told him saying "Joseph is still alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." His heart was astonished, for he could not believe what they told him.
[27]They told him all the words of Joseph that he had said to them. When Jacob saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived.[28]Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

Genesis 45 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Joseph finally reveals himself to his brothers in this chapter. This chapter forms the conclusion of the story which began in chapter 43.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The account of Joseph focuses on the power of God. God is able to protect his people despite the evil actions of some. He also is able to continue to bless them despite their circumstances. (See: peopleofgod and bless)

Joseph's character

Genesis just recorded a period of time where Joseph's ancestors and brothers struggled with sin. Joseph's character in this chapter is upright. It gained him great favor in the eyes of Pharaoh and helped to save his people. (See: sin save)

Links:

Genesis 45:1 Notes

Genesis 45:1

could not control himself

This means he could not control his emotions. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "was about to start crying"

by him

"near him"

Genesis 45:2

house of Pharaoh

Here "house" stands for the people in the Pharaoh's palace. Alternate translation: "everyone in Pharaoh's palace"

Genesis 45:3

shocked in his presence

"terrified of him"

Genesis 45:4

whom you sold into Egypt

The meaning can be stated more explicitly. Alternate translation: "whom you sold as a slave to the trader who brought me to Egypt"

Genesis 45:5

Do not be grieved

"do not be upset" or "do not be distressed"

that you sold me here

The meaning can be stated more explicitly. Alternate translation: "that you sold me as a slave and sent me here to Egypt"

to preserve life

Here "life" stands for the people that Joseph saved from dying during the famine. Alternate translation: "so I could save many lives"

Genesis 45:6

there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest

"there will be five more years without planting or harvesting." Here "neither plowing nor harvest" stands for the fact that the crops still will not grow because of the famine. Alternate translation: "and the famine will last five more years"

Genesis 45:7

to preserve you as a remnant in the earth

"so that you and your families would not completely perish from the earth" or "to make sure your descendants would survive"

to keep you alive by a great deliverance

The abstract noun "deliverance" can be stated as "rescuing." Alternate translation: "to keep you alive by rescuing you in

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a mighty way"

Genesis 45:8

he has made me a father to Pharaoh

Joseph advising and helping Pharaoh is spoken of as if Joseph were Pharaoh's father. Alternate translation: "he has made me a guide to Pharaoh" or "he has made me the chief adviser to Pharaoh"

of all his house

Here "house" stands for the people who live in his palace. Alternate translation: "of all his household" or "of all his palace"

ruler of all the land of Egypt

Here "land" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "ruler over all the people of Egypt"

ruler

Here Joseph means that he is ruler in second place to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. This understood information can be made clear.

Genesis 45:9

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of a three-level quotation.

go up to my father

It was common to use the phrase "go up" when speaking about going from Egypt to Canaan. Alternate translation: "go back to my father"

Come down to me

It was common to use the phrase "come down" when speaking about going from Canaan to Egypt. Alternate translation: "Come here to me"

Genesis 45:10

Connecting Statement:

The three-level quotation that began in verse 9 continues here.

Genesis 45:11

Connecting Statement:

The three-level quotation that began in verse 9 ends here.

I will provide ... all that you have

The three-level quotation that began with the words "say to him" in verse 9 ends here. You may need to reduce the number of levels by making some levels indirect quotes. "say to him that his son Joseph says that God has made him master of all Egypt, so he must go down to Joseph and not delay. He will live in the land of Goshen, and he will be near Joseph, he and his children and his children's children, and his flocks and his herds, and all that he has. Joseph will provide for him there, for there are still five years of famine, so that he does not come to poverty, him, his household, and all that he has." or "say to him, 'Your son Joseph says that God has made him master of all Egypt, so he must go down to Joseph and not delay. He will live in the land of Goshen, and he will be near Joseph, he and his children and his children's children, and his flocks and his herds, and all that he has. Joseph will provide for him there, for there are still five years of famine, so that he does not come to poverty, him, his household, and all that he has.'"

come to poverty

This speaks about "poverty" as if it were a destination. Alternate translation: "waste away" or "starve"

Genesis 45:12

your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin

The word "eyes" stands for the entire person. Alternate translation: "All of you and Benjamin can see"

that it is my mouth that speaks to you

The word "mouth" stands for the entire person. Alternate translation: "that I, Joseph, am speaking to you"

Genesis 45:13

about all my honor in Egypt

"how the people in Egypt greatly honor me"

my father down here

It was common to use the word "down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt. Alternate translation: "my father here to me"

Genesis 45:14

He hugged his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck

"Joseph hugged his brother Benjamin, and they both wept"

Genesis 45:15

He kissed all his brothers

In ancient Near East, it is common to greet a relative with a kiss. If your language has an affectionate greeting for a relative, use that. If not, use what is appropriate.

wept over them

This means Joseph was crying while he kissed them.

After that his brothers talked with him

Earlier they were too afraid to speak. Now they feel they can speak freely. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "After that his brothers talked freely with him"

Genesis 45:16

The news of the matter was told in Pharaoh's house: "Joseph's brothers have come."

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. It may also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone in Pharaoh's palace heard that Joseph's brothers had come."

Pharaoh's house

This stands for Pharaoh's palace.

Genesis 45:17

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of a two-level quotation.

Genesis 45:18

Connecting Statement:

The two-level quotation that began in verse 17 ends here.

Get your father ... fat of the land.'

The two-level quotation that began in verse 17 ends here. This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. "Pharaoh told Joseph to tell his brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and go to the land of Canaan. Get your father and your households and come to me. I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land.'" or "Pharaoh to Joseph to tell his brothers to do this: to load their animals and go to the land of Canaan, and also to get their father and their households and go to him. Pharaoh would give them the good of the land of Egypt, and they would eat the fat of the land."

I will give you the good of the land of Egypt

"I will give you the best land in Egypt"

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you will eat the fat of the land
The best food that a land produces is spoken of as if it were the fat portion of the land. Alternate translation: "you will eat the best food in the land"
Genesis 45:19
General Information:
Pharaoh continues to tell Joseph what to tell his brothers.
Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of a two-level quotation.
Now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
you are commanded
This can be stated in active form. You may also need to add the words "to tell them," which the writer left out of this ellipsis. Alternate translation: "I also command you to tell them" or "also tell them"
take carts out
"Carts" are wagons with two or four wheels. Animals pull the carts.
Genesis 45:20
Connecting Statement:
The two-level quote that began in verse 19 ends here.
Do not be concerned about your possessions, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.'
The two-level quote that began in verse 19 ends here. This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. "Now you are commanded to tell them to take carts out of the land of Egypt for their children and for their wives, to get their father, and to come. They are not to be concerned about their possessions, for the good of all the land of Egypt will be theirs."
Genesis 45:21
gave them provisions for the journey
"gave them what they needed for traveling"
Genesis 45:22
he gave each man changes of clothing
Each man received a set of clothes except for Benjamin who received 5 sets of clothes.
three hundred pieces
"300 pieces"
Genesis 45:23
ten donkeys ... and ten female donkeys
The donkeys were included as part of the gift.
Genesis 45:24
do not quarrel
Possible meanings include 1) "do not argue" and 2) "do not become afraid"
Genesis 45:25
went up out of Egypt
It was common to use the word "up" when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
Genesis 45:26
he is ruler over all the land of Egypt
Here "land of Egypt" stands for the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "he rules all the people of Egypt"
His heart was astonished
Here "heart" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "and he was astonished" or "he was very surprised"
he could not believe what they told him
"he did not accept that what they said was true"
Genesis 45:27
They told him
"They told Jacob"
all the words of Joseph that he had said to them
"everything that Joseph had said to them"
the spirit of Jacob their father revived
The word "spirit" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Jacob their father recovered" or "Jacob their father became very excited"

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46 [1]Israel made his journey with all that he had and went to Beersheba. There he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.[2]God spoke to Israel in a vision at night, saying, "Jacob, Jacob." He said, "Here I am."[3]He said, "I am God, the God of your father. Do not fear to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you a great nation.[4]I will go down with you into Egypt, and I will surely bring you up again and Joseph will close your eyes with his own hand."
[5]Jacob rose up from Beersheba. The sons of Israel transported Jacob their father, their children, and their wives, in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to carry him.[6]They took their livestock and their possessions that they had accumulated in the land of Canaan. They came into Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him.[7]He brought with him to Egypt his sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants.

[8]These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt: Jacob and his descendants, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn;
[9]the sons of Reuben, Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi;
[10]the sons of Simeon, Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman;
[11]and the sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

[12]The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.
[13]The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron.
[14]The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.[15]These were the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, along with his daughter Dinah. His sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three.

[16]The sons of Gad were Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.
[17]The sons of Asher were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah; and Serah was their sister. The sons of Beriah were Heber and

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Malkiel.[18]These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban had given to Leah his daughter. These sons she bore to Jacob—sixteen in all.

[19]The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.[20]In Egypt Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph by Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On.
[21]The sons of Benjamin were Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.[22]These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob—fourteen in all.

[23]The son of Dan was Hushim.
[24]The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.[25]These were the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter—seven in all.

[26]All those who went to Egypt with Jacob, who were his direct descendants, not counting Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six in all.[27]With the two sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt, the people of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy in all.

[28]Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way before him to Goshen, and they came to the land of Goshen.
[29]Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen. He saw him, hugged his neck, and wept on his neck a long time.[30]Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive."
[31]Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's house, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, saying, 'My brothers and my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me.[32]The men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock. They have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'
[33]It will come about, when Pharaoh calls you and asks, 'What is your occupation?'[34]that you should say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth until now, both we, and our forefathers.' Do this so that you may live in the land of Goshen, for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians."

Genesis 46 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Going to Egypt

Yahweh allowed Israel to go to Egypt. He was to trust in Yahweh and his covenant faithfulness. God continued to bless them in Egypt. (See: trust and covenantfaith and bless)

Shepherds

Because of the regular flooding of the Nile River, Egypt's economy revolved around farming more than raising animals. Therefore, the Egyptians despised the nomadic lifestyle of shepherds. Joseph's instructions permitted the Hebrew people to live separately from the Egyptians.

Links:

Genesis 46:1 Notes

Genesis 46:1

went to Beersheba

"came to Beersheba"

Genesis 46:2

Here I am

"Yes, I am listening"

Genesis 46:3

to go down to Egypt

It was common to use the phrase "go down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

I will make you a great nation

The "you" is singular and refers to Jacob. Here Jacob refers to his descendants that will become a large nation. Alternate translation: "I will give you many descendants, and they will become a great nation"

Genesis 46:4

into Egypt

"to Egypt"

I will surely bring you up again

The promise was made to Jacob, but the promise would be fulfilled to all of Israel's descendants. Alternate translation: "I will surely bring your descendants out of Egypt again"

bring you up again

It was common to use the word "up" when speaking about traveling from Egypt to Canaan.

Joseph will close your eyes with his own hand

The phrase "close you eyes with his own hand" is a way of saying that Joseph will be present when Israel dies and it will be Joseph who will close Jacob's eyelids at the time of his death. Alternate translation: "Joseph will even be present with you at the time of your death"

will close your eyes

It was a custom to pull down the eyelids when a person died with their eyes open. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Genesis 46:5

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rose up from
"set out from"
in the carts
"Carts" are wagons with two or four wheels. Animals pull the carts. See how you translated "carts" in Genesis 45:19.
Genesis 46:6
they had accumulated
"they had acquired" or "they had gained"
Genesis 46:7
He brought with him
"Jacob brought with him"
his sons' sons
"his grandsons"
his sons' daughters
"his granddaughters"
Genesis 46:8
These are the names
This refers to the names of the people that the author is about to list.
Genesis 46:9
Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi
These are all names of men.
Genesis 46:10
Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul
These are all names of men.
Genesis 46:11
Gershon, Kohath, and Merari
These are all names of men.
Genesis 46:12
Er, Onan, Shelah
These were the sons of Judah by his wife, Shua. See how you translated these names in Genesis 38:3-5.
Perez, and Zerah
These were the sons of Judah by his daughter-in-law, Tamar. See how you translated these names in Genesis 38:29-30.
Hezron ... Hamul
These are all names of men.
Genesis 46:13
Tola, Puah, Jashub ... Shimron
These are all names of men. . "Jashub" is spelled as "Lob" or "Iob" in some verions.
Genesis 46:14
Sered, Elon ... Jahleel
These are all names of men.
Genesis 46:15
Dinah
This is the name of Leah's daughter. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 30:21]
His sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three
Here "sons" and "daughters" refer to Jacob's sons, daughters, and grandchildren related to Leah. Alternate translation: "Altogether he had 33 sons, daughters, and grandchildren"
Genesis 46:16
Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi ... Areli
These are the names of men.
Genesis 46:17
Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi ... Beriah ... Heber ... Malkiel
These are the names of men.
Serah
This is the name of a woman.
Genesis 46:18
Zilpah
This is the name of Leah's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:24]
These sons she bore to Jacob—sixteen in all
This refers to 16 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren that were related to Zilpah.
Genesis 46:20
Asenath
a woman's name. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
Potiphera
a man's name. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
priest of On
On is a city, also called Heliopolis, which was "the City of the Sun" and the center of worship of the sun god Ra. See how you translated this in [Genesis 41:45]
Genesis 46:21
Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard
These are names of men.
Genesis 46:22
fourteen in all
This refers to the 14 sons and grandsons related to Rachel.
Genesis 46:23
Hushim
This is the name of a man.
Genesis 46:24
Jahziel, Guni, Jezer ... Shillem
These are the names of men.
Genesis 46:25
Bilhah
This is the name of Rachel's female servant. See how you translated this name in [Genesis 29:29]
seven in all
This refers to the 7 children and grandchildren related to Bilhah.
Genesis 46:26
direct descendants
A person's "direct descendants" are natural sons, daughters, and grandchildren, not those who have become part of the family by marrying a direct descendant.
sixty-six
"66"
Genesis 46:27
seventy
"70"
Genesis 46:28
to show the way before him to Goshen
"to show them the way to Goshen"
Genesis 46:29
Joseph prepared his chariot and went up
Here "Joseph" stands for his servants. Alternate translation: "Joseph's servants prepared his chariot and Joseph went up"

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went up to meet Israel
The phrase "went up" is used because Joseph is traveling to a higher elevation to meet his father. Alternate translation: "went to meet Israel"
hugged his neck, and wept on his neck a long time
"put his arms around his father, and wept for a long time"
Genesis 46:30
Now let me die
"Now I am ready to die" or "Now I will die happy"
since I have seen your face, that you are still alive
Here "face" stands for the entire person. Jacob was expressing joy at seeing Joseph. Alternate translation: "since I have seen you alive again"
Genesis 46:31
Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of a two-level quotation.
his father's house
Here "house" stands for his family. Alternate translation: "his father's family" or "his father's household"
I will go up and tell Pharaoh
It was common to use the phrase "go up" when referring to someone going to speak with someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "I will go tell Pharaoh"
Genesis 46:32
Connecting Statement:
The two-level quotation that began in verse 31 ends here.
The men are shepherds ... all that they have
The two-level quotation that began with the words "I will go up" in verse 31 ends here. This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I will go up and tell Pharaoh and say that my brothers and my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. I will tell him that the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock, and that they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have."
Genesis 46:33
Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of a two-level quotation.
It will come about
This phrase is used here to mark an important event that is about to happen in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Genesis 46:34
Connecting Statement:
The two-level quotation that began in verse 33 ends here.
you should say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth until now, both we, and our forefathers.'
The two-level quotation that began with the words "when Pharaoh ... asks" in verse 33 ends here. This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. "when Pharaoh ... asks what your occupation is, that you should say that you have been keepers of livestock from your youth until now, both you and your forefathers. Do this"
Your servants
Joseph's family are to refer to themselves as "your servants" when they speak to Pharaoh. This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "We, your servants"
every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians
The abstract noun "abomination" can be translated with the adjective "disgusting." Alternate translation: "Egyptians think shepherds are disgusting"

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47 [1]Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers, their flocks, their herds, and all that they own, have arrived from the land of Canaan. See, they are in the land of Goshen."[2]He took five of his brothers and introduced them to Pharaoh.
[3]Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" They said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, as our ancestors."[4]Then they said to Pharaoh, "We come as temporary residents in the land. There is no pasture for your servants' flocks, because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. So now, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen."
[5]Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, "Your father and your brothers have come to you.[6]The land of Egypt is before you. Settle your father and your brothers in the best region, the land of Goshen. If you know any capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."
[7]Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and presented him to Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh.[8]Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How long have you lived?"[9]Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are 130. The years of my life have been few and painful. They have not been as long as the days of my ancestors' sojourning."[10]Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.
[11]Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers. He gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.[12]Joseph provided food for his father, his brothers, and all his father's household, according to the number of their little ones.

[13]Now there was no food in all the land; for the famine was severe. The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan wasted away because of the famine.[14]Joseph gathered all the money that was in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, by selling grain to the inhabitants. Then Joseph brought the money to Pharaoh's palace.
[15]When all the money of the lands of Egypt and Canaan was spent, all the Egyptians came to Joseph saying, "Give us food! Why should we die in your presence because our money is gone?"[16]Joseph said, "If your money is gone, bring your livestock and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock."[17]So they brought their livestock to Joseph. Joseph gave

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them food in exchange for the horses, for the flocks, for the herds, and for the donkeys. He fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year.
[18]When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my master that our money is all gone, and the herds of cattle are my master's. There is nothing left in the sight of my master, except our bodies and our land.[19]Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we and our land will be servants to Pharaoh. Give us seed that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate."

[20]So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. For every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was very severe. In this way, the land became Pharaoh's.[21]As for the people, he made them slaves from one end of Egypt's border to the other end.[22]It was only the land of the priests that Joseph did not buy, because the priests were given an allowance. They ate from the allotment which Pharaoh gave them. Therefore they did not sell their land.
[23]Then Joseph said to the people, "See, I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh. Now here is seed for you, and you will plant the land.[24]At the harvest, you must give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be your own, for seed of the field and for food for your households and your little ones."
[25]They said, "You have saved our lives. May we find favor in your eyes. We will be Pharaoh's servants."[26]So Joseph made it a statute which is in effect in the land of Egypt to this day, that one-fifth belongs to Pharaoh. Only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's.

[27]So Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. His people gained possessions there. They were fruitful and multiplied greatly.[28]Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years, so the years of Jacob's life were one hundred forty-seven years.
[29]When the time approached for Israel to die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh, and show me faithfulness and trustworthiness. Please do not bury me in Egypt.
[30]When I lie down with my fathers, you will carry me out of Egypt and bury me in my forefathers' burial place." Joseph said, "I will do as you have said."[31]Israel said, "Swear to me," and Joseph swore to him. Then Israel bowed down at the head of his bed.

Genesis 47 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abrahamic covenant

Part of the Abrahamic covenant was that Yahweh would bless those who bless Abraham's descendants. Since Pharaoh cared for the Hebrew people, Yahweh blessed the Egyptians while the Hebrew people lived in Egypt. The Hebrew people also multiplied greatly as this covenant promised. (See: covenant and bless and promise)

Jacob was not buried in Egypt

In the ancient Near east, a person was typically buried in their hometown. Since Egypt was not the Israelites' home, Jacob did not wish to be buried in Egypt. This was a lesson to the Israelites that Canaan was their true home, the promised land. (See: promisedland)

Links:

Genesis 47:1 Notes

Genesis 47:1

Joseph went in and told Pharaoh

It is not clear whether Joseph went with his father and family from Canaan to Goshen and then alone from Goshen to see the Pharaoh, back to Goshen for his five brothers, and then back to Pharaoh, as the ULB implies, or whether he brought the five brothers with him the first time he went from Goshen to Pharaoh, as the UDB states.

Genesis 47:2

He took five of his brothers and introduced them

It is not clear whether Joseph went with his father and family from Canaan to Goshen and then alone from Goshen to see the Pharaoh, back to Goshen for his five brothers, and then back to Pharaoh, as the ULB implies, or whether he brought the five brothers with him the first time he went from Goshen to Pharaoh, as the UDB states.

Genesis 47:3

Your servants are shepherds

"Your servants shepherd flocks"

Your servants

Joseph's brothers refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with more authority. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "We, your servants" or "We"

as our ancestors

"both we and our forefathers" or "both we and our ancestors"

Genesis 47:4

We come as temporary residents in the land

"We have come to stay for a while in Egypt"

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There is no pasture
"There is no grass to eat"
now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
Genesis 47:6
The land of Egypt is before you
"The land of Egypt is open to you" or "All of the land of Egypt is available to you"
Settle your father and your brothers in the best region, the land of Goshen
"Settle your father and your brothers in the land of Goshen, which is the best region"
If you know any capable men among them
It is implied that they are capable of taking care of animals. Alternate translation: "If you know of any men among them who have great skill taking care of animals"
Genesis 47:7
Jacob blessed Pharaoh
Here "blessed" means to express a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
Genesis 47:8
How long have you lived?
"How old are you?"
Genesis 47:9
The years of my sojourning are 130
The phrase "years of my sojourning" refers to how long he has lived on the earth traveling from one place to another. Alternate translation: "I have lived as a foreigner in many places on the earth for 130 years"
The years of my life have been few ... not been as long as the days of my ancestors' sojourning
Jacob means his life is short compared to the lives of Abraham and Isaac.
painful
Jacob has experienced much pain and trouble during his life.
Genesis 47:11
Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers
"Then Joseph took care of his father and his brothers and helped them establish where they would live"
the land of Rameses
This is another name for the land of Goshen.
Genesis 47:12
according to the number of their little ones
Here, the word "little ones" means the small children in the family. Alternate translation: "according to how many small children were in their families"
Genesis 47:13
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.
The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan
This refers to the people living in these lands. Alternate translation: "The people of Egypt and the people of Canaan"
wasted away
"became thin and weak"
Genesis 47:14
Joseph gathered all the money that was in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, by selling grain to the inhabitants
"The people of Egypt and Canaan spent all of their money buying grain from Joseph"
Joseph gathered ... Joseph brought
Most likely Joseph ordered his servants to gather and bring the money.
Genesis 47:15
When all the money of the lands of Egypt and Canaan was spent
Here "lands" stands for the people who live in the lands. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the people of Egypt and Canaan used up all their money"
of the lands of Egypt and Canaan
"from the land of Egypt and from the land of Canaan"
Why should we die in your presence because our money is gone?
The people used a question to emphasize how desperate they are to buy food. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please, do not let us die because we have used up all of our money!"
Genesis 47:17
He fed them with bread
Here "bread" stands for food in general. Alternate translation: "He gave them food" or "He provided them with food"
Genesis 47:18
they came to him
"the people came to Joseph"
We will not hide from my master
The people refer to Joseph as "my master." This is a formal way of speaking to someone with greater authority. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "We will not hide from you, our master" or "We will not hide from you"
There is nothing left in the sight of my master, except our bodies and our land
This double negative emphasizes that the speakers' bodies and land were the only things they had left. Alternate translation: "The only things we have left in the sight of my master is our bodies and our land"
There is nothing left in the sight of my master
Here "sight" stands for Joseph himself. Alternate translation: "We have nothing left to give you, our master"
Genesis 47:19
Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land?
The word "eyes" refers to Joseph's sight. The people use a question to emphasize how desperate they are to buy food. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please do not just watch as we die and our land is ruined!"
Why should we die ... both we and our land
The land becomes useless and ruined because there is no seed to plant; thus it is spoken of as if the land would die.
Genesis 47:20
In this way, the land became Pharaoh's
"So the land became Pharaoh's"
Genesis 47:22
It was only the land of the priests that Joseph did not buy
"But he did not buy the land of the priests"
the priests were given an allowance

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An "allowance" is an amount of money or food that someone regularly gives to another person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh gave the priests a certain amount of food each day"

They ate from the allotment which Pharaoh gave them

"They ate from what Pharaoh gave them"

Genesis 47:23

and you will plant

"that you might sow"

Genesis 47:24

At the harvest, you must give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four parts will be your own

The word "fifth" is a fraction. Alternate translation: "At harvest time you will divide the crops into five parts. You will give one part back to Pharaoh for payment and the four parts are for your own"

for food for your households and your little ones

You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "for food for your households and for food for your little ones"

Genesis 47:25

May we find favor in your eyes

The phrase "find favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "May you be pleased with us"

Genesis 47:26

in the land of Egypt

"over the land of Egypt" or "throughout the land of Egypt"

to this day

This means to the time that the author was writing this.

one-fifth

See how you translated "a fifth" in Genesis 47:24.

Genesis 47:27

They were fruitful and multiplied greatly

The word "multiplied" explains how they were "fruitful." Alternate translation: "They had very many children"

were fruitful

Here "fruitful" means to prosper or to have children.

Genesis 47:28

seventeen years

"17 years"

so the years of Jacob's life were one hundred forty-seven years

"so Jacob lived to be 147 years old"

Genesis 47:29

When the time approached for Israel to die

This speaks about time as if it travels and comes to a place. Alternate translation: "When it was almost time for Israel to die"

If now I have found favor in your eyes

Here "eyes" is a metonym for sight, and "sight" stands for thoughts or opinions. Alternate translation: "If I have found favor with you" or "If I have pleased you"

now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

found favor

This means that someone is approved of by someone else.

put your hand under my thigh

This act is a sign of making a serious promise. See how you translated this in [Genesis 24:2]

show me faithfulness and trustworthiness

The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "trustworthiness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "treat me in a faithful and trustworthy manner"

Please do not bury me in Egypt

The word "please" adds emphasis to this request.

Genesis 47:30

When I lie down with my fathers

This is a polite way of saying that he will die. Alternate translation: "When I die and join my family members who died before me"

Genesis 47:31

Swear to me

"Promise me" or "Make an oath to me"

swore to him

"promised him" or "made an oath to him"

---

48 [1]It came about after these things, that one said to Joseph, "Look, your father is sick." So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.[2]When Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph has arrived to see you," Israel gathered strength and sat up in bed.
[3]Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan. He blessed me[4]and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you. I will make of you an assembly of nations. I will give this land to your descendants as an everlasting possession.'
[5]Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you into Egypt, they are mine. Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine.[6]The offspring who are born after them will be yours; they will be listed under the names of their brothers in their inheritance.[7]But as for me, when I came from Paddan, to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan on the way, while there was still some distance to go to Ephrath. I buried her there on the way to Ephrath" (that is, Bethlehem).

[8]When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Whose are these?"[9]Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." Israel said, "Bring them to me, that I may bless them."[10]Now Israel's eyes were failing because of his age, so he could not see. So Joseph brought them near to him, and he kissed them and embraced them.
[11]Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, but God has even allowed me to see your children."[12]Joseph brought them out from between Israel's knees, and then he bowed with his face to the earth.[13]Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them close to him.

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[14]Israel reached out with his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head. He crossed his hands, for Manasseh was the firstborn.[15]Israel blessed Joseph, saying,
"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
the God who has cared for me to this day,
[16] the angel who has protected me from all harm,
may he bless these boys.
May my name be named in them,
and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac.
May they grow into a multitude on the earth."

[17]When Joseph saw his father place his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him. He took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.[18]Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father; for this is the firstborn. Put your right hand upon his head."
[19]His father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also will become a people, and he also will be great. Yet his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a multitude of nations."[20]Israel blessed them that day with these words,
"The people of Israel will pronounce blessings by your names saying,
'May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh'."
In this way, Israel put Ephraim before Manasseh.

[21]Israel said to Joseph, "See, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and will bring you back to the land of your fathers.[22]To you, as one who is above your brothers, I give to you the mountain slope that I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow."

Genesis 48 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 48:15-16, and in 48:20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessing

The blessing of Jacob is given to Joseph, and his sons Manasseh and Ephraim. It is probably distinct from inheriting the promises Yahweh gave to Abraham because Scripture talks about all of Israel's descendants inheriting those promises. (See: bless and inherit and promise)

Links:

Genesis 48:1 Notes

Genesis 48:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

one said to Joseph

"someone said to Joseph"

Look, your father

"Listen, your father." Here the word "look" is used to get Joseph's attention.

So he took

"So Joseph took"

Genesis 48:2

When Jacob was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When someone told Jacob"

your son Joseph has arrived to see you

"your son Joseph has come to you"

Israel gathered strength and sat up in bed

Here the author speaks of Israel struggling to to sit up in bed as if he were gathering "strength" as someone gathers actual things. Alternate translation: "Israel made a great effort to sit up in bed" or "Israel struggled as he sat up in bed"

Genesis 48:3

Luz

This is the name of a city. See how you translated the name of this city in [Genesis 28:19]

in the land of Canaan. He blessed me

This can be translated with the new sentence starting in a different place. Alternate translation: "in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me"

blessed

This refers to God pronouncing a formal blessing on someone.

Genesis 48:4

and said to me

This can be translated with the new sentence starting in a different place. Alternate translation: "And he said to me"

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said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful, and multiply you. I will make of you an assembly of nations. I will give this land to your descendants as an everlasting possession.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "said to me that he would make me fruitful and multiply me. And, he said that he would make me an assembly of nations and he would give this land to my descendants as an everlasting possession."
Behold
God used the word "behold" here to alert Jacob to pay attention to what he was about to tell him.
I will make you fruitful, and multiply you
The phrase "multiply you" explains how God would make Jacob "fruitful." Alternate translation: "I will give you very many descendants"
I will make of you an assembly of nations
Here "you" refers to Jacob, but it stands for Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "I will make your descendants into many nations"
an everlasting possession
"a permanent possession"
Genesis 48:5
Now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine
Ephraim and Manasseh each will receive a portion of land just like Joseph's brothers.
Genesis 48:6
they will be listed under the names of their brothers in their inheritance
Possible meanings are 1)the rest of Joseph's children would inherit land as part of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh or 2) Joseph will be given separate land from Ephraim and Manasseh and Joseph's other children will inherit that land. Alternate translation: "as for their inheritance, you will list them under the names of their brothers"
Genesis 48:7
Ephrath
This is another name for the town of Bethlehem. See how you translated the name of this city in Genesis 35:16.
Genesis 48:8
Whose are these?
"Whose sons are these?"
Genesis 48:9
bless
A father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children or grandchildren.
Genesis 48:10
Now Israel's eyes ... could not see
The word "Now" is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Israel.
he kissed them
"Israel kissed them"
Genesis 48:11
to see your face again
Here "face" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "to see you again"
Genesis 48:12
between Israel's knees
When Joseph placed his sons on Israel's lap or knees it was a sign that Israel was adopting them. This gave the children special inheritance rights from Jacob.
then he bowed with his face to the earth
Joseph bowed down to show honor to his father.
Genesis 48:13
Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand
Joseph places the boys so that Israel will put his right hand on Manasseh. Manasseh was the oldest brother and the right hand was the sign he would receive the greater blessing.
Genesis 48:14
his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head
Placing the right hand on Ephraim's head was the sign that he would receive the greater blessing.
Genesis 48:15
Israel blessed Joseph
Here "Joseph" also stands for Ephraim and Manasseh. Since Joseph is the father, he is the only one mentioned here.
The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked
Serving God is spoken of as if it were walking before God. Alternate translation: "The God who my grandfather Abraham and father Isaac served"
who has cared for me
God has taken care of Israel like a shepherd takes care of his sheep. Alternate translation: "who has cared for me like a shepherd cares for his animals"
Genesis 48:16
the angel
These words could refer to 1) the angel that God sent to protect Jacob or 2) God, who appeared in angel form to protect Jacob.
protected me
"delivered me"
May my name be named in them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac
Here "name" stands for the person. The phrase "my name be named in them" is an idiom that means a person is remembered because of another person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people remember Abraham, Isaac, and me because of Ephraim and Manasseh"
May they grow into a multitude on the earth
Here "they" refers to Ephraim and Manasseh, but it stands for their descendants. Alternate translation: "May they have many descendants who will live all over the earth"
Genesis 48:18
Put your right hand upon his head
The right hand was the sign of the greater blessing which the oldest son was supposed to receive.
Genesis 48:19
He also will become a people, and he also will be great
Here "He" refers to Manasseh, but it stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "Your older son will have many descendants, and they will become a great people"
Genesis 48:20

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that day with these words
"that day, saying"
The people of Israel will pronounce blessings by your names saying
"The people of Israel will speak your names when they are blessing others"
by your names saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "by your names. They will ask God to make others like Ephraim and like Manasseh"
like Ephraim and like Manasseh
Israel saying Ephraim's name first is another way he indicates that Ephraim will be greater than Manasseh.
Israel put Ephraim before Manasseh
Giving Ephraim the greater blessing and making him more important than Manasseh is spoken of as if Israel physically put Ephraim in front of Manasseh.
Genesis 48:21
will be with you ... bring you back ... your fathers
Here "you" and "your" are plural and refer to all the people of Israel.
will be with you
This is an idiom that means God will help and bless the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "God will help you" or "God will bless you"
will bring you back
Here "bring" can be translated as "take."
land of your fathers
"land of your ancestors"
Genesis 48:22
To you, as one who is above your brothers, I give to you the mountain slope
Possible meanings are 1) Joseph having more honor and authority than his brothers is spoken of as if he were physically above them. Alternate translation: "To you, who is greater than your brothers, I give the mountain slope" or 2) Jacob means he is giving more land to Joseph than he is giving to Joseph's brothers. Alternate translation: "To you, I give one more ridge than I give your brothers. I give to you the mountain slope"
To you
Here "you" is singular and refers to Joseph.
the mountain slope that I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow
Here "sword" and "bow" stands for fighting in battle. Alternate translation: "the portion of land I fought for and took from the Amorites"

49 [1]Then Jacob called for his sons, and said:
"Gather yourselves together,
that I may tell you what will happen to you in the future.
[2] Assemble yourselves and listen, you sons of Jacob.
Listen to Israel, your father.

[3] Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might,
and the beginning of my strength,
outstanding in dignity, and outstanding in power.

[4] Uncontrollable as rushing water,
you will not have the preeminence,
because you went up to your father's bed.
Then you defiled it; you went up to my couch.

[5] Simeon and Levi are brothers.
Weapons of violence are their swords.

[6] O my soul, do not come into their council;
O my glory, do not join in their meetings.
For in their anger they killed men.
It was for pleasure that they hamstrung oxen.

[7] May their anger be cursed, for it was fierce
and their fury, for it was severe.
I will divide them in Jacob
and scatter them in Israel.

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8 Judah, your brothers will praise you.
Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.
Your father's sons will bow down before you.

9 Judah is a lion's cub.
My son, you have gone up from your victims.
He stooped down, he crouched like a lion, like a lioness.
Who would dare to awaken him?

10 The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until Shiloh comes. The nations will obey him.

11 Binding his donkey to the vine,
and his donkey's colt to the choice vine,
he has washed his garments in wine,
and his robe in the blood of grapes.

12 His eyes will be as dark as wine,
and his teeth as white as milk.

13 Zebulun will live by the shore of the sea.
He will be a harbor for ships,
and his border will extend to Sidon.

14 Issachar is a strong donkey,
lying down between the sheepfolds.

15 He sees a good resting place
and the pleasant land.
He will bend his shoulder to the burden
and become a servant for forced labor.

16 Dan will judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan will be a snake beside the road,
a poisonous snake in the path
that bites the horse's heels,
so that his rider falls backward.

18 I wait for your salvation, Yahweh.

19 Gad—raiders will attack him,
but he will attack them at their heels.

20 Asher's food will be rich,
and he will provide royal delicacies.

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[21] Naphtali is a doe let loose;
he will have beautiful fawns.

[22] Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough near a spring,
whose branches climb over the wall.

[23] The archers will attack him bitterly
and shoot at him with hostility.

[24] But his bow will remain steady,
and his hands will be skillful
because of the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel.

[25] The God of your father will help you
and the Almighty God will bless you
with blessings of the sky above,
blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
and blessings of the breasts and womb.

[26] The blessings of your father are greater
than the blessings of the ancient mountains
or the desirable things of the ancient hills.
May they be on the head of Joseph,
even upon the crown of the head of the prince of his brothers.

[27] Benjamin is a hungry wolf.
In the morning he will devour the prey,
and in the evening he will divide the plunder."

[28]These are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them when he blessed them. Each one he blessed with an appropriate blessing.[29]Then he instructed them and said to them, "I am about to go to my people. Bury me with my forefathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,[30]in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is near Mamre in the land of Canaan, the field that Abraham bought for a burial place from Ephron the Hittite.
[31]There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.
[32]The field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the people of Heth."[33]When Jacob finished these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and went to his people.

Genesis 49 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 49:1-27.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecies

These statements made by Jacob to his sons are probably prophecies. These prophecies are concerned with the descendants of each of Jacob's sons who would become the twelve tribes of Israel. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The scepter will not depart from Judah"

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This prophecy indicates Judah will be the ruling tribe of Israel. The future kings of Israel all come from the tribe of Judah.
"I buried Leah"
Since Moses wrote the book of Genesis, this is an editorial comment he makes in the text as the narrator.

Links:

Genesis 49:1 Notes

Genesis 49:1
General Information:
This begins Jacob's final blessings to his sons. This continues through Genesis 49:27. Jacob's blessings are written in poetic form.
Genesis 49:2
Assemble yourselves and listen, you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father
Both sentences say the same thing for emphasis. Alternate translation: "Come and listen carefully to your father"
you sons of Jacob. Listen to Israel, your father
Jacob is referring to himself in the third person. It can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "my sons. Listen to me, your father"
Genesis 49:3
my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength
The phrases "my firstborn, my might" and "the beginning of my strength" mean the same thing. The words "might" and "strength" stand for Jacob's ability to produce children. The words "firstborn" and "beginning" mean that Reuben is his first child. Alternate translation: "my first child after I became a man"
outstanding in dignity, and outstanding in power
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "You are first in honor and power" or "You surpass everyone else in honor and power"
Genesis 49:4
Uncontrollable as rushing water
Jacob compares Reuben to water in a strong current to emphasize that he cannot control his anger and he is not stable.
you will not have the preeminence
"you shall not be first among your brothers"
because you went up to your father's bed. Then you defiled it; you went up to my couch
Here "bed" and "couch" stand for Jacob's concubine, Bilhah. Jacob is referring to when Reuben slept with Bilhah
you went up to your father's bed ... you went up to my couch
Both statements mean the same thing.
Genesis 49:5
Simeon and Levi are brothers
This does not just mean they are brothers by birth. Jacob is emphasizing that they worked together to kill the people of Shechem.
Weapons of violence are their swords
"They use their swords to hurt and to kill people"
Genesis 49:6
O my soul ... my glory
Jacob uses the words "soul" and "glory" to refer to himself and is saying that other people, and perhaps God also, honor him so much that he does not wish to join with those who make plans to do evil.
they hamstrung oxen
This refers to Simeon and Levi crippling oxen just for fun.
hamstrung
This refers to cutting the sinews of an animal's leg so that it cannot walk.
Genesis 49:7
May their anger be cursed, for it was fierce—and their fury, for it was severe
God cursing Simeon and Levi is spoken of as if God were cursing their anger and fury. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord says, 'I will curse them because of their fierce anger and their cruel fury" or "I, the Lord, will curse them because of their fierce anger and their cruel fury"
May their anger be cursed
In prophecy, the prophet will often speak the words of God as if God himself were speaking. This emphasizes how closely united the prophet and God are.
their fury, for it was severe
The words "I will curse" are understood. Alternate translation: "I will curse their fury, for it was cruel"
I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel
The word "I" refers to God. The word "them" refers to Simeon and Levi but they are a metonym standing for their descendants. The words "Jacob" and "Israel" are a metonym standing for all people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I will divide their descendants and scatter them among all the people of Israel"
Genesis 49:8
your brothers will praise you ... Your father's sons will bow down before you
These two statements mean the same thing.
will praise you. Your hand
The second sentence states the reason for the first sentence. This can be made clear with "for" or "because." Alternate translation: "will praise you. For your hand" or "will praise you because your hand"
Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies
This is a way of saying "You will conquer your enemies."
bow down
This means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone.
Genesis 49:9
Judah is a lion's cub
Jacob speaks about Judah as if he were a lion's cub. Jacob is emphasizing Judah's strength. Alternate translation: "Judah is like a young lion"
My son, you have gone up from your victims
"You, my son, have come back from eating your prey"
like a lioness
Jacob also compares Judah to a female lion. The lioness is the primary hunter and protector of her cubs.

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Who would dare to awaken him?
Jacob uses a question to emphasize how terrifying Judah is to other people. Alternate translation: "No one wants to wake him up."
Genesis 49:10
The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet
The "scepter" and the "staff" are long decorated sticks that kings carried. Here they are metonymies that stand for the power to rule. And, "Judah" stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "The power to rule will always be with the descendants of Judah"
until Shiloh comes. The nations will obey him
Possible meanings are 1) "Shiloh" means "tribute." Alternate translation: "until the nations obey him and bring him tribute" or 2) "Shiloh" refers to the city of Shiloh. Alternate translation: "until the ruler comes to Shiloh. Then the nations will obey him" Many people consider this a prophecy about the Messiah, who is a descendant of King David. David is a descendant of Judah.
The nations will obey him
Here "nations" refer to the people. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations will obey him"
Genesis 49:11
Binding his donkey ... to the choice vine
Both statements mean the same thing. It is implied that the vines are so full of grapes that the master does not mind that his donkey eats some of them.
his ... he
Possible meanings for all occurrences of "his" or "he" are 1) they refer to Judah's descendants. Alternate translation: "their ... they" or 2) they refer to the ruler in Genesis 49:10, which may refer to the Messiah.
he has washed ... in the blood of grapes
Both statements mean the same thing. It implies that there are so many grapes that they can wash their clothes in the juice.
he has washed
Often in prophecy events that will happen in the future are described as something that has already happened in the past. This emphasizes that this event will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "they will wash" or "he will wash"
the blood of grapes
This speaks about the grape juice as if it were blood. This emphasizes how red the juice is.
Genesis 49:12
His eyes will be as dark as wine
This refers to the color of a person's eyes to the red color of wine. Possible meanings are 1) dark eyes imply healthy eyes or 2) people eyes will be red from drinking too much of wine.
his teeth as white as milk
This compare the color of the person's teeth to the white color of milk. This implies that there will be so many healthy cows they will have much milk to drink.
Genesis 49:13
Zebulun will live
This refers to the descendants of Zebulun. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Zebulun will live"
He will be a harbor
Here "He" stands for sea towns that the people of Zebulun will inhabit or build. These cities will provide shelter for ships.
harbor
a part of the sea that is next to land and is a safe place for ships
Genesis 49:14
Issachar is a strong donkey
Jacob speaks about Issachar and his descendants as if they are a donkey. This emphasizes that they will work very hard. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Issachar will be like a strong donkey"
Issachar is
Often in prophecy events that will happen in the future are described as something that is already happening. This emphasizes that the event will certainly happen. It can be stated in the future tense. Alternate translation: "Issachar will be" or "The descendants of Issachar will be"
lying down between the sheepfolds
Possible meanings are 1) "lying down between the packs they were carrying" or 2) "lying down between two sheep pens." Either way, Jacob speaks about Issachar's descendants as if they are donkeys that have worked hard and are lying down to rest.
Genesis 49:15
He sees ... He will
These words refer to the descendants of Issachar
a good resting place and the pleasant land
"a resting place that is good and that the land is pleasant"
He will bend his shoulder to the burden
The phrase "bend his shoulder to the burden" is a way of saying "work very hard to carry the load"
become a servant for forced labor
"will work for others as slaves"
Genesis 49:16
Dan will judge his people
Here "Dan" stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Dan will judge their people"
his people
Possible meanings for "his people" are 1) "the people of Dan" or 2) "the people of Israel"
Genesis 49:17
Dan will be a snake beside the road
Jacob speaks about Dan and his descendants as if they were snakes. Though a snake is small, it can bring down a rider off his horse. So Dan, though a small tribe, is very dangerous to its enemies. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Dan will be like a snake beside the road"
Genesis 49:18
I wait for your salvation, Yahweh
The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated as "save." Alternate translation: "I wait for you, Yahweh, to save me"
I wait
The word "I" refers to Jacob.
Genesis 49:19
Gad ... attack him, but he
Here "Gad" stands for his descendants. Alternate

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translation: "The descendants of Gad ... attack them, but they"

at their heels

Here "heels" stands for the raiders who are running away from the descendants of Gad.

Genesis 49:20

Asher's food ... and he

Here "Asher" stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "Asher's descendants' food ... and they"

food will be rich

Here "rich" is a way of saying "delicious."

Genesis 49:21

Naphtali is ... he will

Here "Naphtali" stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Naphtali are ... they will"

Naphtali is a doe let loose

Jacob speaks about the descendants of Naphtali as if they were a female deer that is free to run. This may emphasize that they will be swift messengers. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Naphtali will be like deer set free"

have beautiful fawns

A "fawn" is a baby deer. The meaning of the Hebrew word is unclear. Some versions translate it as "have beautiful words" or "speak beautiful things"

Genesis 49:22

Joseph is a fruitful bough

Here "Joseph" is a metonym that stands for his descendants. Jacob speaks about them as if they were a tree branch that produces a lot of fruit. This emphasizes that they will greatly increase in number. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Joseph are a fruitful bough"

bough

a main branch of a tree

whose branches climb over the wall

Branches that grow and extend over a wall are spoken of as if they were climbing.

Genesis 49:24

General Information:

Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants.

his bow will remain steady

The person holding the bow steady is spoken of as if the bow itself will remain steady. It is implied he is holding it steady as he aims at his enemy. Alternate translation: "he will hold his bow steady as he aims at his enemy"

his bow ... his hands

Here "his" refers to Joseph who stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "their bow ... their hands"

his hands will be skillful

Here the whole person is represented by the "hands" since they are used to hold the bow. Alternate translation: "his arms will remain strong as he aims his bow"

the hands of the Mighty One

The "hands" are expressing the power of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the power of the Mighty One"

because of the name of the Shepherd

Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of the Shepherd"

the Shepherd

Jacob speak of Yahweh as if he were a "Shepherd." This emphasizes that Yahweh guides and protects his people.

the Rock

Jacob speaks of Yahweh as if he were a "Rock" that people can climb upon to find safety from enemies. This emphasizes that Yahweh protects his people.

Genesis 49:25

General Information:

Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants (Genesis 49:22-23).

help you ... bless you

Here "you" refers to Joseph who stands for his descendants. Alternate translation: "help your descendants ... bless them"

blessings of the sky

Here "sky" stands for the rain that helps the crops to grow.

blessings of the deep that lies beneath

Here "deep" stands for the water underneath the ground that supplies rivers and wells.

blessings of the breasts and womb

Here "breasts and womb" stand for the ability for a mother to have children and feed them milk.

Genesis 49:26

General Information:

Jacob continues to bless Joseph and his descendants.

the ancient mountains

The meaning of the original language is not certain. Some Bible translations have "my ancestors" instead of "ancient mountains."

May they be on the head of Joseph

Here "they" refers to the blessings of his father.

upon the crown of the head of the prince of his brothers

Jacob desires for these blessings to be passed on to even the most important of his descendants. Alternate translation: "on the head of the most important of Joseph's descendants"

prince of his brothers

"most important of his brothers"

Genesis 49:27

Benjamin is a hungry wolf

Here "Benjamin" is a metonym that stands for his descendants. Jacob speaks about Benjamin's descendants as if they were a hungry wolf. This emphasizes that they will be fierce warriors. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Benjamin will be like hungry wolves"

Genesis 49:28

These are the twelve tribes of Israel

"These" refers to the sons Jacob mentioned in 49:1-27. Each son became the leader of his own tribe.

when he blessed them

Here the word "blessed" refers to the speaking of formal blessings.

Each one he blessed with an appropriate blessing

"He gave each son a fitting blessing"

Genesis 49:29

he instructed them

"he commanded them"

I am about to go to my people

This is a polite way of saying he is about to die. Alternate translation: "I am about to die"

go to my people

Jacob is referring to where his inner man will go when he

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dies. He expects to join Abraham and Isaac in the afterlife.

Ephron the Hittite

This is the name of a man. "Hittite" means "descendent of Heth." See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:8]

Genesis 49:30

Machpelah

Machpelah was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:9]

Mamre

This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [Genesis 13:18]

Genesis 49:31

General Information:

Jacob continues speaking to his sons.

Genesis 49:32

in it were purchased

The purchase can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "in it were purchased by Abraham"

from the people of Heth

"from the Hittites"

Genesis 49:33

finished these instructions to his sons

"finished instructing his sons" or "finished commanding his sons"

he pulled his feet into the bed

Jacob was sitting on the bed. Now, Jacob turns and puts his feet in the bed so he can lie down.

breathed his last

This is a polite way of saying a person died.

went to his people

After Jacob died, his inner man went to the same place as his relatives who died before him.

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50 [1]Then Joseph was so distressed that he collapsed on the face of his father, and he wept over him, and he kissed him.
[2]Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.[3]They took forty days, for that was the full time for embalming. The Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

[4]When the days of weeping were over, Joseph spoke to the house of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak to Pharaoh, saying,[5]'My father made me swear, saying, "See, I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself in the land of Canaan. There you will bury me." Now let me go up and bury my father, and then I will return.'"[6]Pharaoh answered, "Go and bury your father, as he made you swear."
[7]Joseph went up to bury his father. All the servants of Pharaoh went with him—the elders of his household, all the senior officials of the land of Egypt,[8]with all Joseph's household and his brothers, and his father's household. But their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen.[9]Chariots and horsemen also went with him. It was a very large group of people.
[10]When they came to the threshing floor of Atad on the other side of the Jordan, they mourned with very great and grievous sorrow. There Joseph made a seven-day mourning for his father.[11]When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians." That is why the name of the place was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.
[12]So his sons did for Jacob just as he had instructed them.[13]His sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre. Abraham had bought the cave with the field for a burial place. He had bought it from Ephron the Hittite.[14]After he had buried his father, Joseph returned into Egypt, he, along with his brothers, and all who had accompanied him to bury his father.

[15]When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph continues to be angry against us and wants to repay us in full for all the evil we did to him?"[16]So they commanded the presence of Joseph, saying, "Your father gave instructions before he died, saying,[17]'Tell Joseph this, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin when they did evil to you."' Now please forgive the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him.
[18]His brothers also went and lay facedown before him. They said, "See, we are your servants."[19]But Joseph answered them, "Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God?[20]As for you, you meant to harm me, but God meant it for good, to preserve the lives of many people, as you see today.[21]So now do not be afraid. I will provide for you and your little children." He comforted them in this way and spoke kindly to their hearts.

[22]Joseph lived in Egypt, together with his father's family. He lived one hundred ten years.[23]Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. He also saw the children of Makir son of Manasseh, who were placed on the knees of Joseph.
[24]Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die; but God will surely come to you and lead you up out of this land to the land which he swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."[25]Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He said, "God will surely come to you. At that time you must carry up my bones from here."[26]So Joseph died, 110 years old. They embalmed him and he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

Genesis 50 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Embalming
Embalming was practiced in Egypt on very important people when they died. They removed the liquids from the body then wrapped it in an attempt to preserve the body from decay.
Joseph's character
Joseph's character was so upright that Pharaoh's officials went with him to Canaan to bury Jacob. This was a very large funeral procession. He also learned lessons from earlier in his life and unified his family. (See: righteous)

Links:

Genesis 50:1 Notes

Genesis 50:1
that he collapsed on the face of his father
The term "he collapsed" is an idiom for being overcome. Alternate translation: "that he fell on his father in grief"
Genesis 50:2
his servants the physicians
"his servants who took care of dead bodies"
to embalm his father
To "embalm" is a special way of preserving a dead body before it is buried. Alternate translation: "to prepare his father's body for burial"
Genesis 50:3
They took forty days
"They took 40 days"
seventy days
"70 days"
Genesis 50:4
Connecting Statement:
A three-level quotation is introduced with the words "Joseph spoke ... saying." The second level begins with the words "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak to Pharaoh, saying."
days of weeping
"days of mourning him" or "days of weeping for him"
Joseph spoke to the house of Pharaoh
Here "house of Pharaoh" stands for the officials that make up Pharaoh's royal court. Alternate translation: "Joseph spoke to Pharaoh's officials"
If now I have found favor in your eyes
The phrase "find favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "If I have found favor with you" or "If you are pleased with me"
Genesis 50:5
Connecting Statement:
The three-level quotation that began with the words "Joseph spoke ... saying" in verse 4 continues. The second level of that quotation, which began with the words "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak to Pharaoh, saying" in verse 4 continues.
My father made me swear, saying, "See, I am about to die. Bury me in my tomb that I dug for myself in the land of Canaan. There you will bury me." Now let me go up ... I will return.
This is the second level of the three-level quotation that begins with the words "If now I have" in verse 4. It contains a quote within it. This embedded quote can be translated as an indirect quote. "My father made me swear, saying that he was about to die and that I was to bury him in his tomb that he dug for himself in the land of Canaan. I was to bury him there. Now let me go up ... I will return." The entire second-level quotation can also be translated as an indirect quote. "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak to Pharaoh and tell him that my father made me swear, saying that he was about to die and that I was to bury him in his tomb that he dug for himself in the land of Canaan. I was to bury him there. Now let me go up ... I will return."
See, I am about to die ... you will bury me
This is the third level of the three-level quotation that begins with the words "If now I have" in verse 4.
See, I am about to die
"See, I am dying"
let me go up
It was common to use the phrase "go up" when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
Genesis 50:6
Pharaoh answered
It is implied that the members of the court spoke to Pharaoh, and now Pharaoh is replying to Joseph.
as he made you swear
"as you swore to him"
Genesis 50:7
Joseph went up
It was common to use the phrase "went up" when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan.
All the servants ... the elders ... the senior officials
All of Pharaoh's most important leaders attended the burial procession.
servants of Pharaoh
These were probably government officials, not household servants.
the elders of his household
Here "household" refers to Pharaoh's royal court.
Genesis 50:8
with all Joseph's household and his brothers, and his father's household
This can be translated as a new sentence: "Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household also went with him"
Genesis 50:9
Chariots
Here this stands for the men riding in the chariots.
It was a very large group of people
"It was a very large gathering"
Genesis 50:10
When they came
The word "they" refers to the participants in the burial procession.
floor of Atad
Possible meanings are 1) the word "Atad" means "thorn" and it may refer to a place where large amounts of thorns

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grew, or 2) it may be the name of the person who owns the threshing floor.

they mourned with very great and grievous sorrow

"they were extremely sad and they mourned very much"

a seven-day

"a 7-day"

Genesis 50:11

at the threshing floor of Atad

Possible meanings are 1) "on the threshing floor that belonged to a man named Atad" or "in the threshing floor at a place called Atad"

This is a very sad occasion for the Egyptians

"The mourning of the Egyptians is very great"

Abel Mizraim

The translator can add a footnote that says: "The name Abel Mizraim means "the mourning of Egypt.'"

Genesis 50:12

So his sons

"So Jacob's sons"

just as he had instructed them

"just as he had directed them"

Genesis 50:13

His sons carried him

"His sons took his body"

Machpelah

Machpela was the name of an area or region. See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:9]

Mamre

This was another name for the city of Hebron. It may have been named after Mamre, the friend of Abraham who lived there. See how you translated this in [Genesis 13:18]

Ephron the Hittite

This is the name of a man. "Hittite" means "descendent of Heth." See how you translated this in [Genesis 23:8]

Genesis 50:14

Joseph returned into Egypt

"Joseph returned to Egypt"

all who had accompanied him

"all who had come with him"

Genesis 50:15

What if Joseph continues to be angry against us

Here anger is spoken of as if it was something physical that Joseph could hold in his hands. Alternate translation: "What if Joseph is actually still angry with us"

wants to repay us in full for all the evil we did to him

Avenging oneself against someone who harmed him is spoken of as if the person were paying they other person what they are owed. Alternate translation: "wants revenge for the evil thing we did to him"

Genesis 50:16

Connecting Statement:

A three-level quotation begins with the words "Your father gave."

Your father gave instructions before he died, saying

Jacob was the father of all the brothers. Here they say "your father" to emphasize that Joseph needs to pay attention to what his father said. Alternate translation: "Before our father died he said"

Genesis 50:17

Connecting Statement:

The three-level quotation that begins with the words "Your father gave" in verse 16 ends here.

Tell Joseph this, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin when they did evil to you."

The three-level quotation that begins with the words "Your father gave" in verse 16 ends here. This is the second-level quotation, and it contains a third-level quotation that can be stated as an indirect quotation. "Tell Joseph to please forgive your transgression and your sin when you did evil to him." Both the second-level and third-level quotations can be translated as indirect quotations. "Your father instructed us before he died to tell you to please forgive our transgression and our sin when we did evil to you."

and their sin when they did evil to you

"for the wicked things they did to you"

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

please forgive the servants of the God of your father

The brothers are referring to themselves as "the servants of the God of your father." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "please forgive us, the servants of the God of our father"

Joseph wept when they spoke to him

"Joseph wept when he heard this message"

Genesis 50:18

lay facedown before him

They lay down with their faces toward the ground. This is a sign of humility and respect for Joseph.

Genesis 50:19

Am I in the place of God?

Joseph uses a question to comfort his brothers. Alternate translation: "I am not in the place of God." or "I am not God."

Genesis 50:20

you meant to harm me

"you intended to do evil against me"

God meant it for good

"God intended it for good"

Genesis 50:21

So now do not be afraid

"So do not fear me"

I will provide for you and your little children

"I will always make sure you and your children have enough to eat"

He comforted them in this way and spoke kindly to their hearts

Here "hearts" refers to the brothers. Alternate translation: "He comforted them by speaking kindly to them"

Genesis 50:22

one hundred ten years

"110 years"

Genesis 50:23

Ephraim's children to the third generation

"Ephraim's children and grandchildren"

Makir

This is the name of Joseph's grandson.

who were placed on the knees of Joseph

This expression means that Joseph adopted these children

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of Machir as his own children. This means they would have special inheritance rights from Joseph.

Genesis 50:24

surely come to you

In [Genesis 50:24/26]

lead you up out of this land to the land

It was common to use the word "up" when speaking of traveling from Egypt to Canaan. Alternate translation: "bring you out of this land and take you to the land"

Genesis 50:26

110 years

"one hundred and ten years"

They embalmed him

To "embalm" is a special way of preserving a dead body before it is buried. See how you translated "embalmed" in Genesis 50:1.

he was placed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they placed him"

in a coffin

"in a chest" or "in a case." This is a box a dead person is placed in.

Introduction to Exodus

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Exodus

Israel in Egypt; preparing to depart from slavery (1–12) First genealogy (1:1–6) Israel as slaves in Egypt (1:7–22) Moses's history to the time of the Exodus (2:1–4:26) Israel suffers in Egypt (4:27–6:13) Second genealogy (6:14–27) Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh (6:28–7:25) The plagues (8:1–11:10)

Instructions for celebrating the Passover (12:1–30) From Egypt to Mount Sinai (12:31–18:27) The Passover; preparing to leave Egypt; leaving Egypt (12:31–50, 13:1–22) Journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai (14:1–18:27)

Mount Sinai and the Law

(19-40) Preparing for the covenant (19:1–25) The Ten Commandments (20:1–17) The covenant described (20:18–23:33) The people agree to the covenant; Moses returns to Mount Sinai (24:1–18) Design of the tabernacle and its furnishings; what was required of those who serve in it; tabernacle functions (25:1–31:18) The golden calf; Moses prays for the people (32:1–33:22) The covenant described again (34:1–35) Making of the ark and its furnishings (35:1–38:31) and priestly garments (39:1–43, 40:1–33) The cloud (40:34–38)

What is the Book of Exodus about?

Exodus continues the story of the previous book, Genesis. The first half of Exodus is about how Yahweh made Abraham's descendants into a nation. This nation, which would be called "Israel," was meant to belong to Yahweh and worship him. The second half of Exodus describes how God gave the Israelites his law through Moses. The law of Moses told the Israelites how to obey and worship Yahweh properly.

The Book of Exodus tells how the Israelites were to build the tabernacle. The tabernacle was a tent where Yahweh would be among his people. The Israelites worshiped and sacrificed animals to Yahweh at the tabernacle. (See: lawofmoses and tabernacle)

How should the title of this book be translated?

"Exodus" means "exit" or "departure." Translators may translate this title in a way that can communicate its subject clearly, for example, "About the Israelites Leaving Egypt" or "How the Israelites Left the Land of Egypt."

Who wrote the Book of Exodus?

The writers of both the Old and New Testaments present Moses as being very involved with writing the book of Exodus. Since ancient times, both Jews and Christians have thought that Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Why did Moses write so much about God delivering or rescuing the people of Israel?

Moses wrote much about God rescuing his people from the Egyptians to show that Yahweh is very powerful. Egypt was the most powerful nation at that time. And Yahweh was still able to free the Israelites from the Egyptians. Also, by rescuing the Israelites, Yahweh showed that he had chosen them as his people and they should worship him.

How does the Book of Exodus show the fulfillment of the promises given to Abraham?

The Book of Exodus shows God beginning to fulfill his promise to Abraham. In Genesis, God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants and that they would become a large nation. When God rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians, he took them to Mount Sinai. There he made a covenant with them, and they became the nation that belonged to Yahweh.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the Jewish Passover?

The Jewish Passover was a religious festival. Yahweh commanded the Israelites to celebrate it every year. Passover was a

time to remember how God rescued them from the Egyptians. The first Passover meal was eaten in the evening just before they left Egypt.

What was the law of Moses to the people of Israel?

The law of Moses instructed the people of Israel what Yahweh required them to do as his people. In the law, God told the people how they should live so that they honor him. He also instructed them about their need to offer animal sacrifices. God required these sacrifices so that he could forgive their sins and continue living among them. The law also described the duties of the priests and told how to build the tabernacle.

What did it mean that Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:6 ULB)?

Israel was a holy nation because Yahweh separated them from all other nations to belong to him. They were to honor and worship him only. This made them different than all the other nations of the world. These other nations worshiped many false gods.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why are the details of the construction of the tabernacle in Exodus 25–32 repeated in Exodus 35–40?

In Exodus 25-32, God describes exactly how the tabernacle was to be built. The details were repeated in Exodus 35-40. This showed that the people were to be careful to do exactly as God commanded.

Are the events in the order that they actually happened?

Most but not all of the events in the Book of Exodus are told in the order that they actually happened. Translators may need to make it clear when the events are in an unusual order.

What does it mean that God "lived" among his people?

The Book of Exodus presents God as living in the tabernacle among the nation of Israel. God is everywhere, but he lived among the Israelites in a special way. God dwelled with Israelites because they belonged to him. He promised to lead them and bless them. In return, the people were to worship him and honor him.

Exodus

1 [1]These are the names of the sons of Israel who came into Egypt with Jacob, each with his household:[2]Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,[3]Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,[4]Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.[5]All the people who were descendants of Jacob were seventy in number. Joseph was already in Egypt.
[6]Then Joseph, all his brothers, and all that generation died.[7]But the people of Israel were fruitful, increased in numbers, became great, and became very, very mighty; the land was filled with them.

[8]Now then a new king arose over Egypt, one who did not know about Joseph.[9]He said to his people, "Look, the people of Israel are more numerous and stronger than we are.[10]Come, let us deal with them wisely, otherwise they will continue to grow in numbers, and if war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us, and leave the land."
[11]So they put taskmasters over them to oppress them with hard labor. The Israelites built store cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Rameses.[12]But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the Israelites increased in numbers and spread. So the Egyptians began to dread the people of Israel.
[13]The Egyptians severely forced the people of Israel to serve.[14]They made their lives bitter with hard service with mortar and brick, and with all kinds of work in the fields. All their required work was severe.

[15]Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives; the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the other Puah.[16]He said, "When you assist the Hebrew women on the birthstool, observe when they give birth. If it is a son, then you must kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she may live."[17]But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt ordered them; instead, they let the baby boys live.
[18]The king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the baby boys live?"[19]The midwives answered Pharaoh, "The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. They are vigorous and have finished giving birth before a midwife comes to them."
[20]God protected these midwives. The people increased in numbers and became very mighty.[21]Because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.[22]Pharaoh ordered all his people, "You must throw every son that is born into the river, but every daughter you will let live."

Exodus 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is intended to form a smooth transition with the last chapter of the book of Genesis.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Israel's growth

Many years had passed since the famine that caused the Israelites to go to Egypt, and the number of Israelites had grown greatly. This was in fulfillment of the covenant God made with Abraham. It also caused the Egyptians great concern that there would be more Israelites than Egyptians because they would be unable to defend themselves against such a large number of people. Pharaoh also tried to kill all of the male babies so they would not become soldiers who would fight against him. (See: fulfill and covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"All of the descendants of Jacob were seventy in number"

This number included both Jacob's children and grandchildren. It may cause confusion, but it is important to remember Jacob only had 12 sons.

Links:

Exodus 1:1 Notes Exodus intro

Exodus 1:1

household

This refers to all the people who live in a house together, usually a large family with servants.

Exodus 1:5

seventy in number

"70 in number"

Joseph was already in Egypt

"Joseph lived in Egypt before his brothers"

Exodus 1:6

all his brothers

This includes 10 older brothers and 1 younger brother.

Exodus 1:7

General Information:

The author here emphasizes how God was blessing the Israelites by saying five different ways that there very many of them.

Connecting Statement:

The word "but" that begins this verse indicates that the life and growth that this verse speaks of is good, in contrast to the death and sadness in the previous verse.

were fruitful

The birth of children to the Israelites is spoken of as if they were plants that were producing fruit. Alternate translation: "had many children" or "gave birth to many children"

became very, very mighty

They were mighty because there were so many of them.

very, very mighty

The writer is saying that the people were more than just "mighty" and even more than just "very mighty." Your language may have another way of expressing an idea stronger than "very mighty."

the land was filled with them

This hyperbole emphasizes how many people there were and should probably be left as a hyperbole. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they filled the land" or "the land was full of them"

with them

The word "them" refers to the Israelites.

Exodus 1:8

arose over Egypt

Here "Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "began to rule over the people of Egypt"

Exodus 1:9

He said to his people

"The king said to his people"

his people

These were the people who lived in Egypt, the Egyptians.

Exodus 1:10

let us

The word "us" is inclusive and refers to the king and his people, the Egyptians.

war breaks out

Here war is spoken of as a person that is able to act.

leave the land

"leave Egypt"

Exodus 1:11

taskmasters

Egyptians whose job was to force the Israelites to do hard work

to oppress them with hard labor

"to force the Israelites to do hard work for the Egyptians"

store cities

These were places where the leaders put food and other important things to keep them safe.

Exodus 1:12

to dread

"to abhor and fear"

Exodus 1:13

severely forced the people of Israel to serve

"harshly forced the people of Israel to work"

Exodus 1:14

made their lives bitter

The difficult lives of the Israelites are spoken of as if they were bitter food that was difficult to eat.

mortar

This was a wet glue or mud put between bricks or stones that held them together when it dried.

All their required work was severe

"The Egyptians made them work very hard" or "The Egyptians forced them to work very hard"

Exodus 1:15

king of Egypt

The king of Egypt is called Pharaoh.

midwives

These were women who helped a woman give birth to a baby.

Shiphrah ... Puah

These are Hebrew women's names.

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Exodus 1:16

on the birthstool

Women sat on this short stool as they gave birth. Therefore, it is associated with birth. Alternate translation: "as they give birth"

Exodus 1:18

midwives

These were women who helped a woman give birth to a baby. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:16.

Why have you done this, and let the baby boys live?

Pharaoh asked this question to rebuke the midwives for allowing the male children to live. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have disobeyed my order by not killing the male babies!"

Exodus 1:19

The Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women

The midwives answered wisely to appease Pharaoh's anger.

Exodus 1:20

God protected these midwives

God kept Pharaoh from killing these midwives.

midwives

These were women who helped a woman give birth to a baby. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:16.

The people increased in numbers

"The Israelites increased in numbers"

became very mighty

They were mighty because there were so many of them. See how you translated similar words in Exodus 1:7.

Exodus 1:21

feared God

"revered God" or "had reverence for God"

he gave them families

"the enabled them to have children"

Exodus 1:22

You must throw every son ... into the river

This order was given in order to drown the male children. The full meaning of this may be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You must ... into the river so they will drown"

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2 [1]Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a woman of Levi.[2]The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a healthy boy, she hid him for three months.
[3]But when she could no longer hide him, she took a papyrus basket and sealed it with bitumen and pitch. Then she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds in the water along the side of the river.[4]His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.
[5]Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the river while her attendants walked along by the riverside. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her attendant to get it.[6]When she opened it, she saw the child. Behold, the baby was crying. She had compassion on him and said, "This is certainly one of the Hebrews' children."
[7]Then the baby's sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go and find you a Hebrew woman to nurse the child for you?"[8]Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the young girl went and got the child's mother.
[9]Pharaoh's daughter said to the baby's mother, "Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay you wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him.[10]When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses and said, "Because I drew him from the water."

[11]When Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and observed their hard labors. He saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his own people.[12]He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no one there, he killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand.
[13]He went out the next day, and, behold, two Hebrew men were fighting. He said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why are you hitting your companion?"[14]But the man said, "Who made you a leader and judge over us? Are you planning to kill me as you killed that Egyptian?" Then Moses became afraid and said, "What I did has certainly become known to others."
[15]Now when Pharaoh heard about it, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian. There he sat down by a well.
[16]Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came, drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.[17]The shepherds came and tried to drive them away, but Moses went and helped them. Then he watered their flock.
[18]When the girls went to Reuel their father, he said, "Why are you home so early today?"[19]They said, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock."[20]He said to his daughters, "So where is he? Why did you leave the man? Call him so he can eat a meal with us."
[21]Moses agreed to stay with the man, who also gave him his daughter Zipporah in marriage.[22]She bore a son, and Moses called his name Gershom; he said, "I have been a resident in a foreign land."

[23]A long time later, the king of Egypt died. The people of Israel groaned because of the slave labor. They cried out for help, and their pleas went up to God because of their bondage.[24]When God heard their groaning, God called to mind his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.[25]God saw the people of Israel, and he understood their situation.

Exodus 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Moses's heritage

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In the first part of this chapter, Pharaoh's daughter recognizes Moses as being a Hebrew, but in the last part of this chapter, the Midianites believe him to be an Egyptian.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Ironic situations

While Pharaoh tried to diminish the power of the Israelites by killing all of their baby boys, Yahweh used Pharaoh's own daughter to save Moses. Moses was the one who would ultimately be used by Yahweh to deliver Israel.

Links:

Exodus 2:1 Notes

Exodus 2:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main event. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the narrative. If you have a way of doing this in your language, consider using it here.

Exodus 2:3

papyrus basket

This is a basket made from a tall grass that grows by the Nile River in Egypt.

sealed it with bitumen and pitch

You could explicitly state that this was to keep out water. Alternate translation: "spread tar on it to keep water from getting into it"

sealed

Here "sealed" means that she applied a waterproof coating.

bitumen

This is a sticky black paste made from petroleum. It can be used to keep out water. Alternate translation: "tar"

pitch

This is a sticky brown or black paste that can be made from tree sap or from petroleum. Therefore, "pitch" would include not only "bitumen" but also plant-based resins. It too can be used to keep out water. Alternate translation: "tar" or "resin"

reeds

These "reeds" were a type of tall grass that grew in flat, wet areas.

Exodus 2:4

at a distance

This means she stood far enough away so that she would not be noticed, but close enough to see the basket.

Exodus 2:5

her attendants

the young women whose job was to be with her and make sure nothing bad happened to her

Exodus 2:6

Behold

The word "behold" signals the surprising information that follows.

Exodus 2:7

nurse

feed with milk from the breast

Exodus 2:10

she brought him

"the Hebrew woman brought him"

he became her son

"he became the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter"

Because I drew him from the water

Translators may add a footnote that says "The name Moses sounds like the Hebrew word that means 'pull.'"

drew him

"pulled him"

Exodus 2:11

striking a Hebrew

"hitting a Hebrew" or "beating a Hebrew"

Exodus 2:12

He looked this way and that way

These two opposite directions have the combined meaning of "everywhere." Alternate translation: "He looked all around"

Exodus 2:13

He went out

"Moses went out"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that Moses was surprised by what he saw. You can use a word in your language that will give this meaning.

the one who was in the wrong

This was a customary way of saying "the one who started the fight." Alternate translation: "the one who was guilty of starting the fight"

Exodus 2:14

Who made you a leader and judge over us?

The man used this question to rebuke Moses for intervening in the fight. Alternate translation: "You are not our leader and have no right to judge us!"

Are you planning to kill me as you killed that Egyptian?

The man used a question here to be sarcastic. Alternate translation: "We know that you killed an Egyptian yesterday. You had better not kill me!"

Exodus 2:15

Now when Pharaoh heard about it

The word "now" is used here to mark a break in the event. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the incident.

Exodus 2:16

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters

The word "now" is used here to mark a break in the event. Here the author tells about new people in the narrative.

drew water

This means that they brought up water from a well.

troughs

a long, narrow, open container for animals to eat or drink out of

Exodus 2:17

drive them away

"chase them away"

helped them

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"rescued them"
Exodus 2:20
Why did you leave the man?
This question is a mild rebuke to the daughters for not inviting Moses into their home according to the normal hospitality of that culture. Alternate translation: "You should not have left this man at the well!"
Exodus 2:21
Moses agreed to stay with the man
"Moses agreed to live with Reuel"
Zipporah
This is Reuel's daughter.
Exodus 2:22
Gershom
This is Moses's son.
resident in a foreign land
"stranger in a foreign land"
Exodus 2:23
groaned
They did this because of their sorrow and misery. Alternate translation: "sighed deeply"
their pleas went up to God
The cries of the Israelites are spoken of as if they were a person and were able to travel up to where God is. Alternate translation: "God heard their pleas"
Exodus 2:24
God called to mind his covenant
This was a customary way of saying God thought about what He had promised. Alternate translation: "God remembered his covenant"

3 [1]Now Moses was still shepherding the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. Moses led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and arrived at Horeb, the mountain of God.[2]There the angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush. Moses looked, and behold, the bush was burning, but the bush was not burned up.[3]Moses said, "I will turn aside and see this amazing thing, why the bush is not burned up."
[4]When Yahweh saw that he had turned aside to look, God called to him out of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses." Moses said, "Here I am."[5]God said, "Do not come any closer! Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is ground that is set apart to me."[6]He added, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses covered his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
[7]Yahweh said, "I have certainly seen the suffering of my people who are in Egypt. I have heard their outcry because of their taskmasters, for I know about their suffering.[8]I have come down to free them from the Egyptians' power and to bring them up from that land to a good, large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey; to the region of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.
[9]Now the outcry of the people of Israel has come to me. Moreover, I have seen the way the Egyptians have been oppressing them.[10]Now then, I will send you to Pharaoh so that you may bring my people, the people of Israel, out of Egypt."
[11]But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the people of Israel from Egypt?"[12]God replied, "I will certainly be with you. This will be a sign to you that I have sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship me on this mountain."

[13]Moses said to God, "When I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and when they say to me, 'What is his name?' what should I say to them?"[14]God said to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM." God said, "You must say to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"[15]God also said to Moses, "You must say to the people of Israel, 'Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is how I will be kept in mind for all generations.'

[16]Go and gather the elders of Israel together. Say to them, 'Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me and said, "I have indeed observed you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt.[17]I have promised to bring you up from the affliction in Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey."'[18]They will listen to you. You and the elders of Israel must go to the king of Egypt, and you must tell him, 'Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, in order that we may sacrifice to Yahweh, our God.'
[19]But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go except under a mighty hand.[20]I will reach out with my hand and attack the Egyptians with all the miracles that I will do among them. After that, he will let you go.[21]I will grant this people favor from the Egyptians, so when you leave, you will not go empty-handed.[22]Every woman will ask for silver and gold jewels and for clothing from her Egyptian neighbors and any women staying in her neighbors' houses. You will put them on your sons and daughters. In this way you will plunder the Egyptians."

Exodus 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records one of the most important events in the history of the Israelite people: the revelation of the name Yahweh at the burning bush. (See: reveal)

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Special concepts in this chapter

God's holiness

God is so holy that people could not look upon him without dying. This is why Moses covered his eyes. It is also why he took off his shoes.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Yahweh

The name Yahweh is sacred in the Hebrew religion. It is the personal name of God, which he revealed to Moses. It is by this name, he is known. Yahweh means "I am." Some translations use all capitals to set this apart, "I AM." Great care must be taken in translating the phrase "I am that I am." (See: yahweh)

Links:

Exodus 3:1 Notes

Exodus 3:2

angel of Yahweh

This was Yahweh himself appearing as an angel, and not just an angel that Yahweh sent. "Yahweh appeared as an angel" .

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

behold

The word "behold" here shows that Moses saw something that was very different from what he expected.

Exodus 3:5

set apart

"made holy"

Exodus 3:6

the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob

All of these men worshiped the same God. Alternate translation: "the God of your father, of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob"

your father

Possible meanings are 1) "your ancestor" or 2) "your father." If it means "your ancestor," then the phrases following it clarify who "your father" refers to: it refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If it means "your father," then it refers to Moses's own father.

Exodus 3:7

their outcry

Here the "outcry" is of pain because of the hard work the Egyptians were forcing the Israelites to do.

their taskmasters

Egyptians whose job was to force the Israelites to do hard work. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:11.

Exodus 3:8

a land flowing with milk and honey

"a land where milk and honey flow." God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: "a land that is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops"

flowing with

"full of" or "with an abundance of"

milk

Since milk comes from cows and goats, this represents food produced by livestock. Alternate translation: "food from livestock"

honey

Since honey is produced from flowers, this represents food from crops. Alternate translation: "food from crops"

Exodus 3:9

the outcry of the people of Israel has come to me

Here the word "outcry" is spoken of as if it were a person capable of moving on his own. Alternate translation: "I have heard the outcry of the people of Israel"

the outcry

Here the "outcry" is of pain because of the hard work the Egyptians were forcing the Israelites to do. See how you translated "outcry" in Exodus 3:7.

Exodus 3:11

Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh ... Egypt?

Moses uses this question to tell God that Moses is a nobody and no one will listen to him. Alternate translation: "I am not important enough to go to Pharaoh ... Egypt!"

Exodus 3:14

God said to Moses, "I AM THAT I AM."

This is God's response to Moses's question about God's name. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "God said to Moses, 'Tell them that God says his name is, "I AM THAT I AM."'"

I AM THAT I AM

Possible meanings are 1) this whole sentence is God's name or 2) God is not telling his name but something about himself. By saying this, God is teaching that he is eternal; he has always lived and always will live.

I AM

Languages that do not have an equivalent to the verb "am" may need to render this as "I LIVE" or "I EXIST."

Exodus 3:16

General Information:

God continues speaking to Moses.

the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were three of Moses's ancestors. They all worshiped the same God.

I have indeed observed you

The word "you" refers to the people of Israel.

Exodus 3:17

a land flowing with milk and honey

"a land where milk and honey flow." God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey

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from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. See how you translated this in [Exodus 3:8]

flowing with

"full of" or "with an abundance of"

milk

Since milk comes from cows and goats, this represents food produced by livestock. Alternate translation: "food from livestock"

honey

Since honey is produced from flowers, this represents food from crops. Alternate translation: "food from crops"

Exodus 3:18

They will listen to you

The word "you" refers to Moses. Alternate translation: "The elders will listen to you"

Exodus 3:19

General Information:

God continues speaking to Moses.

except under a mighty hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for the power of the owner of the hand. Possible meanings are 1) "only if someone stronger than he forces him to let you go" or "only if I force him to let you go," or 2) "not even if I force him to let you go."

Exodus 3:20

I will reach out with my hand and attack

Here "hand" refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "I will powerfully attack"

Exodus 3:21

will not go empty-handed

"will go with full hands" or "will go with many valuable things"

Exodus 3:22

any women staying in her neighbors' houses

"any Egyptian woman staying in the houses of her Egyptian neighbors"

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4 [1]Moses answered, "But what if they do not believe me or listen to me but say instead, 'Yahweh has not appeared to you'?"[2]Yahweh said to him, "What is that in your hand?" Moses said, "A staff."[3]Yahweh said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground, and it became a snake. Moses ran back from it.
[4]Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out and take it by the tail." So he reached out and took hold of the snake. It became a staff in his hand again.[5]"This is so they may believe that Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."
[6]Yahweh also said to him, "Now put your hand inside your robe." So Moses put his hand inside his robe. When he brought it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.[7]Yahweh said, "Put your hand inside your robe again." So Moses put his hand inside his robe, and when he brought it out, he saw that it was made healthy again, like the rest of his flesh.
[8]Yahweh said, "If they do not believe you—if they do not pay attention to the first sign of my power or believe in it, then they will believe the second sign.[9]If they do not believe even these two signs of my power, or listen to you, then take some water from the river and pour it on the dry land. The water that you take will become blood on the dry land."

[10]Then Moses said to Yahweh, "Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you spoke to your servant. I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."[11]Yahweh said to him, "Who is it who made man's mouth? Who makes a man mute or deaf or seeing or blind? Is it not I, Yahweh?[12]So now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say."[13]But Moses said, "Lord, please send anyone else, anyone whom you wish to send."
[14]Then Yahweh became angry with Moses. He said, "What about Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Moreover, he is coming to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.[15]You will speak to him and put the words to say into his mouth. I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you both what to do.
[16]He will speak to the people for you. He will be like a mouth for you, and you will be like God for him.[17]You will take in your hand this staff, with which you will do the signs."
[18]So Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, "Let me go so I may return to my relatives who are in Egypt and see if they are still alive." Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."[19]Yahweh said to Moses in Midian, "Go, return to Egypt, for all the men who were trying to take your life are dead."[20]Moses took his wife and his sons and put them on a donkey. He returned to the land of Egypt, and he took the staff of God in his hand.
[21]Yahweh said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power. But I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go.[22]You must say to Pharaoh, 'This is what Yahweh says: Israel is my son, my firstborn,[23]and I say to you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me." But since you have refused to let him go, I will certainly kill your son, your firstborn.'"
[24]Now on the way, when they stopped for the night, Yahweh met Moses and tried to kill him.[25]Then Zipporah took a flint knife and cut off the foreskin of her son, and touched it to his feet. Then she said, "Surely you are a bridegroom to me by blood."[26]So Yahweh let him alone. She said, "You are a bridegroom of blood" because of the circumcision.

[27]Yahweh said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." Aaron went, met him at the mountain of God, and kissed him.[28]Moses told Aaron all the words of Yahweh that he had sent him to say and about all the signs of Yahweh's power that he had commanded him to do.
[29]Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel.[30]Aaron spoke all the words that Yahweh had spoken to Moses. He also displayed the signs of Yahweh's power in the sight of the people.[31]The people

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believed. When they heard that Yahweh had observed the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, then they bowed down and worshiped him.

Exodus 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Moses does not understand

Although Moses believes in Yahweh, he does not trust in him. This is because Moses lacks understanding. Moses tries to believe the things he is asked to do are done by his own power. Yahweh is trying to get Moses to trust that these are Yahweh's doing. (See: believe and trust)

Children of God

This chapter really introduces the concept that the people group Israel is the chosen people of God and God's children, possibly God's firstborn children. (See: elect and peopleofgod and firstborn)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart

Scholars are divided over how to understand this statement. There is debate over whether Pharaoh plays an active or passive role in the hardening of his own heart.

Links:

Exodus 4:1 Notes

Exodus 4:1

if they do not believe

"if the Israelites do not believe"

Exodus 4:4

take it by the tail

"pick it up by the tail" or "grasp it by the tail"

became a staff

"turned into a rod" or "changed into a staff"

Exodus 4:5

the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were three of their ancestors. They all worshiped the same God.

Exodus 4:6

behold

This word is used to create an exclamation, showing surprise.

as white as snow

The word "as" here is used to compare what Moses's hand looked like. Leprosy causes the skin to look white. You may not have a word for snow in your language. If so, consider an alternative that describes something white. Alternate translation: "as white as wool or as white as the sand on the beach"

Exodus 4:8

pay attention

"acknowledge" or "accept"

Exodus 4:10

have never been eloquent

"have never been an excellent speaker"

I am slow of speech and slow of tongue

The phrases "slow of speech" and "slow of tongue" mean basically the same thing. Moses uses them to emphasize that he is not a good speaker.

slow of tongue

Here "tongue" refers to Moses's ability to speak. Alternate translation: "unable to speak well"

Exodus 4:11

Who is it who made man's mouth?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is the Creator who makes if possible for people to speak. Alternate translation: "I Yahweh am the one who created the human mouth and the ability to speak!"

Who makes a man mute or deaf or seeing or blind?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is the one who decides if people can speak and hear, and if they can see. Alternate translation: "I Yahweh make people able to speak, or hear, or to see, or to be blind!"

Is it not I, Yahweh?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he alone makes these decisions. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, am the one who does this!"

Exodus 4:12

I will be with your mouth

Here "mouth" refers to Moses's ability to speak. Alternate translation: "I will give you the ability to speak"

Exodus 4:14

he will be glad in his heart

Here "heart" refers to inner thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "he will be very happy"

Exodus 4:15

put the words to say into his mouth

Words here are spoken of as if they were something that can be physically placed in a person's mouth. Alternate translation: "give him the message that he is to repeat"

I will be with your mouth

The word "mouth" here represents Moses choice of words. Alternate translation: "I will give you the right words to speak"

with his mouth

The word "mouth" here represents Aaron's choice of words. Alternate translation: "I will give him the right words to speak"

Exodus 4:16

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He will be like a mouth for you
The word "mouth" here represents Aaron repeating what Moses told him. Alternate translation: "He will say what you tell him to say"
you will be like God for him
The word "like" here means Moses would represent the same authority to Aaron as God did to Moses. Alternate translation: "you will speak to Aaron with the same authority with which I speak to you"
Exodus 4:18
father-in-law
This refers to the father of Moses's wife.
Exodus 4:21
will harden his heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. Alternate translation: "will cause Pharaoh to be stubborn"
Exodus 4:22
Israel is my son
The word "Israel" here represents all the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel are my own children"
is my son, my firstborn
Here the people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a firstborn son who causes joy and pride. Alternate translation: "is like my own firstborn son"
Exodus 4:23
you have refused to let him go
The word "him" refers to the people of Israel as God's son. Alternate translation: "you have refused to let my son go"
I will certainly kill your son, your firstborn
The word "son" here refers to the actual son of Pharaoh.
Exodus 4:24
Yahweh met Moses and tried to kill him
This may have been because Moses had not circumcised his son.
Exodus 4:25
Zipporah
This is the name of Moses's wife.
flint knife
This was a knife with a sharpened stone blade.
to his feet
It is possible that the word "feet" here may have been a more respectful way to refer to the genital area of the body.
you are a bridegroom to me by blood
The meaning of this metaphor is unclear. It was probably a known saying in that culture. Alternate translation: "you are related to me by this blood" or "you are my husband because of blood"
Exodus 4:27
Yahweh said to Aaron
You may want to add a word that marks the beginning of a new part of the story, as the UDB does with the word "Meanwhile."
at the mountain of God
This may have been the mountain at Sinai, but the text does not include that information.
Exodus 4:28
he had sent him to say
The word "he" refers to Yahweh, and "him" refers to Moses.
Exodus 4:30
in the sight of the people
"before the people" or "in the presence of the people"
Exodus 4:31
had observed the people of Israel
"saw the people of Israel" or "was concerned about the people of Israel"
they bowed down
Possible meanings are 1) "they bowed their heads in awe" or 2) "they bowed down low in reverence."

5 [1]After these things happened, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so they can have a festival for me in the wilderness.'"[2]Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh? Why should I listen to his voice and let Israel go? I do not know Yahweh; moreover, I will not let Israel go."
[3]They said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us go on a three-day journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to Yahweh our God so that he does not attack us with plague or with the sword."[4]But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people from their work? Go back to your labors."[5]Pharaoh also said, "There are now many people in our land, and you are making them stop their labors."
[6]On that same day, Pharaoh gave a command to the people's taskmasters and overseers. He said,[7]"Unlike before, you must no longer give the people straw to make bricks. Let them go and gather straw for themselves.[8]However, you must still demand from them the same number of bricks as they made before. Do not accept any fewer, because they are lazy. That is why they are calling out and saying, 'Allow us to go and sacrifice to our God.'[9]Increase the workload for the men so that they keep at it and pay no more attention to deceptive words."

[10]So the people's taskmasters and overseers went out and informed the people. They said, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will no longer give you any straw.[11]You yourselves must go and get straw wherever you can find it, but your workload will not be reduced.'"
[12]So the people scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw.[13]The taskmasters kept urging them and saying, "Finish your work, just as when straw was given to you."[14]Pharaoh's taskmasters beat the overseers, who were of the people of Israel, those same men whom they had put in charge of the workers. The taskmasters kept asking them, "Why have you not produced all the bricks required of you, either yesterday and today, as you used to do in the past?"

[15]So the overseers, who were of the people of Israel, came to Pharaoh and cried out to him. They said, "Why are you treating your servants this way?[16]No straw is being given to your servants anymore, but they are still telling us, 'Make

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bricks!' We, your servants, are even beaten now, but it is the fault of your own people."[17]But Pharaoh said, "You are lazy! You are lazy! You say, 'Allow us to go sacrifice to Yahweh.'[18]So now go back to work. No more straw will be given to you, but you must still make the same number of bricks."
[19]The overseers, who were of the people of Israel, saw that they were in trouble when they were told, "You must not reduce the daily number of bricks."[20]They met Moses and Aaron, who were standing outside the palace, as they went away from Pharaoh.[21]They said to Moses and Aaron, "May Yahweh look at you and punish you, because you have made us offensive in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants. You have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

[22]Moses went back to Yahweh and said, "Lord, why have you caused trouble for this people? Why did you send me in the first place?[23]Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak to him in your name, he has caused trouble for this people, and you have not set your people free at all."

Exodus 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

A slave's work

The Egyptians were known for making their slaves do a lot of work. They were forced to make a specific number of bricks every day. In this chapter, the were required to not only make these bricks, but also to gather the straw in order to make these bricks.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Let my people go"

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Titles

The leaders are given different titles in this chapter. The ULB uses "taskmasters" and "foremen." Many cultures will not have these types of titles. Generic expressions like "Egyptian leaders" and "Hebrew leaders" may be necessary.

Links:

Exodus 5:1 Notes

Exodus 5:1

After these things happened

It is unclear how long Moses and Aaron waited until they went to see Pharoah.

festival for me

This is a celebration to worship Yahweh.

Exodus 5:2

Who is Yahweh?

Pharaoh uses this question to show that he does not recognize Yahweh as a legitimate god. Alternate translation: "I do not know Yahweh"

Why should I ... let Israel go?

Pharaoh uses this question to state that he has no interest in obeying Yahweh or in letting the Israelites go to worship him. Alternate translation: "He is nothing to me and I will not let Israel go!"

listen to his voice

The words "his voice" represent the words God spoke. Alternate translation: "listen to what he says"

Exodus 5:3

God of the Hebrews

This is a term also used for the Israelites' God or Yahweh.

or with the sword

Here "sword" represents war or an attack by enemies. Alternate translation: "or cause our enemies to attack us"

Exodus 5:4

why are you taking the people from their work?

Pharaoh uses this question to express his anger towards Moses and Aaron for taking the Israelites away from their work. Alternate translation: "stop distracting the people from doing their work!"

Exodus 5:6

taskmasters

Egyptians whose job was to force the Israelites to do hard work. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:11.

Exodus 5:7

you must no longer give

The word "you" in these verses is plural and refers to the taskmasters and foremen.

Exodus 5:10

taskmasters

Egyptians whose job was to force the Israelites to do hard work. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:11.

I will no longer give you

The word "you" is plural and refers to the Israelite people.

Exodus 5:11

you can find ... your workload

The word "you" is plural and refers to the Israelite people.

You yourselves must go

Here "yourselves" emphasizes that the Egyptians will no longer help them.

your workload will not be reduced

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you must continue to make the same number of bricks as before"

Exodus 5:12

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throughout all the land of Egypt
This is an generalization used to show the extra effort Israel made to meet Pharaoh's demands. Alternate translation: "to many places throughout Egypt"
stubble
the part of a plant that is left over after harvest
Exodus 5:13
taskmasters
Egyptians whose job was to force the Israelites to do hard work. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:11.
Exodus 5:14
Why have you not produced all the bricks required of you ... in the past?
The taskmasters used this question to show they were angry with the lack of bricks. Alternate translation: "You are not producing enough bricks, either yesterday or today, as you did in the past!"
Exodus 5:15
cried out
"complained"
Exodus 5:16
they are still telling us, 'Make bricks!'
Here "they" refers to the Egyptian taskmasters.
Exodus 5:19
when they were told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when Pharaoh told them"
Exodus 5:20
palace
This is a very large house that a king lives in.
Exodus 5:21
you have made us offensive
The Egyptians responded to the Israelites the same way they would respond to a foul odor. Alternate translation: "you have caused them to hate us"
have put a sword in their hand to kill us
Here "a sword" represents an opportunity to destroy enemies. Alternate translation: "have given them a reason to kill us"
Exodus 5:22
Lord, why have you caused trouble for this people?
This question shows how disappointed he was that the Egyptians were treating the Israelites even more harshly now. Alternate translation: "Lord, I am sorry that you have caused this trouble for this people."
Why did you send me in the first place?
This question shows how disappointed Moses was that God had sent him to Egypt. Alternate translation: "I wish you had never sent me here!"
Exodus 5:23
to speak to him in your name
The word "name" here represents the message of God. Alternate translation: "to give him your message"

6 [1]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh. You will see this, for he will let them go because of my strong hand. Because of my strong hand, he will drive them out of his land."

[2]God spoke to Moses and said to him, "I am Yahweh.[3]I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty; but by my name, Yahweh, I was not known to them.[4]I also established my covenant with them, in order to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned.[5]Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians have enslaved, and I have called to mind my covenant.
[6]Therefore, say to the people of Israel, 'I am Yahweh. I will bring you out from under the hard labors of the Egyptians, and I will free you from their power. I will rescue you with a display of my power, and with mighty acts of judgment.[7]I will take you to myself as my people, and I will be your God. You will know that I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out from under the hard labors of the Egyptians.
[8]I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am Yahweh.'"[9]When Moses told this to the people of Israel, they would not listen to him because of their discouragement about their severe slavery.

[10]Then Yahweh said to Moses, saying,[11]"Go tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to let the people of Israel go from his land."[12]Moses said to Yahweh, "If the people of Israel have not listened to me, why will Pharaoh listen to me, since I am not good at speaking?"[13]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron. He gave them a command for the people of Israel and for Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

[14]These were the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, were Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi. These were the clan ancestors of Reuben.
[15]The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul—the son of a Canaanite woman. These were the clan ancestors of Simeon.

[16]Here are listed the names of the sons of Levi, according to their genealogies. They were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi lived until he was 137 years old.[17]The sons of Gershon were Libni and Shimei, according to their clans.[18]The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath lived until he was 133 years old.[19]The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These became the clan ancestors of the Levites, together with their descendants.

[20]Amram married Jochebed, his father's sister. She bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years and then died.[21]The sons of Izhar were Korah, Nepheg, and Zikri.[22]The sons of Uzziel were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

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[23]Aaron married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab, sister of Nahshon. She bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.
[24]The sons of Korah were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These were the clan ancestors of the Korahites.
[25]Eleazar, Aaron's son, married one of the daughters of Putiel. She bore him Phinehas. These were the heads of the fathers' houses among the Levites, according to their clans.

[26]These two men were the Aaron and Moses to whom Yahweh said, "Bring out the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, by their hosts."[27]Aaron and Moses spoke to Pharaoh, king of Egypt,in order to bring out the people of Israel from Egypt. These were the same Moses and Aaron.

[28]When Yahweh spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt,[29]he said to him, "I am Yahweh. Say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, everything that I will tell you."[30]But Moses said to Yahweh, "I am not good at speaking, so why will Pharaoh listen to me?"

Exodus 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Promised Land

According to the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham, Egypt is not the home of the Hebrew people. It is the Promised Land in Canaan. The people are to return home to their land. (See: covenant and promisedland)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Links:

Exodus 6:1 Notes

Exodus 6:1

my strong hand

The word "hand" here represents God's actions or works. Alternate translation: "the power I show in my works"

Exodus 6:3

I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob

"I showed myself to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob"

I was not known to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They did not know me"

Exodus 6:5

groaning

This means making sad sounds because of pain and suffering.

Exodus 6:6

say to the people of Israel

This is a command from Yahweh to Moses. "Yahweh told Moses to say to the people of Israel"

mighty acts of judgment

These "acts of judgment" will be acts with which Yahweh will punish the Egyptians.

Exodus 6:8

I swore

"I promised" or "I said I would"

Exodus 6:12

If the people of Israel have not listened to me, why will Pharaoh listen to me, since I am not good at speaking?

Moses asked this question hoping God would change his mind about using Moses. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel did not listen to me, so I can be sure that Pharaoh will not listen to me either because I am not good at speaking!"

Exodus 6:14

the heads of their fathers' houses

Here "heads" refers to the original ancestors of the clan. Alternate translation: "the ancestors of the clans"

Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi

These are the names of men.

Exodus 6:15

Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul

These are the names of men.

Exodus 6:16

Gershon ... Merari

These are the names of men.

137 years old

"one hundred and thirty-seven years old"

Exodus 6:18

Amram ... Uzziel

These are the names of men.

133 years old

"one hundred and thirty-three years old"

Exodus 6:20

137 years

"one hundred and thirty-seven years"

Exodus 6:21

Izhar ... Korah ... Zikri

These are the names of men.

Exodus 6:22

Uzziel ... Mishael ... Sithri

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These are the names of men.
Exodus 6:23
Nadab ... Ithamar
These are the names of men.
Exodus 6:25
Phinehas
This is the name of a man.
These were the heads of the fathers' houses
The word "heads" here represents family leaders. Alternate translation: "These were the leaders of the families"
Exodus 6:26
by their hosts
"one tribe at a time" or "one family group after another"
Exodus 6:30
I am not good ... why will Pharaoh listen to me?
Moses asks this question hoping to change God's mind. This rhetorical question can be translated as as statement. Alternate translation: "I am not good ... Pharaoh will certainly not listen to me!"

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7 [1]Yahweh said to Moses, "See, I have made you like a god to Pharaoh. Aaron your brother will be your prophet.[2]You will say everything that I command you to say. Aaron your brother will speak to Pharaoh so that he will let the people of Israel go from his land.
[3]But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will display many signs of my power, many wonders, in the land of Egypt.[4]But Pharaoh will not listen to you, so I will put my hand on Egypt and bring out my hosts, my people, the people of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment.[5]The Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh when I reach out with my hand on Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them."
[6]Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as Yahweh commanded them.[7]Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

[8]Yahweh said to Moses and to Aaron,[9]"When Pharaoh says to you, 'Do a miracle,' then you will say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, so that it may become a snake.'"[10]Then Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, and they did just as Yahweh had commanded. Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a snake.
[11]Then Pharaoh also called for his Egyptian wise men and sorcerers. They did the same thing by their magic.[12]Each man threw down his staff, and the staffs became snakes. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their snakes.[13]Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen, just as Yahweh had foretold.

[14]Yahweh said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hard, and he refuses to let the people go.[15]Go to Pharaoh in the morning when he goes out to the water. Stand on the riverbank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that had turned into a snake.
[16]Say to him, 'Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you to say, "Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness. Until now you have not listened."[17]Yahweh says this: "By this you will know that I am Yahweh. I am going to strike the water of the Nile River with the staff that is in my hand, and the river will be turned to blood.[18]The fish that are in the river will die, and the river will stink. The Egyptians will not be able to drink water from the river."'"
[19]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and reach out with your hand over the waters of Egypt, and over their rivers, streams, pools, and all their ponds, so that their water may become blood. Do this so that there will be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, even in containers of wood and stone.'"

[20]Moses and Aaron did as Yahweh commanded. Aaron raised the staff and struck the water in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants. All the water in the river turned to blood.[21]The fish in the river died, and the river began to stink. The Egyptians could not drink water from the river, and the blood was everywhere in the land of Egypt.[22]But the magicians of Egypt did the same thing with their magic. So Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, just as Yahweh had said would happen.
[23]Then Pharaoh turned and went into his house. He did not even pay attention to this.[24]All the Egyptians dug around the river for water to drink, but they could not drink the water of the river itself.[25]Seven days passed after Yahweh had attacked the river.

Exodus 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracles
When Yahweh had Moses perform miracles, Pharaoh's men were able to copy these miracles. It is unknown how they were able to do this, but since it was not from Yahweh, they were probably done under some evil power. (See: miracle and evil)
Pharaoh's hard heart
Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to

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understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Links:

Exodus 7:1 Notes

Exodus 7:1

I have made you like a god

"I will cause Pharaoh to consider you as a god"

Exodus 7:3

harden Pharaoh's heart

Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this in [Exodus 4:21]

many signs ... many wonders

The words "signs" and "wonders" mean basically the same thing. God uses them to emphasize the greatness of what he will do in Egypt.

Exodus 7:4

put my hand on

The words "my hand" represent God's great power. Alternate translation: "use my power against"

great acts of judgment

These "acts of judgment" will be acts with which Yahweh will punish the Egyptians. See how you translated this in Exodus 6:6.

Exodus 7:5

reach out with my hand on

The words "my hand" represent God's great power. Alternate translation: "show my powerful acts against"

Exodus 7:7

Aaron eighty-three years old

"Aaron was eighty-three years old"

Exodus 7:9

When Pharaoh says to you, 'Do a miracle,' then you will say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, so that it may become a snake.'

This could be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "When Pharaoh tells you to do a miracle, then you will tell Aaron to take his staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, so that it may become a snake"

Exodus 7:12

swallowed up

"ate up" or "devoured"

Exodus 7:13

Pharaoh's heart was hardened

Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh became more defiant"

Exodus 7:14

Pharaoh's heart is hard

Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this in [Exodus 7:13]

Exodus 7:15

when he goes out to the water

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "when he goes down to the Nile River to bathe"

Exodus 7:16

Say to him

"Say to Pharaoh"

Exodus 7:17

strike the water

"hit the water"

Exodus 7:19

throughout all

"in every part of"

Exodus 7:20

in the river

The name of the river may be made explicit. Alternate translation: "in the Nile River"

Exodus 7:22

Pharaoh's heart was hardened

Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this in [Exodus 7:13]

Exodus 7:24

All the Egyptians

The word "all" here is a generalization that means "many." Alternate translation: "Many of the Egyptians"

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8 [1]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Yahweh says this: "Let my people go so that they may
worship me.[2]If you refuse to let them go, I will afflict all your country with frogs.[3]The river will swarm with frogs. They
will come up and go into your house, your bedroom, and your bed. They will go into your servants' houses. They will go
onto your people, into your ovens, and into your kneading bowls.[4]The frogs will attack you, your people, and all your
servants."'"
[5]Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Reach out with your hand and your staff over the rivers, the streams, and the
pools, and bring the frogs up over the land of Egypt.'"[6]Aaron reached out with his hand over Egypt's waters, and the frogs
came up and covered the land of Egypt.[7]But the magicians did the same with their magic; they brought up frogs over the
land of Egypt.

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[8]Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, "Pray to Yahweh for him to take away the frogs from me and my people. Then I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to him."[9]Moses said to Pharaoh, "Honor yourself over me. When should I pray for you, your servants, and your people, so that the frogs may be removed from you and your houses and stay only in the river?"
[10]Pharaoh said, "Tomorrow." Moses said, "Let it be as you say, so that you may know that there is no one like Yahweh, our God.[11]The frogs will go from you, your houses, your servants, and your people. They will stay only in the river."[12]Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh. Then Moses cried out to Yahweh concerning the frogs that he had brought on Pharaoh.
[13]Yahweh did as Moses asked: The frogs died in the houses, courts, and fields.[14]The people gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank.[15]But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not listen to Moses and Aaron, just as Yahweh had said that he would do.

[16]Yahweh said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Reach out with your staff and strike the dust on the ground, that it may become gnats throughout all the land of Egypt.'"[17]They did so. When Aaron reached out with his hand and his staff and struck the dust on the ground, gnats came on men and animals. All the dust on the ground became gnats throughout all the land of Egypt.
[18]The magicians tried with their magic to produce gnats, but they could not. So there were gnats on men and animals.
[19]Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, so he refused to listen to them. It was just as Yahweh had said Pharaoh would do.

[20]Yahweh said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning and stand in front of Pharaoh as he goes out to the river. Say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "Let my people go so that they may worship me.[21]But if you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you, your servants, and your people, and into your houses. The Egyptians' houses will be full of swarms of flies, and even the ground on which they stand will be full of flies.
[22]But on that day I will set the land of Goshen apart, the land in which my people are living, so that no swarms of flies will be there. This will happen so that you may know that I am Yahweh in the midst of this land.[23]I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This sign of my power will take place tomorrow.'"'"[24]Yahweh did so, and thick swarms of flies came into Pharaoh's house and into his servants' houses. Throughout the whole land of Egypt, the land was ruined because of the swarms of flies.

[25]Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God in our own land."[26]Moses said, "It is not right for us to do so, for the sacrifices we make to Yahweh our God are something disgusting to the Egyptians. If we make sacrifices right before their eyes that are disgusting to the Egyptians, will they not stone us?[27]No, it is a three days' journey into the wilderness that we must make, in order to sacrifice to Yahweh our God, as he commands us."
[28]Pharaoh said, "I will allow you to go and sacrifice to Yahweh your God in the wilderness. Only you must not go very far away. Pray for me."[29]Moses said, "As soon as I go out from you, I will pray to Yahweh that the swarms of flies may leave you, Pharaoh, and your servants and people tomorrow. But you must not deal deceitfully any more by not letting our people go to sacrifice to Yahweh."
[30]Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to Yahweh.[31]Yahweh did as Moses asked; and he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, his servants, and his people. Not one remained.[32]But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he did not let the people go.

Exodus 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pharaoh's hard heart

Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Links:

Exodus 8:1 Notes

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Exodus 8:3
The river
"the Nile River"
kneading bowls
These are bowls in which bread is made.
Exodus 8:8
Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron
"Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron"
Exodus 8:9
Honor yourself over me. When should I pray ... river?
"The honor is yours to tell me when to pray ... river."
Exodus 8:15
he hardened his heart
"Pharaoh hardened his heart." Here "hardened" means that he became stubborn.
just as Yahweh had said that he would do
"just as Yahweh had said Pharaoh would do"
Exodus 8:19
This is the finger of God
The words "finger of God" represent the power of God. Alternate translation: "This is the powerful work of God"
Pharaoh's heart was hardened
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. See how you translated this in [Exodus 7:13]
Exodus 8:20
stand in front of Pharaoh
"present yourself to Pharaoh"
Let my people go
"set my people free"
Exodus 8:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to Pharaoh through Moses.
Exodus 8:24
the land was ruined because of the swarms of flies
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the swarms of flies devastated the land"
Exodus 8:26
right before their eyes
This was a customary way of saying "in the presence of someone." Alternate translation: "in their presence"
will they not stone us?
Moses asks this question to show Pharaoh the Egyptians would allow the Israelites to worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "they will certainly stone us!"
Exodus 8:29
you must not deal deceitfully any more by not letting our people go
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you must begin to deal truthfully with us and let our people go"
But you must not deal deceitfully
"But you must not deceive us" or "But you must not lie to us"
Exodus 8:32
Pharaoh hardened his heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. See how you translated this in [Exodus 7:13]

9 [1]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, says this: "Let my people
go so that they may worship me."[2]But if you refuse to let them go, if you still keep them back,[3]then Yahweh's hand will
bring a terrible plague on your livestock that are in the field—the horses, donkeys, camels, herds, and flocks.[4]But Yahweh
will set the livestock of Israel apart from the livestock of Egypt, so that no animal that belongs to the people of Israel will
die.
[5]Yahweh has fixed a time; he has said, "It is tomorrow that I will do this thing in the land."'"[6]Yahweh did this the next day:
All the cattle of Egypt died, but none of the people of Israel's animals died, not one animal.[7]Pharaoh investigated, and,
behold, not even one livestock of the people of Israel died. But his heart was stubborn, so he did not let the people go.

[8]Then Yahweh said to Moses and to Aaron, "Take some handfuls of ashes from a kiln. You, Moses, must throw the ashes up
into the air while Pharaoh is watching.[9]They will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt. They will cause blisters and
sores to break out on people and animals throughout all the land of Egypt."[10]So Moses and Aaron took ashes from a kiln
and stood in front of Pharaoh. Then Moses threw the ashes up into the air. The ashes caused blisters and sores to break
out on men and animals.
[11]The magicians could not resist Moses because of the blisters, because the blisters were on them and on all the other
Egyptians.[12]Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, so Pharaoh did not listen to Moses and Aaron. This was just as Yahweh had
said to Moses that Pharaoh would do.
[13]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning, stand in front of Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Yahweh, the God of
the Hebrews, says this: "Let my people go so that they may worship me.[14]For this time I will send all my plagues on you
yourself, on your servants and your people. I will do this so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the
earth.
[15]By now I could have reached out with my hand and attacked you and your people with plague, and you would have
been eradicated from the land.[16]But it was for this reason I allowed you to survive: In order to show you my power, so
that my name may be proclaimed throughout all the earth.[17]You are still lifting yourself up against my people by not
letting them go.
[18]Listen! Tomorrow about this time I will bring a very strong hail storm, such as has not been seen in Egypt since the day
it was founded until now.[19]Now then, send men and gather your livestock and everything you have in the fields to a safe
place. Every man and animal that is in the field and is not brought home—the hail will come down on them, and they will
die."'"

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[20]Then those of Pharaoh's servants who feared Yahweh's message hurried to bring their slaves and livestock into the houses.[21]But those who did not take Yahweh's message seriously left their slaves and livestock in the fields.

[22]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand toward the sky so that there will be hail in all the land of Egypt, on men and animals, and every plant of the field in the land of Egypt."[23]Moses reached out with his staff toward the sky, and Yahweh sent thunder, hail, and lightning to the ground. He also rained hail on the land of Egypt.[24]So there were hail and lightning mixed with hail, very severe, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.
[25]Throughout all the land of Egypt, the hail struck everything in the fields, both people and animals. It struck every plant in the fields and broke every tree.[26]Only in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel lived, was there no hail.

[27]Then Pharaoh sent men to summon Moses and Aaron. He said to them, "I have sinned this time. Yahweh is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.[28]Pray to Yahweh, because the mighty thunderbolts and hail are too much. I will let you go, and you will stay here no longer."
[29]Moses said to him, "As soon as I leave the city, I will spread my hands out to Yahweh. The thunder will stop, and there will not be any more hail. In this way you will know that the earth belongs to Yahweh.[30]But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet really honor Yahweh God."
[31]Now the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was maturing in the ear, and the flax was in bloom.[32]But the wheat and the spelt were not harmed because they were later crops.[33]When Moses had left Pharaoh and the city, he spread out his hands to Yahweh; the thunder and hail stopped, and the rain came down no more.
[34]When Pharaoh saw that the rain, hail, and thunder had ceased, he sinned again and hardened his heart, together with his servants.[35]The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and so he did not let the people of Israel go, just as Yahweh had spoken by the hand of Moses.

Exodus 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pharaoh's hard heart

Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Links:

Exodus 9:1 Notes

Exodus 9:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues talking with Moses about dealing with Pharaoh and bringing the Hebrew people out of Egypt.

Exodus 9:2

if you refuse to let them go, if you still keep them back

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. They will emphasize to Pharaoh what will happen if Pharaoh does this. Alternate translation: "if you continue refusing to let them go"

Exodus 9:3

then Yahweh's hand will bring

The word "hand" here represents Yahweh's power to afflict their animals with disease. Alternate translation: "then the power of Yahweh will bring"

will bring a terrible plague on your livestock ... flocks

"will cause your livestock ... flocks—to die from a terrible plague"

on your livestock

The word "your" here refers to all the people of Egypt who owned livestock.

Exodus 9:4

set ... apart

See how you translated this idea in Exodus 8:22.

livestock of Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the livestock belonging to the people of Israel"

livestock of Egypt

Here "Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "the livestock belonging to the people of Egypt"

Exodus 9:5

fixed a time

"set a time" or "appointed a time"

Exodus 9:6

All the cattle of Egypt died

This is exaggerated to emphasize the seriousness of the event. There were still some animals alive that were afflicted by later plagues. However, it may be best to translate this with the word "All."

cattle of Egypt

Here "Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "the cattle belonging to the people of Egypt"

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Exodus 9:7
Pharaoh investigated
Pharaoh collected facts about the situation.
behold
The word "behold" here shows that Pharaoh was surprised by what he saw.
his heart was stubborn
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "he refused to change his mind"
Exodus 9:8
kiln
a furnace
Exodus 9:9
fine
very small
to break out on
"to quickly appear on"
Exodus 9:12
Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 7:13]
Exodus 9:14
on you yourself
This means that even Pharaoh will be hurt by the plagues.
I will do this so that you may know
The word "this" refers to the plagues that Moses had just told Pharaoh about.
Exodus 9:15
reached out with my hand and attacked you
Here "my hand" refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "used my power to strike you"
Exodus 9:16
so that my name may be proclaimed throughout all the earth
Here "my name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "so that people everywhere will know I am great"
Exodus 9:17
lifting yourself up against my people
Pharaoh's opposition to letting Israel go to worship Yahweh is spoken of as if he was raising himself up as a barrier to them.
Exodus 9:18
Listen!
"Pay attention to the important thing I am about to tell you"
Exodus 9:27
to summon
"to call"
Exodus 9:29
Moses said to him
"Moses said to Pharaoh"
spread my hands out to Yahweh
This symbolic gesture accompanies prayer. Alternate translation: "lift up my hands and pray to Yahweh"
Exodus 9:30
honor Yahweh God
Honoring God involves obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.
Exodus 9:31
flax
This is a plant that produces fibers that can be made into linen cloth.
barley
This is a type of grain used for making bread; also used for cattle feed.
Exodus 9:32
spelt
This is a kind of wheat.
Exodus 9:33
spread out his hands to Yahweh
This symbolic gesture accompanies prayer. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 9:29]
Exodus 9:34
hardened his heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. Alternate translation: "became more defiant"
Exodus 9:35
The heart of Pharaoh was hardened
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this in [Exodus 7:13]
just as Yahweh had spoken by the hand of Moses
Here "the hand of Moses" is a metonym for Moses's activity in speaking. Yahweh had told Moses that Pharaoh would not let the people go, and Moses repeated it. Alternate translation: "just had Yahweh had said through Moses" or "just as Yahweh had said through Moses that Pharaoh would do"

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10 [1]Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants. I have done this to show these signs of my power among them.[2]I have also done this so that you may tell your children and grandchildren the things I have done, how I have harshly treated Egypt, and how I have given various signs of my power among them. In this way you will know that I am Yahweh."
[3]So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, says this: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go so that they may worship me.[4]But if you refuse to let my people go, listen, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your land.
[5]They will cover the surface of the ground so that no one will be able to see the earth. They will eat the remains of whatever escaped from the hail. They will also eat every tree that grows for you in the fields.[6]They will fill your houses, those of all your servants, and those of all the Egyptians—something neither your father nor your grandfather ever saw, nothing ever seen since the day that they were on the earth to this present day.'" Then Moses left and went out from Pharaoh.

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[7]Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people of Israel go so that they may worship Yahweh their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is destroyed?"[8]Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, who said to them, "Go worship Yahweh your God. But what people will go?"
[9]Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and our daughters. We will go with our flocks and herds, for we must hold a festival for Yahweh."[10]Pharaoh said to them, "May Yahweh indeed be with you, if I ever let you go and your little ones go. Look, you have some evil in mind.[11]No! Go, just the men among you, and worship Yahweh, for that is what you want." Then Moses and Aaron were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.
[12]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand over the land of Egypt to the locusts, that they may attack the land of Egypt and eat every plant in it, everything that the hail has left."[13]Moses reached out with his staff over the land of Egypt, and Yahweh brought an east wind over the land all that day and night. When it was morning, the east wind had brought the locusts.
[14]The locusts went through all the land of Egypt and infested all parts of it. Never before had there been such a swarm of locusts in the land, and nothing like this will come after it.[15]They covered the surface of the whole land so that it was darkened. They ate every plant in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Throughout all the land of Egypt, no living green plant remained, nor any tree or plant in the fields.
[16]Then Pharaoh quickly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against Yahweh your God and against you.
[17]Now then, forgive my sin this time, and pray to Yahweh your God that he will take this death away from me."[18]So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to Yahweh.
[19]Yahweh brought a very strong west wind that picked up the locusts and drove them into the Sea of Reeds; not a single locust remained in all the territory of Egypt.[20]But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh did not let the people of Israel go.

[21]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand toward the sky, so that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness that may be felt."[22]Moses reached out with his hand toward the sky, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days.[23]No one could see anyone else; no one left his home for three days. However, all the people of Israel had light in the place where they lived.
[24]Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, "Go worship Yahweh. Even your little ones may go with you, but your flocks and herds must remain behind."[25]But Moses said, "Allow us to have sacrifices and burnt offerings so that we may present them to Yahweh our God.[26]Our cattle must also go with us; not a hoof of them may be left behind, for we must take them to worship Yahweh our God. For we do not know with what we must worship Yahweh until we arrive there."
[27]But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.[28]Pharaoh said to Moses, "Go from me! Be careful about one thing, that you do not see me again, for on the day you see my face, you will die."[29]Moses said, "You yourself have spoken. I will not see your face again."

Exodus 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pharaoh's hard heart

Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people.

Links:

Exodus 10:1 Notes

Exodus 10:1

for I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his servants

Yahweh speaks of making Pharaoh and his servants stubborn as if he were making their hearts hard. See how you translated "Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart" in [Exodus 9:12]

Exodus 10:2

various signs

"many different signs"

Exodus 10:4

listen

This word adds emphasis to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Exodus 10:5

hail

Hail is raindrops that freeze while falling from the clouds.

Exodus 10:6

nothing ever seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing anyone has ever seen"

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Exodus 10:7
How long will this man be a snare to us?
Pharaoh's servants ask this rhetorical question to scold Pharaoh and get him to stop rejecting Moses's words. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We cannot allow this man to continue to be a snare to us!"
be a snare to us
The word "snare" is a metonym for the trouble that a snare causes to a person or animal that it captures. Alternate translation: "cause us trouble"
Do you not yet realize that Egypt is destroyed?
Pharaoh's servants ask this question to bring Pharaoh to recognize what he refuses to see. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should realize that Egypt is destroyed!"
that Egypt is destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that these plagues have destroyed Egypt" or "that their God has destroyed Egypt"
Exodus 10:10
May Yahweh indeed be with you, if I ever let you go and your little ones go
Pharaoh said this to emphasize that he would not let the Israelites take the women and children with them to worship Yahweh. When he said, "May Yahweh indeed be with you," he may have been warning Moses that the Israelites would need Yahweh to protect them from Pharaoh.
little ones
This phrase is a synecdoche for everyone in the family except the man (the father and husband), including wives, children, and servants.
Exodus 10:11
Then Moses and Aaron were driven out from Pharaoh's presence
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then Pharaoh drove Moses and Aaron out from his presence" or "Then Pharaoh had his servants drive Moses and Aaron out from his presence"
Exodus 10:15
so that it was darkened
There were so many locusts that the land appeared to be dark. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they darkened the land" or "so that the land appeared dark"
Exodus 10:17
this time
"once again"
take this death away from me
The word "death" here refers to the destruction by the locusts of all plants in Egypt, which would eventually lead to the deaths of people because there were no crops. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "stop this destruction that will lead to our deaths"
Exodus 10:19
picked up the locusts
"moved the locusts upwards"
Exodus 10:20
Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this phrase in [Exodus 9:12]
Exodus 10:21
darkness that may be felt
Yahweh speaks of extreme darkness as if it is so thick that people can grasp it in their hands. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "dense darkness that people can grasp with their hands"
Exodus 10:24
little ones
This phrase is a synecdoche for everyone in the family except the man (the father and husband), including wives, children, and servants. See how you translated this in Exodus 10:10.
Exodus 10:26
not a hoof of them may be left behind
Here the word "hoof" refers to the entire animal. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we cannot leave behind a single animal"
Exodus 10:27
Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart
Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this phrase in [Exodus 9:12]
he would not let them go
"Pharaoh would not let them go"
Exodus 10:28
Be careful about one thing
"Make sure of one thing" or "Be certain of one thing"
you see my face
Here the word "face" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "you see me"
Exodus 10:29
You yourself have spoken
With these words, Moses emphasizes that Pharaoh has spoken the truth. Alternate translation: "What you have said is true"

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11 [1]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "There is still one more plague that I will bring on Pharaoh and Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here. When he finally lets you go, he will drive you away completely.[2]Instruct the people that every man and woman is to ask of his or her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold."[3]Now Yahweh had made the Egyptians eager to please the Israelites. Moreover, the man Moses was very impressive in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and the people of Egypt.

[4]Moses said, "Yahweh says this: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt.[5]All the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sits on his throne, to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the handmill grinding it, and to all the firstborn of the livestock.

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[6]Then there will be a great outcry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as has never been nor ever will be again.[7]But not even a dog will bark against any of the people of Israel, against either man or animal. In this way you will know that I am making a distinction between the Egyptians and the people of Israel.'[8]All these servants of yours, Pharaoh, will come down to me and bow down to me. They will say, 'Go, you and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

[9]Yahweh said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you. This is so that I will do many amazing things in the land of Egypt."[10]Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh. But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

Exodus 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pharaoh's hard heart

Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

In the previous chapters, Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he demanded that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people. In this chapter, the same wording is used to refer to Pharaoh "allowing" the Hebrew people to leave Egypt.

Links:

Exodus 11:1 Notes

Exodus 11:1

he will let you go from here

Each occurrence of the word "you" in this verse is plural and refers to Moses and the rest of the Israelites.

Exodus 11:4

midnight

This is the time of 12 am (at night) or 2400 hours.

Exodus 11:5

All the firstborn ... the firstborn of Pharaoh ... the firstborn of the slave girl ... the firstborn of the livestock

The "firstborn" always refers to the oldest male offspring.

who sits on his throne

This phrase refers to Pharaoh.

who is behind the handmill grinding it

"who is grinding at the handmill" or "who is behind the handmill grinding grain"

Exodus 11:6

great outcry

Here the "outcry" is of pain and grief over the death of the children. See how you translated "outcry" in Exodus 3:7.

Exodus 11:7

making a distinction between

He is setting the Israelites apart from the Egyptians. The words "making a distinction" translate the same Hebrew word as "set ... apart" in Exodus 8:22, so if your language has a word or phrase for both ideas, you may want to use it there and here.

Exodus 11:8

After that I will go out

This means that Moses and the people of Israel will leave Egypt. Alternate translation: "After that I will leave here" or "After that I will go out from Egypt"

Exodus 11:10

Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart

Here "heart" refers to Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated this phrase in [Exodus 9:12]

12 [1]Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt. He said,[2]"For you, this month will be the start of months, the first month of the year to you.
[3]Tell the assembly of Israel, 'On the tenth day of this month they must each take a lamb or young goat for themselves, each family doing this, a lamb for each household.[4]If the household is too small for a lamb, the man and his next door neighbor are to take lamb or young goat meat that will be enough for the number of the people. It should be enough for everyone to eat, so they must take enough meat to feed them all.
[5]Your lamb or young goat must be without blemish, a one-year-old male. You may take one of the sheep or goats.[6]You must keep it safe until the fourteenth day of that month. Then the whole assembly of Israel must kill these animals at twilight.
[7]You must take some of the blood and put it on the two side doorposts and on the tops of the doorframes of the houses in which you will eat the meat.[8]You must eat the meat that night, after first roasting it over a fire. Eat it with bread made without yeast, along with bitter herbs.

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[9]Do not eat it raw or boiled in water, but roast it over fire with its head, legs, and inner parts.[10]You must not let any of it be left over until morning. You must burn whatever is left over in the morning.[11]This is how you must eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. You must eat it hurriedly. It is Yahweh's Passover.
[12]Yahweh says this: I will go through the land of Egypt in that night and strike down all the firstborn of man and animal in the land of Egypt. I will do acts of judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am Yahweh.[13]The blood will be a sign on your houses for my coming to you. When I see the blood, I will pass over you when I attack the land of Egypt. This plague will not come on you and destroy you.[14]This day will become a memorial day for you, which you must observe as a festival to Yahweh; for your generations—a statute that you must keep as a festival forever.

[15]You will eat bread without yeast during seven days. On the first day you will remove the yeast from your houses. Whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person must be cut off from Israel.[16]On the first day there will be an assembly that is set apart to me, and on the seventh day there will be another such gathering. No work will be done on these days, except the cooking for everyone to eat. That must be the only work that may be done by you.
[17]You must observe this Festival of Unleavened Bread because it was on this day that I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. So you must observe this day throughout your people's generations as a statute forever.[18]You must eat unleavened bread from twilight of the fourteenth day in the first month of the year until twilight of the twenty-first day of the month.
[19]During these seven days, no yeast must be found in your houses. Whoever eats bread made with yeast must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether that person is a foreigner or someone born in your land.[20]You must eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat bread made without yeast.'"

[21]Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and select lambs or kids that will be enough to feed your families and kill the Passover lamb.[22]Then take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that will be in a basin. Apply the blood in the basin to the top of the doorframe and the two doorposts. None of you is to go out of the door of his house until the morning.
[23]For Yahweh will pass through to attack the Egyptians. When he sees the blood on the top of the doorframe and on the two doorposts, he will pass over your door and not permit the destroyer to come into your houses to attack you.
[24]You must observe this event. This will always be a law for you and your descendants.[25]When you enter the land that Yahweh will give you, just as he has promised to do, you must observe this act of worship.
[26]When your children ask you, 'What does this act of worship mean?'[27]then you must say, 'It is the sacrifice of Yahweh's Passover, because Yahweh passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt when he attacked the Egyptians. He set our households free.'" Then the people bowed down and worshiped Yahweh.[28]The people of Israel went and did exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron.

[29]It happened at midnight that Yahweh attacked all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, who sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the person in the dungeon and all the firstborn of the livestock.[30]Pharaoh got up in the night—he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians. There was a loud outcry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not someone dead.
[31]Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron in the night and said, "Get up, get out from among my people, you and the people of Israel. Go, worship Yahweh, as you have said you wanted to do.[32]Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and also bless me."[33]The Egyptians were in a great hurry to send them out of the land, for they said, "We will all die."
[34]So the people took their dough without adding any yeast. Their kneading bowls were already tied up in their clothes and on their shoulders.[35]Now the people of Israel did as Moses told them. They asked the Egyptians for articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.[36]Yahweh made the Egyptians eager to please the Israelites. So the Egyptians gave them whatever they asked for. In this way, the Israelites plundered the Egyptians.

[37]The people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. They numbered about 600,000 men on foot, in addition to the little ones.[38]A mixed multitude also went with them, together with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock.
[39]They baked bread without yeast in the dough that they brought from Egypt. It was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay to prepare food.[40]The people of Israel had lived in Egypt for 430 years.
[41]At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all of Yahweh's armed groups went out from the land of Egypt.[42]This was a night to stay awake, for Yahweh to bring them out from the land of Egypt. This was Yahweh's night to be observed by all the people of Israel throughout their people's generations.

[43]Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "Here is the rule for the Passover: No foreigner may share in eating it.[44]However, every Israelite's slave, bought with money, may eat it after you have circumcised him.
[45]Foreigners and hired servants must not eat any of the food.[46]The food must be eaten in one house. You must not carry any of the meat out of the house, and you must not break any bone of it.

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[47]All the community of Israel must observe the festival.[48]If a foreigner lives with you and wants to observe the Passover to Yahweh, all his male relatives must be circumcised. Then he may come and observe it. He will become like the people who were born in the land. However, no uncircumcised person may eat any of the food.
[49]This same law will apply to both the native born and to the foreigner who lives among you."
[50]So all the people of Israel did exactly as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron.[51]It came about that very day that Yahweh brought Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armed groups.

Exodus 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The events of this chapter are known as the Passover. They are remembered in the celebration of Passover. (See: passover)

Special concepts in this chapter

Unleavened bread

The concept of unleavened bread is introduced in this chapter. Its significance stems from its connection to the events in this chapter. (See: unleavenedbread)

Ethnic segregation

The Hebrew people were to be separate from the rest of the world. Because of this, they separated themselves from other people groups. At this time, these foreigners were looked upon as unholy. (See: holy)

Links:

Exodus 12:1 Notes

Exodus 12:2

For you, this month will be the start of months, the first month of the year to you

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the month in which the events of this chapter take place will be the beginning of their calendar year.

the first month of the year

The first month of the Hebrew calendar includes the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars. It marks when Yahweh rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians.

Exodus 12:4

If the household is too small for a lamb

This means that there are not enough people in the family to eat an entire lamb. Alternate translation: "If there are not enough people in the household to eat an entire lamb"

the man and his next door neighbor

Here "the man" refers to the man who is the leader of the household.

Exodus 12:6

twilight

This refers to the time of evening after the sun has set but while there is still some light.

Exodus 12:7

on the two side doorposts and on the tops of the doorframes of the houses

"on the sides and top of the way into the house"

Exodus 12:8

Eat it with bread made without yeast

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Eat it with bread which you have made without yeast"

bitter herbs

These are small plants that have a strong and usually bad taste.

Exodus 12:9

Do not eat it raw

"Do not eat the lamb or goat uncooked"

Exodus 12:10

You must not let any of it be left over until morning

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not leave any of it until the morning"

Exodus 12:11

belt

This refers to a strip of leather or fabric for tying around the waist.

eat it hurriedly

"eat it quickly"

It is Yahweh's Passover

Here the word "it" refers to eating the animal on the tenth day of the month. Alternate translation: "This observance is Yahweh's Passover"

Exodus 12:12

I will do acts of judgment on all

"I will bring judgment on all" or "I will punish all." These "acts of judgment" will be acts with which Yahweh will punish the gods of Egypt. See how you translated this in Exodus 6:6.

Exodus 12:13

for my coming to you

This implies that Yahweh will see the blood which indicates an Israelite home. Alternate translation: "that I will see when I come to you"

I will pass over you

The words "pass over" were a customary way of saying to not visit or enter. Alternate translation: "I will not enter your house"

Exodus 12:15

that person must be cut off from Israel

The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible

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meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "the people of Israel must send him away" or 2) "I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" or 3) "the people of Israel must kill him."
Exodus 12:16
an assembly that is set apart to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "an assembly that you have set apart to me"
No work will be done on these days, except the cooking for everyone to eat
This double negative emphasizes that cooking is the only work that will be done. Alternate translation: "The only work that will be done on these days is the cooking for everyone to eat"
No work will be done on these days
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will do no work on these days"
That must be the only work that may be done by you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "That must be the only work that you do"
Exodus 12:17
because it was on this day that I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt
God was about to bring his people out of Egypt, and he was giving them instructions about what they should do on that day and again later as they remembered that day. Alternate translation: "because it is on this day that I will have brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt" or "for it will remind you that it was on this day that I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt"
your hosts
A host is a military term referring to a large number of soldiers. God speaks of the many people of Israel as if they were an army of many soldiers. Alternate translation: "your armies" or "your tribes"
Exodus 12:18
twilight
This refers to the time of evening after the sun has set but while there is still some light. See how you translated this in Exodus 12:6.
the fourteenth day in the first month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.
the twenty-first day of the month
"the twenty-first day of the first month." This is near the middle of April on Western calendars.
Exodus 12:19
no yeast must be found in your houses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there must not be any yeast in your houses"
must be cut off from the community of Israel
The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "the people of Israel must send him away" or 2) "I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" or 3) "the people of Israel must kill him." See how you translated "must be cut off from Israel" in [Exodus 12:15]
Exodus 12:20
bread made without yeast
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Exodus 12:8]
Exodus 12:21
summoned
officially called
Exodus 12:22
hyssop
a woody plant with small leaves that can be used for sprinkling liquids
the top of the doorframe and the two doorposts
"on the sides and top of the way into the house." See how you translated a similar phrase in Exodus 12:7.
Exodus 12:23
pass over your door
Here the word "door" implies the entire house. This means that God will spare the Israelites in houses with blood on the doors. Alternate translation: "pass over your house"
Exodus 12:24
this event
These words refer to the Passover or Festival of Unleavened Bread. Observing the Passover was an act of worshiping Yahweh.
Exodus 12:25
this act of worship
These words refer to the Passover or Festival of Unleavened Bread. Observing the Passover was an act of worshiping Yahweh.
Exodus 12:27
He set our households free
This means that Yahweh spared the Israelites' firstborn sons. Alternate translation: "He did not kill the firstborn sons in our houses"
Exodus 12:28
as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron
"everything that Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to do"
Exodus 12:29
at midnight
"in the middle of the night"
all the firstborn in the land of Egypt ... all the firstborn of the livestock
Here, "firstborn" always refers to the oldest male offspring. See how you translated a similar phrase in Exodus 11:5.
who sat on his throne
This refers to Pharaoh.
the firstborn of the person in the dungeon
"to the firstborn of people in the dungeon." This refers to prisoners in general, not to a specific person in the dungeon.
Exodus 12:30
There was a loud outcry in Egypt
This can be stated with a verbal form. Alternate translation: "All the Egyptians cried loudly"
loud outcry
Here the "outcry" is of pain and grief over the death of the children. See how you translated "outcry" in Exodus 3:7.
for there was not a house where there was not someone dead
This double negative emphasizes the positive. Alternate translation: "because someone was dead in every house"
Exodus 12:33

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We will all die
The Egyptians were afraid that they would die if the Israelites did not leave Egypt. Alternate translation: "We will all die if you do not leave"
Exodus 12:34
Their kneading bowls were already tied up in their clothes and on their shoulders
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They had already tied up their kneading bowls in their clothes and on their shoulders"
Exodus 12:37
Rameses
Rameses was a major Egyptian city where grain was stored. See how you translated this in Exodus 1:11.
They numbered about 600,000 men
"They numbered about six hundred thousand men." The total number of men was about 600,000.
little ones
This phrase is a synecdoche for everyone in the family except the man (the father and husband), including wives, children, and servants. See how you translated this in Exodus 10:10.
Exodus 12:38
A mixed multitude also went
A multitude is a very large number of people. The word "mixed" here means that the people belonged to differnt ethnic groups. Alternate translation: "A crowd of people from other ethnic groups also went"
Exodus 12:39
bread without yeast in the dough
"bread with dough that did not contain yeast"
they had been driven out of Egypt
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Egyptians had driven them out of Egypt"
Exodus 12:40
430 years
"four hundred and thirty years"
Exodus 12:41
430 years
"four hundred and thirty years"
Yahweh's armed groups
This refers to the tribes of Israel.
Exodus 12:42
to be observed by all the people of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that all the people of Israel were to observe"
all the people of Israel throughout their people's generations
"all the people of Israel and the all the generations of their descendants"
Exodus 12:43
No foreigner may share in eating it
The pronoun "it" refers to the Passover meal.
Exodus 12:44
every Israelite's slave
"any slave of an Israelite"
bought with money
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Israelite has bought with money"
Exodus 12:46
The food must be eaten in one house
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Each Israelite family must eat the food in one house"
you must not break any bone of it
"you must not break any of its bones." Here the word "it" refers to the lamb which the Israelite family will eat.
Exodus 12:48
all his male relatives must be circumcised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must circumcise all his male relatives"
the people who were born in the land
Here the word "land" refers to Canaan. The expression "born in the land" means a person who is a native Israelite. Alternate translation: "those who are Israelites by birth"
no uncircumcised person may eat
This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "only circumcised people may eat"
Exodus 12:50
as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron
"everything that Yahweh told Moses and Aaron to do"
Exodus 12:51
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
by their armed groups
The term used for these groups is a military term referring to a large number of soldiers. See how you translated "armed group" in Exodus 12:41. Alternate translation: "by their divisions" or "by their regiments"

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13 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Set apart to me every firstborn male, the first issue of every womb among the people of Israel, whether man or animal. He is mine."

[3]Moses said to the people, "Call this day to mind, the day on which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by Yahweh's strong hand he brought you out from this place. No bread with yeast may be eaten.[4]You are going out of Egypt on this day, in the month of Aviv.[5]When Yahweh brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and the Jebusites, the land that he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey—then you must observe this act of worship in this month.
[6]For seven days you must eat bread without yeast; on the seventh day there will be a festival to honor Yahweh.[7]Bread without yeast must be eaten throughout the seven days; no bread with yeast may be seen among you. No yeast may be seen with you within any of your borders.
[8]On that day you are to say to your children, 'This is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt.'[9]This will be a reminder for you on your hand, and a reminder on your forehead. This is so the law of Yahweh may be in your

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mouth, for with a strong hand Yahweh brought you out of Egypt.[10]Therefore you must keep this law at its appointed time from year to year.

[11]When Yahweh brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and to your ancestors to do, and when he gives the land to you,[12]you must set apart to Yahweh the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn offspring of your livestock that are males, will belong to Yahweh.[13]Every firstborn of a donkey you must redeem with a lamb. If you do not buy it back, then you must break its neck. But every firstborn of your sons you must redeem.
[14]When your son asks you later, 'What does this mean?' then you are to tell him, 'It was by a strong hand that Yahweh brought us out from Egypt, from the house of slavery.[15]When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, Yahweh killed every firstborn in Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of animal. That is why I sacrifice to Yahweh all the first male issue of the womb, but all my firstborn sons I redeem.'[16]This will become a reminder on your hands, and a reminder on your forehead, for it was by a strong hand Yahweh brought us out of Egypt."

[17]When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that land was nearby. For God said, "Perhaps the people will change their minds when they experience war and will then return to Egypt."[18]So God led the people around through the wilderness to the Sea of Reeds. The people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt armed for battle.
[19]Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear and said, "God will surely rescue you, and you must carry away my bones with you."[20]The Israelites journeyed from Sukkoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness.[21]Yahweh went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them on the way. By night he went in a pillar of fire to give them light. In this way they could travel by day and by night.[22]Yahweh did not take away from before the people the daytime pillar of cloud or the nighttime pillar of fire.

Exodus 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the instructions for the celebration of Passover. (See: passover)

Special concepts in this chapter

Law

The law mentioned here is not the law of Moses because it has not yet been revealed. Instead, it is a more generic "rule." (See: lawofmoses and reveal)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Let my people go

This is a very important statement. Moses does not ask Pharaoh for permission to "let go" of the Hebrew people. Instead, he is demanding that Pharaoh free the Hebrew people. When this chapter states that Pharaoh let the people go, it indicates that he gave them permission to leave.

Links:

Exodus 13:1 Notes

Exodus 13:2

Set apart to me ... every firstborn male

God requires that every firstborn male child be set apart for him.

Exodus 13:3

Call this day to mind

The words "Call ... to mind" were a customary way of telling someone to remember something. Alternate translation: "Remember and celebrate this day"

the house of slavery

Moses speaks of Egypt as if it were a house where people keep slaves. Alternate translation: "the place where you were slaves"

Yahweh's strong hand

Here the word "hand" refers to power. See how you translated "strong hand" in [Exodus 6:1]

No bread with yeast may be eaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not eat bread with yeast"

Exodus 13:4

the month of Aviv

This is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. Aviv is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars.

Exodus 13:5

you must observe this act of worship

When the Israelites live in Canaan, they must celebrate the Passover on this day each year. See how you translated this phrase in Exodus 12:25.

Exodus 13:6

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

For seven days

"For 7 days"

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Exodus 13:7

Bread without yeast must be eaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must eat bread without yeast"

no bread with yeast may be seen among you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You may not have any bread with yeast among you"

No yeast may be seen with you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You may not have any yeast"

within any of your borders

"inside any of the borders of your land"

Exodus 13:8

On that day you are to say to your children, 'This is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt.'

The quotation can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "On that day you are to tell your children that this is because of what Yahweh did for you when you came out of Egypt"

Exodus 13:9

This will be a reminder for you on your hand, and a reminder on your forehead

These are two different types of physical reminders so people will not forget something important.

a reminder for you on your hand

Moses speaks of celebrating the festival as if it were tying an object around their hands to remind them of what Yahweh had done. Alternate translation: "like something you tie around your hand as a reminder"

a reminder on your forehead

Moses speaks of celebrating the festival as if it were tying an object around their foreheads to remind them of what Yahweh had done. Alternate translation: "like something you tie around your head as a reminder"

so the law of Yahweh may be in your mouth

The words "in your mouth" here refers to the words that they speak. Alternate translation: "so you may always be speaking of the law of Yahweh"

strong hand

The word "hand" here represents God's actions or works. See how you translated this in Exodus 6:1. Alternate translation: "the power I show in my works"

Exodus 13:11

when he gives the land to you

"when he gives the land of the Canaanites to you"

Exodus 13:13

Every firstborn of a donkey

Israel is given a choice to kill the firstborn donkey or buy it back with a lamb.

Exodus 13:14

When your son asks you later, 'What does this mean?' then you are to tell him

The first quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "When your son asks you later what this means, then you are to tell him"

strong hand

The word "hand" here represents God's actions or works. See how you translated this in [Exodus 6:1]

the house of slavery

Moses speaks of Egypt as if it were a house where people keep slaves. See how you translated this in [Exodus 13:3]

Exodus 13:16

become a reminder on your hands, and a reminder on your forehead

This expresses two ways to remember the importance of the passover event. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 13:9]

Exodus 13:17

was nearby

"was close to where they were located"

the people will change their minds ... and ... return to Egypt

Since Israelites had lived in slavery all their lives, they were more accustomed to peace than to war and would rather return to slavery than fight.

Exodus 13:20

camped at Etham

Etham is located south of the route heading towards the Philistines, at the border of the wilderness.

Exodus 13:21

pillar of cloud ... pillar of fire

"a cloud in the shape of a column ... fire in the shape of a column." God is with them in a cloud by day and in a fire by night.

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14 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Say to the people of Israel that they should turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, before Baal Zephon. You are to camp by the sea opposite Pi Hahiroth.[3]Pharaoh will say about the people of Israel, 'They are wandering confused in the land. The wilderness has closed in on them.'
[4]I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. I will get honor because of Pharaoh and all his army. The Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh." So the Israelites camped as they were instructed.[5]When the king of Egypt was told that the Israelites had fled, the minds of Pharaoh and his servants turned against the people. They said, "What have we done? We have released Israel from serving us."
[6]Then Pharaoh got his chariots ready and took his army with him.[7]He took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers on all of them.[8]Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and the king pursued the people of Israel. Now the people of Israel had gone away in triumph.[9]But the Egyptians pursued them, together with all his horses and chariots, his horsemen, and his army. They overtook the Israelites camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

[10]When Pharaoh came close, the people of Israel looked up and were surprised. The Egyptians were marching after them, and they were terrified. The people of Israel cried out to Yahweh.[11]They said to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt, that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you treated us like this, bringing us out of

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Egypt?[12]Is this not what we told you in Egypt? We said to you, 'Leave us alone, so we can work for the Egyptians.' It would have been better for us to work for them than to die in the wilderness."
[13]Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still and see the rescue that Yahweh will provide for you today. For you will never see again the Egyptians whom you see today.[14]Yahweh will fight for you, and you will only have to stand still."
[15]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Why are you, Moses, continuing to call out to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.
[16]Lift up your staff, reach out with your hand over the sea and divide it in two, so that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.[17]Be aware that I will harden the Egyptians' hearts so they will go after them. I will get honor because of Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen.[18]Then the Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh when I have gotten honor because of Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."
[19]The angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them. The pillar of cloud moved from before them and went to stand behind them.[20]The cloud came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel. It was a dark cloud to the Egyptians, but it lit the night for the Israelites, so one side did not come near the other all night.

[21]Moses reached out with his hand over the sea. Yahweh drove the sea back by a strong east wind all that night and made the sea into dry land. In this way the waters were divided.[22]The people of Israel went into the middle of the sea on dry ground. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left.
[23]The Egyptians pursued them. They went after them into the middle of the sea—all Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and horsemen.[24]But at the morning watch, Yahweh looked down on the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and cloud. He threw the Egyptians into confusion.[25]Their chariot wheels were clogged, and the horsemen drove with difficulty. So the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from Israel, for Yahweh is fighting for them against us."

[26]Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back onto the Egyptians, their chariots, and their horsemen."[27]So Moses reached out with his hand over the sea, and it returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. The Egyptians fled into the sea, and Yahweh drove the Egyptians into the middle of it.[28]The waters came back and covered Pharaoh's chariots, horsemen, and his entire army that had followed the chariots into the sea. No one survived.
[29]However, the people of Israel walked on dry land in the middle of the sea. The waters were a wall for them on their right hand and on their left.[30]So Yahweh saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw dead Egyptians on the seashore.[31]When Israel saw the great power that Yahweh used against the Egyptians, the people feared Yahweh, and they trusted Yahweh and his servant Moses.

Exodus 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is an important event in the history of Israel, known as the "parting of the Sea of Reeds."

Special concepts in this chapter

Pharaoh's hard heart

Pharaoh's heart is often described as hard in this chapter. This means that his heart was not open or willing to understand Yahweh's instructions. When his heart was hardened, it became less and less receptive to Yahweh.

Pharaoh's chariots

These chariots were a fighting force. Pharaoh took an army to kill the Hebrew people.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The Israelites asked a few rhetorical questions of Moses. These questions were not really directed at Moses, but at Yahweh. This showed their lack of faith in Yahweh. (See: and faith)

Links:

Exodus 14:1 Notes

Exodus 14:2

Pi Hahiroth ... Migdol ... Baal Zephon

These are towns on Egypt's eastern border.

You are to camp

Here the word "You" is plural and refers to Moses and the Israelites.

Exodus 14:3

Pharaoh will say about the people of Israel, 'They are wandering confused in the land. The wilderness has closed in on them.'

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh will say that the people of Israel are wandering confused in the land and that the wilderness has closed in on them"

The wilderness has closed in on them

Pharaoh speaks of the wilderness as a person who has trapped the people of Israel.

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Exodus 14:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues to instruct Moses on where to go and what Yahweh will do.

I will harden Pharaoh's heart

Here "heart" refers to the Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 9:12]

he will pursue them

"Pharaoh will pursue the Israelites"

I will get honor

"People will honor me"

The Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh

"The Egyptians will understand that I am Yahweh, the one true God"

So the Israelites camped as they were instructed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the Israelites camped as Yahweh had instructed them"

Exodus 14:5

When the king of Egypt was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When someone told the king of Egypt"

the king of Egypt

This refers to Pharaoh.

had fled

"had run away"

the minds of Pharaoh and his servants turned against the people

Here the word "minds" refers to their attitudes towards the Israelites. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh and his servants changed their attitudes about the people"

What have we done? We have released Israel from serving us.

They asked this question to show they thought they had done a foolish thing. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have done a stupid thing by letting Israel go free from working for us!"

Exodus 14:7

He took six hundred chosen chariots

"He took 600 of his best chariots"

Exodus 14:8

Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh

Here "heart" refers to the Pharaoh. His stubborn attitude is spoken of as if his heart was hard. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 9:12]

Exodus 14:9

Pi Hahiroth ... Baal Zephon

These are towns on Egypt's eastern border. See how you translated them in [Exodus 14:2]

Exodus 14:10

When Pharaoh came close

The word "Pharaoh" here represents the entire Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "When Pharaoh and his army came close"

they were terrified

"the Israelites were terrified"

Exodus 14:11

Is it because there were no graves in Egypt, that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?

The Israelites ask this question to express their frustration and fear of dying. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There were plenty of graveyards in Egypt for us to be buried in. You did not have to take us into the wilderness to die!"

Why have you treated us like this, bringing us out of Egypt?

The Israelites ask this question to rebuke Moses for bringing them to the desert to die. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have treated us like this by bringing us out of Egypt!"

Exodus 14:12

Is this not what we told you in Egypt?

The Israelites ask this question to emphasize that this is what they had told Moses. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is exactly what we told you while we were in Egypt."

We said to you, 'Leave us alone, so we can work for the Egyptians.'

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "We told you to leave us alone, so we could work for the Egyptians."

Exodus 14:13

Moses said to the people

Moses responds to the Israelites' fears.

provide for you

The pronoun "you" refers to the Israelites.

For you will never see again the Egyptians

Moses used a polite way of saying God was going to destroy the Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "For God will kill the Egyptians"

Exodus 14:15

Why are you, Moses, continuing to call out to me?

Moses apparently had been praying to God for help so God uses this question to compel Moses to act. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do not call out to me any longer, Moses."

Exodus 14:16

divide it in two

"divide the sea into two parts"

Exodus 14:17

Be aware

"Know"

I will harden the Egyptians' hearts

Here "hearts" refers to the Egyptians themselves. Their stubborn attitude is spoken of as if their hearts were hard. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 9:12]

so they will go after them

"so that the Egyptians will go into the sea after the Israelites"

Exodus 14:20

the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel

"the Egyptian army and the Israelite people"

so one side did not come near the other

This means that the Egyptians and the Israelites could not approach one another.

Exodus 14:21

east wind

An east wind originates in the east and blows towards the west.

east

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where the sun rises

the waters were divided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh divided the waters"

Exodus 14:22

on their right hand and on their left

"on each side of them" or "on both sides of them"

Exodus 14:24

He threw the Egyptians into confusion

The Egyptians were so afraid that they could not think normally.

Exodus 14:25

Their chariot wheels were clogged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mud clogged their chariot wheels" or "Their chariot wheels were getting stuck in the mud"

Exodus 14:26

Yahweh said to Moses, "Reach out with your hand ... and their horsemen."

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told Moses to reach out with his hand over the sea so that the waters would come back onto the Egyptians, their chariots, and their horsemen."

come back onto

"fall on"

Exodus 14:27

The Egyptians fled into the sea

Since the sea was closing in on top of the Egyptians, instead of escaping, they were actually running right into the water.

Yahweh drove the Egyptians

"Yahweh pushed the Egyptians" or "Yahweh threw the Egyptians"

Exodus 14:30

out of the hand of the Egyptians

Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "from the Egyptians' power"

on the seashore

"on the land along the edge of the sea"

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15 [1]Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to Yahweh. They sang,
"I will sing to Yahweh, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea.
[2] Yahweh is my strength and song,
and he has become my salvation.
This is my God, and I will praise him,
my father's God, and I will exalt him.

[3] Yahweh is a warrior;
Yahweh is his name.

[4] He has thrown Pharaoh's chariots and army into the sea.
Pharaoh's chosen officers were drowned in the Sea of Reeds.

[5] The depths covered them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.

[6] Your right hand, Yahweh, is glorious in power;
your right hand, Yahweh, has shattered the enemy.

[7] In great majesty you overthrew those who rose up against you.
You sent out your wrath; it consumed them like stubble.

[8] By the blast of your nostrils the waters were piled up;
the flowing waters stood upright in a heap;
the deep water was congealed in the heart of the sea.

[9] The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will share out the plunder;
my desire will be satisfied on them;
I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them.'

[10] But you blew with your wind, and the sea covered them;
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

[11] Who is like you, Yahweh, among the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness,
honored in praises, doing miracles?

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12 You reached out with your right hand,
and the earth swallowed them.

13 In your covenant loyalty you have led the people you have rescued.
In your strength you have led them to the holy place where you live.

14 The peoples will hear, and they will tremble;
terror will seize the inhabitants of Philistia.

15 Then the chiefs of Edom will fear;
the soldiers of Moab will shake;
all the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away.

16 Terror and dread will fall on them.
Because of your arm's power, they will become as still as a stone
until your people pass by, Yahweh—
until the people you have rescued pass by.

17 You will bring them and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance,
the place, Yahweh, that you have made to live in,
the sanctuary, our Lord, that your hands have built.

18 Yahweh will reign forever and ever."

19For Pharaoh's horses went with his chariots and horsemen into the sea. Yahweh brought back the waters of the sea on them. But the people of Israel walked on dry land in the middle of the sea.20Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron, picked up a tambourine, and all the women went out with tambourines, dancing along with her.21Miriam sang to them:
"Sing to Yahweh, for he has triumphed gloriously.
The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea."

22Then Moses led Israel onward from the Sea of Reeds. They went out into the wilderness of Shur. They traveled for three days into the wilderness and found no water.23Then they came to Marah, but they could not drink the water there because it was bitter. So they named that place Marah.
24So the people complained to Moses and said, "What can we drink?"25Moses cried out to Yahweh, and Yahweh showed him a tree. Moses threw it into the water, and the water became sweet to drink. It was there that Yahweh gave them a strict law, and it was there that he tested them.26He said, "If you carefully listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, and do what is right in his eyes, and if you give ear to his commands and obey all his laws—I will put on you none of the diseases that I put on the Egyptians, for I am Yahweh who heals you."
27Then the people came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. They camped there by the water.

Exodus 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic songs in 15:1-18 and 15:21.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's laws

In this chapter, Moses talks about Yahweh's laws. The law of Moses is about to be introduced. Although it has not yet been formally introduced, this is what is being referenced in this chapter in anticipation of the revelation of the law of Moses. (See: lawofmoses and reveal)

Links:

Exodus 15:1 Notes

Exodus 15:1
General Information:

This is a song about the events that happened in Exodus 14:26-28.

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he has triumphed gloriously
It can be stated explicitly over whom Yahweh triumphed. Alternate translation: "he has achieved a glorious victory over the army of Egypt"
the horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea
Moses sang about God causing the sea to cover and drown the horse and rider as if God had thrown them into the sea. Alternate translation: "he has made the sea cover over the horse and rider" or "he has made the horse and rider drown in the sea"
the horse and its rider
This refers to all or many of the Egyptian horses and riders that were chasing the Israelites. Alternate translation: "the horses and their riders"
rider
This is a person who sits on a horse or travels in a chariot that a horse is pulling.
Exodus 15:2
Yah is my strength
Possible meanings are 1) "Yah is the one who gives me strength" or 2) "Yah is the strong one who protects me."
song
Moses calls Yahweh his song because Yahweh is the one he sings about. Alternate translation: "the one I sing about"
he has become my salvation
Moses calls God his salvation because God saved him. Alternate translation: "he has saved me" or "he is the one who saves me"
Exodus 15:3
Yahweh is a warrior
Moses calls God a warrior because God powerfully fought against the Egyptians and won. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is like a warrior"
Exodus 15:4
He has thrown Pharaoh's chariots and army into the sea
Moses sings about God causing the sea to cover Pharaohs chariots and army as if God had thrown them into the sea. Alternate translation: "he has made the sea cover over Pharaoh's chariots and army" or "He has made Pharaoh's chariot riders and army drown in the sea"
Exodus 15:5
they went down into the depths like a stone
Just as a stone does not float but sinks to the bottom of the sea, the enemy soldiers sank to the bottom of the sea. Alternate translation: "they went down into the deep water like a stone sinking to the bottom of the sea"
Exodus 15:6
Your right hand, Yahweh, is glorious in power
Moses speaks of God as if God had hands. The right hand refers to God's power or the things God does powerfully. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, your power is glorious" or "Yahweh, what you do is glorious in power"
your right hand, Yahweh, has shattered the enemy
Moses speaks of God as if God had hands. The right hand refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, your power has shattered the enemy" or "Yahweh, by your power you have shattered the enemy"
has shattered the enemy
Moses speaks of the enemy as if it were fragile and could be shattered like glass or pottery. Alternate translation: "has completely destroyed the enemy"
Exodus 15:7
those who rose up against you
Rebelling against God is spoken of as rising up against him. Alternate translation: "those who rebelled against you" or "your enemies"
You sent out your wrath
Moses speaks of God's wrath as if it were a servant that God sent out to do something. Alternate translation: "You showed your wrath" or "You acted according to your wrath"
it consumed them like stubble
Moses speaks of God's wrath as if it were fire that could completely burn up things. His enemies were completely destroyed like stubble in a fire. Alternate translation: "it completely destroyed your enemies like a fire that burns up straw"
Exodus 15:8
By the blast of your nostrils
Moses speaks of God as if God had a nose, and he speaks of the wind as if God blew the wind from his nose. Alternate translation: "You blew on the sea and"
Exodus 15:9
my desire will be satisfied on them
This can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "I will satisfy my desire on them" or "I will take all I want from them"
my hand will destroy them
The enemies speak of destroying the Israelites by the power of their hands as if it were their hands that would destroy them. Alternate translation: "I will destroy them with my hand"
Exodus 15:10
But you blew with your wind
Moses spoke about God making the wind blow as if God blew the wind through his nose or mouth. Alternate translation: "But you made the wind blow"
sank like lead in the mighty waters
Lead is a heavy metal that is commonly used to make things sink in water. The word "lead" here is used to show how fast God's enemies were destroyed. Alternate translation: "sank as fast as lead in the deep turbulent waters"
Exodus 15:11
Who is like you, Yahweh, among the gods?
Moses uses this question to show how great God is. Alternate translation: "O Yahweh, no one is like you among the gods!" or "Yahweh, none of the gods is like you!"
Who is like you, ... doing miracles?
Moses uses this question to show how great God is. Alternate translation: No one is like you. No one is majestic in holiness as you are, no one is honored in praises as you are, and no one does miracles as you do!"
Exodus 15:12
with your right hand
The phrase "right hand" represents the strong power of God. Alternate translation: "with your strong power"
You reached out with your right hand
Moses speaks about God causing something to happen as if

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God reached out with his hand. Alternate translation: "With your strong power you made it happen"

the earth swallowed them

Moses personifies the earth as if it could swallow or devour with it's mouth. Alternate translation: "the earth devoured them"

Exodus 15:14

tremble

This means to shake because you are afraid.

terror will seize the inhabitants of Philistia

Moses speaks of terror as if it were a person that could forcefully grab hold of someone and make them extremely afraid. Alternate translation: "the inhabitants of Philistia will be afraid"

Exodus 15:15

will melt away

Moses speaks of people becoming weak from their fear as melting away. Alternate translation: "will be weak from fear" or "will be afraid and faint"

Exodus 15:16

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to sing about how the people of other nations will feel when they see God's people.

Terror and dread will fall on them

These two words mean that fear will come upon them. Alternate translation: "Fear will come upon them"

dread

Dread is extreme fear or anxiety about something that is going to happen or might happen.

Because of your arm's power

God's arm represents his great strength. Alternate translation: "Because of your great strength"

they will become as still as a stone

Possible meanings are 1) "They will be silent like stone" or 2) "They will be motionless as stone"

Exodus 15:17

You will bring them

Where God would bring them can be stated clearly. Since Moses was not already in Canaan, some languages would use "take" rather than "bring." Alternate translation: "You will take your people to Canaan"

plant them on the mountain

Moses speaks about God giving his people the land to live in as if they were a tree that God was planting. Alternate translation: "settle them on the mountain" or "let them live on the mountain"

the mountain of your inheritance

This refers to Mount Zion in the land of Canaan.

of your inheritance

Moses speaks about God promising to give his people the mountain forever as if he were giving it to them as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "that you have given them as an inheritance"

that your hands have built

The phrase "your hands" refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "that you have built by your power"

Exodus 15:20

Miriam ... Aaron

Miriam was the older sister of Moses and Aaron.

tambourine

This is a musical instrument like a small drum that also has pieces of metal around the side that make a sound when shaken.

Exodus 15:21

he has triumphed gloriously

It can be stated explicitly over whom Yahweh triumphed. See how you translated this in [Exodus 15:1]

The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea

Miriam sang about God causing the sea to cover and drown the horse and rider as if God had thrown them into the sea. See how you translated this in [Exodus 15:1]

Exodus 15:22

Moses led Israel

The word "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Moses led the Israelite people"

wilderness of Shur

We do not know the exact locations of this place.

Exodus 15:23

Marah

We do not know the exact locations of this place.

Exodus 15:24

complained to Moses and said

"were unhappy and told Moses" or "angrily told Moses"

Exodus 15:26

the voice of Yahweh your God

Yahweh is speaking about his own voice. His voice represents what he says. Alternate translation: "my voice" or "what I say"

do what is right in his eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "do what Yahweh considers to be right"

I will put on you none of the diseases

God speaks of causing people to have diseases as putting diseases on them. Alternate translation: "I will not cause any of you to have the diseases"

Exodus 15:27

Elim

This is an oasis in the desert, a place with water and shade trees.

twelve

"12"

seventy

"70"

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16 [1]The people journeyed on from Elim, and all the community of people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.[2]The whole community of the people of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.[3]The people of Israel said to them, "If only we had died by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full. For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger."

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[4]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people will go out and gather a day's portion every day so that I may test them to see whether or not they will walk in my law.[5]It will come about on the sixth day, that they will gather twice as much as what they gathered every day before, and they will cook what they bring in."
[6]Then Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "In the evening you will know that it is Yahweh who has brought you out from the land of Egypt.[7]In the morning you will see Yahweh's glory, for he hears your complaining against him. Who are we for you to complain against us?"[8]Moses also said, "You will know this when Yahweh gives you meat in the evening and bread in the morning to the full—for he has heard the complaints that you speak against him. Who are Aaron and I? Your complaints are not against us; they are against Yahweh."
[9]Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the community of the people of Israel, 'Come near before Yahweh, for he has heard your complaints.'"[10]It came about, as Aaron spoke to the whole community of the people of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, Yahweh's glory appeared in the cloud.[11]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[12]"I have heard the complaints of the people of Israel. Speak to them and say, 'In the evening you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am Yahweh your God.'"

[13]It came about in the evening that quails came up and covered the camp. In the morning the dew lay round about the camp.[14]When the dew was gone, there on the surface of the wilderness were thin flakes like frost on the ground.[15]When the people of Israel saw it, they said one to another, "What is it?" They did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that Yahweh has given you to eat.
[16]This is the command that Yahweh has given: 'You must gather, each one of you, the amount you need to eat, an omer for each person of the number of your people. This is how you will gather it: Gather enough to eat for every person who lives in your tent.'"[17]The people of Israel did so. Some gathered more, some gathered less.[18]When they measured it with an omer measure, those who had gathered much had nothing left over, and those who had gathered little had no lack. Each person gathered enough to meet their need.
[19]Then Moses said to them, "No one must leave any of it until morning."[20]However, they did not listen to Moses. Some of them left some of it until morning, but it bred worms and became foul. Then Moses became angry with them.[21]They gathered it morning by morning. Each person gathered enough to eat for that day. When the sun became hot, it melted.
[22]It came about that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each person. All the leaders of the community came and told this to Moses.[23]He said to them, "This is what Yahweh has said: 'Tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath in Yahweh's honor. Bake what you want to bake, and boil what you want to boil. All that remains over, set it aside for yourselves until morning.'"
[24]So they set it aside until morning, as Moses had instructed. It did not become foul, nor was there any worm in it.[25]Moses said, "Eat that food today, for today is a day reserved as a Sabbath to honor Yahweh. Today you will not find it in the fields.
[26]You will gather it during six days, but the seventh day is the Sabbath. On the Sabbath there will be no manna."[27]It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather manna, but they found none.
[28]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?[29]See, Yahweh has given you the Sabbath. So on the sixth day he is giving you bread for two days. Each of you must stay in his own place; no one must go out from his place on the seventh day."[30]So the people rested on the seventh day.

[31]The people of Israel called that food "manna." It was white like coriander seed, and its taste was like wafers made with honey.[32]Moses said, "This is what Yahweh has commanded: 'Let an omer of manna be kept throughout your people's generations so that your descendants might see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, after I brought you out from the land of Egypt.'"
[33]Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna into it. Preserve it before Yahweh to be kept throughout the people's generations."[34]As Yahweh commanded Moses, Aaron stored it beside the covenant decrees in the ark.[35]The people of Israel ate manna forty years until they came to inhabited land. They ate it until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan.[36]Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.

Exodus 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Complaints

The Israelites complained about the amount of food Yahweh gave them, even when he miraculously provided their food for them. This is intended to show their ungratefulness and their sinful view of Yahweh. (See: sin)

Prohibition against storing food

The people were not allowed to store the food, called manna, they were provided with. This is because they were to trust in Yahweh to provide for their needs every day. (See: trust)

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Sabbath
This is the first recorded celebration of the Sabbath rest. (See: sabbath)
Ark of the covenant
Although the covenant has not yet been made, it is referenced in Exodus 16:34. This is probably done either in anticipation of the building of the ark or as an editorial comment made by Moses after these events. (See: covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wilderness of Sin
Sin is the name of a part of the Sinai Wilderness. It is not the description of a place, and it has nothing to do with sinning.

Links:

Exodus 16:1 Notes

Exodus 16:1
wilderness of Sin
The word "Sin" here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness. It is not the English word "sin."
on the fifteenth day of the second month
This time coincides with the end of April and the beginning of May on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "on day 15 of the second month"
Exodus 16:2
The whole community of the people of Israel complained
"All the Israelites complained." This is a generalization. Moses and Aaron did not complain. Alternate translation: "The Israelites complained"
complained
"were angry and spoke"
Exodus 16:3
If only we had died
This is a way of saying that they wished that they had died. Alternate translation: "We wish that we had died"
by Yahweh's hand
The phrase "Yahweh's hand" represents Yahweh's action. Alternate translation: "by Yahweh's action"
Exodus 16:4
I will rain down bread from heaven for you
God speaks of food coming down from heaven as if it were rain. Alternate translation: "I will make bread come down from heaven like rain" or "I will make bread fall to you from the sky"
bread
God speaks of the food that he will send as if it were bread. The Israelites would eat this food every day, just as they had eaten bread every day before this. Alternate translation: "food" or "food like bread"
walk in my law
God speaks of obeying his law as walking in it. Alternate translation: "obey my law" or "live according to my law"
my law
"my command"
Exodus 16:5
It will come about on the sixth day, that they
"It will happen on the sixth day that they" or "On the sixth day they"
on the sixth day
"on day 6"
twice
two times
Exodus 16:7
Who are we for you to complain against us?
Moses and Aaron used this question to show the people that it was foolish to complain against them. Alternate translation: "We are not powerful enough for you to complain against us." or "It is foolish to complain against us, because we cannot do what you want."
Exodus 16:8
bread
Moses speaks of the food that God will send as if it were bread. The Israelites would eat this food every day, just as they had eaten bread every day before this. See how you translated it in [Exodus 16:4]
Who are Aaron and I?
Moses used this question to show the people that he and Aaron did not have the power to give them what they wanted. Alternate translation: "Aaron and I cannot give you what you want."
Your complaints are not against us; they are against Yahweh
The people were complaining against Moses and Aaron, who were Yahweh's servants. So by complaining against them, the people were really complaining against Yahweh. Alternate translation: Your complaints are not really against us; they are against Yahweh, because we are his servants"
Exodus 16:10
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. The important event here is the people seeing Yahweh's glory. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
behold
The word "behold" here shows that the people saw something interesting.
Exodus 16:12
bread
God speaks of the food that he will send as if it were bread. The Israelites would eat this food every day, just as they had eaten bread every day before this. See how you translated it in [Exodus 16:4]
Exodus 16:13
It came about ... that
This phrase is used here to mark an important part of the events. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
quails
These are small, plump birds.
Exodus 16:14

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like frost
The original readers knew what frost is like, so this phrase would help them understand what the flakes were like. Frost is frozen dew that forms on the ground. It is very fine. Alternate translation: "that looked like frost" or "that was fine like frost"
Exodus 16:15
bread
Moses speaks of the food that God sent as if it were bread. The Israelites would eat this food every day, just as they had eaten bread every day before this. See how you translated it in [Exodus 16:4]
Exodus 16:16
Connecting Statement:
Moses continues telling the people about the food that God was providing for them.
omer
2 liters
Exodus 16:22
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. Verses 16:22-30 tell about what the people did concerning the manna on the sixth and seventh days of the week. If your language has a way for marking this as a new part of the story, you could consider using it here.
on the sixth day
"on day 6"
twice
two times
bread
This refers to the bread that appeared as thin flakes on the ground each morning.
Exodus 16:23
a solemn rest
"a day to rest quietly and think seriously"
Exodus 16:24
did not become foul
"did not smell rotten"
Exodus 16:25
today is a day reserved as a Sabbath to honor Yahweh
"today is a Sabbath and is to be used only for honoring Yahweh"
Exodus 16:26
but the seventh day
"but on day seven"
manna
This was the name the Israelites gave to the bread that Yahweh caused to appear for them each morning.
Exodus 16:27
they found none
"they did not find any manna"
Exodus 16:28
General Information:
Yahweh speaks to Moses, but the word "you" refers to the people of Israel in general.
How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?
God used this question to scold the people because they did not obey his laws. Alternate translation: "You people still do not keep my commandments and laws!"
to keep my commandments and my laws
"to obey my commandments and my laws"
Exodus 16:29
Yahweh has given you the Sabbath
Yahweh speaks about teaching people to rest on the Sabbath as if the Sabbath were a gift. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, have taught you to rest on the Sabbath"
sixth day ... two days ... seventh day
"day 6 ... 2 days ... day 7"
bread
This refers to the bread that appeared as thin flakes on the ground each morning.
Exodus 16:31
coriander seed
Coriander is also known as cilantro. People dry the seeds and grind them into a powder and put it in food to give it flavor.
wafers
very thin biscuits or crackers
Exodus 16:32
omer
2 liters
bread
This refers to the bread that appeared as thin flakes on the ground each morning.
Exodus 16:33
an omer
"two liters"
Exodus 16:36
Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah
An omer and an ephah are both containers for measuring volume. The original readers would have known how much an ephah was. This sentence would help them know how much an omer was. For languages that do not use fractions, this can be reworded. Alternate translation: "Now ten omers equal one ephah"

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17 [1]The whole community of the people of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, following Yahweh's instructions.
They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.[2]So the people blamed Moses for their situation and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test Yahweh?"[3]The people were very thirsty, and they complained against Moses. They said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt? To kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"
[4]Then Moses cried out to Yahweh, "What should I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."[5]Yahweh said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take with you some elders of Israel. Take with you the staff with which you struck the river, and go.[6]I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you will strike the rock. Water will come out of it for the people to drink." Then Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.[7]He named that place Massah and Meribah

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because the people of Israel were quarreling and because they had tested the Lord by saying, "Is Yahweh among us or not?"

[8]Then an army of the Amalek people came and attacked Israel at Rephidim.[9]So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men and go out. Fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."[10]So Joshua fought Amalek as Moses had instructed, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.
[11]While Moses was holding his hands up, Israel was winning; when he let his hands rest, Amalek would begin to win.
[12]When Moses' hands became heavy, Aaron and Hur took a stone and put it under him for him to sit on. At the same time, Aaron and Hur held his hands up, one person on one side of him, and the other person on the other side. So Moses' hands were held steady until the sun went down.[13]So Joshua laid waste to Amalek and his people with the sword.
[14]Yahweh said to Moses, "Write this in a book and read it in Joshua's hearing, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under the skies."[15]Then Moses built an altar and he called it "Yahweh is my banner."[16]He said, "For a hand was lifted up to the throne of Yahweh—that Yahweh will wage war with Amalek from generation to generation."

Exodus 17 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Moses uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these questions is to convince people of their sin. Likewise, the people's rhetorical question showed their ignorance. (See: and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wilderness of Sin

Sin is the name of a part of the Sinai Wilderness. It is not the description of a place, and it has nothing to do with sinning.

Links:

Exodus 17:1 Notes

Exodus 17:1

wilderness of Sin

The word "Sin" here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness. It is not the English word "sin." See how you translated this in [Exodus 16:1]

Rephidim

This means "the resting place," a place to rest on long journeys through the wilderness.

Exodus 17:2

Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test Yahweh?

Moses uses these questions to scold the people. Alternate translation: "You should not quarrel with me! You should not test Yahweh!"

Exodus 17:3

To kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?

The people use this question to accuse Moses of wanting to kill them. Alternate translation: "You only brought us out here to kill us and our children and livestock by not letting us have any water to drink!"

Exodus 17:7

Massah

a place in the desert whose name means "testing"

Meribah

a place in the desert whose name means "complaining"

Exodus 17:8

Rephidim

This was the name of a place in the desert.

Exodus 17:10

So Joshua fought Amalek

Joshua represents himself and the Israelites that he led into battle. Alternate translation: "So Joshua and the men he chose fought against the Amalekites"

Hur

Hur was a friend of Moses and Aaron.

Exodus 17:11

Israel was winning ... Amalek would begin to win

The words "Israel" and "Amalek" represent the fighters from those groups. Alternate translation: "the Israelite fighters were winning ... the Amalekite fighters would begin to win"

Exodus 17:12

hands became heavy

The author writes of Moses's arms becoming tired as if his hands became heavy. Alternate translation: "arms became tired"

Exodus 17:13

laid waste to

This is a euphemism for "killed." Alternate translation: "killed" or "destroyed"

Amalek and his people

The name "Amalek" is either 1) a personification of the nation of Amalek. Alternate translation: "the people of the nation of Amalek" Or 2) a metonym for the land on which the Amalekite people lived. Alternate translation: "the land of Amalek and the people who lived there"

with the sword

The sword represents battle. Alternate translation: "in battle"

Exodus 17:14

I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek

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God speaks of destroying Amalek as if he were removing people's memory of Amalek. When a group of people is completely destroyed, there is nothing to remind people about them. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy Amalek"

Amalek

This refers to the Amalekites. Alternate translation: Amalekites"

Exodus 17:16

a hand was lifted up

People would raise their hand when they made a promise or pledge, so raising the hand represents making a promise. Alternate translation: "a promise was made"

a hand was lifted up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh lifted up his hand" or "Yahweh made a solemn promise"

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18 [1]Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people. He heard that Yahweh had brought Israel out of Egypt.[2]Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her home,[3]and her two sons; the name of the one son was Gershom, for Moses had said, "I have been a foreigner in a foreign land."[4]The name of the other was Eliezer, for Moses had said, "My ancestor's God was my help. He rescued me from Pharaoh's sword."
[5]Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with Moses' sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped at the mountain of God.[6]He said to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons."
[7]Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and kissed him. They asked about each other's welfare and then went into the tent.[8]Moses told his father-in-law all that Yahweh had done to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for Israel's sake, about all the hardships that had come to them along the way, and how Yahweh had rescued them.
[9]Jethro rejoiced over all the good that Yahweh had done for Israel, in that he had rescued them from the hand of the Egyptians.[10]Jethro said, "May Yahweh be praised, for he has rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, and delivered the people from the hand of the Egyptians.[11]Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods, because when the Egyptians treated the Israelites arrogantly, God rescued his people."
[12]Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices for God. Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat a meal before God with Moses' father-in-law.

[13]On the next day Moses sat down to judge the people. The people stood around him from morning until evening.[14]When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing with the people? Why is it that you sit alone and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?"
[15]Moses said to his father-in-law, "The people come to me to ask for God's direction.[16]When they have a dispute, they come to me. I decide between one person and another, and I teach them God's statutes and laws."
[17]Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not very good.[18]You will surely wear yourselves out, you and the people who are with you. This burden is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it by yourself.[19]Listen to me. I will give you advice, and God will be with you, because you are the people's representative to God, and you bring their disputes to him.[20]You must teach them his statutes and laws. You must show them the way to walk and the work to do.
[21]Furthermore, you must choose capable men from all the people, men who honor God, men of truth who hate unjust gain. You must put them over people, to be leaders in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and of tens.[22]They will judge the people in all routine cases, but the difficult cases they will bring to you. As for all the small cases, they can judge those themselves. In that way it will be easier for you, and they will carry the burden with you.[23]If you do this, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure, and the entire people will be able to go home in peace."
[24]So Moses listened to his father-in-law's words and did everything that he had said.[25]Moses chose capable men from all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.[26]They judged the people in normal circumstances. The difficult cases they brought to Moses, but they themselves judged all the small cases.
[27]Then Moses let his father-in-law leave, and Jethro went back into his own land.

Exodus 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Leadership lessons

Jethro taught Moses an important leadership lesson in this chapter. Many scholars look at this chapter for important leadership lessons. Moses delegated some of his responsibilities to other godly men so that he would not become worn out by all the demands made of him. (See: godly)

Links:

Exodus 18:1 Notes

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Exodus 18:1

Moses' father-in-law

This refers to the father of the wife of Moses.

Exodus 18:2

took Zipporah, Moses' wife

Possible meanings are 1) Jethro took Zipporah to Moses, or 2) Jethro had earlier welcomed back Zipporah.

after he had sent her home

This is something Moses had done earlier. The full meaning of the can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "after Moses had sent her home to her parents"

Exodus 18:3

and her two sons

This is the ending of the sentence that begins with the words "Jethro ... took Zipporah" in verse 2. Possible meanings are 1) Jethro took Zipporah and her two sons to Moses, or 2) Jethro had earlier welcomed back Zipporah and her two sons.

Gershom

This is a son of Moses and Zipporah, whose name means "foreigner."

Exodus 18:4

Eliezer

This is a son of Moses and Zipporah, whose name means "God is the one who helps me."

Pharaoh's sword

This represents being killed by Pharaoh or Pharaoh's army. Alternate translation: "being killed by Pharaoh" or "being killed by Pharaoh's army"

Exodus 18:5

where he was camped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where he camped with the Israelites"

Exodus 18:7

bowed down, and kissed him

These symbolic acts were the normal way that people showed great respect and devotion in that culture.

Exodus 18:8

for Israel's sake

The word "Israel" represents the Israelite people. Alternate translation: "in order to help the Israelite people"

all the hardships that had come to them

Moses writes of hardships happening to them as if hardships had come to them. Alternate translation: "all the hardships that had happened to them" or "all the hardships they had experienced"

Exodus 18:9

the hand of the Egyptians

The hand represents the power of someone to do something. Alternate translation: "the power of the Egyptians ... the power of Pharaoh" or "what the Egyptians were doing to you"

Exodus 18:10

the hand of the Egyptians ... the hand of Pharaoh

The hand represents the power of someone to do something. Alternate translation: "the power of the Egyptians ... the power of Pharaoh" or "what the Egyptians were doing to you ... what Pharaoh was doing to you"

Exodus 18:14

What is this that you are doing with the people?

Jethro uses this question to show Moses that what he was doing was not good. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be doing all of this for the people!"

Why is it that you sit alone ... from morning until evening?

Jethro used this question to show Moses that he was doing too much. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not sit alone ... from morning till evening!"

you sit alone

The word "sit" here is a metonym for "judge." Judges would sit while they listened to people's complaints. Alternate translation: "you judge alone" or "you are the only one who judges the people"

Exodus 18:18

You will surely wear yourselves out

"you will surely make yourselves very tired"

This burden is too heavy for you

Jethro speaks of the hard work that Moses is doing as if it were a physical burden that Moses was carrying. Alternate translation: "This work is too much for you"

Exodus 18:19

you advice

"you guidance" or "you instruction"

God will be with you

Jethro speaks of God helping Moses as if God would be with Moses. Alternate translation: "God will help you" or "God will give you wisdom"

you bring their disputes to him

Jethro speaks of Moses telling God about their disputes as if Moses were bringing their disputes to God. Alternate translation: "you tell God about their disputes" or "you tell God what they are arguing about"

Exodus 18:20

You must show them the way to walk

Jethro speaks of living or behaving like walking. Alternate translation: "You must show them how to live" or "You must show them how to behave"

Exodus 18:21

Connecting Statement:

Jethro continues speaking to Moses.

Furthermore, you must choose

"In addition, you must choose" or "You must also choose"

You must put them over people

Jethro speaks of giving them authority over people as putting them over people. Alternate translation: You must give them authority over people"

leaders in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and of tens

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of people in each group. Alternate translation: "leaders in charge of groups of 1,000 people, groups of 100 people, groups of 50 people, and groups of 10 people" or 2) these numbers are not exact, but represent groups of people of various sizes. Alternate translation: "leaders in charge of very small groups, small groups, large groups, and very large groups"

Exodus 18:22

routine cases

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"the simple cases"

the difficult cases they will bring to you

Jethro speaks of telling Moses about the difficult cases as bringing him the difficult cases. Alternate translation: "the difficult cases they will tell you about" or "when there are difficult cases, they will tell you about them so you can judge them"

they will carry the burden with you

Jethro speaks of the hard work that they would do as if it were a burden that they would carry. Alternate translation: "they will do the hard work with you" or "they will help you do the hard work"

Exodus 18:23

endure

What they will endure can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "endure the stress of the work"

in peace

They will be satisfied that the dispute has been settled justly.

Exodus 18:25

heads over the people

Moses writes of the leaders of people as if they were the head of a body. Alternate translation: "leaders of the people"

capable men

What they were capable of doing can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "men who were able to lead" or "men who were able to judge"

leaders in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of people in each group. Alternate translation: "leaders in charge of groups of 1,000 people, groups of 100 people, groups of 50 people, and groups of 10 people" or 2) these numbers are not exact, but represent groups of people of various sizes. Alternate translation: "leaders in charge of very small groups, small groups, large groups, and very large groups" See how you translated this in [Exodus 18:21]

Exodus 18:26

judged the people in normal circumstances

"judged the people most of the time" or "judged the people's easy cases"

The difficult cases they brought to Moses

The author writes of telling Moses about the difficult cases as bringing him the difficult cases. Alternate translation: "the difficult cases they told Moses about" or "when there were difficult cases, they told Moses about them so that he would judge them"

the small cases

"the easy cases"

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19 [1]In the third month after the people of Israel had gone out from the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the wilderness of Sinai.[2]After they left Rephidim and came to the wilderness of Sinai, they camped in the wilderness in front of the mountain.
[3]Moses went up to God. Yahweh called to him from the mountain and said, "You must tell the house of Jacob, the people of Israel:[4]You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.[5]Now then, if you obediently listen to my voice and keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession from among all peoples, for all the earth is mine.[6]You will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation for me. These are the words that you must speak to the people of Israel."

[7]So Moses came and summoned the elders of the people. He set before them all these words that Yahweh had commanded him.[8]All the people answered together and said, "We will do everything that Yahweh has said." Then Moses came to report the people's words to Yahweh.[9]Yahweh said to Moses, "I will come to you in a thick cloud so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe you forever." Then Moses told the people's words to Yahweh.
[10]Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to the people. Today and tomorrow you must set them apart to me, and make them wash their garments.[11]Be ready for the third day, for on the third day Yahweh will come down to Mount Sinai.
[12]You must set boundaries all around the mountain for the people. Say to them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch its border. Whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death.'[13]No one's hand may touch him. Rather, he must certainly be stoned or shot. Whether an animal or a man, he shall not live. When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they may come up to the mountain."
[14]Then Moses went down from the mountain to the people. He set apart the people to Yahweh and they washed their garments.[15]He said to the people, "Be ready on the third day; do not go near your wives."

[16]On the third day, when it was morning, there were thunder and lightning bolts and a thick cloud on the mountain, and the sound of a very loud ram's horn. All the people in the camp trembled.[17]Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.[18]Mount Sinai was completely covered with smoke because Yahweh descended on it in fire and smoke. The smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently.
[19]When the sound of the ram's horn grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in a voice.[20]Yahweh came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, and he summoned Moses to the top. So Moses went up.[21]Yahweh said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people; otherwise they might break out to Yahweh to look, and many of them might perish.[22]Let the priests also who come near to me set themselves apart—prepare themselves for my coming—so that I do not break out against them."

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[23]Moses said to Yahweh, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for you commanded us: 'Set boundaries around the mountain and set it apart to Yahweh.'"[24]Yahweh said to him, "Go down and bring up Aaron with you, but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Yahweh, or he will break out against them."[25]So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

Exodus 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"A kingdom of priests"

The function of the priests was to intercede for the people. The Levites were the only priests in Israel; this is a metaphor indicating that the nation was to intercede for the world as a whole. They were also to be holy, or set apart, from the rest of the world. (See: priest and and holy)

Revealing the Law

The events of this chapter are concerned with preparing the people to receive the law of Moses. The people go through all of this to prepare themselves for the law, which show the great importance of this event for Israel. (See: lawofmoses)

Links:

Exodus 19:1 Notes

Exodus 19:1

In the third month ... on the same day

This means they arrived at the wilderness on the first day of the month just as they left Egypt on the first day of the month. The first day of the third month on the Hebrew calendar is near the middle of May on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "In the third month ... on the first day of the month"

had gone out from

"had left"

Exodus 19:2

Rephidim

This is an area on the edge of the wilderness of Sinai where the people of Israel had been camping. See how you translated this name in [Exodus 17:1]

Exodus 19:3

the house of Jacob

The word "house" here represents Jacob's family and descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Jacob"

the house of Jacob, the people of Israel

The phrase "the people of Israel" explains what "the house of Jacob" means.

Exodus 19:4

You have seen

The word "you" here refers to the Israelites. Yahweh is telling Moses what to tell the Israelites.

I carried you on eagles' wings

God speaks of caring for his people while they traveled as if he were an eagle and carried them on his wings. Alternate translation: "I helped you travel like an eagle that carries her babies on her wings"

Exodus 19:5

obediently listen to my voice

Obediently can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "listen to my voice and obey me"

my voice

God's voice represents what he says. Alternate translation: "what I say" or "my words"

keep my covenant

"do what my covenant requires you to do"

special possession

"treasure"

Exodus 19:6

a kingdom of priests

God speaks of his people as if they were priests. Alternate translation: "a kingdom of people who are like priests" or "a kingdom of people who do what priests do"

Exodus 19:7

set before them all these words

The author writes of Moses telling people things as if he were setting the words before them. Alternate translation: "told them all these words"

all these words that Yahweh had commanded him

"all that Yahweh had commanded him"

Exodus 19:8

Moses came to report

Where Moses went can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Moses went back up the mountain to report"

the people's words

The word "words" refers to what the people said. Alternate translation: "what the people said"

Exodus 19:10

you must set them apart to me

This probably means "tell them to dedicate themselves to me" or "tell them to purify themselves for me."

their garments

"their clothes" or "what they are wearing"

Exodus 19:11

Be ready

This was a command to the people of Israel.

Exodus 19:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

set boundaries

"make a boundary." This was probably some kind of mark, but it could have been a fence.

Whoever touches the mountain will surely be put to death

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This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "You must surely put to death any person who touches the mountain" or "You must surely kill anyone who touches the mountain"

Whoever touches

"Any person who touches" or "Anyone who touches"

Exodus 19:13

No one's hand may touch him

The word "him" refers to anyone who touches the mountain. Alternate translation: "No one's hand may touch anyone who does that" or "No one may touch anyone who touches the mountain"

Whether an animal or a man

"Whether he is an animal or a man" or "Whether it is an animal or a man that touches the mountain"

he must certainly be stoned or shot

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must certainly stone him or shoot him"

be ... shot

This refers to being killed by someone who shoots arrows from a bow.

a long blast

"a long, loud sound"

Exodus 19:15

do not go near your wives

This is a polite way of talking about sleeping with their wives. Alternate translation: "do not sleep with your wives"

Exodus 19:16

All the people ... trembled

"All the people ... shook with fear"

Exodus 19:18

Yahweh descended

"Yahweh came down"

like the smoke of a furnace

This shows that it was a very large amount of smoke. Alternate translation: "like the smoke from a very large fire"

furnace

an oven that can be made extremely hot

Exodus 19:19

grew louder and louder

"continued to become louder and louder"

in a voice

The word "voice" here refers to a sound that God made. Possible meanings are 1) "by speaking loudly like thunder" or 2) "by speaking" or 3) "by causing thunder to sound"

Exodus 19:20

he summoned Moses

"he commanded Moses to come up"

Exodus 19:21

they might break out

God spoke about people walking past the boundary

Exodus 19:24

break through

God spoke about people walking past the boundary as if they were breaking through a fence and walking through it. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 19:21]

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20 [1]God spoke all these words:

[2]"I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
[3]You must have no other gods before me.

[4]You must not make for yourself a carved figure nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water below.[5]You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God. I punish the ancestors' wickedness by bringing punishment on the descendants, to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me.[6]But I show steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

[7]You must not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain, for I will not hold guiltless anyone who takes my name in vain.

[8]Remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart to me.[9]You must labor and do all your work for six days.[10]But the seventh day is a Sabbath for Yahweh your God. On it you must not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the foreigner who is within your gates.[11]For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and earth, the sea, and everything that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart.

[12]Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you.
[13]You must not murder anyone.
[14]You must not commit adultery.

[15]You must not steal from anyone.
[16]You must not give false testimony against your neighbor.
[17]You must not covet your neighbor's house; you must not covet your neighbor's wife, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

[18]All the people saw the thundering and the lightning, and heard the sound of the ram's horn, and saw the mountain

smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled and stood far off.[19]They said to Moses, "Speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die."[20]Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, for God has come to test you so that the honor of him may be in you, and so that you do not sin."[21]So the people stood far off, and Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.

[22]Yahweh said to Moses, "This is what you must tell the people of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.[23]You will not make for yourselves other gods alongside me, gods of silver or gods of gold.
[24]You must make an earthen altar for me, and you must sacrifice on it your burnt offerings, fellowship offerings, your sheep and your cattle. In every place where I cause my name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you.[25]If you make me an altar of stone, you must not build it of cut stones, for if you use your tools on it, you will have defiled it.[26]You must not go up to my altar on steps, so that your nakedness is not exposed.'"

Exodus 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The instructions recorded in this chapter are commonly known as the "ten commandments."

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant

Yahweh's covenant faithfulness is now based on the covenant he made with Abraham as well as the covenant he is making with Moses. (See: covenantfaith and covenant)

Links:

Exodus 20:1 Notes

Exodus 20:2
house of slavery
"place where you were slaves"
Exodus 20:3
You must have no other gods before me
"You must not worship any other gods but me"
Exodus 20:4
nor the likeness
"and you must not make the likeness"
Exodus 20:5
You must not bow down to them or worship them
The word "them" refers to carved figures or idols.
jealous
God wants his people to worship only him.
punish the ancestors' wickedness by bringing punishment on the descendants
God will punish people for the sin of their parents.
to the third and the fourth generation
"to generations 3 and 4." This refers to the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Alternate translation: "even on the grandchildren and great-grandchildren
Exodus 20:6
I show steadfast love to thousands of those who love me
The abstract noun "love" can be restated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "I faithfully love thousands of those who love me"
to thousands of those who love me
The word "thousands" is a metonym for a number too many to count. Alternate translation: "forever to those who love me"
Exodus 20:7
take the name of Yahweh your God
"use the name of Yahweh your God"
in vain
"carelessly" or "without proper respect"
I will not hold guiltless
This double-negative can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "I will certainly consider guilty" or "I will certainly punish"
Exodus 20:8
set it apart
"set it apart for a special purpose"
Exodus 20:9
do all your work
"do all your usual duties"
Exodus 20:10
within your gates
Cities often had walls around them to keep out enemies, and gates for people to go in and out. Alternate translation: "within your community" or "inside your city"
Exodus 20:11
on the seventh day
"on day seven." Here "seventh" is the ordinal number for "7."
blessed the Sabbath day
Possible meanings are that 1) God caused the Sabbath day to produce good results, or 2) God said that the Sabbath day was good.
Exodus 20:14
You must not commit adultery
"You must not have sex with anyone other than your spouse"
Exodus 20:16
must not give false testimony
"must not speak a false report" or "must not tell lies about someone"
Exodus 20:17
must not covet

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"must not strongly want to have" or "must not want to take"
Exodus 20:18
the mountain smoking
"smoke coming from the mountain"
they trembled
"they shook with fear"
stood far off
"stood far away" or "stood at a distance"
Exodus 20:20
so that the honor of him may be in you, and so that you do not sin
"so that you will honor him and not sin"
Exodus 20:21
Moses approached
"Moses went closer to"
Exodus 20:22
This is what you must tell the people of Israel
"Tell the people of Israel this"
You yourselves have seen that I have talked with you from heaven
"You have heard me speak to you from heaven"
Exodus 20:23
You will not make for yourselves other gods alongside me
"You must not make idols as other gods instead of me"
gods of silver or gods of gold
"gods made out of silver or gold" or "idols made out of silver or gold"
Exodus 20:24
earthen altar
an altar made of materials from the ground, such as stone, soil, or clay
cause my name to be honored
Here "name" is a metonym for God's being. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "choose for you to honor me"
Exodus 20:26
You must not go up to my altar on steps
"Do not build steps up to the altar and go up to it on those steps"
your nakedness
"your private parts"

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21 [1]"Now these are the decrees that you must set before them:

[2]"If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve for six years, and in the seventh year he will go free without paying anything.
[3]If he came by himself, he must go free by himself; if he is married, then his wife must go free with him.[4]If his master gave him a wife and she bore him sons or daughters, the wife and her children will belong to her master, and he must go free by himself.
[5]But if the servant plainly says, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,"[6]then his master must bring him to God. The master must bring him to a door or doorpost, and his master must bore his ear through with an awl. Then the servant will serve him for life.

[7]If a man sells his daughter as a female servant, she must not go free as the male servants do.[8]If she does not please her master, who has selected her for himself, then he must let her be redeemed. He has no right to sell her to a foreign people. He has no such right, since he has treated her deceitfully.
[9]If her master selects her as a wife for his son, he must treat her the same as if she were his daughter.[10]If he takes another wife for himself, he must not diminish her food, clothing, or her marital rights.[11]But if he does not provide these three things for her, then she can go free without paying any money.

[12]Whoever strikes a man so that he dies, that person must surely be put to death.[13]If the man did not lie in wait for him, but God allowed it to happen, then I will appoint for you a place to where he can flee.[14]If a man arrogantly attacks his neighbor and kills him cleverly, then you must take him, even if he is at God's altar, so that he may die.

[15]Whoever hits his father or mother must surely be put to death.
[16]Whoever kidnaps a person—whether the kidnapper sells him, or that person is found in his hand—that kidnapper must be put to death.
[17]Whoever curses his father or his mother must surely be put to death.

[18]If men fight and one hits the other with a stone or with his fist, and that person does not die, but is confined to his bed;
[19]then if he recovers and is able to walk about using his staff, the man who struck him must pay for the loss of his time; he must also see that he is completely healed. But that man is not guilty of murder.

[20]If a man hits his male servant or his female servant with a staff, and if the servant dies as a result of the blow, then that man must surely be punished.[21]However, if the servant lives for a day or two, there is to be no vengeance, for he will have suffered the loss of the servant.

[22]If men fight together and hurt a pregnant woman so that she miscarries, but there is no other injury to her, then the guilty man must surely be forced to pay a fine as the woman's husband demands it from him, and he must pay as the judges determine.[23]But if there is serious injury, then you must give a life for a life,[24]an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot,[25]a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, or a bruise for a bruise.

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[26]If a man hits the eye of his male servant or of his female servant and destroys it, then he must let the servant go free in compensation for his eye.[27]If he knocks out a tooth of his male servant or female servant, he must let the servant go free as compensation for the tooth.

[28]If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox must surely be stoned, and its flesh must not be eaten; but the ox's owner must be acquitted of guilt.[29]But if the ox had a habit of goring in the past, and its owner was warned but did not keep it in, and the ox has killed a man or a woman, that ox must be stoned, and its owner also must be put to death.[30]If a ransom is required for his life, he must pay for the redemption of his life whatever he is required to pay.
[31]If the ox has gored a man's son or daughter, the ox's owner must do what this decree requires him to do.[32]If the ox gores a male servant or a female servant, the ox's owner must pay thirty shekels of silver, and the ox must be stoned.

[33]If a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it,[34]the owner of the pit must repay the loss. He must give money to the dead animal's owner, and the dead animal will become his.

[35]If one man's ox hurts another man's ox so that it dies, then they must sell the live ox and divide its price, and they must also divide the dead ox.[36]But if it was known that the ox had a habit of goring in time past, and its owner has not kept it in, he must surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal will become his own.

Exodus 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant with Moses

Although the covenant Yahweh made with Moses began in the previous chapter, it formally begins with the statement, "Now these are the decrees that you must set before them." The law of Moses was a major part of this covenant. (See: covenant and lawofmoses)

Slavery

This passage does not condone slavery as an acceptable practice. However, it does impose some restrictions on the practice.

Justice in society

The rules and law of this chapter are not intended to be followed by every society. Israel was God's chosen nation and was required to live in a special way. These laws concerned creating a just society and a holy nation. (See: elect and justice and holy)

Links:

Exodus 21:1 Notes

Exodus 21:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

you must set before them

"you must give them" or "you must tell them"

Exodus 21:2

General Information:

Yahweh tells Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

Exodus 21:3

If he came by himself, he must go free by himself

What "by himself" means can be stated clearly. Some languages require that the additional condition, that he marries while a slave, be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "If he became a slave while he had no wife, and if he marries while he is a slave, the master need only free the man"

by himself

"alone" or "without a wife"

if he is married

"if he was married when he became a slave" or "if he came as a married man"

Exodus 21:5

plainly says

"clearly says"

I will not go out free

"I do not want my master to set me free"

Exodus 21:6

bore his ear through

"put a hole in his ear"

awl

a pointed tool used to make a hole

for life

"until the end of his life" or "until he dies"

Exodus 21:8

has selected

"has chosen"

he must let her be redeemed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must allow her father to buy her back"

has no right to sell

"has no authority to sell"

he has treated her deceitfully

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"he has deceived her"
Exodus 21:9
selects her as a wife for his son
"decides that she is the one who will be his son's wife"
Exodus 21:10
he must not diminish her food, clothing, or her marital rights
"he must give the first wife the same food, clothing, and marital rights she had before"
must not diminish her food
"must not take away her food" or "must not give her less food"
or her marital rights
This includes things that a husband must do for his wife, including sleeping with her. Alternate translation: "and he must continue to sleep with her as before"
Exodus 21:12
strikes a man
"hits a man" or "attacks a man"
that person must surely be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must certainly execute that person" or "you must certainly kill that person"
Exodus 21:13
did not lie in wait for him
"did not plan to harm him" or "did not do it on purpose"
I will appoint for you a place to where he can flee
The purpose of choosing a place can be stately clearly here. Alternate translation: "I will choose a place that he can run away to be safe"
Exodus 21:14
cleverly
"after thinking carefully about it"
must take him
The word "him" refers to the one who killed his neighbor.
so that he may die
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you can kill him"
Exodus 21:15
Whoever hits his father or mother must surely be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If anyone hits his father or mother, you must surely put him to death" or "You must surely kill anyone who hits his father or mother"
must surely
"must certainly"
Exodus 21:16
that kidnapper must be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must kill that kidnapper"
Exodus 21:17
Whoever curses his father or his mother must surely be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must surely kill anyone who curses his father or his mother"
Exodus 21:18
is confined to his bed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "cannot get out of bed" or "has to stay in bed"
Exodus 21:19
he recovers
"he gets better"
staff
This is a stick that can be leaned on for support while walking.
the loss of his time
This refers to a situation when someone cannot work to earn money. You can express this clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "the time he could not work"
see that he is completely healed
"pay his medical costs" or "pay for his costs for healing"
Exodus 21:20
as a result of the blow
"because of the injury" or "because his master hit him"
that man must surely be punished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must certainly punish that man"
Exodus 21:21
there is to be no vengeance
"no one is to punish the master"
Possible meanings are 1)
for he will have suffered the loss of the servant
You can express clearly in the translation that the servant was valuable to his master. Alternate translation: "because he has already lost his servant who was valuable to him"
Exodus 21:22
she miscarries
"her baby dies in her womb" or "her baby is born too soon and dies"
the guilty man must surely be forced to pay a fine
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must certainly fine the guilty man" or "the guilty man must pay a fine"
as the judges determine
"what the judges decide"
Exodus 21:23
you must give a life for a life
This means that if she is hurt, the person who hurt her must be hurt in the same way. Alternate translation: "he must give his life for her life"
Exodus 21:24
an eye for an eye
This means that if she is hurt, the person who hurt her must be hurt in the same way. Alternate translation: "his eye for her eye"
Exodus 21:26
If a man
Here "man" refers to the owner of a slave.
in compensation
"as payment." Compensation is what someone does for another person or gives to another person to make up for what he has caused that person to lose.
Exodus 21:28
an ox gores
"an ox injures with its horns"
the ox must surely be stoned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must stone the ox to death"
its flesh must not be eaten

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must not eat its flesh"

the ox's owner must be acquitted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must acquit the ox's owner"

Exodus 21:29

its owner also must be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must also kill its owner"

Exodus 21:30

If a ransom is required for his life

If the ox's owner can pay a fine to save his own life, then he must pay whatever the judges decide. The full meaning of this can be stated clearly. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the owner of the bull can pay a fine to save his own life"

whatever he is required to pay

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the full amount that the judges say that he must pay"

Exodus 21:31

has gored

"has injured with its horns"

Exodus 21:32

thirty shekels of silver

"330 grams of silver." A shekel weighed eleven grams.

the ox must be stoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must kill the ox by stoning it"

Exodus 21:33

opens a pit

"uncovers a hole in the ground" or "takes a cover off a hole in the ground"

Exodus 21:34

repay the loss

The owner must be paid for the loss of his animal. Alternate translation: "pay the owner for the dead animal"

will become his

The one who paid for the loss of the animal will become the owner of the dead animal and can do what he wants with it. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "will belong to the owner of the pit"

Exodus 21:35

divide its price

"divide the money" or "divide the money they receive"

Exodus 21:36

if it was known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if people knew" or "if the owner knew"

a habit of goring in time past

"had gored other animals before"

its owner has not kept it in

This means that the owner did not keep his ox securely inside a fence. This can be clearly stated in the translation. Alternate translation: "its owner did not keep it inside a fence"

he must surely pay ox for ox

The owner of the ox that killed must give an ox to the man who lost his ox. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "the owner of the ox that killed must surely give a living ox to the owner of the ox that died"

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22 [1]If a man steals an ox or a sheep and kills it or sells it, then he must pay five oxen for one ox, and four sheep for one sheep.[2]If a thief is found breaking in, and if he is struck so that he dies, in that case no bloodguilt will attach to anyone on his account.[3]But if the sun has risen before he breaks in, bloodguilt will attach to the person who kills him.
A thief must make restitution. If he has nothing, then he must be sold for his theft.
[4]If the stolen animal is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox, a donkey, or a sheep, he must pay back double.

[5]If a man grazes his livestock in a field or vineyard and lets his animal loose, and it grazes in another man's field, he must make restitution from the best of his own field and from the best of his own vineyard.

[6]If a fire breaks out and spreads in thorns so that stacked grain, or standing grain, or a field is consumed, the one who started the fire must surely make restitution.

[7]If a man gives money or goods to his neighbor for safe keeping, and if it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, that thief must pay double.[8]But if the thief is not found, then the owner of the house must come before the judges to see whether he has put his own hand on his neighbor's property.[9]For every transgression, whether it is an ox, a donkey, a sheep, clothing, or any other missing thing about which one says, "This belongs to me," the claim of both parties must come before the judges. The man whom the judges find guilty must pay double to his neighbor.

[10]If a man gives his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep, and if it dies or is hurt or is carried away without anyone seeing it,[11]an oath to Yahweh must be taken by them both, as to whether or not one person has put his hand on his neighbor's property. The owner must accept this, and the other will make no restitution.[12]But if it was stolen from him, the other must make restitution to the owner for it.[13]If an animal was torn in pieces, let the other man bring the animal as evidence. He will not have to pay for what was torn.

[14]If a man borrows any animal from his neighbor and the animal is injured or dies without the owner being with it, the other man must surely make restitution.[15]But if the owner was with it, the other man will not have to pay; if the animal was hired, it will be paid for by its hiring fee.

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[16]If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed, and if he lies with her, he must surely make her his wife by paying the bride wealth required for this.[17]If her father completely refuses to give her to him, he must pay money equal to the bride wealth of virgins.

[18]You must not allow a sorceress to live.
[19]Whoever lies with an animal must surely be put to death.

[20]Whoever sacrifices to any god except to Yahweh must be completely destroyed.[21]You must not wrong a foreigner or oppress him, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.
[22]You must not mistreat any widow or fatherless child.[23]If you afflict them at all, and if they call out to me, I will surely hear their outcry.[24]My anger will burn, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows, and your children will become fatherless.

[25]If you lend money to any of my people among you who are poor, you must not be like a moneylender to him or charge him interest.[26]If you take your neighbor's garment in pledge, you must return it to him before the sun goes down,[27]for that is his only covering; it is his garment for his body. What else can he lie down in? When he calls out to me, I will hear him, for I am gracious.

[28]You must not blaspheme me, God, nor curse a ruler of your people.
[29]You must not hold back offerings from your harvest or your winepresses. You must give to me the firstborn of your sons.
[30]You must also do the same with your oxen and your sheep. For seven days they may remain with their mothers, but on the eighth day you must give them to me.[31]You will be people that are set apart for me. So you must not eat any meat that was torn by animals in the field. Instead, you must throw it to the dogs.

Exodus 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice in society

The rules and laws of this chapter are not intended to be followed by every society. Israel was God's chosen nation and was required to live in a special way. These laws concerned creating a just society and a holy nation. In this chapter, the purpose of these laws often focuses on minimizing the people's desire for vengeance. (See: elect, lawofmoses, justice and holy and avenge)

Links:

Exodus 22:1 Notes

Exodus 22:1
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
Exodus 22:2
If a thief is found
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If anyone finds a thief"
breaking in
"using force to come into a house"
if he is struck so that he dies
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if anyone strikes the thief so that he dies"
no bloodguilt will attach to anyone on his account
"no one will be guilty of murdering him"
Exodus 22:3
if the sun has risen before he breaks in
"if it is light before he breaks in" or "if he breaks in and it is after sunrise"
bloodguilt will attach to the person who kills him
"the person who kills him will be guilty of murder"
make restitution
"pay for what he stole"
he must be sold for his theft
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "you must sell him as a slave in order to pay for what he stole"
Exodus 22:4
If the stolen animal is found alive in his possession
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If they find that he still has the live animal that he stole"
pay back double
pay two animals for every animal that he took
Exodus 22:5
If a man grazes his livestock
"If a man lets his animals eat plants"
it grazes
"it eats plants"
he must make restitution
"he must pay back the owner of that field"
Exodus 22:6
If a fire breaks out and spreads in thorns

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"If someone starts a fire and it spreads in thorns"
spreads in thorns
"moves along the ground through dry plants"
stacked grain
This is grain that has been cut and tied in bundles.
"bundled grain" or "harvested grain"
standing grain
This is grain that has not been cut, but it is ready to be harvested.
a field is consumed
"fire consumes a field" or "fire destroys a field"
must surely make restitution
"must certainly pay for the grain that the fire destroyed"
Exodus 22:7
for safe keeping
"to watch over it" or "to keep it safe"
if it is stolen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone steals it"
thief
someone who steals something
if the thief is found
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if you find the thief"
Exodus 22:8
come before the judges to see whether
"come before the judges so that they can find out if"
has put his own hand on his neighbor's property
This is an idiom. If you have a way of saying this in your language, you can use it here. Alternate translation: "has stolen his neighbor's property"
Exodus 22:9
the claim of both parties must come before the judges
The judges must listen to both people who claim that the item belongs to them and the judges will decide who is guilty.
Exodus 22:11
an oath to Yahweh must be taken by them both
Only the man who is accused of stealing the animal must swear the oath. The owner of the lost animal must accept the oath that has been sworn. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man who was caring for the animal must swear an oath before Yahweh and the owner must accept that oath"
Exodus 22:12
But if it was stolen from him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if someone stole the animal from him"
Exodus 22:13
If an animal was torn in pieces
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if a wild beast tore the animal in pieces"
He will not have to pay for what was torn
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will not have to pay for the animal that the wild beast destroyed"
Exodus 22:14
must surely make restitution
"must certainly repay with another animal" or "must certainly pay the owner for the animal"
Exodus 22:15
if the animal was hired
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone rented the animal"
it will be paid for by its hiring fee
The one who borrowed the animal will not have to pay the owner anything more than the hiring or rental fee. This fee will pay for the loss of the animal. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "the money that someone paid to rent the animal will cover the loss of the animal"
hiring fee
"rental fee" or "money paid to rent the animal"
Exodus 22:16
a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed
"a man persuades a virgin who is not betrothed that she wants to sleep with him"
not betrothed
"not promised to be married"
if he lies with her
Lying with someone is a euphemism for having sex. Alternate translation: "if he has sexual relations with her"
bride wealth
"dowry" or "bride price"
Exodus 22:17
him, he
These pronouns refer back to the man who seduced the virgin.
Exodus 22:19
Whoever lies with an animal
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Whoever has sexual relations with an animal"
Exodus 22:20
Yahweh must be completely destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you must completely destroy"
Exodus 22:21
wrong a foreigner
"mistreat a foreigner" or "cheat a foreigner"
Exodus 22:22
You must not mistreat any widow or fatherless child
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "You must treat all widows and fatherless children fairly"
widow
"woman whose husband has died"
fatherless child
"orphan" or "child with no parents"
Exodus 22:23
their outcry
Here the "outcry" is of people in pain because they are being oppressed. See how you translated "outcry" in Exodus 3:7.
Exodus 22:24
I will kill you with the sword
To be killed "with the sword" is a metonym that means a person will die violently, or perhaps fighting in a war. Alternate translation: "you will die a violent death"
Exodus 22:25

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a moneylender
"one who lends money"
charge him interest
"charge him extra money for borrowing" or "charge him extra money for the loan"
Exodus 22:26
garment in pledge
"coat as collateral" or "coat as a guarantee to repay the loan"
Exodus 22:27
only covering
"only coat" or "only garment to keep him warm"
What else can he lie down in?
This question adds emphasis. You can translate it as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "He will have nothing to wear while he sleeps!"
Exodus 22:28
You must not blaspheme me, God
"Do not insult God" or "Do not speak evil about God"
nor curse a ruler
"and do not ask God to do bad things to a ruler"
Exodus 22:29
You must not hold back offerings
This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "You must bring all of your offerings"
give to me the firstborn of your sons
"dedicate your firstborn sons to me"
Exodus 22:30
do the same with
"dedicate to me the firstborn of"
For seven days
This can be written as a numeral. Alternate translation: "For 7 days after they are born"
the eighth day
This can be written as a numeral. Alternate translation: "day number 8"
give them to me
"dedicate them to me"

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23 [1]You must not give a false report about anyone. Do not join with a wicked man to be a malicious witness.[2]You must not follow a crowd to do evil, and you must not bear witness in a dispute while siding with the crowd in order to pervert justice.[3]You must not show favoritism to a poor man in his lawsuit.

[4]If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you must bring it back to him.[5]If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen to the ground under its load, you must not leave that person. You must surely help him with his donkey.

[6]Do not thrust aside justice for your poor in his lawsuit.[7]Do not join others in making false accusations, and do not kill the innocent or righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked.[8]Never take a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see, and perverts honest people's words.[9]You must not oppress a foreigner, since you know the life of a foreigner, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.

[10]For six years you will sow seed on your land and gather in its produce.[11]But in the seventh year you will let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor among your people may eat. What they leave, the wild animals will eat. You will do the same with your vineyards and olive orchards.
[12]During six days you will do your work, but on the seventh day you must rest. Do this so that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and so that your female slave's son and any foreigner may rest and be refreshed.[13]Pay attention to everything that I have said to you. Do not mention the names of other gods, nor let their names be heard from your mouth.

[14]You must travel to hold a festival for me three times every year.[15]You are to observe the Festival of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you will eat unleavened bread for seven days. At that time, you will appear before me in the month of Aviv, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt. But you must not appear before me empty-handed.
[16]You must observe the Festival of Harvest, the firstfruits of your labors when you sowed seed in the fields. Also you must observe the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your produce from the fields.[17]All your males must appear before the Lord Yahweh three times every year.

[18]You must not offer the blood from sacrifices made to me with bread containing yeast. The fat from the sacrifices at my festivals must not remain all night until the morning.[19]You must bring the choicest firstfruits from your land into my house, the house of Yahweh your God. You must not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

[20]I am going to send an angel before you to guard you on the way, and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.[21]Be attentive to him and obey him. Do not provoke him, for he will not pardon your transgressions. My name is on him.[22]If you indeed obey his voice and do everything that I tell you, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.
[23]My angel will go before you and bring you to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and the Jebusites. I will destroy them.[24]You must not bow down to their gods, worship them, or do as they do, but you must completely break

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them down, and you must smash their stone pillars in pieces.[25]You must worship Yahweh your God, and he will bless your bread and water. I will remove sickness from among you.
[26]No woman will be barren or will miscarry her young in your land. I will give you long lives.[27]I will send my terror before you, and will throw into confusion all the people to whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you.[28]I will send hornets before you that will drive out the Hivites, Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you.[29]I will not drive them out from before you in one year, or the land would become desolate, and the wild animals would become too many for you.
[30]Instead, I will drive them out little by little from before you until you become fruitful and inherit the land.[31]I will fix your borders from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates River. I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hands. You will drive them out before you.[32]You must not make a covenant with them or with their gods.[33]They must not live in your land, or they would make you sin against me. If you worship their gods, this will surely become a trap for you.'"

Exodus 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice in society

The rules and laws of this chapter are not intended to be followed by every society. Israel was God's chosen nation and was required to live in a special way. These laws concerned creating a just society and a holy nation. (See: elect, lawofmoses and justice and holy)

Celebrations of feasts and festivals

The people of Israel were required to celebrate certain feasts and festivals. These were part of the law of Moses and some are described in this chapter. Their purpose was to worship Yahweh and to remember the great things Yahweh has done for them.

Links:

Exodus 23:1 Notes

Exodus 23:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

malicious witness

This is the same as a lying or false witness.

Exodus 23:2

siding with the crowd

This is a metaphor that describes one's agreeing with a group of people as if he actually walked over and stood with that group. Alternate translation: "doing what the crowd wants" or "agreeing with the majority"

pervert justice

do illegal or immoral actions that result in a unjust ruling

Exodus 23:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

Exodus 23:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

Do not thrust aside justice for your poor in his lawsuit

"Do not decide to treat a poor man unjustly in legal matters"

lawsuit

Here, this refers to any matter that a court decides.

Exodus 23:7

I will not acquit the wicked

"I will not find the wicked not guilty" or "I will not say of wicked people that they are innocent"

Exodus 23:8

bribe blinds ... perverts

Here a "bribe" is described as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "bribe discredits ... undermines"

Exodus 23:9

the life of a foreigner

"the kind of life a stranger lives in a foreign land"

Exodus 23:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

its produce

"the food its plants produce"

Exodus 23:11

fallow

in its natural state, not used for to grow food

so that the poor among your people may eat

The poor can eat any food that grows on its own in a field that is not cultivated. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "so the poor among your people may harvest and eat any food that grows on its own in that field"

Exodus 23:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.

your ox and your donkey

"your work animals"

any foreigner may rest and be refreshed

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "any foreigner may rest and regain his strength"
Exodus 23:13
Pay attention to
"Do" or "Obey"
mention the names of other gods
This represents praying to other gods. Alternate translation: "pray to other gods"
Exodus 23:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
Exodus 23:15
Aviv
This is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. Aviv is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [Exodus 13:4]
not appear before me empty-handed
Here understatement is used to emphasize that the Israelites must bring a suitable offering to Yahweh. "come to me without a proper offering" or "always bring an offering to me"
Exodus 23:16
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
You must observe
"You must honor" or "You must celebrate"
Festival of Ingathering
This festival celebrated the final harvesting of all the crops for the year.
Exodus 23:17
All your males must appear before the Lord Yahweh
Here to "appear" means to gather for worship. Alternate translation: "All the men must gather to worship the Lord Yahweh"
Exodus 23:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
fat from the sacrifices
The fat was burned as an offering to Yahweh and was never eaten.
Exodus 23:19
the choicest firstfruits
"the best and first produce of the harvest"
You must not boil a young goat in its mother's milk
This was a magical fertility practice among the Canaanites, which the Israelites were not permitted to participate in.
Exodus 23:20
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
Exodus 23:21
Be attentive to him
"Listen to him"
Do not provoke him, for he will not pardon
"If you provoke him, he will not pardon"
My name is on him
Here "name" refers to God's authority. Alternate translation: "He has my authority"
Exodus 23:22
If you indeed obey his voice
Here "voice" represents what the angel says. Alternate translation: "If you carefully obey what he says"
an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries
These two phrases mean the same thing and are used for emphasis.
Exodus 23:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
Exodus 23:24
You must not ... do as they do
The Israelites must not live as the people who worship other gods. Alternate translation: "You must not ... live as the people who worship those gods"
Exodus 23:25
he will bless your bread and water
This is a merism that means food and drink. Alternate translation: "he will bless your food and drink" or "he will bless you by giving you food and drink"
he will bless ... I will remove
Yahweh switched between the first and third pronoun to refer to himself. Here both "he" and "I" refer to Yahweh.
Exodus 23:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
No woman will be barren or will miscarry her young in your land
"Every woman will be able to become pregnant and give birth to healthy babies"
miscarry
to have a pregnancy end early and unexpectedly
Exodus 23:28
hornets
a flying insect that can sting people and cause pain
Exodus 23:29
or the land would become desolate
"because no one would be living in the land"
Exodus 23:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses his laws for the people of Israel.
Exodus 23:33
this will surely become a trap for you
This means worshiping other gods will lead the people of Israel to certain destruction as if they were an animal caught in a hunter's trap.

24 [1]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Come up to me—you, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of Israel's elders, and worship me at a distance.[2]Moses alone may come near to me. The others must not come near, nor may the people come up with him."

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[3]Moses went and told the people all of Yahweh's words and decrees. All the people answered with one voice and said, "We will do all the words that Yahweh has said."[4]Then Moses wrote down all of Yahweh's words. Early in the morning, Moses built an altar at the foot of the mountain and arranged twelve stone pillars, so that the stones would represent the twelve tribes of Israel.
[5]He sent some young men from among the people of Israel to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings of oxen to Yahweh.[6]Moses took half of the blood and put it into basins; he sprinkled the other half onto the altar.
[7]He took the book of the Covenant and read it aloud to the people. They said, "We will do all that Yahweh has spoken. We will be obedient."[8]Then Moses took the blood and sprinkled it onto the people. He said, "This is the blood of the covenant that Yahweh has made with you by giving you this promise with all these words."

[9]Then Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of Israel's elders went up the mountain.[10]They saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was a pavement made of sapphire stone, as clear as the sky itself.[11]God did not lay a hand on the leaders of the people of Israel. They saw God, and they ate and drank.

[12]Yahweh said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay there. I will give you the tablets of stone and the law and commandments that I have written, so that you may teach them."[13]So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua and went up the mountain of God.
[14]Moses had said to the elders, "Stay here and wait for us until we come to you. Aaron and Hur are with you. If anyone has a dispute, let him go to them."[15]So Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered it.
[16]Yahweh's glory settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day he called to Moses from within the cloud.[17]The appearance of Yahweh's glory was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the people of Israel.[18]Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain. He was up the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Exodus 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Moses's covenant

The people of Israel promise to obey the covenant Yahweh made with Moses. Their continued blessings were contingent upon their obedience to this covenant. (See: promise and covenant)

God's holiness

Because Yahweh is perfectly holy, he can only be approached in a certain way. Because of this, only Moses was allowed near Yahweh. This is also why Yahweh is described as a "devouring fire." (See: holy)

Links:

Exodus 24:1 Notes

Exodus 24:1

Nadab ... Abihu

These are men's names. See how you translated these names in [Exodus 6:23]

seventy of Israel's elders

"70 of Israel's elders"

Exodus 24:3

with one voice

This is an idiom that means the people were in complete agreement. Alternate translation: "together" or "in agreement"

Exodus 24:4

foot of the mountain

"base of the mountain" or "bottom of the mountain"

Exodus 24:6

Moses took half of the blood and put it into basins

Moses collected half of the blood in basins in order to splash it on the people in Exodus 24:8. This would confirm the people's participation in the covenant between the people of Israel and God.

he sprinkled the other half onto the altar

Here the altar represents God. This would confirm God's participation in the covenant between God and the people of Israel.

Exodus 24:7

We will be obedient

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We will obey everything"

Exodus 24:8

Then Moses took the blood

This refers to the blood that Moses had put into the bowls. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Then Moses took the blood that was in the bowls"

Exodus 24:9

Nadab ... Abihu

These are men's names. See how you translated these names in [Exodus 6:23]

Exodus 24:10

Under his feet

This speaks of God as if he had human feet.

a pavement made of sapphire stone

"a pavement made of blue stones called sapphires"

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pavement
a hard surface for walking or riding
sapphire stone
This is a gemstone that is blue in color.
as clear as the sky itself
This is a simile. Alternate translation: "as clear as the sky is when there are no clouds"
Exodus 24:11
God did not lay a hand on the leaders of the people of Israel
This means that God did not harm the leaders. Alternate translation: "God did not harm the leaders of the people of Israel"
Exodus 24:12
tablets of stone and the law and commandments
God had written the law and commandments on the tablets of stone. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "two stone slabs on which I have written all the laws"
Exodus 24:13
with his assistant Joshua
"with Joshua who assisted him" or "with Joshua who helped him"
Exodus 24:14
wait for us
"wait for Joshua and me"
Hur
Hur was a man who was a friend of Moses and Aaron. See how you translated this name in [Exodus 17:10]
Exodus 24:16
Yahweh's glory
This was the brilliant light of God's presence. Alternate translation: "The brilliant light showing God's presence"
Exodus 24:17
like a devouring fire
This means the glory of Yahweh was very large and seemed to burn brightly like a fire. Alternate translation: "like a big fire burning"
in the eyes of the people of Israel
Their eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents their thoughts or judgment about they saw. Alternate translation: "to the people of Israel"
Exodus 24:18
forty days and forty nights
"40 days and 40 nights"

25 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses,[2]"Tell the people of Israel to take an offering for me from every person who is motivated by a willing heart. You must receive these offerings for me.
[3]These are the offerings that you must receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze;[4]blue, purple, and scarlet material; fine linen; goats' hair;[5]ram skins dyed red and fine leather hides; acacia wood;[6]oil for the sanctuary lamps; spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense;[7]onyx stones and other precious stones to be set for the ephod and breastpiece.
[8]Let them make me a sanctuary so that I may live among them.[9]You must make it exactly as I will show you in the plans for the tabernacle and for all its equipment.

[10]They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half.[11]You must cover it inside and out with pure gold, and you must make on it a border of gold around its top.
[12]You must cast four rings of gold for it, and put them on the ark's four feet, with two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side.[13]You must make poles of acacia wood and cover them with gold.[14]You must put the poles into the rings on the ark's sides, in order to carry the ark.
[15]The poles must remain in the rings of the ark; they must not be taken from it.[16]You must put into the ark the covenant decrees that I will give you.[17]You must make an atonement lid of pure gold. Its length must be two and a half cubits, and its width must be a cubit and a half.[18]You must make two cherubim of hammered gold for the two ends of the atonement lid.
[19]Make one cherub for one end of the atonement lid, and the other cherub for the other end. They must be made as one piece with the atonement lid.[20]The cherubim must spread out their wings upward and overshadow the atonement lid with them. The cherubim must face one another and look toward the center of the atonement lid.[21]You must put the atonement lid on top of the ark, and you must put into the ark the covenant decrees that I am giving you.
[22]It is at the ark that I will meet with you. I will speak with you from my position above the atonement lid. It will be from between the two cherubim over the ark of the covenant decrees that I will speak to you about all the commands I will give you for the people of Israel.

[23]You must make a table of acacia wood. Its length must be two cubits; its width must be one cubit, and its height must be a cubit and a half.[24]You must cover it with pure gold and put a border of gold around the top.
[25]You must make a surrounding frame for it one handbreadth wide, with a surrounding border of gold for the frame.[26]You must make for it four rings of gold and attach the rings to the four corners, where the four feet were.[27]The rings must be attached to the frame to provide places for the poles, in order to carry the table.
[28]You must make the poles out of acacia wood and cover them with gold so that the table may be carried with them.[29]You must make the dishes, spoons, pitchers, and bowls to be used to pour out drink offerings. You must make them of pure gold.[30]You must regularly set the bread of the presence on the table before me.

[31]You must make a lampstand of pure hammered gold. The lampstand is to be made with its base and shaft. Its cups, its

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leafy bases, and its flowers are to be all made of one piece with it.[32]Six branches must extend out from its sides—three branches must extend from one side, and three branches of the lampstand must extend from the other side.
[33]The first branch must have three cups made like almond blossoms, with a leafy base and a flower, and three cups made like almond blossoms in the other branch, with a leafy base and a flower. It must be the same for all six branches extending out from the lampstand.[34]On the lampstand itself, the central shaft, there must be four cups made like almond blossoms, with their leafy bases and the flowers.
[35]There must be a leafy base under the first pair of branches—made as one piece with it, and a leafy base under the second pair of branches—also made as one piece with it. In the same way there must be a leafy base under the third pair of branches, made as one piece with it. It must be the same for all six branches extending out from the lampstand.[36]Their leafy bases and branches must all be one piece with it, one beaten piece of work of pure gold.
[37]You must make the lampstand and its seven lamps, and set up its lamps for them to give light from it.[38]The tongs and their trays must be made of pure gold.[39]Use one talent of pure gold to make the lampstand and its accessories.[40]Be sure to make them after the pattern that you are being shown on the mountain.

Exodus 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tent of meeting

This chapter gives specific instructions regarding the building of a tent where Moses would meet Yahweh and the ark would be stored. This would eventually become the tabernacle. It was to be considered a very holy place. (See: tabernacle and holy)

Links:

Exodus 25:1 Notes

Exodus 25:2

who is motivated by a willing heart

This is an idiom that indicates a person's desire to give an offering. Alternate translation: "who wants to give an offering"

You must receive

The word "you" refers to Moses and the leaders.

Exodus 25:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 25:4

blue, purple, and scarlet material

Possible meanings are 1) "material that is dyed blue, purple, and scarlet," probably wool yarn, or 2) "blue, purple and scarlet dye" to dye the linen.

scarlet

bright red

Exodus 25:5

hides

These are animal skins.

Exodus 25:6

spices

dried plants that people grind into a powder and put in oil or food to give it a nice smell or flavor

Exodus 25:7

onyx

a valuable stone that has layers of white and black, red or brown.

precious stones to be set

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "precious stones for someone to set"

precious stones

"valuable gems" or "treasured gems"

Exodus 25:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 25:9

tabernacle

Here this word means the same thing as the word "sanctuary" in verse 8.

You must make it

Here "you" is plural and refers to Moses and the people of Israel.

show you in the plans

"show you in the design" or "show you in the pattern." Here "you" is singular and refers to Moses.

Exodus 25:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

two and a half cubits ... one cubit and a half

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.5 cubits ... 1.5 cubits" or "115 centimeters ... almost 69 centimeters"

Exodus 25:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

cast four rings of gold

Casting was a process in which gold was melted, poured into a mold that was in the shape of a ring, and then allowed to harden.

Exodus 25:14

in order to carry the ark

"so that you can carry the ark"

Exodus 25:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

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Exodus 25:17
atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made.
two and a half cubits ... a cubit and a half
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.5 cubits ... 1.5 cubits" or "115 centimeters ... 69 centimeters"
Exodus 25:18
hammered gold
"beaten gold"
Exodus 25:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.
They must be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must make them"
Exodus 25:21
You must put
Here "you" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.
Exodus 25:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to Moses.
It is at the ark that I will meet with you
"I will meet with you at the ark." In 25:22 the word "you" is singular and refers to Moses.
atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.
Exodus 25:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
two cubits ... one cubit ... a cubit and a half
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2 cubits ... 1 cubit ... 1.5 cubits" or "92 centimeters ... 46 centimeters ... 69 centimeters"
Exodus 25:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
one handbreadth wide
a measurement of 7 to 8 centimeters
frame for it
"frame for the table"
Exodus 25:26
feet were
"legs are"
Exodus 25:27
The rings must be attached
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must attach the rings"
in order to carry
"so you can carry"
Exodus 25:28
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
so that the table may be carried with them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you may carry the table with them"
Exodus 25:29
to be used to pour out drink offerings
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you may use them to pour out drink offerings"
Exodus 25:30
bread of the presence
This bread represented the presence of God.
Exodus 25:31
hammered gold
"beaten gold." See how you translated this in Exodus 25:18.
The lampstand is to be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make the lampstand"
Its cups, its leafy bases, and its flowers are to be all made of one piece with it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make its cups, its leafy bases, and its flowers all of one piece with the lampstand"
Exodus 25:33
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do. Yahweh is describing the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-32).
almond blossoms
white or pink flowers that have five petals
Exodus 25:34
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do. Yahweh is describing the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-32).
Exodus 25:35
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do. Yahweh is describing the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-32).
made as one piece with it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must make them as one piece with the lampstand"
Exodus 25:36
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do. Yahweh is describing the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-32).
Exodus 25:37
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
for them to give light from it
"so they shine light from it"
Exodus 25:38
The tongs and their trays must be made of pure gold
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make the tongs and their trays of pure gold"
Exodus 25:39
one talent
A talent weighs about thirty-three kilograms.
its accessories
the tongs and the trays
Exodus 25:40
you are being shown on the mountain
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I

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am showing you on the mountain"

26 [1]You must make the tabernacle with ten curtains made from fine linen and blue, purple, and scarlet wool with the designs of cherubim. This will be the work of a very skilled craftsman.[2]The length of each curtain must be twenty-eight cubits, the width four cubits. All the curtains must be of the same size.[3]Five curtains must be joined to each other, and the other five curtains must also be joined to each other.
[4]You must make loops of blue along the outer edge of the end curtain of one set. In the same way, you must do the same along the outer edge of the end curtain in the second set.[5]You must make fifty loops on the first curtain, and you must make fifty loops on the end curtain in the second set. Do this so that the loops will be opposite to each other.[6]You must make fifty clasps of gold and join the curtains together with them so that the tabernacle becomes united.

[7]You must make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle. You must make eleven of these curtains.[8]The length of each curtain must be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain must be four cubits. Each of the eleven curtains must be of the same size.[9]You must join five curtains to each other and the other six curtains to each other. You must double over the sixth curtain in the front of the tent.
[10]You must make fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain of the first set, and fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain that joins the second set.[11]You must make fifty bronze clasps and put them into the loops. Then you join the tent together so that it may be one piece.
[12]The leftover half curtain, that is, the overhanging part remaining from the tent's curtains, must hang at the back of the tabernacle.[13]There must be one cubit of curtain on one side, and one cubit of curtain on the other side—that which is left over of the length of the tent's curtains must hang over the sides of the tabernacle on one side and on the other side, to cover it.[14]You must make for the tabernacle a covering of ram skins dyed red, and another covering of fine leather to go above that.

[15]You must make upright frames out of acacia wood for the tabernacle.[16]The length of each frame must be ten cubits, and its width must be one and a half cubits.[17]There must be two wooden pegs in each frame for joining the frames to each other. You are to make all the tabernacle's frames in this way.[18]When you make the frames for the tabernacle, you must make twenty frames for the south side.
[19]You must make forty silver bases to go under the twenty frames. There must be two bases under the first frame to be its two pedestals, and also two bases under each of the other frames for their two pedestals.[20]For the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, you must make twenty frames[21]and their forty silver bases. There must be two bases under the first frame, two bases under the next frame, and so on.
[22]For the back side of the tabernacle on the west side, you must make six frames.[23]You must make two frames for the back corners of the tabernacle.[24]These frames must be separate at the bottom, but joined at the top to the same ring. It must be this way for both of the back corners.[25]There must be eight frames, together with their silver bases. There must be sixteen bases in all, two bases under the first frame, two bases under the next frame, and so on.

[26]You must make crossbars of acacia wood—five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle,[27]five crossbars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five crossbars for the frames for the back side of the tabernacle to the west.
[28]The crossbar in the center of the frames, that is, halfway up, must reach from end to end.
[29]You must cover the frames with gold. You must make their rings of gold, for them to serve as holders for the crossbars, and you must cover the bars with gold.[30]You must set up the tabernacle by following the plan you were shown on the mountain.

[31]You must make a curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine linen, with designs of cherubim, the work of a skillful workman.[32]You must hang it on four pillars of acacia wood covered with gold. These pillars must have hooks of gold set on four silver bases.[33]You must hang up the curtain under the clasps, and you must bring in the ark of the covenant decrees. The curtain is to separate the holy place from the most holy place.
[34]You must put the atonement lid on the ark of the covenant decrees, which is in the most holy place.[35]You must place the table outside the curtain. You must place the lampstand opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle. The table must be on the north side.

[36]You must make a screen for the tent entrance. You must make it out of blue, purple, and scarlet material and fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer.[37]For the screen you must make five pillars of acacia and cover them with gold. Their hooks must be of gold, and you must cast five bronze bases for them.

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Exodus 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the material in the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The tent of meeting

This chapter gives specific instructions regarding the building of a tent where Moses would meet Yahweh and the ark would be stored. This would eventually become the tabernacle. It was to be considered a very holy place. (See: tabernacle and holy)

Links:

Exodus 26:1 Notes

Exodus 26:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do (Exodus 25:1).

You must make

Yahweh is speaking to Moses, so the word "you" is singular. Yahweh probably expected Moses to tell someone else to do the actual work, but Moses would be the one responsible for seeing that the work was done correctly. "Tell a craftsman to make"

curtains

These were large, heavy sections of woven cloth that were used to form the covering and dividing walls of the tabernacle.

scarlet wool

wool dyed a deep red color

craftsman

a person who is skilled in making beautiful objects by hand

Exodus 26:2

twenty-eight cubits ... four cubits

"28 cubits ... 4 cubits." A cubit is 46 centimeters.

Exodus 26:3

Five curtains must be joined to each other ... must also be joined to each other

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Sew five curtains together to make one set, and sew the other five curtains together to make another set"

Exodus 26:4

one set

"one set of five curtains"

the second set

"the second set of five curtains"

Exodus 26:6

clasps

The clasps fit into the loops (verses 4 and 5) to hold the curtains together.

Exodus 26:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

eleven

"11"

Exodus 26:8

thirty ... four

"30 ... 4"

cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters.

Exodus 26:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

loops

See how you translated these in Exodus 26:4.

Exodus 26:11

clasps

The clasps fit into the loops to hold the curtains together. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:6.

Exodus 26:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 26:13

cubit

A cubit is 46 centimeters.

Exodus 26:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

frames

This refers to frames or panels that they made by joining together smaller pieces of wood.

Exodus 26:16

ten cubits ... one and a half cubits

"10 cubits ... 1.5 cubits"

Exodus 26:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

silver bases

These were silver blocks that had a slot in them to keep the board in place.

pedestals

The silver bases kept the wooden board off the ground.

There must be two bases

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Put two bases"

Exodus 26:21

and so on

This means that what was said about the first two boards should be done for the rest of the boards. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "and two bases for each of the rest of the boards"

Exodus 26:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

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Exodus 26:24
These frames must be separate at the bottom, but joined at the top
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Separate these frames at the bottom, but join them at the top"
Exodus 26:25
silver bases
These were silver blocks that had a slot in them to keep the frame in place. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:19.
in all
"total"
and so on
This means that what was said about the first two frames should be done for the rest of the frames. See how you translated this in [Exodus 26:21]
Exodus 26:26
General Information:
Yahweh continue to tell Moses how the tabernacle was to be built.
crossbars
These are horizontal support beams that give stability to the structure.
Exodus 26:27
the back side of the tabernacle to the west
The front was on the east side of the tabernacle.
Exodus 26:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses how the tabernacle must be constructed.
for them to serve as holders for the crossbars
"which will hold the crossbars" or "because they will hold the crossbars"
crossbars
These are horizontal support beams that give stability to the structure. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:26.
Exodus 26:30
you were shown on the mountain
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have shown you here on this mountain"
Exodus 26:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses how the tabernacle is to be constructed.
You must make
Yahweh is speaking to Moses, so the word "you" is singular. Yahweh probably expected Moses to tell someone else to do the actual work, but Moses would be the one responsible for seeing that the work was done correctly. "Tell a craftsman to make." See how you translated this in [Exodus 26:1]
Exodus 26:33
clasps
The clasps fit into the loops to hold the curtains together. See how you translated these in Exodus 26:6.
you must bring in the ark of the covenant decrees
The ark of the testimony is the chest that contains the commandments. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "you must bring in the chest containing the commandments"
The curtain is to separate the holy place
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The curtain will separate the holy place"
Exodus 26:34
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.
on the ark of the covenant decrees
"on the chest that contains the commandments"
Exodus 26:35
The table must be on the north side
This is the table that holds the bread that represents the presence of God. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Place the table for the bread of God's presence on the north side"
Exodus 26:36
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses how to construct the tabernacle.
a screen
This was a large curtain made of cloth.
blue, purple, and scarlet material
Possible meanings are 1) "yarn that is dyed blue, purple, and scarlet," probably wool yarn, or 2) "blue, purple, and scarlet dye" to dye the linen. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:4.
fine twined linen
"finely twisted linen." This was cloth made from fine linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread.
an embroiderer
"a person who sews designs into cloth" or "a person who embroiders"

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27 [1]You must make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide. The altar must be square and three cubits high.[2]You must make extensions of its four corners shaped like ox horns. The horns will be made as one piece with the altar, and you must cover them with bronze.
[3]You must make equipment for the altar: pots for ashes, and also shovels, basins, meat forks, and firepans. You must make all these utensils with bronze.[4]You must make a grate for the altar, a network of bronze. Make a bronze ring for each of the grate's four corners.
[5]You must put the grate under the ledge of the altar, halfway down to the bottom.[6]You must make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and you must cover them with bronze.
[7]The poles must be put into the rings, and the poles must be on the two sides of the altar, to carry it.[8]You must make the altar hollow, out of planks. You must make it in the way you were shown on the mountain.

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[9]You must make a courtyard for the tabernacle. There must be hangings on the south side of the courtyard, hangings of fine twined linen one hundred cubits long.[10]The hangings must have twenty posts, with twenty bronze bases. There must also be hooks attached to the posts, as well as silver rods.
[11]In the same way, along the north side, there must be hangings one hundred cubits long with twenty posts, twenty bronze bases, hooks attached to the posts, and silver rods.[12]Along the courtyard on the west side there must be a curtain fifty cubits long. There must be ten posts and ten bases.[13]The courtyard must also be fifty cubits long on the east side.
[14]The hangings for one side of the entrance must be fifteen cubits long. They must have three posts with three bases.[15]The other side must also have hangings fifteen cubits long. They must have their three posts and three bases.[16]The courtyard gate must be a screen twenty cubits long. The curtain must be made of blue, purple, and scarlet material and fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer. It must have four posts with four bases.
[17]All the courtyard posts must have silver rods, silver hooks, and bronze bases.[18]The length of the courtyard must be one hundred cubits, the width fifty cubits, and the height five cubits with fine twined linen hangings all along, and bases of bronze.[19]All the equipment to be used in the tabernacle, and all the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard must be made of bronze.

[20]You must command the people of Israel to bring olive oil, pure and pressed, for the lamps so they may burn continually.
[21]In the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that is in front of the tabernacle that contains the ark of the covenant decrees, Aaron and his sons must keep the lamps burning before Yahweh, from evening to morning. This requirement will be a lasting statute throughout the generations of the people of Israel.

Exodus 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the material in the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The tent of meeting

This chapter gives specific instructions regarding the building of a tent where Moses would meet Yahweh and the ark would be stored. This would eventually become the tabernacle. It was to be considered a very holy place. (See: tabernacle and holy)

Links:

Exodus 27:1 Notes

Exodus 27:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do (Exodus 25:1).

five cubits long and five cubits wide

"2.2 meters long on each side"

The altar must be square and three cubits high

"The altar must be square and 1.3 meters high"

cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters.

Exodus 27:2

You must make extensions of its four corners shaped like ox horns

"You must make projections that look like ox horns on its four corners"

The horns will be made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must make the horns"

must cover them

"must cover the altar and horns"

Exodus 27:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

basins

bowls

firepans

These were pans that held hot coals from the altar.

utensils

These were any instrument, vessel, or tool that served a useful purpose.

Exodus 27:4

You must make a grate for the altar, a network of bronze

"You must make a bronze grate for the altar"

grate

a frame of crossed bars for holding wood when burning

Exodus 27:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people need to do.

You must put the grate under the ledge of the altar

The grate was placed inside the altar. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "You must put the grate under the rim of the altar, on the inside of the altar"

grate

This is a frame of crossed bars for holding wood when burning. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:4.

Exodus 27:6

You must make poles for the altar

These poles were used for carrying the altar. This can be

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stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "You must make poles for carrying the altar"

Exodus 27:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people should do.

The poles must be put into the rings, and the poles must be on the two sides of the altar, to carry it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must put the poles into the rings and place them on each side of the altar to carry it"

Exodus 27:8

planks

a long, flat piece of wood that is thicker than a board

you were shown on the mountain

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have shown to you here on this mountain"

Exodus 27:9

There must be hangings ... courtyard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must place hangings ... courtyard"

hangings of fine twined linen

A "hanging" was a large curtain made of cloth. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36

fine twined linen

"finely twisted linen." This was cloth made from fine linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread

one hundred cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "44 meters"

Exodus 27:10

There must also be hooks ... posts

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must also attach hooks ... posts"

posts

a strong piece of wood set upright and used as a support

Exodus 27:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

there must be hangings one hundred cubits long

See how you translated many similar words in Exodus 27:9.

there must be hangings

This could be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "you must make hangings"

with twenty posts, twenty bronze bases, hooks attached to the posts, and silver rods

See how you translated many similar words in Exodus 27:10.

Exodus 27:12

there must be a curtain

This could be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "you must make a curtain"

There must be ten posts

This could be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "You must make ten posts"

Exodus 27:13

The courtyard must also be fifty cubits long

This could be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "Make the courtyard fifty cubits long"

Exodus 27:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

The hangings

These were large curtains made of cloth. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36.

posts

These were strong pieces of wood set upright and used as supports. See how you translated these in Exodus 27:10.

bases

These were metal blocks that had a slot in them to keep the board in place. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:19.

fifteen cubits

about seven meters

Exodus 27:16

The courtyard gate must be a screen twenty cubits long

This could be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "You must make a screen twenty cubits long to be the courtyard gate"

The curtain must be made ... fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must make the curtain ... fine twined linen, the work of an embroiderer" or "Embroiderers must make the curtain ... fine twined linen"

blue, purple, and scarlet material and fine twined linen

Possible meanings are 1) "yarn that is dyed blue, purple, and scarlet," probably wool yarn, or 2) "blue, purple, and scarlet dye" to dye the linen.

an embroiderer

a person who sews designs into cloth

Exodus 27:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 27:18

one hundred cubits

"100 cubits." A cubit is 46 centimeters.

fine twined linen hangings

"finely twisted linen." This was cloth made from fine linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36.

Exodus 27:19

all the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard must be made of bronze

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "make all the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard out of bronze"

tent pegs

sharp pieces of wood or metal used to secure the corners of a tent to the ground

Exodus 27:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 27:21

tent of meeting

This is another name for the tabernacle.

ark of the covenant decrees

This is the chest that contains the sacred slabs of stone on which Yahweh had written his commandments.

This requirement will be a lasting statute

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28 [1]Call to yourself Aaron your brother and his sons—Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar—from among the people of
Israel so that they may serve me as priests.[2]You must make for Aaron, your brother, garments that are set apart to
me. These garments will be for his honor and splendor.[3]You must speak to all people who are wise in heart, those whom I
have filled with the spirit of wisdom, so that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him to serve me as my priest.
[4]The garments that they must make are a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a coat of woven work, a turban, and a sash. They
must make these garments that are set apart to me. They will be for your brother Aaron and his sons so that they may
serve me as priests.[5]Craftsmen must use fine linen that is gold, blue, purple, and scarlet.

[6]They must make the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine-twined linen. It must be the work of a
skillful craftsman.[7]It must have two shoulder pieces attached to its two upper corners.[8]Its finely-woven waistband must
be like the ephod; it must be made of one piece with the ephod, made of fine twined linen that is gold, blue, purple, and
scarlet.[9]You must take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel.
[10]Six of their names must be on one stone, and six names must be on the other stone, in order of the sons' birth.[11]With the
work of an engraver in stone, like the engraving on a signet, you must engrave the two stones with the names of the sons
of Israel. You must mount the stones in settings of gold.[12]You must put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod,
to be stones to remind Yahweh of Israel's sons. Aaron will carry their names before Yahweh on his two shoulders as a
reminder to him.
[13]You must make settings of gold[14]and two braided chains of pure gold like cords, and you must attach the chains to the
settings.

[15]You must make a breastpiece for decision making, the work of a skillful workman, fashioned like the ephod. Make it of
gold, of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine linen.[16]It is to be square. You must fold the breastpiece double. It must
be one span long and one span wide.
[17]You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The first row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet.[18]The second row
must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.[19]The third row must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst.[20]The
fourth row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings.
[21]The stones must be arranged by the names of the sons of Israel. They must be like the engraving on a signet ring, each
name standing for one of the twelve tribes.[22]You must make on the breastpiece chains like cords, braided work of pure
gold.[23]You must make two rings of gold for the breastpiece and must attach them to the two ends of the breastpiece.[24]You
must attach the two golden chains to the two corners of the breastpiece.
[25]You must attach the other ends of the two braided chains to the two settings. Then you must attach those to the shoulder
pieces of the ephod at its front.[26]You must make two rings of gold, and you must put them on the other two corners of the
breastpiece, on the edge next to the inner border of the ephod.
[27]You must make two more gold rings, and you must attach them to the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the front of
the ephod, close to its seam above the finely-woven waistband of the ephod.[28]They must tie the breastpiece by its rings to
the ephod's rings with a blue cord, so that it might be attached just above the ephod's woven waistband. This is so that the
breastpiece might not become unattached from the ephod.
[29]When Aaron goes into the holy place, he must carry the names of the sons of Israel over his heart in the breastpiece for
decision making, as a continuing memorial before Yahweh.[30]You are to put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastpiece
for decision making, so they may be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before Yahweh. Thus Aaron will always carry the
means for making decisions for the people of Israel over his heart before Yahweh.

[31]You will make the robe of the ephod entirely of blue fabric.[32]It must have an opening for the head in the middle. The
opening must have a woven edge round about so that it does not tear. This must be the work of a weaver.
[33]On the bottom hem, you must make pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn all around. Gold bells must be
between them all around.[34]There must be a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate—and so on
—all around the hem of the robe.[35]The robe is to be on Aaron when he serves, so that its sound can be heard when he goes
into the holy place before Yahweh and when he leaves. This is so that he does not die.

[36]You must make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving on a signet, "Holy to Yahweh."[37]You must attach
this plate by a blue cord to the front of the turban.[38]It must be on Aaron's forehead; he must always bear any guilt that
might attach to the offering of the holy gifts that the people of Israel set apart to Yahweh. The turban must be always on
his forehead so that Yahweh may accept their gifts.
[39]You must make the coat with fine linen, and you must make a turban of fine linen. You must also make a sash, the work
of an embroiderer.

[40]For Aaron's sons you must make tunics, sashes, and headbands for their honor and splendor.[41]You must clothe Aaron

your brother, and his sons with him. You must anoint them, ordain them, and consecrate them to me, so that they may serve me as priests.
[42]You must make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh, that will cover them from the waist to the thighs.[43]Aaron and his sons must wear these garments when they enter the tent of meeting or when they approach the altar to serve in the holy place. They must do this so they would not be guilty or else they would die. This is a permanent law for Aaron and his descendants after him.

Exodus 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Holy garments

Because Yahweh is holy, only the priests could approach him, and when they did they must be wearing specially made clothing. (See: priest and holy)

Links:

Exodus 28:1 Notes

Exodus 28:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do (Exodus 25:1).

Call to yourself

Here "yourself" refers to Moses.

Exodus 28:2

You must make

Here "you" refers to the people.

garments that are set apart to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "garments that you will set apart to me"

Exodus 28:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

a coat of woven work

"a coat with a design woven into it"

turban

a tall head covering made from cloth wrapped around the head several times

sash

a piece of cloth that people wear around their waist or across their chest

Exodus 28:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

fine-twined linen

"finely-twisted linen." This was cloth made from fine linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36.

skillful craftsman

a person who can make beautiful objects by hand

Exodus 28:8

it must be made of one piece

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they must make it in one piece"

Exodus 28:9

onyx stones

These are valuable stones that have layers of white and black, red or brown. See how you translated this in [Exodus 25:7]

Exodus 28:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 28:11

With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engraving on a signet

"In the same way a person engraves on a seal"

engraver

a person who cuts designs into a hard material such as wood, stone, or metal

signet

an engraved stone used to stamp a design into a wax seal

settings

pieces of metal that hold the stone onto the ephod

Exodus 28:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

settings

These are pieces of metal that hold each stone onto the ephod. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:11.

Exodus 28:14

two braided chains of pure gold like cords

"two chains of pure gold that are braided like cords"

Exodus 28:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the work of a skillful workman, fashioned like the ephod

"a skillful workman will make it like the ephod"

Exodus 28:16

span

A span is 22 centimeters.

Exodus 28:17

General Information:

Twelve kinds of stone are listed here. Scholars are not sure which kinds of stones the Hebrew words refer to. Some translations list different stones.

precious stones

"valuable gems" or "treasured gems." See how you translated these in [Exodus 25:7]

ruby ... topaz ... garnet

These are precious stones.

Exodus 28:18

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emerald ... diamond
These are precious stones.
sapphire
This is a gemstone that is blue in color. See how you translated this in Exodus 24:10.
Exodus 28:19
jacinth ... agate ... amethyst
These are precious stones
Exodus 28:20
beryl ... jasper
These are precious stones.
onyx
This is a valuable stone that has layers of white and black, red or brown. See how you translated these in Exodus 25:7.
They must be mounted in gold settings
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must mount them in gold settings"
Exodus 28:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
The stones must be arranged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must arrange the stones"
signet ring
A signet is an engraved stone used to stamp a design into a wax seal. Here the stone is mounted on a ring. See how you translated "signet" in Exodus 28:11.
Exodus 28:22
chains like cords, braided work of pure gold
"chains that are made of pure gold and are braided like cords." See how you translated similar phrases in Exodus 28:14.
Exodus 28:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
braided chains
"chains braided like cords." See how you translated this in Exodus 28:14.
to the two settings
These are two settings that enclose the stones. This can be clearly stated in the translation. Alternate translation: "to the two settings that enclose the stones"
Exodus 28:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
finely-woven waistband
This was a cloth belt made from narrow linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:8.
Exodus 28:28
so that it might be attached
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they may attach it"
the breastpiece might not become unattached from the ephod
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "the breastpiece might stay attached to the ephod"
Exodus 28:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
he must carry the names of the sons of Israel over his heart in the breastpiece
This refers to the names of the tribes engraved on the twelve stones the breastplate as described in Exodus 28:17-21.
over his heart
"over Aaron's heart" or "on his chest"
Exodus 28:30
the Urim and the Thummim ... the means for making decisions
The second phrase appears to refer to the Urim and Thummim and explain their purpose.
the Urim and the Thummim
It not clear what these are. They were objects, possibly stones, that the priest used to determine somehow the will of God.
Exodus 28:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
Exodus 28:32
This must be the work of a weaver
This can be stated as a command. Alternate translation: "A weaver must make this robe"
a weaver
"a person who weaves" or "a person who creates cloth using thread"
Exodus 28:33
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people do.
pomegranates
A pomegranate is a round fruit with a red outer skin.
Exodus 28:34
a golden bell and a pomegranate
This phrase is repeated to show the pattern of the design on the robe.
Exodus 28:35
The robe is to be on Aaron when he serves
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Aaron must wear the robe when he serves"
so that its sound can be heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the bells make a sound"
This is so that he does not die
It is implied that he would die because he did not obey Yahweh. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "As a result, he will not die because of disobeying my instructions"
Exodus 28:36
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
engrave on it, like the engraving on a signet
"write on it in the same way a person engraves on a seal." See how you translated similar words in Exodus 28:11
Exodus 28:37
turban
This was a tall head covering made from cloth wrapped around the head several times. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.
Exodus 28:38
It must be on Aaron's forehead

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Aaron must wear it on his forehead"

The turban must be always on his forehead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Aaron must always wear the turban on his forehead"

Exodus 28:39

General Information:

God continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

turban

This was a tall head covering made from cloth wrapped around the head several times. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.

sash

A sash is a decorative piece of cloth that a person wears around his waist or across his chest. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.

the work of an embroiderer

An embroiderer is a person who sews designs into cloth. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36.

Exodus 28:40

General Information:

God continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

sashes

A sash is a decorative piece of cloth that a person wears around his waist or across his chest. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.

headbands

A headband is a narrow, decorative strip of cloth that is worn around the head above the eyes.

Exodus 28:41

You must clothe Aaron your brother

Aaron was the older brother of Moses. You can state this clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "Put these clothes on your older brother Aaron"

Exodus 28:42

General Information:

God continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

undergarments

These are underwear, clothing worn under the outer clothes, next to the skin.

naked flesh

This is a euphemism for sexual organs. Your language may have a different polite way to speak of these things.

Exodus 28:43

tent of meeting

This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.

a permanent law

"a law the will not end"

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29 [1]Now this is what you must do to set them apart to me so that they may serve me as priests. Take one young bull from the herd and two rams without blemish,[2]bread without yeast, and cakes without yeast mixed with oil. Also take wafers without yeast rubbed with oil. Make the wafers using fine wheat flour.
[3]You must put them into a single basket, bring them in the basket, and present them with the bull and the two rams.[4]You must present Aaron and his sons at the entrance to the tent of meeting. You must wash Aaron and his sons in water.
[5]You must take the garments and clothe Aaron with the coat, the robe of the ephod, the ephod, and the breastpiece, fastening the finely-woven waistband of the ephod around him.[6]You must set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban.[7]Then take the anointing oil and pour it on his head, and in this way anoint him.
[8]You must bring his sons and put tunics on them.[9]You must clothe Aaron and his sons with sashes and put headbands on them. The work of the priesthood will belong to them by permanent law. In this way you must consecrate Aaron and his sons for them to serve me.

[10]You must all bring the bull before the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons must lay their hands on its head.[11]You must kill the bull before Yahweh at the entrance to the tent of meeting.
[12]You must take some of the bull's blood and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and you must pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.[13]You must take all the fat that covers the inner parts, and also take the covering of the liver and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them; burn it all on the altar.[14]But as for the bull's flesh, as well as its skin and dung, you must burn it up outside the camp. It will be a sin offering.

[15]You must also take the one ram, and Aaron and his sons must lay their hands on its head.[16]You must kill the ram, then take its blood and sprinkle it on all sides of the altar.[17]You must cut the ram into pieces and wash its inner parts and its legs, and you must put the inner parts, together with its pieces and with its head,[18]on the altar. Then burn the whole ram. It will be a burnt offering to Yahweh, a sweet aroma, an offering made to Yahweh by fire.

[19]You must then take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons must lay their hands on its head.[20]Then you must kill the ram and take some of its blood. Put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, and on the tip of his sons' right ears, on the thumb of their right hands, and on the great toe of their right feet. Then you must sprinkle the blood against the altar on every side.
[21]You must take some of the blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it all on Aaron and on his garments, and also on his sons and on their garments. Aaron will then be set apart for me, as well as his garments, his sons and his sons' garments with him.
[22]You must take the ram's fat, the fat tail, the fat that covers the inner parts, the covering of the liver, the two kidneys and the fat on them, and the right thigh—for this ram is for the priests' consecration to me.[23]Take one loaf of bread, one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer out of the basket of bread without yeast that is before Yahweh.

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[24]You must put these in Aaron's hands and in the hands of his sons and wave them before me for a wave offering before Yahweh.[25]You must then take the food from their hands and burn it on the altar with the burnt offering. It will produce a sweet aroma for me; it will be an offering made to me by fire.

[26]You must take the breast of Aaron's ram of dedication and wave it for a wave offering before Yahweh, and it will be your share.[27]You must set apart to me the breast of the wave offering that is waved and the thigh that is the contribution for the priests—both the breast that was waved and the thigh that was contributed for Aaron and his sons—from the ram of consecration.[28]This will be a perpetual share for Aaron and his sons. It will be a contribution from the people of Israel to give to Yahweh from their peace offerings.
[29]The holy garments of Aaron must also be reserved for his descendants after him. They are to be anointed in them and ordained to me in them.[30]The priest who succeeds him from among his sons, who comes into the tent of meeting to serve me in the holy place, is to wear those garments for seven days.

[31]You must take the ram of consecration and boil its meat in a holy place.[32]Aaron and his sons must eat the ram's meat and the bread that is in the basket at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[33]They must eat the meat and bread that were given to atone for them and to ordain them to be set apart to me. No one else may eat that food; they must treat it as holy.[34]If any of the meat of the ordination offering, or any of the bread, remains to the next morning, then you must burn it. It must not be eaten because it has been set apart to me.

[35]In this way, by following all that I have commanded you to do, you must treat Aaron and his sons. For seven days you must prepare them.[36]Every day you must offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. You must purify the altar by making atonement for it, and you must anoint it in order to set it apart to me.[37]For seven days you must make atonement for the altar and set it apart to Yahweh. Then the altar will be completely set apart to me. Whatever touches the altar will be set apart to Yahweh.

[38]You must regularly offer on the altar every day two lambs a year old.[39]One lamb you must offer in the morning, and the other lamb you must offer about sundown.
[40]With the first lamb, offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with the fourth part of a hin of oil from pressed olives, and the fourth part of a hin of wine as a drink offering.
[41]You must offer the second lamb about sunset. You must offer the same grain offering as in the morning, and the same drink offering. These will produce a sweet aroma for me; it will be an offering made to me by fire.[42]These must be regular burnt offerings throughout your generations, at the entrance to the tent of meeting before Yahweh, where I will meet with you to speak to you there.
[43]That is where I will meet with the people of Israel; the tent will be set apart for me by my glory.[44]I will set apart the tent of meeting and the altar for these to belong to me alone. I will also set apart Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests.
[45]I will live among the people of Israel and will be their God.[46]They will know that I am Yahweh, their God, who brought them out from the land of Egypt so that I might live among them. I am Yahweh, their God.

Exodus 29 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Consecrating priests

This chapter records the process of consecrating priests. The priests were to be set apart from the rest of Israel because Yahweh is holy. (See: consecrate and priest and holy)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"I will live among the Israelites"

As God, Yahweh is everywhere and cannot be limited to a single space. This phrase indicates that he permanently remains within Israel in a special way while they have the ark.

Links:

Exodus 29:1 Notes

Exodus 29:1

Now

The word "now" marks a change in topic from garments for priests to consecrating priests.

you must do

Here "you" refers to Moses.

to set them apart

"to set apart Aaron and his sons"

serve me

Here "me" refers to Yahweh.

one young bull

a male cow

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Exodus 29:2
Also take wafers without yeast rubbed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Also take wafers without yeast and rub them with oil"
bread ... cakes ... wafers
These are different kinds of food made from flour.
Exodus 29:3
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to Moses
You must put them
"You must put the bread, cake, and wafer"
present them with the bull and the two rams
Here "present" means to offer as a sacrifice. The full meaning of this can be translated clearly. Alternate translation: "offer them to me when you sacrifice the bull and the two rams"
Exodus 29:4
tent of meeting
This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.
Exodus 29:5
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
coat
This was a coat with a design woven into it. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.
finely-woven waistband
This was a cloth belt made from narrow linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:8.
Exodus 29:6
turban
This was a tall head covering made from cloth wrapped around the head several times. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.
holy crown
This crown is described in Exodus 29:6 as being engraved with the words "dedicated to Yahweh" and made of pure gold.
Exodus 29:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
bring his sons
"bring Aaron's sons"
tunics
These were coats with a design woven into them. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.
Exodus 29:9
sashes
A sash is a decorative piece of cloth that people wear around their waist or across their chest. See how you translated this word in Exodus 28:4.
headbands
A headband is a narrow, decorative strip of cloth that is worn around the head above the eyes. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:40.
The work of the priesthood
"the duty of being priests"
will belong to them
The duty of being priests will also belong to the descendants of Aaron's sons. You can state this clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "will belong to them and their descendants"
permanent law
"a law the will not end." See how you translated this in Exodus 28:43.
Exodus 29:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
tent of meeting
This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.
Exodus 29:11
You must kill the bull
The bull offering was to be killed by Moses, not the priests, at the doorway, not inside the tent of meeting.
kill the bull
Since the following verses will tell what to do with the blood from the bull, use a term for "kill" that will imply a method similar to "slitting its throat and catch the blood in a bowl."
Exodus 29:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
the horns
These were projections that looked like ox horns attached to the four corners of the altar. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:2.
the rest of the blood
"the remaining blood"
Exodus 29:13
covers the inner parts
"covers the organs"
liver ... kidneys
These are organs in the body.
Exodus 29:14
But as for the bull's flesh, as well as its skin and dung
"But as for the remaining parts of the bull"
Exodus 29:16
You must kill the ram
For these consecration sacrifices for the priests, it was Moses, not Aaron or his sons, who had to kill the animals.
Exodus 29:17
the inner parts
"the organs." See how you translated this in Exodus 29:13.
Exodus 29:18
on the altar
Unlike the bull offering that was burned outside of the tent, the ram was to be burned on the inner altar.
Exodus 29:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
Exodus 29:20
Then you must kill the ram
The ram was killed by cutting its throat. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "Then kill the ram by slitting its throat" or "Then kill the ram by cutting its throat"

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Exodus 29:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
Aaron will then be set apart for me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "By doing this, you will dedicate Aaron to me"
Exodus 29:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
inner parts ... liver ... kidney
These refer to organs inside the body. See how you translated this in Exodus 29:13.
Exodus 29:23
Take one loaf ... before Yahweh
For 29:23 see how you translated similar words in Exodus 29:2.
that is before Yahweh
"that you have placed before Yahweh"
Exodus 29:24
General Information:
God continues speaking to Moses.
You must put these
Here "these" refers to the parts of the sacrifice mentioned in the previous verses.
Exodus 29:25
it will be an offering made to me by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "burn it as an offering to me"
Exodus 29:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
ram of dedication
"ram that you dedicated" or "ram that you killed"
Aaron's ram of dedication
"the ram that you used to dedicate Aaron"
Exodus 29:28
This will be a perpetual share for Aaron and his sons
"This is what Aaron and his sons will always receive from the people"
Exodus 29:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
The holy garments of Aaron must also be reserved for his descendants after him
These garments belong to the priesthood and are not just Aaron's personal clothing. Alternate translation: "Aaron must reserve the holy garments for his descendants after him"
They are to be anointed in them and ordained to me in them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must wear the holy garments when you anoint his descendants and ordain them to me"
Exodus 29:30
tent of meeting
This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.
Exodus 29:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
the ram of consecration
"the ram you killed when you installed the priests"
in a holy place
This is not the same as the holy place outside of the most holy place. This refers to a place within the courtyard. Alternate translation: "at the entrance to the tent of meeting"
Exodus 29:32
tent of meeting
This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.
Exodus 29:33
that were given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you sacrificed"
Exodus 29:34
It must not be eaten
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one must eat it"
because it has been set apart to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because you have set it apart to me"
Exodus 29:35
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
In this way, by following all that I have commanded you to do, you must
treat Aaron and his sons
"I have commanded you to treat Aaron and his sons this way"
Exodus 29:37
Then the altar will be completely set apart to me
"Then the altar will be most holy"
will be set apart to Yahweh
"will also be very holy"
Exodus 29:38
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
You must regularly offer on the altar every day
"You must daily offer on the altar"
Exodus 29:40
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
a tenth ... the fourth part
"1/10 ... 1/4"
ephah
An ephah is 22 liters.
hin
A hin is 3.7 liters.
Exodus 29:41
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
it will be an offering made to me by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be a burnt offering to me"
Exodus 29:42
throughout your generations
"through all the generations of your descendants." See how you translated this in Exodus 12:14.
tent of meeting

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This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.

Exodus 29:43

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

the tent will be set apart for me by my glory

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My awesome presence will dedicate the tent to me"

Exodus 29:45

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

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30 [1]You must make an altar as a place for burning incense. You must make it with acacia wood.[2]Its length must be one cubit, and its width one cubit. It must be square, and its height must be two cubits. Its horns must be made as one piece with it.
[3]You must cover the incense altar with pure gold—its top, its sides, and its horns. You must make a surrounding border of gold for it.[4]You must make two golden rings to be attached to it under its border on its two opposite sides. The rings must be holders for poles to carry the altar.
[5]You must make the poles of acacia wood, and you must cover them with gold.[6]You must put the incense altar before the curtain that is by the ark of the covenant decrees. It will be before the atonement lid that is over the ark of the covenant decrees, where I will meet with you.
[7]Aaron must burn fragrant incense every morning. He must burn it when he tends the lamps,[8]and Aaron lights the lamps again in the evening so incense will burn on it regularly before Yahweh, throughout your generations.[9]But you must offer no other incense on the incense altar, nor any burnt offering or grain offering. You must pour no drink offering on it.
[10]Aaron must make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering he will make atonement for it once a year throughout your generations. It is completely set apart to Yahweh."

[11]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[12]"When you take a census of the people of Israel, then each person must give a ransom for his life to Yahweh. You must do this after you count them, so that there will be no plague among them when you count them.[13]Everyone who is counted in the census is to pay half a shekel of silver, according to the weight of the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is the same as twenty gerahs). This half shekel will be an offering to Yahweh.[14]Everyone who is counted, from twenty years old and up, must give this offering to me.
[15]When the people give this offering to me to make atonement for their lives, the rich must not give more than the half shekel, and the poor must not give less.[16]You must receive this atonement money from the people of Israel and you must allocate it to the work of the tent of meeting. It must be a reminder to the people of Israel before me, to make atonement for your lives."

[17]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[18]"You must also make a large bronze basin with a bronze stand, a basin for washing. You must put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you must put water in it.
[19]Aaron and his sons must wash their hands and their feet with the water in it.[20]When they go into the tent of meeting or when they go near to the altar to serve me by burning an offering, they must wash with water so that they do not die.
[21]They must wash their hands and feet so that they do not die. This must be a permanent law for Aaron and his descendants throughout their people's generations."

[22]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[23]"Take these fine spices: five hundred shekels of flowing myrrh, 250 shekels of sweet-smelling cinnamon, 250 shekels of sweet-smelling cane,[24]five hundred shekels of cassia, measured by the weight of the shekel of the sanctuary, and one hin of olive oil.[25]You must make holy anointing oil with these ingredients, the work of a perfumer. It will be a holy anointing oil, reserved for me.
[26]You must anoint the tent of meeting with this oil, as well as the ark of the covenant decrees,[27]the table and all its utensils, the lampstand and its equipment, the incense altar,[28]the altar for burnt offerings with all its equipment, and the basin with its stand.
[29]You must set them apart to me so that they may be holy to me. Anything that touches them will also be holy.[30]You must anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them so that they may serve me as priests.[31]You must say to the people of Israel, 'This must be an anointing oil that is set apart to Yahweh throughout your people's generations.
[32]It must not be applied to people's skin, nor must you make any oil like it with the same formula, because it is set apart to Yahweh. You must regard it in this manner.[33]Whoever makes perfume like it, or whoever puts any of it on someone, that person must be cut off from his people.'"

[34]Yahweh said to Moses, "Take spices—stacte, onycha, and galbanum—sweet spices along with pure frankincense, each in equal amounts.[35]Make it into the form of incense, blended by a perfumer, seasoned with salt, pure and set apart.[36]You will beat it to powder. Put part of it in front of the ark of the covenant decrees, which is in the tent of meeting, where I will meet with you. You will regard it as very holy to me.
[37]As for this incense that you will make, you must not make any with the same formula for yourselves. It must be most holy to you.[38]Whoever makes anything like it to use as a perfume must be cut off from his people."

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Exodus 30 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Atonement

The atonement offered by the priests was very important in the religious life of Israel. In order to offer sacrifices, the priests had to maintain ritual cleanliness by washing themselves. (See: atonement and priest and clean)

Links:

Exodus 30:1 Notes

Exodus 30:1

General Information:

Yahweh tells Moses how to build the worship equipment.

You must make

Here "you" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.

Exodus 30:2

Its horns must be made

These were projections that looked like ox horns attached to the four corners of the altar. See how you translated "horns" in [Exodus 27:2]

Exodus 30:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the incense altar

"an altar to burn incense"

Exodus 30:4

to be attached to it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you will attach to the altar"

Exodus 30:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 30:6

ark of the covenant decrees

The ark is the chest that contains the commandments. This can be stated clearly in the translation. See how you translated this in [Exodus 26:33]

atonement lid

This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.

where I will meet with you

Here "you" refers to Moses.

Exodus 30:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 30:8

throughout your generations

"through all the generations of your descendants." See how you translated this in Exodus 12:14.

Exodus 30:9

But you must offer

Though the word "you" is addressed to Moses, the instruction is given specifically to Aaron and his descendants as to when and what they are to offer on the altar of incense.

Exodus 30:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

horns

These were projections that looked like ox horns attached to the four corners of the altar. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:2.

throughout your generations

"through all the generations of your descendants." See how you translated this in Exodus 12:14.

Exodus 30:12

When you take

Possible meanings are 1) "you" refers to just Moses or 2) "you" refers to Moses and the leaders of Israel in future generations when they take a census.

a census of the people of Israel

The leaders only counted the males of Israel.

Exodus 30:13

Everyone who is counted

This can be stated in active form. They counted only the men. Alternate translation: "Everyone you count" or "Every man you count"

half a shekel of silver

"1/2 a shekel of silver." Translators may use a unit of measure that people understand and a round number: "5.5 grams of silver" or "six grams of silver"

according to the weight of the shekel of the sanctuary

There were evidently shekels of more than one weight at the time. This specified which one was to be used.

twenty gerahs

"20 gerahs." A gerah is a unit that people used for measuring how much something very small weighed.

Exodus 30:14

from twenty years old and up

Larger numbers are spoken of as being up or above smaller numbers. Alternate translation: "from twenty years old and more" or "who is twenty years old or older"

Exodus 30:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

the people

Only the men made this offering.

the half shekel

Translators may use a unit of measure that people understand and a round number: "the 5.5 grams of silver" or "the 6 grams of silver." See how you translated this in [Exodus 3:13]

Exodus 30:16

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It must be a reminder to the people of Israel before me, to make atonement for your lives
Possible meanings are 1) "It will remind the people of Israel to make atonement for their lives" or 2) "It will remind the people of Israel that they have made atonement for their lives."
Exodus 30:18
You must also make
Here "you" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.
bronze basin
"bronze bowl" or "bronze tub"
a bronze stand
This is what the basin would be put on.
a basin for washing
This phrase explains what the priests were to use the large bronze basin for.
the altar
the altar of sacrifice
Exodus 30:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
water in it
"water in the basin"
Exodus 30:21
for Aaron and his descendants throughout their people's generations
"for Aaron and all the generations of his descendants." See how you translated a similar phrase in Exodus 12:14.
Exodus 30:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Exodus 30:23
spices
dried plants that people grind into a powder and put in oil or food to give it a nice smell or flavor. See how you translated this in [Exodus 25:6]
five hundred shekels ... 250 shekels
"500 shekels ... two hundred and fifty shekels." A shekel is about 11 grams. Translators may use units that people know and round numbers: "5.7 kilograms ... 11.4 kilograms" or "six kilograms ... three kilograms"
cinnamon ... cane
These are sweet spices.
Exodus 30:24
cassia
This is a sweet spice.
the weight of the shekel of the sanctuary
There were evidently shekels of more than one weight at the time. This specified which one was to be used. See how you translated this in [Exodus 30:13]
one hin
Translators may use units that people know and round numbers: "3.7 liters" or "four liters"
Exodus 30:25
with these ingredients
"with these items"
the work of a perfumer
Possible meanings are 1) Moses was to have a perfumer do the work or 2) Moses was to do the work himself the way a perfumer would do it.
a perfumer
a person who is skilled in mixing spices and oils
Exodus 30:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
You must anoint
Here "you" refers to Moses.
ark of the covenant decrees
The ark is the chest that contains the commandments. This can be stated clearly in the translation. See how you translated this in [Exodus 26:33]
Exodus 30:28
the altar for burnt offerings
"the altar on which offering were burnt"
Exodus 30:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
set them apart
This refers to the items listed in Exodus 30:26-28.
Exodus 30:31
throughout your people's generations
"all the generations of your descendants." See how you translated this in Exodus 12:14.
Exodus 30:32
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what Moses must tell the people.
It must not be applied to people's skin
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not put the anointing oil that is dedicated to Yahweh on a person's skin"
with the same formula
"with the same ingredients" or "with the same items"
Exodus 30:33
that person must be cut off from his people
The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" 2) "the people of Israel must send him away" or 3) "the people of Israel must kill him."
Exodus 30:34
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what to do. Yahweh gives the commands only to Moses: all instances of "you" are singular. However, the words "blended by a perfumer" might mean that Moses could have the perfumer take the spices, blend them, grind them, and give them to Moses so Moses could put part of the mixture in front of the ark, as in UDB.
Exodus 30:35
Make it into the form of incense, blended by a perfumer
The phrase with "blended" can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make it into the form of incense that a perfumer has blended" or "A perfumer must blend it into a kind of incense"
blended by a perfumer
Possible meanings are 1) Moses was to have a perfumer do the work or 2) Moses was to do the work himself the way a perfumer would do it. See how you translated these words

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in Exodus 30:25.

Exodus 30:36

You will beat it

"You will crush it." Here "you" refers to Moses.

You will regard

Here "you" is plural and refers to Moses and all the people.

Exodus 30:37

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

you must not make any

The word "you" here refers to the people of Israel.

with the same formula

"with the same ingredients" or "with the same items." See how you translated this in Exodus 30:32.

It must be most holy to you

"You must consider it to be most holy"

Exodus 30:38

perfume

This is a pleasant smelling liquid that a person puts on his or her body.

must be cut off from his people

The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" 2) "the people of Israel must send him away" or 3) "the people of Israel must kill him." See how you translated this in [Exodus 30:33]

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31 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[2]"See, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah.
[3]I have filled Bezalel with my Spirit, to give him wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, for all kinds of craftsmanship,[4]to make artistic designs and to work in gold, silver, and bronze;[5]also to cut and set stones and to carve wood—to do all kinds of craftsmanship.
[6]In addition to him, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, from the tribe of Dan. I have put skill into the hearts of all who are wise so that they may make all that I have commanded you. This includes[7]the tent of meeting, the ark of the covenant decrees, the atonement lid on the ark, and all the furniture of the tent—[8]the table and its utensils, the pure lampstand with all its equipment, the incense altar,[9]the altar for burnt offerings with all its equipment, and the large basin with its base.
[10]This also includes the finely-woven garments—the holy garments for Aaron the priest and those of his sons, reserved for me so that they may serve as priests.[11]This also includes the anointing oil and the sweet incense for the holy place. These craftsmen must make all these things just as I have commanded you."

[12]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[13]"'Tell the people of Israel: 'You must certainly keep Yahweh's Sabbath days, for these will be a sign between him and you throughout your people's generations so that you may know that he is Yahweh, who sets you apart for himself.[14]So you must keep the Sabbath, for it must be treated by you as holy, reserved for him. Everyone who defiles it must surely be put to death. Whoever works on the Sabbath, that person must surely be cut off from his people.[15]Work will be done for six days, but the seventh day is to be a Sabbath of complete rest, holy before Yahweh. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must surely be put to death.
[16]Therefore the people of Israel must keep the Sabbath. They must observe it throughout their people's generations as a lasting covenant.[17]The Sabbath will always be a sign between Yahweh and the people of Israel, for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.'"

[18]When God had finished talking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him two tablets of covenant decrees, made of stone, written on by his own hand.

Exodus 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the end of Exodus' recording of the law of Moses. (See: lawofmoses)

Special concepts in this chapter

Sabbath

As described in this chapter, the Sabbath is more than just a day of worship or celebration. Its significance extends beyond a way to help people rest. It is a major part of the identity of the Hebrew people. (See: sabbath)

Links:

Exodus 31:1 Notes

Exodus 31:2

I have called by name

God speaks of choosing specific people as calling them by name. Alternate translation: "I have chosen"

Bezalel ... Uri ... Hur

These are names of men.

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Exodus 31:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

I have filled Bezalel with my Spirit

Yahweh speaks of giving Bezalel his Spirit as if Bezalel were a container and God's Spirit were a liquid. Alternate translation: "I have given my Spirit to Bezalel"

for all kinds of craftsmanship

The abstract noun "craftsmanship" can be translated as "making crafts" or "making things." Alternate translation: "for making all kinds of crafts" or "so that he can make all kinds of things"

Exodus 31:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Oholiab ... Ahisamak

These are names of men.

I have put skill into the hearts of all who are wise

God speaks of making people able to make things as if he were putting the ability into their hearts. Alternate translation: "I have given skill to all who are wise" or "I have made all who are wise able to make things well"

Exodus 31:7

tent of meeting

This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:21.

ark of the covenant decrees

The ark is the chest that contains the commandments. This can be stated clearly in the translation. See how you translated this in [Exodus 26:33]

atonement lid

This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.

Exodus 31:8

incense altar

"altar to burn incense." See how you translated this in Exodus 30:3.

Exodus 31:9

altar for burnt offerings

"altar on which offering were burnt." See how you translated this in Exodus 30:28.

Exodus 31:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Exodus 31:11

These craftsmen

"These people who are skilled in making beautiful things"

Exodus 31:13

You must certainly keep Yahweh's Sabbath days

God speaks of obeying his instructions about the Sabbath as keeping the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "You must certainly obey Yahweh's instructions about the Sabbath"

throughout your people's generations

"through all the generations of your descendants." See how you translated this in Exodus 12:14.

who sets you apart for himself

God speaks of choosing people to be his as setting them apart for himself. Alternate translation: "who has chosen you to be his people"

Exodus 31:14

for it must be treated by you as holy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for you must treat it as holy"

Everyone who defiles it

God speaks of treating the Sabbath with disrespect as defiling it. Alternate translation: "Everyone who treats the Sabbath with disrespect" or "Everyone who does not obey the laws about the Sabbath"

must surely be put to death

"must surely be killed." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must surely kill" or "you must surely execute"

must surely be cut off from his people

The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "Yahweh will no longer consider him to be one of his people" 2) "you must surely send him away" or 3) "you must surely kill him."

Exodus 31:15

but the seventh day

"but day 7"

Exodus 31:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what he must tell the people of Israel.

must keep the Sabbath

God speaks of obeying his instructions about the Sabbath as keeping the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "must obey Yahweh's instructions about the Sabbath"

They must observe it throughout their people's generations

"They and all the generations of their descendants must observe it." See how you translated "throughout their people's generations" in Exodus 12:42.

lasting covenant

"a covenant that will always exist." See how you translated this in Exodus 28:43.

Exodus 31:18

written on by his own hand

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "which Yahweh wrote on with his own hand"

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32 [1]When the people saw that Moses delayed in coming down the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us an idol that will go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him."[2]So Aaron said to them, "Take off the golden rings that are on your wives' ears, and the ears of your sons and daughters, and bring them to me."
[3]All the people took off the golden rings that were on their ears and brought them to Aaron.[4]He received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with an engraving tool, and he made a cast metal figure in the shape of a calf. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt."

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[5]When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before the calf and made a proclamation; he said, "Tomorrow will be a festival in Yahweh's honor."[6]The people arose early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought fellowship offerings. Then they sat down to eat and to drink, and then got up to play.

[7]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Go quickly, for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.[8]They have quickly left the way that I commanded them. They have made a cast metal image in the shape of a calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it. They have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.'"
[9]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "I have seen this people. Look, they are a stiff-necked people.[10]Now then, do not try to stop me. My anger will burn hot against them, so I will destroy them. Then I will make a great nation from you."[11]But Moses tried to calm down Yahweh his God. He said, "Yahweh, why does your anger burn against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?
[12]Why should the Egyptians say, 'He led them out with evil intent, to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth?' Turn from your burning anger and relent from this punishment on your people.[13]Call to mind Abraham and Isaac and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self and said to them, 'I will make your descendants as many as the stars in the heavens, and I will give to your descendants all this land of which I have spoken. They will inherit it forever.'"[14]Then Yahweh relented from the punishment that he had said he would inflict on his people.

[15]Then Moses turned around and went down the mountain, carrying the two tablets of the covenant decrees in his hand. The tablets were written on both their sides, on both the front and the back.[16]The tablets were God's own work, and the writing was God's own writing, engraved on the tablets.
[17]When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is the noise of combat in the camp."[18]But Moses said,

"It is not the sound of a shout of victory,
and it is not the sound of a cry of defeat,
but the sound of singing that I hear."

[19]When Moses approached the camp, he saw the calf and the people dancing. He became very angry. He threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the bottom of the mountain.[20]He took the calf that the people had made, burned it, ground it to powder, and poured it into the water. Then he made the people of Israel drink it.

[21]Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, that you have brought such a great sin on them?"[22]Aaron said, "Do not let your anger burn hot, my master. You know these people, how they are set on doing evil.[23]They said to me, 'Make us a god who will go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.'[24]So I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let him take it off.' They gave me the gold and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf."

[25]Moses saw that the people were running wild (for Aaron had let them get out of control, causing their enemies to mock them).[26]Then Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is on Yahweh's side, come to me." All the Levites gathered around him.[27]He said to them, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: 'Let each man fasten his sword on his side and go back and forth from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and kill his brother, his companion, and his neighbor.'"
[28]The Levites did what Moses ordered. That day about three thousand of the people died.[29]Moses said to the Levites, "You have been placed into Yahweh's service today, for each of you has taken action against his son and his brother, so Yahweh might give you a blessing today."

[30]The next day Moses said to the people, "You have committed a very great sin. Now I will go up to Yahweh. Perhaps I can make atonement for your sin."[31]Moses returned to Yahweh and said, "Alas! These people have committed a great sin and made themselves an idol of gold.[32]But now, please forgive their sin; but if you do not, blot me out of the book that you have written."
[33]Yahweh said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, that person I will blot out of my book.[34]So now go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. See, my angel will go before you. But on the day that I punish them, I will punish them for their sin."[35]Yahweh sent a plague on the people because they had made the calf, the one that Aaron made.

Exodus 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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The events of this chapter occur while Moses spoke with God and therefore happen at the same time as the events in chapters 20-31.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 32:18.

Special concepts in this chapter

Idolatry
The making of the golden calf was considered a form of idolatry.

Links:

Exodus 32:1 Notes

Exodus 32:1
the people saw
Here understanding something is spoken of as if it were being seen. Alternate translation: "the people realized"
Come, make us an idol
The word "come" strengthens the force of the command following it. The people were demanding that Aaron make an idol for them.
go before us
"lead us" or "be our leader"
Exodus 32:2
bring them to me
The word "them" refers to the golden rings.
Exodus 32:3
All the people
This refers to all the people who rejected Moses as their leader and Moses's God as their God.
Exodus 32:4
fashioned it with an engraving tool, and he made a cast metal figure in the shape of a calf
Aaron melted the gold and poured it into a mold that had the shape of a calf. When the gold became hard, he removed the mold, and the hardened gold had the shape of a calf.
Exodus 32:5
When Aaron saw this
You may need to make explicit what he saw. "When Aaron saw what the people did"
Exodus 32:6
to play
The word "play" here is a general term that might be a euphemism for immoral sexual activity, but it could just as well speak of singing and dancing or even of laughing at and mocking Moses and Yahweh.
Exodus 32:8
left the way that I commanded them
Here God speaks of the people disobeying what he commanded them as if he had told them to walk on a certain road and they left that road. Alternate translation: "stopped doing what I commanded them to do" or "have stopped obeying what I commanded them to do"
Exodus 32:9
I have seen this people
Here Yahweh compares knowing the people to seeing them. Alternate translation: "I know this people"
a stiff-necked people
Yahweh speaks of the people being stubborn as if they had stiff necks. Alternate translation: "a stubborn people"
Exodus 32:10
Now then
The word "now" is used here to mark a break in what Yahweh was telling Moses. Here Yahweh tells what he will do to the people.
My anger will burn hot against them
Yahweh speaks of his anger as if it were a fire that could burn hot. Alternate translation: "My anger towards them will be terrible" or "I am extremely angry with them"
from you
The word "you" refers to Moses.
Exodus 32:11
why does your anger burn against your people ... a mighty hand?
Moses used this question to to try to persuade Yahweh not to be so angry with his people. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do not let your anger burn against your people ... a mighty hand." or "Do not be so angry with your people ... a mighty hand."
great power ... mighty hand
These two phrases share similar meanings and are combined for emphasis.
a mighty hand
Here the word "hand" refers to the things Yahweh did. Alternate translation: "and the powerful things you did"
Exodus 32:12
General Information:
Moses continues to reason with God not to destroy Israel.
Why should the Egyptians say, 'He led them out ... to destroy them from the face of the earth?'
Moses used this question to try to persuade God not to destroy his people. This rhetorical question can be translated with a statement. Alternate translation: If you destroy your people, the Egyptians might say, 'He led them out ... to destroy them from the face of the earth.'
face of the earth
"from the surface of the earth" or "from the earth"
Turn from your burning anger
"Stop your burning anger" or "Stop being so angry"
your burning anger
Moses speaks of God's anger as if it were a fire that was burning. Alternate translation: "your terrible anger"
Exodus 32:13
Call to mind Abraham
"Remember Abraham" or "Think about Abraham"
you swore
"you made an oath" or "you solemnly promised"
They will inherit it forever
God speaks about them possessing the land as if they would

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inherit it. Alternate translation: "They will possess it forever"

Exodus 32:15

tablets of the covenant decrees

These are the two stone slabs on which God had engraved his commandments.

Exodus 32:16

The tablets were God's own work, and the writing was God's own writing

These two phrases share similar meanings. The second explains how the tablets were "God's own work."

Exodus 32:17

he said to Moses

It is assumed that Joshua met Moses while Moses was going back to the camp.

Exodus 32:18

It is not the sound of a shout of victory, and it is not the sound of a cry of defeat

The abstract nouns "victory" and "defeat" can be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "It is not the sound people make when they have won a battle, and not the sound people make when they have lost a battle"

shout ... cry

These words translate the same Hebrew word, which fits well with both "victory" and "defeat." There is no such word in English, but if your language has such a word, you may want to use it here.

Exodus 32:19

the tablets

"the two stone slabs that Yahweh had written on"

Exodus 32:21

Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people ... a great sin on them?"

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Then Moses asked Aaron what the people do to him, that he have brought such a great sin on them"

you have brought such a great sin on them

Moses spoke of causing people to sin as if sin were an object and Aaron put it on them. Alternate translation: "you have caused them to sin so terribly"

Exodus 32:22

Do not let your anger burn hot

Aaron spoke of Moses's anger as if it were a fire that could burn. "Do not be so angry"

they are set on doing evil

Being determined to do evil is spoken of as being set on evil. Alternate translation: "they are determined to do what is evil"

Exodus 32:23

this Moses

People showed disrespect by putting the word "this" before his name, as if Moses were someone they did not know and could not trust.

Exodus 32:24

So I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let him take it off.'

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "So I told them that whoever had any gold should take it off"

I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf

Instead of taking ownership for making the calf, Aaron claims the calf came out of the fire supernaturally.

Exodus 32:25

were running wild

"were behaving wildly" or "were not controlling themselves"

Exodus 32:26

Then Moses stood at the entrance ... "Whoever is on Yahweh's side, come to me."

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Then Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and said that whoever was on Yahweh's side should come to him"

Whoever is on Yahweh's side

Moses speaks of being loyal to Yahweh as being on Yahweh's side. Alternate translation: "Whoever is loyal to Yahweh" or "Whoever serves Yahweh"

Exodus 32:27

go back and forth from entrance to entrance

"go from side of the camp to the other, starting at one entrance to the camp and going to the entrance on the other side of the camp"

Exodus 32:28

three thousand of the people

"3000 of the people"

Exodus 32:29

You have been placed into Yahweh's service

This probably means "You have been chosen to serve Yahweh" or "You have become Yahweh's servants."

for each of you has taken action against his son and his brother

The fact that they did this in obedience to God can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "for you have obeyed Yahweh and killed your sons and your brothers"

Exodus 32:30

You have committed a very great sin

They worshiped an idol.

Perhaps I can make atonement for your sin

Moses spoke of persuading God to forgive the people as if he could make atonement for their sin. Alternate translation: "Perhaps I can persuade Yahweh to forgive you"

Exodus 32:31

Alas

Moses is saying that he is very sad. If your language has a word that expresses deep sadness, you may want to use it here.

Exodus 32:32

blot me out of the book

The word "me" here refers to the name of Moses. Alternate translation: "erase my name from the book"

the book that you have written

What God had written in the book can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the book in which you have written the names of your people"

Exodus 32:33

that person I will blot out of my book

The phrase "that person" represents "that person's name." Alternate translation: "I will erase that person's name from my book"

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my book
This refers to the book of Yahweh that Moses spoke of in Exodus 32:32.
Exodus 32:34
But on the day that I punish them, I will punish them
On the day that God decides to punish them, it will be clear that it is God who is judging them.
Exodus 32:35
Yahweh sent a plague on the people
This plague may have been a serious illness. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made the people very sick"
they had made the calf, the one that Aaron made
Even though Aaron made the calf, the people were also guilty because they told Aaron to do it. Alternate translation: "they told Aaron to make the calf"

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33 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Go from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt. Go to the land about which I made an oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.'[2]I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.[3]Go to that land, which is flowing with milk and honey, but I will not go up with you, because you are a stiff-necked people. I might destroy you on the way."
[4]When the people heard these troubling words, they mourned, and no one put on any jewelry.[5]Yahweh had said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people. If I went among you for even one moment, I would destroy you. So now, take off your jewelry so that I may decide what to do with you.'"[6]So the people of Israel wore no jewelry from Mount Horeb onward.

[7]Moses took a tent and pitched it outside the camp, some distance from the camp. He called it the tent of meeting. Everyone who asked Yahweh for anything went out to the tent of meeting, outside the camp.[8]When Moses would go out to the tent, all the people would stand up at their tent entrances and look at Moses until he had gone inside.[9]Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the tent entrance, and Yahweh would speak with Moses.
[10]Whenever all the people saw the pillar of cloud stand at the entrance to the tent, they would get up and worship, every man at his own tent entrance.[11]Yahweh would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his servant Joshua son of Nun, a young man, would stay in the tent.

[12]Moses said to Yahweh, "See, you have been saying to me, 'Take this people on their journey,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my eyes.'[13]Now if I have found favor in your eyes, show me your ways so that I may know you and continue to find favor in your eyes. Remember that this nation is your people."
[14]Yahweh answered, "My own presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."[15]Moses said to him, "If your presence does not go with us, do not take us up from here.[16]For otherwise, how will it be known that I have found favor in your eyes, I and your people? Will it not only be if you go with us that I and your people will be distinct from all the other peoples that are on the surface of the earth?"

[17]Yahweh said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have requested, for you have found favor in my eyes, and I know you by name."[18]Moses said, "Please show me your glory."
[19]Yahweh said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim my name 'Yahweh' before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."[20]But Yahweh said, "You must not see my face, for no one can see me and live."
[21]Yahweh said, "See, here is a place by me; you will stand on this rock.[22]While my glory passes by, I will put you in a crevice of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by.[23]Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back, but my face will not be seen."

Exodus 33 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant
While the covenants Yahweh made may not be conditioned upon the obedience of Israel, it is clear that their conquering of the Promised Land was conditioned on their obedience to Yahweh. (See: covenant and promisedland)

Links:

Exodus 33:1 Notes

Exodus 33:1
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses of his anger.
Exodus 33:3

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that land, which is flowing with milk and honey
The land was good for raising livestock and growing crops. See how you translated this in [Exodus 3:8]
flowing with
"full of" or "with an abundance of"
milk
Since milk comes from cows and goats, this represents food produced by livestock. Alternate translation: "food from livestock"
honey
Since honey is produced from flowers, this represents food from crops. Alternate translation: "food from crops"
a stiff-necked people
Stubborn people are spoken of as if they have stiff or hard necks that prevent them from turning their heads. Alternate translation: "stubborn people" or "people who refuse to change"
Exodus 33:4
jewelry
beautiful clothing as well as chains and rings with jewels in them
Exodus 33:5
a stiff-necked people
Stubborn people are spoken of as if they have stiff or hard necks that prevent them from turning their heads. See how you translated this in [Exodus 33:3]
Exodus 33:9
the pillar of cloud
The cloud had the shape of a pillar. See how you translated this in [Exodus 13:22]
would come down
Where it came down from can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "would come down from the sky"
Exodus 33:11
Yahweh would speak to Moses face to face
Speaking directly rather than through dreams and visions, is spoken of as if Moses and God saw each other's faces while they spoke. Alternate translation: "Yahweh would speak directly to Moses"
young man
Joshua was old enough to be a soldier, but he was much younger than Moses
Exodus 33:12
See
"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I know you by name
To know someone by name is to know them well. Alternate translation: "I know you well"
you have also found favor in my eyes
Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that God is pleased with Moses. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing God's evaluation. Alternate translation: "I have evaluated you and approve" or "I am pleased with you"
Exodus 33:13
Now if I have found favor in your eyes
Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that God is pleased with Moses. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing God's evaluation. Alternate translation: "Now If you are pleased with me" or "Now if you approve of me"
show me your ways
Possible meanings: 1) "show me what you are going to do in the future" or 2) "show me how people can do what pleases you."
Exodus 33:14
My own presence will go
God's presence represents himself. Alternate translation: "I will go"
go with you ... give you
The word "you" here refers to Moses. It is singular.
I will give you rest
"I will let you rest"
Exodus 33:16
For otherwise
"For if your presence does not go with us"
how will it be known
This can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: how will people know"
how will it be known ... people?
Moses used this question in order to emphasize that if God does not go with them, no one will know that Moses had found favor in God's sight. Alternate translation: "no one will know ... people."
I and your people will be distinct
"everyone will know that I and your people are different." The words "be distinct" translate the same Hebrew word as "set ... apart" in Exodus 8:22, so if your language has one word or phrase for both ideas, you may want to use it there and here.
Will it not only be if
"Will it not only be known if"
Exodus 33:17
General Information:
When Yahweh uses the word "you" in this verse, it is singular and refers to Moses.
you have found favor in my eyes
Here "found favor" is an idiom that means that God is pleased with Moses. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. See how you translated this in [Exodus 33:12]
I know you by name
To know someone by name is to know them well. See how you translated this in [Exodus 33:12]
Exodus 33:19
I will make all my goodness pass before you
God speaks of walking past Moses so that Moses can see his goodness as if only his goodness would go past Moses. Alternate translation: "I will move past you so that you may see my goodness"
Exodus 33:21
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."
Exodus 33:23
you will see my back
This is because Yahweh will be walking away from Moses.

but my face will not be seen	"but you will not see my face"

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation:

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34 [1]Yahweh said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the first tablets. I will write on these tablets the words that were on the first tablets, the tablets that you broke.[2]Be ready by morning and come up Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the mountain top.
[3]No one is to come up with you. Do not let anyone else be seen anywhere on the mountain. No flocks or herds are even to graze in front of the mountain."[4]So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the first ones, and he got up early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as Yahweh had instructed him. Moses carried the tablets of stone in his hand.
[5]Yahweh came down in the cloud and stood with Moses there, and he pronounced the name "Yahweh."[6]Yahweh passed by before him and proclaimed, "Yahweh, Yahweh, the merciful and gracious God, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,[7]keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquities, transgressions, and sins. But he will by no means clear the guilty. He will bring the punishment for the fathers' sin on their children and on their children's children, as far as the third and fourth generations."
[8]Moses quickly bowed down to the ground and worshiped.[9]Then he said, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, my Lord, please go among us, for this people is stiff-necked. Pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as your inheritance."

[10]Yahweh said, "See, I am about to make a covenant. Before all your people, I will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth nor in any nation. All the people among you will see my deeds, for it is a fearful thing that I am doing with you.[11]Obey what I command you today. I am about to drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.
[12]Be careful not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, or they will become a trap among you.[13]Rather, you must break down their altars, smash their stone pillars, and cut down their Asherah poles.[14]For you must worship no other god, for Yahweh, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.
[15]So be careful not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for they prostitute themselves to their gods, and they sacrifice to their gods. Then one of them will invite you and you will eat some of his sacrifice,[16]and then you will even take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters will prostitute themselves to their gods, and they will make your sons prostitute themselves to their gods.[17]Do not make for yourselves gods of molten metal.

[18]You must keep the Festival of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you must eat bread without yeast for seven days at the fixed time in the month of Aviv, for it was in the month of Aviv you came out from Egypt.
[19]The first issue of every womb is mine, even every male firstborn of your livestock, whether from herd or flock.[20]You must redeem the firstborn of a donkey with a lamb, but if you do not buy it back, then you must break its neck. You must redeem all the firstborn of your sons. No one may appear before me empty-handed.

[21]You may work for six days, but on the seventh day you must rest. Even at plowing time and in harvest, you must rest.
[22]You must observe the Festival of Weeks with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and you must observe the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year.
[23]Three times a year all your men must appear before Lord Yahweh, the God of Israel.[24]For I will drive out nations before you and expand your borders. No one will desire to have your land as their own when you go up to appear before Yahweh your God three times in a year.

[25]You must not offer the blood of my sacrifice with any yeast, nor may any meat from the sacrifice at the Festival of the Passover be left over to the morning.[26]You must bring the best of the firstfruits from your soil to my house. You must not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."
[27]Yahweh said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."[28]Moses was there with Yahweh for forty days and nights; he did not eat any food nor drink any water. He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

[29]When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant decrees in his hand, he did not know that the skin of his face had become radiant while speaking with God.[30]When Aaron and the people of Israel saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him.[31]But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the community came up to him. Then Moses spoke with them.
[32]After this, all the people of Israel came up to Moses, and he told them all the commands that Yahweh had given him on Mount Sinai.[33]When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.
[34]Whenever Moses went before Yahweh to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. When he came out, he would tell the people of Israel what he was commanded to say.[35]When the people of Israel saw Moses' face shining, he would put the veil over his face again until he went back in to speak with Yahweh.

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Exodus 34 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"He will bring the punishment for the fathers' sin on their children"

This phrase does not mean that a child is necessarily punished for the sins of their parents. Many scholars believe that this passage indicates that a parent's sins will have consequences that will affect their children and grandchildren. (See: sin)

Links:

Exodus 34:1 Notes

Exodus 34:1

tablets of stone

"flat slabs of stone." See how you translated this in Exodus 31:18

Exodus 34:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Do not let anyone else be seen anywhere on the mountain

Being seen doing something represents doing that. Alternate translation: "Do not let anyone else be anywhere on the mountain"

No flocks or herds are even to graze in front of the mountain

"Even flocks or herds are not allowed to come near the mountain to eat."

Exodus 34:5

stood with Moses there

"stood with Moses on the mountain"

he pronounced the name "Yahweh."

Possible meanings are 1) "he spoke the name 'Yahweh.'" or 2) "he proclaimed who Yahweh is." For the second meaning, "name" would represent who God is.

Exodus 34:6

Yahweh, Yahweh, the merciful and gracious God

God is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, am God, and I am merciful and gracious"

abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness

The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be expressed with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "always loving my people and always being faithful to them"

Exodus 34:7

keeping steadfast love for thousands

The abstract noun "love" can be restated with the verb "loving." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Exodus 20:6]

thousands

"thousands of people." This refers to a great number of people. It may be that "generation" is implied. Alternate translation: "thousands of generations" or "the thousandth generation"

he will by no means clear the guilty

Yahweh is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I will by no means clear the guilty"

will by no means clear the guilty

"will certainly not clear the guilty" or "will certainly not say that the guilty are innocent" or "will certainly not free guilty people"

He will bring the punishment for the fathers' sin on their children

Punishing people is spoken of as if punishment were an object that someone could bring on people. Alternate translation: "He will punish the children for their fathers' sin"

their children

The word "children" refers to sons and daughters.

Exodus 34:9

If now I have found favor in your eyes

Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that God is pleased with Moses. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. See how you translated this in [Exodus 33:12]

our iniquity and our sin

The words "iniquity" and "sin" mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "all our sins"

take us as your inheritance

Something that someone possesses forever is spoken of as if it were something that they had inherited. Alternate translation: "take us as the people that you possess forever" or "accept us as the people who belong to you forever"

this people is stiff-necked

Stubborn people are spoken of as if they have stiff or hard necks that prevent them from turning their heads. Alternate translation: "this people is stubborn" or "this people refuses to change" See how you translated similar words in Exodus 33:3.

Exodus 34:10

your people

Here "your" refers to Moses.

it is a fearful thing that I am doing with you

A fearful thing is a thing that causes people to be afraid. In this case, people will fear God when they see what he does. Alternate translation: "what I do for you will cause people to fear me"

I am doing with you

Here "you" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.

Exodus 34:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses. Here he tells him what Moses and the people must do.

they will become a trap among you

People who tempt others to sin are spoken of as if they were a trap. Alternate translation: "they will tempt you to

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sin"
Exodus 34:14
Yahweh, whose name is Jealous
The word "Jealous" here means that God is concerned to keep his honor. If his people worship other gods, he loses honor, because when his people do not honor him, other people also will not honor him. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, always guard my honor"
whose name is Jealous,
The word "name" here represents God's character. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, who am always jealous" or "I, Yahweh, am always jealous"
Exodus 34:15
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses how his people are to behave towards outsiders.
for they prostitute themselves to their gods
God speaks of people worshiping other gods as if they were prostitutes going to other men. Alternate translation: "for they worship other gods" or "because they worship other gods like prostitutes who go to other men"
you will eat some of his sacrifice
The consequence of eating food that is sacrificed to another god can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "you will eat some of his sacrifice and become guilty of worshiping his gods" or "and you will prostitute yourself to his god by eating some of his sacrifice"
Exodus 34:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
seven days
"7 days"
in the month of Aviv
This is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. Aviv is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars. See how you translated "Aviv" in [Exodus 13:4]
Exodus 34:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Exodus 34:20
redeem
Firstborn sons and firstborn donkeys belonged to Yahweh, but Yahweh did not want them sacrificed to him. Instead, the Israelites were to sacrifice a lamb in their place. This allowed the Israelites to redeem or buy back the donkeys and sons from Yahweh.
No one may appear before me empty-handed
God speaks of the offering as if the person was to carry it in his hands. Alternate translation: "No one may come to me without an offering" or "Everyone who comes to me must bring me an offering"
Exodus 34:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Even at plowing time and in harvest
"Even when you are preparing the soil or gathering the crops"
Exodus 34:22
Festival of Ingathering
This festival was also known as the Festival of Shelters or the Festival of Booths. The idea came from the practice of the farmers living in temporary booths, or huts, out in the fields to guard the crop as it ripened. The word "Ingathering" means when they harvest their crop.
Exodus 34:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Exodus 34:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.
the blood of my sacrifice
The fact that the blood is from an animal can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the blood of an animal that you sacrifice to me"
with any yeast
The fact that any yeast would be in bread can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "with bread that has yeast in it"
Exodus 34:28
Moses was there
"Moses was on the mountain"
forty days
"40 days"
for forty days and nights
"for forty days, both day and night"
He wrote
"Moses wrote"
Exodus 34:29
had become radiant
"had started to shine"
Exodus 34:31
came up to him
"approached him" or "went to him." They did not go up the mountain.
Exodus 34:32
all the commands that Yahweh had given him
Telling commands is spoken of as if the commands were objects that could be given. Alternate translation: "all the commands that Yahweh had told him" or "everything that Yahweh had commanded them"
Exodus 34:34
he would remove
"Moses would remove"
what he was commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh had commanded him"

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35 [1]Moses assembled all the community of the people of Israel and said to them, "These are the things that Yahweh has commanded you to do.[2]On six days work may be done, but for you, the seventh day must be a holy day, a Sabbath day of complete rest, holy to Yahweh. Whoever does any work on that day must be put to death.[3]You must not light a fire in any of your homes on the Sabbath day."

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[4]Moses spoke to all the community of the people of Israel, saying, "This is the thing that Yahweh commanded.[5]Take an offering for Yahweh, all of you who have a willing heart. Bring an offering to Yahweh—gold, silver, bronze,[6]blue, purple, and scarlet wool and fine linen; goats' hair;[7]ram skins dyed red and fine leather hides; acacia wood;[8]oil for the sanctuary lamps, spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense,[9]onyx stones and other precious stones to be set for the ephod and breastpiece.

[10]Every skilled man among you is to come and make everything that Yahweh has commanded—[11]the tabernacle with its tent, its covering, its clasps, frames, bars, posts, and bases;[12]also the ark with its poles, the atonement lid, and the screen to conceal it.
[13]They brought the table with its poles, all its utensils, and the bread of the presence;[14]the lampstand for the lights, with its accessories, its lamps, and the oil for the lamps;[15]the incense altar with its poles, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; the screen for the tabernacle entrance;[16]the altar for burnt offerings with its bronze grate and its poles and utensils; and the large basin with its base.
[17]They brought the hangings for the courtyard with its posts and bases, and the screen for the courtyard entrance;[18]and the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard, together with their ropes.[19]They brought the finely-woven garments for serving in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and his sons, for them to serve as priests."

[20]Then the entire congregation of the people of Israel left and went away from Moses' presence.[21]Everyone whose heart stirred him up and whom his spirit made willing came and brought a contribution to Yahweh for the construction of the tabernacle, for all the items of service in it, and for the holy garments.[22]They came, both men and women, all who had a willing heart. They brought brooches, earrings, rings, and ornaments, all kinds of gold jewelry. They all presented offerings of gold as a wave offering to Yahweh.
[23]Everyone who had blue, purple, or scarlet wool, fine linen, goat hair, ram skins dyed red, or fine leather skins brought them.[24]Everyone making an offering of silver or bronze brought it as an offering to Yahweh, and everyone who had acacia wood for any use in the work brought it.
[25]Every skilled woman spun wool with her hands and brought what she had spun—blue, purple, or scarlet wool, or fine linen.[26]All the women whose hearts stirred them up and who had skill spun goats' hair.
[27]The leaders brought onyx stones and other gems to be set into the ephod and the breastpiece;[28]they brought spices and oil for the lamps, for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense.[29]The people of Israel brought a freewill offering to Yahweh; every man and woman whose heart was willing brought materials for all the work that Yahweh had commanded through Moses to be made.

[30]Moses said to the people of Israel, "See, Yahweh has called by name on Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah.[31]He has filled Bezalel with his Spirit, to give him wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, for all kinds of craftsmanship,[32]to make artistic designs and to work in gold, silver, and bronze;[33]also to cut and set stones and to carve wood—to do all kinds of design and craftsmanship.
[34]He has put it in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab son of Ahisamak, from the tribe of Dan.[35]He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work, to work as craftsmen, as engravers, as embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet wool and fine linen, and as weavers. They are craftsmen in all sorts of work, and they are artistic designers.

Exodus 35 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrifice

All of the people offered sacrifices to Yahweh. This was a form of worship and a sign of repentance from making the golden calf idol. (See: worship and repent)

Links:

Exodus 35:1 Notes

Exodus 35:2

the seventh day

"day number seven" or "Saturday"

Whoever does any work on that day must be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must kill anyone who does work on that day"

Exodus 35:4

General Information:

In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.

Exodus 35:5

General Information:

In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.

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Take an offering for Yahweh
"Take up a collection for Yahweh"
all of you who have a willing heart
Here "heart" refers to the person bringing the offering. Alternate translation: "everyone who is willing"
Exodus 35:6
General Information:
In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.
Exodus 35:7
General Information:
In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.
ram skins dyed red and fine leather hides
See how you translated similar phrases in Exodus 25:5.
Exodus 35:8
General Information:
In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.
Exodus 35:9
General Information:
In Exodus 35:4-9, Moses tells the Israelites to make the things Yahweh commanded him in Exodus 25:3-7.
Exodus 35:10
General Information:
Moses continues telling the people what God commanded them to do.
Every skilled man
"Every man with a skill"
Exodus 35:11
clasps
The clasps fit into the loops to hold the curtains together. See how you translated these in Exodus 26:6.
bases
These are heavy objects that rest on the ground and keep the object attached to them from moving. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:31.
Exodus 35:12
atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.
Exodus 35:13
They brought
"The people of Israel brought"
bread of the presence
This bread represented the presence of God. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:30.
Exodus 35:16
bronze grate
This is a frame of crossed bronze bars for holding wood when burning. See how you translated "grate" in Exodus 27:4.
Exodus 35:17
hangings
These were large curtains made of cloth. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:36.
posts
These were strong pieces of wood set upright and used as supports. See how you translated these in Exodus 27:10.
bases
These were blocks that had a slot in them to keep the board in place. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:19.
Exodus 35:18
tent pegs
sharp pieces of wood or metal used to secure the corners of a tent to the ground. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:19.
Exodus 35:19
finely-woven garments
This was clothing made from narrow linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:8.
Exodus 35:21
whose heart stirred him up
Here "heart" refers to the person. The heart that responded to God is spoken of as if it were water stirred up by a storm. Alternate translation: "who responded to God"
whom his spirit made willing
Here "spirit" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "who was willing" or "who wanted to"
Exodus 35:22
all who had a willing heart
Here "heart" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "everyone who was willing"
brooches, earrings, rings, and ornaments
These are different kinds of jewelry.
Exodus 35:23
Everyone who had ... brought them
For 35:23 see how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:4-5.
Exodus 35:25
blue, purple, or scarlet wool
Possible meanings are 1) "material that is dyed blue, purple, and scarlet," probably wool yarn, or 2) "blue, purple and scarlet dye" to dye the linen. See how you translated a similar phrase in Exodus 25:4.
Exodus 35:26
whose hearts stirred them up
Here "hearts" refers to the women. The hearts of the women who responded to God are spoken of as if they were water stirred up by a storm. Alternate translation: "who responded to God"
Exodus 35:27
The leaders brought ... breastpiece
For 35:27 see how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:7.
Exodus 35:28
they brought spices ... fragrant incense
For 35:28 see how you translated many similar words in Exodus 25:6
Exodus 35:29
whose heart was willing
Here "heart" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "who was willing"
Exodus 35:30
Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah
See how you translated this in Exodus 31:2

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Exodus 35:31

He has filled Bezalel with his Spirit

God's Spirit who gave Bezalel the ability to work is spoken of here as if he was something that filled up Bezalel.

filled Bezalel ... craftsmanship

See how you translated many similar words in Exodus 31:3

Exodus 35:32

to make artistic designs ... bronze

See how you translated many similar words in Exodus 31:4

Exodus 35:33

also to cut and set stones ... craftsmanship

See how you translated many similar words in Exodus 31:5

Exodus 35:34

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people.

He has put it in his heart to teach

Here "heart" refers to Bezalel. The ability to teach is spoken of as if it something that could be placed in a heart. Alternate translation: "He gave Bezalel the ability to teach"

Oholiab son of Ahisamak, from the tribe of Dan

"Oholiab" and "Ahisamak" are names of men. See how you translated these names in [Exodus 31:6]

Exodus 35:35

filled them with skill

Skill to create beautiful objects is spoken of as if it was something that could fill up a person. Alternate translation: "made them very skillful"

engravers

a person who cuts designs into a hard material such as wood, stone, or metal

embroiderers

people who sew designs into cloth

craftsmen

people who are skilled in making beautiful objects by hand

weavers

a person who creates cloth using thread

artistic designers

a person who creates beauty with materials

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36 [1]So Bezalel and Oholiab and every skilled person to whom Yahweh has given skill and ability to know how to do any work in the construction of the holy place are to do the work according to all that Yahweh has commanded."

[2]Moses summoned Bezalel, Oholiab, and every skillful person in whose mind Yahweh had given skill, and whose heart stirred within him to come and do the work.[3]They received from Moses all the offerings that the people of Israel had brought for constructing the holy place. The people were still bringing freewill offerings every morning to Moses.[4]So all the skilled people working on the holy place came from the work that they had been doing.
[5]The craftsmen told Moses, "The people are bringing much more than enough for doing the work that Yahweh has commanded us to do."[6]So Moses instructed that no one in the camp should bring any more offerings for the construction of the holy place. Then the people stopped bringing these gifts.[7]They had more than enough materials for all the work.

[8]So all the craftsmen among them constructed the tabernacle with ten curtains made from fine linen and blue, purple, and scarlet wool with the designs of cherubim. This was the work of Bezalel, the very skilled craftsman.[9]The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits, the width four cubits. All the curtains were of the same size.[10]Bezalel joined five curtains to each other, and the other five curtains he also joined to each other.
[11]He made loops of blue along the outer edge of the end curtain of one set, and he did the same along the outer edge of the end curtain in the second set.[12]He made fifty loops on the first curtain and fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain in the second set. So the loops were opposite to each another.[13]He made fifty gold clasps and joined the curtains together with them so that the tabernacle became united.

[14]Bezalel made curtains of goat hair for a tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven of these curtains.[15]The length of each curtain was thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain was four cubits. Each of the eleven curtains was of the same size.
[16]He joined five curtains to each other and the other six curtains to each other.[17]He made fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain of the first set, and fifty loops along the edge of the end curtain that joined the second set.
[18]Bezalel made fifty bronze clasps to join the tent together so that it might be one piece.[19]He made for the tabernacle a covering of ram skins dyed red, another covering of fine leather to go above that.

[20]Bezalel made vertical frames out of acacia wood for the tabernacle.[21]The length of each frame was ten cubits, and the width of each frame was one and a half cubits.[22]Each frame had two wooden pegs for joining the frames together. He did this for all the frames of the tabernacle.[23]He made the frames for the tabernacle in this way: twenty frames for the south side.
[24]Bezalel made forty silver bases to go under the twenty frames. There were two bases under one frame to join the frames together, and also two bases under each of the other frames to join frames together.[25]For the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty frames[26]and their forty silver bases. There were two bases under the first frame, two bases under the next frame, and so on.
[27]For the back of the tabernacle on the west, Bezalel made six frames.[28]He made two frames for the back corners of the tabernacle.

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[29]These frames were separate at the bottom, but joined at the top in one ring. He made two of them in this way for the two corners.[30]There were eight frames, together with their silver bases. There were sixteen bases in all, two bases under the first frame, two bases under the next frame, and so on.

[31]Bezalel made crossbars of acacia wood—five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle,[32]five crossbars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five crossbars for the frames for the back side of the tabernacle to the west.
[33]He made the crossbar in the center of the frames, that is, halfway up, to reach from end to end.[34]He covered the frames with gold. He made their rings of gold, for them to serve as holders for the crossbars, and he covered the bars with gold.

[35]Bezalel made the curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine linen, with designs of cherubim, the work of a skillful workman.[36]He made for the curtain four pillars of acacia wood, and he covered them with gold. He also made gold hooks for the pillars, and he cast for them four silver bases.
[37]He made a screen for the tent entrance. It was made of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, using fine linen, the work of an embroiderer.[38]He also made the hanging's five pillars with hooks. He covered their tops and their rods with gold. Their five bases were made of bronze.

Exodus 36 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Tent of meeting

The tent of meeting, or tabernacle, mentioned in previous chapters is constructed in this chapter. (See: tabernacle)

Links:

Exodus 36:1 Notes

Exodus 36:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people.

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Oholiab

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:6]

to whom Yahweh has given skill and ability

Here skill and ability are spoken of as if they are something that Yahweh can place inside a person.

according to all that Yahweh has commanded

"just as Yahweh has commanded"

Exodus 36:2

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Oholiab

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:6]

in whose mind Yahweh had given skill

Here "mind" refers to the person who was made skillful by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to whom Yahweh had given skill"

whose heart stirred within him

Here "heart" refers to the person. The heart that responded to God is spoken of as if it were water stirred up by a storm. Alternate translation: "who responded to God"

Exodus 36:5

The craftsmen told Moses ... commanded us to do."

The can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "The craftsmen told Moses that the people were bringing much more than enough for doing the work that Yahweh has commanded them to do"

The craftsmen told Moses

"The men working on the sanctuary told Moses"

Exodus 36:8

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:1.

ten curtains made from fine linen

These curtains are sheets of cloth woven and sewed together so that they can hang to form a wall or tent.

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Exodus 36:9

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:2.

Exodus 36:10

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:3.

Exodus 36:11

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:4.

He made

Here "he" refers to Bezalel, but it includes all the men working on the sanctuary.

loops of blue

loops of blue cloth

curtain

These were large, heavy sections of woven cloth that were

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used to form the covering and dividing walls of the tabernacle. See how you translated this in Exodus 26:1.

Exodus 36:12

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:5.

Exodus 36:13

General Information

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:6.

fifty gold clasps

"50 gold clasps"

Exodus 36:14

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:7.

made eleven

"made 11"

Exodus 36:15

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:8.

thirty cubits

"30 cubits"

Exodus 36:16

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:9.

Exodus 36:17

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:10.

fifty loops

"50 loops"

Exodus 36:18

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:11.

fifty bronze clasps

"50 bronze clasps"

Exodus 36:19

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:14.

Exodus 36:20

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:15.

Exodus 36:21

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:16.

ten cubits ... one and a half cubits

"10 cubits ... 1.5 cubits"

Exodus 36:22

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:17.

two wooden pegs for joining

A wooden peg is a small piece of wood sticking out beyond the end of the board so it can be secured.

Exodus 36:23

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:18.

Exodus 36:24

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:19.

forty silver bases

"40 silver bases"

twenty frames

"20 frames"

Exodus 36:25

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:20.

Exodus 36:26

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:21.

and so on

There will be two bases under each and every frame.

Exodus 36:27

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:22.

on the west

on the side that is on the west

Exodus 36:28

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:23.

for the back corners

for the corners at the rear of the tabernacle

Exodus 36:29

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:24.

Exodus 36:30

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:25.

sixteen bases in all

"16 bases in all"

and so on

There will be two bases under each and every frame.

Exodus 36:31

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:26.

Exodus 36:32

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:27.

to the west

on the west side

Exodus 36:33

General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:28.
from end to end
from one side of the tabernacle to the other side
Exodus 36:34
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:29.
Exodus 36:35
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:31.
Exodus 36:36
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:32.
Exodus 36:37
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:36.
He made
Here "he" refers to Bezalel and those working for him.
"Bezalel and his men made"
a screen
a curtain
Exodus 36:38
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 26:37.

37 [1]Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood. Its length was two and a half cubits, its width was one cubit and a half, and its height was one cubit and a half.[2]He covered it inside and out with pure gold and made for it a border of gold around its top.[3]He cast four rings of gold for its four feet, with two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side.
[4]He made poles of acacia wood and covered them with gold.[5]He put the poles into the rings on the ark's sides, in order to carry the ark.[6]He made an atonement lid of pure gold. Its length was two and a half cubits, and its width was one and a half cubits.
[7]Bezalel made two cherubim of hammered gold for the two ends of the atonement lid.[8]One cherub was for one end of the atonement lid, and other cherub was for the other end. They were made as one piece with the atonement lid.[9]The cherubim spread out their wings upward and overshadowed the atonement lid with them. The cherubim faced one another and looked toward the center of the atonement lid.

[10]Bezalel made the table of acacia wood. Its length was two cubits, its width was one cubit, and its height was one and a half cubits.[11]He covered it with pure gold and put a border of pure gold around the top.[12]He made a surrounding frame for it one handbreadth wide, with a surrounding border of gold for the frame.[13]He cast for it four rings of gold and attached the rings to the four corners, where the four feet were.
[14]The rings were attached to the frame to provide places for the poles, in order to carry the table.[15]He made the poles out of acacia wood and covered them with gold, in order to carry the table.[16]He made the objects that would be on the table—the dishes, spoons, the bowls, and pitchers to be used to pour out the offerings. He made them out of pure gold.

[17]He made the lampstand of pure hammered gold. He made the lampstand with its base and shaft. Its cups, its leafy bases, and its flowers were all made of one piece with it.[18]Six branches extended out from its sides—three branches extended from one side, and three branches of the lampstand extended from the other side.[19]The first branch had three cups made like almond blossoms, with a leafy base and a flower, and three cups made like almond blossoms in the other branch, with a leafy base and a flower. It was the same for all six branches extending out from the lampstand.
[20]On the lampstand itself, the central shaft, there were four cups made like almond blossoms, with their leafy bases and the flowers.[21]There was a leafy base under the first pair of branches—made as one piece with it, and a leafy base under the second pair of branches—also made as one piece with it. In the same way there was a leafy base under the third pair of branches, made as one piece with it. It was the same for all six branches extending out from the lampstand.[22]Their leafy bases and branches were all one piece with it, one beaten piece of work of pure gold.
[23]Bezalel made the lampstand and its seven lamps, its tongs and their trays of pure gold.[24]He made the lampstand and its accessories with one talent of pure gold.

[25]Bezalel made the incense altar. He made it with acacia wood. Its length was one cubit, and its width one cubit. It was square, and its height was two cubits. Its horns were made as one piece with it.[26]He covered the incense altar with pure gold—its top, its sides, and its horns. He also made a surrounding border of gold for it.
[27]He made two golden rings to be attached to it under its border on its two opposite sides. The rings were holders for poles to carry the altar.[28]He made the poles of acacia wood, and he covered them with gold.[29]He made the holy anointing oil and the pure fragrant incense, the work of a perfumer.

Exodus 37 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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The ark of the covenant

The ark, mentioned in previous chapters, is constructed in this chapter. There are other furnishings of the tabernacle that are also produced in this chapter. (See: tabernacle)

Links:

Exodus 37:1 Notes

Exodus 37:1

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:10.

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

two and a half cubits ... one cubit and a half

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.5 cubits ... 1.5 cubits" or "115 centimeters ... 69 centimeters"

Exodus 37:2

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:11.

Exodus 37:3

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:12.

its four feet

These four pieces of wood that supported the ark are spoken of as if they were human or animal feet.

Exodus 37:4

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:13.

He made

Though "he" refers to Bezalel, "he" may include all of the workers who assisted him.

Exodus 37:5

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:14.

Exodus 37:6

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:17.

two and a half cubits ... one and a half cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.5 cubits ... 1.5 cubits" or "115 centimeters ... 69 centimeters"

Exodus 37:7

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:18.

Exodus 37:8

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:19.

They were made as one piece

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He made them as one piece"

Exodus 37:9

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:20.

The cherubim spread out their wings upward and overshadowed

Bezalel placed the statues of the cherubim as if they were real cherubim which were spreading their wings and overshadowing the atonement lid. Alternate translation: "They placed the winged creatures so that their wings touched each other and spread out over"

The cherubim faced one another and looked toward

"The faces of the cherubim were towards each other, and they looked toward"

Exodus 37:10

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:23.

two cubits ... one cubit ... one and a half cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2 cubits ... 1 cubit ... 1.5 cubits" or "92 centimeters ... 46 centimeters ... 69 centimeters"

Exodus 37:11

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:24.

Exodus 37:12

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:25.

handbreadth

This was the width of a man's hand with fingers spread out.

Exodus 37:13

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:26.

the four feet

These four pieces of wood that supported the ark are spoken of as if they were human or animal feet.

Exodus 37:14

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:27.

The rings were attached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Bezalel attached the rings"

Exodus 37:15

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:28.

Exodus 37:16

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:29.

dishes, spoons, the bowls, and pitchers to be used to pour out the

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offerings
It is only the bowls and pitchers that are used to pour out the offerings. Alternate translation: "plates and cups, and also the jars and bowls which the priests will use for pouring out the offerings"
Exodus 37:17
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:31.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
Its cups, its leafy bases, and its flowers were all made of one piece with it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He made the cups, its leafy bases, and its flowers as one piece with the lampstand"
Exodus 37:18
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:32.
Exodus 37:19
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:33.
three cups made like almond blossoms
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he made the 3 cups look like almond blossoms"
almond blossoms
An almond blossom is a white or pink flower with five petals that grows on an almond tree.
Exodus 37:20
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:34.
there were four cups made like almond blossoms
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there were 4 cups which Bezalel made to look like almond blossoms"
Exodus 37:21
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:35.
made as one piece with it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which he made as one piece with the lampstand"
Exodus 37:22
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:36.
Exodus 37:23
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:37-38.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
tongs
This is a tool made from two sticks of wood or metal connected at one end and used for picking up objects.
Exodus 37:24
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 25:39.
one talent
"33 kilograms"
Exodus 37:26
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 30:3.
Exodus 37:27
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 30:4.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
to be attached to it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which they attached to the altar"
Exodus 37:28
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 30:5.
Exodus 37:29
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 30:25.
fragrant incense
See how you translated this in Exodus 25:6.
the work of a perfumer
A perfumer is skilled in mixing spices and oils.

38 [1]Bezalel made the altar for burnt offerings of acacia wood. It was five cubits long and five cubits wide—a square—
and three cubits high.[2]He made extensions of its four corners shaped like ox horns. The horns were made of one
piece with the altar, and he covered it with bronze.[3]He made all the equipment for the altar—pots for ashes, shovels,
basins, meat forks, and firepans. He made all this equipment with bronze.
[4]He made a grate for the altar, a network of bronze to be placed under the ledge, halfway down to the bottom.[5]He cast
four rings for the four corners of the bronze grate, as holders for the poles.
[6]Bezalel made poles of acacia wood and covered them with bronze.[7]He put the poles through the rings on the sides of the
altar, to carry it. He made the altar hollow, out of planks.

[8]Bezalel made the large bronze basin with a bronze stand. He made the basin out of mirrors belonging to the women who
served at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

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[9]He also made the courtyard. The hangings on the south side of the courtyard were of fine linen, one hundred cubits long.
[10]The hangings had twenty posts, with twenty bronze bases. There were hooks attached to the posts, as well as silver rods.
[11]In the same way, along the north side, there were hangings one hundred cubits long with twenty posts, twenty bronze bases, hooks attached to the posts, and silver rods.[12]The hangings of the west side were fifty cubits long, with ten posts and bases. The hooks and rods of the posts were silver.
[13]The courtyard was also fifty cubits long on the east side.[14]The hangings for one side of the entrance were fifteen cubits long. They had three posts with three bases.[15]On the other side of the entrance of the courtyard were also hangings fifteen cubits long, with three posts and three bases.[16]All the hangings around the courtyard were made of fine linen.
[17]The bases for the posts were made of bronze. The hooks and rods for the posts were made of silver, and the covering for the tops of the posts was also made of silver. All the courtyard posts had silver bands on them.[18]The screen at the courtyard gate was twenty cubits long. It was made of blue, purple, and scarlet linen, fine twined linen, and was twenty cubits long. It was twenty cubits in length and five cubits in height, like the courtyard curtains.[19]Their four pillars and bases were of bronze, and the hooks were of silver. The covering for their tops and its rods were made of silver.[20]All the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard were made of bronze.

[21]This is the inventory of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the covenant decrees, as it was taken following Moses' instructions. It was the work of the Levites under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.[22]Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah, made everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses.[23]Oholiab son of Ahisamak, from the tribe of Dan, worked with Bezalel as an engraver, as a skillful workman, and as an embroiderer in blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and in fine linen.

[24]All the gold that was used for the project, in all the work connected with the holy place—the gold from the wave offering—was twenty-nine talents and 730 shekels, measured by the standard of the sanctuary shekel.[25]The silver given by the community weighed one hundred talents and 1,775 shekels, according to the sanctuary shekel,[26]or one beka per person, which is half a shekel, measured by the sanctuary shekel. This figure was reached on the basis of every person who was counted in the census, those twenty years old and older—603,550 men in all.
[27]One hundred talents of silver were cast for the bases of the holy place and the bases of the curtain—one hundred bases, one talent for each base.[28]With the remaining 1,775 shekels of silver, Bezalel made the hooks for the posts, covered the tops of the posts, and made the bands for them.[29]The bronze from the wave offering weighed seventy talents and 2,400 shekels.
[30]With this he made the bases for the entrance to the tent of meeting, the bronze altar, its bronze grate, all the equipment for the altar,[31]the bases for the courtyard, the bases for the courtyard entrance, all the tent pegs for the tabernacle, and all the tent pegs for the courtyard.

Exodus 38 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The altar

The altar is constructed in this chapter. There are other furnishings of the tabernacle that are also produced in this chapter. (See: tabernacle)

Materials

The list of materials being used is intended to give the reader an understanding of the scale of the tabernacle. It should fill the reader with awe concerning the power of Yahweh.

Links:

Exodus 38:1 Notes

Exodus 38:2

General Information

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:2.

The horns were made of one piece

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He made the horns as one piece"

Exodus 38:3

General Information

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:3.

Exodus 38:4

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:4 and Exodus 27:5.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.

to be placed under the ledge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which they placed under the ledge"

Exodus 38:5

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General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:4.
Exodus 38:6
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:6.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
Exodus 38:7
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:7-8.
planks
a long, flat piece of wood that is thicker than a board
Exodus 38:8
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
large bronze basin with a bronze stand
The stand supported the bronze basin. See how you translated this in Exodus 30:18.
He made the basin out of mirrors
The bronze came from the mirrors. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "The bronze for the basin came from the mirrors"
mirrors
A mirror is a piece of polished metal or glass that reflects an image.
Exodus 38:9
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:9.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.
one hundred
"100"
cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters.
Exodus 38:10
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:10.
twenty
"20"
Exodus 38:11
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:11.
one hundred ... twenty
"100 ... 20"
cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters.
Exodus 38:12
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:12.
fifty ... ten
"50 ... 10"
Exodus 38:13
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:13.
fifty
"50"
cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters.
Exodus 38:14
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:14.
fifteen ... three
"15 ... 3"
Exodus 38:15
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:15.
Exodus 38:16
All the hangings around the courtyard were made of fine linen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Bezalel and the workers made all the hangings around the courtyard with fine linen"
Exodus 38:17
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:17.
The bases for the posts were made of bronze
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Bezalel and the workers made the bases for the posts out of bronze"
The hooks and rods for the posts were made of silver, and the covering for the tops of the posts was also made of silver
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They made the hooks, the rods for the posts, and the covering for the tops of the posts out of silver"
Exodus 38:18
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:16.
twenty ... five
"20 ... 5"
cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters.
It was made of
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They made the screen of"
Exodus 38:19
General Information
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:17.
four
"4"
The covering for their tops and its rods were made of silver
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They made the covering for the tops of the posts and their rods out of silver"

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Exodus 38:20

General Information

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 27:19.

All the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard were made of bronze

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They made all of the tent pegs for the tabernacle and courtyard out of bronze"

Exodus 38:21

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.

as it was taken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Moses instructed the Levites to write down"

Ithamar

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Exodus 6:23]

Exodus 38:22

Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur

"Bezalel" and "uri" are the name of men. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Yahweh had commanded Moses

"everything that Yahweh told Moses to do"

Exodus 38:23

Oholiab son of Ahisamak

"Oholiab" and "Ahisamak" are names of men. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:6]

an engraver, as a skillful workman, and as an embroiderer

"as a skilled engraver and embroiderer"

Exodus 38:24

All the gold that was used for the project

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All the gold that the people used for the project"

twenty-nine talents

A talent is about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "29 talents" or "about 960 kilograms"

730 shekels

A shekel is 11 grams. Alternate translation: "seven hundred and thirty shekels" or "about 8 kilograms."

measured by the standard of the sanctuary shekel

There were evidently shekels of more than one weight at the time. This specified which one was to be used. See how you translated this in [Exodus 30:13]

Exodus 38:25

one hundred talents

A talent is about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "100 talents" or "about 330 kilograms"

1,775 shekels

A shekel is 11 grams. "one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels" or "about 20 kilograms"

The silver given by the community

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The silver which the community gave"

Exodus 38:26

one beka

A beka is 1/2 a shekel.

half a shekel

A shekel is 11 grams. Alternate translation: "1/2 a shekel" or "five and a half grams" or "5 1/2 grams"

This figure was reached on the basis of every person who was counted in the census

Every man who was 20 years old or older was included in the census and was required to give half a shekel.

twenty years old

"20 years old"

Exodus 38:27

One hundred talents of silver were cast

A talent is about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "The workers cast 100 talents of silver" or "The workers cast 3,300 kilograms of silver"

One hundred talents

"100 talents"

Exodus 38:28

1,775 shekels

"one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels"

shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams.

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Exodus 38:29

seventy talents and 2,400 shekels

"70 talents and two thousand four hundred shekels." The shekels were bronze coins. The talents and shekels together would have weighed a total of about 2,500 kilograms. Alternate translation: "2450 kilograms and 2400 bronze coins" or "2,450 kilograms plus 28 kilograms of bronze coins" or "about 2,500 kilograms"

Exodus 38:30

General Information:

Bezalel's work crew continues to build the tabernacle and furniture.

grate

This is a frame of crossed bars for holding wood when burning. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:4.

Exodus 38:31

tent pegs

These are sharp bronze stakes that were used to secure the corners of a tent to the ground. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:19.

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39 [1]With the blue, purple, and scarlet wool, they made finely-woven garments for service in the holy place. They made Aaron's garments for the holy place, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[2]Bezalel made the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine twined linen.[3]They hammered gold sheets and cut them into wires, to work them into the blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and into the fine linen, the work of a skillful workman.

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[4]They made shoulder pieces for the ephod, attached at its two upper corners.[5]Its finely-woven waistband was like the ephod; it was made of one piece with the ephod, made of fine twined linen that was gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[6]They crafted the onyx stones, enclosed in settings of gold, set with engravings as on a signet with the names of the sons of Israel.[7]Bezalel put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod to be memorial stones for the sons of Israel, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[8]He made the breastpiece, the work of a skillful workman, fashioned like the ephod. He made it of gold, of blue, purple, and scarlet wool, and of fine linen.[9]It was square. They folded the breastpiece double. It was one span long and one span wide.
[10]They set in it four rows of precious stones. The first row had a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet.[11]The second row had an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.[12]The third row had a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst.[13]The fourth row had a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. The stones were mounted in gold settings.
[14]There were twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a signet with the name of one of the twelve tribes.[15]On the breastpiece they made chains like cords, braided work of pure gold.[16]They made two settings of gold and two gold rings, and they attached the two rings to the two corners of the breastpiece.
[17]They put the two braided chains of gold in the two rings at the corners of the breastpiece.[18]They attached the other two ends of the braided chains to the two settings. They attached them to the shoulder pieces of the ephod at its front.
[19]They made two rings of gold and put them on the two other corners of the breastpiece, on the edge next to the inner border of the ephod.[20]They made two more gold rings and attached them to the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the front of the ephod, close to its seam above the finely-woven waistband of the ephod.
[21]They tied the breastpiece by its rings to the ephod's rings with a blue cord, so that it might be attached just above the ephod's finely-woven waistband. This was so that the breastpiece might not become unattached from the ephod. This was done as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[22]Bezalel made the robe of the ephod entirely of blue fabric, the work of a weaver.[23]The robe had an opening for the head in the middle. The opening had a woven edge round about so that it did not tear.[24]On the bottom hem of the robe, they made pomegranates of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and of fine linen.
[25]They made bells of pure gold, and they put the bells between the pomegranates all around on the bottom edge the robe, between the pomegranates—[26]a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate—on the edge of the robe for Aaron to serve in. This was as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[27]They made the tunics of fine linen for Aaron and for his sons.[28]They made the turban of fine linen, the ornate headbands of fine linen, the linen undergarments of fine linen,[29]and the sash of fine linen and of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn, the work of an embroiderer. This was as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[30]They made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold; they engraved on it, like the engraving on a signet, "Holy to Yahweh."[31]They attached to the turban a blue cord to the top of the turban. This was as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[32]So the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was finished. The people of Israel did everything. They followed all the instructions that Yahweh had given to Moses.[33]They brought the tabernacle to Moses—the tent and all its equipment, its clasps, frames, bars, posts, and bases;[34]the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of fine leather, and the screen to conceal[35]the ark of the covenant decrees, as well as the poles and the atonement lid.
[36]They brought the table, all its utensils, and the bread of the presence;[37]the lampstand of pure gold and its lamps in a row, with its accessories and the oil for the lamps;[38]the golden altar, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; the screen for the tabernacle entrance;[39]the bronze altar with its bronze grate and its poles and utensil and the large basin with its base.
[40]They brought the hangings for the courtyard with its posts and bases, and the screen for the courtyard entrance; its ropes and tent pegs; and all the equipment for the service of the tabernacle, the tent of meeting.[41]They brought the fine woven garments for serving in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and his sons, for them to serve as priests.
[42]Thus the people of Israel did all the work as Yahweh had commanded Moses.[43]Moses examined all the work, and, behold, they had done it. As Yahweh had commanded, in that way they did it. Then Moses blessed them.

Exodus 39 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The holy clothing

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The special, holy clothing mentioned in previous chapters is produced in this chapter to the correct specifications. (See: holy)

Links:

Exodus 39:1 Notes

Exodus 39:1

General Information:

Bezalel's work crew shifts to making the priestly garments.

they made

The word "they" refers to Bezalel, Oholiab, and the other workmen.

as Yahweh had commanded Moses

"just as Yahweh told Moses to do"

Exodus 39:2

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:6.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

Bezalel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Exodus 31:2]

Exodus 39:4

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:7.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

Exodus 39:5

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:8.

it was made of one piece with the ephod, made of fine twined linen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they made it as one piece with the ephod with fine twisted linen"

as Yahweh had commanded Moses

"just as Yahweh told Moses to do." See how you translated this phrase in Exodus 39:1.

Exodus 39:7

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:12.

as Yahweh had commanded Moses

"just as Yahweh told Moses to do." See how you translated this phrase in Exodus 39:1.

Exodus 39:8

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:15.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

He made

"Bezalel made" or "Bezalel and the workers made"

Exodus 39:10

General Information:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

They set in it

"The workers set in the breastpiece"

ruby, a topaz, and a garnet

Some languages may not have words for each of these stones. The important fact is that they were valuable and different from one another. See how you translated these in [Exodus 28:17]

Exodus 39:11

an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond

Some languages may not have words for each of these stones. The important fact is that they were valuable and different from one another. See how you translated these in [Exodus 28:18]

Exodus 39:12

a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst

Some languages may not have words for each of these stones. The important fact is that they were valuable and different from one another. See how you translated these in [Exodus 28:19]

Exodus 39:13

a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper

Some languages may not have words for each of these stones. The important fact is that they were valuable and different from one another. See how you translated these in [Exodus 28:20]

The stones were mounted in gold settings

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They mounted the stones in gold settings"

Exodus 39:14

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:21.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

Exodus 39:15

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:22.

Exodus 39:16

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:23-24.

Exodus 39:17

General Information:

See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:24.

Connecting Statement:

Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.

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two braided chains
"chains that are made of pure gold and are braided like cords." See how you translated this in Exodus 28:14.
Exodus 39:18
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:25.
Exodus 39:19
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:26.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.
Exodus 39:20
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:27.
finely-woven waistband
This was a cloth belt made from narrow linen threads that someone twisted together to make a stronger thread. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:8.
Exodus 39:21
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:28.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.
so that it might be attached
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so they could attach it"
the breastpiece might not become unattached from the ephod
The double negative can be translated as a positive. Alternate translation: "the breastpiece might stay attached to the ephod"
Exodus 39:23
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:32.
Exodus 39:24
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:33.
Exodus 39:25
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:34-35.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments as commanded in Exodus 28:34-35.
bells of pure gold
These were tiny bells.
Exodus 39:26
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:34-35.
Exodus 39:27
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:39.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments.
Exodus 39:28
turban
This is a head covering worn by men made of a long strip of cloth wound around the head. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:4.
headbands
A headband is a narrow, decorative strip of cloth that is worn around the head above the eyes. See how you translated this in Exodus 28:40.
undergarments
This is clothing worn under the outer clothes, next to the skin. See how you translated this in [Exodus 28:42]
Exodus 39:29
sash
This is a long piece of cloth worn over the shoulder or around the waist. See how you translated this word in Exodus 28:4
Exodus 39:30
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:36.
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to make the priestly garments..
holy crown
This was an engraved crown made of pure gold. See how you translated this in Exodus 29:6.
Exodus 39:31
General Information:
See how you translated many of these words in Exodus 28:37.
Exodus 39:32
General Information:
The Israelites finish making the things Yahweh commanded in Exodus 35:4-9 and Exodus 35:10-12.
So the work on the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, was finished. The people of Israel did everything
The "tabernacle" and "tent of meeting" are the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the people of Israel finished all of the work on the tabernacle"
Exodus 39:33
clasps
The clasps fit into the loops to hold the curtains together. See how you translated these in Exodus 26:6.
bases
These are heavy objects that rest on the ground and keep the object attached to them from moving. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:31.
Exodus 39:34
the covering of ram skins dyed red, the covering of fine leather
See how you translated similar phrases in this in Exodus 25:5.
Exodus 39:35

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atonement lid
This is the lid that sits on top of the ark where the atonement offering was made. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:17.
Exodus 39:36
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to present all that they made to Moses.
bread of the presence
This bread represented the presence of God. See how you translated this in Exodus 25:30.
Exodus 39:39
grate
This is a frame of crossed bars that held wood while burning. See how you translated this in Exodus 27:4.
Exodus 39:40
Connecting Statement:
Bezalel's work crew continues to present all that they made to Moses.
They brought
"The people of Israel brought"
the tabernacle, the tent of meeting
These refer to the same place.
Exodus 39:42
Thus the people
"And so the people"
Exodus 39:43
behold
The word "behold" here draws attention to the information that follows.
As Yahweh had commanded, in that way they did it
"They did it in the way that Yahweh had commanded them"

40 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"On the first day of the first month of the new year you must set up the tabernacle, the tent of meeting.
[3]You must place the ark of the covenant decrees in it, and you must shield the ark with the curtain.[4]You must bring in the table and set in order the things that belong on it. Then you must bring in the lampstand and set up the lamps.
[5]You must put the golden incense altar before the ark of the covenant decrees, and you must put the screen at the entrance to the tabernacle.[6]You must put the altar for burnt offerings in front of the entrance to the tabernacle, the tent of meeting.[7]You must put the large basin between the tent of meeting and the altar and you must put water in it.
[8]You must set up the courtyard around it, and you must hang up the screen at the courtyard entrance.[9]You must take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and everything that is in it. You must set it apart and all its furnishings to me; then it will be holy.[10]You must anoint the altar for burnt offerings and all its utensils. You must set apart the altar to me and it will become very holy to me.[11]You must anoint the bronze basin and its base and set it apart to me.
[12]You are to bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and you must wash them with water.[13]You are to clothe Aaron with the garments that are set apart to me, anoint him and set him apart so that he may serve as my priest.
[14]You are to bring his sons and clothe them with tunics.[15]You must anoint them as you anointed their father so that they may serve me as priests. Their anointing will make for them a permanent priesthood throughout their people's generations."[16]This is what Moses did; he followed all that Yahweh had commanded him. He did all these things.

[17]So the tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month in the second year.[18]Moses set up the tabernacle, put its bases in place, set up its frames, attached its bars, and set up its pillars and posts.[19]He spread the covering over the tabernacle and put the tent over it, as Yahweh had commanded him.[20]He took the covenant decrees and put them into the ark. He also placed the poles on the ark and put the atonement lid on it.
[21]He brought the ark into the tabernacle. He set up the curtain for the screen to shield the ark of the covenant decrees, as Yahweh had commanded him.[22]He put the table into the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the curtain.[23]He placed the bread in order on the table before Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded him.
[24]He put the lampstand into the tent of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle.[25]He lit the lamps before Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded him.
[26]He put the golden incense altar into the tent of meeting in front of the curtain.[27]He burned fragrant incense on it, as Yahweh had commanded him.
[28]He hung the screen at the tabernacle entrance.[29]He put the altar for the burnt offering at the entrance to the tabernacle, the tent of meeting. He offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as Yahweh had commanded him.[30]He placed the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and he put water in it for washing.
[31]Moses, Aaron, and his sons washed their hands and their feet from the basin[32]whenever they would go into the tent of meeting and whenever they would go up to the altar. They washed themselves, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.
[33]Moses set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and the altar. He set up the screen at the courtyard entrance. In this way, Moses finished the work.

[34]Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and Yahweh's glory filled the tabernacle.[35]Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and because Yahweh's glory filled the tabernacle.
[36]Whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out on their journey.[37]But if the cloud did not rise up from the tabernacle, then the people would not travel. They would stay until the day that it was

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lifted up.[38]For Yahweh's cloud was over the tabernacle by day, and his fire was over it by night, in plain view of all the people of Israel throughout their journey.

Exodus 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is repetitive and should read as a series of instructions. It is repeated as well to show that Moses was obedient to every detail of Yahweh's command.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Yahweh's glory filled the tabernacle"

This phrase indicates that Yahweh began to dwell within the tabernacle, among Israel, in a special way. (See: glory and tabernacle)

Links:

Exodus 40:1 Notes

Exodus 40:2

the first day of the first month of the new year

The new year marks the time when God rescued his people from Egypt. This happens around the middle of March on Western calendars.

Exodus 40:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

in it

"in the sacred chest"

shield the ark with the curtain

"put the ark behind the curtain"

Exodus 40:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

ark of the covenant decrees

This refers to the "sacred chest."

Exodus 40:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

Exodus 40:9

all its furnishings

"all the things that are a part of it"

Exodus 40:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

You are to bring

Moses will do these things himself.

Exodus 40:13

that are set apart to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you have set apart to me"

Exodus 40:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Exodus 40:15

throughout their people's generations

"through all the generations of their descendants." See how you translated a similar phrase in Exodus 12:14.

Exodus 40:17

So the tabernacle was set up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the people set up the tabernacle"

the first day of the first month

This refers to exactly one year after God rescued his people from Egypt. This happens around the middle of March on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [Exodus 40:2]

in the second year

This is the second year after Yahweh brought his people out of Egypt.

Exodus 40:18

Moses set up

Moses was the leader. The people helped him set up the tabernacle.

posts

a strong piece of wood set upright and used as a support

Exodus 40:21

He brought

Moses was the leader. He had workers helping him.

to shield

"in front of"

Exodus 40:24

He put the lampstand into the tent of meeting

Moses instructed his workers to move the lampstand. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "Moses's workmen set the lampstand inside the sacred tent"

Exodus 40:26

in front of the curtain

This curtain separated the holy place from the very holy place. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "in front of the curtain that separated the holy place from the very holy place"

Exodus 40:31

washed their hands and their feet from the basin

They washed with water from the basin. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "washed their hands and their feet with water from the basin"

Exodus 40:33

In this way

"And so"

Exodus 40:34

Yahweh's glory filled

"Yahweh's awesome presence filled"

Exodus 40:36

was taken up from over

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"rose up from" Exodus 40:37 that it was lifted up	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when it rose up"

Introduction to Leviticus

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Leviticus

Instructions to the Israelites about offerings (1:1–6:7) Burnt offerings (1:1–17) Grain offerings (2:1–16) Fellowship offerings (3:1–17) Offerings for unintentional sins (4:1-5:13) Guilt offerings (5:14–6:7)
Instructions to the priests about offerings (6:8–7:10) Burnt offerings (6:8-13) Grain offerings (6:14-23) Sin offerings (6:24-30) Guilt offerings (7:1-10)
Further instructions to the Israelites (7:11–7:38) Peace offerings (7:11–21) Eating fat and blood forbidden (7:22-27) The share for the priests (7:28–7:38)
Setting apart the priests (8:1–10:20) Aaron and his sons ordained (8:1–36) Aaron as high priest (9:1–24) Nadab and Abihu punished (10:1–20)
Laws about clean and unclean things (11:1–15:33) Clean and unclean food (11:1–47) Women purified after giving birth to a child (12:1–8) Skin, clothing, houses (13:1–14:47) Bodily fluids (15:1–33)
Day of Atonement; the place of the offering; the nature of blood (16:1–17:16) Setting apart for worship and service; being disqualified from service (18:1–24:23) The years of rest and release (25:1–55) Blessing for obeying and curses for not obeying (26:1–46) Gifts to God (27:1–34)

What is the book of Leviticus about?

In the Book of Leviticus, God continues to give laws through Moses to the people of Israel. The people were to obey all of these laws to honor their covenant with God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

"Leviticus" means "about the Levites." The Levites were the tribe of Israel that provided priests and other workers in the tabernacle. If the people in the project language do not understand the term "Levites," you can call it "The Book about the Priests" or "The Book about the Tabernacle Workers."

Who wrote the book of Leviticus?

The writers of both the Old and New Testament present Moses as being very involved with writing the book of Leviticus. Since ancient times, both Jews and Christians have thought that Moses wrote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

What is the meaning of "holy" and "holiness" in the book of Leviticus?

These terms concern separating someone or something from the rest of the people, from the world, or from ordinary use. God separated these people or things so they would belong only to him. The people were to consider the places for worshiping God or for honoring him in any way as separate. The people could not use them for anything else. God required the Israelites to live in a certain way in order to live as a nation belonging to him alone.
Anyone or anything that was acceptable to God or "holy" was spoken of as if they were physically clean.
In the same way, anyone or anything that was not acceptable to God or not holy was spoken of if they were physically unclean.
Some people and some things could be made clean or "cleansed," that is, acceptable to God. People or things were made clean if the people performed the right sacrifices and ceremonies. For example, some foreigners who wished to live among the Israelites and worship Yahweh could be made clean. However, other people and things could never be made acceptable to him.
It is important to know that not all unclean things or conditions were sinful. For example, after giving birth to a male child, a woman would be unclean for thirty-three days. Then the proper animal sacrifice would be offered for her. The flow of blood made the woman unclean (Leviticus 12:7). But Leviticus never suggests that someone with a flow of blood was sinning. In the same way, God did not allow Israelites to eat many kinds of animals, as one way of setting his people apart.
Because God does not sin, the terms "holy" and "holiness" often suggest this same idea. Something belonging to God is holy. Because people must respect God, they must respect the things that belong to him.

What are the important narrative features of Leviticus?

On seventeen occasions, the phrase "The Lord said to Moses" (and sometimes Aaron) is often used to begin paragraphs. God and Moses frequently spoke to others. The verb "speak" is used thirty-eight times.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did the Israelites need so many rules about sacrificing animals?

Leviticus shows that God is holy. That means God is very different from humanity and the rest of the created world. God does not sin. Because of this, it is impossible to be acceptable to him without being "cleansed." The many kinds of sacrifices were meant to make people and things acceptable to God. However, the people had to continue making animal sacrifices so that they would continue to be acceptable to God. This was a sign that pointed to a need for a better sacrifice. They needed a sacrifice that would cause them to be acceptable to God forever. (See: holy and sin)

Why was the priesthood important in the book of Leviticus?

Priests were individuals who went to God on behalf of the people. God authorized the priests to bring the Israelite's sacrifices to himself.

How did the Israelite's rules for worshiping God and sacrificing animals differ from the other nations at that time?

It was common for other nations to sacrifice animals to their idols. But, the other nations did other things to worship their false gods. For instance, people would sleep with prostitutes at the temple of their gods. They did this to try to persuade their gods to bless their land with the ability to grow crops. Also, people of other nations would sometimes offer human sacrifices to their gods. The God of Israel did not allow his people to do these kinds of things.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What important symbols are introduced in Leviticus?

Oil was poured on someone or something meant to be set apart for Yahweh. Water was used to symbolize the cleansing of someone or something so God could accept them. Blood was also used to cleanse and purify people and things. This is because blood represented life that needed to be shed in order for God to forgive people for sinning.

Why do many sections begin with the phrase "Yahweh said to Moses?"

This phrase shows the reader that these rules come from God and must be obeyed. You could also translate this as "God told Moses."

Leviticus

1 [1]Yahweh called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and tell them, 'When any man from among you brings an offering to Yahweh, bring as your offering an animal, either from the herd or from the flock.

[3]If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he must offer a male without blemish. He is to offer it at the entrance of the tent of meeting, so that it may be accepted before Yahweh.[4]He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and then it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for himself.
[5]Then he must kill the bull before Yahweh. Aaron's sons, the priests, will present the blood and sprinkle it on the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.[6]Then he must skin the burnt offering and cut it to pieces.
[7]Then the sons of Aaron the priest will put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire.[8]Then Aaron's sons, the priests, are to place the pieces, including the head and the fat, on the wood that is on the fire that is on the altar.[9]But its inner parts and its legs he must wash with water. Then the priest will burn everything on the altar as a burnt offering. It will produce a sweet aroma for me; it will be an offering made to me by fire.

[10]If his offering for the burnt offering is from the flock, one of the sheep or one of the goats, he must offer a male without blemish.[11]He must kill it on the north side of the altar before Yahweh. Aaron's sons, the priests, will sprinkle its blood on every side of the altar.
[12]He is to cut it into pieces with its head and its fat, and the priest must place the pieces on the wood that is on the fire that is on the altar,[13]but the inner parts and the legs he must wash with water. Then the priest will offer the whole, and burn it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, and it will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh; it will be an offering made to him by fire.

[14]If his offering to Yahweh is to be a burnt offering of birds, then he must bring as his offering either a dove or a young pigeon.[15]The priest must bring it to the altar, wring off its head, and burn it on the altar. Then its blood must be drained out on the side of the altar.
[16]He must remove its crop with its contents, and throw it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for the ashes.[17]He must tear it open by its wings, but he must not divide it into two parts. Then the priest will burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. It will be a burnt offering, and it will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh; it will be an offering made to him by fire.

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Leviticus 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In Hebrew, this chapter begins with the word "and" indicating a connection with the previous book (Exodus). The first five books of the Bible should be seen as a single unit.

Special concepts in this chapter

Atonement

In order to offer a sacrifice for the people, the priest first had to make an atonement for himself, in order to make himself clean. Only then would he be clean and be allowed to perform a sacrifice. These sacrificed animals had to be perfect, the best of all of the animals. A person was not allowed to bring an inferior animal to be sacrificed to Yahweh. These sacrifices also had to be offered in a very specific way. (See: atonement and priest and clean)

Links:

Leviticus 1:1 Notes Leviticus intro

Leviticus 1:1

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Leviticus 1:2

When any man from among you

"When any one of you" or "When any of you"

'When any man

Here Yahweh begins speaking to Moses. The words that begin "from the tent of meeting, saying," can be translated without the quotation within the quotation. "from the tent of meeting and told Moses to say this to the people of Israel: 'When any man"

Leviticus 1:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so that their sacrifices will be acceptable to Yahweh.

If his offering ... he must offer

Here "his" and "he" refer to the person bringing an offering to Yahweh. It can be translated in the second person as it is in [Leviticus 1:2]

so that it may be accepted before Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that Yahweh will accept it"

Leviticus 1:4

lay his hand on the head

This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself through the animal to Yahweh, so that God will forgive the person's sins when they kill the animal.

then it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for himself

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then Yahweh will accept it in his place and forgive his sins"

Leviticus 1:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Then he must kill the bull

Here "he" refers to the one making the offering. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "Then you must kill the bull"

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh"

will present the blood

It is implied that the priests would catch the blood in a bowl as it drained out of the animal. Then they would bring the bowl with the blood in it and present it to Yahweh at the altar.

Leviticus 1:6

Then he must skin the burnt offering and cut it to pieces

As indicated in 1:9, the person must also wash the inner parts and the legs of the animal with water. The person would do this before giving the pieces to the priests so they could place them on the altar. As in the UDB, you can state here the instructions to wash the inner parts and legs.

Then he must skin

Here "he" refers to the one making the offering.

Leviticus 1:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so their offerings will be acceptable to him.

will put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire

This may mean that the priests placed hot coals on the altar, then placed the wood on the coals. Alternate translation: "will put wood on the altar and light a fire"

Leviticus 1:9

But its inner parts and its legs he must wash with water

The person would do this before giving the pieces to the priests to place on the altar. You can state this at the end of Leviticus 1:6.

inner parts

This is the stomach and intestines.

he must wash

Here "he" refers to the one making the offering.

It will produce a sweet aroma for me

Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper offering the sacrifice is spoken of as if Yahweh were pleased by the aroma of the burning sacrifice.

an offering made to me by fire

Yahweh is telling Moses that the offerings are to be burnt with fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a burnt offering to me"

Leviticus 1:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

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Leviticus 1:11
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh"
Leviticus 1:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
He is to cut it
Here "he" refers to the person offering the sacrifice. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "Then you must cut it"
pieces ... head ... fat ... on the wood that is on the fire that is on the altar
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 1:7-9.
Leviticus 1:13
inner parts ... legs he must wash with water ... burnt offering ... sweet aroma ... made ... by fire
See how you translated many of these words in Leviticus 1:9.
Then the priest will offer the whole, and burn it on the altar
"Then the priest will burn everything on the altar"
it will produce a sweet aroma for
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]
it will be an offering made to him by fire
Yahweh tells Moses that the priests must burn their offerings with fire. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be a burnt offering to me" or "it will be a burnt offering to Yahweh"
Leviticus 1:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Leviticus 1:15
wring off its head
"twist off its head"
Then its blood must be drained out
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the priest must drain its blood"
Leviticus 1:16
He must
"The priest must"
its crop with its contents
A crop is a pouch in the bird's throat where pre-digested food is stored.
throw it beside the altar
Here "it" refers to the crop and its contents.
Leviticus 1:17
it will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]
it will be an offering made to him by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be a burnt offering to me" or "it will be a burnt offering to Yahweh"

2 [1]When anyone brings a grain offering to Yahweh, his offering must be fine flour, and he will pour oil on it and put incense on it.[2]He is to take the offering to Aaron's sons the priests, and there the priest will take out a handful of the fine flour with the oil and the incense on it. Then the priest will burn the offering on the altar as a representative offering. It will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh; it will be an offering made to him by fire.[3]Whatever is left of the grain offering will belong to Aaron and his sons. It is very holy to Yahweh from the offerings to Yahweh made by fire.

[4]When you offer a grain offering without yeast that is baked in an oven, it must be soft bread of fine flour mixed with oil, or hard bread without yeast, which is spread with oil.[5]If your grain offering is baked with a flat iron pan, it must be of fine flour without yeast that is mixed with oil.
[6]You are to divide it into pieces and pour oil on it. This is a grain offering.[7]If your grain offering is cooked in a pan, it must be made with fine flour and oil.
[8]You must bring the grain offering made from these things to Yahweh, and it will be presented to the priest, who will bring it to the altar.[9]Then the priest will take some from the grain offering as a representative offering, and he will burn it on the altar. It will be an offering made by fire, and it will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.[10]What is left of the grain offering will belong to Aaron and his sons. It is very holy to Yahweh from the offerings to Yahweh made by fire.

[11]No grain offering that you offer to Yahweh is to be made with yeast, for you must burn no leaven, nor any honey, as an offering made by fire to Yahweh.[12]You will offer them to Yahweh as an offering of firstfruits, but they will not be used to produce a sweet aroma on the altar.[13]You must season each of your grain offerings with salt. You must never allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be missing from your grain offering. With all your offerings you must offer salt.

[14]If you offer a grain offering of firstfruits to Yahweh, offer fresh grain that is roasted with fire and then crushed into meal.[15]Then you must put oil and incense on it. This is a grain offering.[16]Then the priest will burn part of the crushed grain and oil and incense as a representative offering. This is an offering made by fire to Yahweh.

Leviticus 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions about how to make a grain offering.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Yeast

Yeast is connected to the events of the Passover. Any prohibition of yeast may be connected to the original Passover. (See: passover)

Links:

Leviticus 2:1 Notes

Leviticus 2:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

be fine flour

"be the finest flour" or "be the best flour"

flour

a powder made from wheat

Leviticus 2:2

He is to take

"He must take"

take out a handful

"take out what he can hold in his hand"

a representative offering

The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh.

It will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]

it will be an offering made to him by fire

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be a burnt offering to him"

Leviticus 2:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people and priests must do so their offerings will be acceptable to him.

that is baked in an oven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you baked in an oven"

oven

This was probably a hollow object made of clay. A fire was lit under the oven, and the heat would bake the dough inside of the oven.

soft bread of fine flour

It is understood that the soft bread contained no yeast.

which is spread with oil

Translate this phrase to indicate that the oil is to be spread onto the bread. Alternate translation: "with oil on the bread"

Leviticus 2:5

If your grain offering is baked with a flat iron pan

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you bake your grain offering in a flat iron pan"

a flat iron pan

This is a thick plate made of either clay or metal. The plate was placed over a fire, and the dough cooked on top of the plate.

Leviticus 2:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so their offerings will be acceptable to him.

to divide it

Here "it" refers to the grain offering cooked on a flat iron pan.

Leviticus 2:7

If your grain offering is cooked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you cook your grain offering"

in a pan

A pan is a metal plate with rounded edges. The dough was placed in the pan and cooked over a fire.

it must be made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must make it"

Leviticus 2:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so their offerings will be acceptable to him.

made from these things

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you made from the flour and oil"

it will be presented

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will present it"

Leviticus 2:9

Then the priest ... made by fire

See how you translated many of these words in Leviticus 2:2.

a representative offering

The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh. See how you translated this in Leviticus 2:2.

It will be an offering made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It will be a burnt offering"

it will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]

Leviticus 2:10

is ... by fire

See how you translated this in Leviticus 2:3.

from the offerings to Yahweh made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from the burnt offerings to Yahweh"

Leviticus 2:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so that their offerings will be acceptable to him.

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No grain offering that you offer to Yahweh is to be made with yeast
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not use yeast in a grain offering that you offer to Yahweh"
as an offering made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as a burnt offering"
Leviticus 2:12
You will offer them
"You will offer the grain offerings made with leaven or honey"
they will not be used to produce a sweet aroma on the altar
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will not use them to produce a sweet aroma on the altar" or "you will not burn them on the altar"
Leviticus 2:13
the salt of the covenant of your God
It is implied that the salt is a symbol that represents the covenant with God.
Leviticus 2:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do so their offerings will be acceptable to him.
that is roasted with fire and then crushed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you have cooked over a fire and then crushed"
Leviticus 2:16
a representative offering
The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh. See how you translated this in Leviticus 2:2.
This is an offering made by fire to Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is a burnt offering to Yahweh"

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3 [1]If someone offers a sacrifice which is a fellowship offering of an animal from the herd, whether male or female, he must offer an animal without blemish before Yahweh.[2]He will lay his hand on the head of his offering and kill it at the door of the tent of meeting. Then Aaron's sons the priests will sprinkle its blood on the sides of the altar.
[3]The man will offer the sacrifice of a fellowship offering by fire to Yahweh. The fat that covers or is connected to the inner parts,[4]and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them by the loins, and the lobe of the liver, with the kidneys—he will remove all of this.[5]Aaron's sons will burn that on the altar with the burnt offering, which is on the wood that is on the fire. This will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh; it will be an offering made to him by fire.

[6]If the man's sacrifice of a fellowship offering to Yahweh is from the flock; male or female, he must offer a sacrifice without blemish.[7]If he offers a lamb for his sacrifice, then he must offer it before Yahweh.[8]He will lay his hand on the head of his sacrifice and kill it before the tent of meeting. Then Aaron's sons will sprinkle its blood on the sides of the altar.
[9]The man will offer the sacrifice of fellowship offerings as an offering made by fire to Yahweh. The fat, the entire fat tail cut away close to the backbone, and the fat that covers the inner parts and all the fat that is near the inner parts,[10]and the two kidneys and the fat that is with them, which is by the loins, and the lobe of the liver, with the kidneys—he will remove all of this.[11]Then the priest will burn it all on the altar as a burnt offering of food to Yahweh.

[12]If the man's offering is a goat, then he will offer it before Yahweh.[13]He must lay his hand on the head of the goat and kill it before the tent of meeting. Then the sons of Aaron will sprinkle its blood on the sides of the altar.[14]The man will offer his sacrifice made by fire to Yahweh. He will remove the fat that covers the inner parts, and all the fat near the inner parts.
[15]He will also remove the two kidneys and the fat that is with them, which is by the loins, and the lobe of the liver with the kidneys.[16]The priest will burn all that on the altar as a burnt offering of food, to produce a sweet aroma. All the fat belongs to Yahweh.[17]It will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations in every place you make your home, that you must not eat fat or blood.'"

Leviticus 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions about how to offer a fellowship offering.

Special concepts in this chapter

Fat

The fat of the animal was considered the best part of the animal to eat. Therefore, this belonged to Yahweh. This is why the Israelites were not allowed to consume it.

Links:

Leviticus 3:1 Notes

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generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

Leviticus 3:1

General Information:

Moses continues telling the people what Yahweh wants them to do.

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh" or "to Yahweh"

Leviticus 3:2

lay his hand on the head

This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]

Aaron's sons the priests will sprinkle its blood

It is implied that before they sprinkle the blood, they catch blood in a bowl as the it drains from the animal.

Leviticus 3:3

inner parts

This is the stomach and intestines.

Leviticus 3:4

by the loins

This is the part of the body on the sides of the backbone between the ribs and hipbone.

the lobe of the liver

This is the curved or rounded part of the liver. This is considered the best part of the liver to eat. Alternate translation: "the best part of the liver"

Leviticus 3:5

This will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]

it will be an offering made to him by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be a burnt offering to Yahweh"

Leviticus 3:7

offer it before Yahweh

"offer it in the presence of Yahweh" or "offer it to Yahweh"

Leviticus 3:8

lay his hand on the head

This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal.

Aaron's sons will sprinkle its blood

It is implied that before they sprinkle the blood, they catch the blood in a bowl as it drains from the animal.

Leviticus 3:9

as an offering made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as a burnt offering"

inner parts

This is the stomach and intestines.

Leviticus 3:10

and the two kidneys ... the kidneys—he will remove all of this

The words "he will remove all of this" can be placed at the beginning of the sentence in verse 9. "He will remove the fat, the entire fat tail ... the inner parts, and the two kidneys ... with the kidneys"

and the two kidneys

A new sentence can start here. Alternate translation: "He must remove the kidneys"

by the loins

This is the part of the body on the sides of the backbone between the ribs and hipbone.

the lobe of the liver

This is the curved or rounded part of the liver. This is considered the best part of the liver to eat. Alternate translation: "the best part of the liver"

Leviticus 3:11

will burn it all on the altar as a burnt offering of food to Yahweh

Translate this in a way that makes it clear that Yahweh does not actually eat the food. Alternate translation: "will burn those things on the altar as an offering to Yahweh. Those things will come from your food supplies"

Leviticus 3:12

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh" or "to Yahweh"

Leviticus 3:13

lay his hand on the head

This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]

the sons of Aaron will sprinkle its blood

It is implied that before they sprinkle the blood, they catch the blood in a bowl as it drains from the animal.

Leviticus 3:14

will offer his sacrifice made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will offer his sacrifice by fire" or "will burn his sacrifice"

Leviticus 3:15

He will also

Here "He" refers to the person offering the sacrifice.

Leviticus 3:16

will burn all that on the altar as a burnt offering of food

Translate this in a way that it does not seem like Yahweh actually eats the food. Alternate translation: "will burn those things on the altar to be an offering to Yahweh. It will be as though they are food given to Yahweh"

to produce a sweet aroma

Yahweh is pleased with the aroma of burning meat when he is pleased with the worshiper's sincerity. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]

Leviticus 3:17

It will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations

This means that they and their descendants must obey this command forever.

or blood

"or consume blood"

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4 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Tell the people of Israel, 'When anyone sins without wanting to sin, doing any of the things that Yahweh has commanded not to be done, and if he does something that is prohibited, the following must be done.

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[3]If it is the anointed priest who sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer for his sin which he has committed a young bull without blemish to Yahweh as a sin offering.
[4]He must bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before Yahweh, lay his hand on its head, and kill the bull before Yahweh.[5]The anointed priest will take some of the blood of the bull and take it to the tent of meeting.
[6]The priest will dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle some of it seven times before Yahweh, before the curtain of the most holy place.[7]Then the priest will put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before Yahweh, which is in the tent of meeting, and he will pour out all the rest of the blood of the bull at the base of the altar for burnt offerings, which is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.
[8]He will cut away all the fat of the bull of the sin offering; the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is attached to the inner parts,[9]the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, which is by the loins, and the lobe of the liver, with the kidneys—he will cut away all this.[10]He will cut it all away, just as he cuts it off from the bull of the sacrifice of peace offerings. Then the priest will burn these parts on the altar for burnt offerings.
[11]The skin of the bull and any remaining meat, with its head and with its legs and its inner parts and its dung,[12]all the rest of the parts of the bull—he will carry all these parts outside the camp to a place that they have cleansed for me, where they pour out the ashes; they will burn those parts there on wood. They must burn those parts where they pour out the ashes.

[13]If the whole assembly of Israel sins without wanting to sin, and the assembly is unaware that they have sinned and done any of the things which Yahweh has commanded not to be done, and if they are guilty,[14]then, when the sin they have committed becomes known, then the assembly must offer a young bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it before the tent of meeting.[15]The elders of the assembly will lay their hands on the head of the bull before Yahweh, and the bull will be killed before Yahweh.
[16]The anointed priest will bring some of the blood of the bull to the tent of meeting,[17]and the priest will dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before Yahweh, before the curtain.
[18]He will put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is before Yahweh, which is in the tent of meeting, and he will pour out all the blood at the base of the altar for burnt offerings, which is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.[19]He will cut off all the fat from it and burn it on the altar.
[20]That is what he must do with the bull. Just as he did with the bull of the sin offering, so will he also do with this bull, and the priest will make atonement for the people, and they will be forgiven.[21]He will carry the bull outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bull. This is the sin offering for the assembly.

[22]When a ruler sins without intending to sin, doing any one of all the things that Yahweh his God has commanded not to be done, and he is guilty,[23]then his sin which he has committed is made known to him, he must bring for his sacrifice a goat, a male without blemish.
[24]He will lay his hand on the head of the goat and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before Yahweh. This is a sin offering.[25]The priest will take the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offerings, and he will pour out its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering.
[26]He will burn all the fat on the altar, just like the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. The priest will make atonement for the ruler concerning his sin, and the ruler will be forgiven.

[27]If anyone of the common people sins without intending to sin, doing any of the things which Yahweh has commanded him not to be done, and when he realizes his guilt,[28]then his sin which he has committed is made known to him, then he will bring a goat for his sacrifice, a female without blemish, for the sin that he has committed.
[29]He will lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill the sin offering at the place of burnt offering.[30]The priest will take some of the blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offerings. He will pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.
[31]He will cut away all the fat, just as the fat is cut away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings. The priest will burn it on the altar to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. The priest will make atonement for the man, and he will be forgiven.

[32]If the man brings a lamb as his sacrifice for a sin offering, he will bring a female without blemish.[33]He will lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill it for a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering.
[34]The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offerings, and he will pour out all its blood at the base of the altar.[35]He will cut away all the fat, just as the fat of the lamb is cut away from the sacrifice of peace offerings, and the priest will burn it on the altar on top of the offerings of Yahweh made by fire. The priest will make atonement for him for the sin he has committed, and the man will be forgiven.

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Leviticus 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions on how to offer a sacrifice for unintentional sins. This is known as a sin offering. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Unintentional sins

Many scholars have taken special note that all of the sacrifices concern sins that are unintentional and that no provision is offered for sins intentionally committed. Many have suggested that it is only the sacrifice of Jesus's life that can be offered for these sins. Many also believe that this offering parallels the sacrifice of Jesus.

Links:

Leviticus 4:1 Notes

Leviticus 4:1

Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying

"Yahweh said to Moses"

Leviticus 4:2

"Tell the people of Israel, 'When anyone sins

The words beginning with "Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying"

that Yahweh has commanded not to be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh has commanded the people not to do"

if he does something that is prohibited

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "if he does something that Yahweh does not allow"

the following must be done

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must do the following"

Leviticus 4:3

the anointed priest

This phrase refers to the son of the high priest who will succeed the high priest when the high priest dies.

so as to bring guilt on the people

The abstract noun "guilt" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "so as to cause the people to be guilty"

Leviticus 4:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Moses what the people must do.

He must bring the bull

"The high priest must bring the bull"

lay his hand on its head

This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]

Leviticus 4:5

The anointed priest will take some of the blood

It is implied that the priest catches the blood in a bowl as it drains from the animal.

The anointed priest

This phrase refers to the son of the high priest who will succeed the high priest when the high priest dies. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:3.

Leviticus 4:6

sprinkle some of it

"drip some of it" or "splatter some of it"

Leviticus 4:7

horns of the altar

This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. Alternate translation: "the projections at the corners of the altar"

pour out

"empty out the rest of the blood"

at the base of the altar

"at the bottom of the altar"

Leviticus 4:8

He will cut away

"The priest will cut away"

inner parts

This is the stomach and intestines.

Leviticus 4:9

the two kidneys ... with the kidneys—he will cut away all this

The words "he will cut away all this" can be placed before the words "the fat that covers" in verse 8. "He will cut away the fat that covers the inner parts, all the fat that is attached to the inner parts, the two kidneys ... with the kidneys"

by the loins

This is the part of the body on the sides of the backbone between the ribs and hipbone.

the lobe of the liver

This is the curved or rounded part of the liver. This is considered the best part of the liver to eat. Alternate translation: "the best part of the liver"

Leviticus 4:11

The skin of the bull ... and its dung

You may want to begin this sentence with words that tell your reader that the sentence is very long. "As for the skin of the bull ... and its dung"

Leviticus 4:12

a place that they have cleansed for me

A place being ritually pure and suitable to use for serving God is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

they have cleansed for me

Here "they" refers to the priests, and "me" refers to Yahweh.

Leviticus 4:13

is unaware

"does not know"

commanded not to be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "commanded them not to do"

if they are guilty

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"they are guilty" or "they deserve for God to punish them"
Leviticus 4:14
when the sin they have committed becomes known
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when they realize that they have sinned"
Leviticus 4:15
will lay their hands on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies the people with the animal they are offering. In this way the people are offering themselves to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Leviticus 1:4]
the bull will be killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and they will kill the bull"
Leviticus 4:16
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
The anointed priest will bring some of the blood
It is implied that the priest caught the blood in a bowl as the blood drained from the bull.
The anointed priest
This phrase refers to the son of the high priest who will succeed the high priest when the high priest dies. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:3.
Leviticus 4:17
before the curtain
It is implied that this is the curtain before the most holy place.
Leviticus 4:18
He will put
"The priest will put"
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
he will pour out all the blood
"he will pour out the rest of the blood"
Leviticus 4:19
all the fat from it and burn it
"all the fat from the bull and burn the fat"
Leviticus 4:20
he must do
"the priest must do"
the priest will make atonement for the people
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the priest will atone for the people's sins"
they will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive them"
Leviticus 4:22
God has commanded not to be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has commanded the people not to do"
Leviticus 4:23
then his sin which he has committed is made known to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then he realizes that he has sinned"
Leviticus 4:24
He will lay
"The ruler will lay"
lay his hand on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
where they kill
"where the priests kill"
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh" or "to Yahweh"
Leviticus 4:25
The priest will take the blood
It is implied that the priest will catch the blood in a bowl as the blood drains from the goat.
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
Leviticus 4:26
He will burn
"The priest will burn"
The priest will make atonement for the ruler
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The priest will atone for the ruler"
the ruler will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the ruler's sins"
Leviticus 4:27
Yahweh has commanded him not to be done
All of the people of Israel were commanded not to sin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh commanded the people not to do"
Leviticus 4:28
his sin which he has committed is made known to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he becomes aware of the sin he committed"
Leviticus 4:29
lay his hand on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
Leviticus 4:30
The priest will take some of the blood
It is implied that the priest will catch the blood in a bowl as the blood drains from the animal.
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar, which are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
all the rest of the blood
"all the blood remaining in the bowl"
Leviticus 4:31
He will cut away
Here "He" refers to the person offering the sacrifice.
just as the fat is cut away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as a person cuts away the fat"

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will burn it
"will burn the fat"
to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]
The priest will make atonement for the man
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The priest will atone for the man's sins"
he will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the man's sins"
Leviticus 4:33
lay his hand on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies the person with the animal he is offering. In this way the person is offering himself to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
where they kill
"where the priests kill"
Leviticus 4:34
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
he will pour out all its blood
"he will pour out the rest of its blood"
Leviticus 4:35
He will cut away
Here "He" refers to the person offering the sacrifice.
just as the fat of the lamb is cut away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as a person cuts away the fat of the lamb"
the priest will burn it
"the priest will burn the fat"
offerings of Yahweh made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "burnt offerings for Yahweh"
will make atonement for him for the sin he has committed
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "will atone for the sin the person committed"
the man will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the man's sins"

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5 [1]The person who is a witness or has seen or knows about some matter—if he hears the curse but sins by not testifying, he will bear the guilt of his iniquity.[2]Or if anyone touches anything God has designated as unclean, whether it be the carcass of an unclean wild animal or the carcass of any unclean livestock or unclean creatures that move along the ground, even though he was not aware of what he had done, he has become unclean and is guilty.
[3]Or if he touches the uncleanness of someone, whatever that uncleanness is, and if he is unaware of it, then he will be guilty when he learns about it.[4]Or if anyone swears rashly with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatever it is that a man swears rashly with an oath, even if he is unaware of it, when he learns about it, then he will be guilty, in any of these things.
[5]When someone is guilty in any of these things, he must confess whatever sin he has committed.[6]Then he must bring his guilt offering to Yahweh for the sin that he has committed, a female animal from the flock, either a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering, and the priest will make atonement for him concerning his sin.

[7]If he cannot afford to buy a lamb, then he can bring as his guilt offering for his sin two doves or two young pigeons to Yahweh, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.[8]He must bring them to the priest, who will offer one for the sin offering first—he will wring off its head from its neck but will not remove it completely from the body.[9]Then he will sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, and he will drain the rest of the blood out at the base of the altar. This is a sin offering.
[10]Then he must offer the second bird as a burnt offering, as described in the instructions, and the priest will make atonement for him for the sin that he has committed, and the person will be forgiven.

[11]But if he cannot afford to buy two doves or two young pigeons, then he must bring as his sacrifice for his sin a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering. He must not put oil or any incense on it, for it is a sin offering.
[12]He must bring it to the priest, and the priest will take a handful of it as a representative offering and then burn it on the altar, on top of the offerings made by fire for Yahweh. This is a sin offering.[13]The priest will make atonement for any sin that the person has committed, and that person will be forgiven. The leftovers from the offering will belong to the priest, as with the grain offering.'"

[14]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[15]"If anyone sins and acts unfaithfully in regard to the things that belong to Yahweh, but did so unintentionally, then he must bring his guilt offering to Yahweh. This offering must be a ram without blemish from the flock; its value must be appraised in silver shekels—the shekel of the sanctuary—as a guilt offering.[16]He must satisfy Yahweh for what he had done wrong in connection with what is holy, and he must add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest. Then the priest will make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering, and that person will be forgiven.

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[17]If anyone sins and does anything that Yahweh has commanded not to be done, even if he was unaware of it, he is still guilty and must carry his own guilt.[18]He must bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, worth the current value, as a guilt offering to the priest. Then the priest will make atonement for him concerning the sin he has committed, of which he was unaware, and he will be forgiven.[19]It is a guilt offering, and he is certainly guilty before Yahweh."

Leviticus 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions about how to offer a specific type of sacrifice.

Special concepts in this chapter

Not testifying

If a person saw a crime, or a wrong being done, they were required to be a witness about what they saw or heard. (See: testimony)

Sacrifices for the poor

This chapter explains that poor people were allowed to offer less expensive sacrifices if they could not afford more costly sacrifices.

Links:

Leviticus 5:1 Notes

Leviticus 5:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the curse

Jewish law and leaders both required the people to testify if they were witnesses to a crime, so this phrase refers to the curse uttered against those who refuse to testify. Alternate translation: "people ask God to punish anyone who refuses to tell what he knows "

Leviticus 5:2

God has designated as unclean

Something that God has declared to be unfit for people to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

the carcass

"the dead body"

he has become unclean

A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Leviticus 5:3

if he touches the uncleanness of someone, whatever that uncleanness is

The abstract noun "uncleanness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "if he touches anything that makes a person unclean"

the uncleanness

Something that Yahweh has declared unfit for a person to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

he is unaware of it

"he does not realize it" or "he does not know about it"

Leviticus 5:4

if anyone swears rashly with his lips

Here "lips" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "if anyone swears rashly"

if anyone swears rashly

This means to swear an oath without thinking seriously about it. It implies that after the person swears the oath that he either cannot fulfill it or he does not really want to fulfill it.

Leviticus 5:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Leviticus 5:6

the priest will make atonement for him

The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the priest will atone for him"

Leviticus 5:7

If he cannot afford to buy a lamb

"If he does not have enough money to buy a lamb"

Leviticus 5:8

he will wring off its head from its neck but will not remove it

"he will kill it by twisting its head and breaking its neck, but he will not remove the head"

Leviticus 5:10

as described in the instructions

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh has instructed"

the priest will make atonement for him for the sin that he has committed

The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the priest will atone for the sin that the person committed"

the person will be forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the person"

Leviticus 5:11

a tenth of an ephah

An ephah is 22 liters. A tenth of an ephah is about two liters.

a tenth

This is one part out of ten equal parts.

Leviticus 5:12

He must bring it

"He must bring the fine flour"

a representative offering

The handful that the priest burns on the altar represents

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the entire offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh. See how you translated this in Leviticus 2:2.
on top of the offerings made by fire for Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on top of the burnt offerings to Yahweh"
Leviticus 5:13
will make atonement
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "will atone"
that person will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive that person's sins"
Leviticus 5:15
sins and acts unfaithfully in regard to the things that belong to Yahweh
This means the person sinned by not giving to Yahweh what Yahweh commanded him to give. Alternate translation: "sins by failing to give to Yahweh what belongs to Yahweh"
Leviticus 5:16
he must add one-fifth
This means the person must pay an extra one-fifth of the value of what he owes to Yahweh.
one-fifth
This is one part out of five equal parts.
the priest will make atonement for him
The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the priest will atone for him"
that person will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive that person"
Leviticus 5:17
has commanded not to be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has commanded the people not to do"
must carry his own guilt
A person's guilt is spoken of as if it were a physical object that the person carries. Here the word "guilt" represents the punishment for that guilt. Alternate translation: "he is responsible for his own guilt" or "Yahweh will punish him for his sin"
Leviticus 5:18
worth the current value
This means the person must determine how many shekels the ram is worth by using the official standard of the sacred tent. See [Leviticus 5:15]
he will be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive him"
Leviticus 5:19
he is certainly guilty before Yahweh
"Yahweh certainly considers him guilty"

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6 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"If anyone sins and acts unfaithfully against Yahweh by deceiving his neighbor regarding something held in trust, or was left in his care, or about something that was stolen, or if he has oppressed his neighbor,[3]or he has found something that his neighbor lost and lies about it, or if he swears falsely, or in any matters like these by which people sin,[4]and if he has sinned and is found to be guilty, he must restore whatever he took by robbery or oppression, or that which was entrusted to him, or that which was lost but that he had found.
[5]In addition, in any matter in which he swore falsely, he must restore it in full and he must add one-fifth of the value of it and pay it all to the owner on the day that he is found guilty.[6]Then he must bring his guilt offering to Yahweh, a ram without blemish from the flock that is worth the current value, as a guilt offering to the priest.[7]The priest will make atonement for him before Yahweh, and he will be forgiven concerning whatever he has become guilty of doing."

[8]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[9]"Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering must be on the hearth of the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar will be kept burning.
[10]The priest will put on his linen clothes, and he will also put on his linen underclothes. He will pick up the ashes that are left after the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar, and he will put the ashes beside the altar.[11]He will take off his garments and put on other garments to carry the ashes outside the camp to a place that is clean.
[12]The fire on the altar will be kept burning. It must not go out, and the priest will burn wood on it every morning. He will arrange the burnt offering as required on it, and he will burn on it the fat of the peace offerings.[13]Fire must be kept burning on the altar continually. It must not go out.

[14]This is the law of the grain offering. The sons of Aaron will offer it before Yahweh before the altar.[15]The priest will take up a handful of the fine flour of the grain offering and of the oil and the incense which is on the grain offering, and he will burn it on the altar to produce a sweet aroma as a representative offering.
[16]Aaron and his sons will eat whatever is left of the offering. It must be eaten without yeast in a holy place. They will eat it in the courtyard of the tent of meeting.[17]It must not be baked with yeast. I have given it as their part of my offerings made by fire. It is most holy, as the sin offering and the guilt offering.[18]Every male among the descendants of Aaron may eat of it, as decreed forever throughout your generations, taken from the fire offerings made to Yahweh. Whoever touches them will become holy.'"

[19]So Yahweh spoke to Moses again, saying,[20]"This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they will offer to Yahweh on the day when each son is anointed: a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening.

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[21]It will be made with oil in a baking pan. When it is soaked, you will bring it in. In baked pieces you will offer the grain offering to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.[22]The anointed priest from among his sons will offer it. As commanded forever, it must be burned up completely to Yahweh.[23]Every grain offering of the priest will be completely burned up. It must not be eaten."

[24]Yahweh spoke to Moses again, saying,[25]"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This is the law of the sin offering: The sin offering must be killed at the place where the burnt offering is killed before Yahweh. It is most holy.[26]The priest who offers it for sin will eat it. It must be eaten in a holy place in the courtyard of the tent of meeting.
[27]Whatever touches its meat will become holy, and if the blood is sprinkled on any garment, you must wash it, the part that was sprinkled on, in a holy place.[28]But the clay pot in which it is boiled must be broken. If it is boiled in a bronze pot, it must be scrubbed and rinsed clean in water.
[29]Any male among the priests may eat some of it because it is most holy.[30]But any sin offering whose blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the holy place must not be eaten. It must be burned with fire.

Leviticus 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions on how to offer guilt offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings.

Special concepts in this chapter

Eating sacrifices

The Levites were allowed to eat some of the leftover parts of the sacrifice, while they were not allowed to eat other sacrifices. The reasons for this is unknown.

Links:

Leviticus 6:1 Notes

Leviticus 6:2

acts unfaithfully against Yahweh

"disobeys one of Yahweh's commandments"

deceiving his neighbor regarding something held in trust

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "lying to his neighbor about something the neighbor let him borrow"

his neighbor

Here "neighbor" means any Israelite, not just someone who lives nearby.

Leviticus 6:4

that which was entrusted to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not returning something he borrowed"

Leviticus 6:5

in full

"fully" or "totally"

add one-fifth

This means the person must return what he owes to someone and pay an extra one-fifth of the value. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 5:16]

pay it all to the owner

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to pay the person he owes"

he is found guilty

The person who stole is to be brought before the judge and be declared guilty. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the judge declares him guilty"

Leviticus 6:6

worth the current value

This means the person must determine how many shekels the ram is worth by using the official standard of the sacred tent. You can make clear the understood information. See how this was translated in [Leviticus 5:15]

Leviticus 6:7

The priest will make atonement for him

The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The priest will atone for him"

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh"

he will be forgiven

This means Yahweh will forgive the person, not the priest. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive him"

Leviticus 6:9

"Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the law

The sentence that begins "Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying"

must be on the hearth of the altar

"must be on top of the altar"

the fire of the altar will be kept burning

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must keep the fire of the altar burning"

Leviticus 6:10

his linen clothes

Linen is a white cloth. Alternate translation: "his white clothes"

He will pick up the ashes

"He will gather the ashes"

after the fire has consumed the burnt offering

The fire completely burning up the offering is spoken of as if it consumed or used up the burnt offering.

Leviticus 6:11

to a place that is clean

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A place that is fit to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically clean.
Leviticus 6:12
The fire on the altar will be kept burning
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The priest will keep the fire on the altar burning"
as required on it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on it as Yahweh demands"
Leviticus 6:15
to produce a sweet aroma
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Leviticus 1:9]
a representative offering
The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh. See how you translated this in Leviticus 2:2.
Leviticus 6:16
It must be eaten
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must eat it"
Leviticus 6:17
It must not be baked with yeast
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not bake it with yeast"
offerings made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "burnt offerings"
Leviticus 6:18
Whoever touches them will become holy
This is an implied warning that those who are not male descendants of Aaron should not touch this offering. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
Leviticus 6:20
when each son is anointed
It is implied that they will be anointed when they become priests. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when he anoints each son, ordaining them as priests"
a tenth part of an ephah
An ephah is 22 liters. One-tenth of an ephah is about 2 liters.
a tenth
This is one part of ten equal parts.
Leviticus 6:21
It will be made
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will make it"
in a baking pan
This is a thick plate made of either clay or metal. The plate was placed over a fire, and the dough cooked on top of the plate. See how you translated "flat iron pan" in [Leviticus 2:5]
When it is soaked
"When the flour is completely wet with oil"
you will bring it in
Here "you" refers to the person offering the sacrifice.
to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:9]
Leviticus 6:22
The anointed priest
This phrase refers to the son of the high priest who will succeed the high priest when the high priest dies. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:3.
As commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As Yahweh has commanded you"
it must be burned up completely
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must burn all of it"
Leviticus 6:25
"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This is the law
The sentence that begins "Yahweh spoke to Moses again, saying"
Speak to Aaron and to his sons
Yahweh is speaking to Aaron and his sons, but these regulations apply to all priest who perform these sacrifices. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
The sin offering must be killed at ... before Yahweh
It can be made explicit that this refers to the north side of the altar. See Leviticus 1:10-11.
The sin offering must be killed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must kill the sin offering"
where the burnt offering is killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where you kill the animal for the burnt offering"
before Yahweh
"to Yahweh"
Leviticus 6:26
It must be eaten
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He must eat it"
Leviticus 6:27
Whatever touches its meat will become holy
This is an implied warning that no one besides the priests should touch the meat of the sin offering. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
if the blood is sprinkled on
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the blood sprinkles on"
Leviticus 6:28
the clay pot in which it is boiled must be broken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must break the clay pot in which you boiled the meat"
If it is boiled in a bronze pot, it must be scrubbed and rinsed clean in water
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you boiled the meat in a bronze pot, then you must scrub the pot and rinse it with clean water"
Leviticus 6:30
But any sin offering ... must not be eaten

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "But no one may eat any sin offering whose blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the holy place"

whose blood is brought into the tent of meeting

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "from which the priest takes the blood into the tent of meeting"

It must be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The priest must burn it"

with fire

If these words would cause confusion for the reader, you may omit them.

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7 [1]This is the law of the guilt offering. It is most holy.[2]They must kill the guilt offering in the place for killing it, and they must sprinkle its blood against every side of the altar.[3]All the fat in it will be offered: the fat tail, the fat that is over the inner parts,[4]the two kidneys and the fat on them, which is next to the loins, and what covers the liver, with the kidneys—all this must be removed.
[5]The priest must burn these parts on the altar as an offering made with fire to Yahweh. This is the guilt offering.[6]Every male among the priests may eat part of this offering. It must be eaten in a holy place because it is most holy.
[7]The sin offering is like the guilt offering. The same law applies to both of them. They belong to the priest who makes atonement with them.[8]The priest who offers anyone's burnt offering may have for himself the hide of that offering.
[9]Every grain offering that is baked in an oven, and every such offering that is cooked in a frying pan or in a baking pan will belong to the priest who offers it.[10]Every grain offering, either dry or mixed with oil, will belong equally to all the descendants of Aaron.

[11]This is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which people will offer to Yahweh.[12]If anyone offers it in order to give thanks, then he must offer it with a sacrifice of cakes made without yeast, but mixed with oil, of cakes made without yeast, but spread with oil, and of cakes made with fine flour that is mixed with oil.
[13]Also for the purpose of giving thanks, he must offer with the sacrifice of his peace offering cakes of bread made with yeast.[14]He is to offer one of each kind of these sacrifices as a contribution presented to Yahweh. It will belong to the priests who sprinkle the blood of the peace offerings onto the altar.

[15]The person presenting a peace offering for the purpose of giving thanks must eat the meat of his offering on the day of the sacrifice. He must not leave any of it until the next morning.[16]But if the sacrifice of his offering is for the purpose of a vow, or for the purpose of a freewill offering, the meat must be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice, but whatever remains of it may be eaten on the next day.
[17]However, whatever meat of the sacrifice remains on the third day must be burned.[18]If any of the meat of the sacrifice of one's peace offering is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted, neither will it be credited to the one who offered it. It will be a disgusting thing, and the person who eats it will carry the guilt of his sin.

[19]Any meat that touches an unclean thing must not be eaten. It must be burned with fire. As for the rest of the meat, anyone who is clean may eat it.[20]However, an unclean person who eats any meat from the sacrifice of a peace offering that belongs to Yahweh—that person must be cut off from his people.
[21]If anyone touches any unclean thing—whether uncleanness of man or of unclean animal or of some unclean, detestable thing—and if he then eats some of the meat of a sacrifice of peace offering that belongs to Yahweh, that person must be cut off from his people.'"

[22]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[23]"Speak to the people of Israel and say, 'You must eat no fat of cattle, sheep, or goats.[24]The fat of an animal that died without being a sacrifice, or the fat of an animal torn by wild animals, may be used for other purposes, but you must certainly not eat it.
[25]Whoever eats the fat of an animal that men can offer as a sacrifice by fire to Yahweh, that person must be cut off from his people.[26]You must eat no blood whatsoever in any of your houses, whether it is from a bird or an animal.[27]Whoever eats any blood, that person must be cut off from his people.'"

[28]So Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[29]"Speak to the people of Israel and say, 'He who offers the sacrifice of a peace offering to Yahweh must bring part of his sacrifice to Yahweh.[30]The offering for Yahweh to be made by fire, his own hands must bring it. He must bring the fat with the breast, so that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before Yahweh.
[31]The priest must burn the fat on the altar, but the breast will belong to Aaron and his descendants.[32]You must give the right thigh to the priest as a contribution from the sacrifice of your peace offerings.
[33]The priest, one of Aaron's descendants, who offers the blood of the peace offerings and the fat—he will have the right thigh as his share of the offering.[34]For I have taken from the people of Israel, the breast of the wave offering, and the thigh that is the contribution from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and they have been given to Aaron the priest and his sons as their regular share.

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[35]This is what has been consecrated for Aaron and his descendants from the offerings for Yahweh made by fire, on the day when Moses presented them to serve Yahweh in the work of priest.[36]This is the share that Yahweh commanded to be given them from the people of Israel, on the day that he anointed the priests. It will always be their share throughout all generations.

[37]This is the law of the burnt offering, of the grain offering, of the sin offering, of the guilt offering, of the consecration offering, and of the sacrifice of peace offerings,[38]about which Yahweh gave commands to Moses on Mount Sinai on the day that he commanded the people of Israel to offer their sacrifices to Yahweh in the wilderness of Sinai.'"

Leviticus 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives instructions on how to offer guilt offerings, peace offerings and freewill offerings.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blood

The people were not allowed to eat or drink the blood of the sacrificed meat because life was considered to be in the blood of the animal. (See: blood and Leviticus 17:11)

Links:

Leviticus 7:1 Notes

Leviticus 7:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what he must tell Aaron and his sons.

Leviticus 7:2

in the place for killing it

It can be made explicit that this refers to, the north side of the altar, the place where the animals for the burnt offerings are killed. See [Leviticus 1:10-11]

Leviticus 7:3

All the fat in it will be offered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The priest must offer all the fat in it"

inner parts

This is the stomach and intestines.

Leviticus 7:4

liver ... kidneys

See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:4.

next to the loins

This is the part of the body on the sides of the backbone between the ribs and hipbone. See how you translated this in Leviticus 3:4.

all this must be removed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priest must remove all this"

Leviticus 7:5

as an offering made with fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as a burnt offering"

Leviticus 7:6

It must be eaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must eat it"

Leviticus 7:7

The same law applies to both of them

"The law is the same for both of them"

to the priest who makes atonement with them

The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "to the priest who offers the sacrifice to atone for someone's sins"

Leviticus 7:8

hide

the coat or skin of a herd animal

Leviticus 7:9

that is baked in an oven ... that is cooked in a frying pan

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone bakes in an oven ... that someone cooks in a frying pan"

oven

This was probably a hollow object made of clay. A fire was lit under the oven, and the heat would bake the dough inside of the oven. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 2:4]

a frying pan

This is a metal plate with rounded edges. The dough was placed in the pan and cooked over a fire. See how you translated "pan" in [Leviticus 2:7]

a baking pan

This is a thick plate made of either clay or metal. The plate was placed over a fire, and the dough cooked on top of the plate. See how you translated "flat iron pan" in [Leviticus 2:5]

Leviticus 7:12

of cakes made without yeast, but mixed with oil

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "of cakes he made without yeast but mixed with oil"

cakes ... mixed with oil

Here "cakes" refers to a thick bread.

of cakes made without yeast, but spread with oil

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "of thin cakes he made without yeast but spread with oil"

cakes ... spread with oil

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Here "cakes" refers to a thin bread.

of cakes made with fine flour that is mixed with oil

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "of cakes he made with fine flour mixed with oil"

cakes made with fine flour

Here "cakes" refers to a thick bread. It is similar to the first type of bread except it is made with the finest flour.

Leviticus 7:13

cakes of bread made with yeast

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "cakes of bread he made with yeast"

cakes

This refers to a thick bread.

Leviticus 7:15

The person presenting

"The person who offers"

for the purpose of giving thanks

The abstract noun "thanks" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "for the purpose of thanking Yahweh"

Leviticus 7:16

the meat must be eaten ... it may be eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must eat the meat ... he may eat it"

Leviticus 7:17

on the third day

Third is the ordinal number for three. Alternate translation: "after two days"

must be burned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person must burn it"

Leviticus 7:18

If any of the meat of the sacrifice of one's peace offering is eaten on the third day

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "If anyone eats the meat of his peace offering sacrifice on the third day"

it will not be accepted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not accept it"

neither will it be credited to the one who offered it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "neither will Yahweh honor the sacrifice that the person offered"

will carry the guilt of his sin

A person being responsible for the sin he committed is spoken of as if he had to carry the guilt physically.

Leviticus 7:19

Any meat that touches an unclean thing must not be eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one may eat meat that touches something unclean"

an unclean thing

Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

It must be burned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must burn it"

with fire

If these words would cause confusion for the reader, you may omit them. See how you translated these words in Leviticus 6:19.

anyone who is clean

A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

Leviticus 7:20

unclean person

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

that person must be cut off from his people

A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that person may no longer live among his people" or "you must separate that person from his people"

Leviticus 7:21

of man

Here "man" means humans in general. Alternate translation: "of a person"

or of some unclean, detestable thing

"or of some unclean thing that disgusts Yahweh"

that person must be cut off from his people

A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 7:20]

Leviticus 7:23

"Speak to the people of Israel and say, 'You must eat no fat

The sentence that begins "Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying"

Leviticus 7:24

died without being a sacrifice

"died but was not a sacrifice"

the fat of an animal torn by wild animals

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the fat of an animal that wild animals killed"

may be used

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you may use"

Leviticus 7:25

sacrifice by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "burnt offering"

that person must be cut off from his people

A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 7:20]

Leviticus 7:26

You must eat no blood

"You must not consume blood"

in any of your houses

"in any of your homes" or "wherever you live"

Leviticus 7:29

"Speak to the people of Israel and say, 'He who offers

The sentence that begins with the words "So Yahweh spoke to Moses and said"

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Leviticus 7:30

The offering for Yahweh to be made by fire, his own hands must bring it

The statement "his own hands must bring it" can be placed at the beginning of the sentence. The phrase "to be made by fire" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He himself must bring the offering that he plans to burn as a sacrifice to Yahweh"

his own hands must bring it

Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "he must bring it himself"

breast

the front part of the animal's body below the neck

so that the breast may be waved as a wave offering before Yahweh

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the priest can present it to Yahweh as a wave offering"

may be waved as a wave offering before Yahweh

Raising up the offering is a symbolic gesture that shows that the person is dedicating the sacrifice to Yahweh.

Leviticus 7:32

thigh

the upper part of the leg above the knee

Leviticus 7:34

For I have taken

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

that is the contribution

"that is given as an offering"

Leviticus 7:35

the offerings for Yahweh made by fire

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the burnt offerings for Yahweh"

Leviticus 7:36

that Yahweh commanded to be given them from the people of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh commanded the people of Israel to give to them"

that he anointed the priests

"that Moses anointed the priests"

throughout all generations

See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:17.

Leviticus 7:37

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of a speech started in verse Leviticus 7:29.

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8 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Take Aaron and his sons with him, the garments and the anointing oil, the bull for the sin offering, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread.[3]Assemble all the assembly at the entrance to the tent of meeting."
[4]So Moses did as Yahweh commanded him, and the assembly came together at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[5]Then Moses said to the assembly, "This is what Yahweh has commanded to be done."

[6]Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water.[7]He put the tunic on Aaron and tied the sash around his waist, clothed him with the robe and put the ephod on him, and then he tied the ephod around him with the finely-woven waistband and bound it to him.
[8]He placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim.[9]He set the turban on his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden plate, the holy crown, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[10]Moses took the anointing oil, anointed the tabernacle and everything in it and set them apart to Yahweh.[11]He sprinkled the oil on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the washbasin and its base, to set them apart to Yahweh.
[12]He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to set him apart.[13]Moses brought Aaron's sons and clothed them with tunics. He tied sashes around their waists and wrapped linen cloth around their heads, as Yahweh had commanded him.

[14]Moses brought the bull for the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull that they had brought for the sin offering.[15]Moses killed it, and he took the blood and put it on the horns of the altar with his finger, purified the altar, poured out the blood at the base of the altar, and set it apart for God in order to make atonement for it.
[16]He took all the fat that was on the inner parts, the covering of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and Moses burned it all on the altar.[17]But Moses burned the bull, its hide, its meat, and its dung outside the camp, as Yahweh had commanded him.

[18]Moses presented the ram for the burnt offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram.[19]He killed it and sprinkled its blood against every side of the altar.
[20]He cut the ram into pieces and burned the head and the pieces and the fat.[21]He washed the inner parts and the legs with water, and he burned the whole ram on the altar. It was a burnt offering and produced a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[22]Then Moses presented the other ram, the ram of consecration, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram.[23]Aaron killed it, and Moses took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.[24]He brought Aaron's sons, and he put some of the blood on the tip of their

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right ear, on the thumb of their right hand, and on the big toe of their right foot. Then Moses sprinkled its blood against every side of the altar.
[25]He took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat that was on the inner parts, the covering of the liver, the two kidneys and their fat, and the right thigh.[26]Out of the basket of bread without yeast that was before Yahweh, he took one loaf without yeast, and one loaf of oiled bread, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat and on the right thigh.[27]He put it all in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons and waved them before Yahweh as a wave offering.
[28]Then Moses took them from off their hands and burned them on the altar for the burnt offering. They were a consecration offering and produced a sweet aroma. It was an offering made by fire to Yahweh.[29]Moses took the breast and waved it as a wave offering to Yahweh. It was Moses' share of the ram for the priests' ordination, as Yahweh had commanded him.

[30]Moses took some of the anointing oil and the blood that was on the altar; he sprinkled these on Aaron, on his clothes, on his sons, and on his sons' clothes with him. In this way he set apart Aaron and his clothes, and his sons and their clothes to Yahweh.

[31]So Moses said to Aaron and to his sons, "Boil the meat at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and there eat it and the bread that is in the basket of consecration, as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons will eat it.'[32]Whatever remains of the meat and of the bread you must burn.[33]You must not go out from the entrance of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the days of your ordination are fulfilled. For Yahweh will consecrate you for seven days.
[34]What has been done this day—Yahweh has commanded to be done to make atonement for you.[35]You will stay day and night for seven days at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and keep the command of Yahweh, so you will not die, because this is what I have been commanded."[36]So Aaron and his sons did all the things which Yahweh had commanded them through Moses.

Leviticus 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Moses set apart, or consecrated, the sons of Aaron to be priests. (See: consecrate and priest)

Links:

Leviticus 8:1 Notes

Leviticus 8:1
General Information:
In chapter 8 Moses ordains Aaron and his sons as priests according to the commands of Yahweh that Moses recorded in the book of Exodus.
Leviticus 8:2
the garments
"the priestly garments" or "the clothes that the priests wore"
Leviticus 8:5
Yahweh has commanded to be done
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh commands us to do"
Leviticus 8:6
washed them with water
This is a symbolic action. It is a ritually cleaning that prepares them to become priests.
Leviticus 8:7
the tunic ... the sash ... the robe ... the ephod ... the finely-woven waistband
These are special garments that Yahweh commanded the people to make for the priests.
sash
a long piece of cloth that is tied around the waist or chest
bound it to him
"tied it around him"
Leviticus 8:8
He placed the breastpiece on him
"Moses placed the breastpiece on Aaron"
the breastpiece
This is a special garment that Yahweh commanded the people to make for the priests.
the Urim and the Thummim
It is not clear what these are. They were objects that the priest somehow used to determine the will of God.
Leviticus 8:9
the turban ... the golden plate, the holy crown
These are special garments that Yahweh commanded the people to make for the priests.
turban
a man's head covering that is a long piece of cloth wrapped around the head
the golden plate, the holy crown
These two phrases refer to the same thing. It was a plate of pure gold attached to the turban.
Leviticus 8:11
all its utensils
These are all the pots, pans, shovels, and forks used at the altar.
the washbasin
This is a bronze basin that was located between the altar and the tabernacle.

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its base
This is a bronze stand on which the washbasin was placed.
Leviticus 8:12
He poured
"Moses poured"
Leviticus 8:13
sashes
This is the plural form of "sash." See how you translated this in Leviticus 8:7.
Leviticus 8:14
laid their hands on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies Aaron and his sons with the animal they are offering. In this way they are offering themselves to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
Leviticus 8:15
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
set it apart for God
"set the altar apart for God"
in order to make atonement for it
Here "atonement" means to make the altar fit for use in serving God. Alternate translation: "in order to make it a suitable place for burning sacrifices for sin"
Leviticus 8:16
the inner parts
This is the stomach and intestines. See how you translated this in Leviticus 1:9.
liver ... kidneys
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:4.
Leviticus 8:17
hide
the coat or skin of a herd animal
Leviticus 8:18
laid their hands on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies Aaron and his sons with the animal they are offering. In this way they are offering themselves to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
Leviticus 8:20
He cut the ram
"Moses cut the ram"
Leviticus 8:21
produced a sweet aroma
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Leviticus 1:9]
an offering made by fire to Yahweh
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "an offering he burned to Yahweh"
Leviticus 8:22
the ram of consecration
The word "consecration" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "the ram for setting Aaron and his sons apart for service to God"
laid their hands on the head
This is a symbolic action that identifies Aaron and his sons with the animal they are offering. In this way the they are offering themselves to Yahweh through the animal. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 1:4]
Leviticus 8:23
Moses took some of its blood
It is implied that Moses caught the blood in a bowl as the blood drained out from the animal. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.
Leviticus 8:25
inner parts
This is the stomach and intestines. See how you translated this in Leviticus 1:9.
liver ... kidneys
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:4.
right thigh
The thigh is the upper part of the leg above the knee. See how you translated this in Leviticus 7:32.
Leviticus 8:26
the basket of bread without yeast that was before Yahweh
This does not refer to the location of the basket of bread. It means this is the bread that Moses had dedicated to Yahweh.
Leviticus 8:27
put it all in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons
Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "gave it all to Aaron and his sons"
waved them before Yahweh as a wave offering
It is implied that Aaron and his sons presented the offering. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "they waved them before Yahweh as a wave offering"
waved them
This is a symbolic action that dedicates the offering to Yahweh.
Leviticus 8:28
Moses took them
Here "them" refers to the fat, thigh, and all of the bread.
from off their hands
Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "from Aaron and his sons"
They were a consecration offering
"They were an offering for setting Aaron and his sons apart for service to Yahweh"
an offering made by fire to Yahweh
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a burnt offering to Yahweh"
produced a sweet aroma
Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offered the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the burning sacrifice. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Leviticus 1:9]
Leviticus 8:29
breast
the front part of the animal's body below the neck
ordination
an official ceremony that makes someone a priest
Leviticus 8:31
the basket of consecration

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This means the basket contains offerings used while consecrating Aaron and his sons. Alternate translation: "the basket"

as I commanded, saying, 'Aaron and his sons will eat it.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "as I commanded you to do"

Leviticus 8:33

until the days of your ordination are fulfilled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "until you fulfill the days of your ordination"

ordination

This is an official ceremony that makes someone a priest. See how you translated this in Leviticus 8:29.

Leviticus 8:34

to be done

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "us to do"

to make atonement for you

The abstract noun "atonement" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "to atone for your sins"

Leviticus 8:35

this is what I have been commanded

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what he has commanded me"

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9 [1]On the eighth day Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel.[2]He said to Aaron, "Take a calf from the herd for a sin offering, and a ram without blemish for a burnt offering, and offer them before Yahweh.
[3]You must speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Take a male goat for a sin offering and a calf and a lamb, both a year old and without blemish, for a burnt offering;[4]also take an ox and a ram for peace offerings to sacrifice before Yahweh, and a grain offering mixed with oil, because today Yahweh will appear to you.'"[5]So they brought all that Moses commanded to the tent of meeting, and all the assembly of Israel approached and stood before Yahweh.
[6]Then Moses said, "This is what Yahweh commanded you to do, so that his glory may appear to you."[7]Moses said to Aaron, "Come near the altar and offer your sin offering and burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people, and offer the sacrifice for the people to make atonement for them, as Yahweh has commanded."

[8]So Aaron went near the altar and killed the calf for the sin offering, which was for himself.[9]The sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger into it and put it on the horns of the altar; then he poured out the blood at the base of the altar.
[10]However, he burned the fat, the kidneys, and the covering of the liver on the altar as a sin offering, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.[11]The meat and the hide he burned outside the camp.

[12]Aaron killed the burnt offering, and his sons gave him the blood, which he splashed against every side of the altar.[13]Then they gave him the burnt offering, piece by piece, together with the head, and he burned them on the altar.[14]He washed the inner parts and the legs and burned them on top of the burnt offering on the altar.

[15]Aaron presented the people's sacrifice—a goat, then took it as the sacrifice for their sin and killed it; he sacrificed it for sin, as he had done with the first goat.[16]He presented the burnt offering and offered it as Yahweh had commanded.[17]He presented the grain offering; he filled his hand with it and burned it on the altar, along with the morning's burnt offering.

[18]He killed also the ox and the ram, the sacrifice for the peace offering, which was for the people. Aaron's sons gave him the blood, which he sprinkled against every side of the altar.[19]However, they cut out the fat of the bull and the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the inner parts, the kidneys, and the covering of the liver.
[20]They took the parts that were cut out and put these on the breasts, and then Aaron burned the fat on the altar.[21]Aaron waved the breasts and the right thigh as a wave offering before Yahweh, as Moses had commanded.

[22]Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them; then he came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering.[23]Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting, then came out again and blessed the people, and the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people.[24]Fire came out from Yahweh and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw this, they shouted and lay facedown.

Leviticus 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Aaron begins to function as the high priest in this chapter. (See: highpriest)

Special concepts in this chapter

Following Yahweh's instructions

Great care is taken to show that Aaron perfectly followed Yahweh's instructions. Moses records every detail to show how Aaron correctly followed Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

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"Fire came out from Yahweh"
Aaron did not create the fire that consumed his sacrifice. Instead, Yahweh miraculously began the fire which consumed the sacrifice. This showed that the sacrifice was acceptable to him. (See: miracle)

Links:

Leviticus 9:1 Notes

Leviticus 9:1
the eighth day
The word "eighth" is the ordinal number for eight.
Leviticus 9:2
before Yahweh
"to Yahweh" or "in the presence of Yahweh"
Leviticus 9:3
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to Aaron.
You must speak ... and say, 'Take a male goat ... burnt offering
Moses continues speaking to Aaron. This is the beginning of a direct quote within a direct quote. You can change this into an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "You must tell the people of Israel to take a male goat ... burnt offering"
a year old
"twelve months of age"
Leviticus 9:4
also take an ox ... will appear to you
Moses continues speaking to Aaron. If you have begun an indirect quotation in verse 8, continue it here. "and to take an ox ... will appear to them"
to sacrifice before Yahweh
"to sacrifice to Yahweh"
Leviticus 9:6
commanded you to do
Here "you" refers to the people of Israel.
so that his glory may appear to you
Here "glory" represents the presence of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "so that he may show you the glory of his presence"
Leviticus 9:7
make atonement for yourself and for the people ... offer the sacrifice for the people to make atonement for them
These are two different sacrifices. The first sacrifice is to atone for the sins of the high priest. When the high priest sins it also makes the people guilty (Leviticus 4:3). The second sacrifice is to atone of the sins the people themselves commit.
Leviticus 9:9
sons of Aaron presented the blood to him
This implies that they caught the blood in a bowl as the blood drained from the animal. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.
horns of the altar
This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
at the base of the altar
"at the bottom of the altar"
Leviticus 9:10
he burned
"Aaron burned"
kidneys ... liver
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:4.
Leviticus 9:11
the hide
This is the coat or skin of a herd animal. See how you translated this in Leviticus 7:8.
Leviticus 9:12
his sons gave him the blood
It is implied that the sons caught the blood in a bowl as the blood drained from the animal. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.
Leviticus 9:14
inner parts
This is the stomach and intestines. See how you translated this in Leviticus 1:9.
Leviticus 9:15
the first goat
The word "first" is the ordinal number for one. Alternate translation: "the goat for his own offering"
Leviticus 9:17
along with the morning's burnt offering
This refers to the first sacrifice of each day. The priests would offer this burnt sacrifice in the morning before any other sacrifice. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.
Leviticus 9:18
He killed
"Aaron killed"
Aaron's sons gave him the blood
It is implied that the blood was in a bowl. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit.
Leviticus 9:19
inner parts
This is the stomach and intestines. See how you translated this in Leviticus 1:9.
kidneys ... liver
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:4.
Leviticus 9:20
They took the parts
"Aaron's sons took the parts"
put these
The word "these" refers to the fat and inner parts listed previously.
the breasts
This is front part of the animal's body below the neck. See how you translated this in Leviticus 7:30.
Leviticus 9:21
right thigh
This is the upper part of the leg above the knee. See how you translated this in Leviticus 7:32.
before Yahweh
"to Yahweh"

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Leviticus 9:22
then he came down
The phrase "came down" is used because the place of the altar was higher than where the people were standing.
Leviticus 9:23
the glory of Yahweh appeared to all the people
Here "glory" represents Yahweh's presence. Alternate translation: "Yahweh showed all the people the glory of his presence"

Leviticus 9:24
Fire came out from Yahweh and consumed
"Yahweh sent a fire that consumed"
consumed the burnt offering
The fire completely burning up the offering is spoken of as if the fire consumed or used up the burnt offering.
lay facedown
"lay with their faces to the ground." This is a sign respect and honor.

10 [1]Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, each took his censer, put fire in it, and then incense. Then they offered unapproved
fire before Yahweh, which he had not commanded them to offer.[2]So fire came out from before Yahweh and devoured
them, and they died before Yahweh.
[3]Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what Yahweh was talking about when he said,
'I will reveal my holiness to those who come near me.
I will be glorified before all the people.'"
Aaron did not say anything.

[4]Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, "Come here and carry your
brothers out of the camp from before the tabernacle."
[5]So they came near and carried them, still wearing their priestly tunics, out of the camp, as Moses had instructed.
[6]Then Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and to Ithamar, his sons, "Do not let your hair on your heads hang loosely, and
do not tear your clothes, so that you may not die, and so that Yahweh may not be angry with all the assembly. But allow
your relatives, the entire house of Israel, to mourn for those whom the fire of Yahweh has set ablaze.[7]You must not go out
from the entrance of the tent of meeting, or you will die, for the anointing oil of Yahweh is on you." So they acted
according to Moses' instructions.

[8]Yahweh spoke to Aaron, saying,[9]"Do not drink wine or strong drink, you, or your sons who remain with you, when you go
into the tent of meeting, so you will not die. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations,[10]to
distinguish between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean,[11]so that you may teach the people
of Israel all the statutes that Yahweh has commanded through Moses."

[12]Moses spoke to Aaron and to Eleazar and to Ithamar, his remaining sons, "Take the grain offering that remains from the
offerings to Yahweh made by fire, and eat it without yeast beside the altar, for it is most holy.[13]You must eat it in a holy
place, because it is your share and your sons' share of the offerings to Yahweh made by fire, for this is what I have been
commanded to tell you.
[14]As for the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution, you must eat them in a clean place, you and your
sons and daughters with you, for they are given as your assigned portion and your sons' assigned portion out of the
sacrifices of the fellowship offerings of the people of Israel.[15]As for the thigh of the contribution and the breast of the
wave offering, they must bring them with the offerings of fat made by fire as a wave offering before Yahweh. They will be
yours and your sons' with you as a share forever, as Yahweh has commanded."

[16]Then Moses asked about the goat for the sin offering, and found that it was burned up. So he was angry with Eleazar and
Ithamar, the remaining sons of Aaron; he said,[17]"Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the area of the tabernacle,
since it is most holy, and since Yahweh has given it to you to take away the iniquity of the assembly, to make atonement
for them before him?[18]Look, its blood was not brought inside the tabernacle, so you should certainly have eaten it in the
tabernacle area, as I commanded."
[19]Then Aaron answered Moses, "See, today they made their sin offering and burnt offering before Yahweh, and this thing
has happened to me today. If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been pleasing in the sight of
Yahweh?"[20]When Moses heard that, he was satisfied.

Leviticus 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 10:3.

Special concepts in this chapter

Mourning

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Aaron was told that he and his remaining sons should not mourn Aaron's sons who were killed. As priests, they must put priestly work first, before their mourning and personal problems.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Unapproved fire"

The phrase "unapproved fire " indicates that Aaron's son offered an unacceptable sacrifice. Because of Yahweh's holiness, this was a serious sin. They may have offered a sacrifice at the wrong time or in the wrong way. (See: holy and sin)

Links:

Leviticus 10:1 Notes

Leviticus 10:1

Nadab and Abihu

These are the names of Aaron's sons.

censer

a shallow metal container which priests used to carry hot coals or incense

put fire in it

"put burning coals in it"

Then they offered unapproved fire before Yahweh, which he had not commanded them to offer

"But Yahweh did not approve of their offering because it was not according to what he commanded them to offer"

unapproved fire before Yahweh

"unapproved fire to Yahweh"

Leviticus 10:2

So fire came out from before Yahweh

"So Yahweh sent a fire"

came out from before Yahweh

"came out from Yahweh"

devoured them

The fire completely burning the men up is spoken of as if the fire devoured or completely used them up.

they died before Yahweh

"they died in the presence of Yahweh"

Leviticus 10:3

This is what Yahweh was talking about when he said, 'I will reveal my holiness ... before all the people.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "This is what Yahweh was talking about when he said that he would reveal his holiness ... who come near him, and that he will be glorified ... people."

I will reveal my holiness to those who come near me

The phrase "those who come near me" refers to the priests that serve Yahweh. "I will show those that come near to serve me that I am holy" or "Those who come near to serve me must treat me as holy"

I will be glorified before all the people

This second part of Yahweh's statement still concerns the priest, who are the ones who come near to Yahweh. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must glorify me before all the people" or "They must honor me in the presence of all the people"

Leviticus 10:4

Mishael ... Elzaphan ... Uzziel

These are names of men.

your brothers

This does not mean they were literal brothers. Here "brothers" means relatives or cousins.

Leviticus 10:5

So they came near

"So Mishael and Elzaphan came near"

carried them, still wearing their priestly tunics

carried the bodies of Nadab and Abihu, which still had on the priestly tunics

Leviticus 10:6

Eleazar ... Ithamar

These are the names of Aaron's sons.

Do not let your hair on your heads hang loosely, and do not tear your clothes

Yahweh is telling Aaron and his sons not to show any outward signs of grief or mourning.

so that you may not die

"so that you will not die"

not be angry with all the assembly

Here "assembly" means the whole congregation of Israel, not just a group of leaders. Alternate translation: "not be angry with all the people of Israel"

the entire house of Israel

Here "house" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of Israel"

for those whom the fire of Yahweh has set ablaze

"for those whom Yahweh killed with his fire"

Leviticus 10:9

This will be

Here "This" refers back to the command for the priests to not drink wine or strong drink when they enter the tent of meeting.

a permanent statute throughout your people's generations

See how you translated these words in Leviticus 3:17.

Leviticus 10:10

to distinguish

You can start a new sentence here. "You must do this so that you will be able to distinguish"

between the holy and the profane

The nominal adjectives "the holy" and "the common" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "between what is holy and what is common" or "between what is dedicated to God and what is ordinary"

between the unclean and the clean

The nominal adjectives "the unclean" and "the clean" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "between what is unclean and what is clean" or "between what God will not accept and what he will accept"

the unclean

A person or thing that Yahweh has stated is unfit to touch is spoken of as if they were physically unclean.

the clean

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A person or thing that Yahweh has stated is fit to touch is spoken of as if they were physically unclean.

Leviticus 10:12

the offerings to Yahweh made by fire

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the burnt offerings to Yahweh"

for it is most holy

"for the grain offering is most holy"

Leviticus 10:13

this is what I have been commanded to tell you

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh commanded me to tell you"

Leviticus 10:14

for the breast of the wave offering

This refers to the breast of the animals that the Israelites were to bring as offerings to Yahweh and give to the priests, who would wave them before Yahweh.

the thigh of the contribution

This refers to the upper part of the leg above the knee of the animals that the Israelites were to bring as offerings to Yahweh and give to the priests, who would eat them with their families.

in a clean place

A place that is fit to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

for they are given as your assigned portion

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh has assigned them to you as your portion"

you and your sons and daughters

Here "you" refers to Aaron.

Leviticus 10:15

the breast of the wave offering

This refers to the breast of the animals that the Israelites were to bring as offerings to Yahweh and give to the priests, who would wave them before Yahweh. See how you translated this in Leviticus 10:14.

the thigh of the contribution

This refers to the upper part of the leg above the knee of the animals that the Israelites were to bring as offerings to Yahweh and give to the priests, who would eat them with their families. See how you translated this in Leviticus 10:14.

They will be yours and your sons' with you as a share forever

Translate this so it is understood that the portion belongs to Aaron and his sons. Alternate translation: "This portion will always be for you and your sons"

Leviticus 10:16

it was burned up

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests had burned it all"

Eleazar and Ithamar

See how you translated these names in Leviticus 10:6.

Leviticus 10:17

Why have you not eaten ... before him?

Moses uses a question to rebuke Eleazar and Ithamar. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have eaten ... before him."

since it is most holy

"since the sin offering is most holy"

to take away the iniquity of the assembly

Causing Yahweh to forgive the people of Israel is spoken of as if iniquity were an object that Yahweh takes from the people.

before him

"in his presence"

Leviticus 10:18

its blood was not brought

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you did not bring its blood"

Leviticus 10:19

this thing has happened

Aaron is referring to the death of his two sons.

would it have been pleasing in the sight of Yahweh?

These sacrifices were to be eaten with joy and happiness. Aaron uses a question to emphasize that Yahweh would not be pleased for him to eat the sacrifices since he is sad because of his sons' deaths. This question may be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "certainly, Yahweh would not have been pleased."

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11 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'These are the living things which you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth.
[3]You may eat any animal that has a split hoof and that also chews the cud.[4]However, some animals either chew the cud or have a split hoof, and you must not eat them, animals such as the camel, because it chews the cud but does not have a split hoof. So the camel is unclean to you.
[5]Also the rock badger, because it chews the cud but does not have a split hoof, it is also unclean to you.[6]The rabbit, because it chews the cud, but does not have a split hoof, is unclean to you.[7]The pig, although it has a split hoof, does not chew the cud, is unclean to you.[8]You must not eat any of their meat, nor touch their carcasses. They are unclean to you.

[9]The animals living in the water that you may eat are all those that have fins and scales, whether in the ocean or in the rivers.[10]But all living creatures that do not have fins and scales in the ocean or rivers, including all that move in the water and all the living creatures that are in the water—they must be detested by you.
[11]Since they must be detested, you must not eat of their meat; also, their carcasses must be detested.[12]Whatever lives in the water and does not have fins and scales is detestable to you.

[13]These are the birds you must detest—and you must not eat because they are detestable: the eagle, the vulture, and the black vulture,[14]the kite, any kind of falcon,[15]every kind of raven,[16]the horned owl and the screech owl, the seagull, and any kind of hawk.

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[17]You must also detest the little owl and the great owl, the cormorant,[18]the white owl and the barn owl, the osprey,[19]the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and also the bat.

[20]All winged insects that walk on four legs are detestable to you.[21]Yet you may eat any of the flying insects that also walk on four legs if they have jointed legs for hopping on the ground.[22]You may also eat any kind of locust, katydid, cricket, or grasshopper.[23]But all the flying insects that have four feet must be detested by you.

[24]You will become unclean until evening by these animals if you touch a carcass of one of them.[25]Whoever picks up one of their carcasses must wash his clothes and remain unclean until evening.
[26]Every animal which has a split hoof that is not completely divided or which does not chew the cud is unclean to you. Everyone who touches them will be unclean.[27]Whatever walks on its paws among all the animals that walk on all four legs, they are unclean to you. Whoever touches such a carcass will be unclean until the evening.[28]Whoever picks up such a carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. These animals will be unclean to you.

[29]Of the animals that creep on the ground, these are the animals that will be unclean to you: the weasel, the rat, every kind of large lizard,[30]the gecko, the monitor lizard, the lizard, the skink, and the chameleon.
[31]Of all the animals that creep, these are the animals which will be unclean to you. Whoever touches them when they are dead will be unclean until evening.[32]If any of them dies and falls on anything, that thing will be unclean, whether it is made of wood, cloth, leather, or sackcloth. Whatever it is and whatever it is used for, it must be put into water; it will be unclean until evening. Then it will be clean.[33]For every clay pot into or onto which any unclean animal falls, whatever is in the pot will become unclean, and you must destroy that pot.
[34]Any food that could be eaten but has water on it from such a pot is unclean. Any liquid that is for drinking from such a pot is unclean.[35]Anything that one of their carcasses falls on becomes unclean; if it is an oven or small stove, it must be broken to pieces. They are unclean and they must remain unclean to you.
[36]A spring or cistern for collecting water remains clean; but anyone who touches their carcass is unclean.[37]If any part of their carcass falls upon any seeds for sowing, those seeds will still be clean.[38]But if water is put on the seeds, and if any part of their carcass falls on them, then they will be unclean to you.

[39]If any animal that you may eat dies, then he who touches the carcass will be unclean until evening.[40]Whoever eats any of that carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. Anyone who picks up such a carcass will wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

[41]Every animal that creeps on the ground is detestable; it must not be eaten.[42]Whatever crawls on its belly, and whatever walks on all four legs, or whatever has many feet—all the animals that creep on the ground, these you must not eat, for they are detestable.
[43]You must not make yourselves detestable with any living creatures that creep; you must not make yourselves unclean with them and you must not be made unclean by them.[44]For I am Yahweh your God. You are to keep yourselves holy, therefore, and be holy, because I am holy. You must not defile yourselves with any kind of animal that moves about on the ground.[45]For I am Yahweh, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You must therefore be holy, for I am holy.

[46]This is the law regarding the animals, the birds, every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the ground,[47]for which a distinction is to be made between the unclean and the clean, and between the living things that may be eaten and the living things that may not be eaten.'"

Leviticus 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Laws about food

This chapter contains a list of the animals the Israelites were not allowed to eat. Further research may be needed to determine the exact location of different parts of an animal. Many of these foods are not consumed to this day because they cause diseases, but it is unclear why the other foods are prohibited.

Special concepts in this chapter

Eating unclean foods made a person unclean. The process of consuming these types of foods spread the uncleanliness to a person. (See: clean)

Links:

Leviticus 11:1 Notes

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Leviticus 11:2
among all the animals
"out of all the animals"
Leviticus 11:3
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
split hoof
This means a hoof that is split into two parts instead of being one whole.
chews the cud
This means an animal that brings its food up from its stomach and chews it again.
Leviticus 11:4
some animals either chew the cud or have a split hoof
That is, they have one or the other, but not both.
the camel is unclean to you
The camel being unfit for the people to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 11:5
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
rock badger
a small animal that lives in rocky places
unclean to you
These animals which God declared to be unfit for the people to eat are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 11:6
rabbit
a small animal with long ears that usually lives in holes in the ground
Leviticus 11:8
nor touch their carcasses
"nor touch their dead bodies"
Leviticus 11:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
fins
the thin, flat part that the fish uses to move through the water
scales
the small plates that cover the body of the fish
Leviticus 11:10
all living creatures that do not have fins and scales in the ocean or rivers
"all creatures that live in the ocean or rivers that do not have fins and scales"
they must be detested by you
Yahweh commands the people to reject and despise eating these creatures. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must detest them" or "you must completely reject them"
Leviticus 11:11
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
Since they must be detested
"detest"is to reject and despise an object. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Since you must detest them" or "Since you must completely reject them"
their carcasses must be detested
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must detest their dead bodies" or "you must not touch their dead bodies"
Leviticus 11:12
is detestable to you
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must detest" or "you must completely reject"
Leviticus 11:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
vulture
These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on rodents and dead animals.
Leviticus 11:14
kite ... falcon
These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on rodents and dead animals.
Leviticus 11:15
raven
These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on rodents and dead animals.
Leviticus 11:16
horned owl ... screech owl ... seagull ... hawk
These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on rodents and dead animals.
Leviticus 11:17
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
little owl ... great owl ... the cormorant
These are birds that eat rodents and insects and are awake mainly at night.
the great owl
"the large owl"
Leviticus 11:18
white owl ... barn owl ... osprey
These are birds that eat rodents and insects and are awake mainly at night.
Leviticus 11:19
stork ... heron
These are birds that feed on rodents and lizards.
hoopoe
These are birds that eat rodents and insects and are awake mainly at night.
bat
Although not a bird, the bat is included in this list because it has wings and flies. It has a furry body and is awake mainly at night. It eats insects and rodents.
Leviticus 11:20
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.

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All winged insects that walk on four legs are detestable to you
The word "detestable" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "You will detest all winged insects that walk on four legs"
insects that walk on four legs
Here the phrase "four legs" is an idiom that means to crawl on the ground and sets these insects apart from other flying things, such as birds, that have only two feet. Alternate translation: "insects that crawl on the ground"
Leviticus 11:22
locust, katydid, cricket, or grasshopper
These are small insects that eat plants and can jump.
Leviticus 11:23
flying insects that have four feet
"flying insects that have four legs"
Leviticus 11:24
General Information:
Yahweh begins to tell Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
You will become unclean until evening by these animals if you touch a carcass of one of them
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The dead bodies of these animals will make you unclean if you touch any of them"
You will become unclean
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes because he has touched one of these dead animals is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
these animals
This refers to the animals he is about to list in the following verses.
Leviticus 11:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
Every animal ... is unclean to you
These animals that God declared to be unfit for the people to eat are spoken of as if they were physically dirty.
split hoof
This means a hoof that is split into two parts instead of being one whole. See how you translated these in Leviticus 11:3.
chew the cud
This means an animal that brings its food up from its stomach and chews it again. See how you translated these in Leviticus 11:3.
Everyone who touches them will be unclean
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes because he has touched one of these animals is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 11:27
paws
animal feet with claws
until the evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 11:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
these are the animals that will be unclean to you
These animals that God declared to be unfit for people to touch or eat are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
weasel
a small animal with brown fur that eats birds and small animals
large lizard
These are different kinds of reptiles with four legs.
Leviticus 11:30
the gecko, the monitor lizard, the lizard, the skink, and the chameleon
These are different kinds of reptiles with four legs.
skink
"sand lizard"
Leviticus 11:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
these are the animals which will be unclean to you
These animals that God declared to be unfit for people to touch or eat are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Whoever touches them ... will be unclean
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes because he has touched one of these dead animals is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 11:32
that thing will be unclean
Something that God has declared to be unfit for people to touch because one of these dead animals has fallen on it is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. It is spoken of as physically clean after it has been washed.
Then it will be clean
Something that God has declared to be fit for people to touch after it has been washed is spoken of as if it were physically clean.
whatever it is used for, it must be put into water
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "however you use it, you must put it into water"
Leviticus 11:34
unclean
Food becomes unacceptable for the people to eat because unclean water has fallen on it is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 11:35
carcasses
dead bodies
must be broken to pieces
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must break it to pieces" or "You must shatter it"
Leviticus 11:36
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
A spring or cistern ... remains clean
Water that the people are permitted to drink from a spring or cistern is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

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carcass
The dead body of an animal that God has declared to be unfit for the people to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
unclean
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes because he has touched the carcass of one of these animals is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 11:37
seeds for sowing
"seeds that you intend to plant"
those seeds will still be clean
Seeds that God has permitted the people to plant are spoken of as if they are physically clean, and those that he has not permitted are spoken of as if they were unclean.
Leviticus 11:38
they will be unclean
Seeds that God has permitted the people to plant are spoken of as if they are physically clean, and those that he has not permitted are spoken of as if they were unclean.
But if water is put on the seeds
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if you put water on the seeds"
Leviticus 11:39
he who touches the carcass will be unclean until evening
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes because he touches the body of a dead animal is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 11:41
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
it must not be eaten
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must not eat it"
Leviticus 11:43
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron which animals the people are to consider unclean.
must not make yourselves detestable ... must not make yourselves unclean ... must not be made unclean by them
Yahweh repeats the same idea in three different ways to strengthen the command that they are not to eat any unclean animal.
you must not make yourselves unclean
A person who is unacceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
and you must not be made unclean by them
This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) this is another command. Alternate translation: "and you must not allow them to make you unclean" or "you must not allow yourselves to become unclean by touching them" Or 2) this refers to the result of disobedience to the two preceding commands. Alternate translation: "or you will be made unclean by them" or "or they will make you unclean" or "you will be unclean because you have touched them"
Leviticus 11:46
General Information:
Yahweh finishes telling Moses and Aaron what he permits the people to eat and what he forbids them to eat.
Leviticus 11:47
for which a distinction is to be made between
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for which you must distinguish between"
between the unclean and the clean
Animals that God declared to be unfit for the people to touch or eat are spoken of as if they were physically unclean, and those which he declared to be acceptable for the people to touch and eat are spoken of as if they were physically clean.
that may be eaten ... that may not be eaten
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you may eat ... that you may not eat"

12 [1]Yahweh said to Moses,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'If a woman conceives and gives birth to a male child, then she will be unclean for seven days, just as she is unclean during the days of her monthly impurity.[3]On the eighth day the flesh of a baby boy's foreskin must be circumcised.
[4]Then the mother's purification from her bleeding will continue for thirty-three days. She must not touch any holy thing or come into the sanctuary until the days of her purification are finished.[5]But if she gives birth to a female child, then she will be unclean for two weeks, as she is during her impurity. Then for sixty-six days she will be purified from her bleeding.

[6]When the days of her purification are finished, for a son or for a daughter, she must bring a one year old lamb as a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or dove as a sin offering, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to the priest.
[7]Then he will offer it before Yahweh and make atonement for her, and she will be cleansed from the flow of her blood. This is the law regarding a woman who gives birth to either a male or a female child.[8]If she is not able to afford a lamb, then she must take two doves or two young pigeons, one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering, and the priest will make atonement for her; then she will be clean.'"

Leviticus 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter
Menstruation

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A woman was considered to be unclean after she began to bleed from her womb every month and after having a baby. This was because all blood was considered to be unclean. (See: clean and blood)

Links:

Leviticus 12:1 Notes

Leviticus 12:2

she will be unclean

A woman whom other people must not touch because she is bleeding from her womb is spoken of as if she were physically unclean.

during the days of her monthly impurity

This refers to the time of the month when a woman bleeds from her womb.

Leviticus 12:3

the flesh of a baby boy's foreskin must be circumcised

Only the priest could perform this action. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a priest must circumcise the baby boy"

Leviticus 12:4

the mother's purification from her bleeding will continue for thirty-three days

This means that the mother will remain impure for thirty-three days.

thirty-three days

"33 days"

the sanctuary

This is a metonym for the area around the tabernacle. The reader should understand that this is different from the Holy Place, the first chamber in the tabernacle.

Leviticus 12:5

she will be unclean for two weeks

A woman whom other people must not touch because she is bleeding from her womb is spoken of as if she were physically unclean.

for two weeks

"for 14 days"

during her impurity

This refers to the time of the month when a woman bleeds from her womb. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 12:2]

for sixty-six days she will be purified from her bleeding

"it will take sixty-six days for her to be purified from her bleeding"

sixty-six days

"66 days"

Leviticus 12:6

When the days of her purification are finished

"When the days of the mother's purification are finished"

for a son or for a daughter

This refers to the different number of days for purification based on if she gave birth to a son or daughter.

Leviticus 12:7

she will be cleansed from the flow of her blood

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "this will cleanse her from her bleeding occurring during childbirth"

Leviticus 12:8

If she is not able to afford a lamb

Translate this so it clarifies the woman's inability to purchase a sacrificial animal. Alternate translation: "If she does not have enough money to buy a lamb"

then she will be clean

A woman whom other people may touch is spoken of as if she were physically clean.

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13 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,[2]"When anyone has on the skin of his body a swelling or scab or a bright spot, and it becomes infected and there is leprosy in his body, then he must be brought to Aaron the high priest, or to one of his sons the priests.
[3]Then the priest will examine the disease in the skin of his body. If the hair in the diseased area has turned white, and if the disease appears to be deeper than just on the skin, then it is leprosy. After the priest examines him, he must pronounce him unclean.[4]If the bright spot in his skin is white, and the appearance of it is no deeper than the skin, and if the hair in the diseased area has not turned white, then the priest must isolate the one with the disease for seven days.
[5]On the seventh day, the priest must examine him to see if in his opinion the disease is not any worse, and if it has not spread in the skin. If it has not, then the priest must isolate him seven days more.[6]The priest will examine him again on the seventh day to see if the disease is better and has not spread farther in the skin. If it has not, then the priest will pronounce him clean. It is a rash. He must wash his clothes, and then he is clean.
[7]But if the rash has spread in the skin after he has shown himself to the priest for his cleansing, he must then show himself to the priest again.[8]The priest will examine him to see if the rash has spread farther in the skin. If it has spread, then the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy.

[9]When leprosy is in someone, then he must be brought to the priest.[10]The priest will examine him to see if there is a white swelling in the skin, if the hair has turned white, or if there is raw flesh in the swelling.[11]If there is, then it is leprosy, and the priest must pronounce him unclean. He will not isolate him, because he is already unclean.
[12]If the leprosy breaks out widely in the skin and covers all the skin of the person with the disease from his head to his feet, as far as it appears to the priest,[13]then the priest must examine him to see if the leprosy has covered all his body. If it has, then the priest must pronounce the person who has the disease as clean. If it has all turned white, then he is clean.
[14]But if raw flesh appears on him, he will be unclean.

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[15]The priest must look at the raw flesh and pronounce him unclean because the raw flesh is unclean. It is leprosy.[16]But if the raw flesh turns white again, then the person must go to the priest.[17]The priest will examine him to see if the flesh has turned white. If it has then the priest will pronounce that person to be clean.

[18]When a person has a boil on the skin and it has healed,[19]and in place of the boil there is white swelling or a bright spot, reddish-white, then it must be shown to the priest.[20]The priest will examine it to see if it appears deeper under the skin, and if the hair there has turned white. If so, then the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy, if it has developed in the place where the boil was.
[21]But if the priest examines it and sees that there is no white hair in it, and that it is not under the skin but has faded, then the priest must isolate him for seven days.[22]If it spreads widely in the skin, then the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is an infectious disease.[23]But if the bright spot stays in its place and has not spread, then it is the scar of the boil, and the priest must pronounce him clean.

[24]When the skin has a burn and the raw flesh of the burn has become a reddish-white or white spot,[25]then the priest will examine it to see if the hair in that spot has turned white, and if it appears to be deeper than the skin. If it has, then it is leprosy. It has broken out in the burn, and the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy.
[26]But if the priest examines it and finds that there is no white hair in the spot, and it is not under the skin but has faded, then the priest must isolate him for seven days.[27]Then the priest must examine him on the seventh day. If it has spread widely in the skin, then the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is leprosy.[28]If the spot stays in its place and has not spread in the skin but has faded, then it is a swelling from the burn, and the priest must pronounce him clean, for it is nothing more than the scar of the burn.

[29]If a man or woman has an infectious disease on the head or chin,[30]then the priest must examine the person for an infectious disease to see if it appears to be deeper than the skin, and if there is yellow, thin hair in it. If there is, then the priest must pronounce him unclean. It is an itch, leprosy on the head or the chin.
[31]If the priest examines the itching disease and sees that it is not under the skin, and if there is no black hair in it, then the priest will isolate the person with the itching disease for seven days.
[32]On the seventh day the priest will examine the disease to see if it has spread. If there is no yellow hair, and if the disease appears to be only skin deep,[33]then he must be shaved, but the diseased area must not be shaved, and the priest must isolate the person with the itching disease for seven more days.
[34]On the seventh day the priest will examine the disease to see if it has stopped spreading in the skin. If it appears to be no deeper than the skin, then the priest must pronounce him clean. The person must wash his clothes, and then he will be clean.
[35]But if the itching disease has spread widely in the skin after the priest said he was clean,[36]then the priest must examine him again. If the disease has spread in the skin, the priest does not need to seek for yellow hair. The person is unclean.
[37]But if in the priest's view the itching disease has stopped spreading and black hair has grown in the area, then the disease has healed. He is clean, and the priest must pronounce him clean.

[38]If a man or a woman has white spots on the skin,[39]then the priest must examine the person to see if the spots are a dull white, which is only a rash that has broken out in the skin. He is clean.

[40]If a man's hair has fallen out of his head, he is bald, but he is clean.[41]If his hair has fallen out of the front part of his head, and if his forehead is bald, he is clean.
[42]But if there is a reddish-white sore on his bald head or forehead, it is leprosy that has broken out.[43]Then the priest must examine him to see if the swelling of the diseased area on his bald head or forehead is reddish-white, like the appearance of leprosy in the skin.[44]If it is, then he is leprous and is unclean. The priest must surely pronounce him unclean because of his disease on his head.

[45]The leprous person who has the disease must wear torn clothes, his hair must hang loosely, and he must cover his face up to his nose and call out, 'Unclean, unclean.'[46]All the days that he has the infectious disease he will be unclean. Because he is unclean with a disease that can spread, he must live alone. He must live outside the camp.

[47]A garment that is contaminated with leprosy, whether it is a wool or linen garment,[48]or anything woven or knitted from wool or linen, or leather or anything made with leather—[49]if there is a greenish or reddish contamination in the garment, the leather, the woven or knitted material, or anything made of leather, then it is a leprosy that spreads; it must be shown to the priest.
[50]The priest must examine the item for leprosy; he must isolate anything that has leprosy for seven days.[51]He must examine the leprosy again on the seventh day. If it has spread in the garment or anything woven or knitted from wool or linen material, or leather or anything in which leather is used, then it is harmful leprosy, and the item is unclean.[52]He

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must burn the garment, or anything woven or knitted from wool or linen material, or leather or anything made with leather, anything in which the leprosy is found, for it can lead to disease. The item must be completely burned up.

[53]If the priest examines the item and sees that the leprosy has not spread in the garment or material woven or knitted from wool or linen, or leather goods,[54]then he will command them to wash the item in which the leprosy was found, and he must isolate it for seven more days.[55]Then the priest will examine the item after the item where there was leprosy was washed. If the leprosy has not changed its color, even though it has not spread, it is unclean. You must burn the item, no matter where the leprosy has contaminated it.

[56]If the priest examines the item, and if the leprosy has faded after it was washed, then he must tear out the contaminated part from the garment or from the leather, or from the woven or knitted material.[57]If the leprosy still appears in the garment, either in the woven or knitted material, or in anything made of leather, it is spreading. You must burn any item that has the leprosy.[58]The garment or anything woven or knitted from wool or linen material, or leather or anything made with leather—if you wash the item and the leprosy is gone, then the item must be washed a second time, and it will be clean.

[59]This is the law about leprosy in a garment of wool or linen, or anything woven or knitted from wool or linen material, or leather or anything made with leather, so that you may pronounce it clean or unclean."

Leviticus 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Skin disease

This chapter addresses the ways a priest was to decide if a person had a skin disease, which would make a person unclean. This was important because these diseases could have easily spread among the people in the ancient Near East. This is also true concerning things growing on clothing or things that touch a person's skin. (See: priest and clean)

Links:

Leviticus 13:1 Notes

Leviticus 13:2

then he must be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then someone must bring him" or "then he must go"

to one of his sons

"to one of Aaron's sons"

Leviticus 13:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do.

skin of his body

Here "his" refers to the person with the skin disease.

leprosy

Leprosy was a skin disease. There were different skin diseases called leprosy in the Bible.

he must pronounce him unclean

"the priest must pronounce the man unclean." The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:4

for seven days

"for 7 days"

Leviticus 13:5

the priest must examine him

Here "him" refers to the person with the skin disease.

if it has not spread in the skin

This means if the skin disease has not increased in size or moved to other parts of the body.

seventh day

"day 7"

seven days

"7 days"

Leviticus 13:6

the priest will pronounce him clean ... he is clean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

rash

This is an area of the skin that is irritated, but the rash will not spread to other people.

Leviticus 13:7

he ... himself

This refers to the person with the skin disease.

Leviticus 13:8

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

leprosy

See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.

Leviticus 13:9

he must be brought to the priest

The priests determined if a disease was spreading. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must bring him to the priest" or "he must go to the priest"

Leviticus 13:10

if there is raw flesh in the swelling

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Here "raw flesh" could refer to open sores on the skin or it could refer to new skin that has grown, but the area around it is still diseased. Either one indicates that the skin disease is not healing properly.

Leviticus 13:11

leprosy

See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.

the priest must pronounce him unclean ... he is already unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

Leviticus 13:13

the priest must pronounce the person ... he is clean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean and the man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:14

But if ... he will be unclean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean and the man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:15

The priest must ... pronounce him unclean because the raw flesh is unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

pronounce him unclean

Here "him" refers to the person with the skin disease.

raw flesh

See how you translated these words in Leviticus 13:10.

leprosy

See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.

Leviticus 13:17

the priest will pronounce that person to be clean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

Leviticus 13:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

a boil

a painful area on the skin that is infected

Leviticus 13:19

then it must be shown to the priest

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "then he must show it to the priest"

Leviticus 13:20

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

examines it

Here "it" refers to the white swelling or bright spot on the skin.

Leviticus 13:22

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:23

the priest must pronounce him clean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

Leviticus 13:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

Leviticus 13:25

leprosy

See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:26

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

examines it

Here "it" refers to the burn on the person's skin.

Leviticus 13:27

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

leprosy

See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.

Leviticus 13:28

the priest must pronounce him clean

The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

Leviticus 13:29

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

Leviticus 13:30

the priest must pronounce him unclean

The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.

Leviticus 13:31

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

Leviticus 13:32

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.

Leviticus 13:33

then he must be shaved, but the diseased area must not be shaved

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person must shave the hair near the sore but not the hair on the sore"

Leviticus 13:34

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General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease."
the disease
Here "the disease" refers to the disease on the person's head or chin.
the priest must pronounce him clean ... he will be clean
The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:35
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.
after the priest said he was clean
The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:36
The person is unclean
The man whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 13:37
He is clean ... him clean
The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:38
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.
Leviticus 13:39
a dull white
"a faded white"
rash
See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:6.
He is clean
Here "He" refers to both men and women in general. Alternate translation: "That person is clean"
He is clean
The person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:40
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.
he is clean
The person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:42
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.
leprosy
See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.
Leviticus 13:44
he ... is unclean ... pronounce him unclean
The person whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 13:45
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone has a skin disease.
Unclean, unclean
The person whom other people must not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 13:46
outside the camp
The camp is the area where the majority of Israelites lived. The unclean person was not permitted to live among them because his disease may spread to others.
Leviticus 13:47
A garment that is contaminated with leprosy
"A garment that has leprosy on it" or "A garment that mildews"
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew.
is contaminated
has become impure because something harmful has been added to it
Leviticus 13:48
or anything woven or knitted
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "or anything that someone has woven or knitted"
Leviticus 13:49
if there is a greenish or reddish contamination in the garment
"if there is greenish or reddish mildew in the garment"
it must be shown to the priest
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the owner must show it to a priest"
Leviticus 13:50
seven days
"7 days"
Leviticus 13:51
seventh day
"Seventh" is the ordinal number for 7. Alternate translation: "day 7"
anything in which leather is used
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "anything in which a person uses leather"
the item is unclean
Something that God has declared to be unfit for people to touch is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 13:52
anything in which the leprosy is found
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "anything on which he found the leprosy"
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
it can lead to disease
The leprosy could cause disease in a person who comes in contact with the item.
The item must be completely burned up
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He must burn the item completely"
Leviticus 13:54
then he will command them
"then the priest will command the owners" Here the priest is telling the people what to do with household items that were possibly infected.

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in which the leprosy was found
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in which they found the leprosy"
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
Leviticus 13:55
after the item where there was leprosy was washed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "after they washed the item where there was leprosy"
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
it is unclean
Something that God has declared to be unfit for people to touch is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
You must burn the item
Here "you" does not refer to the priest specifically. It just means someone must burn the object.
Leviticus 13:56
after it was washed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "after the owner washed it"
Leviticus 13:57
You must burn
Here "you" does not refer to the priest specifically. It just means someone must burn the item.
Leviticus 13:58
if you wash the item
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the owner washes it"
then the item must be washed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "then the owner must wash it"
it will be clean
Something that God has declared to be fit for people to touch is spoken of as if it were physically clean.
Leviticus 13:59
leprosy in a garment ... made with leather
See how you translated these words in Leviticus 13:47-48.
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
so that you may pronounce it
"so that a priest may declare it"
clean or unclean
Something that God has declared to be fit for people to touch is spoken of as if it were physically clean and something that God has declared to be unfit for people to touch is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

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14 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"This will be the law for the leper on the day of his cleansing. He must be brought to the priest.
[3]The priest will go out of the camp to examine the leper to see if the leprosy is healed.[4]Then the priest will command that the one to be cleansed must take two live, clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet yarn, and hyssop.[5]The priest will command him to kill one of the birds over fresh water that is in a clay pot.
[6]The priest will then take the live bird and the cedar wood, and the scarlet yarn and the hyssop, and he will dip all these things, including the live bird, in the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water.[7]Then the priest will sprinkle this water seven times onto the person who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and then the priest will pronounce him to be clean. Then the priest will release the living bird into the open fields.
[8]The person who is being cleansed will wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water, and then he will be clean. After that he must come into the camp, but he will live outside his tent for seven days.[9]On the seventh day he must shave all his hair off his head, and he must also shave off his beard and eyebrows. He must shave off all his hair, and he must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water; then he will be clean.

[10]On the eighth day he must take two male lambs without blemish, one female lamb a year old without blemish, and three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and one log of oil.[11]The priest who cleanses him will stand the person who is to be cleansed, along with those things, before Yahweh at the entrance to the tent of meeting.
[12]The priest will take one of the male lambs and offer it as a guilt offering, together with the log of oil; he will wave them for a wave offering before Yahweh.[13]He must kill the male lamb in the place where they kill the sin offerings and the burnt offerings, in the area of the tabernacle, for the sin offering belongs to the priest, as does the guilt offering, because it is most holy.
[14]The priest will take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the tip of the right ear of the person who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.[15]Then the priest will take oil from the log and pour it into the palm of his own left hand,[16]and dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and sprinkle some of the oil with his finger seven times before Yahweh.
[17]The priest will put the rest of the oil in his hand on the tip of the right ear of the person to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. He must put this oil on top of the blood from the guilt offering.[18]As for the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand, he will put it on the head of the person who is to be cleansed, and the priest will make atonement for him before Yahweh.
[19]Then the priest will offer the sin offering and make atonement for him who is to be cleansed because of his uncleanness, and afterward he will kill the burnt offering.[20]Then the priest will offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. The priest will make atonement for the person, and then he will be clean.

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[21]However, if the person is poor and cannot afford these sacrifices, then he may take one male lamb as a guilt offering to be waved, to make atonement for himself, and one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and a log of oil,[22]together with two doves or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; one bird will be a sin offering and the other a burnt offering.[23]On the eighth day he must bring them for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance to the tent of meeting, before Yahweh.
[24]The priest will take the lamb for an offering, and he will take with it the log of olive oil, and he will wave them as a wave offering before Yahweh.[25]The priest will kill the lamb for the guilt offering, and he will take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the tip of the right ear of the one who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot.
[26]Then the priest will pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand,[27]and he will sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before Yahweh.
[28]The priest will then put some of the oil that is in his hand on the tip of the right ear of the one who is to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot, the same places where he put the blood of the guilt offering.[29]He will put the rest of the oil that is in his hand on the head of the one who is to be cleansed, to make atonement for him before Yahweh.
[30]He must offer one of the doves or young pigeons, such as the person has been able to get—[31]one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, along with the grain offering. Then the priest will make atonement for the one who is to be cleansed before Yahweh.[32]This is the law for a person in whom there is leprosy, who is not able to afford the standard offerings for his cleansing."

[33]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,[34]"When you have come into the land of Canaan which I gave to you as a possession, and if I put leprosy that spreads in a house in the land of your possession,[35]then he who owns the house must come and tell the priest. He must say, 'There seems to me to be something like leprosy in my house.'
[36]Then the priest will command that they empty the house before he goes in to see the evidence of leprosy, so that nothing in the house will be made unclean. Afterward the priest must go in to see the house.[37]He must examine the leprosy to see if it is in the house walls, and to see whether it appears greenish or reddish in the depressions in the wall's surface.[38]If the house does have leprosy, then the priest will go out of the house and shut the door to the house for seven days.
[39]Then the priest will return again on the seventh day and examine it to see if the leprosy has spread in the walls of the house.[40]If it has, then the priest will command that they take out the stones in which the leprosy has been found and throw them into an unclean place outside the city.
[41]He will require all the inside walls of the house to be scraped, and they must take the contaminated material that is scraped off outside the city and dump it into the unclean place.[42]They must take other stones and put them in the place of the stones that were removed, and they must use new clay to plaster the house.

[43]If leprosy comes again and breaks out in the house in which the stones have been taken away and the walls have been scraped and then replastered,[44]then the priest must come in and examine the house to see if leprosy has spread in the house. If it has, then it is harmful leprosy, and the house is unclean.
[45]The house must be torn down. The stones, timber, and all the plaster in the house must be carried away out of the city to the unclean place.[46]In addition, whoever goes into the house during the time it is closed up will be unclean until evening.
[47]Anyone who has lain down in the house must wash his clothes, and anyone who ate in the house must wash his clothes.

[48]If the priest enters the house to examine it to see whether the leprosy has spread in the house after the house was plastered, then, if the leprosy is gone, he will pronounce the house clean.
[49]Then the priest must take two birds to cleanse the house, and cedar wood, and scarlet yarn, and hyssop.[50]He will kill one of the birds over fresh water in a clay jar.[51]He will take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet yarn, and the live bird, and dip them in the blood of the killed bird, into the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times.
[52]He will cleanse the house with the blood of the bird and with the fresh water, with the live bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet yarn.[53]But he will let the live bird go out of the city into the open fields. In this way he must make atonement for the house, and it will be clean.

[54]This is the law for all types of leprosy and things that cause it, and for an itch,[55]and for leprosy in clothing and in a house, [56]for swelling, for a rash, and for a bright spot,[57]to determine when any of these cases is unclean or when it is clean. This is the law for leprosy."

Leviticus 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This chapter is a continuation of the material in the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Skin disease and mildew

This chapter addresses the ways a priest was to decide if a person had a skin disease, which would make a person unclean. This was important because these diseases could have easily spread among the people in the ancient Near East. This was also true for the things which could have touched a person's skin. This chapter explains how the priest was to treat the person suffering with a skin disease. (See: priest and clean)

Links:

Leviticus 14:1 Notes

Leviticus 14:1

General Information:

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.

Leviticus 14:2

the day of his cleansing

This refers to the day on which the priest declares the person to be ritually clean.

He must be brought to the priest

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone must bring him to the priest" or "He must go to the priest"

Leviticus 14:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.

leprosy

See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:3.

Leviticus 14:4

the one to be cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person he is cleansing"

clean birds

Birds that God allowed the people to eat and offer as sacrifices are spoken of as if they were physically clean.

scarlet yarn

"red yarn"

hyssop

an herb with a pleasant smell that was used for medicine

Leviticus 14:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.

the bird that was killed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bird that the person killed"

Leviticus 14:7

the person who is to be cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person he is cleansing"

the priest will pronounce him to be clean

The person whom other people may touch and who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

Leviticus 14:8

General Information:

Yahweh tells Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.

The person who is being cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The person whom the priest is cleansing"

then he will be clean

The person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.

Leviticus 14:10

he must take

Here "he" refers to the man who was cleansed.

ephah

One ephah is 22 liters.

log

One log is 0.31 liters.

Leviticus 14:11

will stand the person ... along with those things, before Yahweh

The priest would tell the person to stand before the Yahweh and he would set all those things before Yahweh. Alternate translation: "will present the person ... along with those things to Yahweh"

the person who is to be cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person he is cleansing"

Leviticus 14:12

log

One log is 0.31 liters.

Leviticus 14:13

in the area of the tabernacle

This phrase clarifies the previous phrase and further defines where the priest was to kill the lamb.

Leviticus 14:14

the person who is to be cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person he is cleansing"

Leviticus 14:15

log

One log is 0.31 liters.

Leviticus 14:16

sprinkle some of the oil ... before Yahweh

"sprinkle some of the oil ... in Yahweh's presence." There is no indication of what the priest sprinkled the oil on.

Leviticus 14:17

the rest of the oil in his hand

"the rest of the oil that is in his hand"

the person to be cleansed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person whom he is cleansing"

Leviticus 14:18

before Yahweh

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"in Yahweh's presence"
Leviticus 14:19
him who is to be cleansed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the person he is cleansing"
Leviticus 14:20
he will be clean
The person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 14:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.
cannot afford
"does not have enough money to buy"
to be waved ... for himself
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priest will wave ... for him"
one-tenth of an ephah
One-tenth of an ephah is 22 liters.
log
One log is 0.31 liters.
Leviticus 14:24
log
One log is 0.31 liters.
Leviticus 14:25
the one who is to be cleansed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one he is cleansing"
Leviticus 14:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do when someone is cleansed of a skin disease.
Leviticus 14:27
sprinkle ... some of the oil ... before Yahweh
"sprinkle ... some of the oil ... in Yahweh's presence." There is no indication of what the priest sprinkled the oil on.
Leviticus 14:28
the one who is to be cleansed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one he is cleansing"
Leviticus 14:30
He must offer
"The priest must offer"
Leviticus 14:31
the one who is to be cleansed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one he is cleansing"
Leviticus 14:32
leprosy
See how you translated this in Leviticus 13:3.
who is not able to afford
Translate this so it is clear that the person does not have enough money to purchase a standard offering. Alternate translation: "who does not have enough money to buy"
Leviticus 14:34
When you have come
Here "you" refers to the people of Israel.
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
in the land of your possession
The word "possession" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "in the land that you possess"
Leviticus 14:36
so that nothing in the house will be made unclean
Once the priest declared the house to be unclean, everything in the house became unclean, as well. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that he does not need to declare anything left in the house to be unclean"
the house will be made unclean
The house that Yahweh has stated is unfit for people to touch or live in is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 14:37
in the depressions in the wall's surface
This means the priest is to determine whether mildew has gone deeper that just the surface of the walls.
Leviticus 14:40
in which the leprosy has been found
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in which they found the leprosy"
leprosy
Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.
an unclean place
A place that is unfit for people to occupy or to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 14:41
He will require
Here "He" refers to the priest.
all the inside walls of the house to be scraped
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the owner scrapes all the inside walls"
the contaminated material that is scraped off
This refers to the material with mildew on it. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the contaminated material that they scraped off"
the unclean place
A place that is unfit for people to occupy or to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 14:42
the stones that were removed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the stones that they removed"
they must use new clay to plaster the house
"they must cover the stones with new clay"
Leviticus 14:43
in the house ... then replastered
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in the house after the owner takes away the stones, scrapes the walls, and covers the new stones with clay"
Leviticus 14:44
the house is unclean
A house that is unfit for people to occupy is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 14:45
The house must be torn down

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must tear the house down"

The stones, timber, and all the plaster in the house must be carried away

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must carry away the stones, timber, and all the plaster in the house"

Leviticus 14:46

whoever goes into the house ... will be unclean

A person whom other people may not touch and who is not acceptable for God's purposes because he has entered the house is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

until evening

"until sunset"

Leviticus 14:48

the house was plastered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the owner put new clay on the stones"

he will pronounce the house clean

A place that is fit for people to occupy is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

Leviticus 14:49

cedar wood, and scarlet yarn, and hyssop

See how you translated these words in Leviticus 14:4.

Leviticus 14:51

the blood of the killed bird

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the blood of the bird that he killed"

Leviticus 14:52

He will cleanse the house

"The priest will make the house ritually clean"

Leviticus 14:53

it will be clean

A house that is fit for people to occupy is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

Leviticus 14:54

leprosy

See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:3.

Leviticus 14:55

leprosy

Here this probably refers to mildew. See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:47.

Leviticus 14:56

rash

See how you translated this word in Leviticus 13:6.

Leviticus 14:57

unclean or ... clean

People and items that other people may not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean, and those which people may touch are spoken of as if they were physically clean.

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15 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel, and say to them, 'When any man has an infected fluid that comes out of his body, he becomes unclean.[3]His uncleanness is due to this infected fluid. Whether his body flows with fluid or is stopped up, it is unclean.
[4]Every bed on which he lies will be unclean, and everything on which he sits will be unclean.[5]Whoever touches his bed must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until evening.
[6]Anyone who sits on anything on which the man with the flow of infected fluid sat, that person must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and he will be unclean until evening.[7]Anyone who touches the body of the one who has a flow of infected fluid must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until evening.
[8]If the person who has such a flow of fluid spits on someone who is clean, then that person must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and he will be unclean until evening.[9]Any saddle which he who has a flow rides upon will be unclean.
[10]So whoever touches anything that was under that person will be unclean until evening, and anyone who carries those things must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water; he will be unclean until evening.[11]Anyone the man with the discharge touches without washing his hands with water must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and he will be unclean until evening.[12]Any clay pot that the one with such a flow of fluid touches must be broken, and every container of wood must be rinsed in water.

[13]When he who has a flow is cleansed from his flow, then he must count for himself seven days for his cleansing; then he must wash his clothes and bathe his body in running water. Then he will be clean.[14]On the eighth day he must take two doves or two young pigeons and come before Yahweh at the entrance to the tent of meeting; there he must give the birds to the priest.[15]The priest must offer them, one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and the priest must make atonement for him before Yahweh for his flow.

[16]If any man has an emission of semen, then he must bathe his whole body in water; he will be unclean until evening.
[17]Every garment or leather on which there is semen must be washed with water; it will be unclean until evening.[18]If a man lies with a woman and there is an emission of semen, both of them must bathe with water and be unclean until evening.

[19]When a woman has a flow of blood, her impurity will continue for seven days, and whoever touches her will be unclean until evening.[20]Everything she lies on during her period will be unclean; everything that she sits on will also be unclean.
[21]Whoever touches her bed must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water; that person will be unclean until evening.
[22]Whoever touches anything that she sits on must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water; that person will be

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unclean until evening.[23]Whether it is on the bed or on anything on which she sits, if he touches it, that person will be unclean until evening.
[24]If any man lies with her, and if her impure flow touches him, he will be unclean for seven days. Every bed on which he lies will be unclean.

[25]If a woman has a flow of blood for many days that is not in the time of her impurity, or if she has a flow beyond the time of her impurity, during all the days of the flow of her uncleanness, she will be as if she were in the days of her impurity. She is unclean.[26]Every bed on which she lies all during her flow of blood will be to her just like the bed on which she lies during her impurity, and everything on which she sits will be unclean, just like the uncleanness of her impurity.
[27]Whoever touches any of those things will be unclean; he must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and he will be unclean until evening.
[28]But if she is cleansed from her flow of blood, then she will count for herself seven days, and after that she will be clean.
[29]On the eighth day she will take to her two doves or two young pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[30]The priest will offer one bird as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and he will make atonement for her before Yahweh for her unclean flow of blood.

[31]This is how you must separate the people of Israel from their uncleanness, so they will not die due to their uncleanness, by defiling my tabernacle, where I live among them.

[32]This is the law for anyone who has a flow of fluid, for any man whose semen goes out of him and makes him unclean,
[33]for any woman who has a menstrual period, for anyone with a flow of fluid, whether male or female, and for any man who lies with an unclean woman.'"

Leviticus 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Bodily fluid
This chapter discusses fluids that come out of the body. These fluids caused a person to be unclean because of their potential to cause diseases. (See: clean)
Cleanliness
While these rules about cleanliness are intended to benefit the Israelites and promote their health, they also were about making Israel into a separate and holy nation, different from the rest of the world. (See: holy)

Links:

Leviticus 15:1 Notes

Leviticus 15:2
comes out of his body
This refers to the man's private parts.
he becomes unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:3
it is unclean
"his body is unclean" or "he is unclean"
Leviticus 15:4
unclean
The bed or anything that the man sits on that other people must not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:5
Whoever touches his bed ... be unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 15:6
he will be unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 15:7
who touches the body
"who touches any part of the body"
Leviticus 15:8
someone who is clean
The person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
he will be unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:9
saddle
A saddle is a leather seat that a person puts on the back of a horse in order to ride it.
Any saddle ... will be unclean
Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to touch is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:10

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General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses and Aaron what the people must do to avoid infection.
that person
This refers to the person with the infected fluid.
will be unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 15:11
Anyone the man with the discharge touches
"Anyone the person with the infected flow touches"
Leviticus 15:12
Any clay pot that the one with such a flow of fluid touches must be broken
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone must break any clay pot that the one with such a flow of fluid touches"
every container of wood must be rinsed in water
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must rinse every wooden container in water"
Leviticus 15:13
is cleansed from his flow
The man recovering from his sickness is spoken of as if he becomes physically clean. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "recovers from his flow"
Then he will be clean
The man whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
Leviticus 15:16
unclean until evening
People and objects that other people must not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 15:17
Every garment ... must be washed with water
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone must wash with water every garment or leather on which there is semen"
Leviticus 15:18
man lies with a woman
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "man has sexual relations with a woman"
Leviticus 15:19
has a flow of blood
This word refers to the time when blood flows from a woman's womb.
her impurity will continue
"she will continue to be impure"
will be unclean
People and objects that other people must not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:20
her period
These words refer to the time when blood flows from a woman's womb.
Leviticus 15:21
her bed
This refers to the woman who is menstruating.
that person will be unclean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean.
until evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 15:24
If any man lies with her
This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "If any man has sexual relations with her"
her impure flow
"her unclean flow" or "the blood from her womb"
will be unclean
People and objects that other people must not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:25
she will be as if she were in the days of her impurity
This means that if the woman bleeds from her womb at any time other than her regular menstruation time, she is still unclean just as she is during her menstruation.
She is unclean
People whom other people may not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:26
everything on which she sits will be unclean
Objects that other people must not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:27
Whoever touches ... will be unclean
People whom other people may not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:28
But if she
The word "she" refers to the woman who is menstruating.
is cleansed from her flow of blood
The woman recovering from her bleeding is spoken of as if she becomes physically clean. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "recovers from her flow of blood"
she will be clean
The woman whom other people may touch is spoken of as if she were physically clean.
Leviticus 15:29
she will take to her
"she will take for herself"
Leviticus 15:30
her unclean flow of blood
"her flow of blood that makes her unclean"
Leviticus 15:31
This is how you must separate the people of Israel from their uncleanness
Yahweh speaks of preventing the people from becoming unclean as if it were keeping the people at a safe distance from uncleanness. The abstract noun "uncleanness" can be stated as "unclean." Alternate translation: "This is how you must prevent the people of Israel from becoming unclean"
their uncleanness

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People whom other people may not touch and who are not acceptable for God's purposes are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:32

This is the law
"These are the things that must be done"

makes him unclean
People whom other people may not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.
Leviticus 15:33

an unclean woman
People whom other people may not touch are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.

who has a menstrual period
"who is menstruating" or "who is bleeding from her womb"

who lies with
This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "who has sexual relations with"

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16 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses—this was after the death of Aaron's two sons, when they had gone near to Yahweh and then died.[2]Yahweh said to Moses, "Speak to Aaron your brother and tell him not to come at just any time into the most holy place inside the curtain, before the atonement lid that is on the ark. If he does, he will die, because I appear in the cloud over the atonement lid.
[3]So here is how Aaron must come into the most holy place. He must enter with a young bull as a sin offering, and a ram as a burnt offering.[4]He must put on the holy linen tunic, and he must put the linen undergarments on himself, and he must wear the linen sash and linen turban. These are the holy garments. He must bathe his body in water and then dress himself with these clothes.[5]He must take from the assembly of the people of Israel two male goats as a sin offering and one ram as a burnt offering.

[6]Then Aaron must present the bull as the sin offering, which will be for himself, to make atonement for himself and his family.[7]Then he must take the two goats and set them before Yahweh at the entrance to the tent of meeting.
[8]Then Aaron must cast lots for the two goats, one lot for Yahweh, and the other lot for the scapegoat.[9]Aaron must then present the goat on which the lot fell for Yahweh, and offer that goat as a sin offering.[10]But the goat on which the lot fell for the scapegoat must be brought alive before Yahweh, to make atonement by sending him away as a scapegoat into the wilderness.

[11]Then Aaron must present the bull for the sin offering, which will be for himself. He must make atonement for himself and for his family, so he must kill the bull as a sin offering for himself.
[12]Aaron must take a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar before Yahweh, with his hands full of finely ground sweet incense, and bring these things inside the curtain.[13]There he must put the incense on the fire before Yahweh so that the cloud from the incense may cover the atonement lid over the covenant decrees. He must do this so he will not die.
[14]Then he must take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the atonement lid. He must sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times before the atonement lid.

[15]Then he must kill the goat for the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain. There he must do with the blood as he did with the blood of the bull: He must sprinkle it on the atonement lid and then before the atonement lid.[16]He must make atonement for the holy place because of the unclean actions of the people of Israel, and because of their rebellion and all their sins. He must also do this for the tent of meeting, where Yahweh lives among them, in the presence of their unclean actions.
[17]No one must be in the tent of meeting when Aaron enters it to make atonement in the most holy place, and until he comes out and has finished making atonement for himself and for his family, and for all the assembly of Israel.[18]He must go out to the altar that is before Yahweh and make atonement for it, and he must take some of the bull's blood and some of the goat's blood and put it on the horns of the altar all around.[19]He must sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse it and set it apart to Yahweh, away from the unclean actions of the people of Israel.

[20]When he has finished atoning for the most holy place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he must present the live goat.
[21]Aaron must lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over him all the evil deeds of the people of Israel, all their rebellion, and all their sins. Then he must put that sinfulness on the head of the goat and send the goat away in the care of a man who is ready to lead the goat into the wilderness.[22]The goat must carry on himself all the people's evil deeds to a solitary place. There in the wilderness, the man must let the goat go free.

[23]Then Aaron must go back into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments that he had put on before going into the most holy place, and he must leave those garments there.[24]He must bathe his body in water in a holy place, and put on his normal garments; then he must go out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering for the people, and in this way make atonement for himself and for the people.
[25]He must burn the fat of the sin offering on the altar.[26]The man who let the scapegoat go free must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that, he may come back into the camp.

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[27]The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, must be carried outside the camp. There they must burn their hides, flesh, and dung.[28]The man who burns those parts must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that, he may come back into the camp.

[29]It will always be a statute for you that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you must humble yourselves and do no work, whether the native born or a foreigner who is living among you.[30]This is because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you from all your sins so you will be clean before Yahweh.[31]It is a solemn Sabbath of rest for you, and you must humble yourselves and do no work. This will always be a statute among you.
[32]The high priest, the one who will be anointed and ordained to be high priest in his father's place, must make this atonement and put on the linen garments, that is, the holy garments.[33]He must make atonement for the most holy place; he must make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he must make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.
[34]This will always be a statute for you, to make atonement for the people of Israel because of all their sins, once in every year." This was done as Yahweh commanded Moses.

Leviticus 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Holiness

Because Yahweh is holy, he can only be approached in a certain way. This could only happen on a specific day, by a specific person, and only after they offered the proper sacrifice to make themselves clean. (See: holy and clean)

Day of Atonement

This chapter gives rules for what the high priest had to do on the Day of Atonement. This was the most important day in Judaism. This is when he interceded for the sins of the people of Israel. (See: highpriest and atonement and sin)

Links:

Leviticus 16:1 Notes

Leviticus 16:1

Aaron's two sons

This refers to Nadab and Abihu. They died because they brought fire to Yahweh that he did not approve (Leviticus 10:1-2).

Leviticus 16:3

So here is how

"This is how"

Leviticus 16:4

undergarments

clothing worn next to the skin under the outer clothes

sash

a piece of cloth that ties around the waist or chest

turban

head covering made from wrapped strips of cloth

Leviticus 16:5

from the assembly

"from the congregation"

Leviticus 16:6

the sin offering, which will be for himself

"the sin offering for himself"

Leviticus 16:8

the scapegoat

"the goat that is sent away." Aaron was to have someone set the goat free in the wilderness.

Leviticus 16:9

on which the lot fell

"which the lot designated"

Leviticus 16:10

But the goat ... must be brought alive before Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But Aaron must bring the goat ... alive before Yahweh"

Leviticus 16:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what Aaron must do on the Day of Atonement.

he must kill the bull

Aaron would catch the blood of the bull in a bowl so he could later sprinkle it on the atonement lid. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Leviticus 16:12

censer

a container for fire and incense, used by the priests

sweet incense

"sweet-smelling incense." This refers to the smell and not to the taste of the incense.

Leviticus 16:14

the blood of the bull

This is the blood Aaron caught with a bowl in Leviticus 16:11.

sprinkle it with his finger

He used his finger to splash the blood.

on the front of the atonement lid

He put the blood on the top part of the lid. He also put it on the side of the lid that was towards him as he entered the most holy place.

before the atonement lid

Possible meanings are 1) "below the atonement lid onto the chest" or 2) "onto the ground in front of the atonement lid."

Leviticus 16:15

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General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what Aaron must do on the Day of Atonement.
He must sprinkle it on the atonement lid and then before the atonement lid
Aaron sprinkled the blood in the same manner that he did with the bull's blood. See how you translated the previous instructions in Leviticus 16:14.
Leviticus 16:16
He must make atonement for the holy place because of the unclean actions of the people of Israel
The sins of the people of Israel made the holy place unclean.
unclean actions ... rebellion ... sins
These words mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that the people have committed all kinds of sins.
unclean actions
Sinful actions which make people unacceptable to Yahweh are spoken of as if they were physically unclean actions.
in the presence of their unclean actions
The phrase "their unclean actions" represents the people who commit sinful actions. Alternate translation: "in the presence of people who commit sinful actions"
Leviticus 16:18
He must go out to the altar that is before Yahweh
This is the altar of sacrifice just inside the courtyard of the tabernacle.
make atonement for it
Like the holy place and tent of meeting, the altar is unclean because of the sins of the people.
horns of the altar
"the projections at the corners of the altar." This refers to the corners of the altar. They are shaped like the horns of an ox. See how you translated this in Leviticus 4:7.
Leviticus 16:19
to cleanse it
The altar being fit to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically clean.
set it apart to Yahweh, away from the unclean actions of the people of Israel
The altar being dedicated to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were physically separated from the sins of the people.
the unclean actions
Sinful actions which make people unacceptable to Yahweh are spoken of as if they were physically unclean actions.
Leviticus 16:20
he must present the live goat
This goat is called the scapegoat in verse Leviticus 16:10.
Leviticus 16:21
confess over him
"confess over the goat"
he must put that sinfulness on the head of the goat
Aaron's actions here were a symbolic transfer of the people's sin to the goat as a sign that the goat would bear the punishment for their guilt.
evil deeds ... rebellion ... sins
These all mean basically the same thing. Aaron is confessing every kind of sin that the people committed.
Leviticus 16:23
take off the linen garments
These were the special garments Aaron wore only when he entered the most holy place.
Leviticus 16:24
He must bathe his body in water in a holy place
Here "holy place" does not refer to the tent of meeting. This was a different place set aside for him to bathe himself.
put on his normal garments
These are the clothes that Aaron wore for his ordinary duties.
Leviticus 16:25
He must burn
"Aaron must burn"
Leviticus 16:26
The man who let the scapegoat go free must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water
The man was unclean because of his contact with the scapegoat, which carried the sin of the people.
scapegoat
"the goat that is sent away." See how you translated this in Leviticus 16:8.
Leviticus 16:27
whose blood was brought
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose blood Aaron brought"
must be carried
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must carry"
their hides
"their skins." Here "their" refers to the bull and the goat.
Leviticus 16:29
for you
The word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month
This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of September on the western calendar.
Leviticus 16:30
atonement will be made for you
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Aaron will make atonement for you"
to cleanse you ... so you will be clean
People who are acceptable for God's purposes are spoken of as if they were physically clean.
Leviticus 16:31
It is a solemn Sabbath of rest for you
This is not the same as the Sabbath they observed every week on the seventh day. This was a special Sabbath on the Day of Atonement.
Leviticus 16:32
the one who will be anointed and ordained
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one they will anoint and ordain"
in his father's place
When the high priest died, one of his sons would replace him.
the holy garments
These are special clothes the high priest must wear when he enters the most holy place.

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Leviticus 16:33
for all the people of the assembly
"for all the people of Israel"
Leviticus 16:34
General Information:
Yahweh finishes telling Moses what the people must do on the Day of Atonement.
This was done as Yahweh commanded Moses
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "And Moses did as Yahweh commanded" or "And Aaron did as Yahweh commanded Moses"

17 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, and to all the people of Israel. Tell them what Yahweh has commanded:[3]'Any man from Israel who kills an ox, lamb, or goat in the camp, or who kills it outside the camp, in order to sacrifice it—[4]if he does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it as a sacrifice to Yahweh before his tabernacle, that man is guilty of bloodshed. He has shed blood, and that man must be cut off from among his people.
[5]The purpose of this command is so that the people of Israel will bring their sacrifices to Yahweh at the entrance to the tent of meeting, to the priest, to be sacrificed as fellowship offerings to Yahweh, instead of offering sacrifices in an open field.[6]The priest will sprinkle the blood on Yahweh's altar at the entrance to the tent of meeting; he will burn the fat for it to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.
[7]The people must no longer offer their sacrifices to goat idols, for which they act as prostitutes. This will be a permanent statute for them throughout their people's generations.'

[8]You must say to them, 'Any man of Israel, or any foreigner who lives among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice[9]and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting in order to sacrifice it to Yahweh, that man must be cut off from his people.

[10]If any person of the house of Israel, or any foreigner who lives among them consumes any blood, I will set my face against that person who consumes blood and I will cut him off from among his people.[11]For the life of an animal is in its blood. I have given its blood to you to make atonement on the altar for your lives, because it is the blood that makes atonement, for it is the blood that atones for the life.
[12]Therefore I said to the people of Israel that no one among you must eat blood, neither may any foreigner who lives among you eat blood.[13]Anyone of the people of Israel, or any of the foreigners who live among them, who hunts and kills an animal or bird that may be eaten, that person must pour out its blood and cover the blood with earth.

[14]For the life of each creature is its blood. That is why I said to the people of Israel, "You must not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every living creature is its blood. Whoever eats it must be cut off."
[15]Every person who eats an animal that has died or that has been torn by wild animals, whether that person is native born or a foreigner living among you, he must wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and he will be unclean until the evening. Then he will be clean.[16]But if he does not wash his clothes or bathe his body, then he must carry his guilt.'"

Leviticus 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrifices
Sacrifices could only be offered by the priests at the temple. Any other sacrifice was strictly prohibited. This was probably intended to ensure that the people were only offering sacrifices to Yahweh and not to another god. (See: priest and falsegod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The life of each creature is its blood"
It is unclear why the life is described as being in the blood. It is possible that diseases were more common in the blood and this is why it was prohibited. Blood is also necessary for life to continue in a creature. (See: life and blood)

Links:

Leviticus 17:1 Notes

Leviticus 17:4
before his tabernacle
"before Yahweh's tabernacle"
that man must be cut off from among his people
A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 7:20]
Leviticus 17:5

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to the priest, to be sacrificed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to the priest, so he may sacrifice them"
instead of offering sacrifices in an open field
The people had been offering their sacrifices in the open field. God wanted them to stop doing that.
Leviticus 17:7
for which they act as prostitutes
The people being unfaithful to Yahweh by worshiping false gods is spoken of as if they were acting like a man who betrays his wife by committing adultery. Alternate translation: "for which they are unfaithful to Yahweh"
a permanent statute for them throughout their people's generations
See how you translated this phrase in Leviticus 3:17.
Leviticus 17:9
that man must be cut off from his people
A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 7:20]
Leviticus 17:10
I will set my face against that person
This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "I have made up my mind to oppose that person"
will set my face against
"will stare angrily at"
I will cut him off from among his people
A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "I will not permit that person to live among his people any longer" or "I will separate that person from his people"
Leviticus 17:11
For the life of an animal is in its blood ... that atones for the life
This means God uses the blood to atone for the sins of the people because the blood is life. The people should not consume the blood because it has this special purpose.
Leviticus 17:12
I said
Here "I" refers to Yahweh.
no one among you must eat blood
"no one among you may eat meat with blood in it"
Leviticus 17:13
that may be eaten
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have said they may eat"
cover the blood with earth
"cover the blood with dirt"
Leviticus 17:14
the life of each creature is its blood
This means that the blood is enables the creature to be alive. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "each creature is able to live because of its blood"
Whoever eats it must be cut off
A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Whoever eats blood may no longer live among his people" or "You must separate from his people anyone who eats blood"
Leviticus 17:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
that has been torn by wild animals
An animal being killed by wild animals is spoken of as if the wild animals tore the animal to pieces. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that wild animals have killed"
is native born
"is an Israelite"
he will be unclean ... Then he will be clean
The person whom other people may not touch is spoken of as if he were physically unclean and the person whom other people may touch is spoken of as if he were physically clean.
until the evening
"until sunset"
Leviticus 17:16
then he must carry his guilt
A person's guilt is spoken of as if it were a physical object that the person carries. Here the word "guilt" represents the punishment for that guilt. Alternate translation: "then he is responsible for his own guilt" or "then I will punish him for his sin"

18 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'I am Yahweh your God.[3]You must not do the things that the people do in Egypt, where you lived previously. You must not do the things that the people do in Canaan, the land to which I am taking you. Do not follow their customs.
[4]My laws are what you must do, and my commandments are what you must keep, so that you walk in them, because I am Yahweh your God.[5]Therefore you must keep my decrees and my laws. If a person obeys them, he will live because of them. I am Yahweh.

[6]Do not approach any close relatives to uncover nakedness, I am Yahweh.[7]Do not uncover the nakedness of your father by uncovering the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you must not uncover her nakedness.[8]Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's wives; it is your father's nakedness.
[9]Do not uncover the nakedness of your sister, whether she is the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother, whether she was born in your home or distant from you.[10]Do not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness.[11]Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought up in your father's family, since she is your sister.

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[12]Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's relative.[13]Do not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, she is your mother's relative.[14]Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you must not approach his wife; she is your aunt.
[15]Do not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife; you must not uncover her nakedness.[16]Do not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; that is your brother's nakedness.
[17]Do not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter; and you must not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are relatives; that is wickedness.[18]You must not marry your wife's sister as a second wife and uncover her nakedness while your first wife is alive.

[19]Do not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during the impurity of her uncleanness.[20]Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her in this way.
[21]You must not give any of your children to put them into the fire, so that you sacrifice them to Molech, because you must not profane the name of your God. I am Yahweh.
[22]Do not lie with other men as with a woman; that is detestable.[23]Do not lie with any animal and defile yourself with it. Neither should any woman present herself to an animal to lie with it; that is a perversion.

[24]Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for in all these ways the nations are defiled, the nations that I will drive out from before you.[25]The land became defiled, so I have punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.
[26]You, therefore, must keep my commandments and decrees, and you must not do any of these detestable things, neither the native-born Israelite nor the foreigner who lives among you.[27]For these detestable things are what the people who lived in the land before you committed, and now the land is defiled.[28]Therefore be careful so that the land does not vomit you up also after you have defiled it, as it vomited out the people who were before you.
[29]Whoever does any of these detestable things, the persons who do such things will be cut off from among their people.
[30]Therefore you must keep my command not to practice any of these detestable customs which were practiced here before you, so that you do not defile yourselves by them. I am Yahweh your God.'"

Leviticus 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Uncovering nakedness

To uncover someone's nakedness is an idiom that has two related meanings. If a man uncovers a woman's nakedness, it means that he has sexual relations with her. If a man uncovers another man's nakedness, it means that he shames that man by having sexual relations with that man's wife.

Links:

Leviticus 18:1 Notes

Leviticus 18:4

My laws are what you must do, and my commandments are what you must keep

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people must obey everything that Yahweh has commanded them to do. You can translate this parallelism into one statement. Alternate translation: "You must obey all of my laws and commandments"

so that you walk in them

Obeying Yahweh's commandments is spoken of as if the commandments were a path on which the person walks. Alternate translation: "so that you conduct your behavior according to them"

Leviticus 18:6

uncover nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover nakedness" means "have sexual relations"

Leviticus 18:7

Do not uncover the nakedness of your father

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" means "disgrace." Alternate translation: "Do not disgrace your father" or "Do not shame shame your father"

by uncovering the nakedness of your mother ... you must not uncover her nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in Leviticus 18:6. Alternate translation: "by having sexual relations with your mother ... you must not have sexual relations with her"

Leviticus 18:8

Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's wives

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

your father's wives

Sometimes men had more than one wife. God did not allow a son to have sexual intercourse with any woman married to his father.

it is your father's nakedness

"you disgrace your father" or "you shame your father"

Leviticus 18:9

Do not uncover the nakedness of

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Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

whether she is the daughter of your father or the daughter of your mother

This means a man cannot have sexual intercourse with his sister if they have the same parents or even if she has a different mother or father.

whether she was born in your home or distant from you

Another possible meaning is, "whether she grew up at your home or far away from you."

Leviticus 18:10

Do not uncover the nakedness of

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

their nakedness is your own nakedness

"you will disgrace both them and yourself" or "you will shame both them and yourself"

Leviticus 18:11

Do not uncover the nakedness of

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

your father's wife's daughter

Possible meanings are 1) "your half-sister" or 2) "your stepsister." Here the man does not have the same father or mother as the woman. They became brother and sister when their parents married.

Leviticus 18:12

Do not uncover the nakedness of

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

Leviticus 18:13

Do not uncover the nakedness of

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

Leviticus 18:14

Do not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" means "disgrace." Alternate translation: "Do not disgrace your father's brother" or "Do not shame shame your father's brother"

you must not approach his wife

You may have to make explicit the purpose of the approach. Alternate translation: "do not go to his wife in order to have sexual intercourse with her"

Leviticus 18:15

Do not uncover the nakedness of ... you must not uncover her nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

Leviticus 18:16

Do not uncover the nakedness of

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

that is your brother's nakedness

"if you do that, you will shame your brother"

Leviticus 18:17

Do not uncover the nakedness of ... to uncover her nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

Leviticus 18:18

uncover her nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

Leviticus 18:19

to uncover her nakedness

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

the impurity of her uncleanness

This is the time every month when a woman bleeds from her womb. The words "impurity" and "uncleanness" both occur to emphasize how disgusting a man is to consider her nakedness at that time.

Leviticus 18:20

your neighbor's wife

"any man's wife"

Leviticus 18:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must not do that would defile them.

You must not give any of your children to put them into the fire

The phrase "to pass through the fire" means to burn something with fire as a sacrifice. Alternate translation: "You must not burn your children alive"

you must not profane the name of your God

Here the word "profane" means to dishonor. The word "name" represents God himself. Alternate translation: "you must not dishonor your God"

Leviticus 18:22

Do not lie with

This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "Do not have sexual relations with"

that is detestable

Here "detestable" refers to a violation of the natural order of things as Yahweh intended them to be.

Leviticus 18:23

to lie with it

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "to have sexual relations with it"

Leviticus 18:24

the nations are defiled

This refers to the people groups already living in Canaan. Translate this so the term "nations" is clarified as people. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations defiled themselves"

Leviticus 18:25

The land became defiled

"The people defiled the land"

the land vomited out its inhabitants

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Yahweh forcibly removing the people from the land is spoken of as if the land were a person who vomited the people out. Alternate translation: "I forcibly removed the people from the land, like a person vomits up food"
Leviticus 18:26

any of these detestable things
"any of these disgusting things"
Leviticus 18:28

Therefore be careful
"Therefore be careful to obey me"

so that the land does not vomit you up ... as it vomited out the people
Yahweh forcibly removing the people from the land is spoken of as if the land were a person who vomited the people out. See how you translated this metaphor in [Leviticus 18:25]
Leviticus 18:29

General Information:
Yahweh finishes telling Moses what the people must not do.

the persons ... will be cut off from among their people
People being excluded from the community is spoken of as if they had been cut off from their people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the persons ... may no longer live among their people" or "you must separate the persons ... from their people"
Leviticus 18:30

which were practiced here before you
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the people did here before you came"

by them
Here "them" refers to the detestable customs.

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19 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Speak to all the assembly of the people of Israel and say to them, 'You must be holy, for I Yahweh your God am holy.[3]Everyone must respect his mother and his father, and you must keep my Sabbaths. I am Yahweh your God.[4]Do not turn to worthless idols, nor make for yourselves molten gods. I am Yahweh your God.

[5]When you offer a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to Yahweh, you must offer it that you may be accepted.[6]It must be eaten the same day you offer it, or on the next day. If anything remains until the third day, it must be burned up with fire.[7]If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is a foul thing; it must not be accepted,[8]and everyone who eats it must carry his own guilt because he has defiled what is holy to Yahweh, and that person must be cut off from his people.

[9]When you reap the harvest of your land, you must not completely reap the corners of your field, neither will you gather all the gleanings of your harvest.[10]You must not gather every grape from your vineyard, nor gather the grapes that have fallen on the ground in your vineyard. You must leave them for the poor and for the foreigner. I am Yahweh your God.

[11]Do not steal.Do not lie.
Do not deceive each other.

[12]Do not swear by my name falsely and profane the name of your God. I am Yahweh.

[13]Do not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired servant must not stay with you all night until the morning.
[14]Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but fear your God. I am Yahweh.

[15]Do not cause judgment to be false. You must not exalt the poor nor favor the great. Instead, judge your neighbor justly.
[16]Do not walk around spreading slander among your people, but seek to protect your neighbor's life. I am Yahweh.

[17]Do not hate your brother in your heart. You should rebuke your neighbor frankly, and do not bring sin upon yourself because of him.
[18]Do not take vengeance or hold any grudge against any of your people, but instead love your neighbor as yourself. I am Yahweh.

[19]You must keep my commands.Do not try to breed your animals with different kinds of other animals.
Do not mix two different kinds of seeds when planting your field.
Do not wear clothing made of two kinds of material mixed together.

[20]Whoever lies with a slave girl who is promised to a husband, but who has not been ransomed or given her freedom, must be punished. They must not be put to death because she was not free.
[21]A man must bring his guilt offering to Yahweh to the entrance to the tent of meeting—a ram as a guilt offering.[22]Then the priest will make atonement for him with the ram for the guilt offering before Yahweh, for the sin that he has committed. Then the sin which he has committed will be forgiven.

[23]When you come into the land and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you must regard the fruit they produce as forbidden to be eaten. The fruit must be forbidden to you for three years. It must not be eaten.[24]But in the fourth year

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all the fruit will be holy, a sacrifice of praise to Yahweh.[25]In the fifth year you may eat the fruit, having waited so that the trees might produce more. I am Yahweh your God.

[26]Do not eat any meat with blood still in it.Do not practice divination or sorcery.

[27]You will not round off the corners of the hair on the sides of your head or shave off the edge of your beard.
[28]Do not cut your body for the dead or put tattoo marks on your body. I am Yahweh.

[29]Do not disgrace your daughter by making her a prostitute, or the nation will fall to prostitution and the land will become full of wickedness.
[30]You must keep my Sabbaths and honor the sanctuary of my tabernacle. I am Yahweh.

[31]Do not turn to sorcerers or spiritists. Do not seek them out, or they will defile you. I am Yahweh your God.

[32]You must rise before the gray-headed person and honor the presence of an old man. You must fear your God. I am Yahweh.

[33]If a foreigner lives among you in your land, you must not do him any wrong.[34]The foreigner who lives with you must be to you like the native-born Israelite who lives among you, and you must love him as yourself, because you were foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am Yahweh your God.

[35]Do no injustice when measuring length, weight, or quantity.[36]You must use just scales, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin. I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.[37]You must obey all my decrees and all my laws, and do them. I am Yahweh.'"

Leviticus 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Obeying Yahweh

Being holy meant obeying Yahweh in all matters of a person's life. It is not limited to offering correct sacrifices. The law helped to establish righteousness in a person's life, as well as justice in Israel. In Israel, these concepts are closely related. (See: holy and righteous and justice)

Links:

Leviticus 19:1 Notes

Leviticus 19:3

keep my Sabbaths

"observe my Sabbaths" or "respect my day of rest"

Leviticus 19:4

Do not turn to worthless idols

Worshiping idols is spoken of as if it were physically turning towards them. Alternate translation: "Do not begin to worship worthless idols"

Leviticus 19:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

you must offer it that you may be accepted

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will accept the person offering the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "you must offer it properly so that I will accept you" or 2) Yahweh will accept the sacrifice from the person. Alternate translation: "you must offer it properly so that I will accept your sacrifice"

Leviticus 19:6

It must be eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must eat it"

it must be burned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must burn it"

Leviticus 19:7

If it is eaten at all

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you eat any of it"

it must not be accepted

To eat the offering after the designated time is against God and increases the guilt the offering was to cover. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You may not accept it for eating"

Leviticus 19:8

everyone ... must carry his own guilt

A person's guilt is spoken of as if it were a physical object that the person carries. Here the word "guilt" represents the punishment for that guilt. Alternate translation: "everyone ... is responsible for his own guilt" or "Yahweh will punish everyone ... for his sin"

that person must be cut off from his people

A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a

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piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Leviticus 7:20]

Leviticus 19:9

When you reap the harvest of your land, you must not completely reap the corners of your field

"When you gather your crops, do not gather all the way to the edges of your fields"

neither will you gather all the gleanings of your harvest

This refers to the practice of going back over the fields a second time to gather any produce that remained after the first time. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and do not go back and pick up all that you left behind"

Leviticus 19:12

Do not swear by my name falsely

"Do not use my name to swear about something that is not true"

Leviticus 19:13

Do not oppress your neighbor or rob him

Here "neighbor" means "anyone." The meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Do not hurt or rob anyone"

The wages of a hired servant must not stay with you all night until the morning

Yahweh commands the employer to pay his servant promptly when his work is done that day. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

Leviticus 19:14

or put a stumbling block before the blind

"and do not put something in front of a blind person to make him trip over it"

Leviticus 19:15

Do not cause judgment to be false

"Do not judge falsely" or "Do not just unjustly"

You must not exalt the poor nor favor the great

The words "poor" and "great" are two extremes, which together mean "anyone." You can translate this to clarify the terms. Alternate translation: "You must not show favoritism to anyone based on how much money they have"

judge your neighbor justly

"judge everyone according to what is right"

Leviticus 19:16

slander

untrue, hurtful messages about other people

Leviticus 19:17

Do not hate your brother in your heart

Continually hating a person is spoken of as if it were hating a person in the heart. Alternate translation: "Do not continually hate your brother"

You should rebuke your neighbor frankly

"You must correct a person who is sinning"

Leviticus 19:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

clothing made of two kinds of material mixed together

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "clothing that someone made from two kinds of material"

Leviticus 19:20

lies with

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with"

who is promised to a husband

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "who is engaged to marry another man"

but who has not been ransomed or given her freedom

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "but whom her future husband has not ransomed or given her freedom"

must be punished

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must punish them"

They must not be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not kill them"

Leviticus 19:21

A man must bring his guilt offering to Yahweh to the entrance to the tent of meeting—a ram as a guilt offering

"A man must bring a ram as a guilt offering to Yahweh to the entrance of the tent of meeting"

Leviticus 19:22

the sin which he has committed will be forgiven

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the sin which he has committed"

Leviticus 19:23

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

then you must regard the fruit they produce as forbidden to be eaten ... It must not be eaten

Yahweh repeats the prohibition in order to emphasize it and to clarify that it is in force for the first three years that the tree bears fruit. Translate this to clarify the period of time the trees must be left alone. Alternate translation: "then you must not eat the fruit of the trees for the first three years"

you must regard the fruit they produce as forbidden to be eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must regard the fruit they produce as something that I have forbidden you to eat"

The fruit must be forbidden to you

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forbidden the fruit to you"

It must not be eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not eat it"

Leviticus 19:29

the nation will fall to prostitution and the land will become full of wickedness

Here the words "nation" and "land" represent the people who live there. Many people practicing prostitution and other wicked deeds is spoken of as if the they have fallen into or become full of those things. Alternate translation: "the people will begin to practice prostitution and many wicked things"

Leviticus 19:31

sorcerers or spiritists

"anyone who communicates with the world of the dead"

Do not seek them out, or they will defile you
"Do not seek those people out. If you do, they will defile you"
Leviticus 19:32
You must rise
Standing up in front of someone is a sign of respect.
the gray-headed person
This refers to a person whose hair has turned gray from age, or "an old person."
Leviticus 19:36
ephah
This was a measurement for grain.
hin
This was a measurement for liquids.
Leviticus 19:37
must obey ... and do them
These phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the command for obedience.

20 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Say to the people of Israel, 'Anyone among the people of Israel, or any foreigner who lives in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech, must certainly be put to death. The people in the land must stone him with stones.
[3]I also will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people because he has given his child to Molech, so as to defile my holy place and profane my holy name.[4]If the people of the land close their eyes to that man when he gives any of his children to Molech, if they do not put him to death,[5]then I myself will set my face against that man and his clan, and I will cut him off and everyone else who acts like a prostitute as he did in order to act like a prostitute with Molech.

[6]The person who turns to sorcerers and spiritists so as to prostitute themselves with them, I will set my face against that person; I will cut him off from among his people.[7]Therefore consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am Yahweh your God.[1]

[8]You must keep my commands and carry them out. I am Yahweh who sets you apart as holy.
[9]Everyone who curses his father or his mother must surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother, so his blood is upon him.

[10]The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, that is, anyone who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife —the adulterer and the adulteress must both certainly be put to death.
[11]If a man lies with his father's wife, he uncovers his father's nakedness. Both the son and his father's wife must certainly be put to death. Their blood is upon them.
[12]If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them must certainly be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood is upon them.

[13]If a man lies with another man, as with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must surely be put to death. Their blood is upon them.
[14]If a man marries a woman and also marries her mother, this is wickedness. They must be burned, both he and the women, so that there will be no wickedness among you.

[15]If a man lies with an animal, he must surely be put to death, and you must kill the animal.
[16]If a woman approaches any animal and lies with it, you must kill the woman and the animal. They must certainly be put to death. Their blood is upon them.

[17]If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and he sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a shameful thing. They must be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered the nakedness of his sister and he must carry his guilt.
[18]If a man lies with a woman during her menstrual period and has uncovered her nakedness, he has uncovered her flow, the fountain of her blood. Both the man and woman must be cut off from among their people.

[19]You must not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, or your father's sister, because you would disgrace your close relative. You must carry your own guilt.
[20]If a man lies with his aunt, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They will bear responsibility for their sin, and they will die childless.
[21]If a man marries his brother’s wife, that is abhorrent. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they will be childless.

[22]You must therefore keep all my statutes and all my decrees; you must obey them so that the land into which I am bringing you to live will not vomit you up.
[23]You must not walk in the statutes of the nations that I will drive out before you, for they have done all these things, and I detest them.

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[24]I said to you, "You will inherit their land; I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey. I am Yahweh your God, who has separated you from the other peoples.[25]You must therefore distinguish between the clean animals and the unclean, and between the unclean birds and the clean. You must not make yourselves detestable with unclean animals or birds or with any creature that crawls along the ground, which I have separated as unclean from you.

[26]You must be holy, for I, Yahweh, am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples, for you belong to me.

[27]A man or a woman who is a sorcerer or spiritist must certainly be put to death. The people must stone them with stones. Their blood is upon them.'"

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[a]Several modern translations have ... because I, Yahweh your God, am holy.

Leviticus 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Punishments for serious sins

This chapter compiles a list of serious sins. The most serious sins are punished by death. (See: sin and death)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

See each other's nakedness

For a man and a woman to see each other's nakedness means for them have sexual relations together.

Carry guilt

The phrase "you must carry your own guilt" is a metaphor. It is unknown what this means, but it is possible it indicates a penalty of death.

Links:

Leviticus 20:1 Notes

Leviticus 20:2

gives any of his children to Molech

Those who worshiped Molech sacrificed their children to him by means of fire. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "kills any of his children as a sacrifice to Molech"

must certainly be put to death. The people in the land must stone him with stones

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people in the land must stone him to death"

Leviticus 20:3

I also will set my face against that man

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "I have made up my mind to oppose that man"

will set my face against

"will stare angrily at"

he has given his child

"he has sacrificed his child"

so as to defile my holy place and profane my holy name

"and by doing that, he has defiled my holy place and profaned my holy name"

profane my holy name

God's name represents God and his reputation. Alternate translation: "dishonor my reputation" or "dishonor me"

Leviticus 20:4

close their eyes to

The phrase "to close their eyes" implies they "cannot see." This speaks of ignoring something as not seeing. Alternate translation: "disregard" or "ignore"

Leviticus 20:5

who acts like a prostitute as he did in order to act like a prostitute with Molech

This phrase compares those who are unfaithful to Yahweh to prostitutes. Alternate translation: "who is unfaithful to Yahweh as he was in order to commit faithless acts with Molech"

Leviticus 20:6

so as to prostitute themselves with them

This phrase compares the unfaithful people to prostitutes. Alternate translation: "by doing that, they seek advice from the spirits rather than from me"

I will set my face against that person

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "I have made up my mind that I will oppose that person"

will set my face against

"will stare angrily at"

Leviticus 20:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

You must keep my commands and carry them out

The words "keep" and "carry out" mean basically the same thing. They are used together in order to emphasize that the people must obey God.

Leviticus 20:9

must surely be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must surely put to death"

his blood is upon him

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting

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someone to a violent death. Alternate translation: "the guilt for his violent death is his alone"

Leviticus 20:10

certainly be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must certainly put both of them to death"

Leviticus 20:11

lies with his father's wife

This is a polite way of saying that he has sexual relations with his father's wife. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with his father's wife"

he uncovers his father's nakedness

Here the idiom "uncovers ... nakedness" means "disgraces." See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:7]

Their blood is upon them

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting someone to a violent death. See how you translated similar words in [Leviticus 19:9]

Leviticus 20:12

lies with

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with"

They have committed perversion

Here God calls a man having sex with his son's wife a "perversion", a serious sin. See how you translated "perversion" in Leviticus 18:23.

Their blood is upon them

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting someone to a violent death. See how you translated similar words in [Leviticus 19:9]

Leviticus 20:13

lies with

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "had sexual relations with"

as with a woman

The way he treats the man is the same way he would treat a woman. Alternate translation: "just like he would with a woman"

what is detestable

"something detestable" or "something detestable"

They must surely be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must surely put them to death"

Their blood is upon them

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting someone to a violent death. See how you translated similar words in [Leviticus 19:9]

Leviticus 20:14

They must be burned, both he and the women

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must burn to death both the man and the women"

Leviticus 20:15

lies with

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with"

he must surely be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must surely put him to death"

Leviticus 20:16

lies with it

This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with it"

you must kill the woman and the animal. They must certainly be put to death

Both clauses mean the same thing. They emphasize that the woman and animal must die.

They must certainly be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must certainly put them to death"

Their blood is upon them

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting someone to a violent death. See how you translated similar words in [Leviticus 19:9]

Leviticus 20:17

takes

Possible meanings are 1) this is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with" or 2) it simply means "to marry."

a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother

This means a man cannot have sexual intercourse with his sister, even if she has a different mother or father. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "whether it is his full sister or half-sister"

he sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness

Here the idiom "sees nakedness" means "have sexual relations." Alternate translation: "they have sexual relations"

has uncovered the nakedness of his sister

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in Leviticus 18:6. Alternate translation: "has had sexual relations with his sister"

he must carry his guilt

This phrase means the man is responsibile for his sin. Alternate translation: "He is responsible for his sin" or "You must punish him"

Leviticus 20:18

must be cut off from

A person being excluded from his community is spoken of as if he had been cut off from his people, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this idea in [Leviticus 7:20]

menstrual period

the time every month when a woman bleeds from her womb

he has uncovered her flow, the fountain of her blood

This phrase compares having sex with a woman during her menstrual period to removing the cover off of something that should remain hidden. The fact that this was a shameful thing to do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he has done a shameful thing by uncovering the flow of her blood"

a man lies with a woman

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "a man has sexual relations with a woman"

Both the man and woman must be cut off

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It can be stated clearly why this must be done. Alternate translation: "Because they have done this shameful thing, both the man and woman must be cut off"

Leviticus 20:19

You must not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister

Here the idiom "uncover the nakedness" of someone means "have sexual relations" with someone. See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:6]

You must carry your own guilt

The idiom "carry your own guilt" means "you are responsible for your own sin." Alternate translation: "You are responsible for your sin" or "I will punish you"

Leviticus 20:20

a man lies with his aunt

This is a polite way of speaking of sexual relations. You may have to use other words in your translation. Alternate translation: "a man has sexual relations with his aunt"

he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness

Here the idiom "uncovers ... nakedness" means "disgraces." See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:7]

Leviticus 20:21

marries his brother's wife

Some interpret this to apply only when the brother is still alive or has become the father of male children by the woman.

He has uncovered his brother's nakedness

Here the idiom "uncovered ... nakedness" means "disgraced." See how you translated this idiom in [Leviticus 18:7]

Leviticus 20:22

the land into which I am bringing you to live will not vomit you up

This phrase describes the land as a vomiting person who needs to reject bad food. Instead of rejecting bad food, the land rejects the people and removes them. See how you translated this metaphor in [Leviticus 18:25]

Leviticus 20:23

You must not walk in

Doing the actions of idol worshipers is spoken of as walking in their ways. Alternate translation: "you must not follow"

the statutes

or "the customs"

drive out

"remove"

Leviticus 20:24

a land flowing with milk and honey

The phrase "flowing with milk and honey" means "that is rich and productive with enough food for everyone." Alternate translation: "a land that is excellent for cattle and farming" or "a productive land"

Leviticus 20:26

I have separated you

"I have distinguished you" or "I have set you apart"

Leviticus 20:27

must certainly be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they must certainly put to death"

Their blood is upon them

The word "blood" here is a metonym for the guilt of putting someone to a violent death. See how you translated similar words in [Leviticus 19:9]

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21 [1]Yahweh said to Moses: "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them, 'No one among you should make himself unclean for those who die among his people,[2]except for his closest relatives—his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother,[3]or his virgin sister who is dependent on him, since she has no husband—for her he may make himself unclean.
[4]But he must not make himself unclean for other relatives and so defile himself.
[5]Priests must not shave their heads or shave off the corners of their beards, nor cut their bodies.[6]They must be holy to their God and not disgrace the name of their God, because the priests offer Yahweh's food offerings, the bread of their God. Therefore the priests must be holy.
[7]They must not marry any woman who is a prostitute and who is defiled, and they must not marry a woman divorced from her husband, for he is holy to his God.
[8]You will set him apart, for he is the one who offers bread to your God. He must be holy to you, because I, Yahweh who makes you holy, am holy.
[9]Any daughter of any priest who defiles herself by becoming a prostitute disgraces her father. She must be burned.

[10]The one who is the high priest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured, and who has been consecrated to wear the special garments of the high priest, must not wear his hair loose or tear his clothes.[11]He must not go anywhere that a dead body is present and defile himself, even for his father or his mother.[12]The high priest must not leave the sanctuary area of the tabernacle or profane the sanctuary of his God, because he has been consecrated as high priest by the anointing oil of his God. I am Yahweh.

[13]The high priest must marry a virgin as his wife.[14]He must not marry a widow, a divorced woman, or a woman who is a prostitute. He will not marry these kinds of women. He may only marry a virgin from his own people,[15]so he will not defile his children among his people, for I am Yahweh, who makes him holy.'"

[16]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[17]"Speak to Aaron and tell him, 'Whoever of your descendants throughout their generations has a bodily defect, he must not approach to offer the food to his God.
[18]Any man who has a bodily defect must not approach Yahweh, such as a blind man or a man who is unable to walk, one who is disfigured or deformed,[19]a man with a crippled hand or foot,[20]a man who has a hump in his back or is abnormally

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thin or short, or a man with a defect in his eyes, or with a disease, sore, scabs, or whose testicles have been crushed.[21]No man among the descendants of Aaron the priest with a bodily defect may come near to perform the offerings made by fire for Yahweh. Such a man has a bodily defect; he must not come near to offer the bread of his God.
[22]He may eat the food of his God, whether some of the most holy or some of the holy.[23]However, he must not enter inside the curtain or come near the altar, because he has a bodily defect, so that he does not defile my holy place, for I am Yahweh, who makes them holy.'"[24]So Moses spoke these words to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the people of Israel.

Leviticus 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Priests must be holy

Priests must be separate from the rest of the world. Priests should not do anything that would be unclean. They also cannot be unclean because of a birth defect, and they must not marry an unclean woman. (See: priest and holy and clean)

Links:

Leviticus 21:1 Notes

Leviticus 21:1

make himself unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

among his people

"among the Israelites"

Leviticus 21:3

virgin

This can also be translated as "young woman"

Leviticus 21:5

shave off the corners of their beards

It is impossible to be certain what the writer intended here. Possible meanings are 1) shave off certain parts of their beards or 2) cut or shave any part of their beards.

Leviticus 21:6

They must be holy

"They must be set apart"

not disgrace the name of their God

This word "name" is used to represent Yahweh's character. Alternate translation: "not disgrace God's reputation" or "not disgrace their God"

the bread of their God

Here "bread" represents food in general. Yahweh does not actually eat these offerings. It is the sincerity of those offering the food that pleases God.

Leviticus 21:7

They must not

"The priests must not"

he is holy

The understood subject is any priest. Alternate translation: "they are holy" or "all priests are holy"

Leviticus 21:8

You will set him apart

"You people must treat the priest as holy"

for he is the one who offers bread to your God

Here "bread" represents food in general. Yahweh does not actually eat these offerings. Translate this in a way that makes it clear that Yahweh does not actually eat the food.

He must be holy to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must regard him as holy"

Leviticus 21:9

She must be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must burn her to death"

Leviticus 21:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the priests must do.

anointing oil

This is a reference to the anointing oil used in the ceremony consecrating a new the high priest. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

on whose head the anointing oil has been poured, and who has been consecrated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on whose head they poured anointing oil and consecrated him"

must not wear his hair loose or tear his clothes

Loose hair and torn clothes were signs of mourning. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Leviticus 21:12

must not leave the sanctuary area

This does not mean the high priest could never leave. God did not allow him to leave in order to grieve over someone who died.

Leviticus 21:14

from his own people

"from among his own tribe, the tribe of Levi"

Leviticus 21:15

he will not defile his children among his people

By marrying an unholy or ungodly woman, the priest would have children unworthy to be priest. Alternate translation: "that he will not have unworthy children by marrying an ungodly woman"

Leviticus 21:17

he must not approach to offer the food to his God

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he must not come to burn the burnt offering of food on God's altar"

Leviticus 21:18

must not approach Yahweh

A priest had to meet specific physical standards in order to

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approach Yahweh. This does not imply that physical defects were the result of immorality or that all people with physical defects are unable to approach Yahweh.

one who is disfigured or deformed

"one whose body or face is deformed"

Leviticus 21:21

to offer the bread of his God

Here "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "to make burnt offering of food on God's altar"

Leviticus 21:22

He may

Here "he" refers to the priest with the bodily defect.

eat the food of his God

"eat the food offering of his God." Parts of the sacrifices belonged to the priests and could be eaten.

some of the most holy or some of the holy

This also refers to the food that was sacrificed. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "some of the sacrifices offered in the most holy place or some of the sacrifices offered in the holy place"

Leviticus 21:24

to his sons

"to Aaron's sons"

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22 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Speak to Aaron and to his sons, tell them to keep away from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they set apart to me. They must not profane my holy name. I am Yahweh.[3]Say to them, 'If any of your descendants throughout your generations approaches the holy things that the people of Israel have set apart to Yahweh, while he is unclean, that person must be cut off from before me: I am Yahweh.

[4]None of the descendants of Aaron who is leprous or has an infection flowing from his body may eat any of the sacrifices made to Yahweh until he is clean. Whoever touches anything unclean through contact with the dead, or by contact with a man who has a flow of semen,[5]or whoever touches any creeping animal that makes him unclean, or any person who makes him unclean, whatever kind of uncleanness it may be—[6]then the priest who touches anything unclean will be unclean until evening. He must not eat any of the holy things, unless he has bathed his body in water.

[7]When the sun has set, he will then be clean. After sunset he may eat from the holy things, because they are his food.[8]He must not eat anything found dead or killed by wild animals, by which he would defile himself. I am Yahweh.
[9]The priests must follow my instructions, or they will be guilty of sin and could die for profaning me. I am Yahweh who makes them holy.

[10]No one outside the priest's family, including guests of a priest or his hired servants, may eat anything that is holy.[11]But if a priest buys any slave with his own money, that slave may eat from the things set apart to Yahweh. The priest's family members and slaves born in his house, they also may eat with him from those things.

[12]If a priest's daughter married someone who is not a priest, she may not eat any of the holy contribution offerings.[13]But if a priest's daughter is a widow, or divorced, and if she has no child, and if she returns to live in her father's house as in her youth, she may eat from her father's food. But no one who is not in the priestly family may eat from the priest's food.

[14]If a man eats a holy food without knowing it, then he must repay the priest for it; he must add one-fifth to it and give it back to the priest.
[15]The people of Israel must not profane the holy things that they have raised high and presented to Yahweh,[16]and cause themselves to carry the sin that would make them guilty of eating the holy food, for I am Yahweh who makes them holy.'"

[17]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[18]"Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the people of Israel. Say to them, 'Any man from the house of Israel, or an alien living in Israel, when they present a sacrifice—whether it is to fulfill a vow, or whether it is a freewill offering, or they present to Yahweh a burnt offering,[19]if it is to be accepted, they must offer a male animal without blemish from the cattle, sheep, or goats.
[20]But you must not offer whatever has a blemish. I will not accept it on your behalf.
[21]Whoever offers a sacrifice of fellowship offerings from the herd or the flock to Yahweh to fulfill a vow, or as a freewill offering, it must be unblemished to be accepted. There must be no defect in the animal.
[22]You must not offer animals that are blind, disabled, or maimed, or that have warts, sores, or scabs. You must not offer these to Yahweh as a sacrifice by fire on the altar.[23]You may present as a freewill offering an ox or a lamb that is deformed or small, but an offering like that will not be accepted for a vow.

[24]Do not offer any animal to Yahweh that has bruised, crushed, torn, or cut testicles. Do not do this within your land.[25]You must not present the bread of your God from the hand of a foreigner. Those animals are deformed and have defects in them, they will not be accepted for you.'"

[26]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[27]"When a calf or a sheep or a goat is born, it must remain seven days with its mother. Then from the eighth day on, it may be accepted as a sacrifice for an offering made by fire to Yahweh.

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[28]Do not kill a cow or ewe along with its young, both on the same day.[29]When you sacrifice a thank offering to Yahweh, you must sacrifice it in an acceptable way.[30]It must be eaten on the same day that it is sacrificed. You must leave none of it until the next morning. I am Yahweh.

[31]So you must keep my commandments and carry them out. I am Yahweh.
[32]You must not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the people of Israel. I am Yahweh who makes you holy,[33]who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am Yahweh."

Leviticus 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Holy things

Priests who are unclean must not touch any holy thing. The things in the temple and involved in sacrifices must remain clean. An unclean priest would cause anything he touched to become unclean. (See: priest and clean and holy)

Links:

Leviticus 22:1 Notes

Leviticus 22:2

tell them to keep away from the holy things

"tell them when they should keep away from the holy things." Yahweh is about to describe situations where a priest is unclean and not allowed to touch holy things.

profane my holy name

The word "profane" here means to dishonor. The word "name" represents Yahweh's character. Alternate translation: "dishonor my reputation" or "dishonor me"

Leviticus 22:3

throughout your generations

"from now on"

while he is unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

that person must be cut off from before me

A priest no longer being able to serve Yahweh is spoken of as if that person had been cut off from Yahweh's presence, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that person will no longer be able to serve as a priest"

Leviticus 22:4

an infection flowing from his body

"a bodily discharge"

from his body

This is a polite way of referring to a man's private parts. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Leviticus 15:1]

until he is clean

A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

Whoever touches anything unclean

Something that Yahweh has said is unfit to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

through contact with the dead

"by touching a dead body"

the sacrifices made to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices that someone has offered to Yahweh"

Leviticus 22:5

or whoever touches any creeping animal that makes him unclean, or any person who makes him unclean

This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "or whoever is unclean from touching a creeping animal or from touching another unclean person"

Leviticus 22:6

the priest ... will be unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

until evening

"until sunset"

Leviticus 22:7

he will then be clean

"the priest will then be considered clean." A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

Leviticus 22:8

found dead or killed by wild animals

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone found dead or that a wild animal has killed"

Leviticus 22:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what Aaron and his sons must do.

Leviticus 22:12

the holy contribution offerings

The word "contribution" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "the holy offerings which people have contributed"

Leviticus 22:14

he must repay the priest for it; he must add one-fifth to it

Possible meanings are 1) that the person had to replace the food that he had eaten with the same kind of food or 2) that the person had to pay money to the priest for the food that he had eaten.

one-fifth

This is one part out of five equal parts.

Leviticus 22:15

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that they have raised high and presented
The phrase "raised high" refers to a symbolic gesture of respect that represents offering something to Yahweh. It means basically the same thing as "presented." Alternate translation: "that they have offered"
Leviticus 22:16
cause themselves to carry the sin that would make them guilty
Sin is spoken of as if it were an object that people can carry. Possible meanings are 1) they would be responsible for the sin and so become guilty. Alternate translation: "they would be guilty for the sin that they committed" or 2) the word "sin" is a metonym for punishment for the sin that they committed. Alternate translation: "they would receive the punishment because they are guilty"
Leviticus 22:18
an alien
"a foreigner"
Leviticus 22:19
if it is to be accepted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if Yahweh is to accept it" or "if I, Yahweh, am to accept it"
Leviticus 22:21
to be accepted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for me to accept it" or "for Yahweh to accept it"
Leviticus 22:22
disabled, or maimed
These words refer to defects caused by accidents.
warts, sores, or scabs
These refer to types of skin diseases.
Leviticus 22:23
will not be accepted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not accept" or "Yahweh will not accept"
deformed or small
These words refer to defects the animal has from birth.
Leviticus 22:25
must not present the bread of your God
Here "bread" represents food in general. God did not actually eat the sacrifices. Priests would offer the sacrifice on God's altar, and they would eat some of the meat. Alternate translation: "must not present an animal as a food offering to your God"
from the hand of a foreigner
The word "hand" represents the whole person. It is implied that Israelites could not use animals as a sacrifice to God if they bought it from a foreigner, because foreigners castrated their animals making them unacceptable to God. Alternate translation: "that a foreigner has given you, because they castrate their animals"
they will not be accepted for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not accept them from you"
Leviticus 22:27
it may be accepted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you may accept it"
for an offering made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for a burnt offering"
Leviticus 22:30
It must be eaten
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must eat it"
that it is sacrificed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you sacrificed it"
Leviticus 22:31
keep my commandments and carry them out
The words "keep" and "carry out" mean the same thing. They emphasize that the people must obey God's commands. Alternate translation: "obey my commandments"
Leviticus 22:32
You must not profane my holy name
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself and his reputation and "profane" means to remove the honor that belongs to God as Creator and Lord of the universe. Alternate translation: "You must not dishonor me, for I am holy" or "You must not dishonor my holy reputation"
I must be acknowledged as holy by the people of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel must acknowledge me as holy"

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23 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses:[2]"Speak to the people of Israel, and say to them, 'These are the appointed festivals for Yahweh, which you must proclaim as holy assemblies; they are my regular festivals.
[3]You may work for six days, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy assembly. You must do no work because it is a Sabbath for Yahweh in all the places where you live.

[4]These are the appointed festivals of Yahweh, the holy assemblies that you must announce at their appointed times:[5]In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is Yahweh's Passover.[6]On the fifteenth day of the same month is the Festival of Unleavened Bread for Yahweh. For seven days you must eat unleavened bread.
[7]The first day you must set apart to gather together; you will not do any of your regular work.[8]You will present a food offering to Yahweh for seven days. The seventh day is an assembly set apart to Yahweh, and on that day you must not do any regular work.'"

[9]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[10]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you have come into the land that I will give you, and when you reap its harvest, then you must bring a bundle of the firstfruit of the grain to the priest.[11]He will raise the bundle of grain before Yahweh and present it to him, for it to be accepted on your behalf. It is on the day after the Sabbath that the priest will raise it and present it to me.

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[12]On the day when you raise the bundle of grain and present it to me, you must offer a male lamb one year old and without blemish as a burnt offering to Yahweh.[13]The grain offering must be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to Yahweh, to produce a sweet aroma, and with it a drink offering of wine, a fourth of a hin.[14]You must eat no bread, nor roasted or fresh grain, until the same day you have brought this offering to your God. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations, in every place that you live.

[15]Beginning from the day after the Sabbath—that was the day you brought the bundle of grain as the wave offering—count seven full weeks.[16]You must count fifty days, which would be the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you must present an offering of new grain to Yahweh.
[17]You must bring out of your houses two loaves made from two-tenths of an ephah. They must be made from fine flour and baked with yeast; they will be a wave offering of the firstfruits to Yahweh.[18]You must present with the bread seven lambs one year old and without blemish, one young bull from the herd, and two rams. They must be a burnt offering to Yahweh, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire and producing a sweet aroma for Yahweh.
[19]You must offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old for a sacrifice, as fellowship offerings.
[20]The priest must wave them together with the bread of the firstfruits before Yahweh, and present them to him as an offering with the two lambs. They will be holy offerings to Yahweh for the priest.[21]You must make a proclamation on that same day. There will be a holy assembly, and you must do no ordinary work. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations in all the places where you live.

[22]When you reap the harvest of your land, you must not completely reap the corners of your fields, and you must not gather the gleanings of your harvest. You must leave them for the poor and for the foreigner. I am Yahweh your God.'"

[23]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[24]"Speak to the people of Israel and say, 'In the seventh month, the first day of that month will be a solemn rest for you, a memorial with the blowing of trumpets, and a holy assembly.[25]You must do no ordinary work, and you must offer a sacrifice made by fire to Yahweh.'"

[26]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[27]"Now the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It is to be a holy assembly, and you must humble yourselves and present to Yahweh an offering by fire.
[28]You must do no work on that day because it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for yourselves before Yahweh your God.[29]Whoever does not humble himself on that day must be cut off from his people.
[30]Whoever does any work on that day, I, Yahweh, will destroy him from among his people.[31]You must do no work of any kind on that day. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations in all the places where you live.
[32]This day must be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you must humble yourselves the ninth day of the month at the evening. From evening to evening you are to observe your Sabbath."

[33]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[34]"Speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'On the fifteenth day of the seventh month will be the Festival of Shelters for Yahweh. It will last seven days.
[35]On the first day there must be a holy assembly. You must do no ordinary work.[36]For seven days you must offer a sacrifice made by fire to Yahweh. On the eighth day there must be a holy assembly, and you must make a sacrifice offered with fire to Yahweh. This is a solemn assembly, and you must not do any ordinary work.

[37]These are the appointed festivals for Yahweh, which you must proclaim as holy assemblies to offer sacrifice by fire to Yahweh, a burnt offering and a grain offering, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its own day.[38]These festivals will be in addition to the Sabbaths of Yahweh and your gifts, all your vows, and all your freewill offerings that you give to Yahweh.

[39]Regarding the Festival of Shelters, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land, you must keep this festival of Yahweh for seven days. The first day will be a solemn rest, and the eighth day will also be a solemn rest.
[40]On the first day you must take the best fruit from the trees, branches of palm trees, and leafy branches of thick trees, and willows from streams, and you will rejoice before Yahweh your God for seven days.[41]For seven days each year, you must celebrate this festival for Yahweh. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations in all the places where you live. You must celebrate this festival in the seventh month.
[42]You must live in small shelters for seven days. All who were born in Israel must live in small shelters for seven days,[43]so that your descendants, generation after generation, may learn how I made the people of Israel live in such shelters when I led them out of the land of Egypt. I am Yahweh your God.'"[44]In this way, Moses announced to the people of Israel the appointed festivals for Yahweh.

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Leviticus 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The feasts

The people should celebrate the Sabbath, the Passover, the Feast of First Fruits, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Booths. These feasts were important for the religious life of Israel. They were a part of proper worship of Yahweh and the identity of Israel. (See: sabbath, passover and firstfruit and atonement)

Links:

Leviticus 23:1 Notes

Leviticus 23:2

the appointed festivals for Yahweh

These were festivals that the Lord had appointed times for. The people were to worship him at these festivals. Alternate translation: "the festivals for Yahweh" or "Yahweh's festivals"

Leviticus 23:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do on special days and times.

the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest

This is something the people must do habitually. After every six days in which they can work, they must rest on the seventh day.

a holy assembly

The requirement that people assemble to worship God on that day is spoken of as if that day were the assembly. Alternate translation: "a holy day, when you must assemble together to worship me"

Leviticus 23:4

at their appointed times

"at their proper times"

Leviticus 23:5

first month, on the fourteenth day of the month

The first month of the Hebrew calendar marks when Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. The fourteenth day is around the beginning of April on the Western calendar.

at twilight

"at sunset"

Leviticus 23:6

the fifteenth day of the same month

The "same month" is the first month of the Hebrew calendar

Leviticus 23:7

The first day you must set apart to gather together

"You must set apart the first day to gather together" or "You must treat the first day as different and gather together"

Leviticus 23:8

will present a food offering

They would present it to Yahweh by burning it on the altar.

The seventh day is an assembly set apart to Yahweh

The requirement that people assemble on that day is spoken of as if that day were the assembly. Being set apart to Yahweh means that when they assemble, they must worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "The seventh day is a day when you must assemble together to worship Yahweh"

Leviticus 23:11

for it to be accepted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh to accept it" or "and I will accept it"

Leviticus 23:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Leviticus 23:13

two-tenths of an ephah

An ephah is 22 liters. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters"

a fourth of a hin

A hin is 3.7 liters. Alternate translation: "one liter"

Leviticus 23:14

nor roasted or fresh grain

"nor cooked or uncooked grain"

This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations

This means that they and their descendants must obey this command forever. See how you translated this in Leviticus 3:17.

Leviticus 23:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Leviticus 23:16

fifty days

"50 days"

seventh

This is the ordinal for number seven. See:

Leviticus 23:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

made from two-tenths of an ephah. They must be made from fine flour and baked with yeast

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you have made from two-tenths of an ephah of flour and then baked with yeast"

two-tenths of an ephah

This is approximately 4.5 liters. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters"

Leviticus 23:18

producing a sweet aroma for Yahweh

The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will be pleased with you" or "that pleases the Yahweh"

Leviticus 23:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

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Leviticus 23:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

When you reap the harvest of your land, you must not completely reap the corners of your fields

"When you gather your crops, do not gather them all the way to the edges of your fields"

Leviticus 23:24

the seventh month, the first day of that month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of September on Western calendars.

a solemn rest

a period of time that was only for worship and not for work

Leviticus 23:25

you must offer a sacrifice made by fire to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must offer a sacrifice that you make by fire to Yahweh" or "you must burn an offering on the altar to Yahweh"

Leviticus 23:27

tenth day of this seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of September on Western calendars.

the Day of Atonement

On this day each year the high priest made a sacrifice to Yahweh so that Yahweh would forgive all the sins of the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the Day of Sacrifice for Forgiveness"

Leviticus 23:28

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do every year.

Leviticus 23:29

must be cut off from his people

Being excluded is spoken of as being cut off. See how you translated this idea in [Leviticus 7:20]

Leviticus 23:30

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do every year.

on that day

"on the Day of Atonement"

Leviticus 23:31

This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations

This means that they and their descendants must obey this command forever. See how you translated a similar phrase in Leviticus 3:17.

Leviticus 23:32

a Sabbath of solemn rest

This is not the same as the Sabbath they observed every week on the seventh day. This was a special Sabbath on the Day of Atonement.

you must humble yourselves

In this case humbling themselves implies that they would not eat any food. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "you must humble yourselves and eat nothing"

the ninth day of the month

This refers to the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The ninth day is near the end of September on Western calendars. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the ninth day of the seventh month"

From evening to evening

"From sunset to sunset on the next day"

Leviticus 23:34

fifteenth day of the seventh month

This is near the beginning of October on Western calendars.

Festival of Shelters

This is a celebration during which the people of Israel lived in temporary shelters for seven days as a way to remember the time they spent living in the wilderness after they left Egypt.

Leviticus 23:35

General Information:

Yahweh is giving instructions for the Festival of Shelters.

Leviticus 23:37

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do every year.

These are the appointed festivals

This refers to the festivals mentioned in 23:1-36.

Leviticus 23:39

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do every year.

Festival of Shelters

This is a celebration during which the people of Israel lived in temporary shelters for seven days as a way to remember the time they spent living in the wilderness after they left Egypt. See how you translated it in Leviticus 23:34.

fifteenth day of the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of October on Western calendars.

when you have gathered in the fruits

The word "fruits" here represents various kinds of crops. Alternate translation: "after you have gathered the crops"

Leviticus 23:40

General Information:

Yahweh continues his instructions for the Festival of Shelters.

branches of palm trees ... willows from streams

Possible uses for these branches are 1) to make temporary shelters or 2) to wave them as part of their joyous celebration. Some translations state their use clearly; other translations leave it implicit.

willows

trees with long, narrow leaves, which grow near water

Leviticus 23:42

General Information:

Yahweh continues his instructions for the Festival of Shelters.

Leviticus 23:43

your descendants, generation after generation, may learn

"Generation after generation" here is an idiom that refers to each generation that lives after another. Alternate translation: "your descendants belonging to all future generations may learn" or "all your descendants may learn forever"

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24 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[2]"Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil beaten from olives to be used in the lamp, that the light may burn continually.
[3]Outside the curtain before the covenant decrees in the tent of meeting, Aaron must continually, from evening to morning, keep the lamp lit before Yahweh. This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations.[4]The high priest must always keep the lamps lit before Yahweh, the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold.

[5]You must take fine flour and bake twelve loaves with it. There must be two-tenths of an ephah in each loaf.[6]Then you must set them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold before Yahweh.
[7]You must put pure incense along each row of loaves as a representative offering. This incense will be an offering made by fire for Yahweh.[8]Every Sabbath day the high priest must regularly set out the bread before Yahweh on behalf of the people of Israel, as a sign of an everlasting covenant.[9]This offering will be for Aaron and his sons, and they are to eat it in a place that is holy, for it is a portion from the offerings to Yahweh made by fire."

[10]Now it happened that the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the people of Israel. This son of the Israelite woman fought against a man of Israel in the camp.[11]The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the name of Yahweh and cursed God, so the people brought him to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, from the tribe of Dan.[12]They held him in custody until Yahweh himself should declare his will to them.

[13]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying,[14]"Take the man who has cursed God outside the camp. All who heard him must lay their hands on his head, and then the entire assembly must stone him.
[15]You must explain to the people of Israel and say, 'Whoever curses his God must carry his own sin.[16]He who blasphemes the name of Yahweh must surely be put to death. All the assembly must certainly stone him, whether he is a foreigner or a native-born Israelite. If anyone blasphemes the name of Yahweh, he must be put to death.
[17]If anyone strikes down another human being, he must certainly be put to death.[18]If anyone strikes down someone's animal, he must pay it back, life for life.
[19]If anyone injures his neighbor, it must be done to him as he did to his neighbor:[20]fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has caused an injury to a person, so must it also be done to him.[21]Anyone who kills an animal must pay it back, and anyone who kills a person must be put to death.
[22]You must have the same law for both the foreigner and the native-born Israelite, for I am Yahweh your God.'"[23]So Moses spoke to the people of Israel, and the people brought the man outside the camp, the one who had cursed Yahweh. They stoned him with stones. The people of Israel carried out the command of Yahweh to Moses.

Leviticus 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Cursing God

The punishment for someone who curses God is to have stones thrown at him until he is dead. This was acceptable in ancient Israel, but it is no longer considered acceptable. (See: curse)

Links:

Leviticus 24:1 Notes

Leviticus 24:1

General Information:

God gives Moses instructions about the things in the tent of meeting.

Leviticus 24:2

pure oil beaten from olives

"pure olive oil"

the lamp

This refers to the lamp or lamps in Yahweh's sacred tent. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the lamp in the tent of meeting"

Leviticus 24:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues giving Moses instructions about the things in the tent of meeting.

Outside the curtain before the covenant decrees

The phrase "covenant decrees" represents either the tablets that the decrees were written on or the box that the tablets were put in. These were kept in the very holy place, which was the room behind the curtain in the tent of meeting. Alternate translation: "Outside the curtain that is in front of the tablets of the covenant decrees" or "Outside the curtain that is in front of the box of the covenant"

curtain

This was a thick fabric hung as a wall. It was not like a light window curtain.

from evening to morning

"from sunset to sunrise" or "all night"

This will be a permanent statute throughout your people's generations

This means that they and their descendants must obey this command forever. See how you translated a similar phrase in Leviticus 3:17.

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Leviticus 24:5

Connecting Statement:

God continues giving Moses instructions about the things in the tent of meeting.

two-tenths of an ephah

This is about 4.5 liters. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters"

Leviticus 24:6

the table of pure gold before Yahweh

This table is in the holy place, which is before the most holy place.

Leviticus 24:7

Connecting Statement:

God continues giving Moses instructions about the things in the tent of meeting.

You must put pure incense along each row of loaves

The incense was probably next to the loaves rather than directly on the loaves. Alternate translation: "You must put pure incense next to the loaves in each row"

as a representative offering

What the incense would represent can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to represent the loaves as an offering" or "to be an offering that represents the loaves"

This incense will be an offering made by fire for Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will burn this incense as an offering for Yahweh"

Leviticus 24:9

This offering

"This bread that is offered"

for it is a portion from the offerings

"for they took it from the offerings"

the offerings to Yahweh made by fire

"the burnt offerings to Yahweh" or "the offerings that you burn to Yahweh"

Leviticus 24:10

Now it happened

This phrase marks a new section of the book.

Leviticus 24:11

blasphemed the name of Yahweh and cursed God

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "blasphemed Yahweh by cursing him" or "said terrible things about Yahweh"

Shelomith

This is the name of a woman.

Dibri

This is the name of a man.

Leviticus 24:14

All who heard him must lay their hands on his head

They were to put their hands on his head to show that he was the guilty one.

Leviticus 24:15

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what they must do to the man who cursed God.

must carry his own sin

A person suffering because he is guilty of sin is spoken of as if the guilt were a physical object that he is carrying. Alternate translation: "must suffer for his sin" or "must be punished

Leviticus 24:16

must surely be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people must surely put him to death" or "the people must surely kill him"

Leviticus 24:17

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what the people must do when someone does something bad.

he must certainly be put to death.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must certainly put to death anyone who kills another person"

Leviticus 24:18

must pay it back

How he would pay it back can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "must pay it back by giving him a live animal"

life for life

This is an idiom that means that one life would replace the other. Alternate translation: "one life to replace the other life" or "to replace the one that he killed"

Leviticus 24:19

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what the people must do when someone does something bad.

it must be done to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must do to him"

Leviticus 24:20

fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth

These phrases emphasize that a person should receive the same harm he did to someone else.

fracture for fracture

This refers to broken bones. Alternate translation: "broken bone for broken bone" or "If he breaks someone's bone, one of his bones must be broken" or "If he breaks someone's bone, they will break one of his bones"

eye for eye

This refers to eyes being seriously injured or gouged out. Alternate translation: "If he destroys someone's eye, one of his bones must be destroyed" or "If he destroys someone's eye, they will destroy his eye"

tooth for tooth

This refers to teeth being knocked out of the mouth. Alternate translation: "If he knocks out someone's tooth, one of his teeth must be knocked out" or "If he knocks out someone's tooth, they will knock out one of his teeth"

Leviticus 24:21

anyone who kills a person must be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they must put to death anyone who kills a person"

Leviticus 24:23

carried out the command

"obeyed the command"

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25 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you come into the land that I give you, then the land must be made to keep a Sabbath for Yahweh.
[3]You must plant your field for six years, and for six years you must prune your vineyard and gather the produce.[4]But in the seventh year, a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land must be observed, a Sabbath for Yahweh. You must not plant your field or prune your vineyard.
[5]You must not conduct an organized harvest of whatever grows by itself, and you must not conduct an organized harvest of whatever grapes grow on your unpruned vines. This will be a year of solemn rest for the land.[6]Whatever the unworked land grows during the Sabbath year will be food for you. You, your male and female servants, your hired servants and the foreigners who live with you may gather food,[7]and your livestock and also wild animals may eat whatever the land produces.

[8]You must count off seven Sabbaths of years, that is, seven times seven years, so that there will be seven Sabbaths of years, totaling forty-nine years.[9]Then you must blow a loud ram's horn everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you must blow a ram's horn throughout all your land.
[10]You must set apart the fiftieth year to Yahweh and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It will be a Jubilee for you, in which property and slaves must be returned to his own clan.
[11]The fiftieth year will be a Jubilee for you. You must not plant or conduct an organized harvest, and you must not gather the grapes that grow on the unpruned vines.[12]For it is a Jubilee, which will be holy for you. You must eat the produce that grows by itself out of the fields.

[13]You must return everyone to his own property in this year of Jubilee.
[14]If you sell any land to your neighbor or buy any land from your neighbor, you must not cheat or wrong each other.
[15]If you buy land from your neighbor, consider the number of years and crops that can be harvested until the next Jubilee. Your neighbor selling the land must consider that also.[16]A larger number of years until the next Jubilee will increase the value of land, and a smaller number of years until the next Jubilee will decrease the value, because the number of harvests the land will produce for the new owner is related to the number of years before the next Jubilee.[17]You must not cheat or wrong one another; instead, you must honor your God, for I am Yahweh your God.

[18]Therefore you must obey my decrees, keep my laws, and carry them out. Then you will live in the land in safety.[19]The land will yield its produce, and you will eat your fill and live there in safety.
[20]You might say, "What will we eat during the seventh year? Look, we cannot plant or gather our produce."[21]I will command my blessing to come upon you in the sixth year, and it will produce harvest enough for three years.[22]You will plant in the eighth year and continue to eat from the previous years' produce and the stored food. Until the harvest of the ninth year comes in, you will be able to eat from the provisions stored in the previous years.

[23]The land must not be sold to a new permanent owner, because the land is mine. You are all foreigners and sojourners on my land.[24]You must observe the right of redemption for all the land that you acquire; you must allow the land to be bought back by the family from whom you bought it.[25]If your fellow Israelite became poor and for that reason sold some of his property, then his nearest relative must come and redeem what his brother has sold.
[26]If a man has no relative to redeem his property, but if he has prospered and has the ability to redeem it,[27]then he may calculate the years since the land was sold and repay the balance to the man to whom he sold it. Then he may return to his own property.[28]But if he is not able to get the land back for himself, then the land he has sold will remain in the ownership of the one who bought it until the year of Jubilee. At the year of Jubilee, the land will be returned to the man who sold it, and the original owner will return to his property.

[29]If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may buy it back within a whole year after it was sold. For a full year he will have the right of redemption.[30]If the house is not redeemed within a full year, then the house in the walled city will become the permanent property of the buyer throughout his generations. It is not to be returned in the year of Jubilee.
[31]But the houses of the villages that have no wall around them will be considered as the field of the land. They may be redeemed, and they must be returned during the year of Jubilee.[32]As for the cities of the Levites, the houses owned by the Levites in the cities they possess may be redeemed at any time.
[33]If one of the Levites does not redeem a house he sold, then the house that was sold in the city where it is located must be returned in the year of Jubilee, for the houses of the cities of the Levites are their property among the people of Israel.
[34]But the fields around their cities may not be sold because they are the permanent property of the Levites.

[35]If your fellow countryman becomes poor, so that he can no longer provide for himself, then you must help him as you would help a foreigner or a sojourner so that he may live among you.[36]Do not take from him interest or usury, but honor your God so that your brother may keep living with you.[37]You must not give him a loan of money and charge interest, nor

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sell him your food to earn a profit.[38]I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, in order that I might give you the land of Canaan, and that I might be your God.

[39]If your fellow countryman has become poor and sells himself to you, you must not make him work like a slave.[40]Treat him as a hired servant. He must be like a sojourner. He will serve with you until the year of Jubilee.[41]Then he will go away from you, he and his children with him, and he will return to his own clan and to his fathers' property.
[42]For they are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. They will not be sold as slaves.[43]You must not rule over them severely, but you must honor your God.[44]As for your male and female slaves, whom you can obtain from the nations who live around you, you may buy slaves from them.
[45]You may also buy slaves from the foreigners who are living among you and from their clans who are with you, who have been born in your land, and they may become your property.[46]You may provide such slaves as an inheritance for your children after you, to hold as property, and make them slaves for life, but you must not rule over your brothers among the people of Israel severely.

[47]If a foreigner or someone living temporarily with you has become wealthy, and if one of your fellow Israelites has become poor and sells himself to that foreigner, or to a member of a foreigner's clan,[48]after your fellow Israelite has been bought, he may be bought back. Someone in his family may redeem him.
[49]It might be the person's uncle, or his uncle's son, who redeems him, or anyone who is in his clan. Or, if he has become prosperous, he may redeem himself.[50]He must bargain with the man who bought him; they must count the years from the year he sold himself to his purchaser until the year of Jubilee. The price of his redemption must be figured in keeping with the rate paid to a hired servant, for the number of years he might continue to work for the one who bought him.
[51]If there are still many years until the year of Jubilee, he must pay back as the price for his redemption an amount of money that is in proportion to the number of those years.[52]If there are only a few years to the year of Jubilee, then he must bargain with his purchaser to reflect the number of years left before the year of Jubilee, and he must pay for his redemption in keeping with the number of years.
[53]He is to be to the purchaser like a man hired year by year. The purchaser is not to rule over him severely.[54]If he is not redeemed by these means, then he must serve until the year of Jubilee, he and his children with him.[55]To me the people of Israel are servants. They are my servants whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am Yahweh your God.'"

Leviticus 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Over-farming

There is a provision made in this chapter to prevent over-farming of the land. If a land is farmed every year with the same crops, it will quickly become unable to grow anything.

Sabbath and Jubilee Years

Every seventh year, the land should not be planted. Every fiftieth year Israelite slaves must be freed and all land that has been bought returned to its original owners. This prevented people from getting trapped by their poverty.

Links:

Leviticus 25:1 Notes

Leviticus 25:2

the land must be made to keep a Sabbath for Yahweh

The land is spoken of as if it were a person that could obey the Sabbath by resting. Just as the people had to rest every seventh day, people were to honor God by not farming the land every seventh year. Alternate translation: "you must obey the Sabbath law by letting the land rest every seventh year for Yahweh" or "you must obey Yahweh's Sabbath by not farming the land every seventh year"

Leviticus 25:3

prune your vineyard

To prune a vineyard is to cut the branches and vines to help the fruit grow better.

Leviticus 25:4

a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land must be observed

Not farming the land is spoken of as letting the land rest. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must observe a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land" or "you must obey the Sabbath law by not farming the land every seventh year"

Leviticus 25:5

You must not conduct ... for the land

Yahweh will not allow the owner of a field to organize his workers and harvest the land as he does the other six years. However, Yahweh will allow individuals to go through the fields to pick and eat the fruit they find.

your unpruned vines

This means that no one has taken care of the vines and cut them as they do during the other six years. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your vines that you do not prune"

Leviticus 25:6

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Whatever the unworked land ... who live with you may gather food
Yahweh will not allow the owner of a field to organize his workers and harvest the land as he does the other six years. However, Yahweh will allow individuals to go through the fields to pick and eat the fruit they find.
Whatever the unworked land grows
"whatever grows on the unworked land"
the unworked land
This means that no one has taken care of the gardens or farms as they do during the other six years. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your gardens that you do not tend"
Leviticus 25:7
whatever the land produces
"whatever grows on the land"
Leviticus 25:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
there will be seven Sabbaths of years
"they will be seven sets of seven years"
forty-nine years
"49 years"
Leviticus 25:9
the tenth day of the seventh month
This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of September on Western calendars.
the Day of Atonement
On this day each year the high priest would make a sacrifice to Yahweh so that Yahweh would forgive all the sins of the people of Israel. See how you translated this in Leviticus 23:27.
Leviticus 25:10
fiftieth year
This is an ordinal number. Alternate translation: "year 50"
a Jubilee for you
The Jubilee was a year when the Jews had to return land to its' original owners and set slaves free. Alternate translation: "a year of restoration for you" or "a year for you to return land and free slaves"
property and slaves must be returned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must return property and slaves"
Leviticus 25:11
a Jubilee for you
"a year of restoration" or "a year for you to return the land." It can be stated clearly who they were returning the land to. Alternate translation: "a year for you to return the land to me"
Leviticus 25:12
You must eat the produce that grows by itself out of the fields
Yahweh did not allow the land owner to organize his workers and harvest the land as he did the other six years. However, he did allow individuals to go through the fields and eat what they find.
Leviticus 25:13
this year of Jubilee
"this year of restoration" or "this year to return land and free slaves"
Leviticus 25:15
General Information:
God continues telling Moses what the people must do.
that can be harvested
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you can harvest"
the next Jubilee
"the next year of restoration" or "the next year to return land"
Leviticus 25:18
obey my decrees, keep my laws, and carry them out
All of these phrases mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that the people must obey everything Yahweh says.
Leviticus 25:19
you will eat your fill
This means that they would eat enough until their stomach was full. Alternate translation: "you will eat till you are full" or "you will eat plenty"
Leviticus 25:20
You might say
Here "You" refers to the people of Israel.
Leviticus 25:21
I will command my blessing to come upon you
God speaks of his blessing as if it were a person that could obey him. Alternate translation: "I will send my blessing on you" or "I will bless you"
Leviticus 25:22
from the provisions stored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from the food you store"
Leviticus 25:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
The land must not be sold to a new permanent owner
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not sell your land permanently to another person"
Leviticus 25:24
You must observe the right of redemption
The noun "redemption" can be expressed with the verbs "redeem" or "buy back." Alternate translation: "You must remember that the original owner has the right to redeem the land whenever he wants"
you must allow the land to be bought back by the family from whom you bought it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must allow the family from whom you bought the land to buy it back"
Leviticus 25:27
the land was sold
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he sold the land"
repay the balance to the man to whom he sold it
This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "repay to the purchaser who bought it the money the purchaser would have made"
Leviticus 25:28
the year of Jubilee

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"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land." See how you translated it in Leviticus 25:10.

the land will be returned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who had bought it will return the land"

will return to his property

"will go back to his land"

Leviticus 25:29

after it was sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after he sold it"

the right of redemption

The noun "redemption" can be expressed with the verbs "redeem" or "buy back." Alternate translation: "the right to redeem it"

Leviticus 25:30

If the house is not redeemed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If he or his family does not redeem the house"

the buyer throughout his generations

"the buyer and his descendants"

It is not to be returned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The man who bought that house will not have to return it"

the year of Jubilee

"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land and free slaves"

Leviticus 25:31

But the houses of the villages that have no wall

Some villages did not have a wall around them.

They may be redeemed, and they must be returned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You may buy back those houses, and those who bought them must return them"

the year of Jubilee

"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land and free slaves"

Leviticus 25:32

the houses owned by the Levites in the cities they possess

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the houses that the Levites own in their cities"

may be redeemed at any time

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Levites may redeem them at any time"

Leviticus 25:33

the house that was sold in the city where it is located must be returned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who bought the house in the city where it is located must return it"

the year of Jubilee

"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land and free slaves"

their property among the people of Israel

The land of Canaan was divided up among the people of Israel, but of that land, the Levites were only given 48 cities with the fields around them. Alternate translation: "their part of the land that the Israelites possessed" or "their property in the land of Israel"

Leviticus 25:34

But the fields around their cities may not be sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the Levites must not sell the fields around their cities"

Leviticus 25:35

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Leviticus 25:36

Do not take from him interest or usury

The words "interest" and "usury" both refer to a lender requiring more from the borrower than he originally lent. Alternate translation: "Do not require him to pay back any more than you lent him"

Leviticus 25:39

you must not make him work like a slave

The owner was to treat the Israelite with more respect than he would treat a slave.

Leviticus 25:40

Treat him as a hired servant

The owner was to treat the Israelite with more respect than he would treat a slave.

the year of Jubilee

"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land and free slaves"

Leviticus 25:42

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what he must tell the people.

they are my servants

"your fellow countrymen are my servants"

They will not be sold as slaves

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not sell them as slaves"

Leviticus 25:44

you may buy slaves from them

"you may buy slaves from those nations"

Leviticus 25:48

after your fellow Israelite has been bought, he may be bought back.

Someone in his family may redeem him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after the foreigner buys your fellow Israelite, someone in the Israelite's family may buy him back"

Leviticus 25:50

until the year of Jubilee

An Israelite could be a slave only until the year of Jubilee. These instructions are for when an Israelite wanted to buy back his freedom before the year of Jubilee.

the year of Jubilee

"the year of restoration" or "the year to return land and to free slaves"

The price of his redemption must be figured

The verb "figured" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They must figure the price of his redemption" or "They must figure how much to pay for the foreigner to set the Israelite free"

in keeping with the rate paid to a hired servant

If the Israelite bought back his freedom, the foreigner would have to hire a servant to do the work that the Israelite would have done but will not. The verbs "paid" and "hired" can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "according to the rate a person would pay to

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hire a servant"

for the number of years he might continue to work

"for the number of years until the jubilee that the Israelite would have continued to work but will not"

Leviticus 25:51

he must pay back

"the Israelite slave must pay back"

Leviticus 25:53

rule over him severely

"rule over him in a way that harms him" or "treat him badly"

Leviticus 25:54

If he is not redeemed by these means

This can be stated in active form, and who he is to be redeemed from can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "If no one redeems him by these means from the one who bought him as a slave"

by these means

"in this way"

he must serve until the year of Jubilee, he and his children with him

The Israelite slave and his children would serve the foreigner until the year of Jubilee, and then the foreigner would have to set the Israelite and his children free.

Leviticus 25:55

To me the people of Israel are servants

"For it is to me that the people of Israel are servants." This is the reason that God wanted the Israelites to be set free in the year of jubilee. They were his servants. They were not permitted to be anyone else's permanent slave.

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26 [1]"You must make no idols, and you must not lift up a carved figure or a sacred stone pillar, and you must not place any carved stone image in your land to which you bow down, for I am Yahweh your God.[2]You must keep my Sabbaths and honor my sanctuary. I am Yahweh.

[3]If you walk in my laws and keep my commandments and obey them,[4]then I will give you rain in its season; the land will yield its produce, and the trees of the field will yield their fruit.
[5]Your threshing will continue to the time of the grape harvest, and the grape harvest will extend to the planting season. You will eat your bread to the full and live safely where you make your home in the land.[6]I will give peace in the land; you will lie down with nothing to make you afraid. I will take the dangerous animals away from the land, and the sword will not pass through your land.
[7]You will chase your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword.[8]Five of you will chase away a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand; your enemies will fall before you by the sword.
[9]I will look at you with favor and make you fruitful and multiply you; I will establish my covenant with you.[10]You will eat food stored a long time. You will have to bring out the stored food because you will need the room for the new harvest.
[11]I will place my tabernacle among you, and I will not detest you.[12]I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.[13]I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, so that you would not be their slaves. I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you to walk standing up straight.

[14]But if you will not listen to me, and will not obey all these commandments,[15]and if you reject my decrees and detest my laws, so that you will not obey all my commandments, but break my covenant—
[16]if you do these things, then I will do this to you: I will inflict terror on you, diseases and fever that will destroy the eyes and will drain away your life. You will plant your seeds in vain, because your enemies will eat their produce.[17]I will set my face against you, and you will be overpowered by your enemies. Men who hate you will rule over you, and you will run away, even when no one is chasing you.
[18]If after all this you do not listen to me, then I will punish you seven times as severely for your sins.[19]I will break your pride in your power. I will make the sky over you like iron and your land like bronze.[20]Your strength will be used up in vain, because your land will not produce its harvest, and your trees in the land will not produce their fruit.

[21]If you walk against me and will not listen to me, I will bring seven times more blows on you, in proportion to your sins.
[22]I will send wild animals against you, which will rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you so few in number that your roads will be desolate.

[23]If in spite of these things you still do not accept my correction and you continue to walk in opposition to me,[24]then I will also walk in opposition to you, and I myself will punish you seven times because of your sins.
[25]I will bring a sword on you that will execute vengeance for breaking the covenant. You will be gathered together inside your cities, and I will send a plague among you there, and then you will be delivered into the hand of your enemy.[26]When I cut off your staff of food, ten women will be able to bake your bread in one oven, and they will distribute your bread by weight. You will eat but not be satisfied.

[27]If you do not listen to me despite these things, but continue to walk against me,[28]then I will walk against you in anger, and I will punish you even seven more times as much for your sins.
[29]You will eat the flesh of your sons; you will eat the flesh of your daughters.[30]I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and throw your corpses on the corpses of your idols, and I myself will abhor you.

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[31]I will turn your cities into ruins and destroy your sacred places. I will not be pleased with the aroma of your offerings.[32]I will devastate the land. Your enemies who will live there will be shocked at the devastation.[33]I will scatter you among the nations, and I will draw out my sword and follow you. Your land will be devastated, and your cities will be ruined.

[34]Then the land will enjoy its Sabbaths for as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' lands. During that time, the land will rest and enjoy its Sabbaths.[35]As long as it lies desolate, it will have rest, which will be the rest that it did not have with your Sabbaths, when you lived in it.
[36]As for those of you who are left in your enemies' lands, I will send fear into your hearts so that even the sound of a leaf blowing in the wind will startle you, and you will flee as though you were fleeing from the sword. You will fall, even when no one is chasing you.
[37]You will stumble over each other as though you were running from the sword, even though no one is chasing you. You will have no power to stand before your enemies.[38]You will perish among the nations, and your enemies' land will itself devour you.[39]Those who are left among you will waste away in their iniquity, there in your enemies' lands, and because of their fathers' iniquities they will waste away as well.

[40]Yet if they confess their iniquity and their fathers' iniquity, and the unfaithfulness that they committed against me, and also their walking against me—[41]which caused me to turn against them and I brought them into the land of their enemies—if their uncircumcised hearts become humbled, and if they accept the punishment for their sins,[42]then will I call to mind my covenant with Jacob, my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham; also, I will call the land to mind.
[43]The land will be abandoned by them, so it will be pleased with its Sabbaths while it lies desolate without them. They will have to pay the penalty for their iniquity because they themselves rejected my decrees and detested my laws.
[44]Yet despite all this, when they are in their enemies' land, I will not reject them, neither will I detest them so as to completely destroy them and do away with my covenant with them, for I am Yahweh their God.[45]But for their sakes I will call to mind the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, so that I might be their God. I am Yahweh."

[46]These are the commandments, decrees, and laws that Yahweh made between himself and the people of Israel at Mount Sinai through Moses.

Leviticus 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Worship only Yahweh

If people obey God and worship only him, he will bless and protect them. If people disobey his law and if they worship other gods, then he will severely punish them to help them to repent and begin obeying him. This takes the form of a promise. (See: lawofmoses and repent and promise)

Links:

Leviticus 26:1 Notes

Leviticus 26:1
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Leviticus 26:2
keep my Sabbaths
"obey the rules for my Sabbaths"
Leviticus 26:3
walk in my laws and keep my commandments and obey them
These are three ways of saying the same thing. They emphasize that the people must obey everything that God commands them to do. Alternate translation: "If you carefully obey my laws and commands"
walk in my laws
Behaving according to the laws is spoken of as if they were to walk in the laws. Alternate translation: "If you behave according to my laws" or "if you live according to my laws"
Leviticus 26:5
will eat your bread to the full
Here bread represents food. "To the full" means until their stomachs were full of food. Alternate translation: "will eat food until you are full" or "will have plenty of food to eat"
Leviticus 26:6
I will give peace in the land
"I will cause there to be peace in the land"
the sword will not pass through your land
Here the word "sword" represents enemy armies or enemy attacks. Alternate translation: "no armies will attack you"
Leviticus 26:7
they will fall before you by the sword
Here "falling" represents dying, and "the sword" represents either attacking people with a sword or battle in general. Alternate translation: "they will die when you attack them with the sword" or "you will kill them in battle"
Leviticus 26:8
Five of you will chase away a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand

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This means the Israelites will have victory against larger armies.

Five ... hundred ... ten thousand

"5 ... 100 ... 10,000"

Leviticus 26:9

I will look at you with favor

"I will show you favor" or "I will bless you"

make you fruitful and multiply you

These two phrases refer to God causing them to have many descendants so they become a large group.

make you fruitful

God speaks of them having many children as if they were trees that bear a lot of fruit. Alternate translation: "cause you to have many children"

Leviticus 26:10

You will eat food stored a long time

"You will have enough food stored to eat for a long time" or "you will have enough food to store and eat it for a long time"

Leviticus 26:11

I will place my tabernacle among you

"I will put my dwelling place among you"

I will not detest you

"I will accept you"

Leviticus 26:12

I will walk among you

Walking among them represents living with them. Alternate translation: "I will live with you"

Leviticus 26:13

I have broken the bars of your yoke

God speaks of their slavery as if they had to wear a yoke that animals wear in order to do hard work. Breaking the bars of the yoke represents setting them free. Alternate translation: "I have set you free from the hard labor they made you do"

Leviticus 26:14

General Information:

Yahweh is telling Moses what will happen if the people do not obey his commands.

Leviticus 26:16

if you do these things

The phrase "these things" refers to the things listed in Leviticus 26:14-15.

I will inflict terror on you

Here "terror" represents the things that will cause them to be terrified. Alternate translation: "I will send disasters that will terrify you"

will drain away your life

"will slowly take away your life" or "will slowly make you die." It is the diseases and the fever that will do this.

You will plant your seeds in vain

The phrase "in vain" means that they would get nothing from their work. Alternate translation: "You will plant your seeds, but you will not get anything from them"

Leviticus 26:17

I will set my face against you

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "I have made up my mind to oppose you"

you will be overpowered by your enemies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will defeat you"

Leviticus 26:18

seven times

Here "seven times" is not literal. It means Yahweh will increase the severity of his punishment.

Leviticus 26:19

I will break your pride in your power

Using force to cause them not to be proud is spoken of as if he were to break their pride. Alternate translation: "I will punish you and so end the pride that you feel about your power" or "I will punish you so that you will no longer be proud of your power"

I will make the sky over you like iron and your land like bronze

This means God will stop the rain from falling from the sky. This will make the ground hard so that people cannot plant seed or grow crops.

Leviticus 26:20

Your strength will be used up in vain

Working very hard is spoken of as if they were to use all their strength until they had no more strength. The phrase "in vain" means that they would get nothing from working so hard. Alternate translation: "You will work very hard in vain" or "You will work very hard, but you will not receive anything good from working so hard"

Leviticus 26:21

walk against me

Walking represents behavior. Walking against God represents opposing him or rebelling against him. Alternate translation: "rebel against me"

I will bring seven times more blows on you

The abstract noun "blows" can be stated as the verb "hit." Alternate translation: "I will hit you seven times as much"

I will bring seven times more blows on you

Yahweh causing disasters to happen to the Israelites is spoken of as if he would strike them with blows or hit them. Alternate translation: "I will cause seven times as many disasters to come against you" or "I will punish you seven times more severely"

seven times

Here "seven times" is not literal. It means Yahweh will increase the severity of his punishment.

in proportion to your sins

The noun "sins" can be expressed with the verb "sin." Alternate translation: "according to how much you have sinned"

Leviticus 26:22

which will rob you of your children

Stealing is a euphemism or metaphor for killing. Alternate translation: "which will kill your children"

your roads will be desolate

"no one will travel on your roads"

Leviticus 26:23

If in spite of these things

"If when I punish you like this" or "If I discipline you like this and"

you still do not accept my correction

Accepting his correction represents responding rightly to it. In this case responding rightly to it is choosing to obey him.

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Alternate translation: "you still do not listen to my correction" or "you still do not obey me"

walk in opposition to me

Walking represents behavior. Walking in opposition to him means opposing him or fighting against him. Alternate translation: "oppose me" or "fight against me"

Leviticus 26:24

I will also walk in opposition to you

Walking represents behavior. Walking in opposition to them means opposing them or fighting against them. Alternate translation: "I also will oppose you" or "I also will fight against you"

I myself will punish you seven times

The number 7 represents completeness. Alternate translation: "I will personally punish you many times" or "I myself will punish you most severely"

because of your sins

The noun "sins" can be expressed with the verb "sin." Alternate translation: "because you continue to sin against me"

Leviticus 26:25

I will bring a sword on you

Here the word "sword" represents an army or an attack from an army. Alternate translation: "I will bring an enemy army against you" or "I will cause an enemy army to attack you"

that will execute vengeance

"that will punish you"

for breaking the covenant

"for disobeying the covenant" or "because you disobey the covenant"

You will be gathered together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will gather together" or "You will hide"

you will be delivered into the hand of your enemy

Here "into the hand" means "into the control" and refers to defeat by their enemy. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will deliver you into the hand of your enemy" or "I will allow your enemy to control you"

Leviticus 26:26

When I cut off your staff of food

The word "staff" here refers to the staff a weak person leans on as he walks and is a metaphor for something that people rely on for life. Breaking this staff is a metaphor for destroying the food supply, either by destroying the crops in the fields or stopping the people from trading. Alternate translation: "When I stop you from being able to get food" or "When I make it impossible for you to get the food you depend on"

ten women will be able to bake your bread in one oven

This implies that there will be so little flour that one small oven will be able to hold all the bread that many women can put into it.

they will distribute your bread by weight

This means there will be so little food that they will have to measure how much each person gets.

Leviticus 26:27

If you do not listen to me

Listening represents obeying what he has said. Alternate translation: "If you do not obey me"

to walk against me

Walking represents behavior. Walking against someone represents opposing him or fighting against him. Alternate translation: "to oppose me" or "to fight against me"

Leviticus 26:28

I will walk against you

Walking represents behavior. Walking against someone represents opposing him or fighting against him. Alternate translation: "I will oppose you"

I will punish you even seven more times as much

Here "seven more times" is not literal. It means Yahweh will increase the severity of his punishment.

Leviticus 26:30

I will destroy ... cut down ... throw your corpses

Because God would send an army to do these things, he speaks as if he would do them. Alternate translation: "I will send an enemy army to destroy ... cut down ... throw your corpses"

your corpses

"your dead bodies"

the corpses of your idols

God speaks of idols not being alive as if they had been alive and then died. Alternate translation: "your lifeless idols"

Leviticus 26:31

I will turn your cities into ruins and destroy your sacred places

Because God would send armies to do these things, he speaks as if he would do them. Alternate translation: "I will send enemy armies to turn your cities into ruins and destroy your sacred places"

your sacred places

These were places where people worshiped idols instead of God.

I will not be pleased with the aroma of your offerings

Normally the Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with those who burn the offering. But in this case, people would burn offerings, but God would not be pleased with them. Alternate translation: "You will burn offerings, but I will not be pleased with you"

Leviticus 26:33

I will draw out my sword and follow you

This represents sending armies to attack them. Alternate translation: "I will send enemy armies to attack you" or "I will send enemy armies to attack you with their swords"

Your land will be devastated, and your cities will be ruined

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will devastate your land and destroy your cities"

Leviticus 26:34

Then the land will enjoy its Sabbaths

The people were supposed to obey the Sabbath law by not farming the land every seventh year. God speaks about this as if the land were a person that would obey the Sabbath law and rest. Alternate translation: "Then the land will rest according to the Sabbath law" or "Then, as required by the Sabbath law, the land will not be farmed"

Leviticus 26:35

it will have rest

God speaks about the land not being farmed as if it were a

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person that would rest. Alternate translation: "it will not be farmed"

Leviticus 26:36

I will send fear into your hearts

Sending fear into their hearts represents making them afraid. Alternate translation: "I will make you terribly afraid"

as though you were fleeing from the sword

The sword represents either someone who is ready to kill using a sword or an attack from an enemy army. Alternate translation: "as though you were fleeing from someone who was chasing you with a sword" or "as though you were fleeing from an enemy army"

Leviticus 26:37

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing what will happen to the Israelites when they are forced to go to their enemies' countries.

as though you were running from the sword

The sword represents either someone who is ready to kill using a sword or an attack from an enemy army. Alternate translation: "as though you were running away from someone who was chasing you with a sword" or "as though you were running away from an enemy army"

to stand before your enemies

Standing before the enemies represents not falling when the enemies attack and fighting against them. Alternate translation: "to resist your enemies when they attack you" or "to fight back against your enemies"

Leviticus 26:38

your enemies' land will itself devour you

Yahweh speaks about the enemies' land as if it were a wild animal that would eat the Israelites. The word "devour" emphasizes that most of the Israelites will die there. Alternate translation: "you will die in your enemies' land"

Leviticus 26:39

Those who are left among you

"Those of you who do not die"

waste away in their iniquity

Wasting away in their sins represents wasting away because of their sins.

their fathers' iniquities

Here "their fathers" represents their ancestors.

Leviticus 26:40

their fathers' iniquity

The word "fathers" represents their ancestors.

Leviticus 26:41

to turn against them

This represents opposing them. Alternate translation: "to oppose them"

if their uncircumcised hearts become humbled

Here the term "uncircumcised hearts" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "if they will be humble instead of stubbornly disobedient"

Leviticus 26:42

then will I call to mind my covenant with Jacob, my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham

"Call to mind" here is an idiom meaning "intentionally remember." Here it represents fulfilling his covenant. Alternate translation: "then I will fulfill the covenant I made with Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham"

I will call the land to mind

"Call to mind" here is an idiom meaning "intentionally remember." Here it represents fulfilling his promise concerning the land. Alternate translation: "I will fulfill my promise about the land"

Leviticus 26:43

The land will be abandoned by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel will abandon their land"

so it will be pleased with its Sabbaths

Yahweh speaks about the land as if it were a person who is happy about resting, because no one will be planting seed or growing crops on it. This will allow the land to become more fertile. Alternate translation: "so it will benefit from the Sabbaths"

Leviticus 26:44

General Information:

This concludes Yahweh's message to Moses at Mount Sinai regarding the blessings for obedience and the punishments for disobedience.

Leviticus 26:45

I will call to mind the covenant with their ancestors

"Call to mind" here is an idiom meaning "intentionally remember." Here it represents fulfilling his covenant. Alternate translation: "I will fulfill the covenant with their ancestors"

in the sight of the nations

This represents the knowledge of the nations. Alternate translation: "in the knowledge of the nations" or "and the nations knew about it"

the nations

This represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations"

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27 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'If anyone makes a special vow to Yahweh, use the following valuations.

[3]Your standard value for a male from twenty to sixty years old must be fifty shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary.[4]For a female of the same ages your standard value must be thirty shekels.

[5]From five years to twenty years old your standard value for a male must be twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.[6]From one month old to five years your standard value for a male must be five shekels of silver, and for a female three shekels of silver.

[7]From sixty years old and up for a male your standard value must be fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels.[8]But if the person making the vow cannot pay the standard value, then the person being given must be presented to the priest, and the priest will value that person by the amount the one making the vow is able to afford.

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[9]If what is vowed is an animal that people can give as an offering to Yahweh, any part of that animal that is given to Yahweh becomes holy.[10]The person must not exchange it or substitute a good one for a bad one, or a bad for a good one. If he substitutes one animal for another, both it and the substitute become holy.
[11]However, if what is vowed is an unclean animal that people cannot give as an offering to Yahweh, then the person must bring the animal to the priest.[12]The priest will value it, by the market value of the animal. Whatever value the priest places on the animal, that will be its value.[13]If the owner wishes to redeem it, then a fifth of its value is to be added to its redemption price.

[14]When a man sets apart his house as a holy gift to Yahweh, then the priest will set its value as either good or bad. Whatever the priest values it, so it will be.[15]But if the owner who set apart his home wishes to redeem it, he must add a fifth of its value to its redemption price, and it will belong to him.

[16]If a man sets apart to Yahweh some of the fields of his property, then the valuation of it will be in proportion to the amount of seed required to plant it—a homer of barley will be valued at fifty shekels of silver.
[17]If he sets apart his field during the year of Jubilee, the valuation of it will stand.[18]But if he sets apart his field after the year of Jubilee, then the priest must calculate the value of the field by the number of years that remain until the next year of Jubilee, and the valuation of it must be reduced.
[19]If the man who set apart the field wishes to redeem it, then he must add a fifth to the valuation, and it will belong to him.
[20]If he does not redeem the field, or if he has sold the field to another man, it cannot be redeemed any more.[21]Rather, the field, when it is released in the year of Jubilee, will be a holy gift to Yahweh, like the field that has been completely given to Yahweh. It will belong to the priest.
[22]If a man sets apart a field that he has bought, but that field is not part of his family's land,[23]then the priest will figure the valuation of it up to the year of Jubilee, and the man must pay its value on that day as a holy gift to Yahweh.
[24]In the year of Jubilee, the field will return to the man from whom it was bought, to the one whose property the land is.
[25]All the valuations must be set by the weight of the sanctuary shekel. Twenty gerahs must be the equivalent of one shekel.

[26]No one may set apart the firstborn among animals, since the firstborn already belongs to Yahweh; whether ox or sheep, it is Yahweh's.[27]If it is an unclean animal, then the owner may buy it back at the valuation of it, and a fifth must be added to that value. If the animal is not redeemed, then it is to be sold at the set value.

[28]But nothing that a man devotes to Yahweh, from all that he has, whether man or animal, or his family land, may be sold or redeemed. Everything that is devoted is very holy to Yahweh.[29]No ransom may be paid for the person who is devoted for destruction. That person must be put to death.

[30]All the tithe of the land, whether grain grown on the land or fruit from the trees, is Yahweh's. It is holy to Yahweh.[31]If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth to its value.
[32]As for every tenth of the herd or the flock, whatever passes under the shepherd's rod, one-tenth must be set apart to Yahweh.[33]The shepherd must not search for the better or the worse animals, and he must not substitute one for another. If he changes it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed will be holy. It cannot be redeemed.'"

[34]These are the commandments that Yahweh gave at Mount Sinai to Moses for the people of Israel.

Leviticus 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Dedicated to Yahweh

This chapter records the manner in which people make vows of dedication to Yahweh. There are many reasons why a person would dedicate something to Yahweh. (See: vow)

Links:

Leviticus 27:1 Notes

Leviticus 27:2

If anyone makes a special vow to Yahweh

In this case the vow would involve giving oneself or another person to God. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "If anyone vows to give someone to Yahweh"

use the following valuations

Instead of giving the person, he would give the Lord a certain amount of silver. Alternate translation: "use the following values as your gift to the Lord in place of the person" or "give the Lord the following amounts of silver instead of the person"

Leviticus 27:3

Your standard value

"The amount to pay" or "You must pay"

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twenty ... sixty ... fifty
"20 ... 60 ... 50"
fifty shekels of silver
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "fifty pieces of silver, each of which weighs ten grams" or "five hundred grams of silver"
after the shekel of the sanctuary
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. It weighed about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "Use the kind of shekel that is used in the sanctuary" or "When you weigh the silver, use the weight that is used in the sanctuary"
Leviticus 27:4
thirty shekels
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "thirty pieces of silver, each of which weighs ten grams" or "three hundred grams of silver"
thirty
"30"
Leviticus 27:5
five ... twenty ... ten
"3"
your standard value
"the amount to pay" or "you must pay"
twenty shekels
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "twenty pieces of silver" or "two hundred grams of silver"
for the female ten shekels
The phrases "of that age" and "your standard value must be" are left out, but are meant to be understood. Alternate translation: "for the female of that age your standard value must be ten shekels"
ten shekels
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "ten pieces of silver" or "one hundred grams of silver"
Leviticus 27:6
five shekels of silver
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "five pieces of silver" or "fifty grams of silver"
five ... three
"5 ... 3"
three shekels
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "three pieces of silver" or "thirty grams of silver"
Leviticus 27:7
sixty years old and up
"sixty years old and older"
sixty ... fifteen ... ten
"60 ... 15 ... 10"
fifteen shekels
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "fifteen pieces of silver" or "150 grams of silver"
for a female ten shekels
The phrases "of that age" and "your standard value must be" are left out, but are meant to be understood. Alternate translation: "for a female of that age your standard value must be ten shekels"
Leviticus 27:8
the person being given must be presented to the priest
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must present to the priest the person he is giving"
Leviticus 27:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
any part of that animal that is given to Yahweh becomes holy
"you must set apart to Yahweh any part of that animal that that person has given to Yahweh"
Leviticus 27:10
both it and the substitute
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "both it and the one he exchanges it for" or "both animals"
Leviticus 27:11
is an unclean animal that people cannot give as an offering to Yahweh
If Yahweh will not accept a certain animal as an offering, the animal is spoken of as if it were physically dirty. It may be unclean because it is a certain kind of animal or because it has a defect. Alternate translation: "is in fact one that Yahweh will not accept because it is unclean"
Leviticus 27:12
market value
This is the value the animal is normally worth when someone buys or sells it.
Leviticus 27:13
wishes to redeem it
"wishes to buy it back"
Leviticus 27:15
he must add a fifth of its value to its redemption price
A "fifth" is a part of something that is divided into five equal parts. Alternate translation: "he must divide the value of the house into five equal parts, add the amount equal to one of those parts, and pay all of it"
Leviticus 27:16
a homer of barley will be valued at
Here "a homer of barley" represents a piece of land that would need one homer of barley in order to plant on all of it. Alternate translation: "a piece of land that requires one homer of barley in order to plant all of it will be valued at" or 'the value of land that requires one homer of barley will be"
homer
A homer is 220 liters.
fifty shekels of silver
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two way of doing it. Alternate translation: "fifty pieces of silver, each of which weighs ten grams" or "five hundred grams of silver"
Leviticus 27:17
the year of Jubilee
This occurs every 50 years. See how you translated "Jubilee" in Leviticus 25:10.

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the valuation of it will stand
"Stand" represents "remain" or "remain the same." Alternate translation: "its value will remain the same" or "its value will be the full amount"
Leviticus 27:18
the valuation of it must be reduced
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must reduce the estimated value"
Leviticus 27:20
If he does not redeem the field
The time for redeeming the field can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: If he does not redeem the field before the year of Jubilee"
it cannot be redeemed any more
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he can no longer buy it back"
Leviticus 27:21
in the year of Jubilee
"in the year of restoration" or "the year for you to return land and free slaves." This was a year when the Jews had to return land to its original owners and set slaves free. See how you translated it in Leviticus 25:13
that has been completely given to Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone has completely given to Yahweh"
Leviticus 27:24
the man from whom it was bought ... the one whose property the land is
These two phases refer to the same person. Normally the land would be bought from its owner.
the man from whom it was bought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man who sold it"
Leviticus 27:25
All the valuations must be set
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The priests must determine the estimated values"
by the weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent.
Twenty gerahs must be the equivalent of one shekel
The purpose of this sentence is to tell how much the sanctuary shekel weighs. The gerah was the smallest unit of weight that the Israelites used. Alternate translation: "One shekel must equal twenty gerahs"
Twenty gerahs must be the equivalent of one shekel
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here is a way to do it. Alternate translation: "One shekel must weigh ten grams"
Leviticus 27:26
No one may set apart
"No one may set apart to Yahweh"
Leviticus 27:27
a fifth must be added to that value
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must add a fifth to that value"
If the animal is not redeemed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If the person does not buy back the animal"
it is to be sold at the set value
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priest must sell it at the set value"
Leviticus 27:28
nothing that a man devotes to Yahweh, from all that he has, whether man or animal, or his family land, may be sold or redeemed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one may sell or redeem anything a man has devoted to Yahweh, from all that he has, whether it is a human, an animal, or his family land" or "if a man devotes to Yahweh anything he has, whether human or animal, or his family land, no one may sell or redeem it"
Everything that is devoted is very holy to Yahweh
"Everything that anyone devotes to Yahweh is very holy to Yahweh"
Leviticus 27:29
No ransom may be paid
This can be stated in active form. "No one may pay a ransom"
for the person who is devoted for destruction
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for any person whom Yahweh has devoted to destruction"
for the person who is devoted for destruction
Why a person would be devoted to destruction can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "for any person whom Yahweh has determined should die because of his sin"
That person must be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must put that person to death" or "you must kill that person"
Leviticus 27:31
If a man redeems any of his tithe
"If a man wants to buy back any of his tithe"
Leviticus 27:32
whatever passes under the shepherd's rod
This refers to the way they would count their animals. Alternate translation: "when you count your animals by raising your shepherd rod and having them walk under it to the other side" or "when you count the animals"
one-tenth must be set apart to Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must set apart one-tenth to Yahweh"
one-tenth
"every tenth animal"
Leviticus 27:33
then both it and that for which it is changed
"then both animals"
It cannot be redeemed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He cannot redeem it" or "He cannot buy it back"
Leviticus 27:34
These are the commandments
This is a summary statement. It refers to the commandments that were given in the past chapters.

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Introduction to Numbers

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Numbers

Preparing to leave Sinai (1:1–10:10) Counting and assembling the tribes (1:1–4:49) Regulations (5:1–6:27) Dedicating the altar (7:1-89) Setting up the lampstand (8:1-4) Setting apart the Levites (8:5–29) Second Passover; the cloud to lead them; trumpets (9:1–10:10)
Sinai to Moab, through the wilderness (10:11–17:13) Complaining and murmuring (10:11–11:15) The quails (11:16–35) Miriam's leprosy (12:1–16) The spies selected and sent (13:1–14:45) Commands (15:1-41) Korah's rebellion (16:1–17:13)
The Priests and purifying (18:1-19:22) Priests and Levites (18:1–32) The law about purifying (19:1–22)
Conflicts (20:1–21:35) Miriam's death (20:1–13) Edom's refusal and Aaron's death (20:14–29) Journey to Moab (21:1–35)
The Plains of Moab (22:1–36:13) Balaam (22:1–24:25) Baal Peor (25:1–18) The second counting (26:1-65) Inheritance rights for daughters (27:1–11) Joshua succeeds Moses (27:12–23) Offerings and women's vows (28:1–30:16) Midianite war (31:1–54) Across the Jordan (32:1–42) The people set up camp (33:1–56) Land west of the Jordan; cities for Levites and cities of refuge (34:1–35:34) Female heirs marry (36:1-13)

What is the Book of Numbers about?

The Book of Numbers tells about the people of Israel as they traveled from Mount Sinai in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. While traveling, the Israelites became discouraged. So they rebelled against the leaders whom God had given them. The people of Israel refused to enter the Promised Land. Because the Israelites were afraid and did not trust God, he delayed their entry into the Promised Land for forty years (13:1–14:45). (See: promisedland)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The title of this book, "Numbers," refers to when the number of the Israelites was counted. The people of the project language may already be familiar with the name "Numbers" from other Bible versions. If not, the translator could consider a clearer name for the book, such as "The Counting of the People of Israel." (See: census)

Who wrote the Book of Numbers?

The writers of both the Old and New Testament present Moses as being very involved with writing the Book of Numbers. However, at a later time, scribes and priests probably put the book into its present form. They may have included text from other sources. One such source was "the scroll of the Wars of Yahweh" (21:14).

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How does Numbers present the idea of the whole community being responsible when only a few people sinned?

The people understood and assumed that God would punish the whole community of Israel if some of the people rebelled against him. God did often punish the entire nation when some of them sinned. All of the people in the ancient Near East would have understood and expected this. However, Moses and Aaron prayed for God to punish only those who were guilty.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why does Moses speak using third person pronouns about himself?

When an author wrote about something he was involved in, it was common for him to use the pronoun "he" instead of "I," or "they" instead of "we." The translator may decide to use the project's normal pronouns instead.

Numbers

1 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the wilderness of Sinai. This happened on the first day of the second
month during the second year after the people of Israel had come out from the land of Egypt. Yahweh said,[2]"Conduct a census of the whole congregation of the men of Israel by their clans, by their ancestral households. Number them by name. Count all the males man by man,[3]who is twenty years old or older. Count all who can fight as soldiers for Israel. You and Aaron must record the number of men in their armed groups.
[4]A man from each tribe, a clan head, must serve with you as his tribe's leader. Each leader must lead the men who will fight for his ancestors' household.[5]These are the names of the leaders who must fight with you:
From the tribe of Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur;
6 from the tribe of Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai;

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7 from the tribe of Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab;
8 from the tribe of Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar;
9 from the tribe of Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon;

10 from the tribe of Ephraim son of Joseph, Elishama son of Ammihud;
from the tribe of Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur;

11 from the tribe of Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni;

12 from the tribe of Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai;
13 from the tribe of Asher, Pagiel son of Okran;
14 from the tribe of Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel;
15 and from the tribe of Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan."

16These were the men appointed from the people. They led their ancestors' tribes. They were the leaders of the clans in Israel.
17Moses and Aaron took these men, who were recorded by name,18and they assembled the whole community together on the first day of the second month. The men twenty years old and older registered their ancestry by name, by their clans, by their ancestral households. They were numbered man by man.19Then Moses recorded their numbers in the wilderness of Sinai, as Yahweh had commanded him to do.

20From the descendants of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted man by man.21They counted 46,500 men from the tribe of Reuben.

22From the descendants of Simeon, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the mustered men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted man by man.23They counted 59,300 men from the tribe of Simeon.

24From the descendants of Gad, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.25They counted 45,650 men from the tribe of Gad.

26From the descendants of Judah, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.27They counted 74,600 men from the tribe of Judah.

28From the descendants of Issachar, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.29They counted 54,400 men from the tribe of Issachar.

30From the descendants of Zebulun, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.31They counted 57,400 men from the tribe of Zebulun.

32From the descendants of Ephraim son of Joseph, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.33They counted 40,500 men from the tribe of Ephraim.

34From the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.35They counted 32,200 men from the tribe of Manasseh.

36From the descendants of Benjamin, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.37They counted 35,400 men from the tribe of Benjamin.

38From the descendants of Dan, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.39They counted 62,700 from the tribe of Dan.

40From the descendants of Asher, from the records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.41They counted 41,500 men from the tribe of Asher.

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[42]From the descendants of Naphtali, from the genealogical records, by their clans, by their ancestral households, the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted.[43]They counted 53,400 from the tribe of Naphtali.

[44]Moses and Aaron counted all these men, together with the twelve men who were leading Israel, each from his ancestor's household.[45]So all the men of Israel from twenty years old and older, all who could fight in war, were counted in each of their ancestral households.[46]They counted 603,550 men.

[47]But the Levites were not counted according to their ancestors' tribes[48]because Yahweh had said to Moses,[49]"You must not count the tribe of Levi or include them in the total of the people of Israel.
[50]Rather, assign the Levites to care for the tabernacle of the covenant decrees, and to care for all the furnishings in the tabernacle and for everything in it. The Levites must carry the tabernacle, and they must carry the tabernacle's furnishings. They must care for the tabernacle and make their camp around it.
[51]When the tabernacle is to move to another place, the Levites must take it down. When the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites must set it up. Any stranger who comes near the tabernacle must be killed.[52]When the people of Israel set up their tents, each man must do so near the banner that belongs to his armed group.
[53]However, the Levites must set up their tents around the tabernacle of the covenant decrees so that my anger does not come upon the people of Israel. The Levites must perform the duties of the tabernacle of the covenant decrees."[54]The people of Israel did all these things. They did everything that Yahweh commanded through Moses.

Numbers 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 1:5-15 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.

Census

They counted how many men of military age were in each tribe of Israel. These men would also become the heads of families. It is possible the numbers in this chapter are rounded to the nearest 100.

Links:

Numbers 1:1 Notes Numbers intro

Numbers 1:1

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

the first day of the second month

This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of April on Western calendars.

the second year

"year 2"

Numbers 1:2

males man by man

"males, one by one" or "males, head by head" or "males, each one"

Numbers 1:3

twenty years old

"20 years old"

record the number of men in their armed groups

This refers to assigning the men to their military divisions.

Numbers 1:4

a clan head

"a leader of a clan"

serve with you

"help you"

Numbers 1:5

Elizur ... Shedeur

These are names of men.

Numbers 1:6

Shelumiel ... Zurishaddai

These are names of men.

Numbers 1:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues to list the leaders of the tribes to Moses.

Numbers 1:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to list the leaders of the tribes to Moses.

Numbers 1:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues to list the leaders of the tribes to Moses.

Numbers 1:16

the men appointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men whom Yahweh appointed"

Numbers 1:17

took these men

"gathered these men together"

who were recorded by name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose names they had recorded"

Numbers 1:18

the first day of the second month

This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. The first

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day is near the middle of April on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:1]

man by man

"one by one" or "head by head"

Numbers 1:20

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they counted by name all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war"

older, able to go to war, were

"older—men who were able to go to war—were"

counted man by man

"counted one by one" or "counted head by head"

Numbers 1:21

46,500 men

"forty-six thousand five hundred men"

Numbers 1:22

the names of all the mustered men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

mustered men

"men they had called to fight"

counted man by man

"counted one by one" or "counted head by head"

Numbers 1:23

59,300 men

"fifty-nine thousand three hundred men"

Numbers 1:24

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:25

45,650 men

"forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty men"

Numbers 1:26

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:27

74,600 men

"seventy-four thousand six hundred men"

Numbers 1:28

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:29

54,400 men

"fifty-four thousand four hundred men"

Numbers 1:30

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

older, able to go to war, were

"older—men who were able to go to war—were." See how you translated this in Numbers 1:20.

Numbers 1:31

57,400 men

"fifty-seven thousand four hundred men"

Numbers 1:32

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:33

40,500 men

"forty thousand five hundred men"

Numbers 1:34

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:35

32,200 men

"thirty-two thousand two hundred men"

Numbers 1:36

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:37

35,400 men

"thirty-five thousand four hundred men"

Numbers 1:38

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:39

They counted 62,700

"They counted sixty-two thousand seven hundred"

Numbers 1:40

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

older, able to go to war, were

"older—men who were able to go to war—were." See how you translated this in Numbers 1:20.

Numbers 1:41

They counted 41,500

"They counted forty-one thousand five hundred"

Numbers 1:42

the names of all the men twenty years old or older, able to go to war, were counted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:43

They counted 53,400

"They counted fifty-three thousand four hundred"

Numbers 1:45

So all the men of Israel ... were counted in each of their ancestral households

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The phrase "were counted" can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20]

Numbers 1:46

603,550 men

"six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men"

Numbers 1:47

the Levites were not counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses and Aaron did not count the Levites"

Numbers 1:49

must not count the tribe of Levi

Here the "tribe of Levi" refers to all of the men in the tribe of Levi. Alternate translation: "must not count the men of the tribe of Levi"

Numbers 1:50

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it.

everything in it

Here "it" refers to the tabernacle.

The Levites must carry the tabernacle

It was their job to carry the tabernacle when they traveled. Alternate translation: "When you travel, the Levites must carry the tabernacle"

make their camp around it

This means that they were to set up their tents around the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "set up their tents around it"

Numbers 1:51

When the tabernacle is to be set up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When it is time to set up the tabernacle"

Any stranger ... must be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Any stranger ... must die" or "You must kill any stranger who comes near the tabernacle"

Numbers 1:52

the banner

a large flag

his armed group

"his military division"

Numbers 1:53

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it. See how you translated this in Numbers 1:50.

so that my anger does not come upon the people of Israel

Here Yahweh speaks of not punishing the Israelites as his anger not coming upon them. The phrase "come upon" refers to his anger being applied to them. Alternate translation: "so that in my anger I do not punish the people of Israel"

perform the duties of the tabernacle

"do all the work connected to the tabernacle" or "take care of everything connected to the tabernacle" or "keeping watch over the tabernacle"

Numbers 1:54

Yahweh commanded through Moses

Yahweh had commanded Moses everything that the Israelites were to do, and then Moses had commanded the Israelites.

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2 [1]Yahweh spoke again to Moses and Aaron. He said,[2]"Each one of the people of Israel must camp around his standard,
with the banners of their fathers' houses. They will camp around the tent of meeting on every side.
[3]Those will be camping on the east of the tent of meeting, where the sun rises, they are the camp of Judah by their armed groups, and they are camping under their standard. Nahshon son of Amminadab is the leader of the people of Judah.[4]The number of the host of the people of Judah is 74,600.
[5]The tribe of Issachar must camp next to Judah. Nethanel son of Zuar must lead the army of Issachar.[6]The number of the host of the people of Issachar is 54,400 men.
[7]The tribe of Zebulun must camp next to Issachar. Eliab son of Helon must lead the army of Zebulun.[8]The number of the host of the people of Zebulun is 57,400.
[9]All the number of the camp of Judah is 186,400. They will set out first.

[10]On the south side will be the camp of Reuben under their standard. The leader of the camp of Reuben is Elizur son of Shedeur.[11]The number of the host of the people of Reuben is 46,500.
[12]Simeon is camping next to Reuben. The leader of the tribe of Simeon is Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.[13]The number of the host of the people of Simeon is 59,300.
[14]The tribe of Gad is next. The leader of the people of Gad is Eliasaph son of Deuel.[15]The number of the host of the people of Gad is 45,650.
[16]The number of all the men assigned to the camp of Reuben, according to their divisions, is 151,450. They will set out second.

[17]Next, the tent of meeting must go out from the camp with the Levites in the middle of all the camps. They must go out from the camp in the same order as they come into the camp. Every man must be in his place, by his banner.

[18]On the west side will be the divisions of the camp of Ephraim under their standard. The leader of the people of Ephraim is Elishama son of Ammihud.[19]The number of the host of the people of Ephraim is 40,500.

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[20]Next to them is the tribe of Manasseh. The leader of Manasseh is Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.[21]The number of the host of the people of Manasseh is 32,200.
[22]Next will be the tribe of Benjamin. The leader of Benjamin is Abidan son of Gideoni.[23]The number of the host of the people of Benjamin is 35,400.
[24]All those numbered in the camp of Ephraim is 108,100. They will set out third.

[25]On the north will be the divisions of the camp of Dan. The leader of the people of Dan is Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.
[26]The number the host of the people of Dan is 62,700.
[27]The people of the tribe of Asher camp next to Dan. The leader of Asher is Pagiel son of Okran.[28]The number the host of the people of Asher is 41,500.
[29]The tribe of Naphtali is next. The leader of Naphtali is Ahira son of Enan.[30]The number of the host of the people of Naphtali is 53,400.
[31]All those numbered in the camp with Dan is 157,600. They will go out from the camp last, under their banner."

[32]These are the descendants of Israel, numbered according to their ancestral households. All those counted in their camps, by their divisions, are 603,550.[33]But the Levites were not counted along with the people of Israel, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[34]The people of Israel did everything that Yahweh commanded Moses. They camped by their banners. They went out from the camp by their clans, in the order of their ancestor's households.

Numbers 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Camping

Moses told each tribe where to camp. They were each given a specific area in which to stay.

Links:

Numbers 2:1 Notes

Numbers 2:2

around his standard

The "standards" were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards was represented by a banner.

with the banners of their fathers' houses

Each extended family also had a banner under with the camp, which was within the area designated for their standard.

banners

A banner is a large flag.

Numbers 2:3

under their standard

The "standards" were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together, and was represented by a banner. See how you translated "standards" in Numbers 2:2.

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:7.

Numbers 2:4

74,600

"seventy-four thousand six hundred"

Numbers 2:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:8.

Numbers 2:6

host

"division." This is a military term for a large group of soldiers.

54,400 men

"fifty-four thousand four hundred men"

Numbers 2:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:9.

Numbers 2:8

57,400

"fifty-seven thousand four hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "57,400 men"

Numbers 2:9

All the number ... is 186,400

"All the number ... is one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred." This number includes all of the men in the tribes that camped under the standard of Judah. Alternate translation: "The number of the men camped under the standard of Judah is 186,400"

the camp of Judah

This refers to the three tribes that camp east of the tent of meeting: the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

They will set out first

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp

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of Judah will start walking out before the other tribes do. Alternate translation: "When travelling, the camp of Judah will start walking first" or "When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave first"

Numbers 2:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

under their standard

The "standards" were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards were represented by a banner. See how you translated "standards" in Numbers 2:2.

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:5.

Numbers 2:11

46,500

"forty-six thousand five hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "46,500 men"

Numbers 2:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:6.

Numbers 2:13

59,300

"Fifty-nine thousand three hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "59,300 men"

Numbers 2:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:14.

Numbers 2:15

45,650

"forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "45,650 men"

Numbers 2:16

The number of all the men ... is 151,450

"The number of all the men ... is one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty." This number includes all of the men in the tribes that camped under the standard of Reuben. Alternate translation: "The number of all the men camped under the standard of Reuben, according to their divisions, is 151,450"

They will set out second

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp of Reuben will start walking out after the camp of Judah goes out. Alternate translation: "When travelling, the camp of Reuben will start walking second" or "When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave next"

Numbers 2:17

the tent of meeting must go out ... in the middle of all the camps

This means that the tent of meeting must be carried by the Levites in the middle of the tribes as they travel.

They must go out

"They" refers to the twelve tribes.

by his banner

Each man does not have his own personal banner; rather, this refers to the banner belonging to his tribe. Alternate translation: "by his tribe's banner"

Numbers 2:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

under their standard

The "standards" were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards were represented by a banner. See how you translated "standards" in Numbers 2:2.

Numbers 2:19

40,500

"Forty thousand five hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "40,500 men"

Numbers 2:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Next to them

This means that the tribe of Manasseh will set out next, after the tribe of Ephraim.

Numbers 2:21

32,200

"Thirty-two thousand two hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "32,200 men"

Numbers 2:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:11.

Numbers 2:23

35,400

"Thirty-five thousand four hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "35,400 men"

Numbers 2:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

All those numbered ... 108,100

"All those numbered ... one hundred and eight thousand one hundred." This number includes all of the men in the tribes that camped under the standard of Ephraim. Alternate translation: "The number of the men camped under the standard of Ephraim is 108,100"

They will set out third

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp of Ephraim will start walking out after the camp of Judah and the camp of Reuben go out. Alternate translation: "When travelling, the camp of Ephraim will start walking third" or "When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave next"

Numbers 2:25

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.

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the divisions of the camp of Dan
The this refers to the divisions of Dan, Asher, and Naphthali that are under the standard of Dan. Alternate translation: "the divisions that camp under the standard of Dan"
Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:12.
Numbers 2:26
62,700
"Sixty-two thousand seven hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "62,700 men"
Numbers 2:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.
Pagiel son of Okran
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:13.
Numbers 2:28
41,500
"forty-one thousand five hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "41,500 men"
Numbers 2:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.
Ahira son of Enan
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:15.
Numbers 2:30
53,400
"fifty-three thousand four hundred." This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "53,400 men"
Numbers 2:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where each tribe and its army will camp around the tent of meeting.
All those numbered ... 157,600
"All those numbered ... one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred." This number includes all of the men in the tribes that camped under the standard of Dan. Alternate translation: "The number of the men camped under the standard of Dan is 157,600"
Numbers 2:32
All those counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses and Aaron counted them all"
by their divisions
Here "their" refers to the people of Israel.
are 603,550
"are six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty"
Numbers 2:34
They went out from the camp
This refers to when they would travel to another place. Alternate translation: "When they traveled, they went out from the camp"

3 [1]Now this is the history of the descendants of Aaron and Moses when Yahweh spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai.[2]The
names of Aaron's sons were Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
[3]These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests who were anointed and who were ordained to serve as priests.[4]But Nadab and Abihu fell dead before Yahweh when they offered to him unacceptable fire in the wilderness of Sinai. Nadab and Abihu had no children, so just Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests with Aaron their father.

[5]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[6]"Bring the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest for them to help him.
[7]They must perform the duties on behalf of Aaron and the whole community before the tent of meeting. They must serve in the tabernacle.[8]They must care for all the furnishings in the tent of meeting, and they must help the tribes of Israel to carry out the tabernacle service.
[9]You must give the Levites to Aaron and his sons. They are wholly given to help him serve the people of Israel.[10]You must appoint Aaron and his sons as priests, but any foreigner who comes near must be put to death."

[11]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[12]"Look, I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel. I have done this instead of taking each firstborn, who opens the womb, from among the people of Israel. The Levites belong to me,[13]for all the firstborn belong to me. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I set apart for myself all the firstborn in Israel, both men and animals. They belong to me. I am Yahweh."

[14]Yahweh spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. He said,[15]"Count the descendants of Levi in each family, in their clans. Count every male who is one month old and older."[16]Moses counted them, following the word of Yahweh, just as he was commanded to do.

[17]The names of the sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.
[18]These are the names of the sons of Gershon, by their clans: Libni and Shimei.
[19]The sons of Kohath, by their clans: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.
[20]The sons of Merari, by their clans: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites, listed clan by clan.

[21]The clans of the Libnites and the Shimeites come from Gershon. These are the clans of the Gershonites.[22]All the males from a month old and older were counted, totaling 7,500.[23]The clans of the Gershonites must camp on the west side of the tabernacle.

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[24]Eliasaph son of Lael must lead the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites.[25]The family of Gershon must care for the tent of meeting including the tabernacle. They must care for the tent, its covering, and the curtain used as the entrance to the tent of meeting.[26]They must care for the courtyard hangings, the curtain at the courtyard entrance—the courtyard that surrounds the sanctuary and the altar. They must care for the ropes of the tent of meeting and for everything in it.

[27]These clans come from Kohath: the clan of the Amramites, the clan of the Izharites, the clan of the Hebronites, and the clan of the Uzzielites. These clans belong to the Kohathites.[28]8,600 males have been counted aged one month old and older to perform the duties of the sanctuary.[29]The Kohath clans must camp on the south side of the tabernacle.
[30]Elizaphan son of Uzziel must lead the ancestral households of the Kohathites.[31]They must care for the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the holy things that are used in their service, the curtain, and all the work around it.[32]Eleazar son of Aaron the priest must lead the men who lead the Levites. He must supervise the men who perform the duties of the holy place.

[33]Two clans have come from Merari: the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites. These clans have come from Merari.[34]6,200 males have been counted aged one month old and older.[35]Zuriel son of Abihail must lead the ancestral households of Merari. They must camp on the north side of the tabernacle.
[36]The descendants of Merari must care for the framing of the tabernacle, the crossbars, posts, bases, all the hardware, and everything related to them, including[37]the pillars and posts of the courtyard that surround the tabernacle, with their sockets, pegs, and ropes.

[38]Moses and Aaron and his sons must camp on the east side of the tabernacle, in front of the tent of meeting, toward the sunrise. They are responsible for performing the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the people of Israel. Any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary must be put to death.
[39]Moses and Aaron counted all the males in the clans of Levi who were aged one month old and older, just as Yahweh commanded. They counted twenty-two thousand men.

[40]Yahweh said to Moses, "Count all the firstborn males of the people of Israel who are aged one month old and older. List their names.[41]You must take the Levites for me—I am Yahweh—instead of all the firstborn of the people of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of the firstborn of the livestock of the descendants of Israel."
[42]Moses counted all the firstborn people of Israel as Yahweh had commanded him to do.[43]He counted all the firstborn males by name, aged one month old and older. He counted 22,273 men.

[44]Again, Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[45]"'Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the people of Israel, and take the Levites' livestock instead of the people's livestock. The Levites belong to me—I am Yahweh.
[46]For the redemption of the 273 firstborn sons of Israel who exceed the number of the Levites[47]you must collect five shekels for each of them. You must use the shekel of the sanctuary as your standard weight. The shekel equals twenty gerahs.[48]You must give the redemption money that you paid to Aaron and his sons."
[49]So Moses collected the redemption money from those who exceeded the number of those redeemed by the Levites.
[50]Moses collected the money from the firstborn of the people of Israel. He collected 1,365 shekels, weighing with the shekel of the sanctuary.[51]Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and to his sons. Moses did everything he was told to do by Yahweh's word, as Yahweh had commanded him.

Numbers 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The tribe of Levi

The Levites were given a special function in Israel. They belonged to or were specially dedicated to serve Yahweh. They were to be priests, and because of this they were held to a higher standard than the rest of Israel. Only two of Aaron's sons survived because his other two sons offered improper sacrifices. This tribe had a lot of responsibility during this time. (See: priest)

Links:

Numbers 3:1 Notes

Numbers 3:1

Now

Here the author uses the word "now" to shift to telling a new historical account.

Numbers 3:2

Nadab the firstborn

"Nadab, who was the firstborn"

Nadab ... Abihu ... Ithamar

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These are names of men.
Numbers 3:3
the priests who were anointed and who were ordained
This can be stated in active form Alternate translation: "the priests whom Moses anointed and ordained"
Numbers 3:4
Nadab ... Abihu ... Ithamar
See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 3:2.
fell dead before Yahweh
The phrase "fell dead" means to suddenly die. Alternate translation: "suddenly died before Yahweh"
before Yahweh
This refers to Yahweh's presence, meaning that Yahweh saw everything that happened. Alternate translation: "in Yahweh's presence"
they offered to him unacceptable fire
Here the word "fire" is used to refer to "burning incense." Alternate translation: "they burned an incense offering in a way that Yahweh did not approve of"
Numbers 3:6
Bring the tribe of Levi
Here the word "tribe" refers to the men in the tribe. Alternate translation: "Bring the men of the tribe of Levi"
Numbers 3:7
on behalf of
"for." This means to do something for someone else, as a representative for them.
Numbers 3:8
help the tribes of Israel
Here the "tribes of Israel" refer to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "help the people of Israel"
they must help the tribes of Israel to carry out the tabernacle service
The phrase "carry out" means to "serve." Alternate translation: "they must help the tribes of Israel by serving in the tabernacle"
tabernacle service
"work of the tabernacle"
Numbers 3:9
You must give
"You" refers to Moses.
They are wholly given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have given them entirely"
Numbers 3:10
any foreigner who comes near must be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must kill any foreigner who comes near" or "any foreigner who comes near must die"
but any foreigner who comes near
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "but any foreigner who comes near the tabernacle"
Numbers 3:12
Look
"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I have taken the Levites
"I have chosen the Levites"
each firstborn, who opens the womb
The phrase "opens the womb" is a way of talking about the first baby being born. Alternate translation: "every firstborn son, the first to come from the womb"
Numbers 3:15
Count the descendants
Yahweh was commanding Moses to only count the male descendants. Alternate translation: "Count the male descendants"
Numbers 3:16
following the word of Yahweh, just as he was commanded to do
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize that he obeyed Yahweh.
Numbers 3:17
General Information:
This is a list of the descendants of Levi.
Numbers 3:21
come from Gershon
Here the author speaks of "descending" as if it were "coming." Alternate translation: "descend from Gershon"
Libnites ... Shimeites ... Gershonites
"Libnites" and "Shimeites" are the name of clans, named after the head of their family. The "Gershonites" is the name of people who descended from Gershon.
Numbers 3:22
All the males from a month old and older were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses counted all the males from a month old and older"
7,500
"seventy-five hundred" or "seven thousand five hundred"
Numbers 3:24
Eliasaph ... Lael
These are the names of men.
Numbers 3:26
the courtyard hangings
"the curtains in the courtyard"
the courtyard that surrounds the sanctuary and the altar
"that is, the courtyard that surrounds the sanctuary and the altar"
Numbers 3:27
General Information:
This is a list of clans that descended from Kohath.
Kohath
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.
Numbers 3:28
8,600 males have been counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses counted 8,600 males"
8,600 males
"eight thousand six hundred males"
aged one month old and older
"from a month old and older"
perform the duties of the sanctuary
"do all the work connected to the sanctuary" or "take care of everything connected to the sanctuary" or "keeping watch over the sanctuary" See how you translated this in Numbers 1:53.
Numbers 3:30
General Information:
These verses give us information about the clans that descended from Kohath.

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Numbers 3:31
the holy things that are used in their service
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the holy things which the priests use for service"
Numbers 3:32
perform the duties of the holy place
"do all the work connected to the holy place" or "take care of everything connected to the holy place" or "keeping watch over the holy place" See how you translated similar words in Numbers 1:53.
Numbers 3:33
General Information:
This is a list of clans that descended from Merari.
Numbers 3:34
6,200 males have been counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses counted 6,200 males"
6,200 males
"six thousand two hundred males"
Numbers 3:36
the framing
This to the panels that they made by joining together smaller pieces of wood.
crossbars
These are support beams that give stability to the structure.
posts
A post is a strong piece of wood set upright and used as a support.
bases
The bases held the posts in place.
hardware
This means everything used to join the crossbars, posts, and bases together.
Numbers 3:37
with their sockets
Here "their" refers to the "pillars and posts."
sockets, pegs, and ropes
These are all items used secure the pillars and posts into place.
Numbers 3:38
his sons
Here "his" refers to Aaron
toward the sunrise
This is the east side of the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "on the east side, where the sun rises"
performing the duties of the sanctuary
"doing all the work connected to the sanctuary" or "taking care of everything connected to the sanctuary" or "keeping watch over the sanctuary" See how you translated similar words in Numbers 1:53.
Any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary must be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must kill any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary" or "Any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary must die"
Numbers 3:39
twenty-two thousand men
"22,000 men" or "22,000 males"
Numbers 3:41
the livestock of the Levites
This refers to all the Levites' livestock. Alternate translation: "you must take all the Levites' livestock"
Numbers 3:42
all the firstborn people
"all the firstborn sons"
Numbers 3:43
22,273 men
"twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three men"
Numbers 3:46
For the redemption of
The noun "redemption" can be translated with the verb "redeem." Alternate translation: "to redeem"
273 firstborn
"two hundred and seventy-three firstborn"
sons of Israel
Only the firstborn males were counted.
who exceed the number of the Levites
This means that there are 273 more firstborn males among the other tribes of the Israelites than there are total number of Levite males.
Numbers 3:47
five shekels
A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 55 grams of silver"
You must use the shekel of the sanctuary as your standard weight
This means that the shekel must weight the same as those in the sanctuary. Alternate translation: "You must use the weight of the shekels in the sanctuary as your stand weight"
twenty gerahs
"20 gerahs." A gerah is a unit of weight equal to about .57 kilograms.
Numbers 3:48
the redemption money that you paid
"the money that you collected for their redemption." This refers to the shekels that Moses collected.
Numbers 3:50
1,365 shekels
"one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels." A shekel is 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 15 kilograms of silver"
Numbers 3:51
the redemption money
This refers to the money that Moses collected.
to his sons
Here "his" refers to Aaron
he was told to do by Yahweh's word, as Yahweh had commanded him
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.
he was told to do by Yahweh's word
Here "Yahweh's word" refers to Yahweh who spoke to Moses. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh had told him to do"

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4 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron. He said,[2]"Conduct a census of the male descendants of Kohath from among the Levites, by their clans and ancestral households.[3]Count all the men who are thirty to fifty years old. These men must join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.[4]The descendants of Kohath must take care of the most holy things reserved for me in the tent of meeting.
[5]When the camp prepares to move forward, Aaron and his sons must go into the tent, take down the screening curtain that separates the most holy place from the holy place and cover the ark of the testimony with it.[6]They must cover the ark with a piece of fine leather. They must spread a cloth that is completely blue over it. They must insert the poles to carry it.
[7]They are to spread a blue cloth on the table of the bread of the presence. On it they must put the dishes, spoons, bowls, and jars for the drink offering. Bread must always continue to be on the table.[8]They are to spread over them a scarlet cloth and cover the same with hides of fine leather. They must insert poles to carry the table.
[9]They must take a blue cloth and cover the lampstand, along with its lamps, tongs, trays, and all the jars of oil for the lamps.[10]They must put the lampstand and all its accessories into a covering of fine leather, and they must put it on a carrying frame.[11]They must spread a cloth of blue on the gold altar. They must cover it with a covering of fine leather, and then insert the carrying poles.
[12]They must take all the equipment for the ministry, with which they serve in the sanctuary, and wrap it in a blue cloth. They must cover that with the hides of fine leather and put the equipment on the carrying frame.[13]They must clear away the ashes of fat from the altar and spread a purple cloth on the altar.[14]They must put on the carrying frame all the equipment that they use in the work of the altar. These objects are the firepans, forks, shovels, bowls, and all the other equipment for the altar. They must cover the altar with fine leather hides and then insert the carrying poles.
[15]When Aaron and his sons have completely covered the holy place and all its equipment, and when the camp moves forward, then the descendants of Kohath must come to carry the holy place. If they touch the holy instruments, they must die. This is the work of the descendants of Kohath, to carry the furnishings in the tent of meeting.[16]Eleazar son of Aaron the priest oversees the care of the oil for the light, the sweet incense, the regular grain offering, and the anointing oil. He oversees the care of the entire tabernacle and all that is in it, the holy place and its equipment."

[17]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron. He said,[18]"Do not allow the Kohathite tribal clans to be cut off from among the Levites.[19]So do this for them that they may live and not die, when they approach the most holy things: Aaron and his sons must go in, and assign each man to his work and his responsibility.[20]But the Kohathites must not go in to look at the holy place, even for a moment, or they must die."

[21]Yahweh spoke again to Moses. He said,[22]"Conduct a census of the descendants of Gershon also, by their ancestor's families and by their clans.[23]Count those who are thirty years old to fifty years old. Count all of them who will join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.
[24]This is the work of the clans of the Gershonites, when they serve and what they carry.[25]They must carry the curtains of the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, its covering, the covering of fine leather hides that is on it, and the curtains for the entrance to the tent of meeting.[26]They must carry the curtains of the court, the curtain for the doorway of the court's gate, which is near the tabernacle and near the altar, their ropes, and all the instruments for their service. Whatever should be done with these things, they must do it.
[27]Aaron and his sons must direct all the service of the descendants of the Gershonites, in everything that they transport, and in all their service. You must assign them to all their responsibilities.[28]This is the service of the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites for the tent of meeting. Ithamar son of Aaron the priest must lead them in their service.

[29]You must count the descendants of Merari by their clans, and order them by their ancestor's families,[30]from thirty years old and older up to fifty years old. Count everyone who is going to join the company and serve in the tent of meeting.
[31]This is their responsibility and their burden in all their service for the tent of meeting. They must care for the framing of the tabernacle, its crossbars, posts, and sockets,[32]along with the posts of the courtyard around the tabernacle, their sockets, pegs, and their ropes, with all their hardware. List by name the articles they must carry.
[33]This is the service of the clans of the descendants of Merari, what they are to do for the tent of meeting, under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest."

[34]Moses and Aaron and the leaders of the community counted the descendants of the Kohathites by the clans of their ancestor's families.[35]They counted them from thirty years old and older up to fifty years old. They counted everyone who would join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.[36]They counted 2,750 men by their clans.
[37]This was the list of the clans of the Kohathites who served in the tent of meeting. Moses and Aaron counted them according to Yahweh's command that was given through Moses.

[38]The descendants of Gershon were counted in their clans, by their ancestor's families,[39]from thirty to fifty years old, everyone who would join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.[40]All the men, counted by their clans and their ancestor's families, numbered 2,630.

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[41]Moses and Aaron counted the clans of the descendants of Gershon who would serve in the tent of meeting. In doing this, they obeyed what Yahweh had commanded them to do through Moses.

[42]The descendants of Merari were counted in their clans by their ancestor's families,[43]from thirty to fifty years old, everyone who would join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.[44]All the men, counted by their clans and their ancestor's families, numbered 3,200.
[45]This was the list of the clans of the descendants of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron counted according to Yahweh's command that came by the hand of Moses.

[46]So Moses, Aaron, and the chiefs of Israel counted all the Levites by their clans in their ancestral families[47]from thirty to fifty years old. They counted everyone who would do work in the tabernacle, and who would carry and care for the items in the tent of meeting.[48]They counted 8,580 men.
[49]At Yahweh's command, Moses counted each man, keeping count of each by the type of work he was assigned to do. He counted each man by the kind of responsibility he would bear. In doing this, they obeyed what Yahweh had commanded them to do through Moses.

Numbers 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Counting the Levites by clans

Moses gave special instructions for each of the families of the tribes of Levi. Each family was given a special role in the ministry of the tabernacle. (See: tabernacle)

Links:

Numbers 4:1 Notes

Numbers 4:2

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.

Numbers 4:3

thirty to fifty years old

"30 to 50 years old"

join the company

The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting.

Numbers 4:4

reserved for me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have specially selected for myself"

Numbers 4:5

When the camp prepares

Here "camp" refers to all of the people in the camp. Alternate translation: "When the people prepare"

to move forward

This refers to the people moving to another location. Alternate translation: "to move to another location"

the screening curtain

This refers to the curtain that kept people from being able to see into the most holy place.

cover the ark of the testimony with it

The word "it" refers to the curtain that separated the most holy place from the holy place.

Numbers 4:6

insert the poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the ark so that the poles could be used to carry the ark. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert the poles into the rings on the ark's sides"

Numbers 4:7

the bread of the presence

This bread represents the presence of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the bread of Yahweh's presence"

On it they must put

Here "it" refers to the blue cloth.

Bread must always continue to be

There must always be bread"

Numbers 4:8

They are to spread over them

Here the word "them" refers to "the dishes, spoons, bowls, and jars" (verse 7).

scarlet cloth

"red cloth"

insert poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the corners of the table so that the poles could be used to carry the table. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert poles into the rings at the corners of the table"

Numbers 4:10

They must put ... into a covering of fine leather

"They must cover ... with fine leather"

they must put it on a carrying frame

"they must place all of these things on a frame for carrying them"

Numbers 4:11

insert the carrying poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the altar so theys could be used to carry it. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert the carrying poles into the rings one the sides of the altar"

Numbers 4:12

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the carrying frame
a wooden rectangle made with poles used to carry things
for the ministry
The word "ministry" is an abstract noun that can be expressed with the verb "serving." Alternate translation: "used when serving Yahweh in the holy place"
Numbers 4:14
in the work of the altar
The word "work" is an abstract noun that can be expressed with the verb "serving." Alternate translation: "when serving at the altar"
insert the carrying poles
The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the altar so they could be used to carry it. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert the carrying poles into the rings on the sides of the altar"
Numbers 4:15
to carry the holy place
Here the holy place refers to all the items that make up the holy place that Aaron and his sons covered in cloth and skins. Alternate translation: "to carry all of the items of the holy place"
when the camp moves forward
Here the word "camp" refers to all of the people in the camp. Alternate translation: "when the people move forward"
Kohath
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.
the holy instruments
"the holy equipment"
Numbers 4:16
the oil for the light
Here the word "light" is used to refer to the "lamps." Alternate translation: "the oil for the lamps"
the care of
Here the abstract noun "care" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "those who care for"
Numbers 4:18
to be cut off from among the Levites
This phrase refers to the death of the Kohathites. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to do anything that will cause me to completely remove them from among the Levites"
Numbers 4:19
So do this for them
This phrase refers to what Yahweh says next. Moses will protect the Kohathites by not allowing them to go in and see the holy place.
his work ... his responsibility
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.
Numbers 4:20
Kohathites
This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in Numbers 3:27.
Numbers 4:22
of the descendants of Gershon
This refers only to men. Alternate translation: "of the male descendants of Gershon"
Gershon
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.
Numbers 4:23
thirty years old to fifty years old
"30 years old to 50 years old"
join the company to serve in the tent of meeting
The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.
Numbers 4:24
This is the work of the clans ... when they serve and what they carry
This sentence is a description that tells us what the following verses are about.
Gershonites
This refers to the descendants of Gershon. See how you translated this in Numbers 3:21.
Numbers 4:25
the covering of fine leather hides that is on it
This is an outer covering that is placed on top of the tent of meeting's covering. Alternate translation: "the covering of fine leather hides that is placed on top of that" or "the outer covering made of fine leather hides"
Numbers 4:26
Whatever should be done with these things
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Whatever work that these things require"
Numbers 4:27
must direct all the service of the descendants of the Gershonites
"must tell the descendants of the Gershonites how they are to serve Yahweh in the tent of meeting"
Numbers 4:28
This is the service of the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites for the tent of meeting
Here the word "service" is an abstract noun that can be expressed by a verb. Here the word "This" refers to what Yahweh just said. Alternate translation: "This is how the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites will serve in the tent of meeting"
Ithamar
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:2.
Numbers 4:29
the descendants of Merari
This refers only to men. Alternate translation: "the male descendants of Merari"
Merari
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.
order them
"list them"
Numbers 4:30
thirty years old ... fifty years old
"30 years old ... 50 years old"
join the company and serve in the tent of meeting
The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.
Numbers 4:31
This is their responsibility
"This" refers to what Yahweh says next.
crossbars, posts, and sockets

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These are all parts of the framing of the tabernacle. See how you translated all of these parts in Numbers 3:36-37.
Numbers 4:32
their sockets, pegs, and their ropes, with all their hardware
Here "their" refers to the posts of the court.
sockets, pegs, and their ropes
These are all parts of the framing of the tabernacle. See how you translated all of these parts in Numbers 3:36-37.
List by name the articles they must carry
"List by each man's name the articles he must carry"
Numbers 4:33
under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest
The word "direction" is an abstract noun that is expressed by a verb. Alternate translation: "as Ithamar son of Aaron the priest directs them"
Ithamar
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:2.
Numbers 4:34
the descendants of the Kohathites
The refers to men. Alternate translation: "the male descendants of the Kohathites"
Kohathites
This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in Numbers 3:27.
Numbers 4:35
thirty years old ... fifty years old
"30 years old ... 50 years old"
everyone who would join the company
Here the word "would" does not mean that the men "chose" to join the company but rather that they were "assigned" to the company. Alternate translation: "everyone who was assigned to join the company"
join the company to serve in the tent of meeting
The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.
Numbers 4:36
2,750 men
"two thousand seven hundred and fifty men"
Numbers 4:38
The descendants of Gershon
This refers to the men. Alternate translation: "The male descendants of Gershon"
The descendants of Gershon were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses and Aaron counted the descendants of Gershon"
Numbers 4:39
from thirty to fifty years old
"from 30 to 50 years old"
everyone who would join the company
Here the word "would" does not mean that the men "chose" to join the company but rather that they were "assigned" to the company. Alternate translation: "everyone who was assigned to join the company"
join the company to serve in the tent of meeting
The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.
Numbers 4:40
counted by their clans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Moses and Aaron counted by their clans"
2,630
"two thousand six hundred and thirty." This refers to 2,630 men.
Numbers 4:41
they obeyed
The word "they" refers to Moses and Aaron.
Numbers 4:42
The descendants of Merari were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses and Aaron counted the descendants of Merari"
Numbers 4:43
from thirty to fifty years old
"from 30 to 50 years old"
everyone who would join the company
Here the word "would" does not mean that the men "chose" to join the company but rather that they were "assigned" to the company. Alternate translation: "everyone who was assigned to join the company"
join the company to serve in the tent of meeting
The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.
Numbers 4:44
counted by their clans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Moses and Aaron counted by their clans"
numbered 3,200
"numbered three thousand two hundred"
Numbers 4:45
to Yahweh's command that came by the hand of Moses
These words are a metaphor for the authority that God had given Moses. Alternate translation: "to the command Moses received from Yahweh and gave to Aaron"
Numbers 4:47
from thirty to fifty
This refers to men. Alternate translation: "men from thirty to fifty"
from thirty to fifty
"from 30 to 50"
Numbers 4:48
8,580 men
"eight thousand five hundred and eighty men"
Numbers 4:49
At Yahweh's command
"As Yahweh commanded"
keeping count of each by the type ... He counted each man by the kind of responsibility he would bear
These two phrase have similar meaning and are used together to emphasize how Moses counted all the men.
by the type of work he was assigned to do
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by his type of work assignment" or "by the type of work he had assigned each man to do"
he would bear
"he would have"
they obeyed what Yahweh had commanded them

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Here "they" and "them" refer to Moses and Aaron.

5 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Command the people of Israel to send away from the camp every leper, everyone who has an oozing sore, and whoever is unclean through touching a dead body.[3]Whether male or female, you must send them out of the camp. They must not defile the camp, because I live in it."[4]The people of Israel did so. They sent them out of the camp, as Yahweh commanded Moses. The people of Israel obeyed Yahweh.

[5]Again Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[6]"Speak to the people of Israel. When a man or woman commits any sin such as people do to one another, and is unfaithful to me, that person is guilty.[7]Then he must confess the sin that he has done. He must completely pay back the price of his guilt and add to the price one-fifth more. He must give this to the one he has wronged.
[8]But if the wronged person has no close relative to receive the payment, he must pay the price for his guilt to me through a priest, along with a ram to atone for himself.[9]Every contribution, everything the people of Israel have set apart, which they have brought to the priest, will belong to him.[10]The offerings of every person will be for the priest; if anyone gives anything to the priest, it will belong to him."

[11]Again, Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[12]"Speak to the people of Israel. Say to them, 'Suppose that a man's wife turns away and is unfaithful to her husband.
[13]If a man lies with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband, and her impurity is undetected even though she defiled herself, and there is no witness against her, since she was not caught in the act,[14]nevertheless, a spirit of jealousy might still inform the husband that his wife is defiled. However, a spirit of jealousy might falsely come on a man when his wife is not defiled.
[15]In such cases, the man must bring his wife to the priest. The husband must take an offering required on her behalf, a tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He must pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, because it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering for remembering, as a reminder of the iniquity.

[16]The priest must bring her near and place her before Yahweh.[17]The priest must take a jar of holy water and take dust from the floor of the tabernacle. He must put the dust into the water.
[18]The priest will set the woman before Yahweh and he will untie the hair on the woman's head. He will put into her hands the grain offering of remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy. The priest will hold in his hand the bitter water that can bring a curse.[19]The priest will put the woman under an oath and say to her, 'If no other man has lain with you, and if you have not gone astray and committed uncleanness, then you will be free from this bitter water that can bring a curse.
[20]But if you have gone astray, though you are under your husband's authority and you have defiled yourself, and some other man has had sexual relations with you,[21]then, (the priest must cause the woman to swear an oath that can bring down a curse on her, and then he must continue speaking to the woman) 'Yahweh will make you into a curse that will be shown to your people to be such. This will happen if Yahweh causes your thigh to waste away and your abdomen to swell.
[22]This water that brings the curse will go into your stomach and make your abdomen swell and your thighs waste away.' The woman is to reply, 'Amen. Amen.'

[23]The priest must write these curses on a scroll, and then he must wash away the written curses into the bitter water.
[24]The priest must make the woman drink the bitter water that brings the curse. The water that brings the curse will enter her and become bitter.[25]The priest must take the grain offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand. He must hold up the grain offering before Yahweh and bring it to the altar.[26]The priest must take a handful of the grain offering as a representative offering, and burn it on the altar. Then he must give the woman the bitter water to drink.
[27]When he gives her the water to drink, if she is defiled because she has committed a sin against her husband, then the water that brings the curse will enter her and become bitter. Her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away. The woman will be cursed among her people.[28]But if the woman is not defiled and if she is clean, then she must be free. She will be able to conceive children.

[29]This is the law of jealousy. It is the law for a woman who goes astray from her husband and is defiled.[30]It is the law for a man with a spirit of jealousy when he is jealous of his wife. He must bring the woman before Yahweh, and the priest must do to her everything that this law of jealousy describes.
[31]The man will be free from guilt for bringing his wife to the priest. The woman must bear any guilt she might have."

Numbers 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Israel's camp

Israel's entire camp was to be a "clean" place. This meant that people who could not be made acceptable to God were not allowed inside the camp. (See: clean)

Vengeance

There are several laws in this chapter regarding restitution. These laws were meant to limit the ways in which people who had been wronged could seek to be compensated. These laws were intended to make it difficult for such people to avenge a wrong when they were angry. (See: avenge and jealous)

Links:

Numbers 5:1 Notes

Numbers 5:2

oozing sore

This refers to an open cut that has been leaking fluids for a long time.

whoever is unclean through touching a dead body

If a person touched a dead body they were considered unclean. A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Numbers 5:3

you must send

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 5:4

The people of Israel did so

This means that they sent the unclean people away. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel sent those who were unclean out of the camp"

Numbers 5:6

any sin such as people do to one another

"any sin that people usually commit against one another"

is unfaithful to me

If someone sins against another person, it means that they have also sinned against Yahweh and Yahweh considers that person as unfaithful to him. Alternate translation: "they have also wronged me"

Numbers 5:7

the price of his guilt

Here the person's "sin" is referred to as his "guilt." Alternate translation: "what is considered a suitable amount of money for the wrong that he has done"

add to the price one-fifth more

This means the person must pay an extra one-fifth of the price that he owes.

one-fifth

This is one part out of five equal parts.

Numbers 5:8

But if the wronged person has no close relative to receive the payment

Usually the wronged person would receive the payment but if that person has died the payment goes to the closest relative. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But if the wronged person has died and has no close relative to receive the payment"

if the wronged person

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the person whom the guilty person has wronged"

he must pay the price for his guilt to me through a priest

If a person made a payment to a priest to pay for his guilt it was the same as if the person had made the payment to Yahweh.

to atone for himself

The atonement is made for the man's sin. Here Yahweh refers to the man's sin as the man who committed it. Alternate translation: "to atone for his sin"

Numbers 5:10

The offerings of every person will be for the priest; if anyone gives anything to the priest, it will belong to him

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and may be combined to state that the offerings that someone gives belong to the priest to whom they have been given.

Numbers 5:12

Connecting Statement:

The words "Suppose that a man's wife turns away" begin a long description of a possible situation, something that has not happened but might happen. Yahweh tells Moses what to do if it does happen.

a man's wife turns away

This means that she goes away from him and is unfaithful to him. Alternate translation: "a man's wife is unfaithful"

is unfaithful to her husband

This means that she is unfaithful to her husband and and sins against him by having sexual relations with another man. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "sins against her husband by having sexual relations with another man"

Numbers 5:13

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12.

If a man lies with her

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "If a man has sexual relations with her"

her

the woman who turns away and sins against her husband (Numbers 5:12)

in the act

This refers to the act of adultery. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "in the act of adultery" or "sleeping with him"

Numbers 5:14

his wife is defiled ... his wife is not defiled

These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his wife has defiled herself ... his wife has not defiled herself"

a spirit of jealousy might still inform the husband

Here the word "spirit" refers to a person's attitude and emotions. His "jealously" is spoken of as if it were a person

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who spoke to him. Alternate translation: "the husband might feel jealous and become suspicious"

a spirit of jealousy might falsely come on a man

Here the word "spirit" refers to a person's attitude and emotions. The idea of the spirit "coming on him" means that he began to have these jealous feelings. Alternate translation: "a man might feel jealous for no reason"

Numbers 5:15

Connecting Statement:

Moses begins to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.

a tenth

This is one part out of ten equal parts.

a tenth of an ephah

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a tenth of an ephah

a grain offering of jealousy

"a grain offering for jealousy"

a reminder of the iniquity

A "reminder" is something that shows evidence that something had occurred that required justice. In this case, he made the offering to determine whether his wife had committed adultery or not.

Numbers 5:16

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.

near and place her before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh." The priest would bring her near the altar. Alternate translation: "near the altar and place her in the presence of Yahweh"

Numbers 5:18

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh"

grain offering of jealousy

See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 5:15.

Numbers 5:19

no other man has lain with you

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "no other man has had sexual relations with you"

if you have not gone astray

The words "gone astray" is an idiom that means "to be unfaithful." Alternate translation: "if you have not been unfaithful to your husband"

and committed uncleanness

"by committing uncleanness." This phrase refers to committing adultery.

you will be free from this bitter water

The phrase to "be free" from something means to not be harmed by it. Alternate translation: "this bitter water will not harm you, though it is able to"

this bitter water that can bring a curse

Here the bitter water is described as being able to bring a curse. This means that when the woman drinks the water it cause her to be unable to bear children, if she is guilty. Alternate translation: "this bitter water can be a curse to you"

Numbers 5:20

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.

have gone astray

The words "gone astray" is an idiom that means "to be unfaithful." Alternate translation: "have been unfaithful to your husband"

Numbers 5:21

that can bring down a curse on her

The phrase "bring down a curse" is an idiom meaning for a curse to come upon her. Alternate translation: "that can cause a curse to come upon her"

Yahweh will make you into a curse ... your people to be such

Here the author speaks about the woman bearing the curse that Yahweh gives her, which causes other people to curse her. This is spoken of as if the woman herself becomes a curse. Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh curses you, other people will curse you as well, and Yahweh will show people that you are truly cursed"

that will be shown to your people to be such

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he will show to your people as a curse"

your thigh to waste away and your abdomen to swell

Here the word "thigh" is a polite way of referring to the woman's womb or her private parts. Possible meanings are 1) that the woman will become unable to have children or 2) that the woman's pregnancy will end too early and the baby will die. Alternate translation: "your womb to be useless and your abdomen to swell"

Numbers 5:22

Amen. Amen.

"Yes, let that happen if I am guilty" or "Yes, that is exactly what should happen if I am guilty"

Numbers 5:23

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.

he must wash away the written curses

This means that he is to wash the ink off of the scroll.

the written curses

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the curses he has written"

Numbers 5:24

General Information:

Verse 24 explains in a general way what the priest must do and what is expected to happen when the woman drinks the water. Verse 25 and 26 explains in detail how the priest is to do this work. The priest gives the water to the woman and she drinks it only once.

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever

happens.
Numbers 5:25
grain offering of jealousy
"a grain offering for jealousy." See how you translated this in Numbers 5:15.
Numbers 5:26
a representative offering
The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh.
Numbers 5:27
Connecting Statement:
Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.
if she is defiled because she has committed
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "if she has defined herself by committing"
committed a sin
Here the "sin" refers specifically to committing adultery. The meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "committed adultery"
Her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away
Possible meanings are 1) that the woman will become unable to have children or 2) that the woman's pregnancy will end too early and the baby will die. Here the word "thigh" is a polite way of referring to the woman's womb or her private parts. See how you translated these concepts in Numbers 5:21.
The woman will be cursed among her people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Her people will curse her"
Numbers 5:28
is not defiled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has not defiled herself"
if she is clean
Here "being innocent" is spoken of as "being clean."
then she must be free
Possible meanings are 1) "then she will not be cursed" or 2) "then she is free from guilt."
conceive children
"become pregnant"
Numbers 5:29
Connecting Statement:
Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.
the law of jealousy
"the law for dealing with jealousy"
who goes astray from her husband
The words "goes astray from" is an idiom that means "is unfaithful to." Alternate translation: "who is unfaithful to her husband"
is defiled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "defiles herself"
Numbers 5:30
a spirit of jealousy
This phrase refers to the man's attitude and emotions of jealousy. See how you translated this in [Numbers 5:14]
when he is jealous of his wife
This is an idiom that means that he suspects that his wife has been unfaithful to him by sleeping with another man. Alternate translation: "and suspects that his wife has been unfaithful to him" or "and suspects that his wife has slept with another man"
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh"
Numbers 5:31
Connecting Statement:
Moses continues to describe what the people are to do if the situation he began describing in Numbers 5:12 ever happens.
will be free from guilt for bringing his wife to the priest
"will not be guilty of doing something wrong by bringing his wife to the priest"
must bear
"must endure"

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6 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel. Say to them, 'When a man or a woman consecrates himself to Yahweh with the special vow of a Nazirite,[3]he must abstain from wine and strong drink. He must not drink vinegar made from wine or from strong drink. He must not drink any grape juice or eat fresh grapes or raisins.[4]In all the days of his consecration, he must eat nothing that is made from the grape vine, including everything from the seeds to the skins.

[5]During all the time of his vow of consecration, no razor is to be used on his head until the days of his consecration to Yahweh are fulfilled. He must be set apart to Yahweh. He must let the hair grow long on his head.

[6]During all the time that he sets himself apart to Yahweh, he must not come near a dead body.[7]He must not make himself unclean even for his father, mother, brother, or sister, if they die. This is because he is consecrated to God, as everyone can see by his long hair.[8]During all the time of his consecration he is holy, reserved for Yahweh.

[9]If someone very suddenly dies beside him and defiles his consecrated head, then he must shave his head on the day of his purification—on the seventh day he must shave it.
[10]On the eighth day he must bring two doves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[11]The priest must offer one bird as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering. These will atone for him because he sinned by being near the dead body. He must consecrate his head again on that day.

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[12]He must set himself apart to Yahweh for the days of his consecration. He must bring a male lamb one year old as a guilt offering. The days before he defiled himself must not be counted, because his consecration was defiled.

[13]This is the law about the Nazirite for when the time of his consecration is complete. He must be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting.[14]He must present his offering to Yahweh. He must offer as a burnt offering a male lamb one year old and without blemish. He must bring as a sin offering a female lamb one year old and without blemish. He must bring a ram as a fellowship offering that is without blemish.[15]He must also bring a basket of bread made without yeast, loaves of fine flour mixed with oil, wafers without yeast rubbed with oil, together with their grain offering and drink offerings.
[16]The priest must present them before Yahweh. He must offer his sin offering and burnt offering.[17]With the basket of unleavened bread, he must present the ram as a sacrifice, the fellowship offering to Yahweh. The priest must present also the grain offering and the drink offering.
[18]The Nazirite must shave his consecrated head at the entrance to the tent of meeting. He must take the hair from his head and put it on the fire that is under the sacrifice of fellowship offerings.
[19]The priest must take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one loaf of bread without yeast out of the basket, and one wafer without yeast. He must place them into the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated hair.[20]The priest must wave them as an offering before Yahweh, a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that was waved and the thigh that was the contribution for the priest. After that, the Nazirite may drink wine.

[21]This is the law for the Nazirite who vows his offering to Yahweh for his consecration. Whatever else he may give, he must keep the obligations of the vow he has taken, to keep the promise indicated by the law of his consecration.'"

[22]Again Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[23]"Speak to Aaron and to his sons. Say, 'You must bless the people of Israel in this way. You must say to them,
[24] "May Yahweh bless you
and keep you.

[25] May Yahweh make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you.

[26] May Yahweh look on you with favor
and give you peace.'"

[27]It is in this way that they must give my name to the people of Israel. Then I will bless them."

Numbers 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Nazirite vow

The Nazirite vow was a special type of vow between a person and Yahweh. This chapter gives the rules for people to be consecrated to God as Nazirites. (See: vow and consecrate)

Links:

Numbers 6:1 Notes

Numbers 6:3

he must abstain from

"he must not consume"

vinegar made from wine

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "vinegar that people make from wine"

vinegar

a drink produced when wine and other strong drinks ferment too long and become sour

raisins

dried grapes

Numbers 6:4

the days of his consecration

"the days in which he has consecrated himself to me"

nothing that is made from the grape vine

The word "grape vine" is a metonym for the grapes that grow on the vine. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing that people make from grapes"

from the seeds to the skins

These two extremes are given to emphasize the entire grape may not be eaten. Alternate translation: "from any part of a grape"

Numbers 6:5

vow of consecration

"vow of dedication"

no razor is to be used on his head

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no

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one is to use a razor on his head"

the days of his consecration to Yahweh

The word "consecration" is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "the days that he has separated himself to Yahweh" or "the days that he has dedicated himself to Yahweh"

to Yahweh are fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to Yahweh are complete"

He must be set apart to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He must set himself apart to Yahweh"

Numbers 6:7

consecrated

"dedicated"

unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

he is consecrated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he has consecrated himself"

Numbers 6:8

of his consecration

The abstract noun "consecration" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "that he has consecration himself")

reserved for Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he has reserved himself for Yahweh" or "set apart for Yahweh"

Numbers 6:9

defiles his consecrated head

Here "head" represents the Nazirite man's hair, which symbolizes his vow. Alternate translation: "defiles his long hair which shows everyone he is separated to God" or "he becomes defiled"

the seventh day

"day 7"

Numbers 6:10

the eighth day

"day 8"

Numbers 6:12

for the days of his consecration

"during the time he is being set apart again"

He must bring a male lamb ... as a guilt offering

The man is to bring the lamb to the priest so that it can be sacrificed. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "He must bring a male lamb one year old to the priest as a guilt offering"

The days before he defiled himself must not be counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He must not count the days before he defiled himself"

his consecration was defiled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he defiled himself" or "he made himself unacceptable"

Numbers 6:13

of his consecration

The abstract noun "consecration" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "for which he has consecrated himself"

He must be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone must bring him" or "He must go"

Numbers 6:14

He must present his offering to Yahweh

He must bring his offering to the priest to be sacrificed to Yahweh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "He must present his offering to Yahweh by bringing it to the priest to be sacrificed" or "He must present his offering to Yahweh by bringing it to the priest who will sacrifice it"

Numbers 6:15

bread made without yeast

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "bread he made without yeast"

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he mixed with oil"

wafers without yeast rubbed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "wafers without yeast which he rubbed with oil"

wafers without yeast

small pieces of flat bread

together with their grain offering and drink offerings

The word "their" refers to the other offerings that the Nazirite man was told to bring. Often grain offerings and drink offerings were required to accompany other types of sacrifices. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "together with the grain offering and drink offering that Yahweh required to accompany the other offerings"

Numbers 6:16

He must offer his sin offering

"He" refers to the priest and "his" refers to the man who took a vow.

Numbers 6:17

the fellowship offering

"as the fellowship offering"

The priest must present also ... drink offering

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "The priest must present also ... the drink offering to Yahweh"

Numbers 6:18

his consecrated head

"his head, on which he had grown out his hair to show that he had consecrated himself to Yahweh"

Numbers 6:19

the boiled shoulder of the ram

This means that he had boiled the ram's shoulder. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the shoulder of the ram that he boiled"

his consecrated hair

"the hair he grew out to show that he had consecrated himself to Yahweh"

Numbers 6:20

The priest must wave them

After handing the items to the Nazirite, the priest takes them back to offer them to Yahweh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation:

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"Then the priest must take them back and wave them"
together with
"as well as"
that was waved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priest waved"
Numbers 6:21
his consecration
Also, the abstract noun "consecration" may be written as a verb. Alternate translation: "for which he has consecrated himself to Yahweh"
Whatever else he may give
This refers to the Nazirite deciding to give other offering beyond what he has been commanded to give. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "If he decides to give any additional offerings"
he must keep the obligations of the vow he has taken
"he must still obey the requirements of the vow he has taken"
he must keep the obligations ... he promise indicated by the law of his consecration
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize that he must obey the obligations of his vow.
he promise indicated by the law of his consecration
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the promise that the law for his consecration indicates"
Numbers 6:23
You must bless the people of Israel
"You" is plural.
Numbers 6:24
May Yahweh bless you and keep you
Here "you" is singular.
keep you
This is an idiom. Here "keep" means to "protect."
Numbers 6:25
make his face shine on you
This is an idiom which means to have kind intentions towards someone. It can also be expressed by smiling. Alternate translation: "smile at you" or "look at you with kindness"
on you ... to you
Here "you" is singular.
Numbers 6:26
look on you with favor
Here the phrase "look on" means to show a certain attitude towards that person. Alternate translation: "show you favor"
on you ... give you
Here "you" is singular.
Numbers 6:27
they must give my name
Here Yahweh speaks about claiming the Israelites as his own by saying that he is giving them "his name." Alternate translation: "they must let the people of Israel know that they are mine"

7 [1]On the day that Moses completed the tabernacle, he anointed it and set it apart to Yahweh, together with all of its
furnishings. He did the same for the altar and all its utensils. He anointed them and set them apart to Yahweh.[2]On that
day, the leaders of Israel, the heads of their ancestor's families, offered sacrifices. These men were leading the tribes. They
had overseen the counting of the men in the census.[3]They brought their offerings before Yahweh. They brought six
covered carts and twelve oxen. They brought one cart for every two leaders, and each leader brought one ox. They
presented these things in front of the tabernacle.
[4]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[5]"Accept the offerings from them and use the offerings for the work in the tent of
meeting. Give the offerings to the Levites, to each one as his work needs them."
[6]Moses took the carts and the oxen, and he gave them to the Levites.[7]He gave two carts and four oxen to the descendants
of Gershon, because of what their work needed.[8]He gave four carts and eight oxen to the descendants of Merari, in the
care of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. He did this because of what their work required.
[9]But he gave none of those things to the descendants of Kohath, because theirs would be the work related to the things
that belong to Yahweh that they would carry on their own shoulders.
[10]The leaders offered their goods for the dedication of the altar on the day that Moses anointed the altar. The leaders
offered their sacrifices in front of the altar.[11]Yahweh said to Moses, "Each leader must offer on his own day his sacrifice
for the dedication of the altar."

[12]On the first day, Nahshon son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah, offered his sacrifice.
[13]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard
weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[14]He gave
one gold dish that weighed ten shekels and was full of incense.
[15]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[16]He gave one male goat as a sin
offering.[17]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a
fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Nahshon son of Amminadab.

[18]On the second day, Nethanel son of Zuar, leader of Issachar, offered his sacrifice.
[19]He offered as his sacrifice one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the
standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.
[20]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.[21]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram,
and a one-year-old male lamb.[22]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[23]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and

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five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Nethanel son of Zuar.

[24]On the third day, Eliab son of Helon, leader of the descendants of Zebulun, offered his sacrifice.
[25]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels, and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[26]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[27]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[28]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[29]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Eliab son of Helon.

[30]On the fourth day, Elizur son of Shedeur, leader of the descendants of Reuben, offered his sacrifice.
[31]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[32]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[33]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[34]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[35]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Elizur son of Shedeur.

[36]On the fifth day, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, leader of the descendants of Simeon, offered his sacrifice.
[37]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[38]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[39]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[40]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[41]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

[42]On the sixth day, Eliasaph son of Deuel, leader of the descendants of Gad, offered his sacrifice.
[43]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[44]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[45]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[46]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[47]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Eliasaph son of Deuel.

[48]On the seventh day, Elishama son of Ammihud, leader of the descendants of Ephraim, offered his sacrifice.
[49]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[50]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[51]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[52]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[53]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Elishama son of Ammihud.

[54]On the eighth day, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, leader of the descendants of Manasseh, offered his sacrifice.
[55]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[56]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[57]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[58]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[59]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

[60]On the ninth day, Abidan son of Gideoni, leader of the descendants of Benjamin, offered his sacrifice.
[61]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[62]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[63]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[64]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[65]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Abidan son of Gideoni.

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[66]On the tenth day, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, leader of the descendants of Dan, offered his sacrifice.
[67]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[68]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[69]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb..[70]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[71]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

[72]On the eleventh day, Pagiel son of Okran, leader of the descendants of Asher, offered his sacrifice.
[73]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[74]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[75]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[76]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[77]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Pagiel son of Okran.

[78]On the twelfth day, Ahira son of Enan, leader of the descendants of Naphtali, offered his sacrifice.
[79]His sacrifice was one silver platter weighing 130 shekels and one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. Both of these objects were full of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering.[80]He also gave one gold dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense.
[81]He gave as a burnt offering one young bull, one ram, and a one-year-old male lamb.[82]He gave one male goat as a sin offering.[83]He gave two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs that were a year old, as the sacrifice for a fellowship offering. This was the sacrifice of Ahira son of Enan.

[84]This was the dedication offering for the altar on the day that it was anointed: the chiefs of Israel set apart the twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, and twelve gold dishes.[85]Each silver platter weighed 130 shekels and each bowl weighed seventy shekels. All the silver vessels weighed 2,400 shekels, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel.
[86]Each of the twelve gold dishes, full of incense, weighed ten shekels by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel. All the gold dishes weighed 120 shekels.
[87]They set apart all the animals for the burnt offerings, twelve bulls, twelve rams, and twelve year-old male lambs. They gave their grain offering. They gave twelve male goats as a sin offering.[88]From all their cattle, they gave twenty-four bulls, sixty rams, sixty male goats, and sixty male lambs a year old, as the sacrifice for the fellowship offering. This was for the dedication of the altar after it was anointed.

[89]When Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with Yahweh, he heard his voice speaking to him. Yahweh spoke to him from above the atonement lid on the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim. He spoke to him.

Numbers 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Consecrating the altar

When the tabernacle was completed, they consecrated the altar. Each tribe brought an offering to consecrate the altar. (See: tabernacle and consecrate)

Links:

Numbers 7:1 Notes

Numbers 7:1

Moses completed the tabernacle

"Moses finished setting up the tabernacle"

Numbers 7:2

the leaders of Israel ... the heads of their ancestor's families

These two phrases describe the same group of people two different ways. Alternate translation: "the leaders of Israel who are also the heads of their ancestors families"

the heads of their ancestor's families

Here the leaders of the families are referred to as "heads." Alternate translation: "the leaders of their ancestor's families"

had overseen the counting of the men

The abstract noun "counting" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "had helped Aaron and Moses to count the men"

Numbers 7:3

They brought their offerings before Yahweh ... They presented these things in front of the tabernacle

This means that they gave their offerings to Yahweh and

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brought them to the tabernacle. These phrases may be combined to add clarity. Alternate translation: "They brought their offerings to Yahweh and presented them to him in front of the tabernacle"

six covered carts and twelve oxen

"6 covered carts and 12 oxen"

Numbers 7:5

to each one as his work needs them

"to each man as he needs them for his work"

Numbers 7:7

Gershon

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.

because of what their work needed

"because it was what they needed to do their work"

Numbers 7:8

Merari

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.

in the care of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest

"under the supervision of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest" or "Ithamar son of Aaron the priest oversaw their work"

Ithamar

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:2.

He did this because

The word "he" refers to Moses.

because of what their work required

"because it was what they needed to do their work"

Numbers 7:9

none of those things

This refers to the carts and oxen.

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.

theirs would be the work

"their work would be"

the things that belong to Yahweh

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of what belongs to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the things that Yahweh reserved for the tabernacle"

Numbers 7:10

offered their goods

"offered gifts"

Numbers 7:11

Each leader must offer on his own day his sacrifice

"Each day, one leader must offer his sacrifice"

Numbers 7:12

the first day

"day 1" or "day number 1"

Nahshon son of Amminadab

These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in Numbers 1:7

Numbers 7:13

weighing 130 shekels

"weighing one hundred and thirty shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "weighing nearly one and a half kilograms" or "weighing one kilogram and 430 grams"

one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels

"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "one silver bowl weighing nearly eight tenths of a kilogram" or "one silver bowl weighting 770 grams"

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. If you are converting the weights to modern measures, here is another way to translate this phrase. Alternate translation: "measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary"

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"

Numbers 7:14

one gold dish that weighed ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "one gold dish that weighed one tenth of a kilogram" or "one gold dish that weighed 110 grams"

Numbers 7:17

that were a year old

"that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Nahshon son of Amminadab

"This was what Nahshon son of Amminadab presented"

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:7.

Numbers 7:18

the second day

"day 2" or "day number 2"

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:8.

Numbers 7:19

one silver platter weighing 130 shekels

If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels

"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"

Numbers 7:20

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]

Numbers 7:23

that were a year old

"that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Nethanel son of Zuar

"This was what Nethanel son of Zuar presented"

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:8.

Numbers 7:24

the third day

"day 3" or "day number 3"

Eliab son of Helon

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See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:9.
Numbers 7:25
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:26
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:29
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Eliab son of Helon
"This was what Eliab son of Helon gave as a sacrifice"
Eliab son of Helon
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:9.
Numbers 7:30
the fourth day
"day 4" or "day number 4"
Elizur son of Shedeur
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:5.
Numbers 7:31
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:32
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:35
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Elizur son of Shedeur
"This was what Elizur son of Shedeur gave as a sacrifice"
Elizur son of Shedeur
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:5.
Numbers 7:36
the fifth day
"day 5" or "day number 5"
Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:6.
Numbers 7:37
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:38
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:41
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai
"This was what Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai gave as a sacrifice." "Shelumiel" and "Zurishaddai" are names of men.
Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:6.
Numbers 7:42
the sixth day
"day 6" or "day number 6"
Eliasaph son of Deuel
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:14.
Numbers 7:43
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:44

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one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:47
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Eliasaph son of Deuel
"This was what Eliasaph son of Deuel gave as a sacrifice"
Eliasaph son of Deuel
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:14.
Numbers 7:48
the seventh day
"day 7" or "day number 7"
Elishama son of Ammihud
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.
Numbers 7:49
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:50
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:53
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Elishama son of Ammihud
"This was what Elishama son of Ammihud presented"
Elishama son of Ammihud
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.
Numbers 7:54
the eighth day
"day 8" or "day number 8"
Gamaliel son of Pedahzur
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.
Numbers 7:55
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:56
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:59
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur
"This was what Gamaliel son of Pedahzur gave as a sacrifice"
Gamaliel son of Pedahzur
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.
Numbers 7:60
the ninth day
"day 9" or "day number 9"
Abidan son of Gideoni
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:11.
Numbers 7:61
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels
If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels
"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]
by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"
Numbers 7:62
one gold dish weighing ten shekels
If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]
Numbers 7:65
that were a year old
"that were each one year old"
This was the sacrifice of Abidan son of Gideoni
"This was what Abidan son of Gideoni gave as a sacrifice"
Abidan son of Gideoni
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:11.
Numbers 7:66
the tenth day
"day 10" or "day number 10"
Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:12.
Numbers 7:67
one silver platter weighing 130 shekels

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If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels

"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"

Numbers 7:68

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]

Numbers 7:71

that were a year old

"that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

"This was what Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai gave as a sacrifice"

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:12.

Numbers 7:72

the eleventh day

"day 11" or "day number 11"

Pagiel son of Okran

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:13.

Numbers 7:73

one silver platter weighing 130 shekels

If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels

"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"

Numbers 7:74

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]

Numbers 7:77

that were a year old

"that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Pagiel son of Okran

"This was what Pagiel son of Okran gave as a sacrifice."

"Pagiel" and "Okran" were names of men. See how you translated their names in [Numbers 1:13]

Numbers 7:78

the twelfth day

"day 12" or "day number 12)

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:15.

Numbers 7:79

one silver platter weighing 130 shekels

If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

one silver bowl weighing seventy shekels

"one silver bowl weighing 70 shekels." If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13]

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour that he had mixed with oil"

Numbers 7:80

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]

Numbers 7:83

that were a year old

"that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Ahira son of Enan

"This was what Ahira son of Enan gave as a sacrifice"

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:15.

Numbers 7:84

set apart

The phrase "set apart" means to be dedicated to a specific purpose. In this case, the offerings were dedicated to Yahweh.

on the day that it was anointed

Here the word "day" refers to a general period of time. The leaders of Israel dedicated these things over the course of 12 days. You may need to translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "when Moses anointed the altar")

Numbers 7:85

Each silver platter weighed 130 shekels

If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated this same weight in [Numbers 7:13]

each bowl weighed seventy shekels

"each bowl weighted 70 shekels." If necessary, these weight can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated this same weight in [Numbers 7:13]

2,400 shekels

"two thousand four hundred shekels" or "twenty-four hundred shekels"

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See

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how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13]

All the silver vessels weighed

"All the silver vessels together weighed"

the silver vessels

This refers to all of the offerings that were made of silver, both the platters and the bowls.

Numbers 7:86

All the gold dishes weighed

"All the gold dishes together weighed"

Each of the twelve gold dishes ... weighed ten shekels

"Each of the 12 gold dishes ... weighed 10 shekels." If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14]

120 shekels

"one hundred and twenty shekels"

Numbers 7:87

twelve

"12." This number may be written with a numeral instead of with a word.

Numbers 7:88

twenty-four ... sixty

"24 ... 60." These numbers may be written with numerals instead of with words.

a year old

"that were one year old"

after it was anointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after Moses had anointed it"

Numbers 7:89

he heard his voice speaking to him

Here "his voice" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he heard Yahweh speaking to him"

from above the atonement lid ... from between the two cherubim

These two phrases describe the same location.

ark of the testimony

See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:5.

He spoke to him

"Yahweh spoke to Moses"

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8 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Speak to Aaron. Say to him, 'The seven lamps must give light in front of the lampstand when you light them.'"
[3]Aaron did this. He lit the lamps on the lampstand to give light toward the front of it, as Yahweh had commanded Moses.
[4]The lampstand was made in this way and Yahweh showed Moses the pattern for it. It was to be hammered gold from its base to its top, with hammered cups like blossoms.

[5]Again, Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[6]"Take the Levites from among the people of Israel and purify them.
[7]Do this to them to purify them: Sprinkle the water of atonement on them. Make them shave their entire body, wash their clothes, and purify themselves.[8]Then have them take a young bull and its grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil. Let them take another young bull as a sin offering.
[9]You will bring the Levites in front of the tent of meeting and assemble the whole community of the people of Israel.
[10]When you bring the Levites before Yahweh, the people of Israel must lay their hands on the Levites.[11]Aaron must offer the Levites before Yahweh, as a wave offering from the people of Israel so that they may do the service of Yahweh.
[12]The Levites must place their hands on the heads of the bulls. You must offer one bull for a sin offering and the other bull for a burnt offering to me, to atone for the Levites.[13]Present the Levites before Aaron and before his sons, and lift them up as a wave offering to me.

[14]In this way you must separate the Levites from among the people of Israel. The Levites will belong to me.[15]After that, the Levites must go in to serve in the tent of meeting. You must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering.
[16]Do this, because they are entirely mine from among the people of Israel. They will take the place of each firstborn, the first issue of the womb, of all the descendants of Israel. I have taken the Levites for myself.[17]All the firstborn from among the people of Israel are mine, both man or animal. On the day that I took the lives of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I set them apart for myself.
[18]I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of all the firstborn.[19]I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons. I have taken them from among the people of Israel to do the work of the people of Israel in the tent of meeting. I have given them to atone for the people of Israel so that no plague will harm the people when they come near to the holy place."

[20]Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of the people of Israel did this with the Levites. They did everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses concerning the Levites. The people of Israel did this with them.[21]The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothing, and Aaron presented them as a wave offering to Yahweh and he made atonement for them to cleanse them.
[22]After that, the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting before Aaron and before Aaron's sons. This was as Yahweh had commanded Moses about the Levites. They treated all the Levites in this way.

[23]Yahweh spoke again to Moses. He said,[24]"All of this is for the Levites who are twenty-five years old and more. They must join the company to serve in the tent of meeting.

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[25]They must stop serving in this way at the age of fifty years. At that age they must not serve any longer.[26]They may help their brothers who continue to work at the tent of meeting, to perform their duties, but they must serve no more. This is how you must deal with the Levites in all their responsibilities."

Numbers 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The consecration of the tabernacle continues in this chapter. The people obeyed Yahweh's exact instructions. (See: consecrate and tabernacle)

Links:

Numbers 8:1 Notes

Numbers 8:2

must give light in front

"must shine towards the front"

Numbers 8:3

to give light

"to shine"

Numbers 8:4

The lampstand was made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They had made the lampstand"

with hammered cups like blossoms

They were commanded to form the hammered cups so that they resembled flower blossoms. Alternate translation: "with hammered cups that resemble flower blossoms"

Numbers 8:7

to purify them

Here "them" refers to the Levites.

Sprinkle the water of atonement on them

Moses sprinkling water on them was symbolic of their atonement. Alternate translation: "Sprinkle on their the water that symbolizes atonement"

Make them shave their entire body, wash their clothes, and purify themselves

Possible meanings are 1) Moses was to have the Levites shave, wash, and purify, or 2) Moses was to have the Levites purify themselves by shaving and washing, "Make them shave their entire body and wash their clothes; in this way they will purify themselves."

Numbers 8:8

a young bull and its grain offering

When offering a young bull, a grain offering was usually required to accompany it.

of fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "of fine flour that they have mingled with oil"

Numbers 8:9

assemble the whole community

"gather the whole community"

Numbers 8:10

before Yahweh

Here Yahweh refers to himself by his own name.

the people of Israel must lay their hands on the Levites

The action "laying on hands" on someone was often done to dedicate them to Yahweh's work or service. Alternate translation: "The people Israel must lay their hands on the Levites, dedicating them to me"

Numbers 8:11

as a wave offering

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh with the same amount of dedication as if they were a sacrifice given to him. Alternate translation: "if they were a wave offering"

Numbers 8:12

The Levites must place their hands on the heads of the bulls

This is a symbolic action that identifies the Levites with the animals being offered. In this way the person is offering himself through the animal to Yahweh.

Numbers 8:13

lift them up as a wave offering to me

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh as if he were lifting up an offering to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "dedicate them to me, as if you were lifting them up a wave offering to me"

Numbers 8:15

You must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering

Yahweh repeats these things to emphasize their importance. This must happen before the Levites go to serve at the tent of meeting. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "But first, you must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering"

You must offer them as a wave offering

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh as if they were a wave offering to him. Alternate translation: "You must dedicate them to me, as if you were presenting a wave offering to me"

Numbers 8:16

firstborn, the first issue of the womb

The phrase "first issue of the womb" is another way of saying "firstborn."

Numbers 8:17

I took the lives

This is a polite way of referring to when a person kills someone. Alternate translation: "I killed"

I set them apart

Here "them" refers to "the firstborn from among the people of Israel."

Numbers 8:18

I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of all the firstborn

"I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn from

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among the people of Israel"

Numbers 8:19

I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons

Yahweh appointing the Levites to help Aaron and his sons is spoken of as if they were a gift that Yahweh were giving to Aaron and his sons.

I have taken them ... I have given them

Here "them" refers to the Levites.

when they come near

Here "they" refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 8:20

Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of the people of Israel ... The people of Israel did this with them

Here there are three parallel sentences that give the same information. It is repeated to emphasize that the people did to the Levites as Yahweh had commanded. Alternate translation: "Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of the people of Israel did with the Levites everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses concerning the Levites"

Numbers 8:22

to do their service

The word "service," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "to serve"

before Aaron and before Aaron's sons

"in the presence of Aaron and his sons"

This was

"What they did was"

They treated all the Levites in this way

"They did to the Levites what Yahweh commanded." The word "They" refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 8:24

All of this is for the Levites

"All of these commandments are for the Levites"

twenty-five years old

"25 years old"

must join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 4:3.

Numbers 8:25

at the age of fifty years

"at 50 years old" or "when they become 50 years old"

Numbers 8:26

deal with the Levites in all their responsibilities

"make sure the Levites do their duty"

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9 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they came out from the land of Egypt. He said,[2]"Let the people of Israel keep the Passover at its fixed time of year.[3]On the fourteenth day of this month, at evening, you must keep the Passover at its fixed time of year. You must keep it, follow all the regulations, and obey all the decrees that are related to it."
[4]So, Moses told the people of Israel that they should keep the Festival of the Passover.[5]So they kept the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening, in the wilderness of Sinai. The people of Israel obeyed everything that Yahweh commanded Moses to do.
[6]There were certain men who became unclean by the body of a dead man. They could not keep the Passover on that day. They went before Moses and Aaron on that same day.[7]Those men said to Moses, "We are unclean because of the dead body of a man. Why do you keep us from offering the sacrifice to Yahweh at the fixed time of year among the people of Israel?"[8]Moses said to them, "Wait for me to hear what Yahweh will instruct about you."

[9]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[10]"Speak to the people of Israel. Say, 'If any of you or your descendants are unclean because of a dead body, or are on a long journey, he may still keep the Passover to Yahweh.'
[11]In the second month on the fourteenth day at evening, they will eat the Passover meal. They must eat the Passover lamb with bread that is made without yeast and with bitter herbs.[12]They must not leave any of it until the morning, or break any of its bones. They must follow all the regulations for the Passover.
[13]But any person who is clean and is not on a journey, but who fails to keep the Passover, that person must be cut off from his people because he did not bring the offering that Yahweh requires at the fixed time of year. That man must carry his sin.[14]If a stranger lives among you and keeps the Passover to Yahweh, he must keep it according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule. You must have one statute both for the sojourner and for the one who was born in the land."

[15]On the day that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant decrees. At evening the cloud was over the tabernacle. It appeared like fire until morning.[16]It continued that way. The cloud covered the tabernacle and appeared like fire at night.[17]Whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tent, the people of Israel would set out on their journey. Wherever the cloud stopped, the people would camp.
[18]At Yahweh's command, the people of Israel would travel, and at his command, they would camp. While the cloud stopped over the tabernacle, they would stay in their camp.[19]When the cloud remained on the tabernacle for many days, then the people of Israel would obey Yahweh's instructions and not travel.
[20]Sometimes the cloud remained a few days on the tabernacle. In that case, they would obey Yahweh's command—they would make camp and then travel on again at his command.[21]Sometimes the cloud was present in camp from evening until morning. When the cloud lifted in the morning, they journeyed. If it continued for a day and for a night, only when the cloud lifted would they journey on.

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[22]Whether the cloud stayed on the tabernacle for two days, a month, or a year, for as long as it stayed there, the people of Israel would stay in their camp and not travel. But whenever the cloud was taken up, they would set out on their journey.
[23]They would camp at Yahweh's command, and they would travel at his command. They obeyed Yahweh's command given through Moses.

Numbers 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

==Passover ==

This chapter records the celebration of the Passover for the first time since it began. The people kept the Passover as directed by the Lord. (See: passover)

Links:

Numbers 9:1 Notes

Numbers 9:1

in the first month of the second year after they came out from the land of Egypt

This means that they had come out of Egypt a year earlier. They were beginning their second year in the wilderness.

in the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt.

after they came out from the land of Egypt

Here "they" refers to the people of Israel. The phrase "came out" means to leave. Alternate translation: "after they left the land of Egypt"

Numbers 9:2

Let the people ... at its fixed time of year

The word "fixed" means "previously set." This means that this is when the observe it every year. Alternate translation: "Let the people ... at the time of year they currently observe it"

Numbers 9:3

On the fourteenth day ... at its fixed time of year

This is the set time of year that they celebrate the Passover. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "On the fourteenth day ... and observe it, for this is the time you do celebrate it every year"

the fourteenth day

"day 14"

follow all the regulations, and obey all the decrees

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize that they needed to obey the commands.

You must keep it

Here the phrase "keep it" is an idiom which means to observe it. Alternate translation: "You must observe it" or "You must celebrate it"

Numbers 9:4

keep the Festival of the Passover

Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Festival of the Passover" or "celebrate the Festival of the Passover"

Numbers 9:5

in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month

"on day 14 of the first month." This refers to time in the Jewish calendar.

Numbers 9:6

became unclean by the body of a dead man

This implies that they touched the dead man, which made them unclean. You can make clear the full meaning of this statement. Alternate translation: "became unclean because they touched the body of a dead man"

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

keep the Passover

Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Passover" or "celebrate the Passover"

Numbers 9:7

because of the dead body of a man

This means that they had touched a dead man's body. You can make the full meaning of this statement clear. Alternate translation: "because we have touched the body of a dead man"

Why do you keep us from offering the sacrifice ... among the people of Israel?

The men ask this question in order to complain that they are not allowed to participate in celebrating the Passover. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not fair that you keep us away from offering the sacrifice ... among the people of Israel."

fixed

set or predetermined

Numbers 9:10

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

because of a dead body

This refers to someone touching a dead body. Alternate translation: "because you have touched a dead body"

keep the Passover

Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Passover" or "celebrate the Passover"

Numbers 9:11

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eat the Passover
Here the word "eat" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Passover" or "celebrate the Passover"
the second month on the fourteenth day
"day 14 of month 2." This refers to time in the Jewish calendar.
at evening
"at sunset"
with bread that is made without yeast
"with bread that contains no yeast"
bitter herbs
These are small plants that have a strong and usually bad taste.
Numbers 9:12
or break any of its bones
"and they must not break any of its bones"
Numbers 9:13
any person who is clean
A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.
keep the Passover
Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Passover" or "celebrate the Passover"
that person must be cut off
Here the phrase "cut off" means to be disowned and sent away. Alternate translation: "that person must be sent away" or "you must send that person away"
fixed
set or predetermined
That man must carry his sin
Here the concept of the man having to bear the consequences of his sin is spoken of as if his sin were a heavy object object that he had to carry. Alternate translation: "That man must bear the punishment for his sin"
Numbers 9:14
lives among you
Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
he must keep it according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule
"that stranger must keep it and do all that Yahweh has commanded concerning the Passover." The words "statute" and "rule" mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize that the stranger must obey all of the rules about the Passover.
in the land
"in the land of Israel"
Numbers 9:15
the tabernacle was set up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Levites set up the tabernacle"
the tent of the covenant decrees
This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated the phrase "the tabernacle of the covenant decrees" in Numbers 1:50.
It appeared like fire until morning
This refers to the cloud's appearance during the night. Here the cloud is compared to looking like a fire. Alternate translation: "During the night the cloud looked like a huge fire until morning"
Numbers 9:16
It continued that way
It may be helpful to explain that this refers to the cloud being over the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "The cloud remained this way over the tabernacle"
appeared like fire at night
The cloud's appearance is compared to a huge fire. Alternate translation: "it looked like a huge fire at night"
Numbers 9:17
the cloud was taken up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "moved" or "Yahweh took up the cloud"
the cloud stopped
"the cloud stopped moving"
Numbers 9:18
At Yahweh's command
The word "command" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 9:20
on the tabernacle
"over the tabernacle"
make camp
Here the word "make" means to "set up." Alternate translation: "set up their camp"
Numbers 9:21
from evening until morning
This means that the cloud only stayed over the tabernacle for one night. You make make clear the full meaning of this statement. Alternate translation: "only from evening until morning" or "over the tabernacle for only one night"
If it continued
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. "If the cloud stayed over the tabernacle"
only when the cloud lifted would they journey on
"then after the cloud moved they would travel"
Numbers 9:22
the cloud was taken up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cloud rose up" or "Yahweh took up the cloud"
Numbers 9:23
at Yahweh's command
The word "command" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh commanded"
Yahweh's command given through Moses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the command that Yahweh had given through Moses"

10 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Make two silver trumpets. Hammer the silver to make them. You must use the trumpets to call the community together and to call the community to move their camps.

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[3]The priests must blow the trumpets to call all the community together in front of you at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[4]If the priests blow only one trumpet, then the leaders, the heads of the clans of Israel, must gather to you.[5]When you blow a loud signal, the tribes camped on the east side must begin their journey.
[6]When you blow a loud signal the second time, the tribes camped on the south side must begin their journey. They must blow a loud signal for their journeys.[7]When the community gathers together, blow the trumpets, but not loudly.[8]The sons of Aaron, the priests, must blow the trumpets. This will always be an ordinance for you throughout your people's generations.
[9]When you go to war in your land against an adversary who oppresses you, then you must sound an alarm with the trumpets. I, Yahweh your God, will call you to mind and save you from your enemies.
[10]Also, at the times of celebration, both your regular festivals and at the beginnings of the months, you must blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices for your fellowship offerings. These will act as a reminder of you to me, your God. I am Yahweh your God."

[11]In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud was lifted from the tabernacle of the covenant decrees.[12]The people of Israel then went on their journey from the wilderness of Sinai. The cloud stopped in the wilderness of Paran.[13]They made their first journey, following Yahweh's command given through Moses.
[14]The camp under the banner of Judah's descendants went out first, moving out their individual armies. Nahshon son of Amminadab led Judah's army.[15]Nethanel son of Zuar led the army of the tribe of Issachar's descendants.[16]Eliab son of Helon led the army of the tribe of Zebulun's descendants.
[17]The descendants of Gershon and of Merari, who cared for the tabernacle, took down the tabernacle and then set out on their journey.[18]Next, the armies under the banner of Reuben's camp set out on their journey. Elizur son of Shedeur led Reuben's army.[19]Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai led the army of the tribe of Simeon's descendants.[20]Eliasaph son of Deuel led the army of the tribe of Gad's descendants.

[21]The Kohathites set out. They carried the sanctuary's holy equipment. Others would set up the tabernacle before the Kohathites arrived at the next camp.[22]The armies under the banner of Ephraim's descendants set out next. Elishama son of Ammihud led Ephraim's army.[23]Gamaliel son of Pedahzur led the army of the tribe of Manasseh's descendants.[24]Abidan son of Gideoni led the army of the tribe of Benjamin's descendants.

[25]The armies that camped under the banner of Dan's descendants set out last. Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai led Dan's army.[26]Pagiel son of Okran led the army of the tribe of Asher's descendants.[27]Ahira son of Enan led the army of the tribe of Naphtali's descendants.[28]This is the way that the armies of the people of Israel set out on their journey.

[29]Moses spoke to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite. Reuel was the father of Moses' wife. Moses spoke to Hobab and said, "We are traveling to a place that Yahweh described. Yahweh said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us and we will do you good. Yahweh has promised to do good for Israel."[30]But Hobab said to Moses, "I will not go with you. I will go to my own land and my own relatives."
[31]Then Moses replied, "Please do not leave us. You know how to camp in the wilderness. You must watch out for us.[32]If you go with us, we will do for you the same good that Yahweh does to us."

[33]They journeyed from the mountain of Yahweh for three days. The ark of the covenant of Yahweh went before them for three days to find a place for them to rest.[34]Yahweh's cloud was over them in the daytime as they journeyed.

[35]Whenever the ark set out, Moses would say, "Rise up, Yahweh. Scatter your enemies. Make those who hate you run from you."[36]Whenever the ark stopped, Moses would say, "Return, Yahweh, to Israel's many tens of thousands."

Numbers 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trumpets

In the ancient Near East, trumpets were used for many purposes. They were used to call people together. They were also used to lead people into battle.

Israel starts to move

Each tribe had its place in line as did the tabernacle. Their movements through the desert were very deliberate and ordered. (See: tabernacle)

Links:

Numbers 10:1 Notes

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Numbers 10:2

Make two silver trumpets

This means that Yahweh commanded Moses to have someone make the trumpet. He did not make them himself. Alternate translation: "Tell someone to make two silver trumpets"

You must use the trumpets

Moses will not blow the trumpets himself, but he will command the priests to blow them.

Numbers 10:3

in front of you

"while you are present." This means that Moses was to be there with the priest when he blew the trumpets.

Numbers 10:4

the leaders, the heads of the clans of Israel

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. Here the second phrase is used to describe the first phrase. Alternate translation: "the leaders, who are the heads of the clans of Israel"

Numbers 10:5

When you blow a loud signal

Here the word "you" is plural. Yahweh is speaking to Moses, but he his referring to the priests. The priests will blow the trumpets, Moses will not. Alternate translation: "When they blow a loud signal"

Numbers 10:6

When you blow a loud signal

Here the word "you" is plural. Yahweh is speaking to Moses, but he is referring to the priests. The priests will blow the trumpets, Moses will not. Alternate translation: "When they blow a loud signal"

the second time

"time number 2" or "again"

They must blow a loud signal for their journeys

"They" refers to the priests and the word "their" refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 10:7

When the community gathers together

"To gather the community together"

Numbers 10:8

be an ordinance for you

"be a rule for you." Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 10:9

When you go to war ... oppresses you

Yahweh is speaking to Moses and uses the word "you," but he is actually referring the people of Israel going to war. Alternate translation: "When the people of Israel to war ... oppresses Israel"

then you must sound an alarm with the trumpets

Here Yahweh again speaks to Moses using the word "you" but actually wants Moses to have the priests blow the trumpets. Alternate translation: "then you must command the priests to sound an alarm with the trumpets"

call you to mind

This phrase "call to mind" means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember you"

Numbers 10:10

of celebration

The noun "celebration" can be expressed with the verb "celebrate." Alternate translation: "when you celebrate"

you must blow the trumpets

Here Yahweh again speaks to Moses using the word "you," but actually wants him to have the priests blow the trumpets. Alternate translation: "you must command the priests to blow the trumpets" ,

at the beginnings of the months

There are 12 months on the Hebrew calendar. The beginning phase of the moon with its sliver of light marked the beginning of each month in the lunar calendar.

your burnt offerings ... your fellowship offerings ... you to me

In these phrases the words "your" and "you" are plural and refer to the people of Israel.

over the sacrifices

"in honor of the sacrifices"

will act as a reminder of you to me

"will act as a memorial for you of me." The word "reminder" can be expressed with the verb "remind." Alternate translation: "will always remind you of me"

These will act

The word "these" refers to the trumpets and the sacrifices.

Numbers 10:11

In the second year

"In year 2." This refers to the second year after Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt.

in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month

"on day 20 of month 2." This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar.

the cloud was lifted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cloud rose up" or "Yahweh lifted the cloud"

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it. See how you translated this in Numbers 1:50.

Numbers 10:13

Yahweh's command given through Moses

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the commands that Yahweh had given through Moses"

Numbers 10:14

The camp under the banner of Judah's descendants

This camp includes the three tribes under the division of Judah: Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

went out first

They packed up their camp and they left that place before all the others left.

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:7.

Numbers 10:15

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:8.

Numbers 10:16

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:9.

Numbers 10:17

Gershon ... Merari

See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 3:17.

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Numbers 10:18

the armies under the banner of Reuben's camp

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Reuben: Reuben, Simeon, and Gad.

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:5.

Numbers 10:19

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man's name Numbers 1:6.

Numbers 10:20

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:14.

Numbers 10:21

Kohathites

This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in Numbers 3:27.

Numbers 10:22

The armies under the banner of Ephraim's descendants

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Ephraim: Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin.

Elishama son of Ammihud

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.

Numbers 10:23

Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:10.

Numbers 10:24

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:11.

Numbers 10:25

The armies that camped under the banner of Dan's descendants

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Dan: Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:12.

Numbers 10:26

Pagiel son of Okran

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:13.

Numbers 10:27

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 1:15.

Numbers 10:29

Hobab son of Reuel

This is the name of a man.

that Yahweh described

"that Yahweh described to us"

we will do you good

"we will treat you well"

Numbers 10:31

You must watch out for us

The phrase "watch out" means to guide and to take care of. Alternate translation: "You can guide us and show us how to live in the desert"

Numbers 10:33

They journeyed

"They" refers to the people of Israel.

the mountain of Yahweh

This refers to Mount Sinai. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Mount Sinai, the mountain of Yahweh"

The ark of the covenant of Yahweh went before them

The group of Levites carrying the ark of the covenant went before the people of Israel as the traveled. Alternate translation: "Men carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh before them as they traveled"

Numbers 10:35

Whenever the ark set out

Here the ark is spoken of as if were a person traveling. The ark was really being carried by men. Alternate translation: "Whenever the people carrying the ark set out"

Rise up, Yahweh

Here the phrase "rise up" is a request for Yahweh to act, in this case Moses is asking him to scatter their enemies.

Make those who hate you run from you

Here Moses speaks about Yahweh causing their enemies to flee from the people of Israel as if they were fleeing from Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Make those who hate you run away from your ark and your people"

Numbers 10:36

Whenever the ark stopped

Here the ark is spoken of as if were a person traveling. The ark was really being carried by men. Alternate translation: "Whenever the people carrying the ark stopped"

many tens of thousands

This refers to people. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "many tens of thousands of people"

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11 [1]Now the people complained about their troubles as Yahweh listened. Yahweh heard the people and became angry.
Fire from Yahweh burned among them and consumed some of the camp on its edges.[2]Then people called out to
Moses, so Moses prayed to Yahweh, and the fire stopped.[3]That place was named Taberah, because Yahweh's fire burned
among them.

[4]Some foreign people began to camp with Israel's descendants. They wanted better food to eat. Then the people of Israel
began to weep and say, "Who will give us meat to eat?[5]We remember the fish that we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers,
the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic.[6]Now our appetite is gone, because all we can see is this manna."
[7]Manna was like coriander seed. It looked like resin.[8]The people walked around and gathered it. They ground it in mills,
beat it in mortars, boiled it in pots, and made it into cakes. It tasted like a delicacy baked with olive oil.
[9]When the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna also fell.[10]Moses heard the people weeping in their families, and
every man was at the entrance to his tent. Yahweh was very angry, and in Moses' eyes their complaining was wrong.
[11]Moses said to Yahweh, "Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why are you not pleased with me? You make me
carry the load of all these people.[12]Did I conceive all these people? Have I given them birth so that you should say to me,

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'Carry them closely to your chest as a father carries a baby?' Should I carry them to the land that you swore to their ancestors to give them?
[13]Where can I find meat to give to all this people? They are weeping in front of me and are saying, 'Give us meat to eat.'[14]I cannot bear all these people alone. They are too much for me.[15]Since you are treating me this way, kill me now—if I find favor in your eyes—do not let me see my misery."

[16]Yahweh said to Moses, "Bring to me seventy of Israel's elders. Be sure that they are elders and officers of the people. Bring them to the tent of meeting to stand there with you.[17]I will come down and talk with you there. I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them. They will bear the burden of the people with you. You will not have to bear it alone.
[18]Say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow you will indeed eat meat, for you have wept and Yahweh has heard. You said, "Who will give us meat to eat? It was good for us in Egypt." Therefore Yahweh will give you meat, and you will eat it.[19]You will not eat meat for only one day, two days, five days, ten days, or twenty days,[20]but you will eat meat for a whole month until it comes out of your nostrils. It will disgust you because you have rejected Yahweh, who is among you. You have wept before him. You said, "Why did we leave Egypt?"'"
[21]Then Moses said, "The people I am with are 600,000 footmen, and you have said, 'I will give them meat to eat for a whole month.'[22]Should we kill flocks and herds to satisfy them? Should we catch all the fish in the sea to satisfy them?"[23]Yahweh said to Moses, "Is my hand short? Now you will see whether or not my word is true."

[24]Moses went out and told the people Yahweh's words. He gathered seventy of the people's elders and positioned them around the tent.[25]Yahweh came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses. Yahweh took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but only on that occasion and not again.

[26]Two men remained in the camp, named Eldad and Medad. The Spirit also rested on them. Their names were written on the list, but they had not gone out to the tent. Nevertheless, they prophesied in the camp.[27]A young man in the camp ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."
[28]Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, one of his chosen men, said to Moses, "My master Moses, stop them."[29]Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all of Yahweh's people were prophets and that he would put his Spirit on them all!"[30]Then Moses and the elders of Israel went back to the camp.

[31]Then a wind came from Yahweh and brought quail from the sea. They fell near the camp, about a day's journey on one side and a day's journey on the other side. The quail surrounded the camp about two cubits above the ground.[32]The people were busy gathering quail all that day, all the night, and all the next day. No one gathered less than ten homers of quail. They shared the quail all through the camp.
[33]While the meat was still between their teeth, while they were chewing it, the anger of Yahweh was kindled at them. He attacked the people with a very great disease.[34]That place was named Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had craved meat.[35]From Kibroth Hattaavah the people traveled to Hazeroth, where they stayed.

Numbers 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Complaining

Moses complained about having too much responsibility. Therefore, God gave seventy men the spirit of prophecy to help Moses. The people complained about food, even though Yahweh was miraculously providing them with their food. The people complained because they did not have meat or fish to eat. God sent them quail. He punished some of the people, but it does not say why God did this. (See: spirit and prophet)

Links:

Numbers 11:1 Notes

Numbers 11:1
Fire from Yahweh burned
"Yahweh sent fire that burned"
Numbers 11:3
That place was named
This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "They named that place"
Numbers 11:4
Who will give us meat to eat?
The Israelites ask this question in order to complain and to express their desire for something other than manna to eat. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We wish that we had meat to eat."
Numbers 11:6

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our appetite is gone
"we do not want to eat" or "we cannot eat"
Numbers 11:7
coriander seed
Coriander is also known as cilantro. This seed serves as a spice when dried.
resin
This is a sticky substance with a pale yellow color.
Numbers 11:10
in Moses' eyes
he eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in Moses' opinion" or "in Moses' judgement"
Numbers 11:11
General Information:
Moses complains to Yahweh using several rhetorical questions.
Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why are you not pleased with me?
Moses used these questions to complain about the way God was treating him. They can be expressed as statements. Moses speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "You should not treat me, your servant, so badly. You should not be angry with me!" or "I, your servant, have done nothing wrong for you to treat me so badly!"
You make me carry the load of all these people
Moses complains and speaks of leading the people and providing for them as if he were carrying a heavy load. Alternate translation: "You make me responsible for all these people, but it's too hard for me"
Numbers 11:12
Did I conceive all these people?
Moses used this question to remind God that Moses was not their father. Alternate translation: "I am not the father of all these people."
Have I given them birth so that you should say to me, 'Carry ... baby?'
Moses wants God to remember that God told him to take care of the Israelites even though Moses was not their father. Alternate translation: "I have not given them birth, so you have no right to say to me, 'Carry ... baby'!"
Carry them closely to your chest
To take care of the Israelites is spoken of as if it were to carry a helpless newborn baby.
Should I carry them ... to give them?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not expect me to carry them ... to give them!" or "I am not able to carry them ... to give them!"
Numbers 11:13
Where can I find meat to give to all this people?
Moses used this question to complain that it was impossible for him to give meat to all the people. Alternate translation: "I cannot possibly find enough meat to give to all these people."
Numbers 11:14
I cannot bear all these people alone
Moses speaks of leading and providing for the people as if he were carrying them. Alternate translation: "I cannot provide for all these people alone"
They are too much for me
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "This responsibility is too difficult for me"
Numbers 11:17
some of the Spirit that is on you
The "Spirit" here represents the power that God's Spirit had given to Moses so that Moses could do what God told him to do. Alternate translation: "some of the power that the Spirit has given you"
They will bear the burden of the people with you
God speaks of the responsibility of leading and providing for the people as if it were a burden that Moses and the leaders would carry. Alternate translation: "They will help you care for the people"
You will not have to bear it alone
God speaks of the responsibility of leading and providing for the people as if it were a burden that Moses and the leaders would carry. Alternate translation: "You will not care for them alone"
Numbers 11:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
Who will give us meat to eat?
The Israelites had asked this question in order to complain and to express their desire for something other than manna to eat. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We wish that we had meat to eat."
Numbers 11:20
until it comes out of your nostrils
Possible meanings are 1) God speaks of vomiting as if the food would come out through their nostrils. Alternate translation: "until you are sick and vomit" or 2) they would eat so much meat that it would be as if it would come out of their nostrils. Alternate translation: "until it feels like it would have to come out of your nostrils"
Why did we leave Egypt?
The people had used this question to express regret and to complain. Alternate translation: "We never should have left Egypt."
Numbers 11:21
600,000 footmen
"six hundred thousand footmen"
Numbers 11:22
Should we kill flocks and herds to satisfy them? Should we catch all the fish in the sea to satisfy them?
Moses uses these questions to express his doubt that there could be enough meat to feed all of the people. Alternate translation: "We would have to kill entire flocks and herds and catch all the fish in the sea to satisfy them!"
flocks and herds
These two words mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize a great number of animals.
all the fish in the sea
The word "all" is an exaggeration to show how impossible it was to provide food for all the people of Israel.
to satisfy them
"to satisfy their hunger"
Numbers 11:23

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Is my hand short?
Here the word "hand" represents God's power. God uses this question to rebuke Moses for thinking that God did not have the power to provide enough meat for the people. Alternate translation: "Do you think that I am not powerful enough to do this?" or "You should know I am more than strong enough to do this."
Numbers 11:24
Yahweh's words
"what Yahweh had said"
Numbers 11:25
some of the Spirit that was on Moses
The "Spirit" here represents the power that God's Spirit had given to Moses. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 11:17]
put it on the seventy elders
Giving power to the elders is spoken of as putting the Spirit on them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 11:17]
When the Spirit rested on them
Having power from the Spirit is spoken of as if the Spirit rested on them. Alternate translation: "When they had power from the Spirit"
Numbers 11:26
The Spirit also rested on them
The Spirit giving them power is spoken of as if the Spirit rested on them. Alternate translation: "The Spirit also gave them power"
Their names were written on the list
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses had written their names on the list"
Numbers 11:28
stop them
"tell them to stop prophesying"
Numbers 11:29
Are you jealous for my sake?
Moses uses this question to rebuke Joshua. It can be translated as a statement, if necessary. Alternate translation: "You should not be jealous for my sake."
Are you jealous for my sake?
What Joshua might have been jealous about can be stated clearly if needed. Alternate translation: "Are you concerned that they might be taking away something that belongs to me?" or "Are you concerned that people will not respect my authority?"
that he would put his Spirit on them all
Moses speaks of God's Spirit giving people power as if God were to put his Spirit on them. Alternate translation: "that God's Spirit would give them all power"
Numbers 11:31
quail
a small bird
about a day's journey on one side and a day's journey on the other side
"in each direction for as far as a person could walk in one day"
about two cubits
A cubit is a unit of measurement equal to about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 92 centimeters" or "about 1 meter"
Numbers 11:32
No one gathered less than ten homers of quail
"Everyone gathered at least ten homers of quail"
ten homers
A homer is a unit of volume equal to about 220 liters. Alternate translation: "2,200 liters"
Numbers 11:33
While the meat was still between their teeth, while they were chewing it
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that God punished them immediately, even while they were eating the meat. Alternate translation: "While they were still eating the meat"
the anger of Yahweh was kindled at them
This metaphor speaks of Yahweh's anger as if it were a fire that Yahweh was kindling. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry with them"
Numbers 11:34
That place was named Kibroth Hattaavah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They named that place Kibroth Hattaavah"
Numbers 11:35
Hazeroth
This is the name of a place in the desert.

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12 [1]Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married.[2]They said, "Has
Yahweh spoken only with Moses? Has he not spoken also with us?" Now Yahweh heard what they said.[3]Now the man
Moses was very humble, humbler than anyone else on earth.

[4]Right away Yahweh spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." So the three of
them went out.[5]Then Yahweh came down in a pillar of cloud. He stood at the entrance to the tent and called Aaron and
Miriam. They both came forward.
[6]Yahweh said, "Now listen to my words.
When a prophet of mine is with you,
I will reveal myself to him in visions
and speak to him in dreams.
[7] My servant Moses is not like that.
He is faithful in all my house.

[8] I speak to Moses directly, not with visions or riddles.
He sees my form.

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So why are you unafraid
to speak against my servant, against Moses?"

[9]Yahweh's anger burned against them, and then he left them.[10]The cloud rose from over the tent, and Miriam was suddenly leprous—she was as white as snow. When Aaron turned toward Miriam, he saw that she had leprosy.

[11]Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my master, please do not hold this sin against us. We have spoken foolishly, and we have sinned.[12]Please do not let her be like a dead newborn whose flesh is half consumed when it emerges from its mother's womb."
[13]So Moses called out to Yahweh. He said, "Please heal her, God, please."[14]Yahweh said to Moses, "If her father had spit in her face, she would be disgraced for seven days. Shut her outside the camp for seven days. After that bring her in again."[15]So Miriam was shut outside the camp for seven days. The people did not journey until she had returned to the camp.

[16]After that, the people journeyed from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

Numbers 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:6-8.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

God used the idiom "mouth to mouth" meaning "speaking directly with both people present." This indicated that Moses was more than just a prophet and greater than other prophets. (See: and prophet)

Links:

Numbers 12:1 Notes

Numbers 12:2

Has Yahweh spoken only with Moses? Has he not spoken also with us?

Miriam and Aaron use these questions to complain that Moses had so much authority and they did not. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has not spoken only with Moses. He has also spoken with us."

Now Yahweh heard

The word "Now" hear draws attention to the important point that follows.

Numbers 12:3

Now the man Moses

"Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story. The narrator tells background information about Moses's character.

Numbers 12:5

a pillar of cloud

The shape of the cloud is spoken of as if it were a pillar. Alternate translation: "a cloud shaped like a pillar" or "a tall cloud"

Numbers 12:7

My servant Moses is not like that

"I do not speak to Moses like that"

He is faithful in all my house

Here "my house" represents the nation of Israel. Being faithful in God's house represents being faithful in leading Israel. Alternate translation: "Moses leads my people faithfully" or "Moses is the one whom I trust to lead my people Israel"

Numbers 12:8

So why are you unafraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke Miriam and Aaron. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should be afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses."

against my servant, against Moses

The phrase "against Moses" clarifies that he is the "servant" of whom Yahweh speaks. Alternate translation: "against my servant, Moses"

Numbers 12:9

Yahweh's anger burned against them

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry with them"

Numbers 12:10

was as white as snow

Leprosy turned Miriam's skin white. Alternate translation: "became very white"

Numbers 12:11

do not hold this sin against us

To hold people's sin against them is to say that they are guilty for their sin. Here it represents punishing them for their sin.

Numbers 12:12

Please do not let her be like a dead newborn whose flesh is half consumed

Miriam's leprosy would cause her body to decay until she

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died. The flesh being decayed is spoken of as if it were eaten. Alternate translation: "Please do not let her be like a dead newborn baby whose flesh is half decayed"

Numbers 12:13

Please heal her, God, please

Here "please" is repeated for emphasis.

Numbers 12:14

If her father had spit in her face

This describes a situation that could have happened but did not. Spitting in someone's face was a terrible insult.

Numbers 12:15

Miriam was shut outside the camp

Being sent out of the camp and not being allowed to go back in is spoken of as if there were a door that was closed behind her. Alternate translation: "Miriam was sent outside the camp" or "Miriam was kept outside the camp"

Miriam was shut outside the camp

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses shut Miriam outside the camp" or "Moses sent Miriam outside the camp"

Numbers 12:16

Hazeroth

This is the name of a place in the desert. See how you translated it in Numbers 11:35.

13 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Send some men to examine the land of Canaan, which I have given to the people of Israel. Send a man from every tribe of their ancestors. Each man must be a leader among them."
[3]Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, so that they might obey Yahweh's command. All of them were leaders among the people of Israel.[4]These were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zakkur;

[5]from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori;
[6]from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;
[7]from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph;
[8]from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun;

[9]from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu;
[10]from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;
[11]from the tribe of Joseph (that is to say, from the tribe Manasseh), Gaddi son of Susi;
[12]from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli;

[13]from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael;
[14]from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi;
[15]from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Maki.
[16]These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to examine the land. Moses called Hoshea son of Nun by the name of Joshua.

[17]Moses sent them to examine the land of Canaan. He said to them, "Approach from the Negev and go up into the hill country.[18]Examine the land to see what it is like. Observe the people who live there, whether they are strong or weak, and whether they are few or many.[19]See what the land is like where they live. Is it good or bad? What cities are there? Are they like camps, or are they fortified cities?[20]See what the land is like, whether it is good for growing crops or not, and whether there are trees there or not. Be brave and bring back samples of the land's produce." Now the time was the season for the first ripe grapes.

[21]So the men went up and examined the land from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, near Lebo Hamath.[22]They went up from the Negev and arrived at Hebron. Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. Now Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.
[23]When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut down a branch with a cluster of grapes. They carried it on a staff between two of their group. They also brought pomegranates and figs.[24]That place was named the Valley of Eshkol, because of the grape cluster that the people of Israel cut down there.

[25]After forty days, they returned from examining the land.[26]They came back to Moses, Aaron, and all the community of the people of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh. They brought back word to them and to all the community, and showed them the produce from the land.
[27]They told Moses, "We reached the land to which you sent us. It certainly flows with milk and honey. Here is some produce from it.[28]However, the people who make their homes there are strong. The cities are fortified and very large. We also saw descendants of Anak there.[29]The Amalekites live in the Negev. The Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites have their homes in the hill country. The Canaanites live by the sea and along the Jordan River."

[30]Then Caleb silenced the people who were before Moses and said, "Let us go up and take possession of the land, for we are certainly able to conquer it."[31]But the other men who had gone with him said, "We are not able to attack the people because they are stronger than we are."

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[32]So they spread around a discouraging report to the people of Israel about the land that they had examined. They said, "The land that we looked at is a land that eats up its inhabitants. All the people whom we saw there are people of great height.[33]There we saw the Nephilim, descendants of Anak, people who came from giants. In our own sight we were like grasshoppers in comparison with them, and this is what we were in their sight, too."

Numbers 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Spies

Leaders from each of the tribes went to spy on the Promised Land in Canaan. Yahweh was not concerned with how many people were there, because he could defeat them. It appears that he is testing the faith of the people. The people were supposed to be excited to enter this wonderful land, instead they were afraid. (See: promisedland and test and faith)

Links:

Numbers 13:1 Notes

Numbers 13:2

which I have given

God had decided that the land of Canaan would belong to the people of Israel, but they had not yet moved into it. Alternate translation: "which I have decided to give" or "which I will soon give"

Each man must be a leader among them

"Each man whom you send must be a leader among his tribe"

Numbers 13:4

Shammua son of Zakkur

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:5

Shaphat ... Hori

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:6

Jephunneh

A man's name.

Numbers 13:7

Igal

A man's name.

Numbers 13:8

Nun

A man's name.

Numbers 13:9

Palti ... Raphu

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:10

Gaddiel ... Sodi

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:11

Gaddi ... Susi

These are men's names.

from the tribe of Joseph (that is to say, from the tribe Manasseh)

The relationship between between Joseph and Manasseh can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "from the tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh"

Numbers 13:12

Ammiel ... Gemalli

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:13

Sethur ... Michael

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:14

Nahbi ... Vophsi

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:15

Geuel ... Maki

These are men's names.

Numbers 13:16

Hoshea son of Nun

See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 13:8.

Numbers 13:19

Is it good or bad? What cities are there? Are they like camps, or are they fortified cities?

Moses asks these questions to explain the kind of information that the men were to report back to him. These can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "See if the land is good or bad, what kind of cities are there, and whether those cities are only camps, or whether they have defensive walls around them."

Are they like camps, or are they fortified cities

Fortified cities had strong walls around them to protect them from enemy armies. Camps did not have these walls.

Numbers 13:21

Zin ... Rehob

These are names of places.

the wilderness of Zin

The word "Zin" here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness.

Numbers 13:22

Zoan

This is the name of a place.

Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Canaanites had built Hebron 7 years before the Egyptians built Zoan"

Ahiman ... Sheshai ... Talmai

These are names of clans that were named after their ancestors.

Anak

This is the name of a man.

Numbers 13:23

Eshkol

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This is the name of a place.

between two of their group

"between two men of their group"

Numbers 13:24

That place was named

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They named that place"

Numbers 13:25

After forty days

"After 40 days"

Numbers 13:26

They brought back word

Here "word" refers to a report. Alternate translation: "They brought back their report" or "They reported what they had seen"

Numbers 13:27

It certainly flows with milk and honey

"Milk and honey certainly flow there." They spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: "It is certainly excellent for raising livestock and growing crops" or "It is certainly very fertile land"

milk

Since milk comes from cows and goats, it represents livestock and the food produced from the livestock. Alternate translation: "food from livestock"

honey

Since honey is produced from flowers, it represents crops and the food produced from the crops. Alternate translation: "food from crops"

Numbers 13:32

they spread around ... They said

Here "they" refers to all of the men who examined the land except for Caleb and Joshua.

the land that they had examined

Here "they" refers to all of the men who examined the land including Caleb and Joshua.

a land that eats up its inhabitants

The men speak of the land, or the people of the land, being very dangerous as if the land ate up people. Alternate translation: "a very dangerous land" or "a land where the people will kill us"

Numbers 13:33

the Nephilim

These seem to have been giants, very tall, large people.

Anak

This is the name of a man.

In our own sight ... in their sight

Here sight represents evaluation and judgement. Alternate translation: "In our own opinion ... in their opinion" or "In our own judgement ... in their judgement"

we were like grasshoppers in comparison with them

The men speak of grasshoppers to show how very small they thought themselves to be compared to the people of the land. Alternate translation: "we are as small as grasshoppers in comparison with them"

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14 [1]That night all the community wept loudly.[2]All the people of Israel criticized Moses and Aaron. The whole community said to them, "We wish we had died in the land of Egypt, or here in this wilderness![3]Why did Yahweh bring us to this land to die by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become victims. Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?"

[4]They said to one another, "Let us choose another leader, and let us return to Egypt."[5]Then Moses and Aaron lay facedown before all the assembly of the community of the people of Israel.
[6]Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were some of those sent to examine the land, tore their clothes.
[7]They spoke to all the community of the people of Israel. They said, "The land that we passed through and examined is a very good land.[8]If Yahweh is pleased with us, then he will take us into this land and give it to us. The land flows with milk and honey.
[9]But do not rebel against Yahweh, and do not fear the people in the land, for they are bread to us. Their protection will be removed from them, because Yahweh is with us. Do not fear them."[10]Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of Yahweh appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel.

[11]Yahweh said to Moses, "How long must this people despise me? How long must they fail to trust me, despite all the signs of my power that I have done among them?[12]I will attack them with plague, disinherit them, and make from your own clan a nation that will be greater and mightier than they are."

[13]Moses said to Yahweh, "If you do this, then the Egyptians will hear about it, because you rescued this people from them by your power.[14]They will tell it to this land's inhabitants. They have heard that you, Yahweh, are present with this people, because you are seen face to face. Your cloud stands over our people. You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.
[15]Now if you kill this people as one man, then the nations that have heard this report about you will say,[16]'Because Yahweh could not take this people into the land that he swore to give them, he has killed them in the wilderness.'
[17]Now, I beg you, may the power of my Lord be great. For you have said,[18]'Yahweh is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He forgives iniquity and transgression. He will by no means clear the guilty when he brings the punishment of the ancestors' sin on their descendants, to the third and fourth generation.'[19]Pardon, I plead with you, this people's iniquity because of the greatness of your covenant faithfulness, just as you have always forgiven this people from the time they were in Egypt until now."

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[20]Yahweh said, "I have pardoned them in keeping with your request,[21]but truly, as I live, and as all the earth will be filled with my glory,[22]all those people who saw my glory and the signs of power that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness—they have still tested me these ten times and have not listened to my voice.
[23]So I say that they will certainly not see the land about which I made an oath to their ancestors. Not one of them who despised me will see it,[24]except for my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly. I will bring him into the land where he had gone, and his descendants will take possession of it.[25](Now the Amalekites and Canaanites lived in the valley.) Tomorrow turn and go to the wilderness by the way of the Sea of Reeds."

[26]Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron. He said,[27]"How long must I tolerate this evil community that criticizes me? I have heard the complaining of the people of Israel against me.
[28]Say to them, 'As I live—this is Yahweh's declaration—as you have spoken in my hearing, I will do this to you:[29]Your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness, all you who complained against me, you who were counted in the census, the whole number of the people from twenty years old and upward.[30]You will certainly not go into the land that I promised to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.
[31]But your little ones who you said would be victims, I will take them into the land. They will experience the land that you have rejected![32]As for you, your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness.[33]Your children will be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years. They must bear the punishment for your acts of rebellion until the end of your corpses in the wilderness.
[34]According to the number of the days during which you examined the land, forty days, you will bear the punishment for your sins for forty years, one year for every day, and you will know my opposition.[35]I, Yahweh, have spoken. I will certainly do this to all this evil community that is gathered together against me. They will be completely cut off in this wilderness, and here they will die.'"

[36]So the men Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made the entire community grumble against Moses by spreading a bad report about the land—[37]these men who had brought out a bad report about the land were struck down, and they died of a plague before Yahweh.[38]Of those men who had gone to spy out the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh remained alive.

[39]When Moses reported these words to all the people of Israel, they mourned very deeply.[40]They rose up early in the morning and went to the top of the mountain and said, "Look, we are here, and we will go to the place that Yahweh has promised, for we have sinned."
[41]But Moses said, "Why are you now violating Yahweh's command? You will not succeed.[42]Do not go, because Yahweh is not with you to prevent you from being defeated by your enemies.[43]The Amalekites and Canaanites are there, and you will die by the sword because you turned back from following Yahweh. So he will not be with you."
[44]But they arrogantly went up into the hill country; however, neither Moses nor the ark of the covenant of Yahweh left the camp.[45]Then the Amalekites came down, and also the Canaanites who lived on those hills. They attacked the Israelites and beat them down all the way to Hormah.

Numbers 14 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The author uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. These questions indicate that people did not have faith in Yahweh. Yahweh also uses rhetorical questions to show the people's lack of faith. (See: and faith)

Links:

Numbers 14:1 Notes

Numbers 14:3

Why did Yahweh bring us to this land to die by the sword?

The people use this question in order to complain and accuse Yahweh of treating them unfairly. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh should not have brought us to this land only to die by the sword."

to die by the sword

Here "the sword" represents either being killed by the sword or being killed in battle. Alternate translation: "to die when people attack us with swords" or "to die in battle" or

Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?

The people use this question to encourage people to agree with them that it would be better to return to Egypt. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It would be better for us to return to Egypt than to try to conquer Canaan."

Numbers 14:4

They said to one another

This refers to the people of Israel.

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Numbers 14:5

lay facedown

"lay down with their faces touching the ground." Moses and Aaron did this to show that they were humbling themselves before God. They feared that God might punish the people for rebelling against him. Alternate translation: "lay facedown in humility to God" or "lay facedown to pray to God"

Numbers 14:6

Nun ... Jephunneh

These are names of men.

who were some of those sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who were some of those whom Moses sent"

tore their clothes

Tearing one's clothes was a gesture indicating the person is very troubled and is mourning.

Numbers 14:8

The land flows with milk and honey

They spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants flowed through it. See how you translated this in [Numbers 13:27]

Numbers 14:9

Connecting Statement:

Joshua and Caleb continue speaking to the people of Israel.

for they are bread to us

Joshua and Caleb speak of destroying their enemies as easily as if they were eating bread. Alternate translation: "We will destroy them as easily as we can eat food"

Their protection will be removed from them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will remove their protection from them"

Their protection

The abstract noun "protection" can be stated as "protect." Alternate translation: "Anyone that might protect them"

Numbers 14:11

How long must this people despise me? How long must they fail to trust me, despite all the signs ... them?

Yahweh uses these questions to show that he was angry and had lost patience with the people. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "This people has despised me for too long. They have failed to trust me for too long, despite all the signs ... them."

Numbers 14:12

disinherit them

"reject them from being my people." This may imply that he would destroy them, and some versions translate it that way.

make from your own clan

Here "your" is singular and refers to Moses.

Numbers 14:14

you are seen face to face

Possible meanings are 1) Moses speaks of God showing himself to his people as if God had allowed them to actually see his face. Alternate translation: "they have seen you" or 2) Moses speaks of the intimate relationship between him and God as if Moses could see God's face when God spoke to him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you speak directly to me"

Numbers 14:15

as one man

Killing them all at the same time is spoken of as killing them as one person. Alternate translation: "all at one time"

Numbers 14:17

my Lord

Some ancient manuscripts and modern translations read, "Yahweh."

Numbers 14:18

abounding in steadfast love

The abstract noun "love" can be stated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "always showing that he loves his people"

He will by no means clear the guilty

"he will certainly not clear guilty people." Clearing away people's sin is a metaphor for refusing to punish them. God would not clear away the sin of guilty people. Alternate translation: "He will always punish the guilty"

when he brings the punishment of the ancestors' sin on their descendants

Punishing people is spoken of as if punishment were an object that could be brought and put on people. Alternate translation: "when he punishes the guilty people's descendants for the guilty people's sins"

Numbers 14:21

all the earth will be filled with my glory

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my glory will fill all the earth"

Numbers 14:22

they have still tested me

"they have continued to test me"

these ten times

Here the number 10 represents too many times. Alternate translation: "too many times"

have not listened to my voice

Here "listened" represents obedience, and God's voice represents what he said. Alternate translation: "have not obeyed what I have said"

Numbers 14:23

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Numbers 14:24

because he has a different spirit

Here "spirit" represents his attitude. Caleb's attitude was different from the attitude of those who despised God. Alternate translation: "because he has a different attitude" or "because he is different"

and follows me wholeheartedly

Following God is a metaphor for obeying God. Alternate translation: "and obeys me wholeheartedly"

Numbers 14:27

How long must I tolerate this evil community that criticizes me?

Yahweh asks this question because he has lost patience with the people. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have tolerated this evil community who has criticized me long enough."

I have heard the complaining of the people of Israel

The word "complaining," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "I have heard

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the people of Israel complain"
Numbers 14:28
as you have spoken in my hearing
"as I have heard you say"
Numbers 14:29
Your dead bodies will fall
Their dead bodies falling represents them dying. Alternate translation: "You will die"
you who were counted in the census
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you whom Moses counted in the census"
from twenty years old and upward
"twenty years old and older"
Numbers 14:30
You will certainly not go into the land ... home, except Caleb ... Joshua ... Nun
This double negative emphasizes that Caleb and Joshua are the only ones who will go into the land. Alternate translation: "The only ones of you who will go into the land ... home are Caleb ... Joshua ... Nun"
Numbers 14:32
your dead bodies will fall
Their dead bodies falling represents them dying. Alternate translation: "you will die"
Numbers 14:33
Your children will be shepherds in the wilderness
Some modern versions choose to translate, "Your children will wander in the wilderness." This is because in ancient times, shepherds usually wandered from place to place so their flocks and herds could find pasture.
They must bear the punishment for your acts
"They must have me punish them for your acts" or "They must suffer because of what you have done"
until the end of your corpses
A corpse is a dead body. The end of their corpses represents the last of the them dying. Alternate translation: "until the last one of you dies" or "until all of you die"
Numbers 14:34
you will bear ... you will know
This is a statement of obligation, not a prediction. Some modern translations read, "you must bear ... you must know" or "you will have to bear ... you will have to know."
bear the punishment for your sins
"have me punish you for your sins" or "suffer because of your sins"
my opposition
The abstract noun "opposition" can be translated using the verb "oppose." Alternate translation: "what it is like when I oppose you"
Numbers 14:35
They will be completely cut off
This probably means that they will no longer exist. Alternate translation: "they will come to an end" or "they will all be destroyed"
Numbers 14:37
these men who had brought out a bad report about the land were struck down, and they died of a plague before Yahweh
The phrase "plague before Yahweh" shows that Yahweh struck them down. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh struck down these men who had brought out a bad report about the land, and they died"
Numbers 14:40
Look, we are here
They use these words to emphasize that they have changed their minds and now want to do what they should have done the day before. Your language may have a different way of showing this.
Numbers 14:41
Why are you now violating Yahweh's command?
Moses asks this question to rebuke the people of Israel. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be violating Yahweh's command again."
Numbers 14:42
Yahweh is not with you
Helping them is spoken of as being with them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not help you"
to prevent you from being defeated by your enemies
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to prevent your enemies from defeating you" or "to give you victory over your enemies"
Numbers 14:43
you will die by the sword
Here "the sword" refers to battle. Alternate translation: "you will die in battle" or "they will kill you when you fight against them"
you turned back from following Yahweh
Obeying Yahweh is spoken of as following him, and stopping doing that is spoken of as turning away from him. Alternate translation: "you stopped obeying Yahweh" or "you have decided not to obey Yahweh"
he will not be with you
Helping them is spoken of as being with them. Alternate translation: "he will not help you"
Numbers 14:44
they arrogantly went up into the hill country
"they dared to go up into the hill country even though God did not approve"
into the hill country
Much of the land of Israel is elevated. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River valley to attack the Canaanites, there were hills that they had to climb in order to go farther into the land of Canaan.
Numbers 14:45
beat them down
This metaphor speaks of the Amalekites defeating the Israelites as if the Israelites were a small object that the Amalekites had crushed by beating it. Alternate translation: "defeated them" or "crushed them"

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15 [1]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you go into the land where you will live, which Yahweh will give to you,[3]you are to prepare an offering by fire to Yahweh, either a burnt

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offering or a sacrifice to fulfill a vow or a freewill offering, or an offering at your feasts, to produce a pleasing aroma for Yahweh from the herd or the flock.
[4]You must offer to Yahweh a burnt offering as well as a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil.[5]You must also offer with the burnt offering, or for the sacrifice, one-fourth of a hin of wine for the drink offering for each lamb.
[6]If you are offering a ram, you must prepare as a grain offering two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil.[7]For the drink offering, you must offer a third of a hin of wine. It will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.
[8]When you prepare a bull as a burnt offering or as a sacrifice to fulfill a vow, or as a fellowship offering to Yahweh,[9]then you must offer with the bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil.[10]You must offer as the drink offering half a hin of wine, as an offering made by fire, to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.

[11]It must be done this way for each bull, for each ram, and for each of the male lambs or young goats.[12]Every sacrifice that you prepare and offer must be done as described here.[13]All who are native-born must do these things in this way, when anyone brings an offering made by fire, to produce an aroma that is pleasing to Yahweh.
[14]If a sojourner is staying with you, or whoever may live among you throughout your people's generations, he must make an offering made by fire, to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. He must act as you act.[15]There must be the same law for the community and for the foreigner who stays with you, a permanent law throughout your people's generations. As you are, so also must be the sojourner staying with you. He must act as you act before Yahweh.[16]The same law and decree must apply to you and to the foreigner who is staying with you.'"

[17]Again Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[18]"'Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you come into the land where I will take you,[19]when you eat the food produced in the land, you must lift up a contribution to Yahweh.
[20]From the first of your dough you must offer a loaf to lift it up as a contribution, a contribution from the threshing floor. You must lift it up in this way.[21]You must give to me a lifted contribution throughout your people's generations from the first of your dough.

[22]You will sometimes sin without intending to do so, when you do not obey all these commands that I have spoken to Moses—[23]everything that I have commanded you through Moses from the day that I began to give you commands and onward throughout your people's generations.[24]In the case of unintentional sin without the community's knowledge, then all the community must offer one young bull as a burnt offering to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. Along with this must be made a grain offering and drink offering, as commanded by the decree, and one male goat as a sin offering.
[25]The priest must make atonement for all the community of the people of Israel. They will be forgiven because the sin was an error. They have brought their sacrifice, an offering made by fire to me. They have brought their sin offering before me for their error.[26]Then all the community of the people of Israel will be forgiven, and also the foreigners who are staying with them, because all the people committed the sin unintentionally.

[27]If a person sins unintentionally, then he must offer a female goat a year old as a sin offering.[28]The priest must make atonement before Yahweh for the person who goes astray and sins unintentionally. That person will be forgiven when atonement has been made.[29]You must have the same law for the one who does anything unintentionally, the same law for the one who is native born among the people of Israel and for the foreigners who are staying among them.
[30]But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native born or a foreigner, blasphemes me. That person must be cut off from among his people.[31]Because he has despised my word and has broken my commandment, that person must be cut off completely. His iniquity will be on him.'"

[32]While the people of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the Sabbath day.[33]Those who found him brought him to Moses, Aaron, and all the community.[34]They kept him in custody because it had not been declared what should be done with him.
[35]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death. All the community must stone him with stones outside the camp."[36]So all the community brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[37]Again Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[38]"'Speak to the descendants of Israel and command them to make for themselves tassels to hang from the borders of their garments, to hang them from each border by a blue cord. They must do this throughout their people's generations.[39]It will be a special reminder to you, when you may look at it, of all my commandments, to carry them out so that you do not look to your own heart and your own eyes and prostitute yourselves to them.
[40]Do this so that you may call to mind and obey all my commandments, and so that you may be holy, reserved for me, your God.[41]I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to become your God. I am Yahweh your God."

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Numbers 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Purifying the people

As the people travel through the wilderness, Yahweh is purifying them. He is doing this so that they are able to enter into the Promised Land. (See: purify and promisedland)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Prostitution

The imagery of prostitution is commonly used in Scripture to indicate that Yahweh alone is to be worshiped. The people are compared to the prostitute because a husband is to only have a sexual relationship with his wife. Both the prostitute and the worship of other gods are violations of this exclusive relationship. Many cultures will struggle with this imagery because of a desire to use euphemisms.

Links:

Numbers 15:1 Notes

Numbers 15:1

General Information:

Numbers 15:1-32 tells what God told Moses to tell the people of Israel.

Numbers 15:3

to produce a pleasing aroma for Yahweh from the herd or the flock

"to produce from the herd or flock a smell that pleases Yahweh." The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by burning a sacrifice from the herd or the flock"

Numbers 15:4

a burnt offering

This refers to the offerings spoken of in Numbers 15:3.

a tenth of an ephah

An ephah is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "about 2 liters" or "two liters"

one-fourth of a hin

A hin is a unit of volume equal to about 3.7 liters. Alternate translation: "about 1 liter" or "one liter"

Numbers 15:6

two-tenths of an ephah

An ephah is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "4 liters" or "four and a half liters"

a third of a hin

A hin is a unit of volume equal to about 3.7 liters. Alternate translation: "one liter"

Numbers 15:7

It will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

"It will produce a smell that pleases Yahweh." The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "You will please Yahweh by offering it"

Numbers 15:9

three-tenths of an ephah

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "six and one half liters"

half a hin

You may convert this to a modern measure Alternate translation: "two liters"

Numbers 15:10

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you burn on the altar"

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

"to produce a smell that pleases Yahweh." The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by offering it"

Numbers 15:11

It must be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must do it"

Numbers 15:12

must be done as described

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must do as I have described"

Numbers 15:13

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they burn on the altar"

to produce an aroma that is pleasing to Yahweh

"to produce a smell that pleases Yahweh." Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if Yahweh were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by offering it"

Numbers 15:14

he must make an offering made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he must burn an offering on the altar"

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

"to produce a smell that pleases Yahweh." The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by offering it"

Numbers 15:15

As you are, so also must be the sojourner

Possible meanings are 1) "You and the sojourner staying with you are alike before Yahweh" or 2) "The same law

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applies to both you and the sojourner"

He must act as you act before Yahweh

"He must act as you act in Yahweh's presence." Because it says that they must act as the Israelites in Yahweh's presence, it is implied that they must obey all of Yahweh's commands. Alternate translation: "he must act as you act and obey all of Yahweh's commands"

Numbers 15:19

the food produced in the land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the food that the land produces" or "the food that you produce in the land"

Numbers 15:20

the first of your dough

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) the first grain that they would gather during the harvest or 2) the dough that they would make from the first of their grain.

a loaf

Calling it a loaf implies that they would cooked the dough first.

to lift it up as a contribution

This idiom "lift it up" refers to offering it as a gift. Alternate translation: "to offer it as a gift"

a contribution from the threshing floor

The offering is spoken of as being from the threshing floor because this is where they would separate the grain from the other parts of the plant.

Numbers 15:22

General Information:

The word "you" here refers to Israelite people.

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what he must tell the people.

Numbers 15:24

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

"to produce a smell that pleases Yahweh." The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshipers who offer the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by burning it"

must be made a grain offering and drink offering

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must make a grain offering and drink offering"

as commanded by the decree

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as the decree commands" or "as I commanded when I made the decree"

Numbers 15:25

They will be forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will forgive them"

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they made by fire" or "that they burned on the altar"

Numbers 15:26

all the community of the people of Israel will be forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will forgive all the community of the people of Israel"

Numbers 15:27

a female goat a year old

"a 1-year-old female goat"

Numbers 15:28

That person will be forgiven when atonement has been made

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will forgive that person when the priest has made atonement"

Numbers 15:30

with a high hand

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "defiantly" or "knowing it is a sin and not caring"

That person must be cut off from among his people

The metaphor "cut off" has at least three possible meanings. They can be expressed in active form: 1) "his people must send him away" or 2) "I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" or 3) "his people must kill him."

Numbers 15:31

has broken my commandment

Not obeying a commandment is spoken of as breaking it. Alternate translation: "has disobeyed my commandment" or "has not obeyed what I commanded"

His iniquity will be on him

Here "iniquity" represents either 1) punishment for sin or 2) guilt of sin. Sin being on him is a metaphor for either 1) being punished or 2) being guilty. Alternate translation: 1) "I will punish him because of his sin" or 2) "I will consider him guilty"

Numbers 15:34

it had not been declared what should be done with him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had not declared what they should do with him"

Numbers 15:35

The man must surely be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must surely put the man to death" or "The man must surely die"

Numbers 15:38

the descendants of Israel

"the people of Israel"

Numbers 15:39

to carry them out

"to obey them"

so that you do not look to your own heart and your own eyes

"Look to" here is a metaphor for think about. The heart represents what a person wants, and the eyes represent what a person sees and wants. Alternate translation: "so that you do not think about whatever you want"

prostitute yourselves to them

Being unfaithful to God by choosing to do whatever they want is spoken of as if they were women who were unfaithful to their husband by choosing to have sinful relationships with other men. It can be stated clearly that this was a shameful thing to do. Alternate translation: "be shamefully unfaithful to me" or "do those things instead of obeying me"

Numbers 15:40

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Moses what to tell the people of Israel. The word "you" refers to the people.

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call to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember"
Numbers 15:41

I am Yahweh your God
This clause is repeated for emphasis.

16 [1]Now Korah son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth, descendants of Reuben, gathered some men.[2]They rose up against Moses, along with other men from the people of Israel, 250 leaders of the community who were men of reputation in the community.[3]They assembled themselves together to confront Moses and Aaron. They said to them, "You have gone too far! All the community is set apart, every one of them, and Yahweh is among them. Why do you lift up yourselves above the rest of Yahweh's community?"

[4]When Moses heard that, he lay facedown.[5]He spoke to Korah and all his companions, "In the morning Yahweh will make known who belongs to him and who is set apart to him. He will bring that person near to him. The one he chooses he will bring near to himself.
[6]Do this, Korah and all your group. Take censers[7]tomorrow and put fire and incense in them before Yahweh. The one whom Yahweh chooses, that man will be set apart to Yahweh. You have gone too far, you descendants of Levi."
[8]Again, Moses said to Korah, "Now listen, you descendants of Levi:[9]is it a small thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the community of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do work in Yahweh's tabernacle, and to stand before the community to serve them?[10]He has brought you near, and all your kinfolk, the descendants of Levi, with you, yet you are seeking the priesthood also![11]Therefore you and all your company have gathered together against Yahweh. Who is Aaron that you grumble against him?"

[12]Then Moses called for Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, but they said, "We will not come up.[13]Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness? Now you want to make yourself ruler over us![14]In addition, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or given us the fields and vineyards as an inheritance. Now do you want to blind us with empty promises? We will not come to you."

[15]Moses was very angry and said to Yahweh, "Do not respect their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and I have not harmed any of them."[16]Then Moses said to Korah, "Tomorrow you and all your companions must go before Yahweh—you and they, and Aaron.[17]Each of you must take his censer and put incense in it. Then each man must bring before Yahweh his censer, 250 censers. You and Aaron, also, must each bring your censer."
[18]So every man took his censer, put fire in it, laid incense in it, and stood at the entrance to the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron.[19]Korah assembled all the community against Moses and Aaron at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and Yahweh's glory appeared to all the community.

[20]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and to Aaron:[21]"Separate yourselves from among this community that I may consume them immediately."[22]Moses and Aaron lay facedown and said, "God, the God of the spirits of all humanity, if one man sins, must you be angry with all the community?"
[23]Yahweh replied to Moses. He said,[24]"Speak to the community. Say, 'Get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.'"

[25]Then Moses rose up and went to Dathan and Abiram; the elders of Israel followed him.[26]He spoke to the community and said, "Now leave the tents of these wicked men and touch nothing of theirs, or you will be consumed by all their sins."[27]So the community on every side of the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram left them. Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrance to their tents, with their wives, sons, and their little ones.
[28]Then Moses said, "By this you will know that Yahweh has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own accord.[29]If these men die a natural death such as normally happens, then Yahweh has not sent me.[30]But if Yahweh creates something new, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them, with everything that they possess, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you must understand that these men have despised Yahweh."

[31]As soon as Moses finished speaking all these words, the ground opened under those men.[32]The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their families, and all the people who belonged to Korah, as well as all their possessions.
[33]So they and all that they possessed went down alive into Sheol. The earth closed over them, and they perished from among the community.[34]All Israel around them fled from their cries. They exclaimed, "The earth may swallow us up also!"[35]Then fire flashed out from Yahweh and devoured the 250 men who had offered incense.

[36]Again Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[37]"Speak to Eleazar son of Aaron the priest and let him take up the censers out of the flames, for the censers are set apart to me. Then let him scatter the burning coals at a distance.[38]Take the censers of

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those who lost their lives because of their sin. Let them be made into hammered plates as a covering over the altar. Those men did offer them before me, so they are set apart to me. They will be a sign of my presence to the people of Israel."

[39]Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers that had been used by the men who were burned up, and they were hammered out into a covering for the altar,[40]to be a reminder to the people of Israel, so that no outsider who was not descended from Aaron should come up to burn incense before Yahweh, so they might not become like Korah and his group—just as Yahweh had commanded through Moses.

[41]But the next morning all the community of the people of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron. They said, "You have killed Yahweh's people."[42]Then it happened, when the community had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that they looked toward the tent of meeting and, behold, the cloud was covering it. Yahweh's glory appeared,[43]and Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting.
[44]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[45]"Go away from in front of this community so that I may consume them immediately." Then Moses and Aaron lay down with their faces to the ground.[46]Moses said to Aaron, "Take the censer, put fire in it from off the altar, put incense in it, carry it quickly to the community, and make atonement for them, because anger is coming from Yahweh. The plague has begun."
[47]So Aaron did as Moses directed. He ran into the middle of the community. The plague had quickly started to spread among the people, so he put in the incense and made atonement for the people.[48]Aaron stood between the dead and the living; in this way the plague was stopped.
[49]Those who died by the plague were 14,700 in number, besides those who had died in the matter of Korah.[50]Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance to the tent of meeting, and the plague ended.

Numbers 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Rebellion and punishment

A certain Levite and a few men from the tribe of Reuben claimed that they were just as good as Moses and Aaron, and they also could do the work of sacrificing animals at the sacred tent. So Moses told them to come to the sacred tent and burn incense to Yahweh. God then made the earth open and swallow up these leaders and their families. He also sent fire to destroy 250 other men who had joined with those leaders. These actions showed that only the Levites, those whom Yahweh appointed, could be priests. Also, it taught the people that to rebel against Yahweh's anointed was to rebel against Yahweh. (See: appoint and priest and anoint)

Links:

Numbers 16:1 Notes

Numbers 16:1

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:17.

Numbers 16:2

rose up against Moses

Rebelling or criticizing someone in authority is spoken of as if they were standing up to fight. Alternate translation: "rebelled against Moses"

men of reputation in the community

"famous members of the community" or "important men in the community"

Numbers 16:3

You have gone too far

This represents doing more than one should. Alternate translation: "You have done more than you should" or "You assume to have more authority than you should"

Why do you lift up yourselves above the rest of Yahweh's community?

The men ask this question to rebuke Moses and Aaron. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are wrong to lift up yourselves above the rest of Yahweh's community."

lift up yourselves above the rest

Considering someone to be important is spoken of as lifting it up. Alternate translation: "consider yourselves more important than the rest"

Numbers 16:4

he lay facedown

This indicates that Moses was humbling himself before God. He was afraid that God would punish the people for rebelling against God and his chosen leaders.

Numbers 16:5

who is set apart to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Yahweh has set apart for himself"

Numbers 16:6

Connecting Statement:

Moses continues speaking to Korah and the men who were with Korah.

censers

containers in which to burn incense

Numbers 16:7

before Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in Yahweh's presence"

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that man will be set apart to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will set apart that man for himself"

You have gone too far

This represents doing more than one should. Alternate translation: "You have done more than you should" or "You assume to have more authority than you should"

Numbers 16:9

is it a small thing for you ... to serve them?

Moses uses this question to rebuke Korah and the men with him. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You behave as though it it is a small thing for you ... to serve them!" or "You should not consider it a small thing ... to serve them!"

a small thing for you

"not enough for you" or "unimportant to you"

Numbers 16:10

you are seeking the priesthood also

Wanting to have the priesthood is spoken of as if they were looking for it. Alternate translation: "you want to have the priesthood too" or "you want to be priests also"

Numbers 16:11

Who is Aaron that you grumble against him?

Moses uses this question to show them that when they complain about what Aaron does, they are really complaining against Yahweh, because Aaron was doing what Yahweh told him to do. Alternate translation: "You are not really complaining about Aaron, but about Yahweh, whom Aaron obeys!"

Numbers 16:13

Is it a small thing that you have brought us ... to kill us in the wilderness?

Dathan and Abiram use this question to rebuke Moses. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You behave as though it was a small thing for you to bring us ... and kill us in the wilderness."

a small thing

"not enough" or "unimportant"

a land flowing with milk and honey

They spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. See how you translated this in [Numbers 14:8]

to kill us

The people exaggerate because they will hold Moses responsible if any of them die. Alternate translation: "to have us die"

Numbers 16:14

as an inheritance

They spoke of what God would give them to be theirs forever as if it were an inheritance.

Now do you want to blind us with empty promises?

The people used this question to accuse Moses. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now you want to blind us with empty promises."

to blind us

Deceiving people is spoken of as making them blind. Alternate translation: "to deceive us"

with empty promises

They speak of promises that are not kept as if they are empty containers. Alternate translation: "with promises that you do not keep" or "by promising to do things that you do not do"

Numbers 16:15

I have not taken one donkey from them

One donkey here represents anything that a person my take from someone else. Alternate translation: "I have not taken anything from them, not even one donkey"

Numbers 16:17

censer

a container in which to burn incense

Numbers 16:21

that I may consume them

Destroying them is spoken of as if God were to eat them. Alternate translation: "that I may destroy them" or "and I will destroy them"

Numbers 16:22

lay facedown

This shows that Moses and Aaron were humbling themselves before God.

the God of the spirits of all humanity

Here "spirits" represents the ability to live. Alternate translation: "the God who gives life to all humanity"

if one man sins, must you be angry with all the community?

Moses and Aaron use this question to plead with God for the people. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "please do not be angry with all the community because one man sins"

Numbers 16:26

you will be consumed

Being destroyed is spoken of as if they would be eaten. Alternate translation: "you will be destroyed"

you will be consumed by all their sins

Being destroyed because of their sins is spoken of as if the sins would destroy them. Alternate translation: "you will be destroyed because of all their sins"

you will be consumed by all their sins

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all their sins will destroy you" or "Yahweh will destroy you because of all their sins"

Numbers 16:28

By this you will know

Here "this" refers to what Moses will say next.

Numbers 16:30

the earth opens its mouth and swallows them

Moses speaks as if the earth were alive and the opening in the ground into which these people would fall were a large mouth that would eat them. Alternate translation: "and they fall into it and are buried underneath the ground"

Numbers 16:32

The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them

Moses speaks of the earth as if it were alive, and the hole that the people fell into as if it were the earth's mouth. Alternate translation: "The earth opened up like a large mouth, and they fell into it and were buried in it" or "There was a giant hole in the ground, and they fell into it and were buried in it"

Numbers 16:33

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went down alive into Sheol
A similar phrase occurs in Numbers 16:30. See how you translated it there.
Numbers 16:34
They exclaimed
"They" refers to "All Israel."
The earth may swallow us up also
The people speak of the earth as if it were alive. Alternate translation: "The earth might open up and we too will fall into it" or "If the earth opens up again, we too will fall into it and be buried"
Numbers 16:35
fire flashed out from Yahweh and devoured the 250 men
Being destroyed by fire is spoken of as if they were eaten by the fire. Alternate translation: "fire flashed out from Yahweh and destroyed the 250 men"
250 men
"two hundred and fifty men"
Numbers 16:37
out of the flames
This refers to the flames that burned the 250 men.
Numbers 16:38
those who lost their lives
Losing their lives represents dying. Alternate translation: "those who died"
Let them be made
Here "them" refers to the censers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let Eleazar make them"
they are set apart ... They will be a sign
Here "they" and "They" refer to the censers.
Numbers 16:39
that had been used by the men who were burned up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the men whom the fire had burned up had used"
Numbers 16:42
Then it happened
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
had assembled against Moses and Aaron
"had assembled to complain against Moses and Aaron"
behold, the cloud
"suddenly, the cloud." Here "behold" shows that the people were surprised by what they saw.
Numbers 16:45
so that I may consume them
God speaks of destroying them as if he would eat them. Alternate translation: "so that I may destroy them" or "and I will destroy them"
lay down with their faces to the ground
This indicates that Moses and Aaron are humbling themselves before God.
Numbers 16:46
anger is coming from Yahweh
Anger coming from God represents God showing his anger. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is showing us his anger" or "Yahweh is very angry and is acting according to his anger"
Numbers 16:47
he put in the incense
Putting the incense in the censer here represents burning it. Alternate translation: "he burned the incense"
Numbers 16:48
the plague was stopped
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the plague stopped spreading"
Numbers 16:49
14,700 in number
"fourteen thousand seven hundred in number"

17 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses. He said,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel and get staffs from them, one for each ancestral tribe, twelve staffs. Write each man's name on his staff.
[3]You must write Aaron's name on Levi's staff. There must be one staff for each leader from his ancestors' tribe.[4]You must place the staffs in the tent of meeting in front of the covenant decrees, where I meet with you.[5]It will happen that the staff of the man whom I choose will bud. I will cause the complaints from the people of Israel to stop, which they are speaking against you."
[6]So Moses spoke to the people of Israel. All the tribal leaders gave him staffs, one staff from each leader, selected from each of the ancestral tribes, twelve staffs in all. Aaron's staff was among them.[7]Then Moses deposited the staffs before Yahweh in the tent of the covenant decrees.

[8]The next day Moses went into the tent of the covenant decrees and, behold, Aaron's staff for the tribe of Levi had budded. It grew buds and produced blossoms and ripe almonds![9]Moses brought out all the staffs from before Yahweh to all the people of Israel, and each man took his staff.
[10]Yahweh said to Moses, "Put Aaron's staff in front of the covenant decrees. Keep it as a sign of guilt against the people who rebelled so that you may end complaints against me, or they will die."[11]Moses did just as Yahweh had commanded him.

[12]The people of Israel spoke to Moses and said, "We will die here. We will all perish![13]Everyone who comes up, who approaches Yahweh's tabernacle, will die. Must we all perish?"

Numbers 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Which tribe should be special workers for God?
God told Moses that each tribe should bring one wooden staff and leave it overnight at the temple. The next day Aaron's staff representing the tribe of Levi bloomed and produced ripe almond nuts. This showed that the tribe of Levi was still the tribe chosen to be Yahweh's priests. (See: elect and priest)

Links:

Numbers 17:1 Notes

Numbers 17:2
twelve
"12"
Numbers 17:3
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
Levi's staff
The name Levi here refers to the tribe of Levi.
for each leader from his ancestors' tribe
Here "his" refers to "each leader."
Numbers 17:4
the covenant decrees
The phrase "the covenant decrees" refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: "the ark of the covenant" or "the box that holds the covenant decrees"
Numbers 17:5
the staff of the man whom I choose will bud
"buds will start to grow on the staff of the man whom I choose"
cause the complaints from the people of Israel to stop, which they are speaking against you
Here "complaints" is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "make the people of Israel stop complaining against you"
Numbers 17:6
selected from each of the ancestral tribes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Moses selected from each of the ancestor's tribes"
Numbers 17:7
the tent of the covenant decrees
The phrase "the covenant decrees" refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: "the tent of the covenant box" or "the tent that the covenant decrees are in"
Numbers 17:8
behold
The word "behold" here shows that something especially important has happened. You might have a similar word in your language.
Numbers 17:10
the covenant decrees
The phrase "the covenant decrees" refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: "the ark of the covenant" or "the box that holds the covenant decrees"
so that you may end complaints against me
The word "complaints" is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "so that you may stop them from complaining against me"
or they will die
This is what would happen if the people were to continue complaining. God wanted to prevent this. Alternate translation: "so that they will not die"
Numbers 17:12
We will die here. We will all perish!
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

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18 [1]Yahweh said to Aaron, "You, your sons, and your ancestor's clan will be responsible for all sins committed against the sanctuary. But only you and your sons with you will be responsible for all sins committed by anyone in the priesthood.[2]As for your fellow members of the tribe of Levi, your ancestors' tribe, you must bring them with you so they may join you and help you when you and your sons serve in front of the tent of the covenant decrees.
[3]They must perform your duties and the duties of the whole tent. However, they must not come near to anything in the holy place or connected with the altar, or they and also you will die.[4]They must join you and perform the duties connected with the tent of meeting, for all the work connected with the tent. A foreigner must not come near you.[5]You must perform the duties for the holy place and for the altar so that my anger does not come on the people of Israel again.
[6]Look, I myself have chosen your fellow members of the Levites from among the descendants of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to me to do the work connected to the tent of meeting.[7]But only you and your sons may exercise the priesthood regarding everything connected with the altar and everything inside the curtain. You yourselves must fulfill those responsibilities. I am giving you the priesthood as a gift. Any foreigner who approaches must be put to death."

[8]Then Yahweh said to Aaron, "Look, I have given you the duty of handling the contributions lifted up to me, and all the holy offerings that the people of Israel give to me. I have given these offerings to you as a consecrated portion and to your sons as your assigned portion for all time.[9]This will belong to you from the most holy things that are kept from the fire. From every offering of theirs—every grain offering, every sin offering, and every guilt offering—they are set apart to you and to your sons.
[10]These offerings are very holy; every male must eat it, for they are holy to you.[11]These are the contributions that will belong to you, set apart out of all their gifts of the wave offerings of the people of Israel. I have given them to you, your

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sons, and your daughters, as your portion forever. Everyone who is ceremonially clean in your family may eat any of these offerings.
[12]All the best of the oil, all the best of the new wine and grain, the firstfruits that the people give to me—all these things I have given to you.[13]The first ripe produce of all that is in their land, which they bring to me, will be yours. Everyone who is clean in your family may eat these things.
[14]Every devoted thing in Israel will be yours.[15]Every first issue of the womb, all the firstborn that the people offer to Yahweh, both of man and animal, will be yours. Nevertheless, the people must certainly redeem every firstborn son, and they must redeem the firstborn male of unclean animals.[16]Those that are to be redeemed by the people must be redeemed after becoming one month old. Then the people may redeem them for the price of five shekels of silver, by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel, which equals twenty gerahs.
[17]But the firstborn of a cow, or the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat—you must not redeem these animals; they are set apart to me. You must sprinkle their blood on the altar and burn their fat as an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to Yahweh.[18]Their meat will be yours. Like the breast and the right thigh that are lifted as an offering, their meat will be yours.
[19]All the holy contributions that the people of Israel present to Yahweh, I have given to you, and to your sons and to your daughters with you, as a continual share. It is an everlasting covenant of salt, a binding covenant forever, before Yahweh for both you and your descendants with you."[20]Yahweh said to Aaron, "You will have no inheritance in the people's land, nor will you have any share of property among the people. I am your share and inheritance among the people of Israel.

[21]To the descendants of Levi, look, I have given all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the service that they provide in working at the tent of meeting.[22]From now on the people of Israel must not come near the tent of meeting, or they will be responsible for this sin and die.
[23]The Levites must do the work connected to the tent of meeting. They will be responsible for any iniquity regarding it. This will be a permanent law throughout your people's generations. Among the people of Israel they must have no inheritance.[24]For the tithes of the people of Israel, which they offer as a contribution to Yahweh—it is these that I have given to the Levites as their inheritance. That is why I said to them, 'They must have no inheritance among the people of Israel.'"

[25]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[26]"You must speak to the Levites and say to them, 'When you receive from the people of Israel the tenth that I have given to you from them for your inheritance, you will present a contribution from it to Yahweh, a tenth of the tithe.[27]Your contribution must be considered by you as if it were a tenth of the grain from the threshing floor or of the production from the winepress.
[28]So you also must make a contribution to Yahweh from all the tithes that you receive from the people of Israel. From them you must give his contribution to Aaron the priest.[29]Out of all the gifts you receive, you must make every contribution to Yahweh. You must do this from all the best and the holiest things that have been given to you.'
[30]Therefore you must say to them, 'When you present the best of it, then it must be credited to the Levites as the product from the threshing floor and the winepress.[31]You may eat the rest of your gifts in any place, you and your families, because it is your pay in return for your work in the tent of meeting.[32]You will not bear any sin by eating and drinking it, if you have presented to Yahweh the best of what you have received. But you must not profane the holy offerings of the people of Israel, or you will die.'"

Numbers 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Tithes and offerings

The tribes of Israel were required to bring a tithe to the Levites in order to free them to serve Yahweh as priests. There is a detailed description of what belonged to Yahweh in this chapter. (See: priest)

Links:

Numbers 18:1 Notes

Numbers 18:1

all sins committed against the sanctuary

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all sins that anyone commits against the sanctuary"

all sins committed by anyone in the priesthood

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all sins that anyone in the priesthood commits"

anyone in the priesthood

"any priest"

Numbers 18:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron.

They must perform your duties

"They" refers to members of the tribe of Levi; the word

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"you" is singular and refers to Aaron.
perform your duties and the duties of the whole tent
"do the work I have commanded you to do and all the work connected with the whole tent." See how you translated similar words in Numbers 1:53.
or they and also you will die
Here "they" refers to any member of the tribe of Levi who comes "near to anything in the sanctuary;" the word "you" is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites who are serving in approved roles.
Numbers 18:4
They must join you
"They" refers to members of the tribe of Levi; the word "you" is singular and refers to Aaron.
perform the duties
"do all the work"
not come near you
Here "you" is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites.
Numbers 18:5
You must perform the duties
Here "you" is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites.
perform the duties for the holy place
"do all the work connected to the holy place" or "take care of everything connected to the holy place" or "keeping watch over the holy place" See how you translated similar words in Numbers 1:53.
so that my anger does not come on the people of Israel again
Possible meanings are 1) this represents God being extremely angry with his people. Alternate translation: "so that I do not become very angry with the people of Israel again" or 2) this represents God punishing them because of his anger. Alternate translation: "so that I do not punish the people of Israel again"
Numbers 18:6
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Aaron.
They are a gift to you
Yahweh appointing the Levites to help Aaron is spoken of as if they were a gift that Yahweh were giving to Aaron. Alternate translation: "They are like a gift to you"
given to me
Here "given" to God represents being set apart to serve God. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which I have set apart for myself" or "and I have set them apart for myself"
Numbers 18:7
only you and your sons
Here "you" and "your" are singular and refer to Aaron. Other occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural and refer to Aaron and his sons.
exercise the priesthood
"do the work of priests"
everything inside the curtain
Being inside the curtain represents being inside the room behind the curtain. Alternate translation: "everything in the room behind the curtain"
Any foreigner who approaches must be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Any foreigner who approaches must die" or "You must put to death any foreigner who approaches"
who approaches
What they should not approach can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "who approaches the sacred things"
Numbers 18:8
the contributions lifted up to me
Here "lifted up to me" represents giving or offering something to God. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the offerings that people give to me"
I have given these offerings to you
God speaks as if he had already done this because it is a decision that he had already made. Alternate translation: "I give these offerings to you"
as your assigned portion for all time
A share is a portion of something that someone receives. Alternate translation: "as the portion that you will continually receive"
Numbers 18:9
kept from the fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you do not completely burn on the altar"
Numbers 18:10
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
Numbers 18:12
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
the firstfruits
This refers to the first of the best oil, wine, and grain that they harvest.
Numbers 18:13
Everyone who is clean in your family
Being acceptable to God is spoken of as if they were clean. Alternate translation: "Everyone in your family who is acceptable to me"
Numbers 18:14
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
Numbers 18:15
Every first issue of the womb, all the firstborn
The word "firstborn" means the same thing and explains the phrase "first issue of the womb."
Numbers 18:16
Those that are to be redeemed by the people must be redeemed after becoming one month old
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people must buy them back when they become one month old"
Those that are to be redeemed
Most likely this refers only to firstborn humans that must be redeemed and not to firstborn unclean animals.
five shekels ... which equals twenty gerahs
If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "five pieces of silver ... each of which equals ten grams" or "fifty grams of silver, using the standard weights that are used in the sanctuary"

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five shekels
A shekel is a unit of weight. What was weighed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "five shekels of silver"
sanctuary shekel
There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. It weighed twenty gerahs, which was about 11 grams.
Numbers 18:17
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
You must sprinkle their blood
That he must kill the animals first can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You must kill them and sprinkle their blood"
made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you make by fire" or "that you burn with fire on the altar"
an aroma pleasing to Yahweh
The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh will be pleased with you"
Numbers 18:18
the breast and the right thigh that are lifted as an offering
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the breast and the right thigh that you lift up as a gift to me"
Numbers 18:19
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
I have given to you
God speaks as if he had already done this because it is a decision that he had already made. Alternate translation: "I give to you"
as a continual share
A share is a portion of something that someone receives. Alternate translation: "as the portion that you will continually receive"
an everlasting covenant of salt ... a binding covenant forever
The two phrases refer to the same thing. Together they emphasize that the covenant will endure forever. Alternate translation: "an agreement forever"
an everlasting covenant of salt
"a covenant made with salt." Salt represented permanence and was used in offerings and covenant meals. Alternate translation: "a permanent covenant" or "an everlasting covenant"
Numbers 18:20
You will have no inheritance in the people's land
God speaks of the land that the other people will possess as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: "You will not possess any of the people's land" or "You will not receive any of the land that the Israelites will possess"
I am your share and inheritance
God speaks of the great honor that Aaron and his descendants will have by serving him as priests as if God were something that they will inherit. Alternate translation: "Instead, I am what you will have" or "Instead, I will allow you to serve me and I will provide for you through that service"
Numbers 18:21
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
look, I have given
The word "look" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "indeed, I have given"
as their inheritance
God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: "as their portion of what I give to all Israel"
Numbers 18:23
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Aaron.
Among the people of Israel they must have no inheritance
God speaks of the land that the other people of Israel will possess as if they will inherit it. The Levites would not receive any of the land. Alternate translation: "they must not have any of the land that the other people of Israel receive"
Numbers 18:24
as their inheritance
God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: "as their portion of what I give to all Israel"
Numbers 18:26
When you receive from the people of Israel the tenth that I have given to you from them
The people of Israel would offer Yahweh a tenth of their crops and animals, and Yahweh would give that to the Levites.
for your inheritance
God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: "as your portion of what I give to all Israel"
Numbers 18:27
Your contribution must be considered by you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must consider your contribution"
Numbers 18:28
Connecting Statement:
God continues tell Moses what he must tell the Levites.
you must give his contribution to Aaron the priest
Here "his" refers to Yahweh. It was Yahweh's contribution in the sense that they had to give it to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you must give Aaron the priest the contribution that you owe Yahweh"
Numbers 18:29
that have been given to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people of Israel give to you"
Numbers 18:30
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Moses.
the best of it
"the best of what you have received from the people of Israel"
Numbers 18:31
the rest of your gifts
The "gifts" are the offerings that the Israelites give to God

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and that the Levites receive from them.

Numbers 18:32

You will not bear any sin by eating and drinking it

The word "sin" here is a metonym for the guilt that comes from committing sin. Alternate translation: "You will not be guilty when you eat and drink it"

19 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron. He said,[2]"This is a statute, a law which Yahweh is commanding you: Say to the people of Israel that they must bring to you a red heifer without flaw or blemish, and which has never carried a yoke.
[3]Give the heifer to Eleazar the priest. He must bring it outside the camp, and someone must kill it in front of him.[4]Eleazar the priest must take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the tent of meeting.
[5]The heifer must be burned in his sight—its hide, its flesh, and its blood with its dung, must be burned.[6]The priest must take cedarwood, hyssop, and scarlet wool, and throw it all into the middle of the burning heifer.
[7]Then he must wash his clothes and bathe in water. Then he may come into the camp, where he will remain unclean until the evening.[8]The one who has burned the heifer must wash his clothes in water and bathe in water. He will remain unclean until the evening.
[9]A man who is clean must gather up the heifer's ashes and put them outside the camp in a clean place. These ashes must be kept for the community of the people of Israel. They will mix the ashes with water for purification from sin, since the ashes were from a sin offering.[10]The one who gathered the heifer's ashes must wash his clothes. He will remain unclean until the evening. This will be a permanent law for the people of Israel and the foreigners who stay with them.

[11]Whoever touches the dead body of any man will be unclean for seven days.[12]Such a person must purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day. Then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself the third day, then he will not be clean on the seventh day.[13]Whoever touches a dead person, the body of a man who has died, and does not purify himself —this person defiles Yahweh's tabernacle. That person must be cut off from Israel because the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him. He will remain unclean; his uncleanness will remain on him.

[14]This is the law for when someone dies in a tent. Everyone who goes into the tent and everyone who is already in the tent will be unclean for seven days.[15]Every open container with no cover becomes unclean.[16]In the same way, anyone outside a tent who touches someone who has been killed with a sword, any other dead body, a human bone, or a grave—that person will be unclean for seven days.
[17]Do this for the unclean person: Take some ashes from the burnt sin offering and mix them in a jar with fresh water.
[18]Someone who is clean must then take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent, on all the containers inside the tent, on the persons who were there, and on anyone who touched the bone, the one who was killed, the one who died, or the grave.[19]On the third day and on the seventh day, the clean person must sprinkle the unclean person. On the seventh day the unclean person must purify himself. He must wash his clothes and bathe in water. At evening he will become clean.

[20]But anyone who remains unclean, who refuses to purify himself—that person will be cut off from the community, because he has defiled Yahweh's sanctuary. The water for impurity has not been sprinkled on him; he remains unclean.
[21]This will be an ongoing law concerning these situations. The one who sprinkles the water for impurity must wash his clothes. The one who touches the water for impurity will become unclean until evening.[22]Whatever the unclean person touches will become unclean. The person who touches it will become unclean until evening."

Numbers 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Ritually clean

This chapter talks about being clean. Some of these rituals were required to make a priest clean in order to set them apart to serve Yahweh. Other rituals were required because they prevented people from getting sick. (See: clean)

Links:

Numbers 19:1 Notes

Numbers 19:2

a statute, a law

These two words share similar meanings. Alternate translation: "a statute of the law" or "a legal statute"

Yahweh is commanding

Yahweh calls himself by name to emphasize how great he is. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, am commanding" or "I am commanding"

bring to you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Moses.

flaw or blemish

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that this animal is to have no imperfections.

Numbers 19:5

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in his sight
"in his view" or "so he could see it"
Numbers 19:6
priest must take cedarwood
"The priest" refers to Eleazar.
scarlet wool
"red wool"
Numbers 19:7
Then he must wash his clothes
Here "he" refers to Eleazar the priest.
he will remain unclean
Being unacceptable to God or unfit to do any sacred work is spoken of as not being clean.
Numbers 19:9
A man who is clean
Being acceptable to God and fit to do sacred work is spoken of as being clean.
These ashes must be kept
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must keep these ashes"
in a clean place
Being acceptable to God is spoken of as being clean.
Numbers 19:10
He will remain unclean
Being unacceptable to God or unfit to do any sacred work is spoken of as not being clean.
Numbers 19:11
General Information:
The ideas of "clean" and "purify" represent being acceptable to God. The ideas of "unclean," "defile," "impurity," and "uncleanness" represent not being acceptable to God.
the dead body of any man
"the dead body of any person"
Numbers 19:12
purify himself
The person would ask someone who is clean to purify him by sprinkling on him some water mixed with the cows ashes. Asking someone to purify him is spoken of as if he were to purify himself. Alternate translation: "ask someone to purify him"
if he does not purify himself the third day, then he will not be clean on the seventh day
This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "he will be clean on the seventh day only if he purifies himself the third day"
Numbers 19:13
That person must be cut off
Here the phrase "be cut off" means to be disowned and sent away. See how you translated this in [Numbers 9:13]
the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one sprinkled the water for impurity on him"
the water for impurity
"the water that is sprinkled on impure things to make them pure" or "the water for making things pure"
He will remain unclean; his uncleanness will remain on him
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.
Numbers 19:14
General Information:
The idea of "unclean" represents not being acceptable to God or fit for use.
Numbers 19:15
Every open container with no cover becomes unclean
This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Open containers will remain clean only if they have covers"
Numbers 19:16
someone who has been killed with a sword
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone whom someone else has killed with a sword"
Numbers 19:17
General Information:
The idea of "unclean" represents not being acceptable to God or fit for use. The ideas of "clean" and "purify" here represent being acceptable to God.
Numbers 19:20
General Information:
The ideas of "clean" and "purify" represent being acceptable to God and making something acceptable to God. The ideas of "unclean," "defile," and "impurity," represent not being acceptable to God, making something unacceptable to God, and the state of being unacceptable to God.
that person will be cut off
Here the phrase "be cut off" means to be disowned and sent away. See how you translated this in [Numbers 9:13]
The water for impurity has not been sprinkled on him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one has sprinkled the water for impurity on him"
Numbers 19:21
the water for impurity
"the water that is sprinkled on impure things to make them pure" or "the water for making things pure." See how you translated this in Numbers 19:13

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20 [1]So the people of Israel, the whole community, went into the wilderness of Zin in the first month; they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

[2]There was no water for the community, so they assembled together against Moses and Aaron.[3]The people complained against Moses. They said, "It would have been better if we had died when our fellow Israelites died in front of Yahweh! [4]Why have you brought Yahweh's community into this wilderness to die here, we and our animals?[5]Why did you make us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this horrible place? There is no place for seed, figs, vines, or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink."
[6]So Moses and Aaron went away from in front of the assembly. They went to the entrance of the tent of meeting and lay facedown. There Yahweh's brilliant glory appeared to them.

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[7]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[8]"Take the staff and assemble the community, you, and Aaron your brother. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and command it to flow with water. You will produce water for them out of that rock, and you must give it to the community and their livestock to drink."[9]Moses took the staff from before Yahweh, as Yahweh had commanded him to do.

[10]Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock. Moses said to them, "Listen now, you rebels. Must we bring water out of this rock for you?"[11]Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff, and much water came out. The community drank, and their livestock drank.
[12]Then Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me or honor me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, you will not bring this assembly into the land I have given them."[13]This place was called the waters of Meribah because the people of Israel had quarreled with Yahweh there, and he showed himself to them as holy.

[14]Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom: Your brother Israel says this: "You know all the hardship that has found us.[15]You know that our ancestors went down to Egypt and lived in Egypt a long time. The Egyptians treated us harshly and also our ancestors.[16]When we called out to Yahweh, he heard our voice and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt. Look, we are in Kadesh, a city on the border of your land.
[17]I am asking you to let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, nor will we drink the water in your wells. We will go along the king's highway. We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed your border."

[18]But the king of Edom replied to him, "You may not pass through here. If you do, I will come with the sword to attack you."
[19]Then the people of Israel said to him, "We will go along the highway. If we or our livestock drink your water, we will pay for it. Just let us walk through on foot, without doing anything else."

[20]But the king of Edom replied, "You may not pass through." So the king of Edom came against Israel with a strong hand with many soldiers.[21]The king of Edom refused to allow Israel to cross over their border. Because of this, Israel turned away from the land of Edom.

[22]So the people journeyed from Kadesh. The people of Israel, the whole community, came to Mount Hor.[23]Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on Edom's border. He said,[24]"Aaron must be gathered to his people, for he will not enter the land that I have given to the people of Israel. This is because you both rebelled against my word at the waters of Meribah.
[25]Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up to Mount Hor.[26]Take Aaron's priestly garments off him and put them on Eleazar his son. Aaron must die and be gathered to his people there."
[27]Moses did as Yahweh commanded. They went up Mount Hor in the sight of all the community.[28]Moses took Aaron's priestly garments off him and put them on Eleazar his son. Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down.[29]When all the community saw that Aaron was dead, the entire house of Israel wept for Aaron for thirty days.

Numbers 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Moses's sin

God told Moses to command water to come out of a rock for the people who were complaining that they had no water. Moses became angry with the people and hit the rock twice. God told him that he and Aaron would not be allowed to go into Canaan because he disobeyed by hitting the rock instead of just speaking to it. (See: sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"It would have been better if we had died when our fellow Israelites died in front of Yahweh"

It is possible that this statement should be taken as hyperbole, but it does not have to be taken this way. The translator should probably avoid treating this as hyperbole.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wilderness of Sin

Sin is the name of a place in this chapter. It is not a place that is known for its sin. The name is not related to the meaning of the word "sin." (See: sin)

Links:

Numbers 20:1 Notes

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Numbers 20:1

the wilderness of Zin

The word "Zin" here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness.

the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians. The first month is during the last part of March and the first part of April on the Western calendar.

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried her"

Numbers 20:2

they assembled

Here "they" refers to the community.

assembled together

"came as a mob"

Numbers 20:3

in front of Yahweh

This represents being in front of Yahweh's tent.

Numbers 20:4

Connecting Statement:

The people of Israel continue to complain to Moses and Aaron.

Why have you brought Yahweh's community into this wilderness to die here, we and our animals?

The people use this question in order to complain against Moses and Aaron. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have brought Yahweh's community into this wilderness to die here, we and our animals."

Numbers 20:5

Why did you make us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this horrible place?

The people use this question in order to complain against Moses and Aaron. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have made us leave Egypt to bring us to this horrible place."

Numbers 20:6

lay facedown

This indicates that Moses and Aaron are humbling themselves before God.

Numbers 20:8

before their eyes

Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "while they watch you"

Numbers 20:9

from before Yahweh

This represents Yahweh's tent. Alternate translation: "from Yahweh's tent"

Numbers 20:10

Must we bring water out of this rock for you?

Moses asks this question out of frustration to rebuke the people for complaining. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You complain that there is no water. Well, we will make water come out of this rock." or "You would not be happy even if we caused water to come out of this rock. But I will do it anyway."

Must we bring

Here "we" refers to Moses and Aaron and may include Yahweh, but does not include the people.

Numbers 20:12

Because you did not trust me or honor me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel

How Moses showed that he did not trust and honor God can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Because you did not trust me or honor me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, but struck the rock instead of speaking to it as I told you"

in the eyes of the people of Israel

Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "while the people of Israel were watching you"

Numbers 20:13

This place was called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People called this place"

Numbers 20:14

Your brother Israel

Moses uses this phrase to emphasize that the Israelites and the Edomites are related because their ancestors, Jacob and Esau, were brothers.

Numbers 20:16

When we called out to Yahweh

"When we prayed to Yahweh begging him to help us"

he heard our voice

Here "voice" represents their crying or what they said to him. Alternate translation: "he heard our cry" or "he heard what we asked for"

Look

The word "look" here shows that they have stopped speaking about the past and are now speaking about their present situation.

Numbers 20:17

Connecting Statement:

The messengers continue speaking to the king of Edom.

We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left

Here "turn aside" represents leaving the road. Alternate translation: "We will not leave the road in any direction"

the king's highway

This is the main road that connects Damascus in the north to the Gulf of Aqabah in the south.

Numbers 20:18

You may not pass ... to attack you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Moses, who represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Your people may not pass ... to attack them"

I will come with the sword

Here the sword represents the king's army. Alternate translation: "I will send my army"

Numbers 20:19

the people of Israel

This phrase refers to the Israelite messengers.

walk through on foot

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This idiom means that they would simply travel through the area by walking. They would not come in chariots to attack the people of Edom.
Numbers 20:20
the king of Edom came against Israel with a strong hand with many soldiers
Here the hand represents the king's powerful army. Alternate translation: "the king of Edom sent a strong army of many soldiers to attack Israel"
Numbers 20:21
cross over their border
Here "their" refers to the Edomites.
Numbers 20:22
The people of Israel, the whole community
The phrase "the whole community" emphasizes that every person who was a part of "the people of Israel" was present, without exception.
Numbers 20:24
Aaron must be gathered to his people
This is a gentle way to say that Aaron must die. It means that it is time for Aaron to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are. Alternate translation: "Aaron must die"
rebelled against my word
"refused to do what I said"
Numbers 20:25
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to Moses.
Numbers 20:26
must die and be gathered to his people
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. They mean that it is time for Aaron to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are.
Numbers 20:29
thirty days
"30 days"

21 [1]When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was traveling by the road to Atharim, he fought against Israel and took some of them captive.[2]Israel vowed to Yahweh and said, "If you give us victory over these people, then we will completely destroy their cities."[3]Yahweh listened to Israel's voice and he gave them victory over the Canaanites. They completely destroyed them and their cities. That place was named Hormah.

[4]They traveled from Mount Hor by the road to the Sea of Reeds to go around the land of Edom. The people became very discouraged on the way.[5]The people spoke against God and Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread, no water, and we hate this miserable food."
[6]Then Yahweh sent poisonous snakes among the people. The snakes bit the people; many people of Israel died.[7]The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned because we have spoken against Yahweh and you. Pray to Yahweh for him to take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.
[8]Yahweh said to Moses, "Make a snake and attach it to a pole. It will happen that everyone who is bitten will survive, if he looks at it."[9]So Moses made a bronze snake and attached it to a pole. When a snake bit any person, if he looked at the bronze snake, he survived.

[10]Then the people of Israel traveled on and camped at Oboth.[11]They traveled from Oboth and camped at Iye Abarim in the wilderness that faces Moab toward the east.
[12]From there they traveled on and camped in the Valley of Zered.[13]From there they traveled on and camped on the other side of the Arnon River, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites. The Arnon River forms the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.
[14]That is why it says in the scroll of the Wars of Yahweh,
"... Zahab[1] in Suphah, and the valleys of the Arnon,
[15] the slope of the valleys that lead toward the town of Ar
and lie along the border of Moab."

[16]From there they traveled to Beer, the well where Yahweh said to Moses, "Gather the people together for me to give them water."

[17]Then Israel sang this song:
"Spring up, well!
Sing about it,
[18] about the well that our leaders dug,
the well the nobles of the people dug,
with the scepter and their staffs."
Then from the wilderness they traveled to Mattanah.

[19]From Mattanah they traveled to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth,[20]and from Bamoth to a valley in the land of Moab. That is where the top of Mount Pisgah looks down on the wilderness.

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[21]Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites saying,[22]"Let us pass through your land. We will not turn into
any field or vineyard. We will not drink the water from your wells. We will travel by the king's highway until we have
crossed your border."
[23]But King Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his border. Instead, Sihon gathered all his army together and
went out into the wilderness against Israel. He came to Jahaz, where he fought against Israel.
[24]Israel attacked the army of Sihon with the edge of the sword and took their land from the Arnon to the Jabbok river, as
far as the land of the people of Ammon. Now the border of the people of Ammon was fortified.[25]Israel took all the Amorite
cities and lived in all of them, including Heshbon and all of its villages.[26]Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the
Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab. Sihon had taken all his land from his territory to the Arnon
River.
[27]That is why those who speak in proverbs say,
"Come to Heshbon.
Let the city of Sihon be rebuilt and established again.
[28] A fire blazed from Heshbon,
a flame from the city of Sihon
that devoured Ar of Moab,
and the owners of the high places of Arnon.

[29] Woe to you, Moab!
You have perished, people of Chemosh.
He has made his sons to be fugitives
and his daughters to be prisoners
of Sihon king of the Amorites.

[30] But we have conquered Sihon.
Heshbon is devastated all the way to Dibon.
We have defeated them all the way to Nophah,
which reaches to Medeba."

[31]So Israel began to live in the Amorites' land.[32]Then Moses sent men to look at Jazer. They took its villages and drove out
the Amorites who were there.

[33]Then they turned and went up by the road of Bashan. Og king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his army, to
fight them at Edrei.[34]Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Do not fear him, because I have given you victory over him, all his
army, and his land. Do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon."[35]So they killed him, his
sons, and all his army, until none of his people were left alive. Then they took over his land.

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[1]Some modern English translations read, Waheb.

Numbers 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 21:14-15, 17-18, 27-30.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ungrateful

The Israelites said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread, no water, and we hate this miserable food." After all Yahweh had done, they were very ungrateful. This showed their lack of faith and trust in Yahweh. (See: faith and trust)

Links:

Numbers 21:1 Notes

Numbers 21:1
he fought against Israel
Here "he fought" means that his army fought. Alternate translation: "his army fought against Israel"

Numbers 21:2
Israel vowed

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel vowed" or "The Israelites made a vow"

Numbers 21:3

listened to Israel's voice

Here "listen" means that Yahweh did as they asked. Alternate translation: "did what Israel asked"

Israel's voice

Here "voice" is a metonym that refers to their request. Alternate translation: "what Israel asked"

They completely destroyed them and their cities

"The people of Israel completely destroyed the Canaanite army and their cities"

That place was named Hormah

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They named that place Hormah"

Numbers 21:5

Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?

The people used this question in order to rebuke Moses. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not made us leave Egypt to die in the wilderness!"

Numbers 21:7

we have spoken against Yahweh and you

"we have said bad things about Yahweh and you"

we have spoken ... from us

The words "we" and "us" here refer to the people but not to Moses.

Numbers 21:8

Make a snake

Since it is impossible for Moses to make a real snake, it is implied that he was to make a model of a snake. This implied information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Make a model of a snake"

everyone who is bitten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone whom a snake bites"

Numbers 21:9

a bronze snake

"a snake out of bronze"

if he looked at the bronze snake, he survived

Here "he" refers to "any person" who was bitten by a snake.

Numbers 21:11

that faces Moab

Here "faces" is an idiom that means "is across from" or "is next to." Alternate translation: "that is next to Moab"

Numbers 21:13

forms the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites

This means that the two peoples lived on different sides of the river, which was a boundary between them. The Moabite people lived south of the river and the Amorites lived on the north.

Numbers 21:14

Zahab in Suphah

These are both names of places.

Numbers 21:15

the slope of the valleys that lead toward the town of Ar and lie along the border of Moab

"the valleys that go downhill to the town of Ar and lie along the border of Moab"

Numbers 21:16

to Beer, the well

This can be stated as two sentences. Alternate translation: "to Beer. There was a well there"

where Yahweh said to Moses, "Gather the people together for me to give them water."

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "where Yahweh told Moses to gather the people together for him to give them water"

Numbers 21:17

Spring up, well

Here "well" represents the water in the well. The Israelites are speaking to the water as if it were a person who could hear them, and they are asking for it to fill the well. Alternate translation: "Water, fill up the well"

Numbers 21:18

the well that our leaders dug, the well the nobles of the people dug

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the role of the leaders in digging the well.

with the scepter and their staffs

A scepter was carried by those with authority, and the staff was carried by everyone. Neither of these are digging tools. These two items emphasize that they were not too proud to use any means available. Alternate translation: "using even their scepter and staffs"

Numbers 21:19

Nahaliel ... Bamoth

These are the names of places.

Numbers 21:20

Mount Pisgah

This is the name of a mountain.

looks down on the wilderness

This is an idiom. It is a way of saying that the mountain is high, and speaks of the mountain as if it were a person who looks down to see the wilderness below him. Alternate translation: "rises above the wilderness"

Numbers 21:21

Then Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel, and especially to their leaders. Alternate translation: "Then the Israelites"

Numbers 21:22

We will not turn into any field or vineyard

"We will not go into any of your fields or vineyards"

the king's highway

This is the main road that connects Damascus in the north to the Gulf of Aqabah in the south. See how you translated this in Numbers 20:17.

Numbers 21:23

to pass through his border

"to cross over his border" or "to cross over into his land"

Jahaz

This is the name of a place.

he fought against Israel

Here "he" refers to King Sihon who represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "they fought against the Israelites"

Numbers 21:24

Israel attacked

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate

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translation: "The Israelites attacked"

with the edge of the sword

"with the sharp part of the sword." The "edge of the sword" is associated with death and complete destruction. Alternate translation: "and completely defeated them"

took their land

"conquered the land of the Amorites." Here the word "their" refers to the Amorites.

was fortified

"was strongly defended." The Israelites did not attack the Ammonites.

Numbers 21:25

Heshbon and all of its villages

Here "its" is possessive to show that a relationship existed between the city of Heshbon and these nearby villages. Alternate translation: "Heshbon and the nearby villages that it controlled"

Numbers 21:26

Sihon had taken all his land

Here "his" refers to the king of Moab.

Numbers 21:27

Heshbon ... city of Sihon

These are two names that refer to the same city.

Let the city of Sihon be rebuilt and established again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let someone rebuild and establish again the city of Sihon"

rebuilt and established

These two terms are very similar and emphasize that the city will be fully rebuilt. Alternate translation: "completely rebuilt"

Numbers 21:28

A fire blazed from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that destruction will begin at Heshbon. The fire refers to a destroying army. Alternate translation: "King Sihon led a strong army from the city of Heshbon"

devoured Ar of Moab

The army of Sihon is spoken of as if it was an animal that ate up the city of Ar. Alternate translation: "destroyed the town of Ar in the land of Moab"

Numbers 21:29

Moab ... people of Chemosh

These two phrases refer to the same people.

people of Chemosh

"Chemosh" was the name of the false god whom the Moabites worshiped. Alternate translation: "the people who worship Chemosh"

He has made his sons

"He" and "his" refer to Chemosh.

Numbers 21:30

we have conquered

Here "we" refers to the Israelites who defeated Sihon.

Heshbon is devastated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We have devastated Heshbon"

Heshbon ... all the way to Dibon ... all the way to Nophah ... to Medeba

These are all places in Sihon's kingdom. This means the Israelites destroyed Sihon's entire nation.

Numbers 21:32

drove out

"chased away"

Numbers 21:33

went out against them

"attacked them"

Numbers 21:34

Do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites

The Israelites had completely destroyed Sihon. Alternate translation: "Destroy him like you destroyed Sihon king of the Amorites"

Numbers 21:35

So they killed him

"So the army of Israel killed Og"

none of his people were left alive

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all of his people were dead"

they took over his land

"they took control of his land"

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22 [1]The people of Israel traveled on until they camped in the plains of Moab near Jericho, on the other side of the Jordan River from the city.

[2]Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.[3]Moab was very afraid of the people because they were many, and Moab was in terror of the people of Israel.[4]The king of Moab said to the elders of Midian, "This multitude will eat up all that is around us as an ox eats up the grass in a field." Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time.
[5]He sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor, at Pethor which is by the Euphrates River, in the land of his nation and his people. He called him and said, "Look, a nation has come here from Egypt. They cover the face of the earth and they are right now next to me.[6]Please come now and curse this nation for me, because they are too strong for me. Perhaps then I can manage to attack them and drive them out of the land. I know that those you bless will be blessed, and that those you curse will be cursed."

[7]So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian left, taking payment for divination. They came to Balaam and spoke to him Balak's words.[8]Balaam said to them, "Stay here tonight. I will bring you what Yahweh says to me." So the leaders of Moab stayed with Balaam that night.
[9]God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men who came to you?"[10]Balaam answered God, "Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent them to me. He said,[11]'Look, the people who have come from Egypt cover the surface of my land. Now come and curse them for me. Perhaps I will manage to fight them and drive them out.'"

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[12]God replied to Balaam, "You must not go with those men. You must not curse the people of Israel because they have been blessed."[13]Balaam rose up in the morning and said to Balak's leaders, "Go back to your land because Yahweh refuses to allow me to go with you."[14]So the leaders of Moab left and went back to Balak. They said, "Balaam refused to come with us."

[15]Balak sent again more leaders who were even more honored than the first group.[16]They came to Balaam and said to him, "Balak son of Zippor says this, 'Please let nothing stop you from coming to me,[17]because I will pay you extremely well and give you great honor, and I will do whatever you tell me to do. So please come and curse this people for me.'"

[18]Balaam answered and said to Balak's servants, "Even if Balak would give me his palace full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of Yahweh, my God, and do less or more than what he tells me.[19]Now then, please wait here tonight too, so that I may learn anything further that Yahweh says to me."[20]God came to Balaam at night and said to him, "Since these men have come to summon you, get up and go with them. But only do what I tell you to do."

[21]Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the leaders of Moab.[22]But because he went, God's anger was kindled. The angel of Yahweh placed himself in the road as someone hostile to Balaam, who was riding on his donkey. Balaam's two servants were also with him.[23]The donkey saw the angel of Yahweh standing in the road with his drawn sword in his hand. The donkey turned off the road and went into a field. Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back to the road.
[24]Then the angel of Yahweh stood in a narrow part of the road between some vineyards, with a wall on his right side and another wall on his left side.[25]The donkey saw the angel of Yahweh again. She went against the wall and pinned Balaam's foot against it. Balaam struck her again.
[26]The angel of Yahweh went further and stood in another narrow place where there was no way to turn to either side.
[27]The donkey saw the angel of Yahweh, and she lay down under Balaam. Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff.
[28]Then Yahweh opened the donkey's mouth so she could talk. She said to Balaam, "What have I done to you that induced you to strike me these three times?"[29]Balaam replied to the donkey, "It was because you acted so stupidly with me. I wish there were a sword in my hand. If there were, by now I would have killed you."[30]The donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life long to this present day? Have I ever been in the habit of doing such things to you before?" Balaam said, "No."

[31]Then Yahweh opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of Yahweh standing in the road with his drawn sword in his hand. Balaam bowed down and lay facedown.[32]The angel of Yahweh said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Look, I have come as someone hostile to you because your actions before me have been wicked.[33]The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If she had not turned away from me, I would certainly have killed you and spared her life."
[34]Balaam said to the angel of Yahweh, "I have sinned. I did not know that you stood against me in the road. So now, if it is displeasing to you, I will turn back."[35]But the angel of Yahweh said to Balaam, "Go on ahead with the men. But you must only speak the words that I tell you." So Balaam went with the leaders of Balak.

[36]When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at a city in Moab at the Arnon, which is on the border.[37]Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not send men to you to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?"
[38]Then Balaam replied to Balak, "See, I have come to you. Do I now have any power to say anything? I can only say the words that God puts into my mouth."[39]Balaam went with Balak, and they arrived at Kiriath Huzoth.[40]Then Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep and gave some meat to Balaam and the leaders who were with him.

[41]In the morning, Balak took Balaam up to the high place of Baal. From there Balaam could see only a part of the Israelites in their camp.

Numbers 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter begins a section on Balaam. The king of Moab wanted the prophet Balaam to come and curse Israel. God told him not to go but he wanted to go; so God told him to say only what God wanted him to say. Yahweh was able to use Balaam, even though he was not a prophet of Yahweh. (See: prophet and curse)

Links:

Numbers 22:1 Notes

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Numbers 22:1

on the other side of the Jordan River from the city

The Israelites were camped on the east side of the Jordan River. Jericho was on the west side of the river.

Numbers 22:2

Balak son of Zippor

Balak was king of Moab.

Zippor

Zippor is the father of Balak.

Numbers 22:3

Moab was very afraid of the people ... Moab was in terror of the people of Israel

These two phrases mean the same thing, and emphasize how afraid Moab was.

Moab was very afraid

Here "Moab" refers to the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "All of the Moabites were very afraid"

because they were many

"because there were many of them"

Numbers 22:4

The king of Moab said to the elders of Midian

The Moabites and the Midianites were two different groups of people, but the Midianites were living in the land of Moab at that time.

This multitude will eat up all that is around us as an ox eats up the grass in a field

The way the Israelites will destroy their enemies is spoken of as if they were an ox eating up the grass in a field.

Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time

This changes from the main story to background information about Balak.

Numbers 22:5

He sent messengers

"Balak sent messengers"

Beor

This is the name of Balaam's father.

Pethor

This is the name of a city.

of his nation and his people

"of Balaam's nation and people"

He called him

"Balak called Balaam." Balak did not speak to Balaam directly, but did so through the messengers he sent.

They cover the face of the earth

This is an exaggeration to emphasize how many of them there were. Alternate translation: "They are extremely numerous"

the face of the earth

This refers to the surface of the earth.

Numbers 22:6

drive them

"chase them"

I know that those you bless will be blessed, and that those you curse will be cursed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I know you have the power to bless or to curse people"

Numbers 22:7

payment for divination

The abstract noun "divination" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "money to pay Balaam to curse Israel"

They came to Balaam

You may prefer to say "They went to Balaam"

spoke to him Balak's words

"told him the message from Balak"

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 22:8

I will bring you

Balaam's report is spoken of as if it were something that he would carry to the messengers. Alternate translation: "I will tell you"

Numbers 22:9

God came to Balaam

"God appeared to Balaam"

Who are these men who came to you?

Yahweh uses a question to introduce a new topic of conversation. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me about these men who came to you."

Numbers 22:10

Balak ... Zippor

These are the names of men. See how you translated these in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 22:11

Look ... drive them out

Balaam restates the message that Balak sent to him. See how you translated these phrases in Numbers 22:5-6.

drive them out

"chase them away"

Numbers 22:12

because they have been blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because I have blessed them"

Numbers 22:13

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 22:15

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 22:16

They came to Balaam

You may prefer to say "They went to Balaam"

Numbers 22:17

this people

The singular noun refers to the Israelites as a group. Alternate translation: "this group of people"

Numbers 22:18

Balak's servants

These were probably soldiers, not household servants.

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

Even if Balak would give me his palace full of silver and gold

Balaam is describing something that would never happen.

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He is emphasizing that there is nothing that could make him disobey Yahweh.

I cannot go beyond the word of Yahweh ... and do less or more than what he tells me

This means Balaam cannot disobey Yahweh in any way.

Numbers 22:21

saddled his donkey

A saddle is a seat put on the back of an animal in order to ride it.

Numbers 22:22

God's anger was kindled

The increase in God's anger is spoken of as if it was a fire starting to burn. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God became very angry"

as someone hostile to Balaam

"as an enemy to Balaam" or "in order to stop Balaam"

Numbers 22:23

with his drawn sword

A sword is drawn from its sheath in order to be ready to use. Alternate translation: "with his sword ready to attack"

The donkey turned off the road and went into a field

The donkey did this to avoid the angel of Yahweh.

to turn her back

Sometimes animals are referred to as "her" or "she." Alternate translation: "to turn it back"

Numbers 22:25

She went against the wall

This was an attempt to escape from the angel of Yahweh in the road.

She went

Sometimes animals are referred to as "her" or "she." Alternate translation: "It went"

pinned Balaam's foot against it

"pushed Balaam's foot against it" or "hurt Balaam's foot against it"

Numbers 22:27

Balaam's anger was kindled

The increase in Balaam's anger is spoken of as if it was a fire starting to burn. This can be stated in active form. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:22]

Numbers 22:28

Then Yahweh opened the donkey's mouth so she could talk

Opening the mouth is associated with the ability to speak. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh gave the donkey the ability to speak like a human would speak"

She said to Balaam

"The donkey said to Balaam"

Numbers 22:30

Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life long to this present day?

This rhetorical question was used to convict Balaam that his judgment of the donkey was unfair. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am your donkey on which you have ridden all your life, right up to the present moment."

Have I ever been in the habit of doing such things to you before?

This rhetorical question was used to further convict Balaam that his judgment of the donkey was unfair. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have never been in the habit of doing such things to you!"

Numbers 22:31

Then Yahweh opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of Yahweh

To "open one's eyes" is associated with being able to see. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh gave Balaam the ability to see the angel of Yahweh"

with his drawn sword

A sword is drawn from its sheath in order to be ready to use. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:23]

Balaam bowed down and lay facedown

This indicates that Balaam is humbling himself before the angel.

Numbers 22:32

Why have you struck your donkey these three times?

This rhetorical question is used to accuse Balaam of doing wrong. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have struck your donkey these three times."

as someone hostile to you

"as an enemy to you" or "to oppose you"

Numbers 22:33

If she had not turned ... killed you and spared her life

This statement indicates what could have happened but did not. The donkey's actions saved Balaam.

Numbers 22:34

So now, if it is displeasing to you

"So if you do not want me to continue going"

Numbers 22:35

with the leaders of Balak

"with the leaders whom Balak had sent." See how you translated "Balak" in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 22:36

Arnon

This is the name of a river. See how you translated it in Numbers 21:13.

Numbers 22:37

Did I not send men to you to summon you?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely I sent men to summon you."

Why did you not come to me?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have come to me!"

Am I not able to honor you?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that I am able to pay you money for coming to me."

Numbers 22:38

Do I now have any power to say anything?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to tell Balak that he will not be able to do everything that Balak asks him to do. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "But I have no power to say anything I want"

the words that God puts into my mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. Alternate translation: "the message that God wants me to say"

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Numbers 22:39
Kiriath Huzoth
This is the name of a town.
Numbers 22:40
some meat
"some of the meat from the sacrifices"
Numbers 22:41
the high place of Baal
These words could refer to 1) the same place as Bamoth in Numbers 21:19; the word Bamoth means "the high place." Or 2) another high place where people sacrificed to Baal.

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23 [1]Balaam said to Balak, "Build seven altars here for me and prepare seven bulls and seven rams."[2]So Balak did as
Balaam requested. Then Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on every altar.[3]Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stand at your burnt offering and I will go. Perhaps Yahweh will come to meet me. Whatever he shows me I will tell you." So he went away to a hilltop with no trees.
[4]Then God met Balaam, and Balaam said to him, "I have built seven altars, and I have offered up a bull and a ram on each one."[5]Yahweh put a message in Balaam's mouth and said, "Return to Balak and speak to him."[6]So Balaam returned to Balak, who was standing by his burnt offering, and all the leaders of Moab were with him.
[7]Then Balaam began to speak his proverb and said,
"Balak has brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the eastern mountains.
'Come, curse Jacob for me,' he said.
'Come, denounce Israel.'
[8] How can I curse those whom God has not cursed?
How can I denounce those whom Yahweh does not denounce?

[9] For from the top of the rocks I see him;
from the hills I look at him.
See, there is a people who live alone
and do not consider themselves as just an ordinary nation.

[10] Who can count the dust of Jacob
or number even only one-fourth of Israel?
Let me die the death of a righteous person,
and let my life's end be like his!"

[11]Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, but look, you have blessed them."[12]Balaam answered and said, "Should I not be careful to say only what Yahweh puts in my mouth?"

[13]So Balak said to him, "Please come with me to another place where you can see them. You will only see the nearest of them, not all of them. There you will curse them for me."[14]So he took Balaam into the field of Zophim, to the top of Mount Pisgah, and built seven more altars. He offered up a bull and a ram on each altar.[15]Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here by your burnt offering, while I meet with Yahweh over there."
[16]So Yahweh met Balaam and put a message in his mouth. He said, "Return to Balak and give him my message."[17]Balaam returned to him, and look, he was standing by his burnt offering, and the leaders of Moab were with him. Then Balak said to him, "What has Yahweh said?"
[18]Balaam began his prophecy. He said,
"Rise up, Balak, and hear.
Listen to me, you son of Zippor.
[19] God is not a man, that he should lie,
or a human being, that he should change his mind.
Has he promised anything without doing it?
Has he said he would do something without carrying it out?

[20] Look, I have been commanded to bless.
God has given a blessing, and I cannot reverse it.

[21] He has not looked upon disaster in Jacob,
and he has not seen trouble in Israel.
Yahweh their God is with them,

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and the shout of the king is among them.

22 God brought them out of Egypt
with strength like that of a wild ox.

23 There is no sorcery that works against Jacob,
and no divination harms Israel.
Now it must be said about Jacob and Israel,
'Look what God has done!'

24 Look, the people rise like a lioness,
as a lion emerges and attacks.
He does not lie down until he eats his victim
and drinks the blood of what he has killed."

25 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them or bless them at all."
26 But Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Did I not tell you that I must say all that Yahweh tells me to say?"
27 So Balak replied to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place. Perhaps it will please God for you to curse them there for me."
28 So Balak took Balaam to the top of Mount Peor, which looks down on the wilderness.
29 Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here and prepare seven bulls and seven rams."
30 So Balak did as Balaam had said; he offered up a bull and a ram on each altar.

Numbers 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam continues in this chapter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 23:7-10, 18-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cursing God's people

God does not allow others to curse his people. Balaam blessed Israel twice when he was supposed to curse them. This may be taken as humor or an ironic situation. (See: curse and peopleofgod)

Links:

Numbers 23:1 Notes

Numbers 23:1

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

prepare seven bulls and seven rams

"kill seven bulls and seven rams as a sacrifice"

Numbers 23:3

Stand at your burnt offering and I will go

"Stay here with your burnt offering and I will go a distance away"

Numbers 23:4

I have offered up a bull and a ram

It has already been stated that he killed these animals as a burnt offering. Alternate translation: "I have killed a bull and a ram and burnt them as an offering"

Numbers 23:5

Yahweh put a message in Balaam's mouth

Here Yahweh giving Balaam a message to speak is spoken of as if Yahweh placed it in his mouth. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told Balaam what he wanted him to say to Balak"

Numbers 23:7

his proverb

This is probably a metonym for a prophecy. Alternate translation: "his prophecy"

Balak has brought me from Aram ... the king of Moab from the eastern mountains

These phrases mean the same thing.

denounce Israel

To "denounce" here means to judge someone harshly, to consider Israel guilty of great evil.

Numbers 23:8

How can I curse those whom God has not cursed? How can I denounce those whom Yahweh does not denounce?

These rhetorical questions emphasize Balaam's refusal to disobey God. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "But I cannot curse those whom God has not cursed. I cannot denounce those whom Yahweh does not denounce!"

denounce ... denounce

To "denounce" here means to judge someone harshly, to consider Israel guilty of great evil. See how you translated

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this word in Numbers 23:7.

Numbers 23:9

from the top of the rocks I see him ... from the hills I look at him

These two phrases mean the same thing. Balaam viewed Israel from the top of a hill.

I see him ... I look at him

Here "him" is a metonym that refers to the people of Israel.

there is a people

"there is a group of people"

do not consider themselves as just an ordinary nation

This negative statement is used to stress that the opposite is true. Alternate translation: "they consider themselves to be a special nation"

Numbers 23:10

Who can count the dust of Jacob or number even only one-fourth of Israel?

Here "dust of Jacob" is a metaphor that speaks of the number of Israelites as if they were as numerous as the specks of dust. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There are too many Israelites to count. No one could count even a fourth of them because there are so many."

the death of a righteous person

It is understood that this will be a peaceful death. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "the peaceful death of a righteous person"

a righteous person ... like his

These are metonymies that refer to the people of Israel as a single person.

Numbers 23:11

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

What have you done to me?

Balak uses this question to scold Balaam. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe you did this to me!"

but look

This emphasizes the shocking action that follows.

Numbers 23:12

Should I not be careful to say only what Yahweh puts in my mouth?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to defend his actions. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I must be very careful to say only what Yahweh tells me to say."

to say only what Yahweh puts in my mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:38]

Numbers 23:13

There you will curse them for me

"There you will curse the Israelites for me"

Numbers 23:14

field of Zophim

Translators may add a footnote that says: "The word 'Zophim' means 'to watch' or 'to spy.'"

Mount Pisgah

This is the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in Numbers 21:20.

Numbers 23:16

put a message in his mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:38]

He said

"Then Yahweh said"

Numbers 23:18

Balak, and hear ... Listen to me, you son of Zippor

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize how important it was for Balak to pay attention.

Balak ... son of Zippor

See how you translated these names in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 23:19

Has he promised anything without doing it? Has he said he would do something without carrying it out?

Both of these questions mean the same thing and emphasize that God does what he says he will. These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "He has never promised a thing without fulfilling what he promised. He has always done exactly what he said he would do."

Numbers 23:20

I have been commanded to bless

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has commanded me to bless the Israelites"

Numbers 23:21

disaster in Jacob ... trouble in Israel

These two phrases mean the same thing. Possible meanings are 1) God has given Israel only good things or 2) there is no sin in Israel that would cause him to judge them.

the shout of the king is among them

"they shout with joy because Yahweh is their king"

Numbers 23:22

with strength like that of a wild ox

This simile says that Yahweh's great strength is equal to an ox.

Numbers 23:23

it must be said

This can be stated in active form. "people must say"

Look what God has done!

It is implied that what God did for them was good. Alternate translation: "Look at the good things God has done for them!"

Numbers 23:24

the people rise like a lioness ... he has killed

This verse is a long metaphor that speaks of Israel defeating her enemies as if Israel was a lion devouring its prey.

Numbers 23:25

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

Numbers 23:26

Did I not tell you that I must say all that Yahweh tells me to say?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to remind Balak that Balaam refused to disobey God even before he came to Balak. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I told you before that I must say all that

Yahweh tells me to say."

Numbers 23:28

which looks down on the wilderness

It is understood that this wilderness was where Israel was camped. Alternate translation: "which looks down on the wilderness where Israel was"

24 [1]When Balaam saw that it pleased Yahweh to bless Israel, he did not go, as at the other times, to use sorcery. Instead, he looked toward the wilderness.
[2]Balaam raised his eyes and saw that Israel was camped, each in their own tribe, and the Spirit of God came on him.[3]He received this prophecy and said,
"This is the declaration of Balaam son of Beor,
the declaration of the man whose eyes are wide open,
[4] the declaration of the one who hears the words of God,
who sees a vision from the Almighty,
who bows down with his eyes open.

[5] How delightful are your tents, Jacob,
the place where you live, Israel!

[6] Like valleys they spread out,
like gardens by the riverside,
like aloes planted by Yahweh,
like cedars beside the waters.

[7] Water will flow from their buckets,
and their seed will have abundant water.
Their king will be greater than Agag,
and their kingdom will be honored.

[8] God will bring him out of Egypt.
He will have strength like a wild ox.
He will eat up the nations who fight against him.
He will break their bones to pieces.
He will shoot them with his arrows.

[9] He crouches down like a lion,
like a lioness. Who dares disturb him?
May everyone who blesses him be blessed;
may everyone who curses him be cursed."

[10]Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam and he struck his hands together in anger. Balak said to Balaam, "I called you to curse my enemies, but look, you have blessed them three times.[11]So flee home now. I said I would greatly reward you, but Yahweh has kept you from getting any reward."

[12]Then Balaam replied to Balak, "I said to the messengers that you sent to me,[13]'Even if Balak gave me his palace full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond Yahweh's word and anything bad or good, or anything at all that I might want to do. I can say only what Yahweh tells me to say.' Did I not say this to them?[14]So now, look, I will go back to my people. But first let me advise you about what this people will do to your people in the days ahead."

[15]Balaam began this prophecy. He said,
"This is the declaration of Balaam son of Beor,
the declaration of the man whose eyes are wide open.
[16] This is the declaration of someone who hears words from God,
who has knowledge from the Most High,
who sees visions from the Almighty,

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who bows down with open eyes.

17 I see him, but he is not here now.
I look at him, but he is not near.
A star will come out of Jacob,
and a scepter will rise out of Israel.
He will shatter Moab's leaders
and destroy all the descendants of Seth.

18 Then Edom will become a possession of Israel,
and Seir will also become their possession,
enemies of Israel,
whom Israel will conquer with force.

19 Out of Jacob a king will come who will have dominion,
and he will destroy the survivors of their city."

20 Then Balaam looked at Amalek and began his prophecy. He said,
"Amalek was once the greatest of nations,
but his end will be eternal destruction."

21 Then Balaam looked toward the Kenites and began his prophecy. He said,
"The place where you live is strong,
and your nest is in the rocks.
22 Nevertheless you Kenites will be consumed by fire
when Assyria carries you away captive."

23 Then Balaam began his final prophecy. He said,
"Woe! Who will survive when God does this?
24 Ships will come from the coast of Cyprus;[1]
they will attack Assyria and will conquer Eber,
but they, too, will end in destruction."

25 Then Balaam got up and left. He returned to his home, and Balak also went away.

[1] Some modern English translations read, Kittim.

Numbers 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam continues in this chapter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 24:3-9, 15-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cursing God's people

God does not allow others to curse his people. Balaam blesses Israel again and the king is angry and sends him home. This may be taken as humor or an ironic situation. (See: curse and peopleofgod)

Links:

Numbers 24:1 Notes

Numbers 24:1
as at the other times

"like he did the previous times"
Numbers 24:2

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Balaam raised his eyes
Here "raised his eyes" is an idiom that means to look up. Alternate translation: "He looked up"
Spirit of God came on him
This mean's God's Spirit took control of him to prophesy.
Numbers 24:3
He received this prophecy
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave him this prophecy"
Balaam son of Beor
Beor was Balaam's father. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:5.
whose eyes are wide open
This idiom means he sees and understands clearly.
Numbers 24:4
General Information:
Balaam continues to prophesy under the control of the Spirit of God.
who sees ... who bows
Here Balaam refers to himself as "He."
who bows down
This is an act of humility.
with his eyes open
Here "eyes open" is an idiom that means Balaam has received the ability to know what God wants to say.
Numbers 24:6
General Information:
Balaam continues to prophesy under the control of the Spirit of God.
Like valleys they spread out
Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they were numerous enough to cover entire valleys.
like gardens by the riverside
Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they were well-watered gardens that produce an abundant harvest.
aloes planted by Yahweh
Aloes are plants with a pleasant smell that grow well even in dry conditions. Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they would thrive and be pleasant like aloe plants. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "aloes which Yahweh has planted"
like cedars beside the waters
Cedar trees were the largest trees in Israel. Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they grew as large as well-watered cedar trees.
Numbers 24:7
General Information:
Balaam continues to prophesy under the control of the Spirit of God.
Water will flow from their buckets, and their seed will have abundant water
Abundant water is associated with God's blessing on the crops of the land. Alternate translation: "God will bless Israel with plenty of water for their crops"
their seed will have abundant water
Well-watered seed refers to God's blessing on his people so that they will have abundant crops. Alternate translation: "they will have plenty of water for their seed to grow healthy crops"
Their king will be greater ... their kingdom will be honored
These two phrases have similar meaning, emphasizing how much God will bless them compared to other nations.
will be greater
will have more honor and will be more powerful
their kingdom will be honored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "other people will give honor to their kingdom"
Numbers 24:8
General Information:
Balaam continues to prophesy under the control of the Spirit of God.
God will bring him
"God will bring the Israelites"
He will have strength like a wild ox
This simile emphasizes that the Israelites have great strength. The ox was the strongest animal the Israelites owned.
He will eat up the nations
Balaam speaks of the Israelites as if they are wild animals that eat their enemies. This means they will destroy their enemies.
Numbers 24:9
General Information:
Balaam finishes the prophecy under the control of the Spirit of God.
He crouches down like a lion, like a lioness
In this simile, Balaam compares the Israelites to both male and female lions. This means they are dangerous and always ready to attack.
Who dares disturb him?
Balaam uses a question to warn all the people to not provoke the Israelites. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one dares to disturb him!"
May everyone who blesses him be blessed; may everyone who curses him be cursed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God bless those who bless the Israelites; may he curse those who curse the Israelites"
Numbers 24:10
Balak's anger was kindled
The increase in Balak's anger is spoken of as if it was a fire starting to burn. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Balak became very angry"
struck his hands together in anger
This was a sign of great frustration and anger.
Numbers 24:11
flee home now
Balak is very angry and wants Balaam to leave quickly, as if Balak were going to kill him.
Numbers 24:13
Even if Balak gave me his palace full of silver and gold
Balaam is describing something that would never happen. This statement emphasizes that there is nothing that would make Balaam disobey God.
Did I not say this to them?
Balaam uses a question to remind Balak about what he said earlier. This rhetorical question can be translated as a

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statement. "Alternate translation: I said this to them."
Numbers 24:14
this people
"the Israelites"
Numbers 24:15
Balaam son of Beor
Beor was Balaam's father. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:5.
whose eyes are wide open
This idiom means he sees and understands clearly. See how you translated this in [Numbers 24:3]
Numbers 24:16
who has knowledge from the Most High
The abstract term "knowledge" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "who knows things that God Most High has revealed to him"
bows down
This is a sign of submission to God.
Numbers 24:17
General Information:
Balaam continues the first of his four prophecies.
I see him, but he is not here now. I look at him, but he is not near
Both of these statements mean the same thing. Balaam is having a vision of a future event. The word "him" refers to a future leader of Israel.
A star will come out of Jacob
Here "star" refers to an Israelite king that will rise in power.
out of Jacob
Here "Jacob" refers to the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "from among the descendants of Jacob"
a scepter will rise out of Israel
This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Here "scepter" refers to a powerful king.
out of Israel
Here "Israel" refers to future Israelites. Alternate translation: "from among the Israelites in the future"
shatter Moab's leaders
Possible meanings are 1) he will break the heads of the leaders of Moab or 2) he will destroy the leaders of Moab.
all the descendants of Seth
This also refers to the Moabites, who were descendants of Seth.
Numbers 24:18
General Information:
Balaam finishes the first of his four prophecies.
Edom will become a possession of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Israelites will occupy Edom"
Seir will also become their possession
Here "Seir" refers to the people who lived near Mount Seir. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Israel will also conquer the people of Seir"
Numbers 24:19
Out of Jacob a king will come
Jacob was the ancestor of the Israelites. "Jacob" is a metonym that refers to the whole people group.
of their city
This refers to the city of Ar where Balak met Balaam.
Numbers 24:20
Balaam looked at Amalek
Here "Amalek" is a metonym that refers to the people of Amalek. This continues Balaam's vision while turning to look in the direction of the Amalek nation, and then he prophecies about the Amalekites.
his end
A singular pronoun is used because the Amalekites are spoken of as a single person.
Numbers 24:21
the Kenites
This is the name of a people group who descended from Kain.
The place where you live is strong
"The place were you live is well defended"
your nest is in the rocks
This is a metaphor that means that they live in a secure place. Alternate translation: "your location is as secure as a nest high in the rocks"
Numbers 24:22
Nevertheless you Kenites will be consumed by fire when Assyria carries you away captive
Here the destruction of the Kenites is spoken of as if they were burned up in a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nevertheless the Assyrians will destroy you Kenites like a fire, and take you away as captives"
Numbers 24:23
Who will survive when God does this?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one will survive when God does this!"
Numbers 24:24
Cyprus
This is the name of an island in the Mediterranean Sea.
they, too, will end in destruction
The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "God will destroy them also"
Numbers 24:25
Balak
This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:2.

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25 [1]Israel stayed in Shittim, and the men began to prostitute themselves with women of Moab,[2]for the Moabites had
invited the people to the sacrifices to their gods. So the people ate and bowed down to Moabite gods.[3]The men of
Israel joined in worshiping Baal of Peor, and Yahweh's anger was kindled against Israel.
[4]Yahweh said to Moses, "Kill all the leaders of the people and hang them up before me to expose them in the daylight, so
that my fierce anger may turn away from Israel."[5]So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you must kill his people
who have joined in worshiping Baal of Peor."

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[6]Then one of the men of the sons of Israel came and brought among his family members a Midianite woman. This happened in the sight of Moses and all the community of the people of Israel, while they were weeping at the entrance to the tent of meeting.[7]When Phinehas son of Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, saw that, he rose up from among the community and took a spear in his hand.
[8]He followed the man of Israel into the tent and thrust the spear through both of their bodies, both the man of Israel and the woman. So a plague that God had sent on the people of Israel stopped.[9]Those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand in number.

[10]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[11]"Phinehas son of Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, has turned my rage away from the people of Israel because he was passionate with my zeal among them. So I have not consumed the people of Israel in my jealousy.
[12]Therefore say, 'Yahweh says, "Look, I am giving to Phinehas my covenant of peace.[13]For him and his descendants after him, it will be a covenant of an everlasting priesthood because he was zealous for me, his God. He has atoned for the people of Israel."'"

[14]Now the name of the man of Israel who was killed with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, a leader of an ancestor's family among the Simeonites.[15]The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Kozbi daughter of Zur, who was head of a tribe and ancestral household in Midian.

[16]So Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[17]"Treat the Midianites as enemies and attack them,[18]for they treated you like enemies with their deceitfulness. They led you into evil in the case of Peor and in the case of their sister Kozbi, the daughter of a leader in Midian, who was killed on the day of the plague in the matter of Peor."

Numbers 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam concludes in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Foreign women

Balaam told the young women from Moab to act friendly to the Israelite men and invite them to feasts in honor of their god Baal. The men went to the feasts and worshiped Baal. God was angry and killed 24,000 Israelite men. Foreign women are often the source of problems in Israel. They caused the men to worship their false gods. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Numbers 25:1 Notes

Numbers 25:1

Shittim

This is the name of a place in Moab.

Numbers 25:2

bowed down

This was an act of worship.

Numbers 25:3

Peor

Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in Numbers 23:28.

Yahweh's anger was kindled

The increase in Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it was a fire starting to burn. This can be stated in active form. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 21:20]

Numbers 25:4

all the leaders of the people

It is implied that this refers to the leaders who were guilty of idolatry. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "all the leaders of the people who are guilty of idolatry"

to expose them in the daylight

This means that the leaders of Israel will kill these people and leave their dead bodies out where all the people can see them.

Numbers 25:5

to the judges of Israel

"to the judges of Israel who were not guilty of idolatry"

Peor

Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in Numbers 23:28.

Numbers 25:6

brought among his family members a Midianite woman

It is implied that he brought her among his camp to have sex with her. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "brought a Midianite woman to the Israelite camp to sleep with her"

in the sight of Moses and all the community of the people of Israel

Here "in the sight of" is an idiom that means they heard about it, or found out about it.

Numbers 25:7

Eleazar

This is the name of Aaron's son. See how you translated it in

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Numbers 3:2.
Numbers 25:8
He followed
"Phinehas followed"
Numbers 25:11
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh begins to speak to Moses.
turned my rage away from the people of Israel
God's rage is spoken of as if it were something that could be physically pushed aside in order to stop it. Alternate translation: "caused me to no longer be angry with the people of Israel"
I have not consumed the people of Israel in my jealousy
God is spoken of as if he were a fierce animal that could have eaten up the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I have not destroyed the people of Israel in my terrible anger"
Numbers 25:12
Connecting Statement:
This continues Yahweh's speech from verse 11.
Numbers 25:13
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of Yahweh's speech that begins in verse 11.
For him ... of Israel.""
This is the end of Yahweh's speech from [Numbers 25:11]
Numbers 25:14
Now
The word "Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story, where the author tells background information about Zimri and Kozbi.
who was killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Phinehas killed"
Zimri ... Salu
These are names of men.
Numbers 25:15
Zur
This is the name of a man.
Kozbi
This is the name of a woman.
Numbers 25:18
with their deceitfulness
The abstract noun "deceitfulness" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "by deceiving you"
They led you into evil
"They persuaded you to do this evil thing"
in the case of Peor ... in the matter of Peor
Both of these phrases mean that these things happened at Mount Peor.
Peor
Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in Numbers 23:28.
who was killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Phinehas killed"

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26 [1]It came about after the plague that Yahweh spoke to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron the priest. He said,[2]"Count all the community of the people of Israel, from twenty years old and up, by their ancestor's families, all who are able to go to war for Israel."
[3]So Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke to them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho and said,[4]"Count the people, from twenty years old and up, as Yahweh commanded Moses and the people of Israel, who came out of the land of Egypt."

[5]Reuben was the firstborn of Israel. From his son Hanok came the clan of the Hanokites. From Pallu came the clan of the Palluites.
[6]From Hezron came the clan of the Hezronites. From Karmi came the clan of the Karmites.
[7]These were the clans of Reuben, who numbered 43,730 men.
[8]Eliab was a son of Pallu.[9]Eliab's sons were Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These were the same Dathan and Abiram who were in the company of Korah when they rebelled against Moses and Aaron and rebelled against Yahweh.
[10]The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up together with Korah when all his company died. At that time, fire devoured 250 men, who became a warning sign.[11]But Korah's line did not die out.

[12]The clans of Simeon's descendants were these:
Through Nemuel, the clan of the Nemuelites,
through Jamin, the clan of the Jaminites,
through Jakin, the clan of the Jakinites,
[13] through Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites,
through Shaul, the clan of the Shaulites.

[14]These were the clans of Simeon's descendants, who numbered 22,200 men.

[15]The clans of Gad's descendants were these:
Through Zephon, the clan of the Zephonites,
through Haggi, the clan of the Haggites,
through Shuni, the clan of the Shunites,
[16] through Ozni, the clan of the Oznites,
through Eri, the clan of the Erites,

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17 through Arod, the clan of the Arodites,
through Areli, the clan of the Arelites.

18 These were the clans of Gad's descendants, who numbered 40,500 men.

19 Judah's sons were Er and Onan, but these men died in the land of Canaan.
20 The clans of Judah's other descendants were these:
through Shelah, the clan of the Shelanites,
through Perez, the clan of the Perezites, and
through Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites.

21 The descendants of Perez were these:
Through Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites,
through Hamul, the clan of the Hamulites.
22 These were the clans of Judah's descendants, who numbered 76,500 men.

23 The clans of Issachar's descendants were these:
Through Tola, the clan of the Tolaites,
through Puah, the clan of the Puites,
24 through Jashub, the clan of the Jashubites,
through Shimron, the clan of the Shimronites.

25 These were the clans of Issachar, who numbered 64,300 men.

26 The clans of Zebulun's descendants were these:
Through Sered, the clan of the Seredites,
through Elon, the clan of the Elonites,
through Jahleel, the clan of the Jahleelites.
27 These were the clans of the Zebulunites, who numbered 60,500 men.

28 The clans of Joseph's descendants were Manasseh and Ephraim. 29 The descendants of Manasseh were these:
through Makir, the clan of the Makirites (Makir was Gilead's father),
through Gilead, the clan of the Gileadites.

30 Gilead's descendants were these:
Through Iezer, the clan of the Iezerites,
through Helek, the clan of the Helekites,
31 through Asriel, the clan of the Asrielites,
through Shechem, the clan of the Shechemites,

32 through Shemida, the clan of the Shemidaites,
through Hepher, the clan of the Hepherites.

33 Zelophehad son of Hepher had no sons, but only daughters.
The names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah.

34 These were the clans of Manasseh, who numbered 52,700 men.

35 The clans of Ephraim's descendants were these:
Through Shuthelah, the clan of the Shuthelahites,
through Beker, the clan of the Bekerites,
through Tahan, the clan of the Tahanites.

36 The descendants of Shuthelah were, by Eran, the clan of the Eranites.
37 These were the clans of Ephraim's descendants, who numbered 32,500 men. These were Joseph's descendants, counted in each of their clans.

38 The clans of Benjamin's descendants were these:

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Through Bela, the clan of the Belaites,
through Ashbel, the clan of the Ashbelites,
through Ahiram, the clan of the Ahiramites,
39 through Shephupham, the clan of the Shuphamites,
through Hupham, the clan of the Huphamites.

40 The descendants of Bela were Ard and Naaman. From Ard came the clan of the Ardites, and from Naaman came the clan of the Naamites.
41 These were the clans of Benjamin's descendants. They numbered 45,600 men.

42 The clans of Dan's descendants were, by Shuham, the clans of the Shuhamites. These were the clans of Dan's descendants. 43 All the clans of the Shuhamites numbered 64,400 men.

44 The clans of Asher's descendants were these:
Through Imnah, the clan of the Imnites,
through Ishvi, the clan of the Ishvites,
through Beriah, the clan of the Beriites.

45 The descendants of Beriah were these:
Through Heber, the clan of the Heberites,
through Malkiel, the clan of the Malkielites.

46 The name of Asher's daughter was Serah.
47 These were the clans of Asher's descendants, who numbered 53,400 men.

48 The clans of Naphtali's descendants were these:
Through Jahzeel, the clan of the Jahzeelites,
through Guni, the clan of the Gunites,
49 through Jezer, the clan of the Jezerites,
through Shillem, the clan of the Shillemites.

50 These were the clans of Naphtali's descendants, who numbered 45,400 men.

51 This was the complete count of men of Israel: 601,730.

52 Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, 53 "The land must be divided among these men as an inheritance according to the number of their names.
54 To the larger clans you must give more inheritance, and to the smaller clans you must give less inheritance. To every family you must give an inheritance according to the number of men who were counted. 55 However, the land must be divided by random lots. They must inherit the land according to the names of their ancestors' tribes. 56 Their inheritance must be divided among the larger and the smaller clans, distributed to them by random lot."

57 The Levite clans, counted clan by clan, were these:
Through Gershon, the clan of the Gershonites,
through Kohath, the clan of the Kohathites,
through Merari, the clan of the Merarites.

58 The clans of Levi were these:
the clan of the Libnites,
the clan of the Hebronites,
the clan of the Mahlites,
the clan of the Mushites,
and the clan of the Korahites.

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Kohath was Amram's ancestor.
[59]The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, a descendant of Levi, who was born to Levites in Egypt. She bore to Amram their children, who were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam their sister.
[60]To Aaron were born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.[61]Nadab and Abihu died when they offered before Yahweh unacceptable fire.
[62]The males who were counted among them numbered twenty-three thousand, all males one month old and up. But they were not counted among Israel's descendants because no inheritance was given to them among the people of Israel.

[63]These are the ones who were counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest. They counted the people of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.[64]But among these there was no man who had been counted by Moses and Aaron the priest when the descendants of Israel were counted in the wilderness of Sinai.
[65]For Yahweh had said that all of those people would certainly die in the wilderness. There was not a man left among them, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

Numbers 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 26:12-17, 20-26, 29-32, 35, 38-39, 44-45, 48-49, 57-58 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.
The people are counted in preparation for entering into the Promised Land. (See: promisedland)

Special concepts in this chapter

A new generation
None of the adults who came out of Egypt with Moses were still alive except the two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb. (See: faithful)

Links:

Numbers 26:1 Notes

Numbers 26:2
Count all the community
They were only to count the men, not the women. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Count all the men of the community"
twenty years old and up
"20 years old and older"
Numbers 26:3
spoke to them
"spoke to the Israelite leaders"
plains
A plain is a large flat area of land.
Numbers 26:4
twenty years old and up
"20 years old and older"
Numbers 26:5
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
was the firstborn of Israel
Here "Israel" refers to the man also known as Jacob.
From his son
The word "his" refers to Rueben.
Numbers 26:7
43,730 men
"forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty men"
Numbers 26:8
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Eliab
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 16:1.
Numbers 26:9
Eliab ... Dathan ... Abiram
See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 16:1.
Numbers 26:10
The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up
Here the earth is spoken of as if it were a person opening its mouth and eating something. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused the earth to split open, and the men fell in the hole"
fire devoured 250 men
Here the fire is spoken of as if it were a large animal devouring something. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused a fire that killed 250 men"
250 men
"two hundred and fifty men"
Numbers 26:11
Korah's line
"all of Korah's family"
die out
"end"
Numbers 26:12
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:14
22,200 men
"twenty-two thousand two hundred men"

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Numbers 26:15
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:18
40,500 men
"forty thousand five hundred men"
Numbers 26:19
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:22
76,500 men
"seventy-six thousand five hundred men"
Numbers 26:23
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:25
64,300 men
"sixty-four thousand three hundred men"
Numbers 26:26
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:27
60,500 men
"sixty thousand five hundred men"
Numbers 26:28
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:30
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:33
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:34
52,700 men
"fifty-two thousand seven hundred men"
Numbers 26:35
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:37
32,500 men
"thirty-two thousand five hundred men"
These were Joseph's descendants, counted
The word "these" refers to all of the men descended from Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "These were Joseph's descendants, descended from his sons Manasseh and Ephraim, counted"
counted in each of their clans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they counted them in each of their clans"
Numbers 26:38
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:41
45,600 men
"forty-five thousand six hundred men"
Numbers 26:42
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:43
64,400 men
"sixty-four thousand four hundred men"
Numbers 26:44
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:47
53,400 men
"fifty-three thousand four hundred men"
Numbers 26:48
General Information:
The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families.
Numbers 26:50
45,400 men
"forty-five thousand four hundred men"
Numbers 26:51
the complete count
"the total number"
601,730
"six-hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty"
Numbers 26:53
The land must be divided
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must divide the land"
these men
This refers to all of the men that were counted in their clans, beginning in Numbers 26:5.
according to the number of their names
"by the number of people in each clan"
Numbers 26:54
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
give more inheritance
In this passage, the word "inheritance" refers to land inherited. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "give more land as an inheritance"
who were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the leaders of Israel counted"
Numbers 26:55
the land must be divided
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must divide the land"
by random lots
"by casting lots"

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Numbers 26:56
distributed to them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and you must distribute the land to them"
Numbers 26:57
General Information:
This is a list of the Levite clans. Moses counts the Levites separately from the other tribes because they did not receive any land.
counted clan by clan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the leaders also counted clan by clan"
Gershon ... Kohath ... Merari
See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 3:17.
Numbers 26:58
Amram's
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:19.
Numbers 26:59
Amram
See how you translated this man's name in Numbers 3:19.
She bore to Amram their children
"She and Amram had children"
Numbers 26:60
Nadab ... Abihu ... Ithamar
See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 3:2.
Numbers 26:61
they offered before Yahweh unacceptable fire
Here the word "fire" is used to refer to "burning incense."
See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 3:4]
Numbers 26:62
who were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the leaders counted"
twenty-three thousand
"23,000"
one month old and up
"one month old and older"
they were not counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but the leaders did not count them"
because no inheritance was given to them
This can be stated in active form. Here "inheritance" refers to land inherited. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh said they would not receive any land as an inheritance"
Numbers 26:63
who were counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Moses and Eleazar the priest counted"
Numbers 26:64
there was no man
"there were no men"
who had been counted by Moses and Aaron the priest
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Moses and Aaron the priest had counted"
when the descendants of Israel were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when they counted the descendants of Israel"
Numbers 26:65
There was not a man left among them, except
The word "them" refers to all of the people who were counted in the wilderness of Sinai. "The only ones who were still alive were"
son of Jephunneh
Jephunneh was Caleb's father. See how you translated this in Numbers 13:6.
son of Nun
Nun was Joshua's father. See how you translated this in Numbers 11:28.

27 [1]Then to Moses came the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Makir son of Manasseh, of the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph. These were the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah.
[2]They stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and before all the community at the entrance to the tent of meeting. They said,[3]"Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among the company that gathered themselves together to oppose Yahweh, in the company of Korah. He died for his own sin, and he had no sons.
[4]Why should our father's name be taken away from among his clan members because he had no son? Give us a possession among our father's relatives."[5]So Moses brought their case before Yahweh.

[6]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[7]"Zelophehad's daughters are speaking correctly. You must certainly give them a possession as an inheritance among their father's relatives, and you must ensure that their father's inheritance passes on to them.[8]You must speak to the people of Israel and say, 'If a man dies and has no son, then you must cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter.
[9]If he has no daughter, then you must give his inheritance to his brothers.[10]If he has no brothers, then you must give his inheritance to his father's brothers.[11]If his father has no brothers, then you must give his inheritance to his nearest relative in his clan, and he must take it for his own. This will be a law established by decree for the people of Israel, as Yahweh has commanded me.'"

[12]Yahweh said to Moses, "Go up this mountain of Abarim and see the land that I have given to the people of Israel.[13]After you have seen it, you, too, must be gathered to your people, like Aaron your brother.[14]This will happen because you two rebelled against my command in the wilderness of Zin during the strife of the congregation. There, when the water flowed from the rock, in your anger you failed to honor me as holy before the eyes of the whole community." These are the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

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[15]Then Moses spoke to Yahweh and said,[16]"May you, Yahweh, the God of the spirits of all humanity, appoint a man over the community,[17]a man who may go out and come in before them and lead them out and bring them in, so that your community is not like sheep that have no shepherd."
[18]Yahweh said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom my Spirit lives, and lay your hand on him.[19]Place him before Eleazar the priest and before all the community, and command him before their eyes to lead them.
[20]You must put some of your authority on him, so that all the community of the people of Israel may obey him.[21]He will go before Eleazar the priest to seek my will for him by the decisions of the Urim. It will be at his command that the people will go out and come in, both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole community."
[22]So Moses did as Yahweh had commanded him. He took Joshua and placed him before Eleazar the priest and all the community.[23]Moses laid his hands on him and commanded him to lead, as Yahweh had commanded him to do.

Numbers 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Daughters

A man named Zelophehad died without any sons. The five daughters of Zelophehad went to Moses and requested to receive the land that Zelophehad's sons would have received. Yahweh told Moses that it is right to give a man's inheritance to his daughter if he has no son.

The new leader is Joshua

God told Moses to appoint Joshua as the new leader. Joshua became Yahweh's anointed leader. (See: appoint and anoint)

Links:

Numbers 27:1 Notes

Numbers 27:1

Then to Moses came the daughters of Zelophehad ... son of Joseph

"Then the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, of the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph came to Moses." This tells us the genealogy of Zelophehad.

Zelophehad son of Hepher ... Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah

See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 26:33.

Gilead ... Makir

See how you translated these men's names in Numbers 26:29.

Numbers 27:2

They stood

"The daughters of Zelophehad stood"

Numbers 27:3

among the company that gathered themselves together to oppose Yahweh, in the company of Korah

The words "the company of Korah" further identify the words "the company that gathered themselves together to oppose Yahweh."

gathered themselves

"made a plan"

for his own sin

"because of his own sin"

Numbers 27:4

Why should our father's name be taken away from among his clan members because he had no son?

At that time, only sons received land as an inheritance. The daughters use this question to suggest that they should receive the inheritance and continue the family clan. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not remove our father's name from the clan members just because he did not have a son."

Give us a possession among our father's relatives

This means that they are asking to inherit land near where their father's relatives are inheriting land. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Give us land where our father's relatives live"

Numbers 27:7

a possession

Yahweh is speaking of land. This meaning can be made clear. See how you translated this in Numbers 27:7. Alternate translation: "land"

among their father's relatives

This means that they will be inherit land where their father's relatives are inheriting land. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "where their father's relatives live"

Numbers 27:9

General Information:

This continues God's law about who will receive land if a man does not have any sons.

Numbers 27:11

be a law established by decree for the people of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "be a law that all the people of Israel must obey"

has commanded me

Here "me" refers to Moses.

Numbers 27:12

this mountain of Abarim

"this mountain in the Abarim range" Abarim was a range or line of mountains in Moab.

that I have given to the people of Israel

Here Yahweh speaks about the land that his is giving the Israel as if he has already given it to them. He speaks this

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way to emphasize that his committed to give it to them. Alternate translation: "that I will give to the people of Israel"

Numbers 27:13

you, too, must be gathered to your people

This is a euphemism that means Moses will die and his spirit will go to the place where his ancestors are. Alternate translation: "you must die"

like Aaron your brother

You can make clear the understood information that Aaron died. Alternate translation: "and you must die like your older brother Aaron died"

Numbers 27:14

you two rebelled

This refers to Moses and Aaron.

wilderness of Zin

See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 13:21.

the strife of the congregation

"when the people of Israel were rebelling against me"

when the water flowed from the rock, in your anger

This refers to an event when Yahweh made water miraculously flow out of a rock. God told Moses to speak to the rock. Instead, Moses hit the rock because he was angry with the people.

you failed to honor me as holy

"you did not treat me as holy"

before the eyes of the whole community

Here the people of the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they saw. Alternate translation: "in front of the whole community"

waters of Meribah

See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 20:13.

Numbers 27:16

the God of the spirits of all humanity

Possible meaning are 1) here "spirits" refers to all people." Alternate translation: "the God over all of humanity" or 2) the reference to "spirits" refers to God having given life and breath to all people. Alternate translation: "the God who gives breath to all people" or "the God who give life to all humanity"

a man over the community

To be "over" a group of people means to have authority to lead them. Alternate translation: "a man to lead the community"

Numbers 27:17

a man who may go out and come in before them and lead them out and bring them in

This is an idiom that means a person who will lead all the people and also lead the army into battle.

so that your community is not like sheep that have no shepherd

This is a simile that means without a leader the people will wander and be helpless.

Numbers 27:18

Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom my Spirit lives

Yahweh's Spirit is in Joshua, meaning that Joshua obeys Yahweh and follows his commands.

lay your hand on him

This is a sign of dedicating someone to God's service. Alternate translation: "lay your hand on him to appoint him"

Numbers 27:19

command him before their eyes to lead them

Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "in front of all of them command Joshua to lead the people of Israel"

Numbers 27:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses about Joshua.

You must put some of your authority on him

Here Yahweh speaks of Moses giving some of his authority to Joshua as if it were an article of clothing that he could put on him. Alternate translation: "You should give him some of your authority" or "Let him decide what the people should do"

Numbers 27:21

Urim

This was a sacred stone that the High Priest wore on his chest plate. He used it to determine God's will.

It will be at his command that the people will go out and come in

This means that Joshua will have authority to command the movements of the community of Israel. "Going out" and "coming in" are two opposite commands used to emphasize that he will have full command over their movements. Alternate translation: "He will command the community's movements"

both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole community

Both of these phrases mean the same thing, and they are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "both he and the entire nation of Israel"

Numbers 27:22

placed him before

"told him to stand in front of"

Numbers 27:23

laid his hands on him and commanded him to lead

Here "him" refers to Joshua.

laid his hands on him

The laying on of hands was a way of setting a person apart to do a special task for God.

to lead

You can make clear the understood information to lead the people. Alternate translation: "to lead the people" or "to be the leader of the Israelites"

as Yahweh had commanded him to do

Here "him" refers to Moses.

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28 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[2]"Command the people of Israel and say to them, 'You must offer sacrifices to me at the appointed times, the food of my offerings made by fire to produce a sweet aroma for me.'
[3]You must also say to them, 'This is the offering made by fire that you must offer to Yahweh—male lambs a year old without blemish, two each day, as a regular burnt offering.[4]One lamb you must offer in the morning, and the other lamb you must offer in the evening.[5]You must offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil.

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[6]This is the regular burnt offering that was commanded at Mount Sinai to produce a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh.[7]The drink offering with it must be one-fourth of a hin for one of the lambs. You must pour out in the holy place a drink offering of strong drink to Yahweh.[8]The other lamb you must offer in the evening along with another grain offering like the one offered in the morning. You must also offer another drink offering with it, an offering made by fire, to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh.

[9]On the Sabbath day you must offer two male lambs, each a year old without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with oil, and the drink offering with it.[10]This is to be the burnt offering for every Sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and the drink offering with it.

[11]At the beginning of each month, you must offer a burnt offering to Yahweh. You must offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old without blemish.[12]You must also offer three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with oil for each bull, and two-tenths of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with oil for the one ram.[13]You must also offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering for each lamb. This is to be the burnt offering, to produce a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh.
[14]The people's drink offerings must be half a hin of wine for a bull, a third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb. This is to be the burnt offering for every month throughout the months of the year.[15]One male goat as a sin offering to Yahweh must be offered. This will be in addition to the regular burnt offering and the drink offering with it.

[16]During the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, comes Yahweh's Passover.[17]On the fifteenth day of this month a feast is to be held. For seven days, bread without yeast must be eaten.[18]On the first day, there must be a holy assembly to honor Yahweh. You must not do regular work on that day.
[19]However, you must offer a sacrifice made by fire, a burnt offering to Yahweh. You must offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, without blemish.[20]Along with the bull, you must offer a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, and along with the ram, two-tenths.[21]With each of the seven lambs, you must offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil,[22]and one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for yourselves.
[23]You must offer these in addition to the regular burnt offering required each morning.[24]As described here, you must offer these sacrifices daily, for the seven days of the Passover, the food of the offering made by fire, a sweet aroma for Yahweh. It must be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and the drink offering with it.[25]On the seventh day you must have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh, and you must not do regular work on that day.

[26]Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you offer a new grain offering to Yahweh in your Festival of Weeks, you must have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh, and you must not do regular work on that day.[27]You must offer a burnt offering to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. You must offer two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old.[28]Offer also grain offering to go with them: Fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for each bull and two-tenths for the one ram.
[29]Offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for each of the seven lambs,[30]and one male goat to make atonement for yourselves.[31]When you offer those animals without blemish, along with their drink offerings, this must be in addition to the regular burnt offering and the grain offering with it.

Numbers 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Offerings for special days

God commanded the Israelites to make special offerings for Sabbaths, new months, Passover and firstfruits. On each of these occasions, specific sacrifices were required. (See: sabbath and passover and firstfruit)

Links:

Numbers 28:1 Notes

Numbers 28:2

at the appointed times

"at the times that I haven chosen"

the food of my offerings made by fire to produce

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the food offerings that you will burn on the altar produce"

a sweet aroma for me

"a smell I enjoy"

Numbers 28:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the offering made by fire

This can be stated in active form. "the burnt offering" or "the offering you have burned by fire on the altar"

Numbers 28:5

mixed with

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This can be stated in active form. "which you have mixed with"

a tenth of an ephah

"A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" or "a tenth of an ephah

one-fourth of a hin

"One-fourth" means one part out of four equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a liter" or "one-fourth of a hin

beaten oil

"pressed oil" or "pure olive oil." This refers to oil that has been pressed out of olives.

Numbers 28:6

that was commanded at Mount Sinai

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh commanded at Mount Sinai"

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you burned on the altar"

Numbers 28:7

one-fourth of a hin

"One-fourth" means one part out of four equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a liter" or "one-fourth of a hin

You must pour out in the holy place a drink offering of strong drink to Yahweh

This sentence describes the drink offering that is to accompany the lamb. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "It must be a drink offering of strong drink and you must pour it out in the holy place to Yahweh"

Numbers 28:8

like the one offered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "like the one you offered"

Numbers 28:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

two-tenths of an ephah

"Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters" or "two tenths of an ephah

mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you have mixed with oil"

the drink offering with it

Many offerings had a drink offering that was required to be offered with them. The full meaning of the can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the drink offering that accompanies it"

Numbers 28:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Numbers 28:12

three-tenths of an ephah

"Three-tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters" or "three-tenths of an ephah

mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you have mixed with oil"

two-tenths of fine flour

The words "of an ephah" are understood and may stated clearly. "Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters of fine flour" or "two-tenths of an ephah

Numbers 28:13

a tenth of an ephah

"A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" or "a tenth of an ephah

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you burned on the altar"

Numbers 28:14

half a hin

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "two liters" or "half a hin

a third of a hin

"One third of a hin." "A third" means one part out of three equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "1.2 liters" or "One and one-fifth liters" or "half a hin

one-fourth of a hin

"One-fourth" means one part out of four equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a liter" or "one-fourth of a hin

Numbers 28:15

One male goat as a sin offering to Yahweh must be offered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must offer one male goat to Yahweh as a sin offering"

Numbers 28:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month

"During the first month, on day 14 of the month." This refers to the first month of the Hebrew calendar.

comes Yahweh's Passover

"you must celebrate Yahweh's Passover"

Numbers 28:17

On the fifteenth day of this month

"On day 15 day of this month." This refers to the first month of the Hebrew calendar.

a feast is to be held

This can be stated in active form. "you must have a feast"

bread without yeast must be eaten

This can be stated in active form. "you must eat bread without yeast"

Numbers 28:18

On the first day

This refers to the first day of the feast. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "On day 1 of the feast"

there must be a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

"you must gather together to worship and honor Yahweh."

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The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.

Numbers 28:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

you must offer a sacrifice made by fire, a burnt offering

The idea of "burnt" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must burn an offering on the altar"

Numbers 28:20

three-tenths of an ephah

"Three-tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters" or "three-tenths of an ephah

mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you have mixed with oil"

two-tenths

The words "of an ephah of fine flour" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated. "Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters of fine flour" or "two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour

Numbers 28:21

a tenth of an ephah

"A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" or "a tenth of an ephah

Numbers 28:22

to make atonement

The phrase "make atonement" can be expressed with the verb "atone." Alternate translation: "to atone"

Numbers 28:23

required each morning

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Yahweh requires each morning"

Numbers 28:24

As described here

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As I, Yahweh, have described here"

the food of the offering made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must burn the food offering on the altar"

a sweet aroma for Yahweh

"as a sweet aroma for Yahweh"

It must be offered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must offer it"

Numbers 28:25

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

"gather together to worship and honor Yahweh." The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.

Numbers 28:26

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the day of the firstfruits

"the day of the firstfruits, that is the day." This refers to the day during the Festival of Weeks when they offer the grain offering to Yahweh.

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

"gather together to worship and honor Yahweh." The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.

Numbers 28:28

mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you have mixed with oil"

three-tenths of an ephah

"Three tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters" or "three-tenths of an ephah

three-tenths of an ephah

"Three tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters" or "three-tenths of an ephah

two-tenths

The words "of an ephah of fine flour" are understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated. "Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters of fine flour" or "two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour

Numbers 28:29

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

a tenth of an ephah

"A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" or "a tenth of an ephah

fine flour mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour which you mix with oil"

Numbers 28:30

to make atonement

The word "atonement" can be expressed with the verb "atone." Alternate translation: "to atone"

Numbers 28:31

their drink offerings

This refers to the drink offerings that are required to accompany each of the animals when they are sacrificed. Alternate translation: "the drink offerings that are offered with them" or "the drink offerings that accompany them"

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29 [1]In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you must have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh. You must not do regular work on that day. It will be a day when you blow trumpets.
[2]You must offer a burnt offering to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. You must offer one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, each without blemish.

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[3]You must offer with them their grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram,[4]and one-tenth for each lamb of the seven lambs.[5]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering to make atonement for yourselves.
[6]Make these offerings in the seventh month in addition to all of the offerings you will make on the first of each month: the special burnt offering and the grain offering to go with it. These must be in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings. As you make these offerings, you will obey what has been decreed to produce a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh.

[7]On the tenth day of the seventh month you must have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh. You must humble yourselves and do no work.[8]You must offer a burnt offering to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. You must offer one young bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old. They must each be without blemish.
[9]You must offer with them a grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram,[10]and a tenth of an ephah for each of the seven lambs.[11]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering. This will be in addition to the sin offering of atonement, the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[12]On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you must have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh. You must not do regular work on that day, and you must celebrate the festival for him seven days.[13]You must offer a burnt offering, a sacrifice made by fire to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. You must offer thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old. Each must be without blemish.
[14]You must offer with them a grain offering, fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for every bull of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each ram of the two rams,[15]and a tenth of an ephah for each of the fourteen lambs.[16]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and the drink offering with it.

[17]On the second day of the assembly, you must offer twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[18]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[19]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[20]On the third day of the assembly, you must offer eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[21]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[22]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[23]On the fourth day of the assembly, you must offer ten bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[24]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[25]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[26]On the fifth day of the assembly, you must offer nine bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[27]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[28]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[29]On the sixth day of the assembly, you must offer eight bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[30]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[31]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[32]On the seventh day of the assembly, you must offer seven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs a year old, each without blemish.[33]You must make with them a grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[34]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[35]On the eighth day you must have another solemn assembly. You must not do regular work on that day.[36]You must make a burnt offering, an offering made by fire to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh. You must offer one bull, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old, each without blemish.

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[37]You must offer their grain offering and their drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, making as many offerings as were commanded.[38]You must offer one male goat as a sin offering in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

[39]These are what you must offer to Yahweh at your fixed festivals. These must be in addition to your vows and freewill offerings. You must offer these as your burnt offerings, grain offerings, drink offerings, and fellowship offerings.'"[40]Moses told the people of Israel everything that Yahweh had commanded him to say.

Numbers 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the material from the previous chapter about offerings on specific days.

Links:

Numbers 29:1 Notes

Numbers 29:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month

This refers to the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: "On day 1 of month 7"

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

"gather together to worship and honor Yahweh." The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.

It will be a day when you blow trumpets

The word "you" refers to the people of Israel who here represent the priests. The priests blew the trumpet to begin a worship service or to gather the community together. Alternate translation: "It will be a day when the priests blow trumpets"

Numbers 29:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Numbers 29:3

their grain offering

This refers to the grain offerings that are required to accompany each of the animals when they are sacrificed. Alternate translation: "the grain offerings that are offered with them" or "the grain offerings that accompany them"

mixed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you have mixed with oil"

three-tenths of an ephah

The phrase "of fine flour mixed with oil" is understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated. "Three-tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters of fine flour mixed with oil" or "three-tenths of an ephah

two-tenths

The phrase "of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil" is understood from earlier in the sentence. "Two tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters of fine flour mixed with oil" or "two-tenths of an ephah

Numbers 29:4

one-tenth

The phrase "of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil" is understood from earlier in the sentence. "One-tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters of fine flour mixed with oil" or "a tenth of an ephah

Numbers 29:5

to make atonement

The word "atonement" can be expressed with the verb "atone." Alternate translation: "to atone"

Numbers 29:6

in the seventh month ... the first of each month

"in month 7 ... day 1 of each month." The word "month" refers to a month of the Hebrew calendar.

of each month: the special burnt offering ... with it

"of each month—the special burnt offering ... with it." This is the offering that is made on the first day of each month.

the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings

This refers to the offerings the priests were to give every day. The grain offering and drink offering were to be offered with the regular burnt offering. Alternate translation: "the regular burnt offering, with the grain offering and drink offerings that accompany it"

you will obey what has been decreed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will obey Yahweh's decree" or "you will obey what Yahweh had decreed"

an offering made by fire to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "an offering you burnt on the altar to Yahweh"

Numbers 29:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

the tenth day of the seventh month

"day 10 of month 7" The word "month" refers to those in the Hebrew calendar.

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

"gather together to worship and honor Yahweh." The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.

Numbers 29:9

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fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour which you have mixed with oil"
three-tenths of an ephah
"Three-tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters" or "three-tenths of an ephah
two-tenths
The words "of an ephah" are understood from earlier in the verse. They can be repeated here. "Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters" or "two-tenths of an ephah
Numbers 29:10
a tenth of an ephah
"A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" or "a tenth of an ephah
Numbers 29:11
of atonement
The word "atonement" can be expressed with the verb "atone." Alternate translation: "that atones for you"
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
the fifteenth day of the seventh month
"day 15 of month 7." The word "month" refer to those in the Hebrew calendar.
have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh
"gather together to worship and honor Yahweh." The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event.
you must celebrate the festival for him
"you must celebrate the festival for Yahweh"
Numbers 29:13
a sacrifice made by fire
This can be stated in active form. "you must burn it on the altar"
thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs
"13 young bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:14
fine flour mixed with oil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fine flour which you have mixed with oil"
three-tenths of an ephah
The phrase "of fine flour mixed with oil" is understood from earlier in the sentence and can be repeated. "Three-tenths" means three parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "six liters of fine flour mixed with oil" or "three-tenths of an ephah
thirteen bulls
"13 bulls"
two-tenths
The phrase "of an ephah of fine flour" is understood from earlier in the sentence. "Two-tenths" means two parts out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "four and a half liters of fine flour" or "two-tenths of an ephah
Numbers 29:15
fourteen lambs
"14 lambs"
a tenth of an ephah
The phrase "of fine flour" is understood from earlier in the sentence. "A tenth" means one part out of ten equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters of fine flour" or "a tenth of an ephah
Numbers 29:16
its grain offering, and the drink offering with it
The grain offering and drink offering accompany the regular burnt offering.
Numbers 29:17
On the second day of the assembly
"On day 2 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.
twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs
"12 young bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:18
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:19
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. Drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:20
the third day of the assembly
"day 3 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.
eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs
"11 bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:21
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:22
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do during the festival in the seventh month.
the fourth day of the assembly
"day 4 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.

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fourteen male lambs
"14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:24
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:25
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:26
the fifth day of the assembly
"day 5 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.
fourteen male lambs
"14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:27
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:28
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:29
the sixth day of the assembly
"day 6 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.
fourteen male lambs
"14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:30
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:31
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:32
the seventh day of the assembly
"day 7 of the festival." Here the word "assembly" refers to the Festival of Weeks.
fourteen male lambs
"14 male lambs"
Numbers 29:33
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:34
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:35
General Information:
Yahweh tells Moses what the people must do after the seven-day festival in the seventh month.
eighth day
This "eighth" is the ordinal number for eight.
have another solemn assembly
"gather together again to worship Yahweh." This is another assembly similar to the one on the first day of the festival.
Numbers 29:36
an offering made by fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must burn it on the altar"
Numbers 29:37
their grain offering and their drink offerings
These offerings were to be offered with the bull, the ram, and the lambs. Alternate translation: "the grain offerings and the drink offerings"
as were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"
Numbers 29:38
its grain offering, and their drink offerings
The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them"
Numbers 29:39
These are what you must offer
"These offerings are what you must offer"
fixed festivals
"planned festivals." These are festivals that occurred at regularly scheduled times. The word "fixed" means "set" or "predetermined."

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30 [1]Moses spoke to the leaders of the tribes of the people of Israel. He said, "This is what Yahweh has commanded.[2]When a man makes a vow to Yahweh, or swears an oath to bind himself with a binding promise, he must not break his word. He must keep his promise to do everything that comes out of his mouth.
[3]When a young woman living in her father's house makes a vow to Yahweh and binds herself with a promise, while within the house of her father,[4]if her father hears the vow and the promise by which she has bound herself, and if he says nothing to reverse her, then all her vows will remain in force, and every pledge by which she has bound herself will stand.

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[5]But if her father overrules her when he hears about it, none of her vows or the pledges by which she obligated herself will stand; Yahweh will forgive her because her father has forbidden her.
[6]If she marries a husband after she makes a vow or her lips uttered a rash promise by which she has bound herself,[7]and her husband hears about it but says nothing to her, then her vows will stand, and the pledges by which she bound herself will stand.
[8]But if her husband stops her on the day that he hears about it, then he cancels the vow that she has made, the rash talk of her lips with which she has bound herself, and Yahweh will forgive her.
[9]But any vow of a widow or a divorced woman will stand against her.[10]If a woman made a vow in her husband's house or bound herself by a promise with an oath,[11]and her husband hears of it but he says nothing to her and he does not oppose her, then all her vows will stand, and every pledge by which she bound herself will stand.
[12]But if her husband cancels them on the day that he heard about them, then whatever came out of her lips about her vows or promises will not stand. Her husband has canceled them, and Yahweh will forgive her.
[13]Any vow and any binding oath to afflict her, her husband may make it stand or her husband may cancel it.[14]But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows and binding promises that she has made, and they will stand, because he has said nothing to her on the day that he heard of them.
[15]If her husband cancels his wife's vow after he has heard about them, then he will be responsible for her guilt."[16]These are the statutes that Yahweh commanded Moses to announce—statutes for what is between a man and his wife and between a father and his daughter when she is in her youth in her father's family.

Numbers 30 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Vows

Because a vow is a type of promise, men must do what they have vowed to do. A father or a husband has one day in which to cancel a woman's vow. Otherwise, she must do what she vowed she would do. (See: vow and promise)

Links:

Numbers 30:1 Notes

Numbers 30:2

a man makes a vow

The words "a man" refer to any man, not one particular man. It refers only to men and does not include women. Alternate translation: "any man"

to bind himself with a binding promise

Here Moses speaks of a person promising to do something as if his promise were a physical object that he ties to himself. Alternate translation: "committing to fulfill a promise" or "promising to do something"

he must not break his word. He must keep his promise to do everything that comes out of his mouth

These two sentences have similar meanings and are combined to emphasize that he must fulfill his promises. Here "word" is a metonym that refers to what he said.

he must not break his word

The phrase "his word" refers to a man's oaths and vows. Here Moses speaks of not fulfilling these as if they were physical objects that the man could break. Alternate translation: "he must fulfill his promises"

everything that comes out of his mouth

Here the word "mouth" is a metonym for the things that the man says. Alternate translation: "to do everything that he says he will do"

Numbers 30:3

binds herself with a promise

Here Moses speaks of a woman promising to do something as if her promise were a physical object that she ties to herself. Alternate translation: "commits herself to fulfilling a promise" or "promises to do something"

Numbers 30:4

the vow and the promise

These two phrases have very similar meanings. They emphasize what she has promised to do. Alternate translation: "the vow"

by which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: "that she has committed herself to fulfill"

he says nothing to reverse her

"he does not cancel what she has said"

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: "she will be obligated to fulfill"

Numbers 30:5

her vows or the pledges

These two phrases have very similar meanings. They emphasize what she has promised to do. Alternate translation: "her vows"

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 30:4]

Yahweh will forgive her

This refers to Yahweh forgiving her for not fulfilling her vows. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

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Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive her for not fulfilling her vows"

Numbers 30:6

rash

something done without thinking

by which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: "which she has committed herself to fulfill"

Numbers 30:7

says nothing to her

You may need to specify that he says nothing to her about her vow. Alternate translation: "says nothing to her about her vow" or "does not tell her to have Yahweh release her from the vow"

by which she bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: "that she has committed herself to fulfill" See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4]

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: "she will be obligated to fulfill" See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4]

Numbers 30:8

the vow that she has made ... the rash talk of her lips

"the vow that she has made ... that is, the rash talk of her lips." These two phrases refer to the same thing. The second phrase describes the vow that the woman made.

the rash talk of her lips

The phrase "the rash talk" refers to the rash promise that she made. Here "her lips" means the woman herself. She is referred to as "her lips" because lips are related to what she says. Alternate translation: "the rash things she has said" or "her rash promise"

with which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: "that she has committed herself to fulfill" See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4]

Yahweh will forgive her

Here Moses speaks about Yahweh forgiving the woman for not fulfilling her vow as if he were releasing her from something that bound her. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. See how you translated this in [Numbers 30:5]

Numbers 30:9

General Information:

Moses continues telling the leaders of the tribes what Yahweh has commanded.

a divorced woman

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a woman whom a man has divorced"

will stand against her

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 30:4]

Numbers 30:10

If a woman made a vow in her husband's house

This refers to a married woman. You can make the meaning of this statement clear. Alternate translation: "If a married woman makes a vow"

Numbers 30:11

then all her vows will stand

This is an idiom. The phrase "will stand" means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 30:4]

Numbers 30:12

then whatever came out of her lips

Here what the woman said is referred to as something that came out of her lips. Alternate translation: "then whatever she said"

will not stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will not remain in effect and she will be not required to fulfill them. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 30:4]

Yahweh will forgive her

The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. See how you translated this in [Numbers 30:5]

Numbers 30:13

binding oath to afflict her

an oath by which the woman says that unless she fulfills the oath, God or other poeple have the right to afflict her

Numbers 30:14

binding promises

Moses describes a woman's promises as if they were something that she is physically bound by. Alternate translation: "obligations" or "promises"

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: "she will be obligated to fulfill" See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4]

because he has said nothing to her

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "because he has said nothing to her about them"

Numbers 30:15

then he will be responsible for her guilt

This means that he will be guilty of her sin instead of her if she does not fulfill her vow. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "if she does not fulfill her vow, she will not be guilty of her sin, and he will be guilty instead of her"

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31 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[2]"Take vengeance on the Midianites for what they did to the people of Israel. After doing that, you will die and be gathered to your people."

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[3]So Moses spoke to the people. He said, "Arm some of your men for war so they may go against Midian and carry out Yahweh's vengeance on it.[4]Every tribe throughout Israel must send a thousand soldiers to war."[5]So out of Israel's thousands of men, one thousand from each tribe were provided from the clans of Israel, twelve thousand men armed for war.
[6]Then Moses sent them to battle, a thousand from every tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, and with some articles from the holy place and the trumpets in his possession for sounding signals.[7]They fought against Midian, as Yahweh had commanded Moses. They killed every man.[8]They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their dead: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor, with the sword.
[9]The army of Israel took captive the women of Midian, their children, all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods. They took these as plunder.[10]They burned all their cities where they lived and all their camps.
[11]They took all the plunder and prisoners, both people and animals.[12]They brought the prisoners, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the community of the people of Israel. They brought these to the camp in the plains of Moab, by the Jordan near Jericho.

[13]Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the community went to meet them outside the camp.[14]But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the captains of hundreds, who came from serving in the battle.[15]Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live?
[16]Look, these women caused the people of Israel, through Balaam's advice, to commit faithlessness against Yahweh in the matter of Peor, when the plague spread among Yahweh's community.[17]Now then, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man by lying with him.
[18]But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man by lying with him.[19]All of you who have killed anyone or touched anyone who was killed must stay outside the camp for seven days. On the third day and the seventh day you must purify yourselves and your captives.[20]You must purify every garment and everything made of animal hide and goats' hair, and everything made of wood."

[21]Eleazar the priest said to the soldiers who had gone to war, "This is a decreed law that Yahweh has commanded Moses:
[22]The gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead,[23]and everything that resists fire, you must put it through the fire, and it will become clean. You must then purify those things with the water of cleansing. Whatever cannot go through the fire you must cleanse with that water.[24]You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and then you will become clean. Afterward you may come into Israel's camp."

[25]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[26]"You and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the community's ancestral clans are to count all the plundered things that were captured, both men and animals. [27]Divide the plunder into two parts. Divide it between the soldiers who went out to battle and all the rest of the community.
[28]Then levy a tax to be given to me from the soldiers who went out to battle. This tax must be one out of every five hundred, whether persons, cattle, donkeys, sheep, or goats.[29]Take this tax from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest for a contribution to Yahweh.
[30]Also from the people of Israel's half, you must take one out of every fifty—from the persons, cattle, donkeys, and sheep—from all the animals. Give these to the Levites who perform the duties of my tabernacle."[31]So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

[32]Now the booty that remained of the spoil that the men of war had plundered was 675,000 sheep,[33]seventy-two thousand cattle,[34]sixty-one thousand donkeys,[35]and thirty-two thousand women who had not known a man by lying with him.
[36]The half that was kept for the soldiers numbered 337,000 sheep,[37]and the tax for Yahweh of the sheep was 675.
[38]The cattle were thirty-six thousand, from which the tax for Yahweh was seventy-two.

[39]The donkeys were 30,500 from which the tax for Yahweh was sixty-one.
[40]The persons were sixteen thousand women, from which the tax for Yahweh was thirty-two.
[41]Moses took the tax that was to be a contribution presented to Yahweh. He gave it to Eleazar the priest, as Yahweh commanded Moses.

[42]As for the people of Israel's half that Moses had taken from the soldiers who had gone to war—[43]the community's half was 337,500 sheep,[44]thirty-six thousand oxen,[45]30,500 donkeys,[46]and sixteen thousand women.
[47]From the people of Israel's half, Moses took one out of every fifty, both of people and animals. He gave them to the Levites who performed the duties of Yahweh's tabernacle, as Yahweh had commanded him to do.

[48]Then the officers of the army, the commanders over thousands and the captains over hundreds, came to Moses.[49]They said to Moses, "Your servants have counted the soldiers who are under our command, and not one man is missing.

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[50]We have brought Yahweh's offering, what each man found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before Yahweh."[51]Moses and Eleazar the priest received from them the gold—all the articles of craftsmanship.
[52]All the gold of the contribution that they gave to Yahweh—the offerings from the commanders of thousands and from the captains of hundreds—weighed 16,750 shekels.[53]Each soldier had taken plunder, each man for himself.[54]Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from the commanders of thousands and captains of hundreds. They took it into the tent of meeting as a reminder of the people of Israel for Yahweh.

Numbers 31 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Midianites

Israel killed the Midianites, including Balaam, for tempting them to worship Baal. This battle was at Yahweh's command. Yahweh would bring justice. (See: justice)

Links:

Numbers 31:1 Notes

Numbers 31:2

Take vengeance on the Midianites for what they did to the people of Israel

Yahweh was punishing the Midianites for convincing the people of Israel to worship idols.

you will die and be gathered to your people

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. This is a polite way to emphasize that it is time for Moses to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are.

Numbers 31:3

Arm some of your men for war

"Give weapons to some of your men"

go against Midian and carry out Yahweh's vengeance on it

"go fight a war against the Midianites and punish them for what they did to us"

Numbers 31:4

a thousand

"1,000"

Numbers 31:5

twelve thousand

"12,000"

Israel's thousands of men

"the thousands of Israel's men"

one thousand from each tribe were provided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "every tribe sent 1,000 men to war"

twelve thousand men armed for war

All 12 tribes sent men, including the tribe of Levi. Each tribe sent 1,000 men into battle.

Numbers 31:6

the trumpets in his possession

The phrase "in his possession" means that he was in charge of the trumpets. Alternate Translation: "the trumpets that he was in charge of"

Numbers 31:8

Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba

These are names of kings of Midian.

Balaam son of Beor

Beor was Balaam's father. See how you translated this in Numbers 22:5.

Numbers 31:9

They took these as plunder

"They took the Midianites' possessions as their own"

Numbers 31:10

They burned all their cities where they lived and all their camps

"Israel's army burned all the Midianites' cities where the Midianites lived and all the Midianites' camps"

Numbers 31:11

They took

"The army of Israel took"

plunder

This refers to the material goods they recovered from killing the Midianite men.

Numbers 31:12

plains

a large area of flat land

Numbers 31:14

the commanders of thousands and the captains of hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the captains of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the captains of smaller military divisions"

Numbers 31:15

Have you let all the women live?

The law was explicit on who would be permitted to live. The army violated the law by allowing all the women and children to live. This was a rebuke to the army leaders.

Numbers 31:16

Look

This word is used here to draw the audience's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

Numbers 31:17

has known a man by lying with him

"has had sexual relations with a man"

Numbers 31:18

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General Information:
Moses speaks to the commanders of the Israelite army about becoming clean before God.
keep alive for yourselves
You may need to make explicit the idea omitted by the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "you may keep alive and take as wives for yourselves"
who have not known a man by lying with him
"who have not had sexual relations with any man." This refers to girls who were virgins.
Numbers 31:19
All of you
Moses is referring to anyone who fought in battle, not just the commanders.
you must purify yourselves
They must become spiritually clean again before entering the camp.
Numbers 31:20
everything made of animal hide and goats' hair, and everything made of wood
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that someone has made of animal hide, goats' hair, or wood"
Numbers 31:21
General Information:
Eleazar teaches the soldiers the customs of becoming ceremonially clean before Yahweh after going to war.
Numbers 31:22
gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead
metals that were used during that time period
Numbers 31:23
that resists fire
"that will not burn"
put it through the fire
"put it into the fire"
water of cleansing
This refers to water that someone has mixed with ashes from a sin offering. See: Numbers 19:17-19.
Numbers 31:24
then you will become clean
These are the customs of becoming ceremonially clean before Yahweh.
Numbers 31:26
count all the plundered things that were captured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "count all of the possessions that the soldiers captured"
the heads of the community's ancestral clans
"the leaders of each clan in the community"
Numbers 31:28
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses. The word "me" refers to Yahweh.
Then levy a tax to be given to me from the soldiers who went out to battle
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Collect a tax from the soldiers' plunder and give it to me"
every five hundred
"every 500"
Numbers 31:29
from their half
"from the soldiers' half"
for a contribution to Yahweh
Yahweh speaks of himself in third person. Alternate translation: "for a contribution to me")
Numbers 31:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
Also from the people of Israel's half
"Also from the people of Israel's half of the plunder"
perform the duties of my tabernacle
"do all the work connected to my tabernacle" or "take care of everything connected to my tabernacle" or "keeping watch over my tabernacle" See how you translated this in Numbers 1:53.
Numbers 31:32
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Moses begins listing the amount of plunder and how much went to the soldiers, to the people, and to Yahweh.
675,000 sheep
"six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep"
Numbers 31:33
seventy-two thousand cattle
"72,000 cattle"
Numbers 31:34
sixty-one thousand donkeys
"61,000 donkeys"
Numbers 31:35
thirty-two thousand women
"32,000 women"
women who had not known a man by lying with him
"women who had no had sexual relations with a man." This refers to women who are virgins.
Numbers 31:36
General Information:
Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the soldiers and the tax that goes to Yahweh.
The half that was kept for the soldiers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers' part of the sheep"
337,000 sheep
"three hundred and thirty-seven thousand sheep"
Numbers 31:37
the tax for Yahweh of the sheep was 675
"the tax they were to give to Yahweh was 675 sheep"
was 675
"was six hundred and seventy-five"
Numbers 31:38
thirty-six thousand
36,000
seventy-two
72
Numbers 31:39
General Information:
Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the soldiers and the tax that goes to Yahweh.
were 30,500

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"were thirty thousand five hundred"
sixty-one
61
Numbers 31:40
sixteen thousand
16,000
thirty-two
32
Numbers 31:41
to be a contribution presented to Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to be an contribution to Yahweh"
Numbers 31:42
General Information:
Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the people and the tax that goes to Yahweh.
Numbers 31:43
337,500 sheep
"three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep"
Numbers 31:44
thirty-six thousand oxen
36,000 oxen
Numbers 31:46
sixteen thousand women
"16,000 women." It has been stated earlier that all the males and the married women captives were put to death
Numbers 31:47
General Information:
Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the people and the tax that goes to Yahweh. The tax on the people's portion was higher than the tax on the soldiers' portion.
performed the duties of Yahweh's tabernacle
"did all the work connected to Yahweh's tabernacle" or "took care of everything connected to Yahweh's tabernacle" or "kept watch over Yahweh's tabernacle" See how you translated similar words in Numbers 1:53.
Numbers 31:48
the commanders over thousands and the captains over hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: "the commanders over 1,000 soldiers and the captains over 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders over large military divisions and the captains over smaller military divisions" See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 31:14]
Numbers 31:49
Your servants have counted
The commanders refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a polite way to speak to someone with greater authority.
not one man is missing
This can be stated in a positive statement. "we know for certain that every man is here"
Numbers 31:50
General Information:
The officers of the army continue speaking to Moses.
armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces
These are all types of jewelry that people wore.
to make atonement for ourselves before Yahweh
"to thank God for saving our lives"
Numbers 31:51
the gold—all the articles of craftsmanship
"all the articles of gold" or "all the golden jewelry"
Numbers 31:52
All the gold of the contribution that they gave to Yahweh—the offerings from the commanders of thousands and from the captains of hundreds—weighed
"All the gold of the contribution that the commanders of thousands and the captains of hundreds gave to Yahweh weighed"
from the commanders of thousands and from the captains of hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: "from the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and from the captains of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "from the commanders of large military divisions and from the captains of smaller military divisions" See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 31:14]
16,750
"sixteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty"
shekels
A shekel is 11 grams.
Numbers 31:54
as a reminder of the people of Israel for Yahweh
The gold will remind the people that Yahweh gave them victory. It will also remind Yahweh that the people fulfilled his revenge on the Midianites.

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32 [1]Now the descendants of Reuben and of Gad had large numbers of livestock. When they saw the land of Jazer and Gilead, the land was a wonderful place for livestock.[2]So the descendants of Gad and Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the community. They said,[3]"This is a list of places we have surveyed: Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon.
[4]These are the lands that Yahweh attacked before the community of Israel, and they are good places for livestock. We, your servants, have a lot of livestock."[5]They said, "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this land be given to us, your servants, as a possession. Do not make us cross over the Jordan."

[6]Moses replied to the descendants of Gad and Reuben, "Should your brothers go to war while you settle down here?[7]Why discourage the hearts of the people of Israel from going over into the land that Yahweh has given them?

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[8]Your fathers did the same thing when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to examine the land.[9]They went up to the Valley of Eshkol. They saw the land and then discouraged the hearts of the people of Israel so that they refused to enter the land that Yahweh had given them.
[10]Yahweh's anger was kindled on that day. He took an oath and said,[11]'Surely none of the men who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and up, will see the land about which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not completely followed me, except for[12]Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua son of Nun. Only Caleb and Joshua have completely followed me.'
[13]So Yahweh's anger was kindled against Israel. He made them wander around in the wilderness for forty years until all the generation who had done evil in his sight was destroyed.[14]Look, you have risen up in your fathers' place, like just more sinful men, to add to Yahweh's burning anger toward Israel.[15]If you turn away from following him, he will again leave Israel in the wilderness and you will have destroyed all this people."

[16]So they came near Moses and said, "Allow us to build fences here for our livestock and cities for our families.[17]However, we ourselves will be ready and armed to go with Israel's army until we have led them into their place. But our families will live in the fortified cities because of the other people who still live in this land.
[18]We will not return to our houses until every one of the people of Israel has obtained his inheritance.[19]We will not inherit the land with them on the other side of the Jordan, because our inheritance is here on the east side of the Jordan."

[20]So Moses replied to them, "If you do what you say, if you arm yourselves to go before Yahweh to war,[21]then every one of your armed men must cross over the Jordan before Yahweh, until he has driven out his enemies from before him[22]and the land is subdued before him. Then afterward you may return. You will be guiltless toward Yahweh and toward Israel. This land will be your possession before Yahweh.
[23]But if you do not do so, look, you will have sinned against Yahweh. Be sure that your sin will find you out.[24]Build cities for your families and pens for your sheep; then do what you have said."[25]The descendants of Gad and Reuben spoke to Moses and said, "Your servants will do as you, our master, commands.
[26]Our little ones, our wives, our cattle, and all our livestock will stay there in the cities of Gilead.[27]However, we, your servants, every man who is armed for war, will cross over before Yahweh to battle, as our master says."

[28]So Moses gave instructions concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the leaders of the ancestor's clans in the tribes of the people of Israel.[29]Moses said to them, "If the descendants of Gad and Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man who is armed to battle before Yahweh, and if the land is subdued before you, then you will give them the land of Gilead as a possession.[30]But if they do not cross over with you armed, then they will acquire their possessions among you in the land of Canaan."
[31]So the descendants of Gad and Reuben answered and said, "As Yahweh has said to us, your servants, this is what we will do.[32]We will cross over armed before Yahweh into the land of Canaan, but our possessed inheritance will remain with us on this side of the Jordan."

[33]So to the descendants of Gad and Reuben, and also to the half tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph, Moses gave the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and of Og, king of Bashan. He gave to them the land, and distributed to them all its cities with their borders, the cities of the land around them.
[34]The descendants of Gad rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer,[35]Atroth Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah,[36]Beth Nimrah, and Beth Haran as fortified cities with pens for sheep.
[37]The descendants of Reuben rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim,[38]Nebo, Baal Meon—their names were later changed, and Sibmah. They gave other names to the cities that they rebuilt.[39]The descendants of Makir son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it away from the Amorites who were in it.
[40]Then Moses gave Gilead to the Makirites, the descendants of Manasseh, and his people settled there.[41]Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, went and captured its towns and called them Havvoth Jair.[42]Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages, and he called it Nobah, after his own name.

Numbers 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Reuben and Gad's inheritance
Reuben and Gad were given the land conquered east of the Jordan River. This land had good pastures, and suited these tribes because they had many sheep, goats and cattle. They had not yet entered into the Promised Land, and it would have been sinful to not fight with the rest of Israel. So they promised to enter the land to fight with the other tribes, and then return to their own land. (See: sin and promisedland and promise)

Links:

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Numbers 32:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Moses tells background information about the tribes of Reuben and Gad.

Numbers 32:3

Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon

These are names of cities.

Numbers 32:4

General Information:

The people from Reuben and Gad continue speaking to Moses, Eleazar, and the other leaders.

the lands that Yahweh attacked before the community of Israel

Yahweh enabling the Israelites to conquer the people who lived in the land is spoken of as if Yahweh went before the Israelites and attacked the people. Alternate translation: "the lands where Yahweh enabled us to defeat the people living there"

We, your servants

The people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad refer to themselves in this way to show respect to a person of higher authority.

Numbers 32:5

If we have found favor in your eyes

Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that the leaders are pleased with them. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "If we have found favor with you" or "If you are pleased with us"

let this land be given to us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "give this land to us"

Do not make us cross over the Jordan

They wanted the land on the east side of the Jordan River instead of crossing over to the west side and claiming land there. Alternate translation: "Do not make us cross over the Jordan to take possession of land on that side"

Numbers 32:6

Should your brothers go to war while you settle down here?

Moses asks this question to rebuke the people from the tribes of Gad and Reuben. Alternate translation: "It is wrong for you to settle down in this land while your brothers go to war."

Numbers 32:7

Why discourage the hearts ... the land that Yahweh has given them?

Moses asks this question to correct the people from the tribes of Gad and Reuben. Alternate translation: "Do not discourage the hearts ... the land that Yahweh has given them." or "Your actions would discourage the hearts ... the land that Yahweh has given them."

discourage the hearts of the people of Israel from going

Here the word "hearts" represents the people themselves and refers to the seat of their emotions. Alternate translation: "discourage the people of Israel from going" or "cause the people of Israel to not want to go"

Numbers 32:8

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Reuben and Gad.

Numbers 32:9

Valley of Eshkol

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in [Numbers 13:23]

They saw the land

This refers to seeing what was in the land. Alternate translation: "They saw the strong people and cities in the land"

discouraged the hearts of the people of Israel

Here the word "hearts" represents the people themselves and refers to the seat of their emotions. See how you translated this in [Numbers 32:7]

Numbers 32:10

Yahweh's anger was kindled

Yahweh becoming angry is spoken of as if his anger was a fire that begins to burn. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry"

Numbers 32:11

none of the men

"none of the people." This phrase refers to both men and women.

twenty years old and up

"20 years old or older"

completely followed me

Being devoted to Yahweh and obeying him are spoken of as if they were following Yahweh. Alternate translation: "completely obeyed me" or "been completely devoted to me"

Numbers 32:12

Jephunneh ... Nun

These are names of men.

Kenizzite

This is the name of a people group.

Only Caleb and Joshua have completely followed me

This is a positive statement of the words "because they have not completely followed me, except for Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua son of Nun," which begin in Numbers 32:11.

Numbers 32:13

Yahweh's anger was kindled against Israel

Yahweh becoming angry is spoken of as if his anger was a fire that begins to burn. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry with Israel"

forty years

"40 years"

all the generation ... sight was destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he destroyed all the generation ... sight" or "all the generation ... sight had died"

who had done evil in his sight

Being in someone's sight means to be in front of that person where he can see. Alternate translation: "who had done evil

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before Yahweh" or "who had done evil in Yahweh's presence"

Numbers 32:14

you have risen up in your fathers' place

The people of Reuben and Gad acting like their ancestors did is spoken of as if they were standing in the place where their ancestors did. Alternate translation: "you have begun to act just like your ancestors"

to add to Yahweh's burning anger toward Israel

The people causing Yahweh to become angrier is spoken of as if his anger was a fire and the people are adding more fuel to that fire. Alternate translation: "to cause Yahweh to be even more angry with Israel"

Numbers 32:15

all this people

"this entire people" or "all this generation of people"

Numbers 32:17

will be ready and armed

"will be ready with weapons" or "will be ready to fight a war"

in the fortified cities

"in the secured cities"

Numbers 32:18

General Information:

The leaders of Gad and Reuben continue speaking.

has obtained his inheritance

The land that the people were to receive as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they were to obtain. Alternate translation: "has taken possession of his portion of the land"

Numbers 32:20

if you arm yourselves

"if you take your weapons"

before Yahweh

This means Yahweh will go with them to battle and enable them to defeat their enemy and take their land. Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"

Numbers 32:21

until he has driven out his enemies from before him

"until Yahweh has driven out his enemies from his presence." The pronouns here all refer to Yahweh. Yahweh enabling the Israelites to defeat their enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh were fighting their battles. Alternate translation: "until Yahweh has enabled your soldiers to defeat the enemy and force them away from his presence"

Numbers 32:22

the land is subdued before him

Here the word "land" refers to the people who live there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in his presence the Israelites have subdued the people who live in the land"

you may return

It is implied that they will return to the east side of the Jordan. Alternate translation: "you may return to this land on the east side of the Jordan"

You will be guiltless toward Yahweh and toward Israel

Possible meanings are 1) "You will have fulfilled your obligation to Yahweh and to Israel" or 2) "There will be nothing for which Yahweh or the people of Israel can blame you."

Numbers 32:23

Be sure that your sin will find you out

Moses speaks of sin as if it were a person who will condemn the guilty person. This means that the people cannot escape the punishment that their sin deserves. Alternate translation: "Know for sure that Yahweh will punish you for your sin"

Numbers 32:25

Your servants

The people of Gad and Reuben refer to themselves as "your servants." This is a polite way of speaking to someone with greater authority.

Numbers 32:27

will cross over

You can make it clear that they will cross over the Jordan. Alternate translation: "will cross over the Jordan River"

every man who is armed for war

"every man prepared for war"

as our master says

The men speak of Moses in the third person to show great respect. Alternate translation: "as you, our master, say" or "as you say, Master"

Numbers 32:29

every man who is armed

"every man who is ready with his weapon"

if the land is subdued before you

Here the word "land" refers to the people who live there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if Yahweh subdues before you the people living in the land" or "if they help you subdue the people living in the land"

Numbers 32:30

then they will acquire their possessions among you in the land of Canaan

"then the descendants of Gad and Reuben will receive land with you in Canaan"

Numbers 32:32

We will cross over armed

You can make it clear that they will cross the Jordan. Alternate translation: "We will cross over the Jordan ready to fight"

our possessed inheritance

The land that the people were to receive as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they were to obtain. Alternate translation: "the portion of land that we will possess"

will remain with us

This idiom refers to ownership. Alternate translation: "will be ours"

Numbers 32:33

Sihon ... Og

These are names of kings who ruled two separate kingdoms.

Numbers 32:34

Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer

These are names of cities.

Numbers 32:35

Atroth Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah

These are names of cities.

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Numbers 32:36

Beth Nimrah, and Beth Haran

These are names of cities.

Numbers 32:37

Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim

These are names of cities.

Numbers 32:38

Nebo, Baal Meon ... Sibmah

These are names of cities.

their names were later changed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people later changed the names of these cities"

Numbers 32:39

Makir

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in Numbers 26:29.

Numbers 32:41

Jair

This is the name of a man.

Havvoth Jair

This is the name of a city.

Numbers 32:42

Nobah

This is the name of a man.

Kenath

This is the name of a city.

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33 [1]These were the movements of the people of Israel after they left the land of Egypt by their armed groups under the leadership of Moses and Aaron.[2]Moses wrote down the places from where they left to where they went, as commanded by Yahweh. These were their movements, departure after departure.
[3]They traveled from Rameses during the first month, leaving on the fifteenth day of the first month. On the morning after the Passover, the people of Israel left openly, in the sight of all the Egyptians.[4]This happened while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, those whom Yahweh had killed among them, for he also made judgments against their gods.

[5]The people of Israel set out from Rameses and camped at Sukkoth.[6]They set out from Sukkoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.[7]They set out from Etham and turned back to Pi Hahiroth, which is opposite Baal Zephon, where they camped opposite Migdol.
[8]Then they set out from opposite Pi Hahiroth and passed through the middle of the sea into the wilderness. They traveled three days' journey into the wilderness of Etham and camped at Marah.[9]They set out from Marah and arrived at Elim. At Elim were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. That is where they camped.[10]They set out from Elim and camped by the Sea of Reeds.
[11]They set out from the Sea of Reeds and camped in the wilderness of Sin.[12]They set out from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah.[13]They set out from Dophkah and camped at Alush.[14]They set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where no water was found for the people to drink.
[15]They set out from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai.[16]They set out from the wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah.[17]They set out from Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.[18]They set out from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.
[19]They set out from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez.[20]They set out from Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah.
[21]They set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah.[22]They set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.
[23]They set out from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.[24]They set out from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.[25]They set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth.[26]They set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath.
[27]They set out from Tahath and camped at Terah.[28]They set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah.[29]They set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah.[30]They set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.
[31]They set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan.[32]They set out from Bene Jaakan and camped at Hor Haggidgad.
[33]They set out from Hor Haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.[34]They set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.
[35]They set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber.[36]They set out from Ezion Geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin at Kadesh.[37]They set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, at the edge of the land of Edom.

[38]Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at Yahweh's command and died there in the fortieth year after the people of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first day of the month.[39]Aaron was 123 years old when he died on Mount Hor.

[40]The Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the southern wilderness in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the people of Israel.

[41]They set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.[42]They set out from Zalmonah and camped at Punon.[43]They set out from Punon and camped at Oboth.
[44]They set out from Oboth and camped at Iye Abarim, on the border of Moab.[45]They set out from Iye Abarim and camped at Dibon Gad.[46]They set out from Dibon Gad and camped at Almon Diblathaim.
[47]They set out from Almon Diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, opposite Nebo.[48]They set out from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.[49]They camped by the Jordan, from Beth Jeshimoth to Abel Shittim in the plains of Moab.

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[50]Yahweh spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho and said,[51]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan,[52]then you must drive out all the land's inhabitants before you. You must destroy all their carved figures. You must destroy all their cast metal images and demolish all their high places.
[53]You must take possession of the land and settle in it, because I have given you the land to possess.[54]You must inherit the land by lot, according to each clan. To the larger clans you must give a larger share of land, and to the smaller clans you must give a smaller share of land. Wherever the lot falls to each clan, that land will belong to it. You will inherit the land according to your ancestors' tribes.
[55]But if you do not drive out the land's inhabitants before you, then the people you allow to stay will become like objects in your eyes and thorns in your sides. They will make your lives difficult in the land where you settle.[56]Then it will happen that what I now intend to do to those people, I will do also to you.'"

Numbers 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a summary of Israel's exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land, including their wandering through the desert. The phrase "they set out" means "they left."

Links:

Numbers 33:1 Notes

Numbers 33:1

by their armed groups

"by their military divisions." This means that each tribe had their own men, who were armed, to protect them. See how you translated "armed groups" in Numbers 1:3.

Numbers 33:2

as commanded by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"

departure after departure

"from one place to another place"

Numbers 33:3

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

during the first month, leaving on the fifteenth day of the first month

Here "first" is the ordinal number one and "fifteenth" is the ordinal number fifteen. This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.

the people of Israel left openly, in the sight of all the Egyptians

"the Israelites left in plain view of the Egyptians"

Numbers 33:4

their firstborn

This refers to the firstborn sons. Alternate translation: "their firstborn sons"

he also made judgments against their gods

Yahweh proving that he is more powerful than all of the false gods that the Egyptians worshiped is spoken of as if Yahweh judged or punished those false gods. Alternate translation: "he also proved that he is greater than their gods"

Numbers 33:5

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

set out from

"departed from"

Numbers 33:6

on the edge of the wilderness

"on the border of the wilderness"

Numbers 33:8

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

passed through the middle of the sea

This refers to when Yahweh divided the Red Sea so that the Israelites could escape from the Egyptian army.

Numbers 33:9

twelve springs ... seventy palm trees

"12 springs ... 70 palm trees"

Numbers 33:11

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

Numbers 33:14

where no water was found for the people to drink

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where the people could not find water to drink"

Numbers 33:15

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

Numbers 33:19

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

Numbers 33:23

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.

Numbers 33:27

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General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:31
General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:35
General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:38
in the fortieth year after
Here "fortieth" is the ordinal number for forty. Alternate translation: "40 years after"
in the fifth month, on the first day of the month
This "fifth" is the ordinal number for five. This "first" is the ordinal number for one. This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of July on Western calendars.
Numbers 33:39
123 years old
"one hundred and twenty-three years old"
Numbers 33:40
The Canaanite, the king of Arad
"The Canaanite king of Arad"
Arad
This was the name of a Canaanite city.
heard of the coming of the people of Israel
"heard that the people of Israel were coming"
Numbers 33:41
General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:44
General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:47
General Information:
Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt.
Numbers 33:48
plains
a large area of flat land
Numbers 33:52
demolish all their high places
"destroy all of their high places"
Numbers 33:53
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
Numbers 33:54
inherit the land
The Israelites claiming the land as their permanent possession is spoken of as if they were inheriting the land.
Wherever the lot falls to each clan, that land will belong to it
"Each clan will receive the land according to how the lot falls"
Numbers 33:55
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.
like objects in your eyes and thorns in your sides
Just like a small object in a person's eye or a small thorn that sticks into a person skin can cause great irritation, so even a small portion of the Canaanites, if left in the land, would cause great trouble for the Israelites.

34 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[2]"Command the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land of Canaan, the land that will belong to you, the land of Canaan and its borders,[3]your southern border will extend from the wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom. The eastern end of the southern border will be on a line that ends at the southern end of the Salt Sea.
[4]Your border will turn south from the hill of Akrabbim and pass along through the wilderness of Zin. From there, it will run south of Kadesh Barnea and continue to Hazar Addar and further to Azmon.[5]From there, the border will turn from Azmon toward the brook of Egypt and follow it to the sea.

[6]The western border will be the coastline of the Great Sea. This will be your western border.

[7]Your northern border will extend along a line that you must mark out from the Great Sea to Mount Hor,[8]then from Mount Hor to Lebo Hamath, then on to Zedad.[9]Then the border will continue to Ziphron and end at Hazar Enan. This will be your northern border.

[10]Then you must mark out your eastern border from Hazar Enan south to Shepham.[11]Then the eastern border will go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain. The border will continue along the east side of the Sea of Kinnereth.[12]Then the border will continue south along the Jordan River to the Salt Sea and continue down the eastern border of the Salt Sea. This will be your land, following its borders all around.'"

[13]Then Moses commanded the people of Israel and said, "This is the land that you will receive by lot as a possession, which Yahweh has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half tribe.[14]The tribe of the descendants of Reuben, following the assignment of property to their ancestor's tribe, and the tribe of the descendants of Gad, following the assignment of property to their ancestor's tribe, and the half tribe of Manasseh have all received their land.[15]The two tribes and the half tribe have received their possession beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise."

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[16]Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[17]"These are the names of the men who will divide the land for your inheritance:
Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.[18]You must choose one leader from every tribe to divide the land as their possession.
[19]These are the names of the men:
From the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh.
[20] From the tribe of the descendants of Simeon, Shemuel son of Ammihud.

[21] From the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Kislon.
[22] From of the tribe of the descendants of Dan a leader, Bukki son of Jogli.
[23] From the descendants of Joseph, of the tribe of the descendants of Manasseh a leader, Hanniel son of Ephod.

[24] From the tribe of the descendants of Ephraim a leader, Kemuel son of Shiphtan.
[25] From the tribe of the descendants of Zebulun a leader, Elizaphan son of Parnak.
[26] From the tribe of the descendants of Issachar a leader, Paltiel son of Azzan.

[27] From the tribe of the descendants of Asher a leader, Ahihud son of Shelomi.
[28] From the tribe of the descendants of Naphtali a leader, Pedahel son of Ammihud."

[29]Yahweh commanded these men to divide the land of Canaan and to give it to each of the tribes of Israel as their possession.

Numbers 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 34:19-28 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.

Special concepts in this chapter

The boundaries

Moses told them all of the land they would inherit and live in and said that they should divide it up by casting lots. (See: inherit)

Links:

Numbers 34:1 Notes

Numbers 34:3
wilderness of Zin
See how you translated this phrase in Numbers 33:12.
Numbers 34:4
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where the borders are for the land that he is giving to the Israelites.
Numbers 34:6
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where the borders are for the land that he is giving to the Israelites.
Numbers 34:7
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where the borders are for the land that he is giving to the Israelites.
Mount Hor
See how you translated this name in Numbers 20:22.
Numbers 34:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling Moses where the borders are for the land that he is giving to the Israelites.
Numbers 34:13
to the nine tribes and to the half tribe
This means the remaining tribes of Israel who will live on the west side of the Jordan River in the land of Canaan. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had already received their land on the east side of the Jordan River.
Numbers 34:14
following the assignment of property to their ancestor's tribe
"according to how Yahweh assigned the property to their ancestor's tribe"
Numbers 34:15
The two tribes and the half tribe
"The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh"
Numbers 34:17
divide the land for your inheritance
Here "your" is plural and refers to the people of Israel. These men will cast lots to divide the land. Then they will distribute it to the tribes.
Numbers 34:19
General Information:
This is the list of men who will help divide the land among the tribes.
Numbers 34:21
General Information:
This continues the list of men who will help divide the land

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among the tribes.

Numbers 34:24

General Information:

This continues the list of men who will help divide the land among the tribes.

Numbers 34:27

General Information:

This concludes the list of men who will help divide the land among the tribes.

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35 [1]Yahweh spoke to Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho and said,[2]"Command the people of Israel to
give some of their own shares of the inheritance that they possess to the Levites. They must give them cities to live in
and pastureland surrounding those cities.
[3]The Levites will have these cities to live in. The pastureland will be for their cattle, their flocks, and all their other
animals.[4]The pasturelands around the cities that you will give to the Levites must extend from the city walls for one
thousand cubits in every direction.
[5]You must measure two thousand cubits from outside the city on the east side, and two thousand cubits to the south side,
two thousand cubits to the west side, and two thousand cubits to the north side. This will be the pasturelands for their
cities. The cities will be in the center.
[6]Six of the cities that you will give to Levites must serve as cities of refuge. You must provide these as places to which a
person who has killed someone can flee. Also provide forty-two other cities.[7]The cities that you give to the Levites will
total forty-eight. You must give their pasturelands with them.
[8]As for the cities which you will give from the possession of the children of Israel, from tribes with many you shall take
many, and from tribes with few you shall take few. Every tribe according to its inheritance shall give some of his cities to
the Levites."

[9]Then Yahweh spoke to Moses and said,[10]"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross over the Jordan
into the land of Canaan,[11]then you must choose cities to serve as cities of refuge for you, a place to which a person who
has killed someone unintentionally may flee.
[12]These cities must be your refuge from the avenger, so that the killer will not die without first standing trial before the
community.[13]You must choose six cities as cities of refuge.
[14]You must provide three cities beyond the Jordan and three in the land of Canaan. They will be cities of refuge.[15]For the
people of Israel, for the foreigner, and for the sojourner, these six cities will serve as a refuge to which anyone who kills
someone unintentionally can flee.

[16]But if an accused man has struck his victim with an instrument of iron, and if his victim dies, then the accused is indeed
a murderer. He must certainly be put to death.[17]If an accused man has struck his victim with a stone in his hand that
might kill the victim, and if his victim dies, then the accused is indeed a murderer. He must certainly be put to death.[18]If
an accused man has struck his victim with a wooden weapon that might kill the victim, and if the victim dies, then the
accused is indeed a murderer. He must certainly be put to death.
[19]The avenger of blood must put the murderer to death. When he meets him, the avenger of blood must put him to death.
[20]If he strikes another in hatred or throws something at him, while hiding to ambush him, so that the victim dies,[21]or if he
strikes him down in hatred with his hand so that the victim dies, then the accused who struck him must surely be put to
death. He is a murderer. The avenger of blood may put the murderer to death when he meets him.

[22]But if an accused man suddenly hits a victim without premeditated hate or throws something that hits the victim
without lying in wait[23]or if he throws a stone that could kill a victim without seeing the victim, then the accused was not
the victim's enemy; he was not trying to hurt the victim. But this is what to do if the victim dies anyway.
[24]In that case, the community must judge between the accused and the avenger of blood on the basis of these rules.[25]The
community must rescue the killer from the power of the avenger of blood. The community must return the accused to the
city of refuge to which he had originally fled. He must live there until the death of the current high priest, the one who
was anointed with the holy oil.
[26]But if the killer at any time goes beyond the border of the city of refuge to which he fled,[27]and if the avenger of blood
finds him outside the border of his city of refuge, and if he kills the killer, the avenger of blood will not be guilty of
murder.[28]This is because the accused man should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest.
After the death of the high priest, the killer may return to the land where he has his own property.

[29]These laws must be statutes for you through all your people's generations in all the places where you live.[30]Whoever kills
any person, the murderer must be killed, as testified to by the words of witnesses. But one witness's word alone may not
cause any person to be put to death.
[31]Also, you must not accept ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of murder. He must certainly be put to death.
[32]You must not accept ransom for the one who has fled to a city of refuge. You must not in this way allow him to reside on
his own property until the high priest dies.

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[33]Do not pollute in this way the land where you live, because blood from murder pollutes the land. No atonement can be made for the land when blood has been shed on it, except by the blood of the one who shed it.[34]So you must not defile the land in which you live because I am living in it. I, Yahweh, live among the people of Israel.'"

Numbers 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the material from the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Revenge

Yahweh told Moses to establish safe places for people who accidentally killed other people. This prevented revenge killings. Justice is an important concept in this chapter. (See: avenge and justice)

Links:

Numbers 35:1 Notes

Numbers 35:1

plains

a large area of flat land

Numbers 35:2

give some of their own shares of the inheritance that they possess to the Levites

Yahweh did not give the Levites their own land, so they had to live in cities that belonged to other tribes.

pastureland

an area of land where animals feed on grass

Numbers 35:4

one thousand cubits

"1,000 cubits." A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "460 meters"

Numbers 35:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

two thousand cubits

"2,000 cubits." A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "920 meters"

Numbers 35:6

a person who has killed someone

This refers to people who have killed someone, but it had not yet been determined whether they killed the person intentionally or accidentally.

forty-two

"42"

Numbers 35:7

forty-eight

"48"

Numbers 35:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Numbers 35:11

unintentionally

accidentally or without wanting to or trying to

Numbers 35:12

the avenger

This refers to a close relative that seeks vengeance by killing the accused man.

so that the killer will not die without first standing trial before the community

The phrase "the killer" indicates that the community knows who killed the man who died. The question they are deciding is if the killer committed murder or if he killed by accident.

Numbers 35:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

Numbers 35:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

He must certainly be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must certainly execute him"

Numbers 35:19

The avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. Alternate translation: "The one who avenges the murder" or "The relative seeking vengeance"

Numbers 35:21

the accused who struck him must surely be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the relative must certainly execute the accused man" or "the accused man must die"

Numbers 35:22

without premeditated hate

"without planning it out of hate ahead of time"

without lying in wait

Someone intentionally seeking a way to harm another person is spoken of as if someone were hiding in order to ambush that other person. Alternate translation: "without intentionally having tried to harm the victim"

Numbers 35:24

the avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 35:19]

Numbers 35:25

The community must rescue the killer from the power of the avenger of blood

This means if the community judges that the death was an accident, then they must save the accused man from the relative who wants to kill him.

the one who was anointed with the holy oil

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one you anointed with holy oil"

Numbers 35:27

the avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. See how you translated these words in [Numbers 35:19]

Numbers 35:29

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

through all your people's generations

"and all of your descendants who will live after you"

Numbers 35:30

the murderer must be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must execute the murderer"

as testified to by the words of witnesses

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "according to the testimony of witnesses" or "as witnesses testify to the murder"

But one witness' word alone may not cause any person to be put to death

The testimony of one witness is not enough to execute a person for murder. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the word of only one witness is not enough for you to execute a person"

Numbers 35:31

He must certainly be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must execute him"

Numbers 35:32

You must not ... allow him to reside on his own property

This implied that the man would have left the city of refuge and returned home. Alternate translation: "You must not ... allow him to leave the city of refuge and return home to live on his own property"

in this way

"by accepting a ransom"

Numbers 35:33

Do not pollute in this way the land where you live, because blood from murder pollutes the land

Making the land unacceptable to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were physically polluting the land. Alternate translation: "Do not make the land where you live unacceptable to me in this way, because blood from murder makes the land unacceptable to me"

in this way

This means by disobeying the laws concerning a person who kills someone.

No atonement can be made for the land when blood has been shed on it, except by the blood of the one who shed it

This double negative emphasizes that the blood of the one who sheds blood is the only thing that can make atonement for the land. Alternate translation: "The only atonement that can be made for the land when blood has been shed on it is the blood of the one who shed it"

when blood has been shed

This refers to when a person intentionally kills another person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone has shed blood" or "when someone has intentionally killed another person"

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36 [1]Then the leaders of the ancestors' families of the clan of Gilead son of Makir (who was Manasseh's son), who were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and before the leaders who were the heads of the ancestor's families of the people of Israel.[2]They said, "Yahweh commanded you, our master, to give a share of land by lot to the people of Israel. You were commanded by Yahweh to give the possession of Zelophehad our brother to his daughters.
[3]But if his daughters marry men in another tribe of the people of Israel, then their share of land will be removed from our ancestor's share. It will be added to the share of the tribes that they join. In that case, it will be removed from the assigned share of our inheritance.[4]In that case, when the year of Jubilee of the people of Israel comes, then their possession will be joined to the possession of the tribe that they have joined. In this way, their possession will be taken away from the possession of our ancestors' tribe."

[5]So Moses gave a command to the people of Israel, at Yahweh's word. He said, "What the tribe of Joseph's descendants says is right.[6]This is what Yahweh commands concerning Zelophehad's daughters. He says, 'Let them be married to whom they think best, but they must marry only within the clan of the tribe of their father.'
[7]No possession of the people of Israel must change from one tribe to another. Each one of the people of Israel must continue with the possession of his ancestor's tribe.
[8]Every woman of the people of Israel who has a possession in her tribe must marry someone from the clans belonging to her father's tribe. This is so that everyone of the people of Israel may own an inheritance from his ancestors.[9]No share may change hands from one tribe to another. Everyone of the tribes of the people of Israel must keep his own inheritance."

[10]So Zelophehad's daughters did as Yahweh had commanded Moses.[11]Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married descendants of Manasseh.[12]They married into the clans of the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph. In this way, their inheritances remained in the tribe to which their father's clan belonged.

[13]These are the commands and the decrees that Yahweh gave by Moses to the people of Israel in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

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Numbers 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Female heirs

Women who inherited land from their father must marry men from their tribe so the inheritance does not leave the tribe. (See: inherit)

Links:

Numbers 36:1 Notes

Numbers 36:1

Makir

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 26:29]

Numbers 36:2

You were commanded by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh commanded you"

Zelophehad

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 26:33]

Numbers 36:3

will be removed from our ancestor's share

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will no longer belong to our ancestor's share"

It will be added

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It will belong to"

it will be removed from the assigned share of our inheritance

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will no longer be a part of our inheritance"

Numbers 36:4

the year of Jubilee of the people

This refers to a celebration which happens once every fifty years. In this celebration, all land that someone sold or traded must return to the original owner.

their possession will be joined

This can be stated without the passive verb. Alternate translation: "their possession will belong"

their possession will be taken away from the possession of our ancestors' tribe

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will take our tribe's share of the land"

Numbers 36:5

at Yahweh's word

"according to what Yahweh said"

Numbers 36:6

Let them be married to whom they think best

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let them marry whom they want"

they must marry only within the clan of the tribe of their father

"but they may only marry someone from their father's tribal clan"

Numbers 36:7

No possession

The word "possession" represents the portion of land that each tribe received as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "No portion of the land"

Numbers 36:8

who has a possession in her tribe

"who owns a share of land in her tribe"

may own an inheritance

The land that each clan possesses is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received.

Numbers 36:9

No share may change hands from one tribe to another

Transferring ownership from one tribe to another is spoken of as if the property passed from one person's hands to another person's hands. Alternate translation: "No one may transfer the ownership of any share of land from one tribe to another"

Numbers 36:11

Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah

See how you translated these women's names in [Numbers 26:33]

Numbers 36:12

their inheritances

The land that each of Zelophehad's daughters possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received. Alternate translation: "the lands that they received as an inheritance"

Numbers 36:13

plains

a large area of flat land

Introduction to Deuteronomy

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Deuteronomy

Moses reminds Israel of how Yahweh guided them through the wilderness (1:1–3:29) Moses appeals for Israel to obey the law of Yahweh (4:1–43) The Ten Commandments (5:1–10:22) Rules and warnings from the Law (11:1–26:19) Instructions for entering Canaan (27:1–26) Blessings for obeying and curses for disobeying (28:1-68) The covenant renewed (29:1-30:20) Last words of Moses, the Song of Moses, and his death (31:1–34:12)

What is the Book of Deuteronomy about?

In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses repeats the laws of the covenant that God made with the people of Israel. The people of Israel were about to go into the Promised Land. Before they entered the land, Moses reminded them of what Yahweh

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did for them and what he expected from them. Moses warned the people about worshipping idols and no longer trusting Yahweh once they settled in the Promised Land. Yahweh promised to judge those who disobey him and to bless those who obey his Law. (See: covenant)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The name "Deuteronomy" means "Second Law" or "the retelling of the Law." Translators may decide on a title such as, "A Repeat of the Law" or "Moses Explains the Law Again."

Who wrote the Book of Deuteronomy?

The writers of both the Old and New Testament present Moses as being very involved with writing the Book of Deuteronomy. However, many scholars think that Joshua wrote chapter 34. This chapter tells how Moses died.

What are the important features of the Book of Deuteronomy?

The book contains a series of speeches that Moses gave to Israel before he died. He spoke these things just before the people entered the Promised Land. (See: promisedland)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did Yahweh command the Israelites to completely destroy the people who lived in the Promised Land?

As God prepared the Israelites to enter the Promised Land, he commanded them to completely destroy the Canaanite people who lived there. The Israelites would then not be tempted to join them and worship their false gods.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the role of God's name in Deuteronomy?

God's name is mentioned over thirty times in the book of Deuteronomy. The use of God's name in this book usually represents God's honor or fame. At other times in Deuteronomy, God's name represents his presence. God said he would choose a place and make his name dwell there. This means God's presence would be there. The people were to go to that place to worship him.

Can this book be translated before the rest of the Pentateuch?

The Books of Genesis and Exodus help to explain what happens in Deuteronomy. For this reason, those books should be translated before the Book of Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy

1 [1]These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain of the Jordan River valley over against Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab.[2]It is eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea.
[3]It happened in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke to the people of Israel, telling them all that Yahweh commanded him concerning them.[4]This was after Yahweh had attacked Sihon the king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth at Edrei.
[5]Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses began to announce these instructions, saying,
[6]"'Yahweh our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying, 'You have lived long enough in this hill country.
[7]Turn and take your journey, and go to the hill country of the Amorites and to all the places near there in the plain of the Jordan River valley, in the hill country, in the lowlands, in the Negev, and by the seashore—the land of the Canaanites, and in Lebanon as far as the great river, the Euphrates.[8]Look, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land that Yahweh swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give to them and to their descendants after them.'

[9]I spoke to you at that time, saying, 'I am not able to carry you myself alone.[10]Yahweh your God has multiplied you, and, look, you are today as the multitude of the stars of heaven.[11]May Yahweh, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you!
[12]But how can I myself alone carry your loads, your burdens, and your disputes?[13]Take wise men, understanding men, and men of good repute from each tribe, and I will make them heads over you.'[14]You answered me and said, 'The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do.'
[15]So I took the heads of your tribes, wise men, and men of good repute, and made them heads over you, captains of thousands, captains of hundreds, captains of fifties, captains of tens, and officers, tribe by tribe.[16]I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear the disputes between your brothers, and judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the foreigner who is with him.
[17]You will not show partiality to anyone in a dispute; you will hear the small and the great alike. You will not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's. The dispute that is too hard for you, you will bring to me, and I will hear it.'[18]I commanded you at that time all the things that you should do.

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[19]We journeyed away from Horeb and went through all that great and terrible wilderness that you saw, on our way to the hill country of the Amorites, as Yahweh our God had commanded us; and we came to Kadesh Barnea.
[20]I said to you, 'You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which Yahweh our God is giving to us.[21]Look, Yahweh your God has set the land before you; go up, take possession, as Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you; do not be afraid, neither be discouraged.'
[22]Every one of you came to me and said, 'Let us send men ahead of us, so that they may search out the land for us, and bring us word about the way by which we should attack, and about the cities to which we will come.'[23]The advice pleased me well; I took twelve men of you, one man for every tribe.[24]They turned and went up into the hill country, came to the Valley of Eshkol, and scouted it.
[25]They took some of the produce of the land in their hands and brought it down to us. They also brought us word and said, 'It is a good land that Yahweh our God is giving to us.'

[26]Yet you refused to attack, but rebelled against the commandment of Yahweh your God.[27]You complained in your tents and said, "It is because Yahweh hated us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us.[28]Where can we go now? Our brothers have made our heart to melt, saying, 'Those people are bigger and taller than we are; their cities are large and are fortified up to the heavens; moreover, we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.'"
[29]Then I said to you, 'Do not be terrified, neither be afraid of them.[30]Yahweh your God, who goes before you, he will fight for you, like everything that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes,[31]and also in the wilderness, where you have seen how Yahweh your God carried you, as a man carries his son, everywhere you went until you came to this place.'
[32]Yet in spite of this word you did not believe Yahweh your God,[33]who went before you on the way to find a place for you to make camp, in fire by night and in a cloud by day.

[34]Yahweh heard the sound of your words and was angry; he swore and said,[35]'Surely not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land that I swore to give to your ancestors,[36]except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He will see it and I will give him and his descendants the land that he has stepped on, because he wholly followed Yahweh.'
[37]Also Yahweh was angry with me because of you, saying, 'You also will not go in there;[38]Joshua son of Nun, who stands before you, he will go in there; encourage him, for he will lead Israel to inherit it.
[39]Moreover, your little children, the ones you said would be victims, who today have no knowledge of good or evil—they will go in there. To them I will give it, and they will possess it.[40]But as for you, turn and take your journey into the wilderness along the way to the Sea of Reeds.'

[41]Then you answered and said to me, 'We have sinned against Yahweh; we will go up and fight, and we will follow all that Yahweh our God has commanded us to do.' Every man among you girded on his weapons of war, and you were ready to attack the hill country.[42]Yahweh said to me, 'Say to them, "Do not attack and do not fight, for I will not be with you, and you will be defeated by your enemies.'
[43]I spoke to you in this way, but you did not listen. You rebelled against the commandment of Yahweh; you were arrogant and attacked the hill country.[44]But the Amorites, who lived in that hill country, came out against you and chased you like bees, and crushed you in Seir, as far as Hormah.
[45]You returned and wept before Yahweh; but Yahweh did not listen to your voice, nor did he pay attention to you.[46]So you stayed in Kadesh many days, all the days that you stayed there.

Deuteronomy 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter forms a continuation with the last chapter of the book of Numbers.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's victory

The chapter explains that Israel's conquering of the Promised Land will be done by Yahweh. They are not to fear the people of Canaan but be obedient to Yahweh. Yahweh is bringing about his judgement upon the people of Canaan. (See: promisedland and judge)

Possessing the land

While the Promised Land belongs to Israel, they do not possess the land. Possessing the land is an important theme. Posessing the land depended on Israel's faithfulness. (See: faithful)

Links:

Deuteronomy 1:1 Notes Deuteronomy intro

Deuteronomy 1:1

beyond the Jordan

This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he spoke to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "east of the Jordan"

Suph ... Paran ... Tophel ... Laban ... Hazeroth ... Dizahab

These are the names of places.

Deuteronomy 1:2

It is eleven days' journey from Horeb ... to Kadesh Barnea

"It takes eleven days to walk from Horeb ... to Kadesh Barnea"

Mount Seir

This is a mountainous area south of the Dead Sea. The area is also called "Edom."

eleven

"11"

Deuteronomy 1:3

It happened in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spoke

The ordinal numbers can be translated as cardinal numbers. Alternate translation: "They had lived in the wilderness for 40 years, 11 months, and 1 day, when Moses spoke"

fortieth

40th

in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month

This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of January on Western calendars.

eleventh

11th

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Deuteronomy 1:4

Yahweh had attacked

"Yahweh had enabled the Israelites to defeat"

Sihon ... Og

These are names of kings.

Heshbon ... Ashtaroth at Edrei

These are names of cities.

Deuteronomy 1:5

Beyond the Jordan

This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he said this. See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 1:1. Alternate translation: "East of the Jordan River"

Deuteronomy 1:6

spoke to us

The word "us" refers to Moses and the other people of Israel.

You have lived long enough in this hill country

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "You do not need to stay near this mountain any longer"

Deuteronomy 1:7

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the people of Israel what Yahweh said to them.

Turn and take your journey

The word "turn" is an idiom for beginning action. Alternate translation: "Start again on your journey"

hill country ... Euphrates

Yahweh is describing places in the land that he has promised to give to the Israelites.

hill country

This is an area in the hills near the place where the Amorites lived.

lowlands

an area of land that is low and flat

Deuteronomy 1:8

Look

"Pay attention to what I am about to say"

I have set the land before you

"I am now giving this land to you"

that Yahweh swore

Yahweh is speaking as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "that I, Yahweh, swore"

fathers

The word "fathers" is a synecdoche for all ancestors. Alternate translation: "ancestors"

Deuteronomy 1:9

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the people of Israel what Yahweh said to them.

I spoke to you at that time

Here "I" refers to Moses. The phrase "at that time" refers to when the Israelites were at Horeb, which is the same as Mount Sinai. Alternate translation: "When we were at Horeb, I spoke to you"

I am not able to carry you myself alone

Here "to carry you" means "to lead you" or "to govern you." Alternate translation: "It is too much for me to lead you by myself"

Deuteronomy 1:10

as the multitude of the stars of heaven

This is an exaggeration that means God has greatly increased the number of Israelites. Alternate translation: "a great crowd of many people"

Deuteronomy 1:11

a thousand times

The phrase "a thousand" is a metaphor for "very many." Alternate translation: "very many times"

a thousand

1000

Deuteronomy 1:12

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

But how can I myself alone carry your loads, your burdens, and your disputes?

Moses uses a question to emphasize that he cannot solve all of their problems by himself. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot carry your loads, your burdens, and your disputes

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by myself."

carry your loads, your burdens

Moses speaks as if the people's problems and complaints that he needed to take care of were heavy physical objects that he had been carrying. Alternate translation: "take care of your problems, your complaints"

your disputes

"your arguments" or "your disagreements"

Deuteronomy 1:13

men of good repute from each tribe

"men from each tribe whom the people of Israel respect"

Deuteronomy 1:15

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

men of good repute

"men whom your people respected." See how this is translated in Deuteronomy 1:13.

of thousands ... of hundreds ... of fifties ... of tens

"of groups of 1,000 ... of groups of 100 ... of groups of 50 ... and groups of 10"

captains ... officers

These are titles for different leaders in Israel's government.

tribe by tribe

"from each of your tribes"

Deuteronomy 1:16

judge righteously between a man and his brother

"make right and fair decisions about the disputes Israelites have with each other"

Deuteronomy 1:17

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the judges, so the commands are plural.

You will not show partiality

"Do not show partiality"

you will hear the small and the great alike

These two extremes "small" and "great" represent all people. Alternate translation: "you will treat all people alike"

You will not be afraid of the face of man

The word "face" is a metonym for the whole person. "You will not" is a command. "Do not be afraid of anyone"

Deuteronomy 1:18

at that time

This means the time when they were at Horeb, at Mount Sinai.

Deuteronomy 1:19

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

terrible wilderness that you saw

"large and dangerous desert that you crossed through"

Deuteronomy 1:20

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Deuteronomy 1:21

Look ... your God ... before you; go up, take possession ... your fathers ... to you; do not be afraid, neither be discouraged

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as if he were speaking to one man, so these forms should be singular, not plural.

has set the land before you

"is now giving this land to you." See how this is translated in Deuteronomy 1:8.

Deuteronomy 1:22

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Deuteronomy 1:23

twelve men

"12 men"

Deuteronomy 1:24

They turned and went

Turning is an idiom for beginning to obey a command. Alternate translation: "They left that place and went"

Valley of Eshkol

This is a valley in the Hebron region, which is south of Jerusalem.

scouted it

"looked for places they could attack"

Deuteronomy 1:25

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

They took

"The 12 men took"

took some of the produce of the land in their hands

"picked some of the produce of the land"

brought us word and said

The speaker speaks as if a "word" were a physical object that someone could bring. Alternate translation: "told us"

said, 'It is a good land that Yahweh our God is giving to us.'

The direct quotation can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "said that the land that Yahweh our God was giving to us was good"

Deuteronomy 1:26

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Yet you refused to attack

God commanded the Israelites to attack and destroy the Amorites, but the Israelites were afraid and refused to fight them.

Deuteronomy 1:27

into the hand of the Amorites

Here "into the hand" means to give the Amorites power over them. Alternate translation: "into the power of the Amorites"

Deuteronomy 1:28

Where can we go now?

Here this question emphasizes how afraid they were. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have nowhere to go."

made our heart to melt

This means that they became afraid. Alternate translation: "made us very afraid"

are fortified up to the heavens

This is an exaggeration that emphasizes how frightened the people were because the cities were so large and strong.

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Alternate translation: "have walls so high it is like they reach up to the heavens"

sons of the Anakim

These are descendants of the Anak people who were very large and fierce.

Deuteronomy 1:29

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

I said to you

"I said to your ancestors"

Deuteronomy 1:30

before your eyes

Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they saw. Alternate translation: "which you yourselves saw"

Deuteronomy 1:31

you have seen ... Yahweh your God carried you ... you went ... you came

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

Yahweh your God carried you, as a man carries his son

Here Yahweh's care for his people is compared to that of a father. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God has taken care of you, like a father takes care of his son"

until you came to this place

"until you came to this land that God promised to give you"

Deuteronomy 1:32

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Deuteronomy 1:33

make camp

"put up your tents"

Deuteronomy 1:34

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the people of Israel what Yahweh said to them.

heard the sound of your words

"heard what you were saying"

he swore and said

God made a vow not to allow those who rebelled against him to enter the land he promised to give them.

Deuteronomy 1:35

will see

"will enter"

Deuteronomy 1:36

Jephunneh

This is the name of Caleb's father.

he wholly followed Yahweh

Yahweh speaks as if he were someone else. Alternate translation: "he has completely obeyed me"

Deuteronomy 1:37

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Yahweh was angry with me because of you

This refers to when Moses disobeyed what Yahweh told him to do because Moses was angry with the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 1:38

Nun

This is the name of Joshua's father.

who stands before you

Why Joshua stands before Moses can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "who stands before you as your servant" or "who helps you"

Deuteronomy 1:39

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

Deuteronomy 1:40

turn and take your journey

"turn around and go back on the road you have come on"

Deuteronomy 1:41

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

sinned against Yahweh

"we have rebelled against Yahweh by disobeying him"

we will follow

"we will obey"

to attack the hill country

Here the metonym "hill country" represents the people that live there. Alternate translation: "to attack the people who live in the hill country"

Deuteronomy 1:42

for I will not be with you, and you will be defeated by your enemies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will defeat you because I will not be with you"

Deuteronomy 1:43

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

attacked the hill country

The metonym "hill country" stands for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "attacked the people who live in the hill country"

Deuteronomy 1:44

chased you like bees

A "bee" is a small, flying insect that flies in large groups and stings people who threaten them. This means that so many Amorites attacked the Israelite soldiers that they had to leave the battle.

Seir

This is the name of a piece of land.

Hormah

This is the name of a city.

crushed you

"killed many of your soldiers"

Deuteronomy 1:45

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.

returned and wept

"returned to Kadesh and wept"

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2 [1]Then we turned and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Sea of Reeds, as Yahweh had spoken to me;
we went around Mount Seir for many days.[2]Yahweh spoke to me, saying,[3]"You have gone around this mountain long
enough; turn northward.
[4]Command the people, saying, "You are to pass through the border of your brothers, the descendants of Esau, who live in
Seir; they will be afraid of you. Therefore be careful[5]not to fight with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not
even enough for the sole of a foot to step on; for I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.
[6]You will purchase food from them for money, so that you may eat; you will also buy water from them for money, so that
you may drink.[7]For Yahweh your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand; he has known your walking through
this great wilderness. For these forty years Yahweh your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing.'"
[8]So we passed by our brothers, the descendants of Esau who live in Seir, away from the Arabah road, from Elath and from
Ezion Geber. Then we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.
[9]Yahweh said to me, 'Do not trouble Moab, and do not fight with them in battle. For I will not give you his land for your
own possession, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot, for their possession.'
[10](The Emites lived there previously, a people as great, as many, and as tall as the Anakim;[11]these also are considered to be
the Rephaim, like the Anakim; but the Moabites call them the Emites.
[12]The Horites also lived in Seir previously, but the descendants of Esau succeeded them. They destroyed them from before
them and lived in their place, like Israel did to the land of his possession that Yahweh gave to them.)
[13]"'Now rise up and go over the brook Zered.' So we went over the brook Zered.[14]Now the days from when we came from
Kadesh Barnea until we crossed the brook Zered, were thirty-eight years. It was by that time that all that generation of the
men fit for fighting were gone from the people, as Yahweh had sworn to them.[15]Moreover, the hand of Yahweh was
against that generation in order to destroy them from the people until they were gone.

[16]So it happened, when all the men fit for fighting were dead and gone from among the people,[17]that Yahweh spoke to me,
saying,[18]"You are today to pass over Ar, the border of Moab.[19]When you come near opposite the people of Ammon, do not
trouble them or fight them; for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession; because I have
given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.'"
[20](That also is considered to be a land of the Rephaim. The Rephaim lived there previously—but the Ammonites call them
Zamzummim—[21]a people as great, as many, and as tall as the Anakim. But Yahweh destroyed them before the Ammonites,
and they succeeded them and lived in their place.[22]This Yahweh also did for the people of Esau, who live in Seir, when he
destroyed the Horites from before them, and the descendants of Esau succeeded them and have lived in their place even
until today.
[23]As for the Avvites who lived in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and
settled in their place.)
[24]"'Now rise up, go on your journey, and pass over the Valley of the Arnon; look, I have given into your hand Sihon the
Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and fight with him in battle.[25]Today I will begin to put the fear
and terror of you on the peoples that are under the whole sky; they will hear a report about you and will tremble and be
in anguish because of you.'

[26]I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon, king of Heshbon, with words of peace, saying,[27]"Let me pass
through your land; I will go along the highway; I will turn neither to the right hand nor to the left.
[28]You will sell me food for money, so that I may eat; give me water for money, so that I may drink; only let me pass
through on my feet;[29]as the descendants of Esau who live in Seir, and as the Moabites who live in Ar, did for me; until I
pass over the Jordan into the land that Yahweh our God is giving us.'
[30]But Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not let us pass by him; for Yahweh your God had hardened his mind and made his
heart obstinate, that he might defeat him by your might, which he has now done today.[31]Yahweh said to me, 'Look, I have
begun to deliver up Sihon and his land before you; begin to possess it, in order that you may inherit his land.'
[32]Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.[33]Yahweh our God gave him over to us and we
defeated him and his sons and all his people.
[34]We took all his cities at that time and completely destroyed every city—men and the women and the little ones; we left
no survivor.[35]Only the livestock we took as booty for ourselves, along with the spoil of the cities that we had taken.
[36]From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, and from the city that is in the valley, all the way to Gilead,
there was not a city too high for us. Yahweh our God gave them into our hands.[37]It was only to the land of the descendants
of Ammon that you did not go, as well as all the side of the Jabbok River, and the cities of the hill country—wherever
Yahweh our God had forbidden us to go.

Deuteronomy 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Covenant faithfulness
Yahweh is faithful to the covenant he made with Abraham. He is also faithful to the promises he made with Esau and Lot. Because of this, Israel was given specific land it was able to conquer in Canaan. (See: covenantfaith, faithful and covenant and promise)

Links:

Deuteronomy 2:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 2:1
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what the previous generation of Israelites did.
Then we turned and took our journey
"Then we turned around and went"
we went around Mount Seir for many days
Possible meanings are 1) the Israelites traveled around the mountain called Seir for a very long time or 2) the Israelites wandered in a region called Mount Seir for a very long time.
Mount Seir
This is a mountainous area south of the Dead Sea. The area is also called "Edom." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:2]
many days
Some languages translate this as "many nights."
Deuteronomy 2:4
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
of your brothers, the descendants of Esau
"of your relatives, the descendants of Esau"
Deuteronomy 2:5
I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession
Yahweh is reminding the Israelites that he has given this territory to the descendants of Esau.
Deuteronomy 2:6
General Information:
Moses continues to instruct Israel in how they are to treat the descendants of Esau.
You will purchase food from them
Yahweh is giving them permission or instruction, not a command, and he is telling them not to steal. "I permit you to purchase food from them" or "If you need food, you are to purchase it from them"
from them
"from Esau's descendants"
for money
If these words are not needed or make the translation unclear, you may omit them.
Deuteronomy 2:7
your God has blessed you ... your hand ... your walking ... your God ...
with you, and you have lacked
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
you in all the work of your hand
The "work of your hand" refers to all the work they had done. Alternate translation: "all of your work"
he has known your walking
Here what happened to the people while they were walking is spoken of as their "walking."
forty years
"40 years"
you have lacked nothing
This is a litotes for "you have had everything you needed."
Deuteronomy 2:8
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
by our brothers
"by our relatives"
Elath ... Ezion Geber
These are names of cities.
we turned
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "we kept going"
Deuteronomy 2:9
General Information:
This is the end of a part of Moses's speech reminding the Israelites of how Yahweh guided them in the wilderness.
Do not trouble Moab
The word "Moab" represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "Do not trouble the people of Moab"
Ar
This is the name of a city in Moab.
the descendants of Lot
The people of Israel were related to the descendants of Moab. Moab was the son of Lot. Lot was the nephew of Abraham.
Deuteronomy 2:10
General Information:
The writer begins to give background information about the people of the land. These words are not part of Moses's speech to the Israelites.
The Emites lived
These words give background information about the Emite people, who had lived in the land before the Moabites. Your language may have a special way to mark background information.
Emites
This is the name of a people group that were considered giants.
Anakim
These are descendants of the Anak people who were very large and fierce. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 1:28.
Deuteronomy 2:11
General Information:
This continues the background information about the different people groups that had lived in the land. .
Rephaim
This is the name of a people group that were considered giants.
Deuteronomy 2:12

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General Information:
This continues the background information about the different people groups that had lived in the land. .
Horites
This is the name of a people group.
destroyed them from before them
"killed all of them so none of them were left living with them" or "removed them from their presence by killing all of them"
Deuteronomy 2:13
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the Israelites of what had happened to them in the wilderness.
'Now rise up ... Zered.' So
"'Then Yahweh said, "Now rise up ... Zered.' So." This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh told us to rise up ... Zered. So"
rise up
begin to do something
the brook Zered
This stream flows into the Dead Sea from the southeast and creates the border between Edom and Moab.
Deuteronomy 2:14
Now the days
The word "now" marks a change from the story to background information about how long the people of Israel traveled and about God's anger towards that generation. If your language has a way of showing that what follows is background information, you should use it here.
thirty-eight years
"38 years"
were gone from the people
This is a polite way of saying "had died."
Deuteronomy 2:15
the hand of Yahweh was against
Here "the hand of Yahweh" refers to Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh used his power against" or "Yahweh punished"
Deuteronomy 2:16
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the people of Israel of what happened in the past.
Deuteronomy 2:18
You are
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" is singular.
Ar
This is the name of a city in Moab. See how you translated it in [Deuteronomy 2:9]
Deuteronomy 2:19
do not trouble ... will not give you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the command and the word "you" are singular.
to the descendants of Lot
The people of Israel were related to the descendants of Ammon. Ammon was the son of Lot. Lot was the nephew of Abraham.
Deuteronomy 2:20
General Information:
These verses begin to give background information about the people groups who lived in the land. If your language has a way of showing that what follows is background information, you should use it here.
That also is considered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People also consider that"
Rephaim
This is the name of a people group. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 2:11]
Deuteronomy 2:21
Anakim
This is the name of a people group. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:28]
destroyed them before the Ammonites
"allowed the Ammonites to defeat them" or "allowed the Ammonites to kill them all"
they succeeded them and lived in their place
"the Ammonites took over everything the Rephaim had owned and have lived where the Rephaim had lived"
Deuteronomy 2:22
Horites
This is the name of a people group. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 2:12]
succeeded them and have lived in their place
"took over everything the Horites had owned and have lived where the Horites had lived"
Deuteronomy 2:23
General Information:
The writer finishes describing how God enabled Esau to conquer the land Esau is now inhabiting.
Avvites ... Caphtorim
These are names of people groups.
Caphtor
This is the name of a place. It may be another name for the island of Crete located in the Mediterranean Sea.
destroyed them
"destroyed the Avvim"
settled in their place
"lived where the Avvim had lived"
Deuteronomy 2:24
General Information:
The writer has finished giving background information and is now again telling what Moses said to the Israelites.
Now rise up
Yahweh is telling Moses what the people should do. "Now get up" or "Now go."
go on your journey
"continue your journey"
Valley of the Arnon
This is the name of the valley of the Arnon River. It creates the border between Moab and the Amorites.
I have given into your hand
The metonym "into your hand" means "into your control or power." Alternate translation: "I have given you the power to defeat"
your hand ... Begin to possess it ... fight
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so

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the word "your" and the commands "begin to possess" and "fight" are singular.

Sihon

This is the name of a king. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 1:4.

Heshbon

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 1:4.

fight with him

"fight against him and his army"

Deuteronomy 2:25

terror of you ... report about you ... because of you

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" are singular.

put the fear and terror

The words "fear" and "terror" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the fear is intense. Alternate translation: "put a terrible fear"

peoples that are under the whole sky

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "peoples in every land"

tremble and be in anguish

This is hendiadys and emphasizes that the people will "tremble in anguish."

Deuteronomy 2:26

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

I sent

Here "I" refers to Moses.

wilderness of Kedemoth

This is the name of a place near the valley of Arnon.

Sihon ... Heshbon

These are the names of a man and a place. See how you translated them in Deuteronomy 1:4.

with words of peace

"with my offer of peace" or "with a message from me asking for peace"

Deuteronomy 2:27

I will turn neither to the right hand nor to the left

This phrase emphasizes that they will always go in the same direction. It can be stated in positive form. "I will not change direction" or "I will always stay on the path"

Deuteronomy 2:28

General Information:

This continues Moses's message to King Sihon.

You will sell me food for money, so that I may eat; give me water for money, so that I may drink

Moses tells Sihon that the Israelites will not steal from the Amorites and requests that Sihon and his people sell food and water to the Israelites; he is not giving a command. Alternate translation: "I expect to have to pay for food so I can eat and to pay for water so I can drink"

sell me ... I may eat ... give me ... I may drink

Moses is referring to the people of Israel as if they were Moses himself. Alternate translation: "sell to me and my people ... we may eat ... give us ... we may drink"

only let me pass through on my feet

"only let us walk through your land"

Deuteronomy 2:29

Ar

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 2:9]

Deuteronomy 2:30

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the people of what happened in the past.

Sihon ... Heshbon

These are the names of a man and a place. See how you translated them in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

your God ... your might

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "your" are singular.

hardened his mind and made his heart obstinate

Both of these phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh "caused him to become very stubborn."

obstinate

refusing to change opinion or behavior

Deuteronomy 2:31

to deliver up Sihon and his land before you

"to give Sihon and his land over to you"

begin to possess it, in order that you may inherit his land

"take possession of his land, so that you may inherit it"

Deuteronomy 2:32

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.

Sihon

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Jahaz

This is the name of a city in Moab

Deuteronomy 2:34

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people about what happened in the past.

We took all his cities

"We captured all of King Sihon's cities"

Deuteronomy 2:36

Aroer

This is the name of a city on the north bank of the Arnon River.

Valley of the Arnon

"Arnon" is the name of a river. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 2:24.

there was not a city too high for us

This negative statement is used to emphasize their success in battle. This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "we were able to defeat the people of every city even if the city had high walls around it"

Deuteronomy 2:37

you did not go

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so "you" is singular.

Jabbok River

This is the name of a river that created the border between Sihon's land and the land of the Ammonites.

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3 [1]Then we turned and went up the way to Bashan. Og, the king of Bashan, came and attacked us, he and all his people, to fight at Edrei.[2]Yahweh said to me, 'Do not fear him; for I have given you victory over him and have put all his people and his land under your control. You will do to him as you did to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.'
[3]So Yahweh our God also gave us victory over Og the king of Bashan, and all his people were put under our control. We struck them down until not one survivor remained for him.[4]We took all his cities at that time. There was not one of the sixty cities that we did not take from them—all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.
[5]These were all cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars; this was besides very many unwalled villages.[6]We completely destroyed them, as we did to Sihon king of Heshbon, completely destroying every city—men and the women and the little ones.[7]But all the livestock and the spoil of the cities we took as booty for ourselves.
[8]At that time we took the land out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan, from the Valley of the Arnon to Mount Hermon[9](Mount Hermon is called Sirion by the Sidonians, and the Amorites call it Senir)[10]and all the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and all Bashan, all the way to Salekah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan."
[11](For of the remnant of the Rephaim, only Og king of Bashan had remained. Look! His bed was a bed of iron. Was it not in Rabbah, where the descendants of Ammon live? It was nine cubits long and four cubits wide, the way people measure.)

[12]"This land that we took in possession at that time—from Aroer, that is by the Valley of the Arnon, and half the hill country of Gilead, and its cities—I gave to the Reubenites and to the Gadites.[13]The rest of Gilead and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to the half tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob in Bashan was called the land of Rephaim.
[14]Jair, a descendant of Manasseh, took all the region of Argob to the border of the Geshurites and the Maakathites. He called the region, even Bashan, by his own name, Havvoth Jair, to this day.)
[15]I gave Gilead to Makir.[16]To the Reubenites and to the Gadites I gave territory from Gilead to the Valley of the Arnon—the middle of the valley is the territory's border—and to the Jabbok River, which is the border with the descendants of Ammon.
[17]Another of its borders is also the plain of the Jordan River valley, from Kinnereth to the Sea of the Arabah (that is, the Salt Sea) to the slopes of Mount Pisgah eastward.

[18]I commanded you at that time, saying, 'Yahweh your God has given you this land to possess it; you, all the men of war, will pass over armed before your brothers, the people of Israel.
[19]But your wives, your little ones, and your livestock (I know that you have much livestock), will stay in your cities that I have given you,[20]until Yahweh gives rest to your brothers, as he has to you, until they also possess the land that Yahweh your God is giving them beyond the Jordan; then will you return, every man of you, to your own property that I have given you.'
[21]I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, 'Your eyes have seen all that Yahweh your God has done to these two kings; Yahweh will do the same to all the kingdoms where you go over.[22]You will not fear them, for Yahweh your God is the one who will fight for you.'

[23]I earnestly appealed to Yahweh at that time, saying,[24]'O Lord Yahweh, you have begun to show your servant your greatness and your strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or in earth that can do the same works as you have done, and the same mighty acts?[25]Let me go over, I beg you, and see the good land that is beyond the Jordan, that good hill country, and also Lebanon.'
[26]But Yahweh was angry with me because of you; he did not listen to me. Yahweh said to me, 'Let this be enough for you—speak no more to me about this matter:[27]go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes westward, northward, southward, and eastward; look with your eyes, for you will not go over the Jordan.
[28]Instead, instruct Joshua and encourage and strengthen him, for he will go over before this people, and he will cause them to inherit the land that you will see.'[29]So we stayed in the valley opposite Beth Peor.

Deuteronomy 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Victories

The victories recorded in this chapter occurred on the east side of the Jordan River. This was not part of the Promised Land, which was on the west side of the Jordan River. (See: promisedland)

Links:

Deuteronomy 3:1 Notes

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Deuteronomy 3:1

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel of what happened in the past.

Og

This is the name of a king. See how you translated it in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Edrei

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Deuteronomy 3:2

Sihon

This is the name of a king. See how you translated it in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Heshbon

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Yahweh said to me, 'Do not fear him; ... given you ... under your control ... You will do ... as you did ... at Heshbon.'

Yahweh is speaking to Moses as if Moses were the Israelites, so the command "do not fear" and all instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

fear him ... over him ... his people and his land

Here the words "him" and "his" refer to Og.

I have given you victory

Yahweh speaks of what he will do as if he had already done it.

You will do to him as you did to Sihon

The word "him" is a metonym for "his people." Alternate translation: "You will destroy Og and his people as you did Sihon"

Deuteronomy 3:3

all his people were put under our control

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh put all of Og's people under our control"

not one survivor remained for him

"all of his people were dead." This emphasizes that the Israelites did not let anyone live.

Deuteronomy 3:4

There was not one of the sixty cities that we did not take

This is a double negative that emphasizes that they took all of the 60 cities. Alternate translation: "We took every one of the sixty cities"

sixty cities

"60 cities"

the region of Argob

This is the name of a region within Bashan.

Deuteronomy 3:5

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel of what happened in the past.

These were all cities fortified with

"These were all cities protected by"

besides very many

"in addition to very many" or "not including very many"

Deuteronomy 3:6

Sihon

This is the name of a king. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Heshbon

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:4]

Deuteronomy 3:8

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

out of the hand of the two kings

Here the metonym "out of the hand of" means "from the control of." Alternate translation: "from the control of the two kings" or "from the two kings"

Amorites

"Amorite people." See how you translated the name of this people group in Deuteronomy 1:4.

beyond the Jordan

This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he said this. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 1:1. Alternate translation: "east of the Jordan River"

the Valley of the Arnon

See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 2:24.

Mount Hermon

This is the name of a mountain at the northern border of Bashan.

Deuteronomy 3:9

Mount Hermon ... Sirion ... Senir

These are all names of the same mountain which is at the northern border of Bashan.

Deuteronomy 3:10

Bashan ... Edrei ... Og

See how you translated these in Deuteronomy 1:4.

of the plain

This is high, flat land between the Arnon River and Mount Gilead.

Salekah

This is the name of a city near Edrei.

Deuteronomy 3:11

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

For of the remnant ... the way people measure

This is background information about King Og.

Rephaim

See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 2:11.

Look!

"Pay attention to the important thing I am going to tell you."

Was it not in Rabbah, ... live?

The writer uses a question to remind the people of Israel that they could go to Rabbah and see how large Og must have been. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Possible meanings are 1) "It was in Rabbah, ... live." or 2) "It is in Rabbah ... live."

cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters.

the way people measure

"according to the cubit most people use"

Deuteronomy 3:12

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of what happened in the past.

Aroer

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See how you translated the name of this town in Deuteronomy 2:36.
the Valley of the Arnon
See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 2:24.
Deuteronomy 3:13
All the region of Argob in Bashan was called the land of Rephaim
The writer begins to present background information about the land that the people of Israel captured. If your language has a way of showing that what follows is background information, you should use it here.
the region of Argob
See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 3:4.
Rephaim
See how you translated this word in Deuteronomy 2:11.
Deuteronomy 3:14
General Information:
This continues the background information about the land the people of Israel captured (Deuteronomy 3:13).
Jair
This is the name of a man.
the Geshurites and the Maakathites
These are people groups who lived west of Bashan.
Havvoth Jair
Translators may make a footnote that says: "The name 'Havvoth Jair' means 'tent villages of Jair' or 'realm of Jair.'"
Deuteronomy 3:15
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
I gave
Here "I" refers to Moses.
to Makir
Makir was the son of Manasseh. He had died before Moses gave this land. The name is a metonym for the descendants of the person. Alternate translation: "to the descendants of Makir"
Deuteronomy 3:16
Jabbok River
This is the name of a river that created the border between Sihon's land and the land of the Ammonites. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 2:37]
Deuteronomy 3:17
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
Another of its borders is also
"The western border of the Reubenite and Gadite territory is"
Kinnereth
the Sea of Kinnereth, also called "the Sea of Galilee" or "the Lake of Gennesaret"
Mount Pisgah
This is the name of a mountain in the northern part of the Abarim mountain range.
Deuteronomy 3:18
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
I commanded you at that time
Moses reminds the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh that they must help the other Israelites conquer the rest of the land God promised them.
will pass over armed before
"will take your weapons and cross the Jordan River ahead of"
your brothers, the people of Israel
"your fellow Israelites"
Deuteronomy 3:19
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh.
Deuteronomy 3:20
Yahweh gives rest to your brothers
The writer speaks as if the ability to rest were a physical object that could be given as a gift. The word "rest" is also a metaphor for peaceful life in which there is no war. Alternate translation: "Yahweh allows your brothers to rest" or "Yahweh allows your brothers to stop fighting wars and live peacefully"
beyond the Jordan
This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he said this. See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 1:1. Alternate translation: "east of the Jordan River"
then will you return
Moses is emphasizing that the other tribes must possess their land before Yahweh will permit these three tribes to possess their land. "only then are you to return."
Deuteronomy 3:21
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.
Your eyes have seen
Here "eyes" refers to Joshua. Alternate translation: "You have seen"
Deuteronomy 3:23
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the people about what happened in the past.
I earnestly appealed
Here "I" refers to Moses. This means he asked God in a very emotional way.
Deuteronomy 3:24
to show your servant
Here "your servant" is a polite way of speaking to someone with greater authority. Alternate translation: "to show me, your servant"
your strong hand
Here the metonym "hand" means control or power. Alternate translation: "your power"
for what god is there ... acts?
Moses uses a question to emphasize that Yahweh is the only God with the power to do the works he has done. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "for there is no god ... acts."
in heaven or in earth
These two extremes together mean "anywhere."
Deuteronomy 3:25
beyond the Jordan
"west of the Jordan River." When Moses spoke these words to Yahweh, he was east of the Jordan River in Moab.

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Deuteronomy 3:26

General Information:

Moses continues telling the people of Israel what happened in the past.

Yahweh was angry with me because of you

This refers to when Moses disobeyed what Yahweh told him to do because Moses was angry with the people of Israel. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:37]

Deuteronomy 3:27

Pisgah

See how you translated this is in Deuteronomy 3:17.

lift up your eyes

The words "lift up your eyes" are an idiom that means look. Alternate translation: "look"

Deuteronomy 3:28

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.

Deuteronomy 3:29

Beth Peor

This is the name of a town in Moab near Mount Pisgah.

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4 [1]Now, Israel, listen to the laws and the decrees that I am about to teach you, to do them; so that you may live and go in and possess the land that Yahweh, the God of your fathers, is giving you.[2]You will not add to the words that I command you, neither will you diminish them, so that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your God that I am about to command you.
[3]Your eyes have seen what Yahweh did because of Baal Peor; for all the men who followed the Baal of Peor, Yahweh your God has destroyed them from among you.[4]But you who clung to Yahweh your God are alive today, every one of you.
[5]Look, I have taught you laws and decrees, as Yahweh my God had commanded me, that you should do so in the midst of the land which you are going into in order to possess it.[6]Therefore keep them and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear about all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'
[7]For what other great nation is there that has a god so near to them, as Yahweh our God is whenever we call upon him?
[8]What other great nation is there that has laws and decrees so righteous as all this law that I am setting before you today?

[9]Only pay attention and carefully guard yourself, so that you do not forget the things that your eyes have seen, so that they do not leave your heart for all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children.
[10]On the day that you stood before Yahweh your God at Horeb, when Yahweh said to me, 'Assemble me the people, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.'
[11]You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain. The mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.[12]Yahweh spoke to you out of the middle of the fire; you heard the voice with its words, but you saw no form; you only heard a voice.
[13]He declared to you his covenant that he commanded you to perform, the Ten Commandments. He wrote them on two tablets of stone.[14]Yahweh commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, so that you might do them in the land that you are crossing over to take possession of it.

[15]So watch yourselves carefully—for you saw no kind of form on the day that Yahweh spoke to you at Horeb out of the middle of the fire—[16]that you do not corrupt yourselves by making a carved image in the form of any figure, in the likeness of male or female,[17]the likeness of any animal on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the heavens,[18]the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, or the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth.
[19]You must not lift your eyes up to the heavens and look at the sun, the moon, or the stars—all the host of the heavens—and be drawn away to worship them and adore them—those things of which Yahweh your God has given a share to all the peoples under all the heavens.[20]But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be to him a people of his own inheritance, as you are today.
[21]Yahweh was angry with me because of you; he swore that I would not go over the Jordan, and that I would not go into the good land that Yahweh your God is giving to you as an inheritance.[22]Rather, I must die in this land; I must not go over the Jordan. But you will go over and possess that good land.
[23]Pay attention to yourselves, so that you do not forget the covenant of Yahweh your God, which he made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything that Yahweh your God has forbidden you to make.[24]For Yahweh your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.

[25]When you beget children and children's children, and when you will have been in the land for a long time, and if you corrupt yourselves and make a carved figure in the form of anything, and do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God, to provoke him to anger—[26]I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that you will soon utterly perish from off the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong your days in it, but you will be completely destroyed.

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[27]Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations, where Yahweh will lead you away.[28]There you will serve other gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, hear, eat, nor smell.
[29]But from there you will seek Yahweh your God, and you will find him, when you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul.
[30]When you are in distress, and when all these things will have come on you, in those later days you will return to Yahweh your God and listen to his voice.[31]For Yahweh your God is a merciful God; he will not fail you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers that he swore to them.

[32]Ask now about the days that are past, which were before your time, since the day that God created man on the earth, ask from one end of heaven to the other, whether there has been anything so great as this, or has anything like it ever been heard?[33]Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live?
[34]Or has God ever attempted to go and take for himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, as everything that Yahweh your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?
[35]To you these things were shown, so that you might know that Yahweh is God, and that there is no one else besides him.
[36]Out of heaven he made you to hear his voice, so that he might instruct you; on earth he made you see his great fire; you heard his words out of the midst of the fire.
[37]Because he loved your fathers, he chose their descendants after them, and brought you out of Egypt with his presence, with his great power;[38]in order to drive out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land as an inheritance, as today.
[39]Know therefore today, and lay it on your heart, that Yahweh is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no one else.[40]You will keep his statutes and his commandments that I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you forever."

[41]Then Moses selected three cities on the east side of the Jordan,[42]so that anyone might flee to one of them if he killed another person accidentally, without being his enemy previously. By fleeing to one of these cities, he might survive.[43]They were: Bezer in the wilderness, the plain country, for the Reubenites; Ramoth in Gilead, for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites.

[44]This is the law that Moses placed before the people of Israel;[45]these are the covenant decrees, laws, and ordinances that he spoke to the people of Israel when they came out of Egypt,[46]when they were east of the Jordan, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had lived at Heshbon, whom Moses and the people of Israel had defeated when they came out of Egypt.
[47]They took his land as a possession, and the land of Og king of Bashan—these, the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan toward the east.[48]This territory went from Aroer, on the edge of the Valley of the Arnon, to Mount Siyon (or Mount Hermon),[49]and included all of the plain of the Jordan River valley, eastward beyond the Jordan, to the Sea of the Arabah, to the slopes of Mount Pisgah.

Deuteronomy 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Law of Moses

In order to possess the land, the people needed to obey the law of Moses. This will be the most important thing in the religious life of Israel. (See: lawofmoses)

Moses's instructions

Moses is not allowed to enter into the Promised Land. Since they are getting ready to possess the Promised Land, Moses gives them some last instructions before his death. (See: promisedland)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Moses uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these questions is to convince his readers to obey his instructions.

Links:

Deuteronomy 4:1 Notes

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Deuteronomy 4:1
I am about to teach you
Moses is telling the people of Israel what God wants them to do.
to do them
"and obey them"
Deuteronomy 4:2
You will not add to the words ... neither will you diminish them
Yahweh does not want his people to create new laws, or to ignore those he has already given them.
Deuteronomy 4:3
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Your eyes have seen
Here "eyes" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "You saw"
because of Baal Peor
The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "because of the sins you committed at Baal Peor"
Peor
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 3:29.
Yahweh your God has destroyed them from among you
Moses speaks to the people of Israel as though they were one person, so "your" and "you" are singular.
Deuteronomy 4:4
you who clung to Yahweh
The writer speaks as if trusting in Yahweh and obeying him were like physically holding on to a person. Alternate translation: "you who were careful to obey Yahweh"
Deuteronomy 4:5
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Look
"Pay attention"
that you should do so in the midst of the land
"that you should obey them when you live in the land"
Deuteronomy 4:6
keep them and do them
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that they are to obey them. Alternate translation: "obey them carefully"
this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples
The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "understanding" can be translated as adjective phrases, and the abstract noun "sight" refers to how the peoples judge or decide on the value of something. Alternate translation: "this is what will show the peoples that you are wise and that you understand what is important"
this great nation is a wise and understanding people
The word "nation" is a metonym for the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "the people of this great nation are wise and understanding"
Deuteronomy 4:7
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
For what other great nation is there ... him?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "For there is no other great nation ... him."
Deuteronomy 4:8
What other great nation is there ... today?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no other great nation ... today."
Deuteronomy 4:9
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
Only pay attention ... guard yourself ... you do not forget ... your eyes ... your heart ... your life ... Make them known to your children and your children's children
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they are one person, so all instances of "you," "your," and "yourself," as well as the commands "pay attention," "guard," and "make known" are singular.
Only pay attention and carefully guard yourself
"Pay careful attention and be sure to remember these things always"
you do not forget ... they do not leave your heart
These phrases means the same thing and emphasize that the people of Israel must remember what they have seen.
your eyes have seen
Here "eyes" are a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "you have seen"
Deuteronomy 4:10
you stood before Yahweh your God
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they are one person, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
Assemble me the people
"Bring the people together and bring them to me"
Deuteronomy 4:11
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the Israelites of their history.
with fire to the heart of heaven
This is an idiom. "The heart of" means "the middle of" or "the innermost part of," and "heaven" here refers to the sky. Alternate translation: "with a fire that went up to the sky"
with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness
Here "thick darkness" describes the cloud. Alternate translation: "with a thick, dark cloud"
thick darkness
Another possible meaning is "heavy cloud."
Deuteronomy 4:13
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
He declared
"Yahweh declared"
to you
Here "you" refers to the Israelites who were at Mount Horeb.
Deuteronomy 4:14
in the land that you are crossing over to take possession of
"after you have crossed over the Jordan River and taken possession of the land"
Deuteronomy 4:15
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 4:16

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do not corrupt yourselves
"do not do what is wrong"
Deuteronomy 4:18
creeps on the ground
"crawls on the ground"
Deuteronomy 4:19
You must not lift your eyes ... and look ... and be drawn ... Yahweh your God
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" and the words "lift," "look," and "be drawn" are singular.
You must not ... and be drawn away to worship
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not ... and do not let anyone make you want to worship" or "Do not ... and do not allow yourself worship"
all the host of the heavens
"all the army of the heavens." Here this refers to the lights we see in the sky, including the sun, moon, stars. They are called the host because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "all the multitude of things in the sky"
of which Yahweh your God has given a share to all the peoples
This is an idiom. Moses speaks of the stars as if they were small objects like food that Yahweh was dividing and giving out to the people groups. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh your God has put there to help all people groups"
Deuteronomy 4:20
brought you out of the iron furnace
Moses speaks of Egypt and the hard work the Israelites did there as if it were an oven in which iron is heated and the Israelites were the iron. Alternate translation: "brought you out of the land where people made you do hard work"
a people of his own inheritance
This is an idiom that can be translated "people who belong only to him."
Deuteronomy 4:21
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Yahweh was angry with me because of you
This refers to when Moses disobeyed what Yahweh told him to do because Moses was angry with the people of Israel. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 1:37]
Yahweh your God is giving to you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so "you" and "your" are singular.
Deuteronomy 4:23
Pay attention to yourselves
"Pay careful attention"
Yahweh your God has forbidden you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one person, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
Deuteronomy 4:24
Yahweh your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God
Moses compares how Yahweh acts when he is angry to the way a fire destroys things. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will severely punish and destroy you like a fire does because he does not want you to worship other gods"
Yahweh your God
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one person, so the word "your" is singular.
Deuteronomy 4:25
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
you beget ... Yahweh your God
The words "you" and "your" are singular here.
beget
become the father of, or become the ancestor of
if you corrupt yourselves
"if you do what is wrong." See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 4:16.
do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God, to provoke him to anger
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you make Yahweh your God angry by doing what he says is evil"
Deuteronomy 4:26
I call heaven and earth to witness
Possible meanings are 1) Moses is calling on all those who live in heaven and earth to be witnesses to what he says or 2) Moses is speaking to heaven and earth as if they are people, and he is calling them to be witnesses to what he says.
you will not prolong your days
Long days are a metaphor for a long life. Alternate translation: "you will not be able to live a long time"
but you will be completely destroyed
As indicated in 4:27, not every Israelite will be killed. Here "completely destroy" is a generalization and emphasizes that many of the Israelites will die. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but Yahweh will destroy many of you"
Deuteronomy 4:27
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples
Moses speaks as if the people were seeds that Yahweh would scatter around a field. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will send you to many different places and force you to live there"
will lead you away
"will send you" or "will cause your enemies to take you away"
Deuteronomy 4:28
the work of men's hands, wood and stone
Here "men's hands" refers the men themselves, and "the work ... wood and stone" to the idols that they have created. Alternate translation: "the wood and stone idols that men have made"
Deuteronomy 4:29
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel. He speaks as though they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
But from there
"But when you are in those other nations"
you will seek
The word "you" here is plural.
when you search after him

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"when you really try to find him" or "when you really try to know him"

with all your heart and with all your soul

Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly."

Deuteronomy 4:30

will have come on

"have happened to"

in those later days

"afterwards" or "then"

listen to his voice

Here "listen" is an idiom that means to hear and obey. Also, "his voice" refers to Yahweh and emphasizes what he says. Alternate translation: "obey what he says"

Deuteronomy 4:32

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and the command "ask now" are singular.

Deuteronomy 4:33

Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live?

Here the people of Israel are reminded of how Yahweh has spoken to them in an amazing way in the past. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No other people besides you has heard God speak from the middle of the fire and lived."

hear the voice of God speaking

Here God is represented by his voice. Alternate translation: "hear God's voice as he spoke"

Deuteronomy 4:34

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm

Here "a mighty hand" and "an outstretched arm" are metaphors for Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "by showing his mighty power"

before your eyes

Here "eyes" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "in front of you"

Deuteronomy 4:35

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

To you these things were shown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh showed you these things"

Deuteronomy 4:36

he made you to hear ... made you see

"he made sure you heard ... made sure you saw"

made you ... you heard

Moses speaks as if the people to whom he was speaking were the people he had spoken to at Mount Sinai many years earlier. The people at Mount Sinai were actually the fathers of the people to whom he was speaking these words. Alternate translation: "made your fathers ... your fathers heard"

Deuteronomy 4:37

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

your fathers

This refers to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's sons.

with his presence, with his great power

"with the great power that comes from his presence" or "with his great power"

Deuteronomy 4:39

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

lay it on your heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember it"

in heaven above and on the earth beneath

The two phrases "in heaven" and "on the earth" show two extremes and mean "everywhere." Alternate translation: "over everything"

Deuteronomy 4:40

prolong your days

Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

Deuteronomy 4:41

General Information:

Moses's speech, which began in Deuteronomy 1:6, has finished, and the writer continues the narrative that ended in Deuteronomy 1:5.

Deuteronomy 4:43

Bezer ... Ramoth ... Golan

These are names of cities.

Deuteronomy 4:44

This is the law

This refers to the laws Moses will give in the following chapters.

Deuteronomy 4:46

Beth Peor

This is the name of a town in Moab near Mount Pisgah. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 3:29]

Sihon ... Amorites ... Heshbon

"King Sihon ... Amorite people ... town of Heshbon." See how you translated these names in Deuteronomy 1:4.

Deuteronomy 4:47

his land

King Sihon's land

beyond the Jordan toward the east

This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he said this. Alternate translation: "from the side of the Jordan River toward the east"

Deuteronomy 4:48

Aroer

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 2:36.

the Valley of the Arnon

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 2:24.

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Mount Siyon ... Mount Hermon
These are different names for the same mountain.
Mount Siyon
The word "Siyon" is another spelling of "Sirion" (Deuteronomy 3:9).
Mount Hermon
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 3:8.
Deuteronomy 4:49

eastward beyond the Jordan
This refers to the land across the Jordan River, to the east of Israel. Moses was east of the Jordan when he said this.
Alternate translation: "eastward from the side of the Jordan River"
Sea of the Arabah ... Mount Pisgah
See how you translated these names in Deuteronomy 3:17.

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5 [1]Moses called to all Israel and said to them, "Listen, Israel, to the statutes and the decrees that I will speak in your ears today, that you may learn them and keep them.[2]Yahweh our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.[3]Yahweh did not make this covenant with our ancestors, but with us, all of us alive here today.
[4]Yahweh spoke with you face to face on the mount out of the middle of the fire[5](I stood between Yahweh and you at that time, to reveal to you his word; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain). Yahweh said,
[6]'I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

[7]You will have no other gods before me.
[8]You will not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water below.
[9]You will not bow down to them or serve them, for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God. I punish the ancestors' wickedness by bringing punishment on the children, to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,[10]and showing steadfast love to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments.

[11]You will not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain, for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain.

[12]Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy, as Yahweh your God commanded you.[13]For six days you will labor and do all your work;[14]but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your God. On it you will not do any work—not you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your animals, nor any foreigner who is within your gates. This is so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.
[15]You will call to mind that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm. Therefore Yahweh your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

[16]Honor your father and your mother, as Yahweh your God has commanded you to do, that you may live a long time in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and so that it may go well with you.

[17]You will not murder.
[18]You will not commit adultery.
[19]You will not steal.
[20]You will not give false witness against your neighbor.

[21]You will not covet your neighbor's wife, you will not covet your neighbor's house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.'

[22]These words Yahweh spoke in a loud voice to all your assembly on the mountain out of the middle of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness; he did not add any more words. He wrote them down on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.
[23]It came about, when you heard the voice out of the middle of the darkness, while the mountain was burning, that you came near to me—all your elders and the heads of your tribes.[24]You said, 'Look, Yahweh our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the middle of the fire; we have seen today that when God speaks with people, they can live.
[25]But why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of Yahweh our God any longer, we will die.[26]For who besides us is there among all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speak out of the middle of the fire and lived, as we have done?[27]As for you, you should go and listen to everything that Yahweh our God says; repeat to us everything that Yahweh our God says to you; we will listen to it and obey it.'

[28]Yahweh heard your words when you spoke to me. He said to me, 'I have heard the words of this people, what they said

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to you. What they said was good.[29]Oh, that there were such a heart in them, that they would honor me and always keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their children forever![30]Go say to them, "Return to your tents."
[31]But as for you, stand here by me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes, and the decrees that you will teach them, so that they may keep them in the land that I will give them to possess.'
[32]You will keep, therefore, what Yahweh your God has commanded you; you will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.[33]You will walk in all the ways that Yahweh your God has commanded you, so that you may live, and so that it may go well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

Deuteronomy 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set each of the commandments in the list of Ten Commandments in 5:7-21 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB uses a separate paragraph for each commandment.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ten commandments

This chapter repeats the material of Exodus 20. It is known as the Ten Commandments.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors and idioms

Moses uses metaphors and idioms to instruct the people to follow the law of Moses. This is because it is very important to follow these laws.

Links:

Deuteronomy 5:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 5:1

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

called to all Israel

Here "all" is a generalization. Moses wanted everyone in Israel to hear and obey his words, but his voice was probably not so loud that everyone actually heard him.

that I will speak in your ears today

Here "ears" refers to the whole person. This metaphor emphasizes that the people know what Moses has said to them, so they cannot sin and then say they did not know they were sinning. Alternate translation: "that I will speak to you today"

Deuteronomy 5:3

Yahweh did not make this covenant with our ancestors

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh did not only make a covenant with those who were at Horeb; the covenant was also with the later generations of Israelites or 2) Yahweh did not make this covenant with their distant ancestors, such as, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; instead, this covenant began with the Israelites at Horeb.

Deuteronomy 5:4

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

face to face

Use your language's idiom for two people who are close to each other and looking at each other when they are speaking to each other.

on the mount

"on the mountain"

Deuteronomy 5:5

at that time

Moses is referring to an event that happened about 40 years earlier.

Deuteronomy 5:6

out of the house of slavery

Here the metonym "house of slavery" refers to Egypt where the people of Israel had been slaves. Alternate translation: "out of the place where you were slaves"

Deuteronomy 5:7

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people what Yahweh has commanded them. The phrases "you will" and "you will not" are commands. He speaks to the Israelites as if they were one person.

You will have no other gods before me

"You must not worship any other gods but me"

Deuteronomy 5:8

that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water below

This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "that is in the earth beneath your feet, or that is in the water below the earth"

Deuteronomy 5:9

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

You will not bow down to them or serve them

"You will not worship the carved figures or do as they command"

You will not

"Never"

I ... am a jealous God

"I ... want you to worship only me"

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Deuteronomy 5:10
showing steadfast love to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments
The abstract noun "love" can be stated as the verb "love." Alternate translation: "faithfully loving thousands, those who love me"
to thousands, to those who love me
Some translations read "to a thousand generations of those who love me." The word "thousands" is a metonym for a number too many to count. Alternate translation: "forever, to those who love me"
Deuteronomy 5:11
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
You will not take the name of Yahweh
"You will not use the name of Yahweh"
You will not
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 5:9.
in vain
"carelessly" or "without proper respect" or "for wrong purposes"
Yahweh will not hold him guiltless
This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will consider him guilty" or "Yahweh will punish him"
Deuteronomy 5:12
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
to keep it holy
"to dedicate it to God"
Deuteronomy 5:13
do all your work
"do all your usual duties"
Deuteronomy 5:14
seventh day
"day 7." Here "seventh" is the ordinal number for seven.
On it you will not do
"On that day never do"
within your gates
Here "gates" is a reference to the city itself. Alternate translation: "within your community" or "inside your city" or "living with you"
Deuteronomy 5:15
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
You will call to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "You must remember"
by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm
Here "a mighty hand" and "an outstretched arm" are metaphors for Yahweh's power. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:34]
Deuteronomy 5:16
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
Deuteronomy 5:17
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
You will not
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 5:9.
Deuteronomy 5:18
You will not commit adultery
"You will not sleep with anyone other than your spouse"
Deuteronomy 5:20
You will not give false witness against your neighbor
"You will not tell lies about someone"
Deuteronomy 5:21
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.
You will not
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 5:9.
Deuteronomy 5:22
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the people of Israel what Yahweh said.
Deuteronomy 5:23
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the people of Israel what happened in the past.
heard the voice
The word "voice" is a metonym for the sound of the voice or for the person who was speaking. Alternate translation: "heard the sound of the voice" or "heard Yahweh speaking"
Deuteronomy 5:25
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the Israelites what the Israelites had said to Moses.
But why should we die?
They were afraid that they would die if Yahweh spoke to them. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We are afraid that we will die."
Deuteronomy 5:26
For who besides us is there ... have done?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There are no other people besides us ... have done."
all flesh
This represents all people or living things. Alternate translation: "all people" or "all living beings"
Deuteronomy 5:28
when you spoke to me
Here "me" refers to Moses.
Deuteronomy 5:29
Oh, that there were
If your language has an idiom that expresses a strong desire for something, you might want to use it here.

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Alternate translation: "I would be very happy if there were"
Deuteronomy 5:31
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
you will teach them
"you will teach the people of Israel"
Deuteronomy 5:32
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
You will keep
Moses is giving a command to the people of Israel.
you will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left
This compares a person disobeying God to a person turning off of the correct path. Alternate translation: "you will not disobey him in any way" or "you will do everything he says"
Deuteronomy 5:33
prolong your days
Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:40]

6 [1]Now these are the commandments, statutes, and decrees that Yahweh your God has commanded me to teach you, so that you might keep them in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess;[2]so that you might honor Yahweh your God, so as to keep all his statutes and commandments that I am commanding you—you, your sons, and your sons' sons, all the days of your lives, so that your days may be prolonged.
[3]Therefore listen to them, Israel, and keep them, so that it may go well with you, so that you may greatly multiply, in a land flowing with milk and honey, as Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has promised you would do.

[4]Listen, Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one.[5]You will love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.
[6]The words that I am commanding you today will be in your heart;[7]and you will diligently teach them to your children; you will talk about them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up.
[8]You will tie them as a sign upon your hand, and they will serve as frontlets between your eyes.[9]You will write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

[10]When Yahweh your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, that he would give you, with large and very good cities that you did not build,[11]and houses full of all kinds of good things that you did not make, cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant, you will eat and be satisfied—[12]then be careful so that you do not forget Yahweh, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
[13]You will honor Yahweh your God; him you will worship, and you will swear by his name.[14]You will not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you—[15]for Yahweh your God in the midst of you is a jealous God—if you do, the anger of Yahweh your God will be kindled against you and he will destroy you from the surface of the earth.

[16]You will not test Yahweh your God as you tested him at Massah.[17]You will diligently keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, his solemn commands, and his statutes, that he has commanded you.
[18]You will do what is right and good in the sight of Yahweh, that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land that Yahweh swore to your fathers,[19]to drive out all your enemies from before you, as Yahweh has said.

[20]When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What are the covenant decrees, the statutes, and the other decrees that Yahweh our God commanded you?'[21]then you will say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt; Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand,[22]and he displayed signs and wonders, great and severe, on Egypt, on Pharaoh, and on all his house, before our eyes;[23]and he brought us out from there, so that he might bring us in, to give us the land that he swore to our fathers.
[24]Yahweh commanded us to always keep all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our God for our good, so that he might keep us alive, as we are today.[25]If we keep all these commands before Yahweh our God, as he has commanded us, this will be our righteousness.'

Deuteronomy 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's blessings
Yahweh's continued blessing of the people of Israel is dependent upon the people's obedience to the law of Moses. (See: bless and lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

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There are many metaphors in this chapter. These metaphors describe the greatness of the Promised Land and the wholehearted worship that is completely dedicated to Yahweh. (See: and promisedland)

Links:

Deuteronomy 6:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 6:1

General Information:

Moses continues the speech to the people of Israel he began in [Deuteronomy 5:1]

might keep

"might obey"

going over the Jordan

"going to the other side of the Jordan River"

Deuteronomy 6:2

to keep

"to obey"

that your days may be prolonged

Long days are a metaphor for a long life. This can be stated in active form. This can be translated similarly to "prolong your days" in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

Deuteronomy 6:3

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

listen to them

Here "listen" means to obey, and "them" refers to Yahweh's commandments. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "listen to Yahweh's commandments, statutes, and decrees"

keep them

"obey them"

a land flowing with milk and honey

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "a land where plenty of milk and honey flow" or "a land that is excellent for cattle and farming"

Deuteronomy 6:4

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one

"Our God Yahweh is the one and only God"

Deuteronomy 6:5

with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might

Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These three phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated "with all your heart, with all your soul" in [Deuteronomy 4:29]

Deuteronomy 6:6

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

I am commanding you

Moses is speaking God's commandments to the people of Israel.

will be in your heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you must always remember"

Deuteronomy 6:7

you will diligently teach ... you will talk

"I command you to diligently teach ... I command you to talk." The reader should understand these as commands.

Deuteronomy 6:8

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

tie them

This is a metonym for "write these words on parchment, put the parchment in a pouch, and tie the pouch." This metonym in turn may be a metaphor for "obey these words so that it is as if they were physically there." Alternate translation: "tie these words"

as a sign upon your hand

"as something to make you remember my laws"

they will serve as frontlets

This is a metonym for "write these words on parchment, put the parchment in a pouch, and tie the pouch to your head so it sits." This metonym in turn may be a metaphor for "obey these words so that it is as if they were physically there." Alternate translation: "my words will serve as frontlets"

frontlets

ornaments a person wears on the forehead

Deuteronomy 6:9

You will write

This is a command.

Deuteronomy 6:10

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

large and very good cities that you did not build

All these cities will belong to the people of Israel when they conquer the people in Canaan.

Deuteronomy 6:12

out of the house of bondage

Here the metonym "house of bondage" refers to Egypt, the place where the people of Israel had been slaves. Alternate translation: "out of the place where you were slaves"

Deuteronomy 6:13

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

You will honor Yahweh your God; him you will worship, and you will swear by his name

"It is Yahweh your God and no one else whom you will honor; it is he alone whom you will worship, and it is by his name and only his name that you will swear." Your language may have another way of emphasizing that Yahweh is telling the Israelites not to worship or serve any other god.

you will swear by his name

To swear by the name of Yahweh means to make Yahweh

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the basis or the power on which the oath is made. The metonym "his name" refers to Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "you will swear and ask Yahweh to confirm it" or "when you swear you will speak his name"

Deuteronomy 6:15

in the midst of you

"who lives among you"

the anger of Yahweh your God will be kindled against you

Moses compares Yahweh's anger to someone starting a fire to destroy things. This can be stated in active form. To kindle anger is a metaphor for becoming very angry. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will kindle his anger" or "Yahweh your God will become very angry"

destroy you from

"destroy you so that there is nothing left of you anywhere on"

Deuteronomy 6:16

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

You will not test Yahweh

Here "test" means to challenge Yahweh and force him to prove himself.

Massah

This is the name of a place in the desert. The translator may add a footnote that says: "The name 'Massah' means 'testing.'"

Deuteronomy 6:18

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

You will do what is right and good in the sight of Yahweh

This idiom is a command and a blessing. If the Israelites obey Yahweh, they will receive blessings from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Do what Yahweh says is right and good"

Deuteronomy 6:20

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

What are the covenant decrees ... commanded you

In this question the "covenant decrees" represent their meaning and purpose. Alternate translation: "What do the covenant decrees ... commanded mean to you" or "Why should you obey the covenant decrees ... commanded you"

your son

This refers to the children of the adult people of Israel to whom Moses was speaking Yahweh's words.

Deuteronomy 6:21

with a mighty hand

Here "a mighty hand" refers to Yahweh's power. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:34]

Deuteronomy 6:22

on all his house

Here the metonym "his house" refers to the people of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "on all of his people"

before our eyes

Here the word "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "where we could see them"

Deuteronomy 6:23

might bring us in

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "might bring us into Canaan"

Deuteronomy 6:24

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person. He tells them what they should tell their children about Yahweh's commandments.

keep

obey at all times and for a long time

Deuteronomy 6:25

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh" or "where Yahweh can see us"

this will be our righteousness

The word "this" refers to keeping Yahweh's commands. This is a metonym for Yahweh considering them righteous. Alternate translation: "he will consider us righteous"

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7 [1]When Yahweh your God brings you into the land that you go to possess, he will drive out many nations before you—
the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—seven nations
greater and mightier than you.
[2]It is Yahweh your God who gives them over to you when you defeat them, and then you must completely destroy them.
You will make no covenant with them, and show them no mercy.[3]Neither will you arrange any marriages with them. You
will not give your daughters to their sons, and you will not take their daughters for your sons.
[4]For they will turn away your sons from following me, so that they may worship other gods. So the anger of Yahweh will
be kindled against you, and he will destroy you quickly.[5]This is how you will deal with them: You will break down their
altars, dash their stone pillars in pieces, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn their cast idols.

[6]For you are a nation that is set apart to Yahweh your God. He has chosen you to be a people for him to possess, more than
all the other peoples that are on the face of the earth.
[7]Yahweh did not set his love upon you or choose you because you were more in number than any people—for you were
the fewest of all peoples—[8]but because he loves you, and he wished to keep the oath that he had sworn to your fathers.
This is why Yahweh has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the
hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.
[9]Therefore know that Yahweh your God—he is God, the faithful God, who keeps covenants and faithfulness for a
thousand generations with those who love him and keep his commandments,[10]but repays those who hate him to their
face, to destroy them; he will not be lenient on whoever hates him; he will repay him to his face.

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[11]You will therefore keep the commandments, the statutes, and the decrees that I command you today, so that you will do them.

[12]If you listen to these decrees, and keep and do them, it will happen that Yahweh your God will keep with you the covenant and the faithfulness that he swore to your fathers.[13]He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will bless the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground—your grain, your new wine, and your oil—the calves of your herds and the young of your flocks in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you.
[14]You will be blessed more than all other peoples; there will not be a childless male or a barren female among you or among your livestock.[15]Yahweh will take away from you all sickness; none of the evil diseases of Egypt that you have known will he put on you, but he will put them on all those who hate you.
[16]You will consume all the peoples whom Yahweh your God will give over to you, and your eye will not pity them. You will not worship their gods, for that will be a trap for you.

[17]If you say in your heart, 'These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?'—[18]do not be afraid of them; you will call to mind what Yahweh your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt;[19]the great sufferings that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm by which Yahweh your God brought you out. Yahweh your God will do the same to all the peoples whom you fear.
[20]Moreover, Yahweh your God will send the hornet among them, until those who are left and who hide themselves from you perish from your presence.[21]You will not be frightened at them, for Yahweh your God is among you, a great and fearsome God.[22]Yahweh your God will drive out those nations before you little by little. You will not defeat them all at once, or the wild animals would become very many around you.
[23]But Yahweh your God will give you victory over them when you meet them in battle; he will greatly confuse them until they are destroyed.[24]He will put their kings under your power, and you will make their name perish from under heaven. No one will be able to stand before you, until you have destroyed them.
[25]You will burn the carved figures of their gods—do not covet the silver or the gold that covers them and take it for yourself, because if you do, you will become trapped by it—for it is an abomination to Yahweh your God.[26]You will not bring any abomination into your house and start to worship it. You will utterly detest and abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction.

Deuteronomy 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"You must completely destroy them"

The people of Canaan were to be punished by Yahweh. Yahweh used Israel to punish these nations. If they were not completely destroyed, they would lead Israel into sin. Therefore, they were to be completely destroyed and be shown no mercy. (See: sin and mercy)

Abrahamic Covenant

This chapter references parts of the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham. It also emphasizes Yahweh's faithfulness to this covenant. (See: covenant and faithful)

Links:

Deuteronomy 7:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 7:1

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

Deuteronomy 7:2

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

gives them over to you

Moses speaks of victory as if it were a physical object one person could give to another. Alternate translation: "enables you to defeat them"

you defeat them

Here "them" refers to the seven nations from Deuteronomy 7:1.

Deuteronomy 7:4

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

For they will

"If you allow your children to marry the people from the other nations, the people from the other nations will"

So the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you

Moses compares Yahweh's anger to someone starting a fire. This emphasizes Yahweh's power to destroy what makes him angry. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will kindle his anger against you" or "Then Yahweh will become very angry with you"

against you

The word "you" refers to all the Israelites and so is plural.

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Deuteronomy 7:5
you will deal ... You will break ... dash ... cut ... burn
Moses is speaking to all the Israelites here, so these words are all plural.
Deuteronomy 7:6
General Information:
Moses tells the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.
you are a nation that is set apart
Yahweh choosing the people of Israel to belong to him in a special way is spoken of as if Yahweh set them apart from all other nations.
that are on the face of the earth
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that live on the earth"
Deuteronomy 7:7
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.
did not set his love upon you
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "did not love you more than he loved others"
Deuteronomy 7:8
with a mighty hand
Here "a mighty hand" refers to Yahweh's power. These words also appear in [Deuteronomy 4:34]
redeemed you out of the house of bondage
Moses speaks of Yahweh rescuing the people of Israel from being slaves as if Yahweh had paid money to a slave owner. Alternate translation: "rescued you from being slaves"
house of bondage
Here the metonym "house of bondage" refers to Egypt, the place where the people of Israel had been slaves. See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 6:12. Alternate translation: "out of the place where you were slaves"
hand of Pharaoh
Here "hand" means "the control of." Alternate translation: "control of Pharaoh"
Deuteronomy 7:9
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.
for a thousand generations
"for 1,000 generations"
Deuteronomy 7:10
repays those who hate him to their face
This idiom means "repays them quickly and openly so that they know God has punished them."
he will not be lenient on whoever hates him
The words "not be lenient" are an understatement to emphasize that Yahweh will severely punish. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will severely punish everyone who hates him"
Deuteronomy 7:12
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words. He speaks as if the Israelites are one person in verse 12 and to all of them as a group in verse 13.
Deuteronomy 7:13
multiply you
"increase the number of your people"
the fruit of your womb
This is an idiom for "your children."
the fruit of your ground
This is an idiom for "your crops."
the calves of your herds and
"your cattle so they will become many, as will"
Deuteronomy 7:14
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.
You will be blessed more than all other peoples
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless you more than I bless any other people"
there will not be a childless male or a barren female among you or among your livestock
Moses uses a negative statement to emphasize that they all will be able to have children. This may be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "All of you will be able to have children and your livestock will be able to reproduce"
among you ... your livestock
The words "you" and "your" are plural here.
Deuteronomy 7:15
take away from you all sickness
"make sure that you do not become ill" or "keep you completely healthy"
none of the evil diseases ... will he put on you, but he will put them on all those who hate you
Moses speaks as if disease were a heavy object that Yahweh would put on top of people. Alternate translation: "he will not make you sick with any of the evil diseases ... but he will make your enemies sick with them"
Deuteronomy 7:16
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.
You will consume all the peoples
"I command you to completely destroy all the people groups"
your eye will not pity them
This is a command. Moses speaks as if what the eye sees were the eye itself. Alternate translation: "do not allow what you see to cause you to pity them" or "do not pity them because you see that what you are doing is hurting them"
You will not worship
"never worship"
that will be a trap for you
If the people worship other gods, they will be like an animal caught in a hunter's trap, and they will be unable to escape.
Deuteronomy 7:17
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.
If you say in your heart
The people should not be afraid even if they notice that the

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nations are stronger than they are. Alternate translation: "Even if you say in your heart"

say in your heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "think"

how can I dispossess them?

Moses uses a question to emphasize that the people may feel afraid of the other nations. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not know how I will be able to dispossess them"

dispossess them

"take their land away from them"

Deuteronomy 7:18

do not be afraid

The people should not be afraid even if they notice that the nations are stronger than they are. Alternate translation: "even then do not be afraid"

you will call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you must remember"

Deuteronomy 7:19

that your eyes saw

Here "eyes" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "that you saw"

the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm

Here "a mighty hand" and "an outstretched arm" are metaphors for Yahweh's power. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:34]

Deuteronomy 7:20

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

Moreover, Yahweh

"And also, Yahweh"

send the hornet

Possible meanings are 1) God will send actual flying insects that sting people and cause pain, or 2) God will cause the people to become terrified and want to run away.

perish from your presence

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "die so you do not see them anymore"

Deuteronomy 7:21

You will not

"Never"

a great and fearsome God

"a great and awesome God" or "a great God who causes the people to fear"

Deuteronomy 7:22

little by little

"slowly"

Deuteronomy 7:23

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words as if the Israelites are one person.

give you victory over

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "enable you to defeat"

victory over them

"victory over the armies from the other nations"

he will greatly confuse them

"he will make them so they cannot think clearly"

until they are destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until you have destroyed them"

Deuteronomy 7:24

you will make their name perish from under heaven

The Israelites will completely destroy all the people from those nations, and in the future no one will remember them.

stand before you

"stand against you" or "defend themselves against you"

Deuteronomy 7:25

General Information:

Moses continues to tell the people of Israel Yahweh's words. In verse 25 he speaks to the group as a group, so the forms of "you" are plural, but in verse 26 he speaks as if the Israelites are one person, so the forms are singular.

You will burn

This is a command.

do not covet ... trapped by it

These words add to the instruction to burn the idols.

you will become trapped by it

Even taking the gold or silver on the idols could cause the people to start worshiping them. By doing this they would become like an animal caught by a trap. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will become a trap to you"

for it is an abomination to Yahweh your God

These words tell why Yahweh wants the people to burn the idols. "do this because Yahweh your God hates it very much"

Deuteronomy 7:26

You will utterly detest and abhor

The words "detest" and "abhor" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of hatred. Alternate translation: "You will completely hate"

for it is set apart for destruction

Yahweh cursing something and promising to destroy it is spoken of as if Yahweh were setting the object apart from everything else. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh has set it apart for destruction"

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8 [1]You must keep all the commands that I am giving you today, so that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that Yahweh swore to your fathers.[2]You will call to mind all the ways that Yahweh your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order that he might humble you, that he might test you to know what was in your heart, as to whether you would keep his commandments or not.

[3]He humbled you, and made you hunger, and fed you with manna, which you had not known and which your fathers had not known. He did that to make you know that it is not by bread alone that people live; rather, it is by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh that people live.

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[4]Your clothing did not wear out and fall off you, and your feet did not swell up during those forty years.[5]You will think about in your heart, how, as a man disciplines his son, so Yahweh your God disciplines you.[6]You will keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, so that you might walk in his ways and honor him.
[7]For Yahweh your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out into valleys and among hills;[8]a land of wheat and barley, of vines, fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey.
[9]It is a land in which you will not eat bread in poverty and in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are made of iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper.[10]You will eat and be full, and you will bless Yahweh your God for the good land that he has given you.

[11]Be careful that you do not forget Yahweh your God, by failing to keep his commandments and his rules and statutes that I am commanding you today.[12]Otherwise, when you eat and are full, and when you build good houses and live in them, your heart will be lifted up.
[13]Be careful when your herds and flocks multiply and when your silver and gold increase, and all that you have is multiplied,[14]then your heart becomes lifted up and you forget Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
[15]Do not forget him who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the rock of flint.[16]He fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors had never known, so that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end,
[17]but you may say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand acquired all this wealth.'
[18]But you will call to mind Yahweh your God, for it is he who gives you the power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is today.[19]It will happen that, if you will forget Yahweh your God and walk after other gods, worship them, and reverence them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish.[20]Like the nations that Yahweh is making to perish before you, so will you perish, because you would not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God.

Deuteronomy 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Forgetting

This chapter recalls the great things that Yahweh has done for Israel and is about to do for them. This is so they do not forget him and they will continue to worship him. They must remember that Yahweh is the source of their blessings. (See: bless)

Links:

Deuteronomy 8:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 8:1

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.

You must keep ... you may live and multiply, and go in and possess ... your fathers

All instances of "you" and "your" and the verbs are plural.

Deuteronomy 8:2

You will call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "You must remember"

forty years

"40 years"

he might humble you

"he might show you how weak and sinful you are"

to know

"to reveal" or "to show"

what was in your heart

The heart is a symbol of a person's character. Alternate translation: "what kind of people you are" or "how you would behave"

Deuteronomy 8:3

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person. He continues to remind them of what they should "call to mind"

He humbled you

"Yahweh showed you how weak and sinful you are." See how "he might humble you" is translated in Deuteronomy 8:2.

fed you with manna

"gave you manna to eat"

it is not by bread alone that people live

Here "bread" represents all food. Alternate translation: "food is not the only thing people need so they can live"

it is by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of Yahweh that people live

Here "the mouth of Yahweh" is a metonym for the words that Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "people must obey the commands of Yahweh so they can live" or "people must do what Yahweh tells them to do so they can live"

Deuteronomy 8:4

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General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Your clothing ... forty years
This is the last item that they should "call to mind" (Deuteronomy 8:2).
forty years
"40 years"
Deuteronomy 8:5
You will think ... God disciplines you
This continues the list of commands that begins in Deuteronomy 8:1.
You will think about in your heart
Here the metonym "heart" represents the thoughts and understanding of a person. Alternate translation: "You will understand"
Deuteronomy 8:6
You will keep ... honor him
This continues the list of commands that begins in Deuteronomy 8:1.
Deuteronomy 8:7
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
a land of
"a land with" or "a land that has"
Deuteronomy 8:9
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
a land in which you will not eat bread in poverty
This means that they will eat and they will not be in poverty. They will have plenty to eat. The word "bread" is a synecdoche for food in general. This litotes can be translated positively. Alternate translation: "a land where there will be plenty of food for you"
and in which you will not lack anything
This is a generalization: they will lack nothing important. Alternate translation: "and where you will have everything you need"
stones are made of iron
The stones are full of iron ore. Iron is a very hard metal useful for making swords and plows.
dig copper
"mine copper." Copper is a soft metal useful for making household utensils.
Deuteronomy 8:10
You will eat and be full
"You will have enough food to eat until you are full"
you will bless
"you will praise" or "you will give thanks to"
Deuteronomy 8:11
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Deuteronomy 8:12
Connecting Statement:
This verse describes the first two items of a list of five things that might make the Israelites forget about Yahweh (verse 11): "when you eat and are full" and "when you build good houses."
when you eat and are full
"when you have enough food to eat"
your heart will be lifted up
Here "heart" represents the inner person. To become prideful and no longer obey Yahweh is spoken of as if the person's heart is lifted up. Alternate translation: "you will become prideful and no longer obey Yahweh"
Deuteronomy 8:13
Connecting Statement:
This verse describes the last three of the five things that might cause them to forget Yahweh. The first two are "you eat and are full" and "you build good houses and live in them" (Deuteronomy 8:12). The last three are "when your herds and flocks multiply," "when your silver and gold increase," and "all that you have is multiplied."
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
your herds and flocks
"your herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats"
multiply
increase greatly in number
all that you have is multiplied
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have many more things" or "you have many more possessions"
Deuteronomy 8:14
Connecting Statement:
This verse contains the first two of three items Moses warns the people to be careful of (Deuteronomy 8:11): that "your heart becomes lifted up" and "you forget Yahweh your God." It then lists the first of four characteristics of Yahweh that they need to remember, that Yahweh "brought you out of the land of Egypt."
your heart becomes lifted up
Here "heart" represents the inner person. To become prideful and no longer obey Yahweh is spoken of as if the person's heart is lifted up. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Deuteronomy 8:12]
who brought you out
Moses begins to remind the Israelites of what they know about Yahweh.
out of the house of bondage
This is a metaphor for the time they were slaves in Egypt. Alternate translation: "out from the place where you were slaves"
Deuteronomy 8:15
Connecting Statement:
This verse gives the second and third items in the list of characteristics that Moses reminds the Israelites that they must remember about "Yahweh your God" (Deuteronomy 8:14) the first being that he "brought you out of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 8:14). the second that he led them "through the ... wilderness," and the third that he "brought ... water out of the rock."
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one

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person.
Connecting Statement:
Moses continues to remind the Israelites of what they know about Yahweh
who led ... who brought
"Yahweh, who led ... Yahweh, who brought"
fiery serpents
"poisonous snakes"
thirsty ground
This phrase describes the ground as being thirsty just like a person is thirsty when he needs water. Alternate translation: "dry ground"
Deuteronomy 8:16
Connecting Statement:
This is the fourth item in the list of characteristics that Moses reminds the Israelites that they must remember about "Yahweh your God" (Deuteronomy 8:14) the first being that he "brought you out of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 8:14), the second that he led them "through the ... wilderness" (Deuteronomy 8:15), and the third that he "brought ... water out of the rock" (Deuteronomy 8:15).
He fed
Moses continues to remind the Israelites of what they know about Yahweh (Deuteronomy 8:14). "Yahweh fed"
to do you good
"to help you" or "because it would be good for you"
Deuteronomy 8:17
Connecting Statement:
This is the third item in the list of things that Yahweh warns the Israelites that they might do (Deuteronomy 8:11), the first being "your heart becomes lifted up" and the second being "you forget Yahweh your God" (Deuteronomy 8:14).
but you may say in your heart
This is the third thing the people might do when their hearts "become lifted up" and they "forget Yahweh"
My power and the might of my hand acquired all this wealth
Here "hand" refers to a man's power or ability. Alternate translation: "I got this wealth because I am so strong and powerful" or "I have acquired all these things by my own power and ability"
Deuteronomy 8:18
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
But you will call to mind
This idiom is a command. Alternate translation: "But remember"
that he may establish
Possible meanings are 1) "in this way he establishes" or 2) "in this way he is faithful to establish."
that he may
"so he can"
establish
cause to stand or to remain
as it is today
"as he is doing now" or "as he is establishing his covenant now"
Deuteronomy 8:19
walk after other gods
Walking is a metaphor for obeying. Alternate translation: "serve other gods"
against you ... you will
These instances of "you" are plural.
I testify against you
"I warn you" or "I tell you in front of witnesses"
you will surely perish
"you will certainly die"
Deuteronomy 8:20
before you ... you perish ... you would not ... your God
All these instances of "you" and "your" are plural.
before you
"in front of you"
would not listen to the voice of Yahweh
Here "the voice of Yahweh" means what Yahweh tells his people to do. Alternate translation: "would not obey Yahweh's commandments"

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9 [1]Hear, Israel; you are about to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, and cities that are great and fortified up to heaven,[2]a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard people say, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?'
[3]Know therefore today that Yahweh your God is he who goes over before you like a devouring fire; he will destroy them, and he will subdue them before you; so will you drive them out and make them to perish quickly, as Yahweh has said to you.
[4]Do not say in your heart, after Yahweh your God has thrust them out from before you, 'It was because of my righteousness that Yahweh has brought me in to possess this land,' for it was because of the wickedness of these nations that Yahweh is driving them out from before you.
[5]It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you are going in to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that your God is driving them out from before you, and so that he may make come true the word that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

[6]Know therefore, that Yahweh your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.
[7]Remember and do not forget how you provoked Yahweh your God to anger in the wilderness; from the day that you left the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against Yahweh.[8]Also at Horeb you provoked Yahweh to anger, and Yahweh was angry enough with you to destroy you.
[9]When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that Yahweh made with you, I stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water.[10]Yahweh gave to me the two

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tablets of stone written with his finger; on them was written everything just like all the words that Yahweh announced to you on the mountain out of the middle of the fire on the day of the assembly.
[11]It happened at the end of those forty days and forty nights that Yahweh gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.[12]Yahweh said to me, 'Arise, go down quickly from here, for your people, whom you brought out of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have quickly turned aside out of the path that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a cast figure.'
[13]Furthermore, Yahweh spoke to me and said, 'I have seen this people; they are a stubborn people.[14]Let me alone, so that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven, and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they.'
[15]So I turned around and came down the mountain, and the mountain was burning. The two tablets of the covenant were in my hands.[16]I looked, and behold, you had sinned against Yahweh your God. You had molded for yourselves a calf. You had quickly turned aside out of the path that Yahweh had commanded you.
[17]I took the two tablets and threw them out of my hands. I broke them before your eyes.[18]Again I lay facedown before Yahweh for forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all your sin that you had committed, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, so as to provoke him to anger.
[19]For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which Yahweh was angry enough against you to destroy you. But Yahweh listened to me that time also.[20]Yahweh was very angry with Aaron so as to destroy him; I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.
[21]I took your sin, the calf that you had made, and burned it, beat it, and crushed it and ground it very small, until it was as fine as dust. I threw its dust into the stream that came down from the mountain.

[22]At Taberah, at Massah, and at Kibroth Hattaavah, you provoked Yahweh to wrath.[23]When Yahweh sent you from Kadesh Barnea and said, 'Go up and take possession of the land that I have given you,' then you rebelled against the commandment of Yahweh your God, and you did not believe or listen to his voice.[24]You have been rebellious against Yahweh from the day that I knew you.

[25]So I lay facedown before Yahweh those forty days and forty nights, because he had said that he would destroy you.[26]I prayed to Yahweh and said, 'O Lord Yahweh, do not destroy your people or your inheritance whom you have redeemed through your greatness, which you have brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
[27]Call to mind your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; do not look at the stubbornness of this people, nor at their wickedness, nor at their sin,[28]so that the land from where you brought us should say, "Because Yahweh was not able to bring them into the land that he promised to them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness."[29]Yet they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out by your great strength and by the display of your power.'

Deuteronomy 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's victory

This chapter assures the Israelites that it is Yahweh who will empower them to conquer the Promised Land. The Israelites will not be strong enough on their own to conquer these other nations. This victory will be Yahweh's. The people did not earn this victory, but it is Yahweh's punishment of these sinful nations. (See: promisedland and sin)

Israel's sin

Yahweh is about to punish the Canaanites for their sin. He also reminds Israel of their sin. This serves as a warning to the people of Israel. If they sin again, Yahweh will punish them too.

Links:

Deuteronomy 9:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 9:1

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.

Hear, Israel

The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Listen, people of Israel"

to dispossess

"to take the land from"

fortified up to heaven

This is an exaggeration that emphasizes how frightened the people were because the cities were so large and strong. See how you translated similar words in [Deuteronomy 1:28]

Deuteronomy 9:2

sons of the Anakim

Descendants of the Anak people who were very large and fierce. See how you translated similar words in

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[Deuteronomy 1:28]
Who can stand before the sons of Anak?
This means that the sons of Anak were powerful and people were afraid of them. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one who can defend himself against the sons of Anak."
Deuteronomy 9:3
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
today
Moses is speaking of the days and weeks beginning on that day, not of the time since the sun had last set.
like a devouring fire
Yahweh is powerful and able to destroy the armies of the other nations.
subdue them before you
"make them weak so you can control them"
Deuteronomy 9:4
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Do not say in your heart
Here "in your heart" means "in your thoughts." Alternate translation: "Do not think to yourselves"
has thrust them out
"has driven the other peoples out"
Deuteronomy 9:5
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
the uprightness of your heart
This is an idiom. "because you always thought and desired the right things"
so that he may make come true the word
Here the metonym "the word" refers to what God has promised. Alternate translation: "so that he may fulfill the promise"
your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the "ancestors" of whom Moses is speaking.
Deuteronomy 9:6
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
a stiff-necked people
Stubborn people are spoken of as if they have stiff or hard necks that prevent them from turning their heads. Alternate translation: "stubborn people" or "people who refuse to change"
Deuteronomy 9:7
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Remember and do not forget
Moses repeats the same command both positively and negatively to emphasize the importance of remembering. The command is plural. Alternate translation: "Be careful to remember"
how you provoked Yahweh
Here "you" refers to the Israelites that are present with Moses and also the Israelites of the previous generation.
you came to this place, you have been rebellious
These instances of "you" are plural.
to this place
This refers to the Jordan River Valley.
Deuteronomy 9:8
you provoked ... with you to destroy you
These instances of "you" are plural.
Deuteronomy 9:9
General Information:
Moses is reminding the people of Israel what happened in the past.
the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that Yahweh made with you
Here the second phrase clarifies that "the tablets of stone" are the ones on which God wrote the Ten Commandments.
forty days and forty nights
"40 days and 40 nights"
Deuteronomy 9:10
on them was written everything just like all the words that Yahweh announced to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh wrote on them the same words he had said to you"
Yahweh announced ... out of the middle of the fire
It was as if Yahweh were a person standing in the middle of a fire and speaking with a loud voice.
on the day of the assembly
The abstract noun "assembly" can be expressed as the verb "gather together." Alternate translation: "on the day when you Israelites all came and met together in one place"
Deuteronomy 9:11
forty days and forty nights
"40 days and 40 nights"
the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant
The second phrase clarifies that "the two tablets of stone" are the ones on which God wrote the Ten Commandments.
Deuteronomy 9:12
your people ... have corrupted themselves
"your people ... are doing what is wrong." See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 4:16.
They have quickly turned aside out of the path that I commanded them
Moses speaks as if obeying God's commands were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "They have already disobeyed my commands"
Deuteronomy 9:14
blot out their name from under heaven
"make their name disappear completely" or "kill them all so no one will ever remember them." See how you translated a similar phrase in Deuteronomy 7:24.
Deuteronomy 9:15
General Information:
Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what happened in the past.
Deuteronomy 9:16
behold
The word "behold" here shows that Moses was surprised by

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what he saw.

molded for yourselves a calf

The Israelites of the earlier generation had asked Aaron to make a metal calf so they could worship it. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

You had quickly turned aside out of the path that Yahweh had commanded you

Moses speaks as if obeying God's commands were walking along a path. See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 9:12. Alternate translation: "You had quickly disobeyed what Yahweh had commanded you"

Deuteronomy 9:17

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.

I broke them before your eyes

Here "your eyes" is a synecdoche for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I broke them right in front of you" or "I broke them where you could see them"

Deuteronomy 9:18

lay facedown

"lay with my face on the ground." This is a way of showing that Yahweh was great and Moses was not.

forty days and forty nights

"40 days and 40 nights"

Deuteronomy 9:19

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel what happened in the past.

I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which Yahweh was angry enough against you to destroy you

The words "anger and hot displeasure" are a metonym for what Yahweh would do because he was angry and displeased. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was angry at you—he was extremely displeased with you—he was angry enough to destroy you, and so I was afraid of what he would do"

Deuteronomy 9:21

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.

I took ... burned ... beat ... ground ... threw

Moses probably commanded other men to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "I had people take ... burn ... beat ... grind ... throw"

your sin, the calf that you had made

Here the gold calf itself referred to as their "sin." Alternate translation: "the calf, which you sinfully made"

Deuteronomy 9:22

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the people of Israel about what happened in the past.

Taberah ... Massah ... Kibroth Hattaavah

These are names of places that the people of Israel went through while they were in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy 9:23

Go up

They were on low land, and the land Yahweh had told them to take was in the hills, so they had to go uphill to get to it.

rebelled against the commandment

The word "commandment" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "rebelled against Yahweh; you did not obey the commandment"

listen to his voice

Here "his voice" means what God had said. Alternate translation: "obey what he said"

Deuteronomy 9:24

from the day that I knew you

"from the time I began to lead you." Some translations read "from the day that he knew you," the day that Yahweh first knew them.

Deuteronomy 9:25

General Information:

Moses continues reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.

lay facedown before Yahweh

"lay with my face on the ground." See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 9:18.

forty days and forty nights

"40 days and 40 nights"

Deuteronomy 9:26

you have redeemed

Moses speaks as if Yahweh had rescued the Israelites by paying money to free them from slavery. Alternate translation: "you have rescued"

through your greatness

The word "greatness" is a metonym for Yahweh's great power. Alternate translation: "through your great power"

with a mighty hand

Here "a mighty hand" refers to Yahweh's power. See how you translated similar words in Deuteronomy 4:34. Alternate translation: "with your mighty power"

Deuteronomy 9:27

General Information:

Moses continues praying to Yahweh so that he may not destroy the people of Israel.

Call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Remember"

Deuteronomy 9:28

so that the land from where you brought us

The words "the land" are a metonym for the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "so that the people of Egypt"

should say

"can say"

Deuteronomy 9:29

by your great strength and by the display of your power

These phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of Yahweh's power that he used to rescue his people.

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10 [1]At that time Yahweh said to me, 'Carve two tablets of stone like the first, and come up to me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood.[2]I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets that you broke, and you will put them in the ark.'

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[3]So I made an ark of acacia wood, and I carved two tablets of stone like the first, and I went up the mountain, having the two tablets in my hand.[4]He wrote on the tablets, like the first writing, the Ten Commandments which Yahweh had spoken to you on the mountain out of the middle of the fire on the day of the assembly; then Yahweh gave them to me.
[5]I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark that I had made; there they are, as Yahweh commanded me."
[6](The people of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene Jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried; Eleazar, his son, served in the priest's office in his place.[7]From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of streams of water.
[8]At that time Yahweh chose the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, to stand before Yahweh to serve him, and to bless people in his name, as today.[9]Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance of land with his brothers; Yahweh is his inheritance, as Yahweh your God spoke to him.)
[10]"I stayed on the mountain as at the first time, forty days and forty nights. Yahweh listened to me that time also; Yahweh did not wish to destroy you.[11]Yahweh said to me, 'Arise, go before the people to lead them on their journey; they will go in and possess the land that I swore to their ancestors to give to them.'

[12]Now, Israel, what does Yahweh your God require of you, except to fear Yahweh your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, and to worship Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul,[13]to keep the commandments of Yahweh, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today for your own good?
[14]Behold, to Yahweh your God belongs heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is in them.[15]Only Yahweh took pleasure in your fathers so as to love them, and he chose you, their descendants, after them, more than any of the other peoples, as he does today.
[16]Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and no longer stiffen your necks.[17]For Yahweh your God, he is God of gods and Lord of lords, the Great God, the Mighty One and the Fearsome One, who favors no one and takes no bribes.
[18]He executes justice for the fatherless and widow, and he shows love for the foreigner by giving him food and clothing.
[19]Therefore love the foreigner; for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.
[20]You will fear Yahweh your God; him will you worship. To him you must cling, and by his name will you swear.[21]He is your praise, and he is your God, who has done for you these great and fearsome things, which your eyes have seen.
[22]Your fathers went down into Egypt as seventy persons; now Yahweh your God has made you as many as the stars of the heavens.

Deuteronomy 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter.
This chapter focuses on retelling the great things Yahweh has done. It is a continuation of the material from the previous chapter. It is possible that this is a type of sermon or homily, where Moses is giving the people instructions.

Links:

Deuteronomy 10:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 10:1
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the people of Israel about what happened in the past.
At that time
"After I finished praying"
the first
This refers to the first set of tablets that Moses had broken. Alternate translation: "the first two tablets"
the mountain
This refers to Mount Sinai.
Deuteronomy 10:3
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the people of Israel about what happened in the past.
the first
This refers to the first set of tablets that Moses had broken. Alternate translation: "the first tablets" or "the tablets I had before"
went up the mountain
"went up Mount Sinai"
Deuteronomy 10:4
out of the middle of the fire
It was as if Yahweh were a person standing in the middle of a fire and speaking with a loud voice. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 9:10.
on the day of the assembly
The abstract noun "assembly" can be expressed as the verb "gather together." See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 9:10. Alternate translation: "on the day when you Israelites all came and met together in one place"
Deuteronomy 10:5
General Information:
Moses continues to remind the people of Israel about what happened in the past.
I turned

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Here "I" refers to Moses.
came down from the mountain
"came down from Mount Sinai"
in the ark
"in the box" or "in the chest"
Deuteronomy 10:6
General Information:
The writer continues the short account of where the Israelites had traveled.
Beeroth Bene Jaakan ... Moserah
These are names of different places the people of Israel went through while in the wilderness.
Beeroth Bene Jaakan
Translator may add a footnote: "The name 'Beeroth Bene Jaakan' means 'the wells that belonged to the sons of Jaakan' or 'the wells that belonged to the people of Jaakan.'"
there he was buried
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that is where they buried him" or "the Israelites buried him there"
Eleazar
This is the name of Aaron's son.
Deuteronomy 10:7
From there they journeyed ... a land of streams of water
This continues the background information about where the people of Israel traveled.
Gudgodah ... Jotbathah
These are names of different places the people of Israel went through while in the wilderness.
Deuteronomy 10:8
General Information:
The writer begins to explain why the tribe of Levi has no inheritance in the land.
to stand before Yahweh to serve him
This is an idiom. "to offer the sacrifices that Yahweh requires"
in his name
Here "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "as representatives of Yahweh"
as today
"as they are doing today"
Deuteronomy 10:9
Connecting Statement:
The writer finishes explaining why the tribe of Levi has no inheritance in the land.
no portion nor inheritance of land
The tribe of Levi did not receive a portion of the promised land when they arrived there. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit.
Yahweh is his inheritance
Yahweh speaks of the special relationship that Aaron and his descendants will have with him as if Yahweh were something that they will inherit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is what they will have" or "Yahweh will allow them to serve him and he will provide for them through that service"
Yahweh your God
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "your" here is singular.
spoke to him
"spoke to the tribe of Levi"
Deuteronomy 10:10
General Information:
Moses resumes reminding the people of Israel about what happened in the past.
as at the first time
"first" is the ordinal number for one. Here it refers to the first time Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the stone tablets from Yahweh. "as I did the first time"
forty days and forty nights
"40 days and 40 nights"
destroy you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" here is singular.
Deuteronomy 10:11
possess the land
"take the land" or "take possession of the land"
their ancestors
This refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
to give to them
"that I would give to you, their descendants"
Deuteronomy 10:12
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Now, Israel
Here the metonym "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Now, people of Israel"
what does Yahweh your God require of you, except to fear ... with all your soul
Moses uses a question to teach the people of Israel. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God requires you to do no more than this: to fear ... with all your soul."
to walk in all his ways
Moses speaks as if obeying Yahweh were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "to obey all his commands"
with all your heart and with all your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated these two phrases in [Deuteronomy 4:29]
Deuteronomy 10:13
to keep the commandments ... for your own good?
Moses uses a question to teach the people of Israel. This rhetorical question begins with the words "what does Yahweh your God require of you, except to fear ... with all your soul" in verse 12. It can be translated as a statement. "Yahweh your God requires you to do no more than this: to fear ... with all your soul, to keep the commandments ... for your own good."
Deuteronomy 10:14
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they are one person.
Behold, to
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: to"
heaven ... earth

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These words show two extremes, and are combined to mean that all things everywhere belong to Yahweh.

the heaven of heavens

This refers to the highest places in the heavens. Everything in the heavens belong to God.

Deuteronomy 10:15

chose you

Here the word "you" refers to all the Israelites and is plural.

Deuteronomy 10:16

Therefore

"Because of this"

circumcise the foreskin of your heart

The word "foreskin" refers to the fold of skin on a man's private parts that is removed during circumcision. Here Moses is referring to a spiritual circumcision. This means the people must remove the sin from their lives.

no longer stiffen your necks

The phrase "stiffen your necks" is a metaphor that indicates that the people were stubborn, and God wanted them to stop being stubborn. Alternate translation: "stop being stubborn"

Deuteronomy 10:17

God of gods

"the supreme God" or "the only true God"

Lord of lords

"the supreme Lord" or "the greatest Lord"

the Fearsome One

"the one who causes people to fear"

Deuteronomy 10:18

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

He executes justice for the fatherless

"Yahweh makes sure that people treat the fatherless justly"

fatherless

These are children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.

widow

A true widow is a woman whose husband has died and has no children to care for her in her old age.

Deuteronomy 10:19

Therefore

"Because of this"

Deuteronomy 10:20

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

him will you worship

"he is the one you must worship"

To him you must cling

To have a good relationship with Yahweh and to completely rely on him is spoken of as if the person were clinging to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "You must rely on him" or "He is the one you must rely on"

by his name will you swear

To swear by the name of Yahweh means to make Yahweh the basis or the power on which the oath is made. Here "name" represents Yahweh himself. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Deuteronomy 6:13]

Deuteronomy 10:21

which your eyes have seen

Here "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "which you yourselves have seen"

He is your praise

Possible meanings are 1) "He is the one you must praise" or 2) "It is because you worship him that other peoples will praise you"

Deuteronomy 10:22

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they are one man, so "you" and "your" are singular.

went down into Egypt

"traveled south to Egypt" or "went to Egypt"

seventy persons

"70 persons"

as many as the stars of the heavens

This emphasizes the large number of Israelites that were with Moses. Alternate translation: "more than you can count"

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11 [1]Therefore you will love Yahweh your God and always keep his instructions, his statutes, his decrees, and his commandments.
[2]Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known nor have they seen the punishment of Yahweh your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, or his outstretched arm,[3]the signs and deeds that he did in the midst of Egypt to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and to all his land.
[4]Neither did they see what he did to the army of Egypt, to their horses, or to their chariots, how he made the water of the Sea of Reeds overwhelm them as they pursued after you, and how Yahweh has destroyed them until today,[5]or what he did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place.
[6]They had not seen what Yahweh had done to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab son of Reuben, how the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, their households, their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the middle of all Israel.[7]But your eyes have seen all the great works of Yahweh that he did.

[8]Therefore keep all the commandments that I am commanding you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land where you are going over to possess it,[9]and that you may prolong your days in the land that Yahweh swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.
[10]For the land, where you go in to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt, from where you came, where you sowed your seed and watered it with your foot, like a garden of herbs;[11]but the land, where you go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinks water of the rain of the heavens,[12]a land that Yahweh your God cares for; the eyes of Yahweh your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

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[13]It will happen, if you will listen diligently to my commandments that I command you today, to love Yahweh your God and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,[14]that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil.[15]I will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be full.
[16]Pay attention to yourselves so that your heart is not deceived, and you turn aside and worship other gods and bow down to them;[17]so that the anger of Yahweh is not kindled against you; and so that he does not shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain, and the land will not yield its fruit, and so that you perish quickly from off the good land that Yahweh is giving you.

[18]Therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and soul, bind them as a sign on your hand, and let them be as frontlets between your eyes.[19]You will teach them to your children and talk about them when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up.
[20]You will write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates,[21]that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that Yahweh swore to your ancestors to give them for as long as the heavens are above the earth.
[22]For if you diligently keep all these commandments that I am commanding you, so as to do them, to love Yahweh your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cling to him,[23]then Yahweh will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and mightier than yourselves.
[24]Every place where the sole of your foot will tread will be yours; from the wilderness to Lebanon, from the river, the Euphrates River, to the western sea will be your border.[25]No man will be able to stand before you. Yahweh your God will lay the fear of you and the terror of you upon all the land that you tread on, as he has said to you.

[26]Look, I set before you today a blessing and a curse:[27]the blessing, if you obey the commandments of Yahweh your God that I command you today,[28]and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of Yahweh your God, but turn aside from the way that I command you today, to go after other gods that you have not known.
[29]It will happen, when Yahweh your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, that you will set the blessing on Mount Gerizim, and the curse on Mount Ebal.[30]Are they not beyond the Jordan, west of the western road, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?
[31]For you are to cross over the Jordan to go in to possess the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, and you will possess it and live in it.[32]You will keep all the statutes and the decrees that I set before you today.

Deuteronomy 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Therefore

This chapter begins with the word "therefore," which looks back to the instructions Moses gave in the previous two chapters.

Special concepts in this chapter

Eyewitnesses

The instruction that Moses gives and the retelling of the great things Yahweh has done for Israel are very important. This is because the generation entering into the Promised Land did not witness many of these events. (See: testimony)

Covenant

This chapter is included in the covenant God made with Moses, even though it is not explicitly said.

Links:

Deuteronomy 11:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 11:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

always keep

"always obey"

Deuteronomy 11:2

who have not known nor have they seen

"who have not experienced"

his mighty hand, or his outstretched arm

Here "mighty hand" and "outstretched arm" are metaphors for Yahweh's power. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:34]

Deuteronomy 11:3

in the midst of Egypt

"in Egypt"

to all his land

Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "to all his people"

Deuteronomy 11:4

General Information:

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Moses continues speaking to the adult Israelites who were old enough to see what God did in Egypt.

Neither did they see what he did

"Neither did your children see what Yahweh did"

the army of Egypt

"the Egyptian soldiers"

they pursued after you

Here "you" means the Israelites who were alive about 40 years earlier.

Deuteronomy 11:5

to this place

This means the plain of the Jordan River Valley where Moses is speaking to them before they cross over into Canaan.

Deuteronomy 11:6

General Information:

Moses continues to remind the adults to teach their children God's mighty deeds.

Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab

Moses is referring to an event in the past when Dathan and Abiram rebelled against Moses and Aaron. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Dathan ... Abiram ... Eliab

These are names of men.

son of Reuben

"descendant of Reuben"

earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up

Yahweh causing the land to split open so that the people fell in is spoken of as if the land had a mouth and the ability to swallow people.

every living thing that followed them

This refers to their servants and animals.

in the middle of all Israel

This means all the people of Israel witnessed what happened to Dathan, Abiram, their families, and their possessions.

Deuteronomy 11:7

But your eyes have seen

Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "But you have seen"

Deuteronomy 11:8

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

possess the land

"take the land"

where you are going over to possess it

The phrase "are going over" is used because the people of Israel will have to cross the Jordan River to enter into Canaan.

Deuteronomy 11:9

prolong your days

Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

a land flowing with milk and honey

This is an idiom. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 6:3]

Deuteronomy 11:10

watered it with your foot

Possible meanings are 1) "foot" is a metonym that represents the hard work of walking to carry water to the fields. Alternate translation: "worked hard to water it" or 2) they would use their feet to turn a water wheel that supplied water to the fields.

garden of herbs

"vegetable garden" or "garden of vegetables"

Deuteronomy 11:11

drinks water of the rain of the heavens

The land receiving and absorbing a lot of rain is spoken of as if the land were drinking the water. Alternate translation: "the rain from the sky gives it plenty of water"

Deuteronomy 11:12

the eyes of Yahweh your God are always upon it

Here "eyes" represents attention and care. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God is always watching over it"

from the beginning of the year to the end of the year

Here the two extremes "beginning" and "end" are used together to mean the entire year. Alternate translation: "continuously throughout the entire year"

Deuteronomy 11:13

It will happen, if

This means that what Yahweh promises will happen if the Israelites obey his commands.

that I command

Here "I" refers to Moses.

with all your heart and with all your soul

The idiom "with all your heart" means "completely" and "with ... soul" means "with all your being." These two phrases have similar meanings. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:29]

Deuteronomy 11:14

I will give the rain of your land in its season

"I will cause it to rain on your land in the proper season"

I will give

Here "I" refers to Yahweh. This can be stated in the third person. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will give" or "He will give"

the former rain and the latter rain

This refers to rain at the beginning of the sowing season and rain for maturing the crops for harvest. Alternate translation: "the autumn rain and spring rain" or "the rain in the right seasons"

Deuteronomy 11:16

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Pay attention to yourselves

"Be careful" or "Beware"

so that your heart is not deceived

Here "heart" represents a person's desires or thoughts. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that your desires do not deceive you" or "so that you do not deceive yourself"

you turn aside and worship other gods

Rejecting Yahweh and worshiping other gods is spoken of as if the person would physically turn and go in a different direction away from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you start worshiping other gods"

Deuteronomy 11:17

so that the anger of Yahweh is not kindled against you

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God becoming angry is spoken of as if it were a fire that were starting. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that Yahweh does not become angry with you"

so that he does not shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain, and the land will not yield its fruit

God causing no rain to fall from the sky is spoken of as if he were closing the sky. Alternate translation: "so that he does not cause the rain to stop falling from the sky so that crops will not grow in the land"

Deuteronomy 11:18

lay up these words of mine in your heart and soul

A person always thinking about and considering what Moses commands is spoken of as if the heart and soul were a container and Moses's words were the content to fill the container. Alternate translation: "be very careful to remember these words that I am saying to you"

these words of mine

"these commands that I have given you"

your heart and soul

Here "heart" and "soul" represent a person's mind or thoughts.

bind them

"tie these words." This is a metonym that represents a person writing the words on a parchment, putting the parchment in a pouch, and tying the pouch. This metonymy in turn may be a metaphor meaning the people must be careful to obey Moses's commands. See how you translated similar phrases in [Deuteronomy 6:8]

as a sign on your hand

"as something to make you remember my laws"

let them be as frontlets between your eyes

"let my words be as as frontlets between your eyes." This is a metonym that represents a person writing Moses's words on parchement, putting the parchement in a pouch, and tying the pouch so it sits between his eyes. This metonymy in turn may be a metaphor that means the person must be careful to obey all of Moses's commands. See how you translated similar phrases in [Deuteronomy 6:8]

frontlets

ornaments a person wears on the forehead

Deuteronomy 11:19

when you sit in your house, when you walk on the road, when you lie down, and when you get up

Using the different places "in your house" and "on the road," and the opposites "when you lie down" and "get up," represent anywhere, anytime. The people of Israel were to discuss God's commandments and teach them to their children anytime and anywhere.

Deuteronomy 11:20

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

You will write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates

See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 6:9.

Deuteronomy 11:21

that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh may cause you and your children to live a long time"

to your ancestors

This refers to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

to give them for as long as the heavens are above the earth

This compares how long the people could stay in the land to how long the sky will exist above the earth. This is a way of saying "forever." Alternate translation: "to give them as a possession forever" or "to allow them to live there forever"

Deuteronomy 11:22

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

For if you diligently keep all these commandments that I am commanding you, so as to do them

"For if you are careful to do everything that I have commanded you"

walk in all his ways

How Yahweh wants a person to live and behave is spoken of as if they are Yahweh's ways or roads. A person obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if he were walking on Yahweh's ways or roads.

to cling to him

To have a good relationship with Yahweh and to completely rely on him is spoken of as if the person were clinging to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to rely on him" or "to have a good relationship with him" Look at how similar words are translated in Deuteronomy 10:20.

Deuteronomy 11:23

all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations

Here "nations" represent the people groups already living in Canaan. Alternate translation: "all of these people groups from before you, and you will take the land from people groups"

larger and mightier than yourselves

Although Israel's army is smaller and weaker than the people groups living in Canaan, Yahweh will enable the people of Israel to defeat them.

Deuteronomy 11:24

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Every place where the sole of your foot will tread

Here "the sole of your foot" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "Every place you go"

from the river, the Euphrates River

"from the Euphrates River"

Deuteronomy 11:25

No man will be able to stand before you

The phrase "stand before you" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "No one will be able to stop you" or "No one will be able to oppose you"

Yahweh your God will lay the fear of you and the terror of you upon all the land that you tread on

Yahweh causing the people to be very afraid is spoken of as if fear and terror were an object that he will place on the people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will cause the people in every place you go to be very afraid of you"

the fear of you and the terror of you

The words "fear" and "terror" mean the same thing and emphasize the intensity of fear. Alternate translation: "a terrible fear of you"

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upon all the land that you tread on
Here "the land" is a metonym for all the people in the land. Alternate translation: "upon all the people in every place you go"
Deuteronomy 11:26
General Information:
Here Moses summarizes the two options the people of Israel could choose. They could choose to obey and receive God's blessing or they could choose to disobey and receive God's punishment.
Look
"Pay attention"
I set before you today a blessing and a curse
Allowing the people to choose whether they want God to bless them or curse them is spoken of as if a blessing and a curse were objects that Moses is setting in front of them. Alternate translation: "Today you must choose whether God will bless you or curse you"
Deuteronomy 11:27
the blessing, if you obey
The abstract noun "blessing" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "God will bless you if you obey"
Deuteronomy 11:28
but turn aside from the way that I command you today, to go after other gods
The commands of Yahweh that Moses is telling the people are spoken of as if they were God's way or road. To not obey God's commands is spoken of as if people physically were to turn in another direction away from Yahweh to follow other gods. Alternate translation: "but stop obeying what I command you today, in order to worship other gods"
other gods that you have not known
This refers to the gods that other people groups worship. The Israelites know Yahweh because he has revealed himself to them and they have experienced his power.
Deuteronomy 11:29
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
you will set the blessing on Mount Gerizim, and the curse on Mount Ebal
The blessing and the curse are spoken of as if they were objects that someone will set on the mountains. Alternate translation: "some of you must stand on top of Mount Gerazim and proclaim what will cause Yahweh to bless you, and the others must stand on top of Mount Ebal and proclaim what will cause Yahweh to curse you"
Mount Gerizim ... Mount Ebal
These are names of mountains on the west side of the Jordan River.
Deuteronomy 11:30
Are they not beyond the Jordan ... Moreh?
The Israelites are on the eastern side of the Jordan River. Moses uses a question to remind the people where these mountains are located. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "As you know, they are beyond the Jordan ... Moreh."
beyond the Jordan
"on the west side of the Jordan River"
west of the western road
"in the west"
over against Gilgal
"near Gilgal" This may not be the same place as the city near Jericho. Moses may be referring to a place that is near Shechem.
oaks of Moreh
These are sacred trees near Gilgal.
Deuteronomy 11:31
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 11:32
all the statutes and the decrees
These are the statutes and decrees Moses will give in Deuteronomy 12-26.
I set before you today
This does not mean these are new. Moses is reviewing the same statutes and decrees that he gave 40 years earlier.
I set before you
God's statutes and decrees, which Moses is telling the people, are spoken of as if they were objects that Moses is setting before the people. Alternate translation: "I am giving to you"

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12 [1]These are the statutes and the decrees that you will keep in the land that Yahweh, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.[2]You will surely destroy all the places where the nations that you will dispossess worshiped their gods, on the high mountains, on the hills, and under every green tree.
[3]You must break down their altars, dash in pieces their stone pillars, and burn their Asherah poles. You must cut down the carved figures of their gods and destroy their name out of that place.[4]You will not worship Yahweh your God like that.
[5]But to the place where Yahweh your God chooses out of all your tribes to establish his name, that will be the place where he lives, and it is there that you will go.[6]It is there that you will bring your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, and the offerings presented by your hand, your offerings for vows, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.
[7]It is there that you will eat before Yahweh your God and rejoice about everything that you have put your hand to, you and your households, where Yahweh your God has blessed you.
[8]You will not do all the things that we are doing here today; now everyone is doing whatever is right in his own eyes;[9]for you have not yet come to the rest, to the inheritance that Yahweh your God is giving you.
[10]But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit, he will give you rest from all your enemies round about so that you live in safety.[11]Then to the place where Yahweh your God will choose to cause his name to live there—there you will bring everything I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, and the offerings presented by your hand, and all your choice offerings for vows that you will vow to Yahweh.

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[12]You will rejoice before Yahweh your God—you, your sons, your daughters, your male servants, your female servants, and the Levites who are within your gate, because he has no portion or inheritance among you.
[13]Pay attention to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings at every place that you see;[14]but it is at the place that Yahweh will choose among one of your tribes that you will offer your burnt offerings, and there you will do everything that I command you.

[15]However, you may kill and eat animals within all your gates, as you desire, receiving the blessing of Yahweh your God for all that he has given you; the unclean and the clean persons both may eat of it, animals such as the gazelle and the deer.[16]But you will not eat the blood; you will pour it out on the earth like water.
[17]You must not eat within your gates from the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, or the firstborn of your herd or flock; and you must not eat any of the meat you sacrifice along with any of your vows that you make, nor that of your freewill offerings, nor that of the offering you present with your hand.
[18]Instead, you will eat them before Yahweh your God in the place that Yahweh your God will choose—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; you will rejoice before Yahweh your God about everything to which you put your hand.[19]Pay attention to yourself so that you do not abandon the Levite as long as you live on your land.

[20]When Yahweh your God enlarges your borders, as he has promised you, and you say, 'I will eat flesh,' because of your desire to eat meat, you may eat meat, as your soul desires.
[21]If the place where Yahweh your God chooses to establish his name is too far from you, then you will kill some of your herd and your flock that Yahweh has given you, as I have commanded you; you may eat within your gates, as your soul desires.[22]Like the gazelle and the deer are eaten, so you will eat of it; the unclean and the clean persons may eat of it alike.
[23]Only be sure that you do not consume the blood, for the blood is the life; you will not eat the life with the meat.[24]You will not eat it; you will pour it out on the earth like water.[25]You will not eat it, so that it may go well with you, and with your children after you, when you will do what is right in the eyes of Yahweh.
[26]But the things that belong to Yahweh that you have and the offerings for your vows—you will take these and go to the place that Yahweh chooses.[27]There you will offer your burnt offerings, the meat and the blood, on the altar of Yahweh your God; the blood of your sacrifices will be poured out on the altar of Yahweh your God, and you will eat the flesh.
[28]Observe and listen to all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the eyes of Yahweh your God.

[29]When Yahweh your God cuts off the nations from before you, when you go in to dispossess them, and you dispossess them, and live in their land,[30]pay attention to yourself that you are not trapped into following them, after they are destroyed from before you—trapped into investigating their gods, into asking, 'How do these nations worship their gods? I will do the same.'
[31]You must not worship Yahweh your God in that way, for everything that is an abomination to Yahweh, things that he hates—they have done these with their gods; they even burn their sons and their daughters in fire for their gods.
[32]Whatever I command you, observe it. Do not add to it or take away from it.

Deuteronomy 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant with Moses
This chapter is a continuation of the covenant Yahweh made with Moses. The reasons for these food restrictions are not always known.
Israel and Yahweh
In the ancient Near East, when nations conquered other nations, they often added the gods of the conquered nation into their collection of gods they worshiped. It was rare to worship only one God. Israel was to be known for worshiping Yahweh and Yahweh alone. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Deuteronomy 12:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 12:1
General Information:
Moses is still talking to the people of Israel.
you will keep
"you must obey"
all the days that you live on the earth
The phrase "live on the earth" is an idiom that means as long as a person lives. Alternate translation: "for as long as you live"
Deuteronomy 12:2

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You will surely destroy
"You must destroy"
the nations that you will dispossess
Here "nations" represents the people groups that live in Canaan. Alternate translation: "the people groups whose land you will take"
Deuteronomy 12:3
General Information:
Moses is still talking to the people of Israel.
You must break down their altars
"you must pull apart the altars of those nations" or "you must destroy the altars of those nations"
dash in pieces
"break into pieces" or "shatter"
destroy their name
Here "their name" represents "the memory of them." Alternate translation: "destroy them so completely that no one will remember them" or "destroy anything that represents these false gods"
that place
This refers to each place where the nations worshiped their gods.
Deuteronomy 12:4
You will not worship Yahweh your God like that
"You should not worship Yahweh your God like those nations worshiped their gods"
Deuteronomy 12:5
to establish his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. Alternate translation: "to have his people build the place where they will worship him"
it is there that you will go
They will go to worship where God decides.
Deuteronomy 12:6
the offerings presented by your hand
Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "the offerings that you present"
your offerings for vows, your freewill offerings
"your offerings to fulfill a vow, your voluntary offerings." These are types of offerings.
the firstborn of your herds and flocks
God requires that the people give him every firstborn male of their livestock.
Deuteronomy 12:7
It is there
This refers to the place that Yahweh will choose for the children of Israel to worship.
rejoice about everything that you have put your hand to
Here "put your hand to" represents the whole person and work that he has done. Alternate translation: "rejoice about all the work you have done"
Deuteronomy 12:8
You will not do all the things that we are doing here today
"You will not do as we are doing here today." This means that they would worship in the promised land differently than the way they were worshiping at that moment.
now everyone is doing whatever is right in his own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "everyone is doing what he considers to be right" or "now everyone is doing what he judges to be right"
Deuteronomy 12:9
to the rest
The abstract noun "the rest" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "to the land where you will rest"
to the inheritance that Yahweh your God is giving you
The land that God is giving to the people of Israel is spoken of as if it were a possession that a father leaves as an inheritance for his children. Alternate translation: "to the land that Yahweh your God is giving to you as a permanent possession"
Deuteronomy 12:10
live in the land
This refers to the land of Canaan.
in the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit
God giving the land of Canaan to the people of Israel is spoken of as if he were a father giving an inheritance to his children.
he will give you rest from all your enemies round about
"he will give you peace from all your enemies around you"
Deuteronomy 12:11
the offerings presented by your hand
Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "the offerings that you present"
all your choice offerings for vows
"all your voluntary offerings to fulfill vows"
Deuteronomy 12:12
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
rejoice before Yahweh
"rejoice in the presence of Yahweh"
the Levites who are within your gate
Here "gates" is a reference to the city itself. Alternate translation: "the Levites who live inside your city" or "the Levites living with you"
because he has no portion or inheritance among you
The fact that Yahweh would not give any of the land to the Levites is spoken of as if a father were not giving them an inheritance.
he has no portion
Here "he" refers to Levi. Levi represents all of his descendants. Alternate translation: "they have no portion"
Deuteronomy 12:13
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Pay attention to yourself
"Be careful"
every place that you see
"any place that pleases you" or "wherever you want"
Deuteronomy 12:14
but it is at the place that Yahweh will choose
The burnt offerings are to be made at the tabernacle. Yahweh himself would choose where the tabernacle would be located.
Deuteronomy 12:15
However, you may kill and eat animals within all your gates
The people could only kill animals as sacrifices in the place

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that Yahweh would choose. They could kill animals for food anywhere they wanted. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

within all your gates

Here "gates" represents the whole city. Alternate translation: "inside your city" or "at your homes"

the unclean ... persons

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

the clean persons

A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

the gazelle and the deer

These are wild animals with long thin legs that can run quickly. Alternate translation: "the antelope and the deer"

Deuteronomy 12:16

But you will not eat the blood

The blood represents life and God did not allow the people to eat the blood along with the meat. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Deuteronomy 12:17

General Information:

Moses describes to the people all the special offerings and sacrifices that are to be made at the tabernacle.

within your gates

Here "gates" represents the whole city. Alternate translation: "inside your city" or "at your homes"

nor that of the offering you present with your hand

Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "nor that of any offering which you bring to Yahweh"

Deuteronomy 12:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

you will eat them

"you will eat your offerings"

before Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh

the Levite who is within your gates

Here "gate" represents the whole city. Alternate translation: "any Levite who lives inside your city"

everything to which you put your hand

Here "put your hand to" represents the whole person and work that he has done. Alternate translation: "rejoice about all the work you do"

Deuteronomy 12:19

Pay attention to yourself

"Be careful"

that you do not abandon the Levite

"that you take good care of the Levite"

Deuteronomy 12:20

enlarges your borders

"enlarges your territory" or "gives you even more land"

you say, 'I will eat flesh,' because of your desire to eat meat

This is a quotation within a quotation. This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "and you decide that you want to eat meat"

as your soul desires

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "as you want" or "as you crave"

Deuteronomy 12:21

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

to establish his name

Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 12:5]

within your gates

Here "gates" represents the whole city." Alternate translation: "inside your city" or "within your community"

as your soul desires

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "as you desire"

Deuteronomy 12:22

Like the gazelle and the deer are eaten

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Just like you eat the gazelle and the deer"

gazelle and the deer

These are wild animals with long thin legs that can run quickly. See how you translated these in Deuteronomy 12:15.

the unclean ... persons

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

the clean persons

A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

Deuteronomy 12:23

the blood is the life

Here the way that blood sustains life is spoken of as if the blood were life itself. Alternate translation: "the blood sustains life" or "the blood causes animals and people to live"

you will not eat the life with the meat

The word "life" here represents the blood that sustains life. Alternate translation: "You will not eat what sustains life with the meat" or "you will not eat the blood, which sustains life, with the meat"

Deuteronomy 12:25

what is right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what is right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"

Deuteronomy 12:27

the blood of your sacrifices will be poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priest will pour out the blood of the sacrifice"

you will eat the flesh

God's law specifies which parts of the animal are for the burnt offering, which parts are for the priest and which parts are for the offerer to eat. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "you will eat some of the meat"

Deuteronomy 12:28

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Observe and listen to all these words that I command you

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"Carefully listen to and obey everything that I am commanding you"

that it may go well with you and with your children after you

Here "children" means all of their descendants. Alternate translation: "that you and your descendants may prosper"

when you do what is good and right

The words "good" and "right" have similar meanings and emphasize the importance of right behavior. Alternate translation: "when you do what is right"

what is good and right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what is good and right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be good and right"

Deuteronomy 12:29

cuts off the nations

Yahweh destroying the people groups in Canaan is spoken of as if he were cutting them off, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree.

the nations

Here "nations" represents the people living in Canaan.

when you go in to dispossess them, and you dispossess them

"when you take everything from them"

Deuteronomy 12:30

pay attention to yourself

"be careful"

that you are not trapped into following them ... trapped into investigating their gods, into asking

A person learning about and worshiping other gods is spoken of as if they are caught in a hunter's trap. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you do not act like them ... that you do try to learn about their gods, asking"

not trapped into following them

The Israelites worshiping idols as the people groups of Canaan worship idols is spoken of as if the Israelites were following behind the other people groups.

after they are destroyed from before you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after Yahweh destroys them before you"

into asking, 'How do these nations worship their gods? I will do the same.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "into asking about how those people groups worship their gods so that you can do the same."

Deuteronomy 12:32

Do not add to it or take away from it

They are not to create more laws nor are they to ignore laws that God has given them.

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13 [1]If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and if he gives you a sign or a wonder,[2]and if the sign or the wonder comes about, of which he spoke to you and said, 'Let us go after other gods, that you have not known, and let us worship them,'[3]do not listen to the words of that prophet, or to that dreamer of dreams; for Yahweh your God is testing you to know whether you love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul.
[4]You will walk after Yahweh your God, honor him, keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you will worship him and cling to him.[5]That prophet or that dreamer of dreams will be put to death, because he has spoken rebellion against Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and who redeemed you out of the house of bondage. That prophet wants to draw you out of the way in which Yahweh your God commanded you to walk. So completely remove the evil from among you.

[6]Suppose that your brother, the son of your mother, or your son, or your daughter, or the wife of your bosom, or your friend who is to you like your own soul, secretly entices you and says, 'Let us go and worship other gods' which you have not known, neither you nor your ancestors—[7]any of the gods of the peoples that are round about you, near to you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth.'
[8]You must not give in to him or listen to him, and you must not permit your eye to pity him, and you must not spare him or conceal him.[9]Instead, you will surely kill him; your hand will be the first on him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.
[10]You will stone him to death with stones, because he has tried to draw you away from Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.[11]All Israel will hear and fear, and will not continue to do this kind of wickedness among you.

[12]If you hear anyone say about one of your cities, that Yahweh your God gives you to live in:[13]Some wicked fellows have gone out from among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city and said, 'Let us go and worship other gods that you have not known.'[14]Then you will examine the evidence, make search, and investigate it thoroughly. When you discover that it is true and certain that such an abominable thing has been done among you, then you will take action.
[15]You will surely attack the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, completely destroy it and all the people who are in it, along with its livestock, with the edge of the sword.[16]You will gather all the spoil from it into the middle of its street and will burn the city, as well as all its booty, as a burnt offering for Yahweh your God. The city will be a heap of ruins forever; it must never be built again.
[17]None of those things set apart for destruction must stick in your hand. This must be the case, so that Yahweh will turn from the burning of his anger, show you mercy, have compassion on you, and make you increase in numbers, as he has sworn to your fathers.[18]He will do this because you are listening to the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep all his commandments that I am commanding you today, to do that which is right in the eyes of Yahweh your God.

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Deuteronomy 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Worshiping other gods

The people were required to listen to Yahweh's prophets unless they were encouraging the people to worship other gods. The punishment for anyone leading the people to worship other gods was death. These instructions were to keep Israel's worship of Yahweh pure. (See: prophet and falsegod and purify)

Links:

Deuteronomy 13:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 13:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

If there arises among you

"If there appears among you" or "If someone among you claims to be"

a dreamer of dreams

This is someone who receives messages from God through dreams.

a sign or a wonder

These two words have similar meanings and refer to various miracles.

Deuteronomy 13:2

comes about

"takes place" or "happens"

of which he spoke to you and said, 'Let us go after other gods, that you have not known, and let us worship them,'

This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "and he tells you to serve and worship other gods which you have not known,"

Let us go after other gods

Worshiping other gods is spoken of as if they were going after or following other gods. Alternate translation: "Let us follow other gods"

go after other gods, that you have not known

The phrase "gods, that you have not known" refers to the gods that other people groups worship. The Israelites know Yahweh because he has revealed himself to them and they have experienced his power.

Deuteronomy 13:3

do not listen to the words of that prophet, or to that dreamer of dreams

"do not listen to what that prophet say nor to what the dreamer of dreams says"

with all your heart and with all your soul

Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:29]

Deuteronomy 13:4

You will walk after Yahweh your God

Obeying and worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if the people were walking after or following Yahweh. Alternate translation: "You will obey Yahweh"

obey his voice

Here "voice" represents what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "obey what he says"

cling to him

To have a good relationship with Yahweh and to completely rely on him is spoken of as if the person were clinging to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "rely on him"

Deuteronomy 13:5

will be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must kill"

he has spoken rebellion

The abstract noun "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he has tried to make you rebel"

who redeemed you out of the house of bondage

Yahweh rescuing the people of Israel from being slaves in Egypt is spoken of as if Yahweh paid money to redeem his people out of slavery. Alternate translation: "who rescued you out of the place where you were slaves"

the house of bondage

Here "house of bondage" represents Egypt where the people of Yahweh had been slaves. Alternate translation: "Egypt where you were slaves"

draw you out of the way in which Yahweh your God commanded you to walk

How God wants a person to live or behave is spoken of as if it were a way or road on which God wants his people to walk. A person trying to cause someone else to stop obeying God is spoken of as if the person were trying to get the other person to stop walking on God's way or road. Alternate translation: "make you disobey what Yahweh your God commanded"

So completely remove the evil from among you

Here "the evil" refers to the evil person or the evil behavior. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "So you must remove from among the people of Israel the person who does this evil thing" or "So you must kill this evil person"

Deuteronomy 13:6

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

wife of your bosom

A bosom is a person's chest. This is a idiom with the image of him holding her close to his chest; this means that he loves and cherishes her. Alternate translation: "wife you love" or "wife you dearly embrace"

bosom

chest, shoulders, and arms

your friend who is to you like your own soul

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Here "soul" represents the person's life. This means the person cares for his friend as much as he cares for his own life. Alternate translation: "your dearest friend" or "a friend you love as much as you love yourself"

secretly entices you and says, 'Let us go and worship other gods' which you have not known

The words "Let us go and worship other gods" are a direct quote. The words "which you have not known" describe the other gods, but they are not part of the quote. In some languages, it might be more natural to use an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "secretly entices you to go and worship other gods which you have not known"

Deuteronomy 13:7

that are round about you

"that are around you." These words describe the peoples.

from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth

Here the reference to the two extremes of the earth means "everywhere on earth." Alternate translation: "throughout the entire earth"

Deuteronomy 13:8

You must not give in to him

"Do not agree to what he wants"

you must not permit your eye to pity him

Here "your eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "you msut not look at him with pity" or "you must not show him mercy"

you must not spare him or conceal him

"you must not show him mercy or hide from others what he has done"

Deuteronomy 13:9

your hand will be the first on him to put him to death

This means that he was to throw the first stone at the guilty person. The word "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "you must be the first to strike him to kill him"

the hand of all the people

Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "the other people will join you"

Deuteronomy 13:10

he has tried to draw you away from Yahweh

"to turn you away from Yahweh." A person trying to cause someone else to stop obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if the person were trying to cause someone to physically turn around and leave Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he has tried to make you disobey Yahweh"

out of the house of bondage

Here "house of bondage" represents Egypt where the people of Yahweh had been slaves. Alternate translation: "out from the place where you were slaves"

Deuteronomy 13:11

All Israel will hear and fear

It is implied that when the people hear about the person who was executed, they will be afraid to act like he did.

Deuteronomy 13:12

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 13:13

Some wicked fellows have gone out from among you

The phrase "from among you" means that these wicked men were Israelites who lived in their communities.

have drawn away the inhabitants of their city and said, 'Let us go and worship other gods that you have not known.'

This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "have persuaded those who live in their city to go and worship other gods that they have not known."

have drawn away the inhabitants of their city

A person causing someone else to stop obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if the person has caused the other person to physically turn and leave Yahweh.

Deuteronomy 13:14

examine the evidence, make search, and investigate it thoroughly

All of these phrases mean basically the same thing. Moses is emphasizing that they must carefully find out what truly happened at the city.

that such an abominable thing has been done among you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people of the city have done such a terrible thing"

Deuteronomy 13:15

with the edge of the sword

Here "edge" represents the whole sword. Alternate translation: "with your swords"

Deuteronomy 13:16

all the spoil

"all the plunder." This refers to the possessions and treasures that an army collects after winning a battle.

heap of ruins

"pile of ruins"

it must never be built again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one must ever rebuild the city"

Deuteronomy 13:17

None of those things set apart for destruction must stick in your hand

Yahweh cursing something and promising to destroy it is spoken of as if Yahweh were setting the object apart from other things. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not keep any of the things God has commanded you to destroy"

must stick in your hand

This is a way of saying a person keeps something. Alternate translation: "must you keep"

Yahweh will turn from the burning of his anger

Yahweh no longer being angry is spoken of as his anger were an object and Yahweh physically turns away from it. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will stop being angry"

to your fathers

Here "fathers" means ancestors or forefathers.

Deuteronomy 13:18

you are listening to the voice of Yahweh

Here "voice" represents what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "you are obeying what Yahweh says"

that which is right in the eyes of Yahweh your God

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "that which is right in Yahweh's judgment" or "that which Yahweh your God considers to be right"

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14 [1]You are the people of Yahweh your God. Do not cut yourselves, nor shave any part of your face for the dead.[2]For you are a nation that is set apart to Yahweh your God, and Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, more than all peoples that are on the surface of the earth.

[3]You must not eat any abominable thing.[4]These are the animals that you may eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,[5]the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, and ibex, and the antelope, and the mountain sheep.
[6]You may eat any animals that parts the hoof, that is, that has the hoof divided in two, and that chews the cud.
[7]Nevertheless, you must not eat some animals that chew the cud or that have the hoof divided in two: the camel, the rabbit, and the rock badger; because they chew the cud but do not part the hoof, they are unclean to you.
[8]The pig is unclean to you as well because he parts the hoof but does not chew the cud; he is unclean to you. Do not eat pig meat, and do not touch their carcasses.

[9]Of these things that are in water you may eat: whatever has fins and scales;[10]but whatever has no fins and scales you must not eat; they are unclean to you.

[11]All clean birds you may eat.[12]But these are the birds that you must not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey,[13]the red kite and black kite, any kind of falcon.
[14]You must not eat any kind of raven,[15]and the ostrich, and the night hawk, the sea gull, any kind of hawk,[16]the little owl, the great owl, the white owl,[17]the pelican, the osprey, the cormorant.
[18]You must not eat the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat.[19]All winged, swarming things are unclean to you; they must not be eaten.[20]You may eat all clean flying things.

[21]You must not eat of anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the foreigner who is within your gates, that he may eat it; or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a nation that is set apart to Yahweh your God. You must not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

[22]You must surely tithe all the yield of your seed, that which comes out from the field year after year.[23]You must eat before Yahweh your God, in the place where he will choose to make a dwelling for his name, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and your flock; that you may learn to always honor Yahweh your God.
[24]If the journey is too long for you so that you are not able to carry it, because the place where Yahweh your God will choose to establish his name is too far from you, then, when Yahweh God blesses you,[25]you will convert the offering into money, tie up the money in your hand, and go to the place that Yahweh your God will choose.
[26]There you will spend the money for whatever you desire: cattle, sheep, wine or strong drink, or for whatever you desire. Then you will eat there before Yahweh your God and rejoice, you and your household.[27]The Levite who is within your gates—do not abandon him, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.

[28]At the end of every three years you will present all the tithe of your produce in the same year, and you will store it up within your gates;[29]and the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the foreigner, and the fatherless, and the widow who are within your gates, will come and eat and be satisfied. Do this so that Yahweh your God may bless you in all the work of your hand that you do.

Deuteronomy 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Law of Moses

This chapter is part of the law of Moses, which is part of the covenant Yahweh made with Moses. (See: lawofmoses)

Clean animals

There are animals which the law considered to be clean and unclean. The people were not allowed to eat the unclean animals. Scholars are uncertain about the reasons for the animals to be considered to be clean or unclean. The result of these food restrictions was a nation that was different than the nations surrounding it. (See: clean)

Links:

Deuteronomy 14:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 14:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

You are the people

All occurrences of "you" refer to the people of Israel. Moses was included as a part of the people. Alternate translation:

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"We are the people"

Do not cut yourselves, nor shave any part of your face for the dead

These were ways the people groups living in Canaan showed that they were grieving over people who had died. Moses is telling the people of Israel not to act like them. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

nor shave any part of your face

"nor shave the front of your head"

Deuteronomy 14:2

you are a nation ... has chosen you

All occurrences of "you" refer to the people of Israel. Moses was included as a part of the people. Alternate translation: "we are a nation ... has chosen us"

For you are a nation ... surface of the earth

See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 7:6.

you are a nation that is set apart to Yahweh your God

Yahweh choosing the people of Israel to belong to him in a special way is spoken of as if Yahweh set them apart from all other nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God has set you apart from other nations"

Yahweh has chosen you to be a people for his own possession

This means basically the same thing as the first part of the sentence. They both mean that the people of Israel belong to Yahweh in a special way.

a people for his own possession

"a people for his treasured possession" or "his people"

more than all peoples that are on the surface of the earth

"out of all the people groups in the world"

Deuteronomy 14:3

You must not eat any abominable thing

The people of Israel were not supposed to eat anything that God said was unfit for eating.

Deuteronomy 14:5

the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck

These are all types of deer. If your language does not have a word for each animal it can be translated as "all kinds of deer."

the gazelle

This is wild animal with long thin legs that can run quickly. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 12:15.

the roebuck

a type of deer

ibex, and the antelope

Both of these are types of antelope. If your language does not have a word for each animal it can be translated as "all kinds of antelope."

ibex

a type of antelope

Deuteronomy 14:6

that parts the hoof

"that have split hooves." This is a hoof that is split into two parts instead of being one whole.

chews the cud

This means the animal brings its food up from its stomach and chews it again.

Deuteronomy 14:7

rabbit

This is a small animal with long ears that usually lives in holes in the ground.

rock badger

This is a small animal that lives in rocky places.

they are unclean to you

Something Yahweh says is unfit for his people to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

Deuteronomy 14:8

The pig is unclean to you

Something Yahweh says is unfit for his people to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

Deuteronomy 14:9

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Of these things that are in water you may eat

"You may eat these kinds of animals that live in the water"

fins

the thin, flat part which the fish uses to move through the water

scales

the small plates that cover the body of the fish

Deuteronomy 14:10

they are unclean to you

Something Yahweh says is unfit for his people to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

Deuteronomy 14:11

All clean birds

An animal that God says is fit for his people to eat is spoken of as if the animal were physically clean.

Deuteronomy 14:12

eagle ... vulture ... osprey

These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on small animals and dead animals.

Deuteronomy 14:13

red kite ... black kite ... falcon

These are birds that are either awake at night or feed on small animals and dead animals.

Deuteronomy 14:14

raven

A bird that either is awake at night or feeds on small animals and dead animals.

Deuteronomy 14:17

cormorant

A bird that is either awake at night or feeds on small animals and dead animals.

Deuteronomy 14:18

stork ... heron, the hoopoe

These are types of birds that eat small animals and lizards.

the bat

animal with wings and furry body which is awake mainly at night and eats insects and rodents

Deuteronomy 14:19

All winged, swarming things

This means all flying insects that move in large groups.

are unclean to you

Animals that God says are unfit for his people to eat are spoken of as if the animals are physically unclean.

they must not be eaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must not eat them"

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Deuteronomy 14:20
all clean flying things
Animals that God says are fit for his people to eat are spoken of as if the animals are physically clean.
Deuteronomy 14:21
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
anything that dies of itself
This means an animal that dies a natural death.
is within your gates
The word "gates" here is a metonym for the towns inside the gates. Alternate translation: "lives in your towns"
For you are a nation that is set apart to Yahweh your God
Yahweh choosing the people of Israel to belong to him in a special way is spoken of as if Yahweh set them apart from all other nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh your God has set you apart from other nations"
Deuteronomy 14:22
tithe all the yield of your seed
This means they are to give one part out of every ten equal parts from their crops.
year after year
"every year"
Deuteronomy 14:23
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh"
make a dwelling for his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. Alternate translation: "have his people build the place where they will worship him"
Deuteronomy 14:24
carry it
Here "it" refers to the tithe of crops and livestock.
to establish his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 12:5]
Deuteronomy 14:25
you will convert the offering into money
"you will sell your offering for money"
tie up the money in your hand, and go
"put the money in a bag and take it with you"
Deuteronomy 14:26
for whatever you desire
"for whatever you want"
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh"
Deuteronomy 14:27
do not abandon him
"make sure to take care of him"
for he has no portion nor inheritance with you
The tribe of Levi did not receive a portion of land as their inheritance. Their share of the inheritance was the honor of serving Yahweh as his priests. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.
no portion nor inheritance with you
God not giving land to the Levites is spoken of as if he were not giving them an inheritance.
Deuteronomy 14:28
every three years you will present all the tithe of your produce
Once every 3 years the Israelites were to store their tithes within their own towns so that it would be used to provide for the Levites, orphans, widows and foreigners.
within your gates
Here "gates" represents the entire city or town. Alternate translation: "inside your city"
Deuteronomy 14:29
because he has no portion nor inheritance with you
God not giving any land to the Levites is spoken of as if he were not giving them an inheritance.
fatherless
These are children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.
widow
This is a woman whose husband has died and has no children to care for her in her old age.
in all the work of your hand that you do
Here "hand" represents the whole person. This refers to the work that someone does. Alternate translation: "in all the work you do"

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15 [1]At the end of every seven years, you must cancel debts.[2]This is the manner of the release: Every creditor will cancel that which he has lent to his neighbor; he will not demand it from his neighbor or his brother because Yahweh's cancellation of debts has been proclaimed.[3]From a foreigner you may demand it; but whatever of yours is with your brother your hand must release.
[4]However, there should be no poor among you (for Yahweh will surely bless you in the land that he gives you as an inheritance to possess),[5]if only you diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep all these commandments that I am commanding you today.[6]For Yahweh your God will bless you, as he promised you; you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

[7]If there is a poor man among you, one of your brothers, within any of your gates in your land that Yahweh your God is giving you, you must not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother;[8]but you must surely open your hand to him and surely lend him sufficient for his need.
[9]Be careful not to have a wicked thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of release, is near,' so that you will not be stingy in regard to your poor brother and give him nothing; he might cry out to Yahweh about you, and it would be sin for you.[10]You must surely give to him, and your heart must not be sorry when you give to him, because in return for this Yahweh your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you put your hand to.

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[11]For the poor will never cease to exist in the land; therefore I command you and say, 'You must surely open your hand to your brother, to your needy, and to your poor in your land.'

[12]If your brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you for six years, then in the seventh year you must let him go free from you.[13]When you let him go free from you, you must not let him go empty-handed.[14]You must liberally provide for him out of your flock, out of your threshing floor, and out of your winepress. As Yahweh your God has blessed you, you must give to him.
[15]You must remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that Yahweh your God redeemed you; therefore I am commanding you today to do this.[16]It will happen that if he says to you, 'I will not go away from you,' because he loves you and your house, and because he is well off with you,[17]then you must take an awl and thrust it through his ear to a door, and he will be your servant for life. You must do the same with your female servant.
[18]It must not seem difficult for you to let him go free from you, because he has served you for six years and given twice the value of a hired person. Yahweh your God will bless you in all that you do.

[19]All the firstborn males in your herd and your flock you must set apart to Yahweh your God. You will do no work with the firstborn of your herd, nor shear the firstborn of your flock.[20]You must eat the firstborn before Yahweh your God year by year in the place that Yahweh will choose, you and your household.[21]If it has any blemish—for example, if it is lame or blind, or has any blemish whatever—you must not sacrifice it to Yahweh your God.
[22]You will eat it within your gates; the unclean and the clean persons alike must eat it, as you would eat a gazelle or a deer.
[23]Only you must not eat its blood; you must pour its blood out on the ground like water.

Deuteronomy 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Forgiveness of Debt

This chapter gives instructions about the necessity to regularly forgive debt among their fellow countryman. This prevented people from being trapped by their poverty.

Justice

As Yahweh's chosen nation, there must be justice in Israel. This chapter gives commands that encouraged justice by protecting the poor, servants and slaves. (See: elect and justice)

Links:

Deuteronomy 15:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 15:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

seven years

"7 years"

you must cancel debts

"forgive every thing which people still owe you"

Deuteronomy 15:2

This is the manner of the release

"This is how to cancel the debts"

creditor

a person who lends money to other people

his neighbor or his brother

The words "neighbor" and "brother" share similar meanings and emphasize the close relationship that they have with their fellow Israelites. Alternate translation: "his fellow Israelite"

because Yahweh's cancellation of debts has been proclaimed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh has required that you cancel debts"

Deuteronomy 15:3

your hand must release

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you must not demand it back" or "you must not require repayment"

Deuteronomy 15:4

no poor

The nominal adjective "poor" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "no poor people" or "no one who is poor"

the land that he gives

This refers to the land of Canaan.

he gives you as an inheritance to possess

The land that Yahweh is giving to his people is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Yahweh is giving them.

Deuteronomy 15:5

if only you diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your God

Here the metonym "voice of Yahweh" refers to what Yahweh himself says. Alternate translation: "if only you are careful to obey what Yahweh your God says"

Deuteronomy 15:6

you will lend ... you will not borrow

The word "money" is understood. You can make the full meaning of this statement clear. Alternate translation: "you will lend money ... you will not borrow money"

to many nations ... over many nations

Here "nations" represents the people. Alternate translation: "to the people of many nations ... over the people of many nations"

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you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you
Here "rule over" means to be financially superior. This means basically the same thing as the previous part of the sentence.
Deuteronomy 15:7
If there is a poor man
Here "man" means a person in general. Alternate translation: "If there is a poor person"
one of your brothers
"one of your fellow Israelites"
within any of your gates
Here "gates" represents the entire city or town. Alternate translation: "within any of your towns"
you must not harden your heart
Being stubborn is spoken of as if the person hardened their heart. Alternate translation: "you must not be stubborn"
nor shut your hand from your poor brother
A person who refuses to provide for a poor person is spoken of as if he were shutting his hand so that the poor person cannot get anything from him. Alternate translation: "nor refuse to help your fellow Israelite who is poor"
Deuteronomy 15:8
but you must surely open your hand to him
A person who helps a poor person is spoken of as if he were opening his hand to him. Alternate translation: "but you must surely help him"
Deuteronomy 15:9
not to have a wicked thought in your heart, saying
Here "heart" represents a person's mind. Alternate translation: "not to think a wicked thought"
The seventh year, the year of release, is near
It is implied that because the year of release will happen soon, the person thinking this will be reluctant to help a poor person since it is likely that the poor person will not have to pay him back. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
The seventh year
The word "seventh" is the ordinal number for seven.
the year of release
"the year to cancel debts"
is near
Something that will happen soon is spoken of as if it were physically near. Alternate translation: "will happen soon"
so that you will not be stingy in regard to your poor brother and give him nothing
"so that you are not stubborn and refuse to give anything to your fellow Israelite"
cry out to Yahweh
"shout to Yahweh for help"
it would be sin for you
"Yahweh will consider what you have done to be sinful"
Deuteronomy 15:10
your heart must not be sorry
Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "you should not regret it" or "you should be happy"
in all that you put your hand to
Here "put your hand to" represents the whole person and work that he has done. Alternate translation: "in all that you do"
Deuteronomy 15:11
For the poor will never cease to exist in the land
"For there will always be poor people in the land"
For the poor
The nominal adjective "the poor" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "For poor people"
I command you and say, 'You must surely open your hand ... in your land.'
This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I command you to open your hand ... in your land"
open your hand to your brother, to your needy, and to your poor
A person who is willing to help someone else is spoken of as if his hand were open. Alternate translation: "help your fellow Israelite, those who are needy, and those who are poor"
your brother, to your needy, and to your poor
The words "needy" and "poor" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that these are people who cannot help themselves. Alternate translation: "help your fellow Israelites who cannot help themselves"
Deuteronomy 15:12
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
If your brother
Here "brother" means an Israelite in general, whether a male or female. Alternate translation: "If a fellow Israelite" or "If a fellow Hebrew"
is sold to you
If a person could not repay their debts, they sometimes sold themselves into slavery to pay what they owed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "sell themselves to you"
six years
"6 years"
seventh year
"year 7." This "seventh" is the ordinal number for seven.
Deuteronomy 15:13
you must not let him go empty-handed
A person who has no possessions to provide for himself or his family is spoken of as if his hands were empty. Alternate translation: "you must not let him leave without having anything to provide for himself and his family"
Deuteronomy 15:14
liberally provide for him
"generously give to him"
Deuteronomy 15:15
remember that you were a slave
Here "you" includes their ancestors that were slaves for many years. Alternate translation: "remember that your people were once slaves"
that Yahweh your God redeemed you
Yahweh rescuing the people of Israel from being slaves in Egypt is spoken of as if Yahweh paid money to redeem his people from slavery.
Deuteronomy 15:16

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if he says to you, 'I will not go away from you,'
This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "if he says to you that he will not go away from you,"
your house
Here "house" represents the person's family.
Deuteronomy 15:17
then you must take an awl and thrust it through his ear to a door
"then you will place his head near a wooden door frame in your house, and then put the point of the awl through his earlobe into the wood"
awl
a sharp, pointed tool used to make a hole
for life
"until the end of his life" or "until he dies"
Deuteronomy 15:18
It must not seem difficult for you to let him go free from you
This means that they are not resent it when they let someone go free. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Be pleased when you let him go free"
given twice the value of a hired person
This means the owner only had to pay have the amount for this slave to work than he would for a person he hired to do a job.
a hired person
This is a person who works for pay.
Deuteronomy 15:19
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
shear
to cut off wool or hair
Deuteronomy 15:20
before Yahweh
"in the presence of Yahweh"
year by year
"each year" or "every year"
Deuteronomy 15:21
lame
crippled or physically disabled
Deuteronomy 15:22
within your gates
Here "gates" represents the city or town. Alternate translation: "within your community" or "inside your city"
the unclean ... persons
A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
the clean persons
A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.
a gazelle or a deer
These are wild animals with long thin legs that can run quickly. See how you translated these in Deuteronomy 12:15.
Deuteronomy 15:23
you must not eat its blood
"you must not consume its blood." Yahweh did not allow Israelites to consume blood because the blood represented life (Deuteronomy 12:23).

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16 [1]Observe the month of Aviv, and keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, for in the month of Aviv Yahweh your God brought you out of Egypt by night.[2]You will sacrifice the Passover to Yahweh your God with some of the flock and the herd in the place where Yahweh will choose to make a dwelling for his name.
[3]You will eat no leavened bread with it; seven days will you eat unleavened bread with it, the bread of affliction; for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste. Do this all the days of your life so that you may call to mind the day when you came out of the land of Egypt.[4]No yeast must be seen among you within all your borders during seven days; nor must any of the meat that you sacrifice in the evening on the first day remain until the morning.
[5]You must not sacrifice the Passover within any of your city gates that Yahweh your God is giving you.[6]Instead, sacrifice at the place where Yahweh your God will choose to make a dwelling for his name. There you will perform the sacrifice of the Passover in the evening at the going down of the sun, at the time of year that you came out of Egypt.
[7]You must roast it and eat it at the place that Yahweh your God will choose; in the morning you will turn and go to your tents.[8]For six days you will eat unleavened bread; on the seventh day there will be a solemn assembly for Yahweh your God; on that day you must do no work.

[9]You will count seven weeks for yourselves; from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain you must start counting seven weeks.[10]You must keep the Festival of Weeks for Yahweh your God with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand that you will give, according as Yahweh your God has blessed you.
[11]You will rejoice before Yahweh your God—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, the Levite who is within your city gates, and the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow who are among you, at the place where Yahweh your God will choose to make a dwelling for his name.[12]You will call to mind that you were a slave in Egypt; you must observe and do these statutes.

[13]You must keep the Festival of Shelters for seven days after you have gathered in the harvest from your threshing floor and from your winepress.[14]You will rejoice during your festival—you, your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, the Levite, and the foreigner, and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates.
[15]For seven days you must observe the festival for Yahweh your God at the place that Yahweh will choose, because Yahweh your God will bless you in all your harvest and all the work of your hands, and you must be completely joyful.

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[16]Three times in a year all your males must appear before Yahweh your God at the place that he will choose: at the Festival of Unleavened Bread, at the Festival of Weeks, and at the Festival of Shelters. No one will appear before Yahweh empty-handed.[17]Rather, every man will bring a gift as he is able, that you might know the blessing that Yahweh your God has given to you.

[18]You must make judges and officers within all your city gates that Yahweh your God is giving you; they will be taken from each of your tribes, and they must judge the people with righteous judgment.[19]You must not take justice away by force; you must not show partiality nor take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous.[20]You must follow after justice, after justice alone, so that you may live and inherit the land that Yahweh your God is giving you.

[21]You must not set up for yourselves an Asherah, any sort of pole, beside the altar of Yahweh your God that you will make for yourself.[22]Neither must you set up for yourself any sacred stone pillar, which Yahweh your God hates.

Deuteronomy 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Festivals

This chapter retells the specific commands about how to celebrate the Passover. This recalled the Passover in Egypt, which was an important event in the formation of the nation of Israel. There are several other important festivals described in this chapter. (See: passover)

Life in Israel

As Yahweh's chosen nation, there must be justice in Israel. Also, Yahweh must be the only God in Israel. He alone is to be worshiped. (See: elect and justice)

Links:

Deuteronomy 16:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 16:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

month of Aviv

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is during the last part of March and the first part April on Western calendars.

keep the Passover

It is implied by "keep the Passover" that they would celebrate and eat the Passover meal. Alternate translation: "celebrate the Passover meal" or "eat the Passover meal"

Deuteronomy 16:2

You will sacrifice the Passover

Here "Passover" represents the animal that is sacrificed for the Passover celebration. Alternate translation: For the Passover you will offer a sacrifice"

make a dwelling for his name

Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 14:23. Alternate translation: "have his people build the place where they will worship him"

Deuteronomy 16:3

with it

Here "it" refers to the animal they will sacrifice and eat.

seven days

"7 days"

the bread of affliction

This was the name of the unleavened bread. The full meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "this bread will remind you of how much you suffered while in Egypt"

out of the land of Egypt in haste

The people had to leave Egypt so quickly that they did not have enough time to make bread with yeast in it. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "out of the land of Egypt in such hurry you did not have time to make bread with yeast in it"

Do this all the days of your life

"Do this as long as you live"

call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember"

Deuteronomy 16:4

No yeast must be seen among you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not have any yeast among you"

within all your borders

"inside all your territory" or "in all your land"

first day

This "first" is the ordinal number for one.

Deuteronomy 16:5

You must not sacrifice the Passover

Here "Passover" represents the animal that will be sacrificed. Alternate translation: "For the Passover you must not sacrifice the animal"

within any of your city gates

Here "gates" represents the cities or towns. Alternate translation: "within any of your towns"

Deuteronomy 16:6

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make a dwelling for his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 14:23]
at the going down of the sun
"at sunset"
Deuteronomy 16:7
You must roast it
"You must cook it"
Deuteronomy 16:8
six days
"6 days"
seventh day
"seventh" is the ordinal number for seven.
solemn assembly
"special gathering"
Deuteronomy 16:9
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
count seven weeks
"count 7 weeks"
from the time you begin to put the sickle to the standing grain
The phrase "put the sickle to the standing grain" is a way of referring to the beginning of harvest time. Alternate translation: "from the time that you begin harvesting the grain"
sickle
a tool with a curved blade used for cutting grass, grain, and vines
Deuteronomy 16:10
with the tribute of a freewill offering from your hand that you will give
Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "and you will give your free will offering"
according as Yahweh your God has blessed you
"according to the harvest which Yahweh your God has given you" This means that the people will base how much they offer on how much they harvested that year.
Deuteronomy 16:11
your son, your daughter, your male servant, your female servant, the Levite
These do not refer to a specific person. It means these types of people in general. Alternate translation: "your sons, your daughters, your male servants, your females servants, any Levite"
within your city gates
Here "gates" represents cities or towns. Alternate translation: "within your towns"
the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow
This refers to these types of people in general. Alternate translation: "all foreigners, orphans, and widows"
fatherless
These are children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.
widow
This means a woman whose husband has died and has no children to care for her in her old age.
make a dwelling for his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 14:23]
Deuteronomy 16:12
call to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember"
Deuteronomy 16:13
Festival of Shelters
Other names for this festival are "Feast of Tabernacles," "Festival of Booths," and "Feast of the Ingathering." During harvest time, farmers would set up temporary shelters in the field. This festival took place after the last harvest of the year.
seven days
"7 days"
Deuteronomy 16:14
within your gates
Here the word "gates" represents cities or towns. Alternate translation: "within your towns"
Deuteronomy 16:15
the festival
"the Festival of Shelters"
all the work of your hands
Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "all the work you do"
Deuteronomy 16:16
all your males must appear before Yahweh
Females were allowed, but Yahweh did not require that they come. The men could represent their whole families.
must appear before Yahweh
"must come and stand in the presence of Yahweh"
No one will appear before Yahweh empty-handed
"They will not come before Yahweh without an offering"
These two negative phrases together have a positive meaning. Alternate translation: "Every person who comes before Yahweh must bring an offering"
Deuteronomy 16:18
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
You must make judges
"You must appoint judges" or "You must choose judges"
within all your city gates
Here "gates" represents a city or town. Alternate translation: "within all your towns"
they will be taken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will choose them"
judge the people with righteous judgment
"judge the people fairly"
Deuteronomy 16:19
You must not take justice away by force
Moses speaks of justice as if it were a physical object that a strong person can violently pull away from a weak person. This can be stated in positive form. Your language might have one word that means "use force to take away." Alternate translation: "You must not be unfair when you judge" or "You must make just decisions"
You must not
Here "You" refers to those who will be appointed as judges

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and officers.

for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous

Taking a bribe is spoken of as if the bribe were corrupting the people. Alternate translation: "for even a wise man who accepts a bribe will become blind, and even a righteous man who accepts a bribe will tell lies"

a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise

A wise person who accepts a bribe so that he does not speak against something evil is spoken of as if he becomes blind.

the wise

The nominal adjective "the wise" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "a wise person" or "wise people"

perverts the words of the righteous

The nominal adjective "righteous" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "causes a righteous person to lie"

Deuteronomy 16:20

follow after justice, after justice alone

justice is spoken of as a person who is walking. A person who is doing what is fair and just is spoken of as if he was following close behindjustice. Alternate translation: "do only what is fair"

inherit the land that Yahweh your God is giving you

Receiving the land that God is giving to the people is spoken of as if the people are inheriting the land from God.

Deuteronomy 16:21

You must not

Here "You" refers to all the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 16:22

any sacred stone pillar, which Yahweh your God hates

The phrase "which Yahweh your God hates" is giving more information about the sacred stone pillar. Alternate translation: "any sacred stone pillar because Yahweh your God hates them"

sacred stone pillar

This refers to pillars that are idols used to worship false gods.

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17 [1]You must not sacrifice to Yahweh your God an ox or a sheep in which is any blemish or anything bad, for that would be an abomination to Yahweh your God.

[2]If there is found among you, within any of your city gates that Yahweh your God is giving you, any man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God and transgresses his covenant,[3]anyone who has gone and worshiped other gods and bowed down to them, either the sun, the moon, or any of the host of heaven—nothing that I have commanded—[4]and if you are told about this, or if you have heard of it, then you must make a careful investigation. If it is true and certain that such an abomination has been done in Israel, this is what you should do.
[5]You must bring that man or woman, who has done this evil thing, to your city gates, that very man or woman, and you must stone that person to death.[6]At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, will he who must die be put to death; but at the mouth of only one witness he must not be put to death.[7]The hand of the witnesses must be the first to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people; and you will remove the evil from among you.

[8]If a matter arises that is too hard for you to judge—perhaps a question of one kind of bloodshed or another, of one kind of lawsuit or another, or of one kind of wound or another—matters of controversy within your city gates—then you must go up to the place that Yahweh your God chooses.[9]You must go to the priests, the descendants of Levi, and to the judge who will be serving at that time; you will seek their advice, and they will give you the verdict.
[10]Then you must do according to what they order you to do, at the place Yahweh will choose. Be careful to do all that they teach you.[11]Follow the law they teach you, and do according to the decisions they give you. Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right hand or to the left.
[12]Anyone who acts in arrogance, listening neither to the priest who is standing to serve before Yahweh your God nor to the judge—that man will die; you will completely remove the evil from Israel.[13]All the people must hear and fear, and act arrogantly no more.

[14]When you have come to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it, and then you say, 'I will set a king over myself, like all the nations that are round about me,'[15]then you must surely set as king over yourself someone whom Yahweh your God will choose. You must set as king over yourself someone from among your brothers. You must not put a foreigner, who is not your brother, over yourself.
[16]But he must not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt so that he may multiply horses, for Yahweh had said to you, 'You will never return that way again.'[17]He must not take many wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn away. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

[18]When he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he must write for himself in a scroll a copy of this law, from the law that is before the priests, who are Levites.[19]The scroll must be with him, and he must read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to honor Yahweh his God, so as to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to observe them.
[20]He must do this so that his heart is not lifted up above his brothers, and so that he does not turn away from the commandments, to the right hand or to the left, so he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his descendants in the midst of Israel.

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Deuteronomy 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Witnesses

In the ancient Near East, it was common for a person to be punished by the testimony of a single person, especially if this was an important person. The rules in this chapter give protection to people, especially the poor by requiring multiple witnesses. This allowed justice to be done. (See: testimony and justice)

King

Israel was not to have a king because Yahweh was their king. Knowing the sinfulness of the people, Yahweh anticipated that one day Israel would have a king. Therefore, this passage gives commands about their king prophetically. They were not allowed to collect chariots because they were a sign of earthly power and the king was to trust in Yahweh.

Links:

Deuteronomy 17:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 17:1

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

in which is any blemish

"that has a blemish" or "that has something wrong with it." The animal is to appear healthy without any deformity.

that would be an abomination to Yahweh

"that would be disgusting to Yahweh"

Deuteronomy 17:2

If there is found

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you find someone" or "If there is anyone"

within any of your city gates

Here "city gates" represents cities or towns. Alternate translation: "living in one of your cities"

what is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "something that Yahweh your God thinks is evil"

transgresses his covenant

"disobeys his covenant"

Deuteronomy 17:3

any of the host of heaven

"any of the army of heaven." Here this refers to the lights we see in the sky, including the sun, moon, stars. They are called the host because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "any of the multitude of things in the sky"

Deuteronomy 17:4

if you are told about this

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone tells you about this disobedient act"

you must make a careful investigation

The abstract noun "investigation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "you must carefully investigate what happened"

such an abomination has been done in Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has done such a horrible thing in Israel"

Deuteronomy 17:6

At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, will he who must die be put to death

Here "the mouth" represents the testimony of a witness. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "If two or three witnesses speak against the person, then you must execute him"

but at the mouth of only one witness he must not be put to death

Here "the mouth" represents the testimony of a witness. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "but if only one person speaks against him, then you must not execute him"

Deuteronomy 17:7

The hand of the witnesses must be the first to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people

Here "hand" represents the entire group of witnesses. Alternate translation: "The witnesses themselves must be the first ones to throw stones. Then all the people will execute the person by throwing stones at him"

you will remove the evil from among you

The nominal adjective "the evil" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites this person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil person"

Deuteronomy 17:8

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

If a matter arises

"If there is a matter" or "If there is a situation"

one kind of bloodshed or another

"murder or accidental killing"

one kind of lawsuit or another

"whether a lawsuit is just or unjust"

one kind of wound or another

"whether harm was done intentionally or by accident"

Deuteronomy 17:9

you will seek their advice

The abstract noun "advice" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "you will ask them to advise you"

they will give you the verdict

The abstract noun "verdict" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "they will decide on the matter"

Deuteronomy 17:11

Follow the law they teach you

A person obeying what the priests and judge decide is

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spoken of as if the person were physically following behind the law. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must obey what the judge and priests decide about the matter"

Do not turn aside from what they tell you, to the right hand or to the left

A person not doing exactly what the judge and priests say is spoken of as if he were turning off the correct path. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Do not disobey anything they tell you" or "Do everything they say"

Deuteronomy 17:12

arrogance, listening neither to the priest who is standing to serve before Yahweh your God nor to the judge—that

"arrogance—if he will not listen to the priest who is standing to serve before Yahweh your God and he will not listen to the judge—that"

you will completely remove the evil from Israel

The nominal adjective "the evil" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites the person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil Israelite"

Deuteronomy 17:13

All the people must hear and fear, and act arrogantly no more

It is implied that when the people hear about the person who was executed for acting arrogantly, they will be afraid and not act arrogantly themselves.

Deuteronomy 17:14

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

When you have come to the land

The word "come to" can be translated as "gone to" or "entered."

then you say, 'I will set a king over myself, like all the nations that are round about me,'

This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "then you decide that you want a king just like the peoples of the nations that surround you have kings,"

I will set a king over myself ... round about me

Moses has the people speaking as if they were one person. It may be more natural to translate this with plural pronouns. Alternate translation: "We will set over ourselves ... round about us"

set a king over myself

Giving someone the authority to rule as king in Israel is spoken of as if the people were setting the person in a place above them.

all the nations that are round about me

"all the surrounding nations"

all the nations

Here "nations" represent the people who live in the nations.

Deuteronomy 17:15

someone from among your brothers

"one of your fellow Israelites"

a foreigner, who is not your brother, over yourself

Both of these phrases mean the same thing. They both refer to a person who is not an Israelite. Yahweh is emphasizing that the people of Israel should not let a foreigner rule over them. Alternate translation: "a foreigner over yourself" or "a non-Israelite over yourself"

Deuteronomy 17:16

he must not multiply horses for himself

"he must not get large numbers of horses for himself" or "he must not keep acquiring more horses for himself'

for Yahweh had said to you, 'You will never return that way again.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh had said that you must never return to Egypt again."

Deuteronomy 17:17

so that his heart does not turn away

Here "heart" refers to the whole person. An Israelite king who marries foreign wives and starts to worship their false gods is spoken of as if his heart were to turn away from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "so that they do not cause him to stop honoring Yahweh and start worshiping false gods"

Deuteronomy 17:18

When he sits on the throne of his kingdom

Here "throne" represents the person's power and authority as king. To sit on the throne means to become king. Alternate translation: "When he becomes king"

he must write for himself in a scroll a copy of this law

Possible meanings are 1) "he must personally write in a scroll a copy of this law for himself" or 2) "he must appoint someone to write in a scroll a copy of this law for him"

from the law that is before the priests, who are Levites

"from the copy of the law that the Levitical priests keep"

Deuteronomy 17:19

so as to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to observe them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the king must obey all of God's law.

Deuteronomy 17:20

so that his heart is not lifted up above his brothers

Here "his heart" refers to the whole person. A king becoming arrogant is spoken of as if his heart were lifted up. Alternate translation: "so that he does not become arrogant" or "so that he does not think he is better than his fellow Israelites"

so that he does not turn away from the commandments, to the right hand or to the left

A king disobeying God's commands is spoken of as if a person were to turn off the correct path. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "so that he does not disobey any of the commandments" or "so that he obeys all of the commandments"

prolong his days

Long days is a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated a similar phrase "prolong your days" in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

[1]The priests, who are Levites, and all the tribe of Levi, will have no portion nor inheritance with Israel; they must eat the offerings of Yahweh made by fire as their inheritance.[2]They must have no inheritance among their brothers; Yahweh is their inheritance, as he said to them.
[3]This is the share given to the priests, given to them from the people who offer a sacrifice, whether it be an oxen or a sheep: the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the inner parts.[4]The firstfruits of your grain, of your new wine, and of your oil, and the first of the fleece of your sheep, you must give him.[5]For Yahweh your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to stand to serve in the name of Yahweh, him and his sons forever.

[6]If a Levite comes from any of your towns out of all Israel where he is living and desires with all his soul to come to the place Yahweh will choose,[7]then he must serve in the name of Yahweh his God as all his brothers the Levites do, who stand there before Yahweh.[8]They must have similar portions to eat, besides of what comes of the sale of his family's inheritance.

[9]When you have come into the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, you must not learn to observe the abominations of those nations.[10]There must not be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or his daughter in the fire, or anyone who uses divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer[11]or one who casts spells or a sorcerer or a spiritist or one who seeks the dead.
[12]For whoever does these things is an abomination to Yahweh; it is because of these abominations that Yahweh your God is driving them out from before you.[13]You must be blameless before Yahweh your God.[14]For these nations that you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery and divination; but as for you, Yahweh your God has not allowed you to do so.

[15]Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet from among you, one of your brothers, like me. You must listen to him.
[16]This is what you asked from Yahweh your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let us not hear again the voice of Yahweh our God, nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.'
[17]Yahweh said to me, 'What they have said is good.[18]I will raise up a prophet for them from among their brothers, just like you. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them all that I command him.[19]It will happen that if anyone does not listen to the words of mine that he speaks in my name, I will require it of him.

[20]But the prophet who speaks a word arrogantly in my name, a word that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that very prophet must die.'[21]This is what you must say in your heart: 'How will we recognize a message that Yahweh has not spoken?'
[22]You will recognize a message that Yahweh has spoken when a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh. If that thing does not occur nor happen, then that is something that Yahweh has not spoken and the prophet has spoken it in arrogance, and you must not be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Levites

As Yahweh's chosen priests, the priest were to trust in Yahweh to provide for them. He provided for them through the rest of the Israelites. Yahweh was their inheritance. (See: elect, priest and trust and inherit)

Messiah

This chapter is one of the first prophecies about the promised, coming Messiah. (See: prophet and promise and christ)

Links:

Deuteronomy 18:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 18:1

General Information:

Moses continues telling the people what Yahweh wants them to do.

will have no portion nor inheritance with Israel

The Levites not receiving any land from Yahweh is spoken of as if they would not receive an inheritance. Alternate translation: "will not possess any of the people's land" or "will not receive any of the land that the Israelites will possess"

no portion

"no part" or "no share"

Deuteronomy 18:2

among their brothers

"among the other tribes of Israel" or "among the other Israelites"

Yahweh is their inheritance

Moses speaks of the great honor that Aaron and his descendants will have by serving Yahweh as priests as if Yahweh were something that they will inherit. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Deuteronomy 10:9]

Deuteronomy 18:3

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the inner parts
This is the stomach and intestines.
Deuteronomy 18:4
you must give him
"you must give to the priest"
Deuteronomy 18:5
has chosen him
Here "him" represents all the Levites.
to stand to serve in the name of Yahweh
Here "the name of Yahweh" stands for Yahweh himself and his authority. Alternate translation: "to be his special servants" or "to serve as a representative of Yahweh"
him and his sons forever
Here "him" represents all the Levites. Alternate translation: "the Levites and their descendants forever"
Deuteronomy 18:6
desires with all his soul
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "strongly desires" or "really wants"
Deuteronomy 18:7
then he must serve in the name of Yahweh his God
Here "name" represents Yahweh and his authority. Alternate translation: "then he must serve Yahweh his God as a priest"
who stand there before Yahweh
"who serve in the sanctuary in the presence of Yahweh"
Deuteronomy 18:8
his family's inheritance
This is what the priest would inherit from his father.
Deuteronomy 18:9
When you have come
Here "come" can be translated as "gone" or "entered."
you must not learn to observe the abominations of those nations
God hates the religious activities of the people in the surrounding nations. He considers them to be terribly evil. Here "nations" represents the people. Alternate translation: "you must not do the terrible things that the people of the other nations do"
Deuteronomy 18:10
There must not be found among you anyone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There must not be anyone among you"
anyone who uses divination ... tells fortunes ... interprets omens ... sorcerer
These are different ways of practicing magic. God has forbidden every kind of magic. If you do not have different words for all of these activities, it can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "anyone who uses magic to try to find out what will happen in the future or to cast spells"
Deuteronomy 18:11
one who casts spells or a sorcerer or a spiritist or one who seeks the dead
This is a description of people who practice different kinds of magic. God has forbidden every kind of magic. If you do not have a word for all of these types of people, you can treat this list as a doublet and translate more generally. Alternate translation: "anyone who uses magic to cast spells or to talk to the spirits of dead people"
Deuteronomy 18:12
driving them out
Here "them" refers to the people already living in Canaan.
Deuteronomy 18:14
For these nations
Here "nations" stands for the people groups that live in Canaan. Alternate translation: "For these people groups"
these nations that you will dispossess
"these nations whose land you will take"
Deuteronomy 18:15
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet
Yahweh appointing a person to be a prophet is spoken of as if Yahweh would raise or lift the person up.
one of your brothers
"one of your fellow Israelites"
Deuteronomy 18:16
This is what you asked
Here "you" refers to the Israelites at Mount Horeb about 40 years earlier.
at Horeb on the day of the assembly
"on the day you gathered together at Horeb"
on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let us not hear again the voice of Yahweh our God, nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.'
This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "on the day of the assembly when you said that you did not want to hear the voice of Yahweh our God, nor see his great fire anymore, because you were afraid that you would die."
Let us not hear again the voice of Yahweh our God
Here Yahweh is represented by his "voice" to emphasize what he says. Alternate translation: "Let us not hear Yahweh our God speak again"
Deuteronomy 18:18
I will raise up a prophet for them
Yahweh appointing a person to be a prophet is spoken of as if Yahweh would raise or lift the person up.
from among their brothers
"from among their fellow Israelites"
I will put my words in his mouth
Yahweh telling the prophet what to say is spoken of as if Yahweh would put words in the prophet's mouth.
speak to them
"speak to the people of Israel"
Deuteronomy 18:19
does not listen to the words of mine that he speaks in my name
Here "my name" represents Yahweh and his authority. Alternate translation: "does not listen to him when he speaks my message"
require it of him
"I will hold him responsible" or "I will punish him." Here "him" refers to the person who does not listen to the prophet.
Deuteronomy 18:20
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
who speaks a word arrogantly

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"who dares to speak a message" or "who is arrogant enough to speak a message"

in my name

Here "my name" refers to Yahweh himself and his authority. Alternate translation: "for me" or "with my authority"

a word

"a message"

who speaks in the name of other gods

Here "name" represents the gods themselves or their authority. This means the prophet claims that false gods told him to speak a certain message.

Deuteronomy 18:21

This is what you must say in your heart

Here "heart" represents the thoughts of a person. Alternate translation: "You ask yourself" or "You must say to yourself"

How will we recognize a message that Yahweh has not spoken?

"How will we know if the message that the prophet speaks is from Yahweh?" Here "we" refers to the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 18:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

a prophet speaks in the name of Yahweh

Here "name of Yahweh" refers to Yahweh himself and his authority. Alternate translation: "a prophet claims to speak for me" or "a prophet claims to speak with my authority"

the prophet has spoken it in arrogance

"the prophet has spoken this message without my authority"

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19 [1]When Yahweh your God cuts off the nations, those whose land Yahweh your God is giving you, and when you come
after them and live in their cities and houses,[2]you must select three cities for yourself in the middle of your land that
Yahweh your God is giving you to possess.[3]You must build a road and divide the borders of your land into three parts, the
land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit, so that everyone who kills another person may flee there.

[4]This is the instruction concerning the one who kills another and flees from there in order to save his own life—the one
who unintentionally kills his neighbor without hating him at the time of the accident.[5]For example, if a man goes into the
forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and he chops with the ax to cut down a tree, and the ax head slips off of the handle
and strikes his neighbor and kills him—then that man must flee to one of these cities and save his life.
[6]Otherwise the avenger of blood might go after the one who took a life, and in the heat of his anger overtake him, if the
distance is too great, strike him and kill him, even though that man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his
neighbor in the past.[7]Therefore I command you to select three cities for yourself.
[8]If Yahweh your God enlarges your borders, as he has sworn to your ancestors to do, and gives you all the land that he
promised to give to your ancestors;[9]if you keep all these commandments to do them, which I am commanding you today
—commandments to love Yahweh your God and to always walk in his ways, then you must add three more cities for
yourself, besides these three.[10]Do this so that innocent blood is not shed in the midst of the land that Yahweh your God is
giving you for as an inheritance, so that no bloodguilt may be on you.

[11]But if anyone hates his neighbor, lies in wait for him, rises up against him, and mortally wounds him so that he dies, and
if he then flees into one of these cities—[12]then the elders of his city must send and bring him back from there, and turn
him over to the hand of the avenger of blood, so that he may die.[13]Your eye must not pity him; instead, you must
completely remove the bloodguilt from Israel so that it may go well with you.

[14]You must not remove your neighbor's landmark that they set in place a long time ago, in your inheritance that you will
inherit, in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess.

[15]One sole witness must not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any matter that he sins; at the mouth
of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, must any matter be confirmed.[16]Suppose that an unrighteous witness
rises up against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing.
[17]Then both men, the ones between whom the controversy exists, must stand before Yahweh, before the priests and the
judges who serve in those days.[18]The judges must make diligent inquiries; see, if the witness is a false witness and has
testified falsely against his brother,[19]then must you do to him, as he had wished to do to his brother; and you will remove
the evil from among you.
[20]Then those who remain will hear and fear, and will from then on commit no longer any such evil among you.[21]Your eyes
must not pity; life will pay for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Deuteronomy 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

Another way justice would be maintained in Israel was by avoiding revenge killings. This chapter describes the establishment of special cities to protect those fleeing from revenge killings. (See: justice and avenge)

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Witnesses

In the ancient Near East, it was common for a person to be punished by the testimony of a single person, especially if this was an important person. The rules in this chapter give protection to people, especially the poor by requiring multiple witnesses. This allowed justice to be done. (See: testimony)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Law of retaliation

The chapter describes a famous law, often called the "law of retaliation." It is said, an "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." This does not mean a person who causes another person to lose their eye must have their own eye removed as punishment. This law is not about making all things equal. Instead, it is about limiting the punishment or the ability of a person to retaliate.

Links:

Deuteronomy 19:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 19:1

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

When Yahweh your God cuts off the nations

Yahweh destroying the people who live in Canaan is spoken of as if he were cutting them off, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree.

the nations

This represents the people groups that live in Canaan.

those whose land Yahweh your God is giving you

"those nations who were living in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you"

come after them

"take the land from those nations" or "possess the land after those nations are gone"

Deuteronomy 19:2

select three cities

"choose 3 cities"

Deuteronomy 19:3

You must build a road

They were to build roads so that it would be easy for people to travel to these cities.

divide the borders of your land into three parts

It is implied that one of the cities they choose must be in each part of the land.

the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit

Yahweh giving the land to the people of Israel is spoken of as if the people are inheriting the land.

Deuteronomy 19:4

This is the instruction

"These are the instructions" or "These are the directions"

concerning the one who kills another

The word "person" is understood. Alternate translation: "for a person who kills another person"

and flees from there

"and who escapes to one of these cities" or "who runs to one of these cities"

the one who unintentionally kills his neighbor

Here "neighbor" means any person in general. Alternate translation: "any person who kills another person by accident"

without hating him at the time of the accident

"but did not hate his neighbor before he killed him." This implies there was no cause for him to kill his neighbor purposely.

Deuteronomy 19:5

For example, if a man goes into the forest ... and kills him

The author gives an example of how someone might accidentally kill his neighbor.

the ax head slips off of the handle

The iron part of the ax comes off the wooden handle.

strikes his neighbor and kills him

This means the head of the ax hits and kills the neighbor.

to one of these cities and save his life

It is implied that the family of the dead man may try to get revenge. The man who killed him can flee to one of these cities, and the people there will protect him.

Deuteronomy 19:6

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

the avenger of blood

Here "blood" represents the person who was killed. An "avenger of blood" is a close relative of the person who was killed. This relative is responsible for punishing the murderer.

the one who took a life

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the one who killed the other person"

in the heat of his anger

Someone being very angry is spoken of as if anger were something that could become hot. Alternate translation: "and being very angry"

strike him and kill him

"And the blood avenger strikes and kills the one who had killed the other person"

though that man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past

"though that man did not deserve to die since he accidentally killed the other person and was not his enemy, and he had not planned to hurt the man"

Deuteronomy 19:8

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

enlarges your borders

"gives you more land to possess"

as he has sworn to your ancestors to do

"like he promised your ancestors that he would do"

Deuteronomy 19:9

if you keep all these commandments to do them

"if you obey all these commandments"

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to always walk in his ways
How God wants a person to live or behave is spoken of as if it were Yahweh's way or road. A person who obeys Yahweh is spoken of as if he were walking on Yahweh's way or road. Alternate translation: "to always obey him"
then you must add three more cities for yourself
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "then you must choose three more cities for a person to escape to if he accidentally kills someone"
besides these three
"in addition to the three cities you already established"
Deuteronomy 19:10
Do this so that innocent blood is not shed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do this so that family members do not kill an innocent person"
innocent blood is not shed
Here "blood" represents a person's life. To shed blood means to kill a person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one kills an innocent person"
in the midst of the land
"in the land" or "in the territory"
Yahweh your God is giving you for as an inheritance
The land that Yahweh is giving the people of Israel is spoken of as if it were an inheritance.
so that no bloodguilt may be on you
The people of Israel being guilty for a person dying because they did not build a city where he would be safe from the "blood avenger" is spoken of as if the guilt of his death is on them.
bloodguilt
Here "blood" represents a life and "bloodguilt" refers to the guilt someone has for killing an innocent person.
may be on you
This means that if a family member kills an innocent person, then all the people of Israel will be guilty for letting that happen.
Deuteronomy 19:11
his neighbor
Here "neighbor" means any person in general.
lies in wait for him
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "hides and waits in order to kill him" or "plans to kill him"
rises up against him
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "attacks him"
mortally wounds him so that he dies
"hurts him so that he dies" or "and kills him"
Deuteronomy 19:12
must send and bring him back from there
"must send someone to get him and bring him back from the city that he escaped to"
turn him over
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "give him over"
to the hand of the avenger of blood
Here "the hand" represents the authority of someone. Alternate translation: "to the power of the responsible relative" or "to the responsible relative"
the avenger of blood
This is the relative of the person who was killed. This relative is responsible for punishing the murderer.
he may die
"the murderer may die" or "the responsible relative may execute the murderer"
Deuteronomy 19:13
Your eye must not pity him
Here "your eye" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "Do not show him mercy" or "Do not feel sorry for him"
you must completely remove the bloodguilt from Israel
Here "bloodguilt" represents the guilt for murdering an innocent person. Alternate translation: "you must execute the murderer so that the people of Israel will not become guilty for the death of an innocent person"
from Israel
Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 19:14
General Information:
Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.
You must not remove your neighbor's landmark
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You must not take land away from your neighbor by moving the markers on the borders of his land"
they set in place
"that your ancestors placed"
a long time ago
Moses means that when the people have lived in the land for a long time, they should not move the borders that their ancestors made when they first took the land.
in your inheritance that you will inherit, in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess
Yahweh giving the land to the people of Israel is spoken of as if they were inheriting the land. Alternate translation: "in the land that Yahweh your God is giving to you to possess"
Deuteronomy 19:15
General Information:
Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.
One sole witness
"A single witness" or "Only one witness"
must not rise up against a man
Here "rise up" means to stand up in court and speak against someone to a judge. Alternate translation: "must not speak to the judges about something bad that a man did"
in any matter that he sins
"anytime that a man does something bad"
at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses
Here "mouth" represents what the witnesses say. It is implied that there must be at least two or three witnesses. Alternate translation: "at the testimony of at least two or three people" or "based on what at least two or three people say happened"
must any matter be confirmed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will you confirm that the man is guilty"
Deuteronomy 19:16
Suppose that

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"When" or "If"

an unrighteous witness

"a witness who intends to harm someone else"

rises up against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing

Here "rise up" means to stand up in court and speak against someone to a judge. Alternate translation: "tells the judge that a man sinned in order to get the man in trouble" or "tells the judge that a man sinned, so the judge will punish him"

Deuteronomy 19:17

General Information:

Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.

the ones between whom the controversy exists

"the ones who disagree with one another"

must stand before Yahweh, before the priests and the judges

This means the two persons must go to the sanctuary where Yahweh's presence dwells. At the sanctuary are priests and judges who have the authority to make legal decisions for Yahweh.

stand before Yahweh, before the priests and the judges

The phrase "stand before" is an idiom. It means to go to someone with authority and let him make a legal decision about a matter.

Deuteronomy 19:18

The judges must make diligent inquiries

"The judges must work very hard to determine what happened"

Deuteronomy 19:19

then must you do to him, as he had wished to do to his brother

"then you must punish the false witness in the same way as he wanted you to punish the other man"

you will remove the evil from among you

The nominal adjective "the evil" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "you will remove the evil practice from among you"

Deuteronomy 19:20

Then those who remain

"When you punish the false witness, the rest of the people"

will hear and fear

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "will hear about the punishment and be afraid of getting punished"

commit no longer any such evil

"never again do something evil like that"

Deuteronomy 19:21

Your eyes must not pity

Here "eyes" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "You must not pity him" or "You must not show him mercy"

eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot

Here the phrases are shortened because the meaning is understood. The body parts are metonyms for the person whose parts they are. The people must punish a person in the same way that he harmed another person. Alternate translation: "eye will pay for for eye, tooth will pay for for tooth, hand will pay for for hand, foot will pay for for foot" or "you must destroy an eye of the person who destroys another person's eye, you must destroy a tooth of the person who destroys another person's tooth, you must destroy a hand of the person who destroys another person's hand, you must destroy a foot of the person who destroys another person's foot"

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20 [1]When you march out to battle against your enemies, and see horses, chariots, and a people more numerous than you, you must not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God is with you, he who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
[2]When you are about to enter into battle, the priest must approach and speak to the people.[3]He must say to them, 'Listen, Israel, you are going to battle against your enemies. Do not let your hearts faint. Do not fear or tremble. Do not be afraid of them.[4]For Yahweh your God is the one who is going with you to fight for you against your enemies and to save you.'
[5]The officers must speak to the people and say, 'What man is there who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, so that he does not die in battle and another man dedicates it.
[6]Is there anyone who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go home, so he will not die in battle and another man enjoy its fruit.[7]What man is there who is betrothed to a woman but has not yet married her? Let him go home so that he does not die in battle and another man marry her.'
[8]The officers must speak further to the people and say, 'What man is there who is fearful or fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, so that his brother's heart does not melt like his own heart.'[9]When the officers have finished speaking to the people, they must appoint commanders of armies over them.

[10]When you march up to attack a city, make those people an offer of peace.[11]If they answer peaceably and open their gates to you, all the people who are found in it must become forced labor for you and must serve you.
[12]But if it makes no offer of peace to you, and instead makes war against you, then you must besiege it,[13]and when Yahweh your God gives you victory and puts them under your control, you must strike every man in the town with the edge of the sword.
[14]But the women, the little ones, the livestock, and everything that is in the city, and all its spoil, you will take as booty for yourself. You will consume the booty of your enemies, whom Yahweh your God has given to you.[15]You must act in this way toward all the cities that are very far from you, cities that are not of the cities of these following nations.
[16]In the cities of these peoples that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must keep alive nothing that breathes.[17]You must completely destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, as Yahweh your God has commanded you.[18]Do this so that they do not teach you to act in any of their abominable ways, as they have done for their gods. If you do, you will sin against Yahweh your God.

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[19]When you will besiege a city for a long time, as you wage war against it to capture it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them. For you may eat from them, so you must not cut them down. For is the tree of the field a man whom you should besiege?[20]Only the trees that you know are not trees for food, you may destroy and cut down; you will build siege works against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.

Deuteronomy 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

Israel was not to worry about the power and strength of other nations. Instead, they were to trust in the power of Yahweh. He is the source of their military strength and protection. This is why a priest leads them into battle, rather than a military commander. (See: trust and priest)

Holy war

Israel's conquering of the Promised Land was unique in history. It was a type of holy war and had special rules. This war was really Yahweh's punishment against the sin of the Canaanite people. If the people were not completely destroyed, they would cause Israel to sin. (See: promisedland and holy and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"What man is there"

This phrase is used several times to introduce a rhetorical question. The questions are intended to tell the readers that Yahweh only wants soldiers who are completely dedicated to fighting for him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Excused from fighting

In ancient Israel, men were excused from fighting in battle for several different reasons. Some of these reasons are mentioned in this chapter. Apparently, needing to establish a new house, the need to harvest a field and cowardice were possible excuses.

Links:

Deuteronomy 20:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 20:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

When you march out to battle against your enemies

"When you go out to fight in a war against your enemies"

see horses, chariots

People considered an army with many horses and chariots to be very strong. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

he who brought you up out of the land of Egypt

Yahweh brought the people from Egypt to Canaan. It was common to use the word "up" to refer to traveling from Egypt to Canaan. Alternate translation: "Yahweh who led you out from the land of Egypt"

Deuteronomy 20:2

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

speak to the people

"speak to the soldiers of Israel"

Deuteronomy 20:3

Do not let your hearts faint. Do not fear or tremble. Do not be afraid of them

These four expressions all mean the same thing and strongly emphasize that they are not to be afraid. If your language does not have four ways to express this concept, you may use less than four.

Do not let your hearts faint

Here "hearts" represents people's courage. For a heart to faint is an idiom that means "Do not be afraid."

Deuteronomy 20:4

Yahweh your God is the one who is going with you to fight for you against your enemies

Yahweh defeating the enemies of the people of Israel is spoken of as if Yahweh were a warrior who would fight along with the people of Israel.

to save you

"to give you victory"

Deuteronomy 20:5

General Information:

Moses says what the army officers must say to the people of Israel before a battle.

The officers must speak

One of the officers' jobs was to decide who could leave the army. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

What man is there ... Let him go and return to his house

"If any soldier here has built a new house and has not dedicated it, he should go back to his house"

so that he does not die in battle and another man dedicates it

The officer is describing a situation that could possibly happen to a soldier. If a man who did not dedicate his house died in battle, another man could dedicate the house. Alternate translation: "so that he will not die in battle, because if he dies, another man could dedicate it"

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Deuteronomy 20:6
General Information:
Moses continues describing situations that allow a man to leave the military.
Is there anyone who has planted ... Let him go home
"If any soldier here has a new vineyard, but has not yet harvested its grapes, he should go back to his house"
so he will not die in battle and another man enjoy its fruit
The officer is describing a situation that could possibly happen to a soldier. If a soldier died in battle, another man could take the fruit from his garden. Alternate translation: "so that he will not die in battle, because if he dies, another man could harvest its fruit instead of him"
Deuteronomy 20:7
What man is there who is betrothed to a woman ... Let him go home
"If any soldier here has promised to marry a woman, but has not yet married her, he should go back to his house"
so that he does not die in battle and another man marry her
The officer is describing a situation that could possibly happen to a soldier. If a man was engaged and died, another man could marry the woman, and the first man would not have any children. Alternate translation: "so that he will not die in battle, because if he dies, another man could marry her instead of him"
Deuteronomy 20:8
General Information:
Moses continues describing situations that allow a man to leave the military.
What man is there who is fearful or fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house
"If any soldier here is afraid and not brave, he should go back to his house"
fearful or fainthearted
Both of these words mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "afraid to fight in battle"
his brother's heart does not melt like his own heart
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "another Israelite does not become afraid like he is afraid"
brother's heart ... his own heart
Here "heart" represents a person's courage.
Deuteronomy 20:9
they must appoint commanders of armies over them
"the officers must appoint people to be commanders of the army and to lead the people of Israel"
Deuteronomy 20:10
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
When you march up to attack a city
Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "When you go to attack the people of a city"
make those people an offer of peace
"give the people in the city a chance to surrender"
Deuteronomy 20:11
they answer peaceably
Possible meanings are 1) they answer in a peaceful manner or 2) they accept the offer of peace.
open their gates to you
Here "gates" refers to the city gates. The phrase "open their gates to you" represents the people surrendering and allowing the Israelites to enter their city. Alternate translation: "let you enter their city peacefully"
all the people who are found in it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the people in the city"
must become forced labor for you
"must become your slaves"
Deuteronomy 20:12
But if it makes no offer of peace
Here "it" refers to the city which represents the people. Alternate translation: "But if the people of the city do not surrender" or "But if the people of the city do not accept your offer of peace"
Deuteronomy 20:13
strike every man in the town with the edge of the sword
"kill every man in the town with your sword"
Deuteronomy 20:14
the little ones
"the children"
all its spoil
"all the valuable things"
booty
These are the valuable things which people who win a battle take from the people they attacked.
Deuteronomy 20:15
all the cities
Here "cities" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people who live in cities"
Deuteronomy 20:16
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
In the cities of these peoples that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance
The cities in Canaan that Yahweh is giving to the people is spoken of as if the cities were the people's inheritance.
you must keep alive nothing that breathes
"you must not let any living thing stay alive." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you must kill every living thing"
Deuteronomy 20:17
You must completely destroy them
"You must completely destroy these people groups"
Deuteronomy 20:18
Do this so that they
"Destroy these nations so that they"
to act in any of their abominable ways ... their gods
"to act in abominable ways like the people in these nations have done with their gods"
If you do, you will sin against Yahweh your God
"If you act like these people, you will sin against Yahweh your God"
Deuteronomy 20:19
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
wage war
"fight in a war"
by wielding an ax against them
"by cutting down the trees with an ax"
For is the tree of the field a man whom you should besiege?

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This rhetorical question is to remind the people of what they should already know. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "For fruit trees are not people, so they are not your enemy."

Deuteronomy 20:20

you know are not trees for food

"you know are not trees that grow fruit to eat"

siege works

These are tools and structures, such as ladders and towers, that are needed to lay siege to a city.

until it falls

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "until the people of the city lose the war"

it falls

Here "it" refers to the city which represents the people of the city.

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21 [1]If someone is found killed in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess, lying in the field, and it is not known who has attacked him;[2]then your elders and your judges must go out, and they must measure to the cities that are around him who has been killed.
[3]Then the elders of the town nearest to the dead man's body must take a heifer from the herd, one that has never been put to work, and that has not borne the yoke.[4]Then they must lead the heifer down to a valley with running water, a valley that has been neither plowed nor sown, and there in the valley they must break the heifer's neck.
[5]The priests, descendants of Levi, must come forward, for Yahweh your God has chosen them to serve him and give blessing in the name of Yahweh and to decide every case of dispute and assault by their word.
[6]All the elders of the city that is the nearest to the killed man must wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley;[7]and they must answer to the case and say, 'Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.
[8]Forgive, Yahweh, your people Israel, whom you have redeemed, and do not put guilt for innocent bloodshed in the midst of your people Israel.' Then the bloodshed will be forgiven them.[9]In this way you will completely remove the innocent blood from your midst, when you do what is right in the eyes of Yahweh.

[10]When you go out to do battle against your enemies and Yahweh your God gives you victory and puts them under your control, and you take them away as captives,[11]if you see among the captives a beautiful woman, and you delight in her and wish to take her for yourself as a wife,[12]then you will bring her home to your house; she will shave her head and cut her nails.
[13]Then she will take off the clothes she was wearing when she was taken captive and she will remain in your house and mourn for her father and her mother a full month. After that you may go to her and be her husband, and she will be your wife.[14]But if you take no delight in her, then you may let her go where she wishes. But you must not sell her at all for money, and you must not treat her like a slave, because you have humiliated her.

[15]If a man has two wives and one is loved and the other is hated, and they have both borne him children—both the beloved wife and the hated wife—if the firstborn son is of her that is hated,[16]then on the day that the man causes his sons to inherit what he possesses, he may not make the son of the beloved wife the firstborn before the son of the hated wife, the son who is actually the firstborn.[17]Instead, he must acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the hated wife, by giving him a double portion of all that he possesses, for that son is the beginning of his strength. The right of the firstborn belongs to him.

[18]If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, even though they correct him, will not listen to them;[19]then his father and his mother must lay hold on him and bring him out to the elders of his city and to the gate of his city.
[20]They must say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.'[21]Then all the men of his city must stone him to death with stones; and you will remove the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and fear.

[22]If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree,[23]then his body must not remain all night on the tree. You must surely bury him the same day; for whoever is hanged is cursed by God. You must not defile the land that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Deuteronomy 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Elders

Older men were required to lead the people of Israel and help to administer justice. These men would function as judges, which would later become a more official position. (See: justice)

Peace in Israel

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The rules and instructions in this chapter help to ensure peace in Israel. This is not a military peace. Instead, it is about establishing peace within Israel and among the people.

Links:

Deuteronomy 21:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 21:1
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the people of Israel.
If someone is found killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If someone finds a person whom someone else has killed"
lying in the field
The dead person is lying in the field.
it is not known who has attacked him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nobody knows who attacked him"
Deuteronomy 21:2
they must measure to the cities
"they must measure the distance to the cities"
him who has been killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "him whom someone has killed" or "the dead body"
Deuteronomy 21:3
has not borne the yoke
"has not worn a yoke"
Deuteronomy 21:4
running water
This is an idiom for water that is moving. Alternate translation: "a stream"
a valley that has been neither plowed nor sown
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a valley where nobody has plowed the ground or planted seeds"
Deuteronomy 21:5
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
must come forward
"must come to the valley"
for Yahweh your God has chosen them to serve him
"because the priests are the ones whom Yahweh your God has chosen to serve him"
Yahweh your God
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if he were speaking to one man, so the word "your" is singular.
give blessing
"bless the people of Israel"
in the name of Yahweh
Here the metonym "in the name of" refers to Yahweh and his authority. Alternate translation: "as one who says and does what Yahweh himself would say and do"
Yahweh and to decide every case of dispute and assault by their word
"Yahweh, and they will be the ones who settle all disagreements and cases of violence"
Deuteronomy 21:6
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
the heifer whose neck was broken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the heifer whose neck the priests broke"
Deuteronomy 21:7
they must answer to the case
"they must testify to Yahweh about this case"
Our hands have not shed this blood
Here "hands" are a synecdoche for the whole person and "shed this blood" is a metonym for killing an innocent person. Alternate translation: "We did not kill this innocent person"
neither have our eyes seen it
Here "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "and we did not see anyone kill this person"
Deuteronomy 21:8
General Information:
Moses continues to tell the elders what they should say when they wash their hands over the heifer. He speaks to them as if he were speaking to one man, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
whom you have redeemed
Yahweh rescuing the people of Israel from being slaves in Egypt is spoken of as if Yahweh paid money to redeem his people from slavery.
do not put guilt for innocent bloodshed in the midst of your people Israel
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "do not treat your people Israel as if they are guilty of killing an innocent person"
Then the bloodshed will be forgiven them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh will forgive his people Israel for the death of an innocent person"
Deuteronomy 21:9
you will completely remove the innocent blood from your midst
"you will not be guilty any more of killing an innocent person"
what is right in the eyes of Yahweh
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what is right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"
Deuteronomy 21:10
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel as if he were speaking to one man, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
you go out
"you who are soldiers go out"
Deuteronomy 21:11
you delight in her
The word "delight in" here probably refers to tender feelings rather than sexual desire.
wish to take her for yourself as a wife
"want to marry her"
Deuteronomy 21:12

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she will shave her head
"she will shave the hair off of her head"
cut her nails
"cut her fingernails"
Deuteronomy 21:13
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel as if he were speaking to one man, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
she will take off the clothes she was wearing
She will do this after the man brings her to his house and when she shaves her head and cuts her fingernails and toenails as mentioned in [Deuteronomy 21:12]
when she was taken captive
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when you took her captive"
a full month
"an entire month" or "a whole month"
After that you may go to her
This is a polite way of referring to having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "After that you may have sexual relations with her" or "After that you may lie with her"
Deuteronomy 21:14
But if you take no delight in her
You may need to make explicit that the man sleeps with the woman. Alternate translation: "But if you sleep with her and then decide that you do not want her as your wife"
let her go where she wishes
"let her go wherever she wants to go"
because you have humiliated her
"because you shamed her by sleeping with her and then sending her away"
Deuteronomy 21:15
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
one is loved and the other is hated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "the man loves one of his wives and he hates the other wife" or 2) "the man loves one wife more than he loves the other wife"
if the firstborn son is of her that is hated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the firstborn son belongs to the wife whom the man hates"
Deuteronomy 21:16
then on the day that the man
"when the man"
the man causes his sons to inherit what he possesses
"the man gives his possessions to his sons as an inheritance"
he may not make the son of the beloved wife the firstborn before the son of the hated wife
"he may not treat the son of the beloved wife as if he were the firstborn instead of the son of the hated wife"
Deuteronomy 21:17
a double portion
"twice as much"
that son is the beginning of his strength
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that son is the one who shows that the man can become the father of sons"
Deuteronomy 21:18
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother
Here "voice" is a metonym for what a person says. Alternate translation: "who will not obey what his father or mother say"
they correct him
"they punish him for his wrongdoing" or "they train and instruct him"
Deuteronomy 21:19
must lay hold on him and bring him out
"must force him to come out"
Deuteronomy 21:20
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" are singular.
This son of ours
"Our son"
he will not obey our voice
Here "voice" is a metonym for what a person says or a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "he will not do what we tell him to do" or "he will not obey us"
a glutton
a person who eats and drinks too much
a drunkard
a person who drinks too much alcohol and gets drunk often
Deuteronomy 21:21
stone him to death with stones
"throw stones at him until he dies"
you will remove the evil from among you
The adjective "evil" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites the person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil person"
All Israel
The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "All the people of Israel"
will hear of it and fear
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "will hear about what happened to the son and be afraid that the people will punish them also"
Deuteronomy 21:22
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel as if he were speaking to one man, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
If a man has committed a sin worthy of death
"If a man has done something so bad that you need to punish him by killing him"
he is put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you execute him" or "you kill him"
you hang him on a tree
Possible meanings are 1) "after he has died you hang him on a tree" or 2) "you kill him by hanging him on a wooden post"
Deuteronomy 21:23
bury him the same day

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"bury him on the same day as when you execute him"

for whoever is hanged is cursed by God

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "because God curses everyone whom people hang on trees" and 2) "for people hang on trees those whom God has cursed."

You must not defile the land

Leaving the body on the tree would defile the land.

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22 [1]You must not watch your fellow Israelite's ox or his sheep go astray and hide yourself from them; you must surely bring them back to him.[2]If your fellow Israelite is not near to you, or if you do not know him, then you must bring the animal home to your house, and it must be with you until he looks for it, and then you must restore it to him.
[3]You must do the same with his donkey; you must do the same with his garment; you must do the same with every lost thing of your fellow Israelite's, anything that he has lost and you have found; you must not hide yourself.[4]You must not see your fellow Israelite's donkey or his ox fallen down in the road and hide yourself from them; you must surely help him to lift it up again.

[5]A woman must not wear what pertains to a man, and neither must a man put on women's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to Yahweh your God.

[6]If a bird's nest happens to be in front of you on the road, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs in it, and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you must not take the mother along with the young.[7]You must surely let the mother go, but the young you may take for yourself. Obey this command so that it may go well with you, and that you may prolong your days.

[8]When you build a new house, then you must make a railing for your roof so that you do not bring blood on your house if anyone falls from there.

[9]You must not plant your vineyard with two kinds of seed, so that the whole harvest is not confiscated by the holy place, the seed that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard.[10]You must not plow with an ox and a donkey together.[11]You must not wear fabric made of wool and linen together.

[12]You must make yourself fringes on the four corners of the cloak with which you clothe yourself.

[13]Suppose a man takes a wife, and he goes to her, and then hates her,[14]and then accuses her of shameful deeds and puts a bad reputation on her, and says, 'I took this woman, but when I came near to her, I found no proof of virginity in her.'
[15]Then the father and mother of the girl must take proof of her virginity to the elders at the city gate.
[16]The girl's father must say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter to this man as a wife, and he hates her.[17]See, he has accused her of shameful things and said, "I did not find in your daughter the proof of virginity." But here is the proof of my daughter's virginity.' Then they will spread the garment out before the elders of the city.
[18]The elders of that city must take that man and punish him;[19]and they must force him to pay a fine of one hundred shekels of silver, and give them to the father of the girl, because the man has caused a bad reputation for a virgin of Israel. She must be his wife; he may not send her away during all his days.
[20]But if this thing is true, that the proof of virginity was not found in the girl,[21]then they must bring out the girl to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city must stone her to death with stones, because she has committed a disgraceful action in Israel, to act as a prostitute in her father's house; and you will remove the evil from among you.

[22]If a man is found lying with a woman who is married to another man, then they must both die, the man who was lying with the woman and the woman herself; and you will remove the evil from Israel.

[23]If there is a girl who is a virgin, betrothed to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her,[24]take both of them to the city gate, and stone them to death. You must stone the girl, because she did not cry out, even though she was in the city. You must stone the man, because he violated his neighbor's wife; and you will remove the evil from among you.

[25]But if the man finds the betrothed girl in the field, and if he seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lies with her must die.[26]But to the girl you must do nothing; there is no sin worthy of death in the girl. For this case is like when a man attacks his neighbor and kills him.[27]For he found her in the field; the betrothed girl cried out, but there was no one to save her.

[28]If a man finds a girl who is a virgin but who is not betrothed, and if he seizes her and lies with her, and if they are discovered,[29]then the man who lay with her must give fifty shekels of silver to the girl's father, and she must become his wife, because he has violated her. He may not send her away during all his days.

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[30]A man must not take his father's wife as his own; he must not take away his father's marriage rights.

Deuteronomy 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Order in Israel

The instructions in this chapter help to maintain order in this chapter. The people are to have integrity. The people's sin will result in serious punishment. (See: sin)

Virgin woman

If a woman was not a virgin, she was not considered to be worth marrying. The man who slept with her was responsible for providing for her since she will not be able to find a husband to provide for her.

Links:

Deuteronomy 22:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 22:1

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

go astray

"walk away from its owner"

hide yourself from them

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "act as if you do not see them" or "go away without doing anything"

Deuteronomy 22:2

If your fellow Israelite is not near to you

"If your fellow Israelite lives far away from you"

or if you do not know him

"or if you do not know who the owner of the animal is"

it must be with you until he looks for it

"you must keep the animal with you until its owner comes looking for it"

Deuteronomy 22:3

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

You must do the same with his donkey

"You must return his donkey in the same way"

you must do the same with his garment

"you must return his clothing in the same way"

you must not hide yourself

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you must not act as if you do not see that he has lost something" or "you must not go away without doing anything"

Deuteronomy 22:4

you must surely help him to lift it up again

"you must help your fellow Israelite lift the animal back up onto its feet"

Deuteronomy 22:5

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

what pertains to a man

"men's clothing"

Deuteronomy 22:6

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

bird's nest

a home that birds make for themselves out of sticks, grass, plants, and mud

with young ones or eggs in it

"with baby birds or eggs in the nest"

the mother sitting on the young

"the mother bird is sitting on the baby birds"

Deuteronomy 22:7

prolong your days

Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

Deuteronomy 22:8

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

a railing for your roof

a low fence around the edge of the roof so people will not fall off the roof

so that you do not bring blood on your house

Blood is a symbol for death. Alternate translation: "so that it will not be the fault of your household if someone dies"

if anyone falls from there

"if anyone falls from the roof because you did not make a railing"

Deuteronomy 22:9

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

so that the whole harvest is not confiscated by the holy place

The words "holy place" is a metonym for the priests who work in the holy place. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the priests in Yahweh's holy place do not take away the whole harvest" or "so that you do not defile the whole harvest and the priests do not allow you to use it"

the yield of the vineyard

"the fruit that grows in the vineyard"

Deuteronomy 22:11

wool

soft, curly hair that grows on a sheep

linen

thread made from the flax plant

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Deuteronomy 22:12
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" here is singular.
fringes
threads that are bound together and hang from the end of each corner of the cloak
the cloak
a long garment that a person wears over his other clothes
Deuteronomy 22:13
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
he goes to her
This is a polite way of referring to having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "he has sexual relations with her" or "he lies with her"
Deuteronomy 22:14
then accuses her of shameful deeds
"then accuses her of having had sexual relations with someone else before she was married"
puts a bad reputation on her
The abstract noun "reputation" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "makes other people think she is a bad person"
but when I came near to her
This is a polite way of referring to sexual relations. Alternate translation: "but when I had sexual relations with her"
I found no proof of virginity in her
The abstract noun "proof" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "she could not prove to me that she was a virgin"
Deuteronomy 22:15
General Information:
Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.
must take proof of her virginity
The abstract nouns "proof" and "virginity" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "must take something that proves that she has never had sexual relations"
Deuteronomy 22:16
General Information:
Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 22:17
he has accused her of shameful things
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he has accused her of having slept with someone before he married her"
I did not find in your daughter the proof of virginity
The abstract nouns "proof" and "virginity" can be translated as verb phrases. Alternate translation: "Your daughter could not prove that she has never had sexual relations"
But here is the proof of my daughter's virginity
The abstract nouns "proof" and "virginity" can be translated as verb phrases. Alternate translation: "But this proves that my daughter has never had sexual relations"
Then they will spread the garment out before the elders of the city
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "And then the mother and father will show the clothing with the bloodstain to the elders as proof that she was a virgin"
Deuteronomy 22:18
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Deuteronomy 22:19
they must force him to pay a fine
"they must make him pay as a punishment"
one hundred shekels
"100 shekels"
give them to the father of the girl
"give the money to the father of the girl"
has caused a bad reputation for a virgin of Israel
The abstract noun "reputation" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "has caused people to think that a virgin of Israel is a bad person"
he may not send her away
"never allow him to divorce her"
during all his days
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "for his entire life"
Deuteronomy 22:20
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
But if this thing is true
"But if it is true" or "But if what the man said is true"
that the proof of virginity was not found in the girl
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the man did not find proof that the girl was a virgin"
the proof of virginity
The abstract nouns "proof" and "virginity" can be translated as verb phrases. Alternate translation: "something that proves that the girl has never had sexual relations"
Deuteronomy 22:21
then they must bring out the girl
"then the elders must bring out the girl"
stone her to death with stones
"throw stones at her until she dies"
because she has committed a disgraceful action in Israel
"because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel"
to act as a prostitute in her father's house
"acting like a prostitute while living in her father's house"
you will remove the evil
The adjective "evil" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites the person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil person"
Deuteronomy 22:22
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" is singular.
If a man is found
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If someone finds a man"
lying with
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "having sexual relations with"
and you will remove

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"in this way you will remove"
Deuteronomy 22:23
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" is singular.
betrothed to a man
"who is promised to marry a man"
lies with her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with her"
Deuteronomy 22:24
take ... and stone
These commands are addressed to Israel as a group and so are plural.
take both of them
"then you must bring both the girl and the man who slept with her"
because she did not cry out
"because she did not call for help"
because he violated his neighbor's wife
The Israelites at that time thought of a man and woman who had engaged each other for marriage as husband and wife. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "because he slept with a girl who belongs to a fellow Israelite"
you will remove the evil from among you
The adjective "evil" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites the person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil person"
Deuteronomy 22:25
the betrothed girl
a girl whose parents have agreed to let her marry a certain man, but she has not married him yet
lies with her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with her"
then only the man who lies with her must die
"then you must only kill the man who lay with her"
Deuteronomy 22:26
there is no sin worthy of death in the girl
"you are not to punish her by killing her for what she did"
For this case is like when a man attacks his neighbor and kills him
"Because this situation is like the situation when somebody attacks another person and kills him"
Deuteronomy 22:27
For he found her in the field
"Because the man found the girl working in the field"
Deuteronomy 22:28
but who is not betrothed
"but whose parents have not promised another man that she will marry him"
lies with her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "has sexual relations with her"
if they are discovered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if somebody finds out what happened"
Deuteronomy 22:29
who lay with her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who had sexual relations with her"
fifty shekels of silver
A shekel weighs eleven grams. Alternate translation: "fifty pieces of silver" or "550 grams of silver"
He may not send her away during all his days
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "He must never divorce her during his entire life"
Deuteronomy 22:30
must not take his father's wife as his own
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "must not marry his father's former wife, even if she is not his mother"

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23 [1]No man whose genitals are crushed or cut off may enter the assembly of Yahweh.

[2]No illegitimate child may belong to the assembly of Yahweh; as far as to the tenth generation of his descendants, none of them may belong to the assembly of Yahweh.

[3]An Ammonite or a Moabite may not belong to the assembly of Yahweh; as far as to the tenth generation of his descendants, none of them may belong to the assembly of Yahweh.[4]This is because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the road when you had come out of Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram Naharaim, to curse you.
[5]But Yahweh your God would not listen to Balaam; instead, Yahweh your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because Yahweh your God loved you.[6]You must never seek their peace or prosperity, during all your days.

[7]You must not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother; you must not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a foreigner in his land.[8]The descendants of the third generation that are born to them may belong to the assembly of Yahweh.

[9]When you march out as an army against your enemies, then you must keep yourselves from every evil thing.[10]If there is among you any man who is unclean because of a nighttime accident, then he must go out of the army's camp; he must not come back into the camp.[11]When evening comes, he must bathe himself in water; when the sun goes down, he will come back inside the camp.
[12]You must have a place also outside the camp to which you will go;[13]and you will have something among your tools to dig with; when you squat down to relieve yourself, you must dig with it and then put back the earth and cover up what has

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come out from you.[14]For Yahweh your God walks in the midst of your camp to give you victory and to give your enemies into your hand. Therefore your camp must be holy, so that he may not see any unclean thing among you and turn away from you.

[15]You must not give back to his master a slave who has escaped from his master.[16]Let him live with you, in whatever town he chooses. Do not oppress him.

[17]There must be no cultic prostitute among any of the daughters of Israel, neither must there be a cultic prostitute among the sons of Israel.[18]You must not bring the wages of a prostitute or the wages of a dog into the house of Yahweh your God for any vow; for both these are abominations to Yahweh your God.

[19]You must not lend on interest to your fellow Israelite—interest of money, interest of food, or the interest of anything that is lent on interest.[20]To a foreigner you may lend on interest; but to your fellow Israelite you must not lend on interest, so that Yahweh your God may bless you in all that you put your hand to, in the land which you are going in to possess.

[21]When you make a vow to Yahweh your God, you must not be slow in fulfilling it, for Yahweh your God will surely require it of you; it would be sin for you not to fulfill it.[22]But if you will refrain from making a vow, it will be no sin for you.[23]That which has gone out from your lips you must observe and do; according as you have vowed to Yahweh your God, anything that you have freely promised with your mouth.

[24]When you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you desire, but do not put any in your basket.[25]When you go into your neighbor's ripe grain, you may pluck the heads of grain with your hand, but do not put a sickle to your neighbor's ripe grain.

Deuteronomy 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The assembly of Yahweh

This was probably the corporate worship of Yahweh, when the people would come together to worship him.

Links:

Deuteronomy 23:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 23:1

man whose genitals are crushed or cut off

"man whose private body parts someone has crushed or cut off." Moses is referring to a man's male organs.

may enter the assembly of Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "may be a full member of the Israelite community"

Deuteronomy 23:2

illegitimate child

Possible meanings are 1) a child born to parents who committed incest or adultery or 2) a child born to a prostitute.

as far as to the tenth generation of his descendants

This "tenth" is the ordinal number for ten. Alternate translation: "even after ten generations of the illegitimate child's descendants"

none of them

"none of these descendants"

Deuteronomy 23:3

may not belong to the assembly of Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "may not be a full member of the Israelite community"

as far as to the tenth generation of his descendants

This "tenth"is the ordinal number for ten. Alternate translation: "even after ten generations of his descendants"

Deuteronomy 23:4

they did not meet you with bread and with water

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they did not welcome you by bringing you food and drink"

against you ... curse you

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" here is singular.

Deuteronomy 23:5

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

would not listen

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "did not pay attention"

turned the curse into a blessing for you

"had him bless you and not curse you"

Deuteronomy 23:6

You must never seek their peace or prosperity

Possible meanings are 1) "You should never make a peace treaty with the Ammonites and the Moabites" or 2) "You must not do anything to cause things to go well for those 2 people groups to enable them to prosper" .

during all your days

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "as long as you are a

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nation"
Deuteronomy 23:7
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
You must not detest an Edomite
"Do not hate an Edomite"
for he is your brother
"because he is your relative"
you must not abhor an Egyptian
"do not hate an Egyptian"
Deuteronomy 23:8
The descendants of the third generation that are born to them may belong to the assembly of Yahweh
This "third" is the ordinal number for three. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If an Edomite or an Egyptian comes to live in the Israelite community, his grandchildren may become full members of that community"
Deuteronomy 23:9
When you march out as an army against your enemies, then you must keep yourselves
Moses speaks here to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" are singular.
against your enemies
"to fight against your enemies"
keep yourselves from every evil thing
"keep yourselves away from all bad things"
Deuteronomy 23:10
any man who is unclean because of a nighttime accident
This is a polite way of saying that he had an emission of semen. Alternate translation: "any man who is unclean because he had an emission of semen while he was asleep"
Deuteronomy 23:12
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 23:13
you will have something among your tools to dig with
"you should have a tool that you can use to dig with"
when you squat down to relieve yourself
This is a polite way of saying to defecate. Alternate translation: "when you squat down to defecate"
you must dig with it
"you must dig a hole with the tool"
cover up what has come out from you
"cover up your excrement"
Deuteronomy 23:14
so that he may not see any unclean thing among you
"so that Yahweh may not see any unclean thing among you"
Deuteronomy 23:15
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
a slave who has escaped from his master
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "a slave from another country who escaped from his master and came to Israel"
Deuteronomy 23:16
Let him live with you
"Let the slave live among your people"
Deuteronomy 23:17
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
cultic prostitute ... among any of the daughters ... among the sons
Possible meanings are that Moses 1) openly forbids women and men to perform sexual acts as part of temple service or 2) uses a euphemism to forbid women and men to perform sexual acts to receive money.
Deuteronomy 23:18
You must not bring the wages of a prostitute ... into the house
"A woman who earns money as a prostitute must not bring that money ... into the house"
a dog
a man who allows men to have sex with him for money
into the house of Yahweh your God
"into the temple"
for any vow
"to fulfill a vow"
both these
the wages of a female prostitute and of a male prostitute.
Deuteronomy 23:19
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
lend on interest
to lend to somebody and force that person to pay back more than was lent
interest of money ... anything that is lent on interest
"you must not charge interest when you lend somebody money, food, or anything else"
Deuteronomy 23:20
all that you put your hand to
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "all that you do"
Deuteronomy 23:21
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
you must not be slow in fulfilling it
"you must not take a long time to fulfill the vow"
for Yahweh your God will surely require it of you
"because Yahweh your God will blame you and punish you if you do not fulfill your vow"
Deuteronomy 23:22
But if you will refrain from making a vow, it will be no sin for you
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But, if you do not make a vow, you will not sin because you will not have a vow to fulfill"
Deuteronomy 23:23
That which has gone out from your lips
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The words you have spoken"
according as you have vowed to Yahweh your God
"whatever you have vowed to Yahweh your God that you will do"
anything that you have freely promised with your mouth
"anything that people have heard you promise to do

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because you wanted to do it"

with your mouth

"so that people heard you say it"

Deuteronomy 23:24

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

you may eat as many grapes as you desire

"then you may enjoy eating grapes until you are full"

but do not put any in your basket

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "but you may not put any grapes in your bag to take them away with you"

Deuteronomy 23:25

When you go into your neighbor's ripe grain

"When you walk through your neighbor's field where there is grain growing"

you may pluck the heads of grain with your hand

"then you may eat the kernels of grain with your hand"

but do not put a sickle to your neighbor's ripe grain

"but do not cut down your neighbor's ripe grain and take it with you"

sickle

a sharp tool that farmers use to harvest wheat

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24 [1]When a man takes a wife and marries her, if she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found something shameful about her, then he must write her a certificate of divorce, put it into her hand, and send her out of his house.[2]When she has gone out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife.
[3]If the second husband hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it into her hand, and sends her out of his house; or if the second husband dies, the man who took her to be his wife—[4]then her former husband, the one who had first sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after she has become unclean; for that would be an abomination to Yahweh. You must not cause the land to become guilty, the land that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance.

[5]When a man takes a new wife, he will not go to war with the army, neither may he be commanded to go on any forced duty; he will be free to be at home for one year and will bring joy to his wife whom he has taken.

[6]No man may take a mill or an upper millstone as a pledge, for that would be taking a person's life as a pledge.

[7]If a man is found kidnapping any of his brothers from among the people of Israel, and treats him as a slave and sells him, that thief must die; and you will remove the evil from among you.

[8]Be careful regarding any plague of leprosy, so that you carefully observe and follow every instruction given to you which the priests, the Levites, teach you; as I commanded them, so you will act.[9]Call to mind what Yahweh your God did to Miriam as you were coming out of Egypt.

[10]When you make your neighbor any kind of loan, you must not go into his house to fetch his pledge.[11]You will stand outside, and the man to whom you have lent will bring the pledge outside to you.
[12]If he is a poor man, you must not lie down with his pledge in your possession.[13]You must surely restore to him the pledge by the time the sun goes down, so that he may lie down in his cloak and bless you; it will be righteousness for you before Yahweh your God.

[14]You must not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether he is of your fellow Israelites or of the foreigners who are in your land within your city gates.[15]Each day you must give him his wage; the sun must not go down on this unsettled matter, for he is poor and is counting on it. Do this so that he does not cry out against you to Yahweh, and so that it not be a sin that you have committed.

[16]The parents must not be put to death for their children, neither must the children be put to death for their parents. Everyone must be put to death for his own sin.

[17]You must not twist the justice that is due the foreigner or the fatherless, nor take the widow's cloak as a pledge.
[18]Remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and that Yahweh your God rescued you from there. Therefore I instruct you to obey this command.

[19]When you reap your harvest in your field, and if you have forgotten an omer of grain in the field, you must not go back to get it; it must be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, or for the widow, so that Yahweh your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.[20]When you beat the olives off your olive tree, you must not go over the branches again; it will be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, or for the widow.
[21]When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you must not glean it again. What is left over will be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, and for the widow.[22]You must call to mind that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I instruct you to obey this command.

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Deuteronomy 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the teaching about how to maintain justice in Israel. (See: justice)

Special concepts in this chapter

"No man may take a mill or an upper millstone as a pledge"

A millstone was the way a person made a living. To take a person's millstone was to take take away the way they earned money and produced food.

Lending money

Lending money to fellow Israelites was a way to help them out. It was not intended to be a way to make money off their brothers. This chapter gives limitations regarding the lending of money.

Links:

Deuteronomy 24:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 24:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

When a man takes a wife and marries her

The phrases "takes a wife" and "marries her" mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "When a man marries a woman"

if she finds no favor in his eyes

Here the "eyes" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "if he decides that he does not like her"

because he has found something shameful about her

The word translated "shameful" here implies sexual immorality.

he must write her a certificate of divorce

"he must give his wife an official paper saying that they are not married anymore"

Deuteronomy 24:2

she may go and be another man's wife

"she may go and marry another man"

Deuteronomy 24:3

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel about a woman who gets a divorce and marries another man. Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

If the second husband hates her

"If the second husband decides that he hates the woman"

certificate of divorce

This is an official paper saying that the man and woman are not married anymore. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 24:1.

puts it into her hand

"gives it to the woman"

Deuteronomy 24:4

after she has become unclean

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "after she has become unclean by the divorce and remarriage to another man"

You must not cause the land to become guilty

The land is spoken of as if it could sin. Alternate translation: "You must not spread guilt around in the land"

Deuteronomy 24:5

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

When a man takes a new wife

"When a man is newly married to a woman"

neither may he be commanded to go on any forced duty

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and no one is to force him to live away from his home and do any kind of work"

he will be free to be at home

"he will be free to live at home"

Deuteronomy 24:6

mill

a tool for making flour by grinding grain in between two heavy discs of stone

upper millstone

the top disc of stone in a mill

for that would be taking a person's life as a pledge

The word "life" is a metonym for what a person needs to keep himself alive. Alternate translation: "because he would be taking from the man what the man needs to make food for his family"

Deuteronomy 24:7

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

If a man is found kidnapping

This is an idiom for "If a man kidnaps." It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you find a man kidnapping"

kidnapping

using physical force to take an innocent person away from his home and imprison him

any of his brothers from among the people of Israel

"any of his fellow Israelites"

that thief must die

"then other Israelites should kill that thief as a punishment for what he did"

you will remove the evil from among you

The adjective "evil" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "you must remove from among the Israelites the person who does this evil thing" or "you must execute this evil person"

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Deuteronomy 24:8

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Be careful ... you carefully observe

Moses speaks to the Israelites here as if they were one man, so the word "you" and the command "be careful" are singular.

Be careful regarding any plague of leprosy

"Pay attention if you suffer from leprosy" or "Pay attention if you have leprosy"

every instruction given to you which the priests, the Levites, teach you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all of the instructions that I have given you and that the priests, who are Levites, teach you to do"

teach you ... you will act

Moses here speaks to the Israelites as a group, so these instances of the word "you" are plural.

as I commanded them, so you will act

"you must make sure that you do exactly what I have commanded them"

commanded them

The word "them" refers to the priests, who are Levites.

Deuteronomy 24:9

Call to mind what Yahweh your God

Moses speaks to the Israelites here as if they were one man, so the word "your" and the command "call to mind" are singular.

you were coming out

Moses here speaks to the Israelites as a group, so the word "you" is plural.

Call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Remember"

as you were coming out of Egypt

"during the time when you were leaving Egypt"

Deuteronomy 24:10

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

When you make your neighbor any kind of loan

"When you loan something to your neighbor"

to fetch his pledge

"to take his pledge"

his pledge

This refers to what he has promised that he would give you if he did not pay back the loan.

Deuteronomy 24:11

You will stand outside

"You should wait outside his house"

Deuteronomy 24:12

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

you must not lie down with his pledge in your possession

"you must not keep his coat overnight" or "you must return his pledge before you lie down to sleep"

his pledge

This refers to what he has promised that he would give you if he did not pay back the loan. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 24:10.

Deuteronomy 24:13

restore to him the pledge

"give him back what he has given you to show that he will pay back the loan"

so that he may lie down in his cloak and bless you

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "so that he will have his coat to keep himself warm when he sleeps, and he will be grateful to you"

cloak

This is a coat or other clothing that keeps a person warm at night. This was probably the "pledge" Moses was speaking of in Deuteronomy 24:10-12.

it will be righteousness for you before Yahweh your God

"Yahweh your God will approve of the way you handled this matter"

Deuteronomy 24:14

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

You must not oppress a hired servant

"You must not treat a hired servant poorly"

hired servant

a person who gets paid daily for his work

poor and needy

These two words have similar meanings and emphasize that this is a person who cannot help himself.

within your city gates

Here "city gates" mean towns or cities. Alternate translation: "in one of your cities"

Deuteronomy 24:15

Each day you must give him his wage

"You should give the man the money he earns every single day"

the sun must not go down on this unsettled matter

This is an idiom. The Israelites considered the new day as starting when the sun went down. Alternate translation: "you should pay the man on the same day he does the work"

for he is poor and is counting on it

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "because he is poor and depends on his wages to buy his food for the next day"

he does not cry out against you to Yahweh

"he does not call out to Yahweh and ask him to punish you"

Deuteronomy 24:16

The parents must not be put to death for their children

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You must not execute the parents because of something bad that one of their children did"

neither must the children be put to death for their parents

This can be stated in active form, Alternate translation: "and you must not execute the children because of something bad that their parents did"

Everyone must be put to death for his own sin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you should only execute a person because of something bad that he did himself"

Deuteronomy 24:17

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General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
You must not twist the justice that is due the foreigner or the fatherless
Moses speaks of justice as if it were a physical object that someone can twist. To twist justice is to do what is not just or right. Alternate translation: "You must not treat a foreigner or the fatherless unfairly"
fatherless
This refers to children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.
nor take the widow's cloak as a pledge
A lender would take something from the borrower to ensure that she would pay him back. He was not allowed to take her coat because she needed it to stay warm. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and do not take a widow's cloak as a pledge because she needs it"
Deuteronomy 24:19
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
When you reap your harvest in your field
"When you cut down the grain in your field"
an omer of grain
Some versions translate this as "a sheaf." Either translation refers to stalks of grain, enough to be easily carried, possibly tied in a bundle.
it must be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, or for the widow
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "you must leave the sheaf so a foreigner, an orphan, or a widow can take it"
in all the work of your hands
Here "hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "in all the work that you do"
Deuteronomy 24:20
When you beat the olives off your olive tree
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "When you shake the branches of your olive tree, causing the olives to fall to the ground so you can pick them up"
you must not go over the branches again
"do not pick every single olive from the tree"
it will be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, or for the widow
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "the olives that stay on the branches are for foreigners, orphans, and widows to pick and take with them"
Deuteronomy 24:21
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
What is left over will be for the foreigner, for the fatherless, and for the widow
"The grapes that you do not pick will be for the foreigner, the fatherless, and the widow to pick"
for the foreigner, for the fatherless, and for the widow
These refer to groups of people. Alternate translation: "for foreigners, for those who are fatherless, and for the widows"
Deuteronomy 24:22
call to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember"

25 [1]If there is a dispute between men and they go to court, and the judges judge them, then they will acquit the righteous
and condemn the wicked.[2]If the guilty man deserves to be beaten, then the judge will make him lie down and be
beaten in his presence with the ordered number of blows, according to his wickedness.
[3]The judge may give him forty blows, but he may not exceed that number; for if he should exceed that number and beat
him with many more blows, then your fellow Israelite would be humiliated before your eyes.

[4]You must not muzzle the ox when he threshes the grain.

[5]If brothers live together and one of them dies, not having any son, then the wife of the dead man must not be married off
to someone else outside the family. Instead, her husband's brother must go to her and take her to himself as a wife, and
do the duty of a husband's brother to her.[6]This is so that the firstborn that she bears will succeed in the name of that
man's dead brother, so that his name will not perish from Israel.
[7]But if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife for himself, then his brother's wife must go up to the gate to the
elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to raise up for his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of
a husband's brother to me.'[8]Then the elders of his city must call him and speak to him. But suppose that he insists and
says, 'I do not wish to take her.'
[9]Then his brother's wife must come up to him in the presence of the elders, take off his sandal from his foot, and spit in
his face. She must answer him and say, 'This is what is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.'[10]His
name will be called in Israel, 'The house of him whose sandal has been taken off.'

[11]If men fight with each other, and the wife of one comes to rescue her husband out of the hand of him who struck him,
and if she stretches out her hand and takes him by the private parts,[12]then you must cut off her hand; your eye must have
no pity.

[13]You must not have in your bag different weights, a large and a small.[14]You must not have in your house different
measures, a large and a small.

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[15]A perfect and just weight you must have; a perfect and just measure you must have, so that your days may be long in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you.[16]For all who do such things, all that act unrighteously, are an abomination to Yahweh your God.

[17]Call to mind what Amalek did to you on the road as you came out of Egypt,[18]how he met you on the road and attacked those of you at the rear, all who were feeble in your rear, when you were faint and weary; he did not honor God.
[19]Therefore, when Yahweh your God has given you rest from all your enemies round about, in the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you must not forget that you must blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

Deuteronomy 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to teach about justice in Israel. (See: justice)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"A perfect and just weight you must have"

In the ancient Near East, people weighed gold and silver on a scale and used it as money. God was commanding people to use accurate weights for weighing the gold and silver. He did not want them to rob people by using inaccurate weights.

Links:

Deuteronomy 25:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 25:1

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 25:2

If the guilty man deserves to be beaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If the judge orders them to beat the guilty man"

be beaten in his presence

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will watch them beat him"

with the ordered number of blows, according to his wickedness

"the number of times he has ordered because of the bad deed he did"

Deuteronomy 25:3

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

The judge may give him forty blows

"The judge may say that they should beat the guilty person 40 times"

but he may not exceed that number

"but the judge may not order them to beat him more than 40 times"

for if he should exceed that number and beat him with many more blows

"because if the judge orders them to beat him many more than 40 times"

then your fellow Israelite would be humiliated before your eyes

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then the judge would humiliate your fellow Israelite in front of all of the people of Israel"

humiliated before your eyes

Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "humiliated, and you would all see it"

Deuteronomy 25:4

You must not muzzle the ox

"You must not put something over the mouth of an ox"

when he threshes the grain

while he separates the grain from the chaff by walking on it or dragging heavy wood over it

Deuteronomy 25:5

General Information:

Moses is still speaking to the people of Israel.

If brothers live together

Possible meanings are: 1) "If brothers live on the same property" or 2) "If brothers live near each other."

then the wife of the dead man must not be married off to someone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then the family of the dead man must not let the widow marry someone"

must go to her

This is a polite way of talking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "shall have sexual relations with her" or "shall lie with her"

do the duty of a husband's brother to her

"do what the brother of a dead husband is supposed to do"

Deuteronomy 25:6

will succeed in the name of that man's dead brother

The word "name" is a metonym for the person's family line. Alternate translation: "will continue the family line of that man's dead brother"

so that his name will not perish from Israel

The word "name" is a metonym for the person's family line. Alternate translation: "so that his family line will not disappear from Israel"

Deuteronomy 25:7

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

must go up to the gate to the elders

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "must go up to the city gate where the elders judge cases"

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refuses to raise up for his brother a name
Here "name" refers to the memory of someone through his descendants. Alternate translation: "refuses to give his brother a son"
he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me
"he will not do what a husband's brother is supposed to do and marry me"
Deuteronomy 25:8
I do not wish to take her
"I do not wish to marry her"
Deuteronomy 25:9
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.
must come up to him in the presence of the elders
"must walk up close to him with the elders there watching"
who does not build up his brother's house
Here "house" is a metonym for the family. Alternate translation: "who does not give his brother a son and continue his brother's family line"
Deuteronomy 25:10
His name will be called in Israel
"People in Israel will know his family as"
The house of him whose sandal has been taken off
Here removing the sandal symbolizes that the brother would not receive any of the property of his dead brother. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The house of him whose sandal his brother's widow took off his foot" or "The family of a man who did not marry the wife of his dead brother" or "The family whom everyone despises" or "The family who is shameful"
Deuteronomy 25:11
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
out of the hand of him who struck him
Here "hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "so the one who struck him will not strike him again" or "from the man who hit him"
Deuteronomy 25:12
your eye must have no pity
Here "eye" means the whole person. Alternate translation: "you should not feel sorry for her" or "you must not show her mercy"
Deuteronomy 25:13
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
You must not have in your bag different weights, a large and a small
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. You can also make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "You must not have in your bag different weights, a large weight and a small weight" or "You must not cheat people by using a weight that is larger than you say it is when you buy things and by using a weight that is smaller than you say it is when you sell things"
weights
Weights were stones used on a balance to determine how much something weighs
Deuteronomy 25:14
You must not have in your house different measures, a large and a small
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. You can also make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "You must not have in your house different measures, a large measure and a small measure" or "You must not cheat people by using a measure that is larger than you say it is when you buy things and by using a measure that is smaller than you say it is when you sell things"
measures
A measure was a basket or other container for measuring how much there is of something.
Deuteronomy 25:15
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel about using fair weights and measures when buying and selling. He speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
A perfect and just
"A correct and fair"
weight ... measure
See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 25:13.
your days may be long
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you may live for a long time"
Deuteronomy 25:16
For all who do such things, all that act unrighteously
"because everyone who cheats people by using different sized weights and measures"
Deuteronomy 25:17
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so except where noted the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Call to mind what Amalek did to you
This is an idiom, and "Amalek" is a metonym for the Amelikite people. Alternate translation: "Remember what the Amalekites did to you"
as you came out
The word "you" here is plural.
Deuteronomy 25:18
how he met you on the road
"how they met you along the way"
attacked those of you at the rear
"attacked those of your people who were in the back of the line"
all who were feeble in your rear
"all the people who were weak in the back of the line"
faint and weary
These words have similar meanings and emphasize how tired the people were. Alternate translation: "tired and exhausted"
he did not honor God
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he was not afraid of God's punishment" or "he did not respect God"

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Deuteronomy 25:19
you must blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven
"you must kill all of the Amalekites so that nobody will remember them anymore"

26 [1]When you have come into the land that Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance, and when you possess it
and live in it,[2]then you must take some of the first of all the produce of the land that you have brought in from the
land that Yahweh your God is giving you. You must put it in a basket and go to the place where Yahweh your God will
choose to make a dwelling for his name.
[3]You must go to the priest who will be serving in those days and say to him, 'I acknowledge today to Yahweh your God that
I have come to the land that Yahweh swore to our ancestors to give us.'[4]The priest must take the basket out of your hand
and set it down before the altar of Yahweh your God.
[5]You must say before Yahweh your God, 'My ancestor was a wandering Aramean. He went down into Egypt and stayed
there, and his people were few in number. There he became a great, mighty, and populous nation.
[6]The Egyptians treated us badly and afflicted us. They put hard labor on us.[7]We cried out to Yahweh, the God of our
fathers, and he heard our voice and saw our affliction, our labor, and our oppression.
[8]Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, with great fearsomeness, with signs, and
with wonders;[9]and he has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land that flows with milk and honey.
[10]Now look, I have brought the first of the produce of the land that you, Yahweh, have given me.' You must set it down
before Yahweh your God and worship before him;[11]and you must rejoice in all the good that Yahweh your God has done
for you, for your house—you, and the Levite, and the foreigner who is among you.

[12]When you have finished giving all the tithe of your harvest in the third year, that is, the year of tithing, then you must
give it to the Levite, to the foreigner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, so that they may eat within your city gates and
be filled.[13]You must say before Yahweh your God, 'I have completely removed from my house the things that belong to
Yahweh, and have given them to the Levite, to the foreigner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all your
commandments that you have given me. I have not transgressed any of your commandments, neither have I forgotten
them.
[14]I have not eaten any of it in my mourning, nor have I put it somewhere else when I was unclean, nor have I given any of
it in honor of the dead. I have listened to the voice of Yahweh my God; I have obeyed everything you have commanded
me to do.[15]Look down from the holy place where you live, from heaven, and bless your people Israel, and the land that
you have given us, as you had sworn to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

[16]Today Yahweh your God is commanding you to obey these statutes and decrees; you will therefore keep them and do
them with all your heart and with all your soul.[17]You have declared today that Yahweh is your God, and that you will walk
in his ways and keep his statutes, his commandments, and his decrees, and that you will listen to his voice.
[18]Today Yahweh has declared that you are a people who are his own possession, as he had promised you, and that you are
to keep all his commandments,[19]and he will set you high above all the other nations that he has made, and you will
receive praise, fame, and honor. You will be a people that is set apart to Yahweh your God, just as he said."

Deuteronomy 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter recalls the great events of Israel's history when Yahweh brought them out of Egypt.

Links:

Deuteronomy 26:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 26:1
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 26:2
some of the first of all the produce
"some of the first fruits of the crops" or "some of the first crops of the harvest." This "first" is the ordinal number for one.
make a dwelling for his name
Here the phrase "his name" refers to God himself. Yahweh will choose one location where he will live and people will come to worship him there. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 14:23]
Deuteronomy 26:3
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 26:5
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
My ancestor was a wandering Aramean
This is the beginning of the statement that the Israelite

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male should make when bringing his basket.

a wandering Aramean

This refers to Jacob, who was the ancestor of all the Israelites. He lived for many years in Aram-Nahairam, a region located in Syria.

stayed there

"lived the rest of his life there"

There he became

The word "he" is a metonym for "Jacob's descendants."

a great, mighty

These words mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that Israel became a large and powerful nation. Alternate translation: "very great"

Deuteronomy 26:6

General Information:

This continues what the Israelite must say when he brings his first crops to Yahweh.

treated us badly and afflicted us

These two phrases say basically the same thing. They emphasize that the Egyptians acted very harshly.

treated us

Here "us" refers to the people of Israel that were living in Egypt. The speaker includes himself as one of the people whether he lived in Egypt or not.

Deuteronomy 26:7

he heard our voice

Here "voice" refers to the whole person and his cries or prayers. Alternate translation: "he heard our cries" or "he heard our prayers"

our affliction, our labor, and our oppression

"that the Egyptians were afflicting us, that we were doing very hard work, and that the Egyptians were oppressing us"

Deuteronomy 26:8

General Information:

This continues what the Israelite must say when he brings his first crops to Yahweh.

Yahweh brought us

Here "us" refers to the people of Israel that were living in Egypt. The speaker includes himself as one of the people whether he lived in Egypt or not.

with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm

Here "a mighty hand" and "an outstretched arm" are metaphors for Yahweh's power. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:34]

with great fearsomeness

"with acts that terrified the people who saw them"

Deuteronomy 26:9

a land that flows with milk and honey

This is an idiom. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 6:3. Alternate translation: "a land where plenty of milk and honey flow" or "a land that is excellent for cattle and farming"

Deuteronomy 26:10

General Information:

Moses continues telling the Israelites what they must say when they bring theire first crops to Yahweh. He speaks to them as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

first of the produce

"first fruits of the harvest" or "first crops of the harvest"

You must set it down

"You must set the basket down."

Deuteronomy 26:11

you must rejoice in all the good that Yahweh your God has done for you

"you must rejoice and be grateful for all the good things that Yahweh your God has done for you"

Deuteronomy 26:12

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

in the third year

This "third" is the ordinal number for three. Every three years the people of Israel gave a tenth of the harvest to the poor.

fatherless

These are children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.

widow

This means a woman whose husband has died and has no children to care for her now that she is old.

eat within your city gates and be filled

Here "gates" means towns or cities. Alternate translation: "so that those within your towns may have enough food to eat"

Deuteronomy 26:13

I have completely removed from

These are the first words of another statement that the Israelite was supposed to say.

neither have I forgotten them

This means that he has obeyed all of God's commandments.

Deuteronomy 26:14

General Information:

This continues what the Israelite must say to Yahweh when he gives his tithe to the poor.

I have not eaten any of it in my mourning

"I have not eaten any of the tithe while I was mourning"

when I was unclean

God does not allow an unclean person to touch the tithe he is giving to God. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "when I was unclean according to the Law" or "when the law says I cannot touch it"

I have listened to the voice of Yahweh my God; I have obeyed everything you have commanded me to do

Here "voice of Yahweh" is a metonym for what Yahweh says. Both statements share similar meanings. They emphasize that the person has obeyed all of God's commands.

Deuteronomy 26:15

from the holy place where you live, from heaven

These two phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "from heaven, your holy dwelling place"

a land flowing with milk and honey

This is an idiom. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 6:3. Alternate translation: "a land where plenty of milk and honey flow" or "a land that is excellent for cattle and farming"

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Deuteronomy 26:16
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
with all your heart and with all your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:29]
Deuteronomy 26:17
that you will walk in his ways and keep his statutes, his commandments, and his decrees, and that you will listen to his voice
The words "walk," "keep," and "listen" have similar meanings here. Here "voice" refers to what God has said. Alternate translation: "that you will completely obey everything Yahweh commands"
Deuteronomy 26:18
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
a people who are his own possession
"a people who belong to him"
Deuteronomy 26:19
he will set you high above
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he will make you more important than" or "he will make you greater than"
he will set you high above all the other nations that he has made, and you will receive praise, fame, and honor
Possible meanings are 1) "he will cause you to become greater than any other nation that he has established, and he will enable you to praise him and honor him" or 2) "he will have people praise you more than they praise every other nation that he has made; people will say that you are better than any other nation, and they will honor you."
You will be a people that is set apart to Yahweh your God
Yahweh choosing the people of Israel to belong to him in a special way is spoken of as if Yahweh set them apart from all other nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will set you apart from other nations"

27 [1]Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people and said, "Keep all the commandments that I command you
today.[2]On the day when you will pass over the Jordan to the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, you must set up
some large stones and plaster them with plaster.[3]You must write on them all the words of this law when you have passed
over, so that you may go into the land that Yahweh your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, just as
Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, promised you.
[4]When you have passed over the Jordan, set up these stones that I am commanding you about today, on Mount Ebal, and
plaster them with plaster.[5]There you must build an altar to Yahweh your God, an altar of stones; but you must raise no
iron tool to work the stones.
[6]You must build the altar of Yahweh your God of unworked stones; you must offer burnt offerings on it to Yahweh your
God,[7]and you will sacrifice fellowship offerings and will eat there; you will rejoice before Yahweh your God.[8]You will
write on the stones all the words of this law. Write them very plainly."

[9]Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel and said, "Be silent and listen, Israel: Today you have become the
people of Yahweh your God.[10]You must therefore obey the voice of Yahweh your God and obey his commandments and
statutes that I am commanding you today."

[11]Moses commanded the people the same day and said,[12]"These tribes must stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people
after you have passed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin.
[13]These are the tribes that must stand on Mount Ebal to pronounce curses: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and
Naphtali.[14]The Levites will answer and say to all the men of Israel in a loud voice:

[15]'May the man be cursed who makes a a carved image or a cast metal figure, an abomination to Yahweh, the work of the
hands of a craftsman, and who sets it up in secret.' Then all the people must answer and say, 'Amen.'

[16]'May the man be cursed who dishonors his father or his mother.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'
[17]'May the man be cursed who removes his neighbor's landmark.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'

[18]'May the man be cursed who misleads the blind on the road.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'
[19]'May the man be cursed who uses force to take away the justice due to a foreigner, fatherless, or widow.' Then all the
people must say, 'Amen.'

[20]'May the man be cursed who lies with his father's wife, because he has taken away his father's rights.' Then all the
people must say, 'Amen.'
[21]'May the man be cursed who lies with any animal.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'

[22]'May the man be cursed who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father, or with the daughter of his mother.' Then all
the people must say, 'Amen.'
[23]'May the man be cursed who lies with his mother-in-law.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'

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[24]'May the man be cursed who kills his neighbor secretly.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'
[25]'May the man be cursed who takes a bribe to kill an innocent person.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'

[26]'May the man be cursed who does not confirm the words of this law, that he will obey them.' Then all the people must say, 'Amen.'

Deuteronomy 27 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"May the man be cursed"

This phrase is repeated several times in this chapter. This parallelism serves as a warning to the Israelites when they will live in the Promised Land. This is part of the covenant Yahweh made with Moses. (See: promisedland and lawofmoses)

Links:

Deuteronomy 27:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 27:1

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so except where noted, the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

command you today

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as a group, so the word "you" is plural.

I command

Here "I" refers to Moses. The elders are there in agreement with Moses, but he is the only one speaking.

Deuteronomy 27:2

you will pass

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as a group, so the word "you" is plural.

plaster them with plaster

Plaster is usually a mixture of lime, sand, and water that is spread on something. It dries to form a hard, smooth surface on which a person can write. Alternate translation: "spread plaster on them" or "make them so you can write on them"

Deuteronomy 27:3

a land flowing with milk and honey

This is an idiom. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 6:3]

Deuteronomy 27:4

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

you have passed ... set up ... I am commanding you

Moses is addressing the Israelites as a group, so the instances of "you" and the command "set up" are plural.

plaster them with plaster

"spread plaster on them" or "make them so you can write on them." See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 27:2.

Mount Ebal

This is a mountain near Shechem. See how you translated it in Deuteronomy 11:29.

Deuteronomy 27:5

you must raise no iron tool to work the stones

This refers to the chisels that would make the stones smoother, in order that they might fit together better. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "you will not shape the altar stones with iron tools"

Deuteronomy 27:6

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

unworked stones

stones in their natural shape that no one has shaped with metal tools

Deuteronomy 27:8

write on the stones

This refers to the stones they were to set up on Mount Ebal and cover with plaster. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 27:2 and Deuteronomy 27:4.

Deuteronomy 27:9

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

Deuteronomy 27:10

obey the voice of Yahweh your God

Here the metonym "voice of Yahweh" refers to what he says. Alternate translation: "obey what Yahweh your God says"

I am commanding

Moses is commanding. The Levites are there in agreement with Moses, but he is the only one speaking.

Deuteronomy 27:12

These tribes

Here the metonym "tribes" refers to the people from the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "The people from these tribes"

Mount Gerizim

A small mountain north of Mount Ebal. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 11:29.

Joseph

This combines the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were descendants of Joseph.

Deuteronomy 27:13

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Mount Ebal
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 11:29.
pronounce curses
"say in a loud voice how Yahweh will curse Israel"
Deuteronomy 27:15
May the man be cursed ... sets it up in secret
This is the statement the Levites must shout to all the people of Israel. It may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh curse the person ... sets it up in secret"
the work of the hands of a craftsman
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "something a man has made"
craftsman
a man who knows how to make things well
Deuteronomy 27:16
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh curse the man"
Deuteronomy 27:17
who removes his neighbor's landmark
The full meaning of the statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "who takes land away from his neighbor by moving the markers on the borders of his land"
Deuteronomy 27:18
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This may be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 27:16]
Deuteronomy 27:19
uses force to take away the justice due to a foreigner ... widow
Moses speaks of justice as if it were a physical object that a stronger person can violently pull away from a weaker person. Your language might have one word that means "use force to take away." See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 24:17]
fatherless
These are children whose parents have both died and do not have relatives to care for them.
widow
This means a woman whose husband has died and has no children to care for her in her old age.
Deuteronomy 27:20
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 27:16]
who lies with his father's wife
Here "lies with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who has sexual relations with his father's wife"
his father's wife
This does not refer to the man's mother, but another wife of his father.
he has taken away his father's rights
When a man marries a woman, only he has the legal right to sleep with her. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he has taken away his father's legal rights"
Deuteronomy 27:21
who lies with any animal
Here "lies with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who has sexual relations with any anyimal"
Deuteronomy 27:22
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This may be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 27:16]
who lies with his sister
Here "lies with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who has sexual relations with his sister"
the daughter of his father, or with the daughter of his mother
This means a man cannot have sexual relations with his sister, even if she has a different mother or father.
Deuteronomy 27:23
who lies with his mother-in-law
Here "lies with" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who has sexual relations with his mother-in-law"
Deuteronomy 27:24
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This may be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 27:16]
Deuteronomy 27:26
General Information:
Moses continues telling the Levites and the people what they must say.
May the man be cursed
This may be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 27:16]

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28 [1]If you listen carefully to the voice of Yahweh your God so as to keep all his commandments that I am commanding you today, Yahweh your God will set you above all the other nations of the earth.[2]All these blessings will come on you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of Yahweh your God.
[3]Blessed will you be in the city and blessed will you be in the field.[4]Blessed will be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, and the increase of your herds and the lambs of your flocks.
[5]Blessed will be your basket and your kneading trough.[6]Blessed will you be when you come in, and blessed will you be when you go out.

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[7]Yahweh will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be struck down before you; they will come out against you one way but will flee before you seven ways.[8]Yahweh will command the blessing to come on you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to; he will bless you in the land that he is giving you.
[9]Yahweh will establish you as a people that is set apart for himself, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of Yahweh your God, and walk in his ways.[10]All the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of Yahweh, and they will be afraid of you.
[11]Yahweh will make you very prosperous in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that he swore to your fathers to give you.[12]Yahweh will open to you his storehouse of the heavens to give the rain for your land at the right time, and to bless all the work of your hand; you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow.
[13]Yahweh will make you the head, and not the tail; you will be only above, and you will never be beneath, if you listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God that I am commanding you today, so as to observe and to do them,[14]and if you do not turn away from any of the words that I am commanding you today, to the right hand or to the left, so as to go after other gods to serve them.

[15]But if you do not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, so as to keep all his commandments and his statutes that I am commanding you today, then all these curses will come on you and overtake you.
[16]Cursed will you be in the city, and cursed will you be in the field.[17]Cursed will be your basket and your kneading trough.
[18]Cursed will be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, the calves of your herds, and the lambs of your flocks.
[19]Cursed will you be when you come in, and cursed will you be when you go out.

[20]Yahweh will send on you curses, confusion, and rebukes in all that you put your hand to, until you are destroyed, and until you perish quickly because of the evil of your deeds by which you will have abandoned me.[21]Yahweh will make the plague cling to you until he destroys you from off the land that you are going in to possess.
[22]Yahweh will attack you with infectious diseases, with fever, with inflammation, with drought, with sword, with scorching winds, and with mildew. These will pursue you until you perish.
[23]Your skies that are over your head will be bronze, and the earth that is under you will be iron.[24]Yahweh will make the rain of your land into powder and dust; from the heavens will it come down on you, until you are destroyed.

[25]Yahweh will cause you to be struck down before your enemies; you will go out one way against them but will flee before them seven ways. You will be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth.[26]Your dead body will be food to all the birds of the heavens and to the wild animals of the earth; there will be no one to frighten them away.
[27]Yahweh will attack you with the boils of Egypt and with ulcers, scurvy, and itch, from which you cannot be healed.
[28]Yahweh will attack you with madness, with blindness, and with mental confusion.[29]You will grope about at noonday like the blind grope in the darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; you will be always oppressed and robbed, and there will be no one to save you.
[30]You will betroth a woman, but another man will seize her and rape her. You will build a house but not live in it; you will plant a vineyard but not enjoy its fruit.[31]Your ox will be killed before your eyes, but you will not eat its meat; your donkey will be forcibly taken away from before you and will not be restored to you. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and you will have no one to deliver you.
[32]Your sons and your daughters will be given to other peoples; your eyes will look for them the entire day, but will fail with longing for them. There will be no strength in your hand.
[33]The produce of your land and of all your labors—a nation that you do not know will eat it up; you will always be oppressed and crushed,[34]so that you will become insane by what you have to see happen.[35]Yahweh will attack you in the knees and legs with severe boils from which you cannot be cured, from the bottom of your feet to the top of your head.

[36]Yahweh will take you and the king whom you will place over yourself to a nation that you have not known, neither you nor your ancestors; there you will worship other gods of wood and stone.[37]You will become a source of horror, a proverb, and a byword, among all the peoples where Yahweh will lead you away.
[38]You will take much seed out into the field, but will gather little seed in, for the locusts will consume it.[39]You will plant vineyards and cultivate them, but you will neither drink any of the wine, nor even gather in the grapes, for worms will eat them.
[40]You will have olive trees within all your territory, but you will not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olive trees will drop their fruit.[41]You will have sons and daughters, but they will not remain yours, for they will go into captivity.
[42]All your trees and the produce of your ground—the locusts will take them over.[43]The foreigner who is among you will rise up above you higher and higher; you yourself will come down lower and lower.[44]He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him; he will be the head, and you will be the tail.

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[45]All these curses will come on you and will pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed. This will happen because you did not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, so as to keep his commandments and his regulations that he commanded you.[46]These curses will be on you as signs and wonders, and on your descendants forever.

[47]Because you did not worship Yahweh your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart when you were in prosperity,
[48]therefore will you serve the enemies that Yahweh will send against you; you will serve them in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in poverty. He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he destroys you.
[49]Yahweh will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle flies to its victim, a nation whose language you do not understand;[50]a nation with a fierce face that does not respect the aged and does not show favor to the young.[51]They will eat the young of your livestock and the produce of your land until you are destroyed. They will leave for you no grain, new wine, or oil, no calves of your herds or the lambs of your flock, until they have caused you to perish.
[52]They will besiege you in all your city gates, until your high and fortified walls come down everywhere in your land, walls in which you had trusted. They will besiege you within all your city gates throughout all the land that Yahweh your God had given you.[53]You will eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters, whom Yahweh your God gave you, in the siege and in the distress with which your enemies will oppress you.
[54]The man who is timid and very delicate among you—he will be envious of his brother and his own dear wife, and of whatever children he has left.[55]So he will not give to any of them the flesh of his own children that he is going to eat, because he will have nothing left for himself in the siege and in the distress with which your enemy will oppress you within all your city gates.
[56]The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to put the bottom of her foot on the ground for delicateness and tenderness—she will be envious of her own dear husband, of her son, and of her daughter,[57]and of her own newborn that comes out from between her legs, and of the children whom she will bear. She will eat them in private for lack of anything else, during the siege and in the distress with which your enemy will oppress you within your city gates.

[58]If you do not keep all the words of this law that are written in this book, so as to honor this glorious and fearful name, Yahweh your God,[59]then Yahweh will make your plagues terrible, and those of your descendants; they will be great plagues, of long duration, and severe diseases, of long duration.
[60]He will bring on you again all the diseases of Egypt that you were afraid of; they will cling to you.[61]Also every sickness and plague that is not written in the book of this law, those also Yahweh will bring on you until you are destroyed.[62]You will be left few in number, although you were like the stars of the heavens in number, because you did not listen to the voice of Yahweh your God.
[63]As Yahweh once rejoiced over you in doing you good, and in multiplying you, so he will rejoice over you in making you perish and in destroying you. You will be plucked off the land that you are going into to possess.[64]Yahweh will scatter you among all peoples from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; there you will worship other gods that you have not known, neither you nor your ancestors, gods of wood and stone.
[65]Among these nations will you find no ease, and there will be no rest for the bottoms of your feet; Yahweh will give you there a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a soul that mourns.[66]Your life will hang in doubt before you; night and day you will be afraid and will have no assurance of your life.
[67]In the morning you will say, 'I wish it were evening!' and in the evening you will say, 'I wish it were morning!' because of the fear in your hearts and the things your eyes will have to see.[68]Yahweh will bring you into Egypt again by ships, by the route about which I had said to you, 'You will not see Egypt again.' There you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male slaves and female slaves, but no one will purchase you."

Deuteronomy 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessings and warnings

This chapter explains some of the blessings and warnings associated with Israel's obedience to the law of Moses. (See: bless and lawofmoses)

Links:

Deuteronomy 28:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 28:1

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

to the voice of Yahweh your God

Here the metonym "voice of Yahweh" refers to what he

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says. Alternate translation: "to what Yahweh your God says"
so as to keep
"and obey"
set you above
Moses speaks of being important or being great as if it were being physically higher, as on a higher hill. Alternate translation: "make you more important than" or "make you greater than"
Deuteronomy 28:2
All these blessings will come on you and overtake you
Moses describes the blessings as a person who would attack them by surprise or chase and catch them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless you like this in ways that will completely surprise you, and it will be as if you cannot escape having him bless you"
Deuteronomy 28:3
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Blessed will you be
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless you"
in the city ... in the field
This merism means that Yahweh will bless them everywhere.
Deuteronomy 28:4
the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock
These idioms for "your children, and your crops, and all your animals" form a merism for everything the Israelites valued.
the fruit of your livestock, and the increase of your herds and the lambs of your flocks
This doublet is three ways of saying that Yahweh will make the Israelites' animals many and strong. Alternate translation: "all of your animals, along with the calves of the cattle and the lambs of the flocks"
Deuteronomy 28:5
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Blessed will be
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless"
your basket and your kneading trough
Israelites used a basket to carry grain. A "kneading trough" was a bowl they used to mix the grain and make bread. Alternate translation: "all the food you grow and all the food you eat"
Deuteronomy 28:6
when you come in ... when you go out
This merism refers to all of life's activities everywhere they go.
Deuteronomy 28:7
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
cause your enemies who rise up against you to be struck down before you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "cause you to defeat the armies that attack you"
but will flee before you seven ways
"but they will run away from you in seven directions"
seven ways
This is an idiom. The actual number could be more or less than seven. Alternate translation: "in many different directions"
Deuteronomy 28:8
Yahweh will command the blessing to come on you in your barns
Moses describes Yahweh blessing the Israelites as if Yahweh were commanding a person to attack them by surprise. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh blesses you, you will be surprised by how much grain you have in your barns"
in all that you put your hand to
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in everything you do"
Deuteronomy 28:9
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Yahweh will establish you as a people that is set apart for himself
Yahweh choosing the people of Israel to belong to him in a special way is spoken of as if Yahweh put them in a place different from the place all other nations live in. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make you a holy people that belongs to him"
Deuteronomy 28:10
you are called by the name of Yahweh
Here the metonym "called by the name of Yahweh" means belonging to him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has called you his own"
Deuteronomy 28:11
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground
This is an idiom. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 28:4]
Deuteronomy 28:12
his storehouse of the heavens
Moses speaks of the clouds from which the rain falls as if they were a building where he stores the rain. Alternate translation: "the clouds"
at the right time
"when the crops need it"
all the work of your hand
The word "hand" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "all the work that you do"
Deuteronomy 28:13
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
the head, and not the tail
This metaphor describes the nation of Israel as an animal and means the Israelites will always be the leaders over other nations and never the servants following behind

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them. The Israelites will be superior in power, money, and honor.

will be only above ... will never be beneath

The Israelites will rule over others but never have others rule them.

I am commanding you

Moses is speaking to all the Israelites, so the word "you" is plural.

Deuteronomy 28:14

if you do not turn away from any of the words that I am commanding you today, to the right hand or to the left, so as to go after other gods to serve them

Disobeying Yahweh and worshiping other gods is spoken of as if a person physically turned and went in a different direction from Yahweh's words. Alternate translation: "if you do not disobey what I am commanding you today by serving other gods"

Deuteronomy 28:15

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

But if

Here Moses starts describing the curses the people will receive if they disobey.

the voice of Yahweh your God

Here the metonym "voice of Yahweh" means what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh your God is saying"

then all these curses will come on you and overtake you

Moses describes the curses as a person who would attack them by surprise or chase and catch them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will curse you like this in ways that will completely surprise you, and it will be as if you cannot escape having him curse you"

come on you and overtake you

See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 28:2.

Deuteronomy 28:16

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

Cursed will you be

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will curse you"

in the city ... in the field

This merism means that Yahweh will bless them everywhere. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 28:3]

Deuteronomy 28:17

your basket and your kneading trough

The Israelites used a basket to carry grain. A "kneading trough" was a bowl they used to mix the grain and make bread. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 28:5]

Deuteronomy 28:18

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

Cursed will be

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will curse"

the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground

This is an idiom for "your children, your crops." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 28:4]

herds ... flocks

"cattle ... sheep"

Deuteronomy 28:19

when you come in ... when you go out

This merism refers to all of life's activities everywhere they go. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 28:6]

Deuteronomy 28:20

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

curses, confusion, and rebukes

"disasters, fear, and frustration"

in all that you put your hand to

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in everything you do"

until you are destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until your enemies destroy you"

abandoned me

Here "me" refers to Yahweh.

Deuteronomy 28:21

cling to you

"remain on you"

Deuteronomy 28:22

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

infectious diseases, with fever, with inflammation

"diseases and burning fevers that will make you weak." These all refer to diseases that cause people to grow weak and die.

with drought

"with lack of rain"

mildew

mold that grows on crops and causes them to rot

These will pursue you

Moses speaks of the bad things that would happen to the Israelites as if they were people or animals who would chase after the Israelites. Alternate translation: "You will suffer from them"

Deuteronomy 28:23

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

skies ... will be bronze

Moses speaks of the skies being like bronze because there will be no rain. Alternate translation: "skies ... will give no rain"

the earth ... will be iron

Moses speaks of the earth being like iron because no crops will grow. Alternate translation: "nothing will grow from the ground"

Deuteronomy 28:24

Yahweh will make the rain of your land into powder and dust

"instead of rain, Yahweh will send sandstorms"

until you are destroyed

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until it destroys you"
Deuteronomy 28:25
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Yahweh will cause you to be struck down before your enemies
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause your enemies to strike you down"
to be struck down before
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 28:7.
will flee before them seven ways
This means the Israelites will be afraid and panic and run away from their enemies. See similar wording in [Deuteronomy 28:7]
seven ways
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in many different directions"
You will be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The peoples of the other nations will drive you from one nation to another"
Deuteronomy 28:27
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
the boils of Egypt
"the same skin disease with which I cursed the Egyptians"
boils ... ulcers, scurvy, and itch
These are different types of skin diseases.
from which you cannot be healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from which no one will be able to heal you"
Deuteronomy 28:29
You will grope about at noonday like the blind grope in the darkness
"You will be like blind people who grope in darkness even at noonday." The Israelites will have a difficult life even when everyone else is enjoying life.
you will be always oppressed and robbed
"stronger people will always oppress and rob you"
Deuteronomy 28:30
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 28:31
Your ox will be killed before your eyes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will watch as someone kills your ox"
your donkey will be forcibly taken away from before you and will not be restored to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will take your donkey by force and will not give it back"
Your sheep will be given to your enemies
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give your sheep to your enemies" or "I will allow your enemies to take your sheep"
Deuteronomy 28:32
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Your sons and your daughters will be given to other peoples
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give your sons and your daughters to other peoples" or "Your enemies will take your sons and daughters"
your eyes will look for them the entire day, but will fail with longing for them
Here "your eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "you will grow tired as you constantly watch for them and long to see them again"
There will be no strength in your hand
Here the metonym "strength in your hand" refers to power. "Alternate translation: "You will be powerless to do anything about it"
Deuteronomy 28:33
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
a nation
Here the metonym "a nation" means the people from a nation. Alternate translation: "people from a nation"
you will always be oppressed and crushed
The words "oppressed" and "crushed" mean basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will always oppress and crush you" or "they will oppress you continually"
Deuteronomy 28:34
you will become insane by what you have to see happen
"what you see will make you go crazy"
Deuteronomy 28:35
from which you cannot be cured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one will be able to cure"
Deuteronomy 28:36
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 28:37
of horror, a proverb, and a byword, among all the peoples where Yahweh will lead you away
Here the words "proverb" and "byword" mean basically the same thing. This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "of horror. The people, in the places where Yahweh will send you, will make up proverbs and bywords about you" or "of horror. Yahweh will send you to peoples who will laugh at you and ridicule you"
byword
a word or phrase that people use to shame others
Deuteronomy 28:38
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
but will gather little seed in
"but will harvest very little food"
Deuteronomy 28:40
General Information:
Moses continues describing God's curses if the people disobey him. He speaks to the Israelites as if they were one

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man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
but you will not anoint yourself with the oil
People would rub olive oil on themselves to make their skin healthy.
your olive trees will drop their fruit
You may need to make explicit that the fruit drops before it is ripe. Alternate translation: "your olive trees will drop their fruit before the fruit is ripe" or "the olives will fall off your olive trees before they are ripe"
Deuteronomy 28:42
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Deuteronomy 28:43
The foreigner who is
This does not mean a specific foreigner but refers to foreigners in general. Alternate translation: "The foreigners who are"
rise up above you higher and higher; you yourself will come down lower and lower
This idiom means foreigners will have more power, money, and honor than the Israelites.
Deuteronomy 28:44
He will ... to him
This does not mean a specific foreigner
he will be the head, and you will be the tail
This means foreigners will have more power and authority than the Israelites. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Deuteronomy 28:13]
Deuteronomy 28:45
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
All these curses will come on you and will pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed
Moses describes the curses as a person who would attack them by surprise or chase and catch them. See how you translated something similar in [Deuteronomy 28:2]
to the voice of Yahweh your God
Here the words "voice of Yahweh" are a metonym for what Yahweh said. Alternate translation: "to what Yahweh your God said"
his commandments and his regulations
The words "commandments" and "regulations" are a doublet for "all that Yahweh has commanded you to do."
Deuteronomy 28:47
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
joyfulness and gladness of heart
Here "joyfulness" and "gladness of heart" mean the same thing. They emphasize that the people should have been very glad to worship Yahweh.
Deuteronomy 28:48
He will put a yoke of iron on your neck
This is a metaphor for Yahweh allowing the enemy to treat the Israelites cruelly and make them slaves.
Deuteronomy 28:49
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
from far away, from the ends of the earth
These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the enemy will come from a nation that is very far away from Israel.
from the ends of the earth
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "from places that you know nothing about"
like an eagle flies to its victim
This means the enemy will come suddenly and the Israelites will not be able to stop them.
Deuteronomy 28:50
a nation with a fierce face that does not respect the aged and does not show favor
The word "nation" is a metonym for the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "a nation whose people have fierce expressions, who do not respect the aged and do not show favor"
Deuteronomy 28:51
until you are destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until they destroy you" or "until they leave you with nothing"
Deuteronomy 28:52
General Information:
Moses continues describing the army that will attack the Israelites if they do not obey Yahweh. He speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
you in all your city gates
Here the phrase "city gates" represents a city. Alternate translation: "your cities"
Deuteronomy 28:53
the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and of your daughters
Here "the flesh of your sons and of your daughters" explains the metaphor "the fruit of your own body." The people will be so hungry after the enemy army surrounds their city that they will eat their own children.
the fruit of your own body
This speaks of children as if they were fruit that was produced by the bodies of their parents. Alternate translation: "your own children"
Deuteronomy 28:54
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
who is timid and very delicate among you—he
"who is timid and very delicate among you—even he."
Moses is saying that not only those one would expect to eat their children, but even the last person one would expect to eat his own children will eat his children.
Deuteronomy 28:55
all your city gates
Here "city gates" represents the cities themselves. Alternate translation: "all your cities"
Deuteronomy 28:56
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so

the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

The tender and delicate woman among you ... tenderness—she

"The tender and delicate woman among you ... tenderness —even she." Moses is saying that not only those one would expect to eat their children, but even women of noble birth and normally very gentle, whom one would never expect to eat their children, will eat their children. The word "you" here is singular.

who would not venture to put the bottom of her foot on the ground for delicateness and tenderness

Moses is exaggerating. He is emphasizing that this noble woman is so rich and lives in such luxury that she would not allow herself to get dirty.

for delicateness and tenderness

The abstract nouns "delicateness" and "tenderness" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because she is so delicate and tender"

Deuteronomy 28:57

within your city gates

Here "city gates" represents the cities themselves. Alternate translation: "within your cities"

Deuteronomy 28:58

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

that are written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have written"

this glorious and fearful name, Yahweh your God

Here the metonym "name" refers to Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God who is glorious and awesome"

Deuteronomy 28:59

Yahweh will make your plagues terrible, and those of your descendants

"Yahweh will send terrible plagues on you and your descendants" or "Yahweh will make sure that you and your descendants suffer from terrible plagues"

Deuteronomy 28:60

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

He will bring on you again all the diseases of Egypt

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "He will make sure that you again suffer from the diseases of Egypt"

they will cling to you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the diseases will not stop, and no one will be able to heal you of them"

Deuteronomy 28:61

every sickness and plague that is not written

Here "every" is a generalization that means "many." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "even other sicknesses and plagues that I have not written"

until you are destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until he has destroyed you"

Deuteronomy 28:62

You will be left ... you were like ... you did not listen

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as a group, so all instances of "you" are plural.

you were like the stars of the heavens in number

This means that in the past there were many Israelites.

to the voice of Yahweh

Here the metonym "voice of Yahweh" refers to what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "to what Yahweh says"

Deuteronomy 28:63

Yahweh once rejoiced over you ... multiplying you ... rejoice over you in making you perish and in destroying you. You will be plucked

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as a group, so all instances of "you" are plural.

Yahweh once rejoiced over you in doing you good, and in multiplying you

"Yahweh once enjoyed doing you good and causing you to become many"

he will rejoice over you in making you perish

"he will enjoy making you die"

You will be plucked off the land that you are going into to possess

Moses uses a metaphor to speak of the people as though they were fruit that Yahweh would take off a bush. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will remove you from the land which you are entering to possess"

you are going

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" is singular.

Deuteronomy 28:64

scatter you ... you will worship ... you have not known ... you nor your ancestors

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth

These two extremes together mean everywhere on earth. Alternate translation: "throughout the earth" or "all over the earth"

Deuteronomy 28:65

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

there will be no rest for the bottoms of your feet

Here the phrase "the bottoms of your feet" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "you will have to continually wander because you have no permanent home where you can rest"

Yahweh will give you there a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a soul that mourns

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause you to be afraid, without hope, and sad"

Deuteronomy 28:66

Your life will hang in doubt before you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "You will not know whether you will live or die"

Deuteronomy 28:67

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

because of the fear in your hearts

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "because of the fear you are feeling"

the things your eyes will have to see

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Here "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "the terrifying things I will force you to see" Deuteronomy 28:68

I had said
Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

29 [1]These are the words that Yahweh commanded Moses to tell the people of Israel in the land of Moab, words that were added to the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

[2]Moses called to all Israel and said to them, "You have seen everything that Yahweh did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his servants, and to all his land—[3]the great sufferings that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders.[4]But until today Yahweh has not given you a heart to know, eyes to see, or ears to hear.
[5]I have led you for forty years in the wilderness; your clothes did not wear out on you, and your sandals did not wear out on your feet.[6]You did not eat any bread, and you did not drink any wine or other strong drink, so that you might know that I am Yahweh your God.
[7]When you came to this place, Sihon, the king of Heshbon, and Og, the king of Bashan, came out against us to fight, and we struck them down.[8]We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh.[9]Therefore keep the words of this covenant and do them, so that you may prosper in everything that you do.

[10]You stand today, all of you, before Yahweh your God; your chiefs, your tribes, your elders, and your officers—all the men of Israel,[11]your little ones, your wives, and the foreigner who is among you in your camp, from him who cuts your wood to him who draws your water.
[12]You are here in order to enter into the covenant of Yahweh your God and into the oath that Yahweh your God is making with you today,[13]so that he may make you today into a people for himself, and that he may be God for you, as he spoke to you, and as he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

[14]For it is not only with you that I am making this covenant and this oath—[15]with everyone standing here with us today before Yahweh our God—but also with those who are not here with us today.
[16]You know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed.
[17]You have seen their disgusting idols made of wood and stone, silver and gold, that were among them.[18]Make sure there is not among you any man, woman, clan, or tribe whose heart is turning away today from Yahweh our God, so as to go worship the gods of those nations. Make sure there is not among you any root that produces poison fruit and wormwood.
[19]When that person hears the words of this curse, he will bless himself in his heart and say, 'I will have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart.' This would destroy the wet together with the dry.
[20]Yahweh will not pardon him. Instead, the anger of Yahweh and his jealousy will smolder against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book will come on him, and Yahweh will blot out his name from under heaven.[21]Yahweh will set him apart for disaster out of all the tribes of Israel, in keeping with all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law.

[22]The generation to come, your children who will rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, will speak when they see the plagues on this land and the diseases with which Yahweh has made it sick—[23]and when they see that the whole land has become sulfur and burning salt, where nothing is sown or bears fruit, where no vegetation grows, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, that Yahweh destroyed in his anger and wrath —[24]they will say together with all the other nations, 'Why has Yahweh done this to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?'
[25]Then people will say, 'It is because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, that he made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt,[26]and because they went and served other gods and bowed down to them, gods that they had not known and that he had not given to them.
[27]Therefore the anger of Yahweh has been kindled against this land, so as to bring on it all the curses that are written in this book.[28]Yahweh has uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great fury, and has thrown them into another land, as today.'
[29]The secret matters belong alone to Yahweh our God; but the things that are revealed belong forever to us and to our descendants, so that we may do all the words of this law.

Deuteronomy 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a retelling of the covenant Yahweh made with Moses, along with its blessings and cursing. (See: covenant

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and bless and curse)

Links:

Deuteronomy 29:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 29:1

These are the words that Yahweh commanded Moses to tell

This refers to words that Moses is about to speak.

in the land of Moab

This is on the east side of the Jordan where the Israelites were staying before they entered the land of Canaan. "while they were in the land of Moab"

words that were added to the covenant ... at Horeb

These additional commands were given to make Yahweh's covenant apply better to the people once they were settled in their new land. These new commands did not belong to a different covenant, but rather were additions to the original covenant.

Deuteronomy 29:2

You have seen everything that Yahweh did before your eyes

Yahweh expected them to remember what Yahweh had done and they had seen it. Here the "eyes" represent the whole person and emphasize what the person has seen. Alternate translation: "You have seen all that Yahweh did so that you would see and remember what he did"

your eyes

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "your" here is singular.

Deuteronomy 29:3

the great sufferings that your eyes saw

Here "eyes" emphasizes that Yahweh expected them to remember that they had seen it. Alternate translation: "you saw for yourselves that the people suffered terribly"

the signs, and those great wonders

The words "signs" and "wonders" both refer to the plagues that Yahweh had sent upon Egypt. Alternate translation: "and all of the powerful things that Yahweh did"

Deuteronomy 29:4

Yahweh has not given you a heart to know, eyes to see, or ears to hear

The people do have hearts, eyes, and ears. This metonym says that Yahweh has not enabled them to understand from what they saw and heard who Yahweh is, and how and why they should obey him.

given you a heart to know

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "enabled you to understand"

Deuteronomy 29:5

I have led you

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

forty years

"40 years"

your sandals ... your feet

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "your" here is singular.

Deuteronomy 29:6

other strong drink

These were alcoholic drinks made probably from fermented grains. They were not distilled liquors.

Deuteronomy 29:7

Sihon, the king of Heshbon, and Og, the king of Bashan

See how you translated these names in Deuteronomy 1:4.

came out against us

Here "us" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 29:9

keep the words of this covenant and do them

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the people were to obey Yahweh's commands. Alternate translation: "obey all the words of this covenant"

Deuteronomy 29:10

General Information:

Moses continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 29:11

among you in your camp ... your wood ... your water

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

the foreigner who is among you in your camp, from him who cuts your wood to him who draws

There were many foreigners among the Israelites. Alternate translation: "the foreigners who are among you in your camp, from those who cut your wood to those who get your water"

Deuteronomy 29:12

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

to enter into the covenant of Yahweh your God and into the oath that Yahweh your God is making with you today

"to agree to the covenant and to swear that you will obey all that Yahweh your God commands"

Deuteronomy 29:13

a people for himself

"a people group that belongs to him alone"

Deuteronomy 29:14

I am making

Here "I" refers to Yahweh. "Yahweh is making"

Deuteronomy 29:15

standing here with us

Here "us" refers to Moses and the people of Israel.

those who are not here

"our future descendants, who are not here"

Deuteronomy 29:16

we lived

"we were slaves"

Deuteronomy 29:18

whose heart is turning away today from Yahweh our God

Here "heart" refers to the whole person, and "turning away" means to stop obeying. Alternate translation: "who no longer obeys Yahweh our God"

any root that produces poison fruit and wormwood

Moses speaks of someone who secretly worships another God as if he were a root, and the evil deeds he does to serve that god, and which he encourages others to do, as a bitter plant that poisons people. Alternate translation: "any

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person who worships idols and causes others to disobey Yahweh"

Deuteronomy 29:19

that person

The person described in verse 18.

bless himself in his heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "congratulate himself" or "encourage himself"

though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "even though I still refuse to obey Yahweh"

This would destroy the wet together with the dry

Here the words "wet" and "dry" are metaphors for the righteous people and the wicked people. This forms a merism for "everyone." Alternate translation: "This would cause Yahweh to destroy both the righteous people and the wicked people in the land"

wet ... dry

These nominal adjectives can be translated as nouns. Because the land was usually dry and the people needed rain so their crops would grow, these words are metaphors for "living ... dead" or "good ... bad." Alternate translation: "wet things ... dry things" or "good people ... bad people"

Deuteronomy 29:20

the anger of Yahweh and his jealousy will smolder

Just as a fire can grow in intensity, so can God's anger and jealousy grow in intensity. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's jealous anger will grow like a fire"

the anger of Yahweh and his jealousy

Here the word "jealousy" describes "the anger of Yahweh." Alternate translation: Yahweh's jealous anger"

that are written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have written"

all the curses that are written in this book will come on him

Moses describes the curses as a person who would attack them by surprise. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 28:15]

Yahweh will blot out his name from under heaven

This means that God will completely destroy the person and his family. In the future people will not remember him. A similar phrase appears in Deuteronomy 7:24.

Deuteronomy 29:22

The generation to come, your children who will rise up after you

The words "your children ... after you" tell who "the generation to come" is.

Deuteronomy 29:23

when they see that the whole land has become sulfur and burning salt

People put sulfur and salt on the soil to keep anything from growing. "when they see that Yahweh has burned the land with sulfur and salt"

where nothing is sown or bears fruit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where no one can sow seed and the crops do not bear fruit"

like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah

The abstract noun "overthrow" can be translated as a clause. Alternate translation: "as when Yahweh completely destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah"

Admah and Zeboyim

These are names of cities that Yahweh destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah.

Deuteronomy 29:24

they will say together with all the other nations ... mean?

This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "they will ask with all the other nations why Yahweh has done this to the land, and what the heat of this great anger means."

they will say together with all the other nations

"your descendants and the people of all the other nations will say"

What does the heat of this great anger mean?

The writer is communicating one idea through two words. Alternate translation: "What does this terrible anger mean?"

Deuteronomy 29:25

It is because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh, the God of their ancestors

This is the answer to "Why has Yahweh done this to this land?" (Deuteronomy 29:24). "Yahweh has done this to the land because the Israelites did not follow the promises and the laws of his covenant"

Deuteronomy 29:26

served other gods and bowed down to them

"obeyed other gods and worshiped them"

Deuteronomy 29:27

the anger of Yahweh has been kindled against this land

Moses compares Yahweh being angry to someone starting a fire. This emphasizes God's power to destroy whatever makes him angry, and it can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has became very angry with this land"

this land, so as to bring on it

Here "land" is a metonym representing the people. Alternate translation: "the people of this land, so as to bring on them"

that are written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have written"

Deuteronomy 29:28

Yahweh has uprooted them from their land ... and has thrown them

Israel is compared to a bad plant that Yahweh has pulled up and thrown out of a garden. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has removed them from their land ... and has forced them to go"

in anger, in wrath, and in great fury

The words "anger" and "wrath" and "fury" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the great intensity of Yahweh's anger. Alternate translation: "in extremely great anger" or "because he was extremely angry"

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret matters belong alone to Yahweh our God

"Some things Yahweh our God has not revealed, and only he knows them"

that are revealed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he has revealed"

we may do all the words of this law

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"we may do everything that this law commands us to do"

30 [1]When all these things have come on you, the blessings and the curses that I have set before you, and when you call
them to mind among all the other nations where Yahweh your God has banished you,[2]and when you return to
Yahweh your God and obey his voice, following all that I am commanding you today—you and your children—with all
your heart and with all your soul,[3]then Yahweh your God will reverse your captivity and have compassion on you; he will
return and gather you from all the peoples where Yahweh your God has scattered you.
[4]If any of your exiled people are in the farthest places under the heavens, from there Yahweh your God will gather you,
and from there he will bring you.[5]Yahweh your God will bring you into the land that your forefathers possessed, and you
will possess it again; he will do you good and will multiply you more than he did your forefathers.
[6]Yahweh your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so you will love Yahweh your God with
all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.[7]Yahweh your God will put all these curses on your enemies and
on those who hate you, those who persecuted you.[8]You will return and obey the voice of Yahweh, and you will do all his
commandments that I am commanding you today.
[9]Yahweh your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your womb, in the
fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground, for prosperity. For Yahweh will again delight in making you
prosperous, as he rejoiced over your fathers.[10]He will do this if you will obey the voice of Yahweh your God, so as to keep
his commandments and regulations that are written in this book of the law, if you turn to Yahweh your God with all your
heart and all your soul.

[11]For this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, neither is it too far for you to reach.[12]It
is not in heaven, so that you should have to say, 'Who will go up for us to heaven and bring it down to us and make us
able to hear it, so that we may do it?'
[13]Neither is it beyond the sea, so that you should have to say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us and make
us to hear it, so that we may do it?'[14]But the word is very near to you, in your mouth and your heart, so that you may do it.

[15]See, today I have placed before you life and good, death and evil.[16]If you obey the decrees of Yahweh your God, in which
I am commanding you today to love Yahweh your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, his
regulations, and his statutes, you will live and multiply, and Yahweh your God will bless you in the land that you are
entering to possess.
[17]But if your heart turns away, and you do not listen and are drawn away and bow down to other gods and worship them,
[18]then I declare to you today that you will surely perish; you will not prolong your days in the land that you are passing
over the Jordan to go into and possess.
[19]I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, the blessings and the
curses; therefore choose life so that you may live, you and your descendants.[20]Do this so as to love Yahweh your God, to
obey his voice, and to cling to him. For he is your life and the length of your days; do this so that you may live in the land
that Yahweh swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Deuteronomy 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Moses begins to give final instructions to Israel before his death in anticipation of their entrance into the Promised Land. There were warnings and blessings associated with the people's obedience to the covenant Yahweh made with Moses. (See: promisedland and bless and covenant)

Links:

Deuteronomy 30:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 30:1

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

When all these things have come on you

Here "these things" refer to the blessings and curses described in chapters 28-29. The phrase "have come on you" is an idiom that means to happen. Alternate translation: "When all these things happen to you"

that I have set before you

This speaks of the blessings and curses that Moses told the people as if they were objects that he set in front of them. Alternate translation: "that I have just now told you about"

call them to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember them"

among all the other nations

"while you are living in the other nations"

has banished you

"has forced you to go"

Deuteronomy 30:2

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obey his voice
Here "voice" is referring to what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "obey what he says"
with all your heart and with all your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:29]
Deuteronomy 30:3
reverse your captivity
"free you from your captivity." The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. Alternate translation: "free you from those who had captured you"
Deuteronomy 30:4
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
If any of your exiled people are in the farthest places
"Even those of your exiled people who are in the farthest places"
under the heavens
"under the sky" or "on the earth"
Deuteronomy 30:6
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
circumcise your heart
This is not a literal removal of flesh. It means God will remove their sin and enable them to love and obey him.
with all your heart and with all your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:29]
Deuteronomy 30:7
will put all these curses on your enemies
Moses speaks of curses as though they were a load or a cover that someone could physically put on top of a person. Alternate translation: "will cause your enemies to suffer from these curses"
Deuteronomy 30:8
obey the voice of Yahweh
Here "voice" means what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "obey what Yahweh says"
Deuteronomy 30:9
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
the work of your hand
Here "hand" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "in all the work you do"
in the fruit of your womb ... in the fruit of your livestock ... in the fruit of your ground
These three phrases are idioms for "in children ... in calves ... in crops." See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 28:4]
Deuteronomy 30:10
that are written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have written"
with all your heart and all your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These two phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 4:29]
Deuteronomy 30:11
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
neither is it too far for you to reach
Moses speaks of being able to understand what a commandment requires a person to do as if it were that person being able to reach a physical object. Alternate translation: "neither is it too difficult for you to understand what Yahweh requires you to do"
Deuteronomy 30:12
Who will go up for us to heaven and bring it down to us and make us able to hear it, so that we may do it?
Here Moses uses a rhetorical question to emphasize that the people of Israel think that Yahweh's commands are too difficult for them to know. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Someone must travel to heaven to learn God's commands and then return to tell us what they are so we can obey them."
Deuteronomy 30:13
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us and make us to hear it, so that we may do it?
This rhetorical question continues the idea that the people of Israel think Yahweh's commands are too difficult to know. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Someone must travel across the sea to learn God's commands and then return and tell us what they are."
Deuteronomy 30:14
in your mouth and your heart
This means that the people already know God's commands and can tell them to others.
Deuteronomy 30:15
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
I have placed before you
Putting something where another person can see it is a metaphor for telling someone about something. Alternate translation: "I have told you about"
life and good, death and evil
You can make clear the implicit information. Alternate translation: "what is good and will cause you to live, and what is evil and will cause you to die"
Deuteronomy 30:16
multiply
increase greatly in number
Deuteronomy 30:17
General Information:
Moses continues to speak to the Israelites as if they were

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one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

if your heart turns away ... and are drawn away and bow down to other gods and worship them

Here "heart" refers to the whole person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if you stop being loyal to God ... and the people living in the land convince you to bow down and worship other gods"

Deuteronomy 30:18

to you today that you ... you will not prolong your days

Moses speaks to the Israelites as a group.

prolong your days

Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:26]

Deuteronomy 30:19

General Information:

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so except where noted the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

I call heaven and earth to witness

Possible meanings are 1) Moses is calling on all those who live in heaven and earth to be witnesses to what he says, or 2) Moses is speaking to heaven and earth as if they are people, and he is calling them to be witnesses to what he says

to witness against you

"to be willing to say that you have done evil things"

against you today

Moses speaks to the Israelites as a group.

Deuteronomy 30:20

obey his voice

Here "voice" refers to what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "obey what he says"

to cling to him

"to rely on him"

For he is your life and the length of your days

These phrases have the same meaning and are metonyms for Yahweh, emphasizing that he is the one who gives life and determines the length of people's lifetimes. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is the only one who can enable you to live a long life"

the land that Yahweh swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them

"the land that Yahweh swore that he would give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob"

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31 [1]Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.[2]He said to them, "I am now one hundred twenty years old; I can no more go out and come in; Yahweh has said to me, 'You will not go over this Jordan.'[3]Yahweh your God, he will go over before you; he will destroy these nations from before you, and you will dispossess them. Joshua, he will go over before you, as Yahweh has spoken.
[4]Yahweh will do to them as he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, which he destroyed.
[5]Yahweh will deliver them over to you, and you will do to them according to all that I commanded you.[6]Be strong and of good courage, fear not, and do not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God, he it is who goes with you; he will not fail you nor abandon you."
[7]Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and of good courage, for you will go with this people into the land that Yahweh has sworn to their ancestors to give them; you will cause them to inherit it.[8]Yahweh, he it is who goes before you; he will be with you; he will not fail you nor abandon you; do not be afraid, do not be discouraged."

[9]Moses wrote this law and gave it out to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh; he also gave copies of it to all the elders of Israel.[10]Moses commanded them and said, "At the end of every seven years, at the time fixed for the cancellation of debts, during the Festival of Shelters,[11]when all Israel has come to appear before Yahweh your God in the place that he will choose for his sanctuary, you will read this law before all Israel in their hearing.
[12]Assemble the people, the men, the women, and the little ones, and your foreigner who is within your city gates, so that they may hear and learn, and so that they may honor Yahweh your God and keep all the words of this law.[13]Do this so that their children, who have not known, may hear and learn to honor Yahweh your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess."

[14]Yahweh said to Moses, "Look, the day is coming when you must die; call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, so that I may give him a command." Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting.
[15]Yahweh appeared in the tent in a pillar of cloud; the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the tent.
[16]Yahweh said to Moses, "Look, you will lie down with your fathers; this people will rise up and act like a prostitute going after the strange gods that are among them in the land where they are going. They will abandon me and break my covenant that I have made with them.
[17]Then, on that day, my anger will be kindled against them and I will abandon them. I will hide my face from them and they will be devoured. Many disasters and troubles will find them so that they will say on that day, 'Have these disasters not come upon us because our God is not in our midst?'[18]I will surely hide my face from them on that day because of all the evil that they will have done, because they will have turned to other gods.
[19]Now therefore write this song for yourselves and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, so that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel.[20]For when I will have brought them into the land that I swore to give to their ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey, and when they have eaten and become satisfied and prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and they will serve them and they will despise me and they will break my covenant.

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[21]When many evils and troubles come upon this people, this song will testify before them as a witness (for it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their descendants). For I know the plans that they are forming today, even before I have brought them into the land that I swore to them."
[22]So Moses wrote this song the same day and taught it to the people of Israel.[23]Yahweh gave Joshua son of Nun a command and said, "Be strong and of good courage; for you will bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to them, and I will be with you."

[24]It happened that when Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book,[25]that he commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, and he said,[26]"Take this book of the law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, so that it may be there as a witness against you.
[27]For I know your rebellion and your stiff neck; look, while I am still alive with you even today, you have been rebellious against Yahweh; how much more after my death?[28]Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, so that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them.[29]For I know that after my death you will utterly corrupt yourselves and turn aside out of the path that I have commanded you; disaster will come on you in the following days. This will happen because you will do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, so as to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands."

[30]Moses recited in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song until they were finished.

Deuteronomy 31 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Final instructions

In the Ancient Near East, it was common for an important leader to give instructions for his people to follow after his death. In this chapter, Moses begins his final words to the people of Israel. These are words that he wants them to remember long after he is gone. This section also helped to make a smooth transition to Joshua's leadership.

Links:

Deuteronomy 31:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 31:2
one hundred twenty years old
"120 years old"
I can no more go out and come in
Here the extremes "go out" and "come in" used together mean that Moses can no longer do what a healthy person can do. Alternate translation: "I am no longer able to go everywhere that you need to go, so I cannot be your leader any longer"
Deuteronomy 31:3
your God ... before you ... before you ... you will dispossess ... before you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
you will dispossess them
"you will take their land"
Joshua, he will go over before you, as Yahweh has spoken
"Joshua will lead you across the river, as Yahweh promised"
Deuteronomy 31:4
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the Israelites.
he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites
Here "Sihon" and "Og" refer to two Kings of the Amorites and their armies. See how you translated these names in [Deuteronomy 1:4]
Deuteronomy 31:6
Be strong and of good courage
"Be strong and courageous"
fear not, and do not be afraid of them
"do not fear them at all"
Yahweh your God ... with you ... fail you nor abandon you
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
he will not fail you nor abandon you
This can be treated as litotes and translated positively. Alternate translation: "he will always fulfill his promise to you and will always be with you"
Deuteronomy 31:7
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
in the sight of all Israel
This means that all of the people of Israel were present. Alternate translation: "in the presence of all the Israelites"
Be strong and of good courage
"Be strong and courageous." See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 31:5.
you will cause them to inherit it
"you will help them take the land"
Deuteronomy 31:9
gave it out to the priests, the sons of Levi
"gave it out to the Levites, who are the priests"
Deuteronomy 31:10
seven years
"7 years"
fixed for the cancellation of debts
"for canceling debts"

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Festival of Shelters
Other names for this festival are "Feast of Tabernacles," "Festival of Booths," and "Feast of the Ingathering." During harvest, farmers would set up temporary shelters in the field. This festival took place after the last harvest of the year. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 16:13.
Deuteronomy 31:11
Yahweh your God ... you will read
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
in their hearing
"so that they can hear it"
Deuteronomy 31:12
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the priests and the elders.
your foreigner who is within your city gates
Here "city gates" represents the cities themselves. Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the instances of "your" here are singular. Alternate translation: "your foreigners who live in your cities"
keep all the words of this law
"carefully obey all the commands in this law"
Deuteronomy 31:14
Look, the
"Pay attention to what I am about to tell you. The"
Deuteronomy 31:15
a pillar of cloud
This was a thick cloud of smoke in the shape of an upright column.
Deuteronomy 31:16
Look, you
"Pay attention to what I am going to tell you. You"
you will lie down with your fathers
This is a polite way to say "you will die." Alternate translation: "you will die and join your ancestors who have died before you"
will rise up and act like a prostitute
Being a prostitute is a metaphor for worshiping gods other than Yahweh. Alternate translation: "will start to be unfaithful to me"
Deuteronomy 31:17
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses.
my anger will be kindled against them
Yahweh compares his anger to someone starting a fire. This emphasizes God's power to destroy whatever makes him angry. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will kindle my anger against them" or "I will become angry with them"
I will hide my face from them
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will not help them"
they will be devoured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will devour them" or "I will allow their enemies to devour them"
devoured
This is a metaphor for "completely destroyed."
Many disasters and troubles will find them
This describes the disasters and troubles as if they were human. Alternate translation: "They will experience many disasters and troubles"
Have these disasters not come upon us ... midst?
This describes the disasters and troubles as if they were human. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These disasters are destroying me ... midst."
our God is not in our midst
"God is no longer protecting us" or "God has left us alone"
Deuteronomy 31:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Moses about the Israelites.
Put it in their mouths
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Make them memorize and sing it"
Deuteronomy 31:20
a land flowing with milk and honey
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "a land where plenty of milk and honey flow" or "a land that is excellent for cattle and farming" See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 6:3.
Deuteronomy 31:21
When many evils and troubles come upon this people
Here evils and troubles are described as if they were human and could find people. Alternate translation: "When this people experiences many evils and troubles"
this song will testify before them as a witness
This speaks of the song as if it were a human witness testifying in court against Israel.
it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their descendants
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their descendants will not forget to keep it in their mouths"
it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their descendants
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "their descendants will remember to keep it in their mouths"
it will not be forgotten from the mouths of their descendants
The idiom "forget it from the mouth" means to stop speaking about it. Alternate translation: "their descendants will not stop speaking about it to each other"
the plans that they are forming
What people plan to do is spoken of as if it were a physical object. Alternate translation: "what they plan to do"
the land that I swore to them
God's promise of the land was to give it to the people of Israel. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the land that I promised I would give to them"
Deuteronomy 31:23
Be strong and of good courage
"Be strong and courageous." See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 31:5.
Deuteronomy 31:26
witness against you
Moses speaks to the Levites as if they were one man, so the word "you" is singular.
Deuteronomy 31:27
General Information:
Moses continues speaking to the Levites about all the

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Israelite people.

your rebellion and your stiff neck

Moses speaks to the Levites as if they were one man, so the word "your" is singular.

your stiff neck

See how you translated "stubborn" in Deuteronomy 9:6.

how much more after my death?

This rhetorical question emphasizes how rebellious the people were. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will be even more rebellious after I die." Deuteronomy 31:28

so that I may speak these words in their ears

Here "in their ears" means the people themselves. Alternate translation: "so that I may speak the words of this song to them"

call heaven and earth to witness against them

Possible meanings are 1) Moses is calling on all those who live in heaven and earth to be witnesses to what he says or 2) Moses is speaking to heaven and earth as if they are people, and he is calling them to be witnesses to what he says. A similar phrase appears in [Deuteronomy 30:19] Deuteronomy 31:29

you will utterly corrupt yourselves

"you will do what is completely wrong." See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 4:16.

turn aside out of the path that I have commanded you

"stop following the instructions I have given to you." See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 9:12.

what is evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what is evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

through the work of your hands

Here "your hands" means the people themselves. Alternate translation: "because of what you have made" Deuteronomy 31:30

Moses recited in the ears of all the assembly of Israel

Here "ears" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "Moses recited to all the people of Israel"

recited

Possible meanings are 1) "sang" or 2) "spoke."

the words of this song

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "the words of the song that Yahweh taught him"

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32 [1] Give ear, you heavens, and let me speak.
Let the earth listen to the words of my mouth.

[2] Let my teaching drop down like the rain,
let my speech distill like the dew,
like the gentle rain on the tender grass,
and like the showers on the plants.

[3] For I will proclaim the name of Yahweh,
and ascribe greatness to our God.

[4] The Rock, his work is perfect;
for all his paths are just.
He is the faithful God, without iniquity.
He is just and upright.

[5] They have acted corruptly against him.
They are not his children. It is their disgrace.
They are a perverted and crooked generation.

[6] Do you reward Yahweh in this way,
you foolish and unwise people?
Is he not your Father, the one who has created you?
He made you and established you.

[7] Call to mind the days of ancient times,
think about the years of generations past.
Ask your father and he will show you,
your elders and they will tell you.

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8 When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance—
when he divided all of mankind,
he set the boundaries of the peoples
according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For Yahweh's portion is his people;
Jacob is his apportioned inheritance.

10 He found him in a desert land,
and in the barren and howling wilderness;
he shielded him and cared for him,
he guarded him as the apple of his eye.

11 As an eagle that guards her nest
and flutters over her young,
Yahweh spread out his wings and took them,
and carried them on his pinions.

12 Yahweh alone led him;
no foreign god was with him.

13 He made him ride on high places of the land,
and he fed him the fruits of the field;
he nourished him with honey from the rock,
and oil from the flinty crag.

14 He ate butter from the herd and drank milk from the flock,
with fat of lambs,
rams of Bashan and goats,
with the finest of the wheat—
and you drank foaming wine made from the blood of grapes.

15 But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—
you grew fat, you were too fat, and you had eaten your fill—
he abandoned the God who made him,
and he rejected the Rock of his salvation.

16 They made Yahweh jealous by their strange gods;
with their abominations they angered him.

17 They sacrificed to demons, which are not God—
gods they had not known,
gods that recently appeared,
gods your fathers did not fear.

18 You have deserted the Rock, who became your father,
and you forgot the God who gave you birth.

19 Yahweh saw this and he rejected them,
because his sons and his daughters provoked him so.

20 "I will hide my face from them," he said,

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"and I will see what their end will be;
for they are a perverse generation,
children in whom is no faithfulness.

21 They have made me jealous by what is not god
and angered me by their worthless things.
I will make them envious by those who are not a people;
by a foolish nation I will make them angry.

22 For a fire is kindled by my anger
and is burning to the lowest Sheol;
it is devouring the earth and its produce;
it is setting on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will heap disasters on them;
I will shoot all my arrows at them;

24 They will be wasted by hunger and devoured by burning heat
and bitter destruction;
I will send on them the teeth of wild animals,
with the poison of things that crawl in the dust.

25 Outside the sword will bereave,
and in the bedrooms terror will do so.
It will destroy both young man and virgin,
the nursing baby, and the man of gray hairs.

26 I said that I would scatter them far away,
that I would make the memory of them to cease from among mankind.

27 Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy,
and that their enemies would judge mistakenly,
and that they would say, 'Our hand is exalted,'
I would have done all this.

28 For Israel is a nation devoid of counsel,
and there is no understanding in them.

29 Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this,
that they would consider their coming fate!

30 How could one chase a thousand,
and two put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
and Yahweh had given them up?

31 For our enemies' rock is not like our Rock,
just as even our enemies have concluded.

32 For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom,
and from the fields of Gomorrah;
their grapes are grapes of poison;
their clusters are bitter.

33 Their wine is the poison of serpents

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and the cruel venom of asps.

34 Is not this plan secretly kept by me,
sealed up among my treasures?

35 Vengeance is mine to give, and recompense,
at the time when their foot slips;
for the day of disaster for them is near,
and the things that are to come on them will hurry to happen."

36 For Yahweh will give justice to his people,
and he will pity his servants.
He will see that their power is gone,
and no one remains, either slaves or free people.

37 Then he will say, "Where are their gods,
the rock in whom they took refuge,

38 the gods who ate the fat of their sacrifices
and drank the wine of their drink offerings?
Let them rise up and help you;
let them be your protection.

39 See now that I, even I, am God,
and that there is no god besides me;
I kill, and I make alive;
I wound, and I heal,
and there is no one who can save you from my might.

40 For I lift up my hand to heaven
and say, 'As I live forever, I will act.

41 When I sharpen my glittering sword,
and when my hand begins to bring justice,
I will render vengeance on my enemies,
and I will pay back those who hate me.

42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood,
and my sword will devour flesh
with the blood of the killed and the captives,
and from the heads of the leaders of the enemy.'"

43 Rejoice, you nations, with God's people,
for he will avenge the blood of his servants;
he will render vengeance on his enemies,
and he will make atonement for his land, for his people.

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[44]Moses came and recited all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Joshua son of Nun.[45]Then Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel.
[46]He said to them, "Fix your mind on all the words that I have witnessed to you today, so that you may command your children to keep them, all the words of this law.[47]For this is no trivial matter for you, because it is your life, and through this thing you will prolong your days in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess."

[48]Yahweh spoke to Moses on that same day and said,[49]"Go up into this range of the mountains of Abarim, up Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho. You will look at the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel as their possession.
[50]You will die on the mountain that you go up, and you will be gathered to your people, as Aaron your fellow Israelite died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people.[51]This will happen because you were unfaithful to me among the people of Israel at the waters of Meribah in Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because you did not treat me with honor and respect among the people of Israel.[52]For you will see the land before you, but you will not go there, into the land that I am giving to the people of Israel."

Deuteronomy 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 32:1-43.

Special concepts in this chapter

Punishment

This chapter prophesies a time when Israel will be disobedient to Yahweh and he will have to punish them. This is meant to serve as a warning to the nation. (See: prophet)

Links:

Deuteronomy 32:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 32:1

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

Give ear, you heavens ... Let the earth listen

Yahweh speaks to the heavens and earth as if they are there listening. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is speaking to the inhabitants of heaven and earth or 2) Yahweh is speaking to the heavens and earth as if they are persons.

Deuteronomy 32:2

Let my teaching drop down like the rain ... and like the showers on the plants

This means Yahweh wants the people to eagerly accept his helpful teaching.

distill

Use the word in your language for the process by which dew appears.

dew

water that forms on leaves and grass on cool mornings

tender grass

"new plants"

showers

heavy rain

Deuteronomy 32:3

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

proclaim the name of Yahweh

This is an idiom. "tell how good Yahweh is"

ascribe greatness to our God

"make sure people know that our God is great"

Deuteronomy 32:4

The Rock

This a proper name that Moses gives to Yahweh, who, like a rock, is strong and able to protect his people.

his work

"everything he does"

all his paths are just

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Alternate translation: "he does everything in a just way"

He is just and upright

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh is fair and does what is right.

Deuteronomy 32:5

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. Moses continues to use parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

acted corruptly against him

"opposed him by doing what is wrong." See how you translated these words in Deuteronomy 4:16.

a perverted and crooked generation

The words "perverted" and "crooked" mean basically the same thing. Moses uses them to emphasize how wicked the generation is. Alternate translation: "a completely wicked generation"

Deuteronomy 32:6

Do you reward Yahweh in this way ... people?

Moses uses a question to scold the people. Alternate translation: "You should give Yahweh proper praise ... people."

you foolish and unwise people

The words "foolish" and "unwise" mean the same thing and

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emphasize how foolish the people are for disobeying Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you extremely foolish people"

your Father ... has created you ... made you and established you

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

Is he not your Father, the one who has created you?

Moses uses a question to scold the people. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is your Father and the one who created you."

Deuteronomy 32:7

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

Call to mind ... think about ... your father ... show you ... your elders ... tell you

Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.

Call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Remember"

days of ancient times ... years of generations past

Moses wants the people of Israel to focus on their history as a nation.

days of ancient times

"days of long ago." Moses refers to the time period when the ancestors of the people of Israel were alive.

he will show you

"he will make it clear to you" or "he will enable you to understand it"

Deuteronomy 32:8

gave the nations their inheritance

This is an idiom. "put the nations in the places where they would live." Similar words, "giving to you as an inheritance," appear in [Deuteronomy 4:21]

according to the number of the children of Israel

God has arranged the nations according to the way they relate to Israel.

the number of the children of Israel

How this relates to "the boundaries of the people" is not clear. Some ancient and modern translations read, "the number of the angels of God" or "the number of the children of God." That is, God assigned an angel to each other nation, but he rules Israel directly.

Deuteronomy 32:9

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. As he speaks to the Israelites, he talks about them as if they were someone else and as if they were one man.

For Yahweh's portion is his people; Jacob is his apportioned inheritance

These two phrases means basically the same thing and and can be combined. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Jacob are Yahweh's inheritance"

Deuteronomy 32:10

He found him ... shielded him and cared for him ... guarded him

"He found Jacob ... shielded him and cared for him ... guarded him" You may need to translate this as if Moses were talking about the Israelites as many people. Alternate translation: "He found our ancestors ... shielded them and cared for them ... guarded them"

howling wilderness

Here "howling" refers to the sound the wind makes as it blows through the empty land.

he guarded him as the apple of his eye

This is an idiom. The apple of an eye refers to the dark part inside the eyeball that allows a person to see. This is a very important and sensitive part of the body. This means that the people of Israel are very important to God and something he protects. Alternate translation: "he protected him as something very valuable and precious"

Deuteronomy 32:11

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

As an eagle that guards her nest and flutters over her young, Yahweh spread out his wings and took them, and carried them on his pinions

This means Yahweh watched over and protected the Israelites while they were in the desert.

pinions

the outer edges of a bird's wings

Deuteronomy 32:12

led him ... with him

Moses again speaks of the Israelites as "Jacob"

Deuteronomy 32:13

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

He made him ride on high places of the land

This is an idiom. The word "him" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made them ride on high places of the land" or "Yahweh helped them take and occupy the land"

made him ride ... fed him ... nourished him

Moses continues to speak of the Israelites as "Jacob"

he fed him the fruits of the field

"he brought him to a land with plenty of crops he could eat"

he nourished him with honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty crag

The land had many wild bees, which produce honey, with hives inside rock holes. There were also many olive trees, which provide oil, and grow on rocks, hills, and mountains.

nourished him with honey

This is like a mother giving her breast to an infant. "allowed him to suck honey"

Deuteronomy 32:14

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" here is singular.

He ate

Moses continues to speak of the Israelites as "Jacob"

fat of lambs, rams of Bashan and goats

The people of Israel had many healthy herd animals.

Deuteronomy 32:15

General Information:

Moses continues speaking his poetic song to the people of Israel.

Jeshurun

Moses speaks of the Israelites as if they were an animal whose owner named it Jeshurun.

grew fat ... you grew fat, you were too fat, and you had eaten your fill

An animal growing fat is a metaphor for a person becoming

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wealthy and prosperous. Alternate translation: "was like an animal that grew fat ... you grew fat, you were too fat, and you had eaten until you were full"

and kicked

Kicking is a metaphor for rebelling against God. Alternate translation: "and kicked his master" or "and rebelled"

the Rock of his salvation

This means Yahweh is strong like a rock and able to protect his people.

the Rock

This a proper name that Moses gives to Yahweh, who, like a rock, is strong and able to protect his people. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:4.

Deuteronomy 32:16

They made Yahweh jealous

The Israelites made Yahweh jealous.

Deuteronomy 32:17

General Information:

Moses continues to speak his song to the Israelites.

They sacrificed

"The people of Israel sacrificed"

gods that recently appeared

This means the Israelites recently learned about these gods.

your fathers

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as many people, so the word "your" is plural.

Deuteronomy 32:18

You have deserted ... your father ... you forgot ... gave you

Moses is speaking to the Israelites as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and "your" are singular.

You have deserted the Rock

Here Yahweh is called the rock because he is strong and protective. Alternate translation: "You have left the protective care of Yahweh"

the Rock

This a proper name that Moses gives to Yahweh, who, like a rock, is strong and able to protect his people. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:4.

who became your father ... who gave you birth

This compares Yahweh to a father and a mother. This means God caused them to live and to be a nation. Alternate translation: "who fathered you ... who gave life to you"

Deuteronomy 32:19

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

his sons and his daughters

This refers to the people of Israel whom Yahweh gave life to and made into a nation.

Deuteronomy 32:20

I will hide my face from them

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will turn away from them" or "I will stop helping them"

I will see what their end will be

"I will see what happens to them"

Deuteronomy 32:21

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

They have made me jealous

Here "me" refers to Yahweh.

what is not god

"what are false gods"

worthless things

You may need to make explicit what the "things" are. Alternate translation: "worthless idols"

those who are not a people

"people who do not belong to one people group"

foolish nation

Translate "foolish" as in Deuteronomy 32:6.

Deuteronomy 32:22

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

For a fire is kindled by my anger ... foundations of the mountains

Yahweh compares his anger to a fire. This emphasizes his power to destroy what makes him angry.

a fire is kindled by my anger and is burning ... it is devouring ... it is setting

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I start a fire because I am angry, and it burns ... it is devouring ... it is setting" or "when I am angry, I destroy my enemies like a fire, and I destroy everything on earth and in ... I devour ... I set"

to the lowest Sheol

"even to the world of the dead"

Deuteronomy 32:23

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

I will heap disasters on them

Yahweh speaks of bad things that would happen to the Israelites as if they were something like dirt that he could pile up on top of the Israelites. Alternate translation: "I will make sure that many bad things happen to them"

I will shoot all my arrows at them

Here Yahweh compares the bad things he will make sure happen to the Israelites to someone shooting arrows from a bow. Alternate translation: "I will do all I can do to kill them"

Deuteronomy 32:24

They will be wasted by hunger

This can be stated in active form. The abstract noun "hunger" can be translated as the verb "be hungry." Alternate translation: "They will grow weak and die because they are hungry"

They will ... hunger and devoured by burning heat and bitter destruction

Possible meanings of "burning heat" are 1) the Israelites will suffer from fevers or 2) the weather will be unusually hot during a drought or famine. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will ... hunger, and burning heat and terrible disasters will devour them" or "They will ... hunger, and they will die from burning heat and terrible disasters"

I will send on them the teeth of wild animals, with the poison of things that crawl in the dust

The teeth and the poison are synecdoches for the animals

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that use these things to kill. Alternate translation: "I will send wild animals to bite them, and things that crawl in the dust to bite and poison them"

Deuteronomy 32:25

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

Outside the sword will bereave

Here "sword" represents the army of the enemy. Alternate translation: "When the Israelites are outside, the enemy army will kill them"

terror will do so

Yahweh speaks of being afraid as if it were a person who comes into a house and kills those who live in it. Alternate translation: "you will die because you are afraid"

young man and virgin, the nursing baby, and the man of gray hairs

These terms describing people of different ages are combined to mean that all kinds of people will die.

Deuteronomy 32:26

I said that I would ... away, that I would ... mankind.

This can be translated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "I said, 'I will ... away, and I will ... mankind.'"

I would make the memory of them to cease from among mankind

"I would make all people forget about them"

Deuteronomy 32:27

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy

"I was afraid of the provocation of the enemy"

the provocation of the enemy

This abstract noun can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "that the enemy would provoke me" or "that the enemy would cause me to be angry"

the enemy

Yahweh speaks of his enemies as if they are one man. Alternate translation: "my enemy" or "my enemies"

judge mistakenly

"misunderstand"

Our hand is exalted

Here "hand" represents the strength or power of a person. To be exalted is an idiom for defeating an enemy. Alternate translation: "We have defeated them because we are more powerful"

Deuteronomy 32:28

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

Deuteronomy 32:29

Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their coming fate

Moses states something that he wishes were true, but he knows that it is not true. The people of Israel were not wise and did not understand that their disobedience would cause Yahweh to bring disaster on them.

their coming fate

The abstract noun "fate" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "what is going to happen to them"

Deuteronomy 32:30

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words and tell them more of what they would have understood if they were wise

How could one chase a thousand ... Yahweh had given them up?

Moses uses a question to scold the people for not being wise enough to understand why their enemies are defeating them. This question can be translated as a statement as in the UDB.

How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "How could 1 enemy soldier chase 1,000 of your men, and 2 enemy soldiers cause 10,000 of your men to run away"

unless their Rock had sold them

The word "Rock" refers to Yahweh who is strong and able to protect his people. Alternate translation: "unless Yahweh, their Rock, had handed them over"

their Rock

"The Rock" here is a proper name that Moses gives to Yahweh, who, like a rock, is strong and able to protect his people. Translate "Rock" as in Deuteronomy 32:4.

Deuteronomy 32:31

our Rock

"The Rock" here is a proper name that Moses gives to Yahweh, who, like a rock, is strong and able to protect his people. Translate "Rock" as in [Deuteronomy 32:4]

our enemies' rock is not like our Rock

The enemies' idols and false gods are not powerful like Yahweh.

Rock, just as even our enemies have concluded

"Rock; not only do we say so, but our enemies say so also"

have concluded

have made a judgment after looking at the facts

Deuteronomy 32:32

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom ... clusters are bitter

Moses compares enemies who worship false gods to the wicked people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah and to grapevines that produce poisonous fruit. This means their enemies are wicked and will cause the Israelites to die if the Israelites start to act like the people who live around them.

their vine comes from the vine of Sodom, and from the fields of Gomorrah

The vine is a metaphor for the people group. "it is as if their vine were a branch of the vines that grew in the fields of Sodom and Gomorrah" or Alternate translation: "they do evil the same way the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah did"

their clusters

"their clusters of grapes"

Deuteronomy 32:33

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. He continues to quote Yahweh's words.

Their wine is the poison of serpents and the cruel venom of asps

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Moses continues comparing the enemies of the people of Israel to grapevines that produce poisonous fruit and wine. This means their enemies are wicked.

asps

poisonous snakes

Deuteronomy 32:34

Is not this plan secretly kept by me, sealed up among my treasures?

This question emphasizes that Yahweh's plans for the people of Israel are kept secret like a valuable treasure. The rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I know what I have planned to do to the Israelite people and to their enemies, and I have locked up those plans as someone would lock up his valuable possessions."

Deuteronomy 32:35

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel. This is the end of Moses's quotation of Yahweh's words that begins in [Deuteronomy 32:20]

Vengeance is mine to give, and recompense

The words "vengeance" and "recompense" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "I will have vengeance and punish Israel's enemies"

recompense

to punish or reward a person for what he has done

their foot slips

Something bad has happened to them. Alternate translation: "they are helpless"

the day of disaster for them

"the time for me to destroy them"

the things that are to come on them will hurry to happen

Yahweh speaks of the bad things that will happen to his enemies as if the bad things were people running eagerly to punish them. Alternate translation: "I will punish them quickly"

Deuteronomy 32:36

General Information:

Moses continues to speak a poetic song to the people of Israel.

For Yahweh will give justice to his people

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated as an adjective or as an adverb. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh will do what is just for his people" or "For Yahweh will act justly towards his people"

he will pity his servants

"he will feel that he needs to help his servants"

Deuteronomy 32:37

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:38

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Where are their gods" in Deuteronomy 32:37.

the gods who ... drink offerings?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Where are their gods" in [Deuteronomy 32:37]

Let them rise up and help you; let them be your protection

Yahweh says this to mock the Israelites. He knows these gods cannot help them. Alternate translation: "These idols are not even able to get up and help or to protect you"

Deuteronomy 32:39

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

I, even I

"I, I myself" or "I, I alone." Yahweh repeats "I" to emphasize that only he is God.

Deuteronomy 32:40

I lift up my hand to heaven and say

"I lift up my hand to heaven and swear" or "I have taken an oath." Lifting up the hand is a sign of making an oath.

As I live forever

"As certainly as I live forever" or "I swear by my life which is never-ending." This statement assures the people that what God says in Deuteronomy 32:41-Deuteronomy 32:42 will happen.

Deuteronomy 32:41

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

When I sharpen my glittering sword

"When I sharpen my shining sword." This means God is preparing to judge and punish his enemies. Alternate translation: "When I am ready to judge my enemies"

when my hand begins to bring justice

Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "when I get ready to judge the wicked"

Deuteronomy 32:42

General Information:

Moses speaks a poetic song to the people of Israel.

I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword will devour flesh with the blood

Yahweh speaks of arrows as if they were people to whom he could give alcohol and make them drunk, and of a sword as if it were a person who was so hungry that he would eat an animal before draining the blood out. These metaphors are metonyms for a soldier using arrows and a sword to kill many enemies. This in turn is a metaphor for Yahweh killing his enemies in war.

from the heads of the leaders of the enemy

A possible meaning is "from the long-haired heads of the enemy."

Deuteronomy 32:43

General Information:

This is the end of Moses's song.

Rejoice, you nations

Moses addresses the peoples of all the nations as if they were there listening.

for he will avenge the blood of his servants; he will render vengeance on his enemies

Here "blood of his servants" represents the lives of his innocent servants who were killed. Alternate translation: "for he will take revenge on his enemies, who killed his servants"

Deuteronomy 32:44

recited

Possible meanings are 1) "spoke" or 2) "sang."

in the ears of the people

Here "ears" represents the people themselves and emphasizes that Moses wanted to make sure they heard the

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song clearly. Alternate translation: "to the people so they would be sure to hear it"
Deuteronomy 32:45
reciting
Possible meanings are 1) "speaking" or 2) "singing."
Deuteronomy 32:46
He said to them
"Moses said to the people of Israel"
Fix your mind on
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to" or "Think about"
I have witnessed to you
Possible meanings are 1) "I have testified to you," referring to what Yahweh has said he will do to the Israelites if they disobey, or 2) "I have commanded you," referring to what Yahweh was commanding them to do.
your children
"your children and descendants"
Deuteronomy 32:47
this is
"this law is"
no trivial matter
This litotes can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "something very important"
because it is your life
The abstract noun "life" can be translated as the verb "live." You may need to make explicit the metonymy of obeying the law, which represents the law itself. Alternate translation: "because you will live if you obey it"
prolong your days
Long days are a metaphor for a long life. See how you translated these words in [Deuteronomy 4:26]
Deuteronomy 32:49
mountains of Abarim
This is the name of a mountain range in Moab.
Abarim, up Mount Nebo
"Abarim and climb up Mount Nebo"
Mount Nebo
This is the highest place in the Abarim Mountains.
opposite Jericho
"on the other side of the river from Jericho"
Deuteronomy 32:50
General Information:
Yahweh finishes speaking to Moses.
be gathered to your people
This is a polite way of saying Moses's spirit would join the spirits of his relatives in the world of the dead. Alternate translation: "join your ancestors who died before you"
Mount Hor
This is the name of a mountain on the border of Edom.
Deuteronomy 32:51
Meribah
This is the name of the place in the desert where Moses disobeyed God.
wilderness of Zin
This is the name of a wilderness on the southern border of Judah.

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33 [1]This is the blessing with which Moses the man of God blessed the people of Israel before his death.[2]He said:
Yahweh came from Sinai
and rose from Seir upon them.
He shined out from Mount Paran,
and he came with ten thousands of holy ones.
In his right hand were flashes of lightning.
[3] Indeed, he loves the peoples;
all his holy people are in your hand,
and they bowed down at your feet;
they received your words.

[4] Moses commanded us a law,
an inheritance for the assembly of Jacob.

[5] Then there was a king in Jeshurun,
when the heads of the people had gathered,
all the tribes of Israel together.

[6] Let Reuben live and not die,
but may his men be few.

[7]This is the blessing for Judah. Moses said:
Listen, Yahweh, to the voice of Judah,
and bring him to his people again.
Fight for him;

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be a help against his enemies.

8 About Levi, Moses said:
Your Thummim and your Urim belong to your faithful one,
the one whom you tested at Massah,
with whom you struggled at the waters of Meribah,
9 who said about his father and mother, "I have not seen them."
Neither did he acknowledge his brothers,
nor did he take account of his own children.
For he guarded your word
and kept your covenant.

10 He teaches Jacob your decrees
and Israel your law.
He will put incense before you
and whole burnt offerings on your altar.

11 Bless, Yahweh, his possessions,
and accept the work of his hands.
Shatter the loins of those who rise up against him,
and those of the people who hate him, so that they do not rise up again.

12 About Benjamin, Moses said:
The one loved by Yahweh lives in security beside him;
Yahweh shields him all the day long,
and he lives between Yahweh's arms.

13 About Joseph, Moses said:
May his land be blessed by Yahweh
with the precious things of heaven, with the dew,
and with the deep that lies beneath.
14 May his land be blessed with the precious things of the harvest of the sun,
with the precious things of the produce of the months,

15 with the finest things of the ancient mountains,
and with the precious things of the everlasting hills.

16 May his land be blessed with the precious things of the earth and its abundance,
and with the good will of him who was in the bush.
Let the blessing come on the head of Joseph,
and on the top of the head of him who was prince over his brothers.

17 The firstborn of an ox, majestic is he,
and his horns are the horns of a wild ox.
With them he will push the peoples,
all of them, to the ends of the earth.
These are the ten thousands of Ephraim;
these are the thousands of Manasseh.

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[18]About Zebulun, Moses said:
Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out,
and you, Issachar, in your tents.
[19] They will call the peoples to the mountains.
There will they offer sacrifices of righteousness.
For they will suck the abundance of the seas,
and from the sand on the seashore.

[20]About Gad, Moses said:
Blessed be he who enlarges Gad.
He will live there like a lioness,
and he will tear off an arm or a head.
[21] He provided the best part for himself,
for there was the leader's portion of land reserved.
He came with the heads of the people.
He carried out the justice of Yahweh
and his decrees with Israel.

[22]About Dan, Moses said:
Dan is a lion cub
that leaps out from Bashan.

[23]About Naphtali, Moses said:
Naphtali, satisfied with favor,
and full of the blessing of Yahweh,
take possession of the land to the west and south.

[24]About Asher, Moses said:
Blessed be Asher more than the other sons;
let him be acceptable to his brothers,
and let him dip his foot in olive oil.
[25] May your city bars be iron and bronze;
as long as will be your days, so long will your security be.

[26] There is no one like the God of Jeshurun,
who rides through the heavens to your help,
and in his majesty on the clouds.

[27] The eternal God is a refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms.
He thrust out the enemy from before you,
and he said, "Destroy!"

[28] Israel dwelt in safety.
Jacob's spring was secure
in a land of grain and new wine;
indeed, let his heavens drop dew on him.

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29 Your blessings are many, Israel!
Who is like you, a people saved by Yahweh,
the shield of your help,
and the sword of your majesty?
Your enemies will come trembling to you;
you will trample down their high places.

Deuteronomy 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic lines of Moses's blessings in 33:1-29.

Special concepts in this chapter

Families

Moses gives a series of prophecies or instructions for each of the tribes of Israel and Israel overall. (See: prophet)

Links:

Deuteronomy 33:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 33:1

General Information:

Moses begins to bless the tribes of Israel. Moses speaks the blessing in the form of short poems.

Deuteronomy 33:2

Yahweh came from Sinai and rose from Seir upon them. He shined out from Mount Paran

Moses compares Yahweh to the rising sun. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh came from Sinai, he looked to them like the sun when it rises from Seir and shines out from Mount Paran"

upon them

"upon the people of Israel"

ten thousands of holy ones

"10,000 angels"

In his right hand were flashes of lightning

Other possible meanings are 1) "In his right hand were flames of fire" or 2) "He gave them a law of fire" or 3) "He came from the south, down his mountain slopes."

Deuteronomy 33:3

General Information:

These verses are difficult to understand. Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:2]

the peoples

"the people of Israel"

all his holy people are in your hand ... your feet ... your words

The pronouns "his" and "your" refer to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "all Yahweh's holy peole are in his hand ... his feet ... his words"

all his holy people are in your hand

The hand is a metonym for power and protection. Alternate translation: "you protect all his holy people"

Deuteronomy 33:4

an inheritance

"a possession" or "a precious possession"

Deuteronomy 33:5

General Information:

Verse 5 is difficult to understand. Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:2]

there was a king

"Yahweh became king"

Jeshurun

This is another name for Israel. Translate it as in Deuteronomy 32:15.

Deuteronomy 33:6

Let Reuben live

This begins Moses's blessings to the individual tribes of Israel.

but may his men be few

Other possible meanings are 1) "and may his men not be few" or 2) "even though his men are few."

Deuteronomy 33:7

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:2]

to the voice of Judah

Here "voice of Judah" refers to the cries and prayers of the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "when the people of Judah pray to you"

be a help

The abstract noun "help" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "help him to fight"

Deuteronomy 33:8

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:2]

Your Thummim and your Urim

These were sacred stones the high priest carried on his

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breastplate and used at times to determine God's will. Here "your" refers to Yahweh.

your faithful one, the one whom you tested ... with whom you struggled

Moses refers to the tribe of Levi as if it were one man.

your faithful one

"the one who seeks to please you."

Massah

See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 6:16. Translator may add a footnote that says: "The name 'Massah' means 'testing.'"

Meribah

See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:51. Translator may add a footnote that says: "The name 'Meribah' means 'argue' or 'quarrel.'"

Deuteronomy 33:9

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:2]

who said about his father and mother

The word "who" refers to the Yahweh's "faithful one" of Deuteronomy 33:8. This is the tribe of Levi.

your word

"your commands"

guarded ... kept

These words both mean to watch over and to protect. They are often metaphors for "obeyed," but here they should be translated literally because they refer to a time when the Levites literally killed people who were rebelling against Yahweh.

Deuteronomy 33:10

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues to describe the tribe of Levi, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:8]

your ... your ... you ... your

Moses is speaking to Yahweh, so all these words are singular.

Deuteronomy 33:11

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues describing the tribe of Levi, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:8]

accept

be pleased with

the work of his hands

Here the word "hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "all the work that he does"

Shatter the loins of

The loins were considered the center of strength, and are here represent strength. Alternate translation: "Take away the strength of" or "Utterly destroy"

rise up ... rise up

This phrase is used twice as a metaphor. Alternate translation: "rise up to fight ... cause any more trouble"

rise up against

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "fight against"

Deuteronomy 33:12

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems.

The one loved by Yahweh lives

Here Moses is referring to the members of the tribe of Benjamin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The ones whom Yahweh loves live"

lives in security

The abstact noun "security" can be translated using a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "lives where no one can harm him"

he lives between Yahweh's arms

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh protects the tribe of Benjamin with his power or 2) Yahweh lives in the hill region of the tribe of Benjamin. In both translations, it means Yahweh takes care of them.

Deuteronomy 33:13

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems.

About Joseph

This refers to the tribe of Ephraim and the tribe of Manasseh. Both tribes descended from Joseph.

May his land be blessed by Yahweh

The word "his" refers to Joseph which represents the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh bless their land"

with the precious things of heaven, with the dew

"with the precious dew from the sky" or "with the precious rain from the sky"

dew

water that forms on leaves and grass on cool mornings. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:2.

the deep that lies beneath

This refers to the water under the ground.

Deuteronomy 33:14

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues to describe the tribe of Joseph, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:13]

May his land be blessed

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 33:13]

with the precious things of the harvest of the sun

"with the best crops that the sun causes to grow"

with the precious things of the produce of the months

"with the best crops that grow month to month"

Deuteronomy 33:15

finest things ... precious things

Moses is probably referring to food crops. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the best fruits ... the precious fruits"

ancient mountains

"the mountains that existed long ago"

everlasting hills

"the hills that will exist forever"

Deuteronomy 33:16

General Information:

Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues to describe the tribe of Joseph, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:13]

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May his land be blessed
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Deuteronomy 33:13]
its abundance
The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "what it produces in large amounts"
him who was in the bush
The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who spoke to Moses from the burning bush"
Let the blessing come on the head of Joseph
This metaphor is of a man putting his hand on the head of a son and asking God to bless the son. The man here is Yahweh. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh bless Joseph as a father blesses his son"
come on the head of Joseph, and on the top of the head of him
Here "head" and "top of the head" represent the whole person. Also, Joseph represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "be upon the descendants of Joseph"
top of the head
Another possible meaning is "brow" or "forehead."
Deuteronomy 33:17
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues to describe the tribe of Joseph, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:13]
The firstborn of an ox, majestic is he
The ox is a metaphor for something large and strong. The word "firstborn" is a metaphor for honor. Alternate translation: "People will honor Joseph's descendants, who are many and powerful"
his horns are the horns of
The horn is a metaphor for strength. Alternate translation: "he is as strong as"
With them he will push
Pushing with his horns is a metaphor for strength. Alternate translation: "He is so strong that he will push"
ten thousands of Ephraim ... the thousands of Manasseh
This means the tribe of Ephraim will be stronger than the tribe of Manasseh. Alternate translation: "the people of Ephraim, who number many times 10,000 ... the people of Manasseh, who number many times 1,000"
Deuteronomy 33:18
General Information:
Moses continues to bless each tribe of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He speaks to the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar as if they were one man, so the word "your" and the command "rejoice" here are singular.
Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, and you, Issachar, in your tents
The people of Zebulun were located near the Mediterranean Sea. They traveled by sea and traded with other people. The people of Issachar preferred peaceful living and working the land and raising cattle. You can make clear the understood information.
Deuteronomy 33:19
There will they offer
"It is there that they will offer"
sacrifices of righteousness
"acceptable sacrifices" or "proper sacrifices"
For they will suck the abundance of the seas, and from the sand on the seashore
Possible meanings are 1) they will trade with people across the sea or 2) they were beginning to use sand in making pottery.
For they will suck the abundance of the seas
The Hebrew word translated "suck" here refers to how a baby nurses at its mother's breast. It means the people will gain wealth from the sea like a baby gets milk from its mother.
Deuteronomy 33:20
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems.
Blessed be he who enlarges Gad
This can stated in active form. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "May Yahweh bless Gad and give him much land to live in" or 2) "People should say that Yahweh is good because he has given Gad much land to live in"
He will live there like a lioness, and he will tear off an arm or a head
This means the people of Gad are strong and secure, and they will defeat their enemies in war.
Deuteronomy 33:21
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He continues to describe the tribe of Gad as one man, which he began to do in [Deuteronomy 33:20]
the leader's portion
This means a larger piece of land that a leader normally took.
He came with the heads of the people
"They met with all the leaders of the Israelites"
He carried out the justice of Yahweh and his decrees with Israel
"They obeyed all that Yahweh had commanded the Israelites"
Deuteronomy 33:22
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems.
Dan is a lion cub that leaps out from Bashan
The people of Dan are strong like a lion cub, and they attack their enemies who live in Bashan. You can make clear the understood information.
Deuteronomy 33:23
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems. He speaks of the descendants of Naphtali as if they were one man.
satisfied with favor
Yahweh being pleased with Naphtali is spoken of as if "favor" were food that Naphtali ate until he was no longer hungry. Alternate translation: "who has all the good things he desires because Yahweh is pleased with him"
full of the blessing of Yahweh
Blessings are spoken of as if they were food that Naphtali ate until he could hold no more. Alternate translation: "whom Yahweh has blessed so that he has all he needs"

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take possession
Moses speaks as if the tribe of Naphtali is one man, so these words are singular.
the land to the west and south
This refers to the land around Lake Galilee. The full meaning of this statement may be made explicit.
Deuteronomy 33:24
General Information:
Moses continues to bless the tribes of Israel; the blessings are short poems.
dip his foot in olive oil
Olive oil was used for food and for the skin of the face and arms. Feet were dirty, so to put the foot in olive oil was to ruin valuable oil. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "have so much olive oil that he can afford to waste it"
Deuteronomy 33:25
your city bars ... your days ... your security
Moses speaks to the tribe of Asher as if they are one man, so all instances of "your" are singular.
May your city bars be iron and bronze
Cities had large bars across their gates to keep enemies out. The meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "May you be safe from attacks by your enemies"
Deuteronomy 33:26
Jeshurun
This is another name for Israel. Translate it as in Deuteronomy 32:15.
who rides through the heavens ... in his majesty on the clouds
This is an image of Yahweh riding on clouds through the sky like a king on his chariot riding through a battlefield. Alternate translation: "who rides through the heavens like a king rides through a battlefield ... on the clouds like a king on his chariot"
to your help
"to help you." Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" here is singular.
Deuteronomy 33:27
The eternal God is a refuge
The abstract noun "refuge," which means a shelter or a place safe from danger, can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The eternal God will protect his people"
underneath are the everlasting arms
The words "everlasting arms" are a metaphor for Yahweh's promise to protect his people forever. Alternate translation: "he will support and take care of his people forever"
He thrust out ... he said
Moses speaks of the future as if it were the past to emphasize that what he is saying will come true. Alternate translation: "He will thrust out ... he will say"
before you ... Destroy
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the word "you" and the command "destroy" here are singular.
he said, "Destroy!"
If this direct quotation would not work well in your language, you may change it to an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "he will tell you to destroy them!"
Deuteronomy 33:28
Israel dwelt ... Jacob's spring was secure
Possible meanings are 1) Moses speaks of the future as if it were the past to emphasize that what he is saying will come true, "Israel will dwell ... Jacob's spring will be secure" or 2) Moses is blessing Israel, "May Israel dwell ... and may Jacob's spring be secure."
Jacob's spring
Possible meanings are 1) Jacob's home or 2) Jacob's descendants.
let his heavens drop dew
The dew is spoken of as being so much that it is as if it were raining. Possible meanings are 1) Moses is blessing Israel, "may much dew cover the land like rain" or 2) Moses is telling what will happen in the future, "much dew will cover the land like rain."
dew
water that forms on leaves and grass on cool mornings. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:2.
Deuteronomy 33:29
General Information:
Moses speaks to the Israelites as if they were one man, so the words "you" and "your" here are singular.
Who is like you, a people saved by Yahweh ... majesty?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There is no other people group like you, a people whom Yahweh has saved ... majesty."
the shield ... the sword
This merism speaks of Yahweh defending the Israelites from their enemies and enabling them to attack their enemies.
the shield of your help
The word "shield" is a metaphor for Yahweh protecting and defending the Israelites. The abstract noun "help" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the one who protects you and helps you"
the sword of your majesty
The word "sword" is a metaphor for the power to kill with the sword in order to win battles. Alternate translation: "the one who enables you to win battles and so have majesty"
you will trample down their high places
Possible meanings are 1) the Israelites will destroy the places where the other people worship false gods or 2) the Israelites will walk on the backs of their enemies when the Israelites defeat them.

34 [1]Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. There Yahweh showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan,[2]and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, to the western sea,[3]and the Negev, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. [4]Yahweh said to him, "This is the land that I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have allowed you to look at it with your eyes, but you will not go over there."[5]So Moses the servant of

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Yahweh, died there in the land of Moab, as the word of Yahweh promised.[6]Yahweh buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth Peor, but no one knows where his grave is to this day.
[7]Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.[8]The people of Israel mourned for Moses in the plains of Moab for thirty days, and then the days of mourning for Moses were finished.

[9]Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. The people of Israel listened to him and did what Yahweh had commanded Moses.
[10]There has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom Yahweh knew face to face.[11]There has never been any prophet like him in all the signs and wonders that Yahweh sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land.[12]There has never been any prophet like him in all the mighty, fearsome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Deuteronomy 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter may have been written by Joshua, since it recorded Moses's death. This chapter officially ends the revelation of the law of Moses, and life in the Promised Land is about to begin again. (See: reveal and lawofmoses and promisedland)

Links:

Deuteronomy 34:1 Notes

Deuteronomy 34:1
Mount Nebo
This is the highest point of Mount Pisgah which is in the northern part of the Abarim mountain range. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 32:49.
Pisgah
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 3:17.
Deuteronomy 34:3
the City of Palms
This is another name for Jericho.
Deuteronomy 34:4
look at it with your eyes
"see it for yourself"
Deuteronomy 34:6
Beth Peor
This was a town in Moab. See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 3:29.
to this day
This refers to the time that this was written or edited, not to the present time in the twenty-first century.
Deuteronomy 34:7
one hundred twenty years old
"30 days"
his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated
This means his eyes and body were still strong and healthy.
Deuteronomy 34:8
thirty days
"30 days"
Deuteronomy 34:9
son of Nun
See how you translated this in Deuteronomy 1:38.
Joshua ... was full of the spirit of wisdom
The writer speaks as if Joshua were a container and the spirit were a physical object that could be put into a container. Alternate translation: "Yahweh enabled Joshua ... to be very wise"
Moses had laid his hands on him
The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Moses had laid his hands on him to set Joshua apart so Joshua would serve Yahweh"
Deuteronomy 34:10
Yahweh knew face to face
This is an idiom. It means Yahweh and Moses had a very close relationship.
Deuteronomy 34:12
in all the mighty
"who did all the mighty"

Introduction to Joshua

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Joshua

Conquest of the land of Canaan (1:1–12:24) Preparation for conquest; spies; crossing the Jordan River (1:1–5:1) Ceremonies at Gilgal; conquest of Jericho and Ai (5:2–8:29) The covenant affirmed at Shechem (8:30–35) Southern and central campaigns; northern campaigns (9:1–12:24)
Settlement in the Promised Land; division of the land (13:1–22:34) Joshua's final days (23:1–24:33)

What is the Book of Joshua about?

The Book of Joshua is about the Israelites entering and occupying the Promised Land. Joshua was the leader that replaced Moses. He led the Israelites as they fought the people living in the Promised Land. This book also tells how the Israelites divided the land among the twelve tribes. (See: promisedland)

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How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title "Joshua" because Joshua leads the people of Israel after Moses dies. Translators may create a title such as "The Book About When Joshua Led Israel." Translators should avoid a title that suggests Joshua as the writer of the book.

Who wrote the Book of Joshua?

The book does not tell who wrote it. However, some verses in the book indicate that Joshua may have written at least part of it. Since ancient times, Jews have thought that Joshua wrote most of the book.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How does the Book of Joshua present the cause of historical events?

In the ancient Near East, people assumed that gods caused world events to happen in a certain way. The Book of Joshua has some similarities with this view, but there are important differences. The events in the Book of Joshua occurred because Yahweh promised the Israelites that he would give them the Promised Land. What happened also depended on whether or not the Israelites obeyed Yahweh.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What does the phrase "to this day" mean?

This phrase was used by the writer to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. He must avoid giving the impression to readers that "to this day" means "to the present day." The translator might decide to say "to this day, at the time when this was being written," or "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in Joshua 4:9; 6:25; 7:26; 8:28, 29; 10:27; 13:13; 14:14; 15:63; 16:10.

What does the phrase "all Israel" mean?

This phrase appears many times in the Book of Joshua, but it does not always mean every person in the nation of Israel. At times it means the Israelite army. At other times it means the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel. In still other passages, it probably means a large number of the people in the nation of Israel.

When should Joshua be translated?

The Book of Joshua should probably not be translated before Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. This is because the historical events of Joshua will not be understood without the information in these previous books.

Joshua

1 [1]Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of Yahweh, that Yahweh spoke to Joshua the son of Nun,
Moses' chief assistant, saying,[2]"Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore, arise, cross over this Jordan, you and all this
people, into the land that I am giving to them—to the people of Israel.[3]I have given you every place where the sole of your
foot will walk. I have given it to you, just as I promised to Moses.
[4]From the wilderness and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great
Sea, where the sun goes down, will be your land.[5]No one will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. I will be
with you as I was with Moses. I will not abandon you or leave you.
[6]Be strong and courageous. You will cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their ancestors I would give to
them.[7]Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from
it to the right or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go.
[8]This book of the law must not leave your mouth. You must meditate on it day and night so that you can be careful to do
all that is written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.[9]Have I not commanded you? Be strong and
courageous! Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged. Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go."

[10]Then Joshua commanded the leaders of the people,[11]"Go through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare provisions
for yourselves. In three days you will cross over this Jordan and go in and possess the land that Yahweh your God is
giving you to possess.'"

[12]To the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said,[13]"Call to mind the word that Moses the
servant of Yahweh, commanded you when he said, 'Yahweh your God is giving you rest, and he is giving you this land.'
[14]Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock will stay in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan. But your
mighty warriors will go over with your brothers and help them[15]until Yahweh has given your brothers rest just as he has
given it to you. Then they also will take possession of the land Yahweh your God gives them. Then you will return to your
own land and possess it, the land that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you beyond the Jordan, where the sun rises."
[16]Then they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go.
[17]We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses. Only may Yahweh your God be with you, as he was with Moses.[18]Whoever
rebels against your commands and disobeys the words you have commanded them will be put to death. Only be strong
and courageous."

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Joshua 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter appears to be a natural continuation of the book of Deuteronomy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Be strong and Courageous

Joshua is often told, "Be strong and courageous." This repeated encouragement is on purpose and may indicate Joshua will need help in the future.

Links:

Joshua 1:1 Notes Joshua intro

Joshua 1:1

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Nun

Joshua's father

Joshua 1:2

cross over this Jordan

To "cross over" means "go to the opposite bank of the river." Alternate translation: "travel from this side to the opposite side of the Jordan"

you and all this people

The word "you" here refers to Joshua.

Joshua 1:3

I have given you every place

God giving the land to the Israelites in the future is spoken of as if he gave it to them in the past. This emphasizes that he will certainly give it to them. Alternate translation: "I will give to you every place"

I have given you

The word "you" refers to both Joshua and the nation of Israel.

every place where the sole of your foot will walk

This refers to all the places Joshua and the Israelites will travel when they cross the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "everywhere you go in this land"

Joshua 1:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Joshua.

your land

The word "your" refers to the tribes of Israel and not only Joshua.

Joshua 1:5

to stand before you

In verse 5 the words "you" and "your" refer to Joshua.

I will not abandon you or leave you

The words "abandon" and "leave" mean basically the same thing. Yahweh combines them to emphasize that he will not do these things. Alternate translation: "I will certainly stay with you always"

Joshua 1:6

General Information:

Yahweh gives Joshua a series of commands.

Be strong and courageous

Yahweh commands Joshua to overcome his fears with courage.

Joshua 1:7

Do not turn from it to the right or to the left

This can be stated as a positive command. Alternate translation: "Follow it exactly" or "Follow them exactly"

be successful

"achieve your goal" or "reach your goal"

Joshua 1:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Joshua.

prosperous and successful

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize great prosperity.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you?

This refers to Yahweh commanding Joshua. Alternate translation: "I have commanded you!"

Be strong and courageous!

Yahweh is commanding Joshua.

Joshua 1:10

the people

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

Joshua 1:11

Go through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare ... possess.'

Embedded quotes can be expressed as indirect quotes. Alternate translation: "Go through the camp and command the people to prepare provisions for themselves. In three days they will cross over this Jordan and go in and possess the land that Yahweh their God is giving them to possess."

In three days

Here Joshua was counting his present day as day one. Alternate translation: "Two days from now" or "On the day after tomorrow"

cross over this Jordan

"cross over" refers to going to the opposite side of the river. Alternate translation: "travel to the other side of the Jordan River"

Joshua 1:12

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh chose to settle east of the Jordan River.

Reubenites

These were the descendants of Reuben.

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Gadites

These were the decendants of Gad.

Joshua 1:14

General Information:

Joshua continues speaking to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

your little ones

"your little children"

beyond the Jordan

This refers to the east side of the Jordan River. Later most of the Israelites would live west of the Jordan, so they called the east side "beyond the Jordan." But at this time they were all still on the east side. Alternate translation: "east of the Jordan River"

Joshua 1:15

given your brothers rest

This refers to Israel defeating all their enemies residing in Canaan that they were to conquer.

you will ... possess it

This refers to living out their life on the land in peace.

beyond the Jordan, where the sun rises

This refers to the east side of the Jordan river.

Joshua 1:16

General Information:

These Isrelites were specifically the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh that replied to Joshua.

Joshua 1:18

rebels against your commands ... disobeys the words you have commanded them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that any form of disobedience will be punished.

will be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we will put to death"

be strong and courageous

Israel and God considered both traits important for Joshua to pursue as their leader.

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2 [1]Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two men out from Shittim as spies. He said, "Go, look over the land, especially Jericho." They went away and came to the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and they lodged there.[2]It was told to the king of Jericho, "Look, men of Israel have come here to spy on the land."[3]The king of Jericho sent word to Rahab and said, "Bring out the men who have come to you who entered your house, for they have come to spy on the whole land."
[4]But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She replied, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.[5]They left when it was dusk, when it was time for the city gate to shut. I do not know where they went. You will probably catch them if you hurry after them."
[6]But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof.[7]So the men pursued them on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan. The gate was shut as soon as the pursuers went out.

[8]The men had not yet lain down for the night, when she came up to them on the roof.[9]She said, "I know that Yahweh has given you the land and that the fear of you has come upon us. All those who live in the land will melt away before you.
[10]We have heard how Yahweh dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds for you when you came out of Egypt. We also heard what you did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan—Sihon and Og—whom you completely destroyed.[11]As soon as we had heard it, our hearts melted and there was no courage left in anyone—for Yahweh your God, he is God in heaven above and on the earth below.
[12]Now then, please swear to me by Yahweh that, just as I have been kind to you, you will also deal kindly with my father's house. Give me a sure sign[13]that you will spare the lives of my father, mother, brothers, sisters and all their families, and that you will deliver our souls from death."
[14]The men said to her, "Our life for yours, even to death! If you do not speak about our business, then, when Yahweh gives us this land we will be merciful and faithful to you."

[15]So she let them down out through the window using a rope. The house in which she lived was built into the wall of the city.[16]She said to them, "Go in the hills and hide or the pursuers will find you. Hide there for three days until the pursuers have returned. Then go on your way."[17]The men said to her, "We will be be free from the oath you made us swear to if you do not do this.
[18]When we come into the land, you must tie this scarlet rope in the window through which you let us down, and you will gather into the house your father and mother, your brothers and all your father's household.[19]Whoever goes out of the doors of your house into the street, their blood will be upon their own heads and we will be guiltless. But if a hand is laid upon any who is with you in the house, his blood will be on our head.
[20]But if you speak about our business, we will be free from the oath you made us swear."[21]Rahab replied, "May what you say be done." She sent them away and they left. Then she tied the scarlet rope in the window.

[22]They left and went up into the hills and they stayed there three days until their pursuers returned. The pursuers searched all along the road and found nothing.
[23]The two men returned and crossed over and came back to Joshua son of Nun, and they told him everything that had happened to them.[24]They said to Joshua, "Truly Yahweh has given this land to us. All the inhabitants of the land are melting away because of us."

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Joshua 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of the conquest of the Promised Land. (See: promisedland)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rahab's faith

Rahab expressed her faith in Yahweh. The statement "for Yahweh your God, he is God in heaven above and on the earth below" is a recognition of her faith. (See: faith and heaven)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The Israelites were to completely destroy the evil Canaanites. They are compared to melting snow: "... melting away because of us." (See: and evil)

Links:

Joshua 2:1 Notes

Joshua 2:1

Nun

This is Joshua's father.

Shittim

This is the name of a place on the east side of the Jordan River. It means "Acacia Trees."

as spies

These men were to visit the land to gain information on how Israel should conquer the land.

Joshua 2:4

General Information:

Rahab the prostitute protects the two Israelite spies from harm.

But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them

This happened before the king's messenger spoke to her.

the woman

This refers to Rahab, the prostitute.

Joshua 2:5

dusk

This is the time that day begins to change to the darkness of night.

Joshua 2:6

But she had taken them ... on the roof

This is background information and explains how she had hidden the men in [Joshua 2:4]

the roof

The roof was flat and strong, so people could walk around on it.

flax

a plant that is grown for its fibers, which is used in making cloth

Joshua 2:7

the men pursued them

The men pursued the spies because of what Rahab had told them in Joshua 2:5.

fords

places where a river or other body of water is shallow enough for people to get to the other side by walking through it

Joshua 2:8

not yet lain down

This refers to going to sleep for the night.

Joshua 2:9

I know that Yahweh has given you the land

The word "you" refers to the all the Israelite people.

fear of you has come upon us

Becoming afraid is spoken of as if feat came and attacked them. Alternate translation: "we have become afraid of you"

will melt away before you

This compares the fearful people to ice melting and flowing away. Possible meanings are 1) they will be weak in the Israelites' presence or 2) they will be scattered. Alternate translation: "will be so afraid that they will not resist you"

Joshua 2:10

General Information:

Rahab continues to talk to the Israelite spies.

the Sea of Reeds

This is another name for the Red Sea.

Sihon ... Og

These are the names of the Amorite kings.

Joshua 2:11

our hearts melted and there was no courage left in anyone

These two phrases share similar meanings, combined for emphasis. The phrase "our hearts melted" compares the hearts of the fearful people of Jericho to ice melting and flowing away.

Joshua 2:12

General Information:

Rahab continues to talk to the Israelite spies.

please swear to me ... Give me a sure sign

These are similar statements of Rahab seeking assurance from the spies.

I have been kind to you

The word "you" refers to the two spies.

Joshua 2:13

spare the lives ... deliver our souls from death

a polite way of saying "do not to kill us"

Joshua 2:14

General Information:

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The Israelite spies make the promise which Rahab asked for in Joshua 2:12

Our life for yours, even to death

This idiom is a way of swearing and asking God to curse them if they do not keep their promise. Alternate translation: "If we do not do what we promise, may Yahweh cause us to die"

Joshua 2:15

General Information:

The Israelite spies continue to talk to Rahab.

Joshua 2:17

if you do not do this

This expresses a condition for the promise the spies had made to Rahab. The word, "this," refers to the things the men tell her to do in Joshua 2:18.

Joshua 2:18

General Information:

The Israelite spies continue talking to Rahab.

Connecting Statement:

The Israelite spies clarify the condition they expressed in Joshua 2:15.

Joshua 2:19

Whoever goes out of the doors of your house

This can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "If anyone goes out of the doors of your house"

their blood will be upon their own heads

Here "blood" represents a person's death. To be responsible for their own death is spoken of as if their blood would be on their heads. Alternate translation: "their death will be their own fault"

we will be guiltless

"we will be innocent"

if a hand is laid upon any

Here "a hand is laid upon" is a polite way of referring to causing someone injury. Alternate translation: "if we cause injury to any"

Joshua 2:20

General Information:

The two Israelite spies continue to speak to Rahab about their promise to her. The spies required Rahab to remain silent about their visit or they would be free from their oath to protect her family.

if you speak

"You" refers to Rahab.

Joshua 2:21

May what you say be done

Rahab agreed to their terms of the oath to protect her family.

Joshua 2:22

General Information:

The two Israelites spies leave Jericho.

their pursuers returned

It may be helpful to say they returned to Jericho. Alternate translation: "their pursuers returned to the city of Jericho"

found nothing

This refers to the men not finding the spies.

Joshua 2:23

The two men returned

The two men returned back to the Israelite's camp.

returned and crossed over and came back

These are similar expressions referring to returning to where the Israelite's are camped.

crossed over

"cross over" means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "traveled from this side to the opposite side of the Jordan"

Nun

This is a male name; the father of Joshua.

everything that had happened to them

"all that the men had experienced and seen."

Joshua 2:24

us

This word, "us," refers to Israel.

inhabitants of the land are melting away

The people of the land toward Israel are like a substance that melts in the presence of heat.

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3 [1]Joshua got up early in the morning, and they set out from Shittim. They came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and they camped there before they crossed over.
[2]After three days, the officers went through the middle of the camp;[3]they commanded the people, "When you see the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, and the priests from the Levites carrying it, you must leave this place and follow it.
[4]There must be a distance between you and it of about two thousand cubits. Do not come close to it, so that you can see which way to go, since you have not gone this way before."
[5]Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves tomorrow, for Yahweh will do wonders among you."[6]Then Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass in front of the people." So they picked up the ark of the covenant and went in front of people.

[7]Yahweh said to Joshua, "This day I will make you a great man in the eyes of all Israel. They will know that as I was with Moses, I will be with you.[8]You will command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant, 'When you have come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you must stand still in the Jordan River.'"
[9]Then Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here, and listen to the words of Yahweh your God."[10]And Joshua said, "By this you will know that the living God is among you and will drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.[11]Look! The ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth crosses over ahead of you into the Jordan.
[12]Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each.[13]When the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of Yahweh, the Lord of all the earth, touch the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and even the waters that flow down from upstream will stop flowing and they will stand in one heap."

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[14]So when the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests who carried the ark of the covenant went ahead of the people.[15]As soon as those who were carrying the ark had come to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who carried the chest were dipped in the edge of the water—now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of the harvest—[16]the waters that flowed down from upstream stood up in one heap. The water stopped flowing from a great distance. The waters stopped flowing from Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, all the way down to the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea. The people crossed over near Jericho.
[17]The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan until all the people of Israel crossed over on dry ground.

Joshua 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God dries the Jordan River

Joshua told the people "Dedicate yourselves to Yahweh tomorrow, for Yahweh will do wonders among you." The conquest of the Promised Land is accomplished through the supernatural power of God. (See: miracle and promisedland)

Links:

Joshua 3:1 Notes

Joshua 3:1

got up

The phrase, "got up," means to "awaken."

Shittim

A place in the land of Moab, west of the Jordan River where the Israelites were camped before their entry into the promised land, Canaan.

Joshua 3:2

officers

These are people holding a position of command or authority.

Joshua 3:3

people

This is the nation of Israel.

Joshua 3:4

two thousand cubits

"2,000 cubits." The word "cubit" is a measurement equaling the distance from the elbow to the finger tips.

Joshua 3:5

Consecrate yourselves

This refers to a special preparation of being religiously clean before Yahweh.

Yahweh will do wonders

Yahweh will be doing miracles for all to see and experience.

Joshua 3:6

Take up the ark

This is referring to the levites picking up the ark for the purpose of carrying it from one location to another.

Joshua 3:7

General Information:

Yahweh tells Joshua what the priest are to do.

I will make you a great man in the eyes of all Israel

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "the people will see what I do and realize that I have made you a great man"

Joshua 3:8

edge of the waters of the Jordan

Joshua is to approach the bank or edge of the Jordan River.

Joshua 3:9

General Information:

Joshua tells Israel what Yahweh is about to do

Joshua 3:10

drive out from before you

Yahweh will force the other people living on the land to leave or be killed.

Joshua 3:11

crosses over

"cross over" means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "will travel from this side to the opposite side"

Joshua 3:12

General Information:

Joshua continues to tell Israel of the miracle that Yahweh will do. Just as Israel's fathers experience crossing the Red Sea, these people will experience crossing the Jordan river on dry land.

Joshua 3:13

the soles of the feet

This refers to the bottom of their feet.

stand in one heap

The water will stay in one spot or place. It will not flow around the priests.

Joshua 3:15

edge of the water

This can refer to the surface of the water as well as the bank where the water flows to dry land.

now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of the harvest

This is background information and it emphasizes the scale of what Yahweh is doing.

Joshua 3:17

General Information:

The miraculous Jordan River crossing continues.

the Jordan

This refers to the Jordan River bed.

crossed over

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This phrase means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "traveled from this side to the opposite side"

4 [1]When all the people crossed over the Jordan, Yahweh said to Joshua,[2]"Choose twelve men for yourselves from among the people, one man from each tribe.[3]Give them this command: 'Take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests are standing on the dry ground, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you will spend the night tonight.'"
[4]Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had chosen from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe.[5]Joshua said to them, "Go over before the ark of Yahweh your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel.
[6]This will be a sign in your midst for you when your children ask in days to come, 'What do these stones mean to you?'[7]Then you will say to them, 'The waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones will be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.'"

[8]The people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded, and they picked up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, as Yahweh said to Joshua. They set the stones up according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel. They carried the stones with them, over to the place where they camped and they set them down there.[9]Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan River, in the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant stood. The memorial is there to this day.
[10]The priests who carried the ark stood in the middle of the Jordan until everything that Yahweh commanded Joshua to tell the people was completed, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people hurried and they crossed over.[11]When all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of Yahweh and the priests crossed over before the people.
[12]The tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh passed before the people of Israel formed up as an army, just as Moses said to them.[13]About forty thousand men equipped for war passed before Yahweh, for battle on the plains of Jericho.[14]On that day Yahweh made Joshua great in the eyes of all Israel. They honored him—just as they honored Moses—all his days.

[15]Then Yahweh spoke to Joshua,[16]"Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan."
[17]So, Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan."[18]When the priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came up out of the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of their feet were lifted up out on dry ground, then the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed its banks, just as they were four days before.

[19]The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month. They camped in Gilgal, east of Jericho.[20]The twelve stones that they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.[21]He said to the people of Israel, "When your descendants ask their fathers in times to come, 'What are these stones?'
[22]tell your children, 'This is where Israel crossed over the Jordan on dry ground.'[23]Yahweh your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you, until you had crossed over, just as Yahweh your God did to the Sea of Reeds, which he dried up for us until we passed over,[24]so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of Yahweh is mighty, and that you will honor Yahweh your God forever."

Joshua 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's war

The conquering of the Promised Land was a special war. It was God's war against the people of Canaan and Joshua recognized that they would only be victorious through Yahweh's power. This is why their first act after crossing the Jordan River was to build an altar. This war was a witness to Yahweh's power. (See: promisedland)

Links:

Joshua 4:1 Notes

Joshua 4:1

General Information:

Though Yahweh was speaking directly to Joshua, all occurrences of you include Israel.

crossed over

The words "crossed over" refer to going to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "went across"

the Jordan

the Jordan River

Joshua 4:3

Give them this command: ' ... '

The nested quote can be stated as an indirect quote.

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Alternate translation: "Give them this command to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests are standing on the dry ground, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you will spend the night tonight"

Joshua 4:4

General Information:

Joshua tells the twelve men what to do.

Joshua 4:5

into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone upon his shoulder

Each of the twelve men were to pick up a large stone from the Jordan River bed and carry them to the other side to build a monument.

Joshua 4:6

General Information:

Joshua tells Israel what the pile of twelve stones mean.

Joshua 4:7

The waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh cut off the waters of the Jordan in front of the ark of his covenant"

The waters of the Jordan were

"The Jordan River was"

were cut off before the ark

The Jordan River was prevented by God from flowing up to the ark that was being carried by the priests.

the waters of the Jordan were cut off

The water flowing down the Jordan River stopped before the ark so everyone including the ark traveled on the dry river bed.

Joshua 4:8

General Information:

Joshua and Israel continue to do as Yahweh commanded.

they picked up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan

This refers to the twelve men picking up stones from the middle of the Jordan River bed.

Joshua 4:9

Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan River

These were twelve additional stones, not the stones that the twelve men carried from the river bed.

The memorial is there to this day

This means the memorial was there to the day that the author was writing this book.

Joshua 4:10

the Jordan

This refers to the Jordan River.

the people

This refers to the nation of Israel.

crossed over

This means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "traveled from one side to the opposite side"

Joshua 4:11

before the people

This refers to being in front of the people or in the sight of all the people. Everyone saw the ark being carried by the priests.

Joshua 4:12

The tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh passed before the people of Israel formed up as an army

These were the soldiers of the 3 tribes that were fulfilling their obligation to lead the Israelites into battle for settling on the East side of the Jordan River.

Joshua 4:14

just as they

The word "they" refers to the people of Israel.

Joshua 4:15

General Information:

Yahweh tells Joshua to have the priests exit the Jordan River.

Joshua 4:17

General Information:

The Author was making it clear that parting the Jordan River was no different than parting the Red Sea for the previous generation.

Joshua 4:18

waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed its banks

The Jordan River was overflowing its banks and flooding the area before and after Israel passed through on dry land.

four days

"4 days"

Joshua 4:19

came up out of the Jordan

This refers to when Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground.

on the tenth day of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of March on Western calendars.

Joshua 4:20

The twelve stones that they took out of the Jordan

Each tribe was to take one stone from the Jordan River so Joshua could build a memorial of the crossing event.

Joshua 4:22

General Information:

Joshua continues to remind the people the purpose of the pile of stones.

tell your children

It was for Israel to teach their children of God's miracles so that they would honor Yahweh forever.

Joshua 4:24

the hand of Yahweh is mighty

This refers to the power of Yahweh being strong. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is mighty"

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5 [1]As soon as all the kings of the Amorites on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites, who were along the coast of the Great Sea, heard that Yahweh had dried up the waters of the Jordan until the people of Israel had crossed over, their hearts melted, and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.[1]

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[2]At that time Yahweh said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and once more circumcise all the sons of Israel."[3]Then Joshua made himself flint knives and he circumcised all the sons of Israel at Gibeath Haaraloth.
[4]This is the reason Joshua circumcised them: All the males who had come out of Egypt, including all the men of war, had died in the wilderness along the way, after they came out from Egypt.[5]Though all the males who came out of Egypt were circumcised, still, none of the boys born in the wilderness on the way out of Egypt had been circumcised.
[6]For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness until all the people, that is, all the men of war who had come out of Egypt, died, because they did not obey the voice of Yahweh. Yahweh swore to them that he would not let them see the land that he had sworn to their ancestors that he would give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey.[7]It was their children that Yahweh raised up in their place that Joshua circumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.
[8]When they were all circumcised, they remained where they were in the camp until they healed.[9]Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you." So, the name of that place has been called Gilgal until this present day.

[10]The people of Israel camped at Gilgal. They kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, on the plains of Jericho.[11]On the day after Passover, that same day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened bread and roasted grain.
[12]The manna stopped on the day after they ate the produce of the land. There was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate the produce of the land of Canaan that year.

[13]When Joshua was near Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing in front of him; he had drawn his sword and it was in his hand. Joshua went to him and said, "Are you for us or for our enemies?"
[14]He said, "Neither. For I am the commander of the army of Yahweh. Now I have come." Then Joshua lay facedown on the ground to worship and said to him, "What does my master say to his servant?"[15]The commander of Yahweh's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, because the place you are standing is holy." That is what Joshua did.

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[a]Some modern translations have until the people of Israel had crossed over, and others have, until we had crossed over. The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have we, but a note in their margin instructs readers to say they.

Joshua 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Circumcision

It would have been very unusual to be circumcised in a time of war. When men are circumcised they are unable to move without pain or to defend themselves in battle for several days. (See: circumcise)

Manna

Yahweh stops providing manna in this chapter and will no longer provide them with their daily allotment of food. This does not mean Yahweh's care and provision will stop.

Links:

Joshua 5:1 Notes

Joshua 5:1

their hearts melted ... there was no longer any spirit in them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of their fear.

their hearts melted

Here "hearts" refers to their courage. They were so afraid that it was as if their courage melted away like wax in a fire. Alternate translation: "they lost all their courage"

there was no longer any spirit in them

Here "spirit" refers to their will to fight. Alternate translation: "they no longer had any will to fight"

Joshua 5:3

Joshua made himself flint knives ... he circumcised all the sons

There were over 600,000 males, so it is understood that while Joshua was in charge of this task, many other people helped him. If this would confuse your readers, you may want to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "Joshua and the Israelites made themselves flint knives ... they circumcised all the males"

Gibeath Haaraloth

This is a place name which commemorates Israel rededicating themselves to Yahweh. It means "the hill of the foreskins."

Joshua 5:4

General Information:

The reason all the males of Israel had to be circumcised is explained.

the men of war

the men who were old enough to be soldiers

Joshua 5:6

obey the voice of Yahweh

Here "voice" refers to the things that Yahweh spoke.

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Alternate translation: "obey the things that Yahweh commanded them"

a land flowing with milk and honey

God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: "a land that is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops"

Joshua 5:9

This day I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you

Their disgrace is spoken of as if it were a large stone that blocked their path. Here "rolled away" means "removed." Alternate translation: "This day I have removed the disgrace of Egypt from you" or "You were disgraced when you were slaves in Egypt. But, today I have caused you to no longer be disgraced"

Joshua 5:10

the fourteenth day of the month

This is near the end of March on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "the fourteenth day of the first month"

Joshua 5:13

he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing

Here looking up is spoken of as if Joshua literally lifted his eyes in his hands. Alternate translation: "he looked up and saw that a man was standing"

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to pay special attention to new information. Your language may have a way of doing this.

he had drawn his sword and it was in his hand

Here the words "he" and "his" refer to the man who was standing in front of Joshua.

Joshua 5:14

He said

The word "he" refers to the man Joshua saw.

Neither

This is the beginning of the man's answer to Joshua's question, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" This short answer could be clarified. Alternate translation: "I am neither for you nor for your enemies"

Joshua lay facedown on the ground to worship

This was an act of worship.

Joshua 5:15

Take off your sandals from your feet

This was an act of reverence.

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6 [1]Now all the entrances to Jericho were closed because of the army of Israel. No one went out and no one came in.
[2]Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hand, its king, and its mighty warriors.
[3]You must march around the city, all the men of war going around the city one time. You must do this for six days.[4]Seven priests must carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day, you must march around the city seven times, and the priests must sound blasts on the trumpets.
[5]Then they must sound a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet all the people must shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat. The soldiers must attack, each one going straight ahead."
[6]Then Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of Yahweh."[7]He said to the people, "Go over and march around the city, and the armed men will go ahead of the ark of Yahweh."

[8]Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh. As they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets. The ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them.[9]Armed men walked before the priests, and they made a blast on their trumpets, but then the rear guard walked up behind the ark, and the priests blew their trumpets continually.
[10]But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then you must shout."[11]So he caused the ark of Yahweh to go around the city one time that day. Then they entered their camp, and they stayed the night in the camp.

[12]Then Joshua got up early in the morning, and the priests picked up the ark of Yahweh.[13]The seven priests, who were carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of Yahweh, walked steadily and gave blasts on the trumpets. Armed soldiers were walking in front of them. But when the rear guard walked after the ark of Yahweh, then the trumpets gave out continual blasts.[14]They marched around the city one time the second day and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

[15]It was on the seventh day that they got up early, as dawn was breaking, and they marched around the city in the same way that was their pattern, this time for seven times. It was on this day that they marched around the city seven times.[16]It was on the seventh day, when the priests gave a blast with the trumpets, that Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For Yahweh has given you the city.
[17]The city and all that is in it will be set apart to Yahweh for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute will live—she and all the ones with her in her house—because she hid the messengers we sent.[18]But as for you, be on guard about taking the things set apart for destruction, so that after you mark them for destruction, you do not then take any of them. If you do this, you will make the camp of Israel something that must be destroyed and you will bring trouble on it.[19]All the silver, gold, and the things made of bronze and iron are set apart to Yahweh. They must go into the treasury of Yahweh."

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[20]So the people gave a great shout, and they blew on the trumpets. Now when the people heard the trumpet sound, they gave a great shout, the wall fell down flat, and every man charged straight in and captured the city.[21]They completely destroyed all that was in the city by the edge of the sword—man and woman, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

[22]Then Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house. Bring out the woman and all who are with her, as you swore to her."
[23]So the young men who had been spies went in and brought Rahab out. They brought out her father, mother, brothers, and all the relatives that were with her. They brought them to a place outside the camp of Israel.[24]They burned the city and everything in it. Only the silver, gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron were put into the treasury of the house of Yahweh.
[25]But Joshua allowed Rahab the prostitute, her father's household, and all that were with her to live. She lives in Israel to this day because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy on Jericho.
[26]Then Joshua commanded them at that time with an oath, and he said, "Cursed is the man in Yahweh's sight who rebuilds this city, Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay the foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates."
[27]So Yahweh was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

Joshua 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh conquers

It was God, not the army, who gave them victory. It is said, "Shout! For Yahweh has given you the city." The circumstances of Israel's victory in the battle for Jericho were very unusual. It was never common to march around a city or to shout in order to win a military battle.

Links:

Joshua 6:1 Notes

Joshua 6:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here the narrator tells us why the gates of Jericho are closed and locked up.

Joshua 6:2

I have delivered Jericho into your hand, its king, and its mighty warriors

Yahweh is telling Joshua that he will certainly do this by saying that he has already done it.

into your hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for the control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "so that you can control it"

Joshua 6:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Joshua what the people must do.

You must do this for six days

"You must do this once each day for six days"

Joshua 6:4

Seven priests must carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark

The seven priests are to march in front of other priests who are carrying the ark and marching around the city.

Joshua 6:5

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Joshua what the people must do.

they must sound a long blast with the ram's horn ... of the trumpet

The word "they" refers to the seven priests. The "ram's horn" and "trumpet" refer to the trumpets of rams' horns that the priests were blowing in Joshua 6:4.

the wall of the city

"the outer wall of the city" or "the wall surrounding the city"

Joshua 6:6

Nun

This is Joshua's father.

Take up the ark of the covenant

"Pick up the ark of the covenant"

Joshua 6:8

before Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) "in obedience to Yahweh" or 2) "in front of Yahweh's ark"

they gave a blast on the trumpets

"they sounded the trumpets loudly" or "the priests blew into the ram's horn trumpets"

The ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them

It can be stated clearly that there were people carrying the ark. Alternate translation: "The priests who were carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them"

Joshua 6:10

No sound must leave your mouths

Sound leaving someone's mouth refers to that person's speaking or shouting. Alternate translation: "Do not yell or speak"

But Joshua commanded the people

Joshua had commanded the people before they started walking around the city. Alternate translation: "Joshua had commanded the people"

Joshua 6:13

seven priests ... seven trumpets

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"7 priests ... 7 trumpets"
gave blasts on the trumpets
This means that they blew into their trumpets, causing them to make loud noises, multiple times. Alternate translation: "continually sounded the trumpets loudly" or "blew into the ram's horn trumpets continually"
Joshua 6:14
the second day
the next day
They did this
Israel marched around Jericho once every day.
six days
"6 days"
Joshua 6:16
the people
This refers to the people of Israel.
gave a blast with the trumpets
"sounded the trumpets loudly" or "blew into the ram's horn trumpets"
Yahweh has given you
Joshua is saying that Yahweh will definitely give them the city by saying that he has already given it to them.
given you
The word "you" refers to the entire nation of Israel.
Joshua 6:17
Connecting Statement:
Joshua continues speaking to the people of Israel.
The city and all that is in it will be set apart to Yahweh for destruction
This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "You must set apart to Yahweh the city and all that is in it for destruction" or "You must set apart to Yahweh the city and all that is in it by destroying it"
Joshua 6:18
be on guard about taking the things
Being careful is spoken of as if they are to guard themselves. "Be careful that you do not take the things"
you will bring trouble on it
Doing something that makes bad things to happen to the city is spoken of as bringing trouble on it. Alternate translation: "you will cause bad things to happen to it"
Joshua 6:19
the treasury of Yahweh
a collection of things set apart for the worship of Yahweh
Joshua 6:20
So the people ... on the trumpets
The writer is briefly saying that the people did what Joshua had commanded them in Joshua 6:16.
the people gave a great shout
"the people of Israel shouted"
blew on the trumpets
"blew into the ram's horn trumpets"
Joshua 6:24
They burned the city
The word "they" refers to the Israelite soldiers. It does not refer only to the two young men who brought Rahab and her family out of the city.
Joshua 6:25
She lives in Israel
The word "She" refers to Rahab and represents her descendants. Alternate translation: "Her descendants live in Israel"
to this day
"now" or "even today." Rahab's descendants are still living in Israel as the original writer writes this story.
Joshua 6:26
Cursed is the man in Yahweh's sight who rebuilds
Being cursed in Yahweh's sight represents being cursed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh curse the man who rebuilds"
At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay the foundation
The consequence of a man laying a new foundation for Jericho is that his firstborn son would die. This is spoken of as if it were a cost that the man would pay. Alternate translation: "If he lays the foundation, he will lose his firstborn son" or "If he lays the foundation, his firstborn son will die"
at the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates
The consequence of a man setting up new gates for Jericho is that his youngest son would die. This is spoken of as if it were a cost that the man would pay. Alternate translation: "If he sets up its gates, he will lose his youngest son" or "If he sets up it gates, his youngest son will die"
Joshua 6:27
his fame spread throughout the land
This refers to Joshua's fame, not Yahweh's. Becoming known among the people throughout the land is spoken of as if his fame spread. Alternate translation: "Joshua became famous throughout the land" or "people throughout the land learned about Joshua"

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7 [1]But the people of Israel acted unfaithfully regarding the things that were set apart for destruction. Achan son of Karmi
son of Zabdi son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some things that were set apart for destruction, and Yahweh's
anger burned against the people of Israel.

[2]Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which was near Beth Aven, east of Bethel. He said to them, "Go up and spy out the
land." So the men went up and spied out Ai.[3]When they returned to Joshua, they said to him, "Do not send all the people
up to Ai. Send only two or three thousand men to go up and attack Ai. Do not make all the people labor in battle, for they
are few in number."
[4]So only about three thousand men went up from the army, but these ran away from the men of Ai.[5]The men of Ai killed
about thirty-six men as they pursued them from the city gate as far as to the stone quarries, and they killed them as they
were going down a hill. The hearts of the people melted and became like water.

[6]Then Joshua tore his garments. He and the elders of Israel put dust on their heads and lay facedown on the ground in

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front of the ark of Yahweh, remaining there until evening.[7]Then Joshua said, "Ah, Yahweh Lord, why have you brought this people across the Jordan at all? To give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we made a different decision and we had stayed on the other side of the Jordan!
[8]Lord, what can I say, after Israel has turned their backs before their enemies?[9]For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it. They will surround us and make the people of the earth forget our name. What will you do for your great name?"

[10]Yahweh said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying there on your face?[11]Israel has sinned. They have broken my covenant which I commanded them. They have stolen some of the things that were set apart. They have stolen and then also hidden their sin by putting what they have taken among their own belongings.[12]As a result, the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turned their backs from their enemies because they themselves have been set apart for destruction. I will not be with you any more unless you destroy the things that should have been destroyed, but are still among you.
[13]Get up! Consecrate the people to me and say to them, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow. For Yahweh, the God of Israel says, "There are things set apart to be destroyed that are still among you, Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove from among you all the things that were set apart to be destroyed."
[14]In the morning, you must present yourselves by your tribes. The tribe that Yahweh selects will come near by their clans. The clan that Yahweh selects must come near by each household. The household that Yahweh selects must come near one by one.[15]It will happen that the one who is selected and who has those things that were set apart for destruction, he will be burned, he and all he has, because he has broken the covenant of Yahweh and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel.'"

[16]So, Joshua got up early in the morning and brought Israel near, tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was selected.
[17]Joshua brought the clans of Judah near, and the clan of the Zerahites was selected. He brought near the clan of the Zerahites person by person, and Zabdi was selected.[18]He brought Zabdi's household near, person by person, and Achan son of Karmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was selected.
[19]Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and give praise to him. Please tell me what you have done. Do not hide it from me."[20]Achan answered Joshua, "Truly, I have sinned against Yahweh, the God of Israel. This is what I did:[21]When I saw among the plunder a beautiful coat from Babylon, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I desired them and took them. They are hidden in the ground in the middle of my tent, and the silver is under it."

[22]Joshua sent messengers, who ran to the tent and there were the things. When they looked, they found them hidden in his own tent, and the silver under them.[23]They took the items from the middle of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. They poured them out before Yahweh.
[24]Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan son of Zerah, and the silver, the coat, the bar of gold, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys, sheep, and his tent and all that he had, and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor.
[25]Then Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? Yahweh will trouble you today." All Israel stoned him with stones. Then they stoned the rest with stones and burned them with fire.[26]They set up over him a great heap of stones that is here until this day. Yahweh turned away his burning anger. Therefore the name of the place has been called the Valley of Achor until this present day.

Joshua 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sin brought defeat

It was a great sin to take what was to be destroyed. Because of their sin, Yahweh withheld victory from the Israelites. Sin resulted in defeat in battle. (See: sin)

Links:

Joshua 7:1 Notes

Joshua 7:1

the things that were set apart for destruction

"the things that God had said they must set apart to him by destroying them"

Achan ... Karmi ... Zabdi ... Zerah

These are names of men.

Yahweh's anger burned

"anger" and "burned" indicates intensity, not that fire is present. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's anger burned like a fire" or "Yahweh was very angry"

Joshua 7:3

all the people

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This refers to the army of Israel.
they are few in number
The word "they" refers to the people of Ai.
Joshua 7:4
three thousand men went up from the army
These men were part of the army. Alternate translation: "three thousand men belonging to the army went up"
three thousand men
"3,000 men"
Joshua 7:5
thirty-six men
"36 men"
The hearts of the people melted and became like water
These phrases "melted" and "became like water" share similar meanings and are combined to emphasize that the people were extremely afraid.
The hearts of the people melted
Here the people are represented by their "hearts" to emphasize their emotions. Alternate translation: "The people were very afraid"
The hearts of the people
The phrase "the people" refers to the Israelite soldiers.
Joshua 7:6
tore his garments ... put dust on their heads and lay facedown on the ground in front of the ark of Yahweh
They did these things to show God how sad and distressed they were.
Joshua 7:7
why have you brought this people across the Jordan at all? To give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?
Joshua asks these rhetorical questions to show that he is angry with Yahweh and that he is afraid that the people in the land would kill the Israelites. He is not looking for Yahweh to answer him. Alternate translation: "you brought this people across the Jordan to give us into the hands of the Amorites so they would to destroy us."
To give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?
Joshua was asking if this is the reason God had brought them across the Jordan. Alternate translation: "Did you do it so you could give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?"
To give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?
The hands of the Amorites represents their control and power. Giving the Israelites into their hands to destroy them represents allowing the Amorites to have control of the Israelites and destroy them. Alternate translation: "To allow the Amorites to destroy us?
If only we made a different decision
The words "If only" show that this is a wish for something that had not happened. Alternate translation: "I wish we had made a different decision"
Joshua 7:8
General Information:
Joshua expresses frustration to God.
what can I say, after Israel has turned their backs before their enemies?
Joshua said this to show how upset he was that he did not even know what to say. Alternate translation: "I do not know what to say. Israel has turned their backs before their enemies!"
Israel has turned their backs before their enemies
Doing this represents running away from their enemies. Alternate translation: "Israel has run away from their enemies"
Joshua 7:9
They will surround us and make the people of the earth forget our name
Making people forget the name of the Israelites represents making them forget the Israelites. In this case they would do it by killing the Israelites. Alternate translation: "They will surround us and kill us, and the people of the earth will forget about us"
for your great name
The phrase "your great name" here represents God's reputation and power. Alternate translation: "And so what will you do so that people will know that you are great"
What will you do for your great name?
Joshua uses this question to warn God that if the Israelites are destroyed, then the other people will think that God is not great. Alternate translation: "Then there will be nothing you can do for your great name." or "Then people will not know that you are great."
Joshua 7:10
General Information:
Yahweh tells Joshua why Israel is cursed.
Why are you lying there on your face?
God used this question to rebuke Joshua for lying there on his face. Alternate translation: "Stop lying there with your face in the dirt!"
Joshua 7:11
the things that were set apart
These are the things "marked for destruction" from Joshua 6:18-19. Alternate translation: "the cursed things" or "those things which God has cursed"
They have stolen and then also hidden their sin
Hiding their sin represents trying to keep others from knowing that they have sinned. Alternate translation: "They have stolen those things, and then they tried to keep people from knowing that they sinned"
Joshua 7:12
cannot stand before their enemies
Standing before their enemies represents fighting successfully against their enemies. Alternate translation: "cannot fight successfully against their enemies" or "cannot defeat their enemies"
They turned their backs from their enemies
Doing this represents running away from their enemies. Alternate translation: "They ran away from their enemies"
I will not be with you any more
Being with Israel represents helping Israel. Alternate translation: "I will not help you any more"
Joshua 7:13
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Joshua and tells him what to tell the people.
the people
This refers to the people of Israel.
You cannot stand against your enemies
Standing before their enemies represents fighting

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successfully against them. Alternate translation: "You cannot fight successfully against your enemies" or "You cannot defeat your enemies"

Joshua 7:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Joshua what he must tell the people.

you must present yourselves by your tribes

There were twelve tribes that made up the people of Israel. The phrase "by your tribes" means "each tribe." Alternate translation: "each of your tribes must present themselves to Yahweh"

The tribe that Yahweh selects will come near by their clans

The tribe was made up of multiple clans. Alternate translation: "From the tribe that Yahweh selects, each clan will come near"

The tribe that Yahweh selects

The leaders of Israel would toss lots, and by doing this, they would learn which tribe Yahweh had selected. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The tribe that Yahweh selects by lot" or "The tribe that Yahweh selects when we toss lots"

The clan that Yahweh selects must come near by each household

The clan was made up of multiple households. Alternate translation: "From the clan that Yahweh selects, each household must come near"

The household that Yahweh selects must come near one by one

The household was made up of multiple people. Alternate translation: "From the household that Yahweh selects, each person must come near"

Joshua 7:15

the one who is selected

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "the one whom Yahweh selects"

he has broken the covenant of Yahweh

Breaking the covenant represents disobeying it. Alternate translation: "he has disobeyed the covenant of Yahweh"

Joshua 7:16

General Information:

Joshua follows Yahweh's command to bring Israel before Yahweh.

brought Israel near, tribe by tribe

The phrase "tribe by tribe" means each tribe. Alternate translation: "brought each tribe of Israel near"

the tribe of Judah was selected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh selected the tribe of Judah"

Joshua 7:17

He brought near the clan of the Zerahites person by person

The phrase "person by person" is an idiom meaning each person. The persons in this sentence were the leaders of their households. Alternate translation: "He brought near each person of the clan of the Zerahites" or "From the clan of the Zerahites, he brought near each man who was the leader of his household"

the clan of the Zerahites

The clan was named after the man named Zerah.

Zabdi

This is a man's name. Translate as you did in [Joshua 7:1]

Joshua 7:18

Zabdi ... Achan ... Karmi ... Zerah

These are men's names. Translate them as you did in [Joshua 7:1]

Joshua 7:19

give glory to Yahweh ... give praise to him

Achan has dishonored God by taking the items and causing the death of his fellow Israelites

Do not hide it from me

Hiding information represents trying to keep someone from knowing it. Alternate translation: "Do not try to prevent me from knowing what you have done"

Joshua 7:21

two hundred shekels

This is over two kilograms.

fifty shekels

This is over 500 grams.

They are hidden in the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I hid them in the ground"

Joshua 7:22

they looked

"the men Joshua had sent looked"

Joshua 7:23

poured them out

Use the word in your language for pouring many small solid things out of a large bag onto the ground.

Joshua 7:24

the Valley of Achor

The name means "Valley of Trouble," but it is best to translate Achor the way it sounds.

Joshua 7:25

Why have you troubled us?

Joshua uses this question to rebuke Achan. Alternate translation: "You have troubled us"

Then they stoned the rest with stones and burned them with fire.

Possible meanings are 1) the Israelites burned Achan's family to death and then covered them with stones or 2) the Israelites stoned Achan's family to death and then burned the dead bodies or 3) that Achan and his possessions were stoned and then burned.

Joshua 7:26

Yahweh turned away his burning anger

Turning away his anger represents stopping being angry. Burning anger represents strong anger. Alternate translation: "Yahweh stopped being angry"

until this present day

It was still called the valley of Achor at the time the author wrote this. Alternate translation: "even today" or "even now"

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8 [1]Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not fear; do not be discouraged. Take with you all the people of war. Go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.[2]You will do to Ai and her king as you have

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done to Jericho and her king, except that you will take the plunder and the livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city."

3So Joshua got up and took all the men of war up to Ai. Then Joshua chose thirty thousand men—mighty warriors—and he sent them out at night.4He commanded them, "Look, you will lie in ambush against the city, behind it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready.
5I and all the men with me will approach the city, and when they come out to attack us, we will run away from them just as before.6They will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city. They will say, 'They are running away from us as they did the last time.' So we will run away from them.7Then you come up out of your place of hiding, and you will capture the city. Yahweh your God will give it into your hand.
8When you capture the city, you will set it on fire. You will do this when you obey the command given in the word of Yahweh. See, I have commanded you."9Joshua sent them out, and they went to the place of ambush, and they hid between Bethel and Ai to the west of Ai. But Joshua slept that night among the people.

10Joshua got up early in the morning and got his soldiers ready, Joshua and the elders of Israel, and they attacked the people of Ai.11All the fighting men who were with him went up and approached the city. They came near the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now there was a valley between them and Ai.12He took about five thousand men and set them in ambush on the west side of the city between Bethel and Ai.
13They positioned all the soldiers, the main army on the north side of the city, and the rear guard on the west side of the city. Joshua spent that night in the valley.14It came about when the king of Ai saw it, he and his army got up early and rushed out to attack Israel at a certain place that was overlooking the Jordan River valley. He did not know that an ambush was waiting to attack from behind the city.
15Joshua and all Israel let themselves be defeated before them, and they fled toward the wilderness.16All the people who were in the city were called together to go after them, and they went after Joshua and they were drawn away from the city.17There was not a man left in Ai and Bethel who had not gone out to pursue Israel. They abandoned the city and left it open as they pursued Israel.

18Yahweh said to Joshua, "Point that spear in your hand toward Ai, for I will give Ai into your hand." Joshua held out the spear that was in his hand toward the city.19The soldiers hiding in ambush quickly rushed out of their place as he reached out with his hand. They ran and entered the city and captured it. They quickly set the city on fire.
20The men of Ai turned and looked back. They saw the smoke from the city rising into the sky, and they could not escape this way or that. For the Israelite soldiers who had fled into the wilderness now turned back to face those who were pursuing them.21When Joshua and all Israel saw the ambush had captured the city with the smoke rising, they turned around and killed the men of Ai.
22The others came out from the city against them, so that they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. Israel attacked the men of Ai; none remained of those who survived or escaped.23They kept the king of Ai, whom they captured alive, and they brought him to Joshua.

24It came about when Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the field near the wilderness where they pursued them, and when all of them, to the very last one, had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai. They attacked it with the edge of the sword.25All those who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand, all the people of Ai.26Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he had reached out while holding his spear, until he had completely destroyed all the people of Ai.
27Israel took only the livestock and the plunder from the city for themselves, just as Yahweh had commanded Joshua.
28Joshua burned Ai and turned it into a heap of ruins forever. It is a devastated place to this day.
29He hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. When the sun was going down, Joshua gave the command and they took the king's body down from the tree and threw it in front of the city gate. There they set up a great heap of stones on top of it. That heap remains there to this day.

30Then Joshua built an altar to Yahweh, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal,31just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded the people of Israel, as it was written in the book of the law of Moses: "An altar from uncut stones, on which no one has wielded an iron tool." He offered on the altar burnt offerings to Yahweh, and they sacrificed peace offerings.
32There, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses.
33All Israel, their elders, officers, and their judges stood on both sides of the ark before the priests and Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh—the foreigner as well as the native born—half of them stood in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half stood in front of Mount Ebal. They blessed the people of Israel, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded them at first.

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[34]Afterward, Joshua read all the words of the law, the blessings and the curses, just as they had been written in the book of the law.[35]There was not one word from all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read in front of the assembly of Israel, including the women, the little children, and the foreigners who lived among them.

Joshua 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Special concepts in this chapter

Sin brought defeat

It was a great sin to take what was to be destroyed. Because of their sin, Yahweh withheld victory from the Israelites. Sin resulted in defeat in battle. Because they repented, Yahweh brought victory to Israel in Ai. (See: sin and repent)

Built an altar

Altars were commonly built in the Ancient Near East to commemorate important events. Several altars were built in the Book of Joshua.

Links:

Joshua 8:1 Notes

Joshua 8:1

Do not fear; do not be discouraged

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh combines them to emphasize that there is no reason to be afraid.

I have given into your hand the king of Ai ... and his land

Giving them into Israel's hand represents giving Israel victory and control over them. Alternate translation: "I have given you victory over the king of Ai and his people, and I have given you control over his city and his land"

I have given

God speaks of what he promises to do as though he had already done it, because he will certainly do it. Alternate translation: "I will certainly give" or "I am giving"

Joshua 8:2

her king

The word "her" refers to the city of Ai. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: "its king" or "their king"

Joshua 8:3

the men of war

"the army of Israel"

Joshua 8:5

General Information:

Joshua continues to explain the battle plan to his soldiers.

Joshua 8:7

will give it into your hand

Here "hand" symbolizes the control and power the people have over their enemies.

Joshua 8:8

General Information:

Joshua finishes explaining the battle plan to his soldiers.

Joshua 8:9

Joshua sent them out

This phrase refers to Joshua sending the thirty thousand men who had been selected to ambush Ai to where they would set the ambush.

the place of ambush

"where they would hide until it was time to attack"

Joshua 8:12

five thousand men

"5,000 men." This group seems to be a portion of the "thirty thousand men"

Joshua 8:13

General Information:

The Israelites prepare to fight the people of Ai.

the main army

This refers to the largest group of fighting men, those not in the ambush group.

rear guard

those who were "set in ambush on the west side of the city" (Joshua 8:12)

Joshua 8:15

let themselves be defeated before them

"let themselves be defeated before the people of Ai." The phrase "before them" represents what the people of Ai would see and think. The phrase "be defeated" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let the people of Ai think that the Israelites were defeated" or "let the people of Ai think that they had defeated the Israelites"

before them

the army of Ai

they fled

The army of Israel fled.

Joshua 8:16

they went after ... they were drawn away

These occurrences of "they" refer to the army of Ai.

to go after them

to go after the army of Isreal

All the people who were in the city were called together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The city leaders called all the people in the city together"

All the people who were in the city

The writer speaks in a general way about all the people, but "all the people" refers only to those who could fight. Alternate translation: "all the people in the city who could help chase the army of Israel"

Joshua 8:17

left it open

"left the city gates open"

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Joshua 8:18
I will give Ai into your hand
Giving Ai into Israel's hand represents giving Israel victory and control over Ai. Alternate translation: "I will give you victory over Ai" or "I will cause you to capture Ai"
Joshua 8:24
when Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants ... when all of them ... had fallen by the edge of the sword
The writer uses both of these sentences, which mean almost the same thing, to strongly say that the Israelites had obeyed God's command to kill everyone in Ai.
had fallen by the edge of the sword
Here "fallen" is a euphemism for dying. Also, "the edge of the sword" represents whole swords, and swords represent either battle or the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "had died in battle" or "had died when the army of Israel attacked them"
Joshua 8:25
twelve thousand
"12,000"
Joshua 8:28
a devastated place
a place where people once lived, but in which no one now lives
Joshua 8:29
to this day
"today" or "even now"
Joshua 8:30
Mount Ebal
a mountain in Canaan
Joshua 8:35
There was not one word from all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read
The double negative here emphasizes the positive. This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "Joshua read every word of all that Moses commanded"
Israel
This refers to the nation of Israel.

9 [1]Then all the kings who lived beyond the Jordan in the hill country, and in the lowlands along the shore of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and the Jebusites—[2]these gathered themselves together under one command, to wage war against Joshua and Israel.

[3]When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,[4]they acted with a cunning plan. They went as messengers. They took worn-out sacks and put them on their donkeys. They also took old wineskins that were worn, torn, and had been repaired.[5]They put old and patched sandals on their feet, and dressed in old, worn-out clothing. All the bread in their food supply was dry and moldy.
[6]Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have traveled from a very far country, so now make a covenant with us."[7]The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live near us. How can we make a covenant with you?"[8]They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." Joshua said to them, "Who are you? Where did you come from?"
[9]They said to him, "Your servants have come here from a land very far away, because of the fame of Yahweh your God. We have heard a report about him and about everything that he did in Egypt—[10]and everything that he did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan who was at Ashtaroth.
[11]Our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey. Go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants. Make a treaty with us."[12]This is our bread, it was still warm when we took it from our houses on the day we set out to come to you. But now, see, it is dry and moldy.[13]These wineskins were new when we filled them, and look, now they are leaking. Our garments and our sandals are worn out from a very long journey.'"
[14]So the Israelites took some of their provisions, but they did not consult with Yahweh for guidance.[15]Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live. The leaders of the people also swore a vow to them.

[16]Three days after the Israelites made this covenant with them, they learned that they were their neighbors and that they lived nearby.[17]Then the people of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Their cities were Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim.
[18]The people of Israel did not attack them because their leaders had taken an oath about them before Yahweh, the God of Israel. The whole community was grumbling against their leaders.[19]But all the leaders said to all the people, "We have taken an oath concerning them by Yahweh, the God of Israel, and now we cannot harm them.
[20]This is what we will do to them: To avoid any wrath that may come on us because of the oath we swore to them, we will let them live."[21]The leaders said to their people, "Let them live." So, the Gibeonites became cutters of wood and drawers of water for all the Israelites, just as the leaders said about them.

[22]Joshua called for them and said, "Why did you deceive us when you said, 'We are very far from you', when you live right here among us?[23]Now, because of this, you are cursed and some of you will always be slaves, those who cut wood and draw water for the house of my God."
[24]They answered Joshua and said, "Because it was told to your servants that Yahweh your God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you—so we were very afraid for our lives because of you. That is why we did this thing.[25]Now, look, you hold us in your power. Whatever seems good and right for you to do to us, do it."

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[26]So Joshua did this for them: He delivered them out of the control of the people of Israel, so that the people of Israel did not kill them.[27]That day Joshua made the Gibeonites cutters of wood and drawers of water for the community, and for the altar of Yahweh, to this day, in the place that Yahweh chooses.

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[1]Instead of They went as messengers, some Hebrew copies and some ancient translations of the Hebrew copies have, They got provisions ready and loaded their donkeys.

Joshua 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's mistake

Israel was deceived because "they did not consult with Yahweh for guidance." Instead of consulting Yahweh, they attempted to achieve victory under their own power. This was sinful. (See: sin)

Links:

Joshua 9:1 Notes

Joshua 9:1

the Jordan

a shortened name for the Jordan River

Joshua 9:2

under one command

Here "command" represents the one who commanded them. Being under him represents obeying his commands. Alternate translation: "obeying the commands of one leader"

Joshua 9:4

cunning plan

a crafty scheme intended to trick Joshua and the Israelites

Joshua 9:5

dry and moldy

"dry and filled with fungus" or "stale and ruined"

Joshua 9:6

men of Israel

This refers to the entire nation of Israel.

Joshua 9:7

the Hivites

This is another name for the Gibeonites.

Perhaps you live near us. How can we make a covenant with you?

Joshua is emphasizing that the people of Israel have to follow the command of Yahweh above all else. Alternate translation: "If you do live near us, we cannot make a covenant with you."

Joshua 9:10

Sihon

This is the name of the defeated Amorite king.

Heshbon

This is the name of the royal city of the nation of Moab.

Og

This is the name of the defeated king of Bashan.

Ashtaroth

This is the name of a city known for worshiping the goddess of the same name.

Joshua 9:11

in your hand

This phrase means "take with you." Here the word "hand" represents the possession by the Gibeonites of the provisions.

meet them and say to them

The word "them" refers to the people of Israel.

Joshua 9:15

Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live. The leaders of the people also swore a vow to them.

These two sentences are saying that the same thing occurred. Joshua, the leader of the nation of Israel, promised not to kill the Gibeonites. The leaders of the nation of Israel, likewise, made the same covenant.

the people

Here this refers to the people of Israel.

Joshua 9:17

third day

This refers to number three in order.

Kephirah

This is one of the cities of the Gibeonites.

Beeroth

This is the name of a place.

Kiriath Jearim

This is the name of a place.

Joshua 9:18

The whole community was grumbling

"All of the Israelites were grumbling"

Joshua 9:19

the people

Here this phrase refers to the nation of Israel.

Joshua 9:21

the Gibeonites became cutters of wood and drawers of water

"the Gibeonites became woodcutters and water carriers"

Joshua 9:23

house of my God

Here this phrase refers to the dwelling place of Yahweh, the Tabernacle.

Joshua 9:25

Whatever seems good and right

The words "good" and "right" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Whatever seems fair and just"

Joshua 9:26

for them

The word "them" here refers to the Gibeonites.

Joshua 9:27

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to this day "even up to now." This means that the people had	continued to do these things even up to the day that the writer was living.

10 [1]Now when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had captured Ai and had completely destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king), he also heard how the people of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were living among them.[2]The people of Jerusalem were very afraid because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities. It was larger than Ai, and all its men were mighty warriors.
[3]So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent a message to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon:[4]"Come up to me and help me. Let us attack Gibeon because they have made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel."
[5]The five kings of the Amorites—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon—came up, they and all of their armies. They encamped near Gibeon, and they attacked it.

[6]The people of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua and to the army at Gilgal. They said, "Hurry! Do not withdraw your hands from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us. Help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill country have gathered together to attack us."[7]Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the men of war with him, and all the mighty warriors.
[8]Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to stop your attack."
[9]Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal.[10]Yahweh confused the enemy before Israel, and Israel killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon and pursued them on the road going up to Beth Horon, and they killed them on the road to Azekah and Makkedah.
[11]As they ran away from Israel, down the hill from Beth Horon, Yahweh threw large stones down from heaven upon them all the way to Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than who were killed with the sword by the men of Israel.

[12]Then Joshua spoke to Yahweh on the day Yahweh gave the men of Israel victory over the Amorites. This is what Joshua said to Yahweh before Israel,
"Sun, be still at Gibeon,
and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."
[13] The sun stood still,
and the moon stopped moving
until the nation took vengeance
on their enemies.
Is this not written in the Book of Jashar?
The sun stayed
in the middle of the sky;
it did not go down
for about a whole day.

[14]There has been no other day like it before or after it, when Yahweh obeyed the voice of a human being. For Yahweh was waging war on behalf of Israel.

[15]Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.
[16]Now the five kings had escaped and hidden themselves in the cave at Makkedah.[17]It was told to Joshua, "They have been found!—the five kings hidden in the cave at Makkedah!"
[18]Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and place soldiers there to guard them.[19]Do not stay yourselves. Pursue your enemies and attack them from the rear. Do not permit them to enter into their cities, because Yahweh your God has given them into your hand."
[20]Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished slaughtering them with a very great slaughter, until they were almost completely destroyed; only a few survivors who escaped reached the fortified cities.[21]Then the whole army returned in peace to Joshua at the camp at Makkedah. No one dared to say one word against any of the people of Israel.

[22]Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and out of the cave bring to me these five kings."[23]They did as he said. They brought to him these five kings from the cave—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

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[24]When they brought the kings to Joshua, he summoned every man of Israel. He said to the commanders of the soldiers who had gone into battle with him, "Put your feet on their necks." So they came up and put their feet on their necks.[25]Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Be strong and courageous. This is what Yahweh will do to all your enemies you are going to fight."
[26]Then Joshua struck the kings. He hung them on five trees. They hung on the trees until evening.[27]When it was sunset, Joshua gave orders, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves. They put large stones over the mouth of the cave. Those stones remain there to this very day.

[28]In this way, Joshua captured Makkedah on that day and killed everyone there with the sword, including its king. He completely destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivor in it. He did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

[29]Joshua and all Israel passed on from Makkedah to Libnah. He went into battle against Libnah.[30]Yahweh also gave it into the hand of Israel—along with their king. Joshua struck it with the edge of the sword and every person in it. He left no survivor in it. He did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

[31]Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish. He camped by it and waged war against it.
[32]Yahweh gave Lachish into the hand of Israel. Joshua captured it on the second day and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, just as he had done to Libnah.

[33]Then Horam, king of Gezer, came up to help Lachish. Joshua attacked him and his army until there was not even one survivor left.

[34]Then Joshua and all Israel passed on from Lachish to Eglon. They camped by it and waged war against it,[35]and captured it that same day. They struck it with the edge of the sword and they completely destroyed everyone in it, as Joshua had done to Lachish.

[36]Then Joshua and all Israel passed on from Eglon to Hebron. They waged war against it.[37]They captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword, together with its king and its villages, and all the people in it. They left no survivors. Just as they had done to Eglon, they totally destroyed it and every person in it.

[38]Then Joshua turned, and all the army of Israel with him, and they passed on to Debir and waged war against it.[39]They captured it, its king and all its nearby villages. They struck them with the edge of the sword and completely destroyed every person in it. They left no survivor. They did to Debir and its king as they had done to Libnah and its king and to Hebron.

[40]Joshua conquered all the land, the hill country, the Negev, the lowlands, and the foothills. Of all their kings he left not one survivor. He completely destroyed everything that breathed, just as Yahweh, the God of Israel, had commanded.
[41]Joshua struck them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen to Gibeon.
[42]Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.[43]Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, returned to the camp at Gilgal.

Joshua 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 10:12-13 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are a poem.

Special concepts in this chapter

"For Yahweh was waging war on behalf of Israel"

Israel's conquest of the Promised Land was Yahweh's war on the ungodly Canaanites more than Israel's war. This type of war was different from other wars and God gave Israel special instructions. (See: promisedland and godly)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

The people of Gibeon used an idiom when they called for help from Israel: "Do not withdraw your hands," meaning "do not stop protecting."

Links:

Joshua 10:1 Notes

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Joshua 10:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here the writer tells about a new person in the story, Adoni-Zedek.

Adoni-Zedek

This is the name of a man who is an important king.

Joshua 10:3

Jarmuth ... Lachish ... Eglon

These are the names of cities.

Hoham ... Piram ... Japhia ... Debir

These are the names of kings.

Joshua 10:4

Come up to me

"Travel to where I am." Jerusalem was higher in elevation than other cities in Canaan.

Joshua 10:5

five kings

"5 kings"

Jarmuth ... Lachish ... Eglon

These are the names of cities.

They encamped near Gibeon

This means they set up their camp around their city. This was a way of weakening those in the city. It prevented people from escaping the city, and it prevented others from bringing food and water to them in the city.

Joshua 10:6

They said

The word "They" here refers to Gibeonites.

Do not withdraw your hands from your servants

This humble request is stated with two negatives to emphasize the need for a positive action. Alternate translation: "Please come and use your strength to protect us"

your hands

The word "hands" here refers to the people of Israel's strength. Alternate translation: "your strength"

Joshua 10:8

I have given them into your hand

Here "hand" represents the people of Israel's strength and their ability to defeat their enemy. The word "them" refers to the attacking army.

I have given them

Here the word "them" refers to the attacking armies.

Joshua 10:9

Joshua came

The entire army of Israel is referred to here by the name of their commander, Joshua.

Joshua 10:10

Yahweh confused the enemy before Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the entire army of Israel.

Beth Horon ... Azekah ... Makkedah

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 10:11

Beth Horon ... Azekah

These are the names of places.

threw large stones down from heaven

"threw large hailstones from the sky"

Joshua 10:12

Sun, be still at Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon

Joshua is praying that Yahweh would make the progression of time stop on this day.

Sun ... moon

Joshua commands the sun and moon as if these were people.

Valley of Aijalon

This is the name of a place.

Joshua 10:13

the nation

This refers to the people of Israel.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar?

The writer uses this question as background information to remind the reader that the incident is well-documented. Alternate translation: "This is written in The Book of Jashar."

Joshua 10:16

Makkedah

This is the name of a city.

Joshua 10:17

It was told to Joshua

Messengers came and told Joshua. Alternate translation: "Someone told Joshua"

Joshua 10:19

into your hand

The phrase "your hand" here means "your control."

Joshua 10:21

Makkedah

Translate the same way as you did in [Joshua 10:10]

No one dared to say one word against

"No one dared to say anything against" or "No one dared to complain or protest against"

Joshua 10:22

Open the mouth of the cave

Here "mouth" is an idiom that means "entrance." Alternate translation: "Open the entrance of the cave"

Joshua 10:23

Jarmuth ... Lachish ... Eglon

These are the names of places.

Joshua 10:24

every man of Israel

Here the men of Israel represent only those who were soldiers.

Joshua 10:27

to this very day

"until the author wrote this story"

Joshua 10:28

Makkedah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [Joshua 10:10]

He completely destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivor in it

The second sentence summarizes the first sentence to emphasize that Joshua left no person or animal alive.

Joshua 10:29

Libnah

This is the name of a city.

Joshua 10:31

Libnah ... Lachish

These are the names of cities.

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Joshua 10:32
into the hand of Israel
Here their "hand" represents their control. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave Lachish into the control of the nation of Israel"
Joshua 10:33
Horam
This is the name of a man who is an important king.
Gezer ... Lachish
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 10:34
Lachish ... Eglon
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 10:35
struck it with the edge of the sword ... completely destroyed everyone in it
These two phrases have similar meanings. Together they show the completeness of the destruction of Eglon.
Joshua 10:36
Eglon
This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Joshua 10:3]
Joshua 10:37
They captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword
The sword represents the army of Israel and striking expresses the idea of slaughter and destruction. Alternate translation: "They captured and killed and destroyed"
Joshua 10:38
Debir
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 10:39
Debir ... Libnah
These are the names of cities.
They struck them with the edge of the sword
The sword represents the army of Israel and striking expresses the idea of slaughter and destruction. Alternate translation: "They killed and destroyed them"
Joshua 10:40
He completely destroyed everything that breathed
"He killed all the people and animals"
Joshua 10:42
Joshua captured all these kings and their land
This refers to the kings and lands that were listed beginning in Joshua 10:28.
Joshua captured
Here Joshua represents his whole army. Alternate translation: "Joshua and his soldiers captured"
at one time
This does not mean in one day. It means during one military campaign, which may have lasted many days or weeks.

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11 [1]When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard this, he sent a message to Jobab, king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Akshaph.[2]He also sent the message to the kings who were in the northern hill country, in the Jordan River valley south of Kinnereth, in the lowlands, and in Naphoth Dor to the west.[3]He also sent a message to the Canaanites to the east and west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites by Mount Hermon in the land of Mizpah.
[4]All their armies came out with them, a great number of soldiers, in number like the sand on the seashore. They had a great number of horses and chariots.[5]All these kings met at the appointed time, and they camped at the waters of Merom to wage war with Israel.

[6]Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid in their presence, because tomorrow at this time I am giving them all to Israel as dead men. You will hamstring their horses, and you will burn their chariots."[7]Joshua and all the men of war came. They arrived suddenly at the waters of Merom, and attacked the enemy.
[8]Yahweh gave the enemy into the hand of Israel, and they struck them and pursued them to Sidon, Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah to the east. They struck them until not even one survivor of them was left.[9]Joshua did to them just as Yahweh told him. He hamstrung the horses and burned the chariots.

[10]Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor. He struck its king with the sword. (Hazor had been head of all these kingdoms.)[11]They struck with the sword every living creature that was there, and he set them apart to be destroyed, so there was not any living creature left alive. Then he burned Hazor.
[12]Joshua captured all the cities of these kings. He also captured all their kings and struck them with the edge of the sword. He completely destroyed them with the edge of the sword, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded.[13]Israel did not burn any of the cities built on mounds, except Hazor. It alone Joshua burned.
[14]The army of Israel took all the plunder from these cities along with the livestock for themselves. They killed every human being with the edge of the sword until all were dead. They left alive no creature that breathed.[15]Just as Yahweh had commanded his servant Moses, in the same way, Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did it. He left nothing undone of all that Yahweh commanded Moses to do.

[16]Joshua took all that land: the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the foothills, the Jordan River valley, the hill country of Israel and its lowlands.[17]From Mount Halak near Edom, and going north as far as Baal Gad in the valley near Lebanon below Mount Hermon, he captured all their kings and put them to death.
[18]Joshua waged war for a long time with all the kings.[19]Not one city made peace with the army of Israel except the Hivites who lived in Gibeon. Israel captured all the rest of the cities in battle.[20]For it was Yahweh who hardened their hearts so

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they would wage war against Israel, so that they might be devoted to destruction without mercy, just as he had instructed Moses.

[21]Then Joshua came at that time and he destroyed the Anakim. He did this in the hill country, at Hebron, Debir, Anab, and in all the hill country of Judah, and in all the hill country of Israel. Joshua completely destroyed them and their cities.
[22]None of the Anakim were left in the land of Israel except at Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.
[23]So Joshua captured the whole land, just as Yahweh said to Moses. Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel, assigned to each of their tribes. Then the land had rest from the wars.

Joshua 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh overcomes the united forces of the northern kingdoms

Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid in their presence, because tomorrow at this time I am giving them all to Israel as dead men." Even when the kingdoms of Canaan joined forces, they were not able to overcome the power of Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Yahweh gave the enemy into the hand of Israel"

This phrase may present difficulties in translation. The translator should ensure that Yahweh receives credit for Israel's victory.

Links:

Joshua 11:1 Notes

Joshua 11:1

Jabin ... Jobab

These are names of kings.

Hazor ... Madon ... Shimron ... Akshaph

These are the names of places.

Joshua 11:2

Kinnereth ... Naphoth Dor

These are the names of places.

Joshua 11:3

Mount Hermon

This is the name of a mountain.

Joshua 11:4

General Information:

All the Canaanite kings attack Joshua and the nation of Israel.

a great number of soldiers, in number like the sand on the seashore

No one can count the grains of sand on the seashore. This exaggeration emphasizes the very large number of soldiers that these kings assembled. Alternate translation: "such a great number of soldiers that there appeared to be as many of them as there are grains of sand on the seashore"

Joshua 11:5

Merom

This is the name of a place.

Joshua 11:6

I am giving them all to Israel as dead men

Yahweh enabling Israel to conquer the enemy army and kill all of the soldiers is spoken of as if Yahweh killed the soldiers and then gave them to Israel. Alternate translation: "I will enable Israel to kill all of them in battle"

hamstring their horses

"cripple their horses by cutting their legs." This is a practice where the tendons in the backs of the legs are cut so that the horses cannot walk.

Joshua 11:7

Merom

This is the name of a place.

Joshua 11:8

Yahweh gave the enemy into the hand of Israel

Here the word "hand" represents power. Yahweh enabling the army of Israel to conquer their enemy is spoken of as if Yahweh had put the enemy army into Israel's hand. Alternate translation: "Yahweh enabled Israel to conquer the enemy"

struck them ... struck them

"attacked them ... attacked them"

Misrephoth Maim

This is the name of a place.

Joshua 11:9

hamstrung

This is a practice where the tendons in the backs of the legs are cut so that the horses cannot run. See how you translated this word in Joshua 11:6.

Joshua 11:10

He struck its king with the sword

"Joshua killed the king of Hazor with his sword"

Hazor had been head of all these kingdoms

Hazor being the most important city is spoken of as Hazor being the head of the other kingdoms. Alternate translation: Hazor had been the most important of all these kingdoms"

Joshua 11:11

They struck with the sword every living creature that was there ... so there was not any living creature left alive

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize complete destruction.

he set them apart to be destroyed

The word "he" refers to Joshua and represents himself and his army. Completely destroying every living thing in the city is spoken of as if those living things were dedicated for

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destruction. Alternate translation: "the army completely destroyed them"
Joshua 11:12
struck them with the edge of the sword
"killed them"
Joshua 11:13
Israel did not burn any of the cities built on mounds, except Hazor
This double negative emphasizes that Hazor was the only city built on a mound that Israel burned. Alternate translation: "The only city built on a mound that Israel burned was Hazor"
cities built on mounds
"cities built on small hills"
Joshua 11:14
for themselves
This phrase refers to the army of Israel.
They killed every human being with the edge of the sword until all were dead. They left alive no creature that breathed.
These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize complete destruction.
Joshua 11:15
He left nothing undone of all that Yahweh commanded Moses to do
This negative phrase emphasizes that Joshua did everything that Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "Joshua did everything that Yahweh commanded"
Joshua 11:17
Mount Halak ... Baal Gad
These are the names of places.
Joshua 11:19
Not one city made peace with the army of Israel except the Hivites who lived in Gibeon
This double negative emphasizes that the Hivites were the only people who made peace with Israel. The phrase "one city" is a metonym for the people who lived in that one city. Alternate translation: "The only city that made peace with the army of Israel was the Hivites who lived in Gibeon" or "The only people who made peace with the army of Israel were the Hivites who lived in Gibeon"
Joshua 11:20
it was Yahweh who hardened their hearts
Yahweh causing the people of the cities to be stubborn is spoken of as if Yahweh had hardened their hearts. Alternate translation: "it was Yahweh who caused them to act stubbornly"
Joshua 11:21
Anakim
These are the descendants of Anak.
Debir ... Anab
These are the names of places.
Joshua 11:22
None of the Anakim were left in the land of Israel except at Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.
This double negative emphasizes that Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod were the only places in which the Anakim were left. Alternate translation: "The only Anakim left in the land of Israel were those in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod"
Joshua 11:23
Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel
Joshua giving the land to the Israelites is spoken of as if he had given the Israelites an inheritance as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "Joshua gave the land to the Israelites as a permanent possession"
the land had rest from the wars
The people no longer fighting wars is spoken of as if the land were a person who rested from war. Alternate translation: "the people no longer fought wars in the land" or "there was peace in the land"

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12 [1]Now these are the kings of the land, whom the men of Israel conquered. The people of Israel took possession of the land on the east side of the Jordan where the sun rises, from the Valley of the Arnon River to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah to the east.
[2] Sihon, king of the Amorites, lived in Heshbon. He ruled from Aroer, which is on the rim of the Arnon Gorge from the middle of the valley, and half of Gilead down to the Jabbok River on the border of the Ammonites.

[3] Sihon also ruled over the Arabah to the Sea of Kinnereth, to the east, to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) eastward, all the way to Beth Jeshimoth and southward, toward the foot of the slopes of Mount Pisgah.
[4] Og, king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei.
[5]He ruled over Mount Hermon, Salekah, and all Bashan, to the border of the Geshurites and the Maakathites, and half of Gilead, to the border of Sihon, king of Heshbon.

[6]Moses the servant of Yahweh, and the people of Israel had defeated them, and Moses the servant of Yahweh, gave the land as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

[7]These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the valley near Lebanon to Mount Halak near Edom. Joshua gave land to the tribes of Israel for them to possess.
[8]He gave them the hill country, the lowlands, the Arabah, the sides of the mountains, the wilderness, and the Negev—the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.
[9]The kings included the king of Jericho, the king of Ai which is beside Bethel,[10]the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron,
[11]the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish,[12]the king of Eglon, the king of Gezer,
[13]the king of Debir, the king of Geder,[14]the king of Hormah, the king of Arad,[15]the king of Libnah, the king of Adullam,[16]the king of Makkedah, the king of Bethel,

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[17]the king of Tappuah, the king of Hepher,[18]the king of Aphek, the king of Lasharon,[19]the king of Madon, the king of Hazor,
[20]the king of Shimron Meron, the king of Akshaph,
[21]the king of Taanach, the king of Megiddo,[22]the king of Kedesh, the king of Jokneam in Carmel,[23]the king of Dor in Naphoth Dor, the king of Goyim in Gilgal,[24]and the king of Tirzah. The number of kings was thirty-one in all.

Joshua 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 12:2-5 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long list.

Links:

Joshua 12:1 Notes

Joshua 12:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here the writer begins to provide background information about the kings who had ruled over the land.

these are the kings

This refers to the list of kings that continues through verse 24.

the Arabah

These are the names of a region of land.

Joshua 12:2

Aroer

This is the name of a city.

Sihon ... Heshbon

See how you translated these words in Joshua 9:10.

Joshua 12:3

Sea of Kinnereth

This is a place. See how you translated this in Joshua 11:2.

Beth Jeshimoth ... Mount Pisgah

These are the names of places.

Joshua 12:4

Og, king of Bashan

See how you translated this man's name in Joshua 9:10.

the Rephaim

These are the names of people groups.

Ashtaroth ... Edrei

These are the names of places.

Joshua 12:5

Salekah

This is the name of a place.

Maakathites

This is the name of a people group.

Joshua 12:6

Reubenites

These are the descendants of Reuben.

Gadites

These are the descendants of Gad.

half tribe of Manasseh

They are called a half tribe because the other half of the tribe received an inheritance in the land of Canaan.

Joshua 12:7

Baal Gad ... Mount Halak

These are the names of places.

Joshua 12:8

the Arabah

This is the name of a region of land. Translate as in [Joshua 12:1]

Joshua 12:10

Hebron

This is the name of a city.

Joshua 12:11

Jarmuth ... Lachish

These are the names of cities. Translate in the same way you did in [Joshua 10:3]

Joshua 12:12

Eglon ... Gezer

These are the names of cities. Translate "Eglon" in the same way you did in [Joshua 10:3]

Joshua 12:13

Debir ... Geder

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:14

Hormah ... Arad

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:15

Libnah ... Adullam

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:16

Makkedah

This is the name of a city.

Joshua 12:17

Tappuah ... Hepher

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:18

Aphek ... Lasharon

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:19

Madon ... Hazor

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:20

Shimron Meron ... Akshaph

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:21

Taanach ... Megiddo

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:22

Kedesh ... Jokneam

These are the names of cities.

Joshua 12:23

Dor ... Naphoth Dor ... Goyim

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These are the names of cities.	This is the name of a city.
Joshua 12:24	thirty-one in all
Tirzah	"31 in all"

13 [1]Now Joshua was very old when Yahweh said to him, "You are very old, but there is still very much land to capture.

[2]This is the land that still remains: All the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites,[3]from Shihor, which is east of Egypt, and northward to the border of Ekron, which is considered property of the Canaanites; the five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron; the territory of the Avvites
[4]in the south; all the lands of the Canaanites, from Arah that belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek which is on the border of the Amorites;[5]the land of Byblos,[1] all of Lebanon toward the east, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath.

[6]Also, all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth Maim, including all the people of Sidon—I will drive them out before the army of Israel. Be sure to assign the land to Israel as an inheritance, as I commanded you.
[7]Divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh."

[8]With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh, the Reubenites and the Gadites had received their inheritance that Moses, the servant of Yahweh, gave them on the east side of the Jordan,
[9]from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon River gorge (including the city that is in the middle of the gorge), to all the plateau of Medeba as far as Dibon;
[10]all the cities of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, to the border of the Ammonites;[11]Gilead, and the region of the Geshurites and Maakathites, all of Mount Hermon, all Bashan to Salekah;[12]all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei—these are what was left of the remnant of the Rephaim—Moses struck them and drove them out.
[13]But the people of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maakathites, and so Geshur and Maakah live in the midst of Israel to this day.

[14]To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance. The offerings of Yahweh, the God of Israel, made by fire, are their inheritance, as God said to Moses.

[15]Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of Reuben, clan by clan.
[16]Their territory was from Aroer, on the edge of the Arnon River gorge, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plateau by Medeba.
[17]Reuben also received Heshbon and all its cities that are in the plateau, Dibon, and Bamoth Baal, and Beth Baal Meon,
[18]and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,[19]and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth Shahar on the hill of the valley.
[20]Reuben also received Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth Jeshimoth,[21]all the cities of the plateau, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses had defeated together with the leaders of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who had lived in the land.
[22]The people of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination, among the rest of those they had killed.[23]The border of the tribe of Reuben is the Jordan River; this is their boundary. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Reuben, given to each of their clans, with their cities and villages.

[24]This is what Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, clan by clan:
[25]Their territory was Jazer, all the cities of Gilead and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of Rabbah,
[26]from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir.
[27]In the valley, Moses gave them Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Sukkoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a border, to the lower end of the Sea of Kinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan.[28]This is the inheritance of the tribe of Gad, clan by clan, with their cities and villages.

[29]Moses gave an inheritance to the half tribe of Manasseh. It was assigned to the half tribe of the descendants of Manasseh, clan by clan.
[30]Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities;[31]half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei (the royal cities of Og in Bashan). These were assigned to the descendants of Makir son of Manasseh—half of the people of Makir, clan by clan.

[32]This is the inheritance that Moses assigned to them on the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho.[33]Moses did not give an inheritance to the tribe of Levi. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, just as he said to them.

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[1]Some modern English translations read, land of Gebalites.

Joshua 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about dividing the land between the tribes of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Division of the land

There was still much land to be captured west of the Jordan River, but the tribe of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Mannasah received their land east of the Jordan. This land had been promised to them in Numbers 32.

Driving out the people

While Yahweh achieved many great victories through Joshua, Israel was still supposed to drive out the rest of the Canaanites. Israel's success in this would depend on their faith in Yahweh. (See: faith)

Links:

Joshua 13:1 Notes

Joshua 13:2

This is the land that still remains

You may clarify that this is the land that Israel still needs to capture. Alternate translation: "This is the land that still remains for Israel to capture"

Joshua 13:3

Shihor

This is the name of a place.

which is considered property of the Canaanites

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the Canaanites now consider their property"

Avvites

This is the name of a people group.

Joshua 13:4

Arah ... Aphek

These are the names of places.

Joshua 13:5

Baal Gad ... Mount Hermon

These are the names of places.

Joshua 13:6

Misrephoth Maim

this is the name of a place

land ... as an inheritance

The land that Israel will claim is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they will receive as a permanent possession.

Joshua 13:9

Aroer ... Medeba ... Dibon

These are the names of places.

gorge

a place where the river is far below the land on the sides

plateau

flat land high above rivers

Joshua 13:10

Heshbon

This is the name of a city.

Joshua 13:11

Salekah

These are the names of places.

the region of the Geshurites and Maakathites

"the land where the Geshurites and Maakathites lived"

Maakathites

This is the name of a people group.

Joshua 13:12

Ashtaroth ... Edrei

These are the names of places.

Rephaim

This is the name of a people group.

Moses struck them

Here "Moses" represents himself and the Israelite army that Moses led. Alternate translation: "Moses and the Israelites attacked them"

Joshua 13:13

the Geshurites or the Maakathites

These are the names of people groups.

Geshur and Maakah live in the midst of Israel

"Geshur" and "Maakah" are either the names of the ancestors of "the Geshurites" and "the Maakathites" or are the names of the cities in which they lived. Alternate translation: "those people live among Israel"

to this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

Joshua 13:14

Moses gave no inheritance

The land that Moses assigned to the tribes of Israel is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession.

The offerings of Yahweh ... are their inheritance

The writer speaks of the great honor that the Levites had by serving Yahweh as priests as if the offerings were something that they would inherit. Alternate translation: "The offerings of Yahweh ... are what they will have for their provision"

offerings of Yahweh

"offerings that the people were to bring to Yahweh"

made by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priests burned with fire"

Joshua 13:16

Aroer ... Medeba

These are the names of places.

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gorge ... plateau
See how you translated these words in Joshua 13:9.
Joshua 13:17
Heshbon ... Dibon ... Bamoth Baal ... Beth Baal Meon
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:18
Jahaz ... Kedemoth ... Mephaath
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:19
Kiriathaim ... Sibmah ... Zereth Shahar
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:20
Beth Peor ... Pisgah ... Beth Jeshimoth
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:21
Heshbon
This is the name of a city.
Sihon ... Evi ... Rekem ... Zur ... Hur ... Reba
These are the names of people.
together with the leaders of Midian
"as he had defeated the leaders of Midian"
Joshua 13:23
this is their boundary
The Jordan River was the western border of the land that the tribe of Reuben received.
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Reuben
The land that Moses assigned to the tribe of Reuben is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribe of Reuben received as a permanent possession.
given to each of their clans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Moses gave to each of their clans"
Joshua 13:25
Jazer ... Aroer ... Rabbah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:26
Heshbon ... Ramath Mizpah ... Betonim ... Mahanaim ... Debir
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:27
Beth Haram ... Beth Nimrah ... Sukkoth ... Zaphon ... Heshbon
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:28
This is the inheritance of the tribe of Gad
The land that Moses assigned to the tribe of Gad is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribe of Gad received as a permanent possession.
Joshua 13:29
Moses gave an inheritance to the half tribe of Manasseh
The land that Moses assigned to the half tribe of Manasseh is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that he gave to them as a permanent possession.
half tribe of Manasseh
Only half of the tribe received this land because the other half received land on the other side of the Jordan River.
It was assigned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses assigned it"
Joshua 13:30
Mahanaim ... Jair
These are the names of places.
Joshua 13:31
Ashtaroth ... Edrei
These are the names of places.
These were assigned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses assigned these"
Makir
This is a man's name.
Joshua 13:32
This is the inheritance that Moses assigned to them
The land that Moses assigned to the tribes of Israel on the east side of the Jordan is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Moses gave to them as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This is the land that Moses assigned to them as an inheritance"
Joshua 13:33
Yahweh, the God of Israel, is their inheritance
The writer speaks of the great honor that the Levites had by serving Yahweh as priests as if Yahweh were something that they would inherit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, the God of Israel, is what they have"

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14 [1]These are the areas of land that the people of Israel received as their inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the tribal clans of Israel allotted to them.
[2]Their inheritance was selected by lot for the nine and one-half tribes, just as Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses.[3]For Moses had given the inheritance of the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance.[4]The tribe of Joseph was actually two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites were given no portion of the inheritance in the land, but only certain cities to live in, with their pasturelands for livestock and for their own material resources.[5]The people of Israel did as Yahweh commanded Moses, so they assigned the land.

[6]Then the tribe of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, said to him, "You know what Yahweh said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me at Kadesh Barnea.[7]I was forty years old when Moses the servant of Yahweh sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy on the land. I brought him a report again as it was in my heart to make.
[8]But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear. But I completely followed Yahweh my God.[9]Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has walked will be an inheritance for you and for your children forever, because you have completely followed Yahweh my God.'
[10]Now, look! Yahweh has kept me alive these forty-five years, just as he said—from the time when Yahweh spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. Now, look! I am this day eighty-five years old.[11]I am still as strong this day

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as I was in the day that Moses sent me out. My strength is now as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming.
[12]Now therefore give me this hill country, which Yahweh promised me on that day. For you heard on that day that the Anakim were there with great fortified cities. It may be that Yahweh will be with me and that I will drive them out, just as Yahweh said."

[13]Then Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron as an inheritance to Caleb son of Jephunneh.[14]Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he completely followed Yahweh, the God of Israel.[15]Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath Arba. (Arba had been the greatest man among the Anakim.) Then the land had rest from war.

Joshua 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Drive them out

The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land. (See: falsegod and sin)

Links:

Joshua 14:1 Notes

Joshua 14:1
the areas of land that the people of Israel received as their inheritance
The land that the people of Israel acquired is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession.
Joshua 14:2
Their inheritance was selected by lot
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Eleazar, Joshua, and the tribal leaders cast lots to determine the inheritance"
by the hand of Moses
Here the word "hand" refers to Moses himself and means that Yahweh used Moses as the agent to deliver his command. Alternate translation: "through Moses"
Joshua 14:3
Moses had given the inheritance of the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance
The land that Moses gave to the tribes is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession.
Joshua 14:4
The Levites were given no portion of the inheritance in the land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "And Moses did not give a portion of the inheritance to the Levites in the land"
portion
"part"
but only certain cities to live in
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "but they were given only certain cities to live in" or "but he gave to them only certain cities to live in"
pasturelands
fields of grass for the livestock to eat
material resources
physical things they needed so they could provide for their families
Joshua 14:6
Jephunneh
This is a man's name.
Kenizzite
This is the name of a people group.
Joshua 14:7
I brought him a report again as it was in my heart to make
Here the word "heart" represents the thoughts. The phrase is an idiom that refers to a report that is given honestly. Alternate translation: "I brought back to him an honest report"
Joshua 14:8
made the heart of the people melt with fear
Making the people very afraid is spoken of as if it were making the hearts of the people melt. Alternate translation: "made the people very afraid"
I completely followed Yahweh
Being loyal to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were completely following Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I remained loyal to Yahweh"
Joshua 14:9
the land ... will be an inheritance for you and for your children forever
The land that Caleb and his descendants would have is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they would receive as a permanent possession.
the land on which your foot has walked
Here "your foot" represents Caleb. Alternate translation: "the land on which you have walked"
Joshua 14:10
look
"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
while Israel walked in the wilderness
"while the people of Israel traveled in the wilderness"
Joshua 14:11

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My strength is now as my strength was then
"I am still as strong now as I was then"
for going and coming
This is an idiom that refers to daily activities. Alternate translation: "for the things I do every day"
Joshua 14:12
hill country
Possible meanings are 1) many large hills or small mountains or 2) one mountain.
Anakim
This is the name of a people group.
Joshua 14:13
gave Hebron as an inheritance to Caleb
Hebron is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Caleb received as a permanent possession.
Joshua 14:14
to this day
This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.
he completely followed Yahweh
Being loyal to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were completely following Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he remained loyal to Yahweh"
Joshua 14:15
Kiriath Arba
This is the name of a place.
Then the land had rest from war
The people no longer fighting wars is spoken of as if the land were a person who rested from war. See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 11:23]

15 [1]The assignment of land for the tribe of the people of Judah, clan by clan, extended south to the border of Edom, with the wilderness of Zin being the farthest point to the south.[2]Their border on the south ran from the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces to the south.
[3]Their boundary next went out to the south of the hill of Akrabbim and passed along to Zin, and went up south of Kadesh Barnea, along by Hezron, and up to Addar, where it turned about to Karka.[4]It passed along to Azmon, went by the brook of Egypt, and came to its end at the sea. This was their south boundary.
[5]The eastern boundary was the Salt Sea, at the mouth of the Jordan. The border on the north ran from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan.[6]It went up to Beth Hoglah and passed along north of Beth Arabah. Then it went up to the Stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.
[7]Then the border went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the hill of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. Then the border passed along to the springs of En Shemesh and went to En Rogel.[8]Then the border went up the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the south side of the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem). Then it went up to the top of the hill that lies over the Valley of Hinnom, on the west, which is at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim.
[9]Then the border extended from the top of the hills to the spring of Nephtoah, and went out from there to the cities of Mount Ephron. Then the border bends around to Baalah (the same as Kiriath Jearim).[10]Then the border circled around west of Baalah to Mount Seir, and passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (the same as Kesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and crossed over to Timnah.
[11]The border went out beside the northern hill of Ekron, and then it bent around to Shikkeron and passed along to Mount Baalah, and from there it went to Jabneel. The border ended at the sea.[12]The western boundary was the Great Sea and its coastline. This is the border around the tribe of Judah, clan by clan.

[13]In keeping with the commandment of Yahweh to Joshua, Joshua gave Caleb son of Jephunneh an assignment of land among the tribe of Judah, Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak).[14]Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, descendants of Anak.[15]He went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was formerly Kiriath Sepher).
[16]Caleb said, "The man who attacks Kiriath Sepher and captures it, to him I will give Aksah my daughter as a wife."[17]When Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, captured it, Caleb gave him Aksah his daughter as a wife.
[18]Soon after that, Aksah came to Othniel and urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What do you want?"
[19]Aksah replied, "Do me a special favor, since you have given me the land of the Negev: Also give me some springs of water." Then Caleb gave her the upper springs and lower springs.

[20]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, clan by clan.

[21]The cities belonging to the tribe of Judah in the extreme south, toward the border of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,
[22]Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah,[23]Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,[24]Ziph, Telem, Bealoth.
[25]Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (this was also known as Hazor),[26]Amam, Shema, Moladah,[27]Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet,[28]Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah.
[29]Baalah, Iyim, Ezem,[30]Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah,[31]Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah,[32]Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. These were twenty-nine cities in all, including their villages.

[33]In the lowlands there were Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah,[34]Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam,[35]Jarmuth, Adullam, Sokoh,

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Azekah,[36]Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (that is, Gederothaim). These were fourteen cities in number, including their villages.

[37]Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad,[38]Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel,[39]Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon.
[40]Kabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish,[41]Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, Makkedah. These were sixteen cities in number, including their villages.

[42]Libnah, Ether, Ashan,[43]Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib,[44]Keilah, Akzib, Mareshah. These were nine cities, including their villages.

[45]Ekron, with its surrounding towns and villages;[46]from Ekron to the Great Sea, all the settlements that were near Ashdod, including their villages.
[47]Ashdod, its surrounding towns, including their villages; Gaza, its surrounding towns including their villages; to the brook of Egypt, and to the Great Sea with its coastline.

[48]In the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Sokoh,[49]Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir),[50]Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim,[51]Goshen, Holon, and Giloh. These were eleven cities, including their villages.

[52]Arab, Dumah, Eshan,[53]Janim, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah,[54]Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior. These were nine cities, including their villages.

[55]Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah,[56]Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah,[57]Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah. These were ten cities, including their villages.

[58]Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor,[59]Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon. These were six cities, including their villages.

[60]Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), and Rabbah. These were two cities, including their villages.
[61]In the wilderness, there were Beth Arabah, Middin, Sekakah,[62]Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi. These were six cities, including their villages.

[63]But as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the tribe of Judah could not drive them out, so the Jebusites live there with the tribe of Judah to this day.

Joshua 15 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Judah. It will be difficult to fully understand their location without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the location of their land.

Links:

Joshua 15:1 Notes

Joshua 15:1
Zin
This is the name of the wilderness area.
Joshua 15:2
from the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces to the south
"from the bay that faces south at the end of the Salt Sea."
These two phrases refer to the same location. The second phrase clarifies the point at which the southern border begins.
from the bay that faces to the south
"from the bay that extends to the south" or "from the southern bay"
bay
smaller part of the sea that extends into the land
Joshua 15:3
Their boundary
"The border of the land belonging to the tribe of Judah"
Akrabbim ... Zin ... Hezron ... Addar ... Karka
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:4
Azmon
This is the name of a city.
brook of Egypt
a small river of water at the southwestern edge of the land, near Egypt
Joshua 15:5
at the mouth of the Jordan
The point at which the river empties into the sea is spoken of as if it were the mouth of the river.
border ... ran
"border ... was"
Joshua 15:6
Beth Hoglah ... Beth Arabah
These are the names of places.

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the Stone of Bohan
This was likely a large stone that someone set up as a landmark and named after the man, Bohan.
Joshua 15:7
Debir ... the Valley of Achor ... the hill of Adummim ... En Shemesh ... En Rogel
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:8
the Valley of Ben Hinnom ... the Valley of Rephaim
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:9
Nephtoah ... Mount Ephron ... Baalah ... Kiriath Jearim
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:10
Baalah ... Mount Seir ... Mount Jearim ... Kesalon ... Beth Shemesh ... Timnah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:11
Shikkeron ... Mount Baalah ... Jabneel
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:13
Kiriath Arba
These are the names of places.
Arba ... Anak
These are the names of men.
Joshua 15:14
the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, descendants of Anak
These names represent clans of people who were descendants of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. The words "sons" and "descendants" in this context mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "the three clans, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, who were descendants of Anak"
Anak ... Sheshai ... Ahiman ... Talmai
These are the names of men.
Joshua 15:15
He went up from there against
"He went up from there to fight against"
Debir ... Kiriath Sepher
These are the names of places.
Joshua 15:16
Kiriath Sepher
This is the name of a place.
Aksah
This is a woman's name.
Joshua 15:17
Othniel ... Kenaz
These are men's names.
Joshua 15:18
Aksah came to Othniel
This is an idiom that refers to Aksah becoming Othniel's wife. Alternate translation: "when Aksah became Othniel's wife"
urged him to ask her father for a field
This can be translated as direct speech. Alternate translation: "she urged him, saying, 'Ask my father to give me a field.'"
Joshua 15:19
the upper springs and lower springs
The words "upper" and "lower" likely refer to the geographical altitude of the water springs.
Joshua 15:20
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Judah
The land that the tribe of Judah received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Judah received as an inheritance"
Joshua 15:21
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists the southern cities of which Judah took possession. The list continues through Joshua 15:32.
Joshua 15:25
Connecting Statement:
The list of cities continues.
Joshua 15:29
Connecting Statement:
The list of cities continues.
Joshua 15:33
General Information:
The writer lists the northern cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:37
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:40
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:42
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:45
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:46
settlements
villages
Joshua 15:47
brook of Egypt
a small river of water at the southwestern edge of the land near Egypt
Joshua 15:48
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:52
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:55
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:58
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:60
Connecting Statement:
The writer lists cities of which Judah took possession.
Joshua 15:63
to this day
This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote

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this book.

16 [1]The assignment of land for the tribe of Joseph extended from the Jordan at Jericho, east of the springs of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho through the hill country of Bethel.[2]Then it went from Bethel to Luz and passed along to Ataroth, the territory of the Arkites.
[3]Then it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth Horon, and then on to Gezer; it ended at the sea.
[4]It was in this way that the tribes of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim received their inheritance.

[5]The territory of the tribe of Ephraim, clan by clan: The border of their inheritance on the east went from Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon,[6]and from there it continued to the sea. From Mikmethath on the north it turned eastward toward Taanath Shiloh and passed beyond it on the east to Janoah.[7]Then it went down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and then reached Jericho, ending at the Jordan.
[8]From Tappuah the border went westward to the brook of Kanah and ended at the sea. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Ephraim, clan by clan,[9]together with the cities that were chosen for the tribe of Ephraim within the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh—all the cities, including their villages.

[10]They did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so that the Canaanites live within Ephraim to this day, but these people were made to do forced labor.

Joshua 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Drive them out

The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land. (See: falsegod and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Ephraim, one of Joseph's sons. It will be difficult to fully understand their location without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the location of their land.

Links:

Joshua 16:1 Notes

Joshua 16:1
the tribe of Joseph
The "tribe of Joseph" consisted of the tribes of Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Since half of the tribe of Manasseh had settled east of the Jordan, this phrase refers to the tribe of Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh. Alternate translation: "the tribe of Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh"
Joshua 16:2
Luz ... Ataroth
These are the names of places.
Arkites
This is the name of a people group.
Joshua 16:3
Japhletites
This is the name of a people group.
Lower Beth Horon ... Gezer
These are the names of places.
Joshua 16:4
the tribes of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim
"the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph"
received their inheritance
The land that the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "received this land as their inheritance"
Joshua 16:5
The territory of the tribe of Ephraim, clan by clan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The territory ... that Joshua assigned to their clans"
Ataroth Addar ... Upper Beth Horon
These are the names of places.
Joshua 16:6
Mikmethath ... Taanath Shiloh ... Janoah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 16:7
Janoah ... Naarah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 16:8
Tappuah ... Kanah
These are the names of places.
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Ephraim
The land that Ephraim possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Ephraim received as an inheritance"

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clan by clan

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Joshua assigned to their clans"

Joshua 16:9

the cities that were chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cities that Joshua had chosen"

within the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh

The land that the tribe of Manasseh possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "within the land that the tribe of Manasseh had received as an inheritance"

Joshua 16:10

to this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

these people were made to do forced labor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Israelites forced these people to work as slaves"

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17 [1]This was the assignment of land for the tribe of Manasseh (who was the firstborn of Joseph)—that is, for Makir, who was Manasseh's firstborn and who himself was the father of Gilead. Makir's descendants were assigned the land of Gilead and Bashan, because Makir had been a man of war.[2]Land was assigned to the rest of the tribe of Manasseh, given to their clans—Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. These were the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, presented by their clans.
[3]Now Zelophehad son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Makir son of Manasseh had no sons, but only daughters. The names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah.[4]They approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders, and they said, "Yahweh commanded Moses to give to us an inheritance along with our brothers." So, following the commandment of Yahweh, he gave those women an inheritance among the brothers of their father.
[5]Ten parcels of land were assigned to Manasseh in Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan,[6]because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was assigned to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

[7]The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Mikmethath, which is east of Shechem. Then the border went southward to those living near the spring of Tappuah.[8](The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the people of Ephraim.)
[9]The border went down to the brook of Kanah. These cities south of the brook among the towns of Manasseh belonged to Ephraim. The border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook, and it ended at the sea.[10]The land to the south belonged to Ephraim, and the land to the north was Manasseh's; the sea was the border. On the north side Asher can be reached, and to the east, Issachar.
[11]Also in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh possessed Beth Shan and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Endor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages (and the third city is Napheth).
[12]Yet the tribe of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, for the Canaanites continued to live in this land.
[13]When the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not completely drive them out.

[14]Then the descendants of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given us only one assignment of land and one portion for an inheritance, since we are a people great in number, and all along Yahweh has blessed us?"[15]Joshua said to them, "If you are a people great in number, go up by yourselves to the forest and there clear the ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and of the Rephaim. Do this, since the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you."
[16]The descendants of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us. But all the Canaanites who live in the valley have chariots of iron, both those who are in Beth Shan and its villages, and those who are in the Valley of Jezreel."[17]Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are a people great in number, and you have great power. You must not have only one piece of land assigned to you.[18]The hill country will also be yours. Though it is a forest, you will clear it and take possession of it to its farthest borders. You will drive out the Canaanites, even though they have chariots of iron, and even though they are strong."

Joshua 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Manasseh's lack of faith

Even though they were one of the largest and most powerful tribes of Israel, the tribe of Manasseh lacked faith in the power of Yahweh. This caused them many problems. It would also cause their descendants many problems. (See: faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Manasseh, one of Joseph's sons. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land.

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Links:

Joshua 17:1 Notes

Joshua 17:1
firstborn and who himself was
Here "himself" emphasizes that the same person—Makir—was the firstborn of Manasseh and was also the father of Gilead. Alternate translation: "firstborn; he was also"
Makir
These are men's names.
Makir's descendants were assigned the land of Gilead and Bashan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joshua assigned the land of Gilead and Bashan to Makir's descendants"
Joshua 17:2
Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida
These are men's names.
Land was assigned ... given to their clans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joshua assigned land ... and gave them to their clans"
Joshua 17:3
Zelophehad ... Hepher
These are men's names.
Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah
These are women's names.
Joshua 17:4
Eleazar
This is the name of a man.
to give to us an inheritance
The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the people received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "to give to us some land as an inheritance"
he gave those women an inheritance
Possible meanings are 1) "Joshua gave those women an inheritance" or 2) "Eleazar gave those women an inheritance."
Joshua 17:5
Ten parcels of land were assigned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joshua assigned ten parcels of land"
Ten parcels
"Ten portions"
Joshua 17:6
received an inheritance
The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "received land as an inheritance"
The land of Gilead was assigned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joshua assigned the land of Gilead"
Joshua 17:7
southward
toward the south
Mikmethath ... Tappuah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 17:9
The border
"The border of Manasseh's land"
brook
a very small river
Kanah
name of a brook
Joshua 17:10
On the north side Asher can be reached
Possible meanings are 1) that the border of Manasseh's land on the north side touched the land that belonged to the tribe of Asher or 2) that one can travel north to reach Asher. Alternate translation: "Asher was on the north side" or "One can travel north to reach Asher"
to the east, Issachar
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "to the east, Issachar can be reached" or "to the east, one can reach Issachar"
Joshua 17:11
Beth Shan ... Ibleam ... Dor ... Endor ... Taanach ... Megiddo ... Napheth
These are the names of places.
Joshua 17:14
the descendants of Joseph
This refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.
Why have you given us only one ... Yahweh has blessed us?
The people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh ask this question to emphasize that Joshua should have assigned to them more land. Alternate translation: "You should have given us more than one ... Yahweh has blessed us."
one assignment of land and one portion for an inheritance
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. In the second, the land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the people received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "one assignment of land as our inheritance"
portion
part
people great in number
"many people"
Joshua 17:15
If you are a people great in number
"Since you are a people great in number"
Rephaim
This is the name of a people group.
Joshua 17:16
Beth Shan ... Jezreel
These are the names of places.
Joshua 17:17
the house of Joseph
Here the word "house" refers to the descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph"
Joshua 17:18
you will clear it
"you will clear the forest of trees" or "you will cut down its trees"

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18 [1]Then the whole assembly of the people of Israel met together at Shiloh. They set up the tent of meeting there and they conquered the land before them.[2]There were still seven tribes among the people of Israel whose inheritance had not been assigned.
[3]Joshua said to the people of Israel, "How long will you put off going into the land that Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, has given you?[4]Appoint for yourselves three men from each tribe, and I will send them out. They will set out and survey the land up and down. They will write out a description of it with a view to their inheritances, and then they will come back to me.
[5]They will divide it into seven sections. Judah will remain in their territory on the south, and the house of Joseph will continue in their territory in the north.[6]You will describe the land in seven sections and bring the description here to me. I will cast lots for you here before Yahweh our God.
[7]The Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of Yahweh is their inheritance. Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance, beyond the Jordan. This is the inheritance that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave them."

[8]So the men got up and went. Joshua commanded those who went to write the description of the land, saying, "Go up and down in the land and write a description of it and return to me. I will cast lots for you here before Yahweh at Shiloh."[9]The men left and walked up and down in the land and wrote a description of it in a scroll by its cities in seven sections, listing the cities in each section. Then they returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh.
[10]Then Joshua cast lots for them at Shiloh before Yahweh. It was there that Joshua assigned the land to the people of Israel, and to each was given his portion of the land.

[11]The assignment of land for the tribe of Benjamin came up clan by clan. The territory of their assigned land was located between the descendants of Judah and the descendants of Joseph.[12]On the north side, their border began at the Jordan. The border went up to the ridge north of Jericho, and then up through the hill country westward. There it reached the wilderness of Beth Aven.
[13]From there the border passed along south in the direction of Luz (the same place as Bethel). Then the border went down to Ataroth Addar, by the mountain that lies south of Beth Horon.[14]The boundary then went in another direction: On the western side it turned toward the south, heading toward the mountain across from Beth Horon. This boundary ended at Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), a city that belonged to the tribe of Judah. This formed the border on the western side.
[15]The south side began just outside of Kiriath Jearim. The border went from there to Ephron, to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.[16]The boundary then went down to the border of the mountain which was opposite the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which was at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. It then went down to the Valley of Hinnom, south of the slope of the Jebusites, and continued down to En Rogel.
[17]It turned northward, going in the direction of En Shemesh, and from there it went out to Geliloth, which was opposite the ascent of Adummim. Then it went down to the Stone of Bohan the son of Reuben.[18]It passed on to the north of the shoulder of Beth Arabah and down to the Arabah.
[19]The border passed on to the north shoulder of Beth Hoglah. The border ended at the north bay of the Salt Sea, at the southern end of the Jordan. This was the boundary on the south.[20]The Jordan formed its border on the eastern side. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin, and it was given clan by clan, border after border, all around.

[21]Now the cities of the tribe of Benjamin, clan by clan, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz,[22]Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel,[23]Avvim, Parah, Ophrah,[24]Kephar Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba. There were twelve cities, including their villages.
[25]There were also the cities of Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth,[26]Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah,[27]Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah,[28]Zelah, Haeleph, Jebus (the same as Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath. There were fourteen cities, including their villages. This was the inheritance of Benjamin for their clans.

Joshua 18 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribes of Israel. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land.

Links:

Joshua 18:1 Notes

Joshua 18:1
and they conquered the land
They had conquered the people who lived in the land before they set up the tent of meeting. Alternate translation: "after they had conquered the land"
Joshua 18:2

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whose inheritance had not been assigned
The land that the tribes would receive is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they would receive as a permanent possession. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom Joshua had not assigned land as an inheritance"
Joshua 18:3
How long will you put off ... has given you?
Joshua asks this question in order to encourage the Israelites to take possession of the land. Alternate translation: "For long enough, you have put off ... has given you."
Joshua 18:4
the land up and down
The words "up and down" mean in every direction. Alternate translation: "the land in every direction" or "throughout the land"
write out a description of it with a view to their inheritances
This means that they will describe the portions of land that each tribe would like to receive for an inheritance.
their inheritances
The land that they are to survey is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that each of the tribes would receive as a permanent possession.
Joshua 18:5
General Information:
Joshua is continuing his speech to the children of Israel.
They will divide it
"They will divide the land"
Judah will remain
"The tribe of Judah will remain"
the house of Joseph
Here the word "house" represents the descendants of Joseph. The phrase refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Alternate translation: "the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh"
Joshua 18:7
General Information:
Joshua is continuing his speech to the children of Israel.
no portion
"no portion of land"
for the priesthood of Yahweh is their inheritance
Joshua speaks of the great honor that the Levites have by serving Yahweh as priests as if it were something that they inherited. Alternate translation: "for the priesthood of Yahweh is what they have"
the half tribe of Manasseh
"half of the tribe of Manasseh"
have received their inheritance
The land that the tribes received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "have received land as their inheritance"
Joshua 18:8
General Information:
Joshua speaks to the twenty-one men who were to go look at the land.
up and down in the land
The words "up and down" mean in every direction. See how you translated this in [Joshua 18:4]
Joshua 18:10
to each was given his portion of the land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to each tribe Joshua gave their portion in the land"
Joshua 18:11
between the descendants of Judah and the descendants of Joseph
"between the land that belonged to the descendants of Judah and the land that belonged to the descendants of Joseph"
the descendants of Joseph
This refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.
Joshua 18:12
Beth Aven
This is the name of a place.
Joshua 18:13
Luz ... Ataroth Addar ... Beth Horon
These are the names of places.
Joshua 18:14
The boundary
This refers to the same thing as "the border" in verse 13.
Kiriath Baal ... Kiriath Jearim
These are the names of places.
Joshua 18:15
Kiriath Jearim ... Ephron ... Nephtoah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 18:16
Ben Hinnom ... Rephaim ... Hinnom ... En Rogel
These are the names of places.
Joshua 18:17
En Shemesh ... Geliloth ... Adummim
These are the names of places.
the Stone of Bohan
This was likely a large stone that someone set up as a landmark and named after the man, Bohan. See how you translated this in Joshua 15:6.
Joshua 18:18
the shoulder of Beth Arabah
Land that is in the form of a slope or ridge is spoken of as if it were a shoulder. Alternate translation: "the slope of Beth Arabah"
Beth Arabah
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 18:19
the north shoulder of Beth Hoglah
Land that is in the form of a slope or ridge is spoken of as if it were a shoulder. Alternate translation: "the north slope of Beth Hoglah"
Beth Hoglah
This is the name of a place.
Joshua 18:20
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin
The land that the tribe of Benjamin received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance"
it was given clan by clan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joshua gave it to each of their clans"

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Joshua 18:21
General Information:
The writer lists the cities that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance.
Joshua 18:24
their villages
"the villages around them"
Joshua 18:25
General Information:
The writer continues to list the cities that were in the land that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance.
Joshua 18:28
This was the inheritance of Benjamin
The land and cities that the tribe of Benjamin received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance"

19 [1]The second casting of lots fell to Simeon, clan by clan. Their inheritance was in the middle of the inheritance that belonged to the tribe of Judah.
[2]They had for their inheritance Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah,[3]Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem,[4]Eltolad, Bethul, and Hormah.
[5]Simeon also had Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susah,[6]Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhen. These were thirteen cities, including their villages.[7]Simeon also had Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. These were four cities, including their villages.
[8]These were together, including the villages around these cities as far as Baalath Beer (the same as Ramah in the Negev). This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, clan by clan.[9]The inheritance of the tribe of Simeon formed part of the territory of the tribe of Judah. Because the portion of land assigned to the tribe of Judah was too large for them, the tribe of Simeon received their inheritance out of the middle of their portion.

[10]The third casting of lots fell to the tribe of Zebulun, clan by clan. The border of their inheritance began at Sarid.[11]Their border went up westward toward Maralah and touched Dabbesheth; then it extended to the brook that was opposite Jokneam.
[12]From Sarid the border turned eastward toward the sunrise and went to the border of Kisloth Tabor. From there it went to Daberath and then up to Japhia.[13]From there it passed on eastward to Gath Hepher, and then to Eth Kazin; next it went to Rimmon and turned toward Neah.
[14]The border made a turn to the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtah El.[15]This region included the cities of Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. There were twelve cities, including their villages.
[16]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun, clan by clan, including these cities, including their villages.

[17]The fourth casting of lots fell to Issachar, clan by clan.[18]Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem,
[19]Hapharaim, Shion, and Anaharath.
[20]It also included Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez,[21]Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pazzez.[22]Their border also touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth Shemesh, and ended at the Jordan. There were sixteen cities, including their villages.

[23]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar, according to their clans—the cities, including their villages.

[24]The fifth casting of lots fell to the tribe of Asher, clan by clan.[25]Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Akshaph,
[26]Allammelek, Amad, and Mishall. On the west the boundary extended to Carmel and Shihor Libnath.
[27]Then it turned eastward to Beth Dagon and went as far as Zebulun, and then to the Valley of Iphtah El, northward to Beth Emek and Neiel. Then it continued on to Kabul toward the north.[28]It then went on to Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon.
[29]The border turned back to Ramah, and then to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the border turned to Hosah and ended at the sea, in the region of Akzib,[30]Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. There were twenty-two cities, including their villages.

[31]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Asher, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

[32]The sixth casting of lots fell to the tribe of Naphtali, clan by clan.[33]Their border ran from Heleph, from the oak at Zaanannim, on to Adami Nekeb and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan.[34]The border turned westward to Aznoth Tabor and went on to Hukkok; it touched Zebulun on the south, and reached to Asher on the west and Judah on the east at the Jordan River.
[35]The fortified cities were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth,[36]Adamah, Ramah, Hazor,[37]Kedesh, Edrei, and En Hazor.
[38]There were also Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. There were nineteen cities, including their villages.
[39]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Naphtali, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

[40]The seventh casting of lots fell to the tribe of Dan, clan by clan.[41]The territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh,[42]Shaalabbin, Aijalon, and Ithlah.

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[43]It also included Elon, Timnah, Ekron,[44]Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath,[45]Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon,[46]Me Jarkon, and Rakkon along with the territory across from Joppa.
[47]When the territory of the tribe of Dan was lost to them, Dan attacked Leshem and took it. They struck it with the sword, took possession of it, and settled in it. They called Leshem Dan, after the name of their ancestor Dan.
[48]This was the inheritance of the tribe of Dan, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

[49]When they finished the allocation of the land as an inheritance, the people of Israel gave an inheritance among themselves to Joshua son of Nun.[50]By the command of Yahweh they gave him the city for which he asked, Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim. He rebuilt the city and lived there.

[51]These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the tribal clans of Israel assigned by lot at Shiloh, before Yahweh, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished assigning the land.

Joshua 19 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribes of Israel. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land.

Links:

Joshua 19:1 Notes

Joshua 19:1
The second casting of lots fell to Simeon
"The second time Joshua cast lots, the lot indicated the tribe of Simeon"
The second
number two in a list
clan by clan
"and Joshua assigned the land to each of their clans"
Their inheritance was in the middle of the inheritance that belonged to the tribe of Judah
The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribes received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "The land that they received as an inheritance was in the middle of the land that the tribe of Judah received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:2
General Information:
The writer lists cities that were in the land that the tribe of Simeon received as an inheritance.
They had for their inheritance
The land and cities that the tribe of Simeon received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "They had the following cities for their inheritance"
Joshua 19:5
General Information:
The writer continues to list the cities that were in the land that the tribe of Simeon received as an inheritance.
Ziklag
See how you translated the name of this city in Joshua 15:31.
Joshua 19:8
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon
The land and cities that the tribe of Simeon received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Simeon received as an inheritance"
clan by clan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Joshua gave to their clans"
Joshua 19:9
the portion of land assigned to the tribe of Judah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the portion of land which Joshua assigned to the tribe of Judah"
the middle of their portion
"the middle of Judah's portion of land"
Joshua 19:10
The third casting of lots
See how you translated this phrase in Joshua 19:1.
The third
number three in a list
Sarid
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 19:11
Maralah ... Dabbesheth ... Jokneam
These are the names of places.
opposite Jokneam
"across from Jokneam"
Joshua 19:12
Sarid ... Kisloth Tabor ... Daberath ... Japhia
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:13
Gath Hepher ... Eth Kazin ... Rimmon ... Neah
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:14
Hannathon ... Iphtah El
These are names of places.
Joshua 19:15
Kattath ... Nahalal ... Shimron ... Idalah ... Bethlehem
These are names of places.
Bethlehem

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This is not the same "Bethlehem" that is south of Jerusalem in Judah.
Joshua 19:16
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun
The land and cities that the tribe of Zebulun received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Zebulun received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:17
The fourth casting of lots
See how you translated this phrase in Joshua 19:1.
The fourth
number four in a list
Joshua 19:18
Chesulloth ... Shunem
These are names of cities.
Joshua 19:19
Hapharaim ... Shion ... Anaharath
These are names of cities.
Joshua 19:20
Rabbith ... Kishion ... Ebez
These are names of cities.
Joshua 19:21
Remeth ... En Gannim ... En Haddah ... Beth Pazzez
These are names of cities.
Joshua 19:22
Tabor
This is the name of a mountain.
Shahazumah
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 19:23
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar
The land and cities that the tribe of Issachar received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Issachar received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:24
The fifth casting of lots
See how you translated this phrase in Joshua 19:1.
The fifth
number five in a list
Joshua 19:25
Helkath, Hali, Beten, Akshaph
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:26
Allammelek, Amad, and Mishall ... Shihor Libnath
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:27
Beth Dagon ... Valley of Iphtah El ... Beth Emek ... Neiel ... Kabul
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:28
Abdon ... Rehob ... Hammon ... Kanah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:29
Hosah ... Akzib
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:30
Ummah ... Aphek ... Rehob
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:31
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Asher
The land and cities that the tribe of Asher received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Asher received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:32
The sixth casting of lots
See how you translated this phrase in Joshua 19:1.
The sixth
number six in a list
Joshua 19:33
Heleph ... Zaanannim ... Adami Nekeb ... Jabneel ... Lakkum
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:34
Aznoth Tabor ... Hukkok
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:35
Ziddim ... Zer ... Hammath ... Rakkath ... Kinnereth
These are the names of cities.
Hammath
This is not the same location as "Hamath," but is located on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee.
Joshua 19:36
Adamah ... Ramah ... Hazor
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:37
Kedesh ... Edrei ... En Hazor
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:38
Iron ... Migdal El ... Horem ... Beth Anath
These are names of cities.
Joshua 19:39
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Naphtali
The land and cities that the tribe of Naphtali received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Naphtali received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:40
The seventh casting of lots
See how you translated this phrase in Joshua 19:1.
The seventh
number seven in a list
Joshua 19:41
The territory of its inheritance
The land that the tribe of Dan received is spoken of as if it was an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "The territory of land that the tribe of Dan received as an inheritance"
Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:42
Shaalabbin, Aijalon, and Ithlah
These are the names of places.
Joshua 19:43

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Elon, Timnah, Ekron
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:44
Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:45
Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 19:46
Me Jarkon ... Rakkon
These are the names of cities.
across from Joppa
"opposite Joppa" or "beside Joppa"
Joshua 19:47
Leshem
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 19:48
This was the inheritance of the tribe of Dan
The land and cities that the tribe of Dan received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Dan received as an inheritance"
Joshua 19:49
gave an inheritance among themselves to Joshua son of Nun
The city that Joshua received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that he received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "gave a city within their own land as an inheritance to Joshua son of Nun"
Joshua 19:50
Timnath Serah
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 19:51
These are the inheritances ... assigned
The land and cities that the various tribes received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "These are the portions of land and the cities ... assigned as inheritances"

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20 [1]Then Yahweh said to Joshua,[2]"Speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'Appoint the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by the hand of Moses.[3]Do this so that one who kills a person by accident or unknowingly can go there. These cities will be a place of refuge from the avenger of blood.
[4]He will run to one of those cities and will stand at the entrance of the city gate, and explain his case to the elders of that city. Then they will take him into the city and give him a place for him to live among them.
[5]If the avenger of blood pursues him there, then the people of the city must not hand the one who killed him over to the authorities. They must not do this because he killed his neighbor by accident, and he had no hatred toward him in the past.[6]He must stay in that city until he has stood before the assembly for judgment, until the death of the one who was serving as high priest in those days. Then the one who had accidentally killed the person may return to his own town and his own home, to the town from which he fled.'"

[7]So the Israelites selected Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (the same as Hebron) in the hill country of Judah.[8]Beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they selected Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau from the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth Gilead, from the tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh.
[9]These were the cities selected for all the people of Israel and for the foreigners sojourning among them, so that anyone who killed a person unintentionally could run to them for safety. This person would not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until the accused person would first stand before the assembly.

Joshua 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Cities of Refuge
If a person was killed, it was the duty of his relatives to kill the killer. If the death was an accident, this would be unfair. Therefore, God told the Israelites to make cities of refuge for a person who killed someone accidentally. In the city where he sought refuge, his case would be solved legally: "Do this so that one who unintentionally kills a person can go there. These cities will be a place of refuge from anyone who seeks to avenge the blood of a person who was killed." (See: refuge and avenge and blood)

Links:

Joshua 20:1 Notes

Joshua 20:2
by the hand of Moses
Here "hand of Moses" refers to the scriptures that Moses wrote down. Alternate translation: "through the things that Moses wrote"
Joshua 20:3
kills a person by accident
This happens when a person accidentally kills another person, without intending to do so.
the avenger of blood

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This was a relative of the person who had been killed. His job was to kill the person who had killed his relative.

blood

Blood is a metonym for the death of the person whose blood has been shed. Alternate translation: "death"

Joshua 20:4

He will run

Here the word "he" refers to the person who unintentionally killed someone.

explain his case to the elders of that city

"convince the elders of that city that he had not intentionally killed the person.

Then they will take him

The word "they" refers to the elders and "him" refers to the person who unintentionally killed someone.

live among them

This refers to the city as a whole, not to the elders only.

Joshua 20:5

the avenger of blood

This was a relative of the person who had been killed. His job was to kill the person who had killed his relative.

blood

Blood is a metonym for the death of the person whose blood has been shed. See how you translated this in [Joshua 20:3]

Joshua 20:6

stood before the assembly

This is a phrase that describes standing to seek justice from a court of the assembly of his fellow citizens.

Joshua 20:7

General Information:

There are a lot of names in this section.

Joshua 20:8

the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

Joshua 20:9

would not die by the hand of the avenger

Here "by the hand" is an idiom that means to be the specific cause of something. Alternate translation: "would not be killed by the avenger"

the avenger of blood

This was a relative of the person who had been killed. His job was to kill the person who had killed his relative.

blood

Blood is a metonym for the death of the person whose blood has been shed. See how you translated this in [Joshua 20:3]

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21 [1]Then the tribal leaders of the Levites came to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the leaders of the families of their ancestors within the people of Israel.[2]They said to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, "Yahweh commanded you by the hand of Moses to give to us cities to live in, with the pasturelands for our livestock."
[3]So by the command of Yahweh, the people of Israel gave out of their inheritance the following cities, including their pasturelands, to the Levites.

[4]The casting of lots for the clans of the Kohathites gave this result: The priests—the descendants of Aaron who were from the Levites—received thirteen cities given from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin.
[5]The rest of Kohath's descendants received by lot ten cities from the clans of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and from the half tribe of Manasseh.

[6]Then the people descended from Gershon were given, by the casting of lots, thirteen cities from the clans of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.
[7]The people who were descendants of Merari, clan by clan, received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

[8]So the people of Israel gave, by casting lots, these cities (including their pasturelands) to the Levites, just as Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses.
[9]From the tribes of Judah and Simeon, they assigned land to the following cities, here listed by name.[10]These cities were given to the descendants of Aaron, who were among the clans of the Kohathites, who in turn were from the tribe of Levi. For the first casting of lots had fallen to them.
[11]The Israelites gave them Kiriath Arba (Arba had been the father of Anak), the same place as Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the pasturelands around it.[12]But the fields of the city, including their villages, were already given to Caleb son of Jephunneh, as his possession.

[13]To the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its pasturelands—which was a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally—and Libnah with its pasturelands,[14]Jattir with its pasturelands, and Eshtemoa with its pasturelands.[15]They also gave Holon with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands,[16]Ain with its pasturelands, Juttah with its pasturelands, and Beth Shemesh with its pasturelands. There were nine cities that were given from these two tribes.
[17]From the tribe of Benjamin were given Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands,[18]Anathoth with its pasturelands, and Almon with its pasturelands—four cities.
[19]The cities given to the priests, the descendants of Aaron, were thirteen cities in all, including their pasturelands.

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[20]As for the rest of the Kohathites who belong to the Kohathite clans of the Levites—they had cities given to them from the tribe of Ephraim by the casting of lots.[21]To them were given Shechem with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim—a city of refuge for anyone who killed a person unintentionally—Gezer with its pasturelands,[22]Kibzaim with its pasturelands, and Beth Horon with its pasturelands—four cities in all.
[23]From the tribe of Dan, the clan of Kohath was given Eltekeh with its pasturelands, Gibbethon with its pasturelands,
[24]Aijalon with its pasturelands, and Gath Rimmon with its pasturelands—four cities in all.
[25]From the half tribe of Manasseh, the clan of Kohath was given Taanach with its pasturelands and Gath Rimmon with its pasturelands—two cities.
[26]There were ten cities in all for the rest of the clans of the Kohathites, including their pasturelands.

[27]From the half tribe of Manasseh, to clans of Gershon, these were other Levite clans, and they gave Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally, along with Be Eshterah with its pasturelands—two cities in all.

[28]To the clans of Gershon they also gave Kishion from the tribe of Issachar, along with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands,[29]Jarmuth with its pasturelands, and En Gannim with its pasturelands—four cities.
[30]From the tribe of Asher, they gave Mishal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands,[31]Helkath with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands—four cities in all.

[32]From the tribe of Naphtali, they gave the clans of Gershon Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally; Hammoth Dor with its pasturelands, and Kartan with its pasturelands—three cities in all.
[33]There were thirteen cities in all, out of the clans of Gershon, including their pasturelands.

[34]To the rest of the Levites—the clans of Merari—were given out of the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam with its pasturelands, Kartah with its pasturelands,[35]Dimnah with its pasturelands, and Nahalal with its pasturelands—four cities in all.

[36]To the clans of Merari were given from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands,
[37]Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands—four cities.
[38]Out of the tribe of Gad they were given Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally—and Mahanaim with its pasturelands.
[39]The clans of Merari were also given Heshbon with its pasturelands, and Jazer with its pasturelands. These were four cities in all.
[40]All these were the cities of the several clans of Merari, who were from the tribe of Levi—twelve cities in all were given to them by the casting of lots.

[41]The cities of the Levites taken from the middle of the land possessed by the people of Israel were forty-eight cities, including their pasturelands.[42]These cities each had its surrounding pasturelands. It was this way with all these cities.

[43]So Yahweh gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their ancestors. The Israelites took possession of it and settled there.[44]Then Yahweh gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their ancestors. Not one of their enemies could defeat them. Yahweh gave all their enemies into their hand.[45]Not one thing among all the good promises that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel failed to come true. All of them came to be.

Joshua 21 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Levi. Even though they did not receive a large piece of land like the other tribes, they did receive small pieces of land to live on and for their animals. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land.

Links:

Joshua 21:1 Notes

Joshua 21:1
Eleazar ... Nun
These are names of men.

Joshua 21:2
They said to them
"The Levites said to them"

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Yahweh commanded you by the hand of Moses
The phrase "by the hand of" is an idiom that means that Yahweh used Moses to deliver his command. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told Moses to command you"
Joshua 21:3
following cities
This refers to the cities to be listed in the next verses.
Joshua 21:4
casting of lots
A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in Joshua 19:1.
Kohathites
This priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson.
Joshua 21:5
half tribe
Half the tribe because the other half received their inheritance before crossing the Jordan River.
Joshua 21:6
Gershon
Gershon was one of the sons of Levi.
casting of lots
A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in Joshua 19:1.
Joshua 21:7
Merari
Merari was one of the sons of Levi.
Joshua 21:8
Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses
The phrase "by the hand of" here means that Yahweh used Moses as the agent to deliver his command. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had told Moses to command"
Joshua 21:10
clans of the Kohathites
The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson. See how you translated this in [Joshua 21:2]
casting of lots
A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in Joshua 19:1.
Joshua 21:11
Arba had been the father of Anak
This is background information about the name of the man who founded the city of Kiriath Arba.
Anak
This is the name of a man.
hill country
An area of land with natural elevations, smaller than mountains.
pasturelands
An area covered with grass or plants suitable for the grazing of livestock or cattle.
Joshua 21:12
fields of the city
Areas of open land, usually, planted with crops, belonging to and surrounding the city.
villages
Small communities, usually smaller than a town.
Joshua 21:13
Libnah
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 21:14
Jattir ... Eshtemoa
These are all names of cities.
Joshua 21:15
Holon ... Debir
These are all names of cities.
Joshua 21:16
Ain ... Juttah
These are all names of cities.
Joshua 21:17
From the tribe of Benjamin were given Gibeon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Benjamin gave Gibeon"
Geba
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 21:18
Anathoth ... Almon
These are names of cities.
Joshua 21:19
thirteen cities
"13 cities"
Joshua 21:20
the Kohathite clans
The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson.
they had cities given to them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received cities"
casting of lots
A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in Joshua 19:1.
Joshua 21:21
Gezer
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 21:22
Kibzaim ... Beth Horon
names of cities
four cities in all
This refers to the list by the total number.
Joshua 21:23
From the tribe of Dan, the clan of Kohath was given Eltekeh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Dan gave to the clan of Kohath Eltekeh"
the clan of Kohath
The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron,

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Kohath's grandson. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Joshua 21:20]
Eltekeh ... Gibbethon
These are names of cities.
Joshua 21:24
Aijalon ... Gath Rimmon
These are names of cities.
four cities
This refers to the number of cities.
Joshua 21:25
From the half tribe of Manasseh, the clan of Kohath was given Taanach
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The half tribe of Manasseh gave to the clan of Kohath Taanach"
Taanach ... Gath Rimmon
These are names of cities.
clan of Kohath
The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson.
Joshua 21:26
clans of the Kohathites
The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson.
Joshua 21:27
From the half tribe of Manasseh, to clans of Gershon, these were other Levite clans, and they gave Golan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The half tribe of Manasseh, other Levite clans, received from the half tribe of Manasseh Golan"
Golan ... Be Eshterah
names of cities
killed another unintentionally
This refers to a death resulting from an action not intended to harm a person.
two cities
number of cities
Joshua 21:28
To the clans of Gershon they also gave Kishion
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The clans of Gershon also received Kishion"
Kishion ... Daberath
names of cities
Joshua 21:29
Jarmuth ... En Gannim
names of cities
Joshua 21:30
From the tribe of Asher, they gave Mishal
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They received from the tribe of Asher Mishal"
Mishal ... Abdon
names of cities
Joshua 21:31
Helkath ... Rehob
names of cities
Joshua 21:32
From the tribe of Naphtali, they gave the clans of Gershon Kedesh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The clans of Gershon received from the tribe of Naphtali Kedesh"
Gershon
This is the name of a person.
Hammoth Dor ... Kartan
These are names of cities.
Joshua 21:33
thirteen cities in all
"13 cities in total"
Joshua 21:34
To the rest of the Levites—the clans of Merari—were given out of the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: The rest of the Levites—the clans of Merari—received from the tribe of Zebulun Jokneam"
Merari
This is a man's name.
Jokneam ... Kartah
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 21:35
Dimnah ... Nahalal
names of cities
Joshua 21:36
To the clans of Merari were given from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The clans of Merari received from the tribe of Reuben Bezer"
Bezer ... Jahaz
names of cities
Joshua 21:37
four cities
This refers to the total number of cities.
Kedemoth ... Mephaath
names of cities
Joshua 21:38
Out of the tribe of Gad they were given Ramoth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They received from the tribe of Gad Ramoth"
Ramoth ... Mahanaim
These are the names of cities.
Joshua 21:39
The clans of Merari were also given Heshbon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The clans of Merari also received Heshbon"
Heshbon ... Jazer
These are names of cities.
Joshua 21:40
twelve cities in all
"12 cities in total"
twelve cities in all were given to them by the casting of lots
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received these twelve cities by the casting of lots"
casting of lots
A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in Joshua 19:1.
Joshua 21:41
The cities of the Levites taken from the middle of the land

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Levites received their cities from the middle of the land"

forty-eight cities

"48 cities"

Joshua 21:43

he swore

"he gave an oath"

Joshua 21:44

Not one of their enemies could defeat them

This is stated in a negative way to strengthen the statement. Alternate translation: "They defeated every one of their enemies"

gave all their enemies into their hand

Here "into their hand" means "into their power." Alternate translation: "gave them power to defeat all their enemies"

Joshua 21:45

Not one thing among all the good promises that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel failed to come true

This is stated in a negative way to strengthen the statement. Alternate translation: "Every one of the good promises that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel came true"

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22 [1]At that time Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.[2]He said to them, "You have done everything that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you. You have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you.[3]You have not deserted your brothers these many days, down to this present day, and you have fulfilled the duties required by the commandments of Yahweh your God.
[4]Now Yahweh your God has given rest to your brothers, just as he promised them. Therefore turn and go to your tents in the land you possess, which Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you on the other side of the Jordan.[5]Just be very careful to observe the commandments and the law that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you, to love Yahweh your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to cling to him and worship him with all your heart and with all your soul."[6]So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went back to their tents.

[7]Now to one-half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given an inheritance in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua gave an inheritance beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. Joshua sent them away to their tents; he blessed them[8]and said to them, "Return to your tents with much money, and with very much livestock, and with silver and gold, and with bronze and iron, and with very many garments. Divide the plunder from your enemies with your brothers."
[9]So the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh returned home, leaving the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. They left to go to the region of Gilead, to their own land, which they themselves possessed, in obedience to the commandment of Yahweh, by the hand of Moses.

[10]When they came to the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh built an altar beside the Jordan, a very large and prominent altar.[11]The people of Israel heard about this and said, "Look! The people of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the front of the land of Canaan, at Geliloth, in the region near the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel."
[12]When the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go up to make war against them.

[13]Then the people of Israel sent messengers to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead. They also sent Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest,[14]and with him ten leaders, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, and every one of them was the head of a family among the clan of Israel.
[15]They came to the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they spoke to them:
[16]"'The whole assembly of Yahweh says this, 'What is this unfaithfulness that you have committed against the God of Israel, by turning this day from following Yahweh by building yourself an altar this day in rebellion against Yahweh?
[17]Was the iniquity of Peor not enough for us? Yet we have not even now cleansed ourselves from it. There was a plague on the assembly of Yahweh for that sin.[18]Must you also turn away from following Yahweh at this present day? If you also rebel against Yahweh today, tomorrow he will be angry with the whole assembly of Israel.
[19]If the land that you possess is defiled, then you should pass over into the land where Yahweh's tabernacle stands and take for yourselves a possession among us. Only do not rebel against Yahweh, nor rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves other than the altar of Yahweh our God.[20]Did not Achan son of Zerah, act faithlessly in the matter of those things that had been reserved for God? Did not wrath fall on the entire community of Israel? That man did not perish alone for his iniquity.'"

[21]Then the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh replied in answer to the heads of the clans of Israel:[22]"'The Mighty One, God, Yahweh! The Mighty One, God, Yahweh!—He knows, and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in unfaithfulness against Yahweh, do not deliver us on this day[23]for having built an altar to turn ourselves away from following Yahweh. If we built that altar in order to offer on it burnt offerings, grain offerings, or sacrifices of peace offerings, then let Yahweh make us pay for it.
[24]No! We did it for fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel?

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[25]For Yahweh has made the Jordan a border between us and you. You people of Reuben and people of Gad, you have nothing to do with Yahweh.' So your children might make our children cease to worship Yahweh.
[26]So we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offerings nor for any sacrifices,[27]but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we will perform the service of Yahweh before him, with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that your children will never say to our children in time to come, "You have no share in Yahweh."'
[28]So we said, 'If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come, we would say, "Look! This is a copy of the altar of Yahweh, which our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you."'[29]May it be far from us that we should rebel against Yahweh, and today turn away from following him by building an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, other than the altar of Yahweh our God that is before his tabernacle.'"

[30]When Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the people, that is, the heads of the clans of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh said, that it was good in their eyes.[31]Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest said to the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, "Today we know that Yahweh is among us, because you have not committed this act of faithlessness against him. Now you have rescued the people of Israel out of the hand of Yahweh."
[32]Then Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, and the leaders returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites, out of the land of Gilead, back to the land of Canaan, to the people of Israel, and brought back word to them.[33]Their report was good in the eyes of the people of Israel. The people of Israel blessed God and spoke no more about making war against the Reubenites and the Gadites, in order to destroy the land where they had settled.
[34]The Reubenites and the Gadites named the altar "Witness," for they said, "It is a witness between us that Yahweh is God."

Joshua 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The division of the land is completed in this chapter. Additionally, the soldiers who received land on the east side of the Jordan River were released to go home.

Special concepts in this chapter

The tribes east of the Jordan River build a monument

The tribes east of the Jordan River said, "Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offerings nor for any sacrifices, but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we will perform the service of Yahweh before him, with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that your children will never say to our children in time to come, 'You have no share in Yahweh.'" They went home even though the Israelites had not fully conquered the land.

Links:

Joshua 22:1 Notes

Joshua 22:1
Reubenites
people of the tribe of Reuben
Gadites
people of the tribe of Gad
Joshua 22:2
obeyed my voice
Here "my voice" refers to the things that Joshua had said. Alternate translation: "obeyed everything I said"
Joshua 22:3
You have not deserted your brothers
This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "You have remained with your brothers"
Joshua 22:5
to walk in all his ways
A person obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if he were walking on Yahweh's ways or roads. Alternate translation: "to obey everything he says"
with all your heart and with all your soul
The terms "heart" and "soul" are here used together to refer to the entire person. Alternate translation: "with all you think and feel" or "with your entire being"
Joshua 22:7
the Jordan
This was a short name for the Jordan River.
Joshua 22:8
iron
a strong, hard, magnetic metal
plunder
The winning army would take everything of value from the people they conquered.
Joshua 22:9
the commandment of Yahweh, by the hand of Moses
The phrase "by the hand of" is an idiom that means that Yahweh used Moses to deliver his command. Alternate translation: "the commandment that Yahweh told Moses to give to you"
Joshua 22:10

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the Jordan
This was a short name for the Jordan River.
Joshua 22:11
at the front of the land of Canaan
The Israelite tribes who lived across the Jordan River would enter Canaan at the place where they built the altar. This place is spoken of as if it was the "front" or "entrance" to Canaan where the other tribes lived. Alternate translation: "at the entrance to the land of Canaan"
Geliloth
This is the name of a city.
Joshua 22:12
war
a state of armed conflict between two nations or people groups
Joshua 22:13
Eleazar
name of man
Joshua 22:16
The whole assembly of Yahweh says this
All the people of Israel are spoken of together in the singular as if they were one person. Alternate translation: "All the other Israelites are asking"
Joshua 22:17
Was the iniquity of Peor not enough for us?
This question emphasizes how serious their previous sin was. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly the iniquity of Peor was enough for us!" or "We sinned so badly at Peor that we certainly do not want to sin more."
the iniquity of Peor
"the iniquity we committed at Peor" or "the guilt of the sin that we committed at Peor"
enough for us
"bad enough"
Peor
This is name of a place. Translate the same way as in [Joshua 13:20]
we have not even now cleansed ourselves from it
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "we are still dealing with the guilt of that sin"
Joshua 22:18
Must you also turn away from following Yahweh at this present day?
This question is used to rebuke the people for their sin. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You must not turn away from following Yahweh today!"
Joshua 22:20
Achan ... Zerah
names of men
Did not Achan son of Zerah, act faithlessly in the matter of those things that had been reserved for God? Did not wrath fall on the entire community of Israel?
These questions are used to remind the people of the punishment for past sins. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "Achan son of Zerah sinned by taking things that had been reserved for God. And because of that God punished all the people of Israel!"
Joshua 22:22
If it was in rebellion or in unfaithfulness against Yahweh
The word "it" refers to their building of the altar. Alternate translation: "If we built this altar in rebellion or unfaithfulness against Yahweh" or "If we rebelled and broke faith with Yahweh when we built this altar"
do not deliver us on this day
"do not rescue us today" or "do not save us today." The three tribes say this to prove to the rest of Israel that they did not build the altar in rebellion or breach of faith. If they had rebelled and broken faith, they would not have dared to say "do not deliver us on this day."
Joshua 22:23
let Yahweh make us pay for it
The three tribes say this to prove to the rest of Israel that they did not build the altar in order to offering any kind of offerings on it. If they had built the altar to do those things, they would not have dared to say "let Yahweh make us pay for it."
Joshua 22:24
General Information:
The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now tell why they built the altar.
What have you to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel?
This rhetorical question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have nothing to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel!"
Joshua 22:25
General Information:
The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh continue their answer.
For Yahweh has made the Jordan ... nothing to do with Yahweh
This is the continuation of the accusation that the three tribes fear the children of the other tribes might make sometime in the future.
the Jordan
This is a short name for the Jordan River.
So your children might make our children cease to worship Yahweh
The three tribes were afraid that the others might make their children stop worshiping Yahweh.
Joshua 22:26
General Information:
The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now give their answer.
Joshua 22:27
to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us
The altar is spoken of as if it were a witness that could testify to the rights of the three tribes. Alternate translation: "to remind us and you, and our descendants and your descendants"
that we will perform the service of Yahweh before him
The phrase "before him" refers to the place where Yahweh had said they should offer sacrifices to him. They would not offer sacrifices on the altar that they had just built. Alternate translation: "that we will perform the service of Yahweh in his tabernacle"
no share
"no portion" or "no inheritance"
Joshua 22:28
General Information:

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The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now finish their answer.

This is a copy of the altar of Yahweh, which our ancestors made ... as a witness between us and you

The is what the descendants of the three tribes would say to the other tribes.

as a witness between us and you

"as a reminder for us and you." The three tribes wanted people to see the copy of the altar and remember that the three tribes belong to Israel and worship God at the real altar in the tabernacle.

Joshua 22:29

May it be far from us that we should rebel

The unlikely chance that they would rebel is spoken of as if it is something that is a great distance away from them. Alternate translation: "We would certainly not rebel"

turn away from following him

To stop following Yahweh is spoken of as if they were turning away from him. Alternate translation: "stop following him"

Joshua 22:30

heard the words

"heard the message"

was good in their eyes

Here "in their eyes" means "in their opinion."

Joshua 22:31

committed this act of faithlessness against him

"broken your promise to him"

you have rescued the people of Israel out of the hand of Yahweh

Here "the hand of Yahweh" refers to his punishment. Protecting the people is spoken of as rescuing them from his hand. Alternate translation: "you have kept Yahweh from punishing us"

Joshua 22:33

Their report was good in the eyes of the people

Here "good in the eyes" means "accepted." Alternate translation: "The people accepted the report of the leaders"

destroy the land

"destroy everything in the land"

Joshua 22:34

for they said

This refers to the Reubenites and Gadites.

It is a witness between us

The altar is spoken of as if it were a witness that could testify for the three tribes.

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23 [1]After many days, when Yahweh had given rest to Israel from all their enemies that were around them, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years,[2]Joshua called for all Israel—for their elders, for their leaders, for their judges, and for their officials—and he said to them, "I am old and well advanced in years.[3]You have seen everything that Yahweh your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is Yahweh your God who has fought for you.
[4]Look! I have assigned to you the nations that remain to be conquered as an inheritance for your tribes, along with all the nations I have already destroyed, from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west.[5]Yahweh your God will drive them out. He will push them out from you. He will seize their land, and you will take possession of their land, just as Yahweh your God promised to you.
[6]So be very strong, so that you keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left,[7]so you may not mix with these nations that remain among you or mention the names of their gods, swear by them, worship them, or bow down to them.[8]Instead, you must cling to Yahweh your God just as you have done to this day.
[9]For Yahweh has driven out before you large, strong nations. As for you, no one has been able to stand before you to this present day.[10]Any single man of your number will make a thousand run away, for Yahweh your God, is the one who fights for you, just as he promised you.[11]Pay particular attention, so that you love Yahweh your God.
[12]But if you turn back and cling to the survivors of these nations who remain among you, or if you intermarry with them, or if you come together with them and they with you,[13]then know for certain that Yahweh your God will no longer drive these nations out from among you. Instead, they will become a snare and a trap for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that Yahweh your God has given you.

[14]Now I am going the way of all the earth, and you know with all your hearts and souls that not one word has failed to come true of all the good things that Yahweh your God promised about you. All these things have come about for you. Not one of them has failed.[15]But just as every word Yahweh your God promised you has been fulfilled, so Yahweh will bring on you all the evil things until he has destroyed you from this good land that Yahweh your God has given you.
[16]He will do this if you break the covenant of Yahweh your God, which he commanded you to keep. If you go and worship other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land that he has given you."

Joshua 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Joshua's final words to Israel (Joshua 23-24)

"Do not marry with the heathen people but drive them out."

Drive them out

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The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land because if the Israelites married the Canaanites, the Canaanites would cause them to worship other gods. (See: falsegod and sin)

Links:

Joshua 23:1 Notes

Joshua 23:2
old and well advanced in years
This doublet can be translated as "very old."
Joshua 23:4
the Jordan
This is a short name for the Jordan River.
in the west
This indicates the direction of the setting sun.
Joshua 23:6
turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left
Disobeying the commands of the law of Moses is spoken of as turning to the right or to the left away from a path.
Joshua 23:7
you may not mix
Possible meanings are 1) having close friendship with them or 2) intermarrying with them.
mention
to speak of
their gods
This refers to the gods of the remaining nations.
Joshua 23:8
cling to Yahweh
"hold tightly to Yahweh." Believing in Yahweh is spoken of as if they were holding tightly onto him. Alternate translation: "continue to believe in Yahweh"
to this day
"until the present time"
Joshua 23:9
to stand before you
Here "stand" represents holding ground in a battle. The word "you" refers to the entire nation of Israel.
Joshua 23:10
single
only one
a thousand
"1,000"
Joshua 23:12
cling to the survivors of these nations
Accepting the beliefs of these nations is spoken of as holding tightly to them. Alternate translation: "accept the beliefs of the survivors of these nations"
Joshua 23:13
a snare and a trap
The words "snare" and "trap" mean basically the same thing. Together they speak of the other nations as if they were a deadly trap that will cause trouble for Israel.
whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes
These phrases speak of the troubles these nations will cause Israel as if they were as painful as whips and thorns.
Joshua 23:14
I am going the way of all the earth
Joshua uses a polite term to refer to his death. Alternate translation: "I am going to die"
know with all your hearts and souls
Here the words "hearts" and "souls" have similar meanings. Together they emphasize deep personal knowledge.
not one word has failed to come true
These words emphasize that Yahweh has fulfilled all his promises. "every word has come true"
Joshua 23:16
He will do this
This refers to the punishment threatened in the previous verse.
worship other gods and bow down to them
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second describes how the people "worship other gods."
the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you
"Kindled" here is a metaphor for the beginning of Yahweh's anger, like a fire is "kindled" or started with "kindling" or very easy to start burning like dried grass or small twigs. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will begin to be angry with you"

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24 [1]Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their leaders, for their judges, and for their officers, and they presented themselves before God.[2]Joshua said to all the people, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'Your ancestors long ago lived beyond the Euphrates River—Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor—and they worshiped other gods.
[3]But I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan and gave him many descendants through his son Isaac.[4]Then to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.
[5]I sent Moses and Aaron, and I afflicted the Egyptians with plagues. After that, I brought you out.[6]I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. The Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen as far as the Sea of Reeds.
[7]When your ancestors called out to Yahweh, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians. He brought the sea to come over them and cover them. You saw what I did in Egypt. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time.
[8]I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand. You took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you.
[9]Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, got up and attacked Israel. He sent and called for Balaam son of Beor, to curse you.[10]But I did not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I rescued you out of his hand.

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[11]You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. I gave you victory over them and put them under your control.[12]I sent the hornet before you, which drove them and the two kings of the Amorites out before you. It did not happen by your sword or by your bow.
[13]I gave you land on which you had not worked and cities that you had not built, and now you live in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

[14]Now fear Yahweh and worship him with all integrity and faithfulness; get rid of the gods that your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and worship Yahweh.[15]If it seems wrong in your eyes for you to worship Yahweh, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live. But as for me and my house, we will worship Yahweh."

[16]The people answered and said, "We would never abandon Yahweh to serve other gods,[17]for it is Yahweh our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight, and who preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the nations through whom we passed.[18]Then Yahweh drove out before us all the peoples, including the Amorites who lived in the land. So we too will worship Yahweh, for he is our God."

[19]But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve Yahweh, for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions and sins.[20]If you abandon Yahweh and worship foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm. He will consume you, after he has done good to you."
[21]But the people said to Joshua, "No, we will worship Yahweh."[22]Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves Yahweh, to worship him." They said, "We are witnesses."[23]"Now put away the foreign gods that are with you, and turn your heart to Yahweh, the God of Israel."
[24]The people said to Joshua, "We will worship Yahweh our God. We will listen to his voice."[25]Joshua made a covenant with the people that day. He put in place decrees and laws at Shechem.[26]Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the law of God. He took a large stone and set it up there beneath the oak tree that was beside Yahweh's sanctuary.
[27]Joshua said to all the people, "Look, this stone will be a testimony against us. It has heard all the words Yahweh said to us. So it will be a witness against you, should you ever deny your God."[28]So Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.

[29]After these things Joshua son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died, being 110 years old.[30]They buried him within the border of his own inheritance, at Timnath Serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.
[31]Israel worshiped Yahweh all of Joshua's days, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, those who had experienced the deeds that Yahweh had done for Israel.

[32]The bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up out of Egypt—they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. He bought it for one hundred pieces of silver, and it became an inheritance for the descendants of Joseph.[33]Eleazar son of Aaron also died. They buried him at Gibeah, the city of Phinehas his son, which had been given to him. It was in the hill country of Ephraim.

Joshua 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Joshua's instructions

In this chapter, Joshua gives the leaders and people instructions in preparation for his death. It was common in the Ancient Near East for important leaders to do this. Unfortunately, the people of Israel did not listen to Joshua's instructions.

Links:

Joshua 24:1 Notes

Joshua 24:1

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel

Joshua's summons to the tribes is spoken of as if he gathered them together in a basket. Alternate translation: "Joshua asked all the tribes of Israel to meet with him"

presented themselves before

"came and stood in front of" or "came before"

Joshua 24:2

long ago

"many years ago"

This is what

Joshua begins to quote what Yahweh had said previously. The quotation continues until the end of verse 13.

Terah ... Nahor

These are the names of men.

Joshua 24:3

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General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
Joshua 24:4
Seir
This is the name of a place.
went down
Egypt was lower in elevation that the land of Canaan. Alternate translation: "traveled"
Joshua 24:5
General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
brought you out
The word "you" is plural and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
Joshua 24:6
brought your ancestors out
The word "your" is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
Joshua 24:7
General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
your ancestors ... you
Yahweh continually alternates between these two phrases, which both refer to all the Israelites, past and present. The word "you" is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
the sea
This refers to the Sea of Reeds.
in the wilderness
an uninhabited area, a desert
Joshua 24:8
General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
you
The word "you" is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
the Jordan
This is a short name for the Jordan River.
gave them into your hand
Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "enabled you to conquer them"
Joshua 24:9
General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
Balak ... Zippor
men's names
you
The word "you" is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
Joshua 24:10
rescued you out of his hand
Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "enabled you to overcome him"
Joshua 24:11
General Information:
Joshua continues quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
You
The word "you" is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel.
the Jordan
This is a short name for the Jordan River.
Joshua 24:12
the hornet
A small fast flying stinging insect that lives in colonies. Here, many "hornets" are spoken of as only one.
Joshua 24:13
General Information:
Joshua finishes quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.
Joshua 24:15
If it seems wrong in your eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or desire. Alternate translation: "If you do not want"
my house
This represents his family that lives in his house. Alternate translation: "my family"
Joshua 24:17
us and our ancestors ... we
The people speak as if they were present with their ancestors, and interchange the words "us" and "we" with "our ancestors."
house of slavery
Here "house" is an idiom that refers to the location of their slavery. Alternate translation: "place where we were slaves"
nations through whom we passed
"nations that we passed through"
Joshua 24:19
people
This refers to the Israelites.
he is a jealous God
God wants his people to worship only him.
Joshua 24:20
He will consume you
Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if he was a fire that would destroy them. Alternate translation: "He will destroy you as with fire"
Joshua 24:21
people
This refers to the Israelites.
Joshua 24:23
turn your heart to Yahweh
Deciding to obey Yahweh only is spoken of as turning their heart towards him. Here "heart" represents the whole person. In this case, "heart" is plural because it refers to all the Israelites as a single group. However, it may be best to translate it in the plural since "your" is plural. Alternate translation: "turn yourselves to Yahweh" or "decide to obey Yahweh"
Joshua 24:24
people
This refers to the Israelites.
We will listen to his voice

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Here "listen" means to obey. Alternate translation: "We will obey everything he tells us to do"
Joshua 24:25
He put in place decrees and laws
Establishing laws is spoken of as if Joshua physically set them in place like monuments. Alternate translation: "He established decrees and laws" or "He gave them laws and decrees to obey"
Joshua 24:26
the Book of the law of God
This appears to be a continuation of the writings of Moses.
set it up there
"placed it there"
Joshua 24:27
people
This refers to the Israelites.
this stone will be a testimony ... It has heard all the words
The stone that Joshua set up is spoken of as if it were a person who heard what was spoken and would be able to testify about what was said.
should you ever
"if you ever"
Joshua 24:29
110 years old
"one hundred and ten years old"
Joshua 24:30
Timnath Serah ... Mount Gaash
names of places
Joshua 24:31
all of Joshua's days
This is an idiom that refers to Joshua's entire life.
outlived Joshua
"lived longer than Joshua"
Joshua 24:32
The bones of Joseph ... they buried them at Shechem,
It may be helpful to change the order of the beginning of this sentence. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel brought the bones of Joseph up out of Egypt and buried them at Shechem"
one hundred pieces
"100 pieces"
Joshua 24:33
Eleazar
This is a man's name.
Gibeah
This is the name of a place.

Introduction to Judges

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Judges

History of the judges of Israel (1:1–16:31) Introduction (1:1-3:6) Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar (3:7–31) Deborah and Barak (4:1–5:31) Gideon (6:1–8:35) Abimelech, Tola, and Jair (9:1–10:5) Jephthah (10:6-12:7) Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (12:8-15) Samson (13:1–16:31)
The account of Micah and his idols (17:1–18:31) The account of Gibeah; the other Israelites take revenge (19:1–21:25)

What is the Book of Judges about?

The Book of Judges tells of events that occurred after the Israelites settled in the Promised Land. The events in this book happened over a period of about 150 years.
This book describes how the Israelites repeatedly sinned against Yahweh during this time. They worshiped false gods and did the same wicked things as the peoples who lived around them. Therefore, God would allow enemies to defeat and oppress the Israelites. Eventually, the Israelites would call to Yahweh for help. Yahweh would then cause someone to help the Israelites defeat their enemies. This person was called a "judge." The Israelites would live in peace until the judge died.
After that judge died, the Israelites would start sinning again. So this pattern of events would repeat.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title "Judges" because it gives accounts of some of the main leaders or judges in Israel before there were any kings over the people. Unless there are good reasons for following the title in other Bible versions, the translator should probably use the title "Judges" or a title such as "The Book about the Leaders in Israel."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What kind of leaders were the judges?

These were men and women whom God chose to help the Israelites defeat their enemies. After defeating their enemies, these leaders usually continued to help the people by deciding disputes among them. They also helped them make important decisions. Many of these leaders served all the people of Israel, but some of these leaders may have served only certain tribes.

What kind of society was Israel during the time of the judges?

During this time, the twelve tribes of Israel were independent of one another. They were not a unified nation with one ruler. The tribes would sometimes help each other when enemies were threatening them.
These tribes were descended from the same ancestors: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They shared in the same covenant with Yahweh.

What spiritual struggles did Israel experience during the time of the judges?

During this time, Israel struggled to remain faithful to Yahweh. The best judges encouraged Israel to be faithful to him, but some of the judges failed to do so. (See: faithful)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the phrase "in those days there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes"?

This phrase occurs twice in the book of Judges. Shorter versions of the phrase occur two other times. These phrases imply that the writer or editor of this book was alive at a later time when there was a king in Israel. They also seem to imply that the writer thought that things were not good in Israel because there was no king.

The translation of these phrases should imply to the reader that the book's writer is looking back into the past.

What is the meaning of the phrase "to this day"?

The narrator used this phrase to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. The translator must avoid giving the impression that the present day of the translation's readers is meant. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written," or, "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in Judges 1:21, 26; 6:24; 10:4; 15:19; 18:12.

Judges

1 [1]After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel asked Yahweh, saying, "Who first will attack the Canaanites for us, to fight against them?"[2]Yahweh said, "Judah will attack. See, I have given them control of this land."[3]The men of Judah said to men of Simeon, their brothers, "Come up with us into our territory that was assigned to us that together we may fight against the Canaanites. We in turn will go with you to the territory that was assigned to you." So the tribe of Simeon went with them.
[4]The men of Judah attacked, and Yahweh gave them victory over the Canaanites and the Perizzites. They killed ten thousand of them at Bezek.[5]They found Adoni-Bezek at Bezek, and they fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites.
[6]But Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him, and they cut off his thumbs and his big toes.[7]Adoni-Bezek said, "Seventy kings, who had their thumbs and their big toes cut off, picked up food from under my table. As I have done, even so God has done to me." They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

[8]The men of Judah fought against the city of Jerusalem and took it. They attacked it with the edge of the sword and they set the city on fire.[9]After that, the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negev, and the lowlands.[10]Judah advanced against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (the name of Hebron was previously Kiriath Arba), and they defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

[11]From there the men of Judah advanced against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was previously Kiriath Sepher).[12]Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kiriath Sepher and takes it, I will give him Aksah, my daughter, to be his wife."[13]Othniel, son of Kenaz (Caleb's younger brother) captured Debir, so Caleb gave him Aksah, his daughter, to be his wife.
[14]Soon Aksah came to Othniel, and she urged him to ask her father to give her a field. As she was getting off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What can I do for you?"[15]She said to him, "Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negev, also give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

[16]The descendants of Moses' father-in-law the Kenite went up from the City of Palms with the people of Judah, into the wilderness of Judah, which is in the Negev, to live with the people of Judah near Arad.[17]The men of Judah went with the men of Simeon their brothers and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and they completely destroyed it. The name of the city was called Hormah.
[18]The people of Judah also captured Gaza and the land around it, Ashkelon and the land around it, and Ekron and the land around it.[19]Yahweh was with the people of Judah and they took possession of the hill country, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the plains because they had iron chariots.
[20]Hebron was given to Caleb (like Moses had said), and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.[21]But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem. So the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

[22]The house of Joseph prepared to attack Bethel, and Yahweh was with them.[23]They sent out men to spy on Bethel (the city that was formerly named Luz).[24]The spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Show us, please, how to get into the city, and we will be kind to you."

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[25]He showed them a way into the city, and so they attacked the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family get away.[26]Then the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city and called it Luz, which is its name to this day.

[27]The people of Manasseh did not drive out the people living in the cities of Beth Shan and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or those who lived in Dor and its villages, or those who lived in Ibleam and its villages, or those who lived in Megiddo and its villages, because the Canaanites were determined to live in that land.[28]When Israel became strong, they forced the Canaanites to serve them with hard labor, but they never drove them out completely.

[29]Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live in Gezer among them.

[30]Zebulun did not drive out the people living in Kitron, or the people living in Nahalol, and so the Canaanites continued to live among them, but Zebulun forced the Canaanites to serve them with hard labor.

[31]Asher did not drive out the people living in Akko, or the people living in Sidon, or those living in Ahlab, Akzib, Helbah, Aphek, or Rehob.[32]So the tribe of Asher lived among the Canaanites (those who lived in the land), because they did not drive them out.

[33]The tribe of Naphtali did not drive out those who were living in Beth Shemesh, or those living in Beth Anath. So the tribe of Naphtali lived among the Canaanites (the people who were living in that land). However, the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were forced into hard labor for Naphthali.

[34]The Amorites forced the tribe of Dan out into the hill country, not allowing them to come down to the plain.[35]So the Amorites lived at Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the military might of the house of Joseph conquered them, and they were forced to serve them with hard labor.[36]The border of the Amorites ran from the hill of Akrabbim at Sela up into the hill country.

Judges 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"After the death of Joshua"

This statement creates a seamless transition from the book of Joshua.

Special concepts in this chapter

Finishing the conquest of the Promised Land

Israel fought to clear the land of the Canaanites, but they also made treaties with other peoples and made some of them do hard labor. This was against God's instruction to completely remove the Canaanite people from the land.

Links:

Judges 1:1 Notes Judges intro

Judges 1:1

Connecting Statement:

The book of Judges continues the story about Joshua and is also the beginning of a new part of the story.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

will attack the Canaanites for us

The word "us" refers to the people of Israel, but not to Yahweh.

Judges 1:2

Judah will attack

Here "Judah" represents the men of the tribe of Judah. Yahweh is commanding these men to attack first. Alternate translation: "The men of Judah must attack first"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

this land

This refers to the land where the Canaanites lived. Alternate translation: "the land of the Canaanites"

Judges 1:3

their brothers

"their fellow Israelites" or "their relatives"

Come up with us

The people of the tribes of Judah and Simeon were camped with the rest of the Israelite people in the valley of the Jordan River. The land given to Judah was in the hills above the valley. Some languages do not usually indicate whether people were going up or down. Alternate translation: "Come with us" or "Go with us"

that was assigned to us ... that was assigned to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh assigned to us ... that Yahweh assigned to you"

We in turn will go with you

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"In the same way, we will go with you"
Judges 1:4
The men of Judah attacked
It is implied that the men of Simeon attacked with the men of Judah.
They killed ten thousand
"They killed about 10,000" or "They killed a large number"
of them
"soldiers of the Canaanites and Perizzites" or "enemies"
Bezek
This is an area in the mountains of Canaan.
Judges 1:5
Adoni-Bezek
This man was the leader of the army of the Canaanites and the Perizzites.
they fought against him
Here "him" actually refers to Adoni-Bezek and his army. Alternate translation: "they fought against him and his army"
Judges 1:6
pursued him
"chased him"
Judges 1:7
Seventy kings
"70 kings"
who had their thumbs and their big toes cut off
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose thumbs and big toes I told my men to cut off" or "whose thumbs and big toes we cut off"
picked up food from under my table
The phrase "picked up" is a metonym for eating. Forcing these kings to eat food that fell from Adoni-Bezek's table represents all the ways that he humiliated them. Alternate translation: "ate scraps of food from under my table"
Judges 1:8
the city of Jerusalem and took it
Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the people who lived in Jerusalem and defeated them"
They attacked it
Here "it" refers to the city which represents the people of the city. Alternate translation: "They attacked the people of the city"
with the edge of the sword
"with the point of the sword." Here "sword" represents the swords and other weapons that the soldiers used in battle. Alternate translation: "with their swords" or "with their weapons"
Judges 1:9
the men of Judah went down to fight
It was common to use the word "down" when it refers to traveling from Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the men of Judah went to fight"
in the Negev
"in the southern Judean wilderness"
lowlands
hills at the base of a mountain or mountain range
Judges 1:10
the name of Hebron was previously Kiriath Arba
This is background information. Some people who first read this book had probably heard of Kiriath Arba but did not know that it was the same as the city that they called Hebron.
Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai
These are the names of three Canaanite leaders of Hebron. Each leader represents his army. Alternate translation: "Sheshai, Ahiman, Talmai, and their armies"
Judges 1:11
the name of Debir was previously Kiriath Sepher
The author probably wrote this because his readers knew the city as Debir. But at the time Israel attacked it, it was called Kiriath Sepher. Alternate translation: "which used to be called Kiriath Sepher"
was previously
"was in times past" or "was at an earlier time"
Judges 1:12
Whoever attacks Kiriath Sepher and takes it
Here "Kiriath Sepher" represents the people. Alternate translation: "Whoever attacks and defeats the people of Kiriath Sepher and takes their city"
Aksah
This is the name of Caleb's daughter.
Judges 1:13
Othniel, son of Kenaz
These are names of men.
Judges 1:14
she urged him
"Aksah urged Othniel"
Judges 1:15
Give me a blessing
"Do a favor for me" or "Do this for me"
Since you have given me the land of the Negev
Caleb gave Aksah in marriage to Othniel, so she lived with Othniel in the city that he had captured in the Negev. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Since you have given me in marriage to live in the Negev"
Since you have given me the land
This implies that Caleb did give her the field when she asked him for it (verse 14). She is now asking for springs of water in addition to that field.
Judges 1:16
of Moses' father-in-law
"of the father of Moses' wife"
father-in-law the Kenite went up
"father-in-law, who was one of the Ken people, went up"
went up from the City of Palms ... into the wilderness
"left the City of Palms ... and went into the wilderness"
City of Palms
This is another name for the city of Jericho.
Arad
This is the name of a city in Canaan.
Judges 1:17
the men of Simeon their brothers
Here "brothers" means relatives who were in another tribe of Israel.
Zephath
This is the name of a city in Canaan.
The name of the city was called Hormah

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After the Israelites destroyed Zephath, they changed its name to "Hormah." The name "Hormah" means "complete destruction."

Judges 1:19

Yahweh was with the people of Judah

Here "was with" means that Yahweh helped the people of Judah.

plains

a very large area of level, treeless ground

Judges 1:20

Hebron was given to Caleb (like Moses had said)

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses had given Hebron to Caleb"

three sons of Anak

The leaders of the people groups are used to refer to the entire group. Alternate translation: "three sons of Anak and their people"

Anak

This is the name of a man. Anak and his descendants were famous for being very tall.

Judges 1:21

to this day

"until now." This refers to the time the book of Judges was written.

Judges 1:22

The house of Joseph

Here "house" represents descendants. Manasseh and Ephraim were sons of Joseph, and the "house of Joseph" can refer to the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim" or "The men of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim"

to attack Bethel

Here "Bethel" represents the people who live in Bethel.

Judges 1:23

spy

to get information secretly

the city that was formerly named Luz

This is background information. Some people who first read this book had probably heard of Luz but did not know that it was the same as the city that they called Bethel.

Judges 1:24

spies

people who get information secretly

Judges 1:25

they attacked the city

Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "they attacked the people of the city"

with the edge of the sword

"with the point of the sword." Here "sword" represents the swords and other weapons that the soldiers used in battle. Alternate translation: "with their swords" or "with their weapons"

get away

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "escape"

Judges 1:26

Luz

This new town started in the land of the Hittites was named after the town of Luz, near Bethel, that the man had left.

which is its name to this day

"which is still its name." Here "to this day" refers to the time when the book of Judges was written.

Judges 1:27

Beth Shan ... Taanach ... Dor ... Ibleam ... Megiddo

These are names of cities.

because the Canaanites were determined to live in that land

To "determine" is to firmly decide something. Alternate translation: "because the Canaanites firmly decided not to leave that land"

Judges 1:28

When Israel became strong

Here "Israel" represents the people. Alternate translation: "When the people of Israel became stronger"

they forced the Canaanites to serve them with hard labor

"they forced the Canaanites to do hard work for them"

Judges 1:29

Ephraim did not

Here "Ephraim" the men or the soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim.

Gezer

The name of one of the cities in the Ephraim area.

Judges 1:30

Zebulun did not drive out

Here "Zebulun" represents the men or the soldiers of the tribe of Zebulun.

Kitron ... Nahalol

These are names of cities in the land of Canaan.

but Zebulun forced

Here "Zebulun" represents the people of the tribe of Zebulun.

hard labor

"difficult labor"

Judges 1:31

Asher did not drive

Here "Asher" represents the men or the soldiers of the tribe of Asher.

Akko ... Sidon ... Ahlab, Akzib, Helbah, Aphek ... Rehob

These are names of cities in the land of Canaan.

Judges 1:33

Beth Shemesh ... Beth Anath

These are names of cities.

the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were forced into hard labor for Naphthali

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Naphtali forced the people of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath to work for them as slaves"

Judges 1:34

not allowing them to come down

"stopping them from coming down"

plain

a very large area of flat land without trees

Judges 1:35

Mount Heres

This is the name of a large hill on which the city of Aijalon was built.

Aijalon ... Shaalbim

These are names of cities.

the military might of the house of Joseph conquered them

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"the tribes of people who descended from Joseph were able to conquer them because of their powerful army"

house of Joseph

Here "house" represents descendants. Manasseh and Ephraim were sons of Joseph, and the "house of Joseph" can refer to the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim" or "the men of the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim"

Judges 1:36

the hill of Akrabbim

This was a pass southwest of the Dead Sea. It is also called the "Scorpion Pass."

Sela

This is the name of a city.

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2 [1]The angel of Yahweh went up from Gilgal to Bokim, and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and have brought you to
the land I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you.[2]You must make no covenant
with those who live in this land. You must break down their altars.' But you have not listened to my voice. What is this
that you have done?
[3]So now I say, 'I will not drive the Canaanites out before you, but they will become thorns in your sides, and their gods will
become a trap for you.'"[4]When the angel of Yahweh spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people shouted and
wept.[5]They called the name of that place Bokim. There they offered sacrifices to Yahweh.

[6]Now when Joshua had sent the people on their way, the people of Israel went, each to his own property, to take
ownership of the land.[7]The people served Yahweh during the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him, those
who had seen all of Yahweh's great deeds he had done for Israel.[8]Joshua son of Nun the servant of Yahweh, died at the age
of 110 years old.
[9]They buried him within the border of his property in Timnath Heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount
Gaash.[10]All that generation was also gathered to their fathers. Another generation grew up after them who did not know
Yahweh or the deeds he had done for Israel.

[11]The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and they served the Baals.[12]They broke away from Yahweh,
the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, the very gods of the
peoples who were around them, and they bowed down to them. They provoked Yahweh to anger because[13]they broke
away from Yahweh and worshiped Baal and the Ashtoreths.
[14]The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and he gave them to the raiders who stole their possessions from them. He
sold them as slaves who were held by the strength of their enemies around them, so they could no longer defend
themselves against their enemies.[15]Wherever Israel went out to fight, Yahweh's hand was against them to defeat them,
just as he had sworn to them and they were in terrible distress.

[16]Then Yahweh raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who were stealing their possessions.[17]Yet they
would not listen to their judges. They were unfaithful to Yahweh and gave themselves like prostitutes to other gods and
worshiped them. They soon turned aside from the way their fathers had lived—those who had obeyed the
commandments of Yahweh—but they themselves did not do so.
[18]When Yahweh raised up judges for them, Yahweh helped the judges and delivered them from the hand of their enemies
all the days the judge lived. Yahweh had pity on them as they groaned because of those who oppressed them and afflicted
them.[19]But when the judge died, they would turn away and do things that were even more corrupt than their fathers had
done. They would go after other gods to serve them and worship them. They refused to give up any of their evil deeds or
their stubborn ways.
[20]The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel; he said, "Because this nation has broken the terms of my covenant that I had
set in place for their fathers—because they have not listened to my voice—[21]I will not, from now on, drive out from before
them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died.[22]I will do this so that I may test Israel, whether or not they will keep
the way of Yahweh and walk in it, as their fathers kept it."[23]That is why Yahweh left those nations and did not drive them
out quickly and give them into the hand of Joshua.

Judges 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh tests Israel

Yahweh said, "Because this nation has broken the terms of my covenant." Completely removing the Canaanites from the land was a test from Yahweh. While Yahweh displayed covenant faithfulness, Israel did not. (See: test and covenantfaith)

Links:

Judges 2:1 Notes

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Judges 2:1

angel of Yahweh

Possible meaning are 1) "angel who represents Yahweh" or 2) "messenger who serves Yahweh" or 3) it may refer to Yahweh himself, who looked like an angel as he talked to a person. Either one of these meanings would explain the angel's use of "I" as if Yahweh himself were talking.

went up from Gilgal to Bokim

"left Gilgal and went to Bokim"

Bokim

This is what the Israelites named this place in 2:5 after the angel rebukes the people. "Bokim" means "crying."

and said

It is understood that the angel of Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "and said to the people of Israel"

brought you up from Egypt

"led you from Egypt"

your fathers

"your ancestors" or "your forefathers"

break my covenant with you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "fail to do what I said I would do for you"

Judges 2:2

you have not listened to my voice

Here "voice" represents what Yahweh said. Alternate translation: "you have not obeyed my commands"

What is this that you have done?

This question is asked to cause the people of Israel to realize they have disobeyed Yahweh and will suffer because of it. Alternate translation: "You have done a terrible thing."

Judges 2:3

General Information:

The angel of Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.

So now I say, 'I will not ... trap for you.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "So now I tell you that I will not ... trap for you.'"

become thorns in your sides

The Canaanites troubling the Israelites is spoken of as if the Canaanites would be thorns in the side of the Israelites. Alternate translation: "cause you trouble"

thorns

sharp pieces of wood up to 7 centimeters long that stick out from some plants

their gods will become a trap for you

The Israelites worshiping the Canaanite gods is spoken of as if the false gods were a hunter's trap that catches an animal and causes it harm.

Judges 2:4

shouted and wept

"cried many tears"

Judges 2:6

Now when Joshua

Here "Now" is used to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator begins a summary that explains how the generations of Israelites after Joshua sinned and worshiped false gods so that Yahweh punished them, but then he would send judges to rescue them. This summary ends in 2:23.

when Joshua ... of the land

The events of 1:1-2:5 happened after Joshua died. This is recounting events that happened at the end of the book of Joshua.

to his own property

This statement can be made clearer. Alternate translation: "to the place Yahweh had given him"

Judges 2:7

Connecting Statement:

The background information that begins with the words "Now when Joshua" in verse 6 continues.

during the lifetime

This means the time that someone lived. Alternate translation: "during the life"

the elders

Here this means the men who helped lead Israel, participating in matters of social justice and in religious matters such as maintaining the law of Moses.

outlived him

This means to live longer than someone else. Alternate translation: "lived longer than he did"

Judges 2:8

Connecting Statement:

The background information that begins with the words "Now when Joshua" in verse 6 continues.

Joshua son of Nun ... died at the age of 110 years old

The background information that begins with the words "Now when Joshua" in verse 6 ends. The events of 1:1-2:5 happened after Joshua died.

Nun

This is the name of a man.

110 years old

"one hundred and ten years old"

Judges 2:9

Timnath Heres

This is the name of an area of land.

Mount Gaash

This is the name of a mountain.

Judges 2:10

All that generation was also gathered to their fathers

The phrase "was also gathered to their fathers" means that as the people of that generation died, their souls went to the same place as their ancestors who died before them. It is a polite way of saying they died.

fathers

Here this means the ancestors of a certain person or people group.

grew up

"grew older" or "became older"

who did not know Yahweh

Here "did not know" means they had not experienced

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Yahweh or his power the way the previous generation had.
Judges 2:11
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considered to be evil"
Baals
This is the plural of Baal. While "Baal" was generally the name of one false god, the word was also used for various other gods that were often worshiped along with Baal.
Judges 2:12
They broke away from Yahweh
The Israelites no longer obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if they physically broke away from him and left him.
their fathers
"their ancestors" or "their forefathers"
They went after other gods
The Israelites starting to worship false gods is spoken of as if the Israelites walked and went after the false gods.
bowed down to them
This is an act of worship and giving honor to someone.
They provoked Yahweh to anger
"They caused Yahweh to become angry"
Judges 2:13
Ashtoreths
This is the plural of Ashtoroth, who was worshiped as a goddess in many different forms.
Judges 2:14
The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel
The anger of Yahweh is described as burning like a fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry with the people of Israel"
he gave them to the raiders who stole their possessions from them
"he let raiders steal their possessions"
He sold them as slaves who were held by the strength of their enemies around them, so they could no longer defend themselves against their enemies
Yahweh allowing the enemies to take the Israelites as slaves is spoken of as if he sold them into slavery. The phrase "who were held by" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He allowed their enemies to conquer them and take them as slaves, and they could no longer resist their powerful enemies"
Judges 2:15
Yahweh's hand was against them to defeat them
Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh helped their enemies defeat them"
they were in terrible distress
"they were suffering terribly"
Judges 2:16
Then Yahweh raised up judges
Yahweh appointing persons to be judges is spoken of as if he were raising or lifting the persons up.
out of the hand of those
Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "from the power of the enemies"
Judges 2:17
they would not listen to their judges
"they would not obey their judges"
gave themselves like prostitutes to other gods and worshiped them
The people betraying Yahweh and worshiping other gods is spoken of as if the people were prostitutes. Alternate translation: "betrayed him by worshiping false gods"
their fathers
"their ancestors" or "their forefathers"
Judges 2:18
When Yahweh raised up judges
Yahweh appointing persons to be judges is spoken of as if he raised or lifted up the persons.
judges for them ... delivered them
The word "them" refers to the Israelites.
the hand of their enemies
Here "hand" refers to power of the enemies to hurt Israel. Alternate translation: "the power of their enemies"
all the days the judge lived
"as long as the judge lived"
pity
to have compassion for someone or something
as they groaned
The sound made by a person who suffers is used to describe the pain of the Israelites as they suffer. Alternate translation: "as they suffered"
Judges 2:19
they would turn away
The people no longer obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if they would physically turn away from Yahweh.
their fathers
"their ancestors" or "their forefathers"
They would go after other gods to serve them and worship them
The Israelites worshiping other gods is spoken of as if they were walking and going after other gods. Alternate translation: "They would serve and worship other gods"
They refused to give up any of their evil deeds or their stubborn ways
"They refused to stop doing evil things and being stubborn." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "They continued doing evil things and being stubborn"
Judges 2:20
The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel
The anger of Yahweh is described as burning like a fire. See how you translated this phrase in [Judges 2:14]
this nation has broken
Here "nation" represents the people. Alternate translation: "these people have broken" or "the Israelites have broken"
Judges 2:21
any of the nations
Here "nations" represents the people groups that lived in Canaan before the Israelites.
Judges 2:22
they will keep the way of Yahweh and walk in it
How Yahweh wants people to live or behave is spoken of as if it were a way or road. A person obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if they were walking in his way.
Judges 2:23
did not drive them out quickly and give them into the hand of Joshua
These two phrases mean the same thing and can be combined. Alternate translation: "he did not let Joshua quickly conquer them and drive them out"

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into the hand of Joshua
Here "hand" is a metonym for power, and "Joshua" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "into the power of Joshua and his army"

3 [1]Now Yahweh left these nations to test Israel, namely everyone in Israel who had not experienced any of the wars
fought in Canaan.[2](He did this to teach warfare to the new generation of the people of Israel who had not known it
before.)[3]These are the nations: the five rulers of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who
lived in the Lebanon mountains, from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo Hamath.[1]
[4]These nations were left as a means by which Yahweh would test Israel, to confirm whether they would obey the
commands he gave their ancestors through Moses.[5]So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the
Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.[6]Their daughters they took to be their wives, and their own
daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

[7]The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and forgot Yahweh their God. They worshiped the Baals and
the Asherahs.[8]Therefore, the anger of Yahweh was set on fire against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-
Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim. The people of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim for eight years.
[9]When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up someone who would come to help the people of Israel,
and who would rescue them: Othniel son of Kenaz (Caleb's younger brother).[10]Yahweh's Spirit empowered him, and he
judged Israel and he went out to war. Yahweh gave him victory over Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram. The hand of
Othniel defeated Cushan-Rishathaim.[11]The land had peace for forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

[12]After that, the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh gave strength to Eglon king of
Moab to overpower Israel.[13]Eglon joined with the Ammonites and the Amalekites and they went and defeated Israel, and
they took possession of the City of Palms.[14]The people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab for eighteen years.

[15]When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud son of Gera, a Benjamite, a
left-handed man. The people of Israel sent him, with their tribute payment, to Eglon king of Moab.
[16]Ehud made himself a sword that had two edges, one cubit in length; he bound it to his right thigh under his clothing.[17]He
gave the tribute payment to King Eglon of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.)[18]After Ehud had presented the tribute
payment, he left with those who had carried it in.
[19]As for Ehud himself, however, when he reached the place where the carved images were made near Gilgal, he turned
and went back, and he said, "I have a secret message for you, my king." Eglon said, "Silence!" So all those serving him left
the room.[20]Ehud came to him. The king was sitting by himself, alone in the coolness of the upper room. Ehud said, "I have
a message from God for you." The king got up out of his seat.
[21]Ehud reached with his left hand and took the sword from his right thigh, and he stabbed it into the king's body.[22]The hilt
of the sword also went into him following the blade. The tip of the sword came out of his back and the fat closed over it,
for Ehud did not pull the sword out of his belly.[23]Then Ehud went out on the porch and closed the doors of the upper room
behind him and locked them.

[24]After Ehud had gone, the king's servants came; they saw that the doors of the upper room were locked, so they thought,
"Surely he is relieving himself in the coolness of the upper room."[25]They were growing more concerned until they felt
they were neglecting their duty when the king still did not open the doors to the upper room. So they took the key and
opened them, and there lay their master, fallen to the floor, dead.

[26]While the servants were waiting, wondering what they should do, Ehud escaped and passed beyond the place where
there were carved images of idols, and so he escaped to Seirah.[27]When he arrived, he blew a ram's horn in the hill country
of Ephraim. Then the people of Israel went down with him from the hills, and he was leading them.
[28]He said to them, "Follow me, for Yahweh is about to defeat your enemies, the Moabites." They followed him and they
captured the fords of the Jordan across from the Moabites, and they did not allow anyone to cross the river.[29]At that time
they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, and all were strong and capable men. Not one escaped.[30]So that day Moab
was subdued by the strength of Israel, and the land had rest for eighty years.

[31]After Ehud the next judge was Shamgar son of Anath who killed 600 men of the Philistines with a stick used to goad
oxen. He also delivered Israel from danger.

[1]Some modern English translations read, Hamath Pass

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Judges 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The people worship false gods

Israel worshiped idols and false gods. Because of this, Yahweh allowed Aram and Moab to rule over them. In the period of Judges, when Israel sinned, they were often placed under the rule of a foreign power. (See: falsegod and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Blew a trumpet"

When Ehud "blew a trumpet," he was calling all of the men to come help him fight.

Links:

Judges 3:1 Notes

Judges 3:1

Now Yahweh

Here "Now" begins a new section of the story.

these nations

This refers to the people groups that the narrator will list in 3:3.

who had not experienced any of the wars fought in Canaan

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who had not fought in any of the wars in Canaan"

Judges 3:2

He did this to teach warfare to the new generation of the people of Israel who had not known it before

This changes from the main story. The narrator gives background information about why Yahweh left some of the people groups in Canaan. Alternate translation: "Yahweh left nations among the people of Israel to teach the young men who had not fought in battle before how to fight"

Judges 3:3

the five rulers

These five rulers represent themselves and their people. Alternate translation: "the five rulers and their people"

rulers

kings

Mount Baal Hermon

This is the highest mountain in Israel.

Lebo Hamath

This is the name of route between two mountains at the northern boundary of Canaan.

Judges 3:4

These nations were left

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh left these nations in Canaan" or "Yahweh allowed these nations to continue to live in Canaan"

as a means

"as a way"

whether they would ... gave their ancestors

The words "they" and "their" refer to the people of Israel.

the commands he gave

"the commands Yahweh gave"

Judges 3:7

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [Judges 2:11]

forgot Yahweh their God

Here "forgot" is an idiom that means "they stopped obeying."

Judges 3:8

the anger of Yahweh was set on fire

Yahweh becoming very angry is spoken of as if his anger were something that could be set on fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry"

sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim

Allowing the people of Israel to be conquered is spoken of as if Yahweh sold them to Cushan-Rishathaim. Alternate translation: "allowed Cushan-Rishathaim and his army to defeat them"

into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim

Here "hand" is a metonym that represents power or control. Also, "Cushan-Rishathaim" is a synechdoche that represents himself and his army.

Cushan-Rishathaim

This is the name of a man.

Aram Naharaim

This is the name of a country.

Judges 3:9

Yahweh raised up someone

Yahweh appointing someone to do a special work for him is spoken of as if Yahweh raised or lifted up the person.

Othniel ... Kenaz

See how you translated these men's names in Judges 1:13.

Judges 3:10

empowered him

This phrase means that Yahweh helped Othniel to have and develop the qualities he needed to be a great leader.

he judged Israel

Here "judged" means he led the people of Israel.

he went out to war

Here "he" refers to Othniel who represents himself and the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "Othniel and the Israelite soldiers went to fight against the army of Cushan-Rishathaim"

Yahweh gave him victory over Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram

Here "Cushan-Rishathaim" represents his army. Alternate translation: "Yahweh helped the Israelite army defeat the army of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram"

The hand of Othniel

Here "hand" is a metonym for army. Alternate translation: "The army of Othniel"

Judges 3:11

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The land had peace
"The land" is used to refer to the people who lived in the land. Alternate translation: "The people lived peacefully"
forty years
"40 years"
Judges 3:12
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [Judges 2:11]
Yahweh gave strength to Eglon king of Moab
The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made Eglon king of Moab strong"
to Eglon king of Moab to overpower Israel
Here "Eglon king of Moab" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "to Eglon king of Moab and his soldiers as they attacked the Israelite army"
Eglon
This is the name of a king.
to overpower Israel
The name "Israel" here is a metonym for the army or the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "to defeat the army of Israel" or "to conquer the people of Israel"
Judges 3:13
the City of Palms
This is another name for the city of Jericho. See how you translated this in Judges 1:16.
Judges 3:14
eighteen years
"18 years"
Judges 3:15
called out to Yahweh
Here this means to shout or speak loudly to someone far away. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
raised up a deliverer
Yahweh appointing a deliverer to do a special service for him is spoken of as if he raised or lifted up the person.
Ehud ... Gera
These are names of men.
left-handed
Ehud was better able to hold a sword with his left hand.
Judges 3:16
one cubit
If it is necessary to use a modern measurement of length, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "46 centimeters" or "about one half meter"
thigh
the part of the leg between the knee and the hip
Judges 3:17
Now Eglon was a very fat man
Here "Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about Eglon.
Judges 3:19
when he reached the place where the carved images were made near Gilgal
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when he arrived at the place near Gilgal where people made carved images"
Judges 3:20
in the coolness of the upper room
This is a room above the lower level that was used for rest and to remain cool during the hot part of the day.
The king got up out of his seat
Standing up was a sign of honoring God will listening to his message.
Judges 3:22
The tip of the sword came out of his back
"The sharp end of the sword came out of his back"
Judges 3:23
porch
an outside room with low walls and a roof covering
Judges 3:24
Surely he is relieving himself
This is a polite way to speak about a person having a bowel movement
Judges 3:25
until they felt they were neglecting their duty
They waited until they became worried that something was wrong and it was their duty to open the doors to their king's private room.
took the key and opened them
"took the key and opened the doors"
Judges 3:26
While the servants were waiting ... Ehud escaped
This tells what happened before the servants opened the doors to the upper room and found the king dead. Alternate translation: "Meanwhile, as the servants were still waiting outside of the upper room ... Ehud escaped"
Seirah
This is the name of a city.
Judges 3:27
When he arrived
This could be made clearer. Alternate translation: "When he arrived in Seirah"
Judges 3:28
General Information:
Ehud speaks to the people of Israel in Ephraim.
for Yahweh is about to defeat your enemies
Yahweh helping the Israelites to defeat their enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh were a warrior who would fight and defeat their enemies.
captured the fords
"gained control of the fords"
fords
the areas of a river where it is shallow and easy to walk across to the other side
did not allow anyone to cross
"did not let anyone cross"
Judges 3:29
ten thousand men
"10,000 men"
capable men
"able men" or "men able to fight well"
Judges 3:30
Moab was subdued by the strength of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the

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Israelite army defeated the Moabites"

the strength of Israel

Here "strength" represents the Israelite army.

the land had rest

Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the Israelites lived peacefully"

eighty years

"80 years"

Judges 3:31

judge

God appointed judges to lead the people of Israel in times of trouble after they entered the Promised Land and before they had kings. Often judges rescued the Israelites from their enemies.

Shamgar

The name of a man.

Anath

The name of a man.

600 men

"six hundred men"

a stick used to goad oxen

Cattle farmers would poke their cattle with a sharp stick to make them move. Alternate translation: "a stick used to urge oxen to move" or "a stick used to direct oxen"

He also delivered Israel from danger

The word "danger" refers to enemies that tried to harm the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "He also delivered the people of Israel from their enemies"

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4 [1]After Ehud died, the people of Israel once again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh.[2]Yahweh sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was named Sisera, and he lived in Harosheth Haggoyim.[3]The people of Israel called out to Yahweh for help, because Sisera had nine hundred iron chariots and he oppressed the people of Israel with force for twenty years.

[4]Now Deborah, a prophetess (the wife of Lappidoth), was a leading judge in Israel at that time.[5]She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came to her to settle their disputes.
[6]She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali. She said to him, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun.[7]I will draw out Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Kishon River, with his chariots and his army, and I will give you victory over him.'"
[8]Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go, but if you do not go with me, I will not go."[9]She said, "I will certainly go with you. However, the road on which you are going will not lead to your honor, for Yahweh will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh.
[10]Barak called for the men of Zebulun and Naphtali to come together at Kedesh. Ten thousand men followed him, and Deborah went along with him.

[11]Now Heber (the Kenite) had separated himself from the Kenites—they were the descendants of Hobab (Moses' father-in-law)—and he pitched his tent by the oak in Zaanannim near Kedesh.

[12]When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor,[13]Sisera called out all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the soldiers who were with him, from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River.
[14]Deborah said to Barak, "Go! For this is the day in which Yahweh has given you victory over Sisera. Is not Yahweh leading you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.
[15]Yahweh confused Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword. And Sisera got down from his chariot and ran away on foot.[16]But Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth Haggoyim, and the whole army of Sisera was killed by the edge of the sword, and not a man survived.

[17]But Sisera ran away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite.[18]Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my master; turn aside to me and do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her and came into her tent, and she covered him with a blanket.
[19]He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." She opened a leather bag of milk and gave him drink, and then she covered him up again.[20]He said to her, "Stand at the opening of the tent. If someone comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?', say 'No'."
[21]Then Jael (the wife of Heber) took a tent peg and a hammer in her hand and went in secretly to him, for he was in a deep sleep, and she hammered the tent peg into the side of his head until it went down into the ground, and he died.[22]As Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael want out to meet him and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man you are looking for." So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in the side of his head.

[23]So on that day God subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the people of Israel.[24]The might of the people of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed him.

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Judges 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 4 and 5 form one section about Barak and Deborah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Barak's leadership

At this time, it was very unusual for a woman to be a leader, especially a military leader. Barak lacked the strength to go into battle without Deborah. This indicates that Barak was a poor leader. If a woman won the battle for him, it would have brought Barak shame. It also indicates that Deborah was very well respected.

Links:

Judges 4:1 Notes

Judges 4:1

Ehud

See how you translated this man's name in Judges 3:15.

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [Judges 2:11]

Judges 4:2

Yahweh sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan

Here "hand" refers to Jabin's power over Israel. Yahweh's decision to give Jabin power over them is spoken of as if Yahweh had sold them to Jabin. Alternate translation: "Yahweh allowed them to be defeated by the power of Jabin king of Canaan"

Jabin ... Sisera

These are the names of men

Hazor ... Harosheth Haggoyim

These are the names of cities or places

Judges 4:3

nine hundred iron chariots

"900 iron chariots"

twenty years

"20 years"

Judges 4:4

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about Deborah.

Deborah

This is the name of a woman

Lappidoth

This is the name of a man

judge

God appointed judges to lead the Israelites in times of trouble. Often the judges rescued them from their enemies.

Judges 4:5

palm of Deborah

This tree was named after Deborah.

Judges 4:6

General Information:

The writer of Judges refers to men, a city, a mountain, and a river by their names.

Barak ... Abinoam

These are the names of men.

Mount Tabor

This is the name of a mountain.

ten thousand men

"10,000 men"

Judges 4:7

I will draw out

Here "I" refers to God.

draw out Sisera

Here "Sisera" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "draw out Sisera and his army"

draw out

to cause people to come away from a safe location

Sisera ... Jabin

See how you translated these men's names in Judges 4:2.

Kishon

This is the name of a river.

Judges 4:8

General Information:

Barak has a discussion with Deborah.

Barak

See how you translated this man's name in Judges 4:6.

Judges 4:9

the road on which you are going will not lead to your honor

The choice Barak makes is spoken of as if Barak were choosing a road on which to travel. And, "honor" is spoken of as if it were a destination to which one travels. Alternate translation: "no one will honor you for what you do"

for Yahweh will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman

Here "hand" refers to her power to kill him. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh will cause a woman to defeat Sisera"

Sisera

See how you translated this man's name in Judges 4:2.

Deborah

See how you translated this woman's name in Judges 4:4.

Judges 4:10

Ten thousand men

"10,000 men"

Judges 4:11

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about Heber the Kenite.

Heber ... Hobab

These are the names of men.

Kenite

See how you translated this in Judges 1:16

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Moses' father-in-law
"the father of Moses' wife"
Zaanannim
This is the name of a city.
Judges 4:12
When they told Sisera
Here "they" does not identify anyone specifically. Alternate translation: "When someone told Sisera"
Sisera
See how you translated this man's name in Judges 4:2.
Barak ... Abinoam ... Mount Tabor
See how you translated these names in Judges 4:6.
Judges 4:13
Sisera called out all his chariots
Here "chariots" represents the soldiers who drove the chariots.
nine hundred iron chariots
"900 iron chariots"
Harosheth Haggoyim
See how you translated the name of this city in Judges 4:2.
Kishon River
See how you translated this in Judges 4:7.
Judges 4:14
Yahweh has given you victory
Because Deborah is certain of victory, she speaks as if Barak had already won the battle. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will give you victory"
Is not Yahweh leading you?
Deborah asks this question to remind Barak that they fight on the side of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Remember, Yahweh is leading you."
with ten thousand
"with 10,000"
Judges 4:15
Yahweh confused Sisera and all his chariots and all his army
"Yahweh made Sisera and all his chariots and all his army unable to think clearly" or "Yahweh made Sisera and all his chariots and all his army panic"
all his chariots
Here the word "chariots" is a metonym for the soldiers driving the chariots. Alternate translation: "all the men driving chariots"
Judges 4:16
Barak pursued
Here "Barak" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "Barak and his soldiers chased"
Harosheth
Translate this the same way you did in Judges 4:2.
the whole army of Sisera was killed by the edge of the sword
Here "sword" represents the swords and other weapons that the soldiers used in battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Barak and his soldiers killed Sisera's whole army with their swords"
Judges 4:17
Sisera ... Jabin ... Hazor
See how you translated these names in Judges 4:2.
ran away on foot
This is an idiom that means he was walking rather than riding a horse or in a chariot.
Jael
This is the name of a woman.
Heber
See how you translated this man's name in Judges 4:11.
Kenite
See how you translated this in Judges 1:16.
Judges 4:18
Turn aside
This means to change course during a journey in order to rest. Alternate translation: "Come here"
blanket
a large covering for the body to sleep under for warmth, made of wool or animal skins
Judges 4:19
He said to her
"Sisera said to Jael"
Judges 4:21
tent peg
a pointed piece of wood or metal, like a large nail, that is hammered into the ground to hold down a corner of a tent
hammer
a heavy tool made of wood used to hit a tent peg into the ground
a deep sleep
Like a person in a deep hole cannot easily climb out, a person in a deep sleep cannot easily wake up.
Judges 4:22
Barak was pursuing
"Barak was chasing" or "Barak was following after"
Judges 4:23
God subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the people of Israel
God causing the Israelites to defeat Jabin and his army is spoken of as is God himself defeated Jabin as the people of Israel watched.
Judges 4:24
The might
"The military power"
they destroyed him
Here "him" refers to Jabin who represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "they destroyed Jabin and his army"

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5 [1]On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:
[2]"When the leaders take the lead in Israel,
when the people volunteer—
praise Yahweh!

[3] Listen, you kings! Pay attention, you rulers!
I, I will sing to Yahweh;
I will sing praises to Yahweh,

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the God of Israel.

4 Yahweh, when you went out from Seir,
when you marched from Edom,
the earth shook, and the skies also trembled;
also the clouds poured down water.

5 The mountains quaked before the face of Yahweh;
even Mount Sinai quaked before the face of Yahweh,
the God of Israel.

6 In the days of Shamgar (son of Anath),
in the days of Jael,
the main roads were abandoned,
and those who walked only used the winding paths.

7 There were few rural people in Israel,
until I, Deborah, arose—
arose as a mother in Israel!

8 When they chose new gods,
there was fighting at the city gates
and yet there were no shields or spears seen
among forty thousand in Israel.

9 My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel,
along with the people who gladly volunteered—
we bless Yahweh for them!

10 Think about this—you who ride on white donkeys
sitting on rugs for saddles,
and you who walk along the road.

11 Hear the voices of those who sing
at the watering places.
There they tell again of Yahweh's righteous deeds,
and the righteous actions of his warriors in Israel.
Then the people of Yahweh went down to the city gates.

12 Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, sing a song!
Get up, Barak,
and capture your prisoners, you son of Abinoam.

13 Then the survivors came down to the nobles;
the people of Yahweh came down to me with the warriors.

14 They came from Ephraim, whose root is in Amalek;
the people of Benjamin followed you.
From Makir commanders came down,
and from Zebulun those who carry an officer's staff.

15 My princes in Issachar were with Deborah;
and Issachar was with Barak
rushing after him into the valley under his command.
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.

16 Why did you sit between the fireplaces,

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listening to the shepherds playing their pipes for their flocks?
As for the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.

17 Gilead stayed on the other side of the Jordan;
and Dan, why did he wander about on ships?
Asher remained on the coast
and lived close to his harbors.

18 Zebulun was a people who despised their lives to the point of death,
and Naphtali, also, on the field of battle.

19 The kings came, they fought;
the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach
by the waters of Megiddo.
But they took away no silver as plunder.

20 From heaven the stars fought,
from their paths across the heavens they fought against Sisera.

21 The Kishon River swept them away,
that old river, the Kishon River.
March on my soul, be strong!

22 Then came the sound of horses' hooves—
galloping, the galloping of his mighty ones.

23 'Curse Meroz!' says the angel of Yahweh.
'Surely curse its inhabitants!—
because they did not come to help Yahweh—
to help Yahweh in the battle against the mighty warriors.'

24 Jael is blessed more than all other women,
Jael (the wife of Heber the Kenite),
she is more blessed than all the women who live in tents.

25 The man asked for water, and she gave him milk;
she brought him butter in a dish fit for princes.

26 She put her hand to the tent peg,
and her right hand to the laborer's hammer;
with the hammer she struck Sisera, she crushed his head.
She smashed his skull into pieces when she pierced him through the side of his head.

27 He collapsed between her feet, he fell and he lay there.
Between her feet he fell limp.
The place he collapsed is where he was violently killed.

28 Out of a window she looked—
the mother of Sisera looked through the lattice and she called out in sadness,
'Why has it taken his chariot so long to come?
Why have the hoofbeats of the horses that pull his chariots been delayed?'

29 Her wisest princesses replied,
and she gave herself the same answer:

30 'Have they not found and divided up the plunder—
a womb, two wombs for every man;
the plunder of dyed fabric for Sisera,

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the plunder of dyed fabric embroidered,
two pieces of dyed fabric embroidered for the necks of those who plunder?'

31 So may all your enemies perish, Yahweh!
But your friends be like the sun when it rises in its might."
Then the land had peace for forty years.

Judges 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Deborah and Barak continues in this chapter.
Some translations prefer to set apart quotations, prayers, and songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of Chapter 5, which is a song, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The flood
God caused rain and flooding to bog down Jaban's chariots making them vulnerable to soldiers on foot, even though it is not said.

Links:

Judges 5:1 Notes

Judges 5:1
On that day
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "On the day the Israelites defeated the army of King Jabin"
Deborah
See how you translated this name in Judges 4:4.
Barak ... Abinoam
See how you translated these names in Judges 4:6.
Judges 5:2
When the leaders take the lead ... the people volunteer
Possible meanings are 1) this refers to anytime this happens or 2) this refers to the specific battle that has just happened, "When the leaders took the lead ... the people volunteered."
when the people volunteer
The word "people" here probably refers to the men old enough to fight, and the word "volunteer" here implies going to war. Alternate translation: "when the men gladly agree to fight in battle"
praise Yahweh
This command is to the people of Israel and so is plural.
Judges 5:3
General Information:
Deborah and Barak's song continues using poetry.
Listen, you kings! Pay attention, you rulers
Deborah and Barak speak to the kings and rulers as if they were there listening to the song.
you kings ... you rulers
This refers to kings and rulers in general, not to specific kings or rulers.
Judges 5:4
when you went out from Seir, when you marched from Edom
This refers to the time when the Israelites left Edom to start conquering the people in Canaan. Yahweh empowering his people to defeat the people of Canaan is spoken of as if he were a warrior leading the Israelite army.
Seir
Seir is a mountain on the border of the land of Israel and Edom.
the earth shook, and the skies also trembled; also the clouds poured down water
Possible meanings are 1) this is poetic language that emphasizes Yahweh's power by describing it as causing earthquakes and storms or 2) the people of Canaan being terrified as the Israelites were about to attack them is spoken of as if the earth and sky were shaking.
Judges 5:5
General Information:
Deborah and Barak's song continues using poetry.
The mountains quaked
This probably refers to earthquakes and gives the impression that the mountains quaked because they were very afraid of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "The mountains trembled in fear"
before the face of Yahweh
Here "face" refers Yahweh's presence. Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"
even Mount Sinai quaked
When Moses and Israel were at Mount Sinai, it quaked. Alternate translation: "long ago, even Mount Sinai quaked"
Judges 5:6
In the days of
"During the lifetime of"
Shamgar ... Anath ... Jael
These are the names of people. See how you translated Shamgar and Anath in [Judges 3:31]
son of Anath
Shamgar's father is mentioned to help identify Shamgar and when he lived.
the main roads were abandoned
This can be stated in active form and you can make explicit

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why the roads were abandoned Alternate translation: "people stopped using the main roads; because they were afraid of Israel's enemies"

the winding paths

This refers to smaller roads that fewer people traveled on.

Judges 5:7

I, Deborah, arose—arose as a mother in Israel

Deborah speaks of becoming a leader in Israel as if she were a mother taking care of young children. Alternate translation: "I, Deborah, began to lead—I took care of the Israelites as a mother takes care of her children"

Judges 5:8

they chose new gods

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel worshiped new gods"

there was fighting at the city gates

Here "gates" represents the entire city. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "enemies attacked the people within the Israelite cities"

there were no shields or spears seen among forty thousand in Israel

This statement is probably an exaggeration about how few weapons the Israelites had. Alternate translation: "few weapons for battle remained in Israel"

forty thousand in Israel

"40,000 in Israel"

Judges 5:9

My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel

The word "heart" represents a person's emotions. The phrase "My heart goes out to" is a way of saying that Deborah feels gratitude or appreciation. Alternate translation: "I appreciate the commanders of Israel"

Judges 5:10

you who ride on white donkeys ... you who walk along the road

This contrast probably refers to rich people and poor people. Alternate translation: "you rich people who ride on white donkeys ... you poor people who walk along the road"

sitting on rugs for saddles

These rugs were probably used as saddles on the donkey's back to make the rider more comfortable.

Judges 5:11

General Information:

The song of Deborah and Barak continues.

Hear the voices of those

Here "voices" represents the people singing. Alternate translation: "Listen to those"

went down to the city gates

Here "gates" represents the whole city. Alternate translation: "returned to their cities"

Judges 5:12

General Information:

Deborah and Barak's song continues using poetry.

Awake, awake

Possible speakers are 1) the people of Israel or 2) Deborah who is speaking to herself or 3) the poet who wrote the song.

Deborah

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:4.

Barak ... Abinoam

See how you translated these names in Judges 4:6.

Judges 5:13

to me with the warriors

The word "me" refers to Deborah.

Judges 5:14

from Ephraim, whose root is in Amalek

The people of Ephraim living in the land where the descendants of Amalek originally lived is spoken of as if the people of Ephraim were planted and their roots grew into the land. Alternate translation: "from Ephraim, that land where the descendants of Amalek once lived"

followed you

Here "you" refers to the people of Ephraim. It can be stated in third person. Alternate translation: "followed them"

Makir

This is the place where the descendants of Makir live. Makir was the son of Manasseh and the grandson of Joseph.

from Zebulun those who carry an officer's staff

Military leaders are described by the staff, a symbol of their authority. Alternate translation: "military leaders from Zebulun"

Judges 5:15

My princes in Issachar were with Deborah

Here "My" refers to Deborah. This whole statement can be translated in first person. Alternate translation: "My princes in Issachar were with me"

Deborah

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:4.

Issachar was with Barak

Here "Issachar" refers to the tribe of Issachar. Alternate translation: "the tribe of Issachar was with Barak"

Barak

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:6.

rushing after him into the valley under his command

"obeying his command and rushing after him into the valley"

rushing after

"following after" or "hurrying after"

there were great searchings of heart

Here "heart" represents thoughts. The people discussing with each other but being unable to decide what they should do is spoken of as if they were searching their heart. Alternate translation: "there was a lot of discussing about what they should do"

Judges 5:16

Why did you sit between the fireplaces, listening to the shepherds playing their pipes for their flocks?

This question is asked to criticize the people of Reuben because they did not decide to come fight in the battle. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have helped us fight, instead of staying at home and listening to the shepherds playing their pipes for their flocks"

the fireplaces

Some versions of the Bible have the translation "the sheepfolds" or "the sheep pens."

there were great searchings of heart

Here "heart" represents thoughts. The people discussing with each other but being unable to decide what they

should do is spoken of as if they were searching their heart. See how you translated this in [Judges 5:15]

Judges 5:17

Gilead stayed

Here "Gilead" the men from Gilead who should have gone to fight in battle. Alternate translation: "The men of Gilead stayed"

the other side of the Jordan

This refers to the east side of the Jordan.

Dan, why did he wander about on ships?

This question is asked to express anger because the people of the tribe of Dan would not fight for Israel. Alternate translation: "the men of Dan should not have remained on their ships!" or "the people of the tribe of Dan did not help us in the battle. Instead they were wandering around on the sea in ships!"

Dan, why did he

Here "Dan" represents the men from Dan who should have gone to fight in battle. Alternate translation: "the men of Dan, why did they"

wander about on ships

The tribe of Dan was located near the Mediterranean sea. They sailed on the sea to make money through trade and fishing.

Asher remained on the coast and lived close to his harbors

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The people of the tribe of Asher also failed to help us, they just remained on the coast near their harbors"

Asher remained

Here "Asher" represents the men who should have gone to fight in battle. Alternate translation: "The men of Asher remained"

harbors

places at the seacoast with deeper water where ships were kept

Judges 5:18

Naphtali, also

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "Naphtali was a tribe who would also risk their lives to the point of death"

Judges 5:19

The kings came, they fought ... the kings of Canaan fought

The king of a people group is used to refer to himself and the army he commands. Alternate translation: "The kings and their armies came and fought ... the kings of Canaan and their armies fought"

they fought ... fought

The word "us" is understood. Alternate translation: "they fought us ... fought us"

Taanach ... Megiddo

Translate the names of these places as you did in Judges 1:27.

no silver as plunder

Here "silver" represents any treasure in general. Alternate translation: "no silver or other treasures as plunder"

plunder

things taken by force, usually in battle or by thieves

Judges 5:20

From heaven the stars fought, from their paths across the heavens they fought against Sisera

Yahweh helping the Israelite to defeat Sisera and his army is spoken of as if the stars themselves fought against Sisera and his army. This may refer to Yahweh using natural elements, specifically rain storms, to defeat Sisera.

against Sisera

Here "Sisera" represents himself and his whole army. Alternate translation: "Sisera and his army"

Sisera

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:2.

Judges 5:21

The Kishon River swept them away

Because of the heavy rain the river flooded quickly causing the chariots to be stuck in the mud and drowning many soldiers. Alternate translation: "The Kishon River flooded and swept away Sisera's soldiers"

Kishon

See how you translated this in Judges 4:6.

March on my soul, be strong

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. The word "my" refers to Deborah. Alternate translation: "I tell myself to march on and to be strong"

Judges 5:22

Then came the sound of horses' hooves—galloping, the galloping of his mighty ones

This describes the sound of many horses running away from the battle. Alternate translation: "Then I heard the sound of horses running away. Sisera's mighty horses were running away"

galloping

runninb quickly

Judges 5:23

Curse Meroz

Here "Meroz" represents the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "Curse the people of Meroz"

Meroz

This is the name of a city.

Judges 5:24

Jael

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:18.

Heber

See how you translated this name in Judges 4:11.

Kenite

Translate the name of this people group as you did in Judges 1:16.

Judges 5:25

brought him butter

Here "butter" refers to curdled milk. This was the best milk and a favorite drink among Jael's people. Alternate translation: "brought him yogurt" or "brought him curds"

a dish fit for princes

This phrase means the dish was of the best quality because princes were given the best things.

Judges 5:26

She put her hand to the tent peg

"Jael grabbed the tent peg with her left hand"

tent peg

This is a pointed piece of wood or metal, like a large nail,

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that is hammered into the ground to hold down a corner of a tent. See how you translated this in Judges 4:21.

her right hand to the laborer's hammer

This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "she grabbed a hammer with her right hand"

hammer

This is a heavy tool made of wood used to hit a tent peg into the ground. See how you translated this in Judges 4:21.

Sisera

See how you translated this man's name in Judges 4:2.

Judges 5:27

limp

without strength or movement

he was violently killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she killed him" or "he died"

Judges 5:28

the lattice

This is a frame in the window made of crossed wood.

Why has it taken his chariot so long to come? Why have the hoofbeats of the horses that pull his chariots been delayed?

Both of these questions mean the same thing. These two statements can be combined. Alternate translation: "Why is it taking Sisera so long to arrive home"

taken his chariot ... Why have the hoofbeats of the horses that pull his chariots

Both of these represent Sisera. Alternate translation: "taken Sisera ... Why has he"

Judges 5:29

wisest princesses

A "princess" is the daughter of a king, but a "princess" can also mean female advisers to the king's family. Alternate translation: "wisest ladies"

she gave herself the same answer

"she said to herself the same thing"

Judges 5:30

Have they not found and divided up the plunder—a womb ... plunder?

The women use a question to emphasize that they believe this is what certainly happened. Alternate translation: "They must have so much plunder that it is taking a long time to divide it. They have ... plunder."

a womb, two wombs for every man ... of those who plunder?

The women use a question to emphasize that they believe this is what certainly happened. Alternate translation: "There must be a womb, two wombs for every man ... of those who plunder."

a womb, two wombs for every man

Here "womb" represents a woman. Sisera's mother believes Sisera's men have captured many women. Alternate translation: "Each soldier will receive a woman or two"

dyed fabric

"colored cloth" or "colored clothes"

embroidered

having designs made of colored threads

for the necks of those who plunder

Here "necks" represents Sisera's soldiers. Alternate translation: "for the soldiers who plunder to wear"

Judges 5:31

like the sun when it rises in its might

The people of Israel wish to be like the sun that rises because no nation's army is powerful enough to stop the sunrise.

the land had peace

Here "the land" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "and the people of Israel lived peacefully"

for forty years

"for 40 years"

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6 [1]The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he gave them into the hand of Midian for seven years.[2]The power of Midian oppressed Israel. Because of Midian, the people of Israel made shelters for themselves from the dens in the hills, the caves, and the strongholds.
[3]It happened that any time the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people from the east would attack the Israelites.[4]They would set up their camp on the land and destroy the crops, all the way to Gaza. They would leave no food in Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys.
[5]Whenever they and their livestock and tents came up, they would come as a swarm of locusts, and it was impossible to count either the people or their camels. They invaded the land in order to destroy it.[6]Midian weakened the people of Israel so severely that the people of Israel called out to Yahweh.

[7]When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh because of Midian,[8]Yahweh sent a prophet to the people of Israel. The prophet said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I brought you up from Egypt; I brought you out of the house of slavery.
[9]I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all who were oppressing you. I drove them out before you, and I gave you their land.[10]I said to you, "I am Yahweh your God; I commanded you not to worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living." But you have not obeyed my voice.'"

[11]Now the angel of Yahweh came and sat under the oak in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash (the Abiezrite), while Gideon, Joash's son, was threshing wheat in the winepress—to hide it from the Midianites.[12]The angel of Yahweh appeared to him and said to him, "Yahweh is with you, you strong warrior!"
[13]Gideon said to him, "Oh, my master, if Yahweh is with us, why then has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers told us about, when they said, 'Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt?' But now Yahweh has abandoned us and gave us into the hand of Midian."

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[14]Yahweh looked at him and said, "Go in the strength you already have. Deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?"[15]Gideon said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? See, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least important in my father's house."
[16]Yahweh said to him, "I will be with you, and you will defeat the entire Midianite army as one man."[17]Gideon said to him, "If you are pleased with me, then give me a sign that it is you who is speaking to me.[18]Please, do not leave here, until I come to you and bring out my gift and set it before you." Yahweh said, "I will wait until you return."

[19]Gideon went and prepared a young goat and from an ephah of flour he made unleavened bread. He put the meat in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot and brought them to him under the oak tree, and presented them.[20]The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth over them." That is what Gideon did.
[21]Then the angel of Yahweh reached out with the end of the staff in his hand. With it he touched the flesh and the unleavened bread; a fire went up out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of Yahweh went away and Gideon could no longer see him.
[22]Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. Gideon said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!"[23]Yahweh said to him, "Peace to you! Do not be afraid, you will not die."[24]So Gideon built an altar there to Yahweh. He called it, "Yahweh is Peace." To this day it still stands at Ophrah of the clan of Abiezer.

[25]That night Yahweh said to him, "Take your father's bull, and a second bull that is seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it.[26]Build an altar to Yahweh your God on the top of this place of refuge, and construct it the correct way. Offer the second bull as a burnt offering, using the wood from the Asherah that you cut down."
[27]So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as Yahweh had told him. But because he was too afraid of his father's household and the men of the town to do it during the day, he did it at night.

[28]In the morning when the men of the town got up, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull had been offered on the altar that had been built.[29]The men of the city said to one another, "Who has done this?" When they talked with others and searched for answers, they said, "Gideon son of Joash has done this thing."
[30]Then the men of the town said to Joash, "Bring out your son so that he may be put to death, because he broke down the altar of Baal, and because he cut down the Asherah beside it."
[31]Joash said to all who opposed him, "Will you plead the case for Baal? Will you save him? Whoever pleads the case for him, let him be put to death while it is still morning. If Baal is a god, let him defend himself when someone breaks his altar down."[32]Therefore on that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal," because he said, "Let Baal defend himself against him," because Gideon broke down Baal's altar.

[33]Now all the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the people of the east gathered together. They crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel.
[34]But the Spirit of Yahweh clothed Gideon. Gideon blew a trumpet, calling out the clan of Abiezer, so they might follow him.[35]He sent messengers all throughout Manasseh, and they too, were called out to follow him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet him.

[36]Gideon said to God, "If you intend to use me to save Israel, as you have said—[37]Look, I am putting a woolen fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that you will use me to save Israel, as you said."
[38]This is what happened—Gideon rose early the next morning, he pressed the fleece together, and wrung out the dew from the fleece, enough to fill a bowl with water.
[39]Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me, I will speak one more time. Please allow me one more test using the fleece. This time make the fleece dry, and let there be dew on all the ground around it."[40]God did what he asked for that night. The fleece was dry, and there was dew on all the ground around it.

Judges 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about Gideon. (Chapters 6-8)

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's punishment

In Judges, Israel's actions are connected to their obedience to Yahweh. When Israel does evil, they are oppressed. (See:

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evil and oppress)

Links:

Judges 6:1 Notes

Judges 6:1

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [Judges 2:11]

the hand of Midian

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Also, "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "the control of the people of Midian" or "the control of the Midianites"

Judges 6:2

The power of Midian oppressed Israel

Here "the power of Midian" refers to the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "The people of Midian were more powerful than the people of Israel and they oppressed them"

dens

places in the rocky cliffs that would provide shelter

Judges 6:4

They would set up their camp

"The army would set up their tents"

Judges 6:5

Whenever they and their livestock and tents came up

The land of Midian was south of the land of Israel, near the Red Sea. It was common to use the phrase "came up" when speaking of traveling from Midian to Israel. Alternate translation: "Whenever the Midianites brought their livestock and tents to the land of Israel"

they would come as a swarm of locusts

The Midianites are compared to a swarm of locusts because they came in with a great number of people and their livestock ate everything that grew.

it was impossible to count

This is an exaggeration, a hyperbole, showing the number is very great.

Judges 6:6

Midian weakened

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian.

called out to Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "prayed to Yahweh for help"

Judges 6:7

called out to Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "prayed to Yahweh for help"

because of Midian

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "because of the Midianites"

Judges 6:8

I brought you up from Egypt

"I led you out of Egypt"

the house of slavery

Moses speaks of Egypt as if it were a house where people keep slaves. Alternate translation: "the place where you were slaves"

Judges 6:9

from the hand

In this phrase "hand" represents power or control.

Judges 6:10

obeyed my voice

Here "my voice" represents what Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "obeyed my command" or "obeyed me"

Judges 6:11

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.

Ophrah

This is the name of a town.

Abiezrite

This is a people group named after their ancestor Abiezer.

was threshing wheat in the winepress

Gideon was beating the wheat against the floor to separate the wheat grain from the rest of the wheat plant.

Judges 6:12

appeared to him

"went to him"

Judges 6:13

my master

Gideon uses the word "master" as a polite way to greet a stranger. He does not realize he is speaking to Yahweh in the form of an angel or a man.

Where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers told us about, when they said, 'Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt?'

Gideon uses a question to challenge the stranger's statement that Yahweh was with him. Also, the direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "We have not seen any wonderful deeds like the ones our fathers told us about when Yahweh brought them up from Egypt."

gave us into the hand of Midian

The phrase "gave us into" means Yahweh allowed the Israelites to be defeated. Alternate translation: "allowed the Midianites to defeat us"

gave us into the hand

Here "hand" represents power or control.

of Midian

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "of the Midianites"

Judges 6:14

Yahweh looked at him

"Yahweh looked at Gideon"

from the hand

Here "hand" represents power or control.

of Midian

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "of the Midianites"

Have I not sent you?

Yahweh uses a question to ensure Gideon that he is sending him. Here "sent" means Yahweh has appointed Gideon with

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a specific task. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, am sending you!"
Judges 6:15
Please, Lord
Gideon now calls the person "Lord" instead of "my master" as in Judges 6:13. Here it seems Gideon either knows or suspects that he is speaking with Yahweh.
how can I deliver Israel?
Gideon uses a question to emphasize that he does not think he can rescue the Israelites. Alternate translation: "I cannot possibly rescue the Israelites!"
See, my clan
"Look at my clan and me and you will see that it"
in Manasseh
"in the tribe of Manasseh"
in my father's house
Here "house" represents a family. Alternate translation: "in my father's family" or "in my family"
Judges 6:16
I will be with you
Here "be with you" is an idiom that means Yahweh will help and bless Gideon.
as one man
You can state the full meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "as easily as if you were fighting only one man"
Judges 6:18
set it before you
"place it in front of you"
Judges 6:19
from an ephah of flour
If it is necessary to use a modern measurement; here is one way of doing it. Alternate translation: "with 22 liters of flour"
broth
water that has had food, such as meat, cooked in it
them to him
"them to the angel of God"
Judges 6:20
angel of God
This is the same as the angel of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "God, who was in the form of an angel" or "God"
Judges 6:21
angel of Yahweh
In 6:11-24 Yahweh appears to Gideon in the form of an angel. See how you translated this in Judges 6:11.
went away
"disappeared"
Judges 6:22
angel of Yahweh
In 6:11-24 Yahweh appears to Gideon in the form of an angel. See how you translated this in Judges 6:11.
Ah, Lord Yahweh!
The word "Ah" here shows that Gideon was very frightened.
seen the angel of Yahweh face to face
This phrase refers to two people being close to each other. Alternate translation: "really seen the angel of Yahweh"
Judges 6:23
Yahweh said to him
Apparently Yahweh spoke to Gideon from heaven.
Judges 6:24
To this day
This means to the time when the book of Judges was written.
Ophrah
Translate the name of this town as you did in Judges 6:11.
the clan of Abiezer
Translate the name of this people group as you did in Judges 6:11.
Judges 6:25
a second bull
The word "second" is the ordinal number for "two." Alternate translation: "another bull"
that is beside it
"that is beside the altar of Baal"
Judges 6:26
on the top of this place of refuge
The city of Ophrah was on top of a hill. Israelites fled there for refuge from the Midianites.
construct it the correct way
"place the stones in an orderly manner" or "and build it properly"
Judges 6:27
did as Yahweh had told him
This refers to Yahweh's command in Judges 6:25-26.
Judges 6:28
got up
"got up out of bed" or "woke up"
the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull had been offered on the altar that had been built
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they noticed that someone had broken down the altar of Baal, cut down the Asherah that was beside it, and built an altar and sacrificed the second bull on it"
Judges 6:30
he may be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we may kill him as punishment"
Judges 6:31
Will you plead the case for Baal?
Joash uses a question to emphasize that a human should not have to defend a god. Alternate translation: "You should not have to defend Baal."
plead the case
"make a defense" or "give an excuse"
Will you save him?
Joash uses a question to emphasize that a human should not have to rescue a god. Alternate translation: "You should not have to save Baal."
Judges 6:32
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. It means "let Baal defend himself."
because he said
"because Joash said"
Judges 6:33
Now

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This word is used here to mark a stop in the story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.

gathered together

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "gathered together as an army"

Judges 6:34

clothed Gideon

The topic of this metaphor is that because of what the Spirit did, Gideon had special powers. Possible images are 1) the Spirit came over or came on or covered Gideon like a garment, thus giving Gideon special powers. Alternate translation: "came over Gideon" or "took control of Gideon" Or 2) the Spirit covered himself with Gideon and so acted through him.

clan of Abiezer

Translate the name of this people group as you did in Judges 6:11.

so they might follow him

The words "to battle" are understood. Alternate translation: "so they might follow him to battle"

Judges 6:35

and they too, were called out to follow him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "calling them out to follow him"

to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali

These all represent the people of each tribe. Alternate translation: "to the tribes of Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali"

Judges 6:37

woolen fleece

the woolly coat of a sheep

dew

water that forms on plants during the night

then I will know that you will

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "this will be a sign from you, and then I will know that you will"

Judges 6:38

Gideon rose

"Gideon got out of bed"

wrung

twist and squeeze something to remove water

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7 [1]Then Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) rose up early, and all the people who were with him, and they encamped beside the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was to their north in the valley near the hill of Moreh.

[2]Yahweh said to Gideon, "There are too many soldiers for me to give you victory over the Midianites, so that Israel may not boast over me, saying, 'Our own power has saved us.'[3]Now therefore, proclaim in the ears of the people and say, 'Whoever is afraid, whoever trembles, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand people went away, and ten thousand remained.

[4]Yahweh said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will make their number smaller for you there. If I say to you, 'This one will go with you,' he will go with you; but if I say, 'This one will not go with you,' he will not go."
[5]So Gideon brought the people down to the water, and Yahweh said to him, "Separate everyone who laps up the water, as a dog laps, from those who kneel down to drink."[6]Three hundred men lapped. The rest of the men kneeled down to drink water.
[7]Yahweh said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men who lapped, I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Let every other man go back to his own place."[8]So those who were chosen took their supplies and their trumpets. Gideon sent away all the men of Israel, every man to his tent, but he kept the three hundred men. Now the Midian camp was down below him in the valley.

[9]That same night Yahweh said to him, "Get up! Attack the camp, for I am going to give you victory over it.[10]But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant,[11]and listen to what they are saying, and your courage will be strengthened to attack the camp." So Gideon went with Purah his servant, down to the guard posts of the camp.
[12]The Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the people of the east settled along in the valley, as thick as a cloud of locusts. Their camels were more than could be counted; they were more in number than the grains of the sand on the seashore.
[13]When Gideon arrived there, a man was telling a dream to his companion. The man said, "Look! I had a dream, and I saw a round loaf of barley bread tumbling into the camp of Midian. It came to the tent, and hit it so hard that it fell down and turned it upside down, so that it lay flat."[14]The other man said, "This is nothing other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel. God has given him victory over Midian and all their army."

[15]When Gideon heard the retelling of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down in worship. He went back to the camp of Israel and said, "Get up! Yahweh has given you victory over the Midian army."[16]He divided the three hundred men into three groups, and he gave them all rams' horns and empty jars, with torches inside each jar.
[17]He said to them, "Look at me and do what I do. Watch! When I come to the edge of the camp, you must do what I do.
[18]When I blow the ram's horn, I and all who are with me, then blow your ram's horns also on every side of the entire camp and shout, 'For Yahweh and for Gideon!'"

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[19]So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the edge of the camp, right at the beginning of the middle watch. Just as the Midianites were changing guard, they blew the rams' horns and broke the jars that were in their hands.
[20]The three companies blew the rams' horns and broke the jars. They held the torches in their left hands and the rams' horns in their right hands to blow them. They shouted out, "The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon."[21]Every man stood in his place around the camp and all the Midianite army ran. They shouted and ran away.
[22]When they blew the three hundred rams' horns, Yahweh set every Midianite man's sword against his comrades and against all their army. The army fled as far as Beth Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, near Tabbath.[23]The men of Israel from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh were called out, and they went after Midian.

[24]Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Go down against Midian and take control of the Jordan River, as far as Beth Barah, to stop them." So all the men of Ephraim were summoned and took control of the waters, as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan River.[25]They captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and they killed Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. They went after the Midianites, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was on the other side of the Jordan.

Judges 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Gideon continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God gets all of the credit

God said, "There are too many soldiers for me to give you victory over the Midianites. Make sure that Israel will not boast against me, saying, 'Our own power has saved us.'" By lowering the number of fighting soldiers, it emphasizes that the victory is achieved through God's power. (See: glory)

Links:

Judges 7:1 Notes

Judges 7:1

Jerub-Baal

This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated his name in Judges 6:32.

they encamped

"they set up their camp"

spring of Harod ... hill of Moreh

These are the names of places.

The camp of Midian was to their north

Here "Midian" represents the Midianite army. Alternate translation: "The Midianite army set up their camp to the north of the Israelite army"

Judges 7:2

for me to give you victory over the Midianites

The word "victory" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "for me to allow you to defeat the Midianites" or "for me to cause you to be victorious over the Midianites"

Our own power has saved us

Here "power" represents the people themselves. Alternate translation: "We have saved ourselves without God's help"

Judges 7:3

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

proclaim in the ears of the people

Here "the ears" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "proclaim to the people"

Whoever is afraid, whoever trembles

Both of these phrases have the same meaning.

trembles

This word describes fear that causes a person to uncontrollably shake. Alternate translation: "shakes with fear"

let him return

You can make explicit where he will go. Alternate translation: "let him return to his home"

Mount Gilead

This is the name of a mountain in the region of Gilead.

twenty-two thousand

"22,000"

ten thousand remained

The word "people" or "men" is understood. Alternate translation: "10,000 people remained" or "10,000 men remained"

ten thousand

"10,000"

Judges 7:4

I will make their number smaller for you there

Here "number" represents the army. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "there, I will show you who to send home so the army will have less men"

Judges 7:5

Gideon brought

The word "brought" can be translated as "took" or "led."

laps

to drink by licking with the tongue

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Judges 7:6
Three hundred men
"300 men"
Judges 7:7
three hundred men
"300 men"
I will rescue you and give you victory
Here "you" is plural and refers to Gideon and the Israelites.
Judges 7:8
So those who were chosen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So those whom Yahweh chose"
took their supplies and their trumpets
Here "their" refers to the Israelite soldiers who were leaving the army.
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.
Judges 7:9
Attack the camp, for I am going to give you victory over it
Here "camp" refers to the whole Midianite army. The word "victory" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "Attack the Midianites at their camp, for I am going to help you defeat them" or "Attack the Midianites at their camp, for I am going to cause you to be victorious over them"
Judges 7:10
afraid to go down
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "afraid to go down to attack"
Purah
This is the name of a man.
Judges 7:11
your courage will be strengthened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what you hear will be encourage you"
guard posts
places around the edge of an area where soldiers stand to watch for an enemy army
Judges 7:12
as thick as a cloud of locusts
Here "cloud" means a swarm. The author speaks of the army as if it were a swarm of locusts to emphasize how many soldiers there were.
Their camels were more ... in number than the grains of the sand on the seashore
The author uses a hyperbole, an exaggeration, to emphasize that there were very many camels.
Their camels were more than could be counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their camels were more than anyone could count"
Judges 7:14
This is nothing other than the sword of Gideon
Here "the sword of Gideon" refers to Gideon's army attacking. Alternate translation: "The loaf of barley bread in your dream must be the army of Gideon"
God has given him victory over Midian
This future event is spoken of as if it were a past event. This emphasizes that it will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "God will certainly help the Israelites defeat the Midianites"
Judges 7:16
three hundred men
"300 men"
Judges 7:18
For Yahweh and for Gideon!
The words "we fight" are implied. Alternate translation: "We fight for Yahweh and for Gideon!"
Judges 7:19
hundred men
"100 men"
right at the beginning of the middle watch
The beginning of the middle watch would be around 10 o'clock at night.
Judges 7:20
The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon
Here "sword" refers to their fighting. Alternate translation: "We fight for Yahweh and for Gideon"
Judges 7:22
three hundred rams' horns
"300 rams' horns"
Yahweh set every Midianite man's sword against his comrades
Here "sword" refers to their attack with the use of the sword. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused every Midianite man to fight against his fellow soldiers"
Beth Shittah ... Zererah ... Abel Meholah ... Tabbath
These are the names of towns and cities.
Judges 7:23
The men of Israel from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh were called out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Gideon called out the Israelites from the tribes of Naphtali, Asher, and all Mannasseh"
Judges 7:24
Beth Barah
This is the name of a town.
took control of the waters, as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan River
"took control of the area of the Jordan River as far south as Beth Barah"
Judges 7:25
at the rock of Oreb ... at the winepress of Zeeb
The places were given these names after the Israelites killed Oreb and Zeeb there.
Oreb ... Zeeb
These are names of men.

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8 [1]The men of Ephraim said to Gideon, "What is this you have done to us? You did not call us when you went to fight against Midian." Then they had a violent argument with him.
[2]He said to them, "What have I done now compared to you? Are not the gleanings of Ephraim's grapes better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer?[3]God has given you victory over the princes of Midian—Oreb and Zeeb! What have I accomplished compared to you?" Their anger toward him died down when he said this.

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[4]Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over it, he and the three hundred men who were with him. They were exhausted, yet they still kept up the pursuit.[5]He said to the men of Sukkoth, "Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."
[6]Then the officials of Sukkoth said, "Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand? Why should we give bread to your army?"[7]Gideon said, "When Yahweh has given us victory over Zebah and Zalmunna, I will thresh your skin with desert thorns and briers."
[8]He went up from there to Peniel and spoke to the people there in the same way, but the men of Peniel answered him just as the men of Sukkoth had answered.[9]He spoke also to the men of Peniel and said, "When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower."

[10]Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who remained out of the entire army of the people of the East, for there had fallen 120,000 men who drew the sword.
[11]Gideon went up the road taken by tent dwellers, past Nobah and Jogbehah. He defeated the enemy army, because they were not expecting an attack.[12]Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and as Gideon pursued them, he captured the two kings of Midian—Zebah and Zalmunna—and set their whole army into a panic.

[13]Gideon, son of Joash, returned from the battle going through the pass of Heres.[14]He caught a young man of Sukkoth and questioned him. The young man wrote down the names of seventy-seven officials and elders of Sukkoth.
[15]Gideon came to the men of Sukkoth and said, "Look at Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you mocked me and said, 'Have you already conquered Zebah and Zalmunna? We do not know that we should give bread to your army.'"[16]Gideon took the elders of the city, and he punished the men of Sukkoth with the desert thorns and briers.[17]Then he broke down the tower of Peniel and killed the men of that city.

[18]Then Gideon said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "What kind of men did you kill at Tabor?" They answered, "As you are, so were they. Every one of them looked like the son of a king."[19]Gideon said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As Yahweh lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you."
[20]He said to Jether (his firstborn), "Get up and kill them!" But the young man did not draw his sword for he was afraid, because he was still a young boy.[21]Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Get up yourself and kill us! For as the man is, so is his strength." Gideon rose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna. He also took off the crescent-shaped ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

[22]Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson—because you have saved us out of the hand of Midian."[23]Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, neither will my son rule over you. Yahweh will rule over you."
[24]Gideon said to them, "Let me make a request of you, that every one of you give me the earrings from his plunder."(The Midianites had golden earrings because they were Ishmaelites.)[25]They answered, "We are glad to give them to you." They spread out a cloak and every man threw on it the earrings from his plunder.
[26]The weight of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels of gold. This plunder was in addition to the crescent ornaments, the pendants, the purple clothing that was worn by the kings of Midian, and in addition to the chains that had been around their camels' necks.
[27]Gideon made an ephod out of the earrings and put it in his city, in Ophrah, and all Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there. It became a trap for Gideon and for those in his house.[28]So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel and they did not raise their heads up again. So the land had peace for forty years in the days of Gideon.

[29]Jerub-Baal, son of Joash, went and lived in his own house.[30]Gideon had seventy sons who were his descendants, for he had many wives.[31]His concubine, who was in Shechem, also bore him a son, and Gideon gave him the name Abimelek.
[32]Gideon, son of Joash, died at a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, at Ophrah of the clan of Abiezer.
[33]It came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, the people of Israel turned again and prostituted themselves by worshiping the Baals. They made Baal-Berith their god.
[34]The people of Israel did not remember to honor Yahweh, their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side.[35]They did not keep their promises to the house of Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon), in return for all the good he had done in Israel.

Judges 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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The account of Gideon concludes in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sukkoth's refusal to help Gideon

The men of Sukkoth feared the Midianites more than Gideon. This is why they refused to help Gideon. By allying themselves with the Midianites, they aligned themselves against Yahweh. Because of this, Gideon treated them like he treated the Midianites.

Gideon refuses to be king

Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, neither will my son rule over you. Yahweh will rule over you." Although the book of Deuteronomy anticipates a king in Israel, it was sinful for Israel to desire to have a king. He did though take a share of everyone's plunder as a king would have done through taxes. This may serve as a warning to Israel about their desire to have a king. (See: sin)

Links:

Judges 8:1 Notes

Judges 8:1

What is this you have done to us?

The people of the tribe of Ephraim were rebuking Gideon with this rhetorical question for not including them in his army. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not treated us fairly."

against Midian

Here "Midian" represents the Midianite army.

they had a violent argument with him

they argued angrily with him" or "they rebuked him severely"

Judges 8:2

General Information:

Gideon replies to the men from Ephraim.

What have I done now compared to you?

Gideon uses this question to honor the people of Ephraim. Alternate translation: "I have done very little compared with what you have done!"

Are not the gleanings of Ephraim's grapes better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer?

Gideon was calming the people of Ephraim with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "Certainly the grapes you people of Ephraim gleaned are better than what we the descendants of Abiezer gathered from the whole harvest!"

Are not the gleanings of Ephraim's grapes better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer?

Gideon and his army defeating the Medianites is spoken of as if it were a grape harvest. The people of Ephraim killing Oreb and Zeeb at the end of the battle is spoken of as if they were gleaning grapes at the end of the harvest. Alternate translation: "What you people of Ephraim did at the end of the battle is more important than what we descendants of Abiezer did at the beginning."

Abiezer

This is the name of one of Gideon's ancestors. Gideon used his name to refer to Abiezer's descendants and their land.

Judges 8:3

Oreb and Zeeb

See how you translated these names in Judges 7:25.

What have I accomplished compared to you?

Gideon uses this question to honor the people of Ephraim. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "What you have done is more important than what I have done."

died down

"became less"

Judges 8:4

the three hundred men

"the 300 men"

kept up the pursuit

The word "pursuit," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "continued to chase their enemies"

Judges 8:5

Zebah and Zalmunna

These are the names of men.

Judges 8:6

Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand?

The leaders use a question to emphasize that the Israelites have not yet captured Zebah and Zalumnna. Alternate translation: "You have not captured Zebah and Zalmunna yet."

Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna

Here "hands" refer to the whole body.

now in your hand

Here "hand" represents power or control.

Why should we give bread to your army?

The leaders use a question to emphasize that they have no reason to give bread to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "We see no reason to give bread to your army."

Judges 8:7

I will thresh your skin with desert thorns and briers

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I will make whips out of desert thorns and briers and use them to beat you and cut you"

thorns and briers

sharp, pointed pieces on vines or tree limbs that stick out and can cut people and animals

Judges 8:8

He went up from there

Here "He" refers to Gideon. Gideon represents himself and the soldiers following him. Alternate translation: "They left there" or "Gideon and his 300 men left there"

Peniel

The name of a place.

spoke to the people there in the same way

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate

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translation: "asked for food there in the same way" or "he also asked them for food"
Judges 8:9
When I come again in peace
This is a polite way of referring to the defeat of his enemies. Alternate translation: "After I have completely defeated the Midian army"
I will break down this tower
Here "I" refers to Gideon and represents himself and his men. Alternate translation: "My men and I will break down this tower"
Judges 8:10
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.
Zebah and Zalmunna
See how you translated these names in Judges 8:5.
Karkor
This is the name of a city.
fifteen thousand men
"15,000 men"
had fallen
This is a polite way of referring to people who died in battle. Alternate translation: "had been killed" or "had died in battle"
120,000 men
"one hundred thousand men"
men who drew the sword
Here drawing the sword represents using the sword in battle. Possible meanings are 1) this phrase refers to soldiers who use swords in battle. Alternate translation: "swordsmen" or "men who fought with swords" or 2) this phrase refers to any soldiers. Alternate translation: "soldiers"
Judges 8:11
Gideon went up
Here "Gideon" represents himself and all of his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Gideon and his soldiers went up"
He defeated
Here "He" refers to Gideon and represents himself and all of his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Gideon and his soldiers defeated"
Nobah and Jogbehah
These are names of towns.
Judges 8:12
Zebah and Zalmunna
See how you translated these names in Judges 8:5.
panic
extreme fear or worry that makes someone unable to think or act normally
Judges 8:13
the pass of Heres
This is the name of a road that passes between two mountains.
Judges 8:14
questioned him
It can be stated explicitly what Gideon asked the young man. Alternate translation: "he asked him to identify all the names of the leaders in the town"
seventy-seven officials
"77 officials"
Judges 8:15
Zebah and Zalmunna
See how you translated these names in Judges 8:5.
Have you already conquered Zebah and Zalmunna?
Gideon quotes the people of Sukkoth as using a question to mock him. Alternate translation: "You have not yet conquered Zebah and Zalmunna."
Judges 8:16
Gideon took ... he punished
Here "Gideon" represents himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Gideon and his soldiers took ... they punished"
thorns and briers
These are sharp, pointed pieces on vines or tree limbs that stick out and can cut people and animals. See how you translated this in Judges 8:7.
Judges 8:17
he broke
Gideon and his soldiers broke. Alternate translation: "Gideon and his soldiers broke"
Peniel
Translate the name of this city as you did in Judges 8:8.
Judges 8:18
Zebah and Zalmunna
See how you translated these names in Judges 8:5.
Tabor
Translate the name of this city as you did in Judges 4:6.
As you are, so were they
"They were just like you"
Judges 8:19
As Yahweh lives
This idiom is a religious oath used for emphasis that what he is about to say is true. Alternate translation: "I promise you that"
Judges 8:20
Jether
This is the name of Gideon's son.
Judges 8:21
For as the man is, so is his strength
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "It is a job for a man to do"
crescent
This is a curved shape with two points. This shape occurs when the moon is mostly covered in shadow.
ornaments
decorations
Judges 8:22
out of the hand of Midian
Here "hand" represents the power of Midian over Israel. Alternate translation: "from the power of Midian" or "from Midian"
of Midian
Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "of the Midianites"
Judges 8:24
Gideon said to them
"Gideon said to the men of Israel"

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earrings
jewelry worn on the ear
plunder
things stolen by force or taken off of people killed in war
The Midianites had golden earrings because they were Ishmaelites
Here the narrator tells background information about the Midianites.
Judges 8:25
cloak
clothing made from a large piece of fabric and worn over the shoulders as a coat
Judges 8:26
1,700 shekels of gold
"one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold." If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "18.7 kilograms of gold" or "about 20 kilograms of gold"
crescent ornaments
See how you translated this in Judges 8:21.
pendants
pieces of jewelry that hang at the end of the chains or cords of necklaces
that was worn by the kings of Midian
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the kings of Midian wore"
Judges 8:27
Gideon made an ephod out of the earrings
"Gideon used the gold from the earrings to make an ephod"
Ophrah
Translate the name of this city as you did in Judges 6:11.
all Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there
This speaks of worshiping a false god as if it were prostitution. Alternate translation: "the Israelites sinned against Yahweh by worshiping the ephod there"
all Israel
Here "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize that very many worshiped the garment. Alternate translation: "very many people in Israel worshiped the garment"
It became a trap for Gideon and for those in his house
This speaks of Gideon and his family being tempted to worship the ephod as if the ephod were a hunter's snare that would trap them. Alternate translation: "It became a temptation for Gideon and his family" or "Gideon and his family sinned by worshiping it"
for those in his house
Here "his house" represents Gideon's family. Alternate translation: "for his family"
Judges 8:28
So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So Yahweh subdued the Midianites before the people of Israel" or "So Yahweh helped the Israelites defeat the Midianites"
they did not raise their heads up again
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they did not attack Israel again"
So the land had peace
Here "land" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "So the Israelites lived peacefully"
forty years
"40 years"
in the days of Gideon
"during the life of Gideon"
Judges 8:29
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated his name in Judges 6:32.
Judges 8:30
seventy sons
"70 sons"
Judges 8:32
a good old age
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "when he was very old"
was buried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him"
Ophrah
Translate the name of this city as you did in Judges 6:11.
the clan of Abiezer
Translate the name of this people group as you did in Judges 6:11.
Judges 8:33
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
turned again
The people rejecting Yahweh is spoken of as if they physically turned away from him. Alternate translation: "they stopped worshiping Yahwheh"
prostituted themselves by worshiping the Baals
This speaks of worshiping false gods as if it were prostitution. Alternate translation: "they sinned against Yahweh by worshiping the Baals"
Baal-Berith
This is the name of a false god.
Judges 8:34
from the hand of all their enemies
Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from the power of all their enemies" or "from all their enemies"
on every side
"who surrounded them"
Judges 8:35
the house of Jerub-Baal
Here "the house of" represents a person's family. Alternate translation: "the family of Jerub-Baal"
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.

9 [1]Abimelek son of Jerub-Baal went to his mother's relatives at Shechem and he said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family,[2]"Please say this, so that all the leaders in Shechem may hear, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy sons of Jerub-Baal rule over you, or that just one rule over you?' Remember that I am your bone and your flesh."

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[3]His mother's relatives spoke for him to the leaders of Shechem, and they agreed to follow Abimelek, for they said, "He is our brother."[4]They gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-Berith, and Abimelek used the silver to hire worthless and reckless men, who traveled with him.
[5]Abimelek went to his father's house at Ophrah, and upon one stone he murdered his seventy brothers, the sons of Jerub-Baal. Only Jotham was left, the youngest son of Jerub-Baal, for he hid himself.[6]All the leaders of Shechem and Beth Millo came together and they went and made Abimelek king, beside the oak near the pillar which is in Shechem.

[7]When Jotham was told about this, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim. He shouted and said to them, "Listen to me, you leaders of Shechem, so that God may listen to you.[8]The trees once went out to anoint a king over them. For they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.'
[9]But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I give up my abundance, by which gods and men are honored, to sway over the other trees?'[10]The trees said to the fig tree, 'Come and reign over us.'[11]But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I give up my sweetness and my good fruit, just so I could return and sway over the other trees?'
[12]The trees said to the vine, 'Come and reign over us.'[13]The vine said to them, 'Should I give up my new wine, which makes gods and mankind glad, and return and sway over the other trees?'[14]Then said all the trees to the thornbush, 'Come and reign over us.'
[15]The thornbush said to the trees, 'If you truly want to anoint me as king over you, then come and find refuge under my shade. If not, then let fire come out of the thornbush and let it burn up the cedars of Lebanon.'[16]Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and honesty, when you made Abimelek king, and if you have done well concerning Jerub-Baal and his house, and if you have punished him as he deserves—
[17]and to think that my father fought for you, risked his life, and rescued you out of the hand of Midian—[18]but today you have risen up against my father's house and have killed his sons, seventy persons, upon one stone. Then you have made Abimelek, the son of his female servant, king over the leaders of Shechem, because he is your relative.
[19]If you acted with faithfulness and integrity with Jerub-Baal and his house, then you should rejoice in Abimelek, and let him also rejoice in you.[20]But if not, let fire come out from Abimelek and burn up the men of Shechem and Beth Millo. Let fire come out from the men of Shechem and Beth Millo, to burn up Abimelek."[21]Jotham fled and ran away, and he went to Beer. He lived there because it was far away from Abimelek, his brother.

[22]Abimelek ruled over Israel for three years.[23]God sent an evil spirit between Abimelek and the leaders of Shechem. The leaders of Shechem betrayed the trust they had with Abimelek.[24]God did this so the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerub-Baal might be avenged and their blood be laid on Abimelek their brother, and the men of Shechem would be held responsible because they helped him murder his brothers.
[25]So the leaders of Shechem positioned men to lie in wait on the hilltops that they might ambush him, and they robbed all who passed by them along that road. This was reported to Abimelek.

[26]Gaal son of Ebed came with his relatives and they went over to Shechem. The leaders of Shechem had confidence in him.
[27]They went out into the field and gathered grapes from the vineyards, and they trampled on them. They held a festival in the house of their god, where they ate and drank, and they cursed Abimelek.
[28]Gaal son of Ebed, said, "Who is Abimelek, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerub-Baal? Is Zebul not his overseer? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father! Why should we serve Abimelek?[29]I wish that this people were under my command! Then would I remove Abimelek. I would say to Abimelek, 'Call out all your army.'"

[30]When Zebul, the official of the city, heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed his anger was kindled.[31]He sent messengers to Abimelek in order to deceive, saying, "See, Gaal son of Ebed and his relatives are coming to Shechem, and they are stirring up the city against you.
[32]Now, get up during the night, you and the soldiers with you, and prepare an ambush in the fields.[33]Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise early and make a raid on the city. When he and the people with him come out against you, do whatever you can to them."

[34]So Abimelek got up during the night, he and all the men who were with him, and they set an ambush against Shechem—dividing into four units.[35]Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the city gate. Abimelek and the men who were with him came out of their hiding place.
[36]When Gaal saw the men, he said to Zebul, "See, men are coming down from the hilltops!" Zebul said to him, "You are seeing the shadows on the hills like they are men."[37]Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, men are coming down in the middle of the land, and one unit is coming by way of the oak of the diviners."
[38]Then Zebul said to him, "Where are your proud words now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelek that we should serve him?' Are these not the men you despised? Go out now and fight against them."[39]Gaal went out and he was leading the men of Shechem, and he fought Abimelek.[40]Abimelek chased him, and Gaal fled before him. Many fell with deadly wounds before the entrance to the city gate.

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[41]Abimelek stayed in Arumah. Zebul forced Gaal and his relatives out of Shechem.[42]On the next day the people of Shechem went out into the field, and this was reported to Abimelek.[43]He took his people, divided them into three units, and they set an ambush in the fields. He looked and saw the people coming out from the city and he attacked and killed them.
[44]Abimelek and the units that were with him attacked and blocked the entrance to the city gate. The other two units attacked all who were in the field and killed them.[45]Abimelek fought against the city all that day. He captured the city, and killed the people who were in it. He broke down the city walls and sowed it with salt.

[46]When all the leaders of the tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the house of El-Berith.
[47]Abimelek was told that all the leaders had gathered together at the tower of Shechem.
[48]Abimelek went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the men who were with him. Abimelek took an ax and cut off branches. He put it on his shoulder and ordered the men with him, "What you have seen me do, hurry and do as I have done."[49]So every one cut off branches and followed Abimelek. They piled them against the wall of the tower, and they set the stronghold on fire, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand men and women.

[50]Then Abimelek went to Thebez, and he encamped against Thebez and captured it.[51]But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women and all the leaders of the city fled to it and shut themselves in. Then they went up to the roof of the tower.
[52]Abimelek came to the tower and fought against it, and he came up near to the door of the tower to burn it.[53]But a woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelek's head and it crushed his skull.[54]Then he called urgently to the young man who was his armor-bearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, so no one will say about me, 'A woman killed him.'" So his young man pierced him through, and he died.
[55]When the men of Israel saw that Abimelek was dead, they went home.[56]So God avenged the evil of Abimelek that he did to his father by killing his seventy brothers.[57]God made all the evil of the men of Shechem turn back on their own heads and on them came the curse of Jotham son of Jerub-Baal.

Judges 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jotham's curse

Gideon's son, Abimelech, killed all of his brothers except Jotham in order to become king of Shechem. Jotham cursed Abimelech for having murdered Gideon's other sons. "Let fire come out from Abimelech and burn up the men of Shechem and the house of Millo. Let fire come out from the men of Shechem and Beth Millo, to burn up Abimelech." (See: curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Tree metaphor

This chapter contains an extended metaphor about trees. This metaphor functions as a parable instructing Israel about their sinful desire to have a king. (See: and sin)

Links:

- Judges 9:1 Notes

Judges 9:1

Jerub-Baal

This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.

Judges 9:2

Please say this, so that all the leaders in Shechem may hear, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy sons of Jerub-Baal rule over you, or that just one rule over you?'

This has a quotation within a quotation. A direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Please ask the leaders of Shechem if they would rather have all seventy sons of Jerub-Baal rule over them, or if they would rather have just one of his sons rule over them."

seventy

"70"

I am your bone and your flesh

Here "your bone and your flesh" represents being someone's relative. Alternate translation: "I am a member of your family"

Judges 9:3

His mother's relatives spoke for him to the leaders

This means that the relatives of the mother of Abimelek spoke to the leaders, suggesting that they make Abimelek their king.

they agreed to follow Abimelek

"they agreed to let Abimelek be their leader"

Judges 9:4

the house

Here "house" represents a temple.

seventy pieces of silver

This means seventy shekels of silver. A shekel weighs 11 grams. If it is necessary to translate this with modern measurements, you can translate it like this. Alternate

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translation: "almost one kilo of silver"

seventy

"70"

Baal-Berith

This is the name of a false god. See how you translated it in Judges 8:33.

worthless and reckless

"violent and foolish"

Judges 9:5

Ophrah

Translate the name of this city as you did in Judges 6:11.

one stone

"1 stone"

seventy

"70"

Jerub-Baal

This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.

Judges 9:6

Beth Millo

This is the name of a place.

Judges 9:7

General Information:

Jotham begins telling a parable in which the trees try to find someone to rule them. The trees represent the Israelites.

When Jotham was told about this

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Jotham heard that Abimelech had murdered his brothers"

Mount Gerizim

This is a mountain.

Judges 9:8

The trees once went out to anoint a king over them. For they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.'

In this parable Jotham describes the trees doing things that humans do.

to anoint a king over them

Here, to anoint with oil is a symbolic action that represents appointing a person to be king. Alternate translation: "to appoint a king to rule over all of them"

Reign over us

"Be our king"

Judges 9:9

General Information:

Jotham continues telling the parable he begins in Judges 9:7, where the trees represent the Israelites.

Should I give up my abundance ... over the other trees?

The olive tree is asking this question to refuse to be king. This question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will not give up my abundance ... over the other trees."

abundance

This word for "wealth" is a metonym for the olives that come from the tree. People ate olives as food and crushed them to make oil for lamps. Alternate translation: "oil"

by which gods and men are honored

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "by which people honor both gods and other men"

gods

It is possible to translate the same Hebrew word as "god," "God," or "gods," so possible meanings here are 1) "gods" or 2) "God."

sway over

To sway is to move back and forth. Trees sway when the wind blows them. Here this is a metaphor for ruling over people. Jotham is also using irony, saying that the work of any ruler will be useless because the "trees," the people, will not obey anyone who rules them. Alternate translation: "rule over"

Judges 9:11

the fig tree said to them

Jotham continues describing the trees as doing things that humans do.

Should I give up my sweetness ... over the other trees?

The fig tree is asking this question to refuse to be king. This question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will not give up my sweetness ... over the other trees."

my sweetness and my good fruit

The word "sweetness" is an abstract noun. It can be stated as an adjective that describes the fruit that grows on the tree. Alternate translation: "my good sweet fruit"

Judges 9:12

General Information:

Jotham continues telling the parable he begins in Judges 9:7, where the trees represent the Israelites.

The trees said to the vine

In this parable, Jotham describes the trees and the vine as doing things that humans do.

Judges 9:13

Should I give up my new wine ... over the other trees?

The vine is asking this question to refuse to be king. This question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will not give up my new wine ... over the other trees."

Judges 9:14

thornbush

Thorns are sharp spikes or spurs that hurt. This bush has many sharp spikes along its branches.

Judges 9:15

General Information:

Jotham continues telling his parable, where trees represent various people groups, and makes the application.

The thornbush said to the trees

In this parable, Jotham describes the thornbush and the trees as doing things that humans do.

to anoint me as king over you

To anoint someone with oil is a symbolic action that appoints a person to be king. Alternate translation: "to appoint me as your king"

fire come out of the thornbush and let it burn up the cedars of Lebanon

This means to let the thornbush burn so that it will burn the cedars.

then let fire come out of the thornbush

The thornbush refers to itself as "the thornbush." Alternate translation: "then may fire come out from me, the thornbush"

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Judges 9:16
Now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.
his house
Here "house" represents Gideon's family.
Judges 9:17
General Information:
Jotham makes the application to the situation at that time and place.
to think that my father fought for you ... out of the hand of Midian
Here Jotham is expressing that he cannot believe how badly the people of Shechem have treated Gideon and his family even after Gideon fought to save the people of Shechem.
out of the hand of Midian
Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from the power of the Midianites" or "from the Midianites"
Judges 9:18
you have risen up against
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you have opposed" or "you have rebelled against"
my father's house
Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "my father's family"
seventy
"70"
one stone
"1 stone"
his female servant
Here "his" refers to Gideon.
Judges 9:19
If you acted with faithfulness and integrity with Jerub-Baal and his house
Jotham offered the possibility that what they did was good, but he did not actually believe what they did was good. Alternate translation: "If you treated Jerub-Baal and his family with faithfulness and sincerity"
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. It means "let Baal defend himself." See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.
his house
Here "house" refers to family. Alternate translation: "his family"
Judges 9:20
But if not
The rest of this phrase can be understood from what Jotham said in verse 19. Alternate translation: "But if you did not act with honesty and integrity with Jerub Baal and his house"
let fire come out from Abimelek and burn up the men of Shechem
Jotham is speaking a curse. He speaks of Abimelek destroying the people of Shechem as if he would burn them with fire.
Let fire come out from the men of Shechem and Beth Millo, to burn up Abimelek
Jotham is speaking a curse. He speaks of the people of Shechem and Beth Millo destroying Abimelek as if they would burn him with fire.
Beth Millo
This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in Judges 9:6.
Judges 9:21
Beer
This is the name of a city.
Judges 9:23
God sent an evil spirit between Abimelek and the leaders of Shechem
This means that God applied the curse Jotham made by sending an evil spirit to cause trouble and animosity between Abimelek and the leaders of Shechem.
Judges 9:24
God did this so the violence done ... helped him murder his brothers
The passive phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did this to avenge the seventy sons whom Abimelech their brother murdered and the men of Shechem helped murder"
seventy
"70"
Jerub-Baal
This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.
Judges 9:25
positioned men to lie in wait on the hilltops that they might ambush him
"sent men to hide on the hilltops and wait to attack Abimelek"
This was reported to Abimelek
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Abimelek about the men waiting to attack him"
Judges 9:26
Gaal ... Ebed
These are names of men.
had confidence in him
The word "confidence" is an abstract noun that can be stated with the verb "trust." Alternate translation: "trusted him"
Judges 9:27
They went out into the field
Here "They" refers to Gaal and his relatives and the men of Shechem.
they trampled on them
They did this to squeeze out the grape juice to make wine with it.
trampled
"crushed" or "stomped"
in the house
Here "house" represents a temple.
Judges 9:28
Gaal ... Ebed
See how you translated these names in Judges 9:26.
Who is Abimelek, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him?
Gaal uses a question to emphasize that the people of Shechem should not serve Abimelek. Alternate translation:

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"We should not serve Abimelek!"

Who is Abimelek, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him?

Both of these questions means the same thing. Gaal refers to Abimelek as "Shechem" because Abimelek's mother was from Shechem. Alternate translation: "We should not serve Abimelek, that is, Shechem!"

Is he not the son of Jerub-Baal? Is Zebul not his overseer?

Gaal uses a question to emphasize that the people of Shechem should not serve Abimelek. Alternate translation: "He is just the son of Jerub-Baal, and Zebul is just his overseer."

overseer

Zebul oversaw Abimelek's slaves, servants, and laborers.

Jerub-Baal

This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this in Judges 6:32.

Zebul

This is the name of a man.

Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father

Gaal means the people of Shechem should serve those who descended from Hamor, that is, those who are truly Canaanites, and not serve someone whose father was an Israelite.

Why should we serve Abimelek?

Gaal uses a question to emphasize that the people of Shechem should not serve Abimelek. Alternate translation: "We should not serve Abimelek!"

Judges 9:29

I wish that this people were under my command

"I wish that I ruled the people of Shechem"

Judges 9:30

Zebul

See how you translated this name in Judges 9:28.

heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed

"heard what Gaal son of Ebed said"

Gaal ... Ebed

See how you translated these names in Judges 9:26.

his anger was kindled

Becoming angry is spoken of as if a fire were starting. Alternate translation: "he became very angry"

the city

Here "city" represents the people of the city.

Judges 9:31

in order to deceive

Zebul is deceiving Gaal and the people of Shechem. Alternate translation: "secretly"

they are stirring up the city against you

This speaks of the people of the city becoming upset as if they were liquid in a pot moving around. Alternate translation: "they are persuading the people of the city to rebel against you"

Judges 9:32

General Information:

Zebul's messengers continue talking to Abimelech.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

an ambush

"to hide and attack them suddenly"

Judges 9:33

do whatever you can to them

This means that they can do what they want to destroy the followers of Gaal.

Judges 9:34

all the men who were with him

"all the men accompanying Abimelech" or "all the men fighting for Abimelech"

dividing into four units

"separating into 4 groups"

Judges 9:35

Gaal ... Ebed

See how you translated these names in Judges 9:26.

Judges 9:36

Gaal

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Judges 9:26.

Zebul

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Judges 9:28.

You are seeing the shadows on the hills like they are men

Zebul is trying to confuse Gaal and keep him from preparing for battle. Alternate translation: "That is not people, it is only shadows on the hills"

Judges 9:37

one unit

"1 group" or "1 troop"

Judges 9:38

Zebul

See how you translated this name in Judges 9:28.

Where are your proud words now, you

Zebul is scolding Gaal with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "You are not speaking proudly now, you" or "You are not proud now, you"

you who said, 'Who is Abimelek that we should serve him?'

Zebul is quoting Gaal's boast back to Gaal. This can be translated as a statement and as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "you who said that we should not serve Abimelek."

Are these not the men you despised?

Zebul is challenging Gaal with this rhetorical question. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Here are the men that you despised."

despised

strongly disliked or hated

Judges 9:39

Gaal

See how you translated this name in Judges 9:26.

Judges 9:40

Many fell with deadly wounds

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "And many men died of wounds"

Judges 9:41

Arumah

This is the name of a city.

Zebul

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Judges 9:28.

Gaal

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This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Judges 9:26.

Judges 9:42

this was reported to Abimelek

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone reported this to Abimelek"

Judges 9:43

divided them into three units

"separated them into 3 groups"

they set an ambush in the fields

"they hid in the fields to attack the people by surprise"

he attacked

Here "he" refers to Abimelech who represents himself and all of his soldiers. Alternate translation: "they attacked"

Judges 9:44

the units

"the groups of soldiers"

other two

"other 2"

Judges 9:45

Abimelek fought ... He broke down

Here "Abimelek" represents himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Abimelek and his soldiers fought ... They broke down"

against the city

Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "against the people of Shechem"

broke down

"demolished"

sowed it with salt

Here salt is spoken of as if it were seeds. Spreading salt over land keeps anything from growing there. Alternate translation: "spread salt over the land"

Judges 9:46

the house

Here this represents a temple.

El-Berith

The word "El" means "god." This is the same false god as "Baal-Berith" in [Judges 8:33]

Judges 9:47

Abimelek was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Abimelek"

Judges 9:48

Mount Zalmon

This is the name of a mountain.

Judges 9:49

piled

This means to stack the branches into a large heap.

about a thousand men

"about 1,000"

Judges 9:50

Thebez

This is the name of a city.

encamped against Thebez

"camped outside the city of Thebez"

Judges 9:52

fought against it

"attacked it"

Judges 9:53

upper millstone

Two large, flat, round stones were used to grind grain in a mill. An upper millstone was the top one that was rolled on the lower one to crush the grain in between them.

Judges 9:54

armor-bearer

This is the man who carried the weapons of Abimelech.

pierced him through

This means the young man put the sword right through the body of Abimelech.

Judges 9:56

seventy

"70"

Judges 9:57

made all the evil of the men of Shechem turn back on their own heads

"Evil turn back on their heads" here is an idiom. Alternate translation: "punished the men of Shechem for all the evil they had done"

on them came the curse of Jotham son of Jerub-Baal

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the curse of Jotham son of Jerub-Baal happened to them"

Jerub-Baal

This is another name for Gideon. See how you translated this name in Judges 6:32.

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10 [1]After Abimelek, Tola son of Puah son of Dodo, a man from Issachar who lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim, arose to deliver Israel.[2]He judged Israel twenty-three years. He died and was buried in Shamir.

[3]He was followed by Jair the Gileadite. He judged Israel twenty-two years.[4]He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havvoth Jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead.[5]Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

[6]The people of Israel added to the evil they had done in the sight of Yahweh and worshiped the Baals, the Ashtoreths, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines. They abandoned Yahweh and no longer worshiped him.[7]Yahweh burned with anger toward Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites.
[8]They crushed and oppressed the people of Israel that year, and for eighteen years they oppressed all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead.[9]Then the Ammonites crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed.

[10]Then the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, saying, "We have sinned against you, because we abandoned our God

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and worshiped the Baals."[11]Yahweh said to the people of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines,[12]and also from the Sidonians? The Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you; you called out to me, and I delivered you from their power.
[13]Yet you abandoned me again and worshiped other gods. Therefore, I will not keep adding to the times I deliver you.[14]Go and call out to the gods that you have worshiped. Let them rescue you when you have trouble."
[15]The people of Israel said to Yahweh, "We have sinned. Do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please, rescue us this day."[16]They got rid of the foreign gods among them and they worshiped Yahweh. Then Yahweh could bear Israel's misery no longer.

[17]Then the Ammonites were summoned and set up camp in Gilead. The people of Israel came together and set up their camp at Mizpah.[18]The leaders of the people of Gilead said one to another, "Who is the man who will begin to fight the Ammonites? He will become the leader over all those who are living in Gilead."

Judges 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the account of Jephthah (Judges 10-12).

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's punishment

In Judges, Israel's actions are connected to their obedience to Yahweh. When Israel does evil, they are oppressed. (See: evil and oppress)

Links:

Judges 10:1 Notes

Judges 10:1

Tola ... Puah ... Dodo

These are names of men.

Shamir

This is the name of a place.

arose to deliver Israel

"came to deliver Israel" or "became the leader to deliver Israel"

deliver Israel

Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel.

Judges 10:2

He judged Israel

Here "judged" means he led the people of Israel.

twenty-three years

"23 years"

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him"

Judges 10:3

He was followed by Jair the Gileadite

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jair the Gileadite was leader after Tola"

Jair

This is the name of a man.

the Gileadite

Jair was from the tribe of Gilead.

He judged Israel

Here "judged" means he led the people of Israel.

Israel

Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel.

twenty-two years

"22 years"

Judges 10:4

thirty sons

"30 sons"

Havvoth Jair

This is the name of a region, which is named after a man.

to this day

This means to the time when the book of Judges was being written.

Judges 10:5

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him"

Kamon

This is the name of a place.

Judges 10:6

added to the evil they had done in the sight of Yahweh

This speaks of evil as if it were an object that a person could add to and make bigger. Alternate translation: "continued doing what Yahweh said was evil"

in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "according to Yahweh"

Ashtoreths

This is the plural of Ashtoroth, who was worshiped as a goddess in many different forms. See how you translated this in Judges 2:13.

They abandoned Yahweh and no longer worshiped him

The author basically said the same thing twice for emphasis. These can be combined. Alternate translation: "They completely stopped worshiping Yahweh"

They abandoned Yahweh

No longer obeying and worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if the people left Yahweh and went somewhere else.

Judges 10:7

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Yahweh burned with anger toward Israel
Yahweh becoming angry is spoken of as if anger were a burning fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was very angry at Israel"
he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites
Yahweh allowing the Philistines and the Ammonites to defeat the Israelites is spoken of as if he sold the Israelites to them.
into the hand
Here "hand" represents power or control.
Judges 10:8
crushed and oppressed
These two words basically mean the same and emphasize how much the Israelites suffered. Alternate translation: "terribly oppressed"
eighteen years
"18 years"
who were beyond the Jordan
This means on the east side of the Jordan River.
which is in Gilead
"this region is also called Gilead"
Judges 10:9
Judah ... Benjamin
"Judah" and "Benjamin" refer to the people belonging to those tribes. Alternate translation: "the people of the tribe of Judah ... the people of the tribe of Benjamin"
house of Ephraim
The "house" refers to the people of the tribe of Ephraim. Alternate translation: "the people of the tribe of Ephraim"
so that Israel was greatly distressed
"Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "so that the people of Israel suffered much"
Judges 10:10
the people of Israel called out to Yahweh
This means the people of Israel desperately asked Yahweh for help.
because we abandoned our God
The people no longer obeying and worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if they left Yahweh and went somewhere else.
abandoned our God
The people are speaking to Yahweh and refer to him as "our God." This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "abandoned you, our God"
Judges 10:12
and also from the Sidonians?
God is rebuking the people of Israel for their worship of other gods. The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Did I not deliver you" in verse 11 ends here. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who delivered you ... and also from the Sidonians."
Maonites
These are the people from the clan or family of Maon.
from their power
Here "power" represents the Amalekites and the Maonites. Alternate translation: "from them"
Judges 10:13
you abandoned me again
The people no longer obeying and worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if they left Yahweh and went somewhere else.
I will not keep adding to the times I deliver you
The phrase "keep adding to the times" is an idiom that means to continue to do something. You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Yahweh's saying. Alternate translation: "I will not keep on delivering you again and again" or "You can be sure that I will stop delivering you"
Judges 10:16
foreign gods among them
You can make explicit the implicit meaning of this statement. Alternate translation: "foreign gods whose images they possessed"
Yahweh could bear Israel's misery no longer
Here Israel refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "And Yahweh did not want the people of Israel to suffer any longer"
Judges 10:17
the Ammonites were summoned and set
Possible meanings are 1) "the leaders of the Ammonites called them to come to fight, so they set" or 2) "the Ammonites gathered together."
Judges 10:18
Who is the man who will begin to fight the Ammonites?
"Who will lead our army to fight against the Ammonites?"

11 [1]Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was his father.[2]Gilead's wife also gave birth to his other sons. When his wife's sons grew up, they forced Jephthah to leave the house and said to him, "You are not going to inherit anything from our father's household. You are the son of another woman."[3]So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless men gathered around Jephthah and they traveled with him.

[4]Some days later, the people of Ammon made war against Israel.[5]When the people of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah back from the land of Tob.[6]They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader that we may fight with the people of Ammon."
[7]Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "You hated me and forced me to leave my father's house. Why do you come to me now when you are in trouble?"[8]The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we are turning to you now; come with us and fight with the people of Ammon, and you will become the leader over all who live in Gilead."
[9]Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the people of Ammon, and if Yahweh gives us victory over them, I will be your leader."[10]The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "May Yahweh be witness between us if we do not do as we say!"[11]So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him leader and commander over them. When he was before Yahweh in Mizpah, Jephthah repeated all the promises he made.

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[12]Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying, "What is this conflict between us? Why have you come with force to take our land?"[13]The king of the people of Ammon answered to the messengers of Jephthah, "Because when Israel came up out of Egypt, they seized my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, over to the Jordan. Now give back those lands in peace."
[14]Again Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon,[15]and he said, "This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not take the land of Moab and the land of the people of Ammon,[16]but they came up from Egypt, and Israel went through the wilderness to the Sea of Reeds and on to Kadesh.
[17]When Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Please let us pass through your land,' the king of Edom would not listen. They also sent messengers to the king of Moab, but he refused. So Israel stayed at Kadesh.[18]Then they went through the wilderness and turned away from the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and they went along the east side of the land of Moab and they camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not go into the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was Moab's border.
[19]Israel sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon; Israel said to him, 'Please, let us pass through your land to the place that is ours.'[20]But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his army together and camped at Jahaz, and there he fought against Israel.
[21]Then Yahweh, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel and they defeated them. So Israel took all the land of the Amorites who lived in that country.[22]They took over everything within the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and from the wilderness to the Jordan.
[23]So then Yahweh, the God of Israel, has driven out the Amorites before his people Israel, and should you now take possession of their land?[24]Will you not take over the land that Chemosh, your god, gives you? So whatever land Yahweh our God has given us, we will take over.[25]Now are you really better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he dare to have an argument with Israel? Did he ever wage war against them?
[26]While Israel lived for three hundred years in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are along the banks of the Arnon—why then did you not take them back during that time?[27]I have not done you wrong, but you are doing me wrong by attacking me. Yahweh, the judge, will decide today between the people of Israel and the people of Ammon."
[28]But the king of the people of Ammon rejected the warning Jephthah sent him.

[29]Then the Spirit of Yahweh came on Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed through to the people of Ammon.[30]Jephthah made a vow to Yahweh and said, "If you give me victory over the people of Ammon,[31]then whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the people of Ammon will belong to Yahweh, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering."
[32]So Jephthah passed through to the people of Ammon to fight against them, and Yahweh gave him victory.[33]He attacked them and caused a great slaughter from Aroer as far as Minnith—twenty cities—and to Abel Keramim. So the people of Ammon were subdued before the people of Israel.

[34]Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah, and there his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dancing. She was his only child, and besides her he had neither son nor daughter.[35]As soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, "Oh! My daughter! You have crushed me with sorrow, and you have become one who troubles me! For I have opened my mouth to Yahweh, and I cannot turn back on my promise."
[36]She said to him, "My father, you have made a vow to Yahweh, do to me everything you promised, because Yahweh has taken vengeance for you against your enemies, the Ammonites."[37]She said to her father, "Let this promise be kept for me. Leave me alone for two months, that I may leave and go down to the hills and grieve over my virginity, I and my companions."
[38]He said, "Go." He sent her away for two months. She left him, she and her companions, and they grieved her virginity in the hills.[39]At the end of two months she returned to her father, who did with her according to the promise of the vow he had made. Now she had never known a man, and it became a custom in Israel[40]that the daughters of Israel every year, for four days, would retell the story of the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Judges 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Jephthah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jephthah the leader

Jephthah was half Israelite and half Canaanite by birth. While all of the judges were called by Yahweh, it is the leaders who called Jephthah to help them, but Yahweh still used Jephthah to help them.

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Links:

Judges 11:1 Notes

Judges 11:1

Gileadite

This is someone who is from the region of Gilead. It is a coincidence that his father's name is also Gilead. See how you translated this in [Judges 10:3]

Judges 11:2

When his wife's sons grew up

"When the sons of Gilead's wife became adults"

Judges 11:3

the land of Tob

Tob is the name of a region.

they traveled with him

"they followed him" or "they went everywhere together"

Judges 11:4

Some days later

"Some time later"

made war against Israel

The phrase "made war" is an idiom which means that they attacked Israel and were at war with them. Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "attacked the people of Israel"

Judges 11:6

that we may fight with

"so that we can fight against"

Judges 11:7

my father's house

Here "house" refers to people living in the house. Alternate translation: "my family"

Judges 11:8

That is why we are turning to you now

The word "that" refers to what Jephthah said about about them being in trouble. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "We are turning to you now because we are in trouble"

fight with the people of Ammon

"fight against the people of Ammon"

Judges 11:11

leader and commander

These two words basically have the same meaning repeated to emphasize how important Jephthah had became. You can combine the two words. Alternate translation: "commander"

When he was before Yahweh in Mizpah, Jephthah repeated all the promises he made

This is an idiom. Here the phrase "before Yahwheh" means that he repeated his promises as a vow before Yahweh. Alternate translation: "When Jephthah was in Mizpah he repeated all of these promises as a vow before Yahweh"

all the promises he made

This refers to the promises he made to the leaders of Gilead about becoming their leader.

Judges 11:12

What is this conflict between us

"Why is there conflict between us?" Jephthah is asking the king why they are angry with Israel.

Why have you come with force to take our land

The word "you" refers to the King of Ammon and represents himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Why have your soldiers come to seize our land"

come with force to take

"come to forcefully take"

Judges 11:13

Arnon ... Jabbok

These are the names of two rivers.

over to the Jordan

"on the other side of the Jordan River"

in peace

"peacefully" or "and do not try to defend them"

Judges 11:15

he said

Here the word "he" refers to the messenger who was speaking to the king. This may be written with the word "they" as in the UDB, referring to the group of messengers. Alternate translation: "Jephthah told the messengers to say" or "they said"

Judges 11:16

they came up from Egypt

Whenever people traveled to the promised land it is referred to as going "up" to the promised land. When the Israelites left Egypt they were on their way to the promised land. Alternate translation: "they left Egypt"

Judges 11:17

General Information:

Jephthah's messengers continue to speak.

When Israel sent messengers

The messengers were sent by the leaders of Israel. Alternate translation: "When the leaders of Israel sent messengers"

pass through

"go through" or "cross"

would not listen

This phrase is an idiom that means to "refuse." Alternate translation: "refused" or "denied their request"

They also sent messengers to the king of Moab

The reason that Israel sent messengers to the king of Moab can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "They also send messengers to the king of Moab with the same request"

but he refused

The king of Moab refused Israel's request to pass through Moab. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but he also refused and would not let them pass through the land of Moab"

Judges 11:18

Arnon

This is the name of a river. See how you translated this in Judges 11:13.

Judges 11:19

General Information:

Jephthah's messengers continue to speak.

Israel sent messengers to Sihon

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The messengers were sent by the leaders of Israel.
Alternate translation: "When the leaders of Israel sent messengers"
Sihon
This is the name of a person.
Heshbon
This is the name of a city.
Judges 11:20
Jahaz
This is the name of a city.
But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory
Sihon did not trust the people of Israel to pass through his land peacefully. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But Sihon did not trust the people of Israel to pass through his territory peacefully"
there he fought
The word "he" refers to Sihon and represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "there they fought" or "there his army fought"
Judges 11:21
General Information:
Jephthah's messengers continue to speak.
Sihon
See how you translated this man's name in Judges 11:19.
gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel
Here "hand" refers to power to defeat in battle. Alternate translation: "gave Israel power over Sihon and all his people"
Judges 11:22
Arnon ... Jabbok
See how you translated the names of these rivers in Judges 11:13.
Judges 11:23
General Information:
Jephthah's messengers continue to speak.
should you now take possession of their land?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with this rhetorical question. The word "their" refers to the Israel. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "therefore, you should not take possession of their land."
Judges 11:24
Will you not take over the land that Chemosh, your god, gives you?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with a rhetorical question. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should only take over the land that Chemosh, your god, gives you."
take over
This is an idiom which means to take control of something. Alternate translation: "take control of" or "take possession of"
Chemosh
This is the name of a false god.
Judges 11:25
Now are you really better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with a rhetorical question. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not better than Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab."
Balak ... Zippor
These are the names of men.
Did he dare to have an argument with Israel?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with a rhetorical question. This question can be translated with a statement. Alternate translation: "Yet he did not dare to have an argument with Israel."
Did he ever wage war against them?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with a rhetorical question. This question can be translated with a statement. Alternate translation: "Nor did he ever wage war against them."
Judges 11:26
General Information:
Jephthah's messengers continue to speak.
three hundred years
"300 years"
Heshbon
Translate the name of this city the same way that you did in Judges 11:19.
Aroer
This is the name of a city.
why then did you not take them back during that time?
Jephthah is rebuking the king of the Ammonites with a rhetorical question. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you should have taken them back during that time." or "now it is too late; you should have taken them back long ago."
Judges 11:27
I have not done you wrong, but you are doing me wrong by attacking me
Jephthah is speaking to the Sihon. Here Jephthah speaks about the Israelites as though they were himself and of the Ammonites as if they were Sihon their king. Alternate translation: "The Israelites have not done wrong to your people, but your people are doing us wrong by attacking us"
done you wrong ... doing me wrong
This is an idiom. To do someone wrong means to do something wrong to them. Alternate translation: "treated you wrongly ... treating me wrongly" or "treated you unfairly ... treating me unfairly"
Judges 11:29
the Spirit of Yahweh came on Jephthah
This is an idiom which means that the Spirit influenced Jephthah's decisions. Alternate translation: "the Spirit of Yahweh took control of Jephthah"
he passed through Gilead and Manasseh ... from Mizpah of Gilead
Jephthah passed through these places enlisting men for his army to go to war with the people of Ammon. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "he gathered men for his army as he passed through Gilead and Manasseh ... from Mizpah of Gilead"
Judges 11:31
I will offer it up
This is an idiom which means to give something as an offering. Alternate translation: "I will offer it to you" or "I will sacrifice it to you"

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Judges 11:32

So Jephthah passed through ... Yahweh gave him victory

Since Jephthah was the leader of his army, he and his army are often spoken of as Jephthah himself. Alternate translation: "So Jephthah and his army passed through ... Yahweh gave them victory"

Judges 11:33

He attacked

Since Jephthah was the leader of his army, he and his army are often spoken of as Jephthah himself

Aroer

Translate the name of this city the same way you did in Judges 11:26.

Minnith ... Abel Keramim

These are the names of cities.

twenty cities

"including 20 cities"

Judges 11:34

tambourines

musical instruments with heads like drums that can be hit and with pieces of metal around their sides that sound when the instruments are shaken

Judges 11:35

he tore his clothes

This is an act that shows mourning or great sadness. Alternate translation: "he tore his clothes from grief"

You have crushed me with sorrow ... you have become one who troubles me

Jephthah said basically the same thing twice to emphasize that he was very sad.

You have crushed me with sorrow

Here Jephthah speaks of his great sorrow as something that crushes him. Alternate translation: "You have caused me great sorrow" or "You have filled me with sorrow"

you have become one who troubles me

Here Jephthah talks about his great distress and trouble as if it were pain. Alternate translation: "you have caused me great distress"

I cannot turn back on my promise

This is an idiom. To turn back on a promise means to not do what you have promised to do. Alternate translation: "I must do what I have promised" or "I cannot break my promise"

Judges 11:36

has taken vengeance for you against your enemies, the Ammonites

Yahweh has taken vengence for him by defeating his enemies. The meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "has taken vengeance for you against your enemies, the Ammonites, by defeating them"

Judges 11:37

Let this promise be kept for me

This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "Keep this promise for me" or "Keep this promise concerning me"

grieve over my virginity

"weep because I am a virgin" or "cry because I will never be married"

Judges 11:39

had never known a man

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "had never had sexual relations with a man"

Judges 11:40

the Gileadite

This refers to someone from Gilead. See how you translated this in Judges 10:3.

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12 [1]A call went out to the men of Ephraim; they passed through Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you pass through to fight against the people of Ammon and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down over you."[2]Jephthah said to them, "I and my people were in a great conflict with the people of Ammon. When I called you, you did not rescue me from them.
[3]When I saw that you did not rescue me, I put my life in my own hand and passed through against the people of Ammon, and Yahweh gave me victory. Why have you come to fight against me today?"[4]Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and he fought against Ephraim. The men of Gilead attacked the men of Ephraim because they said, "You Gileadites are fugitives in Ephraim—in Ephraim and Manasseh."
[5]The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan leading to Ephraim. When any of the survivors of Ephraim said, "Let me go over the river," the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No,"[6]then they would say to him, "Say: Shibboleth," and if he said "Sibboleth" (for he could not pronounce the word correctly), the Gileadites would seize him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed at that time.

[7]Jephthah served as a judge over Israel for six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

[8]After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem served as a judge over Israel.[9]He had thirty sons. He gave away thirty daughters in marriage and he brought from the outside thirty daughters of other men for his sons. He judged Israel for seven years.
[10]Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.[11]After him Elon the Zebulunite served as judge over Israel. He judged Israel for ten years.[12]Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

[13]After him, Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite served as a judge over Israel.[14]He had forty sons and thirty grandsons. They rode on seventy donkeys, and he judged Israel for eight years.[15]Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim in the hill country of the Amalekites.

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Judges 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Jephthah concludes in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Shibboleth

This is a word in Hebrew. Its importance in this chapter is because of its sounds, not its meaning. The translator should not translate the meaning of this word, but should transliterate or transfer it into the target language by substituting letters that have the same sounds.

Links:

Judges 12:1 Notes

Judges 12:1

A call went out to the men of Ephraim

Here the abstract noun "call" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "The men of Ephraim were called together" or "The men ... of Ephraim called together their soldiers"

Zaphon

This is the name of a city.

passed through ... pass through

or "traveled through ... travel" or "journeyed through ... journey"

We will burn your house down over you

This idiom means to burn down a house with people inside it. Alternate translation: "We will burn your house down with you still in it"

Judges 12:2

When I called you, you

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Ephraim.

did not rescue me

Jephthah uses the word "me" to refer to himself and all the people of Gilead. Alternate translation: "do not rescue us"

Judges 12:3

you did not rescue me

The word "you" is plural and refers to the men of Ephraim. Jephthah is referring to the people of Gilead, including himself, when he says "me." Alternate translation: "you did not rescue us"

I put my life in my own hand

This is an idiom which means to risk one's life and to rely only on one's own strength. Jephthah continues to refer to the people of Gilead as himself. Alternate translation: "We risked our lives, relying on our own strength"

Yahweh gave me victory

Jephthah is referring to Yahweh giving the men of Gilead victory over the Ammonites. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave us victory over them" or "Yahweh allowed us to defeat them in battle"

Why have you come to fight against me

The word "you" is plural and refers to the men of Ephraim. Jephthah is referring to the people of Gilead, including himself, when he says "me." Alternate translation: "Why have you come to fight against us"

passed through against the people of Ammon

This means that they fought against the Ammonites as they passed through Ammon. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "fought against the people of Ammon as we passed through their region"

Judges 12:4

he fought against Ephraim

The word "he" refers to Jephthah and all the fighting men of Gilead. Alternate translation: "they fought against Ephraim"

You Gileadites are fugitives

You can make the meaning of this insult explicit. Alternate translation: "You Gileadites do not really belong here. You are just people who came here to live"

Gileadites

people from Gilead

in Ephraim—in Ephraim and Manasseh

"in the regions of Ephraim and Manasseh" or "in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh." Here "Ephraim" and "Manasseh" refer to regions and are named after the tribes which live there.

Judges 12:5

to Ephraim

"to the land of Ephraim"

The Gileadites captured

"The Gileadites controlled" or "The Gileadites occupied"

fords

These are places where you can cross the river on foot because the water is shallow.

Ephraimite

person from the tribe of Ephraim

Judges 12:6

Shibboleth ... Sibboleth

These words have no meaning. Copy these words into your language, and make sure that the beginning of the words, that is the letters "Sh" and "S" are translated differently.

pronounce the word

"make the sound of the word"

Forty-two thousand

"42,000"

Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They killed forty-two thousand Ephraimites"

Judges 12:7

Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"Jephthah the Gileadite died and they buried him"
Judges 12:8
Ibzan of Bethlehem
This is the name of a man from Bethlehem.
Judges 12:9
He gave away thirty daughters in marriage
Here "give away ... in marriage" is an idiom which means that he allowed his daughters to get married. Alternate translation: "He had thirty daughters and arranged a marriage for each of them"
he brought from the outside thirty daughters of other men for his sons
The idiom "bring them in from the outside" means that he had women from other clans marry his sons. Alternate translation: "he arranged for thirty daughters of other men from outside of his clan to marry his sons"
Judges 12:10
was buried at Bethlehem
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him in Bethlehem"
Judges 12:11
Elon
This is the name of a man.
Zebulunite
someone from the tribe of Zebulun
Judges 12:12
Aijalon
Translate the name of this place the same way you did in Judges 1:35.
was buried in Aijalon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him in Aijalon"
Judges 12:13
Abdon ... Hillel
These are the names of men.
Pirathon
This is the name of a city.
Judges 12:14
They rode on seventy donkeys
These men owned seventy donkeys, which they did ride. Here the word "rode" is used instead of "owned." Alternate translation: "They owned seventy donkeys"
forty sons ... thirty grandsons ... seventy donkeys
"40 sons ... 30 grandsons ... 70 donkeys
Judges 12:15
Pirathonite ... Pirathon
Pirathon is the name of a place, someone who is from that place is called a Pirathonite.

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13 [1]The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

[2]There was a man from Zorah, of the clan of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and so she had not given birth.
[3]The angel of Yahweh appeared to the woman and said to her, "See now, you have been barren, and you have not given birth, but you will conceive and you will give birth to a son.[4]Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, and do not eat anything unclean.
[5]Look, you will become pregnant and give birth to a son. No razor will be used upon his head, for the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he will begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines."
[6]Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, very terrible. I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name.[7]He said to me, 'Look! You will become pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and do not eat any food that the law declares to be unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the time he is in your womb until the day of his death.'"

[8]Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh and said, "Oh, Lord, please let the man of God you sent come again to us so that he may teach us what we are to do for the child who soon will be born."[9]God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came to the woman again when she was sitting in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her.
[10]So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Look! The man has appeared to me—the one who came to me the other day!"[11]Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the man who spoke with my wife?" The man said, "I am."
[12]So Manoah said, "Now may your words come true. What will be the rules for the child, and what will be his work?"[13]The angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, "She must carefully do everything that I said to her.[14]She may not eat anything that comes from the vines, and do not let her drink wine or strong drink or eat anything unclean. She must obey everything I have commanded her to do."

[15]Manoah said to the angel of Yahweh, "Please stay for a while, to give us time to prepare a young goat for you."[16]The angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, "Even if I stay, I will not eat your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to Yahweh." (Manoah did not know that he was the angel of Yahweh.)
[17]Manoah said to the angel of Yahweh, "What is your name, so we may honor you when your words come true?"[18]The angel of Yahweh said to him, "Why do you ask my name? It is wonderful!"

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[19]So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered them on the rock to Yahweh. He did something marvelous while Manoah and his wife were watching.[20]When the flame went up from the altar toward the sky, the angel of Yahweh went up in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife saw this and lay facedown on the ground.

[21]The angel of Yahweh did not appear again to Manoah or his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of Yahweh.
[22]Manoah said to his wife, "We are sure to die, because we have seen God!"
[23]But his wife said to him, "If Yahweh wanted to kill us, he would not have received the burnt offering and the grain offering we gave him. He would not have shown us all these things, nor at this time would he have let us hear such things."
[24]Later the woman gave birth to a son, and called his name Samson. The boy grew up and Yahweh blessed him.[25]Yahweh's Spirit began to stir him in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the account of Samson (Judges 13-16).

Special concepts in this chapter

Warning not to cut his hair

The angel of the Lord prophesied about Samson and gave instructions to Samson's mother. Samson's mother was to offer up her son under a Nazarite vow. This was a special type of vow, dedicating Samson to Yahweh. Part of this vow prohibited the cutting of the person's hair. (See: prophet and vow)

Links:

Judges 13:1 Notes

Judges 13:1

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [Judges 2:11]

he gave them into the hand of the Philistines

Here "hand" refers to power to gain victory in battle. Alternate translation: "he allowed the Philistines to defeat them" or "he allowed them to be oppressed by the Philistines"

forty years

"40 years"

Judges 13:2

Zorah

This was the name of a town in Israel. It was in the region of Judah near the border of Dan.

Danites

people from the tribe of Dan

Manoah

This is the name of a man.

Judges 13:3

See now, you

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: you"

give birth to a son

This refers to childbirth. Alternate translation: "bear a son" or "have a baby boy"

Judges 13:4

anything unclean

Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

Judges 13:5

Look

"Pay attention" or "Listen"

No razor will be used upon his head

Here the word "head" refers to his hair. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one should ever cut his hair"

razor

a sharp knife used to cut hair close to the skin

a Nazirite to God

This means that he will be devoted to God as a Nazirite. Alternate translation: "a Nazirite devoted to God" or "devoted to God as a Nazirite"

from the womb

Here the word "womb" refers to the time before the child is born. Alternate translation: "from before he is born"

the hand of the Philistines

Here the word "hand" means control. Alternate translation: "the control of the Philistines" or "being under the Philistine's control"

Judges 13:6

A man of God

This means that the man was sent by God. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "A man that God sent"

his appearance was like that of an angel of God, very terrible

Here "terrible" means "frightening." Alternate translation: "I was very afraid of him because he looked like an angel of God"

Judges 13:7

Look

"Pay attention" or "Listen"

give birth to a son

This refers to childbirth. Alternate translation: "bear a son" or "have a baby boy"

any food that the law declares to be unclean

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Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean.

a Nazirite to God

This means that he will be devoted to God as a Nazirite. See how you translated this in [Judges 3:5]

from the time he is in your womb until the day of his death

This emphasizes that it would be for his entire life. Alternate translation: "all his life"

Judges 13:8

Manoah

See how you translated this man's name in Judges 13:2.

Judges 13:9

came to the woman

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of the author's words. Alternate translation: "came to Manoah's wife"

Judges 13:10

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

The man

This refers to the angel of God in [Judges 13:3]

Judges 13:12

your words

"what you have said"

Judges 13:14

anything that comes from the vines

Here the angel refers to any food that grow on a vine as "coming" from the vine. Alternate translation: "anything that grows on a vine"

unclean

Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. See how you translated this phrase in [Judges 13:7]

Judges 13:15

prepare a young goat for you

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Manoah's statement. Alternate translation: "cook a young goat for you to eat"

Judges 13:17

your words come true

"what you have said comes true"

Judges 13:18

Why do you ask my name?

The angel asks this question as a rebuke. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not ask me what my name is."

It is wonderful

It may be helpful to explain more explicitly why they should not ask his name. Alternate translation: "It is too wonderful for you to understand"

Judges 13:19

with the grain offering

This law requires a grain offering to be offered when a burnt offering is made. Alternate translation: "with the grain offering required with it" or "with the grain offering to accompany it"

on the rock

"on the altar." The altar Manoah sacrificed the offering on was a rock.

He did something

"The angel did something"

Judges 13:20

the angel of Yahweh went up in the flame of the altar

"the angel of Yahweh went back up into heaven through the flames on the altar"

lay facedown on the ground

"lay with their faces to the ground." This is a sign of respect and honor, but it also shows their fear of Yahweh.

Judges 13:21

that he was the angel of Yahweh

The word "he" refers to the man who Manoah and his wife had seen.

Judges 13:22

We are sure to die, because we have seen God

It is implied that they think God will cause them to die. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "God will cause us to die because we have seen him"

Judges 13:23

He would not have shown us all these things, nor at this time would he have let us hear such things

Manoah's wife said basically the same thing twice for emphasis. These two statements can be combined. Alternate translation: "He would not have told us what he wanted us to do"

Judges 13:24

the woman

"Manoah's wife"

gave birth to a son

This refers to childbirth. Alternate translation: "bore a son" or "had a baby boy"

grew up

"became an adult" or "matured"

Judges 13:25

Yahweh's Spirit began to stir him

The word "stir" here refers to causing Samson to act. "Yahweh's Spirit began to cause him to act" or "Yahweh's Spirit began to control him"

Mahaneh Dan ... Eshtaol

Mahaneh Dan is the name of a temporary camp that the tribe of Dan lived in while they looked for a permanent home. Eshtaol is the name of a town.

Zorah

Translate the name of this town the same way you did in Judges 13:2.

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14 [1]Samson went down to Timnah, and there he saw a woman, one of the daughters of the Philistines.[2]When he returned, he told his father and mother, "I saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. Now get her for me to be my wife."

[3]His father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people? Are you going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for

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when I look at her, she pleases me."[4]But his father and his mother did not know that this matter came from Yahweh, for he desired to create a conflict with the Philistines (for at that time the Philistines were ruling Israel).

[5]Then Samson went down to Timnah with his father and his mother, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And, look, there one of the young lions came up and was roaring at him.[6]Yahweh's Spirit suddenly came on him, and he tore the lion apart as easily as he would have torn apart a small goat, and he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.
[7]He went and spoke with the woman, and when he looked at her, she pleased Samson.[8]A few days later when he returned to marry her, he turned aside to look for the carcass of the lion. And, look, there was a swarm of bees and honey in what was left of the lion's body.[9]He scraped up the honey in his hands and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and his mother, he gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them he had taken the honey out of what was left of the lion's body.

[10]Samson's father went down to where the woman was, and Samson gave a feast there, for this was the custom of the young men.[11]As soon as her relatives saw him, they brought him thirty of their friends to be with him.
[12]Samson said to them, "Let me now tell you a riddle. If one of you can find it out and tell me the answer during the seven days of the feast, I will give out thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes.[13]But if you cannot tell me the answer, then you will give me thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes." They said to him, "Tell us your riddle, so we may hear it."
[14]He said to them,
"Out of the eater was something to eat;
out of the strong was something sweet."
But his guests could not find the answer in three days.

[15]On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Trick your husband so that he may tell us the answer to the riddle, or we will burn up you and your father's house. Did you invite us here in order to make us poor?"
[16]Samson's wife started to weep in front of him; she said, "All you do is hate me! You do not love me. You have told a riddle to some of my people, but you have not told me the answer." Samson said to her, "Look here, if I have not told my father or my mother, should I tell you?"[17]She cried during the seven days that their feast lasted. On the seventh day he told her the answer because she pressured him very much. She told the answer to the relatives of her people.
[18]Before the sun went down on the seventh day the men of the city said to him,
"What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?"
Samson said to them,
"If you had not plowed with my heifer,
you would not have found the answer to my riddle."

[19]Then Yahweh's Spirit suddenly came on Samson with power. Samson went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men. He took their plunder, and he gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he went up to his father's house.[20]Samson's wife was given to his best friend.

Judges 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Samson continues in this chapter.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 14:14, 18.
Special concepts in this chapter
Intermarriage
It was considered sinful for an Israel to marry a Canaanite or anyone from a different people group. This is why Samson's parents did not want him to marry a Philistine woman. They use rhetorical questions to convince him that he is sinning. This woman caused Samson many problems.

Links:

Judges 14:1 Notes

Judges 14:1
Samson went down to Timnah

The phrase "went down" is used here because Timnah is lower in elevation than where his father's house was.

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Timah is the name of a city in the Sorek Valley.

one of the daughters of the Philistines

The word "daughter" is a polite way to refer to a young, unmarried woman. Alternate translation: "one of the unmarried women among the Philistine people" or "a Philistine girl"

Judges 14:2

Now get her for me to be my wife

This is an idiom. Samson was demanding his parents to speak to the Philistine woman's parents about marriage. Alternate translation: "Now arrange for her to become my wife" or "Make the arrangements for me to marry her"

Judges 14:3

Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people?

They ask this question to suggest that they could find Samson a wife among their own people. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely there are women among your people whom you could marry."

the daughters of your relatives

The word "daughter" is a polite way to refer to a young, unmarried woman. Alternate translation: "one of the unmarried women among your relatives"

Are you going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?

This question is asked to rebuke Samson. This question can be written as a statement. You can make explicit the reason his parents do not want him to marry a Philistine. Alternate translation: "You really should not marry a Philistine woman because the Philistine people do not worship Yahweh."

Get her for me

This is an idiom. Samson was demanding his parents to speak to the Philistine woman's parents about marriage. Alternate translation: "Now arrange for her to be my wife"

she pleases me

This means that Samson thinks she is beautiful. "I am pleased by how beautiful she is" or "she is beautiful"

Judges 14:4

this matter

This refers to Samson's request to marry the Philistine woman.

for he desired to create a conflict

The word "he" refers to Yahweh.

Judges 14:5

Samson went down to Timnah

The phrase "went down" is used here because Timnah is lower in elevation than where his father's house was. Timnah was a city in the Sorek Valley. Translate the name of this city the same way you did in [Judges 14:1]

And, look, there one of the young lions came up

Here the word "look" is used to draw the readers attention to a surprising event that happens in the story. The phrase "came up" means that the lion came near him. Alternate translation: "Suddenly, a young lion came near him"

was roaring at him

"threatened him." This is the kind of noise that a lion makes when it threatens to attack something.

Judges 14:6

Yahweh's Spirit suddenly came on him

The phrase "came on" means that Yahweh's Spirit influenced Samson. In this case, he made him very strong. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's Spirit made him very strong"

tore ... apart

tore into two pieces

had nothing in his hand

Here it states that he had nothing in his hand to emphasize that he was not holding a weapon. Alternate translation: "did not have a weapon"

Judges 14:7

she pleased Samson

This means that he thought she was very beautiful. Alternate translation: "he was pleased by how beautiful she was" or "he thought she was very beautiful"

Judges 14:8

he turned aside

This means that he left his path to do something. Alternate translation: "he left the path"

carcass

dead body

And, look, there was a swarm of bees

Here the word "look" is used to draw the reader's attention to something surprising that happens in the story. Alternate translation: "He found a swarm of bees"

swarm

large group of insects

Judges 14:9

scraped up

"gathered up"

Judges 14:10

Samson's father went down to where the woman was

The phrase "went down" is used to describe Timnah which is lower in elevation than where Samson's father lives. Alternate translation: "Samson's father went to where the woman lived"

the custom of the young men

It may be helpful to state that this was a marriage custom. Alternate translation: "the custom of young men who were getting married"

Judges 14:11

thirty of their friends

"30 of their friends"

Judges 14:12

riddle

a game in which the players must discover the answer to a difficult question

can find it out

This means to figure out the meaning of the riddle. Alternate translation: "can figure out its meaning"

thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes

"30 linen robes and 30 sets of clothes"

linen

a type of cloth

Judges 14:13

But if you cannot tell me

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the guests at the feast.

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Judges 14:14

General Information:

Samson tells his riddle. Since it is supposed to be hard to understand, do not translate it in a way that people will immediately know what it means.

Out of the eater was something to eat

"Out of the eater came something to eat" or "Something to eat came out of something that eats"

the eater

The noun "eater" can be expressed as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "the thing that eats"

out of the strong was something sweet

"out of the strong came something sweet" or "Something that is sweet came out of something that is strong"

the strong

This refers to something that is strong. Alternate translation: "the strong thing"

his guests

"the men at his feast"

could not find the answer

Here figuring out the answer to the riddle is spoke of as if it were something hidden that the guest had to search for and find. Alternate translation: "could not figure out the answer"

Judges 14:15

the fourth day

"day 4"

Trick

mislead or fool someone into doing something they would not want to do

your father's house

These words could refer to 1) the actual house. Alternate translation: "the house your father and his family live in" Or 2) the people who live in the father's physical house. Alternate translation: "your family"

will burn up

The phrase "burn up" means to burn something completely. If a person is "burnt up," it means that person is burned to death.

Did you invite us here in order to make us poor?

They ask her this question to accuse her of doing evil. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have brought us here to make us poor!"

to make us poor

They would become poor if they had to buy him new clothes if they could not solve the riddle. Alternate translation: "to make us poor by forcing us to buy him new clothes"

Judges 14:16

All you do is hate me! You do not love me

Samson's wife basically said the same thing twice for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You do not really love me at all"

riddle

a game in which the players must discover the answer to a difficult question

Look here

This is used to get someones attention. Here "look" means to "listen." Alternate translation: "Listen to me" or "Pay attention to what I am about to say"

if I have not told my father or my mother, should I tell you?

Samson was rebuking her for demanding that he tell her the answer. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have not even told my father or mother. I will not tell you." or "you should not demand that I tell you, since I have not even told my parents, and they are closer to me than you are."

Judges 14:17

during the seven days that their feast lasted

Possible meanings are 1) "during the seven days of their feast" or 2) "during the rest of the seven days of their feast."

the seventh day

"day 7"

she pressured him very much

Here the word "pressured" means "urged." Alternate translation: "she kept urging him to tell her"

Judges 14:18

the men of the city

This refers to Samson's wife's relatives. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the young men" or "her relatives"

the seventh day

"day 7"

What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?

This is the answer to the riddle. It may be written as a statement instead of as questions. If necessary it could be made clear how this relates to the riddle by adding more information. Alternate translation: "Honey is sweet and a lion is strong." or "Honey is sweet and it came out of a lion."

If you had not plowed with my heifer

Samson compares their using his wife to get the answer to someone using another person's heifer to plow his field. Alternate translation: "If you had not used my wife"

plowed

To plow is to use an animal to pull a blade through soil to prepare the soil for seeds.

Judges 14:19

came on Samson with power

The phrase "came on" means that Yahweh's Spirit influenced Samson. In this case, he made him very strong. Alternate translation: "made Samson very strong" or "made Samson very powerful"

killed thirty of their men

"killed 30 of their men"

their men

"the men who lived there"

plunder

things taken by force, usually after a fight or battle

their clothes

These were from the plunder he had taken from Ashkelon. Alternate translation: "the sets of clothing that he had taken"

Burning with anger

"Very angry"

went up to his father's house

The phrase "went up" is used here because Samson was at Timnah which is lower in elevation than where his father's house is located.

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Judges 14:20

Samson's wife was given to his best friend

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his wife's father gave her to his best friend"

best friend

"closest friend"

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15 [1]After some days, during the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said to himself, "I will go to my wife's room." But her father would not allow him to go in.[2]Her father said, "I really thought you hated her, so I gave her to your friend. Her younger sister is more beautiful than she is, is she not? Take her instead."
[3]Samson said to them, "This time I will be innocent in regard to the Philistines when I hurt them."[4]Samson went and caught three hundred foxes and he tied together each pair, tail to tail. Then he took torches and tied them in the middle of each pair of tails.
[5]When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and they set fire to both the stacked grain and the grain standing in the field, along with the vineyards and the olive orchards.[6]The Philistines asked, "Who did this?" They were told, "Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, did this because the Timnite took Samson's wife and gave her to his friend." Then the Philistines went and burned up her and her father.
[7]Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I will get my revenge against you, and after that is done, I will stop."[8]Then he cut them to pieces, hip and thigh, with a great slaughter. Then he went down and lived in a cave in the cliff of Etam.

[9]Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and spread out in Lehi.[10]The men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up so we may capture Samson, and do to him as he has done to us."
[11]Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cave in the cliff of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What is this you have done to us?" Samson said to them, "They did to me, and so I have done to them."
[12]They said to Samson, "We have come down to tie you up and give you into the hands of the Philistines." Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves."[13]They said to him, "No, we will only tie you with ropes and hand you over to them. We promise we will not kill you." Then they tied him up with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

[14]When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting as they met him. Then Yahweh's Spirit came on him with power. The ropes on his arms became like burnt flax, and they fell off his hands.
[15]Samson found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and he picked it up and killed a thousand men with it.[16]Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men."

[17]When Samson finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone, and he called the place Ramath Lehi.[18]Samson was very thirsty and called on Yahweh and said, "You have given this great victory to your servant. But now will I die of thirst and fall into the hands of those who are uncircumcised?"
[19]God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi and water came out. When he drank, his strength returned and he revived. So he called the name of that place En Hakkore, and it is at Lehi to this day.[20]Samson judged Israel in the days of the Philistines for twenty years.

Judges 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Samson continues in this chapter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 15:16.

Special concepts in this chapter

Samson's strength

The Spirit of Yahweh rushed upon Samson. This meant God gave Samson extraordinary strength. Samson's power is the power of Yahweh himself and he enacted the judgment of God on the Philistines. (See: holyspirit and judge)

Links:

Judges 15:1 Notes

Judges 15:1

He said to himself

This refers to thinking. Alternate translation: "He thought to himself"

I will go to my wife's room

Samson intended to sleep with his wife. This can be stated

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clearly. Alternate translation: "I will go to my wife's room, so we may sleep together"

would not allow him to go in

The phrase "her room" is understood from what Samson said to himself. It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "would not permit him to go into her room"

Judges 15:2

so I gave her to your friend

This means that he gave her to be his friend's wife. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "so I gave her to be married to your friend"

is she not?

He asks this question to imply that Samson should agree with him. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I hope you agree."

Take her instead

He is suggesting that Samson take her as his wife. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Take her to be your wife instead"

Judges 15:3

I will be innocent in regard to the Philistines when I hurt them

Samson thinks that he will be innocent if he attacks the Philistines because they wronged him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will be innocent if I hurt the Philistines because they have wronged me"

Judges 15:4

three hundred foxes

"300 foxes"

foxes

Foxes are animals like dogs that have long tails and that eat nesting birds and other small animals.

each pair

a pair is two of anything, such as two foxes, or two tails

tail to tail

"by their tails"

torches

A torch is a stick of wood with something flammable attached to one end; a torch is often used to light other things or to be carried for light.

Judges 15:5

standing grain

grain that is still growing on its stalk in the field

stacked grain

the stalks of grain collected in piles after it has been harvested

orchards

An orchard is a place where fruit trees are grown.

Judges 15:6

the Timnite's son-in-law

The husband of a man's daughter is a "son-in-law."

Timnite

This is a person from Timnah.

took Samson's wife and gave her to his friend

Samson's wife's father gave her in marriage to Samson's friend. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "took Samson's wife and allowed her to marry Samson's friend"

burned up

The phrase "burned up" means to burn something completely. If a person is "burned up," it means that person is burned to death.

Judges 15:7

said to them

"said to the Philistines"

If this is what you do

"Because you have done this."

Judges 15:8

he cut them to pieces, hip and thigh

Here "hip and thigh" refers to the whole body. This is a graphic description of how Samson killed the Philistines. Alternate translation: "He cut their bodies to pieces"

he went down

Here the phrase "went down" does not likely mean that he changed elevation, but rather, it is a way to describe someone going to another place. Alternate translation: "he went"

cave

an opening in a hill or mountainside

cliff

a high, rocky hill or mountainside

Etam

This is the name of the rocky hill country near Jerusalem.

Judges 15:9

the Philistines came up ... in Judah

The phrase "came up" is used here because Judah is higher in elevation than Philistia.

encamped in Judah

They set up their tents in Judah. This synecdoche means that they prepared to make war against Judah. Alternate translation: "prepared to make war against Judah"

spread out

moved apart from each other so they could control as much land as possible

Lehi

This is the name of a town in Judah.

Judges 15:10

have you come up against

Possible meanings are 1) "have you come up to attack" (see verse 9) or 2) "are you attacking."

We have come up

Possible meanings are 1) "We have come up" (see verse 9) or 2) "We are attacking you."

do to him as he has done to us

The Philistines are comparing how they want to kill Samson to how he killed many of the Philistines. Alternate translation: "kill him like he killed many of our people"

Judges 15:11

three thousand men of Judah

"3,000 men of Judah"

cave in the cliff of Etam

See how you translated this phrase in Judges 15:8.

Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What is this you have done to us?

The men of Judah ask Samson these questions to rebuke him. This questions may be written as a statements. Alternate translation: "You know that the Philistines are rulers over us but you act like they are not. What you have done has caused us great harm."

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They did to me, and so I have done to them
Samson is referring to how they killed his wife and how he killed them in revenge. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "They killed my wife, so I killed them"
Judges 15:12
the hands of the Philistines
Here "hands" refers to power. Alternate translation: "the Philistine's control"
Judges 15:13
hand you over to them
This means to cause someone to be under someone else's control. Alternate translation: "give you to the Philistines"
up from the rock
This refers to the cave in the cliff of Etam where Samson had gone in [Judges 15:8]
Judges 15:14
When he came
Samson was not travelling alone, he was being led by the men who had tied him with ropes. Alternate translation: "When they came"
Lehi
This is the name of a town in Judah. See how you translated this in Judges 15:9.
came on him with power
The phrase "came on" means that Yahweh's Spirit influenced Samson. In this case, he made him very strong. Alternate translation: "made Samson very strong"
The ropes on his arms became like burnt flax
Samson easily broken the ropes that bound his hands. The author describes how easily he broke the ropes by saying it was as if they had become burnt flax. Alternate translation: "He snapped the ropes on his arms as easily as if they had been stalks of burned flax"
flax
fibers from the flax plant used for making threads and cloth
Judges 15:15
a fresh jawbone
This means that the donkey had died very recently and its bones had not yet begun to decay. A jawbone is the bone in which the lower rows of teeth are set.
a thousand men
"1,000 men"
Judges 15:16
the jawbone of a donkey
"a donkey's jawbone"
heaps upon heaps
This phrase describes how many people Samson killed. There were enough bodies to make large piles of bodies. Alternate translation: "I have made heaps of dead bodies"
Judges 15:17
Ramath Lehi
This is the name of a place. It's name means "Jawbone Hill"
Judges 15:18
was very thirsty
"needed water to drink"
But now will I die of thirst and fall into ... uncircumcised?
Possible meanings are 1) Samson is so thirsty he could literally die. Alternate translation: "But now I will die of thirst and my body will fall into ... uncircumcised." or 2) Samson exaggerates how thirsty he is by asking if he will die of thirst. Alternate translation: "But now will you allow me to become so weak from my thirst that I fall into ... uncircumcised?"
die of thirst
This means to die because you have not drank enough and therefore, you do not have enough water in your body.
fall into the hands of those who are uncircumcised
The phrase "fall into the hands" means to be captured. "Those who are uncircumcised" refers to the Philistines and with the word "uncircumcised" emphasizing that they do not worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "be captured by those godless Philistines"
Judges 15:19
split open the hollow place
"opened a hole in the ground" or "opened the low place." This refers to a low area of ground where Yahweh caused a spring of water to appear.
Lehi
See how you translated this in Judges 15:9
his strength returned and he revived
These two phrase mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Samson became strong again. These two statements can be combined. Alternate translation: "he became strong again" or "he was revived"
En Hakkore
This is the name of a spring of water. The name means "spring of him who prayed."
it is at Lehi to this day
This means that the spring did not dry up but that it remained. The phrase "to this day" refers to the "present" time. Alternate translation: "the spring can still be found at Lehi, even today"
Judges 15:20
in the days of the Philistines
This refers to the time period that the Philistines controlled the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "during the time the Philistines controlled Israel"
for twenty years
"for 20 years"

16 [1]Samson went to Gaza and saw a prostitute there, and he went to her.[2]The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here."
The Gazites surrounded the place and in secret, they waited for him all night at the city gate. They kept silent all night. They had said, "Let us wait until daylight, and then let us kill him."
[3]Samson lay in bed until midnight. At midnight he got up and he took hold of the city gate and its two posts. He pulled them up out of the ground, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of the hill, in front of Hebron.

[4]After this, Samson came to love a woman who lived in the Valley of Sorek. Her name was Delilah.[5]The rulers of the

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Philistines came up to her, and said to her, "Trick Samson to see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him in order to humiliate him. Do this, and each one of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver."
[6]Then Delilah said to Samson, "Please, tell me how is it that you are so strong, and how could anyone bind you, so you might be controlled?"[7]Samson said to her, "If they tie me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I will become weak and be like any other man."
[8]Then the rulers of the Philistines brought up to Delilah seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she tied Samson up with them.[9]Now she had men hiding in secret, staying in her inner room. She said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings like a thread of yarn when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

[10]Then Delilah said to Samson, "This is how you have deceived me and told me lies. Please, tell me how you can be overpowered."[11]He said to her, "If they tie me up with new ropes which have never been used for work, I will become weak and like any other man."[12]So Delilah took new ropes and tied him up with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" The men lying in wait were in the inner room. But Samson tore off the ropes from his arms like they were a piece of thread.

[13]Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have deceived me and told me lies. Tell me how you may be overpowered." Samson said to her, "If you weave seven locks of my hair into a fabric on a loom, and then nail that to the loom, I will be like any other man."[14]While he slept, Delilah wove seven locks of his hair into the fabric on the loom and nailed it to the loom, and she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He woke from his sleep and he pulled out the fabric and the pin from the loom.

[15]She said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you do not share your secrets with me? You have mocked me these three times and have not told me how you have such great strength."[16]Every day she pressed him hard with her words, and she pressured him so much that he wished he would die.
[17]So Samson told her everything and said to her, "I have never had a razor cut the hair on my head, for I have been a Nazirite for God from my mother's womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I will become weak and be like every other man."

[18]When Delilah saw that he had told her the truth about everything, she sent and called for the rulers of the Philistines, saying, "Come up again, for he has told me everything." Then the rulers of the Philistines went up to her, bringing the silver in their hands.[19]She had him fall asleep in her lap. She called for a man to shave off the seven locks of his head, and she began to subdue him, for his strength had left him.
[20]She said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He woke up out of his sleep and said, "I will get out like the other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that Yahweh had left him.[21]The Philistines captured him and put out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. He turned the millstone at the prison house.[22]But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

[23]The rulers of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. They said, "Our god has conquered Samson, our enemy, and put him in our hands."[24]When the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said, "Our god has conquered our enemy and given him to us—the destroyer of our country, who killed many of us."

[25]When they were celebrating, they said, "Call for Samson, that he may make us laugh." They called for Samson out of the prison and he made them laugh. They made him stand between the pillars.[26]Samson said to the boy who held his hand, "Permit me to touch the pillars on which the building rests, so that I can lean against them."
[27]Now the house was full of men and women. All the rulers of the Philistines were there. There were on the roof about three thousand men and women, who were looking on while Samson was entertaining them.

[28]Samson called to Yahweh and said, "Lord Yahweh, call me to mind! Please strengthen me only this once, God, so that I may have revenge in one blow on the Philistines for taking my two eyes."[29]Samson held on to the two middle pillars on which the building rested, and he leaned against them, one pillar with his right hand, and the other with his left.
[30]Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He stretched out with his strength and the building fell on the rulers and on all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed when he died were more than those he killed during his life.
[31]Then his brothers and all the house of his father came down. They took him, brought him back and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burial place of Manoah, his father. Samson had judged Israel for twenty years.

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Judges 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The account of Samson concludes in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Samson's mistake

Samson mistakenly thought that he was the source of his strength. He did not realize that Yahweh had left him and without Yahweh, he had no strength. This was not Samson's only mistake. His foreign wife created most of his problems.

Links:

Judges 16:1 Notes

Judges 16:1

he went to her

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. Alternate translation: he had sexual relations with her" or "he lay with her"

Judges 16:2

The Gazites were told

The word "Gazites" refers to people from Gaza. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told the people of Gaza"

The Gazites surrounded the place ... they waited for him all night at the city gate

This implies that some Gazites surrounded the place where Samson was staying and others waited at the city gate so that he could not leave.

They kept silent all night

Possible meanings are 1) "They did not make any noise all night" or 2) "They made no attempt to attack him all night."

Judges 16:3

until midnight

"until the middle of the night"

its two posts

These are supports for the city gate. These posts were probably made from tree trunks and were buried deep into the ground. The doors of the city gate were attached to these posts.

bar and all

The bar was probably a heavy rod of iron that connected the gate to the posts. The doors of the city gate were probably made of heavy wooden beams or iron bars.

shoulders

the part of the human body where the arms and the neck attach to the body

Hebron

This is the name of a city.

Judges 16:4

Valley of Sorek

This is the name of a valley near Samson's home.

Judges 16:5

Trick

to mislead or fool someone into doing something they would not want to do

to see

This is an idiom that means to learn something. Alternate translation: "to understand" or "to learn"

where his great strength lies

This is an idiom that refers to where his strength comes from. Alternate translation: "what causes him to be very strong"

by what means we may overpower him

"how we might overpower him""

1,100 pieces of silver

"one thousand one hundred pieces of silver."

Judges 16:6

bind you, so you might be controlled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "bind you to control you" or "bind you to restrain you"

Judges 16:7

fresh bowstrings

Bowstrings were often made from parts of an animal, often from the tendons. The words "fresh bowstrings" refer to those that come from a freshly slaughtered animal that have not yet dried.

that have not been dried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that have not yet dried" or "that are not dry yet"

Judges 16:8

that had not been dried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that had not yet dried" or "that were not dry yet"

she tied Samson up with them

"Delilah tied Samson up with the fresh bowstrings"

Judges 16:9

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells background information about Philistine men that Delilah had waiting to capture Samson.

The Philistines are upon you

The phrase "upon you" means that they are ready to capture him. Alternate translation: "The Philistines are here to capture you"

he broke the bowstrings like a thread of yarn when it touches the fire

The author describes how easily he broke the bowstrings by comparing them to how yarn breaks when it is burned. Alternate translation: "he broke the bowstrings as easily as if he were breaking burned yarn" or "he broke the bowstrings as easily as if they were made of thin yarn"

Judges 16:10

This is how you have deceived me and told me lies.

Deceiving and lying mean the same thing and are stated to emphasize how angry Delilah felt. Alternate translation: "You have greatly deceived me!"

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you can be overpowered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people can overpower you"
Judges 16:12
The Philistines are upon you
The phrase "upon you" means that they are there to capture him. Alternate translation: "The Philistines are here to capture you"
lying in wait
This means that they were hiding and waiting for the right moment to attack. Alternate translation: "waiting to attack him"
like they were a piece of thread
The author describes how easily Samson broke the ropes by comparing it to him breaking a piece of thread. Alternate translation: "as easily as if they were only a piece of thread"
Judges 16:13
you have deceived me and told me lies
Deceiving and lying mean the same thing and are stated to emphasize how angry Delilah felt. Alternate translation: "you have greatly deceived me"
you may be overpowered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people can overpower you"
weave
crossing pieces of material together so they hold each other in place
locks of my hair
small bunches of hair
fabric
cloth made from weaving material together
loom
a machine used for combining many threads of material into a cloth
then nail that to the loom
"then nail the fabric to the loom"
nail
to hammer a nail in order to hold something in one place
I will be like any other man
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I will be as weak as any other man"
Judges 16:14
The Philistines are upon you
The phrase "upon you" means that they are there to capture him. Alternate translation: "The Philistines are here to capture you"
he pulled out the fabric and the pin from the loom
Samson pulled out the fabric from the loom when he pulled his hair away from the loom. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "pulled away his hair, taking with it the pin of the loom and the fabric in the loom"
the pin
This is the wooden nail or peg used to fasten the fabric to the loom.
Judges 16:15
How can you say, 'I love you,' when you do not share your secrets with me?
Delilah asks this question to say that if Samson really loved her he would tell her his secrets. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "When you say 'I love you,' you are lying because you do not share your secrets with me."
Judges 16:16
pressed him hard ... pressured him
Here the author speaks of how Delilah tries to persuade Samson as if she were putting pressure on him to convince him to tell her what she wants to know. Alternate translation: "tried hard to persuade him ... kept trying to persuade him"
with her words
"by what she said to him"
that he wished he would die
The author used a hyperbole, an exaggeration, to emphasize how miserable Sampson felt. Alternate translation: "that he was completely miserable" or "that he was very unhappy"
Judges 16:17
told her everything
everything about the source of his strength. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "told her the source of his strength" or "told her the truth"
razor
a sharp blade used to cut hair close to a person's skin
a Nazirite for God
This means that he is devoted to God as a Nazirite. See how you translated a similar phrase in Judges 13:5. Alternate translation: "a Nazirite devoted to God" or "devoted to God as a Nazirite"
from my mother's womb
Here "from my mother's womb" refers to to when he was born. This means that he has been a Nazirite since he was born. Alternate translation: "my entire life"
If my head is shaved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If someone shaves my head"
shaved
to have had the hair cut close to the skin with a razor
my strength will leave me
Samson speaks about his strength as if it were a person who could leave him. Alternate translation: "I will not be strong any more"
Judges 16:18
Delilah saw
Here the word "saw" is a idiom that means to realize something. Alternate translation: "Delilah realized" or "Delilah learned"
the truth about everything
Here the word "everything" refers to everything about why Samson was strong. Alternate translation: "the truth about why he is strong"
Come up again
Delilah is telling the rulers to come again to where she lives. Her home is likely at a higher elevation than where the rulers would be travelling from.
bringing the silver in their hands
This means that they brought to her the silver that they had promised to give her if she helped them capture Samson. Alternate translation: "bringing the silver that they had

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promised to give her"
Judges 16:19
She had him fall asleep
"She caused him to fall asleep"
in her lap
This means that he slept with his head on her lap. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "with his head on her lap"
lap
The lap is the level area of the upper legs when a person is sitting down.
the seven locks of his head
Samson had seven locks of hair on his head. Locks are small bunches of hair. Here his locks of hair are described as "belonging" to his head. Alternate translation: "the seven locks of hair on his head"
subdue him
"control him"
his strength had left him
Here Samson's strength is described as if it were a person who could leave him. Alternate translation: "his strength was gone" or "he was no longer strong"
Judges 16:20
The Philistines are upon you
The phrase "upon you" means that they are ready to capture him. Alternate translation: "The Philistines are here to capture you"
woke up
"awakened"
get out
"escape"
But he did not know that Yahweh had left him
It is implied that if Yahweh left Samson, he would no longer be strong. Alternate translation: "But he did not know that Yahweh had left him and that he would not be strong enough to defeat the Philistines"
Judges 16:21
put out his eyes
This means that they removed his eyes from his head. Alternate translation: "removed his eyes"
down to Gaza
The phrase "down to" is used here because they brought Samson to Gaza which is lower in elevation than his home where they captured him.
bound him with bronze shackles
"chained him with bronze shackles" or "tied him up using bronze shackles"
shackles
locks on the end of chains that hold a prisoner at his feet or hands, or both
turned the millstone
"pulled the millstone around in a circle"
millstone
This is a very large, heavy, circular stone. Normally, a large animal pulls the millstone around in a circle to crush grain. Here the Philistines humiliate Samson by making him pull it.
Judges 16:22
after it had been shaved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after the Philistines had shaved it"
Judges 16:23
Dagon
a major false god of the Philistines
has conquered
"has defeated"
put him in our hands
Here the word "hands" is a metaphor for the rulers' power. Alternate translation: "put him under our control"
Judges 16:24
the destroyer of our country
This refers to Samson. The word "destroyer" can be expressed with the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "the man who has destroyed our country"
who killed many of us
Here the word "us" refers to the Philistine people. Those who are talking are not counting themselves among the people whom Samson killed. Alternate translation: "who killed many of our people"
Judges 16:25
Call for Samson ... They called for Samson
Since Samson was a prisoner, he would not be called directly, but rather the people were asking for the men in charge of the prison to bring him to them. Alternate translation: "Call for them to bring out Samson ... They brought Samson"
Judges 16:26
the boy
"the young man" This was not a young child, but rather a youth.
Permit me to touch the pillars on which the building rests
"Allow me to touch the pillars which hold up the building"
Judges 16:27
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in the main story while the writer tells background information.
three thousand men and women
"3,000 men and women"
looking on
"watching"
while Samson was entertaining them
It is unclear what Samson did to entertain them. It seems the Philistines were making him do things that would humiliate him so that they could make fun of him.
Judges 16:28
called to Yahweh
"prayed to Yahweh"
call me to mind
This means to remember him and his situation. Alternate translation: "remember me"
only this once
"one more time"
in one blow on the Philistines
This idiom means that he wants to have one more powerful act against the Philistines to get full revenge for what they did to him. Alternate translation: "with one strike against the Philistine" or "in one powerful act against the Philistines"

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Judges 16:29
on which the building rested
"which held up the building"
Judges 16:30
He stretched out with his strength
When Samson stretched out his arms he pushed down the pillars of the building. Alternate translation: "He used his strength to push down the pillars" or "He used his strength to push over the pillars"
the dead
This refers to people who are dead. Alternate translation: "the dead people"
were more
"were a greater amount"
Judges 16:31
all the house of his father
Here the word "house" refers to his family. Alternate translation: "all of his father's family"
came down
The phrase "came down" is used here because the place that Samson's family traveled form was higher in elevation than Gaza.
Zorah ... Eshtaol
See how you translated the names of these places in Judges 13:2 and Judges 13:25.
in the burial place of Manoah, his father
"where his father, Manoah, is buried"
Manoah
See how you translated this man's name in [Judges 13:2]
Samson had judged Israel for twenty years
This same sentence is also in [Judges 15:20]
twenty years
"20 years"

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17 [1]There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Micah.[2]He said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you spoke a curse, and which I heard—look here! I have the silver with me. I stole it." His mother said, "May Yahweh bless you, my son!"
[3]He restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother and his mother said, "I set apart this silver to Yahweh, for my son to make a carved image and a cast metal figure. So now, I restore it to you."[4]When he restored the money to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to a metal worker who made them into a carved image and a cast metal figure, and they were placed in the house of Micah.
[5]The man Micah had a house of idols and he made an ephod and household gods, and he hired one of his sons to become his priest.[6]In those days there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

[7]Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the clan of Judah, who was a Levite. He stayed there to fulfill his duties.[8]The man left Bethlehem in Judah to go and find a place to live. As he journeyed, he came to Micah's house in the hill country of Ephraim.[9]Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" The man said to him, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am traveling to find a place where I might live."
[10]Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest. I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your food." So the Levite went into his house.[11]The Levite was content to live with the man, and the young man became to Micah like one of his sons.
[12]Micah set apart the Levite for sacred duties, and the young man became his priest, and was in Micah's house.[13]Then Micah said, "Now I know that Yahweh will do good for me, because this Levite has become my priest."

Judges 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section explaining how Israel came to have a king.

Special concepts in this chapter

Idols and figures

According to the law of Moses, the Israelites were prohibited from making wooden figures or cast metal idols. This was a form of idolatry. This practice was common in Canaan and it shows the influence the Israelites allowed these people to have on them. (See: lawofmoses)

Links:

Judges 17:1 Notes

Judges 17:1
There was a man
This is a way to introduce a new person to the story.
Micah
This is the name of a man. It is not the same man who wrote the book of Micah.

Judges 17:2
1,100 pieces
"one thousand one hundred pieces"
that were taken from you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which someone stole from you"

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I stole it
"I was the one who took it"
Judges 17:3
1,100 pieces
"one thousand one hundred"
set apart
This means to dedicate something to a specific purpose. Alternate translation: "dedicate"
cast metal
metal that has been melted and poured into a mold to form a special shape
I restore it to you
"I give it back to you"
Judges 17:4
two hundred pieces of silver
"200 pieces of silver"
they were placed in the house of Micah
The word "they" refers to the metal figures. This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Micah placed them in his house"
Judges 17:5
a house of idols
This refers to a house used specifically for worshiping idols. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "a house for worshiping idols"
Judges 17:6
everyone did what was right in his own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "each person did what he decided was right" or "each person did what he judged to be right"
Judges 17:7
of Bethlehem
"from Bethlehem"
of the clan of Judah
This means that he was living among the family of Judah, that is, the tribe of Judah. Alternate translation: "who was living among the tribe of Judah"
He stayed there to fulfill his duties
"He lived and worked there"
Judges 17:8
find a place to live
"find a different place to live"
Judges 17:9
where I might live
It is implied that he is looking for a place to live and work. Alternate translation: "where I might live and have a job"
Judges 17:10
a father and a priest
The word "father" is here used in the sense of an advisor, and not to a literal father. Alternate translation: "an advisor and a priest"
I will give you ten pieces of silver a year
"I will give you ten pieces of silver each year"
a suit of clothes
"a set of clothes"
So the Levite went into his house
It is implied that the Levite accepted Micah's offer, and therefore, entered Micah's house. Alternate translation: "So the Levite accepted his offer and went into his house"
Judges 17:11
the young man became to Micah like one of his sons
The relationship between the Levite and Micah became like the close relationship between a father and son. Alternate translation: "the young man became close to Micah and was like one of his sons"
Judges 17:12
Micah set apart the Levite
Here "set apart" means that Micah "dedicated" or "ordained" him. Alternate translation: "Micah dedicated the Levite"
was in Micah's house
Here living in Micah's house is spoken of as "being" in his house. Alternate translation: "lived in Micah's house"

18 [1]In those days there was no king in Israel. The tribe of the descendants of Dan was looking for a territory to live in,
for up to that day they had not received any inheritance from among the tribes of Israel.[2]The people of Dan sent five
men from the whole number of their tribe, men who were experienced warriors from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to scout
the land on foot, and to look it over. They said to them, "Go and look over the land." They came to the hill country of
Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and they spent the night there.
[3]When they were near Micah's house, they recognized the speech of the young Levite. So they stopped and asked him,
"Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? Why are you here?"[4]He said to them, "This is what Micah has
done for me: He has hired me to become his priest."
[5]They said to him, "Please seek the advice of God, so we may know whether the journey we are going on will be
successful."[6]The priest said to them, "Go in peace. Yahweh will lead you in the way you should go."

[7]Then the five men left and came to Laish, and they saw that the people were living in safety, in the same way the
Sidonians lived, undisturbed and secure. There was no one who conquered them or who oppressed them in any way in
the land. They lived far away from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone.[8]They returned to their tribe in Zorah
and Eshtaol. Their relatives asked them, "What is your report?"
[9]They said, "Come! Let us attack them! We have seen the land and it is very good. Are you doing nothing? Do not be slow
to attack and conquer the land.[10]When you go, you will come to a secure people, and the land is wide! God has given it to
you—a place that does not lack anything in the land."

[11]Six hundred men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol.[12]They went up and

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camped at Kiriath Jearim, in Judah. This is why people called that place Mahaneh Dan to this day; it is west of Kiriath Jearim.
[13]They went away from there to the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of Micah.
[14]Then the five men who had gone to scout the country of Laish said to their relatives, "Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, household gods, a carved image, and a cast metal figure? Decide now what you will do."
[15]So they turned in there and came to the house of the young man, the Levite, at the house of Micah, and they greeted him.
[16]Now the six hundred Danites, armed with weapons of war, stood at the entrance of the gate.
[17]The five men who had gone to scout out the land went there and they took the carved figure, the ephod, the household gods, and the cast metal figure, while the priest stood by the opening of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war.[18]When these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the cast metal figure, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"
[19]They said to him, "Be quiet! Put your hand on your mouth and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest for the house of one man, or to be priest for a tribe and a clan in Israel?"[20]The priest's heart was glad. He took the ephod, the household gods, and the carved figure, and went along with the people.

[21]So they turned and went away, putting the little children, their livestock and their valuable possessions in front of them.
[22]When they were a good distance from the house of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called together, and they caught up with the Danites.[23]They shouted to the Danites, and they turned and said to Micah, "Why have you been called together?"
[24]He said, "You stole the gods that I made, you have taken my priest, and you are leaving. What else do I have left? How can you ask me, 'What is bothering you?'"[25]The people of Dan said to him, "You should not let us hear you say anything, or some very angry men will attack you, and you and your family will be killed."[26]Then the people of Dan went their way. When Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

[27]The people of Dan took what Micah had made, as well as his priest, and they came to Laish, to a people who were undisturbed and secure and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city.[28]There was no one to rescue them because it was a long way from Sidon, and they had no dealings with anyone. It was in the valley that is near Beth Rehob. The Danites rebuilt the city and lived there.[29]They named the city Dan, the name of Dan their ancestor, who was one of Israel's sons. But the name of the city used to be Laish.
[30]The people of Dan set up the carved figure for themselves. Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses, he and his sons were priests for the tribe of the Danites until the day of the land's captivity.[31]So they worshiped Micah's carved figure that he made as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

Judges 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tribe of Dan

The tribe of Dan lacked faith in Yahweh and had yet to conquer its inheritance. In this chapter, they begin to conquer their land, but they also started to worship an idol. Their conquering of the land is much different than the other tribes' victories. (See: faith and inherit)

Links:

Judges 18:1 Notes

Judges 18:1

In those days

This phrase introduces the beginning of another event in the story.

In those days ... from among the tribes of Israel

This is background information about Israel and the people of the tribe of Dan.

not received any inheritance from

This refers specifically to land inherited where they would live. Alternate translation: "not received a land inheritance from"

Judges 18:2

from the whole number of their tribe

The phrase "the whole number" refers to all of the men in the tribe. Alternate translation: "from among all of the men in their tribe"

experienced warriors

"experienced fighters"

Zorah

See how you translated the name of this town in Judges 13:2.

Eshtaol

See how you translated the name of this town in Judges 13:25.

to scout the land on foot

The phrase "on foot" means to walk. Alternate translation: "to scout the land by walking through it"

Micah

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See how you translated this man's name in Judges 17:1.
Judges 18:3
they recognized the speech of the young Levite
They recognized the man by the sound of his voice. Here "speech" refers to his "voice." Alternate translation: "they heard the young Levite talking, and they recognized his voice"
Judges 18:7
Laish
This is the name of a city.
There was no one who conquered
"There were no enemies living in their land who had conquered them"
had no dealings with anyone
"had no contact with any outsiders." This means they lived far enough away from any other city that they lived secluded from other people.
Judges 18:8
Zorah
Translate the name of this city the same as you did in Judges 13:2.
Eshtaol
Translate the name of this city the same as you did in Judges 13:25.
Judges 18:9
Are you doing nothing?
This rhetorical question is asked sarcastically and means that they should be doing the opposite. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should be acting now!"
Do not be slow to attack
"Hurry! Attack"
Judges 18:10
a secure people
"a people who think they are secure" "people who are not afraid that anyone will attack them"
the land is wide
"the land is large." This is a description of the size of the land.
that does not lack anything in the land
The men use a hyperbole, an exaggeration, to emphasize that it is a very desirable place to live. Alternate translation: "where we will have everything there that we need"
that does not lack anything
"that has everything"
Judges 18:11
Six hundred men
"600 men"
Judges 18:12
Kiriath Jearim
This is the name of a town.
Mahaneh Dan
Translate the name of this place the same as you did in Judges 13:25.
to this day
This means that something remains the same. It refers to the "present" time. Alternate translation: "and that is still its name"
Judges 18:14
Laish
Translate the name of this town the same as you did in Judges 18:7.
in these houses there are an ephod, ... metal figure? Decide ... will do
The five men asked this question to suggest and encourage the men that they should steal the idols. This can be written as a statement, and the implied information may be given in a parenthetical phrase. Alternate translation: "these houses contain an ephod, ... metal figure.
in these houses there are
"in one of these house there is" or "among these houses is"
Judges 18:15
they turned in there
"they turned"
they greeted him
The word "him" refers to the Levite.
Judges 18:16
six hundred Danites
"600 Danites"
Judges 18:17
six hundred men
"600 men"
Judges 18:19
Is it better for you to be priest for the house of one man ... a clan in Israel?
They ask this as a rhetorical question to imply that it is true. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is better for you to be priest for a tribe and a clan in Israel than for just the house of one man."
Judges 18:20
The priest's heart was glad
Here the priest is referred to by his "heart" to emphasize his emotions. Alternate translation: "The priest was glad"
Judges 18:21
putting the little children, their livestock and their valuable possessions in front of them
They traveled this way to protect the children. If Micah and his people attacked them the would reach the warriors first and not the children. Alternate translation: "putting the little children, their livestock and their possessions in front of them to protect them"
they turned
"the Danites turned around"
Judges 18:22
a good distance
"some distance." This refers a short distance but one that is long enough to be considered as measurable progress.
the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called together
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he called together the men who were in the houses near his house"
they caught up with the Danites
This implies that they ran after them. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "running after the Danites, they caught up with them"
Judges 18:23
Why have you been called together?
This question is a rebuke. It can be translated as a

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statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have called your men together to chase us."

been called together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "called these men together"

Judges 18:24

the gods that I made

Micah did not make his gods; rather, the craftsman made them. Alternate translation: "the gods which I had made for me" or "the gods which a craftsman made for me"

What else do I have left?

Micah asks this question to emphasize that he no longer has the things that are important to him. Alternate translation: "I have nothing left." or "You have taken everything that is important to me."

How can you ask me, 'What is bothering you?'

Micah asks this question to emphasize that the Danites definitely know what is bothering him. Alternate translation: "You know that I am greatly distressed!'" or "You know how much I am bothered by what you have done to me!'"

Judges 18:25

let us hear you say anything

The phrase "us hear you say" refers to the Danites hearing Micah speaking about what had happened, but it also includes if they are told by others that Micah had spoken about what had happened. Alternate translation: "let us find out that you have said anything" or "say anything about this"

hear you say anything

The word "anything" refers to any information about the Danites coming to Micah's house and stealing his idols. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "hear you say anything about this matter" or "hear you say anything about what has happened"

you and your family will be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "kill you and your family"

Judges 18:26

went their way

This means that they continued on their journey. Alternate translation: "continued on their journey" or "continued travelling"

they were too strong for him

This refers to the Danites being too strong for Micah and his men to fight against. Alternate translation: "they were too strong for him and his men to fight"

Judges 18:27

what Micah had made

Micah did not make his gods, rather a craftsman made them for him. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that had been made for Micah" or "Micah's things"

Laish

See how you translated this in Judges 18:7.

with the edge of the sword

"with their swords." Here "the sword" represents the swords and other weapons that the soldiers used in battle.

Judges 18:28

they had no dealings with anyone

this means they lived far enough away from any other city, that they lived secluded from other people. See how you translated this phrase in Judges 18:7.

Beth Rehob

This is a name of a town.

Judges 18:30

Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses

This is the name of the young Levite who used to serve as priest for Micah. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The young Levite's name was Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses"

until the day of the land's captivity

This refers to a time later on when the people of Dan would be captured by their enemies. Here the land being conquered is spoken of as if it were a prisoner taken captive by an enemy. Alternate translation: "until the day that their enemies conquered their land" or "until the day that their enemies took them captive"

Judges 18:31

that he made

Micah did not make his gods, rather the craftsman made them for him. Alternate translation: "that had been made for him" or "that his craftsman made for him"

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19 [1]In those days, when there was no king in Israel, there was a man, a Levite, living for a while in the most remote area of the hill country of Ephraim. He took for himself a woman, a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.[2]But his concubine acted like a prostitute against him; she left him and went back to her father's house in Bethlehem of Judah. She stayed there for four months.

[3]Then her husband got up and went after her in order to persuade her to come back. His servant was with him, and a yoke of donkeys. She brought him into her father's house. When the girl's father saw him, he was glad to meet him.[4]His father-in-law, the girl's father, persuaded him to stay for three days. They ate and drank, and they spent the night there.

[5]On the fourth day they got up early and he prepared to go, but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen yourself with a bit of bread, then you may go."[6]So the two of them sat down to eat and drink together. Then the girl's father said, "Please be willing to spend the night and have a good time."

[7]When the Levite got up to leave, the father of the young woman urged him to stay, so he changed his plan and spent the night there again.[8]On the fifth day he woke up early to leave, but the girl's father said, "Strengthen yourself, and wait until the afternoon." So the two of them had a meal.

[9]When the Levite and his concubine and his servant rose up to depart, his father-in-law, the girl's father said to him, "See now, the day is advancing toward evening. Please stay another night, and have a good time. You can get up early tomorrow and go back home."

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[10]But the Levite was not willing to spend the night. He got up and left. He went toward Jebus (that is Jerusalem). He had a pair of saddled donkeys—and his concubine was with him.[11]When they were near Jebus, the day was nearly over, and the servant said to his master, "Come, let us turn aside to the city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it."
[12]His master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners who do not belong to the people of Israel. We will go on to Gibeah."[13]The Levite said to his young man, "Come, let us go to one of those other places, and spend the night in Gibeah or Ramah."
[14]So they went on, and the sun set as they came near to Gibeah, in the territory of Benjamin.[15]They turned aside there to spend the night in Gibeah. They went and sat down in the city square, but no one took them into his house for the night.

[16]But then an old man was coming from his work in the field that evening. He was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was staying for a while in Gibeah. But the men living in that place were Benjamites.[17]He raised his eyes and saw the traveler in the city square. The old man said, "Where are you going? Where are you coming from?"
[18]The Levite said to him, "We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to the most remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, which is where I come from. I went to Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to the house of Yahweh, but there is no one who will take me into his house.[19]We have straw and feed for our donkeys, and there is bread and wine for me and your female servant here, and for this young man with your servants. We lack nothing."
[20]The old man greeted them, "Peace be with you! I will take care of all your needs. Only do not spend the night in the square."[21]So the man brought the Levite into his house and gave feed to the donkeys. They washed their feet and ate and drank.

[22]While they were making their hearts glad, some men of the city, worthless men, surrounded the house, beating on the door. They spoke to the old man, the master of the house, saying, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so we can know him."[23]The man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, please do not do this evil thing! Since this man is a guest in my house, do not do this act of disgraceful folly!
[24]See, my virgin daughter and his concubine are here. Let me bring them out now. Violate them and do with them whatever you like. But do not do such an act of disgraceful folly to this man!"[25]But the men would not listen to him, so the man seized his concubine and brought her out to them. They raped her and abused her all throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go.[26]At dawn the woman came and she fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, and she lay there until it was light.

[27]Her master rose up in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way. He could see his concubine lying there at the door, with her hands on the threshold.[28]The Levite said to her, "Get up. Let us go." But there was no answer. He put her on the donkey, and the man set out for home.
[29]When the Levite came to his house, he took a knife, and he took hold of his concubine, and cut her up, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent the pieces everywhere throughout Israel.[30]All who saw this said, "Such a thing has never been done or seen from the day the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt to this present day. Think about it! Give us advice! Tell us what to do!"

Judges 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The sin of Benjamin

People from a village of the tribe of Benjamin raped a visitor's wife to death. This was very evil, especially in the ancient Near East. The people of Israel considered mistreatment of a guest one of the worst crimes. (See: and evil)

Links:

Judges 19:1 Notes

Judges 19:1
In those days
This phrase introduces the beginning of another event in the story.
remote
far from where most people live
Judges 19:2
acted like a prostitute against him
This means that she was unfaithful in their relationship and that she began to have sexual relations with other men. This can be stated explicitly if necessary. Alternate translation: "began to have sexual relations with other men"
Judges 19:3
His servant was with him, and a yoke of donkeys
"He took with him his servant and two donkeys"
Judges 19:4
His father-in-law, the girl's father, persuaded

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"His father-in-law, that is, the girl's father, persuaded" or "The girl's father persuaded"
persuaded him to stay
"spoke to him so he decided to stay"
Judges 19:5
he prepared
the Levite prepared
Strengthen yourself with a bit of bread
Here "bread" refers to "food." Alternate translation: "Eat some food so you will be strong enough to travel"
Judges 19:6
Please be willing to spend the night
"Please stay another night"
Judges 19:8
Strengthen yourself, and wait until the afternoon
The father-in-law is suggesting that he strengthen himself by eating. He is also asking him to wait until the afternoon to leave. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Eat some food so you will be strong enough to travel, and wait until afternoon to leave"
Judges 19:9
See now, the day
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: the day"
the day is advancing toward evening
"the day is almost over" or "it is almost evening"
Judges 19:10
that is Jerusalem
"which was later called Jerusalem"
Judges 19:11
Come, let us
This is an idiom used to make a suggestion. Alternate translation: "I suggest that we"
turn aside to
This means to take a break from their journey and stop somewhere along the route. Alternate translation: "stop at"
Judges 19:12
turn aside into
This means to take a break from their journey and stop at a place along the route. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Judges 19:11]
Judges 19:13
Come, let us
This is an idiom used to make a suggestion. Alternate translation: "I suggest that we"
Judges 19:15
turned aside
This means to take a break from their journey and stop at a place along the route. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Judges 19:11]
the city square
the marketplace where people gathered during the day
took them into his house
This phrase means for someone to invite them to spend the night in their home. Alternate translation: "invited them to stay in their house for that night"
Judges 19:16
Benjamites
A Benjamite was a descendant of Benjamin. See how you translated the name of this people group in Judges 3:15.
Judges 19:17
He raised his eyes
Here the man looked up and paid attention to what was around him. Alternate translation: "He looked up"
the city square
the marketplace where people gathered during the day. See how you translated this in Judges 19:14.
Judges 19:18
who will take me into his house
This phrase refers to someone inviting other people into his house to spend the night there. Alternate translation: "who has invited me to stay in his house"
will take me
Here the Levite says "me," but he is actually referring to himself along with his servant and his concubine. Alternate translation: "will take us"
Judges 19:19
there is bread and wine
Change to active voice. Alternate translation: "we have plenty of bread and wine"
me and your female servant here, and for this young man with your servants
The Levite speaks of himself and the others as servants and in the third person to show respect. Alternate translation: "me, my concubine, and my servant"
We lack nothing
This can be written as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "We have everything we need"
Judges 19:20
Only do not
"Do not." The word "only" is used here to emphasize what he did not want the Levite to do.
square
This refers to the city square. See how you translated this Judges 19:17.
Judges 19:21
brought the Levite into his house
This means that he invited the Levite to spend the night in his house. Also, by inviting the Levite he was inviting the man's concubine and servant as well. Alternate translation: "invited the Levite and his servants to stay in his house"
Judges 19:22
they were making their hearts glad
The phrase "making their hearts glad" is an idiom that means to have a good time with someone else. Alternate translation: "they were have a good time together" or "they were enjoying themselves"
some men of ... surrounded the house
Some men stood on all sides of the house.
so we can know him
The phrase "know him" is a polite way of saying "have sexual relations with him." The men probably were not trying to be polite.
Judges 19:23
act of disgraceful folly
a senseless, disgraceful act
Judges 19:24

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See
This word is used to get the peoples' attention. Alternate translation: "Listen"
act of disgraceful folly
a senseless, disgraceful act. See how you translated this in Judges 19:23
Judges 19:25
the men would not listen to him
Here the author speaks of "agreeing" as if it were "listening." Alternate translation: "the men would not accept his offer"
the man seized his concubine
there could be confusion as to the identity of the man. Alternate translation: "the Levite seized his concubine"
at dawn
"when the sun was coming up" or "at first light" This refers to when the sun begins to rise.
Judges 19:26
it was light
This refers to morning when it is bright outside. Alternate translation: "the sun was fully risen"
Judges 19:28
But there was no answer
The woman did not answer because she was dead. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "But she did not answer because she was dead"
Judges 19:29
limb by limb
"section by section." The author uses this graphic description of how the Levite cut up her body into specific pieces to emphasize what he did. "Limbs" refers to a person's arms and legs. If there is not a similar phrase in your language, this description may be left out of the translation.
twelve pieces
"12 pieces"
sent the pieces everywhere throughout Israel
This means that he sent sent the different pieces to twelve different areas of Israel. Alternate translation: "sent each piece to a different place throughout Israel"

20 [1]Then all the people of Israel—from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead also—came out, and the congregation assembled together as one man before Yahweh at Mizpah.[2]The leaders of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, took their places in the assembly of the people of God—400,000 footmen ready to fight with the sword.
[3]Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah. The people of Israel said, "Tell us how this wicked thing happened."[4]The Levite, the husband of the woman who had been murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah in the territory that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night.
[5]During the night, the leaders of Gibeah attacked me, surrounding the house, intending to kill me. They raped my concubine, and she died.[6]I took my concubine and cut her body into pieces, and sent them into each region of Israel's inheritance, because they have committed wickedness and an act of disgraceful folly in Israel.[7]Now, all you people of Israel, give your advice and counsel here."

[8]All the people arose together as one man, and they said, "None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house![9]But now this is what we must do to Gibeah: We will attack it as the lot directs us.
[10]We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and one hundred of a thousand, and one thousand of ten thousand, to get provisions for these people, so that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may punish them for the act of disgraceful folly they committed in Israel."[11]So all the men of Israel assembled against the city, united as one man.

[12]The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that was done among you?[13]Therefore, give us those wicked men of Gibeah, so we may put them to death, and so we will completely remove this evil from Israel." But the Benjamites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel.[14]Then the sons of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to get ready to fight against the sons of Israel.
[15]The people of Benjamin brought together from their cities to fight on that day twenty-six thousand soldiers who were trained to fight with the sword. In addition, there were seven hundred of their chosen men from the inhabitants of Gibeah.[16]Among all these soldiers were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed. Each of them could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.

[17]The people of Israel, not counting the number from Benjamin, numbered 400,000 men, who were trained to fight with the sword. All of these were men of war.[18]The people of Israel arose, went up to Bethel, and asked for advice from God. They asked, "Who first will attack the people of Benjamin for us?" Yahweh said, "Judah will attack first."

[19]The sons of Israel got up in the morning and they moved their camp near Gibeah.[20]The men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin. They set up their battle positions against them at Gibeah.[21]The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and they killed twenty-two thousand men from among Israel on that day.
[22]But the men of Israel strengthened themselves and they formed the battle line in the same place where they had taken positions on the first day.[23]Then the people of Israel went up and they wept before Yahweh until evening, and they sought direction from Yahweh. They said, "Should we go again to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?" Yahweh said, "Attack them!"

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[24]So the people of Israel went against the soldiers of Benjamin the second day.[25]On the second day, Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah and they killed eighteen thousand men from the people of Israel. All were men who trained to fight with the sword.
[26]Then all the people of Israel, all the people, went up to Bethel and wept, and there they sat before Yahweh and they fasted that day until the evening and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yahweh.
[27]The people of Israel asked Yahweh—for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days,[28]and Phinehas, son of Eleazar son of Aaron, was serving before the ark in those days—"Should we go out to battle once more against the people of Benjamin, our brothers, or stop?" Yahweh said, "Attack, for tomorrow I will help you defeat them."

[29]So Israel set men in secret places around Gibeah.[30]The people of Israel fought against the people of Benjamin for the third day, and they formed their battle lines against Gibeah as they had done before.
[31]The people of Benjamin went and fought against the people, and they were drawn away from the city. They began to kill some of the people. There were about thirty men of Israel who died in the fields and on the roads. One of the roads went up to Bethel, and the other went to Gibeah.
[32]Then the people of Benjamin said, "They are defeated and they are running away from us, just as at first." But the people Israel said, "Let us run back and draw them away from the city to the roads."[33]All the men of Israel rose up out of their places and formed themselves into lines for battle at Baal Tamar. Then the people of Israel who had been hiding in secret places ran out from their places from Maareh Gibeah.
[34]Ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel came out against Gibeah, and the fighting was fierce, but the Benjamites did not know that disaster was close to them.[35]Yahweh defeated Benjamin before Israel. On that day, the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin. All these who died were those who had been trained to fight with the sword.

[36]So the people of Benjamin saw they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to Benjamin, because they were trusting in the men they had placed in hidden positions outside Gibeah.[37]Then the men who were hiding got up and hurried, and they rushed into Gibeah, and they struck all the city with the edge of the sword.[38]The arranged signal between the men of Israel and the men hiding in secret would be that a great cloud of smoke would rise up out of the city.
[39]When the signal was sent the men of Israel would turn from the battle. Now Benjamin began to attack and they killed about thirty men of Israel, and they said, "It is sure that they are defeated before us, as in the first battle."
[40]But when a pillar of smoke began to rise up out of the city, the Benjamites turned and saw the smoke rising to the sky from the whole city.[41]Then the men of Israel turned against them. The men of Benjamin were terrified, for they saw that disaster had come on them.
[42]So they ran away from the men of Israel, escaping on the way to the wilderness. But the fighting overtook them. The men of Israel came out of the cities and destroyed them where they stood.
[43]They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them and trampled them down at Nohah, all the way to the east side of Gibeah.
[44]From the tribe of Benjamin, eighteen thousand people died, all of them men who were distinguished in battle.
[45]They turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. The Israelites killed five thousand more of them along the roads. They kept going after them, following them closely all the way to Gidom, and there they killed two thousand more.[46]All the soldiers of Benjamin who fell that day were twenty-five thousand—men who were trained to fight with the sword; all of them were distinguished in battle.
[47]But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness, toward the rock of Rimmon. For four months they stayed at the rock of Rimmon.[48]And the men of Israel turned back against the descendants of Benjamin and struck down with the edge of the sword the entire city, the animals and everything that they found. They also burned down every town in their path.

Judges 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Benjamin destroyed

The army of Israel destroys all the tribe of Benjamin except 600 men. After this point in time, the tribe of Benjamin becomes mostly insignificant.

Links:

Judges 20:1 Notes

Judges 20:1

as one man

This simile speaks of the group as acting as a single person. It refers to a group of who people do everything together in the same way. Alternate translation: "as if they were a single man"

from Dan to Beersheba

This refers to the land as a whole. Alternate translation:

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"from all the eleven tribes"
Judges 20:2
God—400,000 footmen
"God, and also 400,000 regular soldiers came"
ready to fight
"capable of going to war." They were not going to fight each other.
Judges 20:3
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author of the book tells background information about what the people of Benjamin knew.
had gone up to Mizpah
Mizpah was located high in the mountains.
Judges 20:4
to spend the night
"for the night" or "to stay for a night"
Judges 20:6
wickedness and an act of disgraceful folly
The phrase "act of disgraceful folly" describes the "wickedness." Alternate translation: "outrageous wickedness"
act of disgraceful folly
a senseless, disgraceful act. See how you translated this in Judges 19:23
Judges 20:7
Now
This word is used to introduce the conclusion of the speech of the Levite.
give your advice and counsel here
The words "advice" and "counsel" refer to the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "decide what we need to do about this"
Judges 20:8
as one
This simile speaks of the group as acting as a single person. They all acted together in exactly the same way. Alternate translation: "as if they were a single man"
None of us will go to his tent ... none of us will return to his house
These two clauses say basically the same thing twice for emphasis. They can be combined. The words "none ... go" and "none ... return" emphasizes how the people will continue to stay there. They can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "We will all stay here"
Judges 20:9
But now
These words introduce the main portion of what the people say after the initial exclamation.
as the lot directs
This involved tossing or rolling small marked stones to determine what God wants.
Judges 20:10
ten men of a hundred ... one hundred of a thousand ... one thousand of ten thousand
"10 men out of 100 ... 100 out of 1,000 ... 1,000 out of 10,000"
provisions
food and other things the people need
act of disgraceful folly
a senseless, disgraceful act. See how you translated this in Judges 19:23
Judges 20:11
assembled against the city
"came together to attack the city"
Judges 20:13
put them to death
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "kill them" or "execute them"
the voice of their brothers
Here "voice" refers to the message that they spoke. Alternate translation: "what their brother said"
Judges 20:15
twenty-six thousand
"26,000"
seven hundred
"700"
Judges 20:16
left-handed
A left-handed person is someone who is more skilled with their left hand than with their right hand.
could sling a stone at a hair and not miss
This show how amazingly well they could aim and hit their target. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "could throw a stone at even a hair and hit it" or "could throw a stone at something as small as a hair and hit it"
Judges 20:17
not counting
"not including"
400,000
"four hundred thousand men"
Judges 20:18
asked for advice from God
"asked God what to do" or "asked God how to continue"
Judges 20:19
moved their camp near Gibeah
There is some question about the meaning of the Hebrew text. Instead of meaning that they set up their camp near Gibeah, it could mean that the army went out and stood across from Gibeah ready to fight.
Judges 20:21
twenty-two thousand
"22,000"
Judges 20:22
strengthened themselves
Here "strengthened" is an idiom that means they encouraged each other.
they formed the battle line
This probably means that the Israelites prepared their battle lines for the next day's fighting. Alternate translation: "they got ready to fight the next day"
Judges 20:23
they sought direction from Yahweh
The method they used is not stated. The priest may have cast lots to determine God's will.
Judges 20:25
eighteen thousand
"18,000"

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Judges 20:26
before Yahweh
"in Yahweh's presence" or "to Yahweh"
Judges 20:27
for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days
This is background information that the author inserted to help the reader understand how the people asked Yahweh for an answer.
was there in those days
"was at Bethel in those days"
Judges 20:28
and Phinehas ... was serving before the ark in those days
This is background information that the author inserted to help the reader understand how the people asked Yahweh for an answer.
was serving before the ark
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "was serving as priest before the ark"
Attack
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Attack the army of Benjamin"
Judges 20:29
Israel set men
Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelites"
secret places
"in ambush"
Judges 20:31
fought against the people
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "fought against the people of Israel"
they were drawn away from the city
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel drew them away from the city"
They began to kill some of the people
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The people of Benjamin began to kill some of the men of Israel"
Judges 20:32
just as at first
"just as before" or "just like the first two times"
Judges 20:33
Baal Tamar
This is the name of a city.
Maareh Gibeah
This is the name of a place. Other translations may read "fields of Gibeah" or "west of Gibeah" or "Maareh Geba."
Judges 20:34
Ten thousand
"10,000"
chosen men
This is an idiom that means these were particularly good soldiers. Alternate translation: "well-trained soldier"
disaster was close to them
Here immanent disaster is spoken of as if it was standing very close by them. Alternate translation: "they would soon be completely defeated"
Judges 20:35
25,100 men
"twenty-five thousand one hundred men"
men of Benjamin
"soldiers of Benjamin"
Judges 20:36
The men of Israel had given ground to Benjamin, because they were trusting in the men ... outside Gibeah
From this sentence until the end of verse 41 is background information that the writer inserted to explain to the readers how the ambush defeated the Benjamites.
had given ground to Benjamin
This is an idiom that means they intentionally retreated. Alternate translation: "had allowed Benjamin to move forward"
Judges 20:39
General Information:
This verse continues to give background information that the writer inserted to explain to the readers how the ambush defeated the Benjamites.
would turn from the battle
"would retreat from the fight"
they are defeated before us
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we have defeated them"
Judges 20:40
General Information:
This verse continues to give background information that the writer inserted to explain to the readers how the ambush defeated the Benjamites.
Judges 20:41
disaster
great harm, trouble, misery
come on them
This idiom means it happened to them. Alternate translation: "happened to them"
Judges 20:42
But the fighting overtook them
This speaks about fighting as if it were a person who could overtake someone. Alternate translation: "But the soldiers of Israel caught up to them" or "But they were not able to escape the fighting"
Judges 20:43
Nohah
This is the name of a place.
trampled them down
The completed destruction of the Benjamites is spoken of as if the Israelites stomped on their bodies. Alternate translation: "they completely destroyed them"
Judges 20:44
eighteen thousand
"18,000"
were distinguished in battle
"had fought bravely in the battle"
Judges 20:45
They turned and fled
"The remaining Benjamites turned and fled"
five thousand ... two thousand
"5,000 ... 2,000"
Gidom
This is the name of a place.

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Judges 20:46
twenty-five thousand
"25,000"
Judges 20:47
six hundred
"600"
Judges 20:48
turned back against the descendants of Benjamin
These people of Benjamin are not the soldiers who fled to the rock of Rimmon, but the ones who were still in the city.
the entire city
Here "the entire city" refers to all the people in that city.
Alternate translation: "everyone who was in the city"
in their path
"along the way"

21 [1]Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, "None of us will give his daughter to marry a Benjamite."[2]Then the people went to Bethel and sat there before God until the evening, and with loud voices they wept bitterly.[3]They called out, "Why, Yahweh, God of Israel, has this happened to Israel, that one of our tribes should be missing today?"
[4]The next day the people got up early and built an altar there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.[5]The people of Israel said, "Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to Yahweh?" For they had made an important oath concerning anyone who did not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah. They said, "He would certainly be put to death."
[6]The people of Israel had compassion for their brother Benjamin. They said, "Today one tribe has been cut off from Israel.
[7]Who will provide wives for those who are left, since we have made an oath to Yahweh that we will not let any of them marry our daughters?"

[8]They said, "Which of the tribes of Israel did not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah?" It was found that no one had come to the assembly from Jabesh Gilead.[9]For when the people were set out in an orderly manner, behold, none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were there.[10]The assembly sent twelve thousand of their bravest men with instructions to go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children.
[11]"Do this: Every male and every woman who has known a man by lying with him you will devote to destruction."[12]The men found among those living in Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him, and they took them to the camp at Shiloh in Canaan.

[13]The entire assembly sent a message and told the people of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon that they were offering them peace.[14]The Benjamites returned at that time and they were given the women of Jabesh Gilead who had been kept alive, but there were not enough women for all of them.[15]The people had compassion on Benjamin, because Yahweh had made a division between the tribes of Israel.

[16]Then the elders of the assembly said, "How will we arrange wives for the Benjamites who are left, since the women of Benjamin have been killed?"[17]They said, "There must be an inheritance for the escaped remnant of Benjamin, so that a tribe is not destroyed from Israel.
[18]We cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the people of Israel had sworn, saying, 'Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin.'"[19]So they said, "You know there is a feast for Yahweh every year at Shiloh (which is north of Bethel, east of the road that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah)."
[20]They instructed the men of Benjamin, saying, "Go and hide in secret and wait in the vineyards.[21]Watch for the time when the girls from Shiloh come out to dance, then rush out of the vineyards and each one of you should grab a wife from the girls of Shiloh, then go back to the land of Benjamin.
[22]When their fathers or their brothers come to protest to us, we will say to them, 'Show us favor! Let them remain because we did not get wives for each man during the war. You are innocent, since you did not give your daughters to them.'"
[23]The people of Benjamin did so. They took the number of wives that they needed from the girls who were dancing and they carried them off to be their wives. They went and returned to the place of their inheritance. They rebuilt the towns and lived in them.[24]Then the people of Israel left that place and went home, each one to his own tribe and clan, and each one to his own inheritance.

[25]In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter concludes the account of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sin and immorality

At the end of Judges, there is much sin and immorality. The people are doing wrong and fixing their wrongs by doing more evil things. This period of Judges is typified by this final account and summarized by the statement, "everyone did

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what was right in his own eyes." (See: sin and evil and righteous)

Links:

Judges 21:1 Notes

Judges 21:1

Now the men of Israel had sworn ... marry a Benjamite."

This background information tells the reader about the promise that the Israelites made before the battle with the Benjamites.

Benjamite

This is the name of the descendants of Benjamin. See how you translated this in Judges 3:15.

Judges 21:3

Why, Yahweh, God of Israel, has this happened to Israel, that one of our tribes should be missing today?

The people of Israel used this rhetorical question to express their deep sadness. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Oh Yahweh, we are so sad that one of the tribes of Israel has been completely destroyed."

Judges 21:5

The people of Israel said, "Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to Yahweh?"

The people are referring back to the assembly of the Israelites at Mizpah before they attacked the Benjamites.

For they had made an important oath concerning anyone who did not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah. They said, "He would certainly be put to death."

This is background information to explain to the reader the promise that the Israelites had made at Mizpah before they attacked the Benjamites.

He would certainly be put to death

Here "He" refers to anyone who did not go to Mizpah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We will certainly kill that person"

Judges 21:6

their brother Benjamin

This speaks of the tribe of Benjamin as if it were Israel's brother to show their closeness to the tribe. Alternate translation: "the surviving Benjamites"

one tribe has been cut off from Israel

The destruction of the tribe of Benjamin is spoken of as if it had been cut off from Israel by a knife. This was an exaggeration because 600 men were still left. However, the women of Benjamin had been killed, so the future of the tribe was in question. Alternate translation: "one tribe has been removed"

Judges 21:7

Who will provide wives for those who are left, since we have made an oath to Yahweh that we will not let any of them marry our daughters?

The Israelites wanted to provide wives for the few surviving Benjamites, but their promise at Mizpah prevented them from doing that.

Judges 21:8

Jabesh Gilead

This is the name of a city.

Judges 21:9

people were set out in an orderly manner

"people that were assembled at Mizpah were accounted for"

none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were there

This refers back to the earlier assembly at Mizpah. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead had been present at Mizpah"

Judges 21:10

twelve thousand

"12,000"

strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children

The next verse will add an exception to this general instruction.

strike ... with the edge of the sword

"kill ... with their swords"

Judges 21:12

Jabesh Gilead

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in Judges 21:8.

four hundred young virgins

"400 young virgins"

who had not known a man by lying with him

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "who had not had sexual relations with a man"

Judges 21:13

they were offering them peace

The abstract noun "peace" can be translated with a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "they wanted to stop fighting with them"

Judges 21:14

Jabesh Gilead

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in Judges 21:8.

there were not enough women for all of them

There were six hundred Benjamite men, and only four hundred women from Jabesh Gilead.

Judges 21:15

made a division between the tribes of Israel

"had caused the tribes of Israel not to be unified"

Judges 21:16

Benjamites

This refers to the descendants of Benjamin. See how you translated this in Judges 3:15.

the women of Benjamin have been killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we killed all the Benjamite women"

Judges 21:17

There must be an inheritance ... is not destroyed from Israel

The Israelites are exaggerating. They had already given wives to four hundred of the Benjamites, so the tribe would not be completely destroyed.

Judges 21:18

a wife to Benjamin

Here Benjamin refers to the male descendants of Benjamin. Alternate translation: "a wife to the men of Benjamin"

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Judges 21:19
which is north of Bethel, east of the road that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah
This is background information to explain to the reader where the city of Shiloh is located.
Lebonah
This is the name of a city.
Judges 21:21
each one of you should grab a wife ... go back to the land of Benjamin
It it understood that the Benjamites would take these women back to their own land with them. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "each one of you should seize one of the girls of Shiloh, and then take her back with you to the land of Benjamin to become your wife"
Judges 21:22
Show us favor
The abstract noun "favor" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Act kindly toward us"
because we did not get wives for each man during the war
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "because we did not get wives for each of them during the war with Jabesh Gilead"
You are innocent ... not give your daughters to them
This refers to the men of Shiloh. They did not voluntarily give their daughters to the Benjamites, and therefore did not break their promise not to do that.
Judges 21:23
the number of wives that they needed
This refers to one wife for each of the two hundred Benjamite men who did not receive wives from Jabesh Gilead (Judges 21:14).
Judges 21:25
there was no king in Israel
"Israel did not yet have a king"
what was right in his own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what he judged to be right" or "what he considered to be right"

Introduction to Ruth

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ruth

How Ruth came to Bethlehem with Naomi (1:1–22) Boaz helps Ruth as she gleans (2:1–23) Boaz and Ruth at the threshing floor (3:1–18) How Ruth became the wife of Boaz (4:1–16) Obed born to Ruth and Boaz; the genealogy of David (4:13–22)

What is the Book of Ruth about?

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

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title "Ruth" because she is the main person in it. Translators can use a title such as "The Book about Ruth."

When did the events in the Book of Ruth occur?

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

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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

In a period when Israel was often unfaithful to Yahweh, a woman from Moab shows great faith in him. The Israelites' frequent lack of faith in Yahweh is contrasted with the faith of this woman from a foreign land. (See: faithful)

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

Israelites practiced what is called "levirate marriage." This was a custom for the closest male relative to provide for a childless widow by marrying her. Any children born to them were to be regarded as children of the dead man. They did this so that the dead man would still have descendants. If the closest relative did not marry the woman, another relative could.

What was a "kinsman-redeemer"?

A person's close relative or relatives were expected to act as "kinsmen-redeemers" (2:20 ULB) for him or her. They were responsible to provide for a relative in need. They were also responsible to practice "levirate marriage." In the Book of Ruth, Boaz is one such kinsman-redeemer.

What was "gleaning" in the Book of Ruth?

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

What is covenant faithfulness or covenant loyalty?

A covenant is a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill. Covenant

faithfulness or covenant loyalty is when a person does what they said they would do, according to a covenant they had with someone else. God promised that he would love and be faithful to the Israelites. The Israelites were to do the same toward him and toward each other.
The Book of Ruth shows that what kinsmen-redeemers do for their relatives are part of Israel's duties in God's covenant with them. The story of Boaz, Ruth and Naomi gives good examples to all of Israel of the good effects of covenant faithfulness. (See: covenantfaith)

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

City gates in the time of Boaz were natural meeting places for the city elders. Elders were honored men who decided business matters and legal matters together. The city walls were large, perhaps two to three meters in width. Therefore the gateway opening provided a shady area for public meetings. For this reason, Boaz and the other elders sat in the gateway.
Some English Bible versions speak of Boaz sitting "at" the city gate. It may be best for translators to make clear that Boaz sat "in" the city gateway.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

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

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

Ruth

1 [1]It happened in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem of Judah went to live as a foreigner in the country of Moab with his wife and his two sons.[2]The name of the man was Elimelek, and the name of his wife was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion, who were Ephrathites of Bethlehem of Judah. They arrived at the country of Moab and lived there.
[3]Then Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left alone with her two sons.[4]These sons took wives from the women of Moab; the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. They lived there for about ten years.[5]Then both Mahlon and Kilion died, and the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband.
[6]Then she arose with her daughters-in-law and returned from the country of Moab because she had heard in the country of Moab that Yahweh had provided for his people's needs by giving them food.[7]So she left the place where she had been with her two daughters-in-law, and they walked down the road to return to the land of Judah.
[8]Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return, each of you, to your mother's house. May Yahweh show kindness toward you, as you have shown kindness toward the dead and toward me.[9]May Yahweh grant you that you find rest, each of you in the house of another husband." Then she kissed them, and they raised their voices and cried.[10]They said to her, "No! We will return with you to your people."
[11]But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters! Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb for you, so that they may become your husbands?[12]Turn back, my daughters, go your own way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said, 'I hope I get a husband tonight,' and then give birth to sons,[13]would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you choose not to marry a husband? No, my daughters! It is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me."
[14]Then her daughters-in-law lifted up their voices and cried again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell, but Ruth held on to her.
[15]Naomi said, "Listen, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Return with your sister-in-law."
[16]But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back from following you, for where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.[17]Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me, and even more, if anything but death ever separates us."[18]When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped arguing with her.

[19]So the two traveled until they came to the town of Bethlehem. It happened that when they arrived in Bethlehem, the entire town was very excited about them. The women said, "Is this Naomi?"[20]But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi. Call me Bitter, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.[21]I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back again empty. So why do you call me Naomi, seeing that Yahweh has testified against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?"
[22]So Naomi and Ruth the Moabite woman, her daughter-in-law, returned from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

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Ruth 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"It happened in the days when the judges ruled"

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

Special concepts in this chapter

Women without a husband or children

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

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Contrast

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

Links:

Ruth 1:1 Notes Ruth intro

Ruth 1:1

It happened in the days when the judges ruled that

"It happened that" was a common way of beginning to tell about something that happened. Alternate translation: "In the days when the judges ruled" or "In the days when the judges ruled, this is what happened."

in the days when the judges ruled

"during the time when judges led and governed Israel"

in the land

This refers to the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "in the land of Israel"

a certain man

"a man." This is a common way of introducing a character into a story.

Ruth 1:2

Ephrathites of Bethlehem of Judah

They were people from the tribe of Ephraim who settled at Bethlehem in the region of Judea.

Ruth 1:3

she was left alone with her two sons

"Naomi had only her two sons with her"

Ruth 1:4

took wives

"married women." This is an idiom for marrying women. They did not take women who were already married.

from the women of Moab

Naomi's sons married women who were from the tribe of Moab. The Moabites worshiped other gods.

the name of one ... the name of the other

"the name of one woman ... the name of the other woman"

ten years

Ten years after Elimelek and Naomi came to the country of Moab, their sons Mahlon and Kilion died.

Ruth 1:6

she arose with her daughters-in-law and returned

The word "arose" here means that Naomi began to act, and her daughters-in-law saw her, so they began to act also. Alternate translation: "she started to return, and her daughters-in-law also returned"

she had heard in the country of Moab

"while Naomi was living in Moab she heard." It is implied that the news came from Israel. Alternate translation: "she heard from Israel while in the country of Moab"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

had provided for his people's needs

God saw their need and provided good harvests for them.

daughters-in-law

the women who married Naomi's sons

Ruth 1:7

they walked down the road

"they walked along the road." To walk down a road is an expression for walking away.

Ruth 1:8

daughters-in-law

"sons' wives" or "sons' widows"

each of you

Naomi was talking to two people, so languages that have a dual form of "you" would use that throughout her talk.

your mother's house

"to the home of each of your mothers"

shown kindness

"demonstrated that you are loyal"

kindness

"kindness" includes the ideas of love, kindness, and faithfulness.

toward the dead

"to your husbands, who died." Naomi was referring to her two sons that died.

Ruth 1:9

grant you

"give you" or "allow you to have"

you find rest

"Rest" here includes security in marriage.

in the house of another husband

with their new husbands, not someone else's husband. This refers to both a physical house that belongs to the husband, and to the protection from shame by being married.

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they raised their voices and cried
To raise the voice is an idiom for speaking loudly. The daughters cried out loud or wept bitterly.
Ruth 1:10
We will return
When Orpah and Ruth said "we," they were referring to themselves and not Naomi. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive "we" would use the exclusive form here.
with you
Here "you" is the singular form referring to Naomi.
Ruth 1:11
Why will you go with me?
This is a rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "It does not make sense for you to go with me." or "You should not go with me."
Do I still have sons in my womb for you, so that they may become your husbands?
Naomi uses this question to say she cannot have other sons for them to marry. Alternate translation: "Obviously it is not possible for me to have any more sons who could become your husbands."
Ruth 1:12
too old to have a husband
The reason a husband would be important can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "too old to marry again and bear more children"
give birth to sons
"bear children" or "deliver baby boys"
Ruth 1:13
would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you choose not to marry a husband?
These are rhetorical questions, which do not expect an answer. Alternate translation: "you would not wait until they were grown up so that you could marry them. You would choose to marry a husband now."
It is exceedingly bitter to me
Bitterness is a metaphor for grief, and what grieves her can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "It greatly grieves me that you have no husbands"
the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me
The word "hand" refers to Yahweh's power or influence. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has caused terrible things to happen to me"
Ruth 1:14
lifted up their voices and cried
This means that they cried out loud or wept bitterly.
Ruth held on to her
"Ruth clung to her." Alternate translation: "Ruth refused to leave her" or "Ruth would not leave her"
Ruth 1:15
Listen, your sister-in-law
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important, your sister-in-law"
your sister-in-law
"the wife of your husband's brother" or "Orpah"
her gods
Before Orpah and Ruth married Naomi's sons, they worshiped the gods of Moab. During their marriage, they began to worship Naomi's God.
Ruth 1:16
where you stay
"where you live"
your people will be my people
Ruth is referring to Naomi's people, the Israelites. Alternate translation: "I will consider the people of your country as being my own people" or "I will consider your relatives as my own relatives"
Ruth 1:17
Where you die, I will die
This refers to Ruth's desire to spend the rest of her life living in the same place and town as Naomi.
May Yahweh punish me, and even more, if
This refers to Ruth asking God to punish her if she does not do what she said like the english idiom "God forbid, if."
Ruth 1:18
she stopped arguing with her
"Naomi stopped arguing with Ruth"
Ruth 1:19
It happened
"It came about." This is used here to mark a new part of the story with new people.
the entire town
The "town" refer to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "everyone in the town"
Is this Naomi?
Since it has been many years since Naomi lived in Bethlehem and no longer has her husband and two sons, it is likely the women were expressing doubt as to if this woman was actually Naomi. Treat this as a real question, not a rhetorical question.
Ruth 1:20
Do not call me Naomi
The name "Naomi" means "my delight." Since Naomi lost her husband and sons, she no longer feels her life matches her name.
Bitter
This is a translation of the meaning of the name. It is also often translated according to its sound as "Mara."
Ruth 1:21
I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back again empty
When Naomi left Bethlehem, her husband and two sons were living, and she was happy. Naomi blames Yahweh for the death of her husband and sons, saying that he has caused her to return to Bethlehem without them, and now she is bitter and unhappy.
testified against me
Another possible meaning is "judged me guilty."
has afflicted me
"has brought calamity on me" or "has brought tragedy to me"
Ruth 1:22
So Naomi and Ruth
This begins a summary statement. English marks this by the word "so." Determine how your language marks concluding or summary statements and do the same.
at the beginning of the barley harvest
The phrase "the barley harvest" can be translated with a

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verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "when the farmers were just beginning to harvest barley"

2 [1]Now Naomi had a relative of her husband, a man of great wealth of the clan of Elimelek, and his name was Boaz.[2]Ruth, the Moabite woman, said to Naomi, "Now let me go and glean what remains among the ears of grain in the fields. I will follow anyone in whose eyes I will find favor." So Naomi said to her, "Go, my daughter."
[3]Ruth went and gleaned what remained in the fields after they had harvested it. She happened to come to the portion of the fields belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelek.[4]Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, "May Yahweh be with you." They answered him, "May Yahweh bless you."
[5]Then Boaz said to his servant who was supervising the reapers, "What man does this young woman belong to?"[6]The servant supervising the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the land of Moab.[7]She said to me, 'Please let me glean and gather among the bundles of cut grain after the reapers.' So she came here and has continued from the morning until now, except that she rested a little in the house."[1]

[8]Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Are you not listening to me, my daughter? Do not go and glean in another field; do not leave my field. Instead, stay here and work with my young female workers.[9]Keep your eyes only on the field where the men are reaping and follow behind the other women. Have I not instructed the men not to touch you? Whenever you are thirsty, you may go to the waterpots and drink the water that the young men have drawn."
[10]Then she fell on her face before Boaz and bowed to the ground. She said to him, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you should be concerned about me, a foreigner?"[11]Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been reported to me, all that you have done since the death of your husband. You have left your father, mother, and the land of your birth to follow your mother-in-law and to come to a people you do not know.[12]May Yahweh reward you for your deed. May you receive full payment from Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have found refuge."
[13]Then she said, "Let me find favor in your eyes, my master, for you have comforted me, and you have spoken kindly to me, though I am not one of your female servants."

[14]At mealtime Boaz said to Ruth, "Come here, and eat some of the bread, and dip your morsel in the wine vinegar." She sat beside the reapers, and he offered her some roasted grain. She ate until she was satisfied and left the rest of it.
[15]As she got up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the bundles of cut grain, and do not humiliate her.[16]Also pull out for her some ears of grain from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

[17]So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out the ears of grain that she had gleaned, and the grain was about an ephah of barley.[18]She lifted it up and went into the city. Then her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Ruth also brought out the roasted grain left from her meal and gave it to her.
[19]Her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? Where did you go to work? May the man who was concerned about you be blessed." Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man who owned the field where she had worked. She said, "The name of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz."[20]Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by Yahweh, who has not left off his loyalty to the living and to the dead." Naomi said to her, "That man is near of kin to us, one of our kinsman-redeemers."
[21]Ruth the Moabite woman said, "Indeed, he said to me, 'You should keep close to my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'"[22]Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young female workers, so that they do not harm you in another field."
[23]So she stayed close to Boaz's female workers in order to glean to the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest. She lived with her mother-in-law.

[1]Some modern translations read Please let me glean and gather among the bundle of grain after the reapers.

Ruth 2 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Do not go and glean in another field"
Boaz said this because he could not guarantee their safety in another person's field. It is assumed that not everyone was as gracious and obedient to the law of Moses as Boaz.

Links:

Ruth 2:1 Notes

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Ruth 2:1

Now Naomi had a relative of her husband

This phrase introduces new information before the story continues. Your language may have a way to introduce new information.

a man of great wealth

"a prominent, wealthy man." This means that Boaz was prosperous and well known in his community, with a good reputation.

Ruth 2:2

Ruth, the Moabite woman

Here the story resumes. You need to see how your language restarts a story after a break.

the Moabite woman

This is another way of saying the woman was from the country or tribe of Moab.

Now

"Please." This word shows that Ruth was making a polite request.

glean what remains among the ears of grain

"gather kernels of grain left behind by the harvesters" or "pick up kernels of grain left behind by the harvesters"

the ears

"the heads" or "the stalks." The "ears" are the parts of a grain plant that contain the grain.

in whose eyes I will find favor

The phrase "found favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Ruth speaks of gaining someone's favor as gaining permission or approval. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts and judgement. Alternate translation: "who will grant me permission to glean"

daughter

Ruth was caring for Naomi as if she were her own mother. Make sure it is possible in your language to use this word for someone who is not an actual daughter.

Ruth 2:3

She happened to come

Ruth was not aware that the field she picked to glean in belonged to Naomi's relative Boaz.

Ruth 2:4

Behold, Boaz

The word "behold" alerts us to the important event of Boaz arriving at the field. Your language may also have a specific way of introducing important events or characters.

came from Bethlehem

The fields were an unspecified distance outside of Bethlehem.

bless you

"give you good things" or "make you happy"

Ruth 2:5

What man does this young woman belong to?

Possible meanings are 1) Boaz was asking about Ruth's husband or 2) Boaz was asking about Ruth's parents or current guardians.

was supervising

"was in charge of" or "was managing"

Ruth 2:7

glean and gather

You may need to make explicit that Ruth would be gathering grain. Alternate translation: "glean and gather grain"

the house

"the hut" or "the shelter." This was a temporary shelter or garden hut in the field that provided shade from the sun.

Ruth 2:8

Are you not listening to me, my daughter

This rhetorical question can be reworded as a command. Alternate translation: "Listen to me, my daughter" or "Note well what I am telling you, my daughter"

my daughter

This was a kind way of addressing a younger woman. Ruth was not the actual daughter of Boaz, so make sure the translation of this does not make it sound like she was.

Ruth 2:9

Keep your eyes only on the field

The eyes represent watching something or paying attention to something. Alternate translation: "Watch only the field" or "Pay attention only to the field"

Have I not instructed the men ... you?

Boaz used this question to emphasize what he had already done to help Ruth. Alternate translation: "I have given the men strict instructions ... you."

men ... the other women

"young male workers ... young female workers." The word "men" is used three times to refer to the young men who are harvesting in the field. Some languages can say this using one word, and they have a different word that means young women workers.

not to touch you

Possible meanings are 1) the men were not to harm Ruth or 2) the men were not to stop her from gleaning in his field.

the water that the young men have drawn

To draw water means to pull up water from a well or to take it out of a storage vessel.

young men

You may need to make explicit that these were Boaz's servants, as do many versions. Alternate translation: "servants"

Ruth 2:10

she fell on her face before Boaz and bowed to the ground

This hendiadys describes an act of respect and reverence. She was showing honor to Boaz out of gratefulness for what he had done for her by kneeling or lying on the ground and putting her face on the ground. It was also a posture of humility. Alternate translation: "she bowed before Boaz with her face to the ground" (See: and [[rc://en/ta/man/jit/translate-symaction])

bowed to the ground

Some modern translations read, "lay on the ground."

Why have I found such favor ... a foreigner?

Ruth is asking a real question.

foreigner

Ruth had pledged her loyalty to the God of Israel in private, but she was known publicly as "the Moabitess."

Ruth 2:11

It has been reported to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

"People have reported to me" or "People have told me"

to come to a people

Boaz is referring to Ruth coming to dwell with Naomi in a village and community, a country, and religion she did not know.

Ruth 2:12

reward you

"repay you" or "pay you back"

for your deed

This is an act of faith, choosing to live with Naomi in Bethlehem and trusting Naomi's God.

May you receive full payment from Yahweh

This is a poetic expression that is very similar to the previous sentence. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh give back to you even more than you have given"

under whose wings you have found refuge

Boaz uses the picture of a mother bird gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them, in order to describe God's protection for those who trust in him. Alternate translation: "in whose safe care you have placed yourself"

Ruth 2:13

Let me find favor in your eyes

Here "find favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that he is pleased with her. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "Please accept me"

I am not one of your female servants

Possible meanings are 1) Ruth was not one of Boaz's female servants or 2) Ruth did not think her marriage to Naomi's son granted her any privilege in Bethlehem.

Ruth 2:14

At mealtime

This refers to the noontime meal.

dip your morsel in the wine vinegar

This was a simple meal eaten in the field. People would sit on the ground around a cloth that had a bowl of wine vinegar on it and plates of broken bread. They would dip their bread in the vinegar bowl to wet it and add flavor before they ate it.

wine vinegar

a sauce that bread was dipped in. The Israelites further fermented some of their wine to make vinegar.

Ruth 2:15

As she got up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men

In the context of the commands, it is likely that Ruth was far enough away not to hear Boaz's instructions. Alternate translation: "And when Ruth got up to glean, Boaz privately told his young men"

As she got up

"As she stood up"

even among the bundles

Here "even" denotes "above and beyond what one normally does." Boaz instructs his workers to let Ruth glean around the bundles of grain. People who were gleaning were normally forbidden from working that close to the harvested grain.

Ruth 2:16

pull out for her some ears of grain from the bundles

"take some stalks of grain out of the bundles and leave them for her" or "leave behind stalks of grain for her to collect"

do not rebuke her

"do not cause her shame" or "do not dishonor her"

Ruth 2:17

beat out

She separated the edible part of the grain from the hull and stalk, which is thrown away.

ears of grain

This refers to the eatable part of the grain.

about an ephah of barley

An ephah is a unit of measurement equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "about 22 liters of barley"

Ruth 2:18

She lifted it up and went into the city

It is implied that Ruth carried the grain home.

her mother-in-law saw

"Naomi saw"

Ruth 2:19

Where have you gleaned today? Where did you go to work?

Naomi said almost the same thing in two different ways to show that she was very interested in knowing what had happened to Ruth that day.

Ruth 2:20

he be blessed by Yahweh

Naomi is asking God to reward Boaz for his kindness to Ruth and herself.

who has not left off his loyalty

"who has continued to be loyal." Possible meanings are 1) Boaz remembered his obligations to Naomi as a family member or 2) Naomi is referring to Yahweh, who was acting through Boaz or 3) Yahweh has continued to be faithful to the living and the dead.

to the living

"to the people who are still living." Naomi and Ruth were the "living."

the dead

Naomi's husband and sons were the "dead." This can be stated differently to remove the nominal adjective "the dead." Alternate translation: "the people who have already died"

near of kin to us, one of our kinsman-redeemers

The second phrase repeats and expands the first. This is a Hebrew style of emphasis.

kinsman-redeemers

A kinsman-redeemer was a close male relative who could rescue a childless widow from financial ruin by marrying her and having a child with her. He would also reacquire the land his relatives had lost due to poverty and redeem family members who had sold themselves into slavery.

Ruth 2:21

Indeed, he said to me

"He even said to me." This indicates that what follows is the most important part of Boaz's words to Ruth.

keep close to my young men

Boaz was referring to the physical protection his men can provide her.

Ruth 2:22

go out with

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"work with"

they do not harm you in another field

You may need to make explicit that Naomi was afraid men would harm Ruth or to translate in passive form. Alternate translation: "the men in another field do not harm you" or "you are not harmed in some other field"

Ruth 2:23

she stayed close

Ruth worked in Boaz's fields with his workers during the day, so she would be safe.

She lived with her mother-in-law

Ruth went to Naomi's home to sleep at night.

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3 [1]Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek a place for you to rest, so that things may go
well for you?[2]Now Boaz, the man whose young female workers you have been with, is he not our kinsman? Look, he
will be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.
[3]Therefore, wash yourself, anoint yourself, put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not make
yourself known to the man until he finishes eating and drinking.[1][4]But when he lies down, take notice of the place where
he lies down so that later you can go to him, uncover his feet, and lie down there. Then he will explain to you what to
do."[5]Ruth said to Naomi, "I will do everything you say."

[6]So she went down to the threshing floor, and she followed the instructions her mother-in-law had given her.[7]When Boaz
had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. Then she came softly,
uncovered his feet, and lay down.
[8]It came about at midnight that the man was startled. He turned over, and right there a woman was lying at his feet![9]He
said, "Who are you?" She answered, "I am Ruth, your female servant. Spread your cloak over your female servant, for you
are a near kinsman."
[10]Boaz said, "My daughter, may you be blessed by Yahweh. You have made your latest kindness better than the first,
because you have not gone after any of the young men, whether poor or rich.[11]Now, my daughter, do not be afraid! I will
do for you all that you say, because all the city of my people knows that you are a worthy woman.
[12]It is true that I am a kinsman, but there is a kinsman nearer than I.[13]Stay here tonight, and in the morning, if he will
perform for you the duty of a kinsman, good, let him do the kinsman's duty. But if he will not do the duty of a kinsman for
you, then I will do it, by the life of Yahweh. Lie down until the morning."

[14]So she lay at his feet until the morning. But she rose up before anyone could recognize another person. For Boaz had
said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."[15]Then Boaz said, "Bring your shawl and hold it
out." When she did so, he measured six large measures of barley into it and put the load on her. Then he went into the
city.
[16]When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you do, my daughter?" Then Ruth told her all that the man
had done for her.[17]She said, "These six measures of barley are what he gave me, for he said, 'Do not go empty to your
mother-in-law.'"[18]Then Naomi said, "Stay here, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out, for the man will
not rest until he has finished this thing today."

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have, Put on your best piece of clothing. However, a marginal note instructs readers to read, Put on your best clothes. Translators are free to choose for themselves.

Ruth 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Boaz's integrity

Boaz showed great integrity in this chapter by not having sexual relations with Ruth. He was also concerned with how people would see Ruth if they caught her in this position. Boaz's character is important for this story.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"So that things may go well for you"

Naomi attempted to make Ruth desirable to Boaz so that he would want to marry her. Even though she was a Gentile by birth, Boaz could marry her because she was, by marriage, Naomi's daughter.

Links:

Ruth 3:1 Notes

Ruth 3:1

mother-in-law

Naomi is the mother of Ruth's dead husband.

My daughter

Ruth became Naomi's daughter by marrying her son and further by her actions in caring for Naomi after returning to Bethlehem.

should I not seek a place for you to rest ... for you?

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Naomi uses this question to tell Ruth what she planned to do. Alternate translation: "I must look for a place for you to rest ... for you." or "I must find a husband to care for you ... for you."

a place for you to rest

Possible meanings are 1) literally in finding a house for her to live in or 2) figuratively in finding a husband to care for her. Naomi probably had both senses in mind.

Ruth 3:2

female workers you have been with

The translation can make explicit that she was working in the fields with these female workers. Alternate translation: "female workers you have been with in the fields"

is he not our kinsman?

Naomi probably used this question to remind Ruth of something she had already told her. Alternate translation: "he is our relative."

Look

This term indicates that the following statement is very important.

winnowing

To winnow means to separate grain from the unwanted chaff by tossing both the grain and chaff into the air, allowing the wind to blow the chaff away.

Ruth 3:3

anoint yourself

This is probably a reference to rubbing sweet-smelling oil on oneself, much as women put on perfume today.

go down to the threshing floor

This refers to leaving the city and heading to the threshing area.

Ruth 3:4

uncover his feet

This means to remove the cloak or blanket covering his feet so that they would be exposed to the cold.

lie down there

"lie down at his feet"

Then he will explain to you what to do

The specific custom of that time is unclear, but this is usually understood as a culturally acceptable way for a woman to tell a man that she was willing to marry him. Boaz would understand the custom and accept or reject her offer.

Then he will

"When he wakes up, he will"

Ruth 3:7

his heart was merry

Here Boaz is referred to by his heart. It does not imply Boaz was overly drunk. Alternate translation: "he was satisfied" or "he was in a good mood"

she came softly

"she sneaked in" or "she came in quietly so no one would hear her"

uncovered his feet

"removed his blanket from his feet"

lay down

"lay down at his feet"

Ruth 3:8

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

at midnight

"in the middle of the night"

was startled

It is not clear what startled Boaz. Perhaps he suddenly felt the cold air on his feet.

He turned over

He looked to see what startled him.

a woman was lying at his feet

The woman was Ruth, but Boaz could not recognize her in the darkness.

Ruth 3:9

your female servant

Ruth spoke with humility to Boaz.

Spread your cloak over your female servant

This was a cultural idiom for marriage. Alternate translation: "Marry me"

near kinsman

a close relative with special responsibilities toward their extended family

Ruth 3:10

You have made your latest kindness better than the first

"You have shown me even more kindness now than you did before"

your latest kindness

This refers to Ruth asking Boaz to marry her. By marrying Naomi's relative, Ruth would provide for Naomi and demonstrate great kindness to Naomi.

because you have not gone after

"you have not pursued marriage with." Ruth could have ignored Naomi's need and looked for a husband for herself outside of Naomi's relatives.

Ruth 3:11

my daughter

Boaz used this expression as a sign of respect toward Ruth as a younger woman.

all the city of my people knows

Bethlehem is a town, or small city, that belonged to the tribe that Boaz belonged to. Here "city" represents the people who live in that city. Alternate translation: "all the people in the city know" or "everyone in town knows"

Ruth 3:12

kinsman nearer than I

It was the duty of the closest male relative to help the widow.

Ruth 3:13

if he will perform for you the duty of a kinsman

Boaz is referring to the expectation that the closest male relative of Ruth's dead husband would marry her and help carry on his family name.

by the life of Yahweh

"as surely as Yahweh lives." This was a common Hebrew vow.

Ruth 3:14

she lay at his feet

Ruth slept at Boaz' feet. They did not have sex.

before anyone could recognize another person

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This time of day can be spoken of in terms of darkness. Alternate translation: "while it was still dark"

Ruth 3:15

shawl

a piece of cloth worn over the shoulders

six large measures of barley

The actual amount is not stated. It was enough to be considered generous, yet small enough for Ruth to carry alone. Some think it was about 30 kilograms.

put the load on her

The amount of grain was so great that Ruth needed help picking it up to carry it.

Then he went into the city

Most ancient copies have "he went," but some have "she went." There are English versions with both. The better choice is "he went."

Ruth 3:16

How did you do, my daughter?

What Ruth meant by this question can be made more clear. Alternate translation: "What happened, my daughter?" or "How did Boaz act toward you?"

all that the man had done

"all that Boaz had done"

Ruth 3:17

Do not go empty

"Do not go empty-handed" or "Do not go with nothing" or "Be sure to take something"

Ruth 3:18

finished this thing

This refers to the decision about who will buy Naomi's property and marry Ruth.

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4 [1]Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. Soon, the near kinsman of whom Boaz had spoken came by. Boaz said to him, "My friend, come over and sit down here." The man came over and sat down.[2]Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down.
[3]Boaz said to the near kinsman, "Naomi, who has returned from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that was our brother Elimelek's.[4]I thought to uncover your ears and say to you, 'Buy it in the presence of those who are sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you wish to redeem it, redeem it. But if you do not wish to redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you." Then the other man said, "I will redeem it."
[5]Then Boaz said, "On the day that you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also take Ruth the Moabite woman, the widow of a dead man, in order to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance."[6]Then the near kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself without destroying my own inheritance. You take my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

[7]Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and exchange of goods. To confirm all things, a man took off his sandal and gave it to his neighbor; this was the manner of making legal agreements in Israel.[8]So the near kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," and he took off his sandal.
[9]Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought all that was Elimelek's and all that was Kilion's and Mahlon's from the hand of Naomi.[10]Also Ruth the Moabite woman, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired to be my wife, in order that I might raise up the name of the dead man on his inheritance, so that his name will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. Today you are witnesses!"
[11]All the people who were in the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May Yahweh make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem.[12]May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring that Yahweh will give you with this young woman."

[13]So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. He went to her, and Yahweh enabled her to conceive, and she bore a son.
[14]The women said to Naomi, "May Yahweh be blessed, who has not left you today without a near kinsman, this baby. May his name be famous in Israel.[15]May he be for you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him."
[16]Naomi took the child, laid him in her bosom, and took care of him.[17]The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who became the father of David.

[18]Now these were the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron,
[19]Hezron became the father of Ram, Ram became the father of Amminadab,
[20]Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, Nahshon became the father of Salmon,
[21]Salmon became the father of Boaz, Boaz became the father of Obed,
[22]Obed became the father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of David.

Ruth 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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King David

Despite being a Moabitess, Ruth became an ancestor of David. David was Israel's greatest king. It is shocking a Gentile would become a part of such an important lineage. She had great faith in Yahweh. (See: and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You must also take Ruth the Moabitess"

Because Naomi had no son, her daughter-in-law Ruth needed to be provided for. Therefore, the relative who wanted to use her land had to also help Ruth to have a son who would come to provide for her.

"This was the custom in former times"

This is a comment made by the writer of the text. He functions as a narrator in this instance. It indicates that there was a considerable period of time between the events that occurred and the time they were written down.

Links:

Ruth 4:1 Notes

Ruth 4:1

the gate

"the gate of the city" or "the gate of Bethlehem." This was the main entrance to the walled town of Bethlehem. There was an open area by the gate that was used as a meeting place to discuss community matters.

the near kinsman

This was the closest living relative to Elimelek.

came over

stopped going to where he had planned to go and went toward Boaz

Ruth 4:2

elders of the city

"leaders of the city"

Ruth 4:3

Naomi ... is selling the parcel of land

It was the responsibility of the kinsman to buy back his relative's land and to care for his family. In this case, it meant the man must buy Naomi's land, marry Ruth, and care for Naomi.

Ruth 4:4

uncover your ears

"inform you"

in the presence of

This would make the transaction legal and binding.

redeem it

This meant to buy the land to keep it within their family.

I am after you

Boaz was the next kinsman in line to redeem the land.

Ruth 4:5

On the day that you buy ... you must also

Boaz uses this expression to inform his relative of the additional responsibility he will have if he buys the land.

from the hand of Naomi

Here the word "hand" represents Naomi, who owns the field. Alternate translation: "from Naomi"

you must also take Ruth

"you must also marry Ruth"

Ruth ... the widow of a dead man

"Ruth ... the widow of Elimelek's son"

to raise up the name of the dead

"that she may have a son to inherit the property and carry on the name of her dead husband"

Ruth 4:6

destroying my own inheritance

He would have to give some of his own wealth to the children that Ruth might bear.

You take my right of redemption for yourself

"You redeem it yourself" or "You yourself redeem it instead of me"

Ruth 4:7

Now this was the custom

The writer of the book explains of the custom of exchange during the time of Ruth.

in former times

"in earlier times." This implies that the customs had changed from when the story took place until the book was written.

his neighbor

This refers to the person with whom he was making the agreement. In this situation the near kinsman gave Boaz his shoe.

Ruth 4:9

to the elders and to all the people

This refers to all the people who were present at the meeting place, not to everyone in the town.

all that was Elimelek's and all that was Kilion's and Mahlon's

This refers to all the land and possessions of Naomi's dead husband and sons.

from the hand of Naomi

The hand of Naomi represents Naomi. She was responsible for the money exchange. Alternate translation: "from Naomi"

Ruth 4:10

in order that I might raise up the name of the dead man on his inheritance

The first son that Ruth bore would be legally considered Mahlon's son and would inherit the land that Boaz bought from Naomi. Alternate translation: "so that I might give her a son who will inherit the dead man's property"

so that his name will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place

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

the gate of his place

The gate of the town is where important legal decisions were made, such as decisions about who owns a piece of land.

Ruth 4:11

people who were in the gate

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"people who were meeting together near the gate"

come into your house

This has literal and figurative meaning. As Ruth marries Boaz, she will move into his house. House can also refer to becoming part of Boaz's family by being his wife.

like Rachel and Leah

These were the two wives of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel.

built up the house of Israel

"bore many children who became the nation of Israel"

may you prosper in Ephrathah

Ephrathah is the name of the clan to which Boaz belonged in Bethlehem.

Ruth 4:12

May your house be like

God abundantly blessed Judah through his son Perez. The people were asking God to bless Boaz in a similar way through Ruth's children.

Tamar bore to Judah

Tamar was also a widow. Judah fathered a son with her, which continued the family name.

through the offspring that Yahweh will give you

Yahweh would give Boaz children through Ruth.

Ruth 4:13

Boaz took Ruth

"Boaz married Ruth" or "Boaz took Ruth as a wife"

He went to her

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations. Alternate translation: "He had sexual relations with her" or "He lay with her"

Ruth 4:14

who has not left you today without a near kinsman

This phrase can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "who has provided you today with a near kinsman"

May his name be famous

This refers to the reputation and character of Naomi's grandson.

Ruth 4:15

a restorer of life

This phrase probably refers to how Naomi will again experience joy and hope in her life as a result of having a new grandson. Alternate translation: "one who brings joy to you again" or "one who will make you feel young again"

a nourisher of your old age

"he will take care of you when you become old"

better to you than seven sons

"Seven" was the Hebrew number of completeness. Naomi's sons both died before they produced any offspring, but Ruth bore a grandson to Naomi by Boaz. Alternate translation: "better to you than any son"

Ruth 4:16

Naomi took the child

This refers to Naomi holding the child. Make sure it does not sound like she took him away from Ruth.

laid him in her bosom

"held him close against her chest." This is a statement of love and affection for the child.

bosom

chest, shoulders, and arms

Ruth 4:17

A son has been born to Naomi

"The child is like a son to Naomi." It was understood that the child was Naomi's grandson, not her physical son.

father of David

"father of King David." Though "king" is not stated, it was clear to the original audience that David was King David.

Ruth 4:18

the descendants of Perez

"the successive descendants." Because it was mentioned earlier that Perez was the son of Judah, the writer continues listing the family line that came from Perez.

Ruth 4:19

Hezron ... Ram

Introduction to 1 Samuel

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Samuel

Samuel as judge over Israel (1:1–7:17) Samuel as a child (1:1–3:21) Shiloh priesthood; the fall and death of Eli the priest (4:1–22) The ark of God and the war with the Philistines (5:1–6:21) Mizpah; Samuel's rule over Israel (7:1–17)

Saul and Samuel (8:1–15:35) Samuel lets the people seek a king (8:1–22) Saul anointed king (9:1–10:27) Battle and victory over the Ammonites (11:1–15) Samuel's farewell (12:1–25) Saul's weakness and failures (13:1–15:35)

David and his conflicts with Saul (16:1–31:13) God's choice of David to be king (16:1–23) David fights Goliath (17:1–58) Saul's jealousy of David; David and Jonathan (18:1–20:42) David in the wilderness; David in Philistia (21:1–30:31) Death of Saul (31:1–13)

What is the Book of 1 Samuel about?

The Book of 1 Samuel is about Samuel, Saul, and David. Samuel was the last of the judges over Israel. Saul was the first king of Israel. Much of the book is about how Saul became king, then how he later sinned against God and died. God chose David to be king after Saul. This book shows how God protected David when Saul tried to kill him.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title "1 Samuel" or "First Samuel." Or, translators may consider a clearer title such as

"The First Book About Samuel, Saul, and David."

What is the purpose of the Book of 1 Samuel?

The purpose of 1 Samuel is to give an account of the events leading up to David becoming king of Israel. In 1 Samuel, the twelve tribes of Israel unite under the first king of Israel, Saul. But Saul does not obey Yahweh's commands. So God uses Samuel to choose David as a king who will trust and obey Yahweh.

Who wrote the Book of 1 Samuel?

It is uncertain who wrote 1 Samuel. It may have been someone alive soon after King Solomon died. When Solomon died, the kingdom of Israel split into two kingdoms. The author probably lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. A descendant of David continued to rule over the southern kingdom. The author may have written 1 Samuel to defend David's right to be king. This would prove that David's descendant was the rightful king of God's people.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who is "Yahweh's anointed"?

The writer of 1 Samuel often speaks of "Yahweh's anointed." This refers to the one whom Yahweh chose to be the king of his people. Also, the phrase "Yahweh's anointed" would make later readers think about the future descendant of David who would become king of God's people. This person who Yahweh chose would be known as the Messiah. (See: anoint and peopleofgod and christ)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are curses, as found in 1 Samuel and elsewhere?

A curse is a strong statement a person makes to cause bad things to happen to the person or thing being cursed. A curse usually has this pattern: "May God do so to you, and even more, if you hide anything from me of all the words that he spoke to you" (1 Sam. 3:17). Other instances of curses in 1 and 2 Samuel are found in 1 Sam 14:44; 20:13; 25:22; 2 Sam 3:9, 35; and 19:13. The translator should represent a curse in the project language in as strong a way as possible.

How is the name "Israel" used in the Bible?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed his name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: israel)

The Book of 1 Samuel has two references to Israel and Judah (1 Samuel 17:52, 1 Samuel 18:16). However, these references appear in the text long before the two kingdoms split apart. It seems clear that the references to Israel and Judah are in the text because the author wrote at a time after the kingdoms split. He wanted the readers to understand that all the twelve tribes had supported David.

What is the meaning of the phrase "to this day"?

This phrase was used by the narrator to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. He must avoid giving the impression that the present day of the translation's readers is meant. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written" or "to this day, at the time of writing." This phrase occurs in 1 Samuel 5:5; 6:18: 27:6; 30:25.

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1 Samuel

1 [1]There was a certain man of Ramathaim of the Zuphites, of the hill country of Ephraim; his name was Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.[1][2]He had two wives; the name of the first was Hannah, and the name of the second was Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.
[3]This man went from his city year after year to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh of hosts in Shiloh. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, priests to Yahweh, were there.[4]When the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice each year, he always gave portions of the meat to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters.
[5]But to Hannah he always gave a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although Yahweh had closed her womb.[6]Her rival provoked her severely in order to irritate her, because Yahweh had closed her womb.
[7]So year after year, when she went up to the house of Yahweh with her family, her rival always provoked her. Therefore she used to weep and eat nothing.[8]Elkanah her husband always said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

[9]On one of these occasions, Hannah rose up after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting upon his seat by the doorway to the temple of Yahweh.[10]She was deeply distressed; she prayed to Yahweh and wept bitterly.
[11]She made a vow and said, "Yahweh of hosts, if you will look on the affliction of your servant and call me to mind, and do not forget your servant, but give your servant a son, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and no razor will ever touch his head."

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[12]As she continued praying before Yahweh, Eli watched her mouth.[13]Hannah spoke in her heart. Her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk.[14]Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Get rid of your wine."
[15]Hannah answered, "No, my master, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before Yahweh.[16]Do not consider your servant to be a worthless woman; I have been speaking out of the abundance of my great concern and provocation."
[17]Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace; may the God of Israel grant the request that you have asked him for."[18]She said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate; her face was no longer sad.

[19]They rose early in the morning and worshiped before Yahweh, and then they returned again to their house in Ramah. Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and Yahweh remembered her.[20]When the time came, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She called his name Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him from Yahweh."

[21]Once again, Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to Yahweh the yearly sacrifice and pay his vow.[22]But Hannah did not go; she had said to her husband, "I will not go until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, so that he may appear before Yahweh and live there forever."[23]Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems good to you. Wait until you have weaned him; only, may Yahweh confirm his word." So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him.
[24]When she had weaned him, she took him with her, along with a three-year-old bull,[2] one ephah of meal, and a bottle of wine, and brought him to the house of Yahweh in Shiloh. Now the child was still young.[25]They killed the bull, and they brought the child to Eli.
[26]She said, "Oh, my master! As you live, my master, I am the woman who stood here next to you praying to Yahweh.[27]For this child I prayed and Yahweh has given me my petition which I asked of him.[28]I have given him to Yahweh, as long as he lives he is lent to Yahweh." Then he worshiped Yahweh there.[3]

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[1]Some modern translations have Ramathaim Zophim, but it is understood that Zophim really refers to the region in which the clan descended from Zuph resided.
[2]Some translations of the copies of the ancient Hebrew text have three bulls instead of a three-year-old bull.
[3]Some modern translations have Then they worshiped Yahweh there.

1 Samuel 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter introduces Samuel. It is the beginning of the section 1 Samuel 1-7 which tells about Samuel, the religious leader of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Two wives

This was a common practice in the ancient Near East. It was against the law of Moses. The men of Israel would have sinned if they married more than one woman. This type of marriage always creates problems because of jealousy. (See: lawofmoses and sin and jealous)

"Pay his vow"

It was customary for Israelites to promise God to make a sacrifice to him if God answered special prayers. Making such a sacrifice was called paying one's vow. (See: vow)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idioms

When Hannah wanted to assure Eli she was telling the truth, she used the idiom "as you live." This is a type of oath formula meaning "I promise you I am telling the truth."
The author also uses the phrase "call to mind." This is a common idiom meaning "remember."

Links:

1 Samuel 1:1 1 Samuel intro

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1 Samuel 1:1

Ramathaim

This is the name of a small village possibly located eight kilometers northwest of Jerusalem.

the Zuphites

This is the name of a people group that descended from Zuph.

Elkanah ... Jeroham ... Elihu ... Tohu ... Zuph

These are the names of men.

1 Samuel 1:2

Peninnah

This is the name of a woman.

1 Samuel 1:3

This man

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"This man" refers to Elkanah.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Eli, Hophni and Phinehas

These are the names of men.

1 Samuel 1:5

Hannah

This is a woman's name. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 1:2]

closed her womb

"made her barren" or "prevented her from becoming pregnant"

1 Samuel 1:6

Her rival provoked her severely

The other wife would often grieve and shame Hannah.

1 Samuel 1:7

her rival

This is Peninnah, the other wife of Elkanah. A rival is someone who competes against another person. In this case Peninnah was competing against Hannah to try to get Elkanah to love her best.

1 Samuel 1:8

Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?

These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements, if necessary. Alternate translation: "Hannah, you should not weep. You should eat, and your heart should be glad because I am better to you than ten sons!" or "You have little reason for sadness. I favor you and that should be enough."

than ten sons

Elkanah is exaggerating to emphasize how important Hannah is to him. Alternate translation: "than any son could be"

1 Samuel 1:9

General Information:

Hannah begins to pray to Yahweh, and Eli watches.

Hannah rose up after

Implicit information here can be made explicit. Either Hannah's tent was next to the tabernacle tent or she walked from her tent to the tabernacle to pray. Alternate translation: "Hannah rose up and went to the house of Yahweh to pray after"

Now Eli the priest

"Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells about a new person in the story. This person is the priest Eli.

the temple of Yahweh

The "temple" was actually a tent, but it was where the people worshiped, so it is best to translate as "temple" here.

1 Samuel 1:10

She was deeply distressed

Hannah was deeply troubled or grieved because of not having any children and being ridiculed regularly by Peninnah, her husband's other wife.

1 Samuel 1:11

Connecting Statement:

Hannah's prayer to Yahweh continues.

the affliction of your servant

The abstract noun "affliction" can be translated as a verb phrase. This refers either to 1) Hannah being unable to become pregnant. Alternate translation: "how I am suffering because I cannot become pregnant" or 2) the way Peninnah always insulted her. Alternate translation: "how that woman is afflicting me"

call me to mind

This is a special plea to God to take action on Hannah's behalf. God does know what is happening to Hannah; he has not forgotten.

do not forget your servant

This phrase says almost the same thing as "call me to mind."

1 Samuel 1:12

Eli watched her

Eli was the chief priest, so he was in the tabernacle of God and in charge of it.

1 Samuel 1:15

I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit

"I am a woman who is deeply sad"

pouring out my soul before Yahweh

This is an idiom that means "telling Yahweh my deepest emotions."

1 Samuel 1:16

Do not consider your servant to be

Hannah speaks of herself in the second person to show her humility. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "Do not consider me, your servant, to be" or "Do not consider me"

I have been speaking out of the abundance of my great concern and provocation

This is another way of saying that she has a "sorrowful spirit," as in 1:15. The abstract nouns "abundance," "concern," and "provocation" can be translated as adjectives and verbs. Alternate translation: "I have been speaking because I am very sad, and my rival has greatly provoked me"

concern and provocation

These words both mean that Hannah is sad and annoyed because her rival has been provoking her.

concern

Peninnah irritates and annoys her.

provocation

Hannah is referring to the grief and shame she feels because Peninnah is being cruel to her.

1 Samuel 1:17

Then Eli answered

Eli was the head priest residing over the tabernacle.

1 Samuel 1:18

Let your servant find

Hannah speaks of herself in the second person to show respect for Eli, the head priest. This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "Let me, your servant, find" or "Let me find"

find favor in your eyes

Here "find favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that he is pleased with her. Here the eyes are a metonym for sight, and seeing represents judging or deciding the

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value of something. Alternate translation: "evaluated me and approve"

ate; her face was

Here "her face" represents Hannah herself. You can make this a separate sentence, if needed. Alternate translation: "ate. She was" or "ate. People could see that she was"

1 Samuel 1:19

Elkanah knew Hannah

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "Elkanah had sexual relations with Hannah"

remembered her

God knew what was happening to Hannah; he had not forgotten her. See how you translated similar words in 1 Samuel 1:11.

1 Samuel 1:20

Hannah conceived

"Hannah became pregnant"

1 Samuel 1:21

his house

The word "house" is a metonym for the people who lived in the house. Alternate translation: "his family"

1 Samuel 1:22

is weaned

stops drinking milk and starts eating only solid food

he may appear before Yahweh and live there forever

Hannah had promised God that she would allow Samuel to live and work with Eli the priest in the temple (1 Samuel 1:11).

1 Samuel 1:23

nursed her son

"gave her son milk"

1 Samuel 1:24

ephah

An ephah is about 22 liters of dry material.

bottle

Wine was kept in animal skins, not glass bottles.

1 Samuel 1:26

Oh, my master! As you live, my master

Here the idiom "As you live" shows that Hannah is being sincere and truthful. Alternate translation: "Sir, what I am going to tell you is certainly true"

1 Samuel 1:27

has given me my petition which I asked of him

The noun "petition" refers to a formal request for another person to do something. It can be translated with a verb. The idiom "to give a petition" means to do what the person requests. Alternate translation: "has agreed to do what I solemnly requested that he do"

1 Samuel 1:28

he is lent to Yahweh

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am loaning him to Yahweh"

he worshiped Yahweh

Possible meanings: 1) "He" refers to Elkanah or 2) "he" is a synecdoche referring to both Elkanah and his family. Alternate translation: "Elkanah and his family"

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2 [1]Hannah prayed and said,
"My heart rejoices in Yahweh.
My horn is exalted in Yahweh.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.
[2] There is no one holy like Yahweh,
for there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.

[3] Boast no more so very proudly;
let no arrogance come out of your mouth.
For Yahweh is a God of knowledge;
by him acts are weighed.

[4] The bows of the mighty men are broken,
but those who stumble are girded with strength.

[5] Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread;
those who were hungry have stopped being hungry.
Even the barren one gives birth to seven,
but the woman who has many children becomes weak.

[6] Yahweh kills and brings to life.
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.

[7] Yahweh makes some people poor and some rich.
He humbles, but he also lifts up.

[8] He raises up the poor out of the dust.
He lifts the needy from the ash heap

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to make them sit with princes
and inherit the seat of honor.
For the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's
and he has set the world upon them.

9 He will guard the feet of his faithful people,
but the wicked will be put to silence in darkness,
for no one will prevail by strength.

10 Those who oppose Yahweh will be broken to pieces;
he will thunder against them from heaven.
Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the horn of his anointed."

11 Then Elkanah went to Ramah, to his house. The child served Yahweh in the presence of Eli the priest.

12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know Yahweh. 13 The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand, while the meat was boiling. 14 He would stick it into the pan, or kettle, or cauldron, or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. They did this in Shiloh with all of Israel that came there.
15 Worse, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man who was sacrificing, "Give meat to roast for the priest; for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw." 16 If the man said to him, "They must burn the fat first, and then take as much as you want." Then he would say, "No, you will give it me now; if not, I will take it by force." 17 The sin of these young men was very great before Yahweh, for they despised Yahweh's offering.

18 But Samuel served Yahweh as a child clothed with a linen ephod. 19 His mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.
20 Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May Yahweh give you more children by this woman because of the request she made of Yahweh." Then they would return to their own home. 21 Yahweh again helped Hannah, and again she conceived. She bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the child Samuel grew before Yahweh.

22 Now Eli was very old; he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they were lying with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 23 He said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil actions from all these people. 24 No, my sons; for it is not a good report that I hear. You make Yahweh's people disobey.
25 If one man sins against another, God will judge him; but if a man sins against Yahweh, who will speak for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father, because Yahweh intended to kill them. 26 The child Samuel grew up, and increased in favor with Yahweh and also with men.

27 Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Did I not reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to the house of Pharaoh? 28 I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, and to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me. I gave to the house of your father all the offerings of the people of Israel made with fire.
29 Why, then, do you scorn my sacrifices and offerings, which I commanded in the place where I live? Why do you honor your sons above me by making yourselves fat with the best of every offering of my people Israel?' 30 Therefore, Yahweh, the God of Israel, declares, 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should walk before me forever.' But now Yahweh declares, 'Far be it from me to do this, for I will honor those who honor me, but those who despise me will be lightly esteemed.
31 See, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will no longer be any old man in your house. 32 You will see distress in the place where I live. Although good will be given to Israel, there will no longer be any old man in your house. 33 Any one of you that I do not cut off from my altar, I will cause your eyes to fail, and I will cause grief in your heart, then all the increase of your house will die while men.
34 This will be the sign for you that will come on your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: They will both die on the same day. 35 I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do what is in my heart and in my soul. I will build him a sure house; and he will walk before my anointed king forever.
36 Everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him, asking for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and will say, "Please assign me to one of the priests' positions so I can eat a piece of bread.""

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1 Samuel 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with Hannah's poetic prayer in 2:1-10 .

Special concepts in this chapter

Hannah's song of praise to God

This song is about how God protects the weak and strengthens them. He humbles the rich, provides for the poor, and defeats his enemies.

Eli's Sons

Eli, the chief priest, had two sons. They were ungodly priests who continually sinned and did not honor God. Eli corrected them but they did not listen. A prophet warned Eli that God would stop his family from being priests and his sons would both die on the same day. At the same time, Samuel was growing up and serving God. (See: sin and godly and prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

This chapter has many figures of speech because the first part of the chapter is a song and the last part of the chapter is a prophecy. Songs and prophecy tend to have many figures of speech.

Synecdoches

"My heart" and "my mouth" are synecdoches referencing the speaker.

Metonymies

Body parts are often used to stand for activities involving that part of the body. "The feet of his faithful people" is a metonym meaning what they are doing or where they are going. Place names are often used for people in that place such as "the ends of the earth" meaning the people living in the ends of the earth.

Metaphors

Hannah used many military metaphors: "rock," representing protection; "the bows of the mighty men are broken," representing military defeat; "the horn of his anointed," representing the power of the one that God has chosen to be king.

Rhetorical questions

God used three rhetorical questions to correct and condemn Eli. "Did I not reveal myself to the house of your ancestor, when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house?" "Why then do you scorn my offerings that I required in the place where I live?" "Why do you honor your sons above me by making yourselves fat with the best of every offering of my people Israel?"

Links:

1 Samuel 2:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 2:1

General Information:

Hannah recites a song to Yahweh.

My heart rejoices

The word "heart" here is a metonym for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I rejoice"

in Yahweh

"because of who Yahweh is" or "because Yahweh is so great"

My horn is exalted

A horn is a symbol of strength. Alternate translation: "I am now strong"

1 Samuel 2:2

Connecting Statement:

Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.

there is no rock like our God

This is another way of saying that God is strong and faithful.

rock

This is a rock large enough to hide behind or to stand on and so be high above one's enemies.

1 Samuel 2:3

Connecting Statement:

Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh. She speaks as if other people were listening to her.

no arrogance

"no arrogant words"

by him acts are weighed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he weighs people's acts" or "he understands why people act as they do"

1 Samuel 2:4

Connecting Statement:

Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.

The bows of the mighty men are broken

Possible meanings are 1) the bows themselves are broken or 2) the men who carry the bows are prevented from acting. Alternate translation: "Mighty bowmen are kept from acting"

The bows of the mighty men are broken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh breaks the bows of the mighty men" or "Yahweh can make even the strongest of people weak"

those who stumble are girded with strength

"those who stumble put on strength like a belt." This metaphor means they will no longer stumble, but their

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strength will remain with them as tightly as a belt.
Alternate translation: "he will make those who stumble strong"
are girded
This means that they have put something around their waist to prepare for work.
1 Samuel 2:5
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
gives birth to seven
"gives birth to seven children"
1 Samuel 2:6
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
Yahweh kills ... brings to life ... brings down ... raises up
Yahweh is in control of everything.
1 Samuel 2:7
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
makes some people poor ... some rich ... humbles ... lifts up
Yahweh is in control of everything.
1 Samuel 2:8
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
out of the dust ... from the ash heap
These are metaphors for the lowest position in society.
the needy
people who do not have the things that they need
1 Samuel 2:9
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
guard the feet of his faithful people
Here "feet" is a metonym for the way a person walks, which in turn is a metaphor for the way a person decides how to live his life. Alternate translation: "keep his faithful people from making foolish decisions" or "enable his faithful people to make wise decisions"
the wicked will be put to silence in darkness
This polite way of saying that Yahweh will kill the wicked can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will put the wicked to silence in darkness" or "Yahweh will put the wicked in the dark and silent world of the dead"
the wicked will be put to silence
The words "be put to silence" are an idiom for "be made silent." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make them silent"
by strength
"because he is strong"
1 Samuel 2:10
Connecting Statement:
Hannah continues to recite a song to Yahweh.
Those who oppose Yahweh will be broken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will break those who oppose him"
broken to pieces
This idiom means "defeated."
the ends of the earth
This is an idiom that means everywhere. Alternate translation: "the whole earth"
exalt the horn of his anointed
A horn is a symbol of strength. See how you translated similar words in [1 Samuel 2:1]
his anointed
This speaks of the person that Yahweh chose and empowered for his purposes as if Yahweh had anointed the person with oil. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one he has anointed" or "the one he has chosen"
1 Samuel 2:12
General Information:
When people would offer animals as sacrifices, they would first burn the animal's fat and then boil the meat and eat it.
did not know Yahweh
"did not listen to Yahweh" or "did not obey Yahweh"
1 Samuel 2:13
custom
A custom is an action that people regularly do.
1 Samuel 2:14
into the pan, or kettle, or cauldron, or pot
These are containers in which food could be cooked. If your language does not have separate words for these items it can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "into whatever the people were cooking the meat in"
pan
a small metal container for boiling and cooking
kettle
a large, heavy metal container for boiling and cooking
cauldron
a large, heavy metal container for boiling and cooking
pot
a clay container for cooking
1 Samuel 2:15
General Information:
When people would offer animals as sacrifices, they would first burn the animal's fat and then boil the meat, give some to the priest, and eat the rest.
Worse, before
"They even did something worse than that. Before"
they burned
The person who actually did the burning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the man who was sacrificing took his sacrifice to the priests and the priests burned"
Give meat to roast for the priest
"Give me some meat so I can give it to the priest so he can roast it"
roast
cook over a fire
boiled
cooked in water
raw
not cooked
1 Samuel 2:17
despised Yahweh's offering
The young men did not like and paid no attention to Yahweh's instructions regarding what people would offer to him.
1 Samuel 2:20

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because of the request she made of Yahweh
Hannah had asked Yahweh for a baby and promised him that she would give the baby to serve in the temple.
1 Samuel 2:21
before Yahweh
This means where Yahweh could see him and Samuel could learn about Yahweh.
1 Samuel 2:22
they were lying with the women
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "they were having sexual relations with the women"
1 Samuel 2:23
Why do you do such things?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is terrible that you do such things!"
1 Samuel 2:25
who will speak for him?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is certainly no one who can speak for him."
speak for him
"ask Yahweh to have mercy on him"
the voice of their father
Here the father's "voice" represents the father. Alternate translation: "their father" or "what their father said"
1 Samuel 2:27
man of God
This phrase usually means a prophet of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "a man who hears and tells words from God"
Did I not reveal myself ... house of Pharaoh?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should know that I revealed myself ... house of Pharaoh."
the house of your father
The word "house" is a metonym for the people who lived in the house, and "father" refers to a distant ancestor. Alternate translation: "the family of your ancestor"
your father
Aaron
1 Samuel 2:28
to go up to my altar, and to burn incense
This refers to making an offering to Yahweh.
to wear an ephod before me
The words "wear an ephod" are a metonym for the work of the priests who wear the ephod. Alternate translation: "to do what I had commanded the priests to do"
1 Samuel 2:29
Connecting Statement:
The man of God continues to speak to Eli.
Why, then, do you scorn my sacrifices ... live?
This rhetorical question is a rebuke. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not scorn my sacrifices ... where I live."
the place where I live
"the place where my people bring offerings to me"
making yourselves fat with the best of every offering
The best part of the offering was to be burned up as an offering to Yahweh, but the priests were eating it.
1 Samuel 2:30
the house of your father
The word "house" is a metonym for the people who lived in the house, and "father" in this case refers to a distant ancestor. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 2:27]
should walk before me
This is an idiom that means "live in obedience to me."
Far be it from me to do this
"I will certainly not allow your family to serve me forever"
those who despise me will be lightly esteemed
The words "lightly esteemed" is an ironic euphemism for "greatly despised." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will lightly esteem those who despise me" or "I will greatly despise those who despise me"
1 Samuel 2:31
See
"Listen carefully to what I am about to say" or "What I am about to say is very important"
I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house
The words "cut off ... strength" are probably a euphemism for the death of strong, young men; the words "your father's house" are a metonym for "your family." Alternate translation: "I will kill you and all strong, young male descendants in your family"
be any old man
"be any old men" or "be any men who grow old"
1 Samuel 2:33
cause your eyes to fail
"cause you to lose your eyesight" or "cause you to go blind"
all the increase of your house
This metaphor speaks of children born into the "house," the family, as if they were the "increase" of fruit or grain growing in a field. Alternate translation: "all the children born into your family"
while men
while they are the strongest they can be
1 Samuel 2:35
I will raise up ... a faithful priest
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will cause a man to become priest"
for myself
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "to serve me"
what is in my heart and in my soul
"what I want him to do and what I tell him to do"
I will build him a sure house
Here "house" is an idiom used for "descendants." Alternate translation: "I will ensure that he always has a descendant who serves as high priest"
1 Samuel 2:36
him
the faithful priest whom God will raise up
so I can eat a piece of bread
Here "piece of bread" is used for "food. "Alternate translation: "so I can have something to eat"

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3 [1]The child Samuel served Yahweh under Eli. Yahweh's word was rare in those days; there was no frequent prophetic vision.[2]At that time, Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well, was lying down in his own bed.[3]The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of Yahweh, where the ark of God was.[4]Yahweh called to Samuel, who said, "Here I am."
[5]Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli said, "I did not call you; lie down again." So Samuel went and lay down.[6]Yahweh called again, "Samuel." Again Samuel rose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son; lie down again."
[7]Now Samuel did not yet have any experience of Yahweh, nor had any message from Yahweh ever been revealed to him.
[8]Yahweh called Samuel again the third time. Again Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli realized that Yahweh had called the boy.
[9]Then Eli said to Samuel, "Go and lie down again; if he calls you again, you must say, 'Speak, Yahweh, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his own place once more.

[10]Yahweh came and stood; he called as at the other times, "Samuel, Samuel." Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."[11]Yahweh said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel at which the ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.
[12]On that day I will carry out against Eli everything I have said about his house, from beginning to end.[13]I have told him that I am about to judge his house once for all for the iniquity that he knew about, because his sons brought a curse upon themselves and he did not stop them.[14]Because of this I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of his house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering."

[15]Samuel lay down until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of Yahweh. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.[16]Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel said, "Here I am."
[17]He said, "What was the word he spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. May God do so to you, and even more, if you hide anything from me of all the words that he spoke to you."[18]Samuel told him everything; he hid nothing from him. Eli said, "It is Yahweh. Let him do what seems good to him."

[19]Samuel grew up, and Yahweh was with him, and he let none of his prophetic words fall to the ground.[20]All Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was appointed to be a prophet of Yahweh.[21]Yahweh appeared again in Shiloh, for he revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by his word.

1 Samuel 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God speaks to Samuel

God spoke at night to Samuel when he was a small boy, telling him that he would punish Eli's family. As Samuel grew up, God gave him many messages. People came from all over Israel to find out what God had to say.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

In order to show respect when talking to God, Samuel calls himself "your servant" when referring to himself.

Idioms

One characteristic of prophecy is the use of figures of speech. In this passage there are two idioms: "ears will shake," meaning "will shock everyone who hears" and "carry out," meaning "do."

In order to be sure Samuel would tell him the whole truth, Eli used the standard formula for a curse: "may God do to you, and even more, if," meaning "God will punish severely if the person does what the curse says he will do." (See: curse)

Links:

1 Samuel 3:1 Notes

1 Samuel 3:1

Yahweh's word was rare

"Yahweh did not often speak to people"

1 Samuel 3:3

The lamp of God

This is the seven-candle lampstand in the holy place of the tabernacle that burned every day and through the night until it was empty.

the temple of Yahweh

The "temple" was actually a tent, but it was where the people worshiped, so it is best to translate the word as "temple" here. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 1:9.

1 Samuel 3:6

my son

Eli was not Samuel's true father. Eli speaks as if he were Samuel's father to show Samuel that he is not angry but that Samuel needs to listen to him.

1 Samuel 3:7

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nor had any message from Yahweh ever been revealed to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor had Yahweh ever revealed any message to him" or "and Yahweh had never revealed any message to him"
1 Samuel 3:9
your servant is
Eli tells Samuel to speak to Yahweh as if Samuel were another person so that Samuel would show respect to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I am"
1 Samuel 3:10
Yahweh came and stood
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh actually appeared and stood before Samuel or 2) Yahweh made his presence known to Samuel.
your servant is
Samuel speaks to Yahweh as if Samuel were another person to show respect to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I am"
1 Samuel 3:11
at which the ears of everyone who hears it will tingle
Here "ears ... will tingle" is an idiom that means everyone will be shocked by what they hear. Alternate translation: "that will shock everyone who hears it"
tingle
This means to feel like someone is gently poking with small, sharp objects, usually because of the cold or because someone has slapped that body part with their hand.
1 Samuel 3:12
from beginning to end
This is a merism for completeness. Alternate translation: "absolutely everything"
1 Samuel 3:13
brought a curse upon themselves
"did those things which Yahweh had said he would punish those who did them"
1 Samuel 3:14
the iniquity of his house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "there is no sacrifice or offering that anyone can offer that will atone for the iniquity of his house"
the iniquity of his house
Here the word "house" is a metonym for the family living in the house. "the iniquity that the people in his family have committed"
1 Samuel 3:15
the house of Yahweh
The "house" was actually a tent, but it would be best to translate "house" here.
1 Samuel 3:16
my son
Eli was not Samuel's true father. Eli speaks as if he were Samuel's father to show Samuel that he is not angry but that Samuel needs to answer him. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 1:6]
1 Samuel 3:17
the word he spoke
"the message Yahweh gave"
May God do so to you, and even more
This is an idiom to emphasize how serious Eli is. Alternate translation: "May God punish you the same way he said he will punish me, and even more"
1 Samuel 3:19
he let none of his prophetic words fall to the ground
Here messages that do not come true are spoken of as if they fell to the ground. This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "he made all the things he prophesied happen"
1 Samuel 3:20
All Israel
"All the people in Israel"
from Dan to Beersheba
This is a merism for "in every part of the land." Alternate translation: "from one end of the land to the other" or "from Dan in the very north to Beersheba in the very south"
Samuel was appointed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had appointed"

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4 [1]The word of Samuel came to all of Israel.
Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They set up camp at Ebenezer, and the Philistines set up camp at Aphek.
[2]The Philistines lined up for battle against Israel. When the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle.
[3]When the people came into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has Yahweh defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of Yahweh here from Shiloh, that it may be here with us, that it might keep us safe from the hands of our enemies."[4]So the people sent men to Shiloh; from there they carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts, who sits above the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

[5]When the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came into the camp, all of the people of Israel gave a great shout of joy, and the earth resounded.[6]When the Philistines heard the noise of the joyful shouting, they said, "What does this loud joyful shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they realized that the ark of Yahweh had come into the camp.
[7]The Philistines were afraid; they said, "A god has come into the camp." They said, "Woe to us! Nothing like this has happened before![8]Woe to us! Who will protect us from the strength of these mighty gods? These are the gods who attacked the Egyptians with many different kinds of plagues in the wilderness.[9]Take courage, and be men, you Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you. Be men, and fight."
[10]The Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated. Every man fled to his tent, and the slaughter was very great; for thirty thousand footmen from Israel fell.[11]The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

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[12]A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the same day, arriving with his clothes torn and earth on his head.[13]When he arrived, Eli was sitting on his seat by the road watching because his heart trembled with concern for the ark of God. When the man entered the city and told the news, the whole city cried out.
[14]When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, "What is the meaning of this uproar?" The man quickly came and told Eli.[15]Now Eli was ninety-eight years old; his eyes did not focus, and he could not see.
[16]The man said to Eli, "I am the one who came from the battle line. I fled from the battle today." Eli said, "How did it go, my son?"[17]The man who brought the news answered and said, "Israel fled from the Philistines. Also, there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also, your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken."
[18]When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate. His neck was broken, and he died, because he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years.

[19]Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and about to give birth. When she heard the news that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she knelt down and gave birth, but her labor pains overwhelmed her.[20]About the time of her death the women attending to her said, "Do not be afraid, for you have given birth to a son." But she did not answer or take what they said to heart.
[21]She called the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory has gone away from Israel!" for the ark of God had been captured, and because of her father-in-law and her husband.[22]She said, "The glory has gone away from Israel, because the ark of God has been captured."

1 Samuel 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The Ark of the Covenant in Philistine country

This chapter begins a new section on the Ark and the Philistines. It recounts two battles between Israel and the Philistines. In both battles, Israel was badly defeated and, in the second, the Ark was captured.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Ark is captured

The Philistine army invaded Israel, and Israel's army went to fight them but was defeated. Israel decided that if they took the Ark into the next battle, God would cause them to win. When Eli's sons took the Ark into the next battle and the Philistines won the battle, they killed Eli's two sons and captured the Ark. When Eli heard the Ark was captured, he fell over, broke his neck, and died. Hearing this news, his daughter-in-law named her baby "the glory has departed."

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Question

The Philistines expressed their fear using a rhetorical question: "Who will protect us from the strength of this mighty God?"

Links:

1 Samuel 4:1 Notes

1 Samuel 4:1

Ebenezer ... Aphek

These are the names of places.

1 Samuel 4:2

Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Philistines defeated the Israelites and killed"

about four thousand men

Here the number four thousand is a round number. There may have been a few more than that or a few less than that. The word "about" shows that it is not an exact number. Alternate translation: "about 4,000 men"

1 Samuel 4:3

the people

the soldiers who had been fighting the battle

Why has Yahweh defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring ... enemies

The elders truly did not know why Yahweh had defeated them, but they wrongly thought they knew how to make sure it did not happen again, by bringing the ark to be with them.

1 Samuel 4:4

who sits above the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "who sits on his throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

Phinehas

This Phinehas is not the same as the grandson of Aaron in Exodus and Numbers.

were there

were in Shiloh

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1 Samuel 4:5

When the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came into the camp

"When the people carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh into the camp" Some languages may need to add understood information to make the meaning clear. Alternate translation: "The people, along with Hophni and Phinehas, picked up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh and carried it into the camp. When the people carried the ark into the camp"

1 Samuel 4:6

the ark of Yahweh had come into the camp

"the people had carried the ark of Yahweh into the camp"

1 Samuel 4:7

they said ... They said

"they said to themselves ... They said to each other" or "they said to each other ... They said to each other." The second clause clearly refers to what the Philistines said to each other. The first clause probably refers to what they thought, though it could also refer to what they said to each other. If possible, avoid stating who was spoken to.

A god has come

The Philistines worshiped many gods, so they probably believed that one of those gods, or one whom they did not worship, had come into the camp. Another possible meaning is that they were speaking the proper name of the God of Israel: "Yahweh has come." Because 4:8 speaks of "gods," some translations read, "Gods have come," that is, "It is gods who have come."

1 Samuel 4:8

Who will protect us from the strength of these mighty gods?

This rhetorical question is an expression of deep fear. It can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one who can protect us from these mighty gods."

these mighty gods ... the gods who attacked

Because the word "god"

1 Samuel 4:9

be men

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "be strong and fight"

1 Samuel 4:10

Israel was defeated

This can be stated in active form. Also, "Israel" refers to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "they defeated the army of Israel"

his tent

"his home." The Israelites were living in houses in those days.

1 Samuel 4:11

The ark of God was taken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Philistines also took the ark of God"

1 Samuel 4:12

clothes torn and earth on his head

This is a way to express deep mourning in Israelite culture.

1 Samuel 4:13

his heart trembled with concern

This is an idiom which means he was very fearful or terribly concerned about something.

the whole city

This is a metonym for "all the people in the city."

1 Samuel 4:14

The man

"The man of Benjamin"

1 Samuel 4:16

my son

Eli was not the other man's true father. Eli speaks as if he were the man's father to show the man that he is not angry but that the man needs to answer him.

1 Samuel 4:17

Israel fled from the Philistines

This is a general statement about what happened. The rest of the man's words give details.

Also, there has been ... people. Also, your two sons

"I will now tell you something worse ... I will now tell you something worse" or "Not only has there been ... people, but your two sons"

the ark of God has been taken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Philistines have taken the ark of God"

1 Samuel 4:18

When he mentioned

"When the man of Benjamin mentioned"

mentioned

"spoke of"

His neck was broken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His neck broke because he fell" or "He broke his neck when he fell"

1 Samuel 4:19

his daughter-in-law

Eli's daughter-in-law

the ark of God was captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Philistines had captured the ark of God"

1 Samuel 4:20

take what they said to heart

"pay any attention to what they said" or "allow herself to feel better"

1 Samuel 4:21

She called

"she named"

Ichabod

The name is actually a phrase that means "no glory." The name of a person sometimes reveals information about the person, place, or thing it refers to.

for the ark of God had been captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the Philistines had captured the ark of God"

1 Samuel 4:22

the ark of God has been captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the Philistines have captured the ark of God"

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5 [1]Now the Philistines had captured the ark of God, and they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod.[2]The Philistines took the ark of God, brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it up beside Dagon.[3]When the people of Ashdod got up early

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the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen facedown on the ground before the ark of Yahweh. So they took Dagon and set him up in his place again.
[4]But when they got up early the next morning, behold, Dagon had fallen facedown on the ground before the ark of Yahweh. The head of Dagon and both of his hands were lying cut off on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon remained.
[5]This is why, even today, the priests of Dagon and anyone who comes into Dagon's house does not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod.

[6]Yahweh's hand was heavy upon the people of Ashdod. He destroyed them and afflicted them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territories.[7]When the men of Ashdod realized what was happening, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not stay with us, because his hand is hard against us and against Dagon our god."
[8]So they sent for and gathered together all of the rulers of the Philistines; they said to them, "What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" They answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel there.[9]But after they brought it around, Yahweh's hand was against the city, causing a very great tumult. He afflicted the men of the city, both small and great; and tumors broke out on them.
[10]So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But as soon as the ark of God came into Ekron, the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought to us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people."
[11]So they sent for and gathered together all of the rulers of the Philistines; they said to them, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people." For there was a deathly tumult throughout the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.[12]The men who did not die were afflicted with the tumors, and the cry of the city went up to the heavens.

1 Samuel 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of the Ark of the Covenant in Philistia continues.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Ark in the Philistine Cities

The Philistines took the Ark of God to Ashdod and put it in their idol temple, but their idol fell down in front of the Ark and the people got sick with bubonic plague. They took it to Gath next, and the people of Gath began dying of the plague. When they took the Ark to Ekron, the people of Ekron were afraid of it too and did not want it there. Finally they decided to send it back to Israel. (See: temple)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idioms

There are two slightly different idioms used in the same way: the "hand was heavy" and the "hand was hard." Both idioms mean "was severely punished."

Links:

1 Samuel 5:1 Notes

1 Samuel 5:1

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a word or phrase that does the same, you could use it here.

ark of God

See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 3:3. This is the a same as the "ark of the covenant of Yahweh" in 1 Samuel 4:3.

1 Samuel 5:2

house of Dagon

This refers to the temple of Dagon, the god of the Philistines.

1 Samuel 5:3

behold, Dagon

"they were very surprised to see that Dagon"

Dagon had fallen facedown on the ground

The reader should understand that Yahweh had caused the statue to fall on its face during the night.

1 Samuel 5:4

Dagon had fallen

The reader should understand that Yahweh had caused Dagon to fall.

The head of Dagon and both of his hands were lying cut off

It was as if Yahweh were a soldier who had defeated his enemy and cut off the enemy's head and hands.

on the threshold

You may need to make explicit that this was the threshold in the doorway of the entrance to the temple. Alternate translation: "on the threshold of the doorway of the entrance to the temple"

1 Samuel 5:5

This is why, even today

The writer is about to give some background information separate from the main story.

even today

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Here "today" means up to the day when the author was writing this book.

the threshold of Dagon

You may need to make explicit the relationship between the threshold and Dagon. Alternate translation: "the threshold of the doorway of the temple of Dagon"

1 Samuel 5:6

Yahweh's hand was heavy upon

This is an idiom. "Yahweh severely judged"

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids.

both Ashdod and its territories

The name of the town is a metonym for the people living in the town. "both the people of Ashdod and the people in the land surrounding Ashdod"

1 Samuel 5:7

the men of Ashdod realized

"the men of Ashdod understood"

ark of the God of Israel

See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 3:3. This is the a same as the "ark of the covenant of Yahweh" in 1 Samuel 4:3.

1 Samuel 5:9

Yahweh's hand was against

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh punished"

both small and great

Possible meanings are 1) this is a merism that refers to age. Alternate translation: "men of all ages" or 2) this is a merism that refers social class. Alternate translation: "from the poorest and weakest men to the richest and most powerful men"

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6

1 Samuel 5:10

cried out

Why they cried out can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "cried out in fear"

1 Samuel 5:11

the ark of the God of Israel

See how you translated similar words in 1 Samuel 3:3. This is the a same as the "ark of the covenant of Yahweh" in 1 Samuel 4:3.

the God of Israel

Possible meanings are 1) they were speaking the proper name of the God of Israel or 2) they believed that Israel worshiped one of many gods, "the god of Israel." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:7.

there was a deathly tumult throughout the city

"people all over the city were afraid that they were going to die"

the hand of God was very heavy there

The hand is a metonym for God punishing the people. "Yahweh was punishing the people there very severely"

1 Samuel 5:12

The men who did not die

This implies that many men actually died.

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6.

the cry of the city went up to the heavens

The word "city" is a metonym for the people of the city. Possible meanings are 1) the words "went up to the heavens" is an idiom for "was very great." Alternate translation: "the people of the city cried out very loudly" or 2) the words "the heavens" is a metonym for the people's gods. Alternate translation: "the people of the city cried out to their gods"

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6 [1]Now the ark of Yahweh was in the country of the Philistines for seven months.[2]Then the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners; they said to them, "What should we do with the ark of Yahweh? Tell us how we should send it back to its own country."

[3]The priests and diviners said, "If you send back the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it without a gift; by all means send him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will know why his hand has not been lifted off of you until now."[4]Then they said, "What should the guilt offering be that we are returning to him?" They replied, "Five golden tumors and five golden mice, five being the number that is the same as the number of the rulers of the Philistines. For the same plague afflicted you and your rulers.

[5]So you must make models of your tumors, and models of your mice that are ruining the land, and give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lift his hand from you, from your gods, and from your land.[6]Why should you harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? That was when the God of Israel dealt severely with them; did not the Egyptians send away the people, and they left?

[7]Now then, prepare a new cart with two nursing cows that have never been yoked. Tie the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from them.[8]Take the ark of Yahweh and place it on the cart, and put the figures of gold, which you are returning to him as a guilt offering, in a box beside it. Send it off and let it go its way,[9]but watch. If it goes up the road to its own land toward Beth Shemesh, then it is Yahweh who has caused us this great harm. But if not, then we will know that it is not his hand that afflicted us; it happened to us by chance."

[10]The men did as they were told; they took two nursing cows, tied them to the cart, and confined their calves at home.
[11]They put the ark of Yahweh on the cart, together with a box containing the golden mice and the castings of their tumors.
[12]The cows went straight in the direction of Beth Shemesh. They went along one highway, lowing as they went, and they did not turn aside either to the right or to the left. The rulers of the Philistines followed after them to the border of Beth Shemesh.

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[13]Now the people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting their wheat in the valley. When they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, they rejoiced.
[14]The cart came into the field of Joshua from the town of Beth Shemesh and stopped there. A great stone was there, and they split the wood from the cart, and offered the cows as a burnt offering to Yahweh.[15]The Levites took down the ark of Yahweh and the box that was with it, where the golden figures were, and put them on the great stone. The men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices the same day to Yahweh.
[16]When the five rulers of the Philistines saw this, they returned that day to Ekron.

[17]These are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned for a guilt offering to Yahweh—one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, and one for Ekron.[18]The golden mice were the same in number as the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five rulers, both fortified cities and country villages. The great stone, beside which they set down the ark of Yahweh, remains a witness to this day in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite.

[19]Yahweh attacked some of the men of Beth Shemesh because they had looked into the ark of Yahweh. He killed 50,070 men. The people mourned, because Yahweh had given the people a great blow.[1][20]The men of Beth Shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before Yahweh, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from us?"
[21]They sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath Jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of Yahweh; come down and take it back with you."

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[1]Instead of 50,070 men, some later copies and modern translations have, seventy men.

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1 Samuel 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter ends the story of the Ark of the Covenant among the Philistines.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Philistines send the Ark back to Israel

The Philistine leaders asked their priests what they should do with the Ark. The priests said to send it off with an offering. The Philistines put the Ark on a cart drawn by cows and let them go wherever they wanted to go. The cows went straight toward Israel. When some people peeked into the Ark, God killed them. Because of this, the people sent the Ark to Kiriath Jearim.

Links:

1 Samuel 6:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 6:2

the priests and the diviners

These were pagan priests and diviners who worshiped Dagon.

Tell us how we should send it

The Philistines wanted to know how to get rid of the ark without angering Yahweh any further.

1 Samuel 6:3

the God of Israel

Possible meanings are 1) they were speaking the proper name of the God of Israel or 2) they believed that Israel worshiped one of many gods, "the god of Israel." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:7.

by all means send him a guilt offering

The words "by all means" are a forceful way of saying something. Alternate translation: "you must send a guilt offering"

you will be healed

"you will no longer be ill"

you

The pronoun "you" is plural, referring to all of the Philistines.

why his hand has not been lifted off of you

Here "hand" is a metonym used to represent God's power to afflict or discipline. Alternate translation: "why he has not relieved your suffering"

1 Samuel 6:4

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6.

mice

more than one mouse

1 Samuel 6:5

models

A model is something that looks like a real thing.

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6.

the God of Israel

Possible meanings are 1) they were speaking the proper name of the God of Israel or 2) they believed that Israel worshiped one of many gods, "the god of Israel." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:7.

lift his hand from you, from your gods, and from your land

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Here "hand" is a metonym used to represent God's power to afflict or discipline. Alternate translation: "stop punishing you, your gods and your land"

1 Samuel 6:6

Why should you harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts?

The priests and diviners use a rhetorical question to urge the Philistines to think very seriously about what will happen if they refuse to obey God. This can be translated as a warning. Alternate translation: "Do not be stubborn like the Egyptians and Pharaoh were!"

harden your hearts

This is an idiom that means to be stubborn or unwilling to obey God. Alternate translation: "refuse to obey God"

did not the Egyptians send away the people, and they left?

This is another rhetorical question used to remind the Philistines how the Egyptians finally sent the Israelites out of Egypt so that God would stop afflicting the Egyptians. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "remember that the Egyptians sent the Israelites out of Egypt."

1 Samuel 6:7

two nursing cows

"two cows that have calves that are still drinking milk"

1 Samuel 6:8

Send it off and let it go its way

Normally the two cows would head back home to their calves.

1 Samuel 6:9

If it goes ... toward Beth Shemesh, then it is Yahweh

It is unlikely that the cows would choose to wander to Beth Shemesh when their calves are back in the Philistine area.

1 Samuel 6:10

two nursing cows

"two cows that have calves that are still drinking milk" See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 6:7.

1 Samuel 6:11

mice

Translated this as in 1 Samuel 6:4.

castings of their tumors

"models of their tumors"

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6.

1 Samuel 6:12

The cows went straight in the direction of Beth Shemesh

Nursing cows would normally return to their calves, but these cows went to Beth Shemesh.

lowing as they went

Lowing is the noise cows make with their voices.

they did not turn aside either to the right or to the left

"they did not wander off of the highway." This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "they stayed on the highway" or "they went straight ahead"

1 Samuel 6:13

Now

The writer is introducing a new part of the story. If your language has a way of marking the beginning of a new part of the story, you could use it here.

people of Beth Shemesh

These were Israelites.

lifted up their eyes

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "looked up"

1 Samuel 6:14

A great stone was there

The people used this stone as an altar when they offered the cows as sacrifices.

1 Samuel 6:15

The Levites took down the ark of Yahweh

This actually happened before they chopped the cart into firewood to use in offering the cows to Yahweh.

The Levites took down the ark

According to the law of Moses, only the Levites were permitted to handle the ark.

the box that was with it, where the golden figures were

"the box containing the gold models of the rats and the tumors"

1 Samuel 6:16

the five rulers of the Philistines

"the five Philistine kings"

1 Samuel 6:17

tumors

Possible meanings are 1) painful swelling under the skin or 2) hemorrhoids. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 5:6.

1 Samuel 6:18

mice

Translated this as in 1 Samuel 6:4.

fortified cities

These are cities with high walls around them to protect the people inside from attack by their enemies.

The great stone ... remains a witness

The stone is referred to as if it is a person who can see. Alternate translation: "The great stone ... is still there, and people remember what happened on it"

Joshua

This is a man's name.

the Bethshemite

This is what a person from Beth Shemesh is called. Alternate translation: "from Beth Shemesh"

to this day

to the time at which the writer wrote the book

1 Samuel 6:19

they had looked into the ark

The ark was so holy that no one was permitted to look inside it. Only the priests were allowed to even see the ark.

50,070 men

"fifty thousand and seventy men"

1 Samuel 6:20

Who is able to stand before Yahweh, this holy God?

Possible meanings are 1) this is a rhetorical question that expresses the people's fear of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "There is no one who can resist Yahweh because he is so holy!" or 2) this is a question asking for information. The phrase "stand before Yahweh" may refer to priests who serve Yahweh. It is implied that the people were looking for a priest whom Yahweh would permit to

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handle the ark. Alternate translation: "Is there a priest among us who serves this holy God, Yahweh, and is able to handle this ark?"

To whom will the ark go up from us?

This is a question asking for information. It is implied that the people want Yahweh and the ark to go somewhere else so he will not punish them again. Alternate translation: "Where can we send this ark so that Yahweh will not punish us again?"

1 Samuel 6:21

Kiriath Jearim

This was a town in Israel.

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7 [1]The men of Kiriath Jearim came, took the ark of Yahweh, and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill. They set apart his son Eleazar to keep the ark of Yahweh.[2]From the day the ark remained in Kiriath Jearim, a long time passed, twenty years. All the house of Israel lamented and wished to turn to Yahweh.
[3]Samuel said to the entire house of Israel, "If you return to Yahweh with your whole heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, turn your hearts to Yahweh, and worship him only, then he will rescue you from the hand of the Philistines."[4]Then the people of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and worshiped Yahweh only.
[5]Then Samuel said, "Bring together all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to Yahweh for you."[6]They gathered at Mizpah, drew water and poured it out before Yahweh. They fasted that day and said, "We have sinned against Yahweh." It was there that Samuel decided disputes for the people of Israel and led the people.
[7]Now when the Philistines heard the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines attacked Israel. When the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines.[8]Then the people of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not stop calling out to Yahweh our God for us, so he will save us from the hand of the Philistines."
[9]Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to Yahweh. Then Samuel cried out to Yahweh for Israel, and Yahweh answered him.
[10]As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines approached to attack Israel. But Yahweh thundered with a loud sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were routed before Israel.[11]The men of Israel went from Mizpah, and they pursued the Philistines and killed them as far as below Beth Kar.

[12]Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far Yahweh has helped us."
[13]So the Philistines were subdued and they did not enter the border of Israel. The hand of Yahweh was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.[14]The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; Israel brought back their territory from the Philistines. Then there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

[15]Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.[16]Each year he went on a circuit to Bethel, to Gilgal, and to Mizpah. He decided disputes for Israel in all these places.[17]Then he would return to Ramah, because his house was there; and there also he decided disputes for Israel. He also built an altar there to Yahweh.

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1 Samuel 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter completes the section on Samuel leading Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel begins to worship Yahweh again

Samuel told the people to get rid of all their idols and worship Yahweh alone. The people were obedient. When the Philistines heard the Israelites were all gathered together, the Philistines attacked, but God defeated them. There was a time of peace during which Samuel settled disputes between the people as the judges had done before.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idioms

Whenever Samuel spoke to a group of people, he used many idioms: "to turn to" means "to worship"; "with your whole heart" means "completely"; and "rescue from the hand" means "rescued from the power."

Links:

1 Samuel 7:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 7:1

Kiriath Jearim

This is the name of a place.

Abinadab ... Eleazar

These are the names of men.

1 Samuel 7:2

twenty years

"20 years"

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1 Samuel 7:3

the entire house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the people who live in the house and their descendants. Alternate translation: "all of the descendants of Israel" or "all of the Israelite people"

return to Yahweh with your whole heart

Here "with your whole heart" is an idiom that means to be completely devoted to something. Alternate translation: "become completely devoted to worshiping and obeying Yahweh only"

1 Samuel 7:5

all Israel

"all the people of Israel" or "all the Israelites"

1 Samuel 7:6

drew water and poured it out before Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) the people denied themselves water as part of fasting or 2) they got water out of a stream or well and poured it on the ground as an outward sign of being sorry for their sin.

1 Samuel 7:7

the rulers of the Philistines attacked Israel

It can be stated plainly that it was the army and not the rulers by themselves who attacked Israel. Alternate translation: "the Philistine rulers led their army and attacked Israel"

1 Samuel 7:8

save us from the hand of the Philistines

The "hand" is a metonym for the power of the person. Alternate translation: "save us from the Philistine army" or "keep the Philistine army from harming us"

1 Samuel 7:9

nursing lamb

a lamb that is still drinking its mother's milk

cried out

"cried out for help"

Yahweh answered him

"Yahweh did what Samuel asked him to do"

1 Samuel 7:10

As Samuel ... they were routed before Israel

This begins to explain what the writer means by "Yahweh answered him" in (1 Samuel 7:9).

threw them into confusion

The word "confusion" here is used as a casual way of saying the Philistines were unable to think clearly. Alternate translation: "made them unable to think clearly"

they were routed before Israel

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh routed them before Israel" or 2) "Israel routed them"

routed

To rout people is to defeat them before they can cause any harm.

1 Samuel 7:11

The men of Israel ... Beth Kar

This finishes explaining what the writer means by "Yahweh answered him" in (1 Samuel 7:9).

Beth Kar

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 7:12

took a stone and set it

The Israelites and other peoples in that land would place a large stone where important events had happened as a reminder of God's help.

Mizpah ... Shen

These are the names of places.

1 Samuel 7:13

So the Philistines were subdued

The writer has just finished telling how the Philistines were subdued. If your language has a way of marking the end of a description, you could use it here.

the Philistines were subdued

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh subdued the Philistines" or "Yahweh kept the Philistines from causing harm"

they did not enter the border of Israel

The Philistines did not enter Israel's border to attack them.

The hand of Yahweh was against the Philistines

The word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh used his power against the Philistines"

1 Samuel 7:14

The towns ... from Israel were restored to Israel

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Here "Israel" refers to the "land" of Israel. "Yahweh restored to the land of Israel the towns ... from Israel" or 2) "Israel" is a metonym for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel were able to reclaim the towns ... from Israel"

1 Samuel 7:16

went on a circuit

traveled from place to place in a rough circle

He decided disputes

Disputes are arguments or disagreements between two or more people.

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8 [1]When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel.[2]The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second son was Abijah. They were judges in Beersheba.[3]His sons did not walk in his ways, but chased after dishonest gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

[4]Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah.[5]They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations."
[6]But it displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to Yahweh.[7]Yahweh said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in everything they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them.

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[8]The same deeds they have done since the day I brought them out of Egypt—abandoning me and serving other gods—they are now doing also to you.[9]Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know by what ordinances the king will reign over them."

[10]So Samuel told all the words of Yahweh to the people who were asking for a king.[11]He said, "These will be the ordinances of the king who will reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots.[12]He will appoint for himself captains of thousands and captains of fifties. He will make some plow his ground, some reap his harvest, and some make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots.
[13]He will also take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers.[14]He will take the very best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive orchards, and give them to his servants.[15]He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give to his officers and his servants.
[16]He will take your male servants and your female servants and the best of your cattle[1] and your donkeys; he will put them all to work for him.[17]He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves.[18]Then on that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves; but Yahweh will not answer you on that day."

[19]But the people refused to listen to Samuel; they said, "No! There must be a king over us[20]so that we might be like all the other nations, and so that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."
[21]When Samuel heard all the words of the people he repeated them in the ears of Yahweh.[22]Yahweh said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and cause a king to reign over them." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man must go to his own city."

[1]The Hebrew text can be read as: young men instead of cattle.

1 Samuel 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Saul and Samuel

The section including chapters 8-16 begins a new part of the story. The people wanted a king, and God chose Saul, the man the people wanted, to be their king. He was not the king Yahweh wanted.

Special concepts in this chapter

The people want a king

When Samuel was old, he appointed his sons to be judges. They were corrupt and took bribes, so the people came and asked Samuel to appoint a king for them. Samuel asked God, who gave them a king but warned them what a king would be like. Despite Samuel's warning that a king would oppress them, the people still wanted a king. This was sinful because they were rejecting God as their king. (See: appoint, oppress and and sin)

Links:

1 Samuel 8:1 Notes

1 Samuel 8:3

chased after dishonest gain

The writer speaks of money that people would give Samuel's sons as if it were a person or animal running away from Samuel's sons, and he speaks of Samuel's sons as if they were physically chasing that person or animal. Alternate translation: "they worked hard to gain money by being dishonest"

perverted justice

"judged in favor of those who did evil"

1 Samuel 8:5

do not walk in your ways

The way a person lives is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "do not do the things you do" or "do not do what is just the way you do"

Appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations

Possible meanings are 1) "Appoint for us a king like the kings of all the nations so that he can judge us" or 2) "Appoint for us a king who will judge us the way the kings of the nations judge them"

Appoint for us a king to judge us

The leaders wrongly believed that a king, and his sons after him, would rule justly.

1 Samuel 8:6

But it displeased Samuel ... Give us a king to judge us

Samuel was unhappy that the people did not just want him to remove his corrupt sons and to appoint honest judges, but they wanted a king to rule over them like other countries had.

1 Samuel 8:7

Obey the voice of the people

Here "the voice" is a metonym for the will or the desire of the people. Alternate translation: "Do what the people say"

but they have rejected me

Yahweh knew that the people were not just rejecting corrupt judges, but they were rejecting Yahweh as their king.

1 Samuel 8:8

I brought them out of Egypt

This refers to Yahweh freeing the Israelites from slavery in

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Egypt many years before.
1 Samuel 8:9
Now listen to them
"Now do what they are asking you to do"
warn them solemnly
"be very serious as you warn them"
by what ordinances the king will reign over them
"how the king who reigns over them will treat them" or "what the king who rules over them will require them to do"
1 Samuel 8:11
These will be the ordinances ... He will take
The practice of the king will be to take. This begins the list of things he will take.
These will be the ordinances of the king who will reign over you
The abstract noun "ordinances" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "This is how the king who will reign over you will act" or "This is what the king who will reign over you will do"
ordinances
See how you translated this word in 1 Samuel 8:9.
appoint them to his chariots
"have them drive chariots in battle"
be his horsemen
They will ride horses into battle.
1 Samuel 8:13
Connecting Statement:
Samuel continues to tell what things the king will take.
to be perfumers
"to make good-smelling oils to put on his body"
1 Samuel 8:14
olive orchards
"fields of olive trees"
1 Samuel 8:15
a tenth of your grain
They will have to divide their grain into ten equal parts and give one of those parts to the king's officers and servants.
a tenth ... of your vineyards
They will have to divide the wine that they produce in their vineyards into ten equal parts and give one of those parts to the king's officers and servants.
officers
These are the leaders of the king's army.
1 Samuel 8:16
Connecting Statement:
Samuel continues to tell what things the king will take.
1 Samuel 8:17
the tenth of your flocks
They will have to divide their flocks into ten equal parts and give one of those parts to the king's officers and servants. See how you translated "tenth" in [1 Samuel 8:15]
you will be his slaves
"you will feel as if you are his slaves"
1 Samuel 8:18
you will cry out
Possible meanings are 1) the people will ask Yahweh to rescue them from the king or 2) the people will ask the king to stop treating them so badly .
1 Samuel 8:21
he repeated them in the ears of Yahweh
Here "the ears of Yahweh" refers to Yahweh. Samuel prayed to Yahweh repeating all that the people said. Alternate translation: "he repeated them to Yahweh"
1 Samuel 8:22
Obey their voice
Here the metonym "their voice" refers to the will of the people. Alternate translation: "Obey the people"
cause a king to reign over them
"make someone king over them." Use the common term in your language for making someone king.
go to his own city
"go home"

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9 [1]There was a man from Benjamin, a man of great wealth. His name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Bekorath
son of Aphiah, the son of a Benjamite.[2]He had a son named Saul, a handsome young man. There was no man among
the people of Israel who was a more handsome person than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the
people.
[3]Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the servants with you; arise
and go search for the donkeys."[4]So Saul passed through the hill country of Ephraim and went through the land of
Shalisha, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he
passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them.

[5]When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us go back, or my father may
stop caring for the donkeys and become anxious about us."[6]But the servant said to him, "See now, there is a man of God in
this city. He is a man who is held in honor; everything that he says comes true. Let us go there; maybe he can tell us which
way we should go on our journey."
[7]Then Saul said to his servant, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sack is gone, and there is no
present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?"[8]The servant answered Saul and said, "Here, I have with me one-
fourth of a shekel of silver that I will give to the man of God, to tell us which way we should go."
[9](Formerly in Israel, when a man went to seek the knowledge of God's will, he said, "Come, let us go to the seer." For
today's prophet was formerly called a seer.)[10]Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said. Come, let us go." So they went to the
city where the man of God was.
[11]As they went up the hill to the city, they found young women coming out to draw water; Saul and his servant said to
them, "Is the seer here?"

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[12]They answered, and said, "He is; see, he is just ahead of you. Hurry up, for he is coming to the city today, because the people are sacrificing today at the high place.[13]As soon as you enter the city you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not eat until he comes, because he will bless the sacrifice; afterwards those who are invited will eat. Now go up, for you will find him immediately."
[14]So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them, to go up to the high place.

[15]Now the day before Saul came, Yahweh had revealed to Samuel:[16]"Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you will anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He will save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have looked on my people with pity because their cry for help has come to me."
[17]When Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh told him, "Here is the man I told you about! He is the one who will rule over my people."[18]Then Saul came close to Samuel in the gate and said, "Tell me where is the house of the seer?"[19]Samuel answered Saul and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you will eat with me. In the morning I will let you go, and I will tell you everything that is on your mind.
[20]As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not worry about them, for they have been found. Then on whom are all the desires of Israel set? Is it not on you and all your father's house?"[21]Saul answered and said, "Am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel? Is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this manner?"

[22]So Samuel took Saul and his servant, brought them into the hall, and seated them at the head place of those who had been invited, who were about thirty people.
[23]Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave to you, of which I said to you, 'Put it aside.'"[24]So the cook took up the thigh and what was on it and set it before Saul. Then Samuel said, "See what has been kept is set before you. Eat it, because it has been kept for you until the appointed time, from the time when I said, 'I have invited the people.'" So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

[25]When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the rooftop.[26]Then at the break of dawn, Samuel called to Saul on the rooftop and said, "Get up, so I can send you on your way." So Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.
[27]As they were going to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go ahead of us"—and he went ahead—"but you must stay here awhile, that I may announce the message of God to you."

1 Samuel 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Samuel chooses Saul to be their king

When the donkeys of Saul's father strayed away, Saul went looking for them. When he could not find them, he asked Samuel to ask God where they were. Samuel said the donkeys had been found. He invited Saul as the guest of honor to a feast and gave him a place to sleep for the night.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Saul uses two rhetorical questions to convince Samuel he is not important: "Am not I a Benjamite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel? Is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin?"

Links:

1 Samuel 9:1 Notes

1 Samuel 9:1

General Information:

If your language has a way of telling the reader that the writer is giving background information in these verses, you could use it here.

a man of great wealth

Possible other meanings are 1) he was a nobleman or 3) he was a mighty and brave man.

Kish ... Abiel ... Zeror ... Bekorath ... Aphiah

These are names of the men of Saul's family line.

Benjamite

A Benjamite is someone who belongs to the tribe of Benjamin.

1 Samuel 9:2

handsome

someone who looks good

From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people

The other tall people in Israel did not even come up to his shoulders.

1 Samuel 9:3

Now

The writer has ended the background information that

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began in (1 Samuel 9:1) and starts a new main part of the story.

arise and go

"stop what you are doing and go"

1 Samuel 9:4

the hill country of Ephraim ... the land of Shalisha ... the land of Shaalim ... the land of the Benjamites

These are all areas in Israel.

did not find them ... they were not there ... did not find them

The words "them" and "they" all refer to the donkeys.

1 Samuel 9:5

land of Zuph

This is an area in Israel just north of Jerusalem.

1 Samuel 9:6

See now, there

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: there"

man of God

This phrase usually means a prophet of Yahweh. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 2:27. Alternate translation: "a man who hears and tells words from God"

which way we should go on our journey

"which way we should go to find the donkeys"

1 Samuel 9:7

what can we bring the man?

Giving a gift is a sign of respect for the man of God.

man of God

This phrase usually means a prophet of Yahweh. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 2:27. Alternate translation: "a man who hears and tells words from God"

1 Samuel 9:8

one-fourth of a shekel

"1/4 of a shekel." A shekel is a type of money used in the Old Testament.

1 Samuel 9:9

Formerly in Israel ... seer

This is cultural information added by the Hebrew author. If it is not natural in your language to state this information here, it can be moved to the end of verse 11.

For today's prophet was formerly called a seer

"Seer is the old name for what we call a prophet today"

1 Samuel 9:12

the people are sacrificing today

These are likely the feast or first-fruit sacrifices, not the sin sacrifices, which must be held at the tabernacle.

1 Samuel 9:14

to go up to the high place

This is a place that the people had designated as holy to make sacrifices and offerings to Yahweh. The writer writes as though it were outside the wall that was around the city.

1 Samuel 9:15

General Information:

The writer stops telling the story and gives background information so the reader can understand what happens next.

1 Samuel 9:16

you will anoint him to be prince

The term prince is used here instead of king. This is the man whom God has chosen to be king of Israel.

the land of Benjamin

"the land where people from the tribe of Benjamin live"

from the hand of the Philistines

Here the word "hand" is a metonym for control. Alternate translation: "from the control of the Philistines" or "so the Philistines will no longer control them"

For I have looked on my people with pity

"My people are suffering and I want to help them"

1 Samuel 9:17

Yahweh told him

"Yahweh told Samuel"

1 Samuel 9:18

the seer

"the prophet of Yahweh"

1 Samuel 9:20

Then on whom are all the desires of Israel set? Is it not on you and all your father's house?

These questions are an expression of deep conviction that Saul is the one whom Yahweh wants to be the king that the Israelites are looking for. The questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You should know that it is on you that all the desires of Israel are set. They are set on you and your father's family."

1 Samuel 9:21

Am I not a Benjamite ... of Israel? Is not my clan ... Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this manner?

Saul is expressing surprise because Benjamin was the smallest tribe in Israel, and other Israelites considered the tribe unimportant. Also, Benjamites considered the clan of which Saul was a member as unimportant. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I am from the tribe of Benjamin, the least important of all tribes. And my clan is the least important clan in our tribe. I do not understand why you are saying that the Israelite people want me and my family to do something important."

1 Samuel 9:22

the hall

The writer assumes that the reader knows that near the place where they would offer sacrifices there was a large building in which people would eat together.

head place

This is the seat of honor.

thirty people

"30 people"

1 Samuel 9:24

what was on it

Possible meanings are 1) the other food that Saul was to eat along with the meat or 2) other parts of the bull.

Then Samuel said

In the original language it is not clear who is speaking. It is possible that the cook is speaking to Saul. Alternate translation: "Then the cook said"

1 Samuel 9:25

on the rooftop

This is a normal place for family and guests to eat, visit, and sleep. It tends to be cooler in the evening and at night than the inside of the house.

1 Samuel 9:26

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Samuel called to Saul on the rooftop and said
What Saul was doing on the rooftop can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "while Saul was sleeping on the rooftop, Samuel called to him and said"
1 Samuel 9:27
ahead of us"—and he went ahead—"but you must stay
It is possible that Samuel speaks all of these words. Alternate translation: "ahead of us, and when he has gone ahead, you must stay"
that I may announce the message of God to you
"so that I can tell you God's message for you"

10 [1]Then Samuel took a flask of oil, poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him. He said, "Has not Yahweh anointed you to be a ruler over his inheritance?[2]When you leave me today, you will find two men near Rachel's tomb, in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah. They will say to you, 'The donkeys that you were looking for have been found. Now your father has stopped caring about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, "What should I do about my son?"'
[3]Then you will go on further from there, and you will come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine.[4]They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you will take from their hands.
[5]After that, you will come to the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines is. When you arrive at the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a lute, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; they will be prophesying.[6]The Spirit of Yahweh will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them, and you will be changed into a different man.
[7]Now, when these signs come to you, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.[8]Go down before me to Gilgal. Then I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you must do."

[9]When Saul turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. Then all these signs came to pass that day.
[10]When they came to the hill, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him so that he prophesied with them.
[11]When everyone who knew him before saw him prophesying with the prophets, the people said to each other, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul one of the prophets now?"[12]A man who was from that same place answered, "Then who is their father?" Because of this, it became a saying, "Is Saul also one of the prophets?"[13]When he finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

[14]Then Saul's uncle said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?" He replied, "To search for the donkeys. When we saw that we could not find them, we went to Samuel."[15]Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what Samuel said to you."[16]Saul replied to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken.

[17]Now Samuel called the people together before Yahweh at Mizpah.[18]He said to the people of Israel, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel says: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you.'[19]But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all of your calamities and your distresses; and you have said to him, 'Set a king over us.' Now present yourselves before Yahweh by your tribes and by your clans."
[20]So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen.[21]Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their clans; and the clan of the Matrites was chosen; and Saul son of Kish was chosen. But when they went looking for him, he could not be found.
[22]Then the people wanted to ask God more questions, "Is there still another man to come?" Yahweh answered, "He has hidden himself among the baggage."[23]Then they ran and retrieved Saul from there. When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward.
[24]Then Samuel said to the people, "Do you see the man whom Yahweh has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people!" All the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

[25]Then Samuel told the people the customs and rules of kingship, wrote them down in a book, and placed it before Yahweh. Samuel then sent all the people away, each man to his own house.
[26]Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went some strong men, whose hearts God had touched.[27]But some worthless men said, "How can this man save us?" These people despised Saul and did not bring him any gifts. But Saul kept silent.[1]

[1]Some modern translations add to this verse the following paragraph: Nahash king of the Ammonites had severely oppressed the Gadites and Reubenites. He dug out the right eye of each man and did not allow anyone to rescue Israel. Across the Jordan River was left no Israelites whose right eye Nahash king of the Ammonites had not dug out. But seven thousand men had escaped from the Ammonites and had gone into Jabesh Gilead.

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1 Samuel 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the first chapter about King Saul.

Special concepts in this chapter

Saul as the New King

Samuel told Saul that God had chosen him to be king, and on the way home he would meet some prophets. Saul would then begin prophesying and God would give him the Holy Spirit to help him to know what to do. Samuel told everyone to come to Mizpah where he announced that God had chosen Saul to be their king. (See: prophet and holyspirit)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

This chapter uses rhetorical questions to express different ideas: to state a fact

Idioms

Samuel frequently uses idioms when prophesying: "going to God" means "going to worship God"; "take it from their hands" means "accept their gift"; "rush upon you" means "control you"; "hand finds to do" means "what you think you should do"; "God is with you" means "God is directing you"; "another heart" means "a different way of thinking"; "came to pass" means "happened"; "before Yahweh" means "to do work for Yahweh"; and "hearts God had touched" means "God had made them want to help Saul."

Links:

1 Samuel 10:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 10:1

took a flask of oil, poured it on Saul's head

In Israelite culture, when a prophet poured oil on someone's head, that person received a blessing from Yahweh.

flask

a small container made from baked clay

Has not Yahweh anointed you to be a ruler over his inheritance?

Samuel knows the answer to his question. He is reminding Saul that Yahweh has chosen him to be king of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has certainly anointed you to be a ruler over his inheritance."

1 Samuel 10:2

Zelzah

This is the name of a place.

What should I do about my son?

Saul's father is now concerned about Saul and wants to find him.

1 Samuel 10:3

Tabor

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 10:4

take from their hands

The hands are a synecdoche for the person. "take from them" or "accept"

1 Samuel 10:5

tambourine

This is a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken.

1 Samuel 10:6

The Spirit of Yahweh will rush upon you

The phrase "rush upon" means that Yahweh's Spirit will influence Saul. In this case it means it means he will make Saul prophesy and act like a different person.

1 Samuel 10:7

do whatever your hand finds to do

Here Samuel speaks of Saul's hand as if it were a person trying to find things. Alternate translation: "do whatever you think is right to do"

1 Samuel 10:9

God gave him another heart

God enabled Samuel to think differently from the way he had thought before.

1 Samuel 10:10

the Spirit of God rushed upon him

Samuel speaks as if the Spirit of Yahweh were a person running up to Saul and taking complete control of him. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 10:6]

1 Samuel 10:11

What has happened to the son of Kish?

Possible meanings are 1) the people are asking for information or 2) this is a rhetorical question that means Saul is not important. Alternate translation: "Kish is not an important person, so it cannot be true that his son has become a prophet!"

the son of Kish

"Saul, the son of Kish"

1 Samuel 10:12

Then who is their father?

This man uses a rhetorical question to remind people that being a prophet has nothing to do with who one's parents are. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It does not matter who the parents of these other prophets are. What matters is that, amazingly, Saul is speaking messages from God."

Because of this, it became a saying, "Is Saul also one of the prophets?"

This became a proverb among the Israelites. Apparently people said this to express surprise when a person unexpectedly did something that he had not done before. The implied meaning of the question can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "And that is why, when

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people cannot believe some report, they think about what happened to Saul and say, 'Is Saul really one of the prophets?'"

1 Samuel 10:14

Then Saul's uncle said to him

"Then the brother of Saul's father said to Saul"

1 Samuel 10:16

he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom

"Saul did not tell his uncle that God had appointed him to be the king of Israel"

1 Samuel 10:18

I brought up Israel out of Egypt

The name "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. "I brought the people of Israel out of Egypt"

the hand of the Egyptians ... the hand of all the kingdoms

The word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "the power of the Egyptians ... the power of all the kingdoms"

1 Samuel 10:19

today

Samuel is speaking of the time since Israel had begun to reject God, not only the time since the sun had last set.

Set a king over us

"Give us a king to rule us"

present yourselves before Yahweh by your tribes and by your clans

"gather together by tribes and clans and come to stand before Yahweh"

1 Samuel 10:20

the tribe of Benjamin was chosen

This can be translated in active form. It is probably best not to say how the people knew whom Yahweh had chosen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh chose the tribe of Benjamin"

1 Samuel 10:21

the clan of the Matrites was chosen ... Saul son of Kish was chosen

This can be translated in active form. It is probably best not to say how the people knew whom Yahweh had chosen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh chose the clan of the Matrites ... Yahweh chose Saul son of Kish"

1 Samuel 10:23

he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward

The other tall people in Israel did not even come up to his shoulders. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 9:2.

1 Samuel 10:25

the customs and rules of kingship

The abstract noun "kingship" can be translated with a noun clause. Alternate translation: "the customs and rules that a king would be required to follow"

1 Samuel 10:26

whose hearts God had touched

God touching a person's heart is an idiom that means God put something in their mind or moved them to do something. Alternate translation: "who wanted to go with Saul because God had changed their thinking"

1 Samuel 10:27

How can this man save us?

This is a rhetorical question that is used to express sarcasm. Alternate translation: "This man has no power to save us!"

despised

strongly disliked or hated

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11 [1]Then Nahash the Ammonite went and besieged Jabesh Gilead. All the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you."[2]Nahash the Ammonite replied, "On this condition will I make a treaty with you, that I gouge out all of your right eyes, and in this way bring disgrace on all Israel."
[3]Then the elders of Jabesh replied to him, "Leave us alone for seven days, so that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to save us, we will surrender to you."
[4]The messengers came to Gibeah, where Saul lived, and told the people what had happened. All the people wept loudly.
[5]Now Saul was following the oxen out of the field. Saul said, "What is wrong with the people that they are weeping?" They told Saul what the men of Jabesh had said.

[6]When Saul heard what they said, the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he was very angry.[7]He took a yoke of oxen, cut them into pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel with the messengers. He said, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and after Samuel, this is what will be done to his oxen." Then the terror of Yahweh fell on the people, and they came out together as one man.[8]When he mustered them at Bezek, the people of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand.
[9]They said to the messengers that came, "You will tell the men of Jabesh Gilead, 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, deliverance will be yours.'" So the messengers went and told the men of Jabesh, and they were glad.[10]Then the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you can do to us whatever seems good to you."
[11]The next day Saul put the people in three groups. They came into the middle of the camp during the morning watch, and they attacked and defeated the Ammonites until the heat of the day. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

[12]Then the people said to Samuel, "Who was it who said, 'Will Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, so we can put them to death."[13]But Saul said, "No one must be put to death this day, because today Yahweh has brought about deliverance in Israel."

[14]Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingship there."[15]So all the people went to Gilgal and made Saul king before Yahweh in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before Yahweh, and Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

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1 Samuel 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the story of King Saul by telling of his first victory in war.

Special concepts in this chapter

Saul rescues the people of Jabesh Gilead

Nahash, king of the Ammonites, and his army surrounded the Israeli town of Jabesh Gilead. When the city's leaders asked for peace terms, Nahash demanded the right to poke out one eye of every man in order to show Israel their weakness. When Saul heard this, he called for all of Israel to help save this city. Many people came to help Saul's army. Israel was victorious and everyone wanted Saul as their king. At this time, Israel was not a truly unified country, even though it is often spoken of as one country.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idioms

The idioms in this chapter explain the effect God has on his people: "rushed upon him" means "empowered him"; "terror ... fell" means "they became afraid"; "as one man" means "they all agreed"; and "put to death" means "kill."

Links:

1 Samuel 11:1 Notes

1 Samuel 11:1

Nahash

This is a man from Ammon, a descendent of Lot, Abraham's nephew.

Jabesh Gilead

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 11:2

I gouge out

"I cut out" or "I pluck out"

bring disgrace on

"bring shame on" or "bring a bad reputation to"

1 Samuel 11:3

seven days

"7 days"

1 Samuel 11:4

Gibeah

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 11:6

the Spirit of God rushed upon him

The phrase "rushed upon" means Yahweh's Spirit influenced Saul. In this case he enabled Saul to cause the people to fearfully respect him as their king and to join his army. See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Samuel 10:6.

1 Samuel 11:7

does not come out after

Saul was calling all the men of Israel to come fight against Nahash and the Ammonites.

Then the terror of Yahweh fell on the people

Yahweh enabled people to fearfully respect Saul as their king. The result was that the men rallied together with Saul at Bezek.

1 Samuel 11:8

Bezek

This is the name of a town near Jabesh Gilead.

the people of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand

"the people of Israel were 300,000, and the men of Judah were 30,000"

1 Samuel 11:9

They said to the messengers

"They" refers to Samuel and Saul.

by the time the sun is hot

"before the hottest part of the day" or "before noon"

Jabesh Gilead ... Jabesh

These are the names of places. See how you translated them in 1 Samuel 11:1.

1 Samuel 11:10

Nahash

This is the name of a king. See how you translated this name in 1 Samuel 11:1.

1 Samuel 11:11

the morning watch

This was before dawn when most people in the camp were still asleep.

1 Samuel 11:15

made Saul king before Yahweh

"made Saul king while Yahweh watched"

There they sacrificed peace offerings before Yahweh

Part of Samuel's service to Yahweh is to offer sacrifices even though he is not from the line of Aaron or Levi.

12 [1]Samuel said to all Israel, "I have listened to everything you said to me, and I have set a king to reign over you.[2]Now, here is the king walking before you; and I am old and gray; and, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until today.

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[3]Here I am; testify against me before Yahweh and before his anointed one. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with? Testify against me, and I will restore it to you."
[4]They said, "You have not defrauded us, oppressed us, or stolen anything from any man's hand."[5]He said to them, "Yahweh is witness against you, and his anointed one is witness today, that you have found nothing in my hand." They replied, "Yahweh is witness."

[6]Samuel said to the people, "It is Yahweh who appointed Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt.[7]Now then, present yourself, so that I may plead with you before Yahweh about all of the righteous deeds of Yahweh, which he did for you and your fathers.
[8]When Jacob came to Egypt, and your ancestors cried out to Yahweh, then Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron, who led your ancestors out of Egypt and they settled in this place.[9]But they forgot Yahweh their God; he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the armies of Hazor, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; these all fought against your ancestors.
[10]They cried out to Yahweh and said, 'We have sinned, because we have abandoned Yahweh and have served the Baals and the Ashtoreths. But now rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve you.'[11]So Yahweh sent Jerub-Baal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel, and gave you victory over your enemies all around you, so that you lived in security.
[12]When you saw that Nahash the king of the people of Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, a king must rule over us'—even though Yahweh your God was your king.[13]Now here is the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for and whom Yahweh has now appointed as king over you.
[14]If you fear Yahweh, serve him, obey his voice, and not rebel against the command of Yahweh, then both you and the king who reigns over you will be followers of Yahweh your God.[15]If you do not obey the voice of Yahweh, but rebel against the commands of Yahweh, then Yahweh's hand will be against you, as it was against your ancestors.
[16]Even now present yourself and see this great thing which Yahweh will do before your eyes.[17]Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call upon Yahweh, that he may send thunder and rain. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of Yahweh, in asking for yourselves a king."[18]So Samuel called to Yahweh; and that same day Yahweh sent thunder and rain. Then all the people greatly feared Yahweh and Samuel.

[19]Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to Yahweh your God, so that we do not die. For we have added to all our sins this evil in asking for a king for ourselves."[20]Samuel replied, "Do not be afraid. You have done all this evil, but do not turn away from Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your heart.[21]Do not turn away after empty things that cannot profit or rescue you, because they are useless.
[22]For the sake of his great name, Yahweh will not reject his people, because it has pleased Yahweh to make you a people for himself.[23]As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you. I will teach you the way that is good and right.
[24]Only fear Yahweh and serve him in truth with all your heart. Consider the great things he has done for you.[25]But if you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will be destroyed."

1 Samuel 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Samuel's farewell address

This chapter serves as a type of farewell address. This is a way for leaders to give instructions to their followers before they leave or die. Samuel first established his holiness before calling on the people to repent of their desire to have a king. (See: holy and repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

It is common in Scripture to use Israel's history to show how faithful God has been. This gives the readers evidence to trust in Yahweh in their current situation. (See: faithful and trust)

Links:

1 Samuel 12:1 Notes

1 Samuel 12:2

the king walking before you ... I have walked before you

These expressions mean that people can actually see the kind of lives Saul and Samuel are living. Alternate translation: "the king's life was seen ... My life was seen"

1 Samuel 12:3

Here I am; testify against me before Yahweh and before his anointed one

By this statement, Samuel is challenging the people to speak up if he has done anything wrong to anyone. Alternate translation: "I stand in front of you now. I ask you to speak in front of Yahweh and his anointed king if I have done you

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any wrong"

Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken?

Samuel uses rhetorical questions to remind the people that he has never stolen their animals. Alternate translation: "I have never stolen a prized animal from anyone."

Whom have I defrauded?

Samuel uses another rhetorical question to say he has always been honest. Alternate translation: "I have never cheated or bribed any man."

Testify against me, and I will restore it to you

"If I have done any of these evil things, speak now, and I will pay back what I owe. I will make right any wrong"

1 Samuel 12:4

from any man's hand

This phrase means what a person possesses or what they have done to obtain favor from others. This is a polite way of saying he has not stolen, nor has he given or taken bribes.

1 Samuel 12:5

in my hand

This phrase means what a person possesses or what they have done to obtain favor from others. This is a polite way of saying he has not stolen, nor has he given or taken bribes.

1 Samuel 12:7

all of the righteous deeds of Yahweh

Samuel is calling their attention to the history of Yahweh's dealing with Israel, which has been filled with goodness and purpose.

1 Samuel 12:8

Jacob ... Moses ... Aaron

These are names of men.

1 Samuel 12:9

into the hand of Sisera ... Philistines ... king of Moab

"into the power of Sisera ... Philistines ... king of Moab"

Sisera

This is the name of a man.

Hazor

This is the name of a place.

he sold them

This is an expression for God giving them over to their enemies to be their slaves.

1 Samuel 12:10

They cried out to Yahweh

"They" refers to the nation of Israel.

have served the Baals and the Ashtoreths

Serving here is referring to acting worshipful towards the false gods. Alternate translation: "have worshiped false gods and goddesses"

the hand of our enemies

This statement is using "hand" to refer to power. Alternate translation: "the power or control of our enemies"

1 Samuel 12:11

Jerub-Baal

This is sometimes translated in other versions, as Jerubbaal. This is a name of godly honor and strength to fight the false god.

Yahweh sent ... and gave you victory

Samuel is telling the story of what God did after the people's confession of sin and plea for help.

Jerub-Baal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel

These are the names of some judges that God raised up. Samuel included himself in this list.

1 Samuel 12:13

whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for

These two phrases have similar meanings and emphasize that this is the king whom the people wanted.

1 Samuel 12:14

fear ... serve ... obey ... not rebel

These similar words are used to emphasize how important this is.

1 Samuel 12:15

Yahweh's hand will be against you, as it was against your ancestors

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the people as his "hand" being against them. The word "hand" here represents Yahweh's power and control. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will punish you, just as he punished your ancestors"

1 Samuel 12:16

before your eyes

The word "eyes" here represents the people of the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "out in the open where all of the nation of Israel may see"

1 Samuel 12:17

Is it not the wheat harvest today?

Samuel knows it is harvest time. He is using a rhetorical question to emphasize that it does not usually rain at this time so the people will know that the rain that will ruin their harvest is a judgment from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "It is harvest time and does not usually rain at this time"

he may send thunder and rain

Samuel is asking Yahweh to punish Israel for asking for a king by sending a rainstorm during the harvest which will ruin the grain.

1 Samuel 12:19

so that we do not die

The ultimate punishment for sin is death. The nation of Israel had seen Yahweh destroy the nations that had oppressed them. They were concerned that they had become "dedicated for destruction" like those nations.

1 Samuel 12:20

Do not be afraid

The people did evil and were afraid of God destroying them. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid that God will be angry and destroy you because of this sin"

1 Samuel 12:21

turn away after empty things

"pursue worship of false gods"

1 Samuel 12:22

For the sake of his great name

Here "name" refers to the reputation of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "So that people will continue to honor and respect Yahweh"

1 Samuel 12:23

far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you

The people are filled with fear because of the rain and

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thunder that Yahweh sent when Samuel prayed. Some people may believe Samuel would use his prayers to harm them.

13 [1]Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign; when he had reigned forty years over Israel,[2]he chose three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with him in Mikmash and in the hill country of Bethel, while a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the soldiers he sent home, each man to his tent.
[3]Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the ram's horn throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear."[4]All Israel heard that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become a rotten smell to the Philistines. Then the soldiers were summoned together to join Saul at Gilgal.

[5]The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They came up and encamped at Mikmash, east of Beth Aven.
[6]When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble—for the people were distressed, the people hid in caves, in the underbrush, in rocks, in wells, and in pits.[7]Some of the Hebrews went over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. But Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

[8]He waited seven days, the time Samuel had set. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from Saul.[9]Saul said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." Then he offered the burnt offering.[10]As soon as he finished offering the burnt offering Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet him and to greet him.
[11]Then Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul replied, "When I saw that the people were leaving me, and that you did not come within the set time, and that the Philistines had assembled at Mikmash,[12]I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the favor of Yahweh.' So I forced myself to offer the burnt offering."
[13]Then Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the command of Yahweh your God that he commanded you. For then Yahweh would have established your rule over Israel forever.[14]But now your rule will not continue. Yahweh has sought out a man after his own heart, and Yahweh has appointed him to be prince over his people, because you have not obeyed what he commanded you."
[15]Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.Then Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six hundred men.
[16]Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people who were present with them, stayed in Geba of Benjamin. But the Philistines camped at Mikmash.
[17]Raiders came from the camp of the Philistines in three groups. One group turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual.
[18]Another group turned toward Beth Horon, and another group turned toward the border that overlooks the Valley of Zeboyim toward the wilderness.

[19]No blacksmith could be found throughout all of Israel, because the Philistines said, "Otherwise the Hebrews would make swords or spears for themselves."[20]But all the men of Israel used to go down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plow points, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle.[21]The charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plow points, and the mattocks, and one-third of a shekel for sharpening axes and for straightening the goads.
[22]So on the day of battle, there were no swords or spears found in the hands of any of the soldiers who were with Saul and Jonathan; only Saul and his son Jonathan had them.[23]The garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Mikmash.

1 Samuel 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the beginning of a story about Jonathan's victory over the Philistines.

Special concepts in this chapter

Preparation for the battle

Saul sent most of his army home before Jonathan attacked and defeated a Philistine garrison. This attack made the Philistines very angry, and they brought a huge army into Israel and camped at the top of a hill. Most of Saul's army ran away in fear and hid from the Philistines. There are many aspects of this story that give the reader the impression that Israel was unprepared for battle.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Hyperbole

Wanting to express the vast number of enemy soldiers, the author uses a hyperbole: "as numerous as the sand on the seashore," meaning "too many to count."

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Links:

[1 Samuel 13:1 Notes]

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1 Samuel 13:1

General Information:

Samuel has renewed Saul's kingdom at Gilgal and Samuel has reminded the people to follow the Lord.

Saul was thirty years old ... over Israel

The text of this verse in ancient copies is uncertain, so modern versions have many different translations. They are all attempts to represent the most probable meaning of the original text.

1 Samuel 13:2

chose three thousand men

"chose 3,000 men"

Two thousand were with him

"2,000 men were with him"

Mikmash

This is the name of a city.

Gibeah of Benjamin

Gibeah is a town. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 10:26.

The rest of the soldiers he sent home

"He sent the rest of the soldiers home"

1 Samuel 13:3

garrison of the Philistines

"military base of the Philistines" or "military camp of the Philistines"

Geba

This is the name of the town that the Philistine garrison was stationed in.

1 Samuel 13:4

All Israel heard that Saul had defeated

Possible meanings are that 1) Saul was taking responsibility for Jonathan's actions or 2) Saul was taking credit for Jonathan's actions.

Israel had become a rotten smell to the Philistines

The Philistines hating the Israelites is spoken of as if the Israelites had become a bad smell that offended the Philistines. Alternate translation: "the Philistines hated the Israelites"

the soldiers were summoned together to join Saul at Gilgal

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Saul called the soldiers together to join him at Gilgal"

1 Samuel 13:5

three thousand ... six thousand

"3,000 ... 6,000"

troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore

This is an exaggeration that means a group of soldiers so large that it was difficult to count them.

Mikmash

This is the name of a place.

Beth Aven

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 13:6

General Information:

The Philistines had gathered together to fight against Israel.

the people

This phrase refers to the nation of Israel.

the people were distressed

"the people worried greatly"

1 Samuel 13:7

followed him trembling

The people were greatly afraid.

1 Samuel 13:8

the time Samuel had set

"according to the time Samuel had told them he would come"

the people were scattering from Saul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people had started to leave Saul"

1 Samuel 13:9

Then he offered the burnt offering

Only the line of Aaron was permitted to perform the burnt offering sacrifice to God.

1 Samuel 13:11

What have you done

Samuel was not really asking a question, but giving a rebuke to Saul. Saul sought to defend his actions even though they were wrong.

Mikmash

Michmash is the name of a place. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 13:2.

1 Samuel 13:13

the command of Yahweh your God that he commanded you

This may sound better in your language: "the command of Yahweh your God that he gave you."

You have not kept the command of Yahweh

Saul was to wait for Samuel to come and sacrifice the burnt offering to God. He was not to perform the sacrifice himself.

established your rule

"set up your rule" or "authorized your rule" or "appointed your rule"

1 Samuel 13:14

your rule will not continue

This is a litotes that can be stated in the positive form. Alternate translation: "your rule will end soon"

a man after his own heart

Here "heart" represents Yahweh's desire or will. The phrase "man after his own heart" is an idiom that means to be a person who does what Yahweh desires. Alternate translation: "a man who is the kind of person he wants" or "a man who will obey him"

1 Samuel 13:15

Samuel arose and went up

This is an idiom for "Samuel left and went up."

went up from Gilgal

Gilgal is a city. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 7:15.

Gibeah of Benjamin

Gibeah is a town. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 10:26.

six hundred men

"600 men"

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1 Samuel 13:16

Geba of Benjamin

Geba is a town. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 13:3.

Philistines camped at Mikmash

Michmash is the name of a place. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 13:2.

1 Samuel 13:17

Raiders came

Raiders are normally military people who attack enemy villages for their food and other supplies.

Ophrah, to the land of Shual

These are the names of places.

1 Samuel 13:18

Beth Horon ... Valley of Zeboyim

These are the names of places.

1 Samuel 13:19

General Information:

The narrative shifts to background information regarding blacksmiths in Israel.

No blacksmith could be found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one could find a blacksmith"

blacksmith

Here "blacksmith" refers to someone who made or sharpened metal tools and weapons.

1 Samuel 13:20

sharpen his plow points

The words "plow points" refer to the point of a metal tool used for digging up the ground for planting crops.

mattock ... ax ... sickle

These are common garden tools.

mattock

A "mattock" is a broad-bladed axe, with a horizontal blade that is used for breaking up hard soil.

sickle

a curved blade for cutting grasses and grain stalks

1 Samuel 13:21

two-thirds of a shekel

The shekel is divided into 3 parts, 2 of 3 parts are given. "2/3 of a shekel"

straightening the goads

"taking out the bend and making the ox goad straight again so it could be used"

1 Samuel 13:22

General Information:

The narrative continues.

there were no swords or spears

This explains in part why Saul's army was afraid. They did not have any weapons to fight.

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14 [1]One day, Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man who was his armor bearer, "Come, let us go over to the Philistines' garrison on the other side." But he did not tell his father.
[2]Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is in Migron. About six hundred men were with him,[3]including Ahijah son of Ahitub (Ichabod's brother) son of Phinehas son of Eli, the priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, who wore an ephod. The people did not know that Jonathan was gone.
[4]On each side of the pass through which Jonathan wanted to go in order to get to the Philistines' garrison, there was a rocky cliff on one side and another rocky cliff on the other side. One rocky cliff was named Bozez and the other rocky cliff was named Seneh.[5]One rocky cliff stood on the north in front of Mikmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

[6]Jonathan said to his young armor bearer, "Come, let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised fellows. It may be that Yahweh will work on our behalf, for nothing can stop Yahweh from saving by many or by few people."[7]His armor bearer replied, "Do everything that is in your heart. Go ahead, see, I am with you, to obey all your commands."
[8]Then Jonathan said, "We will cross over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them.[9]If they say to us, 'Wait there until we come over to you'—then we will stay in our place and will not cross over to them.[10]But if they reply, 'Come over to us,' then we will cross over; because Yahweh has given them into our hand. This will be the sign to us."
[11]So both of them revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. The Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves."[12]Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armor bearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Follow after me, because Yahweh has given them into the hand of Israel."
[13]Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor bearer followed behind him. The Philistines were put to death before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death behind him.[14]That first attack that Jonathan and his armor bearer made, killed about twenty men within an area of half an acre.
[15]There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among the people. Even the garrison and the raiders panicked. The earth quaked, and there was a great panic.

[16]Then Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; the crowd of Philistine soldiers was dispersing, and they were going here and there.[17]Then Saul said to the people that were with him, "Count and see who is missing from us." When they had counted, Jonathan and his armor bearer were missing.
[18]Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here," for at that time it was with the people of Israel.[19]While Saul was talking to the priest, the commotion in the camp of the Philistines was continuing and increasing. Then Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand."

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[20]Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into battle. Every Philistine's sword was against his fellow countrymen, and there was very great tumult.[21]Now those Hebrews who previously had been with the Philistines, and who had gone with them into the camp, even they joined with Israel who were with Saul and Jonathan.
[22]When all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hills near Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, even they chased after them in battle.[23]So Yahweh saved Israel that day, and the battle passed beyond Beth Aven.

[24]That day the men of Israel were distressed because Saul had put the people under an oath and said, "Cursed be the man that eats any food until evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the troops tasted food.[25]Then all the people entered the forest and there was honey upon the ground.[26]When the people entered into the forest, the honey flowed, but no one put his hand to his mouth for the people feared the curse.
[27]But Jonathan had not heard that his father had bound the people with an oath. He reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. He raised his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened.[28]Then one of the people, answered, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, by saying, 'Cursed be the man that eats food on this day,' even though the people are weak from hunger."
[29]Then Jonathan said, "My father has made trouble for the land. See how my eyes have become brightened because I tasted a little of this honey.[30]How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the plunder from their enemies that they found? Because now the slaughter has not been great among the Philistines."

[31]They attacked the Philistines that day from Mikmash to Aijalon. The people were very weary.[32]The people rushed greedily on the plunder and took sheep, cattle and calves, and killed them on the ground. The people ate them with the blood.
[33]Then they told Saul, "Look, the people are sinning against Yahweh by eating with the blood." Saul said, "You have acted unfaithfully. Now, roll a big stone here to me."[34]Saul said, "Go out among the people, and tell them, 'Let every man bring his cattle and his sheep, and slaughter them here and eat them. Do not sin against Yahweh by eating meat with the blood.'" So each of the people brought his own ox with him that night and killed it there.
[35]Saul built an altar to Yahweh, which was the first altar that he built to Yahweh.

[36]Then Saul said, "Let us pursue the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave one of them alive." They replied, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us approach God here."[37]Saul asked God, "Should I pursue the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But God did not answer him that day.
[38]Then Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people; learn and see how this sin has happened today.[39]For, as Yahweh lives, who saves Israel, even if it is in Jonathan my son, he will surely die." But none of the men among all the people answered him.
[40]Then he said to all Israel, "You must stand on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other." The people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you."[41]Saul said, "Yahweh, God of Israel! If this sin has been committed by me or by my son Jonathan, then, Yahweh, God of Israel, give the Urim. But if this sin has been committed by your people Israel, give the Thummim."[1] Then Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, but the army was exonerated.[42]Then Saul said, "Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son." Then Jonathan was taken by lot.

[43]Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die."[44]Saul said, "God do so and more also to me, if you do not die, Jonathan."
[45]Then the people said to Saul, "Should Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great salvation for Israel? Far from it! As Yahweh lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground, for he has worked with God today." So the people ransomed Jonathan so that he did not die.[46]Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

[47]When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side. He fought against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment on them.[48]He acted with great courage and defeated the Amalekites. He rescued Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

[49]The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-Shua. The names of his two daughters were Merab, the firstborn, and Michal, the younger.[50]The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam; she was the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the captain of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle.[51]Kish was Saul's father; and Ner, the father of Abner, was the son of Abiel.

[52]There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. When Saul saw any mighty man, or any valiant man, he attached him to himself.

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[1]The ULB is following the ancient Greek translation in the quotation. The Hebrew copies have: Give me the right answer.

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1 Samuel 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter completes the story of Jonathan's victory over the Philistines.

Special concepts in this chapter

The battle against the Philistines

Jonathan took his armor bearer to where the Philistines were on the top of the hill. He said God could use a few people just as easily as he could use many people to win his battles. He and his armor bearer started killing the Philistines, and suddenly the Philistines began fighting each other or running away. The rest of Israel, who had hidden, came and chased the Philistines. Even though Israel had a king, God was still in control of the nation of Israel.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Special reference

The people of Israel often used the term "uncircumcised" to refer to Gentiles. Here it is used to mean the Philistines. (See: circumcise)

Links:

1 Samuel 14:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 14:1

General Information:

Jonathan begins his second raid on the Philistines' army.

the young man who was his armor bearer

a teenage boy who is responsible for caring for his master's weapons of war

Philistines' garrison

This is an outpost staffed by the Philistine army.

1 Samuel 14:2

Gibeah

This is the name of a hill north of Jerusalem.

under the pomegranate tree

a tree whose fruit is thick skinned, round, red and has many seeds to eat

that is in Migron

"Migron" is the name of a place north of Jerusalem.

six hundred men were with him

"600 men were with him"

1 Samuel 14:3

son of Ahitub (Ichabod's brother)

"Ahitub" and "Ichabod" are names of men.

Phinehas son of Eli

Phinehas was one of the priests. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 1:3.

1 Samuel 14:4

One rocky cliff was named Bozez

A "cliff" is a rocky height with a steep drop. The cliff was well-known and given the name "Bozez."

the other rocky cliff was named Seneh

This was the name of the other cliff.

1 Samuel 14:5

Mikmash ... Geba

towns north of Jerusalem

1 Samuel 14:6

his young armor bearer

This was a teenage boy who was responsible for caring for his master's weapons of war. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 14:1.

uncircumcised fellows

a derogatory term used for non-Jewish men

work on our behalf

"work for our support" or "help us"

nothing can stop Yahweh from saving

"Yahweh can gain victory" or "Yahweh can win the battle"

by many or by few people

These extremes also include everything in between. Alternate translation: "by any number of people"

1 Samuel 14:7

everything that is in your heart

Here "heart" refers to Jonathan's desires. Alternate translation: "everything that you desire to do"

1 Samuel 14:9

will not cross over to them

"will not go over to the other side of the valley where the Philistines are"

1 Samuel 14:10

has given them into our hand

Here "hand" refers to the power to defeat them. Alternate translation: "will enable us to defeat them"

This will be the sign to us

"This will confirm that the Lord will be with us"

1 Samuel 14:11

revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines

"allowed the Philistine soldiers to see them"

the garrison

the army camp

coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves

The Philistines implied that the Hebrews had been hiding in holes in the ground like animals.

1 Samuel 14:12

we will show you something

This is an idiom that means "we will teach you a lesson."

has given them into the hand of Israel

Here "hand" refers to power to defeat the Philistines. Alternate translation: "will enable Israel to defeat them"

1 Samuel 14:13

Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet

He did this because it was very steep. This could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "So Jonathan climbed up, using his hands and his feet because it was very steep"

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The Philistines were put to death before Jonathan
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jonathan killed the Philistines"
his armor bearer put some to death behind him
"Jonathan's armor bearer followed him and also killed Philistine soldiers"
1 Samuel 14:14
half an acre
An acre of land was the area that a farmer could plow in a day with two oxen yoked together.
1 Samuel 14:15
There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among the people
The abstract noun "panic" can be translated as a verb or as an adjective. Alternate translation: "The Philistine soldiers in the camp and in the field, and all the people with them, panicked" or "The Philistine soldiers in the camp and in the field, and all the people with them, became very afraid"
the raiders
the Philistines who were raiding Israelite cities
The earth quaked
It may be helpful to state the cause. Alternate translation: "God caused the ground to shake"
1 Samuel 14:16
Gibeah
This was the town where Saul was born. Translated "Gibeah" as in [1 Samuel 10:26]
was dispersing ... going here and there
These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that the soldiers were running away in every direction.
1 Samuel 14:18
Bring the ark of God here
A few versions have "ephod" here instead of "ark of God."
1 Samuel 14:19
commotion
great noise and confusion
Withdraw your hand
This seems to be an idiom the means "Stop what you are doing." Saul did not want Ahijah to continue to use the ark to ask God for direction. Alternate translation: "Do not bring the sacred chest at this time"
1 Samuel 14:20
the people who were with him
the remnant of the Israelite army that remained with Saul
Every Philistine's sword was against his fellow countrymen
The swords are spoken of as if they were living people. Alternate translation: "The Philistine soldiers were striking each other with their swords"
1 Samuel 14:22
the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hills
This does not refer to an ambush. These soldiers were hiding because they were afraid of the Philistines. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "the Israelite soldiers who were afraid and had hidden themselves in the hills"
1 Samuel 14:23
Beth Aven
This is a place in Israel. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 13:5]
1 Samuel 14:24
So none of the troops tasted food
It was understood by the troops that no refreshment was permitted under Saul's oath.
1 Samuel 14:25
the people entered the forest
The Philistine soldiers fled through the forests and the Israelite soldiers followed them there.
1 Samuel 14:26
the honey flowed
This is an exaggeration to emphasize how much honey there was in the forest. Alternate translation: "there was a lot of honey everywhere"
no one put his hand to his mouth
Here putting one's "hand to his mouth" is a metonym that means to eat. Alternate translation: "no one ate any"
1 Samuel 14:27
General Information:
Jonathan learns of his father's oath.
bound the people with an oath
Here the obligation to obey an oath is spoken of as if the people were bound with ropes. Alternate translation: "commanded that the people obey his oath"
He raised his hand to his mouth
Here "hand to his mouth" is a metonym that means to eat. Alternate translation: "He ate some honey"
his eyes brightened
This idiom means that he was strengthened. Alternate translation: "he regained his strength"
1 Samuel 14:29
for the land
This is a metonym that represents the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "for Israel"
my eyes have become brightened
This idiom means that he was strengthened. Alternate translation: "I regained my strength"
1 Samuel 14:30
How much better if the people ... that they found?
Jonathan uses this rhetorical question to say that the people should have been allowed to eat the food in the plunder they had taken. Alternate translation: "It would have been much better if the people had eaten freely today of the plunder that they took from their enemies."
plunder
This word refers to the things the people had taken from the battle with their enemy.
Because now the slaughter has not been great
Because the troops were not able to eat during the battle, as the day progressed, they became weaker. Because of this, they were not able to kill as many of the Philistines.
1 Samuel 14:31
General Information:
Jonathan's words lead the army to sin against God in their great hunger.
Mikmash
This is the name of a town. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 13:2.
Aijalon
a place in Zebulun in Israel
The people

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This refers to the Israelites.
1 Samuel 14:32
ate them with the blood
The were so hungry they did not drain the blood first before eating. This was a violation of the Law which was given to Moses for the nation of Israel. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "ate them without draining the blood first as required by the law"
1 Samuel 14:33
by eating with the blood
This was a violation of the Law which was given to Moses for the nation of Israel. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "by eating meat without draining the blood first as required by the law"
You have acted unfaithfully
Saul is accusing his whole army of acting unfaithfully though this is a generalization because not every soldier acted unfaithfully.
Now, roll a big stone here to me
The stone would hold the animals up and make it easier to drain the blood from them.
1 Samuel 14:34
slaughter them here and eat them
This would allow Saul to observe if the blood was properly drained from the animals.
1 Samuel 14:35
General Information:
Saul had told the people to bring their animals to a big stone to kill and eat.
Saul built an altar to Yahweh
It is unclear if Saul built this altar with the large stone that the people brought to him in 1 Samuel 14:33.
1 Samuel 14:36
General Information:
Saul seeks to continue the fight against the Philistines.
let us not leave one of them alive
This is stated in a negative way to emphasize the slaughter. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "let us kill every one of them"
Do whatever seems good to you
Saul had the support of his army to continue the fight.
Let us approach God here
Here "approaching God" is associated with asking him counsel. Alternate translation: "Let us ask God what we should do"
1 Samuel 14:37
give them into the hand of Israel
Here "hand" refers to the power to defeat them. Alternate translation: "enable us to defeat them"
But God did not answer him that day
This implies that God was not willing to help Saul.
1 Samuel 14:38
the people
This refers to the Israelites.
learn and see how this sin has happened
"find who sinned"
1 Samuel 14:39
even if it is in Jonathan my son, he will surely die
The word "it' refers to the guilt. Alternate translation: "Even if Jonathan my son is the guilty one, he will surely die"
But none of the men among all the people answered him
The people remained silent because most of them knew that Jonathan had broken Saul's oath. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "His men knew who was guilty, but none of them said anything to Saul"
1 Samuel 14:40
Then he said to all Israel
This was a generalization since only the Israelite soldiers were present. Alternate translation: "Then he said to the Israelite soldiers who were there"
1 Samuel 14:41
give the Thummim
The Israelites at that time used special stones called the Urim and the Thummim to receive direction from God. Alternate translation: "Show us by means of the Thummim"
Thummim
This is a borrowed word from the original language.
Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, but the army was exonerated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The lots indicated that either Jonathan or Saul was guilty, but the army was not guilty"
1 Samuel 14:42
Then Jonathan was taken by lot
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the lot indicated that Jonathan was guilty"
1 Samuel 14:43
General Information:
The lots had just showed that Jonathan had sinned.
Tell me what you have done
"Tell me how you have sinned" or "Tell me what you have done that was wrong"
I will die
Possible meanings are 1) "I am willing to die" or 2) "do I deserve to be executed because of doing that?"
1 Samuel 14:44
God do so and more also to me, if you do not die, Jonathan
Saul makes a second foolish oath in less than one day. Alternate translation: "May God kill me if I do not kill you, Jonathan"
1 Samuel 14:45
General Information:
The Army defends and protects Jonathan from Saul.
Should Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great salvation for Israel? Far from it!
The people scold Saul. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Jonathan has just accomplished this great salvation for Israel. He should surely not die."
accomplished this great salvation
This is a metonym for winning the victory that brought about the salvation. Alternate translation: "won this great victory"
As Yahweh lives
The people were expressing their certainty that they would not let anything happen to Jonathan.
not one hair of his head will fall to the ground
This exaggeration shows how the people of Israel would protect Jonathan and keep him safe. This litotes can be

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stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "we will protect him from any harm"

1 Samuel 14:47

General Information:

For a brief period Saul served with great courage in defeating Israel's enemies.

Israel

This is a metonym that represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelites"

Moab

This refers to the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "the Moabites"

Edom

This refers to the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "the Edomites"

Wherever he turned

"Wherever he sent his army"

1 Samuel 14:48

out of the hands

The word "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "out of the control"

1 Samuel 14:49

General Information:

This is background information on Saul's family.

Ishvi ... Malki-Shua

These are names of men.

Merab ... Michal

These are names of women.

1 Samuel 14:50

Ahinoam

This is the name of a woman.

Ahimaaz ... Abner ... Ner

These are names of men.

1 Samuel 14:51

Kish ... Ner ... Abner ... Abiel

These are names of men.

1 Samuel 14:52

all the days of Saul

"all of Saul's life"

he attached him to himself

"he forced him to join his army"

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15 [1]Samuel said to Saul, "Yahweh sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel. Now listen to the words of Yahweh.
[2]This is what Yahweh of hosts says, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way, when they came up from Egypt.[3]Now go and attack Amalek and completely destroy all that they have. Do not spare them, but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, cattle and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

[4]Saul summoned the people and numbered them at the city of Telaim—two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah.[5]Then Saul came to the city of Amalek and waited in the valley.
[6]Then Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, come out from among the Amalekites, so I do not destroy you along with them. For you showed kindness to all the people of Israel, when they came from Egypt." So the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites.[7]Then Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt.
[8]Then he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive; he completely destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword.
[9]But Saul and the people spared Agag, as well as the best of the sheep and cattle, fattened calves and the lambs. Everything that was good, they did not destroy. But they completely destroyed anything that was despised and worthless.

[10]Then the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, saying,[11]"I regret that I have set Saul to reign as king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." Samuel was angry; he cried out to Yahweh all night.
[12]Samuel got up early to meet Saul in the morning. Samuel was told, "Saul came to Carmel and he set up a monument to himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal."[13]Then Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you by Yahweh! I have fulfilled the command of Yahweh."
[14]Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the cattle that I hear?"[15]Saul replied, "They have brought them from the Amalekites. For the people spared the best of the sheep and cattle, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God. The rest we have completely destroyed."[16]Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and I will tell you what Yahweh has said to me tonight." Saul said to him, "Speak!"

[17]Samuel said, "Though you are little in your own sight, were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel? Then Yahweh anointed you king over Israel,[18]and Yahweh sent you on your way and said, 'Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are destroyed.'[19]Why did you not obey the voice of Yahweh? Why did you rush to the plunder and do what was evil in the sight of Yahweh?"
[20]Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have indeed obeyed the voice of Yahweh, and have gone on the way that Yahweh sent me. I have captured Agag, the king of Amalek, and have completely destroyed the Amalekites.[21]But the people took some of the booty—sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God in Gilgal."
[22]Samuel replied, "Has Yahweh as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to listen is better than the fat of rams.[23]For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and stubbornness is like wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he has also rejected you from being king."

[24]Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; for I have broken Yahweh's commandment and your words, because I was

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afraid of the people and obeyed their voice.[25]Now, please pardon my sin, and return with me so that I may worship Yahweh."
[26]Samuel said to Saul, "I will not go back with you; for you have rejected the word of Yahweh, and Yahweh has rejected you from being king over Israel."[27]As Samuel turned to leave, Saul took hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore.
[28]Samuel said to him, "Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to a neighbor of yours, one who is better than you.[29]Also, the Strength of Israel will not lie nor change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind."
[30]Then Saul said, "I have sinned. But please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel. Turn again with me, that I may worship Yahweh your God."[31]So Samuel turned again after Saul, and Saul worshiped Yahweh.

[32]Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag the king of the Amalekites here to me." Agag came to him confined with chains and said, "Surely death is bitter."[33]Samuel replied, "As your sword has made women childless, so must your mother be childless among women." Then Samuel chopped Agag to pieces before Yahweh at Gilgal.

[34]Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul.[35]Samuel did not see Saul until the day of his death, for he mourned for Saul. Yahweh regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

1 Samuel 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the section on Saul and Samuel (8-15).

Special concepts in this chapter

God wants total obedience

Samuel told Saul that God wanted him to completely destroy the Amalekite people and animals. Saul fought the Amalekites and killed all the people except the king. He destroyed the animals that were not very good but saved the best animals. Saul told Samuel he had obeyed God's command. Samuel asked him about the animals Saul had. Saul said he had saved them for a sacrifice to God. God said that obedience was better than sacrifice. Because Saul had disobeyed him, God had chosen someone else to become king.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

"He has turned back from following me" is an idiom meaning "he has stopped obeying me."

Rhetorical questions

When Saul insisted that he had obeyed God, Samuel rebuked him with these rhetorical questions: "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen that I hear?"; "Though you are little in your own sight, were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel?"; "Why then did you not obey the voice of Yahweh, but instead you seized the booty and did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh?"; and "Has Yahweh as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh?"

Links:

1 Samuel 15:1 Notes

1 Samuel 15:1

the words of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh"

1 Samuel 15:3

completely destroy all that they have ... put to death both man and woman, child and infant, cattle and sheep, camel and donkey

These two phrases mean the same thing. The second phrase gives specific details about what they are to destroy completely.

Do not spare them

"Do not allow any of them to live"

1 Samuel 15:4

the people

"the army"

numbered them

"counted them"

two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah

"200,000 footmen, and 10,000 men of Judah"

1 Samuel 15:6

Kenites

a nomad people group that had always been friendly to the nation of Israel

1 Samuel 15:7

Havilah ... Shur

These are the names of places.

1 Samuel 15:8

General Information:

Yahweh had told Saul to destroy everything, but here Saul disobeys Yahweh's command.

he took Agag

Here Saul represents himself accompanied by his army. Alternate translation: "Saul and his army took Agag" or

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"Saul and his army captured Agag"

he completely destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword

The "edge of the sword" represents the swords and other weapons that soldiers used in battle. Here Saul represents himself accompanied by his army. Alternate translation: "they completely destroyed all of the people with their swords" or "they killed all of the people with their swords"

1 Samuel 15:9

Saul ... spared Agag

Saul disobeyed God by letting Agag live.

as well as the best of the sheep

Saul disobeyed God by keeping the best of the livestock.

1 Samuel 15:10

the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, saying,

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Samuel. He said," or "Yahweh spoke this message to Samuel:"

1 Samuel 15:11

I regret

"I am sorry"

he has turned back from following me

Saul not obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if Saul had physically turned away from walking behind God. Alternate translation: "he has stopped following me"

has not performed my commandments

"has not obeyed what I commanded him to do." Saul was to completely destroy everything and everyone. God had placed a ban on the Amalekites. But Saul permitted some livestock to live.

Samuel was angry

Possible meanings are 1) Samuel was angry with Saul for his disobedience or 2) Samuel was disturbed.

1 Samuel 15:12

Samuel was told

"Someone told Samuel"

he set up a monument to himself

Saul was full of pride.

down to Gilgal

Gilgal was lower in elevation than Carmel.

1 Samuel 15:13

I have fulfilled the command of Yahweh

It is not clear if Saul understood that he had not fully obeyed God's command to completely destroy the Amalekites.

1 Samuel 15:14

General Information:

Samuel questions why Saul did not utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

bleating of sheep ... lowing of the cattle

These are the sounds that these animals make. Your language may have different terms for these.

in my ears ... that I hear

These two phrases mean the same thing. Here "in my ears" refers to hearing.

1 Samuel 15:15

They have brought ... the people spared

The word "they" and the phrase "the people" here both represent Saul's army. Saul is blaming the people rather than himself.

to sacrifice to Yahweh your God

Saul is arguing that animals for sacrifice were an exception to Yahweh's command to destroy everything.

Yahweh your God

Saul here does not describe Samuel's God as his own God.

1 Samuel 15:17

in your own sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your own opinion" or "in your judgment"

were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel?

Samuel uses this question to remind Saul of now much God had given him. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made you the ruler of the tribes of Israel!"

1 Samuel 15:19

Why did you not obey the voice of Yahweh?

Samuel asks this question to rebuke Saul for disobeying Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have obeyed the voice of Yahweh!"

the voice of Yahweh

Here "voice" refers to the commands that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "the things that Yahweh commanded"

Why did you rush to the plunder and do what was evil in the sight of Yahweh?

Samuel asks this question to rebuke Saul for disobeying Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have rushed to the plunder and done what was evil in the sight of Yahweh!"

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here "sight" refers to Yahweh's thoughts or opinion. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considers to be evil" or "what is evil in Yahweh's judgment"

1 Samuel 15:20

I have indeed obeyed the voice of Yahweh

This is an emphatic statement. It is unclear if Saul thought this was true, or if he was simply making excuses for his sin.

the voice of Yahweh

Here "voice" refers to the commands that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "the things that Yahweh commanded"

Agag

This is the name of the king of the Amalekites.

1 Samuel 15:21

But the people took

This appears to be shifting the blame to the people.

things devoted to destruction

"animals that Yahweh commanded them to destroy"

Gilgal

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 15:22

Has Yahweh as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh?

Samuel asks this question to emphasize that obedience is much more important than sacrifice. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh does not delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying his voice!"

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the voice of Yahweh
Here "voice" refers to the commands that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "the things that Yahweh commanded"
Obedience is better than sacrifice
God wanted Saul's complete obedience in the destruction of the Amalekites. Nothing in the land was fit for sacrifice.
better than the fat of rams
"better than to sacrifice the fat of rams as a burnt offering"
1 Samuel 15:23
rebellion is like the sin of divination
The abstract noun "rebellion" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "to rebel is as sinful as practicing divination"
stubbornness is like wickedness and idolatry
The abstract noun "stubbornness" can be translated with a verb and the abstract noun "wickedness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "being stubborn is as bad as doing wicked things and practicing idolatry"
the word of Yahweh
"Yahweh's message" or "Yahweh's command"
rejected you from being king
"decided that you will no longer be king"
1 Samuel 15:24
I have broken Yahweh's commandment
This is an idiom that means he had disobeyed the commandment. Alternate translation: "I have disobeyed what Yahweh commanded"
because I was afraid of the people
This is the reason Saul gives for not obeying God. Alternate translation: "because I was afraid of the soldiers"
obeyed their voice
Here "voice" refers to what the soldiers asked Saul to do. Alternate translation: "did what they asked"
1 Samuel 15:25
return with me
Saul and Samuel were apparently talking in private away from the other people.
1 Samuel 15:26
for you have rejected the word of Yahweh
Samuel made it clear that Saul understood that he was disobeying God at the time when he spared the best animals and did not kill Agag.
rejected the word of Yahweh
"rejected Yahweh's command" or "rejected Yahweh's message." This means that he refused to obey Yahweh's command. Alternate translation: "refused to obey Yahweh's command"
1 Samuel 15:27
Saul took hold of the hem of his robe
Saul did this to try to stop Samuel from leaving. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Saul tried to stop him by grabbing the edge of Samuel's robe"
the hem of his robe
"the edge of his robe" or "the fringe of his robe"
1 Samuel 15:28
Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel
This refers back to when Saul tore Samuel's robe in [1 Samuel 15:27]
has given it to a neighbor of yours, one who is better than you
God had already decided who would be the next king after Saul.
1 Samuel 15:29
the Strength of Israel
Here Yahweh is referred to as "the Strength of Israel" because he gives strength to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who is the strength of Israel"
will not lie nor change his mind
This is stated as a negative to emphasize that God tells the truth. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will always tell the truth and do what he says"
his mind
This refers to his thoughts and decisions. Alternate translation: "what he has decided to do"
he is not a man, that he should change his mind
This is stated as a negative to emphasize that God is trustworthy. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "he is God, and will do what he says he will do"
1 Samuel 15:30
But please honor me now before the elders
Saul may have been more interested in being honored by the people than in actually worshipping God.
before the elders of my people and before Israel
Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "before the people of Israel and the elders who lead them"
Turn again with me
"Come back with me" or "Return with me"
1 Samuel 15:31
So Samuel turned again after Saul
This implies that Samuel changed his mind, and that they went together to where the people were. Alternate translation: "So Samuel finally agreed to do that, and they went together back to where the people were"
1 Samuel 15:32
Agag came to him confined with chains and said, "Surely death is bitter."
The text here is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) Agag knows that Samuel will not spare his life, as Saul had, or 2) Agag no longer thinks he will be killed. Alternate translation: "Agag came to him confidently, thinking to himself, 'Surely I am no longer in danger of dying.'"
Agag came to him confined with chains and said
"They brought Agag to him bound by chains and Agag said"
1 Samuel 15:33
As your sword has made women childless, so must your mother be childless among women
Both of these phrases have similar meaning and may be intended to be in poetic form. Alternate translation: "Since you have killed people, you will also be killed"
made women childless, so must your mother be childless
This is a polite way of referring to killing people. Alternate translation: "killed the sons of other women, so shall I kill your mother's son"
Then Samuel chopped Agag to pieces
Samuel is the one who completed this task that Yahweh commanded Saul to do. Alternate translation: "Then Samuel cut Agag into pieces with his sword"
1 Samuel 15:34

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Ramah ... Gibeah
These are the names of places.
went up to his house at Gibeah
Gibeah was higher in elevation than Gilgal where Saul and Samuel had been talking.
1 Samuel 15:35
Samuel did not see Saul until the day of his death
"Samuel did not see Saul again for as long as he lived"

16 [1]Yahweh said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have selected for myself a king among his sons."
[2]Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." Yahweh said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh.'[3]Call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you will do. You will anoint for me the one whom I tell you."
[4]Samuel did as Yahweh said and went to Bethlehem. The elders of the city were trembling as they came to meet him and said, "Are you coming in peace?"[5]He said, "In peace; I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh. Prepare to set yourselves apart and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he set apart Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

[6]When they came, he looked at Eliab and said to himself that Yahweh's anointed was certainly standing before him.[7]But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Do not look at his outward appearance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him. For Yahweh does not see as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart."
[8]Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. Then Samuel said, "Neither has Yahweh chosen this one."[9]Jesse then made Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Neither has Yahweh chosen this one."[10]Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Yahweh has not chosen any of these."
[11]Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the boys?" He replied, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."[12]Jesse sent and brought him in. Now this son was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. Yahweh said, "Arise, anoint him; for he is the one."
[13]Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the middle of his brothers. The Spirit of Yahweh rushed on David from that day forward. Then Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

[14]Now the Spirit of Yahweh left Saul, and a harmful spirit from Yahweh tormented him instead.[15]Saul's servants said to him, "See now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you.[16]Let our master now command your servants who are before you to search for a man who is a skillful player on the harp. Then when the harmful spirit from God is on you, he will play it and you will be well."
[17]Saul said to his servants, "Find me a man that can play well and bring him to me."[18]Then one of the young men answered, and said, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a strong, courageous man, a man of war, one prudent in speech, a handsome man; and Yahweh is with him."[19]So Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep."
[20]Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a container of wine, and a young goat, and sent them with his son David to Saul.
[21]Then David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor bearer.
[22]Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my eyes."[23]Whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the harp and played it. So Saul would be refreshed and well, and the harmful spirit would depart from him.

1 Samuel 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Samuel 16-31 Saul and David
Chapter 16 establishes God's choice of David to be the next king. David receives the Holy Spirit to empower and guide him as the king. This chapter also records the Holy Spirit leaving Saul because of his disobedience. (See: holyspirit)

Special concepts in this chapter

David chosen to be the next king
Humans judge others by what they look like, but God judges people by their true inner character. God rejected David's older brothers in favor of David, who truly loved and obeyed him. (See: judge and love)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Question
God scolds Samuel with this rhetorical question for his unwillingness to accept God's decision: "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?" It was wrong to mourn because it was God's punishment of Saul.

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Links:

[1 Samuel 16:1 Notes]

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1 Samuel 16:1

How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?

This rhetorical question is a rebuke from God and can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Stop mourning that I rejected Saul from being king over Israel."

Fill your horn with oil

The term "horn" was sometimes used to refer to a "flask" that was shaped like a horn and was used for holding water or oil. A flask of oil was used for anointing a king.

1 Samuel 16:2

How can I go?

Samuel uses a question to emphasize that he is worried about going to Bethlehem. Alternate translation: "I cannot go!" or "I am afraid to go."

Take a heifer with you and say

You can state the understood information. Alternate translation: "Take a heifer with you to Bethlehem and say to the people there"

say, 'I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "say to the people there that you have come to sacrifice to Yahweh."

1 Samuel 16:4

The elders of the city were trembling as they came to meet him

It seems the elders were trembling because they were worried that Samuel came to rebuke them.

1 Samuel 16:5

In peace

This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "Yes, I have come in peace"

to set ... apart

To set someone apart means to get that person ready for Yahweh's purposes by making sure that person is ritually clean according to the law of Moses.

1 Samuel 16:6

When they came

Here "they" refers to Jesse and his sons.

he looked at Eliab

Here "he" refers to Samuel.

Eliab

This is the name of Jesse's oldest son.

standing before him

Here "him" refers to Yahweh.

1 Samuel 16:7

Yahweh does not see as man sees

Here "see" means to evaluate something.

For Yahweh does not see ... Yahweh looks

Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "For I, Yahweh, do not see ... I, Yahweh, look"

on the heart

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being.

1 Samuel 16:8

Abinadab

This is the name of one of Jesse's sons.

made him pass before Samuel

"told him to go to Samuel"

1 Samuel 16:9

Jesse then made Shammah pass by

It is understood that Shammah passed by Samuel. Alternate translation: "Jesse then made Shammah pass before Samuel" or "Jesse then told Shammah to go to Samuel"

Shammah

This is the name of one of Jesse's sons.

1 Samuel 16:11

There remains yet the youngest

"There is still my youngest son"

we will not sit down

It is understood that they were waiting to sit down and eat. Alternate translation: "we will not sit down to eat"

1 Samuel 16:12

Now ... appearance

The word "Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells about a new person in the story.

this son was ruddy

The word "ruddy" means David was healthy looking.

1 Samuel 16:13

the horn of oil

The term "horn" was sometimes used to refer to a "flask" that was shaped like a horn and was used for holding water or oil. A flask of oil was used for anointing a king. See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Samuel 16:1.

Samuel rose up and went

It is implied that he rose up after they sat down to eat.

The Spirit of Yahweh rushed on David

The phrase "rushed on" means Yahweh's Spirit influenced David. In this case it means he enabled David to fulfill whatever Yahweh wanted him to do. See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Samuel 10:6.

1 Samuel 16:14

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.

harmful spirit

This may refer to either a "spirit that causes trouble" or an "evil spirit."

1 Samuel 16:15

See now, a harmful spirit

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. Alternate translation: "Please listen carefully: a harmful spirit"

a harmful spirit

See how you translated similar words in 1 Samuel 9:6.

1 Samuel 16:16

Let our master now command

The servants refer to Saul in the third person as "our master." Alternate translation: "We ask that you, our

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master, command"

command your servants who are before you to search

The servants refer to themselves in the third person as "your servants." Alternate translation: "command us, your servants who attend to you, to search"

is on you

"troubles you"

1 Samuel 16:18

a strong, courageous man

Possible meanings are 1) "a great warrior" or 2) "a very brave man."

one prudent in speech

"one wise in speech" or "one who speaks wisely"

Yahweh is with him

Here "with him" means Yahweh helps and blesses David.

1 Samuel 16:21

David came to Saul

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

entered his service

The abstract noun "service" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "began to serve him"

he became his armor bearer

"David became Saul's armor bearer"

1 Samuel 16:22

Let David stand before me

Here "stand before me" is an idiom that means to continue in Saul's service. Alternate translation: "Let David stay in my service"

he has found favor in my eyes

Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and "my sight" represents how Saul judges or evaluates David. Alternate translation: "he has found favor in my judgment" or "I am pleased with him"

1 Samuel 16:23

harmful spirit

Here "harmful spirit" may refer to either a "spirit that causes trouble" or an "evil spirit." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 16:14.

was upon Saul

"troubled Saul"

Saul would be refreshed and well

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the music would refresh Saul and make him well"

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17 [1]Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. They were gathered at Sokoh, which belongs to Judah. They had encamped between Sokoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim.
[2]Saul and the men of Israel gathered and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines.[3]The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side with a valley between them.
[4]A strong man came out of the Philistines' camp, a man named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.
[5]He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was clothed in scale armor of bronze that weighed five thousand shekels.
[6]He had bronze armor on his legs and a javelin of bronze between his shoulders.[7]The staff of his spear was large, with a loop of cord for throwing it like the cord on a weaver's beam. His spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. His shield bearer went before him.
[8]He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me.[9]If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants. But if I defeat him and kill him, then you will be our servants and serve us."
[10]Again the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel today. Give me a man so we may fight together."[11]When Saul and all Israel heard what the Philistine said, they were discouraged and greatly afraid.

[12]Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse. He had eight sons. Jesse was an old man in the days of Saul, very old among men.[13]The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah.
[14]David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul.[15]Now David went back and forth between Saul's army and his father's sheep at Bethlehem, in order to feed them.[16]For forty days the Philistine strong man came near morning and evening to present himself for battle.

[17]Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take to your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp for your brothers.[18]Also bring these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand. Look to the well-being of your brothers, and bring back some evidence that they are doing well.
[19]Your brothers are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting the Philistines."[20]David got up early in the morning and left the flock in the care of a shepherd. He took the supplies and left, as Jesse commanded him. He came to the camp as the army was going out to the battlefield shouting the war cry.[21]Then Israel and the Philistines lined up for battle, army against army.
[22]David left his belongings with the keeper of supplies, ran to the army, and greeted his brothers.[23]As he talked with them, the strong man, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came out of the ranks of the Philistines and said the same words as before, and David heard them.[24]When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were very afraid.
[25]The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? He has come to defy Israel. The king will give great riches to the man who kills him, and he will give his daughter to him in marriage, and will make his father's house free from taxation in Israel."

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[26]David said to the men who stood by him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"[27]Then the people repeated what they had been saying and told him, "So it will be done for the man who kills him."

[28]Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride, and the mischief in your heart; for you have come down here so that you might see the battle."[29]David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a question?"[30]He turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way. The people answered the same thing as before.

[31]When the words that David said were heard, soldiers repeated them to Saul, and he sent for David.[32]Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of that Philistine; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."[33]Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are only a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."
[34]But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to shepherd his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock,[35]I chased after him and attacked him, and rescued it out of his mouth. When he rose up against me, I caught him by his beard, struck him, and put him to death.
[36]Your servant has killed both a lion and a bear. This uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God."
[37]David said, "Yahweh rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear. He will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Then Saul said to David, "Go, and may Yahweh be with you."[38]Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze upon his head, and he clothed him with a coat of chainmail.
[39]David strapped his sword on his armor. But he was not able to walk, because he had not trained with them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go out to fight with these, for I have not trained with them." So David put them off.[40]He took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones out of the brook; he put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand as he approached the Philistine.

[41]The Philistine came and approached David, with his shield bearer in front of him.[42]When the Philistine looked around and saw David, he despised him, for he was only a boy, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance.[43]Then the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?," and the Philistine cursed David by his gods.
[44]The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the wild animals of the field."[45]David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin. But I come to you in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.
[46]Today Yahweh will give me victory over you, and I will kill you and remove your head from your body. Today I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds of the heavens and to the wild beasts of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,[47]and that all this gathering may know that Yahweh does not save with sword or spear. For the battle is Yahweh's, and he will give you into our hand."
[48]When the Philistine rose and approached David, then David ran quickly toward the enemy army to meet him.[49]David put his hand in his bag, took a stone from it, slung it, and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into the Philistine's forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

[50]David defeated the Philistine with a sling and with a stone. He hit the Philistine and put him to death. There was no sword in David's hand.[51]Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword, drew it out of the sheath, killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their mighty man was dead, they fled.
[52]Then the men of Israel and of Judah rose with a shout, and chased after the Philistines as far as the valley and the gates of Ekron. The dead Philistines lay along the way to Shaaraim, all the way to Gath and Ekron.[53]The people of Israel returned from hotly pursuing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp.[54]David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

[55]When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the captain of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" Abner said, "As you live, king, I do not know."[56]The king said, "Ask those who might know, whose son the boy is."
[57]When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand.[58]Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

1 Samuel 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This chapter introduced David as a soldier, a skill that will be important for the rest of his life.

Special concepts in this chapter

David kills Goliath

Trust in God is more powerful than physical might or military training and equipment. David, trusting in the Lord and armed only with a sling, defeats Goliath who is well-armed and physically strong but who did not believe in Yahweh. (See: trust and believe)

Uncircumcised

The people of Israel often used the term "uncircumcised" to refer to Gentiles. Here it is used to describe the Philistines. (See: circumcise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

David uses rhetorical questions to state his desire to fight the giant: "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

His brother uses rhetorical questions to show his disdain for his younger brother, whom he thinks is pretending to be bigger than he really is: "Why did you come down here? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?"

David defends himself with some questions: "What have I done now? Was it not just a question?"

Goliath also uses a rhetorical question to show his contempt for young David: "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?"

Links:

1 Samuel 17:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 17:2

the Valley of Elah

This is the name of a place.

1 Samuel 17:4

six cubits and a span

A cubit is a unit of measurement equal to about 46 centimeters. A span is a unit of measurement equal to about 23 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 3 meters"

1 Samuel 17:5

clothed in scale armor of bronze

A "coat of chainmail" is a flexible piece of body armor covered with protective scales or small plates. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he protected himself by wearing a coat of chainmail" or "he wore a coat of chainmail"

five thousand shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 55 kilograms"

1 Samuel 17:6

a javelin of bronze

A "javelin" is a small spear that is meant to be thrown.

1 Samuel 17:7

staff of his spear

"the handle of his spear"

loop of cord

"rope rolled up into a circle"

His spear's head

"The point of his spear"

six hundred shekels of iron

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 7 kilograms"

1 Samuel 17:8

Why have you come out to draw up for battle?

"Why have you come to fight in battle against us?" Goliath uses this question to mock the Israelites. Alternate translation: "You are fools if you think you can fight in battle against us!"

Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul?

Goliath uses this question to mock the Israelites. When he says that he is a Philistine, he is implying that he is strong. Alternate translation: "I am a great Philistine, and you are merely servants of Saul."

1 Samuel 17:10

I defy the ranks of Israel

"I defy the army of Israel"

1 Samuel 17:11

all Israel

This refers to the Israelite soldiers who were there.

they were discouraged and greatly afraid

The words "discouraged" and "greatly afraid" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of their fear.

1 Samuel 17:12

He had eight sons

"He" refers to Jesse.

Jesse was an old man ... very old among men

The two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

1 Samuel 17:13

second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah

"Abinadab the second born, and Shammah the third born." This phrase shows birth order.

1 Samuel 17:14

The three oldest

The implied information is that these are the sons of Jesse. Alternate translation: "The three oldest sons of Jesse"

1 Samuel 17:16

For forty days

"For 40 days"

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to present himself for battle
"to show that he was ready to fight"
1 Samuel 17:17
ephah
An ephah is a unit of measurement equal to about 22 liters.
1 Samuel 17:18
the captain of their thousand
"the captain of your brothers' thousand." Possible meanings are 1) the word "thousand" represents the exact amount of soldiers that this captain led. Alternate translation: "the captain of your brothers' unit of 1,000 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "thousand" does not represent exact number, but is the name of a large military division. Alternate translation: "the captain of your brothers' military division"
Look to the well-being of your brothers
"Check and find out how your brothers are doing"
1 Samuel 17:19
all the men of Israel
"all the soldiers of Israel"
the Valley of Elah
This is the name of a place. See how you translated it in [1 Samuel 17:2]
1 Samuel 17:23
Goliath by name
"whose name was Goliath"
came out of the ranks of the Philistines
"stepped forward from the Philistines' battle line"
1 Samuel 17:25
Have you seen this man who has come up?
The soldiers were saying this to draw one another's attention to the man Goliath. Alternate translation: "Look at this man who has come up!"
The king
This refers to the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "Our king"
his daughter
This refers to the king's daughter.
to him ... his father's house
The words "him" and "his" refer to the man who kills Goliath.
will make his father's house free from taxation in Israel
The word "house" refers to the household or family. Alternate translation: "will no longer require his family to pay taxes"
1 Samuel 17:26
takes away the disgrace from Israel
This can be expressed with the verb "disgrace." Alternate translation: "stops Israel from being disgraced" or "stops him from disgracing Israel"
Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?
David said this to show his anger that this Philistine was defying God's army. Alternate translation: "This uncircumcised Philistine certainly has no power that he should defy the armies of the living God!"
this uncircumcised Philistine
This phrase is an insult and indicates that Goliath does not belong to the living God.
1 Samuel 17:28
Eliab's anger was kindled against David
Here anger is spoken of as if it were a fire that could be kindled. Alternate translation: "Eliab became angry with David"
Why did you come down here?
Eliab uses this question to show that he is angry that David came down. He was probably implying that David did not have a good reason for coming. Alternate translation: "You had no good reason to come here"
With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness?
Eliab uses this question to insult David by making his work seem unimportant and by accusing him of not taking care of his father's sheep. Alternate translation: "You simply had the responsibility of watching over a few sheep in the wilderness. You could not even carry out that simple responsibility!"
your pride, and the mischief in your heart
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.
1 Samuel 17:29
What have I done now? Was it not just a question?
David used these questions to express his frustration and to justify himself. Alternate translation: "I have done nothing wrong. I was only asking a question!"
1 Samuel 17:30
He turned away from him
"He" refers to David and the word "him" refers to Eliab.
1 Samuel 17:31
When the words that David said were heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the soldiers heard what David said"
1 Samuel 17:32
Let no man's heart fail
The heart failing represents being terrified and losing confidence. Alternate translation: "Do not let anyone be terrified" or "Do not let anyone lose their confidence"
your servant will go
David spoke of himself as "your servant" to show respect to Saul. Alternate translation: "I, your servant, will go"
1 Samuel 17:34
Your servant used to shepherd his father's sheep
David spoke of himself as "your servant" to show respect to Saul. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 17:32]
used to shepherd his father's sheep
"used to take care of his father's sheep"
a bear
A bear is a large animal with thick fur and long claws and that walks on four legs but can stand on two legs as a person does.
1 Samuel 17:35
chased after him and attacked him
Here "him" refers to the lion or bear. Some languages would use the word "it" instead of "him."
rescued it out of his mouth
Here "it" refers to the lamb.
he rose up against me
Here "rose up against" is an idiom that refers to attacking. Alternate translation: "it attacked me"

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caught him by his beard
The "beard" refers to the lion's mane or the hair on the bear's face.
1 Samuel 17:36
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to King Saul.
This uncircumcised Philistine
This phrase is an insult and indicates that Goliath does not belong to the living God. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 17:26.
will be like one of them
David is saying that he will be able to kill the Philistine just as he was able to kill the lion and bear.
1 Samuel 17:37
from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear
Bears and lions use their paws when they attack, so the word "paw" represents the attack. Alternate translation: "from the attack of the lion and from the attack of the bear" or "from the lion and the bear"
the hand of this Philistine
The Philistine's hand represents his power in fighting. Alternate translation: "the power of this Philistine" or "the Philistine"
1 Samuel 17:38
coat of chainmail
a flexible piece of body armor covered with protective scales or small plates
1 Samuel 17:39
his sword on his armor
"Saul's sword on the armor"
1 Samuel 17:40
his staff in his hand
Here "his" refers to David.
His sling was in his hand
A sling is a weapon for throwing stones.
1 Samuel 17:41
with his shield bearer in front of him
"and his shield bearer walked in front of him"
1 Samuel 17:42
he despised him
"he hated him"
and ruddy
"and healthy looking"
1 Samuel 17:43
Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?
Here a dog represents a small animal that a person can easily kill. The word "sticks" refers to David's staff and shows Goliath's opinion that it is not a good weapon. Goliath uses this question to accuse David of insulting him. Alternate translation: "You insult me by coming at me with mere sticks as if I were just a dog!"
1 Samuel 17:44
I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the wild animals of the field
Goliath speaks of killing David and leaving his body on the ground for the animals to eat it as if he were to give David's body to the animals. Alternate translation: "I will kill you, and the birds of the heavens and the wild animals of the field will eat your body"
birds of the heavens
"birds of the sky" or "birds"
1 Samuel 17:45
in the name of Yahweh
Here "name" represents God's power or authority. Alternate translation: "with the power of Yahweh" or "with the authority of Yahweh"
whom you have defied
"whom you have provoked" or "whom you have insulted"
1 Samuel 17:46
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to Goliath.
I will give the dead bodies ... to the birds ... and to the wild beasts of the earth
David speaks of leading the Israelites in killing the Philistines and leaving their bodies on the ground for the animals to eat them as if he were to give their bodies to the animals. Alternate translation: "We Israelites will kill the Philistine army, and the birds of the heavens and the wild beasts of the earth will eat them"
all the earth may know
The word "earth" refers to the people on earth. Alternate translation: "all the people of the earth may know"
1 Samuel 17:47
Yahweh does not save with sword or spear
"Yahweh can save his people without anyone's sword or spear"
sword or spear
These words are a synecdoche for any weapon used in battle. Alternate translation: "the weapons people use"
the battle is Yahweh's
Winning the battle is spoken of as owning the battle. Alternate translation: "Yahweh always wins the battle" or "the victory belongs to Yahweh"
he will give you into our hand
Giving the Philistines into Israel's hand represents helping Israel to defeat the Philistines in battle. Alternate translation: "he will help us defeat you"
1 Samuel 17:50
David defeated ... He hit ... put him to death ... There was no sword in David's hand
Verse 50 is a summary of David's amazing victory over Goliath. The details about how he hit and killed Goliath are in 1 Samuel 17:49 and 17:51. Some languages do not use summary statements like this. In those situations, translators may restructure the verses as they are in the UDB.
1 Samuel 17:51
Then David ran and stood over the Philistine
David did this after Goliath fell to the ground in 1 Samuel 17:49.
took his sword
"took the Philistine's sword." Here the word "his" refers to Goliath.
1 Samuel 17:52
The dead Philistines lay along the way to Shaaraim
It can be stated clearly that the Israelites were killing the Philistines as they chased them. Alternate translation: "And they killed the Philistines as they chased them, and the

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bodies of the dead Philistines were on the ground along the way to Shaaraim"

1 Samuel 17:53

they plundered their camp

"the Israelites plundered the Philistines' camp"

1 Samuel 17:54

he put his armor in his tent

"he put Goliath's armor in his own tent"

1 Samuel 17:55

When Saul saw David

The conversation in 17:55-56 happened before David killed Goliath. Alternate translation: "When Saul had seen David" or "Earlier when Saul saw David"

go out against the Philistine

"go to fight against the Philistine"

whose son is this youth

"who is this youth's father"

As you live

This was a way of swearing that what he was about to say was true.

1 Samuel 17:56

whose son the boy is

"who the boy's father is"

1 Samuel 17:57

in his hand

Here "his" refers to David.

1 Samuel 17:58

Whose son are you

"Who is your father"

I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite

"My father is your servant Jesse, the Bethlehemite"

your servant Jesse

David referred to his father as "your servant" to show that his father was faithful to King Saul.

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18 [1]When he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.[2]Saul took David into his service that day; he did not let him return to his father's house.
[3]Then Jonathan and David made a covenant of friendship because Jonathan loved him as his own soul.[4]Jonathan took off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David with his armor, as well as his sword, bow, and belt.
[5]David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he succeeded. Saul set him over the men of war. This was pleasing in the eyes of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

[6]As they came home from defeating the Philistines, the women came from all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments.[7]The women sang one to another as they played. They sang:

"Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

[8]Saul was very angry, and this song displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but they have ascribed only thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingship?"[9]Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

[10]The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within the house. So David played his instrument, as he did each day. Saul had a spear in his hand.[11]Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from Saul's presence twice in this way.[12]Saul was afraid of David, because Yahweh was with him, but was no longer with Saul.
[13]So Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him a commander of a thousand. In this way David went out and came in before the people.[14]David was prospering in all his ways, for Yahweh was with him.
[15]When Saul saw that he prospered, he stood in awe of him.[16]But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.

[17]Then Saul said to David, "Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I will give her to you as a wife. Only be courageous for me and fight Yahweh's battles." For Saul thought, "Let not my hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines be on him."[18]David said to Saul, "Who am I, and who are my relatives, or my father's clan in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?"
[19]But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife.
[20]But Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. They told Saul, and this pleased him.[21]Then Saul thought, "I will give her to him, so that she can be a trap for him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David a second time, "You will be my son-in-law."

[22]Saul commanded his servants, "Speak with David in private, and say, 'See, the king takes pleasure in you, and all his servants love you. Now then, become the king's son-in-law.'"
[23]So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. Then David said, "Is it a small matter to you to be the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?"[24]The servants of Saul reported to him the words which David spoke.

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[25]Then Saul said, "Say this to David, 'The king does not desire any price for the bride except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged from the king's enemies.'" Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.
[26]When his servants told David these words, it pleased David to be the king's son-in-law.
[27]Before those days had expired, David went with his men and killed two hundred Philistines. David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, so that he might be the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter as his wife.[28]When Saul saw, and he knew that Yahweh was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him,[29]Saul was even more afraid of David. Saul was continually David's enemy.

[30]Then the princes of the Philistines came out for battle, and as often as they came out, David behaved more prudently than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly regarded.

1 Samuel 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the first chapter of a section explaining why Saul wants to kill David.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 18:7.

Special concepts in this chapter

Saul is jealous of David's popularity
Saul's son, Jonathan, loves David. David is successful in battling the Philistines, and Saul is happy until the women give David more attention than they give him. He fears that David will replace him as king. This is potentially confusing because the author has already established that David will be the next king. It is probably that Saul feared David would kill him in order to be the next king sooner, or that he did not really believe David would be the next king. (See: love)
Jonathan's love of David
Some scholars believe Jonathan loved David as a man loves his wife. There is no reason to translate this as if Jonathan were a homosexual. Instead, treat this as a brotherly type of love.

Links:

1 Samuel 18:1 Notes

1 Samuel 18:1
the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David
Very close friendship is spoken of as if it were binding together the souls of two people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jonathan felt a strong affection towards David" or "Jonathan committed himself to David"
Jonathan loved him as his own soul
Here "loved" refers to the love between friends, not romantic love. The word "soul" represents the person or the person's life. Alternate translation: "Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself" or "Jonathan loved David as he loved his own life"
1 Samuel 18:3
Jonathan loved him as his own soul
Here "loved" refers to the love between friends, not romantic love. The word "soul" represents the person or the person's life. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 18:1]
1 Samuel 18:5
he succeeded
"he prospered"
This was pleasing in the eyes of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants
The phrases "in the eyes of" and "in the sight of" mean the same thing. The opinion of the people is spoken of as something that they view as either good or bad. Alternate translation: "This was pleasing in the opinions of all the people and of Saul's servants" or "This pleased all the people and Saul's servants"
1 Samuel 18:6
from all the cities of Israel
This is generalization that emphasizes the great number of women who came from many cities. Alternate translation: "from many of the cities throughout Israel"
with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments
"joyfully playing tambourines and other musical instruments"
with tambourines
A "tambourine" is a small handheld drum.
1 Samuel 18:7
his thousands ... his ten thousands
"thousands of enemy soldiers ... ten thousand enemy soldiers"
David his ten thousands
The verb may be supplied from the previous line. Alternate translation: "David has killed his ten thousands"
1 Samuel 18:8
They have ascribed
"They have credited"
What more can he have but the kingship?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The only thing left for him to have is the kingship."
1 Samuel 18:10
a harmful spirit from God
Here "harmful spirit" may refer to either "a spirit that causes trouble" or "an evil spirit." See how you translated

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this in 1 Samuel 16:15.

a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul

The phrase "rushed upon" means the harmful spirit influenced Saul. In this case it means it caused Saul to be troubled and act crazy. See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Samuel 10:6.

he prophesied

"a spirit caused him to speak." Here it appears that what Saul said was of no benefit to the hearers, so some modern English versions read, "he spoke words that made no sense."

1 Samuel 18:12

Yahweh was with him

"Yahweh was with David"

1 Samuel 18:13

So Saul removed him from his presence

"So Saul removed David from his presence"

a commander of a thousand

Possible meanings are 1) the word "thousand" represents the exact amount of soldiers that he would lead. Alternate translation: "a commander of 1,000 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "thousand" does not represent exact number, but is the name of a large military division. Alternate translation: "a commander of a large military division" See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Samuel 17:18]

David went out and came in before the people

Here "the people" refers to the soldiers under David's command. The phrases "went out" and "came in" are idioms that refer to leading the people into battle and leading them home from battle. Alternate translation: "David led his soldiers into battle and led them home from battle"

1 Samuel 18:15

he stood in awe of him

Here "stood in awe" is an idiom that means to fear. Alternate translation: "he feared David"

1 Samuel 18:16

all Israel and Judah loved David

Here "Israel and Judah" represent the people of all of the tribes. Alternate translation: "all the people in Israel and Judah loved David"

went out and came in before them

The phrases "went out" and "came in" are idioms that refer to leading the people into battle and leading them home from battle. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 18:13]

1 Samuel 18:17

Let not my hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines be on him

Harming someone is spoken of as if it were placing one's hand on that person. Here, Saul is referring to killing David. Alternate translation: "I will not be the one to kill him; I will let the Philistines kill him"

1 Samuel 18:18

Who am I, and who are my relatives, or my father's clan in Israel ... to the king?

David uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he is not worthy of being Saul's son-in-law. Alternate translation: "I am nobody and neither my relatives nor my father's family are important enough in Israel ... to the king."

son-in-law to the king

"husband of the king's daughter"

1 Samuel 18:19

when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when Saul should have given his daughter Merab to David"

she was given to Adriel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Saul gave her to Adriel"

1 Samuel 18:20

Michal ... loved David

Here "loved" means she had romantic feelings for David.

They told Saul

Here "they" refers to people who found out about Michal's feelings, not to David and Michal.

1 Samuel 18:21

that the hand of the Philistines may be against him

Harming someone is spoken of as if it were placing one's hand on that person. Here, Saul is referring to killing David. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Samuel 18:17]

You will be my son-in-law

"You will be the husband of my daughter"

1 Samuel 18:22

all his servants love you

"all of his servants admire you"

Now then

"For these reasons you should"

1 Samuel 18:23

Is it a small matter to you to be the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?

David asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that he is not worthy to be the king's son-in-law. Alternate translation: "It is a great matter to be the king's son-in-law, and I am too poor and unimportant for that."

1 Samuel 18:25

The king does not desire any price for the bride except a hundred foreskins

This double negative emphasizes that a hundred foreskins is the only price that the king desires. The verb for the second phrase may be supplied from the first. Alternate translation: "The king desires only a hundred foreskins as price for the bride" or "The king does not desire any price for the bride; he desires only that you bring to him a hundred foreskins"

a hundred

100

foreskins

The foreskin is a fold of skin on a man's private part that is removed during circumcision.

to be avenged from the king's enemies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to get revenge on the king's enemies"

to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines

Here "fall" means to die. The phrase "by the hand" is an idiom that tells us the means by which something will happen, in this case, David will be killed by the Philistines. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to have the Philistines kill David"

1 Samuel 18:27

two hundred Philistines

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This can be rendered numerically. Alternate translation: "200 Philistines"

they gave them in full number to the king

"David and his men gave all of them to the king"

1 Samuel 18:28

Saul saw, and he knew

Here the words "saw" and "knew" share similar meanings and emphasize that Saul knew with certainty. Alternate translation: "Saul recognized"

Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him

Here "loved" means she had romantic feelings for David.

1 Samuel 18:30

behaved more prudently

Many modern English translations understand this phrase as a metonym for the success that his prudent behavior gave him, so they read, "had more success."

so that his name was highly regarded

Here "name" is a metonym for David. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that people greatly respected David"

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19 [1]Saul said to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, took great pleasure in David.[2]So Jonathan told David, "Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning and hide yourself in a secret place.[3]I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you. If I learn anything, I will tell you."
[4]Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Do not let the king sin against his servant David. For he has not sinned against you, and his deeds have brought you good.[5]For he took his life in his hand and killed the Philistine. Yahweh brought about great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why would you sin against innocent blood by killing David for no reason?"
[6]Saul listened to Jonathan. Saul swore, "As Yahweh lives, he will not be put to death."[7]Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

[8]There was war again, and David went out and fought with the Philistines and defeated them with a great slaughter. They fled before him.[9]A harmful spirit from Yahweh came on Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand, and as David was playing his instrument.
[10]Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence, so that Saul drove the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night.[11]Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him that he might kill him in the morning. Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed."
[12]So Michal let David down through the window. He went and fled, and escaped.[13]Michal took a household idol and laid it in the bed. Then she put a pillow of goats' hair at its head, and covered it with the clothes.
[14]When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick."[15]Then Saul sent the messengers to see David; he said, "Bring him up to me in the bed, so that I may kill him."
[16]When the messengers came in, behold, the household idol was in the bed along with the pillow of goats' hair at its head.
[17]Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go. Why should I kill you?'"

[18]Now David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel in Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth.[19]It was told to Saul, saying, "See, David is at Naioth in Ramah."[20]Then Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came on the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.
[21]When Saul was told this, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. So Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied.[22]Then he also went to Ramah and came to the deep well that is in Seku. He asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" Someone said, "See, they are at Naioth in Ramah."
[23]Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God came upon him, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah.[24]He stripped off his clothes and also prophesied before Samuel. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why they ask, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

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1 Samuel 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God protects David

Jonathan persuades Saul not to kill David, but Saul again becomes jealous and orders his servants to bring David to him to be killed. God uses Michal to save David. David flees to Samuel and they begin prophesying. When Saul sends servants to capture David, they begin prophesying. This causes Saul to go himself and he begins to prophesy. (See: jealous and save and prophet)

Links:

1 Samuel 19:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 19:1

to all his servants

Here "his" refers to Saul.

took great pleasure in David

Jonathan greatly enjoyed being with David.

1 Samuel 19:4

Do not let the king sin against his servant

Jonathan speaks as if Saul is another person to show Saul that Jonathan respects Saul. Alternate translation: "Do not sin against your servant"

1 Samuel 19:5

he took his life in his hand

Here "life in his hand" is an idiom that refers to risking his life. Alternate translation: "he risked his life"

Yahweh brought about great salvation

The words "brought about great salvation" is a metonym for allowing the Israelites to win the battle. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave us a great victory"

Why would you sin against innocent blood by killing David for no reason?

Jonathan asks this question to rebuke Saul. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not sin against innocent blood and kill David without cause."

sin against innocent blood

Here "blood" is a metonym for the life of an innocent person. Alternate translation: "commit the sin of murder"

1 Samuel 19:6

he will not be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not put him to death" or "I will not kill him" or "I will certainly keep him alive"

1 Samuel 19:7

he was in his presence

David was in Saul's presence.

1 Samuel 19:9

A harmful spirit from Yahweh

Here "harmful spirit" may refer to either "a spirit that causes trouble" or "an evil spirit." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 16:14.

1 Samuel 19:10

pin David to the wall with the spear

throw his spear so it would go through David and into the wall

1 Samuel 19:11

he might kill him

"Saul might kill David"

Michal ... told him

Michal told David

If you do not save your life

Here "save your life" is an idiom that refers to escape. Alternate translation: "If you do not escape"

you will be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will kill you"

1 Samuel 19:12

General Information:

Michal helps David escape King Saul. She uses a household idol to make David's bed look like he is sleeping in it.

1 Samuel 19:13

she put a pillow of goats' hair at its head, and covered it with the clothes

Possible meanings are 1) the head of the idol was lying on the goat's hair pillow and Michal dressed the idol in David's clothes or 2) Michal used David's clothes as a blanket to completely cover the idol and made the "pillow" of goat's hair look like David's hair sticking out from under the blanket of clothes.

1 Samuel 19:14

General Information:

Saul acts out his desire to kill David.

take David

"take David back to Saul"

she said

Here "she" refers to Michal.

1 Samuel 19:15

Bring him up to me in the bed

The reason why the men thought David was in bed can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If he really is too sick to come to me, bring me the bed with him in it"

1 Samuel 19:16

pillow of goats' hair

See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 19:13.

behold

The word "behold" here shows that the messengers were surprised by what they saw.

1 Samuel 19:17

Why have you deceived me and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?

Possible meanings are 1) Saul really wants to know why Michal did what she did or 2) Saul uses this question to rebuke Michal. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have deceived me and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped."

Let me go. Why should I kill you?

Although David did not actually say this, Michal tells Saul that David threatened her with this question. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will kill you if you do not help me to escape."

1 Samuel 19:18

General Information:

David flees to Samuel.

Now

This word is used here to show that the writer has started to tell a new part of the story.

1 Samuel 19:19

It was told to Saul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Saul"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

1 Samuel 19:20

standing as head over them

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Here "head" refers to a position of authority. Alternate translation: "acting as their leader"
1 Samuel 19:21
When Saul was told this
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When someone told Saul this"
1 Samuel 19:22
Ramah ... Seku ... Naioth
These are place names.
1 Samuel 19:24
This is why they ask, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"
This became a proverb among the Israelites. Apparently people said this to express surprise when a person unexpectedly did something that he had not done before. The implied meaning of the question can be stated explicitly. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 10:12]
they ask
Here "they" refers to people in general. The question became a proverb among the people.

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20 [1]Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity? What is my sin before your father, that he seeks to take my life?"[2]Jonathan said to David, "Far from it; you will not die. My father does nothing either great or small without telling it to me. Why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so."
[3]Yet David vowed again and said, "Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes. He has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But as truly as Yahweh lives, and as you live, there is but a step between me and death."
[4]Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you."[5]David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, so that I may hide myself in the field until the third day at evening.
[6]If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for all the clan.'[7]If he says, 'It is well,' your servant will have peace. But if he is very angry, then know that he has decided on evil.
[8]Therefore deal kindly with your servant. For you have brought your servant into a covenant of Yahweh with you. But if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself; for why then should you bring me to your father?"[9]Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I learned my father decided harm to come upon you, would I not tell you?"
[10]Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if by chance your father should answer you roughly?"[11]Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field.

[12]Jonathan said to David, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be witness. When I have questioned my father around this time tomorrow, or the third day, see, if there is good will toward David, will I not then send to you and make it known to you?
[13]If it pleases my father to do you harm, may Yahweh do to Jonathan and more also if I do not make it known to you and send you away, so that you may go in peace. May Yahweh be with you, as he has been with my father.
[14]If I am still alive, will you not show me the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh, that I may not die?[15]Do not cut off your covenant faithfulness from my house forever—not even when Yahweh cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."[16]So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David and said, "May Yahweh require an accounting from the hand of the enemies of David."

[17]Jonathan made David vow again because of the love that he had for him, because he loved him as he loved his own soul.
[18]Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon. You will be missed because your seat will be empty.[19]When you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself when this matter began, and stay by the stone Ezel.
[20]I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target.[21]Then I will send my young man and say to him, 'Go find the arrows.' If I say to the young boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them," then come; for there will be safety for you and not harm, as Yahweh lives.
[22]"But if I say to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go your way, for Yahweh has sent you away.[23]As for the agreement of which you and I have spoken, see, Yahweh is between you and me forever.'"

[24]So David hid himself in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food.[25]The king sat on his seat, as usual, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood up, and Abner sat by Saul's side. But David's place was empty.
[26]Yet Saul did not say anything that day, because he thought, "Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean."[27]But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal either yesterday or today?"
[28]Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked permission from me to go to Bethlehem.[29]He said, 'Please let me go. For our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has ordered me to be there. Now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me go and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

[30]Then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know

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that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?[31]For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now then, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die."
[32]Jonathan answered Saul his father, "For what reason should he be put to death? What has he done?"[33]Then Saul threw his spear at him to kill him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death.[34]Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved over David, because his father had dishonored him.

[35]In the morning, Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and a young man was with him.[36]He said to his young man, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the young man ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.
[37]When the young man came to the place where the arrow that Jonathan shot had landed, Jonathan called after the young man, and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?"
[38]Then Jonathan called after the young man, "Hurry, be quick, do not stay!" So Jonathan's young man gathered up the arrows and came to his master.[39]But the young man did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter.
[40]Jonathan gave his weapons to his young man and said to him, "Go, take them to the city."
[41]As soon as the young man was gone, David stood up from behind the mound, lay facedown on the ground, and bowed himself three times. They kissed one another and wept together, with David weeping the more.[1][42]Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have both sworn in the name of Yahweh and said, 'May Yahweh be between you and me, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.'" Then David stood up and left, and Jonathan returned to the city.

[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text read, David came out from beside the south. Modern translations interpret this passage in different ways because the text is difficult to understand.

1 Samuel 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jonathan warns David

David tells Jonathan that Saul is still trying to kill him. Jonathan promises to find out if this is true. When David misses dinner two consecutive days, Saul asks about him. Jonathan says that David went home for an annual sacrifice. Saul gets angry at Jonathan, telling him he will never be king unless they kill David. Saul throws his spear at Jonathan. Jonathan warns David to run away, but first they both promise to always be friends. It was usually a king's son who became king after his death in the ancient Near East.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

David uses a powerful metaphor and an oath to impress Jonathan with the danger he is in: "But as truly as Yahweh lives, and as you live, there is but a step between me and death."

Links:

1 Samuel 20:1 Notes

1 Samuel 20:1

What have I done? What is my iniquity? What is my sin before your father, that he seeks to take my life?

These three questions mean basically the same thing. David uses them to emphasize that he has done nothing wrong to Saul. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have done nothing wrong. I have not committed any iniquity. I have not sinned against your father. He has no reason to take my life."

that he seeks to take my life?

Here "take my life" is an idiom for "kill me."

1 Samuel 20:2

Far from it

Here "far from it" is an idiom that refers to that it is not true. Alternate translation: "This is certainly not true"

nothing either great or small

The words "great or small" include everything in between. Alternate translation: "nothing at all"

Why should my father hide this thing from me?

Jonathan uses this question to emphasize that Saul would have told him if he planned to kill David. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My father has no reason to hide this thing from me!" or "If this thing were true, my father would certainly let me know!"

It is not so

"It is not true"

1 Samuel 20:3

I have found favor in your eyes

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "I have pleased you" or "you consider me favorably"

he will be grieved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"this will grieve him" or "he will be very sad"

there is but a step between me and death

Here "step between me and death" is an idiom that refers to being very close to death. Alternate translation: "I am very close to death"

1 Samuel 20:4

General Information:

David proposes a test against King Saul to Jonathan.

1 Samuel 20:5

Tomorrow is the new moon

On the first of every month the people would celebrate and offer sacrifices to God.

until the third day at evening

"until the evening of the day after tomorrow"

1 Samuel 20:6

Connecting Statement:

David continues to describe the test he proposes.

asked leave of me

"asked me if I would allow him to leave"

1 Samuel 20:7

he says ... he is ... he has decided

The word "he" refers to Saul.

your servant will have peace

David speaks of himself as if he were another person to show that he respects Jonathan. Alternate translation: "I, your servant, will have peace"

1 Samuel 20:8

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Jonathan.

with your servant ... have brought your servant

David speak of himself in the third person as a form of humility. Alternate translation: "with me, your servant ... have brought me, your servant" or "with me ... have brought me"

you have brought your servant into a covenant of Yahweh with you

What it was that the two men agreed on can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh heard you when you made a solemn agreement with me that you and I will always be good friends"

for why then should you bring me to your father?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "then there would be no reason for you to bring me to your father"

1 Samuel 20:9

Far be it from you!

This is an idiom that means it will never happen to you. Alternate translation: "This will never happen to you!"

would I not tell you?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I would certainly tell you."

1 Samuel 20:12

see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

if there is good will

"if my father wants to do good things for you"

will I not then send to you and make it known to you?

Jonathan uses this question to emphasize that he will tell David if Saul intends to harm him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "then I will certainly send to you and make it known to you"

1 Samuel 20:13

may Yahweh do to Jonathan and more also

This is an idiom. Jonathan uses this oath for emphasis and speaks of himself as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "may Yahweh do to me whatever harm my father intends to do to you, and even more than that"

1 Samuel 20:14

General Information:

Jonathan asks David not to completely kill all his offspring so that a remnant will remain.

will you not show me the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh, that I may not die?

Jonathan asks this question to confirm that David will do this. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "please show me the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh, that I may not die"

show me the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." Possible meanings for "of Yahweh" are 1) "be faithful to me as Yahweh is faithful" or 2) "be faithful to me as Yahweh requires"

1 Samuel 20:16

house of David

The word "house" is a metonym for the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "David's family"

May Yahweh require an accounting from the hand of the enemies of David

The hand is a synecdoche for the person. Possible meanings are 1) "May Yahweh use David's enemies to punish David if David breaks this promise" or 2) "May Yahweh destroy the enemies of David."

1 Samuel 20:17

he loved him as he loved his own soul

Here "his own soul" refers to himself. Alternate translation: "Jonathan loved David as much as he loved himself"

1 Samuel 20:18

You will be missed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My father will miss you"

1 Samuel 20:19

the stone Ezel

"Ezel" was the name of the stone. Alternate translation: "the stone that people call Ezel"

1 Samuel 20:20

Connecting Statement:

Jonathan continues to speak to David.

to the side of it

Here the word "it" refers to the stone by which David was to hide.

1 Samuel 20:21

my young man ... the young boy

These refer to the same person.

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

then come

"then you, David, come"

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1 Samuel 20:22

Connecting Statement:

Jonathan continues to speak to David.

1 Samuel 20:23

see, Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) "we know that Yahweh" or 2) "pay attention because this is important: Yahweh."

Yahweh is between you and me

Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh is a witness between you and me" or "Yahweh will be watching how we treat each other" or 2) "May Yahweh be a witness between you and me" or "May Yahweh watch how we treat each other"

1 Samuel 20:25

Jonathan stood up

Some ancient copies have "Jonathan sat across from him."

1 Samuel 20:26

He is not clean; surely he is not clean

According to the law of Moses, a person who is ceremonially unclean is not to participate in the feast until the priest declares that he is clean. Saul repeats this phrase as if he is trying to convince himself.

1 Samuel 20:28

asked permission from me to go

"asked me to allow him to go"

1 Samuel 20:29

if I have found favor in your eyes

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 20:3]

the king's table

Jonathan speaks of Saul as if he is another person to show that he respects Saul. Alternate translation: "your table"

1 Samuel 20:30

Saul's anger burned against Jonathan

Here "anger burned" is a metonym that refers to becoming very angry. Alternate translation: "Saul became very angry with Jonathan"

You son of a perverse, rebellious woman!

This is an idiom. Saul uses this phrase as a harsh rebuke to Jonathan and his concern for David. Alternate translation: "You stupid son of a prostitute" or "You stupid traitor"

Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse ... mother's nakedness?

Saul uses this question to emphasize that he knows that Jonathan and David are friends. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know that you have chosen the son of Jesse ... mother's nakedness."

to the shame of your mother's nakedness

Here "mother's nakedness" is an idiom that refers to the mother who gave birth to you. Alternate translation: "to the shame of your mother who gave birth to you"

1 Samuel 20:31

neither you nor your kingdom will be established

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will not become king and will not establish your kingdom"

1 Samuel 20:32

For what reason should he be put to death? What has he done?

Jonathan is trying to get Saul to think carefully about what he is doing. This can be translated as a statement, and the words "should he be put to death" can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have no good reason to put him to death. He has done nothing wrong." or "You have no good reason to kill him. He has done nothing wrong."

1 Samuel 20:34

the second day of the month

This "second" is an ordinal number which refers to two. Alternate translation: "the second day of the new moon festival"

he was grieved over David

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he was grieving over David"

had dishonored him

Here "him" refers to David.

1 Samuel 20:35

a young man was with him

Here "him" refers to Jonathan.

1 Samuel 20:36

he shot an arrow beyond him

"Jonathan shot an arrow beyond the young man"

1 Samuel 20:37

Is not the arrow beyond you?

Jonathan uses this question to emphasize that the arrow is farther ahead of the young man. The uses of litotes also emphasizes this. The rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should know that the arrow is beyond you." or "The arrow is far beyond you."

1 Samuel 20:38

called after the young man, "Hurry

"called out to the young man, who was running away from him, 'Hurry"

1 Samuel 20:41

the mound

It seems that David had hidden behind a pile of earth or stones.

lay facedown on the ground, and bowed himself three times.

David bowed before Jonathan, who was still the King's son, worthy of such respect. Also, this was the last time David met with Jonathan.

1 Samuel 20:42

May Yahweh be between you and me

Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh is a witness between you and me" or "Yahweh will be watching how we treat each other" or 2) "May Yahweh be a witness between you and me" or "May Yahweh watch how we treat each other." See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 20:23.

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21 [1]Then David came to Nob to see Ahimelek the priest. Ahimelek came to meet David trembling and said to him, "Why are you alone and have no one with you?"[2]David said to Ahimelek the priest, "The king has sent me on a mission and

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has said to me, 'Let no one know anything about the business I am sending you, and what I have commanded you.' I have directed the young men to a certain place.
[3]Now then what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here."[4]The priest answered David and said, "There is no ordinary bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women."
[5]David answered the priest, "Surely women have been kept from us for the past three days, as usual when I set out. The things belonging to the young men have been set apart even on ordinary missions. How much more today will what they have be set apart!"[6]So the priest gave him the bread that was set apart. For there was no bread there except the bread of the presence, which was removed from before Yahweh, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day it was taken away.

[7]Now one of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before Yahweh. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds.
[8]David said to Ahimelek, "Now is there not here on hand any spear or sword? For I brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business was urgent."[9]The priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want to take that, take it, for there is no other weapon here." David said, "There is no other sword like that one; give it to me."

[10]David arose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish, the king of Gath.[11]Achish's servants said to him, "Is not this David, the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another about him in dances,
'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands?'"

[12]David took these words to heart and was very afraid of Achish, the king of Gath.[13]He changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands; he made marks on the doors of the gate and let his saliva run down his beard.
[14]Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is mad. Why have you brought him to me?[15]Do I lack madmen, so that you have brought this fellow to behave like one in my presence? Will this fellow really come into my house?"

1 Samuel 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 21:11.

Special concepts in this chapter

David and the chief priest

David visits the chief priest and lies to him about being on a special mission for the king. He asks for food, weapons, and prayer. The chief priest gives him some sacred bread and Goliath's sword and prays for him.

David and the king of Gath

David flees to Gath. The advisers to the king tell him that David is almost the king of Israel. David becomes afraid of the king and pretends to be insane.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

The king of Gath's advisers use two rhetorical questions to warn him about how dangerous David could be: "Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another about him in dances, 'Saul has killed his thousands, and David his ten thousands?'"

Links:

1 Samuel 21:1 Notes

1 Samuel 21:1

Nob

This is the name of a place.

Ahimelek

This is a man's name.

trembling

shaking in fear

1 Samuel 21:2

on a mission

"to do work for him"

I have directed the young men to a certain place

"I have told the young men to go to another place, and I will meet them there later"

1 Samuel 21:3

Now then

David is starting a new part of the conversation.

what do you have on hand?

Here "on hand" is a metonym meaning "available."

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Alternate translation: "What food do you have that you can give me?"

Give me five loaves of bread

This is a polite request.

1 Samuel 21:4

ordinary bread

bread that the priests have not used in worship

if the young men have kept themselves from women

This can be translated as a complete sentence by supplying the understood information. Alternate translation: "Your men may eat it if they have not slept with women recently"

1 Samuel 21:5

women have been kept from us

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "we have kept ourselves from women"

three days

"3 days"

when I set out

"when I begin a journey"

The things belonging to the young men have been set apart

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The young men have set what belongs to them apart"

How much more today will what they have be set apart

This is a statement, not a question. It can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is especially true today that they will set apart what they have"

1 Samuel 21:6

there was no bread there except the bread of the presence

This double negative emphasizes that the bread of the presence was the only bread that was there. Alternate translation: "the only bread that was there was the bread of the presence"

the bread that was set apart

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bread that the priests had set apart"

which was removed from before Yahweh, in order to put

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the priests had removed from before Yahweh so that they could put"

1 Samuel 21:7

detained before Yahweh

Possible meanings are that 1) Doeg had some religious work regarding Yahweh to do there. Alternate translation: "for some work before Yahweh" or 2) Yahweh detained Doeg there. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh had detained him there"

Doeg ... shepherds

You may need to say clearly that Doeg saw what David did. Alternate translation: "Doeg ... herdsmen, and he saw what Ahimelech did"

Doeg the Edomite

This is the name of a man from the land of Edom.

1 Samuel 21:8

Now is there not here on hand any spear or sword?

Here "on hand" is a metonym meaning "available." See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:3]

weapons

a general name for such things as swords, knives, bows and arrows, and spears

1 Samuel 21:9

Valley of Elah

This is the name of a place in Israel.

1 Samuel 21:11

Is not this David, the king of the land?

They were probably exaggerating when they said that David was king of the land. They used this question to imply that David was a powerful enemy and Achish should not let him stay there. Alternate translation: "You know that this is David, who is as dangerous as the king of the land"

Did they not sing to one another about him in dances, 'Saul ... thousands?'

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that when the people of the land were dancing, they sang to each other about him, 'Saul ... thousands.'"

1 Samuel 21:12

David took these words to heart

Here "took ... to heart" is a metonym to think seriously about what was said. Alternate translation: "David thought seriously about what the servants said"

1 Samuel 21:13

in their hands

Here "hands" are a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "in their presence"

1 Samuel 21:14

Why have you brought him to me?

Possible meanings are 1) Achish demands that his servants explain why they have brought David to him or 2) Achish is scolding them with a rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "You should have known not to bring him to me."

1 Samuel 21:15

Do I lack madmen, so that you have brought this fellow to behave like one in my presence?

This rhetorical question is a rebuke. Alternate translation: "There are enough madmen here who waste my time. You should not have brought this fellow to behave like one in my presence."

Will this fellow really come into my house?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do not allow this fellow to enter my house."

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22 [1]So David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him.[2]Everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented—they all gathered to him. David became captain over them. There were about four hundred men with him.

[3]Then David went from there to Mizpah in Moab. He said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother go out with you until I know what God will do for me."[1][4]He left them with the king of Moab. His father and mother stayed with

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him the whole time that David was in his stronghold.[5]Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in your stronghold. Leave and go into the land of Judah." So David left there and went into the forest of Hereth.

[6]Saul heard that David had been discovered, along with the men who were with him. Now Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on a hill, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing around him.
[7]Saul said to his servants who stood around him, "Listen now, people of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds,[8]in exchange for all of you plotting against me? None of you informs me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me. None of you informs me that my son has incited my servant David against me. Today he hides and waits for me so he may attack me."
[9]Then Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, answered, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Nob, to Ahimelek son of Ahitub.[10]He prayed to Yahweh that he might help him, and he gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

[11]Then the king sent someone to summon the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all his father's house, the priests who were in Nob. All of them came to the king.[12]Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." He answered, "Here I am, my master."[13]Saul said to him, "Why have you plotted against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread, and a sword, and have prayed to God that he might help him, so that he might rise up against me, to hide in secret, as he does today?"
[14]Then Ahimelek answered the king and said, "Who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law and is over your bodyguard, and is honored in your house?[15]Is today the first time I have prayed to God to help him? Far be it from me! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father. For your servant knows nothing of this whole matter."
[16]The king replied, "You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and all your father's house."[17]The king said to the guard that stood around him, "Turn and kill the priests of Yahweh. Because their hand also is with David, and because they knew that he fled, but did not reveal it to me." But the servants of the king would not put out their hand to kill the priests of Yahweh.
[18]Then the king said to Doeg, "Turn and kill the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked the priests; he killed eighty-five persons who wore a linen ephod that day.[19]He also put to the sword Nob, the city of the priests, both men and women, children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep, he put to the sword.

[20]But one of the sons of Ahimelek son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David.[21]Abiathar told David that Saul had killed Yahweh's priests.
[22]David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I am responsible for every death in your father's family![23]Stay with me and do not be afraid. For the one who seeks your life seeks mine as well. You will be safe with me."

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[a]Some ancient translations have, Please let my father and my mother stay with you, and some modern translations read this way.

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1 Samuel 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There are two stories in this chapter: David gathering a group of followers and Saul having all the priests and their families killed. (See: priest)

Special concepts in this chapter

David assembles a force of unhappy people

David hides in the wilderness, and people in trouble come to him. Soon he has a force of 500 men. The prophet then tells him to leave the wilderness. (See: prophet)

Saul and the chief priest's family

Doeg tells Saul that Ahimelech the priest gave David food and a sword and prayed for him. Saul accuses the priests of encouraging David to rebel. This is a serious accusation because the priests are God's representatives and are rebelling against God's king if the accusation is true. Saul has the priests and all their families killed except those who escape to David. (See: highpriest)

Links:

1 Samuel 22:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 22:1 cave	a hollow space under the ground, generally opening into the side of a hill, large enough for people to enter

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Adullam
This is the name of a town near the city of Gath.
heard it
heard that David had gone to hide in the cave
1 Samuel 22:2
Everyone who was in distress ... everyone who was discontented
This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Many people who were distressed ... many people who were unhappy"
captain
military officer who leads soldiers
four hundred
"400"
1 Samuel 22:3
Then David went from there
"Then David went from the cave at Adullam"
Mizpah
This is the name of a city.
go out with you
David wanted his parents to live with the king of Moab so that King Saul would not be able to harm them. Translators can express his basic meaning by using the ideas of "come to stay with you," "stay with you," or "live here with you," as in the UDB.
1 Samuel 22:5
go into the land of Judah
"go to your home land of Judah"
Hereth
This is the name of a city.
1 Samuel 22:6
David had been discovered, along with the men who were with him
Saul was most interested in David, so the writer mentions the other men separately. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had discovered where David and all the men who were with him were hiding"
the tamarisk tree
This is a type of tree. Alternate translation: "a large shade tree"
1 Samuel 22:7
Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards?
Saul uses a question to emphasize that David, who is from the tribe of Judah, does not desire to do this for the people of the tribe of Benjamin. Alternate translation: "The son of Jesse will not give you fields or vineyards."
Will the son of Jesse give
The time when he will give can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "When the son of Jesse becomes king, will he give"
the son of Jesse
"David"
Will he make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds
Saul uses a question to emphasize that David, who is from the tribe of Judah, does not desire to do this for the people of the tribe of Benjamin. Alternate translation: "He will not make you captains of thousands and captains of hundreds"
Will he make you all captains
You may need to make explicit when he will make them captains. Alternate translation: "When he becomes king, will he make you all captains"
captains of thousands and captains of hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these captains led. Alternate translation: "captains of 1,000 soldiers and captains of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "captains of large military divisions and captains of smaller military divisions" See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Samuel 17:18]
1 Samuel 22:8
Connecting Statement:
This continues what Saul said to his servants.
1 Samuel 22:9
Doeg the Edomite
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:7]
Nob ... Ahimelek
This is a place name and the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:1]
Ahitub
This is the name of a man.
1 Samuel 22:10
He prayed to Yahweh that he might help him, and he gave him
Ahitub prayed to Yahweh might help David, and Ahitub gave David
1 Samuel 22:13
in that you have given
"by giving"
rise up
"rebel" or "fight"
1 Samuel 22:14
Who among all your servants is so faithful as David ... house?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "None of your servants is as faithful as David ... house."
bodyguard
a person or group of people who protect someone
is honored in your house
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom your family honors"
1 Samuel 22:15
Is today the first time I have prayed to God to help him?
Ahimelech asks himself this question before Saul can ask it, then immediately answers it. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is not the first time I have prayed to God to help David."
Far be it from me!
This idiom means "Absolutely not!"
Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father. For your servant knows nothing
Ahimelech speaks of himself in the third person as the "servant." Ahimelech also refers to Saul in the third person as "the king." Ahimelech speaks this way to show respect to Saul. Alternate translation: "Please, King Saul, do not consider me, your servant, or anyone in the house of my father to be guilty. For I know nothing"

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impute
to consider someone guilty
to all the house of my father
Here "house" represents "family." Alternate translation: "to all my father's family"
1 Samuel 22:16
your father's house
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. Alternate translation: "your father's family" or "your father's descendants"
1 Samuel 22:17
the guard that stood around him
"the soldiers standing nearby to protect him"
Turn and kill
Here "Turn" means to turn around or turn away from the king. Alternate translation: "Go and kill" or "Kill"
their hand also is with David
The word "hand" is a metonym for the work done with the hand. Alternate translation: "they also help David"
would not put out their hand to kill
The word "hand" is a metonym for the work done with the hand. Alternate translation: "did not do anything to kill" or "refused to kill"
1 Samuel 22:18
Turn and kill the priests ... turned and attacked the priests
Here "Turn" means to turn around or turn away from the king. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 22:17]
Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked ... he killed
Possible meanings are 1) Doeg killed all the priests himself or 2) the word "Doeg" is a synecdoche for Doeg and the men who went with him. Alternate translation: "Doeg the Edomite and his men turned and attacked ... they killed"
Doeg the Edomite
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:7]
eighty-five persons
"85 men" or "85 priests"
1 Samuel 22:19
He also put to the sword ... he put to the sword
Possible meanings are 1) Doeg killed all the priests himself or 2) the word "Doeg" is a synecdoche for Doeg and the men who went with him. Alternate translation: "They also put to the sword ... they put to the sword"
put to the sword
"killed with the sword"
Nob
Nob is the name of a city. Here the name "Nob" represents the people of that city. Alternate translation: "the people in the city of Nob" or "the people of Nob"
1 Samuel 22:20
Abiathar
This is a man's name.

23 [1]They told David, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors."[2]So David prayed to Yahweh for help and asked him, "Should I go and attack these Philistines?" Yahweh said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah."
[3]David's men said to him, "See, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?"[4]Then David prayed to Yahweh for help yet again. Yahweh answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will give you victory over the Philistines."
[5]David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines. He led away their cattle and struck them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.[6]When Abiathar son of Ahimelek had fled to David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in his hand.

[7]Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. Saul said, "God has given him into my hand. For he is shut in because he has entered a city that has gates and bars."[8]Saul summoned all his forces for battle, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men.[9]David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him. He said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here."
[10]Then David said, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, your servant has indeed heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake.[11]Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? Yahweh, the God of Israel, I beg you, please tell your servant." Yahweh said, "He will come down."
[12]Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" Yahweh said, "They will surrender you."
[13]Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, got up and went away from Keilah, and they went from place to place. It was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, and he stopped the pursuit.[14]David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph. Saul looked for him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

[15]David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life; now David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh.[16]Then Jonathan, Saul's son, got up and went to David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God.
[17]He said to him, "Do not be afraid. For the hand of Saul my father will not find you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be next to you. Saul my father also knows this."[18]They made a covenant before Yahweh. David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

[19]Then Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hakilah, which is south of Jeshimon?[20]Now come down, king! According to your desire, come down! Our part will be to surrender him into the king's hand."

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[21]Saul said, "May you be blessed by Yahweh. For you have had compassion on me.[22]Go, make even more sure. Learn and find out where his hiding place is and who has seen him there. It is told to me that he is very crafty.[23]So look, and learn all of the places where he hides himself. Come back to me with sure information, and then I will return with you. If he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah."

[24]Then they rose up and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon.[25]Saul and his men went to seek him. But David was told of it, so he went down to a rocky hill and lived in the wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard it, he chased David in the wilderness of Maon.
[26]Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men were going on the other side of the mountain. David hurried to get away from Saul. As Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to take them,[27]a messenger came to Saul and said, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid against the land."
[28]So Saul returned from pursuing David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called Sela Hammahlekoth.[29]David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.

1 Samuel 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Saul chases David

Saul wants to kill David, but David trusts in God who keeps rescuing him. David rescues the town of Keilah from the Philistines who are stealing their harvest. Saul goes to Keilah to capture David, but David flees to the wilderness near Ziph. When David goes deeper into the wilderness, Saul follows but he has to leave to fight the Philistines who have invaded the land. Saul's pursuit of David shows that Saul cares more about killing his enemies than pleasing God. (See: trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Synecdoche

Jonathan strengthens David with a synecdoche: "For the hand of Saul my father will not find you." This helps to strengthen David's faith. (See: and faith)

Links:

1 Samuel 23:1 Notes

1 Samuel 23:1

fighting against Keilah

"Keilah" is the name of a town. Here "Keilah" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "fighting against the people of Keilah"

threshing

separating the grain or seeds, generally from a cereal plant or wheat by some mechanical means

1 Samuel 23:3

How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We will be even more fearful if we go to Keilah to fight the armies of the Philistines."

1 Samuel 23:5

went ... fought ... led ... struck ... saved

The writer pays the most attention to David, so these words are all singular, though David's men helped him do all these things.

1 Samuel 23:6

Ahimelek

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:1]

1 Samuel 23:7

Saul was told

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Saul" or "They told Saul"

1 Samuel 23:8

summoned

officially called. The reader should understand that Saul probably told his officials to gather the soldiers. He did not call with a loud voice to get them to come.

all his forces

"all his soldiers"

1 Samuel 23:10

David said

"David asked" or "David prayed"

your servant has indeed heard

David speaks as if he were someone else to show his respect for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I have indeed heard"

destroy the city

make the city so no one could live in it and kill all the people who live there

1 Samuel 23:11

as your servant has heard ... tell your servant

David speaks as if he were someone else to show his respect for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "as I have heard ... tell me"

surrender me into his hand

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "give me over to Saul"

1 Samuel 23:12

David said

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or "David asked" or "David prayed"

surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "give me and my men over to Saul"

1 Samuel 23:13

six hundred

"600"

It was told Saul

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Saul" or "They told Saul"

had escaped

"had run away from"

1 Samuel 23:14

wilderness of Ziph

This is the name of a deserted area near the city of Ziph.

did not give him into his hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "did not allow Saul to have power over David" or "did not allow Saul to do as he desired with David" or "did not allow Saul to capture David"

1 Samuel 23:15

seek his life

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "try to kill him"

Horesh

This is the name of city near Ziph.

1 Samuel 23:16

strengthened his hand in God

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "encouraged him to trust in God"

1 Samuel 23:17

For the hand of Saul my father will not find you

Here "hand" is a metonym for Saul and his power. Alternate translation: "For Saul my father will not find you" or "For Saul my father will never be able to have power over you"

1 Samuel 23:19

Ziphites

This is the name of the people group from Ziph.

Is not David hiding among us in ... Jeshimon?

This rhetorical question can be translated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "David is hiding among us in ... Jeshimon!"

the hill of Hakilah

This is the name of a hill in the wilderness of Judah.

Jeshimon

This is the name of a desert area near the Dead Sea. It can also be translated as "the Judean Wilderness" or "the wasteland."

1 Samuel 23:20

surrender him into the king's hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for power. The Ziphites speak to Saul as if he were another man to show him that they respect him. Alternate translation: "give David to you so you can do whatever you desire with him"

1 Samuel 23:21

May you be blessed by Yahweh

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I hope that Yahweh blesses you"

you have had compassion on me

The abstract noun "compassion" can be translated with the adjective "kind." Saul says this because they had told him about David and they were willing to help Saul capture David. Alternate translation: "you have been kind to me" or "you have kindly told this to me"

1 Samuel 23:22

Learn and find out

These two words mean almost the same thing and can be translated as one phrase. Alternate translation: "Know for sure"

who has seen him

"who saw him"

It is told to me

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People tell me" or "I have heard"

1 Samuel 23:23

among all the thousands of Judah

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "even if I have to arrest every man in Judah" or "among all the clans of Judah"

1 Samuel 23:24

Then they rose up

They stopped what they had been doing. The reader should not believe that they were sitting or lying.

Then they

"Then the Ziphites"

Ziph

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 23:14.

Jeshimon

This is the name of a desert area near the Dead Sea. It can also be translated as "the Judean Wilderness" or "the wasteland." See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 23:19]

the wilderness of Maon

This is the name of the deserted area around the city of Maon in southern Judah.

1 Samuel 23:25

David was told of it

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told David that they were coming" or "David learned that they were coming"

rocky hill

a hill covered with many rocks or boulders

1 Samuel 23:27

Hurry and come

The words "hurry" and "come" can be combined into one idea. Alternate translation: "Come quickly"

1 Samuel 23:28

pursuing David

"chasing David, trying to catch him"

Sela Hammahlekoth

The name means "Rock of Escape." This was a memorial or marker of David's escape from Saul.

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24 [1]When Saul returned from chasing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En Gedi."[2]Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats.

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[3]He came to sheep pens on the way, where there was a cave. Saul went inside to cover his feet. Now David and his men were sitting far back in the cave.[4]David's men said to him, "This is the day of which Yahweh spoke when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, for you to do with him as you wish.'" Then David arose and quietly crept forward and cut off the corner of Saul's robe.
[5]Afterward David's heart afflicted him because he had cut a corner off Saul's robe.[6]He said to his men, "May Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing to my master, Yahweh's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is Yahweh's anointed."[7]So David rebuked his men with these words, and did not permit them to attack Saul. Saul stood up, left the cave, and went on his way.

[8]Afterward, David also stood up, left the cave, and called out after Saul: "My master the king." When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and showed him respect.[9]David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the men who say, 'See, David is seeking your harm?'
[10]Today your eyes have seen how Yahweh put you into my hand when we were in the cave. Some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my master; for he is Yahweh's anointed.'[11]See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no evil or treason in my hand, and I have not sinned against you, even though you hunt my life to take it.
[12]May Yahweh judge between you and me, and may Yahweh avenge me against you, but my hand must not be against you.
[13]As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand will not be against you.
[14]After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea![15]May Yahweh be judge and give judgment between you and me, and see to it, and plead my cause and permit me to escape from your hand."

[16]When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul lifted up his voice and wept.
[17]He said to David, "You are more righteous than I am. For you have repaid me good, where I have repaid you evil.[18]You have declared today how you have done good to me, for you did not kill me when Yahweh had put me at your mercy.
[19]For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go safely? May Yahweh reward you with good for what you have done to me today.[20]Now, I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand.
[21]Swear to me by Yahweh that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house."[22]So David made an oath to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

1 Samuel 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Even though Saul tries again and again to kill David, David does not avenge himself on Saul because God had chosen Saul as king. This is meant to contrast with Saul's treatment of David, the future king. Saul represents the king the people wanted, a selfish man. David is the king God wanted, a godly man. (See: avenge and elect and godly)

Links:

1 Samuel 24:1 Notes

1 Samuel 24:1

he was told

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told him"

wilderness of En Gedi

Engedi is a place in Israel west of the Dead Sea where there is water with dry land all around it.

1 Samuel 24:2

three thousand

3,000

chosen men

men whom he had chosen because of their superior military abilities

1 Samuel 24:3

sheep pens

"sheep corrals" or "sheep enclosures"

cover his feet

This is a euphemism for "relieve himself" or "defecate" or "empty his intestines."

cave

generally a natural hole under the ground, often with an opening in the side of a hill or cliff

1 Samuel 24:4

David arose and quietly crept

The word "arose" is an idiom for taking action. Alternate translation: "David took action; he quietly crept"

crept

approached slowly, carefully or quietly

1 Samuel 24:5

David's heart afflicted him

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "David was sad because he had done something wrong"

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1 Samuel 24:6

Yahweh's anointed

"the one whom Yahweh has chosen to lead his people" or "the one Yahweh has made king"

to put out my hand against him

The hand is a metonym for the ability to cause harm. Alternate translation: "to harm him in any way"

1 Samuel 24:9

Why do you listen to the men who say, 'See, David is seeking your harm?

This is a rhetorical question. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not listen to the men who say, 'See, David is seeking to harm you."

1 Samuel 24:10

your eyes have seen

Here "your eyes" represent King Saul. Alternate translation: "you have seen with your own eyes"

put you into my hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for control. Alternate translation: "put you where I could kill you or allow you to live"

1 Samuel 24:11

my father

Saul was not David's real father. David calls him "father" to show that he respects Saul.

there is no evil or treason in my hand

David speaks as if evil and treason were physical objects he could hold in his hand. Here "hand" represents a person acting or doing something. Alternate translation: "I have done no evil deed against you, nor have I rebelled against you"

1 Samuel 24:12

my hand must not be against you

The hand is a metonym for the ability to cause harm. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Samuel 24:6]

1 Samuel 24:13

ancients

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "people who lived long ago"

1 Samuel 24:14

After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue?

These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. When David asks the questions, he knows that he will answer the questions himself. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you who the king of Israel has come out after. Let me tell you who it is that you are pursuing."

After a dead dog

The words "dead dog" are a metaphor for a powerless person. This sentence can be made complete. Alternate translation: "You are pursuing a person who is as powerless as a dead dog"

After a flea

The word "flea" is a metaphor for a person whom others do not consider important. Alternate translation: "You are pursuing a person who is as unimportant as a flea"

1 Samuel 24:15

see to it, and plead my cause

Possible meanings are 1) "do what is right, and plead my cause" or 2) "see that my cause is right and fight for me."

from your hand

The word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "so that you have no power over me"

1 Samuel 24:16

my son David

Saul speaks as if David were his son to show David that he loves him.

lifted up his voice and wept

The writer writes as if a voice were something a person could lift up with his hands. Alternate translation: "wept loudly"

1 Samuel 24:18

you have done good to me

Saul acknowledges that David did show that he supported King Saul and was loyal to him by not killing him.

for you did not kill me when Yahweh had put me at your mercy

Saul acknowledges that David chose to show mercy and demonstrated his loyalty to King Saul as Yahweh's anointed.

1 Samuel 24:19

For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go safely?

A rhetorical question with the answer included in the question. Alternate translation: "For if a man finds his enemy, he will not let him go safely."

For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go safely?

Where Saul had believed David was his enemy, he learns that even though David will be king, David will not take over the throne from Saul by force, but will wait for Yahweh's appointed time.

1 Samuel 24:20

the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) David will cause the kingdom of Israel to prosper through his power as king. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of Israel will prosper as you rule the Israelite people" or 2) Yahweh will cause David to have complete control over the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "you will have complete rule over the kingdom of Israel"

in your hand

The word "hand" is a metonym that represents power or control.

1 Samuel 24:21

you will not cut off my descendants after me

"you will not kill my sons and their families." It was common for a new king who was not from the previous family line to kill off all the children of the former king to prevent any of them from challenging him for the throne.

you will not destroy my name out of my father's house

It is important for each family in Israel to have descendants from generation to generation carrying on the family name and land inheritance. Alternate translation: "you will not destroy my family and descendants" or "you will allow my family to live"

1 Samuel 24:22

David and his men

"David and his army"

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25 [1]Now Samuel died. All Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and they buried him in his house at Ramah.
Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

[2]There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel. The man was very wealthy. He had three thousand sheep and one thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel.[3]The man's name was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. The woman was intelligent and beautiful in appearance. But the man was harsh and evil in his dealings. He was a descendant of the house of Caleb.
[4]David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.[5]So David sent ten young men. David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.[6]You will say to him, 'Live in prosperity. Peace to you and peace to your house, and peace be to all that you have.
[7]I hear that you have shearers. Your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing the whole time they were in Carmel.[8]Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Now let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a festive day. Please give whatever you have on hand to your servants and to your son David.'"

[9]When David's young men arrived, they said all of this to Nabal in David's name and then waited.[10]Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters.[11]Should I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?"
[12]So David's young men turned away and came back, and told him everything that was said.[13]David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword." So every man strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. About four hundred men followed after David, and two hundred stayed by the baggage.

[14]But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife; he said, "David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and he screamed at them.[15]Yet the men were very good to us. We were not harmed and did not miss anything as long as we went with them when we were in the fields.
[16]They were a wall to us both day and night, all the while we were with them tending the sheep.[17]Therefore know this and consider what you will do, for evil is plotted against our master, and against his whole house. He is such a worthless fellow that one cannot reason with him."

[18]Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two bottles of wine, five sheep already prepared, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys.[19]She said to her young men, "Go on before me, and I will come after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.
[20]As she rode on her donkey and came down by the cover of the mountain, David and his men came down toward her, and she met them.
[21]Now David had said, "Surely in vain have I guarded all that this man has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he has returned me evil for good.[22]May God do so to the enemies of David, and more also, if by the morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

[23]When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from her donkey and lay before David facedown and bowed herself to the ground.[24]She lay at his feet and said, "On me alone, my master, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak to you, and listen to the words of your servant.
[25]Let not my master regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young men of my master, whom you sent.[26]Now then, my master, as Yahweh lives, and as you live, since Yahweh has restrained you from bloodshed, and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now let your enemies, and those who seek to do evil to my master, be like Nabal.
[27]Now let this present that your servant has brought to my master be given to the young men who follow my master.
[28]Please forgive the trespass of your servant, for Yahweh will certainly make my master a sure house, because my master is fighting the battles of Yahweh; and evil will not be found in you so long as you live.
[29]Though men rise up to pursue you to take your life, yet the life of my master will be bound in the bundle of the living by Yahweh your God; and he will sling away the lives of your enemies, as from the pocket of a sling.
[30]Yahweh will have done for my master everything he promised you, and has appointed you leader over Israel.[31]This will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my master—that you have poured out innocent blood, or because my master attempted to rescue himself. For when Yahweh will do good for my master, remember your servant."

[32]David said to Abigail, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be blessed, he who sent you to meet me today.[33]Your wisdom is blessed and you are blessed, because you have kept me today from bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand!
[34]For in truth, as Yahweh, the God of Israel, lives, he who has kept me from hurting you, unless you had hurried to come meet me, there would certainly have not been left to Nabal so much as one male baby by the morning light."[35]So David

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received from her hand what she had brought him; he said to her, "Go up in peace to your house; see, I have listened to your voice and have accepted you."

[36]Abigail went back to Nabal; behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until the morning light.
[37]It came about in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, that his wife told him these things; his heart died within him, and he became like a stone.[38]It came about ten days later that Yahweh attacked Nabal so that he died.

[39]When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "May Yahweh be blessed, who has avenged the scorn I have received from the hand of Nabal and has kept back his servant from doing wrong. He has turned Nabal's evil action back on his own head." Then David sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her to himself as wife.[40]When David's servants had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her and said, "David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife."
[41]She arose, bowed herself with her face to the ground, and said, "See, your female servant is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my master."[42]Abigail hurried and arose, and rode on a donkey with five servant girls of hers who followed her; and she followed David's messengers and became his wife.

[43]Now David had also taken Ahinoam of Jezreel as a wife; both of them became his wives.[44]Also, Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

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1 Samuel 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Revenge

When David decides to kill all of the men in Nabal's household, Abigail convinces David not to avenge himself but to leave revenge to God. (See: avenge)

Links:

1 Samuel 25:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 25:1

All Israel gathered together and mourned for him

This is likely a generalization. A large number of the people of Israel were probably there, but some were probably unable to attend.

gathered together

"met together"

buried him in his house at Ramah

Possible meanings are that they buried Samuel 1) in his home town of Ramah or 2) on his family's land in Ramah but not physically in the house or 3) in his house in Ramah.

David rose and went down

"David and his men moved on and they went down"

1 Samuel 25:2

There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel. The man was very wealthy.

Some translators may need to put the ideas in these verses in a different order. Alternate translation: "There was a very wealthy man in Maon whose possessions were in Carmel."

Maon

This is the name of a town.

Carmel

This is the name of a town. This is different from Mount Carmel.

three thousand

3,000

one thousand

1,000

shearing his sheep

"shaving the wool off his sheep"

1 Samuel 25:3

The man's name was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. The woman was intelligent and beautiful in appearance. But the man was harsh and evil in his dealings. He was a descendant of the house of Caleb.

This verse give some background information about the man Nabal and his character. Some translators may need to put the ideas in this verse in a different order. Alternate translation: "Now the man was a descendant of the house of Caleb. His name was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. She was intelligent and beautiful in appearance. But the man was harsh and evil in his dealings."

Nabal

This is the name of a man.

Abigail

This is the name of a woman.

He was a descendant of the house of Caleb

Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "He was a descendant of the family of Caleb" or "He was a descendant of Caleb"

1 Samuel 25:4

shearing his sheep

"shaving the wool off his sheep"

1 Samuel 25:5

greet him in my name

"greet him as I would greet him if I were there"

1 Samuel 25:6

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Live in prosperity
"I desire that you may live in prosperity." The abstract noun "prosperity" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I desire that you possess many good things as long as you live"
Peace to you and peace to your house, and peace be to all that you have
"I desire that peace may come to you, your household and your possessions"
1 Samuel 25:7
you have shearers
"your shearers are working" or "your shearers have sheep to shear." David wants his men to speak so that Nabal understands that his sheep were well because David's men helped guard them.
we did them no harm, and they missed nothing
David is pointing out how he and his men offered protection to Nabal's servants and flocks. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "we kept them and all their property from harm"
1 Samuel 25:8
let my young men find favor in your eyes
Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "may you be pleased with my young men" or "may you consider my young men favorably"
to your servants
David was expressing respect toward Nabal by calling his men Nabal's servants.
your son David
David spoke as if he were Nabal's son to show that he respected Nabal, who was an older man.
1 Samuel 25:9
David's young men
"David's army"
said all of this to Nabal in David's name
"told Nabal that this message had come from David"
1 Samuel 25:10
Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse?
Nabal used questions to emphasize that he had no reason to help David. These two rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "This David son of Jesse you speak of—I do not know him." or "I do not know who this David is, so I will not do as he says. I do not know who Jesse is, so I do not care what happens to his son."
breaking away from
"running away from" or "rebelling against"
1 Samuel 25:11
my bread
Here "bread" is an idiom for any kind of food.
men who come from I do not know where
"men when I do not know where they have come from" or "men whom I do not know"
1 Samuel 25:12
that was said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Nabal had said"
1 Samuel 25:13
said to his men
"said to his army"
"Every man strap on his sword." So every man strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword
If swords are not known in your language, you can treat "strap on his sword" as a metonym meaning to prepare for war. Alternate translation: "'Every man, prepare for war.' And every man prepared for war. David also prepared for war"
four hundred
400
two hundred
200
stayed by the baggage
They remained at their base camp to prevent other raiders from stealing their possessions.
1 Samuel 25:14
But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife
You may need to make explicit what the young man did before he spoke with Abigail. Alternate translation: "One of Nabal's servants found out what David and his men were planning to do, so he went to Nabal's wife Abigail"
1 Samuel 25:15
We were not harmed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nobody harmed us" or "We were safe"
did not miss anything as long as we went with them
"we did not lose anything when we were with them." David's men kept wild animals and other people from stealing Nabal's flocks.
1 Samuel 25:16
They were a wall
David's men were like a wall around a city that protects the people in the city from their enemies.
1 Samuel 25:17
evil is plotted against our master
The speaker is careful not to name the one plotting the evil. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone is plotting to do evil things to our master"
our master
The speaker speaks of David as if David were another person to show that he respects David. Alternate translation: "you"
1 Samuel 25:18
two hundred
200
loaves
A loaf is like a cake. You may need to make explicit what the loaves consisted of. Alternate translation: "loaves of bread"
already prepared
"that someone had already cooked" or "ready for someone to cook"
measures
This is a generic term as none is given.
parched grain
"grain that someone had cooked"
clusters of raisins
"cakes of raisins" or "masses of raisins"
1 Samuel 25:20
David and his men

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"David and his army"

by the cover of the mountain

Possible meanings are 1) into a low, narrow stream bed or 2) to where the men were hiding.

1 Samuel 25:21

Connecting Statement:

The writer gives background information before he continues with the story.

Now David had said, "Surely ... for good.

The reader needs to understand that David had said these things before he said, "Every man strap on his sword" in 1 Samuel 25:13.

Now David had said

The word "Now" is used here to mark a break in the story. The author stops telling about Abigail going to David and tells about what David had said sometime before Abigail went to him.

nothing was missed of all that belonged to him

This can be stated positively and in active form. Alternate translation: "he still has everything that was his"

1 Samuel 25:22

May God do so to the enemies of David ... belong to him

The reader needs to understand that David had said these things before he said, "Every man strap on his sword" in 1 Samuel 25:13.

May God do so to the enemies of David

Many modern English translations read, "May God do so to David." This follows the reading in some ancient manuscripts and translations, as well as the more common wording of such statements.

all who belong

"all the people who belong to him" or "those in his family"

1 Samuel 25:23

Connecting Statement:

The writer has finished giving background information, so he continues the story.

lay before David facedown and bowed herself to the ground

Abigail was being humble and showing that she would obey David because he was a powerful leader.

1 Samuel 25:24

listen to

"hear"

my master ... your servant ... words of your servant

"David ... me ... my words." Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are two other people, to show that she respects David.

1 Samuel 25:25

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to advise David not to take revenge.

Let not my master regard ... I your servant ... the young men of my master

Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are other people to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "Do not regard ... I ... your young men"

But I ... did not see ... whom you sent

You may need to make explicit what Abigail would have done. Alternate translation: "But if I ... had seen ... whom you sent, I would have given them food"

1 Samuel 25:26

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to advise David not to take revenge.

my master ... my master

Abigail speaks of David as if he is another person to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "David ... you"

bloodshed

murder

avenging yourself with your own hand

The hand is a metonym for what a person does with the hand. Abigail assumes that David should allow Yahweh to take vengeance for him. Alternate translation: "taking vengeance yourself instead of letting Yahweh do it"

let your enemies ... be like Nabal

Abigail speaks as if Yahweh has already punished Nabal. Alternate translation: "I hope that Yahweh will punish your enemies ... as he will punish Nabal"

1 Samuel 25:27

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to tell David not to be angry.

let this present that your servant has brought to my master be given to the young men

Abigail uses the passive to show her respect for David. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "please give this present, which your servant has brought to my master, to the young men" or "please let my master give this present, which your servant has brought to my master, to the young men"

this present

"these gifts." The "present" was actually many different things.

your servant has ... my master ... my master

Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are two other people to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "I have ... you ... you"

1 Samuel 25:28

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to reason with David.

the trespass of your servant ... my master ... my master is

Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are two other people, to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "my trespass ... you ... you are"

Yahweh will certainly make my master a sure house

Here "house" is an idiom used for "descendants." Alternate translation: "Yahweh will ensure that my master always has a descendant who serves as king"

fighting the battles of Yahweh

"fighting against Yahweh's enemies"

evil will not be found in you

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever see you do any evil thing" or "you will never do anything evil"

1 Samuel 25:29

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to reason with David.

pursue

chase and try to catch

the life of my master will be bound in the bundle of the living by Yahweh your God

Abigail speaks of David's life as if it were a long and thin object that a person could put with other long and thin objects and then tie together into a bundle with a rope. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will bind the life of my master in the bundle of the living" or "Yahweh your God will keep you alive with those who are alive"

the life of my master

Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are two different people to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "your life"

he will sling away the lives of your enemies, as from the pocket of a sling

Abigail speaks of David's enemies' lives as if they were small objects like a stone that could be put in a sling and shot a long distance. Alternate translation: "he will kill your enemies as easily as a man slings a stone a long distance"

a sling

a piece of animal skin with long cords at both ends in which a person can put a stone or other small, hard object and throw it a long distance

1 Samuel 25:30

Connecting Statement:

Abigail continues to reason with David.

my master

Abigail speaks of David as if he is another person, to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "you"

1 Samuel 25:31

Connecting Statement:

Abigail finishes reasoning with David.

This will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my master—that you have poured out innocent blood, or because my master attempted to rescue himself

The word “This” refers to David’s actions. This implies that if David were to pour out blood needlessly or attempt to avenge himself, he would feel grief and have a troubled heart. But since he will not do those things, he will not feel grief and have a troubled heart. Alternate translation: “Your action will not cause you the grief or the troubled heart that pouring out blood needlessly or trying to avenge yourself would cause you.”

This will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my master

A troubled heart is a metonym for feelings of guilt. Alternate translation: "Your action will not give you sorrow or guilty feelings" or "You will not do something that causes you to regret what you did and to feel guilty"

that you have poured out innocent blood

Pouring out blood is a metonym for killing people. Alternate translation: "that you have killed innocent people" or "that you have killed people needlessly"

my master ... my master ... himself ... my master ... your servant

Abigail speaks of herself and David as if they are two other people, to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "you ... you ... yourself ... you ... me"

when Yahweh will do good for my master

That is, when Yahweh actually makes him king after Saul's reign is over.

1 Samuel 25:32

General Information:

David accepts Abigail's counsel and gifts.

May Yahweh ... be blessed, he who

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "I praise Yahweh ... who" or 2) "May all people praise Yahweh ... who."

1 Samuel 25:33

Your wisdom is blessed and you are blessed, because

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I thank Yahweh because he has blessed you by making you wise and because"

bloodshed

murder. The same word appears in 1 Samuel 25:26.

with my own hand

The word "hand" here is a metonym for the action taken by the hand. Alternate translation: "by my own actions"

1 Samuel 25:34

General Information:

David accepts Abigail's gifts and agrees to do as she has advised him.

there would certainly have not been left to Nabal so much as one male baby

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would not have left to Nabal even one male baby"

1 Samuel 25:35

received from her hand

This is an idiom. Abigail did not unload all gifts from the donkeys herself. Alternate translation: "accepted all the gifts that she had brought"

have listened to your voice

The word "voice" is a metonym for the message the person speaks and a synecdoche for the person who speaks. Alternate translation: "have listened to what you have told me" or "will do as you have advised me"

1 Samuel 25:36

morning light

dawn

Nabal's heart was merry within him

Nabal was very happy

1 Samuel 25:37

General Information:

Yahweh's judgment on Nabal

the wine had gone out of Nabal

Nabal was no longer drunk and so was no longer feeling happy.

his heart died within him

Nabal was unable to move because was so afraid that he was no longer physically healthy, probably because he had suffered a stroke.

1 Samuel 25:39

General Information:

David offers to protect Abigail by marrying her.

May Yahweh be blessed

This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 25:32]

has avenged the scorn I have received from the hand of Nabal

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "has defended me after Nabal insulted me"

has kept back his servant from doing wrong

David speaks as if he were another person to show his

respect for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "has kept me from doing evil deeds"

has turned Nabal's evil action back on his own head

The abstract noun "action" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "has done to Nabal what Nabal planned to do to me"

on his own head

The head is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "on him"

sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her to himself as wife

You may make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "sent men to speak to Abigail and tell her that David wanted to take her to be his wife"

1 Samuel 25:41

She arose, bowed herself

Abigail responded by bowing. The reader should understand that she was probably already standing when the men were talking to her in [1 Samuel 25:40]

See, your female servant is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my master

Abigail speaks as if she were another person to show that she is humble. She shows that she desires to be David's new wife by offering to wash the feet of David's servants. Alternate translation: "See, I will serve you, the servants of my master David, by washing your feet"

1 Samuel 25:42

hurried and arose, and rode

You may need to make explicit what Abigail did after she arose and before she rode. Alternate translation: "quickly did what she needed to do to prepare for the journey, and then she rode"

five servant girls of hers who followed her

Abigail was riding a donkey, but the servant girls were walking.

1 Samuel 25:43

Now David had also taken Ahinoam

This event took place before David married Abigail.

Ahinoam

This is the name of a woman.

1 Samuel 25:44

Saul had given Michal

This event took place before David married Abigail.

Michal

This is the name of a woman.

Paltiel ... Laish

These are names of men.

Gallim

This is a town north of Jerusalem.

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26 [1]The Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding in the hill of Hakilah, which is before Jeshimon?"[2]Then Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.
[3]Saul camped on the hill of Hakilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the road. But David was staying in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul was coming after him into the wilderness.[4]So David sent out spies and learned that Saul had indeed come.
[5]David arose and went to the place where Saul had camped; he saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner son of Ner, the general of his army; Saul lay in the camp, and the people were camped around him, all asleep.

[6]Then David said to Ahimelek the Hittite, and to Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" Abishai said, "I! I will go down with you."[7]So David and Abishai went to the army by night. Saul was there sleeping inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground beside his head. Abner and his soldiers lay around him.
[8]Then Abishai said to David, "Today God has put your enemy into your hand. Now please let me pin him to the ground with the spear with just one blow. I will not strike him a second time."
[9]David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can extend his hand against Yahweh's anointed one and be guiltless?"[10]David said, "As Yahweh lives, Yahweh will kill him, or his day will come to die, or he will go into battle and perish.
[11]May Yahweh forbid that I should extend my hand against his anointed one; but now, I beg you, take the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go."[12]So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they got away. No one saw them or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from Yahweh had fallen on them.

[13]Then David went over to the other side and stood on the top of the mountain far off; a great distance was between them.
[14]David shouted out to the people and to Abner son of Ner; he said, "Do you not answer, Abner?" Then Abner answered and said, "Who are you who is shouting to the king?"
[15]David said to Abner, "Are not you a courageous man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your master the king? For someone came in to destroy the king your master.[16]This thing you have done is not good. As Yahweh lives, you deserve to die because you have not kept watch over your master, Yahweh's anointed one. Now see where the king's spear is and the jar of water that was near his head!"

[17]Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" David said, "It is my voice, my master, king."[18]He said, "Why does my master pursue his servant? What have I done? What evil is in my hand?
[19]Now therefore, I beg you, let my master the king listen to the words of his servant. If it is Yahweh who has stirred you up against me, may he be pleased with an offering; but if it is human beings, may they be cursed in the sight of Yahweh, for

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they have today driven me out, that I should not cling to the inheritance of Yahweh; they have said to me, 'Go worship other gods.'[20]Now therefore, do not let my blood fall to the earth away from Yahweh's presence; for the king of Israel has come out to search for the one flea as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains."

[21]Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, David, my son; for I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes today. See, I have played the fool and have made a very bad mistake."
[22]David answered and said, "See, your spear is here, king! Let one of the young men come over and get it and bring it to you.[23]May Yahweh pay each man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; because Yahweh put you into my hand today, but I would not strike his anointed.
[24]See, as your life was precious in my eyes today, so may my life be much valued in the eyes of Yahweh, and may he rescue me out of all trouble."[25]Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, David my son! You will certainly do great things and you will succeed in them." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

1 Samuel 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Vengeance

David has another opportunity to kill Saul but he refuses to kill the one God had chosen as king. This contrasts with Saul, who tried to find David and kill him. Saul came to admit that David was more righteous than he was because he did not kill his enemy. (See: elect and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

David put his reason for not killing Saul in a rhetorical question: "Do not destroy him; for who can extend his hand against Yahweh's anointed one and be guiltless?"

Links:

1 Samuel 26:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 26:1

Is not David hiding ... Jeshimon?

This rhetorical question can be translated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "David is hiding ... Jeshimon!"

before Jeshimon

"from which we can see Jeshimon"

Jeshimon

This is the name of a desert area near the Dead Sea. It can also be translated as "the Judean Wilderness" or "the wasteland." See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 23:19]

1 Samuel 26:2

Then Saul arose and went

The word "arose" is an idiom for taking action. Alternate translation: "Then Saul took action and he went"

three thousand

3,000

chosen men

men whom he had chosen because of their superior military abilities

1 Samuel 26:3

before Jeshimon

"from which they could see Jeshimon"

Jeshimon

This is the name of a desert area near the Dead Sea. It can also be translated as "the Judean Wilderness" or "the wasteland." See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 23:19]

1 Samuel 26:5

David arose and went

"David took action and he went"

Abner ... Ner

These are the names of men.

1 Samuel 26:6

Ahimelek ... Abishai

These are the names of men.

Zeruiah

These are the names of women.

go down ... to

David and his men were probably on higher ground than Saul.

I! I will go down

"I want to be the one who goes down"

1 Samuel 26:8

God has put your enemy into your hand

Abishai speaks as if the enemy were a small object that God had put into David's hand. The word "hand" is a metonym for the power the hand can wield. Alternate translation: "God has given you complete control over your enemy"

pin him to the ground with the spear

This is a metonym that refers to "kill with a spear"

I will not strike him a second time

"I will kill him the first time I strike him" or "I will not need to strike him a second time"

1 Samuel 26:9

who can extend his hand against Yahweh's anointed one and be guiltless?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "No one can strike Yahweh's anointed one and be without guilt." or "Anyone who strikes Yahweh's

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anointed one will be guilty of murder."
1 Samuel 26:10
As Yahweh lives
"as certainly as Yahweh lives" or "as surely as Yahweh lives"
his day will come to die
"he will die a natural death"
1 Samuel 26:11
extend my hand against
The hand is a metonym for the harm a hand can do. Alternate translation: "do anything to harm"
let us go
David includes Abishai, so the word "us" here is inclusive.
1 Samuel 26:12
a deep sleep from Yahweh had fallen on them
Yahweh had caused them to sleep deeply.
1 Samuel 26:14
Do you not answer, Abner?
David uses a question to shame Abner into answering. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Answer me, Abner!"
David shouted
"David spoke as loudly as he could" so Saul and his men could hear him
1 Samuel 26:15
Are not you a courageous man?
David uses a question to rebuke Abner for not guarding Saul. Alternate translation: "You are a very brave man."
Who is like you in Israel?
David uses a question to rebuke Abner for not guarding Saul. Alternate translation: "You are the greatest soldier in Israel."
Why then have you not kept watch over your master the king?
Possible meanings are 1) this is a real question and David wants Abner to answer him or 2) this is a rhetorical question and David is rebuking Abner. Alternate translation: "Therefore you should have kept watch over your master the king!"
to destroy the king
The word "destroy" here is hyperbole for "kill." Alternate translation: "to kill the king"
1 Samuel 26:17
my son
Saul was not David's true father. Saul speaks as if he were David's father to show David that he wants David to trust and respect him as David would trust and respect his own father.
1 Samuel 26:18
Why does my master pursue his servant?
Possible meanings are 1) David really does want Saul to answer the question or 2) this rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My master has no reason to pursue his servant."
Why does my master pursue his servant?
Here David speaks of Saul in third person calling him "my master," and he speaks of himself in third person calling himself "his servant." David speaks this way to show respect to Saul. Alternate translation: "Why are you, my master, pursuing me, your servant?" or "Why are you pursuing me?"
What have I done?
Possible meanings are 1) David really does want Saul to answer the question or 2) this rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that I have done nothing to harm you."
What evil is in my hand?
This speaks of evil as if it were an object that is held in the hand. Here "hand" represents a person acting or doing something. Possible meanings are 1) David really does want Saul to answer the question. Alternate translation: "What have I done wrong?" or 2) this rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have done nothing wrong!"
1 Samuel 26:19
you, let my master the king listen to the words of his servant
David speaks as if he and the king were other people to show respect to Saul. Alternate translation: "you my king, listen to my words"
stirred you up against me
"caused you to be angry with me"
may he be pleased with an offering
You may need to make explicit the reason he will give an offering. Alternate translation: "I will give him an offering and hope he will accept it so he will no longer cause you to be angry with me"
may they be cursed in the sight of Yahweh
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "may Yahweh decide to punish them"
for they have today driven me out, that I should not cling to the inheritance of Yahweh; they have said to me, 'Go worship other gods.'
"for they have today driven me out. It is as if they want me to stop clinging to the inheritance of Yahweh. It is as if they have said to me, 'Go worship other gods.'"
that I should not cling to the inheritance of Yahweh
"so that I will no longer trust that Yahweh will give me what he has promised me"
1 Samuel 26:20
the king of Israel has
David speaks as if the king was another person to show respect to Saul. Alternate translation: "you have"
do not let my blood fall to the earth
This is a polite way of saying "do not kill me."
the one flea
David uses the word "flea" as a metaphor for a person, himself, who cannot do any great harm. Alternate translation: "this single flea" or "me, and I cannot harm you any more than one flea can"
as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains
Saul is chasing David as if he were hunting a valuable wild bird.
1 Samuel 26:21
Return
Possible meanings are 1) "Return to serve me in my palace" or "Return to your home."
my son
Saul was not David's true father. Saul speaks as if he were David's father to show David that he wants David to trust and respect him as David would trust and respect his own

father.

my life was precious in your eyes today

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "today you have considered my life to be very valuable" or "today you showed me that you really do respect me"

played the fool

"been very foolish"

1 Samuel 26:23

Yahweh put you into my hand today

The word "hand" is a metonym for the person's power. "Yahweh gave me an opportunity to attack you today" or "Yahweh placed me where I could easily have killed you"

pay each man

"give what is proper to each man"

his anointed

David speaks as if Saul were another person to show that he respects Saul because Saul is king. Alternate translation: "the one he has chosen to be king"

1 Samuel 26:24

your life was precious in my eyes today

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. See how you translated similar words in [1 Samuel 26:21]

so may my life be much valued in the eyes of Yahweh

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "so may Yahweh consider my life very valuable as well" or "so may Yahweh value my life as much as I have valued your life"

1 Samuel 26:25

May you be blessed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh bless you"

my son

Saul was not David's true father. Saul speaks as if he were David's father to show David that he wants David to trust and respect him as David would trust and respect his own father.

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27 [1]David said in his heart, "I will now perish one day by Saul's hand; there is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines; Saul will give up looking for me any more within all the borders of Israel; in this way I will escape out of his hand."
[2]David arose and passed over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish son of Maok, the king of Gath.
[3]David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his own household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman, and Abigail the Carmelite woman, Nabal's wife.[4]Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, so he looked for him no longer.

[5]David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities in the country, that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?"[6]So that day Achish gave him Ziklag; that is why Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah to this very day.[7]The number of days that David lived in the land of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

[8]David and his men attacked various places, making raids on the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for those nations were the inhabitants of the land, as you go to Shur, as far as the land of Egypt. They had been living there in the land from ancient times.[1][9]David attacked the land and saved neither man nor woman alive. He took away the sheep and cattle, the donkeys, the camels, and the clothing. Then he returned and went back to Achish.
[10]Achish would say, "Against whom have you made a raid today?" David would answer, "Against the south of Judah," or "Against the south of the Jerahmeelites," or "Against the south of the Kenites."
[11]David would keep neither man nor woman alive to bring them to Gath, saying, "So that they cannot say about us, 'David did such and such.'" This was what he did all the while he was living in the country of the Philistines.[12]Achish believed David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; he will therefore be my servant forever."

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[1]Instead of the Girzites which is found in some ancient copies of the Hebrew text, some modern translations have the Gizrites which is found in the margin of some Hebrew copies.

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1 Samuel 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This begins a section about David living with the Philistines.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's move

David is afraid Saul will someday catch him and kill him, so he moves to the Philistine city of Gath. This is a type of exile David creates for himself out of fear. It is caused by his lack of trust in God. This is the same reason his descendants would come to be exiled. (See: trust)

Links:

1 Samuel 27:1 Notes

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1 Samuel 27:1

David said in his heart

Here "his heart" is a metonym that means to himself. Alternate translation: "David thought to himself"

escape out of his hand

The word "hand" is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "escape from him"

1 Samuel 27:2

David arose and passed over

"David took action; he passed over"

passed over

"passed over the border between Israel and Philistia"

six hundred men

600

Achish

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 21:10]

Maok

This is the name of a man.

1 Samuel 27:3

Ahinoam

This is the name of a woman. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 14:50]

Abigail

This is the name of a woman. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 25:3]

Nabal

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 25:3]

1 Samuel 27:4

Saul was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told Saul" or "Saul heard"

1 Samuel 27:5

If I have found favor in your eyes

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 20:3]

let them give me a place

Since Achish was the one who would "give," this is a metonym for "please give me a place."

one of the cities in the country

"one of the outlying towns" or "one of the towns outside the city"

Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not need to live in the city with you." or "I am not important enough to live here with you in the royal city."

your servant

David speaks as if he were another person to show that he respected Achish.

1 Samuel 27:6

Ziklag

This is the name of a city in the southwest part of Judah.

1 Samuel 27:8

making raids on

attacking and taking property many times

Girzites

A people group who apparently lived somewhere between Philistia and Egypt.

as you go to Shur

Here "you" is being used as an indefinite pronoun that refers to anyone. Alternate translation: "on the way most people travel to Shur"

Shur

region on the northeast border of Egypt

1 Samuel 27:9

Achish

the king of Gath

1 Samuel 27:10

Achish

the king of Gath

Jerahmeelites

a clan from the tribe of Judah

Kenites

a people group who lived in the land of Midian

1 Samuel 27:11

Gath

one of five Philistine city-states.

1 Samuel 27:12

Achish

the king of Gath

28 [1]It came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for battle to fight with Israel. Achish said to David, "Know for certain that you will go out with me in the army, you and your men."[2]David said to Achish, "That being the case, you will know what your servant can do." Achish said to David, "Then I will make you my bodyguard all your days."

[3]Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. Also, Saul had banned sorcerers and spiritists from the land.[4]Then the Philistines gathered themselves together and came and camped at Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they camped at Gilboa.
[5]When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled very much.[6]Saul prayed to Yahweh for help, but Yahweh did not answer him—neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.[7]Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a sorceress, so that I may go to her and seek her advice." His servants said to him, "See, there is a woman in Endor who is a sorceress."

[8]So Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothing and went, he and two men with him. They went to the woman by night. He said, "Divine for me by a spirit and bring up for me the one I name."[9]The woman said to him, "See, you know

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what Saul has done, how he has banned sorcerers and spiritists from the land. So why are you setting a trap for my life, to make me die?"[10]Saul swore to her by Yahweh and said, "As Yahweh lives, no punishment will happen to you for this thing."
[11]Then the woman said, "Whom should I bring up to you?" Saul said, "Bring up Samuel for me."[12]When the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice and spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul."
[13]The king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a god coming up out of the earth."[14]He said to her, "What does he look like?" She said, "An old man is coming up; he is clothed with a robe." Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and showed him respect.

[15]Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me and brought me up?" Saul answered, "I am very distressed, for the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has left me and does not answer me any more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I will do."
[16]Samuel said, "What then do you ask me, since Yahweh has left you, and he has become your enemy?[17]Yahweh has done to you what he said he would. Yahweh has torn the kingdom out of your hand and he has given it to someone else—to David.
[18]Because you did not obey the voice of Yahweh and did not carry out his fierce wrath on Amalek, he has therefore done this today to you.[19]Yahweh will give Israel along with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Yahweh will also give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

[20]Then Saul immediately fell his full length on the ground and was very afraid because of the words of Samuel. There was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all that day, neither that whole night.[21]The woman came to Saul and saw that he was very troubled, She said to him, "See, your woman servant has listened to your voice; I have put my life in my hand and have listened to the words that you said to me.
[22]Now therefore, I beg you, listen also to the voice of your woman servant, and let me set a little food in front of you. Eat so that you may gain strength for when you go on your way."[23]But Saul refused and said, "I will not eat." But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him, and he listened to their voice. So he rose from the ground and sat on the bed.
[24]The woman had a fatted calf in the house; she hurried and killed it; she took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread with it.[25]She brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they got up and left that night.

1 Samuel 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Talking to the dead

Talking to the dead was against the law of Moses. God or the Holy Spirit left Saul because of his sin and would not help him. (See: death, lawofmoses and holyspirit and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

Samuel uses a rhetorical question to say it was useless to ask his advice since there was no way Saul could be successful with God against him: "What then do you ask me, since Yahweh has left you, and he has become your enemy?"

Links:

1 Samuel 28:1 Notes

1 Samuel 28:1

to fight with Israel

"to fight against Israel"

1 Samuel 28:2

That being the case, you will know ... "Then I will make

The phrases "That being the case" and "Then" show that the speaker agrees with what the other person has just said. Alternate translation: "Very well, I will go with you so that you will know ... Very well, I will make"

you will know what your servant can do

David probably wanted Achish to think that David would kill many Israelites, but "what your servant can do" could also mean that David was planning to kill Philistines instead. Try to translate so that the reader can see both of these possible meanings.

your servant

David speaks as if he is another person so that Achish will think David respects him. Alternate translation: "I"

make you

The word "you" refers to David and so is singular.

bodyguard

a person who protects another person

1 Samuel 28:3

Now Samuel ... spiritists

The writer provides background information to prepare the reader for the events that follow.

banned ... from the land

He had officially removed them from the country or region, or prevented from entering. Alternate translation: "expelled ... from Israel"

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sorcerers and spiritists
"those who talked with the dead and those who talked with spirits." If your language has one word for those who talk with the dead and one word for those who talk with spirits, or if your language has only one word for those who talk with the dead and with spirits, you should use those words here.
1 Samuel 28:4
Then the Philistines gathered
after David and Achish spoke (1 Samuel 28:2)
gathered all Israel together
"gathered all his armies in Israel together"
Shunem ... Gilboa
these are names of places
1 Samuel 28:5
he was afraid, and his heart trembled very much
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his fear. Here Saul is referred to by his "heart." Alternate translation: "he was terrified"
1 Samuel 28:6
Urim
The high priest carried the sacred lots called Urim and Thummin in his breastplate, in a marked pouch, next to his heart.
1 Samuel 28:7
Endor
This is the name of a place.
1 Samuel 28:8
Saul disguised himself ... and went ... to the woman by night
Saul disguised himself because the way from Gilboa (1 Samuel 28:4) to Endor (1 Samuel 28:7) was through land that the Philistines were living in. He traveled all day and reached the woman after the sun had gone down.
disguised
changed his usual appearance no one would know who he was
Divine for me by a spirit
Saul was requesting that the woman call on the familiar spirit she used to contact the dead and have that spirit call up the spirit of the dead person Saul would name.
1 Samuel 28:9
sorcerers and spiritists
"those who talked with the dead and those who talked with spirits." If your language has one word for those who talk with the dead and one word for those who talk with spirits, or if your language has only one word for those who talk with the dead and with spirits, you should use those words here. See how you translated similar words in 1 Samuel 28:3.
my life
The word "life" represents the person. Alternate translation: "me"
1 Samuel 28:13
a god
Other possible meanings are 1) "one like God" or 2) "a judge" (1 Samuel 7:15).
1 Samuel 28:17
torn the kingdom out of your hand
Samuel speaks as if the kingdom were a physical object that could be held in the hand and grabbed out by another person. Alternate translation: "made you so you are no longer king" or "made another person king in your place"
1 Samuel 28:19
Yahweh will give Israel along with you into the hand of the Philistines
Samuel speaks as if the people of Israel were a small object that Yahweh would give to the Philistines, whom he speaks of as if they were one person. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will allow the Philistines to do whatever they want to do to you and the people of Israel"
will be with me
This is a polite way to say that Saul will die. Alternate translation: "will be dead"
Yahweh will also give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines
Samuel speaks as if the army of Israel were a small object that Yahweh would give to the Philistines, whom he speaks of as if they were one person. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will allow the Philistines to do whatever they want to do to the army of Israel"
1 Samuel 28:20
he had eaten no food all that day, neither that whole night
Saul had not eaten during the night before he traveled from Gilboa (1 Samuel 28:4) to Endor (1 Samuel 28:7), nor during the day as he journeyed, nor during the night on which he visited the woman.
1 Samuel 28:21
I have put my life in my hand and have listened
This is an idiom. "I could die because I listened" or "Someone could kill me because I listened"
1 Samuel 28:22
the voice of your woman servant
The woman speaks as if she is another person to show that she respects Saul. She refers to herself by her "voice" to emphasize what she says. Alternate translation: "my voice" or "me speak to you"
1 Samuel 28:23
Saul refused
"Saul would not do what they asked"
compelled him
"forced him"
1 Samuel 28:24
fatted calf
a calf that has been grown and fed to be available for a special feast
she ... kneaded it
She mixed flour and oil, working and rolling the mixture thoroughly with her hands to produce dough for baking.

29 [1]Now the Philistines gathered together all their army at Aphek, and Israel camped by the spring that is in Jezreel.[2]The princes of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands; David and his men passed on in the rear guard with Achish.

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[3]Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" Achish said to the other princes of the Philistines, "Is not this David, the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault with him since he came away to me to this day?"
[4]But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him and said, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place you assigned him. He will not go down with us into battle, for he will become our adversary during the fighting. For how else could he make himself acceptable to his master than by taking the heads of our own men?
[5]Is this not David of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying,

'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands'?"

[6]Then Achish called David and said to him, "As Yahweh lives, you have been good, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my view; for I have found nothing wrong with you since the day of your coming to me to this very day. Nevertheless, the princes are not favorable to you.[7]So now return and go in peace, so that you do not displease the princes of the Philistines."
[8]David said to Achish, "But what have I done? What have you found in your servant as long as I have been before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my master the king?"[9]Achish answered and said to David, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless, the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us to the battle.'
[10]So now rise up early in the morning with the servants of your master who have come with you; as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, go away."[11]So David rose up early, he and his men, to leave in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

1 Samuel 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 29:5.

Other possible translation difficulties

It is unclear whether David wanted to go into battle with the Philistines. He would have been fighting against Saul, but he also would have been fighting against Israel's soldiers. It is probably best to see that David is conflicted over this issue, but some scholars believe that David planned on turning against the Philistines in the battle.

Links:

1 Samuel 29:1 Notes

1 Samuel 29:1

spring

a small stream of water flowing naturally from the Earth

1 Samuel 29:2

passed on by hundreds and by thousands

"divided their men into groups; some groups had one hundred soldiers and some groups had one thousand soldiers"

hundreds ... thousands

100s ... 1,000s

David and his men passed on in the rear guard with Achish

The groups of hundreds and thousands passed on first, then Achish and his helpers, and then David, his men, and the other Philistine soldiers, who were guarding Achish.

1 Samuel 29:3

What are these Hebrews doing here?

Possible ways to translate this rhetorical question as a statement are Alternate translation: 1) "You should not have allowed these Hebrews, our enemies, to be here with us." or 2) "Tell us who these Hebrews are."

Is not this David ... these years, and I have found ... this day?

Another possible translation is "Is not this David, ... these years? I have found ... this day." The rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should know that this is David ... these years. I have found ... this day."

I have found no fault with him

"I know of nothing that he has done wrong"

1 Samuel 29:4

He will not go down with us into battle

The person here is a synecdoche for the army he commands. Alternate translation: "Do not let his army join with our army against our enemies"

For how else could he make himself acceptable to his master than by taking the heads of our own men?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Here "taking the heads" is a metonym for killing. Alternate translation: "The best way for David to make peace with his master would be by killing our soldiers!"

1 Samuel 29:5

Is this not David of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, 'Saul ... ten thousands'?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not trust David—he is the one of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, 'Saul ... ten thousands'!"

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thousands ... ten thousands
"1,000s ... 10,000s"
1 Samuel 29:6
As Yahweh lives
This is an idiom. "As certainly as Yahweh lives" or "This is a true statement"
your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good
"I am happy to have you go out and come in with me and my army" or "It is good that you go everywhere with me and my army"
1 Samuel 29:8
my master the king
David speaks as if Achish were another person so that Achish will think David respects him. Alternate translation: "you, my master and king"
1 Samuel 29:9
nevertheless, the princes
"even though that is true, this is more important: the princes" or "however, the princes"
1 Samuel 29:10
your master
The reader should understand that Achish is speaking of Saul.
have light
"can see with the morning sun"

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30 [1]It came about, when David and his men had come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid upon the Negev and on Ziklag. They attacked Ziklag, burned it,[2]and captured the women and everyone who was in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but carried them off as they went on their way.
[3]When David and his men came to the city, it was burned, and their wives, their sons, and their daughters were taken captive.[4]Then David and the people that were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more power to weep.
[5]David's two wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.[6]David was greatly distressed, for the people were talking about stoning him, for all the people were bitter in spirit, each man for his sons and daughters; but David strengthened himself in Yahweh, his God.

[7]David said to Abiathar son of Ahimelek, the priest, "I beg you, bring the ephod here for me." Abiathar brought the ephod to David.[8]David prayed to Yahweh for direction, saying, "If I pursue after this troop, will I overtake them?" Yahweh answered him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will surely recover everything."
[9]So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him; they came to the brook Besor, where those who were left behind stayed.[10]But David kept pursuing, he and four hundred men; for two hundred had stayed behind, who were so weak that they could not go over the brook Besor.

[11]They found an Egyptian in a field and brought him to David; they gave him bread, and he ate; they gave him water to drink;[12]and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, he gained strength again, for he had eaten no bread nor drunk any water for three days and three nights.
[13]David said to him, "To whom do you belong? Where do you come from?" He said, "I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; my master left me because three days ago I fell sick.[14]We made a raid on the Negev of the Kerethites, and what belongs to Judah, and the Negev of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag."
[15]David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this raiding party?" The Egyptian said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or betray me up into the hands of my master, and I will bring you down to this raiding party."

[16]When the Egyptian had brought David down, the raiders were spread out over all the ground, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the booty they had taken out of the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.[17]David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. Not a man escaped except for four hundred young men, who rode on camels and fled.
[18]David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken; and David rescued his two wives.[19]Nothing was missing, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither booty, nor anything that the raiders had taken for themselves. David brought back everything.[20]David took all the flocks and the herds, which the men drove ahead of the other livestock. They said, "This is David's booty."

[21]David came to the two hundred men who had been too weak to follow him, the ones the others had made to stay at the brook Besor. These men went ahead to meet David and the people who were with him. When David came to these people, he greeted them.[22]Then all the wicked men and worthless fellows among those who had gone with David said, "Because these men did not go with us, we will not give them any of the booty that we have recovered. However, each man may lead away his wife and children and go."
[23]Then David said, "You must not act like this, my brothers, with what Yahweh has given to us. He has preserved us and given into our hand the marauding band that came against us.[24]Who will listen to you in this matter? For as the share is for anyone who goes into battle, so also will the share be for anyone who waits by the baggage; they will share and share alike."[25]It has been so from that day to this day, for David made it a statute and a decree for Israel.

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[26]When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the booty to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "See, here is a present for you from the booty from Yahweh's enemies."[27]He also sent some to the elders who were in Bethel, and to those who were in Ramoth of the South, and to those who were in Jattir,[28]and to those who were in Aroer, and to those who were in Siphmoth, and to those who were in Eshtemoa.
[29]He also sent some to the elders who were in Rakal, and to those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to those who were in the cities of the Kenites,[30]and to those who were in Hormah, and to those who were in Bor Ashan, and to those who were in Athak,[31]and to those who were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men habitually went.

1 Samuel 30 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

David fights the Amalekites

When David and his men arrive home, they find the Amalekites have raided Ziklag and taken everything. They catch and destroy them and bring back all of their goods and families. Then David sends gifts to all the cities in Judah through which they had traveled.

Links:

1 Samuel 30:1 Notes

1 Samuel 30:1

Ziklag

Ziklag is a city in the southern part of Judah. This was where David and his men kept their families.

1 Samuel 30:2

they

the Amalekites

both small and great

Possible meanings are 1) "both unimportant people and important people" or 2) "both physically small and physically large."

1 Samuel 30:3

their wives ... sons ... daughters

belonging to David and his men

it was burned, and their wives ... daughters were taken captive

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they saw that someone had burned it and taken their wives ... captive"

1 Samuel 30:4

the people that were with him

These were mainly his army of men.

1 Samuel 30:5

General Information:

David finds strength in Yahweh after the raid.

Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman

"Ahinoam from Jezreel"

Nabal the Carmelite

"Nabal the man from Carmel"

Ahinoam ... Abigail

women's names

1 Samuel 30:6

distressed

suffering

all the people were bitter in spirit

The word "bitter" is a metaphor for the desire to rebel. The word "spirit" is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "all the people were ready to rebel against David" or "all the people were very unhappy"

David strengthened himself in Yahweh, his God

Possible meanings are 1) "David took courage because he knew Yahweh his God would help him" or 2) "Yahweh his God made David strong."

1 Samuel 30:7

General Information:

David seeks Yahweh's direction in dealing with the raid on his people.

1 Samuel 30:8

David prayed to Yahweh for direction

The abstract noun "direction" can be translated as a clause. Alternate translation: "David prayed that Yahweh would tell David what David should do"

pursue

chase and try to catch

1 Samuel 30:9

six hundred men

600 men

brook

small stream

1 Samuel 30:10

kept pursuing

"kept chasing them, trying to catch them"

four hundred men

400 men

two hundred

200 men

who were so weak

They were tired from their own raids and now in pursuit of the Amalekites. They no longer had the strength to continue.

1 Samuel 30:11

an Egyptian in a field

He was left there to die from the Amalekite raiding party.

1 Samuel 30:12

clusters of raisins

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"clusters of dried grapes"
1 Samuel 30:13
David said to him
David questioned the Egyptian slave.
three days ago
"three days in the past"
three days
3 days
1 Samuel 30:14
a raid
an attack on a town to take property
1 Samuel 30:15
raiding party
a group of armed warriors who attack people or places unexpectedly
you will not ... betray me up into the hands of my master
Here "hands" refers to control. Alternate translation: "you will not ... violate the trust I have in you by allowing my master to control me again"
1 Samuel 30:16
booty
the goods they had stolen in the raid
1 Samuel 30:17
twilight
the time just after the sun goes down until the sky is dark
Not a man escaped except for four hundred young men
This double negative emphasizes that the four hundred young men were the only ones who escaped. Alternate translation: "The only ones who escaped were four hundred young men"
four hundred
400
1 Samuel 30:18
recovered ... rescued
"got back ... got back." These two words translate the same Hebrew word. Your language may also have a word for a person getting his own property back from the person who stole it that is different from the word for a person getting his wife back from those who have captured her.
rescued his two wives
"got his two wives back" or "saved his two wives from danger"
1 Samuel 30:19
Nothing was missing
"None of the items the Amalekites had stolen were lost"
neither small nor great
Possible meanings are 1) "neither unimportant people nor important people" or 2) "neither physically small nor physically large." See how you translated similar words in 1 Samuel 30:2.
booty
goods that the Amelekites had stolen. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 30:16.
1 Samuel 30:21
two hundred
200
the brook Besor
a small stream or creek named Besor. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 30:9]
greeted them
spoke to them in a friendly way
1 Samuel 30:22
the booty
the goods they had taken from the enemy in battle. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 30:16.
we have recovered
"we have regained" or "we have gotten back"
1 Samuel 30:24
Who will listen to you in this matter?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement: Alternate translation: "No one will listen to you in this matter."
as the share is for anyone who goes
The abstract noun "share" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "as what belongs to anyone who goes"
anyone who goes into battle
the warriors who actually fought the enemy in war
will share and share alike
"will make sure that all receive the same amount"
anyone who waits by the baggage
the people who supported the warriors by managing and guarding their supplies
baggage
belongings that the soldiers left behind when they went into battle
1 Samuel 30:26
Ziklag
This is the name of a town.
booty
goods that David had taken from the Amalekites after the battle. See how you translated this in 1 Samuel 30:16.
a present
"a gift"
1 Samuel 30:27
Connecting Statement:
The writer begins a list of towns whose elders received gifts from David.
Bethel ... Jattir
These are names of towns.
1 Samuel 30:28
Connecting Statement:
The writer continues the list that began in 1 Samuel 30:27 of towns whose elders received gifts from David.
Aroer ... Siphmoth ... Eshtemoa
These are names of towns.
1 Samuel 30:29
Connecting Statement:
The writer continues the list that began in 1 Samuel 30:27 of towns whose elders received gifts from David.
Rakal
This is the name of a town.
Jerahmeelites ... Kenites
These are the names of people groups.
1 Samuel 30:30
Connecting Statement:
The writer continues the list that began in 1 Samuel 30:27 of towns whose elders received gifts from David.

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Hormah ... Bor Ashan ... Athak
These are names of towns.
1 Samuel 30:31

Connecting Statement:
The writer finishes the list that began in 1 Samuel 30:27 of towns whose elders received gifts from David.

31 [1]Now the Philistines fought against Israel. The men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down dead on Mount Gilboa.[2]The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his sons. The Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua, his sons.[3]The battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers overtook him. He was in severe pain because of them.
[4]Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it. Otherwise, these uncircumcised will come and abuse me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was very afraid. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it.[5]When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell on his sword in the same way and died with him.[6]So Saul died, his three sons, and his armor bearer—these men all died together that same day.

[7]When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those beyond the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled, and the Philistines came and lived in them.[8]It came about on the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa.
[9]They cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent messengers into the land of the Philistines throughout to carry the news to their idols' temples and to the people.[10]They put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the city wall of Beth Shan.
[11]When the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul,[12]all the fighting men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan. They went to Jabesh and burned them there.[13]Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted for seven days.

1 Samuel 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the section on Saul, but the book continues in 2 Samuel 1.

Special concepts in this chapter

Saul's punishment

Saul receives his punishment from God: death for his disobedience and resisting the will of God. (See: willofgod)

Links:

1 Samuel 31:1

1 Samuel 31:1

Now the Philistines fought against Israel

This battle was the result of the conflict between David and the Philistines in 1 Samuel 29:11. The writer has finished telling the story of David that began in 1 Samuel 30:1, and now he tells about the battle between the Israelites and the Philistines.

against Israel

"Israel" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "against the people of Israel"

Mount Gilboa

This is the name of a mountain

1 Samuel 31:2

closely pursued Saul and his sons

"chased Saul and three of his sons"

Abinadab, and Malki-Shua

These are names of men.

1 Samuel 31:3

The battle went heavily against Saul

This is an idiom. "Saul's army began to lose the battle"

1 Samuel 31:4

armor bearer

The armor bearer carried the large shield of his commanding officer and other weapons. He protected the commanding officer during a battle.

these uncircumcised

The nominal adjective "uncircumcised" can be translated as an adjective. Not being circumcised is a metonym for being foreigners. Alternate translation: "these men who have not been circumcised" or "these non-Israelite men"

would not

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "would not do what Saul had told him to do"

took his own sword and fell on it

"killed himself with his own sword"

1 Samuel 31:6

that same day

"on that one day"

1 Samuel 31:7

lived in them

lived in the cities the men of Israel had left

1 Samuel 31:8

strip the dead

take the armor and weapons off the dead Israelites' bodies

Mount Gilboa

a mountain range overlooking the Valley of Jezreel in

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northern Israel, south of Nazareth
1 Samuel 31:9
the land of the Philistines throughout
"all areas of the land of the Philistines"
to carry the news to their idols' temples and to the people
"to speak the news inside the temples and to the people"
their idols' temples
the buildings where they worshiped their idols
1 Samuel 31:10
Ashtoreths
ancient false goddesses and idols, also called "Asherah" or "Astarte"
fastened
attached, probably with a large spike or nail
Beth Shan
the name of a city
1 Samuel 31:11
Jabesh
This is the name of a town. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 11:1]
what the Philistines had done to Saul
"how the Philistines had dishonored Saul"
1 Samuel 31:12
all night
"throughout the whole night"
1 Samuel 31:13
a tamarisk tree
This is a type of tree. See how you translated this in [1 Samuel 22:6]

Introduction to 2 Samuel

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 2 Samuel

The first years of David's reign (1:1–7:29) Saul is killed; David is kind to Ishbosheth (1:1–4:12) David defeats the Philistines (5:1–25) Victories, the ark, the house of God (6:1–7:29)
David extends his rule to all the Promised Land (8:1–10:19) David's sin with Bathsheba (11:1–12:31) Amnon and Tamar; Absalom kills Amnon (13:1–14:33) The later years of David's reign (15:1–24:25) Absalom rebels and is killed (15:1–18:33) David's kingdom restored (19:1–20:26) Famine and warfare (21:1–14) David's song of praise (22:1–23:7) David's mighty men (23:8–39) Yahweh judges David's sin of numbering the people; the plague stopped (24:1–25)

What is the Book of 2 Samuel about?

This book is about David ruling as king over Israel. He first ruled over the tribe of Judah for seven years. Then the other eleven tribes agreed to have him become their king. He ruled over all Israel for thirty-three years.
Throughout this time, David led his army to fight foreign enemies who attacked Israel. However, he struggled the most against someone in his own family. Absalom, his son, rebelled and fought against him (2 Samuel 13-19).
The Book of 2 Samuel also tells about when David sinned greatly. He slept with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. When she became pregnant, David arranged for Uriah to be killed in battle. David and all Israel suffered much because of David's sin. However, the writer also tells of Yahweh repeatedly showing David grace and love after David repented of his sin.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title "2 Samuel," or "Second Samuel." Or translators may consider a clearer title such as "The Second Book about Samuel, Saul, and David."

What was the purpose of the Book of 2 Samuel?

The Book of 2 Samuel begins where 1 Samuel ended. The writer continues to show how the tribes of Israel unite under the first kings of Israel. The Book of 2 Samuel centers around David as the king Yahweh chose to lead Israel.

Who wrote the Book of 2 Samuel?

It is uncertain who wrote 2 Samuel. It may have been someone alive soon after King Solomon died. When Solomon died, the kingdom of Israel split into two kingdoms. The author probably lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. A descendant of David continued to rule over the southern kingdom. The author may have written 2 Samuel to defend David's right to be king. This would prove that David's descendant was the rightful king of God's people.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What covenant had its beginning in the Book of 2 Samuel?

In 2 Samuel 7, Yahweh made a covenant with David. God promised to make a descendant of David rule forever over Israel. Christians believe that Jesus Christ fulfills this covenant. Jesus was a descendant of David. Jesus is the true "anointed one," the person God chose to be king forever. (See: covenant)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why does the book refer to someone being addressed indirectly?

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David frequently refers to himself as "your servant" when he speaks to King Saul. He also calls Saul "my master." Indirectly addressing a person in this way can be difficult to translate. It is intended to show that the speaker submits to the one being addressed. English sometimes uses the address "sir" or "ma'am" in this way.

Can I translate this book before 1 Samuel?

The Book of 1 Samuel should be translated before 2 Samuel, since 2 Samuel continues from where 1 Samuel ends.

How is the name "Israel" used in the Bible?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed his name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: israel)

2 Samuel speaks of both the northern kingdom of Israel and the whole nation of Israel as "Israel." However, these references appear in the narrative long before the two kingdoms split apart. It seems clear that the references to Israel and Judah indicate that the author wrote 2 Samuel at a time after the kingdoms split. (See: 2 Samuel 2:10; 2 Samuel 3:10; 2 Samuel 5:5; 2 Samuel 11:11; 2 Samuel 12:8; 2 Samuel 19:42-43; 2 Samuel 21:2; 2 Samuel 24:1).

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2 Samuel

1

[1]After the death of Saul, David returned from attacking the Amalekites and remained in Ziklag for two days.[2]On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head. When he came to David he fell to the ground and bowed down.
[3]David said to him, "Where did you come from?" He answered, "I escaped from the camp of Israel."[4]David said to him, "Please tell me how things went." He answered, "The people fled from the battle. Many have fallen and many are dead. Saul and Jonathan his son are also dead."[5]David said to the young man, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?"
[6]The young man replied, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there Saul was leaning on his spear, and chariots and riders were about to catch up with him.[7]Saul turned around and saw me and called out to me. I answered, 'Here I am.'
[8]He said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.'[9]He said to me, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for great suffering has taken hold of me, but life is still in me.'[10]So I stood over him and killed him, because I knew that he would not live after he had fallen. Then I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm, and brought them here to you, my master."

[11]Then David tore his clothes, and all the men with him did the same.[12]They mourned, wept, and fasted until evening for Saul, for Jonathan his son, for the people of Yahweh, and for the house of Israel because they had fallen by the sword.
[13]David said to the young man, "Where are you from?" He answered, "I am the son of a foreigner in the land, an Amalekite."
[14]David said to him, "Why were you not afraid to destroy Yahweh's anointed king with your own hand?"[15]David called one of the young men and said, "Go and kill him." So that man went and struck him down, and the Amalekite died.[16]Then David said to the dead Amalekite, "Your blood is on your head because your own mouth has testified against you and said, 'I have killed Yahweh's anointed king.'"

[17]Then David sang this lament about Saul and Jonathan his son.[18]He commanded the people to teach this Song of the Bow to the sons of Judah, which has been written in the Book of Jashar.

[19] "Your glory, Israel, is dead, killed on your high places!
How the mighty have fallen!

[20] Do not tell it in Gath,
do not proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon,
so that the daughters of the Philistines may not rejoice,
so that the daughters of the uncircumcised may not celebrate.

[21] Mountains of Gilboa,
let there not be dew or rain on you,
nor fields giving grain for offerings,
for there the shield of the mighty was defiled.
The shield of Saul is no longer anointed with oil.

[22] From the blood of those who have been killed,
from the bodies of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn back,

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and the sword of Saul did not return empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan were loved and gracious in life,
and in their death they were not separated.
They were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.

24 You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
who clothed you in scarlet as well as jewels,
and who put ornaments of gold on your clothing.

25 How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!
Jonathan is killed on your high places.

26 I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan.
You were very dear to me.
Your love to me was wonderful,
exceeding the love of women.

27 How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war perished!"

2 Samuel 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 1:19-27.
This chapter continues the material from 1 Samuel.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's funeral song
David praised Saul and Jonathan as great warriors and Jonathan as his dearest friend.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Synecdoche
David used two figures of speech to express that Jonathan and Saul were great warriors: "the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, and the sword of Saul did not return empty."

Links:

2 Samuel 1:1 Notes 2 Samuel intro

2 Samuel 1:1
Ziklag
This is the name of a city in the southern part of Judah.
2 Samuel 1:2
On the third day
"After three days"
with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head
In this culture, tearing one's own clothes and putting dirt on one's head was an act of mourning.
he fell to the ground and bowed down
This was an act of showing submission to David, who was now the king of Israel.
2 Samuel 1:4
Many have fallen and many are dead
Possible meanings are 1) "Many were wounded and many were killed" or 2) "Many were wounded and killed."
2 Samuel 1:6
By chance I happened to be
This statement emphasizes that the man did not plan to meet Saul.
Saul was leaning on his spear
Possible meanings are 1) Saul was weak and using the spear to support himself or 2) Saul was attempting to kill himself by falling on his own spear.
2 Samuel 1:8
He said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.'
These direct quotations could be stated as indirect speech. Alternate translation: "He asked me who I was, and I told him that I am an Amalekite"
I am an Amalekite
These are the same people David just finished attacking in 2 Samuel 1:1.
2 Samuel 1:9
great suffering has taken hold of me

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Saul's suffering is spoken of as something terrible that has grabbed hold of him. Alternate translation: "I am suffering terribly"

life is still in me

This idiom means he is still alive. Alternate translation: "I am still alive"

2 Samuel 1:10

he would not live after he had fallen

"he would die anyway"

2 Samuel 1:11

David tore his clothes ... the men with him did the same

David and his men tore their clothes as a sign of mourning for the death of King Saul.

2 Samuel 1:12

for the people of Yahweh, and for the house of Israel

Both statements mean basically same thing. The word "house" is a metonym that represents the descendants of Israel. But, both "people" and "house" probably are a synecdoche representing the soldiers of Israel. Alternate translation: "for the Israelite soldiers"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

they had fallen by the sword

Here "fallen" is a polite way of referring to being killed. Also, "sword" represents a battle. This here means "had been killed." Alternate translation: "they had died in battle" or "enemies had killed them in battle"

2 Samuel 1:13

Where are you from?

The man had already stated that he is an Amalekite in 2 Samuel 1:8. David apparently asks the man to confirm this because of the serious judgment that David was going to pronounce on the man.

2 Samuel 1:14

Why were you not afraid to destroy Yahweh's anointed king with your own hand?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke the man. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have feared Yahweh and not killed his anointed king with your own hand!"

Yahweh's anointed king

This refers to Saul.

with your own hand

This phrase refers to doing something yourself. Alternate translation: "yourself" or "personally"

2 Samuel 1:15

struck him down

This idiom means "killed him."

2 Samuel 1:16

Your blood is on your head

Here "blood" is a metonym that implies "shed blood" and is associated with death. Here "your head" is a synecdoche referring to the man and means that he is responsible. Alternate translation: "You are responsible for your own death" or "You have caused your own death"

your own mouth has testified against you

Here "your own mouth" refers to the man himself. Alternate translation: "you have testified against yourself"

2 Samuel 1:17

General Information:

David sings a song of mourning for Saul and Jonathan.

2 Samuel 1:18

Song of the Bow

This was the title of the song.

which has been written in the Book of Jashar

This is background information added to tell the reader what happened to the song in the future.

the Book of Jashar

The word "Jashar" means "upright." Alternate translation: "the Book of the Upright"

2 Samuel 1:19

Your glory, Israel, is dead

"Your glory" refers to Saul.

the mighty

The phrase "the mighty" refers to both Saul and Jonathan. This nominal adjective is plural, and can be stated as "the mighty ones."

have fallen

The word "fallen" here means "died."

2 Samuel 1:20

Do not tell it in Gath ... do not proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated as part of the poetry of the song.

Gath ... Ashkelon

Gath and Ashkelon are two of the Philistines' major cities. The Philistines killed Saul and Jonathan.

so that the daughters of the Philistines may not rejoice ... so that the daughters of the uncircumcised may not celebrate

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated as part of the poetry of the song.

the daughters of the uncircumcised

This phrase refers to people who do not follow Yahweh, such as the Philistines.

2 Samuel 1:21

Mountains of Gilboa

David speaks directly to the "Mountains of Gilboa" as if they were listening to his song.

let there not be dew or rain on you

David curses the ground where King Saul died in the battle. This was out of reverence for Saul, who was God's anointed king.

the shield of the mighty was defiled

The "mighty" here refers to Saul. The shield was defiled because it fell on the ground, and because the king's blood was shed on it.

The shield of Saul is no longer anointed with oil

Saul's shield was made of leather. To care for the shield, it was rubbed with oil. Alternate translation: "No one will care for Saul's shield anymore"

2 Samuel 1:22

From the blood of those who have been killed, from the bodies of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan did not turn back, and the sword of Saul did not return empty

Saul and Jonathan are shown here to have been fierce and valiant warriors.

the sword of Saul did not return empty

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Saul's sword is spoken of as if it were a living thing that could return on its own. Rather than return empty, it was carrying the blood of Saul's enemies that it killed.

2 Samuel 1:23

in their death they were not separated

The phrase "were not separated" is used to emphasize that they were always together. Alternate translation: "even in death they were together"

They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

Saul and Jonathan were spoken of as if they were faster than eagles and stronger than lions.

2 Samuel 1:24

who clothed you in scarlet as well as jewels, and who put ornaments of gold on your clothing

"who provided you nice clothes and jewelry." These two phrases share similar meanings that describe providing the women with expensive, attractive clothing.

2 Samuel 1:25

How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle

This phrase is repeated in verse 27 to emphasize that Israel's best warriors are dead. Alternate translation: "The mighty men have died in battle"

the mighty

Here "mighty" is plural and may refer to only Saul and Jonathan, or to all of the soldiers of Israel. Alternate translation: "the mighty warriors"

have fallen

This is a polite way to say "have died."

Jonathan is killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jonathan has died in battle" or "The enemy has killed Jonathan"

on your high places

David continues to address this part of the song to the mountains of Gilboa as he started in [2 Samuel 1:21]

2 Samuel 1:26

my brother Jonathan

Here "brother" is used in the sense of a very close friend.

Your love to me was wonderful, exceeding the love of women

Here "love" is used in the sense of friendship and loyalty. Jonathan's loyalty to David was even greater than the loyalty a woman has for her husband and children.

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2 [1]After this David asked Yahweh and said, "Should I go up to one of the cities of Judah?" Yahweh replied to him, "Go up." David said, "To which city should I go?" Yahweh replied, "To Hebron."[2]So David went up with his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel, and Abigail from Carmel, the widow of Nabal.[3]David brought the men who were with him, who each brought his family, to the cities of Hebron, where they began to live.
[4]Then men from Judah came and anointed David king over the house of Judah.They told David, "The men of Jabesh Gilead have buried Saul."
[5]So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead and said to them, "You are blessed by Yahweh, since you have shown this loyalty to your master Saul and have buried him.
[6]Now may Yahweh show you steadfast love and faithfulness. I also will show you this goodness because you have done this thing.[7]Now then, let your hands be strong; be courageous for Saul your master is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

[8]But Abner son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-Bosheth son of Saul and brought him to Mahanaim.[9]He made Ish-Bosheth king over Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and over all Israel.
[10]Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.[11]The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

[12]Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.[13]Joab son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon. There they sat down, one group on one side of the pool and the other on the other side.
[14]Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men arise and compete before us." Then Joab said, "Let them arise."[15]Then the young men got up and gathered together, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, and twelve from servants of David.
[16]Each man seized his opponent by the head and thrust his sword into the side of his opponent, and they fell down together. Therefore that place was called "Helkath Hazzurim," or "Field of Swords," which is in Gibeon.[17]The battle was very severe that day and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated before the servants of David.

[18]The three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was swift in his feet like a wild gazelle.
[19]Asahel closely pursued Abner and followed him without turning away in any direction.
[20]Abner looked behind him and said, "Is that you Asahel?" He answered, "It is I."[21]Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right or to your left, and seize one of the young men and take his armor." But Asahel would not turn aside.
[22]So Abner said again to Asahel, "Stop pursuing me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I hold up my face to Joab, your brother?"[23]But Asahel refused to turn aside, and so Abner stabbed him in the body with the blunt end of his spear, so that the spear came out the other side. Asahel fell down and died there. So it came about that anyone who arrived at the place where Asahel fell down and died, he stopped and stood still.

[24]But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. When the sun was going down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is near Giah

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by the road to the wilderness of Gibeon.[25]The men of Benjamin gathered themselves together behind Abner and stood on the top of the hill.
[26]Then Abner called to Joab and said, "Must the sword devour forever? Do you not know it will be bitter in the end? How long will it be before you tell your men to stop pursuing their brothers?"[27]Joab replied, "Just as God lives, if you had not said that, my soldiers would have pursued their brothers until the morning!"
[28]So Joab blew the ram's horn, and all his men stopped and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore.
[29]Abner and his men traveled all that night through the Arabah. They crossed the Jordan, marched all the next morning, and then reached Mahanaim.

[30]Joab returned from pursuing Abner. He assembled all his people, from whom were missing Asahel and nineteen of David's servants.[31]But the servants of David had slaughtered from Benjamin and of Abner's men 360 men who died.[32]Then they took up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was in Bethlehem. Joab and his men traveled all night, and the day dawned on them at Hebron.

2 Samuel 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of the civil war between Saul's son and David.

Special concepts in this chapter

Civil war

There was a civil war in Israel. David was made king of Judah and Saul's uncle (Abner) made Saul's son (Ishbosheth) king of the rest of Israel. When they fought each other, Abner killed Joab's brother, but David's army was victorious.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

Abner finally stopped the battle with a rhetorical question to David's army. "Must the sword devour forever?"

Links:

2 Samuel 2:1 Notes

2 Samuel 2:1
After this
"After David mourned the deaths of Saul and Jonathan in battle"
go up to one of the cities of Judah
At this time David was in the city of Ziklag. David used the phrase "go up" because Ziklag was lower in elevation than Judah. Alternate translation: "travel to one of the cities of Judah"
2 Samuel 2:2
David went up with his two wives
At this time David was in the city of Ziklag. The narrator uses the phrase "went up" because Ziklag was lower in elevation than Hebron. Alternate translation: "David traveled to Hebron with his two wives"
2 Samuel 2:4
anointed David king
In this symbolic act, they poured oil on David's head to show that he was selected to be the king.
the house of Judah
Here "house" is used in the sense of "tribe." Alternate translation: "the tribe of Judah"
Jabesh Gilead
This is the name of a town in the region of Gilead.
2 Samuel 2:6
General Information:
David speaks to the people of Jabesh Gilead.
Now may Yahweh show you steadfast love and faithfulness
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be expressed with the verb "loves" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "Now may Yahweh show you that he loves you without ceasing and is faithful"
this thing
They buried Saul.
2 Samuel 2:7
let your hands be strong
Here "hands" refers to the people of Jabesh Gilead. Alternate translation: "be strong"
anointed me king
In this symbolic act, they poured oil on David's head to show that he was selected to be the king.
2 Samuel 2:8
Ner ... Ish-Bosheth
These are the names of men.
Mahanaim
This is the name of a place.
2 Samuel 2:9
Gilead ... Jezreel
These are the names of places.
2 Samuel 2:10
the house of Judah followed David
Obeying David's rule is spoken of as "following" him. Alternate translation: "the tribe of Judah obeyed David as their king"
house of Judah
Here "house" is used to mean "tribe."

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2 Samuel 2:12

Abner ... Ner ... Ish-Bosheth ... Saul

These are the names of men.

2 Samuel 2:13

Zeruiah

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 2:16

they fell down together

This is a polite way of saying they died. Alternate translation: "they both died"

Helkath Hazzurim

This is a name given to remind people what happened there.

2 Samuel 2:17

The battle was very severe that day

It may be helpful to explicitly state that this was the large battle that followed the contest of the young men. Alternate translation: "Then the others started to fight also. It was a very fierce battle that day"

2 Samuel 2:18

Zeruiah ... Joab ... Abishai ... Asahel

These are the names of men.

Asahel was swift in his feet like a wild gazelle

Here Asahel is compared to a gazelle, an animal that runs very fast. Alternate translation: "Asahel could run very fast"

wild gazelle

This small, four-legged animal, with two long horns on its head, runs very fast.

2 Samuel 2:19

Abner

This is the name of a man.

followed him without turning away in any direction

Here "without turning away" is stated in negative form to emphasize how closely he followed Abner's path. Alternate translation: "followed him wherever he went"

2 Samuel 2:20

Asahel

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 2:21

Turn aside to your right or to your left ... turn aside

"Stop chasing me ... stop chasing Abner"

seize one of the young men and take his armor

Abner was asking Asahel to kill and plunder another younger soldier who would not be as dangerous as Abner. He did not want to kill Asahel. Alternate translation: "fight with another soldier and take his equipment as plunder"

2 Samuel 2:22

Why should I strike you to the ground?

This rhetorical question is used to warn Asahel of the danger he faced. "Strike to the ground" is a polite way of saying "to kill." Alternate translation: "I do not wish to kill you"

How then could I hold up my face to Joab, your brother?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that Abner does not want to fight and kill Asahel because it would destroy Abner's relationship with Joab. Here "hold up my face to Joab" is an idiom that means that he would be too ashamed to look at Joab. Alternate translation: "I would be too ashamed to look at your brother, Joab"

2 Samuel 2:23

turn aside

This means to "halt" or "stop chasing."

the blunt end of his spear

This refers to the handle, which is not sharp or designed to pierce anything. It can be implied that Abner was only trying to stop Asahel from following him, and did not intend to kill him.

2 Samuel 2:24

Abishai

This is the name of a man.

hill of Ammah ... Giah

These are the names of places.

2 Samuel 2:26

Abner called

"Abner shouted" or "Abner yelled"

Must the sword devour forever?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that the battle had already continued too long. Here "sword" refers to the fighting. The killing in the battle is spoken of as if a wild animal was eating the soldiers. Alternate translation: "We do not need to keep using our swords to fight and kill each other."

Do you not know it will be bitter in the end?

This rhetorical question is used to force Joab to acknowledge that continued fighting could only result in more suffering. Here "bitter" is a euphemism for the terrible suffering that would occur. Alternate translation: "You know very well that there will be a terrible result if this continues!"

How long will it be before you tell your men to stop pursuing their brothers?

This rhetorical question is intended to convince Joab to stop fighting their fellow Israelites. Here "brother" is used to represent the members of the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "Stop this now so that Israelites will not have to kill each other!"

2 Samuel 2:27

Just as God lives

This is a very strong vow. Alternate translation: "With God as my witness" or "God will affirm that I mean what I say"

if you had not said that ... pursued their brothers until the morning

Joab spoke about what did not happen to show how good it was that Abner said what he said. Because Abner said what he said, Joab would tell his soldiers to stop chasing their brothers.

2 Samuel 2:28

blew the ram's horn

Trumpets were used to signal orders to the armies across great distances.

did not pursue Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the Israelite soldiers. Alternate translation: "did not continue to chase the Israelite soldiers"

2 Samuel 2:29

Arabah ... Mahanaim

These are the names of places.

2 Samuel 2:30

his people

"his men" or "his fighting men"

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Asahel
This is the name of a man.

David's servants
"David's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

2 Samuel 2:31

from Benjamin and of Abner's men 360 men
"360 men from Benjamin who followed Abner." Abner did not die.

360 men
"three hundred and sixty men"

from Benjamin
This phrase means "from the tribe of Benjamin."

2 Samuel 2:32

took up Asahel
"carried Asahel's body with them"

the day dawned on them at Hebron
"they arrived at Hebron by dawn the next morning"

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3 [1]Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. David grew stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

[2]Sons were born to David in Hebron. His firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam from Jezreel.
[3]His second son, Kileab, was born to Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel. The third, Absalom, was son of Maakah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

[4]David's fourth son, Adonijah, was the son of Haggith. His fifth son was Shephatiah son of Abital,
[5]and the sixth, Ithream, was the son of David's wife Eglah. These sons were born to David in Hebron.

[6]It came about during the war between the house of Saul and the house of David that Abner made himself strong in the house of Saul.[7]Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. Ish-Bosheth said to Abner, "Why have you gone to my father's concubine?"
[8]Then Abner was very angry at the words of Ish-Bosheth and said, "Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I am showing faithfulness to the house of Saul, your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, by not delivering you into the hand of David. But now you accuse me of iniquity concerning this woman?
[9]May God do so to me, Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as Yahweh has sworn to him,[10]to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba."[11]Ish-Bosheth could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

[12]Then Abner sent messengers to David to speak for him saying, "Whose land is this? Make a covenant with me, and you will see that my hand is with you, to bring all Israel to you."[13]David answered, "Good, I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require from you is that you cannot see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see me."
[14]Then David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, saying, "Give me my wife Michal, to whom I betrothed to myself at the price of one hundred Philistine foreskins."[15]So Ish-Bosheth sent for Michal and took her from her husband, Paltiel son of Laish.[16]Her husband went with her, weeping as he went, and followed her to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Return home now." So he returned.

[17]Abner spoke with the elders of Israel saying, "In the past you were trying to have David be king over you.[18]Now do it. For Yahweh has spoken of David saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.'"
[19]Abner also spoke personally to the people of Benjamin. Then Abner went also to speak with David in Hebron to explain everything that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin desired to accomplish.[20]When Abner and twenty of his men arrived in Hebron to see David, David had a feast prepared for them.
[21]Abner explained to David, "I will arise and gather all Israel to you, my master the king, so that they may make a covenant with you, so that you may reign over all that you desire." So David sent Abner away, and Abner left in peace.

[22]Then the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much plunder with them. But Abner was not with David in Hebron. David had sent him away, and Abner had left in peace.[23]When Joab and all the army with him arrived, they told Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to the king, and the king has sent him away, and Abner left in peace."
[24]Then Joab came to the king and said, "What have you done? Look, Abner came to you! Why have you sent him away, and he is gone?[25]Do you not know that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you and to discover your plans and learn everything you are doing?"[26]When Joab left David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the well of Sirah, but David did not know this.

[27]When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the middle of the gate to speak with him quietly. There Joab stabbed him in the stomach and so that Abner died. In this way, Joab avenged the blood of Asahel his brother.

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[28]When David heard about this he said, "I and my kingdom are innocent before Yahweh forever regarding the blood of Abner son of Ner.[29]May his blood fall upon the head of Joab and upon all his father's house! May Joab's house never be without someone who has a running sore or leprosy or who is lame and must walk with a staff or who is killed by the sword or does not have enough food."[30]So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in battle.

[31]David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes, gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner's body." Now King David walked behind the body in the funeral procession.[32]They buried Abner in Hebron. The king wept and cried loudly at the tomb of Abner, and all the people also wept.
[33]The king lamented for Abner and sang,
"Should Abner die as a fool dies?
[34] Your hands were not bound.
Your feet were not shackled.
As a man falls before the sons of injustice, so you have fallen."
Once more all the people wept over him.

[35]All the people came to make David eat while it was still day, but David swore, "May God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down."[36]All the people took notice of David's grief, and it pleased them, as whatever the king did pleased them.
[37]So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not the king's desire to kill Abner son of Ner.[38]The king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?[39]Now I am weak today, though I am an anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too severe for me. May Yahweh repay the evildoer by punishing him for his wickedness, as he deserves."

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2 Samuel 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the first attempt to end the civil war.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 3:33-34.

Special concepts in this chapter

David never wanted to hurt Saul's family. Isbosheth criticized Abner and Abner became angry. He decided to help David become king of all of Israel. Abner came and made a treaty with David. As he left, Joab arrived and told him he wanted to talk to him and he murdered Abner. David was very unhappy that Abner had been killed.

Links:

2 Samuel 3:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 3:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Samuel gives information about the war between David and the supporters of Saul.

house

Here "house" is used to mean "supporters."

grew stronger and stronger

This metaphor means the number of people supporting David increased.

grew weaker and weaker

This metaphor means the number of people supporting Saul's family decreased.

2 Samuel 3:2

Sons were born to David

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David's wives gave birth to six sons"

Ahinoam

This is the name of a woman, a wife of David.

2 Samuel 3:3

second son ... third

These two sons were born after the "firstborn"

Abigail ... Maakah

These are women's names. They are the wives of David.

Kileab ... Nabal ... Talmai

These are men's names.

2 Samuel 3:4

fourth son ... fifth son

This is the numerical order of David's sons.

Adonijah ... Shephatiah

These are the names of David's sons.

Haggith ... Abital

These are names of David's wives.

2 Samuel 3:5

the sixth

This is the numerical order of David's sons.

Ithream

This is the name of one of David's sons.

Eglah

This is the name of one of David's wives.

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2 Samuel 3:6

It came about

This introduces a new event in the story of the struggle between David's supporters and Saul's family.

house of Saul

This refers to Saul's family and supporters who assumed control of his estate after he died.

house of David

This refers to the supporters of David.

Abner made himself strong in the house of Saul

Abner's increasing power over Saul's family is spoken of as if he became physically stronger. Alternate translation: "Abner gained more power over the family and supporters of Saul"

2 Samuel 3:7

Rizpah ... Aiah

These are names of women.

Ish-Bosheth

This is a male name, a son of Saul.

Why have you gone to my father's concubine?

Ish-Bosheth asked this question to rebuke Abner who was acting like he was the king. Alternate translation: "You did not have the right to go to father's concubine!"

gone to

This is a euphemism for sexual relations. Alternate translation: "had sexual relations with"

2 Samuel 3:8

Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah?

This question is used by Abner as an angry denial of Ish-Bosheth's accusation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am not a traitor working for David!"

Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah?

Abner speaks of himself as the head of a dog, which the Israelites considered to be loyal to anyone who fed them. Here "belongs to Judah" implies that Abner's loyalty is to Judah, to which David belonged, and not to Saul's house. Alternate translation: "Am I a traitor for Judah?" or "I am not a traitor working for David!"

into the hand of David

Here "hand" represents the power to defeat. Alternate translation: "to be defeated by David"

But now you accuse me of iniquity concerning this woman?

Abner asks this question to rebuke Ishbosheth. It is unclear if Abner actually slept with Rizpah, or if he was falsely accused, but it appears that he is denying that he is guilty. Alternate translation: "You should not think that I have slept with this woman!"

2 Samuel 3:9

May God do so to me ... and more also, if I do not

This is the form of a solemn vow in that time. Abner is asking God to judge him severely if he does not keep his vow. Your language may have a way of expressing vows. Alternate translation: "I am asking God to punish me if I do not"

2 Samuel 3:10

the house of Saul

Here "house" refers to Saul's family and supporters who survived Saul's death. Alternate translation: "the family and supporters of Saul"

throne of David

This phrase refers to the authority of David as king.

2 Samuel 3:12

to David

Some versions have "to David when he was at Hebron." You may want to include "when he was at Hebron" if it is present in your national version.

Whose land is this?

The original meaning of this question is not clear. Possible meanings are 1) Abner had the power to give the land to David. Alternate translation: "This land is mine!" or 2) David is chosen by God to rule the land: Alternate translation: "This land rightfully belongs to you!"

my hand is with you

Here "hand" represents Abner's assistance that he is offering to David. Alternate translation: "I will assist you"

2 Samuel 3:13

you cannot see my face unless you first bring Michal

David is stating the condition under which he will meet Abner. Here "face" refers to David himself. Alternate translation: "you cannot see me unless you bring Michal to me first"

Michal

This is the name of a daughter of Saul. She was David's first wife.

2 Samuel 3:14

one hundred Philistine foreskins

This represents the number of men David killed so that Saul would allow him to marry Michal. These men are represented here by their "foreskins." The "foreskin" is the fold of skin that covers the male reproductive organ.

2 Samuel 3:15

took her from her husband

Paltiel was Michal's second husband. Saul gave her to him after David fled from Saul.

Paltiel ... Laish

These are the names of men.

2 Samuel 3:16

Bahurim

This is the name of a village.

2 Samuel 3:18

Now do it

"So now make David your king"

By the hand of my servant David

Here "hand" refers to David's power to defeat the Philistines. Alternate translation: "I will empower my servant David and"

the hand of the Philistines

Here "hand" refers to power over Israel. Alternate translation: "the power of the Philistines"

the hand of all their enemies

Here "hand" refers to power over Israel. Alternate translation: "the power of all of their enemies"

2 Samuel 3:19

the people of Benjamin ... the whole house of Benjamin

Both of these statements refer to the descendants of Benjamin, who were one of the tribes of Israel.

2 Samuel 3:20

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twenty of his men
The number of men who came with Abner.
2 Samuel 3:21
all Israel
This phrase means "all of the nation of Israel."
So David sent Abner away
They parted as friends. David was not angry with Abner.
2 Samuel 3:22
servants of David
"David's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.
plunder
These are items taken from the enemy.
Abner was not with David in Hebron
Abner had already left to return home.
2 Samuel 3:23
they told Joab
"someone told Joab"
Ner
This is a man's name. He is the grandfather of Saul.
2 Samuel 3:24
What have you done?
Joab asks this question to rebuke David for letting Abner go in peace. Alternate translation: "You should not have done this!"
Why have you sent him away, and he is gone?
Joab asks this question to rebuke David for letting Abner escape. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Abner was here and you let him leave!"
2 Samuel 3:25
Do you not know ... everything you are doing?
Joab asks this question to convince David that Abner is plotting against David. Alternate translation: "Surely you know ... everything you are doing."
2 Samuel 3:26
well of Sirah
"Sirah" is the name of a place where the well was located.
2 Samuel 3:27
the middle of the gate
This refers to one of the gates in the city wall at Hebron. As the UDB implies, city gates were constructed as part of buildings set into the city walls. Inside the passageway were doors leading to side rooms, where guests could be received and business and judicial proceedings could be conducted. It was probably in one of these rooms that Joab murdered Abner.
the blood of Asahel
Here "blood" is associated with the death of Asahel. Alternate translation: "the death of Asahel"
Asahel
This is the name of a male person.
2 Samuel 3:28
the blood of Abner
Here "blood" refers to violent death. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Samuel 3:27]
Ner
This is the name of a man.
2 Samuel 3:29
fall upon the head of Joab and upon all his father's house
This phrase means the results of the guilt will happen to Joab and his family as if something heavy had collapsed on them. Alternate translation: "always cause suffering for Joab and for all his father's house"
all his father's house
Here "house" refers to descendants. Alternate translation: "all the descendants of Joab's father"
May Joab's house never be without someone
This double negative emphasizes that there will always be someone with the problems listed. Alternate translation: "May Joab's house always have someone" (See:)
is killed by the sword
Here "sword" refers to violent death. Alternate translation: "dies violently"
does not have enough food
"is hungry"
2 Samuel 3:30
Abishai ... Asahel
These are the names of men.
2 Samuel 3:31
Tear your clothes, gird yourselves with sackcloth
These were symbolic actions to demonstrate their grief and sadness.
2 Samuel 3:32
The king wept and cried loudly
The words "wept" and "cried loudly" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how much David mourned for Abner.
2 Samuel 3:33
Should Abner die as a fool dies?
This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that his death was not fair. Alternate translation: "Abner should not have died in disgrace!"
2 Samuel 3:34
Your hands were not bound. Your feet were not shackled
These two sentences express similar ideas. They can be combined into one sentence. Alternate translation: "You were in no way a criminal in prison" or "You were completely innocent of doing wrong"
Your hands were not bound
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one had tied your hands"
Your feet were not shackled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one had attached your feet to chains"
the sons of injustice
This refers to people who are unjust or wicked. Alternate translation: "wicked men"
2 Samuel 3:35
All the people came
This deliberate exaggeration is used to show that the nation of Israel wanted to take care of David in his grief. Alternate translation: "Many people came"
May God do so to me, and more also, if
This is the form of a solemn vow in that time. David is asking God to judge him severely if he eats anything before sunset. Your language many have a way of expressing vows. Alternate translation: "I am asking God to punish me if"

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2 Samuel 3:37

Ner

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 3:38

Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel?

This rhetorical question is used to show how much David respected Abner. Here "fallen" is a euphemism that means "died." It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is certainly true that a great prince has died today in Israel!"

a prince and a great man

These two phrases both refer to Abner. Alternate translation: "a great prince"

2 Samuel 3:39

Zeruiah

This is the name of a man.

are too severe

"are too much like animals" or "are too violent"

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4 [1]When Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands became weak, and all Israel was troubled.[2]Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of groups of soldiers. The name of one was Baanah and the other Rekab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, who was from the people of Benjamin (for Beeroth is also considered part of Benjamin,[3]and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been living there until this very time).

[4]Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up to flee, but in her hurry, Jonathan's son fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

[5]So the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rekab and Baanah, traveled during the heat of the day to the house of Ish-Bosheth, as he was resting at noon.[6]The woman guarding the door had fallen asleep while sifting wheat, and Rekab and Baanah walked in quietly and passed her.[7]So after they entered the house, they attacked him and killed him as he was lying on his bed in his room. Then they cut off his head and carried it away, traveling on the road all night to the Arabah.
[8]They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron, and they said to the king, "Look, this is the head of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. Today Yahweh has avenged our master the king against Saul and his descendants."[9]David answered Rekab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite; he said to them, "As Yahweh lives, who delivered my life from every trouble,[10]when someone told me, 'Look, Saul is dead,' thinking he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news.
[11]How much more, when wicked men have killed an innocent person in his own house on his bed, should I not now require his blood from your hand and completely remove you from the earth?"[12]Then David gave orders to the young men, and they killed them and cut off their hands and feet and hung them up beside the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron.

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2 Samuel 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

While the end of the civil war occurs in this chapter, David still only reigned over Judah (1-4).

Special concepts in this chapter

David and Ishbosheth

David never sought revenge against Saul's family. When two men snuck into Ishbosheth's room, cut off his head and brought it to David, David had them killed for killing an innocent man. (See: avenge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

When two men brought Ishbosheth's head to David and expected to get a reward for it, David condemned them with the rhetorical question: "should I not now require his blood from your hand, and remove you from the earth?" (See: and condemn and reward)

Links:

2 Samuel 4:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 4:1

Ish-Bosheth

This is the name of a man.

his hands became weak

In this phrase "his hands" represents Ishbosheth himself. Alternate translation: "Ishbosheth became weak" or "Ishbosheth lost all strength"

2 Samuel 4:2

Baanah ... Rekab ... Rimmon

These are names of men.

Now Saul's son had two men

This introduces the men Baanah and Rechab into the story.

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for Beeroth is also considered part of Benjamin
Here the author begins to provide background information about Beeroth for the reader. The area of Beeroth was part of the land that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin.
Beeroth
This is the name of a place.
2 Samuel 4:3
and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been living there until this very time
Here the author finishes providing background information about Beeroth for the reader. The area of Beeroth was part of the land that belonged to the tribe of Benjamin.
Gittaim
This is the name of a place.
2 Samuel 4:4
General Information:
This verse pauses the main story to provide background information about Mephibosheth, a descendent of Saul through Jonathan instead of through Ishbosheth. Mephibosheth will become an important character later in the book.
crippled in his feet
This phrase means "unable to walk."
five years old
This was the age of Jonathan's son at the time of his father's death.
the news about Saul and Jonathan
This refers to the news about their death.
nurse
This is a woman or girl who is hired to care for young children.
became lame
This explains how Mephibosheth was injured so he was unable to walk.
Mephibosheth
This is the name of Jonathan's young son, the grandson of Saul.
2 Samuel 4:5
General Information:
The story returns to the actions of Rechab and Baanah who were introduced in 2 Samuel 4:2.
the heat of the day
the middle of the day, the part of the day when it is the hottest
2 Samuel 4:6
sifting wheat
"cleaning chaff from wheat"
2 Samuel 4:8
sought your life
This idiom means "was trying to kill you."
2 Samuel 4:9
As Yahweh lives
This is one of the strongest oaths David could swear, as Yahweh is the witness. Alternate translation: "I swear on the life of Yahweh"
who delivered my life
Here "life" refers to David himself. This means that Yahweh has kept David alive. Alternate translation: "who rescued me"
2 Samuel 4:11
How much more ... should I not now require his blood from your hand and completely remove you from the earth?
This question is used to show that the men had committed an especially serious crime. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are even more guilty! It is my duty to require his blood from your hand and to remove you from the earth."
require his blood from your hand
The phrase "his blood" represents the life of Ishbosheth. Here "from your hand" represents Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, introduced in [2 Samuel 4:5]
2 Samuel 4:12
cut off their hands and feet and hung them up
These were symbolic actions to show contempt for the men.
they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in the grave
This was a symbolic act to honor Ish-Bosheth. This could be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "they honored Ish-Bosheth by burying his head in the grave"

5 [1]Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone.[2]In the recent past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led the Israelite army. Yahweh said to you, 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become ruler over Israel.'"
[3]So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before Yahweh. They anointed David king over Israel.[4]David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.[5]In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

[6]The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land. They said to David, "You will not come here except to be turned away by the blind and the lame. David cannot come here."[7]Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, which now is the city of David.
[8]At that time David said, "Those who attack the Jebusites will have to go through the water shaft to reach the 'lame and the blind' who are David's enemies." That is why people say, "The 'blind and the lame' must not enter the palace."[9]So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. He fortified around it, from the terrace toward the inside.
[10]David became very powerful because Yahweh, the God of hosts, was with him.

[11]Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, carpenters, and masons. They built a house for

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David.[12]David knew that Yahweh had established him as king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

[13]After David left Hebron and came to Jerusalem, he took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him.[14]These were the names of the children who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,[15]Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,[16]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

[17]Now when the Philistines heard that David had been anointed as king over Israel, they all went out looking for him. But David heard about it and went down to the stronghold.[18]Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim.
[19]Then David asked for help from Yahweh. He said, "Should I attack the Philistines? Will you give victory over them?" Yahweh said to David, "Attack, for I will certainly give you victory over the Philistines."[20]So David attacked at Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He commented, "Yahweh has burst through my enemies before me like a bursting flood of water." So he called the name of that place Baal Perazim.[21]The Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

[22]Then the Philistines came up again and spread out once more in the Valley of Rephaim.[23]So David sought help from Yahweh again, and Yahweh said to him, "You must not attack their front, but rather circle around behind them and come on them through the balsam woods.
[24]When you hear the sound of marching in the wind blowing through the balsam treetops, then attack with force. Do this because Yahweh will have gone out before you to attack the army of the Philistines."[25]So David did as Yahweh had commanded him. He killed Philistines from Geba all the way to Gezer.

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2 Samuel 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This records the beginning of the kingdom's expansion.

Special concepts in this chapter

David conquers Jerusalem

David brought the combined army to Jerusalem and conquered it by going in through the water shaft. He enlarged the city and strengthened the defenses, and made it his capital. Jerusalem is an important place in the plans of God.

David consulting God

David always consulted God before fighting a battle. The Philistines invaded Israel trying to capture David. David asked God if he should attack the Philistines, and God said yes; so he defeated them. They invaded again and God told him to attack them from the rear and he defeated them again.

Links:

2 Samuel 5:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 5:1

we are your flesh and bone

This phrase means "a relative." Alternate translation: "we are related to you" or "we are of the same family"

2 Samuel 5:2

In the recent past

This is historical information. Saul had been their king before David.

You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become ruler over Israel

These two clauses mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh had chosen David to be king.

You will shepherd my people Israel

Here ruling over the people is spoken of as shepherding them. Alternate translation: "You will care for my people Israel" or "You will rule over my people Israel"

2 Samuel 5:3

They anointed David king over Israel

To "anoint" is a symbolic act to show that they recognized that God had chosen David as king.

2 Samuel 5:6

General Information:

David and the army of Israel attack Jerusalem.

You will not come here except to be turned away by the blind and the lame

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "If you come here, even the blind and the lame will be able to turn you away"

the blind and the lame

Here "the blind" and "the lame" are nominal adjectives. Alternate translation: "those people who cannot see and those who cannot walk"

2 Samuel 5:8

David said, "Those who attack the Jebusites

David was speaking to his soldiers. Alternate translation: "David said to his soldiers, 'Those who want to get rid of the Jebus people"

The 'blind and the lame'

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These words could be either 1) a literal reference to people who are truly lame and blind or 2) a metonym that speaks about the Jebusites inside the city of Jerusalem as if they were all weak and handicapped.

2 Samuel 5:11

Hiram

This is the name of a man.

carpenters

those who work with wood

masons

those who work with stone or brick

2 Samuel 5:13

more sons and daughters were born to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he had more sons and daughters" or "they bore him more sons and daughters"

2 Samuel 5:14

Shammua ... Shobab ... Nathan ... Solomon

These are the names of David's sons.

who were born to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that his wives bore for him" or "he had"

2 Samuel 5:15

Ibhar ... Elishua ... Nepheg ... Japhia

These are the names of David's sons.

2 Samuel 5:16

Elishama ... Eliada ... Eliphelet

These are the names of David's sons.

2 Samuel 5:17

David had been anointed as king over Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Israel had anointed David as king"

they all went out looking for him

Here "all" is a generalization that means the Philistine army. Alternate translation: "the Philistine army went looking for him"

2 Samuel 5:18

Valley of Rephaim

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 5:20

Baal Perazim

This is the name of a place.

Yahweh has burst through my enemies before me like a bursting flood of water

Here David speaks of the victory that Yahweh brought as if it were a flood of water that overflowed its banks and covered the land, causing destruction. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has overwhelmed my enemies like a flood overwhelms the land"

2 Samuel 5:22

the Philistines came up again

They "came up" because the Philistines lived at a lower elevation than David's stronghold.

Valley of Rephaim

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 5:23

balsam woods

"Balsam" here is a type of tree, and the "woods" describe many balsam trees growing together.

2 Samuel 5:24

When you hear ... Yahweh will have gone out before you to attack the army of the Philistines

This is the continuation of Yahweh's instruction to David that began in [2 Samuel 5:23]

When you hear the sound of marching in the wind blowing through the balsam treetops

This speaks of the sound of the leaves rustling as wind blows through them as if it were the sound of marching. Alternate translation: "When the wind blowing through the tops of the balsam trees sounds like men marching"

2 Samuel 5:25

Geba ... Gezer

These are the names of places.

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6 [1]Now David again gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.[2]David arose and went with all his men who were with him from Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of Yahweh of hosts, who sits enthroned over the cherubim.
[3]They set the ark of God on a new cart. They brought it out of Abinadab's house, which was on a hill. Uzzah and Ahio, his sons, were guiding the new cart.[4]They brought the cart out of Abinadab's house on the hill with the ark of God on it. Ahio was walking in front of the ark.[5]Then David and all the house of Israel began to play before Yahweh, celebrating with instruments made of fir wood, harps, lyres, tambourines, rattles, and cymbals.

[6]When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah reached out with his hand to grab the ark of God, and he took hold of it.[7]Then the anger of Yahweh burned against Uzzah. God attacked him there for his sin. Uzzah died there by the ark of God.
[8]David was angry because Yahweh had attacked Uzzah, and he called the name of that place Perez Uzzah. That place is called Perez Uzza to this day.[9]David was afraid of Yahweh that day. He said, "How can the ark of Yahweh come to me?"
[10]So David was not willing to take the ark of Yahweh with him into the city of David. Instead, he put it aside in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.[11]The ark of Yahweh remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months. So Yahweh blessed him and all his household.
[12]Now King David was told, "Yahweh has blessed Obed-Edom's house and everything that belongs to him because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from Obed-Edom's house to the city of David with joy.[13]When those who were carrying the ark of Yahweh had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf.
[14]David danced before Yahweh with all his might; he was wearing only a linen ephod.[15]So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of Yahweh with shouting and the sound of rams' horns.

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[16]Now as the ark of Yahweh came into the city of David, Michal, daughter of Saul, looked out the window. She saw King David leaping and dancing before Yahweh. Then she despised him in her heart.[17]They brought in the ark of Yahweh and put it in its place, in the middle of the tent that David had set up for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before Yahweh.
[18]When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of hosts.[19]Then he distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people left; each one returned to his own house.

[20]Then David returned to bless his family. Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David and said, "How honored the king of Israel was today, who undressed himself today before the eyes of the slave girls among his servants, like one of the crude fellows who shamelessly undresses himself!"
[21]David responded to Michal, "I did that before Yahweh, who chose me above your father and above all his family, who appointed me leader over the people of Yahweh, over Israel. Before Yahweh I will be joyful![22]I will be even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you have spoken about, I will be honored."[23]So Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children to the day of her death.

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2 Samuel 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem

David organized a procession with many musical instruments to bring the ark to Jerusalem. They put it on a cart; but when the oxen stumbled, Uzzah reached out to steady it so it would not fall. God killed him for touching the ark. David was angry at God for killing Uzzah and was afraid to bring the ark any further. Uzzah died because the ark was perfectly holy. (See: holy)

Dancing

David danced for joy in front of the ark. His wife, Michal, criticized David for uncovering himself as he danced, but David did not care. (See: joy)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony

Michal criticized David by using irony: "How honored the king of Israel was today, who undressed himself today before the eyes of the slave girls among his servants, like one of the crude fellows who shamelessly undresses himself!"

Links:

2 Samuel 6:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 6:1

Now

This word marks a new part of the story.

all the chosen men of Israel

This metonym represents the army of the nation of Israel.

thirty thousand

"30,000"

2 Samuel 6:2

from Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God

It is implied that they are taking the ark to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "from Baalah in Judah to take to Jerusalem the ark of God"

to bring up from there the ark of God

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem and going down from it.

to bring up

The word "bring" can be translated as "take."

Baalah

This is the name of a place.

which is called by the name of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh's name was written on the ark.

who sits enthroned over the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "who sits on his throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

enthroned

to sit on a throne

2 Samuel 6:3

General Information:

David and the army of the nation of Israel move the ark of the covenant.

Abinadab ... Uzzah ... Ahio

These are names of men.

2 Samuel 6:5

all the house of Israel

This metonym represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the other Israelites with him"

tambourines

A tambourine is a musical instrument like the head of a drum with pieces of metal around the side that sound when

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the instrument is shaken or hit.

rattles

musical instruments with many small, hard objects inside a hard shell, making rhythmic noise when shaken

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound

2 Samuel 6:6

Nakon

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 6:7

anger of Yahweh burned

Here the "anger of Yahweh" is spoken of as if it were fire.

for his sin

It was a sin for Uzzah to touch the ark because Yahweh had commanded that no one should touch the ark.

2 Samuel 6:8

Perez Uzzah

This is the name of a place. Translator may add a footnote that says, "The name 'Perez Uzzah' means 'the punishment of Uzzah.'"

to this day

This means to the time when this was being written, not to the present time in the twenty-first century.

2 Samuel 6:9

How can the ark of Yahweh come to me?

David uses this question to emphasize that he is afraid to take the ark to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "I am too afraid to bring the ark of Yahweh with me to Jerusalem."

2 Samuel 6:10

Obed-Edom the Gittite

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 6:11

blessed him

Here "him" refers to Obed-Edom the Gittite.

2 Samuel 6:12

Now

This word starts a new part of the story.

King David was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people told King David"

Obed-Edom's house

Here "house" represents a family. Alternate translation: "Obed-Edom and his family"

brought up the ark of God

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem and going down from it. Alternate translation: "moved the ark of God" or "took the ark of God"

brought up

The word "brought" can be translated as "took."

2 Samuel 6:14

David danced before Yahweh with all his might

Dancing here is a form of joyfully worshiping Yahweh.

linen

a cloth made from fibers of the flax plant

2 Samuel 6:15

all the house of Israel

Here "house" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the other Israelites with him"

2 Samuel 6:16

Now ... in her heart

The word "Now" marks a stop in the story. Here the narrator gives information about Michal.

Michal

Michal was the daughter of King Saul and also David's first wife. See how you translated this name in 2 Samuel 3:13.

she despised him in her heart

Here "heart" represents thoughts or emotions. Alternate translation: "she looked at him with disdain" or "she sneered at him"

before Yahweh

"to Yahweh"

2 Samuel 6:18

he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of hosts

To bless "in the name of Yahweh of hosts" means to bless with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative.

2 Samuel 6:19

cake of raisins

a baked sweet bread made with dried grapes

2 Samuel 6:20

came out

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

How honored the king of Israel was today

This is an ironic statement. Michal means the opposite of what she said, and she does not believe David acted honorably. Michal speaks disrespectfully to King David about his dancing attire and behavior.

before the eyes of the slave girls

Here "eyes of the slave girls" represents the slave girls. Alternate translation: "in front of the slave girls"

crude fellows

Michal is comparing David to vulgar and foolish men.

2 Samuel 6:21

who chose me above your father

Here "your" refers to Michal.

over the people of Yahweh, over Israel

Here "the people of Yahweh" and "Israel" mean the same thing.

2 Samuel 6:22

I will be even more undignified than this

David is being ironic and means the opposite of what he said. He does not believe what he did was actually undignified or that his actions in the future will be undignified.

I will be humiliated in my own eyes

Here "in my own eyes" represents what a person considers or thinks about something. Alternate translation: "I will consider myself humiliated" or "I will consider myself a fool"

But by these slave girls you have spoken about, I will be honored

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the slave girls of whom you have spoken will honor me"

2 Samuel 6:23

had no children to the day of her death

"was never able to bear any children"

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7 [1]It happened that after the king had settled in his house, and after Yahweh had given him rest from all his surrounding
enemies,[2]the king said to Nathan the prophet, "Look, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God is staying in the
middle of a tent."

[3]Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do what is in your heart, for Yahweh is with you."
[4]But that same night the word of Yahweh came to Nathan, saying:[5]"Go and tell David my servant, 'This is what Yahweh
says: Will you build me a house in which to live?
[6]For I have not lived in a house from the day that I brought up the people of Israel out of Egypt until this present day.
Rather, I have been moving about in a tent, a tabernacle.[7]In all places where I have moved among all the people of Israel,
did I ever say anything to anyone from the tribes of Israel whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why
have you not built me a house of cedar?"'

[8]"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what Yahweh of hosts says: I took you from the pasture, from following the
sheep, so that you would be ruler over my people Israel.[9]I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your
enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the great ones of the earth.
[10]I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them there, so that they may live in their own place and be
troubled no more. No longer will wicked people oppress them, as they did before,[11]as they were doing from the days that I
commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Now I will give you rest from all your enemies."Moreover, Yahweh
declares to you that Yahweh will make you a house.
[12]When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up a descendant after you, one who will
come out from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.[13]He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the
throne of his kingdom forever.[14]I will be a father to him, and he will be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will
discipline him with the rod of men and with the whipping of the sons of men.
[15]But my covenant faithfulness will not leave him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.[16]Your house
and kingdom will be confirmed forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.'"
[17]Nathan spoke to David and reported to him all these words, and he told him about the entire vision.

[18]Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh and said, "Who am I, Lord Yahweh, and what is my family that you
have brought me to this point?[19]Now this was a small thing in your sight, Lord Yahweh. You have even spoken about your
servant's family for a great while to come, and have shown me future generations, Lord Yahweh!
[20]"What more can I, David, say to you? You have known your servant, Lord Yahweh.
[21]For your word's sake, and to fulfill your own purpose, you have done this great thing and revealed it to your servant.
[22]"Therefore you are great, Lord Yahweh, for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, as we have heard
with our own ears.[23]What nation is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom you, God, went and rescued for
yourself? You did this so that they would become a people for yourself, to make a name for yourself, and to do great and
fearful deeds for your land. You drove out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you rescued from
Egypt.
[24]You established Israel as your own people forever, and you, Yahweh, became their God.
[25]"So now, Yahweh God, may the promise that you made concerning your servant and his family be established forever.
Do as you have spoken.[26]May your name be forever great, so the people will say, 'Yahweh of hosts is the God of Israel,'
while the house of me, David, your servant is established before you.

[27]"For you, Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, have revealed to your servant that you will build him a house. That is why I,
your servant, have found courage to pray to you.[28]Now, Lord Yahweh, you are God, and your words are trustworthy, and
you have made this good promise to your servant.[29]Now then, let it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it
may continue forever before you. For you, Lord Yahweh, have said these things, and with your blessing your servant's
house will be blessed forever."

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2 Samuel 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the finishing of a small interruption about the house of God. (See: houseofgod)

Special concepts in this chapter

David wanted to honor God by building him a temple. God told David that he would not build it, but his son would build it. (See: temple)

Covenant of David

God made a covenant with David that was not conditioned upon anything David or his descendants did. God promised that one of David's descendants would rule Israel forever. Because Israel would not have a king in the future, this

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promise did not begin at this time. The descendant, who would rule forever, is Jesus. (See: covenant and promise and eternity)

Links:

2 Samuel 7:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 7:1

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

given him rest from all his surrounding enemies

"given him safety from all his surrounding enemies." Here "rest" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "caused the enemy people groups to stop attacking Israel"

2 Samuel 7:2

I am living in a house of cedar

Cedar is a kind of tree that is known for its strength. If you have an equivalent type of tree in your culture, you can use that name, otherwise you can reword this. Alternate translation: "I am living in a strong, permanent house"

the ark of God is staying in the middle of a tent

Tents are temporary dwellings. If you do not have tents in your culture, you can word this differently. Alternate translation: "the ark of God is staying in a temporary place"

2 Samuel 7:3

do what is in your heart

Here "heart" represents the mind. Alternate translation: "do what you think you should"

for Yahweh is with you

Here "with you" means God is helping and blessing David.

2 Samuel 7:4

the word of Yahweh came to Nathan, saying:

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Nathan. He said," or "Yahweh spoke this message to Nathan:"

2 Samuel 7:5

Go and tell David my servant, 'This is what Yahweh says: Will you build me a house in which to live?

This is the beginning of a quotation that contains quotations within it.

Will you build me a house in which to live?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that David is not the one to build a house for Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You will not build a house for me"

build me a house

Here the word "house" means a temple. Later Yahweh will say that he will build a house for David, but there the word "house" means a family. If your language has a word that can express both ideas, use it here.

2 Samuel 7:7

did I ever say anything to anyone from the tribes of Israel whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

This has a quotation within a quotation and one rhetorical question inside another rhetorical question. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation, and the rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "did I ever ask any of Israel's leaders whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel why they had not built me a house of cedar?" or "I never asked any of Israel's leaders whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel why they had not built me a house of cedar." or "I never said anything to any of Israel's leaders whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel. I never said, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar.'" or "I never said anything to any of Israel's leaders whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel. I never said, 'You should have built me a house of cedar.'"

anyone from the tribes of Israel whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel

The referent of "whom I appointed" is "anyone," not "tribes." Of those from the tribes of Israel whom he had appointed to shepherd, he had told none to build him a house.

whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel

Those who are leaders of the people of Israel are spoken of as if they were shepherds and the people were sheep.

Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

If Yahweh had asked the leaders this question, he would have been using a question to scold them for not building him a house of cedar. But, Yahweh said previously that he did not ask them this question. Alternate translation: "You should have built me a house of cedar."

2 Samuel 7:8

General Information:

Yahweh describes his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

tell my servant David, 'This is what Yahweh of hosts says: I took you ... so that you would be ruler over my people Israel.

This has quotations within quotations. It may be necessary to translate the direct quotations as indirect quotations, as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "tell my servant David that I took him ... so that he would be ruler over my people Israel"

tell my servant David

Yahweh is still telling the prophet Nathan what he should tell David.

I took you from the pasture

David's job as a shepherd is referred to by the place he watched his sheep. Alternate translation: "I took you from your job as a shepherd"

2 Samuel 7:9

I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the great ones of the earth

This continues the quotations within quotations. It may be

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necessary to translate the direct quotations as indirect quotations, as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "I have been with him wherever he went. I have cut off all his enemies from before him. Now I will make his name great, like the name of the great ones of the earth"

I have been with you

Here "with you" means that Yahweh has helped and blessed David.

I have cut off all your enemies

Yahweh destroying David's enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh cut them off, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree.

make your name great

Here "name" represents a person's reputation.

the great ones

The phrase "great ones" means famous persons.

2 Samuel 7:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I will appoint a place

"I will choose a place"

will plant them there

Yahweh causing the people to live in the land permanently and securely is spoken of as if he would plant them in the land.

be troubled no more

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever trouble them"

2 Samuel 7:11

from the days

"from the time"

I commanded judges

After the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan and before they had kings to rule them, God appointed leaders called "judges" to lead them in times of trouble.

to be over my people Israel

To be in authority is referred to as being over someone. Alternate translation: "to rule my people Israel"

Now I will give you rest from all your enemies ... Yahweh declares to you that Yahweh will make you a house

If in [2 Samuel 7:8]

I will give you rest from all your enemies

"I will give you safety from all your enemies." Here "rest" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "I will make all your enemies stop attacking you"

Yahweh will make you a house

Here the metonym "house" refers to David's ancestors continuing on as the rulers of Israel. In [2 Samuel 7:4]

2 Samuel 7:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers

These two phrases have similar meanings and are combined for emphasis. They both are polite ways to refer to death and dying.

I will raise up a descendant after you

Yahweh appointing David's descendant is spoken of as if Yahweh would raise or lift him up.

one who will come out from your body

This is an idiom that means the person will be David's descendant.

I will establish his kingdom

Here "his kingdom" represents his power to rule. Alternate translation: "I will make him to be a very powerful king"

2 Samuel 7:13

a house for my name

Here "name" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "a permanent dwelling for me"

I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever

Here "throne" represents the person's power to rule as king. Alternate translation: "I will make his rule over Israel to last forever"

2 Samuel 7:14

I will be a father to him, and he will be my son

The prophecy in 7:12-14 refers to Solomon, David's son. But, aspects of the prophecy will be fulfilled by Jesus. So, here it is best to translate the words "father" and "son" with your normal words for a biological father and son.

2 Samuel 7:15

General Information:

Yahweh finishes describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

But my covenant faithfulness will not leave him, as I took it from Saul

The word "faithfulness" is an abstract noun that can be stated as "faithfully loving." Alternate translation: "I will never stop faithfully loving him as I stopped loving Saul"

from before you

If in [2 Samuel 7:8]

2 Samuel 7:16

Your house ... before you. Your throne

If in [2 Samuel 7:8]

Your house and kingdom will be confirmed forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.

These two sentences have similar meanings and emphasize that David's dynasty will last forever.

Your house and kingdom will be confirmed forever before you

Here the word "house" represents David's descendants, who will rule as kings. Here "kingdom" means about the same thing as "house." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will live to see me establish your family and their rule over the people of Israel forever"

Your throne will be established forever

Here "throne" represents the power to rule as king. Alternate translation: "I will cause your descendants to rule over Israel forever"

2 Samuel 7:17

all these words

"all these things." This refers to what Yahweh had said.

he told him about the entire vision

"he told him about everything Yahweh revealed to him"

2 Samuel 7:18

Who am I, Lord Yahweh, and what is my family that you have brought me to this point?

David asks this question to express the deep emotion he felt from hearing Yahweh's proclamation. This rhetorical

question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My family and I are not worthy of this honor, Lord Yahweh."
2 Samuel 7:19
in your sight
Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment"
your servant's family
Here David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "my family"
for a great while to come
This speaks about time as if it were something that travels and arrives somewhere. Alternate translation: "and what will happen to them in the future"
your servant
Here David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "me"
2 Samuel 7:20
What more can I, David, say to you?
David uses this question to emphasize that he has nothing left to say to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "There is nothing more I can say to you."
2 Samuel 7:21
For your word's sake
"Because of what you promised to do"
to fulfill your own purpose
"to accomplish what you planned to do"
to your servant
David refers to himself as "your servant." It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "to me"
2 Samuel 7:22
as we have heard with our own ears
The phrase "with our own ears" is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "as we ourselves have heard"
as we have heard
Here "we" refers to David and the nation of Israel.
2 Samuel 7:23
What nation is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom you, God, went and rescued for yourself?
David uses a question emphasize that there is no other nation like Israel. Alternate translation: "There is no nation like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom you, God, went and rescued for yourself."
to make a name for yourself
Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "to make all people know who you are"
for your land
Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "for your people"
You drove out nations
Here "nations" represents the people groups that were living in Canaan.
2 Samuel 7:24
General Information:
David continues to talk to Yahweh.
2 Samuel 7:25
So now
Here "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
may the promise that you made concerning your servant and his family be established forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may you do what you promised to me and my family, and may your promise never change"
your servant and his family
David is speaking about himself in the third person. This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "me and my family"
2 Samuel 7:26
May your name be forever great
Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation.
the house of me, David, your servant
Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "my family"
is established before you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is secure because of you" or "continues because of you"
2 Samuel 7:27
to your servant that you will build him a house
David refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "to me that you will build me a house"
that you will build him a house
Here the metonym "house" refers to David's ancestors continuing on as the rulers of Israel. In [2 Samuel 7:4]
house
Here "house" represents David's family.
2 Samuel 7:28
Now
This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
your words are trustworthy
"I trust what you say"
2 Samuel 7:29
with your blessing your servant's house will be blessed forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will continue to bless my family forever"
your servant's house
Here David refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "my house" or "my family"

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8 [1]After this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. So David took Metheg Ammah from the control of the Philistines.

[2]Then he defeated Moab and measured their men with a line by making them lie down on the ground. He measured off two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. So the Moabites became servants to David and began to pay him tribute.

[3]David then defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, the king of Zobah, as Hadadezer was traveling to recover his rule by the

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Euphrates River.[4]David captured from him 1,700 chariots and twenty thousand footmen. David hamstrung all the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for a hundred chariots.
[5]When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand Aramean men.[6]Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to him and brought him tribute. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went.
[7]David took the golden shields that were on Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem.[8]From Tebah and Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze.

[9]When Tou, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer,[10]Tou sent Hadoram his son to King David to greet him and to bless him, because David had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, and because Hadadezer had waged war against Tou. Hadoram brought with himself objects of silver, gold, and bronze.
[11]King David dedicated these objects to Yahweh, together with the silver and gold that he had dedicated, which came from all the nations that he had conquered—[12]from Aram, Moab, the people of Ammon, the Philistines, and Amalek, along with all of the plundered goods of Hadadezer son of Rehob, the king of Zobah.

[13]David's name was well known when he returned from conquering the Arameans in the Valley of Salt, with their eighteen thousand men.[14]He placed garrisons throughout all of Edom, and all the Edomites became servants to him. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went.

[15]David reigned over all Israel, and he administered justice and righteousness to all his people.[16]Joab son of Zeruiah was the commander of the army, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder.[17]Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelek son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was scribe.[18]Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in charge of the Kerethites and Pelethites, and David's sons were the priests.[1]

[1]The ancient Greek translations and some modern translations have this as it is in 1 Chronicles 18:17, were the chief officials.

2 Samuel 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter returns to the theme of the expansion of David's kingdom.

Special concepts in this chapter

God enabled victory

God enabled David to conquer all the surrounding nations. Much of the loot and tribute David received, he saved for the temple that his son would build.

Links:

2 Samuel 8:1 Notes

2 Samuel 8:1

David defeated

Here "David" represents his soldiers. Alternate translation: "David and his soldiers attacked"

2 Samuel 8:2

Then he defeated

Here "he" refers to David who represents his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Then they defeated"

measured their men with a line ... He measured off two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive

Here the "line" is a "rope." David had the soldiers lie down on the ground to be measured and sorted into three groups. The men in two groups were killed, and in the third, they were allowed to live.

2 Samuel 8:3

David then defeated Hadadezer

Here both "David" and "Hadadezer" represent their armies. Alternate translation: "David and his army then defeated the army of Hadadezer"

Hadadezer ... Rehob

These are the names of men.

Zobah

This is the name of a region in Aram.

to recover his rule

"to regain control over a region" or "to recapture a region"

2 Samuel 8:4

1,700 chariots

"one thousand seven hundred chariots"

twenty thousand footmen

"20,000 footmen"

David hamstrung

This is a practice where the tendons in the backs of the legs are cut so that the horses cannot run.

reserved enough

"set aside enough" or "saved enough"

a hundred chariots

"100 chariots"

2 Samuel 8:5

David killed

Here David represents his soldiers. Alternate translation:

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"David and his soldiers killed"

twenty-two thousand Aramean men

"22,000 Aramean men"

2 Samuel 8:6

put garrisons in Aram

"ordered large groups of his soldiers to remain in Aram"

2 Samuel 8:7

David took

Here "David" is probably a metonym for his soldiers. Alternate translation: "David's soldiers took"

2 Samuel 8:8

King David took

Here "David" is probably a metonym for his soldiers. Alternate translation: "King David's soldiers took"

Tebah and Berothai

These are the names of places.

2 Samuel 8:9

Tou

These are the names of men.

Hamath

This is the name of a place.

David had defeated

Here "David" is a metonym for his army. Alternate translation: "David's army had defeated"

2 Samuel 8:10

Tou ... Hadoram

These are the names of men.

2 Samuel 8:12

and Amalek

"and the Amalekites"

the plundered goods

These are the valuable items that soldiers take from the people they defeated.

Hadadezer son of Rehob, the king of Zobah

See how you translated these names in 2 Samuel 8:3.

2 Samuel 8:13

David's name was well known

Here "name" refers to David's reputation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David was very famous"

Valley of Salt

This is the name of a place. Its exact location is unknown.

eighteen thousand men

"18,000 men"

2 Samuel 8:14

He placed garrisons throughout all of Edom

"He ordered groups of his soldiers to remain in areas throughout all of Edom"

2 Samuel 8:16

Joab ... Zeruiah

See how you translated these names in 2 Samuel 2:13.

Ahilud was recorder

A recorder was a person who spoke to the people and told them the king's announcements. Alternate translation: "Ahilud was the herald"

Ahilud

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 8:17

Ahitub ... Ahimelek ... Seraiah

These are names of men.

2 Samuel 8:18

Benaiah ... Jehoiada

These are names of men.

Kerethites ... Pelethites

These are names of people-groups. These people were David's bodyguards.

the priests

They were probably officials who advised David on matters to do with the kingdom and not involved in temple worship.

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9 [1]David said, "Is there anyone left in Saul's family to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"[2]There was in Saul's family a servant whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. The king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "Yes. I am your servant."
[3]So the king said, "Is there not anyone left of Saul's family to whom I may show the kindness of God?" Ziba replied to the king, "Jonathan still has a son, who is lame in his feet."[4]The king said to him, "Where is he?" Ziba replied to the king, "Look, he is in the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."
[5]Then King David sent and had him brought out of the house of Makir son of Ammiel from Lo Debar.[6]So Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul, came to David and bowed down his face to the floor in honor of David. David said, "Mephibosheth." He answered, "See, I am your servant!"
[7]David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather, and you will always eat at my table."[8]Mephibosheth bowed and said, "What is your servant, that you should look with favor on such a dead dog as I am?"

[9]Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and his family I have given to your master's grandson.[10]You, your sons, and your servants must till the land for him and you must harvest the crops so that your master's grandson will have food to eat. For Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, must always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.
[11]Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do all that my master the king commands his servant." The king added, "As for Mephibosheth he will eat at my table, as one of the king's sons."[12]Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mika. All who lived in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth.[13]So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, and he always ate at the king's table, though he was lame in both his feet.

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2 Samuel 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is another interruption to the story of David expanding his kingdom. David is concerned with fulfilling his oath to Jonathan's descendants.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's vow

David determined to fulfill his vow to Jonathan to care for Jonathan's descendants. He found Jonathan's son and told him he would treat him as if he was one of his sons. He restored all of Saul's property to him and had him eat every day at the king's table. (See: fulfill and vow and restore)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question and metaphor

Jonathan's son expressed his surprise and feeling of unworthiness with a rhetorical question: "What is your servant, that you should look with favor on such a dead dog as I am?" and by a metaphor comparing himself to "a dead dog."

Links:

2 Samuel 9:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 9:1

for Jonathan's sake

"because of my love for Jonathan"

Jonathan's sake

Jonathan was Saul's son and David's best friend.

2 Samuel 9:2

Ziba

This is the name of a man.

I am your servant

Ziba calls himself "your servant" to show great respect to David.

2 Samuel 9:3

I may show the kindness of God

The abstract noun "kindness" can be stated as "kind." Alternate translation: "I may be kind as I promised God I would be"

who is lame in his feet

"whose feet are damaged." The word "feet" here refers to the ability to walk. Alternate translation: "who is unable to walk"

2 Samuel 9:4

Makir ... Ammiel

These are names of men.

Lo Debar

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 9:5

King David sent

It is understood that David sent messengers.

2 Samuel 9:6

Mephibosheth

See how you translated this in 2 Samuel 4:4.

came to David

The word "came" can be translated as "went."

I am your servant

Mephibosheth refers to himself as "your servant" to show great honor to David.

2 Samuel 9:7

for Jonathan your father's sake

"because I loved your father, Jonathan"

you will always eat at my table

Here "my table" represents being together with David or in his presence. Eating with the king at his table was a great honor. Alternate translation: "you will always eat with me"

2 Samuel 9:8

What is your servant, that you should look with favor on such a dead dog as I am?

This rhetorical question shows that Mephibosheth understands that he is not important enough for the king to take care of him. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am like a dead dog. I do not deserve for you to be kind to me."

such a dead dog

Here Mephibosheth represents the line of Saul, and he compares himself to a "dead dog." Dogs were feral animals, not cared for, and of little importance. A dead dog would be considered even less important. Alternate translation: "such a person like me who is worthless as a dead dog"

2 Samuel 9:10

must always eat at my table

Here "my table" represents being together with David or in his presence. Eating with the king at his table was a great honor. Alternate translation: "must always eat with me"

Now Ziba ... servants

Here "now" makes a stop in the main story. The narrator gives background information about Ziba.

fifteen sons and twenty servants

"15 sons and 20 servants"

2 Samuel 9:11

Your servant will do all that my master the king commands his servant

Ziba refers to himself as "your servant" and refers to David as "my master." Alternate translation: "I, your servant will do all that you, my king, command me to do"

2 Samuel 9:12

Mika

This is the name of the son of Mephibosheth.

All who lived in the house of Ziba

Here "house" represents Ziba's family. Alternate translation: "All of Ziba's family"

2 Samuel 9:13

he always ate at the king's table

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Here "table" represents being together with David or in his presence. Eating with the king at his table was a great honor. Alternate translation: "he always ate with the king at his table"	though he was lame in both his feet "thouge both of his feet were damaged." Here "feet" represents the ability to walk. Alternate translation: "though he was unable to walk"

10 [1]It came about later that the king of the people of Ammon died, and that Hanun his son became king in his place.
[2]David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me." So David sent his servants to comfort Hanun concerning his father. His servants entered the land of the people of Ammon.[3]But the leaders of the people of Ammon said to Hanun their master, "Do you really think that David is honoring your father because he has sent men to comfort you? Has not David sent his servants to you to look at the city, to spy it out, in order to overthrow it?"
[4]So Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half their beards, cut off their garments up to their buttocks, and sent them away.[5]When they explained this to David, he sent to meet with them, for the men were deeply ashamed. The king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown back, and then return."

[6]When the people of Ammon saw that they had become a stench to David, the people of Ammon sent messengers and hired the Arameans of Beth Rehob and Zobah, twenty thousand foot soldiers, and the king of Maakah with a thousand men, and the men of Tob with twelve thousand men.[7]When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of soldiers.
[8]The Ammonites came out and formed a line of battle at the entrance to their city gate, while the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maakah, stood by themselves in the open fields.

[9]When Joab saw the battle lines facing him both in front and behind, he chose some of Israel's best fighters and arranged them against the Arameans.[10]The rest of his people he put into the hand of Abishai his brother, and he set them out in position to fight against the army of Ammon.
[11]Joab said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you, Abishai, must rescue me. But if the army of Ammon is too strong for you, then I will come and rescue you.[12]Be strong, and let us show ourselves to be strong for our people and for the cities of our God, for Yahweh will do what is good for his purpose."
[13]So Joab and the soldiers of his army advanced to the battle against the Arameans, who were forced to flee before the army of Israel.[14]When the army of Ammon saw that the Arameans had fled, they also fled from Abishai and went back into the city. Then Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went back to Jerusalem.

[15]When the Arameans saw that they were being defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together again.[16]Then Hadarezer sent for Aramean troops from beyond the Euphrates River. They came to Helam, and Shobak, the commander of Hadarezer's army, went before them.
[17]When David was told this, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, and arrived at Helam. The Arameans arranged themselves in battle lines against David and fought him.[18]The Arameans fled from Israel, and David killed seven hundred of their men in chariots and forty thousand horsemen. Shobak the commander of their army was wounded and died there.[19]When all the kings who were servants of Hadarezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became their subjects. So the Arameans were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

2 Samuel 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter records the last expansion of David's kingdom. This chapter is also the beginning of a section dealing with the war between Israel and Ammon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Shame

It was apparently the cause of shame or embarrassment in ancient Ammon to have their beards shaved off or to have their garments cut off.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The Ammon people used a metaphor comparing themselves to a bad smell: "they had become a stench to David" when they realized they had made David very angry.

Links:

2 Samuel 10:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 10:1

Hanun

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 10:2

Hanun ... Nahash

These are the names of men.

2 Samuel 10:3

Do you really think that ... you?

The leaders use a question to suggest to the king that he should not trust David. Alternate translation: "You are wrong to think that ... you!"

to spy

to secretly learn information about someone else

Has not David ... overthrow it?

The leaders use a question to suggest to the king that he should not trust David. Alternate translation: "You need to know that David ... overthrow it."

in order to overthrow it

Here "it" refers to the city which represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "in order to conquer us"

the city

Here "the city" refers to Rabbah, the capital city of the Ammonites.

2 Samuel 10:4

shaved off half their beards

This act was meant as an insult to humiliate the men.

2 Samuel 10:5

were deeply ashamed

Here "deeply" is an idiom that means "very."

sent to meet

"sent someone to meet"

then return

It is understood that they should return to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 10:6

they had become a stench to David

The phrase "become a stench" is a metaphor for "they had become offensive." Alternate translation: "they had become offensive like a bad smell to David"

Beth Rehob ... Zobah ... Maakah ... Tob

These are the names of places.

twenty thousand ... a thousand ... twelve thousand

"20,000 ... 1,000 ... 12,000"

2 Samuel 10:8

to their city gate

Here "the city" refers to Rabbah, the capital city of the Ammonites.

2 Samuel 10:9

General Information:

The battle with the Arameans and Ammon continues.

2 Samuel 10:10

The rest of his people he put into the hand of Abishai his brother

"He put Abishai his brother in charge of the rest of the army"

2 Samuel 10:11

General Information:

Joab gets the army ready for battle.

for me, then you, Abishai, must rescue me

Here "me" refers to Joab. Joab and Abishai represents themselves and their armies. Alternate translation: "for us, then you, Abishai, and your army must rescue us"

2 Samuel 10:14

from Abishai

Here Abishai represents himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "from Abishai and his soldiers"

into the city

Here "the city" refers to Rabbah, the capital city of the Ammonites.

went back to Jerusalem

"returned to Jerusalem"

2 Samuel 10:15

When the Arameans saw that they were being defeated by Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the Arameans realized that the Israelites were defeating them"

2 Samuel 10:16

Hadarezer ... Shobak

These are the names of men.

from beyond the Euphrates River

This means the east side of the Euphrates River.

They came to Helam

Here "came to" can be translated as "went to" or "gathered at"

Helam

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 10:17

When David was told this

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When David heard about this"

gathered all Israel together

Here "Israel" represents the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "assembled all the army of Israel together"

Helam

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 10:16.

against David and fought him

Here David represents himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "against David and his soldiers and fought them"

2 Samuel 10:18

David killed

Here "David" is a synecdoche for himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "David and his soldiers killed"

seven hundred ... forty thousand

"700 ... 40,000"

Shobak the commander of their army was wounded and died there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Israelites wounded Shobak the commander of the Aramean army, and he died there"

Shobak

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 10:16.

2 Samuel 10:19

Hadarezer

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 10:16.

saw that they were defeated by Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "realized that the Israelites had defeated them"

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11 [1]It came about in the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally go to war, that David sent out Joab, his servants, and all the army of Israel. They destroyed the army of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.

[2]So it came about one evening that David got up from his bed and walked on the roof of his palace. From there he happened to see a woman who was bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to look at.[3]So David sent and he asked people who would know about the woman. Someone said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, and is she not the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"
[4]David sent messengers and took her; she came to him, and he lay with her (for she had just purified herself from her uncleanness). Then she returned to her house.[5]The woman conceived, and she sent and told David; she said, "I am pregnant."

[6]Then David sent to Joab saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David.[7]When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab was, how the army was doing, and how the war was going.[8]David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the king's palace, and the king sent a gift for Uriah after he left.
[9]But Uriah lay down at the door of the king's palace with all the servants of his master, and he did not go down to his house.[10]When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?"[11]Uriah answered David, "The ark, and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my master's servants are camped in an open field. How then can I go into my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As sure as you are alive, I will not do this."
[12]So David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you leave." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next day.[13]When David called him, he ate and drank before him, and David made him drunk. At evening Uriah went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his master; he did not go down to his house.

[14]So in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.[15]David wrote in the letter saying, "Set Uriah at the very front of the most severe battle, and then withdraw from him, that he may be hit and die."
[16]So as Joab watched the siege upon the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew the strongest enemy soldiers would be fighting.[17]When the men of the city went out and fought against Joab's army, some of the servants of David fell, and Uriah the Hittite was also killed there.
[18]When Joab sent word to David about everything concerning the war,[19]he commanded the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the things concerning the war to the king,[20]it may happen that the king will become angry, and he will say to you, 'Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?
[21]Who killed Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' Then you must answer, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

[22]So the messenger left and went to David and told him everything that Joab had sent him to say.[23]Then the messenger said to David, "The enemy were stronger than we were at first; they came out to us into the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate.
[24]Then their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed, and your servant Uriah the Hittite was killed too."[25]Then David said to the messenger, "Say this to Joab, 'Do not let this displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Make your battle even stronger against the city, and overthrow it,' and encourage him."

[26]So when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented deeply for her husband.[27]When her sorrow passed, David sent and took her home to his palace, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done displeased Yahweh.

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2 Samuel 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a new section of David's life. God punished David by allowing his family to have many problems.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's adultery and the murder of Uriah

The army of Israel defeated the army of Ammon and then they besieged Ammon's capital while David stayed in Jerusalem. One day, David saw a beautiful woman, named Bathsheba, bathing. He committed adultery with her. When she became pregnant, David tried to cover up his sin. When this did not work, he had her husband killed in battle. (See: sin)

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Links:

2 Samuel 11:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 11:1

It came about in the spring of the year

"It happened in the springtime." This introduces a new event in the story.

at the time

"at the time of year"

David sent out Joab, his servants, and all the army of Israel

David sent them out to war. This can be stated clearly. Also, the word "his" refers to David. Alternate translation: "David sent Joab, his servants, and all the army of Israel to war"

the army of Ammon

"the Ammonite army"

Rabbah

This is the name of a city.

2 Samuel 11:2

So it came about

"So it happened" or "So it came to pass." The author uses this phrase to introduce the next event in the story.

a woman who was bathing

The woman was not on the roof, she would have been bathing outside in the courtyard of her house. Alternate translation: "a woman who was bathing in the courtyard of her house"

2 Samuel 11:3

So David sent

Here the word "sent" means that David sent a messenger. Alternate translation: "So David sent a messenger"

he asked people who would know about the woman

David was trying to find out who the woman was. The word "he" refers to David, but is a metonym for the messenger that David sent. The messenger was to ask the people for information about her. Alternate translation: "the messenger asked the people who knew her about who she was"

Is not this Bathsheba ... and is she not the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

This question gives information and can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is Bathsheba ... and she is the wife of Uriah the Hittite."

2 Samuel 11:4

took her

David actually sent messengers, and they took her and brought her to him. Alternate translation: "they brought her to him"

she came to him

She came into his palace and into his bedroom. Alternate translation: "she came into the place where he was"

he lay with her

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. You may need to use a different euphemism in your language.

uncleanness

The Israelites considered a woman unclean when she was bleeding from her womb, and she needed to wash herself after the bleeding stopped. The bath she was taking in 1 Samuel 11:2 may have been this ritual bath.

2 Samuel 11:5

she sent and told David; she said, "I am pregnant."

Here the word "sent" means that she sent a messenger to tell David that she was pregnant. Alternate translation: "she sent a messenger to David, and the messenger told David that she was pregnant"

2 Samuel 11:6

Then David sent

Here the word "sent" means that David sent a messenger. Alternate translation: "Then David sent a messenger"

2 Samuel 11:7

how Joab was, how the army was doing, and how the war was going

David was asking if Joab and the army were well and about the progress of the war. Alternate translation: "if Joab was well, if other soldiers were well, and how the war was progressing"

2 Samuel 11:8

Go down to your house

Possible meanings for the phrase "go down" are 1) Uriah's house was located at a lower elevation than the king's palace or 2) Uriah's house was of lesser importance than the king's palace. Alternate translation: "Go to your house"

wash your feet

This phrase is a metonym for returning home to rest for the night after working all day. Alternate translation: "rest for the night"

the king sent a gift for Uriah

David sent someone to bring the gift to Uriah. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the king sent someone to take a gift to Uriah"

2 Samuel 11:9

his master

The word "his" refers to Uriah and the word "master" refers to David.

2 Samuel 11:10

Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?

This rhetorical question is used to show David's surprise that Uriah did not visit his wife. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "After coming from such a long journey, you should have gone down to your house."

2 Samuel 11:11

Israel and Judah

This refers to their armies. Alternate translation: "the armies of Israel and Judah"

How then can I go into my house ... with my wife?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize Uriah's refusal to visit his wife and can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It would be wrong for me to go into my house ... with my wife while the other soldiers in my army are in danger."

to lie with my wife

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "to have sexual relations with my wife"

As sure as you are alive, I will not do this

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Uriah swears a strong promise that he will not go home to his wife as long as the rest of the soldiers are at war. He makes this promise by comparing the truth of his promise to the certainty that the king was alive. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise that I will not do this"

2 Samuel 11:13

he ate and drank before him

"Uriah ate and drank with David"

down to his house

Possible meanings of the word "down" are 1) Uriah's house was located at a lower elevation than the king's palace or 2) Uriah's house was of lesser importance than the king's palace. See how you translated the similar phrase "down to your house" in [2 Samuel 11:8]

2 Samuel 11:14

sent it by the hand of Uriah

The phrase "the hand of Uriah" refers to Uriah himself. Alternate translation: "sent Uriah himself to deliver it to him"

2 Samuel 11:15

very front of the most severe battle

"very front of the battle line where the fighting is the worst"

withdraw from him

"command the soldiers to back away from him"

he may be hit and die

"he may be wounded and die"

2 Samuel 11:16

the siege upon the city

The word "siege" can be expressed with the verbs "surround" and "attack." Alternate translation: "his army surround and attack the city"

2 Samuel 11:17

some of the servants of David fell

The word "fell" is a polite way to refer to the soldiers being killed. Alternate translation: "David's servants were killed" or "they killed some of David's servants"

servants of David

"David's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

and Uriah the Hittite was also killed there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "including Uriah the Hittite" or "and the men of the city also killed Uriah the Hittite"

2 Samuel 11:18

Joab sent word to David

The phrase "sent word" means that he sent a messenger to give a report. Alternate translation: "Joab sent a messenger to David to give a report"

2 Samuel 11:20

Why did you go so near ... from the wall?

Joab says that David may rebuke him by asking these rhetorical questions. These questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You should not have gone so near to the city to fight. You should have known that they would shoot from the wall."

shoot from the wall

This refers to men of the city shooting arrows down at their enemy from the top of the city wall. Alternate translation: "shoot arrows at you from the top of the city wall"

2 Samuel 11:21

Who killed Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth?

Joab says that David may rebuke him by asking these rhetorical questions. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Remember how Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth was killed!"

Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth

This is the name of a man. His father is also know by the name Gideon.

Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez?

Joab says that David may rebuke him by asking these rhetorical questions. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Remember he died at Thebez when a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the top of the wall."

millstone

a heavy stone that would roll, used to crush grain for making bread

from the wall

"from the top of the city wall"

Thebez

This is the name of a city.

Why did you go so near the wall?

Joab says that David may rebuke him by asking these rhetorical questions. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have gone so near the wall!"

2 Samuel 11:23

the gate

"the city gate"

2 Samuel 11:24

their shooters shot

"their shooters shot arrows"

some of the king's servants were killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed some of the king's servants"

king's servants

"king's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

your servant Uriah the Hittite was killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed your servant Uriah the Hittite"

2 Samuel 11:25

for the sword devours one as well as another

Here "the sword" refers to a person who kills someone with sword. Also, killing someone with a sword is spoken of as if the sword were "eating" the people. Alternate translation: "for one man can be killed by a sword the same as another man" or "for any man can die in battle"

Make your battle even stronger

"Fight even stronger"

2 Samuel 11:26

she lamented deeply

Here the author speaks of her lamenting very much as if it were deep inside her. Alternate translation: "she lamented very much" or "she lamented greatly"

2 Samuel 11:27

sorrow

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a deep feeling of sadness caused by suffering, disappointment or misfortune

David sent and took her home

Here the word "sent" means that he sent a messenger to get her and bring her to him. Alternate translation: "David sent a messenger to her to bring her home"

displeased Yahweh

"saddened Yahweh" or "angered Yahweh"

12 [1]Then Yahweh sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were once two men in a city. One man was rich and the other poor.[2]The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle,[3]but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and fed and raised. It grew up together with him and with his children. The lamb even ate with him and drank from his own cup, and it lay in his bosom and was like a daughter to him.
[4]One day a visitor came to the rich man, but the rich man was unwilling to take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for him. Instead, he took the poor man's ewe lamb and cooked it for his visitor."[5]David was hot with anger against the rich man, and he raged to Nathan, "As Yahweh lives, the man who has done this deserves to be put to death.[6]He must pay back the lamb four times over because he did such a thing, and because he had no pity on the poor man."

[7]Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you out of the hand of Saul.[8]I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your arms. I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah. But if that had been too little, I would have given you many other things in addition.
[9]So why have you despised the commands of Yahweh, so as to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your own wife. You killed him with the sword of the army of Ammon.
[10]So now the sword will never leave your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your wife.'
[11]Yahweh says, 'Look, I will raise up disaster against you out of your own house. Before your own eyes, I will take your wives and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight.[12]For you committed your sin secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, in the sunlight.'"[13]Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh." Nathan replied to David, "Yahweh also has passed over your sin. You will not be killed.
[14]However, because by this act you have despised Yahweh, the child who is born to you will surely die."[15]Then Nathan left and went home.Yahweh attacked the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he was very sick.
[16]David then implored God for the boy. David fasted and went inside and lay all night on the floor.[17]The elders of his house arose and stood beside him, to raise him up from the floor, but he would not get up, and he would not eat with them.[18]It came about on the seventh day that the child died. David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Look, while the child was still alive we spoke to him, and he did not listen to our voice. What might he do to himself if we tell him that the boy is dead?!"
[19]But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David realized that the child was dead. He said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They answered, "He is dead."[20]Then David arose from the floor and washed himself, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went to the tabernacle of Yahweh and worshiped there, and then he came back to his own palace. When he asked for it, they set food before him, and he ate.
[21]Then his servants said to him, "Why have you done this? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you got up and ate."[22]David answered, "While the child was still alive I fasted and wept. I said, 'Who knows whether or not Yahweh will be gracious to me, that the child may live?'[23]But now he is dead, so why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

[24]David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went to her and lay with her. Later she gave birth to a son, and the child was named Solomon. Yahweh loved him[25]and he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah, because Yahweh loved him.

[26]Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and he captured the royal city.[27]So Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against Rabbah, and I have taken the city's water supply.[28]Now therefore gather the rest of the army together and camp against the city and take it, because if I take the city, it will be named after me."
[29]So David gathered all the army together and went to Rabbah; he fought against the city and captured it.[30]David took the crown from their king's head—it weighed a talent of gold, and there was a precious stone in it. The crown was placed on David's own head. Then he brought out the plunder of the city in large quantities.
[31]He brought out the people who were in the city and forced them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes; he also made them work at brick kilns. David required all the cities of the people of Ammon to do this labor. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

This is the final expansion of David's kingdom and records the end of the war with Ammon.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's punishment

God sent a prophet to confront David. He said that because David had Uriah killed, there would always be killing in his family and that the baby conceived with Bathsheba would die. David prayed that the baby be allowed to live, but the infant died. Bathsheba then had another son, who was named Solomon. (See: prophet)

Links:

2 Samuel 12:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 12:3

the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb ... raised

This double negative emphasizes that the lamb was the only thing that the poor man owned. This is probably an exaggeration that means that the man loved this lamb more than anything else he owned. Alternate translation: "the only thing the poor man had was one little ewe lamb ... raised" or "the poor man had a little ewe lamb ... raised, and which he loved more than anything else he owned"

ewe lamb

a female lamb

was like a daughter to him

This refers to the closeness of this man and his little lamb. Alternate translation: "he loved it as much as if it were one of his daughters"

2 Samuel 12:4

ewe lamb

a young, female sheep

for his visitor

It was for his visitor to eat. Alternate translation: "for his visitor to eat"

2 Samuel 12:5

David was hot with anger against

Here the author describes how David was very angry as if his body were physically hot because of his anger. Alternate translation: "David became furious with" or "David became very angry with"

he raged to Nathan

This means that David spoke angrily to Nathan.

As Yahweh lives

This expresses that David was swearing an oath or serious promise. Alternate translation: "I declare, as surely as Yahweh lives"

to be put to death

This means to be killed. Also, that can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to be killed" or "to die"

2 Samuel 12:6

He must pay back the lamb four times over

The amount the rich man was required to pay back to the poor man was to be four times what the little lamb cost. "He must pay the poor man four times the price of the lamb"

pity

to feel sadness and love for someone who is suffering or hurt or not loved

2 Samuel 12:7

out of the hand of Saul

Here the word "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "out of Saul's control" or "from Saul's control"

2 Samuel 12:8

your master's wives into your arms

Here Yahweh describes David having his master's wives as his own wives, by saying that they are "in his arms." Alternate translation: "your master's wives as your own"

I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah

Here Yahweh speaks of how he gave David his authority as king over Israel and Judah as if he gave him the houses of Israel and Judah as a gift. The phrase "the house of" means "the people of." Alternate translation: "I also gave you authority as king over the people of Israel and Judah"

if that had been too little

"if I had not given you enough"

2 Samuel 12:9

So why have you despised ... Yahweh, so as to do what is evil in his sight?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke David. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have despised ... Yahweh and should not have done what is evil in his sight!"

what is evil in his sight

Here "sight" refers to Yahweh's thoughts or opinion. Alternate translation: "what he considers to be evil" or "what is evil in Yahweh's judgement"

You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword

David did not kill Uriah himself, rather he arranged for him to be killed in battle. The phrase "with the sword" represents how Uriah died in battle. Alternate translation: "You have arranged for Uriah the Hittite to die in battle"

You killed him with the sword of the army of Ammon

David did not kill Uriah himself, rather he arranged for him to be killed in battle when Israel was fighting against Ammon. The phrase "with the sword" refers to how he died in battle. Alternate translation: "You arranged for him to die in battle against the army of Ammon"

2 Samuel 12:10

the sword will never leave your house

Here the word "sword" refers to people dying in war. Also, David's "house" refers to his descendants. Alternate translation: "some of your descendants will always die in battle"

2 Samuel 12:11

out of your own house

Here David's "house" refers to his family. Alternate translation: "from among your own family"

Before your own eyes

Here David is referred to by his eyes to emphasize what he would see. Alternate translation: "While you are watching"

he will lie with your wives

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This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "he will have sexual relations with your wives"

in broad daylight

"in full daylight." The idea of doing something "openly" or in a way that people are fully aware of what is happening is often spoken about as being done in the "daylight." Alternate translation: "openly" or "and everyone will see what is happening"

2 Samuel 12:12

committed your sin

"sinned"

before all Israel

This phrase speaks of the people of Israel knowing about what has happened to his wives as if they all actually witnessed it happening. Alternate translation: "before all the people of Israel" or "and all the people of Israel will know about it"

2 Samuel 12:13

passed over

Yahweh has forgiven David of his sin. This is spoken of here as Yahweh passing over his sin as if it were something that he walked by and disregarded. Alternate translation: "forgiven"

You will not be killed

This can be stated in active form. Sometimes men died because of their sins, but he will not die because of his sin with the woman. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You will not die" or "you will not die because of this sin"

2 Samuel 12:14

despised

to strongly dislike or hate someone or something

the child who is born to you

The phrase "born to you" means that it is David's baby. Alternate translation: "your child who will be born"

2 Samuel 12:15

Yahweh attacked the child that ... and he was very sick

Here the author speaks of Yahweh causing the baby to become sick as Yahweh attacking the child. Alternate translation: "Yahweh afflicted the child that ... and he was very sick" or "Yahweh caused the baby that ... to become very sick"

the child that Uriah's wife bore to David

This means that she gave birth to a child and that David was his father. Alternate translation: "David's child, who Uriah's wife gave birth to"

2 Samuel 12:16

implored

to beg or pray with strong desire

went inside

David went into his room when he was alone. Alternate translation: "went inside his room"

2 Samuel 12:17

to raise him up from the floor

"and urged him to get up from the floor"

2 Samuel 12:18

It came about

"It happened"

he did not listen to our voice

The servants are referred to here by their voices to emphasize that they were speaking. Alternate translation: "he did not listen to us"

the seventh day

"day 7." This refers to the seventh day after the baby was born. Alternate translation: "the seventh day after he was born"

Look

This is used to get people's attention. Alternate translation: "Listen"

What might he do to himself if we tell him that the boy is dead?!

The servants ask this rhetorical question to express their fear. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We are afraid that he may harm himself if we tell him that the boy is dead!"

2 Samuel 12:19

were whispering together

"were speaking very quietly to each other"

David realized

"David understood"

2 Samuel 12:20

David arose

"David got up"

2 Samuel 12:21

General Information:

These verses contain rhetorical questions that emphasize that David realizes that Yahweh has allowed this to happen.

2 Samuel 12:22

Who knows whether or not Yahweh will be gracious to me, that the child may live?

David asked this rhetorical question to empathize that no one knew if Yahweh would let the child live. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one knows whether or not Yahweh will be gracious to me so that the child may live."

2 Samuel 12:23

But now he is dead, so why should I fast?

David asks this rhetorical question to empathize that he no longer has a reason to fast. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now that he is dead it would be of no use to fast any longer."

Can I bring him back again?

David asks this rhetorical question to empathize that the boy cannot come back to life. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot bring him back to life."

I will go to him

David implies that he will go to where his child is when he dies. Alternate translation: "When I die I will go to where he is"

2 Samuel 12:24

lay with her

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "had sexual relations with her"

2 Samuel 12:25

he sent word through Nathan the prophet

Here "word" refers to a message that Yahweh told Nathan to tell David. Alternate translation: "he sent Nathan to tell him"

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Jedidiah
This is another name for David's son Solomon, which Yahweh chose for him.
2 Samuel 12:26
Joab fought ... he captured
Here the author says "Joab" but he is referring to Joab and his soldiers who fought with him. Alternate translation: "Joab and his soldiers fought ... they captured"
Rabbah
Fighting against this city literally means to fight against the people of Rabbah. Translate the name the same as you did in [2 Samuel 11:1]
2 Samuel 12:27
So Joab sent messengers to David and said
"So Joab sent messengers to David to say to him"
have taken the city's water supply
"Taking" a place or landmark means to take control of it. Alternate translation: "have taken control of the city's water supply"
I have fought ... I have taken
Here Joab speaks of himself when he is actually referring to himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "My soldiers and I have fought ... my soldier and I have taken"
2 Samuel 12:28
if I take
Here Joab speaks of himself when he is actually referring to himself and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "if my soldiers and I take"
camp against
This means to surround and attack. Alternate translation: "besiege" or "surround"
take it ... take the city
"Taking" a place or landmark means to take control of it. Alternate translation: "take control of it ... take control of the city"
it will be named
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will name it"
2 Samuel 12:29
he fought
Here the author speaks of David when he is actually referring to David and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "David and his soldiers fought"
2 Samuel 12:30
a talent
This may be written in modern weights. Alternate translation: "about 33 kilograms"
a precious stone
a rare gemstone such as a diamond, ruby, sapphire, emerald, or opal
The crown was placed on David's own head
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They placed the crown on David's own head"
he brought out
Here the author speaks of David when he is actually referring to David's soldiers. Alternate translation: "they brought out"
plunder
valuable things taken from a defeated enemy
large quantities
"large amounts"
2 Samuel 12:31
He brought out the people
David did not bring out the people himself; he commanded his soldiers to bring them out. Alternate translation: "David commanded his soldiers to bring out the people"
saws, iron picks, and axes
These are tools to cut wood or break up the ground.
brick kilns
ovens where bricks are dried and hardened
all the cities of the people of Ammon
This refers to the people in the cities. Alternate translation: "all the people of the cites of Ammon"

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13 [1]It came about after this that David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and David's son Amnon loved her.[2]Amnon was so frustrated that he became sick because of his sister Tamar. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her.
[3]But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man.
[4]Jonadab said to Amnon, "Why, son of the king, are you depressed every morning? Will you not tell me?" So Amnon answered him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister."
[5]Then Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be sick. When your father comes to see you, ask him, 'Would you please send my sister Tamar to give me something to eat and cook it before me, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand?'"[6]So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please send my sister Tamar to make some food for my sickness in front of me so that I may eat from her hand."

[7]Then David sent word to Tamar at his palace, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him."[8]So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house where he was lying down. She took dough and kneaded it and formed bread in his sight, and then she baked it.[9]She took the pan and gave the bread to him, but he refused to eat. Then Amnon said to the others present, "Send everyone out, away from me." So everyone went out from him.
[10]So Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into my room that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the bread that she had made, and brought it into the room of Amnon her brother.[11]When she had brought the food to him, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister."[12]She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me, for nothing like this should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing!

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[13]How could I be rid of my shame? What about you? You would be like one of the fools in Israel! Now, please speak to the king, for he would not keep me from you."[14]However Amnon would not listen to her, and he was stronger than she was, and he overpowered her, and he lay with her.

[15]Then Amnon hated Tamar with extreme hatred. The hatred with which he hated her was even greater than the love with which he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and go."[16]But she responded to him, "No! Because this great evil of making me leave is even worse than what you did to me!" But Amnon did not listen to her.[17]Instead, he called his personal servant and said, "Take this woman away from me, and bolt the door after her."
[18]Then his servant brought her out and bolted the door after her. Tamar was wearing a beautifully decorated garment because the king's daughters who were virgins dressed in such robes.[19]Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her beautifully decorated garment. She put her hands on her head and walked away, crying aloud as she went.

[20]Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now keep quiet, my sister. He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart." So Tamar remained alone in her brother Absalom's house.[21]But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry.[22]Absalom said nothing to Amnon, for Absalom hated him for what he had done to her and how he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

[23]It came about after two full years that Absalom had sheep shearers working at Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons to visit there.[24]Absalom went to the king and said, "See now, your servant has sheep shearers. Please, may the king and his servants go with me, your servant."
[25]The king answered Absalom, "No, my son, all of us should not go because we would be a burden to you." Absalom begged the king, but he would not go, but he gave him his blessing.[26]Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us." So the king said to him, "Why should Amnon go with you?"
[27]Absalom pressed David, and so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.[28]Absalom commanded his servants saying, "Listen closely. When Amnon begins to be affected by the wine, and when I say to you, 'Attack Amnon,' then put him to death. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and brave."[29]So Absalom's servants did to Amnon as he had commanded them. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man mounted his mule and fled.

[30]So it came about, while they were on the road, that the news came to David saying, "Absalom has killed all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left."[31]Then the king arose and tore his clothes, and lay on the floor; all his servants stood by with their clothes torn.
[32]Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, "Let not my master believe that they have killed all the young men who are the king's sons, for Amnon only is dead. Absalom has planned this from the day that Amnon violated his sister Tamar.[33]So therefore let not my master the king take this report to heart, so as to believe that all the king's sons are dead, for Amnon only is dead."

[34]Absalom fled away. A servant keeping watch raised his eyes and saw many people coming on the road on the hillside west of him.[35]Then Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's sons are coming. It is just as your servant said."[36]So it came about when he finished speaking, the king's sons arrived and raised their voices and wept. The king and all his servants also wept bitterly.

[37]But Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. David mourned for his son every day.[38]So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, where he was for three years.[39]The mind of King David longed to go out to see Absalom, for he was comforted concerning Amnon and his death.

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2 Samuel 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story about the difficulties and killings in David's family. David's sin caused these problems in his family. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Amnon raped Absalom's sister

Amnon raped Absalom's sister, who was his own half-sister. David did nothing to punish him and David's lack of action caused significant problems in his family and in Israel. This eventually caused Solomon to become king, even though he was not the oldest son.

Links:

2 Samuel 13:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 13:1

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of the account of the rebellion led by Absalom, David's son, which runs through 2 Samuel 19.

It came about after this

"It happened after this." This phrase is used to introduce a new event to the story.

David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar ... Amnon loved her

Absalom, Amnon, and Tamar had all been born before the events in 1 Samuel 11-12. It was after those events that Amnon fell in love with Tamar.

Absalom ... had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and ... Amnon loved her.

The writer is introducing the people that the following account is about. Absalom (1 Samuel 3:2) is introduced first because the larger account, through 2 Samuel 19, is about him. Tamar and Amnon (1 Samuel 3:2) are not as important to the larger account and so are introduced after Absalom.

2 Samuel 13:2

Amnon was so frustrated that he became sick because of his sister Tamar

Amnon was frustrated because he desired to sleep with his sister Tamar. Alternate translation: "Amnon was so frustrated with desire for his sister Tamar that he felt sick"

2 Samuel 13:3

Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother

These are the names of men. Shimeah was David's brother.

shrewd

crafty or deceptive

2 Samuel 13:4

depressed

in an emotional state of extreme unhappiness

Will you not tell me?

It is understood that he is asking him about his depression, which can be stated clearly. Also, this rhetorical question is a request for Jehonadab to tell him why he is depressed. It may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Will you not tell me why you are depressed?" or "Please, tell me why you are depressed."

2 Samuel 13:5

Jonadab

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 13:3.

eat it from her hand

This is probably a request for her to serve food to him personally. He probably did not want her to put the food in his mouth. Alternate translation: "have her serve it to me herself"

2 Samuel 13:6

I may eat from her hand

This is probably a request for her to serve food to him personally. He probably did not expect her to put the food in his mouth. Alternate translation: "she may serve it to me to eat"

pretended to be sick

This means he gave a false appearance of being ill.

for my sickness in front of me

The food is not for his sickness, but rather it is for him, because he is sick. The phrase "in front of me" is a request for Tamar to prepare the food in his presence. Alternate translation: "in front of me because I am sick"

2 Samuel 13:7

David sent word

This means that he sent a messenger to speak to Tamar. Alternate translation: "David sent a messenger"

2 Samuel 13:8

dough

a thick mixture of flour and liquid used for baking

kneaded

used her hands to mix the dough

in his sight

This means that Tamar made the bread in front of him. Alternate translation: "in front of him" or "in his presence"

2 Samuel 13:9

So everyone went out from him

To "go out from someone" means to leave them. Alternate translation: "So everyone left him"

2 Samuel 13:10

that I may eat from your hand

This is a request for Tamar to serve the food to him personally. Alternate translation: "and serve it to me"

2 Samuel 13:11

lie with me

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "have sexual relations with me"

2 Samuel 13:12

do not force me

She does not want him to force her to have sexual relations with him. Alternate translation: "do not force me to have sexual relations with you"

2 Samuel 13:13

General Information:

Tamar continues to talk to Amnon.

How could I be rid of my shame?

Tamar asks this rhetorical question to emphasize how much shame she would have if she slept with him. Tamar speaks of getting rid of her shame as if it were an enemy or a tormentor that she needed to escape from. Alternate translation: "If you do this, I would have to endure shame everywhere I go"

2 Samuel 13:14

he lay with her

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "he had sexual relations with her"

2 Samuel 13:15

The hatred with which he hated her was even greater than the love with which he had loved her

The repetition of the ideas of hate and love here emphasize that his feelings had changed completely. The abstract nouns "hatred" and "love" can be left untranslated. Alternate translation: "He hated her even more than he had loved her"

love ... loved her

You may need to make explicit that the words "love" and

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"loved" here refer only to sexual desire. Alternate translation: "had desired her"

2 Samuel 13:16

Because this great evil of making me leave is even worse

The abstract noun "this great evil" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "It would be very evil to make me leave! It would be even worse"

2 Samuel 13:17

bolt the door after her

This means to lock the door so that she will not be able to come back in again. Alternate translation: "lock the door so that she cannot come back in"

2 Samuel 13:18

bolted the door after her

This means to lock the door so that she will not be able to come back in again. Alternate translation: "locked the door so that she could not go back in"

כְּתֹנֶת פַּסִּים

2 Samuel 13:19

put ashes on her head and tore her beautifully decorated garment. She put her hands on her head

These are acts of mourning and grief in the Israelite culture. Alternate translation: "put ashes on her head and tore her beautifully decorated garment to show that she was very sad. Then to show her grief, she put her hands on her head"

2 Samuel 13:20

Has Amnon your brother been with you?

This is a polite way to ask is Amnon has had sexual relations with her. Alternate translation: "Has Amnon your brother slept with you?"

keep quiet

This means to not tell anyone about something. Alternate translation: "do not tell anyone about this"

Do not take this thing to heart

The phrase "take something to heart" means "to worry about it." Alternate translation: "Do not worry about what has happened"

So Tamar remained alone

This means that she did not marry.

2 Samuel 13:22

said nothing

"did not speak"

2 Samuel 13:23

It came about after two full years

This explains that two whole years has passed and introduces the next event in the story. The phrase "full years" means that they are complete years.

shearers

These are people who cut the wool from sheep.

Baal Hazor

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 13:24

See now, your servant

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: your servant"

your servant

Absalom is calling himself "your servant" to show respect.

has sheep shearers

It was customary for people in Israel to have a party after they had sheared their sheep.

may the king

Although he is talking to his father the king, he calls him "the king" instead of "you" to show respect for him.

2 Samuel 13:26

please let my brother Amnon go with us

The oldest son could often represent his father in Israelite culture. Amnon was David's oldest son.

Why should Amnon go with you?

David knew that Amnon was not Absalom's friend.

2 Samuel 13:27

Absalom pressed David

Here the author speaks of Absalom urging David to let Amnon come as if he were putting physical pressure on him. Alternate translation: "Absalom begged David for Amnon to come"

all the king's sons

This does not include Absalom and Amnon who is dead. It includes the rest of the sons that the king allowed to go to the celebration. Alternate translation: "the rest of the king's sons"

2 Samuel 13:28

Do not be afraid

This implies that they do not need to be afraid of the consequences for killing Amnon. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid that you will be blamed for killing the king's son"

Have I not commanded you?

Absalom asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that he will be blamed for killing Amnon because he is commanding them. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have commanded you to do this." or "I will be the one guilty for killing him because I have commanded you to do this."

not commanded you

What Absalom has commanded them to do may be stated in the question. Alternate translation: "not commanded you to kill him"

2 Samuel 13:29

every man

This refers to the king's sons who left the celebration.

2 Samuel 13:30

So it came about

"It happened that." This phrase is used here to introduce the next event in the story.

on the road

"travelling along the road"

that the news came to David saying

Here it says that the news came, when really someone came and told David the news. Alternate translation: "that someone came and reported the news to David saying"

2 Samuel 13:31

Then the king arose

"Then the king stood up"

tore his clothes, and lay on the floor

He did these things to show that he was extremely sad. Alternate translation: "tore his clothes, and threw himself

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on the floor grieving"

with their clothes torn

They did this to show their sadness and to mourn with their king. Alternate translation: "and tore their clothes, mourning with the king"

2 Samuel 13:32

Jonadab ... Shimeah

See how you translated these men's names in 2 Samuel 13:3.

Let not my master believe

"My master, do not believe"

my master

Jonadab calls David "my master" to show respect.

Amnon violated his sister

This is a polite way of saying that Amnon raped his sister.

2 Samuel 13:33

let not my master the king

"my master the king, do not"

take this report to heart

The phrase "take something to heart" means "to worry about it." Alternate translation: "worry about this report"

2 Samuel 13:34

keeping watch

This means that the servant was watching for enemies while guarding at the city wall. Alternate translation: "who was guarding" or "who was guarding at the city wall"

raised his eyes

Here the servant looking up at something is spoken of as if he lifted up his eyes. Alternate translation: "looked up"

2 Samuel 13:36

So it came about

This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.

raised their voices

Here the sons crying out is spoken of as if their voices were something they lifted into the sky. Alternate translation: "cried out"

2 Samuel 13:37

Talmai ... Ammihud

These are the names of men.

for his son

"for his son Amnon"

2 Samuel 13:38

where he was for three years

"where he stayed for three years"

2 Samuel 13:39

The mind of King David longed

Here David is referred to by his mind to emphasize his thoughts. Alternate translation: "King David longed"

for he was comforted concerning Amnon and his death

"because he was no longer grieving about Amnon being dead." This refers to three years after Absalom fled to Geshur.

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14 [1]Now Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart went out to Absalom.[2]So Joab sent word to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought to him. He said to her, "Please pretend you are a mourner and put on mourning clothes. Please do not anoint yourself with oil, but be like a woman who has mourned a long time for the dead.[3]Then go to the king and speak to him about what I will describe." So Joab told her the words she was to say to the king.

[4]When the woman from Tekoa spoke to the king, she lay facedown on the ground and said, "Help me, king."[5]The king said to her, "What is wrong?" She answered, "The truth is that I am a widow, and my husband is dead.[6]I, your servant, had two sons, and they fought with each other in the field, and there was no one to separate them. One struck the other and killed him.
[7]Now the whole clan has risen against your servant, and they say, 'Give into our hand the man who struck his brother, so that we may put him to death, to pay for the life of his brother whom he killed.' So they would also destroy the heir. Thus they will put out the burning coal that I have left, and they will leave for my husband neither name nor descendant on the surface of the earth."

[8]So the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will command something to be done for you."[9]The woman of Tekoa replied to the king, "My master, king, may the guilt be on me and on my father's family. The king and his throne are guiltless."
[10]The king replied, "Whoever says anything to you, bring him to me, and he will not touch you anymore."[11]Then she said, "Please, may the king call to mind Yahweh your God, so that the avenger of blood will not destroy anyone further, so that they will not destroy my son." The king replied, "As Yahweh lives, not one hair of your son will fall to the ground."

[12]Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a further word to my master the king." He said, "Speak on."[13]So the woman said, "Why then have you devised such a thing against the people of God? For in saying this thing, the king is like someone who is guilty, because the king has not brought back home again his banished son.[14]For we all must die, and we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But God will not take away life. Rather, he devises a way for those who were driven away not to remain outcast.
[15]Now then, seeing that I have come to speak this thing to my master the king, it is because the people have made me afraid. So your servant said to herself, 'I will now speak to the king. It may be that the king will perform the request of his servant.[16]Perhaps the king will listen to me and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together, out of the inheritance God gave us.'[17]Then your servant prayed, 'Yahweh, please let the word of my master the king give me relief, for as an angel of God, so is my master the king in telling good from evil.' May Yahweh your God be with you."

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[18]Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide from me anything that I will ask you." The woman replied, "Let my master the king now speak."[19]The king said, "Is not the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As you live, my master the king, no one can escape to the right hand or to the left from anything that my master the king has spoken. It was your servant Joab who commanded me and told me to say these things that your servant has spoken.[20]Your servant Joab has done this to change the course of what is happening. My master is wise, like the wisdom of an angel of God, and he knows everything that is happening in the land."

[21]So the king said to Joab, "See now, I will do this thing. Go then, and bring the young man Absalom back."[22]So Joab lay facedown on the ground in honor and gratitude to the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my master, king, in that the king has performed the request of his servant."
[23]So Joab arose, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem.[24]The king said, "He may return to his own house, but he may not see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king's face.

[25]Now in all Israel there was no one praised for his handsomeness more than Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the top of his head there was no blemish in him.[26]When he cut the hair of his head at the end of every year, because it was heavy on him, he weighed his hair; it would weigh about two hundred shekels, which is measured by the weight of the king's standard.[27]To Absalom were born three sons and one daughter, whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman.

[28]Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without seeing the king's face.[29]Then Absalom sent word for Joab to send him to the king, but Joab would not come to him. So Absalom sent word a second time, but Joab still did not come.
[30]So Absalom said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is near mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire.[31]Then Joab arose and came to Absalom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"
[32]Absalom answered Joab, "Look, I sent word to you saying, 'Come here so I may send you to the king to say, "Why did I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to still be there. Now therefore let me see the king's face, and if I am guilty, let him kill me."'"[33]So Joab went to the king and told him. When the king called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed low to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

2 Samuel 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Reconciliation

David missed his son, Absalom, who was in exile. Joab summons a wise woman to reconcile David and Absalom. (See: reconcile)

Important figures of speech used in this chapter

Parable

The wise woman uses a type of story to convince David that his actions were wrong. He treated a stranger worse than he treated his own son. This parable was intended to convict David of his sin. She uses David's own words against him. (See: sin)

Links:

- 2 Samuel 14:1 Notes

2 Samuel 14:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells about a new person in the story.

Zeruiah

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 2:13.

2 Samuel 14:2

sent word to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought

This means that Joab sent someone with a message to Tekoa and had him bring back a woman to him. This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "sent someone with a message to Tokoa and had him bring a wise woman back"

Tekoa

This is the name of a place.

the dead

This refers to someone who has died, not dead people in general. Alternate translation: "someone who has died"

2 Samuel 14:4

she lay facedown on the ground

She did this to show her respect and submission to the king. Alternate translation: "she showed her respect to the king by lying facedown on the ground"

2 Samuel 14:6

One struck the other

"One of my sons hit the other son with something"

2 Samuel 14:7

the whole clan

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"my entire family"

your servant

To show respect for the king the woman refers to herself as "your servant."

put him to death

This is an idiom which means to kill. Alternate translation: "kill him"

they would also destroy the heir

If they put the guilty brother to death there would not be a son left to inherit the family's possessions. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "if they did this, they would be destroying our family's heir"

Thus they will put out the burning coal that I have left

Here the woman refers to her only living son as if he were a burning piece of coal. She speaks of the men killing her son as stopping the coal's burning. Alternate translation: "In this way they will kill the only child I have left"

they will leave for my husband neither name nor descendant

"they will not leave for my husband name or descendant"

neither name nor descendant

This refers to a son to carry on the family's name into the next generation. Alternate translation: "no son to preserve our family's name"

on the surface of the earth

"on the earth." This descriptive phrase emphasizes that the family line would not continue on earth after the husband died. "The surface of the earth" refers to the ground on which people walk.

2 Samuel 14:8

I will command something to be done for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will take care of this matter for you"

2 Samuel 14:9

Tekoa

Translate the name of this place the same as you did in 2 Samuel 14:2.

may the guilt be on me and on my father's family

This means that if people say that the king was wrong for helping the woman's family that the king should not be guilty. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "if anyone blames you for helping our family, may my family be considered guilty instead"

The king and his throne

Here the word "throne" refers to anyone who later becomes king in David's place. Alternate translation: "The king and his descendants" or "The king and his family"

are guiltless

"are innocent." This implies that in the future if anyone accuses the king of wrongdoing, he will be innocent in the matter. Alternate translation: "will be innocent regarding the matter"

2 Samuel 14:10

says anything to you

Here speaking threats is spoken of as speaking in general. Alternate translation: "threatens you" or "speaks threats to you"

he will not touch you anymore

Here David speaks of a person not threatening or hurting her, by saying that the person would not touch her. It is implied that David will not allow the person threatening her to bother her again. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "I will make sure he does not threaten you again"

2 Samuel 14:11

Please, may the king call to mind Yahweh your God

Possible meanings are 1) The phrase "call to mind" is an idiom meaning to pray. Alternate translation: "Please, pray to Yahweh your God" or 2) Here "call to mind" means to remember and it is implied that after he remembers Yahweh he will promise in his name. Alternate translation: "Please promise in the name of Yahweh your God"

the avenger of blood

This refers to the man who wants to avenge the death of the dead brother. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the man who wants to avenge my son's brother's death"

destroy anyone further

"cause anyone else to die." This is in addition to the brother who already died.

that they will not destroy my son

"that they will not kill my son" or "that they will not execute my son"

As Yahweh lives

Often people would make promises and compare how surely they would fulfil their promise to how surely Yahweh is alive. Alternate translation: "I promise you, as surely as Yahweh lives" or "In Yahweh's name I promise"

not one hair of your son will fall to the ground

The means that her son will not be harmed, which is exaggerated by saying that he will not lose even a single hair. Alternate translation: "your son will be completely safe"

2 Samuel 14:12

your servant

To show respect for the king the woman refers to herself as "your servant."

speak a further word to

"talk about something else to." The woman is requesting to speak to the king about another topic.

Speak on

This is an idiom. The king was giving her permission to continue speaking. Alternate translation: "You may speak to me"

2 Samuel 14:13

Why then have you devised such a thing against the people of God?

The woman asks this rhetorical question to rebuke David for how he has treated Absalom. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "What you have just said proved that you did wrong."

the king is like someone who is guilty

The woman compares the king to someone who is guilty to suggest that he is guilty without saying it directly. Alternate translation: "the king has declared himself guilty"

his banished son

"his son whom he banished"

2 Samuel 14:14

For we all must die, and we are like water spilled on the ground ... up

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again
Here the woman speaks of a person dying as if they were water being spilled on the ground. Alternate translation: "We all must die, and after we die we cannot be brought back to life again"
not to remain outcast
"to be allowed to return"
2 Samuel 14:15
it is because the people have made me afraid
The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "I have come because the people have made me afraid"
your servant
To show respect for the king the woman refers to herself as "your servant"
2 Samuel 14:16
from the hand of the man
This phrase is an idiom. Also, "the hand" is a metonym referring to the man's control. Alternate translation: "out of the control of the man"
2 Samuel 14:17
the word of my master the king
"the message of my master the king"
for as an angel of God, so is my master ... from evil
Here David, the king, is compared to an "angel of God." Alternate translation: "for the king is like an angel of God because they both know how to tell good from evil"
2 Samuel 14:18
Please do not hide from me anything that I will ask you
The negative form here is used for emphasis and can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Please tell me the truth about everything I ask you"
2 Samuel 14:19
Is not the hand of Joab with you in all this
Here the word "hand" refers to Joab's influence. Alternate translation: "Has not Joab influenced you in all this" or "Did Joab send you here to speak these things"
As you live
"As surely as you are alive." Here the woman compares the certainty of what David has said to the certainty that he is alive, to emphasize how true his statement is.
no one can escape to the right hand ... the king has spoken
Here the woman describes the difficulty of speaking to the king and keeping him from finding out the truth by comparing it to a person not being about to escape in any direction. Alternate translation: "no one can keep you from knowing the truth"
to the right hand or to the left
The expression gives two extremes and means "anywhere." Alternate translation: "anywhere at all" or "anywhere"
2 Samuel 14:20
My master is wise
"My master the king is wise"
is wise, like the wisdom of an angel of God
The woman compares David's wisdom to the wisdom of an angel to emphasize how very wise he is. Alternate translation: "you are very wise, like an angel of God"
2 Samuel 14:21
So the king said to Joab
It is implied that the king had Joab brought before him so that he could speak to him. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Then the king summoned Joab and said to him"
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated similar words in 2 Samuel 13:24.
this thing
This refers to what Joab wants the king to do. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "what you want me to do"
2 Samuel 14:22
Joab lay facedown on the ground
Joab did this to honor the king and show his gratitude.
your servant
To show respect for the king Joab refers to himself as "your servant."
I have found favor in your eyes
The phrase "found favor" is an idiom which means to be approved of by someone. Also, "eyes" is a metonym for sight, and sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "you are pleased with me" or "you have approved of me"
in that the king
"because the king"
the king has performed the request of his servant
"you have done what I asked you to do"
2 Samuel 14:24
but he may not see my face ... the king's face
Here the word "face" refers to the king himself. Alternate translation: "but he may not see me ... the king"
2 Samuel 14:25
Now
This word marks a stop in the main story. This new section gives background information for the part of the story that follows.
there was no one praised for his handsomeness more than Absalom
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people praised Absalom for his handsomeness more than they praised anyone else"
handsomeness
good and pleasing appearance, especially of the face
From the sole of his foot to the top of his head there was no blemish in him
This means the whole person was without blemish. Alternate translation: "There were no blemishes on any part of his body"
2 Samuel 14:26
two hundred shekels
This can be written in modern units. Alternate translation: "two and a half kilograms"
the weight of the king's standard
The king had weights that determined the standard weight of the shekel and other weights and measurements.
2 Samuel 14:27
To Absalom were born three sons and one daughter
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"Absalom had three sons and one daughter"
2 Samuel 14:28
the king's face
Here "the king's face" refers to the king himself. Alternate translation: "the king"
2 Samuel 14:29
Absalom sent word for Joab
Here "word" is a metonym for "a message." This means that he sent a messenger to Joab with a request. Alternate translation: "Absalom sent a messenger to Joab asking him"
to send him to the king
It is implied that Absalom wanted Joab to come to him to see him and to intercede for him so that he would be allowed to see the king. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "to come to him and to intercede for him so that he could see the king"
So Absalom sent word a second time
Here "word" is a metonym for "a message." This means that he sent a messenger to Joab again with the same request. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "So Absalom sent a messenger to Joab again with the same request"
2 Samuel 14:30
See
Here this word is used to remind people of something. Alternate translation: "As you know"
2 Samuel 14:32
Look
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
I sent word
Here "word" is a metonym for "a message." This means that he sent a messenger. Alternate translation: "I sent a messenger"
to the king to say
The message here for the king is written as if Absalom were the speaker. Absalom was asking Joab to speak the message on his behalf. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "to say to the king on my behalf" or "to ask the king for me"
the king's face
Here "king's face" refers to the king himself. Alternate translation: "the king"
2 Samuel 14:33
bowed low to the ground before the king
Absalom is showing respect to the king. Alternate translation: "bowed low to the ground to honor the king"
the king kissed Absalom
This implies that the king forgave and restored Absalom. The full meaning of this can be made clear.

15 [1]It came about after this that Absalom prepared a chariot and horses for himself, with fifty men to run before him.
[2]Absalom would get up early and stand beside the road leading to the city gate. When any man had a dispute to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city have you come?" Then the man would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel."
[3]So Absalom would say to him, "Look, your case is good and in the right, but there is no one empowered by the king to hear your case."[4]Absalom would add, "I wish that I were made judge in the land, so that every man who had any dispute or cause might come to me, and I would bring him justice!"
[5]So it came about that when any man came to Absalom to honor him, Absalom would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him.[6]Absalom acted in this way to all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

[7]It came about at the end of four years that Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay a vow that I have made to Yahweh in Hebron.[8]For your servant made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram, saying,' If Yahweh will indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will worship Yahweh.'"
[9]So the king said to him, "Go in peace." So Absalom arose and went to Hebron.[10]But then Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you must say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'"
[11]With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem, who were invited. They went in their innocence, not knowing anything that Absalom had planned.[12]While Absalom offered sacrfices, he sent for Ahithophel from his hometown of Giloh. He was David's counselor. Absalom's conspiracy was strong, for the people following Absalom were constantly increasing.

[13]A messenger came to David saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are following after Absalom."[14]So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Prepare to leave immediately, or he will quickly overtake us, and he will bring down disaster on us and attack the city with the edge of the sword."[15]The king's servants said to the king, "Look, your servants are ready to do whatever our master the king decides."
[16]The king left and all his family after him, but the king left ten women, who were concubines, to keep the palace.[17]After the king went out and all the people after him, they stopped at the last house.[18]All his servants marched with him, and before him went all the Kerethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites—six hundred men who had followed him from Gath marched with the king.

[19]Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why will you come with us? Return and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and an exile. Return to your own place.[20]Since you just left yesterday, why should I make you wander all over with us? I

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do not even know where I am going. So return and take your fellow countrymen with you, and may steadfast love and faithfulness go with you."
[21]But Ittai answered the king and said, "As Yahweh lives, and as my master the king lives, surely in whatever place where my master the king goes, there also will your servant go, whether that means living or dying."[22]So David said to Ittai, "Go ahead and continue with us." So Ittai the Gittite marched with the king, along with all his men and all the families who were with him.[23]All the country wept with a loud voice as all the people passed by over the Kidron Valley, and as the king also himself crossed over. All the people traveled on the road toward the wilderness.

[24]Even Zadok with all the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of God, were present. They set the ark of God down, and then Abiathar joined them. They waited until all the people had passed by out of the city.[25]The king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of Yahweh, he will bring me back here and show me again the ark and the place where he lives.[26]But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' look, here am I, let him do to me whatever seems good to him."
[27]The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar.[28]See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me."[29]So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back into Jerusalem, and they stayed there.

[30]But David ascended barefoot and weeping up the Mount of Olives, and he had his head covered. Every man of the people who were with him covered his head, and they went up weeping as they walked.[31]Someone told David saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O Yahweh, please turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness."
[32]It came about that when David arrived at the top of the road, where God used to be worshiped, Hushai the Arkite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth on his head.[33]David said to him, "If you travel with me, then you will be a burden to me.[34]But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, king, as I have been your father's servant in time past, so will I now be your servant,' then you will confuse Ahithophel's advice for me.
[35]Will you not have the priests Zadok and Abiathar with you? So whatever you hear in the king's palace, you must tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests.[36]See that they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son. You must send to me by their hand everything that you hear."[37]So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city as Absalom arrived and entered into Jerusalem.

2 Samuel 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of Absalom's attempted revolt.

Special concepts in this chapter

Absalom's conspiracy

For four years, Absalom made many allies in an attempt to make himself king. This is why he acted as a judge for the people. Since this was all done in secret, it is called a "conspiracy." David found out and fled with those in the army who were loyal to him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The author used the metaphor of a thief to describe how Absalom was able to win people's loyalty: "So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."

Links:

2 Samuel 15:1 Notes

2 Samuel 15:1

It came about

This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.

with fifty men to run before him

These men would run in front of the chariot to honor Absalom. Alternate translation: "with fifty men to run before him to honor him"

2 Samuel 15:2

Your servant

When a man would respond to Absalom's question he would refer to himself as "your servant" to honor Absalom.

2 Samuel 15:3

So Absalom would say to him

It is implied that the person told his case to Absalom. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Absalom would ask him what his problem was, and the man would then explain to Absalom why he sought justice. Absalom would then say to him"

to hear your case

"Hearing" a case means to listen to it and to make a

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judgement decision over it. Alternate translation: "to judge your case" or "to oversee your case"
2 Samuel 15:5
put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him
This action is a friendly greeting. Alternate translation: "greet him as a friend by embracing him and kissing him"
2 Samuel 15:6
who came to the king for judgment
This means that people came to the king so that he could decide their disputes. Alternate translation: "who came to the king for him to judge over their disputes"
So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel
This sentence means Absalom convinced the men to be loyal to him rather than to David. Here the author speaks of how the people became loyal to Absalom by saying that he stole their hearts. Alternate translation: "In this way, Absalom convinced the men of Israel to be loyal to him"
2 Samuel 15:7
It came about
This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.
at the end of four years that Absalom
This refers to four years after he returned to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "fours years after Absalom had returned to Jerusalem, he"
and pay a vow that I have made to Yahweh in Hebron
"to Hebron and there fulfill a vow that I have made to Yahweh"
2 Samuel 15:8
For your servant
Here Absalom refers to himself this way to honor the king.
2 Samuel 15:9
So Absalom arose
"So Absalom left"
2 Samuel 15:10
throughout all the tribes of Israel
Here the places where the tribes of Israel lived are referred to as the tribes themselves. Alternate translation: "throughout the land of the tribes of Israel"
the sound of the ram's horn
"a ram's horn being blown"
2 Samuel 15:11
who were invited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who he had invited"
went in their innocence
"went innocently"
2 Samuel 15:12
he sent for Ahithophel
This means that he sent a messenger to go get Ahithophel and bring him back to him. Alternate translation: "he sent a messenger to go get Ahithophel who was"
Ahithophel
This is the name of a man.
Giloh
This is the name of a place.
2 Samuel 15:13
The hearts of the men of Israel are following after
Here the men are referred to by their "hearts" to emphasize their loyalty to Absalom. Alternate translation: "The men of Israel are loyal to" or "The men of Israel are following after"
2 Samuel 15:14
escape from Absalom ... he will quickly ... and he will bring
Here David speaks of Absalom and the men with him as "Absalom" himself because the men are following Absalom's authority. Alternate translation: "escape from Absalom and his men ... he and his men will quickly ... and they will bring"
attack the city with the edge of the sword
The "city" is a metonym referring to the people in the city. The "edge of the sword" is a synecdoche referring to the Israelites' swords and emphasize that they killed the people in battle. Alternate translation: "will attack the people of our city and kill them with their swords"
bring down disaster
This means to cause disaster to happen.
2 Samuel 15:16
to keep the palace
Here the word "keep" means to care for. Alternate translation: "to care for the palace"
2 Samuel 15:17
at the last house
This refers to the last house they would come to when leaving the city. Alternate translation: "at the last house as they were leaving the city"
2 Samuel 15:18
his servants
"his soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.
Kerethites ... Pelethites
Translate the names of these people groups the same as you did in 2 Samuel 8:18.
Gittites
Translate the name of this people group the same as you did in 2 Samuel 6:10.
six hundred men
"600 men"
2 Samuel 15:19
Ittai
This is the name of a man.
Gittite
Translate the name of this people group the same as you did in 2 Samuel 6:10.
Why will you come with us?
This rhetorical question indicates that the king does not think they should go along with him. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not need to go with us."
2 Samuel 15:20
why should I make you wander all over with us?
This rhetorical question emphasizes David did not want Ittai to come. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not want to cause you to wander around with us."
Since you just left yesterday
Here "yesterday" is an exaggeration that emphasizes a short amount of time. Ittai the Gittite had lived there for several years. Alternate translation: "Since you have lived here only a short time"

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may steadfast love and faithfulness go with you
This is a blessing that David is giving to him. The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be expressed with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "may Yahweh love you without ceasing and be faithful to you"
2 Samuel 15:21
As Yahweh lives, and as my master the king lives
Here the speaker is making a solemn promise. He compares the certainty that he will fulfill his promise to the certainty that Yahweh and the king are alive. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise that as surely as Yahweh and the king live"
your servant
Ittai refers to himself this way to honor the king.
whether that means living or dying
"even if I get killed supporting you"
2 Samuel 15:23
All the country wept with a loud voice
Many of the people of Israel wept loudly when they saw the king leaving. Here this is generalized by saying that the whole country wept. Alternate translation: "All the people along the road wept" or "Many of the people wept"
with a loud voice
Here the many people who were weeping are spoken of as if they shared one loud voice. Alternate translation: "loudly"
Kidron Valley
This is the name of a place near Jerusalem.
2 Samuel 15:25
I find favor in the eyes of Yahweh
Here the "eyes of Yahweh" refer to Yahweh's thoughts and opinion. If you "find favor" with someone it means that they are pleased with you. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is pleased with me"
where he lives
"where his presence is." The ark of the covenant symbolizes Yahweh's presence. This refers to the place where the ark is. Alternate translation: "where it is kept"
2 Samuel 15:27
Ahimaaz
This is the name of a man.
Abiathar
See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 8:17.
Are you not a seer?
This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Zadok and can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You will be able to find out what is happening."
2 Samuel 15:28
See
Here this word means for the listener to pay attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
until word comes from you
This refers to him sending a messenger to the king. Alternate translation: "until you send a messenger to me to inform me"
to inform me
Here the king implies he is to receive a message informing him about what is happening in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "to tell me what is happening in Jerusalem"
2 Samuel 15:30
barefoot
wearing no shoes or sandals
his head covered
This is a sign of mourning and shame. Alternate translation: "his head covered in mourning"
2 Samuel 15:31
Ahithophel
See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 15:11.
conspirators
people who join together against someone else
please turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness
David is asking Yahweh to make Ahitohphel's advice foolish and useless. Alternate translation: "please let whatever advice Ahithophel gives be foolishness and unsuccessful"
2 Samuel 15:32
It came about
"It happened." This phrase marks the next event in the story.
at the top of the road
The word "top" is used here because David went up in elevation and is at the top of a hill. Alternate translation: "at the top of the hill"
where God used to be worshiped
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where people once worshiped God"
Hushai
This is the name of a man.
Arkite
This is the name of a people group.
with his coat torn and earth on his head
This is an act showing shame or repentance. Here the word "earth" means dirt. Alternate translation: "He had torn his clothes and put dirt on his head to show that he was very sad"
2 Samuel 15:34
you will confuse Ahithophel's advice for me
David is suggest to Hushai that he oppose whatever Ahithopel advises. Alternate translation: "you can serve me by opposing Ahithophel's advice"
2 Samuel 15:35
Will you not have the priests Zadok and Abiathar with you?
David asks this rhetorical question to tell Hushai that he will not be alone. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Zadok and Abiathar the priests will be there to help you."
whatever you hear
This is a generalization. It means all of the important and insightful things that he hears, not every single word he hears.
2 Samuel 15:36
Ahimaaz ... Jonathan
These are the names of men.
by their hand
The phrase "their hand" refers to the sons and means that they were to serve as messengers. Alternate translation: "their sons to tell me"

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16 [1]When David had gone a short distance over the summit of the hill, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of saddled donkeys; on them were two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, and one hundred bunches of figs, and a skin of wine.[2]The king said to Ziba, "Why did you bring these things?" Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fig cakes are for your young men to eat, and the wine is for anyone who is faint in the wilderness to drink."
[3]The king said, "Then where is your master's grandson?" Ziba replied to the king, "Look, he has stayed behind in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore my father's kingdom to me.'"[4]Then the king said to Ziba, "Look, all that belonged to Mephibosheth now belongs to you." Ziba answered, "I bow in humility to you, my master, king. Let me find favor in your eyes."

[5]When King David approached Bahurim, a man from the family of the clan of Saul came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. [6]He threw stones at David and at all of the king's servants, in spite of the people and mighty men who were on the king's right and left.
[7]Shimei called out in cursing, "Go away, get out of here, you man of blood, you worthless man![8]Yahweh has repaid all of you for the blood you shed within the family of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. Yahweh has given the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood."

[9]Then Abishai son of Zeruiah, said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my master the king? Please let me go over and take off his head."[10]But the king said, "What have I to do with you, sons of Zeruiah? Perhaps he is cursing me because Yahweh has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then could say to him, 'Why are you cursing the king?'"
[11]So David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Look, my son, who was born from my body, wants to take my life. How much more may this Benjamite now desire my ruin? Leave him alone and let him curse, for Yahweh has commanded him to do it.[12]Perhaps Yahweh will look at the misery unleashed on me, and repay me with good for his cursing me today."
[13]So David and his men traveled on the road, while Shimei went beside him up on the hillside, cursing and throwing dust and stones at him as he went.[14]Then the king and all the people who were with him became weary, and he rested when they stopped for the night.

[15]As for Absalom and all the people of the men of Israel who were with him, they came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.[16]It came about when Hushai the Arkite, David's friend, had come to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"
[17]Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with him?"[18]Hushai said to Absalom, "No! The one whom Yahweh and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, that is the man to whom I will belong, and I will stay with him.
[19]Also, what man should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, I will serve in your presence."

[20]Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give us your advice about what we should do."[21]Ahithophel answered Absalom, "Go to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the palace, and all Israel will hear that you have become a stench to your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong."
[22]So they spread for Absalom a tent on the top of the palace, and Absalom went to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.[23]Now the advice of Ahithophel that he gave in those days was as if a man heard from the mouth of God himself. That was how all of Ahithophel's advice was viewed by both David and Absalom.

2 Samuel 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Absalom seeks advice from David's advisers

David's best adviser, Ahithophel, told Absalom to publicly seduce the concubines that David had left to take care of the palace. Because the concubines were the king's property, having sexual relations with a king's concubines implied that Absalom was now the king. This would show the people that the break with David was complete.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

To show how seriously people took Ahithophel's advice, the author used a simile comparing his advice to God's advice. "Now the advice of Ahithophel that he gave in those days was as if a man heard from the mouth of God himself."

Links:

2 Samuel 16:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 16:1

Ziba

This is a man's name.

Mephibosheth

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 4:4.

two hundred loaves ... one hundred clusters ... one hundred bunches

"200 loaves ... 100 clusters ... 100 bunches"

loaves of bread

"cakes of bread"

clusters of raisins ... bunches of figs

These phrases refer to raisins or figs pressed together.

raisins

dried grapes

a skin of wine

"a wineskin full of wine"

2 Samuel 16:2

faint

tired and weak

2 Samuel 16:3

your master's grandson

"Mephibosheth, your master's grandson"

grandson

the son of one's son or daughter

Look

Here this word is used to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

house of Israel

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

will restore my father's kingdom to me

Having a descendant of Saul being allowed to rule is spoken of as the kingdom being restored to their family. Alternate translation: "will allow me to rule the kingdom that my grandfather ruled"

2 Samuel 16:4

Mephibosheth

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 4:4.

I bow in humility to you

Ziba is not literally bowing before the king when he is speaking here. This means that he will serve the king with the same amount of humility he would be showing if he were literally bowing before him. Alternate translation: "I will humbly serve you"

Let me find favor in your eyes

The phrase "find favor" means to be approved of by someone. Also, "eyes" is a metonym for sight, and sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "I want you to be pleased with me" or "I desire you for to be pleased with me"

2 Samuel 16:5

Bahurim

Translate the name of this city the same as you did in 2 Samuel 3:16.

Shimei ... Gera

These are the names of men.

2 Samuel 16:6

the king's servants

You may need to make explicit that these were probably officials of some sort, not household servants. Alternate translation: "the king's officials"

in spite of the

"even though there were"

people and mighty men

You may need to make explicit that these were probably soldiers and bodyguards, men who protect an important person. Alternate translation: "soldiers and bodyguards"

2 Samuel 16:7

man of blood

Here "blood" refers to all of men he was responsible for killing in battle. Alternate translation: "murderer"

2 Samuel 16:8

Yahweh has repaid

Yahweh repays them by punishing them. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has punished"

for the blood you shed within the family of Saul

Here "blood" refer to people who were killed from Saul's family. The king was responsible for them dying. Alternate translation: "for killing many of Saul's family"

in whose place you have reigned

David reigned as king over the same people whom Saul had previously reigned. Alternate translation: "in whose place you have reigned as king"

into the hand of Absalom

Here "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "into the control of Absalom"

2 Samuel 16:9

Abishai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 2:18]

Zeruiah

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 2:13]

Why should this dead dog curse my master the king?

Abishai asked this question to express his anger at the man. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This dead dog must not speak to the king this way."

this dead dog

Here the man is being described as worthless by being compared to a dead dog. Alternate translation: "this worthless man"

2 Samuel 16:10

What have I to do with you, sons of Zeruiah?

This rhetorical question is asked to correct the sons of Zeruiah. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not want to know what you think!"

Perhaps he is cursing me because

"He may be cursing me because"

Who then could say to him, 'Why are you cursing the king?

This is said as a rhetorical question to emphasize that the answer is "no one." This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one then can ask him, 'Why are you cursing the king?'"

2 Samuel 16:11

my son, who was born from my body

David describes his son this way to emphasize the close bond between a father and his son. Alternate translation: "my own son" or "my dear son"

wants to take my life

This is a polite way to refer to killing someone. Alternate

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translation: "wants to kill me"

How much more may this Benjamite now desire my ruin?

David uses this rhetorical question to express that he is not surprised that the man wants to kill him. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Of course this Benjamite desires my ruin!" or "I am not surprised this Benjamite desires my ruin as well!"

desire my ruin

Here David describes the man's desire to kill him as if David were something that the man wanted to ruin. Alternate translation: "desire me to be killed" or "desire to kill me"

Leave him alone and let him curse

Here the phrase "leave him alone" means to not stop him from what he is doing. Alternate translation: "Do not stop him from cursing me"

2 Samuel 16:12

will look at

Here "looking" means "considering." Alternate translation: "will consider"

the misery unleashed on me

Here David speaks of misery as if it were a dangerous animal that the Benjamite unleashed on him.

2 Samuel 16:13

Shimei went beside him up on the hillside

Shimei was walking parallel to David and his men, though Shimei was up higher on the hillside.

2 Samuel 16:15

Ahithophel

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:12]

2 Samuel 16:16

Hushai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:32]

It came about

"It happened that." This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.

Arkite

See how you translated the name of this people group in [2 Samuel 15:32]

2 Samuel 16:17

loyalty

a strong feeling of support and love

Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with him?

These rhetorical questions are asked to criticize Hushai. They can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have been a loyal friend to David; you should have gone with him."

2 Samuel 16:18

The one whom ... that is the man ... with him

Here Hushai is referring to Absalom in the third person to take emphasize off of him and place it on Yahweh and the people who chose him. This can be written in second person. Alternate translation: "you are the one whom ... you are the man ... with you"

2 Samuel 16:19

what man should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son?

Hushai asks these rhetorical questions to emphasize that he wants to serve Absalom. They can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I should serve only David's son, so I will serve in his presence." or "I should serve you, for you are David's son."

2 Samuel 16:20

Ahithophel

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:12]

2 Samuel 16:21

Go to your father's concubines

This is a polite way of talking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "Have sexual relations with your father's concubines" or "Lie with your father's concubines"

to keep the palace

The phrase "to keep" means to take care of. Alternate translation: "to take care of the palace"

become a stench to your father

Ahithophel speaks of Absalom offending his father as if he would become something that had a strong and offensive odor. Alternate translation: "become offensive to your father" or "greatly insulted father"

Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong

Here the people who followed Absalom are referred to by their hands. The news will strengthen the peoples' loyalty to Absalom and encourage them. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The news of this will strengthen the loyalty of all who follow you"

2 Samuel 16:22

they spread

"they set up"

Absalom went to his father's concubines

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Samuel 16:21]

in the sight of all Israel

This means that people were able to see the tent and Absalom walking in and out of the tent with the women. The phrase "all of Israel" is a generalization, for only people near the palace could see it. Alternate translation: "where the Israelites could see him go into the tent"

2 Samuel 16:23

Now the advice of Ahithophel ... was as if a man heard

Here the author compare how much people trusted Ahithophel's advice with how much they would trust advice directly from God. Alternate translation: "Now people trusted the advice of Ahithophel in those days in the same way they would have trusted it if had come"

as if a man heard from the mouth of God himself

Here God's mouth represents himself and emphasizes his speech. Alternate translation: "as if God had said it with his own mouth" or "as if a man heard it spoken by God himself"

all of Ahithophel's advice was viewed by both David and Absalom

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "both David and Absalom viewed all of Ahithophel's advice"

was viewed

"was thought of"

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17 [1]Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Now let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David
tonight.[2]I will come on him while he is weary and weak and will surprise him with fear. The people who are with him
will flee, and I will attack only the king.[3]I will bring back all the people to you, like a bride coming to her husband, and all
the people will be at peace under you."[4]What Ahithophel said pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

[5]Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Arkite, too, and let us hear what he says."[6]When Hushai had come to Absalom,
Absalom explained to him what Ahithophel had said and then asked Hushai, "Should we do what Ahithophel has said? If
not, tell us what you advise."[7]So Hushai said to Absalom, "The advice that Ahithophel has given this time is not good."
[8]Hushai added, "You know your father and his men are strong warriors, and that they are bitter, and they are like a bear
robbed of her cubs in a field. Your father is a man of war; he will not sleep with the army tonight.[9]Look, right now he is
probably hidden in some pit or in some other place. It will happen that when some of your men have been killed at the
beginning of an attack, that whoever hears it will say, 'A slaughter has taken place among the soldiers who follow
Absalom.'[10]Then even the bravest soldiers, whose hearts are like the heart of a lion, will be afraid because all Israel knows
that your father is a mighty man, and that the men who are with him are very strong.
[11]So I advise you that all Israel should be gathered together to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as numerous as the sands that
are by the sea, and that you go to battle in person.[12]Then we will come on him wherever he may be found, and we will
cover him as the dew falls on the ground. We will not leave even one of his men, or him himself, alive.
[13]If he retreats into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it into the river, until there is no
longer even a small stone found there."[14]Then Absalom and the men of Israel said, "Hushai the Arkite's advice is better
than Ahithophel's." Yahweh had ordained the rejection of Ahithophel's good advice in order to bring destruction on
Absalom.

[15]Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel in such and
such a way, but I have advised something else.[16]Now then, go quickly and report to David; say to him, 'Do not camp
tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over, or the king will be swallowed up along with all the
people who are with him.'"
[17]Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at the spring of Rogel. A female servant used to go and inform them what they
needed to know, for they could not risk being seen going into the city. When the message came, then they were to go and
tell King David.[18]But a young man saw them this time and told Absalom. So Jonathan and Ahimaaz went away quickly and
came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard, into which they descended.
[19]The man's wife took the covering for the well and spread it over the well's opening, and tossed grain over it, so no one
knew Jonathan and Ahimaaz were in the well.[20]Absalom's servants came to the woman of the house and said, "Where are
Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman told them, "They have crossed over the river." So after they had looked around and
could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

[21]It came about after they had left that Jonathan and Ahimaaz came up out of the well. They went to report to King David;
they said to him, "Get up and cross quickly over the water because Ahithophel has given such and such advice about
you."[22]Then David arose and all the people who were with him, and they crossed over the Jordan. By morning daylight not
one of them had failed to cross over the Jordan.
[23]When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and went to his house in his own
city. He set his house in order and hanged himself. So he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

[24]Then David came to Mahanaim. As for Absalom, he crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him.
[25]Absalom had set Amasa over the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether the Ishmaelite,[1] who
went to Abigail, who was the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab.[26]Then Israel and Absalom
camped in the land of Gilead.

[27]It came about when David had come to Mahanaim, that Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Makir
son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim,[28]brought sleeping mats and blankets, bowls and
pots, and wheat, barley flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils,[29]honey, butter, sheep, and milk curds from the herd, so that
David and the people with him could eat. These men had said, "The people are hungry, weary, and thirsty in the
wilderness."

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[1]Scholars disagree about whether the word describing Jether should be "Ishmaelite," as it is in the ancient Greek translation, or "Israelite," as it is in the ancient Hebrew text. Some scholars believe that "Israelite" is a scribal error in the Hebrew. "Ishmaelite" is the word used in a parallel passage, 1 Chronicles 2:17, in both the ancient Hebrew and Greek texts.

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2 Samuel 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Confusion

Ahithophel gives good advice to Absalom, but Hushai confuses Absalom. God is using the misleading advice to protect David, his king.

Links:

2 Samuel 17:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 17:1

Ahithophel

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:12]

twelve thousand men

"12,000 men"

arise and

"begin to"

2 Samuel 17:2

come on

"come to"

weary and weak

These words mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize how weak David was. Alternate translation: "weak"

will surprise him with fear

Here the word "fear" can be expressed with the adjective "afraid." Alternate translation: "will surprise him and make him afraid"

I will attack only the king

It is implied that he intends to kill the king. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will kill only the king"

2 Samuel 17:3

bring back all the people

This refers to all of the people who were with David. Alternate translation: "bring back all of the people who were with him"

like a bride coming to her husband

Here Ahithophel speaks of the peoples' happiness by comparing it to a bride's happiness. Alternate translation: "and they will come happily, like a bride is happy when she comes to her husband" or "and they will come happily"

be at peace

This means to have peace or to live peacefully. Alternate translation: "live peacefully"

under you

This refers to being under the king's authority. Alternate translation: "under your authority"

2 Samuel 17:5

Hushai the Arkite

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 15:32.

2 Samuel 17:6

Ahithophel

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 15:12.

2 Samuel 17:8

they are like a bear robbed of her cubs

The anger of the soldiers here is being compared to that of a mother bear who cubs are taken from her. Alternate translation: "they are angry, like a mother bear whose cubs have been take from her" or "they are very angry"

a bear

a large furry animal that walks on four legs and has sharp claws and teeth

is a man of war

This means that his has fought in many battles and knows well the ways of war. Alternate translation: "has fought in many battles"

2 Samuel 17:9

Look

Here this word is used to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

pit

a deep hole in the ground

or in some other place

"or hidden in some other place"

when some of your men have been killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when his soldiers kill some of your men"

A slaughter has taken place among the soldiers who follow Absalom

The noun "slaughter" means an event where many people are brutally killed. This can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Many of the soldiers who follow Absalom have been slaughtered" or "The enemy soldiers have killed many of the soldiers who follow Absalom"

2 Samuel 17:10

whose hearts are like the heart of a lion

Here the soldiers are refers to by their "hearts." Also, their strong bravery is compared to that of a lion's. Alternate translation: "who are as brave as lions" or "who are very brave"

2 Samuel 17:11

that all Israel should be gathered together to you

This can be stated in active form. Also, here "all Israel" represents only the Israelite soldiers. Alternate translation: "that you should gather together all of the Israelite soldiers"

from Dan to Beersheba

This phrase means from the northern border of Israel to the southern border. Alternate translation: "from the whole nation of Israel"

as numerous as the sands that are by the sea

This is an exaggeration where all the grains of sand on a beach are compared to the number of Israelite soldiers. Alternate translation: "so many that they can barely be counted"

that you go to battle in person

The phrase "in person" means to go yourself and not send someone else instead. Alternate translation: "then lead them yourself into battle"

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2 Samuel 17:12

come on him

This means to purposefully go to where he is and then to attack.

we will cover him as the dew falls on the ground

Absalom's army is described as covering David's army like the dew covers the ground in the morning. Alternate translation: "we will overwhelm and completely defeat David's army"

dew

the fog or misty cloud of water that can fall onto the ground during the night, covering the ground and leaving it wet in the morning

We will not leave even one of his men ... alive

This negative sentence is used for emphasis and can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "We will kill every one of his men"

him himself

Both these words refer to David. Alternate translation: "David himself"

2 Samuel 17:13

then all Israel

This refers to Israel's soldiers, not to all of Israel. Alternate translation: "then all of our soldiers"

will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it into the river

This means that the soldiers would tear down the city walls and drag the pieces to river. Alternate translation: "will destroy the city and drag the stones to the river with ropes"

until there is no longer even a small stone found there

This is an exaggeration to describe how completely they will destroy the city. The would not literally sweep away every small stone from the city. Alternate translation: "until the city is completely destroyed"

2 Samuel 17:14

Hushai the Arkite

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 15:32. Arkite is the name of a people group.

Ahithophel

See how you translated this man's name in 2 Samuel 15:12.

the rejection of Ahithophel's good advice

The word "rejection" can be expressed with the verb "reject." Alternate translation: "for the men of Israel to reject Ahithophel's good advice"

to bring destruction on Absalom

To "bring" something on someone means to cause it to happen to them. Alternate translation: "to cause a disaster to happen to Absalom"

2 Samuel 17:15

Zadok ... Abiathar

See how you translated these men's names in [2 Samuel 15:24]

in such and such a way

This phrase, meaning "like this," refers to what Ahithophel advised Absalom earlier beginning in [2 Samuel 17:1]

2 Samuel 17:16

the fords of the wilderness

A ford is a shallow part of a river where people can walk across. The word "wilderness" here probably refers to the Arabah, the land along both sides of the Jordan River.

by all means

This means to make sure that you do something. Alternate translation: "be sure to" or "make sure that you"

the king will be swallowed up

Here the king and his people being killed is describes as if they were "swallowed" by their enemy. Alternate translation: "the king will be killed"

2 Samuel 17:17

Jonathan ... Ahimaaz

See how you translated these men's names in [2 Samuel 15:27]

When the message came

Here the "message" is spoken of as coming to them, when really it is the woman who came to then bringing the message. Alternate translation: "When she brought them a message"

spring of Rogel

This is the name of a place.

2 Samuel 17:18

this time

"one time"

So Jonathan and Ahimaaz went away

It is implied that they found out that the young man had told Absalom about them being there. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Jonathan and Ahimaaz found out what the young man had done, so they went away"

Bahurim

This is the name of a small town.

they descended

"they lowered themselves and hid"

2 Samuel 17:19

Jonathan ... Ahimaaz

See how you translated these men's names in [2 Samuel 15:27]

2 Samuel 17:20

Absalom's servants

These were probably soldiers, not house servants.

the woman of the house

"the man's wife"

Ahimaaz ... Jonathan

See how you translated these men's names in [2 Samuel 15:27]

2 Samuel 17:21

It came about

"It happened." This phrase marks the next event in the story.

cross quickly over the water

Here "the water" refers to the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "cross quickly over the river"

has given such and such advice

The idiom "such and such" is used in the place of information that is already know by the reader. Here it refers to what Ahithophel advised Absalom beginning in [2 Samuel 17:1]

2 Samuel 17:22

By morning daylight not one of them had failed to cross over the Jordan

This negative sentence is used to emphasize that they all crossed the river. It can be stated in a positive form.

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Alternate translation: "By morning daylight every one of them had crossed over the Jordan"
2 Samuel 17:23
Ahithophel saw
"Ahithophel knew" or "Ahithophel realized"
his advice had not been followed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Absalom had not followed his advice"
saddled his donkey
placed a blanket or small leather seat on the donkey so he could sit on it
set his house in order
He prepared for his death by telling his family what to do after he died. Alternate translation: "prepared for his death"
So
"And this is how"
was buried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him"
2 Samuel 17:24
Mahanaim
Translate the name of this place the same as you did in [2 Samuel 2:8]
2 Samuel 17:25
Amasa ... Joab ... Jether ... Nahash
These are the names of men. See how you translated Joab and Zeruiah
Ishmaelite
This word means that the person is descended from Ishmael. Some versions say "Israelite" here. See the footnote. You may want to choose the word that is used in the majority language Bible in your area.
who went to Abigail
This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. Alternate translation: "who had sexual relations with Abigail" or "who lay with Abigail"
Abigail ... Zeruiah
These are the names of women.
2 Samuel 17:26
Gilead
Translate the name of this place the same as you did in [2 Samuel 2:9]
2 Samuel 17:27
It came about
This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.
Mahanaim ... Rabbah ... Lo Debar ... Rogelim
These are the names of cities or places.
Shobi ... Nahash ... Makir ... Ammiel ... Barzillai
These are the names of men.
Ammonites ... Gileadite
These are the names of people groups.
2 Samuel 17:28
sleeping mats and blankets
A mat is something soft to sleep on, and a blanket is a cloth covering for warmth.
flour
crushed grain made into powder and used to make bread
roasted
cooked with dry heat
beans
seeds that are cooked and eaten
lentils
a kind of seed that is cooked and eaten
2 Samuel 17:29
curds
milk that has soured and become solid
thirsty
in need of water or some other drink

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18 [1]David counted the soldiers who were with him and appointed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them.[2]Then David sent out the army, one-third under the command of Joab, another third under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and still another third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the army, "I will certainly go out with you myself, too."
[3]But the men said, "You must not go to battle, for if we flee away they will not care about us, or if half of us die they will not care. But you are worth ten thousand of us! Therefore it is better that you be ready to help us from the city."[4]So the king answered them, "I will do whatever seems best to you." The king stood by the city gate while all the army went out by hundreds and by thousands.
[5]The king commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom." All the people heard that the king had given the captains this command about Absalom.

[6]So the army went out into the countryside against Israel; the battle spread into the forest of Ephraim.[7]The army of Israel was defeated there before the servants of David; there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men.[8]The battle spread throughout the whole countryside, and more men were consumed by the forest than by the sword.

[9]Absalom happened to meet some of David's servants. Absalom was riding his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree, and his head was caught up in the tree branches. He was left dangling between the ground and the sky while the mule he was riding kept going.[10]Someone saw this and told Joab, "Look, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!"[11]Joab said to the man who told him about Absalom, "Look! You saw him! Why did you not strike him down to the ground? I would have given you ten silver shekels and a belt."
[12]The man replied to Joab, "Even if I received a thousand silver shekels, still I would not have reached out my hand against the king's son, because we all heard the king command you, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, 'No one must touch the

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young man Absalom.'[13]If I had risked my life by a falsehood (and there is nothing hidden from the king), you would have abandoned me."
[14]Then Joab said, "I will not wait for you." So Joab took three javelins in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive and hanging from the oak.[15]Then ten young men who carried Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, attacked him, and killed him.

[16]Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and the army returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab held back the army.[17]They took Absalom and threw him into a large pit in the forest; they buried his body under a very large pile of stones, while all Israel fled, every man to his own tent.
[18]Now Absalom, while still alive, had built for himself a large stone pillar in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to carry along the memory of my name." He named the pillar after his own name, so it is called Absalom's Monument to this very day.

[19]Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me now run to the king with the good news, how Yahweh has rescued him from the hand of his enemies."[20]Joab answered him, "You will not be the bearer of news today; you must do it another day. Today you will bear no news because the king's son is dead."
[21]Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed down to Joab, and ran.[22]Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said again to Joab, "Regardless of what may happen, please let me also run and follow the Cushite." Joab replied, "Why do you want to run, my son, seeing that you will have no reward for the news?"[23]"Whatever happens," said Ahimaaz, "I will run." So Joab answered him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and outran the Cushite.

[24]Now David was sitting between the inner and outer gates. The watchman had gone up to the roof of the gate to the wall and raised his eyes. As he looked, he saw a man approaching, running alone.[25]The watchman shouted out and told the king. Then the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." The runner came closer and neared the city.
[26]Then the watchman noticed another man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper; he said, "Look, there is another man running alone." The king said, "He is also bringing news."[27]So the watchman said, "I think the running of the man in front is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok." The king said, "He is a good man and is coming with good news."

[28]Then Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "All is well." He bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Blessed be Yahweh your God! He has delivered the men who lifted up their hand against my master the king."[29]So the king replied, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent me, the king's servant, to you, king, I saw a great disturbance, but I did not know what it was."[30]Then the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So Ahimaaz turned aside, and stood still.

[31]Immediately then the Cushite arrived and said, "There is good news for my master the king, for Yahweh has avenged you today from all who rose up against you."[32]Then the king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "The enemies of my master the king, and all who rise up against you to do harm to you, should be as that young man is."[33]Then the king was deeply unnerved, and he went up to the room over the gate and wept. As he went he grieved, "My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"

2 Samuel 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter tells of the defeat and death of Absalom, ending this section on Absalom's rebellion.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's mercy

David reorganized his army and sent them out to battle, but told them to be merciful to Absalom. When David's army defeated Absalom's army, Absalom fled on a mule, but his hair caught in a tree limb and the mule ran on, leaving him hanging. One of David's soldiers saw him and told Joab. Joab went and killed him. When David heard about this he mourned for his son, Absalom. (See: mercy)

Links:

2 Samuel 18:1 Notes

2 Samuel 18:1
David counted the soldiers who were with him and appointed

David did not count all of the people himself, rather other men counted them. Alternate translation: "David

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commanded for the soldiers who were with him to be counted and he appointed" or "David arranged the soldiers who were with him and appointed"

captains of thousands and captains of hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these captains led. Alternate translation: "captains of 1,000 soldiers and captains of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "captains of large military divisions and captains of smaller military divisions"

captains

A captain is a person who is in authority over a group of soldiers.

2 Samuel 18:2

one-third ... another third

"one-third of the army ... another third of the army." A "third" is one part out of three equal parts.

Abishai ... Zeruiah

See how you translated these men's names in [2 Samuel 2:18]

Ittai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:19]

Gittite

This refers to a person from Gath, which is a Philistine city.

I will certainly go out with you myself, too

This means that he will go out with them to battle. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I myself will go with you to battle" or "I personally will go with you into battle"

2 Samuel 18:3

half of us

The word "half" refers to one out of two equal parts.

you are worth ten thousand of us

This means that the enemy army considering killing David of greater worth than killing 10,000 of the other men. The number 10,000 here is an exaggeration used to emphasize a very great number of people. Alternate translation: "they would rather kill you than to kill 10,000 of us" or "killing you is worth more to them than killing a great number of us"

ten thousand

"10,000"

that you be ready to help us from the city

David could help them from the city by advising them and sending men to help them. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that you stay here in the city and send help to us"

2 Samuel 18:5

Abishai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 2:18]

Ittai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:19]

Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom

"For my sake, do not harm the young man, Absalom." The phrase "Deal gently" means to be kind to someone and not to harm them.

my sake

"my well-being" or "my account"

2 Samuel 18:6

went out into the countryside against Israel

This means that they went out and fought against them in battle. Alternate translation: "went out into the countryside and fought against Israel"

against Israel

Here "Israel" refers to their soldiers, not all of the Israelites. Alternate translation: "against the Israelite soldiers"

2 Samuel 18:7

The army of Israel was defeated there before the servants of David

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There the servants of David defeated the army of Israel"

servants of David

"David's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

a great slaughter

an event where many people are brutally killed

twenty thousand men

"20,000 men"

2 Samuel 18:8

more men were consumed by the forest than by the sword

Here "the forest" is described as if it were alive and could act. "The sword" refers to David's soldiers who fought with swords. Alternate translation: "dangerous things in the forest killed more men than David's soldiers killed with their swords"

2 Samuel 18:9

Absalom happened to meet some of David's servants

This is an event that happened during the battle. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "During the battle, Absalom happened to meet some of David's servants"

David's servants

"David's soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

his head was caught up in the tree branches

Absalom had long hair that got caught in the tree branches. Alternate translation: "his hair was caught in the tree branches"

dangling

hanging or swinging loosely

between the ground and the sky

"in the air"

2 Samuel 18:10

Look

Here this word is used to draw a person's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

2 Samuel 18:11

Why did you not strike him down to the ground?

This rhetorical question means that he should have killed him. This question can be written as a statement. The phrase "strike down" means to kill. Alternate translation: "You should have struck him down to the ground!" or "You should have killed him immediately!"

ten silver shekels

This can be written in modern units. Alternate translation: "ten silver coins" or "110 grams of silver"

belt

This is a special belt that shows people that someone is a

great soldier and should be honored.
2 Samuel 18:12
a thousand silver shekels
"1,000 silver shekels." This can be stated in modern units. Alternate translation: "1,000 silver coins" or "11 kilograms of silver"
would not have reached out my hand against the king's son
The phrase "reached out my hand" means to attack. Alternate translation: "would not have attacked the king's son"
No one must touch
Here "touching" refers to "harming." Alternate translation: "No none must harm" or "Do not harm"
2 Samuel 18:13
a falsehood
The word "falsehood" can be expressed with a verb phrase. Also, this refers to disobeying the king's command. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "doing something that is wrong" or "by disobeying the king"
there is nothing hidden from the king
Here the man speaks about how the king knows about almost everything that happens as if everything were a physical object he knew the location of. Alternate translation: "there is nothing that the king does not know" or "the king hears about everything that happens"
2 Samuel 18:14
I will not wait for you
Joab meant that he should not continue talking to the man. Alternate translation: "I will not waste anymore time talking to you"
heart of Absalom
Here Absalom's heart refers to his chest or upper body. Alternate translation: "chest"
2 Samuel 18:15
armor
This refers to both the armor he would wear to protect himself and to his weapons. Alternate translation: "armor and weapons"
2 Samuel 18:16
Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and the army returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab held back the army
This describes what Joab commanded by blowing the ram's horn. Alternate translation: "Then Joab blew the ram's horn to call back the army, and the army returned from pursuing Israel"
returned from pursuing Israel
Here "Israel" refers to the Israelite army. Alternate translation: "returned from pursuing the Israelite army"
2 Samuel 18:17
They took Absalom and threw him
"They took Absalom's body and threw it"
they buried his body under a very large pile of stones
After putting his body in the pit they covered it with a pile of stones. This can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "they covered his body with a huge pile of stones"
while all Israel fled
Here "all Israel" refers to the Israelite soldiers. The word "fled" means "ran away." Alternate translation: "while all the Israelite soldiers ran away"
his own tent
"his own home." The Israelites were living in houses at this time.
2 Samuel 18:18
the King's Valley
This is the name of a place.
to carry along the memory of my name
Absalom uses the phrase "my name" to refer to himself and his family line. Alternate translation: "to carry on my family name, by which people would remember me"
so it is called Absalom's Monument to this very day
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so people called it Absalom's Monument from that day on"
to this very day
This refers to the present time when this book of the Bible was written.
2 Samuel 18:19
Ahimaaz
See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 15:27]
run to the king with the good news
Here Ahimaaz speaks of running to go and tell the king the good news as if the good news were a object that he were carrying. Alternate translation: "run to tell the king the good news"
the hand of his enemies
Here "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "the control of his enemies"
2 Samuel 18:20
the bearer of news
"the one who tells the news"
you will bear no news
This refers to not bearing the news to the king. Alternate translation: "you will not tell the news to the king"
2 Samuel 18:21
tell the king what you have seen
Joab is telling him to go and tell the king about the news of the battle.
2 Samuel 18:24
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story and the beginning of a new part of the story.
raised his eyes
Here the watchman looking to see something is spoken of as if he lifted up his eyes. Alternate translation: "looked out beyond the city"
2 Samuel 18:25
there is news in his mouth
Here the king speaks of the man having a message as if the news were an object sitting in his mouth. Alternate translation: "he has news to tell us"
2 Samuel 18:27
I think the running of the man in front is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok
The watchman compares the way the man ran to the way Ahimaaz runs to suggest that it may be him. Alternate translation: "I think the man running in front is Ahimaaz son Zadok, because he runs like Ahimaaz"
2 Samuel 18:28

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He bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground
He did this to honor the king. Alternate translation: "He bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground to honor the king"
Blessed be Yahweh
"Praise Yahweh." Here "bless" means to praise.
the men who lifted up their hand against my master the king
Here Ahimaaz speaks of the men opposing the king as if they were were raising their hands before him. Alternate translation: "the men who opposed and fought against my master the king"
2 Samuel 18:29
a great disturbance
This means that people were acting as though things were not right.
2 Samuel 18:30
Turn aside and stand here
"Move out of the way" or "Stand aside"
2 Samuel 18:31
rose up against
This means to oppose. Alternate translation: "opposed"
2 Samuel 18:32
The enemies of my master the king, ... should be as that young man is
The Cushite uses a comparison as a polite way to tell the king that Absalom is dead. This can be stated more directly. Alternate translation: "I would like all your enemies ... to die the way that young man died"
2 Samuel 18:33
was deeply unnerved
"was very unhappy" or "was trembling with grief"

19 [1]Joab was told, "Look, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom."[2]So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the army, for the army heard it said that day, "The king is mourning for his son."
[3]The soldiers had to sneak quietly into the city that day, like people who are ashamed sneak away when they run from battle.[4]The king covered his face and cried in a loud voice, "My son Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son!"
[5]Then Joab entered into the house to the king and said to him, "You have shamed the faces of all your servants today, who have saved your life today, and the lives of your sons and of your daughters, and the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines,[6]because you love those who hate you, and you hate those who love you. For today you have shown that commanders and servants are nothing to you. Today I believe that if Absalom had lived, and we all had died, then that would have pleased you.
[7]Now therefore get up and go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by Yahweh, if you do not go, not one man will remain with you tonight. That would be worse for you than all the disasters that have ever happened to you from your youth until now."[8]So the king got up and sat in the city gate, and all the people were told, "Look, the king is sitting in the gate," and all the people came before the king.So Israel fled, every man to his tent.
[9]All the people were arguing with each other throughout all the tribes of Israel saying, "The king rescued us out of the hand of our enemies, and he saved us out of the hand of the Philistines, but now he has run out of the land because of Absalom.[10]Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"

[11]King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah saying, 'Why are you the last to bring the king back to his palace, since the talk of all Israel favors the king, to bring him back to his palace?[12]You are my brothers, my flesh and bone. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?'
[13]Then say to Amasa, 'Are you not my flesh and my bone? God do so to me, and more also, if you are not captain of my army from now on in the place of Joab.'"[14]So he won the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man. They sent to the king saying, "Return, you and all your servants."[15]So the king returned and came to the Jordan. Now the men of Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king and then to bring the king across the Jordan.

[16]Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite, who was from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David.
[17]There were one thousand men from Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of Saul, and his fifteen sons and twenty servants with him. They crossed through the Jordan in the presence of the king.[18]They crossed to bring over the king's family and to do whatever he thought good. Shimei son of Gera bowed down before the king just before he began to cross the Jordan.
[19]Shimei said to the king, "Do not, my master, find me guilty or call to mind the wrong your servant did the day my master the king left Jerusalem. Please, may the king not take it to heart.[20]For your servant knows that I have sinned. See, that is why I have come today as the first from all the family of Joseph to come down to meet my master the king."

[21]But Abishai son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed Yahweh's anointed?"[22]Then David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should today be adversaries to me? Will any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?"[23]So the king said to Shimei, "You will not die." So the king promised him with an oath.

[24]Then Mephibosheth son of Saul came down to meet the king. He had not dressed his feet, or trimmed his beard, or washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he came home in peace.[25]So when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"

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[26]He answered, "My master the king, my servant deceived me, for I said, 'I will saddle a donkey so I may ride on it and go with the king, because your servant is lame.'[27]My servant Ziba has slandered me, your servant, to my master the king. But my master the king is like an angel of God. Therefore, do what is good in your eyes.[28]For all my father's house were dead men before my master the king, but you set your servant among those who ate at your own table. What right therefore have I that I should still cry any more to the king?"
[29]Then the king said to him, "Why explain anything further? I have decided that you and Ziba will divide the fields."[30]So Mephibosheth replied to the king, "Yes, let him take it all, since my master the king has come safely to his own home."

[31]Then Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim to cross over the Jordan with the king, and he accompanied the king over the Jordan.[32]Now Barzillai was a very old man, eighty years old. He had furnished the king with provisions while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man.[33]The king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you to stay with me in Jerusalem."
[34]Barzillai replied to the king, "How many days are left in the years of my life, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?[35]I am eighty years old. Can I distinguish between good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a burden to my master the king?[36]Your servant would like to just go over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward?
[37]Please let your servant return back home, so I may die in my own city by the grave of my father and my mother. But see, here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my master the king, and do for him what seems good to you."
[38]The king answered, "Kimham will go over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you, and whatever you desire from me, I do that for you."[39]Then all the people crossed the Jordan, and the king crossed over, and the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him. Then Barzillai returned to his own home.

[40]So the king crossed over to Gilgal, and Kimham crossed over with him. All the army of Judah brought the king over, and also half the army of Israel.[41]Soon all the men of Israel began to come to the king and say to the king, "Why have our brothers, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king and his family over the Jordan, and all David's men with him?"
[42]So the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "It is because the king is more closely related to us. Why then are you angry about this? Have we eaten anything that the king had to pay for? Has he given us any gifts?"[43]The men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten tribes related to the king, so we have even more right to David than you. Why then did you despise us? Was not our proposal to bring back our king the first to be heard?" But the words of the men of Judah were even more severe than the words of the men of Israel.

2 Samuel 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

David told to stop mourning Absalom

Joab warned David that if he continued to mourn Absalom and not thank his army, they would all desert him. So David went out to encourage the soldiers. David was both a good father and a good leader.

David made king again

This chapter record the recognition that David was the true king of Israel. It is important to remember that even though Absalom had power for a while, David never stopped being the king.

The ten tribes and Judah argue over David

The ten tribes of Israel argued with the tribe of Judah about who would bring David across the river. The men of Judah answered the ten tribes very harshly. This may foreshadow, or give a glimpse of, the future civil war that would come to divide these two groups.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

The people wanted David back as their king and expressed it in a rhetorical question: "So why are we not talking about bringing the king back?" David also used a question to persuade the people of Judah to bring him back: "You are my brothers, my flesh and bone. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?"

Links:

[2 Samuel 19:1 Notes]

2 Samuel 19:1	"Someone told Joab"
Joab was told	Look, the king is weeping
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:	The word "Look" is used here to draw someone's attention

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to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen, the king is weeping"

2 Samuel 19:2

So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the army

This means that the whole army mourned instead of celebrating. Alternate translation: "So instead of celebrating victory that day, the whole army mourned"

2 Samuel 19:3

like people who are ashamed sneak away when they run from battle

The author compares the way that the soldiers had to sneak back into the city to the way that soldiers sneak away when they are running away from battle. This emphasizes that they were made to feel ashamed. Alternate translation: "in the same way that people who had run away from battle would sneak away because they were ashamed"

sneak

move without being seen by others

2 Samuel 19:4

The king covered his face

This is a way to express grief and mourning. Alternate translation: "The king showed his grief by covering his face"

2 Samuel 19:5

You have shamed the faces of all your servants today

Here the servants are referred to by their face to emphasize how they would have hid their faces because of their shame" Alternate translation: "You have caused all your servants to hide their faces in shame today" or "You have caused all of your servants to be ashamed today"

your servants

"your soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated similar words in 2 Samuel 3:22.

2 Samuel 19:6

commanders and servants

"military officers and the soldiers under them." The "servants" served David as soldiers. See how you translated similar words in 2 Samuel 3:22.

nothing to you

This phrase is an exaggeration, but it expresses the very low value that David showed for the army. Alternate translation: "are worth very little to you"

if Absalom had lived, and we all had died, then that would have pleased you

Joab imagined how David would have felt if Absalom had lived and if all the men who had fought to help David had died. He said this because he was angry that David was still mourning for Absalom.

2 Samuel 19:7

your servants

"your soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated similar words in 2 Samuel 3:22.

I swear by Yahweh

Joab is making a very strong oath. Alternate translation: "I swear, as surely as Yahweh is alive"

if you do not go, not one man will remain with you

Joab means if David did not go and speak kindly to his soldiers, they would all leave David. This can be stated positivley. Alternate translation: "only if you go will any of your men remain with you" or "if you do not go, all of your men will leave you"

not one man will remain with you

This refers to them remaining loyal to him. Alternate translation: "not one man will remain loyal to you"

2 Samuel 19:8

all the people were told

This is a generalization. It means most of the men. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many of the men who were there heard others saying"

Look, the king is sitting

The word "Look" is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen, the king is sitting"

all the people

Here "the people" refer to the people who followed David. Here "all" is an generalization. It means a large number came and gathered around him. Alternate translation: "many of the people"

So Israel fled

Here "Israel" refers to the Israelite soldiers who followed Absalom. Alternate translation: "And every Israelite soldier fled" or "And all of the Israelite soldiers fled"

his tent

"his home." The Israelites were living in houses in those days. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 18:17.

2 Samuel 19:9

out of the hand of our enemies

Here "hand" means control. Alternate translation: "from under the control of our enemies" or "from our enemies' control"

out of the hand of the Philistines

Here "hand" means control. Alternate translation: "from under the control of the Philistines" or "from the Philistines' control"

out of the land because of Absalom

This means that he had left the country fleeing from Absalom. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "out of the country fleeing from Absalom"

2 Samuel 19:10

why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?

This means they should consider bringing David back now that Absalom was dead. The question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "we should be talking about bringing the king back."

the king

This refers to David.

2 Samuel 19:11

sent to Zadok and to Abiathar

This means that David sent a messenger to Zadok and Abiathar. Alternate translation: "sent a messenger to Zadok and to Abiathar"

Why are you the last to bring the king back ... to bring him back to his palace?

This rhetorical question is asked to rebuke the elders in Judah. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have been the first to favor the king and bring him back to the palace, not the people of the nation of Israel."

since the talk of all Israel favors the king, to bring

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The noun "talk" can be expressed with the verb "talk" or "speak." Alternate translation: "since all Israel speaks favorably about the king and desires to bring" or "since what the people of Israel are saying is in the king's favor, to bring"

to bring the king back to his palace

Here restoring the king's authority to rule is spoken of as bringing him back to his palace. Alternate translation: "to restore the king's authority as king"

2 Samuel 19:12

You are my brothers, my flesh and bone

The king uses these to phrases to emphasize that they are closely related. Being or having the same flesh is a metaphor for belonging to the same family or tribe. Alternate translation: "You are my brothers, and we have the same flesh and bone" or "You are my brothers, my close relatives"

Why then are you the last to bring back the king?

This is the second rhetorical question here and it is also a rebuke for the elders of Judah. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have been the first, not the last, to bring back the king."

2 Samuel 19:13

Amasa

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 17:25]

Are you not my flesh and my bone?

David uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that they are related. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are my flesh and my bones."

my flesh and my bone

Here David speaks of them being related by saying that they have the same flesh and bones. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Samuel 19:12]

God do so to me

This is an idiom that means for God to kill him. Alternate translation: "May God kill me"

2 Samuel 19:14

he won the hearts

Here the mens' loyalty is referred to as their "hearts." Alternate translation: "he won the loyalty"

as one man

This speaks of the men being united in their loyalty to the king as if they were one man with the same mind. Alternate translation: "and they were united together" or "they were united in their loyalty to the king"

They sent to the king

This means that they sent a messenger to the king. Alternate translation: "They sent a messenger to the king"

2 Samuel 19:16

Gera

This is the name of a man.

Bahurim

Translate the name of this place the same as you did in 2 Samuel 3:16.

2 Samuel 19:17

Ziba

This is the name of a man. Translate as you did in [2 Samuel 9:2]

one thousand men ... fifteen sons ... twenty servants

"1,000 men ... 15 sons ... 20 servants"

in the presence of the king

This means that the king was there and was aware of what was happening. Alternate translation: "at the place where the king was"

2 Samuel 19:19

call to mind

This means "to remember." Alternate translation: "remember"

your servant

Here Shimei refers to himself this way to humble himself before the king and honor the king.

not take it to heart

"To take something to heart" means to think about something seriously or to be bothered by it. Alternate translation: "not be bothered by it" or "forget about it"

2 Samuel 19:21

Abishai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 2:18]

Zeruiah

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 2:13]

Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed Yahweh's anointed?

Abishai was angry at Shimei for cursing David and is suggesting that he should be killed. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Shimei should be put to death because he cursed Yahweh's anointed."

Yahweh's anointed

This refers to David. It means that he is the man that Yahweh had anointed as king. Alternate translation: "the man that Yahweh has anointed as king"

2 Samuel 19:22

What have I to do with you ... that you should today be adversaries to me?

David uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Abishai. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have nothing in common with you, you sons of Zeruiah! You have no good reason to become my adversaries today."

Will any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?

David uses these rhetorical questions to continue rebuking Abishai. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "No person will be executed today in the nation of Israel, because today I am the one who is king over all of Israel."

Will any man be put to death

This phrase "put to death" means to be killed or executed. Alternate translation: "Will any man be killed" or "Will I order any man to die"

For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?

Possible meanings of this rhetorical question are 1) "I know that I am still king of Israel." or 2) "Today I am the one who is king over Israel!"

2 Samuel 19:24

Mephibosheth

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 4:4]

He had not dressed his feet

"He had not cared for his feet." Mephibosheth's feet were

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crippled. This phrase means that he had not taken proper care of his feet.

2 Samuel 19:25

Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?

David is asking Mephibosheth why he did not go with David when David and all the people who followed him left Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Why did you not go with me when I left Jerusalem, Mephibosheth?"

2 Samuel 19:27

Ziba

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 9:2]

my master the king is like an angel of God

Here David's wisdom is compared to the wisdom of an angel. Alternate translation: "my master the king is as wise as an angel of God"

do what is good in your eyes

This means to do what you think is right. Alternate translation: "do what you believe to be the right thing to do"

2 Samuel 19:28

all my father's house were dead men before my master the king

Mephibosheth speaks of how his relatives had deserved to be executed as if they had already been executed and were dead. Alternate translation: "all my father's house deserved for my master the king to order them to be executed"

my father's house

This refers to his father's relatives. Alternate translation: "my father's relatives"

What right therefore have I that I should still cry any more to the king?

Mephibosheth uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he has no right to request anything from the king. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Therefore, I have no right to ask the king to do anything else for me."

2 Samuel 19:29

Why explain anything further?

David uses this rhetorical question to tell him that he does not need to continue talking about his conflict with Ziba. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not need to explain this any further." or "You certainly do not need to say any more."

2 Samuel 19:31

Barzillai

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 17:27]

Gileadite

See how you translated the name of this people group in [2 Samuel 17:27]

Rogelim

See how you translated the name of this place in [2 Samuel 17:27]

the Jordan

the Jordan River

2 Samuel 19:32

Mahanaim

See how you translated the name of this place in [2 Samuel 17:27]

eighty years old

"80 years old"

had furnished the king with provisions

"had provided what the king needed"

2 Samuel 19:34

How many days are left in the years of my life, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem?

Here Barzillai means that he is old and that there is no reason for him to accompany David. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am certainly not going to live many more years. There is no good reason for me to go up with the king to Jerusalem."

2 Samuel 19:35

eighty years old

"80 years old"

Can I distinguish between good and bad?

Barzillai uses rhetorical questions to emphasize why he does not want to go to Jerusalem. Here "good" and "bad" refer to what is desirable and what is not. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot distinguish between what is desirable and what is not."

Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink?

Barzillai uses rhetorical questions to emphasize why he does not want to go to Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot enjoy the taste of what I eat and drink."

Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women?

Barzillai uses rhetorical questions to emphasize why he does not want to go to Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot hear well the voices of singing men and singing women."

Why then should your servant be a burden to my master the king?

Barzillai uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he does not want to be a burden to the king. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your servant should not go with you and be a burden to you."

2 Samuel 19:36

Why should the king repay me with such a reward?

Barzillai uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he does not know why the king would reward him this way. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not know why the king would repay me with such a great reward"

2 Samuel 19:37

General Information:

Barzillai asks that Kimham be allowed to take his place instead with David.

Kimham

This is the name of a man.

by the grave of my father and my mother

This does not mean that he wants to die right next to their graves, but rather, that he wants to die in the city where they are buried. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "where my father's and my mother's graves are" or "where my father and my mother are buried"

Let him cross over

This refers to crossing the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "Let him cross over the Jordan"

2 Samuel 19:38

Kimham will go over with me

This refers to crossing the Jordan River. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Kimham will cross the river

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with me"

2 Samuel 19:40

crossed over to Gilgal

They crossed over the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "crossed over the river to Gilgal"

Kimham

See how you translated this name in 2 Samuel 19:37.

All the army of Judah brought the king over, and also half the army of Israel

"All the army of Judah and half the army of Israel brought the king over"

brought the king over

They crossed over the Jordan River with the king. Alternate translation: "escorted the king over the river"

2 Samuel 19:41

Why have our brothers, the men of Judah ... and all David's men with him?

The men of Israel use this question to express that they feel betrayed by the people of Judah. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not right that our brothers, the men of Judah, who did not support you as king, had the privilege of bringing you and your family back across the Jordan River."

stolen you away

The men of Israel speak of how the men of Judah escorted the king across the river as if the king were something they stole that did not belong to them. Alternate translation: "taken you away from us"

the Jordan

the Jordan River

2 Samuel 19:42

Why then are you angry about this?

The men of Judah ask this rhetorical question to rebuke the men of Israel. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "But you have no reason to be upset about this."

Have we eaten anything that the king had to pay for? Has he given us any gifts?

The men of Judah ask the question to express that they have not taken anything from the king. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The king has never paid for our food, and he has never given us any gifts."

2 Samuel 19:43

we have even more right to David than you

"we have a greater claim to David than you do." It may be helpful to state clearly what having "more right" means. Alternate translation: "we have more right to serve the king and to be with the king than you do"

Why then did you despise us?

The men of Israel ask this rhetorical question to express their anger. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have despised us!"

Was not our proposal to bring back our king the first to be heard?

The men of Israel ask this question to remind and rebuke the people of Judah. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We were the first to suggest that we bring back the king!"

the words of the men of Judah were even more severe than the words of the men of Israel

"the men of Judah spoke even more severely than the men of Israel did"

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20 [1]There also happened to be at the same place a worthless man whose name was Sheba son of Bikri, a Benjamite. He blew the ram's horn and said, "We have no part in David, neither have we any inheritance in the son of Jesse. Let every man go back to his tent, Israel!"

[2]So all the men of Israel deserted David and followed Sheba son of Bikri. But the men of Judah followed closely their king, from the Jordan all the way to Jerusalem.

[3]When David came to his palace at Jerusalem, he took the ten concubines whom he had left to keep the palace, and he put them in a house under guard. He provided for their needs, but he did not go to them any longer. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living as if they were widows.

[4]Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together within three days; you must be here, too."[5]So Amasa went to call Judah, but he was delayed beyond the time that the king had appointed for him.
[6]So David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba son of Bikri will do us more harm than Absalom did. Take your master's servants and pursue after him, or he will find fortified cities and escape out of our sight."[7]Then Joab's men went out after him, along with the Kerethites and the Pelethites and all the mighty warriors. They left Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bikri.
[8]When they were at the great stone which is at Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Joab was wearing the battle armor that he had put on, which included a belt around his waist with a sheathed sword fastened to it. As he walked forward, the sword fell out.
[9]So Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my cousin?" Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him.
[10]Amasa did not notice the dagger that was in Joab's left hand. Joab stabbed Amasa in the stomach and his bowels spilled out to the ground. Joab did not strike him again, and Amasa died.So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba son of Bikri.
[11]Then one of Joab's young men stood by Amasa, and the man said, "He who favors Joab, and he who is for David, let him follow Joab."[12]Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the middle of the road. When the man saw that all the people stood still, he carried Amasa off of the road and into a field. He threw a garment over him because he saw that everyone who

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came by him stood still.[13]After Amasa was taken off the road, all the men followed on after Joab in pursuit of Sheba son of Bikri.

[14]Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel Beth Maakah, and through all the land of the Bikrites, who gathered together and also pursued Sheba.[15]They caught up with him and besieged him in Abel Beth Maakah. They built up a siege ramp against the city against the wall. All the army who were with Joab were wreaking destruction to break down the wall.[16]Then a wise woman cried out of the city, "Listen, please listen, Joab! Come near me so I may speak with you."
[17]So Joab came near to her, and the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of your servant." He answered, "I am listening."[18]Then she spoke, "They used to say in old times, 'Surely seek advice at Abel,' and that advice would end the matter.[19]We are a city that is one of the most peaceful and faithful in Israel. You are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why do you want to swallow up the inheritance of Yahweh?"
[20]So Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy.[21]That is not true. But a man from the hill country of Ephraim, named Sheba son of Bikri, has lifted up his hand against the king, against David. Give up him alone, and I will withdraw from the city." The woman said to Joab, "His head will be thrown to you over the wall."[22]Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom. They cut off the head of Sheba son of Bikri, and threw it out to Joab. Then he blew the ram's horn and Joab's men left the city, every man to his tent. Then Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

[23]Now Joab was over all the army of Israel, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and over the Pelethites.
[24]Adoniram was over the men who did forced labor, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder.[25]Sheva was scribe and Zadok and Abiathar were priests.[26]Ira the Jairite was David's priest.

2 Samuel 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sheba's revolt

A man named Sheba told the people of the ten tribes that David was Judah's king, but not their king. David worked hard to preserve unity in Israel after this time of division.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Joab used an idiom "has lifted up his hand against the king, against David" meaning "revolted against David," to explain why his army was attacking the city of Abel.

Links:

2 Samuel 20:1 Notes

2 Samuel 20:1

to be at the same place

This refers to the town of Gilgal.

Sheba ... Bikri

These are names of men.

We have no part in David, neither have we any inheritance in the son of Jesse

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Sheba is emphasizing that he and the tribes of Israel have no relationship with David. Alternate translation: "The inheritance of David and his father's family does not belong to us" or "We are not a part of David and his father's family"

his tent

"his home." The Israelites were living in houses in those days. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 18:17.

2 Samuel 20:3

to keep the palace

Here the phrase "to keep" means to take care of. Alternate translation: "to take care of the palace"

in a house under guard

If a house is "under guard" it means that a guard is posted at the house. Alternate translation: "in a house and put a guard there"

he did not go to them

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "he did not have sexual relations with them"

they were shut up

This means that they were not allowed to leave the house. Alternate translation: "they were shut inside the house"

widows

These are women whose husbands have died.

2 Samuel 20:4

Amasa

This is the commander of David's army. See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 17:25]

2 Samuel 20:6

Abishai

This is another commander of David's army. See how you translated his name in [2 Samuel 2:18]

do us more harm

"hurt us more"

your master's servants

"my soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how

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you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22. David refers to himself as "your master" as a formal way of speaking to someone with less authority.

pursue after

"chase after"

he will find fortified cities

This means that Sheba and his men will enter these cities to hide from David's army. The word "he" represents Sheba but refers to both him and his men. Alternate translation: "he and his men will hide in fortified cities" or "he and his men will take refuge in fortified cities"

out of our sight

Here David refers to his army by their sight to emphasize that Sheba and his men would be hidden and David's army would be unable to capture them. Alternate translation: "from us"

2 Samuel 20:7

Kerethites ... Pelethites

These are the names of people groups who helped to protect King David. See how you translated this man's name in [2 Samuel 8:18]

2 Samuel 20:8

When they were

"When Joab and the men of Judah were"

belt

a strip of leather or other material used to hold clothing or weapons in place

sheathed sword

This means the sword was in its protective covering.

the sword fell out

Joab let the sword fall out to fool Amasa into thinking that he Joab was unarmed, so that Amasa would allow him to walk closer to him. Alternate translation: "he allowed the sword to fall on the ground so Amasa would think he was unarmed"

2 Samuel 20:9

my cousin

Amasa was the son of the sister of Joab's mother.

took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him

This was a common way for men to greet one another.

2 Samuel 20:10

dagger

a short sword that is easy to hide and was often used for close-in fighting and assassinations

bowels spilled

"intestines spilled"

2 Samuel 20:11

he who is for David

To be "for" someone means to support them. Alternate translation: "he who supports David" or "he who is loyal to David"

2 Samuel 20:12

Amasa lay wallowing in his blood

"Amasa lay squirming in his blood." Amasa may have still been alive and rolling in his blood, but he was probably dead by this time. It is described this way to show how gruesome his body looked. Alternate translation: "Amasa lay dead in his blood"

all the people stood still ... came by him stood still

This means they stopped walking and were staring at Amasa's dead body. Alternate translation: "all the people stood still staring at the dead body ... came by him stood still, staring at his dead body"

he carried Amasa

"he carried Amasa's body"

2 Samuel 20:13

After Amasa was taken off the road

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After the man took Amasa off the road"

in pursuit of

This abstract noun can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "pursuing"

2 Samuel 20:14

Sheba passed through

Here "Sheba" refers to both him and his army. Alternate translation: "Sheba and his army" or "Sheba and his men"

Abel Beth Maakah

The names Both Abel and Beth Maakah refer to the same place and may be combined. It is a city near the tribe of Dan.

of the Bikrites

This is the name of a people group.

also pursued Sheba

"also followed Sheba"

2 Samuel 20:15

They caught up with him

"Joab and the soldiers caught up with him"

against the city against the wall

"against the city wall"

were wreaking destruction to break down the wall

The use of the words "destruction" and "break down" are probably a hendiadys to emphasize how hard the men were working to destroy the wall. They were probably using a log with metal at one end. Many men would run with the log and hit the wall with the metal end until it broke down. Alternate translation: "were doing all they could to break down the wall."

2 Samuel 20:16

Listen, please listen

The repetition of "Listen" strengthens the woman's plea.

2 Samuel 20:17

Listen to the words of your servant

The woman refers to herself as "your servant." This is a polite way to speak to someone with greater authority.

2 Samuel 20:18

that advice would end the matter

"that advice would solve the problem"

2 Samuel 20:19

most peaceful and faithful in Israel

This describes the cities. Alternate translation: "most peaceful and faithful cities in Israel"

city that is a mother in Israel

This speaks of the importance of this city among the nation of Israel as if it were a well respected mother. Alternate translation: "city that everyone in Israel respects like they would their mother" or "city that is very important and that Israel respects"

Why do you want to swallow up the inheritance of Yahweh?

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

Here the woman uses a rhetorical question to suggest to Joab what they should not do. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not destroy the city that is Yahweh's inheritance!"

swallow up

Here the woman speaks of the army destroying the city as if the city were food to be swallowed. Alternate translation: "destroy"

the inheritance of Yahweh

Here the city is referred to as Yahweh's inheritance to emphasize that it belongs to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "a city that belongs to Yahweh"

2 Samuel 20:20

Far be it, far be it from me, that I should

He repeats this phrase to emphasize that this is something he would never do. Alternate translation: "Truly, truly, I would never"

that I should swallow up or destroy

This refers to destroying the city. This may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that I should swallow up or destroy your city" or "that I should swallow up or destroy the inheritance of Yahweh"

swallow up or destroy

Both of these phrases means to destroy. In the first phrase "destroying" is spoken of as if it were "swallowing." These may be combined. Alternate translation: "ruin or destroy the city" or "destroy"

2 Samuel 20:21

has lifted up his hand against

This means to rebel and fight against someone. Alternate translation: "has opposed" or "is rebelling against"

Give up him alone

Joab is asking for the people of the city to release Sheba to him. Alternate translation: "Hand this man over to us" or "Give this man to us"

I will withdraw from the city

Here the "I" refers to both Joab and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "We will withdraw from the city"

His head will be thrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We will throw his head"

2 Samuel 20:22

Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom

This means that the woman acted wisely and spoke to her people about what they should do. Alternate translation: "Then the wise woman spoke to all the people"

his tent

"his home." The Israelites were living in houses in those days. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 18:17.

2 Samuel 20:23

Now

"Now" marks a stop in the main story. This new section gives background information about the men who served King David.

Joab was over ... Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over

The phrase "was over" refers to having authority over a group of people. Alternate translation: "Joab had authority over ... Benaiah son of Jehoiada had authority over"

Benaiah ... Jehoiada

Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [2 Samuel 8:18]

Kerethites ... Pelethites

Translate the names of these people groups the same as you did in [2 Samuel 8:18]

2 Samuel 20:24

Adoniram was over

The phrase "was over" refers to having authority over a group of people. Alternate translation: "Adoniram had authority over"

Adoniram

This is the name of a man.

the men who did forced labor

"the slave workers"

Jehoshaphat ... Ahilud

Translate the names of these men the same as you did in 2 Samuel 8:16.

2 Samuel 20:25

Sheva

This is the name of a man.

were priests

They were probably officials who advised David on matters to do with the kingdom and were not involved in temple worship. See the footnote at 2 Samuel 8:18, where the same word is used.

2 Samuel 20:26

Ira

This is the name of a man.

Jairite

This is the name of a people group.

David's priest

He was probably an official who advised David on matters to do with the kingdom and was not involved in temple worship. See the footnote at 2 Samuel 8:18, where the same word is used.

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21 [1]There was a famine in David's time for three years in a row, and David sought the face of Yahweh. So Yahweh said, "This famine is on you because of Saul and his murderous family, because he put the Gibeonites to death."
[2]So the king called together the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not from the people of Israel; they were from what remained of the Amorites. The people of Israel had sworn not to kill them, but Saul tried to kill them all anyway in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.[3]David said to them, "What should I do for you? How can I make atonement, so that you may bless the people of Yahweh, who inherit his goodness and promises?"
[4]The Gibeonites responded to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his family. In the same way it is not for us to put to death any man in Israel." David replied, "What are you saying that I should do for you?"
[5]They answered the king, "The man who tried to kill us all, who schemed against us, so that we are now destroyed and have no place within the borders of Israel—[6]let seven men from his descendants be handed over to us, and we will hang them before Yahweh in Gibeah of Saul, the one chosen by Yahweh." So the king said, "I will give them to you."

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[7]But the king spared Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul, because of Yahweh's oath between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul.[8]But the king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, sons whom she bore to Saul—the two sons were named Armoni and Mephibosheth; and David also took the five sons of Merab[1] daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite.[9]He handed them over into the hands of the Gibeonites. They hanged them on the mountain before Yahweh, and they died all seven together. They were put to death during the time of harvest, during the first days at the beginning of barley harvest.

[10]Then Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the mountain beside the dead bodies, from the beginning of harvest until the rain poured down on them from the sky. She did not allow the birds of the sky to disturb the bodies by day or the wild animals by night.[11]It was told to David what Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

[12]So David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh Gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth Shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, after the Philistines had killed Saul in Gilboa.[13]David took away from there the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son, and they gathered the bones of the seven men who had been hanged, as well.
[14]They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of Kish his father. They performed all that the king commanded. After that God answered their prayers for the land.

[15]Then the Philistines went to war again with Israel. So David went down with his servants and fought against the Philistines. David was overcome with battle fatigue.[16]Ishbi-Benob, a descendant of the Rapha, whose bronze spear weighed three hundred shekels, and who was armed with a new sword, intended to kill David.[17]But Abishai son of Zeruiah rescued David, attacked the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You must not go to battle anymore with us, so that you do not put out the lamp of Israel."

[18]It came about after this that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob, when Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of the Rapha.[19]It came about again in a battle with the Philistines at Gob, that Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.
[20]It came about in another battle at Gath that there was a man of great height who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number. He also was descended from the Rapha.[21]When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimeah, David's brother, killed him.[22]These were descendants of the Rapha in Gath, and they were killed by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

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[1]Some Hebrew copies and other ancient translations of the Hebrew copies read: Michal, but see 1 Samuel 18:19, and compare 2 Samuel 6:23, which has Michal had no children. It may be that Michal was another name for Merab.

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2 Samuel 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Special concepts in this chapter

Famine caused by a broken oath

When Israel first conquered the land, they promised not to kill the people of Gibeon. When Saul tried to kill them all, God caused a famine in Israel. David made amends with the people of Gibeon and the famine ended. David also kept his vow to Jonathan's sons. This helps to show the wisdom of king David. Although these people were not Israelites, they believed in Yahweh. (See: promise, vow and wise and believe)

Wisdom, grace and justice

David is seen to have many great qualities in this chapter. These were qualities important for a king of Israel: wisdom, grace and justice. (See: wise and grace and justice)

Links:

2 Samuel 21:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 21:1

sought the face of Yahweh

Here "face" is a synecdoche for Yahweh's presence. This means David prayed to Yahweh for an answer about the famine.

because of Saul and his murderous family

Saul had killed many Gibeonites, and Saul's descendants are guilty because of this sin.

2 Samuel 21:2

Now

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

Here "Now" marks a stop in the main story. This gives background information about the Gibeonites.

2 Samuel 21:3

What should I do for you? How can I make atonement ... promises?

These two sentences have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "What can I do to remove this sin, so that you may bless the people of Yahweh, who inherit his goodness and promises?"

2 Samuel 21:4

It is not a matter of silver or gold

"Money will not solve the problem"

2 Samuel 21:5

who schemed against us

"who made plans against us"

2 Samuel 21:6

let seven men from his descendants be handed over to us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "allow your men to give seven of his descendants to us"

we will hang them

"we will execute them by hanging"

in Gibeah of Saul

Saul was from the town of Gibeah.

the one chosen by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one whom Yahweh chose"

2 Samuel 21:7

Mephibosheth

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan. See how you translated his name in 2 Samuel 4:4.

2 Samuel 21:8

Rizpah ... Aiah

Rizpah was a woman and her father was Aiah. See how you translated these names in 2 Samuel 3:7.

Armoni and Mephibosheth ... Adriel ... Barzillai

These are names of men. This is not the same Mephibosheth as the son of Jonathan.

Merab

This is the name of a woman. See how you translated it in 2 Samuel 3:13.

Meholathite

This is the name of a people group.

2 Samuel 21:9

He handed them over into the hands of the Gibeonites

Here "the hands of the Gibeonites" represents the Gibeonite people's control. Alternate translation: "He gave them to the Gibeonites"

They were put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Gibeonites put them to death"

2 Samuel 21:10

Rizpah ... Aiah

Rizpah was a woman and her father was Aiah. See how you translated these names in 2 Samuel 3:7.

2 Samuel 21:11

It was told to David

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told David"

2 Samuel 21:12

Jabesh Gilead

Jabesh is a town in the region of Gilead. See how you translated this in 2 Samuel 2:4.

the public square

This is an area near the city gate where people did various kinds of business.

Beth Shan

This is the name of a place.

Gilboa

See how you translated the name of this place in 2 Samuel 1:6.

2 Samuel 21:13

who had been hanged

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Gibeonites executed by hanging"

2 Samuel 21:14

Zela

This is the name of a town in Benjamin.

Kish

This is the name of a man.

his father

"Saul's father"

2 Samuel 21:16

Ishbi-Benob

This is the name of a man.

three hundred shekels

"300 shekels." This is about 3.4 kilograms.

2 Samuel 21:17

Abishai son of Zeruiah

Abishai and Zeruiah are names of men. See how you translated these names in 2 Samuel 2:18.

you do not put out the lamp of Israel

The "lamp of Israel" is a metaphor that refers to David's leadership and the idea that if David were to die, the people of Israel would have no clear direction.

2 Samuel 21:18

It came about after this that

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Gob

This is the name of a town.

Sibbekai ... Saph

These are names of men.

Hushathite ... Rapha

These are names of people groups.

Rapha

This people group was known for its giant warriors.

2 Samuel 21:19

Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite

Some versions translate this as "Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed the brother of Goliath the Gittite."

Elhanan son of Jair ... Goliath

These are names of men.

Bethlehemite ... Gittite

These are names of people groups.

whose spear was like a weaver's beam

When a person was weaving a cloth he would run the threads through hooks attached to large sticks called a "weaver's beam." This means Goliath's spear was larger

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than a normal spear.

2 Samuel 21:20

twenty-four in number

"24 fingers and toes altogether"

Rapha

This people group was known for its giant warriors.

2 Samuel 21:21

Jonathan son of Shimeah

These are names of men. Shimeah was David's brother.

2 Samuel 21:22

they were killed by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants

Here "by the hand of" means "through" or "by." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David and his servants killed them"

his servants

"his soldiers." These men served David as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Samuel 3:22.

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22 [1]David sang to Yahweh the words of this song on the day that Yahweh rescued him out of the hand of all his enemies,
and out of the hand of Saul.[2]He prayed,
"Yahweh is my rock, my fortress,
the one who rescues me.
[3] God is my rock.
I take refuge in him.
He is my shield, the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold, and my refuge,
the one who saves me from violence.

[4] I will call on Yahweh, who is worthy to be praised,
and I will be saved from my enemies.

[5] For the waves of death surrounded me,
the rushing waters of destruction overwhelmed me.

[6] The cords of Sheol surrounded me;
the snares of death trapped me.

[7] In my distress I called to Yahweh;
I called to my God;
he heard my voice from his temple,
and my cry for help went into his ears.

[8] Then the earth shook and trembled.
The foundations of the heavens trembled
and were shaken, because God was angry.

[9] Smoke went up from out of his nostrils,
and blazing fire came out of his mouth.
Coals were kindled by it.

[10] He opened the heavens and came down,
and thick darkness was under his feet.

[11] He rode on a cherub and flew.
He was seen on the wings of the wind.

[12] He made darkness a tent around him,
gathering heavy rain clouds in the skies.

[13] From the lightning before him
coals of fire fell.

[14] Yahweh thundered from the heavens.
The Most High shouted.

[15] He shot arrows and scattered his enemies—
lightning bolts and threw them into confusion.

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16 Then the channels of the sea were seen;
the foundations of the world were laid bare
at the rebuke of Yahweh,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 He reached down from above; he took hold of me!
He pulled me out of the surging water.

18 He rescued me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me.

19 They came against me on the day of my distress,
but Yahweh was my support.

20 He also brought me out to a wide open place.
He saved me because he was pleased with me.

21 Yahweh has rewarded me to the measure of my righteousness;
he has restored me to the measure of the cleanness of my hands.

22 For I have kept the ways of Yahweh
and have not acted wickedly by turning from my God.

23 For all his righteous decrees have been before me;
as for his statutes, I have not turned away from them.

24 I have also been innocent before him,
and I have kept myself from my iniquity.

25 Therefore Yahweh has restored me to the measure of my righteousness,
to the degree of my cleanness in his sight.

26 To the faithful one, you show yourself to be faithful;
to a man who is blameless, you show yourself to be blameless.

27 With the pure you show yourself pure,
but you are perverse to the twisted.

28 You save afflicted people,
but your eyes are against the proud, and you humiliate them.

29 For you are my lamp, Yahweh.
Yahweh lights up my darkness.

30 For by you I can run over a troop;
by my God I can leap over a wall.

31 As for God, his way is perfect.
The word of Yahweh is pure.
He is a shield
to everyone who takes refuge in him.

32 For who is God except Yahweh,
and who is a rock except our God?

33 God is my refuge,
and he leads the blameless person on his path.

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34 He makes my feet swift like a deer
and places me on the high hills.

35 He trains my hands for war,
and my arms to bend a bow of bronze.

36 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your favor has made me great.

37 You have made a wide place for my feet beneath me,
so my feet have not slipped.

38 I pursued my enemies and destroyed them.
I did not turn back until they were destroyed.

39 I devoured them and smashed them; they cannot rise.
They have fallen under my feet.

40 You girded me with strength for battle;
you put under me those who rise up against me.

41 You gave me the back of my enemies' necks;
I annihilated those who hated me.

42 They cried for help, but no one saved them;
they cried out to Yahweh, but he did not answer them.

43 I beat them into fine pieces like dust on the ground,
I trampled them like mud in the streets.

44 You also have rescued me from the disputes of my own people.
You have kept me as the head of nations.
A people that I have not known serves me.

45 Foreigners were forced to bow to me.
As soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.

46 The foreigners came trembling out of their strongholds.

47 Yahweh lives! May my rock be praised.
May God be exalted, the rock of my salvation.

48 This is the God who executes vengeance for me,
the one who brings down peoples under me.

49 He sets me free from my enemies.
Indeed, you lifted me up above those who rose up against me.
You rescue me from violent men.

50 Therefore I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, among the nations;
I will sing praises to your name.

51 God gives great victory to his king,
and he shows his covenant loyalty to his anointed one,
to David and to his descendants forever."

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2 Samuel 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 22:2-51.

Special concepts in this chapter

God rescued David

God rescued David when he thought he would die. He protected David, fought against his enemies, and enabled him to defeat his enemies.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

David uses many metaphors to express his trust in God's protection: "my rock, my fortress, my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge." He used other metaphors to express his hopelessness: "the waves of death surrounded me," "the rushing waters of worthlessness overwhelmed me," "the cords of sheol surrounded me;" "the snares of death trapped me," and "the surging water." He also used metaphors for the victory God gave him: "I can run over a barricade" and "by my God I can leap over a wall." (See: and trust)

Links:

2 Samuel 22:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 22:1

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh starts. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul

This is a progression from enemies in general to one specific enemy of David, King Saul.

out of the hand of

This metonym means "out of the power of."

2 Samuel 22:2

Yahweh is my rock, my fortress

This metaphor shows a progression from a part, "rock," to the whole, "fortress." A fortress is built of many large rocks. This means Yahweh has the strength to protect his people from harm.

2 Samuel 22:3

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

God is my rock ... He is my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold

All of these metaphors are symbols of God's strength and power. They emphasize God's ability to protect and save his people.

2 Samuel 22:4

who is worthy to be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who is worthy to receive praise"

I will be saved from my enemies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will save me from my enemies"

2 Samuel 22:5

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

For the waves of death surrounded me, the rushing waters of destruction overwhelmed me

David compares the wicked men who wanted to kill him to flood waters that are about to drown him. These sentences have similar meanings and are used for emphasis.

the rushing waters of destruction

This is a picture of fast-flowing flood waters that destroy everything in their path.

2 Samuel 22:6

The cords of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death trapped me

David speaks about death and Sheol as if they are people who are trying to trap him as a hunter traps an animal. These phrases have similar meanings and are used for emphasis.

2 Samuel 22:7

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

In my distress

"In my great trouble"

he heard my voice from his temple

David is referring to the heavenly temple where Yahweh dwells. The earthly temple has not yet been built.

my cry for help went into his ears

Here the metonym "his ears" refers to Yahweh and his hearing of David's cry for help. Alternate translation: "he heard my prayer for help"

his ears

David speaks of Yahweh as if he had ears.

2 Samuel 22:8

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

Then the earth shook

This is Yahweh's response to David's cry for help from his enemies

earth shook ... heavens trembled

David speaks of the two extremes to include everything in creation.

and were shaken, because God was angry

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"because God's anger shook them"

2 Samuel 22:9

his nostrils ... his mouth

David speaks of Yahweh as if he had these humans parts.

Coals were kindled by it

Here Yahweh's anger is compared to fire, which causes coals to catch fire and burn. Alternate translation: "The flame from his mouth set coals on fire" or "He also sent burning coals from his mouth"

were kindled by it

This is Yahweh's response to David's cry for help from his enemies (1 Samuel 22:7). David uses the imagery of fire coming from Yahweh to emphasize Yahweh's terrible anger.

2 Samuel 22:10

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

He opened the heavens

David describes Yahweh's way of saving David from his enemies as a storm cloud gathering over a place. This emphasizes God's power and his anger.

under his feet

David speaks of God as having feet like humans.

2 Samuel 22:11

He was seen on the wings of the wind

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He appeared on the wings of the wind"

He was seen

In the original language the word translated here as "seen" is uncertain. Some other translation have "He flew."

the wings of the wind

This expression speaks of the wind as if it were a bird.

2 Samuel 22:12

rain clouds in the skies

David describes Yahweh's way of saving David from his enemies as a storm cloud gathering over a place. This emphasizes God's power and his anger.

He made darkness a tent around him

Here the darkness Yahweh creates is compared to a tent which hides him completely. Alternate translation: "He hid himself in the darkness"

2 Samuel 22:13

General Information:

David's song to Yahweh continues. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

From the lightning before him coals of fire fell

Possible meanings are 1) "Out of his bright light he sent burning coals" or 2) "From his brightness he sent lightning"

From the lightning before him

David continues describing Yahweh, whom he compares to a storm, coming to save him from his enemies. This emphasizes God's power and anger towards David's enemies.

2 Samuel 22:14

The Most High shouted.

David describes Yahweh doing these actions a person would do.

2 Samuel 22:15

He shot arrows

David describes Yahweh doing these actions a person would do.

He shot arrows ... lightning bolts

David compares the lightning from Yahweh's storm to arrows that a soldier would use.

lightning bolts and threw them into confusion

David continues describing Yahweh, whom he compares to a storm, coming to save him from his enemies. This emphasizes God's power and anger towards David's enemies.

2 Samuel 22:16

General Information:

This continues David's song to Yahweh. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

Then the channels of the sea were seen ... breath of his nostrils

When Yahweh shouted in his attack against David's enemies, it is compared to his power to create upheaval in the deepest parts of the ocean and the earth. This shows his great power and fierce anger.

the channels of the sea were seen

This means that the sea water moved and the ocean floor was visible. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People could see the channels of the sea"

the channels of the sea

the deepest part of the sea, from which the Hebrews believed was where the water in the sea came

the foundations of the world were laid bare at the rebuke of Yahweh, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils

David compares Yahweh's anger to turbulent movements of the ground. "This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's rebuke, the breath of his nostrils, laid bare the foundations of the world"

2 Samuel 22:17

General Information:

This continues David's song to Yahweh. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

out of the surging water

David compares his enemies to a flood that threatens to drown him.

2 Samuel 22:18

He rescued me from my strong enemy

David's enemies were overwhelming. He praises God for delivering him from all his enemies.

2 Samuel 22:19

General Information:

This continues David's song to Yahweh. He uses parallelism to emphasize what he is saying.

They came against me on the day of my distress

"My enemies fought against me when I was in great trouble"

the day of my distress

"the time of my distress"

but Yahweh was my support

"but Yahweh supported me" or "but Yahweh helped me"

2 Samuel 22:20

a wide open place

This refers to a place where there was no danger and his enemies could not trap him.

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2 Samuel 22:21

to the measure of the cleanness of my hands

Here "cleanness of my hands" means the same as "righteousness." Alternate translation: "because I obey his commands"

2 Samuel 22:22

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

I have kept the ways of Yahweh

Here "the ways of Yahweh" refers to how Yahweh wants his people to act. This means David has done what Yahweh commands.

2 Samuel 22:23

have been before me

This means David constantly reads and thinks about God's decrees.

2 Samuel 22:24

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

I have kept myself from my iniquity

This refers to choosing not to sin against Yahweh.

2 Samuel 22:25

to the degree of my cleanness in his sight

Here "my cleanness" means the same as "my righteousness." Alternate translation: "because he knows that I have done what he commands"

2 Samuel 22:26

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

2 Samuel 22:27

you are perverse to the twisted

Here "perverse" means to be cunning or crafty, and "twisted" means to turn away from what is good and right. This means God is wise in how he deals with wicked people.

2 Samuel 22:28

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

your eyes are against the proud

Here the metonym "your eyes" refers to what Yahweh sees. This means Yahweh watches the proud person.

you humiliate them

"you destroy their pride" or "you make them no longer proud"

2 Samuel 22:29

you are my lamp, Yahweh. Yahweh lights up my darkness

This metaphor compares Yahweh to a lamp, which means he gives David light and helps him to see when things seem hopeless.

2 Samuel 22:30

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

I can run over a troop

Here "troop" may refer to a group of soldiers or to a stone wall. Either way it means God enables David to defeat his enemies.

I can leap over a wall

David is exaggerating to emphasize Yahweh's help. Alternate translation: "I can climb over the wall that surrounds their city"

2 Samuel 22:31

The word of Yahweh is pure

"Everything Yahweh says is true"

He is a shield

The metaphor "a shield" emphasizes God's power to protect his people.

2 Samuel 22:32

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

For who is God except Yahweh, and who is a rock except our God?

David uses this question to emphasize that there is no God apart from Yahweh. These may be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Yahweh alone is God. Our God alone is a rock."

who is a rock

David compares Yahweh to a rock to emphasize his strength and ability to protect his people.

2 Samuel 22:33

he leads the blameless person on his path

Yahweh keeps the blameless person safe and removes anything that may harm him.

2 Samuel 22:34

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

He makes my feet swift like a deer and places me on the high hills

Here David's feet are compared to those of a deer using exaggeration. Yahweh gives David the strength to move quickly and provides secure places for protection and rest.

2 Samuel 22:35

my hands ... and my arms

Both of these refer to David.

to bend a bow of bronze

Only a very strong man could use a bow made from metal.

2 Samuel 22:36

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

the shield of your salvation

David compares Yahweh's power to save him to a shield that protects a soldier from his enemy.

your favor

God answered David's prayers and granted him blessings and success over his enemies.

2 Samuel 22:37

You have made a wide place for my feet beneath me

Yahweh has put David in a safe place where his enemies cannot trap him. Here he refers to himself by his "feet" to emphasize his ability to stand securely.

2 Samuel 22:38

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

pursued my enemies

"chased my enemies"

2 Samuel 22:39

I devoured them and smashed them

Here David compares himself to a wild animal. Alternate translation: "I completely destroyed them like a wild animal devouring its prey"

under my feet

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Here "feet" refers to the power and control of victory over his enemies.

2 Samuel 22:40

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

You girded me with strength for battle

"You put strength on me like a belt for battle." Here the strength that Yahweh gives is compared to a belt for battle that allowed David to do mighty things. Alternate translation: "You gave me strength for battle"

you put under me those who rise up against me

"you helped me defeat those who fought against me"

2 Samuel 22:41

the back of my enemies' necks

Possible meanings are 1) David seeing the backs of the enemy as they run away or 2) David putting his foot on the back of his enemy's neck after he defeats him.

I annihilated

"I completely destroyed"

2 Samuel 22:42

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

They cried

"My enemies cried"

they cried out to Yahweh, but he did not answer them

The time for Yahweh's judgment had come upon them.

2 Samuel 22:43

like dust on the ground ... like mud in the streets

This means that David completely destroyed his enemies. These two phrases "like dust on the ground" and "like mud on the streets" have a similar meaning and are used for emphasis.

2 Samuel 22:44

General Information:

David continues his song to Yahweh.

from the disputes of my own people

This refers to those among the Israelites who rebelled against King David.

You have kept me as the head of nations

"You placed me as ruler over the nations." Here "nations" refers to other nations besides Israel.

A people that I have not known

"A foreign people"

2 Samuel 22:45

Foreigners were forced to bow to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Foreigners bowed down to me"

2 Samuel 22:47

May my rock be praised. May God be exalted

These sentences have similar meaning and are used for emphasis. These may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May everyone praise my rock. May everyone exalt God"

my rock ... the rock

David compares Yahweh to a rock to emphasize his power to protect his people.

2 Samuel 22:48

the one who brings down peoples under me

"the one who puts the people of other nations under my rule"

2 Samuel 22:49

you lifted me up above those who rose up against me

"you saved me from my enemies and gave me honor"

from violent men

"from those who want to harm me"

2 Samuel 22:50

General Information:

David concludes his song to Yahweh.

to your name

Here the metonym "name" refers to Yahweh's reputation.

2 Samuel 22:51

he shows his covenant loyalty to his anointed one

Here David may be referring to the promises Yahweh made in 2 Samuel 7:8

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23 [1]Now these are the last words of David—
the declaration of David son of Jesse,
the declaration of the man who was highly honored,
the one anointed by the God of Jacob,
the sweet psalmist of Israel.
[2] "The Spirit of Yahweh spoke by me,
and his word was on my tongue.

[3] The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me,
'The one who rules righteously over men,
who rules in the fear of God.

[4] He will be like the morning light when the sun rises,
a morning without clouds,
when the tender grass springs up from the earth
through bright sunshine after rain.

[5] Indeed, is my family not like this before God?
Has he not made an everlasting covenant with me,
ordered and sure in every way?

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Does he not increase my salvation and fulfill my every desire?

6 But the worthless will all be like thorns to be thrown away,
because they cannot be gathered by one's hands.

7 The man who touches them
must use an iron tool or the shaft of a spear.
They must be burned up where they lie.'"

8 These are the names of David's mighty men: Josheb-Basshebeth the Tahkemonite, was the leader of the officers. He killed eight hundred men on one occasion.[1]

9 After him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men. He was with David when they taunted the Philistines who had gathered together to do battle, and when the men of Israel had retreated. 10 Eleazar stood and fought the Philistines until his hand became weary and his hand stiffened to the grip of his sword. Yahweh brought about a great victory that day. The army returned after Eleazar, only to strip the bodies.

11 After him was Shammah son of Agee, a Hararite. The Philistines gathered together where there was a field of lentils, and the army fled from them. 12 But Shammah stood in the middle of the field and defended it. He killed the Philistines, and Yahweh brought about a great victory.

13 Three of the thirty soldiers went down to David at harvest time, to the cave of Adullam. The army of the Philistines was camped in the Valley of Rephaim. 14 At that time David was in his stronghold, a cave, while the Philistines had established at Bethlehem.
15 David was longing for water and said, "If only someone would give me water to drink from the well at Bethlehem, the well that is by the gate!" 16 So these three mighty men broke through the army of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, the well at the gate. They took the water and brought it to David, but he refused to drink it. Instead, he poured it out to Yahweh. 17 Then he said, "Yahweh, far be it from me, that I should do this. Should I drink the blood of men who have risked their lives?" So he refused to drink it.
These things were done by the three mighty.

18 Abishai, brother of Joab and son of Zeruiah, was captain over the three. He once fought with his spear against three hundred men and killed them. He was renowned along with the three soldiers. 19 Was he not even more famous than the three? He was made their captain. However, his fame did not equal the fame of the three most famous soldiers.

20 Benaiah from Kabzeel was the son of Jehoiada; he was a strong man who did mighty feats. He killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down into a pit and killed a lion while it was snowing. 21 Then he killed a very large Egyptian man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiah fought against him with only a staff. He seized the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and then killed him with his own spear.
22 Benaiah son of Jehoiada did these feats, and he was named alongside the three mighty men. 23 He was more highly regarded than the thirty soldiers in general, but he was not regarded quite as highly as the three mighty men. Yet David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

24 The thirty included the following men: Asahel brother of Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem,
25 Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite,
26 Helez the Paltite, Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,
27 Abiezer the Anathothite, Sibbekai[2] the Hushathite,
28 Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite;

29 Heled[3] son of Baanah the Netophathite, Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah of the Benjamites,
30 Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the valleys of Gaash.
31 Abi-Albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,
32 Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan son of Shammah the Hararite,
33 Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite,
34 Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maakathite, Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,
35 Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,
36 Igal son of Nathan from Zobah, Bani from the tribe of Gad,[4]

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[37]Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armor bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah,
[38]Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,
[39]Uriah the Hittite—thirty-seven in all.

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[1]Instead of Josheb-Basshebeth, some Hebrew copies and some ancient translations have Ishbaal, or Ish-Bosheth. These all are probably forms of the same name.
[2]Some copies of the ancient Greek translation taken from the ancient Hebrew copies, have the name Sibbekai, see also 2 Samuel 21:18 and 1 Chronicles 11:29. Come of the copies have Mebunnai.
[3]Some ancient copies have the spelling of this name to read, Heleb.
[4]Some modern translations have a different name at this place in the text: Zobah the son of Hagri.

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2 Samuel 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 23:2-7.
2 Samuel 23:8-39 is a list of the famous people in David's army along with some of the special deeds some of them did. (See: works)

Special concepts in this chapter

Everlasting covenant
This is a reference to the covenant God previously made with David. (See: 2 Samuel 7, eternity and covenant).

Links:

2 Samuel 23:1 Notes

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2 Samuel 23:1
Now
This marks the beginning of a new section of the book.
these are the last words
This refers to what David will say in 2 Samuel 23:2-7.
the man who was highly honored, the one anointed by the God of Jacob
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man whom the God of Jacob highly honored and anointed"
anointed by the God of Jacob
Anointing was done by pouring oil on a person's head. This was done to choose who would serve God as king or priest.
psalmist
This is a person who writes psalms or songs.
2 Samuel 23:2
by me
by David
and his word was on my tongue
Here "on my tongue" is a metonym for David speaking. Alternate translation: "he gave me a message to speak"
2 Samuel 23:3
General Information:
This continues David's last words.
The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel ... me
Here the "God of Israel" is the same as the "Rock of Israel." The two phrases say essentially the same thing. David compares God to a rock to emphasize his power to protect his people.
The one who rules righteously over men, who rules in the fear of God
These two sentences both say that the king will respect God and do what God wants him to do.
in the fear of God
"respecting God"
2 Samuel 23:4
He will be like the morning light ... sunshine after rain
Here God is comparing the king to the morning light and sunshine after the rain. These are all ways of saying this king would be a delight to God and a blessing for the people. These two phrases have a similar meaning and are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "He will be a delight to all"
2 Samuel 23:5
General Information:
This continues David's last words.
Indeed, is my family not like this before God?
Here David is saying that he agrees with God. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My family is indeed like this before God!"
Has he not made ... way?
David acknowledges that God has made a covenant with him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He has indeed made ... way."
ordered and sure
This means God's covenant is properly organized and will not change so David's family can trust it.
Does he not increase my salvation ... desire?
David believes that God will always help him and cause him to prosper. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He increases my salvation and gives me my every desire."
2 Samuel 23:6
General Information:
This concludes David's last words.
But the worthless will all be like thorns to be thrown away
Here the wicked person is compared to useless thorns. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the wicked person is worthless and dangerous like thorns we

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throw away"

because they cannot be gathered by one's hands

"because no one can pick them up with his hands without the thorns hurting him"

2 Samuel 23:7

They must be burned up where they lie

"Where thorns are found, that is where they must be burned." This means God will destroy wicked people.

2 Samuel 23:8

Josheb-Basshebeth the Tahkemonite

The Tahkemonites were a people group, probably descendants of a man named Tahkemon. Alternate translation: "Josheb-Basshebeth, a descendant of Tahkemon"

Josheb-Basshebeth

This is the name of a man. Other modern translations read "Jeshbaal" or "Jashobeam" "Ishbaal" or "Ishbosheth" because various ancient copies have these variations. Translators may choose to say this in a footnote to their translation

eight hundred

"800"

2 Samuel 23:9

General Information:

This continues the list of David's greatest soldiers.

2 Samuel 23:10

The army returned after Eleazar

This means that the army returned after Eleazar returned from battle. Alternate translation: "The Israeli army returned to the battle field after Eleazer had already won the battle"

only to strip the bodies

"only to take what they wanted from the dead bodies of the enemies"

2 Samuel 23:11

General Information:

This continues the list of David's greatest soldiers.

a field of lentils

"a field where someone had planted lentils"

lentils

a flat seed, eaten like beans

the army fled

"the Israelite army ran away"

2 Samuel 23:13

Three of the thirty

These are not the same three soldiers mentioned in 2 Samuel 23:8-12.

the thirty

"the 30" or "the thirty bravest Israelite soldiers." The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

cave of Adullam

"cave near the town of Adullam." Adullam is near Bethlehem.

Valley of Rephaim

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in 2 Samuel 5:18.

2 Samuel 23:14

in his stronghold

"in his protected place"

the Philistines had established at Bethlehem

"some Philistines soldiers were controlling the village of Bethlehem"

2 Samuel 23:16

broke through the army

"fought their way through the enemy army"

2 Samuel 23:17

Should I drink the blood of men who have risked their lives?

David compares the water to blood because the men risked their lives to bring the water to him. He uses a question to emphasize this. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Drinking this water would be like drinking the blood of those men who have risked their lives to bring it to me."

2 Samuel 23:18

Abishai ... Zeruiah

These are the names of men. Translate them as in 2 Samuel 2:18.

captain over the three

This means Abishai was the leader of the three who went and got water for David.

three hundred men

"300 men"

He was renowned along with the three soldiers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He was almost as famous as the three bravest men"

2 Samuel 23:19

Was he not even more famous than the three?

This question is used to emphasize how famous he was. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He was even more famous than the three."

three most famous soldiers

This refers to Josheb Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shimeah. Abishai was not as famous as these soldiers.

2 Samuel 23:20

Kabzeel

This is the name of a city.

Jehoiada

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in 2 Samuel 8:18.

Ariel

This is the name of a man.

2 Samuel 23:22

did these feats

"did these mighty deeds"

he was named alongside the three mighty men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people praise him like they praised the three mighty men"

three mighty men

This refers to Josheb Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shimeah.

2 Samuel 23:23

He was more highly regarded than the thirty soldiers in general, but he was not regarded quite as highly as the three mighty men

"He was more famous than the other 30 soldiers except for the three best soldiers"

his bodyguard

a group of soldiers in charge of guarding David

2 Samuel 23:24

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General Information:
This is a list of David's greatest soldiers.
The thirty
"The 30 very famous soldiers"
2 Samuel 23:29
General Information:
This continues the list of David's greatest soldiers.
2 Samuel 23:33
General Information:
This continues the list of David's greatest soldiers.
2 Samuel 23:37
General Information:
This concludes the list of David's greatest soldiers.
2 Samuel 23:39
thirty-seven in all
"there were 37 total"

24 [1]Again the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them saying, "Go, count Israel and Judah."[2]The king said to Joab the commander of the army, who was with him, "Go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count all the people, so that I may know the total number of men fit for battle."
[3]Joab said to the king, "May Yahweh your God multiply the number of people a hundred times, and may the eyes of my master the king see it take place. But why does my master the king want this?"[4]Nevertheless, the king's word was final against Joab and against the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders went out from the king's presence to count the people of Israel.
[5]They crossed over the Jordan and encamped near Aroer, south of the city in the valley. Then they traveled on through Gad to Jazer.[6]They came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi, then on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon.[7]They reached the stronghold of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to the Negev in Judah at Beersheba.
[8]When they had gone throughout all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.
[9]Then Joab reported the total of the census of the fighting men to the king. There were in Israel 800,000 brave men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were 500,000 men.

[10]Then David's heart afflicted him after he had counted the men. So he said to Yahweh, "I have greatly sinned by doing this. Now, Yahweh, take away your servant's guilt, for I have acted very foolishly."
[11]When David rose up in the morning, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,[12]"Go say to David: 'This is what Yahweh says: "I am giving you three choices. Choose one of them."'"
[13]So Gad went to David and said to him, "Will three years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months from your enemies while they pursue you? Or will there be three days of plague in your land? Now decide what answer I should return to him who sent me."[14]Then David said to Gad, "I am in deep trouble. Let us fall into Yahweh's hands rather than into the hand of man, for his merciful actions are very great."

[15]So Yahweh sent a plague on Israel from the morning to a fixed time, and seventy thousand people died from Dan to Beersheba.[16]When the angel reached out with his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, Yahweh changed his mind because of the harm it would cause, and he said to the angel who was destroying people, "Enough! Now draw back your hand." At that time the angel of Yahweh was standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.
[17]Then David spoke to Yahweh when he saw the angel who had attacked the people, and said, "I have sinned, and I have acted perversely. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand punish me and my father's family!"

[18]Then Gad came that day to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar for Yahweh at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."[19]So David went up as Gad instructed him to do, as Yahweh had commanded.[20]Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants approaching. So Araunah went out and bowed to the king with his face to the ground.
[21]Then Araunah said, "Why has my master the king come to me, his servant?" David replied, "To buy your threshing floor, so I can build an altar for Yahweh, so that the plague may be removed from the people."[22]Araunah said to David, "Take it as your own, my master the king. Do with it what is good in your sight. Look, here are oxen for the burnt offering and threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood.[23]All this, my king, I, Araunah, will give to you." Then he said to the king, "May Yahweh your God accept you."
[24]The king said to Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it at a price. I will not offer as a burnt offering to Yahweh anything that costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.[25]David built an altar for Yahweh there and offered on it burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. So Yahweh answered the prayer on behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was confined.

2 Samuel 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Counting soldiers

David ordered the leaders of his army to count how many men of fighting age there were. He was not supposed to do this because it showed he did not trust God. God was displeased and offered David three punishments. (See: trust)

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Links:

2 Samuel 24:1 Notes

2 Samuel 24:1

the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel

The word "kindled" means start a fire. Here Yahweh's anger is compared to that of a fire. Alternate translation: "the anger of Yahweh started to burn like a fire"

he moved David against them

"he caused David to oppose them"

Go, count Israel and Judah

In the law of Moses, God prohibited the kings of Israel from taking a census of fighting men. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

2 Samuel 24:2

Dan to Beersheba

This phrase uses two place names Dan, in the far north, and Beersheba, in the far south, to represent the entire country.

count all the people ... fit for battle

This means to count all the men except those men who are either too young, too old, or physically unable to fight.

2 Samuel 24:3

multiply ... hundred times

This means "produce 100 more people for every one person there is now."

2 Samuel 24:4

the king's word was final against Joab

Joab and the other commanders of King David's army were not able to convince David to not take a census.

the king's word

This phrase represents the king's command to them. Alternate translation: "what the king had commanded"

2 Samuel 24:5

They crossed

"Joab and the commanders of the army crossed"

Aroer

This was a city on the northern edge of the Arnon River.

Jazer

This is a town in Gad.

2 Samuel 24:6

Tahtim Hodshi

This may refer to the town of Kadesh in the land of the Hittite people.

2 Samuel 24:8

they had gone

"Joab and the commanders had gone"

nine months and twenty days

"9 months and 20 days"

2 Samuel 24:9

Then Joab reported the total of the census of the fighting men to the king

"Then Joab told the king the total number of men ready for battle"

in Israel

This refers to the northern tribes of Israel.

800,000 ... 500,000

"eight hundred thousand ... five hundred thousand"

who drew the sword

This metonym refers to the men who were ready to fight in the army.

of Judah

This refers to the southern tribe of Judah.

2 Samuel 24:10

David's heart afflicted him

The "heart" here is a metonym for David's emotions and conscience. Alternate translation: "David felt guilty"

Now, Yahweh, take away your servant's guilt

David refers to himself as "your servant." This is a polite way to speak to someone with greater authority.

2 Samuel 24:11

the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this idiom in [2 Samuel 7:4]

David's seer

This means Gad was the official prophet in the royal palace.

2 Samuel 24:14

I am in deep trouble

"I am in terrible trouble"

Let us fall into Yahweh's hands rather than into the hand of man

Here "hands" refer to power or control. Alternate translation: "Let Yahweh and not people punish us"

2 Samuel 24:15

a fixed time

This is the time God decided he would stop the plague.

seventy thousand

"70,000"

from Dan to Beersheba

Here mentioning the city of Dan in the extreme north and the city Beersheba in the extreme south means the entire nation of Israel.

2 Samuel 24:16

the angel reached out with his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it

Here the metonym "hand" stands for the angel's power. Alternate translation: "the angel was about to destroy the people in Jerusalem"

Yahweh changed his mind because of the harm

This means that Yahweh stopped the evil that he was allowing the angel to do. Alternate translation: "Yahweh felt grieved about the harm"

Now draw back your hand

The metonym "hand" stands for the angel's power. Alternate translation: "Do not harm them any longer"

Araunah

This is the name of a man.

the threshing floor

A threshing floor was a hard, flat surface where edible grain was separated from chaff.

2 Samuel 24:17

I have sinned, and I have acted perversely

These phrases mean the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I have sinned terribly"

But these sheep, what have they done?

David uses a question and compares the people to sheep to emphasize that they have done nothing wrong. This

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rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These ordinary people have done nothing wrong."

Please let your hand punish me

Here the metonym "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "Please punish me"

2 Samuel 24:20

bowed to the king with his face to the ground

He was showing deep respect and honor to the king.

2 Samuel 24:21

so that the plague may be removed from the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that Yahweh will remove this plague from the people"

2 Samuel 24:22

what is good in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what you think is good" or "what is good in your judgement"

threshing sledges

heavy boards used to separate grain from the rest of the wheat plant

2 Samuel 24:24

I will not offer ... anything that costs me nothing

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I will only offer ... something that I have paid for"

fifty shekels

"50 shekels." A shekel is 11 grams.

2 Samuel 24:25

on behalf of the land

Here the metonym "land" stands for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "on behalf of the people of Israel"

the plague on Israel was confined

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God confined the plague that had been on Israel" or "God took the plague away from Israel"

Introduction to 1 Kings

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Kings

David dies and Solomon begins to reign (1:1-2:46) Solomon reigns (3:1–11:43) Solomon becomes wise and wealthy (3:1–4:43) Solomon's temple (5:1–8:66) Rise and fall of Solomon (9:1–11:43)
The kingdom divides (12:1-14:31) Rehoboam succeeds Solomon (12:1–24) Jeroboam rules the northern kingdom of Israel (12:25–33) Ahijah prophesies against Jeroboam (13:1–14:20) Rehoboam's end (14:21–31)
Kings and events in Israel and Judah (15:1-22:53) Abijah and Asa in Judah (15:1–24) Nadab in Israel (15:25–32) Baasha in Israel (15:33–16:7) Elah in Israel (16:8–14) Zimri in Israel (16:15–22) Omri in Israel (16:23–28) Ahab in Israel (16:29–22:40) Jehoshaphat in Judah (22:41–50) Ahaziah in Israel (22:51–53)

What are the Books of 1 and 2 Kings about?

These books are about what happened to the people of Israel, from the time of King Solomon to the time both the northern and southern kingdoms were destroyed. These books describe how Israel split into two kingdoms after Solomon died. It also tells about all the kings that ruled over each kingdom after Solomon died.

In the southern kingdom, some kings did what Yahweh judged to be right. For example, King Josiah repaired the temple and reformed the worship of Yahweh. He responded to the high priest finding a copy of the Law of Yahweh in Jerusalem (2 Kings 22–23). However, all of the kings of the northern kingdom were wicked.

The Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. The Babylonians destroyed the southern kingdom in 586 B.C.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Books of 1 and 2 Kings were originally one book in Hebrew. They were separated into two books when translated into Greek. Translators might choose more meaningful titles such as "The First Book about the Kings" and "The Second Book about the Kings."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the purpose of 1 and 2 Kings?

These books were probably finished during the exile, after the Babylonians had destroyed the temple. They show how being faithful to Yahweh results in his blessing and prospering his people. Worshipping idols and not being faithful result in their being punished and destroyed.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why do the Books of 1 and 2 Kings refer to someone being addressed indirectly?

In the Bible, people often referred to themselves as "your servant" when speaking to anyone in a superior position to themselves. Indirectly addressing people in this way was intended to honor the one addressed. English sometimes uses the address "sir" in this way. But a translator should use whatever expressions that are natural in the project language in order to honor someone in a superior position.

What does the king "did what was right (or evil) in the eyes of Yahweh" mean?

The writer repeats this kind of expression throughout the Books of 1 and 2 Kings. Here "in the eyes of Yahweh" represents what Yahweh thinks about someone. If a king was faithful and obeyed the covenant, he did what was right according to Yahweh. If he was not faithful and disobeyed the covenant, he did what was evil according to Yahweh.

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed his name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: israel)

Can I translate the Book of 1 Kings before I translate the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel?

The Books of 1 and 2 Samuel should be translated before 1 Kings, since 1 Kings continues from where 2 Samuel ends.

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1 Kings

1 [1]When King David was old and advanced in years, they covered him with blankets, but he could not keep warm.[2]So his servants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin for our master the king. Let her serve the king and take care of him. Let her lie in his arms so that our master the king may keep warm."
[3]So they searched for a beautiful girl within all the borders of Israel. They found Abishag the Shunammite and brought her to the king.[4]The girl was very beautiful. She served the king and took care of him, but the king did not know her.

[5]At that time, Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run ahead of him.[6]His father had never troubled him, saying, "Why have you done this or that?" Adonijah was also a very handsome man, born next after Absalom.
[7]He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. They followed Adonijah and helped him.[8]But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David did not follow Adonijah.
[9]Adonijah sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fattened calves by the stone of Zoheleth, which is beside En Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants.[10]But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or his brother Solomon.

[11]Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, and David our master does not know it?[12]Now therefore let me give you advice, so that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.
[13]Go to King David; say to him, 'My master the king, did you not swear to your servant, saying, "Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?" Why then is Adonijah reigning?'[14]While you are there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

[15]So Bathsheba went into the king's room. The king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king.
[16]Bathsheba bowed down and showed respect before the king. Then the king said, "What do you desire?"[17]She said to him, "My master, you swore to your servant by Yahweh your God, saying, 'Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne.'
[18]Now, see, Adonijah is king, and you, my master the king, do not know it.[19]He has sacrificed many cattle, fatted calves, and sheep, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant.
[20]As for you, my master the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, waiting for you to tell them who will sit on the throne after you, my master.[21]Otherwise it will happen, when my master the king lies down with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be regarded as criminals."

[22]While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in.[23]The servants told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here." When he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.
[24]Nathan said, "My master the king, have you said, 'Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?'[25]For he has gone down today and sacrificed a great number of cattle, fatted calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king's sons, the captains of the army, and Abiathar the priest. They are eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!'
[26]But as for me, your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon, he has not invited us.
[27]Has my master the king done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after him?"

[28]Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba back to me." She came into the king's presence and stood before the king.[29]The king made an oath and said, "As Yahweh lives, who has redeemed my soul out of all trouble,[30]as I vowed to you by Yahweh, the God of Israel, saying, 'Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place,'

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I will do this today."[31]Then Bathsheba bowed down and put her face to the ground and she showed honor to the king and said, "May my master King David live forever!"

[32]King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king.[33]The king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your master, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule and take him down to Gihon.[34]Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel and blow the ram's horn and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'
[35]Then you will come up after him, and he will come and sit on my throne; for he will be king in my place. I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."[36]Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, "Let it be so! May Yahweh, the God of my master the king, confirm it.[37]As Yahweh has been with my master the king, so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my master King David."

[38]So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride upon King David's mule; they brought him to Gihon.[39]Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the ram's horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!"[40]Then all the people went up after him, and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth shook with their sound.

[41]Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the ram's horn, he said, "Why is there an uproar in the city?"[42]While he was still speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest came. Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a worthy man and bring good news."
[43]Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "Our master King David has made Solomon the king,[44]and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites. They have had Solomon ride on the king's mule.[45]Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon, and have come up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard.
[46]Also, Solomon is sitting on the throne of the kingdom.[47]Moreover, the king's servants came to bless our master King David, saying, 'May your God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed down on the bed.[48]The king also said, 'Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who has given a person to sit on my throne this day, and that my own eyes should see it.'"

[49]Then all the guests of Adonijah were terrified. They stood up and each man went his way.[50]Adonijah was afraid of Solomon and rose up, went, and took hold of the horns of the altar.[51]Then it was told Solomon, saying, "See, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, for he has laid hold on the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not kill his servant with the sword.'"
[52]Solomon said, "If he will show himself a worthy man, not a hair of his will fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he will die."[53]So King Solomon sent men, who brought Adonijah down from the altar. He came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

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1 Kings 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Kings is a continuation of 2 Samuel.
This chapter records the beginning of the reign of Solomon (chapters 1-11) after the death of David.

Special concepts in this chapter

The next king

David did not announce who was to succeed him. Because of this, there was fighting between David's sons over who should be king. Adonijah invited guests to a banquet and declared himself king. Then those favoring Solomon told David and he declared Solomon the new king.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Several times in this chapter, the people use the idiom "sit on the throne" to mean "be king." Solomon assures Adonijah that if he behaves himself "not a hair of his will fall to the earth," meaning "he will not be harmed."

Links:

1 Kings 1:1 Notes 1 Kings intro

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1 Kings 1:1

covered him with blankets

They put many blankets on King David to try to keep him warm.

old and advanced in years

"very old." The two phrases are similar in meaning and are combined for emphasis. (See:.)

1 Kings 1:3

So they searched

"So the king's servants searched"

within all the borders of Israel

"all over the land of Israel"

Abishag

This is a woman's name.

Shunammite

a person from the city of Shunem

the king

"King David"

1 Kings 1:4

the king did not know her

Here "know her" is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "the king did not have sexual relations with her"

1 Kings 1:5

Adonijah son of Haggith

Haggith was a wife of David.

exalted himself

"began to boast"

horsemen

These are men who drive chariots pulled by horses.

fifty men to run ahead of him

These men would go ahead of the chariots to clear the way for them and protect them.

1 Kings 1:6

had never troubled him, saying

"had never troubled him. He had never even asked him" or "had never wanted to make him angry, so he never even asked him"

Why have you done this or that?

This is a rhetorical question that a father would ask to discipline his son. Alternate translation: "You should know that what you have done is wrong."

born next after Absalom

David was the father or both Absalom and Adonijah, but they had different mothers. Absalom was born, then Adonijah.

1 Kings 1:7

He conferred with Joab

"Adonijah discussed his plans with Joab"

Joab ... Zeruiah ... Abiathar ... Adonijah

These are names of men.

followed Adonijah and helped him

"supported and helped Adonijah" or "promised to support and help Adonijah"

1 Kings 1:8

Zadok ... Benaiah ... Jehoiada ... Nathan ... Shimei ... Rei

These are names of men.

1 Kings 1:9

fattened calves

"calves that were given plenty of food so that they would be fat" or "young cows that were specially prepared for sacrifice"

stone of Zoheleth

This is a rocky area near Jerusalem.

En Rogel

This was the name of a spring where people got water.

all his brothers ... all the men

This is a generalization.

all his brothers, the king's sons

These two phrases refer to the same people.

men of Judah, the king's servants

These two phrases refer to the same people.

1 Kings 1:11

Have you not heard ... it?

The purpose of this question is to introduce the information that Nathan wants to tell Bathsheba. Alternate translation: "You do not seem to have heard ... it." or "Have you heard ... it?"

that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king

"that Haggith's son Adonijah is trying to become king"

Haggith

Adonijah's mother and a wife of David.

1 Kings 1:13

General Information:

The prophet Nathan continues to speak to Bathsheba.

did you not swear to your servant ... throne?

The purpose of this question was to remind David of what he had promised Bathsheba. Alternate translation: "you swore to your servant ... throne."

to your servant

Bathsheba speaks to David as if she were someone else to show that she respects David. Alternate translation: "to me, your servant"

he will sit on my throne

Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. Alternate translation: "he will be king just as I was"

Why then is Adonijah reigning?

Bathsheba was to use a question so David would pay attention. Alternate translation: "So then, Adonijah should not be reigning."

1 Kings 1:14

confirm your words

"tell him that what you have said is true"

1 Kings 1:15

the king's room

"the room in which the king slept"

Abishag the Shunammite

This is the young virgin that King David's servants had brought to care for him. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 1:3.

1 Kings 1:16

bowed down and showed respect before the king

"bowed close to the ground in front of the king"

What do you desire?

"What can I do for you?"

1 Kings 1:17

you swore to

The form of "you" here is emphatic. Alternate translation: "you yourself swore to"

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your servant
Bathsheba speaks as if she were another person to show David that she respects him. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 1:13. Alternate translation: "me, your servant"
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
he will sit on my throne
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 1:13]
1 Kings 1:18
General Information:
Bathsheba continues speaking to King David.
see
"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
1 Kings 1:20
General Information:
Bathsheba continues to speak to King David.
the eyes of all Israel are on you, waiting
Here "eyes" refers to the people. Here "the eyes ... are on you" is an idiom that means the people are waiting expectantly. Alternate translation: "all the people of Israel are waiting expectantly"
will sit on the throne
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in 1 Kings 1:13. Alternate translation: "will be king"
1 Kings 1:21
when my master the king lies down with his fathers
Bathsheba speaks to King David as if she were speaking about him to show that she respects him. Alternate translation: "when you sleep with your fathers"
lies down with his fathers
This is a polite way of saying "dies."
I and my son Solomon will be regarded as criminals
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the new king will regard my son Solomon and me as criminals"
1 Kings 1:22
General Information:
Nathan the prophet speaks to King David.
1 Kings 1:24
General Information:
Nathan the prophet continues to speak to King David.
have you said, 'Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?'
This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "have you said that Adonijah will reign after you, and he will sit on your throne?"
he will sit on my throne
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 1:13. Alternate translation: "he will be king just as I was"
1 Kings 1:25
eating and drinking before him
Adonijah probably sat at a table where he could watch all those he had invited as they ate and drank. The main idea is that the people Nathan named were with Adonijah and they were celebrating together. Alternate translation: "eating and drinking with him" or "eating and drinking where he can see them"
1 Kings 1:26
General Information:
Nathan the prophet continues to speak to King David.
1 Kings 1:27
Has my master the king done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after him?
Nathan refers to David in the third person. This is a way of showing respect to the king. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "Have you, my master the king, done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after you?"
who should sit on the throne
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:13]
1 Kings 1:28
General Information:
King David makes a promise to Bathsheba.
came into the king's presence
"came before the king" or "came back to the king"
1 Kings 1:29
made an oath
"made a solemn promise"
1 Kings 1:30
he will sit on my throne in my place
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:13]
1 Kings 1:31
May my master King David live forever
Bathsheba knew David would not live forever; this is a way of saying that he is a good king.
1 Kings 1:32
General Information:
King David anoints Solomon king.
1 Kings 1:33
the servants of your master
David speaks of himself as if he were speaking of someone else so Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah would remember that David is still king. Alternate translation: "my servants"
Gihon
This is the name of a water spring.
1 Kings 1:35
General Information:
King David continues to speak on behalf of Solomon as the one who will become king.
he will come and sit on my throne
The words "sit on the throne" are used as a metonym for being king in 1 Kings 1:13, 1 Kings 1:17, and 1 Kings 1:30. Here David speaks of Solomon literally sitting on a physical throne.
1 Kings 1:36
Let it be so!
They agree and will do what King David said.
May Yahweh, the God of my master the king, confirm
Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David.

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Alternate translation: "My master and king, may Yahweh your God confirm"

1 Kings 1:37

has been with my master the king, so

Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David. Alternate translation: "has been with you, my master the king, so"

make his throne greater than the throne of my master King David

The word "throne" is a metonym for either 1) the person who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "make the one who sits on the throne greater than my master King David" or 2) the kingdom over which the one who sits on the throne rules. Alternate translation: "make his kingdom greater than the kingdom of my master King David"

the throne of my master King David

Benaiah speaks to King David as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects King David. Alternate translation: "your throne, my master King David"

1 Kings 1:38

General Information:

The people of Israel anoint Solomon as king over Israel.

Kerethites ... Pelethites

These are names of people groups.

Gihon

This is the name of a spring, where fresh water comes out of the ground.

1 Kings 1:39

took the horn of oil out of the tent

This means the priest took the special animal horn filled with olive oil that was kept in Yahweh's special tent.

took the horn of oil

Possible meanings are 1) the horn of an animal filled with olive oil or 2) a container that had replaced the original horn, but the people still called it a horn. Alternate translation: "took a container of oil"

all the people

This is a generalization.

1 Kings 1:41

General Information:

Adonijah hears the loud noise and waits for the news.

1 Kings 1:43

General Information:

Adonijah learns that Solomon is the new king.

1 Kings 1:44

Kerethites ... Pelethites

These are names of people groups.

1 Kings 1:46

General Information:

Jonathan continues to speak to Adonijah about Solomon.

is sitting on the throne of the kingdom

Possible meanings are 1) that these words are a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:35]

1 Kings 1:48

a person to sit on my throne this day

Possible meanings are 1) that these words are a metonym for being king. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 1:35]

1 Kings 1:49

General Information:

Adonijah becomes terrified of King Solomon.

They stood up

Another possible meaning is "They began to act quickly"

1 Kings 1:50

Adonijah ... took hold of the horns of the altar

The "horns of the altar" symbolized the strength and protection of Yahweh, but because Adonijah literally went into the area of the physical tent to take literal hold of the physical horns, you should translate this literally.

Adonijah ... rose up, went

Another possible meaning is "Adonijah ... quickly went"

1 Kings 1:51

is afraid of King Solomon

The servants speak to King Solomon as if they were speaking of someone else to show that they respected King Solomon. Alternate translation: "is afraid of you, King Solomon"

he will not kill his servant

Adonijah speaks of himself as if he were speaking of another person so people will think that he respects King Solomon. Alternate translation: "he will not kill me"

1 Kings 1:52

General Information:

Solomon spares the life of Adonijah.

not a hair of his will fall to the earth

This is an exaggeration to say that Solomon will keep Adonijah safe. Alternate translation: "not a hair of his head will fall" or "I will keep him safe"

wickedness is found in him

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be translated as a verb. It is spoken of as if it were an object that could be found in a container. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "he does what is evil"

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2 [1]As the day of David's death approached, he commanded Solomon his son, saying,[2]"I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.[3]Keep the commands of Yahweh your God to walk in his ways, to obey his statutes, his commandments, his decisions, and his covenant decrees, being careful to do what is written in the law of Moses, so you may prosper in all you do, wherever you go,[4]so that Yahweh may fulfill his word which he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your descendants carefully watch their conduct, to walk before me faithfully with all their heart and with all their soul, you will never cease to have a man on the throne of Israel.'

[5]You know also what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner son of Ner, and to Amasa son of Jether, whom he killed. He shed the blood of war in peace and put the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet.[6]Deal with Joab by the wisdom you have learned, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace.

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[7]However, show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, for they came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother.
[8]Look, there is with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite of Bahurim, who cursed me with a violent curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. Shimei came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by Yahweh, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.'[9]Now therefore do not let him go free from punishment. You are a wise man, and you will know what you ought to do to him. You will bring his gray head down to Sheol with blood."

[10]Then David lay down with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David.[11]The days that David reigned over Israel were forty years. He had reigned for seven years in Hebron and for thirty-three years in Jerusalem.[12]Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

[13]Then Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. She said, "Do you come peacefully?" He replied, "Peacefully."[14]Then he said, "I have something to say to you." So she replied, "Speak."[15]Adonijah said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel expected me to be king. But things changed, and the kingdom was given to my brother, for it was his from Yahweh.
[16]Now I have one request of you, and do not turn away from my face." Bathsheba said to him, "Speak."[17]He said, "Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not turn away from your face, so that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife."[18]Bathsheba said, "Very well, I will speak to the king."

[19]Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. The king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat down on his throne and had a throne brought for the king's mother. She sat at his right hand.[20]Then she said, "I wish to ask one small request of you, for you will not turn away from my face." The king answered her, "Ask, my mother, for I will not turn away from your face."[21]She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as his wife."
[22]King Solomon answered and said to his mother, "Why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Why do you not ask the kingdom for him also, for he is my elder brother—for him, for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab son of Zeruiah?"[23]Then King Solomon swore by Yahweh, saying, "May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life.
[24]Now therefore as Yahweh lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house as he promised, surely Adonijah will be put to death today."[25]So King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and Benaiah found Adonijah and put him to death.

[26]Then to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields. You are worthy of death, but I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord Yahweh before David my father and suffered in every way my father suffered.",[1][27]So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being priest to Yahweh, that he might fulfill the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

[28]The news came to Joab, for Joab had supported Adonijah, though he had not supported Absalom. So Joab fled to the tent of Yahweh and took hold of the horns of the altar.[29]It was told King Solomon that Joab had fled to the tent of Yahweh and was now beside the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, execute him."
[30]So Benaiah came to the tent of Yahweh and said to him, "The king says, 'Come out.'" Joab replied, "No, I will die here." So Benaiah returned to the king, saying, "Joab said he wanted to die at the altar."[31]The king said to him, "Do as he has said. Kill him and bury him so that you may take away from me and from my father's house the blood that Joab shed without cause.
[32]May Yahweh return his blood on his own head, because without the knowledge of my father David he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself and killed them with the sword, Abner son of Ner, the captain of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, the captain of the army of Judah.[33]So may their blood return on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever. But to David and his descendants, and to his house, and to his throne, may there be peace forever from Yahweh."
[34]Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and attacked Joab and killed him. He was buried in his own house in the wilderness.[35]The king put Benaiah son of Jehoiada over the army in his place, and he put Zadok the priest in Abiathar's place.

[36]Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, and do not go out from there to any other place.[37]For on the day you go out, and pass over the Kidron Valley, know you for certain that you will surely die. Your blood will be on your own head."[38]So Shimei said to the king, "What you say is good. As my master the king has said, so your servant will do." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem for many days.

[39]But at the end of three years, two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish son of Maakah, the king of Gath. So they

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told Shimei, saying, "See, your servants are in Gath."[40]Then Shimei arose, saddled his donkey and went to Achish in Gath to seek his servants. He went and brought his servants back from Gath.
[41]When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned,[42]the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by Yahweh and testify to you, saying, 'Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any other place, you will surely die'? Then you said to me, 'What I have heard is good.'
[43]Why then have you not kept your oath to Yahweh and the command that I gave you?"[44]The king also said to Shimei, "You know in your heart all the wickedness that you did to my father David. Therefore Yahweh will return your wickedness on your own head.
[45]But King Solomon will be blessed and the throne of David will be established before Yahweh forever."[46]Then the king gave a command to Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He went out and put Shimei to death.
So the kingdom was well established in Solomon's hand.

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[1]The ancient Greek translation simply has, the ark of Yahweh.

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1 Kings 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories: David's last advice to Solomon and Solomon's punishment of those who supported Adonijah and also Shimei, who had cursed David when David was fleeing from Absalom. (See: curse)

Special concepts in this chapter

Exalting oneself

Exalting oneself can lead to disaster as when Adonijah made himself king. (See: exalt)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Euphemism

David spoke of his impending death using a euphemism: "I am going the way of all the earth."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Parallelism

David wanted to emphasize the importance of obeying God to his son Solomon. He used parallelism, saying the same thing seven times using different words: "Keep the commands of Yahweh your God to walk in his ways, to obey his statutes, his commandments, his decisions, and his covenant decrees, being careful to do what is written in the law of Moses." Some languages have other ways of emphasizing an idea.

Links:

1 Kings 2:1 Notes

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1 Kings 2:2

I am going the way of all the earth

This is a polite way of saying "I am going to die."

show yourself a man

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "show yourself to be a man" or "show everyone that you are a man" or "live so that everyone can see you are a good man"

1 Kings 2:3

walk in his ways

Walking on a path is a metonym for the way a person lives. Alternate translation: "live the way he commands"

so you may prosper

"so you may succeed" or "so you may do well"

1 Kings 2:4

may fulfill his word

"do everything he promised he would do"

If your descendants ... you will never cease

Yahweh is talking to David, so the words "you" and "your" refer to David.

to walk before me faithfully

Yahweh is talking to David, so the word "me" refers to Yahweh.

with all their heart and with all their soul

The idiom "with all ... heart" means "completely" and "with all ... soul" means "with all ... being." These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "with all their being" or "with all their energy"

you will never cease to have a man on the throne of Israel

The word "throne" is a metonym for the king who sits on the throne. The phrase "will never cease to have" can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "your descendants will never cease to be kings of Israel" or "one of your descendants will always be the king of Israel"

1 Kings 2:5

General Information:

King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.

what Joab ... did to me, and what he did

David is referring to the same thing twice. Alternate translation: "what Joab ... did to me—that is, what he did"

shed the blood of war in peace

Possible meanings are 1) "killed those men during a time of peace as if he were killing them in war" or 2) "took revenge on those men during a time of peace because they had killed people in war"

put the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet

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Possible meanings are 1) Joab was close enough to these men when he killed them that their blood spattered on his belt and on his sandals or 2) the word "blood" is a metonym for guilt of murder, and the belt and the shoes are metonyms for Joab's authority as commander, so David is saying that because Joab is guilty of murder, he should not be commander of the army. Either way, it is best to translate this literally.
1 Kings 2:6
do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace
Here being old is represented by having gray hair, that is, a "gray head." Alternate translation: "make sure Joab dies a violent death before he grows old"
Sheol
the grave or the world of the dead
1 Kings 2:7
General Information:
King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.
Barzillai
a man's name
let them be among those who eat at your table
The table is a metonym for the home where the table is. Alternate translation: "welcome them to eat at your home"
1 Kings 2:8
General Information:
King David continues to tell Solomon how to lead Israel.
Shimei ... Gera
men's names
Benjamite
descendant of Benjamin
Bahurim ... Mahanaim
place names
1 Kings 2:9
do not let him go free from punishment
"be sure to punish him"
bring his gray head down to Sheol with blood
Blood is a metonym for violent death, and the head is synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "make sure he dies a violent death"
1 Kings 2:10
General Information:
David dies and Solomon takes his place as the new king of Israel.
lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "died"
David ... and was buried
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "David ... and they buried him"
1 Kings 2:11
The days that David reigned over Israel were
"The time that David reigned over Israel was" or "David reigned over Israel for"
1 Kings 2:12
sat on the throne of his father David
The throne represents the authority of the king. Alternate translation: "became king, as his father David had been"
his rule was firmly established
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh firmly established Solomon's rule" or "Yahweh caused Solomon to take complete control of the kingdom"
1 Kings 2:13
General Information:
Adonijah comes to speak to Bathsheba.
peacefully
with no desire to cause harm
1 Kings 2:15
all Israel
This is a generalization.
things changed
"what we expected to happen did not happen"
the kingdom was given to my brother
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave the kingdom to my brother" or "my brother became king"
1 Kings 2:16
General Information:
Adonijah shares his request with Bathsheba.
do not turn away from my face
Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. Alternate translation: "do not refuse to do what I request"
1 Kings 2:17
he will not turn away from your face
Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. Alternate translation: "he will not refuse to do what you request"
Abishag the Shunammite
See 1 Kings 1:3.
1 Kings 2:19
General Information:
Bathsheba goes to King Solomon with Adonijah's request.
The king rose
"The king stood up" from where he was sitting on his throne.
had a throne brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "told someone to bring a throne"
the king's mother
Bathsheba
1 Kings 2:20
you will not turn away from my face ... I will not turn away from your face
Turning from the face of someone is a metonym for refusing to look at someone, which in turn is a metonym for refusing to do what that person requests. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 2:16]
1 Kings 2:21
Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah ... as his wife
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Allow Adonijah ... to marry Abishag the Shunammite" or "Give Abishag the Shunammite to Adonijah ... as his wife"
1 Kings 2:22
General Information:
King Solomon gives an answer to Adonijah's request.
Why do you ask ... Adonijah? Why do you not ask the kingdom for him

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also ... Zeruiah?
King Solomon was angered by his mother's request. Alternate translation: "You are wrong to ask ... Adonijah! This is the same as asking the kingdom for him also ... Zeruiah!"
1 Kings 2:23
May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God will have every right to execute me—and to do even worse things to me—if I do not execute Adonijah because he has made this request"
1 Kings 2:24
General Information:
King Solomon executes Adonijah.
set me on the throne
The word "throne" refers to Solomon's authority to rule that was given by Yahweh.
who has made me a house
Here "house" refers to descendants that Yahweh gave to King Solomon, who would continue to reign after him.
1 Kings 2:26
General Information:
Solomon dismisses Abiathar from being priest.
suffered in every way my father suffered
Abiathar had suffered alongside King David before David became king.
1 Kings 2:27
that he might fulfill
The word "he" refers to King Solomon.
the word of Yahweh
"the things that Yahweh had said"
which he had spoken
The word "he" refers to Yahweh.
1 Kings 2:28
General Information:
King Solomon orders Benaiah to execute Joab.
The news came to Joab
"Joab heard what Solomon did after he had become king"
the horns of the altar
The horns of the altar symbolized Yahweh's power and protection.
1 Kings 2:29
It was told King Solomon that Joab had fled
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told King Solomon that Joab had fled"
1 Kings 2:30
General Information:
Benaiah goes to execute Joab.
1 Kings 2:31
bury him so that you may take away from me and from my father's house the blood that Joab shed without cause
Here "house" stands for the descendants of David while "blood" represents guilt. Alternate translation: "bury him and so remove from me and my family the guilt for the murders Joab committed without cause" or "bury him. Do that so Yahweh will not hold me and my father's house guilty because Joab murdered people for no reason"
1 Kings 2:32
General Information:
King Solomon explains why Joab should die.
May Yahweh return his blood on his own head
The word "his" refers to Joab. "Blood" is a metonym for murder. And, the idiom "his blood on his own head" means the person should be considered guilty for murder. Alternate translation: "Joab has murdered people, and I want Yahweh to hold him guilty for what he has done"
more righteous and better
These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Abner and Amasa were much better men than Joab.
1 Kings 2:33
may their blood return on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants
The word "blood" is a metonym for murder. And, the idiom "blood return on the head of" means the person should be considered guilty for murder. Alternate translation: "I want Yahweh to hold Joab and his descendants guilty"
to his house, and to his throne
The words "house" and "throne" are metonyms for the family and the kingdom. Alternate translation: "to David's descendants and to David's kingdom"
1 Kings 2:34
General Information:
Benaiah kills Joab and becomes the commander of King Solomon's army.
He was buried in his own house
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They buried Joab in his own house"
in his own house
The house is a metonym for the land on which the house stood. The Israelites buried people out of doors in graves or tombs. Alternate translation: "where his family lived"
1 Kings 2:36
General Information:
King Solomon tells Shimei to stay in Jerusalem or Shimei will die.
1 Kings 2:37
Your blood will be on your own head
Here "blood" is a metonym for guilt and the head is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "You will be responsible for your own death"
1 Kings 2:39
General Information:
Shimei leaves Jerusalem.
Achish ... Maakah ... Gath
men's names
Gath
a Philistine city
1 Kings 2:40
Shimei arose
This is an idiom. "Shimei quickly"
1 Kings 2:41
General Information:
King Solomon judges Shimei for leaving Jerusalem.
Solomon was told
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone told Solomon"
1 Kings 2:42

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Did I not make you swear ... saying, 'Know ... die'?
Solomon is reminding Shimei of what Shimei had promised. Alternate translation: "You know very well that I made you swear ... saying, 'Know ... die'!"
1 Kings 2:43
General Information:
King Solomon pronounces judgment upon Shimei for leaving Jerusalem.
Why then have you not kept your oath ... you?
Possible meanings are 1) Solomon is asking for an answer or 2) Alternate translation: "You have done wrong by breaking your oath ... you."
1 Kings 2:44
will return your wickedness on your own head
Here the head represents the person, and wickedness is spoken of as if it were a solid or liquid that could be put on a person's head. Alternate translation: "will hold you responsible for all your wickedness"
1 Kings 2:45
General Information:
King Solomon orders Shimei to be put to death.
the throne of David will be established before Yahweh forever
Here "throne of David" represents the authority and rule of David and all his descendants forever.
1 Kings 2:46
in Solomon's hand
This use of "hand" represents Solomon's power and authority.

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3 [1]Solomon allied himself by marriage with Pharaoh king of Egypt. He took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David until he had finished building his own house, the house of Yahweh, and the wall around Jerusalem.[2]The people were sacrificing at the high places, because no house had yet been built for the name of Yahweh.[3]Solomon showed his love for Yahweh by walking in the statutes of David his father, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

[4]The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place there. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.[5]Yahweh appeared at Gibeon to Solomon in a dream by night; he said, "Ask! What should I give you?"
[6]So Solomon said, "You have shown great covenant faithfulness to your servant, David my father, because he walked before you in trustworthiness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart. You have kept for him this great covenant faithfulness and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.
[7]Now Yahweh my God, you have made your servant king in the place of David my father, though I am only a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.[8]Your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted.[9]So give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, so that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?"

[10]This request of Solomon pleased the Lord.[11]So God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice,
[12]see, now I will do all you asked of me when you gave me your request. I give you a wise and an understanding heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, and no one like you will rise up after you.
[13]I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.[14]If you will walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."
[15]Then Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. He came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

[16]Then two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him.[17]One woman said, "Oh, my master, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth to a child with her in the house.
[18]It happened on the third day after I gave birth that this woman also gave birth. We were together. There was no one else with us in the house, but only the two of us in the house.[19]Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him.[20]So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me, while your servant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead son at my breast.
[21]When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, he was dead. But when I had looked at him carefully in the morning, he was not my son, whom I had borne."[22]Then the other woman said, "No, the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." The first woman said, "No, the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." This is how they spoke before the king.

[23]Then the king said, "One of you says, 'This is my son who is alive, and your son is dead,' and the other says, 'No, your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'"[24]The king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king.[25]Then the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to this woman and half to the other."
[26]Then the woman whose son was alive spoke to the king, for her heart was full of compassion for her son, and she said, "Oh, my master, give her the living child, and by no means kill him." But the other woman said, "He will be neither mine nor yours. Divide him."[27]Then the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill

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him. She is his mother."[28]When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered, they feared the king, because they saw that the wisdom of God was in him for giving judgments.

1 Kings 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories. Verses 1-15 is the story of Solomon's dream when God asked him what he wanted and he said he needed wisdom to be a good and fair ruler. Verses 16-28 is the story of a court case showing Solomon's wisdom. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom

God was very pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom. This is because wisdom was something that he could use to serve other people instead of himself. Because this was a noble request, God promised Solomon wisdom, wealth, and fame. (See: promise)

Putting the needs of others first

There are two additional examples of people putting the needs of others in front of their own needs. God is pleased with people wanting to do their job well more than wanting to be blessed. A mother will put the life of her child above every other concern. (See: bless)

Links:

[1 Kings 3:1 Notes]

1 Kings 3:1

General Information:

Solomon marries an Egyptian.

Solomon allied himself by marriage with Pharaoh king of Egypt

Solomon became the son-in-law of Pharaoh king of Egypt so the two kings would work together and fight together against their enemies.

until he had finished building

She was still in the city of David after he had finished building.

the house of Yahweh

"the temple"

1 Kings 3:2

no house had yet been built

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one had yet built a house"

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for the name" refers to worshiping the person. Alternate translation: "in which people would worship Yahweh"

1 Kings 3:3

walking in the statutes of David his father

How one lives one's life is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "obeying the laws that David his father had made"

1 Kings 3:4

General Information:

God asks Solomon what he can do for Solomon.

the great high place

"the most famous place for makings sacrifices" or "the most important altar"

1 Kings 3:5

Ask! What should I give you?

"Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you." or "What do you want? Ask and I will give it to you."

1 Kings 3:6

General Information:

Solomon responds to God's question.

You have shown great covenant faithfulness to your servant

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "You have been very faithful to your covenant with your servant" or "You have greatly and faithfully loved your servant"

because he walked before you in trustworthiness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart

Walking is a metaphor for the way one lives. The abstract nouns "trustworthiness," "righteousness," and "uprightness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because he was trustworthy and righteous, and his heart was upright"

in uprightness of heart

A sincere person is spoken of as one whose heart is upright. Alternate translation: "he was sincere" or "he spoke the truth and did what was good"

have given him a son

The "son" is Solomon.

to sit on his throne

Sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. Alternate translation: "to rule in his place"

today

Solomon is speaking of the years he had already been ruling, not of the time since the sun had last set.

1 Kings 3:7

General Information:

Solomon asks for wisdom.

your servant

Solomon speaks as if he is another person to show respect to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "me"

I am only a little child

Solomon is saying that he is like a child who does not know as much as a father.

I do not know how to go out or come in

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This is an idiom that means Solomon does not know how to govern as king. Alternate translation: "I do not know how to be the king" or "I do not know the right way to do things as king"
1 Kings 3:9
For who is able to judge this great people of yours?
Solomon asks a question to emphasize that he knows that no one can judge. Alternate translation: "No one is able to judge this great people of yours."
1 Kings 3:10
General Information:
God gives Solomon wisdom and more.
1 Kings 3:11
the life of your enemies
The "life" is a metonym for the power to kill. Alternate translation: "the power to kill your enemies"
1 Kings 3:12
now I will do all you asked of me when you gave me your request
"I will do what you asked me to do when you spoke with me"
I give you a wise and an understanding heart
The heart is a metonym for what a person thinks and desires. Alternate translation: "I make you able to be wise and to understand many things"
1 Kings 3:14
walk in my ways to keep
Living one's life is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "live as I want you to live and obey"
lengthen your days
"make you live a long time"
1 Kings 3:15
behold
The word "behold" here shows that Solomon saw something interesting.
1 Kings 3:16
General Information:
Two prostitutes ask Solomon to make a decision.
1 Kings 3:18
General Information:
The two prostitutes tell Solomon their story.
1 Kings 3:19
lay on him
It may be helpful to state that this caused the baby to die. Alternate translation: "accidentally rolled on top of her baby and smothered him"
1 Kings 3:20
your servant
The woman speaks as if she were speaking of someone else to show that she respects Solomon. Alternate translation: "I"
1 Kings 3:21
General Information:
Two prostitutes continue to share their story with Solomon.
nurse my child
This means to feed her baby milk from her breast.
1 Kings 3:22
before the king
"before Solomon" or "while Solomon could see and hear them"
1 Kings 3:23
General Information:
Solomon makes a decision for the two women.
1 Kings 3:26
General Information:
The real mother asks the king to spare the child's life.
her heart was full of compassion for her son
This speaks of the woman having a lot of compassion as if her heart were a container and compassion were a solid object. Alternate translation: "she greatly loved her baby"
1 Kings 3:28
all Israel
This is a generalization.

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4 [1]King Solomon was king over all Israel.[2]These were his officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest.

[3]Elihoreph and Ahijah sons of Shisha, were secretaries. Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder.
[4]Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the army. Zadok and Abiathar were priests.[1]

[5]Azariah son of Nathan was over the officers. Zabud son of Nathan was a priest and the king's friend.
[6]Ahishar was over the household. Adoniram son of Abda was over the men who were subjected to forced labor.

[7]Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household. Each man had to make provision for one month in the year.[8]These were their names: Ben-Hur, in the hill country of Ephraim;
[9]Ben-Deker in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Bethhanan;
[10]Ben-Hesed, in Arubboth (to him belonged Sokoh and all the land of Hepher);

[11]Ben-Abinadab, in all Naphoth Dor (he had Taphath the daughter of Solomon as his wife);
[12]Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth Shan that is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth Shan to Abel Meholah as far as the other side of Jokmeam;
[13]Ben-Geber, in Ramoth Gilead (to him belonged the towns of Jair son of Manasseh, that are in Gilead, and the region of Argob belonged to him, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze gate bars);
[14]Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim;

[15]Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he also married Basemath the daughter of Solomon as his wife);

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[16]Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth;
[17]Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar;

[18]Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin;
[19]and Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan, and he was the only deputy who was in the land.

[20]Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea. They were eating and drinking and were rejoicing.[21]Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.[22]Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of fine flour and sixty cors of meal,[23]ten head of cattle fattened in the stall, twenty head of cattle taken from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl.
[24]For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the River, from Tiphsah as far as to Gaza, over all the kings on this side of the River, and he had peace on all sides around him.[25]Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.
[26]Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.[27]Those officers provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table, every man in his month. They let nothing be lacking.
[28]They also brought to the proper place barley and straw for the chariot horses and riding horses, each one bringing in what he was able.

[29]God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding, and wideness of understanding like the sand on the seashore.
[30]Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt.[31]He was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Kalkol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol—and his fame reached all the surrounding nations.
[32]He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were 1,005 in number.[33]He described the plants, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He explained also about animals, birds, creeping things, and fish.
[34]People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon. They came from all kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

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[a]The ancient Greek translation supports the opinion of some modern scholars that Zadok and Abiathar were priests was a later addition to the text.

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1 Kings 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter names the important people in Solomon's government and shows the extent of his kingdom.

Links:

1 Kings 4:1 Notes

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1 Kings 4:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of a list of Solomon's officials. The list ends in 1 Kings 4:6.
1 Kings 4:2
Azariah ... Zadok
These are names of men.
1 Kings 4:3
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Solomon's officials.
Elihoreph ... Ahijah ... Shisha ... Jehoshaphat ... Ahilud
These are names of men.
1 Kings 4:4
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Solomon's officials.
Benaiah ... Jehoiada ... Zadok ... Abiathar
These are names of men.
1 Kings 4:5
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Solomon's officials.
Azariah ... Nathan ... Zabud
These are names of men.
1 Kings 4:6
Connecting Statement:
This ends the list of Solomon's officials.
Ahishar ... Adoniram ... Abda
These are names of men.
the men who were subjected to forced labor
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men whom Solomon forced to work for him"
1 Kings 4:7
General Information:
This begins a list of Solomon's 12 officers. The list ends in 1 Kings 4:19.
1 Kings 4:8
Ben-Hur
This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Hur" means "the son of Hur."

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in the hill country
"who was the officer in charge of the hill country
Ephraim
This is the name of a place.
1 Kings 4:9
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ben-Deker
This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Deker" means "the son of Deker."
in Makaz
"who was the officer in charge of Makaz"
Makaz ... Shaalbim ... Beth Shemesh ... Elon Bethhanan
These are names of places.
1 Kings 4:10
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ben-Hesed
This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Hesed" means "the son of Hesed."
in Arubboth
"who was the officer in charge of Arubboth"
Arubboth ... Sokoh ... Hepher
These are names of places.
1 Kings 4:11
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ben-Abinadab
This is the name of a man. Note that "Ben" before a name means "son of" so "Ben-Abinadab" means "the son of Abinadab."
in all Naphoth Dor
"who was the officer in charge of all Naphoth Dor"
Naphoth Dor
This is the name of a place.
Taphath
This is the name of a woman.
1 Kings 4:12
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Baana ... Ahilud
These are names of men.
in Taanach
"who was the officer in charge of Taanach"
Taanach ... Megiddo ... Beth Shan ... Zarethan ... Jezreel ... Beth Shan to Abel Meholah ... Jokmeam
These are names of places.
1 Kings 4:13
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ben-Geber ... Jair ... Manasseh
These are names of men.
in Ramoth Gilead
"who was the officer in charge of Ramoth Gilead"
Ramoth Gilead ... Argob ... Bashan
These are names of places.
1 Kings 4:14
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ahinadab ... Iddo
These are men's names.
in Mahanaim
"who was the officer in charge of Mahanaim"
Mahanaim
This is the name of place.
1 Kings 4:15
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Ahimaaz
This is the name of a man.
in Naphtali
"who was the officer in charge of Naphtali"
Naphtali
This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel.
Basemath
This is the name of a woman.
1 Kings 4:16
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Baana ... Hushai
These are names of men.
in Asher
"who was the officer in charge of Asher"
Asher
This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel.
Bealoth
This is the name of a piece of land.
1 Kings 4:17
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Jehoshaphat ... Paruah
These are names of men.
in Issachar
"who was the officer in charge of Issachar"
Issachar
This is a tribal land named after a son of Israel.
1 Kings 4:18
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers continues.
Shimei ... Ela
These are the names of men.
in Benjamin
"who was the officer in charge of Benjamin"
Benjamin
This is a tribal land named for a son of Israel.
1 Kings 4:19
Connecting Statement:
The list of Solomon's 12 officers ends.
Geber ... Uri ... Sihon ... Og
These are men's names
in the land of Gilead
"who was the officer in charge of the land of Gilead"
Gilead ... Bashan
These are names of places.
the country of Sihon
"the land that in earlier years belonged to Sihon"
Amorites
This is the name of a people group.

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in the land
Here "the land" refers to the land of Judah; the previous officials presided over different parts of Israel.
1 Kings 4:20
Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea
The speaker uses exaggeration to say that there were so many people that it would be impossible to count them all. The words "Judah" and "Israel" are metonyms for the people who lived in Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: "There were as many people in Judah and Israel as there are grains of sand by the sea" or "there were more people in Judah and Israel than a person could count"
1 Kings 4:21
the River
"the Euphrates River"
1 Kings 4:22
thirty cors
A cor is a unit of dry measure.
1 Kings 4:23
deer, gazelles, roebucks
four-legged animals that run fast
deer
more than one of these animals
fattened fowl
"birds that people fed so they would become fat"
1 Kings 4:24
Tiphsah
name of a piece of land
1 Kings 4:25
Judah and Israel
The words "Judah" and "Israel" are metonyms for the people of Judah and Israel.
every man under his vine and under his fig tree
"each family had their own garden with grapevines and fig trees," This showed that the people lived in safety and peace, since they were not at war and had time to grow their gardens.
from Dan to Beersheba
This represents the whole land of Israel from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south.
1 Kings 4:26
stalls of horses
A stall is a place where an animal such as a horse is kept and cared for.
1 Kings 4:27
who came to King Solomon's table
"who ate with King Solomon" or "whom King Solomon invited to eat with him"
every man in his month
Solomon had assigned 12 officers in 1 Kings 4:7 to bring him food in different months.
They let nothing be lacking
This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "They provided everything that Solomon needed"
1 Kings 4:29
God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding
The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "understanding" can be translated as verbs. God giving him these things means that God enabled him to have these qualities. Alternate translation: "God enabled Solomon to be wise and to understand many things"
wideness of understanding like the sand on the seashore
Solomon was able to understand many things about many different subjects. The abstract noun "wideness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Solomon was able to understand many things about a wide range of subjects"
1 Kings 4:30
Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people
"Solomon was wiser than all the wise people"
the people of the east
This refers to people from countries east of Israel such as Arabia and Mesopotamia.
1 Kings 4:31
Ethan ... Heman ... Kalkol ... Darda ... Mahol
men's names
1 Kings 4:33
cedar ... hyssop
These words form a merism that includes all plants. Alternate translation: "cedar tree ... hyssop bush" or "the greatest of trees ... least important of bushes"

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5 [1]Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon for he had heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father; for Hiram had always loved David.[2]Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying,[3]"You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of Yahweh his God because of the wars that surrounded him, for during his lifetime Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet.
[4]But now, Yahweh my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor disaster.[5]So I intend to build a temple for the name of Yahweh my God, as Yahweh spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, will build the temple for my name.'
[6]Now therefore command that they cut cedars from Lebanon for me. My servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants so that you are paid fairly for everything you agreed to do. For you know there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

[7]When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, "May Yahweh be blessed today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people."[8]Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, "I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I will provide all the wood of cedar and cypress that you desire.
[9]My servants will bring the trees down from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts to go by sea to the place that you direct me. I will have them broken up there, and you will take them away. You will do what I desire by giving food for my household."

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[10]So Hiram gave Solomon all the timber of cedar and fir that he desired.[11]Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand cors of wheat for food to his household and twenty thousand baths of pure oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year.
[1][12]Yahweh gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

[13]King Solomon conscripted labor out of all Israel. The forced laborers numbered thirty thousand men.[14]He sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts. One month they were in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was over the men who were subjected to forced labor.
[15]Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens and eighty thousand who were stonecutters in the mountains,
[16]besides Solomon's 3,300 chief officers who were over the work and who supervised the workers.
[17]At the king's command they quarried large precious stones with which to lay the foundation of the temple.[18]So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men from Byblos[2] did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stones to build the temple.

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[1]Some ancient Hebrew copies have: twenty thousand cors ... twenty thousand cors. Other ancient copies read: twenty thousand cors ... twenty thousand baths, which we are following here.
[2]Some modern English translations read, Gebalites.

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1 Kings 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of the description of the building of the temple. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Building the temple

Building the temple took a lot of work and cooperation. King Hiram of Tyre provided lumber for building the temple in exchange for wheat and olive oil. Solomon also had many people cutting rocks for the walls of the temple.

Links:

1 Kings 5:1 Notes

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1 Kings 5:1

General Information:

Solomon talks with King Hiram about building the Temple.

Hiram had always loved David

"Hiram had always been a close friend of King David"

1 Kings 5:3

Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet

To put an enemy under someone's foot means to conquer them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was helping David to defeat his enemies" or "David was busy since Yahweh was giving him victory over his enemies"

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for the name" refers to worshiping the person.See how you translated this in [1 Kings 3:2]

because of the wars that surrounded him

Another possible meaning is "because of the wars with which his enemies surrounded him" or "because he was fighting enemies on all sides"

Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet

This speaks of Yahweh giving David complete control over his enemies as putting them under his feet. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was enabling David to completely defeat his enemies"

1 Kings 5:4

General Information:

Solomon continues to talk with King Hiram about building the Temple.

has given me rest on every side

Before Solomon became king, King David and the people of Israel had been at war, but now King Solomon and the people were at rest and in a time of peace.

There is neither adversary nor disaster

neither humans who cause harm nor natural events that cause harm. This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "We are safe from our enemies and from natural disasters"

adversary

enemy

disaster

event that causes harm to people and their property

1 Kings 5:5

So

This is to emphasize the words that follow. "Listen! This is what I am going to do:" or "Because of what Yahweh has done for me, this is what I am going to do:"

for the name of Yahweh my God ... for my name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "where Yahweh my God will live ... where I will live"

set on your throne in your place

Here "throne" refers to ruling as king. Alternate translation: "make to be the king after you"

1 Kings 5:6

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General Information:
Solomon continues to talk with King Hiram about building the temple.
there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians
"your workers know how to cut timber better than my men"
Sidonians
people of the city of Sidon
1 Kings 5:7
General Information:
King Hiram answers Solomon.
the words of Solomon
"what Solomon said"
May Yahweh be blessed today
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I praise Yahweh today"
1 Kings 5:8
cypress
Cypress is another kind of valuable wood that would be used for building the temple.
1 Kings 5:9
General Information:
King Hiram continues to answer Solomon.
make them into rafts
"tie them together so they will float in groups"
them broken up there
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "my workers untie the logs from each other"
You will do what I desire
"You can do what I want" or "You can pay me"
1 Kings 5:10
fir
The word "fir" refers to many kinds of trees, including cypress trees.
1 Kings 5:11
twenty thousand cors of wheat
"20,000 cors of wheat." A cor equals about 220 liters. Alternate translation: "4,400 cubic meters of wheat"
twenty thousand baths of pure oil
"20,000 baths of pure oil." A bath equals about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "440 cubic meters of pure oil"
year by year
"every year"
1 Kings 5:13
General Information:
Solomon forces men to build the Temple.
conscripted labor out of all Israel
"forced men from all over Israel to work"
1 Kings 5:14
in shifts
That is, there were three groups that took turns spending one month in Lebanon and two months at home.
One month they were in Lebanon and two months at home
Each of the three groups spent one month working in Lebanon and then two months at home in Israel.
the men who were subjected to forced labor
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men whom Solomon was forcing to work for him"
1 Kings 5:15
General Information:
Solomon continues to force men to build the Temple.
seventy thousand
"70,000"
burdens
heavy things that people have to work hard to carry
eighty thousand
"80,000"
stonecutters
men who dig stones out of the ground and cut them to the proper shape
1 Kings 5:16
3,300 chief officers
"three thousand three hundred chief officers"
1 Kings 5:17
General Information:
Solomon continues to force men to build the temple.
quarried large precious stones
"dug large, good stones out of the mountain and cut them to be the right shape"

6 [1]So Solomon began to build the temple of Yahweh. This happened in the 480th year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month.
[2]The temple that King Solomon built for Yahweh was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.
[3]The portico in front of the temple's main hall was twenty cubits in length, equal to the width of the temple, and ten cubits deep in front of the temple.[4]For the house he made windows with frames that made them more narrow at the outside than on the inside.
[5]Against the walls of the main chamber he built rooms around it, around both the outer room and the inner room. He built rooms all around the sides.[6]The lowest story was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide. For on the outside he made offsets in the wall of the house all around so that the beams would not be inserted in the walls of the house.
[7]The house was built of stones prepared at the quarry. No hammer, ax, or any iron tool was heard in the house while it was being built.[8]On the south side of the temple there was an entrance at the ground level, then one went up by stairs to the middle level, and from the middle to the third level.
[9]So Solomon built the temple and finished it; he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar.[10]He built the side rooms against the inner chambers of the temple, each side five cubits high; they were joined to the house with timbers of cedar.

[11]The word of Yahweh came to Solomon, saying,[12]"Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in my

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statutes and do justice, keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will confirm my promise with you that I had made to David your father.[13]I will live among the people of Israel and will not abandon them."

[14]So Solomon built the house and finished it.[15]Then he built the interior walls of the house with boards of cedar. From the floor of the house to the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood, and he covered the floor of the house with cypress boards.
[16]He built twenty cubits onto the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the ceiling. He built this room to be the inner room, the most holy place.[17]The main hall, that is, the holy place that was in front of the most holy place, was forty cubits long.[18]There was cedar inside the house, carved in the shape of gourds and open flowers. All was cedar inside. No stonework was visible on the inside.
[19]Solomon prepared the inner room inside the house in order to place the ark of the covenant of Yahweh there.[20]The inner room was twenty cubits in length, twenty cubits in width, and twenty cubits in height. Solomon overlaid the walls with pure gold and covered the altar with cedar wood.
[21]Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold, and he placed chains of gold across the front of the inner room, and overlaid the front with gold.[22]He overlaid the entire interior with gold until all the temple was finished. He also overlaid with gold the whole altar that belonged to the inner room.

[23]Solomon made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high, for the inner room.[24]One wing of the first cherub was five cubits long and its other wing was also five cubits long. So from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other there was a distance of ten cubits.[25]The other cherub also had a wingspan of ten cubits. Both the cherubim were of the same dimensions and shape.[26]The height of one cherub was ten cubits and the other cherub was the same.
[27]Solomon placed the cherubim in the innermost room. The wings of the cherubim were stretched out so that the wing of one touched one wall and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. Their wings touched one another in the middle of the most holy place.[28]Solomon overlaid the cherubim with gold.

[29]He carved all the walls of the house around about with figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, in the outer and inner rooms.[30]Solomon overlaid the floor of the house with gold, in both the outer and inner rooms.
[31]Solomon made doors of olivewood for the entrance to the inner room. The lintel and doorposts had five indented sections.[32]So he made two doors of olivewood, and he made on them carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He overlaid them with gold and he spread the gold on the cherubim and palm trees.
[33]In this way, Solomon also made for the temple entrance doorposts of olive wood having four indented sections[34]and two doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding and the two leaves of the other door were folding.[35]He carved on them cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and he evenly overlaid gold on the carved work.
[36]He built the inner courtyard with three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams.

[37]The foundation of the house of Yahweh was laid in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv.[38]In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts and conforming to all its specifications. Solomon took seven years to build the temple.

1 Kings 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The building of the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Building the temple

Solomon built the temple in seven years. The outside walls were made of rock. Solomon shaped the rocks for the wall in the quarry and then assembled them at the temple site. The inside was covered with wood. Inside the temple was a room covered by gold, which was the Most Holy Place where the ark was housed under statues of angels. It represented the presence of God.

Links:

[1 Kings 6:1 Notes]

1 Kings 6:1

General Information:

The narrator describes the temple and its dimensions. This description continues through 1 Kings 6:38.

Solomon began to build

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "Solomon commanded his workers to begin building"

480th ... fourth

These are the ordinal forms of 480 and 4.

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in the month of Ziv, which is the second month
"Ziv" is the name of the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.
1 Kings 6:2
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high
"60 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high." A cubit is 46 centimeters. This can be written used modern measures. Alternate translation: "27.6 meters long, 9.2 meters wide, and 13.8 meters high"
1 Kings 6:3
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
portico
an area of a building made of columns and a roof that leads to and connects with the building's entrance door. This portico was probably attached to the front part of the wall that surrounded the temple.
twenty cubits ... ten cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters ... 4.6 meters"
1 Kings 6:4
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
he made windows
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "they made windows"
1 Kings 6:5
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
he built
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "they built"
he built rooms around it
He built rooms on the outside of the outside wall around the main chamber.
1 Kings 6:6
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
he made
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "they made"
The lowest story ... the middle ... the third
This refers to the rooms in each story of the building.
five cubits ... six cubits ... seven cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 2.3 meters ... about 2.8 meters ... about 3.2 meters"
he made offsets in the wall of the house
They made ledges all around the main building to support the beams of the small rooms.
beams
A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building.
1 Kings 6:7
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple.
the house
Here "house" refers to God's house, the temple.
stones prepared at the quarry
A quarry is where people cut large stones from a mountain and shape them with tools so they are smooth. After they prepared the stones at the quarry, they brought them to the temple.
1 Kings 6:8
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple.
ground level ... middle level ... third level
There were a total of three floors. Some languages call these "ground floor," "first floor," and "second floor."
1 Kings 6:9
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple.
Solomon built ... he covered
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers built ... they covered"
beams ... of cedar
A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:6.
planks ... of cedar
A plank is a flat wooden board used for floors and walls.
1 Kings 6:10
Connecting Statement:
The narrator continues to describe the temple and its dimensions.
He built
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "They built"
He built the side rooms
These are the same rooms that are referred to in 1 Kings 6:5.
inner chambers
This phrase is a metonym for the walls that enclosed the chambers. Alternate translation: "exterior walls that enclosed the inner chambers"
five cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters"
timbers of cedar
The word "timbers" is a general term that refers to wood used for building, such as beams and planks.
1 Kings 6:11
The word of Yahweh came to Solomon, saying,
The idiom "The word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Solomon. He said," or "Yahweh spoke this message to Solomon:"
1 Kings 6:12
which you are building
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "which you are having your workers build"

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walk in my statutes
The word "walk" is a metaphor for "live" or "obey." Alternate translation: "continually obey all my statutes"
do justice
Possible meanings are 1) "carry out all of my laws" or 2) "treat the people whom you are ruling justly."
keep all my commandments and walk in them
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the importance of obeying God's commandments. Alternate translation: "carefully obey all I tell you to do"
I will confirm my promise with you that I had made to David your father
"I will do everything I promised David your father that I would do for you"
1 Kings 6:14
Solomon
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers"
1 Kings 6:15
he built ... he covered them ... he covered the floor
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "they built ... they covered them ... they covered the floor"
interior walls
walls between the rooms on the inside
cypress
Cypress is a kind of wood that was used for building the temple.
1 Kings 6:16
He built twenty cubits ... He built this room
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do the building. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to build twenty cubits ... He had them build this room"
He built twenty cubits
"He built a room twenty cubits long"
twenty cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters"
1 Kings 6:17
forty cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "18.4 meters"
main hall
"main room"
1 Kings 6:18
gourds
a type of hard, round vegetable that grows on a vine on the ground
open flowers
"blooming flowers" or "flowers that were open"
1 Kings 6:19
Solomon prepared
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They prepared"
1 Kings 6:20
Solomon overlaid
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They overlaid"
twenty cubits
"9.2 meters"
covered the altar with cedar wood
This altar would be used for burning incense.
1 Kings 6:21
Solomon overlaid ... he placed
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They overlaid ... they placed"
overlaid
"covered"
1 Kings 6:22
He overlaid ... He also overlaid
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They overlaid ... They also overlaid"
altar that belonged to the inner room
"altar of incense at the entrance to the inner room"
1 Kings 6:23
Solomon made
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Solomon commanded them to make"
olivewood
wood from an olive tree
ten cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "4.6 meters"
1 Kings 6:24
five cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters"
1 Kings 6:25
wingspan
the distance from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other wing
same dimensions
"same size"
1 Kings 6:27
Solomon placed
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They placed"
innermost room
another name for the most holy place
1 Kings 6:28
Solomon overlaid
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They overlaid"
overlaid
"covered." See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:21.
1 Kings 6:29
He carved
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to carve"
1 Kings 6:30
Solomon overlaid
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He had them overlay"
overlaid
covered
1 Kings 6:31
Solomon made

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Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They made"

lintel

beam across the top of a door frame

indented sections

toothlike notches on each of five sections

1 Kings 6:32

he made ... he made ... He overlaid ... he spread

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "they made ... they made ... They overlaid ... they spread"

overlaid

"covered." See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:21.

1 Kings 6:33

In this way, Solomon also made for the temple entrance doorposts of olive wood having four indented sections

"In the same way, Solomon also made doorposts of olive wood for the temple entrance, with four indented sections"

Solomon also made

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "they also made"

indented sections

tooth-like notches

1 Kings 6:34

The two leaves of the one door

This means each door had two sections connected by hinges so they could fold together.

1 Kings 6:35

He carved ... he evenly overlaid

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They carved ... they evenly overlaid"

1 Kings 6:36

He built the inner courtyard

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They built the inner courtyard"

cedar beams

A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:6.

1 Kings 6:37

the fourth year

The word "fourth" is the ordinal form of "four." You may need to make explicit the event from which the writer counts the years. Alternate translation: "the fourth year after Solomon became king"

house of Yahweh

"the temple"

in the month of Ziv

"Ziv" is the name of the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:1]

1 Kings 6:38

the eleventh year

The word "eleventh" is the ordinal forms of "eleven." You may need to make explicit the event from which the writer counts the years. Alternate translation: "the eleventh year after Solomon became king"

in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month

"Bul" is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

the house was finished in all its parts and conforming to all its specifications

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they finished building every part of the house. They built it exactly the way Solomon had told them to build it"

Solomon took

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "It took Solomon's workers"

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7 [1]Solomon took thirteen years to build his own palace.[2]He built the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. Its length was one hundred cubits, its width was fifty cubits, and its height was thirty cubits. The palace was built with four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars.
[3]The house was roofed with cedar that rested on beams. Those beams were supported by pillars. There were forty-five beams, fifteen in a row.[4]There were beams in three rows, and each window was opposite another window in three sets.
[5]All the doors and posts were made square with beams, and window was opposite window in three sets.
[6]There was a colonnade fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide, with a portico in front and pillars and a roof.
[7]Solomon built the hall of the throne where he was to judge, the hall of justice. It was covered with cedar from the floor to the ceiling.[1]
[8]Solomon's house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, was designed in a similar way. He also built a house like this for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as a wife.

[9]These buildings were adorned with costly hewn stones, precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed on all sides. These stones were used from the foundation to the stones on top, and also on the outside to the great court.[10]The foundation was constructed with very large, costly stones of eight and ten cubits in length.
[11]Above were costly hewn stones precisely cut to size, and cedar beams.[12]The great courtyard surrounding the palace had three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams like the courtyard of the temple of Yahweh and the temple portico.

[13]King Solomon sent for Huram and brought him from Tyre.[14]Huram was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali; his father was a man of Tyre, a craftsman in bronze. Huram was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill to do great work with bronze. He came to King Solomon to work with bronze for the king.

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[15]Huram fashioned the two pillars of bronze, each eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference.[16]He made two capitals of polished bronze to set on the tops of the pillars. The height of each capital was five cubits.[17]Checker latticework and wreaths of chain work for the capitals decorated the top of the pillars, seven for each capital.
[18]So Huram made two rows of pomegranates around the top of each pillar to decorate their capitals.[19]The capitals on the tops of the portico pillars were decorated with lilies, four cubits high.
[20]The capitals on these two pillars also included, close to their very top, two hundred pomegranates in rows all around.
[21]He raised up the pillars at the temple portico. The pillar on the right was named Jakin, and the pillar on the left was named Boaz.[22]On the top of the pillars were decorations like lilies. The fashioning of the pillars was done in this way.

[23]Huram made the round sea of cast metal, ten cubits from brim to brim. Its height was five cubits, and it was thirty cubits in circumference.[24]Under the brim encircling the sea were gourds, ten in each cubit, cast in one piece with it when that basin was cast.
[25]The sea stood on twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. It was set on top of them, and all their hindquarters were toward the inside.
[26]The sea was as thick as the width of a hand, and its brim was forged like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom. The sea held two thousand baths of water.

[27]Huram made the ten stands of bronze. Each stand was four cubits long and four cubits wide, and the height was three cubits.[28]The work of the stands was like this. They had panels that stood between frames,[29]and on the panels and on the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. Above and below the lions and oxen were wreaths of hammered work.
[30]Every stand had four bronze wheels and axles, and its four corners had supports beneath for the basin. The supports were cast with wreaths on the side of each one.[31]The opening was round like a pedestal, a cubit and a half wide, and was within a crown that rose up a cubit. On the opening were engravings, and their panels were square, not round.
[32]The four wheels were underneath the panels, and the axles of the wheels and their housings were in the stand. The height of a wheel was a cubit and a half.[33]The wheels were forged like chariot wheels. Their housings, rims, spokes, and hubs were all cast metal.
[34]There were four handles at the four corners of each stand, forged into the stand itself.[35]In the top of the stands there was a round band half a cubit deep, and on the top of the stand its supports and panels were attached.
[36]On the surfaces of the supports and on the panels Huram engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees that covered the space available, and they were surrounded by wreaths.[37]He made the ten stands in this manner. All of them were cast in the same molds, and they had one size, and the same shape.

[38]Huram made ten basins of bronze. One basin could hold forty baths of water. Each basin was four cubits across and there was one basin on each of ten stands.[39]He made five stands on the south-facing side of the temple and five on the north-facing side of the temple. He set the sea on the east corner, facing toward the south of the temple.

[40]Huram made the basins and the shovels and the sprinkling bowls. Then he finished all the work that he did for King Solomon in the temple of Yahweh:
[41]the two pillars, and the bowl-like capitals that were on top of the two pillars, and the two sets of decorative latticework to cover the two bowl like capitals that were on top of the pillars.

[42]He made the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of decorative latticework (two rows of pomegranates for each set of latticework to cover the two bowl-like capitals that were on the pillars);
[43]the ten stands, and the ten basins on the stands.

[44]He made the large basin called the sea with its twelve oxen under it;
[45]also the pots, shovels, basins, and all the other implements. Huram made them out of polished bronze, for King Solomon, for the temple of Yahweh.
[46]The king had cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Sukkoth and Zarethan.[47]Solomon did not weigh all the utensils because there were too many to weigh, because the weight of the bronze could not be measured.

[48]Solomon had made all the furnishings that were in the temple of Yahweh out of gold: the golden altar and the table on which the bread of the presence was to be placed;
[49]the lampstands, five on the right side and five on the left, in front of the inner room, were of pure gold, and the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs were of gold.

[50]Solomon also had made the cups, lamp trimmers, basins, spoons, and incense burners, all of which were made of pure gold; he had sockets of gold made for the doors of the inner room (which was the most holy place), and for the doors of the main hall of the temple.

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[51]In this way, all the work that King Solomon directed for the house of Yahweh was finished. So Solomon brought in the things that were set apart by David, his father, and the silver, the gold, and the furnishings, and put them into the storerooms of the house of Yahweh.

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[1]There was a repetition of the word for floor in the Hebrew copies, but see 1 Kings 6:16 for a similiar expression, that reads from the floor to the rafters and which appears to have been intended here.

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1 Kings 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has a description of the palace Solomon built and the materials used in the temple courtyard. It is the last chapter about the building of the temple. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Bronze

Solomon hired a man from Tyre who was good at casting things out of bronze. The bronze objects were made by hollowing out the shape of the object in clay and then pouring in the hot melted liquid bronze and letting it cool. He made two large pillars and a large water reservoir set on the backs of 12 bronze cows. He made all the instruments for use in the sacrifices outside the temple. He made the furnishing inside the temple out of gold.

The temple and the palace

Solomon spent 13 years building a palace for himself that was much bigger than the temple. It is significant that the house of Solomon was much larger than the house of God. (See: houseofgod)

Links:

[1 Kings 7:1 Notes]

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1 Kings 7:1

General Information:

The author is writing about Solomon's palace.

Solomon took thirteen years to build his own palace

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "It took Solomon's workers thirteen years to build his palace"

palace

If your language does not have a word for "palace," you may translate this as "house" or "big house."

1 Kings 7:2

General Information:

Some details are given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

He built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to build"

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

"the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest"

one hundred cubits ... fifty cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "46 meters ... 23 meters ... 13.8 meters"

beams

A beam is a long piece of strong wood used to support walls and roofs.

1 Kings 7:3

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

The house was roofed with cedar that rested on beams

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The carpenters built a roof from cedar planks and attached them to beams"

beams

long pieces of strong wood usually used to support a roof

1 Kings 7:4

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

1 Kings 7:5

Connecting Statement:

Some details continue to be given about the structure of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

were made square

"had rectangular frames"

1 Kings 7:6

General Information:

The author writes about the structure of the Hall of Pillars.

colonnade

a series of columns, all the same distance apart

fifty cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "23 meters ... 13.8 meters"

portico

an area of a building made of columns and a roof that leads to and connects with the building's entrance door. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:3

1 Kings 7:7

General Information:

The author writes about the hall of the throne.

Solomon built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Solomon had them build"

the hall of the throne

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Possible meanings are 1) "the house in which he was going to place his throne" or 2) "a house named The King's Chair House"

It was covered with cedar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers covered the floor with cedar wood"

1 Kings 7:8

General Information:

The author continues to write about the palace area.

Solomon's house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, was designed in a similar way

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Solomon had someone design the house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, in almost the same way"

He also built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He also commanded them to build"

1 Kings 7:9

General Information:

The writer is writing about the stones used for the buildings.

These buildings were adorned with costly hewn stones

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers adorned the buildings with costly, hewn stones"

hewn stones, precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "hewn stones, that workers had precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed"

These stones were used

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers used these stones"

from the foundation to the stones on top, and also on the outside to the great court

The author is emphasizing that the workers used expensive stones for the foundations and all the buildings.

1 Kings 7:10

The foundation was constructed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers constructed the foundation"

eight and ten cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 3.7 meters and 4.6 meters"

1 Kings 7:11

cedar beams

A beam is a long piece of wood used for structural support.

1 Kings 7:12

three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams

See how you translated this in 1 Kings 6:36.

1 Kings 7:13

brought him from Tyre

Huram accepted Solomon's invitation to come to Jerusalem.

1 Kings 7:14

the son of a widow ... his father was a man of Tyre

A widow is a woman whose husband has died, so we know that the father is dead.

Huram was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill

This can be stated in active form. The words "wisdom and understanding" mean basically the same thing and are used together for emphasis. Yahweh giving such things as wisdom is spoken of as if they were liquids that Yahweh had poured into a container, and Huram is spoken of as if he were that container. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had given Huram wisdom, understanding, and skill"

1 Kings 7:15

eighteen cubits ... twelve cubits

A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 8.3 meters ... 5.5 meters"

in circumference

Circumference is the distance or measurement around a circular object or area.

1 Kings 7:16

five cubits

A cubit is about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "2.3 meters"

two capitals

decorations on top of each of the two pillars

polished bronze

They polished the bronze so that it would reflect sunlight. "gleaming bronze"

1 Kings 7:17

Checker latticework and wreaths of chain work

"Crossed metal strips woven together and metal chains twisted together"

1 Kings 7:18

Huram made

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Huram commanded his workers to make"

two rows of pomegranates

A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. Huram did not use real pomegranates to decorate the pillars. He made them out of bronze.

1 Kings 7:19

The capitals ... were decorated with lilies, four cubits high

Lilies are plants whose flowers are wide at one end and very narrow at the other end. These words can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram decorated the capitals ... with bronze lilies, four cubits high"

the tops of the portico

Translate "portico" as in 1 Kings 7:6.

four cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters"

1 Kings 7:20

two hundred pomegranates

"200 pomegranates." A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:18]

1 Kings 7:21

He raised up

Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They raised up"

The pillar on the right was named Jakin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The name of the pillar on the right side was Jakin"

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the pillar on the left was named Boaz
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The name of the pillar on the left side was Boaz"
1 Kings 7:22
The fashioning of the pillars was done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram fashioned the pillars" or "Huram's men fashioned the pillars"
1 Kings 7:23
Huram made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Huram also commanded them to make"
the round sea
This refers to a particular bronze tank or basin in the temple. It was very large and held a lot of water. It was called "the sea."
cast metal
Huram melted the bronze and formed it in a mold.
ten cubits ... five cubits ... thirty cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "4.6 meters ... 2.3 meters ... 13.8 meters"
from brim to brim
"from one edge to the other"
in circumference
Circumference is the distance or measurement around a circular object or area.
1 Kings 7:24
encircling the sea were gourds
A gourd is a type of hard, round vegetable that grows on a vine on the ground.
when that basin was cast
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when Huram cast that basin"
1 Kings 7:25
The Sea
This refers to the bronze tank or basin that held water for sacrifices.
stood on
"was on top of"
"The Sea" was set on top of them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram's workers set 'The Sea' on top of the bronze oxen"
hindquarters
This is the back quarter of the body of an animal with four feet.
1 Kings 7:26
the width of a hand
This is about eight centimeters.
its brim was forged like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram forged the brim to look like the brim of a cup, to curve outward like a lily"
two thousand baths
"2,000 baths." A bath is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "44 cubic meters" or "44,000 liters")
1 Kings 7:27
Huram made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Huram also commanded them to make" or "They also made"
four cubits ... three cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters ... about 1.4 meters"
1 Kings 7:28
The work of the stands was like this
This means the author will describe the stands in the words that follow.
1 Kings 7:29
on the panels and on the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim
There were decorative pieces in the shapes of lions, oxen, and cherubim fastened to the sides of the stands.
wreaths of hammered work
Here the word "wreaths" refers to spiral-shaped pieces of bronze.
1 Kings 7:30
four bronze wheels and axles
There was one axle for each pair of wheels. Alternate translation: "four bronze wheels and two axles"
its four corners
"the four corners of each stand"
The supports were cast with wreaths
Each support was cast as one piece with the wreaths. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram cast the supports with spiral-shaped pieces"
1 Kings 7:31
a cubit and a half ... a cubit
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 70 centimeters ... about 50 centimeters"
a crown that rose up
Here the word "crown" refers to the circular piece at the top of the stand's opening that held the basin.
their panels were square
"the panels of the stands were square." This phrase returns to the description of the panels that began in 1 Kings 7:28.
1 Kings 7:32
their housings
Here the word "their" refers to the axles. The word "housings" refers to the casings into which the axles were inserted.
a cubit and a half
A cubit was 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 70 centimeters"
1 Kings 7:33
The wheels were forged like chariot wheels
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram made the wheels like small chariot wheels"
Their housings, rims, spokes, and hubs
Here the word "Their" refers to the wheels.
1 Kings 7:34
There were four handles at the four corners of each stand
"There was a handle at each of the four corners of each stand"
1 Kings 7:35
half a cubit deep
A cubit was 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "twenty-three centimeters wide"

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on the top of the stand its supports and panels were attached
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram attached the supports and panels to the top of each stand"
1 Kings 7:36
Huram engraved
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "they engraved"
they were surrounded
Here the word "they" refers to the cherubim, lions, and palm trees.
they were surrounded by wreaths
The word "wreaths" refers to spiral-shaped pieces of bronze. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there were wreaths all around them"
1 Kings 7:37
He made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to make"
All of them were cast in the same molds
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Huram cast all of the stands in the same mold" or "They cast all of the stand in the same mold"
they had one size, and the same shape
"all of the stands were the same size and shape"
1 Kings 7:38
Huram made ten
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Huram had them make ten"
forty baths
A bath is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "about 880 liters"
four cubits
A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 1.8 meters"
1 Kings 7:39
He made five ... He set
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Human had them make five ... Huram commanded them to set"
the south-facing side ... the north-facing side
"the south side ... the north side"
on the east corner, facing toward the south of the temple
"near the southeast corner of the temple"
1 Kings 7:40
Huram made ... he finished
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Huram had them make ... they finished"
1 Kings 7:41
the bowl-like capitals
The capitals were shaped like bowls.
decorative latticework
"crossed metal strips woven together"
1 Kings 7:42
He made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They made"
four hundred pomegranates
"400 pomegranates." A pomegranate is a fruit with a hard, red rind and many juicy seeds inside. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 7:18]
1 Kings 7:44
He made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They made"
1 Kings 7:45
Huram made
Huram would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "They made"
all the other implements
"all the other tools"
polished bronze
bronze that was polished so that it would reflect light
1 Kings 7:46
The king had cast them
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "The king had his workers cast them"
plain of the Jordan
"flat land near the Jordan River"
Sukkoth ... Zarethan
These are names of cities.
1 Kings 7:47
Solomon did not weigh
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Solomon did not have them weigh"
the weight of the bronze could not be measured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could measure the weight of the bronze"
1 Kings 7:48
Solomon had made
Solomon would have commanded his workers to do this work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers had made"
on which the bread of the presence was to be placed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on which the priests were to place the bread of the presence"
1 Kings 7:49
the flowers, the lamps
The "flowers" and "lamps" were part of the lampstands.
1 Kings 7:50
had made the cups ... all of which were made of pure gold
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "had his workers make all the cups ... out of pure gold"
sockets of gold made for the doors
Here "sockets" may refer to either 1) the sockets in which the door pegs turned, or 2) the hinges on which the doors hung.
1 Kings 7:51
the work that King Solomon directed for the house of Yahweh was finished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the workers finished the work that King Solomon had them do for the house of Yahweh"

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8 [1]Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, and the leaders of the families of the people of
Israel, before himself in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh from the city of David, that is, Zion.
[2]All the men of Israel assembled before King Solomon at the feast, in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month.
[3]All the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.[4]They brought up the ark of Yahweh, the tent of meeting, and
all the holy furnishings that were in the tent. The priests and the Levites brought these things up.[5]King Solomon and all
the assembly of Israel came together before the ark, sacrificing sheep and cattle that could not be counted.
[6]The priests brought in the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to its place, into the inner room of the house, to the most holy
place, under the wings of the cherubim.[7]For the cherubim spread out their wings to the place of the ark, and they covered
the ark and the poles by which it was carried.[8]The poles were so long that their ends were seen from the holy place in
front of the inner room, but they could not be seen from outside. They are there to this day.
[9]There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses had put there at Horeb, when Yahweh made a
covenant with the people of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.[10]It came about that when the priests came out
of the holy place, the cloud filled the temple of Yahweh.[11]The priests could not stand to serve because of the cloud, for the
glory of Yahweh filled his house.

[12]Then Solomon said, "Yahweh has said
that he would live in thick darkness,
[13] But I have built you a lofty residence,
a place for you to live in forever."

[14]Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.[15]He
said, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised, who spoke to David my father, and has fulfilled it with his own hands,
saying,[16]'Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to
build a house, in order for my name to be there. However, I chose David to rule over my people Israel.'
[17]Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.[18]But Yahweh said
to David my father, 'In that it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well for it to be in your heart.
[19]Nevertheless you will not build the house; instead, your son, one who will be born from your loins, will build the house
for my name.'
[20]Yahweh has carried out the word that he had said, for I have arisen in the place of David my father, and I sit on the
throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised. I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.[21]I have made a
place for the ark there, in which is Yahweh's covenant, which he made with our fathers when he brought them out of the
land of Egypt."

[22]Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh, before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward the
heavens.[23]He said, "Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens above or on the earth below, who keeps
his covenant faithfulness with your servants who walk before you with all their heart;[24]you who have kept with your
servant David my father, what you promised him. Yes, you spoke with your mouth and have fulfilled it with your hand, as
it is today.
[25]Now then, Yahweh, God of Israel, carry out what you have promised to your servant David my father, when you said,
'You will not fail to have a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful to walk
before me, as you have walked before me.'[26]Now then, God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken
to your servant David my father.

[27]But will God actually live on the earth? Look, the entire universe and heaven itself cannot contain you—how much less
can this temple that I have built![28]Yet please respect this prayer of your servant and his humble request, Yahweh my God;
listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you today.
[29]May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, to the place about which you have said, 'My name and my
presence will be there'—in order to listen to the prayers that your servant will pray toward this place.[30]So listen to the
humble request of your servant and of your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, listen from the place
where you live, from the heavens; and when you listen, forgive.

[31]If a man sins against his neighbor and is required to swear an oath, and if he comes and swears an oath before your
altar in this house,[32]listen from the heavens and act. Judge your servants, condemning the wicked and bringing what he
has done upon his own head. Declare the innocent not guilty and give to him according to his righteousness.

[33]When your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, if they turn back to you,
confess your name, pray, and seek your favor in this temple—[34]then please listen in the heavens and forgive the sin of
your people Israel; bring them back to the land that you gave to their ancestors.

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[35]When the skies are shut up and there is no rain because the people have sinned against you—if they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin when you have afflicted them—[36]then listen in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and of your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk. Send rain on your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

[37]Suppose there is famine in the land, or suppose that there is disease, blight or mildew, locusts or caterpillars; or suppose that an enemy attacks the city gates in their land, or that there is any plague or sickness—[38]and suppose then that prayers and humble requests are made by a person or by all your people Israel—each knowing the plague in his own heart as he spreads out his hands toward this temple.
[39]Then listen from heaven, the place where you live, forgive and act, and reward every person for all he does; you know his heart, because you and you only know the hearts of all human beings.[40]Do this so that they may fear you all the days that they live on the land that you gave to our ancestors.

[41]In addition, concerning the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel: When he comes from a distant country because of your name—[42]for they will hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your raised arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple,[43]then please listen from heaven, the place where you live, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you. Do this so that all the peoples on earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel. Do this so they might know that this house I have built is called by your name.

[44]Suppose that your people go out to battle against an enemy, by whatever way you may send them, and suppose that they pray to you, Yahweh, toward the city that you have chosen, and toward the house that I have built for your name.[45]Then listen in the heavens to their prayer and their request, and help their cause.

[46]Suppose that they sin against you, since there is no one who does not sin, and suppose that you are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, so that the enemy takes them away captive to their land, whether distant or near.[47]Then suppose that they realize they are in the land where they have been exiled, and suppose that they repent and seek favor from you from the land of their captors. Suppose that they say, 'We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly.'
[48]Suppose that they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who captured them, and suppose that they pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, and toward the city that you chose, and toward the house that I have built for your name.
[49]Then from heaven, the place where you live, listen to their prayer and their request for help, and you will make matters right for them.[50]Forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, and cause their captors to have compassion on them.
[51]They are your people and your inheritance, whom you rescued out of Egypt as if from the middle of a furnace where iron is forged.[52]May your eyes be open to the humble request of your servant and to the requests of your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they cry to you.[53]For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to belong to you and receive your promises, just as you explained by Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, Lord Yahweh."

[54]So it was that when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and request for favor to Yahweh, he arose from before the altar of Yahweh, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread out toward the heavens.[55]He stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying,[56]"May Yahweh be praised, who has given rest to his people Israel, keeping all his promises. Not one word has failed out of all Yahweh's good promises that he made with Moses his servant.
[57]May Yahweh our God be with us, as he was with our ancestors. May he never leave us or abandon us,[58]that he may incline our hearts to him, to live in all his ways and keep his commandments and his regulations and his statutes, which he commanded our fathers.
[59]Let these words I have spoken, by which I have sought the favor of Yahweh, be near Yahweh our God day and night, so that he may help the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel, as every day will require;[60]that all the peoples of the earth may know that Yahweh, he is God, and there is no other God![61]Therefore let your heart be true to Yahweh our God, to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments, as on this day."

[62]So the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices to Yahweh.[63]Solomon offered a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to Yahweh: twenty-two thousand cattle and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of Yahweh.

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[64]The same day the king set apart the middle of the courtyard in front of the temple of Yahweh, for there he offered the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar that was before Yahweh was too small to receive the burnt offering, the grain offerings, and the fat of the fellowship offerings.
[65]So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from Lebo Hamath to the brook of Egypt, before Yahweh our God for seven days and also for another seven days, a total of fourteen days.[66]On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their tents with joyful and glad hearts for all the goodness that Yahweh had shown to David, his servant, and to Israel, his people.

1 Kings 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ark is placed in the new temple. This is a very significant event in the history of the Israelites. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Celebration of the temple's completion

When the temple was finished, Solomon told all of the people to come to Jerusalem. They took the ark out of the tent and brought it to the temple. Then Solomon prayed that God would hear and answer prayers made to him when they faced towards the temple.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Solomon prayed that God would respond to people's prayers using an idiom: "that your eyes may be open to the request of your servant."

Links:

1 Kings 8:1 Notes

1 Kings 8:1

assembled the elders of Israel

"called together the leaders of Israel"

1 Kings 8:2

All the men of Israel

This may refer either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in 8:1 or 2) generally to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every male person who lived in Israel.

at the feast

This is a reference to the Feast of Sukkoth, also known as the Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Shelters .

in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month

"Ethanim" is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

1 Kings 8:5

all the assembly of Israel

This is a generalization.

sheep and cattle that could not be counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "more sheep and cattle than anyone would ever be able to count"

1 Kings 8:6

into the inner room of the house, to the most holy place, under

"into the inner room of the house—that is, to the most holy place—under"

1 Kings 8:7

poles by which it was carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "poles by which the priests carried it"

1 Kings 8:8

their ends were seen ... they could not be seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people could see their ends ... people could not see them"

this day

This means the day on which the writer wrote.

1 Kings 8:9

There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets ... Egypt

This double negative emphasizes that the two tablets were the only things in the ark. Alternate translation: "The only things in the ark were the two tablets ... Egypt"

1 Kings 8:10

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

1 Kings 8:12

Yahweh has said ... darkness

Solomon speaks to Yahweh as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects Yahweh.

1 Kings 8:13

lofty residence

beautiful building in which someone very important lives

1 Kings 8:14

all the assembly of Israel

"all the people of Israel who were gathered there"

1 Kings 8:15

May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, the God of Israel"

with his own hands

The hand is a metonym for the power in the hand. Alternate translation: "by his own power"

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1 Kings 8:16

in order for my name to be

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2]

1 Kings 8:17

it was in the heart of David my father

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "David my father desired"

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for the name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2]

1 Kings 8:18

In that it was in your heart

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "Because you desired"

for my name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2]

for it to be in your heart

What David desired is spoken of as if it were an item in a container and the heart as if it were a container. Alternate translation: "to desire to do that" or "by wanting to do that"

1 Kings 8:19

one who will be born from your loins

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "one who will be your own offspring" or "one whom you yourself will father"

1 Kings 8:20

has carried out the word that he had said

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "has done exactly what he said he would do"

I have arisen in the place of David my father

Height is a metaphor for power. Alternate translation: "I have gained the power that David my father had"

I sit on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "I rule over Israel"

for the name of Yahweh

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 3:2. Alternate translation: "in which people will worship Yahweh"

1 Kings 8:21

is Yahweh's covenant, which

The stone tablets on which Yahweh had written the terms of the covenant are spoken of as if they were the covenant itself. Alternate translation: "are the tablets on which Yahweh wrote the terms of the covenant that"

1 Kings 8:22

all the assembly of Israel

"all the people of Israel who were gathered there"

1 Kings 8:23

who keeps his covenant faithfulness with your servants

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." Alternate translation: "who faithfully loves your servants" or "who is faithful to your covenant with your servants"

walk before you with all their heart

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "live wholeheartedly the way that you want them to"

1 Kings 8:24

fulfilled it with your hand

The hand is a metonym for the power of the hand. Alternate translation: "by your power fulfilled what you said"

1 Kings 8:25

to sit on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "to rule over Israel"

walk before me ... have walked before me

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "live as I want you to ... have lived as I want you to"

1 Kings 8:27

But will God actually live on the earth?

Possible meanings of this question are 1) Solomon is asking a real question and expecting an answer or 2) the question is rhetorical and Solomon is emphasizing that God is too big and mighty to live on earth. Alternate translation: "But it surely cannot be that God will actually live on the earth!"

But will God

Here Solomon speaks about God in the third person. It can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "But will you"

Look

"What I am about to say is important" or "The truth is that"

you—how much less can this temple that I have built

"you, so this temple that I have built certainly cannot contain you"

1 Kings 8:28

respect this prayer of your servant and his humble request

The words "prayer" and "humble request" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he makes his request. Solomon refers to himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "respect me, your servant, as I make this request"

listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you today

The words "cry" and "prayer" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he asks Yahweh to help him. Solomon refers to himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "listen to me, your servant, as I call today for you to help me"

1 Kings 8:29

May your eyes be open toward

The eye is a metonym for what the eye does. Alternate translation: "May you watch over"

night and day

This is a merism. Alternate translation: "all the time" or "continually"

My name and my presence

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These two words together emphasize that Yahweh will dwell in the temple.

that your servant will pray

Solomon speaks of himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "that I, your servant, will pray"

1 Kings 8:30

listen to the humble request of your servant and of your people Israel

Solomon speaks of himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "listen to my humble request and the humble request of your people Israel"

1 Kings 8:31

is required to swear

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone requires him to swear"

1 Kings 8:32

upon his own head

Here "head" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "on him"

give to him according to his righteousness

"to give him what he deserves because he is righteous"

1 Kings 8:33

your people Israel are defeated by an enemy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "an enemy defeats your people Israel"

confess your name

Possible meanings are 1) "confess that they have sinned against you" or 2) "praise you" or 3) "say that they will obey you from now on."

1 Kings 8:35

the skies are shut up and there is no rain

The sky is spoken of as if it were a building in which God stores the rain. Alternate translation: "you do not allow rain to fall"

confess your name

Possible meanings are 1) "confess that they have sinned against you" or 2) "praise you" or 3) "say that they will obey you from now on." See how you translated this in 1 Kings 8:33.

1 Kings 8:36

in which they should walk

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "that they should live"

1 Kings 8:37

Suppose there is famine in the land, or ... sickness

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future.

blight or mildew

These are agricultural terms that refer to the death of crops from either too little or too much rain, respectively.

locusts or caterpillars

A "locust" is a type of grasshopper that causes destruction by eating crops. The word "caterpillar" refers to an early growth stage of the locust.

1 Kings 8:38

prayers and humble requests

The words "prayer" and "humble requests" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the person is sincere as he makes his request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28]

knowing the plague in his own heart

Possible meanings are 1) The person's sin is spoken of as if it were a plague. Alternate translation: "knowing the sin in his own heart" or 2) The "plague" is a metonym for the sins that the disasters are a punishment for. Alternate translation: "knowing in his heart that the plague is the result of his own sin"

1 Kings 8:43

this house I have built is called by your name

The phrase "is called by your name" shows that God possesses and owns the house. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you own this house that I have built"

1 Kings 8:44

Suppose that your people go out ... suppose that they pray

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The situations he describes are conditions for what he requests in the following sentence. The words "suppose that" can be translated with the word "if," and this sentence can be connected to his request in verse 45.

for your name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2]

1 Kings 8:45

their prayer and their request

The words "prayer" and "request" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people are sincere as they make their request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28]

1 Kings 8:46

Suppose that they sin ... suppose that you are

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The events that he describes in verese 46-48 are conditions for his requests in verses 49-50.

1 Kings 8:47

suppose that they realize ... suppose that they repent ... Suppose that they say

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future.

where they have been exiled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where their enemies have taken them as exiles"

captors

people who keep others as prisoners

We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly

These two sentences mean the same thing. Together they emphasize how bad the people's actions were.

acted perversely and sinned

The words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the people sinned.

1 Kings 8:48

Suppose that they return ... suppose that they pray

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The events that he describes in verese 46-48 are conditions for his requests in verses 49-50.

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with all their heart and with all their soul
The idiom "with all ... heart" means "completely" and "with all ... soul" means "with all ... being." These two phrases have similar meanings. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:4]
in the land
"while they are living in the land"
toward their land
"toward the land in which they belong." This refers to Israel.
for your name
The word "name" is a metonym for the person, and "for ... name" refers to worshiping the person. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 3:2]
1 Kings 8:49
their prayer and their request
The two words "prayer" and "request" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that the people were sincere as they made their request to Yahweh. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28]
1 Kings 8:50
Forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you
Solomon twice requests Yahweh to forgive the people. This emphasizes the earnestness of his request.
1 Kings 8:51
a furnace where iron is forged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a furnace where people forge iron"
1 Kings 8:52
May your eyes be open
The eye is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "Please pay attention"
1 Kings 8:54
prayer and request
The words "prayer" and "request" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he makes his request. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28]
1 Kings 8:56
May Yahweh be praised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh"
Not one word has failed out of all Yahweh's good promises
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has made every word of his good promises come true"
1 Kings 8:57
leave us or abandon us
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize Solomon's desire for Yahweh to be present with the people.
1 Kings 8:58
incline our hearts to him
Here their "hearts" refer to the people's desires and emotions. Desiring to please someone is spoken of as inclining the heart toward that person. Alternate translation: "make us want to please him"
live in all his ways
Here "in his ways" is an idiom that refers to the way he wants people to live. Alternate translation: "live as he requires us to live"
1 Kings 8:59
day and night
This merism refers to "all the time" or "continually."
1 Kings 8:61
let your heart be true
"be wholly devoted"
walk in his statutes
The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "always obey his statutes"
1 Kings 8:62
all Israel with him
This generalization may refer either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1]
1 Kings 8:63
all the people of Israel
This generalization may refer either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1]
twenty-two thousand cattle
"22,000 cattle"
120,000 sheep
"one hundred twenty thousand sheep"
1 Kings 8:64
the bronze altar that was before Yahweh
"the bronze altar that was in Yahweh's presence." Since the temple is Yahweh's dwelling place among his people, the altar is described as being in his presence.
1 Kings 8:65
all Israel with him
This generalization may refer either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [1 Kings 8:1]
seven days ... seven days ... fourteen days
"7 days ... 7 days ... 14 days"
1 Kings 8:66
eighth day
The word "eighth" is the ordinal form of "8."
joyful and glad
The two words mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

9 [1]After Solomon had finished building the house of Yahweh and the king's palace, and after he had accomplished all that
he desired to do,[2]Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon.
[3]Then Yahweh said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your request for favor that you have made before me. I have set
apart this house, which you have built, to myself, to put my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for
all time.

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[4]As for you, if you walk before me as David your father walked in integrity of heart and in uprightness, obeying all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my decrees,[5]then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'A descendant of yours will never fail to be on the throne of Israel.'
[6]But if you turn away, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have placed before you, and if you go and worship other gods and bow down to them,[7]then will I cut off Israel from off the ground that I have given them; and this house that I have set apart to my name, I will cast it out of my sight, and Israel will become an example to be mocked and an object of ridicule among all peoples.
[8]This temple will become a heap of ruins, and everyone who passes by it will be shocked and will hiss. They will ask, 'Why has Yahweh done this to this land and to this house?'[9]Others will answer, 'Because they abandoned Yahweh, their God, who had brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and they laid hold of other gods and bowed down to them and worshiped them. That is why Yahweh has brought all this disaster on them.'"
[10]It came about at the end of twenty years that Solomon had finished building the two buildings, the temple of Yahweh and the king's palace.[11]Now Hiram, the king of Tyre, had furnished Solomon with cedar and cypress trees, and with gold—all that Solomon desired—so King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.
[12]Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, but they did not please him.[13]So Hiram said, "What cities are these which you have given me, my brother?" Hiram called them the Land of Kabul, which they are still called today.[14]Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

[15]This is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon imposed to build the temple of Yahweh and his own palace, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer.[16]Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer. He burned it and killed the Canaanites in the city. Then Pharaoh gave the city to his daughter, Solomon's wife, as a wedding gift.
[17]So Solomon rebuilt Gezer and Beth Horon the Lower,[18]Baalath and Tamar[1] in the wilderness in the land of Judah,[19]and all the store cities that he possessed, and the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever he wished to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the lands under his rule.
[20]As for all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel,[21]their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were not able to totally destroy—Solomon made them into forced laborers, which they are to this day.
[22]However, Solomon made no forced laborers of the people of Israel. They were his soldiers, his servants, his officials, his officers, and commanders of his chariot forces and his horsemen.

[23]These were also the chief officers managing the supervisors who were over Solomon's works, 550 of them, who supervised the people who did the work.

[24]Pharaoh's daughter moved from the city of David to the house that Solomon had built for her. Later, Solomon built the Millo.

[25]Three times each year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar that he built for Yahweh, burning incense with them on the altar that was before Yahweh. So he completed the temple and was now using it.

[26]King Solomon built a fleet of ships in Ezion Geber, which is near Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.
[27]Hiram sent servants to Solomon's fleet, sailors who were familiar with the sea, with Solomon's own servants.[28]They went to Ophir with servants of Solomon. From there they brought back 420 talents of gold for King Solomon.

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[1]Tamar is also pronounced Tadmor.

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1 Kings 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There are two parts to this chapter. Verses 1–9 is a dream in which God warned Solomon that he and his descendants were not to worship idols. If they did this, the temple would be destroyed. Verses 10–28 is about Solomon's extensive building and his partnership with Hiram, king of Tyre. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Worship only Yahweh

Yahweh alone must be worshiped. It is necessary for people to stay faithful to God and not worship idols. (See: faithful)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

'Walk" is a common image in Scripture. It is said, "if you walk before me as David your father walked." (See: walk)

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Links:

1 Kings 9:1 Notes

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1 Kings 9:3

your prayer and your request

The words "prayer" and "request" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh recognized that Solomon's request was sincere. See how you translated similar words in [1 Kings 8:28]

to put my name there forever

The name is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "to dwell there and to claim possession of it forever"

My eyes and my heart will be there

The eyes and heart are synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will protect and care for it"

1 Kings 9:4

if you walk before me as David your father walked

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "if you live the way I want you to live, just as David your father did"

in integrity of heart and in uprightness

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how righteous David was.

1 Kings 9:5

the throne of your kingdom

Here "throne" refers to his reign. Alternate translation: "your dynasty" or "your reign"

will never fail to be on the throne of Israel

The action of ruling a kingdom is spoken of as if it were a person sitting on a throne. This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "will always rule over Israel"

1 Kings 9:6

my commandments and my statutes

Here the words "commandments" and "statutes" mean basically the same thing and emphasize all that Yahweh has commanded.

worship other gods and bow down to them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

1 Kings 9:7

set apart to my name

Here the word "name" is a metonym for the person who possesses something. Alternate translation: "set apart for myself"

I will cast it out of my sight

The abstract noun "sight" can be expressed with the verb "see." Looking at something is a metaphor for protecting it. Alternate translation: "I will put it where I no longer have to see it" or "I will get rid of it so I no longer have to protect it"

1 Kings 9:8

This temple will become a heap of ruins

"This temple will be destroyed and its remains will be piled into a high mound"

will be shocked and will hiss

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will express amazement and make a sound of disrespect"

1 Kings 9:9

bowed down to them and worshiped them

These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase "bowed down to them" describes the posture that people used in worship.

1 Kings 9:10

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way of doing this, you could consider using it here.

at the end of twenty years

"after 20 years"

Solomon had finished building

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this.

1 Kings 9:13

What cities are these which you have given me, my brother?

Hiram is rebuking Solomon. This questions can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These cities that you have given me are good for nothing."

which they are still called today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and people still call them that today"

1 Kings 9:14

120 talents of gold

"one hundred and twenty talents of gold." A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "about 4,000 kilograms of gold"

1 Kings 9:15

the account of the forced labor which King Solomon imposed

"the account of Solomon requiring men to work"

the Millo

Possible meanings are 1) "the terrace system" or 2) "the landfill."

1 Kings 9:16

Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up

The person is a metonym for the army he commands. Alternate translation: "The army of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had gone up"

1 Kings 9:17

So Solomon rebuilt Gezer

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this.

1 Kings 9:22

Solomon made no forced laborers of the people of Israel

"Solomon did not force the people of Israel to labor"

1 Kings 9:23

550 of them

"five hundred and fifty of them"

1 Kings 9:24

built the Millo

Possible meanings are 1) "built the terrace system" or 2) "built the landfill." See how you translated "the Millo" in 1 Kings 9:15.

1 Kings 9:25

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altar that was before Yahweh
See how you translated this phrase in 1 Kings 8:64.
So he completed the temple
Solomon is a metonym for the workers he hired to do the work. Alternate translation: "So his workers completed the temple"
1 Kings 9:26
King Solomon built
It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this.
a fleet of ships
"a large group of ships"
1 Kings 9:28
420 talents of gold
"four hundred and twenty talents of gold." A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "about 14,000 kilograms of gold"

10 [1]When the queen of Sheba heard the report about Solomon concerning the name of Yahweh, she came to test him with hard questions.[2]She came to Jerusalem with a very long caravan, with camels loaded with spices, much gold, and many precious gemstones. When she arrived, she told Solomon all that was in her heart.
[3]Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing she asked that the king did not answer.[4]When the queen of Sheba saw all Solomon's wisdom, the palace that he had built,[5]the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the work of his servants and their clothing, also his cupbearers, and the manner in which he offered burnt offerings in the house of Yahweh, there was no more breath in her.
[6]She said to the king, "It is true, the report that I heard in my own land of your words and your wisdom.[7]I did not believe the message until I came here, and now my eyes have seen it. Not half was told me! In wisdom and wealth you have exceeded the report that I heard.
[8]How blessed are your wives, and how blessed are your servants who constantly stand before you, because they hear your wisdom.[9]May Yahweh your God be praised, who has taken pleasure in you, who placed you on the throne of Israel. Because Yahweh loved Israel forever, he has made you king, for you to do justice and righteousness!"
[10]She gave the king 120 talents of gold and a large amount of spices and precious stones. No greater amount of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon was ever given to him again.

[11]The fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, also brought from Ophir a large amount of almug wood and precious stones.[12]The king made almug wood pillars for the temple of Yahweh and for the king's palace, and harps and lutes for the singers. No such quantity of almug wood has ever come or been seen again to this day.

[13]King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba everything she wished for, whatever she asked, in addition to what Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she returned to her own land with her servants.

[14]Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,[15]besides the gold that the traders and merchants brought. All the kings of Arabia and the governors in the country also brought gold and silver to Solomon.
[16]King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold. Six hundred shekels of gold went into each one.[17]He also made three hundred shields of beaten gold. Three minas of gold went into each shield; the king put them into the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.
[18]Then the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with the finest gold.[19]There were six steps to the throne, and the back of it had a rounded top. There were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests.[20]Twelve lions stood on the steps, one on each side of each of the six steps. There was no throne like it in any other kingdom.
[21]All King Solomon's drinking cups were gold, and all the drinking cups in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were silver, because silver was not considered valuable in Solomon's days.[22]The king had at sea a fleet of ships of Tarshish, along with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet brought gold, silver, and ivory, as well as apes and baboons.

[23]So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the world in riches and in wisdom.[24]All the earth sought the presence of Solomon in order to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.[25]Those who visited brought tribute, vessels of silver and of gold, and clothes, armor, and spices, as well as horses and mules, year after year.

[26]Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen that he stationed in the chariot cities and with himself in Jerusalem.[27]The king had silver in Jerusalem, as much as the stones on the ground. He made cedar wood to be as abundant as the sycamore fig trees that are in the lowlands.
[28]The horses that belonged to Solomon were imported from Egypt, and Kue and the king's merchants purchased them from Kue.[29]Chariots were brought up from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver each, and horses for 150 shekels each. Many of these were then sold to all the kings of the Hittites and Aram.

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[1]Some Hebrew copies have: How blessed are your men. The ancient Greek translation has How blessed are your wives. Many think it is probable that women was misread as men, because two Hebrew words are very similar.

1 Kings 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There are two parts to this chapter: The fame of Solomon's wisdom and the wealth of his kingdom. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

==Queen of Sheba == King Solomon became so famous for his wisdom that the queen of Sheba (modern day Yemen) came all the way to see him and was deeply impressed. God promised him great wealth and he became famously rich. (See: promise)

Links:

1 Kings 10:1 Notes

1 Kings 10:1

the report about Solomon concerning the name of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is represented by his "name." Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "Solomon's fame, which glorified Yahweh" or 2) Alternate translation: "Solomon's fame, which Yahweh had given him"

1 Kings 10:2

all that was in her heart

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "everything she wanted to know"

1 Kings 10:5

the seating of his servants

Possible meanings are 1) "how his servants were seated around the table" or 2) "where his servants lived."

there was no more breath in her

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "she was utterly amazed"

1 Kings 10:6

I heard in my own land

"I heard while I was in my own land"

your words and your wisdom

Here the word "wisdom" can describe the word "words." Alternate translation: "your wise sayings"

1 Kings 10:7

my eyes have seen it

The phrase "my eyes" emphasizes that she herself saw it. Alternate translation: "I have seen it for myself"

Not half was told me

This can be stated without the passive form, and you may want to make explicit the idea that ellipsis omits. Alternate translation: "They did not tell me about even half of how wise and wealthy you are"

1 Kings 10:8

who constantly stand before you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "who are always in your presence waiting to serve you"

1 Kings 10:9

May Yahweh your God be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people praise Yahweh your God"

who placed you on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the king who sits on it. Alternate translation: "who made you king of Israel"

1 Kings 10:10

120 talents of gold

"one hundred and twenty talents of gold." A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "about 4,000 kilograms of gold"

No greater amount of spices ... was ever given to him again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one ever again gave to King Solomon more spices than the queen of Sheba gave to him"

1 Kings 10:11

almug wood

a type of wood, possibly one with a pleasant scent

1 Kings 10:12

The king made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: "The king told his people to make"

or been seen again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor has anyone ever seen such a great quantity again"

to this day

This means to the day that the author was writing this.

1 Kings 10:13

everything she wished for, whatever she asked

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

of his royal bounty

"because as king he had so much"

1 Kings 10:14

in one year

"each year." This refers to every year of Solomon's reign, and not to just one time.

666 talents of gold

"six hundred sixty-six." A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "almost 22,000 kilograms of gold"

1 Kings 10:16

King Solomon made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: "King Solomon's men made"

two hundred large shields

"200 large shields"

Six hundred shekels of gold

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams.

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Alternate translation: "About 6.6 kilograms of gold" or "Six and one half kilograms of gold"

Six hundred shekels

Because the word "shekels" does not appear here in the Hebrew text, some modern versions assume instead the unit of bekah, which was equivalent to only a half shekel. Any version making this assumption would signal a metric equivalent of about three kilograms.

1 Kings 10:17

He also made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon do this. Alternate translation: "The king's men also made"

three hundred shields

"300 shields"

Three minas of gold

A mina is a unit of weight equal to about 550 grams. Alternate translation: "About 1.7 kilograms of gold" or "One and three-quarters kilograms of gold"

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

"the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest." See how you translated this in 1 Kings 7:2.

1 Kings 10:18

the king made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped the king do this. Alternate translation: "the king's men made"

throne of ivory

Ivory is the hard, white substance from the tusks or teeth of large animals.

1 Kings 10:21

the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon

"the house called the House of the Lebanon Forest." See how you translated this in 1 Kings 7:2.

1 Kings 10:22

ivory

Ivory is the hard, white substance from the tusks or teeth of large animals. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 10:18]

apes and baboons

These animals live wild in Africa. At the ends of their four limbs are what look like human hands and feet, and they have long tails. Some people consider baboons a type of ape.

1 Kings 10:24

All the earth

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "People from everywhere" or "People from many different places"

sought the presence of Solomon

The presence of the person is a metonym for being able to speak and listen to the person. Alternate translation: "sought an audience with Solomon" or "wanted to visit Solomon"

to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart

The heart is a metonym for what a person thinks and is spoken of as if it were a container. The abstract noun "wisdom" is spoken of as if it were an object that could be put in a container and can be translated as an adjective. It can be a metonym for either the person or the words the person speaks. Alternate translation: "to hear his wisdom, which God had given him" or "to hear how wise God had enabled him to be" or "to hear him speak the wise words that God had enabled him to speak"

1 Kings 10:26

1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen

"one thousand four hundred chariots and 12,000 horsemen"

1 Kings 10:27

The king had silver in Jerusalem, as much as the stones on the ground

The narrator uses exaggeration to emphasize the great amount of silver that was in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The king had so much silver in Jerusalem, it was like there was as much silver as there was stones on the ground"

1 Kings 10:28

were imported from Egypt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that his merchants had bought from people in Egypt"

Kue

This is the name of a region. Some think that Kue was the same as Cilicia, in Asia Minor.

1 Kings 10:29

Chariots were brought up from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver each, and horses for 150 shekels each

Solomon's officials bought the chariots and horses in Egypt and then brought them to Jerusalem. The Israelites always referred to travel toward Jerusalem as if it were uphill, as it often truly was. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His merchants went to Egypt, bought chariots for six hundred shekels of silver each and horses for 150 shekels each, and brought them to Solomon in Jerusalem"

six hundred shekels of silver ... 150 shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 6.6 kilograms of silver ... about 1.7 kilograms"

six hundred shekels of silver

"600 shekels of silver"

150 shekels

"one hundred and fifty shekels"

Many of these were then sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His merchants then sold many of these"

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11 [1]Now King Solomon loved many foreign women including the daughter of Pharaoh—women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites.[2]They were from the nations about which Yahweh said to the people of Israel, "You will not go among them to marry, neither will they come among you, for they will certainly turn your heart to their gods." In spite of this command, Solomon was affectionate toward these women in love.
[3]Solomon had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. His wives turned his heart away.[4]For when Solomon grew old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; his heart was not fully surrendered to Yahweh his God, as was the heart of David his father.

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[5]For Solomon followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and he followed Molech, the disgusting idol of the Ammonites.[6]Solomon did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did not fully follow Yahweh as David his father had done.
[7]Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the disgusting idol of Moab, on a hill east of Jerusalem, and also for Molech, the disgusting idol of the people of Ammon.[8]He also built high places for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods at them.

[9]Yahweh was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from him, the God of Israel, even though he had appeared to him twice[10]and commanded him about this very thing, that he should not go after other gods. But Solomon did not obey what Yahweh commanded.
[11]Therefore Yahweh said to Solomon, "Because you have done this and have not kept the covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant.[12]However, for David your father's sake, I will not do it in your lifetime, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son.[13]Yet I will not tear away all the kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for David my servant's sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

[14]Then Yahweh raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was from the royal family of Edom.[15]When David was in Edom, Joab the captain of the army had gone up to bury the dead, every man who had been killed in Edom.
[16]Joab and all Israel remained there six months until he had killed every male in Edom.[17]But Hadad fled to Egypt with other Edomites, his father's servants, when Hadad was still a little child.
[18]They left Midian and came to Paran, from where they took men with them to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and land and food.[19]Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that Pharaoh gave him a wife, his own wife's sister, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.
[20]The sister of Tahpenes gave birth to Hadad's son. They named him Genubath. Tahpenes raised him in Pharaoh's palace. So Genubath lived in Pharaoh's palace among the children of Pharaoh.[21]While he was in Egypt, Hadad heard that David had lain down with his ancestors and that Joab the captain of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, so I may go to my own country."[22]Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that you now seek to go to your own country?" Hadad answered, "Nothing. Please let me go."

[23]God also raised up another adversary to Solomon, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah.[24]Rezon gathered men to himself and became captain over a marauding band when David killed the men of Zobah. Rezon's men went to Damascus and lived there, and Rezon reigned in Damascus.[25]He was an enemy of Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the trouble that Hadad caused. Rezon abhorred Israel and reigned over Aram.

[26]Then Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king.[27]He lifted up his hand against the king because Solomon had built up the place located at Millo and repaired the opening in the city wall of David his father.
[28]Jeroboam was a man of great ability. Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, so he appointed him over all the labor of the house of Joseph.[29]At that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed in a new garment and the two men were alone in the field.[30]Then Ahijah grabbed hold of the new garment that was on him and tore it into twelve pieces.
[31]He said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces, for Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'Look, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and I will give ten tribes to you[32](but Solomon will have one tribe, for my servant David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake—the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel),[33]because they have abandoned me and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Molech the god of the people of Ammon. They have not walked in my ways, to do what is right in my eyes, and to keep my statutes and my decrees, as did David his father.
[34]I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand. I have made him ruler all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake whom I chose, the one who kept my commandments and my statutes.[35]But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and I will give it to you, ten tribes.[36]I will give one tribe to Solomon's son, so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city in which I have chosen to put my name.
[37]I will take you, and you will rule to fulfill all that you desire, and you will be king over Israel.[38]If you listen to all that I command you, and if you walk in my ways and do what is right in my eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, then I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you.[39]I will punish the descendants of David, but not forever.'"
[40]So Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam got up and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and he remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

[41]As for the other matters concerning Solomon, all that he did and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the

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events of Solomon?[42]Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years.[43]He lay down with his ancestors and he was buried in the city of David his father. Rehoboam his son became king in his place.

1 Kings 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of Solomon. (Chapters 1-11)

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriage with Gentiles

God had told the people of Israel in Moses's law never to marry women from the Gentile nations. But Solomon married many women from Gentile countries. This was because their religious beliefs would negatively affect Israel. Solomon, the wisest man, became a fool and his wives persuaded him to worship foolish idols. God became angry and warned he would take away 10 tribes from the kingdom of his son.

Links:

1 Kings 11:1 Notes

1 Kings 11:1

Now King Solomon

The word "Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. The narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.

Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites

These are names of people groups.

1 Kings 11:2

turn your heart to their gods

To "turn someone's heart" is to convince that person to change his affection. Alternate translation: "persuade you to worship the gods that they worship"

1 Kings 11:3

seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines

"700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines"

seven hundred wives, princesses

"seven hundred royal wives"

turned his heart away

To "turn someone's heart" is to convince that person to change his affection. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 11:1]

1 Kings 11:4

his heart was not fully surrendered ... as was the heart of David

To "surrender" your heart refers to giving total allegiance and affection. Alternate translation: "he was not fully devoted ... as was David"

1 Kings 11:5

Ashtoreth ... Molech

These are the names of false gods.

Sidonians

This is the name of a people group.

he followed Molech

Some version render this as "Milcom."

1 Kings 11:6

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, "in the sight of" refers to someone's opinion. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be evil"

1 Kings 11:7

Chemosh ... Molech

These are the names of false gods.

1 Kings 11:8

sacrificed to their gods at them

Here the words "at them" refer to the shrines that Solomon built.

1 Kings 11:9

his heart had turned away from him

The words "his heart had turned" refer to his having changed allegiance and affection. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 11:1]

he had appeared to him twice

"Yahweh had appeared to Solomon twice"

1 Kings 11:11

tear the kingdom from you

To "tear from" is to forcefully remove. This is like a person tears apart a piece of cloth. Alternate translation: "forcefully take the kingdom from you"

1 Kings 11:12

the hand of your son

The word "hand" refers to control, authority and power. Alternate translation: "your son's control"

1 Kings 11:14

Hadad

This is the name of a man.

1 Kings 11:15

General Information:

This begins three verses of background material that happened long before.

1 Kings 11:16

Connecting Statement:

This continues background material that happened long before.

Joab and all Israel

The words "all Israel" refer to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "Joab and all of the Israelite army"

1 Kings 11:17

Connecting Statement:

This concludes background material that happened long before.

1 Kings 11:18

General Information:

This section continues the background information that began in 1 Kings 11:15.

They left Midian

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Here the word "They" refers to Hadad and the other Edomites mentioned in 1 Kings 11:17.

Midian ... Paran ... Egypt

These are the names of places.

1 Kings 11:19

Tahpenes

This is the name of a woman.

1 Kings 11:20

Tahpenes

This is the name of a woman.

Hadad ... Genubath

These are names of men.

1 Kings 11:21

David had lain down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying David was dead. Alternate translation: "David had died"

1 Kings 11:23

Rezon ... Eliada ... Hadadezer

These are names of men.

Zobah

This is the name of a location.

1 Kings 11:24

Zobah ... Damascus

These are names of locations.

when David killed

Here "David" refers to David and his army. Alternate translation: "when David's army killed"

1 Kings 11:25

Aram

This is the name of a location.

all the days of Solomon

"during the time that Solomon was alive" or "all the days of Solomon's life"

Rezon abhorred Israel

"Rezon hated Israel very much"

1 Kings 11:26

Jeroboam ... Nebat

These are names of men.

Zeredah

This is the name of a location.

a servant of Solomon

Or "one of Solomon's officials." He was probably an official in the government, not one of Solomon's household servants.

Zeruah

This is the name of a woman.

lifted up his hand against the king

The word "hand" refers to authority, power and control. The phrase "lifted up against" refers to having opposed someone by using authority, power and control. This is a metonym used as a common idiom. Alternate translation: "rebelled against the king"

1 Kings 11:27

Solomon had built up the place located at Millo

Translate "Millo" as in 1 Kings 9:15.

1 Kings 11:28

man of great ability

Other possible meanings are 1) "a wealthy and influential man" or 2) "a great warrior."

he appointed him

"he made him commander"

all the labor

The word "labor" refers to the work that Solomon commanded the people to do for his government. This is a metonym.

the house of Joseph

This refers to the descendants of Joseph who were the people groups of Ephraim and Manasseh. This is a metonym.

1 Kings 11:29

Ahijah

This is the name of a man.

Shilonite

The Shilonites are a people group.

1 Kings 11:31

He said

Here the word "He" refers to Ahijah.

tear the kingdom out

Here "tear ... out" is a metaphor that refers to the action of forcefully removing. This is like a person tears apart a piece of cloth. See how you translated this phrase in [1 Kings 11:11]

the hand of Solomon

Here "hand" is a metonym that refers to a person's authority, control and power. Alternate translation: "Solomon's control"

1 Kings 11:32

Solomon will have

The name "Solomon" here is a metonym referring to his descendants. Alternate translation: "Solomon's sons will have" or "Solomon's descendants will have"

1 Kings 11:33

Ashtoreth ... Chemosh ... Molech

These are the names of false gods.

Sidonians ... Moab ... Ammon

These are the names of locations and the people groups that live there.

what is right in my eyes

"Eyes" here is a metonym for someone's opinion or idea. This is a commonly used idiom. Alternate translation: "what I consider to be right"

1 Kings 11:34

General Information:

Ahijah continues to tell Jeroboam what Yahweh has said.

I will not take

Here the word "I" refers to Yahweh.

out of Solomon's hand

Here the word "hand" is a metonym that refers to a person's authority, control and power. Alternate translation: "out of Solomon's control"

1 Kings 11:35

I will give it to you

Here the word "you" refers to Jeroboam.

1 Kings 11:36

may always have a lamp before me

The word "lamp" is a metonym that refers to a person's influence and guidance. Alternate translation: "will always have a descendant to rule as an influence and a guide for

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obeying my covenant with David's family"
1 Kings 11:37
General Information:
Ahijah continues to tell Jeroboam what Yahweh has said.
I will take you
Here the word "I" refers to Yahweh and the word "you" refers to Jeroboam.
1 Kings 11:38
what is right in my eyes
The word "eyes" here is a metonym for someone's opinion or idea. This is a commonly used idiom. See how you translated this phrase in [1 Kings 11:33]
build you a sure house
The clause "build a house" is a metaphor for establishing descendants from that time on. Alternate translation: "establish for you a lasting kingdom"
1 Kings 11:40
Shishak
This is the name of a man.
1 Kings 11:41
are they not written in the book of the events of Solomon?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "you can find them in the book of the events of Solomon."
the book of the events of Solomon
This book no longer exists.
1 Kings 11:43
He lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "He died and he was buried with his ancestors"
he was buried
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"

12 [1]Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel was coming to Shechem to make him king.[2]It happened that Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of this (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon), for Jeroboam had settled down in Egypt.[1]
[3]So they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam,[4]"Your father made our yoke heavy. Now make lighter the hard work of your father and make lighter the heavy yoke that he put on us, and we will serve you."[5]Rehoboam said to them, "Go away for three days, then come back to me." So the people went away.

[6]King Rehoboam consulted with the old men who had stood before Solomon his father while he was alive, and he said, "How do you advise me to answer this people?"[7]They spoke to him and said, "If you will be a servant today to these people and serve them, and answer them by saying good words to them, then they will always be your servants."
[8]But Rehoboam ignored the advice that the old men had given him and he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him.[9]He said to them, "What advice do you give me that we may answer the people who spoke to me and said, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?"
[10]The young men who had grown up with Rehoboam spoke to him, saying, "Speak to these people who told you that your father Solomon made their yoke heavy but that you must make it lighter. You should say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist.[11]So now, although my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.'"

[12]So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had instructed when he said, "Come back to me on the third day."[13]The king answered the people roughly and ignored the advice of the old men that they had given him.[14]He spoke to them following the advice of the young men; he said, "My father burdened you with a heavy yoke, but I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions."
[15]So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of events brought about by Yahweh, that he might carry out his word that he had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

[16]When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered him and said,
"What share do we have in David?
We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse!
Go to your tents, Israel.
Now see to your own house, David."
So Israel went back to their tents.
[17]But as for the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam became king over them.
[18]Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was over the forced laborers, but all Israel stoned him to death with stones. King Rehoboam fled quickly in his chariot to Jerusalem.[19]So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.
[20]It happened that when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to their assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was no one who followed the family of David, except only the tribe of Judah.

[21]When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin; there were 180,000 chosen men who were soldiers, to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam son of Solomon.

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[22]But the word of God came to Shemaiah, the man of God; it said,[23]"Speak to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people; say,[24]'Yahweh says this: You must not attack or fight against your brothers the people of Israel. Each man must return to his home, for this thing has been made to happen by me.'" So they listened to the word of Yahweh and turned back and went their way, and they obeyed his word.

[25]Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. He went out from there and built Peniel.
[26]Jeroboam thought in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.[27]If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem, then the heart of these people will turn again to their master, to Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah."
[28]So King Jeroboam sought advice and made two calves of gold; he said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Look, these are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt."[29]He set up one in Bethel and the other in Dan.[30]So this act became a sin. The people went to one or the other, all the way to Dan.
[31]Jeroboam made houses on high places and he also made priests from among all the people, who were not among the sons of Levi.[32]Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar. He did so at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made, and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places he had made.
[33]Jeroboam went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month he had planned in his own mind; he ordained a feast for the people of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

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[1]2 Chronicles 10:2 is very close to 1 Kings 12:2, that is, the Hebrew consonants are identical, and could support either reading, "settled down" or "returned." The alternate reading would be: then Jeroboam returned from Egypt.

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1 Kings 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Civil war

This chapter explains how the united kingdom of Israel was split into the two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. This is sometimes called a "civil war."

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel splits

God's warning to Solomon came true. In spite of his famous wealth, Solomon had over-taxed his own people and forced them to work for free. When the people requested that King Rehoboam reduce taxes and forced labor, he said that he would be harsher than his father. This caused the 10 northern tribes to revolt and appoint Jeroboam as their king. These northern tribes are now called the kingdom of Israel. Only Judah and Benjamin stayed with Rehoboam. They are called Judah. (See: appoint)

Jeroboam introduces calf worship

Jeroboam made a terrible mistake. He was afraid that if the people continued to go to Jerusalem to worship in the temple, they would want to return to Rehoboam as their king. So he made two shrines with calves made of gold for the people to worship. This eventually caused the destruction of his whole family. The kingdom of Israel continued worshiping the idols until they were taken slaves by the Assyrians. The northern tribes were unable to truly worship Yahweh without going to Jerusalem in the kingdom of Judah.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The people used the metaphor of "yoke" for oppressive government: "Your father made our yoke difficult. Now then, make your father's hard work easier, and lighten the heavy yoke that he put on us." But Rehoboam promised to increase their oppression with three metaphors: "My little finger is thicker than my father's waist. So now, although my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions." (See: and oppress and promise)

Links:

1 Kings 12:1 Notes

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1 Kings 12:1

all Israel was coming

Here "Israel" represents all the men of Israel capable of fighting. Here "all Israel" is a generalization which means almost all the men of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the men of Israel were coming"

1 Kings 12:2

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Jeroboam ... Nebat

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These are the names of men.
1 Kings 12:3
called him
Here the word "him" refers to Jeroboam.
1 Kings 12:4
made our yoke heavy
A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and requirements. Alternate translation: "treated us cruelly" or "forced us to work very hard"
1 Kings 12:6
the old men who had stood before Solomon
To "stand before" is an idiom for serving the king in his presence. Alternate translation: "the old men who counseled Solomon" or "the old men who attended to Solomon"
1 Kings 12:9
Lighten the yoke that your father put on us
To "lighten the yoke" is a metaphor to represent lifting of the burden. Alternate translation: "Do not treat us as cruelly as your father did" or "Do not force us to work as hard as your father did"
1 Kings 12:10
My little finger is thicker than my father's waist
This metaphor means that Rehoboam is more cruel and intimidating than his father. Alternate translation: "What I will do to make your burden heavier is much more than what my father put on you"
1 Kings 12:11
My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions
This metaphor means that the punishment Rehoboam plans to give will be worse than what his father gave. Alternate translation: "My father used whips to force you to work but I will use even crueler punishment"
punish you with scorpions
The word "scorpions" may refer to 1) a whip with sharp metal barbs on the end or 2) a spider-like creature that has a poisonous sting.
1 Kings 12:14
burdened you with a heavy yoke
A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and requirements. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 12:4]
My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions
This metaphor means that the punishment Rehoboam plans to give will be worse than what his father gave. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 12:11]
1 Kings 12:15
it was a turn of events brought about by Yahweh
This is an idiom and can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused things to happen like this"
his word that he had spoken by Ahijah ... to Jeroboam
The idiom "had spoken by" someone refers to giving someone a message to tell others.
Ahijah ... Jeroboam ... Nebat
These are the names of men.
Shilonite
This is the name of a people group from the town of Shiloh.
1 Kings 12:16
all Israel
Here "Israel" represents all the men of Israel capable of fighting. "All Israel" is a generalization which means almost all the men of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the men of Israel"
What share do we have in David?
"Share" here is a metonym meaning a part, involvement, or interest. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "We will have no part in the family of David."
We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse
"Son of Jesse" here is a metonym for David, a son of Jesse. "Inheritance" is a metonym for the part left for these people from David's successes. Alternate translation: "We will have nothing to do with the descendants of Jesse"
Go to your tents, Israel
"Tents" here is a metonym representing a person's place of residence. Alternate translation: "Go to your homes, people of Israel"
Now see to your own house, David
"House" here is a metonym for David's lineage of power and prestige. Alternate translation: "Now take care of your own kingdom, descendant of David"
1 Kings 12:18
Adoniram
This is the name of a man.
all Israel
Here "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. "All Israel" is a generalization which means almost all the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the people of Israel who were there"
1 Kings 12:19
the house of David
Here "house" is a metonym that represents family or descendants. Alternate translation: "the kings descended from David"
to this day
"ever since that time." This refers to the time that the writer was actually writing this.
1 Kings 12:20
It happened that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
when all Israel heard
"All Israel" here is a generalization that means the capable men of Israel who represent the rest of the people by a synecdoche. Alternate translation: "when all the leaders of Israel heard"
king over all Israel
"Israel" implicitly means the northern ten tribes that rebelled against Rehoboam. Alternate translation: "king over all of the 10 tribes of Israel"
There was no one who followed the family of David, except only the tribe of Judah
This double negative emphasizes that the tribe of Judah was the only tribe that followed the family of David. Alternate translation: "The only people who followed the family of David were the people of the tribe of Judah"

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the family of David
"David's descendants"
1 Kings 12:21
all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin
Here "house" is a metonym that represents a tribe or descendants. And, here "tribe" refers specifically to the soldiers from those tribes. Alternate translation: "all the soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin"
180,000 chosen men
"one hundred eighty thousand chosen men"
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents the kingdom made up of the 10 northern tribes of Israel. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of the northern tribes of Israel"
1 Kings 12:22
the word of God came ... it said
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "God spoke this message ... and he said" or "God spoke these words ... and he said"
Shemaiah
This is the name of a man.
the man of God
The expression "man of God" is a respectful way of referring to a prophet of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the man who belongs to God" or "the prophet of God"
1 Kings 12:23
all the house of Judah and Benjamin
Here "house" is a metonym that represents a tribe or descendants. Alternate translation: "all the people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin"
1 Kings 12:24
your brothers the people of Israel
The words "brothers" and "people of Israel" are a doublet that refer to the men of the ten northern tribes and emphasize the family relationship between them and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.
for this thing has been made to happen by me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because I have made this thing happen"
1 Kings 12:26
thought in his heart
"Heart" here is a metonym for a person's inner consciousness, thoughts, motivation, or feelings. Alternate translation: "thought to himself"
the house of David
Here "house" is a metonym representing family or descendants. Alternate translation: "the kings descended from David"
1 Kings 12:27
If these people go up
The words "these people" refer to the people of the northern ten tribes of Israel.
the heart of these people
"Heart" here is a metonym for the people's allegiance and affection. Alternate translation: "the allegiance of these people"
turn again to their master, to Rehoboam king of Judah ... return to Rehoboam king of Judah
These phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize Jeroboam's fear that the people would turn again to Rehoboam as king.
1 Kings 12:28
brought you up
"You" here is a metonym for the ancestors of the people. Alternate translation: "brought your ancestors up"
1 Kings 12:31
Jeroboam made houses on high places
The workers who did this at Jeroboam's commands are represented by the metonym of the name of Jeroboam himself. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam's workers made houses on high places"
houses on high places
The implied information is that these were houses of worship. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "houses of worship on high places"
made priests
"appointed men to be priests"
1 Kings 12:32
in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month
This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of November on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "on the fifteenth day of the eighth month"
went up to the altar
"Went up" here is an idiom for going to a sacred place to worship since these altars were located on high places. Alternate translation: "offered sacrifices on the altar"
1 Kings 12:33
went up to the altar
"Went up" here is an idiom for going to a sacred place to worship since these altars were located on high places. Alternate translation: "offered sacrifices on the altar"
in the month he had planned in his own mind
"in the month that he had determined"

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13 [1]A man of God came out of Judah by the word of Yahweh to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense.[2]He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "Altar, altar! This is what Yahweh says, 'See, a son named Josiah will be born to the family of David, and on you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who now burn incense on you. On you they will burn human bones.'"[3]Then the man of God gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that Yahweh has spoken: 'Look, the altar will be split apart, and the ashes on it will be poured out.'"
[4]When the king heard what the man of God said, that he had cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam reached out with his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." Then the hand with which he had reached out against the man dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself.[5](The altar was also split apart and the ashes poured out from the altar, as described by the sign that the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh.)

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[6]King Jeroboam answered and said to the man of God, "Plead for the favor of Yahweh your God and pray for me, so that my hand may be restored to me again." So the man of God prayed to Yahweh, and the king's hand was restored to him again, and it became as it was before.[7]The king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward."
[8]The man of God said to the king, "Even if you give me half your possessions, I will not go with you, nor will I eat food or drink water in this place,[9]because Yahweh commanded me by his word, 'You will eat no bread nor drink water, nor return by the way that you came.'"[10]So the man of God left another way and did not return to his home by the way that he had come to Bethel.

[11]Now there was an old prophet living in Bethel, and one of his sons came and told him all the things that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. His sons also told him the words that the man of God had spoken to the king.[12]Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" Now his sons had seen the way the man of God from Judah had gone.[13]So he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey and he rode off on it.
[14]The old prophet went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak tree; and he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" He answered, "I am."[15]Then the old prophet said to him, "Come home with me and eat food."[16]The man of God answered, "I may not return with you nor go in with you, neither will I eat food nor drink water with you in this place,[17]because it was commanded to me by the word of Yahweh, 'You will eat no food nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.'"
[18]So the old prophet said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house, that he may eat food and drink water.'" But he was lying to the man of God.[19]So the man of God went back with the old prophet and ate food in his house and drank water.

[20]As they sat at the table, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet who had brought him back,[21]and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Yahweh says, 'Because you have been disobedient to the word of Yahweh and have not kept the command that Yahweh your God gave you,[22]but came back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place about which Yahweh told you to eat no food and drink no water, your body will not be buried in the tomb of your fathers.'"
[23]After he had eaten food and after he had drunk, the prophet saddled the donkey of the man of God, the man who had come back with him.[24]When the man of God was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him, and his body was left on the road. Then the donkey stood by it, and the lion also stood by the body.[25]When men passed by and saw the body left on the road, and the lion standing by the body, they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

[26]When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh gave him to the lion, which tore him to pieces and killed him, just as the word of Yahweh warned him."[27]So the old prophet spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle my donkey," and they saddled it.[28]He went and found the body left in the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the body. The lion had not eaten the body, nor attacked the donkey.
[29]The prophet lifted up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. He came to his own city to mourn and to bury him.[30]He laid the body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying, "Woe, my brother!"
[31]Then after he had buried him, the old prophet spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, bury me in the tomb in which the man of God is buried. Lay my bones beside his bones.[32]For the message he declared by the word of Yahweh, against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses on the high places in the cities of Samaria, will certainly happen."

[33]After this Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but continued to appoint common priests for the high places from among all sorts of people. Any who would serve he consecrated as a priest.[34]This matter became sin to the family of Jeroboam and caused his family to be destroyed and to be exterminated from the face of the earth.

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1 Kings 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two parts: The young prophet's warning to Jeroboam (1-10) and the old prophet's deception (11-34). (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Obeying God

People should do what God tells them to do and not what other people tell them is God's will for them. The story of the young prophet and the old prophet is an example of this. (See: reward and willofgod)

Links:

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1 Kings 13:1

A man of God came out of Judah by the word of Yahweh to Bethel

The implied information is that Yahweh sent the man of God to Bethel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sent a man of God from Judah to Bethel"

A man of God

This is another title for a prophet. Alternate translation: "A prophet"

came out of Judah

"came from Judah"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

1 Kings 13:2

He cried against the altar

Here "He" refers to the man of God.

cried against the altar

This means he prophesied toward the altar in a loud and condemning voice. Alternate translation: "prophesied loudly toward the altar"

Altar, altar

The prophet spoke to the altar as if it were a person who could hear him. He said this twice for emphasis.

a son named Josiah will be born to the family of David

Here the "family of David" refers to the descendants of David. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a descendant of David will have a son named Josiah"

they will burn

Here "they" refers to Josiah and the people with him.

1 Kings 13:3

the altar will be split apart, and the ashes on it will be poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will split the altar apart and the ashes on it will fall to the ground"

1 Kings 13:4

the hand with which he had reached out against the man dried up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh dried up the hand with which he had reached out against the man"

dried up

"withered" or "became paralyzed"

1 Kings 13:5

The altar was also split apart

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh also split the altar apart"

as described by the sign that the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as the man of God had described by the word of Yahweh as a sign"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

1 Kings 13:6

Plead for the favor of Yahweh your God

The abstract noun "favor" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Plead that Yahweh your God may favor me"

my hand may be restored to me again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh may restore my hand"

the king's hand was restored to him again, and it became as it was before

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh restored the king's hand and made it as it was before"

1 Kings 13:7

Come home with me and refresh yourself

The word "yourself" is a reflexive pronoun. Alternate translation: "Come home with me and eat some food"

1 Kings 13:8

half your possessions

"half of your house"

1 Kings 13:9

You will eat no bread nor drink water, nor return by the way that you came

"Do not eat bread, drink water, or return by the way that you came"

1 Kings 13:10

left another way

"went a different way"

1 Kings 13:12

his sons had seen the way

The implied information is that the sons also told their father which way the man of God went.

1 Kings 13:13

Saddle

This means to place a seat on the back of an animal so a person can ride on it.

1 Kings 13:14

The old prophet

This refers to the prophet who lived in Bethel.

he said to him

"the old prophet said to the man of God"

He answered

"The man of God answered"

1 Kings 13:16

go in with you

"go into your house"

in this place

"in Bethel"

1 Kings 13:17

it was commanded to me by the word of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh commanded me by his word"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

1 Kings 13:18

an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh

"an angel delivered to me a message from Yahweh"

by the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

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1 Kings 13:20
As they sat at the table
The implied information is that they were still eating and drinking at the table. Alternate translation: "As they were eating and drinking at the table"
the word of Yahweh came to the prophet
The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 6:11]
brought him back
Here the word "him" refers to the man of God.
1 Kings 13:21
came from Judah, saying, "Yahweh
The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" in the previous verse is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 6:11]
he cried to the man of God
"the prophet spoke loudly to the man of God"
Because you have been disobedient to the word of Yahweh
"Because you have not obeyed the word of Yahweh"
1 Kings 13:23
the prophet saddled the donkey
This means he placed a seat on the back of the donkey so the man of God could ride on it. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 13:13.
1 Kings 13:24
his body was left on the road
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "left his body on the road"
his body
"his dead body"
1 Kings 13:25
they came and told it
Here "it" refers to what they had seen on the road. Alternate translation: "they came and told about what they had seen"
1 Kings 13:28
the body
"the dead body of the man of God"
left in the road
"lying in the road"
1 Kings 13:29
the body
"the dead body"
1 Kings 13:30
they mourned
Here the word "they" refers to the prophet and his sons.
Woe, my brother!
The word "Woe" here is an expression of great sorrow.
1 Kings 13:31
he had buried him
Here the word "he" refers to the old prophet and the word "him" refers to the man of God.
Lay my bones beside his bones
Here "my bones" represents his entire body. Alternate translation: "Lay my dead body beside his bones"
1 Kings 13:32
houses on the high places
The implied information is that these were houses of worship. Alternate translation: "houses of worship on the high places"
1 Kings 13:34
This matter became sin to the family of Jeroboam
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam's family sinned by doing this thing"
This matter
This phrase refers to Jeroboam's setting up shrines and appointing priests.
caused his family to be destroyed and to be exterminated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because of this God destroyed and exterminated Jeroboam's family"
to be destroyed and to be exterminated
These mean nearly the same thing. Alternate translation: "to be completely destroyed"

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14 [1]At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam became very sick.[2]Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please arise and disguise yourself, so you will not be recognized as my wife, and go to Shiloh, because Ahijah the prophet is there; he is the one who spoke about me, saying that I would become king over these people.[3]Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to Ahijah. He will tell you what will happen to the child."
[4]Jeroboam's wife did so; she left and went to Shiloh and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see; he lost his sight because of old age.[5]Yahweh said to Ahijah, "Look, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to seek advice from you regarding her son, for he is sick. Say such and such to her, because when she comes, she will act as if she were some other woman."

[6]When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet as she came in at the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be someone you are not? I have been sent to you with severe news.[7]Go, tell Jeroboam that Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'I raised you from among the people to make you the leader over my people Israel.[8]I tore the kingdom away from the family of David and gave it to you, yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, to do only what was right in my eyes.
[9]Instead, you have done evil, more than all who were before you. You have made other gods, and you have cast metal images to provoke me to anger, and you have thrust me behind your back.[10]Therefore, look, I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam; I will cut off from you every male child in Israel, whether slave or free, and will completely remove the house of Jeroboam like someone who burns up dung until it is gone.
[11]Anyone who belongs to Jeroboam who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs, and anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the heavens, for I, Yahweh, have said it.'[12]So arise, wife of Jeroboam, and go back to your home; when your feet enter the city, the child Abijah will die.[13]All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. He is the only one

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from Jeroboam's family who will go into a grave, because only in him, out of Jeroboam's house, was anything good found in the sight of Yahweh, the God of Israel.
[14]Also, Yahweh will raise up a king of Israel who will cut off the family of Jeroboam on that day. Today is that day, right now.[15]For Yahweh will attack Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and he will root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their ancestors. He will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherah poles and provoked Yahweh to anger.[16]He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, the sins that he has committed, and through which he has led Israel to sin."

[17]So Jeroboam's wife arose and left, and came to Tirzah. As she came to the threshold of her house, the child died.[18]All Israel buried him and mourned for him, just as it was told to them by the word of Yahweh which he had spoken by his servant Ahijah the prophet.

[19]As for the other matters concerning Jeroboam, how he waged war and how he reigned, see, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.[20]Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years and then lay down with his ancestors, and Nadab his son became king in his place.

[21]Now Rehoboam son of Solomon was reigning in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that Yahweh had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put his name. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite woman.[22]Judah did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; they provoked him to jealousy with the sins that they committed, more than everything that their fathers had done.
[23]For they also built for themselves high places, stone pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree.[24]There were also cultic prostitutes in the land. They did the same disgusting practices as the nations that Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel.

[25]It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.[26]He took away the treasures in the house of Yahweh, and the treasures in the king's house. He took everything away; he also took all the shields of gold that Solomon had made.
[27]King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place and entrusted them into the hands of the commanders of the guard, who guarded the doors to the king's house.[28]It happened that whenever the king entered the house of Yahweh, the guards would carry them; then they would bring them back into the guardhouse.

[29]As for the other matters concerning Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[30]There was constant warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.[31]So Rehoboam lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite woman. Abijah his son became king in his place.

1 Kings 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter has two stories. One is the death of Jeroboam's son (1-18). The other is the reign of Rehoboam (20-31) .

Special concepts in this chapter

The death of Jeroboam's son

God knows the truth; it is useless to try to fool God's prophet. Jeroboam's son became sick; so the king sent his wife, disguised as a common woman, to the prophet. The prophet was blind, but when Jeroboam's wife arrived he told her, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam." He also told her that her son would die and that all of Jeroboam's family would be killed, because he had caused Israel to worship the golden calves. (See: true and prophet and sin)

Rehoboam's reign

When Solomon obeyed God, God made him very rich. When the people of Judah began to worship the fertility goddess, Ashtoreth, and to do many evil things, they had to give all of their wealth to the king of Egypt to persuade him not to attack Jerusalem. (See: evil)

Links:

1 Kings 14:1 Notes

1 Kings 14:2
disguise yourself
"change how you appear to others"
you will not be recognized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will recognize you"
1 Kings 14:5
Look, the wife of Jeroboam

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Here the word "Look" means "pay attention."

coming to seek advice from you

The abstract noun "advice" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "coming to ask you to advise her"

Say such and such to her

The words "such and such" mean that Yahweh told Ahijah what to say. Alternate translation: "Speak in this way to her"

1 Kings 14:6

Why do you pretend to be someone you are not?

This question shows that Ahijah knew she was disguised. Alternate translation: "Stop pretending to be someone else; I know who you are."

I have been sent to you with severe news

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told me to give you severe news"

severe news

"very bad news"

1 Kings 14:7

I raised you

"I exalted you"

1 Kings 14:8

I tore the kingdom away

God forcefully removed most of the kingdom like a person tears a piece of cloth.

followed me

"obeyed me"

with all his heart

Here the "heart" refers to a person's will and desire. Alternate translation: "with all his will" or "with complete commitment"

what was right in my eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what I judged to be right" or "what I considered to be right"

1 Kings 14:9

thrust me behind your back

Jeroboam has disrespected Yahweh like a person throws away something that is not wanted. Alternate translation: "completely rejected me"

1 Kings 14:10

look

"pay attention." This word is added to indicate that what follows is important.

the house of Jeroboam

The word house is a metonym for family. Alternate translation: "the family of Jeroboam" or "your family"

I will cut off ... and will completely remove

These two phrases are very similar in meaning and are repeated for emphasis.

cut off from you every male child in Israel

Yahweh speaks of destroying Jeroboam's family and preventing him from having any descendants as if he were cutting them off as one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy every one of your male children in Israel"

will completely remove the house of Jeroboam like someone who burns up dung until it is gone

This simile compares the removal of every descendant of Jeroboam with the complete burning up of dung that was mixed with straw, dried, and burned for fuel.

1 Kings 14:11

Anyone who belongs to Jeroboam who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Dogs will eat anyone who belongs to Jeroboam and who dies in the city"

who belongs to Jeroboam

"who is part of Jeroboam's family." Yahweh is speaking to Jeroboam and addressing him in the third person, so you may need to change this to second person. Alternate translation: "who is part of your family."

anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the heavens

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the birds of the heavens will eat anyone who dies in the field"

1 Kings 14:12

when your feet enter the city

The word "feet" here is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "when you enter the city"

1 Kings 14:13

All Israel

This is a generalization that means the people of the northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "The Israelite people"

go into a grave

"be buried in a grave"

out of Jeroboam's house

The word "house" here is a metonym for "family." Alternate translation: "in all of Jeroboam's family"

was anything good found in the sight of Yahweh, the God of Israel

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did Yahweh, the God of Israel, find anything he judged to be good"

1 Kings 14:14

cut off the family of Jeroboam

The writer speaks of the new king of Israel destroying Jeroboam's family and preventing him from having any descendants like one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the descendants of Jeroboam"

1 Kings 14:15

Yahweh will attack Israel as a reed is shaken in the water

The writer here uses a simile to express how Yahweh will bring judgment on the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will attack the people of Israel as a reed is shaken in the water"

as a reed is shaken in the water

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "like a river of water shakes a reed"

he will root up Israel out of this good land

Yahweh compares Israel with a plant that he will tear out of the ground by its roots. Alternate translation: "he will remove the people of Israel from this good land"

scatter them

"disperse them"

1 Kings 14:17

Tirzah

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This is the name of the city where king Jeroboam lived.
1 Kings 14:18
All Israel buried him and mourned for him
This is a generalization that means the people of Israel buried him and mourned for him. Alternate translation: "A great number of the people of Israel were present when people buried him, and the people of Israel mourned for him"
just as it was told to them by the word of Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh told them"
by the word of Yahweh
"by the message of Yahweh" or "in Yahweh's message"
1 Kings 14:19
see
"look" or "see for yourself"
they are written in
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can find them written in" or "someone has written about them in"
the book of the events of the kings of Israel
This refers to a book that no longer exists.
1 Kings 14:20
twenty-two years
"22 years"
lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10]
1 Kings 14:21
forty-one years old ... seventeen years
"41 years old ... 17 years"
in which to put his name
Here "put his name" is a metonym for "dwell" and refers to the temple where Yahweh was to be worshiped. Alternate translation: "in which to dwell" or "in which to be worshiped"
His mother's name
Here the word "His" refers to Rehoboam.
Naamah
This is a woman's name.
1 Kings 14:22
Judah did
Here "Judah" represents the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah did"
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The "sight" of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:6]
they provoked him to jealousy
The abstract noun "jealousy" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "they made him jealous"
their fathers
"their ancestors"
1 Kings 14:23
For they also built
The word "they" here refers to the people of Judah.
built for themselves
The words "for themselves" are a metonym for what they will do with the high places. Alternate translation: "built for their own use"
on every high hill and under every green tree
This is likely to be an exaggeration that indicates there were many places like these for false worship all over the country. Alternate translation: "on the high hills and under the green trees"
1 Kings 14:24
cultic prostitutes
"religious prostitutes" or "male prostitutes." This probably refers to male prostitutes who were associated with idol worship.
the same disgusting practices as the nations that
Here the word "nations" represents the people in those nations. Alternate translation: "the same disgusting things that the people did whom"
1 Kings 14:25
in the fifth year of King Rehoboam
This refers to the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign as king. Alternate translation: "in the fifth year that Rehoboam was king"
in the fifth year
"in year 5"
Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem
"Shishak king of Egypt" represents himself along with the Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "Shishak king of Egypt, and his army with him, came up against Jerusalem"
Shishak
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:40]
came up against
This is an idiom that means marched against or attacked. Alternate translation: "came to attack"
1 Kings 14:26
He took everything away
This is a generalization that indicates every valuable thing that could be found was taken away. Alternate translation: "He took away many valuable things"
He took
The word "He" represents Shishak and the soldiers who were with him. Alternate translation: "Shishak and his army took"
that Solomon had made
Here "Solomon" refers to the craftsmen who worked for Solomon to make the shields. Alternate translation: "that Solomon had his workers make"
1 Kings 14:27
King Rehoboam made shields
Here "King Rehoboam" represents the persons who worked for him to make the shields. Alternate translation: "King Rehoboam's workers made shields"
in their place
"in place of the shields of gold"
entrusted them into the hands of the commanders
Here "hands" represents care or responsibility. Alternate translation: "made them the responsibility of the commanders"
who guarded the doors to the king's house
Here "doors" represents the entrance. Alternate translation: "who guarded the entrance to the king's house"
1 Kings 14:28

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the guards would carry them
"the guards would carry the shields of bronze"
1 Kings 14:29
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah." or "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Judah."
the book of the events of the kings of Judah
This refers to a book that no longer exists.
1 Kings 14:30
There was constant warfare
"There was continuing war" or "There were constant battles"
warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam
The names of the kings represent themselves and their armies. Alternate translation: "the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam fought in battle again and again" or "Rehoboam and his people and Jeroboam and his people engaged in battle continually"
1 Kings 14:31
lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10]
was buried with them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"
Naamah
This is the name of a woman. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:21]
Abijah his son
"Abijah the son of Rehoboam"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Rehoboam"

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15 [1]In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijah began to reign over Judah.[2]He reigned for three years
in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maakah. She was the daughter of Abishalom.[3]He walked in all the sins that his
father had committed before his time; his heart was not devoted to Yahweh his God as the heart of David, his ancestor,
had been.
[4]Nevertheless, for David's sake, Yahweh his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up his son after him in order to
strengthen Jerusalem.[5]God did this because David had done what was right in his eyes; for all the days of his life, he had
not turned away from anything that he commanded him, except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.[6]Now there was
war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of Abijah's life.

[7]As for the other matters of Abijah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.[8]Abijah lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of
David. Asa his son became king in his place.

[9]In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah.[10]He reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem.
His grandmother's name was Maakah, the daughter of Abishalom.[11]Asa did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, as
David, his ancestor, had done.
[12]He expelled the cultic prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols that his ancestors had made.[13]He also removed
Maakah, his grandmother, from being queen, because she had made a disgusting figure out of an Asherah pole. Asa cut
down the disgusting figure and burned it at the Kidron Valley.
[14]But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, Asa's heart was completely devoted to Yahweh all his days.[15]He
brought into the house of Yahweh the things that were set apart by his father, and his own things that had been set apart
that were made of silver and gold, and vessels.

[16]There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, all their days.[17]Baasha king of Israel, acted aggressively against
Judah and built up Ramah, so that he might not allow anyone to leave or enter into the land of Asa king of Judah.
[18]Then Asa took all the silver and gold left in the storerooms in the house of Yahweh, and the storerooms of the king's
palace. He put it into the hands of his servants and sent it to Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion, the king of
Aram, who lived in Damascus. He said,[19]"Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father
and your father. Look, I have sent to you a gift of silver and gold. Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, so that
he may leave me alone."
[20]Ben-Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies, and they attacked the cities of Israel. They
attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Beth Maakah, and all Kinnereth, together with all the land of Naphtali.[21]It came about that when
Baasha heard this, he stopped building up Ramah and went back to Tirzah.[22]Then King Asa made a proclamation to all
Judah. No one was exempted. They carried away the stones and timbers of Ramah with which Baasha had been building
up the city. Then King Asa used that building material to build up Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

[23]As for the other matters of Asa, all his might, all that he did, and the cities he built, are they not written in the book of
the events of the kings of Judah? But during his old age he was diseased in his feet.[24]Then Asa lay down with his ancestors
and was buried with them in the city of David his father. Jehoshaphat his son became king in his place.

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[25]Nadab son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah; he reigned over Israel two years.[26]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of his father, and in his own sin, by which he led Israel to sin.
[27]Baasha son of Ahijah, of the family of Issachar, conspired against Nadab; Baasha killed him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.[28]In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha killed Nadab and became king in his place.
[29]As soon as he was king, Baasha killed all the family of Jeroboam. He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing; in this way he destroyed his royal line, just as Yahweh had spoken by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite,[30]for the sins of Jeroboam which he committed and by which he led Israel to sin, in his anger to which he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel.

[31]As for the other matters concerning Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[32]There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

[33]In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel in Tirzah and he reigned twenty-four years.[34]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin by which he led Israel to sin.

1 Kings 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah had some bad kings and some good kings. All of the kings in Israel continued to worship the golden calves, so they were all considered to be bad. Judah and Israel continually fought each other.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"But the shrines were not taken away."
At the shrines, the people worshiped Yahweh. But later, during Hezekiah's reign, it was decided that all sacrifices must be made only at the temple. (See: temple)

Links:

1 Kings 15:1 Notes

1 Kings 15:1
In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat
This refers to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam's reign. Alternate translation: "After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost eighteen years"
In the eighteenth year
"In year 18"
1 Kings 15:3
He walked in all the sins
Walking represents living, and walking in sins represents committing those sins. Alternate translation: "Abijah continued to practice all the sins"
that his father had committed before his time
Since these verses refer to several kings, it may help to include the name of Abijah's father. This information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "that his father, Rehoboam, had committed before Abijah's time"
his time
This phrase represents the time that he was king. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "before Abijah was king"
his heart was not devoted ... as the heart of David
The heart represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "Abijah was not devoted ... as David"
1 Kings 15:4
gave him a lamp in Jerusalem
The word "lamp" here represents a descendant who would be king as David was. Alternate translation: "gave David a descendant to rule in Jerusalem"
by raising up his son after him
"by raising up Abijah's son after him" or "by giving Abijah a son"
1 Kings 15:5
what was right in his eyes
The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judges to be right" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"
for all the days of his life
"the whole time that David lived" or "throughout David's whole life"
he had not turned away from anything that he commanded him, except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite
This double negative emphasizes that only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite had David turned away from God's commands. Alternate translation: "the only time David turned away from anything that God commanded him was in the matter of Uriah the Hittite"
he had not turned away from anything that he commanded him
Turning away from a command represents disobeying it. Alternate translation: "David did not disobey anything that God commanded him"
except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite

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This is a general way to refer to the situation with Uriah. It can be stated more clearly what this matter was. Alternate translation: "except for what he did to Uriah the Hittite" or "except when he caused Uriah the Hittite to be killed"
1 Kings 15:6
between Rehoboam and Jeroboam
These kings represent themselves and their armies. Rehoboam was Abijah's father. Alternate translation: "between the armies of Rehoboam and Jeroboam"
all the days of Abijah's life
"the whole time that Abijah lived"
1 Kings 15:7
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Abijah is in this other book. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29]
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
This can stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Judah."
between Abijah and Jeroboam
The names "Abijah" and "Jeroboam" represent the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: "between the armies of Abijah and Jeroboam"
1 Kings 15:8
Abijah lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Abijah died as his ancestors had" or "Like his ancestors, Abaijah died"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Abijah"
1 Kings 15:9
In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel
This refers to the twentieth year of Jeroboam's reign. Alternate translation: "After Jeroboam had been the king of Israel for almost twenty years"
In the twentieth year
"In year 20"
1 Kings 15:10
forty-one years
"41 years"
1 Kings 15:11
what was right in the eyes of Yahweh
The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Asa's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judges to be right" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"
1 Kings 15:12
the cultic prostitutes
This probably refers to prostitutes who were associated with idol worship and who were all men. Alternate translation: "religious prostitutes" or "the prostitutes who worked for idols" or "male prostitutes"
1 Kings 15:13
Asa cut down the disgusting figure
Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to cut down the figure. Alternate translation: "Asa caused the disgusting figure to be cut down" or "Asa made them cut down the disgusting figure"
1 Kings 15:14
But the high places were not taken away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But Asa did not command the people to take away the high places"
Asa's heart was completely devoted
The heart represents the person. Alternate translation: "Asa was completely devoted"
all his days
"the whole time that he lived" or "throughout his whole life"
1 Kings 15:16
all their days
This refers to the entire time they reigned as kings. Alternate translation: "the whole time that they reigned over Judah and Israel"
1 Kings 15:17
acted aggressively against Judah
"attacked Judah"
built up Ramah
It is implied that the army of Baasha first captured Ramah. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "captured and fortified Ramah"
1 Kings 15:18
He put it into the hands of his servants
Putting things in their hands represents giving those things to them. It is implied that they would do with it what he wanted them to do. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "He entrusted it to his servants"
He said
This means he spoke by means of his servants. Asa told his servants what to say to Ben-Hadad and they did. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Asa told his servants to say to Ben Hadad" or "Through his servants, Asa said to Ben-Hadad"
1 Kings 15:19
Let there be a covenant between me and you
A covenant being between two people represents those two people having a covenant with each other. Alternate translation: "Let us have a covenant with each other" or "Let us make a peace treaty"
Look, I
"As proof that I want a treaty with you, I"
Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel
Breaking a covenant represents canceling it and not doing what one has promised to do. Alternate translation: "Cancel your covenant with Baasha king of Israel" or "Do not be loyal to Baasha king of Israel as you promised in your covenant with him"
Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel
Asa wanted Ben Hadad to attack Israel. Ben Hadad could only do that if he broke his covenant with the king of Israel. The meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, and attack Israel"
1 Kings 15:21
It came about that

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This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

he stopped building up Ramah

King Baasha did this by telling his workers to do this. Alternate translation: "he had his workers stop building up Ramah"

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.

1 Kings 15:22

No one was exempted

This can also be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Every one had to obey King Asa's proclamation"

1 Kings 15:23

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Abijah is in this other book. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29]

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Judah."

1 Kings 15:24

Asa lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Asa died as his ancestors had"

was buried with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him with his ancestors"

David his father

The word "father" here refers to an ancestor. Alternate translation: "King David, his ancestor"

1 Kings 15:25

Connecting Statement:

The rest of chapter 15 and 16 is about the kings of Israel. These events happened while King Asa of Judah was still alive.

the second year of Asa king of Judah

This refers to the second year of Asa's reign. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "when Asa had been king of Judah for almost two years"

he reigned over Israel two years

"Nadab reigned over Israel two years"

1 Kings 15:26

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

walked in the way of his father

Walking here represents behaving. Alternate translation: "did the same things that his father had done"

in his own sin

Walking in his own sin represents sinning in ways that were different from the ways that his father had sinned. Alternate translation: "he sinned in his own ways"

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "and by sinning, he influenced Israel to sin"

1 Kings 15:27

conspired against Nadab

"secretly plotted to kill King Nadab"

Gibbethon

This is the name of a city.

Nadab and all Israel

"The phrase "all Israel" is a generalization that represents the many soldiers of Israel. Alternate translation: "Nadab and the many soldiers of Israel" or "Nadab and the army of Israel"

were laying siege to Gibbethon

"were surrounding Gibbethon, so that the people of Gibbethon would surrender to them"

1 Kings 15:28

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Nadab"

1 Kings 15:29

Baasha killed all the family of Jeroboam. He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing.

These two sentences mean the same thing and are combined to emphasize his descendents were all killed.

all the family of Jeroboam

Jeroboam was King Nadab's father.

He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing

Breathing represents being alive. Alternate translation: "He left none of Jeroboam's descendants living"

his royal line

"Jeroboam's royal line"

just as Yahweh had spoken by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite

In 1 Kings 14:10 and 1 Kings 14:11 Yahweh spoke through his prophet Ahijah and told Jeroboam that he would destroy his family.

Ahijah the Shilonite

"Ahijah, who was from Shiloh"

1 Kings 15:30

for the sins of Jeroboam which he committed and by which he led Israel to sin

The abstract noun "sins" can be expressed with the verb "sin." Alternate translation: "because Jeroboam sinned and led Israel to sin in the same ways"

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do something. Alternate translation: "by which he influenced Israel to sin"

1 Kings 15:31

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Nadab is in this other book. See how you translated a similar phrase concerning Judah in [1 Kings 14:29]

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about this in the book of the events of the kings of Israel."

1 Kings 15:32

all their days

This refers to the whole period of time that they reign as

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kings. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:16]

1 Kings 15:33

Connecting Statement:

Starting in 1 Kings 15:27, the author told about how Baasha became king. Here the author begins to tell about what Baasha did as king of Israel.

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.

1 Kings 15:34

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

walked in the way of Jeroboam

Walking here represents behaving. Alternate translation: "did the same things that Jeroboam had done"

in his sin by which he led Israel to sin

Possible meanings are that "his" and "he" refer to 1) Baasha or 2) Jeroboam.

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "and by sinning, he influenced Israel to sin"

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16 [1]The word of Yahweh came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,[2]"Although I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel, you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made my people Israel to sin, so as to provoke me to anger with their sins.
[3]See, I will consume Baasha and his family and I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam son of Nebat.[4]The dogs will eat anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat anyone who dies in the fields."

[5]As for the other matters concerning Baasha, what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[6]Baasha lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place.
[7]So by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani the word of Yahweh came against Baasha and his family, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of Yahweh, so as to provoke him to anger with the work of his hands, like the family of Jeroboam, and also because he had killed all of Jeroboam's family.

[8]In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah son of Baasha began to reign over Israel in Tirzah; he reigned two years.[9]His servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him. Now Elah was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household in Tirzah.[10]Zimri went in, attacked him, and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah and became king in his place.
[11]When Zimri began to reign and was seated on his throne, he killed all the family of Baasha. He did not leave alive a single male belonging to Baasha's relatives or friends.[12]So Zimri destroyed all the family of Baasha, according to the word of Yahweh which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet,[13]for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son that they committed, and by which they had led Israel to sin, so that they provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their idols.
[14]As for the other matters concerning Elah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

[15]In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned only for seven days in Tirzah. Now the army was camped by Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.[16]The army camped there heard it said, "Zimri has plotted and has killed the king." So that day in the camp, all Israel declared Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel.[17]Omri went up from Gibbethon and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah.
[18]So when Zimri saw that the city had been taken, he went into the fortress attached to the king's palace and set fire to the building over him; in this way he died in the flames.[19]This was for the sins that he had committed in doing what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, by walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin that he had committed, so as to lead Israel to sin.
[20]As for the other matters concerning Zimri, and the treason that he carried out, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

[21]Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts. Half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri.[22]But the people who followed Omri were stronger than the people who followed Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became king.
[23]Omri began to reign over Israel in the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. He reigned from Tirzah for six years.[24]He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver. He built a city on the hill and called the name of the city Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the past owner of the hill.
[25]Omri did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and acted more wickedly than all who had been before him.[26]For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in his sins by which he led Israel to sin, to provoke Yahweh, the God of Israel, to be angry with their worthless idols.

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[27]As for the other matters concerning Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[28]So Omri lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria and Ahab his son became king in his place.

[29]In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri began to reign over Israel. Ahab son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.[30]Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, more than all those who were before him.
[31]It was to Ahab a trivial thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, so he took as his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; he went and worshiped Baal and bowed down to him.[32]He built an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.[33]Ahab made an Asherah pole. Ahab did even more to provoke Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who had been before him.
[34]During Ahab's rule, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. Hiel laid the foundation of the city at the cost of the life of Abiram, his firstborn son; and Segub, his youngest son, lost his life while he was building the gates of the city, in keeping with the word of Yahweh which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun.

1 Kings 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Incorrect worship

The prophet Jehu warned Baasha, king of Israel, that God would destroy his family for worshiping the idols. But Baasha did not change his ways; so Zimri murdered Baasha's son and all his relatives. Then Omri killed Zimri. Omri's son Ahab brought in the rain god Baal and his wife, the fertility goddess Ashtoreth, as the official religion of Israel. This was very evil. (See: prophet and falsegod and evil)

Links:

1 Kings 16:1 Notes

1 Kings 16:1

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

1 Kings 16:2

Although I exalted you

This is God's message that Jehu was to give to Baasha. The word "you" refers to Baasha.

I exalted you out of the dust

"I raised you out of the dust." Being in the dust on the ground represents not being important. Exalting someone represents making him important. Alternate translation: "I raised you from a very unimportant position" or "when you had no power or influence over people, I made you important"

you have walked in the way of Jeroboam

Walking represents behaving. Jeroboam and Baasha both sinned. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "you have done the same things that Jeroboam did" or "you have sinned as Jeroboam sinned"

1 Kings 16:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Baasha what he will do to him.

See, I will consume Baasha and his family

Yahweh is speaking to Baasha, and the phrase "his family" refers to Baasha's family. This can be translated using the words "you" and "your." Alternate translation: "Listen, Baasha. I will consume you and your family"

I will consume

Consuming represents destroying. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy"

1 Kings 16:5

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Baasha is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31]

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel."

1 Kings 16:6

Baasha lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Baasha died as his ancestors had" or "Like his ancestors, Baasha died"

was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Baasha"

1 Kings 16:7

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

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all the evil that he did in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "all the things that Baasha that are evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "all the things that Baaha did that Yahweh considers to be evil"
so as to provoke him to anger
The abstract noun "anger" can be expressed with the adjective "angry." Alternate translation: "so as to make Yahweh very angry" or "that made God very angry"
with the work of his hands
Here Basha is represented by his "hands." This speaks of all of his actions as his "work." Alternate translation: "by the things Baasha had done"
1 Kings 16:8
Tirzah
This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.
1 Kings 16:9
His servant Zimri
"Elah's servant Zimri"
captain of half his chariots
The word "chariots" here represents the soldiers who drove the chariots. Alternate translation: "captain of half his chariot drivers"
drinking himself drunk
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "drinking so much wine that he was getting drunk" or "getting drunk"
who was over the household
Being over the household represents being in charge of the things in King Elah's house. Alternate translation: "who was in charge of the things in the Elah's house"
1 Kings 16:10
attacked him, and put him to death
"attacked and killed Elah"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Elah"
1 Kings 16:11
He did not leave alive a single male
This means that he killed all the men and boys. Alternate translation: "He did not leave even one male alive"
1 Kings 16:12
the word of Yahweh
"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"
which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet
Speaking "by" a prophet represents telling a prophet to speak and the prophet speaking. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh told Jehu the prophet to speak against Baasha"
1 Kings 16:13
they had led Israel to sin
Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "they had influenced Israel to sin"
they had led Israel to sin
Here the word "Israel" refers to the ten northern tribes of Israel. Baasha and Elah had been their king.
they provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their idols
God became angry with the people because they worshiped idols. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "they made Yahweh, the God of Israel, angry because they worshiped idols"
the God of Israel
Here the word "Israel" refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.
1 Kings 16:14
are they not written ... kings of Israel?
This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Elah is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31]
are they not written ... Israel?
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel."
1 Kings 16:15
Tirzah
This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.
the army was camped by Gibbethon
The word "army" refers to the army of the kingdom of Israel.
Gibbethon
This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 15:27.
1 Kings 16:16
The army camped there heard it said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers who camped there heard someone say"
all Israel
Both times this phrase is used, it represents the army of Israel. Here the word "all" is a generalization meaning "most." Alternate translation: "all the army of Israel" or "most of the soldiers in the army of Israel" or "the army of Israel"
1 Kings 16:18
that the city had been taken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Omri and the army had taken the city"
1 Kings 16:19
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"
walking in the way of Jeroboam
Here walking represents behaving. Alternate translation: "doing the same things that Jeroboam had done"
so as to lead Israel to sin
Leading people to do something represents influencing them to do it. Alternate translation: "so as to influence Israel to sin"
1 Kings 16:20
the treason that he carried out
This treason refers to Zimri's plot to kill Elah, the king of Israel. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "how he plotted against King Elah" or "how he killed the king of Israel"
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?
This question is used to either inform or remind the

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readers that the information about Zimri is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated a similar phrase concerning Judah in [1 Kings 14:29]

are they not written ... Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel."

1 Kings 16:21

followed Tibni ... followed Omri

Here "followed" represents supporting or wanting to make him king. Alternate translation: "supported Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half supported Omri" or "wanted to make Tibni son of Ginath king, and half wanted to make Omri king"

1 Kings 16:22

were stronger than the people who followed Tibni

"overpowered the people who followed Tibni"

1 Kings 16:23

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in 1 Kings 14:17.

1 Kings 16:24

Shemer

This is the name of a man.

two talents of silver

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about 66 kilograms of silver"

He built a city

The word "He" refers to Omri. He commanded people to build the city. Alternate translation: "Omri had his people build a city" or "Omri commanded and his workers built a city"

after the name of Shemer

This is an idiom that means "to honor Shemer" or "so that people would remember Shemer."

1 Kings 16:25

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

1 Kings 16:26

walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat

Walking represents behaving. Alternate translation: "did all the same things that Jeroboam son of Nebat did"

in his sins by which he led Israel to sin

Possible meanings are that "his" and "he" refer to 1) Baasha or 2) Jeroboam.

in his sins

Possible meanings are walking in his sins represents 1) sinning as Jeroboam sinned. Alternate translation: "he sinned as Jeroboam sinned" or 2) or sinning habitually. Alternate translation: "he sinned habitually"

by which he led Israel to sin

Leading people to sin represents influencing them to sin. Alternate translation: "his sins, by which he influenced Israel to sin" or "and by sinning like this, he influenced people to sin.

to provoke Yahweh ... to be angry with their worthless idols

God became angry with the people because they worshiped idols. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Kings 16:13]

their worthless idols

The word "worthless" here reminds people that idols are worthless because they cannot do anything. Alternate translation: "their idols, which are worthless" or "their idols, which are useless"

the God of Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.

1 Kings 16:27

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Omri is in this other book. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31]

are they not written ... Israel?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel."

1 Kings 16:28

Omri lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Omri died as his ancestors had" or "Like his ancestors, Omri died"

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Omri"

1 Kings 16:30

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

1 Kings 16:31

It was to Ahab a trivial thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat

This implies that Ahab wanted to commit worse sins. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It was as if Ahab thought that walking in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat was not enough"

It was to Ahab a trivial thing

This is an idiom. The phrase "to Ahab" means that Ahab considered or thought something. Alternate translation: "Ahab considered it a trivial thing" or "Ahab thought that it was not enough"

a trivial thing

"an insignificant thing" or "not enough"

to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat

Walking in Jeroboam's sins represents sinning as Jeroboam had sinned. Alternate translation: "to sin as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned"

worshiped Baal and bowed down to him

These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase "bowed down to him" describes the posture that people used in worship.

1 Kings 16:33

the God of Israel

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Here the word "Israel" refers to the nation of Israel, which consisted of twelve tribes.

the kings of Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to the kingdom of Israel, which consisted of ten tribes.

1 Kings 16:34

at the cost of the life of Abiram, his firstborn son

The consequence of building the city is spoken of as if it were a cost that Hiel paid. Alternate translation: "and the consequence of his sin was that Abiram, his firstborn son, died"

Segub, his youngest son, lost his life

Dying is spoken of as if he lost his life. Alternate translation: "Segub, his youngest son, died"

while he was building the gates of the city

"while Hiel was building the gates of the city"

in keeping with the word of Yahweh

"according to the word of Yahweh"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"

which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun

Speaking "by" someone represents both telling someone to speak and the person doing it. Alternate translation: "which Yahweh caused Joshua son of Nun to speak"

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17 [1]Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As Yahweh, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there will not be dew or rain these years unless I say so."
[2]The word of Yahweh came to Elijah, saying,[3]"Leave from here and go eastward; hide yourself by the brook Kerith, east of the Jordan.[4]It will happen that you will drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there."
[5]So Elijah went and did as the word of Yahweh commanded. He went to live by the brook Kerith, east of the Jordan.[6]The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.
[7]But after a while the brook dried up because there was no rain in the land.

[8]The word of Yahweh came to him, saying,[9]"Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there. Look, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."[10]So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city a widow was there gathering sticks. So he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a jar so that I may drink."
[11]As she was going to get water he called to her, and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand."[12]She replied, "As Yahweh your God lives, I do not have any bread, but only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug. See, I am gathering two sticks so I may go in and cook it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."[13]Elijah said to her, "Do not fear. Go and do as you have said, but make me a little bread first and bring it out to me. Then afterward make some for you and for your son.
[14]For Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'The jar of meal will not empty, neither will the jug of oil stop flowing, until the day that Yahweh sends rain on the earth.'"[15]So she did as Elijah had told her. She and Elijah, along with her household, ate for many days.[16]The jar of meal did not empty, neither did the jug of oil stop flowing, just as the word of Yahweh had said, as he had spoken by Elijah.

[17]After these things the woman's son, the woman who owned the house, fell sick. His sickness was so severe that there was no more breath left in him.[18]So his mother said to Elijah, "What do you have against me, man of God? Have you come to me to remind me of my iniquity and to kill my son?"
[19]Then Elijah replied to her, "Give me your son." He took the boy from her arms and carried him up into the room where he was staying, and he laid the boy on his own bed.[20]He cried to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh my God, have you also brought disaster on the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?"[21]Then Elijah stretched himself on the child three times; he cried out to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh my God, I beg you, please let this child's life return to him."
[22]Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child returned to him, and he revived.[23]Elijah took the child and brought him out of his room down into the house; he handed the boy to his mother and said, "See, your son is alive."[24]The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of Yahweh in your mouth is true."

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1 Kings 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of the story of Elijah. (1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 2)

Special concepts in this chapter

Baal worship

Ahab had introduced the worship of Baal, the god people thought brought rain, to Israel. Because of this, God caused a drought. Elijah told Ahab that it would not rain or dew until he, Elijah, said so. Elijah had to hide so Ahab would not kill him for bringing the drought. (See: falsegod)

Links:

1 Kings 17:1 Notes

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1 Kings 17:1

the Tishbite

This is the name of a people group from Tishbe.

Tishbe

This is the name of a town in the region of Gilead.

As Yahweh, the God of Israel lives

This phrase is an oath to emphasize that what he will say is true.

before whom I stand

This is an idiom that means "to serve." Alternate translation: "whom I serve"

dew

drops of water that form on the plants during the night

1 Kings 17:2

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

1 Kings 17:3

Kerith

This is the name of a very small stream.

1 Kings 17:4

It will happen that

This phrase is used to introduce how Yahweh will take care of Elijah during the drought. Alternate translation: "There"

ravens

large, black birds

1 Kings 17:5

as the word of Yahweh commanded

Here "the word" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh commanded"

the brook Kerith

This is the name of a very small stream. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 17:2]

1 Kings 17:7

in the land

"in that area" or "in that country"

1 Kings 17:8

The word of Yahweh came

This idiom means God spoke. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

came to him

Here the word "him" refers to Elijah.

1 Kings 17:9

Zarephath

This is a town.

Look, I

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I"

1 Kings 17:12

As Yahweh your God lives

This phrase is an oath to emphasize that what she will say is true.

only a handful of meal

"only a little bit of meal"

meal

"flour." This what is used to make bread.

See, I

"Let me tell you what I am doing: I"

two sticks

This may refer to two sticks or to only a few sticks.

that we may eat it, and die

It is implied that they will die because they do not have anymore food. Alternate translation: "that we may eat. Afterwards, we will starve to death"

1 Kings 17:13

afterward make some for you and for your son

It is implicit that there would be enough flour and oil to make more bread.

1 Kings 17:14

Yahweh sends rain

This is an idiom that means Yahweh causes it to rain. Alternate translation: "Yahweh causes rain to fall"

1 Kings 17:15

She and Elijah, along with her household, ate for many days

In the original language it says, "And she and he and her household ate for many days." It is unclear who "he" is. Possible meanings are 1) Elijah, the widow, and her son ate for many days or 2) the widow, her son, and everyone living in her house ate for many days or 3) Elijah, the widow, and everyone living in her house ate for many days.

along with her household

Possible meanings for "household" are 1) this refers only to the widow's son or 2) this refers to other people who live in her house but are not named in the story or 3) this refers to her son and others living in her house.

1 Kings 17:16

just as the word of Yahweh had said

Here "word" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh had said"

1 Kings 17:17

the woman's son, the woman who owned the house

"the son of the woman who owned the house"

there was no more breath left in him

This is a polite way of saying the boy died. Alternate translation: "he stopped breathing" or "he died"

1 Kings 17:18

man of God

The phrase "man of God" is another title for a prophet.

of my iniquity

This means sins in general not a specific sin. Alternate translation: "of my sins"

1 Kings 17:19

where he was staying

Here "he" refers to Elijah.

on his own bed

Here "his" refers to Elijah.

1 Kings 17:20

have you also brought disaster on the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?

Possible meanings are 1) Elijah is truly asking a question. Alternate translation: "why would you cause the widow with whom I am staying to suffer even more by killing her son" or 2) Elijah uses a question to express how sad he is. Alternate translation: "surely, you would not cause the

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widow with whom I am staying to suffer even more by killing her son"

have you also brought disaster on the widow

Causing the widow to suffer is spoken of as if "disaster" were an object that is placed on the widow.

also brought disaster

Here "also" means in addition to the disaster that the drought has caused.

1 Kings 17:21

stretched himself on the child

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "lay on top of the child"

1 Kings 17:22

Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah

Here "voice" represents what Elijah prayed. Alternate translation: "Yahweh answered Elijah's prayer"

the life of the child returned to him, and he revived

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "the child came back to life" or "the child lived again"

1 Kings 17:23

his room

Here "his" refers to Elijah.

See, your son is alive

The word "See" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

1 Kings 17:24

the word of Yahweh in your mouth is true

"the message of Yahweh in your mouth is true." The word "mouth" represents what Elijah said. Alternate translation: "the message that you spoke from Yahweh is true"

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18 [1]So after many days the word of Yahweh came to Elijah, in the third year of the drought, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab and I will send rain on the land."[2]Elijah went to show himself to Ahab; now the famine was severe in Samaria.
[3]Ahab called Obadiah, who was in charge of the palace. Now Obadiah honored Yahweh very much,[4]for when Jezebel was killing the prophets of Yahweh, Obadiah took one hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water.
[5]Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the water springs and brooks. Perhaps we will find grass and save the horses and mules alive, so that we will not lose all the animals."[6]So they divided the land between them to pass through it and look for water. Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way.

[7]As Obadiah was on the road, Elijah unexpectedly met him. Obadiah recognized him and lay facedown on the ground. He said, "Is it you, my master Elijah?"[8]Elijah answered him, "It is I. Go tell your master, 'Look, Elijah is here.'"
[9]Obadiah replied, "How have I sinned, that you would give your servant into the hand of Ahab, for him to kill me?[10]As Yahweh your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent men to find you. Whenever a nation or kingdom says, 'Elijah is not here,' Ahab makes them take an oath swearing that they could not find you.[11]Yet now you say, 'Go, tell your master that Elijah is here.'
[12]As soon as I am gone from you, the Spirit of Yahweh will carry you some place I do not know. Then when I go and tell Ahab, and when he cannot find you, he will kill me. Yet I, your servant, have worshiped Yahweh from my youth.[13]Has it not been told to you, my master, what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of Yahweh, how I hid one hundred of Yahweh's prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water?
[14]Now you say to me, 'Go and tell your master that Elijah is here,' so that he will kill me."[15]Then Elijah responded, "As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to Ahab today."

[16]So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him what Elijah said. Then the king went to meet Elijah.[17]When Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is it you? You are the one who brings trouble to Israel!"
[18]Elijah answered, "I have not brought trouble to Israel, but you and your father's family are the ones who have caused trouble by abandoning the commandments of Yahweh and by following the Baals.[19]Now then, send word and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table."

[20]So Ahab sent word to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel.[21]Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you keep changing your mind? If Yahweh is God, follow him. But if Baal is God, then follow him." Yet the people did not answer him a word.
[22]Then Elijah said to the people, "I, I alone, am left as a prophet of Yahweh, but Baal's prophets are 450 men.[23]So let them give us two bulls. Let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. Then I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under it.[24]Then you will call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Yahweh, and the God who answers by fire, then let him be God." So all the people answered and said, "This is good."

[25]So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many people. Then call on the name of your god, but put no fire under the bull."[26]They took the bull that was given to them and prepared it, and they called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "Baal, hear us." But there was no voice, nor anyone who answered. They danced around the altar they had made.

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[27]At noon Elijah mocked them and said, "Shout out loudly! He is a god! Perhaps he is thinking, or is relieving himself, or he is traveling on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened."[28]So they shouted more loudly, and they cut themselves, as they usually did, with swords and spears, until their blood flowed out over themselves.[29]Midday passed, and they were still raving until the time of offering of the evening sacrifice, but there was no voice or anyone to answer; there was no one who paid any attention to their pleadings.

[30]Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me," and all the people came near to him. Then he repaired the altar of Yahweh that was lying in ruin.[31]Elijah took twelve stones, each stone representing one of the tribes of the sons of Jacob—it was Jacob to whom the word of Yahweh came, saying, "Israel will be your name."[32]With the stones he built an altar in the name of Yahweh and he dug a trench around the altar large enough to contain two seahs of seeds.
[33]He arranged the wood for a fire, cut the bull in pieces, and laid the pieces of the bull on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood."[34]Then he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. Once more he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time.[35]The water ran around the altar and filled the trench.
[36]It happened at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Yahweh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word.[37]Hear me, Yahweh, hear me, that these people may know that you, Yahweh, are God, and that you have turned their heart back again to yourself."
[38]Then the fire of Yahweh fell and consumed the burnt offering, as well as the wood, the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.[39]When all the people saw this, they lay facedown on the ground and said, "Yahweh, he is God! Yahweh, he is God!"[40]So Elijah said to them, "Take the prophets of Baal. Do not let one of them escape." So they took them, and Elijah brought the prophets of Baal down to the Kishon River and killed them there.

[41]Elijah said to Ahab, "Get up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of much rain."[42]So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Then Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees.
[43]He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." His servant went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." So seven times Elijah said, "Go again."[44]At the seventh time the servant said, "Look, there is a cloud going up from the sea, as small as a man's hand." Elijah replied, "Go up and say to Ahab, 'Make ready your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.'"
[45]It happened that in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. Ahab rode and went to Jezreel,[46]but the hand of Yahweh was on Elijah. He girded his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

1 Kings 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Baal

God proved himself to all the people of Israel. Elijah went to meet Ahab. He told Ahab to bring the 450 prophets of Baal and all the people to Mount Carmel. Then he proposed an experiment, which was carried out. The prophets of Baal took one bull, killed it, cut it up, and placed it on wood on an altar without lighting the fire. The prophets of Baal danced and prayed to Baal all morning and half the afternoon. After they were exhausted, Elijah built his altar, put the bull he had prepared on it, and drenched it with water. Then he prayed. God answered his prayer with fire that burned up the sacrifice, the altar and the water. Then Elijah told the people to seize the prophets of Baal and kill them. After that, Elijah prayed for rain, and it rained very hard. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Humor

Elijah insults the false god Baal. He states, "Perhaps he is thinking, or is relieving himself, or he is traveling on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." Baal was too busy in the bathroom to answer the prophets. "Relieving himself" is a euphemism.

Links:

1 Kings 18:1 Notes

1 Kings 18:1
the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God.
See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

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send rain on the land
"cause rain to fall on the land"
1 Kings 18:2
now the famine was severe
The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the writer tells background information about how the famine had affected Samaria.
1 Kings 18:3
Now Obadiah honored Yahweh
The word "Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the writer tells about a new person in the story.
1 Kings 18:4
one hundred prophets and hid them by fifties
"100 prophets and hid them in groups of 50"
1 Kings 18:5
save the horses and mules alive ... not lose all the animals
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "prevent the horses and mules from dying"
1 Kings 18:6
Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way
The phrase "by himself" emphasizes that Ahab and Obadiah went in separate directions, not necessarily that no one was with Ahab. Alternate translation: "Ahab lead a team in one direction and Obadiah lead a team in the other direction"
1 Kings 18:7
master Elijah
Here the word "master" is used as a term of respect.
1 Kings 18:8
Go tell your master, 'Look, Elijah is here.'
Here the word "master" refers to Ahab.
Look, Elijah
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: Elijah"
1 Kings 18:9
How have I sinned ... for him to kill me?
Obadiah asks this question to emphasize the danger to himself because of King Ahab's anger at Elijah. Alternate translation: "I have not wronged you ... for him to kill me."
give your servant into the hand of Ahab
"Hand" is metonymy for power and control. Alternate translation: "deliver your servant to Ahab"
your servant
Obadiah refers to himself as Elijah's servant in order to honor Elijah.
1 Kings 18:10
As Yahweh your God lives
This is an oath used to emphasize that what he is saying is true.
there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent men
Here "no nation or kingdom" is an exaggeration that means that men have traveled very far and gone to many places to find Elijah. This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "my master has sent men to every nation and kingdom" or "my master has sent men to many nations and kingdoms"
1 Kings 18:11
Yet now
This phrase is used to emphasize the danger in what Elijah is telling Obadiah to do.
1 Kings 18:13
Has it not been told to you ... with bread and water?
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Surely you have been told about what I did ... with bread and water!"
my master
Here the word "master" is a term of respect used to refer to Elijah.
one hundred of Yahweh's prophets by fifties
"100 of Yahweh's prophets in groups of 50"
1 Kings 18:14
Go and tell your master that Elijah is here
See how you translated these words in 1 Kings 18:11.
your master
Here "master" refers to King Ahab.
1 Kings 18:15
As Yahweh of hosts lives
This is an oath to emphasize that what he will say is true.
before whom I stand
To "stand before" is an idiom for being in someone's presence and ready to serve him. Alternate translation: "whom I serve"
1 Kings 18:16
told him what Elijah said
"Obadiah told Ahab what Elijah had told him to say"
1 Kings 18:17
Is it you? You are the one who brings trouble to Israel!
Ahab asks the question for emphasis to be certain about Elijah's identity. Alternate translation: "So here you are. You are the troublemaker of Israel!"
1 Kings 18:19
all Israel
This is a generalization to refer to the leaders and people who represent the ten tribes of the northern kingdom.
450 prophets
"four hundred and fifty prophets"
four hundred prophets
"400 prophets"
1 Kings 18:20
sent word to ... and gathered
"Word" represents Ahab's message and is also a metonym for the messenger who delivered the message. This is a common statement used with the meaning understood. Alternate translation: "sent a message to ... and gathered" or "sent a messenger to summon ... to gather"
1 Kings 18:21
How long will you keep changing your mind?
Elijah asks this question to urge the people to make a decision. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have been indecisive for long enough."
did not answer him a word
"did not say anything" or "were silent"
1 Kings 18:22
I, I alone, am left
The word "I" is repeated for emphasis.
450 men

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"four hundred and fifty men"
1 Kings 18:24
call on the name of your god ... call on the name of Yahweh
"Name" is metonymy for the reputation and honor of someone and "calling on" him represents an appeal. Alternate translation: "call to your god ... call to Yahweh"
all the people answered and said, "This is good."
"all the people said, 'This is a good thing to do.'"
1 Kings 18:25
prepare it
"make it ready to be sacrificed"
you are many people
Here the word "you" is plural.
1 Kings 18:26
They took the bull
"The prophets of Baal took the bull"
the bull that was given to them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bull that someone gave them"
But there was no voice, nor anyone who answered
These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that there was no one to respond to the prayers of the false prophets. The word "voice" represents someone speaking. Alternate translation: "But Baal did not say or do anything"
1 Kings 18:27
Perhaps he is thinking
"Maybe he is thinking" or "It could be that he is thinking"
relieving himself
This euphemism is a more pleasant way to express a harsh statement. Elijah uses understatement to insult Baal with sarcasm. Alternate translation: "in the bathroom"
must be awakened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must awaken him" or "you must wake him up"
1 Kings 18:29
they were still raving
"they continued their wild behavior." Prophets often acted in ways that seemed unusual or even crazy. In this case they were calling on Baal while dancing, shouting loudly, and cutting themselves with knives.
of offering of the evening sacrifice
"to offer the evening sacrifice"
but there was no voice or anyone to answer; there was no one who paid any attention to their pleadings
These phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that no one responded to the prayers of the false prophets. Alternate translation: "but Baal did not say or do anything or even pay attention"
there was no voice or anyone to answer
See how you translated this in 1 Kings 18:26.
1 Kings 18:31
twelve stones
"12 stones"
1 Kings 18:32
in the name of Yahweh
"Name" here is a metonym for honor and reputation. Possible meanings are 1) "to honor Yahweh" or 2) "with the authority of Yahweh."
trench
a small waterway to hold water
two seahs of seeds
A seah is a unit of volume equal to about 7.7 liters. Alternate translation: "about 15 liters of seeds"
1 Kings 18:33
He arranged the wood for a fire
"On the altar" where he placed the wood is assumed in this sentence. Alternate translation: "He put the wood for a fire on the altar"
four jars
"4 jars"
jars
A jar is a container for water.
1 Kings 18:35
trench
See how you translated this in 1 Kings 18:30.
1 Kings 18:36
It happened
This phrase is used here to reference a significant and meaningful time of the day in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Yahweh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel
Here "Israel" is referring to Jacob. God changed Jacob's name to Israel (Genesis 32:28), and God named the nation of Jacob's descendants "Israel."
let it be known this day
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "make these people know today"
1 Kings 18:37
Hear me ... hear me
This phrase is repeated to emphasize the appeal of Elijah to Yahweh.
turned their heart back again to yourself
The people's "heart" is a metonym for the affection and loyalty of the people. Alternate translation: "caused them to be loyal to you again"
1 Kings 18:38
the fire of Yahweh fell
"the fire of Yahweh came down"
licked up
The fire is compared to a thirsty person drinking water.
1 Kings 18:39
Yahweh, he is God! Yahweh, he is God!
This phrase is repeated for emphasis.
1 Kings 18:41
there is the sound of much rain
"it sounds like it is going to rain a lot"
1 Kings 18:42
bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees
This describes a posture used for praying.
1 Kings 18:43
seven times
The word "seven" can be rendered as the numeral "7." Alternate translation: "7 times"
1 Kings 18:44
as small as a man's hand
From a long distance, the cloud could be covered from sight by a man's hand.
1 Kings 18:45

It happened
This phrase is used here to mark where a new step in the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
1 Kings 18:46
the hand of Yahweh was on Elijah
Here the word "hand" is a metonym for strength. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave his power to Elijah"
girded his loins
Elijah wrapped his long robe around his waist so that his legs would be free for running.

19 [1]Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.[2]Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of those dead prophets by tomorrow about this time."[3]When Elijah heard that, he arose and fled for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.
[4]But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. He requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough, now, Yahweh; take away my life, for I am no better than my dead ancestors."[5]So he lay down and slept under a broom tree. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat."[6]Elijah looked, and near his head was bread that had been baked on coals and a jug of water. So he ate and drank and then lay down again.
[7]The angel of Yahweh came again a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, because the journey will be too much for you."[8]So he arose and ate and drank, and he traveled in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

[9]He went to a cave there and prepared to stay overnight in it. Then the word of Yahweh came to him and said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"[10]Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for Yahweh, God of hosts, because the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. Now I, only I, am left and they are also trying to take my life."
[11]Yahweh replied, "Go out and stand on the mountain before me." Then Yahweh passed by, and a very strong wind struck the mountains and broke rocks into pieces before Yahweh, but Yahweh was not in the wind. Then after the wind, an earthquake came, but Yahweh was not in the earthquake.[12]Then after the earthquake a fire came, but Yahweh was not in the fire. Then after the fire, a still small voice came.
[13]When Elijah heard the voice, he wrapped his face in his cloak, went out, and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then a voice came to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"[14]Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for Yahweh, God of hosts, because the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. Now I, only I, am left and they are also trying to take my life."

[15]Then Yahweh said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you arrive you will anoint Hazael to be king over Aram,[16]and you will anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king over Israel, and you will anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah to be prophet in your place.
[17]It will happen that Jehu will kill whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, and that Elisha will kill whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu.[18]But I will leave for myself seven thousand people in Israel, whose knees have not bent down to Baal, and whose mouths have not kissed him."

[19]So Elijah left from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself was plowing with the twelfth yoke. Elijah walked over to Elisha and draped his cloak on him.[20]Then Elisha left the oxen and ran after Elijah; he said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." Then Elijah said to him, "Go back, but think about what I have done to you."
[21]So Elisha returned from Elijah and took the yoke of oxen, killed the animals, and cooked the meat with the wood from the ox yoke. Then he gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose, went after Elijah and served him.

1 Kings 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The queen was angry that Elijah had killed her prophets of Baal. She promised to kill Elijah. Elijah fled south into the desert south of Judah. He traveled on to Mount Horeb also known as Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. God asked him why he was there. He said he had come to Mount Horeb because Israel had deserted God, killed his prophets, and wanted to kill him. God sent him home to make Hazael the king of Aram, Jehu the king of Israel, and Elisha as the prophet in his place. (See: prophet and promise)

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Links:

1 Kings 19:1 Notes

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1 Kings 19:2

So may the gods do to me, and more also

This is a comparison used as an emphatic oath. "May the gods kill me and do even more bad things"

if I do not make your life like the life of one of those dead prophets

"if I do not kill you like you killed those prophets"

1 Kings 19:3

he arose

"he stood up"

1 Kings 19:4

he himself went a day's journey

The word "himself" is used to emphasize that he was alone. Alternate translation: "he walked by himself for a day"

broom tree

A "broom tree" is a plant that grows in the desert.

He requested for himself that he might die

"He prayed that he would die"

It is enough, now, Yahweh

"These troubles are too much for me, Yahweh"

1 Kings 19:6

bread that had been baked on coals

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "bread that someone had cooked on hot stones"

jug of water

"a container of water"

1 Kings 19:7

will be too much for you

"will be too difficult for you."

1 Kings 19:8

he traveled in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights

"that food gave him energy to travel for 40 days and 40 nights"

1 Kings 19:9

to a cave there

Here the word "there" refers to Mount Horeb. A cave is an opening in a mountainside that leads to a natural room or rooms underground.

the word of Yahweh came to him and said to him, "What

The idiom "The word of Yahweh came to," is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

What are you doing here, Elijah?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke Elijah and to remind him of his duty. Alternate translation: "This is not where you should be, Elijah."

1 Kings 19:10

I, only I, am left

Here the word "I" is repeated for emphasis.

1 Kings 19:11

on the mountain before me

"Before me" here is an idiom for standing in front of someone. Alternate translation: "on the mountain in my presence"

1 Kings 19:13

he wrapped his face in his cloak

"he covered his face with his cloak" A cloak is a long robe, a piece of clothing that covers the whole body.

Then a voice came to him

"Then he heard a voice"

What are you doing here, Elijah?

See how you translated this text in 1 Kings 19:9.

1 Kings 19:14

Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous ... and they are also trying to take my life."

See how you translated this text in 1 Kings 19:10.

I, only I, am left

Here the word "I" is repeated for emphasis.

1 Kings 19:16

prophet in your place

"prophet instead of you"

1 Kings 19:17

It will happen

This phrase is used to introduce what will happen when Elijah does what Yahweh has told him to do. "What will happen is"

whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael

"Sword" is metonymy for for killing as in battle. Alternate translation: "whomever Hazael does not kill with the sword"

1 Kings 19:18

I will leave for myself

Here the words "I" and "myself" refer to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will save from death"

seven thousand people

"7,000 people"

whose knees have not bent down to Baal, and whose mouths have not kissed him

"Bending down" and "kissing" are metonymies for actions people did to worship idols. They are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "who have not bowed down and kissed Baal" or "who have not worshiped Baal"

1 Kings 19:19

Shaphat

This is the name of a man.

twelve yoke of oxen

"12 yoke of oxen"

he himself was plowing with the twelfth yoke

The word "himself" indicates that Elisha was plowing with the last yoke, while other men were plowing with the other eleven yokes.

1 Kings 19:20

he said, "Please

The word "he" refers to Elisha.

1 Kings 19:21

he gave it to the people

Elisha gave the cooked meat to the people of his city.

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20 [1]Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army together. There were thirty-two lesser kings with him, and horses and
chariots. He went up, besieged Samaria and fought against it.[2]He sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel,
and said to him, "Ben-Hadad says this:[3]'Your silver and your gold are mine. Also your wives and children, the best ones,
are now mine.'"
[4]The king of Israel answered and said, "It is as you say, my master, king. I and all that I have are yours."[5]The messengers
came again and said, "Ben-Hadad says this, 'I sent word to you saying that you must give me your silver, your gold, your
wives, and your children.[6]But I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they will search your house
and your servants' houses. They will seize with their own hands and take away everything that delights your eyes.'"

[7]Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land together and said, "Please take note and see how this man seeks
trouble. He has sent word to me in order to take my wives, children, and silver and gold, and I have not refused him."[8]All
the elders and all the people said to Ahab, "Do not listen to him or consent to his demands."
[9]So Ahab said to the messengers of Ben-Hadad, "Tell my master the king, 'I agree to everything that you sent your servant
to do the first time, but I cannot accept this second demand.'" So the messengers left and took this response to Ben-Hadad.
[10]Then Ben-Hadad sent his reply to Ahab, and said, "May the gods do so to me and more also, if even the ashes of Samaria
will be enough for all the people who follow me to have a handful each."
[11]The king of Israel answered and said, "Tell Ben-Hadad, 'No one who is girding on his armor should boast as if he were
taking it off.'"[12]Ben-Hadad heard this message as he was drinking, he and the kings under him who were in their tents.
Ben-Hadad commanded his servants, "Line yourselves up in position for battle." So they prepared themselves in position
of battle to attack the city.

[13]Then behold, a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and said, "Yahweh says, 'Have you seen this great army? Look, I will
place it into your hand today, and you will know that I am Yahweh.'"[14]Ahab replied, "By whom?" Yahweh replied and said,
"By the young officers who serve the governors of the provinces." Then Ahab said, "Who will begin the battle?" Yahweh
answered, "You."[15]Then Ahab mustered the young officers who served the governors of the provinces. They numbered
232. After them he mustered all the soldiers, all the army of Israel; seven thousand in number.

[16]They went out at noon. Ben-Hadad had been drinking himself drunk in his tent, he and the thirty-two lesser kings who
were supporting him.[17]The young officers who served the governors of the provinces went forward first. Then Ben-Hadad
was informed by scouts that he had sent out, "Men are coming out from Samaria."
[18]Ben-Hadad said, "Whether they have come out for peace or war, take them alive."[19]So the young officers who served the
governors of the provinces went out of the city and the army followed them.
[20]Each man killed his opponent. The Arameans fled and Israel pursued them. Ben-Hadad the king of Aram escaped on a
horse along with some horsemen.[21]Then the king of Israel went out and attacked the horses and chariots, and killed the
Arameans in a great slaughter.

[22]So the prophet came to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself, and understand and plan what you
are doing, because at the return of the year the king of Aram will come up against you again."[23]The servants of the king of
Aram said to him, "Their god is a god of the hills. That is why they were stronger than we were. But now let us fight
against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they are.
[24]So you must do this: Remove all the kings from their positions of authority and replace them with military commanders.
[25]Raise up an army like the army you lost—horse for horse and chariot for chariot—so we can fight them in the plain.
Then surely we will be stronger than they are." So Ben-Hadad listened to their advice and did what they advised.

[26]After the beginning of the new year, Ben-Hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel.
[27]The people of Israel were mustered and supplied to fight against them. The people of Israel camped before them like two
little flocks of goats, but the Arameans filled the countryside.
[28]Then a man of God came near and spoke to the king of Israel and said, "Yahweh says: 'Because the Arameans have said
that Yahweh is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys, I will place this great army into your hand, and you will
know that I am Yahweh.'"
[29]So the armies camped opposite each other for seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle started. The people of
Israel killed 100,000 Aramean footmen in one day.[30]The rest fled to Aphek, into the city, and the wall fell on twenty-seven
thousand men who were left. Ben-Hadad fled and went into the city, into an inner room.

[31]Ben-Hadad's servants said to him, "See now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings.
Please let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads, and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will
spare your life."[32]So they girded sackcloth on their waists and ropes around their heads and then went to the king of Israel
and said, "Your servant Ben-Hadad said, 'Please let me live.'" Ahab said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother."

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[33]Now the men were listening for any sign from Ahab, so they quickly answered him, "Yes, your brother Ben-Hadad is alive." Then Ahab said, "Go and bring him." Then Ben-Hadad came to him, and Ahab had him come up into his chariot.
[34]Ben-Hadad said to Ahab, "I will restore to you the cities that my father took from your father, and you may make markets for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." Ahab replied, "I will let you go with this covenant." So Ahab made a covenant with him and then let him go.

[35]A certain man, one of the sons of the prophets, said to one of his companions by the word of Yahweh, "Please hit me." But the man refused to hit him.[36]Then the prophet said to his fellow prophet, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh, as soon as you leave me, a lion will kill you." As soon as that man had left him, a lion came upon him and killed him.
[37]Then the prophet found another man and said, "Please hit me." So the man hit him and wounded him.[38]Then the prophet left and waited for the king by the road; he had disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes.
[39]As the king passed by, the prophet cried out to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the heat of the battle, and a soldier stopped and brought a man to me and said, 'Watch this man. If by any means he goes missing, your life will be given for his life, or you must pay a talent of silver.'[40]But because your servant was busy going here and there, the man escaped." Then the king of Israel said to him, "This is what your punishment will be—you yourself have decided it."
[41]Then the prophet quickly removed the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets.[42]The prophet said to the king, "Yahweh says, 'Because you have let go from your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, your life will take the place of his life, and your people for his people.'"[43]So the king of Israel went to his house resentful and angry, and arrived in Samaria.

1 Kings 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is a story of two battles between Aram and Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Battle

God had chosen to defeat Ben Hadad, king of Aram. So when he attacked Samaria with a huge army, the tiny army of Israel defeated him. The people of Aram said that Yahweh was the god of the hills, but they could defeat Israel on the plains. So they came again but Israel defeated them again. Then Ben Hadad offered a peace plan and Ahab accepted. But God had wanted him to kill Ben Hadad and was angry at Ahab for making peace with him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

There were so few Israel soldiers that they were "like two little flocks of goats."

Links:

1 Kings 20:1 Notes

1 Kings 20:1

Ben-Hadad

This is the name of a man.

thirty-two lesser kings

"32 lesser kings"

lesser kings

"kings ruling smaller groups of people"

1 Kings 20:4

It is as you say

This is an idiom to express agreement. Alternate translation: "I agree with you"

1 Kings 20:6

tomorrow about this time

"tomorrow at the same time of day that it is now"

everything that delights your eyes

Here the word "eyes" represents the whole person and emphasizes him looking at something and being pleased by it. Alternate translation: "whatever pleases you"

1 Kings 20:7

of the land

"The land" represents all the people living there. Alternate translation: "of the people of Israel"

take note and see

"Take note" here is an idiom to observe carefully. Alternate translation: "pay close attention to"

I have not refused him

"I have agreed to his demands"

1 Kings 20:10

May the gods do so to me and more also

This is an oath with great emphasis. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 19:2.

if even the ashes of Samaria will be enough for all the people who follow me to have a handful each

Ben-Hadad is threatening that his army will totally destroy everything in Samaria.

1 Kings 20:11

Tell Ben-Hadad, 'No one who is girding on his armor should boast as if he were taking it off.'

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"Girding on armor" is metonymy for getting prepared for battle. "Tell Ben-Hadad, 'Do not boast as if you have already won a battle that you have not yet fought.'"

No one who is girding on his armor should boast as if he were taking it off

This is a proverb, so you may want to make it as brief and easy to say as possible. Alternate translation: "Let him who puts his armor on not boast like him who takes it off"

1 Kings 20:12

his servants

These men served him as soldiers. Alternate translation: "his soldiers"

1 Kings 20:13

Then behold

The word "behold" alerts us to the sudden appearance of a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Have you seen this great army?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize the size and strength of Ben Hadad's army. Alternate translation: "Look at this great army."

Look, I will place it into your hand today

The word "Look" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

place it into your hand

Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "give you victory over that army"

1 Kings 20:14

By whom?

Ahab leaves out the words 'will you do this' Alternate translation: "By whom will you do this?"

1 Kings 20:15

Ahab mustered the young officers

"Ahab assembled the young officers"

all the soldiers, all the army of Israel

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

seven thousand

"7,000"

1 Kings 20:16

They went out

Here the word "They" refers to the Israelite army.

thirty-two lesser kings

See how you translated this in 1 Kings 20:1.

1 Kings 20:17

Ben-Hadad was informed by scouts that he had sent out

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Scouts that Ben-Hadad had sent out informed him"

scouts

A "scout" is a soldier sent to gather information about the enemy.

1 Kings 20:18

Ben-Hadad said

It is understood that Ben-Hadad is speaking to his soldiers. Alternate translation: "Ben-Hadad said to his soldiers"

Whether they have ... take them

Here "they" and "them" refer to the Israelite army.

1 Kings 20:19

So the young officers ... the army followed

"The young Israelite officers ... the Israelite army followed"

1 Kings 20:20

Israel pursued them

"Israel" is synecdoche for all the soldiers of the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "the men of the army of Israel pursued them"

1 Kings 20:21

the king of Israel went out and attacked

"The king" is synecdoche for the king and all the soldiers serving under him. Alternate translation: "The king of Israel and his soldiers went out and attacked"

1 Kings 20:22

strengthen yourself

"Yourself" represents by metonymy the army of the king. Alternate translation: "strengthen your forces"

understand and plan

These two words mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "determine"

at the return of the year

Possible meanings are 1) "in the springtime of next year" or 2) "at this time next year."

1 Kings 20:23

let us fight ... we will be stronger

The words "us" and "we" refer to the servants, the king, and the army all together.

1 Kings 20:24

Remove all the kings from their positions of authority

"You must remove the thirty-two kings who are leading your troops"

1 Kings 20:26

Aphek

This is the name of a city.

to fight against Israel

"Israel" represents the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "to fight against the army of Israel"

1 Kings 20:27

The people of Israel were mustered and supplied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Israelite army also gathered together, and the commanders gave the arms that they needed for the battle"

like two little flocks of goats

This simile compares the Israelite army to two little flocks of goats. Alternate translation: "The Israelite army appeared to be small and weak like two flocks of goats"

1 Kings 20:28

a man of God

This is another title for a prophet. Alternate translation: "a prophet"

place this great army into your hand

Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "give you victory over this great army"

1 Kings 20:29

seven days

"7 days"

100,000

"one hundred thousand"

footmen

A "footman" is a soldier who marches on foot.

1 Kings 20:30

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The rest fled to Aphek
The expression "the rest" assumes the words "of the Aramean soldiers." Alternate translation: "The rest of the Aramean soldiers"
Aphek
This is the name of a town.
twenty-seven thousand
"27,000"
1 Kings 20:31
See now, we
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: we"
put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads
This was a sign of surrender.
1 Kings 20:32
Is he still alive?
Ahab asks this question to express surprise. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that he is still alive!"
He is my brother
"My brother" here is a metaphor for somebody who is a good friend. Alternate translation: "He is like a brother to me" or "He is like family"
1 Kings 20:33
Now the men
The word "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
for any sign from Ahab
"Sign" is metonymy for an action that gives a meaning. Alternate translation: "for any action from Ahab that would show them that Ahab wanted to be merciful"
1 Kings 20:35
one of the sons of the prophets
"a member of the group of prophets"
the word of Yahweh
"the message of Yahweh" or "Yahweh's message"
1 Kings 20:36
you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh
"The voice" is metonymy for what Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "you have not obeyed Yahweh"
1 Kings 20:39
Your servant went out
The prophet refers to himself in the third person as a sign of respect to the king.
into the heat of the battle
"Heat of the battle" here is an idiom to express the most intense and fierce fighting. Alternate translation: "to where the battle was most intense"
your life will be given for his life
"you will die in his place"
a talent of silver
A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "33 kilograms of silver"
1 Kings 20:40
going here and there
This is an idiom to represent being very busy and preoccupied. Alternate translation: "doing other things" or "doing this and that"
1 Kings 20:42
let go from your hand
Here the word "hand" is metonymy for power. Alternate translation: "released" or "spared the life of"
your life will take the place of his life, and your people for his people
"you will die in his place, and your people will die in the place of his people"

21 [1]Now some time later, Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, near the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria.[2]Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, so I can have it as a vegetable garden, because it is near my house. In exchange, I will give you a better vineyard, or, if you prefer, I will pay you its value in money."
[3]Naboth replied to Ahab, "May Yahweh forbid that I should give the inheritance of my ancestors to you."[4]So Ahab went into his palace resentful and angry because of the answer Naboth the Jezreelite gave him when he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and refused to eat any food.

[5]Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is your heart so sad, so that you eat no food?"[6]He replied to her, "I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard to be yours.' Then he answered me, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"[7]So Jezebel his wife replied to him, "Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? Get up and eat; let your heart be happy. I will obtain for you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."
[8]So Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and to the nobles who sat with him in meetings, and who lived near Naboth.[9]She wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth above the people.[10]Also place two worthless men with him and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.'" Then take him out and stone him to death.

[11]So the men of his city, the elders and the noblemen who lived in Naboth's city, did as Jezebel had described to them, as was written in the letters that she had sent to them.[12]They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth above the people.[13]The two dishonest men came in and sat before Naboth; they testified against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed both God and the king." Then they carried him out of the city and stoned him to death.[14]Then the elders sent word to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."
[15]So when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, because Naboth is not alive, but dead."[16]When

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Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite and take possession of it.

[17]Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,[18]"Get up and go meet Ahab king of Israel, who lives in Samaria. He is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession of it.
[19]You must speak to him and say that Yahweh says, 'Have you killed and also taken possession?' Then you will tell him that Yahweh says, 'In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick your blood, yes, your blood.'"[20]Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?" Elijah answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh.
[21]Yahweh says this to you: 'See, I will bring disaster on you and will completely consume and cut off from Ahab every male child and slave and free man in Israel.[22]I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the family of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have led Israel to sin.'
[23]Yahweh has also spoken concerning Jezebel, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel beside the wall of Jezreel.'[24]Anyone who belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, the dogs will eat; and the birds of the sky will eat anyone who dies in the field."
[25]There was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, whom Jezebel his wife incited to sin.[26]Ahab behaved abhorrently by following idols, just as all that the Amorites had done, those whom Yahweh had removed before the people of Israel.

[27]When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and became very sad.[28]Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,[29]"Do you see how Ahab humbles himself before me? Because he humbles himself before me, I will not bring the coming disaster in his days; it is in his son's day that I will bring disaster on his family."

1 Kings 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God hates oppression but is forgiving to people who are sorry for their sins. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard to make into a garden for his palace, but Naboth refused to sell it. So the queen, Ahab's wife, told the civic leaders of Naboth's town to falsely accuse him and execute him. Elijah told Ahab that he would be killed in Naboth's vineyard and all his family destroyed. Ahab repented and showed he was very sorry for what he did, so God said it would not happen to Ahab himself but to his son. (See: oppress, forgive and sin and repent)

Links:

1 Kings 21:1 Notes

1 Kings 21:1

Now some time later

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story and indicates that these events happened later, not that Naboth owned the vineyard later. If your language has a way marking the beginning of a new part of a story, you could consider using it here. Alternate translation: "Now this is what happened later"

Naboth the Jezreelite

This is the name of a man from Jezreel.

king of Samaria

"Samaria" was the capital city of the kingdom of Israel and here represents the entire nation. Alternate translation: "king of Israel"

1 Kings 21:3

May Yahweh forbid that I should give

This phrase is an oath that emphasizes that what follows will not happen. Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh forbids it, I will never give"

give the inheritance of my ancestors to you

The land that his ancestors received as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance. Alternate translation: "give to you the land that my ancestors received as an inheritance"

1 Kings 21:5

Why is your heart so sad

Here "heart" refers to the entire person and his emotions. Alternate translation: "Why are you so sad"

1 Kings 21:7

Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel?

Jezebel uses this negative rhetorical question to rebuke Ahab. It can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "You still rule the kingdom of Israel!"

let your heart be happy

Here "heart" refers to the entire person and his emotions. Alternate translation: "be happy" or "cheer up"

1 Kings 21:8

wrote letters in Ahab's name

Possible meanings are 1) she wrote Ahab's name on the letters. Alternate translation: "wrote letters and signed them with Ahab's name" or 2) the word "name" is a metonym for authority. Alternate translation: "wrote letters

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on behalf of Ahab"

the nobles who sat with him

The word "nobles" refers to wealthy people.

1 Kings 21:9

seat Naboth above the people

Having Naboth sit in a place of honor is spoken of as if it were having him sit above the rest of the people who were present. Alternate translation: "have Naboth sit in a place of honor among the people"

1 Kings 21:10

let them testify against him

"have them accuse him"

1 Kings 21:11

as was written in the letters

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as she had written in the letters"

1 Kings 21:12

seated Naboth above the people

Having Naboth sit in a place of honor is spoken of as if it were having him sit above the rest of the people who were present. See how you translated this idea in [1 Kings 21:9]

1 Kings 21:13

sat before Naboth

"sat in front of Naboth"

they carried him out

Here the word "they" refers to the people of the city.

1 Kings 21:14

Naboth has been stoned and is dead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We have stoned Naboth and he is dead"

1 Kings 21:15

that Naboth had been stoned and was dead

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people had stoned Naboth and he was dead"

Naboth is not alive, but dead.

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize Jezebel's statement. Alternate translation: "Naboth is dead!"

1 Kings 21:17

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom means that Yahweh spoke or has sent a message. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

1 Kings 21:19

Have you killed and also taken possession?

Yahweh asks this question to scold Ahab. Alternate translation: "You have killed Naboth and stolen his vineyard!"

your blood, yes, your blood

This is repeated for emphasis.

1 Kings 21:20

Have you found me, my enemy?

Ahab uses this question to express anger toward Elijah. That Elijah "found" Ahab likely refers to Elijah discovering Ahab's actions, not to finding his physical location. Alternate translation: "You have found me, my enemy!" or "You have discovered what I have done, my enemy!"

you have sold yourself to do what is evil

A person being committed to doing what is evil is spoken of as if that person had sold himself to evil. Alternate translation: "you have dedicated yourself to doing what is evil"

what is evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, "in the sight of" refers to someone's opinion. See how you translated this in 1 Kings 11:6. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

1 Kings 21:21

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

completely consume and cut off from Ahab every male child and slave and free man in Israel

Yahweh speaks to Ahab as if he were speaking of someone else. He speaks of destroying Ahab's family and preventing him from having any decedents as if he were consuming these people like a fire would consume them and cutting them off as one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy every one of your male children in Israel, whether slave or free"

1 Kings 21:22

I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam ... and like the family of Baasha

Yahweh will destroy Ahab's family like he destroyed the families of Jeroboam and Baasha.

1 Kings 21:24

Anyone who belongs to Ahab

"Anyone who belongs to Ahab's family"

1 Kings 21:25

who sold himself to do what was evil

A person being committed to doing what is evil is spoken of as if that person had sold himself to evil. See how you translated this idea in [1 Kings 21:20]

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The phrase, "in the sight of" refers to someone's opinion. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 11:6]

1 Kings 21:26

Ahab behaved abhorrently by following idols

Possible meanings are 1) following the idols was in itself abhorrent behavior or 2) because he followed idols he engaged in other abhorrent behavior.

removed before the people of Israel

Here "Israel" refers to all twelve tribes of Israel and not just to the northern kingdom. Alternate translation: "removed from the presence of the people of Israel" or "drove out of the land before the people of Israel"

1 Kings 21:28

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom means that Yahweh spoke or has sent a message. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 6:11]

1 Kings 21:29

Do you see how Ahab humbles himself before me?

God knows that Elijah can literally see Ahab, but he wants Elijah to understand that Ahab's sorrow is genuine. Alternate translation: "I have seen how Ahab humbles himself before me." or "Look at how Ahab humbles himself before me."

in his days ... in his son's day

"during his lifetime ... during his son's lifetime"

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22 [1]Three years passed without war between Aram and Israel.[2]Then it came about that in the third year, Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to the king of Israel.
[3]Now the king of Israel had said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is ours, but that we are doing nothing to take it from the hand of the king of Aram?"[4]So he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to war at Ramoth Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses are like your horses."

[5]Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please seek direction from the word of Yahweh for what you should do first."[6]Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Should I go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or should I not?" They said, "Attack, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king."
[7]But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here yet another prophet of Yahweh from whom we might seek advice?"[8]The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man by whom we may seek advice from Yahweh to help, Micaiah son of Imlah, but I hate him because he does not prophesy anything good about me, but only hardships." But Jehoshaphat said, "May the king not say that."[9]Then the king of Israel called an officer and commanded, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah, right away."
[10]Now Ahab the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on a throne, clothed in their robes, in a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them.[11]Zedekiah son of Kenaanah made himself horns of iron and said, "Yahweh says this: 'With these you will push the Arameans until they are consumed.'"[12]Then all the prophets prophesied the same, saying, "Attack Ramoth Gilead and win, for Yahweh has given it into the hand of the king."

[13]The messenger who went to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "See now, the words of the prophets declare good things to the king with one mouth. Please let your word be like one of them and say good things."[14]Micaiah replied, "As Yahweh lives, it is what Yahweh says to me that I will say."[15]When he came to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, should we go to Ramoth Gilead for battle, or not?" Micaiah answered him, "Attack and win. Yahweh will give it into the hand of the king."
[16]Then the king said to him, "How many times must I require you to swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh?"[17]So Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered to the mountains, like sheep who have no shepherd, and Yahweh said, 'These have no master. Let every man return to his house in peace.'"
[18]So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but only disaster?"[19]Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of Yahweh: I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven were standing by him on his right hand and on his left.[20]Yahweh said, 'Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead?' One of them said this and another one said that.
[21]Then a spirit came forward, stood before Yahweh, and said, 'I will entice him.' Yahweh said to him, 'How?'[22]The spirit replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Yahweh replied, 'You will entice him, and you will also be successful. Go now and do so.'[23]Now see, Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and Yahweh has decreed disaster for you."

[24]Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, came up, slapped Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?"[25]Micaiah said, "Look, you will see on that day when you will go to hide in an inner room."
[26]The king of Israel said to his servant, "Seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, my son.[27]Say to him, 'The king says, Put this man in prison, and feed him the bread of affliction and the water of affliction until I come safely.'"[28]Then Micaiah said, "If you return safely, then Yahweh has not spoken by me." Then he added, "Listen to this, all you people."

[29]So Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth Gilead.[30]The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your royal robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle.
[31]Now the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not attack unimportant or important soldiers. Attack only the king of Israel."[32]It came about that when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat they said, "Surely that is the king of Israel." They turned to attack him, so Jehoshaphat cried out.[33]It came about that when the commanders of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.
[34]But a certain man drew his bow at random and shot the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. Then Ahab said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am badly wounded."
[35]The battle grew worse that day and the king was held up in his chariot facing the Arameans. He died in the evening. The blood ran out from his wound into the bottom of the chariot.[36]Then about the time the sun was going down, a cry went up throughout the army, saying, "Every man should go back to his city; and every man should go back to his region!"

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[37]So King Ahab died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried him in Samaria.[38]They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood (this was where the prostitutes bathed), just as the word of Yahweh had declared.
[39]As for the other matters concerning Ahab, all that he did, the ivory house that he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[40]So Ahab lay down with his ancestors, and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

[41]Then Jehoshaphat son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.[42]Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.
[43]He walked in the ways of Asa, his father; he did not turn away from them; he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. Yet the high places were not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.
[44]Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

[45]As for the other matters concerning Jehoshaphat, and the might that he showed, and how he waged war, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[46]He completely removed from the land the rest of the cultic prostitutes who had remained in the days of his father Asa.[47]There was no king in Edom, but a deputy ruled there.
[48]Jehoshaphat built ships of Tarshish; they were to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go because the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber.[49]Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants sail with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat would not allow it.[50]Jehoshaphat lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David, his ancestor; Jehoram his son became king in his place.

[51]Ahaziah son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel.[52]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of his father, in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he led Israel to sin.[53]He served Baal and worshiped him and so he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.

1 Kings 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of Ahab and a continuation of the story of Elijah as he had predicted Ahab's death and the dogs licking his blood.

Special concepts in this chapter

When God has decided a person will die, then they cannot avoid death. Ahab persuaded Jehoshaphat, king of Judah to help him in a battle against the army of Aram. Ahab's false prophets all told him to go because he would be successful. But a randomly shot arrow hit him and he bled to death. They washed his chariot at the pool and the dogs licked up his blood, just as Elijah had said they would. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"However, the shrines were still not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense at the shrines." At the shrines, the people worshiped Yahweh. But later, during Hezekiah's reign it was decided that all sacrifices must be made only at the temple. (See: temple)

Links:

1 Kings 22:1 Notes

1 Kings 22:1

Three years

"3 years"

1 Kings 22:2

it came about that

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

1 Kings 22:3

Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is ours, but that we are doing nothing to take it from the hand of the king of Aram?

Ahab asks this question to emphasize that they should have already recaptured Ramoth Gilead. Alternate translation: "Ramoth Gilead is ours, but we have done nothing yet to take it from the hand of the king of Aram."

to take it from the hand of the king of Aram

Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "to take it from the control of the king of Aram"

1 Kings 22:4

I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses are like your horses

Jehoshaphat tells Ahab that he, his people, and his horses belong to Ahab, meaning that Ahab can command them as he pleases. Alternate translation: "I, my soldiers, and my horses are yours to use in any way you want"

1 Kings 22:6

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four hundred men
"400 men"
for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king
Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "for the Lord will allow the king to capture Ramoth Gilead"
1 Kings 22:8
May the king not say that
Jehoshaphat refers to Ahab in the third person to show respect for him. Alternate translation: "You should not say that"
1 Kings 22:11
made himself horns of iron
"made iron horns for himself"
With these you will push the Arameans until they are consumed
The prophet's actions are a symbolic metaphor that illustrates the way that Ahab would defeat the Arameans. Ahab's army will win with great strength, as a bull attacks another animal.
until they are consumed
Destroying an enemy army is spoken of as if it were consuming them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until you consume them" or "until you destroy them"
1 Kings 22:12
given it into the hand of the king
Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "allowed the king to capture it"
1 Kings 22:13
See now, the words
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: the words"
the words of the prophets declare good things to the king with one mouth
The prophets all saying the same thing is spoken of as if they all spoke with the same mouth. Alternate translation: "the prophets all declare the same good things to the king"
let your word be like one of them
Here the word "them" refers to "the words of the prophets." Alternate translation: "let what you say agree with what they have said"
1 Kings 22:15
should we go
The word "we" refers to Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and their armies but not to Micaiah.
will give it into the hand of the king
Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "will allow the king to capture it"
1 Kings 22:16
How many times must I require ... in the name of Yahweh?
Ahab asks this question out of frustration to rebuke Micaiah. Alternate translation: "Many times I have required ... in the name of Yahweh."
in the name of Yahweh
Here the word "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "as the representative of Yahweh"
1 Kings 22:17
I saw all Israel
Here "all Israel" refers to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "I saw the entire army of Israel"
like sheep who have no shepherd
The people of the army are compared to sheep that have no one to lead them because their shepherd, the king, has died.
These have no master
"These people no longer have a leader"
1 Kings 22:18
Did I not tell you ... but only disaster?
Ahab asks this question to emphasize that he had spoken the truth about Micaiah. Alternate translation: "I told you ... but only disaster!"
1 Kings 22:19
all the host of heaven were standing by him
"all the army of heaven was standing by him." Here "the host of heaven" refers to the living beings that God created in the heavens. Possible meanings are that they are called host 1) because they fight as armies. Alternate translation: "all the angel army of heaven was standing by him" or 2) because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "all the multitude of heaven was standing by him"
1 Kings 22:20
fall at Ramoth Gilead
Ahab dying in battle is spoken of as if he will fall. Alternate translation: "die at Ramoth Gilead"
One of them said ... and another one said
"One ... and another" refers to two or more angels in the heavenly host who were responding to Yahweh's question in the previous verse.
1 Kings 22:22
be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets
Here the word "spirit" refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words "the mouth" represents what they will say. Alternate translation: "cause all his prophets to speak lies"
1 Kings 22:23
see
"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours
Here the word "spirit" refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words "the mouth" represents what they will say. Alternate translation: "has caused all of your prophets to speak lies"
1 Kings 22:24
Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?
Zedekiah asks this sarcastic question to insult and rebuke Micaiah. Alternate translation: "Do not think that Yahweh's Spirit left me to speak to you!"
1 Kings 22:25
Look
"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
you will see
"you will know the answer to your question." If Zedekiah's rhetorical question is translated as a statement, this phrase may be translated to supply implicit information. Alternate translation: "you will know that the Spirit of Yahweh has spoken to me"
1 Kings 22:27

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feed him the bread of affliction and the water of affliction
"feed him the bread and water of affliction" or "give him the prisoners' small portions of bread and water." Ahab was telling his servants to punish and afflict Micaiah.
1 Kings 22:28
If you return safely, then Yahweh has not spoken by me
Micaiah knew that the king would not return safely because Yahweh had already told him that. So he said this to emphasize that. Alternate translation: "If you return safely, then that would mean that Yahweh has not spoken by me"
1 Kings 22:29
Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up
Here the kings represent themselves accompanied by their armies. Alternate translation: "Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah led their armies up"
1 Kings 22:30
disguise
This means to change the usual appearance so as not to be identified.
1 Kings 22:31
thirty-two captains
"32 captains"
Do not attack unimportant or important soldiers
By mentioning both "unimportant" and "important soldiers," the king meant all soldiers. Alternate translation: "Do not attack any of the soldiers"
1 Kings 22:32
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
1 Kings 22:34
drew his bow at random
Possible meanings are 1) he took aim to shoot a soldier without knowing that it was Ahab or 2) he drew his bow to shoot without any specific target in mind.
1 Kings 22:35
the king was held up in his chariot
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone held the king up in his chariot"
1 Kings 22:36
a cry went up
Here "a cry" represents the soldiers who were shouting. Alternate translation: "soldiers began to shout"
Every man should go back to his city; and every man should go back to his region
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.
1 Kings 22:37
was brought to Samaria
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his soldiers brought his body to Samaria"
they buried him
"people buried him"
1 Kings 22:38
just as the word of Yahweh had declared
Here "the word of Yahweh" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh had declared"
1 Kings 22:39
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 15:31]
1 Kings 22:40
lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10]
1 Kings 22:42
thirty-five years old
"35 years old"
twenty-five years
"25 years"
1 Kings 22:43
He walked in the ways of Asa, his father
A person's behavior is spoken of as if that person walked along a path. Alternate translation: "He did the same things that Asa, his father, had done"
what was right in the eyes of Yahweh
Here "eyes" represents seeing and Yahweh's opinion is spoken of as if he were able to see something. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be right"
the high places were not taken away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he did not take away the high places"
1 Kings 22:45
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 14:29]
1 Kings 22:48
the ships were wrecked
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the ships wrecked"
1 Kings 22:50
lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [1 Kings 2:10]
was buried with them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"
1 Kings 22:51
he reigned two years
"he reigned 2 years"
1 Kings 22:52
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
Yahweh's opinion regarding something is spoken of as if Yahweh were seeing that thing. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considered to be evil"
walked in the way of his father, in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat
A person's behavior is spoken of as if that person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "did the same things that his father, mother, and Jeroboam son of Nebat had done"
led Israel to sin
Here the word "Israel" refers to the ten northern tribes that made up the kingdom of Israel.

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1 Kings 22:53

He served Baal and worshiped him

The words "served" and "worshiped" mean basically the same thing.

the God of Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to all of the twelve tribes descended from Jacob.

Introduction to 2 Kings

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 2 Kings

The prophets Elijah and Elisha (1:1-8:15) Elijah brings Yahweh's judgment onto King Ahaziah (1:1–18) Elijah goes to heaven and Elisha replaces him (2:1–25) Elisha defends the northern kingdom against Moab (3:1–27) Elisha performs various miracles (4:1–44) Elisha heals Naaman the Syrian (5:1–27) Elisha acts in time of war against Syria (6:1–7:20) Elisha's reputation and prophecy about Hazael (8:1–15)

The history of Judah and Israel from Kings Jehoram and Joram to the fall of Israel (8:16–17:41) The history of Judah from King Hezekiah to the fall of Judah (18:1–25:30)

What are the Books of 1 and 2 Kings about?

These books are about what happened to the people of Israel, from the time of King Solomon to the time both the northern and southern kingdoms were destroyed. These books describe how Israel split into two kingdoms after Solomon died. It also tells about all the kings that ruled over each kingdom after Solomon died.

In the southern kingdom, some kings did what Yahweh judged to be right. For example, King Josiah repaired the temple and reformed the worship of Yahweh. He responded to the high priest finding a copy of the Law of Yahweh in Jerusalem (2 Kings 22–23). However, all of the kings of the northern kingdom were wicked.

The Assyrians destroyed the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. The Babylonians destroyed the southern kingdom in 586 B.C.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Books of 1 and 2 Kings were originally one book in Hebrew. They were separated into two books when translated into Greek. Translators might choose more meaningful titles such as "The First Book about the Kings" and "The Second Book about the Kings."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the purpose of 1 and 2 Kings?

These books were probably finished during the exile, after the Babylonians had destroyed the temple. They show how being faithful to Yahweh results in his blessing and prospering his people. Worshipping idols and not being faithful result in their being punished and destroyed.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why do the Books of 1 and 2 Kings refer to someone being addressed indirectly?

In the Bible, people often referred to themselves as "your servant" when speaking to anyone in a superior position to themselves. Indirectly addressing people in this way was intended to honor the one addressed. English sometimes uses the address "sir" in this way. But a translator should use whatever expressions that are natural in the project language in order to honor someone in a superior position.

What does the king "did what was right (or) evil in the eyes of Yahweh" mean?

The writer repeats this kind of expression throughout the Books of 1 and 2 Kings. Here "in the eyes of Yahweh" represents what Yahweh thinks about someone. If a king was faithful and obeyed the covenant, he did what was right according to Yahweh. If he was not faithful and disobeyed the covenant, he did what was evil according to Yahweh.

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: israel)

What does the phrase "to this day" mean?

This phrase was used by the narrator to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written," or, "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in 2 Kings 2:22; 8:22; 10:27; 14:7; 16:6; 17:23, 34, 41.

Can I translate 2 Kings before 1 Kings?

The Book of 1 Kings should be translated before 2 Kings, since 2 Kings continues from where 1 Kings ends.

2 Kings

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1 [1]Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.[2]Then Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber
in Samaria, and was injured. So he sent for messengers and said to them, "Go, ask Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron,
whether I will recover from this injury."
[3]But the angel of Yahweh said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?[4]Therefore Yahweh says, "You will not come down from the bed to where you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die."'" Then Elijah left.

[5]When the messengers returned to Ahaziah, he said to them, "Why have you returned?"[6]They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"'"
[7]Ahaziah said to his messengers, "What sort of man was he, the one who came up to meet you and said these words to you?"[8]They answered him, "He wore a garment made of hair and had a leather belt wrapped around his waist." So the king replied, "That is Elijah the Tishbite."

[9]Then the king sent a captain with fifty soldiers to Elijah. The captain went up to Elijah where he was sitting on the top of a hill. The captain spoke to him, "You, man of God, the king has said, 'Come down.'"[10]Elijah answered and said to the captain, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.
[11]Again King Ahaziah sent to Elijah another captain with fifty soldiers. This captain also said to Elijah, "You, man of God, the king says, 'Come down quickly.'"[12]Elijah answered and said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Again the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.
[13]Yet again the king sent a third group of fifty warriors. This captain went up, fell on his knees before Elijah, and sought his favor and said to him, "You, man of God, I ask you, let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.[14]Indeed, fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains with their men, but now let my life be precious in your sight."
[15]The angel of Yahweh said to Elijah, "Go down with him. Do not be afraid of him." So Elijah arose and went down with him to the king.[16]Later Elijah said to Ahaziah, "This is what Yahweh says, 'You have sent messengers to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron. Is it because there is no God in Israel from whom you can ask for information? So now, you will not come down from the bed where you have gone up; you will certainly die.'"

[17]So King Ahaziah died according to the word of Yahweh that Elijah had spoken. Joram began to reign in his place, in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son.[18]As for the other matters concerning Ahaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

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2 Kings 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

2 Kings is a continuation of 1 Kings.
The story of Elijah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's sovereignty
God is in control of the future. King Ahaziah sent messengers to ask the Philistine god if he would recover from his fall, but this god does not know the future. Because he asked another god instead of Yahweh, Elijah sent the messengers to tell Ahaziah that he would not recover. (See: falsegod)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question
Elijah rebuked the king with a rhetorical question: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron?"

Links:

2 Kings 1:1 Notes 2 Kings intro

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2 Kings 1:1
Moab rebelled

"The people who lived in Moab rebelled"
2 Kings 1:2

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the lattice in his upper chamber
The upper room was built on the roof of the palace. The lattice was made of thin boards decoratively crossed over one another to form a balcony or window covering. Alternate translation: "the wooden boards around the flat roof of his palace"
Baal-Zebub
2 Kings 1:3
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
the Tishbite
This refers to someone from the city of Tishbe.
Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?
This rhetorical question is asked as a rebuke for consulting Baal-Zebub. This may be written as a statement. This is irony because they are definitely aware of the God of Israel. Alternate translation: "You fools! You know there is a God in Israel, but you were acting as though you did not know when you sent men to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron!"
consult with Baal-Zebub
The word "consult" means to get the opinion of someone about a question.
2 Kings 1:4
Therefore Yahweh says
This is Yahweh's message to King Ahaziah. Alternate translation: "Therefore Yahweh says to King Ahaziah"
You will not come down from the bed to where you have gone up
When King Ahaziah was injured, he was placed in a bed. Yahweh said that he will never become well and be able to get out of the bed. Alternate translation: "You will not recover and you will not get up from the bed on which you are lying"
2 Kings 1:5
When the messengers returned to Ahaziah
After meeting with Elijah, the messengers returned to the king instead of going to Ekron.
2 Kings 1:6
Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?
This rhetorical question is asked as a rebuke for consulting Baal-Zebub. This may be written as a statement. This is irony because they are definitely aware of the God of Israel. See how you translated a similar question in [2 Kings 3:3]
you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up
When King Ahaziah was injured, he was placed in a bed. Yahweh said that he will never become well and be able to get out of the bed. See how you translated this statement in [2 Kings 3:4]
2 Kings 1:8
He wore a garment made of hair
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor that speaks of him being very hairy as if his hair were a garment. Alternate translation: "He was very hairy" or 2) "His clothes were made from animal hair"
2 Kings 1:9
Then the king sent a captain with fifty soldiers to Elijah
The king sent the leader of the army with fifty men to bring Elijah back to him. Alternate translation: "Then the king sent a captain with fifty soldiers to seize Elijah"
fifty soldiers
"50 soldiers"
2 Kings 1:10
If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven
The captain had called Elijah a man of God, but the captain and the king did not show Elijah proper respect. Elijah said this so that fire would come down from heaven, and this would prove that Elijah really was a man of God and he deserved their respect. Alternate translation: "Since I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven" or "If I am a man of God as you have said, let fire come down from heaven"
from heaven
"from the sky"
2 Kings 1:11
fifty soldiers
"50 soldiers"
2 Kings 1:12
If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven
The captain had called Elijah a man of God, but the captain and the king did not show Elijah proper respect. Elijah said this so that fire would come down from heaven, and this would prove that Elijah really was a man of God and he deserved their respect. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 1:10. Alternate translation: "Since I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven" or "If I am a man of God as you have said, let fire come down from heaven"
fire of God
This means that the fire came from God. Alternate translation: "fire from God"
2 Kings 1:13
fifty warriors
"50 warriors" or "50 soldiers"
sought his favor
"begged him"
these fifty servants of yours
The captain says that his servants are Elijah's servants to show him honor. Alternate translation: "my fifty soldiers"
let my life and the life of ... be precious in your sight
Here Elijah's "sight" represents him judgement or evaluation. The captain is pleading with Elijah to let them live. Alternate translation: "please consider my life and the life of ... as precious to you" or "consider my life and the life of ... to be of worth to you and do not kill us"
2 Kings 1:14
let my life be precious in your sight
Here Elijah's "sight" represents him judgement or evaluation. The captain is repeating his request for Elijah to show kindness to him and let him live. Alternate translation: "please be kind to me" or "please allow me to live"
2 Kings 1:16
Is it because there is no God in Israel from whom you can ask for information?
This rhetorical question is asked as a rebuke for consulting

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Baal-Zebub. This may be written as a statement. This is irony because the king is definitely aware of the God of Israel. Alternate translation: "You must think there is no God in Israel whom you may ask for information!" or "You fool! You know there is a God in Israel to consult, but you acted as if you did not know."

you will not come down from the bed where you have gone up

When King Ahaziah was injured, he was placed in a bed. Yahweh said that he will never become well and be able to get out of the bed. See how you translated this statement in [2 Kings 3:4]

2 Kings 1:17

the word of Yahweh that Elijah had spoken

"what Yahweh had told Elijah that Elijah had spoken"

in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah

This describes the time that Joram began to reign over Israel by stating how long Jehoram had been reigning over Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "in the second year that Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat was king of Judah"

2 Kings 1:18

are they not written ... Israel?

This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they are written ... Israel." or "someone has written about them in ... Israel."

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2 [1]So it came about, when Yahweh was going to take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah left with Elisha from Gilgal.[2]Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, because Yahweh has sent me to Bethel." Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.
[3]The sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha replied, "Yes, I know it, but do not talk about it."[4]Elijah said to him, "Elisha, wait here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to Jericho." Then Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho.
[5]Then the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha answered, "Yes, I know it, but do not talk about it."[6]Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to the Jordan." Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So the two went on.
[7]Later, fifty of the sons of the prophets stood opposite them at a distance while the two stood by the Jordan.[8]Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The river divided on both sides so that the two of them walked over on dry ground.
[9]It came about, after they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask me what I should do for you before I am taken from you." Elisha replied, "Please let a double portion of your spirit come on me."[10]Elijah answered, "You have asked for a difficult thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, this will happen for you, but if not, it will not happen."
[11]As they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared, which separated the two men from each other, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.[12]Elisha saw it and cried out, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!"He saw Elijah no more, and he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces.
[13]He picked up Elijah's cloak that had fallen off him, and went back to stand by the bank of the Jordan.[14]He struck the water with Elijah's cloak that had fallen and said, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the waters, they divided on both sides and Elisha crossed over.

[15]When the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him across from them, they said, "The spirit of Elijah does rest on Elisha!" So they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.[16]They said to him, "See now, among your servants there are fifty strong men. Let them go, we ask, and look for your master, in case the Spirit of Yahweh has taken him up and thrown him onto some mountain or into some valley." Elisha answered, "No, do not send them."
[17]But when they urged Elisha until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." Then they sent fifty men, and they looked for three days, but did not find him.[18]They came back to Elisha, while he stayed at Jericho, and he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

[19]The men of the city said to Elisha, "See now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my master can see, but the water is bad and the land is not fruitful."[20]Elisha replied, "Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it," so they brought it to him.
[21]Elisha went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it; then he said, "Yahweh says this, 'I have healed these waters. From this time on, there will be no more death or unfruitful land.'"[22]So the waters were healed to this day, by the word which Elisha spoke.

[23]Then Elisha went up from there to Bethel. As he was going up the road, young boys came out of the city and mocked him; they said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!"[24]Elisha looked behind him and saw them; he cursed them in the name of Yahweh. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys apart.[25]Then Elisha went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

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2 Kings 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter ends the story of Elijah and begins the story of Elisha.

Special concepts in this chapter

Elisha replaces Elijah as the chief prophet of God. (See: prophet)

Links:

2 Kings 2:1 Notes

2 Kings 2:1

So it came about

"So it happened." This phrase is used to introduce the next event in the story.

a whirlwind

a strong wind that spins around and around

2 Kings 2:2

As Yahweh lives, and as you live

"As surely as Yahweh lives and as you live." Here Elisha compares the certainty that Yahweh and Elijah are alive to the certainty of what he is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise you that"

2 Kings 2:3

The sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. Alternate translation: "A group of men who were prophets"

2 Kings 2:4

As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you

"As surely as Yahweh lives and as you live, I will not leave you." Here Elisha compares the certainty that Yahweh and Elijah are alive to the certainty of what he is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:2]

2 Kings 2:5

Then the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him

"When Elijah and Elisha came near Jericho, the sons of the prophets who were from there said to Elisha"

the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

2 Kings 2:6

As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you

"As surely as Yahweh lives and as you live, I will not leave you." Here Elisha compares the certainty that Yahweh and Elijah are alive to the certainty of what he is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:2]

2 Kings 2:7

fifty of the sons

"50 of the sons"

the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

stood opposite them

This means that they were standing, facing them. Alternate translation: "stood facing them" or "stood watching them"

2 Kings 2:8

cloak

outer piece of clothing used as a covering

The river divided on both sides so that the two of them walked over on dry ground

"The water of the Jordan River opened up so there was a dry path for Elijah and Elisha to cross over to the other side"

on both sides

"to the right and the left." This refers to the right and the left of where Elijah struck the water.

2 Kings 2:9

It came about

"it happened"

crossed over

This refers to crossing the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "crossed over the Jordan River"

before I am taken from you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before Yahweh takes me from you"

a double portion of your spirit

Here Elijah's spirit refers to his spiritual power. Alternate translation: "twice as much of your spiritual power"

2 Kings 2:11

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

a chariot of fire and horses of fire

Here the phrase "of fire" means that these were surround by fire. Alternate translation: "a chariot surrounded by fire pulled by horses surrounded by fire"

went up by a whirlwind into heaven

"was carried into the sky by a whirlwind." Translate the word "whirlwind" the same as you did in 2 Kings 2:1.

2 Kings 2:12

My father, my father

Elisha is calling Elijah his respected leader.

tore them into two pieces

People would often tear their clothes as a sign of great sadness or grief. Alternate translation: "ripped them in two pieces to show his great sadness"

2 Kings 2:13

cloak

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The cloak was the outer clothing of a prophet. It was the sign of his job. When Elisha took Elijah's cloak he was saying he was taking Elijah's place as prophet.

2 Kings 2:14

Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?

Elisha is asking if Yahweh is with him as he was with Elijah. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, the God of Elijah, are you here with me?"

they divided on both sides and Elisha crossed over

The river separated and Elisha walked to the other side on dry ground, the same way he did previously when he was with Elijah.

on both sides

"to the right and the left." This refers to the right and the left of where Elijah struck the water.

2 Kings 2:15

the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

bowed themselves to the ground before him

They are showing him deep respect and acknowledging him as their new leader.

The spirit of Elijah does rest on Elisha

Here Elijah's "spirit" refers to his spiritual power. This speaks of Elisha having this spiritual power as if it were something that physically rested upon him. Alternate translation: "Elisha does have the same spiritual power that Elijah did" or "The spiritual power Elijah had is now with Elisha"

2 Kings 2:16

See now, among your servants there are fifty strong men. Let them go

These men are referring to themselves when they say "fifty strong men." Alternate translation: "See now, we are fifty strong men and we are now your servants. Let us go"

See now, among

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: among"

fifty strong men

"50 strong men"

2 Kings 2:17

But when they urged Elisha until he was ashamed

The sons of the prophets kept asking Elisha until he felt bad about saying "no." Alternate translation: "They kept asking Elisha until he felt bad for denying their request, so"

2 Kings 2:18

Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he had told them previously what would happen. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I told you that you should not go, because you would not find him!"

2 Kings 2:19

The men of the city

"The leaders of the city"

See now, the situation

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: the situation" See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 2:16.

the situation of this city is pleasant

This means that the city is located in a good place. Alternate translation: "this city is in a good place" or "this city is in a good location"

as my master can see

The men refer to Elisha here as "my master" to honor him.

fruitful

producing good crops

2 Kings 2:21

healed these waters

This speaks of Yahweh making the bad water pure as if he healed it. Alternate translation: "made the waters pure"

there will be no more death or unfruitful land

This also can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "everyone will live and all the land will be fruitful"

2 Kings 2:22

the waters were healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the waters have remained pure"

to this day, ... spoke

This means that something remains in a certain condition until the present time. Alternate translation: "by the word which Elisha spoke, and have always remained pure since"

2 Kings 2:23

went up from there to Bethel

The phrase "went up" is used her because Bethel is higher in elevation than Jericho.

Go up

The young boys wanted Elisha to go away from them and expressed this by saying "go up." Alternate translation: "Go away"

baldhead

A bald person does not have any hair on their head. The young boys were mocking Elisha for having a bald head.

2 Kings 2:24

forty-two of the boys

"42 of the boys"

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3 [1]Now in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Joram son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twelve years.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, but not like his father and his mother; for he removed the sacred stone pillar of Baal that his father had made.[3]Nevertheless he held on to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; he did not turn away from them.

[4]Now Mesha king of Moab bred sheep. He had to give to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. [5]But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.[6]So King Joram left Samaria at that time to mobilize all Israel for war.

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[7]He sent a message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me against Moab to battle?" Jehoshaphat replied, "I will go. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses."[8]Then he said, "By which way should we attack?" Jehoshaphat answered, "By way of the wilderness of Edom."
[9]So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. They wandered around for seven days, and then there was no water for the army or for the animals that went with them.[10]So the king of Israel said, "What is this? Has Yahweh called three kings to give them into the hand of Moab?"
[11]But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of Yahweh, that we may consult Yahweh by him?" One of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah."[12]Jehoshaphat said, "The word of Yahweh is with him." So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.

[13]Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and mother." So the king of Israel said to him, "No, because Yahweh has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab."[14]Elisha replied, "As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, if I did not honor the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you, or even look at you.
[15]But now bring me a musician." Then it came to pass when the harpist played, the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha.[16]He said, "Yahweh says this, 'Make this dry river valley full of trenches.'[17]For Yahweh says this, 'You will not see wind, neither will you see rain, but this river valley will be filled with water, and you will drink, you and your livestock and all your animals.'
[18]This is an easy thing in the sight of Yahweh. He will also give you victory over the Moabites.[19]You will attack every fortified city and every good city, cut down every good tree, stop up all springs of water, and ruin every good piece of land with rocks."
[20]So in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, waters came from the direction of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

[21]Now when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come to fight against them, they summoned everyone who was old enough to gird on armor and older, and they stood at the border.[22]They awakened early in the morning and the sun reflected on the water. When the Moabites saw the water opposite them, it looked as red as blood.[23]They exclaimed, "This is blood! The kings have certainly been destroyed, and they have killed each other! So now, Moab, let us go plunder them!"
[24]When they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, who fled before them. The army of Israel drove the Moabites across the land, killing them.[25]They destroyed the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a rock until it was covered up. They stopped up every spring of water and chopped down all the good trees. Only Kir Hareseth was left with its rocks in place. But the soldiers armed with slings surrounded and attacked it.
[26]When King Mesha of Moab saw that the battle was lost, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed.[27]Then he took his oldest son, who should have reigned after him, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall. So there was great anger against Israel, and the Israelite army left King Mesha and returned to their own land.

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2 Kings 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elisha continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Victory and defeat

God is in control of victory and defeat. The armies of Israel, Judah and Edom united to attack Moab from the desert for failure to pay tribute. When they ran out of water, they were in desperate condition. Therefore, they asked Elisha (the prophet of God) what to do and he said God would give them water and victory over Moab. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

They described Elisha with the idiom, "who poured water on the hands of Elijah," meaning "who served Elijah."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Anger

It is said that, "Anger came on Israel." It is not clear who was angry or why they were angry.

Links:

2 Kings 3:1 Notes

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2 Kings 3:1

in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah

This describes the time that Joram began to reign by stating how long the current king of Judah had reigned. The meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "in the eighteenth year that Jehoshaphat was king of Judah"

the eighteenth year

"year 18"

Joram son of Ahab

Sometimes this man is referred to as "Jehoram." This is not the same person as the man mentioned in 2 Kings 1:17 named "Jehoram."

2 Kings 3:2

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here "sight" refers to Yahweh's thoughts or opinion. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh considers to be evil" or "what is evil in Yahweh's judgement"

but not like his father and his mother

This compares how much evil he did to being less that the amount that his parents did. Alternate translation: "but he did not do as much evil as his father and mother had done"

the sacred stone pillar of Baal

This pillar was used in the worship of Baal, though it is unknown what the pillar looked like. Alternate translation: "the sacred stone pillar for worshiping Baal"

2 Kings 3:3

he held on to the sins

This is an idiom. Here "holding on" to something means to continue doing it. Alternate translation: "he continued to commit the sins"

Nebat

This is the name of a man.

he did not turn away from them

"Turning away" from something is an idiom which means to stop doing it. Alternate translation: "he did not stop committing those sins" or "he continued committing those sins"

2 Kings 3:4

He had to give to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams

Mesha had to give these things to the king of Israel because his kingdom was controlled by the king of Israel. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Every year he was forced to give 100,000 lambs and the wool from 100,000 rams to the king of Israel, because his kingdom was controlled by the king of Israel"

100,000 lambs ... 100,000 rams

"one hundred thousand lambs ... one hundred thousand rams"

2 Kings 3:6

to mobilize all Israel for war

"to prepare the people of Israel for war." Here "all Israel" refers to all of the Israelite soldiers. Alternate translation: "to mobilize all of the Israelite soldiers for war"

2 Kings 3:7

General Information:

King Joram continues speaking to King Jehoshaphat.

Will you go with me against Moab to battle?

The word "you" refers to Jehoshaphat, but refers to both him and his army. Here "Moab" stands for "the army of Moab." Alternate translation: "Will you and your army go with me to fight against the army of Moab?"

I will go

Jehoshaphat is saying that he and his entire army will fight with King Joram against Moab. Alternate translation: "We will go with you"

I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses

Jehoshaphat is letting Joram use himself, his people, and his horses for his purposes. He speaks of this as if they belonged to Joram. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "We are ready to do whatever you want us to. My soldiers and my horses are ready to help you"

2 Kings 3:8

By way of the wilderness of Edom

"By going through the wilderness of Edom"

2 Kings 3:9

the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom

This refers to the kings accompanied by their armies. Alternate translation: "the king of Israel and his army went with the king of Judah and his army and the king of Edom and his army"

They wandered around

Possible meanings are 1) the kings were not sure where they were going, and so they changed direction often or 2) the kings knew where they were going and they walked around Moab (2 Kings 3:8).

2 Kings 3:10

What is this? Has Yahweh called three kings to give them into the hand of Moab?

The king uses a rhetorical question to emphasize how ridiculous and terrible their situation is. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It looks like Yahweh will allow all three of us to be captured by Moab!"

to give them into the hand of Moab

Here "Moab" refers to its army. Also, "the hand of Moab" refers to the "control" of Moab's army. Alternate translation: "to give us over to Moab's control" or "so the army of Moab will defeat us"

2 Kings 3:11

Is there not here a prophet of Yahweh, that we may consult Yahweh by him?

Jehoshaphat uses a rhetorical question here to state that he is certain that there is a prophet there and to find out where he is. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am sure there is a prophet of Yahweh here! Tell me where one is, so we may consult Yahweh by him."

Shaphat

This is the name of a man.

who poured water on the hands of Elijah

This idiom means that he was Elijah's helper. The phrase "poured water on the hands" is a description of one of the ways he served Elijah. Alternate translation: "who was a helper to Elijah"

2 Kings 3:12

The word of Yahweh is with him

This means that he is a prophet and that Yahweh tells him

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what to say. Alternate translation: "He speaks what Yahweh tells him to say"

went down to him

They went to see Elijah and to consult with him about what they should do. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "went to see Elisha to ask him what they should do"

2 Kings 3:13

What have I to do with you?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he and the king have nothing in common. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have nothing to do with you." or "I have nothing in common with you."

to give them into the hand of Moab

Here the "hand of Moab" refers the Moab's "control." Alternate translation: "to give them over to the control of Moab" or "to allow them to be captured by the Moabite army"

2 Kings 3:14

As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, if I ... look at you

"As I know that Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, if I ... look at you." Here Elisha compares the certainty that Yahweh is alive to the certainty that, if it were not for Jehoshaphat being there, he would not pay attention to Joram. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "As surely as Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I promise you, if I ... look at you"

before whom I stand

Here serving Yahweh is spoken of as standing in his presence. Alternate translation: "whom I serve"

if I did not honor the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you

Elisha described a situation that was not real. He really did honor the presence of the king of Judah, so he paid attention to the king of Israel. It can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "it is only because I honor the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah that I pay attention to you"

I did not honor the presence of Jehoshaphat

Here Jehoshaphat is referred to by his presence. Alternate translation: "I honor Jehoshaphat"

I would not pay any attention to you, or even look at you

These two phrases have similar meaning and are used together to emphasize that he would not pay any attention to Joram. Alternate translation: "I would not have anything at all to do with you"

2 Kings 3:15

Then it came to pass

"And it happened that"

harpist

someone who plays the harp

the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha

Here Yahweh's "hand" refers to his "power." Alternate translation: "the power of Yahweh came upon Elisha"

2 Kings 3:16

trenches

A trench is a long ditch that workers dig in the ground to collect water.

2 Kings 3:17

this river valley will be filled with water

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will fill this river valley with water"

you will drink

This refers to drinking the water that Yahweh provides. Alternate translation: "you will drink the water"

2 Kings 3:18

This is an easy thing in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "Yahweh considers this as an easy thing to do" or "This is an easy thing for Yahweh to do"

2 Kings 3:19

fortified city

A fortified city is well protected from enemies by such things as high walls or a easily defensible location.

ruin every good piece of land with rocks

This means to put rocks on the fertile land so that it is difficult to use. The meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "ruin every good piece of land by covering them with rocks"

2 Kings 3:20

the country was filled with water

"and soon the country became filled with water"

country

land, ground

2 Kings 3:21

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells background information about the Moabite army preparing to meet the three kings and their armies in battle.

everyone who was old enough to gird on armor

Here "armor" represents ability to fight. Alternate translation: "all the men who were able to fight"

the kings had come

Here the word "kings" refers to both the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: "the kings had come with their armies" or "the kings and their armies had come"

2 Kings 3:22

it looked as red as blood

This compares the red appearance of the water to the color of blood. Alternate translation: "it was red like blood"

2 Kings 3:23

So now, Moab

The soldiers are referring to themselves here as "Moab." Alternate translation: "soldiers of Moab"

plunder them

"steal their belongings." After an army defeated their enemies, they would often plunder their towns by stealing whatever was left of value.

2 Kings 3:24

camp of Israel

Here "Israel" refers only to the Israelite soldiers and not to the whole nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "the area where the Israelite soldiers had set up their tents"

Israel rose up

Here "Israel" refers only to the Israelite soldiers and not to

the whole nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelite soldiers rose up"

rose up

began to act purposefully

fled before them

"ran away from them"

2 Kings 3:25

Kir Hareseth

This is the capital of Moab.

was left with its rocks in place

The walls and buildings of the city were made of stones. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "still had its stone walls and buildings in place"

with slings

A "sling" is piece of animal skin with long cords at both ends in which a person can put a stone or other small, hard object and throw it a long distance.

2 Kings 3:26

King Mesha

Translate the name of this king the same as you did in 2 Kings 3:4.

that the battle was lost

"that his army was being defeated"

seven hundred swordsmen

"700 swordsmen"

swordsmen

soldiers who fight with swords

break through

"force their way through." There were many soldiers fighting on the battlefield which made it difficult to move though the crowd.

2 Kings 3:27

offered him as a burnt offering

King Mesha burned his son with fire until he died. He did this as an offering to Chemosh, the false god of Moab. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

So there was great anger against Israel

Here the word "anger" can be expressed as a verb. There are two possibilities for who is angry here: 1) The Moabite soldiers. Alternate translation: "So the Moabite soldiers were very angry with Israel" or 2) God. Alternate translation: "So God was very angry with Israel"

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4 [1]Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets came crying to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared Yahweh. Now the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."[2]So Elisha said to her, "What can I do for you? Tell me what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house, except a pot of oil."
[3]Then Elisha said, "Go out to borrow jars from your neighbors, empty jars. Borrow as many as possible.[4]Then you must go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all those jars; set aside the jars that are full."
[5]So she left Elisha and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her, and she filled them with oil.
[6]When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another jar." But he said to her, "There are no more jars." Then the oil stopped flowing.
[7]Then she came and told the man of God. He said, "Go, sell the oil; pay your debt, and live with your sons on the rest."

[8]One day Elisha walked to Shunem where an important woman lived; she urged him to eat food with her. So as often as Elisha passed by, he would stop there to eat.[9]The woman said to her husband, "See now, I realize that this is a holy man of God who is always passing by.
[10]Let us make a little room on the roof for Elisha, and let us put in it a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp. Then when he comes to us, he will stay there."[11]So when the day came again that Elisha stopped there, he stayed in the room and rested there.
[12]Elisha said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him.[13]Elisha said to him, "Say to her, 'You have gone to all this trouble to care for us. What can be done for you? Can we speak for you to the king or to the army commander?'" She answered, "I live among my own people."
[14]So Elisha said, "What can we do for her, then?" Gehazi answered, "Indeed, she has no son, and her husband is old."[15]So Elisha answered, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the door.[16]Elisha said, "At this time of year, in one year's time, you will be holding a son." She said, "No, my master and man of God, do not lie to your servant."

[17]But the woman conceived and gave birth to a son at the same time in the following year, as Elisha had said to her.
[18]When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father, who was with harvesters.[19]He said to his father, "My head, my head." His father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother."[20]When the servant had picked him up and brought the boy to his mother, the child sat on her knees until noon and then died.
[21]So the woman got up and laid the boy on the bed of the man of God, shut the door, and went out.[22]She called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys so that I may hurry to the man of God and then come back."
[23]Her husband said, "Why do you want to go to him today? It is not a new moon nor a Sabbath." She replied, "It will be all right."[24]Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, "Drive on quickly; do not slow down for me unless I say so."
[25]So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.So when the man of God saw her in the distance, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, here comes the Shunammite woman.
[26]Please run to meet her and say to her, 'Is everything alright with you and with your husband and child?'" She answered, "It is all right."

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[27]When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi came near to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for she is very upset, and Yahweh has hidden the problem from me, and has told me nothing."
[28]Then she said, "Did I ask you for a son, my master? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"[29]Then Elisha said to Gehazi, "Gird your loins and take my staff in your hand. Go to her home. If you meet any man, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. Lay my staff on the young man's face."
[30]But the mother of the young man said, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So Elisha arose and followed her.[31]Gehazi hurried on ahead of them and laid the staff on the young man's face, but the young man did not speak or hear. So then Gehazi returned to meet Elisha and told him saying, "The young man has not awakened."

[32]When Elisha arrived at the house, the young man was dead and was still on the bed.[33]So Elisha went in and shut the door on the two of them and prayed to Yahweh.[34]He went up and lay on the child; he put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. He stretched himself out on the boy, and the boy's body grew warm.
[35]Then Elisha got up and walked around the room and again went up and stretched himself out on the boy. The child sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes![36]So Elisha called Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite!" So he called her, and when she came into the room, Elisha said, "Pick up your son."[37]Then she lay facedown on the ground at his feet and bowed to the ground, and then picked up her son and went out.

[38]Then Elisha came again to Gilgal. There was famine in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. He said to his servant, "Put the large pot on the fire and cook stew for the sons of the prophets."[39]One of them went out into a field to gather vegetables. He found a wild vine and gathered enough wild gourds to fill the fold of his robe. They cut them up and put them into the stew, but did not know what kind they were.
[40]So they poured out the stew for the men to eat. Later, as they were eating, they cried out and said, "Man of God, there is death in the pot!" So they could not eat it anymore.[41]But Elisha said, "Bring some flour." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it out for the people, so that they may eat." Then there was no longer anything hurtful in the pot.

[42]A man came from Baal Shalishah to the man of God and brought twenty loaves of barley bread in his sack from the firstfruits and fresh ears of grain. He said, "Give this to the people so they can eat."[43]His servant said, "What, should I set this before a hundred men?" But Elisha said, "Give this to the people, so they can eat, because Yahweh says, 'They will eat and will have some left.'"[44]So his servant set it before them; they ate, and left some remaining, just as the word of Yahweh promised.

2 Kings 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Elisha continues with a group of stories about the miracles Elisha did. (See: 2 Kings 4-6 and miracle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Widow

Elisha helps a widow financially, and he correctly prophesies that a barren woman would conceive and have a baby by the next year. Later, when that child dies, Elisha miraculously causes him to come back to life. Also, Elisha causes a poisonous food to no longer be harmful, and he miraculously feeds 100 people with only 20 loaves of bread.

Links:

2 Kings 4:1 Notes

2 Kings 4:1

the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

Your servant my husband

"My husband, who was your servant"

creditor

person who lends other people money

2 Kings 4:2

Your servant has nothing

The woman refers to herself as Elisha's servant to show him honor.

nothing in the house, except a pot of oil

This is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "nothing of value in the house except a pot of oil"

2 Kings 4:4

you must go inside

This means to go inside their house. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "you must go inside your house"

2 Kings 4:6

the vessels

"the jars"

2 Kings 4:7

the man of God

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This refers to Elisha. Alternate translation: "Elisha, the man of God"

live with your sons on the rest

This is an idiom. It means to use the money to buy the things that they need, such as food and clothing. Alternate translation: "use the rest of the money for you and your sons for what you need to live"

2 Kings 4:8

Shunem

This is the name of a city.

she urged him to eat food with her

This means that she asked him to stop and have a meal at her house. Alternate translation: "she asked him to come to her house to have a meal"

passed by

"traveled through Shunem"

2 Kings 4:9

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 2:16.

who is always passing by

"who travels by regularly"

2 Kings 4:10

General Information:

The important woman continues talking to her husband about Elisha.

Let us

Here "us" refers to the important woman and her husband.

2 Kings 4:12

Gehazi

This is the name of a man.

Call this Shunammite

"Call the Shunammite woman." This refers to the woman from Shunem that Elisha was staying with.

2 Kings 4:13

You have gone to all this trouble to care for us

The phrase "gone to all this trouble" is an idiom that means to make great effort to do something. Alternate translation: "You have made a great effort to care for us" or "You have worked very hard to take care of us"

What can be done for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What can we do for you"

Can we speak for you

Here Elisha is asking if she would like for him to speak to the king or army commander to make a request for her. The implicit meaning of this question can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Can we make a request for you"

I live among my own people

The woman is implying that she does not need anything because her family cares for her needs. Alternate translation: "I live surrounded by my family, and because they take care of me, I have no needs"

2 Kings 4:15

Call her

"Ask her to come to see me"

When he had called her

"When Gehazi had called her"

the door

This refers to the doorway. Alternate translation: "the doorway"

2 Kings 4:16

a son

"your son"

my master and man of God

The woman uses both of these names to refer to Elisha.

your servant

The woman refers to herself as Elisha's servant to show him honor.

2 Kings 4:17

at the same time in the following year

"during the same season the next year"

2 Kings 4:18

When the child had grown

"When the child was older"

2 Kings 4:19

My head, my head.

The child said this because his head hurt. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "My head hurts! My head hurts!"

2 Kings 4:20

the child sat on her knees until noon and then died

Here the woman's knees refer to her lap. She held her son in her lap until he died. Alternate translation: "she held him on her lap until noon and then he died"

2 Kings 4:21

on the bed of the man of God

This was the bed in the room she had prepared for Elisha when he traveled through Shunem.

the man of God

"Elisha, the man of God"

2 Kings 4:22

that I may hurry to the man of God and then come back

The woman told her husband she was going to see Elisha but she did not say that she was going because their son had died. This implicit information may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that I may hurry to the man of God and then come back.' But she did not tell her husband that their son had died"

2 Kings 4:23

It will be all right

"It is well" or "Everything is fine." The woman states this, knowing that the situation will be as it should be if her husband does as she requests. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Everything will be all right if you do as I ask"

2 Kings 4:24

she saddled a donkey

The woman did not saddle the donkey, rather the servant would have saddled it for her. Alternate translation: "she had her servant saddle a donkey"

2 Kings 4:25

So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel

"So she traveled toward Mount Carmel where Elisha, the man of God, was"

So when the man of God saw her in the distance

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"While she was still far off, and Elisha saw her coming"

2 Kings 4:26

It is all right

"It is well" or "Yes, everything is fine." The woman is saying that the situation is as it should be, but only because she does not want Gehazi to be involved. She wants to speak only with Elisha. See how you translated "all right" in 2 Kings 4:23.

2 Kings 4:27

the mountain

"Mount Carmel"

she caught hold of his feet

This implies that she knelt or lay on the ground in front of him and grabbed his feet. Alternate translation: "she dropped down on the ground in front of him and put her hands around his feet"

Yahweh has hidden the problem from me, and has told me nothing

Elisha can see that the woman is upset but Yahweh has not revealed to him the cause of her problem.

2 Kings 4:28

Did I ask you for a son, my master? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?

The woman uses these rhetorical questions to show that she is upset about what has happened. She is speaking about her conversation with Elisha when he told her that she was going to have a son. These questions may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I did not ask you to give me a son, but I did ask you not to lie to me!"

2 Kings 4:29

Gird your loins

"Get ready to travel"

If you meet any man, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him

Elisha wanted Gehazi to travel as quickly as possible, without even stopping to talk to anyone.

2 Kings 4:30

As Yahweh lives, and as you live

"As surely as Yahweh lives and as you live." This shows that the mother is taking an oath. The mother compares the certainty that Yahweh and Elisha are alive to the certainty of what she is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise that"

2 Kings 4:31

the young man did not speak or hear

This means that the child was not alive. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "but the young man did not show any signs of being alive"

has not awakened

Here being dead is spoken of as being asleep. Alternate translation: "is still dead"

2 Kings 4:33

So Elisha went in and shut the door on the two of them and

"So Elisha went by himself into the room where the child lay, closed the door, and"

2 Kings 4:35

stretched himself out on the boy

"lay on top of the boy again"

2 Kings 4:36

the Shunammite

"the Shunammite woman"

2 Kings 4:37

Then she lay facedown on the ground at his feet and bowed to the ground

The woman bowed down before Elisha as a sign of great respect and appreciation. Alternate translation: "Then she bowed in front of Elisha with her face to the ground to show him her gratitude"

2 Kings 4:38

the sons of the prophets

This is an idiom. It does not mean that they were actually the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

stew

This is a dish that is usually made of meat and vegetables cooked in a pot with liquid.

2 Kings 4:39

wild gourds

These vegetables were growing wild, meaning someone had not planted them.

fill the fold of his robe

He lifted the bottom edge of his robe up to his waist to make a place to carry more gourds than he could carry with his hands only.

but did not know what kind they were

Since they did not know what kind of gourds they were they did not know whether or not they were safe to eat. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but did not know if they were good or bad to eat"

2 Kings 4:40

they poured out the stew

"they poured the stew into bowls"

there is death in the pot

This means that there was something in the pot that could kill them, not that there is something dead in the pot. Alternate translation: "there is something in the pot that will kill us"

2 Kings 4:41

He threw it into the pot

"He added it to the stew in the pot"

Pour it out for the people

"Serve it to the people"

2 Kings 4:42

Baal Shalishah

This is the name of a city.

twenty loaves

"20 loaves"

from the firstfruits

made from the firstfruits of his grain from the new harvest

fresh ears of grain

"fresh heads of grain." This refers to grain from the new harvest.

2 Kings 4:43

What, should I set this before a hundred men?

The man uses this rhetorical question to imply that this is not enough bread to feed 100 men. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "That is not enough to feed a hundred men!"

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a hundred men
"100 men"
2 Kings 4:44
the word of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is referred to by what he said. This phrase is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh"

5 [1]Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great and honorable man in his master's view, because by him Yahweh had given victory to Aram. He was also a mighty warrior, but he was a leper.[2]The Arameans had gone out in raiding parties and had captured a little girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife.
[3]The girl said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would heal my master of his leprosy."[4]So Naaman went in and told the king what the little girl from the land of Israel had said.
[5]So the king of Aram said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." Naaman left and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothes.[6]He also took the letter to the king of Israel that said, "Now when this letter is brought to you, you will see that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, so that you may cure him of his leprosy."
[7]When the king of Israel had read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man wants me to cure a man of his leprosy? It seems he is seeking to start an argument with me."

[8]So when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent word to the king saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."[9]So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house.[10]Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and dip yourself into the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored; you will be clean."
[11]But Naaman was angry and went away and said, "Look, I thought he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of Yahweh his God, and wave his hand over the place and heal my leprosy.[12]Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.
[13]Then Naaman's servants came near and spoke to him, "My father, if the prophet had commanded you do some difficult thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he says to you, 'Dip yourself and be clean'?"[14]Then he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, obeying the instructions of the man of God. His flesh was restored again like the flesh of a little child, and he was healed.

[15]Naaman returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him. He said, "See now, I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. So therefore, please take a gift from your servant."[16]But Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." Naaman urged Elisha to take a gift, but he refused.
[17]So Naaman said, "If not, then I ask you to let there be given to your servant two mule loads of earth, for from now on, your servant will offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to any god but Yahweh.[18]In this one thing may Yahweh pardon your servant, that is, when my king goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, may Yahweh pardon your servant in this matter."[19]Elisha said to him, "Go in peace." So Naaman left.

[20]He had traveled only a short distance, when Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said to himself, "Look, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean by not receiving from his hands gifts that he brought. As Yahweh lives, I will run after him and receive something from him."[21]So Gehazi followed after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he jumped down from his chariot to meet him and said, "Is everything all right?"[22]Gehazi said, "Everything is all right. My master has sent me, saying, 'See, now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'"
[23]Naaman replied, "I am very happy to give you two talents." Naaman urged Gehazi and tied two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothes, and laid them on two of his servants, who carried the bags of silver before Gehazi.
[24]When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the bags of silver from their hands and hid them in the house; he sent the men away, and they left.[25]When Gehazi went in and stood before his master, Elisha said to him, "Where have you come from, Gehazi?" He answered, "Your servant went nowhere."
[26]Elisha said to Gehazi, "Was not my spirit with you when the man turned his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to accept money and clothes, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants?[27]So the leprosy of Naaman will be on you and your descendants forever." So Gehazi went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.

2 Kings 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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The stories of Elisha's miracles continue in this chapter. (See: miracle)

Links:

2 Kings 5:1 Notes

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2 Kings 5:1

in his master's view

"sight." The king's "view" represents what he thinks about something. Alternate translation: "in the king's opinion"

because by him Yahweh had given victory to Aram

Here "Aram" refers to the Aramean army. Alternate translation: "because through Naaman, Yahweh had given victory to the Aramean army"

2 Kings 5:2

The Arameans had gone out

Here the "Arameans" refer to the Aramean soldiers.

in raiding parties

"in small groups attacking." This means to go out attacking an enemy in small groups.

2 Kings 5:3

The girl said to her mistress

The girl from Israel, who had been captured by the Aramean soldiers, spoke to Naaman's wife.

my master

Here "my master" refers to Naaman.

2 Kings 5:5

I will send a letter

The king is going to give the letter to Naaman to take with him to the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "I will send a letter with you"

ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold

"10 talents of silver, 6,000 pieces of gold." This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "330 kilograms of sliver, 6,000 pieces of gold"

took with him ten ... clothes

This were gifts from the king of Aram for the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "took with him ten ... clothes, which were gifts for the king of Israel"

2 Kings 5:7

he tore his clothes

Often people would rip their clothes if they were in great distress. Alternate translation: "he ripped his clothes to show his distress"

Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man wants me to cure a man of his leprosy?

The king uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that the request of the king of Aram is outrageous and something he cannot do. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The king of Aram must think I am some sort of God, with the power over death and life! He wants me to cure this man of his leprosy, but I cannot do that."

It seems he is seeking to start an argument with me

The king of Israel did not believe the request to heal Naamam was the real reason for the letter. He thought the real reason was to start a fight. Alternate translation: "It seems he is looking for an excuse to start a fight with me"

2 Kings 5:8

General Information:

Elisha talks to the King of Israel about Naaman.

Why have you torn your clothes?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to emphasize to the king that he does not need to be distressed and tear his clothes. Alternate translation: "There is no need to be distressed and tear your clothes."

2 Kings 5:10

your flesh will be restored

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "your flesh will be well"

you will be clean

this means that he will no longer be unclean. A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. God considers a person who has leprosy as being defiled and unclean.

2 Kings 5:11

Look

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

the name of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is referred to by his name. Alternate translation: "Yahweh"

over the place

"over the diseased area of my skin" or "over my leprosy"

2 Kings 5:12

Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?

Naaman uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that the Abanah and the Pharpar are better rivers than the Jordan. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The Abanah and the Pharpar Rivers, in my home country of Aram, are much better than any of the rivers of Israel!

Abanah and Pharpar

These are the names of rivers.

Can I not bathe in them and be clean?

Naaman uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he could have bathed in the other rivers easily. He believes that bathing in them could heal him just as bathing in the Jordan could. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I should have just bathed in them and been healed!" or "I could just as easily have bathed in them and been healed!"

went away in a rage

"was very angry as he walked away"

2 Kings 5:13

My father

The servants were showing respect to Naaman by addressing him as "my father" or "sir."

would you not have done it?

The servant uses this question to carefully rebuke Naaman. Alternate translation: "you surely would have done it!"

How much more, then

The servant is comparing how much more willing Naaman should be to obey a simple command since he is willing to obey a difficult one. Alternate translation: "How much

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more willing should you be to obey" or "Should you not be even more willing to obey"

How much more, then, when he says to you, 'Dip yourself and be clean'?

The servant uses this rhetorical question to emphasize to Naaman that he should obey Elisha's command. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should be even more willing to obey when he says to you, 'Dip yourself and be clean.'"

2 Kings 5:14

the man of God

"Elisha, the man of God"

His flesh was restored again like the flesh of a little child

This speaks how smooth Namaan's skin is after he is healed by comparing it to the skin of a young child. Alternate translation: "His flesh was restored again and was as soft as the flesh of a young child" or "His skin was well again and was smooth like a young child's skin"

His flesh

"His skin"

he was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his leprosy was gone"

2 Kings 5:15

See now, I

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 2:16.

there is no God in all the earth except in Israel

"the only God in all the earth is in Israel"

2 Kings 5:16

As Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I

"As surely as I know that Yahweh lives, before whom I stand." Here Elisha compares the certainty that Yahweh is alive to the certainty that he will not receive any gifts from Naaman. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "As surely as Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I promise you that I"

before whom I stand

Here serving Yahweh is spoken of as standing in his presence. Alternate translation: "whom I serve"

I will receive nothing

This means that he will not accept any gifts. Alternate translation: "I will not take any gifts"

2 Kings 5:17

If not

The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "If you will not take the gifts I have brought for you"

let there be given to your servant

This can be stated in active from. Alternate translation: "let me have"

two mule loads of earth

Naaman is asking to take soil from Israel and place it in sacks for two mules to carry home with him. He then plans to build an altar on the soil. Alternate translation: "as much soil from Israel as two mules can carry, so that I can build an altar to Yahweh"

your servant

Naaman refers to himself as Elisha's servant to honor him.

will offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to any god but Yahweh

This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "will not offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god but Yahweh" or "will offer burnt offerings and sacrifices only to Yahweh"

2 Kings 5:18

when my king

This is referring to the king of Aram, the king that Namaan works for.

he leans on my hand

"he supports himself on my arm." This means that Naaman assists the king when he bows in the house of Rimmon because the king is either old or sick.

2 Kings 5:19

Go in peace

"Go home and do not worry" or "Leave without fear"

2 Kings 5:20

He had traveled

"Naaman had traveled"

Gehazi

See how you translated this man's name in [2 Kings 4:12]

Look

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

has spared this Naaman the Aramean

"has let Naaman the Aramean leave too easily"

by not receiving

"by not accepting"

from his hands

Here Naaman is referred to by his hands to emphasize the act of giving. Alternate translation: "from him"

As Yahweh lives

"As surely as Yahweh lives." Here Gehazi compares the certainty that Yahweh is alive to the certainty of what he has decided to do. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "As Yahweh lives, I promise"

2 Kings 5:21

Is everything all right

"Is everything well" or "Is everything fine." Naaman wants to know if the situation is as it should be. See how you translated "all right" in 2 Kings 4:23.

2 Kings 5:22

Everything is all right

"Everything is well" or "Everything is fine." Gehazi is saying that the situation is as it should be. See how you translated "all right" in 2 Kings 4:23.

of the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes

Gehazi is asking Naaman to give these things to him so that he can take them and give them to the prophets. Alternate translation: "Please give me a talent of sliver and two changes of clothes to give to them"

See

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

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a talent of silver

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "33 kilograms of silver"

2 Kings 5:23

two talents

This can be written in modern measurements. This talents are of silver. Alternate translation: "two talents of silver" or "66 kilograms of silver"

laid them on two

"gave them to"

Naaman urged Gehazi

Naaman urged him to take gifts. Alternate translation: "Naaman urged Gehazi to take the gifts"

2 Kings 5:25

Your servant

Gehazi refers to himself here as Elisha's servant.

2 Kings 5:26

Was not my spirit with you when the man turned his chariot to meet you?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that Yahweh allowed him to see what Gehazi had done. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have realized that my spirit could see you when Naaman stopped his chariot and talked to you."

Is this a time to accept money ... female servants?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that this is not the time take gifts. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is not the time to accept money ... female servants."

2 Kings 5:27

the leprosy of Naaman will be on you and your descendants

This speaks of Gehazi and his descendant getting leprosy as if Naaman's leprosy was taken from him and given to Gehazi. Alternate translation: "you and your descendants will have leprosy, just as Naaman had leprosy"

So Gehazi went out from his presence

The phrase "his presence" refers to the area where Elisha could see him. This means that he left the room where Elisha was. Alternate translation: "When Gehazi left the room, he was"

as white as snow

Leprosy makes skin white. Here Gehazi's leprous skin is compared to the color of snow. Alternate translation: "with skin that was white like snow"

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6 [1]The sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we live with you is too small for us all.[2]Please let us
go to the Jordan, and let every man cut down a tree there, and let us build us a place there where we may live." Elisha
answered, "You may go ahead."[3]One of them said, "Please go with your servants." Elisha answered, "I will go."
[4]So he went with them, and when they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down trees.[5]But as one was chopping, the ax
head fell into the water; he cried out and said, "Oh no, my master, it was borrowed!"
[6]So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" The man showed Elisha the place. He then cut off a stick, threw it in the
water, and made the iron float.[7]Elisha said, "Pick it up." So the man reached out his hand and grabbed it.

[8]Now the king of Aram was waging war against Israel. He consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such
and such a place."[9]So the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Be careful not to pass that place, for the Arameans
are going down there."
[10]The king of Israel sent a message to the place about which the man of God had spoken and warned him. More than once
or twice, when the king went there, he was on his guard.[11]The king of Aram was enraged about these warnings, and he
called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me who among us is for the king of Israel?"
[12]So one of his servants said, "No, my master, king, for Elisha the prophet in Israel tells the king of Israel the words that
you speak in your own bedroom!"[13]The king replied, "Go and see where Elisha is so I may send men and capture him." It
was told him, "See, he is in Dothan."

[14]So the king sent to Dothan horses, chariots, and a large army. They came by night and surrounded the city.[15]When the
servant of the man of God had risen early and gone outside, behold, a large army with horses and chariots surrounded
the city. His servant said to him, "Oh, my master! What will we do?"[16]Elisha answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with
us are more than those who are with them."
[17]Elisha prayed and said, "Yahweh, I beg that you will open his eyes that he may see." Then Yahweh opened the servant's
eyes, and he saw. Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha![18]When the Arameans came
down to him, Elisha prayed to Yahweh and said, "Strike these people blind, I ask you." So Yahweh made them blind, just
as Elisha had asked.[19]Then Elisha told the Arameans, "This is not the way, neither is this the city. Follow me, and I will
bring you to the man whom you are looking for." Then he led them to Samaria.

[20]It came about that when they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "Yahweh, open the eyes of these men that they may
see." Yahweh opened their eyes and they saw, and behold, they were in the middle of the city of Samaria.[21]The king of
Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, "My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?"
[22]Elisha answered, "You must not kill them. Would you kill those whom you had taken captive with your sword and bow?
Put bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master."[23]So the king prepared much food
for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went back to their master. Those bands of
Aramean soldiers did not return for a long time into the land of Israel.

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[24]Later after this Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army and attacked Samaria and besieged it.[25]So there was a great famine in Samaria. Behold, they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.[26]As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, saying, "Help, my master, king."
[27]He said, "If Yahweh does not help you, how can I help you? Is there anything coming from the threshing floor or winepress?"[28]The king continued, "What is troubling you?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son so that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'"[29]So we boiled my son and ate him, and I said to her on the next day, "Give your son that we may eat him, but she has hidden her son."
[30]So when the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes (now he was passing by on the wall), and the people looked and saw that he had sackcloth underneath, against his skin.[31]Then he said, "May God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on him today."

[32]But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a man from before him, but when the messenger came to Elisha, he said to the elders, "See how this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold the door shut against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?"[33]While he was still talking with them, behold, the messenger came down to him. The king had said, "Behold, this trouble comes from Yahweh. Why should I wait for Yahweh any longer?"

2 Kings 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The stories of Elisha's miracles continue in this chapter. (See: miracle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Impossible actions

Elisha caused an iron ax head to float. He fooled the whole army of Aram that was sent to arrest him. When the king of Aram besieged the capital of Israel, the people became so hungry they started eating their children. Elisha told the king of Israel that there would be plenty of food the next day, but the king's counselor said it was impossible.

Links:

2 Kings 6:1 Notes

2 Kings 6:1

The sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

See now, the place

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: the place" See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 2:16.

2 Kings 6:2

let us go to the Jordan

This refers to the area by the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "let us go beside the Jordan River"

2 Kings 6:3

your servants

Here one of the prophet refers to the of the sons of the prophets as Elisha's servants to show him honor.

2 Kings 6:4

General Information:

Elisha goes with the prophets to cut trees.

2 Kings 6:5

the ax head fell into the water

The ax head refers to the blade of the ax. This means that the ax head came loose from its the handle and fell into the water. Alternate translation: "the ax head separated from the handle and fell into the water"

Oh no

The man said this to show that he was upset and frustrated. If you have a way of expressing these emotions in your language, you can use it here.

it was borrowed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I borrowed it"

2 Kings 6:6

So the man of God said

"So Elisha, the man of God, asked"

He then cut off a stick, threw it in the water, and made the iron float

God uses Elisha to perform a miracle. The ax head rises to the surface of the water and it stays there so the prophet can pick it up.

made the iron float

"caused the iron to float"

the iron

"the ax head." The ax head was made of iron.

2 Kings 6:8

Now the king of Aram was waging war against Israel

"When the king of Aram was at war with Israel,"

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.

saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place

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The king of Aram was telling his counselors where to set up the camp. Here the phrase "such and such" is a way to refer to the information of the location of the camp without writing it out. If this phase does not translate well into your language this may be written as indirect speech. Alternate translation: "and told them where his camp would be located"

2 Kings 6:9

the man of God

"Elisha the man of God"

Be careful not to pass that place, for the Arameans are going down there

Elisha knew the specific place that the Arameans were going to set up their camp and advised the king of Israel for his soldiers to avoid that area.

2 Kings 6:10

to the place about which the man of God had spoken and warned him

This refers to the place that Elisha had warned the king about in 2 Kings 6:9.

More than once or twice, when the king went there, he was on his guard

Elisha would warn the king of where the Aramean army would attack so that he could alert the people before the attack happened. Alternate translation: "Elisha warned the king of Israel in this way several times and the Israelites were able to stay safe"

2 Kings 6:11

Will you not tell me who among us is for the king of Israel?

The king of Aram assumes there is a traitor among his soldiers who is giving information to the Israelite king. He uses this rhetorical question to try to find out who that traitor is. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me which of you is for the king of Israel!" or "Tell me which of you is revealing our plans to the king of Israel!"

is for the king of Israel

"To be for someone" means to be loyal to that person. In this case, it means that they would give information to help the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "is helping the king of Israel" or "is loyal to the king of Israel"

2 Kings 6:12

No

The servant is saying that none of the king's soldiers are giving information to the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "It is none of us"

my master, king

This refers to the king of Aram.

the words that you speak in your own bedroom

"what you say in the privacy of your own bedroom"

2 Kings 6:13

I may send men and capture him

The king plans to send the men to capture Elisha for him. The king does not plan to capture him himself. Alternate translation: "I may send men to capture him"

See

This word is used here to draw the king's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

he is in Dothan

"Elisha is in Dothan"

Dothan

This is the name of a city.

2 Kings 6:14

So the king

This refers to the king of Aram.

2 Kings 6:15

the man of God

"Elisha" or "Elisha the man of God"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that the servant was surprised by what he saw.

had risen early and gone outside, behold

"got up early in the morning and went outside, and he saw"

His servant said to him

The servant went back inside the house to tell Elisha what he had seen. Alternate translation: "The servant went back inside and said to Elisha"

2 Kings 6:16

those who are with us are more than those who are with them

"To be with someone" in battle means to fight for their side. Alternate translation: "those who are on our side in the battle are more than those who are on their side"

2 Kings 6:17

open his eyes that he may see

Elisha is asking that his servant may be able to see things that other people cannot see, namely the horses and chariots of fire that are around them. Alternate translation: "make him able to see"

he saw. Behold

"he could see. What he saw was that"

Behold

The word "Behold" here shows that the servant was surprised by what he saw.

the mountain was full of horses

"the mountainside was covered with horses"

around Elisha

This refers to the city where Elisha is. Alternate translation: "around the city where Elisha was"

2 Kings 6:18

these people

This refers to the Aramean soldiers.

Strike these people blind

"Cause these people to be blind!" This refers to Yahweh causing them to be unable to see clearly.

2 Kings 6:19

This is not the way, neither is this the city

Elisha confuses the Arameans by telling them that they are not at the city they are searching for. Alternate translation: "This is not the way, neither is this the city you are looking for"

2 Kings 6:20

It came about that

"It happened that" or "Then,"

open the eyes of these men that they may see

Elisha is asking Yahweh to cause the men to see clearly again. Alternate translation: "allow these men to see"

Yahweh opened their eyes and they saw

Yahweh allowed the men to see clearly again. Alternate translation: "Yahweh took away their blindness" or

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"Yahweh allowed them to see clearly"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that the Arameans were surprised by what they saw.

2 Kings 6:21

when he saw them

"when he saw the Aramean soldiers"

My father

The king is speaking to Elisha the prophet and calling him "father" to show respect.

should I kill them? Should I kill them?

Here the king of Israel is referring to his army as himself. Alternate translation: "Should I order my army to kill these enemy soldiers?"

2 Kings 6:22

Elisha answered

Elisha was replying to the king of Israel's question.

Would you kill those whom you had taken captive with your sword and bow?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to rebuke the king and tell him not to kill these men. The words "sword and bow" are a metonym for war in which soldiers use swords and bows and arrows. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You would not kill men whom you had captured in war, so you should not kill these men."

Put bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "Give them food to eat and water to drink"

go to their master

This refers to the king of Aram.

2 Kings 6:23

So the king prepared much food for them

The king ordered his servants to prepare the food. He did not prepare the food himself. Alternate translation: "Then the king ordered his servants to prepare a lot of food for them"

Those bands

"Those groups"

did not return for a long time into the land of Israel

This means that they did not attack Israel for a long time. Alternate translation: "stopped attacking the land of Israel for a long time"

2 Kings 6:24

Ben-Hadad

The name of the king of Aram. His name, Ben-Hadad, means "son of Hadad."

attacked Samaria

The king and his army attacked Samaria. Alternate translation: "they attacked Samaria"

2 Kings 6:25

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

a donkey's head was sold for

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a donkey's head cost"

eighty pieces of silver

"80 pieces of silver"

the fourth part of a kab

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a fourth part of a liter" or "a quarter of a liter"

the fourth part

This is one part out of four equal parts. Alternate translation: "one fourth" or "a quarter" or "1/4"

dove's dung for

The words "was sold for" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "dove's dung was sold for" or "dove's dung cost"

2 Kings 6:26

was passing by on the wall

"walking on top of the city wall"

my master

The woman referred to the king by this name to show him respect.

2 Kings 6:27

He said

"The king of Israel answered the woman,"

If Yahweh does not help you, how can I help you?

The king uses this rhetorical question to tell the woman that he cannot help her. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "If Yahweh is not helping you, then I cannot help you."

Is there anything coming from the threshing floor or winepress?

The king uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no food available. Here the threshing floor refers to grain and the winepress refers to wine. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing coming from the threshing floor or the winepress." or "There is no food to harvest or any grapes to make wine to drink."

2 Kings 6:28

The king continued

"The king said." This means that they continued talking.

2 Kings 6:29

we boiled

"we cooked"

2 Kings 6:30

heard the words of the woman

The words "the words" are a metonym for what the woman said. Alternate translation: "heard the woman tell what she and the other woman had done"

he tore his clothes

The king ripped his outer garment to show his distress. Alternate translation: "he tore his clothes in grief"

now he was passing by on the wall

He had been walking on the city wall when the woman called out to him in 2 Kings 6:24. Now he continued walking along it.

he had sackcloth underneath, against his skin

By wearing sackcloth even for his undergarments, the king showed that he was very sad and upset. Alternate translation: "he had sackcloth underneath his outer garment, against his skin" or "he was wearing sackcloth underneath his robe because he was very upset"

2 Kings 6:31

May God do so to me, and more also

The king is saying he hopes God will punish him and even kill him if Elisha the prophet does not die because of the

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things that have happened in the city of Samaria. Alternate translation: "May God punish me and kill me"

if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on him today

This refers to Elisha dying, specifically be being beheaded. Alternate translation: "if Elisha son of Shaphat is not beheaded today" or "if my soldiers do not behead Elisha son of Shaphat today"

2 Kings 6:32

The king sent a man from before him

"To be before the king" means to be one of his servants. Alternate translation: "The king of Israel sent one of his servants as a messenger"

when the messenger came to Elisha, he said to the elders

Here Elisha is speaking to the elders right before the king's messenger arrived. Alternate translation: "when the messenger had almost arrived, Elisha said to the elders"

See how this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head?

Elisha uses this rhetorical question to draw attention to the kings messenger and to insult the king. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "See, this son of a murderer has sent someone to remove my head!"

son of a murderer

This means that the king of Israel has the characteristics of a murderer. Alternate translation: "this man who is like a murderer" or "that murderer"

has sent to

It is understood that he sent a person. Alternate translation: "has sent someone to"

to take away my head

This means to behead him. Alternate translation: "to cut off my head" or "to behead me"

Look, when

Elisha uses this word here to draw the elder's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen to what I want you to do: when"

hold the door shut against him

If a door is shut against someone it means that it is closed and that they may not enter through it. Alternate translation: "hold the door shut so that he cannot come in"

Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?

Elisha uses this question to assure the elders that the king is coming not far behind him. This rhetorical question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The sound of his master's feet is right behind him." or "The king will be coming along soon after he arrives."

2 Kings 6:33

behold, the messenger

The word "behold" alerts us to the arrival of the messenger.

the messenger came down to him

The messenger arrived, and so did the king, as Elisha had said he would. The phrase "came down to him" means that they arrived at the place where he was. Alternate translation: "the messenger and the king arrived"

Behold

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

this trouble

"Indeed, this trouble." The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. The phrase "this trouble" refers to the famine in Samaria and the suffering it caused.

Why should I wait for Yahweh any longer?

This king use this rhetorical question to emphasize that he does not believe that Yahweh is going to help them. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Why should I continue to wait for Yahweh to help us?" or "I will not wait any longer for help from Yahweh!"

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7 [1]Elisha said, "Hear the word of Yahweh. This is what Yahweh says: 'Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'"[2]Then the officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha replied, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it."

[3]Now there were four men with leprosy right outside the city gate. They said one to another, "Why should we sit here until we die?[4]If we say that we should go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we will die there. But if we still sit here, we will still die. Now then, come, let us go to the army of the Arameans. If they keep us alive, we will live, and if they kill us, we will only die."

[5]So they rose up at twilight to go into the Aramean camp; when they arrived at the outermost part of the camp, there was no one there.[6]For the Lord had made the Aramean army hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses—the noise of another large army, and they said to each other, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to come against us."

[7]So the soldiers arose and fled in the twilight; they left their tents, their horses, their donkeys, and the camp as it was, and fled for their lives.[8]When the men with leprosy came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried away silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid them. They came back and entered into another tent and carried plunder away from there also, and went and hid it.

[9]Then they said to each other, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping quiet about it. If we wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now then, come, let us go and tell the king's household."[10]So they went and called the gatekeepers of the city. They told them, saying, "We went to the camp of the Arameans, but there was no one there, not the sound of anyone, but there were the horses tied, and the donkeys tied, and the tents as they were."[11]Then the gatekeepers shouted out the news, and then it was told inside the king's household.

[12]Then the king arose at night and said to his servants, "I will tell you now what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry, so they have gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the fields. They are saying, 'When they come

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out of the city, we will take them alive, and get into the city.'"[13]One of the king's servants answered and said, "I beg you, let some men take five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city. They are like all the rest of the population of Israel who are left—most are now dead; let us send them and see."
[14]So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans, saying, "Go and see."[15]They went after them to the Jordan, and all the road was full of clothes and equipment that the Arameans had cast away in their hurry. So the messengers returned and told the king.

[16]The people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, just as the word of Yahweh had said.[17]The king had ordered the officer on whose hand he had leaned to be in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him down in the gateway. He died as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king had come down to him.
[18]So it happened as the man of God had said to the king, saying, "About this time in the gate of Samaria, two measures of barley will be available for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel."[19]That officer had answered the man of God and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha had said, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it."[20]That is exactly what happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

2 Kings 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The stories of Elisha's miracles continue in this chapter. (See: miracle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fear

God caused the army of Aram to hear the sound of an enormous army approaching so they all ran away leaving all their food behind.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

The king's counselor expressed his unbelief in Elisha's prophecy of plenty of food: "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" (See: and believe and heaven)

Links:

2 Kings 7:1 Notes

2 Kings 7:1

a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel

It is implied that the Israelites will be paying less money for these item than they had been. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will sell a measure of fine flour for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel"

a measure of fine flour ... two measures of barley

Here the word "measure" translates the word "seah," which is a unit of dry measurement equal to about 7 liters. Alternate translation: "7 liters of fine flour ... 14 liters of barley"

a shekel

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 11 grams of silver" or "one silver coin"

2 Kings 7:2

the officer on whose hand the king leaned

A high ranking officer who was the king's personal assistant is spoken of as if he was a person on whom the king leaned his hand. Alternate translation: "the officer who was close to the king" or "the officer who was the king's personal assistant"

even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven

Yahweh causing much rain to fall in order to make the crops grow is spoken of as if Yahweh were opening windows in heaven through which he pours down rain. Alternate translation: "even if Yahweh were to cause much rain to fall from heaven"

can this thing happen?

The officer asks this question to express his unbelief. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "this could never happen!"

you will watch it happen with your own eyes

The phrase "with your own eyes" emphasizes that the officer will certainly see the things that Elisha prophesied. Alternate translation: "you yourself will watch these things happen"

but you will not eat any of it

"but you will not eat any of the flour or barely"

2 Kings 7:3

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the writer starts to tell a new part of the story.

Why should we sit here until we die?

Although there were four men, probably only one of them asks this question. The question is rhetorical and emphasizes that they should not do this. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly

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we should not sit here until we die"
2 Kings 7:4
If they keep us alive, we will live, and if they kill us, we will only die
The four men with leprosy are saying that the Arameans might feed them so that they can live, or they might kill them, which would be no worse since they would die anyway.
2 Kings 7:5
at twilight
This refers to the early evening after the sun has set, but before it is dark.
the outermost part
"the edge"
2 Kings 7:6
the Aramean army hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses—the noise of another large army
The soldiers of the Aramean army heard noises that sounded like a large army approaching to battle them. This was not an actual army, but the Lord had made them hear these sounds.
they said to each other
"the Aramean soldiers said to each other"
the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians
Here the word "kings" represents the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: "the armies of the Hittites and the Egyptians"
to come against us
"to fight us" or "to attack us"
2 Kings 7:7
General Information:
This is what happened after the Lord caused the Aramean soldiers to think they heard a large enemy army approaching their camp.
in the twilight
This refers to the early evening after the sun has set, but before it is dark.
2 Kings 7:8
plunder
This refers to items that a conquering army takes from another army that they have defeated. Here it refers to "silver and gold and clothes."
2 Kings 7:9
until the morning light
"until morning, when people can see"
punishment will overtake us
Someone punishing the four men is spoken of as if punishment were a person who captures them. Alternate translation: "the people will punish us" or "someone will punish us"
tell the king's household
Here the word "household" represents the people who live in the king's palace. Alternate translation: "tell the king and his people"
2 Kings 7:10
as they were
The implicit information may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "as they were when the soldiers were still there"
2 Kings 7:11
then it was told inside the king's household
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then people told it inside the king's household" or "then people told it to the king and those in his palace"
2 Kings 7:12
have done to us
"are planning to do to us" or "have done to deceive us"
take them alive
This means that they would capture the people and not kill them.
2 Kings 7:13
the horses that remain, which are left in the city
Many of the horses belonging to the Israelites had died because of the famine. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the horses in the city that are still alive"
see
The implicit information about what he wanted to see may be expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "see if what these lepers have said is true"
2 Kings 7:14
Go and see
The implicit information about what the king wanted them to see may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Go and see if what these lepers have said is true"
2 Kings 7:15
They went after them to the Jordan
"They followed the path the Aramean army took all the way to the Jordan River"
all the road was full of clothes and equipment
This is an exaggeration that means the men saw these items scattered along the road as they traveled. Alternate translation: "there were clothes and equipment all along the road"
2 Kings 7:16
plundered the camp
This refers to taking items from a defeated army.
So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So people sold a measure of fine flour for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel"
a measure of fine flour ... two measures of barley
Here the word "measure" translates the word "seah," which is a unit of dry measurement equal to about 7 liters. Alternate translation: "7 liters of fine flour ... 14 liters of barley"
a shekel
A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 11 grams of silver" or "one silver coin"
just as the word of Yahweh had said
Here "word" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh had said"
2 Kings 7:17
the officer on whose hand he had leaned
A high-ranking officer who was the king's personal assistant is spoken of as if he were a person on whom the king leaned his hand. See how you translated this in [2

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Kings 7:2]

trampled him down

The crowd of people were in such a rush to get to the food in the camp that they knocked over the man and trampled him to death.

2 Kings 7:18

General Information:

In this verse, the writer summarizes what happened by repeating the events that he described in [2 Kings 7:1]

About this time

"About this time tomorrow"

two measures of barley ... a measure of fine flour

Here the word "measure" translates the word "seah," which is a unit of dry measurement equal to about 7 liters. Alternate translation: "14 liters of barley ... 7 liters of fine flour"

a shekel

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 11 grams of silver" or "one silver coin"

2 Kings 7:19

General Information:

In this verse, the writer summarizes what happened by repeating the events that he described in [2 Kings 7:2]

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven

Yahweh causing much rain to fall in order to make the crops grow is spoken of as if Yahweh were opening windows in heaven through which he pours down rain. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 7:2]

can this thing happen?

The captain asks this question to express his unbelief. This question can be translated as a statement. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 7:2]

you will watch it happen with your own eyes

The phrase "with your own eyes" emphasizes that the captain will certainly see the things that Elisha prophesied. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 7:2]

but you will not eat any of it

"but you will not eat any of the flour or barley"

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8 [1]Now Elisha had spoken to the woman whose son he had restored to life. He said to her, "Arise, and go with your household, and stay wherever you can in another land, because Yahweh has called for a famine which will come on this land for seven years."[2]So the woman arose and she obeyed the word of the man of God. She went with her household and lived in the land of the Philistines seven years.
[3]It came about at the end of seven years that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, and she went to the king to cry to him for her house and for her land.[4]Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please tell me all the great things that Elisha has done."
[5]Then as he was telling the king how Elisha had restored to life the child who was dead, the very woman whose son he had restored to life came to cry to the king for her house and for her land. Gehazi said, "My master, king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."[6]When the king asked the woman about her son, she explained it to him. So the king ordered a certain officer for her, saying, "Give back to her all that was hers and all the harvests of her fields since the day that she left the land until now."

[7]Elisha came to Damascus where Ben-Hadad the king of Aram was sick. The king was told, "The man of God has come here."[8]The king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go meet the man of God, and consult with Yahweh through him, saying, 'Will I revive from this sickness?'"[9]So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift with him of every kind of good thing of Damascus, carried by forty camels. So Hazael came and stood before Elisha and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you, saying, 'Will I revive from this sickness?'"
[10]Elisha said to him, "Go, say to Ben-Hadad, 'You will surely revive,' but Yahweh has shown me that he will surely die."[11]Then Elisha stared at Hazael until he was ashamed, and the man of God wept.[12]Hazael asked, "Why do you weep, my master?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set their strongholds on fire, and you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip open their pregnant women."
[13]Hazael replied, "Who is your servant, that he should do this great thing? He is only a dog." Elisha answered, "Yahweh has shown me that you will be king over Aram."[14]Then Hazael left Elisha and came to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" He answered, "He told me that you would certainly revive."[15]Then the next day Hazael took the blanket and dipped it in water, and spread it on Ben-Hadad's face so that he died. Then Hazael became king in his place.

[16]In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoram began to reign. He was the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He began to reign when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah.[17]Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem.
[18]Jehoram walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab was doing; for he had Ahab's daughter as his wife, and he did what was evil in Yahweh's sight.[19]However, because of his servant David, Yahweh did not want to destroy Judah, since he had told David that he would always give him a lamp for his descendants.

[20]In Jehoram's days, Edom rebelled against the hand of Judah, and they set a king over themselves.[21]Then Jehoram crossed

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over to Zair with all his chariots. When the Edomites surrounded Jehoram, his chariot commanders rose up and attacked them during the night; but Jehoram's army ran away and went back to their tents.
[22]So Edom has been in rebellion against the rule of Judah to this present day. Libnah also revolted at the same time.[23]As for the other matters concerning Jehoram, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
[24]Jehoram lay down with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of David. Then Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

[25]In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign.[26]Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah; she was the daughter of Omri, king of Israel.[27]Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; he did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as the house of Ahab was doing, for Ahaziah was a son-in-law to the house of Ahab.
[28]Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram, at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram.[29]King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of Ahab, because Joram had been wounded.

2 Kings 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The stories of of Elisha's miracles continue in this chapter. (See: miracle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Kings

Elisha told Hazael that he would be king of Aram. Jehoram became king of Judah. He was evil so Edom and Libna revolted and chose their own kings. (See: evil)

Links:

[2 Kings 8:1 Notes]

2 Kings 8:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story.

the woman whose son he had restored to life

The story of this woman and her son is found at 2 Kings 4:8.

he had restored to life

"he had caused to become alive again"

Arise, and go

To arise here is for a person to stop what he is doing and begin to do what he needs to do. Alternate translation: "Do as I say, and go"

2 Kings 8:2

the woman arose and she obeyed the word of the man of God

To arise here is for a person to stop what he is doing and begin to do what he needs to do. She may have been standing when she heard Elisha speak and decided to go.

the man of God

"Elisha, the man of God"

2 Kings 8:3

to the king

This refers to the king of Israel.

to cry to him for her house and for her land

While the woman was gone, someone seized her home and land. She is begging the king to return them to her. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "to beg him to return her house and land to her" or "for her home and her land to be returned to her"

her land

This refers to the land that she would farm for food.

2 Kings 8:4

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells us background information about what the king was doing when the woman arrived.

2 Kings 8:5

had restored to life the child who was dead

"had caused the child who was dead to become alive again"

to cry to the king for her house and for her land

While the woman was gone, someone seized her home and land. She is begging the king to return them to her. The meaning of this can be made clear. See how you translated similar words in [2 Kings 8:3]

her land

This refers to the land that she would farm for food. See how you translated this in 2 Kings 8:3.

2 Kings 8:6

about her son

This refers to the story of her son dying and Elisha bringing him back to life. The meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "about what had happened to her son"

all the harvests of her fields

This metonym refers to the amount of money that the harvests of her fields were worth while she was away. Alternate translation: "all the profit from the harvests of her fields"

2 Kings 8:7

Ben-Hadad

This is the name of the king of Aram. His name, Ben-Hadad,

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means "son of Hadad." See how you translated this man's name in [2 Kings 6:24]

2 Kings 8:8

Hazael

This is the name of a man.

Take a gift

Hazael was to take many gifts, not just one. Alternate translation: "take many gifts"

in your hand

The phrase "in your hand" is an idiom meaning for him to take the gifts with him. Alternate translation: "with you"

the man of God

"Elisha, the man of God"

consult with Yahweh through him, saying

"ask Elisha to ask Yahweh"

Will I revive

"Will I recover" or "Will I become well"

2 Kings 8:9

carried by forty camels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which forty camels carried"

forty camels

"40 camels"

Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram

Ben-Hadad was not actually Elisha's son, but Hazael called him that to show a close relationship between them. Alternate translation: "Ben-Hadad the king of Aram who is like a son to you"

Will I revive

"Will I recover" or "Will I become well." See how you translated this in 2 Kings 8:8.

2 Kings 8:10

You will surely revive

"You will surely recover" or "You will surely become well." See how you translated similar words in 2 Kings 8:8.

2 Kings 8:11

until he was ashamed

"until Hazael felt uncomfortable"

2 Kings 8:12

my master

Hazael refers to Elisha this way to honor him.

Because I know

God has shown Elisha what will take place in the future.

you will do

The word "you" represents Hazael and refers to himself and the soldiers under his control when he is king. Alternate translation: "you will cause to happen" or "you will order your soldiers"

You will set ... you will kill

The word "you" represents Hazel but here refers to his soldiers and not to Hazael personally. Alternate translation: "You soldiers will set ... your soldiers will kill"

dash in pieces their little ones

"crush their little children." This is a brutal description of the soldiers killing children.

kill their young men with the sword

This means that the men will be killed in battle. The sword was the main weapon used in battle. Alternate translation: "kill their young men in battle"

rip open their pregnant women

Specifically this refers to tear open their stomachs. Alternate translation: "rip open the stomachs of their pregnant women with swords"

2 Kings 8:13

Who is your servant, that he should do this great thing?

Hazel refers to himself here as Elisha's servant. Hazel uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he does not think he could do the terrible things that Elisha has said. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I could never do such great things!" or "Who am I, that I would have the power to do such things?"

this great thing

"this terrible thing." Here the word "great" refers to something that has a large effect and is terrible.

He is only a dog

Hazael is talking about himself. He speaks of his low status and lack of influence by comparing himself to a dog. Here a dog represents a lowly animal. Alternate translation: "I am as powerless as a dog" or "I am as powerless as a lowly animal"

2 Kings 8:14

came to his master

The phrase "his master" refers to Ben Hadad.

you would certainly revive

"you would certainly recover" or "you would certainly get better." See how you translated similar words in 2 Kings 8:8.

2 Kings 8:15

face so that he died

This means that Ben-Hadad suffocated under the wet blanket. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "face. Ben-Hadad was unable to breathe through it, and so he died"

2 Kings 8:16

General Information:

Jehoram becomes king of Judah.

In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel

This describes the time that Jehoram began to reign over Judah by stating how long Joram, the current king of Israel, had been reigning. Alternate translation: "In the fifth year that Jorman son of Ahab was king of Israel" or "In year five of the reign of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel"

fifth year

"year 5"

Jehoram began to reign

Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, became the king of Judah.

2 Kings 8:17

thirty-two years old

"32 years old"

2 Kings 8:18

Jehoram walked in the ways of the kings of Israel

Here "walking" is an idiom that refers to how he lived and reigned as king. At this time in history, the recent kings of Israel had been evil kings. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Jehoram was an evil king, just as other kings of Israel who ruled before him had been"

as the house of Ahab was doing

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Here the "house" of Ahab refers to the members of Ahab's family and his recent descendants. Ahab is Jehoram father-in-law. Alternate translation: "the same as the rest of the family of Ahab was doing"

for he had Ahab's daughter as his wife

Jehoram had married king Ahab's daughter.

what was evil in Yahweh's sight

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

2 Kings 8:19

destroy Judah

Here "Judah" is a metonym for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "destroy the people of Judah"

since he had told David that he would always give him a lamp for his descendants

"since Yahweh had told David that he would always give David a lamp for his descendants." This refers to Yahweh's promise to David that his descendants would always rule Judah. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "since he had told David that one of his descendants would always rule Judah"

2 Kings 8:20

the hand of Judah

Here the word "hand" refers to the control of Judah, and "Judah" refers specifically to the king of Judah. Alternate translation: "the control of the king of Judah"

they set a king over themselves

"they appointed a king to rule over themselves"

2 Kings 8:21

Then Jehoram crossed over

What was "crossed over" can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Then Jehoram crossed the enemy lines"

their tents

"their homes." The Judahites were living in houses in those days.

2 Kings 8:22

General Information:

King Jehoram of Judah dies and his son Ahaziah becomes king.

So Edom has been in rebellion against the rule of Judah to this present day

"So after that, Edom was no longer controlled by Judah, and it is still like that"

the rule of Judah

Here "Judah" refers to the king of Judah. Alternate translation: "the rule of the king of Judah" or "the authority of the king of Judah"

to this present day

to the time that this book was written

Libnah also revolted at the same time

Libnah rebelled against the king of Judah just as Edom had. Alternate translation: "During that same time, Libnah also rebelled against the king of Judah"

Libnah

This is another city that was originally part of Judah. Here "Libnah" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Libnah"

2 Kings 8:23

As for the other matters concerning Jehoram, all that he did

"To read more about the history of Jehoram and what he did,"

are they not written ... Judah?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Jehoram is in this other book. Alternate translation: "these things are written ... Judah." or "someone has written about them ... Judah."

2 Kings 8:24

Jehoram lay down with his fathers and was buried with them

Here "lay down" is a polite way of referring to someone dying. After he died, his body was buried in the same place as the bodies of his forefathers. The phrase "was buried" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jehoram died as his ancestors had died, and they buried him with his ancestors"

Then Ahaziah his son became king in his place

"Then Ahaziah, Jehoram's son, became king after he died"

2 Kings 8:25

General Information:

Ahaziah becomes king of Judah.

In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel

This describes the time that Ahaziah began to reign as king of Judah by stating how long Joram, the current king of Israel, had reigned. Alternate translation: "in the twelfth year that Joram son of Ahab was king of Israel"

twelfth year

"12th year"

2 Kings 8:26

twenty-two years

"22 years"

Athaliah ... Omri

Athaliah is the name of a woman. Omri is the name of a man.

2 Kings 8:27

Ahaziah walked in the ways of

Here "walking" refers his behavior or the way in which he lived. Alternate translation: "Ahaziah lived the same way as the others in"

the house of Ahab

Here the "house" of Ahab refers to his family. Alternate translation: "the family of Ahab"

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

a son-in-law to the house of Ahab

This explains Ahaziah's family relationship to Ahab. Ahaziah's father was married to Ahab's daughter. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the son of Ahab's son-in-law" or "a grandson of King Ahab"

2 Kings 8:28

Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram

The names of the three kings listed here are synecdoches and refer also to their armies that accompany them. Alternate translation: "Ahaziah's army joined the army of King Joram of Israel to fight against the army of King Hazael of Aram"

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2 Kings 8:29

to be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to heal" or "to recover"

against Hazael king of Aram

Here "Hazael" refers to himself and his army. Alternate translation: "the army of Hazael king of Aram"

Joram had been wounded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Arameans had wounded Joram"

9 [1]Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Gird your loins, then take this little bottle of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth Gilead.[2]When you arrive, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi, and go in and make him arise up from among his companions, and conduct him to an inner chamber.[3]Then take the bottle of oil and pour it on his head and say, 'Yahweh says this: "I have anointed you king over Israel."' Then open the door, and run off; do not delay."
[4]So the young man, the young prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead.[5]When he arrived, behold, the captains of the army were sitting. So the young prophet said, "I have come on an errand to you, captain." Jehu replied, "To which of us?" The young prophet answered, "To you, captain."[6]So Jehu arose and went into the house, and the prophet poured the oil on his head and said to Jehu, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: 'I have anointed you king over the people of Yahweh, over Israel.
[7]You must kill the family of Ahab your master so that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of Yahweh who were murdered by the hand of Jezebel.[8]For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male child in Israel, whether he is a slave or a free person.
[9]I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah.[10]The dogs will eat Jezebel in Jezreel, and there will be no one to bury her.'" Then the prophet opened the door and ran off.

[11]Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, "Is everything all right? Why did this mad fellow come to you?" Jehu answered them, "You know the man and the kinds of things he says."[12]They said, "That is a lie. Tell us." Jehu answered, "He said this and that to me, and he also said, 'This is what Yahweh says: I have anointed you as king over Israel.'"[13]Then each of them quickly took off his outer garment and put it under Jehu at the top of the steps. They blew the ram's horn and said, "Jehu is king."

[14]In this way Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram,[15]but King Joram had gone back to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds that the Arameans had given him, when he had fought against Hazael king of Aram.Jehu said to the servants of Joram, "If this is your opinion, then let no one escape and go out of the city, in order to go tell this news in Jezreel."
[16]So Jehu rode in a chariot to Jezreel; for Joram was resting there. Now Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

[17]The watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came at a distance; he said, "I see a group of men coming." Joram said, "Take a horseman, and send him out to meet them; tell him to say, 'Are you coming in peace?'"[18]So a man was sent on horseback to meet him; he said, "The king says this: 'Are you coming in peace?'" So Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me." Then the watchman told the king, "The messenger has met them, but he is not coming back."
[19]Then he sent out a second man on horseback, who came to them and said, "The king says this: 'Are you coming in peace?'" Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me."[20]Again the watchman reported, "He has met them, but he is not coming back. For the way that the chariot is being driven is the way that Jehu son of Nimshi drives; he is driving wildly."

[21]So Joram said, "Get my chariot ready." They prepared his chariot, and Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah rode out, each in his chariot, to meet Jehu. They found him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite.[22]When Joram saw Jehu, he said, "Are you coming in peace, Jehu?" He answered, "What peace is there, when the idolatrous acts of prostitution and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel are so many?"
[23]So Joram turned his chariot and fled and said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery, Ahaziah."[24]Then Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his shoulders; the arrow went through his heart, and he sank down in his chariot.
[25]Then Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, "Pick him up and throw him in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. Think about how when you and I rode together after Ahab his father, Yahweh placed this prophecy against him:[26]'Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—this is Yahweh's declaration—and I will surely make you pay for it on this field—this is Yahweh's declaration. Now then, pick him up and throw him on this field, according to the word of Yahweh."

[27]When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled up the road to Beth Haggan. But Jehu followed him, and said, "Kill him also in the chariot," and they shot him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Ahaziah fled to Megiddo and died there.
[28]His servants carried his body in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the city of David.

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[29]Now it was in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab that Ahaziah had begun to reign over Judah.

[30]When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes, arranged her hair, and looked out the window.
[31]As Jehu was entering the gate, she said to him, "Are you coming in peace, you Zimri, your master's murderer?"[32]Jehu looked up at the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Then two or three eunuchs looked out.
[33]So Jehu said, "Throw her down." So they threw Jezebel down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and the horses, and Jehu trampled her underfoot.[34]When Jehu entered the palace, he ate and drank. Then he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter."
[35]They went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands.[36]So they came back and told Jehu. He said, "This is the word of Yahweh which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the land at Jezreel the dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel,[37]and the body of Jezebel will be like dung on the surface of the fields in the land at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, "This is Jezebel."'"

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2 Kings 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The life of Elisha continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

King Jehu

Elisha told a young prophet to go and tell Jehu that God had made him the new king. Jehu killed the kings of both Israel and Judah and Jezebel, the mother of the king. (See: prophet)

Links:

2 Kings 9:1 Notes

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2 Kings 9:1

the sons of the prophets

This does not mean that they were the sons of prophets, but rather, that they were a group of prophets. See how you translated this phrase in [2 Kings 2:3]

Gird your loins

"Get ready to travel"

in your hand

The phrase "in your hand" refers to him taking the bottle with him. Alternate translation: "with you"

Ramoth Gilead

Translate the name of this city the same as you did in [2 Kings 8:28]

2 Kings 9:2

Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi

This means that Jehoshaphat is Jehu's father and that Nimshi is Jehoshapat's father.

companions

These are the people with whom Jehu was sitting.

conduct him to

"go along with him to" or "take him along to"

an inner chamber

"a private room"

2 Kings 9:5

behold

The writer uses the word "behold" to direct attention to what follows. If you have a way of doing this in your language, you can use it here.

the captains of the army were sitting

Jehu was sitting among the captains. You may introduce Jehu to the story here if this is necessary in your language. Alternate translation: "Jehu and some other army officers were sitting together"

To which of us

The word "us" refers to Jehu and the other army captains.

2 Kings 9:7

General Information:

The young prophet continues to speak to Jehu, whom he had just anointed as king over Israel.

I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of Yahweh

Here the "blood" of the prophets and the servants refers to their deaths. Alternate translation: "I may avenge the deaths of my servants the prophets and all the servants of Yahweh" or "so that I may punish them for murdering my servants the prophets and all the servants of Yahweh"

who were murdered by the hand of Jezebel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Jezebel commanded her servants to murder" or "whose deaths were commanded by Jezebel"

by the hand of Jezebel

This means that Jezebel commanded the people to be killed. Alternate translation: "by an order from Jezebel" or "by Jezebel's command"

2 Kings 9:8

For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male child

Here to be "cut off" means to be killed. Alternate translation: "For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I will cause every male child in his family to be killed" or "Every member of Ahab's family will die, including every male child"

every male child

This phrase is used to refer to every male, but it specifies

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"child" to emphasize that it includes children. Alternate translation: "every male"

2 Kings 9:9

General Information:

The young prophet continues to speak the words of Yahweh to Jehu, whom he had just anointed as king over Israel.

I will make the house of Ahab like

This means that God will destroy Ahab and his family just as he destroyed Jeroboam and Baasha and their families. Alternate translation: "I will get rid of the house of Ahab like I got rid of"

the house of

This phrase is used in this verse three times. Each time, the word "house" refers to the "family" of the man specified. Alternate translation: "the family of"

Nebat ... Ahijah

These are the names of men. Translate the name "Nebat" the same as you did in [2 Kings 3:3]

2 Kings 9:10

The dogs will eat Jezebel

This means that the dogs will eat her dead body. Alternate translation: "Dogs will eat the dead body of Jezebel"

2 Kings 9:11

the servants of his master

This refers to the other officers who were serving King Ahab.

Is everything all right

"Is everything well" or "Is everything fine." The servant wants to know if the situation is as it should be. See how you translated "all right" in 2 Kings 4:23.

mad fellow

"crazy man"

You know the man and the kinds of things he says

Jehu says that he is a young prophet and they all are familiar with the kinds of things young prophets generally say. Alternate translation: "You know what kinds of things young prophets like him say"

2 Kings 9:12

Tell us

"Tell us what he said"

He said this and that to me

"He talked about some things"

2 Kings 9:13

took off his outer garment and put it under Jehu

In this culture, putting clothing on the ground was a way of honoring the king, so that his feet would not touch the dirty ground. Alternate translation: "took off their outer clothes and put them in front of Jehu for him to walk on"

They blew the ram's horn and said

Not every man blew a ram's horn. It is likely only one man blew a ram's horn. Alternate translation: "One of them blew the ram's horn and they all said"

2 Kings 9:14

Nimshi

Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [2 Kings 9:2]

Now Joram

The word "Now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells background information about about how Joram was wounded and went to recover in Jezreel.

all Israel

These refers only to the Israelite army and not to everyone who lives in Israel. Alternate translation: "he and his army" or "he and the Israelite army"

Hazael

Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [2 Kings 8:8]

2 Kings 9:15

to be healed of

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to recover from"

the wounds that the Arameans had given him

This means that he was wounded in battle with the Arameans. Alternate translation: "wounds that Joram got during the battle with the Aramean army"

against Hazael king of Aram

This refers to Hazael and his army. Alternate translation: "against Hazael king of Aram and his army"

Jehu said to the servants of Joram

This refers to the officers who were with Joram at Ramoth Gilead.

If this is your opinion

"If you are in agreement with me" Jehu uses this phrase to refer to if people are supportive of him being king and of his decisions. Alternate translation: "If you truly want me to be your king"

in order to go tell this news in Jezreel

This refers to telling Joram and his army of Jehu's plans. Alternate translation: "to warn king Joram and his army in Jezreel"

2 Kings 9:16

Now Ahaziah

The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author tells background information about Ahaziah visiting Joram.

2 Kings 9:17

watchman

guard

the company of Jehu as he came at a distance

"Jehu and his men as they were still far away"

2 Kings 9:18

What have you to do with peace?

Jehu uses this rhetorical question to tell the messenger that it is none of his concern if he comes in peace or not. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not your concern if I have come in peace!" or "It is not for you to know if I have come in peace!"

The messenger has met them, but he is not coming back

The watchman told King Joram that the man he sent out is not coming back with a reply to the king's question.

2 Kings 9:19

Then he sent out a second man on horseback, who came to them

"Then king Joram sent a second messenger riding a horse, who went out to meet Jehu and his army"

a second man

Joram had already sent one man. This was the next. Alternate translation: "another man"

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What have you to do with peace?
Jehu uses this rhetorical question to tell the messenger that it is none of his concern if he comes in peace or not. This may be written as a statement. See how you translated this question in [2 Kings 9:18]
2 Kings 9:20
For the way that the chariot is being driven is the way that Jehu son of Nimshi drives
This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Because the driver of the chariot drives the same way that Jehu son of Nimshi drives"
2 Kings 9:21
each in his chariot
"each in his own chariot"
They found him at
"When they reached Jehu, he was at"
Naboth
This is the name of a man.
Jezreelite
This refers to a person from Jezreel.
2 Kings 9:22
What peace is there, when the idolatrous acts of prostitution and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel are so many?
Jehu uses this rhetorical question to state why he is not coming in peace. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There can be no peace as long as your mother Jezebel practices and promotes so much idolatry in the form of prostitution and witchcraft."
2 Kings 9:23
turned his chariot and fled
"turned his chariot around to try to flee"
treachery
trickery or deception
2 Kings 9:24
with his full strength
"with all of his strength" or "with all of his power"
he sank down in his chariot
Joram died from being shot with arrow. Alternate translation: "Joram fell down dead in his chariot"
2 Kings 9:25
Bidkar
This is the name of a man.
Pick him up and throw him
"Pick up his dead body and throw it" or "Take his corpse and throw it"
Think about how
"Remember"
after Ahab his father
This means that they rode in the chariot behind Ahab's chariot. Alternate translation: "behind his father Ahab's chariot"
Yahweh placed this prophecy against him
"Yahweh spoke this prophecy against Ahab"
2 Kings 9:26
I will surely make you pay for it
This means that he will punish Ahab as he deserves for the evil he has done. Alternate translation: "I will give you what you deserve for the evil you have done"
pick him up and throw him on this field
"take Joram's dead body and throw it into the field of Naboth"
according to the word of Yahweh
"to fulfill the prophecy spoken to us"
2 Kings 9:27
General Information:
This is the account of what happened to Ahaziah, the king of Judah, after Jehu killed Joram.
saw this
"saw what happened to Joram"
Beth Haggan ... Gur ... Ibleam ... Megiddo
These are the names of places.
at the ascent of Gur
The word "ascent" means that they were going up hill while travelling on the road to Gur. Alternate translation: "on the road leading up to Gur"
2 Kings 9:28
his fathers
"his ancestors"
2 Kings 9:29
in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab
This describes the time that Ahaziah began to reign by stating how long the current king of Israel had reigned. Alternate translation: "in the eleventh year that Joram son of Ahab was king of Israel"
eleventh year
"11th year"
2 Kings 9:30
painted her eyes, arranged her hair
"put on makeup, made her hair look nice"
2 Kings 9:31
Are you coming in peace, you Zimri, your master's murderer?
Jezebel uses this rhetorical question to accuse Jehu of not coming peacefully. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are certainly not coming in peace, you Zimri, your master's murderer!"
you Zimri, your master's murderer
Here Jezebel calls Jehu "Zimri" to say that he is a murderer. Zimri was a commander of the army of Israel who murdered the king of Israel because he wanted to be king. Alternate translation: "you murdered your master, just like Zimri murdered his master"
Zimri
This is the name of a man.
2 Kings 9:32
Who is on my side
To "be on someone's side" means to be loyal to them and supportive of them. Alternate translation: "Who is loyal to me"
2 Kings 9:33
Throw her down
Jehu was telling the eunuchs to throw Jezebel out of the window.
So they threw Jezebel down
The eunuchs threw Jezebel out of the high window and she died when she hit the ground.
Jehu trampled her underfoot
This means that he drove his horses over her body. Alternate translation: "Jehu's horses that were pulling his

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chariot trampled her body under their feet"
2 Kings 9:34
See now to
The phrase "see now to" means to give your attention to whatever is specified. Alternate translation: "Now go to"
for she is a king's daughter
Since Jezebel was the daughter of a king, it was necessary to bury her properly. Alternate translation: "because she is a king's daughter and therefore should be buried properly"
2 Kings 9:35
they found no more of her than
"they found no more of her body than" This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "all they found that was left of her body were"
the palms of her hands
The palm is the inner part of the hand.
2 Kings 9:36
the Tishbite
This refers to someone from the city of Tishbe. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 1:3]
2 Kings 9:37
the body of Jezebel will be like dung on the surface of the fields ... so that no one will be able to say
This speaks of the pieces of Jezebel's body being scattered in the field as if they were dung spread in the field. Since the pieces of her body were so small and spread out there was nothing that could be collected and buried. Alternate translation: "the pieces of Jezebel's body will be scattered like dung in the fields ... so that no one will be able to recognize them and say"
dung
manure, specifically dung used as a fertilizer
so that no one will be able to say, "This is Jezebel."
"so that no one will be able to recognize her body." or "so no one will be able to tell this was Jezebel."

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10 [1]Now Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, including the elders and the guardians of Ahab's descendants, saying,[2]"Your master's descendants are with you, and you also have chariots and horses and a fortified city and armor. So then, as soon as this letter comes to you,[3]select the best and most deserving of your master's descendants and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's royal line."
[4]But they were terrified and said among themselves, "See, the two kings could not stand before Jehu. So how can we stand?"[5]Then the man who was in charge of the palace, and the man who was over the city, and the elders also, and they who raised the children, sent word back to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants. We will do everything that you command us. We will not make any man king. Do what is good in your eyes."
[6]Then Jehu wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you will listen to my voice, you must take the heads of the men of your master's descendants, and come to me to Jezreel by tomorrow this time." Now the king's descendants, seventy in number, were with the important men of the city, who were bringing them up.[7]So when the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and killed them, seventy persons, put their heads in baskets, and sent them to Jehu in Jezreel.
[8]A messenger came to Jehu, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." So he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning."[9]In the morning Jehu went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You are innocent. See, I plotted against my master and killed him, but who killed all these?
[10]Now you should certainly realize that no part of Yahweh's word, the word that he spoke concerning the family of Ahab, will fall to the ground, for Yahweh has done what he spoke about through his servant Elijah."[11]So Jehu killed all who remained in the family of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his important men, his close friends, and his priests, until no survivor remained to him.

[12]Then Jehu arose and left; he went to Samaria. As he was arriving at Beth Eked of the Shepherds,[13]he met brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah. Jehu said to them, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are brothers of Ahaziah, and we are going down to greet the children of the king and the children of Queen Jezebel."[14]Jehu said to his own men, "Take them alive." So they took them alive and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, all forty-two men. He did not leave any of them alive.

[15]When Jehu had left there, he met Jehonadab son of Rekab coming to meet him. Jehu greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart with me, as my heart is with yours?" Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave Jehu his hand, and Jehu took Jehonadab up with him into the chariot.[16]Jehu said, "Come with me and see my zeal for Yahweh." So he had Jehonadab ride along with him in his chariot.[17]When he came to Samaria, Jehu killed all who remained from Ahab's descendants in Samaria, until he had destroyed Ahab's royal line, just as was told them before by the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken to Elijah.

[18]Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much.
[19]Now therefore call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests. Let no one be left out, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Whoever does not come will not live." But Jehu did this deceitfully, with the intent to kill the worshipers of Baal.[20]Jehu said, "Announce that there will be an assembly for Baal." So they announced it.

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[21]Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. They came into the temple of Baal, and it was filled from one end to another.[22]Jehu said to the man who kept the priest's wardrobe, "Bring out robes for all the worshipers of Baal." So the man brought out robes to them.
[23]So Jehu went with Jehonadab son of Rekab into the house of Baal, and he said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and make sure that there is no one here with you from the servants of Yahweh, but the worshipers of Baal alone."[24]Then they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had chosen eighty men who were standing outside, and he told them, "If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escapes, whoever lets that man escape, his life will be taken for the life of the one who escaped."

[25]So then as soon as Jehu finished offering the burnt offering, he said to his bodyguards and to the officers, "Go in and kill them. Let no one come out." So they killed them with the edge of the sword, and the bodyguards and the officers threw them out and went into the inner room of the house of Baal.[26]They dragged out the stone pillars that were in the house of Baal, and they burned them.[27]Then they broke down the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the house of Baal and made it a latrine, which it is to this day.[28]That is how Jehu destroyed Baal worship from Israel.

[29]But Jehu did not leave the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he made Israel sin—that is, the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan.[30]So Yahweh said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in executing what was right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation."[31]But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, by which he made Israel sin.

[32]In those days Yahweh began to cut off regions from Israel, and Hazael defeated the Israelites at the borders of Israel,
[33]from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, through Gilead to Bashan.
[34]As for the other matters concerning Jehu, and all that he did, and all his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[35]Jehu lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz his son became king in his place.[36]The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

2 Kings 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's prophecy against the family of Ahab was fulfilled. Jehu killed all of Ahab's descendants and all the worshipers of Baal. (See: prophet and fulfill)

Links:

2 Kings 10:1 Notes

2 Kings 10:1

seventy descendants

"70 descendants"

Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria

This means that Jehu sent a messenger to deliver the letters. Alternate translation: "Jehu wrote letters and sent a messenger to deliver them in Samaria"

2 Kings 10:3

set him on his father's throne

Here, sitting on the king's throne means to be appointed as king. Alternate translation: "make him king in his father's place"

for your master's royal line

"your master's descendants." Here the man that they selected to be king is referred to as Ahab's royal line of descendants. Alternate translation: "to defend your master's descendant" or "to defend him"

2 Kings 10:4

But they were terrified

"Then they were very afraid"

the two kings

"two kings, Joram and Ahaziah"

could not stand before Jehu

Here "stand" means to be able to endure under trouble. Alternate translation: "could not endure against Jehu" or "could not resist Jehu"

So how can we stand?

The descendants use the rhetorical question to imply that they cannot stand against Jehu. Alternate translation: "We cannot stand against him either!" or "We cannot resist him either!"

2 Kings 10:5

the man who was over the city

"the mayor of the city." Here to be "over" something means to have authority and responsibility over it. Alternate translation: "the man who was in charge of the city"

they who raised the children

This refers to the people who raised the king's children. Alternate translation: "they who raised the king's children"

Do what is good in your eyes

Here Jehu's "eyes" refer to his "sight." His "sight" refers to what he thinks. Alternate translation: "Do what you judge

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to be right" or "Do whatever you think is the best"
2 Kings 10:6
wrote a letter the second time to them
Joram had written one letter. This was the next. Alternate translation: "again wrote a letter to them" or "wrote another letter to them"
on my side
To "be on someone's side" means to be loyal to them and supportive of them. Alternate translation: "loyal to me"
listen
to hear and obey
to my voice
Here Jehu's "voice" refer to what he says. Alternate translation: "to what I say"
you must take the heads ... and come to me
It is implied that they are to bring the heads of the Ahab's descendant and present them to Jehu. Alternate translation: "you must take the heads ... and bring them to me"
you must take the heads of the men of your master's descendants
This refers to killing them and removing their heads. Alternate translation: "kill your master's descendants and cut off their heads"
seventy in number
"70 in number"
who were bringing them up
This means that they were supervising them and teaching them. Alternate translation: "who were raising them" or "who were supervising them"
2 Kings 10:7
seventy persons
"70 persons"
sent them to Jehu
This means that they sent people to deliver the baskets to Jehu. Alternate translation: "sent people to take them to Jehu"
2 Kings 10:8
of the king's sons
"of Ahab's descendants"
2 Kings 10:9
Jehu went out and stood
"Jehu went to the city gate and stood before the people"
You are innocent
It can be stated clearly what they were innocent of. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "You are innocent of what happened to Joram" or 2) this means that they are not held responsible for the deaths of Joram's family. Alternate translation: "You are innocent of what happened to Joram and his family" or "You are innocent of this matter"
See
Jehu uses this word here to draw the peoples' attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Hear my words"
but who killed all these?
Jehu uses a rhetorical question to cause the people to think deeply about the situation. This can be written as a statement. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "but the men of Samaria are responsible for killing Ahab's 70 descendants" or 2) Alternate translation: "but it was Yahweh's will for these men to die"
2 Kings 10:10
certainly realize
"understand" or "be aware of the fact that"
no part of Yahweh's word ... will fall to the ground
This speaks of everything happening that Yahweh has said will happen as if it were something that did not die and fall to the ground. Alternate translation: "No part of Yahweh's word ... will fail" or "every part of Yahweh's word ... will happen"
Yahweh has done
This speaks of Yahweh causing Ahab's descendants to be killed as if he killed them himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has caused to happen"
2 Kings 10:11
So Jehu killed all ... and his priests
Jehu did not kill all of these people personally, rather he commanded for them to be killed. Alternate translation: "So Jehu commanded for all ... to be killed" or "So Jehu commanded for all ... to die"
all who remained
"all who were alive" or "all who were left"
until no survivor remained to him
This means that none of Ahab's family, friends, and loyal officials were alive. Alternate translation: "until all of his people were dead"
2 Kings 10:12
Beth Eked of the shepherd
This was the name of a place where sheep were sheared.
2 Kings 10:13
going down to greet
"going to visit"
the children of the king
"the children of King Joram"
2 Kings 10:14
Take them alive
This means to capture them, but not to kill them. Alternate translation: "Seize them" or "Capture them"
So they took them alive
"So they captured them"
forty-two men
"42 men"
He did not leave any of them alive
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He killed all of them"
2 Kings 10:15
Jehonadab son of Rekab
This is the name of a man.
Is your heart with me, as my heart is with yours? ... "It is."
Here a person's "heart" refers to their loyality. If a person's loyalty is "with someone," it means that they are loyal to that person. Alternate translation: "Will you be loyal to me, as I will be loyal to you? ... 'I will.'"
If it is, give me your hand
"If so, put your hand in mine" or "If so, let us shake hands"
In many cultures, when two people shake hands, it confirms their agreement.
2 Kings 10:16
see my zeal
The word "zeal" may be expressed as an adjective.

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Alternate translation: "see how zealous I am"
2 Kings 10:17
royal line
"entire royal family"
just as was told them before by the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken to Elijah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the prophecy that Elijah had spoken, which Yahweh gave to him"
2 Kings 10:18
gathered all the people together
"called all the people and had them come to where he was"
all the people together
all the people of the city of Samaria
serve him much
"serve him much more than Ahab did"
2 Kings 10:19
Let no one be left out
"Do not leave anyone out"
Whoever does not come will not live
This means that if they do not come they will be executed. Alternate translation: "We will execute anyone who does not come"
2 Kings 10:20
Announce that there will be an assembly for Baal
"Tell the people to come for an assembly to honor Baal." The messengers were to tell that there would be an assembly and when it would take place.
2 Kings 10:21
Then Jehu sent
This means that he sent messengers to take this message throughout the land. Alternate translation: "Then Jehu sent messengers" or "Then Jehu sent the message"
so that there was not a man left who did not come
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "so that every worshiper of Baal was there" or "so that every man came"
it was filled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they filled it"
2 Kings 10:22
who kept the priest's wardrobe
Here "to keep" something means to care for it and oversee it. Alternate translation: "who was in charge of the priest's wardrobe" or "who cared for the priest's wardrobe"
2 Kings 10:23
he said to the worshipers of Baal
"Jehu said to the people who were in the temple to worship Baal"
but the worshipers of Baal alone
"but that only worshipers of Baal are here"
2 Kings 10:24
If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escapes
Here the "hands" of the men refer to their "control." By being stationed around the temple they were in control of the situation and it was up to them whether people were able to escape or not. Alternate translation: "If any of these men that I brought into your control escapes" or "If any of the men that are inside gets away"
whoever lets that man escape, his life will be taken for the life of the one who escaped
"we will kill the man who let him escape"
his life will be taken
This can be stated in active form. This is a polite way to refer to a person being killed. Alternate translation: "we will take his life" or "we will kill him"
for the life of the one
"in exchange for the life of the man." Here this man is referred to by his "life" to emphasize that he did not die. Alternate translation: "for the man"
2 Kings 10:25
he said to his bodyguards and to the officers
You may need to state that Jehu came out of the temple before he spoke to the guard. Alternate translation: "he went back outside of the temple of Baal and said to his bodyguards and to the officers"
with the edge of the sword
The men used swords to kill the worshipers of Baal. This phrase refers to their swords. Alternate translation: "with their swords"
threw them out
This means that threw the dead bodies of the people out of the temple. Alternate translation: "threw their dead bodies out of the temple"
2 Kings 10:27
made it a latrine
"made it a public toilet" A latrine is a bathroom, or a toilet area, usually for a camp or buildings used to house soldiers.
which it is to this day
This means that something has remained in a certain condition until the present time. Alternate translation: "and since then it has always been that way"
2 Kings 10:29
did not leave the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat
This speaks of Jehu committing the same sins that Jeroboam committed, as if Jeroboam's sins were a place that Jehu did not leave. Alternate translation: "did not stop committing the kinds of sins that Jeroboam son of Nebat had committed"
Nebat
See how you translated this man's name in [2 Kings 3:3]
2 Kings 10:30
in executing
"in carrying out" or "in accomplishing"
what was right in my eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what I judge to be right" or "what I consider to be right"
the house of Ahab
Here Ahab's "house" refers to his "family." Alternate translation: "the family of Ahab"
all that was in my heart
Here the "heart" represents "desire." Alternate translation: "all that I desired for you to do" or "all that I wanted you to do"
sit on the throne
Sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. Alternate translation: "be the kings"

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to the fourth generation
This refers to his son, grandson, great-grandson, and great-great-grandson. Alternate translation: "to the 4th generation" or "for four more generations"
2 Kings 10:31
Jehu took no care to walk in the law of Yahweh
Here "walking" refers to "living." Alternate translation: "Jehu was not careful to live according to the law of Yahweh"
with all his heart
Here the "heart" refers to a person's will and desire. Alternate translation: "in everything that he did" or "with all of his will"
He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam
To "turn away" from something means to stop doing it. Alternate translation: "Jehu did not stop from sinning in the same ways as Jeroboam"
2 Kings 10:32
began to cut off regions from Israel
"began to cause the territory controlled by Israel to become smaller"
regions
areas of land
Hazael defeated
Here "Hazael" refers to himself and his army. Alternate translation: "Hazael and his army" or "King Hazael's Aramean army"
Hazael
See how you translated this king's name in [2 Kings 8:8]
2 Kings 10:33
from the Jordan eastward
"from the land east of the Jordan"
Aroer ... Bashan
These are all names of places.
the Arnon
"the Arnon River" This is the name of a river.
2 Kings 10:34
are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?
This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 1:18]
2 Kings 10:35
Jehu lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria
This is a polite way of saying that he died. This speaks of him being buried where his ancestors were buried as if he were sleeping with them. Alternate translation: "Jehu died and they buried him in Samaria, where they had also buried his ancestors"
Jehoahaz
This is the name of a man.
2 Kings 10:36
The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years
"Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-eight years"
twenty-eight years
"28 years"

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11 [1]Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and killed all the royal children.
[2]But Jehosheba, a daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and hid him away from among the king's sons who were killed, along with his nurse; she put them into a bedroom. They hid him from Athaliah so that he was not killed.[3]He remained with her six years, hidden in the house of Yahweh, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

[4]In the seventh year, Jehoiada sent messages and brought the commanders of hundreds of the Carites and of the guard, and brought them to himself, into the temple of Yahweh. He made a covenant with them, and he made them swear an oath in the house of Yahweh. Then he showed them the king's son.[5]He commanded them, saying, "This is what you must do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath will keep watch over the king's house,[6]and a third will be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse. You shall guard the guardhouse of the temple."
[7]The two other groups who are not serving on the Sabbath, you must keep the watch over the house of Yahweh for the king.[8]You must surround the king, every man with his weapons in his hand. Whoever enters within your ranks, let him be killed. You must stay with the king when he goes out, and when he comes in.

[9]So the commanders of hundreds obeyed everything Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each one took his men, those who were to come in to serve on the Sabbath, and those who were to stop serving on that Sabbath; and they came to Jehoiada the priest.[10]Then Jehoiada the priest gave the commanders of hundreds the spears and shields that belonged to King David and that were in the house of Yahweh.
[11]So the guards stood, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side, near the altar and the temple, surrounding the king.[12]Then Jehoiada brought out the king's son Joash, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant decrees. Then they made him king and anointed him. They clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

[13]When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people in the house of Yahweh.[14]She looked, and, behold, the king was standing by the pillar, as the custom was, and the captains and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and shouted, "Treason! Treason!"

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[15]Then Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of hundreds who were over the army, saying, "Bring her out between the ranks. Anyone who follows her, kill him with the sword." For the priest had said, "Do not let her be killed in the house of Yahweh."[16]So they seized her as she reached the horses' entrance to the king's house, and there she was killed.

[17]Then Jehoiada made a covenant between Yahweh and the king and people, that they should be Yahweh's people, and also between the king and the people.[18]So all the people of the land went to the house of Baal and tore it down. They smashed Baal's altars and his idol figures to pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those altars. Then Jehoida the priest appointed guards over the temple of Yahweh.
[19]Jehoida took with him the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guard, and all the people of the land, and together they brought down the king from the house of Yahweh and they went into the king's house, entering by way of the gate of the guards. Joash took his place on the royal throne.[20]So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

[21]Joash was seven years old when he began to reign.

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2 Kings 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the beginning of the story of the spiritual revival in Judah under Joash. The people returned to properly worshiping Yahweh. (See: spirit)

Special concepts in this chapter

Athaliah's evil actions

The mother of the king of Judah, Athaliah, killed all the royal children so that she could rule. She was not able to kill the baby Joash because his aunt hid him in the temple. When Joash was seven years old, the chief priest conspired with the army and made Joash king. They killed Athaliah and destroyed the temple of Baal. (See: temple)

Links:

2 Kings 11:1 Notes

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2 Kings 11:1

Athaliah

This is the name of a woman.

saw that her son was dead

"became aware that her son was dead"

she arose and killed all the royal children

Athaliah did not personally kill the children. Alternate translation: "she commanded her servants to kill all the members of Ahaziah's family who might become king"

2 Kings 11:2

took Joash son of Ahaziah, and hid him away from among the king's sons who were killed, along with his nurse; she put them into a bedroom. They hid him from Athaliah so that he was not killed.

"took Ahaziah's very young son Joash and hid him and his nursemaid in a bedroom in the temple. So he was not killed"

Jehosheba

This is the name of a woman.

Joash

This is the name of a man.

2 Kings 11:3

He remained with her six years, hidden in the house of Yahweh, while Athaliah reigned over the land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joash and Jehosheba hid him in the house of Yahweh for six years while Athaliah ruled the land"

land

This is a metonym for the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "people of Judah"

2 Kings 11:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the story of what happens after Joash, the son of King Azahiah, was hidden in the temple after all King Azahiah's other descendants were killed.

In the seventh year

"In the seventh year of Athaliah's reign" or "In year 7 of Athaliah's reign"

Jehoiada

the high priest

the commanders of hundreds

The phrases "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that each of these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions"

Carites

This is the name of a particular group of the royal guards.

brought them to himself

"had them come to meet with him." Jehoiada, the high priest, had these military men report to him at the temple.

Then he showed them the king's son

Jehoiada revealed to them that Joash, King Azahiah's son, was still alive.

2 Kings 11:7

General Information:

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Jehoiada continues giving directions to the soldiers who will protect King Joash.

for the king

They were to keep watch for the purpose of protecting the king from harm. Alternate translation: "in order to protect King Joash"

2 Kings 11:8

Whoever enters within your ranks

"Anyone who tries to go past you while you are protecting King Joash." A rank refers to a line of soldiers.

let him be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must kill him"

You must stay with the king when he goes out, and when he comes in

These two opposite things are a merism that refers to everything the king does. Alternate translation: "You must stay near the king at all times"

2 Kings 11:9

the commanders of hundreds

The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that each of these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions" See how you translated this in [2 Kings 11:4]

Each one

"Each commander"

2 Kings 11:10

were in the house of Yahweh

"were stored in the temple"

2 Kings 11:11

from the right side of the temple to the left side, near the altar and the temple

Some versions translate the first two occurrences of "temple" as "palace." These versions say, "from the right side of the palace to the left side of the palace, near the altar and the temple."

2 Kings 11:12

brought out the king's son Joash

Jehoiada, the high priest, brought king Ahaziah's son, Joash, out from the temple apartment where he had been raised in hiding.

gave him the covenant decrees

"presented him with the book of the law"

anointed him

The priest poured olive oil on the head of Joash as a symbol that he was now the king. Alternate translation: "poured some olive oil on Joash's head"

clapped their hands

Clapping their hands was a sign of the happiness of the people at the anointing of the new king.

2 Kings 11:13

the noise of the guard

This refers to the noise made by all the soldiers.

she came to the people in the house of Yahweh

"she came to where the people had gathered at the temple"

2 Kings 11:14

She looked, and, behold, the king was standing

"When she arrived, she was surprised to see King Joash standing"

by the pillar

"by one of the pillars of the temple"

as the custom was

"which was the usual place for the king to stand"

the trumpeters

"the people who played the trumpets"

Athaliah tore her clothes

She tore her clothes to express that she was very upset and angry.

Treason! Treason!

"You are traitors! You have betrayed me!"

2 Kings 11:15

the commanders of hundreds

The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that each of these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions" See how you translated this in [2 Kings 11:4]

Bring her out between the ranks

"Take her away between two rows of guards" or "Lead her away with a row of soldiers on each side of her." Ranks are lines or rows of soldiers.

Anyone who follows her

It is implied that a person who followed her would be trying to help her. Alternate translation: "Anyone who follows to try to rescue her"

2 Kings 11:16

they seized her as she reached the horses' entrance to the king's house

Some versions translate this as "the guards seized her and took her to the palace, to the place where horses enter the courtyard."

the horses' entrance to the king's house

"where the horses enter the palace grounds"

2 Kings 11:17

also between the king and the people

"also made a covenant between the king and the people"

2 Kings 11:18

all the people of the land

This is a generalization to show that a large group of people tore down the temple of Baal. Alternate translation: a large number of the people of the land"

the house of Baal

"the temple of Baal"

Mattan

This is the name of a male priest.

2 Kings 11:19

General Information:

They take the new king, Joash, from the temple to the palace.

the commanders of hundreds

The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that each of these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions" See how you translated this in [2 Kings 11:4]

Carites

This is the name of a particular group of the royal guards.

brought down the king from the house of Yahweh and they went into the king's house

"brought the king from the temple to the palace"

2 Kings 11:20

all the people of the land rejoiced

This is a generalization. It is possible that some did not rejoice. Alternate translation: "many people in the land rejoiced"

the city was quiet

"the city was calm" or "the city was peaceful"

2 Kings 11:21

Joash was seven years old

"Joash was 7 years old"

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12 [1]In the seventh year of Jehu, the reign of Joash began; he reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah, of Beersheba.[2]Joash did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh all the time, because Jehoiada the priest was instructing him.[3]But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

[4]Joash said to the priests, "All the money that is brought in as sacred offerings into the house of Yahweh, that money for which each person is assessed—whether it is the money collected in the census, or the money received from personal vows, or the money brought in by people motivated by Yahweh in their hearts to give—[5]the priests should receive the money from one of their treasurers and repair whatever damage is found in the temple."
[6]But by the twenty-third year of King Joash, the priests had not repaired anything in the temple.[7]Then King Joash called for Jehoiada the priest and for the other priests; he said to them, "Why have you not repaired anything in the temple? Now take no more money from your taxpayers, but take what has been collected for repairs of the temple and give it to those who can make the repairs."[8]So the priests consented to take no more money from the people and not repair the temple themselves.

[9]Then, Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of Yahweh. The priests who were guarding the temple entrance put into it all the money that was brought to the house of Yahweh.[10]Whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest would come and put the money in bags and then count it, the money found in the temple of Yahweh.
[11]They gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of men who took care of the temple of Yahweh. They paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the temple of Yahweh,[12]and to the masons and the stonecutters, for buying timber and cutting stone to repair the temple of Yahweh, and for all that was needed to be paid to repair it.
[13]But the money that was brought into the house of Yahweh did not pay to make for it any silver cups, lamp trimmers, basins, trumpets, or any gold or silver furnishing.[14]They gave this money to those who did the work of repairing the house of Yahweh.
[15]In addition, they did not require the money paid for repairs to be accounted for by the men who received it and paid it to the workmen, because these men practiced faithfulness.[16]But the money for the guilt offerings and the money for the sin offerings was not brought into the temple of Yahweh, because it belonged to the priests.

[17]Then Hazael king of Aram attacked and fought against Gath, and took it. Hazael then turned to attack Jerusalem.[18]Joash king of Judah took all the things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had set apart, and what he had set apart, and all the gold that was found in the storerooms of the houses of Yahweh and of the king and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram. Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem.

[19]As for the other matters concerning Joash, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[20]His servants arose and plotted together; they attacked Joash in Beth Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla.
[21]Jozabad[1] son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, attacked him, and he died. They buried Joash with his ancestors in the city of David, and Amaziah, his son, became king in his place.

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[1]Some ancient copies have Jozacar.

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2 Kings 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the end of the story of the revival in Judah under Joash.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Temple

Joash repaired the temple. In many ways, the temple represents the relationship between the people and Yahweh. (See: temple)

Links:

2 Kings 12:1 Notes

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2 Kings 12:1

In the seventh year of Jehu

"During year 7 of the reign of Jehu over Israel"

the reign of Joash began

"Joash began to reign over Judah"

Zibiah

This was the name of a woman.

Zibiah, of Beersheba

"Zibiah, from the city of Beersheba"

2 Kings 12:2

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judges to be right" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"

instructing him

"teaching him"

2 Kings 12:3

But the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the people did not destroy the high places"

The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places

Yawheh forbid the people to worship at these place. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "The people continued to go to places that were unacceptable to Yahweh, to make sacrifices and burn incense"

2 Kings 12:4

the money that is brought in as sacred offerings into the house of Yahweh

This refers to money that people gave to support the temple. This money came in three forms that are described in the rest of the sentence.

2 Kings 12:6

by the twenty-third year of King Joash

"when Joash had been king for twenty three years"

2 Kings 12:7

Why have you not repaired anything in the temple?

Joash asks this question to rebuke the priests. Alternate translation: "You should have been repairing the temple!"

give it to those who can make the repairs

"pay workers who will do the repairs"

2 Kings 12:9

on the right side as one comes into the house of Yahweh

"on the right side of the entrance to the temple"

put into it

"put into the chest" or "put in the box"

the money that was brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the money that people brought"

2 Kings 12:10

put the money in bags and then count it

Many versions put this in a more logical order such as "count the money and put it in bags."

put the money in bags

Possible meanings are 1) "put the money in bags" or 2) "tied up the money in bags" .

the money found

"the money that they found in the chest"

2 Kings 12:11

weighed out

"counted"

into the hands of men

Here "hands" refers to the men. Alternate translation: "to men"

who took care of the temple

"who repaired the temple"

carpenters

people who build and repair things made of wood

2 Kings 12:12

masons

people who build with stone

stonecutters

people who cut stones into the correct size and shape

for buying timber and cutting stone

"to buy wood and to cut stone"

for all that was needed to be paid to repair it

"to pay for all of the needed repairs"

2 Kings 12:13

did not pay to make for it any

"was not spent to pay for any of the temple's"

silver cups, lamp trimmers, basins, trumpets, or any gold or silver furnishing

These are items that would have been used by the priests for various temple tasks, such as sacrifices or festivals.

2 Kings 12:15

they did not require the money paid for repairs to be accounted for by the men who received it and paid it to the workmen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they did not require the men who received the money and paid the workmen for the repairs to account for the money"

to be accounted for

to keep a record of how much money was received and spent

2 Kings 12:16

the money for the guilt offerings and the money for the sin offerings was not brought into the temple of Yahweh

It is implied that this money was not used for the repairs. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they did not use the money from the guilt offerings and the sin offerings to pay for the repairs to the temple of Yahweh"

2 Kings 12:17

Hazael king of Aram attacked ... Hazael then turned to attack

This refers to Hazael's army as well as to Hazael. Alternate

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translation: "Hazael king of Aram and his army attacked ... Then they turned to attack"

Hazael

This is the name of the king of the country of Syria.

took it

"defeated and took control of it"

2 Kings 12:18

Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers

These men were previous kings of Judah.

set apart

"dedicated"

the gold that was found in the storerooms

"the gold that was stored in the storerooms"

Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem

The gifts Joash gave Hazael convinced him not to attack Jerusalem. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "So Hazael stopped attacking Jerusalem and left"

2 Kings 12:19

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to remind the reader that these things are recorded. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 12:20

Silla

The location of this place is unknown.

2 Kings 12:21

Jozabad ... Shimeath ... Jehozabad ... Shomer ... Amaziah

These are names of men.

with his ancestors

"in the place where his ancestors were buried"

became king in his place

"became the next king of Judah"

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13 [1]In the twenty-third year of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned seventeen years.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; and Jehoahaz did not turn away from them.
[3]The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and he gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram and into the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael.[4]So Jehoahaz implored Yahweh, and Yahweh listened to him because he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram was oppressing them.[5]So Yahweh gave Israel a rescuer, and they escaped from the hand of the Arameans, and the people of Israel began to live in their tents as they had before.
[6]Nevertheless, they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin, and they continued in them; and the Asherah pole remained in Samaria.[7]The Arameans left Jehoahaz with only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen, for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the chaff at threshing time.
[8]As for the other matters concerning Jehoahaz, and all that he did and his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[9]So Jehoahaz lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Jehoash his son became king in his place.

[10]In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, the reign of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began over Israel in Samaria; he reigned sixteen years.[11]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had made Israel to sin, but he walked in them.
[12]As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, and all that he did, and his might by which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[13]Jehoash lay down with his ancestors, and Jeroboam sat on his throne. Jehoash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

[14]Now Elisha became sick with an illness by which he later died, so Jehoash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him. He said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen are taking you away!"[15]Elisha said to him, "Pick up a bow and some arrows," so Joash picked up a bow and some arrows.[16]Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow," so he put his hand on it. Then Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands.
[17]Elisha said, "Open the window eastward," so he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!", and he shot. Elisha said, "This is Yahweh's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram, for you will attack the Arameans in Aphek until you have consumed them."[18]Then Elisha said, "Take the arrows," so Joash took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them," and he struck the ground three times, then stopped.[19]But the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have hit the ground five or six times. Then you would have attacked Aram until you annihilated it, but now you will attack Aram only three times."

[20]Then Elisha died, and they buried him. Now marauding bands of Moabites invaded the land at the beginning of the year.
[21]As they were burying a certain man, they saw a marauding band of Moabites, so they threw the body into Elisha's grave. As soon as the man touched Elisha's bones, he revived and stood up on his feet.

[22]Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.[23]But Yahweh was gracious to Israel, and had compassion on them and concern for them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So Yahweh did not destroy them, and he still has not driven them away from his presence.
[24]Hazael king of Aram died, and Ben-Hadad his son became king in his place.[25]Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took back from Ben-Hadad son of Hazael the cities that had been taken from Jehoahaz his father by war. Jehoash attacked him three times, and he recovered those cities of Israel.

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2 Kings 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the last chapter about Elisha.

Special concepts in this chapter

Elisha's death

The king of Israel is upset when Elisha is dying. Elisha assures him that he will have three victories over Aram.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The king compares the protection that Elisha had given Israel to "The chariot of Israel and the horsemen."

Links:

2 Kings 13:1 Notes

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2 Kings 13:1

In the twenty-third year of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah

"After Joash had been ruling Judah for almost 23 years"

reign over Israel in Samaria

"rule over the kingdom of Israel located in Samaria"

he reigned seventeen years

"Jehoahaz was king for 17 years"

2 Kings 13:2

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

followed the sins of Jeroboam

"did the same sins as Jeroboam"

Jehoahaz did not turn away from them

Here stopping his sin is spoken of as if he turned away from them. This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Jehoahaz did not stop doing the sins of Jeroboam" or "Jehoahaz continued to do the same sins as Jeroboam"

2 Kings 13:3

The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel

Yahweh becoming angry with Israel is spoken of as if his anger was a fire that burned. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh became very angry with Israel"

gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram and into the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael

Here "them" refers to Israel and "hand" refers to the power to control them. Alternate translation: "allowed Hazael the king of Aram, and Ben-Hadad, his son, to repeatedly defeat the Israelites in battle"

2 Kings 13:4

implored Yahweh

"prayed to Yahweh"

he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram was oppressing them

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. The abstract noun "oppression" means the same as "the king of Aram was oppressing them." Alternate translation: "he saw how severely the king of Aram was oppressing Israel"

2 Kings 13:5

a rescuer

"someone to rescue them"

they escaped from the hand of the Arameans

Here "hand" refers to the power to control them. Alternate translation: "he enabled them to be free from Aram's power"

their tents

"their homes." The Israelites were living in houses at this time.

2 Kings 13:6

they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam

To stop sinning is spoken of as if they departed from the sins. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Israel did not stop doing the same sins as Jeroboam had done" or "Israel continued to commit the same sins as Jeroboam had committed"

house of Jeroboam

"the family of Jeroboam"

2 Kings 13:7

had destroyed them

"had defeated the army of Jehoahaz"

made them like the chaff at threshing time

The Aramean army had so severely defeated the army of Israel that what remained was so worthless that it is compared to wheat chaff that the laborers walk on at harvest time. Alternate translation: "had crushed them as workers crush chaff under their feet at harvest time"

2 Kings 13:8

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to remind the reader that the acts of Jehoahaz are recorded in another book. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 1:18]

2 Kings 13:9

lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died.

Jehoash

This is a man's name. Many translations read, "Joash."

2 Kings 13:10

In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah

"After Joash had ruled Judah for almost 37 years"

the reign of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began over Israel in Samaria

"Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began to rule over Israel in

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Samaria"

Jehoash

This was a king of Israel who was the son of Jehoahaz.

2 Kings 13:11

He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here "sight" represents God's thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "He did things that Yahweh considers to be evil"

He did not leave behind any of the sins of Jeroboam

To stop sinning is spoken of as if he left behind the sins. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Jehoash did not stop committing the same sins as Jeroboam" or "Jehoash kept committing the same sins as Jeroboam"

by which he had made Israel to sin

"by which Jeroboam had caused Israel to sin"

but he walked in them

To sin is spoken of as if he was walking along a sinful path. Alternate translation: "but Jehoash continued to do these same sins"

2 Kings 13:12

his might by which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah

Here the strength of Jehoash's army is spoken of as Jehoash's "might." Alternate translation: "the power that his army showed when they fought against the army of Amaziah king of Judah"

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to remind the reader that the acts of Jehoahaz are recorded in another book. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 1:18]

2 Kings 13:13

Jehoash lay down with his ancestors

This a polite way to say that Jehoash died.

Jeroboam sat on his throne

Here "sat on his throne" refers to ruling as king. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam became king after him" or "Jeroboam began to rule after him"

2 Kings 13:14

wept over him

"wept because Elisha was sick"

My father, my father

Elisha was not the king's literal father. King Joash used this term as a sign of respect.

the chariots of Israel and the horsemen are taking you away

This is a reference to Elijah going to heaven in [2 Kings 2:11]

the horsemen

This refers to the men who drove the chariots. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the drivers of the chariots"

2 Kings 13:17

General Information:

Elisha continues to talk to Joash, king of Israel.

Open the window eastward

"open the window that faces east" or "open that window towards the east"

so he opened it

Since this happens after Joash takes the bow and arrows, he may have had a servant open the window. Alternate translation: "So a servant opened it"

he shot

"Joash shot the arrow"

This is Yahweh's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram

The relationship between the arrow and victory can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "This arrow is a sign from Yahweh that he will give you victory over Aram" or "This arrow symbolizes the victory Yahweh will give you over Aram"

Aphek

This was a city in the land of Israel.

2 Kings 13:19

But the man of God was angry with him

"But Elisha was angry with King Joash"

until you annihilated it

"until you completely destroyed it" or "until they were completely wiped out"

2 Kings 13:20

Now

This word marks a stop in the main story. This new section gives background information for the part of the story that follows.

at the beginning of the year

"each year during spring"

2 Kings 13:21

As they were burying a certain man

"As some Israelites were burying a man's body"

they saw a marauding band of Moabites

It can be made explicit that they were afraid of the Moabites. Alternate translation: "they saw a group of Moabite raiders coming toward them and they were afraid"

Elisha's grave

"the grave where Elisha was buried"

As soon as the man touched Elisha's bones

Here "the man" refers to his dead body. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "As soon as the dead man's body touched the bones of Elisha"

he revived and stood up on his feet

"the dead man came back to life and stood up"

2 Kings 13:23

But Yahweh was gracious to Israel, and had compassion on them and concern for them

It may be helpful to divide this sentence into shorter parts. Alternate translation: "But Yahweh was very kind to the Israelite people. He helped them"

So Yahweh did not destroy them

Yahweh's covenant is the reason he did not destroy Israel. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "This is the reason that Yahweh did not destroy them" or "Because of his covenant, Yahweh did not destroy them"

has not driven them away from his presence

Yahweh's rejection is spoken of as if he had physically driven Israel away from where he was. Alternate translation: "has not rejected them"

2 Kings 13:24

Hazael ... Ben-Hadad

These are names of kings.

became king in his place

"became king after him"

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2 Kings 13:25

Jehoash ... Jehoahaz

These are names of kings.

Jehoash attacked him three times

Here "Jehoash" and "him" refer to the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: "Jehoash's army attacked Ben-Hadad's army three times"

he recovered those cities of Israel

"Jehoash took back control of the Israelite cities that Ben-Hadad had captured"

14 [1]In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign.[2]He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan, of Jerusalem.[3]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, yet not like David his father. He did everything that Joash, his father, had done.
[4]But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.[5]It came about that as soon as his rule was well established, he killed the servants who had murdered his father, the king.
[6]Yet he did not put to death the sons of the murderers, according to what was written in the book of the law of Moses, as Yahweh had commanded, saying, "Fathers must not be put to death because of their children, neither must the children be put to death because of their fathers. But each one must die for his own sin."[7]He killed ten thousand soldiers of Edom in the Valley of Salt; he also took Sela in war and called it Joktheel, which is what it is called to this day.

[8]Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet each other face to face in battle."[9]But Jehoash the king of Israel sent messengers back to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "A thistle that was in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' but a wild beast in Lebanon walked by and trampled down the thistle.[10]You have indeed attacked Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Take pride in your victory, but stay at home, for why should you cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you?"

[11]But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel attacked and he and Amaziah king of Judah met each other face to face at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah.[12]Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent.
[13]Jehoash king of Israel, captured Amaziah, king of Judah son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh. He came to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits in distance.[14]He took all the gold and silver, all the objects that were found in the house of Yahweh, and the valuable things in the king's palace, with hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

[15]As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, all that he did, his power, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[16]Then Jehoash lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam, his son, became king in his place.

[17]Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel.[18]As for the other matters concerning Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[19]They made a conspiracy against Amaziah in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. He fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and killed him there.
[20]They brought him back on horses, and he was buried with his ancestors in Jerusalem in the city of David.[21]All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah.[22]It was Azariah who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah lay down with his ancestors.

[23]In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years.[24]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.[25]He restored the border of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, following the commands of the word of Yahweh, the God of Israel, which he had spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath Hepher.
[26]For Yahweh saw the suffering of Israel, that it was very bitter for everyone, both slave and free, and that there was no rescuer for Israel.[27]But Yahweh had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he delivered them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

[28]As for the other matters concerning Jeroboam, all that he did, his power, how he waged war and recovered Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?
[29]Jeroboam lay down with his ancestors, with the kings of Israel, and Zechariah his son became king in his place.

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2 Kings 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The text begins to alternate between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah again.

Special concepts in this chapter

Pride

Pride in one's success can make a person attempt and fail at something else. Amaziah defeated Edom so he wanted to fight Israel. But Israel defeated him and thoroughly humiliated him.

Links:

2 Kings 14:1 Notes

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2 Kings 14:1

In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel

"When Jehoash son of Jehoahaz had been king of Israel for almost two years"

Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign

"Amaziah son of Joash, became the king of Judah"

2 Kings 14:2

He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign

"He was 25 years old when he became king"

he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem

"he was the king in Jerusalem for 29 years"

Jehoaddan

2 Kings 14:3

He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, yet not like David his father

Here "the eyes of Yahweh" refers to his sight, and his sight refers to his judgment. Alternate translation: "Amaziah did many things that pleased Yahweh, but he did not do as many things that pleased Yahweh as King David had done"

He did everything that Joash, his father, had done

Joash obeyed Yahweh and did good things. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "He did the same good things that his father Joash had done"

2 Kings 14:4

General Information:

The story of Amaziah's rule as king of Judah continues.

But the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. The high places were used for pagan worship. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But he did not remove the high places"

sacrificed and burned incense at the high places

The high places were used for pagan worship. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "sacrificed and burned incense to pagan gods at the high places"

2 Kings 14:5

It came about

This is used to introduce a new event.

as soon as his rule was well established

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as soon as Amaziah securely established his royal rule and kingly authority"

he killed the servants

Amaziah probably ordered other people to kill the officials. Alternate translation: "he made his servants execute the officials"

2 Kings 14:6

General Information:

The narrator tells about what king Amaziah did after his father King Joash was murdered.

Yet he did not put to death the sons of the murderers

King Amaziah did not order his servants to kill the children of the men who killed his father. If he was going to have them executed though, he would have commanded his servants do it, he would not have done it himself. Alternate translation: "But he did not tell his servants to execute those officials' children"

the sons of the murderers, according to what was written in the book of the law of Moses

"the sons of the murderers. He obeyed what was written in the book of the law of Moses"

Fathers must not be put to death because of their children, neither must the children be put to death because of their fathers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People must not kill the fathers for the sins of their children, and they must not kill the children for the sins of their parents"

2 Kings 14:7

He killed

Here "He" refers to his army. Alternate translation: "Amaziah's army killed" or "Amaziah's soldiers killed"

ten thousand soldiers

"10,000 soldiers"

Valley of Salt

This is the name of a place that is located south of the Dead Sea.

he also took Sela in war

Here the word "he" refers to King amaziah and represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "King Amaziah's army captured the city of Sela"

Sela ... Joktheel

They renamed the city of Sela. The new name was Joktheel.

2 Kings 14:8

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet each other face to face in battle."

Here "each other" also included their armies. Alternate translation: "Then Amaziah sent messengers to King Jehoash of Israel, saying, 'Come here and let us and our armies fight each other in battle.'"

2 Kings 14:9

A thistle that was in Lebanon ... trampled down the thistle

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This is a word picture and a riddle. A cedar tree is great and a thistle is small and worthless. Jehoash compares himself to the cedar and Amaziah to the thistle and warns Amaziah not to attack. If you have a similar comparison in your own language, you can use it.

thistle

type of bush with thorns

saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,'

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "asking the cedar to give his daughter to the thistle's son for a wife"

2 Kings 14:10

You have indeed attacked Edom

This is the warning part of Jehoash's message to Amaziah. "Amaziah, you have definitely defeated Edom"

your heart has lifted you up

This is an idiom that refers to being proud. Alternate translation: "you are very proud of what you have done"

Take pride in your victory

"Be content with your victory"

for why should you cause yourself trouble and fall

Jehoash uses this question to warn Amaziah not to attack him. Alternate translation: "for you should not cause trouble for yourself and suffer defeat"

2 Kings 14:11

But Amaziah would not listen

Here "listen" refers to obeying the warning. Alternate translation: "However, Amaziah would not obey Jehoash's warning"

So Jehoash king of Israel attacked ... Amaziah king of Judah met each other

The armies of these kings went to battle with them. Alternate translation: "So Jehoash and his army went to fight Amaziah and his army and they met each other"

Beth Shemesh

This is a town in Judah near the border of Israel.

2 Kings 14:12

Judah was defeated by Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Israel defeated Judah"

every man fled to his tent

"all the men in the army of Judah ran home." The people of Judah lived in houses at this time.

2 Kings 14:13

General Information:

This is what happened after the army of Israel defeated the army of Judah at Beth Shemesh.

He came

Here "He" refers to Jehoash and his army. Alternate translation: "Jehoash and his army came ... Jehoash's soldiers took"

Ephraim Gate ... Corner Gate

There are the names of gates in the wall of Jerusalem.

four hundred cubits

"about 180 meters"

cubits

A cubit was about 46 centimeters.

2 Kings 14:14

He took

Here "He" refers to Jehoash and his army. Alternate translation: "Jehoash and his army came ... Jehoash's soldiers took"

with hostages also, and returned to Samaria

This implies that Jehoash needed to take these hostages to prevent Amaziah from attacking again. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and they also took to Samaria some prisoners to make sure that Amaziah would cause them no more trouble"

2 Kings 14:15

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to remind the reader that the acts of Jehoahaz are recorded in another book. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 1:18]

2 Kings 14:16

Then Jehoash lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way to say that he died. Alternate translation: "Then Jehoash died"

became king in his place

"became king after him"

2 Kings 14:18

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to remind the reader that these things are recorded. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 14:19

They made a conspiracy against Amaziah in Jerusalem

A conspiracy is a secret plan to do harm to someone or something. Alternate translation: "Some people in Jerusalem plotted against Amaziah"

Lachish

This is a city in southwestern Judah.

but they sent men after him to Lachish

The men who made the conspiracy sent other men to follow Amaziah to Lachish.

2 Kings 14:20

General Information:

This is what happened after the death of King Amaziah.

They brought him back on horses

"They brought Amaziah's body back on horses"

2 Kings 14:21

All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah

This is a generalization. Some people may not have wanted him to be king. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah took the 16 year-old Azariah and made him king after his father, Amaziah"

Azariah

This king is better known today by the name "Uzziah."

2 Kings 14:22

It was Azariah who rebuilt Elath

Azariah did not do this alone. Alternate translation: "It was Azariah who ordered Elath to be rebuilt" or "It was Azariah who supervised the rebuilding of Elath"

Elath

a city in Judah

restored it to Judah

"returned it to Judah"

lay down with his ancestors

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This is a poetic way to say he died.

2 Kings 14:23

General Information:

This describes what King Uzziah did after he became king.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah

"In year 15 of Amaziah"

forty-one years

"41 years"

2 Kings 14:24

evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here "sight" is a metaphor for judging or considering. Alternate translation: "evil according to Yahweh" or "what Yahweh considered to be evil"

He did not depart from any of the sins of Jeroboam

To stop sinning is spoken of as leaving a path. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He did not stop committing the same sins as Jeroboam" or "He continued to commit the same sins as Jeroboam"

2 Kings 14:25

He restored the border

This means his army restored the land up to the border. Alternate translation: "His soldiers conquered again some of the territory that had previously belonged to Israel"

Lebo Hamath

This city was also called Hamath.

the Sea of the Arabah

"the Dead Sea"

2 Kings 14:26

it was very bitter

Suffering that was difficult is spoken of as if it had a bitter taste. Alternate translation: "it was very difficult"

there was no rescuer for Israel

"there was no one who could rescue Israel"

2 Kings 14:27

blot out

To completely destroy Israel is spoken of as if Yahweh wiped them away with a cloth. Alternate translation: "completely destroy"

the name of Israel

Here "the name of Israel" represents all of Israel and its inhabitants. Alternate translation: "the Israelite people"

under heaven

"on earth"

so he delivered them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash

Here "hand" is a metonym for power. Also, "Jehoash" is a synecdoche representing Jehoash and his army. Alternate translation: "so he caused King Jeroboam and his army to rescue them"

2 Kings 14:28

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

This question is used to remind the reader that the acts of Jehoahaz are recorded in another book. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 1:18]

2 Kings 14:29

Jeroboam lay down with his ancestors, with the kings of Israel

This is a polite way to say that he died and was buried. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam died, and was buried where the other kings of Israel were buried"

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15 [1]In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign.[2]Azariah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekoliah, and she was from Jerusalem.[3]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Amaziah had done.
[4]However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.[5]Yahweh afflicted the king so that he was a leper to the day of his death and lived in a separate house. Jotham, the king's son, was over the household and ruled the people of the land.
[6]As for the other matters concerning Azariah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[7]So Azariah lay down with his ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in the city of David. Jotham, his son, became king in his place.

[8]In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria for six months.[9]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as his fathers had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.
[10]Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against Zechariah, attacked him in Ibleam, and put him to death. Then he became king in his place.[11]As for the other matters concerning Zechariah, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.[12]This was the word of Yahweh that he spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." That is what happened.

[13]Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he reigned only one month in Samaria.[14]Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to Samaria. There he attacked Shallum son of Jabesh, in Samaria. He put him to death and became king in his place.
[15]As for the other matters concerning Shallum and the conspiracy that he formed, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.[16]Then Menahem attacked Tiphsah and all who were there, and the borders around Tirzah, because they did not open up the city to him. So he attacked it, and he ripped open all the pregnant women in that village.
1
[17]In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi began to reign over Israel; he reigned ten years in Samaria.[18]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. For his whole life, he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.

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[19]Then Pul the king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul one thousand talents of silver, so that Pul's support might be with him to strengthen the kingdom of Israel in his hand.[20]Menahem exacted this money from Israel by requiring each of the wealthy, powerful men to pay fifty shekels of silver to him to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in the land.
[21]As for the other matters concerning Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?[22]So Menahem lay down with his ancestors, and Pekahiah his son became king in his place.

[23]In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned two years.[24]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had caused Israel to sin.
[25]Pekahiah had an officer named Pekah son of Remaliah, who conspired against him. Along with fifty men of Gilead, Pekah killed Pekahiah as well as Argob and Arieh in Samaria, in the citadel of the king's palace. Pekah killed Pekahiah and became king in his place.[26]As for the other matters concerning Pekahiah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.

[27]In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twenty years.[28]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.

[29]In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maakah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali. He carried away the people to Assyria.[30]So Hoshea son of Elah formed a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah. He attacked him and put him to death. Then he became king in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah.[31]As for the other matters concerning Pekah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.

[32]In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah began to reign.[33]He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah; she was the daughter of Zadok.
[34]Jotham did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Uzziah had done.[35]However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. Jotham built the upper gate of the house of Yahweh.[36]As for the other matters concerning Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?
[37]In those days Yahweh began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah.[38]Jotham lay down with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David, his ancestor. Then Ahaz, his son, became king in his place.

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[a]Instead of Tiphsah, one ancient translation and some modern translations read Tappuah.

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2 Kings 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's evil

Israel assassinated one king after another. The Assyrians began attacking Israel. (See: evil)

Links:

2 Kings 15:1 Notes

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2 Kings 15:1

In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam

It can be stated clearly that this is the twenty-seventh year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 27 of the reign of Jeroboam"

Azariah

This king is better known today by the name "Uzziah."

2 Kings 15:2

Jekoliah

This is the name of Azariah's mother.

2 Kings 15:3

He did what was right

"Azariah did what was right"

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what was right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"

2 Kings 15:4

the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one took away the high places" or "Azariah did not have anyone take the high places away"

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were not taken away
Being taken away represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: "were not destroyed"
2 Kings 15:5
to the day of his death
The abstract noun "death" can be expressed with the verb "die." Alternate translation: "until the day he died"
Jotham, the king's son, was over the household
The word "household" refers to the people living in the king's palace. Because Azariah was a leper, he had to live in a separate house. So his son, Jotham, took charge over the palace.
was over the household
Being over the household represents having authority over those in it. Alternate translation: "was in charge of the household" or "had authority over those in Azariah's palace"
2 Kings 15:6
are they not written ... Judah?
This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Azariah is in this other book. This can also be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]
2 Kings 15:7
Azariah lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Azariah died as his ancestors had" or "like his ancestors, Azariah died"
they buried him with his ancestors
"his family buried him where his ancestors had been buried"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Azariah"
2 Kings 15:8
In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah
It can be stated clearly that this is the thirty-eighth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 38 of the reign of Azariah king of Judah"
Zechariah son of Jeroboam
This Jeroboam was the second king of Israel that had that name. He was the son of King Jehoash.
reigned over Israel in Samaria for six months
Samaria is the city that Zechariah lived in when he was king of Israel. Alternate translation: "lived in Samaria and reigned over Israel for six months"
2 Kings 15:9
He did what was evil
"Zechariah did what was evil"
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]
He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat
Departing from sins represents refusing to do those sins. Alternate translation: "Zechariah did not refuse to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat" or "He sinned as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned"
Jeroboam son of Nebat
This Jeroboam was the first king of the ten northern tribes that made up the kingdom of Israel.
who had caused Israel to sin
Here the word "Israel" represents the people of the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "who had caused the people of Israel to sin"
2 Kings 15:10
Shallum ... Jabesh
These are the names of two men.
against Zechariah
"against King Zechariah"
Ibleam
This was the name of a city.
Then he became king in his place
"Then Shallum became king in Zechariah's place"
2 Kings 15:11
they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel"
2 Kings 15:12
This was the word of Yahweh
It can be stated clearly that the events described in verse 10 fulfilled the word of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "What happened to Zechariah was according to the word of Yahweh" or "What happened to Zechariah fulfilled the word of Yahweh"
Your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation
Sitting on the throne represents being the king. Alternate translation: "Your descendants will be the kings of Israel for four generations"
2 Kings 15:13
Shallum ... Jabesh
These are the names of two men. See how you translated these names in [2 Kings 15:10]
in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah
It can be stated clearly that this is the thirty-ninth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "in year 39 of the reign of Uzziah king of Judah"
Uzziah
Some ancient manuscripts and modern translations read, "Azariah."
he reigned only one month in Samaria
Samaria is the city that he lived in when was king of Israel. Alternate translation: "Shallum lived in Samaria and reigned over Israel for only one month"
2 Kings 15:14
Menahem ... Gadi
These are the names of two men.
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Shallum"
2 Kings 15:15
the conspiracy that he formed
The abstract noun "conspiracy" can be translated with the verb "plan." It can be stated clearly what this conspiracy was. Alternate translation: "how he planned to murder

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King Zechariah" or "and how he murdered King Zechariah"
they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel"
2 Kings 15:16
Tiphsah
This is the name of a city. Some versions have "Tappuah," which is the name of another city.
2 Kings 15:17
In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah
It can be stated clearly that this is the thirty-ninth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 39 of the reign of Azariah king of Judah"
2 Kings 15:18
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]
For his whole life
The abstract noun "life" can be translated with the verb "live." Alternate translation: "The whole time that he lived"
he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat
Departing from sins represents refusing to do those sins. Alternate translation: "Zechariah did not refuse to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat" or "He sinned as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned"
who had caused Israel to sin
Here the word "Israel" represents the people of the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "who had caused the people of Israel to sin"
2 Kings 15:19
Pul the king of Assyria came against the land
The phrase "Pul the king of Assyria" represents Pul and his army. Alternate translation: "Pul the king of Assyria came with his army against the land"
Pul the king of Assyria
Pul is the name of a man who was king of Assyria. He was also named Tiglath-Pileser.
came against the land
The phrase "came against" is an idiom meaning to attack. "The land" refers to the land of Israel and represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "came with his army to attack the people of Israel"
one thousand talents of silver
"1000 talents of silver." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "thirty-three thousand kilograms of silver" or "thirty-three metric tons of silver"
so that Pul's support might be with him
The abstract noun "support" can be translated with the verb "support." Alternate translation: "so that Pul might support him"
to strengthen the kingdom of Israel in his hand
Having the kingdom in his hand represents ruling the kingdom. Alternate translation: "to strengthen his rule over the kingdom of Israel"
2 Kings 15:20
exacted this money from Israel
"took this money from Israel"
powerful men
These were important leaders, not strong soldiers.
fifty shekels of silver
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "six hundred grams of silver" or "three-fifths of a kilogram of silver"
did not stay there in the land
"did not stay there in Israel"
2 Kings 15:21
are they not written ... Israel?
This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Menahem is in this other book. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 1:18]
2 Kings 15:22
Menahem lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 10:35]
Pekahiah
This a man's name.
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Menahem"
2 Kings 15:23
In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah
It can be stated clearly that this is the fiftieth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 50 of the reign of Azariah king of Judah"
Pekahiah
This is a man's name.
2 Kings 15:24
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]
He did not leave behind the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat
Leaving behind sins represents refusing to do those sins. Alternate translation: "Pekahiah did not refuse to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat" or "He sinned as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned"
he had caused Israel to sin
Here the word "Israel" represents the people of the kingdom of Israel.
2 Kings 15:25
Pekah ... Remaliah
These are men's names.
conspired against him
"secretly planned to kill Pekahiah"
fifty men
"50 men"
Argob ... Arieh
These are men's names.
the citadel of the king's palace
"the fortified part of the king's palace" or "the safe place in the king's palace"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Pekahiah"
2 Kings 15:26
they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel"

2 Kings 15:27

In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah

It can be stated clearly that this is the fifty-second year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 52 of the reign of Azariah king of Judah"

2 Kings 15:28

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat

Departing from sins represents refusing to do those sins. Alternate translation: "Zechariah did not refuse to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat" or "He sinned as Jeroboam son of Nebat had sinned"

2 Kings 15:29

In the days of Pekah king of Israel

It can be stated clearly that this refers to the time of Pekah's reign. Alternate translation: "In the days of the reign of Pekah king of Israel" or "During the time that Pekah was king of Israel"

Tiglath-Pileser

In [2 Kings 15:19]

Ijon ... Abel Beth Maakah ... Janoah ... Kedesh ... Hazor ... Gilead ... Galilee ... Naphtali

These are the names of cities or regions.

He carried away the people to Assyria

Here "He" refers to Tiglath-Pileser and represents him and his army. Carrying the people to Assyria represents forcing them to go to Assyria. Alternate translation: "He and his army forced the people to go to Assyria

the people

It can be stated clearly which people these are. Alternate translation: "the people of those places" or "the people of Israel"

2 Kings 15:30

Hoshea ... Elah

These are men's names.

a conspiracy

A conspiracy is a secret plan by a group to do harm to someone or something.

He attacked him and put him to death

"Hoshea attacked Pekah and killed him"

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Pekah"

in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah

It can be stated clearly that this is the twentieth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 20 of the reign of Jotham son of Uzziah"

2 Kings 15:31

they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can read about them in the book of the events of the kings of Israel"

2 Kings 15:32

In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel

It can be stated clearly that this is the second year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 2 of the reign of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel"

Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah began to reign

"Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah became king of Judah"

Uzziah

Some ancient manuscripts and modern translations read, "Azariah."

2 Kings 15:33

He was twenty-five years old ... sixteen years

"He was 25 years old ... 16 years"

Jerushah

This is a woman's name.

2 Kings 15:34

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what was right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be right"

Uzziah

Some ancient manuscripts and modern translations read, "Azariah."

2 Kings 15:35

the high places were not taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one took away the high places" or "Jotham did not have anyone take the high places away"

were not taken away

Being taken away represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: "were not destroyed"

Jotham built the upper gate

"Jotham built" represents Jotham making his workers build it. Alternate translation: "Jotham had his workers build the upper gate"

2 Kings 15:36

are they not written ... Judah?

This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Jotham is in this other book. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 15:37

In those days

This refers to a time period. What time period this refers to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "During that time" or "While Jotham was king of Judah"

Rezin

This is a man's name.

Pekah ... Remaliah

These are men's names. Pekah was the king of Israel. See how you translated them in 2 Kings 15:37.

2 Kings 15:38

Jotham lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Jotham died as his ancestors had" or "Like his ancestors, Jotham died"

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Jotham"

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16 [1]In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham king of Judah, began to reign.[2]Ahaz was
twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in
the eyes of Yahweh his God, as David his ancestor had done.
[3]Instead, he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even made his son pass through the fire, following the detestable
practices of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel.[4]He offered sacrifices and burned
incense at the high places, on the hilltops, and under every green tree.

[5]Then Rezin, king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to attack. They besieged Ahaz,
but they could not conquer him.[6]At that time, Rezin king of Aram recovered Elath for Aram and drove the Jews out of
Elath. Then the Arameans came to Elath, where they have lived to this day.

[7]So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save
me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who have attacked me."[8]So Ahaz took the
silver and gold that was found in the house of Yahweh and among the treasures of the king's palace and he sent it as a gift
to the king of Assyria.[9]Then the king of Assyria listened to him, and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus,
conquered it and carried off its people as prisoners to Kir. He also killed Rezin the king of Aram.

[10]King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. At Damascus he saw an altar. He sent to Uriah the
priest a model of the altar and its pattern and the design for all the workmanship needed.[11]So Uriah the priest built an
altar to be just like the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. He finished it before King Ahaz arrived back from
Damascus.[12]When the king came from Damascus he saw the altar; the king approached the altar and made offerings on it.
[13]He made his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured out his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his
fellowship offerings on the altar.[14]The bronze altar that was before Yahweh—he brought it from the front of the temple,
from between his altar and the temple of Yahweh and put it on the north side of his altar.
[15]Then King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, saying, "On the large altar burn the morning burnt offering and the
evening grain offering, and the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the
land, and their grain offering and their drink offerings. Sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood
of the sacrifice. But the bronze altar will be for me to consult for guidance."[16]Uriah the priest did just what King Ahaz
commanded.

[17]Then King Ahaz removed the panels and the basins from the portable stands; he also took down the sea from off the
bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone pavement.[18]He removed the covered walkway for the Sabbath that
they had built at the temple, along with the king's entry outside the temple of Yahweh, because of the king of Assyria.
[19]As for the other matters concerning Ahaz and what he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of
Judah?[20]Ahaz lay down with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. Hezekiah his son
became king in his place.

2 Kings 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Ahaz

Ahaz was a wicked king. Israel and Aram united to fight against him, so he paid the Assyrian king to attack Aram. Assyria defeated the people of Aram and took them into captivity. The people were to trust in Yahweh and not rely on military alliances with other Gentile nations. This showed a lack of trust in the power of Yahweh. (See: evil and trust)

Links:

2 Kings 16:1 Notes

2 Kings 16:1

In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah

It can be stated clearly that this is the seventeenth year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 17 of the reign of Pekah son of Remaliah"

Pekah ... Remaliah

These are men's names. Pekah was the king of Israel. See how you translated them in [2 Kings 15:25]

2 Kings 16:2

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh his God

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "what was right in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh his God considers to be right"

as David his ancestor had done

David had done what is right.

2 Kings 16:3

he walked in the way of the kings of Israel

Walking represents behavior and actions. Alternate translation: "King Ahaz acted the same way that the kings

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of Israel had acted" or "he did the things that the kings of Israel had done"

He even made his son pass through the fire

You may need to make explicit why he caused his son be put into the fire and what happened after he did so. Alternate translation: "He even burned his son to death as an offering to his gods"

following the detestable practices of the nations

Here "following" represents doing what others do. Alternate translation: "copying the disgusting things that the other nations did, the nations"

the nations

The word "nations" represents the people of other nations. Here it refers to the people of the nations who had lived in that land. Alternate translation: "the people of other nations"

whom Yahweh had driven out

"Driven out" means "forced out." Alternate translation: "whom Yahweh had forced to leave"

before the people of Israel

The people of those nations fled as the people of Israel moved into the land. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "before the people of Israel who moved into the land" or "as the people of Israel moved into the land"

2 Kings 16:4

the high places, on the hilltops, and under every green tree

These are places where the people of the other nations worshiped their false gods.

under every green tree

God wanted his people to offer sacrifices to him in Jerusalem. The word "every" here is an exaggeration to show how determined King Ahaz was to disobey God by offering sacrifices in many other places instead. Alternate translation: "under many green trees" or "under many green trees around the country"

2 Kings 16:5

Rezin ... Pekah ... Remaliah

These are men's names. See how you translated them in [2 Kings 15:37]

besieged Ahaz

Ahaz was in Jerusalem. Here "Ahaz" represents himself and the people who were in Jerusalem with him. Alternate translation: "surrounded the city with Ahaz in it" or "surrounded Ahaz and the others in the city with him"

2 Kings 16:6

recovered Elath for Aram

Here "Aram" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "took back control of the city of Elath for the people of Aram"

Elath

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [2 Kings 14:22]

drove the Jews out of Elath

"forced the Jews to leave Elath"

to this day

This means to the time of the writing of this book.

2 Kings 16:7

Tiglath-Pileser

In [2 Kings 15:19]

I am your servant and your son

Being a servant and a son represents submitting to someone's authority. Alternate translation: "I will obey you as if I were your servant or your son"

from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel

The hand is a metonym that represents power. Alternate translation: "from the power of the king of Aram and from the power of the king of Israel"

who have attacked me

The kings attacking Ahaz represent the armies of those kings attacking Ahaz and his people. Alternate translation: "who have attacked me with their armies" or "whose armies have attacked me"

2 Kings 16:9

the king of Assyria went up against Damascus

The word "king" represents the king and his army. Also, Damascus represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria and his army attacked the people of Damascus"

carried off its people as prisoners to Kir

Carrying off the people represents forcing them to go away. Alternate translation: "made the people his prisoners and forced them to go to Kir"

Kir

Possible meanings are 1) this is the name of a city or 2) this word means "city" and refers to the capital city of Assyria.

2 Kings 16:10

the design for all the workmanship needed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the instructions that the workers needed in order to build it"

2 Kings 16:13

General Information:

This is what King Ahaz did after he returned from Damascus and visited the new altar which Uriah the priest had built for him.

He made his burnt offering

"King Ahaz made his burnt offering"

on the altar

This refers to the altar that King Ahaz told Uriah to build.

2 Kings 16:14

from the front of the temple ... from between his altar and the temple of Yahweh

Both of these phrases tell where the bronze altar was. They refer to the same place.

2 Kings 16:15

the large altar

This refers to the new altar that Ahaz told Uriah to build.

the king's burnt offering and his grain offering

When Ahaz said "the king" and "his," he was referring to himself. The king treated his offerings as special. Alternate translation: "my burnt offering and my grain offering" or "the royal burnt offering and royal grain offering"

2 Kings 16:17

the portable stands

"the movable stands" or "the carts." These stands had wheels on them so they could be moved around.

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he also took down the sea
"he also removed the large bowl." The "sea" was a huge basin or water bowl that was made of bronze.
2 Kings 16:18
because of the king of Assyria
Why they did this can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "to please the king of Assyria"
2 Kings 16:19
are they not written ... Judah?
This question is used to either inform or remind the readers that the information about Ahaz is in this other book. This can also be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]
2 Kings 16:20
Ahaz lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying Ahaz died. Alternate translation: "Ahaz died as his ancestors had" or "like his ancestors, Ahaz died"
was buried with his ancestors
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him with his ancestors"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Ahaz"

17 [1]In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, the reign of Hoshea son of Elah began. He ruled in Samaria over Israel for nine years.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him.
[3]Shalmaneser king of Assyria attacked him, and Hoshea became his servant and brought him tribute.
[4]Then the king of Assyria realized that Hoshea had been plotting against him, for Hoshea had sent messengers to So king of Egypt; also, he offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. So the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison.[5]Then the king of Assyria attacked throughout all the land, and attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years.[6]In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria. He put them in Halah, at the Habor River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

[7]This captivity happened because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. The people had been worshiping other gods[8]and walking in the customs of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel, and in the customs of the kings of Israel that they had done.
[9]The people of Israel did secretly—against Yahweh their God—things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their cities, from the watchtower to the fortress.[10]They also set up stone pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree.
[11]There they burned incense in all the high places, as the nations had done, those whom Yahweh had carried away before them. The Israelites performed wicked things to provoke Yahweh to anger;[12]they worshiped idols, about which Yahweh had said to them, "You will not do this thing."
[13]Yet Yahweh had testified to Israel and to Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, and be careful to keep all the law I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets."
[14]But they would not listen; instead they stiffened their necks like their fathers, who did not trust in Yahweh their God.
[15]They rejected his statutes and the covenant that he had made with their ancestors, and the covenant decrees that he had given to them. They followed useless practices and they themselves became useless. They followed the pagan nations who were around them, those that Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate.
[16]They ignored all the commandments of Yahweh their God. They made cast metal figures of two calves to worship. They made an Asherah pole, and they worshiped all the host of the heavens and Baal.[17]They made their sons and daughters pass through the fire, they used divination and enchantments, they sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and they provoked him to anger.[18]Therefore Yahweh was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. There was no one left but the tribe of Judah alone.

[19]Even Judah did not keep the commandments of Yahweh their God, and they followed the customs that Israel had practiced.[20]So Yahweh rejected all the descendants of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hand of those who would take the possession as spoil, until he had cast them out of his sight.
[21]He tore Israel from the royal line of David, and they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Jeroboam drove Israel away from following Yahweh and made them commit a great sin.[22]The people of Israel followed all the sins of Jeroboam and they did not depart from them,[23]so Yahweh removed Israel from his sight, as he had said through all his servants the prophets that he would. So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, and it is this way to this present day.

[24]The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and from Kuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel. They took over Samaria and lived in its cities.[25]It happened at the beginning of their residence there that they did not honor Yahweh. So Yahweh sent lions among them which killed some of them.[26]So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the practices required by the god of the land. So he has sent lions among them, and, see, the lions are killing people there because they do not know the practices required by the god of the land."

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[27]Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Take one of the priests there whom you brought from there, and let him go and live there, and let him teach them the practices required by the god of the land."[28]So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel; he taught them how they should honor Yahweh.
[29]Every ethnic group made gods of their own, and put them in the high places that the Samaritans had made—every ethnic group in the cities where they lived.[30]The people of Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth; the people of Kuthah made Nergal; the people of Hamath made Ashima;[31]the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak. The Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelek and Anammelek, the gods of the Sepharvites.
[32]They also honored Yahweh, and appointed from among themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the temples at the high places.[33]They honored Yahweh and also worshiped their own gods, in the customs of the nations from among whom they had been taken away.

[34]To this day they persist in their old customs. They neither honor Yahweh, nor do they follow the statutes, the customs, the law, or the commandments that Yahweh gave to the descendants of Jacob, whom he named Israel.[35]When Yahweh made a covenant with them, he commanded them, "You will not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor worship them, nor sacrifice to them.
[36]But Yahweh, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, it is him you will honor, it is to him you will bow down, and it is to him that you will sacrifice.[37]The statutes and the decrees, the law and the commandments that he wrote for you, you will keep them forever. So you must not fear other gods,[38]and the covenant that I have made with you, you will not forget; neither will you honor other gods.
[39]But Yahweh your God is who you will honor. He will rescue you from the might of your enemies."[40]They would not listen, because they continued to do what they had done in the past.[41]So these nations feared Yahweh and they also worshiped their carved figures, and their children did the same—as did their children's children. They continue to do what their ancestors did, up to this day.

2 Kings 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter ends the story about the kingdom of Israel and continues with Judah alone.

Special concepts in this chapter

Idol worship

Israel continued to worship idols, so God punished them by allowing Assyria to conquer them and take them away. Assyria brought people from other lands and settled them in what used to be Israel's territory and the new people worshiped their own gods in addition to Yahweh. (See: falsegod)

Links:

2 Kings 17:1 Notes

2 Kings 17:1
Hoshea son of Elah
Hoshea became the king of the northern kingdom of Israel.
Elah
This is the name of a man.
He ruled in Samaria
Samaria was the capital city of Israel.
2 Kings 17:2
evil in the sight of Yahweh
He did not obey Yahweh's laws as given to Moses. "In the sight of" is metaphor for judgment or opinion. Alternate translation: "evil to Yahweh"
2 Kings 17:3
Shalmaneser
This is the name of a man.
Hoshea became his servant and brought him tribute
Hoshea did as the King of Assyria commanded and brought money to him so that the King would not destroy Israel.
2 Kings 17:4
So
This is the name of a man.
year by year
"every year"
shut him up and bound him in prison
"put Hoshea in prison"
2 Kings 17:5
besieged it
put troops around the city in order to force it to surrender
2 Kings 17:6
carried Israel away to Assyria
The name "Israel" is metonymy for the people living there. Alternate translation: "took the Israelite people to Assyria"
Halah ... Habor River ... Gozan
These are the names of locations.
Medes
This is the name of a people group.
2 Kings 17:7
General Information:
The narrative pauses to summarize Yahweh's judgment on Israel.

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This captivity
This refers to the capture of the Israelites by the Assyrians.
the hand of
"Hand" is metonymy for control, authority or power. Alternate translation: "the control of"
2 Kings 17:8
walking in the customs
"Walking" is metaphor for the ways or patterns of behavior people use in their lives. Alternate translation: "doing the activities"
2 Kings 17:9
General Information:
The narrative continues to summarize Yahweh's judgment on Israel.
2 Kings 17:10
on every high hill and under every green tree
These are exaggerations to show that worship of false gods was widespread. Alternate translation: "on high hills and under green trees everywhere"
2 Kings 17:11
General Information:
The narrative continues to summarize Yahweh's judgment on Israel.
performed wicked things to provoke Yahweh to anger
Possible ways to render this: 1) "did many wicked things that caused Yahweh to become angry" or 2) "did many sinful things that made Yahweh angry"
2 Kings 17:12
about which Yahweh had said to them
"about which Yahweh had warned them"
2 Kings 17:13
General Information:
The narrative continues to summarize Yahweh's judgment on Israel.
Yahweh had testified ... by every prophet
Yahweh spoke through the prophets.
Turn from your evil ways
"Stop doing the evil things you have been doing"
I sent to you by my servants the prophets
The prophets were sent by Yahweh to remind the people of God's Laws and to obey them.
2 Kings 17:14
General Information:
The summary of Yahweh's judgment on Israel continues.
they stiffened their necks
The phrase "stiffened their necks" is a metaphor that means that they became very stubborn. Alternate translation: "they became very stubborn"
2 Kings 17:15
rejected his statutes
They refused to obey God's Laws.
They followed useless practices
They followed the practices of the people around them.
not to imitate
"not to copy"
2 Kings 17:16
General Information:
The summary of Yahweh's judgment on Israel continues.
cast metal figures
Cast metal figures are objects made by pouring melted metal into a form (or mold) to make a shape.
2 Kings 17:17
used divination and enchantments
"Divination" is the use of magic gain information. "Enchantments" are sets of words that people believe have magic power over people and things. These two words together form a merism. Alternate translation: "practiced all kinds of magic"
sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh
To "sell themselves" is a metaphor for committing completely to do that which was evil. Alternate translation: "committed themselves to do things that Yahweh said were evil"
2 Kings 17:18
removed them out of his sight
"Sight" is metonymy for being within the attention of Yahweh so he no longer cared for them. Alternate translation: "removed them from his attention"
2 Kings 17:19
General Information:
The summary of Yahweh's judgment on Israel includes how Judah also fell into idolatry.
Judah
The location "Judah" is metonymy for the people that live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"
2 Kings 17:20
he afflicted them
"Yahweh punished the Israelites"
gave them into the hand of those who would take the possession as spoil
"Hand" is metonymy for control, power or authority. Alternate translation: "handed them over to those who robbed them of their property"
until he had cast them out of his sight
"his sight" is metaphor for attention and caring. Alternate translation: "until he got rid of them all" or "until they were no longer in his presence"
2 Kings 17:21
General Information:
The reason for Yahweh's judgment on Israel continues by relating the history behind it.
He tore Israel
"He tore" here is a metaphor for violent removal. Alternate translation: "Yahweh removed the people of Israel"
from the royal line of David
"from the rule of David's descendants"
drove Israel away from following Yahweh
"turned the people of Israel away from following Yahweh"
2 Kings 17:22
they did not depart from them
"the Israelites did not stop committing these sins" or "they did not turn away from those sins"
2 Kings 17:23
so Yahweh removed Israel from his sight
"Sight" here is a metaphor for attention and care. Alternate translation: "so Yahweh removed the people of Israel from his attention and care"
2 Kings 17:24

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General Information:
Yahweh's judgment continues against the new Assyrian inhabitants who practice their pagan religions.
Kuthah ... Avva ... Hamath ... Sepharvaim
These are places in the Assyrian empire.
2 Kings 17:25
It happened at the beginning of their residence there that
"When those people first lived there"
2 Kings 17:26
The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria
"The people you have moved from other lands and sent to live in the cities of Samaria"
do not know the practices required by the god of the land
"do not know how to worship the God that the Israelites worshiped in this land"
2 Kings 17:27
Take one of the priests there whom you brought from there
"Take a priest who came from Samaria back there"
let him teach them
"let the Samaritan priest teach the people who are living there now"
2 Kings 17:30
Sukkoth Benoth ... Nergal ... Ashima
These are the names of gods, both male and female.
Kuthah ... Hamath
These are the names of places.
2 Kings 17:31
Nibhaz ... Tartak
These are the names of gods, both male and female.
Avvites ... Sepharvites
These are the names of people groups.
burned their children in the fire
"sacrificed their own children" or "burned their children in fire as an offering"
2 Kings 17:32
They
This refers to the pagan people that the king of Assyria moved into the cities of Samaria.
2 Kings 17:34
they persist in their old customs
"they continue in the same habits as before"
They neither honor Yahweh
The people were only interested in appeasing Yahweh. They were either not interested or not aware Yahweh was interested in a relationship with them.
2 Kings 17:36
General Information:
The summary comes toward the end with an appeal to worship only Yahweh.
with great power and with an outstretched arm
The phrase "raised arm" is metonymy for displaying power and means basically the same thing as "great power." Alternate translation: "with very great power"
2 Kings 17:37
keep them
"obey them"
2 Kings 17:39
General Information:
The summary now ends with an appeal to worship only Yahweh and a description of the sins of the people.
2 Kings 17:40
They would not listen
"Listen" here is a metaphor for paying attention and acting on the command. Alternate translation: "They did not obey"
2 Kings 17:41
these nations feared Yahweh
These nations feared Yahweh only to the point of appeasing him the same way they treated their own gods.
up to this day
"and have continued ever since." The phrase "this day" refers to the time period in which the writer lived.

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18 [1]Now in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah began to reign.[2]He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah; she was the daughter of Zechariah.[3]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as David, his ancestor, had done.
[4]He removed the high places, destroyed the stone pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because in those days the people of Israel were burning incense to it; it was called "Nehushtan."[5]Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh, the God of Israel, so that after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among the kings who were before him.
[6]For he held on to Yahweh. He did not stop following him but kept his commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moses.
[7]So Yahweh was with Hezekiah, and wherever he went he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him.[8]He attacked the Philistines to Gaza and the borders around, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city.

[9]In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it.[10]At the end of three years they took it, in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel; in this way Samaria was captured.
[11]So the king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria and put them in Halah, and at the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.[12]He did this because they did not obey the voice of Yahweh their God, but they violated the terms of his covenant, all that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded. They refused to listen to it or do it.

[13]Then in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.[14]So Hezekiah king of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria, who was at Lachish, saying, "I have offended

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you. Withdraw from me. Whatever you put on me I will bear." The king of Assyria required Hezekiah king of Judah to pay three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold.[15]So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the king's palace.
[16]Then Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Yahweh and from the pillars that he had overlaid; he gave the gold to the king of Assyria.[17]But the king of Assyria mobilized his great army, sending Tartan and Rabsaris and the chief commander from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They traveled up the roads and arrived outside Jerusalem. They approached the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway of the launderers' field, and stood by it.[18]When they had called to King Hezekiah, Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to meet them.

[19]So the chief commander said to them to tell Hezekiah what the great king, the king of Assyria, said: "What is the source of your confidence?[20]You speak only useless words, saying you have counsel and strength for war. In whom are you trusting, that you should rebel against me?[21]Look, you trust in Egypt, this walking stick of crushed reed; if a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt is to anyone who trusts in him.
[22]But if you say to me, 'We are trusting in Yahweh our God,' is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem'?[23]Now therefore, I want to make you a good offer from my master the king of Assyria. I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able to find riders for them.
[24]How could you resist even one captain of the least of my master's servants? You have put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen![25]Have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this place and destroy it? Yahweh said to me, 'Attack this land and destroy it.'"

[26]Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah said to the chief commander, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it. Do not speak with us in the language of Judah in the ears of the people who are on the wall."[27]But the chief commander said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"
[28]Then the chief commander stood and shouted in a loud voice in the language of Judah, saying, "Listen to the word of the great king, the king of Assyria.[29]The king says, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to rescue you from my power.[30]Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh, saying, "Yahweh will surely rescue us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."'
[31]Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and from his own fig tree, and drink from the water in his own cistern.[32]You will do this until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, so that you may live and not die.' Do not listen to Hezekiah when he tries to persuade you, saying, 'Yahweh will rescue us.'
[33]Has any of the gods of the peoples rescued them out of the hand of the king of Assyria?[34]Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they rescued Samaria out of my hand?[35]Among all the gods of the lands, is there any god who has rescued his land from my power? How could Yahweh save Jerusalem from my might?"

[36]But the people remained silent and did not respond, for the king had commanded, "Do not answer him."[37]Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household; Shebna the scribe; and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and reported to him the words of the chief commander.

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2 Kings 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of Hezekiah, one of the great kings of Judah (2 Kings 18–20). Because he was so important, there is more space dedicated to the history of his reign.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust in Yahweh

Hezekiah trusted and obeyed God. He stopped paying tribute to Assyria so the Assyrians invaded Judah. The Assyrian king told the people of Judah that resistance was useless. Despite this, Hezekiah trusted in the power of Yahweh. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Kings 18:1 Notes

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2 Kings 18:1

General Information:

Hezekiah becomes king over Judah in place of his father King Ahaz.

Hoshea ... Elah

These are the names of men.

2 Kings 18:2

Zechariah

These are the names of men.

Abijah

This is the name of a woman.

2 Kings 18:3

He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

"In the eyes" here is a metaphor for Yahweh's attention and care. Alternate translation: "King Hezekiah did what was right to Yahweh" or "Hezekiah did things that Yahweh said are right"

2 Kings 18:4

General Information:

The story of King Hezekiah's reign continues.

He removed the high places, destroyed the stone pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles

"Hezekiah removed the high places of worship, smashed into pieces the memorial stones, and cut down the wooden poles of Asherah"

Nehushtan

This name could be translated "Bronze Serpent Idol."

2 Kings 18:6

General Information:

The story of King Hezekiah's reign continues.

he held on to Yahweh

To "hold on" is metaphor for staying loyal and attached. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah stayed loyal to Yahweh" or "Hezekiah remained faithful to Yahweh"

2 Kings 18:7

wherever he went he prospered

"wherever Hezekiah went he was successful"

2 Kings 18:8

fortified city

city with a wall all around it

2 Kings 18:9

Hoshea ... Elah ... Shalmaneser

These are the names of men.

2 Kings 18:11

Halah ... Habor River ... Gozan

These are the names of places.

Medes

This is the name of a people group.

So the king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria

"So the king of Assyria commanded his army to take the Israelites away from their homes, and he made them live in Assyria"

2 Kings 18:12

the voice of Yahweh

"Voice" is metonymy for the message about the command of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the command of Yahweh"

2 Kings 18:13

Sennacherib

This is the name of a man.

fortified cities

Cities with walls around them for protection. See how you translated "fortified city" in 2 Kings 18:8.

2 Kings 18:14

Lachish

This is the name of a city.

Withdraw from me

This expression assumes that "me" represents the kingdom of Hezekiah. Alternate translation: "Take your army out of my territory"

Whatever you put on me I will bear

"I will pay you whatever you demand of me"

talents

This is the name of type of weight that was used for money. One talent weighted about 33 kilograms.

2 Kings 18:15

treasuries

This was the place in the palace where money and valuable things were stored.

2 Kings 18:17

the king of Assyria mobilized his great army, sending Tartan and Rabsaris and the chief commander

Sennacherib sent a group of men from his army to Jerusalem to meet with King Hezekiah, including officials named Tartan and Rabsaris.

Tartan ... Rabsaris

Some Bibles translate these as proper names. Other versions of the Bible translate them as titles. Alternate translation: "the Tartan ... the Rabsaris" or "the leader of the soldier ... a court official"

Lachish

This is the name of a city.

the conduit of the upper pool

the channel where the water stored in the "upper pool" flows into the city of Jerusalem

stood by it

"and waited there for King Hezekiah to meet with them"

2 Kings 18:18

Eliakim ... Hilkiah ... Shebna ... Joah ... Asaph

These are the names of men.

2 Kings 18:19

General Information:

Rabshakeh continues telling the message from the king of Assyria to King Hezekiah's men.

What is the source of your confidence?

The King of Assyria

2 Kings 18:20

you have counsel and strength for war

The speaker is trying to convince the hearers that Hezekiah does not know how to defeat the Assyrians and would not have the might to carry out such a plan if he had one.

In whom are you trusting, that you should rebel against me?

The speaker wants to make the hearers doubt that Egypt can support Judah. He does not ask this question looking for an answer. Alternate translation: "You cannot trust

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anyone to help you rebel against me."
2 Kings 18:21
Egypt, this walking stick of crushed reed
The speaker compares Egypt to a weak walking stick; you expect that it will support you when you lean on it, but instead it breaks and cuts you. Alternate translation: "Egypt, which is like a walking stick made from a crushed reed"
if a man leans ... and pierce it
The speaker is extending the metaphor by describing what happens when a reed is used as a support.
2 Kings 18:22
General Information:
Rabshakeh continues telling the message from the king of Assyria to King Hezekiah's men.
is not he the one whose high places ... Jerusalem'?
This question assumes the listeners know the answer and is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You need to remember that he is the one whose high places ... Jerusalem'!"
2 Kings 18:24
General Information:
Rabshakeh continues telling the message from the king of Assyria to King Hezekiah's men.
How could you resist even one captain of the least of my master's servants?
He asks this question to emphasize that the army of Hezekiah does not have the resources to fight. He also uses exaggeration to mock Hezekiah's army. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "You could not defeat even one of the least of the king's soldiers." or 2) "You could not defeat a group of the king's soldiers commanded by his least important officer."
2 Kings 18:25
Have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this place and destroy it?
He asks this question to emphasize that Yahweh is behind his success to obey the command to destroy Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh himself told us to come here and destroy this land!"
2 Kings 18:26
Eliakim ... Hilkiah ... Shebnah ... Joah
Translate the names of these men as in [2 Kings 18:18]
in the ears of the people who are on the wall
"In the ears" is metonymy for being able to listen. Alternate translation: "because the people standing on the city wall will hear it and be afraid"
2 Kings 18:27
Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?
He asks these questions assuming the listeners know the answers to emphasize their intention to destroy and humiliate the leaders and people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "My master sent me not only to you and your master, but also to speak to the people in this city, who will suffer with you when they have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine to survive."
2 Kings 18:29
from my power
"my power" is metonymy for the ability of the king himself. Alternate translation: "from me" or "from the power of my army"
2 Kings 18:30
this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria
This can be expressed in an active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will never allow the king of Assyria's army to take this city"
the hand
"Hand" is metonymy for control, authority and power.
2 Kings 18:31
Make peace with me and come out to me
"Come out of the city and surrender to me" or "Make an agreement with me to surrender, and come out of the city to me"
his own vine ... his own fig tree ... his own cistern
These sources of food and water are metaphors for security and plenty. This also was a common way of expressing this idea.
2 Kings 18:32
a land of grain and new wine ... bread and vineyards ... olive trees and honey
These are metaphors for having good things and plenty in daily life.
2 Kings 18:33
General Information:
Rabshakeh continues telling the message from the king of Assyria to King Hezekiah's men.
Has any of the gods ... Assyria?
He asks this question for emphasis because they know the answer. Alternate translation: "None the gods of the peoples have rescued them ... Assyria."
2 Kings 18:34
Where are the gods of ... Arpad?
He asks this question for emphasis because they know the answer. Alternate translation: "I have destroyed the gods of ... Arpad!"
Hamath ... Arpad ... Sepharvaim ... Hena ... Ivvah ... Samaria
These are the names of places that represent the people living there.
out of my hand
"Hand" is metonymy for control, power, or authority. Alternate translation: "out from my control"
2 Kings 18:35
is there any god who has rescued his land from my power?
He asks this question for emphasis because they know the answer. Alternate translation: "No god has rescued his land from my power."
from my power
"My power" is metonymy for the person whose has the power. Alternate translation: "from me"
How could Yahweh save Jerusalem from my might?
He asks this question for emphasis because they know the answer. Alternate translation: "There is no way Yahweh can save Jerusalem from my might!"
2 Kings 18:37
Eliakim ... Shebna ... Joah ... Asaph
These are the names of men.

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who was over the household
"who managed the king's palace"
the recorder
"the history keeper"
chief commander
and is the translation of the Hebrew; some see this as a personal name, "Rabshakeh"

19 [1]It came about that when King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Yahweh.[2]He sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, all covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet.
[3]They said to him, "Hezekiah says, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace, for the children have come to the time of birth, but there is no strength for them to be born.[4]It may be that Yahweh your God will hear all the words of the chief commander, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to defy the living God, and will rebuke the words which Yahweh your God has heard. Now lift up your prayer for the remnant that is still here.'"
[5]So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah,[6]and Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master: 'Yahweh says, "Do not be afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me.[7]Look, I will put a spirit in him, and he will hear a certain report and go back to his own land. I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."'"
[8]Then the chief commander returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had gone away from Lachish.[9]Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized to fight against him, so he sent messengers again to Hezekiah with a message:
[10]"Say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given over into the hand of the king of Assyria."'[11]See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them completely. So will you be rescued?
[12]Have the gods of the nations rescued them, the nations that my fathers destroyed: Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Tel Assar?[13]Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah?'"

[14]Hezekiah received this letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the house of Yahweh and spread it before him.[15]Then Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh and said, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, you who sit above the cherubim, you are God alone over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth.
[16]Incline your ear, Yahweh, and listen. Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God.[17]Truly, Yahweh, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands.[18]They have put their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, just wood and stone. So the Assyrians have destroyed them.
[19]Now then, Yahweh our God, save us, I implore you, from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Yahweh, are God alone."

[20]Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah, saying, "Yahweh, the God of Israel says, 'Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you.[21]This is the word that Yahweh has spoken about him:

"The virgin daughter of Zion
despises you and mocks you.
The daughter of Jerusalem
shakes her head at you.
[22] Whom have you defied and slandered?
Against whom have you exalted your voice
and lifted up your eyes in pride?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

[23] By your messengers
you have defied the Lord,
and have said,
'With the multitude of my chariots
I have gone up to the heights of the mountains,
to the highest elevations of Lebanon.
I will cut down the tall cedars
and the choice cypress trees there.
I will enter into its farthest parts,
its most fruitful forest.

[24] I have dug wells

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and have drunk foreign waters.
I dried up all the rivers of Egypt
under the soles of my feet.'

25 Have you not heard how I
determined it long ago,
and worked it out in ancient times?
Now I am bringing it to pass.
You are here to reduce impregnable cities
into heaps of ruins.

26 Their inhabitants, of little strength,
are shattered and ashamed.
They are plants in the field,
green grass,
the grass on the roof or in the field,
burned before it has grown up.

27 But I know your sitting down,
your going out, your coming in,
and your raging against me.

28 Because of your raging against me,
and because your arrogance has reached my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose,
and my bit in your mouth;
I will turn you back
the way you came."

29 This will be the sign for you:
This year you will eat what grows wild,
and in the second year what grows from that.
But in the third year you must plant and harvest,
plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
30 The remnant of the house of Judah that survives
will again take root and bear fruit.

31 For from Jerusalem a remnant will come out,
from Mount Zion an escaped remnant will come. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.

32 Therefore Yahweh says this about the king of Assyria:
"He will not come into this city
nor shoot an arrow here.
Neither will he come before it with shield
or build up a siege ramp against it.
33 The way by which he came
will be the same way he will leave;
he will not enter this city—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

34 For I will defend this city and rescue it,
for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.'"

35 It came about that night that the angel of Yahweh went out and attacked the camp of the Assyrians, putting to death 185,000 soldiers. When the men arose early in the morning, dead bodies lay everywhere. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria left Israel and went home and stayed in Nineveh. 37 Later, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisrok his god, his sons

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Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword. Then they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

2 Kings 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Hezekiah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

God is in control of everything. God caused the Assyrian king to fail in conquering Jerusalem because he mocked God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

"The virgin daughter of Zion" here is an idiom meaning the people of Jerusalem. "The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and laughs you to scorn" means that "the people of Jerusalem know that Assyria will fail because they have mocked God."

Links:

2 Kings 19:1 Notes

2 Kings 19:1

house of Yahweh

This is another way of saying "temple of Yahweh."

2 Kings 19:2

Eliakim ... Shebna ... Isaiah ... Amoz

These are all names of men.

He sent Eliakim

"Hezekiah sent Eliakim"

all covered with sackcloth

"all wearing sackcloth"

2 Kings 19:3

This day is a day of distress

"This is a time of distress"

the children have come to the time of birth, but there is no strength for them to be born

This is a metaphor to describe how the people and their leaders have become so weak and unable to fight the enemy.

2 Kings 19:4

all the words of the chief commander

"everything that the chief commander has said"

lift up your prayer

This a common way

2 Kings 19:7

I will put a spirit in him, and he will hear a certain report and go back to his own land

"I will control the attitude of the king of Assyria, so when he hears a report, he will want to return to his own country"

I will put a spirit in him

"I will influence his thinking" or "I will cause him to think differently." Here "spirit" probably refers to his attitude and thoughts, rather than to a spirit being.

certain report

You should translate this phrase using a word for a message that could be either true or false.

I will cause him to fall by the sword

"Fall by the sword" is metonymy for being killed. Alternate translation: "I will cause him to die by the sword" or "I will cause some men to kill him with a sword"

2 Kings 19:8

the chief commander

"the official from Assyria in charge under the king"

found the king of Assyria fighting

"discovered that the Assyrian army was fighting"

Libnah ... Lachish

The names of cities in the kingdom of Judah.

2 Kings 19:9

Sennacherib ... Tirhakah

These are the names of men.

had mobilized to fight against him

"had prepared his army to fight against Assyria"

so he sent

"so Sennacherib sent"

a message

This message was written in a letter.

2 Kings 19:10

General Information:

This is the message that King Sennacharib of Assyria sent to King Hezekiah.

Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying

"Do not believe your God in whom you trust. He is lying when he says"

the hand of the king of Assyria

"Hand" is metonymy for control, authority or power. Alternate translation: "the control of the government of Assyria"

2 Kings 19:11

See, you have heard

"Notice, you have heard" or "You have certainly heard." Here "see" was used to draw attention to what he was about to say next.

So will you be rescued?

Sennacharib used this question to emphasize that God will not be able to rescue them. Alternate translation: "Your God will not rescue you!" or "You will not be able to escape either!"

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2 Kings 19:12

General Information:

King Sennacharib's message to King Hezekiah continues.

Have the gods of the nations rescued them, the nations ... destroyed: Gozan ... Assar?

This question assumes Hezekiah knows the answer and provides emphasis. Alternate translation: "The gods of the nations, the nations ... destroyed—Gozan ... Assar—certainly did not rescue them!"

my fathers

"the previous kings of Assyria" or "the armies of the previous kings of Assyria"

Gozan ... Haran ... Rezeph ... Eden ... Tel Assar

These are all place names.

2 Kings 19:13

Hamath ... Arpad ... Sepharvaim ... Hena ... Ivvah

These are all place names.

2 Kings 19:14

this letter

This refers to the letter that King Sennacherib of Assyria sent to Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:8).

2 Kings 19:15

you who sit above the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "you who sit on your throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

2 Kings 19:16

General Information:

King Hezekiah continues praying to Yahweh after receiving the letter from King Sennacherib of Assyria.

Incline your ear, Yahweh, and listen. Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see

Both of these sentences urge Yahweh to pay attention to the things that Sennacherib is saying.

Incline your ear, Yahweh, and listen

The words "Incline your ear" and "listen" mean the same thing and add emphasis to the plea. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, please listen to what he is saying"

Incline your ear

To "incline the ear" is to lean toward the speaker so as to better hear the words. This is a metaphor for listening carefully and paying attention. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully" or "Pay attention"

Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see

The words "Open your eyes" and "see" mean the same thing and add emphasis to the plea. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, please pay attention to what is happening"

2 Kings 19:18

They have put their gods into the fire

"The Assyrian kings have burned up the gods of the other nations"

Assyrians have destroyed them

"Assyrians have destroyed both the nations and the nations' gods"

2 Kings 19:19

General Information:

King Hezekiah continues praying to Yahweh after receiving the letter from King Sennacherib of Assyria.

I implore you

"I beg of you"

from his power

"from the power of the King of Assyria" or "from the armies of the King of Assyria"

2 Kings 19:21

General Information:

The writer begins to quote a poem by the prophet Isaiah that contains a prophecy.

The virgin daughter of Zion

"Virgin daughter" here is a metaphor for the people of Jerusalem as if they are young, vibrant and beautiful. The term "daughter" was used to give personal characteristics to cities by some biblical writers. Alternate translation: "The beautiful people of Jerusalem"

The daughter of Jerusalem

"Daughter" is metaphor for the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The people of the city of Jerusalem"

shakes her head at you

This action is a metaphor to represent disdain at the pride of the Assyrians. Alternate translation: "scorns you"

2 Kings 19:22

Whom have you defied and slandered? Against whom have you exalted your voice and lifted up your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel!

Yahweh uses rhetorical questions to rebuke Sennacherib. Alternate translation: "You have defied and slandered me! You have exalted your voice and lifted up your eyes in pride against me, the Holy One of Israel!"

lifted up your eyes in pride

"lifted up your eyes in pride" is metonymy for a haughty or arrogant facial expression. Alternate translation: "looked at very proudly"

the Holy One of Israel

An expression for the God of Israel, Yahweh.

2 Kings 19:23

General Information:

This continues the message from Yahweh given by Isaiah, the prophet, to King Hezekiah concerning King Sennacherib. It uses parallelism throughout.

you have defied the Lord

To "defy" is to openly resist or mock.

I have gone up ... I will cut down ... I will enter

These boasts made by Sennacherib could only be fulfilled by his army. The pronoun "I" represents him and his army.

2 Kings 19:24

I dried up all the rivers of Egypt under the soles of my feet.

This is a boast that Sennacherib has so many soldiers that their feet dry up the water when they cross a river. This is an exaggeration to emphasize the great number of soldiers he has. Alternate translation: "And by marching through the streams of Egypt, we dried them all up!"

2 Kings 19:25

General Information:

This continues the message from Yahweh, given by Isaiah, the prophet, for King Hezekiah concerning King Sennecherib. It uses parallelism throughout.

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Have you not heard how ... times?
To make the point strongly this question assumes the listener knows the answer. Alternate translation: "Surely you know how ... times."
impregnable cities
"cities that cannot be captured" or "cities surrounded by high walls"
2 Kings 19:26
plants in the field, green grass
This metaphor compares the weak victims of the Assyrian advance to fragile plants. Alternate translation: "as frail as plants and grass in the fields" or "as weak as shallow rooted plants"
the grass on the roof or in the field, burned before it has grown up
This continues the metaphor comparing the weak victims of the Assyrian advance to fragile plants in difficult conditions for growing fully. Alternate translation: "like grass before it has matured" or "like grass before it has grown tall"
2 Kings 19:27
General Information:
This continues the message from Yahweh, given by Isaiah, the prophet, for King Hezekiah concerning King Sennecherib. It uses parallelism throughout.
raging against me
"angry shouting about me"
2 Kings 19:28
because your arrogance has reached my ears
"Ears" are metonymy for listening or hearing. Alternate translation: "because I have heard your proud words"
I will put my hook in your nose, and my bit in your mouth
A "hook" and a "bit"
I will turn you back the way you came
That Sennacherib will return home before he can conquer Jerusalem can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will make you return to your own country the same way you came, without conquering Jerusalem"
2 Kings 19:29
General Information:
Here Isaiah is talking to King Hezekiah. He continues using parallelism throughout.
grows wild
"grows without having been planted"
2 Kings 19:30
The remnant of the house of Judah that survives will again take root and bear fruit
This metaphor compares restoration of the remnant to plantings that take hold and produce results. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah who remain alive will restore their lives and prosperity" or "The people who remain in Judah will prosper and have many children"
2 Kings 19:31
The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this
"The strong action of Yahweh will make this happen"
2 Kings 19:32
General Information:
This is the end of the message from Yahweh, spoken through the prophet Isaiah to King Hezekiah. It uses parallelism throughout.
nor shoot an arrow here
"Arrow" is metonymy representing all tools of warfare and destruction. Alternate translation: "nor do any fighting here"
or build up a siege ramp against it
"and they will not even build up high mounds of earth against the city wall to enable them to attack the city"
2 Kings 19:33
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"
2 Kings 19:34
for my own sake and for my servant David's sake
"for the sake of my own reputation and because of what I promised to King David, who served me well"
2 Kings 19:35
It came about
"It happened"
185,000 soldiers
"one hundred eighty-five thousand soldiers"
When the men arose
"When the men who were left alive got up"
2 Kings 19:37
Adrammelek ... Sharezer ... Esarhaddon
These are the names of men.

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20 [1]In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying. So Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet came to him, and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Set your house in order; for you will die, and not live.'"[2]Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to Yahweh, saying,[3]"Please, Yahweh, I beg you, call to mind how I have faithfully walked before you with my whole heart, and how I have done what was good in your sight." Then Hezekiah wept loudly.
[4]Before Isaiah had gone out into the middle courtyard, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying,[5]"Turn back, and say to Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what Yahweh, the God of David your ancestor, says: "I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears. I am about to heal you on the third day, and you will go up to the house of Yahweh.
[6]I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.'"[7]So Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." They did so and put it on his boil, and he recovered.

[8]Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign that Yahweh will heal me, and that I should go up to the temple of Yahweh on the third day?"[9]Isaiah replied, "This will be the sign for you from Yahweh, that Yahweh will do the thing that he has spoken. Will the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?"

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[10]Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to go forward ten steps. No, let the shadow go backward ten steps."[11]So Isaiah the prophet cried out to Yahweh, and he brought the shadow ten steps backward, from where it had moved on the stairway of Ahaz.

[12]At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick.[13]Hezekiah listened to those letters, and then showed the messengers all the palace and his valuable things, the silver, the gold, the spices and precious oil, and the storehouse of his weapons, and all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them.
[14]Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say to you? Where did they come from?" Hezekiah said, "They came from the distant country of Babylon."[15]Isaiah asked, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them."

[16]So Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to the word of Yahweh:[17]'Look, the days are about to come when everything in your palace, the things that your ancestors stored away until this present day, will be carried to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says Yahweh.[18]Some of your descendants whom you will father will be taken away from you, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"
[19]Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of Yahweh that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Will there not be peace and stability in my days?"[20]As for the other matters concerning Hezekiah, and all his power, and how he constructed the pool and the conduit, and how he brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[21]Hezekiah lay down with his ancestors, and Manasseh his son became king in his place.

2 Kings 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter finishes the story of Hezekiah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hezekiah's additional time

God hears the distressed call of his faithful believers. Hezekiah was dying but when he prayed, God gave him 15 more years of life. (See: faithful and believe)

Links:

2 Kings 20:1 Notes

2 Kings 20:1

Set your house in order

"House" is metonymy for what was under Hezekiah's control. Alternate translation: "Give final instructions to your household and government"

2 Kings 20:3

call to mind

This is a common way of speaking, an idiom, urging Yahweh to remember. Alternate translation: "remember"

walked

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "lived my life"

good in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment"

2 Kings 20:4

the word of Yahweh came

"Word" represents the message Yahweh revealed to Isaiah. This is a common way of speaking, an idiom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke his word"

2 Kings 20:5

I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears

The second part reinforces the first part to make one message by using parallelism. Alternate translation: "I have heard your prayers and seen your tears"

on the third day

"two days from now" The day Isaiah said this was the first day, so "the third day" would be the same as "two days from now."

2 Kings 20:6

General Information:

The message from Yahweh to King Hezekiah through the prophet Isaiah continues.

fifteen years

15 years

from the hand of the king of Assyria

"Hand" is metonymy for power, authority and control. Alternate translation: "from the control of the king of Assyria"

2 Kings 20:7

lump of figs

"paste made of boiled figs"

They did so and put it on his boil

"Hezekiah's servants did this and put the paste on Hezekiah's sore"

2 Kings 20:9

Will the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?

The source of "the shadow" can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Do you want Yahweh to make the shadow

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caused by the sunlight on the stairway to go forward ten steps or to go back ten steps?"

ten steps

This expression refers to the "stairway of Ahaz" in 2 Kings 20:11. This was probably a special stairway built for King Ahaz in such a way that its steps marked the hours of daylight as the sun's rays advanced along them. In this way, the staircase served to tell the time during the day.

2 Kings 20:10

It is an easy thing for the shadow to go forward ten steps

Why "it is an easy thing" can be stated clearly. "It is easy to cause the shadow to move forward ten steps, because that is the normal thing for it to do"

2 Kings 20:11

the stairway of Ahaz

This was probably a special stairway built for King Ahaz in such a way that its steps marked the hours of daylight as the sun's rays advanced along them. In this way, the staircase served to tell the time during the day. Alternate translation: "the steps that had been built for King Ahaz"

2 Kings 20:12

Marduk-Baladan ... Baladan

These are the names of the king of Babylon and his son.

2 Kings 20:13

listened to those letters

"carefully considered those letters" or 2) "heard the message from the king of Babylon"

There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them

Here "There was nothing ... did not show them" is an exaggeration used for emphasis. It means Hezekiah showed them all of his most valuable things. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah showed him absolutely everything valuable in his house and in all his kingdom"

2 Kings 20:14

these men

This refers to the men sent to King Hezekiah with a message and gifts from Marduk-Baladan.

2 Kings 20:15

They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them

Hezekiah repeats the same idea in two ways to emphasize his point.

There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them

"Nothing" and "not" cancel each other out to make the idea positive. This exaggeration is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I showed them absolutely every one of my valuable things"

2 Kings 20:16

So Isaiah said to Hezekiah

Why Isaiah spoke can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "So, because Isaiah knew Hezekiah had been foolish to show the men all his valuable things, Isaiah said to him"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh"

2 Kings 20:17

Look, the days are about to come when

"Listen to me, someday there will come a time when"; "Look" is used to draw attention to what Isaiah is about to tell Hezekiah.

the days

"Days" is synecdoche to refer to an undefined span of time.

2 Kings 20:19

For he thought

"Because Hezekiah thought"

Will there not be peace and stability in my days?

Hezekiah asks this question for emphasis knowing the answer already. Alternate translation: "I can be sure that there will be peace and stability in my days."

2 Kings 20:20

pool

A small area of still water for storage

conduit

A tunnel for carrying the water

are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?

This question is used to remind the reader that these things are recorded. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 8:23]

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21 [1]Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like the disgusting things of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel.[3]For he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he built altars for Baal, made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and he bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them.

[4]Manasseh built altars in the house of Yahweh, although Yahweh had commanded, "It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever."[5]He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh.[6]He caused his son to pass through the fire, he performed sorcery and divination and consulted with sorcerers and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger.

[7]The carved figure of Asherah that he had made, he placed it in the house of Yahweh. It was about this house that Yahweh had spoken to David and Solomon his son; he had said: "It is in this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that I will put my name forever.[8]I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land that I gave to their ancestors, if they will only be careful to obey all that I have commanded them, and to follow all the law that my servant Moses commanded them."[9]But the people did not listen, and Manasseh led them to do evil even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel.

[10]So Yahweh spoke by his servants the prophets, saying,[11]"Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these disgusting things, and has acted wickedly more than all that the Amorites who were before him did, and has also made Judah sin

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with his idols,[12]therefore Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: Look, I am about to bring such evil on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle.
[13]I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria, and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem clean, as a man wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.[14]I will throw off the remnant of my inheritance and give them into the hand of their enemies. They will become victims and plunder for all their enemies,[15]because they have done what is evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, to this day."

[16]Moreover, Manasseh shed much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another with death. This was in addition to the sin by which he made Judah to sin, when they did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh.[17]As for the other matters concerning Manasseh, all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[18]Manasseh lay down with his ancestors and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Amon his son became king in his place.

[19]Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth; she was the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.[20]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as Manasseh his father had done.
[21]Amon followed in all the way that his father had walked in and worshiped the idols that his father worshiped, and bowed down to them.[22]He abandoned Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of Yahweh.[23]The servants of Amon conspired against him and put the king to death in his own house.
[24]But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they made Josiah his son king in his place.[25]As for the other matters concerning Amon that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[26]The people buried him in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in his place.

2 Kings 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's judgment

God judges sin. When Manasseh worshiped idols and did many evil things, God said he would cause Judah to be destroyed by its enemies. (See: judge and sin and evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

"I will wipe Jerusalem clean, as a man wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down" means "God would completely destroy Jerusalem."

Links:

2 Kings 21:1 Notes

2 Kings 21:1

Hephzibah

The mother of King Manasseh

2 Kings 21:2

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

like the disgusting things

Another possible meaning is "including the disgusting things."

2 Kings 21:3

he rebuilt the high places ... he built altars for Baal, made an Asherah pole

Manasseh would have commanded his workers to do the building for him. Alternate translation: "he had the high places rebuilt ... he had altars built for Baal, had an Asherah pole made" or "he had his workers rebuild the high places ... he had them build altars for Baal, make an Asherah pole"

2 Kings 21:4

General Information:

The story of King Manasseh's reign continues.

It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever

The name is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem is where I will forever make known who I am"

2 Kings 21:5

He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh

It is implied that he built these altars so people could make sacrifices and worship the stars. Also, he would not have built these altars himself, rather he would have commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "He had his workers build altars in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh so that the people could worship the stars and offer them sacrifices"

2 Kings 21:6

He caused his son to pass through the fire

You may need to make explicit why he caused his son be put into the fire and what happened after he did so.

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Alternate translation: "He burned his son to death as an offering to his gods"

consulted with

"asked for information from"

much evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Kings 3:2]

2 Kings 21:7

General Information:

The story of King Manasseh's reign continues.

that he had made

Manasseh probably did not do the work. His servants would have done the work. Alternate translation: "that Manasseh had ordered his servants to make"

that I will put my name forever

Here Yahweh putting his "name" on the temple represents him designating it as the place to worship him. Alternate translation: "where I want people to worship me forever"

2 Kings 21:8

the feet of Israel

The feet are a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "the Israelites"

2 Kings 21:9

even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel

Here "nations" refers to the people who had lived in the land of Canaan before the Israelites had arrived. Alternate translation: "even more than the people whom Yahweh had destroyed as the people of Israel advanced through the land"

2 Kings 21:13

stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria, and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab

The words "measuring line" and "plumb line" are metaphors for the standards Yahweh uses to judge people. Alternate translation: "judge Jerusalem using the same measure I used when I judged Samaria and the house of Ahab"

against Samaria

Samaria is the capital city and it represents all the people of the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "against the people of Israel"

plumb line

a tool made of a heavy weight and a thin rope used to show if a wall is straight

the house of Ahab

Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "the family of Ahab"

2 Kings 21:14

I will throw off

"I will abandon" or "I will reject"

give them into the hand of their enemies

Here the "hand" of the enemies refers to their enemies' control. Alternate translation: "let their enemies defeat them and take over their land"

2 Kings 21:16

Moreover, Manasseh

"Also, Manasseh" or "In addition, Manasseh"

Manasseh shed much innocent blood

The words "shed much innocent blood" are a metonym for killing people violently. It might be best to translate this so the reader understands that other people helped Manasseh do this. Alternate translation: "Manasseh ordered his soldiers to kill many innocent people"

he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another with death

This hyperbole emphasizes the great number of people Manasseh had killed throughout Jerusalem. The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "dead people." Alternate translation: "there were very many dead people throughout Jerusalem"

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

2 Kings 21:17

are they not written ... Judah?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how this phrase is translated in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 21:18

lay down with his ancestors and

This is a polite way of saying he "died, as his ancestors had, and"

the garden of Uzza

Possible meanings are 1) "the garden that had once belonged to a man named Uzza" or 2) "Uzza Garden."

Amon

This is a man's name

2 Kings 21:19

Amon ... Haruz

These are names of men.

Meshullemeth

This is the name of a woman.

Jotbah

This is the name of a city.

2 Kings 21:20

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

2 Kings 21:21

followed in all the way that his father had walked in

"walked in all the ways that his father walked in." The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "lived completely the way his father had lived"

2 Kings 21:22

He abandoned Yahweh

"He went away from Yahweh" or "He paid no more attention to Yahweh"

2 Kings 21:23

conspired against him

"made plans and worked together to harm him"

2 Kings 21:24

the people of the land

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "some of the people in Judah"

conspired against

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

"made plans and worked together to harm." See how you translated this in 2 Kings 21:23.

2 Kings 21:25

are they not written ... Judah?

This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 21:26

the garden of Uzza

Possible meanings are 1) "the garden that had once belonged to a man named Uzza" or 2) "Uzza Garden." See how you translated this in [2 Kings 21:18]

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22 [1]Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah (she was the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath).[2]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. He walked in all the way of David his ancestor, and he did not turn away either to the right or to the left.

[3]It came about that in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of Yahweh, saying,[4]"Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and tell him to count the money that has been brought into the house of Yahweh, which the temple guards have gathered from the people.[5]Let it be given into the hand of the workmen who are in charge of the house of Yahweh, and let them give it to the workmen who are in the house of Yahweh, for them to make repairs to damage in the temple.
[6]Let them give money to the carpenters, the builders, and the masons, and also to buy timber and cut stone to repair the temple."[7]But no accounting was required for the money that was given to them, because they handled it faithfully.

[8]Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Yahweh." So Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.[9]Shaphan went and took the book to the king, and also reported to him, saying, "Your servants have spent the money that was found in the temple and they have given it into the hand of the workmen who supervise the care for the house of Yahweh."[10]Then Shaphan the scribe said to the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." Then Shaphan read it to the king.
[11]It came about that when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes.[12]The king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah, his own servant, saying,[13]"Go and consult with Yahweh for me, and for the people and for all Judah, because of the words of this book that has been found. For great is the anger of Yahweh that has been kindled against us because our ancestors have not listened to the words of this book so as to obey all that was written concerning us."

[14]So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter), and they spoke with her.
[15]She said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Tell the man who sent you to me,[16]'"This is what Yahweh says: 'See, I will bring disaster to this place and to its inhabitants, according to everything written in the book that the king of Judah has read.
[17]Because they have abandoned me and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke me to anger with all the deeds they have committed—therefore my anger has been kindled against this place, and it will not be extinguished.'"[18]But to the king of Judah, who sent you to ask Yahweh's will, this is what you will say to him: "Yahweh, the God of Israel says this: 'About the words that you heard,[19]because your heart was tender, and because you have humbled yourself before Yahweh, when you heard what I said against this place and its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have listened to you—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[20]See, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.'"" So the men took this message back to the king.

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2 Kings 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The next two chapters (2 Kings 22-23) tell about the spiritual revival under King Josiah. A revival occurs when the people begin to worship Yahweh properly again. (See: spirit)

Special concepts in this chapter

The law

The priests found a copy of the law in the temple and took it to the king. He was upset because the people had disobeyed the law so badly. Josiah asked God about it. God said that he would destroy Judah for these sins but not in Josiah's lifetime, since he humbled himself and wanted to do better. Many scholars believe this was a copy of the book of Deuteronomy. (See: priest, lawofmoses and temple and sin)

Links:

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2 Kings 22:1

thirty-one years

"31 years"

Jedidah

This is the name of a woman.

Adaiah

This is the name of a man.

Bozkath

This is the name of a town in Judah.

2 Kings 22:2

He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

Here "eyes" represents Yahweh's thoughts or what he considered about something. Alternate translation: "He did what Yahweh considered to be right" or "He did what was right according to Yahweh"

He walked in all the way of David his ancestor

"He walked in all the ways of David his ancestor" Josiah behaving as David did is spoken of as if he walked on the same road or way as David. Alternate translation: "He lived the way David his ancestor had lived" or "He followed the example of David his ancestor"

he did not turn away either to the right or to the left

To fully obey Yahweh is spoken of as if a person were on the correct road and never turned from it. Alternate translation: "he did not do anything that would displease Yahweh" or "he fully obeyed all the laws of Yahweh"

2 Kings 22:3

It came about that

If your language has a way to mark the beginning of a new part of the story, consider using it here.

the eighteenth year

"Eighteenth" is the ordinal form of 18. Alternate translation: "year 18"

Shaphan ... Azaliah ... Meshullam

These are men's names.

2 Kings 22:4

Go up to Hilkiah

The phrase "Go up" is used because Yahweh's temple was higher in elevation than where King Josiah was located. Alternate translation: "Go to Hilkiah"

Hilkiah

This is a man's name.

that has been brought into the house of Yahweh, which the temple guards have gathered from the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the temple guards who gathered the money from the people brought into the temple of Yahweh"

house of Yahweh

This is another name for the "temple" (verse 3).

2 Kings 22:5

house of Yahweh ... in the temple

Here "house of Yahweh" and "temple" mean the same thing.

Let it be given into the hand of the workmen

Here "hand" represents the workmen as a whole. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Tell Hilkiah to give the money to the workmen"

2 Kings 22:6

General Information:

The message from King Josiah to Hilkiah, the high priest, continues.

Let them give money

Here "them" refers to the workmen who are in charge of the house of Yahweh in 2 Kings 22:5.

the carpenters, the builders, and the masons

These are the same as the workmen who are in the house of Yahweh in 2 Kings 22:5. Here the workers are described in more detail.

carpenters

workers who build with wood

masons

workers who build with stone

2 Kings 22:7

was given to them ... because they handled

Here "them" and "they" refer to the workmen who are in charge of the house of Yahweh in 2 Kings 22:5.

no accounting was required for the money that was given to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the workmen who were in charge did not have to report how they used the money that the temple guards gave them"

because they handled it faithfully

"because they used the money honestly"

2 Kings 22:8

Hilkiah

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 18:18]

the book of the law

Most likely these laws were written on a scroll. A scroll was a type of book made of one long, rolled-up sheet of papyrus or leather.

2 Kings 22:9

given it into the hand of the workmen

Here "hand" represents the workmen as a whole. Alternate translation: "given it to the workmen"

2 Kings 22:11

It came about that

If your language has a way to mark the beginning of a new part of the story, consider using it here.

had heard the words of the book of the law

Here "words" represents the message of the law. Alternate translation: "had heard the laws that were written in the book" or "had heard the laws that were written in the scroll"

he tore his clothes

This is a symbolic action that indicates intense grief or sadness.

2 Kings 22:12

Ahikam ... Shaphan ... Akbor ... Micaiah ... Asaiah

These are names of men.

2 Kings 22:13

Go and consult with Yahweh

It is made clear in 22:14 that the king means for the men to go to the prophetess of Yahweh to determine Yahweh's will.

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consult
to go to someone to ask for advice
the words of this book that has been found
Here "words" represents the laws. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the laws in this book that Hilkiah has found"
For great is the anger of Yahweh that has been kindled against us
Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire that was lit. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh is very angry with us"
all that was written concerning us
This refers to the law that was given to Israel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all that Moses wrote in the law that we should do" or "all the laws that God gave through Moses to the people of Israel"
2 Kings 22:14
Huldah
This is a woman's name.
Shallum ... Tikvah ... Harhas
These are men's names.
keeper of the wardrobe
Possible meanings are 1) the person who took care of the clothing that priests wore in the temple or 2) the person who took care of the king's clothing.
she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter
Here "second quarter" refers to the new part of the city that was built on the north side of Jerusalem. Also, "second" is the ordinal form of 2. Alternate translation: "she lived in Jerusalem in the new part of the city" or "she lived in the new part of Jerusalem"
2 Kings 22:15
the man who sent you to me
Here "the man" refers to King Josiah.
2 Kings 22:16
I will bring disaster to this place and to its inhabitants
Yahweh causing terrible things to happen is spoken of as if disaster were an object that he could bring to a place. Alternate translation: "I will cause terrible things to happen to this place and to those who live there"
to this place
"to Jerusalem." This refers to the city of Jerusalem which represents the whole land of Judah. Alternate translation: "to Judah"
2 Kings 22:17
General Information:
The message Yahweh sent to King Josiah through Huldah, the prophetess, continues.
my anger has been kindled against this place, and it will not be extinguished
Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire that was lit. Alternate translation: "my anger against this place is like a fire that cannot be put out"
this place
Here "place" represents the people who live in Jerusalem and Judah. Alternate translation: "these people"
2 Kings 22:18
About the words that you heard
Here "words" represents the message that Huldah just spoke. Alternate translation: "About the message that you heard"
2 Kings 22:19
because your heart was tender
Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. Feeling sorry is spoken of as if the heart were tender. Alternate translation: "because you felt sorry" or "because you repented"
that they would become a desolation and a curse
The abstract nouns "desolation" and "curse" can be stated as an adjective and a verb. Alternate translation: "that I would make the land desolate and would curse them"
torn your clothes
This is a symbolic action that indicates intense grief or sadness.
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 19:33]
2 Kings 22:20
General Information:
This is the end of the message from Yahweh to King Josiah through the prophetess Huldah.
See, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace
Both statements mean basically the same thing. They are polite ways of saying he will die. Alternate translation: "So I will allow you to die and be buried peacefully"
Your eyes will not see
Here "will not see" represents not experiencing something. Alternate translation: "You will not experience"
Your eyes
Here "eyes" represents the whole person.
the disaster that I will bring upon this place
Yahweh causing terrible things to happen is spoken of as if disaster were an object that Yahweh would bring to a place. Alternate translation: "the terrible things I will cause to happen in this place"

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23 [1]So the king sent messengers who gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.[2]Then the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, prophets, and all the people, from small to great. He then read in their hearing all the words of the book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh.
[3]The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh and to keep his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book. So all the people agreed to stand by the covenant.

[4]The king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests under him, and the gatekeepers to bring out of the temple of Yahweh all the vessels that were made for Baal and Asherah, and for all the host of heaven. He burned them outside

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Jerusalem in the fields in the Kidron Valley and carried their ashes to Bethel.[5]He got rid of the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had chosen to burn incense at the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places around Jerusalem—those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and the moon, to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.
[6]He brought out the Asherah pole from the temple of Yahweh, outside Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley and burned it there. He crushed it to dust and threw that dust onto the graves of the common people.[7]He broke down the houses of the cultic prostitutes in the temple of Yahweh, where the women wove garments for Asherah.
[8]Josiah brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba. He destroyed the high places at the gates that were at the entrance to the gate of Joshua (the city governor), on the left side of the city gate.[9]Although the priests of those high places were not allowed to serve at the altar of Yahweh in Jerusalem, they ate unleavened bread among their brothers.
[10]Josiah defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so that no one might cause his son or his daughter to pass through the fire as a sacrifice to Molech.[11]He took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun. They had been in an area at the entrance to the temple of Yahweh, near the room of Nathan-Melek, the chamberlain. Josiah burned the chariots of the sun.
[12]Josiah the king destroyed the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the temple of Yahweh. Josiah smashed them into pieces and threw them into the Kidron Valley.[13]The king ruined the high places east of Jerusalem, south of the mount of corruption that Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth, the detestable idol of the Sidonians; for Chemosh, the detestable idol of Moab; and for Molech, the detestable idol of the people of Ammon.[14]He broke the stone pillars into pieces and cut down the Asherah poles and he filled those places with the bones of human beings.

[15]Josiah also completely destroyed the altar that was at Bethel and the high place that Jeroboam son of Nebat (the one who made Israel to sin) had constructed. He also burned that altar and the high place and crushed it to dust. He also burned the Asherah pole.[16]As Josiah looked over the area, he noticed the graves that were on the hillside. He sent men to take the bones from the graves; then he burned them on the altar, which defiled it. This was according to the word of Yahweh which the man of God had spoken, the man who spoke of these things beforehand.
[17]Then he said, "What monument is that I see?" The men of the city told him, "That is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and spoke about these things that you have just done against the altar of Bethel."[18]So Josiah said, "Let it alone. No one should move his bones." So they let his bones alone, along with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria.
[19]Then Josiah removed all the houses on the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made, and that provoked Yahweh to anger. He did to them exactly what had been done at Bethel.[20]He slaughtered all the priests of the high places on the altars and he burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

[21]Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant."[22]Such a Passover celebration had never been held from the days of the judges who ruled Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel or Judah.[23]But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover of Yahweh was celebrated in Jerusalem.

[24]Josiah also completely removed the sorcerers and spiritists. He also completely removed the fetishes, the idols, and all the disgusting things that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so as to confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had found in the house of Yahweh.[25]Before Josiah, there had been no king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his heart, all his soul, and all his might, who followed all the law of Moses. Nor did any king like Josiah arise after him.

[26]Nevertheless, Yahweh did not turn away from the burning of his raging anger, which burned against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke him to anger.[27]So Yahweh said, "I will also remove Judah out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will throw away this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, 'My name will be there.'"

[28]As for the other matters concerning Josiah, everything that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[29]In his days, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went to fight against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went to meet Necho in battle, and Necho killed him at Megiddo.[30]Josiah's servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own grave. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

[31]Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.[32]Jehoahaz did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like

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everything that his ancestors had done.[33]Pharaoh Necho put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem. Then Necho imposed a fine on Judah of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. [34]Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away to Egypt, and Jehoahaz died there.[35]Jehoiakim paid the silver and gold to Pharaoh. In order to meet the demand of Pharaoh, Jehoikim taxed the land and he forced each man among the people of the land to pay him the silver and gold according to their assessments.

[36]Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah; she was the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.[37]Jehoiakim did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his ancestors had done.

2 Kings 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Josiah ends in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ending idolatry

Josiah destroyed idolatry in Judah and in the deserted areas of Israel. But he fought against Egypt and was killed in battle. After his death, Egypt set up a government of Judah that it controlled.

Links:

2 Kings 23:1 Notes

2 Kings 23:2

all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "many other people"

from small to great

This merism includes everyone in between. Alternate translation: "from the least important to the most important"

He then read in their hearing

"Then the king read aloud so that they could hear"

that had been found

In [2 Kings 22:8]

2 Kings 23:3

walk after Yahweh

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path, and "to walk after" someone is a metonym for doing what that other person does or wants others to do. Alternate translation: "live obeying Yahweh"

his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes

These words all share similar meanings. Together they emphasize everything that Yahweh had commanded in the law.

with all his heart and all his soul

The idiom "with all his heart" means "completely" and "with all his soul" means "with all his being." These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "with all his being" or "with all his energy"

that were written in this book

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that this book contained"

stand by the covenant

This idiom means to "obey the terms of the covenant."

2 Kings 23:4

the priests under him

"the other priests who served him"

gatekeepers

men who guarded the gates to the temple

for Baal ... for all the host of heaven

"so people could use them to worship Baal ... so people could use them to worship all the stars"

He burned ... and carried

The word "he" refers to Josiah. He would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "he had them burn them ... and carry them"

Kidron Valley ... Bethel

names of places

2 Kings 23:5

He got rid

The word "He" refers to Josiah. He would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He had them get rid"

to Baal, to the sun and the moon, to the planets, and to all the host of heaven

"as a way to worship Baal, the sun and the moon, the planets, and all the stars"

2 Kings 23:6

General Information:

This continues to tell what King Josiah did in response to the message from Yahweh.

He brought out ... and burned it ... He crushed it ... and threw

The word "he" refers to Josiah. He would have commanded his workers to do these things. Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He had them bring out ... and burn it ... He had them crush it ... and throw"

2 Kings 23:7

He broke

The word "He" refers to Josiah. He would have commanded

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his workers to do these things. Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He had them clear"

the houses of the cultic prostitutes in the temple of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) the houses were in the temple or 2) the prostitutes were in the temple.

in the temple of Yahweh

You may need to make explicit that the houses were in the courtyard around the building, not in the building itself. Alternate translation: "by the temple of Yahweh"

wove garments

"made clothes"

2 Kings 23:8

Josiah brought ... and defiled ... He destroyed

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to bring ... and to defile ... He had them destroy"

Geba ... Beersheba

names of places

Joshua (the city governor)

"the city ruler named Joshua" or "the city leader named Joshua." This is a different Joshua from the Joshua in the Old Testament Book of Joshua.

2 Kings 23:9

their brothers

Here "brothers" refers to their fellow priests who served at the temple.

2 Kings 23:10

Topheth ... Ben Hinnom

place names

cause his son or his daughter to pass through the fire as a sacrifice to Molech

"put his son or his daughter in the fire and burn them as an offering to Molech"

2 Kings 23:11

He took away

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people, perhaps Hilkiah and "the priests under him"

the horses

Possible meanings are 1) real horses or 2) statues of horses.

had given to the sun

Here "given" represents being dedicated for worship. Alternate translation: "had used to worship the sun"

Nathan-Melek

a man's name

2 Kings 23:12

Josiah the king destroyed ... Josiah smashed ... and threw

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "Josiah the king commanded them to destroy ... He had them smash ... had them throw"

the kings of Judah had made ... Manasseh had made

Manasseh and the kings of Judah probably commanded their workers to make these things. Alternate translation: "the kings of Judah had had their workers make ... Manasseh had had his workers make"

Kidron Valley

place name. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 23:4]

2 Kings 23:13

The king ruined

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He had them ruin ... He had them break ... they filled"

Solomon the king of Israel had built

Solomon would have commanded his workers to do these things. Alternate translation: "Solomon the king of Israel had had his workers build"

2 Kings 23:14

He broke ... he filled

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do these things. It is likely that Hilkiah and the priests who assisted him did these things. Alternate translation: "He had them break ... they filled"

filled those places with the bones of human beings

"covered the ground with human bones so people could not use it as a shrine anymore"

2 Kings 23:15

Josiah also completely destroyed ... He also burned ... and crushed ... He also burned

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people, perhaps Hilkiah and "the priests under him"

2 Kings 23:16

spoke of these things beforehand

"had said that these things would happen"

2 Kings 23:17

monument

marker or statue that honors a person. A tomb is one kind of monument.

2 Kings 23:18

So they let his bones alone, along with the bones of

"So they did not touch his bones or the bones of"

2 Kings 23:19

Josiah removed ... He did

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people, perhaps Hilkiah and "the priests under him"

the kings of Israel had made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people, probably the kings' workers, might have helped the kings make these things.

what had been done

"what he had done"

2 Kings 23:20

He slaughtered ... he burned

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people, perhaps Hilkiah and "the priests under him"

he burned human bones on them

You may need to make explicit why he burned the bones. "he burned human bones on them so no one would use them again"

2 Kings 23:21

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Keep the Passover
"You must celebrate the Passover"
2 Kings 23:22
Such a Passover celebration had never been held from the days of
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Israel had not celebrated the Passover festival in such a great way in the time of"
ruled Israel
The name "Israel" is a metonym for "the descendants of Israel."
the days of the kings of Israel or Judah
"the time when the people of Israel had their own king and the people of Judah had their own king"
2 Kings 23:23
this Passover of Yahweh was celebrated
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah celebrated this Passover of Yahweh"
2 Kings 23:24
completely removed
This phrase translates a word that can mean to burn things, which is probably what Josiah did to the fetishes, idols, and disgusting things. The phrase can also mean simply to remove things, and Josiah probably told the sorcerers and spiritists to leave Judah, but he may have literally executed them by burning them or executed them some other way and burned their dead bodies.
sorcerers and spiritists
See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 21:6.
fetishes
things that people wrongly believe have special power
2 Kings 23:25
who turned to Yahweh
"who gave himself completely to Yahweh"
Nor did any king like Josiah arise after him
"And since then there has never been a king who was like Josiah"
2 Kings 23:26
Nevertheless
The writer uses this word to show that even though all of these things that Josiah did were good, Yahweh was still angry with Judah.
Yahweh did not turn away from the burning of his raging anger, which burned against Judah
Fire is a metaphor for anger, and starting a fire is a metaphor for becoming angry. The abstract noun "anger" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Yahweh did not stop being furiously angry with Judah"
had done to provoke him
"had done to cause him to be angry"
2 Kings 23:27
out of my sight
"from where I am" or "from being near me"
My name will be there
The name is a metonym for the honor that people should give to the person. Alternate translation: "People should worship me there"
2 Kings 23:28
are they not written ... Judah?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]
2 Kings 23:29
In his days, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt
"During the time of Josiah, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt"
Necho ... Megiddo
Necho is the name of a man. Megiddo is the name of a city.
2 Kings 23:31
twenty-three years old
"23 years old"
Hamutal
This is a woman's name.
Libnah
This is the name of a place.
2 Kings 23:32
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]
2 Kings 23:33
Riblah ... Hamath
These are names of places.
put him in chains
Being put "in chains" represents being captured and imprisoned. Alternate translation: "put him in prison"
imposed a fine on Judah
"punished the people of Judah by forcing them to give him"
one hundred talents ... one talent
A talent was about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "3,300 kilograms ... 33 kilograms"
2 Kings 23:35
Jehoikim taxed the land
"Jehoikim collected taxes from the people who owned land"
people of the land
"people of the land of Judah." Possible meanings are 1) "the people who lived in the land of Judah" or 2) "the richest and most powerful of those who lived in Judah."
2 Kings 23:36
Zebidah
This is a woman's name.
Pedaiah
This is a man's name.
Rumah
This is the name of a place.
2 Kings 23:37
did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

24 [1]In Jehoiakim's days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Judah; Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then Jehoiakim turned back and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar.[2]Yahweh sent against Jehoiakim marauding bands of Chaldeans, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it. This was in conformity with the word of Yahweh that had been spoken through his servants the prophets.

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[3]It was certainly at the mouth of Yahweh that this came on Judah, to remove them out of his sight, because of the sins of Manasseh, all that he did,[1] [4]and also because of the innocent blood that he shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. Yahweh was not willing to pardon that.
[5]As for the other matters concerning Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah?[6]Jehoiakim lay down with his ancestors, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.
[7]The king of Egypt did not attack any more out of his land, because the king of Babylon had conquered all the lands that had been controlled by the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

[8]Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta; she was the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem.[9]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that his father had done.

[10]At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and besieged the city.[11]Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it,[12]and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers. The king of Babylon captured him in the eighth year of his own reign.
[13]Nebuchadnezzar took out from there all the valuable things in the house of Yahweh, and those in the king's palace. He cut into pieces all the golden objects that Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh, as Yahweh had said would happen.[14]He took into exile all Jerusalem, all the leaders, and all the mighty warriors, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. No one was left except the poorest people in the land.
[15]Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin into exile at Babylon, as well as the king's mother, wives, officers, and the nobles of the land. He took them into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.[16]All the fighting men, seven thousand in number, and one thousand craftsmen and blacksmiths, all of them strong and fit for fighting—the king of Babylon brought these men into exile at Babylon.[17]The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's father's brother, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

[18]Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.[19]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that Jehoiakim had done.[20]Through Yahweh's anger, all these events happened in Jerusalem and Judah, until he drove them out of his presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

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[1]Some ancient Hebrew copies read, It was certainly because of the wrath of Yahweh.

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2 Kings 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

These last two chapters are the final defeat of Judah and the beginning of their exile to Babylon.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's punishment

God punished Judah because of their sin. The Babylonians conquer Jerusalem and carry away all the craftsmen, soldiers and wealthy. They make Zedekiah the king. He was not truly a king because he lacked absolute authority. (See: sin)

Links:

2 Kings 24:1 Notes

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2 Kings 24:1
In Jehoiakim's days
"During the time that Jehoiakim ruled Judah"
attacked Judah
You may need to make explicit what happened after Nebuchadnezzar attacked Judah. Alternate translation: "attacked and defeated Judah"
2 Kings 24:2
This was in conformity with the word of Yahweh that had been spoken through his servants the prophets
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "This was according to the word of Yahweh that his servants the prophets had spoken" or "This was exactly what Yahweh had told his servants the prophets to say would happen"
2 Kings 24:3
It was certainly at the mouth of Yahweh
Some versions have, "It was certainly because of the wrath of Yahweh," which is just as good a reading of the original text. If translators have access to versions in major languages in their region, they should probably follow their choice.
at the mouth of Yahweh
Here "mouth" represents Yahweh's command. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh had commanded"
remove them out of his sight

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"get rid of them" or "destroy them"

2 Kings 24:4

innocent blood that he shed

Blood is a metonym for innocent life, and shedding blood is a metonym for killing innocent people. Alternate translation: "innocent people whom he killed"

he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood

Blood is a metonym for innocent life, and shedding blood is a metonym for killing innocent people. Alternate translation: "he killed many innocent people in Jerusalem"

2 Kings 24:5

are they not written ... Judah?

This is written as a rhetorical question because at the time this was written people were already aware of this information. This can be written as a statement. It can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 8:23]

2 Kings 24:6

lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "died and was buried along with his ancestors"

2 Kings 24:7

The king of Egypt did not attack any more out of his land

"The king of Egypt did not come out of his land any more to attack other people groups"

2 Kings 24:8

Nehushta ... Elnathan

Nehushta is the name of a woman. Elnathan is the name of a man.

2 Kings 24:9

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

he did all that his father had done

Here "all" is a generalization. It means he did the same sinful things as his father. Alternate translation: "he committed the same kinds of sins his father had committed"

2 Kings 24:10

the servants

"the army." These men served Nebuchadnezzar as soldiers.

2 Kings 24:11

his servants

"his army." These men served Nebuchadnezzar as soldiers. See how you translated this phrase in 2 Kings 24:11.

2 Kings 24:12

Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers

You may need to make explicit why Jehoiachin went out to meet Nebuchadnezzar. Alternate translation: "Jehoiachin the king of Judah, with his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers, went out to where the king of Babylon was, to surrender to him"

The king of Babylon captured him in the eighth year of his own reign

"After the king of Babylon had been king for more than seven years, he captured Jehoiachin"

2 Kings 24:13

Solomon king of Israel had made

You might want to translate this so the reader understands that Solomon might have had others help him do this.

2 Kings 24:14

He took into exile all Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" is a metonym for the people who lived there. And, "all" is a generalization. It means all the most important people Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar took all the important people away from Jerusalem"

the craftsmen and the smiths

"the men who knew how to make and repair things that are made from metal"

No one was left except the poorest people in the land

"Only the poorest people in the land were left"

was left

"still lived there"

2 Kings 24:15

nobles

This probably refers to men who were wealthy or were leaders because people thought they were wise.

2 Kings 24:16

seven thousand ... one thousand

"7,000 ... 1,000"

2 Kings 24:17

Mattaniah

This is a man's name.

2 Kings 24:18

twenty-one ... eleven

"21 ... 11"

Hamutal

This is a woman's name.

Jeremiah

This is a man's name.

Libnah

This is the name of a place.

2 Kings 24:19

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated this in [2 Kings 3:2]

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25 [1]It happened that in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem. He camped opposite it, and they built a siege wall around it.[2]So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign.[3]On the ninth day of the fourth month of that year, the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land.
[4]Then the city was broken into, and all the fighting men fled at night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, although the Chaldeans were all around the city. The king went in the direction of the Arabah.[5]But the army of Chaldeans pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. All his army was scattered away from him.

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[6]They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where they passed sentence on him.[7]As for Zedekiah's sons, they slaughtered them before his eyes. Then he put out his eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and brought him to Babylon.

[8]Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a servant of the king of Babylon and commander of his bodyguards, came to Jerusalem.
[9]He burned the house of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; also every important building in the city he burned.[10]As for all the walls around Jerusalem, all the army of the Chaldeans who were under the commander of the bodyguard destroyed them.
[11]As for the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the remainder of the population—Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them away into exile.[12]But the commander of the bodyguard did leave some of the poorest of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

[13]As for the bronze pillars that were in the house of Yahweh, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke them into pieces and carried the bronze back to Babylon.[14]The pots, shovels, lamp trimmers, spoons, and all the utensils of bronze with which the priests had served in the temple—the Chaldeans took them all away.
[15]The censers and the bowls that were made of gold and those made of silver—the captain of the king's guard took them away as well.
[16]The two pillars, the sea, and the stands that Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh contained more bronze than could be weighed.[17]The height of the first pillar was eighteen cubits, and a capital of bronze was on top of it. The capital was three cubits high, with latticework and pomegranates all around on the capital, all made of bronze. The other pillar and its latticework were the same as the first.

[18]The commander of the bodyguard took Seraiah the chief priest, together with Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three gatekeepers.[19]From the city he took prisoner an officer who was in charge of soldiers, and five men of those who advised the king, who were still in the city. He also took prisoner the king's army officer responsible for drafting men into the army, along with sixty important men from the land who were in the city.
[20]Then Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.
[21]The king of Babylon put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile.

[22]As for the people who remained in the land of Judah, those whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, he put Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, in charge of them.[23]Now when all the commanders of the soldiers, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. These men were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maakathite—they and their men.[24]Gedaliah made an oath to them and to their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you."
[25]But it happened that in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, from the royal family, came with ten men and attacked Gedaliah. Gedaliah died, along with the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.
[26]Then all the people, from the least to the greatest, and the commanders of the soldiers, arose and went to Egypt, because they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

[27]It happened later in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Awel-Marduk king of Babylon released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. This happened in the year that Awel-Marduk began to reign.
[28]He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat more honorable than that of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.
[29]Awel-Marduk removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes, and Jehoiachin ate regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life.
[30]A regular food allowance was given to him by the king every day for the rest of his life.

2 Kings 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the final defeat of Judah and the beginning of their exile to Babylon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Zedekiah's revolt

Zedekiah revolted against the Babylonians, so they came and completely destroyed Jerusalem. They tore down the city walls and took the rest of the people to Babylon as slaves, except the very poorest people remained.

Links:

2 Kings 25:1 Notes

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2 Kings 25:1

in the ninth year

in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month

This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of December on Western calendars. This is during the cold season when there may be rain and snow.

came with all his army against Jerusalem

The name "Jerusalem" is a metonym for the people who lived in it. Alternate translation: "came with his whole army to fight against the people of Jerusalem" or "came with his whole army to conquer Jerusalem"

2 Kings 25:3

the ninth day of the fourth month

This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. The ninth day is near the end of June on Western calendars. This is during the dry season when there is very little or no rain.

the people of the land

These are the inhabitants of Jerusalem, including refugees from the surrounding villages that fled to Jerusalem when the war started.

2 Kings 25:4

Then the city was broken into

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the Babylonian army broke into the city"

all the fighting men

"all the warriors"

by the way of the gate

"by using the gate"

the Chaldeans

Some translations use "Chaldeans" and others use "Babylonians." Both terms refer to the same people group.

The king went in the direction of

"King Zedekiah also fled and he went toward"

2 Kings 25:5

All his army was scattered away from him

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "His whole army ran away from him" or "The Chaldeans chased away his whole army"

2 Kings 25:6

Riblah

This is the name of a place.

passed sentence on him

"decided what they would do to punish him"

2 Kings 25:7

they slaughtered them before his eyes

The eyes are synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "they forced king Zedekiah to watch them kill his sons"

he put out his eyes

"Nebuchadnezzar put out Zedekiah's eyes." It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people might have helped Nebuchadnezzar do this.

2 Kings 25:8

in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month

This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. The seventh day is near the end of July on Western calendars.

the nineteenth year

This is the ordinal form of the number 19.

Nebuzaradan

This is the name of a man.

2 Kings 25:10

As for all the walls around Jerusalem, all

"This is what happened to all the walls around Jerusalem: all"

who were under

"who were following the orders of"

2 Kings 25:11

As for the rest of the people ... city, those

"This is what happened to the rest of the people ... city: those"

the rest of the people who were left in the city

"the people who remained in the city"

deserted to the king

"left the city and gone to be with the king"

2 Kings 25:13

As for the bronze pillars ... Yahweh, the Chaldeans

"This is what happened to the bronze pillars ... Yahweh: the Chaldeans"

the stands

This refers to the large, moveable bronze stands with bronze wheels and axles. "the moveable bronze stands" or "the bronze stands with wheels"

the bronze sea

"the large bronze basin"

broke them into pieces

"cut them into pieces" or "chopped them up into small pieces"

2 Kings 25:14

shovels

A shovel was a tool that was used to clean the altar, typically used to move big piles of dirt, sand, or ashes.

with which the priests had served in the temple

"which the priests had used in the temple service"

2 Kings 25:16

the sea

"the large bronze basin." See how you translated this in 2 Kings 25:13.

the stands

See how you translated this in 2 Kings 25:13.

2 Kings 25:17

eighteen cubits ... three cubits

A cubit was 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 8.3 meters ... about 1.4 meters"

a capital of bronze

"an artistic, bronze design" or "a bronze piece with designs"

latticework

This was a design made of crossed strips that looked like a net.

all made of bronze

"completely made of bronze"

2 Kings 25:18

The commander of the bodyguard

See how you translated this in 2 Kings 25:8.

Seraiah

This is the name of a man.

the second priest

These words refer to Zephaniah. Another possible meaning

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is "the priest under Seraiah."
gatekeepers
See how you translated this in 2 Kings 7:10.
2 Kings 25:19
took prisoner
"captured and kept from escaping"
an officer who was in charge of soldiers
Other translations may read "a eunuch who was in charge of soldiers." A eunuch is a man whose private parts have been removed.
officer responsible for drafting men into the army
Possible meanings are 1) the officer forced men to become soldiers or 2) the officer wrote down the names of the men who became soldiers.
2 Kings 25:20
Nebuzaradan
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in 2 Kings 25:8.
Riblah
This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in 2 Kings 25:6.
2 Kings 25:21
put them to death
This is a polite way of saying "killed them." It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people might have helped the king do this.
In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile
"So Judah was taken into exile out of its land"
Judah went out of its land
Judah, the name of the people group, is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah went out of their land"
2 Kings 25:22
Gedaliah ... Ahikam ... Shaphan
These are the names of men.
2 Kings 25:23
Ishmael ... Nethaniah ... Johanan ... Kareah ... Seraiah ... Tanhumeth ... Jaazaniah
These are the names of men.
Netophathite
This refers to a person who is a descendant of a man named Netophah.
Maakathite
This refers to a person who comes from a place called Maakah.
2 Kings 25:25
the seventh month
This is the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
Elishama
This is the name of a man.
2 Kings 25:26
all the people
This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "many people"
from the least to the greatest
This is a merism that means "everyone," which is a generalization. Alternate translation: "from the least important to the most important" or "everyone"
2 Kings 25:27
in the thirty-seventh year
in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month
This is the twelfth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-seventh day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.
Awel-Marduk
This is a man's name.
2 Kings 25:28
a seat more honorable than that of the other kings
Giving a good place at the dining table is a metonym for honoring him. Alternate translation: "more honor than the other kings"
2 Kings 25:29
removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes
The act of removing Jehoiachins' prison clothes represents making him a free man.
at the king's table
"with the king and his officials"
2 Kings 25:30
A regular food allowance was given to him
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The king made sure that he had a regular food allowance"
A regular food allowance
"Money to buy food"

Introduction to 1 Chronicles

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Chronicles

Lists of descendants (1:1-9:44) From Adam to Jacob (1:1–2:2) Jacob's descendants (2:2–9:44)
Saul dies and David begins to reign
(10:1-29:30) Saul dies (10:1–14) David captures Jerusalem (11:1-9) David's mighty men (11:10–12:40) David prospers (13:1–22:1) David prepares for Solomon to build the temple (22:2–29:30)

What are the Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles about?

The Book of 1 Chronicles retells the line of descendants from Adam to Saul. It then gives the history of Israel during the time of David. The Book of 2 Chronicles gives the history of Israel beginning with Solomon. It ends when the Babylonian army attacks Judah and takes some of the people to Babylon. The writers of Chronicles probably wrote these books for the Jews who returned from exile in Babylon. The purpose was to teach the people to avoid disobeying God as their ancestors

did.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title "1 Chronicles" or "First Chronicles." You may also call this book "The Events of the Kings of Judah and Israel, Book 1" or "The First Book of the Events of the Kings of Judah and Israel."

Who wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles?

The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles are unknown. They mention that they used other books when writing Chronicles. The names of these other books are "The Chronicles of Samuel the Seer," "The Chronicles of Nathan the Seer," "The Chronicles of Gad the Seer," "The History of Nathan the Prophet," "The Chronicles of Shemaiah the Prophet and Iddo," "The Story of the Prophet Iddo" and "The books of the kings of Judah and Israel."

Why are there multiple books that give the history of the kings of Israel?

The books of Chronicles and the books of Kings tell much of the same history, but they are not exactly the same. The writers of Chronicles wrote mostly about the kings of Judah who were faithful to Yahweh and his covenant. The writers wanted the Jews to think carefully about David and Solomon. They also wanted the Jews to think about how Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah caused their ancestors to repent and to worship Yahweh. The writers wanted to encourage the Jews and their leaders to obey the law and to honor God's covenant with them. (See: covenant)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did God punish the people of Israel?

God punished the people of Israel because they disobeyed him and worshiped false gods. God punished them with disease, disasters, and defeat in battle. However, God forgave them and caused them to prosper again if they repented and obeyed him. The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles continually reminded the readers that God punished his people because they disobeyed. They wanted the readers to understand that they must obey God.

Why are alliances with foreign countries seen as evil in these books?

Yahweh led and protected the nation of Israel. The people of Israel should have trusted him instead of relying on other nations to protect them.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah.

What does it mean to "seek God"?

The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles often wrote about "seeking God." To "seek God" means to make an effort to please and honor God. It can also mean to ask God for help. It does not imply that God is hidden.

What does the phrase "to this day" mean?

The writers used the phrase "to this day" to refer to the time when they were writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written," or, "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in 1 Chronicles 4:41, 43; 5:26; 13:11; 20:26; 21:10; 35:25.

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1 Chronicles

1 [1]Adam, Seth, Enosh,[2]Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared,[3]Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech.

[4]The sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.[1]

[5]The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
[6]The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.[2]
[7]The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites, and the Rodanites.

[8]The sons of Ham were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan.
[9]The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raamah, and Sabteka. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.
[10]Cush became the father of Nimrod, who began to be a mighty man on the earth.

[11]Egypt became the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,[12]Pathrusites, Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines came), and the Caphtorites.

[13]Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and of the Hittites.[14]He also became the ancestor of the Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites,[15]Hivites, Arkites, Sinites,[16]Arvadites, Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

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[17]The sons of Shem were Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.
[18]Arphaxad became the father of Shelah, and Shelah became the father of Eber.
[19]Eber had two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided. His brother's name was Joktan.

[20]Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,[21]Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,[22]Obal, Abimael, Sheba,
[23]Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were descendants of Joktan.

[24]Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah,
[25]Eber, Peleg, Reu,
[26]Serug, Nahor, Terah,
[27]Abram, who was Abraham.

[28]The sons of Abraham were Isaac and Ishmael.
[29]These are their descendants: the firstborn of Ishmael was Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,[30]Mishma, Dumah,
Massa, Hadad, Tema,[31]Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were Ishmael's sons.

[32]The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine, were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of
Jokshan were Sheba and Dedan.
[33]Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanok, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's descendants.

[34]Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Israel.
[35]The sons of Esau were Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.
[36]The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.
[37]The sons of Reuel were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

[38]The sons of Seir were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.
[39]The sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam, and Timna was Lotan's sister.
[40]The sons of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah.

[41]The son of Anah was Dishon. The sons of Dishon were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran.
[42]The sons of Ezer were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. The sons of Dishan were Uz and Aran.

[43]These were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the people of Israel: Bela son of
Beor, and the name of his city was Dinhabah.
[44]When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place.
[45]When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

[46]When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the land of Moab, reigned in his place. The name of
his city was Avith.
[47]When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.
[48]When Samlah died, Shaul of Rehoboth on the river reigned in his place.

[49]When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan son of Akbor reigned in his place.
[50]When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad reigned in his place, and the name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel
daughter of Matred daughter of Me-Zahab.
[51]Hadad died.The chiefs in Edom were Chief Timna, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth,
[52]Chief Oholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon,[53]Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar,[54]Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram.
These were the chiefs of Edom.

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[1]The Hebrew copies do not have the expression, The sons of Noah, but the ancient Greek translation includes this expression.
[2]Most Hebrew copies have Diphath instead of Riphath. However Diphath was probably a misspelling and other ancient copies corrected it to read Riphath. This last name is found in Genesis 10:3.

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1 Chronicles 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives the genealogies of Abraham, Esau and the early kings of Edom.

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Links:

1 Chronicles 1:1 Notes 1 Chronicles intro

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1 Chronicles 1:1

Adam ... Seth ... Enosh

These are all names of men. Each man was the father or ancestor of the next man in the list. If your language has a specific way to mark this kind of list, you can use it here.

1 Chronicles 1:2

Kenan ... Mahalalel ... Jared

These are all names of men. Each man was the father or ancestor of the next man in the list. If your language has a specific way to mark this kind of list, you can use it here.

1 Chronicles 1:3

Enoch ... Methuselah ... Lamech

These are all names of men. Each man was the father or ancestor of the next man in the list. If your language has a specific way to mark this kind of list, you can use it here.

1 Chronicles 1:4

The sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth

Some versions, including the ULB and UDB, include "The sons of" in order to make it clear that Shem, Ham, and Japheth were brothers to each other and sons of Noah. Otherwise, the reader would assume that each person represented one generation farther away from Noah, their ancestor.

Noah

Noah was Lamech's son. Alternate translation: "Lamech's son Noah"

1 Chronicles 1:5

Gomer ... Magog ... Madai ... Javan ... Tubal ... Meshech ... Tiras

These are all names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:6

Ashkenaz ... Riphath ... Togarmah

These are all names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:7

Elishah ... Tarshish

These are names of men.

Kittites ... Rodanites

These are names of people groups.

Rodanites

This name is sometimes spelled "Dodanites."

1 Chronicles 1:8

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:10

who began to be a mighty man

Possible meanings are 1) "who became a mighty man" or 2) "who was the first mighty man."

mighty man

or "warrior" or "conqueror"

1 Chronicles 1:11

Ludites ... Anamites ... Lehabites ... Naphtuhites

These are names of people groups.

1 Chronicles 1:12

Pathrusites ... Kasluhites ... Philistines ... Caphtorites

These are names of people groups.

from whom the Philistines came

"the ancestors of the Philistines"

1 Chronicles 1:13

Canaan ... Sidon

These are names of men.

Hittites

This is the name of a people group.

1 Chronicles 1:14

Jebusites ... Amorites ... Girgashites

These are names of people groups.

1 Chronicles 1:15

Hivites ... Arkites ... Sinites

These are names of people groups.

1 Chronicles 1:16

Arvadites ... Zemarites ... Hamathites

These are names of people groups.

1 Chronicles 1:17

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:20

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:24

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:28

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:32

General Information:

All of the names here except for Keturah are names of men. Keturah is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 1:33

General Information:

All of the names here except for Keturah are names of men. Keturah is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 1:34

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:38

General Information:

All of the names in this verse are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:39

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men, execpt for Timna. Timna is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 1:40

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:41

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 1:43

Edom ... Dinhabah

These are the names of places.

Bela ... Beor

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These are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 1:44
Bela ... Jobab ... Zerah
These are the names of men.
Bozrah
This is the name of a place.
reigned in his place
"reigned in Bela's place" or "reigned instead of Bela." This means that Jobab became king after Bela. Alternate translation: "succeeded Bela as king" or "became king after him"
1 Chronicles 1:45
Jobab ... Husham
These are names of men.
Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place
"Husham, from the land where Teman's descendants lived, reigned after him"
Temanites
This is the name of a people group.
1 Chronicles 1:46
Husham ... Hadad ... Bedad
These are names of men.
Avith
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 1:47
Hadad ... Samlah
These are names of men.
Masrekah
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 1:48
Samlah ... Shaul
These are names of men.
Shaul of Rehoboth on the river reigned in his place
Shaul lived in Rehoboth. Rehoboth was by the Euphrates river. This information may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Shaul reigned in his place. He was from Rehoboth, which is by the Euphrates River" or "Shaul, who was from Rehoboth by the river, became king after him"
Rehoboth
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 1:49
Shaul ... Baal-Hanan ... Akbor
These are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 1:50
Baal-Hanan ... Hadad ... Me-Zahab
These are the names of men.
Pau
This is the name of a place.
Mehetabel ... Matred
These are the names of women.
1 Chronicles 1:51
Hadad ... Timna ... Alvah ... Jetheth
These are names of men.
Edom
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 1:52
Oholibamah ... Elah ... Pinon
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 1:53
Kenaz ... Teman ... Mibzar
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 1:54
Magdiel ... Iram
These are names of men.
Edom
This is the name of a place.

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2 [1]These were the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun,[2]Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

[3]Judah's sons were Er, Onan, and Shelah, who were born to him by Shua's daughter, a Canaanite woman. Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh killed him.[4]Tamar, his daughter-in-law, bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons.

[5]Perez's sons were Hezron and Hamul.
[6]Zerah's sons were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Kalkol, and Darda, five in all.
[7]Karmi's son was Achar, who brought trouble on Israel when he acted faithlessly in regard to what was devoted to God.[1]
[8]Ethan's son was Azariah.

[9]Hezron's sons were Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb.
[10]Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, a leader among Judah's descendants.[11]Nahshon became the father of Salmon, and Salmon became the father of Boaz.[12]Boaz became the father of Obed, and Obed became the father of Jesse.

[13]Jesse became the father of his firstborn Eliab, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third,[14]Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,[15]Ozem the sixth, and David the seventh.
[16]Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah were Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three of them.[17]Abigail bore Amasa, whose father was Jether the Ishmaelite.

[18]Caleb son of Hezron became the father of children by Azubah, his wife, and by Jerioth. His sons were Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon.[19]Azubah died, and then Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur.[20]Hur became the father of Uri, and Uri became the father of Bezalel.

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[21]Later Hezron (when he was sixty years old) married the daughter of Makir, the father of Gilead. She bore him Segub.
[22]Segub became the father of Jair, who controlled twenty-three cities in the land of Gilead.
[23]Geshur and Aram took Havvoth Jair and Kenath, as well as sixty surrounding towns. All these inhabitants were descendants of Makir, the father of Gilead.
[24]After the death of Hezron, Caleb went to Ephrathah, the wife of his father Hezron. She bore him Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.[2]

[25]The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron, were Ram the firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah.[26]Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah. She was the mother of Onam.
[27]The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker.
[28]The sons of Onam were Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai were Nadab and Abishur.

[29]The name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid.
[30]The sons of Nadab were Seled and Appaim, but Seled died without children.
[31]The son of Appaim was Ishi. The son of Ishi was Sheshan. The son of Sheshan was Ahlai.
[32]The sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai, were Jether and Jonathan. Jether died without children.
[33]The sons of Jonathan were Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel.

[34]Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters. Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.[35]Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant as his wife. She bore him Attai.

[36]Attai became the father of Nathan, and Nathan became the father of Zabad.
[37]Zabad became the father of Ephlal, and Ephlal became the father of Obed.
[38]Obed became the father of Jehu, and Jehu became the father of Azariah.

[39]Azariah became the father of Helez, and Helez became the father of Eleasah.
[40]Eleasah became the father of Sismai, and Sismai became the father of Shallum.
[41]Shallum became the father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah became the father of Elishama.

[42]The sons of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, were Mesha his firstborn, who was the father of Ziph. His second son, Mareshah, was the father of Hebron.
[43]The sons of Hebron were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.[44]Shema became the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam. Rekem became the father of Shammai.
[45]The son of Shammai was Maon, and Maon was the father of Beth Zur.
[46]Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez. Haran became the father of Gazez.
[47]The sons of Jahdai were Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.

[48]Maakah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah.[49]She also bore Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Makbenah and the father of Gibea. The daughter of Caleb was Aksah.

[50]These were the descendants of Caleb. The sons of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal the father of Kiriath Jearim,
[51]Salma the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth Gader.

[52]Shobal the father of Kiriath Jearim had descendants: Haroeh, half of the Manahathites,[53]and the clans of Kiriath Jearim: the Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites, and Mishraites. The Zorathites and Eshtaolites descended from these.

[54]The descendants of Salma were Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth Beth Joab, and half of the Manahathites—the Zorites,[55]and the clans of the scribes who lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, Shimeathites, and Sucathites. These were the Kenites who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rekab.

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[1]Some Hebrew copies spell the name: Achan instead of Achar, a name which means trouble.
[2]Some translate the Hebrew to read, After Hezron's death in Caleb Ephrathah, his wife Abijah bore him a son, Ashhur the father of Tekoa.

1 Chronicles 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the descendants of Judah, son of Jacob.

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Links:

[1 Chronicles 2:1 Notes]

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1 Chronicles 2:1
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:2
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:3
Er ... Onan ... Shelah ... Shua ... Judah
These are the names of men.
who were born to him by Shua's daughter, a Canaanite woman
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "his sons whom Shua's daughter, a Canaanite woman, bore"
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents his judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh judged"
Yahweh killed him
The reader should understand that Yahweh may have had a person kill Er.
1 Chronicles 2:4
Tamar
This is the name of a woman.
daughter-in-law
This refers to the wife of his son.
Perez ... Zerah ... Judah
These are the names of men.
bore him Perez and Zerah
"gave birth to his sons Perez and Zerah"
five sons
"5 sons"
1 Chronicles 2:5
Perez ... Hezron ... Hamul
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:6
Zerah ... Zimri ... Ethan ... Heman ... Kalkol ... Darda
These are all names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:7
Karmi ... Achar
These are names of men.
what was devoted to God
what God had said he wanted the people to destroy
1 Chronicles 2:8
Ethan ... Azariah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:9
Hezron ... Jerahmeel ... Ram ... Caleb
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:10
Ram ... Amminadab ... Nahshon ... Judah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:11
Nahshon ... Salmon ... Boaz
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:12
Boaz ... Obed ... Jesse
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:13
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
the second ... the third
The word "son" is understood. Also, the numbers are in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the second son ... the third son"
1 Chronicles 2:14
Nethanel ... Raddai
These are names of men.
the fourth ... the fifth
The word "son" is understood. Also, the numbers are in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the fourth son ... the fifth son"
1 Chronicles 2:15
Ozem ... David
These are names of men.
the sixth ... the seventh
The word "son" is understood. Also, the numbers are in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the sixth son ... the seventh son"
1 Chronicles 2:16
General Information:
All names here except Zeruiah and Abigail are the names of men. Zeruiah and Abigail are the names of women.
1 Chronicles 2:17
Amasa ... Jether
These are names of men.
Jether the Ishmaelite
"Jether, a descendant of Ishmael"
1 Chronicles 2:18
Caleb ... Hezron ... Jesher ... Shobab ... Ardon
These are names of men.
Azubah ... Jerioth
These are names of women.
1 Chronicles 2:19
Caleb ... Hur
These are names of men.
Azubah ... Ephrath
These are names of women.
1 Chronicles 2:20
Hur ... Uri ... Bezalel
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:21
General Information:
All names in this list are the names of men.
bore him
"gave birth to"
1 Chronicles 2:22
Segub ... Jair
These are names of men.

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land of Gilead
People gave the land the name of the man.
1 Chronicles 2:23
Geshur ... Aram
These are names of people groups named after ancestors. Translate "Aram" as in 1 Chronicles 1:17.
Havvoth Jair and Kenath
These are the names of places.
Makir ... Gilead
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:24
Hezron ... Caleb ... Ashhur ... Tekoa
These are names of men.
Caleb went to Ephrathah
This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with her. Alternate translation: "Caleb had sexual relations with Ephrathah" or "Caleb lay with Ephrathah"
Ephrathah
This is the name of a woman.
bore him
"gave birth to his son"
1 Chronicles 2:25
Jerahmeel ... Hezron ... Ram ... Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:26
Jerahmeel ... Onam
These are names of men.
Atarah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 2:27
Ram ... Jerahmeel ... Maaz, Jamin, and Eker
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:28
Onam ... Shammai ... Jada ... Nadab ... Abishur
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:29
Abishur ... Ahban ... Molid
These are names of men.
Abihail
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 2:30
Nadab ... Seled ... Appaim
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:31
Appaim ... Ishi ... Sheshan ... Ahlai
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:32
Jada ... Shammai ... Jether ... Jonathan
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:33
Jonathan ... Peleth ... Zaza ... Jerahmeel
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:34
Sheshan ... Jarha
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:35
Sheshan ... Jarha ... Attai
These are names of men.
bore him
"gave birth to his son"
1 Chronicles 2:36
Attai ... Nathan ... Zabad
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:37
Zabad ... Ephlal ... Obed
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:38
Obed ... Jehu ... Azariah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:39
Azariah ... Helez ... Eleasah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:40
Eleasah ... Sismai ... Shallum
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:41
Shallum ... Jekamiah ... Elishama
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:42
Caleb ... Jerahmeel ... Mesha ... Ziph ... Mareshah ... Hebron
These are names of men.
the father of Hebron
Some modern translations read, "the founder of the clan of Hebron"
1 Chronicles 2:43
Hebron ... Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:44
Shema ... Raham ... Jorkeam ... Rekem ... Shammai
These are names of men.
the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam ... the father of Shammai
Some modern translations read, "the founder of the clan of Hebron ... the founder of the clan of Raham, the founder of the clan of Jorkeam ... the founder of the clan of Shammai."
1 Chronicles 2:45
Shammai ... Maon ... Beth Zur
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:46
Caleb ... Haran ... Moza ... Gazez
These are names of men.
Ephah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 2:47
Jahdai ... Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 2:48
Caleb ... Sheber ... Tirhanah
These are names of men.
Maakah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 2:49
She also bore
"She also gave birth to"
Shaaph ... Madmannah ... Sheva ... Makbenah ... Gibea ... Caleb
These are names of men.
Aksah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 2:50

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Hur ... Shobal
These are names of men.
Ephrathah
This is the name of a woman.
father of Kiriath Jearim
Kiriath Jearim is the name of a town. The name of the town is a metonym for the people who live in the town. Alternate translation: "founder of Kiriath Jearim"
1 Chronicles 2:51
Salma ... Hareph
These are names of men.
father of Bethlehem ... father of Beth Gader
Bethlehem and Beth Gader are the names of towns. The names of the towns are metonyms for the people who live in the towns. Alternate translation: "founder of Bethlehem ... founder of Beth Gader"
1 Chronicles 2:52
General Information:
See:
Shobal the father of Kiriath Jearim
Shobal is the name of a man, and Kiriath Jearim is the name of a town. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 2:50]
Manahathites
This is the name of a clan.
1 Chronicles 2:53
Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites ... Mishraites ... Zorathites ... Eshtaolites
These are the names of clans.
1 Chronicles 2:54
Salma
This is the name of a man.
Bethlehem
This is the name of a town where Salma's descendants settled and represents the people living in that town. Alternate translation: "the people of Bethlehem"
Netophathites ... Atroth Beth Joab ... Manahathites ... Zorites
These are names of clans.
1 Chronicles 2:55
Jabez
This is the name of a town.
Tirathites ... Shimeathites ... Sucathites ... Kenites
These are names of clans.
the Kenites who came from Hammath
"the Kenites who descended from Hamath"
Hammath ... Rekab
These are names of men.

3 [1]Now these are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam from Jezreel; the second was Daniel, by Abigail from Carmel;

[2]the third was Absalom, whose mother was Maakah, daughter of Talmai king of Geshur. The fourth was Adonijah son of Haggith;
[3]the fifth was Shephatiah by Abital; the sixth was Ithream by Eglah his wife.

[4]These six were born to David in Hebron, where he reigned seven years and six months. He then ruled thirty-three years in Jerusalem.[5]These four sons, by Bathsheba daughter of Ammiel, were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon.[1]
[6]David's other nine sons were: Ibhar, Elishua, Eliphelet,[7]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,[8]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.[9]These were David's sons, not including the sons by his concubines. Tamar was their sister.

[10]Solomon's son was Rehoboam. Rehoboam's son was Abijah. Abijah's son was Asa. Asa's son was Jehoshaphat.
[11]Jehoshaphat's son was Jehoram. Jehoram's son was Ahaziah. Ahaziah's son was Joash.
[12]Joash's son was Amaziah. Amaziah's son was Azariah. Azariah's son was Jotham.

[13]Jotham's son was Ahaz. Ahaz's son was Hezekiah. Hezekiah's son was Manasseh.
[14]Manasseh's son was Amon. Amon's son was Josiah.

[15]Josiah's sons were his firstborn Johanan, his second son Jehoiakim, his third son Zedekiah, and his fourth son Shallum.
[16]Jehoiakim's sons were Jehoiachin and Zedekiah.

[17]The descendants of Jehoiachin the captive, were Shealtiel,[18]Malkiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

[19]Pedaiah's sons were Zerubbabel and Shimei. Zerubbabel's sons were Meshullam and Hananiah; Shelomith was their sister.
[20]His other five sons were Hashubah, Ohel, Berekiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed.
[21]Hananiah's sons were Pelatiah and Jeshaiah. His son was Rephaiah, and further descendants were Arnan, Obadiah, and Shekaniah.

[22]The descendants of Shekaniah were Shemaiah and his sons: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat.
[23]Neariah's three sons were Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam.
[24]Elioenai's seven sons were Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani.

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[1]One ancient Hebrew copy and the ancient Latin translation have Bathseba, however, most ancient Hebrew copies have Bathshua. 1 Samuel 12:24 is clear that Bathsheba was Solomon's mother and so her name is spelled here, "Bathsheba," so as to avoid confusion.

1 Chronicles 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the descendants of King David.

Links:

1 Chronicles 3:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 3:1

David

David was a son of Jesse, who was a descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 2:15).

Ahinoam ... Abigail

These are the names of women who were David's wives.

Daniel

This man has the same name as an Israelite prophet but is a different person.

1 Chronicles 3:2

Maakah ... Haggith

These are the names of women who were David's wives.

Talmai

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 3:3

Abital ... Eglah

These are the names of women who were David's wives.

Shephatiah ... Ithream

These are the names of men.

1 Chronicles 3:4

where he reigned seven years and six months

This can also be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "David reigned there seven years and six months"

thirty-three years

"33 years"

1 Chronicles 3:5

Ammiel ... Shammua ... Shobab ... Nathan

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 3:6

Ibhar, Elishua, Eliphelet

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 3:7

Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 3:8

Elishama ... Eliada ... Eliphelet

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 3:9

Tamar

This is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 3:10

General Information:

This is the beginning of the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men.

Solomon's son was Rehoboam. Rehoboam's son was Abijah

Solomon had more than one son. The same is true of other men in the list. Alternate translation: "Solomon was the father of Rehoboam. Rehoboam was the father of Abijah"

1 Chronicles 3:11

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

1 Chronicles 3:12

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

Azariah

This was another name for Uzziah, the better-known name for this king. Translators may decide to use "Uzziah" everywhere for this king.

1 Chronicles 3:13

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

1 Chronicles 3:14

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

1 Chronicles 3:15

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

1 Chronicles 3:16

General Information:

This continues the list of David's descendants who became king. All of the names in this list are the names of men. Form these sentences as you did starting in 1 Chronicles 3:10.

1 Chronicles 3:17

Jehoiachin ... Shealtiel

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These are names of men.
Jehoiachin
Some versions have "Jeconiah," which is a variation of "Jehoiachin."
the captive
This may be a title that was given to Jehoiachin because he was taken into captivity. However, some versions regard the word as "Assir," the name of one of his sons.
1 Chronicles 3:18
General Information:
These are all names of men.
1 Chronicles 3:19
General Information:
All of the names in this list except Shelomith are the names of men. Shelomith is a woman's name.
1 Chronicles 3:20
General Information:
These are all names of men.
1 Chronicles 3:21
General Information:
These are all names of men.
Obadiah
This man has the same name as the prophet Obadiah but is a different person.
further descendants were Arnan, Obadiah, and Shekaniah
Different versions put these people into different relationships with each other because the Hebrew is not very clear about them.
1 Chronicles 3:22
General Information:
All of the names in this list are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 3:23
General Information:
These are all names of men.
1 Chronicles 3:24
General Information:
These are all names of men.

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4 [1]Judah's descendants were Perez, Hezron, Karmi, Hur, and Shobal.

[2]Reaiah, the son of Shobal, was the father of Jahath. Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were of the clans of the Zorathites.

[3]These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash. Their sister's name was Hazzelelponi.[4]Penuel was the father of Gedor. Ezer was the father of Hushah. These were descendants of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.

[5]Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.
[6]Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the descendants of Naarah.
[7]Helah's sons were Zereth, Zohar, Ethnan,[8]and Koz, who became the father of Anub and Hazzobebah, and of the clans descended from Aharhel son of Harum.

[9]Jabez was more respected than his brothers. His mother named him Jabez. She said, "Because I bore him in pain."[10]Jabez called out to the God of Israel and said, "If only you would truly bless me, expand my territory, and your hand will be with me. When you do this you will keep me from harm, so that I may be free from pain!" So God granted him his prayer.

[11]Kelub brother of Shuhah became the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton.[12]Eshton became the father of Beth Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, the father of Ir Nahash.[1] These were men who lived in Rekah.

[13]Kenaz's sons were Othniel and Seraiah. Othniel's sons were Hathath and Meonothai.[2][14]Meonothai became the father of Ophrah, and Seraiah became the father of Joab, the originator of Ge Harashim, whose people were craftsmen.
[15]The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh were Iru, Elah and Naam. Elah's son was Kenaz.
[16]Jehallelel's sons were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel.

[17]Ezrah's sons were Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. Mered's Egyptian wife[3] conceived and bore Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah, who became the father of Eshtemoa.[18]These were the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married. Mered's Judahite wife bore Jered, who became the father of Gedor; Heber, who became the father of Soko; and Jekuthiel, who became the father of Zanoah.

[19]Of the two sons of Hodiah's wife, sister of Naham, one became the father of Keilah the Garmite. The other was Eshtemoa the Maakathite.
[20]The sons of Shimon were Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. The descendants of Ishi were Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth.

[21]The descendants of Shelah son of Judah, were Er father of Lekah, Laadah father of Mareshah and the clans of the linen workers at Beth Ashbea,[22]Jokim, the men of Kozeba, and Joash and Saraph, who ruled in Moab and Jashubi Lehem. (This information is from ancient records.)[23]These were the potters who lived in Netaim and Gederah and worked for the king.

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[24]Simeon's descendants were Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul.
[25]Shallum was Shaul's son, Mibsam was Shallum's son, and Mishma was Mibsam's son.
[26]Mishma's descendants were Hammuel his son, Zakkur his grandson, and Shimei his great-grandson.
[27]Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters. His brothers did not have many children, so their clans did not increase greatly in numbers as the people of Judah did.[28]They lived at Beersheba, Moladah, and at Hazar Shual.
[29]They also live at Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,[30]Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,[31]Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susim, Beth Biri, and Shaaraim. These were their cities until the reign of David.
[32]Their five villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Token, and Ashan,[33]together with the outlying villages as far as Baalath. These were their settlements, and they kept the genealogical records.

[34]Clan leaders were Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah,[35]Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah son of Seraiah son of Asiel,
[36]Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,[37]and Ziza son of Shiphi son of Allon son of Jedaiah son of Shimri son of Shemaiah.
[38]These mentioned by name were leaders in their clans, and their fathers' houses increased greatly.
[39]They went near Gedor, on the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.[40]They found abundant and good pasture. The land was broad, quiet, and peaceable. The Hamites had formerly lived there.[41]These just listed by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and attacked the Hamite tents and the Meunites, who were there also. They completely destroyed them and lived there because they found pasture for their flocks.
[42]From them, from the sons of Simeon, five hundred men went to Mount Seir with Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, as their leader.[43]They defeated the rest of the escaped remnant of Amalekites, and have lived there to this day.

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[1]Some modern translations read who settled in the town of Nahash.
[2]Most copies of the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew, and the ancient Latin translation of the Hebrew, insert: Meonothai into this verse, believing that it was omitted through a copyist's mistake.
[3]The Hebrew does not indicate here who the woman was. We understand from 4:18 that it was Mered's Egyptian wife.

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1 Chronicles 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the other descendants of Judah.

Links:

1 Chronicles 4:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 4:1

General Information:

All of the names in this list are the names of men.

1 Chronicles 4:2

General Information:

All of the names in this list except the Zorathites are the names of men. Zorathites is the name of a people group who took their name from the town of Zorah where they lived.

1 Chronicles 4:3

the sons of Etam

There was a village named Etam. Possible meanings are 1) Etam was a man, and the word "sons" refers to his own sons, or 2) Etam here is the village, and "sons" is a metaphor meaning those who start a village. and

Jezreel ... Ishma ... Idbash

These are names of men.

Hazzelelponi

This is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 4:4

Penuel was the father of Gedor. Ezer was the father of Hushah.

There was a man named Gedor and a city named Gedor. The name Hushah occurs only in this verse. Possible meanings are 1) the names Gedor and Hushah refer to two men, or 2) the names Gedor and Hushah refer to cities, and "father" is a metaphor meaning someone who starts a city.

Penuel ... Ezer ... Hur ... Ephrathah

These are the names of men.

These were descendants of Hur

The word "These" refers to Peniel and Ezer.

Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah

Hur was Ephrathah's first son.

Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem

Bethlehem is the name of a city. The word "father" is a metaphor meaning someone who starts a city. Alternate translation: "Ephrathah, who started the city of Bethlehem."

1 Chronicles 4:5

Ashhur ... Tekoa

See how you translated these men's names in 1 Chronicles 2:24.

Helah ... Naarah

These are the names of women.

1 Chronicles 4:6

bore him

"gave birth to his sons"

Ahuzzam ... Hepher

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These are names of men.
Temeni ... Haahashtari
These are understood here as the names of men. However, some versions understand them as the names of clans that were begun by the sons of Ashhur.
1 Chronicles 4:7
Zereth ... Zohar ... Ethnan
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:8
Koz ... Anub ... Hazzobebah ... Aharhel ... Harum
These are the names of men.
and of the clans descended from Aharhel son of Harum
A new sentence can start here. "Koz also became the ancestor of Harum and the clans that descended from Harum's son Aharhel"
1 Chronicles 4:9
Jabez
This is the name of a man.
1 Chronicles 4:10
expand my territory
"give me more land"
your hand will be with me
Possible meanings are that God's hand is 1) a metonym for his guidance, his power, or his protection. Alternate translation: "you will guide me" or "you will make me prosper" or "you will protect me" or 2) a synecdoche for himself. Alternate translation: "you will be with me"
granted him his prayer
The words "his prayer" are a metonym for what Jabez asked in the prayer. Alternate translation: "did what Jabez had asked him to do"
1 Chronicles 4:11
Kelub ... Shuhah ... Mehir ... Eshton
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:12
Eshton ... Beth Rapha ... Paseah ... Tehinnah
These are names of men.
Tehinnah, the father of Ir Nahash
It apprears that Ir Nahash may have been a city. Alternate translation: "Tehinnah, the founder of the city of Nahash"
Nahash ... Rekah
These are the names of places.
1 Chronicles 4:13
General Information:
It may be helpful to create a verse bridge and to put verse 15 together with verse 13 since Kenaz was a descendant of Jephunneh and Caleb.
Kenaz ... Othniel ... Seraiah ... Hathath ... Meonothai
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:14
Meonothai ... Ophrah ... Joab
These are names of men.
Ge Harashim, whose people were craftsmen
Ge Harashim means "Valley of Craftsmen." This can be made explicit with an explanation. Alternate translation: "Ge Harashim, which means 'Craftsmen's Valley.' It was called this because its people were craftsmen"
craftsmen
people skilled at making or building things
1 Chronicles 4:15
Jephunneh ... Iru ... Elah ... Naam ... Kenaz
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:16
Jehallelel ... Ziph ... Ziphah ... Tiria ... Asarel
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:17
Ezrah ... Jether ... Mered ... Epher ... Jalon ... Miriam ... Shammai ... Ishbah ... Eshtemoa
These are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:18
These were the sons of Bithiah
The word "these" refers to Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah. They were the sons Bithiah bore for her husband Mered.
Bithiah
This is the name of a woman.
Mered's Judahite wife
The Hebrew text says, "His Judahite wife," but most versions understand "his" to refer to Mered. This refers to a different wife of Mered, in addition to Bithiah.
Jered ... Gedor ... Heber ... Soko ... Jekuthiel ... Zanoah
These are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:19
Hodiah ... Naham ... Keilah ... Eshtemoa
These are names of men.
Garmite
This is someone from the Gar people group.
Maakathite
This is someone from the region of Maakah.
1 Chronicles 4:20
Shimon ... Amnon ... Rinnah ... Ben-Hanan ... Tilon ... Ishi ... Zoheth ... Ben-Zoheth
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:21
Shelah ... Er ... Laadah
These are names of men.
Lekah ... Mareshah ... Beth Ashbea
These are names of towns.
linen workers
people who made clothing out of a fabric made from crushed reeds
1 Chronicles 4:22
Jokim ... Joash ... Saraph
These are names of men.
Kozeba ... Jashubi Lehem
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:23
the potters
the people who make containers out of clay
Netaim ... Gederah
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:24
Nemuel ... Jamin ... Jarib ... Zerah ... Shaul
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:25
Shallum ... Mibsam ... Mishma
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:26
Mishma ... Hammuel ... Zakkur ... Shimei

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These are names of men.
Zakkur his grandson
the son of Mishma's son
great-grandson
the son of Mishma's grandson
1 Chronicles 4:27
sixteen sons and six daughters
"16 sons and 6 daughters"
1 Chronicles 4:28
Moladah ... Hazar Shual
These are the names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:29
General Information:
The list of the cities where Simeon's descendants lived continues.
Bilhah ... Ezem ... Tolad
These are the names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:30
Bethuel ... Hormah ... Ziklag
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:31
Beth Markaboth ... Hazar Susim ... Beth Biri ... Shaaraim
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 4:32
General Information:
The list of places where Simeon's descendants lived continues.
Etam ... Ain ... Rimmon ... Token ... Ashan
These are the names of villages.
1 Chronicles 4:33
outlying villages
the villages that were near but outside the main town
Baalath
This is the name of a town.
1 Chronicles 4:34
Meshobab ... Jamlech ... Joshah ... Amaziah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:35
Joel ... Jehu ... Joshibiah ... Seraiah ... Asiel
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:36
Elioenai ... Jaakobah ... Jeshohaiah ... Asaiah ... Adiel ... Jesimiel ... Benaiah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:37
Ziza ... Shiphi ... Allon ... Jedaiah ... Shimri ... Shemaiah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:38
These mentioned by name were leaders
"These men were leaders"
their fathers' houses increased greatly
The house is a metonym for the people in the house. Alternate translation: "the number of people in their families increased greatly"
1 Chronicles 4:39
Gedor
This is the name of a town.
pasture for their flocks
an area of land where their flocks could feed on the grass
1 Chronicles 4:40
abundant and good pasture
"pastures with much good food for their animals"
Hamites
a people group, descendants of Ham
1 Chronicles 4:41
Hamite tents
Or "homes of the Hamites" or "places where the Hamites lived." The Hamites probably did not still live in tents.
Meunites
a people. Alternate translation: "descendants of Meun"
1 Chronicles 4:42
five hundred men
"500 men"
Pelatiah ... Neariah ... Rephaiah ... Uzziel ... Ishi
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 4:43
the rest of the escaped remnant of Amalekites
"the rest of the remaining Amalekites who had escaped"
to this day
"from then until now." This refers to the day when the author was writing this account.

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5 [1]The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel—now Reuben was Israel's firstborn, but his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel because Reuben had defiled his father's couch. So he is not recorded in the genealogy as having the birthright.[2]Judah was the strongest of his brothers, and the leader would come from him. But the birthright was Joseph's—[3]the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel were Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi.

[4]The descendants of Joel were these: Joel's son was Shemaiah. Shemaiah's son was Gog. Gog's son was Shimei.[5]Shimei's son was Micah. Micah's son was Reaiah. Reaiah's son was Baal.
[6]Baal's son was Beerah, whom Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria took into exile. Beerah was a leader in the tribe of Reuben.

[7]His kinsmen according to their clans, enrolled in the genealogy by their generations: Jeiel the leader, Zechariah,[8]and Bela son of Azaz son of Shema son of Joel. They lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal Meon,[9]and eastward to the start of the wilderness that extends to the Euphrates River, because their livestock had increased in the land of Gilead.

[10]In the days of Saul, the tribe of Reuben attacked the Hagrites and defeated them. They lived in the Hagrites' tents throughout all the land east of Gilead.

[11]The members of the tribe of Gad lived near them, in the land of Bashan as far as Salekah.

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[12]Joel was their leader; Shapham was second; and Janai and Shaphat in Bashan.
[13]Their relatives, by their clans, were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jakan, Zia, and Eber—seven in all.

[14]These persons named above were the descendants of Abihail, and Abihail was the son of Huri. Huri was the son of Jaroah. Jaroah was the son of Gilead. Gilead was the son of Michael. Michael was the son of Jeshishai. Jeshishai was the son of Jahdo. Jahdo was the son of Buz.
[15]Ahi son of Abdiel son of Guni, was head of their clan.

[16]They lived in Gilead, in Bashan, in its towns, and in all the pasturelands of Sharon as far as its borders.[17]All these were listed by genealogical records in the days of Jotham king of Judah and of Jeroboam king of Israel.

[18]The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh had 44,760 soldiers skilled in battle, who carried shield and sword and who drew the bow, who could go out to war.[19]They attacked the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab.
[20]They received divine help against them. In this way, the Hagrites and all who were with them were defeated. This was because the Israelites cried out to God in the battle, and he responded to them, because they put their trust in him.[21]They captured their animals, including fifty thousand camels, 250,000 sheep, two thousand donkeys, and 100,000 men.[22]Many fell because the battle was from God. They lived in their land until the captivity.

[23]The sons of the half tribe of Manasseh lived in the land of Bashan as far as Baal Hermon and Senir (that is, Mount Hermon).[24]These were the heads of their clans: Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. They were mighty warriors, famous men, heads of their fathers' houses.

[25]But they were unfaithful to their ancestors' God. They acted like prostitutes with the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.[26]The God of Israel stirred up Pul king of Assyria (also called Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria). He took into exile the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. He brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and to the river of Gozan, where they remain to this day.

1 Chronicles 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the descendants of Jacob's sons who lived east of the Jordan River: Reuben, Gad and Manasseh.

Links:

1 Chronicles 5:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 5:1

now Reuben

The word "now" is used here to mark the change from the lists of descendants to background information about Reuben.

but his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but Israel gave Reuben's birthright to the sons of Joseph, another of Israel's sons"

Reuben had defiled his father's couch

This is a polite way to speak about Reuben sleeping with his father's secondary wife. The couch is the place where a man and his wife would have slept together.

he is not recorded in the genealogy as having the birthright

This can be stated in active form. The word "recorded" carries the idea of a written record, so if your language has such a word, you may want to use it here. Alternate translation: "the family history does not list Reuben as the oldest son"

1 Chronicles 5:2

General Information:

This verse finishes the background information about Reuben.

1 Chronicles 5:3

Hanok ... Pallu ... Hezron ... Karmi

These are the names of men.

1 Chronicles 5:4

Joel ... Shemaiah ... Gog ... Shimei

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 5:5

Shimei ... Micah ... Reaiah ... Baal

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 5:6

Baal ... Beerah ... Tiglath-Pileser

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 5:7

clans, enrolled in the genealogy

This can start a new sentence: "clans. Their genealogical records list them as"

genealogy

a record that shows how people in a family are related to each other

Jeiel ... Zechariah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 5:8

Bela ... Azaz ... Shema

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These are names of men.
Aroer ... Nebo ... Baal Meon
These are the names of cities.
1 Chronicles 5:10
the Hagrites
This is a name of a people group.
lived in the Hagrites' tents
The tents are a synecdoche for the land and the buildings on the land. Alternate translation: "took over all the Hagrites' land and buildings" or "lived in all the Hagrite territory"
1 Chronicles 5:11
Salekah
This is the name of a city.
1 Chronicles 5:12
Joel ... Shapham ... Janai ... Shaphat
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 5:13
Michael ... Meshullam ... Sheba ... Jorai ... Jakan ... Zia ... Eber
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 5:14
Abihail ... Huri ... Jaroah ... Gilead ... Michael ... Jeshishai ... Jahdo ... Buz
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 5:15
Ahi ... Abdiel ... Guni
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 5:16
They lived
"The tribe of Gad lived"
the pasturelands
the areas of land where animals feed on grass
1 Chronicles 5:17
All these were listed by genealogical records
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Genealogical records listed them all" or "The records of their family's ancestry listed them all"
All these
It is not clear how many of the preceding people this refers to.
1 Chronicles 5:18
Reubenites
This refers to the people from the tribe of Rueben.
Gadites
This refers to the people from the tribe of Gad.
44,760 soldiers
"forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty soldiers"
who carried shield and sword and who drew the bow
The soldiers are described as skilled in warfare by the weapons they carried. Alternate translation: "who were all trained to fight well in battles"
1 Chronicles 5:19
Hagrites ... Jetur ... Naphish ... Nodab
These are the names of people groups.
1 Chronicles 5:20
the Israelites cried out to God
"the Israelites cried to God for help"
1 Chronicles 5:21
They captured their animals
"The Israelites captured the Hagrites' animals"
fifty thousand camels
"50,000 camels"
250,000 sheep
"two hundred and fifty thousand sheep"
two thousand donkeys
"2,000 donkeys"
100,000 men
"one hundred thousand men"
1 Chronicles 5:22
the battle was from God
God's help in battle is described as if he were the one who caused the battle. Alternate translation: "God helped them"
1 Chronicles 5:23
The sons of the half tribe
"the families of the half tribe" or "the people of the half tribe"
Baal Hermon ... Senir
These are the names of mountains.
1 Chronicles 5:24
Epher ... Ishi ... Eliel ... Azriel ... Jeremiah ... Hodaviah ... Jahdiel
These are the names of men.
fathers' houses
extended families, people related to each other who usually lived in different houses, what the UDB calls "clans"
1 Chronicles 5:25
They acted like prostitutes with the gods
When Yahweh's people worship other gods, they are spoken of as spiritual prostitutes. Alternate translation: "they acted like prostitutes by worshiping the gods" (See:
1 Chronicles 5:26
Pul ... Tiglath-Pileser
These are the names of men.
Reubenites ... Gadites
These are the names of people groups.
Halah ... Habor ... Hara
These are names of towns.
Gozan
This is the name of a river.
to this day
See how you translated this phrase in 1 Chronicles 4:43

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6 [1]The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

[2]The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.
[3]The children of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

[4]Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, and Phinehas became the father of Abishua.
[5]Abishua became the father of Bukki, and Bukki became the father of Uzzi.
[6]Uzzi became the father of Zerahiah, and Zerahiah became the father of Meraioth.

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[7]Meraioth became the father of Amariah, and Amariah became the father of Ahitub.
[8]Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok became the father of Ahimaaz.
[9]Ahimaaz became the father of Azariah, and Azariah became the father of Johanan.

[10]Johanan became the father of Azariah, who served as a priest in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem.
[11]Azariah became the father of Amariah, and Amariah became the father of Ahitub.
[12]Ahitub became the father of Zadok, and Zadok became the father of Shallum.

[13]Shallum became the father of Hilkiah, and Hilkiah became the father of Azariah.
[14]Azariah became the father of Seraiah, and Seraiah became the father of Jozadak.
[15]Jozadak went into captivity when Yahweh exiled Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

[16]The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.
[17]The sons of Gershon were named Libni and Shimei.
[18]The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

[19]The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites listed according to their fathers.
[20]The descendants of Gershon: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,[21]Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, and Jeatherai his son.

[22]The descendants of Kohath: Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,[23]Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son,
[24]Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son.

[25]The descendants of Elkanah were Amasai, Ahimoth,
[26]Elkanah his son, Zophai his son, Nahath his son,[27]Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, and Elkanah his son.[1]

[28]The sons of Samuel were the firstborn, Joel, and Abijah, the second-born.
[29]The descendants of Merari were Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son,
[30]Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

[31]These are the names of the men whom David put in charge of music in the house of Yahweh, after the ark came to rest there.[32]They served by singing before the tabernacle, the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem. They fulfilled their duties according to the instructions given to them.

[33]These were those who served with their sons. From the clans of the Kohathites came Heman the musician. Here were his ancestors, going back in time: Heman was the son of Joel. Joel was the son of Samuel.
[34]Samuel was the son of Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Jeroham. Jeroham was the son of Eliel. Eliel was the son of Toah.
[35]Toah was the son of Zuph. Zuph was the son of Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Mahath. Mahath was the son of Amasai.
Amasai was son of Elkanah.

[36]Amasai was the son of Elkanah. Elkanah was the son of Joel. Joel was the son of Azariah. Azariah was the son of Zephaniah.
[37]Zephaniah was the son of Tahath. Tahath was the son of Assir. Assir was the son of Ebiasaph. Ebiasaph was the son of Korah.
[38]Korah was the son of Izhar. Izhar was the son of Kohath. Kohath was the son of Levi. Levi was the son of Israel.

[39]Heman's fellow worker was Asaph, who stood at his right hand. Asaph was the son of Berekiah. Berekiah was the son of Shimea.
[40]Shimea was the son of Michael. Michael was the son of Baaseiah. Baaseiah was the son of Malkijah.[41]Malkijah was the son of Ethni. Ethni was the son of Zerah. Zerah was the son of Adaiah.
[42]Adaiah was the son of Ethan. Ethan was the son of Zimmah. Zimmah was the son of Shimei.[43]Shimei was the son of Jahath. Jahath was the son of Gershon. Gershon was the son of Levi.

[44]At Heman's left hand were his fellow workers the sons of Merari. They included Ethan son of Kishi. Kishi was the son of Abdi. Abdi was the son of Malluk.[45]Malluk was the son of Hashabiah. Hashabiah was the son of Amaziah. Amaziah was the son of Hilkiah.

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[46]Hilkiah was the son of Amzi. Amzi was the son of Bani. Bani was the son of Shemer.[47]Shemer was the son of Mahli. Mahli was the son of Mushi. Mushi was the son of Merari. Merari was the son of Levi.

[48]Their associates, the Levites, were assigned to do all the labor for the tabernacle, the house of God.
[49]But Aaron and his descendants made the offerings on the altar for burnt offerings; and the offering on the incense altar for all the work on the most holy place. These offerings made atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

[50]Aaron's descendants are reckoned as follows: Aaron's son was Eleazar. Eleazar's son was Phinehas. Phinehas' son was Abishua.[51]Abishua's son was Bukki. Bukki's son was Uzzi. Uzzi's son was Zerahiah.
[52]Zerahiah's son was Meraioth. Meraioth's son was Amariah. Amariah's son was Ahitub.[53]Ahitub's son was Zadok. Zadok's son was Ahimaaz.

[54]These are the locations where Aaron's descendants were assigned to live, that is, for the descendants of Aaron who were from the clans of the Kohathites (the first lot was theirs).[55]To them they gave Hebron in the land of Judah and its pasturelands,[56]but the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh.

[57]To the descendants of Aaron they gave: Hebron (a city of refuge), and Libnah with its pasturelands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pasturelands,[58]Hilen with its pasturelands, and Debir with its pasturelands.
[59]They also gave to the descendants of Aaron: Ashan with its pasturelands, Juttah,[2] and Beth Shemesh with its pasturelands;[60]and from the tribe of Benjamin, Geba with its pasturelands, Alemeth with its pasturelands, and Anathoth with its pasturelands.
All their cities throughout their clans were thirteen cities.

[61]To the rest of Kohath's descendants were given by lot ten cities from the half tribe of Manasseh.[62]To Gershon's descendants in their various clans were given thirteen cities from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.
[63]To Merari's descendants they gave by lot twelve cities, clan by clan, from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.[64]So the people of Israel gave these cities with their pasturelands to the Levites.[65]They assigned by lot these towns mentioned by name from the tribes of the sons of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

[66]Some of the clans of the descendants of Kohath were given cities from the territory of the tribe of Ephraim.[67]They gave them: Shechem (a city of refuge) with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasturelands,
[68]Jokmeam with its pasturelands, Beth Horon with its pasturelands,[69]Aijalon with its pasturelands, and Gath Rimmon with its pasturelands.
[70]The half tribe of Manasseh gave the Kohathites Aner with its pasturelands and Bileam with its pasturelands. These became the possessions of the rest of the Kohathite clans.

[71]To Gershon's descendants out of the clans of the half tribe of Manasseh, they gave Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands.
[72]The tribe of Issachar gave to Gershon's descendants Kedesh with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands,
[73]Ramoth with its pasturelands, and Anem with its pasturelands.

[74]Issachar received from the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands,[75]Hukok with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands.
[76]They received from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands, Hammon with its pasturelands, and Kiriathaim with its pasturelands.

[77]The rest of Merari's descendants received from the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam, Kartah,[3] and Rimmono with its pasturelands and Tabor with its pasturelands;
[78]and from the tribe of Reuben, across the Jordan on the east side of Jericho, they received Bezer in the desert, Jahzah,
[79]Kedemoth and its pasturelands, and Mephaath and its pasturelands.

[80]The Levites received from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands, Mahanaim with its pasturelands,
[81]Heshbon with its pasturelands, and Jazer with its pasturelands.

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[1]The ancient Greek translation taken from the Hebrew copies adds to the list Samuel his son.
[2]The place name Juttah is not in the ancient Hebrew copies but is found in the Syriac translation of the Hebrew copies; also see Joshua 21:16.

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[3]The names Jokneam and Kartah are not found in the Hebrew copies but are found in the ancient Greek translation taken from the Hebrew copies. Compare the list in Joshua 21:34.

1 Chronicles 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the descendants of Levi.

Links:

1 Chronicles 6:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 6:1

Gershon ... Kohath ... Merari

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:2

Kohath ... Amram ... Izhar ... Hebron ... Uzziel

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:3

Amram ... Nadab ... Abihu ... Eleazar ... Ithamar

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:4

Eleazar ... Abishua

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:5

Abishua ... Bukki ... Uzzi

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:6

Uzzi ... Zerahiah ... Meraioth

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:7

Meraioth ... Amariah ... Ahitub

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:8

Ahitub ... Zadok ... Ahimaaz

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:9

Ahimaaz ... Johanan

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:10

Solomon built

The reader should understand that Solomon probably hired workers to do the work.

1 Chronicles 6:11

Amariah ... Ahitub

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:12

Ahitub ... Zadok ... Shallum

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:13

Hilkiah

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 6:14

Seraiah ... Jozadak

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:15

exiled Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar

The power Nebuchadnezzar has through his army is described as the part of his body

1 Chronicles 6:16

Gershon ... Kohath ... Merari

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 6:1.

1 Chronicles 6:17

Libni ... Shimei

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:18

Amram ... Izhar ... Hebron ... Uzziel

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 6:2.

1 Chronicles 6:19

Merari ... Mahli ... Mushi

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:20

Libni ... Jahath ... Zimmah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:21

Joah ... Iddo ... Zerah ... Jeatherai

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:22

Amminadab ... Korah ... Assir

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:23

Elkanah ... Ebiasaph ... Assir

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:24

Tahath ... Uriel ... Uzziah ... Shaul

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:25

Elkanah ... Amasai ... Ahimoth

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:26

Elkanah ... Zophai ... Nahath

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:27

Eliab ... Jeroham ... Elkanah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:28

Joel

This is the name of a man.

second-born

the second son

1 Chronicles 6:29

Merari ... Mahli ... Libni ... Shimei ... Uzzah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:30

Shimea ... Haggiah ... Asaiah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:31

the house of Yahweh

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

"where people met with Yahweh" This was a tent in David's time.

the ark came to rest there

"the people of Israel placed the ark there"

1 Chronicles 6:32

the tabernacle, the tent of meeting

Possible meanings are 1) that "the tent of meeting" and "the tabernacle" are two names for the same thing or 2) the tabernacle is part of the tent of meeting, "the sanctuary of the tent of meeting"

They fulfilled their duties

"They did their work" or "They did their various kinds of work"

according to the instructions given to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "according to the instructions that David gave them" or "according to the instructions they received"

1 Chronicles 6:33

These were those

"These were the musicians"

Kohathites

This is the name of a people group, the descendants of Kohath

going back in time

This means the list is going in order from the most recent to the oldest.

Heman

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 6:34

Jeroham ... Eliel ... Toah

These are names of men.

Elkanah

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 6:25.

1 Chronicles 6:35

Toah ... Zuph ... Mahath

These are names of men.

Elkanah ... Amasai

See how you translated these men's names in 1 Chronicles 6:25.

1 Chronicles 6:36

Amasai ... Elkanah

See how you translated these men's names in 1 Chronicles 6:25.

Joel

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 6:37

Tahath ... Assir ... Ebiasaph

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:38

Izhar ... Kohath

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:39

who stood at his right hand

The authority of a person is described by where they stand. The right side of a person is the place where the person with the most authority stands.

Berekiah ... Shimea

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:40

Shimea ... Michael ... Baaseiah ... Malkijah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:41

Malkijah ... Ethni ... Zerah ... Adaiah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:42

Adaiah ... Ethan ... Zimmah ... Shimei

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:43

Shimei ... Jahath ... Gershon

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:44

General Information:

See:

At Heman's left hand

"Standing on Heman's left side"

Heman ... Ethan

See how you translated these men's names in 1 Chronicles 2:6.

Merari

See how you translated the name of this man in 1 Chronicles 6:1.

Kishi ... Abdi ... Malluk

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:45

Malluk ... Hashabiah ... Amaziah ... Hilkiah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:46

Hilkiah ... Amzi ... Bani ... Shemer

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:47

Mahli ... Mushi

See how you translated these men's names in 1 Chronicles 6:19.

1 Chronicles 6:48

Their associates, the Levites, were assigned to do

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God had assigned their associates, the Levites, to do" or "It was the duty of their fellow workers, the Levites, to do"

1 Chronicles 6:49

These offerings made atonement for Israel

"They offered these things to make atonement for the sins of the people of Israel"

1 Chronicles 6:50

Aaron's descendants are reckoned as follows

"These were the descendants of Aaron"

Eleazar ... Abishua

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:51

Bukki ... Uzzi ... Zerahiah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:52

Meraioth ... Amariah ... Ahitub

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 6:53

Ahimaaz

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 6:54

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These are the locations where Aaron's descendants were assigned to live

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "These are the places where God assigned Aaron's descendants to live"

for the descendants of Aaron ... Kohathites

"where the descendants of Aaron ... Kohathites were to live"

Kohathites (the first lot was theirs)

The Israelites drew lots to decide where people would live. Alternate translation: "Kohathites. The first lot that they drew was theirs"

Kohathites

This is the name of a people group, the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 6:1). See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 6:33.

1 Chronicles 6:55

To them they gave Hebron

"They gave Hebron to the Kohathites"

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:57

Hebron ... Libnah ... Jattir ... Eshtemoa

These are names of places.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:58

Hilen ... Debir

These are names of places.

1 Chronicles 6:59

Ashan ... Juttah ... Beth Shemesh

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:60

Geba ... Alemeth ... Anathoth

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:62

To Gershon's descendants in their various clans were given thirteen cities

"The clans of Gershon's descendants gained 13 cities"

1 Chronicles 6:63

Merari

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 6:1.

1 Chronicles 6:64

their pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:65

these towns mentioned by name

The towns mentioned in 1 Chronicles 6:55 and 1 Chronicles 6:60.

1 Chronicles 6:67

Shechem ... Gezer

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:68

Jokmeam ... Beth Horon

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:69

Aijalon ... Gath Rimmon

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:70

Aner ... Bileam

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:71

Gershon

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 6:1.

Golan ... Ashtaroth

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:72

Kedesh ... Daberath

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:73

Ramoth ... Anem

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:74

Issachar received from the tribe of Asher

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Asher gave Issachar"

Mashal ... Abdon

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:75

Hukok ... Rehob

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:76

They received from the tribe of Naphtali

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Naphtali gave them"

Kedesh ... Hammon ... Kiriathaim

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 6:77

The rest ... descendants received from the tribe of Zebulun

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Zebulun gave the rest ... descendants"

Merari's

Translate "Merari" as in 1 Chronicles 6:1.

Jokneam ... Kartah ... Rimmono ... Tabor

These are names of towns.

its pasturelands

the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.

1 Chronicles 6:78

General Information:

The information in 1 Chronicles 6:78-79 can be rearranged

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as in the UDB so its meaning can be more easily understood.
from the tribe of Reuben, across ... Jericho, they received
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the tribe of Reuben, across ... Jericho, gave them"
Bezer ... Jahzah
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 6:79
General Information:
The information in 1 Chronicles 6:78-79 can be rearranged as in the UDB so its meaning can be more easily understood.
Kedemoth ... Mephaath
These are names of towns.
1 Chronicles 6:80
The Levites received from the tribe of Gad
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Gad gave the Levites"
Ramoth ... Mahanaim
These are names of towns.
its pasturelands
the land with grass for animals to eat. See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 5:16.
1 Chronicles 6:81
Heshbon ... Jazer
These are names of towns.

7 [1]Issachar's four sons were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron.

[2]The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Samuel. They were the heads of their clans, from the descendants of Tola and they were listed as mighty warriors among their generations. They numbered 22,600 in the days of David.
[3]Uzzi's son was Izrahiah. His sons were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Ishiah; all five of them were clan leaders.
[4]Along with them, according to the genealogical records of their clans, they had thirty-six thousand troops of the army for battle, for they had many wives and sons.
[5]Their relatives from all the clans of Issachar numbered in all eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors, as listed in their genealogy.

[6]Benjamin's three sons were Bela, Beker, and Jediael.
[7]Bela's sons were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five heads of clans and mighty warriors. There were 22,034 of them recorded in their genealogy.

[8]Beker's sons were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were his sons.[9]Recorded in their genealogy, according to their generations, were 20,200 heads of their clans, mighty warriors.
[10]The son of Jediael was Bilhan. Bilhan's sons were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar.
[11]All these were sons of Jediael. Listed in their clan lists were 17,200 heads of houses and mighty warriors fit for military service.
[12]The Shuppites and the Huppites were descendants of Ir, and the Hushites were descendants of Aher.

[13]The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem—the descendants of Bilhah.

[14]The descendants of Manasseh were Asriel, who was his descendant through his Aramean concubine. (She gave birth to Makir, the father of Gilead.[15]Then Makir took a wife from the Huppites and Shuppites, and his sister's name was Maakah.) The name of the second was Zelophehad, who had only daughters.
[16]Then Maakah, wife of Makir, bore a son and she called him Peresh, and his brother's name was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem.

[17]The son of Ulam was Bedan. These were the descendants of Gilead, who was the son of Makir, who was the son of Manasseh.[18]Gilead's sister Hammoleketh gave birth to Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah.
[19]The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

[20]The descendants of Ephraim were Shuthelah, Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son,[21]Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son. Ezer and Elead were killed by men of Gath, natives in the land, when they went to steal their livestock.[22]Ephraim their father mourned for them many days, and his brothers came to comfort him.
[23]He went to his wife. She conceived and bore a son. Ephraim named him Beriah, because tragedy had come to his family.
[24]His daughter was Sheerah, who built Lower and Upper Beth Horon and Uzzen Sheerah.

[25]Rephah was his son, Resheph his son, Telah his son, Tahan his son,
[26]Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,[27]Nun his son, and Joshua was his son.

[28]Their possessions and residences were Bethel and its surrounding villages. They extended eastward to Naaran and westward to Gezer and its villages, and to Shechem and its villages to Ayyah and its villages.[29]On the border with

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Manasseh were Beth Shan and its villages, Taanach and its villages, Megiddo and its villages, and Dor and its villages. In these towns the descendants of Joseph son of Israel lived.

[30]Asher's sons were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Serah was their sister.
[31]Beriah's sons were Heber and Malkiel, who was the father of Birzaith.
[32]Heber's sons were Japhlet, Shomer, and Hotham. Shua was their sister.

[33]Japhlet's sons were Pasak, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were Japhlet's children.
[34]Shomer, Japhlet's brother, had these sons: Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram.
[35]Shemer's brother, Helem, had these sons: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal.

[36]Zophah's sons were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah,[37]Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera.
[38]Jether's sons were Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara.

[39]Ulla's sons were Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia.[40]All these were descendants of Asher. They were heads of clans, distinguished men, mighty warriors, and chief among the leaders. There were twenty-six thousand men listed who were fit for military service recorded in their genealogy.

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1 Chronicles 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the descendants of Issachar, Benjamin, Ephraim, Asher, and Manasseh living west of the Jordan River.

Links:

1 Chronicles 7:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 7:1
Issachar ... Tola, Puah, Jashub ... Shimron
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 7:2
General Information:
All of the names here are the names of men.
They numbered 22,600
"They numbered twenty-two thousand six hundred" or "There were 22,600 men"
in the days of David
"during David's life" or "while David was alive"
1 Chronicles 7:3
General Information:
All of the names here are the names of men.
1 Chronicles 7:4
Along with them ... they had
Another possible meaning is "Among them ... were."
thirty-six thousand troops of the army for battle
"36,000 soldiers who were ready for battle"
1 Chronicles 7:5
eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors
"87,000 mighty warriors"
1 Chronicles 7:6
Bela ... Beker ... Jediael
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 7:7
General Information:
All of the names here are the names of men.
22,034 of them
"twenty-two thousand and thirty-four of them"
1 Chronicles 7:8
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 7:9
20,200 heads of their clans
"twenty thousand two hundred clan leaders"
1 Chronicles 7:10
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 7:11
Jediael
This is the name of a man.
Listed in their clan lists were 17,200
"The clan lists contained 17,200"
17,200 heads of houses
"seventeen thousand two hundred heads of houses"
1 Chronicles 7:12
Ir ... Aher
These are names of men.
Shuppites ... Huppites ... Hushites
These are names of clans of people.
1 Chronicles 7:13
Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem
These are names of men.
Bilhah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 7:14
Asriel
This is the name of a man.
descendant through his Aramean concubine
"descendant, to whom his Aramean concubine gave birth"
Makir ... Gilead

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These are names of men. See how you translated "Makir, father of Gilead" in 1 Chronicles 2:21.

1 Chronicles 7:15

Makir ... Zelophehad

These are names of men.

Huppites ... Shuppites

See how you translated these names in 1 Chronicles 7:12.

Maakah

This is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 7:16

Maakah, wife of Makir

This woman is different from Makir's sister Maakah 1 Chronicles 7:15.

Makir ... Peresh ... Sheresh ... Ulam ... Rakem

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:17

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:18

General Information:

All of the names here except Hammoleketh are names of men. Hammoleketh is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 7:19

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:20

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:21

General Information:

All of the names here except Gath are names of men. Gath is the name of a place.

Ezer and Elead were killed by men of Gath, natives in the land

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Men of Gath, the natives in the land, killed Ezer and Elead"

they went to steal their livestock

"the brothers went to steal the livestock from the people of Gath"

1 Chronicles 7:23

He went to his wife

This is a polite way of saying that he had sexual relations with his wife. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Chronicles 2:24]

She conceived and bore a son

"She became pregnant and gave birth to a son"

Ephraim ... Beriah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:24

Sheerah

This is the name of a woman.

Upper Beth Horon ... Uzzen Sheerah

These are names of towns.

1 Chronicles 7:25

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:26

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:27

Nun

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 7:28

General Information:

All of the names listed here are names of towns.

Their possessions and residences were Bethel ... villages

The abstract nouns "possessions" and "residences" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "They possessed and resided in Bethel ... villages" or "They owned and lived in Bethel ... villages"

1 Chronicles 7:29

Beth Shan ... Taanach ... Megiddo ... Dor

These are names of towns.

In these towns the descendants of Joseph son of Israel lived

"The descendants of Joseph, son of Israel, lived in these towns"

1 Chronicles 7:30

General Information:

All of the names here except Serah are names of men. Serah is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 7:31

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:32

General Information:

All of the names here except Shua are names of men. Shua is the name of a woman.

1 Chronicles 7:33

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:34

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:35

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:36

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:37

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:38

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:39

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 7:40

Asher

This is the name of a man.

distinguished men

"important men"

There were twenty-six thousand men listed who were fit for military service recorded in their genealogy

"According to the clan records, there were 26,000 men who were able to serve in the military"

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8 [1]Benjamin's five sons were Bela his firstborn, Ashbel, Aharah,

[2]Nohah, and Rapha.
[3]Bela's sons were Addar, Gera, Abihud,[4]Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah,[5]Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram.

[6]These were the descendants of Ehud who were heads of fathers' houses for the inhabitants of Geba, who were compelled to move to Manahath:
[7]Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera. The last, Gera, led them in their move. He was the father of Uzza and Ahihud.

[8]Shaharaim became the father of children in the land of Moab, after he had divorced his wives Hushim and Baara.[9]By his wife Hodesh, Shaharaim became the father of Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malkam,[10]Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of fathers' houses.[11]He had already become the father of Abitub and Elpaal by Hushim.

[12]Elpaal's sons were Eber, Misham, and Shemed (who built Ono and Lod with its surrounding villages).[13]There were also Beriah and Shema. They were heads of the fathers' houses of those living in Aijalon, who drove out the inhabitants of Gath.

[14]Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth,[15]Zebadiah, Arad, Eder,[16]Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were the sons of Beriah.
[17]Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber,[18]Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal.

[19]Jakim, Zikri, Zabdi,[20]Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel,[21]Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei.

[22]Ishpan, Eber, Eliel,[23]Abdon, Zikri, Hanan,[24]Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah,[25]Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak.

[26]Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,[27]Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zikri were the sons of Jeroham.[28]These were heads of clans—according to the genealogical records they were heads. These were the chief men who dwelled in Jerusalem.

[29]The father of Gibeon, Jeiel, whose wife's name was Maakah, lived in Gibeon.[30]His firstborn son was Abdon, followed by Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,[31]Gedor, Ahio, and Zeker.
[32]Another of Jeiel's sons was Mikloth, who became the father of Shimeah. They also lived near their relatives in Jerusalem.
[33]Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal.
[34]The son of Jonathan was Merib-Baal. Merib-Baal was the father of Micah.

[35]The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melek, Tarea, and Ahaz.
[36]Ahaz became the father of Jehoaddah. Jehoaddah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza.[37]Moza was the father of Binea. Binea was the father of Raphah. Raphah was the father of Eleasah. Eleasah was the father of Azel.

[38]Azel had six sons, and these were their names: Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Shearіah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were sons of Azel.
[39]The sons of Eshek, his brother, were Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third.[40]Ulam's sons were mighty warriors and archers. They had many sons and grandsons, a total of 150. All these belonged to the descendants of Benjamin.

1 Chronicles 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the genealogy of Saul's family.

Links:

[1 Chronicles 8:1 Notes]

1 Chronicles 8:1
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:2
Nohah ... Rapha
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:3
Bela ... Addar, Gera, Abihud
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:4

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Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:5
Gera, Shephuphan ... Huram
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:6
Ehud
This is the name of a man.
fathers' houses
extended families, people related to each other who usually lived in different houses, what the UDB calls "clans"
Geba ... Manahath
These are names of towns.
were compelled to move
"needed to move" or "had to move"
1 Chronicles 8:7
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:8
Shaharaim
This is the name of a man.
Hushim ... Baara
These are names of women.
1 Chronicles 8:9
Shaharaim ... Jobab ... Zibia ... Mesha ... Malkam
These are names of men.
By his wife Hodesh, Shaharaim became the father of
"Shaharaim and his wife Hodesh had the following sons:"
Hodesh
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 8:10
Jeuz ... Sakia ... Mirmah
These are names of men.
fathers' houses
extended families, people related to each other who usually lived in different houses, what the UDB calls "clans"
1 Chronicles 8:11
Abitub ... Elpaal
These are names of men.
Hushim
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 8:12
Elpaal ... Eber ... Misham ... Shemed
These are names of men.
Ono ... Lod
These are names of places.
1 Chronicles 8:13
Beriah ... Shema
These are names of men.
fathers' houses
extended families, people related to each other who usually lived in different houses, what the UDB calls "clans"
Aijalon ... Gath
These are names of places.
1 Chronicles 8:14
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:15
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:16
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:17
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:18
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:19
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:20
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:21
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:22
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:23
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:24
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:25
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:26
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:27
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:29
The father of Gibeon, Jeiel, whose wife's name was Maakah, lived in Gibeon
Here "father of" refers to Jeiel's status as the leading person in the city of Gibeon. Alternate translation: "Jeiel, the leader of Gibeon, lived in Gibeon. His wife's name was Maakah"
Gibeon
This is the name of a town.
Jeiel
This is the name of a man.
Maakah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 8:30
His firstborn
"Jeiel's first son"
Abdon ... Zur ... Kish ... Baal ... Nadab
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:31
Gedor ... Ahio ... Zeker
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:32
Jeiel ... Mikloth ... Shimeah

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These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:33
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:34
Jonathan ... Merib-Baal ... Micah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:35
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:36
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:37
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:38
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 8:39
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third
"Jeush, who was born after Ulam, and Eliphelet, who was born after Jeush"
1 Chronicles 8:40
Ulam
This is the name of a man.
many sons and grandsons, a total of 150
"a total of one hundred fifty sons and grandsons"

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9 [1]So all Israel was recorded in genealogies. They were recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. As for Judah, they were carried away in exile to Babylon because of their faithlessness.[2]The first to resettle in their possessions, in their cities, were some Israelites, priests, Levites, and temple servants.[3]Some descendants of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem.

[4]The settlers included Uthai son of Ammihud son of Omri son of Imri son of Bani, one of the descendants of Perez son of Judah.
[5]Among the Shelanites were Asaiah the firstborn and his sons.
[6]Among the descendants of Zerah was Jeuel. Their relatives numbered 690.

[7]Among the descendants of Benjamin was Sallu son of Meshullam son of Hodaviah son of Hassenuah.
[8]There were also Ibneiah son of Jeroham; Elah son of Uzzi son of Mikri; and Meshullam son of Shephatiah son of Reuel son of Ibnijah.
[9]Their kinsmen, according to the genealogical records, numbered 956. All these men were heads of fathers' houses for their fathers' houses.

[10]The priests were Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, and Jakin.
[11]There was also Azariah son of Hilkiah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth son of Ahitub, the one in charge of the house of God.

[12]There was Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pashhur son of Malkijah. There was also Maasai son of Adiel son of Jahzerah son of Meshullam son of Meshillemith son of Immer.
[13]Their relatives, who were leaders of their clans, numbered 1,760. They were very capable men for the work of service in the house of God.

[14]Among the Levites, there was Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah, among the descendants of Merari.[15]There were also Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mika son of Zikri son of Asaph.[16]There were also Obadiah son of Shemaiah son of Galal son of Jeduthun; and Berekiah son of Asa son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

[17]The doorkeepers were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their relatives. Shallum was their leader.[18]Previously they stood guard at the king's gate on the east side for the camp of Levi's descendants.[19]Shallum son of Kore son of Ebiasaph,[1] son of Korah, and his relatives from his clan, the Korahites, were in charge of the work of the guard service. They guarded the door to the tent, as their ancestors had guarded the camp of Yahweh, and they also had guarded the entrance.
[20]Phinehas son of Eleazar had been in charge of them in the past, and Yahweh had been with him.[21]Zechariah son of Meshelemiah was guard of the entrance to the tent of meeting.
[22]All those who were chosen as gatekeepers at the entrances numbered 212. Their names were recorded in the people's genealogies in their villages. David and Samuel the seer had appointed them to their positions of trust.[23]So they and their descendants were assigned to guard the gates of the house of Yahweh, that is called the house of the tabernacle.[24]The gatekeepers were posted on all four sides, toward the east, west, north, and south.
[25]Their brothers, who lived in their villages, came in for seven-day rotations, in turn.[26]But the four leaders of the gatekeepers, who were Levites, were entrusted with the rooms and with the storerooms in the house of God.[27]They would

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stay overnight in their posts all around the house of God, for they were responsible for guarding it. They would open it each morning.

[28]Some of them were in charge of the temple's equipment; they counted the articles when they were brought in and when they were taken out.[29]Some of them also were assigned to take care of the holy things, the equipment, and the supplies, including the fine flour, the wine, the oil, the frankincense, and the spices.
[30]Some of the priests' sons mixed the spices.[31]Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of preparing bread for the offerings.[32]Some of their brothers, descendants of the Kohathites, were in charge of the bread of the presence, to prepare it every Sabbath.

[33]The singers and heads of the Levites' clans lived in rooms at the sanctuary when they were free from work, because they had to carry out their assigned tasks day and night.[34]These were leaders of the clans of the Levites, according to the genealogical records, chief men. They lived in Jerusalem.

[35]The father of Gibeon, Jeiel, whose wife's name was Maakah, lived in Gibeon.[36]His firstborn son was Abdon, then his sons Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab,[37]Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth.
[38]Mikloth was the father of Shimeam. They also lived near their brothers in Jerusalem.
[39]Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malki-Shua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal.
[40]The son of Jonathan was Merib-Baal. Merib-Baal was the father of Micah.

[41]The sons of Micah were Pithon, Melek, Tahrea, and Ahaz.
[42]Ahaz was the father of Jadah. Jadah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza.
[43]Moza became the father of Binea; and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.
[44]Azel had six sons, and their names were Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were Azel's sons.

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[1]Ebiasaph is the same person referred to as Asaph in 1 Chronicles 26:1.

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1 Chronicles 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records the genealogy of the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile and the family of Saul.

Links:

1 Chronicles 9:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 9:1

all Israel was recorded in genealogies

This can be translated in active form. The reader should understand that the people who wrote the genealogies included the names of the people who had already died. Alternate translation: "The Israelites recorded all of themselves in genealogies"

genealogies

family records that name ancestors and descendants

They were recorded in the book ... Israel

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They wrote the names in the book ... Israel"

the book of the kings of Israel

This refers to a book that no longer exists.

they were carried away in exile

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Babylonians carried them away in exile"

1 Chronicles 9:4

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 9:5

Shelanites

This is the name of a people group descended from Shelah.

Asaiah

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 9:6

Zerah ... Jeuel

These are names of men.

numbered 690

"numbered six hundred ninety people"

1 Chronicles 9:7

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 9:8

General Information:

All of the names here are names of men.

1 Chronicles 9:9

heads of fathers' houses for their fathers' houses

"leaders of their extended families." Extended families are people related to each other who usually live in different houses, what the UDB calls "clans."

1 Chronicles 9:10

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General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:11
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
the house of God
the second temple, which the people built after they returned from Babylon
1 Chronicles 9:12
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:13
They were very capable men for the work of service
"These capable men worked"
the house of God
the second temple, which the people built after they returned from Babylon
numbered 1,760
"numbered one thousand and sixty priests" or "numbered seventeen hundred and sixty priests"
1 Chronicles 9:14
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
among the descendants
"one of the descendants"
1 Chronicles 9:15
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:16
General Information:
All of the names here except "Netophathites" are the names of men. The Netophathites were a people group.
1 Chronicles 9:17
The doorkeepers were
"The guards were" or "The gatekeepers were"
Shallum ... Akkub ... Talmon ... Ahiman
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:18
they stood guard at the king's gate on the east side for the camp of Levi's descendants
"Levi's descendants guarded the king's gate on the east side of their camp"
1 Chronicles 9:19
Shallum ... Kore ... Ebiasaph
These are all the names of men.
Korahites
descendants of Korah
the door to the tent ... the entrance
These phrases both refer to the entrance of the tent of meeting, or the tabernacle.
the tent
This is a metonym for the second temple, which the people built after they returned from Babylon.
1 Chronicles 9:20
Eleazar
This is the name of a man.
in charge of them
"in charge of the Korahites" (1 Chronicles 9:19)
1 Chronicles 9:21
Meshelemiah
This is the name of a man.
the tent of meeting
The building where the Israelites prayed and offered sacrifices to God was sometimes called "the tent of meeting" in memory of the tent where Moses met with God when he and the Israelites were in the wilderness many years before this. Alternate translation: "the tent of meeting, that is, the temple"
1 Chronicles 9:22
General Information:
See:.
who were chosen as gatekeepers
It is not clear who chose these men, so if you have to translate in active form, use your language's most general way of doing so. Alternate translation: "whom they had chosen to be gatekeepers"
numbered 212
"numbered two hundred and twelve"
Their names were recorded in the people's genealogies in their villages
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The records in peoples' villages included the names of these men"
1 Chronicles 9:24
gatekeepers were posted
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "men guarded the entrances"
on all four sides, toward the east, west, north, and south
The words "east, west, north, and south" explain the words "all four sides."
1 Chronicles 9:25
Their brothers
"The guards' brothers"
came in for seven-day rotations, in turn
"would come to help for 7-day periods, taking turns"
1 Chronicles 9:26
the four leaders ... were entrusted with the rooms
It is not clear who entrusted these men, so if you have to translate in active form, use your language's most general way of doing so. Alternate translation: "they entrusted the four leaders ... with the rooms"
entrusted with
You may want to make explicit that they were entrusted to guard the rooms. Alternate translation: "entrusted to guard"
the house of God
the second temple, which the people built after they returned from Babylon
1 Chronicles 9:28
Some of them
"Some of the guards"
they counted the articles when they were brought in and when they were taken out
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they counted the articles that people took out to use, and they counted the articles when people brought them back"
1 Chronicles 9:29
Some of them also were assigned to take care of
It is not clear who assigned these men, so if you have to

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translate in active form, use your language's most general way of doing so. Alternate translation: "The leaders also assigned some of them to take care of" or "Some of them also took care of"
1 Chronicles 9:31
Mattithiah ... Shallum
These are names of men.
Korahite
This is the name of a people group.
1 Chronicles 9:32
Kohathites
This is the name of a people group.
bread of the presence
See the translationWord page about "bread" for the specific definition of "bread of the presence."
1 Chronicles 9:33
they were free from work
"they did not have to do other work"
carry out their assigned tasks
"complete the tasks they needed to do"
day and night
This means "at all times" and can be translated using a phrase or word from your language or culture that gives the same meaning.
1 Chronicles 9:34
These were leaders of the clans of the Levites, according to the genealogical records
"The family history lists included the names of these Levite family leaders"
1 Chronicles 9:35
Gibeon ... Gibeon
"the man Gibeon ... the town of Gibeon"
Jeiel
This is the name of a man.
Maakah
This is the name of a woman.
1 Chronicles 9:36
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:37
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:38
Mikloth ... Shimeam
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:39
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:40
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:41
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:42
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
1 Chronicles 9:43
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.
Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son
Possible meanings are 1) Rephaiah was Bineah's son, Eleasah was Rephaiah's son, and Azel was Eleasah's son, or 2) Rephaiah, Eleasah, and Azel were all sons of Moza.
1 Chronicles 9:44
General Information:
All of the names here are names of men.

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10 [1]Now the Philistines fought against Israel. Every man of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down dead on Mount Gilboa.[2]The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his sons. The Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua, his sons.[3]The battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers overtook him, and they wounded him.
[4]Then said Saul to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it. Otherwise, these uncircumcised will come and abuse me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was very afraid. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it.
[5]When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell on his sword in the same way and died.[6]So Saul died, and his three sons, so all his household members died together.

[7]When all the men of Israel in the valley saw that they had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled. Then the Philistines came and lived in them.[8]It came about on the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, that they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa.
[9]They stripped him and took his head and his armor. They sent messengers throughout Philistia to carry the news to their idols and to the people.[10]They put his armor in the temple of their gods, and fastened his skull to the temple of Dagon.
[11]When all Jabesh Gilead heard of all that the Philistines had done to Saul,[12]all the fighting men went and took away the body of Saul and those of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh. They buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh and fasted seven days.

[13]So Saul died for the faithless act with which he acted faithlessly against Yahweh. He did not obey Yahweh's instructions, but asked for advice from someone who talked with the dead.[14]He did not seek guidance from Yahweh, so Yahweh killed him and turned over the kingdom to David son of Jesse.

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1 Chronicles 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The death of Saul

Saul died because he disobeyed God.

Links:

1 Chronicles 10:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 10:1

Every man of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down dead on Mount Gilboa

It is implied that these men were Israelite soldiers. Alternate translation: "The whole army of Israel ran away from the Philistines"

Every man of Israel ... fell down dead

This is probably a generalization. It seems that while all the soldiers did run away, not all of them died. Alternate translation: "Every man of Israel ... most of them died"

1 Chronicles 10:2

Abinadab ... Malki-Shua

See how you translated these men's names in [1 Chronicles 8:33]

1 Chronicles 10:4

thrust me through with it

The action of stabbing is a metonym for the result, death. Alternate translation: "kill me with it"

these uncircumcised will come

The nominal adjective "uncircumcised" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "these people who are uncircumcised will come" or "these uncircumcised people will come"

these uncircumcised

Here "uncircumcised" represents people who do not belong to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "these people who do not belong to Yahweh" or "these heathen Philistines"

fell on it

Saul probably stuck the handle into the ground and leaned on the point so the sword would go through his body as he fell down. The action is a metonym for the result, death. Alternate translation: "killed himself with it"

1 Chronicles 10:5

fell on his sword

He probably stuck the handle into the ground and leaned on the point so the sword would go through his body as he fell down. The action is a metonym for the result, death. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 10:4]

1 Chronicles 10:6

and his three sons

The word "died" is understood from the previous phrase. It can be repeated. Alternate translation: "and his 3 sons died"

1 Chronicles 10:7

When all the men of Israel

This is probably a generalization. Alternate translation: "When the men of Israel"

they had fled

"the Israelite soldiers had fled"

the Philistines came and lived in them

"the Philistines came and lived in the cities from which the Israelites had fled." This probably happened after the events in verses 8-12.

1 Chronicles 10:8

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

to strip the dead

"to take everything of value off of the dead bodies"

Saul and his sons fallen

Here "fallen" is a polite way to refer to someone who died in battle. Alternate translation: "Saul and his sons dead"

1 Chronicles 10:9

They stripped him

"The Philistines removed everything from Saul's body"

to carry the news to their idols and to the people

They told the people what had happened and praised their idols in prayer.

to carry the news

A person telling others about something that has happened is spoken of as if the person were carrying a solid object and giving it to those other people. Alternate translation: "to tell what had happened"

1 Chronicles 10:10

They put his armor

"The Philistines put Saul's armor"

Dagon

This is the name of a false god.

1 Chronicles 10:11

When all Jabesh Gilead heard of all that the Philistines

Both instances of the word "all" are generalizations. The name of the town is a metonym for the people who live in the town, and the people group name is a metonym for that people group's soldiers. Alternate translation: "When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard what the soldiers of the Philistine army"

Jabesh Gilead

This is the name of a town in the region of Gilead.

1 Chronicles 10:12

their bones

The bones are a synecdoche for the dead bodies. Alternate translation: "their bodies"

seven days

"7 days"

1 Chronicles 10:13

Connecting Statement:

Verses 13 and 14 give a summary of why Saul died. If your language has a way of showing that this is not part of the story, you could use it here.

1 Chronicles 10:14

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Connecting Statement:
Verses 13 and 14 give a summary of why Saul died. If your language has a way of showing that this is not part of the story, you could use it here.

did not seek guidance from Yahweh

"did not ask Yahweh to guide him"

turned over the kingdom to David son of Jesse

Here "turned over the kingdom" is an idiom that means to give someone authority over a kingdom. Alternate translation: "made David, son of Jesse, king"

11 [1]Then all Israel gathered together with David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone.[2]In the recent
past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led the Israelite army. Yahweh your God said to you, 'You will
shepherd my people Israel, and you will become a ruler over my people Israel.'"[3]So all the elders of Israel came to the king
at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them before Yahweh. They anointed David king over Israel. In this way, the
word of Yahweh that had been declared by Samuel came true.

[4]David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (that is, Jebus). Now the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there.[5]The
inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You will not come in here." But David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of
David.[6]David had said, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites first will become chief and commander." So Joab son of Zeruiah
attacked first, so he was made the chief.
[7]Then David began to live in the stronghold. So they called it the city of David.[8]He built the city all around from the Millo
and back to the surrounding wall. Joab restored the rest of the city.[9]David became greater and greater because Yahweh of
hosts was with him.

[10]These were the leaders David had, who showed themselves strong with him in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to
make him king, obeying the word of Yahweh concerning Israel.[11]This is a list of David's mighty men: Jashobeam, the son
of a Hakmonite, was commander of the officers.[1] He killed three hundred men with his spear on one occasion.
[12]After him was Eleazar son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighty men.[13]He was with David at Pas
Dammim, and there the Philistines assembled together for battle, where there was a barley field and the army fled from
the Philistines.[14]They stood in the middle of the field. They defended it and cut down the Philistines and Yahweh rescued
them with a great victory.

[15]Then three of the thirty leaders went down to the rock to David, to the cave of Adullam. The army of the Philistines was
camped in the Valley of Rephaim.[16]At that time David was in his stronghold, a cave, while the Philistines had established
their camp at Bethlehem.[17]David was longing for water and said, "If only someone would give me water to drink from the
well at Bethlehem, the well that is by the gate!"
[18]So these three mighty men broke through the army of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, the
well at the gate. They took the water and brought it to David, but he refused to drink it. Instead, he poured it out to
Yahweh.[19]Then he said, "Far be it for me before God that I should ever do this! Should I drink the blood of these men who
have risked their lives?" Because they had put their lives at risk, David refused to drink it. These were the deeds of the
three mighty men.

[20]Abishai brother of Joab was captain over the Three. He once used his spear against three hundred and killed them. He
had a name along with the Three.[21]Of the Three, he was given double honor and became their captain, even though he
was not one of them.

[22]Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a brave warrior from Kabzeel, who did great deeds. He killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab.
He also went down into a pit and killed a lion on a day when the snow was falling.[23]He even killed an Egyptian, a man five
cubits tall. The Egyptian had a spear like a weaver's beam, but he went down to him with only a staff. He seized the spear
out of the Egyptian's hand and killed him with his own spear.
[24]Benaiah son of Jehoiada did these feats, and he was named alongside the three mighty men.[25]He was more highly
regarded than the thirty soldiers in general, but he was not regarded quite as highly as the three mighty men. Yet David
put him in charge of his bodyguard.

[26]The mighty warriors were Asahel brother of Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem,
[27]Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite,
[28]Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Anathothite,
[29]Sibbekai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite,

[30]Maharai the Netophathite, Heled son of Baanah the Netophathite,
[31]Ithai son of Ribai of Gibeah of Benjamin's descendants, Benaiah the Pirathonite,
[32]Hurai of the valleys of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite,
[33]Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

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[34]the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shagee the Hararite,
[35]Ahiam son of Sakar the Hararite, Eliphal son of Ur,
[36]Hepher the Mekerathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,
[37]Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai son of Ezbai,

[38]Joel brother of Nathan, Mibhar son of Hagri,
[39]Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite (the armor bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah),
[40]Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,
[41]Uriah the Hittite, Zabad son of Ahlai,

[42]Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite (a chief of the Reubenites) and thirty with him,
[43]Hanan son of Maakah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,
[44]Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham the Aroerite,

[45]Jediael son of Shimri, Joha (his brother the Tizite),
[46]Eliel the Mahavite, Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, Ithmah the Moabite,
[47]Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

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[1]The Hebrew could also read, of the thirty, or, of the three.

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1 Chronicles 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of David begins here and continues throughout the remainder of this book.

Special concepts in this chapter

King David the military leader

David was made the king of all Israel and was the leader of their army. He conquered Jerusalem and strengthened its defenses. He had many brave men in his army that did great deeds. (See: works)

Links:

1 Chronicles 11:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 11:1

all Israel gathered together with David

This is a generalization that means people from every tribe in Israel came to David, but not every individual. Alternate translation: "people from throughout Israel came to be with David" or "people from every tribe in Israel came to be with David"

we are your flesh and bone

This idiom means that they are relatives. Alternate translation: "we are your relatives" or "we have the same ancestors as you"

1 Chronicles 11:2

In the recent past

This is historical information. Saul had been their king before David.

You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become a ruler over my people Israel

These two clauses mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh had chosen David to be king.

You will shepherd my people Israel

Here ruling over the people is spoken of as shepherding them. Alternate translation: "'You will care for my people Israel" or "You will lead my people Israel"

1 Chronicles 11:3

They anointed David king over Israel

To "anoint" is a symbolic act to show that they recognized that God had chosen David as king.

the word of Yahweh that had been declared by Samuel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the word of Yahweh that Samuel had declared"

1 Chronicles 11:4

David and all Israel

Here the phrase "all Israel" represents the entire Israelite army. Alternate translation: "David and all the Israelite army"

Now the Jebusites ... were there

The word "now" is used to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about Jerusalem.

1 Chronicles 11:5

David took the stronghold of Zion

Here the word "took" is an idiom that means "captured" or "conquered." Since David led the army, his name here is a synecdoche for the whole army who attacked the city. Alternate translation: "David captured the stronghold of Zion" or "David and the Israelite army captured the stronghold of Zion"

the stronghold of Zion ... the city of David

Both of these names refer to Jerusalem.

1 Chronicles 11:6

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Zeruiah
This is the name of a man.
so he was made the chief
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so David made Joab the chief"
1 Chronicles 11:8
He built the city all around ... Joab restored the rest of the city
The word "he" refers to David. The reader should understand that David and Joab were probably in charge of other men who made the fortifications.
the Millo
This likely refers to a terraced structure that consisted of retaining walls with dirt filled in behind them.
1 Chronicles 11:10
These were the leaders David had
"These were the leaders of David's warriors"
who showed themselves strong with him in his kingdom ... to make him king
This phrase means that both the leaders of David's army, and the full army, helped David to establish himself as king over Israel. Alternate translation: "who strongly supported David's kingdom ... to make him king"
1 Chronicles 11:11
Jashobeam
This is the name of a man.
a Hakmonite
This refers to a person from the clan descended from a man named Hakmon.
on one occasion
"in one battle"
1 Chronicles 11:12
After him
"After Jashobeam"
Eleazar ... Dodo
These are the names of men.
the Ahohite
The "Ahohites" is the name of a people group.
1 Chronicles 11:13
Pas Dammim
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 11:14
They stood in the middle of the field
"David and Eleazar stood in the middle of the field"
cut down the Philistines
This means that they killed the Philistine soldiers with their swords. Alternate translation: "killed the Philistines"
1 Chronicles 11:15
three of the thirty
"3 of the 30"
the cave of Adullam
"the cave near the town of Adullam." Adullam is near Bethlehem.
the Valley of Rephaim
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 11:16
in his stronghold, a cave
"in his safe place in a cave"
the Philistines had established their camp at Bethlehem
"the Philistines had stationed soldiers in Bethlehem"
1 Chronicles 11:17
the well at Bethlehem, the well that is by the gate
These two phrases refer to the same well. The second specifies which well in Bethlehem.
1 Chronicles 11:18
three mighty men
"3 mighty men"
broke through the army of the Philistines
"fought their way through the army of the Philistines"
the well of Bethlehem, the well at the gate
These two phrases refer to the same well. The second specifies which well in Bethlehem. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Chronicles 11:17]
he poured it out to Yahweh
This means that he poured out the water as an offering to Yahweh.
1 Chronicles 11:19
Far be it for me before God that I should ever do this
"May God never see me do something like this" or "This is something I, who fear God, should never do"
Should I drink the blood of these men who have risked their lives?
David speaks of the water as if it were blood because the men risked their lives to bring the water to him. He uses a question to emphasize this. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I should not drink this water, which would be like drinking the blood of these men who have risked their lives to bring it to me."
1 Chronicles 11:20
Abishai
See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 2:16.
captain over the Three
This means Abishai was the leader of the three men who went and got water for David.
three hundred
"300 men" or "300 warriors"
He had a name along with the Three
The word "name" here is a metonym for a good reputation, for being honored as a mighty warrior. Alternate translation: "People honored him the same way they honored the Three"
1 Chronicles 11:21
Of the Three, he was given double honor and became
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) that he received double the honor that the Three received. Alternate translation: "People gave him twice as much honor as they gave the Three and he became" or 2) the Three honored him more than they honored others. Alternate translation: "The Three honored him more than they honored others and he became"
1 Chronicles 11:22
Benaiah ... Jehoiada ... Ariel
These are the names of men.
Kabzeel
This is the name of a city.
1 Chronicles 11:23
five cubits
A "cubit" is a unit of measurement equal to 46 centimeters.

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Alternate translation: "2.3 meters"

a spear like a weaver's beam

This compares the size of the spear with the size of a weaver's beam. Alternate translation: "a spear the size of a weaver's beam"

he went down to him

"Benaiah went down to the Egyptian." This idiom means that he met him in battle. Alternate translation: "he attacked him"

1 Chronicles 11:24

did these feats

"did these mighty deeds"

he was named alongside the three mighty men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people praised him like they praised the three mighty men"

1 Chronicles 11:25

He was more highly regarded than the thirty soldiers in general, but he was not regarded quite as highly as the three mighty men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people respected him more than the 30 soldiers, but not as much as the 3 most elite soldiers"

his bodyguard

the group of people responsible for protecting David

1 Chronicles 11:26

General Information:

This begins a list of David's thirty most important warriors. The list contains the names of the men and the clans to which they belonged. The list continues through 1 Chronicles 11:47.

1 Chronicles 11:27

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:28

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:29

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:30

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:31

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:32

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:33

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:34

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:35

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:36

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:37

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:38

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:39

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:40

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:41

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:42

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

thirty with him

"30 men with him"

1 Chronicles 11:43

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:44

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:45

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:46

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

1 Chronicles 11:47

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of David's thirty most important warriors.

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12 [1]These were the men who came to David to Ziklag, while he was still banished from the presence of Saul son of Kish.
They were among the soldiers, his helpers in battle.[2]They were armed with bows and could use both the right hand
and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the bow. They were Benjamites, Saul's kinsmen.

[3]The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite. There were Jeziel and Pelet, sons of Azmaveth.
There were also Berakah, Jehu the Anathothite,[4]Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a soldier among the thirty (and in command of
the thirty); Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad the Gederathite,
[5]Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Haruphite,[6]the Korahites Elkanah, Ishiah, Azarel, Joezer,
Jashobeam, and[7]Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

[8]Some Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness. They were mighty warriors, men of war, ready for battle,
who could handle shield and spear; whose faces were as fierce as the faces of lions. They were as swift as gazelles on the
mountains.

[9]There were Ezer the leader, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third,
[10]Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,
[11]Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,
[12]Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,
[13]Jeremiah the tenth, Makbannai the eleventh.
[14]These sons of Gad were leaders of the army. The least led a hundred, and the greatest led a thousand.[15]They crossed the
Jordan in the first month, when it overflowed its banks, and caused all those living in the valleys to flee, both toward the
east and toward the west.

[16]Some of the men of Benjamin and Judah came to the stronghold to David.[17]David went out to meet them and addressed
them: "If you have come in peace to me to help me, my heart will be joined with you. But if you have come to betray me to
my adversaries, may the God of our ancestors see and rebuke you, since I have done no wrong."
[18]Then the Spirit clothed Amasai, who was chief of the thirty. Amasai said, "We are yours, David. We are on your side, son
of Jesse. Peace, may peace be to whoever helps you. May peace be to your helpers, for your God is helping you." Then
David received them and made them commanders over his men.

[19]Some from Manasseh also deserted to David when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle. Yet they did not
help the Philistines, because the Philistine lords consulted with each other and sent David away. They said, "He will desert
to his master Saul at the risk of our lives."[20]When he went to Ziklag, the men of Manasseh who joined him were Adnah,
Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, captains over thousands of Manasseh.
[21]They helped David fight against the roving bands, for they were mighty warriors. Later they became commanders in the
army.[22]Day after day, men came to David to help him, until there was a great army, like the army of God.

[23]This is the record of the armed soldiers for war, who came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him,
which carried out Yahweh's word.
[24]The men of Judah who carried shield and spear were 6,800, armed for war.
[25]From the Simeonites there were 7,100 mighty warriors trained for war.

[26]From the Levites there were 4,600 fighting men.[27]Jehoiada was the leader of Aaron's descendants, and with him were
3,700.[28]With Zadok, a young man, a mighty warrior, were twenty-two leaders from his clan.

[29]From Benjamin, Saul's kinsmen, were three thousand. Most of them had kept watch over the house of Saul until this
time.
[30]From the Ephraimites there were 20,800 mighty warriors, men who were famous in their clans.
[31]From the half tribe of Manasseh there were eighteen thousand famous men who came to make David king.

[32]From Issachar, there were two hundred leaders who had understanding of the times and knew what Israel ought to do.
All their relatives were under their command.
[33]From Zebulun there were fifty thousand fighting men, prepared for battle, with all the weapons of war, and ready to
give undivided loyalty.

[34]From Naphtali there were one thousand officers, and with them thirty-seven thousand men with shields and spears.
[35]From the Danites there were 28,600 men prepared for battle.

[36]From Asher there were forty thousand men of war prepared for battle.

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[37]From the other side of the Jordan, from the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, there were 120,000 men armed with all kinds of weapons for war.

[38]All these soldiers, equipped for battle, came to Hebron with a whole heart to make David king over all Israel. All the rest of Israel were in agreement to make David king also.[39]They were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their relatives had sent them with provisions.[40]In addition, those who were near to them, as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen, and cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, wine, oil, cattle and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.

1 Chronicles 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"[They] could use both the right hand and the left"

These soldiers were very skilled. They were able to fight with either hand.

King David

This chapter records all those who supported David as king over Saul. The extent of this record shows that there was nearly universal support for David.

Links:

1 Chronicles 12:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 12:1

while he was still banished from the presence of

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "during the time when he could not be in the presence of"

1 Chronicles 12:2

could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows

"could use either their right hands or their left hands to sling stones and shoot arrows"

slinging stones

The sling was a strip of leather that a person would use to throw a stone long distances.

1 Chronicles 12:3

General Information:

This begins a list of the men from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag.

1 Chronicles 12:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the men from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag.

the thirty

"the 30 soldiers"

1 Chronicles 12:5

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the men from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag.

1 Chronicles 12:6

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the men from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag.

1 Chronicles 12:7

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of the men from the tribe of Benjamin who joined David at Ziklag.

1 Chronicles 12:8

General Information:

This begins a list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David.

whose faces were as fierce as the faces of lions

Here the word "faces" represents the men and the lions. Their faces express the fierceness with which they fight battles. Alternate translation: "who were as fierce in battle as lions hunting prey"

They were as swift as gazelles on the mountains

This hyperbole compares how swiftly these men were able to run with how swiftly gazelles are able to run over rugged mountain terrain.

gazelles

animals similar to deer that can run quickly over hills and rough ground

1 Chronicles 12:9

Ezer the leader, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third

This begins a list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David, in order of their importance.

1 Chronicles 12:10

Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth

This continues a list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David, in order of their importance.

1 Chronicles 12:11

Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh

This continues the list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David, in order of their importance.

1 Chronicles 12:12

Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth

This continues the list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David, in order of their importance.

1 Chronicles 12:13

Jeremiah the tenth, Makbannai the eleventh

This ends the list of the men from the tribe of Gad who joined David, in order of their importance.

1 Chronicles 12:14

The least led a hundred

The least of the sons led groups of one hundred soldiers.

the greatest led a thousand

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The greatest of the sons led groups of a thousand soldiers.
The least ... the greatest
Possible meanings are "The youngest sons ... the oldest sons," "The weakest sons ... the strongest sons," or "The most important sons ... the least important sons"
1 Chronicles 12:15
first month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars. It is at the beginning of the spring season when the late rains come.
when it overflowed its banks
"when the Jordan overflowed its banks"
caused all those living in the valleys to flee
"they chased away all those living in the valleys"
1 Chronicles 12:16
men of Benjamin and Judah
"men from the tribes of Benjamin and Judah"
1 Chronicles 12:17
may the God of our ancestors see
What God will see may be supplied in translation. Alternate translation: "may the God of our ancestors see what you intend to do"
1 Chronicles 12:18
clothed Amasai
The topic of this metaphor is that because of what the Spirit did, Amasai had special powers. Possible images are 1) the Spirit came over or came on or covered Amasai like a garment, thus giving Amasai special powers. Alternate translation: "came over Amasai" or "took control of Amasai" Or 2) the Spirit covered himself with Amasai and so acted through him.
Amasai
This is the name of a man.
the thirty
"the 30 soldiers"
We are yours, David. We are on your side, son of Jesse
These phrases share similar meanings. The idioms "we are yours" and "we are on your side" both mean that the men support David. Alternate translation: "We are devoted to you, David. We support you, son of Jesse"
Peace, may peace be to whoever helps you
Here the word "peace" refers to prosperity and well-being. The word is repeated to emphasize great prosperity. Alternate translation: "May whoever helps you greatly prosper"
1 Chronicles 12:19
deserted to
"left their leaders to join"
He will desert to his master Saul
"He will stop fighting with us and fight for his master Saul"
1 Chronicles 12:20
Ziklag
This is the name of a city.
Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai
These are the names of men.
captains over thousands of Manasseh
This means that each of these men led groups of a thousand soldiers in the tribe of Manasseh. Alternate translation: "each a captain over 1,000 men in the tribe of Manasseh"
1 Chronicles 12:21
the roving bands
"the groups of robbers." This refers to groups of people who robbed people traveling through the countryside.
1 Chronicles 12:22
Day after day
"Each day"
a great army, like the army of God
Possible meanings are 1) the phrase "like the army of God" means "like an army that God assembled" or 2) the word "God" is used as an idiom that refers to the great size of the army. Alternate translation: "a very large army"
1 Chronicles 12:23
General Information:
This begins the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him
The men making David king in place of Saul is spoken of as if they gave possession of Saul's kingdom to David. Alternate translation: "to make David king in place of Saul"
carried out Yahweh's word
"made Yahweh's word true" or "fulfilled Yahweh's word"
1 Chronicles 12:24
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
6,800, armed for war
"six thousand eight hundred, armed for war"
1 Chronicles 12:25
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
From the Simeonites
"From Simeon" or "From the tribe of Simeon"
7,100 mighty warriors
"seven thousand one hundred mighty warriors"
1 Chronicles 12:26
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
4,600 fighting men
"four thousand six hundred fighting men"
1 Chronicles 12:27
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
Jehoiada
This is the name of a man.
with him were 3,700
"with him were three thousand seven hundred"
1 Chronicles 12:28
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.
twenty-two leaders
"22 leaders"
1 Chronicles 12:29
Connecting Statement:

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This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

From Benjamin, Saul's kinsmen

"From Benjamin, the tribe to which Saul belonged"

three thousand

"3,000"

kept watch over

This is a metaphor for being loyal to someone. Alternate translation: "been loyal to"

1 Chronicles 12:30

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

20,800 mighty warriors

"twenty thousand eight hundred mighty warriors"

From the Ephraimites

"From Ephraim" or "From the tribe of Ephraim"

1 Chronicles 12:31

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

eighteen thousand

"18,000"

1 Chronicles 12:32

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

two hundred

"200"

who had understanding of the times

Possible meanings are 1) these men knew the right time to act or 2) these men had a good understanding of current political events within Israel.

1 Chronicles 12:33

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

fifty thousand

"50,000"

ready to give undivided loyalty

It is implicit that they would give loyalty to David. Alternate translation: "ready to give undivided loyalty to David"

1 Chronicles 12:34

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

one thousand ... thirty-seven thousand

"1,000 ... 37,000"

1 Chronicles 12:35

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

From the Danites

"From Dan" or "From the tribe of Dan"

28,600 men

"twenty-eight thousand six hundred men"

1 Chronicles 12:36

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

forty thousand

"40,000"

1 Chronicles 12:37

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of the number of men who joined David from each tribe.

the Reubenites, Gadites

"Reuben, Gad" or "the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad"

120,000 men

"one hundred twenty thousand men"

1 Chronicles 12:38

with a whole heart

The word "heart" here is a metonym for a person's intentions or desires. Alternate translation: "with firm intentions" or "determined to make David king"

1 Chronicles 12:39

They were there with David

"These soldiers were there with David"

three days

"3 days"

1 Chronicles 12:40

there was joy in Israel

The people of Israel were very happy.

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13 [1]David consulted with the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with every leader.[2]David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and if this comes from Yahweh our God, let us send messengers everywhere to our brothers who remain in all the regions of Israel, and to the priests and Levites who are in their cities. Let them be told to come together with us.[3]Let us bring the ark of our God back to ourselves, for we did not seek his will in the days of Saul's reign."[4]The whole assembly agreed to do these things, because in the eyes of all the people they seemed to be what was right.
[5]So David assembled all Israel together, from the Shihor River in Egypt to Lebo Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim.[6]David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, Kiriath Jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by Yahweh's name, Yahweh, who sits enthroned over the cherubim.
[7]So they set the ark of God on a new cart. They brought it out of Abinadab's house. Uzzah and Ahio were guiding the cart.
[8]David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all their might. They were singing with harps and lutes, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets.

[9]When they came to the threshing floor of Kidon, Uzzah reached out with his hand to grab the ark, because the oxen stumbled.[10]Then the anger of Yahweh burned against Uzzah, and Yahweh killed him because Uzzah had reached out with

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his hand to the ark. He died there before God.[11]David was angry because Yahweh had attacked Uzzah. That place is called Perez Uzzah to this day.
[12]David was afraid of God that day. He said, "How can I bring the ark of God home to me?"[13]So David did not move the ark to the city of David, but put it aside in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite.[14]The ark of God remained in Obed-Edom's household in his house for three months. So Yahweh blessed his house and all that he possessed.

1 Chronicles 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Ark of the covenant

David tried to bring the ark to Jerusalem on an ox cart instead of being carried by priests as the law said to do. The ox stumbled and Uzzah touched the ark to keep it from falling and he immediately died because of this. (See: priest and lawofmoses and covenant)

Links:

1 Chronicles 13:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 13:1

the commanders of thousands and of hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the commanders of smaller military divisions"

1 Chronicles 13:2

all the assembly of Israel

This refers to all of the Israelites who were assembled in this place. Alternate translation: "all of the Israelites who were assembled there"

if this comes from Yahweh our God

This idiom means that this action is something that Yahweh approves. Alternate translation: "if this is something that Yahweh our God approves"

Let them be told to come together with us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let messengers tell them to join us" or "Let them join us"

1 Chronicles 13:4

in the eyes of all the people they seemed to be what was right

Here the word "eyes" is a metonym for what the people thought or judged because of what they saw. Alternate translation: "all the people considered these things to be right"

1 Chronicles 13:5

David assembled all Israel together

Here the word "all" is a generalization. The phrase means that David assembled people from all over Israel, not that he assembled every person in Israel. Alternate translation: "David assembled people together from all Israel"

Lebo Hamath ... Kiriath Jearim

These are the names of places.

1 Chronicles 13:6

Baalah ... Kiriath Jearim

These are the names of places. "Baalah" is another name for Kiriath Jearim.

which belongs to Judah

"which is in Judah"

to bring up from there the ark of God

It is implied that they are taking the ark to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "to take to Jerusalem the ark of God"

to bring up from there

Jerusalem is higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem and going down from it.

which is called by Yahweh's name

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) the idiom "called by ... name" refers to a person owning the thing. Alternate translation: "which belongs to Yahweh" or 2) the ark has Yahweh's name written on it. Alternate translation: "which bears Yahweh's name"

who sits enthroned over the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "who sits on his throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

1 Chronicles 13:7

Abinadab ... Uzzah ... Ahio

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 13:8

David and all Israel

Here the word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "David and all of the Israelites who were present"

singing with harps and lutes

"singing while playing harps and lutes"

tambourines

hand drums with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instruments are shaken

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound

1 Chronicles 13:9

Kidon ... Uzzah

These are names of men.

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1 Chronicles 13:10

the anger of Yahweh burned against Uzzah

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire that burned the one with whom Yahweh is angry. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was very angry with Uzzah"

before God

"in the presence of God"

1 Chronicles 13:11

That place is called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People call that place"

Perez Uzzah

This is the name of a place. Translator may add a footnote that says, "The name 'Perez Uzzah' means 'the punishment of Uzzah.'"

to this day

See how you translated this phrase in 1 Chronicles 4:43

1 Chronicles 13:12

How can I bring the ark of God home to me?

David uses this question to emphasize that he is afraid to take the ark to Jerusalem. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am too afraid to bring the ark of Yahweh with me to Jerusalem."

1 Chronicles 13:13

Obed-Edom the Gittite

This is the name of a man. A "Gittite" is a person from the city of Gath.

1 Chronicles 13:14

in Obed-Edom's household in his house

"with Obed-Edom's family in his house"

three months

"3 months"

Yahweh blessed his house

Here the word "house" is a metonym for his family. Alternate translation: "Yahweh blessed his family"

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14 [1]Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, carpenters, and masons. They built a house for him.[2]David knew that Yahweh had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingdom was exalted on high for the sake of his people Israel.

[3]In Jerusalem, David took more wives, and he became the father of more sons and daughters.[4]These were the names of the children who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,[5]Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet,[6]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,[7]Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

[8]Now when the Philistines heard that David had been anointed as king over all Israel, they all went out looking for him. But David heard about it and went out against them.[9]Now the Philistines had come and made a raid in the Valley of Rephaim.
[10]Then David asked for help from God. He said, "Should I attack the Philistines? Will you give victory over them?" Yahweh said to him, "Attack, for I will certainly give them to you."[11]So they came up to Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He commented, "God has burst through my enemies by my hand like a bursting flood of water." So the name of that place became Baal Perazim.[12]The Philistines abandoned their gods there, and David gave an order that they should be burned.

[13]Then the Philistines raided the valley yet again.[14]So David asked for help from God again. God said to him, "You must not attack their front, but rather circle around behind them and come on them through the balsam woods.
[15]When you hear the sound of marching in the wind blowing through the balsam treetops, then attack with force. Do this because God will have gone out before you to attack the army of the Philistines."[16]So David did as God had commanded him. He defeated the army of the Philistines from Gibeon all the way to Gezer.[17]Then David's fame went out into all lands, and Yahweh caused all nations to fear him.

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1 Chronicles 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

David asked for help from God and because of this, God enabled him to defeat the Philistines when they tried to capture him.

Links:

1 Chronicles 14:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 14:1

Hiram

This is the name of a man.

carpenters

people who make things with wood

masons

people make things with stone or brick

They built a house for him

"The carpenters and masons built a house for David"

1 Chronicles 14:2

established him as

"made him"

his kingdom was exalted on high

The idiom "exalted on high" means that Yahweh had given

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great honor to David's kingdom. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had exalted David's kingdom on high" or "Yahweh had given great honor to David's kingdom"

for the sake of his people Israel

Here the word "his" refers to Yahweh.

1 Chronicles 14:4

the children who were born to him

"the children whom his wives bore for him"

Shammua, Shobab, Nathan

These are names of men. See how you translated these in [1 Chronicles 3:5]

1 Chronicles 14:5

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the children who were born to David in Jerusalem.

Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet

These are names of men. These names appear also in 1 Chronicles 3:6, although there "Elpelet" is spelled "Eliphelet."

1 Chronicles 14:6

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the children who were born to David in Jerusalem.

Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia

These are names of men. These names appear also in 1 Chronicles 3:7.

1 Chronicles 14:7

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of the children who were born to David in Jerusalem.

Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet

These are names of men. These names appear also in 1 Chronicles 3:8, although there "Beeliada" is spelled "Eliada."

1 Chronicles 14:8

Now

The writer uses this word to show that he has finished giving the background information that he started in 1 Chronicles 14:3 and is starting a new part of the story. Your language may have a different way of doing this.

David had been anointed as king

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the elders of Israel had anointed David as king"

went out against them

It is implied that David led his army out to fight against them. Alternate translation: "led his army out to fight against them"

1 Chronicles 14:9

Valley of Rephaim

This is the name of a place.

1 Chronicles 14:10

give them to you

This idiom means that Yahweh will enable David to have victory over them. Alternate translation: "give you victory over them"

1 Chronicles 14:11

Baal Perazim

This is the name of a place. You may add a footnote that says, "The name 'Baal Perazim' means 'Lord of breaking through.'"

God has burst through my enemies ... like a bursting flood of water

David speaks of God easily defeating David's enemies as if God had burst through them, like a flood bursts through anything in its path. Alternate translation: "God has easily defeated my enemies ... like a flood easily bursts through everything"

by my hand

This refers to David's resources. Alternate translation: "using my army"

1 Chronicles 14:12

that they should be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to burn their false gods"

1 Chronicles 14:13

the valley

"the Valley of Rephaim"

1 Chronicles 14:14

attack their front

"attack from the front"

circle around behind them and come on them through the balsam woods

"go through the forest of balsam trees and attack them from behind"

balsam woods

"Balsam" here is a type of tree, and the "woods" describe many balsam trees growing together.

1 Chronicles 14:15

Connecting Statement:

God continues his answer to David's question.

When you hear the sound of marching in the wind blowing through the balsam treetops

This speaks of the sound of the leaves rustling as wind blows through them as if it were the sound of marching. Alternate translation: "When the wind blowing through the tops of the balsam trees sounds like men marching"

1 Chronicles 14:16

Gezer

This is the name of a town.

1 Chronicles 14:17

David's fame went out into all lands

The word "fame" here is spoken of as if it were a person who could move. The word "lands" is a metonym for the people living in those lands. Alternate translation: "People in all the lands nearby knew who David was" or "People in all the lands nearby knew that David was a mighty warrior"

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15 [1]David built houses for himself in the city of David. He prepared a place for the ark of God and set up a tent for it.
[2]Then David said, "Only the Levites may carry the ark of God, for they had been chosen by Yahweh to carry the ark of Yahweh, and to serve him forever."[3]Then David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of Yahweh to the place he had prepared for it.

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[4]David gathered together Aaron's descendants and the Levites.
[5]From the descendants of Kohath, there was Uriel the leader and his relatives, 120 men.
[6]From the descendants of Merari, there was Asaiah the leader and his relatives, 220 men.

[7]From the descendants of Gershom, there was Joel the leader and his relatives, 130 men.
[8]From the descendants of Elizaphan, there was Shemaiah the leader and his relatives, 200 men.
[9]From the descendants of Hebron, there was Eliel the leader and his relatives, eighty men.
[10]From the descendants of Uzziel, there was Amminadab the leader and his relatives, 112 men.
[11]David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab.[12]He said to them, "You are the leaders of the Levite families. Consecrate yourselves, both you and your brothers, so that you may bring up the ark of Yahweh, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it.
[13]You did not carry it the first time. That is why Yahweh our God broke out against us, for we did not seek him or obey his decree."[14]So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves so they could bring up the ark of Yahweh, the God of Israel.[15]So the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded—following the rules given by the word of Yahweh.

[16]David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to assign their brothers as singers who would play loudly on musical instruments, lutes and lyres and loud cymbals, to lift up sounds of joy.[17]So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel and one of his brothers, Asaph son of Berekiah. They also appointed kinsmen from Merari's descendants and Ethan son of Kushaiah.[18]With them were their kinsmen of second rank: Zechariah,[1] Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers.
[19]The musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were appointed to play loud bronze cymbals.[20]Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah played the lutes, set to Alamoth.[21]Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah led the way with harps set to the Sheminith.
[22]Kenaniah, leader of the Levites, was the director of the singing because he was a teacher of music.[23]Berekiah and Elkanah were guards for the ark.[24]Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were guards for the ark.

[25]So David, the elders of Israel, and the commanders over thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh out of Obed-Edom's house with rejoicing.[26]While God helped the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.
[27]David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were the Levites who carried the ark, the singers, and Kenaniah, the leader of the song with the singers. David was wearing a linen ephod.[28]So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh with joyful shouting, and with the sound of horns and trumpets, with cymbals, and with lutes and harps.

[29]But as the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul, looked out the window. She saw King David dancing and celebrating. Then she despised him in her heart.

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[1]Some ancient copies add the name or prefix, "ben," assuming perhaps the name of Zechariah's father was left out.

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1 Chronicles 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 15 and 16 explain how David organized the priests and Levites. (See: priest)

Links:

1 Chronicles 15:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 15:1

David built houses for himself ... He prepared

It might be best to translate this so that the reader understands that David had other people do this for him. Alternate translation: "David had workers build houses for him ... He had them prepare"

1 Chronicles 15:2

they had been chosen by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had chosen them"

1 Chronicles 15:3

David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem

Here the word "all" is a generalization. The phrase "all Israel" means that David assembled people from all over Israel, not that he assembled every person in Israel. Alternate translation: "David assembled at Jerusalem people from all over Israel"

1 Chronicles 15:4

General Information:

This begins the list of the number of men whom David

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assembled from each of the Levite clans.
1 Chronicles 15:5
120 men
"one hundred twenty men"
1 Chronicles 15:6
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men whom David assembled from each of the Levite clans.
220 men
"two hundred twenty men"
1 Chronicles 15:7
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men whom David assembled from each of the Levite clans.
1 Chronicles 15:8
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men whom David assembled from each of the Levite clans.
1 Chronicles 15:9
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of the number of men whom David assembled from each of the Levite clans.
1 Chronicles 15:10
Connecting Statement:
This ends the list of the number of men whom David assembled from each of the Levite clans.
1 Chronicles 15:11
Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab
These are names of men. See how you translated them in [1 Chronicles 15:5-6]
1 Chronicles 15:13
You did not carry it
"You did not carry the ark"
broke out against us
The idiom to "break out against" means to act violently toward someone. Alternate translation: "acted violently toward us" or "attacked us"
we did not seek him
Here seeking Yahweh means to seek his counsel. Alternate translation: "we did not ask him for instructions"
1 Chronicles 15:15
the rules given by the word of Yahweh
The word "word" can be translated with a verb. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the rules that the word of Yahweh had given" or "the rules that Yahweh had spoken"
1 Chronicles 15:16
cymbals
two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]
lift up sounds of joy
This idiom means to sing and play the instruments loudly and joyfully. Alternate translation: "sing and play the instruments loudly and joyfully"
1 Chronicles 15:17
General Information:
This begins the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
1 Chronicles 15:18
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
With them were their kinsmen of second rank
This likely means that these men served in lower positions and were assistants to Heman, Asaph, and Ethan. Alternate translation: "With them were their kinsmen who were in a lower position of power" or "The following relatives would help them"
Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers
The word "gatekeepers" refers to people who guard gates or entryways. Here it refers to guarding access to the ark of the covenant and applies to Obed-Edom and Jeiel. Alternate translation: "Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers, Obed-Edom and Jeiel"
1 Chronicles 15:19
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
The musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were appointed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Levites appointed the musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan"
cymbals
two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]
1 Chronicles 15:20
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
Alamoth
The meaning of this word is not clear but may refer to a style of music.
1 Chronicles 15:21
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
Sheminith
The meaning of this word is not clear but may refer to a style of music.
led the way
"led the other musicians" or "led the processional"
1 Chronicles 15:22
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.
1 Chronicles 15:23
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.

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1 Chronicles 15:24

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of men whom the Levites appointed to sing and play music as the people brought the ark to Jerusalem.

1 Chronicles 15:25

the commanders over thousands

Possible meanings are 1) the word "thousands" represents the exact amount of soldiers that each of these commanders and led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "thousands" does not represent an exact numbers but is the name of a large military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions"

Obed-Edom

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 15:27

David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were the Levites who carried the ark, the singers, and Kenaniah, the leader of the song with the singers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David, the Levites who carried the ark, the singers, and Kenaniah, the leader of the song with the singers all wore fine linen robes"

linen

a cloth made from fibers of the flax plant

Kenaniah

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 15:28

So all Israel brought up the ark

Here the word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "So a great crowd of Israelites brought up the ark"

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]

1 Chronicles 15:29

as the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came to the city of David

"as the people brought the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to the city of David"

Michal

This is the name of David's wife.

she despised him in her heart

Here "heart" represents thoughts or emotions. Alternate translation: "she despised him" or "she hated him"

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16 [1]They brought in the ark of God and put it in the middle of the tent that David had set up for it. Then they offered
burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before God.[2]When David had finished offering up the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh.[3]He distributed to every man of Israel, to both men and women, a loaf of bread, and a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins.

[4]David appointed certain Levites to serve before the ark of Yahweh, and to celebrate, thank and praise Yahweh, the God of Israel.[5]These Levites were Asaph the leader, and second to him Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel. These were to play with lutes and harps. Asaph was to sound the cymbals, sounding loudly.[6]Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests were to blow the trumpets regularly, before the ark of the covenant of God.

[7]Then on that day David first appointed Asaph and his brothers to sing this song of thanksgiving to Yahweh.

[8] Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations.

[9] Sing to him, sing praises to him;
speak of all his marvelous deeds.

[10] Boast in his holy name;
let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice.

[11] Seek Yahweh and his strength;
seek his presence continually.

[12] Recall the marvelous things he has done,
his miracles and the decrees from his mouth,

[13] you descendants of Israel his servant,
you people of Jacob, his chosen ones.

[14] He is Yahweh, our God.
His decrees are on all the earth.

[15] Keep his covenant in mind forever,
the word that he commanded for a thousand generations.

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16 He calls to mind the covenant that he made with Abraham,
and his oath to Isaac.

17 This is what he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
and to Israel as an everlasting covenant.

18 He said, "I will give you the land of Canaan
as the assigned portion of your inheritance."

19 When they were only few in number,
so very few, and they were strangers in the land,

20 they wandered from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another.

21 He did not allow anyone to oppress them;
he punished kings for their sakes.

22 He said, "Do not touch my anointed ones,
and do not harm my prophets."

23 Sing to Yahweh, all the earth;
announce his salvation day after day.

24 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all the nations.

25 For Yahweh is great and is to be praised greatly,
and he is to be feared above all other gods.

26 For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but it is Yahweh who made the heavens.

27 Splendor and majesty are in his presence.
Strength and joy are in his place.

28 Ascribe to Yahweh, you clans of peoples,
ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength!

29 Ascribe to Yahweh the glory his name deserves.
Bring an offering and come before him.
Bow down to Yahweh in the splendor of holiness.

30 Tremble before him, all the earth.
The world also is established; it cannot be shaken.

31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let them say among the nations, "Yahweh reigns."

32 Let the sea roar, and that which fills it shout with joy.
Let the fields be joyful, and all that is in them.

33 Then let the trees in the forest shout for joy before Yahweh,
for he is coming to judge the earth.

34 Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

35 Then say, "Save us, God of our salvation.

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Gather us together and rescue us from the other nations,
so that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praises."

[36] May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised
from everlasting to everlasting.
All the people said, "Amen" and praised Yahweh.

[37]So David left Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, to serve continually before the ark, as every day's work required.[38]Obed-Edom with those sixty-eight relatives were included. Obed-Edom son of Jeduthun, along with Hosah, were to be gatekeepers.[39]Zadok the priest and his fellow workers were to serve before the tabernacle of Yahweh at the high place in Gibeon.
[40]They were to offer burnt offerings to Yahweh on the altar for burnt offerings continually morning and evening, according to all that is written in the law of Yahweh, which he gave as a command to Israel.[41]Heman and Jeduthun were with them, together with the rest who were chosen by name, to give thanks to Yahweh, because his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
[42]Heman and Jeduthun were in charge of those who played trumpets, cymbals, and the other instruments for the sacred music. The sons of Jeduthun guarded the gate.[43]Then all the people returned to their homes, and David returned to bless his own household.

1 Chronicles 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 15 and 16 tell how David organized the priests and Levites. (See: priest)
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 16:8-36.

Special concepts in this chapter

David's psalm
As David organized the priests in their work in the tent, he wrote a psalm of praise to Yahweh.

Links:

1 Chronicles 16:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 16:1
General Information:
The word "they" in these verses refers to the priests and Levites.
before God
"to God"
1 Chronicles 16:2
When David had finished offering up the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings
This is a metonym for David directing the priests, who performed the actual sacrifices.
he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh
To bless "in the name of Yahweh" means to bless with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative.
1 Chronicles 16:3
He distributed to every man of Israel
David probably had those under his authority distribute the items.
cake of raisins
a baked sweet bread made with dried grapes
1 Chronicles 16:5
Zechariah ... Jaaziel ... Shemiramoth ... Jehiel ... Mattithiah ... Eliab ... Benaiah ... Obed-Edom ... Jeiel
These are names of men.
second to him
This means next to him in authority and position.
cymbals
These are two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]
1 Chronicles 16:6
Benaiah
This is the name of a man.
1 Chronicles 16:7
on that day
Here "that day" refers to the day the ark of the covenant was moved from the house of Obed Edom to Jerusalem.
song of thanksgiving
"song of giving thanks"
1 Chronicles 16:8
call on his name
Here "his name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "call on Yahweh"
the nations
This refers to the people in the nations. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations"
1 Chronicles 16:10
Boast in his holy name

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Here "his holy name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Boast in who Yahweh is" or "Boast in Yahweh"

let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice

Here "the heart" represents the person who seeks Yahweh. Alternate translation: "let the people who seek Yahweh rejoice"

1 Chronicles 16:11

Seek Yahweh and his strength

To "seek Yahweh's strength" means to ask him to strengthen you. Alternate translation: "Seek Yahweh and ask him to give you his strength"

seek his presence continually

"seek to be near him always"

1 Chronicles 16:12

Recall the marvelous things

"Remember the marvelous things"

done, his miracles and

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "done; recall his miracles and"

decrees from his mouth

Here "mouth" refers to the things that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "decrees that he has spoken"

1 Chronicles 16:13

you descendants of Israel his servant, you people of Jacob, his chosen ones

These phrases share similar meanings and are used for emphasis.

1 Chronicles 16:14

His decrees are on all the earth

Here "all the earth" refers to all the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "His laws are for all the people of the earth"

1 Chronicles 16:15

Keep his covenant ... for a thousand generations

These two phrases share similar meanings and are used together for emphasis. Here "word" refers to the covenant. Alternate translation: "Keep his covenant in mind forever, the promise that he made for a thousand generations"

Keep his covenant in mind

This means to remember and think about his covenant. Alternate translation: "Remember his covenant"

a thousand generations

"1,000 generations"

1 Chronicles 16:16

He calls to mind

The phrase "calls to mind" means to remember something. Alternate translation: "He remembers"

the covenant that he made with Abraham, and his oath to Isaac

Both "the covenant" and "the oath" refer to the same promise that Yahweh made to his people.

his oath to Isaac

This refers to the oath that he had previously made to Issac. Alternate translation: "his oath that he made to Isaac"

1 Chronicles 16:18

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in this verse refers to Israel.

the assigned portion of your inheritance

"the part of your inheritance that God has assigned to you"

1 Chronicles 16:19

General Information:

The word "they" in this verse refers to Israel.

strangers in the land

It is implied that "the land" refers to Canaan. Alternate translation: "foreigners in the land of Canaan"

1 Chronicles 16:20

General Information:

The word "they" in this verse refers to Israel.

from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another

These two phrases have similar meanings and are used together for emphasis.

1 Chronicles 16:21

General Information:

The words "them" and "their" in this verse refers to Israel.

for their sakes

"for their own well-being"

1 Chronicles 16:22

Do not touch my anointed ones

Here "touch" means to harm. It is an exaggeration Yahweh used to strengthen his warning to not harm his people. Alternate translation: "Do not harm the people I have anointed"

1 Chronicles 16:23

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

all the earth

This refers to the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "all you people who live on the earth"

announce his salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated using the verb "save." Alternate translation: "announce that he has saved us" or "tell people that he is the one who saves"

day after day

"every day"

1 Chronicles 16:24

Declare his glory among the nations

"Tell all the people in every nation about his great glory"

1 Chronicles 16:25

Yahweh is great and is to be praised greatly

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is great. Praise him greatly" or "Yahweh is great, and people should praise him greatly"

he is to be feared above all other gods

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "fear him above all other gods"

1 Chronicles 16:27

Splendor and majesty are in his presence

The author speaks as if splendor and majesty are people who can stand before a king.

in his presence

"all around him" or "where he is"

Strength and joy are in his place

The author speaks as if strength and joy are people who can be in Yahweh's sanctuary.

in his place

"in his temple" or "in his sanctuary"

1 Chronicles 16:28

Ascribe to Yahweh

"Give praise to Yahweh" or "Praise Yahweh"

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ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength
The abstract nouns "glory" and "strength" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "praise Yahweh because he is glorious and strong"
1 Chronicles 16:29
Ascribe to Yahweh the glory his name deserves
The abstract noun "glory" can be stated as a verb or adjective. Alternate translation: "Glorify Yahweh just as his name deserves" or "Proclaim that Yahweh is glorious just as his name deserves"
his name deserves
Here "his name" refers to the person of God. Alternate translation: "due to him" or "he deserves" or "he is worthy to receive"
Bow down to Yahweh
The implied information is that the people were to bow down in worship. Alternate translation: "Bow down to worship Yahweh"
in the splendor of holiness
The abstract nouns "splendor" and "holiness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because he is gloriously beautiful and holy"
1 Chronicles 16:30
Tremble
shake because of fear
all the earth
This is a metonym for all the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "all the people of the earth"
1 Chronicles 16:31
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let them say
Possible meanings are 1) the heavens and the earth are spoken of as if they have emotions like people. Alternate translation: "Let it be as if the heavens are glad and the earth rejoices and they say" or 2) "the heavens" and "the earth" are metonyms for those who dwell in those places. Alternate translation: "Let those who live in the heavens be glad and let those who live on the earth rejoice, and let them say"
let them say among the nations
The people of the nations would observe what is said. Alternate translation: "let them say to the nations"
1 Chronicles 16:32
that which fills it shout with joy
The implied information is that this refers to all the creatures living in the sea. They are spoken of as if they should shout with joy like people might do. Alternate translation: "the sea creatures shout joyfully"
Let the fields be joyful, and all that is in them
"Let the fields and all that is in them be joyful." The author speaks as if the fields and the animals that live in them have emotions like people. Alternate translation: "Let it be as if the fields themselves and all the animals that live in them are rejoicing"
1 Chronicles 16:33
let the trees in the forest shout for joy
This speaks about the trees as if they were people who could shout for joy.
1 Chronicles 16:34
for his covenant faithfulness endures forever
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." Alternate translation: "for he faithfully loves us forever" or "for he is faithful to his covenant forever"
1 Chronicles 16:35
from the other nations
Here "the other nations" represents the people in those nations. Alternate translation: "from the people of other nations" or "from the armies of other nations"
give thanks to your holy name
Here Yahweh is referred to by his "holy name." Alternate translation: "give thanks to you" or "give thanks to Yahweh"
1 Chronicles 16:36
from everlasting to everlasting
This refers to two extremes and means for all time. Alternate translation: "for all eternity"
All the people
This is a generalization that refers to the group of people assembled to worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "The people" or "Everyone who was there"
1 Chronicles 16:37
his brothers
"his relatives"
as every day's work required
The implied information is that they were to perform the daily duties that were given in the law of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "as was required every day by the law"
1 Chronicles 16:38
Obed-Edom ... Jeduthun ... Hosah
These were names of men.
sixty-eight relatives
"68 relatives"
1 Chronicles 16:39
to serve before the tabernacle
"to serve at the tabernacle"
1 Chronicles 16:40
General Information:
The word "They" in this verse refers to the priests.
continually morning
"every day, morning"
1 Chronicles 16:41
General Information:
The word "them" in this verse refers to the priests.
Heman ... Jeduthun
These were names of men.
1 Chronicles 16:42
cymbals
These are two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]
guarded the gate
The implied information is that they were to guard the entrance to the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "guarded the tabernacle gate"

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17 [1]It happened that after David had settled in his house, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Look, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is staying under a tent."[2]Then Nathan said to David, "Go, do what is in your heart, for God is with you."
[3]But that same night the word of God came to Nathan, saying,[4]"Go and tell David my servant, 'This is what Yahweh says: You will not build me a house in which to live.[5]For I have not lived in a house from the day that I brought up Israel to this present day. Rather, I have been living in a tent, a tabernacle, in various places.[6]In all places I have moved among all Israel, did I ever say anything to any of Israel's judges, whom I appointed to shepherd my people, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"'"
[7]"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what Yahweh of hosts says: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, so that you would be ruler over my people Israel.[8]I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and I will make you a name, like the name of the great ones who are on the earth.
[9]I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them there, so that they may live in their own place and be troubled no more. No longer will wicked people oppress them, as they did before,[10]as they were doing from the days that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Then I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover I tell you that I, Yahweh, will build you a house.
[11]It will come about that when your days are fulfilled for you to go to your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, and for one of your own descendants, I will establish his kingdom.[12]He will build me a house, and I will establish his throne forever.
[13]I will be a Father to him, and he will be my son. I will not take my covenant faithfulness away from him, as I took it from Saul, who ruled before you.[14]I will set him over my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever.'"
[15]Nathan spoke to David and reported to him all these words, and he told him about the entire vision.

[16]Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh; he said, "Who am I, Yahweh God, and what is my family, that you have brought me to this point?[17]For this was a small thing in your sight, God. You have spoken of your servant's family for a great while to come, and have shown me future generations, Yahweh God.[18]What more can I, David, say to you? You have honored your servant. You have given your servant special recognition.
[19]Yahweh, for your servant's sake, and to fulfill your own purpose, you have done this great thing to reveal all your great deeds.[20]Yahweh, there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, just as we have always heard.[21]For what nation on earth is like your people Israel, whom you, God, rescued from Egypt as a people for yourself, to make a name for yourself by great and awesome deeds? You drove out nations from before your people, whom you rescued from Egypt.
[22]You made Israel your own people forever, and you, Yahweh, became their God.[23]So now, Yahweh, may the promise that you made concerning your servant and his family be established forever. Do as you have spoken.[24]May your name be established forever and be great, so the people will say, 'Yahweh of hosts is the God of Israel,' while the house of me, David, your servant is established before you.
[25]For you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build him a house. That is why I, your servant, have found courage to pray to you.[26]Now, Yahweh, you are God, and have made this good promise to your servant:[27]Now it has pleased you to bless your servant's house, that it may continue forever before you. You, Yahweh, have blessed it, and it will be blessed forever."

1 Chronicles 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Building the temple

David wanted to build a temple for God but God would not allow him to. Instead he promised that his son, Solomon, would build the temple and he promised David would have a descendant who would be king forever. (See: temple and promise and eternity)

Links:

1 Chronicles 17:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 17:1

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

settled

comfortable and happy, without the desire to move or change

I am living in a house of cedar

Cedar is a kind of tree that is known for its strength. If you have an equivalent type of tree in your culture, you can use that name, otherwise you can reword this. Alternate translation: "I am living in a strong, permanent house"

the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is staying under a tent

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Tents are temporary dwellings. If you do not have tents in your culture, you can word this differently. Alternate translation: "the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is staying in a temporary place"

1 Chronicles 17:2

do what is in your heart

Here "heart" represents the mind. Alternate translation: "do what you think you should"

God is with you

Here "with you" means God is helping and blessing David.

1 Chronicles 17:3

the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

The idiom "the word of God came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "God gave a message to Nathan. He said," or "God spoke this message to Nathan:"

1 Chronicles 17:4

Go and tell David my servant, 'This is what Yahweh says: You will not build me a house in which to live

This has quotations within quotations. It may be necessary to translate them as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "Go and tell David my servant that he will not be the one to build a house in which I will live"

build me a house

Here "house" means a temple. In 1 Chronicles 17:10 Yahweh will say that he will build a house for David. There "house" means a family. If your language has a word that can express both ideas, use it here and in 17:10.

1 Chronicles 17:5

that I brought up Israel

The implied information is that this refers to God bringing up Israel out of the land of Egypt. Alternate translation: "that I brought the Israelites to the promised land from the land of Egypt"

a tent, a tabernacle

Both the words "tent" and "tabernacle" describe the same thing and emphasize that he had lived in a place that was not a permanent building.

1 Chronicles 17:6

did I ever say anything to any of Israel's judges, whom I appointed to shepherd my people, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"

This has a quotation within a quotation. The direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "did I ever ask any of Israel's judges, whom I appointed to shepherd my people, why they had not built me a house of cedar?"

did I ever say anything to any of Israel's judges

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he never asked any of Israel's judges to build him a house. Alternate translation: "I never said anything to any of Israel's judges"

whom I appointed to shepherd my people

Those who are leaders of the people of Israel are spoken of as if they were shepherds and the people were sheep.

Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

If Yahweh had asked the leaders this question, he would have been using a question to scold them for not building him a house of cedar. But, Yahweh said previously that he did not ask them this question. Alternate translation: "You should have built me a house of cedar."

1 Chronicles 17:7

General Information:

Yahweh describes his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

tell my servant David

Yahweh is still telling the prophet Nathan what he should tell David.

I took you from the pasture

David's job as a shepherd is referred to by the place he watched his sheep. Alternate translation: "I took you from your job as a shepherd"

pasture

an area of land where animals feed on the grass. See how you translated this word in 1 Chronicles 4:39 and 4:40.

1 Chronicles 17:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I have been with you

Here "with you" means that Yahweh has helped and blessed David.

cut off all your enemies

Yahweh destroying David's enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh cut them off, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree.

I will make you a name

Here "name" represents a person's reputation. Alternate translation: "I will make your name to be great and well known"

the great ones

The phrase "great ones" means famous persons.

1 Chronicles 17:9

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I will appoint a place

"I will choose a place"

will plant them there

God causing the people to live in the land permanently and securely is spoken of as if he would plant them in the land. Alternate translation: "I will settle them there"

be troubled no more

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever trouble them"

1 Chronicles 17:10

General Information:

The words "your" and "you" in this verse refers to David.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

from the days

Here "days" represents a longer period of time. Alternate translation: "from the time"

I commanded judges

After the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan and

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before they had kings to rule them, God appointed leaders called "judges" to lead them in times of trouble.

to be over my people Israel

To be in authority is referred to as being over someone. Alternate translation: "to rule my people Israel"

subdue

make a person or animal unable to attack

build you a house

Here the metonym "house" refers to David's ancestors continuing on as the rulers of Israel. In 1 Chronicles 17:4 God told David he would not be the one to build a house for Yahweh. There "house" represented a temple. If your language has a word that can express both ideas, use it here and in 17:4.

1 Chronicles 17:11

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

It will come about

"It will happen"

when your days are fulfilled for you to go to your fathers

The two phrases "when your days are fulfilled" and "go to your fathers" have similar meanings and are combined for emphasis. They both are polite ways to refer to death and dying.

I will raise up your descendant after you

God appointing David's descendant is spoken of as if Yahweh would raise or lift him up.

1 Chronicles 17:12

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I will establish his throne forever

The right to rule as king is described by the place where a king sits. Alternate translation: "I will make his rule over Israel to last forever"

1 Chronicles 17:13

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I will not take my covenant faithfulness away from him, as I took it from Saul

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as "faithfully." Alternate translation: "I will never stop faithfully loving him, as I stopped loving Saul"

1 Chronicles 17:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh finishes describing his promises to King David through the prophet Nathan.

I will set him over my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever

These two phrases have similar meanings and emphasize that David's dynasty will last forever.

his throne will be established forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will establish his throne forever"

his throne

A king's right to rule is referred to by the place a king sits. Alternate translation: "his right to rule"

1 Chronicles 17:15

reported to him

"told him"

all these words

Here "words" represents what Yahweh said.

1 Chronicles 17:16

he said

"David said"

Who am I, Yahweh God, and what is my family, that you have brought me to this point?

David asks this question to express the deep emotion he felt from hearing Yahweh's proclamation. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My family and I are not worthy of this honor, Yahweh God."

1 Chronicles 17:17

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

this was a small thing

Something that is not important is described as being small.

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment"

your servant's family

Here David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "my family"

for a great while to come

This speaks about time as if it were something that travels and arrives somewhere. Alternate translation: "and what will happen to them in the future"

your servant

Here David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "me"

1 Chronicles 17:18

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

What more can I, David, say to you?

David uses this question to emphasize that he has nothing left to say to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "There is nothing more I can say to you."

You have honored your servant. You have given your servant special recognition

These two phrases have similar meanings and are repeated for emphasis.

You have given your servant special recognition

The abstract noun "recognition" can be translated using the verb "recognize." Alternate translation: "You have recognized your servant in a special way"

1 Chronicles 17:19

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

your servant's sake

Here David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "my sake" or "my benefit"

to fulfill your own purpose

"to accomplish what you planned to do"

1 Chronicles 17:20

Connecting Statement:

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David continues to speak to Yahweh.

there is none like you, and there is no God besides you

These phrases have similar meaning and are repeated for emphasis.

as we have always heard

Here "we" refers to David and the nation of Israel.

1 Chronicles 17:21

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

what nation on earth ... by great and awesome deeds?

This question expects a negative answer to make the point that there was no other nation like Israel. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is no nation on earth ... by great and awesome deeds."

you rescued from Egypt

The implied information is that they were rescued from slavery. Alternate translation: "you rescued from slavery in Egypt"

to make a name for yourself

Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "to make all people know who you are"

You drove out nations

Here "nations" represents the people groups that were living in Canaan.

1 Chronicles 17:22

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

1 Chronicles 17:23

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

So now

Here "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

may the promise that you made concerning your servant and his family be established forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may you do what you promised to me and my family, and may your promise never change"

your servant and his family

David is speaking about himself in the third person. This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "me and my family"

1 Chronicles 17:24

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

May your name

Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation.

the house of me, David, your servant

Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "my family"

is established before you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is secure because of you" or "continues because of you"

1 Chronicles 17:25

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

your servant

David refers to himself as "your servant." This can be expressed in the first person. Alternate translation: "me"

that you will build him a house

Here the metonym "house" refers to David's ancestors continuing on as the rulers of Israel. In [1 Chronicles 17:4]

I, your servant, have found courage

The abstract noun "courage" can be expressed here as the verb "encouraged." Alternate translation: "I, your servant, am encouraged"

1 Chronicles 17:26

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

1 Chronicles 17:27

Connecting Statement:

David continues to speak to Yahweh.

your servant's house

David speaks of himself in the third person. This can be expressed in the first person. Alternate translation: "my house" or "my family"

You, Yahweh, have blessed it, and it will be blessed forever

These two phrases have about the same meaning and are repeated here for emphasis.

it will be blessed forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will continue to bless it forever"

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18 [1]After this it came about that David attacked the Philistines and subdued them. He took Gath and its villages out of the Philistines' control.[2]Then he defeated Moab, and the Moabites became servants to David and paid him tribute.

[3]David then defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah at Hamath, as Hadadezer was traveling to establish his rule by the Euphrates River.[4]David captured from him a thousand chariots, seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen. David hamstrung all the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for a hundred chariots.

[5]When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand Aramean men.[6]Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to him and brought him tribute. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went.
[7]David took the golden shields that were on Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem.[8]From Tebah and Kun, cities of Hadadezer, David took very much bronze. It was with this bronze that Solomon later made the bronze basin called "The Sea," the pillars, and the bronze equipment.

[9]When Tou, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer king of Zobah,[10]Tou sent Hadoram

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his son to King David to greet him and to bless him. He did this because David had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, and because Tou had often been at war with Hadadezer. Tou also sent David many different sorts of articles made of gold and silver and bronze.[11]King David set these objects apart to Yahweh, together with the silver and the gold that he carried away from all the nations: Edom, Moab, the people of Ammon, the Philistines, and Amalek.

[12]Abishai son of Zeruiah killed eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.[13]He placed garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became David's servants. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went.

[14]David reigned over all Israel, and he administered justice and righteousness to all his people.[15]Joab son of Zeruiah was the commander of the army, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder.[16]Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelek son of Abiathar were priests, and Shavsha was scribe.[17]Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and Pelethites, and David's sons were the chief officials at the hand of the king.

1 Chronicles 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

David's victories

David conquered all kingdoms neighboring Israel. The gold, silver and bronze he received from these victories, he saved for building the temple. This may indicate that he believed that the victories were because of Yahweh and therefore the goods received in victory belonged to him. (See: temple)

Links:

1 Chronicles 18:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 18:1

After this

"After God's promise to bless David"

it came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

1 Chronicles 18:3

David then defeated Hadadezer

Here David and Hadadezer are spoken of as if they were alone, but the reader should understand that these kings represent their armies that were with them. Alternate translation: "David and his army then defeated the army of Hadadezer"

Hadadezer

This is the name of a man.

Zobah

This is the name of a country.

was traveling to establish his rule by the Euphrates River

"was going to the Euphrates river to conquer people in that area"

1 Chronicles 18:4

a thousand chariots

"1,000 chariots"

seven thousand horsemen

These are soldiers who rode on horses. "7,000 horsemen"

twenty thousand footmen

These are soldiers who walked. "20,000 footmen"

hamstrung all the chariot horses

David had his soldiers cut the hamstring muscles on the backs of the horses' thighs so they would no longer be able to run.

reserved

to keep for a special use

a hundred chariots

"100 chariots"

1 Chronicles 18:5

killed twenty-two thousand

"killed 22,000"

1 Chronicles 18:6

garrisons

groups of soldiers assigned to particular areas

Yahweh gave victory to David

"Yahweh caused David to be victorious"

1 Chronicles 18:7

Hadadezer

This was the king of Zobah. See how you translated his name in 1 Chronicles 18:3.

that were on Hadadezer's servants

"that Hadadezar's servants carried"

1 Chronicles 18:8

Tebah ... Kun

These are the names of cities.

very much bronze

"a large quantity of bronze"

It was with this bronze that Solomon later made the bronze basin called "The Sea," the pillars, and the bronze equipment

The writer adds this background information to explain what would happen to this bronze at a later time.

the bronze basin called "The Sea,"

This a large bronze bowl, about 5 meters across, that was kept in the temple for ceremonial washing.

1 Chronicles 18:9

Tou

This is the name of a man.

Hamath ... Zobah

These are the names of places.

1 Chronicles 18:10

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Tou ... Hadoram
These are the names of men.
fought against
"been at war with"
1 Chronicles 18:11
set these objects apart to Yahweh
"decided that these objects would only be used to worship Yahweh"
he carried away from all the nations
"David took from all the nations that he defeated"
1 Chronicles 18:12
Abishai ... Zeruiah
These are names of men.
eighteen thousand Edomites
"18,000 Edomites"
Valley of Salt
This is the name of a valley between Edom and Judah that was used as a battlefield.
1 Chronicles 18:14
over all Israel
"over all the Israelites"
he administered justice and righteousness to all his people
The abstract nouns "justice" and "righteousness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "he did what was just and right for all his people"
1 Chronicles 18:15
Zeruiah ... Ahilud
These are names of men.
recorder
the person who writes down details of special events
1 Chronicles 18:16
Ahitub ... Abiathar ... Shavsha
These are the names of men.
Ahimelek
This spelling represents a correction of the spelling "Abimelek," which some versions follow. The corrected spelling makes this verse agree with 2 Samuel 8:17.
1 Chronicles 18:17
Benaiah ... Jehoiada
These are the names of men.
Kerethites ... Pelethites
These are the names of foreign people groups who became David's bodyguards.

19 [1]It came about later that Nahash, king of the people of Ammon, died, and that his son became king in his place.[2]David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, because his father showed kindness to me." So David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. David's servants entered the land of the Ammonites and went to Hanun, in order to comfort him.[3]But the Ammonite princes said to Hanun, "Do you think that David is honoring your father because he has sent men to comfort you? Do not his servants come to you to explore and examine the land in order to overthrow it?"
[4]So Hanun seized David's servants, shaved them, cut off their robes in the middle at their buttocks, and sent them away.
[5]When they explained this to David, he sent to meet with them, for the men were deeply ashamed. The king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown back, and then return."

[6]When the Ammonites saw that they had become a stench to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent a thousand talents of silver to hire Aramean chariots and horsemen from Naharaim, Maakah, and Zobah.[7]They hired thirty-two thousand chariots and the king of Maakah and his army, who came and encamped before Medeba. Then the Ammonites gathered themselves together from their cities and came out to battle.
[8]When David heard of it, he sent Joab and his entire host of mighty men.[9]The people of Ammon came out and lined up for battle at the city gate, while the kings who had come were by themselves in the field.

[10]When Joab saw the battle lines facing him both in front and behind, he chose some of Israel's best fighters and arranged them against the Arameans.[11]As for the rest of the army, he gave it into the command of Abishai his brother, and he put them into battle lines against the army of Ammon.
[12]Joab said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you, Abishai, must rescue me. But if the army of Ammon is too strong for you, then I will come and rescue you.[13]Be strong, and let us show ourselves to be strong for our people and for the cities of our God, for Yahweh will do what is good in his eyes."
[14]So Joab and the soldiers of his army advanced to the battle against the Arameans, who were forced to flee before the army of Israel.[15]When the army of Ammon saw that the Arameans had fled, they also fled from Joab's brother Abishai and went back into the city. Then Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went back to Jerusalem.

[16]When the Arameans saw that they were being defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought back Arameans from beyond the Euphrates River, with Shophak the commander of Hadadezer's army.[17]When David was told this, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, and came upon them. He arranged the army for battle against the Arameans, and they fought him.
[18]The Arameans fled from Israel, and David killed seven thousand Aramean charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers. He also killed Shophak, the commander of the army.[19]When all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with David and served him. So the people of Aram were no longer willing to rescue the Ammonites.

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1 Chronicles 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of the story about the war against the Ammonites. This story continues in the first part of the next chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Insults

The young king of Ammon insulted David when he had David's servants shaved and cut off their garments. Knowing David was going to attack him for this, he hired mercenaries from Aram to help him. Israel was able to defeat the Aramean mercenaries.

Links:

1 Chronicles 19:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 19:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Nahash

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 19:2

Nahash ... Hanun

These are names of men.

I will show kindness ... showed kindness

The abstract noun "kindness" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "I will be kind ... was kind"

console

comfort

1 Chronicles 19:3

Do you think that David is honoring your father because he has sent men to comfort you?

The princes asked this question to turn the king against David. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not think that David is honoring your father because he has sent men to comfort you."

Do not his servants come to you to explore and examine the land in order to overthrow it?

The princes asked this question to turn the king against David. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely his servants come to you to explore the land in order to overthrow it."

1 Chronicles 19:4

So Hanun seized

Hanun did not do this personally, but ordered his men to do it. Alternate translation: "So Hanun's men seized"

1 Chronicles 19:5

he sent to meet with them

"David sent some messengers to encourage them"

deeply ashamed

In this idiom, shame is described as deep to show that it has greatly affected them. Alternate translation: "very ashamed"

The king

This refers to David.

then return

"then return to Jerusalem"

1 Chronicles 19:6

saw that they had become a stench to David

The word "stench" refers to a bad smell. This describes the Ammonites as something unpleasant and unwanted. Alternate translation: "realized that they had become repulsive to David" or "realized that they had angered David"

a thousand talents

"1,000 talents"

talents

approximately 33 kilograms

Naharaim ... Maakah ... Zobah

These are names of cities.

1 Chronicles 19:7

thirty-two thousand chariots

"32,000 talents"

Maakah ... Medeba

These are names of cities.

thirty-two thousand chariots

It is not clear if the Ammonites paid the entire thousand talents to the king of Maakah, or if they paid him only a portion of that amount and gave the rest to the other cities that sent additional chariots and horsemen.

1 Chronicles 19:8

heard of it

"heard that the Ammonites were coming out for war"

he sent ... mighty men

You may need to make explicit the purpose of sending them "he sent ... mighty men to fight against them"

1 Chronicles 19:9

at the city gate

this refers to the gate of the Ammonite capital city

the kings who had come

this refers to the Aramean kings that the Ammonites hired to help them fight Israel

by themselves in the field

in the field outside the city, separate from the Ammonites

1 Chronicles 19:10

the battle lines

"the enemy soldiers lined up for battle"

1 Chronicles 19:11

put them into battle lines

"arranged his soldiers in lines for battle"

Abishai

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This is the name of Joab's brother.

1 Chronicles 19:13

Be strong ... show ourselves to be strong

"Be brave ... behave bravely"

for our people and for the cities of our God

"for the sake of our people and for the cities of our God" or "to protect our people and the cities of our God"

what is good in his eyes

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what he considers to be good"

1 Chronicles 19:14

advanced to the battle

"moved forward to the battle" or "approached the enemy soldiers in the battle"

1 Chronicles 19:15

Then Joab returned ... and went back to Jerusalem

It does not appear that Joab and his soldiers continued to attack the Ammonites in their city. When the Ammonites went into their city, the battle ended and the Israelites returned home.

1 Chronicles 19:16

General Information:

Verses 16-19 describes a second battle when the Arameans who fled from Joab in 1 Chronicles 19:15 were reinforced by other Arameans and attacked Israel again.

the Arameans saw

What the Arameans understood is spoken of as what they saw. Alternate translation: "the Arameans understood"

sent messengers

"sent messengers to request more soldiers"

Shophak ... Hadadezer

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 19:17

Connecting Statement:

This verse continues to describe a second battle when the Arameans who fled from Joab in 1 Chronicles 19:15 were reinforced by other Arameans and attacked Israel again.

When David was told this

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: When David's messengers told him that a larger Aramean army was coming"

he gathered ... He arranged

David did not do these things alone. His official and officers helped him. Alternate translation: "David and his officials gathered ... David and his officers arranged"

all Israel

This is a generalization. Not every person in Israel came to fight. Alternate translation: "a very large number of Israelites"

He arranged

"He organized"

they fought him

Here "him" refers to David's soldiers, in addition to David. Alternate translation: "the Arameans fought David and his soldiers"

1 Chronicles 19:18

Connecting Statement:

This verse continues to describe a second battle when the Arameans who fled from Joab in 1 Chronicles 19:15 were reinforced by other Arameans and attacked Israel again.

killed seven thousand ... forty thousand

" killed 7,000 ... 40,000"

1 Chronicles 19:19

Connecting Statement:

This verse finishes describing a second battle when the Arameans who fled from Joab in 1 Chronicles 19:15 were reinforced by other Arameans and attacked Israel again.

they were defeated by Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Israel had defeated them"

they made peace with David and served him

They made the peace agreement with David as the king, and served the Israelites.

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20 [1]It came about in the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally go to war, that Joab led the army into battle and devastated the land of the Ammonites. He went and besieged Rabbah. David remained in Jerusalem. Joab attacked Rabbah and completely destroyed it.
[2]David took the crown of their king from off his head, and he found that it weighed a talent of gold, and in it were precious stones. The crown was set on David's head, and he brought out the plunder of the city in large quantities.[3]He brought out the people who were in the city and forced them to work with saws and iron picks and axes. David required all the cities of the descendants of Ammon to do this labor. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

[4]It came about after this that there was a battle at Gezer with the Philistines. Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Sippai, one of the descendants of the Rephaim, and the Philistines were subdued.[5]It came about again in a battle with the Philistines at Gob, that Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed Lahmi brother of Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.
[6]It came about in another battle at Gath that there was a man of great height who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He also was descended from the Rapha.[7]When he mocked the army of Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him.[8]These were descendants of the Rapha of Gath, and they were killed by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

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1 Chronicles 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This chapter ends the story of the war with Ammon and tells of giants being killed by David's soldiers.

Special concepts in this chapter

"When kings normally go to war"

It was advantageous for kings to go to war in the springtime. This was possibly due to the weather being neither too hot nor too cold.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"It came about"

This is a phrase used to indicate the next event in a series. It can often be translated as "after," "then" or "next."

Links:

1 Chronicles 20:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 20:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

at the time when kings normally go to war

This is background information from the author. It was harder to fight wars in the cold winter, so kings normally waited for spring to attack their enemies.

kings normally go to war ... Joab led the army into battle

Here "kings" is a metonym that means the kings sent their armies into battle. Joab was the commander of David's army. Alternate translation: "kings normally send their armies to war ... Joab led David's army into battle"

devastated the land

"destroyed the land." This refers to when an army will ruin the land where their enemies grow food.

He went and besieged Rabbah

"He" refers to the soldiers as well as Joab. Alternate translation: "Joab and his soldiers surrounded Rabbah"

1 Chronicles 20:2

talent

about 33 kilograms

The crown was set on David's head

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) David put the crown on his own head or 2) David's men placed the crown on his head.

he brought out

The word "he" refers to David, but also refers to David's soldiers who helped David do this.

plunder

valuable items taken in war

1 Chronicles 20:3

He brought out

The word "He" refers to David, but also refers to David's soldiers who helped David do this.

forced them to work with saws and iron picks and axes

These terms describe difficult manual labor that the defeated people were forced to do.

David required all the cities of the descendants of Ammon

The people are referred to by their city. Alternate translation: "David required the people of all the Ammonite cities"

David and all the people returned to Jerusalem

The phhrase "all the people" refers to David's army. Alternate translation: "David and his army returned to Jerusalem"

1 Chronicles 20:4

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

there was a battle at Gezer with the Philistines

"the Israelites battled the Philistines at Gezer"

Gezer

This is the name of a city.

Sibbekai ... Sippai

These are names of men.

Hushathite ... Rephaim

These are names of people groups.

the Philistines were subdued

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they subdued the Philistines" or "they defeated the Philistines"

1 Chronicles 20:5

Gob

This is the name of a city.

Elhanan ... Jair ... Lahmi

These are names of men.

Bethlehemite ... Gittite

These are names of people groups.

staff

a long and thin pole.

the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam

A weaver's beam was a very large piece of wood used to stretch strings as the threads of a rug are weaved together around them. This means the handle of Lahmi's spear was very large.

1 Chronicles 20:6

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Rapha

This is the name given to a race of people who were very tall and strong.

1 Chronicles 20:7

Jonathan ... Shimea

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 20:8

These were descendants of the Rapha of Gath

Here "these" refer to Sippai in 1 Chronicles 20:4, Lahmi in 1

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Chronicles 20:5, and the giant in verse 6.

they were killed by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants

David and his servants are referred to by the part of their bodies used to hold a sword. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David and his servants killed the descendants of the Rephaim"

servants

You may need to make explicit that these men served David as soldiers. Alternate translation: "soldiers"

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21 [1]An adversary arose against Israel and incited David to count Israel.[2]David said to Joab and to the commanders of the army, "Go, count the people of Israel from Beersheba to Dan and report back to me, that I may know their number."[3]Joab said, "May Yahweh make his army a hundred times greater than it is. But my master the king, do they not all serve my master? Why does my master want this? Why bring guilt on Israel?"
[4]But the king's word was enforced against Joab. So Joab left and went throughout all Israel. Then he came back to Jerusalem.[5]Then Joab reported the total of the census of the fighting men to David. There were in Israel 1,100,000 men who drew the sword. Judah alone had 470,000 soldiers.
[6]But Levi and Benjamin were not counted among them, for the king's command had disgusted Joab.[7]God was offended by this action, so he attacked Israel.[8]David said to God, "I have greatly sinned by doing this. Now take away your servant's guilt, for I have acted very foolishly."

[9]Yahweh told Gad, David's prophet,[10]"Go say to David, 'This is what Yahweh says: I am giving you three choices. Choose one of them.'"
[11]So Gad went to David and said to him, "Yahweh says this, 'Choose one of these:[12]either three years of famine, three months being pursued by your enemies and being caught by their swords, or else three days of Yahweh's sword, that is, a plague in the land, with the angel of Yahweh destroying throughout all the land of Israel.' Now then, decide what answer I should take to the one who sent me."
[13]Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress! Let me fall into the hand of Yahweh rather than into the hand of man, for his merciful actions are very great."[14]So Yahweh sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand people died.[15]God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he was about to destroy it, Yahweh watched and changed his mind about the harm. He said to the destroying angel, "Enough! Now draw back your hand." At that time the angel of Yahweh was standing at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
[16]David looked up and saw the angel of Yahweh standing between earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand raised over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, lay facedown on the ground.[17]David said to God, "Is it not I that commanded that the army be numbered? I did this wicked thing. But these sheep, what have they done? Yahweh my God! Let your hand strike me and my clan, but do not let the plague remain on your people."

[18]So the angel of Yahweh commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up and build an altar for Yahweh at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.[19]So David went up as Gad instructed him to do in the name of Yahweh.[20]While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the angel. He and his four sons with him hid themselves.
[21]When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David. He left the threshing floor and bowed to David with his face to the ground.[22]Then David said to Ornan, "Sell me this threshing floor, so I can build an altar for Yahweh. I will pay the full price, so that the plague may be removed from the people."
[23]Ornan said to David, "Take it as your own, my master the king. Do with it what is good in your sight. Look, I will give you oxen for burnt offerings, threshing sledges for wood, and wheat for the grain offering; I will give it all to you."[24]King David said to Ornan, "No, I insist on buying it for the full price. I will not take what is yours and offer it as a burnt offering to Yahweh if it costs me nothing."
[25]So David paid six hundred shekels of gold for the place.[26]David built an altar for Yahweh there and offered on it burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on Yahweh, who answered him with fire from heaven on the altar for burnt offerings.[27]Then Yahweh gave an order to the angel, and the angel put his sword back into its sheath.

[28]When David saw that Yahweh had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he performed the sacrifice there at that same time.[29]Now at that time, Yahweh's tabernacle, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar for burnt offerings, were at the high place at Gibeon.[30]However, David could not go there to ask for God's direction, because he was afraid of the sword of the angel of Yahweh.

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1 Chronicles 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

To trust in one's own power instead of God's protection is a sin. David had been trusting God to protect him, but now he counted the men of military age so he could know the strength of his army. (See: trust and sin)

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Links:

[1 Chronicles 21:1 Notes]

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1 Chronicles 21:1

An adversary arose against Israel

Possible meanings of "adversary" are 1) this refers to Satan who decided to cause trouble for Israel or 2) this refers to an enemy army that began to threaten Israel.

incited David to count Israel

"caused David to do wrong, to count Israel." If your language has a word for getting someone to become angry and do something he knows is wrong, you should use it here.

1 Chronicles 21:2

count the people of Israel ... that I may know their number

It is apparent from 1 Chronicles 21:5 that David wanted to count only the men who were able to fight.

from Beersheba to Dan

The Israelites considered these two cities their most southern and most northern cities. David uses these cities to refer to all of Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:3

a hundred times greater than it is

Joab expresses the desire for an army the size of 100 armies to say he would like the army to have more soldiers and be more powerful.

But my master the king, do they not all serve my master? Why does my master want this? Why bring guilt on Israel?

Joab uses these three rhetorical questions to tell David that the census was a bad idea. It appears that David was trusting the size of his army instead of trusting Yahweh, and thus making Israel guilty of sin. These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: But my master the king, they all serve you already. My master should not request this. You will only bring guilt on the people of Israel by trusting your military power."

Why does my master want this?

The word "this" refers to David's plan to count all the men of Israel.

1 Chronicles 21:4

the king's word was enforced against Joab

"the command of the king prevailed despite Joab's objections"

So Joab left and went throughout all Israel

It is understood from David's command in [1 Chronicles 21:2]

1 Chronicles 21:5

1,100,000 men

"one million, one hundred thousand men"

men who drew the sword

The soldiers in Israel are described by the action of pulling out a sword to fight with it. Alternate translation: "men who were prepared to serve as soldiers"

470,000 soldiers

"four hundred seventy thousand soldiers"

1 Chronicles 21:6

But Levi and Benjamin were not counted among them

The Levites were supposed to lead worship and not to fight. It is unclear why Joab did not count Benjamin. This can be stated in active voice. Alternate translation: "But Joab did not count the men from the tribes of Levi and Benjamin"

the king's command had disgusted Joab

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joab was offended by what David had commanded"

1 Chronicles 21:7

by this action

Here "this action" refers to David's plan to count all the men of Israel who are able to fight.

so he attacked Israel

The nature of this attack is not clear. It was apparently enough to cause David to realize that Yahweh was angry with him for counting the people.

1 Chronicles 21:8

take away your servant's guilt

This is an idiom. Forgiveness is here spoken of as having guilt taken away. Alternate translation: "forgive me"

your servant's guilt

David refers to himself as God's servant. Alternate translation: "my guilt"

1 Chronicles 21:12

being caught by their swords

Here "their swords" represents death in battle. Alternate translation: "being killed by them in battle"

Yahweh's sword, that is, a plague in the land

Here the plague is spoken of as Yahweh's sword because the "sword" is a metonym for death.

destroying throughout all the land

"killing people who live in every part of the land"

I should take to the one who sent me

The one who sent him was Yahweh. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "I should take to Yahweh who sent me"

1 Chronicles 21:13

Let me fall into the hand of Yahweh rather than into the hand of man

Here "hand" represents power to harm or punish Israel. Alternate translation: "Let me be punished by Yahweh, rather than be punished by people"

Let me fall

The people of Israel are the ones who would die from the plague, but David is personalizing this judgment as if he himself was being killed.

hand of man

Here "man" is used in the generic sense of "people."

his merciful actions are very great

"Yahweh is very merciful"

1 Chronicles 21:14

on Israel

Here Israel is a metonym that represents the people of Israel.

seventy thousand people died

"70,000 people died"

1 Chronicles 21:15

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changed his mind about the harm
Here "mind" represents his decision. Alternate translation: "decided not to destroy Jerusalem"
Enough!
This exclamation means "You have killed enough people!"
draw back your hand
This is an idiom that means to stop doing something. Alternate translation: "do not kill attack the people of Jerusalem"
Ornan
This is the name of a man.
1 Chronicles 21:16
standing between earth and heaven
This is symbolic language to indicate that the angel was sent from Yahweh in heaven to judge the people on the earth.
having a drawn sword in his hand raised over Jerusalem
The angel holding a sword in his hand is a symbolic action that shows he is ready to attack Jerusalem. This is symbolic, because the judgment was sickness. Alternate translation: "holding a sword in his hand as if ready to attack Jerusalem"
clothed in sackcloth, lay facedown on the ground
These were symbols of repentance.
1 Chronicles 21:17
Is it not I that commanded that the army be numbered?
David uses this question to emphasize that his is the one who sinned by counting the people. Alternate translation: "I am the one who commanded that the army be numbered."
But these sheep
David speaks of the people of Israel as if they were sheep, who are known for trusting and following their leader.
what have they done?
David uses this question to asks God not to punish the people. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "they certainly have done nothing that deserves punishment."
Let your hand strike me and my clan
Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power to punish. Alternate translation: "Punish me and my clan"
1 Chronicles 21:18
David should go up
This is a reference to elevation. This threshing floor which became the future site of the temple was the highest point in Jerusalem.
Ornan
See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 21:15.
1 Chronicles 21:19
David went up
This is a reference to elevation. This threshing floor which became the future site of the temple was the highest point in Jerusalem.
as Gad instructed him to do in the name of Yahweh
Speaking "in the name of Yahweh" means speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative. Alternate translation: "as Gad, speaking for Yahweh, instructed David to do"
1 Chronicles 21:20
hid themselves
They were afraid of the angel. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "hid themselves because they were afraid of the angel"
1 Chronicles 21:21
with his face to the ground
This phrase describes that Ornan bowed far forward. To bow before someone is a way to show humility and respect. A deeper bow shows greater humility and respect. Alternate translation: "bowed very low to the ground"
1 Chronicles 21:22
full price
"I will pay the full price for what this threshing floor is worth"
1 Chronicles 21:23
Take it as your own
This implies that David should take the land without paying for it. Alternate translation: "Take it as a gift"
what is good in your sight
David's understanding is described as his sight. Alternate translation: "whatever you decide to do with it"
threshing sledges
These are wooden sleds with rocks or metal fitted underneath, dragged by oxen over the grain on the threshing floor to separate the grain from its stalks.
1 Chronicles 21:24
full price
See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 21:22.
1 Chronicles 21:25
six hundred shekels of gold
"600 shekels of gold"
shekels
a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams
for the place
"to buy the threshing floor"
1 Chronicles 21:26
He called on Yahweh
"He prayed for help to Yahweh"
who answered him with fire from heaven on the altar for burnt offerings
"who answered him by sending fire from heaven to the alter where David would offer the burnt offerings"
1 Chronicles 21:27
the angel put his sword back into its sheath
The angel putting his sword back in the sheath is a symbolic action to show that he would not continue to kill the people. Alternate translation: the angel put his sword in its sheath to show that he would stop killing the people"
sheath
cover for a sword or knife
1 Chronicles 21:28
Ornan
Translate his name as in 1 Chronicles 21:15.
1 Chronicles 21:29
Now at that time
Verses 29-30 are background information to explain why David offered this sacrifice at the threshing floor instead of on the altar at the tabernacle.
1 Chronicles 21:30

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Connecting Statement:
Verses 29-30 are background information to explain why David offered this sacrifice at the threshing floor instead of on the altar at the tabernacle.
to ask for God's direction
"to ask God to tell him what he should do"
afraid of the sword of the angel of Yahweh
Here "sword" represents being killed by the angel of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "afraid he would be killed by the angel of Yahweh"

22 [1]Then David said, "This is where the house of Yahweh God will be, with the altar for the burnt offerings of Israel."

[2]So David ordered his servants to gather together the foreigners living in the land of Israel. He assigned them to be stonecutters, to cut stone blocks, in order to build the house of God.
[3]David supplied a large amount of iron for the nails for the doors to go in the gateways, and for braces. He also supplied more bronze than could be weighed,[4]and more cedar trees than could be counted. (The Sidonians and the Tyrians brought too many cedar logs to David to count.)[5]David said, "My son Solomon is a young and inexperienced man, and the house that is to be built for Yahweh must be especially magnificent, so that it will be famous and glorious in all other lands. So I will prepare for its building." So David made extensive preparations before his death.

[6]Then he called for Solomon his son and commanded him to build a house for Yahweh, the God of Israel.[7]David said to Solomon, "My son, it was my intention to build a house myself, for the name of Yahweh my God.[8]But Yahweh came to me and said, 'You have shed much blood and have fought many battles. You will not build a house for my name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight.
[9]However, you will have a son who will be a peaceful man. I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. For his name will be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days.[10]He will build a house for my name. He will be my son, and I will be his Father. I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.'
[11]Now, my son, may Yahweh be with you and enable you to succeed. May you build the house of Yahweh your God, as he said you would.[12]Only may Yahweh give you insight and understanding, so that you may obey the law of Yahweh your God, when he places you in charge over Israel.[13]Then you will succeed, if you carefully obey the statutes and the decrees that Yahweh gave to Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be discouraged.
[14]Now, see, with great pains I have prepared for the house of Yahweh 100,000 talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. I have also provided timber and stone. You must add more to all this.
[15]You have many workmen with you: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and skillful craftsmen without number of every kind,[16]who can work with gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Arise and begin the work, and may Yahweh be with you."

[17]David also ordered all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying,[18]"Yahweh your God is with you and has given you peace on every side. He has given the region's inhabitants into my hand. The region is subdued before Yahweh and his people.[19]Now seek Yahweh your God with all your heart and your soul. Get up and build the holy place of Yahweh God. Then you can bring the ark of the covenant of Yahweh and the holy things that belong to God into the house built for Yahweh's name."

1 Chronicles 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a new section lasting for the remainder of the book. David begins preparing the things needed for building the temple. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Solomon

In addition to preparing for the construction of the temple by gathering supplies, David also prepares his son, Solomon, to build the temple. David instructs Solomon to obey God. This is what is most necessary.

Links:

1 Chronicles 22:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 22:1
This is where
"This threshing floor is where"
1 Chronicles 22:2
stonecutters
persons who gathered large stones and cut them to the correct size so builders could use the rocks in walls and buildings
1 Chronicles 22:3
braces
items that connect two things together. "clamps" or "hinges"
more bronze than could be weighed

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This is an exaggeration to show that there was a very large quantity of bronze. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so much bronze that no one could weigh it"

1 Chronicles 22:4

more cedar trees than could be counted

This is an exaggeration to show that there was a very large number of cedar trees. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so many cedar trees that no one could count them"

The Sidonians and the Tyrians brought too many cedar logs to David to count

This is background information to explain who provided so many logs.

1 Chronicles 22:5

the house that is to be built for Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the house that he will build for Yahweh"

so that it will be famous and glorious in all other lands

Here the word "lands" refers to the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "so that people in every other land will know about it and think that it is glorious"

prepare for its building

"prepare to build it"

1 Chronicles 22:6

he called

"David called"

commanded him to build

The readers should understand that David intended for laborers to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "commanded him to oversee the building of"

1 Chronicles 22:7

it was my intention to build a house myself

The readers should understand that David intended for laborers to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "it was my intention to oversee the building of the house myself"

it was my intention

"I intended"

to build a house myself

The reflexive "myself" means that David originally planned to build the temple. Alternate translation: "that I would be the one to build the temple"

for the name of Yahweh my God

Here "name" represents God's honor. Alternate translation: "in order to honor Yahweh my God"

1 Chronicles 22:8

shed much blood

Here the killing of people is spoken of as shedding their blood, where "blood" represents their lives. Alternate translation: "killed many people"

for my name

Here "name" represents God's honor. Alternate translation: "to honor me"

you have shed ... in my sight

Here "sight" refers to what God has seen. Alternate translation: "I have seen that you have shed much blood on the earth"

1 Chronicles 22:9

Connecting Statement:

David continues telling Solomon what Yahweh said to him.

be a peaceful man

"live at peace with everyone"

give him rest from all his enemies

"cause there to be peace between him and all his enemies"

on every side

This means in every place surrounding Israel.

For his name will be Solomon

The name "Solomon" sounds like the Hebrew word for "peace." This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "His name will be Solomon, which sounds like the word for peace"

in his days

"while he rules"

1 Chronicles 22:10

Connecting Statement:

David finishes telling Solomon what Yahweh said to him.

a house for my name

Here "name" refers to honor. Alternate translation: "a temple to honor me"

He will be my son, and I will be his Father

God will treat Solomon as if he were God's own son.

I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever

Here "throne" refers to the authority to rule as king. Alternate translation: "I will make his descendants rule over Israel forever"

1 Chronicles 22:11

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Solomon.

Now

David uses this word to introduce something important he is about to say.

May you build

Solomon would not personally do the building, but he would direct others to do it. Alternate translation: "May you direct people to build"

1 Chronicles 22:12

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Solomon.

when he places you in charge over Israel

"when he makes you king of Israel"

1 Chronicles 22:13

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Solomon.

Be strong and courageous ... Do not fear or be discouraged

These two sentences mean the same thing, stated in different ways in order to emphasize that Solomon should not be afraid.

1 Chronicles 22:14

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Solomon.

Now, see, with great

The words "Now, see" introduce something important David is about to say. Alternate translation: "Listen! With great"

with great pains I have prepared

"I have worked hard to prepare"

100,000 talents

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"one hundred thousand talents"
talents
about 33 kilograms
one million
"1,000,000"
You must add more to all this
"You will need to increase that amount"
1 Chronicles 22:15
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to Solomon.
stonecutters, masons
These are both workers who cut stone and prepare it for builders to use in walls and buildings.
carpenters
persons who work with wood
skillful craftsmen without number of every kind
Here "without number" is an exaggeration to emphasize that there were a large number of them. Alternate translation: "a very large number of every kind of skillful craftsmen"
1 Chronicles 22:16
Connecting Statement:
David finishes speaking to Solomon.
may Yahweh be with you
This is an idiom that implies that Yahweh will help Solomon be successful in the project.
1 Chronicles 22:18
Yahweh your God is with you
This is an idiom that implies that Yahweh will help Israel to prosper.
your ... you
Here these pronouns are plural.
has given you peace on every side
"has caused all the nations who live around Israel to live peacefully with you"
He has given the region's inhabitants into my hand
Here "hand" refers to power to defeat his enemies. Alternate translation: "He has given me power over everyone who lives around us"
The region is subdued before Yahweh and his people
This can be stated in active form. "The other nations no longer attack Yahweh and his people"
1 Chronicles 22:19
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to all the leaders of Israel.
Now
This word introduces something important that David is about to say.
seek Yahweh your God
Seeking Yahweh represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him.
your ... you
Here these pronouns are plural.
with all your heart and your soul
Here "heart" and "soul" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "with your whole being"
Get up and build the holy place
It is understood that Solomon will not do the work personally, but he will direct others to do it. Alternate translation: "Get up and direct the workers as they build the holy place"
the house built for Yahweh's name
Here "name" refers to honor. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the temple you will build to honor Yahweh"

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23 [1]When David was old and near the end of his life, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.[2]He gathered together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and Levites.[3]The Levites who were thirty years old and older were counted in a census, and they numbered thirty-eight thousand.
[4]"Of these, twenty-four thousand were to oversee the work on the house of Yahweh, and six thousand were officers and judges.[5]Four thousand were gatekeepers, and four thousand were to praise Yahweh with the instruments that I made to give praise," David said.[6]David divided them into groups that corresponded to Levi's sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

[7]From the clans descended from Gershon, there were Ladan and Shimei.
[8]There were three of Ladan's sons: Jehiel the leader, Zetham, and Joel.
[9]There were three of Shimei's sons: Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran. These were the leaders of the clans of Ladan.

[10]There were four of Shimei's sons: Jahath, Ziza, Jeush, and Beriah.
[11]Jahath was the oldest, and Ziza the second, but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were considered as one clan with the same duties.

[12]There were four of Kohath's sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.
[13]These were Amram's sons: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was chosen to set apart the most holy things, that he and his descendants would offer incense before Yahweh, to serve him and to give blessings in his name forever.[14]But as for Moses the man of God, his descendants were counted with the tribe of Levi.

[15]Moses' sons were Gershom and Eliezer.
[16]Gershom's descendant was Shubael the oldest.
[17]Eliezer's descendant was Rehabiah. Eliezer had no other sons, but Rehabiah had many descendants.
[18]Izhar's son was Shelomith the leader.

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[19]Hebron's descendants were Jeriah the oldest, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.
[20]Uzziel's sons were Micah the oldest, and Ishiah the second.

[21]Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi. Mahli's sons were Eleazar and Kish.
[22]Eleazar died without having any sons. He had only daughters. So their kinsmen, the sons of Kish, married them.
[23]Mushi's three sons were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth.

[24]These were Levi's descendants corresponding to their clans. They were the leaders, counted and listed by name in the census, of the clans that did the work in the service of the house of Yahweh, from twenty years old and upward.[25]For David said, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people. He makes his home in Jerusalem forever.[26]The Levites will no longer need to carry the tabernacle and all the equipment used in its service."
[27]For by David's last words the Levites were counted, from twenty years old and upward.[28]Their duty was to assist Aaron's descendants in the service of the house of Yahweh. They were to care for the courtyards, the rooms, the ceremonial purification of all the things that belong to Yahweh, and other work in the service of the house of God.[29]They also took care of the bread of the presence, the fine flour for grain offerings, the unleavened wafers, the baked offerings, the offerings mixed with oil, and all the measuring of the amounts and sizes of things.
[30]They also stood every morning to thank and praise Yahweh. They also did this in the evening[31]and whenever burnt offerings were offered to Yahweh, on the Sabbath and at the new moon festivals and feast days. A fixed number, assigned by decree, always had to be present before Yahweh.
[32]They were in charge of the tent of meeting, the holy place, and helped their kinsmen the descendants of Aaron in the service of the house of Yahweh.

1 Chronicles 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the construction of the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Organizing the Levites

As priests, the Levites had a significant role in the construction of the temple. David organized the Levites according to their families and explained what each group was to do. (See: priest)

Links:

1 Chronicles 23:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 23:1
General Information:
David appoints Solomon as his successor and organizes Levitical priests and staff for temple service.
1 Chronicles 23:3
The Levites who were thirty years old and older were counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Some of David's men counted the Levites who were 30 years old and older"
they numbered thirty-eight thousand
"there were 38,000 of them"
1 Chronicles 23:4
Of these, twenty-four thousand
"Of these Levities, 24,000"
six thousand
"6,000 Levites"
officers and judges
These Levites listened to legal arguments and administered justice according to the law of Moses.
four thousand
"4,000 Levites"
1 Chronicles 23:5
gatekeepers
These Levites guarded the temple entrance so no person who was ceremonially unclean entered.
1 Chronicles 23:6
that corresponded to
"based on" or "according to the descendants of"
Gershon, Kohath, and Merari
These are names of Levi's sons.
1 Chronicles 23:7
General Information:
This is the list of Levites according to their clans.
1 Chronicles 23:8
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.
1 Chronicles 23:9
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.
1 Chronicles 23:10
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.
1 Chronicles 23:11
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.
the oldest ... the second

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The word "son" is understood. Also, "second" is in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the oldest son ... the second son"

so they were considered as one clan

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so David considered them to be one clan"

1 Chronicles 23:12

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

There were four of Kohath's sons

"Kohath had 4 sons"

1 Chronicles 23:13

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

Aaron was chosen to set apart the most holy things

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh chose Aaron to dedicate the most holy things"

to give blessings in his name forever

Here "in his name" refers to the authority to speak as his representative. Alternate translation: "to bless the people as representatives of God forever"

1 Chronicles 23:14

his descendants were counted with the tribe of Levi

The sons of Aaron were the most important Levite clan, but the sons of Moses were also considered to be Levites. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people considered Moses's sons to be part of the Levite clan"

1 Chronicles 23:15

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:16

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:17

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:18

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:19

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

the oldest ... the second ... the third ... the fourth

The word "son" is understood. Also, these numbers are in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the oldest son ... the second son ... the third son ... the fourth son"

1 Chronicles 23:20

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

the oldest ... the second

The word "son" is understood. Also, "second" is in ordinal form. Alternate translation: "the oldest son ... the second son"

1 Chronicles 23:21

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:22

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:23

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list of Levites according to their clans.

1 Chronicles 23:24

These were Levi's descendants corresponding to their clans. They were the leaders, counted and listed by name in the census, of the clans

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "These were the names of Levi's descendants and their families, whom David's men counted and listed. They were the leaders of the clans"

from twenty years old and upward

"from 20 years old and older"

1 Chronicles 23:25

has given rest

Here "rest" refers to peace with surrounding nations. See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Chronicles 22:9.

He makes his home in Jerusalem forever

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will be present in Jerusalem forever or 2) Yahweh's temple will be present in Jerusalem forever.

1 Chronicles 23:26

all the equipment used in its service

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the equipment they used in its service"

1 Chronicles 23:27

For by David's last words the Levites were counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For David's last command was for his men to count the Levites"

from twenty years old and upward

"who were 20 years old and older." See how you translated this phrase in [1 Chronicles 23:24]

1 Chronicles 23:29

bread of the presence

See the Translation Word page about "bread" for the specific definition of "bread of the presence." See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 9:32.

flour

grain that is ground into a powder

1 Chronicles 23:30

They also stood

"The Levites also stood at the temple"

1 Chronicles 23:31

whenever burnt offerings were offered to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whenever the priests offered burnt offerings to Yahweh"

new moon festivals

These holidays marked the beginning of each new month.

A fixed number, assigned by decree, always had to be present before Yahweh

"A specific number of the Levites were always assigned to be present at the temple to make offerings to Yahweh"

1 Chronicles 23:32

They were in charge of

"The Levites were responsible for"

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24 [1]The work groups based on Aaron's descendants were these: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.[2]Nadab and Abihu
died before their father died. They had no children, so Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.[3]David, together with
Zadok, a descendant of Eleazar, and Ahimelek, a descendant of Ithamar, divided them into groups for their labor as
priests.
[4]There were more leading men among Eleazar's descendants than among Ithamar's descendants, so they divided
Eleazar's descendants into sixteen groups. They did this by heads of clans and by Ithamar's descendants. These divisions
were eight in number, corresponding to their clans.[5]They divided them impartially by lot, for there were holy officials
and officials of God, from both Eleazar's descendants and Ithamar's descendants.
[6]Shemaiah son of Nethanel the scribe, a Levite, wrote down their names in the presence of the king, the officials, Zadok
the priest, Ahimelek son of Abiathar, and the leaders of the priestly and Levite families. One clan was drawn by lot from
Eleazar's descendants, and then the next would be drawn from Ithamar's descendants.

[7]The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah,
[8]the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim,
[9]the fifth to Malkijah, the sixth to Mijamin,
[10]the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah,

[11]the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shekaniah,
[12]the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,
[13]the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,
[14]the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,

[15]the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez,
[16]the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel,
[17]the twenty-first to Jakin, the twenty-second to Gamul,
[18]the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.

[19]This was the order of their service, when they came into the house of Yahweh, following the ordinance given to them by
Aaron their ancestor, as Yahweh, the God of Israel, had commanded him.

[20]These were the rest of the descendants of Levi: Of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah.
[21]As for Rehabiah, the sons of Rehabiah: Ishiah the leader.
[22]From the Izharites: Shelomoth; from the sons of Shelomoth: Jahath.

[23]The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the leader, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.
[24]The son of Uzziel: Micah; from the sons of Micah: Shamir.
[25]The brother of Micah: Ishiah. From the sons of Ishiah: Zechariah.

[26]The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi; from the son of Jaaziah: Beno.
[27]The sons of Merari from Jaaziah: Beno, Shoham, Zakkur, and Ibri.
[28]From Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons.

[29]From Kish: The son of Kish: Jerahmeel.
[30]The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the Levites, listed by their clans.[31]These men who were the
head of each clan and each of their younger brothers, cast lots in the presence of King David, and Zadok and Ahimelek,
along with the leaders of the families of the priests and Levites. They cast lots just as Aaron's descendants had done.

1 Chronicles 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Arranging the priests

David arranged for the order in which priests would be on duty. (See: priest)

Links:

1 Chronicles 24:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 24:1

General Information:

This chapter describes how the Levites in the previous chapter were divided into work groups with different assignments.

Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 6:3.

1 Chronicles 24:3

Ahimelek

This is the name of a man.

divided them into groups

"divided the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar into groups"

1 Chronicles 24:4

they divided

"David, Zadok, and Ahimelech divided"

sixteen groups

"16 groups"

heads of clans

Here "heads" is a metaphor for the more important people —the leaders of the clans. Alternate translation: "leaders of the clans"

These divisions were eight in number, corresponding to their clans

"There were 8 divisions based on the clans of Ithamar's descendants"

1 Chronicles 24:5

They divided them impartially by lot

"They divided them by lot so that the divisions would be fair"

1 Chronicles 24:6

Shemaiah

This is the name of a man.

Nethanel

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 15:24.

Ahimelek

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 18:16.

One clan was drawn by lot from Eleazar's descendants, and then the next would be drawn from Ithamar's descendants

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They chose one by lot from Eleazar's descendants, then they would choose by lot one from Ithamar's descendants"

1 Chronicles 24:7

General Information:

This begins a list of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests. This list ends in 1 Chronicles 24:18.

The first lot ... the second

"Lot number 1 ... lot number 2." This shows the order in which the families were chosen by lots. If this is unnatural in your language you may use "The initial" for "The first" and "the next" for all of the following ones.

Jehoiarib ... Jedaiah

See how you translated the names of these men in [1 Chronicles 9:10]

the second

This refers to the second lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the second lot" or "lot number 2"

1 Chronicles 24:8

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the third ... the fourth

This refers to the third and fourth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the third lot ... the fourth lot" or "lot number 3 ... lot number 4"

Harim ... Seorim

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:9

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the fifth ... the sixth

This refers to the fifth and sixth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fifth lot ... the sixth lot" or "lot number 5 ... lot number 6"

Malkijah ... Mijamin

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:10

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the seventh ... the eighth

This refers to the seventh and eighth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the seventh lot ... the eighth lot" or "lot number 7 ... lot number 8"

Hakkoz ... Abijah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:11

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the ninth ... the tenth

This refers to the ninth and tenth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the ninth lot ... the tenth lot" or "lot number 9 ... lot number 10"

Jeshua ... Shekaniah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:12

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the eleventh ... the twelfth

This refers to the eleventh and twelfth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the eleventh

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lot ... the twelfth lot" or "lot number 11 ... lot number 12"

Eliashib ... Jakim

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:13

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the thirteenth ... the fourteenth

This refers to the thirteenth and fourteenth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the thirteenth lot ... the fourteenth lot" or "lot number 13 ... lot number 14"

Huppah ... Jeshebeab

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:14

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the fifteenth ... the sixteenth

This refers to the fifteenth and sixteenth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fifteenth lot ... the sixteenth lot" or "lot number 15 ... lot number 16"

Bilgah ... Immer

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:15

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the seventeenth ... the eighteenth

This refers to the seventeenth and eighteenth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the seventeenth lot ... the eighteenth lot" or "lot number 17 ... lot number 18"

Hezir ... Happizzez

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:16

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the nineteenth ... the twentieth

This refers to the nineteenth and twentieth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the nineteenth lot ... the twentieth lot" or "lot number 19 ... lot number 20"

Pethahiah ... Jehezkel

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:17

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the twenty-first ... the twenty-second

This refers to the twenty-first and twenty-second lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-first lot ... the twenty-second lot" or "lot number 21 ... lot number 22"

Jakin ... Gamul

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:18

Connecting Statement:

This ends the list begun in 1 Chronicles 24:7 of 24 lots that were cast to decide how the descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar would be divided into groups for their work as priests.

the twenty-third ... the twenty-fourth

This refers to the twenty-third and twenty-fourth lots. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-third lot ... the twenty-fourth lot" or "lot number 23 ... lot number 24"

Delaiah ... Maaziah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 24:19

following the ordinance given to them by Aaron their ancestor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "following the rules that Aaron their ancestor gave them"

1 Chronicles 24:20

General Information:

This begins the list of names of the other sons of Levi. This list will end in [1 Chronicles 24:30]

Amram

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 6:3.

Shubael

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 23:16.

1 Chronicles 24:23

Hebron ... Jeriah ... Amariah ... Jahaziel ... Jekameam

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 23:19.

the second ... the third ... the fourth

"the second son ... the third son ... the fourth son"

1 Chronicles 24:24

Uzziel ... Micah

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 23:20.

Shamir

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 24:25

Ishiah

Translate the name of this man as in 1 Chronicles 23:20.

Zechariah

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 24:26

Merari ... Mahli ... Mushi

Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 23:21.

Jaaziah

This is the name of a man.

from the son of Jaaziah: Beno

It seems Jaaziah is another son of Merari. And, Beno is the son of Jaaziah. Beno is mentioned in both verses 26 and 27 because he is a leader in his family. However, some Bibles translate "Beno" as "his son" rather than as a proper name.

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Those Bibles read like this: "and from his sons, Jaaziah, his son."
1 Chronicles 24:27
Jaaziah ... Shoham ... Zakkur ... Ibri
These are the names of men.
from Jaaziah: Beno, Shoham
It seems Jaaziah is another son of Merari. And, Beno is the son of Jaaziah. Beno is mentioned in both verses 26 and 27 because he is a leader in his family. However, some Bibles translate "Beno" as "his son" rather than as a proper name. Those Bibles read like this: "from Jaaziah, his son: Shoham."
1 Chronicles 24:28
Mahli ... Eleazar
Translate the names of these men as in 1 Chronicles 23:21.
1 Chronicles 24:29
From Kish: The son of Kish
This is written in the text as a title, but could be stated in a more complete form. Alternate translation: "These are the sons who were descended from Kish"
Kish
Translate the name of this man as in 1 Chronicles 23:21.
Jerahmeel
This is the name of a man.
1 Chronicles 24:30
Mushi
Translate the name of this man as in 1 Chronicles 23:21.
Mahli ... Eder ... Jerimoth
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 24:31
Ahimelek
Translate the name of this man as in 1 Chronicles 18:16.

25 [1]David and the leaders of the army selected some of the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun to prophesy with lutes and harps, and with cymbals. Here is the list of the men who performed this service:

[2]From the sons of Asaph: Zakkur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah,[1] the sons of Asaph, under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied under the king's supervision.
[3]From the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri,[2] Jeshaiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six in all, under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied, playing the harp for giving thanks and praising Yahweh.

[4]From the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel,[3] Shubael, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth.[5]All these were the sons of Heman the king's prophet. God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters to lift up his horn.

[6]All these were under the direction of their fathers. They were musicians in the house of Yahweh with cymbals, lutes and lyres, as they served in the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the king's supervision.[7]They and their brothers who were skilled and trained to make music to Yahweh numbered 288.[8]They cast lots for their duties, all alike, the same for the young as well as the old, the teacher as well as the student.

[9]Now regarding Asaph's sons: The first lot fell to Joseph's family; the second fell to Gedaliah's family, twelve persons in number;[10]the third fell to Zakkur, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[11]the fourth fell to Izri,[4] his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[12]the fifth fell to Nethaniah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[13]the sixth fell to Bukkiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[14]the seventh fell to Jesarelah,[5] his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[15]the eighth fell to Jeshaiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[16]the ninth fell to Mattaniah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[17]the tenth fell to Shimei, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[18]the eleventh fell to Azarel,[6] his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[19]the twelfth fell to Hashabiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[20]the thirteenth fell to Shubael, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[21]the fourteenth fell to Mattithiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[22]the fifteenth fell to Jerimoth, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[23]the sixteenth fell to Hananiah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[24]the seventeenth fell to Joshbekashah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[25]the eighteenth fell to Hanani, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[26]the nineteenth fell to Mallothi, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[27]the twentieth fell to Eliathah, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[28]the twenty-first fell to Hothir, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;
[29]the twenty-second fell to Giddalti, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[30]the twenty-third fell to Mahazioth, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number;[31]the twenty-fourth fell to Romamti-Ezer, his sons and his relatives, twelve persons in number.

[1]This is the same person referred to in 1 Chronicles 25:14 as Jesarelah.
[2]This is a variant of the name Izri, which is found in 1 Chronicles 25:11, and refers to the same person.
[3]Uzziel is the same person referred to in 1 Chronicles 25:18 as Azarel.
[4]This is a variant of Zeri, found in 1 Chronicles 25:3, and refers to the same person.
[5]This is the same person referred to in 1 Chronicles 25:2 as Asharelah.
[6]This is the same person referred to in 1 Chronicles 25:4 as Uzziel.

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1 Chronicles 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Music

The 24 groups who were chosen to play music in the temple cast lots to see in what order they would serve.

Links:

1 Chronicles 25:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 25:1

this service

"the work done at the tabernacle"

cymbals

This refers to two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]

Heman ... Jeduthun

Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 16:41]

1 Chronicles 25:2

General Information:

This begins a list of leaders of the tabernacle service.

Zakkur ... Joseph ... Nethaniah ... Asharelah

These are names of men.

the sons of Asaph, under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied under the king's supervision

"these were the sons of Asaph, whom he supervised. Asaph prophesied under the king's supervision"

under the direction of

"under the supervision of"

1 Chronicles 25:3

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of leaders of the tabernacle service that was started in 1 Chronicles 25:2.

Gedaliah ... Zeri ... Jeshaiah ... Shimei ... Hashabiah ... Mattithiah

These are names of men.

1 Chronicles 25:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of leaders of the tabernacle service that was started in 1 Chronicles 25:2.

Heman

See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 16:41]

Bukkiah ... Mattaniah ... Uzziel ... Shubael ... Jerimoth ... Hananiah ... Hanani ... Eliathah ... Giddalti ... Romamti-Ezer ... Joshbekashah ... Mallothi ... Hothir ... Mahazioth

These are all names of men.

1 Chronicles 25:5

fourteen sons and three daughters

"14 sons and 3 daughters"

to lift up his horn

An animal horn is a symbol of strength or authority. To lift up someone's horn is a metaphor for honoring him. Alternate translation: "to honor Heman"

1 Chronicles 25:6

were under the direction of their fathers

"were supervised by their fathers"

cymbals

This refers to two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]

Jeduthun ... Heman

Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 16:41]

1 Chronicles 25:7

numbered 288

"were two hundred and eighty-eight men"

1 Chronicles 25:8

all alike, the same for the young as well as the old, the teacher as well as the student

This refers to all of the men by describing the extremes. Alternate translation: "all of them, including the young men and the old men, the teachers and the students"

1 Chronicles 25:9

General Information:

This begins the list of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve. This list ends in 1 Chronicles 25:31.

The first lot ... the second

"Lot number 1 ... lot number 2." This shows the order in which the families were chosen by lots. If this is unnatural in your language you may use "The initial" for "The first" and "the next" for all of the following ones.

The first lot fell to Joseph's family

For all of the other people in the list, the text specifies that there were "twelve persons in number." Since this was likely true for Joseph's family also, you may want to state it clearly. Alternate translation: "The first lot fell to Joseph's family, twelve persons in number"

the second

This refers to the second lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the second lot" or "lot number 2"

Gedaliah

See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 25:3]

twelve persons in number

"12 people"

1 Chronicles 25:10

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.

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the third
This refers to the third lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the third lot" or "lot number 3"
Zakkur
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:2]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:11
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the fourth
This refers to the fourth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fourth lot" or "lot number 4"
Izri
This name of this man is spelled Zeri in [1 Chronicles 25:3]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:12
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the fifth
This refers to the fifth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fifth lot" or "lot number 5"
Nethaniah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:2]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:13
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the sixth
This refers to the sixth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the sixth lot" or "lot number 6"
Bukkiah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:14
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the seventh
This refers to the seventh lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the seventh lot" or "lot number 7"
Jesarelah
This is the name of a man.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:15
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the eighth
This refers to the eighth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the eighth lot" or "lot number 8"
Jeshaiah
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 25:3]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:16
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the ninth
This refers to the ninth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the ninth lot" or "lot number 9"
Mattaniah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:17
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the tenth
This refers to the tenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the tenth lot" or "lot number 10"
Shimei
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:3]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:18
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the eleventh
This refers to the eleventh lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the eleventh lot" or "lot number 11"
Azarel
This is the name of a man.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:19
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would

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serve.
the twelfth
This refers to the twelfth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twelfth lot" or "lot number 12"
Hashabiah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:3]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:20
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the thirteenth
This refers to the thirteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the thirteenth lot" or "lot number 13"
Shubael
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:21
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the fourteenth
This refers to the fourteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fourteenth lot" or "lot number 14"
Mattithiah
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 25:3]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:22
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the fifteenth
This refers to the fifteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fifteenth lot" or "lot number 15"
Jerimoth
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:23
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the sixteenth
This refers to the sixteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the sixteenth lot" or "lot number 16"
Hananiah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:24
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the seventeenth
This refers to the seventeenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the seventeenth lot" or "lot number 17"
Joshbekashah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:25
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the eighteenth
This refers to the eighteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the eighteenth lot" or "lot number 18"
Hanani
Translate the name of this man as you did in 1 Chronicles 25:4.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:26
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the nineteenth
This refers to the nineteenth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the nineteenth lot" or "lot number 19"
Mallothi
Translate the name of this man as you did in 1 Chronicles 25:4.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:27
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the twentieth
This refers to the twentieth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twentieth lot" or "lot number 20"
Eliathah

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Translate the name of this man as you did in 1 Chronicles 25:4.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:28
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the twenty-first
This refers to the twenty-first lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-first lot" or "lot number 21"
Hothir
Translate the name of this man as you did in 1 Chronicles 25:4.
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:29
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the twenty-second
This refers to the twenty-second lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-second lot" or "lot number 2"
Giddalti
Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:30
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the twenty-third
This refers to the twenty-third lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-third lot" or "lot number 23"
Mahazioth
Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"
1 Chronicles 25:31
Connecting Statement:
This ends the list begun in 1 Chronicles 25:9 of 24 lots that were cast to choose the order in which families would serve.
the twenty-fourth
This refers to the twenty-fourth lot. The word "lot" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the twenty-fourth lot" or "lot number 24"
Romamti-Ezer
Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 25:4]
twelve persons in number
"12 people"

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26 [1]Here were the divisions of the gatekeepers: From the Korahites, Meshelemiah son of Kore, a descendant of Asaph[1]

[2]Meshelemiah[2] had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,
[3]Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh.

[4]Obed-Edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sakar the fourth, and Nethanel the fifth,
[5]Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth, for God had blessed Obed-Edom.
[6]To Shemaiah his son were born sons who ruled over their clans; they were men of great ability.
[7]The sons of Shemaiah were Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad. His relatives Elihu and Semakiah were also men with many abilities.[8]All these were descendants of Obed-Edom. They and their sons and relatives were men capable of doing their duties in the tabernacle service. There were sixty-two of them related to Obed-Edom.
[9]Meshelemiah had sons and relatives, capable men, eighteen in all.

[10]Hosah, a descendant of Merari, had sons: Shimri the leader (although he was not the firstborn, his father made him leader),[11]Hilkiah the second, Tabaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth. All of Hosah's sons and kinsmen were thirteen in number.

[12]These divisions of the gatekeepers, corresponding to their leaders, had responsibilities, like their relatives, to serve in the house of Yahweh.[13]They threw lots, both young and old, corresponding to their clans, for every gate.[14]When the lot was cast for the east gate, it fell to Shelemiah[3] They then cast lots for Zechariah his son, a prudent advisor, and his lot came out for the north gate.
[15]To Obed-Edom was assigned the south gate, and his sons were assigned the storehouses.[16]Shuppim and Hosah were assigned the west gate along with the gate of Shalleketh, on the upper road. The guards were very close to each other.
[17]On the east were six Levites, on the north four a day, on the south four a day, and at the storehouses two pairs.[18]At the pillar to the west there were four stationed at the road and two at the pillar[4][19]These were the divisions of the gatekeepers who were the descendants of Korah and Merari.

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[20]Among the Levites, Ahijah was in charge of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the things that belong to Yahweh.[21]The descendants of Ladan, who were descendants of the Gershonites through Ladan, who were heads of families belonging to Ladan the Gershonite, were Jehieli[22]and the sons of Jehieli: Zetham and Joel his brother. They were in charge of the treasuries of the house of Yahweh.
[23]From the clans of Amram, the clans of Izhar, the clans of Hebron, and the clans of Uzziel:
[24]Shubael, a descendant of Gershom son of Moses, was supervisor over the treasuries.[25]His relatives from the clan of Eliezer were his son Rehabiah, Rehabiah's son Jeshaiah, Jeshaiah's son Joram, Joram's son Zikri, and Zikri's son Shelomith.
[26]Shelomith and his relatives were over all the treasuries holding the dedicated things that David the king, the family leaders, commanders over thousands and hundreds, and the army commanders had dedicated.[27]They set apart the plunder won in battles for the upkeep of the house of Yahweh.[28]They were also in charge of everything that was set apart to Yahweh by Samuel the prophet, Saul son of Kish, Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah. Everything that was set apart to Yahweh was under the guard of Shelomith and his relatives.

[29]Of Izhar's descendants, Kenaniah and his sons were in charge of the civil affairs of Israel. They were officers and judges.
[30]Of Hebron's descendants, Hashabiah and his brothers, 1,700 capable men, were in charge of Yahweh's work and the king's work. They were on the west side of the Jordan.
[31]As for the Hebronites, Jeriah was the head of the clans, according to the genealogical records. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they examined the records and found among them men of great ability in Jazer of Gilead.[32]Jeriah had 2,700 relatives, who were capable family leaders. David made them overseers over the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and for the king's affairs.

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[1]Asaph is the same person referred to as Ebiasaph in 1 Chronicles 9:19.
[2]Meshelemiah is the same person referred to as Shelemiah in 1 Chronicles 26:14.
[3]Shelemiah is the same person referred to as Meshelemiah in 1 Chronicles 26:2.
[4]The Hebrew word translated here as pillar is uncertain. Some translations simply write the Hebrew word as parbar. This word appears only here and in 2 Kings 23:11 in the Old Testament.

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1 Chronicles 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Casting lots

The gatekeepers cast lots to see which gate they would guard. Those who took care of the storage also cast lots.

Links:

1 Chronicles 26:1 Notes

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1 Chronicles 26:1
General Information:
This begins the list of the gatekeepers.
divisions
groups
Korahites
See how you translated the name of this people group in [1 Chronicles 19:19]
Meshelemiah
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 9:21]
Kore
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 9:19]
Asaph
This is an alternative spelling to "Ebiasaph" in [1 Chronicles 9:19]
1 Chronicles 26:2
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Meshelemiah ... Zechariah
See how you translated the names of these men in [1 Chronicles 9:21]
Jediael ... Zebadiah ... Jathniel
These are names of men.
the second ... the third ... the fourth
This shows the order in which the sons were born. If it is more natural in your language, you may say "the next" for each son. The word "son" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the second son ... the third son ... the fourth son"
1 Chronicles 26:3
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Elam ... Jehohanan ... Eliehoenai
These are names of men.
the fifth ... the sixth ... the seventh
This shows the order in which the sons were born. If it is

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more natural in your language, you may say "the next" for each son. The word "son" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the fifth son ... the sixth son ... the seventh son"
1 Chronicles 26:4
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Obed-Edom
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 16:38]
Shemaiah ... Jehozabad ... Joah ... Sakar ... Nethanel
These are names of men.
the second ... the third ... the fourth ... the fifth
This shows the order in which the sons were born. If it is more natural in your language, you may say "the next" for each son. The word "son" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the second son ... the third son ... the fourth son ... the fifth son"
1 Chronicles 26:5
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Ammiel ... Issachar ... Peullethai
These are names of men.
the sixth ... the seventh ... the eighth
This shows the order in which the sons were born. If it is more natural in your language, you may say "the next" for each son. The word "son" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the sixth son ... the seventh son ... the eighth son"
1 Chronicles 26:7
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Shemaiah
Translate this name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 26:4]
Othni ... Rephael ... Obed ... Elzabad ... Elihu ... Semakiah
These are the names of men.
His relatives
"Shemaiah's relatives" or "Shemaiah's family members"
1 Chronicles 26:8
Obed-Edom
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 26:4]
sixty-two of them
"62 men"
1 Chronicles 26:9
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Meshelemiah
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 26:1]
eighteen in all
"18 total"
1 Chronicles 26:10
Connecting Statement:
This continues the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Hosah ... Merari ... Shimri
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 26:11
Connecting Statement:
This ends the list of gatekeepers that started in 1 Chronicles 26:1.
Hilkiah ... Tabaliah ... Zechariah ... Hosah
These are names of men.
the second ... the third ... the fourth
This shows the order in which the sons were born. If it is more natural in your language, you may say "the next" for each son. The word "son" may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "the second son ... the third son ... the fourth son"
All of Hosah's sons and kinsmen were thirteen in number
"There were 13 of Hosah's sons and kinsmen."
1 Chronicles 26:12
divisions
groups
1 Chronicles 26:13
threw lots
"cast lots"
both young and old
This refers to all of the men by describing the extremes. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Chronicles 25:8]
1 Chronicles 26:14
When the lot was cast
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they cast the lot"
Zechariah
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 26:2]
a prudent advisor
This is a person who shows good judgment in making decisions.
1 Chronicles 26:15
To Obed-Edom was assigned the south gate, and his sons were assigned the storehouses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Obed-Edom was responsible for guarding the south gate, and his sons guarded the storehouses"
Obed-Edom
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 26:4]
1 Chronicles 26:16
Shuppim and Hosah were assigned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Shuppim and Hosah were responsible for guarding"
Shuppim
This is the name of a man.
Hosah
See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 26:10.
Shalleketh
This is the name of the gate.
1 Chronicles 26:17
six Levites
"6 Levites"

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the east ... the north ... the south
These phrases refer to the gates. Alternate translation: "the east gate ... the north gate ... the south gate"
four a day
This refers to the number of men on guard duty. Alternate translation: "four men each day" or "four Levites each day"
two pairs
"2 pairs of men" or "2 sets of 2 men each"
1 Chronicles 26:18
At the pillar to the west there were four stationed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Four Levites guarded the pillar to the west"
four stationed at the road and two at the pillar
The numbers "four" and "two" refer to guards. Alternate translation: "four Levites stationed at the road and two Levites stationed at the pillar"
two at the pillar
"two Levites guarded the pillar"
1 Chronicles 26:19
Merari
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 26:10]
1 Chronicles 26:21
Ladan ... Gershon
Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:7]
descendants of the Gershonites through Ladan, who were heads of families belonging to Ladan the Gershonite
Ladan's descendants were also descendants of Ladan's ancestor Gershon, so the information about them being Gershon's descendants can be left implicit if including it would result in wrong meaning. Alternate translation: "who were leaders of the families of Ladan the Gershonite"
Gershonite
A descendant of Gershon.
Jehieli
This is the name of a man. This is the same person as in 1 Chronicles 23:8, but there his name is spelled "Jehiel."
1 Chronicles 26:22
the sons of Jehieli: Zetham and Joel his brother
Zetham and Joel were Jehieli's sons.
Jehieli
This is the name of a man. This is the same person as in [1 Chronicles 23:8]
Zetham ... Joel
Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:8]
They were in charge
The word "They" refers to Jehieli, Zetham, and Joel.
1 Chronicles 26:23
Amram ... Izhar ... Hebron ... Uzziel
Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:12]
1 Chronicles 26:24
Shubael
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:16]
Gershom
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:15]
1 Chronicles 26:25
Eliezer
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:15]
His relatives from the clan of Eliezer
These were his relatives who did this work with him. Alternate translation: "His relatives who did the work with him from the clan of Eliezer"
Rehabiah
Translate the name of this man as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:17]
Jeshaiah ... Joram ... Zikri ... Shelomith
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 26:26
were over
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "were in charge of"
commanders over thousands and hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders over 1,000 soldiers and the commanders over 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders over large military divisions and the commanders over smaller military divisions"
1 Chronicles 26:27
plunder
things an army takes from its enemies after a victory
1 Chronicles 26:28
everything that was set apart to Yahweh by Samuel the prophet ... Joab son of Zeruiah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that Samuel the prophet ... Joab son of Zeruiah set apart to Yahweh"
Kish ... Ner ... Zeruiah
These are names of men.
Everything that was set apart
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everything that the leaders set apart"
1 Chronicles 26:29
Izhar
Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:12]
civil affairs of Israel
"daily business of the people of Israel." This refers to the regular business of the people of Israel, not connected to the military or to the temple.
Kenaniah
This is the name of a man.
1 Chronicles 26:30
Hebron
Translate the name of this man the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 23:12]
Hashabiah
This is the name of a man.
1,700 capable men
"one thousand seven hundred capable men"

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Yahweh's work and the king's work
"work done for Yahweh and the king."
1 Chronicles 26:31
Hebron
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 23:12]
Jeriah
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 23:19]
In the fortieth year of the reign of David
"When David had been king for 40 years"
men of great ability
"capable men"
Jazer
This is the name of a city.
1 Chronicles 26:32
2,700 relatives
"two thousand seven hundred family members"

27 [1]This is the list of the family leaders of the people of Israel, commanders of thousands and hundreds, as well as army officers who served the king in various ways. Each military division served month by month throughout the year. Each division had twenty-four thousand men.

[2]Over the division for the first month was Jashobeam son of Zabdiel. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.[3]He was among the descendants of Perez and in charge of all the army officers for the first month.

[4]Over the division for the second month was Dodai, from the clan descended from Ahoah. Mikloth was second in rank. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[5]The commander of the army for the third month was Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a priest and leader. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.[6]This is the Benaiah who was the leader of the thirty, and over the thirty. Ammizabad his son was in his division.

[7]The commander for the fourth month was Asahel brother of Joab. Zebadiah his son became commander after him. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[8]The commander for the fifth month was Shamhuth, a descendant of Izrah. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[9]The commander for the sixth month was Ira son of Ikkesh, from Tekoa. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.

[10]The commander for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, from the people of Ephraim. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[11]The commander for the eighth month was Sibbekai the Hushathite, from the clan descended from Zerah. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[12]The commander for the ninth month was Abiezer the Anathothite, from the tribe of Benjamin. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.

[13]The commander for the tenth month was Maharai from the city of Netophah, from the clan descended from Zerah. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[14]The commander for the eleventh month was Benaiah from the city of Pirathon, from the tribe of Ephraim. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.
[15]The commander for the twelfth month was Heldai from the city of Netophah, from the clan descended from Othniel. In his division were twenty-four thousand men.

[16]These were the leaders of the tribes of Israel: For the tribe of Reuben, Eliezer son of Zichri was the leader. For the tribe of Simeon, Shephatiah son of Maakah was the leader.
[17]For the tribe of Levi, Hashabiah son of Kemuel was the leader, and Zadok led Aaron's descendants.
[18]For the tribe of Judah, Elihu, one of David's brothers, was the leader. For the tribe of Issachar, Omri son of Michael was the leader.

[19]For the tribe of Zebulun, Ishmaiah son of Obadiah was the leader. For the tribe of Naphtali, Jerimoth son of Azriel was the leader.
[20]For the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Azaziah was the leader. For the half tribe of Manasseh, Joel son of Pedaiah was the leader.
[21]For the half tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo son of Zechariah was the leader. For the tribe of Benjamin, Jaasiel son of Abner was the leader.
[22]For the tribe of Dan, Azarel son of Jeroham was the leader. These were the leaders of the tribes of Israel.

[23]David did not count those twenty years old or younger, because Yahweh had promised to increase Israel like the stars of

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heaven.[24]Joab son of Zeruiah began to count the men, but did not finish. Wrath fell on Israel for this. This number was not written down in the Chronicles of King David.

[25]Azmaveth son of Adiel was in charge of the king's treasuries. Jonathan son of Uzziah was over the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the fortified towers.[26]Ezri son of Kelub was over the farmers, those who plowed the land.[27]Shimei the Ramathite was over the vineyards, and Zabdi the Shiphmite was over the grapes and the wine cellars.
[28]Over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the lowlands was Baal-Hanan from Geder, and over the storehouses of oil was Joash.[29]Over the herds that were pastured in Sharon was Shitrai from Sharon, and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat son of Adlai.
[30]Over the camels was Obil the Ishmaelite, and over the female donkeys was Jehdeiah from Meronoth. Over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite.[31]Jaziz the Hagrite was in charge of the flocks. All these officials were in charge of the property of King David.

[32]Jonathan, David's uncle, was an advisor, since he was a wise man and a scribe. Jehiel son of Hakmoni cared for the king's sons.[33]Ahithophel was the king's advisor, and Hushai from the Arkite people was the king's private advisor.
[34]Ahithophel's position was taken by Jehoiada son of Benaiah, and by Abiathar. Joab was commander of the king's army.

1 Chronicles 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Links:

1 Chronicles 27:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 27:1

This is the list

"These are the names"

commanders of thousands and hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the commanders of smaller military divisions" See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:1]

in various ways

"in different ways" or "in many ways"

Each military division served month by month throughout the year

This means that each division took turns serving periods of a month at a time.

Each military division

"Each group"

throughout the year

"all year long"

twenty-four thousand men

"24,000 men"

1 Chronicles 27:2

Over the division

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "In charge of the division"

first month

"month 1." This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars.

Jashobeam ... Zabdiel

These are names of men.

twenty-four thousand men

"24,000 men"

1 Chronicles 27:3

Perez

This is the name of a man.

1 Chronicles 27:4

Over the division

"In charge of the division"

the second month

"month 2." This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

Dodai ... Mikloth

These are names of men.

Ahoah

See how you translated this man's name in 1 Chronicles 8:4.

In his division

"In his group of soldiers"

twenty-four thousand men

"24,000 men"

1 Chronicles 27:5

the third month

"month 3." This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars.

Jehoiada

See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 11:22]

twenty-four thousand men

"24,000 men"

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1 Chronicles 27:6
Ammizabad
This is the name of a man.
the thirty
"the 30." This refers to "David's 30 mightiest soldiers."
over the thirty
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in charge of the 30 men"
1 Chronicles 27:7
The commander for the fourth month was Asahel brother of Joab
"Asahel, brother of Joab, was the commander for the fourth month"
the fourth month
"month 4." This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.
Asahel ... Zebadiah
These are the names of men.
his division
"his military group"
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:8
Shamhuth ... Izrah
These are the names of men.
the fifth month
"month 5." This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:9
the sixth month
"month 6." This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of August and the first part of September on Western calendars.
Ira ... Ikkesh
Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [1 Chronicles 11:28]
Tekoa
This is the name of a place.
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:10
The commander for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, from the people of Ephraim
"Helez, the Pelonite, from the people of Ephraim, was the commander for the seventh month"
the seventh month
"month 7." This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
Helez the Pelonite
See how you translated the name of this man and the name of his clan in [1 Chronicles 11:27]
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:11
the eighth month
"month 8." This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.
Sibbekai the Hushathite
See how you translated the name of this man and the name of his clan in [1 Chronicles 11:29]
Zerah
See how you translated this man's name in [1 Chronicles 2:4]
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:12
the ninth month
"month 9." This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part November and the first part December on Western calendars.
Abiezer the Anathothite
See how you translated the name of this man and the name of his clan [1 Chronicles 11:28]
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:13
the tenth month
"month 10." This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.
Maharai
See how you translated the name of this man in [1 Chronicles 11:30]
Netophah
This is the name of a place.
Zerah
See how you translated the name of this man in 1 Chronicles 2:4.
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:14
the eleventh month
"month 11." This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of January and the first part of February on Western calendars.
Pirathon
This is the name of a place.
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:15
the twelfth month
"month 12." This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on Western calendars.
Heldai ... Othniel
These are names of men.
Netophah
This is the name of a place.
twenty-four thousand men
"24,000 men"
1 Chronicles 27:16
Eliezer ... Zichri ... Shephatiah ... Maakah
These are names of men.

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1 Chronicles 27:17
Hashabiah ... Kemuel
These are names of men.
Zadok
See how you translated the hame of this man in 1 Chronicles 6:8.
1 Chronicles 27:18
Omri
This is the name of a man.
Elihu
See how you translated the name of this man in 1 Chronicles 12:20.
Michael
See how you translated the name of this man in 1 Chronicles 7:3.
1 Chronicles 27:19
Ishmaiah ... Obadiah ... Jerimoth ... Azriel
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 27:20
Hoshea ... Azaziah ... Joel ... Pedaiah
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 27:21
Iddo ... Zechariah ... Jaasiel ... Abner
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 27:22
Azarel ... Jeroham
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 27:23
those twenty years old or younger
"people 20 years old or younger"
to increase Israel like the stars of heaven
This speaks of the number of people in Israel increasing as if they would become as numerous as the stars. Alternate translation: "to increase the number of people in Israel to be as many as the stars in the heavens"
increase Israel
Here "Israel" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "increase the population of Israel"
1 Chronicles 27:24
Zeruiah
See how you translated this woman's name in [1 Chronicles 2:16]
Wrath fell on Israel
This speaks of God punishing the people as if his "wrath" were something that fell upon them. Alternate translation: "God punished the people of Israel"
This number was not written down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one wrote this number down"
1 Chronicles 27:25
Azmaveth ... Adiel ... Jonathan ... Uzziah
These are names of men.
in charge of
"responsible for guarding"
was over
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "was in charge of"
fortified towers
"strong towers"
1 Chronicles 27:26
Ezri ... Kelub
These are names of men.
plowed the land
This means to dig into or break up the dirt before planting.
1 Chronicles 27:27
Zabdi
This is the name of a man.
Ramathite
This is the name of a person from the city of Ramah.
Shiphmite
This is the name of a person from the city of Shepham.
wine cellars
These are the parts of a building that are below the ground and used to store wine.
1 Chronicles 27:28
Over the
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "In charge of the"
sycamore
This is a type of tree.
Baal-Hanan
This is the name of a man.
Geder
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 27:29
Sharon
This is the name of a place.
Shitrai ... Shaphat ... Adlai
These are names of men.
that were pastured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that ate grass in the fields"
1 Chronicles 27:30
Over the
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "In charge of the"
Obil ... Jehdeiah ... Jaziz
These are names of men.
Ishmaelite
Translate the name of this clan as you did in 1 Chronicles 2:17.
Hagrite
Translate the name of this people group as you did in 1 Chronicles 5:10.
Meronoth
This is the name of a place.
1 Chronicles 27:31
Jaziz
This is the name of a man.
Hagrite
Translate the name of this people group as you did in 1 Chronicles 5:10.
All these officials
"All of these men"
1 Chronicles 27:32
Jonathan ... Jehiel ... Hakmoni
These are names of men.
1 Chronicles 27:33
Ahithophel ... Hushai
These are names of men.
Arkite

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This is the name of a tribe or clan.
1 Chronicles 27:34

Ahithophel ... Jehoiada
These are names of men.

28 [1]David assembled all the officials of Israel at Jerusalem: the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king in their scheduled work, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, the managers over all the property and possessions of the king and of his sons, and the officers and fighting men, including the most skilled of them.
[2]Then David the king rose to his feet and said, "Listen to me, my brothers and my people. It was my intention to build a house as a resting place for the ark of the covenant of Yahweh; a footstool for our God, and I have made preparations to build it.[3]But God said to me, 'You will not build a temple for my name, because you are a man of war and have shed blood.'
[4]Yet Yahweh, the God of Israel, chose me from all my father's house to be king over Israel forever. He has chosen Judah as leader, and from the house of Judah he chose my father's house, and from all my father's sons he was pleased to make me king over all Israel.[5]From the many sons whom Yahweh has given me, he chose Solomon, my son, to sit on the throne of the kingdom of Yahweh, over Israel.
[6]He said to me, 'Solomon your son will build my house and my courtyards, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his Father.[7]I will establish his kingdom forever, if he remains committed to obey my commandments and decrees, as you are this day.'
[8]Now then, in the sight of all Israel, this assembly for Yahweh, and in the presence of our God, all of you must keep and try to carry out all the commandments of Yahweh your God. Do this so that you may possess this good land and leave it as an inheritance to your descendants after you forever.

[9]As for you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father, and serve him with your whole heart and a willing spirit. Do this because Yahweh searches all hearts and understands every motivation of everyone's thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will reject you forever.[10]Realize that Yahweh has chosen you to build this temple as his sanctuary. Be strong and do it."

[11]Then David gave to Solomon his son the plans for the temple portico, the temple buildings, the storerooms, the upper rooms, the inner rooms, and the room with the atonement lid.[12]He gave him the plans he had drawn for the courtyards of the house of Yahweh, all the surrounding rooms, the storerooms in the house of God, and the treasuries for the things that belong to Yahweh.
[13]He gave him regulations for the divisions of the priests and Levites, for the assigned responsibilities for the service of the house of Yahweh, and for all the objects for the service in the house of Yahweh.[14]He determined the weight of all the gold vessels for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service,[15]the weight of the gold for all the gold articles, to be lampstands and gold lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand, the weight of silver for each silver lampstand, according to the use of each lampstand in the service.
[16]He gave the weight of the gold for the tables of the bread of the presence, for every table, and the weight of the silver for the silver tables.[17]He gave the weight of pure gold for the meat forks, basins, and cups. He gave the weight for each of the gold bowls, and the weight of each of the silver bowls.
[18]He gave the weight of refined gold for the incense altar, and of the gold for the design of the chariot, the cherubim that spread out their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of Yahweh.[19]David said, "I have put all this in writing as Yahweh directed me and gave me to understand regarding the design."

[20]David said to Solomon his son, "Be strong and brave. Do the work. Do not be afraid or dismayed, for Yahweh God, my God, is with you. He will not leave you nor abandon you until all the work for the service of the house of Yahweh is finished.[21]See, here are the divisions of the priests and Levites for all the service in the house of God. They will be with you, together with all willing and skillful men, to assist you in the work and to perform the service. The officials and all the people are ready to follow your commands."

1 Chronicles 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple continues in this chapter. David lectured the people and Solomon on what they should do. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

David's instructions

David gives instructions to the people because he knows that he will not be there when the temple is built. It was common in the ancient Near East for leaders to give instructions to people before they die in preparation or anticipation of their death.

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Links:

[1 Chronicles 28:1 Notes]

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1 Chronicles 28:1
assembled
called together
scheduled work
Work that needs to be repeated, for example every day or every month.
the commanders of thousands and of hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the commanders of smaller military divisions" See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:1]
the managers over
The word "over" is used here as an idiom. Alternate translation: "the managers in charge of"
property and possessions
These two words share similar meanings and refer to all of the items and lands that the king owned.
1 Chronicles 28:2
rose to his feet
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "stood up"
my brothers and my people
These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that David and the people of Israel are family.
the ark of the covenant of Yahweh; a footstool for our God
The second phrase defines the first phrase. The "ark of the covenant" is spoke of as Yahweh's footstool to picture God on his throne, with his feet resting on his footstool, which represents all that is in submission to him.
1 Chronicles 28:3
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to the Israelites.
a temple for my name
Here God refers to himself by his "name." Alternate translation: "a temple for me"
a man of war and have shed blood
"a man accustomed to war and have shed blood." Both descriptions emphasize the same thing, namely that David had killed people.
have shed blood
This refers to killing people. Alternate translation: "have killed people"
1 Chronicles 28:4
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to the Israelites.
chose me ... to be king over Israel forever
One possible meaning is that here David is a metonym for David and his descendants who will rule Israel forever. Alternate translation: "chose me and my descendants ... to be kings over Israel forever" Another is that David will continue to be the king of Israel after he is resurrected from the dead.
all Israel
"the whole land of Israel" or "all the Israelites"
1 Chronicles 28:5
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to the Israelites.
to sit on the throne of
Here "to sit on the throne" means to rule as king. Alternate translation: "to rule over" or "to be the king of"
the kingdom of Yahweh, over Israel
"Israel, which is Yahweh's kingdom"
1 Chronicles 28:6
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to the Israelites.
He said to me
"God said to me"
my house
The word "house" refers to the temple of Yahweh.
I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his Father
This does not mean that Solomon becomes an actual son of God, but it describes the personal relationship that he and God will have. Alternate translation: "I have chosen to treat him like a son, and I will be like a father to him"
1 Chronicles 28:7
Connecting Statement:
David continues speaking to the Israelites.
my commandments and decrees
These two words basically mean the same thing and refer to everything that Yahweh had commanded.
as you are this day
The word "you" here refers to David. Also, the understood word "committed" may be supplied. Alternate translation: "as you are committed this day"
1 Chronicles 28:8
Connecting Statement:
David finishes speaking to the Israelites.
Now then, in the sight of all Israel ... all of you must
Here David is giving a command to all of the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Now then, in the sight of all Israel, this assembly for Yahweh, and in the presence of our God, I command all of you to"
Now then
This indicates that David starts a new phase in his speech.
all Israel, this assembly for Yahweh
These two phrases have the same meaning and the second describes the first. Even though all of the people of Israel are not present, those present represent all of Israel. Alternate translation: "all you people of Israel, in this assembly for Yahweh"
in the sight of
The phrase "in the sight of" means that they are all present and listening. Alternate translation: "in the hearing of"
keep and try to carry out
The phrase "to carry out" means basically the same thing as "keep." Together the words emphasize importance of doing

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what God commands. Alternate translation: "carefully obey"

your descendants after you forever

This means that the land will belong to their descendants in the future. The phrase "after you" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "your children and your descendants, who will take your place after you die"

1 Chronicles 28:9

the God of your father

David calls himself "your father" because this is a very formal occasion. Alternate translation: "my God"

with your whole heart

Here the "heart" the represents the whole person. To do something with "your whole heart" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "with complete devotion" or "completely"

a willing spirit

Here the "spirit" represents the whole person and emphasizes the person's will. Alternate translation: "willingly"

searches all hearts and understands every motivation of everyone's thoughts

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh knows the thoughts and motives of every person.

all hearts

Here people's "hearts" represent their feelings and desires. Alternate translation: "searches everyone's emotions and desires"

If you seek him, he will be found by you

This can be written in active form. Also, this speaks of following Yahweh and having him listen to you as searching for him and finding him. Alternate translation: "If you seek him, you will find him" or "If you try to get Yahweh to pay attention to you, he will do so"

1 Chronicles 28:10

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to Solomon.

Realize that

"Be aware that" or "Be sure you remember that"

Be strong and do it

The word "strong" here refers to willpower and strength of character.

1 Chronicles 28:11

General Information:

The writer begins a list of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans.The verb "gave" here is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew.

temple portico

"temple porch" or "temple entrance." This refers to the columns that supported the roof at the entrance of the temple.

1 Chronicles 28:12

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

treasuries

storerooms for valuable things

1 Chronicles 28:13

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

regulations

These were specific rules about how the priests and Levites should work in the temple.

divisions of the priests and Levites

"groups of the priests and Levites." This refers to the groups in which the priests and other temple workers were organized to fulfill their duties.

1 Chronicles 28:14

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

1 Chronicles 28:15

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

according to the use of each lampstand in the service

"determined by what each lampstand would be used for in the service in the temple." There would be silver lampstands of different weights for different purposes.

1 Chronicles 28:16

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

for every table

The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "the weight of the gold for every other table"

1 Chronicles 28:17

General Information:

The writer continues the list, which begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11, of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 is the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

1 Chronicles 28:18

General Information:

The writer ends the list that begins in 1 Chronicles 28:11 of the items for which David gave Solomon the plans. The verb "gave" in verse 11 translates the only verb in the entire list in Hebrew. The ULB adds verbs in this and other verses to make translation easier.

1 Chronicles 28:19

I have put all this in writing

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This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I wrote all of this down"

gave me to understand regarding the design

This refers to the detail for the design of the temple. Alternate translation: "helped me to understand the details for his temple"

1 Chronicles 28:20

strong and brave

These two words basically mean the same thing and emphasize that Solomon must be courageous.

Do not be afraid or dismayed

The words "afraid" and "dismayed" basically mean the same thing and emphasize that Solomon must never give up. Also, this can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be courageous" or "Be confident"

is with you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will help you"

He will not leave you nor abandon you

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will always be with Solomon. Also, this can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He will always be with you"

1 Chronicles 28:21

Connecting Statement:

David finishes speaking to Solomon.

See, here are the divisions

"Here are the divisions." David uses the word "see" here to refer back to the listings of the divisions of the Levites and their duties for the temple.

the divisions of the priests and Levites

See how you translated this in 1 Chronicles 28:13.

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29 [1]King David said to the whole assembly, "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is still young and inexperienced, and the task is great. For the temple is not for people but for Yahweh God.[2]So I have done my best to provide for the temple of my God. I am giving gold for the things to be made of gold, silver for the things to be made of silver, bronze for the things to be made of bronze, iron for the things to be made of iron, and wood for the things to be made of wood. I am also giving onyx stones, stones to be set, stones for inlaid work of various colors—all kinds of precious stones—and marble stone in abundance.
[3]Now, because of my delight in the house of my God, I am giving my personal treasure of gold and silver for it. I am doing this in addition to all that I have prepared for this holy temple:[4]three thousand talents of gold from Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, in order to overlay the walls of the buildings.[5]I am donating gold for the things to be made of gold, and silver for the things to be made of silver, and things for all kinds of work to be done by craftsmen. Who else wants to make a contribution to Yahweh today and give himself to him?"

[6]Then freewill offerings were made by the leaders of their ancestors' families, the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and hundreds, and by the officials over the king's work.[7]They gave for the service of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and 100,000 talents of iron.
[8]Those who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of Yahweh, under the supervision of Jehiel, a descendant of Gershon.[9]The people rejoiced because of these freewill offerings, because they had contributed wholeheartedly to Yahweh. King David also rejoiced greatly.

[10]David blessed Yahweh in front of all the assembly. He said, "May you be praised, Yahweh, God of Israel our ancestor, forever and ever.[11]Yours, Yahweh, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. For all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, Yahweh, and you are exalted as ruler over all.
[12]Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all people. In your hand is power and might. You possess the strength and might to make people great and to give strength to anyone.[13]Now then, our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name.

[14]But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have the ability to offer so willingly these things? Indeed, all things come from you, and we have simply given back to you what is yours.[15]For we are sojourners and tenants before you, as all our ancestors were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope of remaining on earth.
[16]Yahweh our God, all this wealth that we have collected in order to build a temple to honor your holy name—it comes from you and belongs to you.[17]I know also, my God, that you examine the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things, and now I look with joy as your people who are present here willingly offer gifts to you.
[18]Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel—our ancestors—keep this forever in the thoughts of the minds of your people. Direct their hearts toward you.[19]Give to Solomon my son a whole heart to keep your commandments, your covenant decrees, and your statutes, and to carry out all these plans to build the palace for which I have made provision."

[20]David said to all the assembly, "Now bless Yahweh your God." All the assembly blessed Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, and they bowed down and showed honor to Yahweh and to the king.[21]On the next day, they made sacrifices to Yahweh and offered burnt offerings to him. They offered a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel.

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[22]On that day, they ate and drank before Yahweh with great joy.They made Solomon, David's son, king a second time, and anointed him with Yahweh's authority to be ruler. They also anointed Zadok to be priest.
[23]Then Solomon sat on Yahweh's throne as king in place of David his father. He prospered, and all Israel obeyed him.
[24]All the leaders, soldiers, and King David's sons gave allegiance to King Solomon.[25]Yahweh greatly honored Solomon before all Israel and bestowed on him royal majesty such as had never been given to any king before him in Israel.

[26]David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.[27]David had been king of Israel for forty years. He ruled for seven years in Hebron and for thirty-three years in Jerusalem.[28]He died at a good old age, after enjoying a long life, wealth and honor. Solomon his son reigned after him.
[29]King David's accomplishments are written in the chronicles of Samuel the seer, in the chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the chronicles of Gad the seer.[30]Recorded there are the deeds of his rule, his power and the events that affected him, Israel, and all the kingdoms of the other lands.

1 Chronicles 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The preparation for the temple is finished in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Offering

David and the people made a free will offering and dedicated it all to God.

Links:

1 Chronicles 29:1 Notes

1 Chronicles 29:1

whom alone God has chosen

"the one whom God has chosen"

1 Chronicles 29:2

Connecting Statement:

David continues talking to the people about his provisions for the building of the temple.

gold for the things to be made of gold ... to be made of wood

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "gold so the craftsmen may make the gold things, silver so they may make the silver things, bronze so they may make the bronze things, iron so they may make the iron things, and wood so they may make the wooden things"

onyx stones ... stones to be set ... stones for inlaid work of various colors

Each of these phrases refer to different types of stones intended for different purposes.

onyx stones

These are stones with black and white lines that are used to make jewelry.

stones to be set

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "stones for the craftsmen to set" or "stones for mounting"

inlaid work

This refers to the beautiful and decorative designs or patterns formed by the stones.

1 Chronicles 29:3

Connecting Statement:

David continues talking to the people about his provisions for the building of the temple.

1 Chronicles 29:4

Connecting Statement:

David continues talking to the people about his provisions for the building of the temple.

three thousand talents

"3,000 talents." This can be stated in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "about 100,000 kilograms" or "about 100 metric tons"

gold from Ophir

This was the best quality and most valuable gold.

seven thousand talents

"7,000 talents." This can be stated in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "about 230,000 kilograms" or "230 metric tons"

1 Chronicles 29:5

Connecting Statement:

David finishes talking to the people about his provisions for the building of the temple.

gold for the things to be made of gold ... work to be done by craftsmen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "gold for the craftsmen to make the gold things, silver so they may make the silver things, and things of all kinds for their other work"

give himself to him

"give himself to God"

1 Chronicles 29:6

General Information:

See:.

Then freewill offerings were made by the leaders ... and by the officials over the king's work.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the leaders ... and the officials over the king's work made freewill offerings"

the commanders of thousands and hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the commanders of smaller military divisions" See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:1]

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the officials over the king's work
Here the word "over" is used as an idiom. Alternate translation: "the officials in charge of the king's work"
1 Chronicles 29:7
five thousand talents ... and 100,000 talents of iron
"5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze, and 100,000 talents of iron." These may be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "165 metric tons and 84 kilograms of gold, 330 metric tons of silver, 600 metric tons of bronze, and 3,300 metric tons of iron"
100,000 talents
"one hundred thousand talents"
1 Chronicles 29:8
treasury
This is a place where money and valuable objects are kept.
Jehiel
See how you translated these men's names in [1 Chronicles 23:8]
Gershon
This was the firstborn son of Levi. See how you translated these men's names in [1 Chronicles 23:7]
1 Chronicles 29:9
wholeheartedly
willingly and without any doubt or hesitation
1 Chronicles 29:10
May you be praised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people praise you"
Israel our ancestor
Here "Israel" refers to the man Jacob. Alternate translation: "Jacob our ancestor"
1 Chronicles 29:11
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
1 Chronicles 29:12
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
In your hand is power and might
This speaks of Yahweh having control over whether people are powerful or not as if "power and might" were something in hand that he had control over. Alternate translation: "You determine who has power and might"
power and might
The words "power" and "might" mean the same thing and emphasize the greatness of Yahweh's power.
1 Chronicles 29:13
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
your glorious name
Here Yahweh is represented by his name. Alternate translation: "you who are glorious" or "you because you are glorious"
1 Chronicles 29:14
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
But who am I, and who are my people, that we should have the ability to offer so willingly these things?
David uses this rhetorical question to express that he and his people deserve no praise for giving anything to God. Alternate translation: "My people and I should definitely offer these things to you willingly!"
1 Chronicles 29:15
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
we are sojourners and tenants before you
This speaks of people's lives being short as if they were tenants only here on earth for a short time. Alternate translation: "For our lives are short and we are like foreigners and tenants who live on your land"
Our days on the earth are like a shadow
This speaks of people's lives being short as if they were a shadow that is only visible for a short time. A person's lifetime is represented by his "days." Alternate translation: "Our time here on earth is like a shadow that disappears quickly"
1 Chronicles 29:16
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
1 Chronicles 29:17
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
you examine the heart
Here the "heart" represents a person's thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "you examine people's thoughts"
in the uprightness of my heart
Here the "heart" represents a person's thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "because I want to be honest and honorable in everything I do for you"
I look with joy as
"I am joyful as I see"
1 Chronicles 29:18
Connecting Statement:
David continues his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
keep this forever in the thoughts of the minds of your people
"keep this in the thoughts and minds of your people forever"
Direct their hearts toward you
Here the people's "hearts" represent their thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "Direct them to be loyal to you" or "Keep them loyal to you"
1 Chronicles 29:19
Connecting Statement:
David finishes his prayer of praise to Yahweh.
a whole heart
The word "heart" here is a metonym for a person's intentions or desires. See how you translated this in [1 Chronicles 13:8]
1 Chronicles 29:20
Now bless Yahweh
"Now praise Yahweh"
bowed down and showed honor to Yahweh and to the king
This refers to lying down on the ground before someone to show great respect. Alternate translation: "lay down on the ground to show respect to Yahweh and the king"
1 Chronicles 29:21
they made sacrifices to Yahweh and offered burnt offerings to him

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The people offered animals to be sacrificed to Yahweh by the priests. Most of the people did not actually kill and sacrifice the animals themselves.

a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs

"1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, and 1,000 lambs"

1 Chronicles 29:22

before Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in honor of Yahweh"

a second time

This means that they anointed him and declared him as king. The first time is described in 1 Chronicles 23:1.

anointed him with Yahweh's authority to be ruler

To do something with "Yahweh's authority" means to do it on his behalf and with his approval. Alternate translation: "anointed him to rule over Israel on Yahweh's behalf"

1 Chronicles 29:23

Then Solomon sat on Yahweh's throne as king in place of David his father

Here the throne of Israel is referred to as "Yahweh's throne," to emphasize that the people of Israel are Yahweh's people. Sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. Alternate translation: "So Solomon sat on the throne, in place of his father David, as king over Yahweh's people"

1 Chronicles 29:24

gave allegiance to King Solomon

"told King Solomon that they would be faithful to him"

1 Chronicles 29:27

forty years ... thirty-three years

"40 years ... 33 years"

1 Chronicles 29:28

at a good old age

"as an old man"

1 Chronicles 29:29

written in the chronicles of Samuel the seer, ... and in the chronicles of Gad the seer

These are written accounts that no longer exist.

1 Chronicles 29:30

Recorded there are the deeds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There men wrote down the deeds"

the deeds of his rule

"the things that happened while David was king"

the events that affected him, Israel, and all the kingdoms of the other lands

"all the things that happened to him and to the people of Israel and in the kingdoms of other countries while he was ruling Israel"

Introduction to 2 Chronicles

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 2 Chronicles

Solomon rules the kingdom (1:1–9:28)

Solomon put on the throne of David, his father (1:1-17) Solomon builds the temple of Yahweh (2:1–5:1) Solomon dedicates the temple (5:2–7:22) The life of Solomon (8:1–9:28)

Judah declines and goes into exile (10:1–36:23)

From Rehoboam to Zedekiah (10:1–36:21) The edict of Cyrus, permitting Israel to return to Canaan (36:22–23)

What are 1 and 2 Chronicles about?

The Book of 1 Chronicles retells the line of descendants from Adam to Saul. It then gives the history of Israel during the time of David. The Book of 2 Chronicles gives the history of Israel beginning with Solomon. It ends when the Babylonian army attacks Judah and takes some of the people to Babylon. The writers of Chronicles probably wrote these books for the Jews who returned from exile in Babylon. The purpose was to teach the people to avoid disobeying God as their ancestors did.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title "2 Chronicles" or "Second Chronicles." You may also call this book "The Events of the Kings of Judah and Israel, Book 2" or "The Second Book of the Events of the Kings of Judah and Israel."

Who wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles?

The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles are unknown. They mention that they used other books when writing Chronicles. The names of these other books are "The Chronicles of Samuel the Seer," "The Chronicles of Nathan the Seer," "The Chronicles of Gad the Seer," "The History of Nathan the Prophet," "The Chronicles of Shemaiah the Prophet and Iddo," "The Story of the Prophet Iddo" and "The books of the kings of Judah and Israel."

Why are there multiple books that give the history of the kings of Israel?

The books of Chronicles and the books of Kings tell much of the same history, but they are not exactly the same. The writers of Chronicles wrote mostly about the kings of Judah who were faithful to Yahweh and his covenant. The writers wanted the Jews to think carefully about David and Solomon. They also wanted the Jews to think about how Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah caused their ancestors to repent and to worship Yahweh. The writers wanted to encourage the Jews and their leaders to obey the law and to honor God's covenant with them. (See: covenant)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did God punish the people of Israel?

God punished the people of Israel because they disobeyed him and worshiped false gods. God punished them with

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disease, disasters, and defeat in battle. However, God forgave them and caused them to prosper again if they repented and obeyed him. The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles continually reminded the readers that God punished his people because they disobeyed. They wanted the readers to understand that they must obey God.

Why are alliances with foreign countries seen as evil in these books?

Yahweh led and protected the nation of Israel. The people of Israel should have trusted him instead of relying on other nations to protect them.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah.

What does it mean to "seek God?"

The writers of 1 and 2 Chronicles often wrote about "seeking God." To "seek God" means to make an effort to please and honor God. It can also mean to ask God for help. It does not imply that God is hidden.

What does the phrase "to this day" mean?

The writers used the phrase "to this day" to refer to the time when they were writing. The translator should be aware that "to this day" refers to a time already passed. The translator might decide to say, "to this day, at the time when this is being written," or, "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in 1 Chronicles 4:41, 43; 5:26; 13:11; 20:26; 21:10; 35:25.

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2 Chronicles

1 [1]Solomon son of David was strengthened in his rule, and Yahweh his God was with him and made him very powerful.
[2]Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every prince in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' houses.[3]So Solomon and all the assembly with him went to the high place that was at Gibeon, for there was the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of Yahweh, had made in the wilderness.[4]But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place that he had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.[5]In addition, the bronze altar made by Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur was there before the tabernacle of Yahweh; Solomon and the assembly went to it.[1]
[6]Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before Yahweh, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered one thousand burnt offerings on it.
[7]God appeared to Solomon that night and said to him, "Ask! What should I give you?"
[8]Solomon said to God, "You have shown great covenant faithfulness to David my father, and have made me king in his place.[9]Now, Yahweh God, let your promise to David my father be carried out, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth.[10]Now give me wisdom and knowledge, so that I may lead this people, for who can judge your people, who are so many in number?"[11]God said to Solomon, "Because this was in your heart, and because you have not asked for riches, wealth, or honor, nor for the life of those who hate you, nor for long life for yourself, but you have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself, so that you might rule my people, over whom I have made you king, this is what I will do.
[12]I will now give you wisdom and knowledge. I will also give you riches, wealth, and honor, as none of the kings had before you, and none after you will have."[13]So Solomon came to Jerusalem from the high place that was at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting; he reigned over Israel.

[14]Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen, and he had 1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen that he placed in the chariot cities, and with himself, the king in Jerusalem.[15]The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as the stones, and he made cedar wood as common as the sycamore trees that are in the lowlands.
[16]As for the importation of horses from Egypt and Kue for Solomon, the king's merchants bought them from Kue at a price.[17]They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for 150 shekels. They also exported them to the kings of the Hittites and the Arameans.

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[1]Some of the ancient Hebrew copies have, the bronze altar made by Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, he placed there before the tabernacle of Yahweh, where he refers to David.

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2 Chronicles 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about King Solomon's reign (2 Chronicles 1-9).

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Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom

Solomon asks God for wisdom to rule God's people. God is pleased with this request because it is used to serve others. Therefore, God also gives Solomon tremendous wealth and a long life. (See: wise and peopleofgod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 1:1 Notes 2 Chronicles intro

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2 Chronicles 1:1

was strengthened in his rule

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "gained complete control over his kingdom" or "ruled powerfully over his kingdom"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

God was with him

Here "was with him" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God supported him" or "God helped him"

2 Chronicles 1:2

General Information:

It may be helpful to reorder the events in these verses as in the UDB.

spoke to all Israel, to the commanders ... heads of the fathers' house

Here "all of Israel" means those people mentioned afterwards. They represent all of Israel. Alternate translation: "spoke to the commanders ... heads of the father's house"

the commanders of thousands and of hundreds

Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions and the commanders of smaller military divisions"

to every prince in all Israel, the heads of the fathers' houses

Here "the heads of the fathers' houses" further describe the princes. Alternate translation: "to every prince in all Israel, that is, the heads of the fathers' houses"

to every prince

Here "prince" means leaders in general. They are not necessarily the sons of the king. Alternate translation: "to every leader"

the heads of the fathers' houses

Here "heads" is a metaphor for the most important part. And "houses" represents families. Alternate translation: "the leaders of the families in Israel"

2 Chronicles 1:4

Kiriath Jearim

A little town about 9 miles west of Jerusalem.

pitched a tent

"set up a tent"

2 Chronicles 1:5

the bronze altar made by Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri son Hur made"

Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur

These are names of men.

2 Chronicles 1:6

went up there

"went up to the high place at Gibeon"

one thousand

"1,000"

2 Chronicles 1:7

Ask! What should I give you?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Ask for whatever you want from me."

2 Chronicles 1:8

You have shown great covenant faithfulness to David

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." Alternate translation: "You have greatly and faithfully loved David" or "You have been very faithful to David"

2 Chronicles 1:9

Now

Here the word "Now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

let your promise to David my father be carried out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "please do what you promised to David my father that you would do"

a people as numerous as the dust of the earth

This simile emphasizes the great number of Israelites. Alternate translation: "countless people" or "very many people"

2 Chronicles 1:10

give me wisdom and knowledge

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "wisdom" and "knowledge." Alternate translation: "cause me to be wise and to know many things"

who can judge your people, who are so many in number?

Here "judge" means to govern or rule. Solomon uses a question to state that it is impossible to rule over so many people without God's help. Alternate translation: "no one can judge all of your countless people without your help."

2 Chronicles 1:11

Because this was in your heart

Here "heart" represents desire. Alternate translation: "Because this was your desire" or "Because this is what you wanted"

nor for the life of those who hate you

"nor to be able to defeat those who hate you" or "nor to be able to kill your enemies"

2 Chronicles 1:12

I will now give you wisdom and knowledge

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "wisdom"

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and "knowledge." Alternate translation: "I will now cause you to be wise and to know many things"

2 Chronicles 1:13

So Solomon came to Jerusalem

Here "Solomon" represents all the people with him. Also "came" can be stated as "went." Alternate translation: "So Solomon and the people with him went to Jerusalem"

from before the tent of meeting

"from the tent of meeting"

2 Chronicles 1:14

1,400 chariots

"one thousand four hundred chariots"

twelve thousand horsemen

"12,000 horsemen"

in the chariot cities

This is a reference to cities which stored his chariots.

2 Chronicles 1:15

The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as the stones

The narrator uses exaggeration to emphasize the great amount of silver that was in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The king had so much silver in Jerusalem, it was like there was as much silver as there was stones on the ground"

the sycamore trees

This is a tree that grows fruit that looks like figs.

2 Chronicles 1:16

As for the importation of horses from Egypt and Kue for Solomon

"Importation" is the act of bringing something into one country from another country. This can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "As for the horses Solomon imported from Egypt and Kue"

Kue

This is the name of a region. Some think that Kue was the same as Cilicia, in Asia Minor.

at a price

"at a set price" or "for money"

2 Chronicles 1:17

six hundred shekels of silver ... 150 shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: "about 6.6 kilograms of silver ... about 1.7 kilograms"

six hundred

"600"

exported

to send something out of one country into another

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2 [1]Now Solomon commanded the building of a house for Yahweh's name and the building of a palace for his kingdom.
[2]Solomon assigned seventy thousand men to carry loads, and eighty thousand men as stonecutters in the mountains, and 3,600 men to supervise them.[3]Solomon sent a message to Hiram, the king of Tyre, saying, "As you did with David my father, sending him cedar logs to build a house to live in, do the same with me.
[4]See, I am about to build a house for the name of Yahweh my God, to set it apart to him, to burn incense of sweet spices before him, to set out the bread of the presence, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths and on the new moons, and on the appointed feasts for Yahweh our God. This is forever, for Israel.[5]The house that I will build will be very large, for our God is greater than all other gods.
[6]But who is able to build God a house, since the entire universe and even heaven itself cannot contain him? Who am I to build him a house, except to burn sacrifices before him?[7]So send me a man who is skilled at work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue wool, a man who knows how to make all kinds of engraved wood. He will be with the skilled men who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided.
[8]Send me also cedar, cypress, and algum trees from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber in Lebanon. See, my servants will be with your servants,[9]in order to prepare for me timber in abundance, for the house which I am about to build will be great and marvelous.[10]See, I will give to your servants, the men who will cut the timber, twenty thousand cors of ground wheat, twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil."[1]

[11]Then Hiram, the king of Tyre, answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon: "Because Yahweh loves his people, he has made you king over them."
[12]In addition, Hiram said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, who has given to David the king a wise son, gifted with prudence and understanding, who will build a house for Yahweh and a royal palace for himself.
[13]Now I have sent a skillful man, Huram-Abi, who is gifted with understanding.[14]He is the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan. His father was a man from Tyre. He is skilled at work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and in timber, and in purple, blue, and crimson wool, and fine linen. He is also skilled in making any kind of engraving and in making any kind of design. Let a place be made for him among your skilled workers, and with those of my master, David, your father.
[15]Now then, the wheat and the barley, the oil and the wine, of which my master has spoken, let him send these things to his servants.[16]We will cut wood from Lebanon, as much wood as you need. We will take it to you as rafts by sea to Joppa, and you will carry it up to Jerusalem."

[17]Solomon counted all the foreigners who were in the land of Israel, following the method that David, his father, had counted them. They were found to be 153,600.[18]He assigned seventy thousand of them to carry loads, eighty thousand to be stonecutters in the mountains, and 3,600 to be supervisors to put the people to work.

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[1]Some translations compare this section with 1 Kings 5:11 where the Hebrew reads: twenty thousand cors of wheat as food.

2 Chronicles 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Solomon's reign continues in this chapter. This chapter also begins a section on building the temple. (2 Chronicles 2-4 and temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

House of God

The temple is repeatedly referred to as the "house of God" because Yahweh will dwell in the temple. (See: houseofgod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 2:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 2:1

Now

This marks a new part of the story.

commanded the building of a house for Yahweh's name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "commanded his people to build a house where Yahweh may live" or "commanded his people to build a house where they could worship Yahweh"

of a palace for his kingdom

"of a royal palace for his kingdom" or "of a palace for himself"

2 Chronicles 2:2

seventy thousand men ... eighty thousand men

"70,000 men ... 80,000 men"

to carry loads

It is understood that these are loads of materials for building Yahweh's house. Alternate translation: "to carry loads of materials"

3,600

"three thousand six hundred"

2 Chronicles 2:3

Hiram

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 2:4

I am about to build a house for the name of Yahweh my God

Here "name" represents the person. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 2:1]

I am about to build

Solomon would command his people to build the house. Alternate translation: "I am about to command my people to build"

the bread of the presence

This is a reference to the 12 loaves of bread that were placed in front of the altar.

new moons

This was the time of a festival coinciding with the movement of the moon.

This is forever, for Israel

Here "This" refers back to all the ways the people will worship Yahweh at his temple. Alternate translation: "These are the things Yahweh has commanded Israel to do forever"

2 Chronicles 2:5

God is greater

This is a reference to God being more important and more powerful than other gods, not to being larger than other gods.

2 Chronicles 2:6

who is able to build God a house, since the entire universe and even heaven itself cannot contain him? Who am I to build him a house, except to burn sacrifices before him?

Solomon uses a question to emphasize that no one is able or worthy to build a house for God. Alternate translation: "no one is able to build a house for God because not even the universe or heaven is big enough to contain him. I am not worthy to build a house for him, except as a place to offer sacrifices to him.

2 Chronicles 2:8

Connecting Statement:

This continues Solomon's message to Hiram, the king of Tyre.

cedar, cypress, and algum trees

These are different types of tress.

2 Chronicles 2:10

twenty thousand cors

A cor is 220 liters. Twenty thousand cors equals 4,400 cubic meters.

twenty thousand

"20,000"

ground wheat

"wheat flour"

twenty thousand baths

A bath is 22 liters. Twenty thousand baths equals 440 cubic meters.

2 Chronicles 2:12

gifted with prudence and understanding

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "prudence" and "understanding." Alternate translation: "who is very intelligent and understands many things"

2 Chronicles 2:13

gifted with understanding

The abstract noun "understanding" can be stated as "understands" or "wise." Alternate translation: "who understand many things" or "who is very wise"

Huram-Abi

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 2:14

He is skilled at work in gold ... crimson wool

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Translate many of these words as you did in 2 Chronicles 2:7.

fine linen

"high quality cloth" or "the best cloth"

He is the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan

"His mother is from the tribe of Dan" or "His mother is a descendant of Dan"

2 Chronicles 2:15

Connecting Statement:

This continues the message from Hiram, king of Tyre, to Solomon.

of which my master has spoken, let him send these things to his servants

Hiram refers to Solomon as "my master" and to himself and his own people as "his servants." This is a way of showing respect. Alternate translation: "of which you, my master, have spoken, please send these things to us, your servants"

2 Chronicles 2:16

you will carry it up to Jerusalem

Here "you" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "you will command your people to take the wood to Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 2:17

Solomon counted

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon had his servants count"

They were found to be 153,600

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There were 153,600 foreigners"

153,600

"one hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred"

3,600

"three thousand six hundred"

2 Chronicles 2:18

seventy thousand of them ... eighty thousand to be

"70,000 of them ... 80,000 of them to be"

to carry loads

It is understood that these are loads of materials for building Yahweh's house. Alternate translation: "to carry loads of materials"

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3 [1]Then Solomon began to build the house of Yahweh at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where Yahweh had appeared to
David his father. He prepared the place that David had planned for it, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.[2]He
began to build on the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.[3]Now these are the dimensions of
the foundation that Solomon laid for the house of God. Using the old style cubit, the length was sixty cubits, and the width
was twenty cubits.
[4]The length of the portico at the front of the house was twenty cubits, matching the building's width. Its height was also
twenty cubits, and Solomon overlaid its interior with pure gold.[5]He fashioned the ceiling of the main hall with cypress,
which he overlaid with fine gold, and which he carved with palm trees and chains.
[6]He decorated the house with precious stones; the gold was gold from Parvaim.[7]He also overlaid its beams, thresholds,
walls, and doors with gold; he carved cherubim on its walls.

[8]He built the most holy place. Its length matched the house's width, twenty cubits, and its width was also twenty cubits.
He overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents.[9]The weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. He
overlaid its high surfaces with gold.

[10]He made two images of cherubim for the most holy place; craftsmen overlaid them with gold.[1][11]The wings of the
cherubim were twenty cubits long all together; the wing of one cherub was five cubits long, reaching to the wall of the
room, and the other wing was five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.[12]The wing of the other cherub was
also five cubits, reaching to the wall of the room; its other wing was also five cubits, touching the wing of the first cherub.
[13]The wings of these cherubim spread a total of twenty cubits. The cherubim stood on their feet, with their faces toward
the main hall.[14]He made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson wool and fine linen, and he fashioned cherubim on it.

[15]Solomon also made two pillars, each thirty-five cubits high, for in front of the house; the capitals that were on the top of
them were five cubits high.[16]He made chains for the pillars and put them on top of them; he also made one hundred
pomegranates and joined them to the chains.[17]He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right hand, and the
other on the left; he named the pillar on the right Jakin, and the pillar on the left Boaz.

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew texts can be rendered in two ways. Some translate as: two forged metal images of cherubim; and another as: two carved wooden images of cherubim.

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2 Chronicles 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon and the building of the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Location of the temple

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The location of the temple was very significant. Many important events in history occurred at this location.

Links:

2 Chronicles 3:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 3:1

Then Solomon began to build ... He prepared

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Then Solomon's workers began to build ... They prepared"

Mount Moriah

This is the name of a mountain.

Ornan the Jebusite

"Ornan" is the name of a man. "Jebusite" is the name of a people group.

2 Chronicles 3:2

He began

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "They began"

the second day of the second month

"day 2 of month 2." This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. The second day is near the middle of April on Western calendars.

in the fourth year

"in year 4"

2 Chronicles 3:3

that Solomon laid

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "that Solomon's workers laid"

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator begins to explain the dimensions and the design of the temple.

sixty cubits ... twenty cubits

"60 cubits ... 20 cubits." A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "27.6 meters long ... 9.2 meters"

2 Chronicles 3:4

portico

an area of a building made of columns and a roof that leads to and connects with the building's entrance door. This portico was probably attached to the front part of the wall that surrounded the temple.

twenty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters"

Solomon overlaid

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers overlaid"

2 Chronicles 3:5

He fashioned ... which he overlaid ... which he carved

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers fashioned ... which they overlaid ... which they carved"

the main hall

This is a reference to a large room, not a hallway.

2 Chronicles 3:6

He decorated

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers decorated"

precious stones

Stones that were beautiful, highly valued, and used for decorations.

Parvaim

This is probably the name of a region.

2 Chronicles 3:7

He also overlaid ... he carved

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers also overlaid ... they carved"

beams

A beam is a long heavy piece of wood used to support a building.

2 Chronicles 3:8

He built ... He overlaid

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers built ... They overlaid"

twenty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters"

six hundred talents

"600 talents." A talent is 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "about 20 metric tons"

2 Chronicles 3:9

fifty shekels

"50 shekels." A shekel is 11 grams. Alternate translation: ".55 kilograms" or "about a half a kilogram"

2 Chronicles 3:10

He made

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made"

2 Chronicles 3:11

twenty cubits ... five cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters ... 2.3 meters"

2 Chronicles 3:13

twenty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters"

2 Chronicles 3:14

He made ... he fashioned

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made ... they fashioned"

blue, purple, and crimson wool

Translate these words as you did in 2 Chronicles 2:7.

fine linen

"high quality cloth" or "the best cloth"

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2 Chronicles 3:15

Solomon also made

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers also made"

thirty-five cubits ... five cubits

"35 cubits ... 5 cubits." A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "16.1 meters ... 2.3 meters"

the capitals

decorations on top of the pillars

2 Chronicles 3:16

He made ... he also made

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "They made ... they also made"

one hundred pomegranates

"100 pomegranates"

2 Chronicles 3:17

He set up

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "They set up"

on the right hand ... on the left

"on the right side ... on the left side" or "on the south side ... on the north side"

he named

"Solomon named"

Jakin

Possibly a name to describe God as "The One who establishes."

Boaz

This name means "in strength" and is possibly used here to describe God because it means, "In him is strength."

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4 [1]Moreover he made an altar of bronze; its length was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits. Its height was ten
cubits.[2]He also made the round sea of cast metal, ten cubits from brim to brim. Its height was five cubits, and the sea
was thirty cubits in circumference.[3]Under the brim encircling the sea were bulls, ten to each cubit, cast in one piece with
the sea when the sea itself was cast.
[4]The large basin known as "The Sea" was set upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, three looking toward the
west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. "The Sea" was set on top of them, and all their
hindquarters were toward the inside.[5]"The Sea" was as thick as the width of a hand, and its brim was forged like the brim
of a cup, like a lily blossom. "The Sea" held three thousand baths of water.[6]He made also ten basins for washing things; he
put five on the south side, and five on the north; items used in performing the burnt offering were to be washed in them.
The large basin known as "The Sea" was used by the priests for them to wash.

[7]He made the ten lampstands of gold that were made from the instructions for their design; he placed them in the temple,
five on the right hand, and five on the left.[8]He made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and
five on the left. He made one hundred basins of gold.
[9]Furthermore he made the courtyard of the priests, and the great court and the doors for the court and overlaid their
doors with bronze.[10]He placed the basin known as "The Sea" on the east side of the temple, facing toward the south.
[11]Huram made the pots, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls.So Huram finished the work that he did for King Solomon in
the house of God:
[12]the two pillars, the bowl-like capitals that were on top of the two pillars, and the two sets of decorative latticework to
cover the two bowl-like capitals that were on top of the pillars.
[13]He had made the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of decorative latticework: two rows of pomegranates for
each set of latticework to cover the two bowl-like capitals that were on the pillars.

[14]He also made the stands and the basins to go on the stands;
[15]one sea and the twelve bulls under it,
[16]also the pots, shovels, meat forks, and all the other implements that Huram-Abi made of polished bronze for King
Solomon, for the house of Yahweh.[1]
[17]The king had cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Sukkoth and Zarethan.[18]Thus Solomon
made all these vessels in great abundance; indeed, the weight of the bronze could not be known.

[19]Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables on which the bread
of the presence was to be placed;
[20]the lampstands with their lamps, that were designed to burn before the inner room—these were made of pure gold;
[21]and the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold, pure gold.

[22]Also the lamp trimmers, basins, spoons, and incense burners were all made of pure gold. As for the entrance into the
house, its inner doors into the most holy place and the doors of the house, that is, of the temple, were made of gold.

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[1]Instead of meat forks, some modern translations have bowls, which follows 1 Kings 7:45.

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2 Chronicles 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon and the building of the temple continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Special construction

Not only is the temple constructed in a special way, the things that are used in the temple's sacrificial system and its decorations are constructed in a special way.

Links:

2 Chronicles 4:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 4:1

he made

Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made"

twenty cubits ... ten cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "20 cubits ... 10 cubits" or "9.2 meters ... 4.6 meters"

2 Chronicles 4:2

ten cubits ... five cubits ... thirty cubits

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "4.6 meters ... 2.3 meters ... 13.8 meters"

the round sea

This refers to a tank or basin that would hold water.

cast metal

This is metal that was melted then formed in a mold.

from brim to brim

"from one edge to the other"

in circumference

Circumference is the distance or measurement around a circular object or area.

2 Chronicles 4:3

each cubit

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "every 46 centimeters"

ten to each cubit

"ten per cubit"

when the sea itself was cast

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the workers cast the sea itself"

2 Chronicles 4:4

The Sea

This refers to the tank or basin that held water for sacrifices.

was set upon twelve oxen

"was on top of twelve oxen"

twelve oxen

These are images of oxen made of bronze. Alternate translation: "twelve large figures of bulls" or "twelve bronze oxen"

"The Sea" was set on top of them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers set 'The Sea' on top of the oxen"

hindquarters

This is the back quarter of the body of an animal with four feet.

2 Chronicles 4:5

thick as the width of a hand

This is about 8 centimeters.

its brim was forged like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers forged the brim to look like the brim of a cup, to curve outward like a lily"

three thousand baths

"3,000 baths." A bath is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "66 cubic meters"

2 Chronicles 4:6

He made ... he put

Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made ... they put"

items used in performing the burnt offering were to be washed in them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were to wash the items used in performing the burnt offering in them"

2 Chronicles 4:7

He made ... he placed

Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made ... they placed"

that were made from the instructions for their design

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "according to the instructions for their design" or "according to how Solomon instructed his workers to design them"

on the right hand ... on the left

"on the right side ... on the left side" or "on the south side ... on the north side"

2 Chronicles 4:8

He made ... He made

Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made ... They made"

one hundred basins

"100 basins"

basins

shallow bowls used for washing

2 Chronicles 4:9

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he made the courtyard ... and overlaid
Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made ... they overlaid ... They placed"
the great court
"the large court"
2 Chronicles 4:10
He placed
Here "he" refers to Solomon. The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "They placed"
on the east side of the temple, facing toward the south
"next to the southeast corner of the temple"
2 Chronicles 4:11
Huram
See how you translated this name in 2 Chronicles 2:13.
the sprinkling bowls
bowls that held blood that was used in the house of God for sprinkling the altar
Huram finished the work that he did
Here Huram represents all who worked on the temple. Alternate translation: "Huram and the other workers finished the work that they did"
2 Chronicles 4:12
bowl-like capitals
The upper part of a pillar is called a capital. See how you translated "capital" in 2 Chronicles 3:15. Alternate translation: "bowl-shaped tops" or "bowl-shaped upper parts"
decorative latticework
This refers to the decorative carving or markings on the upper part of the pillars. Alternate translation: "carvings that resembled chains"
2 Chronicles 4:13
He had made
Here Huram represents all who worked on the temple. Alternate translation: "Huram and the other workers had made"
the four hundred pomegranates
"the 400 pomegranates." Translate "pomegranates" as you did in [2 Chronicles 3:16]
2 Chronicles 4:14
He also made
Here Huram, who is also called Huram-Abi, represents all those who worked with him. Alternate translation: "They also made"
the basins
"the bowls"
2 Chronicles 4:15
one sea and the twelve bulls
This is a large decorative washing container. Translate "sea" as you did in 2 Chronicles 4:2 and "bulls" as you did in 2 Chronicles 4:3.
2 Chronicles 4:16
Huram-Abi made
Here Huram, who is also called Huram-Abi, represents all those who worked with him. Alternate translation: "Huram-Abi and his craftsmen made"
other implements
"other tools" or "other objects used for the altar"
polished bronze
Bronze that the workmen polished so that it would reflect light.
2 Chronicles 4:17
The king had cast them
The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "The king commanded his workers to cast them"
Zarethan
This is the name of a city.
2 Chronicles 4:18
Solomon made
The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made" or "Solomon had his workers make"
the weight of the bronze could not be known
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) there was so much bronze no one tried to weigh it. Alternate translation: "no one even tried to weigh the bronze" or 2) this is a hyperbole that emphasizes the great amount of bronze. Alternate translation: "no one could even determine how much all the bronze weighed"
2 Chronicles 4:19
Solomon made
The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Solomon's workers made"
all the furnishings
This refers to all of the bowls and tools that were used in the house of God.
the tables on which the bread of the presence was to be placed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the tables on which the priests were to place the bread of the presence"
the bread of the presence
This is a reference to the 12 loaves of bread that were placed in front of the altar. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 2:4.
2 Chronicles 4:21
the flowers, the lamps
The "flowers" and "lamps" were part of the lampstands.
the tongs
This is a tool made from two sticks of wood or metal connected at one end and used for picking up objects.
2 Chronicles 4:22
Also the lamp trimmers ... were all made of pure gold
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The workers also made the lamp trimmers ... out of pure gold"
lamp trimmers
These would have been used to trim the wicks of the lamps.
its inner doors ... were made of gold
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the workers made its inner doors ... out of gold"

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5 [1]When all the work that Solomon did for the house of Yahweh was completed, Solomon brought in the things that
David, his father, had set apart for this purpose, including the silver, the gold, and all the furnishings—he placed them
into the treasuries of the house of God.

[2]Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, and the leaders of the families of the people of
Israel, in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh from the city of David, that is, Zion.[3]All the men of
Israel assembled before the king at the feast, which was in the seventh month.
[4]All the elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the ark.[5]They brought up the ark, the tent of meeting, and all the
holy furnishings that were in the tent. The priests who were of the tribe of Levi brought these things up.[6]King Solomon
and all the assembly of Israel came together before the ark, sacrificing sheep and cattle that could not be counted.
[7]The priests brought in the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to its place, into the inner room of the house, to the most holy
place, under the wings of the cherubim.[8]For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, and they
covered the ark and the poles by which it was carried.
[9]The poles that extended from the ark were so long that their ends were seen from the holy place in front of the inner
room, but they could not be seen from outside. They are there to this day.[10]There was nothing in the ark except the two
tablets that Moses had put there at Horeb, when Yahweh made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out
of Egypt.

[11]It came about that the priests came out of the holy place. All the priests who were present had consecrated themselves to
Yahweh, regardless of their divisions.[12]Also the Levites who were the singers, all of them, including Asaph, Heman,
Jeduthun, and their sons and brothers, clothed in fine linen and playing cymbals, lutes and harps, stood at the east end of
the altar. With them were 120 priests blowing trumpets.
[13]It came about that the trumpeters and singers made music together, making one sound to be heard for praising and
thanking Yahweh. They raised their voices with the trumpets and cymbals and other instruments, and they praised
Yahweh. They sang, "For he is good, for his covenant loyalty endures forever." Then the house, the house of Yahweh, was
filled with a cloud.[14]The priests could not stand in order to serve because of the cloud, for the glory of Yahweh filled his
house.

2 Chronicles 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Moving the contents of the tent

Everything from the tent was moved into the new temple. This too was done in a special way. (See: temple)

Links:

2 Chronicles 5:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 5:1

When all the work that Solomon did for the house of Yahweh was completed, Solomon brought

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Solomon's workers completed all of the work for the house of Yahweh, they brought"

treasuries

storerooms, rooms where things are kept or stored

2 Chronicles 5:2

assembled the elders of Israel

"called together the leaders of Israel"

all the heads of the tribes

Here "heads" is a metaphor for the most important part of something. Alternate translation: "all the leaders of the tribes"

2 Chronicles 5:3

All the men of Israel

This may refer either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in 5:2 or 2) generally to those who traveled to Jerusalem for the feast, not necessarily to every male person who lived in Israel.

at the feast, which was in the seventh month

This is the Festival of Shelters which is on the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is near the beginning of October on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 5:5

furnishings

This refers to all of the bowls and tools that were used in the house of God. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 4:19

2 Chronicles 5:6

all the assembly of Israel

Here "all" is a generalization meaning very many Israelites.

sacrificing sheep and cattle that could not be counted

This is an exaggeration that emphasizes the great number of animals that were sacrificed. This can be stated in active

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form. Alternate translation: "sacrificing more sheep and cattle than anyone could count" or "sacrificing very many sheep and cattle"

2 Chronicles 5:7

into the inner room of the house, to the most holy place, under

"into the inner room of the house—that is, to the most holy place—under"

2 Chronicles 5:8

poles by which it was carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "poles by which the priests carried it"

2 Chronicles 5:9

their ends were seen ... they could not be seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people could see their ends ... people could not see them"

to this day

This means the day on which the writer wrote.

2 Chronicles 5:10

There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets ... Egypt

This double negative emphasizes that the two tablets were the only things in the ark. Alternate translation: "The only things in the ark were the two tablets ... Egypt"

2 Chronicles 5:11

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way of doing this, you could consider using it here.

2 Chronicles 5:12

Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun

These are names of men.

sons and brothers

"sons and other relatives"

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound

120 priests

"one hundred and twenty priests"

2 Chronicles 5:13

making one sound to be heard for praising and thanking Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "making one sound as they praised and thanked Yahweh"

raised their voices

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "sang loudly"

for his covenant loyalty endures forever

The abstract noun "covenant loyalty" can be stated as "faithful." Alternate translation: "for he is faithful forever"

Then the house, the house of Yahweh, was filled with a cloud

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then a cloud filled the house of Yahweh"

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6 [1]Then Solomon said, "Yahweh has said that he would live in thick darkness,[2]but I have built you a lofty residence, a
place for you to live in forever."[3]Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.

[4]He said, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised, who spoke to David my father, and has fulfilled it with his own hands, saying,[5]'Since the day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, in order for my name to be there. Neither did I choose any man to be prince over my people Israel.[6]However, I have chosen Jerusalem, so that my name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel.'
[7]Now it was in the heart of David my father, to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.[8]But Yahweh said to David my father, 'In that it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well for it to be in your heart.
[9]Nevertheless, you are not to build the house; instead, your son, one who will come from your loins, will build the house for my name.'
[10]Yahweh has carried out the word that he had said, for I have arisen in the place of David my father, and I sit on the throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised. I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.[11]I have placed the ark there, in which is Yahweh's covenant, which he made with the people of Israel."

[12]Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands.[13]For he had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high. He had placed it in the middle of the courtyard. He stood on it and knelt down before all the assembly of Israel, and then he spread out his hands toward the heavens.
[14]He said, "Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens or on the earth, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with your servants who walk before you with all their heart;[15]you who have kept with your servant David my father, what you promised him. Yes, you spoke with your mouth and have fulfilled it with your hand, as it is today.
[16]Now then, Yahweh, God of Israel, carry out what you have promised to your servant David my father, when you said, 'You will not fail to have a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful to walk in my law, as you have walked before me.'[17]Now then, Yahweh, God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant David.

[18]But will God actually live with mankind on the earth? Look, the entire universe and heaven itself cannot contain you—how much less can this temple that I have built![19]Yet please respect this prayer of your servant and his plea, Yahweh my God; listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you.[20]May your eyes be open toward this temple day and night, the place where you promised to put your name. May you listen to the prayer your servant prays toward this place.

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[21]So listen to the pleas of your servant and of your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, listen from the place where you live, from the heavens; and when you listen, forgive.

[22]If a man sins against his neighbor and is required to swear an oath, and if he comes and swears an oath before your altar in this house,[23]listen from the heavens and act. Judge your servants, condemning the wicked and bringing what he has done upon his own head. Declare the innocent not guilty and give to him according to his righteousness.

[24]When your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, if they turn back to you, confess your name, pray, and seek favor before you in this temple—[25]then please listen from the heavens and forgive the sin of your people Israel; bring them back to the land that you gave to them and to their ancestors.

[26]When the skies are shut up and there is no rain because the people have sinned against you—if they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin when you have afflicted them—[27]then listen in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and of your people Israel, when you direct them to the good way in which they should walk. Send rain on your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

[28]Suppose there is famine in the land, or suppose that there is disease, blight or mildew, locusts or caterpillars; or suppose that its enemies attack the city gates in their land, or that there is any plague or sickness—[29]and suppose then that prayers and pleas are made by a person or by all your people Israel—each knowing the plague and sorrow in his own heart as he spreads out his hands toward this temple.[30]Then listen from heaven, the place where you live; forgive, and reward every person for all his ways; you know his heart, because you and you only know the hearts of human beings.[31]Do this so that they may fear you, so that they may walk in your ways all the days that they live on the land that you gave to our ancestors.

[32]As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel, but who—because of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—comes and prays toward this house,[33]then please listen from heaven, the place where you live, and do all that the foreigner asks of you, so that all the people of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and that they might know that this house I have built is called by your name.

[34]Suppose that your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way you may send them, and suppose that they pray to you toward this city that you have chosen, and toward the house that I have built for your name.[35]Then listen from the heavens to their prayer, their request, and help their cause.

[36]Suppose they sin against you—since there is no one who does not sin—and suppose that you are angry with them and hand them over to the enemy, so that the enemy carries them away and takes them as captives to their land, whether distant or near.[37]Then suppose they realize they are in the land where they have been exiled, and suppose that they repent and seek favor from you in the land of their captivity. Suppose that they say, 'We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly.'[38]Suppose that they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they took them as captives, and suppose that they pray toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, and toward the city that you chose, and toward the house that I have built for your name.[39]Then listen from the heavens, the place where you live, to their prayer and to their pleas, and help their cause. Forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

[40]Now, my God, I beg you, let your eyes be open, and let your ears be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place.
[41]Now then arise, Yahweh God, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength. Let your priests, Yahweh God, be clothed with salvation, and let your faithful ones rejoice in your goodness.[42]Yahweh God, do not turn the face of your anointed away from you. Keep in mind your acts of covenant loyalty for David, your servant."

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2 Chronicles 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Temple dedication

Solomon dedicated the temple with a prayer asking God to honor the temple. It was common to dedicate something important to God when it was completed. (See: temple)

Links:

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2 Chronicles 6:1

Yahweh has said that he

Solomon speaks to Yahweh as if he were speaking to someone else to show that he respects Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you have said that you"

in thick darkness

Here the word "thick" shows that the darkness is extreme. Yahweh spoke of not allowing sinful people to see him as if he were to live in darkness. Alternate translation: "in great darkness"

2 Chronicles 6:2

I have built you a lofty residence

Solomon speaks of commanding the people to build the temple and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "I and your people have built you a lofty residence"

a lofty residence

a magnificent house, appropriate for someone who is very important

2 Chronicles 6:3

while all the assembly of Israel was standing

The phrase "all the assembly" is a generalization. It does not mean that every person of Israel was standing, but that all of the people who were gathered there were standing. Alternate translation: "while the people of Israel there were standing"

2 Chronicles 6:4

May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, the God of Israel"

David my father

King Solomon actually was one of King David's sons.

has fulfilled it

"has caused it to happen." The word "it" refers to what God had promised. Alternate translation: "has ensured that he fulfilled his promises"

with his own hands

The hand is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "by his own power"

2 Chronicles 6:5

in order for my name to be there

Here the metonym "my name" represents Yahweh's reputation, and his name being there represents people recognizing his greatness and worshiping him there. Alternate translation: "for people to worship me there"

to be prince over my people Israel

Being "prince over people" represents ruling them. Alternate translation: "to rule my people Israel"

2 Chronicles 6:6

so that my name might be there

Here the metonym "my name" represents Yahweh's reputation, and his name being there represents people recognizing his greatness and worshiping him there. Alternate translation: "so that people might worship me there"

to be over my people Israel

Being "over" people represents ruling them. Alternate translation: "to rule my people Israel"

2 Chronicles 6:7

Connecting Statement:

King Solomon continues speaking to the people at the temple.

it was in the heart of David my father

Here David's heart is spoken of as if it were a container, and what he desired is spoken of as if it were an item in the container. Alternate translation: "David my father desired"

for the name of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh ... for me" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh's reputation"

2 Chronicles 6:8

it was in your heart ... for it to be in your heart

Here David's heart is spoken of as if it were a container, and what he desired is spoken of as if it were an item in the container. Alternate translation: "you desired ... to desire to do that"

for my name

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "for me" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "for my reputation"

In that it was in your heart

"Because it was in your heart" or "Because you wanted"

2 Chronicles 6:9

one who will come from your loins

"one who will be your own offspring" or "one whom you yourself will father"

2 Chronicles 6:10

has carried out the word that he had said

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "has done exactly what he said he would do"

I have arisen in the place of David my father

Height is a metaphor for power. Alternate translation: "I have gained the power that David my father had"

I sit on the throne of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "I rule over Israel"

for the name of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "for the reputation of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 6:11

in which is Yahweh's covenant, which

The stone tablets on which Yahweh had written the terms of the covenant are spoken of as if they were the covenant itself. Alternate translation: "in which are the tablets on which Yahweh wrote the terms of the covenant that"

2 Chronicles 6:12

in the presence of all the assembly of Israel

"in front of the people of Israel who had gathered there"

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spread out his hands
"raised his hands." This was to show that he was praying.
2 Chronicles 6:13
five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high
You may convert these to modern measures. Alternate translation: "two and one-third meters long, two and one-third meters wide, and one and one-half meters high"
he spread out his hands toward the heavens
Solomon lifted up his hands and held them high as he knelt on the platform to pray. Spreading out his hands toward the heavens was a way of showing that he was praying to Yahweh.
2 Chronicles 6:14
on the earth, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with your servants
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "on the earth. You keep your promise to love your servants" or "on the earth. You faithfully love your servants"
walk before you with all their heart
The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "live wholeheartedly the way that you want them to"
2 Chronicles 6:15
you who have kept with your servant David my father, what you promised him
"you who have kept your promise to your servant David my father." To keep a promise is an idiom that means to do what one has promised. Alternate translation: "you who have done what you promised your servant David my father"
you spoke with your mouth
The phrase "with your mouth" may emphasize that God himself spoke. It was not someone else who made the promise. Alternate translation: "you yourself spoke"
and have fulfilled it with your hand
The hand is a metonym for the power of the hand. Alternate translation: "and, by your power, have fulfilled what you said" or "and by your power have done what you said"
as it is today
This refers to the day when Solomon was saying this prayer.
2 Chronicles 6:16
Connecting Statement:
King Solomon continues praying.
carry out what you have promised
This is a request. To carry out what one has said is an idiom meaning to do what one has said. Alternate translation: "please do what you have promised"
You will not fail to have a man
"you will always have a descendant"
a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel
The phrase "in my sight" here implies that God would choose the man and the man would want to obey God.
to sit on the throne of Israel
The throne is a metonym for the activity of the one who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "to rule over Israel"
to walk in my law, as you have walked before me
The way a person behaves is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "to obey my law, as you have obeyed me" or "to be faithful to my law as you have been faithful to me"
2 Chronicles 6:17
let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant David
"I want you to make come true the word that you have spoken to your servant David"
let your word be confirmed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "confirm your word" or "make your word come true"
your word
"your promise"
2 Chronicles 6:18
Connecting Statement:
King Solomon continues praying.
But will God actually live with mankind on the earth?
Possible meanings of this question are 1) Solomon is asking a real question and expecting an answer or 2) the question is rhetorical and Solomon is emphasizing that God is too big and mighty to live on earth. Alternate translation: "But it surely cannot be that God will actually live on the earth!"
But will God
Here Solomon speaks about God in the third person to show his great respect for God. It can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "But will you"
Look
Here "Look" indicates that he is about to say something important.
you—how much less can this temple that I have built
"you, so this temple that I have built certainly cannot contain you"
this temple that I have built
Solomon speaks of commanding the people to build the temple and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "this temple that your people have built under my leadership" or "this house that I and your people have built"
2 Chronicles 6:19
respect this prayer of your servant and his plea
The words "prayer" and "plea" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he makes his plea. Solomon refers to himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "respect me, your servant, as I make this plea"
listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you
The words "cry" and "prayer" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is sincere as he asks Yahweh to help him. Solomon refers to himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "listen to me, your servant, as I call for you to help me"
2 Chronicles 6:20
May your eyes be open toward this temple
The eyes being open is a metonym for watching, and here watching represents protecting. "Please watch over this temple" or "Please protect this temple"
day and night
This is a merism. Alternate translation: "all the time" or

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"continually"
where you promised to put your name
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "where you promised to be" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "where you promised to make people know you"
the prayer your servant prays toward this place
Solomon refers to himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "the prayer that I, your servant, pray toward this place"
2 Chronicles 6:21
Connecting Statement:
King Solomon continues praying.
So listen to the pleas of your servant and of your people Israel
Solomon speaks of himself as "your servant" to show that he respects Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "So listen to my pleas and the pleas of your people Israel"
when you listen, forgive
"when you hear our prayers, please forgive our sins"
2 Chronicles 6:22
Connecting Statement:
King Solomon continues praying.
is required to swear an oath
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone requires him to swear an oath"
this house
This refers to the temple.
2 Chronicles 6:23
bringing what he has done upon his own head
To bring someone's conduct on him represents punishing him for his bad conduct. Alternate translation: "punishing him as he deserves"
upon his own head
Here the "head" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "on him"
give to him according to his righteousness
"give him what he deserves because he is innocent"
2 Chronicles 6:24
When your people Israel are defeated by an enemy
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When an enemy defeats your people Israel"
because they have sinned against you
"because your people Israel have sinned against you"
if they turn back to you
Here "turn back to you" represents submitting again to God. Alternate translation: "if they submit to you again"
confess your name
Possible meanings are 1) "confess that they have sinned against you" or 2) "praise you" or 3) "say that they will obey you from now on."
seek favor before you
"seek your favor" or "ask you to forgive them"
2 Chronicles 6:25
please listen from the heavens
To "listen" is an idiom for responding to prayer. Alternate translation: "please honor their prayer" or "please answer their prayer"
bring them back to the land that you gave to them and to their ancestors
This implies that when their enemies defeated them, God's people will have gone to live in other lands. Alternate translation: "bring them back to their own land"
2 Chronicles 6:26
When the skies are shut up and there is no rain
The sky is spoken of as if it were a building in which God stores the rain, and when God does not want it to rain he closes the door to the building. Alternate translation: "When you do not allow rain to fall from the skies"
confess your name
Possible meanings are 1) "confess that they have sinned against you" or 2) "praise you" or 3) "say that they will obey you from now on."
turn from their sin
Here "turn from" is a metaphor for stopping doing it. Alternate translation: "stop committing their sins" or "stop acting sinfully"
2 Chronicles 6:27
the good way in which they should walk
The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "the good way that they should live"
your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance
The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance because God wanted them to possess it forever. Alternate translation: "your land, which you have given to your people to own forever"
2 Chronicles 6:28
blight or mildew
These are agricultural terms that refer to the death of crops from either too little or too much rain, respectively.
locusts or caterpillars
A "locust" is a type of grasshopper that causes destruction by eating crops. The word "caterpillar" refers to an early growth stage of the locust.
2 Chronicles 6:29
prayers and pleas
The words "prayers" and "pleas" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the person is sincere as he makes his pleas.
knowing the plague and sorrow in his own heart
Here "plague" is a metaphor for sin, and sin and sorrow are spoken of as being in people's hearts. Alternate translation: "knowing the sin and sorrow in his own heart"
he spreads out his hands toward this temple
This was a way of showing that they were praying to the God of the temple. See how you translated "spread out his hands" in [2 Chronicles 6:12]
2 Chronicles 6:30
for all his ways
Here "his ways" represents the person's behavior. Alternate translation: "for what he has done"
2 Chronicles 6:31
so that they may walk in your ways
Here "walk in your ways" represents living and behaving the way God wants. Alternate translation: "so that they may

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live as you want them to"

2 Chronicles 6:32

Connecting Statement:

King Solomon continues praying.

who—because of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—comes

It is implied that the foreigners come because they hear about God's greatness. Alternate translation: "who hears about your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—if he comes"

your great name

Here God's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "your great reputation" or "your greatness"

your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to God's power.

prays toward this house

Praying toward Yahweh's temple shows that one is praying to Yahweh.

2 Chronicles 6:33

may know your name

Here God's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "may know your reputation" or "may know your greatness"

as do your own people Israel

"as your own people Israel know your name and fear you"

this house I have built is called by your name

The phrase "is called by your name" shows that God possesses and owns the house. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you own this house that I have built"

this house I have built

Solomon speaks of commanding the people to build the temple and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built it. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 6:18]

2 Chronicles 6:34

Connecting Statement:

King Solomon continues praying.

Suppose that your people go out ... suppose that they pray

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The situations he describes are conditions for what he requests in the following sentence. The words "suppose that" can be translated with the word "if," and this sentence can be connected to his request in verse 35.

they pray to you toward this city ... and toward the house

Praying toward Jerusalem and the temple shows that they are praying to Yahweh.

the house that I have built

Solomon speaks of commanding the people to build the temple and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "this house that your people have built under my leadership" or "this house that I and your people have built"

for your name

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "for you" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "for your reputation"

2 Chronicles 6:35

to their prayer, their request

The abstract nouns "prayer" and "request" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "to what they request when they pray to you"

help their cause

This refers to helping them fight against their enemies.

2 Chronicles 6:36

Connecting Statement:

King Solomon continues praying.

Suppose they sin ... suppose that you are angry

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The situations he describes in verses 36-38 are conditions for what he requests verse 39.

hand them over to the enemy

Here "hand them over to the enemy" represents allowing the enemy to capture them.

so that the enemy carries them away

Here "carries them away" represents forcing them to leave their own country. Alternate translation: "so that the enemy forces them to leave"

2 Chronicles 6:37

suppose they realize ... suppose that they repent ... Suppose that they say

Solomon speaks about events that he thinks could happen in the future. The situations he describes in verses 36-38 are conditions for what he requests verse 39.

where they have been exiled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where their enemies have taken them as exiles"

seek favor from you

"beg you to be merciful to them"

We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly

These two sentences mean the same thing. Together they emphasize how bad the people's actions were.

acted perversely and sinned

The words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the people sinned.

2 Chronicles 6:38

they return to you

Here "return to you" represents submitting to Yahweh again. Alternate translation: "they submit to you again"

with all their heart and with all their soul

The idioms "with all their heart" means "completely" and "with all their soul" means "with all their being." These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "completely"

where they took them as captives

"where their enemies took them as captives"

that they pray toward their land

This refers to Israel. Praying toward Israel would show that they were praying to Yahweh, the God of Israel. Alternate translation: "that they pray facing their land"

toward the city that you chose

This refers to Jerusalem.

the house that I have built

Solomon speaks of commanding the people to build the temple and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "the house that your people

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have built under my leadership" or "the house that I and your people have built"

for your name

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "for you" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "for your reputation"

2 Chronicles 6:39

to their prayer and to their pleas

The words "prayer" and "pleas" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people are sincere as they make their pleas. Alternate translation: "their pleas"

2 Chronicles 6:40

Now

Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

let your eyes be open

The eyes being open is a metonym for seeing. Here it represents looking attentively. Alternate translation: "please pay attention to us" or "please look at us"

let your ears be attentive to the prayer

The ears being attentive is a metonym for listening attentively. Alternate translation: "please listen to the prayer"

to the prayer that is made in this place

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "to the prayer that we make in this place" or "to us as we pray to you in this place"

2 Chronicles 6:41

arise, Yahweh God, to your resting place

This pictures God as if he were sitting on his throne, and asks that he will get up from his throne and come to this place. Alternate translation: "arise, Yahweh God, and come to your resting place"

the ark of your strength

"the ark, which is a symbol of your power"

Let your priests ... be clothed with salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with the verb "to save." Possible meanings are 1) being clothed with salvation is a metaphor for experiencing salvation. Alternate translation: "Let your priests ... know that you have saved them" or 2) being clothed with salvation is a metaphor for demonstrating salvation. Alternate translation: "Let your priests ... demonstrate how you save people"

2 Chronicles 6:42

do not turn the face of your anointed away from you

Turning the face of someone away represents rejecting him. Alternate translation: "do not reject your anointed one"

your anointed

"your anointed one." Being anointed is a metonym for being chosen by God. King Solomon may have been speaking specifically about himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one you anointed" or "me, the one you chose to be king"

Keep in mind your acts of covenant loyalty for David, your servant

The phrase "your acts" can be expressed with the phrase "what you have done." Alternate translation: "Remember what you have done for David, your servant, because of your covenant loyalty"

Keep in mind

"Remember"

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7 [1]Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and sacrifices, and the glory of Yahweh filled the house.[2]The priests could not enter the house of Yahweh, because his glory filled his house.[3]When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of Yahweh over the house, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the stone pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to Yahweh. They said, "For he is good, for his covenant loyalty endures forever."

[4]So the king and all the people offered sacrifices to Yahweh.[5]King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand head of cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.[6]The priests stood, each standing where they serve; the Levites also with instruments of music of Yahweh, which David the king had made to give thanks to Yahweh in the song, "For his covenant faithfulness endures for ever." All the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.
[7]Solomon set apart the middle of the courtyard in front of the house of Yahweh. There he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar that he had made was not able to hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat.

[8]So Solomon held the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly, from Lebo Hamath to the brook of Egypt.[9]On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for they kept the dedication of the altar for seven days, and the feast for seven days.[10]On the twenty-third day of the seventh month, Solomon sent the people away to their tents with glad and joyful hearts because of the goodness that Yahweh had shown to David, Solomon, and Israel, his people.

[11]Thus Solomon finished the house of Yahweh and the king's house. Everything that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of Yahweh and in his own house, he successfully carried out.[12]Yahweh appeared to Solomon by night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice.
[13]Suppose that I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send plague among my people,[14]then if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and

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turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land.[15]Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers that are made in this place.
[16]For I have now chosen and set apart this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there every day.[17]As for you, if you walk before me as David your father walked, obeying all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my decrees,[18]then I will establish the throne of your kingdom, as I said in a covenant with David your father, when I said, 'A descendant of yours will never fail to be ruler in Israel.'

[19]But if you turn away, and abandon my statutes and my commandments that I have placed before you, and if you go worship other gods and bow down to them,[20]then I will uproot them from out of my ground that I have given them. This house that I have set apart for my name, I will cast away from before me, and I will make it a proverb and a joke among all the peoples.
[21]Even though this temple is so lofty now, everyone who passes by it will be appalled and will hiss. They will ask, 'Why has Yahweh done this to this land and to this house?'[22]Others will answer, 'Because they abandoned Yahweh, their God, who had brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and they laid hold of other gods and bowed down to them and worshiped them. That is why Yahweh has brought all this disaster on them.'"

2 Chronicles 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Solomon's dream

God appeared again to Solomon in a dream and said the temple was acceptable and he honored it with his presence. He would remain as long as Israel obeyed him. If they worshiped other gods and idols he would let their enemies destroy the temple. (See: temple and falsegod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 7:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 7:1

the house

"Yahweh's house" or "the temple"

2 Chronicles 7:3

they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the stone pavement

This is a position of humility and worship. Alternate translation: "they lay down on the ground with their faces touching the stone pavement"

his covenant loyalty endures forever

The abstract noun "covenant loyalty" can be expressed with the adjective "loyal" and the verb "promise." Alternate translation: "God will always be loyal to us because of his covenant" or "God will always faithfully do for us what he promised"

2 Chronicles 7:4

all the people

This generalization refers either 1) to the people whom Solomon called to Jerusalem and who are listed in [2 Chronicles 5:2]

2 Chronicles 7:5

twenty-two thousand head of cattle

"22,000 head of cattle"

120,000 sheep and goats

"one hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats"

2 Chronicles 7:6

each standing where they serve

"each standing in their appointed place"

the Levites also with instruments of music of Yahweh

The word "stood" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "the Levites also stood with instruments of music of Yahweh"

For his covenant faithfulness endures for ever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [2 Chronicles 7:3]

all Israel

This generalization refers to those who were at the feast in Jerusalem, not necessarily to every person who lived in Israel.

2 Chronicles 7:7

the bronze altar that he had made

The author speaks of Solomon commanding someone to make the bronze altar and telling him how to do it as if Solomon himself had made it. Alternate translation: "the bronze altar that he had commanded someone to make" or "the bronze altar that he had caused to be made"

was not able to hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat

This was because there were so many offerings. Alternate translation: "was not able to hold the large amount of burnt offerings, grain offerings, and fat"

2 Chronicles 7:8

all Israel with him

This generalization refers to those who were at the feast in Jerusalem, not necessarily to every person who lived in Israel.

from Lebo Hamath to the brook of Egypt

Lebo Hamath was north of Israel, and the brook of Egypt was south of Israel. These are used together to emphasize

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that people from every part of Israel were at the festival. Alternate translation: "from Lebo Hamath in the north to the brook of Egypt in the south"

2 Chronicles 7:9

the eighth day

The word "eighth" is the ordinal form of "8."

a solemn assembly

This was a special religious gathering.

they kept the dedication of the altar

Here "kept the dedication" is an idiom meaning "celebrated the dedication."

2 Chronicles 7:10

the twenty-third day of the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-third day is near the middle of October on Western calendars.

to their tents

The word "tents" is a metonym for the people's homes, which were houses, not tents. Alternate translation: "to their homes"

with glad and joyful hearts

The words "glad" and "joyful" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the intensity of joy. Alternate translation: "with very glad hearts" or "and they were very joyful"

because of the goodness that Yahweh had shown

"because Yahweh had shown wonderful goodness" or "because Yahweh had been so good"

Israel, his people

"Israel, God's people." The phrase "his people" emphasizes God's faithfulness to Israel.

2 Chronicles 7:11

Solomon finished the house of Yahweh and the king's house

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "the workers whom Solomon commanded finished the house of Yahweh and Solomon's own house"

the king's house

"the royal palace," where Solomon himself lived

Everything that came into Solomon's heart to make

The heart is spoken of as if it were a container, and desires are spoken of as if they came into the heart. Alternate translation: "Everything that Solomon desired to make"

he successfully carried out

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he successfully finished" or "he caused to be done successfully

2 Chronicles 7:12

by night

"at night" or "one night"

a house of sacrifice

"the house where people will offer sacrifices to me"

2 Chronicles 7:13

Suppose that I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain

Here "heavens" refers to the sky, and is spoken of as if it were a building in which God stores the rain. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 6:26]

devour the land

The word "land" represents the plants and crops on the land.

if I send plague among my people

Here "send disease" represents causing diseases. Alternate translation: "if I cause my people to have diseases"

2 Chronicles 7:14

who are called by my name

Here being called by God's name is an idiom meaning belonging to God. Alternate translation: "who belong to me"

seek my face

Here God's face represents his acceptance of them. Possible meanings are "seek my face" represents 1) urgently asking him for forgiveness. Alternate translation: "beg me to forgive them" or 2) strongly wanting to please him. Alternate translation: "choose to please me"

turn from their wicked ways

Here "turn from" is a metaphor meaning to stop doing something, and "ways" represent behavior. Alternate translation: "stop their wicked behavior" or "stop doing wicked things"

heal their land

Here land that does not produce much is spoken of as though it were sick. Alternate translation: "make their land good again" or "make their land produce good crops"

2 Chronicles 7:15

my eyes will be open

The eyes being open is a metonym for seeing. Here it represents looking attentively. Alternate translation: "I will pay attention to you" or "I will watch you"

my ears attentive to the prayers

The ears being attentive is a metonym for listening attentively. Alternate translation: "I will listen to the prayers"

the prayers that are made in this place

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "to the prayers that you make in this place" or "to you as you pray to me in this place"

2 Chronicles 7:16

that my name may be there forever

Possible meanings are 1) God's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "that I may be there forever" or 2) God's name represents Yahweh's reputation, and his name being there represents people worshiping him there. Alternate translation: "for people to worship me there forever"

My eyes and my heart will be there every day

Here "My eyes" represents God's careful attention, and "my heart" represents his love. These being at his temple implies that he will protect his temple. Alternate translation: "I will watch and protect it forever"

2 Chronicles 7:17

As for you

Here "you" refers to King Solomon.

if you walk before me as David your father walked

Here walking is a metaphor for living. Walking before God represents living in obedience to him. Alternate translation: "If you obey me as David your father did"

David your father

Solomon was one of David's sons.

keeping my statutes and my decrees

"obeying my statutes and my decrees"

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2 Chronicles 7:18

I will establish the throne of your kingdom

Here the throne represents ruling. Establishing the throne of Solomon's kingdom represents causing Solomon to have descendants who will rule over Israel. Alternate translation: "I will make descendants of yours rule over your kingdom"

A descendant of yours will never fail to be ruler in Israel

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "One of your descendants will always be ruler in Israel" or "Descendants of yours will always rule in Israel"

2 Chronicles 7:19

But if you turn away

Here "turn away" from God is a metaphor meaning to stop worshiping him. Alternate translation: "But if you stop worshiping me"

you turn away

Possible meanings are that the word "you" refers 1) to all the people of Israel, or 2) to Solomon and his descendants.

my statutes and my commandments

Here the words "commandments" and "statutes" mean basically the same thing and emphasize all that Yahweh has commanded.

2 Chronicles 7:20

I will uproot them from out of my ground that I have given them

The word "them" refers to the people of Israel. God speaks of making his people leave his land as if they were plants that he would pull up by their roots out of the soil. Alternate translation: "I will make them leave the land I have given them"

This house

This refers to the temple.

that I have set apart for my name

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's name represents himself. Alternate translation: "that I have set apart for myself" or 2) Yahweh's name represents his reputation. Alternate translation: "that I have set apart for my reputation"

I will cast away from before me

God speaks of rejecting his temple as if he were to throw it far away from himself. Alternate translation: "I will reject it" or "I will ignore it"

I will make it a proverb and a joke among all the peoples

"I will cause all the peoples to make proverbs and jokes about it" or "because of what I do to it, all the nations will mock and ridicule it"

2 Chronicles 7:21

will be appalled

"will be amazed"

will hiss

This is how they would show that they are appalled by what happened to the temple

2 Chronicles 7:22

they abandoned Yahweh

"they were unfaithful to Yahweh" or "they did not obey Yahweh"

who had brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt

This phrase tells why they should have worshiped God.

they laid hold of other gods

Here "laid hold of" represents choosing to be loyal to them. Alternate translation: "they chose to be loyal to other gods"

bowed down to them and worshiped them

These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase "bowed down to them" describes the posture that people used in worship.

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8 [1]It came about at the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the house of Yahweh and his own house,
[2]that Solomon rebuilt the towns that Hiram had given to him, and he settled the people of Israel in them.

[3]Solomon attacked Hamath Zobah and defeated it.[4]He built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the storage cities, which he built in Hamath.
[5]Also he built Beth Horon the Upper and Beth Horon the Lower, cities fortified with walls, gates, and bars.[6]Solomon built Baalath and all the storage cities that he possessed, and all the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever he wished to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the lands under his rule.

[7]As for all the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who did not belong to Israel,[8]their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel had not destroyed—
Solomon made them into forced laborers, which they are to this day.
[9]However, Solomon did not makes slaves of the people of Israel for his work. Instead, they were soldiers, commanders of his officers, and commanders of his chariots and horsemen.[10]These were also the chief officers managing the supervisors who belonged to King Solomon, 250 of them, who ruled over the people who did the work.

[11]Solomon brought the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for he said, "My wife must not live in the house of David king of Israel, because wherever the ark of Yahweh has come is holy."

[12]Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to Yahweh on his altar that he had built in front of the portico.[13]He offered sacrifices just as the daily schedule required; he offered them, following the directions found in the commandment of Moses, on the Sabbath days, the new moons, and on the set festivals three times every year: the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Shelters.

[14]In keeping with the decrees of his father David, Solomon appointed the divisions of the priests to their work, and the

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Levites to their positions, in order to praise God and to serve before the priests, as the daily schedule required. He also appointed the gatekeepers by their divisions to every gate, for David, the man of God, had also commanded this.[15]These people did not deviate from the commands of the king to the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the storerooms.

[16]All the work ordered by Solomon was completed, from the day the foundation of the house of Yahweh was laid until it was finished. The house of Yahweh was completed.

[17]Then Solomon went to Ezion Geber and then to Elath on the coast, in the land of Edom.[18]Hiram sent him ships commanded by his own officers, men who knew the sea, and with the servants of Solomon they went to Ophir and they took from there 450 talents of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

2 Chronicles 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Solomon's victories

Solomon achieved many victory when he was king. This chapter records many of these victories. Israel is at its height of power when Solomon was king.

Links:

2 Chronicles 8:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 8:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way of doing this, you could consider using it here.

at the end of twenty years

"after 20 years"

Solomon had built the house of Yahweh and his own house

The author writes of Solomon commanding the people to build the temple and palace and telling them how to do it as if he himself had built them. Alternate translation: "Solomon caused the house of Yahweh and his own house to be built" or "Solomon directed the building of the temple and his house"

2 Chronicles 8:2

Hiram

Hiram was the king of Tyre. See how you translated his name in [2 Chronicles 2:11]

Solomon rebuilt the towns that Hiram had given to him

The author speaks of Solomon commanding the people to rebuild the towns as if he himself had rebuilt them. Alternate translation: "Solomon caused the towns that Hiram had given to him to be rebuilt" or "Solomon commanded and the people rebuilt the towns that Hiram had given to him"

2 Chronicles 8:3

Solomon attacked Hamath Zobah

Solomon represents his whole fighting army. Alternate translation: "Solomon's army attacked the town of Hamath Zolbah"

2 Chronicles 8:4

He built Tadmor in the wilderness

Tadmor was a city north of Israel, in modern-day Syria. The author writes of Solomon commanding the people to build Tadmor as if Solomon himself built it. Alternate translation: "Solomon caused the town of Tadmor in the wilderness to be rebuilt" or "Solomon commanded, and the people built the town of Tadmor in the wilderness"

Tadmor

Tadmor was a city north of Israel, in modern-day Syria.

storage cities

Or "supply cities." These are cities where the government stored food or supplies.

2 Chronicles 8:5

Beth Horon the Upper and Beth Horon the Lower

These were two cities in Judah. The upper city was on top of a hill and the lower city was in a valley. Alternate translation: "Higher Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon" or "Beth Horon of the Hill and Beth Horon of the Valley"

2 Chronicles 8:6

Baalath

This was a city in Israel.

all the lands under his rule

"all the lands that he ruled"

2 Chronicles 8:8

their descendants who were left after them in the land

"after those people died, their descendants who remained in the land"

forced laborers

"slaves"

which they are to this day

This phrase adds information about the descendants of those that Solomon had made into forced laborers. Alternate translation: "and their descendants are still forced laborers even now"

to this day

This refers to the time when the book of 2 Chronicles was written. See how you translated it in 2 Chronicles 5:9.

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2 Chronicles 8:11
the daughter of Pharaoh
"his wife, the daughter of Paharaoh"
to the house that he had built for her
The author writes about Solomon having his workers build a house for his wife as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "the house that he had his workers build for her" or "to the house he had commanded his workers to build for her"
David king of Israel
David was Solomon's father and had been king before Solomon.
because wherever the ark of Yahweh has come is holy
It can be stated that the ark had been brought into King David's house. Alternate translation: "because the ark of Yahweh was brought into that house, and wherever the ark of Yahweh has come is holy"
2 Chronicles 8:12
his altar that he had built
The author writes about Solomon having his workers build the altar as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "on Yahweh's altar that Solomon had his workers build" or "the Yahweh's altar that he had commanded his workers to build"
his altar
"Yahweh's altar" or "the altar of Yahweh"
the portico
"the temple porch" or "the entrance to the temple." This was a covered porch supported by columns, attached to the front of the temple.
2 Chronicles 8:13
the daily schedule required
"as was required each day"
following the directions
Here "following the directions" represents obeying them. Alternate translation: "obeying the directions"
the directions found in the commandment of Moses
"what Moses had commanded them"
the set festivals three times every year
"the three festivals that they were to celebrate every year"
the Festival of Shelters
"the Festival of Tents." This is a festival to celebrate God's provision for his people. When the people of Israel wandered in the desert, they lived in temporary shelters. Each year when they harvested their crops, they stayed in temporary shelters in their gardens. In both situations, God provided for them.
2 Chronicles 8:14
In keeping with the decrees of his father David
"According to the decrees of his father David" or "As his father David had decreed"
He also appointed the gatekeepers by their divisions to every gate
"He also appointed groups of gatekeepers to each gate"
gatekeepers
These were Levites who guarded the gates and only let inside those who had permission to go inside.
2 Chronicles 8:15
These people did not deviate from the commands
Here "deviate from the commands" represents to do something different from what was commanded. It can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "These people carefully obeyed the commands"
2 Chronicles 8:16
All the work ordered by Solomon was completed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They completed all the work that Solomon had ordered"
from the day the foundation of the house of Yahweh was laid
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from the day they laid the foundation of the house of Yahweh" or "from the day they built the foundation of the house of Yahweh"
until it was finished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until they finished building the temple"
The house of Yahweh was completed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The house of Yahweh was complete" or "They completed building the house of Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 8:17
Ezion Geber and then to Elath on the coast
These are towns along the Sea of Reeds. They had ports where people who had ships could stop. Alternate translation: "the towns of Ezion Geber and Elath, on the coast of the Sea of Reeds"
2 Chronicles 8:18
Ophir
This is the name of a place. Its location is not known.
450 talents of gold
"four hundred and fifty talents of gold." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about sixteen thousand kilograms of gold" or "about fifteen metric tons of gold"

9 [1]When the queen of Sheba heard the report about Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. She came with a very long caravan, with camels loaded with spices, much gold, and many precious gemstones. When she had come to Solomon, she told him all that was in her heart.[2]Solomon answered her all her questions; nothing was too difficult for Solomon; there was no question that he did not answer.
[3]When the queen of Sheba saw Solomon's wisdom and the palace that he had built,[4]the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the work of his servants and their clothing, also his cupbearers and their clothing, and the burnt offerings he made at[1] the house of Yahweh, there was no more breath in her.
[5]She said to the king, "It is true, the report that I heard in my own land of your words and your wisdom.[6]I did not believe what I heard until I came here, and now my eyes have seen it. Not half was told me about the greatness of your wisdom and wealth! You have exceeded the report that I heard.
[7]How blessed are your men, and how blessed are your servants who constantly stand before you, because they hear your wisdom.[2][8]Blessed be Yahweh your God, who has taken pleasure in you, who placed you on his throne, to be king for

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Yahweh your God. Because your God loved Israel, in order to establish them forever, he had made you king over them, for you to do justice and righteousness!"

[9]She gave the king 120 talents of gold and a large amount of spices and precious stones. There had never been such spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.
[10]The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, also brought algum wood and precious stones.[11]With the algum wood, the king made steps for the house of Yahweh and for his house, as well as harps and lutes for the musicians. No wood like this had been seen before in the land of Judah.[12]King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba everything she desired and whatever she asked for; he gave her more than what she had brought to the king. So she left and went back to her own land, she and her servants.

[13]Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,[14]besides the gold that the traders and merchants brought. All the kings of Arabia and the governors in the country also brought gold and silver to Solomon.
[15]King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold. Six hundred shekels of gold went into each one.[16]He also made three hundred shields of beaten gold. Three minas of gold went into each shield; the king put them into the House of the Forest of Lebanon.
[17]Then the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold.[18]There were six steps to the throne, and a footstool of gold was attached to the throne. On each side of the throne there were armrests with two lions standing beside each of them.
[19]Twelve lions stood on the steps, one on each side of each of the six steps. There was no throne like it in any other kingdom.[20]All King Solomon's drinking cups were gold, and all the drinking cups in the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were silver because silver was not considered valuable in Solomon's days.[21]The king had at sea a fleet of ships of Tarshish, along with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the ships of Tarshish brought gold, silver, and ivory, as well as apes and baboons.

[22]So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the world in riches and in wisdom.[23]All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon in order to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.[24]Those who visited brought tribute, vessels of silver and of gold, clothes, weapons, and spices, as well as horses and mules, year after year.
[25]Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with himself in Jerusalem.[26]He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.
[27]The king had silver in Jerusalem, as much as the stones on the ground. He made cedar wood to be as abundant as the sycamore fig trees that are in the lowlands.[28]They brought horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all the lands.

[29]As for the other matters concerning Solomon, first and last, are they not written in The History of Nathan the Prophet, in The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in The Visions of Iddo the Seer (which also had information about Jeroboam son of Nebat)?[30]Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years.[31]He lay down with his ancestors and the people buried him in the city of David his father. Rehoboam, his son, became king in his place.

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[1]Some scholars suggest an alternative reading of the phrase the burnt offerings he made at to say, the ascent by which he went up to.
[2]Some translations have: How blessed are your wives, following 1 Kings 10:8. The spelling of "men" and "wives" is very close in Hebrew.

2 Chronicles 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Solomon ends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Solomon's fame

Solomon was famous outside of Israel because of his wisdom and tremendous wealth. (See: wise)

Links:

2 Chronicles 9:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 9:1

She came with a very long caravan

"a very large group of servants" or "a very long line of servants"

all that was in her heart

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "everything she wanted to know"

2 Chronicles 9:2

there was no question that he did not answer

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "he

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answered every question"

2 Chronicles 9:3

When the queen of Sheba saw Solomon's wisdom and the palace that he had built

Here "saw Solomon's wisdom" represents realizing that Solomon was very wise. Alternate translation: "When the queen of Sheba realized how wise Solomon was, and when she saw the palace that he had built"

the palace that he had built

The author writes about Solomon having his workers build his palace as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "the palace that Solomon had his workers build" or "the palace that he had commanded his workers to build"

2 Chronicles 9:4

the seating of his servants

Possible meanings are 1) where his servants lived or 2) how his servants sat around the table.

his cupbearers

"his wine servers." These were servants who tasted the king's wine to make sure that there was no poison in it. If it was safe to drink the wine, they would give it to the king.

there was no more breath in her

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "she was completely amazed"

2 Chronicles 9:5

I heard in my own land

"I heard while I was in my own land"

your words and your wisdom

Here the word "wisdom" can describe the word "words." Alternate translation: "your wise words"

2 Chronicles 9:6

now my eyes have seen it

The phrase "my eyes" emphasizes that she herself saw it. Alternate translation: "now I have seen it for myself"

Not half was told me about the greatness of your wisdom and wealth

This can be stated it active form. Alternate translation: "They did not tell me about even half of the greatness of your wisdom and wealth" or "You are much more wise and wealthy than what they told me"

2 Chronicles 9:7

How blessed are your men

This is an exclamation that shows her amazement. Alternate translation: "Your people are greatly blessed"

how blessed are your servants who constantly stand before you

This is an exclamation that shows her amazement. Alternate translation: "your servants who constantly stand before you are greatly blessed"

they hear your wisdom

Hear "wisdom" represents the wise things that he says. Alternate translation: "they hear the wise things that you say"

2 Chronicles 9:8

who has taken pleasure in you, who placed you on his throne

These phrases tell why people should praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "because he has taken pleasure in you and placed you on his throne"

who has taken pleasure in you

"who is pleased with you"

who placed you on his throne, to be king for Yahweh your God

The idea of being on Yahweh's throne represents having the authority to rule as Yahweh does. Being king "for Yahweh" means to represent Yahweh as king. Alternate translation: "who gave you authority to rule as he does, to represent Yahweh your God as king"

in order to establish them forever

Possible meanings are 1) "establish" represents helping them in general. Alternate translation: "in order to help them forever" or 2) "establish" represents making them strong as a nation. Alternate translation: "in order to make them a nation forever"

for you to do justice and righteousness

The abstract nouns "justice" and "righteousness" can be expressed with the words "fairly" and "righteously." Alternate translation: "for you to rule fairly and righteously" or "for you to do what is just and right"

2 Chronicles 9:9

120 talents

"one hundred and twenty talents." A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about four thousand kilograms of gold" or "about four metric tons of gold"

2 Chronicles 9:10

Hiram

Hiram was the king of Tyre. See how you translated his name in [2 Chronicles 2:11]

Ophir

This is the name of a place. Its location is not known. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 8:18]

algum wood

Algum is a kind of tree that grows in Lebanon. King Hiram sent this kind of wood to Solomon. See how you translated it in 2 Chronicles 2:8.

2 Chronicles 9:11

the king made steps ... well as harps and lutes

The author speaks of the king having his workers make these things as if he himself had made them. Alternate translation: "the king had his workers make the steps .. as well as harps and lyres" or "the king's workers made steps ... well as harps and lyres"

No wood like this had been seen before in the land of Judah

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one had seen wood like this before in the land of Judah"

2 Chronicles 9:13

in one year

These words could refer to 1) each year or 2) a particular year.

666 talents of gold

A talent is a unit of weight equal to about 33 kilograms. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about twenty-two thousand kilograms of gold" or "about twenty-two metric tons of gold"

2 Chronicles 9:15

King Solomon made

The author writes about Solomon having his workers make the shields as if he himself had made them. Alternate translation: "King Solomon had his workers make" or "King Solomon's workers made"

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two hundred large shields
"200 large shields"
beaten gold
"gold that people had beaten into thin sheets"
Six hundred shekels of gold went into each one
Here the phrase "went into" represents being made with. Possible meanings are 1) the shields were covered with sheets of gold. Alternate translation: "They covered each shield with six hundred shekels of gold" or 2) the shields were made of gold. Alternate translation: "They made each shield out of six hundred shekels of gold"
Six hundred shekels of gold
A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "Six and one half kilograms of gold"
Six hundred shekels
The word "shekels" does not appear here in the Hebrew text. Some modern versions assume instead the unit called bekah, which was equivalent to only a half shekel. Any version making this assumption would signal a metric equivalent of about three kilograms.
2 Chronicles 9:16
He also made
The author writes about Solomon having his workers make the shields as if he himself had made them. Alternate translation: "King Solomon had his workers also make" or "His workers also made"
three hundred shields
"300 shields"
Three minas of gold went into each shield
Here the phrase "went into" represents being made with. Possible meanings are 1) the shields were covered with sheets of gold. Alternate translation: "They covered each shield with three minas of gold" or 2) the shields were made of gold. Alternate translation: "They made each shield out of three minas of gold"
Three minas of gold
A mina is about 600 grams. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "One and three-quarters kilograms of gold"
the king put them
The author writes about Solomon having his workers put the shields in the palace as if he himself had put them there. Alternate translation: "King Solomon had his workers put them" or "King Solomon's workers put them"
the House of the Forest of Lebanon
Solomon's palace was built of trees from Lebanon. Possible meanings are 1) this was the name of a large room in the palace. Alternate translation: "the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon" or 2) this was the name of his whole palace.
2 Chronicles 9:17
the king made a great throne
The author speaks of commanding his workers to build the throne as if he himself had built it. Alternate translation: "the king had his workers make a great throne" or "the king's workers made"
a great throne of ivory
"a great throne decorated with ivory"
ivory
Ivory is the hard, white substance from the tusks or teeth of large animals, such as the elephant, walrus, or hippopotamus.
2 Chronicles 9:18
two lions
These were statues. Alternate translation: "two statues of lions"
2 Chronicles 9:20
the House of the Forest of Lebanon
Solomon's palace was built of trees from Lebanon. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 9:16]
silver was not considered valuable in Solomon's days
Silver was so common in Solomon's days that if a king wanted to show his wealth, he would not do it by making things out of silver. Instead he would use gold, which was less common and more valuable. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people did not value silver so much"
in Solomon's days
Here "Solomon's days" refers to the time when Solomon ruled. Alternate translation: "when Solomon ruled"
2 Chronicles 9:21
a fleet of ships of Tarshish
"a group of ships that travel on the ocean"
along with the servants of Hiram
"along with Hiram's fleet of ships"
apes and baboons
It is not certain whether the word translated as "apes" here refers to apes, baboons, or monkeys. It is not certain whether the word translated as "baboons" here refers to baboons or peacocks. This can be translated more generally as "animals from far away" or "animals from Africa."
2 Chronicles 9:23
All the kings of the earth
The word "all" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Kings from around the world"
sought the presence of Solomon
The presence of a person is a metonym for being able to speak and listen to the person. Alternate translation: "wanted to visit Solomon" or "came to visit Solomon"
to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart
The heart is a metonym for what a person thinks, and here it is spoken of as if it were a container. The abstract noun "wisdom" is a metonym for the wise things a person thinks or says. Alternate translation: "to hear how wise God had enabled him to be" or "to hear him speak the wise words that God had enabled him to speak"
which God had put in his heart
God putting wisdom in Solomon's heart represents God making Solomon wise. Alternate translation: "which God had given him" or "because God had made him wise"
2 Chronicles 9:24
year after year
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "every year"
2 Chronicles 9:25
four thousand stalls ... twelve thousand horsemen
"4,000 stalls ... 12,000 horsemen"
stalls
This is a small enclosure where horses are kept.

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2 Chronicles 9:27

as much as the stones on the ground

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that there was such a great amount of silver.

2 Chronicles 9:28

They brought horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all the lands

The word "they" may refer to Solomon's merchants. However this sentence is not about what the merchants did, but about where Solomon's horses came from. Alternate translation: "Horses were brought to Solomon from Egypt and from all the lands" or "Solomon's horses were from Egypt and all the lands"

from all the lands

The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "from many other places" or "from many other countries"

2 Chronicles 9:29

first and last

The phrase "first and last" represents the whole time of Solomon's reign. Alternate translation: "from the beginning to the end of his reign"

are they not written ... (which also had information about Jeroboam son of Nebat)?

The author uses the question to remind the readers that other people had written about Solomon. It can be expressed in active form Alternate translation: "they are written ...

The History of Nathan the Prophet ... The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite ... The Visions of Iddo the Seer

These are the names of some writings that existed when 2 Chronicles was written, but they do not exist now.

Ahijah the Shilonite

This is a prophet from Shiloh who predicted that the nation of Israel would be divided into two kingdoms.

Shilonite

This is the name of a people group from the town of Shiloh.

2 Chronicles 9:31

He lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "He died"

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10 [1]Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel was coming to Shechem to make him king.[2]When Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard this (for he was in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), he returned from Egypt.
[3]So they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all Israel came; they spoke to Rehoboam and said,[4]"Your father made our yoke difficult. Now therefore, make your father's hard work easier, and lighten the heavy yoke that he put on us, and we will serve you."[5]Rehoboam said to them, "Come again to me after three days." So the people left.

[6]King Rehoboam consulted with the old men who had stood before Solomon his father while he was alive; he said, "How would you advise me to bring an answer to these people?"[7]They spoke to him and said, "If you are good to this people and please them, and say good words to them, then they will always be your servants."
[8]But Rehoboam ignored the advice of the old men that they had given him, and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him.[9]He said to them, "What advice do you give me, so that we may answer the people who spoke to me and said, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?"
[10]The young men who had grown up with Rehoboam spoke to him, saying, "This is how you should speak to the people who told you that your father Solomon made their yoke heavy, but that you must make it lighter. This is what you should say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist.[11]So now, although my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions.'"

[12]So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king said, "Come back to me on the third day."[13]King Rehoboam spoke to them harshly, ignoring the advice of the old men.[14]He spoke to them following the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions."
[15]So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn in events brought about by God, that Yahweh might carry out his word that Ahijah the Shilonite had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

[16]When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered him and said, "What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! Each of you should go back to his tent, Israel. Now see to your own house, David." So all Israel returned to their tents.
[17]But as for the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.[18]Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was over the forced laborers, but the people of Israel stoned him to death with stones. King Rehoboam fled quickly in his chariot to Jerusalem.[19]So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

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2 Chronicles 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This begins a section on King Rehoboam. (2 Chronicles 10-12)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rehoboam's taxes

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The people asked Solomon's son, Rehoboam, to reduce the heavy taxes and the forced labor Solomon had demanded but Rehoboam refused. He lacked the wisdom to follow the advice of the men who had been councilors of his father Solomon. So the ten northern tribes broke off and made Jeroboam their king. They were called "Israel" and Rehoboam's kingdom was called Judah. This will cause confusion between the northern kingdom of Israel and the whole nation of Israel. (See: wise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The people use the metaphor of a yoke to complain about the high taxes and forced labor Solomon demanded from the people. They said, "Your father made our yoke difficult."

Links:

2 Chronicles 10:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 10:1

all Israel was coming

Here "Israel" is a metonym for the men of Israel. The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "the men of Israel were coming"

2 Chronicles 10:2

Jeroboam ... Nebat

These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in [2 Chronicles 9:29]

2 Chronicles 10:3

they sent and called him

"the men of Israel sent for Jeroboam"

Jeroboam and all Israel came

"Jeroboam and all Israel came to Rehoboam"

all Israel came

Here "Israel" is a metonym for the men of Israel. The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "the men of Israel came"

2 Chronicles 10:4

made our yoke difficult

A difficult yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and cruel treatment. Alternate translation: "treated us cruelly" or "forced us to work very hard"

make your father's hard work easier, and lighten the heavy yoke that he put on us

These two phrases mean the same thing. The yoke metaphor emphasizes the fact that Solomon had treated them harshly. Alternate translation: "make the hard work that your father gave us easier, and do not treat us as harshly as he did"

2 Chronicles 10:5

after three days

"after 3 days"

2 Chronicles 10:6

the old men who had stood before Solomon

To "stand before" is an idiom for serving the king in his presence. Alternate translation: "the old men who counseled Solomon" or "the old men who attended to Solomon"

to bring an answer to these people

"to answer these people" or "to reply to these people"

2 Chronicles 10:8

Rehoboam ignored the advice

"Rehoboam did not follow the advice"

who had grown up with him, who stood before him

"who were his long-time friends, and who advised him"

2 Chronicles 10:9

Lighten the yoke that your father put on us

To "lighten the yoke" is a metaphor that represents easing the burden. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 10:4]

2 Chronicles 10:10

made their yoke heavy

A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and cruel treatment. This metaphor is continued in this verses. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 10:4]

My little finger is thicker than my father's waist

This metaphor means that Rehoboam is more cruel and intimidating than his father. Alternate translation: "I rule much more harshly than my father ever did" or "I am much harsher than my father"

2 Chronicles 10:11

Connecting Statement:

A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and cruel treatment. This metaphor is continued in this verses. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 10:4]

I will add to your yoke

"I will make your yoke heavier." A yoke is a metaphor for labor. Alternate translation: "I will force you to work harder"

I will punish you with scorpions

Possible meanings are that 1) "scorpions" is a metaphor for any kind of painful punishment. Alternate translation: "I will punish you much more harshly" or 2) "scorpions" is a metaphor for whips with sharp metal barbs at the end. Alternate translation: "I will punish you with whips that have sharp pieces of metal at the ends"

2 Chronicles 10:12

on the third day

"after three days"

2 Chronicles 10:14

made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it

A heavy yoke is a metaphor for very difficult labor and cruel treatment. Alternate translation: "treated you cruelly, but I will be more cruel" or "forced you to work very hard, but I will make you work harder"

I will punish you with scorpions

Possible meanings are that 1) "scorpions" is a metaphor for any kind of painful punishment. Alternate translation: "I will punish you much more harshly" or 2) "scorpions" is a

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metaphor for whips with sharp metal barbs at the end. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 10:11. Alternate translation: "I will punish you with whips that have sharp pieces of metal at the ends"

2 Chronicles 10:15

So the king did not listen to the people

Here "listen to the people" represents not care about what they said or about actually doing what they asked. Alternate translation: "So the king did not do what the people had asked him to do" or "So the king ignored the people"

it was a turn in events brought about by God

This is an idiom and can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God caused things to happen like this"

that Yahweh might carry out his word ... Nebat

"that Yahweh might do according to the message that he told Ahijah the Shilonite to tell Jeroboam son of Nebat" or "that Yahweh might do what he had said he would do when he told Ahijah the Shilonite to give a message to Jeroboam son of Nebat"

that Yahweh might carry out his word

The idiom "carry out his word" means to do what he had said he would do.

his word that Ahijah the Shilonite had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat

This refers to the message that God gave Ahijah to tell Jeroboam.

Ahijah the Shilonite ... Jeroboam son of Nebat

See how you translated these names in [2 Chronicles 9:29]

2 Chronicles 10:16

all Israel

Here "Israel" is a metonym for the men of Israel. The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "the men of Israel"

the king did not listen to them

Here "listen to the people" represents not caring about what they said or about actually doing what they asked. Alternate translation: "the king did not do what they had asked him to do" or "the king ignored them"

What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse

The people use this question and statement to imply that since they do not belong to David's family, they are not obligated to support David's grandson, King Rehoboam. Alternate translation: "We have no share in David. We will not have anything to do with the descendants of the son of Jesse"

What share do we have in David?

Having a share in someone represents being his descendants and receiving the good things that descendants receive. Alternate translation: "We do not belong to the family of David"

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse

"Son of Jesse" here is a metonym for David, a son of Jesse. Having an inheritance in someone represents being his descendants and receiving the good things that descendants receive. Alternate translation: "We will not receive any inheritance from the son of Jesse" or "We will have nothing to do with the his descendants"

Each of you should go back to his tent

"Tent" here is a metonym representing people's homes. Alternate translation: "Go to your homes, people of Israel"

Now see to your own house, David

Here "see to" is an idiom meaning to take care of something, and "house" is a metonym for David's lineage of power and prestige. Alternate translation: "Now take care of your own kingdom, descendant of David"

2 Chronicles 10:18

Adoniram

Adoniram is the name of a man. In the Hebrew text of this sentence, his name was written as Adoram.

who was over the forced laborers

Being over people represents having authority to tell them what to do. Alternate translation: "who was in charge of the forced laborers"

stoned him to death with stones

"killed Adoniram by stoning him"

2 Chronicles 10:19

against the house of David

Here "the house of David" represents the kings who were descendants of David. Alternate translation: "against the kings descended from David"

to this day

This refers to the general time when the author wrote this book. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 5:9. Alternate translation: "even now"

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11 [1]When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he assembled the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were soldiers, to fight against Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.
[2]But the word of Yahweh came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,[3]"Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin,[4]'Yahweh says this, "You must not attack or make war against your brothers. Everyone must return to his own house, for I have caused this to happen."'" So they obeyed the words of Yahweh and turned back from attacking Jeroboam.

[5]Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities in Judah for defense.[6]He built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,[7]Beth Zur, Soko, Adullam,[8]Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,[9]Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,[10]Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. These are fortified cities in Judah and Benjamin.
[11]He fortified the fortresses and put commanders in them, with stores of food, oil, and wine.[12]He put shields and spears in all the cities and made them very strong. So Judah and Benjamin belonged to him.

[13]The priests and the Levites who were in all Israel went over to him from within their borders.[14]For the Levites left their pasturelands and property in order to come to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had driven them away, so

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that they could no longer act as the priests of Yahweh.[15]Jeroboam appointed for himself priests for the high places and the goat and calf idols he had made.
[16]People from all the tribes of Israel came after them, those who set their hearts to seek Yahweh, the God of Israel; they came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to Yahweh, the God of their fathers.[17]So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and made Rehoboam son of Solomon strong during three years, and they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.

[18]Rehoboam took a wife for himself: Mahalath, the daughter of Jerimoth, David's son, and of Abihail, the daughter of Eliab, Jesse's son.[19]She bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.
[20]After Mahalath, Rehoboam took Maakah, Absalom's daughter; she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.
[21]Rehoboam loved Maakah, Absalom's daughter, more than all his other wives and his concubines (he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and became the father of twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters).
[22]Rehoboam appointed Abijah son of Maakah to be chief, a leader among his brothers; he had the thought of making him king.[23]Rehoboam ruled wisely; he scattered all his sons throughout all the land of Judah and Benjamin to every fortified city. He also gave them food in abundance and looked for many wives for them.

2 Chronicles 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The section on King Rehoboam continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Strengthening their defenses

Rehoboam strengthened the defenses of Judah. Without the help of the northern tribes, the kingdom of Judah did not really have much power to defend itself from outside attacks. Therefore, Rehoboam felt it necessary to strengthen Judah's military defenses.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

When the author speaks about Israel, he is now referring almost exclusively to the northern kingdom of Israel and not the united nation of Israel.

Links:

2 Chronicles 11:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 11:1

the house of Judah and Benjamin

Here "house" is a metonym that represents a tribe or descendants and refers specifically to the soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "all the soldiers from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin"

180,000 chosen men

"one hundred and eighty thousand chosen men"

chosen men who were soldiers

"choice men who were soldiers." The phrase "chosen men" is an idiom that refers to elite soldiers who were skilled in battle. Alternate translation: "of the best soldiers"

2 Chronicles 11:2

the word of Yahweh came ... saying

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke this message ... and he said" or "Yahweh spoke these words ... and he said"

Shemaiah

This is the name of a man.

the man of God

The expression "man of God" is a respectful way of referring to a prophet of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the man who belongs to God" or "the prophet of God"

2 Chronicles 11:3

all Israel in Judah and Benjamin

Here the word "Israel" refers to the Israelite people who live in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "all of the Israelites in the tribes of Judah and Benjamin"

2 Chronicles 11:4

your brothers

This is a reference to the ten northern tribes. By calling them "brothers," Yahweh emphasizes the family relationship between all of the tribes.

2 Chronicles 11:5

Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Rehoboam build these cities. Alternate translation: "Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and had his workers build cities"

2 Chronicles 11:6

Etam, Tekoa

These are the names of cities.

2 Chronicles 11:10

Zorah, Aijalon

These are the names of cities.

2 Chronicles 11:11

He fortified the fortresses

Here the word "fortresses" refers to fortified cities. That

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Rehoboam "fortified the fortresses" means that he built up and strengthened the defenses of these fortified cities. Alternate translation: "He strengthened the defenses of the fortified cities"

2 Chronicles 11:12

made them very strong

"made the cities very strong"

Judah and Benjamin belonged to him

Rehoboam was in control of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

2 Chronicles 11:13

The priests and the Levites ... went over to him from within their borders

Possible meanings are 1) "The priests and Levites ... supported Rehoboam from within their borders" or 2) "The priests and Levites ... traveled from within their borders to join Rehoboam."

2 Chronicles 11:14

pasturelands

lands used for animals

Jeroboam and his sons had driven them away

To "drive away" is an idiom that means to forcefully cause someone to leave. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam and his sons had forced them to leave"

act as the priests of Yahweh

"do their proper work as the priests of Yahweh" or "do their duties as priests of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 11:15

the goat and calf idols he had made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Jeroboam make these idols. Alternate translation: "the goat idols and calf idols that he had his craftsmen make"

2 Chronicles 11:16

People ... came after them

"People ... followed the Levites" or "People ... came to Jerusalem after the Levites"

those who set their hearts to seek Yahweh

Here the word "hearts" represents the thoughts and desires. The idiom "set their hearts" means to determine to do something. Alternate translation: "those who had determined to seek Yahweh"

to seek Yahweh

Worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if the person were seeking Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to worship Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 11:17

made Rehoboam son of Solomon strong

The people supporting Rehoboam as king is spoken of as if they made Rehoboam strong. Alternate translation: "supported Rehoboam son of Solomon as king"

they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon

Here a person's actions and lifestyle are spoken of as if the person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "they followed the example of David and Solomon for three years"

2 Chronicles 11:18

Mahalath ... Abihail

These are the names of women.

Jerimoth ... Eliab

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 11:19

Jeush ... Shemariah ... Zaham

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 11:20

Mahalath ... Maakah

These are the names of women.

Rehoboam took Maakah

This idiom means that he married her. Alternate translation: "Rehoboam married Maakah"

Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 11:21

eighteen wives and sixty concubines ... twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters

"18 wives and 60 concubines ... 28 sons and 60 daughters"

2 Chronicles 11:22

he had the thought of making him king

"he had thought of making Abijah king"

2 Chronicles 11:23

he scattered all his sons throughout all the land of Judah and Benjamin to every fortified city

"he sent all his sons throughout all the land to every fortified city of Judah and Benjamin"

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12 [1]It came about, when Rehoboam's reign was established and he was strong, that he abandoned the law of Yahweh—
and all Israel with him.
[2]It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, because the people had been unfaithful to Yahweh.[3]He came with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand horsemen. Soldiers without number came with him from Egypt: Libyans, Sukkites, and Cushites.[4]He captured the fortified cities that belonged to Judah and came to Jerusalem.
[5]Now Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and to the leaders of Judah who had gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak. Shemaiah said to them, "This is what Yahweh says: You have abandoned me, so I have also given you over into Shishak's hand."[6]Then the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "Yahweh is righteous."
[7]When Yahweh saw that they had humbled themselves, the word of Yahweh came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves. I will not ruin them; I will deliver them to some extent, and my anger will not pour out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak's hand.[8]Nevertheless, they will be his servants, so that they may understand what it is to serve me and to serve the rulers of the other countries."

[9]So Shishak, king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem and took away the treasures in the house of Yahweh, and the treasures in the king's house. He took everything away; he also took the shields of gold that Solomon had made.[10]King

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Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place and entrusted them into the hands of the commanders of the guard, who guarded the doors to the king's house.
[11]It happened that whenever the king entered the house of Yahweh, the guards would carry them; then they would bring them back into the guards' room.[12]When Rehoboam humbled himself, Yahweh's anger turned away from him, so as not to destroy him completely; besides, there was still some good to be found in Judah.

[13]So King Rehoboam made his kingship strong in Jerusalem, and thus he reigned. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that Yahweh had chosen from all the tribes of Israel so that he might put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite woman.[14]He did what was evil, because he did not fix his heart to seek Yahweh.

[15]As for the other matters concerning Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the writings of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, which also have records of genealogies and the constant wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam?[16]Rehoboam lay down with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David; Abijah his son became king in his place.

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2 Chronicles 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter ends the section on King Rehoboam.

Special concepts in this chapter

Worshiping Yahweh

The safety of Israel and Judah was dependent upon the people worshiping Yahweh and not upon their military power. Because Rehoboam deserted the worship of God, God allowed the king of Egypt to take all of the wealth Solomon stored up.

Links:

2 Chronicles 12:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 12:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when Rehoboam's reign was established

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "when Rehoboam had established his reign"

all Israel with him

Here the words "all Israel" refer specifically to the people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, over which Rehoboam was king. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "all the Israelite people whom he ruled also abandoned the law of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 12:2

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the fifth year of King Rehoboam

This refers to the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign as king. Alternate translation: "in the fifth year that Rehoboam was king" or "in year five of King Rehoboam's reign"

Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem

"Shishak, king of Egypt" here is a metonym for Shishak along with the Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "Shishak, king of Egypt, and his army with him, came up against Jerusalem"

Shishak

This is the name of a man.

came up against

This is an idiom that means marched against or attacked. Alternate translation: "came to attack"

2 Chronicles 12:3

twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand horsemen

"1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen"

Soldiers without number

This exaggeration means that there were more soldiers than a person could easily count. Alternate translation: "Many soldiers"

Libyans, Sukkites, and Cushites

These are people from Libya, Sukki, and Ethiopia. The location of Sukki is uncertain, but it may be a region in Libya.

2 Chronicles 12:5

Shemaiah

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this word in [2 Chronicles 11:2]

so I have also given you over into Shishak's hand

Here the word "hand" represents power. Yahweh speaks of enabling Shishak's army to defeat the king and the others in Jerusalem as if he were placing them into Shishak's hand. Alternate translation: "so I have enabled Shishak to defeat you" or "so I have given you to Shishak as captives"

2 Chronicles 12:7

they had humbled themselves

"the princes of Israel and the king had humbled themselves"

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the word of Yahweh came ... saying
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke this message ... and he said" or "Yahweh spoke these words ... and he said"
I will deliver them to some extent
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will permit Shishak to attack Jerusalem and cause trouble for the people, but he will deliver them from total destruction or 2) the words "to some extent" can be translated as soon, meaning that Yahweh will deliver the people of Jerusalem before Shishak can completely destroy the city.
my anger will not pour out on Jerusalem
Yahweh speaks of his anger as if it were a liquid, and of expressing his anger as if he were to pour out that liquid. Alternate translation: "I will not express my anger against Jerusalem" or "Jerusalem will not suffer the effects of my anger"
by means of Shishak's hand
Here the word "hand" represents Shishak himself. Alternate translation: "by means of Shishak"
2 Chronicles 12:9
Shishak, king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem
"Shishak, king of Egypt" here is a metonym for Shishak along with the Egyptian army. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 12:2]
came up against
This is an idiom that means marched against or attacked. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 12:2]
the house of Yahweh
Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"
the shields of gold that Solomon had made
It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Solomon make these shields. Alternate translation: "the shields of gold that Solomon had his craftsmen make"
2 Chronicles 12:10
King Rehoboam made shields of bronze
It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Rehoboam make these shields. Alternate translation: "King Rehoboam had his craftsmen make shields of bronze"
in their place
"in place of the shields of gold"
entrusted them into the hands of the commanders
Here the word "hands" represents care or responsibility. Alternate translation: "made them the responsibility of the commanders"
who guarded the doors to the king's house
Here the word "doors" represents the entrance. Alternate translation: "who guarded the entrance to the king's house"
2 Chronicles 12:11
It happened that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
the guards would carry them
"the guards would carry the shields"
2 Chronicles 12:12
Yahweh's anger turned away from him, so as not to destroy him completely
Yahweh no longer being angry with Rehoboam is spoken of as if Yahweh's anger were a person who turned away from Rehoboam. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was no longer angry with him and so did not destroy him completely"
besides, there was
"in addition, there was"
2 Chronicles 12:13
forty-one years old ... seventeen years
"41 years old ... 17 years"
so that he might put his name there
Possible meanings for the phrase "put his name" are 1) a metonym for "dwell." Alternate translation: "so that he might dwell there" or 2) an idiom that refers to ownership. Alternate translation: "so that it might belong to him"
Naamah
This is the name of a woman.
2 Chronicles 12:14
he did not fix his heart to seek Yahweh
Here the word "heart" represents the thoughts and desires. The idiom "fix his heart" means to determine to do something. Alternate translation: "he was not committed to seeking Yahweh"
to seek Yahweh
Worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if the person were seeking Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to worship Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 12:15
first and last
"from beginning to end." These two words form a merism and refer to everything that Rehoboam did from the beginning of his reign to the end of his reign. Alternate translation: "everything that he did"
are they not written ... Jeroboam?
This can be expressed in active form and assumes that the answer is positive. The question is rhetorical and is used for emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "they are written ... Jeroboam." or "you can read about them ... Jeroboam."
Shemaiah ... Iddo
These are the names of men.
the constant wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam
The names of the kings represent the armies that they led. Alternate translation: "the wars in which Rehoboam's army and Jeroboam's army constantly engaged"
2 Chronicles 12:16
Abijah
This is the name of a man.
Rehoboam lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Rehoboam died"
was buried in the city of David
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him in the city of David"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of

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Rehoboam"

13 [1]In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign over Judah.[2]He reigned for three years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Macaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.
[3]Abijah went into battle with an army of strong, courageous warriors, 400,000 chosen men. Jeroboam placed battle lines against him with 800,000 chosen men, mighty warriors.
[4]Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel![5]Do you not know that Yahweh the God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David and his descendants forever by a covenant of salt?
[6]Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master.[7]Worthless men, base fellows, gathered to him. They came against Rehoboam son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and timid at heart, and they were too strong for him.
[8]So now you plan to resist the kingdom of Yahweh that is held within the hand of the descendants of David, because you are a large army, and you have the golden calves that Jeroboam made to be your gods.[9]But did you not drive out the priests of Yahweh, the descendants of Aaron, and the Levites, and make priests of your own in the same way as the people of other lands do? Whoever comes to serve as a priest, sacrificing a young bull and seven rams, he becomes a priest of what are not gods.
[10]But as for us, Yahweh is our God, and we have not abandoned him. We have priests, descendants of Aaron, serving Yahweh, and the Levites, who are at their work.[11]Every morning and evening they burn for Yahweh burnt offerings and sweet incense. They also arrange the bread of the presence on the pure table; they also tend the lampstand of gold with its lamps, for them to burn every evening. We keep the commandments of Yahweh, our God, but you have abandoned him.
[12]See, God is with us at our head, and his priests are here with the trumpets to sound an alarm against you. Sons of Israel, do not fight against Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, for you will not succeed."

[13]But Jeroboam prepared an ambush behind them; his army was in front of Judah, and the ambush was behind them.
[14]When Judah looked back, behold, the fighting was both in front of them and behind them. They cried out to Yahweh, and the priests blew the trumpets.[15]Then the men of Judah gave a shout; as they shouted, it came about that God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.
[16]The people of Israel fled before Judah, and God gave them into the hand of Judah.[17]Abijah and his army killed them with great slaughter; 500,000 chosen men of Israel fell dead.[18]In this way, the people of Israel were subdued at that time; the people of Judah won because they relied on Yahweh, the God of their ancestors.
[19]Abijah pursued Jeroboam; he took cities from him: Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages, and Ephron with its villages.[20]Jeroboam never recovered power again during the days of Abijah; Yahweh struck him, and he died.[21]But Abijah became powerful; he took fourteen wives for himself and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.[22]The rest of Abijah's deeds, his behavior, and words are written in the history of the prophet Iddo.

2 Chronicles 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Trusting in God, King Abijah of Judah was able to overcome the army of Israel even though it was twice as big as his army. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Chronicles 13:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 13:1

In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam

This refers to the eighteenth year of Jeroboam's reign as king. Alternate translation: "In the eighteenth year that Jeroboam was king" or "in year 18 of King Jeroboam's reign"

2 Chronicles 13:2

Macaiah, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah

"Macaiah" is the name of a woman. "Uriel" is the name of a man.

There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam

The names of the kings represent the armies that they led. Alternate translation: "There was war between the army of Abijah and the army of Jeroboam"

2 Chronicles 13:3

400,000 chosen men ... 800,000 chosen men

"Four hundred thousand chosen men ... eight hundred thousand chosen men." The phrase "chosen men" is an idiom that refers to elite soldiers who were skilled in battle. Alternate translation: "400,000 skilled men ... 800,000 skilled men"

2 Chronicles 13:4

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Mount Zemaraim

2 Chronicles 13:5

Do you not know ... by a covenant of salt?

Abijah asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the positive answer that it anticipates. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know very well ... by a covenant of salt."

a covenant of salt

The meaning of this phrase is not clear. It seems to mean "a permanent covenant."

2 Chronicles 13:7

base fellows

"wicked men" or "evil men"

gathered to him

"joined with Jeroboam"

2 Chronicles 13:8

the kingdom of Yahweh

This is a reference to a united Israel as it existed in the time of David and Solomon.

that is held within the hand of the descendants of David

Here the word "hand" represents authority and possession. Abijah is claiming that only the descendants of David have the rightful authority to rule Yahweh's kingdom. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the descendants of David hold within their hand" or "which only the descendants of David have the authority to rule"

the golden calves that Jeroboam made

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that Jeroboam had others make the golden calves. Alternate translation: "the golden calves that Jeroboam had his craftsmen make"

2 Chronicles 13:9

But did you not drive out ... as the people of other lands do?

Abijah asks this rhetorical question to rebuke the people and to emphasize the positive answer that it anticipates. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "But you drive out ... as the people of other lands do."

Whoever comes to serve as a priest

"Anyone who comes to serve as a priest"

a priest of what are not gods

The phrase "what are not gods" refers to the golden calves that Jeroboam had his craftsmen make. Although the priests served them as if they were gods, they were not really gods. Alternate translation: "a priest of idols that are not really gods"

2 Chronicles 13:10

as for us

The word "us" refers to the people of the southern kingdom of Judah.

who are at their work

The word "work" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "who are working"

2 Chronicles 13:11

the bread of the presence

The "bread of the presence" refers to twelve loaves of bread that the priests placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God and as a symbol of God's presence.

they also tend the lampstand

"they also take care of the lampstand"

for them to burn every evening

"so that the lamps burn every evening" or "and light the lamps every evening"

2 Chronicles 13:12

God is with us at our head

Here the front of the army is spoken of as if it were the head. Abijah is saying that God is the one who is leading the army of Judah in battle. Alternate translation: "God is with us as our leader"

do not fight against Yahweh

Since Yahweh is leading the army of Judah, Abijah speaks of the army of Israel fighting against the army of Judah as if they were fighting against Yahweh himself.

2 Chronicles 13:13

an ambush behind them

"a surprise attack behind the army of Judah"

the ambush was behind them

"the soldiers who were to attack them by surprise were behind them"

2 Chronicles 13:14

When Judah looked back

Here "Judah" represents the soldiers in the army of Judah. Alternate translation: "When the soldiers of Judah looked back"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that the soldiers were surprised by what they saw.

the fighting was both in front of them and behind them

The word "fighting" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the army of Israel was fighting them from the front and from the back"

2 Chronicles 13:15

God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah

God enabling the army of Judah to defeat Jeroboam and the army of Israel is spoken of as if God struck Jeroboam and Israel. Alternate translation: "God enabled Abijah and the army of Judah to defeat Jeroboam and all Israel"

all Israel

Here the word "Israel" refers to the army. Alternate translation: "the entire army of Israel"

2 Chronicles 13:16

fled before Judah

Here the word "Judah" represents the army of Judah. Alternate translation: "fled before the army of Judah"

God gave them into the hand of Judah

Here the word "hand" represents power. God enabling the army of Judah to defeat the army of Israel is spoken of as if God had put the army of Israel in the hand of the army of Judah. Alternate translation: "God enabled Judah to defeat the people of Israel"

2 Chronicles 13:17

killed them with great slaughter

This idiom means that they thoroughly defeated them, or that they killed very many of the soldiers. Alternate translation: "thoroughly defeated them" or "slaughtered many of their soldiers"

500,000 chosen men

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"five hundred thousand chosen men." The phrase "chosen men" is an idiom that refers to elite soldiers who were skilled in battle. Alternate translation: "500,000 of the best soldiers"

2 Chronicles 13:18

the people of Israel were subdued

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the army of Judah subdued the people of Israel"

2 Chronicles 13:19

Abijah pursued

"Abijah chased after"

Jeshanah ... Ephron

These are the names of cities.

2 Chronicles 13:20

Yahweh struck him, and he died

Yahweh causing Jeroboam to die is spoken of as if Yahweh struck Jeroboam. It is possible that this refers to Yahweh causing Jeroboam to become ill. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused Jeroboam to die" or "Yahweh caused Jeroboam to become ill, and he died"

2 Chronicles 13:21

he took fourteen wives for himself

The idiom "took ... wives" means that he married. Alternate translation: "he married fourteen women"

fourteen wives ... twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters

"14 wives ... 22 sons and 16 daughters"

2 Chronicles 13:22

his behavior, and words

"his behavior, and his sayings" or "his behavior, and the things that he said"

are written in the history of the prophet Iddo

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "are in the history that the prophet Iddo wrote"

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14 [1]Abijah lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. Asa, his son, became king in his place.
In his days the land was quiet ten years.[2]Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of Yahweh his God,[3]for he took
away the foreign altars and the high places. He broke down the stone pillars and cut down the Asherah poles.[4]He
commanded Judah to seek Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, and to carry out the law and the commandments.
[5]Also he took away the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. The kingdom had rest under him.[6]He
built fortified cities in Judah, for the land was quiet, and he had no war in those years, because Yahweh had given him
peace.
[7]For Asa said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and make walls around them, and towers, gates, and bars; the land is still
ours because we have sought Yahweh our God. We have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side." So they
built and succeeded.[8]Asa had an army that carried shields and spears; from Judah he had 300,000 men, and from
Benjamin, 280,000 men who carried shields and drew bows. All of these were mighty warriors.

[9]Zerah the Cushite came against them with an army of one million soldiers and three hundred chariots; he came to
Mareshah.[10]Then Asa went out to meet him, and they set the battle lines in order in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.
[11]Asa cried to Yahweh, his God, and said, "Yahweh, there is no one but you to help one who has no strength when he is
facing many. Help us, Yahweh our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast number.
Yahweh, you are our God; do not let man defeat you."
[12]So Yahweh struck the Cushites before Asa and Judah; the Cushites fled.[13]Asa and the soldiers with him pursued them to
Gerar. So many Cushites fell that they could not recover, for they were completely destroyed before Yahweh and his army.
The army carried away very much plunder.
[14]The army destroyed all the villages around Gerar, for terror of Yahweh had come on the inhabitants. The army
plundered all the villages, and there was much booty in them.[15]The army also destroyed the tents of those who owned
livestock; they carried away sheep in abundance, as well as camels, and then they returned to Jerusalem.

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2 Chronicles 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the section about King Asa. (2 Chronicles 14-16)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Trusting in Yahweh, Asa was able to defeat million men of the army of Nubia. Trust in Yahweh is more important than military might. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Chronicles 14:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 14:1

Abijah lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Abijah died"

they buried him

"people buried him"

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became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Abijah"
In his days
"During his reign"
the land was quiet ten years
There being no war is spoken of as if the land were quiet. Alternate translation: "there was peace in the land for ten years" or "there was no war in the land for ten years"
2 Chronicles 14:2
what was good and right in the eyes of Yahweh his God
The word "eyes" here represents seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Asa's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judged to be good and right" or "what Yahweh considered to be good and right"
2 Chronicles 14:3
He broke down the stone pillars and cut down the Asherah poles
Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to do these things. Alternate translation: "He had his people break down the stone pillars and cut down the Asherah poles"
2 Chronicles 14:4
He commanded Judah to seek Yahweh
Here the word "Judah" represents the people of Judah. Worshiping Yahweh is spoken of as if it were seeking him. Alternate translation: "He commanded the people of Judah to worship Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 14:5
he took away the high places
Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to do these things. Alternate translation: "he had his people take away the high places"
The kingdom had rest under him
There being no war is spoken of as if the kingdom had rest. Alternate translation: "The kingdom had peace under him"
under him
"under his reign." A king ruling a kingdom is spoken of as if the king is over the kingdom or the kingdom is under the king. Alternate translation: "during his reign" or "while he was king"
2 Chronicles 14:6
He built fortified cities
Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to do these things. Alternate translation: "He had his workers build fortified cities"
the land was quiet
There being no war is spoken of as if the land were quiet. Alternate translation: "there was peace in the land"
2 Chronicles 14:7
Asa said to Judah
Here "Judah" refers to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "Asa said to the people of Judah"
peace on every side
"peace all around." This means that Judah was at peace with all of the surrounding nations.
So they built
The ellipsis may be supplied from the context. Alternate translation: "So they built the cities"
2 Chronicles 14:8
300,000 men ... 280,000 men
"three hundred thousand men ... two hundred and eighty thousand men"
2 Chronicles 14:9
Zerah
This is the name of a man.
one million soldiers and three hundred chariots
"1,000,000 soldiers and 300 chariots"
Mareshah
This is the name of a place.
2 Chronicles 14:10
the Valley of Zephathah
This is the name of a place.
Asa went out to meet him
Here "Asa" represents both the king and the army that he led into battle. It is implicit that he went out to meet him in battle. Alternate translation: "Asa led his army out to meet him in battle"
2 Chronicles 14:11
in your name
Here "name" represents Yahweh's authority. Alternate translation: "on your behalf" or "by your authority"
do not let man defeat you
Since the army of Judah is fighting in Yahweh's name, Asa speaks of Zerah defeating Judah as if Zerah were to defeat Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "do not let man defeat your people"
2 Chronicles 14:12
Yahweh struck the Cushites before Asa and Judah
God enabling the army of Judah to defeat the Cushites is spoken of as if God struck the Cushites. Alternate translation: "God enabled Asa and the army of Judah to defeat the Cushites"
2 Chronicles 14:13
So many Cushites fell that they could not recover
Possible meanings are 1) "So many Cushites died that the army could not recover" or 2) "So many Cushites died that there were none who remained alive."
So many Cushites fell
Here to "fall" is a euphemism for dying in battle. Alternate translation: "So many Cushites died"
for they were completely destroyed before Yahweh and his army
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh's army completely destroyed them"
2 Chronicles 14:14
for terror of Yahweh had come on the inhabitants
The inhabitants of the villages being terrified is spoken of as if terror were an object that came upon them. Possible meanings are 1) "terror of Yahweh" refers to terror from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh had caused the inhabitants to be terrified" or 2) "terror of Yahweh" refers to being terrified of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "for the inhabitants were terrified of Yahweh"

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15 [1]The Spirit of God came on Azariah son of Oded.[2]He went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all
Judah and Benjamin: Yahweh is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you
abandon him, he will abandon you.
[3]Now for a long period, Israel was without the true God, without a teaching priest, and without the law.[4]But when in their
distress they turned to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them.[5]In those times there was no
peace for him who went out or for him who came in, for there were great disturbances on all the inhabitants of the lands.
[6]They were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city, for God troubled them with all kinds of suffering.
[7]But be strong, and do not let your hands be weak, for your work will be rewarded."

[8]When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and drove away the disgusting figures
from all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and from the cities that he had captured from the hill country of Ephraim, and
he rebuilt Yahweh's altar, which was in front of the portico of the house of Yahweh.[9]He gathered all Judah and Benjamin,
and those who stayed with them—people from Ephraim and Manasseh, and from Simeon. For they came from Israel to
him in great numbers, when they saw that Yahweh his God was with him.
[10]So they gathered together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of Asa's reign.[11]They sacrificed to Yahweh
in that day some of the plunder that they had brought: seven hundred head of cattle and seven thousand sheep and goats.
[12]They entered into a covenant to seek Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and with all their soul.
[13]They agreed that whoever refused to seek Yahweh, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether the person was
small or great, whether man or woman.
[14]They swore to Yahweh with a loud voice, with shouting, and with trumpets and rams' horns.[15]All Judah rejoiced at the
oath, for they had sworn with all their heart, and they sought God with their whole desire, and he was found by them.
Yahweh gave them peace all around them.

[16]King Asa also removed Maakah, his grandmother, from being queen mother because she had made a disgusting figure
out of an Asherah pole. He cut down the disgusting figure, crushed it to dust, and burned it at the Kidron Brook.[17]But the
high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless, Asa's heart was completely devoted all his days.
[18]He brought into the house of God his father's sacred gifts and his own sacred gifts, silver and gold and utensils.[19]There
was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

2 Chronicles 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The section about King Asa continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Promise

The people promise to serve the Lord. This is something they will ultimately fail to do. (See: promise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

The phrase "seek Yahweh" means "wanting to believe and obey Yahweh." This is a common way to describe proper worship of Yahweh. It is possible the meaning of this idiom is about a desire to properly worship.

Links:

2 Chronicles 15:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 15:1

The Spirit of God came on Azariah

This is an idiom which means that the spirit of God influenced Azariah and enabled him to prophesy. Alternate translation: "The Spirit of God gave Azariah the ability to prophesy"

Oded

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 15:2

he will be found by you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will find him" or "he will permit you to find him"

2 Chronicles 15:3

Israel was without the true God

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. This refers to a time when the people of Israel did not worship the true God. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel did not worship the true God"

without a teaching priest

"without a priest who taught them"

2 Chronicles 15:4

he was found by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they found him" or "he permitted them to find him"

2 Chronicles 15:5

for him who went out or for him who came in

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This phrase is an idiom that refers to a person who travels anywhere away from home. Alternate translation: "for the person who traveled anywhere"

for there were great disturbances on all the inhabitants of the lands

The people experiencing great disturbances is spoken of as if those disturbances were objects that were on the people. Alternate translation: "for all the inhabitants of the lands experienced great disturbances"

great disturbances

"great troubles"

2 Chronicles 15:6

They were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city

The word "they" refers to the words "nation" and "city." Conquering one another is spoken of as if they were breaking each other into pieces. Alternate translation: "Nations and cities destroyed each other, nations fighting nations, cities fighting cities"

They were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city

Here "nation" and "city" are metonyms for the people who live there. You may also supply a connecting word to clarify the relationship between these two phrases. Alternate translation: "Nations and cities destroyed each other, as the people of one nation fought against the people of another nation, and the people of one city fought against the people of another city"

2 Chronicles 15:7

do not let your hands be weak

Here the word "hands" represents the people who work. Alternate translation: "do not become weak as you work"

for your work will be rewarded

This can be stated in active form. Yahweh is the implied subject. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh will reward your work"

2 Chronicles 15:8

When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Oded the prophet

"When Asa heard the words that Oded the prophet spoke" or "When Asa heard the prophecy of Oded the prophet." The phrase "the prophecy of Oded the prophet" defines "these words."

the prophecy of Oded the prophet

Many versions make this passage read, "the prophecy of Azariah, the son of Oded the prophet." They do this in order to make the sense agree with 2 Chronicles 15:1. Translators will probably want to do the same in their versions.

drove away the disgusting figures

The words "the disgusting figures" refers to idols. Having his workers remove or destroy the idols is spoken of as if his workers were driving animals or other people away. Alternate translation: "got rid of the disgusting idols"

2 Chronicles 15:9

He gathered all Judah and Benjamin

Here the word "all" is a generalization. The phrase means that David assembled people from all over Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "He gathered together people from all over Judah and Benjamin"

For they came from Israel

"For people from of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon came from Israel"

2 Chronicles 15:10

So they gathered together

"They" here refers to the tribes of Judah and Israel that were with Asa.

the third month

This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars.

third ... fifteenth

2 Chronicles 15:11

some of the plunder that they had brought

This refers to the plunder that they had taken from the villages around Gerar in 2 Chronicles 14:14.

seven hundred ... seven thousand

"700 ... 7,000"

2 Chronicles 15:12

with all their heart and with all their soul

Together, these two phrases form an idiomatic expression that refers to a person's entire being. Alternate translation: "with all their beings" or "wholeheartedly"

2 Chronicles 15:13

be put to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "should die"

whether the person was small or great

Possible meanings are 1) a person's importance within the community is spoken of as if the person were small or great. Alternate translation: "whether the person was important or not" or 2) a young person is spoken of as if he were small and an old person is spoken of as if he were great. Alternate translation: "whether the person was young or old"

2 Chronicles 15:15

All Judah rejoiced

Here the word "all" is a generalization. The phrase means that people from all over Judah rejoiced. Alternate translation: "People all over Judah rejoiced"

with all their heart

The idiom "with all their heart" means "with complete devotion." Alternate translation: "with complete devotion" or "wholeheartedly"

he was found by them

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 15:4]

2 Chronicles 15:16

Maakah, his grandmother

This woman had been the wife of Rehoboam and the mother of Asa's father Abijah.

queen mother

This phrase is the official title of the mother or grandmother of the current king who was queen while her husband was king, but since his death has no official duties.

a disgusting figure

This phrase refers to an idol.

He cut down the disgusting figure, crushed it ... and burned it

Since Asa was king, he may have told his officials to cut down the figure. Alternate translation: "He made his workers cut down the disgusting figure, crush it ... and burn it"

2 Chronicles 15:17

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But the high places were not taken out of Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But Asa did not command the people to take the high places out of Israel"
Asa's heart was completely devoted
The heart represents the person. Alternate translation: "Asa was completely devoted"
all his days
This refers to the whole period of time that Asa lived.
Alternate translation: "the whole time that he lived" or "throughout his whole life"
2 Chronicles 15:18
the house of God
Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of God"
2 Chronicles 15:19
the thirty-fifth year
"year 35"

16 [1]In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, Baasha, king of Israel, acted aggressively against Judah and built up Ramah, so that he might not allow anyone to leave or enter into the land of Asa, king of Judah.
[2]Then Asa brought the silver and gold out of the storerooms in the house of Yahweh and of the king's house, and sent it to Ben-Hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus. He said,[3]"Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Look, I have sent to you silver and gold. Break your covenant with Baasha, king of Israel, so that he may leave me alone."
[4]Ben-Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim,[1] and all the storage cities of Naphtali.[5]It came about that when Baasha heard this, he stopped building up Ramah and let his work cease.[6]Then Asa the king took all Judah with him. They carried away the stones and timbers of Ramah with which Baasha had been building up the city. Then King Asa used that building material to build up Geba and Mizpah.

[7]At that time Hanani the seer went to Asa, king of Judah, and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram, and have not relied on Yahweh your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand.[8]Were not the Cushites and the Libyans a huge army, with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on Yahweh, he gave you victory over them.
[9]For the eyes of Yahweh run everywhere throughout the whole earth, so that he might show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward him. But you have acted foolishly in this matter. From now on, you will have war."[10]Then Asa was angry with the seer; he put him into prison, for he was enraged with him over this matter. At the same time, Asa oppressed some of the people.

[11]Behold, the deeds of Asa, from first to last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.[12]In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was very severe, he did not seek help from Yahweh, but only from the healers.
[13]So Asa lay down with his ancestors, dying in the forty-first year of his reign.[14]They buried him in his own tomb, which he had dug out for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a bier that was filled with sweet odors and various kinds of spices prepared by skilled perfumers. Then they made a very great fire in his honor.

[1]The place named Abel Maim is the same as Abel Beth Maakah. See 2 Samuel 20:14-15.

2 Chronicles 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The section about King Asa is completed in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Asa did not trust Yahweh
When Baasha was building Ramah to blockade him, Asa asked the king of Aram to help him instead of trusting God to help him. This was sinful because he disobeyed Yahweh. (See: trust and sin)

Links:

2 Chronicles 16:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 16:1
the thirty-sixth year
"year 36"
built up Ramah
It is implied that the army of Baasha first captured Ramah. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
Alternate translation: "captured and fortified Ramah"
so that he might not allow anyone to
"so that no one could"
2 Chronicles 16:2
Then Asa brought the silver ... of the king's house, and sent it
Asa would have had his workers gather the gold and silver

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for him. Alternate translation: "Then Asa told his workers to take the silver ... of the king's house, and to take it"

Ben-Hadad

This is the name of a man.

He said

This means he spoke by means of his servants. Asa told his servants what to say to Ben-Hadad and they did. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Asa told his servants to say to Ben-Hadad" or "Through his servants, Asa said to Ben-Hadad"

2 Chronicles 16:3

Let there be a covenant between me and you ... between my father and your father

A covenant being between two people represents those two people having a covenant with each other. Alternate translation: "Let us have a covenant with each other ... with my father and your father" or "Let us make a peace treaty ... with my father and your father"

Look, I have sent

"As proof that I want a treaty with you, I have sent"

Break your covenant with Baasha, king of Israel

Breaking a covenant represents canceling it and not doing what one has promised to do. Alternate translation: "Cancel your covenant with Baasha king of Israel" or "Do not be loyal to Baasha king of Israel as you promised in your covenant with him"

Break your covenant with Baasha, king of Israel

Asa wanted Ben Hadad to attack Israel. Ben Hadad could only do that if he broke his covenant with the king of Israel. The meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Break your covenant with Baasha, king of Israel, and attack Israel"

leave me alone

This is an idiom. Here Asa speaks of himself to represent himself along with his army. Alternate translation: "not attack me"

2 Chronicles 16:4

sent the commanders of his armies against the cities

Here Asa's armies are represented by their commanders. Alternate translation: "sent his armies to attack the cities"

Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim

These are the names of cities in Israel.

2 Chronicles 16:5

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

he stopped building up Ramah and let his work cease

Here Asa represents himself and his army. "his work" refers to other work that his workers were doing in Ramah. Alternate translation: "he commanded his army to stop fortifying Ramah and doing other work there"

building up

"fortifying"

2 Chronicles 16:6

took all Judah

This refers to all the men who live in Judah. Alternate translation: "took all the men of Judah"

timbers

Timbers are large pieces of wood used to build houses or walls.

Baasha had been

Here "Baasha" refers to his workers. Alternate translation: "Baasha's workers had been"

building up ... to build up

"fortifying ... to fortify"

Then King Asa used

Here "King Asa" represents his workers. Alternate translation: "Then King Asa had his workers use"

Geba

This is the name of a city.

2 Chronicles 16:7

Hanani

This is the name of a man.

out of your hand

Here the king's "hand" refers to his control. This means that his army was unable to conquer the king of Aram's army. Alternate translation: "from you" or "from your control"

2 Chronicles 16:8

Were not the Cushites and the Libyans a huge army, with very many chariots and horsemen?

Hanani uses this rhetorical question to remind Asa of a previous victory. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The Cushites and the Libyans were a huge army, with very many chariots and horsemen."

Libyans

These are people from Libya.

he gave you victory

This means that king Asa's army was able to defeat the opposing army. Alternate translation: "he gave your army victory"

2 Chronicles 16:9

the eyes of Yahweh run everywhere throughout the whole earth

This speaks of Yahweh seeing everything that happens everywhere as if his eyes were a person that ran all over the earth. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sees what is happening all over the earth"

so that he might show himself strong on behalf of

This means that Yahweh shows people that he is strong by protecting his people. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh protects with his strength" or "so that he may show his strength by protecting"

those whose hearts are perfect toward him

This speaks of a people's will and desires as their "hearts." To be "perfect toward" something means to be completely devoted to that person or thing. Alternate translation: "those who are completely committed to following him" or "those who are completely devoted to following him"

2 Chronicles 16:11

from first to last

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "from the first thing that he did to the last thing that he did" or "everything he did"

the book of the kings of Judah and Israel

This is a book that no longer exists.

2 Chronicles 16:12

the thirty-ninth year

"year 39"

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Asa was afflicted with a disease in his feet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Asa had a disease in his feet"
2 Chronicles 16:13
Asa lay down with his ancestors, dying in
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Asa died during"
in the forty-first year of his reign
"in year 41 of his reign" or "when he reigned almost 41 years"
2 Chronicles 16:14
which he had dug out for himself
Asa would have had his workers prepare his tomb for him. Alternate translation: "which his workers had dug out for him"
bier
A bier is a table on which a dead body is placed at a funeral.
sweet odors and various kinds of spices prepared by skilled perfumers
Putting plants that smell good with the dead body was one of the burial customs of the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "sweet smelling plants prepared by people skilled in this custom"
prepared by skilled perfumers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that skilled perfumers had prepared"

17 [1]Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king in his place. Jehoshaphat strengthened himself against Israel.[2]He placed forces
in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had captured.
[3]Yahweh was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David, and did not seek the Baals.
[1][4]Instead, he relied on the God of his father, and walked in his commandments, not according to the practices of Israel.
[5]So Yahweh established the rule in his hand; all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat. He had riches and honor in abundance.[6]His heart was committed to Yahweh's ways. He also removed the high places and the Asherah poles from Judah.

[7]In the third year of his reign he sent his officials Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.[8]With them were Levites: Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah; and with them were the priests Elishama and Jehoram.[9]They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of Yahweh with them. They went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

[10]Terror of Yahweh fell on all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.[11]Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and silver as tribute. Arabians also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, and 7,700 goats.
[12]Jehoshaphat became very powerful. He built fortresses and storage cities in Judah.[13]He had many supplies in the cities of Judah, and soldiers—mighty warriors—in Jerusalem.
[14]These were their divisions listed by the name of their fathers' houses: From Judah, the commanders of thousands; Adnah the commander, and with him 300,000 mighty warriors;
[15]next to him Jehohanan the commander, and with him 280,000 men;
[16]next to him Amasiah son of Zikri, who volunteered to serve Yahweh; and with him 200,000 mighty warriors.

[17]From Benjamin: Eliada, a mighty warrior, and with him 200,000 armed with bows and shields;
[18]next to him Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 ready prepared for war.
[19]These were those who served the king, besides those whom the king put in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

[1]Some ancient copies do not have David, therefore, some modern translations leave it out.

2 Chronicles 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of King Jehoshaphat.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust in Yahweh
Jehoshaphat trusted and obeyed God. Because of this, God made him strong. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Chronicles 17:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 17:1
in his place
"after his father"
strengthened himself against Israel
Jehoshaphat prepared the army for battle. Alternate translation: "prepared the army to be able to battle Israel"

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2 Chronicles 17:2
He placed forces
"He places soldiers"
garrisons
military encampments set up to protect the people
2 Chronicles 17:3
Yahweh was with Jehoshaphat
Here "was with" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God supported him" or "God helped him"
walked in the earlier ways of his father
Here the way a person lives and conducts himself is spoken of as if it were walking. For most of David's life he lived righteously and followed Yahweh closely. Alternate translation: "lived in the earlier ways of his father David" or "lived righteously as his father David had done in his earlier years"
did not seek the Baals
This means that he did not worship the Baal idols in order to seek help from them.
2 Chronicles 17:4
not according to the practices of Israel
This refers to how most of the people of Israel did not follow Yahweh. Alternate translation: "and did not follow the evil practices that were common in Israel" or "and did not behave in the ways of the people of Israel."
2 Chronicles 17:5
Yahweh established the rule in his hand
The phrase "his hand" represents Jehoshaphat's control. Alternate translation: "Yahweh enabled him to completely control his kingdom"
honor in abundance
The word "honor" may be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "was greatly honored" or "the people greatly honored him"
2 Chronicles 17:6
His heart
Here the king is represented by his "heart" to emphasize his will and desires. Alternate translation: "He"
2 Chronicles 17:7
the third
"year 3"
Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah
These are names of men.
2 Chronicles 17:8
Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah ... Elishama and Jehoram
These are names of men.
2 Chronicles 17:10
Terror of Yahweh fell on all the kingdoms of the lands
The word "terror" can be expressed with the adjective "afraid." Also, this speaks of the people becoming afraid as if the terror were something that fell upon them. Alternate translation: "The people in all the kingdoms surrounding Judah became very afraid of what Yahweh might do to punish them"
against Jehoshaphat
Here Jehoshaphat represents his army. Alternate translation: "against Jehoshaphat's army"
2 Chronicles 17:11
7,700 rams, and 7,700 goats
The number can also be written as seven thousand seven hundred. This is a description of the flocks that the Arabians brought Jehoshaphat.
2 Chronicles 17:12
He built fortresses and storage cities
Jehoshaphat did not build these things himself; rather, he commanded his workers to build them. Alternate translation: "His workers built fortresses and storage cities"
2 Chronicles 17:14
These were their divisions listed by the name of their fathers' houses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The divisions by the name of their fathers' houses were as follows"
the commanders of thousands
The phrase "commander of thousands" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "thousands" represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 1,000 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "thousands" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a large military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of large military divisions"
Adnah
300,000
"three hundred thousand"
2 Chronicles 17:15
Jehohanan
280,000
"two hundred and eighty thousand"
2 Chronicles 17:16
Amasiah son of Zikri
200,000
"two hundred thousand"
2 Chronicles 17:17
Eliada
These are the names of men.
200,000
"two hundred thousand men" or "200,000 men"
2 Chronicles 17:18
Jehozabad
This is the name of a man.
180,000
"one hundred and eighty thousand men" or "180,000 men"
2 Chronicles 17:19
besides those
"in addition to"

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18 [1]Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; he allied himself with Ahab by having one of his family marry his daughter.[2]After some years, he went down to Ahab in Samaria. Ahab killed many sheep and cattle for him and the people who were with him. Ahab also persuaded him to attack Ramoth Gilead with him.[3]Ahab, king of Israel, said to

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Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, "Will you go with me to Ramoth Gilead?" Jehoshaphat answered him, "I am like you, and my people are like your people. We will be with you in the war."

[4]Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please first seek the word of Yahweh for your answer."[5]Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Should we go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or should I not?" They said, "Attack, for God will give it into the hand of the king."
[6]But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here still another prophet of Yahweh with whom we might seek advice?"[7]The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man by whom we may seek the advice of Yahweh, Micaiah son of Imlah, but I hate him because he never prophesies good concerning me, but always evil." But Jehoshaphat said, "The king should not say that."[8]Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, "Quickly bring Micaiah son of Imlah."
[9]Now Ahab the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on a throne, clothed in their robes, on a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them.[10]Zedekiah son of Kenaanah made himself horns of iron and said, "Yahweh says this: With these you will push the Arameans until they are consumed."[11]All the prophets prophesied the same, saying, "Attack Ramoth Gilead and win, for Yahweh has given it into the hand of the king."

[12]The messenger who went to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one mouth are favorable to the king. Let your words agree with theirs, and speak favorably."[13]Micaiah replied, "As Yahweh lives, it is what God says that I will say."[14]When he came to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, should we go to Ramoth Gilead for battle, or not?" Micaiah answered him, "Attack and be victorious! For it will be a great victory."
[15]Then the king said to him, "How many times must I require you to swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh?"[16]So Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep who have no shepherd, and Yahweh said, 'These have no shepherd. Let every man return to his house in peace.'"
[17]So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but only disaster?"[18]Then Micaiah said, "Therefore all of you should hear the word of Yahweh: I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven were standing on his right hand and on his left.
[19]Yahweh said, 'Who will entice Ahab, king of Israel, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead?' One said this and another that.
[20]Then a spirit came forward and it stood before Yahweh and said, 'I will entice him.' Yahweh said to him, 'How?'[21]The spirit replied, 'I will go out and I will become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Yahweh replied, 'You will entice him, and you will also be successful. Go now and do so.'
[22]Now see, Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours, and Yahweh has decreed disaster for you."

[23]Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, came up, slapped Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?"[24]Micaiah said, "Look, you will know that on that day, when you run into some inner room to hide."
[25]The king of Israel said to some servants, "You people seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, my son.[26]You people will say to him, 'The king says: Put this man in prison and feed him with only a little bread and only a little water, until I return safely.'"[27]Then Micaiah said, "If you return safely, then Yahweh has not spoken by me." Then he added, "Listen to this, all you people."

[28]So Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up against Ramoth Gilead.[29]The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your royal robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into the battle.[30]Now the king of Aram had commanded the captains of his chariots, saying, "Fight with neither small nor great, but only with the king of Israel."
[31]It came about that when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat they said, "That is the king of Israel." They turned around to attack him, but Jehoshaphat cried out, and Yahweh helped him. God turned them away from him.[32]It came about that when the commanders of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.
[33]But a certain man drew his bow at random and shot the king of Israel between the joints of his armor. Then Ahab said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am badly wounded."[34]The battle grew worse that day, and the king of Israel was held up in his chariot facing the Arameans until the evening. About the time that the sun was going down, he died.

2 Chronicles 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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The story of Jehoshaphat as king continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The will of God is accomplished, even when people try to avoid it. Ahab tried to disguise himself to hide from the soldiers of Aram but an arrow still hit and killed him. (See: willofgod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 18:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 18:1

Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; he allied himself with Ahab

The word "now" is used here to mark background information. This happened before Ahab went down to Samaria.

he allied himself with Ahab

"he aligned himself with Ahab" or "he made himself a friend of Ahab"

2 Chronicles 18:2

Ahab killed many sheep and cattle for him and the people

This means that he had these animals slaughtered to prepare a feast for the people. Also, Ahab himself would not have prepared the animals, but rather would have commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "Ahab commanded his workers to slaughter many sheep and cattle for a feast for Jehoshaphat and the people"

2 Chronicles 18:3

Will you go with me to Ramoth Gilead

Here Ahab is requesting for Jehoshaphat to join him with his army to make war against Ramoth Gilead. This can be written explicitly. Also, in this question each of the kings represents themselves accompanied by their armies. Alternate translation: "Will you and your army go with my army to attack the city of Ramoth in the region of Gilead"

I am like you, and my people are like your people

Jehoshaphat is stating his allegiance to Ahab. Alternate translation: "I offer myself and my soldiers to you to use in any way you want"

2 Chronicles 18:4

king of Israel

This refers to King Ahab.

2 Chronicles 18:5

four hundred men

"400 men"

should I not

Here about refers to himself accompanied by his army as himself. Alternate translation: "should we not"

will give it into the hand of the king

Here the king's "hand" refers to his control. This means that God will enable them to defeat the people at Ramoth Gilead. Alternate translation: "will enable your army to defeat them"

2 Chronicles 18:7

Micaiah son of Imlah

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 18:10

Kenaanah

This is the name of a man.

horns of iron

This is a reference to the horns of a bull but they made of metal.

you will push the Arameans until they are consumed

The prophet's actions are a symbolic metaphor that illustrates the way that Ahab would defeat the Arameans. Ahab's army will win with great strength, as a bull attacks another animal. Alternate translation: "With horns like these, your army will keep attacking the army of Aram like a bull attacks another animal, until you completely destroy them"

until they are consumed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until you consume them"

2 Chronicles 18:11

has given it into the hand of the king

Here the king's "hand" refers to his control. This means that God will enable them to defeat the people at Ramoth Gilead. Alternate translation: "has allowed the king to capture it" or "will allow your armies to capture it"

2 Chronicles 18:12

Micaiah

Translate this man's name the same as in [2 Chronicles 17:7]

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the words of the prophets with one mouth are favorable to the king

The prophets all saying the same thing is spoken of as if they all spoke with the same mouth. The phrase "the words of the prophets" represents the message that the prophets declare. Alternate translation: "the prophets all declare that good things will happen to the king"

your words

"what you say"

2 Chronicles 18:13

As Yahweh lives

"as surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I solemnly swear"

2 Chronicles 18:14

or not

The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "or should we not go"

should we go

The word "we" refers to Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and their armies but not to Micaiah.

2 Chronicles 18:15

How many times must I require ... in the name of Yahweh?

Ahab asks this question out of frustration to rebuke Micaiah. Alternate translation: "Many times I have required ... in the name of Yahweh."

in the name of Yahweh

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Here the word "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "as the representative of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 18:16

I saw all Israel

Here "all Israel" refers to the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "I saw the entire army of Israel"

like sheep who have no shepherd

The people of the army are compared to sheep that have no one to lead them because their shepherd, the king, has died.

These have no shepherd

Yahweh speaks of the king as if he were a shepherd. Just like a shepherd is responsible to care for and protect his sheep, the king is responsible to lead and protect his people. Alternate translation: "These people no longer have a leader"

2 Chronicles 18:17

Did I not tell you ... but only disaster?

Ahab asks this question to emphasize that he had spoken the truth about Micaiah. Alternate translation: "I told you ... but only disaster!"

2 Chronicles 18:18

all the host of heaven

"all the army of heaven." Here "the host of heaven" refers to the living beings that God created in the heavens. Possible meanings are that they are called host 1) because they fight as armies. Alternate translation: "all the angel army of heaven" or 2) because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "all the multitude of heaven"

on his right hand and on his left

This means that they were standing beside him on his right side and his left side. Alternate translation: "by his right side and by his left side"

2 Chronicles 18:19

entice

This means to attract someone by offering something appealing.

fall at Ramoth Gilead

Ahab dying in battle is spoken of as if he will fall. Alternate translation: "die at Ramoth Gilead"

One said this and another that

This indicates that there was more than one opinion. The words "One ... and another" refer to two or more angels in the heavenly host who were responding to Yahweh's question in the previous verse.

2 Chronicles 18:21

become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets

Here the word "spirit" refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words "the mouth" represents what they will say. Alternate translation: "cause all his prophets to speak lies"

2 Chronicles 18:22

Now see, Yahweh

"Now pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: Yahweh"

has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours

Here the word "spirit" refers to the attitudes of the prophets and the words "the mouth" represents what they will say. Alternate translation: "has caused your prophets to speak lies"

2 Chronicles 18:23

Kenaanah

Translate this man's name the same as in [2 Chronicles 18:10]

Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?

Zedekiah asks this sarcastic question to insult and rebuke Micaiah. Alternate translation: "Do not think that Yahweh's Spirit left me to speak to you!"

2 Chronicles 18:24

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

you will know that

"you will know the answer to your question." If Zedekiah's rhetorical question is translated as a statement, this phrase may be translated to supply implicit information. Alternate translation: "you will know that the Spirit of Yahweh has spoken to me"

2 Chronicles 18:25

king of Israel

This refers to Ahab.

Amon

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 18:27

If you return safely, then Yahweh has not spoken by me

Micaiah knew that the king would not return safely because Yahweh had already told him that. So he said this to emphasize that. Alternate translation: "If you return safely, then that would mean that Yahweh has not spoken by me"

2 Chronicles 18:28

Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up against

Here the kings represent themselves accompanied by their armies. Alternate translation: "Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah led their armies up against"

went up against

"fought against"

Ramoth Gilead

Translate the name of this place as you did in [2 Chronicles 18:2]

2 Chronicles 18:29

disguise

This means to change the usual appearance so as not to be identified.

2 Chronicles 18:30

Fight with neither small nor great

Here "small" and "great" mean the unimportant and important soldiers. The king used the words "small" and "great" to refer to all the soldiers. Alternate translation: "Do not attack any of the soldiers"

2 Chronicles 18:31

That is the king of Israel

Jehoshaphat was wrongly identified as the king of Israel because Ahab had insisted that he wear kingly robes.

God turned them away from him

"God caused them to stop pursuing him"

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could

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consider using it here.
2 Chronicles 18:33
drew his bow at random
Possible meanings are 1) he took aim to shoot a soldier without knowing that it was Ahab or 2) he drew his bow to shoot without any specific target in mind.
between the joints of his armor
This is a place where two pieces of armor meet and is susceptible to arrows and swords.
2 Chronicles 18:34
the king of Israel was held up in his chariot
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone held the king of Israel up in his chariot"

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19 [1]Jehoshaphat the king of Judah safely returned to his house in Jerusalem.[2]Then Jehu son of Hanani, the seer, went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you be helping the wicked? Should you be loving those who hate Yahweh? For this deed, anger from Yahweh is on you.[3]However, there is some good to be found in you, in that you have taken the Asherah poles out of the land, and you have fixed your heart to seek God."

[4]Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem; and he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to Yahweh, the God of their fathers.[5]He placed judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city.
[6]He said to the judges, "Consider what you should do, because you are not judging for man, but for Yahweh; he is with you in the act of judging.[7]Now then, let the fear of Yahweh be upon you. Be careful when you judge, for there is no iniquity with Yahweh our God, nor is there any favoritism or bribe taking."

[8]Moreover, in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and the priests, and some of the heads of the families of Israel, for carrying out judgment for Yahweh, and for the sake of disputes. They lived in Jerusalem.[9]He instructed them, saying, "You must serve in reverence for Yahweh, faithfully, and with your whole heart.
[10]Whenever any dispute comes to you from your brothers who live in their cities, whether concerning bloodshed, whether about laws and commands, statutes or decrees, you must warn them, so they do not become guilty before Yahweh, or anger will come toward you and toward your brothers. If you do this, you will not be guilty.
[11]See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all the matters of Yahweh. Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the leader of the house of Judah, is in charge of all the matters of the king. Also, the Levites will be officers serving you. Be strong and obey your instructions, and may Yahweh be with those who are good."

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2 Chronicles 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Jehoshaphat as king continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Levite judges
Jehoshaphat appointed many Levites to be judges and told them to be very fair. (See: appoint and judge)

Links:

2 Chronicles 19:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 19:2
Hanani, the seer
"Hanani" is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 16:7]
went out to meet him
Here the word "him" refers to Jehoshaphat.
Should you be helping the wicked? Should you be loving those who hate Yahweh?
These questions expect negative answers to make the point that Jehoshaphat should not have helped Ahab. Alternate translation: "You should not help the wicked! You should not love those who hate Yahweh!"
the wicked
This refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "wicked people"
anger from Yahweh is on you
The abstract noun "anger" can be translated using the word "angry." This phrase can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is angry with you"
2 Chronicles 19:3
there is some good to be found in you
The abstract noun "good" can be translated as an adjective. This phrase can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "you have done some good things"
you have taken the Asherah poles out of the land
Since Jehoshaphat was king, he may have told his officials to do these things for him. Alternate translation: "you have had your people take the Asherah poles out of the land"
Asherah poles
See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 14:3.
fixed your heart
Here the heart represents the will. Jehoshaphat's will is

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spoken of as being fixed or immovable, which means having an unchanging intention to seek God. Alternate translation: "firmly decided"

seek God

Wanting to do what pleases God is spoken of as if Jehoshaphat were seeking him. Alternate translation: "do what pleases God"

2 Chronicles 19:4

from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim

This is a merism that means the whole land over which Jehoshaphat reigned, from the most southern part to the most northern part, and is intended to include the whole land in between. Alternate translation: "of all the land of Judah"

brought them back to Yahweh

The author speaks of Jehoshaphat's leading the people back to serving Yahweh as if he were carrying them back to where they were at an earlier time. Alternate translation: "convinced them to return to Yahweh"

their fathers

"their ancestors" or "their forefathers"

2 Chronicles 19:5

fortified cities

cities with walls around them for protection

city by city

"for every city"

2 Chronicles 19:6

He said to the judges

"Jehoshaphat said to the judges"

he is with you

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh was aware of what the judges decided or 2) Yahweh would hold the judges accountable for their decisions or 3) Yahweh would help and guide them in their decisions.

2 Chronicles 19:7

let the fear of Yahweh be upon you

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "you should remember to fear Yahweh when you judge"

there is no iniquity with Yahweh our God, nor is there any favoritism or bribe taking

The abstract nouns "iniquity," "favoritism," and "bribe" can be translated using the verbs "sin," "favor," and "bribe." Alternate translation: "Yahweh our God will not sin or favor one person over another in judgment or be bribed"

2 Chronicles 19:8

heads of the families

Here "heads" is a metaphor for the most important part. Alternate translation: "leaders of the families"

for carrying out judgment for Yahweh

The abstract noun "judgment" can be translated using the verb "to judge." Alternate translation: "for judging the people for Yahweh" or "for judging on Yahweh's behalf"

for the sake of disputes

"for settling disputes" or "for resolving arguments"

2 Chronicles 19:9

You must serve in reverence for Yahweh

The abstract noun "reverence" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "You must serve while fearing Yahweh" or "You must serve while respecting Yahweh"

with your whole heart

Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "with your whole being"

2 Chronicles 19:10

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in this verse refers to those persons Jehoshaphat appointed to be judges.

Connecting Statement:

Jehoshaphat continues to instruct some of the Levites and the priests, and some of the heads of the ancestral houses of Israel, who he appointed to be judges.

Whenever any dispute comes to you from your brothers who live in their cities

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Whenever your brothers who live in their cities bring you a dispute"

from your brothers

Here "brothers" is a general reference to fellow Israelites.

bloodshed

Here the killing of people is spoken of as shedding their blood, where "blood" represents their lives. Alternate translation: "the killing of people" or "murder"

anger will come toward you and toward your brothers

The abstract noun "anger" can be expressed as the adjective "angry." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will be angry with you and your brothers"

2 Chronicles 19:11

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in this verse refers to those persons Jehoshaphat appointed to be judges.

Connecting Statement:

Jehoshaphat continues to instruct some of the Levites and the priests, and some of the heads of the ancestral houses of Israel, who he appointed to be judges.

See, Amariah

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: Amariah"

Amariah ... Zebadiah ... Ishmael

These are the names of men.

is over you

"is in charge of you"

of all the matters of the king

Here Jehoshaphat speaks of himself in the third person. This can be translated in the first person. Alternate translation: "of all my royal matters"

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20 [1]It came about after this, that the people of Moab and Ammon, and with them some Meunites came against Jehoshaphat to do battle.[1] [2]Then some came who told Jehoshaphat, saying, "A large multitude is coming against you from beyond the Dead Sea, from Edom. See, they are in Hazezon Tamar," that is, En Gedi.[2]
[3]Jehoshaphat became afraid and set himself to seek Yahweh. He proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.[4]Judah gathered together to seek Yahweh; they came to seek Yahweh from all the cities of Judah.

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[5]Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, at the house of Yahweh, in front of the new courtyard.[6]He said, "Yahweh, the God of our ancestors, are you not God in heaven? Are you not the ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in your hand, so no one is able to resist you.[7]Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham?
[8]They lived in it and built you a holy place in it for your name, saying,[9]'If disaster comes on us—the sword, judgment, or plague, or famine—we will stand before this house, and before you (for your name is in this house), and we will cry to you in our distress, and you will hear us and save us.'[3]
[10]See now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir whom you would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt; so, Israel turned away from them and did not destroy them.[11]See how they are rewarding us; they are coming to drive us out of your land that you have given us to inherit.
[12]Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power against this great army that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."
[13]All Judah stood before Yahweh, with their little ones, wives, and children.

[14]Then in the middle of the assembly the Spirit of Yahweh came on Jahaziel, son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite and a descendant of Asaph.[15]Jahaziel said, "Listen, all Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat. This is what Yahweh says to you, 'Do not fear; do not be discouraged because of this great army, for the battle does not belong to you, but to God.
[16]You must go down against them tomorrow. See, they are coming up by way of the pass of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley, before the wilderness of Jeruel.[17]You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand in your positions, stand still, and see the rescue of Yahweh with you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear nor be discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for Yahweh is with you.'"
[18]Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground. All Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before Yahweh, worshiping him.[19]The Levites, those of the descendants of the Kohathites and Korahites, stood up to praise Yahweh, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

[20]Early in the morning they arose and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah, and you inhabitants of Jerusalem! Trust in Yahweh your God, and you will be supported. Trust in his prophets, and you will succeed."[21]After he consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to Yahweh and who praised him for his majestic splendor as they went out before the army, saying, "Give thanks to Yahweh, for his covenant faithfulness endures forever."

[22]When they began to sing and to praise, Yahweh set men in ambush against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming against Judah. They were defeated.[23]For the people of Ammon and Moab rose to fight the inhabitants of Mount Seir, in order to completely kill them and destroy them. When they had finished with the inhabitants of Mount Seir, they all helped to destroy each other.

[24]When Judah came to a place overlooking the wilderness, they looked out on the army. Behold, they were dead, fallen to the ground; none had escaped.
[25]When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take plunder from them, they found among them abundant goods, clothing, and valuable articles, which they took for themselves, more than they could carry away. It took them three days to carry off the plunder, there was so much of it.[4][26]On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Berakah. There they praised Yahweh, so the name of that place is the "Valley of Berakah" to this day.
[27]Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in their lead, to go again to Jerusalem with joy, for Yahweh had made them rejoice over their enemies.[28]They came to Jerusalem and to the house of Yahweh with lutes and harps and trumpets.
[29]The terror of God was on all the kingdoms of the nations when they heard that Yahweh had fought against Israel's enemies.[30]So Jehoshaphat's kingdom was quiet, for his God gave him peace all around him.

[31]Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: He was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi.[32]He walked in the ways of Asa, his father; he did not turn away from them; he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh.[33]However, the high places were not taken away. The people still had not directed their hearts to the God of their ancestors.
[34]As for the other matters concerning Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the history of Jehu son of Hanani, which is recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.

[35]After this Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, allied himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, who committed much wickedness.[36]He allied himself with him to build ships to go to Tarshish. They built the ships at Ezion Geber.[37]Then Eliezer son of

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Dodavahu of Mareshah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat; he said, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, Yahweh has destroyed your works." The ships were wrecked so that they could not go to Tarshish.

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[1]The reading Meunites represents a correction to the Hebrew text, as was suggested by the ancient Greek translation. The ancient Hebrew copies read: Ammonites. Most modern translations agree that Meunites was original.
[2]Instead of Edom, the ancient Greek and Latin translations and some modern translations read Aram.
[3]Instead of judgment, some ancient and modern translations read flood.
[4]Instead of among them, some ancient and modern translations read cattle. Instead of clothing, some ancient and modern translations read dead bodies.

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2 Chronicles 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Jehoshaphat is completed in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Deliverance and trust

God rescues those who trust him. An enormous army came against Jehoshaphat but God promised that he would defeat them without Judah having to fight. Then the enemy fought among themselves and when the army of Judah arrived there were dead bodies. (See: trust and promise)

Links:

2 Chronicles 20:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 20:1

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Meunites

This was a people group from the region of Meun which was near Edom, east of the Jordan River.

came against Jehoshaphat to do battle

Here "Jehoshaphat" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "came against Jehoshaphat's army to do battle" or "came to fight against Jehoshaphat and his army"

2 Chronicles 20:2

See, they are in Hazezon Tamar

The word "see" is used here as an idiom to add emphasis to what is said next. They could not see the army in Hazezon Tamar from where they were speaking. Alternate translation: "They are already in Hazezon Tamar"

Hazezon Tamar

This is the name of a place. It is another name for Engedi.

2 Chronicles 20:3

set himself to seek

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "determined himself to seek" or "devoted himself to seek"

to seek Yahweh

This speaks of seeking Yahweh's advice as if he were looking for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to seek Yahweh's advice"

He proclaimed a fast

The word "fast" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "He proclaimed that all the people should fast"

2 Chronicles 20:4

Judah gathered

This refers to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah gathered"

2 Chronicles 20:5

of Judah and Jerusalem

This refers to the people from these places. Alternate translation: "of the people from Judah and Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 20:6

are you not God in heaven? Are you not the ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations?

Jehoshaphat uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that God is in heaven and his authority over all things. This question can be written as statement. Alternate translation: "you are indeed God in heaven and the ruler over all the kings of the earth."

Power and might are in your hand

The words "Power" and "might" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of Yahweh's power. The word "hand" refers to possession. Alternate translation: "You possess great power" or "You have great power and might"

2 Chronicles 20:7

Our God, did you not drive out the inhabitants of this land ... to the descendants of Abraham?

Jehoshaphat uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that God drove their enemies from their land and gave it to the Israelites. This question can be written as statement. Alternate translation: "It was you who drove out those who lived in this land for the sake of your people Israel and who gave it permanently to the descendants of Abraham."

2 Chronicles 20:8

for your name

Here Yahweh is represented by his "name." Alternate translation: "for you" or "to honor you"

2 Chronicles 20:9

the sword

The "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "war" or "battle"

before this house

This refers to the temple.

your name is in this house

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Here Yahweh's presence is represented by his "name." Alternate translation: "your presence is here in this house"
2 Chronicles 20:10
Mount Seir
This was a place where the Edomites lived.
2 Chronicles 20:11
See how they are rewarding us; they are coming to drive us out of your land
Here Jehoshaphat speaks of the ironic situation. Alternate translation: "This is how they 'repay' us for the mercy we showed to them; they are coming to drive us out of your land"
See how
The word "see" here is used as an idiom to emphasize what is said next.
2 Chronicles 20:12
will you not judge them?
This rhetorical question is used as a request. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "please judge them."
our eyes are on you
Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize that they are directing their attention to God. Alternate translation: "we are looking to you for help"
2 Chronicles 20:14
the Spirit of Yahweh came on
This is an idiom which means that the spirit of God influenced Jahaziel and enabled him to prophesy. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 15:1]
Jahaziel ... Zechariah ... Benaiah ... Jeiel ... Mattaniah ... Asaph
These are the names of men.
2 Chronicles 20:15
all Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem
Here "Judah" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "all you who live in Judah and Jerusalem"
for the battle does not belong to you, but to God
This means that God is in control of the battle and of what happens.
2 Chronicles 20:16
go down against
This is an idiom that means to go and meet the enemy army for battle. Alternate translation: "march against" or "go to battle against"
See
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
pass of Ziz
This is a narrow valley between two mountains southeast of Jerusalem.
2 Chronicles 20:17
Go out against
This is an idiom that means to go and meet the enemy army for battle. Alternate translation: "March out against" or "Go to battle against"
the rescue of Yahweh with you
The word "rescue" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Yahweh rescue you"
Judah and Jerusalem
Here these places represent the people from them. Alternate translation: "people of Judah and Jerusalem"
2 Chronicles 20:18
bowed his head with his face to the ground ... fell down before Yahweh
These acts of worship that express humility and submission to God.
All Judah
Here "Judah" refers to the people from Judah. Alternate translation: "All the people of Judah"
2 Chronicles 20:19
Kohathites and Korahites
These are the names of people groups descending from Kohath and Korah.
with a very loud voice
This speaks of all the people praising Yahweh as if they together had one voice. Alternate translation: "with very loud voices"
2 Chronicles 20:20
Tekoa
Translate the name of this city the same as in [2 Chronicles 11:6]
you will be supported
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will support you" or "he will help you"
Trust in his prophets, and you will succeed
"If you trust in Yahweh's prophets, then you will succeed"
2 Chronicles 20:21
his covenant faithfulness endures forever
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [2 Chronicles 7:3]
2 Chronicles 20:22
to sing and to praise
They were singing to Yahweh [2 Chronicles 20:21]
Yahweh set men
This means that Yahweh caused some of the enemy soldiers to ambush other enemy soldiers. Alternate translation: "Yahweh set some enemy soldiers"
ambush
a surprise attack
Mount Seir
Translate the name of this place the same as in [2 Chronicles 20:10]
They were defeated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They defeated them" or "They defeated those they had ambushed"
2 Chronicles 20:23
to completely kill them and destroy them
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second intensifies the first. Alternate translation: "to completely annihilate them"
When they had finished with
This refers to after they had destroyed them. Alternate translation: "When they had finished killing"
2 Chronicles 20:24
Behold, they were dead
The word "behold" is used here to mark a surprising event.
they were dead, fallen to the ground
The phrase "fallen to the ground" is an idiomatic way to say

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that "they were dead." Alternate translation: "they were all dead on the ground"
2 Chronicles 20:26
the fourth day
"day 4"
Valley of Berakah
This is the name of a place.
to this day
This means the day on which the writer wrote. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 5:9.
2 Chronicles 20:27
every man of Judah and Jerusalem
This is a reference to every man in the army. Alternate translation: "every soldier of Judah and Jerusalem"
Jehoshaphat in their lead
"with Jehoshaphat leading them." The phrase "in their lead" is an idiom. King Jehoshaphat was in front of the whole army as they went back to Jerusalem.
rejoice over their enemies
They rejoiced because their enemies had been defeated. Alternate translation: "rejoice over their enemies' defeat" or "rejoice because their enemies had been destroyed"
2 Chronicles 20:29
The terror of God was on all the kingdoms of the nations
The word "terror" can be expressed with the verb "feared." Alternate translation: "All the kingdoms of the nations greatly feared God"
kingdoms of the nations
"kingdoms in the nearby nations"
2 Chronicles 20:30
Jehoshaphat's kingdom was quiet
This speaks of the kingdom having peace as the kingdom being quiet. Alternate translation: "Jehoshaphat's kingdom was at peace"
2 Chronicles 20:31
thirty-five years old ... twenty-five years
"35 years old ... 25 years"
Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi
"Azubah" was the name of Jehoshaphat's mother. Shilhi was the name of Azubah's father.
2 Chronicles 20:32
He walked in the ways of Asa, his father; he did not turn away from them
This means that he lived in a way that pleased Yahweh as his father had done. Here "walking" is an idiom for the way a person lives and behaves. Alternate translation: "He did things that were pleasing to Yahweh, like his father Asa had done, and he did not stop doing those things"
he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh
The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Jehoshaphat's actions. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]
2 Chronicles 20:33
the high places were not taken away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he did not get rid of the high places"
The people still had not directed their hearts to the God
This means that the people did not desire to obey God and were not devoted to him. Here people's "hearts" represent their will and their desires. Alternate translation: "The people were still not devoted to the God" or "The people still were not committed to following the God"
2 Chronicles 20:34
first and last
These two opposites are given to refer to everything concerning Jehoshaphat during his reign as king. Alternate translation: "from the beginning of his reign until he died"
behold, they are written in the history ... Israel
The word "behold" is used here to add emphasis to the important information that follows. Alternate translation: "anyone can look in the history ... Israel and see that they are written there"
they are written in ... which is recorded in
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they are in ... which is in"
Hanani
Translate this man's name as you did in [2 Chronicles 16:7]
the history of Jehu son of Hanani
This is a historical account that was written by Jehu.
the book of the kings of Israel
This is a book that no longer exists. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 16:11.
2 Chronicles 20:36
ships
These are ships capable of traveling on large bodies of water.
Tarshish
This is the name of a city.
They built the ships
Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah did not build the ships, rather, their workers built them. Alternate translation: "Their workers built the ships"
Ezion Geber
Translate the name of this place as you did in 2 Chronicles 8:17.
2 Chronicles 20:37
Eliezer ... Dodavahu
These are names of men.
Mareshah
Translate this man's name as you did in 2 Chronicles 11:8.
your works
"the things you have made"
The ships were wrecked so that
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The ships became ruined and" or "The ships wrecked so that"
they could not go
"no one was able to sail them"

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21 [1]Jehoshaphat lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David; Jehoram, his son, became king in his place.[2]Jehoram had brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and

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Shephatiah. All these were sons of Jehoshaphat, king of Israel.[3]Their father had given them large gifts of silver, gold, and other precious things, and also fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram.
[4]Now when Jehoram had risen up over his father's kingdom and had firmly established himself as king, he killed all his brothers with the sword, and also various other leaders of Israel.[5]Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem.
[6]He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab was doing, for he had Ahab's daughter as his wife, and he did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh.[7]However, Yahweh did not wish to destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David; he had promised that he would always give a lamp to him and his descendants.

[8]In Jehoram's days, Edom rebelled against the control of Judah, and they set a king to reign over themselves.[9]Then Jehoram crossed over with his commanders and all his chariots. It was night when he rose up and fought against the Edomites who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders.[10]So Edom has been in rebellion from the control of Judah to this present day. Libnah also revolted at the same time from his control, because Jehoram had abandoned Yahweh, the God of his ancestors.

[11]In addition, Jehoram had also built high places in the mountains of Judah and he made the inhabitants of Jerusalem to live like prostitutes, and he led Judah astray.
[12]A letter from the prophet Elijah came to Jehoram. It said, "This is what Yahweh, the God of David, your ancestor, says: Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat, your father, nor in the ways of Asa, king of Judah,[13]but have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to act like a prostitute, as the house of Ahab did—and because you have also killed your brothers in your father's house, men who were better than yourself—[14]see, Yahweh will strike your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions with a heavy blow.
[15]You yourself will have much sickness with a disease in your intestines, until the disease causes your intestines to come out, and this will continue day after day."

[16]Yahweh stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians who were near the Cushites.[17]They attacked Judah, invaded it, and carried away all the wealth that was found in the king's house. They also carried away his sons and his wives. No son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son.

[18]After all this, Yahweh struck him in his intestines with an incurable disease.[19]It came about in due time, at the end of two years, that his intestines fell out because of his sickness, and that he died of severe disease. His people made no fire in his honor as they had done for his ancestors.[20]He had begun to reign when he was thirty-two years old; he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years, and when he departed no one mourned him. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the royal tombs.

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2 Chronicles 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Evil

Doing evil causes the country to decline. Jehoshaphat's son was evil. Edom and Libna successfully revolted against him, the Arabs plundered him and he died of an intestinal disease. (See: evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

The author compares worship of Baal to being a prostitute: "to act like a prostitute." Idolatry by the people of God is often pictured as prostitution. (See: and peopleofgod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 21:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 21:1

lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "died"

city of David

This is the city of Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 21:2

Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah

These are names of men.

Jehoshaphat, king of Israel

The southern kingdom was technically called "Judah," but the writer of this book apparently wanted to make the point that the southern kingdom was, in its obedience to God, the true Israel.

2 Chronicles 21:3

large gifts

"gifts of large amounts"

he gave the kingdom to Jehoram

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The kingdom is spoken of as if it were a physical object that Jehoshaphat gave to Jehoram. Alternate translation: "he made Jehoram king"
2 Chronicles 21:4
risen up over his father's kingdom
To "rise up over" something is an idiom that means to control it. Alternate translation: "taken complete control over his father's kingdom"
he killed all his brothers with the sword
Jehoram probably did not kill them personally, but had other people do it for him. Alternate translation: "he caused all of his younger brothers to be killed"
2 Chronicles 21:6
walked in the ways
This is an idiom that means he followed their example. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 20:32]
the house of Ahab was doing
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the descendants of Ahab. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Ahab were doing"
he had Ahab's daughter as his wife
"he had married a daughter of Ahab"
in the sight of Yahweh
The sight of Yahweh represents his judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh judged"
2 Chronicles 21:7
the house of David
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 10:19]
he had promised that he would always give a lamp to him and his descendants
Here the word "lamp" is a metaphor, probably for the authority to rule. Alternate translation: "he had promised that David and his descendants would rule Israel forever"
2 Chronicles 21:8
In Jehoram's days
"While Jehoram was king"
set a king to reign over themselves
The word "set" is a metonym for choosing. Alternate translation: "chose a king to rule over them"
2 Chronicles 21:9
crossed over
"crossed the border into Edom" or "went to Edom"
It was night when he rose up ... surrounded him and his chariot commanders
It may be helpful to reorder this sentence and to add implicit information. Alternate translation: "The Edomites surrounded him and his chariot commanders, but Jehoram and his army fought against them and escaped during the night"
2 Chronicles 21:10
to this present day
This refers to the time when the book of 2 Chronicles was written. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 5:9.
Libnah
This was a town in Judah.
2 Chronicles 21:11
Jehoram had also built high places
Other people helped Jehoram build these high places all over the mountains of Judah. Alternate translation: "Jehoram and the people had also built high places"
he made the inhabitants of Jerusalem to live like prostitutes
Jehoram caused the people to serve idols instead of Yahweh. People who serve other gods in order to receive something from them are spoken of as spiritual prostitutes. Alternate translation: "he caused the people of Jerusalem to leave Yahweh and serve other gods, as prostitutes serve men who are not their husbands"
he led Judah astray
Not following Yahweh is spoken of as not following the correct path. Alternate translation: "he caused Judah to no longer follow Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 21:12
A letter from the prophet Elijah came to Jehoram
"Jehoram received a letter from the prophet Elijah" or "The prophet Elijah sent a letter to Jehoram"
walked in the ways
This is an idiom that means he followed their example. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 20:32]
2 Chronicles 21:13
act like a prostitute
Jehoram caused the people to serve idols instead of Yahweh. People who serve other gods in order to receive something from them are spoken of as spiritual prostitutes. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 21:11]
the house of Ahab
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the descendants of Ahab. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 21:6]
2 Chronicles 21:14
see
This tells Jehoram to pay attention to the message that follows.
strike your people ... your possessions with a heavy blow
"cause horrible things to happen to your people ... your possessions"
2 Chronicles 21:15
You yourself
The use of the reflexive "yourself" emphasizes that this is a personal judgment on Jehoram.
until the disease causes your intestines to come out
Possible meanings are 1) his intestines will literally fall out or 2) this is a metaphor that describes intestinal problems that will result in his death. Alternate translation: "until this disease causes your death"
2 Chronicles 21:16
stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians
Stirring the spirit is a metonym for making someone want to act. Here "spirit" is singular and refers to the Philistines as a group and to the Arabians as a group. Alternate translation: "provoked against Jehoram the Philistines and the Arabians"
against Jehoram
Here Jehoram refers to Jehoram and the people of Judah

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that he ruled. Alternate translation: "against Jehoram and the people of Judah"

the spirit of the Philistines and of the Arabians who were near the Cushites

The Philistines and the Arabians were two different nations. The Arabians lived southeast of Judah near the Cushites, and the Philistines lived west of Judah. These nations were stirred up separately. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the spirit of the Philistines and the spirit of the Arabians who were near the Cushites"

2 Chronicles 21:17

No son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son

"They took away all of his sons except Jehoahaz, his youngest son" or "The only son they left to him was Jehoahaz, his youngest son"

Jehoahaz, his youngest son

This same son is called "Ahaziah" in 2 Chronicles 22:1.

2 Chronicles 21:18

Yahweh struck him in his intestines with an incurable disease

Here "struck" is an idiom that means Yahweh caused him to be sick. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused him to suffer from an incurable disease in his intestines"

2 Chronicles 21:19

It came about

This phrase marks an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in due time

This is an idiom that refers to a set or appointed time. Alternate translation: "in the proper time" or "when the time was right"

made no fire in his honor as they had done for his ancestors

The custom of the Israelites was to make a bonfire to honor the king who had died. They did not do this for Jehoram to express their contempt for him. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "did not make a bonfire to honor him as they normally did to honor kings when they died"

2 Chronicles 21:20

when he departed no one mourned him

"no one was sad that he died"

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22 [1]The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, Jehoram's youngest son, king in his place, for the marauding band that came with the Arabians into the camp had killed all his older sons. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, became king.[2]Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah; she was the daughter of Omri.[3]He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab for his mother was his advisor in doing wicked things.
[4]Ahaziah did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as the house of Ahab was doing, for they were his advisors after the death of his father, to his destruction.[5]He also followed their advice; he went with Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram, at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram.
[6]Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that they had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael, king of Aram. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of Ahab, because Joram had been wounded.

[7]Now the destruction of Ahaziah was brought about by God through Ahaziah's visit to Joram. When he had arrived, he went with Jehoram to attack Jehu son of Nimshi, whom Yahweh had anointed to destroy the house of Ahab.[8]It came about, when Jehu was carrying out God's judgment on the house of Ahab, that he found the leaders of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers serving Ahaziah. Jehu killed them.
[9]Jehu looked for Ahaziah; they caught him hiding in Samaria, brought him to Jehu, and killed him. Then they buried him, for they said, "He is a son of Jehoshaphat, who sought Yahweh with all his heart." So the house of Ahaziah had no more power to rule the kingdom.

[10]Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and killed all the royal children in the house of Judah.[11]But Jehosheba,[1] a daughter of the king, secretly took Joash son of Ahaziah away from the king's sons who were about to be killed. She put him and his nurse into a bedroom. So Jehosheba, a daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah, so that Athaliah did not kill him.[12]He was with them, hidden in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

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[1]Jehosheba may be spelled differently in other translations, as: Jehoshaba.

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2 Chronicles 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the beginning of the story of Queen Athaliah.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The author compares Athaliah's evil deeds to Ahab's family's evil lives: "walked in the ways of the house of Ahab." Ahab is pictured as the epitome of evil. (See: and evil and works)

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Links:

2 Chronicles 22:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 22:1

for the marauding band ... had killed all his older sons

This is background information about the events of [2 Chronicles 21:16]

all his older sons

"all Jehoram's older sons"

2 Chronicles 22:2

twenty-two years old

"22 years old"

Athaliah

This is the name of Ahaziah's mother.

2 Chronicles 22:3

He also walked in the ways

Here "walked in the ways" is an idiom that means he followed Ahab's example. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 20:32]

the house of Ahab

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the descendants of Ahab. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 21:6]

2 Chronicles 22:4

in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents his judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh judged"

the house of Ahab was doing

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the descendants of Ahab. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 21:6]

they were his advisors

"descendants of Ahab advised him"

to his destruction

"and this caused his destruction"

2 Chronicles 22:5

He also followed their advice; he went

"He also followed their advice and went" or "He also followed their advice to go"

to fight against Hazael, king of Aram

The reader should understand that Hazael did not fight alone, but that he took his army with him. Alternate translation: "to fight against Hazael, king of Aram, and his army"

Hazael

This is a man's name.

2 Chronicles 22:6

of the wounds that they had given him

"from the wounds that he received at the battle"

went down to Jezreel

Jezreel was lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 22:7

Now the destruction of Ahaziah was brought about by God

The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated as an action. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God caused Ahaziah to die"

visit to Joram ... went with Jehoram

"Joram" and "Jehoram" are two names for the same person.

Nimshi

This is the name of a man.

the house of Ahab

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the descendants of Ahab. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 21:6]

2 Chronicles 22:8

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

carrying out God's judgment on the house of Ahab

This refers to killing the descendants of Ahab. Alternate translation: "killing all the descendants of Ahab as God had commanded"

the sons of Ahaziah's brothers

Possible meanings are 1) Ahaziah's nephews or 2) the sons of Ahaziah's relatives .

2 Chronicles 22:9

they caught him ... killed him

"they caught Ahaziah ... killed Ahaziah"

they buried him, for they said, "He is a son of Jehoshaphat, who sought Yahweh with all his heart."

They honored him enough to bury his body because he was the descendant of Jehoshaphat, who was a good king. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: they buried his corpse, because they said, "He deserves to be buried, because he was a descendant of Jehoshaphat, who tried hard to please Yahweh."

the house of Ahaziah had no more power to rule the kingdom

Here "house of Ahaziah" is a metonym that refers to Ahaziah's descendants. Here "power to rule" is a metonym for a king. Since all the adult descendants of Ahaziah were dead, there was no one left to rule Judah.

2 Chronicles 22:10

she arose and killed all the royal children

Here the writer speaks of Athaliah as if she killed the children herself, but the reader should understand that she would have ordered her servants to kill them. Alternate translation: "she commanded her servants to kill all the royal children"

all the royal children

This refers only to the males, because they could become king. Verse 11 confirms that the sons were the ones who were killed.

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case, it refers to the kingdom of Judah. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the kingdom of Judah"

2 Chronicles 22:11

a daughter of the king ... a daughter of King Jehoram

Here "the king" refers to Jehoram, the father of Ahaziah.

his nurse

This refers to a person who cares for a child, not to a medical person.

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into a bedroom

Verse 12 makes it clear that this bedroom was located in the temple. Jehosheba could access that room because she was married to Jehoiada who was a priest.

Jehoiada

This is a man's name.

2 Chronicles 22:12

He was with them

"Joash was with Jehosheba and Jehoiada"

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23 [1]In the seventh year, Jehoiada showed his strength and entered into a covenant with the commanders of hundreds, Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zikri.[2]They went about in Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, as well as the heads of the families of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.[3]All the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. Jehoiada said to them, "See, the king's son will reign, as Yahweh has said concerning the descendants of David.
[4]This is what you must do: A third of you priests and Levites who come to serve on the Sabbath will be guards at the doors.[5]Another third will be at the king's house, and the other third will be at the Foundation Gate. All the people will be in the courtyard of the house of Yahweh.
[6]Allow no one to come into the house of Yahweh, except for the priests and the Levites who are serving. They may enter because they are consecrated. But all the other people must obey the commands of Yahweh.[7]The Levites must surround the king on all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand. Whoever comes into the house, let him be killed. Stay with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

[8]So the Levites and all Judah served in every way in the manner in which Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each one took his men, those who were to come in to serve on the Sabbath, and those who were to leave off serving on the Sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed any of their divisions.[9]Then Jehoiada the priest brought to the commanders spears and small and large shields that had been King David's that were in the house of God.
[10]Jehoiada placed all the soldiers, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, surrounding the king.[11]Then they brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant decrees. Then they made him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him. Then they said, "Long live the king."

[12]When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people in the house of Yahweh,[13]and she looked, and, behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the commanders and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers were playing musical instruments and leading the singing of praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and shouted, "Treason! Treason!"
[14]Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the commanders of hundreds who were over the army and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks; anyone who follows her, let him be killed with the sword." For the priest had said, "Do not kill her in the house of Yahweh."[15]So they seized her as she went into the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's house, and there they killed her.

[16]Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself, all the people, and the king, that they should be Yahweh's people.[17]So all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down. They smashed Baal's altars and his images to pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those altars.
[18]Jehoiada appointed officers for the house of Yahweh under the hand of the priests, who were Levites, whom David had assigned to the house of Yahweh, to offer the burnt offerings to Yahweh, as it was written in the law of Moses, together with rejoicing and singing, as David had given direction.[19]Jehoiada set guards at the gates of the house of Yahweh, so that no one that was unclean in any way should enter.
[20]Jehoiada took with him the commanders of hundreds, the noblemen, the rulers of the people, and all the people of the land. He brought down the king from the house of Yahweh; the people came through the Upper Gate to the king's house and sat the king on the throne of the kingdom.[1] [21]So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet. As for Athaliah, they had killed her with the sword.

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[1]Some modern translations have, they brought down the king.

2 Chronicles 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter ends the story of Queen Athaliah and begins the story of King Joash.

Special concepts in this chapter

Having a king

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The high priest organized a coup and made seven-year-old Joash king. Athaliah objected, so the chief priest had her killed. This was an attempt by the priests to fulfill the covenant God made with David. (See: highpriest and priest fulfill and covenant)

Links:

2 Chronicles 23:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 23:1

General Information:

Throughout chapter 23, Joash is referred to as "the king." It may be helpful to your readers to occasionally add "King Joash" or "Joash the king" to make his identity explicit.

Jehoiada

the chief priest who served in the temple and was faithful to God. He was an advisor to Joash.

showed his strength

He decided it was time to challenge Athaliah's rule and reveal that Joash was alive and ready to be king. Alternate translation: "decided to act"

the commanders of hundreds

The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions"

entered into a covenant

"made an agreement"

Azariah ... Ishmael ... Azariah ... Maaseiah ... Elishaphat

These five men were the commanders of hundreds of soldiers.

Jeroham ... Jehohanan ... Obed ... Adaiah ... Zikri

These are men's names.

2 Chronicles 23:2

the heads of the families

Here "heads" is a metaphor for the most important part. Alternate translation: "leaders of the families"

2 Chronicles 23:3

the king's son

Here, "king" refers to Joash's father. Alternate translation: "Joash, the son of the king"

2 Chronicles 23:4

A third

"One-third"

will be guards at the doors

"will be guards at the temple doors"

2 Chronicles 23:5

Another third ... the other third

"Another one-third ... the other one-third"

the Foundation Gate

This gate may have also been called the "Middle Gate" or the "Sur Gate." It was apparently an inner gate that was near the king's palace.

All the people

This is a generalization that refers to all the people who are present. Alternate translation: "All the other people who are present"

2 Chronicles 23:6

Allow no one to come into the house of Yahweh, except for the priests ... serving

This double negative emphasizes that the priests and Levites were the only people whom the assembly was to allow into the house of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "The only people you may allow to come into the house of Yahweh are the priests ... serving"

Allow no one to come into the house of Yahweh

"Do not allow anyone to come into the house of Yahweh"

But all the other people must obey the commands of Yahweh

It may be helpful to state that command. Alternate translation: "All the others must remain in the courtyard, obeying what Yahweh has commanded"

2 Chronicles 23:7

The Levites must surround the king on all sides

"The Levites must surround the king on all sides in order to protect him"

all sides, every man with his weapons in his hand

"all sides, and every temple guard should have his weapons and be ready to fight"

Whoever comes into the house, let him be killed

This did not include the temple guards and the priests. This can be stated explicitly and in active form. Alternate translation: "You must kill anyone except the temple guards and the priests who come into the temple"

when he comes in and when he goes out

Possible meanings are 1) "at all times" or 2) "wherever he goes."

2 Chronicles 23:8

all Judah

This is a generalization to refer to all the people of Judah who were present in the courtyard that day.

served in every way in the manner in which Jehoiada the priest commanded

"did exactly what Jehoiada the priest commanded" or "obeyed everything that Jehoiada the priest commanded"

Each one took his men ... any of their divisions

The priests and guards served in divisions, with each group working for two weeks. This refers to the point in time when two divisions were present—the one ending their service and the one starting their service. Thus there were twice as many men as usual.

were to leave off serving on the Sabbath

"were finishing their work on that Sabbath day"

2 Chronicles 23:10

General Information:

Throughout chapter 23, Joash is referred to as "the king." It may be helpful to your readers to occasionally add "King Joash" or "Joash the king" to make his identity explicit.

with his weapon in his hand

This means they were ready to fight. See how you

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translated a similar phrase in 2 Chronicles 23:7.
2 Chronicles 23:11
the king's son
Here "king" refers to Joash's father. Alternate translation: "Joash, the son of the king"
put the crown on him
This is a symbolic act to show that they are making him king.
gave him the covenant decrees
The symbolic act of giving him a scroll with the decrees shows that they expect him to obey them. It is unclear if these decrees were a portion of the law of Moses, or a separate set of rules for kings to obey. Alternate translation: "presented to him the covenant decrees that he should obey"
anointed him
This was a symbolic act to show that he was chosen by God to be the king.
Long live the king
"May the king live a long life"
2 Chronicles 23:13
behold
This alerts the reader that the following information is very important.
standing by his pillar at the entrance
The relationship between the king and this particular pillar at the temple entrance is unclear.
All the people of the land
This is a generalization to show that many people participated in the event. Alternate translation: "A very large number of the people of the land"
Athaliah tore her clothes
This was a symbolic action to show her great distress.
Treason! Treason!
Treason is acting to overthrow the government. Athaliah had killed the legitimate heirs of the king and made herself ruler in 2 Chronicles 22:10. She was angry that Joash became king in her place. The exclamation is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You are committing treason!"
2 Chronicles 23:14
Jehoiada
Translate this man's name as in [2 Chronicles 22:11]
the commanders of hundreds
The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 23:1]
who were over the army
"who were leaders in the army"
Bring her out between the ranks
Possible meanings are 1) "Surround her and bring her out of the temple courtyard" or 2) "Remove her from the people in the temple courtyard"
anyone who follows her, let him be killed with the sword
This can be stated in active form. It is implied that people who followed her would be trying to help her. Alternate translation: "Use your sword to kill anyone who comes to help her"
For the priest had said
"For Jehoiada the priest had said"
2 Chronicles 23:15
as she went into the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's house
Some versions have "and took her to the Horse Gate near the entrance of the kings' house"
the king's house
"the royal palace"
2 Chronicles 23:16
General Information:
Throughout chapter 23, Joash is referred to as "the king." It may be helpful to your readers to occasionally add "King Joash" or "Joash the king" to make his identity explicit.
2 Chronicles 23:17
all the people went to the house of Baal
This is a generalization that means a large group of the people did this. Alternate translation: "a very large group of the people went to the temple of Baal"
Mattan
This is the name of a man.
2 Chronicles 23:18
under the hand of the priests
Here "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "under the direction of the priests"
2 Chronicles 23:19
so that no one that was unclean in any way should enter
A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if they were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "so that no one that was unacceptable to God in any way should enter"
so that no one that was unclean in any way should enter
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "to make sure that only those who were clean could enter" or "to make sure only those who were acceptable to God could enter"
2 Chronicles 23:20
the commanders of hundreds
The phrase "commander of hundreds" is probably an official title for a military officer. Possible meanings are 1) the word "hundreds" represents the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "the commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "hundreds" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a military division. Alternate translation: "the commanders of military divisions" See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 23:1]
all the people of the land
This is a generalization that means he took very many people with him. Alternate translation: "a very large group of the people of Israel"
He brought down the king from the house of Yahweh
The temple was built on the highest hill in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "He brought the king down from the temple to the palace"
the throne of the kingdom

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"the royal throne"
2 Chronicles 23:21
So all the people of the land
This is generalization to say that most of the people rejoiced.

the city was quiet
Here "the city" represents the people of the city, and "quiet" represents peace, since no one opposed Joash after Athaliah died. Alternate translation: "the people of the city were at peace"

24 [1]Joash was seven years old when he began to reign; he reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah, of Beersheba.[2]Joash did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh all the days of Jehoiada, the priest.[3]Jehoiada took for him two wives, and he became the father of sons and daughters.

[4]It came about after this, that Joash decided to restore the house of Yahweh.[5]He gathered together the priests and the Levites, and he said to them, "Go out every year to the cities of Judah and gather from all Israel money to repair the house of your God. Make sure that you start right away." The Levites did nothing at first.
[6]So the king called for Jehoiada the high priest and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses the servant of Yahweh and by the assembly of Israel for the tent of the covenant decrees?"[7]For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God and had given all the holy things of the house of Yahweh to the Baals.

[8]So the king commanded, and they made a chest and placed it outside at the entrance to the house of Yahweh.[9]Then they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, for the people to bring in for Yahweh the tax that Moses the servant of God levied on Israel in the wilderness.[10]All the leaders and all the people rejoiced and brought money in and put it into the chest until they finished filling it.
[11]It happened that whenever the chest was brought to the king's officials by the hand of the Levites, and whenever they saw that there was much money in it, the king's scribe and the high priest's official would come, empty the chest, and take it and carry it back to its place. They did this day after day, gathering large amounts of money.[12]The king and Jehoiada gave the money to those who did the work of serving in the house of Yahweh. These men hired stonemasons and carpenters to restore the house of Yahweh, and also those who worked in iron and bronze.
[13]So the workmen labored, and the work of repairing went forward in their hands; they set up the house of God in its original design and strengthened it.[14]When they finished, they brought the rest of the money to the king and Jehoiada. This money was used to make furnishings for the house of Yahweh, utensils with which to serve and make offerings—spoons and utensils of gold and silver. They offered burnt offerings in the house of Yahweh continually for all the days of Jehoiada.

[15]Jehoiada grew old and was full of days, and then he died; he was 130 years old when he died.[16]They buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, toward God, and to the house of God.
[17]Now after the death of Jehoiada, the leaders of Judah came and did honor to the king. Then the king listened to them.
[18]They abandoned the house of Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, and worshiped the Asherah gods and the idols. God's anger came on Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs.[19]Yet he sent prophets to them to bring them again to himself, Yahweh; the prophets testified against the people, but they refused to listen.

[20]The Spirit of God clothed Zechariah son of Jehoiada, the priest; Zechariah stood above the people and said to them, "God says this: Why do you transgress the commandments of Yahweh, so that you cannot prosper? Since you have abandoned Yahweh, he has also abandoned you."[21]But they plotted against him; at the king's command, they stoned him with stones in the courtyard of the house of Yahweh.[22]Joash the king, did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had done to him, and so he killed Jehoiada's son. As Zechariah was dying, he said, "May Yahweh see this and call you to account."

[23]It came about at the end of the year, that the army of Aram came up against Joash. They came to Judah and Jerusalem; they destroyed all the leaders of the people and sent all the plunder from them to the king of Damascus.[24]Although the army of the Arameans had come with only a few soldiers, Yahweh gave them victory over a very great army, because Judah had abandoned Yahweh, the God of their ancestors. In this way the Arameans brought judgment on Joash.

[25]By the time that the Arameans had gone, Joash had been severely wounded. His own servants plotted against him because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada, the priest. They killed him in his bed, and he died; they buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.[26]These were the persons who plotted against him: Zabad son of Shimeath, an Ammonite woman; and Jehozabad son of Shimrith, a Moabite woman.
[27]Now the accounts about his sons, the important prophecies that were spoken about him, and the rebuilding of the house of God, see, they are written in the commentary on the book of the kings. Amaziah his son became king in his place.

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2 Chronicles 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Joash is completed in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Joash repairs the temple

Joash decided to repair the temple. The Levites collected money from people and gave it to the workmen to repair the temple. This was a sign of worship towards Yahweh. (See: temple and sign)

Joash becomes evil

When Joash stopped worshiping Yahweh, he had many troubles. Joash remaind loyal to Yahweh as long as the chief priest lived, but when the chief priest died Joash started following other gods. The chief priest's son warned him that he would have trouble, so he had him killed. The army of Aram defeated and plundered him and his servants murdered him. (See: priest and falsegod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 24:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 24:1

began to reign

"became king of Judah"

forty years

"40 years"

Zibiah

This is a woman's name.

2 Chronicles 24:2

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The word "eyes" here represents seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Joash's actions. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:1]

all the days of Jehoiada, the priest

This idiom means "as long as Jehoiada, the priest, was alive."

2 Chronicles 24:3

Jehoiada took for him two wives

"Jehoiada chose two wives for Joash"

2 Chronicles 24:4

It came about after this

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

2 Chronicles 24:5

right away

"immediately"

The Levites did nothing at first

It may be helpful to add "but" to show that the Levites did not obey. Alternate translation: "But the Levites did not do it immediately"

2 Chronicles 24:6

Why have you not required the Levites ... covenant decrees?

King Joash asks this rhetorical question to accuse Jehoiada of not doing his duty. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have neglected your duty. I told you to require the Levites ... covenant decrees, but you have not done it."

for the tent of the covenant decrees

Although it refers to the temple that Solomon built, it is a reminder that this tax has been collected since the time of Moses and the "tent of meeting."

2 Chronicles 24:7

holy things

This refers to the items used for worship in the temple.

to the Baals

"to people to use for the worship of idols of Baal"

2 Chronicles 24:8

a chest

a large wooden box

2 Chronicles 24:9

they made a proclamation

"they proclaimed" or "they announced"

2 Chronicles 24:10

All the leaders and all the people

This is a generalization. Some people probably did not respond this way.

2 Chronicles 24:11

It happened that whenever

This phrase introduces a new, recurring action. If your language has a way to note this, you may use it here.

take it and carry it back to its place

"take the chest and carry it back to its place"

2 Chronicles 24:12

stonemasons and carpenters

"men who built with stone and men who built with wood"

those who worked in iron and bronze

"men who made things from iron and bronze"

2 Chronicles 24:13

went forward in their hands

Here the word "forward" represents progress, and the word "hands" represents their control. Alternate translation: "made progress under their supervision"

2 Chronicles 24:14

the rest of the money

This is money that was collected in the chest but not needed for repairs.

furnishings

This refers to the "utensils" and "spoons" listed later in the verse.

for all the days of Jehoiada

This idiom refers to the lifespan of Jehoiada. Alternate

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translation: "for as long as Jehoiada lived" or "throughout the lifetime of Jehoiada"

2 Chronicles 24:15

grew old and was full of days

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how long he lived. Alternate translation: "became very old"

was full of days

This idiom means he lived a long time.

130 years old

"one hundred and thirty years old"

2 Chronicles 24:16

among the kings

"among the tombs of the kings" or "among the graves of the kings"

because he had done good in Israel, toward God, and to the house of God

The nominal adjective "good" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "because he had done good things in Judah for God and for God's temple"

2 Chronicles 24:17

did honor to the king

"gave honor to King Joash" or "honored the king"

Then the king listened to them

The following verse indicates that they wanted the king to serve idols instead of Yahweh, and he agreed. Alternate translation: "Then they persuaded the king to do what they wanted"

2 Chronicles 24:18

God's anger came on Judah and Jerusalem

God's anger is spoken of as something that covered over Judah and Jerusalem. Here the words "Judah" and "Jerusalem" are metonyms for the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "God became very angry with the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

for this guilt of theirs

"because they were guilty of sin"

2 Chronicles 24:19

Yet he sent

Here the word "yet" indicates a contrast between God's anger and his sending of the prophets to give them a chance to repent and avoid judgment.

to himself, Yahweh

The reflexive pronoun emphasizes that Yahweh was the one to whom they should turn.

they refused to listen

"the people refused to obey"

2 Chronicles 24:20

clothed Zechariah

The topic of this metaphor is that because of what the Spirit did, Zechariah had special powers. Possible images are 1) the Spirit came over or came on or covered Zechariah like a garment, thus giving Zechariah special powers. Alternate translation: "came over Zechariah" or "took control of Zechariah" Or 2) the Spirit covered himself with Zechariah and so acted through him.

Zechariah son of Jehoiada

This was not the same man as Zechariah son of Berechiah who wrote the Book of Zechariah.

Why do you transgress the commandments of Yahweh, so that you cannot prosper?

Zechariah asked this rhetorical question to rebuke the people. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are transgressing the commandments of Yahweh, so that is why you cannot prosper."

2 Chronicles 24:22

did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had done to him

"did not pay attention to the way that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had been kind to him"

to him

Here "him" refers to Joash.

call you to account

"make you pay for the wrong you have done"

2 Chronicles 24:23

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

sent all the plunder from them

"sent all the plunder from Judah and Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 24:24

victory over a very great army

"victory over the much larger army of Judah"

In this way the Arameans brought judgment on Joash

This refers to God's judgment. This can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "In this way God used the Arameans to judge Joash"

2 Chronicles 24:25

Joash had been severely wounded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they had severely wounded Joash"

because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada

The word "blood" here is a metaphor for innocent life and a metonym for the murder in which the blood was shed. Alternate translation: "because he had murdered the sons of Jehoiada"

They killed him in his bed

"The servants killed Joash in his bed"

2 Chronicles 24:26

Zabad ... Jehozabad

These are the names of men.

Shimeath, an Ammonite woman ... Shimrith, a Moabite woman

"Shimeath, from the country of Ammon ... Shimrith, from the country of Moab." These are the names of two women.

2 Chronicles 24:27

the accounts about his sons

"the record of what his sons did"

the important prophecies that were spoken about him

"the important things the prophets spoke about him"

see, they are written

Here "see" alerts the reader to pay special attention to the information that follows.

the commentary on the book of the kings

This is a book which no longer exists.

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25 [1]Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan, of Jerusalem.[2]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, but not with a whole heart.
[3]It came about that as soon as his rule was well established, he killed the servants who had murdered his father, the king.
[4]But he did not put their children to death, according to what was written in the law, in the book of Moses, as Yahweh had commanded, "The fathers must not be put to death for their children, and children must not be put to death for their fathers. But, each one must die for his own sin."

[5]Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and registered them by their ancestors' houses, under commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds—all of Judah and Benjamin. He numbered them from twenty years old and upward, and found them to be 300,000 chosen men, able to go to war, who could handle spear and shield.[6]He hired also 100,000 mighty warriors from Israel for one hundred talents of silver.
[7]But a man of God came to him and said, "King, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for Yahweh is not with Israel—none of the people of Ephraim.[8]But even if you do go and are courageous and strong in battle, God will throw you down before the enemy, for God has power to help, and power to throw down."
[9]Amaziah said to the man of God, "But what will we do about the one hundred talents that I have given to the army of Israel?" The man of God answered, "Yahweh is able to give you much more than that."[10]So Amaziah separated the army that had come to him from Ephraim; he sent them home again. So their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in fierce anger.
[11]Amaziah took courage and led his people to go out to the Valley of Salt; there he defeated ten thousand men of Seir.[12]The army of Judah carried away alive another ten thousand. They took them to the top of the cliff and threw them down from there, so that they were all broken in pieces.
[13]But the men of the army which Amaziah sent back, so that they should not go with him to battle, attacked the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth Horon. They struck down three thousand of the people and took much plunder.

[14]Now it came about, after that Amaziah had returned from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the people of Seir, and set them up to be his own gods. He bowed down before them and burned incense to them.[15]So Yahweh's anger was kindled against Amaziah. He sent a prophet to him, who said, "Why have you sought after the gods of a people who did not even save their own people from your hand?"
[16]It came about that as the prophet was speaking with him, the king said to him, "Have we made you an advisor to the king? Stop! Why should you be killed?" Then the prophet stopped and said, "I know that God has decided to destroy you because you have done this deed and have not listened to my advice."

[17]Then Amaziah king of Judah consulted with advisors and sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet each other face to face in battle."
[18]But Jehoash the king of Israel sent messengers back to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "A thistle that was in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' but a wild beast in Lebanon walked by and trampled down the thistle.[19]You have said, 'See, I have struck down Edom,' and your heart has lifted you up. Take pride in your victory, but stay at home, for why should you cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you?"

[20]But Amaziah would not listen, because this event was from God, so he might put the people of Judah into the hand of their enemies, because they had sought advice from the gods of Edom.[21]So Jehoash, king of Israel, attacked; he and Amaziah, king of Judah, met each other face to face at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah.[22]Judah was struck down before Israel, and every man fled to his tent.
[23]Jehoash, king of Israel, captured Amaziah son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, at Beth Shemesh. He brought him to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits in distance.[24]He took all the gold and silver, all the objects that were found in the house of God with Obed-Edom, and the valuable things in the king's house, with hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

[25]Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash, son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel.[26]As for the other matters concerning Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?
[27]Now from the time that Amaziah turned away from following Yahweh, they began to make a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem. He fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and killed him there.[28]They brought him back on horses and buried him with his ancestors in the city of Judah.

2 Chronicles 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Worshiping other gods
When Amaziah trusted God he was successful against Edom. But when he started worshiping the idols of Edom he was badly defeated. (See: trust and falsegod)

Links:

[2 Chronicles 25:1 Notes]

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2 Chronicles 25:1
twenty-five years ... twenty-nine years
"25 years ... 29 years"
Jehoaddan
This is a woman's name.
2 Chronicles 25:2
what was right in the eyes of Yahweh
Here the word "eyes" represents sight, and sight represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]
but not with a whole heart
Here the phrase "whole heart" is an idiom that means "completely." Alternate translation: "but not completely"
2 Chronicles 25:3
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
2 Chronicles 25:4
the book of Moses
This refers to the book of Deuteronomy, which Moses wrote.
The fathers must not be put to death for their children, and children must not be put to death for their fathers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People must not kill the fathers for the sins of their children, and they must not kill the children for the sins of their fathers"
2 Chronicles 25:5
gathered Judah together
Here "Judah" refers to the people who lived in Judah. Alternate translation: "gathered the people of Judah together"
registered them ... numbered them
He had someone write their names on an official list.
by their ancestors' houses
Here the word "houses" is a metonym for the families that lived in them. Alternate translation: "by their ancestors' families"
commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds
Possible meanings are 1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders led. Alternate translation: "commanders of 1,000 soldiers and commanders of 100 soldiers" or 2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "commanders of large military divisions and commanders of smaller military divisions" See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 1:2]
all of Judah and Benjamin
Here "Judah" and "Benjamin" refer to the people who lived in the wider kingdom of Judah. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah and Benjamin"
twenty years old and upward
Here numbers that were larger than twenty are spoken of as if they were higher. Alternate translation: "20 years old and older"
found them to be
"learned that there were"
300,000
"three hundred thousand"
chosen men
"capable soldiers" or "skilled warriors"
2 Chronicles 25:6
100,000
"one hundred thousand"
one hundred talents of silver
"100 talents of silver." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about thirty-three hundred kilograms of silver" or "about 3,300 kilograms of silver"
2 Chronicles 25:7
a man of God
"a prophet of God"
Israel ... the people of Ephraim
These are two names for the same group people.
2 Chronicles 25:8
throw you down before the enemy ... throw down
Here the prophet speaks of military defeat as if the king would be thrown down on the ground. Alternate translation: "enable your enemy to defeat you ... defeat"
2 Chronicles 25:9
about the one hundred talents
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "about the thirty-three hundred kilograms of silver" or "about the 3,300 kilograms of silver"
2 Chronicles 25:10
the army that had come to him from Ephraim
These words refer to "the army of Israel" (verse 9).
So their anger was greatly kindled
Here the increase in their anger is spoken of as if it were a growing fire inside them. Alternate translation: "So their anger began to burn within them like a fire"
in fierce anger
"very angry"
2 Chronicles 25:11
took courage
"became brave"
Valley of Salt
This is an area near the Dead Sea.
ten thousand men
"10,000 men"
2 Chronicles 25:12
another ten thousand

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"another 10,000 soldiers"
so that they were all broken in pieces
This is an exaggeration to emphasize the thoroughness of the slaughter. Alternate translation: "so that they were all completely destroyed"
2 Chronicles 25:13
the men of the army which Amaziah sent back
"the men of the army of Israel which Amaziah sent back to Israel"
Beth Horon
This was a village near Jerusalem in Ephraim.
struck down
Here "struck down" is an idiom that means they killed them. Alternate translation: "killed"
three thousand of the people
"3,000 people"
took much plunder
"took away a great amount of valuable things"
2 Chronicles 25:14
Now it came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
the slaughter of the Edomites
"slaughtering the Edomites" or "killing the Edomites"
the gods of the people of Seir
"the gods that the people of Seir worshiped"
bowed down ... burned incense
These are symbolic acts of worship.
the gods
This expresses the popular opinion of the day that the gods determined who won battles.
2 Chronicles 25:15
Yahweh's anger was kindled against Amaziah
Here the increase in Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a growing fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's anger grew like a fire against Amaziah"
Why have you sought after the gods of a people who did not even save their own people from your hand?
The prophet uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Amaziah for worshiping the powerless gods of the people he had defeated. Here the word "hand" is a metonym for power. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have worshiped the gods of a people that did not even save their own people from your power, King Amaziah."
the gods ... who did not even save their own people
This expresses the popular opinion of the day that the gods determined who won battles.
2 Chronicles 25:16
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark the next important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Have we made you an advisor to the king? Stop! Why should you be killed?
The king used these rhetorical questions to rebuke the prophet for speaking against him. The questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "We certainly did not appoint you to be one of my advisors. So stop talking! If you say anything more, I will tell my soldiers to kill you!"
you have done this deed
This refers back to Amaziah worshiping the gods of the Edomites in 2 Chronicles 25:14.
2 Chronicles 25:17
Jehoash ... Jehoahaz
These are names of men.
meet each other face to face
This idiom means they would both be there in person, rather than communicating through messages or other people. Alternate translation: "meet each other in person"
2 Chronicles 25:18
A thistle that was in Lebanon ... trampled down the thistle
This message is in the form of a parable. The worthless thistle represents Amaziah, and the cedar represents Jehoash. The trampling of the thistle by the beast expresses that something bad will happen to the thistle, and it will be powerless to stop it. The point of the parable is that Amaziah was foolish to challenge Jehoash.
thistle
This is a small, worthless plant with small, sharp thorns.
cedar
a very large type of tree
Judah
Here "Judah" is a metonym for the people who lived in Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"
2 Chronicles 25:19
your heart has lifted you up
This is an idiom that means he had become proud. Alternate translation: "you have become proud"
why should you cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you?
Jehoash used this rhetorical question to warn Amaziah not to fight with him. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you should not cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you."
fall
Here "fall" is a euphemism for "die."
2 Chronicles 25:20
this event was from God
"God wanted this event to happen"
into the hand of their enemies
Here "hand" refers to power to defeat. Alternate translation: "into the power of their enemies" or "so their enemies could defeat them"
2 Chronicles 25:21
met each other face to face
This idiom means they were both at the battle in person, rather than only sending other people to fight. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 25:17]
Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah
The city of Beth Shemesh was located in Judah.
2 Chronicles 25:22
Judah was struck down before Israel
Here "Judah" and "Israel" are metonyms for the soldiers of Judah and Israel, and "struck down" is an idiom that means "defeated." This can be stated in active form. Alternate

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translation: "The soldiers of Israel defeated the soldiers of Judah"

every man

This is a generalization that refers to the soldiers of Judah who survived the battle. Alternate translation: "the surviving soldiers of Judah"

to his tent

"to his home"

2 Chronicles 25:23

four hundred cubits in distance

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "400 cubits in distance" or "a length of 180 meters"

2 Chronicles 25:24

with Obed-Edom

Here "Obed-Edom" refers to this man's descendants. Alternate translation: "under the care of the descendants of Obed-Edom"

the king's house

"the royal palace"

2 Chronicles 25:26

As for the other matters ... are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?

This rhetorical question is used to remind the reader that what happened to Amaziah is well-known. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "All of the matters concerning Amaziah, behold, are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel."

the other matters concerning Amaziah, first and last

Here the phrase "first and last" refers to those extremes and everything in between. Alternate translation: "all the matters concerning Amaziah"

behold

This alerts the reader to pay special attention to the truth of what follows.

the book of the kings of Judah and Israel

This refers to a book that no longer exists.

2 Chronicles 25:27

turned away from following Yahweh

Here "turn away" is an idiom that means he no longer obeyed Yahweh. Alternate translation: "stopped obeying Yahweh" or "started to disobey Yahweh"

they began to make a conspiracy ... they sent

The text does not state to whom "they" refers. Retain the generic "they" in your translation if possible.

make a conspiracy against him

The abstract noun "conspiracy" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "conspire against him" or "plot against him"

Lachish

a city in Judah

2 Chronicles 25:28

They brought

The text does not state to whom the word "They" refers. Retain the generic "they" in your translation if possible.

brought him back

"brought back his body"

city of Judah

This was another name for Jerusalem, which was also called the city of David.

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26 [1]All the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah.[2]It was he who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah. After that the king lay down with his ancestors.[3]Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign. He reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekoliah; she was from Jerusalem.
[4]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Amaziah had done.[5]He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who taught him to honor God.[1] As long as he sought Yahweh, God made him prosper.

[6]Uzziah went out and fought against the Philistines. He broke down the city walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod; he built cities in the country of Ashdod and among the Philistines.[7]God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabians who lived in Gurbaal, and against the Meunites.[8]The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread, even to the entrance of Egypt, because he was becoming more powerful.
[9]In addition, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them.[10]He built watchtowers in the wilderness and dug many cisterns, for he had many herds in the lowlands and in the plains. He had farmers and vine growers in the hill country and in the fruitful fields, for he loved the soil.
[11]In addition, Uzziah had an army of fighting men who went out to war in groups which were organized by their number that were counted by Jeiel, the scribe, and Maaseiah, the officer, under the authority of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders.[12]The whole number of the leaders of the families who led the mighty warriors was 2,600.[13]Under their hand was an army of 307,500 men that made war with mighty power to help the king against the enemy.
[14]Uzziah prepared for them—for all the army—shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows, and stones for slinging.[15]In Jerusalem he built machines that were designed by skillful men to be on the towers and on the battlements to shoot arrows and large stones. His fame spread to distant lands, for he was greatly helped and so he became very powerful.

[16]But when Uzziah had become powerful, his heart was lifted up so that he acted corruptly; he acted faithlessly against Yahweh, his God, for he went into the temple of Yahweh to burn incense on the altar of incense.[17]Azariah, the priest, went in after him, and with him eighty priests of Yahweh, who were brave men.[18]They confronted Uzziah the king, and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to Yahweh, but for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the holy place, for you have been unfaithful and you will not be honored by Yahweh God."

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[19]Then Uzziah became angry. He was holding a censer in his hand to burn incense. While he was enraged against the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of Yahweh, beside the altar of incense.[20]Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and, behold, he had become leprous on his forehead. They quickly drove him out of there. Indeed, he hurried to go out, because Yahweh had struck him.
[21]Uzziah, the king, was a leper to the day of his death and lived in a separate house since he was a leper, for he was cut off from the house of Yahweh. Jotham, his son, was over the king's house and ruled the people of the land.
[22]The other matters concerning Uzziah, from first to last, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.[23]So Uzziah lay down with his ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in a burial ground that belonged to the kings, for they said, "He is a leper." Jotham, his son, became king in his place.

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text can be read either, to honor God , or in the fear of God or in seeing God. Scholars are divided.

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2 Chronicles 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Uzzah the leper

Uzzah was powerful when he followed Yahweh. When he entered the temple to burn incense like a priest, God made him a leper. Lepers could not properly worship Yahweh because they were always unclean. (See: temple and priest and clean)

Links:

2 Chronicles 26:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 26:1

All the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah

The word "All" is a generalization. Some people may not have wanted him to be king. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah took the 16 year-old Uzziah and made him king after his father, Amaziah"

sixteen

"16"

2 Chronicles 26:2

It was he who rebuilt Elath

Uzziah did not do this alone. Alternate translation: "It was he who ordered Elath to be rebuilt" or "It was he who supervised the rebuilding of Elath"

Elath

a city in Judah

restored it to Judah

"returned it to Judah." This means that his army captured the city so that now it belonged to Judah again.

lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way to say he died.

2 Chronicles 26:3

sixteen ... fifty-two

"16 ... 52"

2 Chronicles 26:4

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

2 Chronicles 26:5

He set himself to seek God

Here "set himself" is a metaphor for being determined to do something. Seeking God represents choosing to know, worship, and obey him. Alternate translation: "He was determined to obey God"

in the days of Zechariah

Here "the days of Zechariah" is a metonym referring to the time period during which Zechariah was priest. Alternate translation: "when Zechariah was priest"

As long as he sought Yahweh

"During the whole time that he sought Yahweh"

sought Yahweh

Seeking Yahweh represents choosing to know, worship, and obey him. Alternate translation: "chose to obey Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 26:6

Uzziah went out and fought against the Philistines

Here "Uzziah" represents himself and his army that he led. Alternate translation: "Uzziah led his army out to fight against the Philistines" or "Uzziah and his army went out and fought against the Philistines"

He broke down ... he built cities

Here the pronouns "He" and "him" represent Uzziah and his army. Alternate translation: "Uzziah and his army broke down ... they built cities"

Jabneh

This was a town in northern Judah.

the country of Ashdod

"the country surrounding Ashdod" or "near Ashdod"

2 Chronicles 26:7

God helped him

Here the pronouns "He" and "him" represent Uzziah and his army. Alternate translation: "God helped them"

Gurbaal

This was a town in Arabia.

Meunites

This is likely people who moved to that area from the kingdom of Maon near Mount Seir.

2 Chronicles 26:8

his fame spread, even to the entrance of Egypt

His fame spreading is a metaphor for people in various places learning about him. Alternate translation: "people who lived even as far away as the border of Egypt learned

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about the things he was doing"

2 Chronicles 26:9

Uzziah built towers

Here "Uzziah" represents the workers he had commanded to build the towers. Alternate translation: "Uzziah had his workers build towers" or "Uzziah's workers built towers"

2 Chronicles 26:10

He built watchtowers ... and dug many cisterns

Uzziah commanded his workers, and they did these things. Alternate translation: "He had his workers build watchtowers ... and dig many cisterns" or "They built watchtowers ... and dug many cisterns"

he had many ... He had farmers ... he loved

The word "he" refers to Uzziah.

the soil

This phrase is a metonym for the activity of farming the soil. Alternate translation: "farming"

2 Chronicles 26:11

Jeiel ... Maaseiah, the officer ... Hananiah

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 26:12

the leaders of the families who led the mighty warriors

"the family leaders who led the mighty warriors"

2,600

"two thousand six hundred"

2 Chronicles 26:13

307,500

"three hundred seven thousand five hundred"

Under their hand was an army

Here "their hand" represents their authority. Alternate translation: "Under their authority was an army" or "They commanded an army"

2 Chronicles 26:14

helmets

A helmet is a protective head covering.

body armor

This is a covering for the body made of metal links or chains.

2 Chronicles 26:15

he built machines that were designed by skillful men

Here "he built machines" represents Uzziah commanding his workers to build them. Alternate translation: "his workers built machines that were designed by skillful men"

the battlements

These were the corners of the city walls where soldiers could fight from.

he was greatly helped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God greatly helped him"

2 Chronicles 26:16

his heart was lifted up

Here the heart being lifted up represents pride. Alternate translation: "he became proud"

2 Chronicles 26:17

with him eighty priests of Yahweh, who were brave men

The verb "went" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "with him went eighty priests of Yahweh, who were brave men" or "eighty priests of Yahweh, who were brave men, went with him"

2 Chronicles 26:18

It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to Yahweh

"It is not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to Yahweh" or "Uzziah, you do not have the right to burn incense to Yahweh"

who are consecrated to burn incense

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has consecrated to burn incense" or "whom God has chosen to burn incense"

2 Chronicles 26:19

censer

This is a special pan or bowl used for burning incense.

2 Chronicles 26:20

behold, he had become leprous

The word "behold" here shows that the priests were surprised by what they saw.

They quickly drove him out of there

"They quickly forced him out of there" or "They quickly made him leave"

Yahweh had struck him

This speaks of Yahweh making him sick as if Yahweh had hit him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh had made him ill"

2 Chronicles 26:21

to the day of his death

"until he died" or "the rest of his life"

lived in a separate house

This indicates that he lived away from other houses and other people.

he was cut off from the house of Yahweh

Here being "cut off" from Yahweh's house represents being excluded from the temple. Alternate translation: "he was excluded from the house of Yahweh" or "he was not allowed to go to the temple"

Jotham, his son, was over the king's house

Here being over something represents having responsibility or authority for it. Alternate translation: "Jotham, his son, was responsible for the king's house" or "Jotham, his son, was in charge of the palace"

the king's house

This refers to the king's palace, which the king was no longer living in.

2 Chronicles 26:22

The other matters concerning Uzziah, from first to last, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As for the other matters concerning Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz recorded them"

from first to last

This phrase represents the whole time of Uzziah's reign. Alternate translation: "from the beginning of his reign to the end of his reign"

Amoz

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 26:23

So Uzziah lay down with his ancestors

This is polite way to say that he died. Alternate translation: "So Uzziah died"

they buried him with his ancestors

"the people buried him near his ancestors" or "they buried

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him where his ancestors were buried"

Jotham, his son, became king in his place

"Jotham, his son, became king after Uzziah"

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27 [1]Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah; she was the daughter of Zadok.[2]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Uzziah had done. He also refrained from going into the temple of Yahweh. But the people were still behaving corruptly.
[3]He built the upper gate of the house of Yahweh, and on the hill of Ophel he built much.[4]Moreover he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and in the forests he built fortresses and towers.
[5]He fought also with the king of the people of Ammon and defeated them. In that same year, the people of Ammon gave him one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand measures of barley. The people of Ammon gave him the same in the second and third years.
[6]So Jotham became powerful because he walked firmly before Yahweh his God.[7]As for the other matters concerning Jotham, all his wars, and his ways, see, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.
[8]He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned for sixteen years in Jerusalem.[9]Jotham lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. Ahaz, his son, became king in his place.

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2 Chronicles 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust in Yahweh

Jotham was able to conquer the people of Ammon because he obeyed the Lord. For Yahweh, trust in Yahweh is the key to victory in battle. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Chronicles 27:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 27:1

twenty-five years old ... sixteen years

"25 years old ... 16 years"

Jerushah

This is the name of a woman.

2 Chronicles 27:2

He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Jotham's actions. See how you translated similar words in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

2 Chronicles 27:3

He built the upper gate ... he built much

Since Jotham was king, he may have had his workers build these things. Alternate translation: "He had his workers build the upper gate ... he had his workers build many things"

the hill of Ophel

This is a hill in Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 27:4

he built cities ... he built fortresses and towers

Since Jotham was king, he may have had his workers build these things. Alternate translation: "he had his workers build cities ... he had his workers build fortresses and towers"

2 Chronicles 27:5

He fought also with the king of the people of Ammon

You may need to translate so that the reader understands that Jothan led his army to fight. Alternate translation: "He also led his army to fight with the king of the people of Ammon"

with the king of the people of Ammon

You may need to translate so that the reader understands that the king of Ammon led his army to fight. Alternate translation: "with the king of Ammon and his army"

one hundred talents of silver

You may convert this to a modern measure. A "talent" is equivalent to 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "100 talents of silver" or "3,300 kilograms of silver"

ten thousand measures of wheat

You may convert this to a modern measure. The word translated here as "measure" is "cor" and is equivalent to 220 liters. Alternate translation: "10,000 measures of wheat" or "2,200 kiloliters of wheat"

ten thousand measures of barley

You may convert this to a modern measure. The word translated here as "measure" is "cor" and is equivalent to 220 liters. Alternate translation: "10,000 measures of barley" or "2,200 kiloliters of barley"

in the second and third years

"in the second and third years after he defeated them"

2 Chronicles 27:6

he walked firmly before Yahweh his God

Jotham's actions and lifestyle are spoken of as if they were a path upon which he walked. That he walked firmly means that he was devoted to living in this way. Alternate translation: "he faithfully obeyed Yahweh his God"

2 Chronicles 27:7

his ways

Jotham's actions are spoken of as if they were a path upon which he walked. Alternate translation: "the things that he did"

see, they are written in the book ... Judah

"anyone can look in the book ... Judah and see that they are written there"

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they are written in the book
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they are in the book" or "you can read of them in the book"
the book of the kings of Israel and Judah
This is a book that no longer exists.
2 Chronicles 27:8
twenty-five years old ... sixteen years
"25 years old ... 16 years"
2 Chronicles 27:9
Jotham lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Jotham died"
they buried him
"people buried him"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Jotham"

28 [1]Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, as David his ancestor had done.[2]Instead, he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; he also made cast metal figures for the Baals.
[3]In addition, he burned incense in the Valley of Ben Hinnom and he caused his children to pass through the fire, according to the idolatrous practices of the people that Yahweh forced out of their land before the people of Israel.[4]He sacrificed and burned incense at the high places and on the hills and under every green tree.

[5]Therefore Yahweh the God of Ahaz gave him into the hand of the king of Aram. The Arameans defeated him and carried away from him a great crowd of captives, bringing them to Damascus. Ahaz was also given into the hand of the king of Israel who defeated him in a great slaughter.[6]For Pekah son of Remaliah in one day killed 120,000 soldiers in Judah and all of them were powerful men, because they had abandoned Yahweh the God of their ancestors.
[7]Zikri, a powerful man from Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam, the official over the palace, and Elkanah, who was next to the king.[8]The army of Israel took captive from their relatives 200,000 wives, sons, and daughters. They also took much plunder, which they carried back to Samaria.
[9]But a prophet of Yahweh was there, his name was Oded. He went out to meet the army coming into Samaria. He said to them, "Because Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, was angry with Judah, he gave them into your hand. But you have slaughtered them in a rage that reached up to heaven.[10]And now you, people of Judah and Jerusalem, intend to make them your male slaves and female slaves. But are you not guilty of sins of your own against Yahweh your God?[11]Now then, listen to me: Send the captives back, those whom you have captured of your own brothers, for Yahweh's burning anger is on you."
[12]Then certain leaders of the people of Ephraim—Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berekiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, stood up against those who came back from the war.[13]They said to them, "You must not bring the captives here, for you intend something that will bring on us sin against Yahweh, to add to our sins and trespasses, for our trespass is great, and there is burning anger against Israel."
[14]So the armed men left the captives and the plunder before the leaders and all the assembly.[15]The men who were assigned by name got up and took the captives, and clothed all who were naked among them with the plunder. They clothed them and gave them sandals. They gave them food to eat and drink. They anointed them and put the weak ones on donkeys. They took them back to their families in Jericho, (called the City of Palms). Then they returned to Samaria.

[16]At that time King Ahaz sent messengers to the kings of Assyria to ask them to help him.[17]For once again the Edomites had come and attacked Judah, carrying captives away.[18]The Philistines also invaded the cities of the lowlands and of the Negev of Judah. They took Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soko with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and also Gimzo with its villages. They went to live in those places.
[19]For Yahweh humbled Judah because of Ahaz, king of Israel; for he had acted wickedly in Judah and had been very faithless against Yahweh.[20]Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, came to him and troubled him instead of strengthening him.
[21]For Ahaz plundered the house of Yahweh and the houses of the king and the leaders, to give the valuable things to the kings of Assyria. But doing this did not benefit him.

[22]This same King Ahaz became even more faithless against Yahweh in his time of suffering.[23]For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, gods that had defeated him. He said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them, so that they might help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel.
[24]Ahaz gathered together the furnishings of the house of God and cut them to pieces. He shut the doors of the house of Yahweh and he made for himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem.[25]In every city of Judah he made high places to burn sacrifices to other gods. He provoked Yahweh, the God of his ancestors, to anger.
[26]Now the rest of his deeds, and all his ways, first and last, see, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.[27]Ahaz lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, but they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. Hezekiah, his son, became king in his place.

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2 Chronicles 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

King Ahaz's idolatry

Judah was defeated by all of the neighboring countries because King Ahaz was worshiping all sorts of foreign gods. (See: falsegod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 28:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 28:1

twenty years old ... sixteen years

"20 years old ... 16 years"

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The eyes here represent seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of Ahaz's actions. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

2 Chronicles 28:2

he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel

Walking represents behavior and actions. Alternate translation: "he acted the same way that the kings of Israel had acted" or "he did the things that the kings of Israel had done"

he also made cast metal figures for the Baals

"he even made cast metal figures for worshiping the Baals"

2 Chronicles 28:3

the Valley of Ben Hinnom

This is a valley in Jerusalem.

before the people of Israel

The people of those nations fled as the people of Israel moved into the land. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "before the people of Israel who moved into the land" or "as the people of Israel moved into the land"

2 Chronicles 28:4

the high places and on the hills and under every green tree

These are places where the people of the other nations worshiped their false gods.

under every green tree

God wanted his people to offer sacrifices to him in Jerusalem. The word "every" here is an exaggeration to show how determined King Ahaz was to disobey God by offering sacrifices in many other places instead. Alternate translation: "under many green trees" or "under many green trees around the country"

2 Chronicles 28:5

Yahweh the God of Ahaz gave him into the hand of the king of Aram

Here the metonym "hand" represents power. God enabling the army of the king of Aram to defeat Ahaz and his army is spoken of as if God had put Ahaz in the hand of the king of Aram. Alternate translation: "Yahweh the God of Ahaz enabled the king of Aram to defeat Ahaz"

carried away from him

"carried away from Ahaz." Here "him" represents Ahaz's army. Alternate translation: "carried away from Ahaz's army"

Ahaz was also given into the hand of the king of Israel who defeated him

Here the metonym "hand" represents power. God enabling the army of the king of Israel to defeat Ahaz and his army is spoken of as if God had put Ahaz in the hand of the king of Israel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh also enabled the king of Israel to defeat Ahaz"

2 Chronicles 28:6

Pekah son of Remaliah

This was the king of Israel. Both "Pekah" and "Remaliah" are the names of men.

120,000 soldiers

"one hundred twenty thousand soldiers"

2 Chronicles 28:7

Zikri ... Maaseiah ... Azrikam ... Elkanah

These are the names of men.

a powerful man

This is an idiom that refers to a mighty warrior. Alternate translation: "a mighty warrior"

who was next to the king

This idiom means that this man was the king's assistant who was second in command. Alternate translation: "who was the king's second in command"

2 Chronicles 28:8

The army of Israel took captive from their relatives

"From their own relatives, the army of Israel took captive." The word "their" refers to the army of Israel. The narrator speaks of the people of Judah as the relatives of the people of Israel.

200,000 wives, sons, and daughters

"two hundred thousand wives, sons, and daughters"

2 Chronicles 28:9

Oded

This is the name of a man.

he gave them into your hand

Here the word "hand" represents power. God enabling the army of Israel to defeat the army of Judah is spoken of as if God had put the army of Judah in the hand of the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "God enabled you to defeat them"

you have slaughtered them in a rage that reached up to heaven

Oded speaks of Yahweh knowing how severely the army of Israel slaughtered the army of Judah as if the rage with which the army of Israel slaughtered them were an object so large that it reached into heaven. That Yahweh knows what they have done implies that he will respond. Alternate translation: "you have slaughtered them in such great rage that Yahweh himself has noticed and will take vengeance"

2 Chronicles 28:10

But are you not guilty of sins of your own against Yahweh your God?

Oded asks this rhetorical question to rebuke the army of

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Israel and to emphasize the positive answer that the question anticipates. Alternate translation: "But you yourselves are guilty of sins of your own against Yahweh your God."

2 Chronicles 28:11

Yahweh's burning anger is on you

Oded speaks of Yahweh being extremely angry with the Israelite army as if Yahweh's wrath were an object that were upon them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is extremely angry with you"

burning anger

See how you translated this phrase in 2 Chronicles 28:11.

2 Chronicles 28:12

Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berekiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai

These are all names of men.

stood up against those who came back from the war

The phrase "stood up against" is an idiom that means to confront or to oppose. Alternate translation: "confronted those who came back from the war" or "opposed those who came back from the war"

2 Chronicles 28:13

something that will bring on us sin

The leaders speak of doing something that will cause them to be guilty of sin as if it were sin were an object that the action brings upon them. Alternate translation: "something that will cause us to be guilty of sinning"

there is burning anger against Israel

This phrase implies that it is Yahweh's burning anger that is against Israel. The words "burning anger" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is extremely angry with the people of Israel"

burning anger

See how you translated this phrase in 2 Chronicles 28:11.

2 Chronicles 28:15

The men who were assigned by name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The men whom the leaders assigned by name"

sandals

This is a type of shoe.

anointed them

This probably means that they gave them oil to put on their wounds.

put the weak ones on donkeys

"put the weak ones who were too weak to walk on donkeys"

2 Chronicles 28:18

They took Beth Shemesh

Taking a city is an idiom that means to conquer or to capture the city. Alternate translation: "The Philistines captured Beth Shemesh"

Beth Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soko ... Timnah ... Gimzo

These are the names of places.

2 Chronicles 28:19

Yahweh humbled Judah because of Ahaz

The name "Judah" is a metonym for the people who lived in the lind of Judah. Alternate translation: "Yahweh humiliated the people of Judah because of Ahaz"

2 Chronicles 28:20

Tiglath-Pileser

This is Tiglath-Pileser III, also known as Pul.

troubled him instead of strengthening him

Helping Ahaz against his enemies is spoken of as if it were strengthening Ahaz. Alternate translation: "caused him trouble instead of helping him"

2 Chronicles 28:22

in his time of suffering

"when he was suffering"

2 Chronicles 28:23

the gods of Damascus

The Syrians believed Damascus to be the city where their gods dwelt, much like Yahweh dwelt in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the gods whom the Syrians worshiped in Damascus"

gods that had defeated him

This expresses Ahaz's opinion. Because the Syrians had defeated him and his army, Ahaz attributed his defeat to the gods whom the Syrians worshiped. Alternate translation: "gods whom he believed had enabled the Syrian army to defeat him"

they were the ruin of him and of all Israel

The word "ruin" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "those gods ruined him and all Israel"

all Israel

Here "Israel" represents the southern kingdom of Judah.

2 Chronicles 28:24

the house of God ... the house of Yahweh

Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of God ... the temple of Yahweh"

in every corner of Jerusalem

Possible meanings are 1) the word "corner" refers to street corners, or places where streets intersect. Alternate translation: "on every street corner in Jerusalem" or 2) the various parts of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were the corners of the city. Alternate translation: "in every part of Jerusalem"

he made for himself altars

Since Ahaz was king, he may have had his workers make these high places. Alternate translation: "he had his workers make altars for him"

2 Chronicles 28:25

he made high places to burn sacrifices

Since Ahaz was king, he may have had his workers make these high places. Alternate translation: "he had his workers make high places to burn sacrifices"

2 Chronicles 28:26

all his ways, first and last

Ahaz's actions are spoken of as if they were a path upon which he walked. The phrase "first and last" refers to those extremes and everything in between. Alternate translation: "all that he did from the beginning of his reign to the end of his reign"

see, they are written in the book ... Israel

"anyone can look at the book ... Israel and see that they are written there"

they are written in the book

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written them in the book" or "you can read of them in the book"

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the book of the kings of Judah and Israel
This is a book that no longer exists.
2 Chronicles 28:27
Ahaz lay down with his ancestors
This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "Ahaz died"
they buried him
"people buried him"
became king in his place
The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Ahaz"

29 [1]Hezekiah began to reign when he was twenty-five years old; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah; she was the daughter of Zechariah.[2]He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as David his father had done.
[3]In the first year of his reign, in the first month, Hezekiah opened the doors of the house of Yahweh and repaired them.
[4]He brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the courtyard on the east side.[5]He said to them, "Listen to me, you Levites! Consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, and carry away the filthiness from the holy place.
[6]For our ancestors were faithless and did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh our God; they abandoned him, turned away their faces from the place where Yahweh lives, and turned their backs on it.[7]Also they shut up the doors of the porch and put out the lamps; they did not burn incense or offer burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel.
[8]Therefore the wrath of Yahweh had fallen on Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them to be an object of terror, of horror, and of scorn, as you can see with your own eyes.[9]This is why our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons, our daughters, and our wives are in captivity for this.
[10]Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with Yahweh, the God of Israel, so that his burning anger may turn away from us.[11]My sons, do not be lazy now, for Yahweh has chosen you to stand before him, to worship him, and that you should be his servants and burn incense."

[12]Then the Levites arose: Mahath son of Amasai, and Joel son of Azariah, of the people of the Kohathites; and of the people of Merari, Kish son of Abdi, and Azariah son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah son of Zimmah, and Eden son of Joah;
[13]of the descendants of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeuel; and of the descendants of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah;
[14]of the descendants of Heman, Jehuel and Shimei; and of the descendants of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.
[15]They gathered their brothers, they consecrated themselves, and they went in, as the king commanded, following the words of Yahweh, to cleanse the house of Yahweh.[16]The priests went in to the inner part of the house of Yahweh to cleanse it; they brought out everything unclean that they found in the temple of Yahweh into the courtyard of the house. The Levites took it to carry it out to the Kidron Brook.[17]Now they began the consecration on the first day of the first month. By the eighth day of the month they reached the porch of Yahweh. Then for eight more days they consecrated the house of Yahweh. On the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.
[18]Then they went to Hezekiah, the king, inside the palace and said, "We have cleansed all the house of Yahweh, the altar for burnt offerings with all its implements, and the table of the bread of the presence, with all its implements.[19]So we have prepared and we have consecrated all the items that King Ahaz removed when he acted unfaithfully during his reign. See, they are in front of the altar of Yahweh."

[20]Then Hezekiah the king rose early in the morning and gathered the leaders of the city; he went up to the house of Yahweh.[21]They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats as a sin offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah. He commanded the priests, the descendants of Aaron, to offer them on the altar of Yahweh.
[22]So they killed the bulls, and the priests received the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. Then they killed the rams and sprinkled their blood on the altar; and they also killed the lambs and sprinkled their blood on the altar.[23]They brought the male goats for the sin offering before the king and the assembly; they laid their hands on them.[24]The priests killed them, and they made a sin offering with their blood on the altar to make atonement for all Israel, for the king had commanded that a burnt offering and a sin offering should be made for all Israel.

[25]Hezekiah placed the Levites in the house of Yahweh with cymbals, lutes and harps, arranging them by the command of David, Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan, the prophet, for the command was from Yahweh by means of his prophets.[26]The Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.
[27]Hezekiah commanded them to offer the burnt offering on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song of Yahweh began also, with the trumpets, together with the instruments of David, king of Israel.[28]All the assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpeters played; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

[29]When they had finished the offerings, the king and all who were present with him bowed and worshiped.[30]Moreover, Hezekiah, the king, and the leaders commanded the Levites to sing praises to Yahweh with the words of David and of Asaph, the seer. They sang praises with gladness, and they bowed down and worshiped.

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[31]Then Hezekiah said, "Now you have consecrated yourselves to Yahweh. Come here and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of Yahweh." The assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all who had a willing heart brought burnt offerings.
[32]The number of the burnt offerings that the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred male lambs. All these were for a burnt offering to Yahweh.[33]The consecrated offerings were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.
[34]But the priests were too few to skin all the burnt offerings, so their brothers, the Levites, helped them until the work was done, and until the priests could consecrate themselves, for the Levites had been more careful to consecrate themselves than the priests.
[35]In addition, there were very many burnt offerings; they were performed with the fat of the fellowship offerings, and there were drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of Yahweh was set in order.[36]Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people also, because of what God had prepared for the people, for the work had been done quickly.

2 Chronicles 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of King Hezekiah. (2 Chronicles 29-32)

Special concepts in this chapter

Cleansing the temple

King Hezekiah was a great king. He cleaned and rededicated the temple. This was a sign that he wanted the people to return to worshiping Yahweh. (See: clean and temple and sign)

Links:

2 Chronicles 29:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 29:1

twenty-five years old ... twenty-nine years

"25 years old ... 29 years"

Abijah

This is a woman's name.

2 Chronicles 29:2

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

The word "eyes" here represents seeing, and seeing represents judgment. Yahweh saw and approved of Hezekiah's actions. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:1]

2 Chronicles 29:3

in the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of March and the first part April on Western calendars.

the house of Yahweh

Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

Hezekiah opened the doors ... and repaired them

Since Hezekiah was king, he may have had his workers do these things. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah ordered his workers to open the doors ... and to repair them"

2 Chronicles 29:4

on the east side

This refers to the east side of the temple. Alternate translation: "on the east side of the temple"

2 Chronicles 29:5

carry away the filthiness from the holy place

The word "filthiness" refers to things that the people had used to worship other gods. The narrator speaks of these things making the temple unacceptable to Yahweh as if they were physically dirty. Alternate translation: "remove the things that defile the holy place" or "remove the things that make the holy place unacceptable to Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 29:6

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh our God

The word "sight" here represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of their ancestors' actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh our God judged to be evil" or "what Yahweh our God considered to be evil"

turned away their faces from the place where Yahweh lives, and turned their backs on it

These two phrases share similar meanings. The words "faces" and "backs" represent the people who turned so that their faces were away from the temple and their backs were towards it. Alternate translation: "turned away from the place where Yahweh lives"

turned away their faces from the place where Yahweh lives, and turned their backs on it

Rejecting Yahweh and no longer worshiping him is spoken of as if the people had turned away from the temple. Alternate translation: "abandoned Yahweh's temple and stopped worshiping him"

the place where Yahweh lives

This refers to the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple where Yahweh lives"

2 Chronicles 29:8

the wrath of Yahweh had fallen on Judah and Jerusalem

Here the words "Judah and Jerusalem" refer to the people who live there. Hezekiah speaks of Yahweh being angry with the people and punishing them as if his wrath were an object that fell upon them. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh was angry, he had punished the people of Judah

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and Jerusalem"

an object of terror, of horror, and of scorn

This can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "something that terrifies and horrifies people, and something that people scorn"

as you can see with your own eyes

The phrase "with your own eyes" emphasizes that the people can see this for themselves without others having to tell them about it. Alternate translation: "as you can see for yourselves"

2 Chronicles 29:9

our fathers have fallen by the sword

The idiom "fallen by the sword" means to die in battle. The word "sword" represents the soldiers, who used swords as their primary weapons. Alternate translation: "our fathers have died in battle"

2 Chronicles 29:10

it is in my heart

Here the word "heart" represents the thoughts and intentions. Hezekiah speaks of deciding to do something as if that thing were in his heart. Alternate translation: "it is my intention" or "I have decided"

his burning anger may turn away from us

Here Yahweh turning his anger from them is spoken of as if the anger were a person who could turn himself away from them. Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "he may no longer be very angry with us" or "he may turn his great anger away from us"

burning anger

See how you translated this phrase in 2 Chronicles 28:11.

2 Chronicles 29:11

to stand before him

Possible meanings are 1) "to stand in his presence" or 2) this is an idiom that means to serve a person of high rank. Alternate translation: "to serve him"

2 Chronicles 29:12

General Information:

These verses list the names of the Levites who began to do the work that Hezekiah had ordered them to do. These are all men's names.

the Levites arose

Here the word "arose" is an idiom that means that the Levites began to act. Alternate translation: "the Levites began to work"

2 Chronicles 29:15

following the words of Yahweh

This phrase shows that the king gave his command in obedience to the word of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "in obedience to the word of Yahweh" or "because of what Yahweh had said"

to cleanse the house of Yahweh

A place that is fit to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically clean.

the house of Yahweh

Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 29:16

the house of Yahweh ... the courtyard of the house

Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh ... the courtyard of the temple"

they brought out everything unclean that they found in the temple of Yahweh

The word "unclean" describes things that the people had used to worship other gods. The narrator speaks of these things making the temple unacceptable to Yahweh as if they were physically dirty. Alternate translation: "they brought out all the defiled things that they found in the temple of Yahweh" or "they brought out all the things that they found in the temple of Yahweh that made it unacceptable to Yahweh"

Kidron Brook

A small body of water that flows on the east side of Jerusalem. At times it was used as a trash dump.

2 Chronicles 29:17

the first day of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day marks the day when Yahweh brought the people out of Egypt. This is near the middle of March on Western calendars.

the eighth day of the month

This is near the end of March on Western calendars.

they reached the porch of Yahweh

The phrase "the porch of Yahweh" refers to the porch of the temple. "They reached" means that they began to cleanse this section. Alternate translation: "they had begun to cleanse the porch of Yahweh's temple"

sixteenth day of the first month

This is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 29:18

the bread of the presence

This is a reference to the 12 loaves of bread that were placed in front of the altar. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 2:4.

2 Chronicles 29:19

See, they are

"Look at them. You can see for yourself that they are"

2 Chronicles 29:20

the house of Yahweh

The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 29:22

they killed the bulls, and the priests received the blood

"the priests killed the bulls and took the blood"

2 Chronicles 29:23

they laid their hands on them

"the king and people in the assembly laid their hands on them"

2 Chronicles 29:24

that a burnt offering and a sin offering should be made for all Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priests should make a burnt offering and a sin offering for all Israel"

2 Chronicles 29:25

the house of Yahweh

The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

cymbals

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two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 5:12]

arranging them by the command of David, Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan, the prophet

The word "command" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "arranging the Levites as David, Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan, the prophet had commanded"

for the command was from Yahweh by means of his prophets

The word "command" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh had commanded this through his prophets"

2 Chronicles 29:27

the song of Yahweh began also

The phrase "the song of Yahweh" refers to people singing a song to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the people began to sing a song to Yahweh also"

2 Chronicles 29:28

until the burnt offering was finished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the priests finished offering the burnt offering"

2 Chronicles 29:29

When they had finished the offerings

"When the priests had finished the offerings"

bowed and worshiped

The object of worship may be supplied in translation. Alternate translation: "bowed and worshiped Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 29:31

thank offerings

These were offerings of thanksgiving.

the house of Yahweh

The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

who had a willing heart

Here the word "heart" represents the person who was willing. Alternate translation: "who were willing" or "who desired"

2 Chronicles 29:32

seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred male lambs

"70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 male lambs"

2 Chronicles 29:33

six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep

"600 oxen and 3,000 sheep"

2 Chronicles 29:34

to skin all the burnt offerings

"to remove the skins from all the burn offerings"

until the work was done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until they had finished the work"

until the priests could consecrate themselves

Since there were some priests who were already consecrated, this implies that more priests consecrated themselves. Alternate translation: "until more of the priests could consecrate themselves"

had been more careful to consecrate themselves

There were enough Levites to do this work because they had been careful to consecrate themselves. This implies that the reason that there were not enough priests was because the priests were not careful to consecrate themselves.

2 Chronicles 29:35

they were performed with the fat of the fellowship offerings

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests performed the burnt offerings with the fat of the fellowship offerings"

the service of the house of Yahweh was set in order

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah set the service of the house of Yahweh in order"

the house of Yahweh

The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

was set in order

This idiom means that something is organized. Here it refers to the priestly service beginning in the temple again. Alternate translation: "was restored" or "began again"

2 Chronicles 29:36

the work had been done quickly

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people had done the work quickly"

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30 [1]Hezekiah sent messengers to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem, to celebrate the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel.[2]For the king, his leaders, and all the assembly in Jerusalem had consulted together, deciding to celebrate the Passover in the second month.[3]They could not celebrate at the regular time, because not enough priests had consecrated themselves for the celebration and the people had not gathered together in Jerusalem.
[4]This proposal seemed right in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly.[5]So they agreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come to celebrate the Passover to Yahweh, the God of Israel, in Jerusalem. For they had not observed it with large numbers of people according to what was written.[6]So couriers went with the letters from the king and his leaders throughout all Israel and Judah, by the command of the king. They said, "You people of Israel, turn back to Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that he may turn back to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.
[7]Do not be like your ancestors or your brothers, who were faithless against Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, so that he made them an object of horror, as you see.[8]Now do not stiffen your necks, as your ancestors did; instead, give yourselves to Yahweh and come into his holy place, which he has consecrated forever, and worship Yahweh your God, so that his burning anger may turn away from you.[9]For if you turn back to Yahweh, your brothers and children will find compassion before those who led them away as prisoners, and they will come back into this land. For Yahweh your God, is gracious and merciful, and will not turn his face away from you, if you return to him."

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[10]So the couriers passed from city to city throughout the regions of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the way to Zebulun, but the people laughed at them and mocked them.[11]However, certain men of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.[12]The hand of God also came on Judah, to give them one heart, to carry out the command of the king and leaders by the word of Yahweh.

[13]Many people, a very great assembly, gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread in the second month.[14]They rose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense; they threw them into the Kidron Brook.[15]Then they killed the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and Levites were ashamed, so they consecrated themselves and brought burnt offerings into the house of Yahweh.
[16]They stood in their place by their divisions, following the directions given in the law of Moses, the man of God. The priests sprinkled the blood that they received from the hand of the Levites.[17]For there were many in the assembly who had not consecrated themselves. Therefore the Levites slaughtered the Passover lambs for everyone who was not purified and could not consecrate their sacrifice to Yahweh.
[18]For a great many of the people, many of them from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not purified themselves, yet they ate the Passover meal, against the written instructions. For Hezekiah had prayed for them, saying, "May the good Yahweh pardon everyone[19]who sets his heart to seek God, Yahweh, the God of his ancestors, even though he is not purified by the purification standards of the holy place."[20]So Yahweh listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.
[21]The people of Israel who were present in Jerusalem kept the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great joy. The Levites and the priests praised Yahweh day after day, singing with loud instruments to Yahweh.[22]Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who understood the service of Yahweh. So they ate throughout the festival for the seven days, offering sacrifices of fellowship offerings, and making confession to Yahweh, the God of their ancestors.

[23]The whole assembly then decided to celebrate for another seven days, and they did so with joy.[24]For Hezekiah king of Judah gave the assembly one thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep as an offering; and the leaders gave to the assembly one thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep and goats. A large number of priests consecrated themselves.
[25]All the assembly of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the people who came together from Israel, as well as the foreigners who came from the land of Israel and those who lived in Judah—they all rejoiced.[26]So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of David, king of Israel, there had not been anything like it in Jerusalem.
[27]Then the priests, the Levites, rose and blessed the people. Their voice was heard, and their prayer went up to heaven, the holy place where God lives.

2 Chronicles 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Hezekiah continues in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Passover

Hezekiah invited everyone in Judah and in Israel to come to Jerusalem and celebrate the Passover. It had not been celebrated since King Solomon's day. (See: passover)

Links:

2 Chronicles 30:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 30:1

all Israel and Judah

This represents the nation of Israel in general. Earlier the nation had been split into two kingdoms called by these names.

Ephraim and Manasseh

Ephraim and Manasseh were two of the tribes in the northern part of Israel. Here the phrase "Ephraim and Manasseh" refers to the people who belonged to all ten of the northern tribes of Israel. Alternate translation: "the northern tribes of Israel"

2 Chronicles 30:2

deciding to celebrate the Passover in the second month

The Israelites normally celebrated the passover during the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The first month is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars.

second month

This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 30:4

This proposal

This refers to the proposal to celebrate the Passover in the second month instead of in the first month.

in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in the judgment of the

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king and all the assembly" or "to the king and all the assembly"

2 Chronicles 30:5

from Beersheba to Dan

These are the most southern and most northern parts of Israel. By referring to them this way, the writer emphasizes that all of Israel was included. Alternate translation: "from Beersheba in the south to Dan in the north"

according to what was written

"as it was written that they should do." It is implied that it was written that they should observe the Passover with large numbers of people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Moses had written that they should observe it"

2 Chronicles 30:6

couriers

people who carry messages

all Israel and Judah

The tribe of Judah was the largest of the tribes of Israel and was in the southern part of Israel. Here the phrase "Israel and Judah" refers to the people who belonged to the southern tribes of Israel. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 30:1]

turn back to Yahweh

Here "turn back to Yahweh" represents submitting to him again. Alternate translation: "submit again to Yahweh"

so that he may turn back to the remnant of you

Here "turn back to the remnant" represents protecting the remnant again. Alternate translation: "so that he may again protect the remnant of you"

who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria

The word "hand" often represents power or authority. Here it represents the kings' cruel authority to force people to go to other countries. Alternate translation: "who have escaped from the power of the kings of Assyria"

2 Chronicles 30:7

Connecting Statement:

This is a continuation of King Hezekiah's message to the people of Israel.

your brothers

Here "brothers" represents other people of Israel. Alternate translation: "your people"

he made them an object of horror

The abstract noun "horror" can be expressed with the words "horrified" or "horrible." The author writes of what God did to their ancestors in terms of how other people would react when the saw what God did. Alternate translation: "he made them something that people would be horrified to see" or "he punished them horribly"

2 Chronicles 30:8

do not stiffen your necks

This phrase is a metaphor. God is telling them not to become stubborn. Alternate translation: "do not become stubborn"

give yourselves to Yahweh

This represents submitting to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "submit to Yahweh" or "dedicate yourselves to Yahweh"

come into his holy place

Here "his holy place" refers to God's temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "come to his temple in Jerusalem for it is holy" or "come to his temple in Jerusalem"

his burning anger may turn away from you

Here Yahweh turning his anger from them is spoken of as if the anger were a person who could turn himself away from them. Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "he may no longer be very angry with you" or "he may turn his great anger away from you"

burning anger

See how you translated this phrase in 2 Chronicles 28:11.

2 Chronicles 30:9

if you turn back to Yahweh

Here "turn back to Yahweh" represents submitting to him again. Alternate translation: "if you submit again to Yahweh"

your brothers and children will find compassion before those who led them away as prisoners

Here "find compassion" is a metaphor for experiencing compassion. Finding it "before those who led them" means those who led them away will show them compassion. Alternate translation: "your brothers and children will experience compassion from those who led them away as prisoners" or "those who led your brothers and children away as prisoners will be kind to them"

will not turn his face away from you

Here "turn his face away from you" represents rejecting them and refusing to protect them. Alternate translation: "will not reject you"

if you return to him

Here "return to him" represents submitting to God again. Alternate translation: "if you submit again to him"

2 Chronicles 30:10

the regions of Ephraim and Manasseh

Ephraim and Manasseh were two of the tribes in the northern part of Israel. Here the phrase "Ephraim and Manasseh" refers to the people who belonged to all ten of the northern tribes of Israel. See how you translated it in [2 Chronicles 30:1]

all the way to Zebulun

Zebulun was one of the tribes farthest in the north of Israel, but there were three other tribes that reached farther north.

2 Chronicles 30:12

The hand of God also came on Judah

Here "the hand of God" represents his guidance as if he were guiding them with his hand. Alternate translation: "God guided the people of Judah"

to give them one heart

Having "one heart" represents being united and agreeing. Alternate translation: "causing them to agree"

to carry out the command

Here "carry out the command" is an idiom meaning to do what was commanded. Alternate translation: "to obey the command"

the command of the king and leaders by the word of Yahweh

The phrase "by the word of Yahweh" shows that the king and leaders gave their command in obedience to the word of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the command that the

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king and leaders gave them in obedience to the word of Yahweh" or "what the king and the leaders commanded because of what Yahweh had said"

2 Chronicles 30:13

the second month

This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 30:14

They rose and took away the altars

Here "They rose" means that they started to work at taking away the altars. Alternate translation: "They began to work and took away the altars" or "They took away the altars"

the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense

These two phrases refer to altars that people had built to false gods.

the Kidron Brook

This was a small stream of water in the Kidron Valley.

2 Chronicles 30:15

the fourteenth day of the second month

This is near the beginning of May on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 30:16

They stood in their place by their divisions

"They stood in their appointed places"

the blood that they received from the hand of the Levites

This refers to the blood of the lambs that the Levites killed. Here "received from the hand of the Levites" is a metonym for the Levites giving the blood to the priests. Alternate translation: "the blood that they received from the Levites" or "the lambs' blood that the Levites gave to them"

2 Chronicles 30:17

the Passover lambs

"the lambs for the Passover"

2 Chronicles 30:18

Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun

These are the names of some of the tribes that lived in the northern part of Israel. See how you translated "Zebulun" in [2 Chronicles 30:10]

against the written instructions

To do something "against" instructions means to do something that is not in obedience to the instructions. If needed, the instructions can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "even though the written instructions said that they must purify themselves first"

the good Yahweh

The word "good" here is a reminder to the people that Yahweh is kind. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who is good"

2 Chronicles 30:19

who sets his heart to seek God

This continues the sentence that begins with the word "everyone" in verse 18.Here "sets his heart" is a metaphor for being determined to do something, and "to seek God" is a metaphor for knowing, worshiping, and obeying him. "everyone who is determined to obey God" or "everyone who truly wants to honor God"

2 Chronicles 30:20

So Yahweh listened to Hezekiah

This implies that Yahweh responded favorably to Hezekiah. Alternate translation: "So Yahweh responded favorably to Hezekiah" or "So Yahweh did what Hezekiah asked"

healed the people

Here "healed the people" is a metaphor for forgiving the people and not punishing them. Alternate translation: "forgave the people" or "did not punish the people"

2 Chronicles 30:21

kept the Festival of Unleavened Bread

Here "kept the festival" is a idiom meaning to participate in the festival or celebrate the festival. Alternate translation: "celebrate the festival"

singing with loud instruments to Yahweh

"singing and playing loud musical instruments to Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 30:22

who understood the service of Yahweh

This was the reason that he spoke encouragingly to them. Alternate translation: "because they understood the service of Yahweh" or "because they served Yahweh skillfully"

So they ate throughout the festival

The word "they" refers to the people of Israel.

making confession to Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) "confession" here refers to saying that God is great. Alternate translation: "praising Yahweh" or 2) "confession" here refers to admitting their sins. Alternate translation: "confessing their sins to Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 30:24

Hezekiah ... gave the assembly ... bulls and ... sheep as an offering

Hezekiah gave the animals to the people as an offering to the Lord for the people to eat.

one thousand bulls ... seven thousand sheep ... one thousand bulls ... ten thousand sheep and goats

"1,000 bulls ... 7,000 sheep ... 1,000 bulls ... 10,000 sheep and goats"

2 Chronicles 30:25

All the assembly of Judah

Here "Judah" probably refers to the southern tribes of Israel.

all the people who came together from Israel

Here "Israel" probably refers to the northern tribes of Israel. The people are members of those tribes. They came to Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Alternate translation: "all the people who came together from Israel in the north"

the foreigners who came from the land of Israel

Here "the land of Israel" probably refers to the land owned by the northern tribes of Israel. Alternate translation: "the foreigners who came from the land of Israel in the north"

2 Chronicles 30:26

since the time of Solomon son of David, king of Israel

"since the time when Solomon son of David ruled as king of Israel" or "since the Passover Festival that the people held when Solomon son of David was king of Israel"

there had not been anything like it in Jerusalem

"there had not been any Passover Festival in Jerusalem like this Passover Festival"

2 Chronicles 30:27

Their voice was heard ... their prayer went up to heaven, the holy place where God lives

These two phrases mean the same thing and imply that God responded favorably to their prayer. Alternate translation:

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"God responded favorably to their prayer, which he heard in heaven, the holy place where he lives" or "God, who lives in the holy heaven, heard their prayer"

Their voice was heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God heard their voice" or "God heard what they said to him"

their prayer went up to heaven

Their prayer going up to heaven represents God in heaven paying attention to them praying on earth.

31 [1]Now when all this was finished, all the people of Israel who were there went out to the cities of Judah and broke to pieces the stone pillars and they cut down the Asherah poles, and they broke down the high places and the altars in all of Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the people of Israel returned, every one to his own possession and his own city.

[2]Hezekiah assigned the divisions of the priests and the Levites organized by their divisions, each man assigned to his work, both the priests and the Levites. He assigned them to make the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, to serve, to give thanks, and to praise at the gates of the house of Yahweh.[3]He also assigned the king's portion for the burnt offerings from his own possessions, that is, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the Sabbath days, the new moons, and the fixed festivals, as it was written in the law of Yahweh.
[4]Moreover, he commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion for the priests and the Levites, so that they might concentrate on obeying the law of Yahweh.[5]As soon as the command was sent out, the people of Israel generously gave the firstfruits of grain, new wine, oil, honey, and from all their harvest of the field. They brought in a tithe of everything, which was a great quantity.
[6]The people of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep, and the tithe of the holy things that were set apart to Yahweh their God, and they piled them up in heaps.[7]It was in the third month when they began piling up their contribution in heaps, and they finished in the seventh month.[8]When Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed Yahweh and his people Israel.
[9]Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites about the heaps.[10]Azariah, the chief priest, of the house of Zadok, answered him and said, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of Yahweh, we have eaten and had enough, and have plenty left over, for Yahweh has blessed his people. What was left over is this large amount here."

[11]Then Hezekiah commanded storerooms to be prepared in the house of Yahweh, and they prepared them.[12]Then they faithfully brought in the offerings, the tithes and the things that belonged to Yahweh. Konaniah the Levite was the manager in charge of them, and his brother Shimei was second to him.[13]Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were managers under the hand of Konaniah and Shimei his brother, by appointment of Hezekiah, the king, and Azariah, the official over the house of God.
[14]Kore son of Imnah the Levite, the porter at the east gate, was over the freewill offerings of God, in charge of distributing the offerings to Yahweh and the most holy offerings.[15]Under him were Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shekaniah, in the cities of the priests. They filled offices of trust, in order to give these offerings to their brothers division by division, to both the important and the unimportant.
[16]They also gave to those males three years old and up, who were recorded in the genealogies of their ancestors who entered the house of Yahweh, as required by the daily schedule, to do the work in their offices and their divisions.[1]
[17]They distributed to the priests who were recorded in the genealogies of their ancestors, and the same to the Levites twenty years old and more, according to their offices and their divisions.[18]They recorded in the genealogy all their little ones, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, through the whole community, for they were faithful in keeping themselves holy.[19]For the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who were in the fields of the villages belonging to their cities, or in every city, there were men assigned by name to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all who were recorded in the genealogies of their ancestors as being among the Levites.

[20]Hezekiah did this throughout all Judah. He accomplished what was good, right, and faithful before Yahweh, his God.[21]In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, the law, and the commandments, to seek his God, he performed it with all his heart, and he succeeded.

[1]Instead of males three years old and up, some modern translations have males thirty years old and up.

2 Chronicles 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Hezekiah continues in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

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To express Hezekiah's desire to please God, the author uses two idioms "to seek God" and "with all his heart." This means that he really wanted to do what God wanted.

Links:

2 Chronicles 31:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 31:1

who were there

"who were in Jerusalem"

to his own possession

Here "possession" means possessions in general. Alternate translation: "to his own property" or "to his own home"

2 Chronicles 31:2

Hezekiah assigned the divisions of the priests and the Levites organized by their divisions, each man assigned to his work, both the priests and the Levites

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah organized the priests and the Levites into groups. He assigned each priest and Levite to their duties"

2 Chronicles 31:3

assigned the king's portion for the burnt offerings from his own possessions

Hezekiah took the meat and grain used for the burnt offerings out of his own possessions.

the new moons

This was a festival coinciding with the movement of the moon.

the fixed festivals

This refers to festivals which occur on specific dates.

as it was written in the law of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as Moses wrote in the law of Yahweh" or "just as Yahweh commanded in his law"

2 Chronicles 31:5

As soon as the command was sent out

This can stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As soon as the people heard the command"

a tithe of everything

"a tenth of all their crops"

2 Chronicles 31:7

third month

This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the dry season. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars.

seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the early rain season, which would soften the land for sowing. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 31:10

of the house of Zadok

Here "house" represents a family or descendants. Alternate translation: "a descendant of Zadok"

What was left over is this large amount here

The chief priest would have been pointing to the large heaps.

2 Chronicles 31:11

Hezekiah commanded storerooms to be prepared

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah commanded the priests and Levites to prepare storerooms"

2 Chronicles 31:12

Konaniah ... Shimei

These are names of men.

2 Chronicles 31:13

Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath, and Benaiah

These are names of men.

were managers under the hand of Konaniah and Shimei his brother

Here "hand" represents power or control. The phrase "under the hand" is an idiom that means to be under someone's authority. Alternate translation: "were managers whom Konaniah and Shimei his brother supervised"

the official over the house of God

Here "over" is an idiom that means to be in charge of. Alternate translation: "the official in charge of everyone who served in the house of God"

2 Chronicles 31:14

Kore ... Imnah

These are names of men.

the porter at the east gate

"the gatekeeper at the east gate of the temple"

2 Chronicles 31:15

Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shekaniah

These are names of men.

Under him were Eden ... in the cities of the priests

Here "under" is an idiom that means to be under someone's authority. Alternate translation: "Eden ... assisted Kore in the cities of the priests"

They filled offices of trust, in order to give

"Their duty was to give" or "They faithfully gave"

to their brothers

Here "brothers" is a metaphor for "fellow priests." Alternate translation: "to their fellow priests"

division by division

"group by group"

to both the important and the unimportant

Here "important" and "unimportant" are used together to mean "everyone." Alternate translation: "to everyone, including the important and the unimportant"

the important and the unimportant

This seems to imply the old and the young. This can be restated to removed the nominal adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who are old and those who are young"

2 Chronicles 31:16

They also gave

It is understood that they gave the freewill offerings. Alternate translation: "They also gave freewill offerings"

three years old and up

"three years old and older"

who were recorded in the genealogies

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose names were in the records"

as required by the daily schedule, to do the work in their offices and their divisions

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to do the daily work that they were supposed to do"

2 Chronicles 31:17

They distributed

It is understood they distributed the freewill offerings. Alternate translation: "They distributed freewill offerings"

twenty years old and more

"20 years old and older"

2 Chronicles 31:19

there were men assigned by name to give portions

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there were men responsible for giving portions"

to all who were recorded in the genealogies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to all whose names were in the records"

2 Chronicles 31:21

to seek his God

Seeking Yahweh represents choosing to know, worship, and obey him. Alternate translation: "to obey his God"

he performed it with all his heart

Here the word "heart" refers to a person's will and desire. Alternate translation: "he performed it with all his will" or "he was completely committed to what he did"

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32 [1]After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came and entered Judah. He camped to attack the fortified cities, which he intended to capture for himself.
[2]When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and that he intended to fight against Jerusalem,[3]he consulted with his leaders and his powerful men to stop up the waters of the springs that were outside the city; they helped him do so.[4]So many people gathered together and stopped up all the springs and the stream that was flowing through the middle of the land. They said, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find a lot of water?"
[5]Hezekiah took courage and built up all the wall that was broken down. He built the towers higher, and also the other wall outside. He also strengthened the Millo in the city of David, and he made large amounts of weapons and shields.[1]
[6]He placed military commanders over the people. He gathered them together to him in the broad place at the city gate and spoke to their hearts. He said,[7]"Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed because of the king of Assyria and all the army that is with him, for someone is with us who is greater than those with him.[8]With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is Yahweh, our God, to help us, and to fight our battles." Then the people comforted themselves with the words of Hezekiah, king of Judah.

[9]After this, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, sent his servants to Jerusalem (now he was in front of Lachish, and all his army was with him), to Hezekiah, king of Judah, and to all of Judah who were in Jerusalem. He said,[10]"This is what Sennacherib, king of Assyria, says: What are you trusting in so you can endure a siege in Jerusalem?
[11]Is not Hezekiah misleading you, that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, 'Yahweh our God will rescue us from the hand of the king of Assyria'?[12]Has not this same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, 'On one altar you must worship, and on it you must burn your sacrifices'?
[13]Do you not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the peoples of the other lands? Were the gods of the peoples of the surrounding lands able in any way to rescue their land from my power?[14]Among all the gods of those nations that my ancestors completely destroyed, was there any god who could rescue his people out of my hand? Why should your God be able to rescue you from my power?[15]Now do not let Hezekiah deceive you or persuade you in this way. Do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to rescue his people out of my hand, or out of the hand of my ancestors. How much less will your God rescue you from my hand?"

[16]Sennacherib's servants spoke even more against Yahweh God and against his servant Hezekiah.[17]Sennacherib also wrote letters in order to mock Yahweh, the God of Israel, and to speak against him. He said, "As the gods of the nations of the lands have not rescued their people out of my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not rescue his people out of my hand."
[18]They cried out in the language of the Jews to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten them and trouble them, in order that they might capture the city.[19]They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they had spoken of the gods of the other peoples of the earth, which are merely the work of men's hands.

[20]Hezekiah, the king, and Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet, prayed because of this matter and he cried out to heaven.
[21]Yahweh sent an angel, who killed the mighty warriors, the commanders, and the officers of the king of Assyria in the camp. So Sennacherib returned to his own land with shame on his face. When he had gone into the house of his god, some of his own children killed him there with the sword.
[22]In this way, Yahweh saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all others, and gave them rest on every side.[2][23]Many were bringing offerings to Yahweh in Jerusalem, and precious gifts to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was lifted up in the eyes of all nations from that time forward.

[24]In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying. He prayed to Yahweh, who spoke to him and gave him a sign that

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he would be healed.[25]But Hezekiah did not pay back Yahweh for the help given to him, for his heart was lifted up. So anger came on him, and on Judah and Jerusalem.[26]Nevertheless, Hezekiah later humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that Yahweh's anger did not come on them during Hezekiah's days.

[27]Hezekiah had very many riches and much honor. He provided himself with storerooms for silver, gold, precious stones, and for spices, as well as for shields and for all kinds of valuable objects.[28]He also had storehouses for the harvest of grain, new wine, and oil, and stalls for various kinds of livestock. He also had flocks in their pens.[29]In addition, he provided himself with cities and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him very much wealth.[3]
[30]It was this same Hezekiah who also stopped up the upper spring of the waters of Gihon, and who brought them straight down on the west side of the city of David. Hezekiah succeeded in all his works.[31]However, in the matter of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent to him to ask questions of those who knew, about the miraculous sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him, and to know all that was in his heart.

[32]As for the other matters concerning Hezekiah, including his actions of covenant loyalty, you can see that they are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.[33]Hezekiah lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him on the hill of the tombs of the descendants of David. All Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death. Manasseh his son became king in his place.

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[1]Instead of He built the towers higher, some ancient and modern translations have, he built towers on it, that is, on the wall.
[2]Instead of gave them rest on every side, some ancient and modern translations have guided them on every side. The original reading is uncertain.
[3]Instead of cities, some modern translations have donkeys, and some other modern translations leave out the word entirely.

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2 Chronicles 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of King Hezekiah is completed in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust in Yahweh

Because Hezekiah trusted God, God rescued Jerusalem from the attacked of the Assyrian army and healed Hezekiah when he was very sick. (See: trust)

Links:

2 Chronicles 32:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 32:1

After these things and these acts of faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully." Alternate translation: "After Hezekiah faithfully did all the things Yahweh commanded him to do"

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came ... He camped

Here Sennacherib represents his army. Alternate translation: "Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and his army came ... They camped"

came and entered Judah

Here "came" can be stated as "went." Alternate translation: "went and entered Judah"

2 Chronicles 32:2

that Sennacherib had come and that he intended

Here Sennacherib also represents his army. Alternate translation: "that Sennacherib and his army had come and that they intended"

to fight against Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people there. Alternate translation: "to fight against the people of Jerusalem" or "to fight against the army of Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 32:3

to stop up the waters of the springs that were outside the city

The people of the city would fill up wells and fountain springs with earth and rocks, hiding the water from the Assyrians, but the people would cause the water to flow into the city through secret pathways.

2 Chronicles 32:4

Why should the kings of Assyria come and find a lot of water?

The people use a rhetorical question to emphasize that they do not want the kings of Assyria to find their water. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We do not want the kings of Assyria to come here and find a lot of water."

the kings of Assyria

Possible meanings for "kings" are 1) this is an idiom that refers to the one king of Assyria. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria" or 2) this may refer to the king and his other leaders. Alternate translation: "the king and the other leaders of Assyria"

2 Chronicles 32:5

Hezekiah took courage and built up ... He built ... He also ... he made

The readers should understand that Hezekiah probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah took courage and commanded the people to build up ... They built ... They also ... they made"

Hezekiah took courage and built up

Possible meanings are 1) Hezekiah strengthened his

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position by commanding the people to repair the walls of the city. You can make this clear by using the connecting word "by." Alternate translation: "Hezekiah strengthened the city by building up" or 2) he became encouraged. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah became encouraged and built up"

the Millo

This is a part of the wall on the north side of Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 32:6

He placed military commanders over the people

The idiom "place over" means to put in charge of. "He put military commanders in charge of the people"

2 Chronicles 32:7

for someone is with us who is greater than those with him

"for our God is with us and is more powerful than those with the king of Assyria"

2 Chronicles 32:8

is only an arm of flesh

Here "arm" represents strength, and "flesh" represents humanity. Alternate translation: "are only those with human power"

2 Chronicles 32:9

now he was ... with him

The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about the location of Sennacherib and his army.

Lachish

This was a city in Judah.

2 Chronicles 32:10

What are you trusting in so you can endure a siege in Jerusalem?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people to think about their situation. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These people you are trusting in cannot make you able to endure a siege in Jerusalem."

2 Chronicles 32:11

Is not Hezekiah misleading you ... king of Assyria'?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah is misleading you ... king of Assyria.'"

that he may give you over to die by famine and by thirst

"so that you will die from lack of food and water"

from the hand of the king of Assyria

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from the power of the king of Assyria" or "from the king of Assyria"

2 Chronicles 32:12

Has not this same Hezekiah taken away ... sacrifices'?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is the same Hezekiah who has taken away ... sacrifices.'" or "Hezekiah has taken away ... sacrifices.'"

commanded Judah and Jerusalem

Here "Judah" and "Jerusalem" represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "commanded the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 32:13

Do you not know what ... lands?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know very well what ... lands!"

Were the gods ... power?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There was no god ... power!"

2 Chronicles 32:14

Among all the gods ... was there any god who ... hand?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There was no god among all the gods ... who ... hand!"

out of my hand

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from my power" or "from me"

Why should your God be able ... power?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no reason your God should be able ... power!"

2 Chronicles 32:15

Now

Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

How much less will your God rescue you from my hand?

Sennacherib uses a rhetorical question to cause the people of Jerusalem to think about their situation. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your God will certainly not be able to rescue you from my hand!"

2 Chronicles 32:17

out of my hand

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from my power" or "from me"

2 Chronicles 32:18

They cried out

"Sennacherib's servants shouted loudly"

to frighten them and trouble them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of fear. Alternate translation: "to make them very afraid"

they might capture

"the Assyrian army might capture"

2 Chronicles 32:19

They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as they had spoken of the gods of the other peoples of the earth

"They mocked the God of Jerusalem as they had mocked the gods of the other peoples of the earth"

which are merely the work of men's hands

This emphasizes that humans made these idols with their own hands and are therefore worthless. Alternate translation: "which are merely idols that men have made"

2 Chronicles 32:20

cried out to heaven

Here "heaven" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "cried to Yahweh for help" or "pleaded to Yahweh"

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2 Chronicles 32:21

with shame on his face

"embarrassed" or "ashamed"

the house of his god

"the temple of his god"

2 Chronicles 32:22

from the hand of Sennacherib ... from the hand of all others

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from the power of Sennacherib ... from the power of all others" or "from Sennacherib ... from all others"

gave them rest on every side

The abstract noun "rest" can be translated as "peacefully." Alternate translation: "caused them to live peacefully with all the people of the nations around them"

2 Chronicles 32:23

he was lifted up in the eyes of all nations

Here "lifted up" is an idiom that means to honor. Also, "in the eyes" is a metaphor that represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "the people of all the nations honored him"

2 Chronicles 32:24

that he would be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he would heal Hezekiah"

2 Chronicles 32:25

But Hezekiah did not pay back Yahweh for the help given to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But Hezekiah did not act in a grateful way after Yahweh helped him"

his heart was lifted up

Here "heart" is a metonym that represents a person's inner being. Here "heart was lifted up" is an idiom that means to become proud. Alternate translation: "he became proud"

So anger came on him, and on Judah and Jerusalem

Yahweh becoming angry and punishing the people is spoken of as if "anger came on" them. "Judah" and "Jerusalem" are metonyms that represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "So Yahweh became angry and punished him and the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 32:26

during Hezekiah's days

"during Hezekiah's lifetime" or "during Hezekiah's reign as king"

2 Chronicles 32:28

stalls

This is a small enclosure where horses are kept. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 9:25

pens

a storage place for small animals

2 Chronicles 32:30

Hezekiah who also stopped up ... and who brought them straight down

The readers should understand that Hezekiah probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah who ordered his workers to stop up ... and to build a tunnel so that the water would flow down"

waters of Gihon

This is the name of a stream near Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 32:31

the miraculous sign that had been done in the land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the miracle that Yahweh had performed in the land"

to know all that was in his heart

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "to reveal Hezekiah's true character"

2 Chronicles 32:33

Hezekiah lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 9:31]

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33 [1]Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like the disgusting things of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel.[3]For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had torn down, and he built altars for the Baals, he made Asherah poles, and he bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them.
[4]Manasseh built altars in the house of Yahweh, although Yahweh had commanded, "It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever."[5]He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh.[6]In the Valley of Ben Hinnom he caused his sons to pass through the fire. He practiced sorcery, divination and he read omens, and he consulted with sorcerers and spiritists. Manasseh did much evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he provoked him to anger.
[7]The carved figure he had made, he placed it in the house of God. It was about this house that God had spoken to David and Solomon his son; he had said, "It is in this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that I will put my name forever.[8]I will not move the people of Israel any more out of the land that I assigned to their ancestors, if they will only be careful to keep all that I have commanded them, following all the law, statutes, and decrees which I gave them through Moses."[9]Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do evil even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel.

[10]Yahweh spoke to Manasseh, and to his people, but they paid no attention.[11]So Yahweh brought on them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains, bound him with fetters, and took him off to Babylon.
[12]When Manasseh was in distress, he implored Yahweh, his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors.[13]He prayed to him; and God was moved by his plea, and God heard his humble request and brought him back to Jerusalem, into his kingship. Then Manasseh knew that Yahweh was God.

[14]After this, Manasseh built an outer wall to the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, to the entrance at the Fish Gate. He surrounded the hill of Ophel with it and raised the wall up to a very great height. He put courageous

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commanders in all the fortified cities of Judah.[15]He took away the foreign gods, the idol out of the house of Yahweh, and all the altars that he had built on the mount of the house of Yahweh and in Jerusalem, and threw them out of the city.
[16]He rebuilt the altar of Yahweh and offered on it sacrifices of fellowship offerings and thank offerings; he commanded Judah to serve Yahweh, the God of Israel.[17]However, the people still sacrificed at the high places, but only to Yahweh, their God.

[18]As to the other matters concerning Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel, behold, they are written among the deeds of the kings of Israel.[19]In that account there is history of his prayer, and how God was moved by his plea. There is also an account of all his sin and his trespasses, and the places where he had built high places and set up the Asherah poles and the carved figures, before he humbled himself —they are written about in the Chronicles of the Seers.[1][20]So Manasseh lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in his own house. Amon, his son, became king in his place.

[21]Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem.[22]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as Manasseh, his father, had done. Amon sacrificed to all the carved figures that Manasseh his father had made, and he worshiped them.[23]He did not humble himself before Yahweh, as Manasseh his father had done. Instead, Amon trespassed more and more.
[24]His servants conspired against him and put him to death in his own house.[25]But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they made Josiah, his son, king in his place.

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[1]Some modern translations have the Chronicles of Hozai, which is the reading of the original text. But many modern translations correct it to read the Chronicles of the Seers. Also, a few modern translations have the Chronicles of his seers.

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2 Chronicles 33 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

King Manasseh

Manasseh angered God more than any other king of Judah. He worshiped the sun, stars and many foreign gods and even sacrificed his sons to the sun. (See: falsegod)

Links:

2 Chronicles 33:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 33:2

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here Yahweh's "sight" refers to how he judges or decides on the value of something. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

like the disgusting things

Another possible meaning is "including the disgusting things."

2 Chronicles 33:3

he rebuilt the high places ... he built altars ... he made Asherah poles

Manasseh would have commanded his workers to do the building for him. Alternate translation: "he had the high places rebuilt ... he had altars built ... he had Asherah poles made" or "he had his workers rebuild the high places ... he had them build altars ... he had them make Asherah poles"

2 Chronicles 33:4

It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever

The name is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem is where I will forever make known who I am"

2 Chronicles 33:5

He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh

The word "host" is a metaphor for the stars, speaking of them as if they were an army. It is implied that Manasseh built these altars so people could make sacrifices and worship the stars. Also, he would not have built these altars himself, rather he would have commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "He had his workers build altars in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh so that the people could worship the stars and offer them sacrifices"

2 Chronicles 33:6

Valley of Ben Hinnom

This is the name of a place near Jerusalem that is also known as Gehenna.

he caused his sons to pass through the fire

You may need to make explicit why he put his son in the fire and what happened after he did so. Alternate translation: "he burned his sons to death as an offering to his gods"

Manasseh did much evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here Yahweh's "sight" refers to how he judges or decides on the value of something. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

he provoked him to anger

"Manasseh made Yahweh very angry"

2 Chronicles 33:7

he had made

Manasseh probably did not do the work. His servants

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would have done the work. Alternate translation: "Manasseh had ordered his servants to make"

that I will put my name forever

Here God is represented by his "name." Alternate translation: "where I want people to worship me forever"

2 Chronicles 33:8

that I assigned to their ancestors

"that I gave to their ancestors"

2 Chronicles 33:9

Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" is a part of "Judah." Alternate translation: "the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel

Here "nations" refers to the people who had lived in the land of Canaan before the Israelites had arrived. Alternate translation: "even more than the people whom Yahweh had destroyed as the people of Israel advanced through the land"

2 Chronicles 33:11

brought on them

Yahweh sent the army to attack Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "brought about an attack on them by"

the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria

The commanders were accompanied by their soldiers. Alternate translation: "the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria and their soldiers"

took Manasseh in chains, bound him with fetters, and took him off to Babylon

Here Manasseh being taken as a prisoner is represented by him being bound by chains and fetters. Fetters were chains placed around the feet. Alternate translation: "seized Manasseh, bound him in chains, and took him as a prisoner to Babylon"

2 Chronicles 33:12

implored

to beg for help

2 Chronicles 33:13

He prayed to him; and God was moved by his plea

The second phrase intensifies the first phrase and emphasizes the earnestness of Manasseh's prayer. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He prayed to God; and God heard his plea and changed his mind"

into his kingship

"to rule again as king"

2 Chronicles 33:14

General Information:

See:

Manasseh built ... He surrounded ... and raised ... He put

Manasseh did not do the building and construction himself, rather, he commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "Manasseh commanded his workers to build ... They surrounded ... and raised ... He commanded his workers to put"

Gihon

This was the name of a spring and a stream. See how you translated the "waters of Gihon" in [2 Chronicles 32:30]

the hill of Ophel

Translate the name of this hill as you did in [2 Chronicles 27:3]

raised the wall up

"built the wall up"

the fortified cities

This refers to cities with walls around them.

2 Chronicles 33:15

He took away ... he had built ... and threw

Manasseh did not do the building and construction himself; rather, he commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "Manasseh commanded his workers to take away ... they had previously built ... and to throw"

the foreign gods

"the false gods from other countries"

2 Chronicles 33:16

He rebuilt

Manasseh did not do the building and construction himself, rather, he commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to rebuild"

he commanded Judah

Here "Judah" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "he commanded the people of Judah"

2 Chronicles 33:18

behold, they are written among the deeds ... of Israel

"anyone can look among the deeds ... Israel and see that they are written there"

they are written

These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "men have written them"

the deeds of the kings of Israel

This in account of the history of Israel that no longer exists.

2 Chronicles 33:19

the places where he had built high places and set up the Asherah poles and the carved figures

Manasseh did not do the building and construction himself, rather, he commanded his workers to do it. Alternate translation: "the place where he had the high places built and the Asherah poles and the carved figures set up" or "the places where he commanded his workers to build the high places and to set up the Asherah poles and carved figures"

the Chronicles of the Seers

This is a book that no longer exists.

they are written about

These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "men have written about them"

2 Chronicles 33:20

So Manasseh lay down with his ancestors

This is a polite way of saying that he died. Alternate translation: "So Manasseh died"

in his own house

"in his palace"

Amon

This is the name of a man.

king in his place

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "became the next king" or "became the king of Judah"

2 Chronicles 33:21

twenty-two years old

"22 years old"

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2 Chronicles 33:22

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

Here Yahweh's "sight" refers to how he judges or decides on the value of something. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

2 Chronicles 33:23

Amon trespassed more and more

"Amon increased his guilt" or "Amon continued to sin"

2 Chronicles 33:24

put him to death

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "killed him"

conspired against him

"planned in secret to kill him"

2 Chronicles 33:25

king in his place

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "became the next king" or "became the king of Judah"

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34 [1]Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.[2]He did what was right
in the eyes of Yahweh, and walked in the ways of David his ancestor, and did not turn away either to the right or to
the left.[3]For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek after the God of David, his ancestor.
In the twelfth year, he began to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, the Asherah poles, and the carved
figures and the cast metal figures.
[4]The people broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence; he cut apart the incense altars that were above them. He
broke the Asherah poles and the carved figures. He crushed the cast metal figures to dust and scattered the dust on the
graves of those who had sacrificed to them.[5]He burned the bones of their priests on their altars. In this way, he cleansed
Judah and Jerusalem.
[6]He did the same in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, all the way to Naphtali, and in the ruins that
surrounded them.[7]He broke down the altars, crushed the Asherah poles and the carved images into powder, and cut
apart all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

[8]Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, after Josiah had cleansed the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of
Azaliah, Maaseiah, the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz the secretary, to repair the house of Yahweh his God.
[9]They went to Hilkiah, the high priest, and entrusted to him the money that had been brought into the house of God, that
the Levites, the guards of the doors, had gathered from Manasseh and Ephraim, from all the remnant of Israel, from all
Judah and Benjamin, and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
[10]They entrusted the money to the men who supervised the work on the temple of Yahweh. These men paid the workers
who repaired and restored the temple.[11]They paid it to the carpenters and builders to buy cut stone and timber for braces,
and to make beams for the structures that some kings of Judah had allowed to become ruined.
[12]The men did the work faithfully. Their supervisors Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah
and Meshullam, from the sons of the Kohathites. Other Levites, all of whom were very good musicians, closely directed
the workmen.[13]These Levites supervised those who carried building material and all other men who worked in any way.
There were also Levites who were secretaries, administrators, and gate guards.

[14]When they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Yahweh, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the
law of Yahweh that had been given through Moses.[15]Hilkiah said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law
in the house of Yahweh." Hilkiah brought the book to Shaphan.[16]Shaphan took the book to the king, and also reported to
him, saying, "Your servants are doing everything that has been entrusted to them.
[17]They have emptied out the money that was found in the house of Yahweh, and they gave it into the hand of the
supervisors and to the workmen."[18]Shaphan the scribe told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." Then
Shaphan read in it to the king.[19]It came about that when the king had heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.
[20]The king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah, his own
servant, saying,[21]"Go and ask Yahweh's will for me, and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, because of the words
of the book that has been found. For it is great, the anger of Yahweh that has been poured out on us.[1] It is great, because
our ancestors have not listened to the words of this book so as to obey all that was written in it."

[22]So Hilkiah, and those whom the king had commanded, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of
Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (she lived in Jerusalem in the Second District), and they spoke with her in
this way.
[23]She said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: Tell the man who sent you to me,[24]'This is what Yahweh
says: See, I am about to bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants, all the curses that have been written in the
book that they have read before the king of Judah.[25]This will happen because they have abandoned me and have burned
incense to other gods, and they have provoked me to anger by all the works of their hands. Therefore, my anger will be
poured out on this place, and it will not be extinguished.'
[26]But to the king of Judah, who sent you to ask Yahweh what he should do, this is what you will say to him, 'Yahweh, the
God of Israel says this: About the words that you heard,[27]because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before
God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and because you have humbled yourself before me

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and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have listened to you—this is Yahweh's declaration—[28]see, I will gather you to your ancestors. You will be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not see any of the disaster I will bring on this place and its inhabitants.'" The men took this message back to the king.

[29]Then the king sent messengers and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.[30]Then the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, Levites, and all the people, from great to small. He then read in their hearing all the words of the book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh.
[31]The king stood in his place and made a covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh, and to keep his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to obey the words of the covenant that were written in this book.[32]He caused all who were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand by the covenant. The inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in obedience to the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors.
[33]Josiah took away all the disgusting things from the lands that belonged to the people of Israel. He made everyone in Israel worship Yahweh, their God. For all of his days, they did not turn away from following Yahweh, the God of their ancestors.

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[a]Instead of that has been poured out on us, which is followed by most modern translations, some translations follow another rendering of the Hebrew, to read: that has been kindled against us.

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2 Chronicles 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is the beginning of the story of King Josiah. (2 Chronicles 34-35)

Special concepts in this chapter

Returning the people to Yahweh

Josiah worshiped Yahweh and cleaned out the idols and shrines from Judah. The people returned to worship Yahweh again. (See: clean)

Links:

2 Chronicles 34:1 Notes

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2 Chronicles 34:1

thirty-one years

"31 years"

2 Chronicles 34:2

what was right in the eyes of Yahweh

Here Yahweh's "sight" refers to how he judges or decides on the value of something. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

walked in the ways of David his ancestor

Josiah behaving as David did is spoken of as if he walked on the same road or way as David. Alternate translation: "lived the way David his ancestor had lived" or "followed the example of David his ancestor"

did not turn away either to the right or to the left

To fully obey Yahweh is spoken of as if a person were on the correct road and never turned from it. Alternate translation: "did not do anything that would displease Yahweh" or "fully obeyed the laws of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 34:3

the eighth year ... the twelfth year

"year 8 ... year 12." See how you translated this in [2 Chronicles 14:2]

he began to cleanse Judah and Jerusalem from ... the cast metal figures

This speaks of Josiah getting rid of the things that were used for worshiping false gods from Judah and Jerusalem as if he were making the places physically clean. Josiah would have commanded his workers to remove these things. Alternate translation: "he began to make Judah and Jerusalem acceptable again to Yahweh by having his workers remove from them the high places, the Asherah poles, the craved figures, and the cast metal figures"

2 Chronicles 34:4

in his presence

"in Josiah's presence"

he cut apart ... He broke ... He crushed ... and scattered

Josiah probably commanded his workers to do much or all of this work. Alternate translation: "he had them cut apart ... He commanded them to break ... He had them crush ... and scatter" or "he and his workers cut apart ... He and his workers broke ... He and his workers crushed ... and scattered"

dust

very small pieces that could be carried away by the wind

2 Chronicles 34:5

He burned

Josiah probably commanded his workers to do much or all of this work. Alternate translation: "He commanded them to burn" or "He and his workers burned"

He burned the bones of their priests on their altars

This means that the bones of the priests who offered sacrifices on the altars to the false gods were burned on the altars that the priests had previously made sacrifices on.

he cleansed Judah and Jerusalem

This speaks of Josiah causing Judah and Jerusalem to be

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acceptable to Yahweh as if he made them physically clean. Alternate translation: "he caused Judah and Jerusalem to be acceptable again to Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 34:7

He broke down the altars, crushed ... cut apart

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do these things. Alternate translation: "He commanded his workers to break down the altars, to beat ... to cut apart"

into powder

"into dust." This means to smash them until they have become powder.

2 Chronicles 34:8

the eighteenth year

"year 18"

Josiah had cleansed the land and the temple

This speaks of Josiah causing Judah and Jerusalem to be acceptable to Yahweh as if he made them physically clean. Alternate translation: "Josiah had caused the land and the temple to become acceptable again to Yahweh"

Shaphan ... Azaliah ... Maaseiah ... Joah ... Joahaz

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 34:9

Hilkiah

This is the name of a man.

entrusted to him

"gave to him the responsibility of using the money"

that had been brought into the house of God, that the Levites, the guards of the doors, had gathered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the Levites who guarded the doors had brought into the house of God all that they had gathered"

2 Chronicles 34:10

They entrusted

The word "they" refers to the men that Josiah had sent to Hilkiah the high priest. They first gave the money to him and then he distributed it to the men who supervised the building. Alternate translation: "Then Hilkiah entrusted"

the money

This refers to some on the money that was entrusted to Hilkiah. Alternate translation: "some of the money"

2 Chronicles 34:11

carpenters

workers who build with wood

braces

pieces used to connect large beams

had allowed to become ruined

"had allowed to rot"

2 Chronicles 34:12

Jahath ... Meshullam

These are the names of men.

Merari

Translate this man's name as you did in 2 Chronicles 29:12.

Kohathites

Translate the name of the clan as you did in 2 Chronicles 20:19.

Obadiah ... Zechariah

Translate these men's names the same as you did for other men by the same names in 2 Chronicles 17:7.

2 Chronicles 34:13

These Levites supervised those who carried building material and all other men who worked in any way

This means that they were in charge of all the men who did any type of building work. Alternate translation: "These Levites were in charge of all of the men who did any kind of building work"

2 Chronicles 34:14

General Information:

See:

When they brought out the money that was brought into

The word "they" refers to Hilkiah and whoever was helping him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they brought out the money for the supervisors from"

that had been given through Moses

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Yahweh had given to the people through Moses"

the book of the law

Most likely these laws were written on a scroll. A scroll was a type of book made of one long, rolled-up sheet of papyrus or leather.

2 Chronicles 34:15

Shaphan

This is the name of a man.

2 Chronicles 34:16

everything that has been entrusted to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that you entrusted to them to do" or "everything that you gave them the responsibility to do"

2 Chronicles 34:17

They have emptied out

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "They have gathered all"

into the hand of the supervisors and to the workmen

The supervisors and workmen are represented by their "hand" to emphasize their possession. Alternate translation: "to the supervisors and the workmen"

2 Chronicles 34:19

It came about that when

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

he tore his clothes

This is a symbolic action that indicates intense grief or sadness. Alternate translation: "he tore his clothes because he was very upset"

2 Chronicles 34:20

Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan ... Asaiah

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 34:21

ask Yahweh's will for me

The word "will" can be translated as a verb. Also, it is made clear in [2 Chronicles 34:22]

because of the words

"concerning the words"

the words of the book that has been found

Here "words" represents the laws. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the laws in the book that Hilkiah has found"

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For it is great, the anger of Yahweh that has been poured out on us. It is great

Emotions such as anger are often spoken of in Scripture as if they were liquids. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh's anger towards us is great, like water that could totally wash us away" or "For great is Yahweh's anger with which he has punished us"

all that was written in it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all that is written in it" or "all that is in this book"

2 Chronicles 34:22

Huldah

This is the name of a woman.

Shallum ... Tokhath ... Hasrah

These are the names of men.

keeper of the wardrobe

This refers to Shallum. Possible meanings are 1) the person who took care of the clothing that priests wore in the temple or 2) the person who took care of the king's clothing.

the Second District

This was a cerain part of Jerusalem. It may have been a newer part. Alternate translation: "The Second Part"

they spoke with her in this way

"they had the following conversation with her"

2 Chronicles 34:23

the man who sent you to me

Here "the man" refers to King Josiah.

2 Chronicles 34:24

See

The word is used here as an idiom to draw the listener's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

I am about to bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants

Yahweh causing terrible things to happen is spoken of as if disaster were an object that he could bring to a place. Alternate translation: "I will soon cause terrible things to happen to this place and to those who live there"

on this place

"to Jerusalem" This refers to the city of Jerusalem which represents the whole land of Judah. Alternate translation: "on Judah"

all the curses that have been written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the curses written" or "all the curses"

on this place

Here "this place" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "on these people"

2 Chronicles 34:25

they have provoked me to anger

"they have made me angry"

Therefore, my anger will be poured out on this place, and it will not be extinguished

Emotions such as anger are often spoken of in Scripture as if they were liquids. Alternate translation: "therefore, my anger against this place is like a fire, and nothing will stop it"

my anger will be poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will pour out my anger"

2 Chronicles 34:26

About the words that you heard

"About the message that you heard"

2 Chronicles 34:27

because your heart was tender

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. Feeling sorry is spoken of as if the heart were tender. Alternate translation: "because you felt sorry" or "because you repented"

torn your clothes

This is a symbolic action that indicates intense grief or sadness.

2 Chronicles 34:28

see, I will gather you to your ancestors. You will be gathered to your grave in peace

Both statements mean basically the same thing. They are polite ways of saying he will die. Alternate translation: "so I will allow you to die and be buried peacefully"

You will be gathered to your grave

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will gather you to your grave"

your eyes will not see

Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Also, the phrase "will not see" represents not experiencing something. Alternate translation: "you will not experience"

the disaster I will bring on this place

Yahweh causing terrible things to happen is spoken of as if disaster were an object that Yahweh would bring to a place. Alternate translation: "the terrible things I will cause to happen to this place"

2 Chronicles 34:30

all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

This is a generalization. Alternate translation: "many other people"

from great to small

This merism includes everyone in between. Alternate translation: "from the most important to the least important"

He then read in their hearing

"Then the king read aloud so that they could hear"

that had been found

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Hilkiah had found" or "that they had found"

2 Chronicles 34:31

stood in his place

This refers to the place where the king stood at the temple. Alternate translation: "stood where he was supposed to stand at the entrance to the temple"

walk after Yahweh

The way a person lives is spoken of as if that person were walking on a path, and "to walk after" someone is a metonym for doing what that other person does or wants others to do. Alternate translation: "live obeying Yahweh"

his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes

These words all share similar meanings. Together they emphasize everything that Yahweh had commanded in the law.

with all his heart and all his soul

The idiom "with all his heart" means "completely" and

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"with all his soul" means "with all his being." These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "with all his being" or "with all his energy"

that were written in this book

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that this book contained"

2 Chronicles 34:32

all who were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all who lived in Jerusalem and Benjamin"

stand by the covenant

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "accept the terms of the covenant" or "promise to obey the covenant"

2 Chronicles 34:33

Josiah took away all

Josiah would have commanded his workers to do this. Alternate translation: "Josiah commanded his workers to take away all"

the disgusting things

These are the idols that were repulsive to God. Alternate translation: "the disgusting idols"

For all of his days

Josiah's life is represented by his "days." Alternate translation: "For all of his life" or "As long as Josiah was alive"

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35 [1]Josiah kept a Passover to Yahweh in Jerusalem, and they killed the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month.[2]He placed the priests in their positions and encouraged them in the service of the house of Yahweh.
[3]He said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were set apart to Yahweh, "Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon son of David, king of Israel built. It will be a burden on your shoulders no longer. Now worship Yahweh your God, and serve his people Israel.[4]Organize yourselves by your clans and your divisions, following the written instructions of David, king of Israel, and those of Solomon, his son.
[5]Stand in the holy place, taking your position with your divisions within the clans of your brothers, the descendants of the people, and taking your places with your divisions within the clans of the Levites.[6]Kill the Passover lambs, consecrate yourselves, prepare the lambs for your brothers, to do according to the word of Yahweh that was given by the hand of Moses."

[7]Josiah gave thirty thousand lambs and kids from flocks for the Passover offerings to all the people who were present, and he also gave three thousand head of cattle—all of these were from the king's own possessions.[8]His leaders gave a freewill offering to the people, priests, and Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the officials in charge of the house of God, gave to the priests 2,600 Passover offerings and three hundred head of cattle.[9]Also Konaniah, and Shemaiah and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the chiefs of the Levites, gave five thousand Passover offerings to the Levites and five hundred head of cattle.

[10]So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their places, with the Levites by their divisions, in response to the king's command.[11]They killed the Passover lambs, and the priests sprinkled the blood that they received from the Levites' hand, and the Levites skinned the lambs.[12]They removed the burnt offerings, in order to distribute them to the divisions of the clans of the people, to offer them to Yahweh, as it is written in the Book of Moses. They did the same with the cattle.
[13]They roasted the Passover lambs with fire following the instructions. As for the consecrated offerings, they boiled them in pots, cauldrons, and pans, and they quickly carried them to all the people.[14]They later prepared offerings for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the descendants of Aaron, were occupied in offering the burnt offerings and the fat until nightfall, so the Levites prepared the offerings for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron.
[15]The singers, the descendants of Asaph, were in their place, according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer, and the guards were at every gate. They did not have to leave their labors because their brothers the Levites made preparations for them.

[16]So, at that time the entire service of Yahweh was carried out for the celebration of the Passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of Yahweh, as King Josiah commanded.[17]The people of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time, and then the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days.
[18]Such a Passover celebration had never been held in Israel from the days of the prophet Samuel, nor had any of the other kings of Israel ever celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did, along with the priests, Levites, and all the people of Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.[19]This Passover was kept in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah.

[20]After all this, after Josiah had set the temple in order, Necho, king of Egypt, went up to fight against Carchemish at the Euphrates River, and Josiah went to fight against him.[21]But Necho sent ambassadors to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am making war. God has commanded me to hurry, so refrain from interfering with God, who is with me, or he might destroy you."
[22]However, Josiah refused to turn away from him. He disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Necho that had come from the mouth of God; so he went to fight in the Valley of Megiddo.

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[23]Archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded."[24]So his servants took him out of the chariot, and put him in his extra chariot. They took him to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried in the tombs of his ancestors. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.
[25]Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; all the male and female singers lament about Josiah to this day. These songs became customary in Israel; behold, they are written in the songs of lament.
[26]As for the other matters concerning Josiah, and his good deeds done in obedience to what is written in the law of Yahweh—[27]his deeds, from beginning to end, are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

2 Chronicles 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of King Josiah.

Special concepts in this chapter

Passover

Josiah organized a large Passover celebration and people shared their animals with those without animals to sacrifice. The celebration of Passover was a sign of proper worship by the people. (See: passover and sign)

Links:

2 Chronicles 35:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 35:1

Josiah kept a Passover to Yahweh

Josiah commanded the people to celebrate the Passover that Yahweh had commanded their ancestors to celebrate.

in Jerusalem

Yahweh had commanded Moses that all the people of Israel were to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover.

the fourteenth day of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.

2 Chronicles 35:2

He placed the priests in their positions

Placing the priests in a position is a metaphor for telling the priests which jobs they are to do. The reader should probably understand that Josiah commanded his officials to give instructions to the priests. Alternate translation: "He had people tell the priests which jobs to do"

in the service of

The abstract noun "service" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "as they served in" or "to serve well in"

2 Chronicles 35:3

that Solomon son of David, king of Israel built

The readers should understand that Solomon probably commanded other people to do the actual work. Alternate translation: "that Solomon, king of Israel, commanded the people to build"

2 Chronicles 35:4

by your clans and your divisions

The word "name" is a collective noun, referring to each name of each clan and each division. Your language may need to say "according to the names of your clans and your divisions."

divisions

groups into which the people had divided the priests and Levites

the written instructions of David ... and those of Solomon, his son

"the instructions that David ... and Solomon, his son, wrote"

2 Chronicles 35:5

Stand in the holy place, taking your position

"Take your positions in the temple area"

your divisions

This refers to the work group to which the people had assigned each Levite. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 35:4.

2 Chronicles 35:6

consecrate yourselves

This probably refers to the priests and Levites washing themselves before they did work in the temple.

to do according to the word of Yahweh that was given by the hand of Moses

Here the word "hand" refers to Moses himself. Yahweh used Moses as the agent to deliver his command. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to obey all of the commands that Yahweh gave to the people through Moses" or "to do everything that Yahweh commanded Moses to tell the people"

2 Chronicles 35:7

General Information:

See: and

thirty thousand lambs

"30,000 lambs"

kids

baby goats

three thousand head of cattle

"3,000 head of cattle"

these were from the king's own possessions

"all these lambs, kids, and bulls that he gave were ones that he himself owned"

2 Chronicles 35:8

2,600 Passover offerings

"two thousand six hundred Passover offerings"

three hundred head of cattle

"300 head of cattle"

Hilkiah ... Zechariah ... Jehiel

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These are all the names of men.
2 Chronicles 35:9
Konaniah ... Shemaiah ... Nethanel ... Hashabiah ... Jeiel ... Jozabad
These are all the names of men.
five thousand Passover offerings
"5,000 Passover offerings"
five hundred head of cattle
"500 head of cattle"
2 Chronicles 35:10
the service was prepared
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they prepared everything they needed so they could perform the Passover"
their divisions
the groups into which the people had divided the priests and Levites. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 35:4.
2 Chronicles 35:11
the blood that they received from the Levites' hand
Here the word "hand" refers to the Levites. Alternate translation: "the blood that the Levites gave them"
2 Chronicles 35:13
General Information:
All instances of "they" and "themselves" refer to the Levites (2 Chronicles 35:10).
They roasted the Passover lambs with fire
"They cooked the Passover lambs over fires"
they boiled them in pots, cauldrons, and pans
"they cooked them in water in containers of different sizes"
2 Chronicles 35:14
They ... prepared offerings for themselves and for the priests
"They ... prepared the offerings that they would eat and the offerings that the priests would eat"
2 Chronicles 35:15
according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer had commanded them"
Heman ... Jeduthun
These are the names of men.
2 Chronicles 35:16
the entire service of Yahweh was carried out
This refers to everything associated with the preparation, the sacrifice, and the worship of Yahweh during the Passover. The word "service" can be expressed as a verb and this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they did everything that needed to be done to serve Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 35:17
kept the Passover
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "observed the Passover" or "celebrated the Passover"
then the Festival of Unleavened Bread
This refers to celebrating the festival. Alternate translation: "then they kept the Festival of Unleavened Bread" or "then celebrated the Festival of Unleavened Bread"
2 Chronicles 35:18
Such a Passover celebration had never been held in Israel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There had never been such a Passover celebration in Israel"
held in Israel
This refers specifically to the nation of Israel as a whole, as it was before the northern kingdom and southern king split.
from the days
"from the time"
the other kings of Israel
Here "Israel" refers specifically to the northern kingdom of Israel.
2 Chronicles 35:19
This Passover was kept
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They observed this Passover"
was kept
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "was observed" or "was celebrated"
the eighteenth year
"year 18"
2 Chronicles 35:20
set the temple in order
This means that he restored the worship in the temple as God had intended it to be. Alternate translation: "restored proper worship to the temple"
Necho, king of Egypt, went up
This is the name of the king of Egypt. Here the king represents himself accompanied by his army. Alternate translation: "Necho, king of Egypt, went up with his army"
against Carchemish
This is the name of a city. Here the city represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "against the people of Carchemish"
Josiah went to fight against him
Here both Josiah and Necho represent themselves accompained by their armies. Alternate translation: "Josiah and his army went to fight against Necho and his army"
2 Chronicles 35:21
What have I to do with you, king of Judah?
Necho uses this rhetorical question to tell Josiah that he is not in conflict with him and that Josiah should not attack him. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have no reason to attack me, king of Judah."
I am not coming against you
Here the king Josiah represents his kingdom. Alternate translation: "I am not fighting your kingdom"
against the house with which
Here the word "house" refers to the house of Babylon, where "house" is a metonym for the kingdom. The kingdom is a synechdoche representing the Babylonian army. Alternate translation: "against the house of Babylon, with whom"
2 Chronicles 35:22
He disguised himself
Josiah disguised himself so that the other armies would not recognize him.
fight with him

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The word "him" refers to Necho who represents himself accompanied by his army. Alternate translation: "fight with the army of Egypt"

that had come from the mouth of God

Here God is represented by his "mouth" to emphasize his speech. Alternate translation: "that had come from God" or "that God had said to him"

so he went

The word "he" refers to Josiah who represents himself accompanied by his army. Alternate translation: "so he and his army went"

the Valley of Megiddo

This is the name of a place.

2 Chronicles 35:24

All Judah and Jerusalem

"Judah" and "Jerusalem" represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "All the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

2 Chronicles 35:25

to this day

This means the day on which the writer wrote. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 5:9.

behold, they

Possible meanings: 1) "this is where they are: they" or 2) "they still exist: they."

the songs of lament

This was an ancient scroll of funeral songs.

2 Chronicles 35:26

his good deeds done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the good deeds that he did"

what is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the words"

2 Chronicles 35:27

his deeds ... are written in the book

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "men have written of all his deeds ... in the book"

his deeds, from beginning to end,

This refers to all of the significant things that he did from the beginning of his reign as king to the end of his life. Alternate translation: "all of his deeds" or "everything he did from the beginning of his reign to when he died"

the book of the kings of Judah and Israel

This is a book that no longer exists.

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36 [1]Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem.
[2]Jehoahaz[1] was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.
[3]The king of Egypt removed him at Jerusalem, and forced him to pay a fine on the land of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.[4]The king of Egypt made Eliakim, who was the brother of Jehoahaz, king over Judah and Jerusalem (and changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim). Then Necho took Eliakim's brother Jehoahaz and brought him to Egypt.

[5]Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh his God.[6]Then Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacked him and bound him in chains to lead him away to Babylon.[7]Nebuchadnezzar also carried some of the objects in the house of Yahweh to Babylon, and put them in his palace at Babylon.
[8]As for the other matters concerning Jehoiakim, the disgusting things that he did, and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. Then Jehoiachin, his son, became king in his place.

[9]Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh.[10]In the spring of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent men and brought him to Babylon, with the valuable things from the house of Yahweh, and made Zedekiah, his relative, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

[11]Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.[12]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of Yahweh.
[13]Zedekiah also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear loyalty to him by God. But Zedekiah stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to Yahweh, the God of Israel.[14]Moreover, all the leaders of the priests and the people were extremely unfaithful, and they followed the disgusting practices of the nations. They polluted the house of Yahweh which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.
[15]Yahweh, the God of their ancestors, sent word to them by his messengers again and again, because he had compassion on his people and on the place where he lives.[16]But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words, and scoffed at his prophets, until the wrath of Yahweh arose against his people, until there was no help for it.

[17]So God brought on them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the sanctuary, and had no compassion on young men or virgins, old men or the gray-haired. God gave them all into his hand.
[18]All the furnishings of the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of Yahweh, and the treasures of the king and his officials—all these he took to Babylon.[19]They burned down the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces, and destroyed all the valuable things in it.
[20]The king carried away to Babylon those who had escaped the sword. They became servants for him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia.[21]This happened to fulfill the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land

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should have enjoyed its Sabbath rests. It observed its Sabbath for all the time of its desolation so that it might pass seventy years in this way.

[22]Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah might be carried out, Yahweh motivated the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing. He said,
[23]"This is what Cyrus, king of Persia, says: Yahweh, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth. He has commanded me to build a house for him in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you from all his people, may Yahweh your God, be with you. Let him go up to the land."

[1] Jehoahaz is written in Hebrew as Joahaz, but refers to the same person.

2 Chronicles 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the end of the story of Judah as an independent country.

Special concepts in this chapter

Punishment

God warned the people through the prophets, that he would punish them if they did not worship Yahweh. The people refused to listen to the prophets or to stop their evil deeds. God finally punished them by letting the Babylonians conquer them. (See: prophet and evil and works)

Links:

2 Chronicles 36:1 Notes

2 Chronicles 36:1

Jehoahaz

This is a man's name.

in his father's place

The phrase "in his ... place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of him." Alternate translation: "instead of his father"

2 Chronicles 36:2

twenty-three years old ... three months

"23 years old ... 3 months"

2 Chronicles 36:3

The king of Egypt removed him at Jerusalem

The idiom "removed him at Jerusalem" means that he caused him no longer to be king in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The king of Egypt removed him from being king in Jerusalem"

forced him to pay a fine on the land

Here the word "land" represents the people who lived there.

one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold

You may convert this to a modern measure. A talent was about 33 kilograms. Alternate translation: "thirty-three hundred kilograms of silver and thirty-three kilograms of gold" or "about 3,300 kilograms of silver and 33 kilograms of gold"

2 Chronicles 36:4

Eliakim ... Jehoahaz

These are the names of men.

2 Chronicles 36:5

twenty-five years old ... eleven years

"25 years old ... 11 years"

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh his God

Here "sight" represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of Jehoiakim's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judged to be evil" or "what Yahweh considered to be evil"

2 Chronicles 36:6

attacked him

The word "him" refers to Jehoiakim. Jehoiakim represents either Jerusalem or the nation of Judah. Alternate translation: "attacked Jerusalem" or "attacked Judah"

2 Chronicles 36:7

Nebuchadnezzar also carried

Since Nebuchadnezzar was king, he may have had his soldiers do this. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar also had his soldiers carry"

the house of Yahweh

Here the word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"

2 Chronicles 36:8

the disgusting things that he did

This usually refers to worshiping false gods, which Yahweh hated.

what was found against him

This idiom refers to things that he did for which people could accuse him of wrong. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what people found against him" or "things that he did for which people could accuse him"

behold, they are written

"anyone can look in the book ... Israel and see they are written there"

they are written in the book

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone has written them in the book" or "you can read of them in the book"

the book of the kings of Judah and Israel

This is a book that no longer exists. See how you translated this in 2 Chronicles 35:27.

became king in his place

The phrase "in his place" is a metaphor meaning "instead of

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him." Alternate translation: "became king instead of Jehoiakim"
2 Chronicles 36:9
eight years old ... three months and ten days
"8 years old ... 3 months and 10 days"
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh
Here "sight" here represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of Jehoiachin's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh judged to be evil" or "what Yahweh considered to be evil"
2 Chronicles 36:10
brought him to Babylon
"brought Jehoiachin to Babylon"
the house of Yahweh
Here "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of Yahweh"
his relative
"Jehoiachin's relative"
2 Chronicles 36:11
twenty-one years old ... eleven years
"21 years old ... 11 years"
2 Chronicles 36:12
what was evil in the sight of Yahweh his God
Here "sight" represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of Zedekiah's actions. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh his God judged to be evil" or "what Yahweh his God considered to be evil"
who spoke from the mouth of Yahweh
Here the word "mouth" represents the words that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "who spoke the words that Yahweh spoke to him"
2 Chronicles 36:13
Zedekiah stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to Yahweh
The phrases "stiffened his neck" and "hardened his heart" are both metaphors that mean to become stubborn. Zedekiah refusing to worship Yahweh is spoken of as if he refused to turn to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Zedekiah stubbornly refused to worship Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 36:14
they followed the disgusting practices of the nations
The idiom "followed the ... practices" means to do those things. Alternate translation: "they did the disgusting things that the nations did"
disgusting practices
This phrase refers to worshiping other gods.
They polluted the house of Yahweh
A place that is unfit to be used for God's purposes is spoken of as if it were physically dirty. The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "They polluted the temple of Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 36:15
again and again
"many times"
the place where he lives
This refers to the temple.
2 Chronicles 36:16
the wrath of Yahweh arose against his people
Here the word "arose" refers to beginning an action. Yahweh punishing his people in his anger is spoken of as if his wrath were a person who acted against them. Alternate translation: "in his wrath, Yahweh began to punish his people"
there was no help for it
This idiom means that nobody could do anything to prevent what happened. Alternate translation: "there was no way to avoid it"
2 Chronicles 36:17
God brought on them the king of the Chaldeans, who
The idiom "brought on them" means to cause to attack with his army. Alternate translation: "God caused the king of the Chaldeans to attack them, and he"
who killed their young men with the sword
The king probably did not personally kill their young men. Rather, his army killed them. Alternate translation: "whose army killed their young men with swords"
God gave them all into his hand
Here "hand" is a metonym for the power to defeat them. Alternate translation: "God allowed the Chaldean army to defeat them"
2 Chronicles 36:18
the house of God ... the house of Yahweh
The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the temple of God ... the temple of Yahweh"
2 Chronicles 36:19
They burned down
"They" refers to the Babylonian soldiers.
2 Chronicles 36:20
The king carried away to Babylon
Here "the king" refers to his soldiers whom he ordered to do the work. The phrase "carried away" is an idiom that means to forcefully bring them to Babylon. Alternate translation: "The king had his army forcefully take to Babylon"
until the rule of the kingdom of Persia
"until the kingdom of Persia came to power"
2 Chronicles 36:21
the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah
Here the noun "word" can be translated with the verb "spoke." The word "mouth" represents Jeremiah. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh spoke through Jeremiah" or "the word from Yahweh that Jeremiah spoke"
until the land should have enjoyed its Sabbath rests
The people were supposed to obey the Sabbath law by not farming the land every seventh year. This phrase speaks about this as if the land were a person that would obey the Sabbath law and rest. Alternate translation: "until the land had rested according to the Sabbath law" or "until, as required by the Sabbath law, no one had farmed the land"
It observed its Sabbath for all the time of its desolation
The word "it" refers to the land. The land is spoken of as if it were a person who observed the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "The requirements of the Sabbath law were fulfilled as long as the land lay desolate"
so that it might pass seventy years in this way
"so that 70 years might pass while the land lay desolate"
2 Chronicles 36:22
in the first year

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This refers to the beginning of the reign of King Cyrus.

so that the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah might be carried out

Here the noun "word" can be translated with the verb "spoke." The word "mouth" represents Jeremiah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that what Yahweh spoke through Jeremiah might happen" or "so that the word from Yahweh that Jeremiah spoke might happen"

Yahweh motivated the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia

Motivating the spirit is a synecdoche for making someone want to act. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made Cyrus, king of Persia, want to act"

2 Chronicles 36:23

all the kingdoms of the earth

This is an exaggeration, as there were kingdoms over which Cyrus did not rule.

to build a house for him

Here the word "house" represents a temple. Alternate translation: "to build a temple for him"

his people

"Yahweh's people"

Let him go up to the land

"Let that person go up to the land of Judah"

Introduction to Ezra

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ezra

The first Jewish exiles return to Jerusalem from Persia (1:1–2:70) The people rebuild and dedicate the temple in Jerusalem (3:1–6:22) More exiles return; Ezra teaches the Law of Yahweh (7:1-8:36) The problem of the people marrying foreigners, and how it is solved (9:1–10:44)

What is the Book of Ezra about?

The Book of Ezra is about how the people of Israel returned from Babylon and tried to worship Yahweh again as the law required. To do this they needed to rebuild their temple so they could sacrifice to Yahweh. (See: temple)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Book of Ezra is named for the priest Ezra who led the first group of Jews out of exile and back to Judah. Translators can use the traditional title "Ezra." Or they might choose a clearer title, such as "The Book about Ezra."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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

Foreigners worshiped many false gods. Yahweh did not allow his people to marry foreigners. He knew this would cause the people of Israel to worship false gods. (See: falsegod)

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

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

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the Book of Ezra use the term "Israel"?

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

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

Some of the events in the Book of Ezra are not told in the order they actually happened. Translators should pay attention to notes that signal when events are probably out of order.

Ezra

1 [1]In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, Yahweh fulfilled his word that came from the mouth of Jeremiah. He stirred Cyrus' spirit, and Cyrus' voice went out over his entire kingdom. This is what was written and spoken:

[2]"Cyrus, king of Persia, says: Yahweh, God of Heaven, gave me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he appointed me to build for him a house in Jerusalem in Judah.
[3]Whoever is from his people (may his God be with him) may go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build a house for Yahweh, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem.[4]People of any part of the kingdom where survivors of that land are living as foreigners should provide them with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, as well as a freewill offering for the house of God in Jerusalem."

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[5]Then the heads of the ancestors' clans of Judah and Benjamin, the priests and Levites, and everyone whose spirit God stirred to go and build the house of Yahweh, which is in Jerusalem, arose.[6]Those around them supported their work with silver and gold objects, goods, animals, valuables, and freewill offerings.
[7]Cyrus king of Persia also released the objects belonging to the house of Yahweh that Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem and put in his own gods' houses.[8]Cyrus, king of Persia, put them into the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out for Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah.
[9]This was their number: thirty gold basins, one thousand silver basins, twenty-nine other basins,[10]thirty gold bowls, 410 small silver bowls, and one thousand additional objects.
[11]There were 5,400 gold and silver items in all. Sheshbazzar brought all of them when the exiles went from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Ezra 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter records the story of the first Jews as they return from Persia to Judea.

Special concepts in this chapter

King Cyrus

King Cyrus allowed them to return because he wanted them to rebuild the temple. Those who stayed behind gave gifts to those who left to help them on their journey and resettlement. This practice was common under the reign of Cyrus and was used as a way to maintain peace throughout his kingdom. (See: temple)

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Jews

Upon return to Judea, the focus of the rest of the Old Testament is on the Jewish people.

Links:

Ezra 1:1 Notes Ezra intro

Ezra 1:1

first year

This refers to the beginning of the reign of King Cyrus.

Yahweh fulfilled his word that came from the mouth of Jeremiah

Here "mouth" represents speaking. Alternate translation: "Yahweh did what Jeremiah prophesied that Yahweh would do"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Yahweh ... stirred Cyrus' spirit

Here Cyrus is represented by his spirit. This speaks of Yahweh causing Cyrus to want to act as if he "stirred" his spirit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh ... made Cyrus want to act"

Cyrus' voice went out over his entire kingdom

The voice is a metonym for the message the voice speaks, and the kingdom is a metonym for the people whom a king rules. Alternate translation: "Cyrus sent a message to everyone over whom he ruled"

what was written and spoken

This can be translated in active form. It might be best to translate so the reader understands that other people might have helped Cyrus get the message to the people over whom he ruled. Alternate translation: "what Cyrus wrote and what his messengers read so people could hear them"

Ezra 1:2

all the kingdoms of the earth

Here "all" is an exaggeration, as there were kingdoms over which Cyrus did not rule.

for him a house in ... Judah

You may need to make explicit that the house was for people to worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "a house in ... Judah where people can worship him"

Ezra 1:3

his people

the people who belong to Yahweh.

Ezra 1:4

survivors of that land ... should provide them

Those Israelites who choose to stay where they are should help those who choose to go to Jerusalem physically and financially.

Ezra 1:5

everyone whose spirit God stirred to go

Stirring the spirit is a metonym for making someone want to act. See how you translated these words in [Ezra 1:1]

Ezra 1:6

their work

This refers to the work of the people roused by God in the previous verse.

Ezra 1:8

Mithredath ... Sheshbazzar

These are men's names.

put them into the hand of Mithredath the treasurer

Putting an object into someone's hand is a metaphor for allowing that person to do what he wants with that object. Here the reader should understand that Cyrus expected

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Mithredath to do what Cyrus wanted him to do. Alternate translation: "put Mithredath the treasurer in charge of them" or "made Mithredath the treasurer responsible for them"

treasurer

official in charge of money

prince of Judah

There was no king of Judah at this time, so the word "prince" means "leader," not "son of the king."

Ezra 1:9

General Information:

This is a list of numbered items.

thirty ... one thousand ... twenty-nine

"30 ... 1,000 ... 29"

basins

objects used to hold water for washing

Ezra 1:10

410

"30 ... 1,000 ... 29 ... four hundred and ten"

bowls

objects used to hold water for washing

Ezra 1:11

5,400 ... in all

"five thousand four hundred ... in all." This is the total number of items returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, which are listed above individually.

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2 [1]These are the people in the province who went up from the captivity of King Nebuchadnezzar, who had exiled them in Babylon, the people who returned to each of their cities of Jerusalem and in Judah.[2]They came with Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

This is the record of the men of the people of Israel.
[3]The descendants of Parosh: 2,172.[4]The descendants of Shephatiah: 372.[5]The descendants of Arah: 775.[6]The descendants of Pahath-Moab, through Jeshua and Joab: 2,812.
[7]The descendants of Elam: 1,254.[8]The descendants of Zattu: 945.[9]The descendants of Zakkai: 760.[10]The descendants of Bani: 642.
[11]The descendants of Bebai: 623.[12]The descendants of Azgad: 1,222.[13]The descendants of Adonikam: 666.[14]The descendants of Bigvai: 2,056.
[15]The descendants of Adin: 454.[16]The men of Ater, through Hezekiah: ninety-eight.[17]The descendants of Bezai: 323.[18]The descendants of Jorah: 112.
[19]The men of Hashum: 223.[20]The men of Gibbar: ninety-five.[21]The men of Bethlehem: 123.[22]The men of Netophah: fifty-six.
[23]The men of Anathoth: 128.[24]The men of Azmaveth: forty-two.[25]The men of Kiriath Arim, Kephirah, and Beeroth: 743.[26]The men of Ramah and Geba: 621.
[27]The men of Mikmash: 122.[28]The men of Bethel and Ai: 223.[29]The men of Nebo: fifty-two.[30]The men of Magbish: 156.
[31]The men of the other Elam: 1,254.[32]The men of Harim: 320.[33]The men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono: 725.
[34]The men of Jericho: 345.[35]The men of Senaah: 3,630.

[36]The priests: descendants of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua: 973.[37]Immer's descendants: 1,052.[38]Pashhur's descendants: 1,247.[39]Harim's descendants: 1,017.

[40]The Levites: descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, descendants of Hodaviah: seventy-four.
[41]The temple singers, descendants of Asaph: 128.
[42]The descendants of the gatekeepers: descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai: 139 total.

[43]Those who were assigned to serve in the temple: descendants of Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth,[44]Keros, Siaha, Padon,
[45]Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub,[46]Hagab, Shalmai, and Hanan.
[47]The descendants of Giddel: Gahar, Reaiah,[48]Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam,[49]Uzza, Paseah, Besai,[50]Asnah, Meunim, and Nephusim.
[51]The descendants of Bakbuk: Hakupha, Harhur,[52]Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha,[53]Barkos, Sisera, Temah,[54]Neziah, and Hatipha.

[55]The descendants of Solomon's servants: descendants of Sotai, Hassophereth, Peruda,[56]Jaala, Darkon, Giddel,[57]Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-Hazzebaim, and Ami.[58]There were 392 total descendants of those assigned to serve in the temple and descendants of Solomon's servants.

[59]Those who left Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer—but were not able to prove their ancestry from Israel —[60]included 652 descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda.

[61]Also, from the priest's descendants: the descendants of Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai (who took his wife from the daughters of Barzillai of Gilead and was called by their name).[62]They searched for their genealogical records, but could not find them, so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean.[63]So the governor told them they must not eat any of the holy sacrifices until a priest with Urim and Thummim approved.

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[64]The whole group totaled 42,360,[65]not including their servants and their maidservants (these were 7,337) and their male and female temple singers (two hundred).
[66]Their horses: 736. Their mules: 245.[67]Their camels: 435. Their donkeys: 6,720.

[68]When they went to the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem, the chief patriarchs offered freewill gifts to build the house of God, to put it back on its foundation.[69]They gave according to their ability to the work fund: sixty-one thousand gold darics, five thousand silver minas, and one hundred priestly tunics.

[70]So the priests and Levites, the people, the temple singers and gatekeepers, and those assigned to serve in the temple inhabited their cities. All the people in Israel were in their cities.

Ezra 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogy

People had to prove they were priests, or that they were Jews, through their genealogies. (See: priest)

Links:

Ezra 2:1 Notes

Ezra 2:1
General Information:
This begins a list of the names of people who returned from the exile.
went up
This is an idiom that refers to traveling toward Jerusalem.
Alternate translation: "returned" or "came back"
Ezra 2:2
Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah
These are men's names.
This is the record
This refers to the list of men in 2:3-35.
Ezra 2:3
General Information:
This continues the list of the names of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group.
Parosh
a man's name
Ezra 2:4
Shephatiah
a man's name
Ezra 2:5
Arah
a man's name
Ezra 2:6
Pahath-Moab ... Jeshua
a man's name
Ezra 2:7
General Information:
This continues the list of the names of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group.
Ezra 2:8
Zattu
a man's name
Ezra 2:9
Zakkai
a man's name
Ezra 2:10
Bani
a man's name
Ezra 2:11
General Information:
This continues the list of the names of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group.
Bebai
a man's name
Ezra 2:12
Azgad
These are men's names.
Ezra 2:13
Adonikam
a man's name
Ezra 2:14
Bigvai
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:2.
Ezra 2:15
General Information:
This continues the list of the names of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group.
Adin
a man's name
Ezra 2:16
Ater
a man's name
ninety-eight
"98"
Ezra 2:17
Bezai
a man's name
Ezra 2:19
General Information:
This continues the list of people who returned from the

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exile along with the number in each group. Notice that staring in 2:21 these now are the names of places from where they originally came.

Hashum

a man's name

Ezra 2:20

Gibbar

These are men's names.

ninety-five

"95"

Ezra 2:21

The men of Bethlehem

This begins to list the number of people whose ancestors had lived in towns in Judah.

Ezra 2:22

fifty-six

"56"

Netophah

This is the name of a town in Judah.

Ezra 2:23

General Information:

This continues the list people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group whose ancestors came from the places listed.

Anathoth

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:24

Azmaveth

This is the name of a place.

forty-two

"42"

Ezra 2:25

Kiriath Arim ... Kephirah ... Beeroth

These are names of places.

Ezra 2:26

Geba

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:27

General Information:

This continues with the list of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group whose ancestors came from the places listed.

Mikmash

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:29

Nebo

This is the name of a place.

fifty-two

"52"

Ezra 2:30

Magbish

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:31

General Information:

This continues with the list of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group whose ancestors came from the places listed.

Ezra 2:32

Harim

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:33

Lod ... Hadid ... Ono

These are names of places.

Ezra 2:34

General Information:

This continues with the list of people who returned from the exile along with the number in each group whose ancestors came from the places listed.

Ezra 2:35

Senaah

This is the name of a place.

Ezra 2:36

General Information:

This section lists the names of priests whose descendants returned from the exile along with the number in each group.

Jedaiah

This is a man's name.

Jeshua

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:6.

Ezra 2:39

Harim

The "Harim" in Ezra 2:32 is the name of a place, but here "Harim" is the name of a man.

Ezra 2:40

General Information:

This section lists the names of Levites whose descendants returned from the exile along with the number in each group.

Kadmiel ... Hodaviah

These are men's names.

seventy-four

"74"

Ezra 2:42

Shallum ... Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai

These are men's names.

gatekeepers

those in charge of who goes through the gates of the temple

Ater

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:16.

Ezra 2:43

General Information:

This section continues listing the names of Levites whose descendants returned from the exile.

Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth

These are men's names.

Ezra 2:44

Keros, Siaha, Padon

These are men's names.

Ezra 2:45

Lebanah, Hagabah

These are men's names.

Akkub

See how you translated this in Ezra 2:42.

Ezra 2:46

Hagab, Shalmai, and Hanan

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These are men's names.
Ezra 2:47
General Information:
This section continues listing the names of Levites whose descendants returned from the exile. These are all names of men.
Ezra 2:51
General Information:
This section continues listing the names of Levites whose descendants returned from the exile. These are all names of men.
Ezra 2:55
General Information:
This section continues listing the names of Levites whose descendants returned from the exile.
Ezra 2:58
392 total descendants
"three hundred and ninety-two total descendants." This is the number of all the people in this group who came back from the exile.
Ezra 2:59
General Information:
This is a list of people who had returned to Israel from various Babylonian cities but could not prove their heritage.
Ezra 2:60
652 descendants
"six hundred and fifty-two descendants."
Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda
These are men's names.
Ezra 2:61
Hobaiah ... Hakkoz ... Barzillai
These are men's names.
Ezra 2:62
their genealogical records
the records that told who their ancestors were
could not find them
"could not find their names in the records of the priests"
they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean
This can be translated in active form. The abstract noun "priesthood" can be translated as the verb "work as priests."
Alternate translation: "the other priests treated them as if they were unclean and did not allow them to work as priests"
unclean
not fit to be priests
Ezra 2:63
Urim and Thummim
two items like dice that the priests used to decide what God wanted them to do
Ezra 2:64
whole group
This means the whole group that returned back to the land of Judah from the exile.
42,360
"forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty"
Ezra 2:65
their maidservants
"their female servants"
these were 7,337
"these were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven"
two hundred
"200"
Ezra 2:66
General Information:
This is a list of the animals along with the numbers of each kind that returned with the people from the exile.
Ezra 2:69
sixty-one thousand ... five thousand ... one hundred
"61,000 ... 5,000 ... 100"
gold darics
A "daric" was a small gold coin used by the Persian Empire.
minas
A mina is a unit of weight. One mina equals 550 grams. Minas are normally linked with measuring silver.
tunics
garments worn next to the skin
Ezra 2:70
All the people in Israel were in their cities
Everyone went back to their home towns in Judea. Not everyone resettled in Jerusalem.

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3 [1]It was the seventh month after the descendants of Israel came back to their cities, when the people gathered together as one man in Jerusalem.[2]Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and his brothers rose up and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.
[3]Then they established the altar on its stand, for terror was on them because of the people of the land. They offered burnt offerings to Yahweh at dawn and evening.[4]They also observed the Festival of Shelters as it is written and offered burnt offerings day by day according to the decree, each day's duty on its day.[5]Accordingly, there were daily burnt offerings, offerings for the new moons, and offerings for all the fixed feasts of Yahweh that had been consecrated, as well as freewill offerings from all those who offered them to Yahweh.
[6]They began to offer up burnt offerings to Yahweh on the first day of the seventh month, although the temple had not been founded.[7]So they gave silver to the stoneworkers and craftsmen, and they gave food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre, so they would bring cedar trees by sea from Lebanon to Joppa, as authorized for them by Cyrus, king of Persia.

[8]Then in the second month of the second year after they came to the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak, the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and those who came from captivity back to Jerusalem began the work. They assigned the Levites twenty years old and older to oversee the work of the house

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of Yahweh.[9]Jeshua and his sons and brothers, and Kadmiel and his sons (who were descendants of Hodaviah), and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers-all of them were Levites-joined together in overseeing those working on the house of God.[1]
[10]The builders laid a foundation for the temple of Yahweh. This enabled the priests to stand in their garments with trumpets, and the Levites, sons of Asaph, to praise Yahweh with cymbals, just as the hand of David, king of Israel had commanded.[11]They sang with praise and thankfulness to Yahweh, "He is good! His covenant faithfulness to Israel endures forever." All the people cried out with a great shout of joy in praise of Yahweh because the temple's foundations had been laid.
[12]But many of the priests, Levites, and chief patriarchs, those who were old and had seen the first house, when this house's foundations were laid before their eyes, wept loudly. But many people had shouts of joy with gladness and an excited sound.[13]As a result, people were not able to distinguish the joyful and glad sounds from the sound of people weeping, for the people were crying out with great joy, and the sound was heard from far away.

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[1]There are some textual issues here regarding the phrase the sons of Judah or the descendants of Hodaviah and other matters.

Ezra 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of the building of the temple and re-establishment of worship in the new temple. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rebuilding the temple

They immediately began the temple worship, even though the temple had not yet been built because they feared the people of the surrounding nations.

Links:

Ezra 3:1 Notes

Ezra 3:1

the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the early rain season. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

as one man

One man is in only one place and has only one purpose. Alternate translation: "for one purpose"

Ezra 3:2

Jeshua

This is the name of a man. Translate the same as in Ezra 2:36.

Shealtiel

This is the name of a man.

rose up and built

Standing up is a metaphor for beginning to act. Alternate translation: "began to act and built"

as it is written in the law of Moses

This can be translated in active form. You may need to make explicit whom and what Yahweh had commanded. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh had commanded them to do in the law of Moses"

Ezra 3:3

established the altar on its stand

"mounted the altar on its stand" or "placed the altar on its stand so it would stay there"

terror was on them

"they were terrified"

because of the people of the land

You may need to make explicit what it was about the people of the land that made the Jews afraid. Alternate translation: "because they thought the people of the land wanted to attack them"

They offered burnt offerings to Yahweh at dawn and evening

One of the first things the people did was to begin offering sacrifices. This was before the temple was rebuilt.

Ezra 3:4

the Festival of Shelters

This is a festival that was celebrated for eight days during the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It was associated with the time of the exodus when the Israelites lived in tents.

Ezra 3:6

the first day of the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of September on Western calendars.

the temple had not been founded

The Jews began the ceremonies of worship even before they started building the temple. Alternate translation: "they had not yet laid the foundation for the temple"

Ezra 3:7

as authorized for them by Cyrus, king of Persia

The letters sent by Cyrus gave the Jews permission to buy materials and build the temple.

Ezra 3:8

second month

This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the warm season when people are harvesting crops. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on

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Western calendars.

the second year

This is during the year after the one in which they returned.

to the house of God

You may need to make explicit that there was no house of God standing when they arrived. Alternate translation: "to where the house of God had stood" or "to where they were going to build the house of God"

Jeshua ... Jozadak

These are the names of men.

the rest of their brothers the priests and the Levites, and

The word "brothers" is used here because Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the priests and Levites were all from the tribe of Levi. They were not all sons of the same man and woman. Alternate translation: "the rest of the members of their tribe—the priests and the Levites—and"

twenty years old

"20 years old"

Ezra 3:9

Jeshua ... Henadad

These are the names of men.

Kadmiel

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:40.

Ezra 3:10

laid a foundation

"foundation" in this sense was more than just the stone blocks to support the temple walls. It included the entire temple floor set in stone. This enabled all the temple worshipers to wear their special garments and keep them clean.

their garments

"their special robes"

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound

the hand of David ... had commanded

The hand of a king is a metonym for the power to give commands. Alternate translation: "as David ... had commanded"

Ezra 3:11

thankfulness

A feeling and expression of appreciation and gratitude for the kindness of another.

His covenant faithfulness to Israel endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." Alternate translation: "He faithfully loves Israel forever" or "He is always faithful to his covenant with Israel"

Ezra 3:12

first house

This refers to the first temple that Solomon built, the house of God.

before their eyes

The people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they saw. Alternate translation: "in their sight" or "and they saw it"

wept loudly

This refers to emotional expression of sorrow involving tears and vocal sounds.

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4 [1]Now some enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people who had been exiled were now building a temple for
Yahweh, the God of Israel.[2]So they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of their ancestors' clans. They said to them,
"Let us build with you, for, like you, we seek your God and have sacrificed to him since the days when Esarhaddon, king
of Assyria, brought us to this place."
[3]But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of their ancestors' clans said, "It is not you, but we who must build the
house of our God, for it is we who will build for Yahweh, the God of Israel, just as King Cyrus of Persia commanded."
[4]So the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah; they made the Judeans afraid to build.[5]They also
bribed counselors to frustrate their plans. They did this during all of the days of Cyrus and into the reign of Darius king of
Persia.[6]Then at the beginning of the reign of Xerxes,[1] they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and
Jerusalem.

[7]It was during the days of Artaxerxes that Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and their associates wrote to King Artaxerxes of
Persia. The letter was written in Aramaic and translated.[8]Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote this way
to King Artaxerxes about Jerusalem.

[9]Then Rehum the commander, Shimshai the scribe, and their other associates, who were judges and other officers in the
government, the Persians, men from Uruk[2] and Babylon, and the men from Susa (that is, the Elamites)—they wrote a
letter—[10]and they were joined by the people whom the great and noble Ashurbanipal exiled and forced to settle in
Samaria, along with the rest who were in the Province Beyond the River.

[11]This is a copy of the letter that they sent to him: "To King Artaxerxes, your servants, men of the Province Beyond the
River, write this:
[12]Let the king know that the Jews who went from you have come against us in Jerusalem to build a rebellious city. They
have completed the walls and repaired the foundations.
[13]Now let the king know that if this city is built and the wall is completed, they will not give any tribute, taxes, or tolls, and
that will harm the treasury of the kings.

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[14]Surely because we have eaten the palace salt, it is not fitting for us to see any dishonor happen to the king. It is because of this that we are sending this to inform to the king[15]to search your father's record books and to learn that this is a rebellious city that will harm kings and provinces. It has caused many problems to the kings and provinces. It has been a center for rebellion from long ago. It was for this reason that the city was destroyed.[16]We are informing the king that if this city and wall are built, then there will be nothing remaining for you in the Province Beyond the River."

[17]So the king sent out a reply to Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and their associates in Samaria and the rest who were in the Province Beyond the River: "May peace be yours.
[18]The letter that you sent me has been translated and read to me.[19]So a decree was issued by me, and they searched and found that for a long time that city has risen up against kings, and rebellion and revolt have been made in it.
[20]Mighty kings have ruled over Jerusalem and had power over everything in the Province Beyond the River. Tribute, taxes, and tolls were paid to them.[21]Now, make a decree for these men to stop and not build this city until I make a decree.
[22]Be careful not to neglect this. Why allow this threat to grow and cause more loss for the royal interests?

[23]When King Artaxerxes' decree was read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their associates, they went out quickly to Jerusalem and forced the Jews to stop building.
[24]So the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

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[1]Also known as Ahasuerus.
[2]Some modern English translations read, Erech.

Ezra 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of the building of the temple and re-establishment of the temple worship continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Helping to build the temple

The people of the surrounding nations offered to help to build the temple. It is unknown why the Jews refused their help. These other people became their enemies and tried to hinder the work. They even persuaded the king of Persia to stop the Jews from building.

Links:

Ezra 4:1 Notes

Ezra 4:1

General Information:

The non-Jewish people offer to help build the temple.

who had been exiled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Babylonians had taken into exile"

Ezra 4:2

Zerubbabel

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:2]

Esarhaddon, king of Assyria

He ruled in Assyria before Cyrus ruled in Persia.

Ezra 4:3

Jeshua

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:6.

It is not you, but we who must build

Possible meanings are 1) the Jewish leader felt that Cyrus had authorized only them to build the temple or 2) building the temple was the exclusive work of the Jews and no non-Jew would be permitted to contribute to the work.

Ezra 4:4

the people of the land

"the people who were living in the land at that time," which could include non-Jews and Jews whose families the Babylonians had not taken into exile

weakened the hands of the people of Judah

This speaks of the people of the land discouraging the Judeans as if they made their hands physically weak. Alternate translation: "discouraged the Judeans"

Ezra 4:5

to frustrate their plans

"to make it so the Judeans could not build the temple as they had planned"

Ezra 4:6

wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem

The abstract nouns "accusation" can be translated as a verb "accuse." You may need to make explicit what the enemies accused the Judeans of doing. Alternate translation: "wrote a letter in which they accused those who lived in Judah and Jerusalem of disobeying the king"

Ezra 4:7

Bishlam ... Mithredath ... Tabeel

names of men

The letter

This is the letter spoken of in Ezra 4:6.

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Aramaic
the language used in that area at the time for official business
translated
into Persian
Ezra 4:8
Shimshai
This is a man's name.
Rehum
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:1.
Ezra 4:9
Uruk ... Susa
names of cities
Ezra 4:10
Ashurbanipal
This is a name of a man.
the Province Beyond the River
This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa.
Ezra 4:11
This is a copy
Ezra includes in his writing the content of the letter sent to King Artaxerxes.
the Province Beyond the River
This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated this in [Ezra 4:10]
Ezra 4:12
a rebellious city
The city is a metonym for the people who live in it. Alternate translation: "a city that they plan to live in and rebel against you"
repaired the foundations
"fixed the foundations" or "mended the foundations"
Ezra 4:13
if this city is built and the wall is completed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "if they build the city and complete the wall"
any tribute, taxes, or tolls
This is probably a merism for "any kind of taxes."
taxes
This word probably refers specifically to taxes on goods that people bought or consumed.
tolls
taxes that people needed to pay to use roads
and that will harm the treasury of the kings
They will "harm the treasury" by not giving money to the kings. Possible meanings are that the writers of the letter use the word "kings" 1) to refer to Artaxerxes and his descendants or 2) to honor Artaxerxes by referring to him in third person plural.
Ezra 4:14
we have eaten the palace salt
Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) the writers being loyal to the king or 2) the king giving the writers special honors. Alternate translation: "we are loyal to you" or "you have honored us by making us your officials"
Ezra 4:15
a rebellious city
The city is a metonym for the people who live in it. Alternate translation: "a city in which live people who have rebelled against your father"
the city was destroyed
This can be translated in active form, in which case you will need to make explicit who destroyed the city. The "city" represents the people who live in it. Alternate translation: "the Babylonians destroyed the city"
Ezra 4:16
if this city and wall are built
This can be translated in active form. See how you translated these words in [Ezra 4:13]
there will be nothing remaining for you
Here "nothing" is an exaggeration to make the king think that he will be losing much tax money if the Judeans rebel.
the Province Beyond the River
This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated this in [Ezra 4:10]
Ezra 4:17
the Province Beyond the River
This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated this in [Ezra 4:10]
Rehum
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:2.
Shimshai
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 4:8.
the River
the Euphrates River
Ezra 4:18
The letter that you sent me has been translated and read
This can be translated in active form, in which case you will need to make explicit who translated and read the letter to the king. Alternate translation: "I have had my servants translate and read the letter that you sent to me"
Ezra 4:19
a decree was issued by me
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I issued a decree"
that city has risen up against kings
The phrase "that city" is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "the people of that city have risen up against kings"
has risen up against
The phrase "risen up" is a metaphor for "rebelled." The people have been rebelling repeatedly for a long time. Alternate translation: "has rebelled against" or "has been rebelling against"
rebellion and revolt have been made in it
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people who live there have been rebelling and revolting"
Ezra 4:20
the Province Beyond the River

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This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated this in [Ezra 4:10]

Tribute, taxes, and tolls were paid to them

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people in Jerusalem paid tribute, taxes, and tolls to those kings" or "Those kings were able to collect tribute, taxes, and tolls"

Tribute, taxes, and tolls

This is probably a merism for "Every kind of taxes." See how you translated similar words in [Ezra 4:13]

taxes

This word probably refers specifically to taxes on goods that people bought or consumed.

tolls

taxes that people needed to pay to use roads

Ezra 4:21

make a decree

"make a law"

Ezra 4:22

Be careful not to neglect this

The litotes "not to neglect" is an understatement to emphasize that the writers want Artaxerxes to do what they tell him to do. Alternate translation: "Be careful to do this"

Why allow this threat to grow and cause more loss for the royal interests?

Artaxerxes uses a question to tell them that he understands that he will lose taxes and honor if the city is built. Alternate translation: "You must make sure that this threat does not grow and cause more loss for the royal interests."

threat to grow

Danger is spoken of as if it were a plant that could increase in size. Alternate translation: "danger to become worse"

cause more loss for the royal interests

The words "the royal interests" are a metonym for the king himself. Alternate translation: "cause more bad things to happen to the kings"

Ezra 4:23

King Artaxerxes' decree was read

This can be translated in active form, in which case you will need to make explicit who read the decree from the king to the officials. Alternate translation: "The messengers from King Artaxerxes read his decree"

Rehum

See how you translated this in Ezra 2:1.

Shimshai

See how you translated this in Ezra 4:7.

Ezra 4:24

the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius

This delay lasted about 16 years.

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5 [1]Then Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the prophet, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied in the name of the God of Israel
to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem.[2]Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak rose up and began to build
the house of God in Jerusalem with the prophets who supported them.
[3]Then Tattenai the governor of the Province Beyond the River, Shethar-Bozenai, and his associates came and said to them,
"Who gave you a decree to build this house and complete these walls?"[4]They also said, "What are the names of the men
building this building?"[5]But God's eye was on the Jewish elders and their enemies did not stop them. They were waiting
for a letter to be sent to Darius and for a decree to be returned to them concerning this.

[6]This is a copy of the letter of Tattenai, governor of the Province Beyond the River, and Shethar-Bozenai and his associates
in the Province Beyond the River, which they sent to Darius the king.[7]They sent a report, writing this to King Darius, "May
all peace be yours.

[8]Let the king know that we went to the province of Judah to the house of the great God. It is being built with large stones
and timbers set in the walls. This work is being done thoroughly and is prospering in their hands.[9]We asked the elders,
'Who issued you a decree to build this house and these walls?'[10]We also asked them their names to make them known to
you; so the names of the men who were at their head are written down.
[11]This is how they answered us; they said, 'We are servants of the one who is the God of heaven and earth, and we are
rebuilding this house that had been built many years ago when the great king of Israel built it and completed it.
[12]However, when our ancestors enraged the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of
Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and took the people into exile in Babylon.[13]Nevertheless, in the first year
when Cyrus was king of Babylon, Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild the house of God.
[14]King Cyrus also returned the gold and silver objects belonging to the house of God that Nebuchadnezzar had brought
from the temple in Jerusalem to the temple in Babylon. He restored them to someone named Sheshbazzar, whom he had
appointed governor.[15]He said to him, "Take these objects. Go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem. Let the house of
God be rebuilt there."
[16]Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation for the house of God in Jerusalem; and it is being constructed, but
is not yet complete.'

[17]Now if it pleases the king, may it be investigated in the house of archives in Babylon if a decree from King Cyrus was
issued to build this house of God in Jerusalem. Then let the king send his decision to us.

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Ezra 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of the building of the temple and re-establishment of the temple worship continues in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rebuilding the temple

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the Jews to begin again building the temple. This was very important to life in Judah. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezra 5:1 Notes

Ezra 5:1

Iddo

This is a man's name.

Ezra 5:2

Jeshua ... Jozadak

These are the names of men.

Shealtiel

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 3:1.

to build the house of God

This was the temple of God.

Ezra 5:3

Tattenai ... Shethar-Bozenai

men's names

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated it in Ezra 4:10.

Ezra 5:5

God's eye was on

The eye represents the person watching over another person. Alternate translation: "God was watching over"

for a letter to be sent to Darius and for a decree to be returned to them

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for an official to send a letter to the king and for the king to send back to them a letter stating a decree"

Ezra 5:6

This is a copy of the letter

Ezra includes the contents of the letter to King Darius regarding their work on the temple.

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated this in [Ezra 4:10]

Ezra 5:8

General Information:

The letter from Tattenai to the king that began in Ezra 5:7 continues.

timbers

wood for building

Ezra 5:9

Who issued you a decree

"Who gave you official permission"

Ezra 5:10

to make them known to you

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that we could tell you who they are"

the names ... head are written down

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "we wrote down the names ... head"

Ezra 5:11

General Information:

The letter from Tattenai to the king that began in Ezra 5:7 continues.

We are servants of the one

Possible meaning are 1) they were calling the Jewish people servants of God or 2) those who replied were from the tribe of Levi and Aaron, who were the ones actually responsible for the temple worship and sacrifices.

that had been built many years ago when the great king of Israel built it and completed it

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the great king of Israel had built and supplied all the equipment for"

completed it

"supplied all the equipment for it"

Ezra 5:12

General Information:

The letter from Tattenai to the king continues. Tattenai continues to tell the king what the Judeans had told him beginning in Ezra 5:11.

enraged the God of heaven

"made the God of heaven become very angry with us"

he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and took the people

The hand is a metonym for power or control. Also, "Nebuchadnezzar" represents his army. Alternate translation: "allowed the army of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, the Chaldean, to destroy this house and to take the people"

destroyed this house

"tore down this house"

Ezra 5:13

Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild the house of God

Cyrus ordered that the people rebuild God's temple.

Ezra 5:14

General Information:

The letter from Tattenai to the king that began in Ezra 5:7 continues. Tattenai continues to tell the king what the Judeans had told him beginning in (Ezra 5:11).

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Sheshbazzar
See how you translated this in Ezra 1:7.
He restored them
King Cyrus returned the temple objects.
Ezra 5:15
Let the house of God be rebuilt
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I want the Judeans to rebuild the house of God"
Ezra 5:16
General Information:
The letter from Tattenai to the king that began in Ezra 5:7 continues. Tattenai continues to tell the king what the Judeans had told him beginning in (Ezra 5:11).
it is being constructed, but is not yet complete
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people are now constructing it, but they have not done all the work yet"
constructed
built
Ezra 5:17
General Information:
The letter from Tattenai to the king that began in Ezra 5:7 continues. Tattenai has finished telling the king what the Judeans told him and now asks the king to see if what the Judeans told him was true.
may it be investigated
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would like you to have someone investigate this matter"
if a decree from King Cyrus was issued
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "if King Cyrus issued a decree"

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6 [1]So King Darius issued a decree, and they searched in the house of archives, where the treasuries were stored, there in Babylon.[2]In the fortified city of Ecbatana in the province of Media a scroll was found; this was its record:

[3]"In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus issued a decree about the house of God in Jerusalem: 'Let the house be rebuilt as a place for sacrifice, let its foundations be laid, let its height be sixty cubits, and its width sixty cubits,[4]with three rows of large stones and a row of new timber, and let the cost be paid by the king's house.[5]Now bring back the gold and silver objects belonging to the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar brought to Babylon from the temple in Jerusalem and send them back to the temple in Jerusalem. You are to put them in the house of God.'

[6]Now Tattenai, governor of the Province Beyond the River, Shethar-Bozenai, and your associates who are in the Province Beyond the River, keep away![7]Leave the work of this house of God alone. The governor and Jewish elders will build this house of God at that place.
[8]I am issuing a decree that you must do this for these Jewish elders who build this house of God: Funds from the king's tribute beyond the River will be used to pay these men so they do not have to stop their work.[9]Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, or lambs for the burnt offerings to the God of Heaven, grain, salt, wine, or oil according to the command of the priests in Jerusalem—give these things to them every day without fail.[10]Do this so they will bring in sacrifices pleasing to the God of Heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons.
[11]I have issued a decree that if anyone violates this decree, a beam must be pulled from his house and he must be impaled on it. His house must then be turned into a rubbish heap because of this.[12]May the God who has caused his name to dwell there overthrow any king or people who lifts a hand to violate this decree, or to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, hereby issue this decree. Let it be done with diligence!"
[13]Then because of the decree sent by Darius the king, Tattenai, the governor of the Province Beyond the River, Shethar-Bozenai, and their associates, did everything that King Darius had ordered.[14]So the Jewish elders built and prospered under the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah, the descendant of Iddo. They completed their buildings according to the decree of the God of Israel and by the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes the king of Persia.[15]The house was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of King Darius' reign.

[16]The Israelite people, priests, Levites, and the rest of the captives celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy.
[17]They offered one hundred bulls, one hundred rams, and four hundred lambs for the dedication of the house of God. Twelve male goats were also offered as a sin offering for all Israel, one for each tribe in Israel.[18]They also assigned the priests and Levites to work divisions for the service of God in Jerusalem, as it was written in the book of Moses.

[19]So those who had been in exile celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.[20]The priests and Levites all purified themselves; all of them were clean. Then they slaughtered the Passover sacrifices for all those who had been in exile, including themselves.
[21]The people of Israel who ate some of the Passover meat were those who had returned from exile and had separated themselves from the uncleanness of the nations of the land and sought Yahweh, the God of Israel.[22]They joyfully celebrated the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days, for Yahweh had brought them joy and turned the heart of Assyria's king to strengthen their hands in the work of his house, the house of the God of Israel.

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Ezra 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The completion of the story of the building of the temple and re-establishment of the temple worship occurs in this chapter. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Temple taxes

The king said the Jews were right and ordered money from his taxes to be used to help them with their sacrifices.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Darius

In this chapter, Darius is called the king of Assyria. In reality, besides ruling over the former Assyrian Empire, Darius was also king of Persia. Persia had conquered Babylon, which had previously conquered Assyria. This made the king of Persia, the king of Assyria as well. It was unusual to refer to Darius as the king or ruler of Assyria. Ezra may have referred to him in this way to contrast Darius' actions with those of the former rulers of Assyria, who had treated the Jews very cruelly. It was those earlier Assyrian rulers who had conquered the northern tribes of Israel and deported them to other lands. It was for this reasons that the northern tribes lost their identity and were no longer a distinct people group.

Links:

Ezra 6:1 Notes

Ezra 6:1

house of archives

This is a building where the king's officials kept the important government records.

Ezra 6:2

Ecbatana

This is the name of a city.

a scroll was found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they found a scroll" or "they found a scroll that told about Darius and Jerusalem"

Ezra 6:3

General Information:

This begins the record of King Cyrus's command that the Jews rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem.

In the first year of King Cyrus

It can be stated clearly that this is the first year of his reign. Alternate translation: "In year 1 of the reign of King Cyrus"

Let the house be rebuilt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let the Jews rebuild the house" or "The Jews must rebuild the house"

sixty cubits

"60 cubits." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "twenty-seven meters"

Ezra 6:4

with three rows of large stones and a row of new timber

This can be stated as a new sentence. Possible meanings are 1) this describes how to build the foundation. Alternate translation: "Build the foundation on three layers of large stones covered with one layer of timber" or 2) this describes how to build the walls. Alternate translation: "Build the house's walls with three layers of large stones alternating with one layer of timber"

let the cost be paid by the king's house

The phrase "the king's house" represents King Cyrus's own wealth in the royal treasury. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will pay for it with money from the royal treasury"

Ezra 6:6

General Information:

This continues the record of King Cyrus's command that the Jews rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem, which began in Ezra 6:3.

Tattenai ... Shethar-Bozenai

Darius writes directly to these men. Translate their names as in [Ezra 5:3]

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated it in [Ezra 4:10]

Ezra 6:8

General Information:

This continues the record of King Cyrus's command that the Jews rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem, which began in Ezra 6:3.

Funds from the king's tribute beyond the River will be used to pay these men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Use funds from the king's tribute beyond the river to pay these men"

Funds from the king's tribute beyond the River

"The king's tribute" refers to taxes that people pay the king. Alternate translation: "Money from the taxes that you collect for the king from the people beyond the river"

Ezra 6:11

General Information:

This continues the record of King Cyrus's command that the Jews rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem, which began in Ezra 6:3.

a beam must be pulled from his house and he must be impaled on it. His house must then be turned into a rubbish heap

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I command my officials to pull a beam from his house and impale him on it. They are then to turn his house into a rubbish heap"

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beam
a long, sturdy piece of wood, supporting the roof of a house
impaled
pierced through
Ezra 6:12
who lifts a hand to violate ... or to destroy
Lifting the hand represents trying or daring to do something. Alternate translation: "who tries to violate ... or to destroy" or "who dares to violate ... or to destroy"
to violate this decree
The abstract noun "decree" can be expressed with the phrase "what I have decreed." Alternate translation: "to violate what I have decreed" or "to do what this decree says no one should do"
I, Darius, hereby issue this decree
The phrase "hereby issue" means that Darius, by speaking, is issuing the decree. Your language may have a different way to show that the speaker is claiming to make something happen, not simply explaining what he is doing.
Ezra 6:13
Tattenai ... Shethar-Bozenai
Translate the names of these men as you did in [Ezra 5:3]
Ezra 6:15
The house was completed
This can be translated in active form. You may need to make explicit which house they completed. Alternate translation: "They completed God's house" or "They finished building the temple"
the third day of the month of Adar
"Adar" is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the cold season. The third day is near the middle of February on Western calendars.
sixth year
King Darius had been ruling for five years, so he was now in year number six of his reign.
Ezra 6:16
the rest of the captives
These people had been captured and taken to Babylon, but they returned to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the rest of the people who had been taken captive to Babylon and had returned to Jerusalem" or "the rest of the people who had returned from captivity"
Ezra 6:17
one hundred bulls ... four hundred lambs
"100 bulls ... 400 lambs"
Ezra 6:18
to work divisions
The abstract noun "work divisions" can be expressed with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "to work in groups"
work divisions
"groups that work together"
Ezra 6:19
fourteenth day of the first month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.
Ezra 6:20
purified themselves
"made themselves pure." Being pure represents being acceptable to God. Alternate translation: "made themselves acceptable to God"
Ezra 6:21
separated themselves from the uncleanness of the nations of the land
Separating themselves from uncleanness represents refusing to do things that make people unclean. Alternate translation: "They refused to do the things that the people of the nations of the land did that made them unclean"
the uncleanness of the nations of the land
Here "uncleanness" represents being unacceptable to God. Alternate translation: "the things that the people of the nations of the land did that made them unacceptable to God"
sought Yahweh
Seeking Yahweh represents choosing to know, worship, and obey him. Alternate translation: "chose to obey Yahweh"
Ezra 6:22
turned the heart of Assyria's king
Turning the king's heart represents making him think differently about the work of the temple. Alternate translation: "changed the attitude of Assyria's king" or "made Assyria's king willing"
to strengthen their hands in the work of his house
Strengthening their hands in the work represents helping them to work. The Assyrian king did this by telling them to do the work and providing the money for it. Alternate translation: "to help them do the work of his house" or "to make it possible for them to do the work of his house"
the work of his house
This refers to building the temple.

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7 [1]Now after this, during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra came up from Babylon. Ezra's ancestors were Seraiah, Azariah, Hilkiah,[2]Shallum, Zadok, Ahitub,[3]Amariah, Azariah, Meraioth,[4]Zerahiah, Uzzi, Bukki,[5]Abishua, Phinehas, Eleazar, who was son of Aaron the high priest.
[6]Ezra came up from Babylon and he was a skilled scribe in the law of Moses that Yahweh, the God of Israel, had given. The king gave him anything he asked since the hand of Yahweh was with him.[7]Some of the descendants of Israel and the priests, Levites, temple singers, gatekeepers, and those assigned to serve in the temple also went up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.
[8]He arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was the seventh year of the king.[9]He left Babylon on the first day of the first month. It was on the first day of the fifth month that he arrived in Jerusalem, since the good hand of God was with him.[10]Ezra had established his heart to study the law of Yahweh and to carry out and teach its statutes and decrees in Israel.

[11]This was the copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, an expert in the words of the

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commandments of Yahweh, and in his statutes for Israel.
[12]"The King of kings Artaxerxes, to the priest Ezra, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven:
[13]I hereby issue a decree that anyone from the people of Israel in my kingdom—along with their priests and Levites—who desires to go to Jerusalem may go with you.
[14]I, the king, and my seven counselors, send you all out to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God, which is in your hand.[15]You are to bring the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem.[16]Freely give all the silver and gold that you find in the province of Babylon, along with the freewill offerings that the people and the priests have willingly offered for the house of God in Jerusalem.
[17]So use this money to buy in full the oxen, rams and lambs, and grain offerings and drink offerings. Offer them on the altar that is in the house of your God in Jerusalem.[18]Do with the rest of the silver and gold whatever seems good to you and your brothers, to please your God.
[19]Place the objects that were freely given to you before him for the service of the house of your God in Jerusalem.
[20]Anything else that is needed for the house of your God that you require, take its cost from the royal treasury.
[21]I, King Artaxerxes, hereby issue a decree to all the treasurers in the Province Beyond the River, that anything that Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, asks from you should be given in full,[22]up to one hundred silver talents, one hundred cors of grain, one hundred baths of wine, and one hundred baths of oil, also salt without limit.
[23]Anything that comes from the decree of the God of Heaven, do it with devotion for his house. For why should his wrath come upon the kingdom of the king and his sons?
[24]We are informing them that there is no authority to impose any tribute or taxes or tolls on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, gatekeepers, or on the people assigned to the service of the temple and servants of the house of this God.
[25]Ezra, with the wisdom that God has given you, you must appoint judges and magistrates to judge all the people in the Province Beyond the River, and to serve all who know the laws of your God. You must also teach those who do not know the law.[26]As for whoever will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king—let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether death or banishment or confiscation of his goods or imprisonment.

[27]Blessed be Yahweh, our ancestors' God, who placed all this into the king's heart to glorify the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem,[28]and who extended covenant faithfulness to me before the king, his counselors, and all his powerful officials. I have been strengthened by the hand of Yahweh my God, and I gathered prominent men from Israel to go with me.

Ezra 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Ezra begins his religious reforms.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's Law

The people no longer know the law of Moses. Therefore, the king allows Ezra to return to Judea to teach the people about God's law. Many people go with him. (See: lawofmoses)

Links:

Ezra 7:1 Notes

Ezra 7:1
General Information:
Ezra's genealogy goes back to Aaron, the first high priest.
Ezra came up from Babylon
Where Ezra came up to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Ezra came up to Jerusalem from Babylon"
Seraiah
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 2:2]
Azariah, Hilkiah
men's names
Ezra 7:2
Shallum
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 2:42]
Zadok, Ahitub
men's names
Ezra 7:3
Amariah, Azariah, Meraioth
This list is all men's names.
Ezra 7:4
Zerahiah, Uzzi, Bukki
men's names
Ezra 7:5
Abishua, Phinehas, Eleazar
men's names
Ezra 7:6
The king gave him anything he asked
"The king gave Ezra anything he asked for"
the hand of Yahweh was with him
The "hand" of Yahweh represents Yahweh's blessing or help. Alternate translation: "the blessing of Yahweh was with Ezra" or "Yahweh was blessing Ezra"
Ezra 7:7

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in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes
This refers to the seventh year of his reign. Alternate translation: "in the seventh year that Artaxerxes was king"
Ezra 7:8
the fifth month
This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.
the seventh year of the king
The king had ruled for six full years and part of the seventh.
Ezra 7:9
the first day of the first month
This is near the middle of March on Western calendars.
the first day of the fifth month
This is near the middle of July on Western calendars.
the good hand of God
"Hand" represents the power or control that God uses for good results.
Ezra 7:10
Ezra had established his heart to study
Establishing his heart represents firmly deciding or committing himself to do something. Alternate translation: "Ezra committed his life to study"
carry out
"obey"
the law of Yahweh and to carry out and teach its statutes and decrees
These were the laws that God passed down to Israel through Moses.
Ezra 7:11
This was the copy of the letter
The text following this statement was what King Artaxerxes had written in the letter.
Ezra 7:12
The King of kings Artaxerxes
"The King of kings" was a title, meaning that he was the greatest of kings, the king that other kings obeyed. Alternate translation: "The Great King Artaxerxes" or "Artaxerxes, the greatest king"
Ezra 7:13
I hereby issue a decree that anyone ... who desires to go to Jerusalem
In those days people needed permission from the king to resettle and rebuild in an area previously destroyed by the conquering nation.
I hereby issue a decree
The phrase "hereby issue" means that Darius, by speaking, is issuing the decree. Your language may have a different way to show that the speaker is claiming to make something happen, not simply explaining what he is doing. See how these words are translated in Ezra 6:12.
may go with you
The word "you" refers to Ezra.
Ezra 7:14
Connecting Statement:
This continues the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
I, the king, and my seven counselors
The word "I" and the phrase "the king" refer to the same person. The king is reminding the people who hear this letter that he is the author of this letter.
to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God
What they were to inquire about can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "to investigate the situation in Judah and Jerusalem, in order to learn whether or not they are obeying the law of your God"
Ezra 7:15
You are to bring the silver and gold
Where they were to bring it can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You are to bring to Jerusalem the silver and gold"
the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered
"Freely" means that they were not forced to offer the money. They gave it because they wanted to. Alternate translation: "the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have willingly offered"
Ezra 7:17
Connecting Statement:
This continues the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
So use this money to buy in full ... offerings
The phrase "in full" means as many as are necessary to complete the task. They were to use the gold and silver to buy all they needed in order to worship God in the temple. Alternate translation: "Use this money to buy as many of the oxen, rams, lambs, grain and drink offerings as are needed"
Ezra 7:18
you and your brothers
The phrase "your brothers" refers to the people who were doing this work with Ezra. Alternate translation: "your co-workers" or "your companions"
Ezra 7:19
Connecting Statement:
This continues the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
the objects that were freely given to you
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "the objects that we have freely given to you"
Place the objects ... before him
The word "him" refers to God.
for the service of the house of your God
The abstract noun "service" can be expressed with the verbs "serve" or "use." Alternate translation: "to use in the house of your God" or "to serve in the house of your God"
Ezra 7:20
treasury
a secure place where money is stored
Ezra 7:21
Connecting Statement:
This continues the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
I ... hereby issue a decree
The phrase "hereby issue" means that Darius, by speaking, is issuing the decree. Your language may have a different way to show that the speaker is claiming to make something happen, not simply explaining what he is doing. See how these words are translated in Ezra 6:12.

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the Province Beyond the River
This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. See how you translated it in [Ezra 4:10]
that anything that Ezra ... asks from you should be given in full
This can be expressed in active form. "Give Ezra ... in full anything he asks of you"
should be given in full
The phrase "in full" here represents whatever quantity necessary to do the work. Alternate translation: "should be given as much as he needs"
Ezra 7:22
one hundred silver talents
"100 talents of silver." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "3,300 kilograms of silver"
one hundred cors of grain
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "22,000 liters of grain" or "twenty thousand liters of grain"
one hundred baths of oil
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: 2,200 liters of oil" or "two thousand liters of oil"
Ezra 7:23
his house
This refers to God's temple.
For why should his wrath come upon the kingdom of the king and his sons?
The king uses this question to say that he does not want God's wrath to come upon them. The implied information is that if they do not give Ezra what he needs, then God will punish the kingdom. Alternate translation: "For we do not want God's wrath to come upon the kingdom of the king and his sons." or "For if you do not do these things, God's wrath will come upon the kingdom of the king and his sons."
For why should his wrath come upon the kingdom of the king and his sons
God's wrath represents God punishing them. Alternate translation: "For why should God punish the kingdom of the king and his sons" or "For if you do not do these things, God will punish the kingdom of the king and his sons"
the kingdom of the king and his sons
The king is emphasizing his own majesty by referring to himself in third person. Alternate translation: "my and my sons' kingdom"
Ezra 7:24
Connecting Statement:
This continues the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
We are informing them that there is no authority to impose any tribute or taxes
"We are telling them that they have no authority to impose any tribute or taxes"
musicians
people who play musical instruments
Ezra 7:25
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the decree that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra.
with the wisdom that God has given you, you must appoint judges and magistrates
The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "God has made you wise, so you must wisely appoint judges and magistrates"
Ezra 7:26
whether death or banishment or confiscation of his goods or imprisonment
The abstract nouns can be translated with verbs. Alternate translation: "whether by killing them, banishing them, confiscating their goods, or imprisoning them" or "You may kill them, send them away, take the things they own, or put them in prison"
Ezra 7:27
Connecting Statement:
Ezra praises God because of what King Artaxerxes decreed.
placed all this into the king's heart to glorify the house of Yahweh in Jerusalem
Placing things in the king's heart represents causing him to have certain thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "caused the king to want to glorify Yahweh's house in Jerusalem"
the house of Yahweh
This refers to Yahweh's temple.
Ezra 7:28
who extended covenant faithfulness to me
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "loyal." Alternate translation: "who has been faithful to me" or "who has been loyal to me"
I have been strengthened
Being strengthened represents being encouraged. Alternate translation: I am encouraged"
by the hand of Yahweh my God
Here Yahweh's hand represents what he did to help Ezra. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh has helped me"

8 [1]These are the leaders of their ancestors' families, and this is the genealogy of those who left Babylon with me during the reign of King Artaxerxes.

[2]Of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom. Of the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel. Of the descendants of David, Hattush.
[3]Of the descendants of Shekaniah, who was from the descendants of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him there were 150 males listed in his genealogy.

[4]Of the descendants of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah and with him were two hundred males.
[5]Of the descendants of Zattu, Ben Jahaziel and with him were three hundred males.
[6]Of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan and with him were listed fifty males.
[7]Of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiah son of Athaliah and with him were listed seventy males.

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[8]Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael and with him were listed eighty males.
[9]Of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel and with him were listed 218 males.
[10]Of the descendants of Bani,[1] Shelomith son of Josiphiah and with him were listed 160 males.
[11]Of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai and with him were listed twenty-eight males.

[12]Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan and with him were listed 110 males.
[13]Those of the descendants of Adonikam came later. These were their names: Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah and with them came sixty males.
[14]Of the descendants of Bigvai, Uthai and Zakkur and with him were listed seventy males.

[15]I gathered the travelers at the canal that goes to Ahava, and we camped there three days. I examined the people and priests, but could not find any descendants of Levi there.[16]So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, and Elnathan and Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam—who were leaders—and for Joiarib and Elnathan—who were teachers.
[17]Next I sent them to Iddo, the leader in Kasiphia. I told them what to say to Iddo and his relatives, the temple servants living in Kasiphia, that is, to send to us servants for the house of God.
[18]So they sent us by our God's good hand a man named Sherebiah, a prudent man. He was a descendant of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel. He came with eighteen sons and brothers.[19]With him came Hashabiah. There also were Jeshaiah, one of the descendants of Merari, with his brothers and their sons, twenty men in all.[20]Of those assigned to serve in the temple, whom David and his officials gave to serve the Levites: 220, each of them assigned by name.

[21]Then I proclaimed a fast at the Ahava Canal to humble ourselves before God, to seek a straight path from him for us, our little ones, and all our possessions.[22]I was ashamed to ask the king for an army or horsemen to protect us against enemies along the way, since we had said to the king, 'The hand of our God is on all who seek him for good, but his might and wrath are on all who forget him.'[23]So we fasted and sought God about this, and he heard our prayer.

[24]Next I selected twelve men from the priestly officials: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brothers.[25]I weighed out for them silver, gold, and the objects and offerings for the house of God that the king, his counselors and officials, and all Israel had freely offered.
[26]So I weighed into their hand 650 talents of silver, one hundred talents of silver objects, one hundred talents of gold,
[27]twenty gold bowls that were together valued at one thousand darics, and two well-polished bronze vessels as precious as gold.
[28]Then I said to them, "You are consecrated to Yahweh, and these objects also, and the silver and gold are a freewill offering to Yahweh, the God of your ancestors.[29]Watch over them and keep them until you weigh them out before the priestly officials, Levites, and leaders of the ancestors' clans of Israel in Jerusalem in the rooms of the house of God."[30]The priests and the Levites accepted the weighed silver, gold, and the objects in order to take them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

[31]We went out from the Ahava Canal on the twelfth day of the first month to go to Jerusalem. The hand of our God was on us; he protected us from the hand of the enemy and the ones who wished to ambush us along the road.[32]So we entered Jerusalem and stayed there for three days.
[33]Then on the fourth day the silver, gold, and objects were weighed out in the house of our God, into the hand of Meremoth son of Uriah the priest. With him were Eleazar son of Phinehas, Jozabad son of Jeshua, and Noadiah son of Binnui the Levite.[34]The number and weight of everything was determined. All the weight was written down at that time.

[35]The ones who came back from the captivity, the people of exile, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel: twelve bulls for all of Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve male goats as a sin offering. All were a burnt offering for Yahweh.[36]Then they gave the king's decrees to the king's high officials and the governors in the Province Beyond the River, and they helped the people and the house of God.

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[1]The name Bani was missing in the ancient Hebrew copies, but was restored from the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew copies.

Ezra 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The people's return to Judah

Many people went back to Judah with Ezra. They trusted God to protect them and the precious items they carried with them, which had been given for the temple. (See: trust)

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Links:

Ezra 8:1 Notes

Ezra 8:1

General Information:

There is an apparent shift in authorship beginning here. Chapters 1-7 were written as if the author were writing about Ezra. Chapter 8 was written as if the author were Ezra. Verses 2-14 are a list of leaders and their ancestors. All of them are men.

Ezra 8:2

Of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom

This is the first item in the list. It can be written with the verb "was." Alternate translation: "The leader of the descendants of Phinehas was Gershom" or "Gershom was the leader of the descendants of Phinehas"

Of the descendants of Ithamar, Daniel

This is the second item in the list. It can be written with the verb "was." Alternate translation: "The leader of the descendants of Ithamar was Daniel" or "Daniel was the leader of the descendants of Ithamar"

Of the descendants of David, Hattush

This is the third item in the list. It can be written with the verb "were." Alternate translation: "The leaders of the descendants of David were Hattush who was ... Parosh; and Zechariah" or "The leaders of the descendants of David were Hattush and Zechariah. Hattush was from ... Parosh"

Hattush

This is a man's name.

Ezra 8:3

Parosh

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:3.

with him there were 150 males listed in his genealogy

"with Zechariah there were 150 males listed in his genealogy"

150 males

"one hundred and fifty males"

Ezra 8:4

General Information:

The list of men's names continues.

Of the descendants of Pahath-Moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah

This is the next item in the list. It can be written with the verb "was." Alternate translation: "The leader of the descendants of Pahath-Moab was Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah" or "Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah was the leader of the descendants of Pahath-Moab"

with him were two hundred males

"with Eliehoenai were two hundred males"

Zerahiah

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 7:4.

two hundred

"200"

Ezra 8:5

three hundred

"300"

Ezra 8:6

Adin

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:15.

fifty

"50"

Ezra 8:7

seventy

"70"

Ezra 8:8

General Information:

The list of men's names continues.

Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael

This is the next item in the list. It can be written with the verb "was." Alternate translation: "The leader of the descendants of Shephatiah was Zebadiah son of Michael" or "Zebadiah son of Michael was the leader of the descendants of Shephatiah"

Shephatiah

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:2.

Michael

This is a man's name.

with him were listed eighty males

"with Zebadiah were listed eighty males"

eighty

"80"

Ezra 8:9

218 males

"two hundred and eighteen males"

Ezra 8:10

160 males

"one hundred and sixty males"

Ezra 8:11

Bebai

See how you translated this in Ezra 2:11.

twenty-eight

"28"

Ezra 8:12

General Information:

This is the end of the list of men's names.

Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan

This is the next item in the list. It can be written with the verb "was." Alternate translation: "The leader of the descendants of Azgad was Johanan son of Hakkatan" or "Johanan son of Hakkatan was the leader of the descendants of Azgad"

with him were listed 110 males

"with Johanan were listed 110 males"

110 males

"one hundred and ten males"

Azgad

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:12.

Ezra 8:13

Those of the descendants of Adonikam

The word "those" refers to the leaders. Alternate translation: "The leaders of the descendants of Adonikam"

Adonikam

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:13.

sixty

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"60"
Ezra 8:14
Bigvai
See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:2.
seventy
"70"
Ezra 8:15
General Information:
The word "I" in chapter 8 refers to Ezra. He is the author. Verse 16 contains a list of men's names.
the canal that goes to Ahava
Possible meanings are that the "canal" was 1) a waterway that men built or 2) an ordinary river. It can be translated in a more general way. Alternate translation: "the waterway that flows to Ahava"
Ahava
This is the name of a place
Ezra 8:16
Shemaiah
See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 8:13.
Elnathan ... Elnathan ... Elnathan
There were apparently three men with the same name.
Ezra 8:17
Iddo
This is a man's name.
Next I sent them to Iddo
The word "them" refers to the nine leaders and two teachers written about in [Ezra 8:16]
Kasiphia
This is the name of a place.
I told them what to say to Iddo ... that is, to send to us servants for the house of God
The words "that is" introduces what he told them to say. Alternate translation: "I told them to tell Iddo ... to send us servants for the house of God"
Ezra 8:18
Sherebiah ... Mahli
These are men's names.
So they sent us by our God's good hand a man
God's "good hand" represents his kindness in providing for them. Alternate translation: "Because God was kind to us, they sent us a man"
a prudent man
This is a man of understanding and wisdom.
son of Levi son of Israel
Here "Israel" is a man's name. It is the name God gave to Jacob.
eighteen
"18"
Ezra 8:19
Hashabiah ... Merari
These are men's names.
twenty
"20"
Jeshaiah
See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 8:7.
Ezra 8:20
officials
people with specific authority within a government system
Ezra 8:21
the Ahava Canal
This is the name of the canal that flows to the place called Ahava. See how you translated Ahava and canal in [Ezra 8:15]
to seek a straight path from him for us, our little ones, and all our possessions
The word "seek" represents asking God to do something for them. Here a "straight path" represents safety while they travel. Alternate translation: "to ask God to give us, our little ones, and all our possessions safety while we travel" or "to ask God to protect us, our little ones, and all our possessions while we travel"
Ezra 8:22
The hand of our God is on all who seek him
The hand of God being on people is a metonym for God helping people. Seeking God is a metaphor for serving him. Alternate translation: "God helps all who serve him"
but his might and wrath are on all who forget him
God's might and wrath being on people is a metonym for him punishing people. Forgetting God is a metaphor for refusing to serve him. Alternate translation: "but he punishes all who refuse to serve him"
Ezra 8:23
So we fasted and sought God about this
Here seeking God is a metaphor for asking God to do something for them. Alternate translation: "So we fasted and asked God to help us"
Ezra 8:24
Sherebiah, Hashabiah
See how you translated these men's names in [Ezra 8:19]
Ezra 8:26
650 talents of silver
"six hundred and fifty talents of silver." A talent weighs about thirty-three kilograms. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "22,000 kilograms of silver"
one hundred talents of silver objects
"100 talents of silver objects." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "3,300 kilograms of silver objects"
one hundred talents of gold
"100 talents of gold." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "3,300 kilograms of gold"
Ezra 8:27
one thousand darics
"1,000 darics." A "daric" was a small gold coin that people in the Persian Empire used. You can translate this in terms of the number of coins or their weight. Alternate translation: "one thousand Persian gold coins" or "eight and one half kilograms of gold"
bronze vessels
Bronze is a mixture of copper and another metal. It is stronger than pure copper.
Ezra 8:28
Then I said to them
"Then I said to the twelve priestly officials"
Ezra 8:29
until you weigh them out before the priestly officials, Levites, and

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leaders

When they arrived in Jerusalem, they would weigh the silver, gold, and bronze to show that they had not taken any of it for themselves.

Ezra 8:30

The priests and the Levites

According to the law of Moses, the tribe of Levi had the work of caring for the temple, its possessions, and the offerings.

Ezra 8:31

We went out from the Ahava Canal

"We left the Ahava Canal" or "We started traveling from the Ahava Canal"

Ahava Canal

This is the name of the canal that flows to the place called Ahava. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:21]

twelfth day of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The twelfth day is near the end of March on Western calendars.

The hand of our God was on us

The hand of God being on people is a metonym for God helping people. Alternate translation: "God was helping us"

he protected us from the hand of the enemy and the ones ... road

The hand represents what those people might do. It specifically refers to the enemy attacking the group that was traveling. Alternate translation: "he protected us from the attack of the enemy and the ones who wished to ambush us along the road" or "He kept the enemy from attacking us and he kept robbers from ambushing us along the road"

the ones who wished to ambush us

This refers to thieves and robbers who wanted to attack them for their treasures.

Ezra 8:33

the silver, gold, and objects were weighed out

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the twelve priestly officials weighed out the silver, gold and objects"

the silver, gold, and objects were weighed out ... into the hand of Meremoth

Here "the hand of Meremoth" represents Meremoth's care of the silver, gold, and objects. The men weighed those things and gave them to Meremoth to take care of them.

Meremoth ... Uriah ... Eleazar ... Phinehas ... Jozabad ... Jeshua ... Noadiah ... Binnui

These are the names of men.

Jeshua

See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:6.

Ezra 8:35

The ones who came back from the captivity ... the people of exile

These two phrases refer to the Jewish people who were living as exiles in Babylon and who left Babylon and returned to Jerusalem in Judea. Alternate translation: "The ones who came back to Jerusalem from the captivity in Babylon, the people of exile"

twelve ... ninety-six ... seventy-seven ... twelve

"12 ... 96 ... 77 ... 12"

Ezra 8:36

the governors in the Province Beyond the River

These were the Babylonian officials managing the people west of the Euphrates River, which included the people living in Judea.

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa. It included Judea. See how you translated it in [Ezra 4:10]

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9 [1]When these things were done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands and their abominations: Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites.[2]For they have taken some of their daughters and sons, and have mixed the holy people with the peoples of the lands, and the leaders and officials have been first in this faithlessness."

[3]When I heard this, I tore apart my clothing and robe and pulled out hair from my head and beard, and I sat down, devastated.[4]All those who trembled at the words of the God of Israel about the faithlessness of the exiles gathered to me while I was sitting devastated until the evening offering.

[5]But at the evening offering I arose from my position of humiliation in my torn clothes and robe, and knelt down and spread my hands to Yahweh my God.[6]I said, "My God, I am ashamed and disgraced to raise my face to you, for our iniquities increase over our head, and our guilt grows to the heavens.

[7]From the days of our ancestors until now we have been in great guilt. In our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests were given into the hand of kings of this world, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and ashamed faces, as we are today.

[8]Yet now for a short time, mercy from Yahweh our God has come to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a foothold in his holy place. This was for our God to enlighten our eyes and to give us a little relief in our slavery.[9]For we are slaves, but our God has not forgotten us in our slavery. Rather, he has extended covenant faithfulness to us before the king of Persia. He has given us new strength to rebuild the house of our God and raise its ruins, and he has given us a wall of safety in Judah and Jerusalem.

[10]But now, our God, what can we say after this? We have forgotten your commands,[11]the commands that you gave to your servants the prophets, when you said, "This land that you are entering to possess is an unclean land. It is contaminated by the people of the lands with their abominations. They have filled it from one end to the other with their uncleanness.[12]So now, do not give your daughters to their sons; do not take their daughters for your sons, and do not seek their ongoing

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peace and welfare, so that you will be strong and eat the good of the land, so you will cause your children to possess it for all time."
[13]Yet after everything that came on us for our evil practices and our great guilt—since you, our God, have held back what our iniquities deserve and left us an escaped remnant—[14]should we again break your commandments and make mixed marriages with these abominable people? Will you not be angry and annihilate us so there will be no remnant, no one to escape?
[15]Yahweh, God of Israel, you are righteous, for we have remained as an escaped remnant to this day. Look! We are here before you in our guilt, for there is no one who can stand before you because of this.

Ezra 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriage

When Ezra found out that many Jews had married Gentile wives, he prayed to God and asked God why he had been so good to them by letting these few people return from captivity even though they sinned by marrying Gentile wives. They did this before and God had punished them for it. God forbid this type of marriage because it caused the people to worship other gods. (See: sin and falsegod)

Links:

Ezra 9:1 Notes

Ezra 9:1

have not separated themselves

have married people from other lands and have adopted their religion

Ezra 9:3

When I heard this

When Ezra heard that many Israelites had married foreign women and were worshiping their gods

I tore apart my clothing and robe and pulled out hair from my head and beard

Ezra was showing everyone how unhappy he was that people were doing things that offended God.

Ezra 9:4

evening offering

a sacrifice that the priests would offer around the time the sun was going down

Ezra 9:5

my position of humiliation

another way of saying he was "sitting ashamed" (Ezra 9:4). "where I was sitting on the ground to show how ashamed I was"

knelt down and spread my hands

"got on my knees and stretched out my arms with my hands open toward the sky"

Ezra 9:6

our iniquities increase over our head, and our guilt grows to the heavens

These words are two ways of speaking of iniquity and guilt as if they were physical objects that could grow to be larger than people. The abstract nouns "iniquity" and "guilt" can be expressed as a noun and an adjective, respectively. Alternate translation: "we have committed wicked deeds and we are very guilty"

Ezra 9:7

the days of our ancestors

"the time when our ancestors were alive"

in great guilt ... In our iniquities

The abstract nouns "guilt" and "iniquity" can be translated as an adjective and a verb, respectively. Alternate translation: "very guilty ... Because of the evil deeds we did"

we ... were given into the hand of kings

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you gave us ... into the hand of kings"

were given into the hand of kings of this world

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "were given into the control of the kings of this world" or "were given over to the kings of this world"

to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and ashamed faces

The sword is a metonym for people killing other people. The abstract nouns "captivity" and "plunder" can be stated as verb phrases. And, "faces" is a synecdoche representing the whole person. Alternate translation: "to our enemies to kill us, to capture us, to steal from us, and to cause us shame"

Ezra 9:8

mercy from Yahweh our God has come

God deciding to be merciful is spoken of as if mercy were a person who could move. Alternate translation: "Yahweh our God has decided to be merciful to us and"

an escaped remnant

"some survivors who have escaped captivity"

Ezra 9:9

he has extended covenant faithfulness to us

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "loyal." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezra 7:28]

before the king of Persia

The king could not literally see the temple, but he did know about what was happening in Jerusalem. Here "sight" is a metonym for what a person knows. Alternate translation: "so that the king of Persia knows about it"

the house of our God

the temple

he has given us a wall of safety

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Possible meanings are 1) the wall of safety is a wall to protect the people. Alternate translation: "he has given us a wall to protect us" or 2) this is a metaphor for Yahweh protecting his people. Alterate trasnslation: "he protects us like a wall" or "he gives us protection"

Ezra 9:12

for all time

"until the end of the ages"

Ezra 9:13

escaped remnant

"some survivors who have escaped captivity." See how you translated this phrase in Ezra 9:8.

Ezra 9:14

should we again break your commandments and make ... people?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "it is very wrong that some of us have broken your commandments and made ... people."

Will you not be angry ... escape?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am afraid that you will be angry ... escape."

there will be no remnant, no one to escape

The word translated "remnant" here is the usual word for something that remains or is left. The word translated "one to escape" is the same word translated "escaped remnant" in Ezra 9:8 and can be translated "survivors who have escaped captivity."

Ezra 9:15

Look

"Pay attention to what I am about to say"

escaped remnant

"some survivors who have escaped captivity. " See how you translated this phrase in Ezra 9:8.

We are here before you in our guilt

"You can see that we are all guilty"

there is no one who can stand before you

"you do not think that any person is innocent"

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10 [1]As Ezra prayed and confessed, he wept and threw himself down before the house of God. A very great assembly of Israelite men, women, and children gathered to him, for the people were weeping very greatly.[2]Shekaniah son of Jehiel of the descendants of Elam said to Ezra, "We have been unfaithful to our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land. But in spite of this, there is still hope for Israel.
[3]So now let us make a covenant with our God to send out all the women and their children according to the Lord's instructions and the instructions of those who tremble at the commandments of our God, and let it be done according to the law.[4]Arise, for this thing is for you to carry out, and we are with you. Be strong and do this."

[5]So Ezra rose and made the priestly officials, the Levites, and all of Israel promise to act in this way. So they all took a solemn oath.[6]Then Ezra rose from before the house of God and went to the rooms of Jehohanan son of Eliashib. He did not eat any bread or drink any water, since he was mourning concerning the faithlessness of those who had been in captivity.
[7]So they sent word in Judah and Jerusalem to all the people back from exile to assemble in Jerusalem.[8]Anyone who did not come in three days according to the instructions from the officials and elders—all of his possessions would be forfeited, and he himself would be excluded from the great assembly of the people who had come back from exile.

[9]So all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled in Jerusalem in three days. It was the ninth month and the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the rains.[10]Ezra the priest arose and said, "You yourselves have committed treason. You lived with foreign women so as to increase Israel's guilt.
[11]But now give confession to Yahweh, your ancestors' God, and do his will. Separate from the people of the land and from the foreign women."
[12]All the assembly answered in a loud voice, "We will do as you have said.[13]However, there are many people, and it is the rainy season. We have no strength to stand outside, and this is not only one or two days of work, since we have greatly transgressed in this matter.
[14]So let our officials represent all the assembly. Let all in our cities who have married foreign women come at an appointed time that will be appointed by the city elders and the city judges until the raging wrath of our God goes away from us."[15]Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supported them.

[16]So the people who returned from exile did this. Ezra the priest selected men, the leaders in their ancestors' clans and houses—all of them by name, and they investigated the matter on the first day of the tenth month.[17]By the first day of the first month they had finished discovering which men had lived with foreign women.

[18]Among the descendants of the priests there were those who had lived with foreign women. Among the descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers there were Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah.[19]So they determined to send their wives away. Since they were guilty, they offered a ram from the flock for their guilt.

[20]Among the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

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[21]Among the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah.
[22]Among the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

[23]Among the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah—that is, Kelita, Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.
[24]Among the singers: Eliashib. Among the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.
[25]Among the rest of the Israelites—among the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah, and Benaiah.[1]

[26]Among the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.
[27]Among the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.
[28]Among the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.
[29]Among the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluk, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.[2]

[30]Among the descendants of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.
[31]Among the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,[32]Benjamin, Malluk, and Shemariah.

[33]Among the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.
[34]Among the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel,[35]Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi,[36]Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,
[37]Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu.
[38]Among the descendants of Binnui: Shimei,[3] [39]Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah,[40]Maknadebai, Shashai, Sharai,[4]
[41]Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah,[42]Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.
[43]Among the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.
[44]All of these had taken foreign wives and had children with some of them.[5]

[1]Instead of the second occurrence of Malkijah, some modern translations substitute Hashabiah.
[2]Instead of Bani, some modern translations have Bigvai.
[3]Instead of Among the descendants of Binnui: Shimei, some modern translations have Bani, Binnui, Shimei.
[4]Instead of Maknadebai, some modern translations have Among the descendants of Zaccai.
[5]Instead of and had children with some of them, some modern translations have but sent them away with their children.

Ezra 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Intermarriages

The people agree to divorce their Gentile wives. Many Jews were involved in these mixed marriages. Divorce should not normally have been common for the Jews to engage in, but marriage with non-Jewish women was not allowed.

Links:

Ezra 10:1 Notes

Ezra 10:1

As Ezra prayed and confessed ... threw himself down

Ezra speaks of himself as if he were someone else.

threw himself down

quickly went from standing to lying facedown

before the house of God

in front of the temple

Ezra 10:2

Shekaniah

See how you translated this in Ezra 8:5.

Jehiel

See how you translated this in Ezra 8:9.

We have been unfaithful to our God

This was made as a public confession, not as a boastful claim.

Ezra 10:4

we are with you

"we will help you"

Ezra 10:6

Jehohanan ... Eliashib

These are the names of men.

Ezra 10:8

Anyone who did not come ... all of his possessions would be forfeited, and he himself would be excluded

"As for anyone who did not come ... the officials would take all his possessions away from him and would exclude him" or "The people of Judah and Jerusalem would take all the possessions away from everyone who did not come ... and would exclude them"

three days

3 days

Ezra 10:9

in three days

"three days later"

ninth month and the twentieth day of the month

This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twentieth day is near the middle of December on Western calendars.

in the square

a large open courtyard in front of the temple

Ezra 10:10

committed treason

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The abstract noun "treason" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "helped the enemies of your people"
so as to increase Israel's guilt
"and now God considers us guilty of worse sin than before"
Ezra 10:11
Separate from
move away from, be different from
Ezra 10:13
this is not only one or two days of work
This litotes can be translated in positive form. Alternate translation: "we will need a long time to do all this work"
Ezra 10:15
Jonathan ... Asahel ... Jahzeiah ... Tikvah ... Meshullam ... Shabbethai
men's names
Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this
Possible meanings are, 1) these men did not want the city officials to investigate the offenses or 2) they did not want anyone to investigate the people's marriages.
Ezra 10:16
did this
The people investigated who had married non-Jewish wives.
the first day of the tenth month
This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of December on Western calendars.
Ezra 10:17
first day of the first month
This is near the middle of March on Western calendars.
Ezra 10:18
Jeshua
See how you translated this in Ezra 2:2.
Jozadak
See how you translated this in Ezra 3:2.
Maaseiah ... Gedaliah
names of men
Eliezer ... Jarib
See how you translated this in Ezra 8:16.
Ezra 10:20
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Immer
a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:37.
Hanani
a man's name
Zebadiah
a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:8.
Ezra 10:21
Harim
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:32]
Maaseiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:18]
Shemaiah ... Jehiel
These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:13]
Ezra 10:22
Pashhur
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:37.
Elioenai ... Nethanel ... Elasah
These are the names of men.
Jozabad
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:33.
Ezra 10:23
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Jozabad
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:33.
Ezra 10:24
Eliashib
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:6]
Shallum
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:42]
Ezra 10:25
Parosh
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:3]
Eleazar
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 7:5]
Ezra 10:26
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Elam
See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 2:7.
Jehiel
See how you translated this man's name in Ezra 8:9.
Ezra 10:27
Zattu
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 2:8]
Elioenai
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 10:22]
Eliashib
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 10:6]
Ezra 10:28
Bebai
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:11]
Jehohanan
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:6]
Ezra 10:29
Bani
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 2:10]
Meshullam
See how you translated this man's name in [Ezra 8:16]
Ezra 10:30
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.

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Pahath-Moab
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:4.
Benaiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:25.
Maaseiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:18.
Mattaniah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:26.
Binnui
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:33.
Ezra 10:31
Malkijah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:25]
Harim
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:32]
Eliezer
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:16]
Ezra 10:32
Malluk
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:29]
Ezra 10:33
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Hashum
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 2:19
Zabad
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:27.
Eliphelet
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 8:13.
Manasseh
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:30.
Shimei
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:23.
Ezra 10:34
Bani
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:10]
Ezra 10:35
Benaiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:23]
Ezra 10:36
Meremoth
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:33]
Eliashib
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:6]
Ezra 10:37
General Information:
Ezra continues to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Mattaniah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:26.
Mattenai
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:33.
Ezra 10:38
Binnui
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:33]
Shimei
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:23]
Ezra 10:39
Adaiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:26]
Ezra 10:41
General Information:
Ezra finishes to list the men who married non-Jewish women.
Shelemiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:39.
Shemariah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:32.
Ezra 10:42
Shallum
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:42]
Amariah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 7:3]
Ezra 10:43
Nebo
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 2:29]
Jeiel
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 8:13]
Zabad
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Ezra 10:27]
Zebina ... Jaddai ... Joel
These are the names of men.
Benaiah
This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Ezra 10:25.
Ezra 10:44
All of these

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all the men in the list beginning in Ezra 10:20

Introduction to Nehemiah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Nehemiah

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

What is the Book of Nehemiah about?

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

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Book of Nehemiah is named for a Jewish leader named Nehemiah. Translators can use the traditional title "Nehemiah." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Book about Nehemiah."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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

Foreigners worshiped many false gods. Yahweh did not allow his people to marry foreigners. He knew this would cause the people of Israel to worship false gods. (See: falsegod)

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

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

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the Book of Nehemiah use the term "Israel"?

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

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

Some of the events in the Book of Nehemiah are not told in the order they actually happened. Translators should pay attention to notes that signal when events are probably out of order.

Nehemiah

1 [1]The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:
Now it happened in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in the fortress of Susa,
[2]that one of my brothers, Hanani, and some men from Judah came, and I asked them about the Jews, the escaped remnant, those who had escaped from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
[3]They said to me, "Those in the province who survived the captivity are in great trouble and disgrace because the wall of Jerusalem has been broken open, and its gates have been set on fire."

[4]As soon as I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and for days I continued grieving and fasting and praying before the God of heaven.[5]Then I said, "Please, I beg you, Yahweh, God of heaven, the God who is great and awesome, who keeps the covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,
[6]may your eyes be open and may your ear be attentive so you may hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants. I am confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Both I and my father's house have sinned.[7]We have acted very wickedly against you, and we have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules you commanded your servant Moses.
[8]Please call to mind the word you commanded your servant Moses, 'If you act unfaithfully, I will scatter you among the peoples,[9]but if you return to me and follow my commandments and do them, though your people were scattered under the farthest skies, I will gather them from there and bring them to that place where I have chosen to make my name remain.'

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[10]Now they are your servants and your people, whom you have rescued by your great power and by your strong hand.
[11]Please, I beg you, Lord, may your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight to honor your name. Now give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."I served as cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:"
This phrase serves as an introduction to this entire book.

Special concepts in this chapter

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

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

I
While the author of this book is probably Ezra, the word "I" always refers to Nehemiah.
Israel
It is uncertain to whom "Israel" refers. It probably does not refer to the northern kingdom of Israel. Neither does it likely refer to the twelve tribes of Israel. Instead, it is probably a reference to Israel in the sense of the surviving people group. At Nehemiah's time, this people group exclusively comprised the tribe of Judah because the other tribes had already been scattered throughout the entire Near East, where they lost their identity, for the most part.

Links:

Nehemiah 1:1 Notes Nehemiah intro

Nehemiah 1:1
Nehemiah ... Hakaliah
These are names of men.
in the month of Kislev
"Kislev" is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on Western calendars.
in the twentieth year
Nehemiah is referring to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. Alternate translation: "in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia"
fortress of Susa
This was one of the royal cities of Persian kings, located in the country of Elam. It was a large, fortified city with high walls surrounding it.
Nehemiah 1:2
Hanani
This is the name of a man.
one of my brothers, Hanani
Hanani was Nehemiah's biological brother.
Hanani, and some men from Judah came
"Hanani, came from Judah with some other men"
the Jews, the escaped remnant, those who had escaped from the captivity
The phrases "escaped remnant" and "those who had escaped from the captivity" both describe "the Jews," and "those who had escaped the captivity" specifies what it was that "the escaped remnant" escaped. Possible meanings are 1) the few Jews who were taken as exiles to Babylon but escaped and returned to live in Jerusalem or 2) the few Jews who had escaped from those who were trying to take them into exile in Babylon and so remained in Jerusalem. Since it is unclear which meaning is correct, it is best not to specify in the translation.
Nehemiah 1:3
They said to me
Here "They" refers to Hanani and the other people who had come from Judah.
the province
Here "province" refers to Judah as an administrative district under the Persian Empire. Alternate translation: "the province of Judah" or "Judah"
the wall of Jerusalem has been broken open, and its gates have been set on fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "armies have broken open the wall of Jerusalem and have set its gates on fire"
Nehemiah 1:5
Then I said
Nehemiah tells what he prayed. Alternate translation: "Then I said to Yahweh"
Please, I beg you
These words translate one word with which the speaker calls for the attention of the hearer and indicates that the words that follow are a plea. If your language has another way of saying the same thing, you may want to use it here.
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
who love him and keep his commandments
Since Nehemiah is speaking to Yahweh, the pronouns "him" and "his" can be translated as "you" and "your." Alternate

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translation: "who love you and keep your commandments"

Nehemiah 1:6

Connecting Statement:

This verse begins the prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5).

may your eyes be open

"look at me." Here open eyes are a metaphor that represents paying attention to someone. Alternate translation: "pay attention to me"

may your ear be attentive

The ear here is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "listen and pay attention"

so you may hear the prayer of your servant

"so that you may hear the prayer that I, your servant, am praying." The word "servant" refers to Nehemiah. This is how a person would address his superior in order to show humility and respect.

day and night

By saying that he prays both during the day and during the night, Nehemiah emphasizes the frequency of his prayers. Alternate translation: "all the time"

Both I and my father's house

Here the word "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "Both I and my family"

Nehemiah 1:7

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5) continues.

Nehemiah 1:8

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5) continues.

Please call to mind

To "call to mind" is an idiom that means to remember. Alternate translation: "Please remember"

the word you commanded your servant Moses

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

If you act unfaithfully ... scatter you

The pronouns "you" and "your" are plural and refer to the Israelite people.

I will scatter you among the peoples

Yahweh speaks of causing the Israelite people to live in other nations as if he scattered them like one would scatter seeds. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to live among the people of other nations"

Nehemiah 1:9

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5) continues.

if you return ... your people

The pronouns "you" and "your" are plural and refer to the Israelite people.

though your people were scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "though I scattered your people"

under the farthest skies

Yahweh speaks of places on the earth that are very far away as being "under the farthest skies." Alternate translation: "to places very far away"

to that place where I have chosen ... remain

This phrase refers to Jerusalem, where the temple was located. Alternate translation: "to Jerusalem, where I have chosen ... remain"

where I have chosen to make my name remain

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "where I have chosen to dwell"

Nehemiah 1:10

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5) continues.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in Nehemiah's prayer. Here he begins to make his request based on Yahweh's promise.

they are your servants

The word "they" refers to the Israelite people.

by your great power and by your strong hand

Here "hand" represents strength or power. Together, these two phrases form a doublet that emphasizes the intensity of Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "by your great power and by your mighty strength" or "by your very powerful strength"

Nehemiah 1:11

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that Nehemiah begs Yahweh to listen to (Nehemiah 1:5) ends here.

the prayer of your servant

Here "servant" refers to Nehemiah. This is how a person would address his superior in order to show humility and respect. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 1:6.

the prayer of your servants

Here "servants" refers to the rest of the Israelite people who would have been praying for Yahweh to act on behalf of his people and on behalf of Jerusalem.

who delight to honor your name

Here "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "who delight to honor you"

grant him mercy in the sight of this man

Here "him" refers to Nehemiah, who refers to himself in the third person to express his humility before God, and "this man" refers to Artaxerxes, the king of Persia.

in the sight of this man

Nehemiah speaks of the king's attitude or disposition as if it were how the king viewed something. Alternate translation: "grant that the king will have mercy on me"

I served as cupbearer to the king

This is background information about Nehemiah's role in the king's court. Your language may have a special way to mark background information.

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2 [1]In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, he selected wine, and I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never before been sad in his presence.[2]But the king said to me, "Why is your face so sad? You do not appear to be ill. This must be sadness of heart." Then I became very much afraid.

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[3]I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad? The city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire."
[4]Then the king said to me, "What do you want me to do?" So I prayed to the God of heaven.[5]I replied to the king, "If it seems good to the king, and if your servant has done well in your sight, you could send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."[6]The king replied to me (and the queen was also sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone and when will you return?" The king was glad to send me when I gave him an appointed time.
[7]Then I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, may letters be given to me for the governors in the Province Beyond the River so that they may permit me to pass through their territories on my way to Judah.[8]May there also be a letter for Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, so that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress next to the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house in which I will live."So because the good hand of God was on me, the king granted me my requests.

[9]I came to the governors in the Province Beyond the River and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent with me commanders of the army and horsemen.[10]When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, they were greatly displeased that someone had come who was seeking to help the people of Israel.
[11]So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.[12]I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. There was no animal with me, other than the one I was riding.
[13]I went out by night by the Valley Gate, toward the Jackal's Well and to the Dung Gate, and inspected the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken open, and the wooden gates were destroyed by fire.[14]Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool. The place was too narrow for the animal I was riding to pass through.
[15]So I went up that night by the valley and inspected the wall, and I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.[16]The rulers did not know where I went or what I did, and I had not yet informed the Jews, nor the priests, nor the nobles, nor the rulers, nor the rest who did the work.

[17]I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins and its gates have been burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so we will no longer be in disgrace."[18]I told them that the good hand of my God was on me and also about the king's words that he had spoken to me. They said, "Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the good work.
[19]But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite servant, and Geshem the Arabian heard about it, they mocked and showed us contempt, and they said, "What are you doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"[20]Then I answered them, "The God of heaven will give us success. We are his servants and we will arise and build. But you have no share, no right, and no historic claim in Jerusalem."

Nehemiah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the account of the construction of the wall. Many scholars believe these chapters teach valuable lessons on leadership (Nehemiah 2-6).
Special concepts in this chapter
Nehemiah's character
Apparently, Nehemiah's character made an impression on the king. It was very unusual for a king to be so concerned with one of his servants.
Cultural Customs
In ancient Persia, they thought it was important for their conquered peoples to practice their own cultural customs. It was thought that this independence promoted peace in their vast kingdom. The rebuilding of Jerusalem may have been seen as a way to allow for the Jewish cultural practices.
Yahweh's control
Yahweh is seen as very powerful. He is able to provide for his people, even through a foreign king. (See: peopleofgod)

Links:

Nehemiah 2:1 Notes

Nehemiah 2:1
In the month of Nisan
"Nisan" is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar.
in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king
"in the 20th year that Artaxerxes was king"
Now
This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Nehemiah tells background information about the expression on his face when he went before the king.
Nehemiah 2:2
But the king

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"So the king"

Why is your face so sad

Here Nehemiah is referred to by his face because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: "Why are you so sad"

This must be sadness of heart

This speaks of Nehemiah being sad as if his heart were sad, since the heart is often considered the center of emotions. Alternate translation: "You must be very sad"

Then I became very much afraid

As Nehemiah prepares to answer, he is afraid because he does not know how the king will respond.

Nehemiah 2:3

May the king live forever

Nehemiah is showing honor to King Artaxerxes. Here "forever" is an exaggeration that refers to a long life. Alternate translation: "Long live the king" or "May the king have a long life"

Why should not my face be sad?

Here Nehemiah uses this rhetorical question to tell the king that he has a reason to be sad. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have very good reasons to be sad."

the place of my fathers' tombs

"the place where my ancestors are buried"

its gates have been destroyed by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fire has destroyed its gates" or "our enemy has burned its gates"

Nehemiah 2:5

I replied to the king

"Then I replied to the king"

your servant

Nehemiah refers to himself this way to show his submission to the king.

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment"

the city of my fathers' tombs

"the city where my ancestors are buried"

that I may rebuild it

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

Nehemiah 2:6

I gave him an appointed time

"I told him when I wanted to go and how long I would be gone"

Nehemiah 2:7

may letters be given to me

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may you give letters to me"

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of Susa.

Nehemiah 2:8

Asaph

This is the name of a man.

the good hand of God was on me

God's "good hand" represents his "favor." Alternate translation: "God's favor was upon me"

Nehemiah 2:10

Sanballat the Horonite

Sanballat is the name of a man, and the Horonites were a people group.

Tobiah the Ammonite servant

This man was likely a freed slave now serving as an officer in Ammon.

heard this

"heard that I had arrived"

Nehemiah 2:12

had put into my heart

Here Nehemiah's "heart" refers to his thoughts and will. Alternate translation: "had inspired me" or "had led me"

There was no animal with me

"There were no animals with me"

Nehemiah 2:13

General Information:

A few men accompanied Nehemiah on this inspection, but he speaks in the first person because he was the primary person.

I went out by night by the Valley Gate

"At night, I went out through the Valley Gate"

Jackal's Well

A jackal is a wild dog. Some modern translations read, "Dragon's Well."

Dung Gate

Presumably, refuse was removed from the city through this gate.

which had been broken open, and the wooden gates were destroyed by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Israel's enemies had broken open, and the wooden gates which their enemies had destroyed with fire"

Nehemiah 2:15

So I went up ... and I turned back

The other men with Nehemiah also followed him. Alternate translation: "So we went up ... and we turned back"

by the Valley Gate

"through the Valley Gate"

Nehemiah 2:16

the rest who did the work

This refers to the men who would later rebuild the walls. Alternate translation: "the others who would later do the work of rebuilding the walls"

Nehemiah 2:17

You see the trouble

Here "you" is plural, referring to all the people mentioned in [Nehemiah 2:16]

its gates have been burned by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "how our enemies destroyed its gates by burning them"

so we will no longer be in disgrace

"so we will no longer be ashamed"

Nehemiah 2:18

the good hand of my God was on me

God's "good hand" represents his "favor." Alternate

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translation: "my God's favor was upon me"

rise up and build

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "begin building"

So they strengthened their hands for the good work

The phrase "strengthened their hands" means to prepare to do something. Alternate translation: "So they prepared do this good work"

Nehemiah 2:19

Sanballat ... Tobiah

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 2:10]

Geshem

This is the name of a man.

What are you doing? Are you rebelling against the king?

These rhetorical questions are used to mock Nehemiah. These can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You are acting foolishly! You should not be rebelling against the king!"

the king

This refers to Artaxerses, the king of Persia.

Nehemiah 2:20

will arise and build

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will begin rebuilding"

But you have no share, no right, and no historic claim in Jerusalem

"But you have no share, legal right, or religious claim to Jerusalem"

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3 [1]Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brother priests, and they built the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors in place. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel.[2]Next to him the men of Jericho worked, and next to them Zakkur son of Imri worked.

[3]The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They made beams for it, and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.[4]Meremoth repaired the next section. He is the son of Uriah son of Hakkoz. Next to them Meshullam repaired. He is the son of Berekiah son of Meshezabel. Next to them Zadok repaired. He is the son of Baana.[5]Next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles refused to do the labor ordered by their supervisors.

[6]Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate. They made beams for it, and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.[7]Next to them were men from Gibeon and Mizpah—Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite—the throne of the governor of the Province Beyond the River.
[8]Next to him Uzziel son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired, and next to him was Hananiah, a maker of perfumes. They rebuilt Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.[9]Next to them Rephaiah son of Hur repaired. He was the official over half the district of Jerusalem.[10]Next to them Jedaiah son of Harumaph repaired next to his house. Next to him Hattush son of Hashabneiah repaired.
[11]Malkijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section along with the Tower of the Furnaces.
[12]Next to them Shallum son of Hallohesh, the official over half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, along with his daughters.

[13]Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. They repaired a thousand cubits as far as the Dung Gate.

[14]Malkijah son of Rekab, the official over the district of Beth Hakkerem, repaired the Dung Gate. He built it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.
[15]Shallun son of Kol-Hozeh, the official over the district of Mizpah, rebuilt the Fountain Gate. He built it, and put a cover on it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. He also rebuilt the wall of the Pool of Siloam by the king's garden, as far as the stairs leading down from the city of David.
[16]Nehemiah son of Azbuk, the official over half the district of Beth Zur, repaired to the place across from the tombs of David, to the man-made pool, and to the house of the mighty men.[17]After him the Levites repaired, including Rehum son of Bani and next to him, Hashabiah, the official over half the district of Keilah, for his district.
[18]After him their brothers repaired, including Binnui son of Henadad, the official over half the district of Keilah.[19]Next to him, Ezer son of Jeshua, the official over Mizpah, repaired another section that faced the ascent to the armory at the corner of the wall.
[20]After him Baruch son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the corner of the wall to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.[21]After him Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib.
[22]Next to him the priests, the men from the area around Jerusalem, repaired.[23]After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their own house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah son of Ananiah repaired next to his own house.[24]After him Binnui son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the corner of the wall.
[25]Palal son of Uzai repaired over against the corner of the wall and the tower that extends upward from the upper house of the king at the courtyard of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh repaired.[26]Now the temple servants living in Ophel repaired to the point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower.[27]After him the Tekoites repaired another section that was opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

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[28]The priests repaired above the Horse Gate, each opposite his own house.[29]After them Zadok son of Immer repaired the section opposite his own house. Then after him Shemaiah son of Shekaniah, the keeper of the east gate, repaired.[30]After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam son of Berekiah repaired opposite his living chambers.
[31]After him Malkijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired to the house of the temple servants and the merchants that was opposite the Appointment Gate and the upper living chambers on the corner.[32]The goldsmiths and the merchants repaired between the upper chamber of the corner and the Sheep Gate.

Nehemiah 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Priests

The priests worked on rebuilding the city. Normally, the priests were exempt from this type of work. Because they helped, it emphasizes that this is a holy work and something done for Yahweh.

Cooperation

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

Links:

Nehemiah 3:1 Notes

Nehemiah 3:1

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brother priests

"Then Eliashib the high priest came forward with his brothers, the priests"

Eliashib

This is the name of a man.

Tower of the Hundred

"Tower of the 100"

Tower of Hananel

This is the name of a tower. It is likely named after a man named "Hananel."

Nehemiah 3:2

Zakkur son of Imri

This is the name of a man.

men of Jericho

This means that the men were from Jericho. Alternate translation: "men from Jericho"

Nehemiah 3:3

Hassenaah

This is the name of a man.

set its doors

"installed its doors" or "put its doors in place"

its bolts, and its bars

"its locks and bars." These locked the gates securely.

Nehemiah 3:4

Meremoth ... Uriah ... Hakkoz ... Meshullam ... Berekiah ... Meshezabel ... Zadok ... Baana

These are names of men.

Meremoth repaired the next section ... Meshullam repaired ... Zadok repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Meremoth repaired the next section of the wall ... Meshullam repaired the wall ... Zadok repaired the wall"

Nehemiah 3:5

Tekoites repaired

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

the Tekoites

These are people from the town of Tekoa.

ordered by their supervisors

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that their supervisors had ordered them to do"

Nehemiah 3:6

Joiada ... Paseah and Meshullam ... Besodeiah

These are all names of men.

set its doors

"installed its doors" or "put its doors in place"

its bolts, and its bars

"its locks and bars." These locked the gates securely.

Nehemiah 3:7

Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite—the throne of the governor

Some modern translations read, "Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, who carried out the commands of the governor."

the throne of the governor

Possible meanings are 1) the word "throne" is a metonym for "the place in which the governor had his throne" or "towns over which the governor ruled" or "the place from which the governor ruled" or 2) the word should be translated "seat" and is a metonym for "the place where the governor lived."

Melatiah ... Jadon

These are names of men.

Gibeonite ... Meronothite

Gibeonites and Meronothites are people groups.

Gibeon and Mizpah

These are names of places.

the Province Beyond the River

This is the name of the province that was west of the Euphrates River. It was across the river from the city of

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Susa. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 2:7.

Nehemiah 3:8

Uzziel ... Harhaiah ... Hananiah

These are names of men.

goldsmiths

A goldsmith is a person who makes gold jewelry and other gold objects.

goldsmiths, repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "goldsmiths, repaired the wall"

next to him was Hananiah, a maker of perfumes

Hananiah repaired the wall as well. Alternate translation: "next to him Hananiah, a maker of perfumes, repaired the wall"

perfumes

liquid substances that people put on their body in small amounts to smell pleasant

Nehemiah 3:9

Rephaiah ... Hur

These are names of men.

Hur repaired

Hur repaired the wall. Alternate translation: "Hur repaired the wall"

official

leader or chief administrator

half the district

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

Nehemiah 3:10

Jedaiah ... Harumaph ... Hattush ... Hashabneiah

These are names of men.

Harumaph repaired ... Hashabneiah repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Harumaph repaired the wall ... Hashabneiah repaired the wall"

Nehemiah 3:11

Malkijah ... Harim ... Hasshub ... Pahath-Moab

These are all names of men.

repaired another section

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired another section of the wall"

Nehemiah 3:12

Shallum ... Hallohesh

These are names of men.

repaired, along with his daughters

These phrase refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired another section of the wall ... repaired the wall, along with his daughters"

Shallum son of Hallohesh, the official

Shallum was the ruler, not Hallohesh.

official

leader or chief administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:9.

half the district

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

Nehemiah 3:13

Hanun

This is the name of a man.

the inhabitants of Zanoah

"the people from Zanoah"

Zanoah

This is the name of a place.

the Valley Gate

"the Gate of the Valley" or "the Gate that Leads to the Valley." Try to translate this expression as a name, not just as a description.

set its doors

"installed its doors" or "put its doors in place"

its bolts, and its bars

"its locks and bars." These locked the gates securely.

They repaired a thousand cubits as far as the Dung Gate

They repaired the portion of the wall between the Valley Gate and the Dung Gate. Alternate translation: "They repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, from the Valley Gate to the Dung Gate"

They repaired a thousand cubits

It is understood that they were repaing the wall of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "They repaired a thousand cubits of the wall" or "They repaired another thousand cubits of the wall beyond the Valley Gate"

a thousand cubits

"1,000 cubits." This may be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "460 meters"

the Dung Gate

Presumably, refuse was removed from the city through this gate. Try to translate this expression as a name, not just as a description.

Nehemiah 3:14

Malkijah ... Rekab

These are names of men.

Malkijah son of Rekab, the official

Malkijah was the official, not Rekab.

official

leader or chief administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:9.

Beth Hakkerem

This is the name of a place.

He ... set its doors

"He installed its doors" or "He put its doors in place"

its bolts, and its bars

"its locks, and its bars." These locked the gates securely.

Nehemiah 3:15

Shallun ... Kol-Hozeh

These are names of men.

Shallun son of Kol-Hozeh, the official

Shallun was the official, not Kol-Hozeh.

the wall of the Pool of Siloam

This means that the wall was beside the Pool of Siloam. Alternate translation: "the wall that surrounded the Pool of Siloam"

Nehemiah 3:16

Nehemiah

This is the name of a man.

Nehemiah son of Azbuk, the official

Nehemiah was the official, not Azbuk.

Nehemiah

This is a different man named Nehemiah from the person who authored this book.

official

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leader or chief administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:9.

half the district

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

Beth Zur

These are names of places.

repaired to the place

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired the wall up to the place"

mighty men

"warriors"

Nehemiah 3:17

Rehum ... Bani ... Hashabiah

These are names of men.

Keilah

This is the name of a place.

Levites repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Levites repaired the wall"

for his district

"representing his district" or "on behalf of his district"

Nehemiah 3:18

After him their brothers repaired

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Next to him their brothers repaired the wall"

brothers

"relatives" or "fellow Jews." These were probably not children of the same father and mother.

After him

"Next to him"

Binnui ... Henadad

These are names of men.

Binnui son of Henadad, the official

Binnui was the official, not Henadad.

official

leader or chief administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:9.

Keilah

This is the name of a place.

Nehemiah 3:19

repaired another section

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired another section of the wall"

Ezer ... Jeshua

These are names of men.

Mizpah

This is the name of a place.

Ezer son of Jeshua, the official

Ezer was the official, not Jeshua.

official

leader or chief administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:9.

that faced the ascent to the armory

"in front of the steps that went up to the armory"

armory

the place where weapons are kept

Nehemiah 3:20

After him

"Next to him"

Baruch ... Zabbai ... Eliashib

These are the names of men.

repaired another section

This refers to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired another section of the wall"

Nehemiah 3:21

Meremoth ... Uriah ... Hakkoz

These are the names of men.

Nehemiah 3:22

around Jerusalem, repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "around Jerusalem, repaired the wall"

Nehemiah 3:23

Benjamin and Hasshub repaired ... Azariah ... repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Benjamin and Hasshub repaired the wall ... Azariah ... repaired the wall"

Benjamin ... Hasshub ... Azariah

These are the names of men.

After them

"Next to them"

opposite their own house

"in front of their own house"

Nehemiah 3:24

Binnui ... repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Binnui ... repaired the wall"

Binnui ... Henadad

These are the names of men.

After him

"Next to him"

Nehemiah 3:25

Palal ... repaired ... Parosh repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "Palal ... repaired the wall ... Parosh repaired the wall"

Palal ... Uzai ... Pedaiah ... Parosh

These are the names of men.

the tower that extends upward

"the tower that rises up"

upper house of the king

"higher palace of the leader of Israel"

the courtyard of the guard

This is the place where the guards stayed.

After him

"Next to him"

Nehemiah 3:26

servants ... repaired

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "servants ... repaired the wall"

Ophel

This is the name of a place.

opposite the Water Gate

"in front of the Water Gate"

the projecting tower

"the tall tower." The phrase "the projecting tower" means a tall tower that juts out from the wall.

Nehemiah 3:27

Tekoites repaired another section

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These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "the Tekoites repaired another section of the wall"

the Tekoites

These are people from the town of Tekoa. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:5]

the great projecting tower

"the tall tower." The phrase "the projecting tower" means a tall tower that juts out from the wall. It is likely that this phrase refers to the same tower as "the tall tower" in verse 26.

Nehemiah 3:28

priests repaired

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "priests repaired the wall"

above the Horse Gate

The word "above" is used here because the priests' houses were likely located at a higher elevation than the Horse Gate.

opposite his own house

"in front of his own house"

Nehemiah 3:29

repaired the section ... east gate, repaired

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired the section of the wall ... east gate, repaired the wall"

After them

"Next to them"

Zadok ... Immer ... Shemaiah ... Shekaniah

These are the names of men.

Shemaiah son of Shekaniah, the keeper of the east gate

Shemaiah was the keeper of the east gate, not Shekaniah.

the keeper of the east gate

"the person who looked after the east gate" or "the person who opened and closed the east gate"

Nehemiah 3:30

repaired another section ... repaired opposite

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "priests repaired the wall ... repaired the section of the wall ... east gate, repaired the wall ... repaired another section of the wall ... repaired the wall opposite"

After him

"Next to him"

Hananiah ... Shelemiah ... Hanun ... Zalaph ... Meshullam ... Berekiah

These are the names of men.

the sixth son

"son 6" or "son number 6"

opposite his living chambers

"in front of the rooms where he stayed." The word "his" refers to Meshullam.

Nehemiah 3:31

After him

"Next to him"

Malkijah

This is the name of a man.

goldsmiths

A goldsmith is a person who makes gold jewelry and other gold objects.

repaired to the house

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "repaired the wall to the house"

merchants

"sellers" or "traders"

upper living chambers

the higher-level rooms where people stayed

Nehemiah 3:32

merchants repaired

These words refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: "merchants repaired the wall"

Sheep Gate

This is the name of an entranceway in the wall.

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4 [1]Now when Sanballat heard we were building the wall, anger burned within him, and he was furiously angry, and he mocked the Jews.[2]In the presence of his brothers and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore the city for themselves? Will they offer sacrifices? Will they finish the work in a day? Will they bring to life the stones from the piles of rubble after they were burned?[3]Tobiah the Ammonite was with him, and he said, "If only a fox went up on what they are building, it would break down their stone wall!"

[4]Hear, our God, for we are despised. Turn back their taunts on their own heads and give them up to be plundered in a land of captivity.[5]Do not cover over their iniquity and let their sin not be blotted out from before you, for they have provoked the builders to anger.
[6]So we built the wall and all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a desire to work.

[7]But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the work of repairing the walls of Jerusalem was going forward, and that the broken places in the wall were being closed up, a great anger burned within them.[8]They all conspired together, and they came to fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it.[9]But we prayed to our God and set a guard as protection against them day and night because of their threat.
[10]Then the people of Judah said, "The strength of those who carry the burdens is failing. There is too much rubble, and we are not able to rebuild the wall."
[11]Our enemies said, "They will not know or see until we come among them and kill them, and stop the work."
[12]At that time the Jews who lived near them came from all directions and spoke to us ten times, warning us about the schemes they were making against us.[13]So I positioned people in the lowest parts of the wall in the exposed areas. I positioned each family with their swords, spears, and bows.[14]Then I looked, and stood up, and I said to the nobles, and to

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the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Call to mind the Lord, who is great and awesome. Fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

[15]It came about when our enemies heard that their plans were known to us, and God had frustrated their plans, all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.[16]So from that time half of my servants worked only on rebuilding the wall, and half of them held spears, shields, bows, and wore armor, while the leaders stood behind all the people of Judah
[17]and those who were building the wall. Those who carried burdens carried their loads such that each did his work with one hand, and with the other hand he held his weapon.[18]Every builder wore his sword girded at his side, and that is how he worked. The one who sounded the ram's horn stayed beside me.
[19]I said to the nobles and to the officials and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall, far from one another.[20]You must rush to the place where you hear the ram's horn sound and assemble there. Our God will fight for us."

[21]So we were doing the work. Half of them were holding spears from the rising of the dawn until the coming out of the stars.[22]I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant spend the night in the middle of Jerusalem, so they may be for us a guard during the night and a worker in the day."[23]So neither I, nor my brothers, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us changed our clothes, and each of us carried his weapon, even if he went for water.

Nehemiah 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Dedication

The people were so dedicated to rebuilding the walls that they worked with their weapons ready for battle right next to them. Even when they were threatened with an attack, they continued to trust in Yahweh. (See: trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Sanballat uses a series of rhetorical questions. These are intended to show his intense anger against the Israelites.

Links:

Nehemiah 4:1 Notes

Nehemiah 4:1

Now when Sanballat

Here Nehemiah uses the word "now" to signal a new part of the story.

Sanballat

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in [Nehemiah 2:10]

anger burned within him, and he was furiously angry

This speaks of Sanballat becoming very angry as if his anger were a burning fire. These two phrases mean the same thing and are used together to emphasize that he was extremely angry. Alternate translation: "he became furiously angry" or "he became very angry"

Nehemiah 4:2

In the presence of his brothers

"In the presence of his kinsmen" or "In the presence of his clan"

What are these feeble ... Will they restore ... Will they offer ... Will they finish the work in a day?

Sanballat poses these questions to mock the Jews. These can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "These feeble Jews can accomplish nothing. They will never restore the city for themselves. They will not offer sacrifices. They will not finish the work in a day."

feeble Jews

"weak Jews"

in a day

This speaks of not finishing something quickly by saying that it cannot be accomplished in a day. Alternate translation: "quickly"

Will they bring to life the stones from the piles of rubble after they were burned?

Sanballat also poses this question to mock the Jews. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "They will not bring to life again the stones from piles of rubble that were burned."

bring to life the stones from the piles of rubble after they were burned

This speaks of the people rebuilding the city as if they were bring it back to life. Alternate translation: "restore the city and rebuild its walls from the useless stones that were burned and turned into rubble"

from the piles of rubble after they were burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from piles of rubble that someone had burned"

Nehemiah 4:3

Tobiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 2:10]

If only a fox went up on what they are building, it would break down their stone wall

Sanaballat mocks the wall and exaggerates how weak it is by saying that a fox could knock it down. Alternate

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translation: "That wall they are building is so weak that even if a little fox climbed up on it, their stone wall would fall to the ground"

Nehemiah 4:4

Connecting Statement:

Nehemiah begins to pray to God.

Hear, our God, for we are despised

Here the word "we" refers to the Jews. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hear, our God, for our enemies despise us"

give them up to be plundered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let their enemies rob them"

Turn back their taunts on their own heads

The phrase "their taunts" refers to Sanballat's and Tobiah's insults. Here the word "heads" refers to the whole people. Alternate translation: "Turn their taunts onto themselves" or "Cause their insulting words to mock themselves"

land of captivity

"land where they are prisoners"

Nehemiah 4:5

Connecting Statement:

Nehemiah contines the prayer he began in verse 4.

Do ... to anger.

Nehemiah continues the prayer he began with the words "Hear, our God" in verse 4. You may show that this is a prayer by making it a direct quote. "Then I prayed, 'Hear, our God, ... they are prisoners. Do not cover ... the builders to anger.'"

Do not cover over

This speaks of a forgiving a person's sins as if they were a object that could be physically hidden. Alternate translation: "Do not forgive"

let their sin not be blotted out from before you

This metaphor speaks of sin as if it were written words and of God forgiving sin as if he were erasing those words. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "do not forgive their sin" or "I do not want you to forgive their sin"

let ... not

Nehemiah is expressing a desire. He is not asking God to forbid another person from blotting out the sin.

they have provoked the builders to anger

"they have made the builders become angry"

Nehemiah 4:6

So we built the wall

"So we rebuilt the wall"

all the wall was joined together to half its height

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we joined the wall together and it was half its total height"

half its height

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

Nehemiah 4:7

a great anger burned within them

This speaks of the people being very angry as if their anger were something that burned inside them. Alternate translation: "they became very angry" or "they became enraged"

Nehemiah 4:8

against Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "against the people of Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 4:9

set a guard as protection

"put men around the wall to guard the city"

Nehemiah 4:10

There is too much rubble

Rubble is "burned stone" or "broken rock" or "unusable stone."

Nehemiah 4:11

They will not know or see until we come among them

"They will not see us coming until we are beside them"

Nehemiah 4:12

from all directions

This represents many directions. The word "all" is an exaggeration for represents "many." Alternate translation: "from many directions"

spoke to us ten times

Here the number 10 is used to represent "many." Alternate translation: "spoke to us many times"

Nehemiah 4:13

in the exposed areas

"in the vulnerable areas"

I positioned each family

This refers to several people from each family, this likely does not include the women and children. Alternate translation: "I positioned people from each family"

Nehemiah 4:14

Call to mind the Lord

the phrase "call to mind" means to remember. Alternate translation: "Remember the Lord"

Nehemiah 4:15

It came about

"It happened that"

their plans were known to us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we knew about their plans"

Nehemiah 4:16

my servants worked

"my young men worked"

half of my servants ... half of them

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

the leaders stood behind all the people

"the leaders positioned themselves behind all the people"

Nehemiah 4:17

Those who carried burdens

These were people who carried supplies to those who were actually working on the wall.

each did his work with one hand, and with the other hand he held his weapon

This is probably an exaggeration to say that they always had their weapon with them so that if anyone attacked them, they could protect themselves and those around them.

Nehemiah 4:19

I said

Here "I" refers to Nehemiah.

the nobles ... the officials

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These are the leaders referred to in Nehemiah 4:16.

The work is great

Here the word "great" means "large-scale" or "huge."

Nehemiah 4:20

the ram's horn sound

This refers to someone blowing a ram's horn. Alternate translation: "someone blowing a ram's horn"

Nehemiah 4:21

Half of them

Here "Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

from the rising of the dawn until the coming out of the stars

This refers to the whole day, while it is light outside.

Alternate translation: "from the first light of day until the very beginning of the night"

the rising of the dawn

It is the point in time that the sun rises that is "dawn." Here the sun rising is spoken of as if the "dawn" rose. Alternate translation: "the rising of the sun" or "dawn"

Nehemiah 4:22

in the middle of Jerusalem

"within Jerusalem"

Nehemiah 4:23

changed our clothes

"took off our clothes"

5 [1]Then the people and their wives raised a great outcry against their fellow Jews.[2]For there were some who said, "With our sons and daughters we are many. So let us get grain that we may eat and stay alive."[3]There were also some who said, "We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards, and our houses to get grain during the famine."
[4]Some also said, "We have borrowed money to pay the king's tax on our fields and our vineyards.[5]Yet now our flesh and blood is the same as our brothers, and our children are the same as their children. We are forced to sell our sons and our daughters to become slaves. Some of our daughters have already been enslaved. But it is not in our power to help it because other men now own our fields and our vineyards."

[6]I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words.[7]Then I thought about this, and earnestly appealed to the nobles and officials. I said to them, "You are exacting interest, each from his own brother." I held a great assembly against them[8]and said to them, "As for us, we have, according to our ability, bought back from slavery our Jewish brothers who had been sold to the nations, but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold back to us!" They were silent and never found a word to say.
[9]Also I said, "What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations that are our enemies?[10]I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. But we must stop charging interest on these loans.[11]Return to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses and the percentage of the money, the grain, the new wine, and the oil that you exacted from them."
[12]Then they said, "We will return what we took from them, and will require nothing from them. We will do as you say." Then I called the priests, and made them swear to do as they had promised.[13]I shook out the fold of my robe and said, "So may God shake out of his house and possessions every man who does not keep his promise. So may he be shaken out and emptied."All the assembly said, "Amen," and they praised Yahweh and the people did as they had promised.

[14]So from the time I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food provided for the governor.[15]But the former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people, and took from them forty shekels of silver for their daily food and wine. Even their servants were lords over the people. But I did not do so because of the fear of God.
[16]I also continued to work on the wall, and we bought no land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.[17]At my table were the Jews and the officials, 150 men, besides those who came to us from among the nations who were around us.
[18]Now what was prepared each day was one ox, six choice sheep, and also birds, and every ten days all kinds of wine in abundance, yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because the labor was heavy on this people.
[19]Call me to mind, my God, for good, because of all that I have done for this people.

Nehemiah 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Equality

The rich made money from the poor. The rich oppressed the poor by charging interest on loans. Because Nehemiah wanted to treat everyone fairly, he did not collect any taxes from them. This chapter also emphasizes that it was wrong to enslave a fellow Jew. (See: oppress)

Governor

Nehemiah was a governmental leader in Jerusalem, but he was not a king. Jerusalem had a great deal of independence, but it was under the authority of the Persian king. The term "governor" reflects this idea, but a different term may be used

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in translation.

Links:

Nehemiah 5:1 Notes

Nehemiah 5:1

Then the people and their wives raised a great outcry against their fellow Jews

Since they were working on the wall, the workers did not have enough time to work to buy and grow food for their families. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

the people and their wives

The word "people" refers to the men who were working on building the wall.

raised a great outcry

The word "outcry" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "cried out loudly"

Nehemiah 5:3

We are mortgaging our fields

"We are having to pledge" or "We are having to give in pledge"

Nehemiah 5:5

Yet now our flesh and blood is the same as our brothers, and our children are the same as their children

Here the Jews are implying that they are of the same Jewish descent as the other Jews and that they of the same importance as the others. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Yet our families are Jews just like the other Jew's families, and our children are just as important to us as their children are to them"

our flesh and blood

This is an idiom which refers to their family members. Alternate translation: "our family"

Some of our daughters have already been enslaved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We have already sold some of our daughters into slavery"

But it is not in our power to help it because other men now own our fields and our vineyards

Since the mens' fields and vineyards are not in their possession, they are unable to produce the money they need to support their families. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "But we are unable to change this situation because other men now own our fields and our vineyards which we need to support our lives"

it is not in our power

This is an idiom which means that they do not have the resources to do something. Alternate translation: "we are unable"

Nehemiah 5:6

when I heard their outcry

The word "outcry" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "when I heard them cry out"

Nehemiah 5:7

earnestly appealed

The context indicates that Nehemiah was pleading with the nobles and officials, probably including judges, appealing to their sense of right and wrong, rather than bringing formal charges against them in court.

You are exacting interest, each from his own brother

Every Jew would have known that it is wrong under the Law to charge interest to another Jew. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Each of you is charging interest to your own brother, and that is wrong under the Law"

I held a great assembly against them

This means that he brought together a large group of people and brought these charges against them. The meaning of statement this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "I held a great assembly and brought these charges against them" or "I held them on trial in front of the assembly"

Nehemiah 5:8

As for us ... you even

The Hebrew places a separate word "we," which is translated "As for us" here, at the beginning of the sentence to indicate that the speakers are emphasizing that their own actions ("we have bought back from slavery") are good, but those of the hearers ("you even sell your brothers") are wicked. Your language may have another way of indicating this important contrast.

but you even sell your brothers that they may be sold back to us

This means that they are selling their family members, both men and women, as slaves to their fellow Jews. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Now you are selling your own people to be slaves of your fellow Jews, so that they might later sell them back to us"

who had been sold to the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who people had sold as slaves to the nations"

Nehemiah 5:9

Also I said

The pronoun "I" refers to Nehemiah.

What you are doing

"You" here refers to the Jewish nobles.

Should you not walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations that are our enemies?

This is a rhetorical question that Nehemiah is using to scold the nobles. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should walk in the fear of our God to prevent the taunts of the nations that are our enemies."

walk in the fear of our God

This is and idiom. Here "walk" refers to a person's behavior and the way he lives. Alternate translation: "live your life in a way that honors God"

the taunts of the nations that are our enemies

The word "taunt" means "slander" or "mockery" and it can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "the nations who are our enemies from taunting us" or "the enemy nations from mocking us"

Nehemiah 5:10

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lending

borrowing or giving something to someone expecting repayment

loans

This is any money, food, or property that one person could let another person borrow in order to repay debts. The borrower would then be indebted to the lender.

Nehemiah 5:11

percentage

A part of the value of the loan that the borrower was charged in interest.

you exacted from them

"you charged them" or "you made them pay"

Nehemiah 5:12

Then they said

Here "they" refers to the Jewish leaders.

We will return what we took from them

The Jewish leaders are saying they will return the money which the poorer Jews paid in interest charges.

made them swear

Here the word "them" refers to the Jewish leaders.

Then I called

"I" refers to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 5:13

I shook out the fold of my robe

"I shook out the pockets of my robe." Many times in the Old Testament, oaths were physically demonstrated as a witness to what was promised. Nehemiah is demonstrating to the Jewish leaders what will happen if they break the promise they had made.

So may God shake out of his house ... So may he be shaken out and emptied

Here Nehemiah speaks of God taking away all of a man's possessions as if God were shaking him out of his home and possessions like Nehemiah shook out his robe. Alternate translation: "So may God take away from every man who does not keep his promise all of his possessions and his home like I have taken everything out of the fold of my robe"

Nehemiah 5:14

from the time I was appointed

Here "I" refers to Nehemiah.

from the twentieth year until the thirty-second year

"from the 20th year until the 32 year"

of Artaxerxes the king

"that Artaxerxes was king"

twelve years

"12 years" or "during those 12 years." Nehemiah is restating the number of years to emphasize that he did this continually for the full time he was governor.

the food provided for the governor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "ate the food that the people provided for the governor"

Nehemiah 5:15

for their daily

"every day for their"

former governors

"previous governors" or "governors from the past." Nehemiah was not the first governor of Judah.

forty shekels

"40 shekels" or "40 silver coins"

were lords over the people

"oppressed the people" or "forced the people to obey them absolutely"

But I did not do so because of the fear of God

"But because my fear of God I did not take the food" or "But I did not take the food because I feared God"

Nehemiah 5:16

I also continued

"I" refers to Nehemiah.

we bought

The word "we" refers to Nehemiah and his servants.

all my servants were gathered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I gathered all of my servants there"

for the work

"to work on the wall"

Nehemiah 5:17

150 men

"one hundred and fifty men"

At my table were the Jews ... from among the nations who were around us

Nehemiah was responsible for providing food for all of these people. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Also, every day I was responsible to feed at our table the Jews and the officials, 150 people; and we also fed the visitors who came from other countries around us

my table

This refers to the governor's table. It was a communal table for the community and for discussion of issues.

officials

government leaders

Nehemiah 5:18

Now what was prepared each day was

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Each day I told my servants to prepare" or "Each day I told my servants to serve us the meat from"

six choice ... ten days

"6 choice ... 10 days"

wine in abundance

"enough wine for everyone"

yet for all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor

"yet I never asked for the governor's food allowance"

the labor was heavy on this people

Possible meanings are 1) the work that the people were doing was too hard or 2) the word "labor" is a metonym for the demand that the officials were making of the people. Alternate translation: "the officials were forcing the people to do too much work"

Nehemiah 5:19

Call me to mind

This is an idiom. It is a request for God to think about him and remember him. Alternate translation: "Remember me"

for good

This idiom is a request for God to reward him with good things because of the good that he has done for the people. Alternate translation: "and reward me" or "cause good to happen to me"

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6 [1]Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall and that there were no longer any sections left broken open, although I had not yet set up the doors in the gates,
[2]Sanballat and Geshem sent to me saying, "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do harm to me.
[3]I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?"[4]They sent me the same message four times, and I answered them the same way each time.
[5]Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way the fifth time, with an open letter in his hand.[6]In it was written,
[7]You have also appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem, saying, 'There is a king in Judah!' You can be sure the king will hear these reports. Therefore come, let us discuss the matter with one another."

[8]Then I sent word to him saying, "No such things have occurred as you say, for within your heart you invented them."[9]For they all wanted to make us afraid, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and the work will not be done." But now, God, please strengthen my hands.
[10]I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah son of Mehetabel, who was confined in his home. He said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, inside the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. At night they are coming to kill you."[11]I replied, "Would a man like me run away? Would a man like me go into the temple just so he could save his own life? I will not go in!"
[12]I realized that it was not God who sent him, but that he had prophesied against me. Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.
[13]They hired him to make me afraid, so that I might do what he said and sin, so they could give me a bad name in order to humiliate me.
[14]Call to mind Tobiah and Sanballat, my God according to their deeds. Also call to mind the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who tried to make me be afraid.

[15]So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Elul, after fifty-two days.[16]When all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us, they became afraid and they fell greatly in their own eyes. For they knew the work was done with the help of our God.
[17]At this time the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them.[18]For there were many in Judah who were bound by an oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shekaniah son of Arah. His son Jehohanan had taken as his wife the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah.[19]They also spoke to me about his good deeds and reported my words back to him.Letters were sent to me from Tobiah to frighten me.

Nehemiah 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The building of the wall is completed in this chapter.
The ULB sets the lines in 6:6-7 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracle

Completing this city wall in only fifty-two days was considered proof that God had helped the Jews, especially given the opposition that they had experienced from the people in surrounding areas.

Links:

Nehemiah 6:1 Notes

Nehemiah 6:1

Sanballat ... Tobiah

These are the names of men. See how you translated them in [Nehemiah 2:10]

Geshem

This is the name of a man.

I had rebuilt the wall ... I had not yet

Nehemiah supervised the rebuilding of the wall and did not build it by himself. Alternate translation: "we had rebuilt the wall ... we had not yet"

any sections

This refers to sections of the wall. Alternate translation: "any sections of the wall" or "any gaps in the city wall"

Nehemiah 6:2

sent to me

This means that they sent a messenger with a message. Alternate translation: "sent a messenger to me"

Ono

This is the name of a place.

Nehemiah 6:3

I am doing a great work

Nehemiah supervised the rebuilding of the wall. He did not build it by himself. Alternate translation: "We are doing a great work"

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Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?
This rhetorical question is used to challenge Sanballat's request. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot let the work stop and come down to you"
down to you
The word "down" is used here because the plain of Ono where they were requesting Nehemiah to come is at a lower elevation than Jerusalem.
Nehemiah 6:5
Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way the fifth time
Identifying this message separately means it is distinct in some way from the previous four messages and, therefore, should be noted. Alternate translation: " Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same way yet again" or "Sanballat sent his servant to me to deliver a fifth message"
an open letter
The letter was an unsealed diplomatic communication. This was an insult to the recipient because the courier was free to read it and spread its contents among the people of the region.
in his hand
This means he had the letter in his possession, but he did not necessarily carry it in his hand at all times. Alternate translation: "in his possession"
Nehemiah 6:6
It is reported among the nations
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The rumor in the region is"
are planning to rebel
This means that they are planning to rebel against Artaxerxes, the Persian king, who was currently ruling the Jews. Alternate translation: "are planning to rebel against Artaxerxes"
Nehemiah 6:7
the king will hear
"King Artaxerxes will hear"
Therefore come
"Therefore come meet with us"
Nehemiah 6:8
Then I sent word to him
Here "I" refers to Nehemiah and "him" to Sanballat.
No such things have occurred as you say
"None of the things you have written have occurred"
for within your heart you invented them
Here the "heart" refers to the "mind," that is, to one's desires and thoughts. Alternate translation: "for within your mind you invented them" or "for you have made this up in your own imagination"
Nehemiah 6:9
For they all wanted to make us afraid
Here "they" refers to Nehemiah's enemies, Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, and their followers. The word "us" refers to the Jews.
Their hands will drop from the work
This is a descriptive phrase that means that they are stopping their work on the wall. Alternate translation: "They will become discouraged and will stop working"
strengthen my hands
Here Nehemiah requests for God to strengthen him by asking him to strengthen his "hands." Alternate translation: "strengthen me" or "give me courage"
Nehemiah 6:10
Shemaiah ... Delaiah ... Mehetabel
These are men's names.
who was confined in his home
The writer does not give the reason for him being confined, so it is best to say that he was staying at home using the most general words possible. Alternate translation: "who could not leave his house" or "whom the authorities had ordered to stay in his house"
Nehemiah 6:11
Would a man like me run away? Would a man like me go into the temple just so he could save his own life?
Nehemiah uses these rhetorical questions to emphasize that he will not do what Shemaiah has suggested. These questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "A man like me would not run away. A man like me would not go into the temple just to hide to stay alive."
Nehemiah 6:12
but that he had prophesied against me
"but that he had prophesied in order to oppose me"
Nehemiah 6:13
and sin
Using the temple as a place to hide was sinful. It may be helpful to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "and sin by misusing the temple"
a bad name
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "so that they could give me a bad reputation" or "so that they could give a bad report about me"
Nehemiah 6:14
Call to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Remember"
Noadiah
This is the name of a woman.
Nehemiah 6:15
So the wall was finished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We finished the wall"
the twenty-fifth day of the month of Elul
"day 25 of the month of Elul." Elul is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar.
fifty-two days
"52 days"
Nehemiah 6:16
they fell greatly in their own eyes
"they thought much less of themselves" or "they lost confidence in themselves"
the work was done with the help of our God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it was our God who helped us complete this work"
Nehemiah 6:17
sent many letters
The nobles sent messengers to bring these letters to Tobiah. Alternate translation: "sent many messengers with letters"
Tobiah's letters came
Here Tobiah's letters are personified as coming by

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themselves, when they were actually brought by messengers. Alternate translation: "Tobiah sent letters" or "Tobiah sent many messengers with letters"

Tobiah

See how you translated this man's name in [Nehemiah 2:10]

Nehemiah 6:18

who were bound by an oath to him

This speaks of people being loyal to Tobiah because they had pledged an oath to him as if their oath were a rope that bound their bodies. Alternate translation: "who had sworn an oath to him" or "who had made an oath and were loyal to him"

he was the son-in-law of Shekaniah

This means that Tobiah was married to the daughter of Shekaniah. See how you translated "Shekaniah" in [Nehemiah 3:29]

Arah ... Jehohanan

These are the names of men.

Meshullam ... Berekiah

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:4.

Nehemiah 6:19

They also spoke to me about his good deeds and reported my words back to him

"The Jewish nobles told me about Tobiah's good deeds and then told him about my responses"

Letters were sent to me from Tobiah

This can be stated in active form. Tobiah sent messengers to bring the letters to Nehemiah. Alternate translation: "Tobiah sent letters to me" or "Tobiah sent messengers to bring letters to me"

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7 [1]When the wall was finished and I had set up the doors in place, and the gatekeepers and singers and Levites had been appointed,[2]I put my brother Hanani in charge over Jerusalem, along with Hananiah, the overseer of the fortress, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.
[3]I said to them, "Do not open the gates of Jerusalem until the sun is hot. While the gatekeepers are on guard, you may shut the doors and bar them. Appoint guards from those who live in Jerusalem, some at the place of their guard station, and some in front of their own homes."[4]Now the city was wide and large, but there were few people within it, and no houses had yet been rebuilt.

[5]My God put into my heart to gather together the nobles, the officials, and the people to enroll them by families. I found the book of the genealogy of those who returned at the first and found the following written in it.
[6]"These are the people of the province who went up out of the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon took into exile. They returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, each to his city.[7]They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.The number of the men of the people of Israel included the following.
[8]The descendants of Parosh, 2,172.[9]The descendants of Shephatiah, 372.[10]The descendants of Arah, 652.
[11]The descendants of Pahath-Moab, through the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, 2,818.[12]The descendants of Elam, 1,254.
[13]The descendants of Zattu, 845.[14]The descendants of Zakkai, 760.
[15]The descendants of Binnui, 648.[16]The descendants of Bebai, 628.[17]The descendants of Azgad, 2,322.[18]The descendants of Adonikam, 667.
[19]The descendants of Bigvai, 2,067.[20]The descendants of Adin, 655.[21]The descendants of Ater, of Hezekiah, 98.[22]The descendants of Hashum, 328.
[23]The descendants of Bezai, 324.[24]The descendants of Hariph, 112.[25]The descendants of Gibeon, 95.[26]The men from Bethlehem and Netophah, 188.
[27]The men from Anathoth, 128.[28]The men of Beth Azmaveth, 42.[29]The men of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth, 743.
[30]The men of Ramah and Geba, 621.
[31]The men of Mikmash, 122.[32]The men of Bethel and Ai, 123.[33]The men of the other Nebo, 52.[34]The people of the other Elam, 1,254.
[35]The men of Harim, 320.[36]The men of Jericho, 345.[37]The men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, 721.[38]The men of Senaah, 3,930.

[39]The priests: The descendants of Jedaiah (of the house of Jeshua), 973.[40]The descendants of Immer, 1,052.[41]The descendants of Pashhur, 1,247.[42]The descendants of Harim, 1,017.

[43]The Levites: The descendants of Jeshua, through the descendants of Kadmiel through the line of Hodaviah, 74.
[44]The singers: The descendants of Asaph, 148.
[45]The gatekeepers of the descendants of Shallum, the descendants of Ater, the descendants of Talmon, the descendants of Akkub, the descendants of Hatita, the descendants of Shobai, 138.

[46]The temple servants: The descendants of Ziha, the descendants of Hasupha, the descendants of Tabbaoth,[47]the descendants of Keros, the descendants of Sia, the descendants of Padon,[48]the descendants of Lebana, the descendants of Hagaba, the descendants of Shalmai,[49]the descendants of Hanan, the descendants of Giddel, the descendants of Gahar.

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[50]The descendants of Reaiah, the descendants of Rezin, the descendants of Nekoda,[51]the descendants of Gazzam, the descendants of Uzza, the descendants of Paseah,[52]the descendants of Besai, the descendants of Meunim, the descendants of Nephusim.
[53]The descendants of Bakbuk, the descendants of Hakupha, the descendants of Harhur,[54]the descendants of Bazluth, the descendants of Mehida, the descendants of Harsha,[55]the descendants of Barkos, the descendants of Sisera, the descendants of Temah,[56]the descendants of Neziah, the descendants of Hatipha.

[57]The descendants of Solomon's servants: the descendants of Sotai, the descendants of Sophereth, the descendants of Perida,[58]the descendants of Jaala, the descendants of Darkon, the descendants of Giddel,[59]the descendants of Shephatiah, the descendants of Hattil, the descendants of Pokereth-Hazzebaim, the descendants of Amon.[60]All the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants, were 392.

[61]These were the people who went up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer. But they could not prove that they or their ancestors' families were descendants from Israel:[62]the descendants of Delaiah, the descendants of Tobiah, and the descendants of Nekoda, 642.
[63]Those who were from the priests: the descendants of Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai (who took his wife from the daughters of Barzillai of Gilead and was called by their name).
[64]These sought their records among those enrolled by their families, but they could not be found, so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean.[65]Then the governor said to them that they should not be allowed to eat the priests' share of food from the sacrifices until there rose up a priest with Urim and Thummim.

[66]The whole assembly together was 42,360,[67]besides their male servants and their female servants, of whom there were 7,337. They had 245 singing men and women.
[68]Their horses were 736 in number, their mules, 245,[69]their camels, 435, and their donkeys, 6,720.

[70]Some from among the heads of ancestors' families gave gifts for the work. The governor gave to the treasury one thousand darics of gold, 50 basins, and 530 priestly garments.[1][71]Some of the heads of ancestors' families gave into the treasury for the work twenty thousand darics of gold and 2,200 minas of silver.[72]The rest of the people gave twenty thousand darics of gold, and two thousand minas of silver, and sixty-seven priestly garments.

[73]So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel lived in their cities.By the seventh month the people of Israel were settled in their cities."

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text has thirty priestly garments, but it is difficult to understand. Most modern translations have 530 priestly garments. However, some recommend reading thirty priestly garments and five hundred minas of silver.

Nehemiah 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogy

The people who returned from Persia were counted according to their families. Nehemiah ensured that those who lived in Jerusalem had a completely Jewish ancestry.

Different lists

This list is paralleled in Ezra 2. The lists do contain some differences in numbers. This is probably due to the timing of their counting. They were likely counted at different times.

Links:

Nehemiah 7:1 Notes

Nehemiah 7:1

When the wall was finished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When we had finished the wall"

I had set up the doors in place

This was done with help. Alternate translation: "I and others hung the doors"

the gatekeepers and singers and Levites had been appointed

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are: 1) Nehemiah appointed them. Alternate translation: "I assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks" or 2) Someone else appointed them. Alternate translation: "they assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks"

gatekeepers

people assigned to each gate, responsible to control access to the city or temple, as well as to open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the administrator

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singers
vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion
Nehemiah 7:2
Hanani ... Hananiah
These are names of men.
I put my brother Hanani in charge
"I gave the order for my brother Hanani to be the manager"
overseer of the fortress
"official who was in charge of the fortress"
feared God more than many
"feared God more than many other people"
Nehemiah 7:3
I said to them
The word "them" refers to Hanani and Hananiah.
Do not open the gates of Jerusalem until the sun is hot. While the gatekeepers are on guard, you may shut the doors and bar them
Possible meanings are 1) these actions were done by Hanani and Hananiah or 2) these actions were done by Hanani and Hananiah with the help of the gatekeepers or 3) the gatekeepers did these actions under the direction of Hanani and Hananiah.
the sun is hot
"the sun is high in the sky"
While the gatekeepers are on guard, you may shut the doors and bar them
"Shut the doors and bar them while the gatekeepers are still on guard"
gatekeepers
See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1
shut the doors and bar them
"close the gates and lock them"
Appoint guards from those who live in Jerusalem
"Assign guards from those people who live in Jerusalem"
guard station
"guard post" or "guard duty place"
Nehemiah 7:4
no houses had yet been rebuilt
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people had not yet rebuilt the houses"
Nehemiah 7:5
put into my heart
Here Nehemiah's "heart" refers to his thoughts and will. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 2:12]
to enroll them
"to list and register them"
the book of the genealogy
This was a book that no longer exists.
found the following written in it
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "found that someone had written the following in it"
Nehemiah 7:6
These are the people of the province
"These are the descendants of this region"
went up out of
"returned from" or "came back from"
went up
This is an idiom that refers to traveling toward Jerusalem, which was on higher ground than the surrounding area.
whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon took into exile
"whom Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of Babylon, took away from their home country." The army of Babylon did this under the command of Nebuchadnezzar.
Nehemiah 7:7
Zerubbabel ... Jeshua ... Nehemiah ... Azariah ... Raamiah ... Nahamani ... Mordecai ... Bilshan ... Mispereth ... Bigvai ... Nehum ... Baanah
These are the names of men.
The number of the men
A census had been taken when the Israelites first returned to Jerusalem after the exile. The numbers represent how many men belonged to each family group. This sentence introduces the information in the following verses.
Nehemiah 7:8
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is recounting the number of people who returned from exile. The people were grouped by families according to the name of their patriarchs. The number represents the number of men in each family.
Parosh
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 7:9
Shephatiah
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:10
Arah
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:11
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Pahath-Moab ... Jeshua ... Joab
These are the names of men.
through the descendants of Jeshua and Joab
"that is, the descendants of Jeshua and Joab"
Nehemiah 7:12
Elam
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:13
Zattu
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:14
Zakkai
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:15
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Binnui
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:16
Bebai
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:17
Azgad
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 7:18
Adonikam

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This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:19
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Bigvai
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:20
Adin
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:21
Ater
This is a man's name.
The descendants of Ater, of Hezekiah
The writer has shortened this sentence. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Ater, who is a descendant of Hezekiah"
Nehemiah 7:22
Hashum
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:23
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Bezai
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:24
Hariph
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:25
Gibeon
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:26
Bethlehem and Netophah
These are the names of places in Judah.
Nehemiah 7:27
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Anathoth
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:28
Beth Azmaveth
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:29
Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:30
Ramah and Geba
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 7:31
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Mikmash
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:32
Bethel and Ai
These are names of places.
Nehemiah 7:33
Nebo
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:34
Elam
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:35
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Harim
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:36
Jericho
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:37
Lod, Hadid, and Ono
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:38
Senaah
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 7:39
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Jedaiah ... Jeshua
These are names of men.
of the house of Jeshua
The word "house" is a metonym for family. Alternate translation: "from the family of Jeshua"
Nehemiah 7:40
Immer
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:41
Pashhur
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:42
Harim
This is a man's name.
Nehemiah 7:43
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Jeshua ... Kadmiel ... Hodaviah
These are all names of men.
Nehemiah 7:44
Asaph
This is a man's name.
singers
See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
Nehemiah 7:45
Shallum ... Ater ... Talmon ... Akkub ... Hatita ... Shobai
This is a man's name.
gatekeepers
See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
Nehemiah 7:46
General Information:
These verses continue the names of people whose descendants returned from the exile.

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Ziha ... Hasupha ... Tabbaoth
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:47
Keros ... Sia ... Padon
These are names of men.
Sia
This is the same man known by the name Siaha in Ezra 2:44.
Nehemiah 7:48
Lebana, ... Hagaba ... Shalmai
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:49
Hanan ... Giddel ... Gahar
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:50
General Information:
These verses continue the names of people whose descendants returned from the exile.
Reaiah ... Rezin ... Nekoda
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:51
Gazzam ... Uzza ... Paseah
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:52
Besai ... Meunim ... Nephusim
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:53
General Information:
These verses continue the names of people whose descendants returned from the exile.
Bakbuk ... Hakupha ... Harhur
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:54
Bazluth ... Mehida ... Harsha
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:55
Barkos ... Sisera ... Temah
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:56
Neziah ... Hatipha
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:57
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
Sotai ... Sophereth ... Perida
These are names of men.
Sophereth
This is the name of a man who is called Hassophereth in Ezra 2:55.
Perida
This is the name of a man who is also called Peruda in Ezra 2:55.
Nehemiah 7:58
Jaala ... Darkon ... Giddel
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:59
Shephatiah ... Hattil ... Pokereth-Hazzebaim ... Amon
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:61
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
went up
This is an idiom that refers to traveling toward Jerusalem, which was on higher ground than the surrounding area. Alternate translation: "returned" or "came back"
Tel Melah ... Tel Harsha ... Kerub ... Addon ... Immer
These are names of places.
Nehemiah 7:62
Delaiah ... Tobiah ... Nekoda
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:63
Habaiah ... Hakkoz ... Barzillai
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 7:64
These sought their records among those enrolled by their families
"They searched their written genealogical records"
These sought
"These" refers to the descendants of Hobaiah, Hakkoz and Barzillai (Nehemiah 7:63).
but they could not be found
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "but they could not find their records"
they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean
This can be translated in active form. The abstract noun "priesthood" can be translated as the verb "work as priests." Alternate translation: "the governor treated them as if they were unclean and did not allow them to work as priests"
Nehemiah 7:65
until there rose up a priest with Urim and Thummim
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until a priest with Urim and Thummim approved"
Urim and Thummim
These were sacred stones that the high priest carried on his breastplate and used at times to determine God's will.
Nehemiah 7:66
Connecting Statement:
Nehemiah is continuing to recount the number of people who returned from exile.
The whole assembly together
"The whole group together"
was 42,360
"was 42,360 people"
Nehemiah 7:67
singing men and women
"male singers and female singers"
Nehemiah 7:68
736 ... 245
"seven hundred and thirty-six ... two hundred and forty-five." These are numbers of animals brought back.
Nehemiah 7:69
435 ... 6,720
"four hundred and thirty-five ... six thousand seven hundred and twenty." These are numbers of animals brought back.
Nehemiah 7:70
the heads of ancestors' families

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"the chief patriarchs" or "the leaders of the clans"
gave to the treasury
"put into the treasury"
one thousand darics
"1,000 darics"
darics of gold
A daric was a small gold coin that people in the Persian Empire used.
50 basins
"fifty basins." These are large bowls.
530 priestly garments
"five hundred thirty priestly garments." These are items of clothing worn by the priests.
Nehemiah 7:71
twenty thousand darics
"20,000 darics"
2,200 minas of silver
"two thousand two hundred minas of silver." A mina is about one half of a kilogram in weight.
Nehemiah 7:72
two thousand minas
"2,000 minas"
sixty-seven priestly garments
"67 priestly garments"
Nehemiah 7:73
gatekeepers
See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
singers
See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
some of the people
The implied information is that this refers to some of the Israelites who were not priests or other temple workers.
all Israel
Possible meanings are: 1) all the groups of Israelites that are listed in this verse or 2) the rest of the Israelites who did not work in the temple.
the seventh month
"month 7." This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
were settled in their cities
"lived in their own cities"

8 [1]All the people gathered as one man in the open area in front of the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Yahweh had commanded Israel.[2]On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all who could hear and understand.[3]He faced the open area in front of the Water Gate, and he read from it from early morning until midday, before men and women, and any who could understand, and all the people listened attentively to the book of the law.
[4]Then Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform which the people had made for the purpose. Standing beside him were Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right side; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam were standing on his left side.[5]Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above the people, and when he opened it all the people stood up.
[6]Ezra blessed Yahweh, the great God, and all the people lifted up their hands and answered, "Amen! Amen!" Then they bowed down and worshiped Yahweh with their faces to the ground.[7]Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah—the Levites—helped the people understand the law, while the people remained in their place.[1][8]They read in the book, The Law of God, making it clear with interpretation and giving the meaning so the people understood the reading.

[9]Nehemiah the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting to the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to Yahweh your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law.[10]Then Nehemiah said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and have something sweet to drink, and send some of it to one who has nothing prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of Yahweh is your strength."
[11]So the Levites made the people be quiet, saying, "Hush! for this day is holy. Do not be grieved."[12]Then all the people went their way to eat and to drink and to share food and to celebrate with great joy because they had understood the words that were made known to them.

[13]On the second day the leaders of the ancestors' families from all the people, the priests and the Levites, came together to Ezra the scribe to gain insight from the words of the law.[14]They found written in the law how Yahweh had commanded through Moses that the people of Israel should live in shelters during the festival of the seventh month.[15]They should make a proclamation in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out into the hill country, and bring back branches from olive and wild olive trees, and from myrtle, palms and shade trees, to make shelters, as it is written."
[16]So the people went out and brought the branches back and made themselves shelters, each on their own roofs, in their courtyards, in the courts of the house of God, in the open area in front of the Water Gate, and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim.[17]All the assembly of those who had returned from captivity made shelters and lived in them. For since the days of Joshua son of Nun to that day, the people of Israel had not celebrated this festival, and so their joy was very great.
[18]Also day by day, from the first day to the last, Ezra read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival for seven days and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, in obedience to the decree.

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[1]Most modern translations identify as Levites all the persons named in this verse. However, some modern translations put the Levites in the same list as the individuals first named.

Nehemiah 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Reading of the law

During the exile, the Hebrew language was no longer spoken. Only the priests and Levites still understood it. Ezra read the book of the law to the people in Hebrew and the Levites walked among the crowd translating it into Aramaic for the people to understand. (See: priest and lawofmoses)

Festival of Shelters

After they heard Ezra read the law of Moses, the people obeyed it by making temporary shelters for themselves with tree branches. They did this to remember that their ancestors slept in shelters when they came out of slavery in Egypt.

Links:

Nehemiah 8:1 Notes

Nehemiah 8:1

All the people gathered as one man

The word "all" is a generalization that indicates the people as a whole came together. Alternate translation: "The people gathered all together"

Water Gate

This was the name of a large opening or doorway in the wall.

the book of the law of Moses

This would have been all or part of the first five books of the Old Testament.

Nehemiah 8:2

On the first day of the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day of the seventh month is near the middle of September on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "On day 1 of month 7"

brought the law

"brought The Book of the Law"

all who could hear and understand

This would include children who were old enough to understand what was being read.

Nehemiah 8:3

He faced the open area

"He turned towards the open area"

he read from it

Here "it" refers to the Book of the law of Moses.

Nehemiah 8:4

Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah ... Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam

These are all names of men.

Nehemiah 8:5

Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people

The abstract noun "sight" can be expressed with the verb "see." Alternate translation: "Everyone saw Ezra open the book"

the book

"The Book of the Law"

he was standing above the people

"he was standing higher than the people"

when he opened it all the people stood up

The people stood up out of respect for God's word.

Nehemiah 8:6

Ezra blessed Yahweh

Ezra thanked Yahweh or Ezra praised Yahweh or Ezra said that he desired that Yahweh be pleased with Ezra and Ezra's people.

Nehemiah 8:8

They read in the book

The word "They" here refers to the Levites.

making it clear with interpretation and giving the meaning

The abstract nouns "interpretation" and "meaning" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "clearly interpreting and explaining it"

the reading

"what was read"

Nehemiah 8:9

For all the people wept

This is a generalization that indicates there was great weeping among the people. Alternate translation: "For the people wept greatly"

Nehemiah 8:10

eat the fat and have something sweet to drink

The implied information is that the people were told to feast on rich food and sweet drinks. Alternate translation: "eat rich food and drink something sweet"

Do not be grieved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not grieve"

for the joy of Yahweh is your strength

The abstract nouns "joy" and "strength" can be expressed as verbs or adjectives. Alternate translation: "rejoicing in Yahweh will protect you" or "being joyful in Yahweh will be your strong refuge"

Nehemiah 8:11

Hush!

"Be quiet!" or "Be silent!"

Do not be grieved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not grieve"

Nehemiah 8:12

celebrate with great joy

The abstract noun "joy" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "rejoice greatly"

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the words that were made known to them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the words that he declared to them"
Nehemiah 8:13
On the second day
"On day 2" or "On the next day"
to gain insight from
The abstract noun "insight" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "to understand"
Nehemiah 8:14
should live in shelters
These were temporary shelters that people made out of branches and leaves.
the seventh month
"month 7." This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
Nehemiah 8:15
They should make a proclamation
"They should announce"
myrtle
a kind of small tree with colorful flowers
shade trees
"leafy trees"
as it is written
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Moses wrote about it"
Nehemiah 8:16
made themselves shelters
"each built their own shelters"
Water Gate ... Gate of Ephraim
These are names of large openings or doorways in the wall.
in the square at the Gate of Ephraim
"in the open place by the Gate of Ephraim"
Nehemiah 8:17
For since the days of Joshua
"From the days of Joshua"
son of Nun
"Nun" here is a man's name.
their joy was very great
The abstract noun "joy" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the people were very joyful"
Nehemiah 8:18
day by day
This idiom means "each day."
from the first day to the last
The implied information is that it was during the entire week of the festival. Alternate translation: "from the first day to the last day of the week"
They kept the festival
"They made a feast" or "They celebrated the festival"
on the eighth day
"on day 8"
solemn assembly
This was a special religious gathering.
in obedience to the decree
The implied information is that "the decree" was the command of Yahweh about how the Festival of Shelters was to end. Alternate translation: "as God had commanded"

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9 [1]Now on the twenty-fourth day of the same month the people of Israel were assembled and they were fasting, and they were wearing sackcloth, and they put dust on their heads.[2]The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all the foreigners. They stood and confessed their own sins and the iniquities of their ancestors.
[3]They stood up in their places, and for one-fourth of the day they read from the book of the law of Yahweh their God. For another fourth of the day they were confessing and bowing down before Yahweh their God.[4]The Levites, Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani, stood on the stairs and they called out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God.

[5]Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah said, "Stand up and give praise to Yahweh your God forever and ever.""May they bless your glorious name, and may it be exalted above every blessing and praise.
[6]You are Yahweh. You alone. You have made heaven, the highest heavens, with all their host, and the earth and everything on it, and the seas and all that is in them. You give life to them all, and the host of heaven worship you.
[7]You are Yahweh, the God who chose Abram, and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, and gave him the name Abraham.[8]You found his heart was faithful before you, and you made with him the covenant to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

[9]You saw the affliction of our forefathers in Egypt and you heard their cry by the Sea of Reeds.[10]You gave signs and wonders against Pharaoh, and all his servants, and on all the people of his land, for you knew that the Egyptians acted with arrogance against them. But you made a name for yourself which stands to this day.
[11]Then you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the middle of the sea on the dry land; and threw those who pursued them into the depths, as a stone into deep waters.
[12]You led them by a pillar of cloud during the day, and by a pillar of fire during the night to light the way for them to go.
[13]On Mount Sinai you came down and you spoke with them from heaven and gave to them righteous decrees and true laws, good statutes and commandments.

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[14]You made your holy Sabbath known to them, and you gave them commandments and statutes and a law through Moses your servant.[15]You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, and water from a rock for their thirst, and you said to them to go in to possess the land you swore on oath to give them.

[16]But they and our ancestors acted arrogantly, and they stiffened their necks and did not listen to your commandments.
[17]They refused to listen, and they did not think about the wonders that you had done among them, but they stiffened their necks, and in their rebellion they appointed a leader to return to their slavery. But you are a God who is full of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. You did not abandon them.
[18]Even when they had cast a calf out of molten metal and said, 'This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great blasphemies,[19]you, in your compassion, did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them on the way did not leave them during day, neither did the pillar of fire by night to light the way for them to go.
[20]Your good Spirit you gave them to instruct them, and your manna you did not withhold from their mouths, and water you gave them for their thirst.[21]For forty years you provided for them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.
[22]You gave them kingdoms and peoples, assigning to them every corner of the land. Then they took possession of the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and the land of Og king of Bashan.
[23]You made their children as numerous as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you told their ancestors to go in and possess.[24]So the people went in and possessed the land and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites. You gave them into their hands, with their kings and the peoples of the land, that Israel might do with them as they pleased.
[25]They captured the fortified cities and a productive land, and they took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already cut out, vineyards and olive orchards, and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were satisfied and grew fat and enjoyed themselves in your great goodness.

[26]Then they became disobedient and they rebelled against you. They threw your law behind their backs. They murdered your prophets who had warned them to turn back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.[27]So you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer. In the time of their suffering, they cried out to you, and you heard them from heaven, and because of your great mercies you sent them rescuers who rescued them out of the hand of their enemies.
[28]But after they had rest, they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so their enemies ruled over them. Yet when they returned and cried out to you, you heard from heaven, and many times because of your compassion you rescued them.[29]You warned them so they might turn back to your law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to your commands. They sinned against your decrees which give life to anyone who obeys them. They gave the stubborn shoulder-blade and stiffened their neck and refused to listen.
[30]For many years you put up with them and warned them by your Spirit through your prophets. Yet they did not listen. So you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.[31]But in your great mercies you did not destroy them completely or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

[32]Now therefore, our God—you great, mighty, and awesome God who keep your covenant and steadfast love—do not let all this hardship seem little to you that has come on us, on our kings, on our leaders, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our ancestors, and on all your people from the days of the kings of Assyria until today.[33]You are just in everything that has come on us, for you have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.[34]Our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our ancestors have not kept your law, nor paid attention to your commandments or your laws by which you warned them.
[35]Even in their own kingdom, while they enjoyed your great goodness to them, in the large and productive land you set before them, they did not serve you or turn away from their evil deeds.
[36]Now we are slaves in the land you gave our ancestors to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, and behold, we are slaves in it!
[37]The rich produce of our land goes to the kings you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please. We are in great distress.
[38]Because of all this, we make a firm covenant in writing. On the sealed document are the names of our leaders, Levites, and priests."

Nehemiah 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter and the next one form a single section.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Prayer to God
The people prayed and thanked God for his care for them and the blessings he gave to them. They also confessed their sin of disobeying him. (See: bless and confess and sin)
Learning from their ancestor's mistakes
This chapter teaches that the Jews learned from the mistakes of their ancestors. They became determined to worship Yahweh alone, to not intermarry with other peoples, and to worship Yahweh as the law of Moses instructed them. (See: lawofmoses)
Recalling the great power of God
It was common to recall the great things God did for Israel. This is a reminder to Israel of God's power. It is intended to bring the people to repentance and proper worship of Yahweh. (See: repent)

Links:

Nehemiah 9:1 Notes

Nehemiah 9:1
the twenty-fourth day of the same month
"the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month" This is near the middle of October on Western calendars.
the people of Israel were assembled
"the people of Israel came together"
they were wearing sackcloth, and they put dust on their heads
This was in order to show how sorry they were for the wrong things they and their ancestors had done.
Nehemiah 9:2
The descendants of Israel
"The Israelites"
separated themselves from all the foreigners
"no longer had anything to do with those who were not Israelites"
They stood and confessed their own sins and the iniquities of their ancestors
"They stood and admitted the wrong things that they had done and the wicked things their forefathers had done"
Nehemiah 9:3
They stood up
All the Israelites stood up
they were confessing
"they were admitting the wrong things they had done"
bowing down before
"worshiping" or "praising"
Nehemiah 9:4
The Levites, Jeshua, Bani ... stood on the stairs
Some versions translate, "Jeshua, Bani ... stood on the stairs built for the Levites"
Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani
men's names
Nehemiah 9:5
Then the Levites ... said, "Stand up ... ever."
Here the Levites are speaking to the people of Israel.
give praise to Yahweh
"bless Yahweh"
Jeshua ... Kadmiel ... Bani ... Sherebiah ... Shebaniah
These are the names of men. See how you translated them in [Nehemiah 9:4]
Hashabneiah ... Hodiah ... Pethahiah
These are the names of men.
May they bless your glorious name
the Levites are speaking to Yahweh. "May the people of Judah bless your glorious name, Yahweh"
Nehemiah 9:6
with all their host ... the host of heaven worship you
A host is an army. Possible meanings are 1) "host" refers to the army of living beings that God created in the heavens. Alternate translation: "with all their angel armies ... the angel armies of heaven worship you" or 2) "host" is a metaphor that refers to the multitude of lights in the sky. Alternate translation: "with all the stars ... the multitude of stars in the sky worship you"
Nehemiah 9:7
Connecting Statement:
The Levites continue their prayer before all the people.
Ur of the Chaldeans
"Ur, where the Chaldean people group lived"
Nehemiah 9:8
You found his heart was faithful before you
The heart, the inner being of the person, represents the person. Alternate translation: "You saw that he was completely faithful to you"
Canaanites ... Hittites ... Amorites ... Perizzites ... Jebusites ... Girgashites
people group names
Nehemiah 9:9
Connecting Statement:
In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.
You saw
Yahweh saw
you heard their cry
The implied information is that God was moved to action because of the Israelites' cries for help.
Nehemiah 9:10
signs and wonders against Pharaoh
The plagues tested Pharaoh's heart, and they became a witness against his hardness of heart. Alternate translation: "signs and wonders that testified against Pharaoh" or "signs and wonders that condemned Pharaoh"
all the people of his land
"all the Egyptians"
acted with arrogance against them
"were arrogant toward the Israelites" or "mistreated God's chosen people"
you made a name for yourself which stands to this day
Here "name" represents a reputation. Alternate translation: "you made yourself famous and even now people still remember"

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Nehemiah 9:11

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

you divided the sea

God divided

you ... threw those who pursued them into the depths, as a stone into deep waters

In this simile, the writer describes God throwing the Egyptians into the sea as easily as a person would throw a stone into water, and the stone would disappear under the water completely.

Nehemiah 9:12

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

You led them

Yahweh led the Israelites.

Nehemiah 9:13

you came down

When God talks with his people, he is often described as "coming down" or "coming down from heaven." This is a descriptive way of saying that God appeared to that person. Alternate translation: "you appeared" or "you came down from heaven"

righteous decrees and true laws, good statutes and commandments

Both of these double phrases describe the same thing, the law of Moses.

Nehemiah 9:14

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

commandments ... statutes ... law

Each of these three words refers to the law of Moses.

Nehemiah 9:16

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

they and our ancestors

the Israelites at the time of Moses and the people of Israel after the time of Moses

they stiffened their necks

This is an metaphor that means that they were stubborn. Alternate translation: "they were very stubborn"

Nehemiah 9:17

they stiffened their necks

This is an metaphor that means that they were stubborn. See how you translated this phrase in [Nehemiah 9:16]

the wonders that you had done among them

"the miracles that you had done among them"

they appointed a leader to return to their slavery

The Israelites would know that this referred to their ancestors wanting to return to Egypt. Alternate translation: "they appointed a leader to take them back to Egypt where they had been slaves"

who is full of forgiveness

The desire to forgive is spoken of as if it were a liquid that could fill a container. Alternate translation: "who is ready to forgive"

abounding in steadfast love

Love is spoken of as if it were a food crop that Yahweh could share with people. Alternate translation: "always loves his people very much"

Nehemiah 9:18

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

cast a calf out of molten metal

melted metal and molded it in the shape of a calf

Nehemiah 9:19

you ... did not abandon them

Yahweh did not abandon the Israelites.

The pillar of cloud ... the pillar of fire

See how you translated this in Nehemiah 9:12.

Nehemiah 9:20

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

Your good Spirit ... your manna ... water

The writer changes the usual word order to emphasize the good things Yahweh gave his people. Your language may have another way of emphasizing these items.

instruct

teach

your manna you did not withhold from their mouths

This litotes can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "you generously gave them manna"

from their mouths

The mouth is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "from them"

Nehemiah 9:22

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

You gave them kingdoms

Yahweh gave the Israelites kingdoms.

gave them kingdoms and peoples

"enabled them to conquer kingdoms and peoples"

assigning to them every corner of the land

"enabling them to possess every part of the land"

Sihon ... Og

These are the names of kings.

Heshbon ... Bashan

These are names of places.

Nehemiah 9:23

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

You made their children

Yahweh made the descendants of the Israelites at the time of Moses

Nehemiah 9:24

gave them into their hands

The Canaanites are spoken of as if they were small objects that a person could place in the hand of another person. To give something into a person's hand is to give that person complete control over that thing. Alternate translation: "enabled the Israelites to have complete control over them"

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Nehemiah 9:25

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

They captured

The Israelites at the time of Moses captured

a productive land

"a fertile land"

cisterns

holes in the ground where people store water

grew fat

This might be a metaphor for "stopped thinking about Yahweh" or "became complacent."

Nehemiah 9:26

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

They threw your law behind their backs

The law is spoken of as if it were a worthless item that a person could throw away. Alternate translation: "They considered your law worthless and paid no attention to it"

They threw your law

The Israelites threw Yahweh's law.

Nehemiah 9:27

you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "you allowed their enemies to defeat them and cause them to suffer"

you sent them rescuers who rescued them out of the hand of their enemies

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "you sent people to stop their enemies from harming them"

Nehemiah 9:28

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

they had rest, they did evil again before you

Here "they" refers to the Israelites and "you" to Yahweh.

you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "you abandoned them and allow their enemies to defeat them"

Nehemiah 9:29

did not listen to your commands

If your language has a word for "listen" that also means "obey," use it here.

your decrees which give life to anyone who obeys them

Yahweh himself is spoken of as if he were the decrees themselves. Alternate translation: "you even though you give life to everyone who obeys your decrees"

They gave the stubborn shoulder-blade and stiffened their neck

These are images of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders. Here they are a metaphor that represents the people being stubborn. Alternate translation: "They became stubborn"

Nehemiah 9:30

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands

Here "hand" represents power or control. See how you translated these words in [Nehemiah 9:27]

you gave

Yahweh gave

peoples of the lands

"the neighboring peoples" or "the peoples of the lands near them"

Nehemiah 9:32

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

do not let all this hardship seem little to you that has come on us ... until today

It is possible to divide this into two sentences. "Do not let all this hardship seem little to you. The hardship has come upon us ... until today"

hardship ... has come on us

The phrase "come on us" speaks of bad things that happen as if they are people who cause harm. Alternate translation: "harm ... we have suffered"

Nehemiah 9:33

everything that has come on us

The phrase "come on us" speaks of bad things that happen as if they are people who cause harm. Alternate translation: "everything we have suffered"

Nehemiah 9:35

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

while they enjoyed your great goodness to them

"while they enjoyed the good things you gave them"

they did not serve you

"they were not obedient to your law or teaching"

Nehemiah 9:36

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

its good gifts

"all the good things in it" or "all the good things we can get from it"

Nehemiah 9:37

The rich produce of our land goes to the kings

"We pay tribute to kings for working our own land"

They rule

The kings rule.

Nehemiah 9:38

Connecting Statement:

In these verses, the Levites continue to praise Yahweh in the presence of the people of Israel.

Because of all this

because the people had disobeyed and Yahweh had punished them

On the sealed document are the names

The reader should understand that the men wrote their names on the document before it was sealed.

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10 [1]On the sealed documents were Nehemiah, the governor, son of Hakaliah and Zedekiah,[2]Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

[3]Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,

[4]Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk,
[5]Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,
[6]Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,
[7]Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,
[8]Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. These were the priests.

[9]The Levites were: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the family of Henadad, Kadmiel,
[10]and their fellow Levites, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
[11]Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah,
[12]Zakkur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
[13]Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.
[14]The leaders of the people were: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

[15]Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,
[16]Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,
[17]Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,
[18]Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,
[19]Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,
[20]Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
[21]Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,

[22]Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
[23]Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,
[24]Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,
[25]Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
[26]Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,
[27]Malluk, Harim, and Baanah.

[28]As for the rest of the people, who were priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants, and all who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands and pledged themselves to the law of God, including their wives, their sons and their daughters, all who have knowledge and understanding,[29]they joined together with their brothers, their nobles, and bound themselves with both a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and obey all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord and his decrees and his statutes.
[30]We promised that we would not give our daughters to the people of the land or take their daughters for our sons.[31]We also promised that if the people of the land bring goods or any grain to sell on the Sabbath day, we would not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will let our fields rest, and we will cancel all debts.

[32]We accepted the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God,[33]to provide for the bread of the presence, and for the regular grain offering, the burnt offerings on the Sabbaths, the new moon festivals and appointed feasts, and for the holy offerings, and for the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, as well as for all the work of the house of our God.
[34]We—the priests, the Levites, and the people—cast lots for the wood offering. The lots would select which of our families would bring wood into the house of our God at the appointed times each year, to be burned on the altar of Yahweh our God, as it is written in the law.[35]We promised to bring to the house of Yahweh the firstfruits grown from our soil, and each year the firstfruits from each tree.[36]The firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle—according to what is written in the law—and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks we will bring to the house of our God, to the priests who serve in the house of our God.
[37]We will bring the first of our dough and our grain offerings, and the fruit of every tree and new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God. We will bring to the Levites the tithes from our soil because the Levites collect the tithes in all the towns where we labor.[38]A priest, a descendant of Aaron, must be with the Levites when they receive the tithes. The Levites must bring a tenth of the tithes to the house of our God to the rooms of the storehouse.
[39]For the people of Israel and the descendants of Levi are to bring the contributions of grain, new wine, and oil to the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are kept and where the priests who are serving, and the gatekeepers, and the singers stay.We will not neglect the house of our God.

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Nehemiah 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter concludes the passage beginning in chapter 9.

Special concepts in this chapter

The vow

By signing this document, the people vowed or agreed to obey God, not to buy things on the Sabbath and to pay their temple tax. (See: vow and sabbath and temple)

Links:

Nehemiah 10:1 Notes

Nehemiah 10:1

Connecting Statement:

Here begins a list of the people whose names were on the sealed document.

On the sealed documents were Nehemiah ... Zedekiah

The names of these people were written on the documents. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "On the sealed documents were the names of Nehemiah ... Zedekiah" or "On the sealed documents were the names of the following people: Nehemiah ... Zedekiah"

sealed documents

The documents were sealed after the names had been signed on the documents.

Nehemiah

Some people believe that Nehemiah wrote this book and is speaking of himself as if he were someone else because this is an official list.

Hakaliah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 1:1]

Nehemiah 10:2

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents (verse 1) continues.

Seraiah ... Jeremiah

These are names of men.

Azariah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:23.

Nehemiah 10:3

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents (verse 1) continues.

Pashhur, Amariah

These are names of men.

Malkijah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:11.

Nehemiah 10:4

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Hattush

See how you translated this man's name in [Nehemiah 3:10]

Shebaniah

See how you translated this man's name in [Nehemiah 9:4]

Malluk

This is a man's name.

Nehemiah 10:5

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Harim

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:11]

Meremoth

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:4]

Obadiah

This is a man's name.

Nehemiah 10:6

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Daniel, Ginnethon

These are the names of men.

Baruch

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:20.

Nehemiah 10:7

Meshullam

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in [Nehemiah 9:4]

Abijah, Mijamin

These are the names of men.

Nehemiah 10:8

Maaziah, Bilgai

These are the names of men.

Shemaiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:29.

These were the priests

This refers to the previous list of men who signed the document. Alternate translation: "These were the names of the priests who signed the document"

Nehemiah 10:9

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues. Nehemiah begins here to list the names of the Levies who signed the sealed document.

The Levites were

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This refers to those who put their names on the sealed documents. Alternate translation: "The Levites who put their names on the sealed documents were"

Jeshua ... Henadad

These are the names of men. See how you translated them in [Nehemiah 3:18-19]

Azaniah

This is a man's name.

Binnui

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in Nehemiah 3:24.

Kadmiel

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in Nehemiah 7:43.

Nehemiah 10:10

Shebaniah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 9:4]

Hodiah ... Kelita ... Pelaiah

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 8:7]

Hanan

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 7:49]

Nehemiah 10:11

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Rehob

This is a man's name.

Mika

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 10:11.

Hashabiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:17.

Nehemiah 10:12

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Zakkur

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:2]

Sherebiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 8:7]

Shebaniah

This is a man's name.

Nehemiah 10:13

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Hodiah ... Beninu

These are the names of men.

Bani

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:17.

Nehemiah 10:14

The leaders of the people were

This refers to those who put their names on the sealed documents. Alternate translation: "The leaders of the people who put their names on the sealed documents were"

Parosh

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:25]

Pahath-Moab

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:11]

Elam ... Zattu

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 7:12]

Nehemiah 10:15

General Information:

In these verses, Nehemiah continues to list the names of the people who signed the sealed document.

Bunni

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 9:4]

Azgad, Bebai

These are the names of men. See how you translated them in [Nehemiah 7:16-17]

Nehemiah 10:16

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Adonijah ... Adin

These are the names of men.

Bigvai

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:7.

Nehemiah 10:17

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Azzur

These are the names of men.

Ater, Hezekiah

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:20.

Nehemiah 10:18

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Hodiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 8:7]

Hashum

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 7:20]

Bezai

This is a man's name.

Nehemiah 10:19

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Nebai

This is a man's name.

Hariph

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This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:23.

Anathoth

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:27.

Nehemiah 10:20

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Magpiash ... Hezir

These are the names of men.

Meshullam

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:4.

Nehemiah 10:21

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Jaddua

This is a man's name.

Meshezabel, Zadok

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:4.

Nehemiah 10:22

General Information:

In these verses, Nehemiah continues to list the names of the people who signed the sealed document.

Pelatiah

This is a man's name.

Hanan

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:49.

Anaiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 8:4.

Anaiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:8.

Nehemiah 10:23

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Hoshea ... Hananiah

These are the name of men.

Hasshub

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:11.

Nehemiah 10:24

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Hallohesh

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:11]

Pilha ... Shobek

These are the name of men.

Nehemiah 10:25

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Rehum

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 3:17]

Hashabnah

These are the name of men.

Maaseiah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 3:23.

Nehemiah 10:26

Ahiah ... Anan

These are the name of men.

Hanan

This is a man's name.

Nehemiah 10:27

Connecting Statement:

The list of men whose names appear on the sealed documents Nehemiah 10:1 continues.

Malluk, Harim

These are the names of men. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 10:4]

Baanah

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in [Nehemiah 7:6]

Nehemiah 10:28

gatekeepers

This refers to the people assigned to each gate, responsible to control access to the city or temple, as well as to open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.

singers

You may need to make explicit that these are those who sang in the temple. Alternate translation: "temple singers"

the peoples of the lands

"the neighboring peoples" or "the peoples who lived in the lands near them"

all who have knowledge and understanding

This phrase can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "all who were old enough to understand what promising to obey God meant"

Nehemiah 10:29

their brothers, their nobles

"their fellow brothers the nobles" or "their brothers the leaders." These phrases refer to the same people.

bound themselves with both a curse and an oath

This speaks of the people taking an oath and a curse as if the oath and the curse were a rope that physically bound them. Alternate translation: "swore themselves to an oath and a curse" or "they took an oath and called for a curse to come on themselves if they failed to keep it"

to walk in God's law

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "to live by God's law" or "to obey God's law"

which was given by Moses the servant of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which Moses the servant of God had given to Israel"

to observe

"to follow"

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Nehemiah 10:30

General Information:

In these verses, the people describe the content of the oath they were making in Nehemiah 10:29.

would not give our daughters to the people of the land or take their daughters for our sons

This means that they would not allow their sons and daughters to marry them. Alternate translation: "would not give our daughters to marry the people of the land, and we would not take their daughters to marry our sons"

the people of the land

This refers to the people who live in their land who do not worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the people of this land who do not worship Yahweh"

We promised ... we would not give ... or take

The pronoun "we" here includes Nehemiah and the Jewish people, but not the reader of this book.

Nehemiah 10:31

We also promised ... we would not buy ... we will let ... we will cancel

The pronoun "we" here includes Nehemiah and the Jewish people, but not the reader of this book.

seventh year

"year 7"

we will let our fields rest

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "we will not plow our fields" or "we will not grow anything in our fields"

we will cancel all debts

This means that they will not require that people pay them what they owe. Alternate translation: "we will cancel all debts that people owe us" or "we will tell people that they no longer have to pay us back"

Nehemiah 10:32

General Information:

In these verses, the people continue describing the content of the oath they were making in Nehemiah 10:29.

We accepted the commands

"We promised to obey the command"

We accepted

The pronoun "we" here includes all the Israelites including Nehemiah except for the priest and Levites, and does not include the reader of this book

a third of a shekel

"1/3 of a shekel." "A third" means one part out of three equal parts. This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "5 grams of sliver"

for the service of

"to pay for the care of"

Nehemiah 10:33

the bread of the presence

This refers to the 12 loaves of bread baked without yeast kept in the temple and used to symbolize God's presence with his people.

the new moon festivals

These were celebrations held when the moon was just a small crescent in the sky.

Nehemiah 10:34

General Information:

In these verses, the people continue describing the content of the oath they were making in Nehemiah 10:29.

to be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the Levites to burn"

as it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as it states"

Nehemiah 10:35

from our soil

"in our soil" or "on our land"

Nehemiah 10:37

General Information:

In these verses, the people continue describing the content of the oath they started making in Nehemiah 10:28 and 29.

We will bring ... We will bring

The pronoun "we" here includes Nehemiah and the Israelites except for the priests and the Levites, and also does not include the reader of this book

our dough

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) dough made from coarse flour, 2) coarse flour, or 3) ground grain.

and the fruit of every tree and new wine and oil

The words "first of" are understood from the beginning of the sentences. They can be repeated. Alternate translation: "and the first of the fruit of every tree and the first of the new wine and the first of the oil"

the first

"the best"

the storerooms of the house of our God

"the places where things are stored in the temple"

the tithes from our soil

Here "our soil" refers to everything that is grown in the ground. Alternate translation: "the tithes of what we grow in the ground"

Nehemiah 10:38

they receive the tithes

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people give them the tithes"

a tenth

This means one part out of ten equal parts.

the rooms of the storehouse

"the storerooms in the temple"

Nehemiah 10:39

General Information:

In these verses, the people finish describing the content of the oath they were making in Nehemiah 10:29.

the storerooms where the articles of the sanctuary are kept

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the rooms where the priests keep the things that are used in the temple"

We will not neglect the house of our God

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "We will care for the temple"

We will

The pronoun "we" here includes Nehemiah and all the people of Israel but does not include the reader of this book.

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11 [1]The leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one of ten to live in
Jerusalem, the holy city, and the other nine remained in other towns.[2]Then the people blessed all those who
volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

[3]These are the provincial officials who lived in Jerusalem. However, in the towns of Judah everyone lived on his own
property, including some Israelites, priests, Levites, temple servants, and descendants of Solomon's servants.[4]In Jerusalem
lived some of the descendants of Judah and some of the descendants of Benjamin.The people from Judah included:
Athaiah son of Uzziah son of Zechariah son of Amariah son of Shephatiah son of Mahalalel, a descendant of Perez.
[5]There was Maaseiah son of Baruch son of Kol-Hozeh son of Hazaiah son of Adaiah son of Joiarib son of Zechariah, a
descendant of Shelah.[6]All the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468. They were outstanding men.

[7]These are the descendants of Benjamin: Sallu son of Meshullam son of Joed son of Pedaiah son of Kolaiah son of
Maaseiah son of Ithiel son of Jeshaiah,[8]and those following him, Gabbai and Sallai, 928 men.[1][9]Joel son of Zikri was their
overseer, and Judah son of Hassenuah was second in command over the city.

[10]From the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jakin,[11]Seraiah son of Hilkiah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth
son of Ahitub, the chief official of the house of God,[12]and their associates who did the work for the house, 822 men, along
with Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pelaliah son of Amzi son of Zechariah son of Pashhur son of Malkijah.
[13]His brothers were heads of clans, 242 men; and Amashsai son of Azarel son of Ahzai son of Meshillemoth son of Immer,
[14]and their brothers, 128 valiant warriors; their overseer was Zabdiel son of Haggedolim.

[15]From the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah son of Bunni,[16]and Shabbethai and
Jozabad, who were from the leaders of the Levites and were in charge of the outside work of the house of God.
[17]There was Mattaniah son of Mika son of Zabdi, a descendant of Asaph, who was the director who began the
thanksgiving in prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his brothers, and Abda son of Shammua son of Galal son of
Jeduthun.[18]All the Levites in the holy city numbered 284.

[19]The gatekeepers: Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers, who kept watch at the gates, 172 men.
[20]The remainder of Israel and of the priests and the Levites were in all the towns of Judah. Everyone lived on his own
inherited property.[21]The temple workers lived in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of them.

[22]The chief officer over the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani son of Hashabiah son of Mattaniah son of Mika, of
the descendants of Asaph, singers over the work in the house of God.[23]They were under orders from the king, and firm
orders were given for the singers as every day required.[24]Then Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, a descendant of Zerah son of
Judah, was at the king's side in all matters concerning the people.

[25]As for the villages and their fields, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath Arba and its villages, and in Dibon and its
villages, and in Jekabzeel and its villages,[26]and in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet,[27]Hazar Shual, and Beersheba and its
villages.
[28]Some of the people of Judah lived in Ziklag, Mekonah and its villages,[29]En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth,[30]Zanoah, Adullam,
and their villages, and in Lachish its fields and Azekah and its villages. So they encamped from Beersheba to the Valley of
Hinnom.
[31]The descendants of the Benjamites settled in Geba, Mikmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages,[32]Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,
[33]Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,[34]Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,[35]Lod, Ono, and Ge Harashim.[2][36]Some of the Levites who lived in Judah
were assigned to the people of Benjamin.

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[1]Instead of those following him, some scholars suggest his brothers because that construction appears in Nehemiah 11:13, 14, 17, and 19.
[2]Some modern English translations read, Lod, Ono, and the Valley of the Craftsmen. Others read, Lod and Ono, the valley of the craftsmen.

Nehemiah 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The places where the Jews lived

Some people lived in Jerusalem, but most people lived in villages and towns away from Jerusalem. They lived there in order to farm the land raise their animals. The city with its walls was there to provide all of the people with protection if enemies attacked them.

Links:

Nehemiah 11:1 Notes

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Nehemiah 11:1
the people cast lots
"the people threw marked stones"
to bring one of ten
"to bring one family out of every ten families"
Nehemiah 11:3
on his own property, including some Israelites
"on his own property: Israelites"
Nehemiah 11:4
some of the descendants of Judah and some of the descendants of Benjamin
"some of the people of Judah and some of the people of Benjamin"
The people from Judah included:
"From the descendants of Judah:"
Judah ... Benjamin ... Athaiah ... Uzziah ... Zechariah ... Amariah ... Shephatiah ... Mahalalel ... Perez
These are the names of men.
a descendant of Perez
"from the descendants of Perez"
Nehemiah 11:5
Connecting Statement:
In these verses, Nehemiah continues to list the provincial officers who lived in Jerusalem.
Maaseiah ... Baruch ... Kol-Hozeh ... Hazaiah ... Adaiah ... Joiarib ... Zechariah ... Shelah
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:6
Perez
This is a man's name.
All ... were 468
"All ... were four hundred and sixty-eight." Perez had 468 descendants who lived in Jerusalem.
They were outstanding men
"They were courageous men" or "They were valiant men"
Nehemiah 11:7
Connecting Statement:
In these verses, Nehemiah continues to list the provincial officers who lived in Jerusalem.
These are the descendants
"These are some of the descendants." Your language may need to specify that this is not a list of every descendant.
Benjamin ... Sallu ... Meshullam ... Joed ... Pedaiah ... Kolaiah ... Maaseiah ... Ithiel ... Jeshaiah
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:8
Gabbai ... Sallai
These are the names of men.
928 men
"nine hundred and twenty-eight men."
Nehemiah 11:9
Joel ... Zikri ... Judah ... Hassenuah
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:10
Jedaiah ... Joiarib ... Jakin
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:11
Seraiah ... Hilkiah ... Meshullam ... Zadok
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:12
Adaiah ... Jeroham ... Pelaliah ... Amzi ... Zechariah ... Pashhur ... Malkijah
These are names of men.
their associates
"their brothers" or "their kinsmen"
who did the work for the house
"who worked in the temple." The "house" referred to here is the "house of God" mentioned in the previous verse.
822 men
"eight hundred and twenty-two men"
Nehemiah 11:13
His brothers
the brothers of Adaiah, the son of Jeroham (Nehemiah 11:12).
brothers
This word is a metaphor for 1) fellow Israelites or 2) people who did the same work. Alternate translation: "associates" or "fellow workers"
242 men
"two hundred and forty-two men"
Amashsai ... Azarel ... Ahzai ... Meshillemoth ... Immer
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:14
Zabdiel ... Haggedolim
These are the names of men.
128 valiant warriors
"one hundred and twenty-eight courageous fighting men." These were "valiant warriors" or "courageous warriors."
Nehemiah 11:15
Shemaiah ... Hasshub ... Azrikam ... Hashabiah ... Bunni
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:16
Shabbethai ... Jozabad
These are the names of men.
who were from the leaders of the Levites and were in charge
"from the leaders of the Levites, were in charge"
Nehemiah 11:17
Mattaniah ... Mika ... Zabdi ... Asaph ... Bakbukiah ... Abda ... Shammua ... Galal ... Jeduthun
These are the names of men.
who began the thanksgiving in prayer
That is, who directed the singers.
Bakbukiah, the second among his brothers
Possible meanings are 1) Bakbukiah was Mattaniah's kinsman and second in authority to Mattaniah or 2) "Bakbukiah, who led a second group of singers."
brothers
Another possible meaning is "associates" or "fellow workers."
Nehemiah 11:18
the holy city
This expression refers to the city of Jerusalem.
numbered 284
"numbered two hundred and eighty-four." There were 284

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Levites in Jerusalem.
Nehemiah 11:19
gatekeepers
people assigned to each gate, responsible to control access to the city or temple, as well as to open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
Akkub ... Talmon
These are the names of men.
172 men
"one hundred and seventy-two men"
Nehemiah 11:21
Ziha ... Gishpa
These are the names of men.
Ophel
This is the name of a place.
Nehemiah 11:22
The chief officer over
"The overseer of"
Uzzi ... Bani ... Hashabiah ... Mattaniah ... Mika ... Asaph
These are the names of men.
Nehemiah 11:23
They were under orders from the king
"The king had told them what to do"
firm orders were given for the singers
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king had told them specifically what to do about the singers"
Nehemiah 11:24
Pethahiah ... Meshezabel ... Zerah ... Judah
These are the names of men.
at the king's side in all matters concerning the people
"at the Persian king's side as an adviser in all matters concerning the Jewish people"
Nehemiah 11:25
Kiriath Arba ... Dibon ... Jekabzeel
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:26
Jeshua ... Moladah ... Beth Pelet
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:27
Hazar Shual ... Beersheba
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:28
Ziklag ... Mekonah
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:29
En Rimmon ... Zorah ... Jarmuth
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:30
Zanoah ... Adullam ... Lachish ... Azekah ... Beersheba ... Valley of Hinnom
These are the names of places.
they encamped
Here "they" refers to the people of Judah, and encamped is probably a metaphor for "lived in houses" .
Nehemiah 11:31
Geba ... Mikmash ... Aija ... Bethel
These are the names of places.
Aija
This is possibly another name for the town of Ai.
Nehemiah 11:32
Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:33
Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:34
Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 11:35
Ono, and Ge Harashim
Other possible meanings are 1) Ge Harashim is a different place from Ono whose name is not given. Alternate translation: "Ono, and the valley of the craftsmen" Or 2) Ge Harashim is a description of Ono as "the valley of the craftsmen." Alternate translation: "Ono, the valley of the craftsmen"
Nehemiah 11:36
Some of the Levites who lived in Judah were assigned to the people of Benjamin
It is not clear who assigned these Levites to live with the people of Benjamin. Alternate translation: "They assigned some of the Levites who lived in Judah to serve the people of Benjamin" or "The officials assigned some of the Levites who lived in Judah to serve the people of Benjamin"

12 [1]These were the priests and Levites who came up with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and with Jeshua: Seraiah,
Jeremiah, Ezra,

[2]Amariah, Malluk, Hattush,
[3]Shekaniah, Rehum, and Meremoth.

[4]There were Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah,
[5]Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah,
[6]Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
[7]Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and their associates in the days of Jeshua.

[8]The Levites were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who was in charge of the thanksgiving songs, along with his associates.[9]Bakbukiah and Unni, their associates, stood opposite them during the service.
[10]Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim was the father of Eliashib, Eliashib was the father of Joiada,[11]Joiada was the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.

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12 In the days of Joiakim these were the priests, the leaders of the families: Meraiah was the leader of Seraiah, Hananiah was the leader of Jeremiah,
13 Meshullam was the leader of Ezra, Jehohanan was the leader of Amariah,
14 Jonathan was the leader of Malluk, and Joseph was the leader of Shebaniah.[1]

15 Adna was the leader of Harim, Helkai the leader of Meremoth,
16 Zechariah was the leader of Iddo, Meshullam was the leader of Ginnethon, and
17 Zikri was the leader of Abijah; Piltai was the leader of Miniamin and Moadiah.
18 Shammua was the leader of Bilgah, Jehonathan was the leader of Shemaiah,
19 Mattenai was the leader of Joiarib, Uzzi was the leader of Jedaiah,
20 Kallai was the leader of Sallu, Eber was the leader of Amok,
21 Hashabiah was the leader of Hilkiah, and Nethanel was the leader of Jedaiah.

22 In the days of Eliashib, the Levites Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were recorded as the heads of families, and the priests were recorded during the reign of Darius the Persian. 23 The descendants of Levi, their leaders of families were recorded in the book of the annals up to the days of Johanan son of Eliashib.
24 The leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua son of Kadmiel, with their associates, who stood opposite them to give praise and to give thanks, responding section by section, in obedience to the command of David, the man of God. 25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storerooms by the gates. 26 They served in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scribe.

27 At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the people sought out the Levites wherever they lived, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with joy, with thanksgivings and singing with cymbals, lutes, and harps. 28 The fellowship of singers gathered together from the district around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites.
29 They also came from Beth Gilgal and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem. 30 The priests and the Levites purified themselves, and then they purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

31 Then I had the leaders of Judah go up to the top of the wall, and I appointed two large choirs who gave thanks. One went to the right on the wall toward the Dung Gate.
32 Hoshaiah and half the leaders of Judah followed them, 33 and after them went Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, 35 and some of the priests' sons with trumpets, and Zechariah son of Jonathan son of Shemaiah son of Mattaniah son of Micaiah son of Zakkur son of Asaph.
36 There also were Zechariah's relatives, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. Ezra the scribe was in front of them. 37 By the Fountain Gate they went straight up on the stairs of the city of David, by the stairway to the wall above David's palace, to the Water Gate on the east.

38 The other choir of those who gave thanks went in the other direction. I followed them on the wall with half the people, above the Tower of Ovens, to the Broad Wall, 39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the Old Gate, and by the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate, and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard.
40 So both choirs of those who gave thanks took their place in the house of God, and I also took my place with half of the officials with me. 41 Then the priests took their place: Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with the trumpets, 42 and also Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer, and the singers made themselves heard and Jezrahiah was their leader.
43 They offered great sacrifices that day, and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy. Also the women and the children rejoiced. So the joy of Jerusalem could be heard far away.

44 On that day men were appointed to be in charge of the storerooms for the contributions, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the law for the priests and for the Levites. Each was assigned to work the fields near the towns. For Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who were standing before them. 45 They performed the service of their God, and the service of purification, and so did the singers and the gatekeepers, in keeping with the command of David and of Solomon his son.
46 For long ago, in the days of David and Asaph, there were directors of singers, and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47 In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, all Israel gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers. They set aside the consecrated portion that was for the Levites, and the Levites set aside the consecrated portion for the descendants of Aaron.

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[1]Many modern translations have Malluk as a correction for Malluki in the Hebrew text. The correct form of this name appears in Neh. 12:2.

Nehemiah 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Dedication of the wall

In the ancient Near East, it was common to dedicate an important structure to a god. When it was completed, the wall was dedicated to Yahweh. Long lists of people are present, indicating that "everyone" was present for this and praised Yahweh. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Nehemiah 12:1 Notes

Nehemiah 12:1

who came up

"who arrived from Babylonia"

with Zerubbabel

"under the leadership of Zerubbabel"

Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Jeshua ... Seraiah ... Jeremiah ... Ezra

These are names of men.

Jeshua

The original readers would have understood that Jeshua was the high priest. Alternate translation: "Jeshua the high priest"

Nehemiah 12:2

Amariah ... Malluk ... Hattush

These are names of men.

Nehemiah 12:3

Shekaniah ... Rehum ... Meremoth

These are names of men.

Nehemiah 12:4

Connecting Statement:

The list that began in Nehemiah 12:1 continues.

There were

These words have been added for this translation. If you continue the list that began in Nehemiah 12:1, you can omit these words.

Iddo ... Ginnethon ... Abijah

These are all names of men.

Nehemiah 12:5

Mijamin ... Moadiah ... Bilgah

These are all names of men.

Nehemiah 12:6

Shemaiah ... Joiarib ... Jedaiah

These are all names of men.

Nehemiah 12:7

Sallu ... Amok ... Hilkiah ... Jedaiah ... Jeshua

These are all names of men.

Nehemiah 12:8

Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, ... Mattaniah

These are names of men.

Nehemiah 12:9

Bakbukiah ... Unni

These are names of men.

stood opposite them during the service

Possible meanings are 1) this was during a worship service and these were two groups of singers or other worshipers, or 2) these groups guarded the temple at different times, or "took turns guarding the temple."

Nehemiah 12:10

Jeshua ... Joiakim ... Eliashib ... Joiada

These are names of men.

Jeshua was the father of Joiakim

This is the same Jeshua named in [Nehemiah 12:1]

Nehemiah 12:11

Joiada ... Jonathan ... Jaddua

These are names of men.

Nehemiah 12:12

Joiakim ... Meraiah ... Hananiah

These are names of men.

Seraiah ... Jeremiah

These are names of families named after men.

Nehemiah 12:13

Meshullam ... Jehohanan

These are names of men.

Ezra ... Amariah

These are names of families named after men.

Nehemiah 12:14

Jonathan ... Joseph

These are names of men.

Malluk ... Shebaniah

These are names of families named after men.

Nehemiah 12:15

Connecting Statement:

The list that began in Nehemiah 12:12 continues.

Adna ... Helkai

These are all names of men.

Harim ... Meremoth

These are all names of families that are named after men.

was the leader of

"was the leader of the family of" or "was the leader of the descendants of"

Nehemiah 12:16

Zechariah ... Meshullam

These are all names of men.

Iddo ... Ginnethon

These are all names of families that are named after men.

Meshullam was the leader of Ginnethon

Ginnethon may be another form of the name Ginnethoi.

Nehemiah 12:17

Zikri ... Piltai

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These are names of men.
Abijah ... Miniamin ... Moadiah
These are all names of families that are named after men.
Nehemiah 12:18
Shammua ... Jehonathan
These are all names of men.
Bilgah ... Shemaiah
These are all names of families that are named after men.
Nehemiah 12:19
Mattenai ... Uzzi
These are all names of men.
Joiarib ... Jedaiah
These are all names of families that are named after men.
Nehemiah 12:20
Kallai ... Eber
These are all names of men.
Sallu ... Amok
These are all names of families that are named after men.
Nehemiah 12:21
Hashabiah ... Nethanel
These are all names of men.
Hilkiah ... Jedaiah
These are all names of families that are named after men.
Nehemiah 12:22
Eliashib ... Joiada, Johanan ... Jaddua
names of men
during the reign of Darius
Another possible meaning is "until the reign of Darius"
Nehemiah 12:23
recorded in the book of the annals
This may refer to the Book of Chronicles. The scribes wrote the words in the verses above in a book that recorded the events of each day.
up to the days of Johanan son of Eliashib
The records in the temple recorded only up until Johanan.
Nehemiah 12:24
Hashabiah, Sherebiah ... Jeshua ... Kadmiel
These are names of men.
who stood opposite them to give praise and to give thanks, responding section by section
This refers to how they sang some of their songs in worship. A leader or one group would sing a phrase, then one or two groups that "stood opposite them" would sing a phrase in response.
obedience to the command of David
King David had commanded the Levites how they were to organize and lead worship.
Nehemiah 12:25
Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub
These are names of men.
Nehemiah 12:26
Joiakim ... Jeshua ... Jozadak ... Nehemiah ... Ezra
These are names of men.
in the days of Joiakim ... Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra ... scribe
The date was fixed by listing those who were leading the Jews at the time. "when Joiakim ... Jozadak was high priest, and when Nehemiah was governor and Ezra ... was the scribe"
Nehemiah 12:27
At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem
Possible meanings are 1) "At the time when they dedicated the wall of Jerusalem" or 2) "So that the dedication of Jerusalem's wall could take place."
cymbals
two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound
Nehemiah 12:29
Beth Gilgal ... Geba and Azmaveth
These are the names of places.
Nehemiah 12:31
the leaders of Judah
the leaders of the people who lived in the region of Judah
Nehemiah 12:32
Hoshaiah
These are the names of males.
Nehemiah 12:33
Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam
These are the names of males.
after them went
"behind them followed"
Nehemiah 12:34
Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah
These are the names of males.
Nehemiah 12:35
Zechariah ... Jonathan ... Shemaiah ... Mattaniah ... Micaiah ... Zakkur ... Asaph
These are the names of males.
some of the priests' sons with trumpets, and Zechariah
Some modern translations read, "from among the priests with trumpets, Zechariah"
Zechariah son of Jonathan son of Shemaiah son of Mattaniah son of Micaiah son of Zakkur son of Asaph
All of the names after "Zechariah" are the ancestors of Zechariah. This list connects Zechariah with the famous singer Asaph. "Zechariah who was the son of Jonathan, who was the son of Shemaiah, who was the son of Mattaniah, who was the son of Micaiah, who was the son of Zaccur son of Asaph"
Nehemiah 12:36
There also were
"Along with them were"
Zechariah ... Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, Hanani ... David ... Ezra
These are the names of males.
Ezra the scribe was in front of them
"Ezra the scribe was leading them"
Nehemiah 12:37
Fountain Gate ... Water Gate
These are the names of openings in the wall.
Nehemiah 12:38
choir
group of singers
I followed them
Nehemiah followed them.
Tower of Ovens
This is the name of a tall structure where people kept watch for danger.

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Broad Wall
This is a name for part of the wall.
Nehemiah 12:39
Tower of Hananel ... Tower of the Hundred
These are the names of tall structures where people kept watch for danger.
Gate of Ephraim ... Old Gate ... Fish Gate ... Sheep Gate ... Gate of the Guard
These are the names of openings in the wall.
Nehemiah 12:40
I also took my place
Nehemiah is speaking here. Alternate translation: "I, Nehemiah, also took my place"
Nehemiah 12:41
Eliakim ... Maaseiah ... Miniamin ... Micaiah ... Elioenai ... Zechariah ... Hananiah
These are the names of males who were the priests at that time.
with the trumpets
Possible meanings are 1) only the first seven priests listed from Eliakim to Hananiah carried trumpets or 2) all 15 priests listed from Eliakim to Ezer carried trumpets.
Nehemiah 12:42
Maaseiah ... Shemaiah ... Eleazar ... Uzzi ... Jehohanan ... Malkijah ... Elam ... Ezer
These are the names of males who were the priests at that time.
Jezrahiah
This is the name of a male who was the leader of the singers.
made themselves heard
"sang loudly"
Nehemiah 12:43
rejoice with great joy
"rejoice greatly"
So the joy of Jerusalem could be heard far away
"The joy of Jerusalem" here is a metonym for "the sound that the people of Jerusalem made." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people far away from Jerusalem could hear the sound that the people of Jerusalem made as they celebrated"
Nehemiah 12:44
men were appointed to be in charge
This can be stated in active form. It is not clear who appointed the men. Alternate translation: "they appointed men to be in charge"
the contributions
things the people gave to the priests
For Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites
It seems that the people appointed the men because the people of Judah were grateful for the priests and Levites who were serving.
who were standing before them
The Levites and priests were not just standing, they were serving in their roles. The meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "who were standing before them serving God"
Nehemiah 12:45
gatekeepers
These were people assigned to each gate, responsible to control access to the city or temple, as well as to open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.
Nehemiah 12:46
there were directors of singers
This sentence tells why the people did what they did in Nehemiah 12:45 and gives us more information about the time when David told people how to worship at the temple.
Nehemiah 12:47
In the days of Zerubbabel
Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David and one of the governors in the region of Judah.
They set aside the consecrated portion
"All Israel set aside the consecrated portion"
the descendants of Aaron
the priests in Israel, who descended from Aaron, the brother of Moses

13 [1]On that day they read in the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people. It was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should come into the assembly of God, forever.[2]This was because they had not come to the people of Israel with bread and with water, but they had hired Balaam to curse Israel. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.
[3]As soon as they heard the law, they separated out from Israel every foreign person.

[4]Now before this Eliashib the priest was appointed over the storerooms of the house of our God. He was related to Tobiah.
[5]Eliashib prepared for Tobiah a large storeroom, where previously they kept the grain offering, the incense, the articles, and the tithes of the grain, new wine, and the oil, which were commanded to be for the Levites, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests.
[6]But in all this time I was not in Jerusalem. For in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king. After some time I asked the king for permission to leave,[7]and I returned to Jerusalem. I understood the evil that Eliashib had done by giving Tobiah a storeroom in the courts of the house of God.
[8]This was very displeasing to me and I threw all Tobiah's household articles out of the storeroom.[9]I ordered that they purify the storerooms, and I put back in them the articles of the house of God, the grain offerings, and the incense.

[10]I learned that the Levites' portions had not been given to them, and they had run away, each to his own field, the Levites and the singers who did the work.[11]So I confronted the officials and said, "Why is the house of God neglected?" I gathered them together and stationed them at their posts.

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[12]Then all Judah brought in the tithe of the grain, the new wine, and the oil to the storehouses.[13]I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses Shelemiah the priest and Zadok the scribe, and from the Levites, Pedaiah. Next to them was Hanan son of Zakkur son of Mattaniah, for they were counted as trustworthy. Their duties were to distribute the supplies to their associates.
[14]Call me to mind, my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out the good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and its services.

[15]In those days I saw in Judah people treading winepresses on the Sabbath and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys, and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of heavy loads, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. I warned them against selling food on that day.
[16]Men from Tyre living in Jerusalem brought in fish and all kinds of goods, and they sold them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah and in the city![17]Then I confronted the nobles of Judah, "What is this evil thing you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?[18]Did not your fathers do this? Did not our God bring all this evil on us and on this city? Now you are bringing more wrath on Israel by profaning the Sabbath."

[19]As soon as it became dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I commanded that the doors be shut and that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. I stationed some of my servants at the gates so no load could be brought in on the Sabbath day.[20]The merchants and sellers of all kinds of wares camped outside Jerusalem once or twice.
[21]But I warned them, "Why do you camp outside the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you!" From that time on they did not come on the Sabbath.[22]Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves, and come and guard the gates, to sanctify the Sabbath day.Call me to mind for this also, my God, and have mercy on me because of the covenant loyalty you have toward me.

[23]In those days I also saw Jews that had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.[24]Half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod. None of them knew how to speak the language of Judah, but only the language of one of the other peoples.
[25]I confronted them, and I cursed them, and I hit some of them and pulled out their hair. I made them swear by God, saying, "You will not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves.[26]Did not Solomon king of Israel sin on account of these women? Among many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless, his foreign wives caused him to sin.[27]Should we then listen to you and do all this great evil, and act unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?"

[28]One of the sons of Joiada son of Eliashib the high priest was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite. Therefore I caused him to flee from my presence.
[29]Call them to mind, my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.

[30]Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and established the duties of the priests and the Levites, each to his own task.[31]I provided for the wood offering at the appointed times and for the firstfruits.Call me to mind, my God, for good.

Nehemiah 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem

Nehemiah was eager to make sure that the Jews kept their promise to obey the law. When he returned from Persia, he found many things wrong: one of the store rooms in the temple had been converted into a guest room for Tobiah, the Levites had not received their portions for working in the temple, people were working on the Sabbath, and many had married heathen wives. (See: promise, lawofmoses and temple and sabbath)

Links:

Nehemiah 13:1 Notes

Nehemiah 13:1

in the hearing of the people

"so that the people could hear it"

should come into the assembly of God, forever

"should ever come into the assembly of God"

Nehemiah 13:2

This was because

"They could not come into the assembly because"

Nehemiah 13:4

Eliashib the priest was appointed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they appointed Eliashib the priest" or "the leaders appointed Eliashib the priest"

He was related to Tobiah

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"Eliashib and Tobiah worked closely together"

Eliashib ... Tobiah

These are the names of men.

Nehemiah 13:5

Eliashib prepared for Tobiah a large storeroom

"Eliashib prepared a large storeroom for Tobiah to use"

gatekeepers

people assigned to each gate, responsible to control access to the city or temple, as well as to open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the administrator. See how you translated this in Nehemiah 7:1.

Nehemiah 13:6

But in all this time I was not in Jerusalem

"During the time all this was happening, I was away from Jerusalem"

I was not

Here "I" refers to Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 13:7

a storeroom in the courts of the house of God

This was a room which had previously been purified to store offering supplies (Nehemiah 13:5).

Nehemiah 13:10

the Levites' portions had not been given to them

The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. This can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people had not been bringing into the storerooms their tithes and offerings of food for the temple priests"

they had run away, each to his own field, the Levites and the singers who did the work

"the Levites and the singers who did the work had left the temple, each one going to his own field"

Nehemiah 13:11

Why is the house of God neglected?

Nehemiah uses a rhetorical question to challenge or even ridicule the officials who had not done their work. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have neglected the house of God!"

Nehemiah 13:12

all Judah

The name of the land is a metonym for the people of the land. This is probably a generalization. Alternate translation: "all the people who lived in Judah"

Nehemiah 13:13

Shelemiah ... Zadok ... Pedaiah ... Hanan ... Zakkur ... Mattaniah

These are the names of men.

they were counted as trustworthy

This can be translated in active form. The abstract noun "trustworthy" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I knew that I could trust them"

Nehemiah 13:14

Call me to mind, my God, concerning this

"My God, remember me concerning this"

Nehemiah 13:15

treading winepresses

The word "winepresses" is a metonym for the grapes that were in the winepresses. The people were walking on grapes to get the juice out of them to make wine. Alternate translation: "walking on grapes in winepresses"

treading

walking on something to crush or press it

Nehemiah 13:16

Tyre

This is the name of a city.

Nehemiah 13:17

What is this evil thing you are doing, profaning the Sabbath day?

Nehemiah is using a rhetorical question to scold the leaders of Judah. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are doing an evil thing by profaning the Sabbath day." or "God will punish you for doing this evil thing, for profaning the Sabbath day."

Nehemiah 13:18

Did not your fathers do this? Did not our God bring all this evil on us and on this city?

Nehemiah is using these rhetorical questions to scold the leaders of Judah. These questions can be combined and translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that your fathers did this, and that is why God brought all this evil on us and on this city."

Nehemiah 13:19

As soon as it became dark ... before the Sabbath

"When the sun went down ... and it was time for the Sabbath to begin"

that the doors be shut and that they should not be opened until

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the guards shut the doors and not open them until"

no load could be brought in

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could bring in things they wanted to sell"

Nehemiah 13:20

sellers of all kinds of wares

"people who had brought many different things they wanted to sell"

Nehemiah 13:21

Why do you camp outside the wall?

Nehemiah uses a rhetorical question to rebuke merchants and to emphasize his command. This question can be translated as a statement. The full meaning of this statement can also be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You are camping outside the wall against what I commanded."

I will lay hands on you!

The word "hands" is a metonym for forceful action. Alternate translation: "I will send you away by force!" or "I will remove you by force!"

Nehemiah 13:22

Call me to mind for this also, my God

"My God, remember me concerning this also." See how you translated a similar phrase in Nehemiah 13:14.

Nehemiah 13:23

Connecting Statement:

These verses introduce the action that follows.

Jews that had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab

"Jews that had married foreign women." God had forbidden intermarriage. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

Ashdod

This is the name of a city.

Ammon ... Moab

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These are the names of nations.
Nehemiah 13:24
Half of their children
"As a result, half of their children"
Nehemiah 13:25
I confronted them
"I spoke directly to them about what they had done"
I hit some of them
Nehemiah hit some of them with his hands.
I made them swear by God
"I made them say a promise before God"
Nehemiah 13:26
Did not Solomon king of Israel sin on account of these women?
Nehemiah uses a rhetorical question to scold the men. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that Solomon king of Israel sinned on account of these women."
Nehemiah 13:27
Should we then listen to you and do all this great evil, and act unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?
Nehemiah uses a rhetorical question to scold the men. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We will not listen to you or do this great evil or act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women."
Nehemiah 13:28
Joiada ... Eliashib ... Sanballat
These are the names of men.
the Horonite
This refers to a person from the city of Beth Horon.
I caused him to flee from my presence
"I chased him away" or "I made him leave Jerusalem"
Nehemiah 13:29
Call them to mind
"Think about them" or "Remember what they have done."
See how you translated a similar phrase in Nehemiah 13:14.
they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites
Causing the priesthood to be dishonored and breaking the covenant is spoken of as if they made the priesthood and covenant physically unclean. Alternate translation: "they have dishonored the priesthood and broken the covenant you made with the priests and Levites"
Nehemiah 13:30
Thus I cleansed them
"In this way I purified them"
established the duties of the priests and the Levites
"told the priests and Levites what they were to do"
Nehemiah 13:31
I provided for the wood offering
"I arranged for a supply of wood for the wood offerings"
for the firstfruits
"for the offering of firstfruits at harvest time"
Call me to mind, my God, for good
"Think about all I have done, my God, and bless me because of the good things I have done." See how you translated a similar phrase in Nehemiah 13:14.

Introduction to Esther

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Esther

King Ahasuerus sends away his wife, the queen (1:1–22) Ahasuerus chooses Esther as the new queen (2:1–23) Haman plots to destroy the Jews (3:1–15) Mordecai asks Esther to help her people (4:1–17) Esther pleads with the king for the Jews (5:1–7:10) The result of Haman's plot to destroy the Jews (8:1–9:16) The Feast of Purim (9:17–32) Conclusion (10:1–3)

What is the Book of Esther about?

The Book of Esther tells how a young Jewish woman named Esther became the queen of Persia. As queen, she worked to save all the Jews in the Persian Empire from being destroyed.

This book ends by telling why the Jews celebrate the festival of Purim. The name "Purim" comes from the word "pur." It means "lots" or "dice." Haman, the enemy of Jews, threw dice to choose when to attack and destroy the Jews. The Jews celebrate Purim to remember how Yahweh rescued his people from being destroyed.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title of this book, which is "The Book of Esther" or just "Esther." Or they can choose a clearer title, such as "The Book About Esther."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the Persian Empire?

King Cyrus the Great conquered and ruled over many kingdoms. This was in the part of the world called Persia, which is now Iran. So people named his kingdom the Persian Empire. When Cyrus conquered Babylonia in 539 B.C., he then controlled the Jews whom the Babylonians had exiled.

Why were there Jews in Babylonia when the Persians conquered it?

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians conquered and took into exile the people of Judah. These Jews and their descendants were still in Babylon when the Persians conquered it.

What was meant by "the laws of the Medes and Persians"?

The phrase "the laws of the Medes and Persians" is found in Esther 1:19 and Daniel 6:12. It referred to laws and decrees that could not be changed or removed once they were issued. In the book of Esther, the king made a decree that the

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people could attack the Jews. Later he regretted that decision but he was not able to change the decree.
The term "Medes" refers to a people group that had formed its own nation, but the Persians conquered them.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What different levels of language are in the Book of Esther?

In the Book of Esther, people talk to each other in many different situations. There is the polite and stately talk in the Persian court and the words of royal decrees. Friends and close relatives also talk to each other. There are even the words that one uses in speaking to oneself. Translators should use all the ways their own language has to express these different situations in a way that their readers will identify and understand.

Esther

1 [1]In the days of Xerxes[1] (this is Xerxes who reigned from India as far as Cush, over 127 provinces),[2]in those days King Xerxes sat on his royal throne in the fortress of Susa.
[3]In the third year of his reign, he gave a feast to all his officials and his servants. The army of Persia and Media, the noblemen, and governors of the provinces were in his presence.[4]He displayed the wealth of the splendor of his kingdom and the honor of the glory of his greatness for many days, for 180 days.
[5]When these days were completed, the king gave a feast lasting seven days. It was for all the people in the fortress of Susa, from the greatest to the least significant. It was held in the courtyard of the garden of the king's palace.[6]The courtyard of the garden was decorated with curtains of white cotton and violet, with cords of fine linen and purple, hung on silver rings from pillars of marble. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored paving stones.
[7]Drinks were served in golden cups. Each cup was unique and there was much royal wine that came because of the king's generosity.[8]The drinking was carried out in keeping with the decree, "There must be no compulsion," for in this way the king had given orders to all the officials of his palace to do according to the desire of each man.

[9]Also, Queen Vashti gave a feast for the women in the royal palace of King Xerxes.[10]On the seventh day, when the king's heart was feeling happy because of the wine, he told Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Karkas (the seven officials who served before him),[11]to bring Queen Vashti before him with her royal crown. He wanted to show the people and the officials her beauty, for her features were stunning.
[12]But Queen Vashti refused to come at the word of the king that had been brought to her by the officials. Then the king became very angry; his rage burned within him.

[13]So the king conferred with the men who were known to be wise, who understood the times (for this was the king's procedure toward all who were expert in law and judgment).[14]Now the ones close to him were Karshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memukan, seven princes of Persia and Media. They had access to the king, and they held the highest offices within the kingdom.[15]"In compliance with the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she did not obey the command of King Xerxes, which was brought to her by the officials?"
[16]Memukan said in the presence of the king and the officials, "Not only against the king has Vashti the queen done wrong, but also against all the officials and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Xerxes.[17]For the matter of the queen will become known to all women. It will cause them to treat their husbands with contempt. They will say, 'King Xerxes commanded Vashti the queen to be brought before him, but she refused.'[18]Before the end of this very day the noble women of Persia and Media who have heard of the matter of the queen will say the same thing to all the king's officials. There will be much contempt and anger.
[19]If it pleases the king, let a royal decree be sent out from him, and let it be written in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, which cannot be repealed, that Vashti may no longer come before him. Let the king give her position as queen to another who is better than she.[20]When the king's decree is proclaimed throughout all his vast kingdom, all the wives will honor their husbands, from the greatest to the least significant."
[21]The king and his princes were pleased with this advice, and the king did as Memukan proposed.[22]He sent out letters to all the royal provinces, to each province in its own writing, and to each people in their own language. He ordered that every man should be master of his own household. This decree was given in the language of each people in the empire.

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[1]Xerxes is also known as Ahasuerus.

Esther 1 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The king's divorce
The king's advisers were afraid that husbands would lose their authority when they heard the queen had refused to come

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to show her beauty to the king's guests; so the advisers told him to divorce her.

Links:

Esther 1:1 Notes Esther intro](../front/intro.md)| [>>

Esther 1:1

In the days of Xerxes

"In the time of Xerxes" or "When Xerxes was ruling as king"

this is Xerxes who reigned from India as far as Cush, over 127 provinces

This is background information to help the reader identify Xerxes.

provinces

A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government.

Esther 1:2

sat on his royal throne

Here "royal throne" may refer to his rule over the kingdom. Alternate translation: "ruled the empire"

fortress

This refers to a castle, stronghold or fortified city.

Susa

This was a royal city of Persian kings.

Esther 1:3

In the third year of his reign

"After he had ruled for 2 years"

The army

This likely refers to the leaders of the army. Alternate translation: "The officers of the army"

Esther 1:4

the wealth of the splendor of his kingdom

These words have similar meaning and emphasize how great his kingdom was. Alternate translation: "the great wealth of his kingdom"

the honor of the glory of his greatness

These words have similar meaning and emphasize how great he was. Alternate translation: "the splendor of his greatness"

180 days

"one hundred and eighty days"

Esther 1:5

When these days were completed

"At the end of that feast"

a feast lasting seven days

This was a second feast that was only for the officials in Susa. Alternate translation: "another feast that lasted seven days"

fortress

This refers to a castle, stronghold or fortified city.See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.

Susa

See how you translated the name of this place in [Esther 1:2]

Esther 1:6

a mosaic pavement

A "mosaic" consists of colored stones arranged in an attractive pattern.

porphyry

This is a kind of red and purple rock that contained pieces of crystal.

Esther 1:7

Drinks were served in golden cups

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The guests drank wine from gold cups"

there was much royal wine that came because of the king's generosity

"the king was very generous with the royal wine"

generosity

"great willingness to give"

Esther 1:8

There must be no compulsion

"No one must be forced to drink"

king had given orders to all the officials of his palace to do according to the desire of each man

This statement means that the king told his workers to give all the guests as much wine as they wanted.

Esther 1:10

On the seventh day

"After 6 days"

the king's heart was feeling happy because of the wine

Here "heart" refers to the king, and "feeling happy" is an idiom that means he was drunk. Alternate translation: "the king was drunk with wine"

Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Karkas

These are names of men.

the seven officials who served before him

This is background information to explain who these men were.

Esther 1:11

her features were stunning

"she was very beautiful"

Esther 1:12

at the word of the king that had been brought to her by the officials

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the king's officials told her about his command"

at the word

"at the command"

his rage burned within him

The intensity of the king's anger is spoken of as if it was a fire that burned inside him. Alternate translation: "his rage was as intense as a fire inside him"

Esther 1:13

who understood the times

"who understood the things that happened in their lives"

for this was the king's procedure toward all who were expert in law and judgment

This background information explains why the king called these men.

Esther 1:14

Karshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memukan

These are the names of men.

Esther 1:15

In compliance with the law ... by the officials?

It may be helpful to state who asked this question. Alternate translation: The king said to them, "In compliance with the law ... by the officials?"

In compliance with the law

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"In observance of the law" or "In obedience to the law"
Esther 1:16
Memukan
Translate his name as in [Esther 1:14]
all the officials and all the people ... all the provinces
These are exaggerations to emphasize the damage that the queen's refusal caused.
provinces
a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
Esther 1:17
all women
This is an exaggeration to emphasize the damage that the queen's refusal caused.
Esther 1:18
There will be much contempt and anger
"They will be angry with their husbands and treat them with contempt"
Esther 1:19
Connecting Statement:
Meremoth continues to answer the king.
If it pleases the king ... from him ... before him ... Let the king
Meremoth speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: "If it pleases you ... from you ... before you ... Please"
which cannot be repealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which no one can change"
Esther 1:20
the king's decree ... his vast kingdom
Meremoth speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: "your decree ... your vast kingdom"
When the king's decree is proclaimed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they hear the king's decree" or "When they hear what you have commanded"
vast
very wide
from the greatest to the least significant
This is a merism that refers to both extremes and everyone in between. This probably refers to the husbands, but it is possible that it refers to the wives.
Esther 1:21
Memukan
Translate his name as in [Esther 1:14]
Esther 1:22
He sent out letters
You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.
province
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
every man should be master of his own household
"all men should have complete authority over their wives and their children"
This decree was given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They wrote this decree"

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2 [1]After these things, when the anger of King Xerxes subsided, he thought about Vashti and what she had done. He also thought about the decree that he had made against her.[2]Then the king's young men who served him said, "Let a search be made on the king's behalf for beautiful young virgins.
[3]Let the king appoint overseers in all the provinces of his kingdom, to gather together all the beautiful young virgins to the harem in the fortress in Susa. Let them be put under the care of Hegai, the king's official, who is in charge of the women, and let him give them their cosmetics.[4]Let the young girl who pleases the king become queen in the place of Vashti." This advice pleased the king, and he did so.

[5]There was a certain Jew in the fortress of Susa whose name was Mordecai son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, who was a Benjamite.[6]He had been taken into exile from Jerusalem with the exiles along with those who had been taken into exile with Jehoiachin, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia took into exile.
[7]He was caring for Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, because she had neither father nor mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was lovely in appearance. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

[8]When the king's order and decree were proclaimed, many young women were brought to the fortress of Susa. They were put under Hegai's care. Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put under the care of Hegai, the overseer of the women.[9]The young girl pleased him, and she found favor with him. Immediately he provided her with cosmetics and her portion of food. He assigned to her seven servant girls from the king's palace, and he moved her and the servant girls to the best place in the house of the women.
[10]Esther had not told anyone who her people or relatives were, for Mordecai had instructed her not to tell.[11]Every day Mordecai walked back and forth in front of the courtyard outside the house of the women, to learn about Esther's welfare, and about what would be done with her.

[12]When the turn came for each girl to go to King Xerxes—after she had obeyed the regulations for the women for twelve months, for this was how the time of their beauty treatments was completed: six months with oil of myrrh and six with

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perfumes and cosmetics—[13]when a young woman went to the king, whatever she desired was given to her from the house of the women, for her to take to the palace.
[14]In the evening she would go in, and in the morning she would return to the second house of the women, and to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's official, who was in charge of the concubines. She would not return to the king again unless he had taken great pleasure in her and called for her by name.
[15]Now when the time came for Esther (daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his own daughter) to go in to the king, she did not ask for anything but what Hegai the king's official, who was in charge of the women, suggested. Now Esther received the favor of all who saw her.
[16]Esther was taken to King Xerxes into the royal residence on the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.
[17]The king loved Esther more than all the other women and she received favor and kindness before him, more than all the other virgins. So he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.[18]The king gave a great feast for all his officials and his servants, "Esther's feast," and he granted relief from taxation to the provinces. He also gave gifts with royal generosity.

[19]Now when the virgins had been gathered together a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate.[20]Esther had not yet told anyone about her relatives or her people, as Mordecai had instructed her. She continued to follow Mordecai's advice, as she had done when she was raised by him.[21]In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, two of the king's officials, Bigthana and Teresh, who guarded the doorway, became angry and sought to do harm to King Xerxes.
[22]When the matter was made known to Mordecai, he told Queen Esther, and Esther spoke to the king in the name of Mordecai.[23]The report was investigated and confirmed, and both the men were hanged from a gallows. This account was written, in the presence of the king, in the book of the events of his reign.

Esther 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Esther becomes queen
Esther was humble and took the advice of the royal officials about how to dress for her time with the king. The king chose Esther to be the new queen.
Mordecai warns the king against a plot
Esther's cousin, Mordecai, discovered that two men planned to kill the king. He told Esther, who then told the king. She also gave Mordecai credit for telling her.

Links:

Esther 2:1 Notes

Esther 2:1
After these things
This introduces a new event that happened a while later.
the anger of King Xerxes subsided
"the king became less angry"
the decree
This is refers to the decree in Esther 1:19-20.
Esther 2:2
Let a search be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Tell your servants to search"
on the king's behalf
The men speak to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "on your behalf"
Esther 2:3
Connecting Statement:
The young servants continue to speak to the king.
Let the king ... the king's official
The servants spoke to the king in third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "You should ... your official"
provinces
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
harem
where the wives of a man with many wives live
the fortress
This refers to a castle, stronghold or fortified city. See how you translated this in Esther 1:2.
Susa
See how you translated the name of this place in [Esther 1:2]
Let them be put under the care of Hegai, the king's official, who is in charge of the women
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let Hegai, the king's official, who is in charge of the women, take care of them"
Hegai
This is a man's name.
their cosmetics
A "cosmetic" is a substance such as a cream, lotion, or powder that women usually put on their face or body to improve their appearance.
Esther 2:4

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pleases the king
The servants spoke to the king in third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "pleases you"
Esther 2:5
There was a certain Jew
This introduces Mordecai as a new character in the story.
Susa
Translate the name of this city as in [Esther 1:2]
son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish
"Jair," "Shimei," and "Kish" are men from whom "Mordecai" is the male descendant.
a Benjamite
"of the tribe of Benjamin"
Esther 2:6
He had been taken into exile ... king of Babylonia took into exile
This background information explains how Mordecai came to live in Susa. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia took him and other exiles into exile, along with Jehoiachin, king of Judah"
He had been taken into exile from Jerusalem
The Hebrew text leaves unclear who is being spoken of here. It is perhaps Kish, who seems to have been the great-grandfather of Mordecai. If it was Mordecai himself, then he would be extremely old at the time of the events concerning Esther. Many modern versions leave this matter unclear. A few versions, including the UDB, choose to assume that it was Mordecai who had been taken away from Jerusalem.
Jehoiachin, king of Judah
Esther 2:7
Connecting Statement:
This continues the background information about Mordecai and explains his relationship to Esther.
Hadassah
This is Esther's Hebrew name.
his uncle's daughter
"his cousin"
she had neither father nor mother
"her father and mother had died"
took her as his own daughter
"cared for her as if she was his own daughter"
Esther 2:8
When the king's order and decree were proclaimed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After the king commanded that they search for some beautiful women"
proclaimed
"announced"
many young women were brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they brought many young women"
They were put under Hegai's care
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hegai began to take care of them"
Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put under the care of Hegai, the overseer of the women
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Hegai, the overseer of the women, also began to take care of Esther when they brought her to the king's palace"
palace
See how you translated this in Esther 1:5.
Esther 2:9
The young girl pleased him, and she found favor with him
These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how much she pleased him. Alternate translation: "The young girl greatly pleased him"
The young girl
"Esther"
Esther 2:11
about Esther's welfare
"how Esther was doing" or "about Esther's well-being"
Esther 2:12
General Information:
Verses 12-14 are background information about the customs for the women who became the king's concubines.
after she had obeyed ... perfumes and cosmetics
This is information that gives background information to the other background material in verses 12-14.
after she had obeyed the regulations for the women
"acting in accordance with the requirements for the women"
the regulations for the women
"what the king had commanded that the women needed to do"
beauty treatments
Things done to make the girls look more beautiful and smell good.
Esther 2:13
when a young woman went to the king
These words are repeated from the beginning of Esther 2:12 because so much background information is given there.
whatever she desired was given to her
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she could take whatever she desired"
palace
See how you translated this in Esther 1:5.
Esther 2:14
Connecting Statement:
This continues the background information that began in [Esther 2:12]
in the morning
It is implied that this is the following morning. This information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the next morning"
second house
"a different house"
to the custody of Shaashgaz, ... concubines
"to where Shaashgaz, ... concubines would take care of her"
custody
"supervision" or "protection"
Shaashgaz
This is a man's name.
Esther 2:15
Now when the time came
This introduces a new part of the story.
daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his

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own daughter
This background information reminds the reader of Esther's relationship to Mordecai.
Abihail
Esther's father and Mordecai's uncle
she did not ask for anything but what
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "she asked only for what"
Hegai
See how you translated this man's name in Esther 2:3.
received the favor of all
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "pleased all"
Esther 2:16
the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth
"Tebeth" is the name of the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part December and the first part January on Western calendars.
seventh year
"year number 7"
Esther 2:17
The king loved
This is the romantic use of the word "love."
received favor and kindness before him
The words "favor" and "kindness" here are probably a doublet or hendiadys that emphasizes how much the Esther pleased the king. The word translated "kindness" here is translated "favor" in [Esther 2:9]
set the royal crown on her head
The king did this to show that he was making her his queen.
Esther 2:18
"Esther's feast,"
It may be helpful to state that this is the name of the feast. Alternate translation: "he called it, 'Esther's feast,'"
he granted relief from taxation to the provinces
"he collected fewer taxes from the provinces than he had been collecting"
provinces
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
royal generosity
"generosity that only a king can give"
Esther 2:19
when the virgins had been gathered together a second time
It is unclear when this second gathering happened, and why. Therefore some versions have altered the text somewhat. It is probably best to translate it as it is written.
a second time
"one more time" or "an additional time"
Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate
Possible meanings are 1) Mordecai sat there so he could hear how Esther was doing from the many people who passed through the gate or 2) "sitting at the king's gate" is an idiom that means Mordecai was given a position of authority by the king.
the king's gate
"the gate to the king's palace"
Esther 2:20
as Mordecai had instructed her
Mordecai told her not to tell anyone about her family.
Esther 2:21
In those days
This introduces a new event in the story.
Bigthana and Teresh
These are the names of men.
Esther 2:22
When the matter was made known to Mordecai
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Mordecai learned about what they were planning"
in the name of Mordecai
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "on behalf of Mordecai"
Esther 2:23
The report was investigated and confirmed, and both the men were hanged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The king investigated and confirmed the report, and ordered his servants to hang both men"
a gallows
This was a structure used for killing people by tying one end of a rope around the top of the structure and the other end of the rope around their necks and hanging them from it. Alternate translation: "a frame for hanging people"
This account was written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They recorded this account"
the book of the events of his reign
"the royal history" or "the royal chronicles"

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3 [1]After these things, King Xerxes promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and placed his seat of authority
above all the officials who were with him.[2]All the king's servants who were at the king's gate knelt down and bowed
down to Haman, as the king had ordered them to do. But Mordecai did not kneel or bow down.
[3]Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?"[4]They
spoke with him day after day, but he refused to comply with their demands. So they spoke with Haman to see if the
matter about Mordecai would remain like that, for he had told them that he was a Jew.
[5]When Haman saw that Mordecai did not kneel and show him respect, Haman was filled with rage.[6]He had contempt for
the idea of killing only Mordecai, for the king's servants had told him who Mordecai's people were. Haman sought to
exterminate all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, who were in the entire kingdom of Xerxes.

[7]In the first month (which is the month of Nisan), in the twelfth year of King Xerxes, the Pur—that is the lot—was thrown
before Haman, to select a day and month. They cast the lot over and over until the lot fell on the twelfth month (which is
the month of Adar).

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[8]Then Haman said to King Xerxes, "There is a certain people scattered and distributed among all the provinces of your kingdom. Their laws are different from those of other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so it is not suitable for the king to let them stay.[9]If it is pleasing to the king, give a command to kill them, and I will weigh out ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who are in charge of the king's business, for them to put it into the king's treasury."
[10]Then the king took the signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.[11]The king said to Haman, "I will see that the money is given back to you and your people. You will do with it whatever you wish."

[12]Then the king's scribes were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and a decree containing all that Haman had commanded was written to the king's provincial governors, those who were over all the provinces, to the governors of all the various peoples, and to the officials of all the people, to every province in their own writing, and to every people in their own language. It was written in the name of King Xerxes and was sealed with his ring.[13]Letters were delivered by the hand of couriers to all the king's provinces, to annihilate, kill, and destroy all Jews, from young to old, children and women, in one day—on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (which is the month of Adar)—and to plunder their possessions.
[14]A copy of the letter was made law in every province. In every province it was made known to all the people that they should prepare for this day.[15]The couriers went out and hurried to distribute the king's order. The decree was also distributed within the fortress of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink, but the city of Susa was in confusion.

Esther 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Haman plots against the Jews

Mordecai considered prostrating himself before Haman. This would be considered to be worship. It was wrong to worship someone other than Yahweh. Because of this, he refused to do it on religious grounds. This made Haman angry so he decided to kill all the Jews in the Persian Empire.

Links:

Esther 3:1 Notes

Esther 3:1

After these things

This introduces a new event in the story.

Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite

This is the name and description of Haman, one of the king's officials.

placed his seat of authority above all the officials who were with him

Here "seat of authority" represents his position or status in the government. Alternate translation: "promoted him above the other officials" or "gave him more authority than all the other officials"

Esther 3:2

knelt down and bowed down to Haman

These acts represent submission to the authority of Haman.

Esther 3:4

to see if the matter about Mordecai would remain like that

"to find out what Haman would do about Mordecai's actions"

Esther 3:5

did not kneel and show him respect

Mordecai showed disrespect for Haman's status in the government by not doing these actions.

Haman was filled with rage

Here Haman's rage is spoken of as something that could fill him up. Alternate translation: "Haman became very angry"

Esther 3:6

He had contempt for the idea of killing only Mordecai

"He rejected the idea of killing just Mordecai." This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He decided to kill more than just Mordecai"

sought to exterminate

"was trying to exterminate" or "was looking for an opportunity to exterminate"

exterminate all the Jews

"get rid of all the Jews" or "kill all the Jews"

Esther 3:7

In the first month

"In month one"

which is the month of Nisan

"Nisan" is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on Western calendars.

in the twelfth year of King Xerxes

"in year number 12 of King Xerxes" or "when King Xerxes had reigned for about twelve years"

the Pur—that is the lot—was thrown

"they cast the Pur—that is the lot—"

the twelfth month

"month twelve"

the month of Adar

"Adar" is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on Western calendars.

Esther 3:8

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a certain people
"a group of people" This refers to the Jews as an ethnic group.
scattered and distributed
"who live in many different places"
provinces
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
the king's ... the king
Haman speaks to the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "your ... you"
it is not suitable for the king to let them stay
"the king should not let them remain." This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "the king should remove them"
Esther 3:9
If it is pleasing to the king
"If the king would be pleased to do so" or "If doing so would please the king"
the king, give
Haman speaks to the king in third person here to show respect. Alternate translation: "you, the king, give" or "you, give"
I will weigh out ... into the hands of those
Here "hands" stands for the men. To "weigh out" is an idiom that means to pay them. Alternate translation: "I will pay ... to the men"
ten thousand talents of silver
"330 metric tons of silver"
Esther 3:10
signet ring
a special ring that could be used to imprint the king's official seal on a proclamation
Esther 3:11
I will see that the money is given back to you
The meaning of this phrase is not clear. Possible meanings are 1) "I will return the money to you" or 2) "Take the money and give it to the men just as you have said."
Esther 3:12
the king's scribes were summoned ... a decree containing all that Haman had commanded was written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king summoned his scribes ... they wrote a decree containing all that Haman had commanded"
thirteenth day of the first month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The thirteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.
king's provincial governors
"governors of the provinces." Translate "province" as in Esther 1:1.
It was written in the name of King Xerxes and was sealed with his ring
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They wrote the decree in the name of King Xerxes and Haman sealed it with the king's signet ring"
in the name of
Here "name" represents the authority of the king. Alternate translation: "in the authority of"
Esther 3:13
Letters were delivered by the hand of couriers
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Couriers hand-delivered the letters" or "Courtiers gave the letters directly"
Letters
You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.
annihilate, kill, and destroy
These words mean the same thing and emphasize the completeness of the destruction. Alternate translation: "completely destroy"
thirteenth day of the twelfth month
"day thirteen of month twelve"
which is the month of Adar
"Adar" is the name of the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. The thirteenth day is near the beginning of March on Western calendars.
plunder
steal by force
Esther 3:14
A copy of the letter was made law in every province
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The officials in every province made a copy of the letter become the law"
province
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
In every province it was made known to all the people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They told all the people in every province"
this day
"that day"
Esther 3:15
The decree was also distributed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They also distributed the decree"
the fortress
This refers to a castle, stronghold or fortified city. See how you translated this in Esther 1:2.
Susa
See how you translated the name of this place in [Esther 1:2]

4 [1]When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went out into the middle of the city, and cried out with a loud and a bitter cry.[2]He went up only as far as the king's gate, because no one was allowed to go through it clothed in sackcloth.[3]In every province, wherever the king's command and decree reached, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing. Many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

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[4]When Esther's young women and her servants came and told her, the queen was in great distress. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai (so he could take off his sackcloth), but he would not accept them.[5]Then Esther called for Hathak, one of the king's officials who had been assigned to serve her. She ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what had happened and what it meant.
[6]So Hathak went to Mordecai in the city square in front of the king's gate.[7]Mordecai reported to him all that had happened to him, and the total amount of the silver that Haman had promised to weigh out and put into the king's treasuries in order to put the Jews to death.[8]He also gave him a copy of the decree that was issued in Susa for the Jews' destruction. He did this so that Hathak could show it to Esther, and that he should make it known to her and give her a solemn command to go to the king to beg for his favor, and to plead with him on behalf of her people.

[9]So Hathak went and told Esther what Mordecai had said.[10]Then Esther spoke to Hathak and ordered him to go back to Mordecai.[11]She said, "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner courtyard without being summoned, there is only one law: That he must be put to death—except for anyone to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. I have not been called to come to the king these thirty days."[12]So Hathak reported Esther's words to Mordecai.

[13]Mordecai sent back this message to Esther: "You must not think that in the king's palace, you will escape any more than all the other Jews.[14]If you remain silent at this time, relief and rescue will rise up for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Who knows whether you have come to this royal position for such a time as this?"
[15]Then Esther sent this message to Mordecai,[16]"Go, gather together all the Jews who live in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My young girls and I will fast in the same way. Then I will go to the king, even though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."[17]Mordecai went and did all that Esther had ordered him to do.

Esther 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Mordecai warns Esther to act

Mordecai tells Esther she must beg the king for the Jews' lives, even if she risks her own death.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

There is implicit information translators may not understand. "Who knows whether you have come to this royal position for such a time as this?" This means "maybe God made you the queen so you could save the Jews."

Links:

Esther 4:1 Notes

Esther 4:1

learned of all that had been done

"found out about those letters"

tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes

These acts are signs of severe sadness. Alternate translation: "tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes to show his grief"

Esther 4:3

province

A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.

there was great mourning among the Jews

"the Jews mourned greatly"

Many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes

Possible meanings are 1) they put sackcloth and ashes on the ground and lay down on them or 2) they wore sackcloth and lay down on ashes.

Esther 4:4

young women and her servants

"female servants and male servants"

to clothe Mordecai

"for Mordecai to wear"

Esther 4:5

Hathak

This is the name of a man.

one of the king's officials who had been assigned to serve her

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "one of the officials whom the king had assigned to serve her"

Esther 4:6

Hathak

See how you translated this man's name in [Esther 4:5]

the city square

"the city plaza"

Esther 4:7

Haman

See how you translated this man's name in [Esther 3:1]

Esther 4:8

He also gave him

"Mordecai also gave Hathak"

to beg for his favor

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"to beg for the king's favor"
Esther 4:10
ordered him
or "instructed him"
Esther 4:11
if any man or woman goes to the king ... the king holds out the golden scepter
The conditional clause starting with "if" can be expressed as a statement. It may also be helpful to divide this sentence into two sentences. Alternate translation: "no man or woman is allowed to go to the king inside the inner courtyard without being summoned. The person who breaks this law will be be put to death unless the king holds out his golden scepter to him"
without being summoned
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "without the king summoning him" or "unless the king summons him"
he must be put to death
"he must be killed" or "he must be executed"
thirty days
"30 days"
Esther 4:14
relief and rescue will rise up for the Jews from another place
Here "relief" and "rescue" are spoken of as if they are living things that can rise up. Alternate translation: "someone else will rise up from another place and rescue the Jews"
Who knows whether you have come to this royal position for such a time as this?
The purpose of this question is to have Esther think deeply about her role in this situation. Alternate translation: "Who knows, perhaps it was for just for a time like this that you were made queen."
Esther 4:16
Susa
See how you translated the name of this place in [Esther 1:2]
fast for me ... will fast
Fasting was a symbolic act that the Jews did when they were praying intensely. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "fast and pray for me ... will fast and pray"
three days
"3 days"
Esther 4:17
ordered him
or "instructed him"

5 [1]After three days, Esther put on her royal clothes and went to stand in the courtyard of the king's palace, in front of the king's house. The king was sitting on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance to the house.[2]When the king saw Esther the queen standing in the courtyard, she received favor in his eyes. He held out to her the golden scepter in his hand. So Esther approached and touched the tip of the scepter.
[3]Then the king said to her, "What do you want, Queen Esther? What is your request? Up to half of my kingdom, it will be given to you."[4]Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to a feast that I have prepared for him."

[5]Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, to do what Esther has said." So the king and Haman went to the feast that Esther had prepared.[6]When the wine was being served at the feast, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition? It will be granted you. What is your request? Up to half of the kingdom, it will be granted."
[7]Esther answered, "My petition and my request is this,[8]if I have found favor in the eyes of the king and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and to honor my request, let the king and Haman come to the feast that I will prepare for them tomorrow and I will answer the king's question."

[9]Haman went out that day joyful and glad at heart. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate, that Mordecai neither rose up nor trembled before him with any fear, he was filled with rage against Mordecai.[10]Nevertheless, Haman restrained himself and went to his own house. He sent for his friends and gathered them together, with Zeresh his wife.
[11]Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches, the number of his many sons, all the promotions by which the king honored him, and how he had advanced above all the officials and the servants of the king.
[12]Haman said, "Queen Esther invited no one else but me to come with the king to the feast she prepared. Even tomorrow I am again invited by her along with the king.[13]But all this is worth nothing to me as long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."
[14]Then Zeresh his wife said to Haman and all his friends, "Let them make a gallows fifty cubits high. In the morning speak to the king for them to hang Mordecai on it. Then go joyfully with the king to the feast." This pleased Haman and he had the gallows constructed.

Esther 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about Haman's fall (Chapters 5-7).

Special concepts in this chapter

Esther's respect
Esther approached the king with the utmost of respect. By doing this, her character became respected by the king.

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Links:

Esther 5:1 Notes

Esther 5:1

facing the entrance to the house

"across the room from the entrance of the house" or "looking toward the entrance to the house"

Esther 5:2

she received favor in his eyes

The phrase "received favor" is an idiom that means that he was pleased with her. The word "eyes" refers to his sight and is a metaphor for his evaluation of her. Alternate translation: "he was pleased with her" or "he approved of her"

He held out to her the golden scepter in his hand

He did this to show that he he was pleased with her.

touched the tip of the scepter

She probably did this to to show that she respected his authority and was thankful for his kindness to her.

Esther 5:3

Up to half of my kingdom, it will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you ask for up to half of my kingdom, I will give it to you"

Esther 5:4

If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come ... for him

In order to show respect to a king, people sometimes did not call him "you." This can be translated with the word "you" along with other words that show respect. Alternate translation: "O King, if it pleases you, come and bring Haman ... for you" or "If you are willing to do this, Sir, come, and let Haman come with you .. for you"

Haman

See how you translated this man's name in [Esther 3:1]

Esther 5:6

What is your petition

The abstract noun "petition" can be expressed with the verb "ask for" or "want"? Alternate translation: "What do you ask for" or "What do you want"

It will be granted you

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give you what you ask for" or "I will do for you what you ask"

What is your request

The abstract noun "request" can be expressed with the verb "ask for" or "want"? Alternate translation: "What do you ask for" or "What do you want"

Up to half of the kingdom, it will be granted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you ask for up to half of my kingdom, I will give it to you"

Esther 5:7

My petition and my request

The words "petition" and "request" mean the same thing. She probably used these words together as a way of speaking very formally and respectfully to the king.

Esther 5:8

General Information:

Esther shows respect to the king by using third person to speak to him.

if I have found favor in the eyes of the king and if it pleases the king

In order to show respect to a king, people sometimes did not call him "you." This can be translated with the word "you" along with other words that show respect. Alternate translation: "if you are pleased with me, O King, and if it pleases you"

if I have found favor in the eyes of the king

"Find favor" here is an idiom that means be approved of or that he is pleased with her. "In the eyes of the king" is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "if the king evaluates me and approves" or "if the king is pleased with me"

let the king and Haman come

This can be translated with the word "you" along with other words that show respect. Alternate translation: "please come and bring Haman" or "please come and let Haman come with you"

I will answer the king's question

This can be translated with the word "you" along with other words that show respect. Alternate translation: "I will answer your question"

Esther 5:9

Mordecai neither rose up

Rising was a sign of respect. Mordecai did not give Haman special respect.

he was filled with rage

Being "filled with rage" represents being very angry. Alternate translation: he was extremely angry"

Esther 5:10

Nevertheless

This can be translated with a phrase. "Even though he was so angry"

Haman restrained himself

Restraining himself represents refusing to do something that he wanted very much to do. Haman wanted to show Mordecai that he was very angry. Alternate translation: "Haman refused to show how angry he was"

Zeresh

This is a woman's name.

Esther 5:11

Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches

"Splendor" and "riches" are both abstract nouns. Alternate translation: "Haman told them about how great his wealth was" or "Haman told them about the many great things he owned"

all the promotions by which the king honored him

The abstract noun "promotion" can be expressed with the verb "promote." It means that the king gave him more important work. Alternate translation: "How the king had promoted him many times and honored him" or "how the king had honored him many times by giving him more important work"

how he had advanced above all the officials and the servants of the king

Advancing above people represents becoming more important than them. Alternate translation: "how he had

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become more important than all the officials and the servants of the king"
Esther 5:12
no one else but me
This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "only me"
Esther 5:13
is worth nothing to me
"does not make me happy" or "does not satisfy me"
Esther 5:14
a gallows
a structure used for killing a person by tying one end of a a rope around the top of the structure and the other end of the rope around the person's neck and hanging him from it. See how you translated this in [Esther 2:23]
fifty cubits high
"50 cubits high." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "twenty-three meters high"
he had the gallows constructed
"he told people to construct the gallows"
This pleased Haman
"Haman liked this idea"

6 [1]That night the king could not sleep. He commanded servants to bring the book of the records of the events of his reign, and they were being read aloud to the king.[2]It was found recorded there that Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's officials who guarded the entrance, who had tried to harm King Xerxes.[3]The king asked, "What great honor has been given to Mordecai for doing this?" Then the king's young men who served him said, "Nothing was done for him."
[4]The king said, "Who is in the courtyard?" Now Haman had entered the outer courtyard of the king's house to speak to him about hanging Mordecai on the gallows he set up for him.[5]The king's servants said to him, "Haman is standing in the courtyard." The king said, "Let him come in."[6]When Haman entered, the king said to him, "What should be done for the man whom the king takes pleasure in honoring?" Now Haman said in his heart, "Whom would the king take pleasure in honoring more than me?"
[7]Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king takes pleasure in honoring,[8]let royal robes be brought, robes that the king has worn, and a horse that the king has ridden and on whose head is the royal crest.[9]Then let the robes and the horse be given to one of the king's most noble officials. Let them clothe the man whom the king takes pleasure in honoring, and let them lead him on the horse through the city streets. Let them proclaim before him, 'This is what is done to the one whom the king takes pleasure in honoring!'"

[10]Then the king said to Haman, "Hurry, take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do this for Mordecai the Jew who sits at the king's gate. Do not fail in a single matter of what you have said."[11]Then Haman took the robe and the horse. He dressed Mordecai and led him on the horse through the city streets. He proclaimed before him, "This is what is done for a man whom the king takes pleasure in honoring!"
[12]Mordecai returned to the king's gate. But Haman hurried to his house, mourning, with his head covered.[13]Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that happened to him. Then his men who were known for their wisdom, and Zeresh his wife, said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom you have begun to fall, is Jewish, you will not overcome him, but you will certainly fall before him."[14]While they were talking with him, the king's officials arrived. They hurried to bring Haman to the feast that Esther had prepared.

Esther 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the story of Haman's fall.

Special concepts in this chapter

Approaching the king

It was not possible for a person to easily approach the king. Normally, access to him was very limited. There are several events in this chapter which show the layers of protection surrounding the king.

Links:

Esther 6:1 Notes

Esther 6:1
the book of the records of the events of his reign
"the records of his reign" or "the royal record book"
Esther 6:2
Bigthana and Teresh
These are the names of two men. See how your translated their names in [Esther 2:21]
It was found recorded there
Here "found" is an metaphor for learning. Both "found" and "recorded" can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "They found that the writers had recorded there" or "They learned that the writers had written"
Esther 6:3
What great honor has been given

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This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "What did I do to give honor" or "What did we do to give honor"

Nothing was done for him

This can be expressed in active form. However it may be good to find a way that does not give the impression that servants were accusing the king. Alternate translation: "No one did anything for Mordecai"

Esther 6:4

Haman

See how you translated this man's name in Esther 3:1

the outer courtyard

"the first courtyard from the outside"

hanging Mordecai

It can be made clear what the purpose of hanging him was. Alternate translation: "killing Mordecai by hanging him"

the gallows he set up for him

The gallows was a structure that was used to kill people by hanging them from it. See how you translated "gallows" in [Esther 5:14]

set up

"built"

Esther 6:6

What should be done for the man whom the king takes pleasure in honoring

Here the king speaks of himself in the third person. This can be stated in first person and in active form. Alternate translation: "What should I do for the man whom I take pleasure in honoring"

the king takes pleasure in honoring

Taking pleasure in doing something is an idiom for being glad to do something or wanting to do something. Alternate translation: "the king is glad to honor" or "the king wants to honor"

said in his heart

The heart represents the thoughts and attitudes. Alternate translation: "thought" or "said to himself"

Whom would the king take pleasure in honoring more than me?

This can be expressed as a statement. "Surely there is no one whom the king would take pleasure in honoring more than me!"

Esther 6:8

let royal robes be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let someone bring royal robes" or "tell your servants to bring royal robes"

on whose head is the royal crest

The word "whose" refers to the horse. The royal crest is a special symbol that represents the king's family.

Esther 6:9

Then let the robes and the horse be given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then let them give the robes and the horse" or "Then tell them to give the robes and the horse"

Let them clothe ... in honoring, and let them lead him

"Tell them to clothe ... in honoring and to lead him."

clothe

If your language has a special word for putting someone into especially beautiful clothes, you might want to use it here.

Let them proclaim

"Tell the noble official and servants to proclaim"

Esther 6:10

Do not fail in a single matter of what you have said

The phrase "a single matter" emphasizes that he must do absolutely everything he said. It can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Be sure to do absolutely everything you have said"

Esther 6:12

with his head covered

People often covered their head to show that they were either extremely sad or ashamed.

Esther 6:13

Zeresh

See how you translated this woman's name in [Esther 6:13]

before whom you have begun to fall ... you will certainly fall before him

They spoke as if Haman and Mordecai were in a battle, and Haman was beginning to lose the battle. Here "to fall" represents being dishonored and defeated. Alternate translation: "who has already humiliated you ... he will certainly defeat you"

you will not overcome him

"you will not win against him." They spoke as if Haman and Mordecai were in a battle. Here overcoming a person represents having greater honor than that person. Alternate translation: "you will not have greater honor than he has"

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7 [1]So the king and Haman went to feast with Queen Esther.[2]On this second day, during the banquet of wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It will be granted to you. What is your request? Up to half of the kingdom, and it will be granted."

[3]Then Queen Esther replied, "If I have found favor in your eyes, king, and if it pleases you, let my life be given to me—this is my petition, and I request this also for my people.[4]For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, killed, and annihilated. If we had only been sold into slavery, as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, for no such distress as this would justify disturbing the king."[5]Then King Xerxes said to Esther the queen, "Who is he? Where is this person to be found who has filled his heart to do such a thing?"

[6]Esther said, "The adversary, that enemy, is this evil Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

[7]The king got up in a rage from the wine-drinking at the feast and went into the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg for his life from Queen Esther. He saw that disaster was being decided against him by the king.

[8]Then the king returned from the palace garden into the room where the banquet of wine had been. Haman had just fallen on the couch where Esther was. The king said, "Will he assault the queen in my presence in my own house?" As soon as this sentence came out of the king's mouth, the servants covered Haman's face.

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[9]Then Harbona, one of the officials who served the king, said, "A gallows fifty cubits tall stands beside Haman's house. He set it up for Mordecai, the one who spoke up to protect the king." The king said, "Hang him on it."[10]So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's rage died down.

Esther 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Haman's fall concludes in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Covering Haman's face

When "the servants covered Haman's face," they were showing that he had been condemned to be executed. (See: and condemn)

Links:

Esther 7:1 Notes

Esther 7:1

Haman

See how you translated this man's name in [Esther 3:1]

Esther 7:2

On this second day

"on this second day of feasting"

during the banquet of wine

"as they were drinking wine" or "during the banquet." They were probably also eating food, not only drinking wine.

What is your petition

The abstract noun "petition" can be expressed with the verb "ask for" or "want." Alternate translation: "What do you ask for" or "What do you want"

It will be granted to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give you what you ask for" or "I will do for you what you ask"

Up to half of the kingdom, and it will be granted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If you ask for up to half of my kingdom, I will give it to you"

Esther 7:3

If I have found favor in your eyes, king

"Find favor" here is an idiom that means to be approved of or that he is pleased with her. "In your eyes" is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "If you evaluate me and approve" or "If you are pleased with me"

this is my petition

The abstract noun "petition" can be expressed with the verb "ask for." Alternate translation: "this is what I ask for"

Esther 7:4

For we have been sold

The metaphor "being sold" represents being betrayed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has betrayed us" or "For someone has put us in danger of our enemies"

to be destroyed, killed, and annihilated

Here all three words have the same meaning and are used for emphasis. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for our enemies to destroy, kill, and annihilate us"

Esther 7:5

Where is this person to be found who has filled his heart to do such a thing

To fill one's heart to do something is an idiom meaning to dare to do something. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Where is the one who has dared to so such a thing"

Esther 7:6

was terrified

"was extremely afraid"

Esther 7:7

The king got up in a rage

Being in a rage is an idiom for being extremely angry. Alternate translation: "The king was extremely angry and got up"

to beg for his life from Queen Esther

"to beg Queen Esther to save his life"

He saw that disaster was being decided

Here seeing represents realizing or understanding. Alternate translation: "He realized that disaster was being decided"

disaster was being decided against him by the king

This can be stated in active form. The abstract noun "disaster" can be expressed with the more concrete verbs "destroy" or "kill." Alternate translation: "the king was deciding to cause a disaster against him" or "the king was deciding to destroy him"

Esther 7:8

where the banquet of wine had been

"where they had been drinking wine" or "where the banquet had been." They were probably also eating food, not only drinking wine.

couch

a long piece of furniture where a person can sit or lie down

Will he assault the queen in my presence in my own house?

The king uses this question to show his shock and anger at what Haman was doing. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He even dares to attack the queen in my presence and in my own house!"

assault the queen

"attack the queen." This phrase is a polite way to refer to rape.

As soon as this sentence came out of the king's mouth

Speech coming out of the mouth is a metonym that

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represents speaking. Alternate translation: "As soon as the king said this"

the servants covered Haman's face

Apparently they did this because they understood that the king wanted Haman to be killed. Alternate translation: "the servants covered Haman's face as a sign that he would be killed"

Esther 7:9

Harbona

This is the name of a man.

A gallows fifty cubits tall

You may convert "fifty cubits" to a modern measure. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Esther 5:14]

Esther 7:10

Then the king's rage died down

The king's rage is a spoken of as if it were a large fire that became smaller. Alternate translation: "Then the king's rage lessened" or "Then the king was not so angry"

8 [1]On that day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the property of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and Mordecai began to serve before the king, for Esther told the king how Mordecai was related to her.[2]The king took off his signet ring, which he had taken back from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. Esther designated Mordecai to be in charge of Haman's estate.

[3]Then Esther spoke again to the king. She lay facedown on the ground and wept as she pleaded with him to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite, to the scheme that he had devised against the Jews.[4]Then the king held out the golden scepter to Esther, she arose and stood before the king.
[5]She said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his eyes, if the thing seems proper before the king, and I am pleasing in his eyes, let a decree be written to revoke the letters written by Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the letters that he wrote to destroy the Jews who are in all the king's provinces.[6]For how could I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How could I endure watching the destruction of my relatives?"
[7]King Xerxes said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, "Look, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows, because he was going to attack the Jews.[8]Write another decree for the Jews in the name of the king and seal it with the king's ring. For the decree that has already been written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked."

[9]Then the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day of the month. A decree was written containing all that Mordecai was commanding concerning the Jews. It was written to the provincial governors, the governors and officials of the provinces that were located from India to Cush, 127 provinces, to every province written in their own writing, and to every people in their language, and to the Jews in their writing and language.
[10]Mordecai wrote in the name of King Xerxes and sealed it with the king's signet ring. He sent the letters by couriers riding on horses, warhorses that were used in the king's service, bred from the royal stud.[11]The king gave to the Jews who were in every city permission to gather together and to make a stand to protect their lives: To annihiliate, to kill, and to destroy any armed force from any people or province that might attack them, children and women included, or to plunder their possessions.[12]This was to be in effect in all the provinces of King Xerxes, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar.
[13]A copy of the decree was to be issued as a law in every province and publicly displayed to all the peoples. The Jews were to be ready on that day to take vengeance on their enemies.[14]So the couriers rode on the royal horses that were used in the king's service. They went without delay. The king's decree was also issued from the palace in Susa.

[15]Then Mordecai left the king's presence wearing royal clothes of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a purple robe of fine linen, and the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced.[16]The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honor.[17]In every province and in every city, wherever the king's word and his decree reached, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. Many from among the variety of peoples of the land became Jews, because the fear of the Jews had fallen on them.

Esther 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's protection

Yahweh is at work in this chapter preventing the Jews from possible destruction. God used Esther and Mordecai to protect their people.

Links:

Esther 8:1 Notes

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Esther 8:1

Haman

See how you translated this man's name in Esther 3:1.

Esther 8:2

signet ring

This ring had the king's name or mark on it. When he put a wax seal on important papers, he would press the mark onto the seal. If a paper had this mark on its seal, people would know that what was written on the paper was written with the king's authority and had to be obeyed. See how you translated this in [Esther 3:10]

gave it to Mordecai

By giving his signet ring to Mordecai, the king gave Mordecai the authority to write important papers that people would have to obey.

Haman's estate

This refers to the things that had belonged to Haman and that the king had given to Esther.

Esther 8:3

pleaded with

"begged"

to put an end to the evil plan of Haman the Agagite

"Put an end to" here is an idiom meaning to stop something. Alternate translation: "to stop the evil plan of Haman the Agagite" or "to prevent the evil things from happening that Haman the Agagite had planned"

the Agagite

See how you translated this in Esther 3:1

scheme that he had devised

"the plot that he had invented" or "the plot that Haman invented"

Esther 8:4

the king held out the golden scepter to Esther

He did this to show that he was pleased with her. See how you translated a similar phrase in Esther 5:2

Esther 8:5

If it pleases the king ... in his eyes ... before the king ... in his eyes

Esther is speaking to the king in third person to show him respect. Alternate translation: "If it pleases you, the king ... in your eyes ... before you, the king ... in your eyes"

If it pleases the king

"If what I ask for pleases the king"

if I have found favor in his eyes

Here "found favor" is an idiom that means be approved of or that he is pleased with her. Here "eyes" are a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "if he is pleased with me"

if the thing seems proper before the king

"Before the king" here is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "if the king thinks that what I ask for is proper"

I am pleasing in his eyes

Here "his eyes" is a metonym for sight, and sight is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "he is pleased with me"

revoke

take back and make of no effect

the letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

Hammedatha

This is the name of a man.

provinces

A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.

Esther 8:6

For how could I bear to see disaster fall on my people? How could I endure watching the destruction of my relatives?

Esther used these questions to show that that she would be extremely sad if her people were to be destroyed. Alternate translation: "I cannot bear to see disaster fall on the Jews. I cannot endure watching my relatives be killed."

Esther 8:7

the house of Haman

This represents all that Haman had owned. Alternate translation: "all that had belonged to Haman" or "all of Haman's property"

gallows

See how you translated this in Esther 6:4

Esther 8:8

Write ... in the name of the king

Writing something in the king's name represents writing it with his authority, or writing it as his representative.

For the decree ... ring cannot be revoked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For no one can revoke the decree ... ring" or "For no one can cancel the decree ... ring"

For the decree ... ring cannot be revoked

The information given between the words "decree" and "cannot" is the reason that the king cannot revoke Haman's decree. It can be shown clearly that it was the reason with the word "because." Alternate translation: "For I cannot revoke the decree that has already been written, because it was written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring"

decree that has already been written in the king's name

Writing something in the king's name represents writing it with his authority, or writing it as his representative.

Esther 8:9

the king's scribes were called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king called his scribes." The reader should understand that the king probably told an official to go and bring the scribes back with him. The king probably did not call out with a loud voice to get them to come.

the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day of the month

"Sivan" is the name of the third month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-third day is near the middle of June on Western calendars.

A decree was written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They wrote a decree"

127 provinces

"one hundred and twenty-seven provinces"

provinces

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A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in in Esther 1:1.

written in their own writing

"written in their own script." There are different writing systems around the world.

Esther 8:10

wrote in the name of King Xerxes

Writing something in the king's name represents writing it with his authority, or writing it as his representative.

signet ring

See how you translated this phrase in Esther 8:2

the letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

couriers

people who carry messages

bred from the royal stud

The royal stud was the king's best male horse. The horses that were used in the king's service were its offspring. Alternate translation: "the offspring of the king's best horse"

Esther 8:11

gave to the Jews ... permission to gather

"told the Jews ... that he was allowing them to gather"

make a stand

This is a metaphor for fighting back and not running away. Alternate translation: "fight back"

Esther 8:12

the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar

See how you translated this in Esther 3:13

Esther 8:13

to take vengeance on their enemies

"To take vengeance on people" here is an idiom meaning to hurt people who have hurt you. Alternate translation: "to fight back against their enemies"

Esther 8:14

They went without delay

"Without delay" here is an idiom meaning that they did not delay or wait. Alternate translation: "They went immediately"

Susa

This is the city where the king's palace was. See how you translated it in [Esther 1:2]

Esther 8:15

the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced

The "city" represents the people living in it. Alternate translation: "the people of the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced"

shouted and rejoiced

The word "rejoiced" tells how they shouted. Alternate translation: "shouted joyfully"

Esther 8:16

had light and gladness

Possible meanings are that 1) having light is a metaphor for being happy. Alternate translation: "were happy and glad" or 2) having light is metaphor for feeling prosperous and safe. Alternate translation: "felt safe and were glad"

honor

Possible meanings are that 1) other people honored the Jews. Alternate translation: "other people honored them" or 2) the Jews felt honored. Alternate translation: "they felt honored"

Esther 8:17

province

A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.

wherever the king's word and his decree reached

Reaching places represents going to places. Alternate translation: "wherever the king's men took word of his decree" or "wherever the king's decree was read"

holiday

day on which people celebrate special events

the fear of the Jews had fallen on them

Fear falling on people represents people becoming very afraid. Alternate translation: "they had become very afraid of the Jews"

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9 [1]Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, when the king's law and decree were about to be carried out, on the day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain power over them, it was reversed. The Jews gained power over those who hated them.[2]The Jews assembled in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Xerxes, to lay hands on those who tried to bring disaster on them. No one could stand against them, for the fear of them had fallen on all the peoples.
[3]All the officials of the provinces, the provincial governors, the governors, and the king's administrators, helped the Jews because the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them.[4]For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces, for the man Mordecai was becoming great.[5]The Jews attacked their enemies with the sword, killing and destroying them, and did as they pleased to those who hated them.
[6]In the fortress of Susa itself the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred men.[7]They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,[8]Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,[9]Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, Vaizatha;[10]they killed the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they did not take any plunder.

[11]That day the number of those killed in the fortress of Susa, was reported to the king.[12]The king said to Queen Esther, "The Jews have killed five hundred men in the fortress of Susa, including the ten sons of Haman. What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It will be granted you. What is your request? It will be granted to you."

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[13]Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be permitted to carry out this day's decree tomorrow also, and let the bodies of Haman's ten sons be hanged on gallows."[14]So the king commanded that this be done. A decree was issued in Susa, and they hanged the ten sons of Haman.
[15]The Jews who were in Susa came together on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar, and killed three hundred more men in Susa, but laid no hands on the plunder.[16]The rest of the Jews who were in the king's provinces came together to defend their lives, and they got relief from their enemies and killed seventy-five thousand of those who hated them, but they did not lay their hands on the valuables of those they killed.

[17]This happened on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. On the fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and gladness.[18]But the Jews who were in Susa assembled together on the thirteenth and the fourteenth days. On the fifteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and gladness.[19]That is why the Jews of the villages, who make their homes in the rural towns, observe the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day of gladness and feasting, and as a day on which they send gifts of food to one another.

[20]Mordecai recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Xerxes, both near and far,[21]obligating them to keep the fourteenth and the fifteenth day of the month Adar every year.[22]These were the days when the Jews got relief from their enemies, and the month when their sorrow turned to joy, and mourning into a day of celebration. They were to make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending gifts of food to one another, and gifts to the poor.
[23]So the Jews continued what they had begun to do, what Mordecai had written to them.[24]At that time Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and he threw Pur (that is, he threw lots), to trouble and destroy them.[25]But when the matter came before the king, he gave orders by letters that the wicked plan Haman developed against the Jews should come back on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

[26]Therefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur. Because of everything that was written in this letter, and everything that they had seen and that had happened to them,[27]the Jews accepted a new custom and duty. This custom would be for themselves, their descendants, and everyone who joined them. It would be that they would celebrate these two days every year. They would celebrate them in a certain way and at the same time each year.[28]These days were to be remembered and celebrated in every generation, every family, every province, and every city. These days of Purim should never fail from among the Jews, and their memory should never come to an end for their descendants.

[29]Queen Esther daughter of Abihail and Mordecai the Jew wrote with full authority and confirmed this second letter about Purim.
[30]Letters were sent to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes, wishing the Jews safety and truth.[31]These letters confirmed the days of Purim at their appointed times, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther obligated the Jews. The Jews accepted this obligation for themselves and their descendants, just as also they accepted times of fasting and lamenting.[32]The command of Esther confirmed these regulations regarding Purim, and it was written in the book.

Esther 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Purim

The events of this chapter were so significant, the Jews celebrated these events every year after this. It is known as "Purim."

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Ironic Situation

The day that was supposed to bring great victory to the enemies of the Jews became a day of great victory for the Jews. This is a type of irony.

Links:

Esther 9:1 Notes

Esther 9:1

the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day

See how you translated a similar phrase in Esther 3:13.

when the king's law and decree were about to be carried out

"Carry out" here is an idiom meaning to do something that was commanded or planned. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the people were about to obey the king's law and decree"

to gain power over them

Gaining power over people is an idiom for defeating them.

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Alternate translation: "to defeat the Jews"
it was reversed
"the situation was reversed." The situation being reversed is a metaphor meaning that the opposite of what was expected happened. Alternate translation: "the opposite happened"
Esther 9:2
provinces
A province is a large area into which some countries are divided for the purposes of government. See how you translated this in Esther 1:1.
to lay hands on those who tried to bring disaster on them
Laying hands on people is a metonym for fighting against them. Alternate translation: "to fight their enemies"
who tried to bring disaster on them
To bring disaster on people is an idiom meaning to cause a disaster to happen to them. In this case it refers to destroying them. Alternate translation: "who tried to destroy them"
No one could stand against them
Standing against people represents resisting their attack. Alternate translation: "No one could resist the attack of the Jews" or "No one could successfully fight against the Jews"
the fear of them had fallen on all the peoples
Fear falling on people represents people becoming very afraid. Alternate translation: "all the peoples had become very afraid of the Jews"
Esther 9:3
provincial governors
"governors of the provinces"
the fear of Mordecai had fallen on them
Fear falling on people represents people becoming afraid. Alternate translation: "they had become afraid of Mordecai"
Esther 9:4
was great in the king's house
"was very important in the king's palace"
his fame spread throughout all the provinces
Fame spreading through places represents people in those places learning about how great he was. Alternate translation: "throughout the provinces people learned about how great he was"
Esther 9:6
the fortress
This refers to a castle, stronghold or fortified city. See how you translated this in Esther 1:2.
Susa
This was a royal city of Persian kings. See how you translated this in [Esther 1:2]
five hundred men
"500 men"
Esther 9:7
General Information:
This is the beginning of the list of men that the Jews killed. The Hebrew words translated "They killed" appear at the end of the list, not in this verse.
Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha
These are the names of men.
Esther 9:8
General Information:
The list of men that the Jews killed continues here.
Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha
These are the names of men.
Esther 9:9
General Information:
The list of men that the Jews killed ends here.
Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, Vaizatha
These are the names of men.
Esther 9:10
Connecting Statement:
Verses 7-10 in Hebrew read, "Parshandatha ... Vaizatha, the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, they killed."
the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha
These words explain who were the ten men whom the Jews killed (Esther 9:7-9).
ten sons
"10 sons"
Haman
This is the name and description of Haman, one of the king's officials. See how you translated this in [Esther 3:1]
Hammedatha
See how you translated this man's name in [Esther 3:1]
the enemy of the Jews
This phrase tells us about Haman.
Esther 9:12
five hundred men
"500 men"
ten sons
"10 sons"
What then have they done in the rest of the king's provinces?
The king uses this question to show that he believes that the Jews must have also killed many people in the other provinces. Alternate translation: "What they must have done in the rest of the king's provinces!" or "They must have killed many more in the rest of the king's provinces!"
what is your petition?
The abstract noun "petition" can be expressed with the verb "ask for" or "want." Alternate translation: "what do you ask for?" or "what do you want?"
It will be granted you
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give you what you ask for" or "I will do for you what you ask"
What is your request?
The abstract noun "request" can be expressed with the verb "ask for" or "want." Alternate translation: "What do you ask for?" or "What do you want?"
Esther 9:13
to carry out this day's decree tomorrow also
"Carry out" here is an idiom meaning to do something that was commanded or planned. Alternate translation: "to obey today's decree tomorrow also" or "to do tomorrow also what was decreed that they should do today"
ten sons
"10 sons"
gallows
This was a structure used for killing people by tying one

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end of a rope around the top of the structure and the other end of the rope around their necks and hanging them from it. See how you translated this in [Esther 2:23]

Esther 9:15

the fourteenth day of the month of Adar

See how you translated a similar phrase in Esther 3:13.

laid no hands on the plunder

Laying their hands on things represents taking them. Alternate translation: "took none of the plunder" or "did not take any of the plunder"

Esther 9:16

seventy-five thousand

"75,000"

they did not lay their hands on the valuables of those they killed

Laying their hands on things represents taking them. Alternate translation: "they did not take any of the valuables of the people they killed"

valuables

"valuable things" or "possessions"

Esther 9:17

the thirteenth day of the month of Adar

See how you translated a similar phrase in Esther 3:13.

On the fourteenth day they rested

"On the fourteenth day of Adar the Jews who were in the provinces rested"

Esther 9:18

the Jews who were in Susa assembled together

Why they assembled together can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the Jews who were in Susa assembled together to fight against their enemies"

Esther 9:20

sent letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

Esther 9:21

to keep the fourteenth and the fifteenth day of the month Adar every year

To keep a day is an idiom that means to celebrate it. Alternate translation: "to celebrate the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar every year"

Esther 9:22

their sorrow turned to joy

Turning represents changing. The abstract nouns sorrow and joy can be expressed with "sad" and "joyful." Alternate translation: "they changed from being very sad to being joyful"

Esther 9:23

General Information:

This passage summarizes much of the story of Esther in order to explain the reason for the festival of Purim.

Esther 9:24

Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite

This is the name and description of Haman, one of the king's officials. See how you translated this in [Esther 3:1]

he threw Pur (that is, he threw lots)

"Pur" was the Persian word for "lot." The phrase "he threw lots" explains what "he threw Pur" means.

he threw Pur (that is, he threw lots)

Why he threw Pur, or lots, can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he threw Pur

Esther 9:25

But when the matter came before the king

The Hebrew text can also be interpreted to mean, "But when Esther came before the king." Some modern versions choose this interpretation.

letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

the wicked plan Haman developed against the Jews should come back on his own head

"Come back on his own head" means that it should be done to Haman. Alternate translation: "the wicked plan Haman developed against the Jews should be done to him"

Esther 9:26

they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur

To call something after something else is an idiom that means to give it the same name or a similar name. Alternate translation: "They called these days Purim, like the word Pur"

Purim

This is the name of the festival that commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people in ancient Persia from Haman's plot to destroy and kill all the Jews in a single day.

the name of Pur.

It can be stated clearly what "Pur" means. Alternate translation: "the word Pur, which means 'lot.'"

Esther 9:28

These days were to be remembered and celebrated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Jews were to remember and celebrate these days"

These days of Purim should never fail from among the Jews

"The Jews should never fail to celebrate these days of Purim"

their memory should never come to an end for their descendants

"the memory of those days should never come to an end for the descendants of the Jews" or "the descendants of the Jews should never forget those days"

Esther 9:29

Queen Esther daughter of Abihail and Mordecai the Jew wrote ... this second letter

Esther was the daughter of Abihail. Esther and Mordecai wrote the letter.

Abihail

Esther's father and Mordecai's uncle. See how you translated this in [Esther 2:15]

second letter

"additional letter"

Esther 9:30

Letters were sent to all the Jews

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They sent letters to all the Jews"

Letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

127 provinces

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"one hundred and twenty-seven provinces"

wishing the Jews safety and truth

The abstract nouns "safety" and "truth" can be expressed with phrases. Alternate translation: "wishing that the Jews would be safe and that people would be faithful to the Jews"

Esther 9:31

These letters

You may need to use a word for written instructions that is more general than "letter" so that the reader does not think that these documents were about only personal matters.

The Jews accepted this obligation for themselves and their descendants

Accepting an obligation is a metaphor for agreeing with the obligation. The abstract noun "obligation" can be expressed with the verb "obligate." Alternate translation: "The Jews agreed and said that they and their descendants were obligated to celebrate the days of Purim"

they accepted times of fasting and lamenting

Accepting times of fasting and lamenting is a metaphor for agreeing to fast and lament at certain times. Alternate translation: "they agreed to fast and lament at certain times"

10 [1]Then King Xerxes imposed a tax on the land and on the coastlands along the sea.[2]All the achievements of his power and might, together with the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him, they are written in the book of the events of the reigns of the kings of Media and Persia.
[3]Mordecai the Jew was second in rank to King Xerxes. He was great among the Jews and shown favor by his many Jewish brothers, for he sought the welfare of his people and he spoke for the peace of all his people.

Esther 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Mordecai's new position

Through the power of Yahweh, Mordecai was given a new position in the Persian Empire. Mordecai was now the second in command in the kingdom of Persia and he used his position to help other Jews.

Links:

Esther 10:1 Notes

Esther 10:1

imposed a tax on the land and on the coastlands along the sea

To impose a tax means to make people pay a tax. The land and coastlands represent the people living there. Alternate translation: "made the people living in the land and on the coastlands along the sea pay a tax"

Esther 10:2

All the achievements of his power and might

The abstract noun "achievements" can be expressed with the verb "achieve" or the phrase "do great things. The abstract nouns "power" and "might" can be translated with adjectives. Alternate translation: "All that he achieved because of how powerful and mighty he was" or "All the great things that he did because of his power and might"

the full account of the greatness of Mordecai to which the king had raised him

The king honoring Mordecai is spoken of as if the king physically raised him up. Alternate translation: "the full account of how the King had made it known that Mordecai was great" or "the full account of how the king had honored Mordecai for the great things he had done"

the book of the events of the reigns

"the royal histories" or "the royal chronicles"

Esther 10:3

second in rank to King Xerxes

"the most important person after King Xerxes"

Jewish brothers

The word brothers represents people who were like him. Alternate translation: "fellow Jews"

he sought the welfare of his people

Seeking something is a metaphor for working hard for something. The abstract noun "welfare" can be translated as a phrase with the verb "prosper" or the adjective "secure." Alternate translation: "He worked hard so his people would prosper" or "He worked hard so his people would be secure"

he spoke for the peace of all his people

"he represented his people so that they might have peace"

Introduction to Job

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Job

Job is introduced (1:1–2:13) Job is blameless and wealthy (1:1–5) Yahweh allows Satan to test Job (1:6–2:10)
Three friends speak to Job (3:1–14:22) Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar Job replies to each
They speak to him again (15:1–21:34) Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar Job replies to each
They speak a third time (22:1–31:40) Eliphaz and Bildad Job replies to each
Elihu speaks to Job (32:1–37:24) Yahweh answers Job out of the whirlwind (38:1–41:34) Job is humbled before Yahweh (42:1–6) Yahweh rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (42:7–9) Yahweh prospers Job again (42:10–17)

What is the Book of Job about?

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The Book of Job is about a man named Job who experienced disaster even though he was faithful to Yahweh. Job speaks with three friends and asks why Yahweh lets him experience trials and losses. The book teaches that we cannot understand all of Yahweh's ways, and when we suffer, it is more important to trust Yahweh than it is to understand the reason for the suffering.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Book of Job is named for Job, the main character in the book. His name is not related to the English word "job." Translators might use the traditional title of "The Book of Job" or just "Job." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Book About Job" or "The Book About a Man Named Job."

Who wrote the Book of Job?

We do not know who wrote the Book of Job. Many people suggest that Moses composed or compiled the book, but it may have been written after the time of Moses.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Does sin cause suffering?

When a person sins against Yahweh, it can cause the person to experience suffering. People in the ancient Near East generally believed that a person suffered because they or their ancestors sinned against God. This is what many religions teach. However, the Book of Job shows that a person may suffer even if he or she has not sinned. (See: sin)

Were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar really Job's friends?

Job 2:11 refers to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar as the friends of Job. But they did not comfort Job. Instead, they tried to persuade Job to say something about God that Job believed was not true. So we might wonder if it is right to translate the word as "friends." They did care about Job and they wanted to help him. However, what they said did not help Job because they did not understand the truth about God.

When did the events in the Book of Job take place?

We do not know when the events in the Book of Job took place. It seems to be set around the time of Abraham and Isaac in the Book of Genesis. However, some verses are similar to ones in the Books of Proverbs and Isaiah, which are set much later.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What style of writing is in the Book of Job?

The writer starts and ends the Book of Job by telling what happened to Job in narrative form. He wrote the other parts in poetry form. In the ancient Near East, writers often used poetry to discuss matters of wisdom.

Is the Book of Job difficult to translate?

The Book of Job has many uncommon words and phrases, making parts of it hard to understand translate. For this reason, translators may decide to translate this book after they have translated other books of the Bible. However, since the writer did not connect Job with a specific time or place in history, the translator may decide to translate this book before other Old Testament books.

Job

1 [1]There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and Job was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned from evil.[2]There were born to him seven sons and three daughters.[3]He possessed seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred donkeys and a great many servants. He was the man who was the greatest of all the people of the East.
[4]On each son's assigned day, he would give a feast in his house. They would send and call for their three sisters to eat and drink with them.[5]When the days of the feast were over, Job would send for them and he would consecrate them. He would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings for each of his children, for he would say, "It may be that my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Job always did this.

[6]Then it was the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. Satan also came with them.
[7]Yahweh said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it."[8]Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil."
[9]Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "Is it for no reason that Job fears God?[10]Have you not put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side? You have blessed the deeds of his hands, and his livestock have spread throughout the land.[11]But now stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he does not curse you to your face."[12]Yahweh said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him himself do not stretch out your hand." Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh.

[13]It came about that on a certain day, his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's

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house.[14]A messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them.[15]Then the Sabeans fell on them and took them away. As for the servants, they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I alone have escaped to make it known to you."
[16]While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from the heavens and burned up the sheep and the servants. I alone have escaped to make it known to you."[17]While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups, made a raid on the camels, and have taken them away. As for the servants, they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I alone have escaped to make it known to you."
[18]While he was yet speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house.[19]A strong wind came from the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house. It fell on the young people, and they died. I alone have escaped to make it known to you."

[20]Then Job rose, tore his robe, shaved his head, lay facedown on the ground, and worshiped God.[21]He said, "I was naked when I came out of my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I will return there. It is Yahweh who gave, and it is Yahweh who has taken away. May the name of Yahweh be blessed."
[22]In all this matter, Job did not sin, nor did he accuse God of wrongdoing.

Job 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter introduces a story about a man named Job who lives during a time long before the author.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wealth

Job is very rich. During his time, a man's wealth is measured by the number of animals he owns.

Feasts

Job is a very godly man and celebrates Yahweh's provision by having feasts. It must be remembered that Job lives prior to the law of Moses, so his religious practices are different than the Hebrew people after Moses. The events of this book occur about the same time as the life of Abraham. Therefore, this book corresponds more with Genesis 12-50 than the rest of the Old Testament. (See: godly and lawofmoses)

Job's faith

Satan believes that Job's faith is based on Yahweh's blessings. He challenges Yahweh to remove these blessings from Job's life because he thinks that Job will no longer trust in Yahweh if this happens. (See: faith, bless and trust)

Links:

Job 1:1 Notes Job intro

Job 1:1

land of Uz

Possible locations are 1) a place in ancient Edom east of the Jordan River in modern western Jordan or 2) a place east of the Euphrates River in modern Iran.

blameless and upright

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous man. Alternate translation: "one who did what was right before God"

one who feared God

"one who honored God"

turned from evil

Here evil is spoken of as if it were a place that a person could avoid going to, instead of the doing of evil actions. Alternate translation: "refused to do evil"

Job 1:2

seven sons and three daughters

"7 sons and 3 daughters"

Job 1:3

He possessed seven thousand sheep

"He had 7,000 sheep"

three thousand camels

"3,000 camels"

five hundred yoke of oxen

"500 yoke of oxen." Each yoke would have been over two oxen, so there were five hundred pairs of oxen, which is a total of one thousand (1,000) oxen.

the greatest

"the richest"

all the people of the East

The refers to places that were east of Canaan. Alternate translation: "all the people who live in lands that were east of Canaan"

Job 1:4

On each son's assigned day, he would give

The word "day" perhaps refers to the day when they celebrated the son's birth. But it at least refers to the idea that the sons each took a turn in holding a feast. Alternate translation: "On each son's birthday, the son would give" or "Each son in turn would give"

he would give ... They would send and call for

"he habitually gave ... They habitually sent and called for "

with them

The word "them" refers to the seven sons and the three daughters but does not include Job.

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Job 1:5

Job would send ... he would consecrate ... He would rise early in the morning and offer ... he would say

"he habitually gave ... They habitually sent and called for ... Job habitually sent ... he habitually consecrated ... He habitually rose early in the morning and offered ... he habitually said"

When the days of the feast were over

"When the feast was over" or "After the feast"

Job would send for them

"Job habitually sent someone to call them to come to him"

he would consecrate them

Here "consecrate" means to ask God to take away any ritual impurities that Job's children might have brought upon themselves as they happily feasted together. Job did this by making sacrifices to God for them.

cursed God in their hearts

Their "hearts" represent their thoughts. Often such thoughts could come unintentionally, without the person wanting to think them. Alternate translation: "cursed God in their thoughts"

Job 1:6

Then it was the day when

"At the time when" or "One day when." This is not a specific day but apparently the gathering happened often.

sons of God

This refers to angels, heavenly beings.

to present themselves before Yahweh

"to stand together before Yahweh as he commanded them to do."

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Job 1:7

From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it

The phrases "wandering" and "going back and forth" refer to the activity of traveling all over the earth in order to emphasize its completeness. Alternate translation: "From going everywhere on the earth"

Job 1:8

Have you considered my servant Job?

"Have you thought about my servant Job?" Here God is beginning to talk with Satan about Job. Alternate translation: "Consider my servant Job"

a blameless and upright man

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous man. See how you translated this in [Job 1:1]

one who fears God

"one who honors God." See how you translated this in Job 1:1.

God

God is referring to himself in third person. Alternate translation: "me" or "me, God"

Job 1:9

Connecting Statement:

Satan's response to God's question in verse 8 runs through Job 8:11.

Is it for no reason that Job fears God?

Satan uses a rhetorical question to introduce his claim that Job only serves God because God blesses him. Alternate translation: "Job has a very good reason for fearing God." or "Does Job not live better because he fears God?"

for no reason

The word "reason" here implies some form of gain, whether physical goods or happiness.

Job fears God

"Job honors God." See how you translated similar words in Job 1:1.

God

God is referring to himself in third person. See how you translated this in [verse 8]

Job 1:10

Have you not put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side

Satan states the facts to support his argument. Alternate translation: "You have protected him, his family and everything he owns"

put a barrier around him, around his house, and around all that is his from every side

Just as a barrier such as a wall or a hedge surrounds and protects one's land, God has surrounded Job with his protection. Alternate translation: "protected him and his house and all that is his"

the deeds of his hands

"everything that he does"

his livestock have spread throughout the land

"he has more and more livestock in the land"

Job 1:11

But now stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he does not curse you to your face

Satan means that if God attacks Job, he will see how Job responds. Alternate translation: "But now, if you stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, you will see that he will curse you to your face"

But now stretch out your hand

Here "hand" refers to God's power to act. "But now use your power"

now

This word usually indicates a sincere, polite request, but Satan uses it here to taunt God.

touch all that he has

Here "touch" represents the action of harming or destroying. Alternate translation: "attack all that he has" or "destroy all that he has"

to your face

"in your hearing." This refers to a time when God is paying attention.

Job 1:12

Behold

"Look" or "Pay attention to all that I am about to tell you"

all that he has is in your hand

Here "hand" represents someone's power to control something. Alternate translation: "you have power over all that he has"

against him himself

"against his life"

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went away from the presence of Yahweh
"departed from Yahweh" or "left Yahweh"
Job 1:14
were feeding
"were eating." The word "feeding" here is the usual word for a person's animal eating in a pasture.
Job 1:15
the Sabeans
This refers to a people in a region in modern day Yemen. Here it represents a group of raiders or bandits.
fell on them
Here "fell" represents the idea of attacking. Alternate translation: "attacked them"
have struck
Here striking represents killing.
the edge of the sword
Here "edge" represents the part of swords that kill people, that is, either the point or the sharp edge. Also, all the swords of the Sabeans are spoken of as if they were only one sword.
I alone have escaped to make it known to you
"I am the only one who has escaped and can report it to you"
make it known to
or "tell"
Job 1:16
While he was still speaking
"he" refers to the first messenger
another also came
This refers to another messenger. Alternate translation: "another messenger also came"
I alone have escaped to make it known to you
See how you translated this in Job 1:15.
Job 1:17
made a raid on
"quickly attacked"
they have struck them with the edge of the sword. I alone have escaped to make it known to you
Here "edge" represents the part of swords that kill people, that is, either the point or the sharp edge. Also, all the swords of the Chaldeans are spoken of as if they were only one sword. See how you translated this in [Job 1:15]
they have struck them
"the Chaldeans have struck the servants"
Job 1:18
Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house
See how you translated this in Job 1:13.
Job 1:19
A strong wind
"A tornado" or "A desert storm"
the four corners of the house
"the structural supports of the house"
It fell on the young people
"The house fell on your sons and daughters"
I alone have escaped to make it known to you
See how you translated this in Job 1:15.
Job 1:20
tore his robe, shaved his head
These were ritual mourning actions, symbolizing deep grief.
Job 1:21
I was naked when I came out of my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I will return there
"At my birth, I brought nothing into the world, and at my death I will return to the earth with nothing"
Job 1:22
In all this matter
"Regarding all this that happened"
accuse God of wrongdoing
"say that God had done wrong"

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2 [1]Then it was the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh. Satan also came with them to present himself before Yahweh.[2]Yahweh said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Then Satan answered Yahweh and said, "From wandering on the earth, from going back and forth on it."
[3]Yahweh said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil. He still holds fast to his integrity, although you misled me against him, to destroy him without cause."

[4]Satan answered Yahweh and said, "Skin for skin, indeed; a man will give all he has for his life.[5]But stretch out your hand now and touch his bones and his flesh, and see if he does not curse you to your face."
[6]Yahweh said to Satan, "See, he is in your hand; it is only his life that you must spare."

[7]Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh. He struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his feet to his head.
[8]Job took a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself with, and he sat down in the middle of ashes.
[9]Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die."[10]But he said to her, "You talk as a foolish woman talks. Should we receive the good from God and not receive the bad?" In all this matter, Job did not sin with his lips.

[11]Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come on him, each of them came from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They set a time to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

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[12]When they lifted up their eyes at a distance, they did not recognize him. They raised their voices and wept; each tore his robe and threw dust into the air and upon his own head.[13]Then they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights. No one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

Job 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter repeats the concepts of the previous chapter, but this time it is more severe. After losing his wealth, Job's health is taken from him. His wife also begins to encourage Job to sin by cursing Yahweh. (See: sin and curse)

Links:

Job 2:1 Notes

Job 2:1

General Information:

This verse is almost exactly the same as Job 1:6 and can probably be translated in the same way.

Then it was the day

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

the day when

This is not a specific day. The gathering happened often. Alternate translation: "at the time when" or "one day when"

sons of God

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

present themselves before Yahweh

See how you translated this in Job 1:6.

Job 2:2

General Information:

This verse is exactly the same as Job 1:7 and can probably be translated in the same way.

Job 2:3

General Information:

This verse is the same as Job 1:8, except for the addition of "He still holds fast to his integrity, although you misled me against him, to destroy him without cause."

Have you considered my servant Job?

This rhetorical question actually makes a statement.See how you translated this in [Job 1:8]

a blameless and upright man

The words "blameless" and "upright" share similar meanings and emphasize that Job was a righteous man. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Job 1:1]

one who fears God and turns away from evil

See how you translated this in Job 1:1.

still holds fast to his integrity

"remains completely dedicated to doing what is good and right"

misled me against him

"persuaded me without cause to attack him"

to destroy him

Here "destroy" represents "make poor." Alternate translation: "to make him a poor man"

Job 2:4

Skin for skin, indeed

"Skin" here is a metonym for Job's life. Alternate translation: "A person will do anything to save his own life, even accept the loss of possessions and loved ones"

Job 2:5

But stretch out your hand now and touch his bones and his flesh, and see if he does not curse you to your face

Satan means that if God attacks Job, he will see how Job responds. Alternate translation: "But now, if you stretch out your hand and touch his bones and his flesh, you will see that he will curse you to your face"

stretch out your hand

Here "hand" refers to God's power to act. "But now use your power." See how you translated this in [Job 1:11]

touch

Here "touch" represents the action of harming. Alternate translation: "attack"

his bones and his flesh

This expression represents Job's body.

curse you to your face

See how you translated this in Job 1:11.

to your face

This refers to a time when God is paying attention. Alternate translation: "in your hearing"

Job 2:7

Then Satan went away from the presence of Yahweh

See how you translated this in Job 1:12.

He struck Job with painful boils

"He caused Job to suffer greatly with painful boils"

painful boils

large, itching and painful skin infections

Job 2:8

a piece of broken pottery to scrape himself

The scraping scratches the skin to lessen the itch.

sat down in the middle of ashes

This probably refers to a place where trash and garbage were dumped and perhaps burned. Sitting in such a place was a sign of deep mourning. Alternate translation: "sat on the trash heap"

Job 2:9

Do you still hold fast to your integrity?

This rhetorical question represents a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not still be holding fast to your integrity."

Curse God

"Reject God"

Job 2:10

You talk as a foolish woman

"You talk the way a stupid woman talks"

Should we receive the good from God and not receive the bad?

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This rhetorical question represents a statement. Alternate translation: "We should certainly receive the bad from God as well as the good."
receive the good
"benefit from all the good things"
the good
This represents all the good things that God gives us.
receive the bad
"suffer all the bad things without complaining"
the bad
This represents all the bad things that God makes or allows us to experience.
sin with his lips
Here "lips" represents the act of speaking. Alternate translation: "sin by speaking against God"
Job 2:11
Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite
Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar are men's names. Teman was a city in Edom. Shuhites are the decedents of Abraham and Keturah. Naamah was a city in Canaan.
set a time
"agreed on a time"
to mourn with him and to comfort him
Here the words "mourn with" and "comfort" share similar meanings. The friends try to comfort Job by mourning with him. Alternate translation: "to grieve with Job in order to help ease his suffering"
Job 2:12
they lifted up their eyes
This is an idiom that means "they looked intently" or "they looked carefully."
they did not recognize him
This probably means that Job's visitors did not recognize him at first, when they saw him at a distance. Job looked very different than usual because of his grief and because of the sores covering his body. Alternate translation: "they barely recognized him"
They raised their voices and wept
Here "raised their voices" is an idiom that means they became loud. Alternate translation: "They wept out loud" or "They wept loudly"
tore his robe
This was a sign of mourning.
threw dust into the air and upon his own head
These were signs of mourning.

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3 [1]After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day he was born.[2]He said,

[3] "May the day on which I was born perish,
the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived.'

[4] May that day be dark!
May God not care about it,
nor light shine on it.

[5] May darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own.
May a cloud live over it;
may everything that makes the day black truly terrify it.

[6] As for that night, may thick darkness seize it.
May it not rejoice among the days of the year;
may it not come into the number of the months.

[7] See, may that night be barren;
may no joyful voice come into it.

[8] Those who curse the day–may they curse it,
those who know how to wake up Leviathan.

[9] May the stars of that day's dawn be dark.
May that day look for light, but find none;
neither may it see the eyelids of the dawn,

[10] because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb,
and because it did not hide trouble from my eyes.

[11] Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?
Why did I not perish when my mother bore me?

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12 Why did her knees welcome me?
Why did her breasts receive me so that I should suck?

13 For now I would have been lying down quietly.
I would have slept and been at rest

14 with kings and counselors of the earth,
who built up tombs for themselves that are now in ruins.

15 Or I would have been lying down with princes who once had gold,
who had filled their houses with silver.

16 Or perhaps I would have been stillborn,
like infants that never see the light.

17 There the wicked cease from trouble;
there the weary are at rest.

18 There the prisoners are at ease together;
they do not hear the voice of the slave driver.

19 Both small and great people are there;
the servant is free from his master there.

20 Why is light given to him who suffers?
Why is life given to the one who is bitter in soul,

21 to one who longs for death without it coming;
to one who digs for it more than for hidden treasure?

22 Why is light given to one who rejoices very much
and is glad when he finds the grave?

23 Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden,
a man whom God has hedged in?

24 For my sighing happens instead of eating;
my groaning is poured out like water.

25 For the thing that I feared has come upon me;
what I was afraid of has come to me.

26 I am not at ease, I am not quiet, and I have no rest;
trouble comes instead."

Job 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these rhetorical questions is to show Job's earnest desire.

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Links:

Job 3:1 Notes

Job 3:1

opened his mouth

This idiom means he began to speak.

Job 3:3

May the day on which I was born perish, the night

Job speaks of that day and night as if they were people. Alternate translation: "I wish that I had never been born"

the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived.'

This expression intensifies the statement of Job's grief by going even further back in time from his birth to his conception. Alternate translation: "the night that said, 'A boy has been conceived' perish."

the night that said

Here the night is spoken of as if it were a person who could speak. The translator may choose, however, to translate it in a less metaphorical way. Alternate translation: "the night on which people said"

A boy has been conceived

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "his mother has conceived a male child"

Job 3:4

General Information:

The expressions in these verses are all wishes that the day of Job's birth would no longer exist. This may imply that the day, although in the past, still existed somehow.

May that day be dark ... nor light shine on it

These two clauses describe the darkness of the day of Job's birth, thus repeating Job's regret that he had been born. "Dark" describes night: the sun does not shine, so people cannot see. "Light" describes day: the sun shines, and people can see. If your language does not have words to describe day and night, you might use the sun as a metonym for the light that it brings and the darkness that happens when it is not shining. Alternate translation: "May that day be like the night ... nor may the sun shine during it"

May that day be dark

This is a wish for that day to not exist any longer. Alternate translation: "May that day disappear"

Job 3:5

May darkness and the shadow of death claim it for their own

Here darkness and the shadow of death are spoken of as if they were people who could claim something as their own possession. The word "it" refers to the day of Job's birth.

the shadow of death

Here a shadow represents death itself. Alternate translation: "death like a shadow"

May a cloud live over it

Here a cloud is spoken of as if it were a person who could live over the day of Job's birth. Alternate translation: "May a cloud cover it so no one can see it"

everything that makes the day black

This refers to things that block out the sun's light and create darkness. Here "black" represents darkness.

terrify it

"terrify that day." The day is spoken of as if it were a person who could be terrified by the darkness.

Job 3:6

may thick darkness seize it

This darkness is again spoken of as if it were a person who could grasp and hold the night. Alternate translation: "may thick darkness make it disappear"

thick darkness

"deep darkness" or "complete darkness"

May it not rejoice

The word "it" refers to the night of Job's birth or conception. The night of Job's conception is spoken of as if it were a person who should not rejoice. Alternate translation: "May that night vanish from the calendar"

may it not come into the number

That night is spoken of as if it were a person who could walk. Alternate translation: "may no one count it in the number"

Job 3:7

may that night be barren

The night of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "may no child be born on that night"

may no joyful voice come into it

Here that the night of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a time when it was still possible for someone to be happy. Alternate translation: "may no one hear the happy cry at the birth of a son"

joyful voice come

Here the voice stands for a person who is happy. Alternate translation: "may no one be happy in it ever again"

Job 3:8

General Information:

Job continues to curse the day he was born.

Those who curse the day–may they curse it, those who know how to wake up Leviathan

You may need to change the order of the clauses. Alternate translation: "May those who curse the day—those who know how to wake up Leviathan—curse the day I was born" or "Those who curse the day—those who know how to wake up Leviathan—may they curse the day I was born"

Those who curse the day

This metonym refers to people who use magic to cause other people to suffer on a given day as though they were causing the day itself to suffer. Alternate translation: "Those who know how to curse people"

may they curse it

The word "it" refers to the day on which Job was born.

those who know how to wake up Leviathan

Job is probably referring here to sorcerers and magicians, who he believes might be able to even provoke Leviathan in spreading chaos. Leviathan was an animal well known in Ancient Near Eastern mythology, which was thought to be responsible for all kinds of destruction, disorder, and chaos.

Job 3:9

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May the stars of that day's dawn be dark
This refers to the planets that are often visible just before dawn. Alternate translation: "May the stars that appear before that day's first light be dark"
May that day look for light, but find none
The day of Job's birth is spoken of as if it were a person looking for something. Alternate translation: "May that day hope for light, but have none"
neither may it see the eyelids of the dawn
The dawn is spoken of as if it had eyelids as a person has. Alternate translation: "nor see the first light of the dawn"
Job 3:10
because it did not shut up the doors of my mother's womb
A woman's womb is spoken of as if it were a container with doors. Alternate translation: "because that day did not close my mother's womb"
because it did not hide trouble from my eyes
The day of Job's birth is spoken of here as if it were a person who could hide something.
from my eyes
Here "eyes" represents the person who sees with them. Alternate translation: "from me"
Job 3:11
General Information:
Verses 11 and 12 contain four rhetorical questions, which Job asks in order to show how said he was about being born.
Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?
"Why did I not die at birth?" Job poses this question in order to curse the day of his birth and to express his anguish. Alternate translation: "I wish I had died the day I was born"
Why did I not perish when my mother bore me?
Job means to say that he should not have been born alive. Alternate translation: "I wish I had perished when I came out of the womb."
Job 3:12
Why did her knees welcome me?
This perhaps refers to the lap of Job's mother. His mother's knees are spoken of as if they were people who could welcome a newborn baby. Alternate translation: "I wish there had been no lap to receive me."
Why did her breasts receive me so that I should suck?
Job's mother's breasts are spoken of as if they also were people who could welcome a newborn baby. Alternate translation: "I wish there had been no breasts for me to nurse."
Job 3:13
For now I would have been lying down quietly. I would have slept and been at rest
Job begins talking about what would have been true if he had died at birth. He is sad that these things are not true.
lying down quietly
"asleep, resting peacefully"
been at rest
Here the word "rest" means to sleep peacefully in death, but also that Job would not be experiencing the pain that he does.
Job 3:14
with kings and counselors of the earth
"with kings and their advisers"
Job 3:15
General Information:
Job continues talking about what would have been true if he had never been born. He is sad that these things are not true.
I would have been lying down with princes
"I would be resting with princes." In this phrase, the words "lying down" and "resting" are a polite way of saying "no longer alive."
Job 3:16
General Information:
Job continues talking about what would have been true if the day of his birth had been barren and cursed as he spoke of in [Job 3:7-8]
I would have been stillborn
"I would have died in my mother's womb"
like infants that never see the light
"like babies who have never been born"
infants
"babies"
Job 3:17
General Information:
Job changes his talk from dying to life after death.
There the wicked cease from trouble
Job is talking about the place where people go after they stop living. Alternate translation: "In that place, evil people stop causing trouble"
Job 3:18
the voice of the slave driver
Here "voice" is a metonym for the power that the slave drivers have over the slaves. Alternate translation: "They are no longer under the control of the slave driver"
the slave driver
This refers to slave drivers in general, not one particular slave driver. Alternate translation: "slave drivers"
slave driver
Some English versions read, "oppressor."
Job 3:19
small and great people
This is a figure of speech which means "all people, both poor people and rich people."
the servant is free from his master
A servant is no longer obligated to serve his master.
Job 3:20
Why is light given to him who suffers?
Here Job is wondering why people must stay alive and suffer. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God gives life to a person who is suffering"
light
Here light represents life.
Why is life given to the one who is bitter in soul
"why does God give life to a miserable person?" Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God gives life to a person who is very unhappy"
Job 3:21
to one who longs ... for hidden treasure
This is the end of the question that Job begins asking with

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the words "Why is life given ... bitter in soul" (verse 20).

to one who longs for death without it coming

Here death is spoken of as if it were an object coming toward someone. Alternate translation: "to a person who no longer wants to be alive, but is still alive"

to one who digs for it more than for hidden treasure

A person hoping to die ("death") is spoken of as if he were digging for buried treasure. Alternate translation: "to a person who wants to stop living more than he wants to look for hidden riches"

Job 3:22

Why is light given to one who rejoices very much and is glad when he finds the grave

Here Job uses a question to make a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God allows a person to keep living when the person would be very happy to be buried in the ground"

one who rejoices very much and is glad

The phrase "rejoices very much" means basically the same thing as "is glad." Together, the two phrases emphasize the intensity of gladness. Alternate translation: "one who is extremely happy"

when he finds the grave

This is a polite way of referring to dying. Alternate translation: "when he is dead and can be buried"

the grave

Here the grave represents death.

Job 3:23

Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, a man whom God has hedged in?

Job asks this question in order to make a statement. Alternate translation: "God should not give life to a man and then take away his future and confine him."

Why is light given to a man

Here light represents life. Alternate translation: "Why does God keep a man alive"

whose way is hidden

Here Job speaks of his future, which he does not know in advance, as if God had hidden it from him.

a man whom God has hedged in

Here a man who has difficulties and is in danger is spoken of as if God had put a hedge around him so he could not move.

whom God has hedged in

"around whom God has built a hedge." A hedge is a wall of bushes planted so close together that people cannot go through it.

Job 3:24

For my sighing happens instead of eating; my groaning is poured out like water

Job expresses his anguish in two ways.

my sighing happens instead of eating

"Instead of eating, I mourn"

my groaning is poured out like water

Moral qualities and emotions such as grief are often spoken of as if they were water.

Job 3:26

I am not at ease, I am not quiet, and I have no rest

"I do not feel safe, I am not calm, and I cannot rest." Job expresses his terrible anguish in three separate phrases. Alternate translation: "I am very anxious and I cannot rest"

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4 [1]Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
[2]If anyone tries to speak with you, will you be impatient?
But who can stop himself from speaking?

[3] See, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened weak hands.

[4] Your words have supported him who was falling;
you have made feeble knees strong.

[5] But now trouble has come to you, and you are weary;
it touches you, and you are troubled.

[6] Is not your fear your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your hope?

[7] Think about this, please: Who has ever perished when innocent?
Or when were the upright people ever cut off?

[8] According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap it.

[9] By the breath of God they perish;
by the blast of his anger they are consumed.

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10 The roaring of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion,
the teeth of the young lions—they are broken.

11 The old lion perishes for lack of victims;
the cubs of the lioness are scattered everywhere.

12 Now a certain matter was secretly brought to me,
and my ear received a whisper about it.

13 Then came thoughts from visions in the night,
when deep sleep falls on people.

14 It was at night when fear and trembling came upon me,
and all my bones shook.

15 Then a spirit passed before my face,
and the hair of my flesh stood up.

16 The spirit stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, and I heard a voice that said,

17 "Can a mortal man be more righteous than God?
Can a man be more pure than his Maker?

18 See, if God puts no trust in his servants;
if he accuses his angels of folly,

19 how much more is this true of those who live in houses of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed sooner than a moth?

20 Between morning and evening they are destroyed;
they perish forever without anyone noticing them.

21 Are not their tent cords plucked up among them?
They die; they die without wisdom.

Job 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to form Eliphaz's argument.

Links:

Job 4:1 Notes

Job 4:1

Eliphaz

Eliphaz is a man's name.

Temanite

A Temanite belongs to the tribe of Teman.

Job 4:2

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will you be impatient?
Eliphaz asks this question in order to make a statement. Alternate translation: "you will surely be impatient."
will you be impatient?
"will that annoy you?"
But who can stop himself from speaking?
Eliphaz asks this question to say that no one who sees a friend suffering can remain silent. Alternate translation: "No one can restrain himself from speaking (to a friend in such a state as you find yourself)" or "I must speak to you, (seeing that you are in a state of grief)."
Job 4:3
See, you have instructed many; you have strengthened weak hands
This verse states a single idea in two different ways.
you have strengthened weak hands
Here "weak hands" represents people who need help. Alternate translation: "you have helped others when they needed help"
Job 4:4
supported
Someone who has been encouraged is spoken of as if he were kept from falling down.
falling
Here becoming discouraged is spoken of as if it were falling down.
you have made feeble knees strong
Here discouragement is spoken of as if it were a person whose weak knees could not keep him upright.
Job 4:5
But now trouble has come to you
Here trouble is spoken of as if it were an object that could come to a person. Alternate translation: "But now you suffer from disasters"
you are weary
"you are discouraged"
Job 4:6
your fear
"the fact that you honor God"
Is not your fear your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?
Eliphaz asks these questions in order to tell Job that it is because of his sin that he is suffering. Alternate translation: "Everyone thinks that you honor God; everyone thinks that you are an honest man. But these things must not be true, because you do not trust God any longer."
your fear
Eliphaz means Job's fear of God. Alternate translation: "your fear of God"
your ways
Here "your ways" represents "your conduct," "how you behave."
Job 4:7
Who has ever perished when innocent?
Eliphaz uses this question to prompt Job to search his life for sin
when were the upright people ever cut off
This question also means to make a statement, and may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "No one has ever cut off an upright person"
cut off
Here being cut off represents being destroyed.
Job 4:8
plow iniquity ... sow trouble ... reap
Here the actions of plowing and sowing represent causing trouble for other people. The action of reaping represents suffering the trouble that one has himself caused.
Job 4:9
By the breath of God they perish; by the blast of his anger they are consumed
The writer explains a single idea using two different statements. This is a form of Hebrew poetry used for emphasis, clarity, teaching, or all three.
the breath of God
This may represent the action of God giving a command.
the blast of his anger
This expression suggests the heavy breathing that a person sometimes does through his nose when he is very angry.
breath ... blast
The second builds on the first. They make the same point by using meanings that increase the result. "By the puff of God's mouth they die; the rushing wind of his anger devastates them."
perish ... are consumed
The second phrase builds on the first. They make the same point. "By the puff of God's breath they die, the rushing wind of his anger devastates them."
they are consumed
Here being consumed or eaten represents being killed.
Job 4:10
The roaring of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion, the teeth of the young lions—they are broken.
Here a lion's roar, his voice, and his teeth being broken are used as pictures of the wicked being destroyed.
they are broken
This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "something breaks them"
Job 4:11
The old lion perishes for lack of victims; the cubs of the lioness are scattered everywhere
Eliphaz uses the picture of an old lion dying of hunger and of a lion's family being scattered as metaphors for the wicked being destroyed.
the cubs of the lioness are scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "something scatters the cubs of the lioness"
Job 4:12
Now a certain matter was secretly brought to me ... my ear received a whisper about it
These phrases express the same idea in two different way. They emphasize that Eliphaz heard a message whispered to him.
Job 4:13
visions in the night
"dreams"
when deep sleep falls on people
"when people sleep very deeply"
Job 4:14
fear and trembling came upon me

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Here fear and trembling are spoken of as if they were objects that could come to a person. Alternate translation: "I began to be afraid and to tremble"

Job 4:15

the hair of my flesh stood up

This indicates great fear. If your language has a word for what people's hair does when they are frightened, you may want to use it here.

the hair of my flesh

"the hair on my body." In some languages, the word for the hair that grows on the top of the head is different from the word for hair that grows on other parts of the body.

Job 4:16

A form was before my eyes

"Something was before my eyes" or "I saw something"

form

shape

and I heard

"then I heard"

Job 4:17

Can a mortal man be more righteous than God?

Eliphaz poses this question so that Job will consider, "Do I regard myself as more righteous than God?" or "Am I justified before God?" Alternate translation: "A mortal man cannot be more righteous than God." or "A mortal man cannot be righteous before God."

Can a man be more pure than his Maker?

This question has the same purpose as the previous question. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be more pure than his Maker." or "A man cannot be pure before his Maker."

his Maker

"his Creator"

Job 4:19

those who live in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust

This is a figurative way of describing human beings, who were created out of the dust of the earth and whose bodies are like houses, which are made of clay and have dirt foundations.

who are crushed sooner than a moth

Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) "who God destroys as easily as he crushes a moth" or 2) "whose lives are as short as the life of a moth."

Job 4:20

Between morning and evening they are destroyed

This refers to the idea of something happening quickly.

they are destroyed

This may also be put into active form. Alternate translation: "they die"

Job 4:21

Are not their tent cords plucked up among them?

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "Have not their enemies plucked up their tent cords from among them?"

their tent cords

Here tent cords represent a tent. Sometimes a person's home and family are pictured as his tent, which can also represent all his possessions.

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5 1 Call out now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?

2 For anger kills the foolish;
jealousy causes the death of the silly.

3 I have seen a foolish person taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his home.

4 His children are far from safety;
they are crushed in the city gate.
There is no one to rescue them.

5 The hungry eat up their harvest;
they even take it from among the thorns.
The thirsty pant for their wealth.

6 For difficulties do not come out from the soil;
neither does trouble sprout from the ground.

7 Yet, mankind is born for trouble,
just as sparks fly upward.

8 But as for me, I would turn to God himself;
to him I would commit my cause—

9 he who does great and unsearchable things,

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marvelous things without number.

10 He gives rain on the earth,
and sends water on the fields.

11 He does this in order to set up on high those who are low;
to raise to safety those who mourn.

12 He breaks the plans of crafty people,
so that their hands cannot achieve success.

13 He traps wise people in their own crafty actions;
the plans of twisted people are hurried to their end.

14 They encounter darkness in the daytime,
and grope at noonday as if it were night.

15 But he saves the poor person from the sword in their mouths
and the needy person from the hand of mighty people.

16 So the poor person has hope,
and injustice shuts her own mouth.

17 See, blessed is the man whom God corrects;
therefore, do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.

18 For he inflicts pain and then binds up;
he wounds and then his hands heal.

19 He will rescue you out of six troubles;
indeed, in seven troubles, no evil will touch you.

20 In famine he will ransom you from death,
and in war from the hands of the sword.

21 You will be hidden from the scourge of the tongue;
and you will not be afraid of destruction when it comes.

22 You will laugh at destruction and famine,
and you will not be afraid of beasts of the earth.

23 For you will have a covenant with the stones in your field,
and the beasts of the field will be at peace with you.

24 You will know that your tent is in safety;
you will visit your sheepfold and you will not miss anything.

25 You will also know that your seed will be great,
that your descendants will be like the grass on the ground.

26 You will come to your grave at a full age,
like a stack of grain bundles that goes up at its time.

27 See, we have examined this matter; it is like this;
listen to it, and know it for yourself."

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Job 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sickness and sin

In the ancient Near East, it was common to believe that a person's illness was caused by sin. It was seen as the punishment of a god. While Yahweh may punish people because of their sin, not all sicknesses are caused by sin.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Links:

Job 5:1 Notes

Job 5:1

To which of the holy ones will you turn?

Eliphaz poses this question to make the point that there is no one Job can turn to for help. Alternate translation: "Is there a holy one to whom you may turn?" or "There is no holy one to whom you can turn for help."

holy ones

This refers to supernatural beings of some kind, whether angels or other spirits.

Job 5:2

anger kills the foolish; jealousy causes the death of the silly

The phrases "the foolish" and "the silly" are emphatic in the Hebrew. Alternate translation: "it is the foolish whom anger kills; it is the silly of whom jealousy causes the death"

the silly

"the one who lacks sound judgment" or "the one who cannot think well"

the foolish ... the silly

These phrases refer to any foolish person and any silly person.

Job 5:3

a foolish person

any foolish person

a foolish person taking root

Here a person is spoken of as if he were a plant, perhaps becoming more foolish over time. Alternate translation: "a foolish person becoming grounded in foolishness"

his home

This refers to the person's family and all his property.

Job 5:4

His children are far from safety

"His" refers to the foolish person or the foolish people in Job 5:2. Alternate translation: "Their children are never safe"

are crushed

Here being crushed represents being oppressed, taken advantage of, at court. This idea may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "someone crushes them"

city gate

The city gate, functioning as a court, was the place where disputes were resolved and where judgments were given.

There is no one to rescue them

"There is no one to help the foolish people's children out of their hardship"

Job 5:5

they even take it from among the thorns

This perhaps refers to parts of a field where the worst crops grow, because of thorn plants present.

The thirsty pant for their wealth

Here greedy people are spoken of as if they were thirsty, and the wealth of the foolish person is spoken of as if it were something that they could drink.

Job 5:6

For difficulties do not come out from the soil; neither does trouble sprout from the ground

Here difficulties and trouble are spoken of as if they were plants.

Job 5:7

mankind is born for trouble, just as sparks fly upward

It is as natural for people, once they are born, to have trouble as it is for sparks to fly up from a fire.

Job 5:9

great and unsearchable things, marvelous things without number

"great things that cannot be understood, wonders that cannot be counted"

unsearchable things

This refers to things that mankind cannot understand.

great and unsearchable things

Here the writer uses two independent words connected by "and" to emphasize the greatness of God's actions. Alternate translation: "greatly profound things"

marvelous things

"wonderful things" or "wonders"

Job 5:11

He does this in order to set up on high those who are low

Humble people in distress are spoken of as if they were in a low position. When God rescues them, they receive honor. When this happens, they are spoken of as being raised up and put into a high position. Alternate translation: "God does this in order to rescue and honor the humble who have been suffering"

Job 5:12

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He breaks the plans
Here stopping crafty people from doing what they have planned to do is spoken of as if those plans were things that he could physically break.
Job 5:13
He traps wise people in their own crafty actions
Here making wise people suffer for their own evil actions is spoken of as if it were catching them in traps. Their own actions are spoken of as if they were those traps.
twisted people
Here being evil in a clever way is spoken of as if it were being twisted. Alternate translation: "those who are cunning" or "those who are devious" or "those who are shrewd"
Job 5:14
They encounter darkness in the daytime
Here the cunning, wicked people whom God confuses are spoken of as if they unexpectedly are in the dark at noon, when the sun is at its highest position in the sky. They cannot do anything they wish to do, because they cannot see. Alternate translation: "Those who are cunning are in the dark, even at noontime"
grope
feel around like a blind person
noonday
the middle of the day, when the sun is highest and brightest
Job 5:15
But he saves the poor person from the sword in their mouths
Here the insulting and threatening things that people say are spoken of as if they were a sword in their mouths. Alternate translation: "But he saves the poor person from the threats of the mighty" or "But he saves the poor person when the mighty threaten or insult them"
Job 5:16
injustice shuts her own mouth
People who say unjust things are spoken of as if they were the injustice itself, who must stop speaking. Alternate translation: "It is as though injustice shut her own mouth"
Job 5:17
God corrects ... discipline of the Almighty
God is pictured as a parent correcting or instructing a child.
blessed is the man whom God corrects
"God really favors the man whom he corrects"
do not despise
"do not reject" or "do not consider worthless"
discipline
"instruction" or "correction"
Job 5:18
For he inflicts pain and then binds up; he wounds and then his hands heal
"For he causes pain but binds up; he crushes, but his hands heal"
inflicts pain ... binds up
If your language has a word for "pain" that is specifically the pain of a bleeding wound, you may want to use it here. The "pain" that "he inflicts" is by implication the pain of a bleeding wound, so when "he binds" it, he stops the bleeding and makes it feel better.
his hands heal
Here "his hands" represents God.
Job 5:19
He will rescue you out of six troubles; indeed, in seven troubles, no evil will touch you
The use of increasing numbers such as "six" and "seven" represents the idea of many, many times. Alternate translation: "He will rescue you out of trouble over and over again; indeed, time after time, no evil will touch you"
Job 5:20
General Information:
The shift in pronoun from "he" to "you" which began in Job 5:19 continues through the end of Eliphaz's speech in Job 5:27.
In famine he will ransom you
Here rescuing is spoken of as if it were ransoming, buying back. Alternate translation: "In famine God will rescue you from danger"
the hands of the sword
Here "hands" probably represents the people who attack with weapons, including swords. Alternate translation: "violent people" or "people who attack you"
Job 5:21
of destruction
Here "destruction" refers to the danger of being destroyed by enemies. Alternate translation: "that any enemy will destroy you"
Job 5:22
You will laugh at destruction and famine
Here "laugh" represents that the person is not afraid. Alternate translation: "You will not be afraid of any danger of destruction or famine"
beasts of the earth
This refers to wild animals. Alternate translation: "wild animals"
Job 5:23
you will have a covenant with the stones in your field
Here the stones in farmers' fields are spoken of as if they were people that someone could have a covenant with. Alternate translation: "the stones in your fields will be like people who promise that they will not make any trouble for you"
the beasts of the field
This refers to dangerous wild animals.
Job 5:24
You will know that your tent is in safety
Here "tent" represents a person's family, household, and all his possessions. Alternate translation: "You will know that your family, servants, and everything you own are safe"
you will visit your sheepfold and you will not miss anything
"when you visit where your flock stays at night, you will find all your sheep there"
Job 5:25
your seed will be great
Here "seed" represents a person's descendants. Alternate translation: "your descendants will be many"
your descendants will be like the grass on the ground
Here "descendants" are spoken of as if they were as many as blades of grass, and probably as thriving, too. Alternate translation: "your descendants will be as many and as alive

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as the grass that grows"
Job 5:26
You will come to your grave at a full age
"You will die at a very old age"
like a stack of grain bundles that goes up at its time
You may need to make explicit that the grain in this simile is fully ripe but not overly ripe. He would neither die young nor become weak in his old age.
Job 5:27
See, we have examined this matter; it is like this; listen to it, and know it for yourself
The words "we" refers to Job's friends but not to Job.
Alternate translation: "Look, we have thought about this matter. Listen to what I am saying and know that it is true"

6 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2]"Oh, if only my anguish were weighed;
if only all my calamity were laid in the balance!

[3] For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas.
That is why my words were reckless.

[4] For the arrows of the Almighty are in me,
my spirit drinks up the poison;
the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me.

[5] Does the wild donkey bray in despair when he has grass?
Or does the ox low in hunger when it has fodder?

[6] Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt?
Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

[7] I refuse to touch them;
they are like disgusting food to me.

[8] Oh, that I might have my request;
oh, that God would grant me the thing I long for:

[9] that it would please God to crush me once,
that he would set his hand free and cut me off from this life!

[10] May this still be my consolation—
even if I rejoice in pain that does not lessen:
that I have not denied the words of the Holy One.

[11] What is my strength, that I should continue to hope?
What is my end, that I should prolong my life?

[12] Is my strength the strength of stones?
Or is my flesh made of bronze?

[13] Is it not true that I have no help in myself,
and that wisdom has been driven out of me?

[14] To the person who is about to faint, faithfulness should be shown by his friend;
even to him who abandons the fear of the Almighty.

[15] But my brothers have acted as deceitfully to me as a desert streambed,
as channels of water that pass away to nothing,

[16] which are darkened because of ice over them,
and because of the snow that hides itself in them.

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17 When they thaw out, they vanish;
when it is hot, they melt out of their place.

18 The caravans that travel by their way turn aside for water;
they wander into wasteland and then perish.

19 Caravans from Tema looked there,
while companies of Sheba hoped in them.

20 They were disappointed because they had been confident of finding water.
They went there, but they were put to shame.

21 For now you friends are nothing to me;
you see my dreadful situation and are afraid.

22 Did I say to you, 'Give something to me'
or, 'Offer me a bribe from your wealth'

23 or, 'Save me from my adversary's hand'
or, 'Ransom me from the hand of oppressors'?

24 Teach me, and I will hold my peace;
make me understand where I have been wrong.

25 How painful are upright words!
But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?

26 Do you plan to ignore my words,
treating the words of a desperate man like the wind?

27 Indeed, you cast lots for a fatherless child,
and haggle over your friend like merchandise.

28 Now, therefore, please look at me,
for surely I would not lie to your face.

29 Relent, I beg you; let there be no injustice with you;
Indeed, relent, for my cause is just.

30 Is there evil on my tongue?
Cannot my mouth detect destructive things?

Job 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, and desiring his own death, Job does not curse God. He would rather have God end his life than to curse him. (See: curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

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Metaphors
Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He also is upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.
Rhetorical questions
Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Links:

Job 6:1 Notes

Job 6:2
in the balance
"on a scale"
Job 6:3
For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas
Job compares the burden of his suffering to the weight of wet sand; both can crush a person. Alternate translation: "For my anguish and calamities would be heavier than the sand on the seashore"
my words were reckless
"I spoke recklessly" or "I spoke rashly"
Job 6:4
For the arrows of the Almighty are in me
This is a metaphor for Job's suffering. He compares his many troubles to arrows that that God has shot his body with. Alternate translation: "It is as though the Almighty has shot arrows into my body"
my spirit drinks up the poison
"my spirit drinks up the arrows' poison." This continues the metaphor of the arrows, by implying that they had tips of poison and that Job feels the pain in his spirit. He speaks of feeling this pain as if his spirit drank the poison. Alternate translation: "I feel the pain of their poison in my inner being"
the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me
Job speaks of the terrible things that have happened to him as if they were soldiers that God had lined up to attack him all at once. Alternate translation: "God has caused all the terrible things that could happen to happen to me all at once"
the terrors of God have arranged themselves in array against me
God causing many things to terrify Job is spoken of as if God's terrors were soldiers lined up to attack Job. Alternate translation: "the terrors of God have arranged themselves like soldiers in an army"
Job 6:5
Does the wild donkey bray in despair when he has grass? Or does the ox low in hunger when it has fodder?
Job poses these rhetorical questions to emphasize that he has a reason to complain. These question can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "Just as the wild donkey does not bray in despair when he has grass and as the ox does not low in hunger when he has fodder, I would not complain if I did not have a reason"
bray
the sound a donkey makes
low
the sound an ox makes
fodder
animal food
Job 6:6
Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
Possible meanings are 1) Job is comparing his displeasure for his circumstances to people's dislike for bland food or 2) Job is comparing his displeasure for his friend's advice to people's dislike for bland food.
Can that which has no taste be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?
Job uses these rhetorical questions to emphasize his own displeasure. These questions can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tasteless food cannot be eaten without salt, just as there is no taste in the white of an egg."
Can that which has no taste be eaten
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Can you eat that which has no taste"
Job 6:7
I refuse to touch them
"Them" refers to bad tasting foods.
Job 6:9
to crush me once
This means for God to cause him to die. Alternate translation: "to crush me and let me die"
that he would set his hand free and cut me off from this life
The phrase "he would set his hand free" is an idiom that means that Job wants God to do what God really desires to do. Also, the phrase "cut me off from this life" is a euphemism for killing him. Alternate translation: "that he would do what he really wants to do and cut short my life" or "that he would act quickly and end my life"
Job 6:10
even if I rejoice in pain that does not lessen
"I would leap for joy in unending pain" or "I would endure pain that does not diminish"
does not lessen
"does not diminish"
that I have not denied the words of the Holy One
"that I have not disowned God." This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "that I have always obeyed the Holy One"
Job 6:11
What is my strength, that I should continue to hope? What is my end, that I should prolong my life?
Job poses these questions to emphasize that he has no reason to continue living. These questions have the same meaning. They may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I do not have enough strength to go on living; I have no reason to prolong my life"

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continue to hope

keep waiting for something good to happen

Job 6:12

General Information:

The writer uses parallel rhetorical questions in each of these verses to emphasize Job's lack of strength to endure suffering.

Is my strength the strength of stones? Or is my flesh made of bronze?

Job describes the weakness of his body by saying that he is not as strong as rocks and bronze to emphasize his lack of strength. These rhetorical questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I am not as strong as the rocks. My flesh is not as strong as metal."

Job 6:13

Is it not true that I have no help in myself ... me?

Job uses this rhetorical question to emphasize his lack of wisdom and his weakness. This question can be written as a statement. Also, the phrase "no help in myself" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "It is true that I have no strength left ... me."

wisdom has been driven out of me

"my success has been taken from me." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my wisdom is gone"

Job 6:14

To the person who is about to faint, faithfulness should be shown by his friend

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A friend should be faithful to the person who feels he is about to faint"

who is about to faint

This speaks of a person who feels hopeless and is overwhelmed by his troubles as if he were about to physically faint. Alternate translation: "who feels hopeless"

even to him who abandons the fear of the Almighty

"even if he stops fearing Almighty God." Possible meanings are 1) the faint person does not fear God or 2) his friend does not fear God.

Job 6:15

But my brothers have acted as deceitfully to me as a desert streambed

Job speaks of his friends being unfaithful to him as being like a "wadi" which is a stream that can suddenly dry up. Also, Job refers to his friends ironically here as his "brothers." Alternate translation: "But my friends are unfaithful to me. They are like a desert streambed"

as channels of water that pass away to nothing

"like streams of water that dry up." Job continues speaking of his friends being unfaithful as if they were streams that dry up.

Job 6:16

which are darkened because of ice over them ... and because of the snow that hides itself in them

These two phrases have the same meaning. They describe how the streambed is full of ice and snow in the winter. Alternate translation: "which look dark in the winter because they are covered with ice and are full of melted snow"

because of the snow that hides itself in them

This speaks of the snow melting and the water going into the streambed as if the snow were hiding in the streambed. Alternate translation: "because the snow melts and goes into them"

Job 6:17

When they thaw out, they vanish ... when it is hot, they melt out of their place

These two phrases have the same meaning. They describe how the streambed dries up in the hot season. Alternate translation: "When it is hot, the ice melts and the streambeds dry up"

Job 6:18

Connecting Statement:

Job is continuing his description of his friends being as unreliable as streams that dry up.

The caravans that travel by their way turn aside for water

"The caravans turn aside from the routes to find water" or "The caravans change course looking for water"

The caravans

A caravan is a large group of travelers riding camels across the desert.

Job 6:19

Tema ... Sheba

These are the names of places. The people of these places used caravans to trade things with people from other lands.

while companies of Sheba

"while caravans from Sheba"

hoped in them

"hoped for them" or "put their hope in them"

Job 6:20

but they were put to shame

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but they were disappointed" or "but they were not satisfied"

Job 6:21

General Information:

In these verses, Job poses four questions to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he did not ask for help from any of them.

For now

Job uses this phrase to introduce the main part of what he is saying.

you friends are nothing to me

"you friends have not helped me at all"

are afraid

This means that they see the trouble Job has and are afraid of being in the same situation. Alternate translation: "you are afraid that God might do similar things to you"

Job 6:23

or, 'Save ... hand' or, 'Ransom ... oppressors'?

These words are the last of a series of rhetorical questions that begins in verse 22. Job uses these questions to emphasize that he has not asked his friends to give him anything or to help him. "I never said to you, 'Give ... me' or, 'Offer ... wealth' or, 'Save ... hand' or, 'Ransom ... oppressors'."

my adversary's hand ... the hand of oppressors

The word "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "having my adversary control me ... having my oppressors control me" or "my adversary's power ... my oppressors' power"

Ransom me

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"Rescue me"

Job 6:24

Teach me ... make me

These verbs "teach" and "make" are second person plural and are spoken to his friends.

I will hold my peace

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will be silent"

Job 6:25

How painful are upright words! But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?

The exact meaning of the original language is uncertain. Some Bibles translate "How painful" as "How pleasant." Alternate translation: "When a person speaks the truth, it harms no one. But your arguments are not true, so how do they actually rebuke me?"

upright words

The word "upright" here is a metaphor for honesty or truthfulness. Alternate translation: "honest words" or "truthful words"

But your arguments, how do they actually rebuke me?

Job is using this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that what they are saying does not apply to him. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your reasons for rebuking me do not apply to me even though you sternly correct me." or "But your arguments against me are not true, so they do not actually rebuke me!"

your arguments

"your reasons" or "your claims"

Job 6:26

Do you plan to ignore my words, treating the words of a desperate man like the wind?

Job uses this rhetorical question to scold his friends. He compares his words to the wind to explain that his friends act like his words are empty and useless. Alternate translation: "You ignore my words! I am a desperate man, and you treat my words as if they are as useless as the wind."

Do you

"You" is in second person plural form.

Job 6:27

you cast lots for a fatherless child

"you would even gamble to win an orphan"

you cast lots ... haggle over your friend

Here "you" and "your" are in second person plural form.

haggle over your friend like merchandise

This compares how the man would sell his friend to how a person sells merchandise or wares. Alternate translation: "bargain to sell your friend for money"

Job 6:28

Now

This word is used by Job to introduce new information.

please look

The verb "to look" is in second person plural form.

I would not lie to your face

The word "your" refers to Job's friends. Here his friends are represented by their faces to emphasize that they are looking at him. Alternate translation: "I would not lie to you while I am looking at you"

Job 6:29

Relent, I beg you

"Please be merciful to me" or "Stop speaking like this, I beg you"

let there be no injustice with you

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "let there always be justice with you" or "always be just in the way you treat me"

Indeed, relent

"Please relent."

Job 6:30

Is there evil on my tongue?

"Do I say wicked things?" Job uses this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he is not wicked. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not say wicked things."

on my tongue

Here Job's speech is represented by his "tongue." Alternate translation: "in my speech"

Cannot my mouth detect destructive things?

Job uses this question to rebuke his friends and to emphasize that he can tell the difference between right and wrong. Here Job refers to himself by his "mouth" to emphasize his speech. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know what is right to say and what is wrong to say."

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7 Does not man have hard labor on earth?
Are not his days like the days of a hired man?

2 Like a slave earnestly desires the shadows of evening,
like a hired man looks for his wages—

3 so I have been assigned months of emptiness;
I have been given trouble-filled nights.

4 When I lie down, I say to myself,
'When will I get up and when will the night be gone?'
I am full of tossing to and fro until the day's dawning.

5 My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust;

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the sores in my skin harden up and then dissolve and run afresh.

6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle;
they pass without hope.

7 God, call to mind that my life is only a breath;
my eye will no more see good.

8 The eye of God, who sees me, will see me no more;
God's eyes will be on me, but I will not exist.

9 As a cloud is consumed and vanishes away,
so he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more.

10 He will return no more to his house;
neither will his place know him again.

11 Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

12 Am I the sea or a sea monster
that you place a guard over me?

13 When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
and my couch will ease my complaint,'

14 then you frighten me with dreams
and terrify me through visions,

15 so that my soul would choose strangling
and death rather than preserving these bones of mine.

16 I despise my life; I would not wish to always be alive;
let me alone, for my days are useless.

17 What is man that you should pay attention to him,
that you should set your mind on him,

18 that you should observe him every morning
and test him every moment?

19 How long will it be before you look away from me,
before you let me alone long enough for me to swallow down my own saliva?

20 Even if I have sinned, what would that do to you,
you who watch men?
Why have you made a target of me,
so that I am a burden for you?

21 Why do you not pardon my transgression
and take away my iniquity?
For now will I lie down in the dust;

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you will seek me carefully, but I will not exist."

Job 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, and desiring his own death, Job does not curse God. He would rather have God end his life than to curse him. (See: curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He also is upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Links:

Job 7:1 Notes

Job 7:1

Does not man have hard labor on earth?

Job poses this negative question to emphasize his awareness that all people experience hard work. It can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "There is hard labor for every person on earth."

on earth

This is a generalization that means for the time people are living on the earth. Alternate translation: "while he lives on the earth"

Are not his days like the days of a hired man?

Job poses this negative question to emphasize his awareness that all people struggle in life. Alternate translation: "And their days are like the days of a hired man."

a hired man

"a day laborer." This is a man who worked jobs one day at a time and was paid at the end of every day.

Job 7:2

Like a slave ... like a hired man

Job compares his misery and trouble to that of the slave and hired man.

the shadows of evening

"cool shade." The implied information is that the shadows of evening provide coolness and shade from the sun

looks for his wages

"waits for his pay"

Job 7:3

I have been assigned months of emptiness

Job speaks as if God had commanded him to endure months of emptiness. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has assigned me months of emptiness"

months of emptiness

The abstract noun "emptiness" can be translated as the adjective "empty." This is a metaphor for life that is meaningless, because either he believes that he will never enjoy life again or he is unable to do work that has value. Alternate translation: "empty months" or "months when I have nothing to live for" or "months in which I can do nothing of value"

I have been given trouble-filled nights

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has given me trouble-filled nights"

trouble-filled nights

Possible meanings are 1) "nights in which bad things happen" or 2) "nights in which I greatly worry."

Job 7:4

When I lie down

The implied information is that this is when Job would lie down to sleep at night. Alternate translation: "When I lie down to sleep"

I say to myself

Job poses a question to no one else in particular. Alternate translation: "I ask" or "I wonder"

When will I get up and when will the night be gone?

Job poses this question to emphasize his intense suffering during the hours he should be sleeping. Alternate translation: "I wish I could get up, but night continues."

tossing to and fro

"turning back and forth." This indicates that Job has moved on his bed all night without any rest.

Job 7:5

My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust

The worms and clods of dust are pictured as covering Job as if they were clothing. Alternate translation: "My flesh is covered with worms and clods of dust"

My flesh

This represents his whole body. Alternate translation: "My body"

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clods of dust
Possible meanings are 1) lumps or crusts of dirt or 2) scabs on the skin.
dissolve and run afresh
"break out again"
Job 7:6
My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle
Job compares his lifetime to the quickness of a weaver's shuttle. Alternate translation: "My life goes by very quickly"
weaver
a person who makes cloth by crossing threads or yarn
a weaver's shuttle
a moving part that carries thread or yarn back and forth quickly in a loom when making cloth
Job 7:7
call to mind
"remember." The phrase "call to mind" does not mean God forgot. Job is asking God to consider or think about the shortness of Job's life.
my life is only a breath
Job compares the shortness of his life to the shortness of a breath. Alternate translation: "my life is very short, like taking one breath"
my eye will no more see good
Here "my eye" represents Job's whole person and his ability to see or experience things. Alternate translation: "I will never again experience good things"
Job 7:8
The eye of God, who sees me, will see me no more
Many versions of the Bible translate this as "The eye which sees me will see me no more." The words "of God" were added to this phrase because they are implied by the context.
The eye of God, who sees me ... God's eyes will be on me
Here God is represented by his "eye" to emphasize what he looks at. Alternate translation: "God who watches me ... God will look for me"
Job 7:9
As a cloud is consumed and vanishes away, so he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more
Job is describing death as being like the clouds that disappear.
As a cloud is consumed
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "As a cloud fades"
he who goes down to Sheol will come up no more
"he who dies will not return"
Job 7:10
his place
The words "his place" represent those who live in his place. Alternate translation: "the people who live in his place" or "his family"
Job 7:11
I will not restrain my mouth
Here the mouth represents speech. Alternate translation: "I will not restrain my speech"
in the anguish of my spirit
"in the distress of my spirit" or "in the torment of my suffering." The abstract noun "anguish" can be translated using the adverb "distress." Alternate translation: "while my spirit is distressed"
in the bitterness of my soul
Here sorrow is spoken of as if it tasted bitter, and "soul" refers to the whole man. Alternate translation: "with anger and resentment"
Job 7:12
Am I the sea or a sea monster that you place a guard over me?
Job poses this question to express his anger at God. In comparing himself to the sea or a sea monster, Job suggests that God regards him as a hideous creature. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am not the sea or a sea monster that needs a guard to watch it."
Job 7:13
My bed will comfort me, and my couch will ease my complaint
Here "bed" and "couch" are metonyms for "sleep." In lying down to sleep, Job would hope to be comforted. The metonyms also have human attributes; they have the ability to comfort and ease a person. Alternate translation: "My bed, my couch, will be like someone who can comfort me"
My bed ... my couch
These phrases refer to the same thing. Alternate translation: "My bed ... my bed"
Job 7:14
you frighten me
"you" here refers to God
Job 7:15
my soul
This is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I"
strangling
killing a person by squeezing the throat and stopping the breathing
these bones of mine
Here Job uses the word "bones" to refer to his body. Alternate translation: "This body of mine"
Job 7:16
to always be alive
"to live forever"
my days are useless
"my days are pointless" or "the days of my life are empty"
Job 7:17
Connecting Statement:
Job asks a rhetorical question to say that he does not understand why God should pay attention to people.
set your mind on him
Here the mind represents thoughts and attention. To "set your mind on" means to give attention to. Alternate translation: "direct your attention to him"
Job 7:18
that you should observe ... every moment?
This is the end of the rhetorical question that Job begins asking with the words "What is man that" in verse 17. The question can be translated as a statement. "Tell me what man is that ... mind on him, that you should observe ... every moment." or "I do not understand what man is that ... mind on him, that you should observe ... every moment."
observe him

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"carefully examine him"

Job 7:19

How long will it be ... swallow down my own saliva?

Here Job uses paralleism to emphasize his wish that God would stop watching him. Alternate translation: "Look away from me! Leave me alone long enough for me to swallow my own saliva!"

saliva

liquid produced in people's mouths that keeps the mouth moist and helps to swallow food

Job 7:20

Even if I have sinned ... burden for you?

Job poses these questions to argue against God treating him unfairly. Alternate translation: "Even if I have sinned, that would do nothing to you, as you watch over people. Tell me why you have made me your target, so that I am a burden for you."

Job 7:21

Why do you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?

Here Job uses two similar clauses within a rhetorical question to emphasize his point. Possible meanings are: 1) Job is asking why God does not forgive him. Alternate translation: "Tell me why you do not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity." or 2) Job is asking God why he cannot just overlook his supposed wrongdoings. Alternate translation: "Tell me why you do not just bear with my transgression and iniquity."

take away

"remove"

now will I lie down in the dust

The phrase "lie down in the dust" is a metonym that represents dying. Alternate translation: "now I will die"

I will not exist

"I will not be here" or "I will be gone"

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8 [1]Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
[2] "How long will you say these things?
How long will the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?

[3] Does God pervert justice?
Does the Almighty pervert righteousness?

[4] Your children have sinned against him;
we know this, for he gave them into the hand of their sins.

[5] But suppose you diligently sought God
and sought the favor of the Almighty.

[6] If you are pure and upright,
then he would surely stir himself on your behalf
and restore you to your rightful place.

[7] Even though your beginning was small,
still your final condition would be much greater.

[8] Please ask the former generations,
and give your attention to what our ancestors learned.

[9] (We were only born yesterday and know nothing
because our days on earth are a shadow.)

[10] Will they not teach you and tell you?
Will they not speak words from their hearts?

[11] Can papyrus grow without a marsh?
Can reeds grow without water?

[12] While they are still green and not cut down,
they wither before any other plant.

[13] So also are the paths of all who forget God;
the hope of the godless will perish.

[14] His confidence will break apart,

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and his trust is as weak as a spider's web.

15 He leans on his house, but it will not support him;
he takes hold of it, but it does not stand.

16 Under the sun he is green,
and his shoots go out over his entire garden.

17 His roots are wrapped about the heaps of stone;
they look for good places among the rocks.

18 But if this person is destroyed out of his place,
then that place will deny him and say, 'I never saw you.'

19 See, this is the "joy" of such a person's behavior;
other plants will sprout out of the same soil in his place.

20 See, God will not reject an innocent man;
neither will he take the hand of evildoers.

21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,
your lips with shouting.

22 Those who hate you will be clothed with shame;
the tent of the wicked will be no more."

Job 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Bildad speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Bildad uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Bildad's argument.

Links:

Job 8:1 Notes

Job 8:1

General Information:

Verses 2 and 3 each consist of two different questions that have the same meaning. Bildad uses these questions to rebuke Job.

Connecting Statement:

In this chapter, Bildad begins to speak about Job's complaints.

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered

"Bildad" is the name of a man who is a member of the tribe of Shuah.

Job 8:2

How long will the words of your mouth be a mighty wind?

Bildad speaks of Job's words as if they are as empty and insubstantial as the wind. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The words of your mouth are as insignificant as a mighty wind."

Job 8:3

Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert righteousness?

Here "God" and "the Almighty" both refer to Yahweh. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "God does not pervert justice; the Almighty does not pervert righteousness."

pervert justice? ... pervert righteousness?

"approve of and do what is not just? ... approve of and do what is not righteous?"

Job 8:4

for he gave them into the hand of their sins

Here "hand" represents the power or results of sin. Bildad implies that God killed Job's children because of their sin. Alternate translation: "for God caused the consequences of your children's sins to kill them"

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Job 8:5

But suppose you diligently sought God and sought the favor of the Almighty

Bildad is about to say what would have happened if Job had correctly spoken to God, but Bildad does not believe that Job really did this.

diligently sought God ... sought the favor of the Almighty

These two phrases both refer to Job asking God for help or pleading with God for mercy.

diligently sought God

"earnestly asked God for help"

Job 8:6

General Information:

Bildad says that God would treat Job well if he was pure, but Bildad does not believe that Job is pure.

If you are pure and upright

"If only you were pure and righteous" or "If only you would obey God and do what is right"

stir himself on your behalf

Here Yahweh is spoken of as if he would wake up to help Job. Alternate translation: "help you" or "do good things for you"

restore you to your rightful place

This refers to giving back to Job the things he lost, including his family, wealth, and honor.

Job 8:7

Even though your beginning was small, still your final condition would be much greater

Here lack of wealth is spoken of as being a "small beginning." Alternate translation: "Even if you were poor early in your life, God would make you very wealthy later in your life"

Job 8:8

give your attention to what our ancestors learned

"study carefully what our ancestors discovered" or "consider the things our forefathers learned"

Job 8:9

our days on earth are a shadow

The shortness of life is spoken of as if it were a shadow which quickly disappears.

Job 8:10

Will they not teach you and tell you? Will they not speak words from their hearts?

Bildad uses these rhetorical questions to rebuke Job for not agreeing with Bildad and the ancestors. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "They will teach you and tell you and speak what they sincerely believe."

from their hearts

Here the word "hearts" represents their inner beliefs. Alternate translation: "that they sincerely believe"

Job 8:11

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of Job 8:8-10.

Can papyrus grow without a marsh? Can reeds grow without water?

Bildad uses these two parallel questions to emphasize the single point that people cannot live without God. Here the plants represent people and the water represents God. The questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Papyrus plants cannot grow away from the marshes. Reeds cannot grow without water."

papyrus

a tall reed-like plant that grows in shallow water

Job 8:12

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of Job 8:8-10.

While they are still green and not cut down, they wither before any other plant

It is implied that they wither when there is no water. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Without water, they stop growing and wither faster than any other plant, even if no one cuts them down"

wither

"dry up"

Job 8:13

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of Job 8:8-10.

So also are the paths of all who forget God

Here "the paths" represents a person's future and the events that will happen to them. Alternate translation: "The same thing will happen to everyone who forgets God"

the hope of the godless will perish

"the things the godless person desires will not happen"

Job 8:14

General Information:

It is unclear if this verse is the teaching of Bildad, or if Bildad is quoting the sayings of the ancestors of [Job 8:8-10]

His confidence will break apart ... his trust is as weak as a spider's web

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the godless person is trusting in something that cannot save him.

his trust is as weak as a spider's web

Here Bildad compares the trust of the godless person to a spider's web; the slightest force will break both.

Job 8:15

General Information:

In this verse the pronouns "he" and "him" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

He leans on his house, but it will not support him; he takes hold of it, but it does not stand

This statement probably refers to a man relying on his property and wealth for security. If so, then "house" here represents the owner's property and wealth. Alternate translation: "He thinks he will be safe because he is wealthy, but he will not be safe"

it will not support him

This negative statement emphasizes the opposite. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "he will fall down"

it does not stand

This negative statement emphasizes the opposite. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "it will fall down"

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Job 8:16

General Information:

Here pronouns "he" and "his" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

Under the sun he is green, and his shoots go out over his entire garden

Here Bildad compares the godless person to a plant that is healthy.

Under the sun he is green

The meaning of the Hebrew text is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) he is healthy during the day or 2) he is watered before the sun rises.

Job 8:17

General Information:

In this verse the pronoun "his" refers to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

His roots are wrapped about the heaps of stone ... they look for good places among the rocks

These two phrases have similar meaning, but the meaning is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) he appears to be well-rooted in the rocks, taking advantage of every opening or 2) his roots cannot find fertile ground and must try to find nutrients among the rocks.

Job 8:18

General Information:

In this verse the pronouns "his" and "him" refer to the godless person, who represents godless people in general. It may be helpful to readers to use the plural pronouns "they" and "their."

if this person is destroyed out of his place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone pulls him out of his place" or "if a gardener tears him out of the garden"

his place

"the rocky ground" or "the garden"

that place will deny him and say, 'I never saw you.'

The garden is spoken of as if it had human ability to speak. The garden immediately forgets that he existed.

Job 8:19

this is the "joy" of such a person's behavior

Bildad is speaking with irony to express that there is not any real joy for the godless person. Alternate translation: "this is all the joy they will receive from their godless actions"

other plants will sprout out of the same soil in his place

Bildad continues the metaphor from [Job 8:16-18]

sprout

"grow"

the same soil

"the rocky ground" or "the garden"

in his place

"in the place of the godless man"

Job 8:20

God will not reject an innocent man

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God will accept an innocent man"

neither will he take the hand of evildoers

Here "take the hand" refers to help or support. Alternate translation: "God will not support people who do evil things"

Job 8:21

He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, your lips with shouting

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how happy Job would be if he were innocent. The word "he" refers to God and "your" refers to Job. Alternate translation: "God will make you very happy again if you are innocent"

fill your mouth with laughter

God causing Job to laugh is spoken of as if God had poured laughter into Job's mouth. Alternate translation: "cause you to continually laugh"

your lips with shouting

The words "he will yet fill" are understood from the previous clause. God causing him to shout for joy is spoken of as if God had poured joy into Job's mouth. Alternate translation: "he will yet fill your lips with shouting" "God will cause you to shout for joy"

Job 8:22

Those who hate you will be clothed with shame

Here "shame" is spoken of as if it were clothing that God will cause Job's enemies to wear. This means they will be very ashamed. Alternate translation: "God will cause those who hate you to be very ashamed"

the tent of the wicked will be no more

Here "tent" refers to the homes of the wicked. Alternate translation: "the houses of the wicked will be destroyed"

will be no more

"will not last" or "will be destroyed"

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9 [1]Then Job answered and said,

[2] "I truly know that this is so.
But how can a person be in the right with God?

[3] If he wants to argue with God,
he cannot answer him once in a thousand times.

[4] God is wise in heart and mighty in strength;
who has ever hardened himself against him and succeeded?—

[5] he who removes the mountains without warning anyone
when he overturns them in his anger—

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6 he who shakes the earth out of its place
and sets its pillars trembling.

7 It is the same God who tells the sun not to rise, and it does not,
and who covers up the stars,

8 who by himself stretches out the heavens
and tramples down the waves of the sea,

9 who makes the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades,
and the constellations of the south.

10 He does great and unsearchable things,
and wonderful things that cannot be counted.

11 See, he goes by me, and I do not see him;
he passes on, but I do not understand him.

12 If he takes something away, who can stop him?
Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?'

13 God will not withdraw his anger;
the helpers of Rahab bow beneath him.

14 How much less could I answer him,
could I choose words to reason with him?

15 Even if I were righteous, I could not answer him;
I could only plead for mercy with my judge.

16 Even if I called and he answered me,
I would not believe that he was listening to my voice.

17 For he breaks me with a tempest
and multiplies my wounds without cause.

18 He does not allow me to regain my breath;
but he fills me with bitterness.

19 If it is a matter of strength, behold, he is mighty!
If it is a matter of justice, who can summon him?

20 Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me;
and though I am blameless, my words would prove me to be guilty.

21 I am blameless, but I do not care any more about myself;
I despise my own life.

22 It makes no difference, which is why I say
that he destroys blameless people and wicked people together.

23 When a whip suddenly kills,
he mocks the despair of the innocent.

24 The earth is given into the hand of wicked people;

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God covers the faces of its judges.
If it is not he who does it, then who is it?

25 My days are swifter than a running messenger;
my days flee away; they see no good anywhere.

26 They are as fast as papyrus reed boats,
and as fast as the eagle that swoops down on its victim.

27 If I said that I would forget about my complaints,
that I would take off my sad face and be happy,

28 I would be afraid of all my sorrows
because I know that you will not consider me innocent.

29 I will be condemned;
why, then, should I try in vain?

30 If I washed myself with snow water
and made my hands ever so clean,

31 God would plunge me in a ditch,
and my own clothes would be disgusted with me.

32 For God is not a man, as I am, that I could answer him,
that we could come together in court.

33 There is no judge between us
who might lay his hand upon us both.

34 There is no other judge who could take God's rod off me,
who could keep his terror from frightening me.

35 Then would I speak up and not fear him.
But as things are now, I cannot do that.

Job 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness and Yahweh's power

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Job does not think that he can make a claim against Yahweh because only God is perfectly wise and just. Yahweh is truly powerful and Job understands this. (See: curse and wise and justice)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express himself or to describe Yahweh's power. He is also upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Bildad that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

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Links:

Job 9:1 Notes

Job 9:2
I truly know that this is so
"I know that what you say is true"
this is so
Here the word "this" refers to what Bildad said.
how can a person be in the right with God?
"how can anyone be innocent before God?"
Job 9:3
argue
dispute
he cannot answer him once in a thousand times
"Once in a thousand times" here is an idiom that means "at all." Possible meanings are 1) "he cannot give any answer to God" or 2) "God will not answer him at all"
a thousand times
"1,000 times"
Job 9:4
wise in heart
Here the heart represents the inner being or thoughts. Alternate translation: "wise in what he decides"
mighty in strength
The abstract noun "strength" can be expressed as the adjective "strong." Alternate translation: "mighty in how strong he is"
hardened himself against him
To harden oneself means to be stubborn. Alternate translation: "resisted him" or "defied him"
Job 9:5
he who removes the mountains
"God removes the mountains"
Job 9:6
he who shakes the earth
"God shakes the earth"
Job 9:7
who covers up the stars
"who blocks the stars from view"
Job 9:8
who by himself stretches out the heavens
God is spoken of as creating the heavens without any help, as if the heavens were fabric that he stretches out.
tramples down the waves of the sea
God is spoken of as calming the sea as if with his feet. Alternate translation: "puts his feet down on the waves of the sea" or "calms the waves of the sea"
Job 9:9
the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades
These are the names of constellations, which are groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky.
Orion
a famous hunter in Greek mythology
Pleiades
several bright stars that look like they are close together in the sky
constellations
groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky
Job 9:10
unsearchable things
"things that cannot be understood"
Job 9:11
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."
he passes on
"he passes by" or "he moves on"
Job 9:12
If he takes something away, who can stop him? Who can say to him, 'What are you doing?
These are rhetorical questions that expect an answer of "No one." They can be reworded as statements. Alternate translation: "If he takes something away, no one can stop him. No one can ask him, 'What are you doing?'"
If he takes something away
"If he takes someone away" or "If he wants to snatch something away"
Job 9:13
the helpers of Rahab bow beneath him
Here "bow beneath him" symbolizes submission or defeat. Alternate translation: "he crushes the helpers of Rahab"
Rahab
The word "Rahab" here refers to a monster of the sea.
Job 9:14
How much less could I answer him, could I choose words to reason with him?
Job poses two similar questions to emphasize his reluctance to confront God. They can be reworded as a statement. Alternate translation: "So I certainly could not answer him or choose words to reason with him."
Job 9:17
For he breaks me with a tempest
Job compares his troubles from God to the effects of a tempest. Alternate translation: "He injures me as if with a tempest"
tempest
a powerful or violent storm
multiplies my wounds
"gives me many wounds" or "wounds me again and again"
without cause
"even though I have not given him cause to do so" or "even though I am innocent"
Job 9:18
to regain my breath
This is an idiom that means "to be able to breathe again" or
he fills me with bitterness
This verse pictures God as filling up Job's life with things that make him bitter. The abstract noun "bitterness" can be expressed as the adjective "bitter." Alternate translation: "he fills me up with bitter things"
Job 9:19
If it is a matter of strength

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"If there is a contest of strength"

behold, he is mighty

"look and you will see that he is mighty" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you: he is mighty"

he is mighty

"he is the strong one"

who can summon him?

This question expects an answer of "No one" to make the point that no one is able to bring God to court. This can be reworded as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one can summon him."

Job 9:20

Though I am in the right, my own mouth would condemn me; and though I am blameless, my words would prove me to be guilty

This verse expresses the same idea twice for emphasis.

Though I am in the right

Here "I am in the right" means I am the one who has done right things. Alternate translation: "Although I have done right things" or "Even though I am innocent"

my own mouth would condemn me

Here "mouth" represents Job's words. Alternate translation: "my own words would accuse me" or "what I say would condemn me"

blameless

"faultless"

my words would prove me to be guilty

Here "my words" are spoken of as if they could take action. Alternate translation: "God would use what I say to prove me guilty"

guilty

The word here has the meaning of "twisted" or "crooked."

Job 9:21

I am blameless

"I am faultless"

about myself

"what happens to me"

Job 9:22

It makes no difference

"It is all the same" or "It does not matter"

he destroys blameless people and wicked people together

Here "blameless" and "wicked" are two extremes for a merism that include everything in between. Alternate translation: "he brings everyone to an end, whether they are blameless or wicked"

Job 9:23

When a whip suddenly kills

The word "whip" here is a metaphor for any kind of disaster. Alternate translation: "When a disaster suddenly happens and people die"

the despair of the innocent

The word "despair" is an abstract noun that can be translated by the verb "despair." Here it is a metonym for the innocent who are despairing. Alternate translation: "the innocent who are despairing" or "the innocent who have lost all hope"

innocent

This is a nominalized adjective. Alternate translation: "innocent people".

Job 9:24

The earth is given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gives the earth"

The earth is

Here "the earth" is used to represent the people on the earth. Alternate translation: "The people of the world are"

into the hand of

Here "hand" is a metonym for "control." Alternate translation: "into the control of"

God covers the faces of its judges

This idiom means God keeps the judges of the earth from being able to judge the difference between right and wrong. Alternate translation: "God makes its judges blind" or "God keeps its judges from judging rightly"

If it is not he who does it, then who is it?

"If it is not God who does these things, then who does them?"

Job 9:25

My days are swifter than a running messenger

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to a fast runner. Alternate translation: "My days pass swiftly"

running messenger

"runner" or "running man"

my days flee away

This pictures the days of Job's life as being able to run away like a person.

they see no good anywhere

This pictures the days of Job's life as being able to see like a person.

no good

"no good thing"

Job 9:26

They are as fast as papyrus reed boats

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to the speed of fast boats. Alternate translation: "They pass quickly by like papyrus reed boats"

papyrus reed boats

"boats made out of reeds." Papyrus reed is a hollow grass that grows along the banks of rivers.

as fast as the eagle that swoops down on its victim

Job compares how quickly his days are passing by to a large bird diving toward its prey. Alternate translation: "as fast as the eagle that flies down quickly to catch its food"

swoops down

"rushes down"

Job 9:27

I would forget about my complaints

The abstract noun "complaint" can be translated as the verb "complain." Alternate translation: "I would stop complaining" or "I would stop complaining against God"

my complaints

It can be stated clearly whom Job was complaining against. Alternate translation: "my complaints against God"

I would take off my sad face and be happy

Job's sad face is spoken of here as if it was something that could be removed. Alternate translation: "I would stop looking unhappy and smile"

Job 9:28

I would be afraid of all my sorrows

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Verses 28 and 29 express the consequences if Job does what he says in verse 27. This can be expressed by adding the word "then." Alternate translation: "Then I would be afraid of all my sorrows"

of all my sorrows

The abstract noun "sorrows" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "of everything that hurts me"

Job 9:29

I will be condemned

"I will be accused and punished." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will condemn me"

why, then, should I try in vain?

Job uses this question to emphasize that he does not think it is of any use trying to get God's attention. The implied information about what Job is trying can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It is of no use to try to get God's attention."

Job 9:30

If I washed myself with snow water

"If I bathed my body in pure, clean water"

snow water

the water that comes from melted snow

snow

white flakes of frozen water that fall from clouds in places where the air temperature is cold

made my hands ever so clean

"made my hands exceedingly clean." Some other versions of the Bible translate this with the meaning of "cleaned my hands with very strong soap."

Job 9:31

plunge me in a ditch

"throw me into a pit"

my own clothes would be disgusted with me

Job's clothing is spoken of as if it would have a negative response to Job after God plunged him into a ditch. Alternate translation: "I would be too filthy for my own clothing"

Job 9:32

answer him

Job implies that God has charged him of doing wrong, and he wants to respond to those charges. Alternate translation: "answer his charges against me" or "defend myself" or "argue my innocence with him"

come together in court

"come together to trial." Here "court" is a place where people can come and a judge will settle disputes. "Coming together in court" is a metonym for going against each other in a court of law. Alternate translation: "confront each other before a judge"

Job 9:33

There is no judge between us

This means there is no judge who is greater than God who could decide what is right between him and Job.

lay his hand upon us both

Here "lay his hand upon" means having power or authority over. Alternate translation: "take hold of both of us" or "have authority over both of us"

Job 9:34

Connecting Statement:

These verses continue the previous argument that no one is greater than God who could act as a judge between God and Job.

take God's rod off me

Here "God's rod" is a metonym for God punishing or correcting Job. Alternate translation: "stop God from punishing me"

keep his terror from frightening me

The abstract noun "terror" can be translated as the verb "terrify." Alternate translation: "keep him from terrifying and frightening me"

Job 9:35

Then would I speak up

"Then I would speak"

as things are now

"because this is how things are now"

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10 [1] I am weary of my life;
I will give free expression to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

[2] I will say to God, 'Do not merely condemn me;
show me why you accuse me.

[3] Is it good to you that you should oppress me,
to despise the labor of your hands
while you smile on the plans of the wicked?

[4] Do you have eyes of flesh?
Do you see like a man sees?

[5] Are your days like the days of mankind
or your years like the years of people,

[6] that you inquire after my iniquity
and search after my sin,

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7 although you know I am not guilty
and there is no one who can rescue me from your hand?

8 Your hands have framed and fashioned me
together round about, yet you are destroying me.

9 Call to mind, I beg you, that you have fashioned me like clay;
will you bring me into dust again?

10 Have you not poured me out like milk
and curdled me like cheese?

11 You have clothed me with skin and flesh
and knit me together with bones and sinews.

12 You have granted me life and covenant faithfulness;
your care has guarded my spirit.

13 Yet these things you hid in your heart—
I know that this is what you were thinking:

14 that if I sinned, you would notice it;
you would not acquit me of my iniquity.

15 If I have acted wickedly, woe to me;
and even if I acted righteously,
I could not lift up my head,
since I am filled with disgrace—
see my affliction!

16 If my head were lifted up,
you would stalk me like a lion;
and again you would show yourself with marvellous acts of power against me.
17 You bring new witnesses against me
and increase your anger against me;
you attack me with fresh armies.

18 Why, then, have you brought me out of the womb?
I wish I had died and that no eye had ever seen me.

19 I would have been as though I had never existed;
I would have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 Are not my days only a few? Stop then,
let me alone, so that I may have a little rest

21 before I go from where I will not return,
to the land of darkness and of the shadow of death,

22 the land that is as dark as darkness,
the land of the shadow of death, without any order,
where the light is like darkness.'"

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Job 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse Yahweh. Instead, he defends himself to Yahweh, while trusting in his decision. (See: curse and trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to defend himself. He does not believe that he committed a sin deserving severe punishment.

Links:

Job 10:1 Notes

Job 10:1

I am weary of my life

"I am tired of living"

I will give free expression to my complaint

The abstract nouns "expression" and "complaint" can be translated as the verbs "express" and "complain." Alternate translation: "I will freely express what I have to complain about" or "I will argue freely"

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul

How Job feels is compared to a bitter taste. The abstract noun "bitterness" can be translated as the adverb "bitterly." Alternate translation: "My inner being will speak bitterly" or "I will bitterly speak out"

Job 10:3

Is it good to you that you should oppress me, to despise the labor of your hands while you smile on the plans of the wicked?

This question expects a "no" answer and can be changed into a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not good that you should oppress me, that you should despise the labor of your hands, while you smile on the plans of the wicked."

the labor of your hands

Here God is represented by his "hands." Alternate translation: "what you have created"

smile on the plans of the wicked

Here the idiom "smiling on" represents God's approval. Alternate translation: "approve the plans of the wicked"

Job 10:4

Do you have eyes of flesh? Do you see like a man sees?

These two questions have nearly the same meaning. These questions expect a negative answer to emphasize that God does not see or understand things the same way a man does. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You do not have eyes of flesh, and you do not see like a man sees."

Job 10:5

Connecting Statement:

Job begins to ask a rhetorical question. He is saying that God lives forever but people live only for a short time, so God should not worry about Job's sins.

your days like the days of mankind ... your years like the years of people

These two phrases have nearly the same meaning.

your days

"the number of your days"

your years

"the number of your years"

Job 10:6

Connecting Statement:

Job continues the rhetorical question he began in verse 5.

inquire after my iniquity

"look to see if I have committed iniquity"

Job 10:7

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Are your days" in verse 5.

although you know ... from your hand?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Are your days" in verse 5. The whole question can be translated as a statement. "Your days are not like the days of mankind, and your years are not like the years of people, so you should not inquire after my iniquity and search after my sin, because you know I am not guilty and there is no one who can rescue me from your hand."

from your hand

Here "your hand" represents God's power. Alternate translation: "from your power"

Job 10:8

Your hands

Here "hands" represent God and his creative action. Alternate translation: "You"

Your hands have framed and fashioned me together round about

Job is using a metaphor of a potter forming clay to describe how God carefully created him.

framed and fashioned me

"shaped and formed me." The words "framed" and "fashioned" are similar in meaning.

Job 10:9

Call to mind

"Remember"

bring me into dust again

"turn me back into dust again"

Job 10:10

General Information:

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In these verses, Job uses the language of poetry to describe how God formed him in the womb.

Have you not poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese?

This is a question that expects a positive answer. Alternate translation: "You poured me out like milk and curdled me like cheese." or "You formed me in the womb like poured milk becomes cheese."

you

Here "you" refers to God.

me

Here "me" refers to Job.

Job 10:11

You have clothed me with skin and flesh

God putting skin and flesh on Job's body is spoken of as if God was putting clothing on him. Alternate translation: "You have put skin and flesh on my body"

knit me together

"wove me together." God putting Job's body together in the womb is spoken of as if God was knitting or weaving a piece of cloth. Alternate translation: "put me together"

sinews

the parts of the body that connect muscles to bones or other body parts and are like tough, white bands or cords

Job 10:12

You have granted me life and covenant faithfulness

The abstract nouns "life" and "faithfulness" can be stated as "live" and "faithful." Alternate translation: "You have been faithful to your covenant and allowed me to live"

guarded my spirit

Here Job is represented by his "spirit." Alternate translation: "guarded me" or "watched carefully over me" or "kept me safe"

Job 10:14

you would notice it

"you would watch me"

Job 10:15

If I have acted wickedly

"If I do evil things"

woe to me

"how terrible will it be for me"

lift up my head

This idiom means to be sure or confident. Alternate translation: "hold my head up" or "be confident" or "be sure about myself"

I am filled with disgrace—see my affliction

Another possible meaning, followed by some versions, is, "I am full of disgrace and am completely full of my own suffering," where the disgrace is bad but the suffering is even worse.

I am filled with disgrace

"I am totally ashamed" or "No one respects me anymore"

disgrace

shame

see my affliction

The abstract noun "affliction" can be translated using the verb "afflict." Alternate translation: "see how God is afflicting me"

Job 10:16

If my head were lifted up, you would stalk me like a lion

Possible meanings are that Job sees this as 1) a potential situation that has not happened yet or 2) as a situation that happens repeatedly. Alternate translation: "When my head is lifted up, you stalk me like a lion"

If my head were lifted up

This idiom means to become self-confident or proud. Alternate translation: "If I become proud"

you would stalk me like a lion

Possible meanings of this simile are 1) God hunts Job like a lion hunts its prey or 2) Job is like a lion being hunted by God.

again you would show yourself with marvellous acts of power against me

This phrase expresses irony in how God displays his marvelous power by acting to harm Job.

Job 10:17

You bring new witnesses against me

Job's troubles from God are spoken of as if they were people who were witnesses against him.

increase your anger against me

The abstract noun "anger" can be translated as the adjective "angry." Alternate translation: "are more and more angry with me"

you attack me with fresh armies

God sending troubles against Job is spoken of as if God was constantly sending new armies against him.

Job 10:18

brought me out of the womb

Here being brought out of the womb represents being born into this world. Alternate translation: "brought me out of my mother's womb" or "brought me into this world"

and that no eye had ever seen me

Job uses "eye" here to refer to the whole person. He wishes he could have died at birth, before anyone saw him. Alternate translation: "before any person had ever seen me" or "before I was born"

Job 10:19

I had never existed

"I had never lived"

I would have been carried

"My body would have been carried"

Job 10:20

Are not my days only a few?

Here "my days" represent the length of Job's life. This question expects a positive answer, to emphasize that Job only expects to live a few more days. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I only have a few days left to live." or "My life will soon end."

Job 10:21

the land

Here the place where the spirits of dead people go is spoken of as if it was a land. Alternate translation: "the place"

of darkness and of the shadow of death

The phrase "shadow of death" intensifies the idea of "darkness." Both phrases describe where the spirits of dead people go.

the shadow of death

See how you translated this in Job 3:5.

Job 10:22

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as dark as darkness
"totally dark"
without any order
This negative phrase can be expressed in positive form. Alternate translation: "full of confusion" or "where all is confused"
where the light is like darkness
"where there is darkness even where there should be light" or "where there is no light at all"

11 [1]Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said,
[2] "Should not such a multitude of words be answered?
Should this man, so full of talk, be acquitted?

[3] Should your boasting make others remain silent?
When you mock, will no one make you feel ashamed?

[4] For you say to God, 'My beliefs are pure,
I am clean in your eyes.'

[5] But, oh, that God would speak
and open his lips against you;

[6] that he would show you the secrets of wisdom!
For sound wisdom has two sides.
Know then that God demands from you less than your iniquity deserves.

[7] Can you understand God by searching for him?
Can you comprehend the Almighty perfectly?

[8] The matter is as high as heaven; what can you do?
It is deeper than Sheol; what can you know?

[9] Its measure is longer than the earth,
and wider than the sea.

[10] If he passes through and shuts anyone up,
if he calls an assembly, then who can stop him?

[11] For he knows deceitful people;
when he sees iniquity, does he not notice it?

[12] But foolish people will gain understanding
when the foal of a wild donkey is born a man.

[13] But suppose that you set your heart right
and reach out with your hands toward God;

[14] suppose that iniquity is in your hand,
but that you put it far away from you,
and do not let unrighteousness live in your tents.

[15] Then you will certainly lift up your face without a sign of shame;
indeed, you will be steadfast and will not fear.

[16] You will forget your trouble;
you will remember it only like waters that have flowed away.

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17 Your life will be brighter than the noonday;
though there be darkness, it will become like the morning.

18 You will be secure because there is hope;
indeed, you will find safety about you and will take your rest in safety.

19 Also you will lie down in rest, and none will make you afraid;
indeed, many will seek your favor.

20 But the eyes of wicked people will fail;
they will have no refuge;
their only hope will be a last gasp of life."

Job 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Zophar speaks to Job.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Zophar uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Zophar's argument.

Links:

Job 11:1 Notes

Job 11:1

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in [Job 2:11]

Job 11:2

Should not such a multitude of words be answered?

Zophar is asking a question in the negative to emphasize that Job's words must be challenged. Alternate translation: "We must answer all of these words!" or "Someone should respond to all these words!"

Should this man, so full of talk, be acquitted?

Zophar uses this question to emphasize that they should not believe what Job was saying simply because Job talks much. Alternate translation: "This man is full of much talk, but we should not believe him!" or "Job, your many words alone do not show that you are innocent!"

Job 11:3

Should your boasting make others remain silent?

Zophar uses this question to rebuke Job. Alternate translation: "Just because you have spoken many words, this does not mean that others must keep silent."

When you mock, will no one make you feel ashamed?

Zophar uses this question to rebuke Job. You may need to make explicit what it is that Job is mocking. Alternate translation: "You have mocked us for what we have said. Now we will make you feel ashamed!"

Job 11:4

My beliefs are pure

"My understanding is correct"

I am clean in your eyes

The word "clean" here is a metaphor for innocence, and the "eyes" here are a metonym for the thinking or judgment of the person whose eyes they are. Alternate translation: "You should know that I am innocent" or "You should consider me innocent"

Job 11:5

that God would speak ... open his lips against you

The words "open his lips" are a metonym that means speak. These two phrases mean the same thing and are used together to emphasize Zophar's desire that God would speak harshly against Job.

Job 11:6

that he would show ... secrets of wisdom

What the "secrets of wisdom" are can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that he would show you that you are suffering because of your sin"

sound wisdom has two sides

The word "wisdom" here is probably a metonym for a wise person, and the "two sides" are the different arguments in a dispute. When there is a disagreement, a wise person will listen to everyone before deciding what the truth is.

Know then

"Acknowledge then" or "So admit"

God demands from you less than your iniquity deserves

Demanding from Job represents punishing Job. Alternate translation: "God is punishing you less than you deserve"

Job 11:7

Can you understand God by searching for him? Can you comprehend the Almighty perfectly?

These two rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot understand

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God by searching for him, and you will never completely understand the Almighty!"

Job 11:8

The matter

This refers to understanding God. Alternate translation: "To understand God"

is as high as heaven ... deeper than Sheol

The impossibility of understanding God is spoken of as if it were impossible to go to these extremely far away places. Alternate translation: "is as inaccessible as the highest places in heaven ... is more inaccessible than the deepest places in Sheol"

what can you do?

Zophar uses this question to show that a person cannot do anything to understand God fully. Alternate translation: "you cannot do anything." or "you cannot understand him fully."

what can you know?

Zophar uses this question to show that a person cannot do anything to know God fully. Alternate translation: "you cannot know God fully." or "you cannot know all there is to know."

Job 11:9

Its measure

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) God's greatness or 2) the greatness of God's wisdom.

is longer than the earth ... wider than the sea

God's greatness or wisdom is spoken of as if it could be measured in distance.

Job 11:10

If he ... shuts anyone up

"If God ... shuts anyone up in prison"

if he calls an assembly

The abstract noun "assembly" can be translated with the verb "assemble." You may need to make explicit that the "assembly" is a court that will judge whether someone is guilty. Alternate translation: "if God calls people together for a court"

who can stop him?

This question emphasizes that no one can stop God. Alternate translation: "no one can stop him!"

Job 11:11

does he not notice it?

This emphasizes that God does notice sin. Alternate translation: "he surely notices it!"

Job 11:12

foolish people will gain understanding when the foal of a wild donkey is born a man

Since a wild donkey can never give birth to a man, this means that foolish people will never get understanding. Alternate translation: "foolish people would be able to get understanding only if a wild donkey could give birth to a man" or "it is as impossible for a foolish person to get understanding as it is for a donkey to give birth to a man"

But foolish people will gain understanding

The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "But foolish people will be able to understand"

Job 11:13

General Information

Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he does this things in this verse.

suppose that you set your heart right

The heart represents thoughts and attitudes. Setting it right represents correcting it. Alternate translation: "if you correct your attitude"

and reach out with your hands toward God

This is a symbolic action representing asking God for help. Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he sets his heart right. Alternate translation: "and make an appeal and pray to God"

Job 11:14

General Information

Zophar asks Job to consider what will happen if he puts iniquity far away from him and does not let righteousness live in his tent.

suppose that iniquity is in your hand

The hand represents what a person does. Alternate translation: "even if you have done some evil things"

but that you put it far away from you

Putting sin behind represents stopping sinning. Alternate translation: "but that you stop doing evil things"

and do not let unrighteousness live in your tents

Unrighteousness living represents people doing unrighteous things. Alternate translation: "and that you do not allow the members of your household to do unrighteous things"

Job 11:15

General Information:

In verses 15-19 Zophar tells Job the things that will happen if Job does what Zophar spoke about in verses 13-14.

lift up your face without a sign of shame

"Lifting up your face" represents the attitude of a person who is confident and brave.

Job 11:16

you will remember it only like waters that have flowed away

Zophar is comparing misery with water that flows downstream and it is gone. Alternate translation: "You will remember your misery, but it will be gone, like waters that have flowed away"

Job 11:17

Your life will be brighter than the noonday

Brightness represents being prosperous and happy. Alternate translation: "Your life will be prosperous and happy like the noonday"

though there be darkness

Darkness represents troubles and sadness. Alternate translation: "Though there might be dark troubles and sadness"

it will become like the morning

The morning represents light, which represents prosperity and happiness. Alternate translation: "it would be prosperous and happy like the morning"

Job 11:18

You will be secure ... will find safety ... will take your rest in safety

Zophar repeats the idea to emphasize how safe Job will be. Job will experience this if he does what Zopahr spoke of in verses 13 and 14.

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will take your rest in safety
"Take your rest" here is an idiom for "rest." The phrase "in safety" can be expressed with the word "safely." Alternate translation: "will rest safely"
Job 11:19
you will lie down in rest
The abstract noun "rest" can be expressed with the verb "rest." Alternate translation: "you would lie down and rest"
many will seek your favor
This means that people will respect Job and will hope that he will treat them well.
Job 11:20
the eyes of wicked people will fail
Their eyes represent their understanding. Alternate translation: "the understanding of the wicked people will fail" or "the wicked people will not be able to understand"
they will have no refuge
"there will be no place to which they can escape"

12 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2] "No doubt you are the people;
wisdom will die with you.

[3] But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Indeed, who does not know such things as these?

[4] I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—
I, one who called on God and who was answered by him!
I, a just and blameless man—I am now something to laugh at.

[5] In the thought of someone who is at ease, there is contempt for misfortune;
he thinks in a way that brings more misfortune to those whose foot is slipping.

[6] The tents of robbers prosper,
and those who provoke God feel secure;
their own hands are their gods.

[7] But now ask the animals, and they will teach you;
ask the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you.

[8] Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you;
the fish of the sea will declare to you.

[9] Which animal among all these does not know
that the hand of Yahweh has done this?

[10] In his hand is the life of every living thing
and the breath of all mankind.

[11] Does not the ear test words
just as the palate tastes its food?

[12] With aged men is wisdom;
in length of days is understanding.

[13] With God are wisdom and might;
he has counsel and understanding.

[14] See, he breaks things down, and they cannot be built again;
if he imprisons someone, there can be no release.

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15 See, if he withholds the waters, they dry up;
and if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.

16 With him are strength and wisdom;
people who are deceived and the deceiver are both in his power.

17 He leads counselors away barefoot in sorrow;
he turns judges into fools.

18 He removes the bond of kings;
he wraps a cloth about their waists.

19 He leads priests away barefoot in sorrow
and overthrows mighty people.

20 He removes the speech of those who had been trusted
and takes away the understanding of the elders.

21 He pours contempt upon princes
and unfastens the belt of the strong.

22 He reveals the deep things of darkness
and brings utter darkness into the light.

23 He makes nations strong, and he also destroys them;
He enlarges nations, and he also leads them along as prisoners.

24 He takes away understanding from the leaders of the people of the earth;
he causes them to wander in a wilderness where there is no path.

25 They grope in the dark without light;
he makes them stagger like a drunk man.

Job 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Zophar.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. His friends, on the other hand, judge Job's case, which Job recognizes to be Yahweh's authority. These three friends therefore try to take God's place. (See: curse and judge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair. He is also upset with the advice of his friends, who are supposed to help him during difficult times.

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

Links:

Job 12:1 Notes

Job 12:2

No doubt you are the people; wisdom will die with you

Job mocks how they are acting and shows how ridiculous they sound. Alternate translation: "Surely you are such

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important people that wisdom cannot exist without you" or "You all act like you are the only wise people and that when you die, wisdom will disappear"

No doubt

"Surely"

you

This is plural in verses 2 and 3.

you are the people

"you are the important people who know everything"

Job 12:3

Indeed, who does not know such things as these?

Job used this question to express a truth that should be obvious to his listeners. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly there is no one who does not know such things as these." or "Certainly everyone knows these things."

Job 12:4

I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—I, one who called on God and who was answered by him!

The relationship between these phrases can be made clear with the words "even though." Alternate translation: "I am something for my neighbor to laugh at—even though I am one who called on God and he answered me!"

I, a just and blameless man—I am now something to laugh at

The relationship between these phrases can be made clear with the words "even though." Alternate translation: "Even though I am a just and blameless man, people now laugh at me"

Job 12:5

In the thought of someone who is at ease, there is contempt for misfortune

The abstract nouns "thought," "ease," "contempt," and "misfortune" can be expressed with other phrases. Alternate translation: "A person who lives an easy life despises a person who suffers"

brings more misfortune

Bringing misfortune represents causing it to happen. Alternate translation: "causes more bad things to happen"

to those whose foot is slipping

The foot slipping represents being in danger or trouble. Alternate translation: "to those who are already in trouble"

Job 12:6

The tents of robbers prosper

Their tents prospering represents the robbers prospering in their tents. Alternate translation: "Robbers live in prosperity in their own tents"

their own hands are their gods

Here "their own hands" is a metonym for strength, and "their gods" is a metaphor for their pride. Alternate translation: "they are extremely proud of their own abilities"

Job 12:7

But now ask the animals ... the birds ... they will tell you

Job is saying that the animals and the birds understand God better than Job's friends do.

you

All occurrences of "you" are plural.

But now ask the animals, and they will teach you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition with the word "if." Alternate translation: "But if you ask the animals, they will teach you"

ask the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: if you ask the birds of the heavens, they will tell you" (See:)

Job 12:8

speak to the earth ... will declare to you

Job is saying that the beasts, the birds, the earth, and the fish understand God better than Job's friends do.

Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you

The command in the first part of the sentence can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "Or if you speak to the earth, it will teach you"

the fish of the sea will declare to you

The command "Ask the fish of the sea" is understood from the previous sentences. It can be translated as a condition. Alternate translation: "and if you ask the fish of the sea, they will declare to you"

Job 12:9

Which animal among all these does not know ... this?

This question emphasizes the point that all the animals know that Yahweh has done this. This question can be worded as a statement. Alternate translation: "Every animal among all these knows ... this."

the hand of Yahweh has done this

Yahweh's hand represents his power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has done this by his power"

Job 12:10

In his hand is the life ... and the breath of all mankind

Yahweh's hand represents his control or power. Alternate translation: "God controls the life of every living thing and gives breath to all mankind"

the breath of all mankind

Here "breath" represents life or the ability to live.

Job 12:11

Does not the ear test words just as the palate tastes its food?

Job uses this question to emphasize that people listen to what others say and judge whether it is good or not. The ear and palate are metonyms for hearing and tasting. Alternate translation: "We hear what people say and test it just as we taste food and test it."

Job 12:12

With aged men is wisdom

"Aged men have wisdom." The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with "wise." The word "men" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "Old people are wise"

in length of days is understanding

This represents people gaining understanding when they live a long time. The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the phrase "understand much." Alternate translation: "people gain understanding when they live a long time" or "people who live a long time understand much"

Job 12:13

General Information:

Verse 13 says that God is wise and mighty. The rest of this chapter shows that this is true by telling about the wise and mighty things that God does.

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With God are wisdom and might
The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "might" can be expressed with the adjectives "wise" and "mighty." Alternate translation: "God is wise and mighty"
Job 12:14
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
they cannot be built again
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can rebuild them"
if he imprisons someone, there can be no release
The abstract noun "release" can be expressed with the verb "free." Alternate translation: "if God shuts someone in, no one can free him"
Job 12:15
if he withholds the waters, they dry up
Possible meanings are that withholding waters represents 1) preventing the rain from falling. Alternate translation: "if he stops the rain from falling the land dries up" or 2) preventing running water from flowing. Alternate translation: "if he stops the water from flowing, the land dries up"
if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land
Possible meanings are that sending them out is a metaphor meaning 1) causing the rain to fall. Alternate translation: "if he causes a lot of rain to fall, it floods the land" or 2) causing the waters to flow. Alternate translation: "if he makes a lot of water flow, it floods the land"
Job 12:16
With him are strength and wisdom
The abstract nouns "strength" and "wisdom" can be expressed with the words "strong" and "wise." Alternate translation: "God is strong and wise"
people who are deceived and the deceiver are both in his power
Being in God's power represents God ruling over them. Alternate translation: "people who believe a lie and people who lie to others are both in his power" or "God rules over both people who believe lies and people who lie to others"
Job 12:17
He leads counselors away barefoot
Leading counselors away barefoot represents taking away their wisdom and authority.
in sorrow
The abstract noun "sorrow" can be expressed with the words "sad" or "grieve" Alternate translation: "and they feel very sad" or "and they grieve"
he turns judges into fools
"he makes judges become foolish"
Job 12:18
He removes the bond of kings
Possible meanings are that 1) this is a metonym for causing kings to no longer have authority. Alternate translation: "He takes away the authority of kings" or 2) this is a metonym for setting people free from the chains that kings have put on them. Alternate translation: "He takes off the bonds that kings have put on people"
he wraps a cloth about their waists
This cloth is probably what a slave wears. To put these cloths on kings represents making the kings slaves. Alternate translation: "he makes kings wear the clothing of slaves" or "he makes them slaves"
Job 12:19
He leads priests away barefoot
Leading priests away barefoot represents taking away their authority.
in sorrow
The abstract noun "sorrow" can be expressed with the words "sad" or "grieve" Alternate translation: "and they feel sad" or "and they grieve"
overthrows mighty people
"defeats powerful people"
Job 12:20
He removes the speech of those who had been trusted
Removing their speech represents making them unable to speak. Alternate translation: "He makes those who were trusted unable to speak" or "He silences people whom others trusted"
takes away the understanding of the elders
Taking away their understanding represents making them unable to understand or make good decisions. Alternate translation: "makes the elders unable to understand" or "makes the elders unable to make good decisions"
the elders
Possible meanings are 1) the older people or 2) the leaders.
Job 12:21
He pours contempt upon princes
Pouring contempt on princes is a metaphor for causing people to feel contempt for them. Alternate translation: "He causes people to greatly disrespect those who rule"
unfastens the belt of the strong
The belt is a symbol of strength. Unfastening a strong person's belt represents taking away his strength and making him weak. Alternate translation: "makes the strong weak"
the strong
This refers to any strong person. Alternate translation: "strong people"
Job 12:22
He reveals the deep things of darkness
Revealing things represents making them known. "Deep things from darkness" represent secrets that people do not know. Alternate translation: "He makes known secrets that people do not know"
brings utter darkness into the light
Bringing things out into the light is a metaphor for making them known. Alternate translation: "makes known things that no one can see"
Job 12:23
He enlarges nations
"He makes nations larger" or "He makes nations have more land"
he also leads them along as prisoners
God leading nations represents God causing enemy nations to lead them. The word "them" represents nations, which here represents the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "he also causes their enemies to lead them along as prisoners"

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Job 12:24

He takes away understanding from the leaders of the people of the earth

Taking away their understanding represents causing them to be unable to understand. Alternate translation: "He causes the leaders of the people of the earth to be unable to understand"

to wander in a wilderness where there is no path

Wandering in a wilderness where there is no path represents being in a difficult situation and not knowing what to do. Alternate translation: "to be unsure of what to do like a person wandering in a wasteland with no path"

Job 12:25

They grope in the dark without light

Being in the dark without light represents lacking knowledge. Alternate translation: "They struggle to make decisions without knowledge as people struggle to walk in the dark without light"

he makes them stagger like a drunk man

Staggering or wandering like a drunk man represents living without purpose. Alternate translation: "he makes them live without purpose like a drunk person who staggers as he walks" or "they wander aimlessly like a drunk person who staggers back and forth"

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13 1 See, my eye has seen all this;
my ear has heard and understood it.

2 What you know, the same I also know;
I am not inferior to you.

3 However, I would rather speak with the Almighty;
I wish to reason with God.

4 But you whitewash the truth with lies;
you are all worthless healers.

5 Oh, that you would altogether hold your peace!
That would be your wisdom.

6 Hear now my own reasoning;
listen to the pleading of my own lips.

7 Will you speak unrighteousness for God,
and will you talk deceitfully for him?

8 Will you show him partiality?
Will you argue the case for God?

9 Will it be good for you when he examines you?
Could you deceive him as you might deceive men?

10 He would surely reprove you
if in secret you showed partiality.

11 Will not his majesty terrify you,
and the dread of him fall upon you?

12 Your memorable sayings are proverbs made of ashes;
your defenses are defenses made of clay.

13 Hold your peace, let me alone, so that I may speak,
let come what may on me.

14 I will take my own flesh in my teeth;
I will take my life in my hands.

15 See, if he kills me, I will have no hope left;
nevertheless, I will defend my ways before him.

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16 This will be the reason for my deliverance,
for no godless person would come before him.

17 God, listen carefully to my speech;
let my declaration come to your ears.

18 See now, I have set my defense in order;
I know that I will be vindicated.

19 Who is the one who would argue against me in court?
If you came to do so, and if I were proved wrong, then I would be silent and die.

20 God, do only two things for me,
and then I will not hide myself from your face:

21 withdraw your oppressive hand from me,
and do not let your terrors make me afraid.

22 Then call me, and I will answer;
or let me speak to you, and you answer me.

23 How many are my iniquities and sins?
Let me know my transgression and my sin.

24 Why do you hide your face from me
and treat me like your enemy?

25 Will you cause a driven leaf to tremble?
Will you pursue dry stubble?

26 For you write down bitter things against me;
you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth.

27 You also put my feet in the stocks;
you closely watch all my paths;
you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked

28 although I am like a rotten thing that wastes away,
like a garment that moths have eaten.

Job 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Zophar. It also contains Job's claim of righteousness to Yahweh. (See: righteous)

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. His friends, on the other hand, judge Job's case, which Job recognizes to be Yahweh's authority. These three friends therefore try to take God's place. (See: curse and judge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's response.

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Links:

Job 13:1 Notes

Job 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

my eye has seen all this

Job referred to himself as his eye since it is with his eyes that he saw these things. Alternate translation: "I have seen all this"

my ear has heard and understood it

Job referred to himself as his ear since it is with his ears that he heard these things. Alternate translation: "I have heard and understood it"

Job 13:2

What you know, the same I also know

"What you know, I also know" or "I know as much as you"

Job 13:3

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

I wish to reason with God

Job's friends are judging him, but they not speaking the truth. Job would rather argue with God alone about his complaint.

Job 13:4

you whitewash the truth with lies

Putting whitewash or plaster on the truth represents ignoring the truth. Alternate translation: "you hide the truth with lies" or "you lie and ignore the truth"

you are all worthless healers

The word "healers" is a metaphor for people who comfort others. Healers who are "worthless" call themselves healers but do not actually heal people. Alternate translation: "you are all like physicians who do not know how to heal people" or "you all come to comfort me, but you do not know how, like unskilled physicians"

Job 13:5

hold your peace

This expression means "be quiet" or "stop talking."

That would be your wisdom

They thought that they were saying wise things, but Job was saying that they would be wiser if they would stop talking. The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with the word "wise." Alternate translation: "If you were to do that, you would be wise" or "If you were to stop talking, you would appear wise"

Job 13:6

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

listen to the pleading of my own lips

Here "lips" represent the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "listen to what I myself plead for"

Job 13:7

Will you speak unrighteousness for God, and will you talk deceitfully for him?

Job uses these two questions to rebuke his friends for speaking unrighteously. Alternate translation: "You think that you are speaking for God, but you are speaking unrighteousness. You are trying to defend him by speaking deceitfully."

speak unrighteousness

The abstract noun "unrighteousness" can be translated using the adjective "unrighteous," and the word "words" is a metonym for the message that the words carry. Alternate translation: "speak unrighteous words" or "say things of which God does not approve"

for God ... for him

"to defend God ... to defend him" or "as God's representative ... to represent him"

talk deceitfully

"lie" or "tell lies"

Job 13:8

Will you show him partiality? Will you argue the case for God?

Showing kindness to God represents helping God or defending God against Job's complaints. Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for thinking that they can defend God. Alternate translation: "You think that God need you to defend him? You think that you can argue for God like attorneys in court."

Job 13:9

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

Will it be good for you when he examines you?

Job uses this question to warn his friends that if God were to examine them, he would say that what they are doing is wrong. Alternate translation: "When God examines you, it will not be good for you."

Could you deceive him as you might deceive men?

Job uses this question to warn his friends that God knows the truth about them. Alternate translation: "You might be able to deceive men, but you cannot deceive God."

Job 13:10

reprove you

"rebuke you"

if in secret you showed partiality

"if you secretly show favor to another." Showing partiality refers to saying only good things about someone so that the judge will say that the person is good. Doing this in secret means pretending to speak fairly, but really favoring one person over another.

Job 13:11

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak to his friends.

Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?

Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends. Possible meanings are 1) Job is saying that they should fear God. Alternate translation: "His majesty should make you afraid, and his dread should fall on you." or 2) Job is saying that they will fear God. Alternate translation: "His majesty will make you afraid, and his dread will fall on you!"

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and the dread of him fall upon you
Dread falling on people represents them becoming terribly afraid. Alternate translation: "and you not be terribly afraid" or "and you not be terrified"
Job 13:12
Your memorable sayings are proverbs made of ashes
Ashes represent things that are worthless and do not last. Alternate translation: "Your memorable sayings are worthless like ashes" or "Your memorable sayings will be forgotten like ashes that are blown away"
your defenses are defenses made of clay
Job speaks of what they say as if it were a wall made of clay around a city; it cannot defend the people because clay breaks easily. Alternate translation: "What you say in defense is as useless as a wall of clay"
your defenses
Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) what they say to defend themselves or 2) what they say to defend God.
Job 13:13
Connecting Statement:
Job continues to speak to his friends.
Hold your peace
This is an idiom meaning "Be quiet" or "Stop talking"
let me alone
This is an idiom that means "stop bothering me" or "stop hindering me"
let come what may on me
Things coming on a person represents things happening to a person. This expression starting with "let" means that he does not care what might happen to him. Alternate translation: "let whatever may happen to me happen" or "I do not care what may happen to me"
Job 13:14
I will take my own flesh ... in my hands
"Flesh" here is a metonym for life. "Teeth" and "hands" are metonyms for his own control. These two phrases together emphasize that Job is willing to risk his life by arguing his case with God. Alternate translation: "I am ready to risk my life"
Job 13:16
Connecting Statement:
Job finishes speaking to his friends and begins to address God directly.
This will be the reason for my deliverance
The abstract noun "deliverance" can be expressed with the verb "deliver." Alternate translation: "This is the reason that God will deliver me" or "This is why God will save me from my troubles"
Job 13:17
God, listen carefully
Job begins directing his speech directly to God.
listen carefully to my speech; let my declaration come to your ears
These two lines mean basically the same thing and intensify Job's request for God to listen to him.
let my declaration come to your ears
The abstract noun "declaration" can be expressed with the verb "declare." The ears represent listening. Alternate translation: "listen to my declaration" or "listen to what I declare"
Job 13:18
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to God.
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I"
I have set my defense in order
Setting his defense in order represents deciding what he will say to defend himself. Alternate translation: "I have thought through how I will defend myself" or "I have decided how I will explain myself"
Job 13:19
Who is the one who would argue against me in court?
Job uses this question to express his belief that since he is right, no one would argue against him. Alternate translation: "I do not believe that anyone would argue against me in court."
If you came to do so
"If you came to argue against me"
If you
"You" here means God himself.
if I were proved wrong
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if you were to prove me wrong"
die
If your language has a word for dying that refers to breathing for the last time, you may want to use it here.
Job 13:20
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to God.
from your face
"Face" represents the person. Alternate translation: "from you"
Job 13:21
withdraw your oppressive hand
An oppressive hand is a metonym for doing things that oppress someone. Withdrawing the hand is a metaphor for stopping doing those things. Alternate translation: "stop oppressing me"
do not let your terrors make me afraid
The phrase "your terrors" refers to what causes people to be terrified of God. Alternate translation: "do not terrify me"
Job 13:23
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to God.
Job 13:24
Why do you hide ... like your enemy?
Job asks this question to complain about how God is treating him. He probably hopes for an answer.
you hide your face from me
Hiding one's face from someone represents refusing to look at him or ignoring him. Alternate translation: "you refuse to look at me" or "you ignore me"
Job 13:25
Will you cause a driven leaf to tremble?
Job is rebuking God because God is attacking Job when Job has no defense against God. This rhetorical question can be

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translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not cause this driven leaf to tremble"

cause a driven leaf to tremble

The word "tremble" here refers to trembling with fear. The phrase "driven leaf," which refers to a leaf that has died and dried up and is blown by the wind, is a metaphor for a man who has no strength and is harmless. Alternate translation: "terrify a weak, harmless man"

Will you pursue dry stubble?

Job uses this question to tell God that since Job is so insignificant and weak, it is useless to pursue him. "Leaf" and "stubble" are metaphors describing Job's weakness, insignificance, and frailty. Alternate translation: "It is useless for you to pursue dry stubble" or "You pursue me, but I am weak like a leaf blown by the wind and insignificant like dry stubble"

pursue

You may need to make explicit that the purpose of pursuing Job is to persecute him. Alternate translation: "persecute"

Job 13:26

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes presenting his case to God.

For you write down bitter things against me

"Bitter things" represents accusations. Alternate translation: "For you write down accusations against me"

you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth

Inheriting the iniquities of his youth is a metaphor. Possible meanings are it represents 1) being guilty for the sins of his youth. Alternate translation: "you say that I am still guilty for the sins of my youth" or 2) being punished for the sins of his youth. Alternate translation: "you punish me for the sins of my youth"

the iniquities of my youth

The abstract noun "youth" can be translated with the word "young." Alternate translation: "the sins I committed when I was young"

Job 13:27

You also put my feet in the stocks

Doing this represents punishing Job and keeping him from living freely as if Job had committed a crime and was a prisoner. Alternate translation: "It is as though you put my feet in the stocks"

the stocks

Possible meanings are 1) a frame that holds a prisoner's feet in place so that he cannot move at all or 2) chains around a prisoner's feet that make it hard for him to walk. These are used as a form of punishment.

all my paths

"Paths" represent the things Job does. Alternate translation: "everything I do"

you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked

The soles of his feet represent the person who walks. Alternate translation: "you examine the ground where I have walked"

you examine the ground where the soles of my feet have walked

Examining this ground represents examining all that Job has done. Alternate translation: "it is as though you examine the ground where I have walked" or "you examine everything I do like a person examining someone's footprints on the ground"

Job 13:28

like a rotten thing that wastes away

Job compares his life to something that is decaying. He is slowly dying.

like a garment that moths have eaten

Job compares himself to clothes that are full of holes because the moths have eaten parts of it.

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14 [1] Man, who is born of woman,
lives only a few days and is full of trouble.

[2] He sprouts from the ground like a flower and is cut down;
he flees like a shadow and does not last.

[3] Do you look at any of these?
Do you bring me into judgment with you?

[4] Who can bring something clean out of something unclean?
No one.

[5] Man's days are determined.
The number of his months is with you;
you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass.

[6] Look away from him that he may rest,
so that he may enjoy his day like a hired man if he can do so.

[7] There can be hope for a tree;
if it is cut down, it might sprout again,
so that its tender stalk does not disappear.

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8 Though its root grows old in the earth,
and its stump dies in the ground,

9 yet even if it only smells water, it will bud
and send out branches like a plant.

10 But man dies; he becomes weak;
indeed, man stops breathing, and then where is he?

11 As water disappears from a lake,
and as a river becomes dry and dries up,

12 so people lie down and do not rise again.
Until the heavens are no more, they will not awake
nor be roused out of their sleep.

13 Oh, that you would hide me away in Sheol away from troubles,
and that you would keep me in private until your wrath is over,
that you would set me a fixed time to stay there and then call me to mind!

14 If a man dies, will he live again?
All my time of service there I will wait
until my release should come.

15 You would call, and I would answer you.
You would have a desire for the work of your hands.

16 You would number and care for my footsteps;
you would not keep track of my sin.

17 My transgression would be sealed up in a bag;
you would cover up my iniquity.

18 But even mountains fall and crumble to nothing;
even rocks are moved out of their place;

19 the waters wear down the stones;
their flooding washes away the dust of the earth.
Like this, you destroy the hope of man.

20 You forever defeat him, and he passes away;
you change his face and send him away to die.

21 If his sons are honored, he does not know it;
and if they are brought low, he does not see it.

22 He feels only the pain of his own body,
and he mourns for himself.

Job 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This

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chapter is a continuation of Job's claim of righteousness being presented to Yahweh. It also has an abrupt shift in tone. Rather than being hopeful, Job laments. (See: righteous and lament)

Special concepts in this chapter

Resurrection

The events of Job occurred long before the Old Testament was written. Therefore, he likely had very little direct revelation about Yahweh. The resurrection of the dead was apparently not well-known during Job's day. (See: reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in his appeal to Yahweh.

Links:

Job 14:1 Notes

Job 14:1

General Information:

This chapter continues Job's speech, which started in Job 12:1. Job is speaking to God.

Man, who is born of woman

This refers to all people, both men and women; all are born into this world.

lives only a few days

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that people live only a short time. Alternate translation: "lives only a very short time"

is full of trouble

Being "full of trouble" represents experiencing much trouble. Alternate translation: "has many troubles" or "suffers much"

Job 14:2

He sprouts from the ground like a flower and is cut down

Like the life of a flower, a person's life is short and is easily killed.

he flees like a shadow and does not last

A person's short life is compared to a shadow that disappears quickly.

Job 14:3

Do you look at any of these?

Job implies that he does not want God to pay so much attention to him. Alternate translation: "You do not look at any of these." or "You do not pay so much attention to these. Please do not pay so much attention to me."

look at

Here looking at some one represents paying attention to him in order to judge him. Alternate translation: "pay attention to" or "look for faults in"

Do you bring me into judgment with you?

Job uses this question to show his surprise that God judges him even though Job is so insignificant like the flowers. Alternate translation: "But you judge me."

Job 14:4

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

Who can bring something clean out of something unclean? No one

Job uses this question to persuade God to apply what he knows about unclean things to Job. Alternate translation: "No one can bring something clean out of something unclean"

Job 14:5

Man's days are determined

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "You determine a man's days" or "You decide how long a man lives"

The number of his months is with you

The number of man's months being with God represents God deciding the number of months that the man will live. "You decide how many months he will live"

you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass

Passing a limit represents living past a time that God has set for a person to die. Alternate translation: "you have appointed the time that he will die, and he cannot live longer than that"

Job 14:6

hired man

a man who is hired to do a job and goes home afterwards

Job 14:7

There can be hope for a tree

The abstract noun "hope" can be expressed with the verb "hope." The hope is explained in verses 7-9. Alternate translation: "We can hope that a tree will live again"

it might sprout again

"it might start growing again"

so that its tender stalk does not disappear

Disappearing represents dying. Alternate translation: "so that its young shoot will not die"

Job 14:8

Though

"Even if"

stump

the part of the tree that remains sticking out of the ground after someone has cut down most of the tree

Job 14:9

even if it only smells water

This describes the dead stump as if it could smell water to represent water being near it. Alternate translation: "even if only a little water is near it"

it will bud

"it will start growing"

send out branches like a plant

The tree sending out branches represents branches growing on the tree. Alternate translation: "branches will start growing on it like a plant"

Job 14:10

then where is he?

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Job uses this question to emphasize that when a person dies, he is not present. Alternate translation: "no one knows where he is." or "he is gone."

Job 14:11

Connecting Statement:

Job begins to use word pictures to describe how it is that "man dies; he becomes weak" (verse 10).

As water disappears from a lake ... dries up

Water that has dried up from a lake or a river cannot return, and once a person dies or grows old, he cannot become young again.

becomes dry and dries up

The phrases "becomes dry" and "dries up" mean translate words that mean the same thing. If translating both phrases would be awkward in your language, you can leave one of them untranslated.

Job 14:12

Connecting Statement:

Job finishes comparing growing old and dying with water drying up (verse 11).

so people lie down

Lying down represents dying. Alternate translation: "so people die"

do not rise again

Rising again represents living again. Alternate translation: "do not live again"

Job 14:13

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

Oh, that you would hide me

This is an exclamation showing what Job wants very much but does not really expect to happen. Alternate translation: "I wish that you would hide me"

keep me in private

"keep me locked up" or "keep me hidden"

call me to mind

Call someone to mind is an idiom meaning to think about him. Alternate translation: "think about me" or "remember me"

Job 14:14

General Information:

This seems to be an elliptical statement of a hypothetical case: "If a man dies, he will not live again, but if he did, all the days of my hard service I would wait for my release to come."

If a man dies, will he live again?

The implicit answer is "no." Alternate translation: "If a man dies, he will not live again."

man

any male person

All my time of service there I will wait

"I will wait all the time I am serving there"

until my release should come

The abstract noun "release" can be expressed with the verb "release." Alternate translation: "until I should be released" or "until you release me"

Job 14:15

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

I would answer

"I would do what you wanted me to do"

You would have a desire for

The noun "desire" can be expressed with the verbs "desire" or "want." Alternate translation: "You would desire" or "You would want"

for the work of your hands

Here God's hands represent him making things. Job refers to himself as the work of God's hands. Alternate translation: "for me, whom you have made"

Job 14:16

number and care for

These two verbs together express a single action. Alternate translation: "attentively care for"

my footsteps

Footsteps represent his life or what he does. Alternate translation: "my life" or "the things I do"

you would not keep track of my sin

Keeping track of Job's sin represents thinking about his sin. Alternate translation: "you would not look at my sin" or "you would not think about my sin"

Job 14:17

My transgression would be ... you would cover up

These three lines express the same thought and are used together to emphasize his confidence that God would forgive him.

My transgression would be sealed up in a bag

Sealing transgression in a bag represents hiding it and refusing to think about it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You would refuse to think about my transgression like someone who hides something in a bag"

you would cover up my iniquity

Covering up someone's iniquity so that it cannot be seen represents refusing to think about it. Alternate translation: "you would hide my iniquity" or "you would ignore my iniquity"

Job 14:18

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

mountains fall and crumble to nothing

"Crumble to nothing" here is an idiom meaning be completely destroyed. This phrase expands on the word "fall" and emphasizes complete destruction. Alternate translation: "mountains completely fall apart"

rocks are moved out of their place

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "rocks tumble down from their place"

Job 14:19

Like this, you destroy the hope of man

If it is easier in your language, you can put this phrase at the beginning of verse 18 and adjust the text accordingly. Alternate translation: "You destroy the hope of man, just like ... dust of the earth"

you destroy the hope of man

Destroying hope represents causing the things people hope for not to happen. Alternate translation: "You prevent the hope of man from happening"

the hope of man

The abstract noun "hopes" can be expressed with the verb

"hope." Alternate translation: "the things that man hopes for"

Job 14:20

General Information:

Job continues speaking to God.

You forever defeat him

The word "him" refers to any person. Alternate translation: "You forever defeat man" or "You forever defeat people"

forever

or "completely"

he passes away

Passing away represents dying. Alternate translation: "he dies"

you change his face

Possible meanings are 1) the pain just before dying makes his face contract or 2) when a person dies, God makes the person's face look different.

send him away to die

This represents causing him to die.

Job 14:21

if they are brought low

Being brought low represents being shamed. Alternate translation: "if they are disgraced" or "if people shame them"

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15 [1]Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
[2]"Should a wise man answer with useless knowledge
and fill himself with the east wind?

[3] Should he reason with unprofitable talk
or with speeches with which he can do no good?

[4] Indeed, you diminish respect for God;
you obstruct meditation before him,

[5] for your iniquity teaches your mouth;
you choose to have the tongue of the crafty.

[6] Your own mouth condemns you, not mine;
indeed, your own lips testify against you.

[7] Are you the first man that was born?
Were you brought into existence before the hills?

[8] Have you heard the secret knowledge of God?
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?

[9] What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that is not also in us?

[10] With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged men
who are much older than your father.

[11] Are the consolations of God too small for you,
the words that are gentle toward you?

[12] Why does your heart carry you away?
Why do your eyes flash,

[13] so that you turn your spirit against God
and bring out such words from your mouth?

[14] What is man that he should be clean?
What is he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous?

[15] See, God puts no trust even in his holy ones;
indeed, the heavens are not clean in his sight;

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16 how much less clean is one who is abhorrent and corrupt,
a man who drinks iniquity like water!

17 I will show you; listen to me;
I will announce to you the things I have seen,

18 the things that wise men have passed down from their fathers,
the things that their ancestors did not hide.

19 These were their ancestors, to whom alone the land was given,
and among whom no stranger ever passed.

20 The wicked man twists in pain all his days,
the number of years that are laid up for the oppressor to suffer.

21 A sound of terrors is in his ears;
while he is in prosperity, the destroyer will come upon him.

22 He does not think that he will return out of darkness;
he has been marked out for the sword.

23 He goes to various places for bread, saying, 'Where is it?'
He knows that the day of darkness is at hand.

24 Distress and anguish make him afraid;
they prevail against him, as a king ready for battle.

25 Because he has reached out with his hand against God
and has behaved proudly against the Almighty,

26 this wicked man runs at God with a stiff neck,
with a thick shield.

27 This is true, even though he has covered his face with his fat
and gathered fat on his loins,

28 and has lived in desolate cities;
in houses which no man inhabits now
and which were ready to become heaps.

29 He will not be rich; his wealth will not last
and his possessions will not spread over the land.

30 He will not depart out of darkness;[1]
a flame will dry up his stalks;
at the breath of God's mouth he will go away.[2]

31 Let him not trust in useless things, deceiving himself;
for uselessness will be his reward.

32 It will happen before his time should come to die;
his palm branch will not be green.

33 He will drop his unripe grapes like a grapevine;

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he will cast off his flowers like the olive tree.

34 For the company of godless people will be barren;
fire will consume their tents of bribery.

35 They conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity;
their womb conceives deceit."

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[1]Many modern translations leave out He will not depart out of darkness, because they believe that this expression was mistakenly copied from 15:22.
[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have He will go away by the breath of his mouth, which some modern translations interpret as meaning the breath of God's mouth. However, other modern translations follow the ancient Greek translation of the ancient Hebrew copies, which reads, his flower will fall with the wind.

Job 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Eliphaz speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Links:

Job 15:1 Notes

Job 15:1

Eliphaz the Temanite

This is the name of a man. People from Teman are known as Temanites. See how you translated this in [Job 2:11]

Job 15:2

Should a wise man answer with useless knowledge and fill himself with the east wind?

Eliphaz uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Job. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A wise man should not answer with useless knowledge nor fill himself with the east wind."

fill himself with the east wind

The wind represents emptiness. This phrase speaks of a person speaking empty and meaningless words as if that person were full of the wind. Alternate translation: "fill himself with empty words" or "only have meaningless words"

the east wind

"hot air" or "the desert wind"

Job 15:3

Should he reason with unprofitable talk or with speeches with which he can do no good?

Eliphaz uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Job. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "He should not reason with unprofitable talk nor with speeches with which he can do no good." or "He should not argue using unprofitable talk or make speeches that accomplish nothing good."

Job 15:4

you diminish respect for God

Possible meanings are 1) "because of what you say and do, other people no longer respect God" or 2) "you are no longer respecting God."

diminish

make smaller

you obstruct meditation before him

Possible meanings are 1) "you make it difficult for others to meditate in God's presence" or 2) "you are no longer devoting yourself to God."

Job 15:5

your iniquity teaches your mouth

This describes "iniquity" as if it were a teacher and Job's mouth is described as if it is learning. This means that his speech is greatly influenced by his iniquity. Alternate translation: "your iniquity is like a teacher and your mouth is like its student" or "it is because of your sin that you speak the way you do"

your mouth

This speaks of Job, but refers to his "mouth" to place emphasis on what he says. Alternate translation: "you to speak" or "you to say what you say"

to have the tongue of the crafty

This refers to the way crafty people speak as their "tongue." Alternate translation: "to speak in the way of crafty people"

the crafty

This nominal adjective refers to people who harm others by lying to them.

Job 15:6

Your own mouth condemns you, not mine

This refers to Job and Eliphaz by their "mouths" to place emphasis on what they say. Alternate translation: "You are condemned by what you say, not by what I say" or "You condemn yourself by what you say, it is not I who condemns you"

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your own lips testify
This speaks of Job, but refers to his "lips" to place emphasis on what he says. Alternate translation: "your own words" or "you testify"
Job 15:7
General Information:
Each verse is a parallelism that contains two rhetorical questions.
Are you the first man that was born?
The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not the first man that was born."
Were you brought into existence before the hills?
The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You were not brought into existence before the hills." or "God did not bring you into existence before he brought the hills into existence."
Were you brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Did God bring you"
Job 15:8
Have you heard the secret knowledge of God?
The implicit answer here is "no." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not heard the secret knowledge of God."
Do you limit wisdom to yourself?
This rhetorical question emphasizes that he cannot limit wisdom to himself. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot limit wisdom to yourself." or "You are not the only wise person."
Job 15:9
What do you know that we do not know?
The implicit answer here is "nothing." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that you know that we do not know." or "Everything you know, we also know."
What do you understand that is not also in us?
This speaks of the men having understanding as if it were something "inside" them. Alternate translation: "Everything you understand, we also understand." or "We understand everything that you understand."
Job 15:10
With us are both the gray-headed and the very aged men
Eliphaz speaks of him and the other men having learned wisdom from older men and wisdom that had been passed down from men of previous generations as if these older men were physically present with them. Alternate translation: "We acquired wisdom from old gray-haired people, from people who were born before your father was"
Job 15:11
Are the consolations of God ... gentle toward you?
This rhetorical question is an accusation, with the implicit answer to the question being "yes." This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You must think that the consolations of God are too small for you, the words that are gentle toward you"
consolations
"comforts" or "sympathies"
Job 15:12
Why does your heart carry you away?
Here the "heart" represents a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "Why do your emotions take you away?" or "Why do you allow your emotions to guide your decisions?"
Why do your eyes flash
This probably refers to Job appearing angry, specifically the appearance of his eyes. Alternate translation: "Why do your eyes look angry" or "Why are you angry"
Job 15:13
turn your spirit
Here the "spirit" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "turn yourself"
bring out such words from your mouth
This describes him speaking. Alternate translation: "so you say harsh things against him"
Job 15:14
What is man ... What is he who is born
These two questions are basically the same and are used together to emphasize that a man cannot be perfect.
What is man that he should be clean?
This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that a man cannot be completely "clean." This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A man, he cannot be completely clean."
clean
A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.
What is he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous?
This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that a man cannot be completely "righteous." This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A man who is born from a woman cannot be completely righteous."
Job 15:15
See
This word is used here to draw Job's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
his holy ones
"his angels"
clean
Something that God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if it were physically clean.
in his sight
Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in his judgment"
Job 15:16
abhorrent and corrupt
These two words basically mean the same thing and emphasize how wicked humans are.
abhorrent
If your language has a word for a person whom others reject as unclean in a ritual or spiritual sense, you might want to use it here.
who drinks iniquity like water
This describes iniquity as if it were water you can drink. It compares how the evil man desires to commit sin to how readily he desires to drink cool water. Alternate translation: "who love iniquity as much as they love a cup

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of fresh water" or "who commit evil deeds as often as they drink water"
Job 15:17
I will show you
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will explain to you" or "I will make it clear to you"
I will announce
"I will declare"
Job 15:18
their ancestors did not hide
Eliphaz emphasizes that their ancestors purposefully taught them these things. Alternate translation: "their ancestors taught openly"
Job 15:19
to whom alone the land was given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom alone God gave the land"
among whom no stranger ever passed
This means that no foreigner lived among them, specifically so that they would not be influenced by pagan religions. Alternate translation: "no one from another country came and caused them to think wrongly about God"
Job 15:20
twists in pain
"suffers a lot of pain." This is either physical or emotional pain.
the number of years that are laid up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the years that God has laid up"
that are laid up
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that are prepared" or "that are set aside"
Job 15:21
A sound of terrors is in his ears
"He constantly hears sounds that terrify him"
Job 15:22
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues describing the wicked man he began to describe in Job 15:20.
return out of darkness
Here "darkness" is a metaphor for trouble or misfortune. Alternate translation: "escape misfortune"
he has been marked out for the sword
Here "the sword" is a metonym that represents an enemy who is waiting to kill the evil man. Possible meanings are 1) he is worried that someone will murder him. Alternate translation: "he worries that someone is about to murder him" or 2) it is certain that he is someone will murder him. Alternate translation: "someone is waiting to murder him"
Job 15:23
for bread
Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "for food"
the day of darkness
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the day of disaster" or "the moment of his death"
is at hand
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "is coming soon"
Job 15:24
Distress and anguish make him afraid; they prevail against him
The words "distress" and "anguish" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of the emotion. Here these feelings are spoken of as if they were an enemy who is attacking the wicked man.
prevail against
"overpower" or "defeat"
as a king ready for battle
This compares how his distress and anguish overpower him to how a king, who is ready for battle, would prevail against him. Alternate translation: "just like a king, who is ready for a battle, would prevail against him"
Job 15:25
he has reached out with his hand against God
"he has shook his fist against God." This is a sign of aggression.
Job 15:26
runs at God
This speaks of the wicked man acting aggressively against God as if he were running towards him to attack him. Alternate translation: "attacks God" or "acts violently against God"
with a thick shield
"with his strong shield"
Job 15:27
This is true
"This" refers to the wicked man running at God from the previous verse.
he has covered his face with his fat and gathered fat on his loins
This wicked man is described as fat and weak, while believing himself to be strong enough to defeat God. Alternate translation: "he is weak with a fat face and fat loins"
Job 15:28
which no man inhabits
"which are abandoned"
heaps
piles of useless things
Job 15:29
He will not be rich; his wealth will not last
These two litotes express that he will be the opposite of rich, that he will be poor. Alternate translation: "he will be poor; all his money will disappear"
Job 15:30
out of darkness
Darkness here represents death. Alternate translation: "out of the darkness of death"
a flame will dry up his stalks
Here the flame represents God's judgment and the drying up of his stalks represents either the fact that his possessions disappear, or that he will die. Alternate translation: "God will take everything he owns away, like a fire dries out the moist branches of a tree"
the breath of God's mouth
Here God's "breath" represents his judgement. Alternate translation: "God's breath" or "God's judgment"
he will go away
This refers to him dying. Alternate translation: "he will die"
Job 15:31

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for uselessness will be his reward
This is implied that this is what will happen if he trusts in useless things. Alternate translation: "for if he trusts in them, uselessness will be his reward"
Job 15:32
his palm branch will not be green
This speaks of the man looking pale and dead as if he were a dried out stalk or palm tree branch. Alternate translation: "he will look dead, just like the branch of a dead palm tree does not look green"
Job 15:33
He will drop his ... he will cast off his
These two lines give a similar image, which is repeated to emphasize that this will surely happen.
He will drop his unripe grapes like a grapevine
This speaks of the wicked man growing weak and dying as if he were a grapevine dropping unripe grapes. Alternate translation: "Just like a grapevine drops its unripe grapes, so the wicked man will drop his strength"
he will cast off his flowers like the olive tree
This speaks of the wicked man growing weak and dying as if he were were an olive tree dropping its flowers. Alternate translation: "just like an olive tree loses its flowers, so the wicked man will lose his strength"
Job 15:34
the company of godless people
"the group of godless people"
fire will consume their tents of bribery
The phrase "tents of bribery" means that the wicked people bought these tents with the money they made by bribery. Alternate translation: "the tents they bought with their bribes will be burned by fire"
Job 15:35
They conceive mischief and give birth to iniquity; their womb conceives deceit
The same thought is repeated three times to emphasize how much evil these people produce. This speaks of a person planning to do evil things and doing them as if the person were conceiving and giving birth to these things as a woman conceives and gives birth to a child. Alternate translation: "They plan to cause mischief and do evil things; they are always planning to deceive others"
their womb conceives
Here the "womb" is used to refer to the person to emphasize conception, as it is in the womb that conception takes place. Alternate translation: "they conceive"

16 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2] "I have heard many such things;
you are all troublesome comforters.

[3] Will useless words ever have an end?
What is wrong with you that you answer like this?

[4] I also could speak as you do,
if you were in my place;
I could collect and join words together against you
and shake my head at you in mockery.

[5] I would strengthen you with my mouth,
and the quivering of my lips will bring you relief!

[6] If I speak, my grief is not lessened;
if I keep from speaking, how am I helped?

[7] But now, God, you have made me weary;
you have made all my family desolate.

[8] You have made me dry up,
which itself is a witness against me;
the leanness of my body rises up against me,
and it testifies against my face.

[9] God has torn me in his wrath and persecuted me;
He grinds his teeth in rage;
my enemy fastens his eyes on me as he tears me apart.

[10] People have gaped with open mouth at me;
they have hit me on the cheek with contempt;
they have gathered together against me.

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11 God hands me over to ungodly people,
and throws me into the hands of wicked people.

12 I was at ease, and he broke me apart.
Indeed, he has taken me by the neck and dashed me to pieces;
he has also set me up as his target.

13 His archers surround me all around;
God pierces my kidneys and does not spare me;
he pours out my bile on the ground.

14 He smashes through my wall again and again;
he runs upon me like a warrior.

15 I have sewn sackcloth on my skin;
I have thrust my horn into the ground.

16 My face is red with weeping;
on my eyelids is utter darkness,

17 although there is no violence in my hands,
and my prayer is pure.

18 Earth, do not cover up my blood;
let my cry have no resting place.

19 Even now, see, my witness is in heaven;
he who vouches for me is on high.

20 My friends scoff at me,
but my eye pours out tears to God.

21 I ask for that witness in heaven to argue for this man with God
as a man does with his neighbor!

22 For when a few years have passed,
I will go to a place from where I will not return.

Job 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's response

Job expresses shock and disgust at the advice Eliphaz gives to him. He even mocks Eliphaz. He describes the difficulties of his circumstances but never curses Yahweh. (See: curse)

Advocate

Job describes the need for someone to intercede for him in heaven. This person would be his advocate and provide a witness for him. Although this is probably not intended as a prophecy, it closely parallels the way Jesus intercedes for people in heaven. (See: intercede, heaven and testimony and prophet)

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Links:

Job 16:1 Notes

Job 16:2
you are all troublesome comforters
"instead of comforting me, you all cause me only trouble"
Job 16:3
Will useless words ever have an end?
Job uses this rhetorical question to express that he wishes that they would stop speaking useless words. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "How I wish your useless words would end!"
What is wrong with you that you answer like this?
Job uses this rhetorical question to rebuke Eliphaz. Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Eliphaz, who just finished speaking to Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Eliphaz, you should stop answering me like this!"
Job 16:4
I could collect and join words together
Job speaks of thinking of useless things to say as if his words were random items that he collected and joined together. Alternate translation: "I could think of things to say"
shake my head
This is an action that shows disapproval.
in mockery
The word "mockery" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "to mock you"
Job 16:5
I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the quivering of my lips will bring you relief!
The words "mouth" and "lips" are metonyms for the words or messages that a person speaks using his mouth and lips. Here Job is speaking sarcastically and means the opposite of what he says. Alternate translation: "My words would surely not be encouraging to you! They would surely not lighten your grief" or "By speaking to you as you spoke to me earlier, I would not encourage you or lighten your grief!"
with my mouth
Here Job's "mouth" represents what he says. Alternate translation: "with what I say"
the quivering of my lips
This is a metonym for the words or message that he speaks. Alternate translation: "my comforting words"
will bring you relief
This speaks of grief as if it were a heavy physical burden. Alternate translation: "will lessen your grief" or "will help you feel less grief"
Job 16:6
grief
Job has experienced great loss of family and health that is unexplained and therefore causes him "great sorrow and emotional pain."
how am I helped?
Job uses this rhetorical question to express that keeping quiet does not lessen his grief. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "it does not help me at all."
Job 16:7
But now, God, you
Job now turns his complaining to God.
made all my family desolate
"destroyed all my family"
Job 16:8
You have made me dry up
This means that Job's body has shriveled and become wrinkled. Alternate translation: "You have made my body shrivel up"
which itself is a witness against me
Job describes the shriveling of his body as if it were an accuser against him. Alternate translation: "and people think that shows me to be a sinner"
the leanness of my body rises up against me, and it testifies against
Job describes the thinness of his body as if it were accuser against him. Alternate translation: "They see how thin my body is, and they think that proves that I am guilty"
against my face
Here Job is referred to by his "face." Alternate translation: "against me"
Job 16:9
God has torn me in his wrath and persecuted me ... as he tears me apart
This speaks of God causing Job pain as if God were a wild animal and Job were his prey that he was killing. Alternate translation: "Because God is very angry with me, it is as though he were a wild animal that tore my body apart with his teeth because he was my enemy"
my enemy
Job refers to God as his "enemy" as he describes how he has caused him great pain.
fastens his eyes on me
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "glares at me"
Job 16:10
People have gaped with open mouth
To "gape" means to stare in amazement with open mouth.
Job 16:11
hands me over to ungodly people, and throws me into the hands of wicked people
These two lines mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize Job's feeling of having been betrayed by God.
hands me over to
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "puts me under the control of"
throws me into the hands
Here a person's "hands" refer to his "control." Alternate translation: "delivers me to the control"
Job 16:12
and he broke me apart
Job speaks of his pain and despair as if he himself were something that was broken into pieces. Alternate translation: "but then it felt as though he broke me apart"

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dashed me to pieces
Job speaks of God causing him pain and despair as if he were something that God had taken and smashed into pieces. Alternate translation: "it is as though he has taken me by the neck and smashed me to pieces"
he has also set me up as his target
Job speaks of himself being the focus of God's attacks as if God has set him up as a target to shoot arrows at. Alternate translation: "it is as though he set me up like a target"
Job 16:13
His archers surround me all around
Job speaks of himself being the focus of God's attacks as if God has set him up as a target and God had archers surrounding him to attack him. Alternate translation: "It is as though his archers have me surrounded"
God pierces my kidneys and does not spare me; he pours out my bile on the ground
Job speaks of the pain he is feeling by comparing it to God piercing his body with arrows. Here "God" represents the arrows that he shoots. Alternate translation: "It feels like God's arrows have pierced my kidneys and my liver, spilling my bile on the ground. He does not spare me"
Job 16:14
He smashes through my wall
Job speaks of the pain that he feels by comparing himself to a wall that God smashes through. Alternate translation: "I feel like a wall that God smashes through" or "I feel like a wall that God breaks through"
he runs upon me like a warrior
Job describes God as a soldier that attacks him. Alternate translation: "it is like he is a warrior who runs at me to attack me"
Job 16:15
I have sewn sackcloth on my skin
Job speaks of wearing clothing made of sackcloth as if the cloth were attached to his body. People often wore sackcloth to express mourning or great grief. Alternate translation: "Because I am mourning, I have sewn together sackcloth to wear as my clothing" or "I wear clothing that I made from sackcloth, because I am mourning"
I have thrust my horn into the ground
Job's "horn" represents the power and authority he had before but now is no more. Alternate translation: "I sit here in the dirt, very depressed"
Job 16:16
on my eyelids is utter darkness
Here Job's eyes are represented by his "eyelids." Job speaks of his eyes' dark appearance as if his eyes looked like the eyes of a dead person. Alternate translation: "there are dark circles around my eyes" or "my eyes are dark, like the eyes of a dead person"
Job 16:17
there is no violence in my hands
"Hands" refers to a person's ability and activity. Alternate translation: "I have not acted violently"
Job 16:18
Earth, do not cover up my blood
Jobs speaks to the "earth" directly even though it cannot hear him, to add strength to his statement. The earth is personified as purposefully covering up his blood after he dies. Alternate translation: "I wish my blood would not soak into the ground but that it would remain on top of the ground as proof of how I died"
Earth, do not cover up my blood
Job speaks of himself dying as if he would be murdered. Here his "blood" is a metonym referring to his death. Alternate translation: "Earth, when I die, do not hide how I died unfairly" or "Let it not be hidden how I died unfairly"
let my cry have no resting place
Job speaks of wanting everyone to know what happened to him as if his "cry" were a person that never stopped testifying to what happened to him and never rested. Alternate translation: "let everyone hear about what has happened to me"
Job 16:19
see
Job uses this word to draw attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "listen"
vouches for me
"testifies that I am righteous"
on high
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "in heaven" or "in heaven on high"
Job 16:20
scoff at
"scorn" or "ridicule"
my eye pours out tears
Job describes how strongly he feels his sorrow. Here he exaggerates how he often cries by saying that tears pour from his eyes. Alternate translation: "my eyes are full of tears while I cry out"
Job 16:21
for this man
"for me." Here Job refers to himself in the third person.
as a man does with his neighbor!
"as a man does for his neighbor." Job describes how he wants that one in heaven to plead for him.
Job 16:22
I will go to a place
Here Job is referring to himself dying. Alternate translation: "I will die and go to a place"

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17 [1] My spirit is broken, and my days are over;
the grave is ready for me.

[2] Surely there are mockers with me;
my eye must always see their provocation.

[3] Give now a pledge, be a guarantee for me with yourself;

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who else is there who will help me?

4 For you, God, have kept their hearts from understanding;
therefore, you will not exalt them over me.

5 He who denounces his friends for a reward,
the eyes of his children will fail.

6 But he has made me a byword of the people;
they spit in my face.

7 My eye is also dim because of sorrow;
all my members are as thin as shadows.

8 Upright men will be appalled by this;
the innocent man will stir himself up against godless men.

9 The righteous man will keep to his way;
he who has clean hands will grow stronger and stronger.

10 But as for you all, come on now;
I will not find a wise man among you.

11 My days are past; my plans are shattered,
and so are the desires of my heart.[1]

12 These people, these mockers, change the night into day;
light is near to darkness.

13 If the only home I hope for is Sheol;
and if I have spread my couch in the darkness;

14 and if I have said to the pit, 'You are my father,'
and to the worm, 'You are my mother or my sister,'

15 where then is my hope?
As for my hope, who can see any?

16 Will hope go down with me to the gates of Sheol
when we descend to the dust?"

[1]Some modern translations have My days are past, as are my plans. The wishes of my heart are finished or ... the strings of my heart have been broken. Some translations have My days are past; my plans are over, as are the wishes of my heart.

Job 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Eliphaz, but it is more directly addressed to Yahweh.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's grief

Job expresses grief or great sadness in this chapter. He awaits the justice and intercession of Yahweh as he awaits his own death. (See: curse and intercede)

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Advocate
Job describes the need for someone to intercede for him in heaven. This person would be his advocate and provide a witness for him. Although this is probably not intended as a prophecy, it closely parallels the way Jesus intercedes for people in heaven. (See: heaven and testimony and prophet)

Links:

Job 17:1 Notes

Job 17:1
General Information:
Job continues to speak.
My spirit is broken
The word "spirit" is a synecdoche that refers to Job as a whole person and means that he has no physical strength left. Alternate translation: "I have no more strength"
my days are over
"my time is over" or "I am going to die soon"
the grave is ready for me
This phrase describes "the grave" as if it is a person who will receive Job as a guest. Alternate translation: "soon I will be dead and buried"
Job 17:2
Surely there are mockers with me
"Those who are around me are mocking me"
Surely
"Certainly" or "There is no doubt that"
my eye must always see
Job refers to himself by his "eyes" to emphasize what he sees. Alternate translation: "I must always see" or "I must always hear"
their provocation
"their insults." The word "provocation" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "them provoking me" or "them, trying to make me angry"
Job 17:3
Give now a pledge, be a guarantee for me with yourself
Job begins to speak to God. Here he speaks of his situation as if he were in prison. He is asking God to provide a pledge so that he may be released. Alternate translation: "God, give now a pledge so that I may be released from this prison" or "pay for my release from prison"
who else is there who will help me?
Job uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no one else to help him. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is no one else who will help me."
Job 17:4
General Information:
Job continues to speak.
have kept their hearts
The word "their" refers to his friends. They are referred to by their "hearts" to emphasize their emotions. Alternate translation: "have kept them" or "have kept my friends"
you will not exalt them over me
"you will not allow them to triumph over me"
Job 17:5
He who
"Anyone who"
denounces his friends for a reward
"falsely accuses his friends in order to get a profit" or "betrays his friends to receive a reward"
the eyes of his children will fail
The person's children are referred to here by their "eyes." This phrase describes the children suffering because of what their father or mother did. Alternate translation: "his children will suffer for it"
Job 17:6
General Information:
Job continues to speak.
he has made me a byword of the people
This means that people speak of him in a mocking way and use his name as an insult. Alternate translation: "because of him, people use my name as an insult" or "because of them, people use my name as a byword"
they spit in my face
"people spit in my face." In this culture spitting on someone was a great insult. If spitting has a different meaning in your culture you can write this differently. Alternate translation: "people insult me greatly, by spitting in my face"
Job 17:7
My eye is also dim because of sorrow
Job speaks of his vision as his "eyes." Alternate translation: "My vision has become weak because I am so sad" or "I am almost blind because of my sorrow"
all my members are as thin as shadows
Shadows have no thickness and are infinitely thin. That is an exaggeration of how thin Job's body parts are. Alternate translation: "all my body parts are very thin"
all my members
This is a generalization used to emphasize that his whole body is thin, but it probably refers specifically to his arms and legs. Alternate translation: "my arms and legs"
Job 17:8
will be appalled
"will be shocked" or "will be horrified"
by this
"by what has happened to me"
will stir himself up against
This is an idiom that means to awaken oneself or rouse oneself into activity. Alternate translation: "will begin to take action against"
Job 17:9
General Information:
Job continues to speak.
will keep to his way
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will continue to live in a righteous way"
he who has clean hands
This speaks of a person being innocent as having clean

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hands. Alternate translation: "he who does what is right" or "he who is innocent"

will grow stronger and stronger

This does not refer only to physical strength but also to the strength of a person's will and emotions.

Job 17:10

you all

Job is speaking to Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar.

come on now

Job invites his friends to debate what he has said. Alternate translation: "come on now, argue with me again"

Job 17:11

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

My days are past

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "My time is past" or "My life is over"

my plans are shattered, and so are the desires of my heart

Here Job's "heart" represents his inner being. Alternate translation: "my plans will never happen, nor will the things that I have desired most"

Job 17:12

These people, these mockers

These two phrases refer to the same people, namely Job's friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. The second phrase emphasizes their unfriendly attitude.

change the night into day

This speaks of the people claiming that night is day as if they actually changed night into day. Alternate translation: "claim it is daytime when it is night" or "say the opposite of what is true, just as night is the opposite of day"

light is near to darkness

It is implied that the mockers claim that it is light when it is close to dark. Alternate translation: "they claim that light is near to darkness" or "they claim that when it is becoming dark, that it is getting light"

Job 17:13

General Information:

Job continues to speak.

If the only home ... and if I have spread

The instances of "if" here have the meaning of "since"; Job is speaking as if all these things were true. "Since the only home ... and since I have spread"

have spread my couch in the darkness

Here Job speaks of being prepared to die as having laid his bed in the darkness. Alternate translation: "have prepared myself to go and sleep among the dead"

have spread my couch

"have made my bed"

Job 17:14

if I have said

The word "if" here has the meaning of "since"; Job is speaking as if this were true. "since I have said"

I have said to the pit ... and to the worm

These two lines are a variation to each other and are used together to emphasize how desperate Job is.

the pit

"the grave"

You are my father

Job speaks of the closeness he will soon have with his grave by comparing it to the closeness a man has with his father. Alternate translation: "You are as close to me as my father" or "When I am buried, you will be as close to me as a father"

the worm

"the maggot." Worms are the small creatures that eat dead bodies.

You are my mother or my sister

Job speaks of the closeness he will soon have with the worms in his grave by comparing it to the closeness a man has with his mother and sisters. Alternate translation: "You are as close to me as my mother or my sister" or "You will be as close to me as a mother or sister"

Job 17:15

where then is my hope?

The implicit answer is "nowhere," because he has no hope. This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "then I have no hope."

As for my hope, who can see any?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that that no one expects him to have any hope. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can see any hope for me." or "No one expects me to have any more hope."

Job 17:16

Will hope go down with me ... dust?

The implicit answer is "no." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Hope will not go down with me ... dust." or "I will no longer hope when I go down ... dust."

gates of Sheol

Sheol does not really have gates, but it is a metaphor for Job entering Sheol. Alternate translation: "when I go into Sheol"

when we

"when I and the things that I hope for" or "when I and my hopes." The word "we" refers to Job and his hope.

descend to the dust

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "die and are buried" or "go to the grave"

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18 [1]Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
[2]"When will you stop your talk?
Consider, and afterwards we will speak.

[3] Why are we regarded as cattle,
stupid in your sight?

[4] You who tear at yourself in your anger,

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should the earth be abandoned for you
or should the rocks be removed out of their places?

5 Indeed, the light of the wicked person will be put out;
the spark of his fire will not shine.

6 The light will be dark in his tent;
his lamp above him will be put out.

7 The steps of his strength will be made short;
his own plans will cast him down.

8 For he will be thrown into a net by his own feet;
he will walk into a pitfall.

9 A trap will take him by the heel;
a snare will lay hold on him.

10 A noose is hidden for him on the ground;
and a trap for him in the way.

11 Terrors will make him afraid on every side;
they will chase him at every step.

12 His wealth will turn into hunger,
and calamity will be ready at his side.

13 The parts of his body will be devoured;
indeed, the firstborn of death will devour his parts.

14 He is torn from the safety of his tent
and marched off to the king of terrors.

15 People not his own will live in his tent
after they see that sulfur is scattered within his home.

16 His roots will be dried up beneath;
above will his branch be cut off.

17 His memory will perish from the earth;
he will have no name in the street.

18 He will be driven from light into darkness
and be chased out of this world.

19 He has no offspring or descendants among his people,
no survivor where he once lived.

20 Those who live in the west are appalled at what happens to him one day,
and horror seizes those who live in the east.

21 Surely such are the homes of unrighteous people,
the places of those who do not know God."

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Job 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Bildad speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke, and he is even angry at Job.

Links:

Job 18:1 Notes

Job 18:1

General Information:

Bildad the Shuhite is speaking to Job. (See: and

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said

"Bildad" is the name of a man who is a member of the tribe of Shuah. See how you translated this in Job 8:1.

Job 18:2

When will you stop your talk?

This rhetorical question means that Job has been talking for too long. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Stop talking!"

Consider, and

"Be reasonable, and" or "Think about these things, and"

Job 18:3

General Information:

Bildad continues speaking to Job.

Why are we regarded as cattle, stupid in your sight?

Bildad uses this rhetorical questions to emphasize to Job that he should not consider his friends as animals who cannot think or speak. It can be written as a statement in active form. Alternate translation: "We should not be regarded as beasts, as stupid in your sight." or "You should not regard us as beasts or think of us as stupid."

Why are we

The word "we" probably refers to Bildad and Job's other friends and so is exclusive.

regarded

Regarding, looking, is a metonym here for thinking well or badly of someone.

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment" or "in your thinking"

your sight

The word "your" here is plural. Bildad is using sarcasm to tell Job that Job should not think of himself as a great man. Alternate translation: "your sight, you who wrongly think you are great"

Job 18:4

You who tear at yourself in your anger

Here Bildad is stating that it is because of Job's anger and disobedience that he has been injured, not because of God's anger as Job has previously claimed. The word "tear" here means to "injure." Alternate translation: "You who have caused your own injuries because of your anger"

should the earth be abandoned for you or should the rocks be removed out of their places?

This rhetorical question suggests that letting Job, whom they consider a guilty man, go free would be like changing the whole world. Bildad uses these huge exaggerations here to emphasize how outrageous he thinks this is. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "asking God to let you, a guilty man, go free is as silly as asking for God to forsake the earth for your sake or for God to move the rocks out of their places to please you!"

should the earth be abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "should everyone leave the earth"

should the rocks be removed out of their places

This can be stated in active form. The word "rocks" here refers to large rocks, such as those in the mountains. Alternate translation: "should God remove the rocks from their places" or "should God move mountains around"

Job 18:5

General Information:

Bildad continues speaking to Job.

Indeed, the light of the wicked person will be put out; the spark of his fire will not shine

Bildad speaks of a wicked person dying as if his lamp were being blown out. Alternate translation: "What will happen is that the lives of wicked people like you end as quickly as we can put out a light or extinguish the flame of a fire"

will be put out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will go out"

Job 18:6

The light will be dark in his tent; his lamp above him will be put out

Bildad continues to speak of the wicked person dying. He speaks of the wicked man's life as if it were the light in his tent. Alternate translation: It will be like the light in his tent has turned to darkness, like the lamp above him has gone out"

Job 18:7

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

The steps of his strength will be made short

This speaks of the wicked person suddenly experiencing disaster as if he no longer had strength to walk. Alternate translation: "It will be like he no longer has the strength to walk"

his own plans will cast him down

"his own advice makes him fall down." This speaks of the wicked person undergoing disaster as if he fell down. Alternate translation: "his own plans will lead him into disaster"

Job 18:8

For he will be thrown into a net by his own feet; he will walk into a pitfall

"His own feet will lead him into a net." Bildad uses this

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image to say that the way that a wicked person lives his life leads him to sudden disaster. Alternate translation: "It will be as though he led himself into a net, as if he walked right into a pitfall"

a net

cords or ropes that people weave together to create a mesh. People used nets to catch animals.

a pitfall

a pit that has branches and leaves over it so that an animal will walk onto the branches and leaves and fall into the pit

Job 18:9

General Information:

Bildad continues to speak and uses three parallel images to describe how suddenly the wicked person will experience disaster.

A trap will take him ... a snare will

These four phrases speak of the wicked man experiencing disaster as if he were caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "It will be as though a trap will take him ... a snare will"

A trap

People used this kind of trap to catch birds. The trap snapped shut and held on to the foot of the bird.

will take him by the heel

Here the "heel" refers to the whole foot. Alternate translation: "will take hold of his foot"

Job 18:10

A noose is ... and a trap for him in the way

These four phrases speak of the wicked man experiencing disaster as if he were caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "It will be as though a noose is ... and a trap for him in the way"

A noose is hidden for him on the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has hidden a noose on the ground in order to catch him"

A noose

a rope with a loop that grabs hold of an animal's leg when the animal steps in the middle of the loop

a trap for him

The understood verbal phrase "is hidden" may be supplied. Alternate translation: "a trap is hidden on the path to catch him" or "someone will hide a trap to catch him in the way"

Job 18:11

Terrors will make him afraid on every side

"Terrors all around will make him afraid"

they will chase him at every step

This speaks of the things that terrify the wicked person as if they were enemies who chased him. Alternate translation: "it will be as if the terrors will chase him all around"

Job 18:12

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

His wealth will turn into hunger

This speaks of the wicked man becoming poor and hungry as if his wealth were something that turned into something else. Alternate translation: "Instead of being wealthy, he will become poor and hungry"

calamity will be ready at his side

The phrase "ready at his side" is an idiom that means that something is continually present. Alternate translation: "he will continually experience disaster" or "he will not be able to avoid calamity"

Job 18:13

The parts of his body will be devoured

This can be stated in active form. Also, this speaks of a disease destroying his body as if it were an animal that had attacked him and was eating him. Alternate translation: "Disease will eat away at his skin" or "Disease will destroy his skin"

the firstborn of death will devour his parts

Here a disease that kills many people is referred to as "the firstborn of death." This speaks of that disease destroying his body as if it were an animal that had attacked him and was eating him. Alternate translation: "a deadly disease will destroy the different parts of his body"

Job 18:14

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

He is torn from the safety of his tent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Disaster rips him out of his tent, where he is safe"

marched off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it marches him off" or "it forces him to go"

the king of terrors

This is a reference to "King Death," a pagan god who was believed to rule over death. Alternate translation: "the one who rules over the dead" or "the king of death"

Job 18:15

People not his own

"People who are not his family"

after they see that sulfur is scattered within his home

People used sulfur to get rid of any diseases from a dying person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after they spread sulfur all over his home"

Job 18:16

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

His roots will be dried up ... branch be cut off

This speaks of the wicked man dying and having no descendants as if he were a tree whose roots dried up and branches withered, producing no fruit. Alternate translation: "He will die and leave no descendants, he will be like a tree whose roots have dried up and whose branches have all withered"

will his branch be cut off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his branches will wither"

Job 18:17

His memory will perish from the earth; he will have no name in the street

These phrases have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize the fact that nobody will remember him after he dies.

His memory will perish from the earth

This speaks of the "memory" of the wicked man as if it were a person who died. Alternate translation: "No one on the

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earth will remember him"

he will have no name in the street

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "no one walking along the street will even remember his name"

Job 18:18

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

He will be driven from light into darkness ... and be chased out of this world

These phrases together emphasize the fact that the wicked person will be sent to Sheol, the place of the dead.

He will be driven from light into darkness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will drive the wicked person from light into darkness"

from light into darkness

The word "light" refers to life, and the word "darkness" refers to death. Alternate translation: "from the light of life to the darkness of death"

be chased out of this world

This speaks of God making him leave earth and go where dead people go as if he were chasing him. Alternate translation: "God will make him leave this world" or "God will send him to the place where dead people go"

be chased out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will chase him"

Job 18:19

He has no offspring ... no survivor where he once lived

Together these two phrases emphasize that he will have no family or descendants left.

where he once lived

Or "in his temporary dwelling-place." If your language has a word for a place in which people live temporarily until they can move to a better place, you may want to use it here.

Job 18:20

Those who live in the west ... those who live in the east

The phrases "in the west" and "in the east" are together a merism that refers to all people living everywhere. This is probably an exaggeration, as not everyone on the earth will hear about what happens to every specific wicked person, but Bildad is speaking of Job in the third person to warn Job that if Job continues to do evil, everyone Job cares about will be desolated and horrified at what happens when God punishes Job.

one day

"on the day God punishes him"

Job 18:21

General Information:

Bildad continues to describe the wicked person.

the homes of unrighteous people, the places of those who do not know God

These two phrases have the same meaning and refer to the same people. Here these people are referred to by the places where they live. Alternate translation: "unrighteous people, those who do not know God"

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19 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2] "How long will you torment me
and crush me with words?

[3] These ten times you have insulted me;
you are not ashamed that you have treated me harshly.

[4] If it is indeed true that I have erred,
my error remains my own concern.

[5] If indeed you will exalt yourselves above me
and use my humiliation against me,

[6] then you should know that God has done wrong to me
and has caught me in his net.

[7] See, I cry out, "Violence!" but I get no answer.
I call out for help, but there is no justice.

[8] He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass,
and he has set darkness in my path.

[9] He has stripped me of my glory,
and he has taken the crown from my head.

[10] He has broken me down on every side, and I am gone;
he has pulled up my hope like a tree.

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11 He has also kindled his wrath against me;
he regards me as one of his adversaries.

12 His troops come on together;
they cast up siege mounds against me
and encamp around my tent.

13 He has put my brothers far from me;
my acquaintances are wholly alienated from me.

14 My kinsfolk have failed me;
my close friends have forgotten me.

15 Those who once stayed as guests in my house and my female servants regard me as a stranger;
I am an alien in their sight.

16 I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer
although I seek his favor with my mouth.

17 My breath is offensive to my wife;
I am even detestable to those who were born from my mother's womb.

18 Even young children despise me;
if I rise to speak, they speak against me.

19 All my familiar friends abhor me;
those whom I love have turned against me.

20 My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh;
I survive only by the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me.

22 Why do you pursue me like God does?
Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?

23 Oh, that my words were now written down!
Oh, that they were inscribed in a book!

24 Oh, that with an iron pen and lead
they were engraved in the rock forever!

25 But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that at last he will stand on the earth;

26 after my skin, that is, this body, is destroyed,
then in my flesh I will see God.

27 I will see him with my own eyes—I, and not someone else.
My heart fails within me.

28 If you say, 'How we will persecute him!

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The root of his troubles lies in him,'

29 then be afraid of the sword,
because wrath brings the punishment of the sword,
so that you may know there is a judgment."

Job 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.
Verses 25-27 are very important to this book. They show the great depth of Job's faith in Yahweh after his most difficult time. (See: faith)

Links:

Job 19:1 Notes

Job 19:1
General Information:
See: and
Connecting Statement:
Job speaks to his three friends.
Job 19:2
How long will you torment me and crush me with words?
Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "Stop making me suffer and crushing me with words."
crush me with words
Job uses this image to say that their words make him feel very sad and hopeless. Alternate translation: "torment me with your words"
Job 19:3
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
These ten times you have insulted me
The phrase "These ten times" refers to the way that the friends have completely insulted Job. Alternate translation: "You have completely insulted me" or "You have insulted me many times"
you are not ashamed that you have treated me harshly
Job is rebuking them for this. This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "You should be ashamed that you have treated me so harshly"
have treated me harshly
"have despised me" or "have publicly ridiculed me"
Job 19:4
have erred
"have sinned by accident" or "mistakenly sinned"
my error remains my own concern
Job implies that his friends are not responsible for continuing to rebuke him since he is the one who made the error. Alternate translation: "my error is my own responsibility, so you should not continue to rebuke me" or "my error did not hurt you, so you should not continue to rebuke me"
my error
"my sin" or "my mistake"
Job 19:5
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
If indeed you will exalt yourselves above me
"If you think you are better than I am" or "Since you act as though you are better than I am"
use my humiliation against me
How his friends would do this can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "claim that my humiliation is proof against me" or "use my humiliation as evidence that I am guilty"
use my humiliation against me
The abstract noun "humiliation" can be expressed with the verb "humiliate." Alternate translation: "claim that what has happened to humiliate me proves that I am guilty"
Job 19:6
has caught me in his net
Job speaks as if God were a hunter that has trapped Job in his net. This metaphor represents God taking control of Job and Job's feeling of helplessness. Alternate translation: "has trapped me" or "has taken control of me" or "has control of what happens to me, so that I am helpless"
Job 19:7
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
See, I cry out
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I cry out"
Violence!
This is a cry for help. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Violence! Help!" or "Help! I am being attacked!"
I call out for help
"I shout for help" or "I cry for help"
but there is no justice
The abstract noun "justice" can be translated with a phrase that makes the meaning clear. Alternate translation: "but no one protects me from those who do me wrong"
Job 19:8
He has walled up ... darkness in my path

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Job uses these images to describe how God has made him feel helpless and hopeless.

He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass

"God has put a wall on the road that I am walking on" or "He has blocked the way so I cannot keep going"

Job 19:9

He has stripped ... the crown from my head

Job uses these images to say that God has taken his good reputation, wealth, and dignity away from him.

He has stripped me of my glory

Job speaks of his glory as if it were a robe that God has taken away. Alternate translation: "He has taken away my glory"

he has taken the crown from my head

The crown refers to Job's dignity or honor. Alternate translation: "he has taken away my dignity and honor" or "it is as though he has taken my crown off my head"

Job 19:10

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

He has broken me down on every side

Job speaks of God ruining him as if Job were building that God is smashing down. Alternate translation: "He has ruined me in every way" or "He has attacked me in every way"

I am gone

The metaphor "being gone" represents being completely destroyed. Alternate translation: "I am completely destroyed"

he has pulled up my hope like a tree

Job speaks of God causing Job not to have hope as if Job's hope were a tree that God has pulled with its roots out of the ground. Alternate translation: "he has completely taken away all my hope" or "because of what he has done, I can no longer hope for anything good"

like a tree

This simile is also an ellipsis. You may need to supply the omitted words. Alternate translation: "the way a man pulls a tree up by its roots"

Job 19:11

He has also kindled his wrath against me

Job speaks of God's wrath as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "God has also lit a fire of anger against me" or "God has also become very angry with me"

he regards me as one of his adversaries

"he thinks of me as an enemy"

Job 19:12

His troops come on together

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was a city and God was sending an army to attack it. Alternate translation: "God sends his army to attack me"

they cast up siege mounds against me

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was a city and God's army was piling up dirt against the city wall in order to climb over the wall and attack the city. Alternate translation: "the soldiers pile up dirt in order to climb over my wall"

encamp around my tent

Job speaks of God attacking him as if Job was in his tent and God's army was camping around him and preparing to attack him. Alternate translation: "they camp around my tent and prepare to attack me"

Job 19:13

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

He has put my brothers far from me

Being "far from" someone represents being unwilling to relate to him or help him. Alternate translation: "God has caused my brothers to stay away from me" or "God caused my brothers to refuse to help me"

my acquaintances are wholly alienated from me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my acquaintances have alienated themselves from me" or "my friends treat me like a stranger"

Job 19:14

My kinsfolk have failed me

"My relatives have left me without help"

my close friends

"my intimate friends"

have forgotten me

"have abandoned me" or "have neglected me." This means that they refuse to treat him according to how he and they had related to each other in the past. It implies that they abandoned him.

Job 19:15

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

regard me

"consider me"

I am an alien in their sight

Job describes how people now think of him as an outsider. Here sight represents judgement or evaluation. Alternate translation: "they think of me as a foreigner"

Job 19:16

but he gives me no answer

"but he does not respond to me" or "but he does not come to me." The answer is a response to Job's call.

although I seek his favor with my mouth

The phrase "my mouth" is a metonym which refers to Job speaking. Alternate translation: "even though I speak to him and plead with him"

seek his favor

"plead with him"

Job 19:17

General Information:

Job continues to speak to his three friends.

My breath is offensive to my wife

Here "breath" represents the smell of his breath. If something is offensive to someone, it means that he hates it. Alternate translation: "My wife hates the smell of my breath"

those who were born from my mother's womb

Job refers to his brothers and sisters this way to imply that they are people who should love him. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "my own brothers who should love me" or "my brothers and sisters who should love me"

Job 19:18

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despise me
"hate me" or "detest me"
they speak against me
"they ridicule me" or "they make fun of me"
Job 19:19
All my familiar friends
"All my closest friends" or "All of my friends with whom I shared my secrets." This refers to his closest friends.
abhor me
"think I am disgusting"
have turned against me
"have betrayed me"
Job 19:20
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh
"I am just skin and bones" or "My skin sticks to my bones." Job speaks of his bones, skin, and flesh to describe his appearance. He was extremely thin, and people could easily see the shape of his bones. Some languages have idioms for this.
I survive only by the skin of my teeth
This idiom means that he is barely surviving, that he almost does not survive. Alternate translation: "I am barely alive" or "I hardly survive"
Job 19:21
Have pity upon me
"Have compassion on me"
for the hand of God has touched me
Here "touched me" is a metonym for "hit me." And, "hand" represents God's power. Causing Job to suffer is spoken of as if Yahweh were physically hitting him with his hand. Alternate translation: "because God has afflicted me"
Job 19:22
Why do you pursue me ... God does?
Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "Do not persecute me ... God does!"
Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?
Job uses this question to complain about how his friends are treating him. Alternate translation: "You have consumed my flesh enough!" or "Stop consuming my flesh!"
Will you ever be satisfied with my flesh?
Job speaks of his friends speaking so cruelly to him as if they were wild beasts eating up another animal. Alternate translation: "Stop violently slandering me." or "Stop attacking me with your words."
Job 19:23
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
Oh, that my words were now written down
This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would write down my words"
my words
"what I am saying"
Oh, that they were inscribed in a book
This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would write them in a book"
Job 19:24
Oh, that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever
This exclamation tells what Job wishes for. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would use an iron pen and lead to carve them in the rock forever"
an iron pen
"an iron chisel." This was a tool used for writing. It was made of iron so that people could carve words in rock.
lead
Lead is a soft metal. We do not know how people used lead when carving rock. They may have filled the letters of the inscription with lead in order to make the inscription last longer.
Job 19:25
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
my Redeemer
"My Defender." Here "Redeemer" refers to a person who will rescue Job by proving Job's innocence, restoring his honor, and giving him justice.
at last he will stand on the earth
This refers to standing to speak in court. Possible meanings are 1) the Redeemer will be the last one to speak in the court. Alternate translation: "he will judge whether or not I am guilty" or 2) the Redeemer will stand in this final court to defend Job. Alternate translation: "at last he will defend me in court"
Job 19:26
after my skin ... is destroyed
Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) his body being destroyed by disease or 2) his body decaying after he has died.
in my flesh I will see God
His flesh represents his body, and "in my flesh" represents being alive. Alternate translation: "while I live in my body, I will see God"
Job 19:27
my own eyes—I, and not someone else
The synecdoche "my own eyes" represents Job. The phrases "my eyes" and "and not someone else" emphasize that Job himself will actually see God. It is not that someone else will see God and tell Job about him.
My heart fails within me
People thought of the heart as being where the emotions are. So the heart failing represents him having very many emotions. Alternate translation: "I am very emotional about it" or "My emotions overwhelm me as I think about that"
My heart fails within me
Possible meanings are that 1) Job feels very hopeful, thankful, and happy or 2) Job feels exhausted waiting to see his Redeemer.
Job 19:28
General Information:
Job continues to speak to his three friends.
How we will persecute him!
This is an exclamation. Possible meanings are 1) that they

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will certainly persecute Job or 2) that they will persecute him severely.

The root of his troubles lies in him

The "root" represents the source. Alternate translation: "He is the source of all his troubles" or "He has all these troubles because of what he has done"

Job 19:29

then be afraid of the sword

Possible meanings are that the sword represents 1) God judging them. Alternate translation: "then be afraid that God will judge you" or 2) God killing them. Alternate translation: "then be afraid that God will kill you"

because wrath brings the punishment of the sword

The abstract nouns "wrath" and "punishment" can be expressed with the adjective "angry" and the verb "punish." Possible meanings are that 1) God's anger results in punishment. Alternate translation: "because God will be angry with you and punish you" or 2) the anger of Job's friends results in punishment. Alternate translation: "because if you are so angry with me, God will punish you"

brings

"causes" or "results in"

there is a judgment

The abstract noun "judgment" can be expressed with the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "God judges people"

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20 [1]Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said,
[2] "My thoughts make me answer quickly
because of the worry that is in me.

[3] I hear a rebuke that dishonors me,
but a spirit from my understanding answers me.

[4] Do you not know this fact from ancient times,
when God placed man on earth:

[5] the triumph of a wicked man is short,
and the joy of a godless man lasts only for a moment?

[6] Though his height reaches up to the heavens,
and his head reaches to the clouds,

[7] yet such a person will perish forever like his own dung;
those who have seen him will say, 'Where is he?'

[8] He will fly away like a dream and will not be found;
indeed, he will be chased away like a vision of the night.

[9] The eye that saw him will see him no more;
his place will see him no longer.

[10] His children will apologize to poor people;
his hands will have to give back his wealth.

[11] His bones are full of youthful strength,
but it will lie down with him in the dust.

[12] Although wickedness is sweet in his mouth,
although he hides it under his tongue,

[13] although he holds it there and does not let it go
but keeps it still in his mouth—

[14] the food in his intestines turns bitter;
it becomes the poison of asps inside him.

[15] He swallows down riches, but he will vomit them up again;

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God will cast them out of his stomach.

16 He will suck the poison of asps;
the viper's tongue will kill him.

17 He will not enjoy the streams,
the torrents of honey and butter.

18 He will give back the fruit of his labor and will not be able to swallow it;
he will not enjoy the wealth earned by his commerce.

19 For he has oppressed and neglected poor people;
he has violently taken away houses that he did not build.

20 Because he has known no satisfaction in his belly,
he will not be able to save anything in which he takes pleasure.

21 There is nothing left that he did not devour;
therefore his prosperity will not be permanent.

22 In the fullness of his abundance he will fall into trouble;
the hand of everyone who suffers will come against him.

23 When he is about to fill his stomach,
God will throw the fierceness of his wrath on him;
God will rain it down on him while he is eating.

24 Although that man will flee from the iron weapon,
a bow of bronze will shoot him.

25 He pulls it out of his back
and the gleaming point comes out of his liver.
Terrors come over him.

26 Complete darkness is reserved for his treasures;
a fire not fanned will devour him;
it will consume what is left in his tent.

27 The heavens will reveal his iniquity,
and the earth will rise up against him as a witness.

28 The wealth of his house will vanish;
his goods will flow away on the day of God's wrath.

29 This is the wicked man's portion from God,
the heritage decreed for him by God."

Job 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. In this chapter, Zophar speaks to Job again. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke, and he is even angry at Job. He claims that Job took advantage of the poor and is being punished for it.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

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There are many metaphors used in this chapter. Zophar uses them to explain the temporary nature of life and riches. He also uses them to describe God's punishment of Job.

Links:

Job 20:1 Notes

Job 20:1

General Information:

Zophar replies to Job.

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11. Since this is the second time that Zophar speaks, some translations omit "the Naamathite" here.

Job 20:2

My thoughts make me answer quickly

The idea of Zophar's thoughts making him do something represents his strong desire to do something. Alternate translation: "I want very much to answer you quickly"

because of the worry that is in me

The abstract noun "worry" can be expressed with the adjective "worried." The reason for the worry can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because I am very worried about you" or "because I am very worried because of what you said"

Job 20:3

I hear a rebuke that dishonors me

The abstract noun "rebuke" can be expressed with the verb "rebuke." Alternate translation: "I hear you rebuke me, and what you say dishonors me" or "You insult me by how you rebuke me"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

Here "spirit" probably refers to a thought or idea. Alternate translation: "a thought from my understanding answers me"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

This "spirit" or thought is spoken of as if it were a person that could answer Zophar. Alternate translation: "I have a thought from my understanding, and now I know what I wanted to know"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

The content of the answer can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "a thought from my understanding answers me about how I can reply to you" or "I have a thought from my understanding, and now I know how I can reply to you"

a spirit from my understanding answers me

The abstract nouns "spirit" and "understanding" can be expressed with the verbs "think" and "understand." Alternate translation: "because I understand things, I have thought, and now I know how I can reply to you"

Job 20:4

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking with Job.

Do you not know this fact from ancient times ... man on earth

Zophar begins a rhetorical question to cause Job to think deeply about what he will now say.

Job 20:5

Connecting Statement:

Zophar finishes the rhetorical question he began in verse 4.

the triumph ... for a moment?

Zophar uses a rhetorical question to cause Job to think deeply about what he will now say. This can be translated as a statement. "Surely you know ... man on earth; the triumph ... for a moment."

the triumph of a wicked man is short

The abstract noun "triumph" can be expressed with the verbs "triumph" or "celebrate." Alternate translation: "the wicked man triumphs only a short time" or "the wicked person celebrates for only a little while"

the joy of a godless man lasts only for a moment

The abstract noun "joy" can be expressed with the verb "rejoice" or the adjective "happy." The word "moment" is an exaggeration to emphasize that the time is very short. Alternate translation: "a godless man rejoices for only a moment" or "the godless man is happy for only a very short time"

Job 20:6

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

Though his height reaches up to the heavens

"Though the wicked person's height reaches up to the heavens." The abstract noun "height" can be expressed with the adjective "tall." Alternate translation: "Though he is as tall as the heavens"

Though his height reaches up to the heavens

The wicked man's height represents either his reputation or his pride. Also, here "reaches up to the heavens" represents being very great. Alternate translation: "Though his reputation is great" or "Though his pride is great"

his head reaches to the clouds

"and though his head is as high as the clouds." This also represents his reputation or pride being great. This means the same as the previous phrase.

Job 20:7

will perish forever like his own dung

Dung mixes in with the ground and disappears. The reference to dung may also imply that the wicked person is worthless. Alternate translation: "will perish permanently like his dung, which completely disappears in the ground"

his own dung

If people are embarrassed about the word "dung," translators may refer to something else that disappears completely. Alternate translation: "dust that the wind blows away"

Job 20:8

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

He will

"The wicked person will"

He will fly away like a dream ... he will be chased away like a vision of the night

Here "fly away" and "be chased away" represent disappearing. They may also imply being forgotten, since

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dreams and visions disappear when people forget them. Alternate translation: "He will disappear like a dream ... he will be forgotten like a vision of the night"

will not be found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will find him"

Job 20:9

The eye that saw him

The eye represents a person. Alternate translation: "Anyone who saw him" or "The people who saw him"

his place

The phrase "his place" represents those who live in his place. Alternate translation: "the people who live in his place" or "his family"

Job 20:10

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

His children

"The wicked person's children"

his hands will have to give back his wealth

Here the word "hands" refers to the wicked man's children. When he dies, his children will have to return everything that he took from others.

Job 20:11

His bones are full of youthful strength

The word "bones" represents his body. Being "full of youthful strength" represents being strong like a young person. Alternate translation: "His body is strong like a young person's body"

but it will lie down with him in the dust

The word "it" refers to his youthful strength. The metonym "lie down ... in the dust" represents dying. The strength dying is a metaphor for disappearing. Alternate translation: "but his youthful strength will die with him" or "but his youthful strength will disappear when he dies"

Job 20:12

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

Although wickedness is sweet in his mouth

Here "wickedness is sweet" represents a person enjoying doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "Although doing wicked things is pleasurable like tasting sweet food in the mouth"

although he hides it under his tongue

Zophar speaks of wickedness as if it were sweet food that a person puts under his tongue so it will stay in his mouth and he can taste it for a long time.

Job 20:13

he holds it there and does not let it go but keeps it still in his mouth

Zophar speaks of wickedness as if it were sweet food that a person puts under his tongue so it will stay in his mouth and he can taste it for a long time.

Job 20:14

the food in his intestines turns bitter

When food turns bitter in the stomach, it causes pain and a bitter taste. This is a metaphor for a person experiencing the painful consequences of doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "those wicked things become like food that has turned bitter in the stomach" or "the consequences of those wicked things are painful like food that becomes sour in the stomach"

it becomes the poison of asps inside him

This image is even worse than sour food in the stomach. This is a metaphor for a person experiencing the terrible consequences of doing wicked things. Alternate translation: "the consequences of doing those wicked things are painful like the poison of asps inside him"

asps

poisonous snakes

Job 20:15

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

He swallows down riches ... cast them out of his stomach

Zophar speaks of gaining and losing wealth as if it were food that a person eats and vomits. Alternate translation: "The wicked person becomes very wealthy, but he loses his wealth like a person who vomits up his food. God causes him to lose it all"

He swallows down riches

Possible meanings are that "swallows down riches" represents 1) accumulating riches and storing them selfishly. Alternate translation: "The wicked man gains much wealth and keeps it all for himself" or 2) accumulating riches in wicked ways. Alternate translation: "The wicked man steals many riches"

God will cast them out of his stomach

Here "cast them out of his stomach" is a metonym for causing the man to vomit them. This is a metaphor for causing the man to lose his riches.

cast

throw

Job 20:16

He will suck the poison of asps

Here "suck the poison of asps" represents doing evil things. Both are very dangerous. Alternate translation: "Doing evil things is like sucking the poison of asps" or "He will do evil things and endanger his life like a person who sucks the poison of asps"

asps

poisonous snakes

the viper's tongue will kill him

The viper is a poisonous snake. Its tongue represents its poisonous bite. Alternate translation: "the viper's poisonous bite will kill him" or "the viper will bite him and he will die"

the viper's tongue will kill him

The viper represents the man's wickedness. Alternate translation: "his wickedness will kill him like a viper's bite"

Job 20:17

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

the streams, the torrents of honey and butter

"Streams" and "torrents" are metaphors that represent abundance. "Honey" and "butter" are metonyms that represent the good things that God gives people. Alternate translation: "the abundance of good things that God gives his people"

Job 20:18

the fruit of his labor

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Normally "the fruit of his labor" simply refers to the results of his labor. In this case it refers to the things the wicked man had stolen. Alternate translation: "the things he had worked to get" or "the things he had stolen"

will not be able to swallow it

Here "to swallow" the fruit of his labor represents enjoying the things he had stolen. Alternate translation: "will not be able to enjoy them"

Job 20:20

he has known no satisfaction in his belly

The word "belly" here is a metonym for the person's desires. Alternate translation: "he has never been able to satisfy his desires"

Job 20:21

There is nothing left that he did not devour

This can be reworded with only one of the negatives. Alternate translation: "He devoured everything, and there is nothing left" or "There is nothing left because he devoured everything"

There is nothing left that he did not devour

Here "devour" represents taking things for himself. Alternate translation: "There is nothing left that he did not take for himself" or "He took everything for himself, and there is nothing left"

Job 20:22

he will fall into trouble

"he will suddenly experience trouble"

the hand of everyone who suffers will come against him

Here "hand" represents power, and "hand ... will come against him" represents people attacking him. Alternate translation: "everyone who is in poverty will attack him" or "everyone who suffers will attack him"

suffers

If your language has a separate word for suffering because of poverty, you may want to use it here.

Job 20:23

General Information:

Zophar continues speaking to Job.

to fill his stomach

Here "fill his stomach" is a metonym meaning eat a lot.

God will throw the fierceness of his wrath on him

The "fierceness of his wrath" represents God's anger and punishment. Throwing the punishment on him represents punishing him severely. Alternate translation: "God will be angry and throw down his punishment on him" or "God will be angry and punish him severely"

God will rain it down on him

"God will cause it to rain down on him." Here "rain it down on him" represents causing much punishment to happen to the man. Alternate translation: "God will punish him severely"

Job 20:24

will flee from the iron weapon

The iron weapon represents the person carrying it. Alternate translation: "will flee from the person carrying an iron weapon"

a bow of bronze will shoot him

The bow represents the person who shoots an arrow with it. Alternate translation: "someone with a bronze bow will shoot him"

Job 20:25

liver

This is a large and important part of the body. If someone shoots through it with an arrow, the person who is shot will die.

Terrors come over him

He will suddenly become very afraid. Alternate translation: "he is terrified"

Job 20:26

Complete darkness is reserved for his treasures

"Complete darkness" here is a metaphor for destruction. Alternate translation: "Destruction is reserved for his treasures" or "His treasures will be destroyed"

a fire not fanned will devour him

Here "devour" is a metaphor meaning destroy. Alternate translation: "a fire that is not fanned will destroy him"

a fire not fanned will devour him

The phrase "not fanned" implies that no human will start the fire. Rather, God will cause the fire. Alternate translation: "a fire that is not started by humans will destroy him" or "God will cause a fire to destroy him"

it will consume

Here "consume" is a metaphor meaning destroy. Alternate translation: "the fire will destroy"

Job 20:27

The heavens ... the earth

Possible meanings are: 1) those who live in the heavens and the earth or 2) Zophar is describing the heavens and the earth as if they are humans who will testify in court against the wicked person.

Job 20:28

General Information:

This concludes Zophar's speech to Job.

vanish

disappear

his goods will flow away on

Here "flow away" represents being taken away from him. Alternate translation: "his goods will be taken away from him, like goods that float away in a flood, on"

his goods

"his possessions"

the day of God's wrath

Here "wrath" represents punishment. The abstract noun "wrath" can be expressed with the verb punish. Alternate translation: "the day when God punishes people"

Job 20:29

This is the wicked man's portion from God

Here "portion from God" represents what God has decided should happen to someone. It is spoken of as if it were something that God would give him. Alternate translation: "This is what God has decided should happen to the wicked man"

the heritage decreed for him by God

This represents what God has decided should happen to someone. It is spoken of as if it were something that God would give him as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "what God has planned to give to him" or "what God has planned should happen to him"

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21 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2] "Listen carefully to my words,
and let this be the comfort you offer to me.

[3] Put up with me, and I also will speak;
after I have spoken, mock on.

[4] As for me, is my complaint to a person?
Why should I not be impatient?

[5] Look at me and be appalled,
and lay your hand upon your mouth.

[6] When I think about my sufferings, I am terrified,
and trembling seizes my body.

[7] Why do wicked people continue to live,
become old, and grow mighty in power?

[8] Their descendants are established with them in their sight,
and their offspring are established before their eyes.

[9] Their houses are safe from fear;
neither is the rod of God on them.

[10] Their bull breeds; it does not fail to do so;
their cow gives birth and does not lose her calf prematurely.

[11] They send out their little ones like a flock,
and their children dance.

[12] They sing to the tambourine and harp
and rejoice with the music of the flute.

[13] They spend their days in prosperity,
and they go down quietly to Sheol.

[14] They say to God, 'Depart from us
for we do not wish any knowledge of your ways.

[15] What is the Almighty, that we should worship him?
What profit would we get if we prayed to him?'

[16] See, is not their prosperity in their own hands?
I have nothing to do with the advice of wicked people.

[17] How often is it that the lamp of wicked people is put out,
or that their calamity comes upon them?
How often does it happen that God distributes sorrows to them in his anger?

[18] How often is it that they become like stubble before the wind
or like chaff that the storm carries away?

[19] You say, 'God lays up one's iniquity for his children.'
Let him pay it himself, so that he might know it.

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20 Let his eyes see his own destruction,
and let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

21 For what does he care about his family after him
when the number of his months is cut off?

22 Can anyone teach God knowledge,
since he judges even those who are high?

23 One man dies in his full strength,
being completely quiet and at ease.

24 His body is full of milk,
and the marrow of his bones is moist.

25 Another man dies in bitterness of soul,
one who has never experienced anything good.

26 They lie down alike in the dust;
the worms cover them both.

27 See, I know your thoughts,
and your schemes to do violence to me.

28 For you say, 'Where now is the house of the prince?
Where is the tent in which the wicked man once lived?'

29 Have you never asked traveling people?
Do you not know the evidence they can tell,

30 that the wicked man is kept from the day of calamity,
and that he is led away from the day of wrath?

31 Who will condemn the wicked man's way to his face?
Who will repay him for what he has done?

32 Yet he will be borne to the grave;
men will keep watch over his tomb.

33 The clods of the valley will be sweet to him;
all people will follow after him,
as there were innumerable people before him.

34 How then do you comfort me with nonsense,
since in your answers there is nothing but falsehood?"

Job 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This

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chapter is Job's response to Zophar. It is also a response to all three of his friends in general.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ancestor's sin

In the ancient Near East, it was common to believe that a person could be punished because of the sins of their fathers and ancestors. It was seen as the punishment of a god. While a father's sin may have consequences for their children, Yahweh does not punish people because of their father's sin.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Zophar that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's argument.

Links:

Job 21:1 Notes

Job 21:1

Connecting Statement:

Job begins to answer Zophar's accusations.

Job 21:3

Put up with me

"Allow me" or "Be patient with me"

mock on

"you can continue mocking me." Job is using sarcasm to imply that his friends would ignore what he would say and continue to mock him.

Job 21:4

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

As for me, is my complaint to a person? Why should I not be impatient?

Job uses questions to emphasize that he thinks it is fair for him to complain to God. Alternate translation: "I am not complaining to a person. I have the right to be impatient"

Job 21:5

lay your hand upon your mouth

"cover your mouth with your hand." Possible meanings are that 1) this is a response to being astonished. Alternate translation: "cover your mouth with your hand" or 2) this is a symbol that the person will not speak. Alternate translation: "do not say anything"

Job 21:6

trembling seizes my body

"fear causes my body to tremble" or "I shake with fear"

Job 21:7

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Why do wicked people continue to live, become old, and grow mighty in power?

Job uses this question to show that his friends are wrong to think evil men always suffer. Alternate translation: "Wicked people indeed continue to live, become old, and become wealthier."

Job 21:8

Their descendants are established with them in their sight ... their offspring are established before their eyes

This two clauses mean the same thing and emphasize that this is true.

in their sight ... before their eyes

These phrases mean the same thing because "eyes" refers to sight. Wicked people get to watch their descendants grow strong and wealthy.

Job 21:9

Their houses

Here "houses" refers to the family members that lives in them. Alternate translation: "Their families"

rod of God

This refers to God's punishment.

Job 21:10

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

does not lose her calf prematurely

"she does not miscarry" or "her calf is born healthy and strong"

Job 21:11

little ones like a flock

Job compares these children to lambs to emphasize that they run, play, and are happy.

Job 21:12

tambourine

a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken

Job 21:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking with his friends.

their days

"their lifetime"

they go down quietly to Sheol

This is a polite way of saying that they die. Alternate translation: "they die peacefully"

Job 21:14

your ways

This refers to how God wants people to behave.

Job 21:15

What is the Almighty, that we should worship him? What profit would we get if we prayed to him?

The wicked people use these questions to mock God. Alternate translation: "We do not believe that this Almighty God is worthy of our worship. If we pray to him, he cannot do anything good for us."

Job 21:16

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

See, is not their prosperity in their own hands?

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Here "hands" refers to their power or control. Job uses this question to challenge his friends. Alternate translation: "Look, these wicked people claim that they make themselves prosper!"

Job 21:17

How often is it ... their calamity comes upon them?

Job uses this question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... their calamity comes upon them."

the lamp of wicked people is put out

Job compares extinguishing the lamp to a person dying. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God causes them to die suddenly"

the lamp of wicked people

Job compares the life of the wicked to a lamp that is burning.

How often does it happen ... in his anger?

Job uses this second question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... in his anger."

Job 21:18

How often is it ... the storm carries away?

Job uses this third question to emphasize that it seems to him that God does not punish the wicked very often. Alternate translation: "It is not often ... the storm carries away."

they become like stubble before the wind or like chaff that the storm carries away

The death of the wicked is spoken of as if they were worthless less chaff and stubble that blows away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God takes them away like the wind blows away the chaff"

Job 21:19

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

You say

These words are added by most versions in order to make it clear that the Job is quoting his friends in the next statement.

God lays up one's iniquity for his children

Job speaks of iniquity as if it were an object that could be stored for later use. You may need to make explicit that God stores the iniquity so that the sinner's children will pay for it. Alternate translation: "God keeps a record of a person's sins, then he punishes the person's children for those wicked deeds"

Let him pay it himself, ... know it

Job now begins to state his own opinion. You may need to make explicit that what the sinner should know is how bad his sins have been. It may be helpful to use an indirect quotation. "But I say that he should pay it himself, ... know his guilt'"

Job 21:20

Let his eyes see

Here "eyes" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "Let him see"

let him drink of the wrath of the Almighty

Here the wrath of God is spoken of as if it were a drink that a person can taste, and tasting is a metonym for experiencing the drink. Job wants the wicked person to experience God's punishment.

Job 21:21

For what does he care about his family after him when the number of his months is cut off?

Job uses this question to show that punishing the evil man's children is not effective. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the wicked man does not care what happens to his family after he has died!"

the number of his months is cut off

This is a polite way of saying that he dies.

the number of his months

This refers to the length of his life.

Job 21:22

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Can anyone teach God knowledge, since he judges even those who are high?

Job asks this question to emphasize that God knows everything. Alternate translation: "Obviously, no one can teach anything to God, since he even judges those in heaven."

those who are high

Possible meanings are 1) "those who are in heaven" or 2) "powerful people."

Job 21:23

One man dies in his full strength

Job contrasts this man who dies in health and peace to the man who dies in sorrow and pain in [Job 21:25]

Job 21:24

His body is full of milk ... the marrow of his bones is moist

Both of these phrases mean that the person is very healthy.

His body is full of milk

The word for "milk" may mean "fat." Either rendering means he is well-fed. Alternate translation: "His body if full of fat"

the marrow of his bones is moist

This idiom means his body is youthful and healthy.

Job 21:25

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to his friends.

Another man dies

Job contrasts this man to the man who dies in peace in Job 21:23.

in bitterness of soul

Here sorrow is spoken of as if it tasted bitter, and "soul" refers to the whole man. Alternate translation: "with anger and resentment" or "after living a sad life"

has never experienced anything good

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "has experienced only bad things"

Job 21:26

They lie down alike in the dust

This is a polite way to say that they died. Alternate translation: "They both die and people bury them"

the worms cover them both

Worms are associated with decay of dead bodies. Alternate translation: "the worms in the dirt eat their dead bodies"

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Job 21:27
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to his friends.
See
Job uses this phrase to call attention to the statement that follows. Alternate translation: "Listen"
Job 21:28
Where now is the house of the prince? Where is the tent in which the wicked man once lived?
Job believes his friends will ask these question to scold him. Both questions mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "See, the house of the evil ruler is gone. The tent of the wicked man has disappeared."
Job 21:29
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to his friends.
Have you never asked traveling people?
Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for not learning from people who travel. Alternate translation: "You should listen to those who have traveled to distant places."
Job 21:30
Connecting Statement:
Job finishes asking a rhetorical question that begins with the words "Do you not know" in verse 29.
the wicked man is kept ... from the day of wrath?
Job uses these questions to rebuke his friends for not learning from people who travel. "Those who have traveled to distant places will tell you ... from the day of wrath."
the wicked man is kept from the day of calamity ... he is led away from the day of wrath
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God keeps the wicked man from the day of calamity ... God leads him away from the day of wrath"
Job 21:31
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking to his friends.
Who will condemn the wicked man's way to his face?
Job uses this question to contradict his friends' belief that the wicked are always judged. Alternate translation: "No one condemns the wicked man to his face."
to his face
This means no one will go directly to the wicked person and condemn him personally.
Who will repay him for what he has done?
Job uses this question to contradict his friends' belief that the wicked are always judged. Alternate translation: "No one repays him for the bad things that he has done."
Job 21:32
he will be borne
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will carry him"
Job 21:33
The clods of the valley will be sweet to him
Job imagines that the dead person will even enjoy the dirt that is put on him. This means the wicked person will even have a good death and a nice burial after a fulfilling life. "Clods" refer to the earth that covers the grave. Alternate translation: "He will enjoy being covered with the dirt of the valley" or "He will enjoy being buried in the dirt of the valley"
all people will follow after him, as there were innumerable people before him
Job emphasizes that a large crowd of people will be in the funeral procession of this imaginary wicked man to honor him. Alternate translation: "a huge number of people go to the grave site; some go in front of the procession and some come behind"
Job 21:34
Connecting Statement:
This concludes Job's speech to his friends.
How then do you comfort me with nonsense, since in your answers there is nothing but falsehood?
Job uses a question to scold his friends. Alternate translation: "You cannot comfort me with nonsense. All of your answers are false."

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22 [1]Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,
[2] "Can a man be useful to God?
Can a wise man be useful to him?

[3] Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous?
Is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?

[4] Is it because of your reverence for him that he rebukes you
and takes you to judgment?

[5] Is not your wickedness great?
Is there no end to your iniquities?

[6] For you have demanded guarantee of a loan from your brother for no reason,
and you have stripped away clothing from the naked.

[7] You have not given water to weary people to drink;
you have withheld bread from hungry people

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8 although you, a mighty man, possessed the earth,
although you, an honored man, lived in it.

9 You have sent widows away empty;
the arms of the fatherless have been crushed.

10 Therefore, snares are all around you,
and sudden fear troubles you.

11 There is darkness, so that you cannot see;
an abundance of waters covers you.

12 Is not God in the heights of heaven?
Look at the height of the stars, how high they are!

13 You say, 'What does God know?
Can he judge through the thick darkness?

14 Thick clouds are a covering to him, so that he does not see us;
he walks on the vault of heaven.'

15 Will you keep the old way
that wicked men have walked—

16 those who were snatched away before their time,
those whose foundations have washed away like a river,

17 those who said to God, 'Depart from us';
those who said, 'What can the Almighty do to us?'

18 Yet he filled their houses with good things;
the plans of wicked people are far from me.

19 Righteous people see their fate and are glad;
innocent people mock them.

20 They say, 'Surely those who rose up against us are cut off;
fire has consumed their possessions.'

21 Now agree with God and be at peace with him;
in that way, good will come to you.

22 Receive, I beg you, instruction from his mouth;
store up his words in your heart.

23 If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up,
if you put unrighteousness far away from your tents.

24 Lay your treasure down in the dust,
the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks,

25 and the Almighty will be your treasure,
precious silver to you.

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26 For then you will take pleasure in the Almighty;
you will lift up your face to God.

27 You will make your prayer to him, and he will hear you;
you will pay your vows to him.

28 You will also decree anything, and it will be confirmed for you;
light will shine on your paths.

29 God humbles a proud man,
and he saves the one with humble eyes.

30 He will rescue even the man who is not innocent;
who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands."

Job 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of the advice of Job's friend, Eliphaz. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

Eliphaz tries to get Job to repent in this chapter. Eliphaz assumes that he is righteous, while assuming Job is not. (See: repent and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Eliphaz's argument.

Links:

Job 22:1 Notes

Job 22:1

Eliphaz the Temanite

See how you translated this man's name in [Job 2:11]

Job 22:2

Can a man be useful to God? Can a wise man be useful to him?

Both questions mean basically the same thing. Eliphaz uses questions to emphasize that a person's actions and wisdom do not benefit God. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be useful to God. A wise man cannot be useful to him."

Job 22:3

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty if you are righteous? Is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Eliphaz uses questions to emphasize that Job's actions do not help God. Alternate translation: "The Almighty does not receive any pleasure if you are righteous. He does not gain anything if you make your ways blameless."

Job 22:4

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

Is it because of your reverence for him that he rebukes you and takes you to judgment?

Eliphaz uses questions to scold Job and accuse him of committing terrible sins. Alternate translation: "It is certainly not because you have been devoted to him that God rebukes you and takes you to judgment!"

Job 22:5

Is not your wickedness great? Is there no end to your iniquities?

Eliphaz uses questions to scold Job and accuse him of committing terrible sins. Alternate translation: "As you know, he judges you because your wickedness is great and you keep on sinning!"

Job 22:6

Connecting Statement:

Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.

you have demanded guarantee of a loan

This refers to a lender taking something from the borrower to ensure that the borrower pays him back.

you have stripped away clothing from the naked

Eliphaz is accusing Job of taking clothes as security from poor people who borrowed from him.

Job 22:7

withheld bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "withheld food"

Job 22:8

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possessed the earth ... lived in it
Eliphaz is accusing Job of taking land from poor people and not allowing them to live on it. He is emphasizing this point by restating it twice.
possessed the earth
Eliphaz is exaggerating the amount of land that Job owned in order to portray Job as greedy. Alternate translation: "possessed a great amount of land"
Job 22:9
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
You have sent widows away empty
"You made widows go away with nothing"
widows
women whose husbands have died
the arms of the fatherless have been crushed
Here "arms" refer to power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you even oppressed the fatherless"
Job 22:10
snares are all around you ... sudden fear troubles you
These are metaphors for trouble and danger. Alternate translation: "you are always in danger ... you become afraid for no reason"
Job 22:11
There is darkness ... an abundance of waters covers you
Each of these metaphors means troubles and dangers are all around Job because of his sin.
an abundance of waters
"a flood"
Job 22:12
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
Is not God in the heights of heaven?
Eliphaz uses this question to say that God sees Job's sin and will judge him. Alternate translation: "God is in the heights of heaven and sees everything that happens on earth."
Look at the height of the stars, how high they are!
Eliphaz implies that God is higher than the stars. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Look at how high the stars are. God is even higher than the stars!"
Job 22:13
What does God know? Can he judge through the thick darkness?
Eliphaz uses these questions to imply that Job has said these things against God. Alternate translation: "God does not know what happens on earth. He sits in dark clouds and cannot see to judge us."
Job 22:14
he walks on the vault of heaven
Here "vault" refers to the barrier that ancient people believed separated the earth from heaven. Alternate translation: "he lives too far away in heaven to see what happens here"
Job 22:15
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
Job 22:16
those who were snatched away
Dying is compared to God snatching them away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who died" or "those whom God took away"
those whose foundations have washed away like a river
The death of wicked people is compared to buildings that had their foundations washed away by a flood.
Job 22:17
What can the Almighty do to us?
Eliphaz quotes a question wicked people use to mock God. Alternate translation: "The Almighty cannot do anything to us!"
Job 22:18
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
Yet he filled
"Yet God filled"
the plans of wicked people are far from me
The idiom "far from me" means Eliphaz rejects them. Alternate translation: "but I will not listen to their wicked plans"
Job 22:19
see their fate
"know what will happen to the wicked"
Job 22:20
They say
"The righteous say"
Surely those who rose up against us are cut off
Here "those who rose up" refers to the wicked people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Surely God has destroyed the wicked people who harmed us"
Job 22:21
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
Now
Eliphaz uses this word to introduce something important he is about to say.
Job 22:22
instruction from his mouth
Here "from his mouth" represents what God has spoken. Alternate translation: "the instruction that God has spoken"
store up his words
God's words are compared to treasures that Job could keep in a storeroom. Alternate translation: "treasure his commands"
your heart
Here "heart" refers to Job's thoughts. Alternate translation: "your mind"
Job 22:23
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
you will be built up
Eliphaz compares Job's restoration to the rebuilding of a house that has fallen. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will heal you and make you prosper again"
if you put unrighteousness far away from your tents
Unrighteousness is pictured as a person who is living in Job's tent who must be removed. Alternate translation: "if you and everyone in your house stops sinning"
Job 22:24

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Lay your treasure down in the dust
To lay a treasure in the dust is to treat it as unimportant. Alternate translation: "Consider your riches as unimportant as dust"
the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks
To put gold in the stream is to treat it as no more valuable than stones. Alternate translation: "the gold of Ophir is as worthless as stones in a stream"
Ophir
This is the name of a region famous for its gold.
Job 22:25
the Almighty will be your treasure, precious silver to you
This means God will be more valuable to Job than any treasure.
Job 22:26
Connecting Statement:
Eliphaz continues speaking to Job.
you will lift up your face to God
This means Job will no longer be ashamed but will trust in God. Alternate translation: "you will be able to approach God confidently"
Job 22:28
it will be confirmed for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cause you to succeed"
light will shine on your paths
God's blessing is compared to a light on all of Job's paths. Alternate translation: "it will be like a light shining on the road in front of you"
Job 22:29
Connecting Statement:
This concludes Eliphaz's speech to Job.
the one with humble eyes
Here the word "eyes" is a synecdoche for the whole person or a metonym for the way the person thinks and acts. Alternate translation: "the humble person"
humble eyes
"lowered eyes," eyes that look at the ground and not at the person with whom their owner is conversing
Job 22:30
He will rescue even the man who is not innocent; who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands
Job being innocent is spoken of as if his hands were physically clean. The phrase "who will be rescued" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will rescue even the person who is not innocent because you do what is right"
He will rescue even the man who is not innocent; who will be rescued through the cleanness of your hands
Some versions of the Bible read, "He rescues the innocent person; so he will rescue you when your hands are clean"

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23 [1]Then Job answered and said,
"Even today my complaint is rebellion;[1]
my hand[2] is heavy because of my groaning.

[3] Oh, that I knew where I might find him!
Oh, that I might come to his place!

[4] I would lay my case in order before him
and fill my mouth with arguments.

[5] I would learn the words with which he would answer me
and would understand what he would say to me.

[6] Would he argue against me in the greatness of his power?
No, he would pay attention to me.

[7] There the upright person might argue with him.
In this way I would be acquitted forever by my judge.

[8] See, I go eastward, but he is not there,
and westward, but I cannot find him.

[9] To the north, where he is at work, but I cannot see him,
and to the south, where he hides himself so that I cannot see him.

[10] But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tested me, I will come out like gold.

[11] My foot has held fast to his steps;
I have kept to his way and turned not aside.

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12 I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips;
I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.

13 But he is one of a kind, who can turn him back?
What he desires, he does.

14 For he carries out his decree against me;
there are many like them.

15 Therefore, I am terrified in his presence;
when I think about him, I am afraid of him.

16 For God has made my heart weak;
the Almighty has terrified me.

17 I have not been brought to an end by darkness,
because of the thick darkness that covers the gloom of my face.

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[1]Some ancient translations and many English translations have: bitter.
[2]Some copies have: his hand.

Job 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz.

Special concepts in this chapter

Court

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of a court case to describe Job's "case," which he seeks to bring to Yahweh, who is a judge. Cultures without a legal system will have difficulty translating this chapter.

Links:

Job 23:1 Notes

Job 23:2

Even today my complaint is rebellion

Here "Even today" emphasizes that his friends arguments have not changed Job's situation at all. Alternate translation: "In spite of what you have said, my complaint is rebellion"

my complaint is rebellion

That is, God continues to afflict Job, but Job will not stop claiming that he has done no wrong.

my hand ... heavy because of my groaning

Possible meanings are 1) "I can barely lift my hand because of my groaning" or 2) "God's hand continues to make me suffer in spite of my groaning" where "hand" refers to God's power to punish.

Job 23:3

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Oh, that I knew where ... Oh, that I might come

These two lines mean the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to meet with God.

I might find him

"I might find God"

Job 23:4

lay my case ... fill my mouth

These two lines mean the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to explain his situation to God.

fill my mouth with arguments

Here "fill my mouth" refers to speaking. Alternate translation: "I would speak all of my arguments"

Job 23:5

I would learn the words ... would understand

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize Job's desire to hear God's answer.

the words with which he would answer me

"the answer that he would give me"

Job 23:6

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Would he

"Would God"

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Job 23:7

There

This refers to the place where God is.

I would be acquitted forever by my judge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my judge would acquit me forever" or "God, who is my judge, would say that I am innocent once and for all"

Job 23:8

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking. He begins using a merism to say that he has looked everywhere.

Job 23:9

north ... south

This is the end of the merism that begins with the words "eastward ... westward" in verse 8. By mentioning these four directions, Job emphasizes that he has looked everywhere.

where he hides himself

Job speaks of God as if he is a person who hides.

Job 23:10

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

he knows the way that I take

Job's actions are spoken of as if he is walking on a path. Alternate translation: "God knows what I do"

I will come out like gold

Job believes that the test will prove that he is as pure as refined gold. Alternate translation: "he will see that I am as pure as gold when anything not pure has been burned away"

Job 23:11

My foot has held fast to his steps

Here "My foot" refers to Job. Alternate translation: "I have followed the path he has shown me"

I have kept to his way

Job's obedience is spoken of as if he is walking in a path that God showed him. Alternate translation: "I have done what he told me to do"

turned not aside

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "followed it exactly"

Job 23:12

I have not gone back from

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I have always obeyed"

of his lips

This phrase refers to the message that God spoke. Alternate translation: "that he spoke"

the words of his mouth

Here God is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "what he said"

Job 23:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

But he is one of a kind, who can turn him back?

Job uses this question to emphasize that there is no one like God and no one can force him to change. Alternate translation: "But there is no one like him, and nobody can make him change his mind." or "But he alone is God, and no one can influence him."

What he desires, he does

"He does whatever he wants to do"

Job 23:14

he carries out his decree against me

"he is doing to me what he said he would do"

there are many like them

"he has many similar plans for me"

Job 23:15

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Job 23:16

For God has made my heart weak; the Almighty has terrified me

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Job is very afraid of God.

made my heart weak

A person whose heart is weak is a person who is timid or fearful. Alternate translation: "made me afraid"

Job 23:17

I have not been brought to an end by darkness

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "The thick darkness in front of me has not made me silent" or 2) "Darkness has not stopped me" or "God has stopped me, not the darkness."

the gloom of my face

Here Job refers to himself by his "face." Alternate translation: "my sadness"

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24 [1] Why are times for judging wicked people not set by the Almighty?
Why do not those who are faithful to God see his days of judgment come?

[2] There are wicked people who remove boundary markers;
there are wicked people who take away flocks by force
and put them in their own pastures.

[3] They drive away the donkey of those without fathers;
they take the widow's ox as a pledge.

[4] They force needy people out of their path;
poor people of the earth all hide themselves from them.

[5] See, these poor people go out to their work
like wild donkeys in the wilderness, looking carefully for food;

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perhaps the Arabah will provide them food for their children.

6 They reap fodder in the field;
they glean the vineyard of the wicked.

7 They lie naked all night without clothing;
they have no covering in the cold.

8 They are wet with the showers of the mountains;
they lie next to large rocks because they have no shelter.

9 The fatherless is seized from the breast,
and they take a pledge against the poor.

10 But the poor people go about naked without clothing;
although they go hungry,
they carry bundles of grain belonging to other people.

11 The poor people make oil within the walls of those wicked men;
they tread the wicked men's winepresses,
but they themselves suffer thirst.

12 From out of the city the dying groan,
and the throat of the wounded cries out for help.
But God does not charge anyone with wrongdoing.

13 Some of these wicked people rebel against the light;
they know not its ways,
nor do they stay in its paths.

14 Before daylight the murderer rises
and he kills the poor and the needy;
in the night he is like a thief.

15 Also, the eye of the adulterer waits for the twilight;
he says, 'No eye will see me.'
He disguises his face.

16 In the darkness they dig into houses;
but they shut themselves up in the daytime;
they do not care for the light.

17 For all of them, thick darkness is like the morning;
for they are friends with the terrors of thick darkness.

18 Swiftly they pass away, however, like foam on the surface of the waters;
their portion of the land is cursed;
no one goes to work in their vineyards.

19 As drought and heat melt away the snow into waters,
so Sheol takes away those who have sinned.

20 The womb that bore him will forget him;
the worm will feed sweetly on him;
he will be remembered no more;

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in this way, wickedness will be broken like a tree.

21 The wicked one devours the barren women who have not borne children;
he does no good to the widow.

22 Yet God drags away the mighty by his power;
he rises up and does not strengthen him in life.

23 God gives him what he needs for security, and he is supported,
but his eyes are on his ways.

24 These people are exalted; still, in only a little while, they will be gone;
indeed, they will be brought low; they will be gathered up like all the others;
they will be cut off like the tops of ears of grain.

25 If it is not so, who can prove me to be a liar;
who can make my speech worth nothing?"

Job 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Eliphaz. It is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Court

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of a court case to describe Job's "case," which he seeks to bring to Yahweh, who is a judge. Cultures without a legal system will have difficulty translating this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Job uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Eliphaz that he is wrong. These questions help to build Job's argument.

Links:

Job 24:1 Notes

Job 24:1

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

Why are times for judging wicked people not set by the Almighty?

Job uses this question to express his frustration that God has not judged evil. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I do not understand why God does not set a time when he will judge wicked people." or "The Almighty should set a time when he will judge wicked people."

Why do not those who are faithful to God see his days of judgment come?

Job uses this question to express his frustration that the righteous have not seen God judge evil. Alternate translation: "It seems that those who obey him never get to see him judge the wicked." or "God should show the day he will judge the wicked to those who know him."

Job 24:2

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

boundary markers

These are stones or other objects to mark the boundary between the lands owned by different people.

pastures

land with grass for animals to eat

Job 24:3

They drive away

"They steal"

those without fathers

"orphans" or "children whose parents have died"

they take the widow's ox as a pledge

"they take widows' oxen to guarantee that the widows will pay back the money that they loaned to those widows"

widow

a woman whose husband has died

as a pledge

A lender would take something from a borrower to ensure that the borrower pays him back.

Job 24:4

out of their path

"out of their way" or "off the road"

poor people of the earth all hide themselves

The word "all" is an exaggeration to show that many poor people are afraid of these wicked people.

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Job 24:5

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

these poor people go out to their work like wild donkeys in the wilderness, looking carefully for food

These poor people are spoken of as if they are wild donkeys who do not know where they will find food. Alternate translation: "these poor people go out to search for food as if they were wild donkeys in the wilderness"

wild donkeys

"donkeys that no one owns or cares for"

Job 24:6

General Information:

This verse is a synecdoche that describes the misery and hard work of the poor. They harvest food for rich people's animals to eat, and they get the last grapes of crops that the wicked enjoy in luxury.

They reap fodder in the field

The words in this line are not clear. Other possible meanings are that they reap at night or that they reap in fields not their own.

reap ... glean

Reaping is the work of hired hands, while gleaning is the work of the landless poor. Taken together, this is a description of poor people who must work in fields belonging to other people, including the wicked.

fodder

food for animals

Job 24:7

They lie naked ... they have no covering

These two lines describe the same thing and are used together to emphasize that these people do not have enough clothing to keep warm.

Job 24:8

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

They are wet with the showers of the mountains

"They become wet when it rains in the mountains"

Job 24:9

The fatherless is seized from the breast, and they take a pledge against the poor

You may need to make explicit that the word "they" refers to the understood actors who seize the fatherless. "They seize the fatherless from the breast and take a pledge against the poor" or "The fatherless are seized from the breast of the poor as a pledge"

The fatherless is seized from the breast

Here "breast" is a synecdoche for the mother. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The wicked seize the fatherless from their mothers"

The fatherless is

"Fatherless children are" or "The orphan is" or "Orphans are"

Job 24:10

go about

"walk around"

naked without clothing

The words "without clothing" mean the same thing as "naked." Alternate translation: "completely naked" or "naked because they have no clothing"

they carry bundles of grain belonging to other people

This means their work will provide food for others but not for themselves.

Job 24:11

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

The poor people make oil

they squeezed olives in order to extract olive oil from them

within the walls of those wicked men

Here "walls" refers to the whole house. Alternate translation: "in the houses of those evil men"

they tread the wicked men's winepresses

It may be helpful to state that they do this to produce juice to make wine. Alternate translation: "they tread on grapes to make juice for wine"

they themselves suffer thirst

"they suffer from thirst" or "they are thirsty"

Job 24:13

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

rebel against the light

Possible meanings of "light" are 1) visible light or 2) spiritual light, which refers to God or living righteously. Alternate translation: "hate the daylight" or "do not want to do things openly" or "rebel against God"

they know not its ways, nor do they stay in its paths

These two lines describe the same thing, and are used together to emphasize that they do not want to follow the ways of the light. Alternate translation: "they do not know how to live a moral life; they stay far away from living a righteous life"

Job 24:14

the poor and the needy

The words "poor" and "needy" refer to the same group of people and emphasize that these are people who are unable to help themselves.

he is like a thief

The murderer kills in secret just like a thief steals without anyone seeing what he does. Alternate translation: "he kills people secretly, just like a thief steals secretly"

Job 24:15

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking.

the eye of the adulterer

Here "eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "the adulterer"

for the twilight

"for the sunset"

No eye will see me

Here "eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "No one will see me"

Job 24:16

they dig into houses

They dig into the houses in order to steal what is in them. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "wicked people dig into houses to steal what is in them"

they shut themselves up

"they hide inside"

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Job 24:17
For all of them, thick darkness is like the morning
The thick darkness is as comfortable for the wicked as light of the morning is for normal people.
the terrors of thick darkness
"the scary things that happen at night"
Job 24:18
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.
like foam on the surface of the waters
Foam lasts only a short time. This emphasizes how quickly God will cause the wicked to disappear.
their portion of the land is cursed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God curses the part of the land that they own"
Job 24:19
As drought and heat melt away ... those who have sinned
Job says that sinners will disappear in Sheol in the same way as snow melts and disappears when it becomes warm.
drought and heat
These two words describe essentially the same weather and are used together to describe it fully.
Job 24:20
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.
The womb
This refers to the mother. Alternate translation: "The mother"
the worm will feed sweetly on him
This means that he will die and worms will eat his body. Alternate translation: "the worm will enjoy eating his dead body" or "he will die and then his body will be eaten by worms"
he will be remembered no more
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will remember him anymore"
wickedness will be broken like a tree
God's destruction of the wicked man is describes as if he were cutting down a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will destroy the wicked as if he were a tree"
Job 24:21
The wicked one devours
This metaphor emphasizes how ruthless the wicked man is. Alternate translation: "Just like a wild animal kills its prey, so the wicked person harms"
the barren women who have not borne children
The people of that day considered that a woman who was barren was cursed by God. Therefore, this represents the most unfortunate women.
widow
a woman whose husband has died
Job 24:22
Connecting Statement:
Job continues speaking.
by his power
"by using his power" or "because he is powerful"
he rises up and does not strengthen him in life
Here "does not strengthen him in life" means God does not keep the mmighty alive. Alternate translation: "God rises up and does not give the mighty the strength to live" or "God rises up and causes them to die"
the mighty
"mighty people" or, by implication, "the wicked" or "wicked people"
Job 24:23
gives him what he needs ... he is supported
"gives to the mighty what the mighty needs ... he is supported" or "gives to mighty people what they need ... they are supported"
he is supported
"he is safe" or "he has what he needs"
but his eyes are on his ways
Here "eyes" are a synecdoche for God, whose eyes they are. Alternate translation: "but God is always watching what they do"
Job 24:24
Connecting Statement:
This concludes Job's speech.
they will be brought low
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bring them low" or "God will destroy them"
they will be gathered up like all the others
Some translations are based on a different early text, which says "they wither and fade like weeds."
they will be gathered up like all the others
This can be stated in active form. What "the others" refers to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "God will gather them up as he gathered up the other wicked people"
they will be cut off like the tops of ears of grain
These wicked people will be cut off in the same way heads of grain are cut off during harvest. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cut them off like a farmer cuts off the top of a stalk of grain"
Job 24:25
If it is not so, who can prove me to be a liar; who can make my speech worth nothing?
Job uses this question to express the certainty of his argument. The implicit answer is: "no one." Alternate translation: "This is true, and no one can prove that I am a liar; no one can prove me wrong."
make my speech worth nothing
"prove what I say is wrong"

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25 [1]Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said,
[2]"Dominion and fear are with him;
he makes order in his high places of heaven.

[3] Is there any end to the number of his armies?
Upon whom does his light not shine?

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4 How then can man be righteous with God?
How can he who is born of a woman be clean, acceptable to him?

5 See, even the moon has no brightness to him;
the stars are not pure in his sight.

6 How much less man, who is a worm—
a son of man, who is a worm!"

Job 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of the advice of Job's friend, Bildad. His words in this chapter are much stronger than when he previously spoke.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's holiness and man's sin

Bildad describes the holiness of Yahweh and the universal nature of man's sinfulness. While his points are accurate, they are not convincing for Job because he has been righteous. (See: holy and sin and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Bildad uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job that he is wrong. These questions help to build Bildad's argument.

Links:

Job 25:1 Notes

Job 25:1

Bildad the Shuhite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11.

Job 25:2

Dominion and fear are with him

Here "him" refers to God. The abstract nouns "dominion" and "fear" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "God rules over all and people should fear only him"

he makes order in his high places of heaven

"he makes peace in the high heaven"

Job 25:3

Is there any end to the number of his armies?

Bildad uses this question to emphasize how great God is. The implicit answer is "no." This refers to the armies of God's angels. Alternate translation: "There is no end to the number of angels in his army." or "His armies are so big that no one can count them."

Upon whom does his light not shine?

Bildad uses this question to emphasize that God gives light to every person. Alternate translation: "There is no one upon whom his light does not shine." or "God makes his light shine over everyone."

Job 25:4

Connecting Statement:

Bildad continues speaking.

How then can man ... God? How can he who is born ... him?

These two questions are used together to emphasize that it is impossible for a man to be good enough before God.

How then can man be righteous with God?

The implicit reaction is that he cannot. Alternate translation: "A man can never be righteous before God."

How can he who is born ... acceptable to him?

The implicit reaction is that he cannot. Alternate translation: "He who is born of a woman cannot be clean or acceptable to him."

he who is born of a woman

This idiom includes everyone. Alternate translation: "any person"

Job 25:5

See

The word "See" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed"

the moon has no brightness to him

The abstract noun "brightness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the moon is not bright enough for God"

the stars are not pure in his sight

Here "pure" means "perfect." Alternate translation: "he does not think even the stars are perfect"

Job 25:6

How much less man ... a son of man, who is a worm

These two lines say the same thing and are used together to emphasize that man is not perfect.

who is a worm

Bildad states that human beings are as worthless as worms. Alternate translation: "who is as worthless as a worm"

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a son of man
translation: "a person"
This is another way of referring to a person. Alternate

26 [1]Then Job answered and said,
[2] "How you have helped one who has no power!
How you have saved the arm that has no strength!

[3] How you have advised one who has no wisdom
and announced to him sound wisdom!

[4] With whose help have you spoken these words?
Whose spirit was it that came out from you?

[5] The dead are made to tremble,
those who are beneath the waters
and all who dwell in them.

[6] Sheol is naked before God;
destruction itself has no covering against him.

[7] He stretches out the northern skies
over the empty space,
and he hangs the earth over nothing.

[8] He binds up the waters in his thick clouds,
but the clouds are not torn under them.

[9] He covers the surface of the moon
and spreads his clouds on it.

[10] He has engraved a circular boundary on the surface of the waters
as the line between light and darkness.

[11] The pillars of heaven tremble
and are astonished at his rebuke.

[12] He calmed the sea with his power;
by his understanding he shattered Rahab.

[13] By his breath he made the skies clear;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.

[14] See, these are but the fringes of his ways;
how small a whisper do we hear of him!
Who can understand the thunder of his power?"

Job 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is Job's response to Bildad.
This chapter begins a section continuing through chapter 31.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power
While Bildad describes Yahweh's power as being so much greater than Job's, Job understands the true extent of Yahweh's

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power. It is not just over Job's life, but over all of creation.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sarcasm

Job uses sarcasm in this chapter. This is the use of irony to insult Bildad.

Links:

Job 26:1 Notes

Job 26:2

How you have helped one ... the arm that has no strength

In these statements, Job is accusing Bildad. The word "one" refers to Job. And, the word "arm" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am powerless and have no strength, but you act like you have helped me; but really, you have not helped me at all"

Job 26:3

How you have advised one who has no wisdom and announced to him sound wisdom

Job is saying that Bildad has not provided him with good advice and knowledge. Alternate translation: "You act like I have no wisdom and that you have advised me, that you have given me good advice"

announced to him sound wisdom

"given him good advice"

Job 26:4

With whose help have you spoken these words? Whose spirit was it ... you?

In these questions Job continues to mock Bildad. They are both rhetorical questions and have basically the same meaning. They are used together to strengthen each other. Alternate translation: "You must have had help speaking these words. Perhaps some spirit helped you speak them!"

Job 26:5

The dead

This refers to dead people. Alternate translation: "Those who are dead" or "The spirits of the dead"

tremble

They tremble because they are afraid of God. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tremble in fear" or "tremble in fear of God"

those who are beneath the waters

This refers to the dead people who tremble.

all who dwell in them

This refers to the dead people who dwell in the waters.

Job 26:6

Sheol is naked before God; destruction itself has no covering

Sheol is spoken of as if it were a person. These two phrases have the same meaning. To be "naked" or have "no covering" is to be completely exposed and not able to hide anything. Alternate translation: "It is like sheol is naked before God, for nothing in sheol, the place of destruction, is hidden from God"

destruction

This is another name for sheol. Alternate translation: "the place of destruction"

Job 26:7

He stretches out the northern skies over the empty space

The northern skies represent heaven, the place where God dwells with the beings he created to dwell there.

Job 26:8

He binds up the waters in his thick clouds

The clouds are compared to a large blanket in which God wraps the rainwater. Alternate translation: "He wraps up the water in his thick clouds"

but the clouds are not torn under them

This can be stated actively. The word "them" refers to the waters. Alternate translation: "but the weight of the waters does not tear the clouds"

Job 26:9

and spreads his clouds on it

This phrase tells how he covers the surface of the moon. Alternate translation: "by spreading his clouds in front of it"

Job 26:10

He has engraved a circular boundary on the surface of the waters

This speaks of the horizon, where the earth appears to meet the sky, as if God has marked a boundary on the ocean.

Job 26:11

The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his rebuke

People thought of heaven or the sky as resting on pillars. Job speaks as though the pillars are humans that shake in fear when God is angry. Alternate translation: "The pillars that hold up heaven shake in fear when God rebukes them" or "The pillars that hold up the sky shake like people who are afraid when God rebukes them"

Job 26:12

he shattered Rahab

"he destroyed Rahab"

Rahab

This is the name of a frightening monster that lived in the sea. See how you translated this in [Job 9:13]

Job 26:13

By his breath he made the skies clear

The noun "breath" can be translated with the verb "breathe" or "blow." This image represents God causing the wind to blow away the clouds. Alternate translation: "God blew away the clouds so that the skies were clear"

his hand pierced the fleeing serpent

It is implied that God his holding a sword, and here "his hand" represents that sword. Also, "pierced" represents killing. Alternate translation: "With his sword he pierced the fleeing serpent"

the fleeing serpent

"the serpent as it was trying to escape from him." This refers to Rahab, the monster in the sea. See Job 26:12.

Job 26:14

See, these are but the fringes of his ways

Here "fringes" represents a small part that we can see of something that is much bigger. Alternate translation: "See, these things that God has done show only a small part of his

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great power"

how small a whisper do we hear of him!

This is an exclamation that expresses Job's amazement of all the great things that God does that we do not even know about. Seeing what God does is spoken of as hearing God's voice. Alternate translation: "it is as if we heard only his quiet whisper!"

Who can understand the thunder of his power?

The "thunder of his power" represents God's greatness. Job uses this question to emphasize that God's power is so great that no one can understand it. Alternate translation: "The thunder displays the greatness of his power which no one can understand!"

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27 [1]Job continued his discourse, and he said,
[2] "As surely as God lives, who has taken away my justice,
the Almighty, who made my life bitter,

[3] while my life is yet in me,
and the breath from God is in my nostrils,
this is what I will do.

[4] My lips will not speak wickedness,
neither will my tongue speak deceit;

[5]I will never admit that you are right;
until I die I will never deny my integrity.
[6] I hold fast to my righteousness and will not let it go;
my conscience will not accuse me so long as I live.

[7] Let my enemy be like a wicked man;
let him who rises up against me be like an unrighteous man.

[8] For what is the hope of a godless man when God cuts him off,
when God takes away his life?

[9] Will God hear his cry
when trouble comes upon him?

[10] Will he delight himself in the Almighty
and call upon God at all times?

[11] I will teach you concerning the hand of God;
I will not conceal the thoughts of the Almighty.

[12] See, all of you have seen this yourselves;
why then have you become completely useless?

[13] This is the portion of a wicked man with God,
the inheritance of the oppressor that he receives from the Almighty:

[14] If his children multiply, it is for the sword;
his offspring will never have enough food.

[15] Those who survive him will be buried by plague,
and their widows will make no lament for them.

[16] Though the wicked man heaps up silver like the dust,
and heaps up clothing like clay,

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17 he may heap up clothing, but righteous people will put it on,
and innocent people will divide up the silver among themselves.

18 He builds his house like a spider,
like a hut that a guard makes.

19 He lies down in bed rich, but he will not keep doing so;
he opens his eyes, and everything is gone.

20 Terrors overtake him like waters;
a storm takes him away in the night.

21 The east wind carries him away, and he leaves;
it sweeps him out of his place.

22 It throws itself at him and does not stop;
he tries to flee out of its hand.

23 It claps its hands at him
and hisses him from his place.

Job 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Instead, he recognizes Yahweh's authority. (See: curse)

Links:

Job 27:1 Notes

Job 27:1

continued his discourse

Or "continued speaking." If your language has a word for a series of proverbs or short teachings, you might want to use it for "discourse" here.

Job 27:2

As surely as God lives

This phrase shows that Job is taking an oath. Job compares the certainty that God is alive to the certainty of what he is saying. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I swear by God"

has taken away my justice

Justice is spoken of as if it were an object that could be taken away or given. Taking it away represents refusing to treat Job with justice. Alternate translation: "has refused to treat me justly"

made my life bitter

Job's "life" being bitter represents Job feeling resentful toward God. Alternate translation: "has caused me to become resentful" or "has made me feel angry because of the unfair way he has treated me"

Job 27:3

while my life is yet in me

This refers to the duration of the rest of his life. Alternate translation: "during the whole time that my life is yet in me" or "as long as my life is yet in me"

while my life is yet in me

The abstract noun "life" can be expressed with the adjective "alive" or the verb "live." Alternate translation: "as long as I am still alive" or "while I still live"

the breath from God is in my nostrils

"Breath ... in my nostrils" represents being able to breathe. "Breath from God" represents God making him able to breathe. Alternate translation: "God enables me to breathe"

nostrils

"nose"

Job 27:4

My lips will not speak wickedness, neither will my tongue speak deceit

These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that he will not speak in such ways. The phrases "My lips" and "my tongue" represent Job himself. Alternate translation: "I will not speak wickedness or deceit"

speak wickedness ... speak deceit

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The abstract nouns "wickedness" and "deceit" can be expressed with "wickedly" and "deceitfully." Alternate translation: "speak wickedly ... speak deceitfully"
Job 27:5
I will never admit that you are right
"I will never agree with you and say that you three are right"
that you are right
The word "you" here is plural. It refers to Job's friends.
I will never deny my integrity
"I will never say that I am not innocent" or "I will always say that I am innocent"
Job 27:6
I hold fast to my righteousness
Here "hold fast" is a metaphor that represents being determined to continue to say something. The abstract noun "righteousness" can be expressed with "righteous." Alternate translation: "I am determined to continue saying that I am righteous"
will not let it go
Here "will not let it go" is a metaphor that represents not stopping saying something. Alternate translation: "will not stop saying that I am righteous" or "will not stop saying so"
my conscience will not accuse me so long as I live
Here the phrase "my conscience" represents Job. Alternate translation: "even in my thoughts, I will not accuse myself"
Job 27:7
Let my enemy be ... let him who rises up against me be
The two clauses that start with these words share the same meaning. They are used together to emphasize Job's strong desire that this should happen.
Let my enemy be like a wicked man
How he wants his enemy to be like a wicked person can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Let my enemy be punished like a wicked man" or "Let God punish my enemy as he punishes wicked people"
let him who rises up against me be like an unrighteous man
How he wants this person to be like an unrighteous man can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "let him who rises up against me be punished like an unrighteous man"
him who rises up against me
Here "rises up against me" is a metaphor meaning "opposes me." The whole phrase refers to Job's adversary. Alternate translation: "him who opposes me" or "my adversary"
Job 27:8
For what is the hope of a godless man when ... when God takes away his life?
Job uses this question to say that such a man has no hope. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "There is no hope for the godless when God ... takes away his soul."
when God cuts him off, when God takes away his life
These two phrases have the same meaning. Alternate translation: "when God cuts him off and takes away his life" or "when God causes him to die"
cuts him off
This is a metaphor meaning "kills him" or "causes him to die"
takes away his life
This is a metaphor meaning "kills him" or "makes him stop living"
Job 27:9
Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him?
Job uses this question to say that God will not help that person. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "God will not hear his cry when trouble comes upon him." or "When trouble comes upon him and he cries out for help, God will not hear him."
Will God hear his cry
Here "hear his cry" represents responding to the godless man's cry and helping him. Alternate translation: "Will God respond to his cry"
Job 27:10
Will he delight himself in the Almighty and call upon God at all times?
Job uses this question to say that the godless man will not do these things. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "He will not delight himself in the Almighty and call upon God at all times." or "He will not be happy about what the Almighty does and he will not pray to God often."
Job 27:11
I will teach you
Each occurrence of "you" in these verses is plural and refers to Job's three friends.
the hand of God
God's "hand" represents his power. Alternate translation: "the power of God"
I will not conceal the thoughts of the Almighty
The abstract noun "thoughts" can be expressed with the verb "think." Alternate translation: I will not hide from you what the Almighty thinks"
Job 27:12
why then have you become completely useless?
Job uses this question to rebuke his friends for saying such foolish things. To become useless here is hyperbole for speaking useless words. This question can be translated as a simple statement. Alternate translation: "you should not have spoken so foolishly!"
Job 27:13
This is the portion of a wicked man with God
"This is what God has planned for the wicked man"
the inheritance of the oppressor that he receives from the Almighty
Here "the inheritance of the oppressor" is a metaphor representing what will happen to the oppressor. What God will do to him is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that God will give him. Alternate translation: "what the Almighty will do to the oppressor"
Job 27:14
it is for the sword
Here "the sword" represents dying in battle. Alternate translation: "they will die in battle"
Job 27:15
Those who survive him
This refers to the wicked man's children. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Those who continue to live after their wicked father dies"
will be buried by plague
Here "be buried" represents dying. Alternate translation:

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"will die by plague"

their widows ... them

The words "their" and "them" refer to "Those who survive him," that is, the children of the wicked man.

Job 27:16

heaps up silver like the dust

Here "heaps up" is a metonym meaning "gathers much." Job speaks as if the silver were as easy to get as dust. Alternate translation: "gathers large piles of silver" or "gathers silver as easily as he could gather dust"

heaps up clothing like clay

Here "heaps up" is a metonym meaning "gathers much." Job speaks as if the clothing were as easy to get as clay. Alternate translation: "gathers large piles of clothing" or "gathers clothing as easily as he could gather clay"

Job 27:18

He builds his house like a spider

After "spider," the phrase "builds its web" is understood information. It can be made clear. Alternate translation: "He builds his house as a spider builds its web"

He builds his house like a spider

A spider web is fragile and easily destroyed. Alternate translation: "He builds his house as fragile as a spider builds its web" or "He builds his house as fragile as a spider's web"

like a hut

A hut is a temporary house that is also not very strong. Alternate translation: "like a temporary hut"

Job 27:19

He lies down in bed rich

"He is wealthy when he lies down in bed." This refers to his lying down in bed at night and sleeping.

but he will not keep doing so

"but he will not keep lying down in bed rich" or "but he will not continue to be wealthy when he lies down in bed"

he opens his eyes

Opening his eyes represents waking up in the morning. Alternate translation: "he wakes up"

everything is gone

"all of his riches are gone" or "everything has vanished"

Job 27:20

Terrors overtake him

Here "overtake him" represents suddenly happening to him. Possible meanings are that "terrors" is a metonym for 1) things that cause people to be afraid. Alternate translation: "Terrifying things suddenly happen to him" or 2) fear. Alternate translation: "He suddenly becomes terrified"

like waters

The word "waters" refers to a flood. Floods can happen very suddenly when people do not expect them, and they are dangerous and frightening. Alternate translation: "like a flood" or "like waters that rise up suddenly"

a storm takes him away

"a violent wind blows him away"

Job 27:21

it sweeps him out of his place

Job speaks of the wind blowing the wicked man out of his house as if the wind were a person sweeping dust out of a house with a broom. Alternate translation: "the wind sweeps him out of his place like a woman who sweeps dirt out of a house" or "the wind easily blows him out of his place"

his place

"his home"

Job 27:22

General Information:

In verses 22-23 Job speaks of the wind as if it were a person attacking the wicked person.

It throws itself at him

Here the phrase "throws itself at him" represents the wind blowing strong against him like an attacker. Alternate translation: "It blows strong against him like someone attacking him"

he tries to flee out of its hand

Here "hand" represents the power or control that the wind has over the wicked man. Alternate translation: "he tries to flee out of its control"

Job 27:23

It claps its hands at him

Clapping the hands is a way of mocking someone. Here it represents the wind making loud noises. Alternate translation: "It makes loud noises like someone clapping his hands to mock him"

hisses him from his place

The wind makes a noise as it blows him out of his place, and the noise is like the hissing sound that people make to mock someone. Alternate translation: "it makes a hissing noise as it causes him to leave his home" or "it blows him out of his place and makes a hissing noise like someone who hisses at him to mock him"

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28 [1] Surely there is a mine for silver,
a place where they refine gold.

[2] Iron is taken out of the earth;
copper is smelted out of the stone.

[3] A man sets an end to darkness
and searches out to the farthest limit
the stones in the blackest darkness.

[4] He breaks open a shaft away from where people live,
places that are forgotten by anyone's foot.

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He hangs far away from people; he swings to and fro.

5 As for the earth, out of which comes bread,
it is turned up below as if by fire.

6 Its stones are the place where sapphires are found,
and its dust contains gold.

7 No bird of prey knows the path to it,
nor has the falcon's eye seen it.

8 The proud animals have not walked such a path,
nor has the fierce lion passed there.

9 A man lays his hand on the flinty rock;
he overturns mountains by their roots.

10 He cuts out channels among the rocks;
his eye sees every valuable thing there.

11 He ties up the streams so they do not run;
what is hidden there he brings out to the light.

12 Where will wisdom be found?
Where is the place of understanding?

13 Man does not know its price;
neither is it found in the land of the living.

14 The deep waters under the earth say, 'It is not in me';
the sea says, 'It is not with me.'

15 It cannot be gotten for gold;
neither can silver be weighed as its price.

16 It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir,
with precious onyx or sapphire.

17 Gold and crystal cannot equal it in worth;
neither can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.

18 No mention is worth making of coral or jasper;
indeed, the price of wisdom is more than rubies.

19 The topaz of Cush does not equal it;
neither can it be valued in terms of pure gold.

20 From where, then, comes wisdom?
Where is the place of understanding?

21 Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all living things
and is kept hidden from the birds of the heavens.

22 Destruction and Death say,
'We have heard just a rumor about it with our ears.'

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23 God understands the way to it;
he knows its place.

24 For he looks to the very ends of the earth
and sees under all the heavens.

25 He made the force of the wind
and parceled out the waters by measure.

26 He made a decree for the rain
and a path for the thunder.

27 Then he saw wisdom and announced it;
he established it, indeed, and he examined it.

28 To people he said,
'See, the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom;
to depart from evil is understanding.'"

Job 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's wisdom

Despite being upset about his circumstances, Job does not curse God. Instead, he recognizes Yahweh's wisdom and authority. This chapter especially focuses on Yahweh's wisdom as he controls the circumstances of Job's life. Men cannot understand because they do not have Yahweh's wisdom. (See: curse and wise)

Links:

Job 28:1 Notes

Job 28:1

mine

This is a place where people dig rocks out of the earth. These rocks have metal in them.

refine

This is the process of heating a metal to remove all of the impurities that are in it.

Job 28:2

Iron is taken out of the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People take iron out of the earth"

copper is smelted out of the stone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people smelt copper out of the stone" or "people heat stone to melt copper out of it"

copper

an important red-brown colored metal

smelted

This is a process of heating rocks to melt the metal in them in order to get the metal out of the rocks.

Job 28:3

A man sets an end to darkness

Here "sets an end to darkness" represents shining a light in the darkness. People used a lantern or a torch for light. Alternate translation: "A man carries light into dark places"

to the farthest limit

"to the farthest parts of the mine"

Job 28:4

shaft

a deep narrow hole dug into the ground or rock. People go down into the hole to mine it.

places that are forgotten by anyone's foot

The foot is spoken of as if it is a person who can remember. Alternate translation: "places where people no longer walk" or "where no one ever walks"

He hangs far away from people

How and where he hangs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Far away from people, he hangs from a rope in the shaft"

Job 28:5

the earth, out of which comes bread

Here "bread" represents food in general. Food coming out of the ground is a metaphor for food growing out of the ground. Alternate translation: "the earth, where food grows"

it is turned up below as if by fire

Possible meanings are that 1) people made fires under the ground to break apart the rock. Alternate translation: "it is

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broken up below by the fires that the miners make" or 2) "turned" is a metaphor for changed. Alternate translation: "it is broken up below so much that it appears that it was destroyed by fire"

it is turned

The word "it" refers to the earth.

Job 28:6

Its stones ... its dust

The word "its" refers to the earth.

sapphires

a rare and valuable blue gemstone

Job 28:7

No bird of prey knows the path to it ... nor has the falcon's eye seen it

These clauses express a similar meaning. Alternate translation: "No bird of prey or falcon knows or has ever seen the path that goes to the mine"

bird of prey

a bird that eats other animals

falcon

This may also be translated "hawk." Both are birds that hunt and eat other animals. You may translate this with a similar bird from your culture.

Job 28:8

The proud animals have not walked such a path ... nor has the fierce lion passed there

These clauses also express similar meaning.

The proud animals

This refers to very strong, wild animals.

Job 28:9

lays his hand on the flinty rock

This represents breaking up the rock. Alternate translation: "digs into the flinty rock"

flinty rock

"hard rock"

he overturns mountains by their roots

Digging up the mountains and the ground underneath them is a metaphor from digging out weeds or trees, an exaggeration that represents digging minerals out of the ground. Alternate translation: "he turns the mountains upside down by pulling out their roots"

Job 28:10

his eye sees

Here "his eye" represents him. Alternate translation: "he sees"

Job 28:11

He ties up the streams so they do not run

Here "ties up the streams" means damming or blocking the streams. Alternate translation: "He blocks the streams so they do not flow"

what is hidden there

This refers to things that people normally do not see because they are in the ground or underwater.

Job 28:12

General Information:

In 28:12-28, wisdom and understanding are spoken of as if they were precious objects that are in some place and people want to find them. Finding wisdom and understanding represents becoming wise and learning to understand things well.

Where will wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding?

These questions mean the same thing and are used to show that it is very difficult to find wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "It is very difficult to find wisdom and understanding."

Where will wisdom be found? Where is the place of understanding

Becoming wise and understanding is spoken of as finding wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "How do people become wise? How do people learn to understand things well"

Job 28:13

Man does not know its price

Possible meanings are 1) wisdom is spoken of as if it were something that people can buy. Alternate translation: "People do not know what it is worth" or 2) the word translated as "price" means "place." Alternate translation: "People do not know where it is"

neither is it found in the land of the living

"and it is not found in the land of the living." The "land of the living" refers to this world where people live. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and no one can find wisdom in this world"

Job 28:14

The deep waters ... say, 'It is not in me'; the sea says, 'It is not with me.'

The deep waters and the sea are presented as if they are people that can speak. Alternate translation: "Wisdom is not in the deep waters under the earth, nor is it in the sea"

Job 28:15

It cannot be gotten for gold

This can be stated in active form. This implies that wisdom is worth much more than gold. Alternate translation: "People cannot pay for wisdom with gold"

neither can silver be weighed as its price

This implies that wisdom is worth much more than silver. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and people cannot weigh out enough silver to pay for wisdom"

Job 28:16

It cannot be valued with ... sapphire

This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than the gold of Ophir, precious onyx and sapphire.

Ophir

This is the name of a land where there was fine gold.

onyx

a valuable black gemstone

sapphire

a valuable blue gemstone

Job 28:17

Gold and crystal cannot equal it in worth

This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than gold and crystal.

crystal

a valuable gemstone that is clear or lightly colored

neither can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold

"and it cannot be exchanged for jewels of fine gold." This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than jewels of fine gold.

exchanged

"traded"

Job 28:18

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No mention is worth making of coral or jasper
"It is not worth making mention of coral and jasper." This implies that wisdom is worth so much more than coral and jasper that there is no need for Job to say anything about them. Alternate translation: "I will not bother to mention coral or jasper" or "Coral and jasper are worthless compared to wisdom"
coral
This is a beautiful, hard substance that grows on ocean reefs.
jasper ... rubies
These are valuable gemstones.
Job 28:19
The topaz of Cush does not equal it
This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than the finest topaz.
topaz
This is a valuable gemstone.
neither can it be valued in terms of pure gold
"and wisdom cannot be valued in terms of pure gold." This implies that wisdom is much more valuable than pure gold.
Job 28:20
From where, then, comes wisdom? Where is the place of understanding?
Job uses these questions to introduce how people get wisdom and understanding. Alternate translation: "I will tell you where wisdom comes from and where understanding is." or "I will tell you how to become wise and how to learn to understand things."
From where, then, comes wisdom
Wisdom is spoken of as if it were in a place and comes to people. Its coming represents people becoming wise.
Where is the place of understanding
Understanding is spoken of as if it were in a place.
Job 28:21
Wisdom is hidden from the eyes of all living things
This means that living things are unable to see wisdom. It can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "No living thing can see wisdom"
is kept hidden from the birds of the heavens
This means that the birds are unable to see wisdom. This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "even the birds that fly in the skies cannot see wisdom"
Job 28:22
Destruction and Death say
Here "Destruction" and "Death" are spoken of as if they are living things who can speak.
Job 28:23
God understands the way to it; he knows its place
Wisdom is spoken of as if it were in a certain place. Alternate translation: "God knows how to find wisdom. He knows where it is"
Job 28:24
the very ends of the earth
"the farthest places on the earth"
Job 28:25
parceled out the waters by measure
This describes God deciding how much water should be in each place. Possible meanings are that this refers to deciding 1) how much rain should be in each cloud or 2) how much water should be in each sea. Alternate translation: "decided how much water should be in each place"
Job 28:26
a path for the thunder
"he decided how the thunder can be heard" or "he decided the path of the thunderstorm"
Job 28:28
See, the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom
The abstract noun "fear" can be expressed with the verbs "fear" or "respect." The abstract noun "wisdom" can be expressed with the word "wise." Alternate translation: "Listen, if you fear the Lord, you will be wise"
to depart from evil is understanding
Here "depart from evil" means refusing to do evil things. The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "if you refuse to do evil, then you will understand many things"

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29 [1]Job resumed speaking and said,
[2] "Oh, that I were as I was in the past months
when God cared for me,

[3] when his lamp shined on my head,
and when I walked through darkness by his light.

[4] Oh, that I were as I was in the ripeness of my days
when the friendship of God was on my tent,

[5] when the Almighty was yet with me,
and my children were around me,

[6] when my way was covered with cream,
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!

[7] When I went out to the city gate,

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when I sat in my place in the city square,

8 the young men saw me and kept their distance from me in respect,
and the aged people rose and stood for me.

9 The princes used to refrain from talking when I came;
they would lay their hand on their mouths.

10 The voices of the noblemen were hushed,
and their tongue clung to the roof of their mouths.

11 For after their ears heard me, they would then bless me;
after their eyes saw me, they would then give witness to me and approve of me

12 because I rescued the one who was poor when he cried out,
and the one who had no father when he had no one to help him.

13 The blessing of him who was about to perish came on me;
I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.

15 I was eyes to blind people;
I was feet to lame people.

16 I was a father to needy people;
I would investigate the case even of one whom I did not know.

17 I broke the jaws of the unrighteous man;
I plucked the victim out from between his teeth.

18 Then I said, 'I will die in my nest;
I will multiply my days like the grains of sand.

19 My roots are spread out to the waters,
and dew lies all night on my branches.

20 The honor in me is always fresh,
and the bow of my strength is always new in my hand.'

21 To me men listened; they waited for me;
they stayed silent to hear my advice.

22 After my words were done, they did not speak again;
my speech dropped like water on them.

23 They always waited for me as they waited for rain;
they opened their mouth wide to drink in my words,
as they would do for the latter rain.

24 I smiled on them when they did not expect it;
they did not reject the light of my face.

25 I selected their way and sat as their chief;

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I lived like a king in his army,
like one who comforts mourners.

Job 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement, but now it is directly addressed to Yahweh.
In this chapter, Job recalls the days before Yahweh's blessings were taken from him. This is only one part of Job's argument that continues for the next 3 chapters.

Links:

Job 29:1 Notes

Job 29:2
Oh, that I were as I was in the past months
Job uses this exclamation to express a wish. Alternate translation: "I wish that I were as I was in past months"
Job 29:3
when his lamp shined on my head
God's lamp shining on Job represents God blessing Job. Alternate translation: "when God's blessing was like a lamp shining its light on my head"
when I walked through darkness by his light
Walking through darkness represents experiencing difficult situations.
Job 29:4
in the ripeness of my days
Job speaks of when he was young and strong as if his days were the time when the harvest is ripe. Alternate translation: "when I was young and strong"
when the friendship of God was on my tent
The abstract noun "friendship" can be expressed with the noun "friend." The word "tent" represents Job's home. Alternate translation: "when God was my friend and protected my home"
Job 29:6
when my way was covered with cream
"when my path was flowing with cream." Job uses this exaggeration to express that he had many cows and they produced much more cream than he and his family needed. Alternate translation: "when my cows provided an abundance of cream"
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil
"and the rock poured out streams of oil for me." Job uses this exaggeration to express that he had many olive vines and great amounts of olive oil. The rock is where his servants pressed the oil out of the olives. Alternate translation: "when my servants pressed out a great amount of olive oil" or "when oil flowed like streams from the pressing rock"
Job 29:7
city square
This is an open area in a village or city where two or more streets meet.
Job 29:8
rose and stood for me
This is a symbol of respect. It can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "rose and stood respectfully for me"
Job 29:9
The princes used to refrain from talking when I came
This was a sign of respect.
they would lay their hand on their mouths
They did this to show that they would not speak. This was a sign of their respect for Job.
Job 29:10
The voices of the noblemen were hushed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The noblemen hushed their voices" or "The noblemen stopped speaking"
their tongue clung to the roof of their mouths
This represents them having so much respect for Job that they had nothing to say. Alternate translation: "they felt that they were unable to speak" or "they had nothing to say"
Job 29:11
after their ears heard me ... after their eyes saw me
The ears represent those who heard him, and the eyes represent those who saw him. Alternate translation: "after they heard what I told them ... after they saw me"
they would then give witness to me and approve of me
"they would witness approvingly of me"
Job 29:12
I rescued the one who was poor when he cried out
Here "the one who was poor" refers to any poor person. Alternate translation: "I used to rescue poor people who cried out"
Job 29:13
The blessing of him who was about to perish came on me
Someone's blessing coming on another represents that person blessing another. Alternate translation: "He who was about to perish would bless me"
him who was about to perish
This represents anyone who was about to die. Alternate translation: "those who were about to die"
I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy
Here "the widow's heart" represents any widow. Alternate translation: "I caused widows to sing joyfully"
Job 29:14
I put on righteousness, and it clothed me

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People often spoke of righteousness as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "I did what was righteous, and it was like clothing that I put on"

my justice was like a robe and a turban

People often spoke of justice as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "I did what was just, and it was like a robe and a turban on me"

turban

a long cloth that men wrap around their heads and wear as a hat

Job 29:15

I was eyes to blind people

This represents helping blind people. Alternate translation: "I was like eyes for blind people" or "I guided blind people"

I was feet to lame people

This represents helping blind people. Alternate translation: "I was like feet for lame people" or "I supported lame people"

Job 29:16

I was a father to needy people

Here "I was a father" represents providing for people. Alternate translation: "I provided for needy people as a father provides for his children"

Job 29:17

General Information:

In verses 18-20 Job tells about the things he used to say before bad things happened to him.

I broke the jaws of ... I plucked the victim

Job speaks of unrighteous people who persecute others as if they were wild animals that attack their victims by picking them up between their teeth. Alternate translation: "I made unrighteous people stop persecuting people, like someone who breaks the jaw of a wild animal and rescues its victim from between its teeth"

Job 29:18

I will die in my nest

Here "nest" represents Job's home and family. Job used to speak as if he were a bird that lived in a nest with his baby birds. Alternate translation: "I will die at home with my family" or "I will die in the safety of my home"

I will multiply my days like the grains of sand

There are more grains of sand on the shore than anyone can count. To say that he would live more days than anyone could count is an exaggeration to express that he would live a very long time. Alternate translation: "I will live a very long time" or "I will live many years"

Job 29:19

My roots ... my branches

Job used to speak of his strength as if he were strong like a well-watered tree.

Job 29:20

The honor in me is always fresh

The abstract noun "honor" can be expressed with the verb "honor." Here "fresh" represents the honor being constantly given. Alternate translation: "People constantly give me honor" or "People always honor me"

the bow of my strength is always new in my hand

A new bow is very strong. Job's bow of strength in his hand represents his physical strength. Alternate translation: "I am always strong like a new bow"

Job 29:22

my speech dropped like water on them

Here "dropped like water on them" represents refreshing the people who heard him. The abstract noun "speech" can be translated with the verb "speak" or "say." Alternate translation: "my speech refreshed their hearts as drops of water refresh people's bodies" or "what I said to them refreshed them like drops of water"

Job 29:23

They always waited for me as they waited for rain

People waited for Job patiently and expected to hear good things.

they opened their mouth wide to drink in my words

This represents waiting eagerly for Job to speak in order to benefit from what said. Alternate translation: "they eagerly waited for me to speak in order to benefit from what I said"

as they would do for the latter rain

"as farmers wait eagerly for the latter rain"

the latter rain

This refers to the large amount of rain that falls just before the dry season.

Job 29:24

I smiled on them

It can be stated clearly that the purpose of smiling was to encourage them. Alternate translation: "I smiled on them to encourage them"

the light of my face

This represents the kindness they saw in Job's face.

Job 29:25

I selected their way

Here "selected their way" represents deciding what they should do.

sat as their chief

Here "sat" represents ruling or leading. Chiefs sat down when they made important decisions. Alternate translation: "led them as their chief"

sat as their chief

Job was their chief. Alternate translation: "led them because I was their chief"

I lived like a king in his army

Job speaks of how he led the people and how they obeyed him as if he were a king and they were his army.

like one who comforts mourners

This phrase means that Job actually was one who comforted people. Alternate translation: "I comforted them when they mourned"

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30 [1] Now those who are younger than I have nothing but mockery for me—
these young men whose fathers I would have refused to allow to work beside the dogs of my flock.

[2] Indeed, the strength of their fathers' hands, how could it have helped me—
men in whom the strength of their mature age had perished?

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3 They were thin from poverty and hunger;
they gnawed at the dry ground in the darkness of wilderness and desolation.

4 They plucked saltwort and bushes' leaves;
the roots of the broom tree were their food.

5 They were driven out from among people
who shouted after them as one would shout after a thief.

6 So they had to live in river valleys,
in holes of the earth and of the rocks.

7 Among the bushes they brayed like donkeys
and they gathered together under the nettles.

8 They were the sons of fools, indeed, sons of nameless people!
They were driven out of the land with whips.

9 But now I have become the subject of their taunting song;
I have become a byword for them.

10 They abhor me and stand far off from me;
they do not refrain from spitting in my face.

11 For God has unstrung the string to my bow and afflicted me,
and those who taunt me cast off restraint before my face.

12 Upon my right hand rise the rabble;
they drive me away and
pile up against me their siege mounds.

13 They destroy my path;
they push forward disaster for me,
men who have no one to hold them back.

14 They come against me like an army through a wide hole in a city wall;
in the midst of the destruction they roll themselves in on me.

15 Terrors are turned upon me;
my honor is driven away as if by the wind;
my prosperity passes away as a cloud.

16 Now my life is pouring out from within me;
many days of suffering have laid hold on me.

17 In the night my bones in me are pierced;
the pains that gnaw at me take no rest.

18 God's great force has seized my clothing;
it wraps around me like the collar of my tunic.

19 He has thrown me into the mud;

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I have become like dust and ashes.

20 I cry to you, God, but you do not answer me;
I stand up, and you merely look at me.

21 You have changed and become cruel to me;
with the might of your hand you persecute me.

22 You lift me up to the wind and cause it to drive me along;
you throw me back and forth in a storm.[1]

23 For I know that you will bring me to death,
to the house appointed for all the living.

24 However, does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls?
Does no one in trouble call out for help?

25 Did not I weep for him whose day is hard?
Did I not grieve for the needy man?

26 When I hoped for good, then evil came;
when I waited for light, darkness came instead.

27 My heart is troubled and does not rest;
days of affliction have come on me.

28 I have gone about like one who was living in the dark,
but not because of the sun;
I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.

29 I am a brother to jackals,
a companion of ostriches.

30 My skin is black and falls away from me;
my bones are burned with heat.

31 Therefore my harp is tuned for songs of mourning,
my flute for the singing of those who wail.

[1] Some modern translations have you dissolve me in a storm.

Job 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement, but now it is directly addressed to Yahweh.
In this chapter, Job laments his current condition as others insult him. (See: lament)

Links:

Job 30:1 Notes

Job 30:1
whose fathers I would have refused to allow to work beside the dogs of my flock

This shows how much he despised those fathers. They were not even good enough to be with his dogs. Alternate translation: "whose fathers I despised and would not have

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allowed to work beside the dogs of my flock"
the dogs of my flock
The dogs' relationship to the flock can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the dogs that guarded my flock"
Job 30:2
Indeed, the strength of their fathers' hands, how could it have helped me ... perished?
Job uses this question to mock the weakness of those men. Alternate translation: "The strength of their fathers' hands could not have helped me ... perished."
men in whom the strength of their mature age had perished
Their strength perishing is a metaphor that represents no longer being strong but weak. The phrase "mature age" refers to them being old. Alternate translation: "men who had become old and had no strength" or "men who had become old and weak"
Job 30:3
They were thin from poverty and hunger
The word "They" refers to the fathers of the young mockers.
They were thin from poverty and hunger
The abstract noun "poverty" can be expressed with the word "poor." The abstract noun "hunger" can be expressed with the words "hungry" or "starving." Alternate translation: "They were very thin because they were poor and starving"
they gnawed at the dry ground
Possible meanings are that 1) "dry ground" is a metonym for the dry roots that grow in the ground. Alternate translation: "they chewed on the dry roots they found in the ground" or 2) "gnawed at the dried ground" is a metonym for eating whatever they could find in the dry ground.
Job 30:4
Connecting Statement:
Job continues to talk about the fathers of the mockers.
saltwort ... bushes' leaves ... the roots of the broom tree
These are plants that people would eat only if they could find nothing better.
the roots of the broom tree were their food
Possible meanings are 1) the people ate the roots of the broom tree or 2) the people warmed themselves by burning the roots of broom trees.
Job 30:5
They were driven out from among people who shouted after them as ... a thief
The phrase "were driven out" means "were forced to leave." These phrases can be reordered and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people shouted after them as ... a thief and forced them to leave"
shouted after them as one would shout after a thief
"shouted at them as though they were thieves"
Job 30:7
Connecting Statement:
Job continues to talk about the fathers of the mockers.
brayed like donkeys
Job speaks of the men crying out in hunger as if they were wild donkeys making a loud noise. Alternate translation: "cried out like wild donkeys because they were hungry"
they gathered together under the nettles
"Nettles" are bushes with sharp thorns. This implies that they did not have a home.
Job 30:8
They were the sons of fools
Here "were the sons of fools" represents having the characteristics fools. Alternate translation: "They were like fools" or "they were fools"
indeed, sons of nameless people
The word "indeed" shows that what follows strengthens the previous thought. Here "sons of nameless people" represents having the characteristics of nameless people. Alternate translation: "indeed, they were nameless people" or "indeed, they were worthless"
nameless people
Here being "nameless" represents having no honor or respect. It means that they are worthless. Alternate translation: "worthless people"
They were driven out of the land with whips
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) the idea of whips implies that they were being treated like criminals. Alternate translation: "People treated them like criminals and forced them to leave the land" or 2) people actually used whips to force them out. Alternate translation: "People whipped them and forced them to leave the land"
They were driven out of the land
Here "the land" refers to the land where they lived before they were forced to go out to the wilderness.
Job 30:9
Connecting Statement:
Job speaks again about the people who were mocking him.
But now I have become the subject of their taunting song
The abstract noun "song" can be expressed with the verb "sing." Alternate translation: "But now they sing songs about me to taunt me"
I have become a byword for them
Here "byword" is a metonym for the person about whom people make cruel jokes. Alternate translation: "I am now one whom they make cruel jokes about" or "They joke and say cruel things about me"
Job 30:10
they do not refrain from spitting in my face
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "they even spit in my face"
Job 30:11
God has unstrung the string to my bow
A bow that is unstrung is not useful. The phrase "has unstrung the string of my bow" is a metaphor for making Job powerless. Alternate translation: "God has taken away my power to defend myself"
those who taunt me
"those who mock me"
cast off restraint before my face
A restraint keeps a person from moving freely and doing what he wants. Here "restraint" represents refraining from doing something, and "cast off restraint" represents not refraining from doing something. In this case the mockers did not refrain from being cruel to Job. Alternate translation: "do not refrain from being cruel to me" or "do whatever cruel things they want to do to me"

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Job 30:12

General Information:

Job speaks about the mockers treating him cruelly as if they were a mob and an army attacking him.

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak about the people who were mocking him.

Upon my right hand rise the rabble

"the rabble rise upon my right hand." Possible meanings are 1) rising upon Job's right hand represents attacking his strength. Alternate translation: "Gangs of young people attack my strength" or 2) rising upon Job's right hand represents attacking his honor. Alternate translation: "Mobs attack my honor"

they drive me away

"they force me to run away"

pile up against me their siege mounds

Armies would pile up mounds of dirt along a city's wall in order to climb over the wall and attack the city. Job speaks of the mockers preparing to attack him as if they were doing that. Alternate translation: "prepare to attack me like an army that prepares to attack a city"

Job 30:13

They destroy my path

This represents keeping Job from escaping their attack. Alternate translation: "They prevent me from escaping from them"

they push forward disaster for me

Here "push forward disaster" represents trying to make disaster happen. Alternate translation: "they try to make disaster happen to me" or "they try to destroy me"

men who have no one to hold them back

Here "hold them back" represents stopping them from doing something. Alternate translation: "men who have no one to stop them from attacking me"

Job 30:14

General Information:

Job speaks about the mockers treating him cruelly as if they were an army attacking him.

Connecting Statement:

Job continues to speak about the people who were mocking him.

They come against me like an army through a wide hole in a city wall

This represents attacking Job forcefully.

they roll themselves in on me

This represents many coming to attack him at once, like giant ocean waves rolling in on him.

Job 30:15

Terrors are turned upon me

Possible meanings are 1) Job has become terrified or 2) things are happening to Job that make him afraid.

my honor is driven away as if by the wind

Job speaks of suddenly having no honor as if the wind had blown it from him. Alternate translation: "Nobody honors me" or "I am now a person that people do not honor"

my prosperity passes away as a cloud

Job speaks of his prosperity ending as if it were a cloud that was blown away. Here "prosperity" may refer to well-being or safety. Alternate translation: "I no longer prosper at all" or "I am no longer safe"

Job 30:16

Now my life is pouring out from within me

Job speaks as if his life were a liquid and his body were a container. He feels he is about to die. Alternate translation: "Now I am dying"

many days of suffering have laid hold on me

Job speaks of his continuous suffering as if the days of suffering have grabbed hold of him. Alternate translation: "I suffer many days, and the suffering does not end"

Job 30:17

my bones in me are pierced

Job speaks of the pain in his bones as if his bones were being pierced. Alternate translation: "my bones ache terribly" or "I have sharp pain in my bones"

the pains that gnaw at me take no rest

Job speaks of his constant pain as if it were alive and biting him and refuses to rest. Alternate translation: "the pains that cause me to suffer do not stop" or "I am in constant pain"

Job 30:18

God's great force has seized my clothing

Job speaks of God using his force as if God's force were actually doing something. Here "God's ... force" stands for "God." Alternate translation: "God has seized my clothing by his great force"

God's great force has seized my clothing

The image of God's force seizing Job is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) it represents Job's pain. Alternate translation: "My pain feels like God has grabbed my clothing tightly" or 2) it represents God's causing Job's many problems. Alternate translation: "It is as though by his great force God has grabbed me by my clothes"

it wraps around me like the collar of my tunic

The image of God's force wrapping around Job is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) it represents Job's pain. Alternate translation: "he wraps the collar of my tunic tightly around me" or 2) it represents God's causing Job's many problems. Alternate translation: "It is as though he grabs me by the collar of my tunic"

Job 30:19

He has thrown me into the mud

Job says that God has humiliated him. Alternate translation: "It is as though he has thrown me in the mud" or "He has humiliated me, like a person thrown in the mud"

I have become like dust and ashes

This represents Job's feeling of being worthless. Alternate translation: "I have become as worthless as dust and ashes"

Job 30:21

cruel

This word means unkind.

with the might of your hand you persecute me

The word "hand" represents God's power. Alternate translation: "you persecute me with your power"

Job 30:22

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

lift me up to the wind ... throw me back and forth in a storm

These expressions represent the extreme suffering that God

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made Job endure.

cause it to drive me along

"cause the wind to push me along"

Job 30:23

you will bring me to death

Here "bring me to death" represents causing Job to die. Alternate translation: "you will cause me to die"

the house appointed for all the living

Job speaks of the world of the dead as if it were a house to which God has appointed all living things to go. Alternate translation: "the world of the dead, to which everything that has ever lived goes"

all the living

That is, all things now alive, but that will die one day.

Job 30:24

Connecting Statement:

Job continues speaking to God.

does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls? Does no one in trouble call out for help?

Job uses these questions to justify himself for crying out to God for help. Alternate translation: "Everyone reaches out with his hand to beg for help when he falls. Everyone who is in trouble calls out for help." or "I have fallen, and so God should not think I am doing wrong when I beg for his help. I am in trouble, so of course I call out for help!"

does no one reach out with his hand to beg for help when he falls? Does no one in trouble call out for help?

Some versions interpret these questions as Job complaining that God has reached out with his hand to harm Job when Job was in trouble and crying out for help. Alternate translation: "Surely no one would reach out with his hand against someone who falls and calls out for help."

Job 30:25

Did not I weep ... hard? Did I not grieve ... man?

Job uses these questions to remind God of how Job had done good to others. A: "You know that I wept ... hard, and I grieved ... man!"

him whose day is hard

Here the word "day" is a synecdoche for the person's life, and "hard" here means "difficult." Alternate translation: "him whose life is difficult"

Job 30:26

When I hoped for good, then evil came

Looking for good represents hoping for good things, and evil coming represents evil things happening.

I waited for light ... darkness came

Here "light" represents God's blessing and favor and "darkness" represents trouble and suffering. Alternate translation: "I waited for the light of God's blessing, but instead I experienced the darkness of suffering"

Job 30:27

My heart is troubled and does not rest

Job speaks of his heart as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "I am troubled in my heart and the feeling does not end"

days of affliction have come on me

Days of affliction coming on Job represents Job experiencing affliction for many days. Alternate translation: "I experience affliction many days" or "I suffer every day"

Job 30:28

I have gone about

Here "have gone about" represents living. Alternate translation: "I have lived" or "I live"

like one who was living in the dark, but not because of the sun

Here "living in the dark" is a metaphor that represents being extremely sad. The phrase "but not because of the sun" clarifies that "living in the dark" is a metaphor, that is, the darkness is not caused by the sun being hidden. Alternate translation: "like one who is terribly sad"

Job 30:29

a brother to jackals, a companion of ostriches

Being a brother to these animals is a metaphor for being like them. Alternate translation: "I am like jackals and ostriches that cry out in the wilderness"

Job 30:30

my bones are burned with heat

Here "bones" refers to the whole body, which suffers from fever.

heat

Another possible meaning is "fever."

Job 30:31

my harp is tuned for songs of mourning

Here "my harp" represents Job himself, and also represents his desire to sing only songs of mourning. Alternate translation: "I play only songs of mourning on my harp"

my flute for the singing of those who wail

Here "my flute" represents Job himself, and also his desire to sing only songs of crying. Alternate translation: "I play only songs of wailing on my flute"

wail

To wail is to cry very loudly because of terrible sadness or pain.

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31 [1] I have made a covenant with my eyes;
how then should I look with desire on a virgin?

[2] For what is the portion from God above,
the inheritance from the Almighty on high?

[3] I used to think that calamity is for unrighteous people,
and that disaster is for those who behave wickedly.

[4] Does not God see my ways

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and count all my steps?

5 If I have walked with falsehood,
if my foot has hurried to deceit,

6 let me be weighed in an even balance
so that God will know my integrity.

7 If my step has turned aside from the way,
if my heart has gone after my eyes,
if any spot has stuck to my hands,

8 then let me sow, and let another eat,
and let my crops be uprooted.

9 If my heart has been deceived by a woman,
if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door,

10 then let my wife grind grain for another,
and let others bow down on her.

11 For that would be a terrible crime;
indeed, it would be a crime to be punished by judges.

12 For that is a fire that consumes as far as Abaddon,
and it would burn all my harvest to the root.

13 If I rejected the plea for justice from my male servant or my female servant
when they argued with me,

14 what then would I do when God rises up to accuse me?
When he comes to judge me, how would I answer him?

15 Did the one who made me in the womb not make them also?
Did not the same one mold us all in the womb?

16 If I have withheld poor people from their desire,
or if I have caused the eyes of the widow to grow dim from crying,

17 or if I have eaten my morsel alone
and not allowed those without fathers to eat it also—

18 because from my youth the orphan grew up with me as with a father,
and I have guided his mother, a widow, from my own mother's womb.

19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing,
or if I have seen that a needy man had no clothing;

20 if his heart has not blessed me
because he has not been warmed with the wool of my sheep,

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21 if I have lifted up my hand against the orphan
because I saw my support in the city gate,
then bring charges against me!

22 If I have done these things, then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade,
and let my arm be broken from its joint.

23 For I dreaded destruction from God;
because of his majesty, I was not able to do those things.

24 If I have made gold my hope,
and if I have said to fine gold, 'You are what I am confident in';

25 if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great,
because my hand had gotten many possessions,
then bring charges against me!

26 If I have seen the sun when it shone,
or the moon walking in its splendor,

27 and if my heart has been secretly attracted,
so that my mouth has kissed my hand in worship of them—

28 this also would be a crime to be punished by judges,
for I would have denied the God who is above.

29 If I have rejoiced at the destruction of anyone who hated me
or congratulated myself when disaster overtook him,
then bring charges against me!

30 Indeed, I have not even allowed my mouth to sin
by asking for his life with a curse.

31 If the men of my tent have never said,
'Who can find one who has not been filled with Job's food?'

32 (even the foreigner has never had to stay in the city square,
because I have always opened my doors to the traveler),
and if that is not so, then bring charges against me!

33 If, like mankind, I have hidden my sins
by hiding my guilt inside my bosom

34 (because I feared the great multitude,
because the contempt of the families terrified me,
so that I kept silent and would not go outside)—

35 Oh, if only I had someone to hear me!
See, here is my signature; let the Almighty answer me!
If only I had the indictment that my opponent has written!

36 Surely I would carry it openly on my shoulder;
I would bind it on myself like a crown.

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37 I would declare to him an accounting for my steps;
as a confident prince I would go up to him.

38 If my land ever cries out against me,
and its furrows weep together,

39 if I have eaten its harvest without paying for it
or have caused its owners to lose their lives,

40 then let thorns grow instead of wheat
and weeds instead of barley."
The words of Job are finished.

Job 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This chapter is a continuation of Job's statement and it is directly addressed to Yahweh.
In this chapter, Job presents his case to Yahweh that he is upright and not guilty of the sins he is being accused of. (See: righteous and guilt and sin)

Links:

Job 31:1 Notes

Job 31:1
General Information:
Job continues speaking.
I have made a covenant with my eyes
Job speaks of making a promise about what he would look at as though his eyes were a person and he made a covenant with them. Alternate translation: "I have made a firm promise about what I will look at"
I have made a covenant with my eyes
What job promised can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I made a promise that I will not look lustfully on a virgin" or "I promised that I will not look lustfully on a virgin"
how then should I look with desire on a virgin?
Job uses this question to emphasize that he would never break his promise. Alternate translation: "So I certainly will not look with lust at a virgin."
Job 31:2
For what is the portion from God above, the inheritance from the Almighty on high?
Job speaks of God's response to people's behavior as if it were the portion of an inheritance that God gives. Alternate translation: "For how will God above respond to me? What will the Almighty on high do?"
For what is the portion from God above, the inheritance from the Almighty on high?
Possible meanings are Job uses this question to emphasize 1) that God will not bless bad behavior. Alternate translation: "For if I look lustfully on a woman, God Almighty on high will not bless me." or 2) that God will punish bad behavior. Alternate translation: "For if I look lustfully on a woman, God Almighty on high will certainly punish me."
Job 31:3
General Information:
Job continues speaking.
Job 31:4
Does not God see my ways and count all my steps?
Here "my ways" and "my steps" are metaphors for Job's behavior. Here "see my ways" and "count all my steps" are metaphors for knowing everything Job does. Job uses this question to emphasize that God does know all he does. Alternate translation: "Certainly God watches me and knows everything that I do."
Does not God see my ways and count all my steps?
Job may be implying that God should know that Job is righteous and does not deserve calamity and disaster.
Job 31:5
General Information:
Job continues speaking.
If I have
In 31:5-40 Job describes different situations in which he would deserve God's punishment. But, Job is confident that they are not true and that he is innocent.
have walked with falsehood, if my foot has hurried to deceit
Here "walked" and "hurried" are metaphors that represent how Job lived. Alternate translation: "have done anything false or purposely deceived anyone"
Job 31:6
let me be weighed in an even balance
People used balances to weigh items and to determine their value. This image represents judging honestly. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let me be judged honestly" or "let God judge me honestly"
Job 31:7
General Information:

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Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but Job is confident that they are not true.

If my step has turned aside from the way

Here "my step" is a metaphor for Job's behavior, and "turned out of the right way" is a metaphor for changing from living right. Alternate translation: "If I have changed from living right" or "If I have stopped doing what is right"

if my heart has gone after my eyes

Here "my heart" and "my eyes" are metonyms for what Job desires and sees. The heart going after the eyes is a metaphor for desiring to do what he sees. It is implied that this refers to sinful things that Job sees. Alternate translation: "if I have have wanted to do any sinful things that I see"

if any spot has stuck to my hands

This is a metaphor for being guilty. Alternate translation: "if I am guilty of any sin at all"

Job 31:8

then let me sow, and let another eat, and let my crops be uprooted

Job is saying that if he really has sinned, then this bad thing should happen to him. He would do the hard work of sowing his fields, but he would not be able to eat any of it.

let my crops be uprooted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let someone else come and take the harvest from my field"

Job 31:9

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

If my heart has been deceived by a woman

Here "my heart" represents Job. Here the word "deceived" expresses the idea of "enticed." The word "woman" expresses the idea of "another man's wife." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If another man's wife has enticed me" or "If I have desired another man's wife"

if I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door

It can be stated clearly why he was waiting at his neighbor's door. Alternate translation: "if I have waited at my neighbor's door so I could sleep with his wife"

Job 31:10

then let my wife grind grain for another

Possible meanings are 1) this is an euphemism which means Job is saying may his wife sleep with another man or 2) it means she will become a slave and work for another man.

Job 31:11

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

For that would be a terrible crime

The word "that" refers to Job sleeping with another woman.

it would be a crime to be punished by judges

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it would be a crime for which judges should punish me"

Job 31:12

For that is a fire that consumes as far as Abaddon, and it would burn all my harvest to the root

Job speaks of the harm that sleeping with another woman causes as if it were a fire that destroys everything. The words "that" and "it" refer to sleeping with another man's wife. Alternate translation: "For adultery is like a fire that burns up everything from here to Abaddon and that would burn up all my harvest"

consumes as far as Abaddon

These words are probably a metaphor for "destroys everything so I have nothing good for the rest of my life," but you should probably translate this literally.

it would burn all my harvest to the root

The word "it" here refers to the action sleeping with another man's wife. This action is a metonym for the punishment that Job would suffer as a result of the action. A fire burning up his harvest is a synecdoche for losing everything he has worked for. Alternate translation: "those who punish me would take away everything I have worked for"

Job 31:13

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

my male servant or my female servant

These two items refer to Job's servants in general, not to any particular male or female servant, and so may be combined: "my male or female servant" or "any of my servants."

Job 31:14

what then would I do when God rises up to accuse me? When he comes to judge me, how would I answer him?

Job uses these questions to emphasize that if God were to judge him, Job would not be able to make himself appear to be good. Alternate translation: "then there would be absolutely nothing I could say to defend myself when God comes to judge me."

Job 31:15

Did the one who made me in the womb not make them also? Did not the same one mold us all in the womb?

Job uses these questions to emphasize that he is no different from his servants. He implies that God would be angry if Job were to treat his servants as less valuable than himself. Alternate translation: "The one who made me in the womb also made them. He formed us all in the womb."

Job 31:16

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true. He does not finish his sentence in verses 16 and 17. Instead he explains in verse 18 why they are not true.

If I have withheld poor people from their desire

"If I have kept poor people from getting what they desire"

if I have caused the eyes of the widow to grow dim from crying

Here "to grow dim" refers to the widow having bad eyesight from crying a lot. Alternate translation: "if I have caused a widow to cry in great sadness"

Job 31:17

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my morsel
"my food"
Job 31:18
because from my youth the orphan grew up with me as with a father
Here "the orphan" represents orphans in general. Job is describing how he truly treated orphans. Alternate translation: "because even when I was young I took care of orphans like a father"
because from my youth
The phrase "But I have done none of those things" is understood from the context. Alternate translation: "But I have done none of those things, because from my youth"
I have guided his mother, a widow, from my own mother's womb
Job is describing how he truly treated widows. With the phrase "from my own mother's womb" he uses exaggeration to emphasize that he did this all his life. Alternate translation: "all my life I have guided the orphan's mother, a widow" or "all my life I have guided widows"
Job 31:19
General Information:
Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he knows they are not true.
Job 31:20
if his heart has not blessed me
The phrase "his heart" represents the poor man who needs clothing. Alternate translation: "if he has not blessed me"
because he has not been warmed with the wool of my sheep
Here "the wool of my sheep" represents blankets or clothing made from the wool of Job's sheep. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the wool of my sheep has not warmed him" or "because I have not given him clothing made from the wool of my sheep"
Job 31:21
if I have lifted up my hand against the orphan
Lifting up the hand against someone represents threatening to harm him. Alternate translation: "if I have threatened to harm the orphan"
the orphan
This is a generic noun for any orphan or fatherless child. Alternate translation: "orphans" or "fatherless people"
I saw my support in the city gate
Here "saw" is a metaphor for "knew," "support" is a metaphor for "approval," and "the city gate" is a metonym for the leaders who sit at the city gate. Alternate translation: "I knew that the leaders at the city gate would approve of me"
in the city gate
This is where the important men of the city would gather to make decisions.
then bring charges against me
This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.
Job 31:22
then let my shoulder fall from the shoulder blade, and let my arm be broken from its joint
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then let someone tear off my shoulder from the shoulder blade and break my arm from its joint"
Job 31:23
For I dreaded ... his majesty
This is the reason that Job did not do any of the wicked things he spoke of in verses 7 through 21.
Job 31:24
General Information:
Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.
If I have made gold my hope
The abstract noun "hope" can be translated with the verbs "trust" or "hope." Alternate translation: "If I trusted in gold" or "If I hoped that having a lot of gold would make me secure"
if I have said to fine gold, 'You are what I am confident in'
This line means the same as the previous line.
Job 31:25
my hand had gotten many possessions
Here "my hand" represents Job's ability to do things. Alternate translation: "I have gained many possessions by my own ability"
then bring charges against me
This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.
Job 31:26
General Information:
Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.
the moon walking
Here "walking" represents moving slowly. Alternate translation: "the moon moving across the sky"
Job 31:27
if my heart has been secretly attracted
Here "my heart" represents Job. This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if I have been secretly attracted to them" or "if I have secretly desired to worship them"
so that my mouth has kissed my hand
Here "my mouth" represents Job. This is a sign of love and devotion. Alternate translation: "so that I have kissed my hand"
Job 31:28
to be punished by judges
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for which judges would be right to punish me"
I would have denied the God who is above
"I would have been unfaithful to the God who is above"
Job 31:29
General Information:
Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.
at the destruction of anyone who hated me
The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "when anyone who hated me was destroyed" or "when bad things happened to

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anyone who hated me"

when disaster overtook him

"when he experienced disasters"

then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:30

Indeed, I have not even allowed my mouth to sin

Here "my mouth" represents Job speaking. Alternate translation: "Truly I did not let myself sin" or "Truly, I did not sin"

by asking for his life with a curse

Here "asking for his life with a curse" represents cursing someone's life so that he will die. Alternate translation: "by cursing him so that he would die" or "by cursing his life"

Job 31:31

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

the men of my tent

The tent represents Job's household. The men of his tent includes family members and servants. All of these knew Job well. Alternate translation: "the men of my household" or "my family members and servants"

Who can find one who has not been filled with Job's food?

Job's men would have used this question to emphasize that Job was generous to everyone. Alternate translation: "Everyone has been filled with Job's food!" or "Everyone we know of has eaten as much of Job's food as he wanted!"

Job 31:32

even the foreigner has never had to stay in the city square

Job is explaining how he truly treated foreigners. Here "stay in the city square" represents sleeping overnight in the city square. Alternate translation: "foreigners have never had to sleep in the city square" or "foreigners have never had to sleep outside"

I have always opened my doors to the traveler

Here "opened my doors to the traveler" represents welcoming the traveler into his home. Alternate translation: "I have always welcomed the traveler into my home"

and if that is not so, then bring charges against me

This phrase is not in the original language or in other versions of the Bible. It was added here to help preserve the meaning of Job's statement in this long sentence.

Job 31:33

General Information:

Job continues describing situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is confident that they are not true.

If ... I have hidden my sins

Here "have hidden my sins" represents trying to keep people from knowing that he had sinned. Alternate translation: "If ... I have tried to keep my sins a secret"

by hiding my guilt inside my bosom

This represents trying to keep people from knowing that he is guilty. The "bosom" is the chest and arms and is probably a metonym for the tunic that covers it. Alternate translation: "by hiding the evidence of my guilt inside my tunic" or "like one who hides the evidence of his guilt inside his tunic"

Job 31:34

because I feared the great multitude, because the contempt of the families terrified me

This would be the reason for hiding his sins. These two phrases mean the same thing. They emphasize that a person may hide his sin because he fears what other people may think about him.

so that I kept silent and would not go outside)—

The dash at the end of the line is used to show that Job did not finish this sentence.

Job 31:35

Oh, if only I had someone to hear me!

This exclamation expresses Job's wish. Alternate translation: "I wish I had someone to hear me" or "I wish that someone would listen to me"

here is my signature

Here "my signature" represents Job's promise that everything he is saying is true. He speaks of his complaint as if he had written a legal document. Alternate translation: "I solemnly promise that all I have said is true"

let the Almighty answer me!

Here an answer probably refers to telling Job what wrong he accuses Job of doing. Alternate translation: "let the Almighty tell me what I have done wrong" or "I wish the Almighty would say what I have done wrong"

If only I had the indictment that my opponent has written!

This expresses Job's wish. Job speaks as though his troubles are evidence that someone has written something accusing him of terrible sin. Alternate translation: "I wish I had the accusation that my opponent has written" or "If only I could read my opponent's complaint against me"

my opponent

These words could refer to 1) God or 2) someone else.

Job 31:36

Surely I would carry it openly on my shoulder; I would bind it on myself like a crown

This represents putting it where everyone could read it.

Job 31:37

I would declare to him an accounting for my steps

Here "my steps" represents Job's actions. Alternate translation: "I would declare to him an accounting for all I have done" or "I would tell him everything I have done"

as a confident prince I would go up to him

This means Job would approach God without any fear. Job implies that he could do this because he was not guilty. Alternate translation: "I would approach him boldly"

Job 31:38

General Information:

This concludes Job's description of situations in which he would deserve God's punishment, but he is convinced that they they are not true.

If my land ever cries out against me, and its furrows weep together

Job speaks of being guilty as if his land were a person who cries out against Job because of the wrong Job has done to the land. Alternate translation: "If I have done wrong

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concerning my land" or "If I have stolen my land from someone"

Job 31:39

to lose their lives

This represents dying. Alternate translation: "to die"

Job 31:40

weeds instead of barley

The words "let" and "grow" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "let weeds grow instead of barley"

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32 [1]So these three men stopped answering Job because he was righteous in his own eyes.[2]Then the anger of Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled; it was kindled against Job because he justified himself rather than God.
[3]Elihu's anger was also kindled against his three friends because they had found no answer to Job, and yet they had condemned Job.[4]Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because the other men were older than he.[5]However, when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men, his anger was kindled.

[6]Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite spoke up and said,
"I am young, and you are very old.
That is why I held back and was afraid to tell you my own thoughts.
[7] I said, "Length of days should speak;
a multitude of years should teach wisdom.

[8] But there is a spirit in a man;
the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

[9] It is not only the great people who are wise,
nor the aged people alone who understand justice.

[10] Therefore I say to you, 'Listen to me;
I will also tell you my knowledge.'

[11] See, I waited for your words;
I listened to your arguments
while you were searching for a word.

[12] Indeed, I paid attention to you,
but, see, there was not one of you who could convince Job
or who could respond to his words.

[13] Be careful not to say, 'We have found wisdom!'
God will have to defeat Job; mere man cannot do it.

[14] For Job has not directed his words against me,
so I will not answer him with your words.

[15] These three men are dismayed; they can answer Job no longer;
they have not a word more to say.

[16] Should I wait because they are not speaking,
because they stand there silent and answer no more?

[17] No, I also will answer on my part;
I will also tell them my knowledge.

[18] For I am full of words;
the spirit in me compels me.

[19] See, my breast is like fermenting wine that has no vent;

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like new wineskins, it is ready to burst.

20 I will speak so that I may be refreshed;
I will open my lips and answer.

21 I will not show favoritism;
neither will I give honorific titles to any man.

22 For I do not know how to give such titles;
if I did so, my Maker would soon take me away.

Job 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Job's friends give up on trying to convince him that he is being punished for sinning. This chapter introduces Elihu who was a witness to these interactions between Job and his friends. According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the first of Elihu's four statements. (See: sin and testimony)
Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 32:6-22, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. This quotation continues through the next chapter.

Links:

Job 32:1 Notes

Job 32:1

he was righteous in his own eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "he considered himself righteous"

Job 32:2

Then the anger of Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, was kindled; it was kindled against Job

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became very angry with Job"

Elihu ... Barakel ... Ram

These are names of men.

Buzite

This is the name of a people-group.

he justified himself rather than God

This means that he considered himself innocent and believed God had been wrong to punish him. Alternate translation: "he justified himself and claimed that God had been wrong to punish him"

Job 32:3

Elihu's anger was also kindled against his three friends

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Elihu also became very angry with his three friends"

Job 32:4

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. This tells background information about Elihu.

Job 32:5

that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men

This means that the men were done speaking to Job. This speaks of the men possibly having an answer as if the answer were an object that would be in their mouths. Alternate translation: "that these three men had nothing else to say" or "that these three men had no more answers to give Job"

his anger was kindled

This compares Elihu's anger to someone starting a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he became very angry"

Job 32:6

you are very old

Here "you" is plural and refers to Job and his three friends.

Job 32:7

Length of days should speak; a multitude of years should teach wisdom

These two lines mean the same thing. Elihu emphasizes that since older people are wiser than younger people, they should be the first to speak of what they know. Alternate translation: "He who has lived many years should speak; He would is older should teach wisdom"

Job 32:8

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job and his friends.

there is a spirit in a man; the breath of the Almighty

Both phrases mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that a man's wisdom comes from God. Alternate translation: "there is a spirit in a man, that is, the breath of the Almighty that"

the breath of the Almighty

Here the spirit is represented by "breath." Alternate translation: "the spirit of the Almighty"

Job 32:11

See

Elihu uses this word here to draw the mens' attention to

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what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

I waited for your words

"I waited to hear what you would say." The word "your" refers to Job's friends and so is plural.

searching for a word

The word "word" is a synecdoche for an entire message, and "searching for" a word as if it were a solid object is a metaphor for thinking of the right thing to say. Alternate translation: "thinking about what to say" or "trying to think of the right thing to say"

Job 32:12

who could respond to his words

Here the word "respond" does not just mean to answer, but to answer with a helpful response.

Job 32:13

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking to Job's friends.

We have found wisdom

This means that they believe that they have figured out what is wise. Alternate translation: "We have discovered what is wise"

to defeat Job

This speaks of God responding to Job and correcting him as if he were defeating him in battle. Alternate translation: "to refute Job" or "to answer Job"

Job 32:14

with your words

"by saying what you have said"

Job 32:15

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

dismayed

discouraged or distressed

Job 32:16

Should I wait because they are not speaking, because they stand there silent and answer no more?

Elihu uses a question to emphasize that he will not wait any longer to speak. Elihu answers this question himself in the next verse. Alternate translation: But because you do not speak, I certainly will not wait any longer; you merely stand there and do not reply anymore.

Job 32:17

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking using parallelisms.

I also will answer on my part

"I will now take my turn to answer"

Job 32:18

I am full of words

Elihu speaks of having a lot to say as being full of words. Alternate translation: "I have so much to say"

the spirit in me compels me

"my spirit forces me to say it"

Job 32:19

my breast is like fermenting wine that has no vent; like new wineskins, it is ready to burst

While wine is fermenting, gas collects in the container. If the gas is not let out the container will burst. Elihu means that he has so much to say that if he does not speak he feels like he will burst. Also, these two phrases are parallel and have the same meaning. Alternate translation: "I feel like my breast is about to burst, like a container of fermenting wine that has no vent"

my breast is

This represents Elihu, specifically his spirit. Alternate translation: "my spirit is" or "I am"

Job 32:20

I may be refreshed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I may feel better"

open my lips

Here the "lips" represent the mouth. Alternate translation: "open my mouth"

Job 32:21

favoritism; neither will I give honorific titles to any man

Elihu is probably speaking of giving honorific titles to someone as a metaphor for flattering him, and he is probably speaking indirectly about Job and his friends by speaking of "a man" in general. Alternate translation: "favoritism; neither will I flatter anyone" or "favoritism, nor will I flatter any of you"

Job 32:22

my Maker

This is a name referring to God. Alternate translation: "God who made me"

take me away

This means that he would destroy him. Alternate translation: "destroy me"

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33 [1] So now, Job, I beg you, hear my speech;
listen to all my words.

[2] See now, I have opened my mouth;
my tongue has spoken in my mouth.

[3] My words come from the uprightness of my heart;
my lips speak pure knowledge.

[4] The Spirit of God has made me;
the breath of the Almighty has given me life.

[5] If you can, answer me;
set your words in order before me and stand up.

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6 See, I am just as you are in God's sight;
I also have been formed out of the clay.

7 See, terror of me will not make you afraid;
neither will my pressure be heavy upon you.

8 You have certainly spoken in my hearing;
I have heard the sound of your words saying,

9 'I am clean and without transgression;
I am innocent, and there is no iniquity in me.

10 See, God finds opportunities to attack me;
he regards me as his enemy.

11 He puts my feet in stocks;
he watches all my paths.'

12 See, in this you are not in the right—I will answer you,
for God is greater than man.

13 Why do you struggle against him?
He does not account for any of his doings.

14 For God speaks once—
yes, twice, though man does not notice it.

15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls upon men,
in slumber on the bed—

16 then God opens the ears of men,
and frightens them with threats,

17 to cause man to turn away from his deed,
and keep pride from a man.

18 God keeps man's life back from the pit,
his life from crossing over to death.

19 Man is punished also with pain on his bed,
with constant strife in his bones,

20 so that his life abhors food,
and his soul abhors delicacies.

21 His flesh is consumed away so that it cannot be seen;
his bones, once not seen, now stick out.

22 Indeed, his soul draws close to the pit,
his life to those who wish to destroy it.

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23 But if there is an angel who can be a mediator for him,
one out of a thousand,
to tell a man what is right for him,

24 to be gracious to him and say,
'Save this person from going down to the pit;
I have found a ransom for him,'

25 then his flesh will become fresher than a youth's;
it is restored to the days of his youthful vigor.

26 He will pray to God, and God will be kind to him,
so that he sees God's face with joy.
God will restore to the person his righteousness.

27 Then that person will sing in front of other people and say,
'I sinned and perverted that which was right,
but my sin was not punished.

28 God has rescued my soul from going down into the pit;
my life will continue to see light.'

29 See, God does all these things with a person,
twice, yes, even three times,

30 to bring his soul back from the pit,
so that he may be enlightened with the light of life.

31 Pay attention, Job, and listen to me;
be silent and I will speak.

32 If you have anything to say, answer me;
speak, for I wish to justify you.

33 If not, then listen to me;
remain silent, and I will teach you wisdom."

Job 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is a continuation of the first of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed to Job. (See: sin and testimony)
The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. This quotation is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's mercy
While Job has been complaining about the lack of justice and response from Yahweh, Elihu shows Job that Yahweh has shown him great mercy along the way. He is still alive because of Yahweh's mercy. (See: mercy)

Links:

Job 33:1 Notes

Job 33:1
General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.
hear my speech; listen to all my words

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These two phrases mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that Job must listen carefully.
Job 33:2
See now, I
The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is a polite request for the hearer to pay attention. "Please listen carefully: I" See how you translated this phrase in Job 13:18.
I have opened my mouth ... my tongue has spoken in my mouth
These mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that he is now ready to speak. His "tongue" speaking represents himself speaking. Alternate translation: "I have opened my mouth and I have begun to speak"
Job 33:3
My words come from the uprightness of my heart
Here Elihu refers to himself by his "heart" as he speaks of being upright. Alternate translation: "I will speak with uprightness" or "I will speak with complete honesty"
my lips speak pure knowledge
Here Elihu refers to himself by his "lips" to emphasize his speech. Alternate translation: "I will speak sincerely to you the things I know"
Job 33:4
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
The Spirit of God ... has given me life
These two lines mean the same thing. Elihu is emphasizing that God has made him and so gives authority to what he is saying.
Job 33:5
set your words in order before me and stand up
This speaks of Job preparing what he will say as if he were setting up and organizing physical objects. Alternate translation: "prepare what you will say, and stand up and answer me"
Job 33:6
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
See
Elihu uses this word here to draw Job's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
I am just as you are in God's sight
Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "I am just as you are in God's judgment" or "God judges me the same way that he judges you"
I also have been formed out of the clay
Though people are not made out of clay, God has made everyone as a potter carefully makes things out of clay. Alternate translation: "God has made both of us just as a potter forms things from clay"
I also have been formed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has also made me" or "God has formed both of us"
Job 33:7
terror of me will not make you afraid
"you do not need to be afraid of me"
neither will my pressure be heavy upon you
This means that he will not hinder Job or burden him. He speaks of emotional burden here as if it were a heavy physical burden. Alternate translation: "neither will I burden you" or "I will not oppress you with what I say"
Job 33:8
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
in my hearing
"where I could hear you"
I have heard the sound of your words saying
"I have heard you say"
Job 33:9
clean
A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.
there is no iniquity in me
"I have not sinned"
Job 33:10
General Information:
Elihu continues quoting what he heard Job say.
See
The speaker uses this word here to draw attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
Job 33:11
He puts my feet in stocks
"Stocks" are wooden blocks a jailer puts around a prisoner's feet to restrict his movement. Job speaks of feeling like he is a prisoner by saying that he is in stocks. Alternate translation: "I feel he has made me a prisoner"
my paths
These words refer to where he goes. Here where he goes represents what he does. Alternate translation: "everything that I do"
Job 33:12
I will answer you
Elihu is speaking to Job, so the word "you" is singular.
Job 33:13
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
Why do you struggle against him?
Elihu uses this question to emphasize that Job should not struggle against God. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not struggle against God." or "You should not try to argue with God."
He does not account for any of his doings
"He does not have to explain to us anything he does"
Job 33:14
God speaks once—yes, twice
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God speaks again and again in different ways"
Job 33:15
a dream ... a vision of the night
These phrases have the same meaning.
when deep sleep falls upon men, in slumber on the bed
This speaks of people being in a deep sleep as if the sleep fell upon them or overcame them. Alternate translation: "when people are fully asleep on their bed"
Job 33:16
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
then God opens the ears of men
This speaks of God making people aware of things as if he

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were opening their ears so that they could hear. Alternate translation: "then God reveals things to people"
Job 33:17
to cause man to turn away from his deed
This speaks of God keeping someone from doing something as if he were physically causing him to turn his body away from something. Alternate translation: "to keep man from"
man
If your language has a word for human beings, male and female, you may want to use it here.
his deed
"what he desires to do" or "what he is doing." The context implies that the deed will be evil, so if your language has a word for a deed that is probably evil, you may want to use it here.
a man
This is a male person as opposed to a female, a strong person as opposed to a weak person.
Job 33:18
God keeps man's life back from the pit ... his life from crossing over to death
Both of these statements mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "God saves people from the grave and from death"
the pit
The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"
man's life back ... his life
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "man from dying and ... he keeps him"
from crossing over to death
Here "death" represents the place where people go when they die, that is, sheol. Alternate translation: "from going to sheol"
Job 33:19
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
Man is punished also
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also punishes a person"
with pain on his bed
This means that the person is experiencing such pain that he must lie in bed. Alternate translation: "with pain so that he must lie in bed"
constant strife in his bones
The word "strife," possibly referring to the man's reaction to God causing him to "turn away from his deed" [Job 33:17]
Job 33:20
so that his life abhors food, and his soul abhors delicacies
These two phrases mean basically the same thing, that the person is in so much pain that he cannot even eat. The person is represented by his "life" and his "soul." Alternate translation: "the result is that he does not desire any food, not even very special food"
abhors delicacies
"hates even very special food"
Job 33:21
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
His flesh is consumed away so that it cannot be seen; his bones, once not seen, now stick out
This can be stated in active form. "His flesh" refers to his fat and muscles, not to his body's outer skin. Alternate translation: "Disease makes his body weak and thin so that a person can see his bones"
Job 33:22
his soul draws close to the pit
Here a person is represented by his "soul." Alternate translation: "he is close to going into the grave"
the pit
The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"
his life to those who wish to destroy it
Here the person is represented by his "life." The phrase "those who wish to destroy it" refers to the place where people go after they die. Alternate translation: "and he is close to going to the place where dead people go" or "and he will soon go to the place of the dead"
Job 33:23
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
for him
This does not refer to a specific person. Elihu continues speaking about any person in general.
one out of a thousand
In some languages it may be more natural to refer to "a great number" instead of "a thousand." Alternate translation: "one from the great number of angels"
Job 33:24
to be gracious to him and say
“to be gracious to the man and to say to God”
the pit
The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"
I have found a ransom for him
This means that the angel has found a way to pay for the sins of the man so that he does not have to die. Alternate translation: "for I have found a way for you to keep him from dying"
Job 33:25
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
then
This word is used here to introduce what will happen if God grants the angel's request by saving the man.
his flesh will become fresher than a youth's
This speaks of the man being healed and his body growing strong again as if his body became new like a youth's body. Alternate translation: "the sick man's body will become new again like a young person's body"
fresher than a youth's
In this comparison, the word "fresher" is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "fresh like a youth's"
a youth's
This refers to a youth's flesh. Alternate translation: "a

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youth's flesh"
it is restored to the days of his youthful vigor
This speaks of the man's flesh again being as strong as it was when he was young. Alternate translation: "it will become strong again, as it was when he was young"
Job 33:26
he sees God's face with joy
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he joyfully worships God"
God's face
Here God is represented by his "face." Alternate translation: "God"
will restore to the person his righteousness
Possible meanings are that the words "his righteousness" refer to 1) the righteousness of the person. Alternate translation: "will once again consider the person righteous" or "God will make things right for the person again" Or 2) God's righteousness.
Job 33:27
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
but my sin was not punished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God did not punish me for sinning"
Job 33:28
rescued my soul from going down into the pit
Here the person is referred to by his "soul." Alternate translation: "rescued me from dying and going to the pit"
the pit
The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"
my life will continue to see light
Here the person is represented by his "life." Also, living is spoken of as seeing the light. Alternate translation: "I will continue to live and see the daylight" or "I will continue to live"
Job 33:29
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
See
Elihu uses this word here to draw Job's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
twice, yes, even three times
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "again and again"
Job 33:30
his soul
The person is represented by his "soul." Alternate translation: "him"
to bring his soul back from the pit
This speaks of saving the man from dying as if he had died and was being brought back to life. Alternate translation: "to keep him from dying and going to the pit"
the pit
The place where people go when they die is referred to here as "the pit." Alternate translation: "the place where dead people are"
he may be enlightened with the light of life
This is an idiom and may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he may be happy to still be alive"
Job 33:31
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking to Job.
Pay attention, Job, and listen to me
These phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully to me, Job"
Job 33:32
justify you
"show that you are in the right" or "show that you are innocent"

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34 [1]Moreover, Elihu continued to speak:
[2] "Listen to my words, you wise men;
hear me, you who have knowledge.

[3] For the ear tests words
as the palate tastes food.

[4] Let us choose for ourselves what is just:
let us discover among ourselves what is good.

[5] For Job has said, 'I am righteous,
but God has taken away my rights.

[6] Regardless of my rights
I am considered to be a liar.
My wound is incurable,
although I am without sin.'

[7] What man is like Job,
who drinks up mockery like water,

[8] who goes around in the company of those who behave wickedly,
and who walks with wicked men?

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9 For he has said, 'It is no use to a person
to take pleasure in doing what God wants.'

10 So listen to me, you men of understanding:
far be it from God that he should do wickedness;
far be it from the Almighty that he should commit sin.

11 For he pays back a person's work;
he makes every man come upon the reward of his own ways.

12 Indeed, God does nothing wicked,
nor does the Almighty ever pervert justice.

13 Who put him in charge over the earth?
Who put the whole world under him?

14 If he ever set his intentions only on himself,
and if he ever gathered back to himself his spirit and his breath,

15 then all flesh would perish together;
mankind would return to dust again.

16 If now you have understanding, listen to this;
listen to the sound of my words.

17 Can one who hates justice govern?
Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?

18 God, who says to a king, 'You are worthless,'
or says to nobles, 'You are wicked'?

19 God, who does not show favoritism to leaders
and does not acknowledge rich people more than poor,
for they all are the work of his hands.

20 In a moment they will die;
at midnight people will be shaken and will pass away;
mighty people will be taken away, but not by human hands.

21 For God's eyes are upon a person's ways;
he sees all his steps.

22 There is no darkness and there is no deep shadow
where those who behave wickedly may hide themselves.

23 For God does not need to examine a person further;
there is no need for any person to go before him in judgment.

24 He breaks mighty men into pieces for their ways that need no further investigation;
he puts others in their places.

25 In this way he has knowledge of their deeds;

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he overthrows these people in the night; they are crushed.

26 In the open sight of others, he kills them for their wicked deeds like criminals
27 because they turned away from following him
and refused to acknowledge any of his ways.

28 In this way, they made the cry of poor people come to him;
he heard the cry of afflicted people.

29 When he stays silent, who can condemn him?
If he hides his face, who can see him?
He rules over nation and individual alike,

30 so that a godless man may not reign,
so that there may be no one to entrap people.

31 Suppose someone says to God,
'I am certainly guilty, but I will not act corruptly any longer;

32 teach me what I cannot see;
I have committed sin, but I will do it no longer.'

33 Is it according to your desires that God must punish that person?
For you reject this!
You must choose, not I.
So say what it is that you know.

34 Men of understanding will say to me—
indeed, every wise man who hears me will say,

35 'Job speaks without knowledge;
his words are without wisdom.'

36 If only Job were put on trial in the smallest details of his case
because of his talking like wicked men.

37 For he adds rebellion to his sin;
he claps his hands in mockery in our midst;
he piles up words against God."

Job 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the second of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)
The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Elihu uses many of Job's statements against him. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice
Elihu defends the justice of Yahweh after Job claimed that Yahweh was being unjust. (See: justice)

Links:

Job 34:1 Notes

Job 34:1
Moreover, Elihu

"Then, Elihu"
Elihu

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See how you translated this man's name in [Job 32:2]
Job 34:2
Listen to my words
"Listen to what I say"
you wise men ... you who have knowledge
Elihu is criticizing Job and his friends. He does not think they are actually wise.
Job 34:3
For the ear tests words as the palate tastes food
Elihu means people listen carefully to determine what is right or wrong just like we taste food to determine if it is good or bad. Here people are referred to by their "ear" and their "palate" to emphasize that they are tasting and hearing. Alternate translation: "For we listen to words to know what is good and bad, just as we taste foods to know what is good to eat"
Job 34:4
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking.
Let us
Here "us" refers to Elihu, Job, and his three friends.
Job 34:5
has taken away my rights
"refused to give me justice"
Job 34:6
I am considered to be a liar
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God considers me to be a liar"
My wound is incurable
Here Job's sickness and suffering is spoken of as if it were a "wound." Alternate translation: "I am sick and no one can heal me"
Job 34:7
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking.
What man is like Job
Elihu uses this rhetorical question to scold Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one else like Job"
who drinks up mockery like water
Elihu is accusing Job of mocking others as often as a person drinks water. Alternate translation: "who mocks other people as frequently as he drinks water"
Job 34:8
who walks with wicked men
Here "walk" is an idiom for how a person acts. Alternate translation: "who behaves like wicked men"
Job 34:10
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking. Each of these verses contain parallel phrases.
you men of understanding
Elihu is criticizing Job and his friends. He does not actually think they are wise.
far be it from God ... far be it from the Almighty that he should commit sin
These two phrases have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that God would never do anything wrong. The phrase "far be it from" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Almighty God would never consider doing anything that is wicked or wrong"
Job 34:11
For he pays back a person's work
This means that he gives to a person what he deserves for the work he has done. Here "work" is a metaphor for what a person does. Alternate translation: "For he gives to a person what he deserves in return for he does"
he makes every man come upon the reward of his own ways
The phrase "his own ways" is an idiom for how a person lives his life. Elihu emphasizes that God gives to people what they deserve. Alternate translation: "he causes every man to receive the reward he deserves for how he lives"
Job 34:13
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking.
Who put him in charge over the earth? Who put the whole world under him?
Both of these rhetorical questions have the same meaning and emphasize that no one needed to grant God authority because it was already his. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "No one needed to give permission to God to take responsibility over all the earth. He is the rightful one to rule the world."
Job 34:14
If he ever set his intentions ... his breath
The word "he" refers to God. Elihu is describing a situation that he does not believe would ever happen.
his spirit and his breath
The "spirit" and "breath" of God are what makes all living things alive. Alternate translation: "his spirit and breath which give us life"
Job 34:15
all flesh
Here all living things are represented by their "flesh." Alternate translation: "all living things"
mankind would return to dust again
This means that all people would die and their bodies would decay and become soil. In the beginning God created man from the dust. Alternate translation: "the bodies of mankind would soon become soil again"
Job 34:16
General Information:
Elihu continues speaking.
now
Elihu uses this word to bring attention to something important he is about to say.
you have
Here "you" is singular and refers to Job.
listen to the sound of my words
"listen to what I say." This means the same as the previous part of the sentence.
Job 34:17
Can one who hates justice govern? Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?
Elihu uses this question to rebuke Job for implying that God hates justice. Alternate translation: "One who hates justice cannot be expected to rule over people. So you really cannot criticize God, who is righteous and powerful, and

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you cannot say that what he has done is wrong."

Can one who hates justice govern?

The implicit answer to this rhetorical question is "no." This question implies that God could not rule the world if he hated justice. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "One who hates justice cannot govern the world." or "God could certainly never hate what is right and still rule the world."

Will you condemn God, who is righteous and mighty?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that Job does not have the authority or a reason to condemn God. Alternate translation: "You cannot condemn God, who is righteous and mighty!"

Job 34:18

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

God, who says to a king, 'You are worthless,' or says to nobles, 'You are wicked'?

This continues the rhetorical question from the previous verse, emphasizing to Job that he cannot condemn God. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "He says to some kings, 'You are worthless,' and he says to some nobles, 'You are wicked.'"

God, who says to a king

This is part of the previous question. The understood words from the previous verse, "will you condemn God," may be supplied. Alternate translation: "Will you condemn God, who says to a king"

Job 34:19

for they all are the work of his hands

Here "hands" refer to power. Alternate translation: "for God made them all"

Job 34:20

at midnight

Midnight is the time when one day ends and another begins. Here "midnight" is used as an idiom. Alternate translation: "at night" or "suddenly, at night"

people will be shaken and will pass away

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "will be shaken" is an idiom that means to be "struck." Alternate translation: "God strikes them and they die"

mighty people will be taken away, but not by human hands

This means that it is God who causes people to die, not people. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it is God and not humans who cause mighty people to die"

not by human hands

Here people are represented by their "hands." Alternate translation: "not by humans" or "not by people"

Job 34:21

For God's eyes are upon a person's ways

God's "eyes" represent his sight. The phrase "a person's ways" is an idiom for what he does and how he lives. Alternate translation: "For God watches everything a person does"

he sees all his steps

This means that he always knows where the person is and where he is going. Alternate translation: "he sees him wherever he goes"

Job 34:22

no darkness ... no deep shadow

The words "deep shadow" mean basically the same thing as, and intensify, the word "darkness."

Job 34:23

in judgment

"so he may judge him" or "to be judged"

Job 34:24

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

He breaks mighty men into pieces

This speaks of God destroying these men as if he actually broke their bodies into pieces. Alternate translation: "He destroys mighty men" or "He destroys important people"

for their ways that need no further investigation

He does not need to investigate what they have done because he already knows everything about them. Alternate translation: "without needing to do further investigation, because he already knows their ways"

their ways

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the things they have done"

he puts others in their places

This means that he appoints other people to rule in their positions. Alternate translation: "and he chooses other people to rule in their places"

Job 34:25

in the night

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "when they are not expecting it"

they are crushed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and crushes them"

crushed

They are no longer able to cause trouble. Alternate translation: "destroyed"

Job 34:26

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

In the open sight of others, he kills them for their wicked deeds like criminals

This phrase compares the way that these people die to how criminals die. Alternate translation: "He kills them for their wicked deeds, in the open sight of others as if they were criminals"

In the open sight of others

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "In a place where everyone can see"

he kills them

This speaks of God causing these people to die, though he does not actually strike them with a sword himself. He may cause someone else to kill them or disaster to come upon them. Alternate translation: "he causes them to die"

Job 34:27

his ways

This refers to God's instructions for how people should behave.

Job 34:28

they made the cry of poor people come to him

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The word "cry" can be expressed as a verb. This speaks of God hearing their cry as if the cry were a person that came to him. Alternate translation: "they made the poor people cry, and God heard them"

Job 34:29

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

When he stays silent, who can condemn him? If he hides his face, who can see him?

These two questions speak of God not punishing wicked people as if he were being silent and hiding his face.

When he stays silent, who can condemn him?

Elihu uses this rhetorical question to teach Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can criticize God if he decides to remain silent"

If he hides his face, who can see him?

Elihu uses this rhetorical question to teach Job. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can go and see him if he decides to hide his face"

his face

Here God is represented by his "face." Alternate translation: "himself"

Job 34:30

no one to entrap people

This compares a godless ruler harming people as if he were a hunter trapping his prey. Alternate translation: "no one to harm the people"

Job 34:31

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Job 34:32

teach me what I cannot see

Here to "see" means to know. Alternate translation: "teach me what I have done wrong that I am not aware of"

Job 34:33

Is it according to your desires that God must punish that person?

Elihu is rebuking Job. Alternate translation: "God does not need to punish that person according to your desires."

you reject this

Another possible meaning is "you reject God" or "you do not want God to punish you."

what it is that you know

"what you are thinking about this"

Job 34:34

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

who hears me

"who hears me speaking"

Job 34:36

If only Job were put on trial in

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If only we could put Job on trial in" or "If only we could take Job to court so a judge could listen to"

in the smallest details of his case

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "to listen to his case thoroughly" or "to hear all of the details of his case"

of his talking like wicked men

"of how he has spoken like a wicked man"

Job 34:37

he adds rebellion

This refers to rebellion against God. Alternate translation: "he adds rebellion against God"

he claps his hands in mockery in our midst

In this accusation, this means that Job clapped his hands to strengthen his mockery of God. Alternate translation: "he claps his hands as he mocks God in our midst" or "he mocks God right in front of us"

he piles up words against God

Elihu speaks of "words" as if they were objects, and of speaking many words as if it were piling those objects one on top of the other. Alternate translation: "he speaks many words against God"

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35 [1]Moreover Elihu continued, saying,
[2]"Do you think this is just
when you say, 'I am in the right before God'?

[3] For you ask, 'What use is it to me?'
and, 'Would I be better off if I had sinned?'

[4] I will answer you,
both you and your friends.

[5] Look up at the sky, and see it;
see the sky, which is higher than you.

[6] If you have sinned, what harm do you do to God?
If your transgressions are many, what do you do to him?

[7] If you are righteous, what can you give to him?
What will he receive from your hand?

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8 Your wickedness may hurt a man, as you are a man,
and your righteousness might benefit another son of man.

9 Because of many acts of oppression, people cry out;
they call for help from the arms of mighty men.

10 But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker,
who gives songs in the night,

11 who teaches us more than he teaches the wild animals of the earth,
and who makes us wiser than the birds of the sky?'

12 There they cry out, but God gives no answer
because of the pride of evil men.

13 God will certainly not hear a foolish cry;
the Almighty will pay no attention to it.

14 How much less will he answer you if you say that you do not see him,
that your case is before him, and that you are waiting for him!

15 Now you say that his anger does not punish,
and he does not take even a litte notice of transgression.

16 So Job opens his mouth only to speak foolishness;
he multiplies words without knowledge."

Job 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the third of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Elihu uses many of Job's statements against him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Elihu uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to try to convince Job. These questions help to build Elihu's argument.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Ironic situation

Elihu explains the irony of Job's claim. He claimed to be righteous and desired Yahweh to intervene. In this chapter, Elihu explains to Job that his claims of righteousness are prideful. This makes him unrighteous. (See: and righteous)

Links:

Job 35:1 Notes

Job 35:2

Do you think this is just ... 'I am in the right before God'?

Elihu uses questions to challenge Job. Alternate translation: "You must think you are right ... 'I am in the right before God.'" or "It is not just ... 'I am in the right before God.'"

Do you think this is just when you say

"Do you think it is right for you to say"

Do you think

Here "you" is singular and refers to Job.

say, 'I am in the right before God'?

This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "say that you are in the right before God."

I am in the right before God

Possible meanings are 1) Job is claiming to be innocent before God or 2) Job is claiming that he, rather than God, is right. Alternate translation: "I am more righteous than God"

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Job 35:3

For you ask, 'What use is it to me?' and, 'Would I be better off if I had sinned?'

Elihu quotes Job as saying the these two rhetorical questions. Alternate translation: "For you say, 'It does not benefit me' and, 'I am no better off than if I had sinned.'"

Job 35:4

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

Job 35:6

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

If you have sinned ... what do you do to him?

These two lines share similar meanings. The second line intensifies the meaning of the first line.

If you have sinned, what harm do you do to God?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job's sins cannot actually do anything to God. Alternate translation: "If you have sinned, you have not done any harm to God."

If your transgressions are many, what do you do to him?

Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does nothing to God by his transgressions. Alternate translation: "If you committed a great many transgressions, you still do nothing to him."

Job 35:7

If you are righteous, what can you give to him? What will he receive from your hand?

The two rhetorical questions mean basically the same thing, that Job's righteousness adds nothing to God. Alternate translation: "If you are righteous, that does not enable you to give anything to him, and there is nothing that he will receive from your hand."

receive from your hand

Here the word "hand" represents Job. Alternate translation: "receive from you"

Job 35:8

another son of man

"another human-being" or "another person"

Job 35:9

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Because of many acts of oppression

The word "oppression" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "Because of the many things that people do to oppress others"

they call for help from the arms of mighty men

Here "arms" refers to power or strength. Alternate translation: "they call for someone to deliver them from the power of mighty men"

Job 35:10

who gives songs in the night

Elihu speaks of God enabling people to have hope in troubling circumstances as if he were giving to them songs which they can sing during the night.

Job 35:12

Connecting Statement:

Elihu continues speaking.

they cry out

"the oppressed people cry out"

Job 35:14

How much less will he answer you ... that you are waiting for him!

Since God will not hear the prayers of prideful, evil men, it is even less likely that he will hear Job, who is complaining against him. Alternate translation: "So he certainly will not answer you ... that you are waiting for him!"

that your case is before him

"you have presented your case to him"

you are waiting for him

"you are waiting for him to respond"

Job 35:15

General Information:

Elihu continues speaking.

Now you say that his anger does not punish, and he does not take even a litte notice of transgression

Because Job is saying these things about God that are untrue, it is even less likely that God will answer Job's prayers.

his anger does not punish

Here "his anger" is a metonym for "him." Alternate translation: "he never punishes anyone because he is angry"

Job 35:16

he multiplies words without knowledge

Elihu speaks of "words" as if they were objects, and of speaking many words as if it were piling those objects one on top of the other. The word "knowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "he speaks many words without knowing what he is talking about"

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36 [1]Elihu continued on and said,
[2]"Be patient with me a little longer, and I will show you some things
because I have a little more to say in defense of God.

[3] I will obtain my knowledge from far off;
I will acknowledge that righteousness belongs to my Maker.

[4] For indeed, my words will not be false;
someone who is mature in knowledge is with you.

[5] See, God is mighty, and despises no one;

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he is mighty in strength of understanding.

6 He does not preserve the life of wicked people
but gives justice those who suffer.

7 He does not withdraw his eyes from righteous people
but sets them on thrones with kings forever,
and they are lifted up.

8 If they are bound in chains
and trapped in cords of suffering,

9 then he reveals to them what they have done,
and their transgressions and their pride.

10 He also opens their ears to his instruction,
and commands them to turn back from iniquity.

11 If they listen to him and worship him,
they will spend their days in prosperity,
their years in contentment.

12 However, if they do not listen, they will perish by the sword;
they will die because they have no knowledge.

13 Those who are godless in heart store up their anger;
they do not cry out for help even when God ties them up.

14 They die in their youth;
their lives end among the cultic prostitutes.

15 God rescues afflicted people by means of their afflictions;
he opens their ears by means of their oppression.

16 Indeed, he would like to draw you out of distress
into a broad place where there is no hardship
and where your table would be set with food full of fatness.

17 But you are full of judgment on wicked people;
judgment and justice have laid hold of you.

18 Do not let your anger entice you to mockery,
or the greatness of a ransom to turn you aside.

19 Can your wealth benefit you, so that you will not be in distress,
or can all the force of your strength help you?

20 Do not desire the night, to commit sin against others,
when peoples are cut off in their place.

21 Be careful that you do not turn to wickedness

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because you are being tested by suffering so that you will stay away from sinning.

22 See, God is exalted in his power;
who is a teacher like him?

23 Who has ever instructed him about his way?
Who can ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness?'

24 Remember to praise his deeds,
of which people have sung.

25 All people have looked on those deeds,
but they see those deeds only from far away.

26 See, God is great, but we do not understand him well;
the number of his years is incalculable.

27 For he draws up the drops of water
that he distills as rain from his vapor,[1]

28 which the clouds pour down
and drop in abundance on mankind.

29 Indeed, can anyone understand the extensive spread of the clouds
and the thunder from his hut?

30 See, he spreads his lightning around him
and covers the roots of the sea.

31 In this way he judges the peoples
and gives food in abundance.

32 He fills his hands with the lightning
until he commands it to strike its mark.

33 Its thunder warns of the storm,
the cattle can also hear it is coming.

[1] Some modern translations have that distill as rain from his vapor.

Job 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is the last of Elihu's four statements and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)
The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice
This chapter focuses on the justice of Yahweh. It is important to remember that justice won't always come in this life. (See: justice)

Links:

Job 36:1 Notes

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Job 36:2

Be patient with me

"Allow me to speak"

I will show you some things

Elihu speaks of explaining things to Job as if he were going to show those things to Job. Alternate translation: "I will explain some things to you"

Job 36:3

I will obtain my knowledge from far off

Elihu speaks of having knowledge of many different subjects as if it were getting his knowledge from far away places. Alternate translation: "I will show you my great knowledge"

that righteousness belongs to my Maker

Here the word "righteousness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "that my Maker is righteous"

Job 36:4

my words will not be false

"what I say will not be false"

someone who is mature in knowledge is with you

The word "someone" refers to Elihu himself. He speaks of being very knowledgeable as if it were being mature in knowledge. Alternate translation: "I, who am with you, am very knowledgeable"

Job 36:5

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

he is mighty in strength of understanding

The phrase "mighty in strength" forms a doublet that means "very strong." Elihu speaks of God understanding everything perfectly as if his understanding were very strong. Alternate translation: "he is very strong in understanding" or "he understands everything completely"

Job 36:7

He does not withdraw his eyes from righteous people

Elihu speaks of God protecting righteous people as if God were watching them with his eyes, and of God ceasing to protect them as if he withdrew his eyes from them. Alternate translation: "He does not stop protecting the righteous people"

sets them on thrones with kings

Elihu speaks of God honoring the righteous people as if God were causing them to sit on thrones with kings.

they are lifted up

Elihu speaks of God honoring the righteous people as if he lifted them up to a high place. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he lifts them up" or "he honors them"

Job 36:8

If they are bound in chains

Here the word "they" refers righteous people whom God will discipline if they sin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If someone binds them in chains" or "If someone makes them a prisoner"

trapped in cords of suffering

Elihu speaks of a person being made to suffer as if that person were trapped in ropes that cause suffering. Alternate translation: "someone causes them to suffer"

Job 36:9

their transgressions and their pride

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "he reveals to them their transgressions and their pride"

Job 36:10

He also opens their ears

Elihu speaks of causing a person to listen as if it were opening that person's ear. Alternate translation: "He also causes them to listen"

to his instruction

The noun "instruction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "to what he is instructing them"

to turn back from iniquity

Elihu speaks of stopping an action as if it were turning back from it. Alternate translation: "to stop committing iniquity"

Job 36:11

they will spend their days in prosperity, their years in contentment

The words "days" and "years" both refer to the person's lifetime. Alternate translation: "they will spend their lives in prosperity and contentment"

Job 36:12

they will perish by the sword

Elihu speaks of a person dying violently as if someone had killed them with a sword. Alternate translation: "they will die a violent death"

Job 36:13

who are godless in heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and emotions. The phrase may indicate that the person stubbornly refuses to trust God. Alternate translation: "who refuse to trust in God"

store up their anger

Elihu speaks of a person remaining angry as if that person stored up their anger like one would store up treasure. Alternate translation: "are always angry"

even when God ties them up

Elihu speaks of God disciplining people as if God were tying them up with ropes. Alternate translation: "even when God punishes them"

Job 36:14

their lives end among the cultic prostitutes

Here "cultic prostitutes" refers to young men who served in pagan temples performing sexually immoral acts as part of their rituals. Possible meanings for this phrase are 1) the godless die because of their immoral behavior or 2) the godless die in shame and disgrace.

Job 36:15

he opens their ears

Elihu speaks of God causing a person to listen as if God were opening their ears. See how you translated this in [Job 36:10]

Job 36:16

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into a broad place where there is no hardship
Elihu speaks of living without trouble as if it were being in a wide-open space where there were no hardships.
where your table would be set with food full of fatness
Elihu speaks of living prosperously as if it were having one's table filled with the best foods.
your table would be set
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your servants would set your table"
food full of fatness
Meat that had plenty of fat on it was a sign of prosperity because the animals were healthy and well-fed. Alternate translation: "the very best food"
Job 36:17
you are full of judgment on wicked people
Possible meanings are 1) "God is punishing you as he would punish the wicked" or 2) "you are obsessed with the judgment that the wicked deserve."
judgment and justice have laid hold of you
Elihu speaks of God judging Job and giving him justice as if judgment and justice were people that have laid hold of Job. Alternate translation: "God has brought you to judgment and given you justice"
Job 36:18
Do not let your anger entice you to mockery
Some versions of the Bible translate this as "Beware that you are not enticed by wealth."
Job 36:19
Can your wealth benefit you, so that you will not be in distress, or can all the force of your strength help you?
Elihu asks these questions to state that money and power will not be able to help Job if he acts unjustly. Alternate translation: "Your wealth cannot cause you to no longer be in distress, and all the force of your strength cannot help you."
all the force of your strength
"all of your great strength" or "all of your mighty efforts"
Job 36:20
when peoples are cut off in their place
Possible meanings are 1) that "peoples" refers to people in general and "cut off in their place" is a metaphor for oppressing others by dragging them away from their homes. Alternate translation: "when people drag others away from their homes" or 2) that "peoples" represents nations and "cut off in their place" is a metaphor for nations being destroyed. Alternate translation: "when nations will perish"
Job 36:21
you are being tested by suffering
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is testing you by making you suffer"
Job 36:22
See, God
"You know this already: God"
God is exalted in his power
Possible meanings are 1) "God is extremely powerful" or 2) "people exalt God because he is powerful"
who is a teacher like him?
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one is a teacher like God. Alternate translation: "no one is a teacher like him." or "no one teaches like he does."
Job 36:23
Who has ever instructed him about his way?
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one has ever taught God what to do. Alternate translation: "No one has ever instructed him about what he should do."
Who can ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness?'
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can accuse God of having committed unrighteousness. Alternate translation: "No one can ever say to him, 'You have committed unrighteousness.'"
Job 36:25
they see those deeds only from far away
Elihu speaks of people not being fully able to understand God's deeds as if people were only able to see those deeds from far away. Alternate translation: "they do not fully understand them"
Job 36:26
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
the number of his years is incalculable
This refers to how long God has existed. Alternate translation: "people cannot know how long he has lived" or "people cannot know his age"
Job 36:27
that he distills as rain from his vapor
The word "distills" can also mean "refine" or "filter." Elihu describes how God turns the drops of water, or vapor, that he draws up into rain. Alternate translation: "that he turns into rain"
Job 36:29
can anyone understand the extensive spread of the clouds and the thunder from his hut?
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can do these things. Alternate translation: "no one can understand the extensive spread of the clouds and the thunder from his hut."
the extensive spread of the clouds
The phrase "the extensive spread" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "how the clouds spread across the sky"
from his hut
Elihu speaks of the sky as if it were a "hut" in which God lives. Alternate translation: "from the sky, where God lives"
Job 36:30
See, he spreads
"Look carefully and see how he spreads"
and covers the roots of the sea
Elihu speaks of the deep parts of the sea as if the sea were a plant and its depths were its roots. Possible meanings are 1) although the lightning causes light in the sky, the deep parts of the sea remain dark. Alternate translation: "but the depths of the sea remain dark" or 2) the lightning in the sky cause even the depths of the sea to have light. Alternate translation: "and lights up the depths of the sea"
Job 36:32
He fills his hands with the lightning

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Elihu speaks of the lightning that storms cause as if God were holding the lightning in his hand and directing it to strike where he wills. Possible meanings are 1) that God holds the lightning bolts in his hands in order to throw them, or 2) that God hides the lightning bolts in his hands until he is ready to use them.

Job 36:33
Its thunder
"The thunder caused by the lightning" or "The thunder"
hear it is coming
"hear that the storm is coming"

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37 [1] Indeed, my heart trembles at this;
it is moved out of its place.

[2] Hear, oh, hear the noise of his voice,
the sound that goes out from his mouth.

[3] He sends it out under the whole sky,
and he sends out his lightning to the edges of the earth.

[4] A voice roars after it;
he thunders with the voice of his majesty;
he does not restrain the lightning bolts
when his voice is heard.

[5] God thunders marvelously with his voice;
he does great things that we cannot comprehend.

[6] For he says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth';
and to the rain shower, 'Be strong.'

[7] He stops the hand of every man from working,
so that all people whom he has made may see his deeds.

[8] Then the beasts go into hiding
and stay in their dens.

[9] The storm comes from its chamber in the south
and the cold from the scattering winds in the north.

[10] By the breath of God ice is given;
the expanse of the waters is frozen like metal.

[11] Indeed, he weighs down the thick cloud with moisture;
he scatters his lightning through the clouds.

[12] He swirls the clouds around by his guidance,
so that they may do whatever he commands them
above the surface of the earthly world.

[13] He makes all of this happen; sometimes it happens for correction, sometimes for his land,
and sometimes as acts of covenant faithfulness.

[14] Listen to this, Job;
stop and think about God's marvelous deeds.

[15] Do you know how God establishes the clouds
and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them?

[16] Do you understand the floating of the clouds,
the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge?

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17 Do you understand how your garments become hot
when the land is still because the wind comes from the south?

18 Can you spread out the sky as he can—
the sky, which is as strong as a mirror of cast metal?

19 Teach us what we should say to him,
for we cannot lay out our arguments in order because of the darkness of our minds.

20 Should he be told that I wish to speak with him?
Would a person wish to be swallowed up?

21 Now, people cannot look at the sun when it is bright in the sky
after the wind has passed through and has cleared it of its clouds.

22 Out of the north comes golden splendor—
over God is fearsome majesty.

23 As for the Almighty, we cannot find him!
He is great in power;
he does not oppress justice and abundant righteousness.

24 Therefore, people fear him.
He does not pay any attention to those who are wise in their own minds."

Job 37 General Notes

Structure and formatting

According to Elihu, instead of being punished for his sins, Job is sinning in the midst of these difficulties. This is a continuation of the previous chapter and the last of Elihu's four statements, and it is addressed first to Job's friends and then to Job. (See: sin and testimony)

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. His attitude is not too different from Job's friends.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice

This chapter focuses on the justice of Yahweh. It is important to remember that justice won't always come in this life. (See: justice)

Links:

Job 37:1 Notes

Job 37:1

my heart trembles ... it is moved out of its place

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his fear.

my heart trembles at this

The word "this" refers to the storm in Job 36:33.

it is moved out of its place

Elihu speaks of his heart beating violently as if it were to jump out of his chest. Alternate translation: "it moves out of its place" or "it beats violently"

Job 37:2

the noise of his voice, the sound that goes out from his mouth

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Elihu speaks of the thunder as if it is God's voice.

Job 37:3

to the edges of the earth

Elihu speaks of the farthest places on the earth as if they were the earth's borders. Alternate translation: "everywhere in the world"

Job 37:4

A voice roars after it ... the voice of his majesty

Elihu continues to speak of the thunder as if it is God's voice.

roars after it

"roars after the lightning"

the voice of his majesty

"his majestic voice"

when his voice is heard

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when people hear his voice"
Job 37:6
and to the rain shower
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and in the same way he says to the rain shower"
Be strong
"Be a strong shower of rain"
Job 37:7
He stops the hand of every man
Here the word "hand" represents the entire person. Alternate translation: "He stops every man"
Job 37:9
The storm comes from its chamber in the south and the cold from the scattering winds in the north
In Israel, strong wind storms blow in from the south and cold weather approaches from the north.
The storm comes from its chamber in the south
Elihu speaks of the storm blowing in from the south as if the storm has a place where it resides until it comes.
Job 37:10
By the breath of God ice is given
Elihu speaks of the cold north wind as if it were God's breath. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God's breath makes ice"
frozen like metal
Elihu compares the hardness of ice to the hardness of metal. Alternate translation: "frozen, as hard as metal"
Job 37:11
he weighs down the thick cloud with moisture
Elihu speaks of God causing the storm clouds to be full of water as if the moisture weighed heavily on the clouds. Alternate translation: "he causes the thick clouds to be full of moisture"
Job 37:12
the earthly world
Possible meanings are 1) "the land on which people live" or 2) "the land on which it is possible to live."
Job 37:13
sometimes it happens for correction
The word "correction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. The object of his "correction" is people. Alternate translation: "sometimes it happens to correct his people"
sometimes for his land
This means that the rain waters the ground and causes vegetation to grow. Alternate translation: "sometimes to water the land"
sometimes as acts of covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "sometimes to act faithfully to his covenant" or "sometimes to be faithful to his people"
Job 37:15
Do you know how God establishes the clouds and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them?
Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job cannot know this. Alternate translation: "You cannot understand how God establishes the clouds and makes the lightning bolts to flash in them."
establishes the clouds
"controls the clouds" or "makes the clouds obey him"
Job 37:16
Do you understand the floating of the clouds, the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge?
Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does not know these things. Alternate translation: "You do not understand the floating of the clouds, the marvelous deeds of God, who is perfect in knowledge."
the floating of the clouds
"how the clouds float"
the marvelous deeds of God
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "or do you understand the marvelous deeds of God"
Job 37:17
Do you understand how your garments become hot ... from the south?
Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job does not know these things. Alternate translation: "You do not understand how your garments become hot ... from the south."
how your garments become hot
"how you become hot in your clothes" or "how you sweat in your clothes"
because the wind comes from the south
In Israel, hot winds blow in across the desert from the south and cause hot temperatures. Alternate translation: "because of the hot, dry wind blowing in from the south"
Job 37:18
Can you spread out the sky ... a mirror of cast metal?
Elihu asks this question to emphasize that Job cannot do this. Alternate translation: "You cannot spread out the sky ... a mirror of cast metal."
as strong as a mirror of cast metal
In biblical days, mirrors were made of metal. Elihu speaks of the sky giving no rain as if it were as hard as solid metal.
cast metal
This refers to metal that is melted, poured into a mold, and then hardens as it cools.
Job 37:19
Teach us what we should say to him
Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Elihu, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, but not to Job. Elihu uses this phrase sarcastically.
because of the darkness of our minds
Elihu speaks of the inability to understand as if it were having darkness in one's mind. Alternate translation: "because we do not understand"
Job 37:20
Should he be told that I wish to speak with him?
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can do this. Alternate translation: "I cannot have someone tell him that I wish to speak with him."
Should he be told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should I have someone tell him"
Would a person wish to be swallowed up?
Elihu asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one

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would want this to happen. Alternate translation: "No person would want to be swallowed up."

to be swallowed up

Elihu speaks of a person being destroyed as if the person were swallowed up. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God to destroy him"

Job 37:22

over God is fearsome majesty

The word "fearsome" means that it causes fear. Elihu speaks of God's majesty as if it were something that rests upon God. Alternate translation: "God's majesty causes people to fear"

Job 37:23

we cannot find him

Possible meanings are 1) "we cannot approach him" or 2) this is a metaphor in which Elihu speaks of a person's being unable to fully understand God as if he could not find God. Alternate translation: "we cannot comprehend him"

Job 37:24

those who are wise in their own minds

Here "minds" represents the person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "those who are wise in their own thinking" or "those who consider themselves to be wise"

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38 [1]Then Yahweh called to Job out of a fierce storm and said,
[2] "Who is this who brings darkness to plans
by means of words without knowledge?

[3] Now gird up your loins like a man
for I will ask you questions,
and you must answer me.

[4] Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
Tell me, if you have so much understanding.

[5] Who determined its dimensions? Tell me, if you know.
Who stretched the measuring line over it?

[6] On what were its foundations laid?
Who laid its cornerstone

[7] when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

[8] Who shut up the sea with doors
when it burst out, as if it had come out of the womb—

[9] when I made clouds its clothing,
and thick darkness its swaddling bands?

[10] That was when I marked out for the sea my boundary,
and when I placed its bars and doors,

[11] and when I said to it, 'You may come this far, but no farther;
here is where I will put a boundary to the pride of your waves.'

[12] Have you given orders to the morning,
or caused the dawn to know its place,

[13] so that it might take hold of the edges of the earth
and shake the wicked out of it?

[14] The earth is changed in appearance like clay changes under a seal;
all things on it stand out clearly like the folds of a piece of clothing.

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15 From wicked people their light is taken away;
their uplifted arm is broken.

16 Have you gone to the springs of the sea?
Have you walked in the lowest parts of the deep?

17 Have the gates of death been revealed to you?
Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?

18 Have you understood the earth in its expanse?
Tell me, if you know it all.

19 Where is the way to the resting place of light—
as for darkness, where is its place?

20 Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
Can you find the way back to their houses for them?

21 Undoubtedly you know, for you were born then;
the number of your days is so large!

22 Have you entered the storehouses for the snow,
or have you seen the storehouses for the hail,

23 these things that I have kept for times of trouble,
for days of battle and war?

24 What is the path to where the lightning bolts are distributed
or to where the winds are scattered from the east over the earth?

25 Who has created the channels for the floods of rain,
or who has made a path for the thunder,

26 to cause it to rain on lands where no person exists,
and on the wilderness, in which there is no one,

27 to satisfy the devastated and desolate places,
and to make the ground sprout with grass?

28 Does the rain have a father,
or, who fathers the drops of dew?

29 Out of whose womb did the ice come?
Who bore the white frost out of the sky?

30 The waters hide themselves and become like stone;
the surface of the deep becomes frozen.

31 Can you fasten chains on the Pleiades,
or undo the cords of Orion?

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32 Can you lead the constellations to appear at their proper times?
Can you guide the Bear with its children?

33 Do you know the regulations of the sky?
Could you set in place the sky's rule over the earth?

34 Can you raise your voice up to the clouds,
so that an abundance of rainwater may cover you?

35 Can you send out bolts of lightning that they may go out,
that they say to you, 'Here we are'?

36 Who has put wisdom in the clouds
or has given understanding to the mists?

37 Who can number the clouds by his skill?
Who can pour out the water skins of the sky

38 when the dust runs into a hard mass
and the clods of earth clump tightly together?

39 Can you hunt down a victim for a lioness
or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs

40 when they are crouching in their dens
and sheltering in hiding to lie in wait?

41 Who provides victims for the ravens
when their young ones cry out to God
and stagger about for lack of food?

Job 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Yahweh finally speaks in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

Yahweh is far greater than any man. He is the creator of the earth, and his ways will not always be understood by men because their knowledge is always limited.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character.

Links:

Job 38:1 Notes

Job 38:1

Then Yahweh called

Here, the word "then" marks the beginning of a new part of the book. See if your language has a similar way to introduce a new scene. Alternate translation: "After all that had happened, Yahweh called.

called to Job

"answered Job" or "responded to Job"

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out of a fierce storm
"from a powerful storm"
Job 38:2
Who is this who brings darkness to plans by means of words without knowledge?
Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that Job spoke of things he did not know about. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You bring darkness to my plans by means of words without knowledge."
Who is this who brings
"Who are you to bring"
brings darkness to plans
"obscures my plans" or "confuses my purposes." How Job confuses God's plans is spoken of as if he were making God's plans harder to see. The abstract noun "darkness" can be translated as the verb "darkens." Alternate translation: "darkens plans" or "makes plans hard to see"
by means of words without knowledge
"by speaking of things about which you do not know"
words without knowledge
The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "unknowing words" or "ignorant words"
Job 38:3
gird up your loins like a man
"tie your robe up around your waist like a man." Men tied up their robes around their waists so that their legs could move more freely as they did heavy work. The idiom "gird up your loins like a man" means to get ready to do something involving action such as work, a contest, or a battle. Job was to prepare for the hard work of answering God. Alternate translation: "get yourself ready for hard work"
Job 38:4
General Information:
Yahweh begins to challenge Job with a series of questions that emphasize he created the earth and Job did not.
Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Tell me, if you have so much understanding
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me where you were when I laid the foundations of the earth, if you have so much understanding"
I laid the earth's foundations
Yahweh describes creating the earth as though he was building a structure.
if you have so much understanding
The abstract noun "understanding" can be translated as the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "if you understand so much"
Job 38:5
Who determined its dimensions? Tell me, if you know
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who determined its dimensions, if you know"
dimensions
"size"
Who stretched the measuring line over it?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who stretched the measuring line over it."
measuring line
a rope or cord that people use to make something the right size and shape
Job 38:6
General Information:
The word "its" refers to the earth. Yahweh uses more questions to emphasize that Job could never understand how great God is.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
On what were its foundations laid?
This can be stated in active form. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "On what did I set its foundations?" or "Tell me on what its foundations were laid."
Who laid its cornerstone
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who laid its cornerstone"
Job 38:7
Connecting Statement:
Job finishes the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who laid its cornerstone" in verse 6.
when the morning stars ... the sons of God shouted for joy?
Job finishes the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who laid its cornerstone" in verse 6. This can be translated as a statement. "Tell me who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars ... the sons of God shouted for joy."
when the morning stars sang together
The morning stars are spoken of as singing like people sing. Possible meanings are: 1) the "morning stars" are the same as the "sons of God" in the next line or 2) "the morning stars" refer to stars in the sky.
the morning stars
"the bright stars that shine in the morning"
sons of God
This refers to angels, heavenly beings. See how you translated this in Job 1:6.
shouted for joy
The abstract noun "joy" can be translated as the adverb "joyfully." Alternate translation: "shouted joyfully"
for joy
"because they were full of joy"
Job 38:8
General Information:
Yahweh uses another question to emphasize that he created the earth and Job did not.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Who shut up the sea ... of the womb
This can be translated as a command. Alternate translation: "Tell me who shut up the sea ... of the womb"
shut up the sea with doors
Yahweh compares the way that he prevented the sea from covering all of the earth to holding it back with doors. Alternate translation: "prevented the water from flooding over the land"
as if it had come out of the womb
Yahweh compares his creation of the sea to childbirth.
Job 38:9
Connecting Statement:

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This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who shut up" in verse 8.

when I made clouds ... and thick darkness its swaddling bands?

This can be translated as a command. Alternate translation: "Tell me who shut up ... when I made clouds ... and thick darkness its swaddling bands."

its clothing

"as clothes for the sea"

thick darkness its swaddling bands

The abstract noun "darkness" can be translated as the adjective "dark." Alternate translation: "made dark clouds its swaddling bands"

swaddling bands

long pieces of cloth that people use to wrap a baby in after it is born

Job 38:10

I marked out for the sea my boundary

"I made a boundary for the sea"

boundary

Yahweh set a limit beyond which the sea was not allowed to cross.

I placed its bars and doors

Yahweh compares the way that he made a boundary for the sea to containing the sea with bars and doors. Alternate translation: "I set up its barriers"

bars

long pieces of wood or metal that are used to keep a door shut

Job 38:11

when I said to it

"when I said to the sea." Yahweh speaks to the sea as though it were a person.

You may come this far, but no farther

The words "this far" mean only as far as the boundary that Yahweh set up. Alternate translation: "You may come as far as this boundary, but no farther"

to the pride of your waves

"to the power of your waves." The waves are spoken of as if they could have pride. The abstract noun "pride" can be translated as the adjective "proud." Alternate translation: "to your proud waves" or "to your powerful waves"

Job 38:12

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he created the light of day and Job did not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He begins to ask a rhetorical question.

Have you ... to know its place

This question expects a negative answer. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have never ... shaken the wicked out of it."

given orders to the morning

Yahweh describes the morning as being able to receive orders and know things like a person.

caused the dawn to know its place

"caused the dawn to know where it belongs"

dawn

the daylight that appears in the morning sky before the sun rises

Job 38:13

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you given" in verse 12.

so that it might take hold ... shake the wicked out of it?

This is the end of the rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you given" in verse 12. This question expects a negative answer. It can be translated as a statement. "You have never given ... so that it might take hold ... shaken the wicked out of it."

take hold of the edges of the earth

The light of dawn is spoken of as if it seizes the horizons of the earth. Alternate translation: "grasp the ends of the earth"

shake the wicked out of it

The daylight is pictured as causing wicked people to leave like shaking something to remove unwanted things. Alternate translation: "shake wicked people out of the earth"

Job 38:14

The earth is changed in appearance like clay changes under a seal

At nighttime, people cannot see clearly, but in the morning the light reveals the distinct shape of everything, just like a seal creates distinct images in clay.

all things on it stand out clearly like the folds of a piece of clothing

Here "it" refers to the earth. This phrase has a similar meaning to the first phrase in this verse.

Job 38:15

From wicked people their light is taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The morning takes away the 'light' of wicked people"

their light

The wicked consider darkness to be their light, because they do their evil deeds in the darkness and they are familiar with the darkness.

their uplifted arm is broken

The raised arm of the wicked represents their power and intention to do evil things, but the wicked stop doing those evil things when the morning light comes.

Job 38:16

General Information:

Yahweh uses five questions to emphasize that he understands the earth and seas and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Have you gone to the springs of the sea?

This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not gone to the springs of the sea."

Have you walked in the lowest parts of the deep?

This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not walked in the lowest parts of the deep."

the springs of the sea

"the sources of the sea"

the deep

This refers to the sea or ocean where the water is very deep. Alternate translation: "the deep sea" or "the ocean depths" or "the deep water"

Job 38:17

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Have the gates of death been revealed to you
Death is spoken of as if it were a city that had gates through which people enter into it. This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Has anyone shown the gates of death to you"
the shadow of death
See how you translated this in Job 3:5.
Job 38:18
Have you understood the earth in its expanse?
This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not understand the earth in its expanse."
the earth in its expanse
"the great broad places of the earth"
if you know it all
"if you know all about these things"
Job 38:19
General Information:
Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize that he understands light and darkness and Job does not. Each of these verses have two parallel phrases.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Where is the way to the resting place of light—as for darkness, where is its place?
This question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do not know the way to the resting place of light or the place of darkness."
the resting place of light
"the dwelling of light." Light is spoken of as having a resting place from which it comes forth each day.
light
"daylight" or "sunlight"
Job 38:20
Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
These questions expect a negative answer. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot lead light and darkness to their places of work, or find the way back to their houses for them."
to their places of work
"to their territory." Light and darkness are spoken of as being led out and back each day to accomplish Yahweh's purposes.
Job 38:21
Undoubtedly ... so large
Yahweh uses mocking irony to emphasize that Job does not understand light and darkness. Alternate translation: "It is obvious that you do not know, because you were not born when I created them, and you are not very old"
for you were born then
"for you were already living then." The word "then" refers to the time when light was created and separated from darkness. Alternate translation: "for you were already born when I created them"
the number of your days is so large
"you have lived so many years"
Job 38:22
General Information:
Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he rules over the natural world and Job does not.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He bgins to ask a rhetorical question.
storehouses for the snow ... storehouses for the hail
Snow and hail are pictured as being stored by Yahweh to do his will.
hail
balls of ice (usually small) that sometimes fall down from the sky during a storm
Job 38:23
Connecting Statement:
The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you entered" in verse 22 ends here.
these things that I have kept ... and war?
The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you entered" in verse 22 ends here. "You have never entered the storehouses for the snow, and you have never seen the storehouses for the hail, these things that I have kept ... and war."
these things that I have kept
The words "these things" refer to the snow and the hail (verse 22).
Job 38:24
What is the path to where the lightning bolts are distributed or to where the winds are scattered from the east over the earth?
These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What is the path to where I distribute the lightning bolts or to where I scatter the winds from the east over the earth?"
the winds are scattered
"the winds are blown"
Job 38:25
General Information:
Yahweh questions Job to emphasize that he causes it to rain and thunder and Job does not.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job. He begins to ask a series of rhetorical questions.
Who has created the channels for the floods of rain
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only I have created the channels for the floods of rain"
or who has made a path for the thunder
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "and only I have made a path for the thunder"
the floods of rain
"the torrents of rain"
a path for the thunder
"a way for the rumble of thunder to be heard."
Job 38:26
on lands where no person exists, and on the wilderness, in which there is no one
These two phrases have nearly the same meaning.
where no person exists
"where there are no people"
Job 38:27
Connecting Statement:
The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has created" in verse 25 ends here.
to satisfy ... sprout with grass?

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The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has created" in verse 25 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "I am the one who has created ... of rain, and I am the one who has made ... to satisfy ... sprout with grass."

to satisfy

The implied information is that it is the rain that meets the needs of the land to grow grass. Alternate translation: "so that the rain can satisfy the needs of"

devastated and desolate

"ruined and wasted." These two words have nearly the same meaning and emphasize the ruined and empty nature of these regions.

with grass

"the new grass" or "the fresh grass." This is grass that is just starting to grow.

make the ground sprout with

"make the ground support new grass"

Job 38:28

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh begins a series of four questions to emphasize to Job that he makes rain, dew, ice, and frost and Job does not. Rain, dew, ice, and frost are spoken of as though they could be born like people are.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Does the rain have a father, or, who fathers the drops of dew?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Tell me who the rain's father is, and tell me who has become the father of the drops of dew."

fathers the drops of dew

Becoming the father of the dew is a metaphor for creating it. Alternate translation: "causes the drops of dew to exist"

Job 38:29

Out of whose womb did the ice come? Who bore the white frost out of the sky?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Tell me whose womb the ice came out of. Tell me who bore the white frost out of the sky."

ice

"frozen water"

bore

"gave birth to"

the white frost

dew that freezes on the ground on cold, clear nights

Job 38:30

The waters hide themselves and become like stone

The waters are spoken of as being able to hide. During the winter the ice hides the water underneath it.

become like stone

The hardness of ice is spoken of as if it was stone. Alternate translation: "become hard like stone"

the deep

This refers to the sea or ocean where the water is very deep. Alternate translation: "the deep sea" or "the ocean depths" or "the deep water"

Job 38:31

General Information:

Yahweh uses five questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the heavens and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you fasten chains on the Pleiades, or undo the cords of Orion?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot fasten chains on the Pleiades, and you cannot undo the cords of Orion."

fasten chains on

"bind chains onto" or "tie the bonds of"

the Pleiades ... Orion

These are the names of constellations. See how you translated them in Job 9:9.

undo the cords of Orion

"loosen the cords that hold Orion"

Job 38:32

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you lead the constellations ... proper times? Can you guide ... children?

These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot lead the constellations ... proper times. You cannot guide ... children."

constellations

groups of stars that seem like they form a particular shape in the sky

to appear at their proper times

"so that they appear at the right time"

the Bear

This is the name of a constellation. Translate as in Job 9:9.

its children

"its cubs"

Job 38:33

Do you know the regulations of the sky? Could you set in place the sky's rule over the earth?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You do not know the regulations of the sky? You could not set in place the sky's rule over the earth."

Job 38:34

General Information:

Yahweh uses two questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the rain clouds and lightning and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you raise ... may cover you?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot raise ... may cover you."

an abundance of rainwater

The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated as the adjective "abundant." Alternate translation: "an abundant amount of rainwater" or "a flood of waters"

Job 38:35

Can you send out ... you, 'Here we are'?

These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You cannot send out you, 'Here we are!'"

Here we are

The lightning bolts are spoken of as servants saying they are ready to follow commands.

Job 38:36

General Information:

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Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize to Job that he rules the clouds and rain and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who has put wisdom in the clouds or has given understanding to the mists?

These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I am the one who has put wisdom in the clouds and given understanding to the mists."

has put wisdom in the clouds

"has given wisdom to the clouds"

Job 38:37

Connecting Statement:

A rhetorical question begins here.

Who can pour out the water skins of the sky

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who can pour out the water skins of the sky."

the water skins

These are skins that people sew together so that they can hold water. Yahweh refers to the thick clouds as "waters skins" because they hold much water just like water skins.

Job 38:38

when the dust runs ... tightly together?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who can pour out" in verse 37 ends here. "Only I can pour out ... when the dust runs ... tightly together."

when the dust runs into a hard mass

The rain makes the loose dry dirt stick together like one piece of dirt. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the rain molds the dirt into a hard mass"

the clods of earth clump tightly together

"the lumps of soil stick together"

Job 38:39

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he knows how to feed the lions and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Can you hunt down a victim for a lioness or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot hunt down a victim for a lioness or satisfy the appetite of her young lion cubs"

a victim

"prey." This is an animal that a lion could eat.

lioness

This is a female lion.

appetite

hunger

of her young lion cubs

"of young lions." These are young lions that are old enough to hunt for themselves.

Job 38:40

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Can you hunt" in verse 39 ends here.

when they are crouching ... to lie in wait?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Can you hunt" in verse 39 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "You know that you cannot hunt down ... when they are crouching ... to lie in wait."

dens

A "den" is a lair or shelter where lions live.

sheltering in hiding

"hiding in a thicket." Lions hide in thick vegetation when hunting their prey.

to lie in wait

The implied information is that the lions are hiding and waiting for their prey to come near. Alternate translation: "to lie waiting for a victim"

Job 38:41

General Information:

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he provides food for the ravens and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Who provides victims ... for lack of food?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me who provides victims ... for lack of food."

provides victims

"provides food." This refers to animals that ravens look for and can eat.

ravens

large birds with shiny black feathers that feed on dead animals

cry out to God

The implied information is that the ravens are crying out for food. Alternate translation: "cry to God for help" or "cry out for God to give them food"

stagger about

This means to walk around in an unsteady way.

for lack of food

"because they have no food" or "because they have nothing to eat"

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39 [1] Do you know at what time the wild goats in the rocks bear their young?
Can you watch when the deer are having their fawns?

[2] Can you count the months that they gestate?
Do you know the time when they bear their young?

[3] They crouch down and give birth to their young,
and then they finish their labor pains.

[4] Their young ones become strong and grow up in the open fields;

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they go out and do not return to them.

5 Who sent the wild donkey out free?
Who has untied the bonds of the swift donkey,

6 whose home I have made in the Arabah,
his house in the salt land?

7 He laughs in scorn at the noises in the city;
he does not hear the driver's shouts.

8 He roams over the mountains as his pastures;
there he looks for every green plant to eat.

9 Will the wild ox be happy to serve you?
Will he consent to stay by your manger?

10 Can you use ropes to hold the wild ox in the furrows?
Will he harrow the valleys as he follows after you?

11 Will you trust him because his strength is great?
Will you leave your labor to him to do?

12 Will you depend on him to bring your grain home,
to gather the grain for your threshing floor?

13 The wings of the ostrich wave proudly,
but are they the pinions and plumage of love?

14 For she leaves her eggs on the earth,
and she lets them keep warm in the dust;

15 she forgets that a foot might crush them
or that a wild beast might trample them.

16 She deals roughly with her young ones as if they were not hers;
she does not fear that her labor might have been in vain,

17 because God has deprived her of wisdom
and has not given her any understanding.

18 When she runs swiftly,
she laughs in scorn at the horse and its rider.

19 Have you given the horse his strength?
Did you clothe his neck with his flowing mane?

20 Have you ever made him jump like a locust?
The majesty of his snorting is fearsome.

21 He paws in might and rejoices in his strength;

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he rushes out to meet the weapons.

22 He mocks fear and is not dismayed;
he does not turn back from the sword.

23 The quiver rattles against his flank,
along with the flashing spear and the javelin.

24 He swallows up ground with fierceness and rage;
at the sound of the ram's horn, he cannot stand in one place.

25 Whenever the ram's horn sounds, he says, 'Aha!'
He smells the battle from far away—
the thunderous shouts of the commanders and the outcries.

26 Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars,
that he stretches out his wings for the south?

27 Is it at your orders that the eagle mounts up
and makes his nest in high places?

28 He lives on cliffs and makes his home
on the peaks of cliffs, a stronghold.

29 From there he searches for victims;
his eyes see them from very far away.

30 His young also drink up blood;
where killed people are, there he is."

Job 39 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is a poem. Yahweh continues to speak in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

Yahweh is far greater than any man. He is the creator of the earth, and his ways will not always be understood by men because their knowledge is always limited. Since Job cannot understand creation, he cannot truly understand Yahweh.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character. Many of these questions focus on nature because Yahweh is the creator of the heavens and the earth. (See: and heaven)

Links:

Job 39:1 Notes

Job 39:1

General Information:

Yahweh uses four questions to emphasize that he is greater than Job because Yahweh takes care of the wild mountain goats and deer and Job does not.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Do you know at what time ... bear their young?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not know when ... bear their young!"

Can you watch when the deer are having their fawns?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not able to watch to make sure everything goes well when the deer give birth to their fawns!"

are having their fawns

"give birth to their fawns"

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Job 39:2
Can you count the months that they gestate?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot count the months that they are pregnant."
that they gestate
"to complete their pregnancy"
they
The word "they" refers to the goats and the deer.
gestate
"are pregnant"
Do you know the time when they bear their young?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Of course you do not know when they give birth to their young."
Job 39:3
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
They crouch down
The word "They" refers to the wild mountain goats and the deer.
then they finish their labor pains
Possible meanings are 1) their labor pains are over when the birth is finished or 2) "labor pains" is a metonym that refers to the offspring of the goats and deer because they are the result of the mother's labor and pain. Alternate translation: "send out their offspring from their womb"
Job 39:4
the open fields
"the countryside" or "the wild"
do not return to them
"do not come back to them" or "do not come back to their mothers"
Job 39:5
General Information:
Yahweh uses two questions to emphasize that he is greater than Job because Yahweh takes care of the wild donkeys and Job does not.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Who sent the wild donkey out free?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who sent the wild donkey out free."
the wild donkey ... the swift donkey
These are different names for the same kind of donkey.
Who has untied the bonds of the swift donkey
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am the one who untied the bonds of the swift donkey"
bonds
ropes, chains, or straps that hold an animal and keep it from running away
Job 39:6
General Information:
The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has untied" in verse 5 ends here.
whose home I have made ... in the salt land?
The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Who has untied" in verse 5 ends here. This can be translated as a statement. "I am the one who has untied ... whose home I have made in the Arabah, his house in the salt land."
whose home I have made in the Arabah
Yahweh describes the donkey as though he were a person that had a house. "I gave him the Arabah as a place to live"
the salt land
the land around the Salt Sea that has a lot of salt in it
Job 39:7
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
He
The word "He" refers to the wild donkey.
laughs in scorn
Yahweh describes the donkey as though he were a person. The donkey laughs because those in the city have to hear loud noise, but he lives in a quiet place.
the driver's
someone who forces an animal to work
Job 39:8
pastures
places where animals can eat plants growing in the field
Job 39:9
General Information:
Here Yahweh uses four questions to emphasize that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild ox.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Will the wild ox be happy to serve you?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The wild ox will not be happy to serve you."
the wild ox
Possible meanings are 1) a type of ox that used to live in the wild or 2) some kind of buffalo that looked like oxen.
be happy
"be willing"
Will he consent to stay by your manger?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He will not consent to stay by your manger."
consent to stay by your manger
"stay by your manger through the night"
manger
something that holds food so that animals can eat it
Job 39:10
Can you use ropes to hold the wild ox in the furrows?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot control the wild ox with a rope in order to plow furrows in your fields."
ropes
Farmers would tie ropes to animals' heads or necks in order to lead them.
furrows
These are long channels made in the dirt while plowing. See how you translated this in Job 31:38.
Will he harrow the valleys as he follows after you?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He will never harrow the valleys as he follows after you."
harrow
to smooth and break up the soil
Job 39:11
General Information:

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Here Yahweh uses three questions to continue his argument that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild ox.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Will you trust him because his strength is great?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot trust him because his strength is great."

trust him

The word "him" refers to the "wild ox."

Will you leave your labor to him to do?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You will not be able to make him do your labor for you."

leave your labor to him to do

"have him do your hard work for you"

Job 39:12

Will you depend on him ... grain for your threshing floor?

These two clauses basically mean the same thing. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You will not be able to depend on him ... grain for your threshing floor."

Job 39:13

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

The wings of the ostrich ... pinions and plumage of love?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that Job cannot explain why ostriches behave the way they do. Alternate translation: "You do not know whether the pinions and plumage of the ostrich represent love when they wave their wings proudly."

ostrich

a very large bird that can run very fast but cannot fly

wave proudly

"move with joy"

pinions

the very long feathers on the wings of birds

plumage

the smaller feathers that cover the body of a bird

of love

The Hebrew word is uncertain. Possible meanings are 1) "of faithfulness" or 2) "of a stork." The name of the stork meant "the faithful one" or "the loving one" because people knew that storks take very good care of their chicks.

Job 39:14

on the earth

"on the ground"

Job 39:15

crush them

The word "them" refers to the eggs.

trample them

"step on them"

Job 39:16

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

She deals roughly

The word "She" refers to the female ostrich.

her labor

the work that she does when she lays the eggs

might have been in vain

If the chicks die, all of her work was useless. Alternate translation: "might have been useless if the chicks die"

Job 39:17

deprived her of wisdom

"made her forget wisdom" or "not given her wisdom"

understanding

See how you translated this in Job 11:6.

Job 39:18

When she runs

This verse is in contrast to her weakness in caring for her chicks. Alternate translation: "However, when she runs"

she laughs ... its rider

It is implied that she laughs because she is faster than the horse. Alternate translation: "she laughs ... its rider because she can run faster than the horse"

Job 39:19

General Information:

Yahweh uses three questions to emphasize that Job is not like Yahweh because Job cannot control the wild horse.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Have you given the horse his strength?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have never given the horse his strength."

Did you clothe his neck with his flowing mane?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot clothe his neck with his flowing mane."

clothe his neck with his flowing mane

The horse's "mane" is spoken of as if it was clothing for the neck of the horse. Alternate translation: "made his flowing main to cover his neck like clothes"

flowing mane

the long hair on the top of the neck of a horse

Job 39:20

Have you ever made him jump like a locust?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not able to make him jump like a locust."

a locust

a large kind of grasshopper that can jump very far and very quickly

snorting

a very loud sound that horses make with their nose

Job 39:21

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

He paws

The word "He" refers to the horse. The horse paws the ground because he is very excited to begin the fight. Alternate translation: "He paws with excitement and"

paws

"digs at the ground with his hooves"

to meet the weapons

Here "the weapons" represent the battle in which they are used. Alternate translation: "to join in the battle"

Job 39:22

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He mocks fear
"He is not afraid at all"
mocks
"laughs at"
dismayed
discouraged
does not turn back
"does not run away"
Job 39:23
quiver
a container that holds arrows
rattles
shakes and makes noise
flank
the side of a horse
javelin
a long stick with a sharp end that people throw at their enemies
Job 39:24
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
He
The word "He" refers to the horse.
swallows up ground
The horse runs over the ground so quickly that the ground passes by like water that a person drinks. Alternate translation: "runs very fast over the ground"
with fierceness and rage
The horse is very excited, so he moves quickly and strongly.
at the sound of the ram's horn
It can be stated that someone blows the ram's horn. Alternate translation: "when someone blows a ram's horn to announce that a battle has begun"
he cannot stand in one place
"he is too excited to stand still"
Job 39:25
he says, 'Aha
The word "Aha" is a sound people make when they discover something. The horse makes a sound because he has discovered the battle.
the thunderous shouts
It is implied that the horse hears these things. Alternate translation: "he hears the thunderous shouts"
the outcries
"the battle cries." People have special shouts that they use in war to show their great strength and bravery and to scare the enemy.
Job 39:26
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Is it by your wisdom ... for the south?
Yahweh uses this question to prove that Job is not as great as Yahweh. The implicit answer to this question is "no." Alternate translation: "It is not by your wisdom ... for the south."
stretches out his wings for the south
Here the stretching out of his wings refers to flying. Alternate translation: "flies to the south"
for the south
In the biblical geography, birds fly south during the winter in order to live in warmer climates.
Job 39:27
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
Is it at your orders ... nest in high places?
Yahweh uses this question to prove that Job is not powerful enough to command the eagles. The implicit answer to this question is "no." Alternate translation: "You are not able to command the eagle to mount up and build his nest in high places."
at your orders
The abstract noun "orders" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you tell it to do so"
mounts up
This means he flies upward. Alternate translation: "flies up into the sky"
Job 39:28
a stronghold
The high cliffs are strongholds for eagles because the animals that would want to eat them cannot reach them.
Job 39:29
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to challenge Job.
he searches for victims
Here the word "he" refers to the eagle.
for victims
"for animals that he can kill and eat"
his eyes see them
Here "his eyes" refer to the eagle. Alternate translation: "he sees them"
Job 39:30
His young
"The baby eagles." It may be helpful to state that this happens after the eagle kills and animal. Alternate translation: "After an eagle kills an animal, the baby eagles"
drink up blood
"drink the blood of the animal that he killed"
where killed people are
"where there are dead people." This phrase refers to dead bodies that are lying out in the open, not to bodies that are buried in the ground.
there he is
It can be made explicit that he comes to eat the dead bodies. Alternate translation: "he is there to eat them"

40 [1]Yahweh continued to speak to Job; he said,
[2]"Should anyone who wishes to criticize try to correct the Almighty?
He who argues with God, let him answer."

[3]Then Job answered Yahweh and said,

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4 "See, I am insignificant; how can I answer you?
I put my hand over my mouth.

5 I spoke once, and I will not answer;
indeed, twice, but I will proceed no further."

6 Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,
7 "Now gird up your loins like a man,
for I will ask you questions, and you must answer me.

8 Will you actually say that I am unjust?
Will you condemn me so you may claim that you are in the right?

9 Do you have an arm like God's,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?

10 Now clothe yourself in glory and dignity;
array yourself in honor and majesty.

11 Scatter around the excess of your anger;
look at everyone who is proud and bring him low.

12 Look at everyone who is proud and bring him low;
trample down wicked people where they stand.

13 Bury them in the earth together;
imprison their faces in the hidden place.

14 Then will I also acknowledge about you
that your own right hand can save you.

15 See now, the behemoth,
which I made when I made you—
he eats grass like an ox.

16 See now, his strength is in his loins,
and his power is in his belly's muscles.

17 He makes his tail like a cedar;
the sinews of his thighs are joined together.

18 His bones are like tubes of bronze;
his legs are like bars of iron.

19 He is the chief of the creatures of God.
Only God, who made him, can defeat him.

20 For the hills provide him with food;
the beasts of the field play nearby.

21 He lies under the lotus plants
in the shelter of the reeds, in the marshes.

22 The lotus plants cover him with their shade;
the willows of the brook are all around him.

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23 See, if a river floods its banks, he does not tremble;
he is confident, though the Jordan should surge up to his mouth.

24 Can anyone capture him with a hook,
or pierce his nose through with a snare?

Job 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 40:1-2, 4-5, 7-24, which are extended quotations of Job and Yahweh, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Job's righteousness

In seeking to defend his own righteousness, Job accuses Yahweh of being unjust. Yahweh asks a very important question: "Will you condemn me so you may claim you are right?" This is the essence of Job's error.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony

Yahweh states, "He who argues with God, let him answer." Job immediately answers him. This is irony. While Job is forced to acknowledge the power of Yahweh, he does not repent of his former statements. Because of this, Yahweh asks him more questions. (See: repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Animals

There are several animals mentioned in this chapter that do not exist and may never have existed. It may be necessary to leave these names untranslated or to translate their names as adjectives.

Links:

Job 40:1 Notes

Job 40:1

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Job 40:2

Should anyone who wishes to criticize try to correct the Almighty?

Yahweh is rebuking Job. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one who wants to criticize me should try to argue with me, for I am Almighty God." or "You, a person, want to criticize me, Almighty God, but you should not try to correct me."

He who argues with God, let him answer

Yahweh speaks of Job and himself as if they were two other people to remind Job that no person anywhere should argue with God. Alternate translation: "You want to argue with me, so answer me"

Job 40:4

See, I am

"You are right when you say that I am" or "Look at me and you will see that I am"

I am insignificant

"I am not important"

how can I answer you?

Job uses this question to apologize for questioning God. Alternate translation: "I cannot answer you."

Job 40:7

gird up your loins like a man

A man who tucks his robe up under his sash or belt is preparing for hard physical work, and Job was to prepare for the hard work of answering God. See how you translated this in [Job 38:3]

Job 40:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to challenge Job.

Will you actually say that I am unjust?

The word "actually" indicates that Yahweh is surprised that Job would say that Yahweh is unjust and that Job should make sure that he really wants to say that. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you are saying I am unjust." or "You should be sure that you want to say that I am unjust, because that is what you are saying."

Will you condemn me so you may claim that you are in the right?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are condemning me so you can claim that you are innocent."

Job 40:9

an arm like God's

The arm is a metonym for the strength in the arm. Alternate translation: "strength like God's strength"

can you thunder with a voice like his?

God uses this rhetorical question to show Job that God is powerful and Job is not. Alternate translation: "you certainly cannot thunder with a voice like God's."

can you thunder with a voice like his

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Here "thunder with a voice" is a metaphor for speaking in way that is extremely loud and frightening like thunder. Alternate translation: "can you speak with the sound of thunder as he does"

a voice like his

"a voice like his voice"

Job 40:10

clothe yourself in glory and dignity; array yourself in honor and majesty

The abstract nouns "glory," "dignity," "honor," and "majesty" are spoken of as if they were clothing that a person could put on. They can be translated as adjectives and verbs. Alternate translation: "make yourself glorious; do something great so people will respect you and honor you; make people think you are a great king"

Job 40:11

Scatter around the excess of your anger

The abstract noun "anger" is spoken of as it it were something that usually could be held in a container, but in this situation there is so much of it that what does not fit needs to be spread around. It is also a metonym for the actions a person takes when he is angry. You may need to make explicit why the person is angry. Alternate translation: "Be angry because people are proud, and punish them"

bring him low

"take away everything he is proud of"

Job 40:13

their faces

The "face" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "them"

the hidden place

a euphemism for the place where people's spirits go when they die

Job 40:15

See now, the behemoth

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: the behemoth"

behemoth

a large water animal, possibly the hippopotamus

he eats

the behemoth eats

eats grass like an ox

Both the behemoth and the ox eat grass.

Job 40:16

See now, his strength

The phrase "See now" indicates that what follows is an exhortation for the hearer to pay attention. "Listen carefully: his strength" See how you translated this phrase in Job 40:15.

loins ... belly's muscles

These two phrases refer to the same part of the body.

Job 40:17

like a cedar

Cedar is a very hard wood, and his tail becomes very hard.

Job 40:18

like tubes of bronze

Here, his bones are compared to tubes made of bronze to show how tough this animal is.

like bars of iron

This last comparison describes the strength of this great animal.

Job 40:19

chief of the creatures

"most important of the creatures" or "strongest of the creatures"

the creatures of God. Only God

Yahweh speaks as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "of my creatures. Only I, God"

Job 40:20

the hills provide him with food

The hills are spoken of as if they were people capable of giving him food. Alternate translation: "food grows on the hills for him"

Job 40:21

lotus plants

flowering plants that float on the water in swampy areas

reeds

tall grasses found in swamps or marshes

Job 40:22

lotus plants

flowering plants that float on the water in swampy areas. See how you translated this in Job 40:19.

willows of the brook

Willows are large trees that grow in damp ground. If they are unknown in your culture, you can use a general term for trees that grow near water.

Job 40:23

banks

sides of the river

though the Jordan should surge up to his mouth

"even if the flood of the Jordan should come up to his mouth"

Job 40:24

Can anyone capture him with a hook ... snare?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can capture him with a hook or pierce his nose through with a snare."

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[1] 41 Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
Or tie up his jaws with a cord?

[2] Can you put a rope into his nose,
or pierce his jaw through with a hook?

[3] Will he make many pleas to you?
Will he speak soft words to you?

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4 Will he make a covenant with you,
that you should take him for a servant forever?

5 Will you play with him as you would with a bird?
Will you tie him up for your servant girls?

6 Will the groups of fishermen bargain for him?
Will they divide him up to trade among the merchants?

7 Can you fill his hide with harpoons
or his head with fishing spears?

8 Put your hand on him just once,
and you will remember the battle and do it no more.

9 See, the hope of anyone who does that is a lie;
will not anyone be thrown down to the ground just by the sight of him?

10 None is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up;
who, then, is he who can stand before me?

11 Who has first given anything to me in order that I should repay him?
Whatever is under the whole sky is mine.

12 I will not keep silent concerning Leviathan's legs,
nor about the matter of his strength, nor about his graceful form.

13 Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who can penetrate his double armor?

14 Who can open the doors of his face—
ringed with his teeth, which are a terror?

15 his back is made up of rows of shields,
tight together as with a close seal.

16 One is so near to another
that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined to each other;
they stick together, so that they cannot be pulled apart.

18 Light flashes out from his snorting;
his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning dawn.

19 Out of his mouth go burning torches,
sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goes smoke
like a boiling pot on a fire that has been fanned to be very hot.

21 His breath kindles coals into flame;
fires go out from his mouth.

22 In his neck is strength,
and terror dances in front of him.

23 The folds of his flesh are joined together;

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they are firm on him; they cannot be moved.

24 His heart is as hard as a stone—
indeed, as hard as a lower millstone.

25 When he raises himself up, even the gods become afraid;
because of its thrashing they draw back.

26 If a sword strikes him, it does nothing—
and neither does a spear, an arrow, or any other pointed weapon.

27 He thinks of iron as if it were straw,
and of bronze as if it were rotten wood.

28 An arrow cannot make him flee;
to him sling stones become chaff.

29 Clubs are regarded as straw;
he laughs at the whirring flight of a spear.

30 His lower parts are like sharp pieces of broken pottery;
he leaves a spreading trail in the mud as if he were a threshing sledge.

31 He makes the deep to foam up like a pot of boiling water;
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment.

32 He makes a shining wake behind him;
one would think the deep had gray hair.

33 On earth there is no equal to him,
who has been made to live without fear.

34 He sees everything that is proud;
he is king over all the sons of pride."

Job 41 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of this chapter, which is an extended quotation of Yahweh, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. It is a continuation of the previous chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh uses a series of rhetorical questions in this chapter in order to defend his character and to convince Job to repent. (See: and repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Animals

There are several animals mentioned in this chapter that do not exist and may never have existed. It may be necessary to leave these names untranslated or to translate their names as adjectives.

Links:

Job 41:1 Notes

Job 41:1

General Information:

God continues speaking. He is using many rhetorical questions to challenge Job.

Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?

God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you

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cannot draw out Leviathan with a fishhook."
draw out
pull out of the water
Or tie up his jaws with a cord?
The words "can you" are understood from the previous question. They can be repeated here. God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Or can you tie up his jaws with a cord?" or "And you know that you cannot tie up his jaws with a cord."
his jaws
Leviathan's jaws
Job 41:2
Can you put a rope into his nose ... with a hook?
God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot put a rope into Leviathan's nose ... with a hook."
Job 41:3
Will he make many pleas to you?
God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not make pleas to you."
he
Leviathan
Will he speak soft words to you?
God uses this question to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not speak soft words to you."
Job 41:4
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to rebuke Job. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan.
Will he make a covenant with you, that you should take him for a servant forever?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that he will not make a covenant with you, that you should take him for a servant forever."
he ... him
The words "he" and "him" refer to Leviathan.
Job 41:5
Will you play with him as you would with a bird?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot play with him as you would play with a bird."
Will you tie him up for your servant girls?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that you cannot tie him up for your servant girls."
Job 41:6
Will the groups of fishermen bargain for him?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that the groups of fishermen will not bargain for him."
Will they divide him up to trade among the merchants?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that they will not divide him up to trade among the merchants."
Will they divide
"Will the groups of fishermen divide"
Job 41:7
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to rebuke Job. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Job is not powerful like Leviathan.
Can you fill his hide with harpoons or his head with fishing spears?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You cannot pierce his skin with your hunting weapons, nor can you pierce his head with fishing spears."
his
Leviathan's
harpoons
large spears with barbed points that people use to hunt large sea creatures
Job 41:8
him
Leviathan
Job 41:9
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."
will not anyone be thrown down to the ground just by the sight of him?
This generalization can be translated as a statement in active form. Alternate translation: "Anyone who looks at him will be so frightened that he will throw himself on the ground."
the sight of him
"by looking at him" or "by seeing him"
Job 41:10
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to rebuke Job by asking him rhetorical questions. He uses rhetorical questions to remind Job that Yahweh is much more powerful than both Leviathan and Job.
None is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up; who, then, is he who can stand before me?
It would be easier to stir up Leviathan than to stand before Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Since you know that no person is so fierce that he dare stir Leviathan up, you should certainly know that no one can stand before me."
Job 41:11
Who has first given anything to me in order that I should repay him?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that no one has first given anything to me, so there is no one whom I need to repay."
Job 41:12
I will not keep silent concerning ... nor about ... nor about
This can be translated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will certainly speak about ... and about ... and about"
concerning Leviathan's legs, nor about the matter of his strength, nor about his graceful form
These are three things about which God will not keep silent.
his

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The word "his" refers to Leviathan.
Job 41:13
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to rebuke Job by asking him rhetorical questions.
Who can strip off his outer garment?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can strip off his outer clothing."
his ... his
Leviathan's
Who can penetrate his double armor?
The word "armor" is a metaphor for the hard scales or hide on his back. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can penetrate his very thick hide."
Job 41:14
Who can open the doors of his face ... terror?
This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can pry his jaws apart ... terror."
Job 41:15
shields
The word "shields" is a metaphor for Leviathan's hide. Both shields and Leviathan's hide protect well and deflect arrows and other weapons.
tight together as with a close seal
This means the "shields" are very close to one another and nothing can get between them.
Job 41:16
One is so near to another
One row of shields is so near to another (Job 41:15).
between them
between the rows of shields (Job 41:15)
Job 41:17
They ... they ... they
the rows of shields (Job 41:15).
they cannot be pulled apart
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can pull them apart"
Job 41:18
from his snorting
"when he snorts." A snort is a sound like a short snore. Another possible meaning is "from his sneezing" or "when he sneezes."
his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning dawn
This means that his eyes are red as the morning dawn is red.
his
The word "his" refers to Leviathan.
Job 41:19
Out of his mouth go burning torches, sparks of fire leap out
God expresses the same idea in two different ways in order to emphasize the terrifying appearance of Leviathan. You can make this clear by adding the omitted words. Alternate translation: "Out of his mouth go burning torches, sparks of fire leap out of his mouth"
his
The word "his" refers to Leviathan.
Job 41:20
nostrils
the two openings of the nose
smoke like a boiling pot
Both the smoke and a boiling pot are very hot.
Job 41:21
kindles coals into flame
"causes coals to catch fire"
Job 41:22
his ... him
The words "his" and "him" refer to Leviathan.
terror dances in front of him
The abstract noun "terror" can be translated as the verb "be afraid." Alternate translation: "when people see him coming, they are very afraid"
Job 41:23
they cannot be moved
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can move them"
Job 41:24
His heart is as hard as a stone
A rock or stone does not change and become soft. Possible meanings are 1) Leviathan's physical chest and the organs inside it are physically hard or 2) Leviathan is not afraid of anything or 3) Leviathan is spoken of as a person who kills without ever being sorry.
a lower millstone
"the hardest of rocks." The lower millstone is the larger and harder of the two rocks used to grind grain. It would be the hardest rock people could find.
Job 41:25
he ... himself
Leviathan
the gods
Possible meanings are 1) "mighty people" or 2) "very strong people" .
Job 41:26
strikes him
strikes Leviathan
Job 41:27
He thinks of iron as if it were straw
"He thinks of weapons made of iron as if they were weapons made of straw." Straw would not get through his hide, and iron weapons do not get through his hide.
of bronze as if it were rotten wood
You can make this clear by adding the omitted words. Alternate translation: "he thinks of weapons made of bronze as if they were weapons made of rotten wood"
Job 41:28
to him sling stones become chaff
Chaff cannot hurt Leviathan, and sling stones are just as ineffective as chaff.
him ... him
Leviathan
Job 41:29
Clubs are regarded as straw
A club made of straw would not hurt him, and a club made of wood would not hurt him. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He thinks of clubs as if they were straw"
he laughs at the whirring flight of a spear

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The person throwing the spear hopes that the spear will kill Leviathan, but the writer speaks as if Leviathan knows the spear will not kill him and so laughs.
he laughs
Leviathan laughs
Job 41:30
His ... he ... he
These words refer to Leviathan.
he leaves a spreading trail in the mud as if he were a threshing sledge
Just as a threshing sledge goes over grain on a threshing floor and turns it to powder, so Leviathan's tail leaves a trail in the mud as he wags it when he walks.
Job 41:31
He makes the deep to foam up like a pot of boiling water
"As he passes through the water, he leaves a trail of bubbles behind him, like the bubbling of boiling water in a pot"
He
The word "he" refers to Leviathan.
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment
The ointment in a pot is cloudy if someone shakes it, and the sea is muddy when Leviathan swims in it.
Job 41:32
one would think the deep had gray hair
This is because the bubbles in his wake are white.
Job 41:33
there is no equal to him
"no other creature is like Leviathan"
him
Leviathan
Job 41:34
He sees everything that is proud
"He is very, very proud"
he is king over all the sons of pride
Leviathan is spoken of as if he were a person who is able to become king and be proud. Alternate translation: "Leviathan has more reason to be proud than anyone else on earth"
He ... he
Leviathan

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42 [1]Then Job answered Yahweh and said,
[2] "I know that you can do all things,
that no purpose of yours can be stopped.

[3] 'Who is this who without knowledge conceals plans?'
Indeed, I have spoken things that I did not understand,
things too difficult for me to understand, which I did not know about.

[4] You said to me, 'Listen, now, and I will speak;
I will ask you things,
and you will tell me.'

[5] I had heard about you by my ear's hearing,
but now my eye sees you.

[6] So I despise myself;
I repent in dust and ashes."

[7]It came about that after he had said these words to Job, Yahweh said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has done.[8]Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer, so that I may not deal with you after your folly. You have not said what is right about me, as my servant Job has done."[9]So Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as Yahweh had commanded them, and Yahweh accepted Job.

[10]When Job prayed for his friends, Yahweh reversed his captivity. Yahweh gave him twice as much as he had possessed before.[11]Then all Job's brothers, and all his sisters, and all who knew him before, came to him and ate food with him in his house. They showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the disasters that Yahweh had brought upon him, and each of them gave Job a piece of silver and a ring of gold.
[12]Yahweh blessed the final end of Job's life more than the first; he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys.[13]He also had seven sons and three daughters.[14]He called the name of the first daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-Happuch.
[15]In all the land no women were found as beautiful as Job's daughters. Their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers.[16]After this, Job lived 140 years; he saw his sons and his sons' sons, up to four generations.[17]Then Job died, being old and full of days.

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Job 42 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers, or songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 42:1-6, which is an extended quotation of Job, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

In this chapter Job shows his complete trust in Yahweh. (See: trust)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

Yahweh enacts justice at the end of this book. He punishes Job's friends and restores Job's blessings. Yahweh's blessing was not dependent upon Job's repentance, but upon Yahweh's grace. (See: justice, restore, bless and repent and grace)

Links:

Job 42:1 Notes

Job 42:2

I know that you can do all things, that no purpose of yours can be stopped

You may want to repeat the words "I know." Alternate translation: "I know that you can do all things. I know that no purpose of yours can be stopped"

no purpose of yours can be stopped

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can stop any of your plans"

Job 42:3

Who is this

The ULB and most modern versions agree that Job is loosely quoting God's own words from [Job 38:2]

conceals plans

That is, hides or misrepresents God's plans.

Job 42:5

but now my eye sees you

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents understanding. Alternate translation: "but now I really understand you"

Job 42:6

despise myself

Job's self is a metonym for what he said. Alternate translation: "I despise the things I said"

despise

intensely dislike

I repent in dust and ashes

Sitting in dust and ashes is a symbolic act showing the person is sorry.

Job 42:7

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Eliphaz the Temanite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

My wrath is kindled against you

Fire is a metaphor for anger, and starting a fire is a metaphor for becoming angry. Alternate translation: "I have become very angry with you"

Job 42:8

seven bulls

"7 bulls"

so that I may not deal with you after your folly

The abstract noun "folly" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "even though you have been very foolish, I will not punish you as you deserve"

Job 42:9

Bildad the Shuhite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

Zophar the Naamathite

See how you translated this man's name in Job 2:11

Yahweh accepted Job

The person is a metonym for the prayer he prays. Alternate translation: "God accepted Job's prayer for his three friends"

Job 42:10

Yahweh reversed his captivity

This is an idiom that means that Yahweh restored Job's good life. Alternate translation: "Yahweh restored his riches" or "Yahweh restored his wealth"

Job 42:11

all who knew him before

"all the people he had known before"

Job 42:12

more than the first

The words "he blesed" and "of Job's life" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here Alternate translation: "more than he blessed the first part of Job's life"

fourteen thousand sheep

14,000 sheep

six thousand camels

6,000 camels

one thousand yoke of oxen

1,000 yoke of oxen

Job 42:13

seven sons and three daughters

7 sons and 3 daughters

Job 42:14

Jemimah ... Keziah ... Keren-Happuch

women's names

Job 42:15

no women were found as beautiful as Job's daughters

"Job's daughters were more beautiful than all the other women"

Job 42:16

lived 140 years

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"lived 140 years" Job 42:17 being old and full of days	The words "full of days" means basically the same thing as "being old." The two phrases form a common idiom. Alternate translation: "a very old man"

Introduction to Psalms

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Psalms

Book One (Psalms 1-41) Book Two (Psalms 42-72) Book Three (Psalms 73-89) Book Four (Psalms 90-106) Book Five (Psalms 107-150)

What is the Book of Psalms?

The Book of Psalms is a collection of songs. People called psalmists wrote them for different reasons. In some psalms, the psalmists expressed their praise for God. In other psalms, they asked God for help and expressed confidence in his love and power. In others, they confessed their sins and begged for mercy. The Israelites wrote some psalms to ask Yahweh to defeat their enemies. Other psalms celebrated the event of a new king beginning his reign. Psalmists also wrote to praise the city of Jerusalem. They wrote some psalms to instruct people on how to be wise by honoring Yahweh and obeying his law. Also, pilgrims sang some of the psalms while traveling to Jerusalem to worship there. Some psalms became songs of praise in the temple worship of Yahweh.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title of this book, "The Book of Psalms" or just "Psalms." Another title of this book is "Songs of Praise." Translators may express this meaning in their own languages, or they may choose to use or transliterate the name from another language version if it is well known. For example, the French title "Les Psaumes" might be understood by everyone in a project language, if French is the language of wider communication in the region.

When was the Book of Psalms written?

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

What are the Messianic psalms?

Some psalms are called "Messianic psalms." New Testament writers considered these psalms to prophesy about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. They cited Psalms 2, 8, 16, 22, 34, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 89, 102, 109, 110, and 118 at least one time each in the New Testament.

What are superscriptions in the Psalms?

Many psalms give some information called superscriptions before the beginning of the psalm. Some of the expressions in the superscriptions are difficult to understand, so modern versions often have different interpretations of them.
Seventy-three psalms are called "A psalm of David." This may mean they were written by King David. Or, it could mean someone wrote them for David or in the style that David used when he composed poetry. The superscriptions of some psalms give the historical situations in which they were written.
Some superscriptions give instructions about how they should be played and sung. They tell which instruments, singers, or melodies that should be used for that psalm. Fifty-five psalms are addressed "to the choirmaster" or "chief musician." The psalmists seem to have meant them to be used in temple worship.
Traditionally, English versions do not give verse numbers to the superscriptions. But many versions in other languages do. Whether or not translators give them verse numbers, they should consider the superscriptions in the Psalms as part of the divinely inspired biblical text.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What are some important ways in which Yahweh is pictured in the Book of Psalms?

The psalmists often pictured Yahweh as:

a king who rules over the nation of Israel and over all the nations a shepherd who leads the people of Israel and also the individual psalm writers a "rock," that is, a high rocky mountain on which people can be completely safe from their enemies a strong warrior who always defeats his enemies.

What is the importance of honor and shame in the Book of Psalms?

When people honor someone, they think well of him and may even admire him. On the other hand, if people shame someone, that person loses honor and is disgraced.
Psalmists often expressed a great desire that Yahweh would be honored by the Israelites and also by the rest of the world. Also, psalmists often expressed fear that they would be shamed by their enemies. When they felt this way, the psalmists wrote of their trust that Yahweh would not allow this to happen.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why do the ULB and UDB display the Book of Psalms as poetry, but some modern versions do not?

The psalmists wrote the Psalms as Hebrew poetry. The ULB and UDB set each line farther to the right on the page than regular text is placed to show that the writing is poetry rather than prose.

This style typically uses pairs of poetic lines that relate to each other in different ways. Usually, poetic lines are said to be "parallel" to each other. A line that is indented farther to the right is paired with the line above it.

Translators will have to decide whether to present the Psalms as poetry or as prose in their own language. Translators will need to consider whether their language has poetic forms that are suitable for expressing the Psalms.

Why do some versions number the Psalms differently than others?

From ancient times, people have numbered the Psalms in different ways. The Jews numbered the Psalms in Hebrew in one way. When they translated the Psalms into Greek, they numbered them in a different way. As a result, the Hebrew numbering and the Greek numbering of Psalms were both passed down through the centuries. They are both still in use today. Translators will probably want to number the Psalms in the same way that most versions in their own country do.

How should the translator view the terms Selah and Higgaion that occur in various psalms?

"Selah" and "Higgaion" seem to be musical terms inserted as directions for singers and musicians. Scholars do not agree as to their meaning. For this reason, translators may decide to transliterate them or leave them out but not try to translate them.

Psalms

1 Blessed is the man
who does not walk in the advice of the wicked,
or stand in the pathway with sinners,
or sit in the assembly of mockers.

2 But his delight is in the law of Yahweh,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree planted by the streams of water
that produces its fruit in its season,
whose leaves do not wither;
whatever he does will prosper.

4 The wicked are not so,
but are like the chaff that the wind drives away.

5 So the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For Yahweh approves of the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

Psalm 1 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 1 is usually considered to be a "wisdom psalm," which gives advice to those who hear it read or sung. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessed

A main theme in this psalm is what it means to be blessed. Here "blessed" refers to anyone who is well off because of a good relationship to God. The contrasting theme is that there are ungodly people, those who refuse to honor God. (See: bless and godly)

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People who opposed Yahweh
There are several words in this psalm for those who oppose God: "the wicked" (those who do evil), "sinners" (those who ignore God's law), and "mockers" (those who mock God and the righteous people). (See: evil, sin and lawofmoses and righteous)

Links:

Psalms 1:1 Psalms intro

Psalms 1:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
who does not walk in the advice of the wicked
The "advice of the wicked" is spoken of as if it were a path to follow. Alternate translation: "who does not follow the advice of the wicked" or "who does not do what wicked people advise"
stand in the pathway with sinners
Here the word "pathway" represents the way people live. The word "stand" is in parallel with "walk." Alternate translation: "imitate the behavior of sinful people"
or sit in the assembly of mockers
Sitting with people who mock God represents joining people who mock God. Alternate translation: "or join those who mock God" or "or mock God with others who mock him"
Psalms 1:2
his delight is in the law of Yahweh
The word "delight" is an abstract noun that can be stated as a verb. A person who can "delight ... in the law" is happy because the law is good and because one is obeying it. Alternate translation: "what makes him truly happy is the law of Yahweh" or "what makes him truly happy is to know that he is obeying the law of Yahweh"
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
Psalms 1:3
General Information:
This passage introduces an elaborate image in which a righteous person is thought of in terms of a flourishing tree.
He will be like a tree ... fruit in its season
In the Bible, people are often spoken of as trees. People who delight in Yahweh's law can do all God wants them to do just as a tree that is planted by water produces good fruit. Alternate translation: "He will be prosperous like a tree ... fruit in its season"
planted by the streams of water
A tree that is planted by a stream can get enough water to be healthy.
that produces its fruit in its season
Healthy trees produce good fruit at the right time.
whose leaves do not wither
If a tree gets enough water, its leaves do not dry out and die.
whatever he does will prosper
"He will be successful at whatever he does"
Psalms 1:4
The wicked are not so
How they are not like that can be stated clearly. "The wicked are not prosperous" or "The wicked do not prosper"
but are like the chaff
How they are like chaff can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "but are worthless like the chaff"
Psalms 1:5
will not stand in the judgment
Possible meanings are 1) not standing in the judgment is a metonym for being judged by God and having to leave his presence. Alternate translation: "will not continue to stay before God when he judges them" or "will have to leave God's presence when he judges them as guilty" or 2) not standing in the judgment is a metaphor for being condemned in the judgment. "Alternate translation: "will be condemned in the judgment" or "will be condemned when God judges them"
in the judgment
The noun judgment can be expressed as a verb. This probably refers to the final judgment when God judges all people. Alternate translation: "when God judges everyone"
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous
Translators can supply the verb "stand." Alternate translation: "neither will sinners stand in the assembly of the righteous" or "and sinners will not stand in the assembly of the righteous"
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous
Being accepted by God as righteous is spoken of as standing with the group of righteous people. Alternate translation: "and God will not accept sinners along with the righteous people"
Psalms 1:6
For Yahweh approves of the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish
These two clauses contrast what happens to righteous people with what happens to wicked people.
the way of the righteous
How people live is spoken of as if it were a "way" or "road" that they are walking on. Alternate translation: "how the righteous live"
the way of the wicked will perish
How people live and what they do is spoken of as if it were a "way" or "road" that they walk on. Possible meanings are 1) the way perishing represents the wicked perishing because of how they live. Alternate translation: "The wicked will die because of how they live" or 2) the way perishing is a metaphor for no longer being able to live the way they do. Alternate translation: "the wicked will no longer be able to live the way they live"

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2 [1] Why are the nations in turmoil,
and why do the peoples devise vain plans?

[2] The kings of the earth take their stand together
and the rulers take counsel together
against Yahweh and against his Messiah, saying,

[3] "Let us tear off the shackles they put on us
and throw off their chains."

[4] He who sits in the heavens will sneer at them;
the Lord mocks them.

[5] Then he will speak to them in his anger
and terrify them in his rage, saying,

[6] "I myself have set my king in place
on Zion, my holy mountain."

[7] I will announce a decree of Yahweh.
He said to me, "You are my son!
This day I have become your Father.

[8] Ask me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance
and the ends of the earth for your possession.

[9] You will break them with an iron rod;
like a jar of a potter, you will smash them to pieces."

[10] So now, you kings, be prudent;
be corrected, you judges of the earth.

[11] Worship Yahweh in fear
and rejoice with trembling.

[12] Kiss the son or he will be angry with you,
and you will die in the way when his anger burns for just a moment.
How blessed are all those who seek refuge in him.

Psalm 2 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 2 is usually considered a royal psalm because it is about the king. It was probably first sung when a new person became the king. It is often thought to be about the Messiah because of verse 6 and 7 reference the Son of God. (See: christ and sonofgod)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

The main theme of this psalm is that God is protecting and empowering the king he has appointed and that it is useless for the foreign nations to oppose God and his king.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

"Today I have begotten you" here is a metaphor meaning that God acknowledges the king as his special person.

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Links:

Psalms 2:1

Psalms 2:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Why are the nations in turmoil, and why do the peoples devise vain plans?

These questions are used to show surprise that the people are doing things that are so wrong and foolish. Alternate translation: "The nations are in turmoil and the peoples are devising vain plans."

are the nations in turmoil

This probably means that the nations were making a noisy and angry commotion.

the nations

This represents either the leaders or the people of the nations.

vain plans

These are probably plots against God and his people.

Psalms 2:2

The kings of the earth take their stand together ... the rulers take counsel together

These two clauses have similar meanings.

take their stand together ... take counsel together

These phrases have similar meanings, implying that the leaders stand together in order to fight against Yahweh and his Messiah. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "gather to fight ... plan together to revolt"

Psalms 2:3

Let us tear off the shackles ... throw off their chains

The people of other nations speak of Yahweh and the Messiah's rule over them as if it were shackles and chains. Alternate translation: "We should free ourselves from their control; we should not let them rule over us any longer"

Psalms 2:4

He ... the Lord

These phrases refer to Yahweh. Yahweh is often called "the Lord" but the words for "Yahweh" and "the Lord" are different.

sits in the heavens

Here sitting represents ruling. What he sits on can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "rules in the heavens" or "sits on his throne in heaven"

the Lord mocks them

"the Lord mocks those people." Why he mocks them can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The Lord mocks them for their foolish plans"

Psalms 2:5

terrify them in his rage

The abstract noun "rage" can be stated as "furious." Alternate translation: "he will be furious and terrify them"

terrify

greatly frighten

Psalms 2:6

I myself

Yahweh is emphasizing that he, and not someone else, has set his king in place.

set my king in place

"appointed my king to rule"

Psalms 2:7

I will announce a decree of Yahweh. He

The person saying this is the king. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The king says, 'I will announce a decree of Yahweh.' He"

He said to me

"Yahweh said to me"

You are my son! This day I have become your Father

Among many peoples in that part of the world then, men could decide to legally adopt children, who would become their heirs. Here Yahweh adopts a man and makes him king of Israel. Alternate translation: "I make you my son. This day I have become your Father" or "Now you are my son and am your Father"

Psalms 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to the new king of Israel.

the nations for your inheritance ... the ends of the earth for your possession

These phrases express very similar ideas.

the ends of the earth

"the lands that are very far away"

Psalms 2:9

You will break them with an iron rod; like a jar of a potter, you will smash them to pieces

These phrases express very similar ideas.

You will break them with an iron rod

Defeating the nations is spoken of as breaking them, and his power is spoken of as an iron rod. Alternate translation: "You will defeat them completely by your power"

you will smash them to pieces

Destroying nations is spoken of as if they could be smashed like a clay jar. Alternate translation: you will completely destroy them like a clay pot"

a jar of a potter

A potter is a person who makes clay pots and jars. These are fragile and can be broken easily. Alternate translation: "a clay jar" or "a clay pot"

Psalms 2:10

be corrected

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "listen to this correction" or "take this correction"

judges of the earth

"powerful people who govern the nations on earth"

Psalms 2:12

Kiss the son

People would show their king that they were loyal to him by kissing him, perhaps on the feet. Alternate translation: "Show the son that you are truly loyal to him" or "Bow down humbly before his son"

you will die in the way

This may refer to dying right there, before the person has a

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chance to go away. Alternate translation: "you will die immediately"

when his anger burns for just a moment

The king's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire that could burn. Alternate translation: "when he suddenly becomes very angry"

seek refuge in him

Asking the king for protection is spoken of as seeking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "ask the king to protect them"

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3 A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.
Yahweh, how many are my enemies!
Many have risen against me.

2 Many say about me,
"There is no deliverance for him from God."
Selah

3 But you, Yahweh, are a shield around me,
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.

4 I lift up my voice to Yahweh,
and he answers me from his holy hill.
Selah

5 I lay down and slept;
I awoke, for Yahweh protected me.

6 I will not be afraid of the multitudes of people
who have set themselves against me on every side.

7 Rise up, Yahweh! Save me, my God!
For you will hit all my enemies on the jaw;
you will break the teeth of the wicked.

8 Salvation comes from Yahweh.
May your blessings be on your people.
Selah

Psalm 3 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 3 is a psalm of deliverance. It is a morning song intended to be sung in the temple accompanied by musical instruments during morning worship. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

Although the psalmist has many enemies and is saying he is without help, God is protecting him and delivering him from danger.

Links:

Psalms 3:1

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Psalms 3:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

Yahweh, how many are my enemies!

This exclamation shows that David is afraid of his enemies. Alternate translation: "Oh Yahweh, I have so many enemies!"

have risen against me

Fighting against someone is spoken of as rising against him. Alternate translation: "come against me"

Psalms 3:3

you, Yahweh, are a shield around me

A shield protects a soldier. David speaks as if God were a shield protecting him. Alternate translation: "you, Yahweh, protect me like a shield"

my glory

"you are my glory." By calling God his glory, David says that God is the one who gives him glory. Since David has just spoken about his enemies and God being his protector, he probably meant that God gives him glory by giving him victory over his enemies. Alternate translation: "you are the one who gives me glory" or "you are the one who gives me victory"

the one who lifts up my head

"you are the one who lifts up my head." Giving someone courage is spoken of as lifting up his head. Alternate translation: "the one who encourages me"

Psalms 3:4

I lift up my voice

Using one's voice to cry out is spoken as as lifting up his voice. Alternate translation: "I cry out"

Psalms 3:6

have set themselves against me on every side

"have surrounded me to destroy me"

Psalms 3:7

Rise up

David speaks of starting to do something as getting up. Alternate translation: "Take action" or "Do something"

hit all my enemies ... break the teeth of the wicked

These phrases say very similar things. The phrases "my enemies" and "the wicked" refer to the same group of people.

For you will hit all my enemies on the jaw

This was a way of insulting people. David speaks as if Yahweh would come and physically hit his enemies. Alternate translation: "For you will insult all my enemies like someone hitting them on the jaw"

you will break the teeth of the wicked

Animals attack with their teeth. Breaking their teeth takes away their power to attack. David speaks as if Yahweh would come and physically fight against the wicked. Alternate translation: "you will make the wicked unable to harm me like someone breaking the teeth of a ferocious animal"

Psalms 3:8

Salvation comes from Yahweh

The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "Yahweh saves his people"

4 For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm of David.
Answer me when I call, God of my righteousness;
give me room when I am hemmed in.
Have mercy on me and listen to my prayer.

2 You people, how long will you turn my honor into shame?
How long will you love what is worthless and seek after lies?

Selah

3 But know that Yahweh has set apart the faithful ones for himself.
Yahweh will hear when I call to him.

4 Tremble in fear, but do not sin!
Meditate in your heart on your bed and be silent.

Selah

5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness

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and put your trust in Yahweh.

6 Many say, "Who will show us anything good?"
Yahweh, lift up the light of your face on us.

7 You have given my heart more gladness
than others have when their grain and new wine abound.

8 It is in peace that I will lie down and sleep,
for you alone, Yahweh, make me safe and secure.

Psalm 4 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 4 is a psalm of deliverance. It is an evening song, intended to be sung in the temple accompanied by musical instruments during evening worship. (See: deliverer and temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

God protects all those who truly trust in him for protection. (See: trust)

Links:

Psalms 4:1

Psalms 4:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on stringed instruments

"people should play stringed instruments with this song"

Answer me when I call

"Respond to me when I call" or "Help me when I call"

God of my righteousness

"God, who shows that I am righteous"

give me room when I am hemmed in

Being in danger is spoken of as being in a narrow space. Alternate translation: "rescue me when I am in danger"

Psalms 4:2

General Information:

David sings this part of the song as if he is speaking to his enemies.

You people, how long will you turn my honor into shame?

David uses this question to rebuke his enemies. Alternate translation: "You people continually turn my honor into shame!"

turn my honor into shame

Shaming him instead of honoring him is spoken of as making his honor become shame. Alternate translation: "shame me instead of honoring me" or "bring me shame when you should be honoring me"

How long will you love what is worthless and seek after lies?

David uses this question to rebuke his enemies. Alternate translation: "You continue to love things that are worthless and seek after lies."

love what is worthless ... seek after lies

These two phrases are very similar in meaning. The lies are worthless. Alternate translation: "love worthless lies"

Psalms 4:3

Yahweh has set apart the faithful ones for himself

"Yahweh chooses godly people for himself"

Psalms 4:4

Tremble in fear

The relationship between "tremble" and "fear" and who people should fear can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Fear Yahweh so much that you tremble" or "Stand in awe of Yahweh"

Tremble

shake from fear

Meditate in your heart

The heart represents a person's thoughts. Thinking carefully is spoken of as meditating in one's heart. Alternate translation: "Think carefully"

Psalms 4:5

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness

"Offer the right sacrifices"

put your trust in Yahweh

Here "trust" is spoken of as if it were an object that could be put somewhere. The abstract noun "trust" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "trust in Yahweh" or "trust Yahweh"

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Psalms 4:6

Who will show us anything good?

This question is used either to ask for something or to express a wish about something that has not happened. Alternate translation: "Please show us something good!" or "We wish someone would show us something good!"

Who will show us anything good?

Possible meanings are 1) showing something good represents bringing good things. Alternate translation: "Who will bring good things to us?" or 2) showing something good represents saying that good things have happened. Alternate translation: "Who will say that anything good has happened?"

lift up the light of your face on us

The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. Alternate translation: "act favorably towards us"

Psalms 4:7

You have given my heart more gladness

The heart represents the person. Alternate translation: "You have given me more gladness"

You have given my heart more gladness than others have

Here "gladness" is spoken of as if it is an object that can be given. The abstract noun "gladness" can be stated as "glad." Alternate translation: "You have made me more glad than others are"

when their grain and new wine abound

"New wine" may represent grapes. Alternate translation: "when they reap plentiful harvests of grain and grapes"

Psalms 4:8

It is in peace that I will lie down and sleep

Peace is spoken of as if it were a place. This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "peace." Alternate translation: "I will be peaceful when I lie down and sleep" or "I will not be afraid of danger when I lie down and sleep"

make me safe and secure

The words "safe" and "secure" mean basically the same thing and emphasize complete safety. Alternate translation: "make me completely safe"

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5 For the chief musician; with wind instruments. A psalm of David.
Give ear to my words, Yahweh;
think about my groanings.

2 Listen to the sound of my call, my King and my God,
for it is to you that I pray.

3 Yahweh, in the morning you hear my cry;
in the morning I will bring my petition to you and wait expectantly.

4 Certainly you are not a God who takes pleasure in evil;
evil people will not be your guests.

5 The arrogant will not stand in your presence;
you hate all who behave wickedly.

6 You will destroy liars;
Yahweh abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.

7 But as for me, because of your great covenant faithfulness,
I will come into your house;
in reverence I will bow down toward your holy temple.

8 Oh Lord, lead me in your righteousness because of my enemies;
make your path straight before me.

9 For there is no truth in their mouth;
their inward being is wicked;
their throat is an open tomb;
they flatter with their tongue.

10 Declare them guilty, God;

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may their schemes be their downfall!
Drive them out for their many transgressions,
for they have rebelled against you.

11 But may all those who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them always shout for joy because you defend them;
let them be joyful in you, those who love your name.

12 For you will bless the righteous, Yahweh;
you will surround them with favor as with a shield.

Psalm 5 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 5 is a psalm of deliverance. Notice how the psalmist both praises God and asks him for help in defeating the wicked. It was intended to be sung accompanied by flutes. (See: deliverer and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

God does not help people who do evil but he blesses those who are good and trust in him. (See: bless and trust)

Links:

Psalms 5:1

Psalms 5:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

#For the chief musician; with wind instruments. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

with wind instruments

"This song should be accompanied by people who play wind instruments."

Give ear to my words

This is a call for help. Alternate translation: "Listen to me as I call to you for help"

groanings

low sounds that people make with the voice when they are suffering

Psalms 5:3

in the morning you hear my cry ... in the morning I will bring my petition to you

These two phrases are very similar in meaning.

I will bring my petition to you

"I will make my request" or "I will ask you for what I need"

wait expectantly

"wait, expecting you to do what I ask you to do"

Psalms 5:6

Yahweh abhors

Since David is speaking to God in this psalm, this sentence can be stated with the word "you." Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you abhor"

the man of bloodshed and deceit

The phrase "the man" here refers to any person. Alternate translation: "anyone who kills or deceives others"

Psalms 5:7

because of your great covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant"

your house

This refers to God's temple. Alternate translation: "your temple"

Psalms 5:8

lead me in your righteousness

David speaks of righteousness as if it were a path and of teaching as leading. The phrase "your righteousness" means that God is righteous Alternate translation: "teach me to do what is righteous as you do"

make your path straight before me

David speaks of righteousness as if it were a path. A straight path is easy to see or walk on. Alternate translation: "show me clearly how to live in the right way" or "make it easy for me to do what is right"

Psalms 5:9

General Information:

David talks about his enemies.

For there is no truth in their mouth

Truth being in the mouth represents speaking truthfully. Alternate translation: "For they never say what is true"

their inward being is wicked

The inward being represents people's thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "their thoughts and desires are wicked"

their throat

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The throat represents people's speech. Alternate translation: "their speech" or "what they say"

their throat is an open tomb

Their throat is spoken of as if it were an open tomb, ready for dead bodies to put into it. Possible meanings are 1) "they say that they will kill people" or 2) "What they say kills people"

they flatter with their tongue

"they say nice things about people without really meaning it"

their tongue

The tongue represents what people say.

Psalms 5:10

may their schemes be their downfall

"may their schemes cause them to experience disasters" or "may they become less important because of their schemes"

schemes

plans to harm people

downfall

This is something that causes a person to experience disasters or to lose power. Experiencing disaster or becoming less important is spoken of as falling.

Psalms 5:11

may all those who take refuge in you rejoice

God is spoken of as if he were a refuge, a place where people can be protected. Alternate translation: "May all those who go to you for protection rejoice"

those who take refuge in you rejoice ... shout for joy because you defend them

These two clauses express similar thoughts.

take refuge in you

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection"

those who love your name

God's name represents him. Alternate translation: "those who love you"

Psalms 5:12

you will surround them with favor as with a shield

God's favor is spoken of as if it were a shield. Alternate translation: "you will favor them and protect them as a soldier protects himself with his shield" or "because you are kind to them, you will protect them"

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6 For the chief musician; on stringed instruments, set to the Sheminith style. A psalm of David.

Yahweh, do not rebuke me in your anger
or discipline me in your wrath.

2 Have mercy on me, Yahweh, for I am frail;
heal me, Yahweh, for my bones are shaking.

3 My soul also is very troubled.
But you, Yahweh—how long will this continue?

4 Return, Yahweh! rescue me.
Save me because of your covenant faithfulness!

5 For in death there is no remembrance of you.
In Sheol who will give you thanks?

6 I am weary with my groaning.
All night I drench my bed with tears;
I dissolve my couch with my tears.

7 My eyes grow dim from grief;
they grow weak because of all my adversaries.

8 Get away from me, all you who behave wickedly;
for Yahweh has heard the sound of my weeping.

9 Yahweh has heard my appeal for mercy;
Yahweh has accepted my prayer.

10 All my enemies will be ashamed and greatly troubled.

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They will turn back and be suddenly humiliated.

Psalm 6 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 6 is a deliverance psalm: a call to God for help. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trouble

He is in deep trouble and needs God to help him in his difficult situation. But then God hears his prayer and scatters his enemies.

First Person

This psalm is written using first person making its perspective very personal. There are many uses of the first person in this Psalm.

Links:

Psalms 6:1

Psalms 6:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on stringed instruments

"people should play stringed instruments with this song"

set to the Sheminith style

This may refer to a style of music.

Psalms 6:2

my bones are shaking

The bones represent the whole body. His body may have been shaking because he was sick or extremely tired. Alternate translation: "my whole body is shaking"

Psalms 6:3

very troubled

"terrified" or "worried"

how long will this continue?

David uses this question to show that he does not want to continue feeling weak and troubled. Alternate translation: please, do not let this continue!"

Psalms 6:4

Return, Yahweh

David speaks of God being kind to him as God returning to him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, come back to me" or "Have mercy on me, Yahweh"

Save me because of your covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Save me because you are faithful to your covenant"

Psalms 6:5

For in death there is no remembrance of you. In Sheol who will give you thanks?

These two sentences express similar meanings.

For in death there is no remembrance of you

The abstract noun "remembrance" represents praise. Alternate translation: "For when people die, they no longer praise you"

In Sheol who will give you thanks?

David uses this question to emphasize that no one in Sheol thanks God. Alternate translation: "No one in Sheol will give you thanks!" or "The dead cannot praise you!"

Psalms 6:6

I am weary with my groaning

His groaning represents the pain or distress that he feels. Alternate translation: "I am very tired because of my pain"

I drench my bed with tears

This is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "I make my bed wet with my tears" or "I cry in my bed"

bed ... couch

Possible meanings are 1) these are two words for the same thing or 2) the "couch" is the main cushion on the bed or 3) the "bed" is where he sleeps at night and the "couch" is another item of furniture.

I dissolve my couch with my tears

This is an exaggeration. "My couch is very wet because of my tears" or "I cry hard when I am on my couch"

Psalms 6:7

My eyes grow dim

The ability to see is spoken of in terms of the eyes. Alternate translation: "My vision is blurry" or "I cannot see clearly"

from grief

Grief here represents crying. Alternate translation: "from crying" or "because I cry so much"

Psalms 6:9

Yahweh has heard my appeal for mercy ... Yahweh has accepted my prayer

These two lines have very similar meanings.

Yahweh has accepted my prayer

Being willing to do what David has prayed for is spoken of as accepting his prayer. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will respond to my prayer"

7 A musical composition of David, which he sang to Yahweh concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.
1 Yahweh my God, I take refuge in you!
Save me from all who chase me, and rescue me.

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2 Otherwise, they will rip me apart like a lion,
tearing me in pieces with no one else able to bring me to safety.

3 Yahweh my God, if I have done this,
and there is injustice on my hands—

4 if I have done evil to him who was at peace with me,
or harmed my enemy for no reason—

5 then let my enemy pursue my life and overtake me;
let him trample my life to the ground
and lay my honor in the dust.

Selah

6 Arise, Yahweh, in your anger;
stand up against the rage of my enemies;
wake up for my sake and carry out the righteous decrees that you have commanded for them.

7 The peoples are assembled all around you;
take once more your rightful place over them.

8 Yahweh, judge the nations;
vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High.

9 May the evil deeds of the wicked come to an end, but establish the righteous people,
righteous God, you who examine hearts and minds.

10 My shield comes from God,
the one who saves the upright in heart.

11 God is a righteous judge,
a God who is indignant each day.

12 If a person does not repent,
God will sharpen his sword
and will prepare his bow for battle.

13 He prepares to use deadly weapons against him;
he makes his arrows flaming shafts.

14 Think about the one who is pregnant with wickedness,
who conceives destructive plans, who gives birth to harmful lies.

15 He digs a pit and hollows it out
and then falls into the pit he has made.

16 His own destructive plans return to his own head,
for his violence comes down on his own head.

17 I will give thanks to Yahweh for his justice;
I will sing praise to the name of Yahweh Most High.

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Psalm 7 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 7 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

The author had not wronged anyone, yet his enemy was trying to attack him. But he knew that God would protect him.

Cush the Benjamite

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

Links:

Psalms 7:1

Psalms 7:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A musical composition of David, which he sang to Yahweh concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A musical composition of David

"This is a song that David wrote"

take refuge in you!

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection!"

Psalms 7:2

they will rip me apart like a lion, tearing me in pieces

David speaks of his enemies attacking him as if they would rip his body apart and tear it in pieces as a lion would. Alternate translation: "they will violently kill me like a lion ripping apart its victim's body and tearing it in pieces" or "they will violently kill me"

with no one else able to bring me to safety

"and no one else will be able to save me"

Psalms 7:5

my life

The life represents the person. Alternate translation: "me"

overtake me

This represents capturing him. Alternate translation: "capture me"

let him trample my life to the ground

Here "my life" represents the writer. Alternate translation: "allow him to destroy me"

lay my honor in the dust

This refers to lying dead and unburied in disgrace.

Psalms 7:6

Arise, Yahweh, in your anger

Arising represents doing something or taking action. Alternate translation: "Do something in your anger" or "Be angry at my enemies and take action:

stand up against the rage of my enemies

Fighting against people is spoken of as standing up against them. Alternate translation: "fight against the rage of my enemies" or "attack my enemies who rage against me"

the rage of my enemies

Their rage represents their attacks. Alternate translation: "the attacks of my enemies" or "my enemies who attack me"

wake up

Waking up represents starting to do something or take action. Alternate translation: "Take action" or "Do something"

for my sake

"for me" or "to help me"

Psalms 7:7

The peoples are assembled

Here the word "peoples" represents all of the armies that have gathered to attack.

take once more your rightful place over them

Ruling people is spoken of as being over them. Yahweh's rightful place refers either to heaven or to ruling in general. Alternate translation: "Rule over them from heaven" or "Rule over them"

Psalms 7:8

vindicate me

"show them that I am not guilty"

Psalms 7:9

establish the righteous people

"make the righteous people strong" or "make the righteous people prosper"

you who examine hearts and minds

The hearts and minds represent people's desires and thoughts. Alternate translation: "you who know our inner thoughts"

Psalms 7:10

My shield comes from God

The word "shield" represents God's protection.

Psalms 7:11

a God who is indignant each day

Who God is angry with can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a God who is angry with the wicked every day"

Psalms 7:12

God will sharpen his sword and will prepare his bow for battle

In verses 12 and 13, David speaks of God deciding to punish the wicked as if God were a warrior preparing to fight against them with weapons. Alternate translation: "God will take action against him like a warrior who sharpens his sword and prepares his bow for battle"

Psalms 7:14

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

one who is pregnant with wickedness ... conceives destructive plans ... gives birth to harmful lies

David speaks of the things that a wicked person does as if the person were pregnant and wickedness was the baby. Alternate translation: "the wicked person. He makes plans to destroy people and produces harmful lies"

Psalms 7:16

His own destructive plans return to his own head, for his violence comes down on his own head

Destruction and violence are spoken of as if they hit a person's head or fall down on it. Alternate translation: "His own destructive plans destroy him, for his violence attacks him" or "When he plans to destroy others, others destroy him; when he attacks others, others attack him"

8 For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of David.

Yahweh our Lord, how magnificent is your name in all the earth,
you who reveal your glory in the heavens above.

2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants you have established praise[1]
because of your enemies,
so that you might silence both the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look up at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

4 Of what importance is the human race that you notice them,
or mankind that you pay attention to them?

5 Yet you have made them only a little lower than the heavenly beings
and have crowned them with glory and honor.

6 You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet:

7 all sheep and oxen,
and even the wild animals of the field,

8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
everything that passes through the currents of the seas.

9 Yahweh our Lord,
how magnificent is your name in all the earth!

[1] The copies of the ancient Hebrew text can be read either as established praise or established strength.

Psalm 8 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 8 is a psalm of worship and praise to God. This was to be sung by a choir.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's creation

God has made awesome things in the universe and has exalted humans to be rulers over this creation. (See: exalt)

A Little Lower than the Heavenly Beings

Psalms Psalm 8:4-6 is quoted in Hebrews 2:6-8, where it is applied to Jesus. (See: heaven and glory)

Links:

Psalms 8:1

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Psalms 8:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to the Gittith style

This may refer to a style of music.

how magnificent is your name in all the earth

God's "name" represents his whole being. Alternate translation: "people all over the world know that you are very great"

Psalms 8:2

Out of the mouth of babies and infants you have established praise

Possible meanings are 1) praise is spoken of as a solid object that God takes out of babies' mouths and sets up as a defensive wall or 2) God has created the world so that true praise comes to him from babies. Alternate translation: "You have given babies and infants the ability to praise you" or "It is babies and infants who truly praise you"

Psalms 8:3

your heavens, the work of your fingers

God's fingers represent him. Alternate translation: "the heavens, which you have made"

Psalms 8:4

Of what importance is the human race that you notice them, or mankind that you pay attention to them?

These remarks have been expressed in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "It is amazing that you think about people and are concerned about them!"

the human race ... mankind

Both of these phrases refer to people in general.

Psalms 8:5

have crowned them with glory and honor

Glory and honor are spoken of as if they were crowns. The words "glory" and "honor" are similar in meaning. Alternate translation: "have given them glory and honor" or "have caused them to be like kings"

Psalms 8:6

You make him to rule over the works ... you have put all things under his feet

These two clauses express similar meanings.

You make him ... under his feet

"you make them ... under their feet." The words "him" and "his" here refer to people.

the works of your hands

The hands represent what God has done. Alternate translation: "the things that you made"

you have put all things under his feet

Having authority to rule others or control things is spoken of as having them under one's feet. This means God gave people authority over all that he created. Alternate translation: "you have given him authority over all things"

Psalms 8:9

how magnificent is your name in all the earth

With this exclamation, David shows his joy and awe about how great God is. Alternate translation: "your name is wonderfully magnificent in all the earth" or "people in all the earth know how magnificent you are"

your name

God's "name" represents him or his reputation. Alternate translation: "your reputation"

magnificent

excellent, great

---

9 For the chief musician; set to Muth Labben style. A psalm of David.
I will give thanks to Yahweh with my whole heart;
I will tell about all your marvelous deeds.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in you;
I will sing praise to your name, Most High!

3 When my enemies turn back,
they stumble and perish before you.

4 For you have defended my just cause;
you sit on your throne, a righteous judge!

5 You rebuked the nations;
you have destroyed the wicked;
you have blotted out their name forever and ever.

6 The enemy crumbled like ruins
when you overthrew their cities.

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All remembrance of them has perished.

7 But Yahweh remains forever;
he has established his throne for justice.

8 He will judge the world with righteousness,
and he will execute judgment for the nations with fairness.

9 Yahweh also will be a stronghold for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.

10 Those who know your name trust in you,
for you, Yahweh, do not abandon those who seek you.

11 Sing praises to Yahweh, who rules in Zion;
tell the nations of his deeds.

12 For the God who avenges bloodshed remembers;
he does not forget the cry of the oppressed.

13 Have mercy on me, Yahweh; see my affliction by those who hate me,
you who can snatch me from the gates of death.

14 Oh, that I might proclaim all your praise.
In the gates of the daughter of Zion
I will rejoice in your salvation!

15 The nations have sunk down into the pit that they made;
their feet are caught in the net that they hid.

16 Yahweh has made himself known; he has executed judgment;
the wicked is ensnared by his own actions.

Selah

17 The wicked are turned back and sent to Sheol,
all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy will not always be forgotten,
nor will the hope of the oppressed be forever dashed.

19 Arise, Yahweh; do not let man win against you;
may the nations be judged in your sight.

20 Terrify them, Yahweh;
may the nations know that they are mere men.

Selah

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Psalm 9 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 9 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

God is a protector. He is all-powerful and his enemies cannot withstand him.

Acrostic Psalm

This psalm along with Psalm 10 form an acrostic. Which means that each unit begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

One Psalm or two

This psalm has a superscription but Psalm 10 doesn't. This fact and the acrostic nature of the two psalms has lead some scholars to believe these two psalms may have originally been written as one psalm.

Links:

Psalms 9:1

Psalms 9:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Muth Labben style. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Muth Labben

This may refer to a style of music.

I will give thanks to Yahweh with my whole heart

Since this song is addressed to Yahweh, Yahweh can be referred to as "you." Alternate translation: "Yahweh, I will give thanks to you with all my heart"

all your marvelous deeds

The noun "deeds" can be expressed with the verb "do." Alternate translation: "all the marvelous things you do" or "all the marvelous things you have done"

Psalms 9:2

I will sing praise to your name

Here God's name represents God. Alternate translation: "I will sing praise to you"

Psalms 9:3

turn back

"retreat" or "flee in fear"

Psalms 9:4

you sit on your throne, a righteous judge

Kings had authority to judge people, and they would sit on their throne when they judged. David speaks as if God were an earthly king. Alternate translation: "you judge like a king who sits on his throne, and you are righteous"

Psalms 9:5

you have blotted out their name forever and ever

Causing people to be forgotten is spoken of as blotting out their name. Alternate translation: "you have caused them to be forgotten as if their name was blotted out" or "no one will ever remember them again"

blotted out

"erased"

Psalms 9:6

The enemy crumbled like ruins

The enemy is spoken of as if it were a city full of broken down buildings. Alternate translation: "Our enemies were destroyed"

when you overthrew their cities

"when you destroyed their cities"

All remembrance of them has perished

Here "remembrance" is spoken of as if it were a living being that could die. Alternate translation: "All remembrance of them has stopped" or "There is no longer any remembrance of them"

All remembrance of them has perished

The abstract noun "remembrance" can be expressed with the verb "remember." Alternate translation: "No one remembers them at all"

Psalms 9:7

Yahweh remains forever

"Remain" probably represents sitting on the throne as king. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sits on his throne forever" or "Yahweh rules forever"

he has established his throne for justice

The phrase "his throne" represents God's rule. Possible meanings are 1) "He rules in order to judge people" or "He rules over people justly"

Psalms 9:8

He will judge the world with righteousness ... he will execute judgment for the nations with fairness

These two clauses express the same meaning.

He will judge the world with righteousness

Here "the world" refers to all the people in the world. Alternate translation: "He will judge all the people of the world righteously"

Psalms 9:9

Yahweh also will be a stronghold for the oppressed

God is spoken of as if he were a place that people could go to for safety. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will also protect the oppressed" or "Yahweh will also provide safety for those who are oppressed"

Psalms 9:10

Those who know your name

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Here the words "your name" represent God. Alternate translation: "Those who know you"

do not abandon

"do not forsake" or "do not leave"

Psalms 9:11

who rules in Zion

"who is king in Jerusalem"

tell the nations

Here "the nations" represents the people of the nations.

Psalms 9:12

For the God who avenges bloodshed remembers

What he remembers can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "For the God who avenges bloodshed remembers those who were killed" or "For God remembers those who were killed and he punishes the killers"

he does not forget the cry

"He does not ignore the cry"

Psalms 9:13

see my affliction by those who hate me

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "see how those who hate me oppress me" or "see how badly my enemies treat me"

you who can snatch me from the gates of death

Death is spoken of as if it were a city that had gates through which people enter it. If someone is near the gates of death, it means that he will die soon. Keeping someone from dying is spoken of as taking him away from the gates of that city. Alternate translation: "you who can rescue me from death" or "you who can keep me from dying"

Psalms 9:15

The nations have sunk down into the pit that they made

People dig pits so they can catch animals that fall into them. Here digging a pit represents making plans to destroy people. Alternate translation: "The nations are like people who dig a pit for others and then fall into it"

their feet are caught in the net that they hid

People hide nets so they can catch animals that get caught in them. Here hiding a net represents making plans to destroy people. Alternate translation: "they are like people who hide a net and get trapped in it"

Psalms 9:16

the wicked is ensnared by his own actions

Here "wicked" is a nominal adjective that refers to any wicked person. A wicked person acting to harm other people is spoken of as if the wicked person had made a trap and then fallen into it and been unable to escape. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when a wicked person tries to harm other people, his actions will end up harming him"

is ensnared

"is trapped"

Psalms 9:17

turned back

"rejected"

all the nations that forget God

This refers to "the wicked."

Psalms 9:18

For the needy will not always be forgotten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not always forget the needy" or "God will remember the needy"

nor will the hope of the oppressed be forever dashed

Hopes are spoken of as if they were objects that could be broken or destroyed. Hopes being destroyed represents the things that people hope for never happening. Alternate translation: "and the oppressed will not hope forever without results" or "and someday what the oppressed hope for will happen"

Psalms 9:19

Arise

Getting up represents starting to do something. Alternate translation: "Do something" or "Take action"

man

people

be judged

Here judging represents punishing. Alternate translation: "be punished"

in your sight

Here sight represents presence. Alternate translation: "in your presence"

may the nations be judged in your sight

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "judge the nations in your presence" or "take the nations into your presence and punish them"

---

1 10 Why, Yahweh, do you stand far off?
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

2 Because of their arrogance, wicked people chase the oppressed;
but please let the wicked be trapped by their own schemes that they have devised.

3 For the wicked person boasts of his deepest desires;
he blesses the greedy and insults Yahweh.

4 The wicked in the haughtiness of his face does not seek God.
All his thoughts are that there is no God.

5 He is secure at all times,
but your righteous decrees are too high for him;

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he snorts at all his enemies.

6 He says in his heart," I will never fail;
throughout all generations I will not meet adversity."

7 His mouth is full of curses and lies and oppression;
under his tongue are mischief and evil.

8 He waits in ambush near the villages;
in the secret places he murders the innocent;
his eyes look for some helpless victim.

9 He lurks in secret like a lion in the thicket;
he lies in wait to catch the oppressed.
He catches the oppressed when he pulls in his net.

10 His victims are crushed and beaten down;
they fall into his strong nets.

11 He says in his heart, "God has forgotten;
he covers his face; he will never see it."

12 Arise, Yahweh! Lift up your hand, God!
Do not forget the oppressed.

13 Why does the wicked man reject God
and say in his heart, "You will not hold me accountable"?

14 You have taken notice, for you always see the one who inflicts the misery and sorrow.
The helpless entrusts himself to you;
you rescue the fatherless.

15 Break the arm of the wicked and evil man.
Make him account for his evil deeds,
which he thought you would not discover.

16 Yahweh is King forever and ever;
the nations are driven out of his land.

17 Yahweh, you have heard the needs of the oppressed;
you strengthen their heart, you listen to their prayer;

18 You defend the fatherless and the oppressed
so that no man on the earth will cause terror again.

Psalm 10 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 10 is a psalm of deliverance. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Evil people

The wicked people are prospering and think that God does not care. They think that he is not involved in these affairs.

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They destroy the innocent. The godly need God to come to their rescue and to punish the wicked people for the evil that they are doing to the good people. (See: evil, innocent and godly and good)
Second half of Psalm 9
As noted in the intro to the last psalm, this one is part of an acrostic poem. This psalm covers the last half on the Hebrew alphabet. It also does not have a superscription to introduce it. However, the psalms do separate well on the subjects they address. One addresses thanksgiving and praise whereas Psalm 10 is a lament. (See: lament)

Links:

Psalms 10:1

Psalms 10:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
Why, Yahweh, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
The speaker uses these questions to express his distress that God has not helped him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, it seems as though you are far away from me and you hide from me whenever I am in trouble"
Psalms 10:2
schemes
evil plans
Psalms 10:3
the wicked person
This refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "wicked people"
his deepest desires
The noun "desires" can be expressed with the verb "want. "Alternate translation: "the things that he wants very much to do"
the greedy
"greedy people"
Psalms 10:4
The wicked
This refers here to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "the wicked person"
in the haughtiness of his face
The word "face" here is a metonym for the person and how he thinks. Alternate translation: "has an arrogant attitude and" or "is proud and"
does not seek God
Seeking God represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him. Alternate translation: "does not ask God for help" or "does not think about God"
Psalms 10:5
He is secure at all times
"He is safe at all times." He is not really safe, but he thinks that he is.
your righteous decrees are too high for him
Something that is hard to understand is spoken of as if it were too high to reach. Alternate translation: "he cannot understand your righteous decrees"
he snorts at all his enemies
People snort at their enemies when they think that their enemies are weak and worthless. Alternate translation: "he thinks that all his enemies are weak and worthless" or "he sneers at all his enemies"
he snorts
This means that he blows air out noisily through his nose.
Psalms 10:6
He says
"The wicked man says"
throughout all generations
This probably simply means "forever."
I will not meet adversity
Experiencing adversity is spoken of as meeting it. Alternate translation: "I will not have any troubles"
Psalms 10:7
His mouth is full of curses and lies and oppression
What people say is spoken of as being in their mouth. Alternate translation: "He always curses people, tells lies, and threatens to harm people"
under his tongue are mischief and evil
Here the tongue represents speaking. Alternate translation: or "what he says injures and destroys people" or "he speaks words that threaten and hurt people"
Psalms 10:8
He waits in ambush
The word "he" refers to the wicked man.
his eyes look for some helpless victim
The eyes represent him. Alternate translation: "he looks for some helpless victim"
Psalms 10:9
He lurks in secret like a lion in the thicket
This speaks of the wicked person as if he were a lion. Alternate translation: "He hides while he waits for the weak to walk near him, the same way a lion quietly waits in the bush for the animal it wants to attack"
lurks
This means to hide or wait with intent to harm or kill.
he lies in wait
"lies down waiting" or "he hides and waits"
He catches the oppressed when he pulls in his net
The writer speaks of the wicked person catching people as if he were a hunter using a net to catch animals. Alternate translation: "He catches the oppressed like a hunter that catches an animal in a net and drags it away"
Psalms 10:10
they fall into his strong nets
The writer continues to speak of the wicked person catching people as if he were a hunter, his plans were nets, and the people were animals that fall into his net. Alternate translation: "his victims are caught by his plans like animals that fall into a hunter's strong nets"
Psalms 10:11
He says
The word "He" refers to the wicked person, and to wicked people in general.

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God has forgotten
Refusing to pay attention to what people do is spoken of as forgetting. Alternate translation: "God does not pay attention" or "God does not care about what I do"
he covers his face
Refusing to pay attention to what someone does is spoken of as covering one's face. Alternate translation: "God refuses to see what is happening"
he will never see it
"he will never see what I am doing" or "he does not care what I am doing" or "he will never punish me for what I am doing"
Psalms 10:12
Arise
Starting to do something is spoken of as getting up. Alternate translation: "Do something"
Lift up your hand
Here lifting the hand to hit someone represents punishing him. Alternate translation: "Hit him hard" or "Punish the wicked person"
Psalms 10:13
Why does the wicked man reject God and say ... "You will not hold me accountable"?
The speaker uses this question to show that he is very sad that wicked people do these things. Alternate translation: "Wicked people are always rejecting God and saying ... 'You will not hold me accountable.'"
You will not hold me accountable
"You will not require me to tell you why I do what I do." Holding someone accountable here represents punishing him. Alternate translation: "You will not punish me"
Psalms 10:15
Break the arm of the wicked and evil man
Here "arm" represents power. Alternate translation: "Destroy the power of the wicked and evil man" or "Make the wicked and evil man weak"
wicked and evil
These words have the same meaning. You can use one word to express both concepts.
Make him account for his evil deeds
Making someone account for his evil deeds represents punishing him. Alternate translation: "Punish him for the evil things he has done"
Psalms 10:16
the nations are driven out of his land
This can be stated in active form. "Yahweh forces the people of other nations to leave his land"
Psalms 10:17
you have heard the needs of the oppressed
It is implied that the oppressed people cried out to God. Alternate translation: "when oppressed people cried out to you, you listened to them tell you what they need"
you strengthen their heart
A strong heart represents courage, and making people's hearts strong represents encouraging them. Alternate translation: "you encourage them" or "you make them confident"
Psalms 10:18
no man ... will cause terror again
"no one ... will cause people to be afraid again"

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11 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
I take refuge in Yahweh;
how will you say to me,
"Flee like a bird to the mountain"?

2 For see! The wicked prepare their bows.
They make ready their arrows on the strings
to shoot in the darkness at the upright in heart.

3 For if the foundations are ruined,
what can the righteous do?

4 Yahweh is in his holy temple;
his eyes watch, his eyes examine the children of mankind.

5 Yahweh examines both the righteous and the wicked,
but he hates those who love to do violence.

6 He rains burning coals and sulfur upon the wicked;
a scorching wind will be their portion from his cup!

7 For Yahweh is righteous, and he loves righteousness;
the upright will see his face.

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Psalm 11 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 11 is a worship psalm. It tells how great God is and that God delivers the good people from the evil people. (See: deliverer and good and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

The wicked people try to destroy the good people but God knows everything that is being done and he saves the good people and destroys the evil people. (See: justice and save)

Links:

Psalms 11:1

Psalms 11:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

take refuge in Yahweh

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to Yahweh for protection"

how will you say to me, "Flee like a bird to the mountain"?

This question is asked to provide emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "So do not ask me to run away!"

Psalms 11:2

For see! The wicked prepare their bows. They make ready their arrows on the strings to shoot in the darkness at the upright in heart

"Look! the wicked are preparing to attack upright people"

upright in heart

Here "upright in heart" refers to godly or righteous people.

Psalms 11:3

For if the foundations are ruined, what can the righteous do?

Here "the foundations" may refer to law and order. This rhetorical question is asked to add emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Righteous people cannot do anything when evil people are not punished when they disobey the laws!"

Psalms 11:4

his eyes watch, his eyes examine the children of mankind

Here Yahweh is represented by his "eyes." Yahweh is aware of everything that happens. Alternate translation: "He examines all that humanity does"

children of mankind

"humanity"

Psalms 11:5

Yahweh examines

"Yahweh watches carefully"

do violence

"hurt others"

Psalms 11:6

He rains burning coals and sulfur upon the wicked; a scorching wind will be their portion from his cup!

God's punishment is described as if it were burning coals and sulfur from a volcano. Alternate translation: "He punishes the wicked; there will be no relief for them!"

sulfur

burning sulphur

Psalms 11:7

see his face

"be in his presence"

---

12 For the chief musician; set to the Sheminith. A psalm of David.
1 Help, Yahweh, for the faithful ones have disappeared;
those who have integrity have vanished from the children of men.

2 Everyone says empty words to his neighbor;
everyone speaks with flattering lips and a double heart.

3 Yahweh, cut off all flattering lips,
every tongue declaring great things.

4 These are those who have said, "With our tongues we will prevail.
When our lips speak, who can be master over us?"

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5 "Because of violence against the poor, because of the groans of the needy,
I will arise," says Yahweh.
"I will provide the safety for which they long."

6 The words of Yahweh are pure words,
like silver purified in a furnace on the earth,
refined seven times.

7 You are Yahweh! You keep them.
You preserve the godly people from this wicked generation and forever.

8 The wicked walk on every side
when evil is exalted among the children of mankind.

Psalm 12 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 12 is a judgment psalm, where the author asks God to judge and punish the wicked people. (See: judge and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh saves

There are so many wicked people now and they are proud of their evil. But God will save the poor who call out to him. (See: save and call)

Words

This relatively short psalm focuses on the words people use.

Links:

Psalms 12:1

Psalms 12:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to the Sheminith. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to the Sheminith

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 6:1.

Help, Yahweh

"Yahweh, come to my aid"

those who have integrity have vanished

"faithful people have all vanished"

Psalms 12:2

Everyone says ... everyone speaks

The two occurrences of "everyone" are exaggerations, used to emphasize that this is true of very many people.

everyone speaks with flattering lips and a double heart

Here "lips" is a metonym for what people say, and "a double heart" is a metaphor for deception. Alternate translation: "everyone speaks with flattering words and deception" or "everyone praises people falsely and tells lies"

Psalms 12:3

cut off all flattering lips

Here "flattering lips" is a metonym for people who flatter others. Possible meanings are 1) "cut off" is a metaphor for killing. Alternate translation: "kill all who flatter others" or 2) "cut off" is a metaphor for stopping something. Alternate translation: "stop all those who flatter others"

every tongue declaring great things

Here "every tongue" represents every person who declares great things. Alternate translation: "every person who boasts"

Psalms 12:4

With our tongues we will prevail

Here the word "tongues" represents what people say. Alternate translation: "We will prevail because of what we say"

we will prevail

"we will succeed" or "we will win" or "we will be victorious"

When our lips speak

Here the "lips" represents the people who speak. Alternate translation: "When we speak"

who can be master over us?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that they believed no one could rule over them. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one can rule over us!"

Psalms 12:5

groans

These are deep sounds that people make because of pain or some strong emotion.

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I will arise," says Yahweh
This means Yahweh will do something to help the people.
Psalms 12:6
like silver purified in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times
Yahweh's words are compared to silver that has been purified. Alternate translation: "they are without any imperfection"
Psalms 12:7
You keep them
"You keep the righteous people safe"
Psalms 12:8
walk on every side
"surround us"
when evil is exalted among the children of mankind
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when people everywhere are praising evil"
children of mankind
"human beings" or "people"

---

13 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 How long, Yahweh, will you forget me? Forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long must I worry
and have grief in my heart all day?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?

3 Look at me and answer me, Yahweh my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death.

4 Do not let my enemy say, "I have defeated him,"
so that my enemy may not say, "I have prevailed over my adversary";
otherwise, my enemies will rejoice when I am brought down.

5 But I have trusted in your covenant faithfulness;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

6 I will sing to Yahweh
because he has treated me very generously.

Psalm 13 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 13 is a psalm of deliverance because the psalmist is calling on God to deliver him from death and his enemies. (See: deliverer and call)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

The author needs God to help him because his enemies will rejoice if they are able to defeat him. The string of rhetorical questions is very effective at heightening the fear David is feeling. (See: and fear)

Links:

Psalms 13:1

Psalms 13:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
For the chief musician. A psalm of David
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
For the chief musician
"This is for the director of music to use in worship."
How long, Yahweh, will you forget me? Forever?
The writer asks these question to get the reader's attention and to add emphasis. They can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, it seems that you have forgotten about me and will never remember me!"
How long ... face from me?
The words "your face" represent God's whole being. This rhetorical question is asked to add emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It seems like you are hiding from me!"

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Psalms 13:2

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

This rhetorical question is asked to add emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely my enemies will not always defeat me!"

Psalms 13:3

Look at me and answer me

"Give me your attention and listen to me"

Give light to my eyes

This is a way of asking for strength. Alternate translation: "Make me strong again"

or I will sleep in death

To "sleep in death" means to die.

Psalms 13:4

Do not let my enemy say ... so that my enemy may not say

"Do not let my enemy say about me ... so that my enemy may not say about me"

when I am brought down

"when I fall" or "when they defeat me"

Psalms 13:5

I have trusted in your covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "I have trusted that you are faithful to your covenant" or "I have trusted you because you are faithful to your covenant"

my heart rejoices in your salvation

Here "my heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will rejoice because you have rescued me"

---

14 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.

1 A fool says in his heart, "There is no God."
They are corrupt and have done abominable iniquity;
there is no one who does good.

2 Yahweh looks down from heaven on the children of mankind
to see if there are any who understand,
who seek after him.

3 They have all turned away. Together they have become corrupt.
There is no one who does good, no, not one.

4 Do they not know anything, those who behave wickedly,
those who eat up my people as they eat bread,
but who do not call on Yahweh?

5 They tremble with dread,
for God is with the righteous generation!

6 You want to humiliate the poor person
even though Yahweh is his refuge.

7 Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion!
When Yahweh brings back his people from the captivity,
then Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad!

Psalm 14 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 14 is a deliverance psalm because he is trusting God to deliver the poor. (See: deliverer and trust)

Special concepts in this chapter

Evil people

Wicked people do not even consider God when they make their plans. (See: evil)

Links:

Psalms 14:1

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Psalms 14:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A fool says in his heart

This is an idiom that means to say to oneself or to think to oneself. Alternate translation: "A foolish person says to himself"

They are corrupt

The word "they" refers to all foolish human beings who say there is no God.

Psalms 14:2

children of mankind

This phrase refers to all humans.

who seek after him

This describes those who desire to know God as if they were actually following him on a path. Alternate translation: "who desire to know him"

Psalms 14:3

They have all turned away

This describes people who have rejected God as if they had stopped walking on the right path and had gone in another direction. Alternate translation: "They have all turned away from Yahweh"

Psalms 14:4

Do they not know anything ... who do not call on Yahweh?

This rhetorical question is asked to add emphasis. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "They act as if they do not know anything ... who do not call on Yahweh. But they know what they are doing!"

those who eat up my people

This refers to those who do evil things and destroy God's people as if they were eating food.

Psalms 14:5

They tremble

The word "they" refers to those who do evil things.

God is with the righteous generation

To say that "God is with" those who are righteous means that he helps them. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "God helps those who act righteously" or "God helps those who do the right things"

Psalms 14:6

You want

The word "you" here refers to the wicked people.

to humiliate the poor person

"to make the person who is poor feel ashamed"

Yahweh is his refuge

This speaks of the protection that Yahweh provides as if he were a shelter that one might seek in a storm. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is like a shelter of protection to him"

Psalms 14:7

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion!

This is an exclamation. The writer is saying what he wishes or longs for God to do. Alternate translation: "I wish so much that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion!"

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion!

Here "the salvation of Israel" is a metonym for Yahweh, the one who saves Israel. Alternate translation: "Oh, that Yahweh would come from Zion and save Israel!" or "I wish that Yahweh would come from Zion and rescue his people Israel!"

then Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad

These two phrases mean the same thing. Here both "Jacob" and "Israel" represent the people of Israel. The two phrases can be combined in the translation. Alternate translation: "then all the people of Israel will rejoice greatly"

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15 A psalm of David.
Yahweh, who may stay in your tabernacle?
Who may live on your holy hill?

2 Whoever walks blamelessly, does what is right
and speaks truth from his heart.

3 He does not slander with his tongue,
he does not harm others,
and he does not insult his neighbor.

4 The abhorrent is despised in his eyes,
but he honors those who fear Yahweh.
He swears to his own disadvantage
and does not take back his promises.

5 He does not charge interest when he lends money.
He does not take bribes to testify against the innocent.
He who does these things will never be shaken.

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Psalm 15 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 15 is a wisdom psalm telling how people who honor God should live. (See: wise and life)

Special concepts in this chapter

Godliness

This psalm outlines a person who is godly and sees others from a godly perspective. There are several good actions mentioned. Such a person treats his neighbor right, does not slander him, does not take a bribe or interest from him, and keeps his promises even when it is difficult to do so. (See: godly and good and promise)

Moral Conditions for Worship

Scholars have noted that this psalm contains a list of ten different conditions for those who want to participate in worship at the temple. The list consists of three positives in verse 2, 3 negatives in verse 3, two positives in verse 4, followed by two negatives in verse 5. (See: temple)

Links:

Psalms 15:1

Psalms 15:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Who may live on your holy hill?

God's "holy hill" represents God's temple, which was on Mount Zion. Alternate translation: "Who may live in your holy place?"

Psalms 15:2

speaks truth from his heart

"speaks honestly"

Psalms 15:3

He does not slander with his tongue

Here "tongue" represents what a person says. The word "he" refers to the "righeous person"

harm

hurt

Psalms 15:4

The abhorrent is despised in his eyes, but he honors those who fear Yahweh

"Righteous people hate those who have rejected God, but they honor those who respect God"

The abhorrent

This phrase refers to any person whom Yahweh abhors. Alternate translation: "The wicked person" or "The person who has rejected Yahweh"

Psalms 15:5

will never be shaken

Here "to be shaken" represents not living safely any longer. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will live in safety"

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16 A michtam of David.
Protect me, God,
for I take refuge in you.

2 I say to Yahweh, "You are my Lord;
my goodness is nothing apart from you.

3 As for the holy people who are on the earth,
they are noble people; all my delight is in them.

4 Their troubles will be increased, those who seek out other gods.
I will not pour out drink offerings of blood to their gods
or lift up their names with my lips.

5 Yahweh, you are my chosen portion and my cup.
You hold onto my lot.

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6 Measuring lines have been laid for me in pleasant places;
surely a beautiful inheritance is mine.

7 I will bless Yahweh, who counsels me;
even at night my mind instructs me.

8 I set Yahweh before me at all times,
so I will not be shaken from his right hand!

9 Therefore my heart is glad; my glory is rejoicing.
Surely I will live in security.

10 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol.
You will not let your faithful one see the pit.

11 You teach me the path of life;
abundant joy resides in your presence;
delights abide in your right hand forever!"

Psalm 16 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 16 is a psalm of praise, thanking God for all his mercies. The New Testament considers this psalm to be a messianic psalm: a psalm about Christ. (See: mercy and christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

God has been so good to the psalmist, who will worship no other god. The New Testament considers the tenth verse to be about Christ's resurrection when it says that he is God's anointed one, and that God will not leave his body in the grave to decay. (See: good, falsegod and resurrection and anoint)

Superscription

The term "Michtam" is used in the superscription for this psalm. There is much discussion about this term, but in the end no one is certain what it means. So it is easiest to transliterate this word into your language, or you are welcome to translate it as "psalm."

Links:

Psalms 16:1

Psalms 16:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

take refuge in you

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection"

Psalms 16:3

the holy people who are on the earth

Here "holy people" refers to God's own people who trust him. Alternate translation: "your people who live in this land"

Psalms 16:4

Their troubles will be ... gods

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The troubles of those who seek other gods will increase"

pour out ... blood to their gods

"pour out blood as a sacrifice to their gods"

or lift up their names with my lips

Lifting up their names is a metaphor for praising them, and "lips" is a metonym for what one says. Alternate translation: "or praise them with my words" or "and I will not praise their gods"

Psalms 16:5

my chosen portion

Here David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a portion of land that has been given to him.

my cup

Here David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a cup that contains many blessings. Alternate translation: "the one who blesses me"

You hold onto my lot

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"You determine my future" or "You control what will happen to me"

Psalms 16:6

Measuring lines ... in pleasant places

Here laying down measuring lines is a metonym for measuring land and giving it to someone, and here this is a metaphor for God blessing David in many great ways. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have measured off land for me in pleasant places" or "You have given me land in pleasant places" or "You bless me like one who gives land in pleasant places"

Measuring lines

These are ropes that people use to measure a plot of land and mark its boundaries.

surely a beautiful inheritance is mine

Here David speaks of Yahweh's blessings as if they were an inheritance that he has received. Alternate translation: "I am delighted with all the things that he has given me"

Psalms 16:8

I set Yahweh before me at all times

"I always remember that Yahweh is with me"

so I will not be shaken from his right hand

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing will take me away from his side"

Psalms 16:9

General Information:

David continues to speak to God.

my heart is glad

Here the "heart" represents the speaker's thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "Therefore I am glad"

my glory is rejoicing

Possible meanings are 1) the word "glory" represents the honor a person feels. Alternate translation: "I am honored to rejoice in God" or 2) the word translated "glory" really means "liver" and represents the speaker's emotions. Alternate translation: "I am rejoicing"

Psalms 16:11

abundant joy

"great joy" or "a large amount of joy"

joy resides in your presence

The writer speaks of "joy" as if it were a person.

in your right hand

The words "right hand" indicate being in God's special presence. Alternate translation: "when I am near you"

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17 A prayer of David.
1 Listen to my plea for justice, Yahweh;
pay attention to my cry for help!
Give ear to my prayer from lips without deceit.

2 Let my vindication come from your presence;
let your eyes see what is right!

3 If you test my heart, if you come to me in the night,
you will purify me and will not find any evil plans;
my mouth will not transgress.

4 As for the deeds of mankind,
it is at the word of your lips
that I have kept myself from the ways of the lawless.

5 My steps have held firmly to your tracks;
my feet have not slipped.

6 I call to you, for you answer me, God;
turn your ear to me and listen when I speak.

7 Show your covenant faithfulness in a wonderful way,
you who save by your right hand
those who take refuge in you from their enemies!

8 Protect me like the apple of your eye;
hide me under the shadow of your wings

9 from the presence of the wicked ones who deal violently with me,
my enemies who surround me.

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10 They have no mercy on anyone;
their mouths speak with pride.

11 They have surrounded my steps.
They set their eyes to strike me to the ground.

12 They are like a lion eager for a victim,
like a young lion crouching in hidden places.

13 Arise, Yahweh! Attack them! Throw them down on their faces!
Rescue my life from the wicked by your sword!

14 Rescue me from men by your hand, Yahweh,
from men of this world whose prosperity is in this life alone!
You will fill the bellies of your treasured ones with riches;
they will have many children
and will leave their wealth to their children.

15 As for me, I will see your face in righteousness;
I will be satisfied, when I awake, with a sight of you.

Psalm 17 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 17 is a prayer for deliverance from all his enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Innocence

The psalmist is innocent and needs God to rescue him from these enemies. (See: innocent)

Links:

Psalms 17:1

Psalms 17:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Give ear to my prayer from lips without deceit

The phrase "give ear" is a metaphor for listening, and "lips without deceit" is synecdoche for a person who does not lie. Alternate translation: "Listen to my prayer for I speak without deceit"

Psalms 17:2

Let my vindication come from your presence

Vindication coming from God represents God judging someone and declaring him innocent. God's "presence" is a metonym for God himself. Alternate translation: "Let my vindication come from you" or "Declare that I am innocent"

let your eyes see what is right!

Here "your eyes" is synecdoche for God himself, and "see" is a metaphor for paying attention and firmly deciding to do something. Alternate translation: "please see what is right" or "do what is right"

Psalms 17:3

If you test my heart, if you come to me in the night

Here "test my heart" means to examine my thoughts and motives. Alternate translation: "If you examine my thoughts in the night"

my mouth will not transgress

Here the mouth is spoken of as if it were capable of acting on its own. It also represents the words that a person speaks. Alternate translation: "I will not tell lies or sin with my words"

Psalms 17:4

it is at the word of your lips that I have kept myself from the ways of the lawless

Here "the word of your lips" is a metonym for God's instruction, and "the ways of the lawless" is a metaphor for the things that lawless people do. Alternate translation: "it is by obeying your instruction that I have kept myself from doing the things that lawless people do" or "your instruction has caused me to avoid doing wicked things"

Psalms 17:5

My steps have held firmly to your tracks; my feet have not slipped

Both of these clauses mean the same thing. The repetition adds emphasis.

my feet have not slipped

The writer speaks of his obedience to God as if he were

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walking on a path. Alternate translation: "I am determined to follow your ways"

Psalms 17:6

turn your ear to me ... listen when I speak

These phrases mean the same thing. Here "your ear" refers to God's willingness to hear someone who prays to him. Alternate translation: "pay attention to me ... listen when I speak"

Psalms 17:7

Show your covenant faithfulness in a wonderful way

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Show in a wonderful way that you are faithful to your covenant"

your right hand

The "right hand" refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "your mighty power"

take refuge in you

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection"

Psalms 17:8

Protect me like the apple of your eye

The "apple of your eye" refers to something that is valuable. Alternate translation: "Protect me as you would something most valuable and precious"

hide me under the shadow of your wings

David speaks of God's protection as if he were a bird protecting its young under its wings. Alternate translation: "Keep me safe as a mother bird protects her babies by gathering them under her wing"

Psalms 17:10

their mouths speak with pride

Here "their mouths speak" represents his enemies when they speak. Alternate translation: "they speak with pride" or "they are always boasting"

Psalms 17:11

They have surrounded my steps

Here "surrounded my steps" represents how David's enemies have followed him everywhere he goes in order to capture him. Alternate translation: "My enemies have surrounded me"

Psalms 17:12

like a lion eager for a victim, like a young lion crouching in hidden places

These two phrases express very similar ideas. The repetition adds intensity.

They are like a lion ... like a young lion

The writer feels pursued the way a lion hunts its prey

Psalms 17:13

by your sword

This is a metaphor for Yahweh's power and for violent death in war. Alternate translation: "by having them die in war" or "by killing them in battle"

Psalms 17:14

Rescue me from men by your hand, Yahweh, from men of this world

This clause adds intensity to the words "Rescue my life from the wicked by your sword"

by your hand

These words represent the power of Yahweh and add intensity to the words "by your sword"

You will fill the bellies of your treasured ones with riches

The ancient text is hard to understand. Possible meanings are 1) "treasured" is a metaphor for loved, and "your treasured ones" refers to the people whom God loves. Alternate translation: "you will fill the bellies of the people you love with riches" or 2) "your treasured ones" refers to treasures that God gives to people, the "men of this world" Alternate translation: "you will fill their bellies with rich treasures"

You will fill the bellies ... with riches

Here "fill the bellies ... with riches" is a metaphor for giving them many valuable things. Possible meanings are 1) "You will give many riches to the people you love" or 2) "you will give the men of this world many riches"

Psalms 17:15

I will see your face in righteousness

Here "face" represents Yahweh in all of his being. David is confident he will see Yahweh. Alternate translation: "because I act in the right way, I will be with you one day"

I will be satisfied, when I awake, with a sight of you

David believes that after he dies, he will be with Yahweh. This can be made clear in the translation. Alternate translation: "After I die, I will be happy to wake up in your presence"

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18 For the chief musician. A psalm of David, the servant of Yahweh, when he sang to Yahweh the words of this song on the day that Yahweh rescued him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He sang:

1 I love you, Yahweh, my strength.

2 Yahweh is my rock, my fortress, the one who brings me to safety;
he is my God, my rock; I take refuge in him.
He is my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my stronghold.

3 I will call on Yahweh who is worthy to be praised,
and I will be saved from my enemies.

4 The cords of death surrounded me,
and the rushing waters of worthlessness overwhelmed me.

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5 The cords of Sheol surrounded me;
the snares of death trapped me.

6 In my distress I called to Yahweh;
I called for help to my God.
He heard my voice from his temple;
my cry for help went into his presence;
it went into his ears.

7 Then the earth shook and trembled;
the foundations of the mountains also trembled
and were shaken because God was angry.

8 Smoke went up from out of his nostrils,
and blazing fire came out of his mouth.
Coals were kindled by it.

9 He opened the heavens and came down,
and thick darkness was under his feet.

10 He rode on a cherub and flew;
he glided on the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness a tent around him,
heavy rainclouds in the skies.

12 Hailstones and coals of fire fell from the lightning before him.

13 Yahweh thundered in the heavens!
The voice of the Most High shouted.[1]

14 He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies;
many lightning bolts dispersed them.

15 Then the water channels appeared;
the foundations of the world were laid bare
at your rebuke, Yahweh,
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

16 He reached down from above; he took hold of me!
He pulled me out of the surging water.

17 He rescued me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me.

18 They came against me on the day of my distress
but Yahweh was my support!

19 He set me free in a wide open place;
he saved me because he was pleased with me.

20 Yahweh has rewarded me because of my righteousness;

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he has restored me because my hands were clean.

21 For I have kept the ways of Yahweh
and have not wickedly turned away from my God.

22 For all his righteous decrees have been before me;
as for his statutes, I have not turned away from them.

23 I have also been innocent before him,
and I have kept myself from iniquity.

24 Therefore Yahweh has restored me because of my righteousness,
because my hands were clean before his eyes.

25 To one who is faithful, you show yourself to be faithful;
to a man who is blameless, you show yourself to be blameless.

26 To one who is pure, you show yourself to be pure;
but to one who is perverse, you show yourself to be shrewd.

27 For you save afflicted people,
but you abase those with proud, uplifted eyes!

28 For you give light to my lamp;
Yahweh my God lights up my darkness.

29 For by you I can run over a barricade;
by my God I can leap over a wall.

30 As for God—his way is perfect!
The word of Yahweh is pure!
He is a shield to everyone who takes refuge in him.

31 For who is God except Yahweh?
Who is a rock except our God?

32 It is God who puts strength on me like a belt,
who places the blameless person on his path.

33 He makes my feet swift like a deer
and places me on the heights!

34 He trains my hands for war
and my arms to bend a bow of bronze.

35 You have given me the shield of your salvation.
Your right hand has supported me,
and your favor has made me great.

36 You have made a wide place for my feet beneath me
so that my feet have not slipped.

37 I pursued my enemies and caught them;

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I did not turn back until they were destroyed.

38 I smashed them so that they were unable to rise;
they have fallen under my feet.

39 For you have girded me with strength for battle;
you put under me those who rise up against me.

40 You gave me the back of my enemies' necks;
I annihilated those who hated me.

41 They called for help, but no one saved them;
they called out to Yahweh, but he did not answer them.

42 I beat them into fine pieces like dust before the wind;
I threw them out like mud in the streets.

43 You rescued me from the disputes of people;
you have made me head over nations;
people whom I have not known serve me.

44 As soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me;
foreigners were forced to bow to me.

45 The foreigners came trembling out of their strongholds.

46 Yahweh lives; may my rock be praised.
May the God of my salvation be exalted.

47 He is the God who executes vengeance for me,
who subdues the nations under me.

48 I am set free from my enemies!
Indeed, you lifted me above the ones who rose against me!
You rescued me from violent men.

49 Therefore I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, among the nations;
I will sing praises to your name!

50 God gives great victory to his king,
and he shows his covenant loyalty to his anointed one,
to David and to his descendants forever.

[1] This verse follows some Hebrew copies and the Septuagint, ending after shouted. Most Hebrew copies have the additional phrase hailstones and coals of fire.

Psalm 18 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 18 is a psalm of praise to God for his strengthening David for war.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

God has tremendous power and he enabled David to prosper in war. This psalm, and its superscription, also appears in 1 Samuel 22 with some minor differences.

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Links:

Psalms 18:1

Psalms 18:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David, the servant of Yahweh, when he sang to Yahweh the words of this song on the day that Yahweh rescued him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He sang:

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

he sang to Yahweh the words of this song

"he sang this song to Yahweh"

on the day that Yahweh rescued him

"after Yahweh had rescued him"

from the hand of Saul

Here "hand" stands for the power of Saul. Alternate translation: "from Saul's power"

Psalms 18:2

Yahweh is my rock

David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a rock. The word "rock" is a picture of a safe place.

my rock, my fortress

Here the words "rock" and "fortress" share similar meanings and emphasize that Yahweh provides safety from enemies.

take refuge in him

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to him for protection"

my shield, the horn of my salvation, and my stronghold

David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a "shield," "the horn" of his salvation, and his "stronghold." Yahweh is the one who protects him from harm. Here a similar idea is repeated three ways for emphasis.

Psalms 18:3

I will be saved from my enemies

"I will be rescued from my enemies"

Psalms 18:4

The cords of death surrounded me

David speaks of death as if it were a person who could capture him and bind him with ropes. Alternate translation: "I was about to be killed"

rushing waters of worthlessness

David is as helpless as if he were being carried away by a rushing flood of waters. Alternate translation: "I felt completely helpless"

Psalms 18:5

The cords of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death trapped me

Here "Sheol," the place of the dead, and "death" are spoken of as if they were people who could surround and trap him. These two clauses have similar meanings and the idea is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I felt trapped and thought I was going to die"

Psalms 18:6

In my distress

"In my great need" or "In my despair"

my cry for help went into his presence

Here David speaks of his "cry for help" as if it were a person who could come into the presence of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I prayed to him"

it went into his ears

Here David speaks of how Yahweh heard his cry for help. The idea is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "he heard my appeal"

Psalms 18:7

Then the earth ... shaken because God was angry

God's being angry is spoken of as if the there was a terrible earthquake. Alternate translation: "God was so angry that it was as if the earth ... shaken"

the earth shook and trembled

The words "shook" and "trembled" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how greatly the earth shook. Alternate translation: "the land moved back and forth" or "the ground moved up and down" or "there was a violent earthquake"

the foundations of the mountains also trembled and were shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the foundations of the mountains also trembled and shook"

Psalms 18:8

Smoke went up from out of his nostrils ... Coals were kindled by it

David speaks of Yahweh as if he were breathing fire. This is a picture of how angry God was.

blazing fire came out of his mouth. Coals were kindled by it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "blazing fire came out of his mouth and kindled coals"

Psalms 18:9

He opened

The word "He" refers to Yahweh.

thick darkness was under his feet

Though Yahweh does not actually have feet, the Psalmist gives him human characteristics. Alternate translation: "thick darkness was beneath him"

Psalms 18:10

wings of the wind

Here the Psalmist speaks of the wind as if it had wings like an angel.

Psalms 18:11

He made darkness ... him

Here the words "He" and "him" refer to Yahweh.

He made darkness a tent

Here darkness is spoken of as if it were a tent. Alternate translation: "He made darkness a covering" or "He made darkness a hiding place"

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heavy rainclouds
"clouds heavy with rain" or "thick, dark rainclouds"
Psalms 18:12
Hailstones
stones made of ice
Psalms 18:13
Yahweh thundered in the heavens
Yahweh's voice sounded like thunder.
the Most High
"the Most High" refers to Yahweh.
Psalms 18:14
He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies ... lightning bolts dispersed them
Both of these clauses have similar meanings.
He shot his arrows and scattered his enemies
Here lighting strikes are being spoken of as if they were arrows
dispersed them
"sent them in different directions"
Psalms 18:15
General Information:
The writer continues to speak of Yaweh's great power.
Then the water channels appeared; the foundations of the world were laid bare
These two clauses have similar meanings. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the water channels appeared and the bottom of the ocean became visible; you exposed the foundations of the world"
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils
Though God does not have human physical characteristics as described here, this pictures his mighty strength. The wind is spoken of here as if it came as a mighty blast from God's nostrils.
Psalms 18:16
He reached down ... he took hold ... He pulled me
The word "He" in these verses refers to Yahweh.
surging water
Here the Psalmist speaks of the dangers of his enemies as if they were huge waves or forceful waters, from which Yahweh has rescued him.
Psalms 18:18
They came against me
Here "They" refers to the strong enemies in verse 17.
They came against me on the day of my distress but Yahweh was my support
The abstract noun "distress" can be stated as an adjective. The abstract noun "support" can be stated as "protected." Alternate translation: "Strong enemies attacked me on a day when I was distressed, but Yahweh protected me"
Psalms 18:20
my hands were clean
Here having clean hands represents being innocent of wrongdoing. Alternate translation: "I was innocent" or "my actions were right"
Psalms 18:21
I have kept the ways of Yahweh
The laws of Yahweh are spoken of as if they were the paths on which one should walk. Alternate translation: "I have obeyed Yahweh's laws"
have not wickedly turned away from my God
Here being wicked is spoken of as if one left the right path and took the wrong path. Alternate translation: "have not done wickedly by turning away from my God"
Psalms 18:22
For all his righteous decrees ... I have not turned away from them
Both of these clauses have similar meanings. The writer repeats these ideas for emphasis.
have been before me
"have guided me" or "I have remembered"
Psalms 18:23
innocent before him
"innocent according to him"
I have kept myself from iniquity
"I have not sinned"
Psalms 18:24
my hands were clean
To have "clean hands" means that one is innocent of wrongdoing. See how you translated this in [Psalms 18:20]
before his eyes
This refers to God's presence. Alternate translation: "before him" or "according to him"
Psalms 18:25
General Information:
The writer speaks to Yahweh. He praises Yahweh for relating to people in ways that are approprite for how the people live.
To one who is faithful
"To anyone who is faithful" or "To those who are faithful"
you show yourself to be faithful
"you show that you are faithful" or "you are faithful"
to a man who is blameless
"to anyone who is blameless" or "to those who are blameless"
you show yourself to be blameless
"you show that you are blameless" or "you are blameless"
Psalms 18:26
General Information:
The writer continuies to speak to Yahweh and to praise Yahweh for relating to people in ways that are approprite for how the people live.
To one who is pure
"To anyone who is pure" or "To those who are pure"
you show yourself to be pure
"you show that you are pure" or "you are pure"
but to one who is perverse, you show yourself to be shrewd
The perverse person might think that he is wise and can sin without being punished, but God is wiser and will do to the perverse person what that person deserves.
but to one who is perverse
"but to anyone who is perverse" or "but to those who are perverse"
you show yourself to be shrewd
"you show yourself to be wise" or "you are cunning"
Psalms 18:27
you abase
"you humiliate"
with proud, uplifted eyes
This idiom refers to those who are proud. Alternate

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translation: "who are proud"

Psalms 18:28

For you give light to my lamp; Yahweh my God lights up my darkness

The writer speaks of Yahweh's presence as if he were a light. These clauses have similar meanings.

Psalms 18:29

For by you I can run over a barricade

"For with your help I can run past anything that is in my way"

Psalms 18:30

He is a shield to everyone who takes refuge in him

A shield protects a soldier. David speaks as if God were a shield protecting him. See how you translated this in [Psalms 3:3]

Psalms 18:31

For who is God except Yahweh? Who is a rock except our God?

The implied answer is no one. Alternate translation: "Only Yahweh is God! Only our God is a rock!"

a rock

David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a rock that he could climb to get away from his enemies. See how you translated this in [Psalms 18:2]

Psalms 18:32

puts strength on me like a belt

God gives strength to David as if it were a piece of clothing.

places the blameless person on his path

Here David speaks of living a life that is pleasing to God as if he were being placed on the right path. Alternate translation: "causes the blameless person to live a righteous life"

Psalms 18:33

makes my feet swift

This refers to enabling a person to run fast. Alternate translation: "makes me run very fast"

like a deer and places me on the heights

The deer is especially quick and stable in the mountains.

Psalms 18:34

He trains my hands

Here "my hands" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "He trains me"

my arms

This refers to the person. Alternate translation: "me"

Psalms 18:35

the shield of your salvation

Here the writer speaks of God's protection as if it were a shield. The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "your protection and saved me"

Your right hand has supported me

Here God's right hand represents his power. Alternate translation: "Your power has supported me" or "You have supported me by your power"

your favor has made me great

Here God's favor represents him acting according to his favor. Alternate translation: "You have made me great according to your favor" or "By your kindness, you have made me great"

Psalms 18:36

a wide place for my feet beneath me

The writer speaks of the safety that God has provided as if it were a wide place for him to stand. Here "my feet" represent the person. Alternate translation: "a safe place for me"

my feet have not slipped

Here "my feet" refers to the person. The writer refers to the safety of God's protection as if he were standing on a place where he will not slip or fall. Alternate translation: "I have not slipped" or "I am doing well"

Psalms 18:38

I smashed them

"I crushed them" or "I broke them to pieces"

unable to rise

"unable to stand"

they have fallen under my feet

This idiom means the Psalmist has defeated his enemies. Alternate translation: "I have defeated all of them"

Psalms 18:39

you have girded me with strength

"you have put strength on me like a belt." The Psalmist says that Yahweh has given him strength that surrounds and supports him like a belt. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Psalms 18:32]

you put under me

Here the Psalmist speaks of the defeat of his enemies as if he were standing on them. Alternate translation: "you defeat for me"

those who rise up against me

This refers to those who oppose the Psalmist. Alternate translation: "those who are my enemies"

Psalms 18:40

You gave me the back of my enemies' necks

This represents God giving David victory over his enemies. Alternate translation: "You gave me victory over my enemies"

You gave me the back of my enemies' necks

This represents God giving David victory over his enemies. Possible images are 1) David could cut his enemies' heads off at the neck or 2) David could put his foot down on his enemies' necks or 3) David could see his enemies' backs when they ran away from him.

I annihilated those who hated me

"I defeated those who hated me" or "I destroyed completely those who hated me"

Psalms 18:41

but he did not answer them

This means Yahweh did not provide any help. Alternate translation: "but he did not help them"

Psalms 18:42

I beat them into fine pieces like dust before the wind

The psalmists enemies are compared to dust to show how defeated they are.

I threw them out like mud in the streets

The psalmist's enemies are compared to mud in the streets to show how defeated they are.

Psalms 18:43

disputes

disagreements, arguments

have made me head over nations

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Here "head" represents the ruler. Alternate translation: "appointed me to be the ruler over many nations"

Psalms 18:44

foreigners were forced to bow

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God forced foreigners to bow"

Psalms 18:45

foreigners came trembling

Here "trembling" shows that they were very afraid. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "foreigners came shaking, showing that they were very afraid"

Psalms 18:46

may my rock be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he is my rock and he should be praised" or "may people praise my rock"

my rock

Here the writer speaks of Yahweh's protection as if he were a rock that prevented his enemies from reaching him. See how you translated this in [Psalms 18:2]

May the God of my salvation be exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people exalt the God of my salvation"

the God of my salvation

The abstract nouns "salvation" can be stated as "saved" or "rescued." Alternate translation: "the God who rescued me"

Psalms 18:47

the God who executes vengeance for me

To "execute vengeance" means to punish people for their evil actions. This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "vengeance." Alternate translation: "the God who punishes people for the evil things they have done to me"

Psalms 18:48

I am set free

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has set me free"

you lifted me above

Yahweh's protection of the writer is spoken of as if he lifted the writer up so high that his enemies could not reach him to harm him. Alternate translation: "you put me in a safe place high above"

who rose against me

"who attacked me" or "who rebelled against me"

violent men

"cruel men" or "savage men"

Psalms 18:49

among the nations

Here the writer means that he will give thanks to Yahweh so that all people will hear of Yahweh's greatness. Alternate translation: "so all the nations will hear about it"

to your name

Here "name" represents God himself. Alternate translation: "in honor of your name" or "to you"

Psalms 18:50

victory to his king

By using the words "his king," David is referring to himself as king.

he shows his covenant loyalty to his anointed one ... to his descendants forever

"he faithfully loves me as he promised in his covenant, and he will love my descendants forever"

---

19 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the skies make known the work of his hands!

2 Day after day speech pours out;
night after night it reveals knowledge.

3 There is no speech or spoken words;
their voice is not heard.

4 Yet their words go out over all the earth,
and their speech to the end of the world.
He has pitched a tent for the sun among them.

5 The sun is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber
and like a strong man who rejoices when he runs his race.

6 The sun rises from the one horizon
and crosses the sky to the other;
nothing escapes its heat.

7 The law of Yahweh is perfect,
restoring the soul;
the testimony of Yahweh is reliable,
making the simple wise.

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8 The instructions of Yahweh are right,
making the heart glad;
the commandment of Yahweh is pure,
bringing light to the eyes.

9 The fear of Yahweh is pure,
enduring forever;
the righteous decrees of Yahweh are true
and altogether right!

10 They are of greater value than gold,
even more than much fine gold;
they are sweeter than honey
and the dripping honey from the honeycomb.

11 Yes, by them your servant is warned;
in obeying them there is great reward.

12 Who can discern all his own errors?
Cleanse me from hidden faults.

13 Keep your servant also from arrogant sins;
let them not rule over me.
Then I will be perfect,
and I will be innocent from many transgressions.

14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
Yahweh, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 19 is a praise psalm, praising God for his creation and for his law.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's law

God's law keeps people from sinning. There are two distinct themes in this psalm. Verses 1-6 are God's glory in the heavens and the second is praising God for his law. (See: lawofmoses and glory and heaven)

Links:

Psalms 19:1

Psalms 19:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

The heavens declare

The heavens are described as if they were a person. Alternate translation: "The heavens show" or "The heavens look like they declare"

the skies make known the work of his hands

The skies are described as if they were a teacher. Alternate translation: "people can learn from looking at the skies that God has created them"

Psalms 19:2

speech pours out

What is beautiful about creation is compared to speaking, as if creation were a person. Then those words are

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compared to water that flows everywhere. Alternate translation: "creation is like a person speaking to everyone"
Psalms 19:3
There is no speech or spoken words; their voice is not heard
These phrases express clearly that the first two verses were a metaphor. Alternate translation: "There is no real speech or spoken words; no one hears an actual voice with their ears"
their voice is not heard
Other translations read "where their voice is not heard," emphasizing that creation's "speech" is available everywhere.
Psalms 19:4
General Information:
David has just said that creation shows God's glory.
their words ... their speech
This refers to the unspoken "words" of creation that show God's glory.
their words go out
The words are described as if they were people who go out with a message. Alternate translation: "the words that creation speaks are like people who go out"
their speech to the end of the world
The implied words can be included in the translation. Alternate translation: "their speech goes out to the end of the world"
He has pitched a tent for the sun
Here the writer speaks of the place that Yahweh created for the sun as if it were a tent. Alternate translation: "He created a place for the sun"
among them
The word "them" probably refers to the heavens.
Psalms 19:5
The sun is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber
The writer speaks of the sun's coming out as if it were a bridegroom. Alternate translation: "The sun is like a bridegroom walking joyfully toward his bride"
like a strong man who rejoices when he runs his race
This compares the sun to an athlete to emphasize the strength and brightness of the sun.
a strong man
"a fast runner"
Psalms 19:6
horizon
the line where the earth and the sky meet
to the other
Here "other" refers to the other horizon. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "to the other horizon"
nothing escapes its heat
"everything feels its heat"
Psalms 19:7
restoring the soul
The words "the soul" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "making a person strong again"
the simple
"those who have no experience" or "those who have not learned"
Psalms 19:8
the heart
These words refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "a person"
are right
"are true" or "are correct"
bringing light to the eyes
Possible meanings are 1) "bringing understanding to a person" or 2) "making a person healthy again"
Psalms 19:9
altogether right
"completely right"
Psalms 19:10
They are of greater value than gold ... they are sweeter than honey
Yahweh's decrees are spoken of as if they could be bought and tasted. Alternate translation: "If you could buy them, they would be of greater value than gold ... if you could taste them, they would be sweeter than honey"
even more than much fine gold
The word "valuable" is understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated. Alternate translation: "even more valuable than a lot of fine gold"
fine gold
"pure gold" or "expensive gold"
Psalms 19:11
Yes
This word marks that there is more to the truth than what has just been said. Alternate translation: "Moreover"
by them your servant is warned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they warn your servant" or "they are a warning for your servant"
by them ... in obeying them
The word "them" refers to Yahweh's righteous decrees.
your servant is warned
David calls himself "your servant" when speaking to God as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "I am warned"
Psalms 19:12
Who can discern all his own errors?
This appears in the form of a question to add emphasis and can be translated as a strong statement. Alternate translation: No one can be aware of his own errors!"
from hidden faults
"from secret mistakes I have made"
Psalms 19:13
Keep your servant also from
This idiom pictures the servant as being removed from the sins he does not wish to commit. Alternate translation: "Also, protect your servant from doing" or "Also, make sure that I do not commit"
your servant
David calls himself "your servant" when speaking to God as a sign of respect. See how you translated this in [Psalms 19:11]
let them not rule over me
Sins are described as if they were a king that could rule over someone. Alternate translation: "do not let my sins become like a king who rules over me"
innocent from many transgressions
"innocent of rebelling against you" or "innocent of

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committing many sins"

Psalms 19:14

the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

These expressions taken together describe everything a person says and thinks. Alternate translation: "the things I say and the things I think about"

be acceptable in your sight

"receive approval in your sight" or "be pleasing to you"

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment"

Yahweh, my rock

The writer speaks of God as if he were a rock that one could climb and be protected from his enemies. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you are like my rock"

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20 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
May Yahweh help you in the day of trouble;
may the name of the God of Jacob protect you

2 and send help from the holy place
to support you from Zion.

3 May he call to mind all your offerings
and accept your burnt sacrifice.

Selah

4 May he grant you your heart's desire
and fulfill all your plans.

5 Then we will rejoice in your victory,
and, in the name of our God, we will raise banners.
May Yahweh grant all your petitions.

6 Now I know that Yahweh will rescue his anointed one;
he will answer him from his holy heaven
with the saving strength of his right hand.

7 Some trust in chariots and others in horses,
but we trust in the name of Yahweh our God.

8 They will be brought down and fall,
but we will rise and stand upright!

9 Yahweh, rescue the king;
help us when we call.

Psalm 20 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 20 is a royal psalm. It is probably a prayer for the king, perhaps when he first became king.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Trusting God is much better than trusting in military might. (See: trust)

Links:

Psalms 20:1

Psalms 20:1

General Information:

This Psalm begins with a group of people speaking to the king of Israel. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

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"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

help you

The word "you" in this Psalm is singular and refers to the king.

in the day of trouble

"in times of trouble" or "when you are in trouble"

may the name of the God of Jacob protect you

Possible meanings are 1) here "name" is a metonym for God's power. Alternate translation: "may the power of the God of Jacob protect you" or "may the God of Jacob protect you by his power" or 2) here "name" is a metonym for God himself. Alternate translation: "may the God of Jacob protect you"

Psalms 20:2

send help from the holy place

God helping from his holy place is spoken of as if God were sending help. Alternate translation: "may Yahweh help you from his holy place"

holy place ... Zion

Both of these refer to God's temple in Jerusalem.

Psalms 20:3

May he call to mind

The phrase "call to mind" is a way of saying "remember." It does not mean God forgot. It means to consider or think about. Alternate translation: "May he remember"

May he

The word "he" refers to Yahweh.

Psalms 20:4

May he grant

"May he give"

your heart's desire

Here "heart" stands for the entire person. The abstract noun "desire" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "what you desire" or "what you want"

fulfill all your plans

The abstract noun "plans" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "may he help you to accomplish everything that you plan to do"

Psalms 20:5

we will rejoice in your victory

Here "we" refers to the people. They will rejoice in the king's victory.

in the name of our God

Here "name" represents honor or reputation. Alternate translation: "in honor of our God" or "for the reputation of our God"

we will raise banners

"we will raise victory flags." They would do this to show that they were praising God because he gave their king victory over his enemies.

grant all your petitions

"give you everything you request from him"

Psalms 20:6

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the psalm. It transitions from the people speaking to the king speaking.

I know

The word "I" probably refers to the king who is speaking in this section.

his anointed one ... answer him

The king is speaking about himself in the third person. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "me, his anointed one ... answer me"

from his holy heaven

God dwells in heaven as well as in the temple in Jerusalem (Psalms 20:2).

with the saving strength of his right hand

God's right hand represents his power. Alternate translation: "with his great strength he will rescue him"

Psalms 20:7

Some trust in chariots and others in horses

Here "chariots" and "horses" represent a king's army.

trust in chariots ... trust in the name

Many modern translations read, "boast in chariots ... boast in the name."

others in horses

The word "trust" is understood. Alternate translation: "others trust in horses"

we trust in the name of Yahweh our God

Here the word "name" is a metonym for what everyone knows about Yahweh and so for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "we trust in Yahweh our God because of who he is"

we trust

Here "we" refers to the writer and the readers.

Psalms 20:8

we will rise

Here "we" refers to the writer and the readers.

They will be brought down and fall

The word "They" refers to the people who trust in chariots and horses. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bring them down and make them fall"

brought down and fall

Both these verbs mean basically the same thing. Both of these stand for losing in battle.

we will rise and stand upright

"we will get up and stand up straight." These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Both of these stand for victory in battle.

Psalms 20:9

Yahweh, rescue the king

Possible interpretations are 1) the people ask God to protect the king or 2) the king continues to speak about himself in the third person.

the king; help us when we call

Some translations understand the Hebrew differently. Some translate it as the people speaking to Yahweh their king. Alternate translation: "King, help us when we call you"

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21 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
The king rejoices in your strength, Yahweh!

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How greatly he rejoices in the salvation you provide!

2 You have given him his heart's desire
and have not held back the request of his lips.

Selah

3 For you bring him rich blessings;
you placed on his head a crown of purest gold.

4 He asked you for life; you gave it to him;
you gave him the length of his days forever and ever.

5 His glory is great because of your victory;
you have bestowed on him splendor and majesty.

6 For you grant him lasting blessings;
you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

7 For the king trusts in Yahweh;
through the covenant faithfulness of the Most High
he will not be moved.

8 Your hand will seize all your enemies;
your right hand will seize those who hate you.

9 At the time of your anger,
you will burn them up as in a fiery furnace.
Yahweh will consume them in his wrath,
and the fire will devour them.

10 You will destroy their offspring from the earth
and their descendants from among the human race.

11 For they intended evil against you;
they conceived a plot with which they will not succeed!

12 For you will turn them back;
you will draw your bow before them.

13 Be exalted, Yahweh, in your strength;
we will sing and praise your power.

Psalm 21 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 21 is a royal psalm. The king is praying for victory. Victory in war comes from the power and help from God.

Special concepts in this chapter

Pronouns

There is a shift in pronouns in this psalm. In verses 1-6 the psalm addresses Yahweh in second person but in verse 7 the psalmist uses third person before moving back to second person in the latter part.

Links:

Psalms 21:1

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Psalms 21:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

in your strength, Yahweh

It is implied that this is strength Yahweh has given the king to defeat his enemies. Alternate translation: because you, Yahweh, have made him strong enough to defeat his enemies"

How greatly he rejoices

"He rejoices greatly"

in the salvation you provide

It is implied that God has saved the king from his enemies. The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you have saved him from his enemies"

Psalms 21:2

his heart's desire

"his heart's wish." Here "heart" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "his desire" or "what he wished for"

have not held back

"have not refused him" or "you have given him"

the request of his lips

Here "lips" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "his request" or "what he requested of you"

Psalms 21:3

you bring him rich blessings

The abstract noun "blessings" can be stated as "bless" or "good things." Alternate translation: "you bless him greatly" or "you give him many good things"

you placed on his head a crown of purest gold

To place a crown on a person's head is a symbol of making him a king.

a crown of purest gold

Here "purest gold" represents the great honor given to the king.

Psalms 21:4

He asked you for life; you gave it to him

The abstract noun "life" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "He asked that you cause him to live for a long time; you caused it to happen"

the length of his days forever and ever

The idiom "the length of his days" refers to the duration of his life. Alternate translation: "a long life that lasts forever"

Psalms 21:5

His glory

"The king's honor" or "The king's fame"

you have bestowed on him splendor and majesty

"you have placed on him splendor and majesty." Causing the king to be wealthy and powerful is spoken of as if splendor and majesty are objects that are placed on him.

Alternate translation: "you have made him wealthy and powerful"

Psalms 21:6

you grant him

"you allow him to have" or "you agree to give him"

lasting blessings

"a blessings that will last" or "a blessings that will stay"

the joy of your presence

"the joy of being in your presence" or "the joy that comes from you being near to you"

Psalms 21:7

through the covenant faithfulness of the Most High

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "because the Most High is faithful to his covenant"

he will not be moved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will remove him as king"

Psalms 21:8

Your hand will seize

Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "Your power will seize" or "You will powerfully seize"

Your hand ... hate you

Possible meaning of all occurrences of "your" and "you" are 1) they refer to the king or 2) they refer to God.

your right hand will seize those who hate you

This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence. It emphasizes that God will give the king the power to stop his enemies.

Psalms 21:9

At the time of your anger

"When you are angry and begin to act"

your anger ... you will burn

The words "your" and "you" refers to either 1) God or 2) the king.

you will burn them up as in a fiery furnace

Yahweh or the king destroying their enemies is spoken of as if their enemies are wood and Yahweh or the king will throw them into a furnace.

Yahweh will consume them in his wrath, and the fire will devour them

Both clauses mean basically the same thing. Yahweh completely destroying his enemies is spoken of as if his wrath is a fire that completely burns up his enemies.

Psalms 21:10

You will destroy

The word "you" refers to either 1) God or 2) the king.

from the earth ... from among the human race

Both phrases mean the same thing. They emphasize that absolutely none of their enemies will survive.

Psalms 21:11

they intended

"they planned." The word "they" refers to the enemies of God and the king.

evil against you

"to do evil things to you"

they conceived a plot

"they made a plan" or "they created a scheme"

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Psalms 21:12

For you will turn them back; you will draw your bow before them

Possible meanings for "you" and "your" are 1) they refer to the king or 2) they refer to God and speak about him as if he were a warrior with a bow and arrows.

you will turn them back

This is a way of saying that God and the king will defeat their enemies in battle.

you will draw your bow before them

This implies that he actually shoots his arrows at his enemies.

Psalms 21:13

Be exalted, Yahweh, in your strength

Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh, show us that you are very strong" or 2) "Yahweh, because you are strong we will exalt you"

we will sing and praise your power

The words "sing" and "praise" share similar meanings. Here the word "power" represents God and his power. Alternate translation: "with singing we will praise you because you are powerful"

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22 For the chief musician; set to "The rhythm of the deer." A psalm of David.
My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
Why are you so far from saving me
and far from the words of my anguish?

2 My God, I cry out in the daytime, but you do not answer,
and at night I am not silent!

3 Yet you are holy;
you sit as king with the praises of Israel.

4 Our ancestors trusted in you;
they trusted in you, and you rescued them.

5 They cried to you and they were rescued.
They trusted in you and were not disappointed.

6 But I am a worm and not a man,
a disgrace to humanity and despised by the people.

7 All those who see me taunt me;
they mock me; they shake their heads at me.

8 They say, "He trusts in Yahweh;
let Yahweh rescue him.
Let him rescue him, for he delights in him."

9 For you brought me from the womb;
you made me trust you when I was on my mother's breasts.

10 I have been thrown on you from the womb;
you are my God since I was in my mother's womb!

11 Do not be far away from me, for trouble is near;
there is no one to help.

12 Many bulls surround me;

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strong bulls of Bashan surround me.

13 They open their mouths wide against me
like a roaring lion ripping its victim.

14 I am being poured out like water,
and all my bones are dislocated.
My heart is like wax;
it melts away within my inner parts.

15 My strength has dried up like a piece of pottery;
my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.
You have laid me in the dust of death.

16 For dogs have surrounded me;
a company of evildoers has encircled me;
they have pierced my hands and my feet.

17 I can count all my bones.
They look and stare at me.

18 They divide my garments among themselves,
they cast lots for my clothes.

19 Do not be far away, Yahweh;
please hurry to help me, my strength!

20 Rescue my soul from the sword,
my only life from the claws of wild dogs.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth;
rescue me from the horns of the wild oxen.

22 I will declare your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.

23 You who fear Yahweh, praise him!
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!
Stand in awe of him, all you descendants of Israel!

24 For he has not despised or abhorred
the suffering of the afflicted one;
Yahweh has not hidden his face from him;
when the afflicted one cried to him, he heard.

25 My praise will be because of you in the great assembly;
I will fulfill my vows before those who fear him.

26 The oppressed will eat and be satisfied;
those who seek Yahweh will praise him.

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May your hearts live forever.

27 All the peoples of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh;
all the families of the nations will bow down before you.

28 For the kingdom is Yahweh's;
he is the ruler over the nations.

29 All the prosperous people of the earth will feast and will worship;
all those who are descending into the dust will bow before him,
those who cannot preserve their own souls alive.

30 A generation to come will serve him;
they will tell the next generation of the Lord.

31 They will come and tell of his righteousness;
they will tell to a people not yet born what he has done!

Psalm 22 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 22 is a messianic psalm. It contains references to events during the crucifixion of Christ. It is also a psalm of individual lament and praise. (See: christ and crucify and lament)

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

Christ was despised and taunted by his enemies; but finally people all over the earth will bow down to him.

New Testament usage

This psalm is quoted in different places in the New Testament. Verse 1a is cited in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34 as the words of Christ on the cross. Many of the events in the narratives of the crucifixion are mentioned in this psalm. (See: cross)

Links:

Psalms 22:1

Psalms 22:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to "The rhythm of the deer." A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

The rhythm of the deer

This may refer to a style of music.

My God, my God

The writer repeats "My God" to emphasize that he is desperate for God to hear him.

my God, why have you abandoned me?

The writer uses a question to emphasize that he feels like God has abandoned him. It may be best to leave this as a question. It can also be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "my God, I feel like you have abandoned me!"

you abandoned me

"you left me all alone"

Why are you so far from saving me and far from the words of my anguish?

Again the writer uses a question to emphasize that he feels like God is far away from him. It may be best to leave this as a question. It can also be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are far from saving me and far from the words of my anguish!"

far from the words of my anguish

The writer feeling like God is not listening to him is spoken of as if God were far from his words of anguish. Alternate translation: "why do you not listen when I speak to you about the anguish I feel" or "I have told you about my suffering but you do not come to me"

Psalms 22:2

in the daytime ... at night

The writer uses the words "daytime" and "night" to mean he prays to God all the time.

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I am not silent
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I still speak"
Psalms 22:3
you sit as king with the praises of Israel
"the praises of Israel are the throne on which you sit as king." The praises of Israel are described as if they are a throne upon which God can sit and rule, or as a house in which God can live. Alternate translation: "you are king and the people of Israel praise you"
of Israel
Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel.
Psalms 22:5
were not disappointed
This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "you did not disappoint them" or "you did not fail them" or "you saved them" or "you did for them what they needed you to do"
Psalms 22:6
I am a worm and not a man
The writer speaks of himself as if he were a worm. This emphasizes that he feels worthless or that the people treat him as if he were worthless. Alternate translation: "But it is like I am a worm and not a man"
disgrace to humanity and despised by the people
Both of these phrase mean basically the same thing. The phrase "despised by the people" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone thinks I am worthless and the people hate me"
Psalms 22:7
taunt me; they mock me; they shake their heads at me
These three phrases share similar meanings and emphasize how much people disrespect him.
they shake their heads at me
This describes an action used to mock someone.
Psalms 22:8
He trusts in Yahweh ... delights in him
The people are saying this to mock the writer. They do not really believe Yahweh will rescue him.
Let him rescue him
"Let Yahweh rescue him"
for he delights in him
Possible meanings are 1) "for Yahweh delights in him" or 2) "for he delights in Yahweh"
Psalms 22:9
For you
The writer uses the word "For" to begin explaining why he is confused and asking God why he is not coming to help.
you brought me from the womb
This is a way of saying "you caused me to be born."
when I was on my mother's breasts
This means that he has been trusting in Yahweh since he was very young. Alternate translation: "even from the time that I drank milk from my mother's breasts"
Psalms 22:10
I have been thrown on you from the womb
The phrase "have been thrown on" is a way of saying that Yahweh has taken care of him as if Yahweh had adopted him as his own child. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It was as though you had adopted me right when I was born"
you are my God
This implies that Yahweh has always taken care of the writer. Alternate translation: "you, God, have taken care of me"
since I was in my mother's womb
"since before I was born"
Psalms 22:11
Do not be far away from me
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Come close to me"
for trouble is near
The writer speaks about "trouble" as if it were an object that is near him. Alternate translation: "for my enemies are near me"
there is no one to help
"there is no helper"
Psalms 22:12
Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were bulls. This emphasizes how dangerous and powerful his enemies are. Alternate translation: "I have many enemies and they are like bulls that surround me; they are like strong bulls from Bashan that surround me"
Psalms 22:13
They open their mouths wide against me
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were lions with the mouths open ready to eat him. His enemies may be speaking lies to discredit him. Or they may be threatening him and attacking him.
like a roaring lion ripping its victim
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were lions. This emphasizes how powerful and dangerous his enemies are.
Psalms 22:14
I am being poured out like water
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is like someone is pouring me out like water"
I am being poured out like water
The writer speaks about feeling completely exhausted and weak as if he were water being poured out of a jar.
all my bones are dislocated
"all my bones are out of place." It is possible the writer is in some kind of physical pain. Or he may be speaking of his emotional pain as if it were physical pain.
My heart is like wax ... inner parts
The writer speaks about no longer having courage as if his heart melted like wax. Here "heart" represents "courage."
wax
a soft substance that melts at a relatively low temperature
within my inner parts
"inside of me"
Psalms 22:15
My strength has dried up like a piece of pottery
The writer speaks about feeling weak as if his strength were like a dry piece of pottery that can easily break.
piece of pottery
an object made of baked clay that can be used in the house

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my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth
"my tongue sticks to the top of my mouth." The writer may be describing his extreme thirst. Or he may be continuing to speak about being weak as if he were completely dry.
You have laid me in the dust of death
Possible meanings for "dust of death" are 1) it refers to a person turning to dust after they die. Alternate translation: "You are about to let me die and become dust" or 2) it is a way of speaking about the grave, which would mean God is causing the writer to die. Alternate translation: "You have laid me in my grave"
You have laid me
The "you" is singular and refers to God.
Psalms 22:16
dogs have surrounded me
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were dogs. His enemies are coming close to him like wild dogs do to a dying animal. Alternate translation: "my enemies are like dogs that have surrounded me"
a company of evildoers
"a group of evildoers" or "a gang of evildoers"
encircled
stood in a circle
they have pierced my hands and my feet
This continues the dog metaphor. The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were dogs that are biting and piercing his hands and feet with their teeth.
pierced
stabbed through something with a sharp object
Psalms 22:17
I can count all my bones
Possible meanings are 1) the writer is so thin that he can see his bones. Alternate translation: "I can see all of my bones" or "I can feel each of my bones" or 2) this continues the dog metaphor and the writer can see his bones after the dogs have ripped his flesh.
look and stare at me
The words "look" and "stare" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that people look at him awkwardly and make fun of him.
Psalms 22:18
my garments
"my clothes"
Psalms 22:19
Do not be far away
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be very close"
my strength
Here "strength" represents Yahweh who gives him strength. Alternate translation: "you who give me strength"
Psalms 22:20
Rescue my soul
Here "soul" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Rescue me"
the sword
The sword is a common way of referring to a violent enemy. Alternate translation: "those who want to kill me" or "my enemies"
my only life
"my precious life" or "the only life I have"
claws of wild dogs
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were dogs to emphasize how dangerous his enemies are. Also, the claws stand for the animals as a whole in a synecdoche. The writer emphasizes this part of the animal because it is what the animals would use to kill someone.
wild dogs
The word "wild" here means that no one has captured and tamed the animal.
Psalms 22:21
lion's mouth ... horns of the wild oxen
The writer speaks about his enemies as if they were lions and wild oxen to emphasize how dangerous his enemies are. Also, the mouth and horns stand for the animals as a whole in a synecdoche. The writer emphasizes these parts of the animals because they are what the animals would use to kill someone.
wild oxen
The word "wild" here means that no one has captured and tamed the animal.
Psalms 22:22
I will declare your name
"I will make known your name." Here "name" stands for God's character or reputation. Alternate translation: "I will talk about your character"
my brothers
Here "brothers" means "my fellow Israelites" or "my fellow worshipers of Yahweh"
in the midst of the assembly
"when my fellow Israelites and I gather together" or "when I am surrounded by my fellow worshipers of Yahweh"
Psalms 22:23
You who fear
Here "You" is plural.
you descendants of Jacob ... you descendants of Israel
Both of these refer to the same group of people.
Stand in awe of him
"Be full of awe for him" or "Let God's power amaze you"
Psalms 22:24
he has not despised or abhorred the suffering of the afflicted one
Possible meanings are 1) he has not despised the afflicted one because he is suffering or 2) he has not belittled the suffering of the afflicted one
despised or abhorred
These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that God has not forgotten the one who is afflicted and suffering.
despised
strongly disliked or hated
he has not ... abhorred the suffering of the afflicted one
Here, suffering is a metonym for the person who suffers. To abhor something is to think of it as horrible. Alternate translation: "he has not ... thought of the afflicted one who suffers as horrible"
the suffering of the afflicted one ... from him ... the afflicted one cried
Possible meanings are 1) the author was speaking about how God treats people who are suffering. Alternate translation: "those who suffer ... from them ... those who are

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suffering cried" or 2) the author was speaking specifically about how God treated him. Alternate translation: "my suffering because of my affliction ... from me ... I cried"

has not hidden his face from him

Hiding one's face from someone represents ignoring him. Alternate translation: "has not turned his attention away from him" or "has not ignored him"

he heard

"he listened." It is implied that he responded when he heard their cry. Alternate translation: "he answered" or "he helped"

Psalms 22:25

because of you

Here "you" refers to Yahweh.

I will fulfill my vows

This refers to sacrifices the writer promised to offer to God.

before those who fear him

Here "him" refers to Yahweh. It can be stated as "you." Alternate translation: "in the presence of those who fear you"

Psalms 22:26

The oppressed will eat and be satisfied

This refers to the fellowship meal which occurs after the writer offers to God the sacrifices that he promised. He will invite those who were suffering to eat a part of the animal he sacrificed.

those who seek Yahweh

Those who want to know Yahweh and please him are spoken of as if they are literally seeking to find Yahweh.

May your hearts live forever

Here "hearts" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "May you live forever"

May your hearts

Here "your" is plural and refers to the oppressed people.

Psalms 22:27

will remember and turn to Yahweh

Starting to obey Yahweh is spoken of as if the people physically turn toward Yahweh. Alternate translation: "will remember Yahweh and obey him"

all the families of the nations will bow down before you

This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence. The writer is emphasizing that everyone from every place will worship and obey Yahweh.

will bow down before you

This is a sign of giving honor and respect to someone.

before you

Here "you" refers to Yahweh. It can be translated in the third person to match the first part of the sentence. Alternate translation: "before him"

Psalms 22:28

For the kingdom is Yahweh's

"For the kingdom belongs to Yahweh." Here "kingdom" represents God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh is king"

he is the ruler over the nations

Here "nations" represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "he rules the people of the nations"

Psalms 22:29

will feast

The people will eat together at the feast. Alternate translation: "will eat together" or "will eat a festive meal together"

all those who are descending into the dust ... those who cannot preserve their own souls alive

Both phrases refers to the same group. They both refer to all people because all people will die.

those who are descending into the dust

Here "dust" represents the grave. The phrase "descending into the dust" is a way of referring to someone dying. Alternate translation: "those who are dying" or "those who die"

those who cannot preserve their own souls alive

"those who cannot save their own lives" or "those who cannot keep themselves from dying"

Psalms 22:30

A generation to come

Here "A generation" represents the people of a generation. The phrase "to come" speaks about a future time as if it were something that travels and arrives somewhere. Alternate translation: "People in the future generations"

the next generation

Here "generation" represents the people of that generation. Alternate translation: "the people of the next generation" or "their children"

of the Lord

"about the Lord" or "about what the Lord has done"

Psalms 22:31

tell of his righteousness

The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "tell of the righteous things he has done"

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23 A psalm of David.
Yahweh is my shepherd; I will lack nothing.
2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside tranquil water.

3 He brings back my life;
he guides me along paths that are right
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no harm, for you are with me;

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your rod and your staff comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you have anointed my head with oil;
my cup runs over.

6 Surely goodness and covenant faithfulness will pursue me
all the days of my life;
and I will live in the house of Yahweh
for the length of my days!

Psalm 23 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 23 is a psalm of praise to God for his continued care and protection. The psalmist praises God for always being with him and for caring for him.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Psalm 23 is an extended metaphor speaking of God as if he were a shepherd, and of the psalmist as if he were a sheep.

Links:

Psalms 23:1

Psalms 23:1

General Information:

In much of this psalm, David writes as if he were a sheep and the Lord were his shepherd. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Yahweh is my shepherd

The writer speaks about Yahweh as if he were a shepherd. This emphasizes how God cares for people as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is like a shepherd to me" or "Yahweh cares for me as a shepherd cares for his sheep"

I will lack nothing

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I have everything that I need"

Psalms 23:2

He makes me to lie down in green pastures

The writer speaks about himself as if he were a sheep, and he speaks about Yahweh as if he were a shepherd. Alternate translation: He gives me rest like a shepherd who leads his sheep to lie down in green pastures"

he leads me beside tranquil water

The writer speaks about himself as if he were a sheep, and he speaks about Yahweh as if he were a shepherd. Alternate translation: "he provides what I need like a shepherd who leads his sheep beside tranquil water"

tranquil water

"calm water" or "water that flows gently." This water is safe to drink.

Psalms 23:3

General Information:

This psalm continues to tell about how God cares for us as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

He brings back my life

This means God makes a person who is weak and tired to be strong and rested again.

he guides me along paths that are right

Showing a person how to live in a way that pleases God is spoken of as if it were a shepherd showing a sheep the right path to take. Alternate translation: "he shows me how to live right"

for his name's sake

The phrase "his name" here refers to his reputation. Alternate translation: "for his reputation" or "so that people will honor him"

Psalms 23:4

General Information:

This psalm continues to tell about how God cares for us as a shepherd cares for his sheep.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley

The writer describes a person experiencing terrible trouble as if he were a sheep walking through a dark and dangerous valley. There a sheep could get lost or attacked by a wild animal. Alternate translation: "Though my life is like walking through a dark and dangerous valley"

I will fear no harm

The abstract noun "harm" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will not be afraid of something harming me"

you are with me

Here "you" refers to Yahweh.

your rod and your staff comfort me

The rod and staff represent protection because shepherds

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use them to protect their sheep from danger. Alternate translation: "I am not afraid because you protect me like a shepherd who protects his sheep with his rod and staff"
Psalms 23:5
General Information:
Now the writer tells how God is like someone who welcomes a guest into his home and protects him.
You prepare a table
A table represents a feast because people would put all the food on a table.
in the presence of my enemies
The meaning here is that the writer is not worried about his enemies because he is an honored guest of the Lord and therefore protected from harm. Alternate translation: "despite the presence of my enemies"
anointed my head with oil
People sometimes put oil on their guests' heads in order to honor them.
my cup runs over
Here a cup of wine that overflows represents many blessings. Alternate translation: "You fill my cup so much that it overflows" or "You give me many blessings"
Psalms 23:6
Surely goodness and covenant faithfulness will pursue me
Yahweh being good and faithful to a person is spoken of as if goodness and covenant faithfulness are things that pursue after a person. The abstract nouns "goodness" and "faithfulness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "Surely you will be good and faithful to me"
all the days of my life
The abstract noun "life" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "as long as I live"
the house of Yahweh
Possible meanings are that 1) this refers to Yahweh's eternal home, or 2) this refers to Yahweh's temple in Jerusalem. If possible, translate it so that both meanings could be understood.
for the length of my days
This idiom refers to the duration of his life. Alternate translation: "as long as I live" or "forever"

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24 A psalm of David.
The earth is Yahweh's, and its fullness,
the world, and all who live in it.

2 For he has founded it upon the seas
and established it on the rivers.

3 Who will ascend the mountain of Yahweh?
Who will stand in his holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart;
who has not lifted up a falsehood,
and has not sworn an oath in order to deceive.

5 He will receive a blessing from Yahweh
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 Such is the generation of those who seek him,
those who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Selah

7 Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, everlasting doors,
so that the King of glory may come in!

8 Who is this King of glory?
Yahweh, strong and mighty;
Yahweh, mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, everlasting doors,

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so that the King of glory may come in!

10 Who is this King of glory?
Yahweh of hosts,
he is the King of glory.

Selah

Psalm 24 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 24 is a psalm of praise to God as the almighty God. (See: almighty)

Special concepts in this chapter

Righteous people

Only the righteous come to worship God. (See: righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The psalmists uses several rhetorical questions. Each question forms a unit with a response.

Links:

Psalms 24:1

Psalms 24:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

its fullness

The abstract noun "fullness" can be stated with the verb "fills." Alternate translation: "everything that fills it"

Psalms 24:2

For he has founded it upon the seas and established it on the rivers

Here "founded it upon the seas" and "established it on the rivers" mean basically the same thing. The Hebrews of that time believed their land was supported by the oceans and deep underground rivers. Alternate translation: For he formed its foundation on the seas and built it on the deep waters"

the seas ... the rivers

These phrases are used together to refer to the huge deep ocean below the earth.

on the rivers

"the water that is deep below"

Psalms 24:3

Who will ascend the mountain ... in his holy place?

Both of these questions mean basically the same thing. The speaker is asking about who is allowed to go and worship Yahweh.

will ascend

"will go up" or "will climb"

the mountain of Yahweh

This refers to Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

his holy place

This refers Yahweh's temple. His temple is on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

Psalms 24:4

He who has ... who has ... and has not

Here "He" does not refer to a specific person. Alternate translation: "Those who have ... who have ... and have not"

who has clean hands

The word "hands" represents what a person does. For his "hands" to be clean means he does what is right. Alternate translation: "who does what is right"

a pure heart

Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts or motives. Alternate translation: "thinks good thoughts" or "does not think about doing what is wrong"

who has not lifted up a falsehood

Here "falsehood" represents a false idol. To "lift up" means to worship. Alternate translation: "who has not worshiped an idol"

Psalms 24:5

He will receive a blessing from Yahweh

The word "he" does not refer to a specific person. It refers to the ones with pure hearts mentioned in previous verse. The abstract noun "blessing" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless them"

righteousness from the God of his salvation

The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as "righteously." And, "salvation" can be stated as "save." Alternate translation: "God will deal righteously with him and save him"

Psalms 24:6

Such is the generation of those who seek him

Here "generation" represents people in general. Alternate translation: "The people who seek him are like this"

those who seek him, those who seek the face of the God of Jacob

Both statements mean the same thing. They both refer to those who go to the temple to worship God. Alternate

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translation: "the ones who approach God, they are the ones who may worship God, the one we Israelites worship"
those who seek him
Going to the temple to worship Yahweh is spoken of as if the person is literally seeking to find him.
the face of the God of Jacob
Here "face" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "the God of Jacob"
Psalms 24:7
Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, everlasting doors
The two phases are very similar in meaning. The words "gates" and "doors" refer to the gates of the temple. The writer is speaking to the gates as if they were a person. A gatekeeper would be the one to open the gates. Alternate translation: "Open up, you ancient gates" or "Open these ancient gates"
Lift up your heads
It is uncertain what specific part of the gate is the "head." But, it stands for the gate as a whole.
Psalms 24:8
Yahweh, strong and mighty; Yahweh, mighty in battle
The writer speaks about Yahweh as if he were a mighty warrior who fights in battles.
Psalms 24:9
Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, everlasting doors
The two phases are very similar in meaning. The words "gates" and "doors" refer to the gates of the temple. The writer is speaking to the gates as if they were a person. A gatekeeper would be the one to open the gates. See how you translated this in [Psalms 24:7]
Lift up your heads
It is uncertain what specific part of the gate is the "head." But, it stands for the gate as a whole.

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25 A psalm of David.
To you, Yahweh,
I lift up my life!

2 My God, I trust in you.
Do not let me be humiliated;
do not let my enemies rejoice triumphantly over me.

3 May no one who hopes in you be disgraced;
may those who act treacherously without cause be ashamed!

4 Make known to me your ways, Yahweh;
teach me your paths.

5 Guide me into your truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
I hope in you all day long.

6 Call to mind, Yahweh, your acts of compassion and of covenant faithfulness;
for they have always existed.

7 Do not think about the sins of my youth
or my rebelliousness;
Call me to mind with covenant faithfulness
because of your goodness, Yahweh!

8 Yahweh is good and upright;
therefore he teaches sinners the way.

9 He guides the humble in what is right
and he teaches them his way.

10 All the paths of Yahweh are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep his covenant and his solemn commands.

11 For your name's sake, Yahweh,

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pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

12 Who is the man who fears Yahweh?
The Lord will instruct him in the way that he should choose.

13 His life will go along in goodness;
and his descendants will inherit the land.

14 The friendship of Yahweh is for those who honor him,
and he makes his covenant known to them.

15 My eyes are always on Yahweh,
for he will free my feet from the net.

16 Turn toward me and have mercy on me;
for I am alone and afflicted.

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged;
draw me out from my distress!

18 See my affliction and my toils;
forgive all my sins.

19 See my enemies, for they are many;
they hate me with violent hatred.

20 Protect my life and rescue me;
do not let me be humiliated,
for I take refuge in you!

21 May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I hope in you.

22 Rescue Israel, God,
from all of his troubles!

Psalm 25 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 25 is a prayer for God's help.

Special concepts in this chapter

The humble

God is very good to humble people who seek to obey him.

Links:

Psalms 25:1

Psalms 25:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say

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that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I lift up my life

The phrase "lift up my life" is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) the writer is giving himself to Yahweh, which means he is completely depending on Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I give myself to you" or 2) he is offering prayer and adoration to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I worship and adore you"

Psalms 25:2

Do not let me be humiliated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let my enemies humiliate me"

rejoice triumphantly over me

"rejoice in triumph over me." The phrase "over me" implies that his enemies have defeated him and stand above in victory. Alternate translation: "defeat me and rejoice about it"

Psalms 25:3

May no one who hopes in you be disgraced

"Do not let those who hope in you be disgraced." Disgrace could come from being defeated by their enemies. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let enemies defeat those who hope in you"

who hopes in you

"who trusts you"

act treacherously

"act deceitfully" or "act with trickery"

without cause

"without a reason"

Psalms 25:4

Make known to me your ways, Yahweh; teach me your paths

Both statements mean the same thing. God teaching a person how they should behave is spoken of as if he were showing a person the correct path on which a person should travel.

Psalms 25:5

I hope in you

"I depend on you" or "I wait patiently for you"

Guide me into your truth and teach me

Guide and teach mean the same thing, to give instruction. Alternate translation: "Instruct me to conduct my life by obeying your truth"

the God of my salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as "saves." Alternate translation: "the one who saves me"

Psalms 25:6

Call to mind

This is an idiom. This does not mean God forgot something. The writer is asking God to think about and consider his acts of compassion and faithfulness. Alternate translation: "Remember" or "Think about"

your acts of compassion and of covenant faithfulness

The abstract nouns "compassion" and "faithfulness" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "how you have been compassionate and faithful to your covenant"

for they have always existed

Here "they" personifies God's compassion and covenant faithfulness. Alternate translation: "for that is how you have always been"

Psalms 25:7

Do not think about the sins of my youth

The abstract noun "sins" can be stated as "sinned." Alternate translation: "Do not think about how I sinned against you when I was young"

or my rebelliousness

The abstract noun "rebelliousness" can be stated as "rebelled." Alternate translation: or about how I have rebelled against you"

Call me to mind

This is an idiom. This does not mean God forgot something. The writer is asking God to think about him. Alternate translation: "Remember me" or "Think about me"

with covenant faithfulness because of your goodness

The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "goodness" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "and be faithful to me because of your covenant, because you are good"

Psalms 25:8

the way

How God wants a person to behave is spoken of as if it were a way or path on which a person travels.

Psalms 25:9

the humble

This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "humble people" or "those who are humble"

his way

How God wants a person to behave is spoken of as if it were a way or path on which a person travels.

Psalms 25:10

All the paths of Yahweh are steadfast love and faithfulness

Here "paths" is a metaphor that represents what some one does or their character. The abstract nouns "loves" and "faithfulness" can be expressed with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "Yahweh always loves and is faithful"

Psalms 25:11

For your name's sake

The phrase "your name" here refers to Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "For your reputation" or "So that people will honor you"

pardon my iniquity, for it is great

The abstract noun "iniquity" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "please forgive me, for I have sinned much"

Psalms 25:12

Who is the man who fears Yahweh?

This question introduces "the man who fears Yahweh" as a new topic. Alternate translation: "I will tell you about the man who fears Yahweh."

is the man who fears ... instruct him ... he should

These words refer to any person who fears Yahweh, not a specific person. Alternate translation: "are those who fear ... instruct them ... they should"

The Lord will instruct him in the way that he should choose

Yahweh teaching people how they should behave is spoken of as if Yahweh were teaching the people what way or path they should travel.

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Psalms 25:13
His life ... his descendants
These words refer to any person who fears Yahweh, not a specific person. Alternate translation: "Their lives ... their descendants"
His life will go along in goodness
"God will cause him to prosper" or "God will cause them to prosper"
Psalms 25:14
The friendship of Yahweh is for those
"Yahweh is a friend to those." Some translate it as "Yahweh confides in those." His confiding in them shows the intimate friendship he has with them.
Psalms 25:15
My eyes are always on Yahweh
Here "eyes" represents looking. It is implied that he looks to Yahweh for help. Alternate translation: "I always look to Yahweh to help me" or "I always depend on Yahweh to help me"
for he will free my feet from the net
A net is a trap. A person who is in danger is spoken of as if their feet are tangled in a net. Alternate translation: He will rescue me from danger"
Psalms 25:16
Turn toward me
Yahweh paying attention to a person and considering him is spoken of as if Yahweh were physically turning towards the person.
Psalms 25:17
The troubles of my heart are enlarged
Here "heart" represents a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "I feel more and more troubled"
draw me out from my distress
"bring me out of my distress." This speaks of distress as if it were a place that a person can be brought out of. Alternate translation: "rescue me from my distress" or "relieve me of my distress"
my distress
The word "distress" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "the things that distress me" or "the things that cause me to be afraid"
Psalms 25:18
See my affliction
"Notice my affliction"
my affliction
The abstract noun "affliction" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the things that afflict me" or "how afflicted I am"
my toils
The word "toils" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "the things that trouble me"
Psalms 25:19
they hate me with violent hatred
"they hate me and want to do violence to me"
Psalms 25:20
do not let me be humiliated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let my enemies humiliate me"
take refuge in you!
Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection!"
Psalms 25:21
May integrity and uprightness preserve me
This speaks about "integrity" and "uprightness" as if they were persons who could keep another person safe. These abstract nouns can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "May being honest and doing what is right preserve me" or "Preserve me, Lord, because I am honest and do what is right"
preserve me
"keep me safe"
Psalms 25:22
Rescue Israel
"Save Israel" or "Redeem Israel"
Israel ... his troubles
Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel ... our troubles"

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26 A psalm of David.
Judge me, Yahweh,
for I have walked with integrity;
I have trusted in Yahweh without wavering.

2 Examine me, Yahweh, and test me;
test the purity of my inner parts and my heart!

3 For your covenant faithfulness is before my eyes,
and I walk about in your faithfulness.

4 I do not associate with deceitful people,
nor do I mingle with dishonest people.

5 I hate the assembly of evildoers,
and I do not live with the wicked.

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6 I wash my hands in innocence,
and I go around your altar, Yahweh,

7 to sing a loud song of praise
and report all your wonderful deeds.

8 Yahweh, I love the house where you live,
the place where your glory lives!

9 Do not sweep me away with sinners,
or my life with men of bloodshed,

10 in whose hands there is a plot,
and whose right hand is full of bribes.

11 But as for me, I will walk in integrity;
redeem me and have mercy on me.

12 My foot stands on level ground;
in the assemblies will I bless Yahweh!

Psalm 26 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 26 is a teaching psalm; showing people how they should live by the example of the psalmsist.

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

The psalmist delights in praising God and doing good deeds. It is striking how this psalm uses the first person pronoun. This is an individual psalm of petition. Each of the four petitions are accompanied with various claims. (See: good and works)

Links:

Psalms 26:1

Psalms 26:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I have walked

The word "walked" is a metaphor for behavior. Alternate translation: "I have behaved"

in Yahweh

The third person use of "Yahweh" can be stated in the second person. Alternate translation: "in you"

without wavering

Doubting is spoken of as if it were losing balance and waving back and forth. Alternate translation: "without doubting"

Psalms 26:2

Examine me

"Try me"

test the purity of my inner parts and my heart

Here "inner parts" and "heart" mean motives. Alternate translation: "test whether my motives are good"

Psalms 26:3

For your covenant faithfulness is before my eyes

Here "eyes" represent a person's thoughts and having something before one's eyes represents being aware of that thing. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "For I am always aware of your covenant faithfulness" or "For I am always aware that you are faithful to your covenant"

I walk about in your faithfulness

The word "walk" is a metaphor for behavior. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "I conduct my life according to your faithfulness" or "I behave the way I do because you are faithful"

Psalms 26:4

I do not associate with

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"I do not keep company with" or "I do not sit with"

with deceitful people

"with those who deceive others"

nor do I mingle with dishonest people

This means the same as the first part of the sentence. Alternate translation: "and I do not join with dishonest people"

dishonest people

"hypocrites" or "those who lie to others"

Psalms 26:5

the assembly of evildoers

"those who gather to do evil"

the wicked

This is a nominal adjective. Alternate translation: "wicked people" or "those who are wicked"

Psalms 26:6

I wash my hands in innocence

This seems to refer to a ritual washing of hands in water to symbolize freedom from sin and guilt.

I go around your altar

This was an action of worship that the Israelites were accustomed to doing.

Psalms 26:8

the house where you live

Possible meanings are 1) if a person wrote this after the time of David, then the writer is referring to the temple in Jerusalem or 2) if David wrote this, then this refers to the tent that God told his people to set up so that they could worship him there.

the place where your glory lives

Here "glory" represents the presence and power of God, which is similar to a very bright light. Alternate translation: "the place where people can see the glorious light of your presence"

Psalms 26:9

Do not sweep me away with sinners

"Sweep away" here is a metaphor for destruction. Alternate translation: "Do not destroy me along with sinners"

or my life

The word "sweep" is understood. Alternate translation: "or sweep my life"

men of bloodshed

"people who are eager to shed others' blood" or "murderers"

Psalms 26:10

in whose hands

"Hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "people in which"

a plot

"a wicked plan"

Psalms 26:11

But as for me

This phrase shows that the writer is changing from speaking about wicked people to talking about himself.

I will walk in integrity

"Walk" here is a metaphor for behavior. Alternate translation: "I will behave with integrity"

Psalms 26:12

My foot stands

Here "foot" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I stand"

level ground

Possible meanings are that "level ground" represents 1) a safe place or 2) right behavior

in the assemblies will I bless Yahweh

"when I gather with the people of Israel I will praise you"

---

27 A psalm of David.
Yahweh is my light and my salvation;
whom should I fear?
Yahweh is my life's refuge;
whom should I dread?

2 When evildoers approached me to devour my flesh,
my adversaries and my enemies stumbled and fell.

3 Though an army encamps against me,
my heart will not fear;
though war rises up against me,
even then I will remain confident.

4 One thing have I asked of Yahweh,
and I will seek that:
that I may live in the house of Yahweh
all the days of my life,
to see the beauty of Yahweh
and to meditate in his temple.

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5 For in the day of trouble
he will hide me in his shelter;
in the cover of his tent he will conceal me.
He will lift me high on a rock!

6 Then my head will be lifted up above my enemies all around me,
and I will offer sacrifices of joy in his tent!
I will sing and make songs to Yahweh!

7 Hear, Yahweh, my voice when I cry out!
Have mercy on me, and answer me!

8 My heart says about you,
"Seek his face!" I seek your face, Yahweh!

9 Do not hide your face from me;
do not turn your servant away in anger!
You have been my helper;
do not abandon me or reject me,
God of my salvation!

10 Even if my father and my mother abandon me,
Yahweh will take me in.

11 Teach me your way, Yahweh!
Lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.

12 Do not give me up to the desires of my enemies,
for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and they breathe out violence!

13 What would have happened to me
if I had not believed that I would see the goodness of Yahweh
in the land of the living?

14 Wait for Yahweh;
be strong, and let your heart be courageous!
Wait for Yahweh!

Psalm 27 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 27 is a psalm of praise to God because God keeps the psalmist safe from all his enemies.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

Because of God's help, he has nothing to fear, no matter what happens. The psalmist shows his confidence in God; he also asks God for help.

Links:

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Psalms 27:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Yahweh is my light

Here "light" represents life. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is the source of my life"

whom should I fear?

This question emphasizes that there is no one that David should fear. Alternate translation: "I will not be afraid of anyone"

Yahweh is my life's refuge

This speaks about Yahweh as if he were a place where people can go for safety. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is the one who keeps me safe"

whom should I dread?

This question emphasizes that there is no one that David should be afraid of. Alternate translation: "I will not dread anyone"

Psalms 27:2

to devour my flesh

Destroying someone completely is spoken of as if it were devouring a person's flesh. He did not mean that they wanted to eat his body. Alternate translation: "to destroy me"

my adversaries and my enemies

These words mean the same thing. These are the evildoers who came near to him.

stumbled and fell

This represents the writer's enemies failing to fulfill their plans to harm the writer. Alternate translation: "did not succeed" or "failed"

Psalms 27:3

Though an army encamps against me

"though an army surrounds me" or "though an army puts its tents around me"

my heart will not fear

Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will not be afraid"

though war rises up against me

The writer's enemies are spoken of as if they themselves were a war. Alternate translation: "though my enemies come to fight against me"

I will remain confident

"I will continue to trust God to help me"

Psalms 27:4

have I asked of Yahweh

"I have asked Yahweh to let me do"

I will seek that

A person really wanting something and continually asking God for it is spoken of as if he were seeking to find something.

to see the beauty of Yahweh

The wonderful character of God is spoken of as if it were physical beauty. Alternate translation: "to see how wonderful Yahweh is"

to meditate in his temple

Possible meanings are 1) "to ask God what he wants me to do" or 2) "to think carefully about God in his temple."

Psalms 27:5

in the day of trouble

"in times of trouble" or "when I have troubles"

he will hide me

"he will protect me"

his shelter ... his tent

Both of these refer to the tabernacle where the writer is worshiping God.

in the cover of his tent

The word "cover" represents something that hides and protects.

He will lift me high on a rock

God keeping the writer safe from his enemies is spoken of as if God were placing him on a high rock where his enemies cannot reach him.

Psalms 27:6

my head will be lifted up above my enemies

This represents the writer receiving pride or honor when he defeats his enemies. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will honor me when I win the fight against my enemies" or "God will honor me by enabling me to defeat my enemies"

Psalms 27:7

Hear, Yahweh, my voice

The "voice" often represents a person who speak or calls out. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, hear me"

answer me

This implies that Yahweh hears the writer's prayer and Yahweh will do what the writer asks. Alternate translation: "answer my prayer" or "do what I request of you"

Psalms 27:8

My heart says

Here "heart" represents a person's mind or thoughts. Alternate translation: "In my heart I say" or "I say to myself"

Seek his face

A person going to the temple to pray to Yahweh is spoken of as if the person were seeking to find Yahweh. Here "face" represents all of God. Alternate translation: "Go and pray to Yahweh"

I seek your face, Yahweh

A person going to the temple to pray to Yahweh is spoken of as if the person were seeking to find Yahweh. Here "face" represents all of God. Alternate translation: "I will come to your temple to pray to you"

Psalms 27:9

Do not hide your face from me

The face here represents Yahweh's attention, and hiding the face represents rejecting someone. Alternate translation:

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"Do not reject me" or "Do not stop taking care of me"

do not turn your servant away in anger

David said "your servant" to refer to himself in a humble way. Alternate translation: "do not be angry with me"

do not abandon me or reject me

The words "abandon" and "reject" have similar meanings. The writer is emphasizing that he does not want God to leave him.

God of my salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as "saves." Alternate translation: "God who saves me" or "because you are the God who saves me"

Psalms 27:10

Even if my father and my mother abandon me

He is not saying that they actually have done this or that they would do it. His point is that even if they did that, God would not abandon him.

Yahweh will take me in

"Yahweh will keep me" or "Yahweh will take care of me"

Psalms 27:11

Teach me your way

How a person should behave is spoken of as if it were a way or path that person should travel. Alternate translation: "Teach me how you want me to live" or "Teach me to do what you want me to do"

Lead me on a level path

Yahweh keeping the writer safe from his enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh leads the writer on a level path where he will not stumble and fall. Alternate translation: "Keep me safe"

Psalms 27:12

Do not give me up to the desires of my enemies

The abstract noun "desires" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Do not let my enemies do to me what they desire"

have risen up against me

"Risen up" here is an idiom meaning that a witness stood in court to present testimony. Alternate translation: "have stood up in order to speak against me"

they breathe out violence

Here violence is spoken for as if it was something a person could breathe out. Alternate translation: "they say that they will do violent things to me"

Psalms 27:13

What would have happened to me

This rhetorical question can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Something bad would have happened to me"

the goodness of Yahweh

The abstract noun "goodness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the good things that Yahweh does"

in the land of the living

This refers to being alive. Alternate translation: "while I am alive"

Psalms 27:14

Wait for Yahweh ... Wait for Yahweh!

This verse may be 1) the writer speaking to himself or 2) the writer speaking to others or 3) someone speaking to the writer.

let your heart be courageous

Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "be courageous"

Wait for Yahweh!

This line is repeated at the end of the psalm as a way of ending the psalm.

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28 A psalm of David.
To you, Yahweh, I cry out;
my rock, do not ignore me.
If you do not respond to me,
I will join those who go down to the pit.

2 Hear the sound of my pleading
when I call for help from you,
when I lift up my hands
toward your most holy place!

3 Do not drag me away with the wicked,
those who behave wickedly,
who speak peace with their neighbors
but have evil in their hearts.

4 Give them what their deeds deserve
and repay them what their wickedness demands;
repay them for the work of their hands
and render to them their due.

5 Because they do not understand the deeds of Yahweh

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or the work of his hands,
he will break them down
and never rebuild them.

6 Blessed be Yahweh
because he has heard the sound of my pleading!

7 Yahweh is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him, and I am helped.
Therefore my heart greatly rejoices,
and I will praise him with singing.

8 Yahweh is the strength of his people,
and he is the saving refuge of his anointed one.

9 Save your people and bless your inheritance.
Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

Psalm 28 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 28 is a psalm of prayer to God that he is not be punished along with the wicked people. (See: evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

The psalmist trusted God completely and God rescued him. This is similar to psalm 7 and 17 because it is an individual lament psalm. (See: lament)

Links:

Psalms 28:1

Psalms 28:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I cry out

"I call out loudly"

my rock

This is a metaphor for strength. Alternate translation: "my strength"

do not ignore me

"do not be silent to me" or "do not leave me alone"

I will join those who go down to the pit

The pit is either the grave or the place where dead people are. Alternate translation: "I will die like those who are in the grave"

Psalms 28:2

Hear the sound of my pleading

Here "sound" refers to the content of his request. Alternate translation: "Hear my strong request"

I lift up my hands toward your most holy place

Lifting up hands is a symbol of worship. The writer is not worshiping the holy place, but Yahweh who lives in the holy place.

your most holy place

Possible meanings are 1) if David wrote this, then this refers to the tent that God told his people to set up so that they could worship him there, or 2) if a person wrote this after the time of David, then the writer is referring to the temple in Jerusalem.

Psalms 28:3

Do not drag me away

God punishing people is spoken of as if he physically drags them away. In this metaphor Yahweh may be dragging them to prison, exile, or death. Alternate translation: "Do not remove me"

who speak peace with their neighbors

Here "neighbors" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "who speak peacefully with other people"

but have evil in their hearts

Here "hearts" represents a person's mind or thoughts. Alternate translation: "but are thinking something evil about them"

Psalms 28:4

Give them what their deeds deserve ... repay them what their

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wickedness demands
These two phrases mean the same thing. They are used together to emphasize that they deserve for God to punish them.
the work of their hands
Here "hands" represent what the person has done. Alternate translation: "the things they have done"
render to them their due
"give them what they deserve"
Psalms 28:5
Because they do not understand ... never rebuild them
Possible meanings are 1) David is confident about what God will do to wicked people or 2) David is asking God to destroy the wicked people.
they do not understand the deeds of Yahweh
It is implied that "do not understand" means they ignore or do not honor Yahweh's works. Alternate translation: "they do not regard with honor what Yahweh has done"
the work of his hands
Here "hands" represents what Yahweh has done or created. Alternate translation: "what he has created"
he will break them down and never rebuild them
The punishment of the wicked people is spoken of as if they were a building or a city that God would destroy.
Psalms 28:6
he has heard the sound of my pleading
Here "sound" represents what the writer said. Alternate translation: "has heard what I said when I pleaded to him"
Psalms 28:7
Yahweh is my strength
The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "strong." Alternate translation: "Yahweh makes me strong"
my shield
This represents Yahweh's protecting the writer. Alternate translation: "he protects me"
my heart trusts
Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I trust"
I am helped
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he helps me"
my heart greatly rejoices
Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I greatly rejoice"
Psalms 28:8
Yahweh is the strength of his people
The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "strong." Alternate translation: "Yahweh makes his people strong"
he is the saving refuge of his anointed one
Yahweh keeping the king safe is spoken of as if Yahweh were a place that the king could go for safety. Alternate translation: "he keeps safe the one he appointed to be king"
his anointed one
The words "anointed one" represent the king.
Psalms 28:9
your inheritance
This speaks about the people of God as if they were something God inherited. Alternate translation: "your possession" or "those who belong to you"
Be their shepherd and carry them forever
The writer speaks about Yahweh as if he were a shepherd and the people are his sheep. A shepherd would carry a sheep if it needed help or protection. Alternate translation: "Be like their shepherd and protect them forever"

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29 A psalm of David.
Ascribe to Yahweh, you sons of God,
ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength!

2 Ascribe to Yahweh the glory his name deserves.
Bow down to Yahweh in the splendor of holiness!

3 The voice of Yahweh is heard over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
Yahweh thunders over many waters.

4 The voice of Yahweh is powerful;
the voice of Yahweh is majestic.

5 The voice of Yahweh breaks the cedars;
Yahweh breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf
and Sirion like a young ox.

7 The voice of Yahweh sends out flames of fire.
8 The voice of Yahweh shakes the wilderness;
Yahweh shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

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9 The voice of Yahweh causes the oaks to twist
and strips the forests bare.
Everyone in his temple says, "Glory!"

10 Yahweh sits as king over the flood;
Yahweh sits as king forever.

11 Yahweh gives strength to his people;
Yahweh blesses his people with peace.

Psalm 29 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 29 is a worship psalm. It tells how Yahweh rules all nature.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

God is powerful. All he has to do is to speak in order to control nature.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

The voice of the Yahweh stands for Yahweh himself.

Links:

Psalms 29:1

Psalms 29:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

you sons of God

The phrase "sons of" is a way of saying "having the characteristics of." Alternate translation: "you mighty men"

ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength

The abstract nouns "glory" and "strength" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "praise Yahweh because he is glorious and strong"

Psalms 29:2

Ascribe to Yahweh the glory his name deserves

The abstract noun "glory" can be stated as a verb or adjective. Alternate translation: "Honor Yahweh just as his name deserves" or "Proclaim that Yahweh is glorious just as his name deserves"

his name deserves

The phrase "his name" refers to Yahweh or his reputation. Alternate translation: "as is proper because of who he is"

Bow down to Yahweh

The implied information is that the people were to bow down in worship. Alternate translation: "Bow down to worship Yahweh"

in the splendor of holiness

The abstract nouns "splendor" and "holiness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because he is gloriously beautiful and holy"

Psalms 29:3

General Information:

The psalm shows Yahweh's power and glory.

The voice of Yahweh is heard over the waters

God's voice is louder and clearer than all other sounds and noises. It can be heard over other loud sounds such as the sound of the waters. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh speaks his voice is louder than the sound of the sea" or "Yahweh shouts louder than the sound of the waters"

over the waters

This refers to the seas or the oceans. These waters make a very loud noise as the waves rise and fall.

The voice of Yahweh

All occurrences of "voice" here represent Yahweh speaking. The writer is emphasizing that when Yahweh speaks, the sound is so loud it is heard over the waters, and it is so powerful it can destroy the largest trees. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh speaks, his voice"

the God of glory thunders

This speaks about God speaking as if it were the sound of thunder. Just like the sound of thunder, Yahweh's voice can be heard over large distances. Alternate translation: "The voice of the glorious God is loud like thunder" or "When the glorious God speaks it rumbles like thunder"

over many waters

"over the large bodies of water"

Psalms 29:6

Connecting Statement:

The writer continues describing the power of God's voice.

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf

The ground of Lebanon shaking is spoken of as if it were a

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young calf skipping. This emphasizes that when Yahweh speaks, the power of his voice shakes the ground. Alternate translation: "He makes the land of Lebanon shake like a calf skipping"

skip

jump lightly back and forth

Sirion like a young ox

The words "he makes" and "skip" are understood from the first phrase. They can be repeated here. The ground of Sirion shaking is spoken of as if it were a young ox skipping. This emphasizes that when Yahweh speaks, the power of his voice shakes the ground. Alternate translation: "he makes Sirion skip like a young ox"

Sirion

This is a mountain in Lebanon. It is also called Mount Hermon.

Psalms 29:7

The voice of Yahweh sends out flames of fire

All occurrences of "voice" here represent Yahweh speaking. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh speaks he causes lightning to flash in the sky"

flames of fire

This refers to lightning.

Psalms 29:9

The voice of Yahweh causes

Here "voice" represents Yahweh speaking. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh speaks, the sound causes"

the oaks to twist

"the large trees to shake"

strips the forests bare

Removing the leaves of the trees is spoken of as if it was removing their clothing. Alternate translation: "strips off the leaves from the trees"

Psalms 29:10

Yahweh sits as king

This means that Yahweh rules. Alternate translation: "Yahweh rules" or "Yahweh is king"

over the flood

Here "flood" refers to waters that cover the earth.

Psalms 29:11

Yahweh blesses his people with peace

The word "peace" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "Yahweh blesses his people by causing them to prosper and to live peacefully"

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30 A psalm; a song at the dedication of the temple. A psalm of David.
I will exalt you, Yahweh,
for you have raised me up
and have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me.

2 Yahweh my God, I cried to you for help,
and you healed me.

3 Yahweh, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you have kept me alive from going down to the pit.

4 Sing praises to Yahweh, you his faithful ones!
Give thanks when you remember his holiness.

5 For his anger is only for a moment;
but his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping comes for a night,
but joy comes in the morning.

6 In confidence I said, "I will never be shaken."
7 Yahweh, by your favor
you established me as a strong mountain;
but when you hid your face,
I was troubled.

8 I cried to you, Yahweh,
and sought favor from my Lord!

9 What advantage is there in my blood,
if I go down to the grave?

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Will the dust praise you?
Will it declare your trustworthiness?

10 Hear, Yahweh, and have mercy on me!
Yahweh, be my helper.

11 You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have removed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness.

12 So now my glory will sing praise to you and not be silent;
Yahweh my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

Psalm 30 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 30 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving to God. The psalmist was near death but God rescued him.

Special concepts in this chapter

The psalmist's death

If he had died, it would not have been a help to God. But since God rescued him he can praise God.

Links:

Psalms 30:1

Psalms 30:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm; a song at the dedication of the temple. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

a song at the dedication of the temple

"This song was sung when the temple was dedicated"

you have raised me up

The writer speaks of God rescuing him and keeping him from dying as if God had drawn him up from a deep well. Alternate translation: "you rescued me"

Psalms 30:3

brought up my soul from Sheol

Since "Sheol" was the place where dead people go, it refers to death. Alternate translation: "kept me from dying"

brought up my soul

Here "my soul" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "brought me up"

from going down to the pit

The "pit" represents death. Alternate translation: "from dying"

Psalms 30:4

Give thanks when you remember his holiness

The abstract nouns "thanks" and "holiness" can be stated as "thank" and "holy." Alternate translation: "Remember that God is holy and thank him" or "Remember what God has done because he is holy and thank him"

Psalms 30:5

his anger is only for a moment

"his anger lasts only a moment." The abstract noun "anger" can be stated as "angry." Alternate translation: "he is angry for only a moment"

a moment

Here "moment" represents a short amount of time. Alternate translation: "a short time"

but his favor is for a lifetime

The abstract noun "favor" can be stated as the adjective "good." Alternate translation: "but he is good to us all of our lives"

Weeping comes for a night, but joy comes in the morning

This speaks about "weeping" and "joy" as if they were something that travels and arrives at a certain time. Alternate translation: "We may cry during the night, but the next morning we will be joyful"

Psalms 30:6

In confidence

The word "confidence" is an abstract noun. The writer recalls a time when he was prospering and felt confident and safe. Alternate translation: "When I was confident" or "When I felt safe"

I will never be shaken

The word "shaken" is a metaphor for defeat. Alternate translation: "No one will defeat me"

Psalms 30:7

by your favor

The abstract noun "favor" can be stated as the verb "favored" or the adjective "kind." Alternate translation: "when you favored me" or "when you were kind to me"

you established me as a strong mountain

The writer's security is spoken of as if he were a strong mountain. Alternate translation: "you made me as secure as a high mountain"

when you hid your face

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This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "when you stopped helping me" or "when you rejected me"

I was troubled

"I was fearful" or "I was worried"

Psalms 30:8

sought favor from my Lord

The phrase "sought favor" means to ask for help. Alternate translation: "I pleaded for you to help me"

from my Lord

The writer is referring to Yahweh in third person. It can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "from you, my Lord"

Psalms 30:9

What advantage is there in my blood, if I go down to the grave?

The writer uses this question to emphasize that he would be of no value to God if he were dead. Alternate translation: "There is no advantage in my blood, if I go down to the grave."

in my blood

Here "blood" is a metonym for a violent death. Alternate translation: "if I die a violent death"

Will the dust praise you? Will it declare your trustworthiness?

The writer uses these questions to emphasize that his dead and decayed body cannot praise God. Alternate translation: "The dust will certainly not praise you or tell others about how trustworthy you are."

the dust

This refers to the body of the writer which will decay and become dust when he is dead. Alternate translation: "my decayed body"

Psalms 30:11

You have turned my mourning into dancing

It was customary for the Jews to dance when they were very happy. The abstract nouns "mourning" and "dancing" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "You have caused me to stop mourning and to dance with joy instead"

you have removed my sackcloth

Sackcloth was associated with mourning and sorrow. Alternate translation: "You have caused me to no longer be sad"

clothed me with gladness

The writer speaks of gladness as if it were a garment that he could put on. Alternate translation: "caused me to be glad"

Psalms 30:12

my glory will sing praise to you

Here "my glory" refers to the writer's soul or heart or inner being. This represents the entire person of the writer, who worships God because God has made him glad. Alternate translation: "I will sing praise to you"

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31 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
In you, Yahweh, I take refuge;
never let me be humiliated.
Rescue me in your righteousness.

2 Listen to me; rescue me quickly;
be my rock of refuge,
a stronghold to save me.

3 For you are my rock and my fortress;
therefore for your name's sake, lead and guide me.

4 Pluck me out of the net that they have hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.

5 Into your hands I entrust my spirit;
you will redeem me, Yahweh, God of trustworthiness.

6 I hate those who serve worthless idols,
but I trust in Yahweh.

7 I will be glad and rejoice in your covenant faithfulness,
for you saw my affliction;
you knew the distress of my soul.

8 You have not given me into the hand of my enemy.
You have set my feet in a wide open place.

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9 Have mercy upon me, Yahweh, for I am in distress;
my eyes grow weary with grief
with my soul and my body.

10 For my life is weary with sorrow
and my years with groaning.
My strength fails because of my iniquity,
and my bones are wasting away.

11 Because of all my enemies, I have become contemptible;
my neighbors are appalled at my situation,
and those who know me are horrified.
Those who see me in the street run from me.

12 I am forgotten as a dead man whom no one thinks about.
I am like a broken pot.

13 For I have heard the whispering of many,
terrifying news from every side
as they plot together against me.
They plot to take away my life.

14 But I trust in you, Yahweh;
I say, "You are my God."

15 My times are in your hand.
Rescue me from the hands of my enemies
and from those who pursue me.

16 Make your face shine on your servant;
save me in your covenant faithfulness.

17 Do not let me be humiliated, Yahweh;
for I call out to you!
May the wicked be humiliated!
May they be silent in Sheol.

18 May lying lips be silenced
that speak against the righteous defiantly
with arrogance and contempt.

19 How great is your goodness
that you have stored up for those who revere you,
that you perform for those who take refuge in you
before all the children of mankind!

20 In the shelter of your presence, you hide them from the plots of men.
You hide them in a shelter from the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed be Yahweh,
for he showed me his marvelous covenant faithfulness when I was in a besieged city.

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22 Though I said in my alarm,
"I am cut off from your eyes,"
yet you heard my plea for help
when I cried to you.

23 Love Yahweh, all you faithful ones.
Yahweh protects the faithful,
but he pays back the arrogant in full.

24 Be strong and let your heart take courage,
all you who trust in Yahweh for help.

Psalm 31 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 31 is a psalm of deliverance. The psalmist's enemies thought they had defeated him, but God protected him. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Abandonment

Even though everyone deserted and despised the psalmist, God did not abandon him.

Links:

Psalms 31:1

Psalms 31:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

In you, Yahweh, I take refuge

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "I go to you, Yahweh, for protection"

never let me be humiliated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "do not let others humiliate me"

Psalms 31:2

be my rock of refuge, a stronghold to save me

The phrase "be my rock of refuge" is a request for protection. The second phrase emphasizes the first phrase.

my rock of refuge

Yahweh is spoke of as if he were a huge rock that would protect the writer from attack. Alternate translation: "like a huge rock on which I can be safe"

a stronghold to save me

Yahweh is spoken of as if he were a strong fortress in which the writer would be protected from his enemies.

Psalms 31:3

my rock

Yahweh is spoke of as if he were a huge rock that would protect the writer from attack. Alternate translation: "like a huge rock on which I can be safe"

my fortress

Yahweh is spoken of as if he were a strong fortress in which the writer would be protected from his enemies.

for your name's sake

In this phrase "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "so that your name may be honored" or "so that I may worship you"

lead and guide me

The words "lead" and "guide" mean basically the same thing and strengthen the request that Yahweh lead him. Alternate translation: "lead me where you want me to go"

Psalms 31:4

Pluck me out of the net that they have hidden for me

The writer is spoken of as if he were a bird caught in a hidden net, and waiting for Yahweh to free him from the trap.

you are my refuge

Yahweh is spoken of as if he is a place where the writer can hide from people who are attacking him. Alternate translation: "you always protect me" or "you give me constant protection"

Psalms 31:5

Into your hands

God is spirit, but he is here spoken of as if he has hands. Here "your hands" refers to Yahweh's care. Alternate translation: "Into your care"

I entrust my spirit

Here "my spirit" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "I place myself"

God of trustworthiness

"you are a God I can trust"

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Psalms 31:6
I hate those who serve worthless idols
Here the word "worthless" refers to all idols. This can be clarified in translation. Alternate translation: "Idols are worthless. I hate those who serve them"
Psalms 31:7
I will be glad and rejoice in your covenant faithfulness
The words "glad" and "rejoice" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of joy. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "I will be very glad because you are faithful to your covenant"
you saw my affliction ... you knew the distress of my soul
Both of these phrases express the idea that God knows about the writer's troubles.
the distress of my soul
Here "my soul" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "my distress"
Psalms 31:8
You have set my feet
Here "my feet" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "You have set me"
a wide open place
The Hebrews thought of wide open spaces as a metaphor for safety and freedom. Alternate translation: "a place where I am free"
Psalms 31:9
I am in distress
"I am suffering greatly"
my soul and my body
The terms "soul" and "body" are used to describe the complete person.
Psalms 31:10
For my life is weary
Here "my life" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "I have become very weak"
with sorrow ... with groaning
"because of my sorrow ... because of my groaning"
my years with groaning
The phrase "is weary" is missing, but is implied. Alternate translation: "my years are weary with groaning"
My strength fails
Here "My strength" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "I have become weak"
my bones are wasting away
Here "my bones" refers to the physical health of the writer. Alternate translation: "my health is failing"
Psalms 31:11
have become contemptible
The abstract noun "contemptible" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "people have contempt for me" or "people insult me"
are appalled at my situation
"are shocked at my condition"
Psalms 31:12
as a dead man whom no one thinks about
People do not think about dead people. The writer does not think people think about him.
like a broken pot
The writer speaks of himself as if he was completely useless. "as useless as a broken pot"
Psalms 31:13
the whispering of many
It is implied that "many" refers to people. Alternate translation: "many people talking about me"
terrifying news from every side
"scary reports from many sources"
take away my life
This idiom means to kill someone. Alternate translation: "kill me"
Psalms 31:15
My times are in your hand
Here "your hand" refers to Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "You have the power to decide my future"
from those who pursue me
"from people who try to capture me"
Psalms 31:16
Make your face shine on your servant
The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards him as if Yahweh's face shone a light on him. Alternate translation: "Act favorably towards your servant"
save me in your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "save me because you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 31:17
Do not let me be humiliated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let others make me feel ashamed"
May the wicked be humiliated!
"I wish that God would disgrace wicked people!"
the wicked
This refers to "wicked people.
May they be silent in Sheol
Here "in Sheol" represents death. Alternate translation: "Let them die so they cannot speak"
Psalms 31:18
May lying lips be silenced
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "May someone make these lying lips silent"
lying lips
These represent lying people. Alternate translation: "people who lie"
that speak against the righteous defiantly
Here "the righteous" refers to people who are righteous. Alternate translation: "that say terrible things about righteous people"
with arrogance and contempt
These terms have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "with a complete lack of respect"
Psalms 31:19
is your goodness
This can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "are the good things you do"
that you have stored up
Yahweh's goodness is spoken of as if it was something that could be stored up like a harvest. Alternate translation: "that you are keeping ready to use"

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those who revere you
"those who respect you greatly"
take refuge in you
Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. See how you translated this in Psalms 31:1. Alternate translation: "those who go to you for protection"
Psalms 31:20
In the shelter of your presence, you hide them ... You hide them in a shelter
These phrases both mean that God protects them.
In the shelter
Yahweh's presence is spoken of as if it is a strong building where the writer would be safe.
You hide them in a shelter
Here a "shelter" represents a safe place. Alternate translation: "You provide a safe place for them"
from the strife of tongues
Here "tongues" refer to the people who are speaking violent things against the writer. Alternate translation: "where their enemies cannot speak evil at them"
Psalms 31:21
he showed me his marvelous covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "he showed me that he is wonderfully faithful to his covenant"
Psalms 31:22
I am cut off from your eyes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have removed me from your presence"
your eyes
Here Yahweh is represented by his "eyes." Alternate translation: "you"
you heard my plea for help
Here "plea" can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "you heard me plead for help"
Psalms 31:23
the faithful
This refers to the faithful people. Alternate translation: "the people who are faithful"
he pays back the arrogant in full
Here "pay back" is an idiom that refers to punishment. Alternate translation: "he gives the proud people all of the punishment that they deserve"

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32 A psalm of David. A maschil.
Blessed is the person
whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man to whom Yahweh reckons no guilt
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

3 When I remained silent,
my bones were wasting away
while I groaned all day long.

4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me.
My strength withered as in summer drought.

Selah

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I no longer hid my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to Yahweh,"
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Selah

6 For this reason every one of your faithful followers should pray to you
at a time of great distress.
When the surging waters overflow,
the waters will not reach them.

7 You are my hiding place;

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you will guard me from trouble.
You will surround me with the songs of victory.

Selah

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go.
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

9 Do not be like a horse or like a mule,
which have no understanding;
it is only with bridle and bit to control them
that they will go where you want them to.

10 The wicked have many sorrows,
but Yahweh's covenant faithfulness will surround the one who trusts in him.

11 Be glad in Yahweh, and rejoice, you righteous;
shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.

Psalm 32 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 32 is a psalm of confession of sin. (See: confess and sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Confession of sin

This psalm tells of the sorrow of unconfessed sin; it also tells of the blessing of confession and of receiving God's forgiveness. It is such a blessing when God forgives sin. Trouble comes when sin is hidden and not confessed. (See: bless and forgive)

Links:

Psalms 32:1

Psalms 32:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David. A maschil

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music.

whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered

These phrases have similar meanings. They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who God forgives his transgression and covers his sin"

whose sin is covered

Here sin that is forgiven is spoken of as if it were covered so that it can not be seen. Alternate translation: "whose sin is ignored" or "whose sin is deliberately forgotten"

Psalms 32:2

to whom Yahweh reckons no guilt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Yahweh sees as innocent" or "who is not guilty according to Yahweh"

in whose spirit there is no deceit

Here "spirit" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "in whom there is not deceit" or "who is completely honest"

Psalms 32:3

my bones were wasting away

Here "my bones" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "I was wasting away" or "I was getting weaker"

all day long

This idiom means "continually." Alternate translation: "all the time"

Psalms 32:4

day and night

These extremes include everything in between. Alternate translation: "all the time"

your hand was heavy upon me

Here "hand" refers to Yahweh. The entire phrase is an idiom that means "you afflicted me." Alternate translation: "you made me suffer greatly"

My strength withered as in summer drought

David's strength is compared to a small, green plant that turns brown and crumbles in the dry season.

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Psalms 32:6

at a time of great distress

"when they are in great trouble."

When the surging waters overflow, the waters will not reach them

Difficulties are spoken of as if they were a flood of water. Alternate translation: "Then when difficulties come like a flood of water, those people will be safe"

Psalms 32:7

You are my hiding place

Yahweh is spoken of as if he was a safe place from the attacks of the writer's enemies. Alternate translation: "You are like a place where I can hide myself from my enemies"

You will surround me with the songs of victory

This metaphor apparently means that Yahweh's protection of the writer is the cause for songs of victory to be sung. Alternate translation: "Because of you I will sing songs of victory"

Psalms 32:8

I will instruct you and teach you in the way

The words "instruct" and "teach" mean basically the same thing and emphasize careful instruction. Alternate translation: "I will teach you everything about the way"

I will instruct

Here the "I" is probably Yahweh who talks directly to David.

in the way which you should go

Living in the correct way is spoken of as if it were a path that the writer should walk. Alternate translation: "how you should live your life"

with my eye upon you

Here "my eye" refers to Yahweh's attention. Alternate translation: "and direct my attention to you" or "and watch over you"

Psalms 32:9

Do not be like a horse ... no understanding

The writer compares people with no understanding to horses and mules. Possible meanings are 1) the writer is speaking Yahweh's words to his readers, "You all must not be like a horse ... no understanding" or 2) Yahweh is speaking to the writer as though to a group of people.

bridle and bit

Two tools that are used by people to guide horses and mules go where the rider wants them to go.

where you want them to

"where anyone wants them to go." The "you" here is singular and refers to no one in particular.

Psalms 32:10

Yahweh's covenant faithfulness will surround the one who trusts in him

Yahweh being faithful to a person and protecting that person is spoken of as if Yahweh's covenant faithfulness surrounded the person. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh is faithful to his covenant, he will protect the one who trusts in him"

Psalms 32:11

Be glad in Yahweh

Here "in Yahweh" refers to what Yahweh has done for them. "Be glad because of what Yahweh has done"

you righteous

This refers to people. Alternate translation: "you righteous people"

shout for joy

"shout joyfully" or "shout because of joy"

who are upright in heart

Here "heart" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "people who are upright"

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33 [1] Rejoice in Yahweh, you righteous;
praise is appropriate for the upright.

[2] Give thanks to Yahweh with the harp;
sing praises to him with the lute having ten strings.

[3] Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully and shout for joy.

[4] For Yahweh's word is upright,
and all his deeds are done in faithfulness.

[5] He loves righteousness and justice.
The earth is full of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness.

[6] By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made,
and all the stars were made by the breath of his mouth.

[7] He gathers the waters of the sea together like a heap;
he puts the oceans in storehouses.

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8 Let the whole earth fear Yahweh;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For he spoke, and it was done;
he commanded, and it stood in place.

10 Yahweh frustrates the alliances of nations;
he overrules the plans of the peoples.

11 The plans of Yahweh stand forever,
the plans of his heart for all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh,
the people whom he has chosen as his own inheritance.

13 Yahweh looks from heaven;
he sees all the people.

14 From the place where he lives,
he looks down on all who live on the earth.

15 He who shapes the hearts of them all
observes all their deeds.

16 No king is saved by a vast army;
a warrior is not saved by his great strength.

17 A horse is a false hope for victory;
in spite of his great strength, he cannot rescue.

18 See, Yahweh's eye is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his covenant faithfulness

19 to deliver their lives from death
and to keep them alive in times of famine.

20 We wait for Yahweh;
he is our help and our shield.

21 Our hearts rejoice in him,
for we trust in his holy name.

22 Let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be with us
as we put our hope in you.

Psalm 33 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 33 is a worship song. It tells how great God is.

Special concepts in this chapter

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God's power
God is the creator and also the God of his people, Israel. Whatever he plans works out. He alone provides safety in battle.

Links:

Psalms 33:1

Psalms 33:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
Rejoice in Yahweh
Here "in Yahweh" refers to what Yahweh has done for them. "Rejoice because of what Yahweh has done"
praise is appropriate for the upright
"to praise Yahweh is appropriate for upright people"
Psalms 33:4
General Information:
Each verse consists of two lines that have very similar meanings.
Yahweh's word is upright
Here "upright" is used as a metaphor for something that is true. Alternate translation: "Yahweh always does what he says that he will do"
Psalms 33:5
He loves righteousness and justice
These abstract nouns can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "He loves doing what is right and just" or "He loves those who do what is right and just"
The earth is full of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness
People everywhere in the world being able to see evidence of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness is spoken of as if his covenant faithfulness filled the earth. The abstract noun "covenant faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "People everywhere on earth can see that Yahweh is faithful to his covenant" or "Throughout the earth, there is evidence that Yahweh is faithful to his covenant"
Psalms 33:6
By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "By using his word, Yahweh made the heavens"
by the breath of his mouth
This refers to Yahweh's word. Alternate translation: "by his word"
Psalms 33:7
General Information:
Each verse consists of two lines that have very similar meanings.
like a heap
"like behind a dam." The writer describes the creation of the sea as if God piles up all the waters together.
he puts the oceans in storehouses
The writer describes the creation of the oceans as if God put them in a storehouse. Alternate translation: "he puts the oceans in their place, just like a man puts grain in a storehouse"
Psalms 33:8
Let the whole earth
This refers to the people on the earth. Alternate translation: "Let everyone on earth"
stand in awe of him
Here "stand in awe" is an idiom that means "be in awe." Alternate translation: "honor him"
Psalms 33:9
stood in place
Here "stood in place" is an idiom that means "was created." Alternate translation: "started to exist"
Psalms 33:10
General Information:
Each verse consists of two lines that have very similar meanings.
Yahweh frustrates
"Yahweh destroys" or "Yahweh breaks"
the alliances of nations
Here "nations" refers to the people of these nations. Alternate translation: "the alliances of the people of different nations"
alliances
An alliance is an agreement between two or more nations to support each other in a war against a common enemy.
the plans of the peoples
"the intentions of the peoples" Alternate translation: "the evil plans of the peoples"
Psalms 33:11
stand forever
Here "stand" is an idiom that means "endure."
the plans of his heart for all generations
The missing term "stand" is implied. Alternate translation: "the plans of his heart stand for all generations"
the plans of his heart
Here "his heart" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "his plans"
for all generations
"for all future generations." This is an idiom that means "forever."
Psalms 33:12
Blessed is the nation
Here "the nation" refers to the people of the nation. Alternate translation: "Blessed are the people of the nation"
whose God is Yahweh
"who worship Yahweh as God"
as his own inheritance
The people Yahweh has chosen to worship him are described here as if they were an inheritance that he has received.
Psalms 33:14
he looks down
The place where Yahweh lives is spoken of as if it is above the earth where people live.
Psalms 33:15
shapes the hearts of them all
Here "hearts" refers to the thinking of these people. The writer speaks of Yahweh guiding the thinking of the people

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as if he were a potter who was shaping a bowl. Alternate translation: "guides their thinking as a potter shapes a bowl"

Psalms 33:16

No king is saved by a vast army

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A large army is not what saves a king"

Psalms 33:17

A horse is a false hope for victory

Here "a horse" represents the strongest part of the army. Alternate translation: "Having an army with strong horses does not provide security"

Psalms 33:18

See

This word shows that a new theme begins in this Psalm. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Yahweh's eye

Here "eye" refers to Yahweh's attention. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's attention"

those who hope in his covenant faithfulness

The idiom to "count on" means to "wait for" or to "expect." The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adverb. Alternate translation: "those who expect him to act faithfully because of his covenant" or "those who wait for him to act because he is faithful to his covenant"

Psalms 33:19

to deliver their lives from death

Here "their lives" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "to keep them from dying"

Psalms 33:20

We wait for Yahweh

Here "wait" is an idiom that refers to trust. Alternate translation: "We trust in Yahweh" or "We hope in Yahweh"

he is our help and our shield

Here Yahweh is spoken of as if he is a shield that protects soldiers in battle. Alternate translation: "he is our helper and protects us like a shield"

Psalms 33:21

Our hearts rejoice

Here "hearts" refer to the people. Alternate translation: "We rejoice"

in his holy name

Here "holy name" refers to Yahweh's holy character. Alternate translation: "in his holy character" or "in him because he is holy"

Psalms 33:22

Let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be with us

Yahweh acting faithfully towards the people is spoken of as if Yahweh's covenant faithfulness were with them. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "May you always act faithfully towards us because of your covenant, Yahweh"

as we put our hope in you

"as we hope for your help"

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34 A psalm of David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him out.
I will praise Yahweh at all times,
his praise will always be in my mouth.

2 I will praise Yahweh!
May the oppressed hear and rejoice.

3 Praise Yahweh with me,
let us lift up his name together.

4 I sought Yahweh and he answered me,
and he gave me victory over all my fears.

5 Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces are not ashamed.

6 This oppressed man cried and Yahweh heard him
and saved him from all his troubles.

7 The angel of Yahweh camps around those who fear him
and rescues them.

8 Taste and see that Yahweh is good.
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.

9 Fear Yahweh, you his holy people.

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There is no lack for those who fear him.

10 The young lions sometimes lack food and suffer hunger,
but those who seek Yahweh will not lack anything good.

11 Come, sons, listen to me.
I will teach you the fear of Yahweh.

12 What man is there who delights in life
and loves many days,
that he may see good?

13 Then keep your tongue from evil
and keep your lips from speaking lies.

14 Turn away from evil and do good.
Seek peace and go after it.

15 The eyes of Yahweh are on the righteous
and his ears are directed toward their cry.

16 The face of Yahweh is against those who do evil,
to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

17 The righteous cry out and Yahweh hears
and he rescues them from all their troubles.

18 Yahweh is close to the brokenhearted,
and he saves those who are crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the troubles of the righteous,
but Yahweh delivers them out of them all.

20 He keeps all his bones,
not one of them will be broken.

21 Evil will kill the wicked.
Those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

22 Yahweh rescues the lives of his servants.
None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Psalm 34 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 34 is a teaching psalm and includes thanksgiving. It teaches that living right leads to a good life. (See: life)
The psalm does not relate directly to the superscription given about Abimelech.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help
Good people can have problems, but God brings them through these. (See: good)

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Links:

Psalms 34:1

Psalms 34:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him out

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

pretended to be insane

"acted like a crazy person"

before Abimelek

This refers to a specific historical event that the Hebrews knew well. Alternate translation: "when he was in Abimelek's house" or "when he was Abimelek's prisoner"

his praise will always be in my mouth

Here "in my mouth" refers to David speaking about Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will always praise him out loud"

Psalms 34:2

the oppressed

This refers to people who are oppressed. Alternate translation: "the oppressed people"

Psalms 34:3

Praise Yahweh with me

The verb "praise" is a command to a group. Alternate translation: "Everyone should praise Yahweh with me"

lift up his name

Here "lift up" is an idiom that refers to exalting Yahweh. Alternate translation: "tell people how great he is"

his name

Here "his name" refers to Yahweh's character. Alternate translation: "his character"

Psalms 34:4

I sought Yahweh

Here "sought Yahweh" means David was asking Yahweh for help. Alternate translation: "I prayed to Yahweh" or "I asked Yahweh for help"

Psalms 34:5

Those who look to him

Here "look to" represents seeking help from him. Alternate translation: "Those who look at him for help" or "those who expect help only from him"

are radiant

This idiom refers to their appearance as being joyful. Alternate translation: "are joyful"

their faces are not ashamed

Here "their faces" refers to the people who look to Yahweh. It can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "they are not ashamed" or "they are proud"

Psalms 34:6

This oppressed man

David describes himself as an oppressed man. Alternate translation: "I was oppressed and"

Yahweh heard him

Here "heard" means that Yahweh helped him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh heard me" or "Yahweh helped him"

Psalms 34:7

camps around

The angel of Yahweh is spoken of as if he were an army that camps around someone in order to protect them. Alternate translation: "guards"

Psalms 34:8

Taste and see that Yahweh is good

Yahweh's goodness is spoken of as something that can be tasted and seen. Alternate translation: "Try and experience that Yahweh is good"

takes refuge

Yahweh is spoken of as if he were a place where people can hide for protection from their enemies. Alternate translation: "trust him to protect them"

Psalms 34:9

There is no lack for those who fear him

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Those who fear him will always have what they need"

Psalms 34:10

will not lack anything good

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will always have the good things they need"

Psalms 34:11

sons

Here this does not refer to literal sons of the writer, but to the people he is teaching about Yahweh. Alternate translation: "my students"

Psalms 34:12

What man is there who delights in life and loves many days, that he may see good?

The implicit answer to this question is "every man." This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Every man delights in life and desires to live many days and have a good life"

Psalms 34:13

keep your tongue from evil ... keep your lips from speaking lies

These two phrases refer to the same thing and it is said in different ways to emphasize its importance.

Then keep your tongue from evil

Here "tongue" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "Therefore, do not speak evil"

keep your lips from speaking lies

Here "lips" refers to the person speaking. Alternate translation: "do not speak lies"

Psalms 34:14

Turn away from evil

Here "Turn away" is a metaphor for avoiding evil. Alternate translation: "Refuse to do evil"

Seek peace

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Here "seek" means to be concerned about peace. Alternate translation: "Try hard to live in peace with other people"

Psalms 34:15

The eyes of Yahweh are on the righteous

Here "the eyes of Yahweh" refer to his careful watching. "The righteous" is a reference to righteous people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh carefully watches over the righteous people"

his ears are directed toward their cry

Here Yahweh is represented by his "ears." To be directed toward something means to pay attention to it. Alternate translation: "he pays attention to their cry" or "he answers their cry"

Psalms 34:16

to cut off the memory of them from the earth

Yahweh will cause people to so completely forget them when they die that it is as if he used a knife to cut off any memory of them. Alternate translation: "so that when they are dead, people will forget them completely"

Psalms 34:17

Yahweh hears

Here "hears" means that Yahweh desires to respond to them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh pays attention to them"

Psalms 34:18

Yahweh is close

Here "is close" means "ready to help." Alternate translation: "Yahweh is always ready to help"

the brokenhearted

This is a nominal adjective that refers to people who are brokenhearted. Deep sadness is spoken of as if the person's heart is broken. Alternate translation: "people who are very sad"

those who are crushed in spirit

People who are deeply discouraged are spoken of as if their spirits are crushed. Alternate translation: "people who are deeply discouraged"

Psalms 34:19

the righteous

This refers to people who are righteous. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"

Psalms 34:20

He keeps all his bones, not one of them will be broken

Here "all his bones" is literal, but it also implies that Yahweh takes care of the entire person. Alternate translation: "He provides complete protection for him, he will not be harmed in any way"

Psalms 34:21

Evil will kill the wicked

Evil is described as if it were a man who can kill people. Alternate translation: "The evil deeds of wicked people will kill them"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people.

Those who hate the righteous will be condemned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will condemn those who hate the righteous"

the righteous

This refers to righteous people.

Psalms 34:22

None of those who take refuge in him will be condemned

This can be stated in active form. It can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive everyone who takes refuge in him"

take refuge in him

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to him for protection"

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35 A psalm of David.
Yahweh, work against those who work against me;
fight against those who fight against me.

2 Grab your small shield and large shield;
rise up and help me.

3 Use your spear and battle ax
against those who chase me;
say to my soul,
"I am your salvation."

4 May those who seek my life
be shamed and dishonored.
May those who plan to harm me
be turned back and ashamed.

5 May they be as chaff before the wind,
as the angel of Yahweh drives them away.

6 May their way be dark and slippery,

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as the angel of Yahweh chases them.

7 Without cause they set their net for me;
without cause they dug a pit for my life.

8 Let destruction overtake them by surprise.
Let the net that they have set catch them.
Let them fall into it, to their destruction.

9 But I will be joyful in Yahweh
and rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones will say,
"Yahweh, who is like you,
who rescues the oppressed from those who are too strong for them
and the poor and needy from those who try to rob them?"

11 Unrighteous witnesses rise up;
they accuse me falsely.

12 They repay me evil for good.
I am sorrowful.

13 As for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth;
I fasted for them,
and my prayer returned to my bosom.

14 I went about in grief as for my brother;
I bent down in mourning as for my mother.

15 But when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together;
they gathered together against me, and I was surprised by them.
They tore at me without stopping.

16 With no respect at all they mocked me;
they grind their teeth at me in rage.

17 Lord, how long will you look on?
Rescue my soul from their destructive attacks,
my only life from the lions.

18 Then I will thank you in the great assembly;
I will praise you among many people.

19 Do not let my deceitful enemies rejoice over me;
do not let them carry out their wicked schemes.

20 For they do not speak peace,
but they devise deceitful words
against those in our land who live in peace.

21 They open their mouths wide against me;

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they said, "Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it."

22 You have seen it, Yahweh, do not be silent;
Lord, do not be far from me.

23 Arouse yourself and awake to my defense;
My God and my Lord, defend my cause.

24 Defend me, Yahweh my God, because of your righteousness;
do not let them rejoice over me.

25 Do not let them say in their heart, "Aha, we have what we wanted."
Do not let them say, "We have devoured him."

26 May they be put to shame and may they be humiliated who rejoice at my distress.
May those who exalt themselves over me be clothed with shame and dishonor.

27 Let those who desire my vindication
shout for joy and be glad;
may they say continually, "Yahweh be praised,
he who delights in the welfare of his servant."

28 Then I will tell of your justice
and praise you all day long.

Psalm 35 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 35 is a prayer for deliverance. His enemies are coming against him. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Enemies

When his enemies were sick, he tried to comfort them, but when he was in trouble his enemies use this as a time to attack him.

Links:

Psalms 35:1

Psalms 35:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Psalms 35:2

Grab your small shield and large shield

The writer describes God as a warrior who is preparing himself for battle.

small shield and large shield

these are defensive weapons

Psalms 35:3

Use your spear and battle ax

The writer describes God as a warrior who is preparing himself for battle.

spear and battle ax

these are offensive weapons

those who chase me

Possible meanings are 1) these enemies are literally chasing the writer or 2) this is a metaphor for people who are enemies of the writer.

say to my soul

This refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "say to me"

I am your salvation

This can be stated without the abstract noun. Alternate translation: "I am your savior" or "I will save you"

Psalms 35:4

May those who seek my life be shamed and dishonored

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh shame and dishonor those who seek my life"

May those

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"I desire that"

who seek my life

Here "seek my life" means they desire to kill the writer. The writer is represented by his "life." Alternate translation: "who are trying to kill me"

May those who plan to harm me be turned back and ashamed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh turn back and confound those who plan to harm me"

be turned back

"be turned back" here is a metaphor for being unable to accomplish their goal. Alternate translation: "be unsuccessful"

Psalms 35:5

as chaff before the wind

The writer's enemies are spoken of as if they are chaff that is easily blown away. Alternate translation: "blown away by the wind like chaff"

Psalms 35:6

their way

Here "their way" refers to their lives. Alternate translation: "their lives"

dark and slippery

This refers to a way that is hidden and dangerous. Alternate translation: "hidden and full of dangers"

chases them

This refers to the angel of Yahweh being opposed to the writer's enemies. Alternate translation: "works against them" or "opposes them"

Psalms 35:7

they set their net for me

The schemes of the wicked are spoken of as if they were a net that they set to catch the writer. Alternate translation: "they want to catch me in a net like a small animal"

they dug a pit for my life

The schemes of the wicked are spoken of as if they were a pit that they dug to catch the writer. Alternate translation: "they wanted to capture me in a pit like a big animal"

my life

This refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "me"

Psalms 35:8

Let destruction overtake them by surprise

Destruction is spoken of as if it was a dangerous animal that would suddenly attack them. Alternate translation: "Let them be destroyed suddenly" or "Let them be surprised because you destroy them suddenly"

the net that they have set

The schemes of the wicked are spoken of as if they were a net that they place to catch the writer. Alternate translation: "the net that they placed in order to capture me like an animal and harm me"

Let them fall into it

This is the same metaphor as in verse 7. The net is intended to catch the writer. Alternate translation: "Let them fall into the pit that they dug for me"

fall into it

Possible meanings are 1) fall into the pit of verse 7 or 2) fall into destruction.

to their destruction

The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "so that they will be destroyed" or "that is how you should destroy them"

Psalms 35:9

in his salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you save me"

Psalms 35:10

All my bones

Here "bones" refers to the deepest inner being of a person. Alternate translation: "My whole inner being"

Yahweh, who is like you ... those who try to rob them?

The implicit answer to this question is that no one is like Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, there is no one like you ... those who try to rob them."

the poor and needy

The words "poor" and "needy" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh saves many who need his help.

Psalms 35:11

rise up

This means they testify in a trial. Alternate translation: "volunteer to give a testimony"

Psalms 35:12

They repay me evil for good

This is a metaphor which means they give back evil in exchange for the good they have received. Alternate translation: "In return for my doing good things for them, they do evil things to me"

evil ... good

These abstract nouns can be stated in other forms. Alternate translation: "evil things ... good things"

I am sorrowful

"I am extremely sad"

Psalms 35:13

when they were sick

The word "they" refers to the "unrighteous witnesses" (Psalms 35:11).

my clothing was sackcloth

"I wore sackcloth" or "I showed that I was sad"

them, and my prayer returned to my bosom

This was a symbol of prayer. Alternate translation: "them with my head bent down in prayer"

Psalms 35:14

in grief as for my brother

The writer was as sad as if his own brother had died. Alternate translation: "grieving as if my own brother was ill"

I bent down in mourning as for my mother

The writer mourned as if his own mother had died. Alternate translation: "I mourned as if my own mother had died"

I bent down

This was a symbol of pain and suffering.

Psalms 35:15

gathered together

"assembled together" or "came together"

against me

This means they came together for the purpose of attacking

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the writer. Alternate translation: "to make plans against me" or "to plan my destruction"

They tore at me

Here the treated the writer as if he were a piece of cloth that they could tear to pieces. Alternate translation: "They attacked me"

Psalms 35:16

With no respect at all they mocked me

"With the worthless people they ridiculed me" or "Without respect they made fun of me"

they grind their teeth at me in rage

This is a sign of anger and hate. "they made grinding noises with their teeth at me"

Psalms 35:17

how long will you look on?

This rhetorical question indicates that the writer wants God to stop simply looking on and to start to help him. Alternate translation: "how long will you only watch them doing this?" or "when will you help me?"

Rescue my soul

Here "soul" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "Rescue me"

my only life from the lions

The word "save" is implied. Alternate translation: "save my only life from the lions"

my only life from

This refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "me—and I only have one life—from"

from the lions

Here the writer speaks of his enemies as if they were vicious lions. Alternate translation: "from my enemies who attack me like wild animals"

Psalms 35:19

Do not let my deceitful enemies

"Do not let my enemies, who tell lies about me,"

their wicked schemes

"their evil plans"

Psalms 35:20

they do not speak peace

The abstract noun "peace" can be stated as "peacefully." Alternate translation: "they do not speak peacefully to people"

devise deceitful words

"look for ways to tell lies"

those in our land who live in peace

"those who live peacefully in our land"

live in peace

The abstract noun "peace" can be stated in other forms. Alternate translation: "live peacefully with others" or "do no harm to anyone"

Psalms 35:21

They open their mouths wide against me

The reason they open their mouths is to accuse the writer. Alternate translation: "They shout at me in order to accuse me"

Aha, Aha

This is something an excited person says when he has suddenly seen or understood something, especially something other people did not expect him to see. It emphasizes the statement that follows.

our eyes have seen it

Here "our eyes" refers to the enemies' eyes. It is implied that they are saying they saw the writer do something wrong. Alternate translation: "we have seen it" or "we saw the wrong things that you did"

Psalms 35:22

You have seen it

Here "it" refers to the false accusations of the writer's enemies. Alternate translation: "You have seen how they falsely accused me"

do not be silent

"do not ignore what they did" This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "judge them because of what they did"

do not be far from me

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "be very close to me"

Psalms 35:23

Arouse yourself and awake

This does not mean that God is actually asleep. The writer wants God to intervene. Both words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the urgency of this request. Alternate translation: "I feel like you are sleeping! Wake up"

to my defense

This abstract noun "defense" can be stated as "defend." Alternate translation: "to defend me"

my cause

This refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "me"

Psalms 35:24

do not let them rejoice over me

"do not let them be glad because I am suffering"

Psalms 35:25

say in their heart

This is an idiom that means to say to oneself. Alternate translation: "say to themselves"

Aha

This is an exclamation that is used when something is suddenly seen or understood. It emphasizes what follows. Alternate translation: "Yes"

we have what we wanted

It is implied that the writer's enemies wanted him to be declared guilty. Alternate translation: "he has been declared guilty just as we desired"

We have devoured him

The writer's enemies speak of his destruction as if they were wild animals who had eaten him. Alternate translation: "We have swallowed him up" or "We have destroyed him"

Psalms 35:26

May they be put to shame and may they be humiliated who rejoice at my distress

"May those who rejoice at my distress be put to shame and humiliated"

May they be put to shame

"May they feel shame"

May those who exalt themselves over me be clothed with shame and dishonor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"May you clothe with shame and dishonor those who exalt themselves over me"

exalt themselves over me

"consider themselves better than I am" or "think they have the right to treat me badly"

clothed with shame and dishonor

Here shame and dishonor are spoken of as if they were shameful clothes that the writer could wear. These abstract nouns can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "shamed and dishonored"

shame and dishonor

These terms mean about the same thing and are used to emphasize how degraded they will be.

Psalms 35:27

my vindication

Here "vindication" refers to Yahweh proclaiming or judging the psalmist innocent.

may they say continually

"may they always say"

Yahweh be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let us praise Yahweh"

who delights in

"who is happy with" or "who is glad for"

welfare

well-being, happiness

Psalms 35:28

tell of your justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be stated as "right." Alternate translation: "proclaim that you act in the right way"

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36 For the chief musician. A psalm of David the servant of Yahweh.
An evil man speaks of his transgression from deep in his heart,
there is no fear of God in his eyes.

2 For he comforts himself,
thinking that his iniquity will not be discovered and be hated.

3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit;
he does not want to be wise and do good.

4 While he lies in bed, he plans ways to sin;
he sets out on an evil way;
he does not reject evil.

5 Your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, reaches to the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep.
Yahweh, you preserve both mankind and the animals.

7 How precious is your covenant faithfulness, God!
Humanity takes refuge under the shadow of your wings.

8 They feast upon the abundance of your house;
you let them drink from the river of your delights.

9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we will see light.

10 Extend your covenant faithfulness fully to those who know you,
your defense to the upright of heart.

11 Do not let the foot of the arrogant man come near to me.
Do not let the hand of the wicked drive me away.

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12 Over there those who behave wickedly have fallen;
they have been pushed down and are not able to get up.

Psalm 36 General Notes

Formatting in this chapter

Psalm 36 is a psalm of praise. It speaks of how good God is to those who love him. (See: good and love)

Special concepts in this chapter

God and man

Evil people do not think about God; but he is such a pleasure to all who honor him. (See: evil)

Links:

Psalms 36:1

Psalms 36:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David the servant of Yahweh

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

An evil man

This does not refer to a specific man, but to evil people in general. Alternate translation: "Evil people"

from deep in his heart

Here "heart" refers to the inner being of a person. Alternate translation: "from his inner being"

in his eyes

Here "eyes" refers to the wicked person. Alternate translation: "in him"

Psalms 36:2

he comforts himself, thinking

"he prefers to believe" or "he wants to think"

his iniquity will not be discovered and be hated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not discover and hate his sin"

Psalms 36:3

The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit

Here the word "mouth" is a metonym for the writer. The abstract noun "wickedness" can be translated by an adjective. The abstract noun "deceit" can be translated by a verb. Alternate translation: "Everything he says is wicked, and he wants to deceive others"

do good

"do things that are good"

Psalms 36:4

he sets out on an evil way

The sinful actions of the man are spoken of as if he was walking along a path that was evil. Alternate translation: "he begins to do evil things"

he does not reject evil

Here "evil" can be stated in another form. Alternate translation: "he does not reject evil behavior"

Psalms 36:5

Your covenant faithfulness ... reaches to the heavens

The greatness of God's covenant faithfulness is spoken of as if it were an object that reached as high as the heavens. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Your covenant faithfulness ... is very great" or "You ... are as faithful to your covenant as the heavens are high above the earth"

reaches to the clouds

The greatness of God's loyalty is spoken of as if it was very high. Alternate translation: "is as high as the clouds" or "is enormously great"

Psalms 36:6

like the mountains of God ... like the great deep

These phrases describe the greatness of God's righteousness and judgments as if they were very high and deep. Alternate translation: "as high as the highest mountains ... as deep as the deepest sea"

you preserve

"you help" or "you save"

Psalms 36:7

How precious is your covenant faithfulness

The word "precious" refers to how greatly the writer values Yahweh's covenant faithfulness. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "I greatly value how you are faithful to your covenant"

Psalms 36:8

They feast upon the abundance of your house

Eating much food as guests in a house is a metaphor for God providing all his people need. Alternate translation: "They will have all they need because you will provide it to them" or "You have plenty to give, and you will provide them with all they need"

you let them drink from the river of your delights

There are two metaphors here. God's abundant blessings are spoken of as if they are the water in a flowing river. Also, those who receive those blessings are spoken of as if they are drinking them like water. Alternate translation: "your precious blessings are like a river from which you will let them drink"

Psalms 36:9

fountain of life

"source of life"

in your light we will see light

Here "light" is a metaphor for true knowledge. Alternate

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translation: "when you enlighten us, we will know the truth" or "your light is what enables us to know the truth about you"

Psalms 36:10

Extend your covenant faithfulness fully to those who know you

The writer speaks of Yahweh continuing to act faithfully towards the people as if Yahweh were to extend his covenant faithfulness or make it longer. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "Continue to act faithfully to those who know you"

your defense to the upright of heart

The abstract noun "defense" can be stated as a verb. "Continue" is implied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "Continue to protect the upright of heart"

the upright of heart

Here "heart" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "the upright" or "people who act righteously"

Psalms 36:11

the foot of the arrogant man ... the hand of the wicked

Here "foot" and "hand" refer to the evil people. These are not specific men. This refers to evil people in general. Alternate translation: "arrogant people ... wicked people"

drive me away

"send me away" or "make me leave my place"

Psalms 36:12

those who behave wickedly have fallen; they have been pushed down and are not able to get up

All three phrases describe the evildoers as defeated.

they have been pushed down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have pushed them down" or "you have destroyed them" or "you have defeated them"

are not able to get up

"cannot get up" or "will never again harm anyone"

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37 A psalm of David.
Do not be irritated because of evildoers;
do not be envious of those who act unrighteously.

2 For they will soon dry up as the grass
and wither as the green plants.

3 Trust in Yahweh and do what is good;
settle in the land and graze in faithfulness.

4 Then delight yourself in Yahweh,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Give your ways to Yahweh;
trust in him, and he will act on your behalf.

6 He will display your justice like the daylight
and your innocence like the day at noon.

7 Be still before Yahweh
and wait patiently for him.
Do not be angry if someone succeeds in what he does,
or when he makes evil plots.

8 Do not be angry and frustrated.
Do not worry. This only makes trouble.

9 Evildoers will be cut off,
but those who wait for Yahweh will inherit the land.

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10 In a little while the evil man will disappear;
you will look at his place, but he will be gone.

11 But the meek will inherit the land
and will delight in great prosperity.

12 The wicked man plots against the righteous
and he grinds his teeth in rage against him.

13 The Lord laughs at him,
for he sees that his day is coming.

14 The wicked have drawn out their swords
and have bent their bows
to cast down the oppressed and needy,
to kill those who are upright.

15 Their swords will pierce their own hearts,
and their bows will be broken.

16 Better is the little that the righteous has
than the abundance of many wicked people.

17 For the arms of the wicked people will be broken,
but Yahweh supports the righteous people.

18 Yahweh watches over the blameless day by day,
and their heritage will be forever.

19 They will not be ashamed when times are bad.
When famine comes, they will have enough to eat.

20 But evil men will perish.
Yahweh's enemies will be like the splendor of the pastures;
they will be consumed and disappear in the smoke.

21 The wicked person borrows but does not repay,
but the righteous person is generous and gives.

22 Those who are blessed by God will inherit the land;
those who are cursed by him will be cut off.

23 It is by Yahweh that a man's steps are established,
the man whose way is commendable in God's sight.

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24 Though he stumbles, he will not fall down,
for Yahweh is holding him with his hand.

25 I was young and now am old;
I have never seen the righteous person abandoned
or his children begging for bread.

26 All the day long he is gracious and lends,
and his children become a blessing.

27 Turn away from evil and do what is right;
then you will be safe forever.

28 For Yahweh loves justice
and does not abandon his faithful ones.
They are preserved forever,
but the descendants of the wicked will be cut off.

29 The righteous will inherit the land
and live there forever.

30 The mouth of the righteous person speaks wisdom
and increases justice.

31 The law of his God is in his heart;
his feet will not slip.

32 The wicked person spies on the righteous person
and seeks to kill him.

33 Yahweh will not abandon him into the evil person's hand
or condemn him when he is judged.

34 Wait for Yahweh and keep his way,
and he will raise you up to possess the land.
You will see when the wicked are cut off.

35 I have seen the wicked and terrifying person
spread out like a green tree in its native soil.

36 But when I passed by again, he was not there.
I looked for him, but he could not be found.

37 Observe the man of integrity, and mark the upright;
there is a good future for a man of peace.

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38 Rebels will be totally destroyed;
the future for the wicked man is cut off.

39 Salvation of the righteous comes from Yahweh;
he is their place of safety in the times of trouble.

40 Yahweh helps them and rescues them.
He rescues them from evil men and saves them
because they have taken refuge in him.

Psalm 37 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 37 is a teaching psalm. It provides guidance about how to live a moral and God-fearing life. It teaches that evil people do not prosper in the future. (See: evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Envy

Do not envy evil people. Although it appears as though they prosper, soon they will be destroyed and the good people will continue on living. (See: good and life)

Links:

Psalms 37:1

Psalms 37:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Do not be irritated because of evildoers

"Do not let wicked people upset you" or "Do not be bothered by what wicked people do"

Psalms 37:2

dry up as the grass ... wither as the green plants

Evildoers are spoken of as if they are grass and plants that dry up and die in the hot weather. These two similes both mean they will die. Alternate translation: "die" or "come to an end"

Psalms 37:3

graze in faithfulness

Faithfulness is spoken of as if it was an animal that would be strengthened by feeding in good pasture. Alternate translation: "nourish faithfulness" or "increase your faithfulness"

Psalms 37:4

the desires of your heart

Here "heart" represents the person's inner being and thoughts. Alternate translation: "your deepest, inner desires" or "the things that you desire the most"

Psalms 37:5

Give your ways to Yahweh

Here "give your ways" is an idiom that means to ask Yahweh to control your life. Alternate translation: "Ask Yahweh to guide your actions in life"

act on your behalf

This is to represent another in legal issues. Here, when one trusts in Yahweh, he will defend that person and grant justice to that person.

Psalms 37:6

like the daylight ... like the day at noon

Both of these phrases mean about the same thing.

like the daylight

This means "in full view of everyone." Alternate translation: "as clear to see as the light of day"

like the day at noon

This means "as visible as the noon sun." Alternate translation: "as visible as the light at the brightest time of day"

Psalms 37:7

Be still

"Be quiet"

Psalms 37:9

will be cut off

The destruction of the wicked is spoken of as if they were a branch of a plant that was cut off and thrown away.

but those who wait for Yahweh

"but those who trust in Yahweh"

will inherit the land

The possession of the land is spoken of as if it will be received as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "will receive the land as their own possession" or "will live safely in the land"

Psalms 37:10

will disappear

This idiom refers to the death of the evil man. Alternate

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translation: "will die and you will no longer see him"
Psalms 37:11
the meek
This refers to the people who are meek. Alternate translation: "the meek people"
will inherit the land
The possession of the land is spoken of as if it will be received as an inheritance. See how you translated this in [Psalms 37:9]
Psalms 37:12
The wicked man
This does not refer to a specific man. It refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "The wicked person"
the righteous
This does not refer to specific people. This refers to people who are righteous. Alternate translation: "the righteous person"
grinds his teeth
The wicked man hates the righteous person so much that he grinds his teeth together to show his anger.
Psalms 37:13
his day is coming
It is implied that "his day" will be a day of judgment. Alternate translation: "the day is coming when Yahweh will judge and punish him" or "the day is coming when Yahweh will judge and punish the wicked person"
Psalms 37:14
The wicked
This refers to the wicked people. Alternate translation: "The wicked people"
have drawn out their swords ... have bent their bows
Both "swords" and "bows" are weapons used to attack people. The fact that they are "drawn" and "bent" means they are ready to start attacking. Alternate translation: "have prepared their weapons in order to attack"
to cast down
This destruction of the needy people is spoken of as if they were clay pots that would break into pieces when thrown down on the ground. Alternate translation: "to destroy"
the oppressed and needy
These terms both refer to people who are powerless to defend themselves. Alternate translation: "people who are not able to resist them"
Psalms 37:15
Their swords will pierce their own hearts
Swords are examples of weapons and "hearts" represent the people. To "pierce the heart" is an idiom that means "to kill." Alternate translation: "Their weapons will be turned against them and they will kill themselves"
Psalms 37:16
Better is the little that the righteous has than the abundance of many wicked people
"It is better to be poor and righteous than to be wicked with great wealth"
Better is the little that the righteous has
The nominal adjective "the little" refers to few possessions. The nominal adjective "the righteous" refers to a righteous person. Alternate translation: "Better are the few possessions that a righteous person has"
the abundance
This refers to the wealth of the wicked people.
Psalms 37:17
For the arms of the wicked people will be broken
Here "arms" represent the strength of the wicked people. Breaking their arms represents taking away their power. This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh will remove the strength of the wicked people"
Psalms 37:18
watches over the blameless
To "watch over" means to protect someone. Here "the blameless" refers to the blameless people. Alternate translation: "protects the blameless people"
day by day
This is an idiom that means "continually." Alternate translation: "every day"
Psalms 37:19
when times are bad
This phrase refers to disasters, such as famine. Alternate translation: "when calamities occur"
Psalms 37:20
Yahweh's enemies will be like the splendor of the pastures
The writer compares Yahweh's enemies to the flowers blooming in the fields.
be consumed and disappear in the smoke
The writer speaks of the destruction of the wicked as if they were weeds or wilted flowers in the field that are burned off after the harvest. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will destroy them as fire turns the weeds of the field into smoke"
Psalms 37:21
is generous and gives
These mean the same thing and emphasize the generosity of the righteous.
Psalms 37:22
Those who are blessed by God will inherit the land; those who are cursed by him will be cut off
This is a contrastive form of Parallelism. Those who are blessed by God in contrast to those who are cursed by God.
Those who are blessed by God
This can be stated as active. Alternate translation: "Those whom God blesses"
will inherit the land
The possession of the land is spoken of as if it had been received as an inheritance. See how you translated this in [Psalms 37:9]
those who are cursed by him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom Yahweh curses"
will be cut off
The destruction of the wicked is spoken of as if they were a branch of plant that was cut off and thrown away. See how you translated this in [Psalms 37:9]
Psalms 37:23
It is by Yahweh that a man's steps are established ... commendable in God's sight
These can be stated to show the logical connection and

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clarify the passive clause. Alternate translation: "If a man lives in a commendable way in Yahweh's sight, Yahweh will establish his steps"

It is by Yahweh that a man's steps are established

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is the one who enables a man to be successful"

a man ... the man

This does not refer to a specific man, but to people in general.

a man's steps

Steps represent the way a person lives. Alternate translation: "the way a man lives"

Psalms 37:24

Though he stumbles, he will not fall down

Here "stumble" and "fall" refer to the man's reaction to difficult times. Alternate translation: "Though he has difficult times, he will not utterly fail"

holding him with his hand

Here "his hand" refers to Yahweh's power, and "holding him" refers to protecting him. Alternate translation: "protecting him with his power"

Psalms 37:25

the righteous person abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh forsake the righteous person"

the righteous person

This does not refer to a specific person. It is a general statement.

begging for bread

Here "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: begging for food"

Psalms 37:26

All the day long he is

This idiom means this action is a habit of his life. Alternate translation: "He is always

his children become a blessing

"his children grow up to bless others"

Psalms 37:27

Turn away from

To stop doing something is spoken of as if the person turned away from it. Alternate translation: "Stop doing"

Psalms 37:28

They are preserved forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will protect them forever"

will be cut off

The destruction of the wicked is spoken of as if they were a branch of plant that was cut off and thrown away. See how you translated this in [Psalms 37:9]

Psalms 37:29

will inherit the land

The possession of the land is spoken of as if it had been received as an inheritance. See how you translated this in [Psalms 37:9]

Psalms 37:30

the righteous

This refers to the people who are righteous. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"

The mouth of the righteous person

Here "mouth" represents the whole person who speaks. Alternate translation: "The righteous person"

speaks wisdom

The abstract noun "wisdom" can be stated as "wise." Alternate translation: "gives wise advice to others"

increases justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "encourages other people to live rightly"

Psalms 37:31

The law of his God is in his heart

Here "in his heart" refers to his deepest inner being. Alternate translation: "He treasures the commands of his God in his inner being"

his feet will not slip

Here failure to obey Yahweh is spoken of as slipping off a safe path and falling. Alternate translation: "he will walk safely in the way God wants him to walk" or "he will safely do the things God wants him to do"

Psalms 37:32

The wicked person ... the righteous person

These words refer to any wicked or righteous person or to wicked and righteous people in general, not to specific people. Alternate translation: "Wicked people ... righteous people" or "Any wicked person" or "any righteous person"

spies on the righteous person

The wicked person observes the righteous person in order to do him harm. Alternate translation: "waits in ambush for the righteous person"

Psalms 37:33

the evil person's hand

These words refer to the hand of any evil person, not of any specific person. Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "evil people's hands" or "the power of the evil person"

when he is judged

This refers to Yahweh judging the righteous man. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh judges him"

Psalms 37:34

he will raise you up to possess the land

Here "raise you up" refers to God giving honor to those who wait for him. Alternate translation: "he will honor you by giving you the land"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "the wicked people"

are cut off

The destruction of the wicked is spoken of as if they were a branch of a plant that was cut off and thrown away. See how you translated a similar phrase in Psalms 37:9.

Psalms 37:35

the wicked and terrifying person

This does not refer to a specific person. It is a general statement.

spread out like a green tree in its native soil

Here the prosperity of the wicked man is spoken of as if he were a healthy tree growing in good soil.

Psalms 37:36

he could not be found

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I could not find him" or "Yahweh had taken him away"
Psalms 37:37
the man of integrity
This does not refer to a specific person. It is a general statement.
mark the upright
"note carefully the good people" or "notice the good people"
Psalms 37:38
the future for the wicked man is cut off
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will end his family line" or "he will not have any descendants"
the future
This refers to his descendants. Alternate translation: "his descendants"
the wicked man
This does not refer to a specific person. It is a general statement.
is cut off
The destruction of the wicked is spoken of as if they were a branch of a plant that was cut off and thrown away. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Psalms 37:9]
Psalms 37:39
Salvation of the righteous comes from Yahweh
The abstract noun "Salvation" can be expressed as an action. Alternate translation: "Yahweh rescues the righteous people"
the righteous
This refers to the righteous people. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"
Psalms 37:40
helps ... rescues ... saves
This same idea is repeated in several different ways to emphasize that Yahweh is dependable and able to give aid.
they have taken refuge in him
Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "they have gone to him for protection"

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38 A psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.
Yahweh, do not rebuke me in your anger;
do not punish me in your wrath.

2 For your arrows pierce me,
and your hand presses me down.

3 There is no soundness in my body because of your anger;
there is no health in my bones because of my sin.

4 For my iniquities overwhelm me;
they are a burden too heavy for me.

5 My wounds are infected and smell
because of my foolish sins.

6 I am stooped over and humiliated every day;
I go about mourning all day long.

7 For within me, I am filled with burning;
there is no health in my flesh.

8 I am numb and utterly crushed;
I groan because of the anguish of my heart.

9 Lord, you understand my heart's deepest yearnings,
and my groanings are not hidden from you.

10 My heart pounds, my strength fades,
and the light of my eyes, even that is not with me.

11 My friends and companions shun me because of my condition;
my neighbors stand far off.

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12 Those who seek my life lay snares for me.
They who seek my harm speak destructive words
and say deceitful words all day long.

13 But I, I am like a deaf man and hear nothing;
I am like a mute man who says nothing.

14 I am like a man who does not hear
and who has no reply.

15 Surely I wait for you, Yahweh;
you will answer, Lord my God.

16 I say this so that my enemies will not rejoice over me.
If my foot slips, they will do terrible things to me.

17 For I am about to stumble,
and I am in constant pain.

18 I confess my guilt;
I am anxious about my sin.

19 But my enemies are numerous;
those who hate me wrongfully are many.

20 They repay me evil for good;
they hurl accusations at me
although I have pursued what is good.

21 Do not abandon me, Yahweh;
my God, do not stay far away from me.

22 Come quickly to help me,
Lord, my salvation.

Psalm 38 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 38 is a confession of sin and a prayer for deliverance. (See: confess and sin and deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Author's sickness

The author was very sick and his enemies were seeking ways to destroy him.

Links:

Psalms 38:1

Psalms 38:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David, to bring to remembrance

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

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do not rebuke me in your anger ... do not punish me in your wrath
These phrases mean basically the same thing and the idea is repeated for emphasis.
Psalms 38:2
your arrows pierce me
The severity of Yahweh's punishment of the writer is spoken of as if Yahweh had shot arrows into the writer. Alternate translation: "Your punishment is as painful as if you had shot arrows into me"
your hand presses me down
Yahweh's punishment of the writer is spoken of as if Yahweh was smashing the writer with his hand. Here, "hand" refers to Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "your power knocks me down"
Psalms 38:3
General Information:
David continues describing what his guilt and shame does to his body. He uses hyperbole to emphasize the effects of this lesson.
there is no health in my bones because of my sin
Here "my bones" represents the body of the writer. Alternate translation: "my whole body is diseased because of my sin"
Psalms 38:4
my iniquities overwhelm me
The writer's iniquities are spoken of as if they are a flood of water that covers him. Alternate translation: "my iniquities cover me like a flood"
they are a burden too heavy for me
The writer's iniquities are spoken of as if they are a heavy load that he cannot lift. Alternate translation: "they are like a load that is too heavy for me to lift"
Psalms 38:5
General Information:
David continues describing what his guilt and shame does to his body. He uses hyperbole to emphasize the effects of this lesson.
My wounds are infected and smell
Here "smell" refer to his sores having a bad smell that is associated with rotting flesh. Alternate translation: "My wounds are infected and stink as they rot"
Psalms 38:6
I am stooped over
The pain of the writer's wounds have caused him to be bent over as if he were an old, feeble man. Alternate translation: "I am bent over in pain"
Psalms 38:7
I am filled with burning
The writer's is so sick with fever that it is as if he is burning inside. Alternate translation: "My body is burning with fever"
there is no health in my flesh
Here "my flesh" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "I am completely sick"
Psalms 38:8
utterly crushed
The writer's illness is so severe that it is as if a huge weight is pressing down on him.
anguish of my heart
Here "my heart" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "my anguish"
Psalms 38:9
my heart's deepest yearnings
Here "my heart" refers to the writer. It may be helpful to state that the writer desires good health. Alternate translation: "My strongest desires" or "that I desire you to heal me"
my groanings are not hidden from you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are able to see all my moans of sorrow"
Psalms 38:10
My heart pounds
This idiom means his heart beats intensely. Alternate translation: "My heart beats loudly"
my strength fades
"I become very weak"
the light of my eyes, even that is not with me
"I can no longer see well"
Psalms 38:12
lay snares for me
The plots of the writer's enemies are spoken of as if they were traps that they had set to catch him like an animal. Alternate translation: "set traps to catch me"
speak destructive words and say deceitful words
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the hurtful nature of what these people say.
Psalms 38:13
I am like a deaf man ... hear nothing
The writer does not listen to what his enemies are saying.
I am like a mute man ... says nothing
The writer does not speak evil words to or about his enemies.
a mute man
a person who cannot speak
Psalms 38:14
does not hear
The writer does not listen to what his enemies are saying.
has no reply
The writer does not speak evil words to or about his enemies.
Psalms 38:15
you will answer
Possible meanings are 1) "you will answer me" or 2) "you will answer my enemies."
Psalms 38:16
will not rejoice over me
"will not be glad because I am having trouble"
If my foot slips
Here "my foot" represents the writer. The slipping of his foot is a metaphor that refers to the writer's troubles and misfortunes. Alternate translation: "If I make mistakes that cause me trouble"
Psalms 38:17
I am about to stumble
Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) "I am so sick that I am about to die" or 2) "I will soon be ruined." It may be best not to interpret the metaphor in the text.
I am in constant pain

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"I am always in pain"

Psalms 38:19

But my enemies are numerous ... are many

These two phrases mean basically the same thing.

Psalms 38:20

They repay me evil for good

The actions of the writer's enemies are spoken of as a financial transaction where they gave him evil things in exchange for good things. The abstract nouns "evil" and "good" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "They do evil thing to me after I was good to them"

hurl accusations at me

The way the writer's enemies accuse him is spoken of as if they were throwing accusations at him like rocks.

pursued what is good

The writers desire for what is good is spoken of as if he were running after good things.

Psalms 38:21

Do not abandon me ... do not stay far away from me

These two phrases have very similar meanings.

do not stay far away from me

Because Yahweh has not yet answered the writer's request, he speaks of Yahweh as if Yahweh were standing far away from the writer.

Psalms 38:22

Come quickly to help me

God is spoken of as if he is running to the writer to help him.

my salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "you are the one who saves me"

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39 For the chief musician, for Jeduthun. A psalm of David.
I decided, "I will watch what I say
so that I do not sin with my tongue.
I will muzzle my mouth
while in the presence of an evil man."

2 I kept silent;
I kept back my words even from saying anything good,
and my pain grew worse.

3 My heart became hot;
when I thought about these things,
it burned like a fire.
Then finally I spoke.

4 "Yahweh, make me know when will be the end of my life
and the extent of my days.
Show me how transient I am.

5 See, you have made my days only the width of my hand,
and my lifetime is like nothing before you.
Surely every man is a single breath.

Selah

6 Surely every man walks about like a shadow.
Surely everyone hurries about
to accumulate riches although they do not know who will receive them.

7 Now, Lord, for what am I waiting?
You are my only hope.

8 Rescue me from my sins;
do not make me the scorn of fools.

9 I am silent and cannot open my mouth,
because it is you who has done it.

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10 Stop wounding me;
I am overwhelmed by the blow of your hand.

11 When you discipline people for iniquity,
you consume the things they desire like a moth;
surely all people are nothing but vapor.

Selah

12 Hear my prayer, Yahweh,
and give ear to my cry for help;
do not be deaf to my tears!
for I am like a foreigner with you,
a sojourner like all my ancestors were.

13 Turn your gaze from me so that I may smile again
before I die."

Psalm 39 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 39 is a psalm of deliverance from sickness. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Life

Life on earth is short. The psalmist wanted God's healing so he can enjoy the rest of his life. (See: life)

This psalm shares some characteristics of another wisdom book called Ecclesiastes or Koheleth but is more positive.

Links:

Psalms 39:1

Psalms 39:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician, for Jeduthun. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship,"

Jeduthun

One of David's chief musicians had this same name. This may refer to him.

I will watch what I say

Here "watch" is an idiom that mean "pay attention to." Alternate translation: "I will pay attention to the things that I say"

so that I do not sin with my tongue

Here "tongue" refers to the writer's speech. Alternate translation: "so that I do not speak an offense against Yahweh"

muzzle

To "muzzle" means to keep a mouth shut. Here David means that he will not speak while he is with an evil person.

Psalms 39:2

I kept silent; I kept back my words

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the writer did not speak at all. Alternate translation: "I was completely silent"

I kept back my words

"I did not speak"

Psalms 39:3

My heart became hot ... it burned like a fire

Here "heart" represents the whole person. The anxious thoughts of the writer are spoken of as if they were a fire burning inside him. Alternate translation: "I became very anxious when I thought about these things"

Psalms 39:4

the end of my life ... the extent of my days

These phrases mean basically the same thing.

Show me how transient I am

"Show me how brief my life is" or "Show me how soon I will die"

Psalms 39:5

only the width of my hand

The writer speaks of his lifespan is if it could be measured by the width of his hand. Alternate translation: "only a very short time"

my lifetime is like nothing before you

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This simile states that the length of the writer's life is so short that it does not exist. This is an exaggeration to stress how short it is. Alternate translation: "the length of my life is barely any time at all"

Surely every man is a single breath

Life is short, and the psalmist speaks of it here as if it were only as long as the time it takes for a person to breathe one breath. Alternate translation: "The time that humans live is as short as a single breath of a person"

Psalms 39:6

Surely every man walks about like a shadow

The lives of people are spoken of as if they are as insignificant as shadows. Alternate translation: "Everyone disappears like shadows do"

although they do not know who will receive them

Here it is implied that they do not know what will happen to their wealth after they die. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Psalms 39:7

Now, Lord, for what am I waiting?

The writer asks this question to emphasize that people cannot help him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "So now, Yahweh, I can expect to receive nothing from anyone else."

Psalms 39:9

I am silent ... cannot open my mouth

These phrases mean basically the same thing.

because it is you who has done it

"because my punishment comes from you"

Psalms 39:10

Stop wounding me

God's punishment of the writer is spoken of as if God was wounding him with a weapon. Alternate translation: "Please stop punishing me"

I am overwhelmed

"I am defeated completely"

the blow of your hand

God's punishment of the writer is spoken of as if God was striking him with his fist. Here "hand" represents God's judgment. Alternate translation: "your judgment on me"

Psalms 39:11

consume the things they desire like a moth

God will take away the things they value in the same way as a moth eats a piece of cloth. Alternate translation: "consume the things they desire like a moth eats away at clothing"

all people are nothing but vapor

The writer speaks of the frailty of people as if they were mist that disappears quickly. Alternate translation: "everyone is completely fragile"

Psalms 39:12

do not be deaf to my tears

The phrase "deaf to" is a metaphor for "ignore." Possible meanings of the phrase "deaf to my tears" are 1) the word "tears" is a metonym for the writer's cries. Alternate translation: "do not ignore my cries" or "pay attention to my cries" Or 2) the word "tears" is a metonym for the writer himself. Alternate translation: "do not ignore me" or "pay attention to me"

tears

The reader should understand that the writer is extremely sad.

I am like a foreigner with you, a sojourner

The writer speaks of Yahweh's lack of response as if Yahweh considered him to be a total stranger to him. Alternate translation: "I am like a complete stranger to you"

Psalms 39:13

Turn your gaze from me

Here "your gaze" represents Yahweh's punishment. Alternate translation: "Please stop punishing me"

so that I may smile again

Here "smile" is associated with being happy. Alternate translation: "so that I can be happy again"

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40 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 I waited patiently for Yahweh;
he listened to me and heard my cry.

2 He brought me up out of a horrible pit,
out of the miry clay,
and he set my feet on a rock
and made my steps secure.

3 He has put a new song in my mouth,
praise to our God.
Many will see it and honor him
and will trust in Yahweh.

4 Blessed is the man
who makes Yahweh his trust
and does not honor the proud
or those who turn away from him to lies.

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5 Many, Yahweh my God,
are the wonderful deeds that you have done,
and your thoughts which are about us cannot be numbered;
if I declared and spoke of them,
they would be more than could be counted.

6 You have no delight in sacrifice or offering,
but you have opened my ears;
you have not required burnt offerings or sin offerings.

7 Then said I, "See, I have come;
it is written about me in the scroll of the document.

8 I delight to do your will, my God;
your laws are in my heart."

9 I have proclaimed good news of your righteousness in the great assembly;
Yahweh, you know that my lips have not kept back from doing this.

10 I have not concealed your righteousness in my heart;
I have declared your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your covenant faithfulness
or your trustworthiness from the great assembly.

11 Do not keep back your acts of mercy from me, Yahweh;
let your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness always preserve me.

12 Troubles that cannot be numbered surround me;
my iniquities have caught up with me so that I am no longer able to see anything;
they are more than the hairs on my head,
and my heart has failed me.

13 Be pleased, Yahweh, to rescue me;
hurry to help me, Yahweh.

14 Let them be ashamed and completely disappointed
who pursue my life to sweep it away.
Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor,
those who delight in hurting me.

15 Let them be appalled because of their shame,
those who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

16 But may all those who seek you rejoice
and be glad in you;
let everyone who loves your salvation say continually,
"May Yahweh be praised."

17 I am poor and needy;

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yet the Lord thinks about me.
You are my help and you come to my rescue;
do not delay, my God.

Psalm 40 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 40 is a psalm of praise. Many also see it as a messianic psalm, a psalm about Christ. (See: christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrifices

God is not interested in sacrifices but wants people to obey him and fulfill his plans for them.

Links:

Psalms 40:1

Psalms 40:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

I waited patiently for Yahweh

This means the writer was waiting for Yahweh to help him.

he listened to me ... heard my cry

These mean the same thing, and can be combined into one statement. Alternate translation: "he listened to me when I called out to him"

Psalms 40:2

out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay

These two metaphors mean the same thing. The writer's danger is spoken of as if it was a deadly pit full of mud. This emphasizes the danger. Alternate translation: "from being trapped in a horrible pit full of sticky mud"

he set my feet on a rock

Here "my feet" refers to the writer, and "a rock" refers a place of safety. Alternate translation: "he provided safety for me"

Psalms 40:3

He has put a new song in my mouth

Possible meanings are 1) "He has taught me the words to a new song" or 2) "He has given me a new reason to sing."

in my mouth

Here "my mouth" refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "in me"

praise to our God

The noun "praise" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "a song to praise our God"

Many will see it

Here "see it" refers to hearing the writer sing his song about what God has done for him. Alternate translation: "Many people will hear me tell what Yahweh has done"

Psalms 40:4

Blessed is the man who makes Yahweh his trust

"Blessed is the man who trusts in Yahweh" or "Those who trust in Yahweh are blessed"

the proud

This refers to the people who are proud. Alternate translation: "proud people"

to lies

The Hebrew word is unclear. Possible meanings are 1) "lies" or 2) "false gods."

Psalms 40:5

your thoughts which are about us cannot be numbered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can count all the things you think about us"

cannot be numbered ... more than could be counted

These phrases mean essentially the same thing. The first is stated in negative form, and the second is stated in positive form.

Psalms 40:6

You have no delight in sacrifice or offering

This is an exaggeration to express that other things are much more important to God. Alternate translation: "Sacrifices and other offerings are not the things that delight you most"

you have opened my ears

Here "ears" refers to the ability to hear. Alternate translation: "you have enabled me to hear your commands"

you have not required burnt offerings or sin offerings

This is an exaggeration to show that these things were not the most important to God. Alternate translation: "animals burned on the altar and other offerings for our sins are not what you require most"

Psalms 40:7

the scroll of the document

This refers to a scroll on which was written the word of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the written scroll"

Psalms 40:8

your laws are in my heart

Here "my heart" refers to the inner being of the writer. Alternate translation: "I am always thinking about your laws within my inner being"

Psalms 40:9

I have proclaimed good news of your righteousness in the great assembly

"I have told a large assembly of people the good news of your righteousness."

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good news of your righteousness

This refers to the good news that God rescues his people. Alternate translation: "good news that because you are righteous, you rescue your people"

my lips have not kept back from doing this

Here "my lips" represents the writer, emphasizing his speech. Alternate translation: "I have not stopped myself from proclaiming these things"

Psalms 40:10

I have not concealed your righteousness in my heart

"I have not kept your righteousness a secret." This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I have openly told every one about your righteousness"

in my heart

Here this refers to the writer's inner being.

I have not concealed your covenant faithfulness or your trustworthiness from the great assembly

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I have told everyone in the great assembly about your covenant faithfulness or your trustworthiness"

your covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." Alternate translation: "how faithful you are to your covenant"

your trustworthiness

This abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be stated as "trustworthy." Alternate translation: "how trustworthy you are"

Psalms 40:11

let your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness always preserve me

Here "covenant faithfulness" and "trustworthiness" are spoken of as if they were living people who could protect the writer. Alternate translation: "I want your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness to always preserve"

Psalms 40:12

Troubles that cannot be numbered surround me

Here troubles are spoken of as if they were objects that surround and trap the speaker. Alternate translation: "there are more troubles around me than I can count" or "more troubles come to me than I can count"

that cannot be numbered

This is stated in negative form to intensify the number.See how you translated this in [Psalms 40:5]

my iniquities

This refers to the consequences of his sin. Alternate translation: "the consequences of my iniquities"

have caught up with me

The writer's iniquities are spoken of as if they were his enemies who were harming him.

I am no longer able to see anything

Versions differ in how to understand this difficult passage. It may mean that the speaker is crying so much that he cannot see anything because of his tears.

my heart has failed me

Here "heart" refers to the writer's inner confidence. Alternate translation: "I am very discouraged"

Psalms 40:14

Let them be ashamed and completely disappointed who pursue my life to sweep it away

This can be reordered and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let those who pursue my life to sweep it away be ashamed and completely disappointed"

Let them be ashamed and completely disappointed

"Please make them ashamed and completely disappointed"

who pursue my life to sweep it away

Here "pursue my life" means they desire to kill the writer. The writer is represented by his "life." Alternate translation: "who are trying to kill me"

Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor, those who delight in hurting me

This can be reordered and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let those who delight in hurting me be turned back and brought to dishonor" or "Please have someone turn back those who delight in hurting me and bring them to dishonor"

turned back

"unable to continue"

Psalms 40:15

Let them be appalled because of their shame, those who say to me, "Aha, aha!"

"Let those who say to me, 'Aha, aha!' be appalled because of their shame"

Let them be appalled because of their shame

"I hope that they will be appalled when you cause them to be ashamed"

Aha, aha!

These words indicate that the speaker has seen the hearer doing evil that the hearer did not think anyone knew about. You can use here words in your language that mean the same thing but sound different. See how this is translated in [Psalms 35:21]

Psalms 40:16

rejoice and be glad

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the intensity of joy. Alternate translation: "be very joyful"

loves your salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "love you because you saved them"

Psalms 40:17

poor and needy

These words mean the same thing and emphasize how helpless the writer is. Alternate translation: "very needy"

the Lord thinks about me

"the Lord cares for me"

You are my help ... you come to my rescue

These phrases mean the same thing.

You are my help

"You are the one who helps me"

you come to my rescue

"you come to save me"

do not delay

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "respond quickly"

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41 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 Blessed is he who is concerned for the weak;
in the day of trouble, Yahweh will rescue him.

2 Yahweh will preserve him and keep him alive,
and he will be blessed on the earth;
Yahweh will not turn him over to the will of his enemies.

3 Yahweh will support him on the bed of suffering;
you will make his bed of sickness into a bed of healing.

4 I said, "Yahweh, have mercy on me!
Heal me, for I have sinned against you."

5 My enemies speak evil against me, saying,
'When will he die and his name perish?'

6 If my enemy comes to see me,
he says worthless things;
his heart gathers up wickedness for itself;
when he goes away from me, he tells others about it.

7 All who hate me whisper together against me;
against me they hope for my hurt.

8 They say, "An evil disease holds on tightly to him;
now that he is lying down, he will rise up no more."

9 Indeed, even my own close friend, in whom I trusted,
who ate my bread,
has lifted up his heel against me.

10 But you, Yahweh, have mercy on me and raise me up
so that I may pay them back.

11 By this I know that you delight in me,
for my enemy does not triumph over me.

12 As for me, you support me in my integrity
and will keep me before your face forever.

13 May Yahweh, the God of Israel be praised
from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen.

BOOK TWO

(Psalms 42-72)

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Psalm 41 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 41 is a psalm of deliverance. The author's friends had become his enemies who wanted to see him die but he trusted God to rescue him. (See: deliverer and trust)

Special concepts in this chapter

Enemies

The author's best friend had become an enemy. His enemies were happy because they were sure his sickness would result in death.

Links:

Psalms 41:1

Psalms 41:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

he who is concerned for the weak ... rescue him

The words "he" and "him" refer to anyone who is concerned for the weak.

the weak

"weak people" or "poor people"

Psalms 41:2

he ... him ... his

These words refer to anyone who is concerned for the weak.

Psalms 41:3

Yahweh will support him on the bed of suffering

The phrase "the bed of suffering" refers to when a person lies in bed because he is sick. Alternate translation: "When he is sick and in bed, Yahweh will support him"

you will make his bed of sickness into a bed of healing

The phrase "a bed of healing" refers to when a person rests in bed and recovers from his sickness. Alternate translation: "you, Yahweh, will heal him of his sickness"

Psalms 41:5

his name perish

If a person's name dies, it means that people forget that he had ever lived. Alternate translation: "when will his name perish" or "when will people forget about him"

Psalms 41:6

If my enemy comes to see me

The words "my enemy" refers to any enemy in general, and not to one specific enemy.

he says worthless things

Possible meanings are 1) "he says meaningless things" or 2) his enemies say things to make him think that they are his friends when they are not. Alternate translation: "he says deceitful things" or "they pretend to be concerned about me"

his heart gathers up wickedness for itself

His enemies try to learn all of the bad things about him. Here the word "heart" refers the whole person. The writer's sin is spoken of as if it were an object that could be gathered. Alternate translation: "he tries to learn about all of my sins"

Psalms 41:7

against me they hope for my hurt

Possible meanings are 1) "they hope that very bad things will happen to me" or 2) "they are planning to hurt me."

Psalms 41:8

An evil disease ... to him

His enemies speak of "disease" as if it were a person who has captured him. Alternate translation: "He is sick with a fatal disease"

An evil disease

Possible meanings are 1) "A fatal disease" or 2) "Something evil"

now that he is lying down, he will rise up no more

Here the words "lying down" refer to lying in bed because of illness. That he will not "rise up" means that he will continue to lie down, which is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "now that he is sick in bed, he will die there"

Psalms 41:9

has lifted up his heel against me

This is an idiom that means his friend betrayed him. Alternate translation: "has betrayed me" or "has turned against me"

Psalms 41:10

But you, Yahweh, have mercy on me and raise me up

This is a request. Alternate translation: "Please, Yahweh, have mercy on me and raise me up"

raise me up

This means to raise him up from his bed, or to make him recover from his disease. Alternate translation: "make me well"

so that I may pay them back

The writer speaks of revenge on his enemies as if it were paying to them what he owes. Alternate translation: "so that I may take revenge on them"

Psalms 41:11

By this I know that you delight in me, for my enemy does not triumph over me

The word "this" refers to what the writer will say next. For clarity, the clauses may be reversed. Alternate translation: "Because my enemy does not triumph over me, I know that

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you delight in me"
By this I know that you delight in me, for my enemy does not triumph over me
This can also be translated in future tense, since Yahweh has not yet healed him. Alternate translation: "If you enable me to do that, with the result that my enemies do not defeat me, I will know that you are pleased with me"
Psalms 41:12
you support me in my integrity
"you support me because of my integrity"
will keep me before your face
The writer speaks of being in Yahweh's presence as being in a place where Yahweh can see him and he can see Yahweh's face. Alternate translation: "will keep me with you"
Psalms 41:13
General Information:
This verse is more than the end of this psalm. It is the closing statement for all of Book 1 of the Psalms, which starts at Psalm 1 and ends with Psalm 41.
from everlasting to everlasting
This refers to two extremes and means for all time. Alternate translation: "for all eternity"
Amen and Amen
The word "Amen" is repeated to emphasize approval of what has been said. Alternate translation: "May it certainly be so"

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42 For the chief musician. A maschil of the sons of Korah.
1 As the deer pants after streams of water,
so I thirst for you, God.

2 I thirst for God, for the living God,
when will I come and appear before God?

3 My tears have been my food
day and night,
while my enemies are always saying to me,
"Where is your God?"

4 These things I call to mind
as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng
and led them to the house of God
with the voice of joy and praise,
a multitude celebrating a festival.

5 Why are you bowed down, my soul?
Why are you upset within me?
Hope in God,
for again I will praise him who is my salvation.

6 My God, my soul is bowed down within me,
therefore I call you to mind from the land of the Jordan,
from the three peaks of Mount Hermon, and from the hill of Mizar.

7 Deep calls to deep at the noise of your waterfalls;
all your waves and your billows have gone over me.

8 Yet Yahweh will command his covenant faithfulness in the daytime;
in the night his song will be with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

9 I will say to God, my rock,

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"Why have you forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning
because of the oppression of the enemy?"

10 As with a sword in my bones, my adversaries rebuke me,
while they always say to me, "Where is your God?"

11 Why are you bowed down, my soul?
Why are you upset within me?
Hope in God,
for again I will praise him who is my salvation and my God.

Psalm 42 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 42 is a psalm of praise for all that God has done and a prayer for deliverance from the psalmist's enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's deliverance

The psalmist praises God as he remembers what God has done for him in the past, and he puts his trust in him. He needs rescuing from his enemies. Scholars believe that this psalm is about a man in exile longing for Jerusalem.

Psalm 42 and Psalm 43

Some scholars believe that these two psalms were originally written together as one psalm.

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil of the sons of Korah." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 42:1

Psalms 42:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A maschil of the sons of Korah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

As the deer pants after streams of water, so I thirst for you, God

The author compares his desire for God to the desire of a thirsty deer for water.

pants

heavy breathing from an animal or person that is very tired or thirsty

I thirst for you, God

The author speaks of his strong desire for God as if it were a strong thirst for water.

Psalms 42:2

I thirst for God

The author speaks of his strong desire for God as if it were a strong thirst for water.

when will I come and appear before God?

The author does not ask this question to get an answer but to show his strong desire to be before God.

Psalms 42:3

My tears have been my food

The author refers to his tears as if they are food that he eats. This means that he is so sad that he cannot eat. Alternate translation: "My tears are like my food and I eat nothing else"

day and night

This phrase refers to the entire day by referring to both its beginning and end. Alternate translation: "all day long"

my enemies are always saying to me

This is an exaggeration. His enemies are not saying this constantly; they are saying it often.

Where is your God?

The author's enemies use this question to mock him and to express that they do not see his God helping him. Alternate translation: "Your God is not here to help you"

Psalms 42:4

call to mind

This is an idiom that means to remember or think about something. Alternate translation: "remember"

I pour out my soul

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Here the word "soul" refers to the emotions. The author speaks of his soul as if it is a liquid that he pours out. The phrase means that he is expressing his emotional grief. Alternate translation: "I express my sorrow"

the throng

"the crowd of people"

joy and praise

This phrase uses two different words to express one idea. Alternate translation: "joyful praise"

Psalms 42:5

Why are you bowed down, my soul? Why are you upset within me?

The author refers to his inner self as his "soul," which represents himself. He asks these questions to rebuke himself. Alternate translation: "I should not be bowed down. I should not be worried"

bowed down

The writer speaks of depression or discouragement as if it were his soul being bent over. Alternate translation: "discouraged"

Hope in God

The writer continues to speak to his own soul and commands it to trust God.

Psalms 42:6

My God, my soul

The writer begins to speak to God about his soul.

I call you to mind

This phrase means to remember or to think about something. Alternate translation: "I think of you"

the land of the Jordan

This is probably a reference to northern Israel, where the Jordan river originates. Alternate translation: "the land where the Jordan river begins"

peaks

mountain tops

hill of Mizar

This is the name of a hill at the base of Mount Hermon.

Psalms 42:7

Deep calls to deep at the noise of your waterfalls

The word "deep" refers to deep waters, which here are likely the streams rushing down Mount Hermon. The writer speaks of them as if they are people calling out to one another as they hear the sound of their own descent from the mountain.

all your waves ... have gone over me

The author speaks of his great misfortune and sadness as if they are deep waters that drown him with one wave after another.

your waves and your billows

The word "billows" is another word for "waves." Together the two words emphasize the greatness of the waves. Alternate translation: "all of your great waves"

Psalms 42:8

Yahweh will command his covenant faithfulness in the daytime

The writer speaks of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness as if it were a person whom he commands to be with him. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will show me his covenant faithfulness in the daytime" or "Yahweh will show me in the daytime how faithful he is to his covenant"

his song

Possible meanings are 1) "the song that he gives me" or "the song about him"

the God of my life

"the God who gives me life"

Psalms 42:9

I will say to God, my rock

The writer speaks of God as if he were a huge rock that would provide protection from enemy attack.

Why do I go mourning

To "go mourning" is to perform customs related to being very sad.

Psalms 42:10

As with a sword in my bones

The writer describes his adversaries' rebukes as his receiving a fatal wound.

they always say to me

This is an exaggeration; his enemies are not saying this constantly but are saying it often.

Where is your God?

The writer's enemies use this question to mock him and to express that they do not see God helping him. Alternate translation: "Your God is not here to help you"

Psalms 42:11

Why are you bowed down, my soul? Why are you upset within me?

The author refers to his inner self as his "soul," which represents himself. He asks these questions to rebuke himself. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

bowed down

The writer speaks of depression or discouragement as if it were his soul being bent over. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

Hope in God

The writer continues to speak to his own soul and commands it to trust God. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

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[1] 43 Bring me justice, God,
and plead my case against a nation that is not faithful.
Deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

[2] For you are the God of my strength.
Why have you rejected me?
Why do I go about in mourning
because of the oppression of the enemy?

[3] Oh, send out your light and your truth,

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let them lead me.
Let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.

4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy.
I will praise you with the harp,
God, my God.

5 Why are you bowed down, my soul?
Why are you upset within me?
Hope in God,
for again I will praise him who is my salvation and my God.

Psalm 43 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 43 is a psalm of deliverance. It is a plea for rescue from the psalmist's enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Encouragement

The author should not be discouraged because he trusts in God to deliver him. (See: trust)

Psalm 42 and Psalm 43

Some scholars believe that these two psalms were originally written together as one psalm.

Links:

Psalms 43:1

Psalms 43:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Psalms 43:2

the God of my strength

Possible meanings are 1) "the God who protects me" or 2) "the God who gives me strength."

Why have you rejected me? Why do I go about in mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

The writer asks these questions in order to complain to God and express his emotions, not to receive an answer.

Why do I go about in mourning

To "go about in mourning" is to perform customs related to being very sad.

because of the oppression of the enemy

The word "oppression" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because my enemy oppresses me"

Psalms 43:3

send out your light and your truth

The writer speaks of God's deliverance as if it were a light that shows him the way and truth that teaches him how to live. Alternate translation: "guide me with your light and truth"

holy hill

This refers to the hill in Jerusalem where the temple is located and thus to the temple itself.

to your dwelling

"to the place where you live"

Psalms 43:4

God my exceeding joy

"God who is my very great joy" or "God who gives me very great joy"

Psalms 43:5

Why are you bowed down, my soul? Why are you upset within me?

The author refers to his inner self as his "soul," which represents himself. He asks these questions to rebuke himself. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

bowed down

The writer speaks of depression or discouragement as if it were his soul being bent over. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

Hope in God

The writer continues to speak to his own soul and commands it to trust God. See how you translated this in [Psalms 42:5]

my salvation and my God

The phrase "my salvation" refers to God. If necessary the two phrases can be combined. Alternate translation: "my God who saves me"

44 For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah. A maschil.
1 We have heard with our ears, God,
our fathers have told us

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what work you did in their days,
in the days of old.

2 You drove out the nations with your hand,
but you planted our people;
you afflicted the peoples,
but you spread our people out in the land.

3 For they did not obtain the land for their possession by their own sword,
neither did their own arm save them;
but your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face,
because you were favorable to them.

4 God, You are my King;
command victory for Jacob.

5 Through you we will push down our adversaries;
through your name we will tread them under,
those who rise up against us.

6 For I will not trust in my bow,
neither will my sword save me.

7 But you have saved us from our adversaries,
and have put to shame those who hate us.

8 In God we have made our boast all the day long,
and we will give thanks to your name forever.

Selah

9 But now you have rejected us and brought us dishonor,
and you do not go out with our armies.

10 You make us turn back from the adversary;
and those who hate us take spoil for themselves.

11 You have made us like sheep to be slaughtered
and have scattered us among the nations.

12 You sell your people for nothing;
you have not increased your wealth by doing so.

13 You make us a rebuke to our neighbors,
scoffed and mocked by those around us.

14 You make us an insult among the nations,
a shaking of the head among the peoples.

15 All the day long my dishonor is before me,
and the shame of my face has covered me

16 because of the voice of him who rebukes and insults,

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because of the enemy and the avenger.

17 All this has come on us; yet we have not forgotten you
or dealt falsely with your covenant.

18 Our heart has not turned back;
our steps have not gone from your way.

19 Yet you have severely broken us in the place of jackals
and covered us with the shadow of death.

20 If we have forgotten the name of our God
or spread out our hands to a strange god,

21 would not God search this out?
For he knows the secrets of the heart.

22 Indeed, for your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are considered to be sheep for the slaughter.

23 Awake, why do you sleep, Lord?
Arise, do not reject us forever.

24 Why do you hide your face
and forget our affliction and our oppression?

25 For we have sunk down into the dust;
our bodies cling to the earth.

26 Rise up for our help
and redeem us for the sake of your covenant faithfulness.

Psalm 44 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 44 is a deliverance psalm. It is a prayer for God's help against enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Enemies

When Israel entered the Promised Land, God fought for them and drove out their enemies. Since their enemies have now defeated them, they are in need of God's help. (See: promisedland)

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 44:1

Psalms 44:1
General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah. A maschil

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A psalm of the sons of Korah

"This is a psalm that the sons of Korah wrote."

We have heard with our ears, God

The word "ears" adds emphasis to the statement that they have heard and understood the things that the writer is about to describe. The writer addresses this statement to God. Alternate translation: "God, we have heard clearly"

in their days, in the days of old

Both of these phrases use the word "days" to refer to the time period when the ancestors of the people of Israel were alive.

Psalms 44:2

You drove out the nations

"You forced the people from other nations to leave"

with your hand

Here the word "hand" refers to God's power. Alternate translation: "by your power"

you planted our people

The writer speaks of God's causing the Israelites to live in the land as if he were planting them in the soil like he would a tree. Alternate translation: "you caused our people to live there"

Psalms 44:3

by their own sword

The word "sword" refers to military power. Alternate translation: "by fighting with their own swords" or "by their own army's strength"

their own arm

Here the word "arm" refers to power. Alternate translation: "their own power"

the light of your face

You may supply a verb for this phrase. Alternate translation: "the light of your face obtained the land for their possession"

your right hand, your arm

Here the words "hand" and "arm" both refer to God's power. Combined, they emphasize the greatness of God's power. Alternate translation: "your great power"

the light of your face

The writer speaks of Yahweh looking with favor upon them and being kind to them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. Alternate translation: "your kindness" or "your good favor"

Psalms 44:4

victory for Jacob

The people of Israel are referred to by the name of their ancestor "Jacob."

Psalms 44:5

Through you ... through your

"By you ... by your"

push down ... tread them under ... rise up

The writer speaks of his enemies' defeat as if they are "down" and of their preparing to fight as if they are "up."

through your name

Here the word "name" refers to God's power and authority. Alternate translation: "by your power"

tread them under

"tread them under our feet" or "walk on top of them"

Psalms 44:8

we have made our boast

The word "boast" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "we have boasted"

we will give thanks to your name

Here the word "name" refers to God, himself. Alternate translation: "we will give thanks to you"

Psalms 44:10

spoil

resources and treasures that an army collects after winning a battle

Psalms 44:11

You have made us like sheep to be slaughtered

The writer compares the Israelites to sheep that people kill and eat. As sheep are helpless before those who kill them, so the Israelites are helpless before their enemies. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have allowed our enemies to kill us like they would kill a sheep and eat it"

scattered us among the nations

"caused us to live in many different nations"

Psalms 44:12

sell your people for nothing

The writer speaks of Yahweh allowing Israel's enemies to conquer them as if he were selling the people of Israel to their enemies but does not require any payment from their enemies.

Psalms 44:13

You make us a rebuke to our neighbors, scoffed and mocked by those around us

These two phrases are parallel emphasizing how the people among whom they live mock them.

You make us a rebuke to our neighbors

The word "rebuke" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "You make us something that our neighbors rebuke"

scoffed and mocked by those around us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those around us scoff at us and mock us"

Psalms 44:14

an insult among ... a shaking of the head

These phrases are parallel emphasizing how intensely the nations around them mock them.

You make us an insult among the nations

The word "insult" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "You make the nations around us insult us"

a shaking of the head among the peoples

The phrase "a shaking of the head" can be translated in verbal form. Alternate translation: "something at which the peoples shake their heads"

a shaking of the head

This was a gesture that people used to show scorn to others.

Psalms 44:15

my dishonor is before me

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The writer speaks of his dishonor as if it were an object that is always in front of him for him to see. The phrase means that he is always thinking about his dishonor. Alternate translation: "I think about my dishonor"

the shame of my face has covered me

The writer speaks of his shame as if it is an object that covers him like a blanket would cover him. Alternate translation: "the shame of my face has overwhelmed me"

the shame of my face

"the shame that shows on my face." This refers to his facial expressions that his shame causes.

Psalms 44:16

because of the voice of him who rebukes and insults

Here the words "the voice" represents the person insulting him. Alternate translation: "because of what the person says who rebukes and insults me"

rebukes and insults

These words have similar meanings and emphasize the harsh nature of what this person says.

Psalms 44:18

Our heart has not turned back ... have not gone from your way

These two phrases are parallel. The writer speaks of loyalty to God as if it were following him, and disloyalty as if it were turning away from him.

Our heart has not turned back

Here the word "heart" refers to the emotions, and specifically to loyalty and devotion. Alternate translation: "We have not stopped being loyal to you"

Psalms 44:19

you have severely broken us

The writer speaks of God's punishment as if it were breaking a fragile object. Alternate translation: "you have punished us severely"

in the place of jackals

The writer speaks of Israel after God's punishment as if it were a wild, uninhabitable place. Alternate translation: "and made our land like a place where jackals live"

jackals

a type of wild dog

covered us with the shadow of death

The writer speaks of death as if it is an object that casts a shadow over those who are about to die. Alternate translation: "made us so that we are about to die"

Psalms 44:20

If we have forgotten the name of our God

This describes a situation that could have happened but did not. The writer knew that they had not forgotten the name of God. Here the word "name" refers to God, himself. To forget the name of God is to stop worshiping him. Alternate translation: "If we have forgotten our God" or "If we have stopped worshiping our God"

spread out our hands to a strange god

Spreading out the hands is a gesture that people used to worship and pray to a god. Alternate translation: "worshiped a strange god" or "prayed to a strange god"

Psalms 44:21

would not God search this out?

The writer uses this question to express that God would know if they worshiped another god. Alternate translation: "God would certainly find out"

he knows the secrets of the heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "he knows what a person secretly thinks"

Psalms 44:22

we are being killed all day long

The phrase "all day long" is an exaggeration to emphasize that their people are being killed frequently. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we are always in danger of people killing us"

we are considered to be sheep for the slaughter

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people consider us to be sheep for the slaughter"

sheep for the slaughter

The writer compares the Israelites to sheep that people kill and eat. As sheep are helpless before those who kill them, so the Israelites are helpless before their enemies.

Psalms 44:23

Awake, why do you sleep, Lord?

This does not mean that God is actually asleep. The writer speaks of God's seeming inactivity as if God is sleeping. He asks the question to rebuke God for appearing not to be concerned about their troubles. Alternate translation: "Wake up! I feel like you are sleeping, Lord!"

Psalms 44:24

Why do you hide your face ... our oppression?

The writer uses this question to complain that God appears to be ignoring them. Alternate translation: "Do not hide your face ... our oppression."

hide your face

The writer speaks of God ignoring them as if God were hiding his face so that he could not see them. Alternate translation: "ignore us"

forget our affliction and our oppression

The words "affliction" and "oppression" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the severity of their affliction. These words may also be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "forget that people afflict us and oppress us" or "forget that people greatly afflict us"

Psalms 44:25

For we have sunk down into the dust; our bodies cling to the earth

These parallel phrases share similar meanings. The writer describes his people as lying on the ground in a posture of defeat and humiliation.

For we have sunk down into the dust

The writer speaks of their humiliation as if their bodies were objects, such as ice, that melt and soak into the dirt.

our bodies cling to the earth

The writer speaks of their humiliation as if their bodies were stuck to the ground and they could not raise themselves up.

Psalms 44:26

Rise up

This is a command to stand. This phrase refers to beginning to act on something. Alternate translation: "Take action"

for the sake of your covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to show that you are

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faithful to your covenant"

45 For the chief musician; set to Shoshannim. A psalm of the sons of Korah. A maschil. A song of loves.
1 My heart overflows on a good subject;
I will read aloud the words I have composed about the king;
my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

2 You are fairer than the children of mankind;
grace is poured onto your lips;
therefore we know that God has blessed you forever.

3 Gird your sword to your side, mighty one,
in your glory and your majesty.

4 In your majesty ride on triumphantly
because of trustworthiness, meekness, and righteousness;
your right hand will teach you fearful things.

5 Your arrows are sharp;
the peoples fall under you;
your arrows are in the hearts of the king's enemies.

6 Your throne, God, is forever and ever;
a scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom.

7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness more than your companions.

8 All your garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia;
out of ivory palaces
stringed instruments have made you glad.

9 Kings' daughters are among your honorable women;
at your right hand stands the queen clothed in gold of Ophir.

10 Listen, daughter, consider and incline your ear;
forget your own people and your father's house.

11 In this way the king will desire your beauty;
he is your master; revere him.

12 The daughter of Tyre will be there with a gift;
the rich among the people will beg for your favor.

13 The royal daughter in the palace is all glorious;
her clothing is worked with gold.

14 She will be led to the king in embroidered dress;
the virgins, her companions who follow her,
will be brought to you.

15 They will be led by gladness and rejoicing;

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they will enter into the king's palace.

16 In the place of your fathers will be your children,
whom you will make princes in all the earth.

17 I will make your name to be remembered in all generations;
therefore the peoples will give you thanks forever and ever.

Psalm 45 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 45 is a royal psalm written for the king's wedding day.

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The king has a beautiful palace, and his bride is also beautiful.

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 45:1

Psalms 45:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Shoshannim. A psalm of the sons of Korah. A maschil. A song of loves

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Shoshannim

This may refer to a style or the tune of the music. Sometimes it is translated as "set to the tune of 'Lilies.'"

A psalm of the sons of Korah

"This is a psalm that the sons of Korah wrote."

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

My heart overflows on a good subject

The writer speaks of his heart as if it were a container that overflows with liquid. The word "heart" represents his emotions, which are excited by the song that he sings. Alternate translation: "My emotions are excited about a good subject"

a good subject

"a noble theme" or "a beautiful word." This refers to the song that he has written.

composed

to have written or created a song

my tongue is the pen of a ready writer

The writer speaks of his tongue as if it were a pen. He speaks words as skillfully as an experienced writer writes words. Alternate translation: "my tongue is like the pen of person who writes well" or "I speak words as skillfully as an experienced writer can write words"

Psalms 45:2

You are fairer than the children of mankind

This phrase is an exaggeration that emphasizes that the king is better looking than anyone else. The phrase "children of mankind" is an idiom and refers to all humans. Alternate translation: "You are more handsome than any other man"

grace is poured onto your lips

The writer speaks of grace as if it were oil that someone has used to anoint the king's lips. The word "lips" refers to the king's speech. The phrase means that the king speaks eloquently. Alternate translation: "it is as if someone has anointed your lips with oil" or "you speak eloquently"

Psalms 45:3

Gird your sword to your side

Warriors carried their swords in sheaths that hung from belts around their waists. The swords would rest against their sides. This phrase describes an action of someone preparing for battle. Alternate translation: "Prepare yourself for battle"

Psalms 45:4

ride on triumphantly

The writer tells the king to ride his horse or chariot to victory.

because of trustworthiness, meekness, and righteousness

The abstract nouns "trustworthiness," "meekness," and

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"righteousness" can be stated as adjectives. Possible meanings are 1) these are qualities of the mighty one. Alternate translation: "because you are trustworthy, meek, and righteous" or 2) these are virtues that he fights to uphold for the people whom he rules. Alternate translation: "in order to fight for what is trustworthy, meek, and right"

your right hand will teach you fearful things

Most soldiers held their swords with their right hands when they fought. Here, the phrase "right hand" refers to his ability to fight, which the writer speaks of as if it were a person who can teach the king through the experience he gains in battle. Alternate translation: "You will learn to accomplish great military feats by fighting in many battles"

fearful things

"awesome deeds." This refers to military victories that cause his enemies to fear him and his allies to revere him.

Psalms 45:5

the peoples fall under you

This phrase refers to the king defeating his enemies. Possible meanings are 1) "the peoples fall at your feet in surrender" or 2) "the peoples fall dead at your feet."

your arrows are in the hearts of the king's enemies

"your arrows have pierced the hearts of your enemies." The writer speaks to the king while referring to the king in the third person.

Psalms 45:6

Your throne ... is forever and ever

The word "throne" represents the kingdom and rule of the king. Alternate translation: "Your kingdom ... is forever and ever" or "You will reign ... forever and ever"

Your throne, God

Possible meanings are that the word "God" 1) is a title for the king, who is God's representative or 2) modifies the word "throne" and means "Your kingdom that God has given you."

a scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom

The word "scepter" represents the king's authority to rule his kingdom. Alternate translation: "you rule your kingdom with justice"

Psalms 45:7

God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness

The writer speaks of gladness as if it were an oil that God used to anoint the king. That God has anointed him is a symbolic action that represents God's choosing him to be king. Alternate translation: "when God appointed you as king, he made you very glad"

Psalms 45:8

General Information:

Here the writer begins to describe what appears to be the wedding ceremony of the king and his bride.

myrrh, aloes, and cassia

These are aromatic plant substances that people used to make perfumes.

ivory palaces

Ivory is a hard white substance that forms animal's tusks. This phrase describes a palace with walls and furniture that people have decorated with ivory.

stringed instruments have made you glad

The words "stringed instruments" refers to the music that people make by playing the stringed instruments. Alternate translation: "the music of stringed instruments has made you glad"

Psalms 45:9

honorable women

These women are wives of the king who receive his approval.

the queen

This is a reference to the woman who will become queen. Alternate translation: "your bride, the queen" or "your bride, who will be the queen"

Ophir

This is the name of a place that had a reputation for its fine gold. The location is unknown.

Psalms 45:10

Listen, daughter

The writer begins to speak to the queen and refers to her as "daughter" because she is a young woman.

incline your ear

The writer speaks of listening carefully to something as if it were bending one's ear towards the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "listen carefully"

forget your own people

The writer speaks of the queen no longer following the beliefs and customs of her native people as if it were forgetting them. Alternate translation: "no longer follow the customs of your people"

your father's house

Here the word "house" refers to family. Alternate translation: "your relatives"

Psalms 45:11

In this way

"and" or "so"

the king will desire your beauty

This is a polite way to say that the king will want to sleep with the queen as his wife.

Psalms 45:12

General Information:

The writer continues to speak to the queen.

The daughter of Tyre

The writer speaks of the people who live in Tyre as if they are Tyre's children. Alternate translation: "The people of Tyre"

Psalms 45:13

The royal daughter

This is a reference to the woman whom the king will marry. Alternate translation: "The king's bride"

all glorious

"very beautiful." This refers to the woman's appearance.

her clothing is worked with gold

Her clothing is decorated or embroidered with gold. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she wears clothing that someone has embroidered with golden thread"

Psalms 45:14

General Information:

The author continues to speak about the queen but begins to address the king again.

She will be led to the king in embroidered dress

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will lead her to the king as she wears an embroidered dress"

embroidered

a design made by sewing colored threads into cloth

the virgins, her companions who follow her, will be brought to you

Here the word "you" refers to the king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will bring to you the virgins, her companions who follow her"

Psalms 45:15

They will be led by gladness and rejoicing

This phrase describes "gladness and rejoicing" as a person who leads others to celebrate. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Gladness and rejoicing will lead them" or "They will proceed with gladness and rejoicing"

gladness and rejoicing

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of gladness. Alternate translation: "great gladness"

Psalms 45:16

Connecting Statement:

The writer continues to address the king.

In the place of your fathers will be your children

This means that the king's sons will replace him as king, just as he replaced his ancestors as king.

you will make princes in all the earth

The phrase "in all the earth" is an exaggeration to emphasize that they will rule over many nations. Alternate translation: "you will make rulers over many nations"

Psalms 45:17

I will make your name to be remembered in all generations

Here the word "I" refers to the writer. The word "name" refers to the king's character and reputation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause people in every generation to know about your greatness"

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46 For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah; set to Alamoth. A song.
1 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains should be shaken into the heart of the seas,

3 though its waters roar and rage, and
though the mountains tremble with their swelling.

Selah

4 There is a river whose streams make the city of God happy,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.

5 God is in the middle of her; she will not be moved;
God will help her, and he will do so at the dawn of morning.

6 The nations raged and the kingdoms were shaken;
he lifted up his voice, and the earth melted.

7 Yahweh of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Selah

8 Come, behold the deeds of Yahweh,
who has set up objects of horror on earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth;
he breaks the bow and cuts the spear into pieces;
he burns up the shields.

10 Be quiet and know that I am God;

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I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted on the earth.

11 Yahweh of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Selah

Psalm 46 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 46 is a psalm of praise to God.

Special concepts in this chapter

God is all-powerful, controls nature, and protects his people. (See: peopleofgod)

Links:

Psalms 46:1

Psalms 46:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah; set to Alamoth. A song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A psalm of the sons of Korah

"This is a psalm that the sons of Korah wrote"

set to Alamoth

This may refer to a style of music.

God is our refuge and strength

The writer speaks of God as if he were a place where people can go for safety. Alternate translation: "God gives us safety and strength"

Psalms 46:2

the mountains should be shaken into the heart of the seas

The writer speaks of the deepest part of the sea as if it were the sea's heart. Here he describes an earthquake that causes the mountains to crumble and fall into the sea. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the mountains should shake so violently that they fall into the depths of the sea"

Psalms 46:3

though its waters roar and rage

"though the waters of the sea roar and rage." The words "roar" and "rage" describe the violent movements of the sea during a strong storm.

mountains tremble with their swelling

The phrase "their swelling" refers to the waters of the sea as they rise and crash against the mountains. Alternate translation: "the swelling waters cause the mountains to tremble"

Psalms 46:4

There is a river whose streams make the city of God happy

The imagery of a running river symbolizes peace and prosperity for the city of God.

make the city of God happy

The phrase "the city of God" refers to Jerusalem, and represents the people who live in that city. Alternate translation: "make the people who live in Jerusalem happy"

the holy place where the Most High dwells

This phrase describes "the city of God." Alternate translation: "the holy place where the Most High lives"

Psalms 46:5

in the middle of her; she will not be moved ... help her

The words "her" and "she" refer to "the city of God."

she will not be moved

Here, the word "moved" is the same word translated as "shaken" in [Psalms v. 2]

Psalms 46:6

The nations raged

Here, the word "raged" is the same word that the writer used in [Psalms v. 3]

the kingdoms were shaken

Here, the word "shaken" is the same word that the writer used in [Psalms v. 2]

he lifted up his voice

"God lifted up his voice." The writer speaks of the "voice" as an object that a person can pick up and raise into the air. This means that the voice becomes louder. Alternate translation: "God shouted"

the earth melted

The writer speaks of the earth as an object, such as ice, that can melt. Here "the earth" represents mankind, and to melt represents fear. Alternate translation: "the people of the earth tremble with fear"

Psalms 46:7

the God of Jacob is our refuge

The writer speaks of God as if he were a place where people can go for safety. Alternate translation: "the God of Jacob gives us safety"

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the God of Jacob
Possible meanings are 1) "the God whom Jacob worshiped" or 2) "Jacob" is a metonym for the nation of Israel and means "the God of Israel."
Psalms 46:9
He makes wars cease
"He makes nations stop fighting wars"
to the ends of the earth
This is an idiom that refers to everywhere in the word. Alternate translation: "everywhere in the world"
he breaks the bow ... burns up the shields
One way in which Yahweh will make all wars to cease is by destroying the weapons that the armies use to fight one another.
shields
Some versions understand this Hebrew word as "chariots."
Psalms 46:10
Be quiet and know that I am God
Here, God begins to speak.
Be quiet
In this context, these words are likely a command to the nations to stop their wars. Alternate translation: "Stop fighting"
know that I am God
Here the word "know" means to understand and to confess that Yahweh is the true God.
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted on the earth
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people of every nation in the world will exalt God. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People from every nation will exalt me; people all over the earth will exalt me"
Psalms 46:11
Yahweh of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge
The writer speaks of God as if he were a place where people can go for safety. See how you translated these lines in [Psalms 46:7]

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47 For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah.
1 Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with the sound of celebration.

2 For Yahweh Most High is terrifying;
he is a great King over all the earth.

3 He subdues peoples under us
and nations under our feet.

4 He chooses our inheritance for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loved.

Selah

5 God has gone up with a shout,
Yahweh with the sound of a ram's horn.

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.

7 For God is the King over all the earth;
sing praises with understanding.

8 God reigns over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.

9 The princes of the peoples have gathered together
to the people of the God of Abraham;
for the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is greatly exalted.

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Psalm 47 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 47 is a psalm of praise to God.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

God is powerful over all the nations in the world.

Links:

Psalms 47:1

Psalms 47:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

Clap your hands

Clapping your hands is associated with celebration. Alternate translation: "Clap your hands in celebration"

shout to God with the sound of celebration

"shout to God with joyful voices." Here the word "celebration" refers to the joy associated with victory in battle.

Psalms 47:3

He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet

These two phrases are parallel and mean that God enabled Israel to conquer their enemies.

subdues

to conquer and place under the authority of another

under us ... under our feet

The writer speaks of conquering other nations as if it were putting those nations underneath their feet.

Psalms 47:4

He chooses our inheritance for us

The writer speaks of the land of Israel as if it were an inheritance that God has given the people as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "He chooses this land as an inheritance for us"

the pride of Jacob

Here the word "pride" is a metonym for the source of pride and represents the land that God has given to his people as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "the land in which Jacob takes pride"

Jacob whom he loved

The word "Jacob" refers to the nation of Israel.

Psalms 47:5

God has gone up with a shout

The writer speaks of God's conquering the nations as if God were a king ascending his throne, which was located in the temple. Alternate translation: "God has gone up into the temple as people shouted" or "God has ascended to his throne as people shouted"

Yahweh with the sound of a ram's horn

This phrase parallels the previous phrase. The verb may be supplied for clarity. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has gone up as people blew rams' horns"

Psalms 47:6

Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises

The phrase "sing praises" is repeated for emphasis. You may omit the repetition if it is awkward in your language. Alternate translation: "Sing, sing praises to God; sing, sing praises to our King"

Psalms 47:9

The princes of the peoples

"The rulers of all the nations"

gathered together to the people

Possible meanings are that the rulers of the nations 1) "gather in front of the people" or 2) "gathered together with the people" so that all may worship God as king.

the shields of the earth belong to God

Possible meanings are that "shields" 1) refers to instruments of war. Alternate translation: "God has more power than the weapons of all the kings on the earth" or 2) refers to the rulers of the nations who are spoken of as shields who protect their nations. Alternate translation: "the kings of the earth are subject to God"

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48 A song; a psalm of the sons of Korah.
Great is Yahweh and greatly to be praised,
in the city of our God on his holy mountain.

2 Beautiful in elevation,
the joy of the whole earth,
is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north,
the city of the great King.

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3 God has made himself known in her palaces as a refuge.

4 For, see, the kings assembled themselves;
they passed by together.

5 They saw it, then they were amazed;
they were dismayed, and they hurried away.

6 Trembling took hold of them there,
pain as when a woman is in labor.

7 With the east wind
you break the ships of Tarshish.

8 As we have heard,
so have we seen
in the city of Yahweh of hosts,
in the city of our God;
God will establish it
forever.

Selah

9 We have thought about your covenant faithfulness, God,
in the middle of your temple.

10 As your name is, God,
so is your praise to the ends of the earth;
your right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let Mount Zion be glad,
let the daughters of Judah rejoice
because of your righteous decrees.

12 Walk around Mount Zion, go round about her;
count her towers,

13 notice well her walls,
and look at her palaces
so that you may tell it to the next generation.

14 For this God is our God forever and ever;
he will be our guide to death.

Psalm 48 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 48 is a psalm of praise for Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Jerusalem
Jerusalem has mighty defenses. Foreign nations will be amazed. It is something to remember and testify about. (See: testimony)
It is helpful to know that "Mount Zion" is often used to refer to the city of Jerusalem.

Links:

Psalms 48:1

Psalms 48:1
General Information:
This psalm is a song about Jerusalem being God's dwelling place. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song; a psalm of the sons of Korah
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
greatly to be praised
This can be stated in active from. Alternate translation: "people are to praise him greatly"
the city of our God on his holy mountain
This is a reference to Jerusalem, which was built on Mount Zion.
the city of our God
Possible meanings are 1) "the city where our God lives" or 2) "the city that belongs to our God"
Psalms 48:2
Beautiful in elevation
"Beautiful and high." The word "elevation" refers to how high mount Zion is.
the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion
Here the word "earth" refers to everyone living on the earth. The word "joy" may be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Mount Zion gives joy to everyone on earth" or "everyone on earth rejoices because of Mount Zion"
on the sides of the north
Possible meanings are that this phrase 1) refers to the direction of the north or 2) is a proper name, Zaphon, referring to a mountain in the north.
Psalms 48:3
God has made himself known in her palaces as a refuge
The writer speaks of God as if he were a place where people can go for safety. Alternate translation: "God has made himself known as one who gives safety to the people in Mount Zion's palaces"
Psalms 48:4
see
The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
assembled themselves
Here the kings represent their armies. Alternate translation: "assembled their armies"
they passed by together
"together they passed by Jerusalem"
Psalms 48:5
They saw it
"They saw Jerusalem"
dismayed
greatly troubled
Psalms 48:6
Trembling took hold of them there
The writer speaks of the kings' fear as if it were a person who caused the kings and their armies to tremble. Alternate translation: "There they trembled with fear"
pain as when a woman is in labor
The writer speaks of the kings' fear as if it were the pain that a woman experiences in childbirth and speaks of that pain as if it were a person. The verb may be supplied from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "pain took hold of them, as when a woman is in labor" or "they became afraid, like a woman is afraid of experiencing labor pains"
Psalms 48:7
With the east wind you break the ships of Tarshish
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which the author describes the kings being afraid as if they were ships that shake because God destroys them with a strong wind. Alternate translation: "They shook with fear, as the ships of Tarshish shake when you break them with the east wind" or 2) this is an apostrophe in which the author describes God's great power.
the east wind
Possible meanings are 1) "a wind blowing from the east" or 2) "a strong wind."
the ships of Tarshish
Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) ships that sail to or are built in the city of Tarshish or 2) any large ocean-going ship.
Psalms 48:8
As we have heard
It is implied that what they have heard is the great things that God has done in the past. Alternate translation: "As we have heard about the great things that God has done"
so have we seen
This means that they have seen the proof that the things that they have heard are true. Alternate translation: "so we have seen God do great things now"
in the city of Yahweh of hosts, in the city of our God
Both of these phrases refer to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "in the city of our God, Yahweh of hosts"
establish it
"make it secure." Here the word "establish means to preserve and make something secure.
Psalms 48:9
your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "how faithful you are to your covenant" or "how faithful you are to us because of your covenant"
in the middle of your temple
"as we are in your temple"

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Psalms 48:10

As your name is ... so is your praise to the ends of the earth

Here the word "name" represents God's character and reputation. The two phrases compare the greatness of God's reputation with how greatly people praise him. Alternate translation: "Your name is very great ... and so people throughout the world praise you greatly" or "People all throughout the world have heard of you ... so people throughout the world praise you"

to the ends of the earth

This is an idiomatic expression that means everywhere in the word. See how you translated this in [Psalms 46:9]

your right hand is full of righteousness

The writer speaks of righteousness as if it were an object that God could hold in his hand. Here the word "hand" refers to God's power and authority to rule. Alternate translation: "you rule with righteousness" or "you are righteous as you rule"

Psalms 48:11

Let Mount Zion be glad

The writer speaks of Mount Zion as if it were a person who could be glad. The phrase refers to the people who live in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Let those who live on Mount Zion be glad"

let the daughters of Judah rejoice

The writer speaks of the towns in Judah as if they were Judah's children. The phrase refers to the people who live in those towns. Alternate translation: "let the people who live in the cities of Judah rejoice"

Psalms 48:12

Walk around Mount Zion, go round about her

These two phrases are parallel. Alternate translation: "Walk all the way around Mount Zion"

Psalms 48:13

notice well

"notice in detail"

Psalms 48:14

he will be our guide

The word "guide" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he will guide us"

to death

Possible meanings are 1) "until we die" or 2) "forever."

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49 For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah.
Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear, all you inhabitants of the world,

2 both low and high,
rich and poor together.

3 My mouth will speak wisdom
and the meditation of my heart will be of understanding.

4 I will incline my ear to a parable;
I will begin my parable with the harp.

5 Why should I fear the days of evil,
when iniquity surrounds me at my heels?

6 Why should I fear those who trust in their wealth
and boast about the amount of their riches?

7 It is certain that no one can redeem his brother
or give God a ransom for him,

8 For the redemption of one's life is costly,
and no one can pay what we owe.

9 No one can live forever
so that he would not see the pit.

10 For he will see decay. Wise men die;
the fool and the brute alike perish
and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inner thought is that their families will continue forever,
and the places where they live, to all generations;

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they call their lands after their own names.

12 But man, having wealth, does not remain alive;
he is like the wild animals that perish.

13 This, their way, is their folly;
yet after them, men approve of their sayings.
Selah

14 Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol,
and death will be their shepherd.
The upright will rule over them in the morning,
and their bodies will be consumed in Sheol,
with no place for them to live.

15 But God will redeem my life from the power of Sheol;
he will receive me.
Selah

16 Do not be afraid when one becomes rich,
and the glory of his house increases.

17 For when he dies he will take nothing away;
his glory will not go down after him.

18 He blessed his soul while he lived—
and men praise you when you live for yourself—

19 he will go to the generation of his fathers
and they will never see the light again.

20 One who has wealth but no understanding
is like the animals that perish.

Psalm 49 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 49 is a wisdom psalm. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Riches

Riches do not last forever. They cannot save a person from death, and they cannot be taken from a person at death. (See: eternity and save)

Links:

Psalms 49:1

Psalms 49:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

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For the chief musician
"This is for the director of music to use in worship"
Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all you inhabitants
These two phrases are parallel. Together they strengthen the command for all people to listen.
give ear
This idiomatic expression means to use one's ears to listen. Alternate translation: "listen"
Psalms 49:2
both low and high
The writer speaks of people who are weak or insignificant in society as being low and of people who are important and powerful as being high. Together, the words "low" and "high" represent all people. Alternate translation: "both important people and unimportant people" or "people of every social class"
rich and poor together
Together the words "rich" and "poor" refer to all people, regardless of wealth. Alternate translation: "all people"
Psalms 49:3
My mouth will speak wisdom
Here the word "mouth" refers to the whole person who speaks. Alternate translation: "I will speak wise words"
the meditation of my heart will be of understanding
Here the word "heart" represents the mind and thoughts. The abstract nouns "meditation" and "understanding" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "the thoughts upon which I meditate will help you to understand"
Psalms 49:4
incline my ear
The writer speaks of listening carefully to something as if it were bending one's ear towards the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "listen carefully"
with the harp
"as I play the harp"
Psalms 49:5
Why should I fear ... heels?
The writer asks this question to emphasize that he has no reason to fear when bad things happen. Alternate translation: "I have no reason to fear ... heels."
the days of evil
"when evil things happen." Here the word "days" refers to general periods of time.
when iniquity surrounds me at my heels
Possible meanings are 1) the writer speaks of the evil desires of his enemies as if it were a predator ready to overtake him. Alternate translation: "when the iniquity of sinful men is ready to overcome me" or 2) the writer's enemies surround him as they commit their iniquity. Alternate translation: "when my enemies surround me"
Psalms 49:6
those who trust in their wealth
These people trust their wealth will keep them from having to suffer.
about the amount of their riches
a large amount of something
Psalms 49:7
It is certain that no one
"There is no way that any of them can" or Alternate translation: "No one can"
no one can redeem his brother or give God a ransom for him
Both of these phrases express that a person cannot give God enough money to be able to avoid death. Alternate translation: "no one can pay money to God so that their brother will not die"
Psalms 49:8
the redemption of one's life is costly
The word "redemption" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "it costs too much to redeem a person's life"
Psalms 49:9
so that he would not see the pit
The word "pit" here refers to the place where a person's spirit goes after the person dies. The words "not see the pit" refer to the person's dead body not decaying.
Psalms 49:10
he will see decay
The writer speaks of experiencing something as if it were seeing that thing. Alternate translation: "he will die and his body will decay"
Wise men die; the fool and the brute alike perish
The author refers to all people by referring to those who have the most and least wisdom.
brute
This means a person who is stupid or unintelligent.
Psalms 49:11
Their inner thought
"Their belief"
the places where they live, to all generations
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "the places where they live will continue to all generations"
they call their lands after their own names
"they name their lands after themselves." This phrase expresses ownership. Alternate translation: "they own their own lands"
Psalms 49:12
But man, having wealth
"But man, even if he has wealth"
Psalms 49:13
This, their way, is their folly
The writer speaks of the fate of fools as if it is the destination at the end of the path on which they walk. Alternate translation: "This is the fate of those who practice folly"
yet after them
"yet after they die"
Psalms 49:14
General Information:
The author continues to describe people who believe their wealth will save them.
Like sheep
The writer compares people who will all die to a flock of sheep. Just as sheep cannot escape when the butcher decides to slaughter them, so men will not escape when it is their time to die.
they are appointed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"God has appointed them"

death will be their shepherd

The writer speaks of men dying by personifying death as a shepherd who leads them into the grave. Alternate translation: "death will take them away as a shepherd leads away sheep to be slaughtered"

in the morning

Here the word "morning" is a metaphor that refers to a time when God will vindicate righteous people and save them from evil people.

their bodies will be consumed in Sheol

The writer speaks of Sheol, the place of the dead, as if it were a person or animal. He speaks of the decay of dead bodies as if Sheol were eating them. Alternate translation: "their bodies will decompose in the grave"

Psalms 49:15

God will redeem my life from the power of Sheol

The writer speaks of Sheol as if it were a person who has power over those who die. From the context, it is implied that this power refers to consuming the bodies of the dead.

God will redeem my life

Here the word "life" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "God will redeem me"

Psalms 49:16

the glory of his house increases

The word "glory" here refers to wealth or riches. Possible meanings are 1) "when he gains more wealth in his house" or 2) "when his family becomes richer."

Psalms 49:17

he will take nothing away

"he will take nothing with him to the grave"

his glory will not go down after him

The phrase "go down" refers to when the man dies. Alternate translation: "his glory will not go along with him when he dies" or "he will not keep his reputation when he dies"

Psalms 49:18

He blessed his soul

Here the word "soul" refers to the whole person. This phrase means that he considered himself to be happy and successful because of his riches. Alternate translation: "He congratulated himself"

Psalms 49:19

he will go to the generation of his fathers

"he will go to where his fathers' generation is." This is a euphemism that means that the rich man will die and join his ancestors in the grave. Alternate translation: "he will join his ancestors in the grave"

they will never see the light again

The word "they" refers to the rich man and his ancestors. The word "light" may refer to the sun or be a metaphor for life. Alternate translation: "they will never see the sun again" or "they will never live again"

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50 A psalm of Asaph.
The Mighty One, God, Yahweh,
has spoken and called the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.

2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God has shone.

3 Our God comes
and does not stay silent;
a fire devours before him,
and it is very stormy around him.

4 He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth so that he may judge his people:

5 "Gather my faithful ones together to me,
those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

6 The heavens will declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge.

Selah

7 "Hear, my people, and I will speak, Israel,
and I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.

8 I will not reprove you for your sacrifices;

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your burnt offerings are always before me.

9 I will take no bull out of your house,
or male goats out of your folds.

10 For every animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.

11 I know all the birds of the mountains,
and the wild beasts of the field are mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you;
for the world is mine, and everything in it.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?

14 Offer to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the Most High.

15 Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will rescue you, and you will glorify me."

16 But to the wicked God says,
"What have you to do with declaring my statutes,
that you have taken my covenant in your mouth,

17 since you hate instruction
and throw my words away?

18 When you see a thief, you agree with him;
you participate with those who commit adultery.

19 You give your mouth to evil,
and your tongue expresses deceit.

20 You sit and speak against your brother;
you slander your own mother's son.

21 You have done these things, but I have kept silent,
so you thought that I was someone just like yourself.
But I will reprove you
and bring up, right before your eyes, all the things you have done.

22 Give this careful consideration, you who forget God,
otherwise I will tear you to pieces,
and there will be no one to come to help you!

23 The one who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving praises me,
and to anyone who plans his path in the right way
I will show God's salvation."

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Psalm 50 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 50 is a wisdom psalm. It tells what pleases God. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Sacrifices

God does not need animal sacrifices; he does not eat meat or drink blood. The world and everything in it belong to God. He wants people to be thankful and to depend on him. God rejects evil people who reject his covenant. (See: blood and evil)

Links:

Psalms 50:1

Psalms 50:1

General Information:

This psalm is a song that teaches people. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

The Mighty One, God, Yahweh

The author uses three different names to speak of God.

called the earth

Here the word "earth" refers to the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "called all people"

from the rising of the sun to its setting

This phrase refers to the directions east, where the sun rises, and west, where the sun sets. The writer uses these two extremes to represent everywhere on earth. Alternate translation: "everywhere on earth"

Psalms 50:2

Zion, the perfection of beauty

Possible meanings are 1) "Zion, whose beauty is perfect" or 2) "Zion, the most beautiful city."

God has shone

The writer speaks of God as if he were a light that shines. This refers to God causing people to know about his glory. Alternate translation: "God's glory shines like a light"

Psalms 50:3

does not stay silent

The writer uses this negative statement to emphasize the positive. Alternate translation: "speaks so that everyone can hear him"

a fire devours before him

The writer speaks of a fire burning things as if it were eating them. Alternate translation: "a fire burns in front of him"

it is very stormy around him

"there is a great storm around him"

Psalms 50:4

He calls to the heavens above and to the earth

Possible meanings are 1) God is calling on all who live in heaven and on earth to be witnesses as he judges his people or 2) God is speaking to heaven and earth as if they are people, and he is calling them to be witnesses as he judges his people.

Psalms 50:6

The heavens will declare

Possible meanings are 1) the writer uses the word "heavens" to refer to the angels who live there or 2) the writer speaks of "the heavens" as if they are a person who testifies about God's righteousness.

Psalms 50:8

I will not reprove you for your sacrifices

"I will reprove you, but not for your sacrifices." God explains that their sacrifices are not the reason that he is reproving them.

reprove

tell someone he is guilty of doing wrong

your burnt offerings are always before me

This explains why God is not rebuking them for their sacrifices. The phrase "are always before me" refers to being in God's presence and means that his people are always sacrificing their burnt offerings to him. Alternate translation: "you are always sacrificing burnt offerings to me"

Psalms 50:9

folds

areas surrounded by walls in which sheep and goats are kept

Psalms 50:10

the cattle on a thousand hills

The phrase "on a thousand hills" does not represent the total number of cattle that God owns. The number is an exaggeration that emphasizes that God owns all of the cattle in the world. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "all the cattle in the world are mine"

thousand hills

"1,000 hills"

Psalms 50:11

I know all the birds

Here the word "know" implies ownership. Alternate translation: "I own all the birds"

Psalms 50:12

If I were hungry

This describes something that could not happen, since God does not get hungry.

Psalms 50:13

Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

God asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that he does

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not do these things and so has no need for their sacrifices. Alternate translation: "I do not eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats."
Psalms 50:14
Offer to God
Here God refers to himself. Alternate translation: "Offer to me"
pay your vows to the Most High
The writer speaks of "vows" as if they are currency which a person pays to God. Alternate translation: "fulfill your vows to the Most High" or "do what you have promised the Most High to do"
Psalms 50:15
in the day of trouble
Here the word "day" refers to any period of time. Alternate translation: "whenever you have troubles"
Psalms 50:16
But to the wicked God says
Here God is still speaking and speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "But to the wicked I say"
to the wicked
The word "wicked" refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "to wicked people"
have taken my covenant in your mouth
God speaks of wicked people reciting the words of his covenant as if they are putting the covenant in their mouth. Alternate translation: "talk about my covenant"
Psalms 50:17
since you hate instruction and throw my words away
This is the end of the rhetorical question begun with the words "What have you to do"
throw my words away
God speaks of the wicked people rejecting what he says as if they were throwing away trash. Alternate translation: "reject what I say"
Psalms 50:18
you agree with him
Possible meanings are 1) that they approve of the thief's actions. Alternate translation: "you approve or him" or 2) that they join the thief in their actions. Alternate translation: "you join him"
Psalms 50:19
You give your mouth to evil
God speaks of a person speaking evil things as if that person's mouth is a messenger whom the person sends to do evil things. Alternate translation: "You are always saying evil things"
your tongue expresses deceit
The word "tongue" represents the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "you are always telling lies"
Psalms 50:20
You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son
These two phrases have the same meaning but use different words. God accuses them of speaking falsely against members of their own family.
You sit and speak
To "sit and speak" against someone implies that this person deliberately thinks of bad things to say about someone. Alternate translation: "You always think of ways to speak"
Psalms 50:21
you thought that I was someone just like yourself
Since God had kept silent and not yet rebuked the wicked people for their actions, they thought that God approved of what they did. Alternate translation: "you thought that I was someone who acts just like you do"
reprove
tell someone he is guilty of doing wrong
bring up ... all the things you have done
God speaks of listing all of the evil things that they have done. Alternate translation: "list ... all the things you have done"
right before your eyes
Here, to be "before your eyes" means that it is in a place where they can see. This means that they will not be able to deny the charges that God brings against them. Alternate translation: "right in front of you" or "so that you can not deny them"
Psalms 50:22
you who forget God
God speaks of the wicked rejecting him as if they have forgotten him. He speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "you who reject me"
I will tear you to pieces
God speaks of destroying the wicked as if he were a lion eating its prey. Alternate translation: "I will destroy you"
Psalms 50:23
plans his path in the right way
God speaks of a the way a person lives as if it were a path that the person travels. Alternate translation: "lives his life the right way"
I will show God's salvation
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as "save." God refers to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I will save him"

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51 For the chief musician. A psalm of David; when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone into Bathsheba.
Have mercy on me, God,
because of your covenant faithfulness;
for the sake of the multitude of your merciful actions,
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

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3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

4 Against you, you only, I have sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
you are justified when you speak;
you are blameless when you judge.

5 See, I was born in iniquity;
as soon as my mother conceived me, I was in sin.

6 See, you desire trustworthiness in my inner self;
and you teach me wisdom in the secret place within.

7 Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

8 Make me hear joy and gladness
so that the bones that you have broken may rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Do not drive me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain me with a willing spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will be converted to you.

14 Forgive me for shedding blood,
God of my salvation,
and I will shout for the joy of your righteousness.

15 Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will express your praise.

16 For you do not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you have no pleasure in burnt offerings.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.
You, God, will not despise a broken and a contrite heart.

18 Do good in your good pleasure to Zion;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

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19 Then will you delight in the sacrifices of righteousness,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then our people will offer bulls on your altar.

Psalm 51 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 51 is a psalm of repentance from sin. (See: repent and sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

The psalmist is truly sorry for having sinned. He repented and God forgave his sins. God wants true sorrow for having sinned, not sacrifices. (See: true and forgive)

Author of Psalm

Scholars are divided over whether this psalm was authored by King David as is mentioned by the superscription. If nothing else, we can assume the last two verses were added later since Jerusalem is intact with well-built walls during King David's reign.

Links:

Psalms 51:1

Psalms 51:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry. In this psalm David asks God for forgiveness.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David; when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone into Bathsheba

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

when Nathan the prophet came to him

It can be stated clearly what Nathan did when he came to David, because this psalm is in response to that. Alternate translation: "when Nathan the prophet came to David and rebuked him"

because of your covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant"

for the sake of the multitude of your merciful actions

"because you do so many merciful things"

blot out my transgressions

Forgiving sins is spoken of as either 1) blotting them out or 2) erasing a written record of the sins. Alternate translation: "forgive my sins like someone wiping something away" or "forget my sins like someone who erases a record of sins"

Psalms 51:2

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity ... cleanse me from my sin

These two phrases mean the same thing.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity

Being acceptable to God is spoken of as being clean. God makes people acceptable by forgiving their sins. Alternate translation: "Wash away all my sin" or "Forgive all my sins so that I will be acceptable to you"

thoroughly

completely, totally

cleanse me from my sin

Being acceptable to God is spoken of as being clean. God makes people acceptable by forgiving their sins. Alternate translation: "Make me clean from my sin" or "forgive me for my sin so that I will be clean"

Psalms 51:3

my sin is always before me

Not being able to forget his sins is spoken of as if they were always in front of him where he can see them. Alternate translation: "I am always aware of my sins" or "I cannot forget my sins"

Psalms 51:4

what is evil in your sight

The word "sight" here represents judgment. Yahweh saw and did not approve of David's actions. Alternate translation: "what you judge to be evil" or "what you consider to be evil"

Psalms 51:5

I was born in iniquity

Being a sinner is spoken of as being in iniquity. Alternate translation: "I was already a sinner when I was born"

as soon as my mother conceived me, I was in sin

Being a sinner is spoken of as being in sin. Alternate translation: "even when my mother conceived me, I was a sinner"

Psalms 51:6

See, you desire trustworthiness

The use of "See" here draw our attention to the contrast between this sentence and "See, I was born in iniquity" (verse 5). "Truly I was born in iniquity ... But you desire trustworthiness"

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you desire trustworthiness in my inner self

The "inner self" represents either 1) the person's desires or 2) the whole person. Alternate translation: "you want me to desire trustworthiness" or "you want me to be trustworthy"

Psalms 51:7

Purify me ... I will be clean ... wash me ... I will be whiter than snow

Being acceptable to God is spoken of as being clean or white. God makes people acceptable by forgiving their sins.

Purify me with hyssop

The writer speaks of God as if God were a priest who would sprinkle water on him to make him acceptable to God. Alternate translation: "Make me acceptable by sprinkling water on me with hyssop" or "Forgive me for my sins so that I will be acceptable to you"

hyssop

This is a plant that the priests used to sprinkle water or blood on people or things to make them ceremonially clean, that is, acceptable to God.

whiter than snow

Not having sin is spoken of as being white. Alternate translation: "very, very white"

Psalms 51:8

joy and gladness

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize his desire to hear joyful things.

so that the bones that you have broken may rejoice

Feeling terrible sadness is spoken of as if his bones were broken. Alternate translation: "for you have caused me terrible sadness in my inner being. Let me rejoice again"

Psalms 51:9

Hide your face from my sins

Thinking about someone's sins is spoken of as seeing them. Forgiving or refusing to think about the sins is spoken of as choosing not to see them. Alternate translation: "Do not look at my sins" or "Do not remember my sins"

blot out all my iniquities

Forgiving or refusing to think about someone's sins is spoken of as either 1) blotting them out or 2) erasing a written record of the sins. Alternate translation: 1) "forgive my sins like someone wiping something away" or "forget my sins like someone who erases a record of sins"

Psalms 51:10

Create in me a clean heart

Here the "heart" represents the feelings and desires. Being completely devoted and obedient to God is spoken of as having a clean heart. Alternate translation: "Make me completely devoted to you" or "Make me want to obey you always"

renew a right spirit within me

Here "spirit" represents the attitude and desires of a David. Alternate translation: "make my attitude right" or "make me always want to do what is right"

Psalms 51:11

Do not drive me away from your presence

"Do not force me to go away from you." Being rejected by God is spoken of as being forced to go away from him. Alternate translation: "Do not reject me as one of your people"

Psalms 51:12

sustain me

"hold me up" or "assist me"

Psalms 51:13

your ways

"the way you want people to live" or "what you want people to do"

transgressors ... sinners

These two words refer to the same people here.

Psalms 51:14

shedding blood

This phrase refers to killing another person.

Psalms 51:15

Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will express your praise

Here the person is represented by his "mouth." Being able to talk is spoken of as the lips being open. Here not being able to speak is a symbol of being guilty of sin and not being able to make a defense. Alternate translation: "Lord, make me able to speak, and I will praise you"

Psalms 51:16

you do not delight in sacrifice ... you have no pleasure in burnt offerings

This means that God wants something more important than these things. Alternate translation: "A sacrifice is not enough to please you ... you want something more than burn offerings"

Psalms 51:17

The sacrifices of God

"The sacrifices that please God"

a broken spirit

A broken spirit represents a humble attitude. Alternate translation: "humility" or "a person who becomes humble"

a broken and a contrite heart

Being humble and sorry for one's sin is spoken of as having a broken and contrite heart. The heart represents the emotions and will. Alternate translation: "sorrow and humility" or "a person who is sorry for his sin and humble"

Psalms 51:18

rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

The walls of a city protect the city and the people in it. Possible meanings are 1) "enable us to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem" or 2) "protect Jerusalem and make it strong"

Psalms 51:19

our people will offer bulls on your altar

A bull is an adult male cow. Bulls were often used as sacrificial animals, according to God's instruction.

---

52 For the chief musician. A maschil of David; when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelek."

1 Why are you proud of making trouble, you mighty man?
The covenant faithfulness of God comes every day.

2 Your tongue plans destruction

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like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

3 You love evil more than good
and lying rather than speaking righteousness.

Selah

4 You love all words that devour others,
you deceitful tongue.

5 God will surely destroy you forever;
he will take you up and pluck you out of your tent
and root you out of the land of the living.

Selah

6 The righteous will also see it and fear;
they will laugh at him and say,

7 "See, this is a man who did not make God his refuge,
but he trusted in the abundance of his wealth,
and he was strong when he destroyed others."

8 But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;
I will trust in the covenant faithfulness of God forever and ever.

9 I will give you thanks forever for what you have done.
I will wait for your name, because it is good,
in the presence of your faithful ones.

Psalm 52 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 52 is a wisdom psalm. It teaches that God will destroy evil people. (See: wise and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Evil people

Although the evil people feel secure with their wealth and evil deeds, God will destroy them. But people who do good are secure because God protects them. (See: works)

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil of David." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 52:1

Psalms 52:1

General Information:

In this psalm the word "you" refers to Doeg. When Saul wanted to kill David, Doeg told Saul where David was so that Saul could find him. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A maschil of David; when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelek."

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

A maschil

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This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

Doeg ... Ahimelek

These are the names of men.

Why are you proud of making trouble, you mighty man?

This question shows how angry David was at the one who made trouble. Alternate translation: "You should not be so proud of making trouble, you mighty man."

you mighty man

David may have been using irony when he called Doeg this. Alternate translation: "you, who think you are so mighty"

The covenant faithfulness of God comes every day

David speaks of God's covenant faithfulness as if it were something that could come. David was probably referring to God's promises to protect his people from wicked people. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective or an adverb. Alternate translation: "Every day, God is faithful to keep the promises of his covenant" or "Every day, God faithfully protects his people from wicked people like you"

Psalms 52:2

a sharp razor

a sharp blade

Your tongue plans destruction like a sharp razor, working deceitfully

Here the tongue is compared to a sharp razor which is capable of causing great harm. Alternate translation: "Your tongue harms people like a sharp razor does, when you plan destruction and deceive others"

Your tongue

Here "your tongue" refers to the person David is speaking to. Alternate translation: "You"

Psalms 52:3

Connecting Statement:

David continues speaking to the "mighty man" of Psalms 5:1

lying rather than speaking righteousness

"you love lying more than speaking what is right"

Psalms 52:4

words that devour others

Here words that harm others are spoken of as if they were animals that devour people. Alternate translation: "words that harm others"

you deceitful tongue

This refers to the person the author is speaking to. Alternate translation: "you speaker of deceit" or "you liar"

Psalms 52:5

God will surely destroy you

The word translated "surely" shows that the writer has finished describing how evil the "mighty man" Psalm 52:1 is and is now describing what God will do and that it will surely happen.

take you up ... pluck you ... root you

All three of these phrases are different ways of saying "remove you"

root you out of the land of the living

Being alive on earth is spoken of as if people are plants with roots in the ground. God killing someone is spoken of as digging up the plant's roots and taking it out of the ground. Alternate translation: "he will take you out the land of the living" or "He will kill you so that you will no longer be on earth with living people"

Selah

This may be a musical term that tells people how to sing or play their instruments here. Some translations write the Hebrew word, and some translations do not include it.

Psalms 52:6

The righteous will also see it and fear

"The righteous will also see God remove him and they will fear"

Psalms 52:7

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

did not make God his refuge

Here "refuge" represents a protector. Alternate translation: "did not make God his protector" or "did not ask God to protect him"

Psalms 52:8

a green olive tree

Green olive trees are strong and secure. They do not fall over.

I am like a green olive tree in the house of God

Being safe and secure is spoken of as being like a strong tree. Alternate translation: "I am strong in God's house, like a green olive tree" or "Because I worship in God's house, I am secure like a green olive tree"

in the house of God

This refers to God's temple.

I will trust in the covenant faithfulness of God forever and ever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "I will trust in God forever and ever because he is faithful to his covenant"

Psalms 52:9

I will wait for your name, because it is good

God's name represents God himself. Waiting for God represents waiting for God to help him. Alternate translation: "I will wait for you, because you are good" or "I will wait for you to help me, because you are good"

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53 For the chief musician; set to Mahalath. A maschil of David.
A fool says in his heart,
"There is no God."
They are corrupt and have done abominable iniquity;
there is no one who does good.

2 God looks down from heaven

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on the children of mankind
to see if there are any who understand,
who seek after him.

3 They have all turned away. Together they have become corrupt.
There is not one who does good,
not even one.

4 Do those who behave wickedly have no understanding—
those who devour my people as if they were eating bread
and they do not call on God?

5 There they are, in great fear,
where there was nothing to cause them to be afraid;
for God will scatter the bones of those who encamp against you;
you put them to shame,
for God has rejected them.

6 Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come from Zion!
When God brings back his people from the captivity,
then Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad!

Psalm 53 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 53 is a wisdom psalm. It warns people who do evil that God will judge them. (See: wise and evil and judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

God's watching mankind

God looks down from heaven and sees that all humans are evil and corrupt. (See: heaven)

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil of David." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 53:1

Psalms 53:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Mahalath. A maschil of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Mahalath

This may refer to a style of music.

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

Psalms 53:2

the children of mankind

This refers to all people.

who seek after him

Seeking God as a person would look for someone is spoken of as "seeking" God. Possible meanings are 1) wanting to know God. Alternate translation: "who want to know him" or 2) worshiping God. Alternate translation: "who worship him"

Psalms 53:3

They have all turned away

Rejecting God and what is right is spoken of as turning away. Alternate translation: "They have all turned away from doing what is right" or "They have all rejected God"

Psalms 53:4

Do those who behave wickedly have no understanding—those ... God?

This question is used to show the shock that the writer feels because the people are so sinful. It can be written as two statements. "Those who behave wickedly act as though they

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do not know anything. They devour my people as if they were eating bread, and they do not call on God!"

those who devour my people as if they were eating bread

Destroying people is spoken of as devouring them. Doing it as if they were eating bread implies that they did it very easily or without feeling guilty about it. Alternate translation: "those who destroy my people as freely as if they were eating bread"

Psalms 53:5

God will scatter the bones of those who encamp against you

Scattering people's bones represents killing them and allowing their bones to remain wherever they have died and not be buried properly. The phrase "encamp against" is a metaphor that describes someone preparing to attack the reader as if he were an army getting ready to attack a city. Alternate translation: "God will completely destroy everyone who attacks you, and their bones will lie scattered on the ground"

Psalms 53:6

Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come

The word "Oh" here introduces an exclamation that expresses a hope or prayer. Alternate translation: "I hope that the salvation of Israel will come" or "I pray that the salvation of will come"

the salvation of Israel would come from Zion

The salvation represents God, the savior, whose temple is in Zion. Alternate translation: "the savior of Israel would come from Zion" or "God would come from Zion and save Israel"

When God brings back his people from the captivity

"When God saves his captive people"

Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad!

These two phrases have the same meaning.

Jacob

Here "Jacob" refers to the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites.

---

54 For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A maschil of David; when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Does David not hide himself with us?"

1 Save me, God, by your name,
and judge me in your might.

2 Hear my prayer, God;
give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers have risen up against me,
and ruthless men have sought after my life;
they have not set God before them.

Selah

4 See, God is my helper;
the Lord is the one who upholds me.

5 He will repay my enemies with evil;
in your faithfulness, destroy them!

6 I will sacrifice to you with a freewill offering;
I will give thanks to your name, Yahweh, for it is good.

7 For he has rescued me from every trouble;
my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

Psalm 54 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 54 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rescue

Evil people want to kill David; but God has rescued him in the past and he trusts God to rescue him again. (See: evil and

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trust)
Superscription
This psalm is called "a Maschil of David." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 54:1

Psalms 54:1
General Information:
This psalm is a prayer for help. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A maschil of David; when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Does David not hide himself with us?"
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
For the chief musician
"This is for the director of music to use in worship"
on stringed instruments
"people should play stringed instruments with this song"
A maschil
This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1
Ziphites
people from the city of Ziph in the Judean mountains, southeast of Hebron.
Save me, God, by your name
Here God's name represents his character. It may represent specifically his power or his justice. Alternate translation: "Save me, God, by your power"
judge me in your might
Judging David here represents showing people that David is not guilty. When God uses his might to save David, people will know that God has judged him as not guilty. Alternate translation: "In your might, show people that I am not guilty" or "Show people that I am not guilty by using your power to rescue me"
Psalms 54:2
give ear to the words
Giving one's ear represents listening. Alternate translation: "listen to the words"
the words of my mouth
Here the speaker is represented by his mouth. Alternate translation: "my words" or "what I am saying to you"
Psalms 54:3
have risen up against me
Rising up against someone represents preparing to attack him or actually attacking him. Alternate translation: "have prepared to attack me" or "are attacking me"
ruthless men
"men who have no mercy"
have sought after my life
Seeking after someone's life represents trying to kill him. Alternate translation: "have tried to kill me" or "want to kill me"
they have not set God before them
Setting God before them represents paying attention to God. Alternate translation: "they do not pay attention to God" or "they ignore God"
Psalms 54:4
who upholds me
Defending David and keeping him safe is spoken of as upholding or supporting him. Alternate translation: "who defends me" or "who keeps me safe"
Psalms 54:5
He will repay my enemies with evil
Punishment is spoken as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "He will do the evil to my enemies that they have done to me" or "He will cause the evil that my enemies have done to me to be done to them"
in your faithfulness, destroy them
Here David changes from talking about God to talking to God. Alternate translation: "God, destroy them because you are faithful to me"
Psalms 54:6
I will give thanks to your name, Yahweh, for it is good
Yahweh's name represents him. Alternate translation: "I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, for you are good"
Psalms 54:7
my eye has looked
The eye represents the person. Alternate translation: "I have looked"
my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies
Possible meanings are 1) seeing that his enemies have been defeated. Alternate translation: "I have seen that my enemies have been defeated" or 2) defeating his enemies. Alternate translation: "I have defeated my enemies"

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55 For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A maschil of David.
Give ear to my prayer, God;
and do not hide yourself from my plea.

2 Pay attention to me and answer me;
I am restless in my troubles

3 because of the voice of my enemies,

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because of the oppression of the wicked;
for they bring trouble on me,
they are hostile to me with wickedness and anger.

4 My heart trembles within me,
and the terrors of death have fallen on me.

5 Fear and trembling have come on me,
and horror has overwhelmed me.

6 I said, "Oh, if only I had wings like a dove!
Then would I fly away and be at rest.

7 See, then I would wander far away;
I would stay in the wilderness.
Selah

8 I would hurry to a shelter
from the stormy wind and tempest."

9 Destroy, Lord, and divide their tongue;
for I see violence and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about on its walls;
wickedness and trouble are in the middle of it.

11 Wickedness is in the middle of it;
oppression and deceit do not leave its streets.

12 For it was not an enemy who rebuked me,
then I could have borne it;
neither was it he who hated me who raised himself up against me,
then I would have hidden myself from him.

13 But it was you, a man equal to myself,
my companion and my close friend.

14 We had sweet fellowship together;
we walked in the house of God with the throng.

15 Let death come deceitfully on them;
let them go down alive to Sheol,
for wickedness is where they live, right among them.

16 As for me, I will call on God,
and Yahweh will save me.

17 In the evening, morning, and at noonday I complain and moan;

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he will hear my voice.

18 He will safely rescue my life from the battle that was against me,
for those who fought against me were many.

19 God, the one who rules from eternity,
will hear them and humiliate them.

Selah

They never change,
and they do not fear God.

20 My friend has raised his hands against those who were at peace with him;
he has not respected the covenant that he had.

21 His mouth was smooth as butter,
but his heart was hostile;
his words were softer than oil,
yet they were actually drawn swords.

22 Place your burdens on Yahweh,
and he will sustain you;
he will never allow a righteous person to totter.

23 But you, God, will bring the wicked down into the pit of destruction;
men of bloodshed and deceit will not live even half as long as others,
but I will trust in you.

Psalm 55 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 55 is a deliverance psalm. The psalmist is praying that God will deliver him from his enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Betrayal

The author wishes he could get far away from his enemies after his best friend betrayed him. He asks God to completely destroy his enemies. He is trusting God to save him. (See: trust and save)

Superscription

This psalm is called "a Maschil of David." The word "Maschil" in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 55:1

Psalms 55:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A maschil of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on stringed instruments

"people should play stringed instruments with this song"

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1

Give ear to my prayer

Giving one's ear represents listening. Alternate translation: "Listen to my prayer"

do not hide yourself from my plea

Refusing to pay attention to his plea is spoken of as hiding

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himself from it. Alternate translation: "do not ignore my plea"
Psalms 55:3
because of the voice of my enemies
Here "voice" represents what they say. Alternate translation: "because of what my enemies say"
they bring trouble on me
Causing trouble is spoken of as bringing trouble. Alternate translation: "they cause me to have great troubles" or "they do wicked things to me and so I suffer"
Psalms 55:4
My heart trembles within me
Here, "heart trembles" refers to his emotional pain and suffering. This suffering is because of fear. Alternate translation: "I am suffering because I am so afraid"
the terrors of death have fallen on me
Becoming very afraid, or terrified, is spoken of as if terror is a thing that falls on a person. Alternate translation: "I am very much afraid that I will die" or "I am terrified that I will die"
Psalms 55:5
Fear and trembling have come on me
Becoming fearful and trembling is spoken of as if fear and trembling are people who can attack a person. Alternate translation: "I have become very fearful and I tremble"
horror has overwhelmed me
Feeling horror is spoken of as if horror were a thing that can cover people. Alternate translation: "I feel terrible horror" or "I am extremely afraid"
Psalms 55:6
Oh, if only I had wings like a dove!
This exclamation expresses something the writer wishes for very much. Alternate translation: "I wish very much that I had wings like a dove"
Then would I fly away
"If I did have wings, I would fly away"
Psalms 55:7
See, then I would wander
"I would do that and more: I would wander"
Psalms 55:8
General Information:
The writer finishes telling about what he had said.
tempest
a strong storm
Psalms 55:9
Destroy, Lord
Possible meanings are "Destroy my enemies, Lord" or "Destroy my enemies."
divide their tongue
The word "tongue" here represents what the people were saying to each other, and probably refers specifically to them talking about plans to do evil. To "divide" it is to make the people unable to understand each other. Alternate translation: "confuse them when they speak to each other" or "confuse their plans"
Psalms 55:10
they go about on its walls
"violence and strife go about on her walls"
on its walls
"along the tops of the city walls." Cities had thick walls around them to protect them from enemies. People could walk along the tops of the walls to see if any enemies were coming to the city.
wickedness and trouble are in the middle of it
Wickedness and trouble are spoken of as if they were people. This can be expressed by telling about the people who do wickedness and trouble. Alternate translation: "people do wickedness and cause trouble in the middle of the city" or "people do sinful things and cause trouble in it"
Psalms 55:11
Wickedness is in the middle of it
Wickedness is spoken of as if it were a person. This can be expressed by telling about the people who do wicked things. Alternate translation: "People do wicked things in the middle of the city" or "people destroy things in the city"
oppression and deceit do not leave its streets
Oppression and deceit are spoken of as if they were people. This can be expressed by telling about the people who oppress and deceive others. Alternate translation: "People oppress and deceive others in the city streets, and they do not leave" or "People are always oppressing and deceiving others in the city streets"
its streets
This may refer to the marketplaces in the city.
Psalms 55:12
I could have borne it
Tolerating or enduring a rebuke is spoken of as bearing or carrying it. Alternate translation: "I could have tolerated the rebuke" or "I would not be so sad about the rebuke"
raised himself up against me
Being proud of oneself and insulting another is spoken of as raising oneself up against another. Alternate translation: "insulted me" or "despised me"
Psalms 55:13
But it was you
The psalmist speaks as though the person who had rebuked and taunted him were there listening to him.
myself, my companion and my close friend
This can be divided and a new sentence begun. Alternate translation: "myself. You were my companion and my close friend"
Psalms 55:14
We
The word "we" refers to the psalmist and his friend.
with the throng
Possible meanings are 1) "together" or 2) "with the crowd."
Psalms 55:15
Let death come deceitfully on them
Death is spoken of as if it were a person who could deceive and kill others. Alternate translation: "Let my enemies die suddenly"
let them go down alive to Sheol
Dying suddenly is spoken of as if people were to go to Sheol so fast that they do not even die first. Alternate translation: "let them suddenly go to Sheol"
wickedness is where they live
Wickedness is spoken of as if it were a thing that could be in a certain place. The habitual wickedness of his enemies

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is spoken of as if wickedness were with them or near them. Alternate translation: "they always do wicked things where they live"

right among them

This phrase intensifies the idea of wickedness being very near them. Here wickedness is spoken of as being not only in their homes, but right where they are. Alternate translation: "They always do wicked things wherever they are" or "wherever they are"

Psalms 55:16

As for me

This phrase shows that the writer has stopped talking about one thing and is now about to talk about himself. Alternate translation: "But I"

Psalms 55:17

moan

the sound people and animals make when they are in pain

he will hear my voice

Here "voice" represents either 1) the psalmist or 2) the psalmist's complaints and moans. Alternate translation: "he will hear me" or "he will hear my moaning"

Psalms 55:18

my life

Here "my life" represents the psalmist. Alternate translation: "me"

for those who fought against me were many

"for many people fought against me"

Psalms 55:19

will hear them

"will hear my enemies" or "will hear what my enemies say." Some versions say "will hear me."

humiliate them

How God will humiliate them can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "will defeat and humiliate them"

Psalms 55:20

has raised his hands against those

Raising the hand against people represents attacking them. This may be a metaphor for saying things that put people in danger or cause them trouble. Alternate translation: "has attacked those" or "has betrayed those"

Psalms 55:21

His mouth

Someone's "mouth" represents what he says. Alternate translation: "What my friend said"

His mouth was smooth as butter

Speech that is pleasant or nice to hear is spoken of as if it were smooth and easy to swallow. Alternate translation: "What he said was pleasant like smooth butter" or "He said nice things"

was hostile

"was mean" or "was hateful"

his words

"what he said"

his words were softer than oil

People put oil on their skin to make it feel nice, and they put it on wounds to help them heal. Speech that is kind or helpful is spoken of as if it were soft or soothing. Alternate translation: "what he said was kind and soothing like oil" or "he said kind things"

they were actually drawn swords

Speech that causes people trouble is spoken of as if it were swords that wound people. Alternate translation: "what he said wounded people as drawn swords do" or "what he said caused people trouble"

drawn swords

The word "drawn" here means that the swords were pulled out of their covers and ready to be used.

Psalms 55:22

Place your burdens

Here the psalmist is speaking to other godly people.

Place your burdens on Yahweh

Here troubles are spoken of as if they were burdens that people have to carry. Trusting God to help us when we have troubles is spoken of as putting our burdens on him so that he can carry them for us. Alternate translation: "Give Yahweh your problems" or "Trust God to help you with all your troubles like someone who trusts a stronger person to carry his load"

he will sustain you

Taking care of someone or helping someone when he has troubles is spoken of as supporting him. Alternate translation: "he will take care of you" or "he will help you"

he will never allow a righteous person to totter

A person who is about to be severely harmed by some sort of disaster is spoken of as if he is tottering or swaying and is about to fall down. Alternate translation: "he will not let a righteous person sway and fall down" or "he will not let a righteous person to be destroyed"

Psalms 55:23

But you, God

The author speaks to God now.

the pit of destruction

This probably refers to the grave or hell.

will bring the wicked down into the pit of destruction

This represents causing people to die. Alternate translation: "will cause the wicked to die" or "will cause wicked people to die and go to the place where dead people are"

men of bloodshed and deceit

"people who lie and who want to kill others" or "deceitful murderers"

even half as long as others

"even half as long as other people live"

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56 For the chief musician; set to Jonath elem rehokim. A psalm of David. A michtam; when the Philistines took him in Gath.
Be merciful to me, God,
for men are attacking me!
All the day long those who fight me oppress me.

2 My enemies trample me all day long;

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for there are many who arrogantly fight against me.

3 When I am afraid,
I will put my trust in you.

4 In God, whose word I praise—
in God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid;
what can mere man do to me?

5 All the day long they twist my words;
all their thoughts are against me for evil.

6 They gather themselves together, they hide themselves,
and they mark my steps,
just as they have waited for my life.

7 Do not let them escape doing iniquity.
Bring down the peoples in your anger, God.

8 You number my wanderings
and put my tears into your bottle;
are they not in your book?

9 Then my enemies will turn back on the day that I call to you;
this I know, that God is for me.

10 In God—whose word I praise,
in Yahweh—whose word I praise,

11 in God I trust,
I will not be afraid.
What can anyone do to me?

12 The duty to fulfill my vows to you is on me, God;
I will give thank offerings to you.

13 For you have rescued my life from death;
you have kept my feet from stumbling,
so that I may walk before God
in the light of the living.

Psalm 56 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 56 is a psalm of deliverance. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fear

Although the psalmist's enemies are trying to harm him, he is not afraid because God is protecting him.

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Superscription

The word "Michtam" is used in the superscription for this psalm. There is much discussion about this word but, in the end, no one is certain what it means. It is easiest to transliterate this word into your language, or you can simply translate it as "psalm."

Links:

Psalms 56:1

Psalms 56:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Jonath elem rehokim. A psalm of David. A michtam; when the Philistines took him in Gath

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship;"

set to Jonath elem rehokim

This probably tells what musical style or tune to use when singing this psalm. Alternate translation: "Sing this psalm using the tune of 'Jonath elem rehokim'" or "Sing this using the Jonath elem rehokim style"

Jonath elem rehokim

This may mean "Dove on Distant Oak Trees." Translators may either write the meaning or copy the Hebrew words.

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

A michtam

The meaning of the word "michtam" is uncertain. You may use the word "psalm" instead. This can be written as: "This is a psalm that David wrote." See how you translated this in Psalms 16:1.

oppress me

"come closer and closer in order to attack me"

Psalms 56:2

My enemies trample me

The enemies' fierce attack is spoken of as if they were crushing his body by marching on it. Alternate translation: "My enemies attack me severely"

Psalms 56:3

you

The word "you" refers to God.

Psalms 56:4

what can mere man do to me?

Here a question is used to show that the psalmist is not afraid of people, because they cannot seriously harm him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "mere man can do nothing to me!" or "mere man cannot harm me badly!"

mere man

"just humans" or "people." This implies that people are not powerful, but God is powerful.

Psalms 56:5

All the day long

"All the time"

they twist my words

Repeating what someone says but changing it a little so that it means something different is spoken of as twisting their words. Alternate translation: "they say that I said things than I did not say" or "they claim that I said things, but they lie"

all their thoughts are against me for evil

"they always have evil thoughts against me" or "they always think of evil things to do to me"

Psalms 56:6

they mark my steps

Watching what a person does in order to see how to cause him trouble is spoken of as watching his steps, just as someone who wants to capture a person watches where that person walks. Alternate translation: "they watch everything I do"

just as they have waited for my life

Waiting to kill someone is spoken of as waiting for his life. Alternate translation: "as they wait to kill me"

Psalms 56:7

Do not let them escape doing iniquity

What they might escape can be sued clearly. Alternate translation: "Do not let them escape your punishment for their iniquity" or "Do not let them escape when you punish them for the wicked things they do"

Bring down the peoples

Defeating the enemies is spoken of as bringing them down. Alternate translation: "Defeat the peoples"

Psalms 56:8

You number my wanderings

God's concern for the psalmist is spoken of as if God counted each time that the psalmist has walked in sadness and with no place to go for comfort. Alternate translation: "You care about all the times that I have been wandering alone"

put my tears into your bottle

God's concern for the psalmist is spoken of as if God saved the psalmist's tears in a bottle. The tears represent crying. Alternate translation: "you know how much I have cried and you care about me"

are they not in your book?

God's concern for the psalmist is spoken of as if he wrote the number of the psalmist's tears in his book. This question is used to remind God about how greatly he cares for the psalmist. Alternate translation: "you have written about them in your book!" or "you remember my cries!"

Psalms 56:9

will turn back

"will retreat" or "will turn and run away"

God is for me

This means that God favors him. In this context it implies

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that God fights against the psalmist's enemies in order to protect him. Alternate translation: "God is fighting for me"

Psalms 56:11

What can anyone do to me?

Here a question is used to show that the psalmist is not afraid of people, because they cannot seriously harm him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "People can do nothing to me!" or "People cannot harm me badly!"

Psalms 56:12

The duty to fulfill my vows to you is on me

Being obligated to do something is spoken of as if the duty to do something is on a person. Alternate translation: "I must fulfill my vows to you" or "I must do what I promised you I would do"

Psalms 56:13

you have kept my feet from stumbling

The feet here represent the person. Stumbling here probably represents being killed by his enemies. Alternate translation: "you have kept me from stumbling" or "you have kept me from being killed by my enemies"

so that I may walk before God

Living and being seen by God is spoken of as walking before God. Alternate translation: "so that I may live in God's presence"

in the light of the living

Here "the light of the living" probably represents God's enabling people to live. Alternate translation: "with the life that you give" or "because you enable me to live"

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57 For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam; when he fled from Saul, in the cave.
Be merciful to me, God, be merciful to me,
for I take refuge in you until these troubles are over.
I stay under your wings for protection
until this destruction is over.

2 I will cry to God Most High,
to God, who does all things for me.

3 He will send help from heaven and save me,
he rebukes those who hotly pursue me.

Selah

God will send me his steadfast love and his faithfulness.

4 My life is among lions;
I am among those who are ready to devour me.
I am among people whose teeth are spears and arrows,
and whose tongues are sharp swords.

5 Be exalted, God, above the heavens;
let your glory be above all the earth.

6 They spread out a net for my feet;
I was bowed down.
They dug a pit in front of me.
They themselves have fallen into the middle of it!

Selah

7 My heart is fixed, God, my heart is fixed;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises.

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8 Wake up, my glory!
Wake up, lute and harp!
I will wake up the dawn!

9 I will give thanks to you, Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.

10 For great is your unfailing love, reaching to the heavens;
and your faithfulness to the clouds.

11 Be exalted, God, above the heavens;
may your glory be exalted over all the earth.

Psalm 57 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 57 is a psalm of deliverance. It praises God for the many times he has delivered David. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fear

Since God is protecting the psalmist, he has nothing to fear from his enemies.

Superscription

The word "Michtam" is used in the superscription for this psalm. There is much discussion about this word but, in the end, no one is certain what it means. It is easiest to transliterate this word into your language, or you can simply translate it as "psalm."

Links:

Psalms 57:1

Psalms 57:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam; when he fled from Saul, in the cave

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Al Tashheth

This probably tells what musical style or tune to use when singing the psalm. Alternate translation: "sing this psalm using the tune of 'Al Tashheth'" or "sing this using the Al Tashheth style"

Al Tashheth

This means "Do Not Destroy." Translators may either write the meaning or copy the Hebrew words.

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

A michtam

The meaning of the word "michtam" is uncertain. You may use the word "psalm" instead. This can be written as: "This is a psalm that David wrote." See how you translated this in Psalms 16:1.

I take refuge in you

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "I go to you for protection"

I stay under your wings for protection

The psalmist speaks of God as if he were a mother bird that protects its babies by huddling them under its wings. Alternate translation: "I trust you to protect me"

until this destruction is over

The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated as "destructive." Alternate translation: "until this destructive storm is over"

Psalms 57:2

who does all things for me

This explains why he will cry out to God. It can be translated with "because." Alternate translation: "because he does all things for me"

Psalms 57:3

those who hotly pursue me

The enemies' had hotly pursued David, and their pursuit is spoken of as if they were crushing his body by marching on it. Alternate translation: "those who attack me severely"

God will send me his steadfast love and his faithfulness

God's being loving and faithful is spoken of as if he were

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sending his love and faithfulness. The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated as "loving" and "trustworthy." Alternate translation: "God will be loving to me and trustworthy"

Psalms 57:4

My life is among lions

The psalmist speaks of his enemies as if they were lions. Alternate translation: "I live among fierce enemies" or "Fierce enemies surround me like lions"

those who are ready to devour me

Destroying is spoken of as devouring or eating something up. Some versions understand the Hebrew text to mean "fiery beasts." Both images speak of his enemies as if they were wild beasts. Alternate translation: "those who are ready to destroy me"

people whose teeth are spears and arrows

The enemies' spears and arrows are spoken of as if they were lions' teeth. The psalmist continues to speak of his enemies as if they were lions. Alternate translation: "people who kill others with spears and arrows as lions kill with their sharp teeth"

spears and arrows

Since both of these terms are weapons, if your culture knows only one, it is acceptable to use it alone.

whose tongues are sharp swords

The tongue represents what someone says, and the enemies' cruel words are spoken of as if they were swords. Alternate translation: "whose cruel words are like sharp swords" or "who cause terrible trouble for me by what they say"

Psalms 57:5

Be exalted, God, above the heavens

The psalmist is asking God to show that he is exalted. Being exalted above the heavens represents being great. Alternate translation: "God, show that you are exalted above the heavens" or "God, show that you are great in the heavens"

let your glory be above all the earth

The psalmist is asking God to show his glory. Alternate translation: "show your glory over all the earth"

Psalms 57:6

They spread out a net for my feet

His enemies' plans to capture him are spoken of as if they had spread out a net on the ground to trap him. Alternate translation: "It is as though my enemies have spread a net out to trap me" or "They planned to capture me like people who spread out a net to trap an animal"

They dug a pit in front of me

His enemies' plans to capture him are spoken of as if they had dug a pit for him to fall into. Alternate translation: "It is as though they dug a pit for me to fall into" or "They planned to capture me like people who dig a hole in the ground to trap an animal"

They themselves have fallen into the middle of it

The harm that came to his enemies when they tried to capture him is spoken of as if they fell into the trap that they had made for him. Alternate translation: "They themselves fell into the pit they had dug for me" or "But they themselves were hurt by what they planned to do to me"

Psalms 57:7

My heart is fixed, God, my heart is fixed

Being confident is spoken of as one's heart being firm rather than shaken or easily moved. The phrase is repeated to show that he has complete confidence in God and will not change. Alternate translation: "I am completely confident in you, God"

I will sing praises

Who he will sing to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will sing praises to you, God"

Psalms 57:8

Wake up, my glory

It can be stated clearly that the purpose of waking up is to sing praises to God. Waking up may be a metaphor for starting or preparing to do something. The heart represents the psalmist or his emotions. Alternate translation: "Wake up, my honored heart, to sing praises to God" or "I will prepare my honored heart to sing praises to God" or "I am honored to wake up and sing praises to God"

Wake up, lute and harp

It can be stated clearly that the purpose of waking up is to sing praises to God. The psalmist speaks as though the lute and harp were people who could wake up to sing praises to God. Alternate translation: "Wake up, lute and harp, and sing praises to God" or "I will play the lute and harp while I sing praises to God"

I will wake up the dawn

The dawn is spoken of as if it were alive, and getting up before dawn happens is spoken of as waking it up. The purpose of getting up before dawn is to praise God. Alternate translation: "I will get up before dawn" or "I will get up before the sun rises"

Psalms 57:10

For great is your unfailing love, reaching to the heavens ... your faithfulness to the clouds

These two phrases are very similar in meaning. The greatness of God's unfailing love and the greatness of his faithfulness are spoken of as if they could be measured in distance.

For great is your unfailing love, reaching to the heavens

The greatness of God's unfailing love is spoken of as if it could be measured in distance. Alternate translation: "Your unfailing love is as great as the distance from the earth to the heavens"

your faithfulness to the clouds

The words "great is your" and "reaching" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "great is your faithfulness, reaching to the clouds" or "your faithfulness is as great as the distance from the earth to the clouds"

Psalms 57:11

Be exalted, God, above the heavens

The psalmist is asking God to show that he is exalted. Being exalted above the heavens represents being great. Alternate translation: "God, show that you are exalted above the heavens" or "God, show that you are great in the heavens"

may your glory be exalted over all the earth

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The psalmist is asking God to show his glory. Alternate translation: "show your glory over all the earth"

58 For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam.
Do you rulers speak righteousness?
Do you judge uprightly, you people?

2 No, you commit wickedness in your heart;
you distribute violence throughout the land with your hands.

3 The wicked go astray even when they are in the womb;
they go astray from birth, speaking lies.

4 Their poison is like a snake's poison;
they are like a deaf asp that stops up its ears,

5 that pays no attention to the voice of charmers,
no matter how skillful they are.

6 Shatter their teeth in their mouths, God;
break out the great teeth of the young lions, Yahweh.

7 Let them melt away as water that runs off;
when they shoot their arrows, let them be as though they had no points.

8 Let them be like a snail that melts and passes away,
like the untimely born child of a woman that never sees the sunlight.

9 Before your pots can feel the thorn's burning heat,
he will take them away with a whirlwind,
the green thorns and the burning thorns alike.

10 The righteous will rejoice when he sees God's vengeance;
he will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,

11 so that men will say,
"Truly, there is a reward for the righteous person;
truly there is a God who judges the earth."

Psalm 58 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 58 is a deliverance psalm. It asks God for deliverance from the unjust rulers. (See: deliverer and justice)

Special concepts in this chapter

Deliverance

Although the leaders are very evil and unfair, God can deliver his people from their oppression. (See: evil and oppress)

Superscription

The word "Michtam" is used in the superscription for this psalm. There is much discussion about this word but, in the end, no one is certain what it means. It is easiest to transliterate this word into your language, or you can simply translate it as "psalm."

Links:

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Psalms 58:1

General Information:

This psalm is a song about wicked people. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Al Tashheth

This probably tells what musical style or tune to use when singing the psalm. See how you translated this in Psalms 57:1.

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

Do you rulers speak righteousness?

The author uses this question to rebuke the rulers because they do not speak righteously. Alternate translation: "You rulers do not say what is right!"

Do you judge uprightly, you people?

The author uses this question to rebuke the judges who do not judge uprightly. Alternate translation: "You people never judge people uprightly!"

Psalms 58:2

you ... your

The words "you" and "your" refer to the mighty men who are judges

No

The author answers the two questions he had just asked.

you commit wickedness in your heart

The heart refers to the people's thoughts or plans. Alternate translation: "you commit wickedness in your thoughts" or "you think about doing wicked things"

you distribute violence throughout the land with your hands

Doing violence in various places throughout the land is spoken of as distributing or spreading the violence throughout the land, as if violence were some kind of stuff or things. Alternate translation: "you yourselves do violent deeds everywhere in the land"

Psalms 58:3

The wicked go astray even when they are in the womb ... they go astray from birth

This is the same idea expressed in two different ways.

they go astray

Doing wrong things is spoken of as if people are walking on a road, and they turn off and go the wrong way. Alternate translation: "they do wrong things"

Psalms 58:4

Their poison is like a snake's poison

The wicked things people say are spoken of as if they were poison. Alternate translation: "Their wicked words cause trouble as a snake's poison harms people"

they are like a deaf asp that stops up its ears

Wicked people who do not listen to advice or rebukes are spoken of as if they were snakes that do not respond to a charmer's music. Alternate translation: "they refuse to listen like a deaf asp that stops up its ears"

a deaf asp that stops up its ears

An asp that does not respond to a charmer's music is spoken of as as if it could put something in its ears so that it will not hear. Alternate translation: "an asp that does not listen"

asp

a kind of poisonous snake

Psalms 58:5

charmers

people who play or sing music in order to control snakes

no matter how skillful they are

What the snake charmers were skillful at can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "no matter how skillful the charmers are at controlling snakes"

Psalms 58:6

General Information:

The author lists things that he would like God to do to wicked people.

Shatter their teeth ... break out the great teeth of the young lions

In both of these phrases, the wicked people are spoken of as if they were lions, and making them powerless to kill people is spoken of as breaking their teeth. Alternate translation: "Take away their power to kill. Make them powerless like young lions whose teeth have been broken and fallen out"

Psalms 58:7

Let them melt away as water that runs off

The wicked people are spoken of as if they were ice or water. No longer existing is spoken of as melting or draining away into the dry ground. Alternate translation: "Make them disappear like water that runs off" or "Make them vanish like ice that melts and drains into the ground"

let them be as though they had no points

"let their arrows be as though they had no points"

Psalms 58:8

Let them be like a snail that melts and passes away

No longer existing is spoken of as melting and disappearing. Alternate translation: "Let the wicked vanish like a snail that melts and no longer exists"

snail

small animal that the Israelites considered unclean and that looks like it is melting as it moves by sliding over slime it has produced

like the untimely born child of a woman that never sees the sunlight

Not existing is spoken of as being like a baby that is born dead. Alternate translation: "like a baby who is born too early too live and see the sunlight" or "like a baby that was born dead"

Psalms 58:9

Before your pots can feel the thorn's burning heat ... the green thorns and the burning thorns alike

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The wicked are spoken of as if they were thornbush branches, and God's swift punishment of them is spoken of as if he were to quickly blow them away or sweep them away. Alternate translation: "God will destroy wicked people faster than a whirlwind can blow away thornbush branches that have been put under a cooking pot and lit with fire"

your

David is speaking to God's people, so this is plural.

the thorn's burning heat ... the green thorns and the burning thorns

"the heat from the burning thorn branches ... the green thorn branches and the burning thorn branches"

Psalms 58:10

The righteous will rejoice when he sees

The phrase "the righteous" refers to righteous people in general. Alternate translation: "Righteous people will rejoice when they see"

he will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked

Getting one's feet wet by walking on blood is spoken of as washing the feet in blood. Alternate translation: "the righteous will make their feet wet in the blood of the wicked" or "the righteous will march on the blood of the wicked"

he will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked

This exaggeration expresses that a great number of wicked people will die. Alternate translation: "so many wicked people will die that when the righteous march on their blood, it will seem as if they could wash their feet in it"

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59 For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

1 Rescue me from my enemies, my God;
set me on high away from those who rise up against me.

2 Keep me safe from those who behave wickedly,
and save me from men of bloodshed.

3 For, see, they wait in ambush to take my life.
The powerful men gather themselves together against me,
but not because of my transgression or my sin, Yahweh.

4 For no guilt of mine they prepare to run at me;
awake and help me and see.

5 You, Yahweh God of hosts,
the God of Israel,
arise and punish all the nations;
do not be merciful to any wicked transgressors.

Selah

6 They return at evening, they howl like dogs
and go around the city.

7 See, they belch out with their mouths;
swords are in their lips,
for they say, "Who hears us?"

8 But you, Yahweh, laugh at them;
you mock at all the nations.

9 God, my strength, I will pay attention to you;
you are my high tower.

10 My God will meet me with his covenant faithfulness;
God will let me see my desire on my enemies.

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11 Do not kill them,
or my people will forget.
Scatter them by your power and make them fall,
Lord our shield.

12 For the sins of their mouths and the words of their lips,
let them be captured in their pride,
and for the curses and lies that they express.

13 Consume them in wrath,
consume them so that they will be no more;
let them know that God rules in Jacob
and to the ends of the earth.

Selah

14 At evening they return,
howling like dogs going around the city.

15 They wander about looking for food
and they growl like a dog if they are not satisfied.

16 But I will sing about your strength,
and in the morning I will praise your steadfast love!
For you have been my high tower
and a refuge in the day of my distress.

17 To you, my strength, I will sing praises;
for God is my high tower, the God of covenant faithfulness.

Psalm 59 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 59 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Protection

The author prays for God to defeat his enemies. God is his protector. Therefore, he will praise God.

Superscription

The word "Michtam" is used in the superscription for this psalm. There is much discussion about this word but, in the end, no one is certain what it means. It is easiest to transliterate this word into your language, or you can simply translate it as "psalm."

Links:

Psalms 59:1

Psalms 59:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of David. A michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Al Tashheth

This probably tells what musical style or tune to use when singing the psalm. See how you translated this in Psalms 57:1.

A psalm of David

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Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

A michtam

The meaning of the word "michtam" is uncertain. You may use the word "psalm" instead. This can be written as: "This is a psalm that David wrote." See how you translated this in Psalms 16:1.

set me on high

A high place represents a safe place where his enemies cannot reach him. Alternate translation: "put me in a safe place"

rise up against me

Rising up against someone represents attacking him. Alternate translation: "attack me"

Psalms 59:2

men of bloodshed

"people who like to kill other people" or "murderers"

Psalms 59:3

not because of my transgression or my sin

The writer has transgressed and sinned, but not against those who "prepare to run" at him.

they wait in ambush to take my life

David's enemies are in hiding and are waiting quietly for the time when they can attack him.

Psalms 59:4

For no guilt of mine

The writer has sinned, but not against those who "prepare to run" at him.

awake

Deciding to do something and beginning to do it is spoken of as waking up. Alternate translation: "do something" or "take action"

and see

What he wants God to see can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and see what is happening to me" or "and see what they are doing to me"

Psalms 59:5

arise

Deciding to do something and beginning to do it is spoken of as getting up. Alternate translation: "do something" or "take action"

all the nations

The word "nations" here represents the people of the nations that do not honor God. Alternate translation: "the people of all the nations"

Psalms 59:6

They return at evening

The word "they" refers to the wicked transgressors.

they howl like dogs

The psalmist speaks of his enemies threatening to attack people as if they were dogs howling, growling, or barking at people. Alternate translation: "they threaten to attack people"

go around the city

Why they go around the city can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "go around the city to attack anyone they find"

Psalms 59:7

See

Here the word "See" is being used to draw attention to something. Alternate translation: "Hear"

they belch out with their mouths

Saying terrible things is spoken of as belching. These terrible things may have been insults or threats. Alternate translation: "they say terrible things" or "they shout out terrible words"

belch

burp loudly; allow air from the stomach to come out of the mouth with a loud, rude noise

swords are in their lips

The cruel things that the wicked people were saying are spoken of as if they were swords. Alternate translation: "they say cruel things that cause people trouble as much as swords destroy people"

Who hears us?

This question is used to show that they believed that God would not hear and punish them. Alternate translation: "No one can hear us!" or "Your God does not hear us!"

Psalms 59:8

laugh at them

"laugh at them scornfully" or "mock them." God would laugh at them because they are worthless and powerless.

Psalms 59:9

my strength

God's being the psalmist's strength represents God protecting him. Alternate translation: "you are my strength" or "you are my protector"

you are my high tower

A high tower is a place that people could go to for shelter from their enemies. The psalmist speaks of God protecting him as if God were a strong, safe shelter. Alternate translation: "you protect me like a high tower"

Psalms 59:10

My God will meet me with his covenant faithfulness

This phrase implies that God will come to him in order to save him. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "My God, who is faithful to his covenant, will come to save me" or "My God will come to save me because he is faithful to his covenant"

my desire on my enemies

The abstract noun "desire" can be expressed with the verb "want." Alternate translation: "what I want to happen to my enemies"

Psalms 59:11

Scatter them

"Cause them to wander around"

our shield

God's protecting the righteous is spoken of as if God were a shield. Alternate translation: "our protector" or "the one who protects us like a shield"

Psalms 59:12

For the sins of their mouths and the words of their lips

The mouths and lips represent the things people say. Alternate translation: "Because they sin by what they say" or "Because of the sinful things they say"

let them be captured in their pride

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let

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people capture them because of their pride"
that they express
"that they say"
Psalms 59:13
Consume them in wrath, consume them so that they will be no more
Destroying them completely is spoken of either as burning them up or eating them. Alternate translation: "Be angry with them and destroy them completely so there will be no more of them"
in Jacob
Jacob here refers to Israel. Alternate translation: "in Israel"
to the ends of the earth
"to even the most distance places on earth." This represents all places on earth. Alternate translation: "everywhere on earth"
Psalms 59:14
howling like dogs
The psalmist speaks of his enemies threatening to attack people as if they were dogs howling, growling, or barking at people. Alternate translation: "threatening to attack us" or "threatening to attack us like wild dogs"
Psalms 59:15
satisfied
content, having everything they want
Psalms 59:16
you have been my high tower and a refuge
High towers and refuges are places that people can go to for shelter from their enemies. The psalmist speaks of God protecting him as if God were a strong, safe shelter. Alternate translation: "you have protected me like a high tower and a refuge"
in the day of my distress
"whenever I have had troubles"
Psalms 59:17
To you, my strength, I will sing praises
"To you, my strength" can be combined as one clause. Alternate translation: "You are my strength, so I will sing praises to you"
my strength
God's being the psalmist's strength represents God protecting him. Alternate translation: "my protector"
for God is my high tower
High towers are places that people can go to for shelter from their enemies. The psalmist speaks of God protecting him as if God were a strong, safe shelter. Alternate translation: "you have protected me like a high tower"
the God of covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. This can be expressed in a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "He is the God who is faithful to his covenant"

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60 For the chief musician; set to Shushan Eduth. A michtam of David, for teaching; when he fought with Aram Naharaim and with Aram Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

1 God, you have rejected us; you have broken through our defenses;
you have been angry; restore us again.

2 You have made the land tremble; you have torn it apart;
heal its cracks, for it is shaking.

3 You have made your people see difficult things;
you have made us drink the wine of staggering.

4 For those who honor you,
you have set up a banner
to be displayed against those who carry the bow.

Selah

5 So that those you love may be rescued,
rescue us with your right hand and answer me.

6 God has spoken in his holiness, "I will rejoice;
I will divide Shechem
and apportion out the Valley of Sukkoth.

7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim also is my helmet;
Judah is my scepter.

8 Moab is my washbasin;
over Edom I will throw my sandal;

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I will shout in triumph because of Philistia."

9 Who will bring me into the strong city?
Who will lead me to Edom?

10 But you, God, have you not rejected us?
You do not go into battle with our army.

11 Give us help against the enemy,
for man's help is futile.

12 We will triumph with God's help;
he will trample down our enemies.

Psalm 60 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 60 is a psalm of war.

Special concepts in this chapter

Protection

God has preserved the land of Israel, and now he will give them victory over the countries of Moab and Edom.

Links:

Psalms 60:1

Psalms 60:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Shushan Eduth. A michtam of David, for teaching; when he fought with Aram Naharaim and with Aram Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Shushan Eduth

This probably tells what tune or musical style to use when singing the psalm. Alternate translation: "sing this psalm using the tune of 'Shushan Eduth'" or "sing this using the Shushan Eduth style"

Shushan Eduth

This means "Lily of the Promise." Translators may either write the meaning or copy the Hebrew words.

A michtam

The meaning of the word "michtam" is uncertain. You may use the word "psalm" instead. This can be written as: "This is a psalm that David wrote." See how you translated this in Psalms 16:1.

Aram Naharaim ... Aram Zobah

"Aram of the two rivers ... the Aramean nation of Zobah." These are places.

Joab

This refers to Joab and the army that he led. Alternate translation: "Joab and his army"

twelve thousand Edomites

"12,000 Edomites"

you have broken through our defenses

God's allowing Israel's enemies to break through their defenses is spoken of as God himself had done it. Alternate translation: "you have allowed our enemies to break through our defenses"

Psalms 60:2

Connecting Statement:

The psalmist continues speaking to God.

You have made the land tremble; you have torn it apart

The psalmist speaks of the disaster in his country as if it were an earthquake.

heal its cracks

Making the people strong again is spoken of as repairing large cracks in the ground or walls.

Psalms 60:3

You have made your people see difficult things

Here "see" represents "experience" or "suffer."

drink the wine of staggering

Being helpless is spoken of as staggering around, barely able to stand upright. The abstract noun "staggering" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the wine that makes us stagger"

Psalms 60:4

you have set up a banner

God's guiding his people in battle is spoken of as if God were a human king or commander who had set up a banner for the army. Alternate translation: "you are like a king who sets up a banner" or "you command us in battle

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like a king who raises up a banner"

banner

"battle flag." This is a flag that a king or commander would raise up on a pole to show that the army should gather.

to be displayed against those who carry the bow

This can be stated with an active clause. However some versions have different interpretations of this phrase. Alternate translation: "to display against those who carry the bow"

to be displayed against those who carry the bow

The phrase "those who carry the bow" refers to the enemy soldiers in battle. Alternate translation: "to display when he takes his army into battle against your enemies"

Psalms 60:5

with your right hand

God's right hand represents his power. Alternate translation: "by your power"

answer me

Answering here represents responding to his request. Alternate translation: "respond to my request" or "answer my prayer"

Psalms 60:7

Ephraim also is my helmet

God speaks of the tribe of Ephraim as if it were his army. The helmet symbolizes equipment for war. Alternate translation: "Ephraim is like a helmet I have chosen" or "the tribe of Ephraim is my army"

helmet

a hard hat that soldiers wear to protect their heads from injury

Judah is my scepter

God chose men from the tribe of Judah to be the kings of his people, and he speaks of that tribe as if it were his scepter. Alternate translation: "the tribe of Judah is like my scepter" or "Judah is the tribe through whom I rule my people"

Psalms 60:8

Moab is my washbasin

God speaks of Moab being unimportant as if Moab were a washbasin or a lowly servant. Alternate translation: "Moab is like a bowl that I use for washing"

over Edom I will throw my sandal

God was probably speaking of taking ownership of Edom as if he were symbolically throwing his sandal onto that land to show that he owns it. However some versions have other interpretations. Alternate translation: "I take ownership of the land of Edom" or "I throw my sandal onto the land of Edom to show that it is mine"

Psalms 60:10

But you, God, have you not rejected us?

The psalmist uses this question to express his sadness that it seems that God has rejected them. Alternate translation: "But God, it seems like you have rejected us." or "God, you seem to have abandoned us."

You do not go into battle with our army

The psalmist speaks of God helping their army as if God were to go and fight with them. Alternate translation: "you do not help our army when we go into battle"

Psalms 60:11

is futile

"is worthless"

Psalms 60:12

will triumph

"will defeat our enemies"

he will trample down our enemies

The psalmist speaks of God helping their army defeat their enemies as if God were to trample down the enemies. Alternate translation: "he will enable us to trample down our enemies" or "he will make us able to defeat our enemies"

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61 For the chief musician; on a stringed instrument. A psalm of David.
Hear my cry, God;
attend to my prayer.

2 From the ends of the earth will I call to you when my heart is faint;
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

3 For you have been a refuge for me,
a strong tower from the enemy.

4 Let me live in your tabernacle forever!
Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings.

Selah

5 For you, God, have heard my vows,
you have given me the inheritance of those who honor your name.

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6 You will prolong the king's life;
his years will be like many generations.

7 He will reign before God forever;
appoint your steadfast love and faithfulness to protect him.

8 I will sing praise to your name forever
so that I may perform my vows every day.2

Psalm 61 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 61 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Vow

The author has vowed to praise God every day of his life because God has blessed him. (See: vow and bless)

Links:

Psalms 61:1

Psalms 61:1

General Information:

This is a song about God's faithfulness. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; on a stringed instrument. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on a stringed instrument

"people should play a stringed instrument with this song"

Hear my cry, God; attend to my prayer

These clauses have a similar meaning. Alternate translation: "God, listen to me and answer my prayer"

Psalms 61:2

lead me to the rock that is higher than I

Here the writer speaks of God as if he were a high rock that he could climb for protection.

Psalms 61:3

you have been a refuge for me

Being a refuge is a metaphor for keeping someone safe. Alternate translation: "You have been like a safe place for me"

a strong tower from the enemy

People sometimes hid in a strong tower from their enemies. Being a strong tower is a metaphor for keeping someone safe from his enemy. Alternate translation: "You have been like a strong tower to keep me safe from the enemy" or "You have protected me from my enemy like a strong tower"

Psalms 61:4

take refuge under the shelter of your wings

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Here there is a second metaphor that speaks of Yahweh's protection as if he was a hen protecting her baby chicks under her wings. Alternate translation: "go to you for protection as a chick is safe under the wings of its mother"

Psalms 61:5

you have given me the inheritance

The writer speaks of God's blessings as if they were an inheritance that he has received. Alternate translation: "you have given to me the blessings"

who honor your name

Here "your name" means God himself. Alternate translation: "who honor you" or "who have an awesome respect for you"

Psalms 61:6

You will prolong ... many generations

These two clauses have similar meanings. The idea is repeated for emphasis.

You will prolong the king's life

"You will extend the king's life" or "You will cause the king's life to last a long time"

his years will be like many generations

Here "years" refers to how long the king will live. Alternate translation: "he will live for many generations"

Psalms 61:7

He will reign before God forever

Here to "reign before God" means that God will approve of what the king does and bless him for ruling with justice. Some versions translate this as the speaker's desire: "I desire that the king reign before God forever"

appoint your steadfast love and faithfulness to protect him

The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" are spoken of as if they were guards that would protect the king. Alternate translation: "always protect him because you love him and are faithful"

Psalms 61:8

I will sing praise to your name forever

Here "name" stands for God himself. Alternate translation: "I will always sing praise to you"

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my vows day.
These refer to the promise to offer sacrifices to God every

62 For the chief musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A psalm of David.
1 I wait in silence for God alone;
my salvation comes from him.

2 He alone is my rock and my salvation;
he is my high tower;
I will not be greatly moved.

3 How long, all of you, will you attack a man,
that you may murder him,
like a leaning wall or a shaky fence?

4 They consult with him
only to bring him down from his honorable position;
they love to tell lies;
they bless him with their mouths,
but in their hearts they curse him.
Selah

5 I wait in silence for God alone;
for my hope is set on him.

6 He alone is my rock and my salvation;
he is my high tower; I will not be moved.

7 With God is my salvation and my glory;
the rock of my strength and my refuge are in God.

8 Trust in him at all times, you people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.
Selah

9 Surely men of low standing are vanity,
and men of high standing are a lie;
they will weigh lightly in the scales;
weighed together, they are lighter than nothing.

10 Do not trust in oppression or robbery;
and do not hope uselessly in riches,
for they will bear no fruit;
do not fix your heart on them.

11 God has spoken once,
twice have I heard this:
power belongs to God.

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12 Also to you, Lord, belongs covenant faithfulness,
for you pay back every person for what he has done.

Psalm 62 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 62 is a psalm of deliverance. It expresses trust that God will save the psalmist from his enemies. (See: deliverer and trust and save)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Although the psalmist's enemies have attacked him when he was feeling weak, he trusts in God to deliver him. God is powerful and kind.

Links:

Psalms 62:1

Psalms 62:1

General Information:

This psalm is a song about God's faithfulness. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

Jeduthun

One of David's chief musicians had this same name. This may refer to him. See how you translated this in [Psalms 39:1]

my salvation comes from him

"he is the one who rescues me" or "he is the one who saves me"

Psalms 62:2

He alone is my rock and my salvation

The writer speaks of God's ability to protect him as if God were a rock. Alternate translation: "He is the only one who can protect and rescue me"

he is my high tower

The writer speaks of God's ability to protect him as if God were a high tower. Alternate translation: "he keeps me away from the grasp of my enemies"

I will not be greatly moved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing can ever move me"

Psalms 62:3

all of you

"my enemies" or "all my enemies"

How long ... will you attack a man ... or a shaky fence?

David uses a rhetorical question to express his frustration. No answer is expected. Alternate translation: "It seems like my enemies will never stop attacking me. I feel that I am as weak against you as a leaning wall or a broken-down fence."

attack a man

"attack me"

Psalms 62:4

They consult with him only to

"They intend to" or "They plan to"

consult with him ... bring him ... bless him ... curse him

In these verses, David is referring to himself by "him."

with their mouths

This refers to their speech or their words.

in their hearts

This refers to their thoughts.

Psalms 62:5

my hope is set on him

"for I place my hope in him"

Psalms 62:6

He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my high tower

The writer speaks of God as if he were a rock and a high tower. Both of these metaphors show how God provides protection from one's enemies. Here "salvation" means that God rescues the writer. See how you translated this in [Psalms 62:2]

I will not be moved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing can move me"

Psalms 62:7

the rock of my strength and my refuge are in God

The writer speaks of God as if he were a rock that keeps one safe from his enemies. He also speaks of God as if he were a shelter that provides protection. Alternate translation: "God always gives me strength and protection"

Psalms 62:8

pour out your heart

This refers to telling God your inner feelings as if you were pouring out a liquid. Alternate translation: "give your deepest concerns to God"

refuge for us

The word "us" refers to David and the people he is speaking to.

Psalms 62:9

men of low standing ... men of high standing are a lie

This refers to men of all levels of wealth and importance. The phrases "are vanity" and "are a lie" have the same meaning. One cannot confidently trust in anyone. Alternate

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translation: "you cannot place your trust in men, no matter how important they are"

weighed together, they are lighter than nothing

If you put all of these kinds of men together on a scale, they would have no weight. This means that they have no real value to you.

Psalms 62:10

oppression or robbery

These two words have basically the same meaning. You cannot trust in money that you get by taking it from other people.

for they will bear no fruit

The writer speaks of riches as if they were trees or vines that could bear fruit. Alternate translation: "for they will provide nothing good for you"

do not fix your heart on them

Here "fix your heart" is an idiom that means to desire something greatly. Alternate translation: "do not desire them"

Psalms 62:11

God has spoken once, twice have I heard this

This means that God has said this more than once.

power belongs to God

God being characterized by power is spoken of as if power belonged to him. The abstract noun "power" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "God is powerful"

Psalms 62:12

Also to you, Lord, belongs covenant faithfulness

God being characterized by covenant faithfulness is spoken of as if covenant faithfulness belonged to him. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "You, Lord, are also faithful to your covenant"

for you pay back every person for what he has done

The writer speaks of God's rewards as if he were paying a wage for work.

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63 A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.
God, you are my God!
I earnestly search for you,
my soul thirsts for you,
and my flesh longs for you,
in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.

2 So I have looked on you in the sanctuary,
to see your power and your glory.

3 Because your covenant faithfulness is better than life,
my lips will praise you.

4 So I will bless you while I live;
I will lift up my hands in your name.

5 It will be as if I ate a meal of marrow and fatness;
with joyful lips my mouth will praise you,

6 when I think about you on my bed
and meditate on you in the night watches.

7 For you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

8 I cling to you;
your right hand supports me.

9 But those who seek to destroy my life
will go down into the lowest parts of the earth;

10 they will be given over to those whose hands use the sword,

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and they will become food for the jackals.

11 But the king will rejoice in God;
everyone who swears by him will be proud of him,
but the mouth of those who speak lies will be stopped up.

Psalm 63 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 63 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

The author praises God for who he is and for having protected him.

Links:

Psalms 63:1

Psalms 63:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

earnestly

sincerely

my soul thirsts for you, and my flesh longs for you

These two clauses have basically the same meaning and are used together to emphasize how greatly the writer desires to be with God. Alternate translation: "my whole being greatly desires to be with you"

dry and weary land

"hot, dry desert"

Psalms 63:3

Because your covenant faithfulness is better than life, my lips

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adverb and the abstract noun "life" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I value you being faithful to your covenant more than I value living, so my lips"

my lips will praise you

Here "my lips" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will praise you"

Psalms 63:4

I will lift up my hands in your name

Here "in your name" means "to you." Alternate translation: "I will worship you and pray to you"

Psalms 63:5

It will be as if I ate a meal of marrow and fatness

Here the writer speaks of knowing and worshiping God as being more satisfying than eating a good meal. Alternate translation: "I will be happier than a person who eats a meal of fat and choice food"

with joyful lips my mouth will praise you

Here "with joyful lips my mouth" represents the whole person who will praise God joyfully. Alternate translation: "I will praise you joyfully"

Psalms 63:7

in the shadow of your wings I rejoice

The writer speaks of God as if he were a bird protecting its young under his wings. Alternate translation: "I rejoice because you protect me"

Psalms 63:8

I cling to you

"I need you" or "I depend on you"

your right hand supports me

Here, the right hand is used as a symbol of strength and power. Alternate translation: "you support me" or "you lift me up"

Psalms 63:9

will go down into the lowest parts of the earth

This means they will die and go to the place of the dead. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "will die and descend into the place of the dead" or "will die and go down into the place of the dead"

Psalms 63:10

they will be given over to those whose hands use the sword

Here "the sword" represents death in battle, and "those whose hands use the sword" refers to enemies who kill them in battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cause them to die in battle"

they will become food for the jackals

Here "they" refers to the corpses of those who die in battle. Alternate translation: "jackals will eat their dead bodies"

the jackals

"jackals" here are a kind of long-legged wild dog. They feed on carrion, game, and fruit.

Psalms 63:11

the king will

David is speaking about himself. This can be stated clearly in the translation. Alternate translation: "I, the king of Israel, will"

swears by him ... proud of him

The word "him" refers to "God."

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but the mouth of those who speak lies will be stopped up
Here "the mouth" represents the whole person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God will silence the liars" or "but God will silence those who lie"

64 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
Hear my voice, God, listen to my complaint;
preserve my life from fear of my enemies.

2 Hide me from the secret plotting of evildoers,
from the commotion of those who behave wickedly.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like swords;
they have aimed their arrows, bitter words,

4 so that they may shoot from secret places at someone who is innocent;
suddenly they shoot at him and fear nothing.

5 They encourage themselves in an evil plan;
they consult privately together in order to set traps;
they say, "Who will see us?"

6 They invent injustices;
"We have finished," they say, "a careful plan."
The inner thoughts and hearts of man are deep.

7 But God will shoot them;
suddenly they will be wounded with his arrows.

8 They will be made to stumble, since their own tongues are against them;
all who see them will wag their heads.

9 All people will fear
and will declare God's deeds.
They will wisely think about what he has done.

10 The righteous will be glad about Yahweh and will take refuge in him;
all the upright in heart will take pride in him.

Psalm 64 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 64 is a psalm of deliverance. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Plotting of enemies

The author's enemies have plotted against him but God has saved him. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 64:1

Psalms 64:1
General Information:
This psalm is a prayer for help. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

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For the chief musician. A psalm of David
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
For the chief musician
"This is for the director of music to use in worship"
preserve
save
Psalms 64:2
Hide me from the secret plotting of evildoers
Here "Hide" represents protecting, and "the secret plotting of evildoers represents" represents the harm that evildoers secretly plan to do to David. Alternate translation: "Protect me from the harm that evil doers secretly plan to do to me"
from the commotion
The words "hide me" are understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "hide me from the commotion" or "protect me from the commotion"
the commotion of those who behave wickedly
Possible meanings are that "commotion" refers to 1) a noisy disturbance. Alternate translation: "the noisy disturbance that those who behave wickedly make" or 2) a crowd that makes a noisy disturbance. Alternate translation: "the noisy crowd of those who behave wickedly"
Psalms 64:3
They have sharpened their tongues like swords
The writer speaks of his enemies' tongues as if they were as sharp as swords. Here "tongues" represents the harsh words that the enemies speak. Alternate translation: "The harsh things that they say hurt me like a sharp sword"
arrows, bitter words
The writer speaks of his enemies' bitter words as if they were arrows being shot at him. Alternate translation: "bitter words which pierce me like arrows"
Psalms 64:5
Who will see us?
The evildoers do not expect an answer to their question because they think no one will see them. Alternate translation: "No one will see what we are doing"
Psalms 64:6
The inner thoughts and hearts of man are deep
The writer speaks of man's "inner thoughts" and "hearts of man" as if they were a deep body of water that no one can explore all the way to the bottom.
inner thoughts ... hearts of man
Both of these phrases refer to man's private or inner thoughts.
Psalms 64:7
General Information:
The writer continues to speak of the "evildoers" of Psalms 64:1.
But God will shoot them ... with his arrows
The writer speaks of God's punishment of the evildoers as if God were shooting arrows at them.
Psalms 64:8
They will be made to stumble
The writer speaks of God's causing the evildoers' plans to fail as if God were making them stumble in their paths. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make them stumble" or "God will cause their plans to fail"
since their own tongues are against them
Here "tongues" represents the words that they say. Alternate translation: "since the words that they say are against them"
Psalms 64:9
what he has done
"what God has done"
Psalms 64:10
take refuge in him
Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to him for protection"
all the upright in heart will take pride in him
Here "upright in heart" is an idiom that means godly or righteous. Alternate translation: "all the people who are godly will praise him"

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65 For the chief musician. A psalm. A song of David.
For you, God in Zion, our praise waits;
our vows will be carried out to you.

2 You who hear prayer,
to you all flesh will come.

3 Iniquities prevail against us;
as for our transgressions, you will forgive them.

4 Blessed is the man whom you choose to bring near to you
so that he may live in your courts.
We will be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
your holy temple.

5 In righteousness you will answer us by doing awesome deeds,

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God of our salvation;
you who are hope of all the ends of the earth
and of those who are far across the sea.

6 For it is you who made the mountains firm,
you who are girded with strength.

7 It is you who quiet the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
and the commotion of the peoples.

8 Those who live in the uttermost parts of the earth
are afraid of the evidence of your deeds;
you make the east and the west rejoice.

9 You come to help the earth; you water it;
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide mankind grain when you have prepared the earth.

10 You water its furrows abundantly;
you settle down the furrows' ridges;
you make them soft with rain showers;
you bless the sprouts between them.

11 You crown the year with your goodness,
and your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.

12 The pastures in the wilderness drip with dew,
and the hills are girded with joy.

13 The pastures are clothed with flocks;
the valleys also are covered over with grain;
they shout for joy, and they sing.

Psalm 65 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 65 is a psalm of praise to God.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

God answered prayers and gave the people justice and hope. God created nature and controls it, sending rain so the grain and pastures grow well.

Links:

Psalms 65:1

Psalms 65:1

General Information:

This psalm is a song of praise. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm. A song of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

For you, God in Zion, our praise waits

This speaks of praise as if it were a person who could act on its own. Alternate translation: "To you alone, God in Zion, we will offer our praise"

our vows will be carried out to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we will do what we have promised you that we would do"

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Psalms 65:3
Iniquities prevail against us
David speaks about iniquity as if it were a person that is able to defeat or oppress. Alternate translation: "It is as if our own sins were defeating us"
you will forgive them
The word "them" refers to our "iniquities."
Psalms 65:4
whom you choose ... your courts
The words "you" and "your" in this verse refer to Yahweh.
live in your courts
This exaggeration expresses that the man is in the temple very frequently to worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "worship often in your courts"
We will be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The goodness of your house, your holy temple, will satisfy us"
We will be
Here the word "we" refers to David and the people of Israel, but not to God, to whom he is speaking.
your house, your holy temple
"your house, which is your holy temple"
Psalms 65:5
In righteousness
"Because you are righteous"
you who are
"you are"
of all the ends of the earth ... across the sea
These two phrases have similar meanings. Alternate translation: "of all the people who live throughout the earth and across the sea"
of all the ends of the earth
This refers to the people who live all over the earth.
Psalms 65:6
you who are girded with strength
The writer speaks of God as if he wore his strength like a belt. Alternate translation: "showing that you are very powerful"
Psalms 65:7
the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves
These two phrases have the same meaning and are used together to create a vivid impression on the hearer or reader. Alternate translation: "the continuous roaring of the seas"
roaring
a loud noise caused by the wind and waves
the commotion of the peoples
This is also something that God makes quiet.
commotion
loud noise
Psalms 65:8
evidence
proof or something that shows that another thing is true
you make the east and the west rejoice
The phrase "the east and the west" refers to the people who live all over the earth. Alternate translation: "you cause people everywhere to shout joyfully"
Psalms 65:9
help the earth
This refers to the soil of the earth.
you greatly enrich it
"you make the soil very good so that good things will grow in it"
the river of God is full of water
This refers to the supply of water in the sky that God sends to water the earth and fill the streams. Alternate translation: "you fill the streams with water"
Psalms 65:10
You ... you ... you ... you
The writer is speaking to Yahweh, so these words are all singular.
its furrows
"the earth's furrows"
furrows
A furrow is a long narrow trench made in the ground for planting seeds or for watering the field where grains have been planted.
ridges
edges
Psalms 65:11
You ... your
The words "You" and "your" refer to Yahweh and so are singular.
You crown the year with your goodness
Here the "year" is given the human quality of wearing a crown. Alternate translation: "You have honored the year with a good harvest"
your wagon tracks overflow with abundance
Yahweh making the soil so good and fertile that it produces an abundant harvest is spoken of as if Yahweh were traveling through an empty land in a cart, leaving abundant food behind wherever he goes. Alternate translation: "everywhere you have been, you have left abundant food"
Psalms 65:12
The pastures ... drip with dew
There is so much dew in the pastures that they are said to drip with it. Alternate translation: "The pastures ... are full of dew" or "Much dew drips in the pastures of the wilderness"
the hills are girded with joy
The writer speaks of the beauty of the hills as if they were joyful people, and of joy as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "the hills are like people wearing joy" or "the hills are like joyful people"
Psalms 65:13
The pastures are clothed with flocks
The writer speaks of the pastures as being so covered with flocks that it is like the pastures are wearing a garment.
pastures
a large field where animals feed on the grass
flocks
group of animals, such as sheep and goats
they shout for joy, and they sing
The pastures, hills and valleys are so bountiful, that they seem to shout and sing for joy. Alternate translation: "they are like joyful singing people"

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they shout
The word "they" refers to the pastures and valleys.

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66 For the chief musician. A song, a psalm.
1 Shout out loud to God, all the earth;
2 Sing out the glory of his name;
make his praise glorious.

3 Say to God, "How terrifying are your deeds!
By the greatness of your power
your enemies will submit to you.

4 All the earth will worship you
and will sing to you;
they will sing praises to your name."

Selah

5 Come and see the works of God;
he is fearsome in his deeds toward the sons of mankind.

6 He turned the sea into dry land;
they went through the river on foot;
there we rejoiced in him.

7 He rules forever by his might;
his eyes observe the nations;
let not the rebellious exalt themselves.

Selah

8 Give blessing to God, you people,
let the sound of his praise be heard.

9 He keeps us among the living,
and he does not permit our feet to slip.

10 For you, God, have tested us;
you have tested us as silver is tested.

11 You brought us into a net;
you laid a heavy burden on our backs.

12 You made people ride over our heads;
we went through fire and water,
but you brought us out into a spacious place.

13 I will come into your house with burnt offerings;
I will pay you my vows

14 which my lips promised
and my mouth spoke when I was in distress.

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15 I will offer to you burnt offerings of fat animals
with the sweet aroma of rams;
I will offer bulls and goats.

Selah

16 Come and listen, all you who fear God,
and I will declare what he has done for my soul.

17 I cried to him with my mouth,
and he was praised with my tongue.

18 If I had seen wickedness within my heart,
the Lord would not have listened to me.

19 But God has truly heard;
he has paid attention to the voice of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God,
who has not turned away my prayer
or his covenant faithfulness from me.

Psalm 66 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 66 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh saves

Just as God brought Israel through the wilderness, he took the author through hard times but saved him. The author will worship God by sacrificing animals to him. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 66:1

Psalms 66:1

General Information:

This psalm is a song of praise. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A song, a psalm

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

Shout out loud to God

The kind of shout can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Shout joyfully to God" "or "Shout praises to God"

all the earth

This refers to all the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "everyone on earth"

Psalms 66:2

Sing out the glory of his name; make his praise glorious

These phrases have similar meanings and are used together to emphasize how wonderful God is. Alternate translation: "Sing about how wonderful God's name is; sing wonderful praise about how great God is"

the glory of his name

God's name here represents God himself. Alternate translation: "his glory"

Psalms 66:3

How terrifying are your deeds

The works of God cause us to be in awe and terrified because we know he is powerful and holy.

By the greatness of your power

"Because you have great power"

Psalms 66:4

All the earth will worship you

This refers to all of the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "All the people on earth will worship you"

they will sing praises to your name

Here "your name" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "they will praise and honor you"

Psalms 66:5

he ... his

These words refer to God.

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he is fearsome in his deeds toward the sons of mankind
"he causes people to feel fear and wonder when they see his deeds"
the sons of mankind
"humanity"
Psalms 66:6
He ... him
These words refer to God.
He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the river on foot
This refers to the crossing of the Red Sea.
they went
The word "they" refers to God's people, the Israelites.
we rejoiced
The word "we" refers to the Israelites, their ancestors, David, and the people he is speaking to.
Psalms 66:7
He ... his
These words refer to God.
his eyes
These phrase "his eyes" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "he sees"
let not the rebellious exalt themselves
"let not the rebellious people exalt themselves" or "let not the rebellious people be proud"
Psalms 66:8
Give blessing to God ... let the sound of his praise be heard
These two clauses have similar meanings. The idea is repeated to emphasize the importance of praising God.
Psalms 66:9
us ... our
These words refer to David and the people he is speaking to.
he does not permit our feet to slip
The writer speaks of God's protection as preventing his people from slipping as they walk or falling off a cliff. Alternate translation: "he has not allowed us to fall into disaster"
Psalms 66:11
You brought us into a net
The writer speaks of God's punishment as if God had captured his people in a net.
a net
a trap for a bird or an animal
you laid a heavy burden on our backs
The writer speaks of what the people have endured as having to carry heavy loads on their backs.
Psalms 66:12
You made people ride over our heads
This is a picture of being horribly defeated in battle. Alternate translation: "It is as if our enemies defeated us in battle and then drove their chariots over our fallen bodies"
went through fire and water
God tested them with natural disasters like fires and floods. Alternate translation: "we suffered like people who suffer from fires and floods"
spacious place
The writer speaks of the blessings that the people of Israel now have as if they had been brought into a wide open space where they are safe. Alternate translation: "open place where we are safe"
Psalms 66:14
which my lips promised and my mouth spoke
Here "lips" and "mouth" refer to the words of promise that were spoken. Alternate translation: "which I promised"
Psalms 66:15
aroma of rams
"smell of the smoke of sacrificed rams"
Psalms 66:16
I will declare what he has done for my soul
The word "soul" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will tell you what he has done for me"
Psalms 66:17
I cried to him with my mouth
The word "mouth" represents the whole person who cries out to God.
he was praised with my tongue
Here "tongue" represents words or speech. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I praised him with my tongue" or "I praised him"
Psalms 66:18
seen wickedness
"looked with favor on wickedness"
would not have listened to me
Here "would not have listened" implies that God would not have answered his prayer. This can be made clear in the translation. Alternate translation: "would not have heard me call out to him" or "he would not have answered my prayer"
Psalms 66:19
But God has truly heard; he has paid attention
These two clauses have similar meanings and are used together to emphasize that God has heard his prayer. Alternate translation: "But God has truly heard my prayer"
the voice of my prayer
Here the author's prayer is given the personal quality of having a voice. Alternate translation: "my prayer"
Psalms 66:20
who has not turned away my prayer
Here "turned away' represents ignoring his prayer. Alternate translation: "who has not ignored my prayer"
or his covenant faithfulness from me
The phrase "has not turned away" is understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated here. The idea of "his covenant faithfulness" can be translated with the phrase "being faithful to his covenant." Alternate translation: "and has not turned away his covenant faithfulness from me" or "and has not stopped being faithful to his covenant with me"

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67 For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm, a song.
May God be merciful to us and bless us
and cause his face to shine on us

Selah

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2 so that your ways may be known on earth,
your salvation among all nations.

3 Let the peoples praise you, God;
let all the peoples praise you.

4 Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you will judge the peoples with justice
and govern the nations on earth.

Selah

5 Let the peoples praise you, God;
let all the peoples praise you.

6 The earth has yielded its produce
and God, our God, has blessed us.

7 God has blessed us,
and all the ends of the earth honor him.

Psalm 67 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 67 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

People all over the world should be praising God.

Links:

Psalms 67:1

Psalms 67:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm, a song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on stringed instruments

"people should play stringed instruments with this song"

cause his face to shine on us

The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. Alternate translation: "act favorably towards us"

Psalms 67:2

your ways may be known on earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people may know your ways on earth"

your salvation among all nations

The writer desires for everyone to know that God has the power to save them. This can be made clear in the translation. Alternate translation: "and the people of all nations may know that you have the power to save them"

Psalms 67:4

let the nations ... govern the nations

Here "nations" represents the people who live in all the nations on the earth.

with justice

"fairly" or "justly"

Psalms 67:5

Let the peoples praise you ... let all the peoples praise you

The second clause intensifies the meaning of the first to emphasize how important it is to praise God.

Psalms 67:6

The earth has yielded its produce

Here the writer speaks of "the earth" as if it has chosen to provide food to the people. Alternate translation: "We have

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gained much food from our crops"
Psalms 67:7
all the ends of the earth honor him
This means that people everywhere should honor God because of his blessings. Alternate translation: "I desire that all people everywhere on the earth may have an awesome respect for him"

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68 For the chief musician; A psalm of David, a song.
Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered;
let those also who hate him flee before him.

2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;
as wax melts before the fire,
so let the wicked perish in the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad;
let them rejoice before God;
may they rejoice with gladness.

4 Sing to God! Sing praises to his name!
Praise the one who rides through the plains of the Jordan River valley!
Yah is his name! Rejoice before him![1]

5 A Father of the fatherless, a judge of the widows,
is God in the holy place where he lives.

6 God puts the lonely into families;
he brings out the prisoners with singing;
but the rebellious live in a parched land.

7 God, when you went out before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness,

Selah

8 the earth trembled;
the heavens also dropped rain in God's presence,
in the presence of God when he came to Sinai, in the presence of God, the God of Israel.

9 You, God, sent a plentiful rain;
you strengthened your inheritance when it was weary.

10 Your people lived in it;
You, God, gave from your goodness to the poor.

11 The Lord gave the word,
and those who announced them were a great army.

12 Kings of armies flee, they flee,
and the women waiting at home divide the plunder:

13 the wings of a dove are covered with silver,
its feathers with shining gold.
Yet some of you people lie down among the sheepfolds.

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14 The Almighty scattered kings there,
it was as when it snowed on Mount Zalmon.

15 A mighty mountain is the hill country of Bashan;
a high mountain is the hill country of Bashan.

16 Why do you look in envy, you high hill country,
at the mountain which God desires for the place he will live?
Indeed, Yahweh will live in it forever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand,
thousands upon thousands;
the Lord is among them in the holy place, as at Sinai.

18 You have ascended on high;
you have led away captives;
you have received gifts from among men,
even from the rebellious,
so that Yah, God, might live there.[2]

19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burdens,
the God who is our salvation.

Selah

20 Our God is a God who saves;
Yahweh the Lord is the one who is able to rescue us from death.

21 But God will strike through the heads of his enemies,
through the hairy scalps of those who walk in offenses against him.

22 The Lord said, "I will bring my enemies back from Bashan;
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea

23 so that you may crush your enemies, dipping your foot in blood,
and so that the tongues of your dogs may have their share from your enemies."

24 They have seen your processions, God,
the processions of my God, my King, into the holy place.

25 The singers went first, the minstrels followed after,
and in the middle were the unmarried girls playing tambourines.

26 Bless God in the assemblies;
praise Yahweh, you who are from the fountain[3] of Israel.

27 There is Benjamin, the smallest tribe, ruling them,
then the leaders of Judah and their multitudes,
the leaders of Zebulun and the leaders of Naphtali.

28 Your God, Israel, has decreed your strength;

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reveal to us your power, God, as you have revealed it in times past.

29 Reveal your power to us from your temple at Jerusalem,
where kings bring tribute to you.

30 Rebuke the wild beasts in the reeds,
against the peoples, that multitude of bulls and calves.
Humiliate them and make them bring you silver;
scatter the peoples who love to wage war.

31 Princes will come out of Egypt;
Cush will hurry to reach out with her hands to God.

32 Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth.
Selah
Sing praises to the Lord,

33 to him who rides on the heaven of heavens, which exist from ancient times;
see, he lifts up his voice with power.

34 Ascribe strength to God;
his majesty is over Israel,
and his strength is in the skies.

35 God, you are fearsome in your holy place;
the God of Israel—he gives strength and power to his people.
Blessed be God.

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[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[3]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text can be read either as from the fountain or from the assembly.

Psalm 68 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 68 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

God is exceedingly great. He takes care of the weak and helpless. He is glorious in his temple. (See: glory and temple)

No Common Theme

Scholars have found this psalm the most difficult to interpret. There does not appear to be any unity to this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 68:1

Psalms 68:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; A psalm of David, a song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

Let God arise

God beginning to act is spoke of as if he stands up.
Alternate translation: "Let God begin to act"

let his enemies be scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let God chase away his enemies"

Psalms 68:2

As smoke is driven away, so drive them away

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God's enemies are spoken of as if they are smoke that is easily blown away by the wind. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Drive them away as the wind blows away smoke"

as wax melts before the fire

God's enemies are spoken of as if they are wax that is easily melted by a fire. Alternate translation: "cause them to disappear as wax melts before a fire"

the wicked

This refers to the wicked people in general.

Psalms 68:3

the righteous

This refers to the righteous people in general.

rejoice with gladness

"rejoice and be happy" or "be joyful and glad." This is probably a hendiadys. Alternate translation: "be very glad"

Psalms 68:4

to his name

This refers to God. Alternate translation: "to him"

the one who rides through the plains

God's presence among people is spoken of as if he rides on the earth in a horse or chariot.

Psalms 68:5

A Father of the fatherless

God is spoken of as a compassionate God who acts like a father to orphans. Alternate translation: "One who acts like a father to children who have no parents"

a judge of the widows

God is spoken of as a merciful God who protects widows. Alternate translation: "a protector of widows"

Psalms 68:6

God puts the lonely into families

God is spoken of as if he places lonely people into families. "God provides families for those who have no one to live with"

he brings out the prisoners with singing

God is spoken of as the one who leads prisoners out of their confinement. Alternate translation: "God frees prisoners and makes them sing with happiness"

the rebellious

This nominal adjective refers to rebellious people and can be translated with either an adjective or a noun. Alternate translation: "rebellious people" or "people who rebel against him"

a parched land

God's punishment of the rebellious is spoken of as if he forces them to live in a hot desert land. Alternate translation: "a very hot and dry land"

Psalms 68:7

General Information:

David begins to tell the story of God leading the Israelites through the desert to Mt. Sinai.

when you went out ... when you marched through

These two phrases refer to the same event.

you went out before your people

"you led your people"

when you marched through the wilderness

God is spoken of as if he was a soldier marching ahead of the people of Israel.

Psalms 68:8

the heavens also dropped rain ... God's presence

"God caused it to rain"

in the presence of God

This idiom here refers to God's appearance before the Israelites. Alternate translation: "when God appeared to the Israelites"

Psalms 68:9

you strengthened your inheritance when it was weary

The land of Israel is spoken of as if it was a person who could be weary, or could gain strength. Alternate translation: "you caused the land to produce good crops"

your inheritance

The land that God gave to the Israelites is spoken of as if it was an inheritance that a father passed on to his children. Alternate translation: "the land that you gave to us Israelites"

Psalms 68:10

the poor

This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Psalms 68:11

General Information:

David continues the story of the journey of the Israelites through the desert. In this part of the story, the Israelites are victorious in war over their enemies.

The Lord gave the word

"The Lord gave a command"

those who announced them ... army

The large number of people told the Lord's message to others. They are spoken of as if there were a large army. Since this phrase is feminine, some versions translate it as, "the women who announced them ... army."

Psalms 68:12

Kings of armies flee, they flee

The kings represent themselves and their entire armies. It is understood that they flee because they are defeated by Israel's army. Alternate translation: "Kings and their armies flee from us because they are defeated"

plunder

things that are taken from the defeated army and brought to the victorious army's home.

Psalms 68:13

the wings of a dove are covered with silver ... gold

This means that some of the plunder is very valuable because it is covered with precious metals.

Psalms 68:14

scattered kings there ... snowed on Mount Zalmon

There were so many dead kings and soldiers on the mountain that they are spoken of as if they were snow covering the mountain. Alternate translation: "defeated so many enemy kings and soldiers there that they were like snowflakes covering Mount Zalmon"

scattered kings

Here "kings" refers to their armies as well. Alternate translation: "scattered the enemy kings and their armies"

Mount Zalmon

This is the name of a mountain.

Psalms 68:15

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A mighty mountain is the ... a high mountain is the
These two phrase have similar meanings and are used together to strengthen each other. Alternate translation: "a mighty and high mountain is the hill country of Bashan"
Psalms 68:16
Why do you look in envy ... for the place he will live?
This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The high hill country of Bashan should not look in envy at the mountain which God desires for the place he will live."
Psalms 68:17
twenty thousand, thousands upon thousands
This is probably not meant to be an exact number, but to indicate a large number. Alternate translation: "many thousands"
Psalms 68:18
ascended
To "ascend" is to to move up, to go toward the sky.
Psalms 68:19
daily bears our burdens
"carries our heavy loads every day." The Lord's care for his people is spoken of as if he was physically carrying their troubles as a burden.
the God who is our salvation
The words "is our salvation" can be translated with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "the God who saves us"
Psalms 68:21
will strike through the heads of his enemies
God is spoken of as a warrior who will kill his enemies by striking them in their heads in order to kill them. Alternate translation: "will kill his enemies by striking them in the head"
the hairy scalps
It seems to have been the custom for soldiers not to cut their hair during the time of war. Alternate translation: "the long-haired skulls"
walk in offenses against him
Offending God is spoken of as walking among the offenses. Alternate translation: "habitually offend him"
Psalms 68:22
I will bring them back
The word "them" refers to God's enemies.
the depths of the sea
This speaks of the most remote parts of the earth where people might try to escape from God as if they were the depths of the sea.
Psalms 68:23
crush your enemies
The total destruction of Israel's enemies is spoken of as if the Israelites had crushed them under their feet. Alternate translation: "totally defeat your enemies"
dipping your foot in blood
The violence of from the destruction of the enemies is spoke of in very graphic form, as if the Israelites would be standing in the blood of their dead enemies. Alternate translation: "stepping in their blood"
the tongues of your dogs may have their share
The bloodshed from the battle against Israel's enemies is spoken of as if it is so extensive that the dogs will lap up the flowing blood with their tongues.
Psalms 68:24
processions
A procession is a group of people walking together in an orderly manner as part of a ceremony.
Psalms 68:25
minstrels
people who play musical instruments
Psalms 68:26
Bless God in the assemblies; praise Yahweh, you who are from the fountain of Israel
It may be helpful to change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "You who are from the fountain of Israel, praise Yahweh and bless God in the assembly"
from the fountain of Israel
The word "fountain" is a metaphor for the ability of the man Israel to be the ancestor of many people: as much water comes from a fountain, so Israel is the ancestor of many people. This also implies that the call is to those who serve God as the man Israel did. Alternate translation: "true descendants of Israel" or "all of you descendants from Israel"
Psalms 68:27
their multitudes
"their group." The word "their" refers to the leaders of Judah.
Psalms 68:28
Your God, Israel, has decreed your strength
Some versions understand the Hebrew text differently: "Summon your strength, God" or "Use your strength, God"
Your God, Israel, has decreed
"People of Israel, your God has decreed"
to us
The word "us" refers to the writer and the people of Israel, but not to Yahweh, to whom he is speaking.
Psalms 68:29
to us
The word "us" refers to the writer and the people of Israel, but not to Yahweh, to whom he is speaking.
Reveal your power to us from your temple at Jerusalem
"When you are present in the temple at Jerusalem, show us your power"
Reveal your power
The abstract noun "power" can be stated as "strong." Alternate translation: "Show us that you are strong"
Psalms 68:30
Rebuke the wild beasts in the reeds, against the peoples
"Tell the wild beasts in the reeds that you are going to fight against them. Tell the peoples"
the wild beasts in the reeds
Many scholars believe these wild beasts are a metaphor that refers to the people of Egypt. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the people of Egypt who are like wild beasts in the reeds"
the peoples, that multitude of bulls and calves
The peoples of other nations are spoken of as if they were a large group of cattle. Alternate translation: "the powerful nations, who are like herds of bulls"
scatter

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This means cause something to spread quickly in different directions.

Psalms 68:31

Princes will come out of Egypt

It is implied that these princes come from Egypt in order to offer gifts to God in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Then the leaders of Egypt will bring gifts to you"

Cush

This refers to the people of Cush. Alternate translation: "The Cushites"

reach out with her hands to God

This is a symbolic action that represents worship to God. Alternate translation: "lift up her hands to praise God"

Psalms 68:32

you kingdoms of the earth

Here "kingdoms" refers to the citizens of the kingdoms. Alternate translation: "you people who are citizens of kingdoms all over the world"

Psalms 68:33

to him who rides on the heaven of heavens

These words further describe Yahweh [Psalm 68:32]

he lifts up his voice with power

This idiom means he speaks powerfully. Alternate translation: "he shouts powerfully" or "he speaks loudly"

Psalms 68:34

Ascribe strength to God

"Ascribe" means to give credit to someone. Alternate translation: "Strength belongs to God"

his strength is in the skies

The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "powerful." Alternate translation: "in the skies he also shows that he is powerful"

Psalms 68:35

God, you are fearsome in your holy place

Here the author speaks directly to God.

strength and power

These two words mean basically these same thing. They emphasize how much strength God provides to his people.

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69 For the chief musician; set to Shoshannim. A psalm of David.
Save me, God;
for the waters have put my life in danger.

2 I sink in deep mire, where there is no place to stand;
I have come into deep waters, where the floods flow over me.

3 I am weary with my crying; my throat is dry;
my eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 Those who hate me without a cause
are more than the hairs on my head;
those who would cut me off,
being my enemies for wrong reasons, are mighty;
what I did not steal,
I have to give back.

5 God, you know my foolishness,
and my sins are not hidden from you.

6 Let not those who hope in you be put to shame because of me,
Lord Yahweh of hosts;
let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor because of me,
God of Israel.

7 For your sake I have borne rebuke;
shame has covered my face.

8 I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my mother's children.

9 For the zeal of your house has eaten me up,
and the rebukes of those who rebuke you have fallen on me.

10 When I weep and fast,

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I must endure scorn.

11 When I put on sackcloth,
I became a byword to them.

12 Those who sit in the city gate talk about me;
I am a song of drunkards.

13 But as for me, my prayer is to you, Yahweh,
at a time that you will accept;
answer me in the trustworthiness of your salvation.

14 Pull me out of the mire,
and do not let me sink;
let me be taken away from those who hate me
and rescued out of the deep waters.

15 Do not let the floods of water overwhelm me,
neither let the deep swallow me up.
Do not let the pit shut its mouth on me.

16 Answer me, Yahweh, for your covenant faithfulness is good;
because your mercies for me are many, turn to me.

17 Do not hide your face from your servant,
for I am in distress; answer me quickly.

18 Come to me and redeem me.
Because of my enemies, ransom me.

19 You know my rebuke, my shame, and my dishonor;
my adversaries are all before you.

20 Rebuke has broken my heart;
I am full of heaviness;
I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none;
I looked for comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave me poison for my food;
in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

22 Let their table before them become a snare;
when they think they are in safety, let it become a trap.

23 Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see;
and always make their loins shake.

24 Pour out your indignation on them,
and let your raging anger overtake them.

25 Let their encampment be a desolation;

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let no one live in their tents.

26 For they persecuted the one you struck down.
They repeated the account of the pain of those you have wounded.

27 Accuse them of having committed iniquity after iniquity;
do not let them come into your righteous victory.

28 Let them be blotted out of the Book of Life
and not be written down along with the righteous.

29 But I am poor and in pain;
let your salvation, God, set me up on high.

30 I will praise the name of God with a song
and will exalt him with thanksgiving.

31 That will please Yahweh better than an ox
or a bull that has horns and hooves.

32 The meek have seen it and are glad;
you who seek after God, let your hearts live.

33 For Yahweh hears the needy
and does not despise his prisoners.

34 Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas and everything that moves in them.

35 For God will save Zion and will rebuild the cities of Judah;
the people will live there and have it as a possession.

36 His servants' descendants will inherit it;
and those who love his name will live there.

Psalm 69 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 69 is a psalm of deliverance. The author prays to be saved from his enemies and for them to be punished. (See: deliverer and save)

Special concepts in this chapter

Deliverance

The author prays for God to rescue him from his enemies. They show him no mercy, and he asks God to show them no mercy. (See: mercy)

Links:

Psalms 69:1

Psalms 69:1

General Information:

This psalm is a prayer for help. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Shoshannim. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in

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Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Shoshannim

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 45:1.

for the waters have put my life in danger

The writer describes the troubles in his life as if he were drowning in a flood of water. Alternate translation: "for it feels like I am drowning in the waters"

Psalms 69:2

I sink in deep mire

The writer describes the troubles in his life as if he were sinking in deep mud. Alternate translation: "For it feels like I am sinking in deep mud and will die"

mire

thick mud

there is no place to stand

The writer uses a negative statement to stress how unstable and uncertain his condition is.

I have come into deep waters, where the floods flow over me

The writer describes his problems as if he was drowning in a deep, raging river. Alternate translation: "t feels like I am in deep waters, and the floodwaters flow over me"

Psalms 69:3

weary

very tired

my eyes fail

This idiom means the writer has cried so much that his eyes do not see well any longer. Alternate translation: "my eyes are swollen from tears"

Psalms 69:4

more than the hairs on my head

This is an exaggeration to express how many enemies the writer has. Alternate translation: "more than I can count, like the hairs on my head"

cut me off

This idiom means "kill me."

Psalms 69:5

my foolishness

The abstract noun "foolishness" can be stated as "foolish." Alternate translation: "the foolish things that I have done"

my sins are not hidden from you

This can be expressed as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "you know all my sins"

Psalms 69:6

Let not those ... let not those

"Do not let those ... do not let those"

Let not those who hope in you be put to shame because of me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Please do not allow anyone to put those who wait for you to shame because of me"

let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor because of me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Please do not allow anyone to bring dishonor on those who seek you because of me"

those who seek you

Seeking God represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him. Alternate translation: 1) "those who ask you for help" or 2) "those who worship and obey you"

Psalms 69:7

For your sake

"On your behalf" or "For you"

I have borne rebuke

The rebukes of the writer's enemies are spoken of as if they are a heavy load that he has had to carry. Alternate translation: "I have endured the insults of my enemies"

shame has covered my face

The writer speaks of the shame that he feels as if it is a foul thing on his face that everyone can clearly see. Alternate translation: "I am thoroughly humiliated"

Psalms 69:8

I have become a stranger to my brothers

The writer speaks of himself as if he were not part of his own family. Alternate translation: "My brothers no longer know or accept me at all"

a stranger to my brothers ... an alien to my mother's children

These two phrases mean the same thing. They are repeated to stress his separation from his own family.

an alien to my mother's children

It is implied that "I have become" should be understood here. The writer speaks of himself as if he were not part of his own family. Alternate translation: "my brothers no longer know or trust me at all"

Psalms 69:9

the zeal of your house has eaten me up

The writer speaks of his zeal for God's temple as if it was a wild animal that devours the writer. Alternate translation: "the zeal I have for your house consumes me"

has eaten me up

This idiom means that the writer's zeal for the temple takes over all of his thoughts and actions. Alternate translation: "completely controls all that I think and do"

the rebukes ... have fallen on me

The writer speaks of the rebukes of Gods' enemies as if they were rocks that were thrown at the writer. Alternate translation: "those who rebuke you have also thrown their rebukes at me"

Psalms 69:10

I weep and fast

The fact that the writer was fasting indicates that he was sad about the way people treated God's temple.

I must endure scorn

"my enemies rebuked me because I was weeping and not eating"

Psalms 69:11

When I put on sackcloth

Wearing rough, cheap clothing was a symbol of mourning over sin.

I became a byword to them

The writer speaks of himself as if he was the sad or foolish person that people joke about in a rhyme or proverb; the taunting was intended to bring shame to him. Alternate translation: "I became a joke to them" or "they made fun of me"

Psalms 69:12

Those who sit in the city gate

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Here "city gate" is associated with leadership of a town. Alternate translation: "The important people of the city"

I am a song of drunkards

The writer speaks of himself as if he was the person about whom the drunkards sing mocking songs. Alternate translation: "the drunkards of the city sing disgusting songs about me"

Psalms 69:13

at a time that you will accept

"in your accepted time" or "when you are willing"

answer me in the trustworthiness of your salvation

The abstract nouns "trustworthiness" and "salvation" can be stated as "faithfully" and "rescue." Alternate translation: "rescue me because you faithfully love me, as you have promised to do"

Psalms 69:14

Pull me out ... do not let me sink

These two phrases mean the same thing.

Pull me out of the mire, and do not let me sink

The writer speaks of his danger from his enemies as if he was sinking into a pit of mud. "Do not allow me to sink anymore in the mud"

let me be taken away

Here "take away" refers to being removed from danger. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "take me away" or "rescue me"

rescued out

It is understood that "let me be" is implied here. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "please rescue me out"

rescued out of the deep waters

The writer speaks about his danger from his enemies as if he was drowning in deep water.

Psalms 69:15

the floods of water overwhelm me

The writer speaks about his danger from his enemies as if flood waters were covering him completely.

the deep swallow me up

The writer speaks of the deep as if it was a deadly animal that was about to eat him. Alternate translation: "the deep waters swallow me up like a dangerous animal"

Do not let the pit shut its mouth on me

Here the "pit" is spoken of as if it has a mouth like a person and could eat the writer. Alternate translation: "Do not let the pit consume me" or "Do not let the pit of death close over me"

Psalms 69:16

your covenant faithfulness is good

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "you are good and faithful to your covenant"

your mercies for me are many

"you are very merciful to me"

turn to me

The idea of turning towards someone means to pay attention to them or help them. Alternate translation: "help me"

Psalms 69:17

Do not hide your face from your servant

To hide one's face means to refuse to hear or help someone. Alternate translation: "Please help your servant" or "Please help me"

in distress

"in great trouble"

Psalms 69:18

redeem me

The writer asks God to redeem him as if the writer were a slave whose freedom God could purchase. Alternate translation: "free me"

ransom me

The writer asks God to ransom him as if the writer were a captive whose release could be paid for with money. Alternate translation: "rescue me"

Psalms 69:19

my rebuke, my shame, and my dishonor

These abstract nouns can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "how people have rebuked me, shamed me, and dishonored me"

my adversaries are all before you

Here "before you" means that God sees and knows all about them. Alternate translation: "you know who all my enemies are"

Psalms 69:20

broken my heart

This idiom means a person is extremely sad. Alternate translation: "offended me deeply"

I am full of heaviness

The writer's great sadness is spoken of as if he was full of a heavy weight. Alternate translation: "I am heavy with sorrow"

to take pity

to feel sorrow or sadness

Psalms 69:21

They gave me poison for my food

This is probably figurative. The food that people gave to the writer was so bad that it tasted like poison. Alternate translation: "They gave me food that tasted like poison"

Psalms 69:22

Let their table before them become a snare ... let it become a trap

The writer would like for his enemies' food to completely ruin them as if they were small animals caught in a snare or a trap. Alternate translation: "May their food ruin them like a snare ... may it destroy them like a trap"

their table

This refers to food that was served on the tables, possibly at a feast. Alternate translation: "their own food" or "sacrificial feasts"

Psalms 69:23

Let their eyes be darkened

The writer speaks of eyes that cannot see well as if they were darkened. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Please make them unable to see anything"

make their loins shake

Weak backs are spoken of as if they are shaking in weakness. Alternate translation: "cause their backs to be too weak for them to do anything"

their loins

"their sides" or "their backs"

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Psalms 69:24
Pour out your indignation on them
God's demonstration of his anger is described as if he poured it out on his enemies like water.
indignation
anger of a person who has suffered injustice
your raging anger
"your burning anger" or "your strong anger"
overtake them
God's judgment on his enemies is described as if he ran after them and caught them.
Psalms 69:25
be a desolation
This abstract noun can be stated as "abandoned." Alternate translation: "become abandoned"
Psalms 69:26
they persecuted the one
"they persecuted the man"
you struck down
Here to be "struck down" refers to punishment. Alternate translation: "you punished"
those you have wounded
Here to be "wounded" refers to causing them to suffer. Alternate translation: "those you have caused to suffer"
Psalms 69:27
Accuse them of having committed iniquity after iniquity
"Keep making a record of all their sins"
iniquity after iniquity
"very many sins"
do not let them come into your righteous victory
To come into God's victory is an idiom that means to receive a reward from him. Alternate translation: "do not let them receive your righteous reward"
Psalms 69:28
Let them be blotted out of
Here "them" refers to the names of the enemies. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Wipe out their names in"
not be written down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "do not write down their names"
Psalms 69:29
let your salvation, God, set me up on high
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated with the verb "save." Here "on high" refers to a place of safety." Alternate translation: "God, save me and put me in a safe place"
Psalms 69:30
the name of God
Here "name" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "God"
with thanksgiving
This abstract noun can be stated with the verb "thank." Alternate translation: "by thanking him"
Psalms 69:31
better than an ox or a bull
It is understood that the ox and the bull are to be offered to God as sacrifices. Alternate translation: "better than sacrificing an ox or sacrificing a bull"
a bull that has horns and hooves
This phrase distinguishes the full grown bulls from other younger cows. Alternate translation: "a bull that is full grown with horns and hooves"
Psalms 69:32
The meek
This refers to meek people in general. Alternate translation: "Meek people"
you who seek after God
Seeking God represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him. Alternate translation: "you who ask God for help" or "you who think about God"
let your hearts live
Here "hearts" refer to the people. Here "live" is an idiom that means to be encouraged. Alternate translation: "may you be encouraged"
Psalms 69:33
Yahweh hears
Here "hears" means to respond. Alternate translation: "Yahweh answers"
the needy
This refers to needy people in general. Alternate translation: "needy people"
his prisoners
"those who have suffered for him"
Psalms 69:34
Let heaven and earth praise him ... the seas
Here heaven and earth and the seas are spoken of as if they are people who are able to praise God.
the seas and everything that moves in them
It is implied that "Let ... praise him" should be understood here. Alternate translation: "let he seas and everything that moves in them praise him"
Psalms 69:35
God will save Zion
Here "Zion" refers to the people in Zion. Alternate translation: "God will save the people of Zion"
have it as a possession
The word "it" refers to the land of Judah.
Psalms 69:36
who love his name
Here "name" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "who love God"

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70 [1] For the chief musician. A psalm of David; to bring to remembrance.
Save me, God!
Yahweh, come quickly and help me.

[2] Let those who try to take my life

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be ashamed and humiliated;
let them be turned back and brought to dishonor,
those who take pleasure in my pain.

3 Let them be turned back because of their shame,
those who say, "Aha, aha."

4 Let all those who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
let those who love your salvation always say,
"May God be praised."

5 But I am poor and needy;
hurry to me, God;
you are my help and you rescue me.
Yahweh, do not delay.

Psalm 70 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 70 is a psalm of deliverance. The psalmist asks God to deliver him from his enemies.

Special concepts in this chapter

Help

The author needs help and needs it immediately.

Psalm 40

This psalm is an almost exact duplicate of Psalm 40:13-17.

Links:

Psalms 70:1

Psalms 70:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David; to bring to remembrance

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

A psalm of David

Possible meanings are 1) David wrote the psalm or 2) the psalm is about David or 3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

Psalms 70:2

those who

"the people who"

take my life

This idiom means "kill me."

be ashamed and humiliated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may God put them to shame and bring disgrace upon them"

let them be turned back and brought to dishonor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may God turn them around and make them ashamed for what they have done"

turned back

To be stopped or thwarted is spoken of as being turned back from their attack. Alternate translation: "stopped"

Psalms 70:3

those who say, "Aha, aha."

This is an expression of mocking laughter. You may replace "Aha, aha" with whatever laughing sounds like in your language. Alternate translation: "those who mock and laugh at me"

Psalms 70:4

seek you

Seeking God represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him. Alternate translation: "ask you for help" or "think about you and obey you"

rejoice and be glad

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of gladness. Alternate translation: "rejoice greatly" or "be very glad"

love your salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "love you because you saved them"

always say

This exaggeration emphasizes that it is important to praise God often.

May God be praised

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let everyone praise God"
Psalms 70:5
poor and needy
Here the words "poor" and "needy" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he is unable to help himself. Alternate translation: "very needy"
hurry to me
The writer speaks of God as if he were running to the writer in order to help him. Alternate translation: "come quickly to help me"
you are my help and you rescue me
Here the phrase "you rescue me" explains how God is his "help." Alternate translation: "you help me by rescuing me"
do not delay
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "please come quickly"

ל 71 In you, Yahweh, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.

2 Rescue me and make me safe in your righteousness;
turn your ear to me and save me.

3 Be to me a rock for refuge
where I may always go;
you have given a command to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.

4 Rescue me, my God, out of the hand of the wicked,
out of the hand of the unrighteous and ruthless.

5 For you are my hope, Lord Yahweh.
I have trusted in you ever since I was a child.

6 By you I have been supported from the womb;
you are he who took me out of my mother's belly;
my praise will be always about you.

7 I am a marvel to many people;
you are my strong refuge.

8 My mouth will be filled with your praise,
all the day with your honor.

9 Do not throw me away in my time of old age;
do not abandon me when my strength fails.

10 For my enemies are talking about me;
those who watch for my life are plotting together.

11 They say, "God has abandoned him;
pursue and take him,
for there is no one to save him."

12 God, do not be far from me;
my God, hurry to help me.

13 Let them be put to shame and destroyed,
those who are hostile to my life;
let them be covered with rebuke and dishonor,

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those who seek my hurt.

14 But I will always hope in you
and will praise you more and more.

15 My mouth will tell about your righteousness
and your salvation all the day,
although I cannot understand it.

16 I will come with the mighty acts of the Lord Yahweh;
I will make mention of your righteousness, yours alone.

17 God, you have taught me from my youth;
even now I declare your wonderful deeds.

18 Indeed, even when I am old and gray-headed, God,
do not abandon me,
as I have been declaring your strength to the next generation,
your power to everyone who is to come.

19 Your righteousness also, God, is very high;
you who have done great things,
God, who is like you?

20 You who made me see many troubles
will revive us again
and will bring us up again
from the depths of the earth.

21 May you increase my honor;
turn again and comfort me.

22 I will also give thanks to you with the harp
for your trustworthiness, my God;
to you I will sing praises with the harp,
Holy One of Israel.

23 My lips will shout for joy when I sing praises to you—
even my soul, which you have redeemed.

24 My tongue will also talk about your righteousness
all day long;
for they have been put to shame and are confused,
those who sought my hurt.

Psalm 71 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 71 is a psalm of deliverance. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

God has helped the psalmist all his life. Now that he is old, his enemy thinks that God has abandoned him; but the

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psalmist trusts in God and will praise Yahweh with songs of praise. (See: trust)

Links:

Psalms 71:1

Psalms 71:1

General Information:

This psalm is a prayer for help. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

In you, Yahweh, I take refuge

Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "go to you, Yahweh, for protection"

let me never be put to shame

This can be stated in active form. See how "do not let me be humiliated" is translated in [Psalms 25:2]

Psalms 71:2

make me safe in your righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) "make me safe because you always do what is right" or 2) "make me safe as I do what you want me to do"

turn your ear to me

Here "your ear" refers to God's willingness to hear someone who prays to him. See how this is translated in [Psalms 17:6]

save me

"keep me safe"

Psalms 71:3

Be to me a rock for refuge

The psalmist requests that Yahweh make him as safe as he would be if he were hiding in a large rock or cliff where his enemies could not find him.

rock ... rock

These are hills or mountains, not rocks one can hold in one's hand.

you have given a command

"you have commanded your angels"

you are my rock and my fortress

The psalmist believes that Yahweh will protect him and make him as safe as if he were hiding on top of a large mountain or inside a man-made fortress.

Psalms 71:4

out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous

Possible meanings are 1) the word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "from the power of the wicked, from the power of the unrighteous" or 2) "hand" refers to the person himself. Alternate translation: "from wicked people, from unrighteous ... people" or "so that wicked people and unrighteous ... people cannot harm me"

wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous

"wicked; rescue me out of the hand of the unrighteous." You can make clear the understood information.

wicked ... unrighteous ... ruthless

These adjectives can be translated as noun phrases. Alternate translation: "wicked people ... unrighteous people ... ruthless people"

Psalms 71:5

you are my hope

Here "hope" is a metonym for the one in whom the psalmist hopes. Alternate translation: "you are the one whom I confidently expect to help me"

Psalms 71:6

By you I have been supported from the womb

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have supported me from the womb" or "You have taken care of me ever since I came out of my mother's womb"

you are he

"you are the one"

Psalms 71:7

I am a marvel to many people

"Many people are surprised to see how well I live and want to live as I do"

Psalms 71:8

My mouth will be filled with your praise ... with your honor

The psalmist speaks of his desire to praise and honor Yahweh with the words he speaks as if his mouth were full of words the way it can be full of food. Alternate translation: "My mouth will be filled with words that praise you ... that honor you" or "I will always praise you ... will always honor you"

your praise

Here "praise" refer to the words that he will use to praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "words that tell people how great you are"

your honor

Here "honor" refer to the words that he will use to honor Yahweh. Alternate translation: "words that cause people to honor you"

all the day

"all day long" or "at all times"

Psalms 71:9

Do not throw me away ... do not abandon me

These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis.

Do not throw me away

"Do not force me to go away from you." For God to reject him is spoken of as God forcing him to go away. See how this is translated in [Psalms 51:11]

do not abandon me

"do not leave me forever"

Psalms 71:10

watch for my life

It is implied that they are watching for an opportunity to take his life. The euphemism "to take a life" means to kill. Alternate translation: "watch for an opportunity to take my life" or "wait for an opportunity to kill me"

Psalms 71:11

They say

This can be translated to make explicit that they are talking about him. Alternate translation: "They say about me"

pursue and take him

"follow him when he runs away, and kill him"

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Psalms 71:12
do not be far from me
Because Yahweh has not yet answered the writer's request, he speaks of Yahweh as if Yahweh were standing far away from the writer.
hurry to help me
"help me soon"
Psalms 71:13
Let them be put to shame and destroyed, those who are hostile to my life
"Let those who are hostile to my life be put to shame and destroyed"
Let them be put to shame and destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Put them to shame and destroy them"
those who are hostile to my life
The words "my life" represent the person. The idiom "hostile to my life" means that these are people who try to harm him by accusing him of wrongdoing. Alternate translation: "those who accuse me of doing wrong"
let them be covered with rebuke and dishonor, those who seek my hurt
"let those who seek my hurt be covered with rebuke and dishonor"
let them be covered with rebuke and dishonor
This can be stated in active form. The abstract nouns "rebuke" and "dishonor" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "may everyone rebuke them, and may no one honor them"
those who seek my hurt
The noun "hurt" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "those who are looking for ways to harm me"
Psalms 71:14
more and more
"more all the time" or "always more than I have before"
Psalms 71:15
My mouth will tell about your righteousness and your salvation all the day, although I cannot understand it
"I do not completely understand your righteousness and your salvation, but my mouth will tell about them all the day"
My mouth will tell
The mouth is synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will tell" or "I will speak with my mouth and tell"
your righteousness
This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "righteousness." Alternate translation: "how righteous you are" or "all the good things you do"
your salvation
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "how you have saved me" or "how you save people"
Psalms 71:16
I will come
Possible meanings are 1) "I will go to where people worship Yahweh" or 2) "I will go to my enemies"
with the mighty acts of the Lord Yahweh
Possible meanings are 1) "I will tell them of the mighty deeds the Lord Yahweh has done" or 2) "because the Lord Yahweh has given me strength to do mighty acts."
will make mention of
"will talk about"
Psalms 71:17
taught me
The implied information may be stated clearly. "taught me many things"
Psalms 71:18
God, do not abandon me
"God, please do not leave me"
I have been declaring your strength
The abstract noun "strength" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I have been telling how strong you are"
to the next generation
"to those who are children today"
your power to everyone who is to come
The omitted information may be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and as I declare your power to everyone who is to come"
everyone who is to come
This exaggeration refers to everyone the writer can speak to. Alternate translation: "so as many people as I can tell will know"
Psalms 71:19
Your righteousness also, God, is very high
The psalmist speaks of the good things God has done as though they were put together as a high building or a mountain.
who is like you?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is no one like you!"
Psalms 71:20
revive
strengthen or make lively again
from the depths of the earth
"The depths of the earth" here is a metaphor for where people go when they die. The psalmist had not already died, but in this exaggeration he speaks as if he had. Alternate translation: "when we are near death"
Psalms 71:21
May you increase ... turn again and comfort
"I want you to increase ... I want you to turn again and comfort." Some translations read, "You will increase ... you will turn again and comfort."
turn again and comfort me
This describes one action through two phrases. Alternate translation: "comfort me again"
Psalms 71:22
to you I will sing praises with the harp, Holy One of Israel
"to you, who is the Holy One of Israel, I will sing praises while I play the harp"
Psalms 71:23
My lips will shout for joy
"Lips" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will shout for joy"
even my soul, which you have redeemed
The words the psalmist has omitted can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and my soul, which you have

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redeemed, will sing praises"
my soul
Here "soul" refers to the whole person.
Psalms 71:24
My tongue will also talk
Here "tongue" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will also talk"
they have been put to shame and are confused, those who sought my hurt
"those who sought my hurt have been put to shame and are confused"
for they have been put to shame and are confused
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God has put to shame and confused them"
those who sought my hurt
This refers to the enemies of the writer. (Psalms 71:10). See how "those who seek my hurt" is translated in Psalms 71:13.

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72 A psalm of Solomon.
1 Give the king your righteous decrees, God,
your righteousness to the king's son.

2 May he judge your people with righteousness
and your poor with justice.

3 May the mountains produce peace for the people;
may the hills produce righteousness.

4 May he judge the poor of the people;
may he save the children of the needy
and break in pieces the oppressor.

5 May they honor you while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon lasts throughout all generations.

6 May he come down like rain on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.

7 May the righteous flourish in his days,
and may there be an abundance of peace till the moon is no more.

8 May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

9 May those who live in the wilderness bow down before him;
may his enemies lick the dust.

10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the islands render tribute;
may the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.

11 Indeed, may all kings fall down before him;
may all nations serve him.

12 For he helps the needy person who cries out
and the poor person who has no other helper.

13 He has pity on the poor and needy,
and he saves the lives of needy people.

14 He redeems their lives from oppression and violence,

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and their blood is precious in his sight.

15 May he live!
May the gold of Sheba be given to him.
May people always pray for him;
may God bless him all day long.

16 May there be abundance of grain in the land;
on the mountaintops may their crops wave.
May the fruit of it be like Lebanon;
may the people flourish in the cities like the grass of the field.

17 May his name endure forever;
may his name continue as long as the sun;
may people be blessed in him;
may all nations call him blessed.

18 May Yahweh God, the God of Israel, be blessed,
who alone does wonderful things.

19 May his glorious name be blessed forever,
and may the whole earth be filled with his glory.
Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David son of Jesse are finished.

BOOK THREE

(Psalms 73-89)

Psalm 72 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 72 is a psalm for the king when he begins to be the king. David wrote it as a blessing on his son, Solomon. (See: bless)

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessings for the king

May the king be honored throughout the world. May he help the poor. May there be prosperity while he is king.

Close of Book Two

The whole collection of Psalms has been divided into several "books." This is the last psalm of the second book. It is attributed to Solomon, the son of David.

Links:

Psalms 72:1

Psalms 72:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry. Possible meanings for the header "a psalm of Solomon" are 1) David wrote this psalm about Solomon

A psalm of Solomon

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Give the king your righteous decrees, God, your righteousness to the king's son

Possible meanings are 1) "Give me, the king, your righteous decrees, God, your righteousness to my son" or 2) "Give me, the king, your righteous decrees, God, your righteousness to me, the king's son." People in those days would often speak

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of themselves as if they were someone else. However, it would be best to translate this as though the psalmist is speaking of someone else, not of himself.

Give the king your righteous decrees

"Enable the king to judge rightly"

your righteousness to the king's son

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Here the word "righteousness" refers to making righteous decisions. Alternate translation: "give your righteousness to the king's son" or "enable the king's son to rule with righteousness"

Psalms 72:2

May he judge

If David wrote this, he is talking about his son, "the king's son," he is speaking of the time when his son will be king. If Solomon wrote it, even though he is writing about himself, it would be best to translate as though he were writing about someone else. Either way, "May the king judge" is the best translation.

your people ... your poor

The psalmist is speaking to God.

your poor

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. The adjective "poor" refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "may he judge your poor people"

Psalms 72:3

May the mountains produce peace ... may the hills produce righteousness

The psalmist speaks of the people of Israel as if they were the mountains and hills on which they live. He speaks of the mountains and the hills as if they were the entire land of Israel, as if that land were a garden that produces fruit, and of peace and righteousness as if they are that fruit. Alternate translation: "May the people of the land live in peace ... may they do everything in a righteous way"

Psalms 72:4

he ... he

These refer to the one who will "judge" (Psalms 72:2).

break in pieces the oppressor

The writer speaks of the king defeating or punishing people who oppress others as if those people were objects that the king would break into pieces. Alternate translation: "punish the person who oppresses others"

Psalms 72:5

while the sun endures, and as long as the moon lasts

The sun and the moon are metonyms for the day and the night, which together are a merism for all time. Alternate translation: "forever, and without ending"

Psalms 72:6

May he come down like rain on the mown grass

The king will be good, and he will do good things for his people as if he were rain doing good for freshly cut grass.

May he come

"I desire that he come"

like showers that water

"May he come down like showers that water." The king will be good, and he will do good things for his people as if he were rain doing good for the ground.

Psalms 72:7

the righteous

The adjective "righteous" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "righteous people"

in his days

Possible meanings are 1) "while the king rules" or 2) "as long as the righteous person lives" or "as long as the righteous people live."

may there be an abundance of peace

The psalmist speaks as if peace were a physical object like food. An "abundance" is when there is much of something. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "abundance" and "peace." Alternate translation: "may righteous people live peacefully"

till the moon is no more

"as long as the moon shines" or "forever"

Psalms 72:8

May he have dominion

"May the king have dominion"

from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth

Both of these expressions are merisms and refer to the whole earth.

from sea to sea

from the Dead Sea and the Sea of Kinnereth in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

the River

"the Euphrates River," which the Israelites would travel to on land by going north

the ends of the earth

as far as people could travel on land by different routes to the south. The Israelites spoke of the earth as if it were a flat surface with ends.

Psalms 72:9

lick the dust

This is a metaphor for extreme humiliation. Alternate translation: "do everything they can so he will allow them to live"

Psalms 72:10

Tarshish

This is the name of a place.

render

pay

offer gifts

"give gifts"

Seba

This is the name of a country. It is not the same country as Sheba.

Psalms 72:11

fall down before him

"bow down before him" or "honor him as their king"

all nations

Here the word "nations" represents the people who live in the nations. Alternate translation: "the people who live in every nation"

Psalms 72:12

no other helper

"no one else to help him"

Psalms 72:13

He has pity on the poor and needy

"He wants to stop the poor and needy from suffering"

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the poor and needy
Here the nominal adjectives "poor" and "needy" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that they are unable to help themselves. Alternate translation: "those who are poor and those who are needy"
Psalms 72:14
redeems their lives
Here "lives" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "redeems them" or "saves them" or "rescues them"
oppression and violence
These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the needy suffer. These abstract nouns can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "those who oppress them and hurt them"
their blood is precious in his sight
Here "their blood" is a metonym for their well-being. The sight of Yahweh represents his judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "their well-being is very important to him" or "he wants them to live well"
in his sight
See how this phrase is translated in Psalms 19:14.
Psalms 72:15
May he live!
This saying was used to honor the king by expressing a desire to have him live a long time. Alternate translation: "May the king live a long time!" or "I desire that the king live a long time!"
May the gold of Sheba be given to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May they give him the gold of Sheba" or "May he receive the gold of Sheba"
all day long
This idiom means "continually" and does not refer only to one day. Alternate translation: "continually" or "all the time"
Psalms 72:16
abundance of grain
An "abundance" is when there is much of something. This abstract noun can be stated as "much" or "plenty" Alternate translation: "much grain" or "plenty of grain"
crops
plants that people grow for food
wave
Use the word for what long grass does when a gentle wind blows on it and it moves slowly back and forth.
like Lebanon
"like the cedar trees in Lebanon." These trees were beautiful and had wood that was good for building. The meaning of this can be made clear.
the people flourish in the cities like the grass of the field
The prosperity of the people in the cities is spoken of as if they were grass that grows abundantly in the fields.
Psalms 72:17
May his name endure forever
This saying is used to honor God by expressing the desire for people to always remember him. Alternate translation: "May people always know about him" or "May people never forget who he is"
his name
Here "his name" refers to God's reputation. Alternate translation: "the king's name" or "the king's reputation" or "the king's fame"
as long as the sun
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "as long as the sun endures" or "as long as the sun shines"
may people be blessed in him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may God cause him to do good things for people"
call him blessed
"recognize that God has blessed them"
Psalms 72:18
General Information:
These verses are more than the end of this psalm. It is the closing statement for all of Book 2 of the Psalms, which starts at Psalm 42 and ends with Psalm 72.
May Yahweh God, the God of Israel, be blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people bless Yahweh God, the God of Israel"
Psalms 72:19
May his glorious name be blessed forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people bless his glorious name forever" or, treating "name" as a metonym for Yahweh himself, "May people forever know how glorious he is"
his glorious name be blessed
"he, who is glorious, be blessed"
may the whole earth be filled with his glory
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may his glory fill the whole earth" or "may he fill the whole earth with his glory"
Amen and Amen
The word "Amen" is repeated to emphasize approval of what has been said. See how you translated this in Psalms 41:13. Alternate translation: "May it certainly be so"
Psalms 72:20
The prayers of David son of Jesse are finished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "David, the son of Jesse has finished his prayers" or "This is the last prayer of the David the son of Jesse"

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73 A psalm of Asaph.
1 Surely God is good to Israel,
to those with a pure heart.

2 But as for me, my feet almost slipped;

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my feet almost slipped out from under me

3 because I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For they have no pain until their death,
but they are strong and well fed.

5 They are not in trouble like other men;
they are not afflicted like other men.

6 Pride adorns them like a necklace around their neck;
violence clothes them like a robe.

7 Out of such blindness comes sin;
evil thoughts pass through their hearts.

8 They mock and speak wickedly;
in their arrogance they threaten oppression.

9 They set their mouth against the heavens,
and their tongues march through the earth.

10 Therefore his people turn to them
and abundant waters are drained out.

11 They say, "How does God know?
Is there knowledge with the Most High?"

12 Take notice: these people are wicked;
they are always at ease, becoming richer and richer.

13 Surely it is in vain that I have guarded my heart
and washed my hands in innocence.

14 For all the day long I have been afflicted
and disciplined every morning.

15 If I had said, "I will say these things,"
then I would have betrayed this generation of your children.

16 Though I tried to understand these things,
it was too difficult for me.

17 Then I went into God's sanctuary
and came to understand their fate.

18 Surely you put them in slippery places;
you bring them down to ruin.

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19 How they become a wilderness in a moment!
They come to an end and are finished in awful terrors.

20 They are like a dream after one wakes up;
Lord, when you arise,
you will despise their image.

21 For my heart was embittered,
and I was deeply wounded.

22 I was ignorant and lacked insight;
I was like a senseless animal before you.

23 Yet I am always with you;
you hold my right hand.

24 You will guide me with your advice
and afterward receive me to glory.

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
There is no one on earth that I desire but you.

26 My flesh and my heart grow weak,
but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.

27 Those who are far from you will perish;
you will destroy all those who are unfaithful to you.

28 But as for me, all I need to do is to approach God.
I have made the Lord Yahweh my refuge.
I will declare all your deeds.

Psalm 73 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 73 is a wisdom psalm. It explains the problem of wicked people who seem to prosper. (See: wise and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Evil people

Sometimes it seems that wicked people have no problems and everything works for them. Despite this, they will be destroyed. In contrast, the righteous always have God to help them through problems. (See: righteous)

Psalms by Asaph

There are twelve psalms attributed to Asaph; the first one is Psalm 50, which is in Book Two, and the other eleven (Psalm 73–83) are at the beginning of Book Three.

Links:

Psalms 73:1

Psalms 73:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say

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that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Psalms 73:2

my feet almost slipped; my feet almost slipped out from under me

The psalmist speaks of being unable to trust God and wanting to sin as if he had almost fallen while walking on a slippery path. Alternate translation: "I almost stopped trusting in God; I was almost guilty of committing a great sin against him"

Psalms 73:3

I was envious of the arrogant

"I envied the arrogant" or "I did not want arrogant people to have the good things that they had"

the arrogant

The adjective "arrogant" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "arrogant people"

the prosperity of the wicked

The word "prosperity" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "how the wicked have so many good things"

the wicked

The adjective "wicked" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "wicked people"

Psalms 73:4

General Information:

Asaph begins to describe how he sometimes wants to complain to God about those who are "arrogant" and "wicked" (Psalms 73:3).

Psalms 73:5

They are not in trouble like other men

They do not have to work hard to meet their needs for food, shelter, and clothing, and they are always healthy.

they are not afflicted like other men

"they do not suffer the way other people do"

Psalms 73:6

General Information:

Asaph continues to describe how he sometimes wants to complain to God about those who are "arrogant" and "wicked" (Psalms 73:3).

Pride adorns them like a necklace around their neck; violence clothes them like a robe

This means the wicked show everyone how proud and violent they are as if they were wearing a necklace or beautiful robe.

necklace ... robe

This refers to things that rich and important people wear.

necklace

a chain usually made of gold or jewels that goes around the neck

Psalms 73:7

Out of such blindness comes sin

Because they are like blind people who cannot see where they are going, they sin without knowing it. Being blind is a metaphor for a person being unable to see how wicked he is.

evil thoughts pass through their hearts

Here the psalmist describes people's thoughts as if they were people. He also describes the inner beings of wicked people as if they were a building in which those people could walk. Alternate translation: "in their inner beings they are always thinking about more evil things to do"

Psalms 73:8

General Information:

Asaph continues to describe how he sometimes wants to complain to God about those who are "arrogant" and "wicked" (Psalms 73:3).

They mock

Whom they mock can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "They mock God and his people"

Psalms 73:9

They set their mouth against the heavens

Here "their mouth" is a metonym for their speech, and "heavens" is a metonym for God, who lives in the heavens. Alternate translation: "They speak against God, who is in the heavens"

their tongues march through the earth

The word "tongues" represents the people themselves. Possible meanings are 1) "they go through the earth saying bad things about God" or "they go everywhere and boast about themselves."

Psalms 73:10

General Information:

Asaph continues to describe how he sometimes wants to complain to God about those who are "arrogant" and "wicked" (Psalms 73:3).

his people turn to them

Possible meanings are 1) "God's people love the wicked people" or "the wicked people return to this place"

abundant waters are drained out

Possible meanings are 1) "God's people listen gladly to the words of the wicked people" or 2) "the wicked people have plenty of food to eat and wine to drink"

Psalms 73:11

They say

the wicked people say

How does God know? Is there knowledge with the Most High?

These rhetorical questions are to show contempt for God. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Surely God does not know what we are doing. The Most High has no knowledge of it."

Psalms 73:13

General Information:

In verses 13 and 14, Asaph continues to describe how he sometimes wants to complain to God about those who are "arrogant" and "wicked" (Psalms 73:3). In verse 15 he begins to talk about what he is really thinking.

I have

The word "I" refers to Asaph.

guarded my heart

Asaph speaks of guarding his heart as if he were guarding a city or building against enemies. Alternate translation: "I have kept my thoughts pure"

washed my hands in innocence

The writer speaks of his purity as if he had washed his hands with innocence instead of with water. See how you translated this in Psalms 26:6. Alternate translation: "my actions have remained pure" or "I have washed my hands to show that I am innocent"

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Psalms 73:14
all the day long
"always" or "every day"
I have been afflicted
"You have made me suffer." See how "they are not afflicted" is translated in Psalms 73:5.
I have been ... disciplined
"I have been ... punished"
Psalms 73:15
If I had said, "I will say these things," then I would have betrayed this generation of your children
This statement describes something that could have happened in the past but did not. Alternate translation: "I never said, 'I will say these things,' so I did not betray this generation of your children"
Psalms 73:16
these things
The good things that happen to "the wicked" (Psalms 73:4-Psalms 12).
Psalms 73:17
their fate
"what happens to wicked people when they die" or "how wicked people die"
Psalms 73:18
put them
The word "them" refers to the wicked.
slippery places
"unsafe or unstable ground." See how "slipped" is translated in Psalms 73:2.
Psalms 73:19
How they become a wilderness in a moment
The word "wilderness" is a metaphor for a person who has lost everything good. Alternate translation: "How quickly they are destroyed"
Psalms 73:20
like a dream after one wakes up
The wicked will last no longer than what a person sees in a dream. It disappears as soon as the person wakes up.
their image
This phrase refers to the "dream" about the people who are "wicked" and "at ease" (Psalm 73:12).
Psalms 73:21
my heart was embittered
The word "heart" represents the person emphasizing their thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "I was very sad"
I was deeply wounded
The psalmist speaks of emotional pain as if it were physical pain by being pierced with a knife or arrow. Alternate translation: "I felt like someone had wounded me"
Psalms 73:22
ignorant and lacked insight
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how little he knew. Alternate translation: "very ignorant"
lacked insight
"understood nothing"
you
This "you" refers to God.
Psalms 73:23
I am always with you
The word "I" here represents Asaph. The word "you" here represents God.
you hold my right hand
The person's "right hand" refers to the whole person. This shows an intimate relationship with God that offers stability and security. Alternate translation: "You hold me close"
Psalms 73:24
receive me to glory
Possible meanings are 1) "put me where people will honor me" or 2) "honor me by taking me to where you are." See how "receive me" is translated in Psalms 49:15.
Psalms 73:25
Whom have I in heaven but you?
You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one for me in heaven but you!" or "You are the only one I have in heaven!"
in heaven
"among the gods" or "among the supernatural beings"
Psalms 73:26
My flesh and my heart
These two phrases share similar meanings. Together they represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "My body and my mind"
Psalms 73:27
General Information:
Asaph continues to talk about God.
Those who are far from you
Here the idea of staying far from God is compared to being unwilling to obey him. Alternate translation: "Those who do not want to obey you"
who are unfaithful
The word "unfaithful" here refers to sexual immorality that violates marriage. This is a metaphor for people who say they will worship only Yahweh but later worship other gods.
Psalms 73:28
my refuge
The writer speaks of Yahweh as if he were a place to which a person could flee for safety.

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74 A maschil of Asaph.
1 God, why have you rejected us forever?
Why does your anger burn against the sheep of your pasture?

2 Call to mind your people, whom you purchased in ancient times,
the tribe whom you have redeemed to be your own heritage,
and Mount Zion, where you live.

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3 Come look at the everlasting ruins,
all the damage that the enemy has done in the holy place.

4 Your adversaries roared in the middle of your appointed place;
they set up their battle flags.

5 They hacked away with axes
as in a thick forest.

6 They smashed and broke down all the engravings;
they broke them with axes and hammers.

7 They set your sanctuary on fire, knocking it to the ground;
they desecrated the dwelling place of your name.

8 They said in their hearts, "We will destroy them all."
They burned up all the meeting places of God in the land.

9 We do not see any more signs;
there is no prophet any more,
and no one among us knows how long this will last.

10 How long, God, will the enemy throw insults at you?
Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever?

11 Why do you hold back your hand, your right hand?
Take your right hand from your garment and destroy them.

12 Yet God has been my king from ancient times,
bringing salvation on the earth.

13 You divided the sea by your strength;
you smashed the heads of the sea monsters in the waters.

14 You crushed the heads of leviathan;
you fed him to those living in the wilderness.

15 You broke open springs and streams;
you dried up flowing rivers.

16 The day is yours, and the night is yours also;
you set the light and the sun in place.

17 You have set all the borders of the earth;
you have made summer and winter.

18 Call to mind how the enemy hurled insults at you, Yahweh,
and that a foolish people has blasphemed your name.

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19 Do not give the life of your dove to a wild animal.
Do not forget forever the life of your oppressed people.

20 Remember your covenant,
for the dark regions of the land are full of places of violence.

21 Do not let the oppressed be turned back in shame;
let the poor and oppressed praise your name.

22 Arise, God; plead your own cause;
call to mind how fools mock you all day long.

23 Do not forget the voice of your adversaries
or the uproar of those who continually defy you.

Psalm 74 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 74 is a psalm of deliverance. The people have been completely conquered and they pray for God to deliver them. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

God's power

The enemies have destroyed God's temple and are insulting the people. God is powerful. He made everything and he chose Israel for his people. He should avenge himself on these enemies that have burnt his temple. (See: temple and peopleofgod and avenge)

Superscription

This is called a "Maschil." The word in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 74:1

Psalms 74:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A maschil of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

God, why have you rejected us forever?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "God, we have done nothing wrong, but you have rejected us forever!"

Why does your anger burn against the sheep of your pasture?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We are the ones you have promised to care for, and we have done nothing wrong, but now you are angry with us!"

the sheep of your pasture

Asaph speaks of the people of Israel as if they were sheep. Alternate translation: "against Israel, who are like the sheep whom you feed in your pasture"

Psalms 74:2

Call to mind

"Pay attention to." God has not forgotten his people, but he does not seem to be thinking about them.

your own heritage

"yours forever"

Psalms 74:3

General Information:

These verses describe an actual event, a physical attack on the temple of Israel in Jerusalem.

Come look

Asaph is addressing God, asking him to come look at the destruction.

the everlasting ruins

the ruins of a building that no one will ever rebuild

Psalms 74:4

roared

The adversaries were shouting loudly with a great cry of victory.

Psalms 74:6

engravings

This refers to carvings on wood, metal, or stone in the temple.

Psalms 74:7

General Information:

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Asaph continues to describe the destruction of the temple.

They ... they

Here "they" refers to the adversaries mentioned in Psalms 74:4.

Psalms 74:8

They ... They

Here "they" refers to the adversaries mentioned in Psalms 74:4.

They said in their hearts

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "They said to themselves" or "They thought to themselves"

Psalms 74:9

General Information:

Asaph is addressing God about the destruction he sees.

We do not see any more signs

Possible meanings are 1) "We do not see any more miraculous signs from God" or 2) "All our sacred symbols are gone" or 3) the "signs" are the flags and symbols of an army representing the army itself. Alternate translation: "They have completely destroyed our army"

Psalms 74:10

How long, God, will the enemy throw insults at you?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "God, the enemy has been throwing insults at you for too long!"

Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It seems as if you will never stop the enemy from blaspheming your name!"

blaspheme your name

The word "name" is a metonym for God himself. Alternate translation: "say that you are bad" or "insult you"

Psalms 74:11

Why do you hold back your hand, your right hand?

The psalmist speaks of God as if he had a physical body. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Stop holding back your hand, your right hand!"

hold back your hand

Here the word "hand" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "not show your power" or "not use your power to destroy your enemies"

your right hand

"your strongest hand"

Take your right hand from your garment

The psalmist speaks of God as if he had a physical body. "Stop hiding your power and take action"

Psalms 74:12

General Information:

This begins a new theme: Asaph is proclaiming God's mighty deeds in the history of his people.

God has been my king from ancient times

Possible meanings are 1) Asaph is speaking as Israel's representative, "God has been our king since we Israelites first became a nation" or 2) "God, my king, was alive even in ancient times."

bringing salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with the verb "to save." Here Yahweh saving people is spoken of as if salvation were an object that he brings with him. Alternate translation: "saving people"

Psalms 74:13

You divided ... in the waters

Asaph is probably speaking of the time God brought Israel out of Egypt, divided the Sea of Reeds, led Israel through it on dry land, then drowned Pharaoh's army.

You divided the sea by your strength

Asaph is speaking of God as if God had a physical body. "You are so strong you were able to make dry land in the middle of the sea."

the sea

"the great water"

you smashed the heads of the sea monsters in the waters

Asaph is probably speaking of Pharaoh and his army as if they were sea monsters. If possible, translate these words literally. Alternate translation: "when you killed Pharaoh's army, it was as if you smashed the heads of sea monsters in the waters"

Psalms 74:14

General Information:

Asaph continues to speak of what God did long ago. He is probably speaking of when God brought Israel out of Egypt and drowned Pharaoh's army in the Sea of Reeds. If possible, these words should be translated literally.

leviathan

Leviathan is a sea monster. It represents a cruel enemy.

Psalms 74:15

You broke open springs and streams

Yahweh causing springs and streams to flow out of the ground as if he broke open the ground so that they could flow. Alternate translation: "You caused springs and streams to flow out of the ground"

Psalms 74:16

General Information:

Asaph continues to recount God's creative power.

the light

This probably refers to the moon.

Psalms 74:17

the borders of the earth

"the boundaries of the land and the sea"

Psalms 74:18

General Information:

Asaph is pleading for God's help.

Call to mind

"Pay attention to." See how this is translated in [Psalms 74:2]

the enemy hurled insults at you

Asaph speaks of insulting words as if they were physical objects, like stones, which the enemy was throwing at Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the enemy insulted you many times"

Psalms 74:19

the life of your dove

Asaph speaks of himself as if he were a dove, a defenseless bird. This phrase may also be a metaphor for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "me, your dove"

dove

A small, defenseless bird often kept as a pet.

a wild animal

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This phrase may be a metaphor for the enemies of Israel. Alternate translation: "a savage enemy that is like a wild animal"

Do not forget forever the life of your oppressed people

"Do not continue forever to do nothing to help your oppressed people." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Come soon to help your oppressed people"

Psalms 74:20

General Information:

Asaph continues his lament to Yahweh.

the dark regions of the land are full of places of violence

Asaph speaks of "regions" as if they were containers in which one could put "places of violence." Alternate translation: "violent people do evil deeds in dark places in the land wherever they can"

the dark regions of the land

The word "dark" is probably a metaphor for a place where bad things happen or for the lands to which the Israelites had been sent in exile, but these words should be translated literally if possible.

Psalms 74:21

Do not let the oppressed be turned back in shame

"Do not let wicked people defeat the oppressed and make them ashamed"

the oppressed

These are people who are treated cruelly by powerful people.

the poor and oppressed

The words "poor" and "oppressed" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh saves many who need his help. See how these words are translated in [Psalms 35:10]

Psalms 74:22

plead your own cause

This phrase is a metaphor that speaks as if God were testifying in court. Alternate translation: "show everyone that you are right"

call to mind

"Pay attention to." God has not forgotten how fools mocked him, but he does not seem to be thinking about it. See how this is translated in verse Psalms 2.

Psalms 74:23

the voice of your adversaries

The word "voice" is a metonym for the words people use when they speak. Alternate translation: "what your adversaries are saying"

or the uproar of those who continually defy you

The psalmist speaks of the words of those who defy God as if they were the loud sound of animals or non-living objects like water or the wind. Alternate translation: "and pay attention to the loud and meaningless words of those who continually defy you"

defy

boldly oppose

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75 For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of Asaph, a song.

1 We give thanks to you, God;
we give thanks, for your name is near;
people tell of your wondrous works.

2 At the appointed time
I will judge fairly.

3 Though the earth and all the inhabitants shake in fear,
I make steady the earth's pillars.

Selah

4 I said to the arrogant, "Do not be arrogant,"
and to the wicked, "Do not lift up the horn.

5 Do not lift up your horn to the heights;
do not speak with an arrogant neck."

6 It is not from the east or from the west,
and it is not from the wilderness that lifting up comes.

7 But God is the judge;
he brings down and he lifts up.

8 For Yahweh holds in his hand a cup of foaming wine,

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which is mixed with spices, and pours it out.
Surely all the wicked of the earth
will drink it to the last drop.

9 But I will continually tell what you have done;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 He says, "I will cut off all the horns of the wicked,
but the horns of the righteous will be raised up."

Psalm 75 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 75 is a wisdom psalm; teaching what will happen to evil people. (See: wise and evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Punishment

God has warned the evil people that they will be punished. He will strengthen the good people. (See: good)

Links:

Psalms 75:1

Psalms 75:1

General Information:

The people of God are speaking in 75:1, and God speaks in 75:2-3. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to Al Tashheth. A psalm of Asaph, a song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to Al Tashheth

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 57:1.

A psalm of Asaph

"This is a psalm that Asaph wrote." See how this is translated in Psalms Psalm 53.

your name is near

you reveal your presence

Psalms 75:3

all the inhabitants

"all the people who live on it"

make steady the earth's pillars

"keep the earth from being destroyed" or Alternate translation: "keep my people safe"

Psalms 75:4

I said to the arrogant ... and to the wicked

The words "the arrogant" and "the wicked" are nominal adjectives that can be translated with nouns. The verb for the second phrase may be supplied from the first. Alternate translation: "I said to the arrogant people ... and I said to the wicked people"

I said

Possible meanings are 1) God is speaking or 2) Asaph is speaking.

Do not be arrogant ... Do not lift

The speaker is speaking to many wicked people, so these forms are plural.

Do not lift up the horn

Asaph speaks of wicked people as if they were animals with horns on their heads, stretching their necks and holding their heads high to frighten other animals. Alternate translation: "Do not be confident" or "Do not boast about how strong you are"

Psalms 75:5

Do not lift up your ... do not speak

The speaker is speaking to many wicked people, so these forms are plural.

Do not lift up your horn to the heights

Asaph speaks of wicked people as if they were animals with horns on their heads, stretching their necks and holding their heads as high as they can to frighten other animals. Alternate translation: "Be especially sure not to boast that you are greater than God"

with an arrogant neck

Asaph speaks of wicked people who defy or challenge God as if they were animals with horns on their heads, stretching their necks and holding their heads high to frighten other animals. Alternate translation: "arrogantly"

Psalms 75:6

It is not from the east ... that lifting up comes

Asaph speaks of the one who lifts up as if he were the action of lifting up. He also speaks of God giving strength and honor to a person as if God were physically lifting that person up. Alternate translation: "The one who will lift you up will not be someone who comes from the east" or "The one who will make you strong and have people honor you will not be someone who comes from the east"

Psalms 75:7

General Information:

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Asaph speaks about God.

he brings down and he lifts up

The objects of the verbs can be stated clearly: "he brings some people down and he lifts other people up." The words "brings down" and "raises up" are metaphors for God making people powerful and taking away their power. Alternate translation: "he makes one man king in place of another man" or "he takes away one man's power and gives power to another man"

Psalms 75:8

a cup of foaming wine ... mixed with spices

When Yahweh punishes the people they will be like people who have drunk strong wine and become ill.

foaming wine

The foam is a metaphor for the power of the wine to make people drunk, Alternate translation: "strong wine"

spices

dried leaves or ground seeds

pours it out

pours it from a large container into the cups that the people will drink from

drink it to the last drop

"drink every drop of it"

Psalms 75:10

He says

God says

cut off all the horns of

The horns of an animal are a metaphor for the power of a person. Alternate translation: "take away all power from"

the horns of the righteous will be raised up

The horns of an animal are a metaphor for the power of a person. This can be translated as a statement in active form. Alternate translation: "I will raise up the horns of the righteous" or "I will make the righteous powerful"

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76 For the chief musician, on stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph, a song.

1 God has made himself known in Judah;
his name is great in Israel.

2 His tent is in Salem;
his dwelling place is in Zion.

3 There he broke the arrows of the bow,
the shield, the sword, and the other weapons of war.

Selah

4 You shine brightly and are majestic
as you descend from the mountains, where you killed your victims.

5 The brave of heart were plundered;
they fell asleep.
All the warriors were helpless.

6 At your rebuke, God of Jacob,
both charioteer and horse fell asleep.

7 You, yes you, are to be feared;
who can stand in your sight when you are angry?

8 From heaven you made your judgment heard;
the earth was afraid and silent

9 when you, God, arose to execute judgment
and to save all the oppressed of the earth.

Selah

10 Surely your angry judgment against humanity will bring you praise;
you gird yourself with the remnant of your anger.

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11 Make vows to Yahweh your God and keep them.
May all who surround him bring tribute to him who is to be feared.

12 He cuts off the spirit of the princes;
he is feared by the kings of the earth.

Psalm 76 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 76 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's greatness

God is great. He has conquered all the nations surrounding Israel. Everyone should bring him gifts.

Links:

Psalms 76:1

Psalms 76:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician, on stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph, a song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

on stringed instruments

"people should play stringed instruments with this song."

A psalm of Asaph

"This is a psalm that Asaph wrote" See how this is translated in Psalms 53:1.

made himself known in Judah

"caused the people of Judah to know who he is" or "made himself famous in Judah"

his name is great in Israel

The words "his name" are a metonym for his reputation. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel consider him good and powerful"

Psalms 76:2

his dwelling place

"the place where he has chosen to live"

Psalms 76:3

There he broke the arrows of the bow, the shield, the sword, and the other weapons of war

These words are probably a metaphor for God causing the people of Judah to live in peace without being afraid of enemies making war on them, but the words should be translated literally.

Psalms 76:4

General Information:

Asaph speaks of God as if God was a soldier returning from a mountain after winning a great battle.

You shine brightly and are majestic

The second phrase strengthens the first phrase in that Yahweh's glory relates to Yahweh shining brightly.

You shine brightly

The words "shine brightly" are a metaphor for being great. Alternate translation: "You show how extremely great you are"

Psalms 76:5

The brave of heart were plundered

The word "heart" here is a metonym for the person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your people killed the brave soldiers of their enemies and then took all their possessions"

fell asleep

Here "fell asleep" is a euphemism for died. Alternate translation: "died" or "fell down dead"

Psalms 76:6

At your rebuke

The abstract noun "rebuke" refers to saying something in an angry or critical way. Alternate translation: "When you rebuked them"

fell asleep

This phrase is a polite way to say that they died. Alternate translation: "died" or "fell down dead"

Psalms 76:7

who can stand in your sight when you are angry?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can stand in your sight when you are angry." or "You can destroy anyone at whom you are angry."

Psalms 76:8

you made your judgment heard

"you pronounced judgment" or "you announced how you were going to punish wicked people"

the earth was

Here "the earth" is a metonym for the people living on the earth. Alternate translation: "the people of the earth were"

Psalms 76:9

execute judgment

"carry out judgment" or "punish wicked people"

Psalms 76:10

Surely your angry judgment

"It is certain that your angry judgment"

your angry judgment against humanity will bring you praise

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Possible meanings are 1) "people will praise you because you are angry at the wicked and judge them" or 2) "people who are angry with you will do things that cause people to praise you."

you gird yourself with the remnant of your anger

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as something that he can tie around himself like a belt. Alternate translation: "you tie your remaining anger around you like a belt"

Psalms 76:11

him who is to be feared

"Yahweh, whom they should fear"

Psalms 76:12

He cuts off the spirit of the princes

The phrase "He cuts off the spirit" is an idiom that means He breaks the spirit or He humbles. Alternate translation: "He humbles the princes"

he is feared by the kings of the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the kings of the earth fear him"

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77 For the chief musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A psalm of Asaph.
1 I will call with my voice to God;
I will call out with my voice to God,
and my God will give ear to me.

2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord;
at night I stretched my hands out, and they would not become tired.
My soul refused to be comforted.

3 I thought of God as I groaned;
I thought about him as I grew faint.

Selah

4 You held my eyes open;
I was too troubled to speak.

5 I thought about the days of old,
about years long past.

6 During the night I called to mind the song I once sang.
I thought carefully
and tried to understand what had happened.

7 Will the Lord reject me forever?
Will he never again show me favor?

8 Was his covenant faithfulness gone forever?
Had his promise failed forever?

9 Had God forgotten to be gracious?
Had his anger shut off his compassion?

Selah

10 I said, "This is my sorrow:
the changing of the right hand of the Most High toward us."

11 But I will remember the deeds of Yah;[1]
I will remember your miracles of long ago.

12 I will ponder all your deeds

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and will reflect on them.

13 Your way, God, is holy;
what god compares to our great God?

14 You are the God who does wonders;
you have revealed your strength among the peoples.

15 You gave your people victory by your great power—
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.

Selah

16 The waters saw you, God;
the waters saw you, and they were afraid;
the depths trembled.

17 The clouds poured down water;
the cloudy skies gave voice;
your arrows flew about.

18 Your thunderous voice was heard in the wind;
the lightning lit up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.

19 Your path went through the sea
and your way through the surging waters,
but your footprints were not seen.

20 You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 77 General Notes

Type of psalm

The author felt abandoned by God. This is a psalm of lament. (See: lament)

Special concepts in this chapter

Lament

God used to be close to the psalmist, but now it seems that God has completely abandoned him. Long ago, God took care of Israel and brought the people safely through the sea.

Links:

Psalms 77:1

Psalms 77:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

Jeduthun

One of David's chief musicians had this same name. This

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may refer to him. See how you translated this in [Psalms 39:1]

Psalms 77:2

I stretched my hands out

"I prayed with my arms extended"

My soul refused to be comforted

The "soul" represents the person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would not allow anyone to try to comfort me"

Psalms 77:3

I thought of God as I groaned; I thought about him as I grew faint

These two phrases share similar meanings and are combined for emphasis.

as I grew faint

"as my spirit grew faint" or "as my spirit was overwhelmed"

Psalms 77:4

General Information:

After speaking about God, Asaph speaks to God in verse 4 and then returns to speaking about God.

You held my eyes open

"I said to God, 'You held my eyes open.'"

held my eyes open

Open eyes is a metonym for being unable to sleep. Alternate translation: "kept me from sleeping"

Psalms 77:5

the days of old, about years long past

If necessary, "days of old" and "years long past" can be combined. Alternate translation: "about things that happened a very long time ago"

Psalms 77:6

I called to mind

This is an idiom for remembering. Alternate translation: "I remembered"

what had happened

Another possible meaning is "what was happening."

Psalms 77:7

Will the Lord reject me forever? Will he never again show me favor?

These two phrases express feeling rejection from the Lord.

show me favor

"do things that show that he is pleased with me"

Psalms 77:8

General Information:

Because Asaph was not sure of the answer to these questions, they are probably literal questions and should be translated literally.

Was his covenant faithfulness gone forever?

Asaph speaks of Yahweh no longer acting faithfully to his covenant as if Yahweh's covenant faithfulness had gone away. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Has he stopped being faithful to his covenant forever?"

Psalms 77:9

Had God forgotten to be gracious? Had his anger shut off his compassion?

These are two expressions stating similar concept of God not showing compassion.

Had his anger shut off his compassion

Asaph speaks of anger as if it were a person shutting a door to keep another person, compassion, from coming out, Alternate translation: "Had God stopped showing us compassion because he was angry with us"

Psalms 77:10

I said

Possible meanings are 1) the psalmist was speaking to himself or 2) the psalmist was speaking to Yahweh.

the changing of the right hand of the Most High toward us

The "right hand" is a metonym for power, authority or strength. Alternate translation: "the Most High no longer uses his power to help us"

Psalms 77:11

General Information:

The writer begins to speak to Yahweh.

your miracles of long ago

"the wonderful things you did long ago"

Psalms 77:12

I will ponder all your deeds and will reflect on them.

These two phrases express the concept of meditating on what Yahweh has done.

ponder

think deeply about

reflect on them

"think of what they mean"

Psalms 77:13

General Information:

The writer continues to speak to Yahweh.

what god compares to our great God?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "no god compares to our great God."

Psalms 77:14

revealed your strength among the peoples

The abstract noun "strength" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "shown people from many people groups how strong you are"

Psalms 77:15

gave your people victory ... the descendants

"gave us, your people, victory ... us who are the descendants"

gave your people victory

The abstract noun "victory" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "caused your people to be victorious"

the descendants of Jacob and Joseph

This refers to the entire nation of Israel.

Psalms 77:16

The waters saw you ... they were afraid ... the depths trembled

Asaph speaks of the water as if it were a person who saw something that terrified him.

the waters saw you, and they were afraid; the depths trembled

"water" and "depth" refers to large bodies of water such as the sea or ocean.

depths

deepest waters

Psalms 77:17

The clouds poured down water

Asaph speaks of the clouds as if they were people pouring water out of containers. Alternate translation: "Much rain fell" or "It rained very hard"

your arrows flew about

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This is a metaphor that describes lightning as God's arrows. Alternate translation: "the lightning you made flashed like arrows"

flew

Use your language's word for what an arrow does after someone shoots it.

Psalms 77:18

thunderous voice

This is personification, referring to the thunder as the voice of God. Alternate translation: "voice, which was as loud as thunder" or "very loud voice"

lightning lit up the world

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that the lightning lit up everything the writer could see. Alternate translation: "lightning lit up everything as far as you could see"

Psalms 77:19

Your path ... your way

These two phrases have similar meanings and are combined for emphasis.

your footprints

Asaph is speaking of Yahweh as if Yahweh was a person with feet. While this is personification, it should be translated literally, if possible.

your footprints were not seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one saw your footprints"

Psalms 77:20

You led your people like a flock

This simile compares God's people to a flock of animals.

by the hand of

The phrase "by the hand of" here means "by the action of" or "through the action of."

hand

Here "hand" is synechdoche for the whole person.

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78 A maschil of Asaph.
1 Hear my teaching, my people,
listen to the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in parables;
I will sing about hidden things about the past.

3 These are things that we have heard and learned,
things that our ancestors have told us.

4 We will not keep them from their descendants.
We will tell the next generation
about the praiseworthy deeds of Yahweh,
his strength, and the wonders that he has done.

5 For he established covenant decrees in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel.
He commanded our ancestors
that they were to teach them to their children.

6 He commanded this so that the generation to come might know his decrees,
the children not yet born,
who should tell them in turn to their own children.

7 Then they would place their hope in God
and not forget his deeds
but keep his commandments.

8 Then they would not be like their ancestors,
who were a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose hearts were not right,
and whose spirits were not committed and faithful to God.

9 The Ephraimites were armed with bows,
but they turned back on the day of battle.

10 They did not keep the covenant with God,
and they refused to obey his law.

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11 They forgot his deeds,
the wonderful things that he had shown them.

12 They forgot the marvelous things he did in the sight of their ancestors
in the land of Egypt, in the land of Zoan.

13 He divided the sea and led them across it;
he made the waters to stand like walls.

14 In the daytime he led them with a cloud
and all the night with the light of fire.

15 He split the rocks in the wilderness,
and he gave them water abundantly,
enough to fill the depths of the sea.

16 He made streams flow out of the rock
and made the water flow like rivers.

17 Yet they continued to sin against him,
rebelling against the Most High in the wilderness.

18 They challenged God in their hearts
by asking for food to satisfy their appetites.

19 They spoke against God;
they said, "Can God really lay out a table for us in the wilderness?

20 See, when he struck the rock,
waters gushed out
and streams overflowed.
But can he give bread also?
Will he provide meat for his people?"

21 When Yahweh heard this, he was angry;
so his fire burned against Jacob,
and his anger attacked Israel,

22 because they did not believe in God
and did not trust in his salvation.

23 Yet he commanded the skies above
and opened the doors of the sky.

24 He rained down manna for them to eat,
and gave them the grain from heaven.

25 People ate the bread of angels.
He sent them food in abundance.

26 He caused the east wind to blow in the sky,
and by his power he guided the south wind.

27 He rained down meat on them like dust,
birds as numerous as the sands of the sea.

28 They fell in the middle of their camp,

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all around their tents.

29 So they ate and were full.
He gave them what they craved.

30 But they had not yet filled up;
their food was still in their mouths.

31 Then God's anger attacked them
and killed the strongest of them.
He brought down the young men of Israel.

32 Despite this, they continued to sin
and did not believe his wonderful deeds.

33 Therefore God cut short their days;
their years were filled with terror.

34 Whenever God killed them, they would start to seek him,
and they would return and look earnestly for him.

35 They would call to mind that God was their rock
and that the Most High God was their rescuer.

36 But they would flatter him with their mouth
and lie to him with their words.

37 For their hearts were not firmly fixed on him,
and they were not faithful to his covenant.

38 Yet he, being merciful,
forgave their iniquity
and did not destroy them.
Yes, many times he held back his anger
and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 He called to mind that they were made of flesh,
a wind that passes away and does not return.

40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness
and grieved him in the barren regions!

41 Again and again they challenged God
and offended the Holy One of Israel.

42 They did not think about his power,
how he had rescued them from the enemy

43 when he performed his terrifying signs in Egypt
and his wonders in the region of Zoan.

44 He turned the Egyptians' rivers to blood
so that they could not drink from their streams.

45 He sent swarms of flies that devoured them

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and frogs that destroyed them.

46 He gave their crops to the grasshopper
and their labor to the locust.

47 He destroyed their vines with hail
and their sycamore trees with more hail.

48 He rained hail on their cattle
and hurled lightning bolts at their livestock.

49 The fierceness of his anger lashed out against them.
He sent wrath, fury, and trouble
like angels who bring disaster.

50 He leveled a path for his anger;
he did not spare them from death
but gave them over to the plague.

51 He killed all the firstborn in Egypt,
the firstborn of their strength in the tents of Ham.

52 He led his own people out like sheep
and guided them through the wilderness like a flock.

53 He led them secure and unafraid,
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

54 Then he brought them to the border of his holy land,
to this mountain that his right hand acquired.

55 He drove out the nations from before them
and assigned them their inheritance.
He settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.

56 Yet they challenged and rebelled
against the Most High God
and did not keep his solemn commands.

57 They were unfaithful
and acted treacherously like their fathers;
they were as undependable as a faulty bow.

58 For they made him angry with their high places
and provoked him to jealous anger with their idols.

59 When God heard this, he was angry
and completely rejected Israel.

60 He abandoned the sanctuary of Shiloh,
the tent where he had lived among people.

61 He allowed his strength to be captured
and gave his glory into the enemy's hand.

62 He handed his people over to the sword,
and he was angry with his heritage.

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63 Fire devoured their young men,
and their virgins had no wedding songs.

64 Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows could not weep.

65 Then the Lord awakened as one from sleep,
like a warrior who shouts because of wine.

66 He drove his adversaries back;
he put them to everlasting shame.

67 He rejected the tent of Joseph,
and he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.

68 He chose the tribe of Judah
and Mount Zion that he loved.

69 He built his sanctuary like the heavens,
like the earth that he has established forever.

70 He chose David, his servant,
and took him from the sheepfolds.

71 He took him from following the ewes with their young,
and he brought him to be shepherd of Jacob,
his people, and of Israel, his heritage.

72 David shepherded them with the integrity of his heart,
and he guided them with the skill of his hands.

Psalm 78 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 78 is a wisdom psalm using Israel's history. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's complaining

Although God did one miracle after the other, the people of Israel still complained and failed to believe Yahweh. (See: believe)

Superscription

This is called a "Maschil." The word in the original language has caused scholars to have various opinions about its meaning. Some say it means to instruct, while others say that the word is referring to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm.

Links:

Psalms 78:1

Psalms 78:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A maschil of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

Hear my teaching

The noun "teaching" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "Hear what I teach" or "Hear me as I teach you"

the words of my mouth

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The word "mouth" represents the person. Alternate translation: "my words"
Psalms 78:2
open my mouth in parables
The idiom "open my mouth" means to speak. Alternate translation: "speak in parables"
sing about
"tell." See how "pours out" is translated in Psalms 19:2.
hidden things
If your language has a word for sayings that are purposely difficult to understand, you might use it here.
Psalms 78:3
General Information:
Verse 3 continues the sentence begun in verse 2.
Psalms 78:4
We will not keep them from their descendants
This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "We will certainly tell our descendants about them"
the praiseworthy deeds of Yahweh
"the things we praise Yahweh for"
Psalms 78:5
he established
"Yahweh established"
covenant decrees
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws."
Psalms 78:7
General Information:
The writer speaks of the "children" of Psalms 78:5-6.
Psalms 78:9
The Ephraimites ... day of battle
This is possibly a metaphor for not keeping the covenant (verse 10), but it is best to translate literally.
The Ephraimites
"The Ephraimite soldiers"
were armed with bows
The soldiers probably also had arrows. Alternate translation: "had bows and arrows for weapons"
Psalms 78:12
land of Zoan
This refers to the area around the city of Zoan, which was in Egypt.
Psalms 78:15
He split
"God split"
enough to fill the depths of the sea
This is probably hyperbole. Alternate translation: "more water than they could possibly drink"
Psalms 78:16
streams
small rivers
Psalms 78:18
They challenged God
They wanted God to prove that he could do what he said he would do before they would believe him.
in their hearts
"with their whole hearts"
to satisfy their appetites
"so they could eat as much as they desired"
Psalms 78:19
They spoke
the Israelites spoke
Can God really lay out a table for us in the wilderness?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We do not believe that God can really lay out a table for us in the wilderness!" or "God, prove to us that you can really lay out a table for us in the wilderness!"
lay out a table
The idiom "lay out a table" means to prepare a table for a meal. Here the word "table" is a metonym for the food on the table. Alternate translation: "provide us with food"
Psalms 78:20
waters gushed out
much water came out quickly
But can he give bread also? Will he provide meat for his people?
The people are laughing at God to insult him with these questions. Alternate translation: "But we will not believe that he can give us bread also or provide meat for his people until we see him do it."
bread ... meat
food from plants or food from animals. Though this is a merism for all kinds of food, it is best to translate it literally if possible.
Psalms 78:21
his fire burned against Jacob
The writer speaks of Yahweh's anger as if it were a fire, and of Yahweh acting in anger against Jacob as if that fire burned Jacob. Alternate translation: "his anger was like a fire that burned Jacob"
Jacob
This refers to the nation of Israel
his anger attacked Israel
The writer speaks of Yahweh punishing Israel when he was angry as if his anger were a person who attacked Israel. Alternate translation: "because he was angry, he attacked Israel"
Psalms 78:22
did not trust in his salvation
"did not trust him to save them"
Psalms 78:23
he commanded the skies
Asaph speaks of the skies as if they were a person who could hear and obey God's commands. Alternate translation: "he spoke to the sky"
skies
Possible meanings are 1) "sky" or 2) "clouds."
opened the doors of the sky
Asaph speaks of the sky as if it were a storeroom with doors. Alternate translation: "opened the sky as if it were a storeroom"
Psalms 78:24
He rained down manna for them to eat, and gave them the grain from heaven
These two lines speak of the same event.
He rained down manna
"He caused manna to fall from the sky like rain"
Psalms 78:25
the bread of angels
This refers to the manna that God provided for the people.

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The word "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "the same kind of food that angels eat"
food in abundance
The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "abundant food" or "a large amount of food"
Psalms 78:26
He caused
"God caused"
Psalms 78:27
He rained down meat on them like dust
The writer speaks of Yahweh causing birds to fall from the sky as if the birds were rain that Yahweh caused to fall. He compares the large amount of birds to dust. Alternate translation: "He caused meat to fall from the sky like rain, and there was so much of it that it covered the ground like dust"
meat
birds
as numerous as the sands of the sea
No one can count the grains of sand. There were more birds than anyone could count, but this is an exaggeration: there were probably not literally the same number of birds as grains of sand.
Psalms 78:29
craved
strongly desired
Psalms 78:31
Then
while the food was still in their mouths (Psalms 78:31)
God's anger attacked them
"God was angry and attacked them." See how "his anger attacked Israel" is translated in [Psalms 78:21]
brought down
This is a euphemism that means he caused them to die. Alternate translation: "killed"
Psalms 78:32
did not believe his wonderful deeds
The word "deeds" is a metonym for God, who did the deeds. What they did not believe can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "did not believe that he would take care of them even though he had done such wonderful deeds"
Psalms 78:33
General Information:
The writer continues telling of what God did to the Israelites.
cut short their days
Here the word "days" refers to a lifetime. The idiom "to cut short ... days" means to cause someone to die before they have lived a long life. Alternate translation: "killed them while they were still young"
their years were filled with terror
Asaph speaks of years as if they were containers. Alternate translation: "year after year they were afraid all the time"
Psalms 78:34
killed them, they would start to seek him
When some of them died, others would "start to seek" God.
to seek him
to ask him what they needed to do so he would protect them
would return
"would repent" or "would be truly sorry for their sins"
look earnestly
"look urgently" or "look as best they could"
Psalms 78:35
General Information:
The tells of what the Israelites did.
call to mind
"remember." See how this is translated in Psalms 20:3.
God was their rock
The writer speaks about God as if he were a hill or mountain where people could go to be safe from their enemies. Alternate translation: "God was the one who protected them"
their rescuer
"the one who rescued them"
Psalms 78:36
flatter him
"tell him he was wonderful when they did not believe it"
with their mouth
The word "mouth" is a metonym for the words they spoke using their mouths. Alternate translation: "by saying what they said"
Psalms 78:37
their hearts were not firmly fixed on him
Here "hearts" is a metonym for their thoughts. To be loyal to him is spoken of as being solidly attached to him. Alternate translation: "their thoughts were not focused on him" or "they were not loyal to him"
Psalms 78:38
forgave their iniquity
"forgave them even though they had done evil deeds"
held back his anger
Asaph speaks of God's anger as if it were an angry person whom God held onto to keep him from attacking the one who had made him angry. Alternate translation: "did not punish them even though he was angry with them"
did not stir up all his wrath
Asaph speaks of God's wrath as if it were a sleeping person whom God allowed to sleep and did not awaken. Alternate translation: "did not allow himself to become fully angry with them"
Psalms 78:39
called to mind
"remembered." See how "call to mind" is translated in [Psalms 20:3]
they were made of flesh
The word "flesh," which is weak and then dies, is a metonym for human weakness and death. Alternate translation: "the Israelites were weak and would someday die"
Psalms 78:40
the barren regions
"places where nothing grows"
Psalms 78:41
they challenged God
They wanted God to prove that he could do what he said he would do before they would believe him. See how you

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translated this in Psalms 78:18.

Psalms 78:42

General Information:

The writer speaks of how God had rescued the Israelites.

Psalms 78:43

Zoan

a city in Egypt

Psalms 78:44

General Information:

The writer describes what God did.

Psalms 78:45

swarms of flies

so many flies that it looked like a cloud

that devoured them

The flies made the Egyptians almost as unhappy as they would have if they had eaten the Egyptians.

destroyed them

"overran their land" or "went everywhere in their land"

Psalms 78:46

gave their crops to the grasshopper and their labor to the locust

"allowed the grasshoppers to eat all their crops and allowed the locusts to eat everything they had worked hard to produce"

grasshopper

a plant-eating insect with long legs used for jumping

He gave their crops to the grasshopper

Asaph speaks of the crops as a gift that God gave to the grasshoppers. Alternate translation: "He allowed the grasshopper to eat their crops"

their labor to the locust

"he gave their labor to the locust." Asaph speaks of the people's labor as if it were a gift that God gave to the grasshoppers. The word "labor" is a metonym for the crops that their labor had produced. Alternate translation: "he allowed the locusts to eat the crops they had worked so hard to produce"

Psalms 78:47

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did to the Egyptians.

sycamore

a tree that gives fruit

Psalms 78:48

lightning bolts

lightning that makes loud thunder

He rained hail

"He brought hail" or "He caused hail to fall"

Psalms 78:49

The fierceness of his anger lashed out against them

Asaph speaks of God's fierceness as if it were a person who could attack another person. Alternate translation: "He was angry with them, so he suddenly and fiercely attacked them"

The fierceness of his anger

"His fierce anger"

lashed out against them

"attacked them when they were not expecting anything to happen"

He sent wrath, fury, and trouble like angels who bring disaster

Asaph speaks of wrath, fury, and trouble as though they are people God can send to do his work for him. Alternate translation: "He was so angry that he wanted to harm the Egyptians, so he made trouble for them and brought them to disaster"

fury

anger that makes someone want to harm others

angels who bring disaster

or "servants who bring disaster"

Psalms 78:50

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did to the Egyptians.

He leveled a path for his anger

The psalmist speaks of anger as if it were a person who could walk Yahweh getting ready to punish the people as if he were making a smooth road for a person to walk on. Alternate translation: "He was so angry that he did everything he could to harm them" or "It was as if his anger was an army and he made a smooth road for it to march on"

he did not spare them from death

"he did not keep the Egyptians from dying" or "he did not permit the Egyptians to live"

gave them over to the plague

Asaph speaks of the plague as if it were a person who was going to harm the Egyptians. Alternate translation: "he made them all very ill with the plague"

Psalms 78:51

the firstborn of their strength

This phrase refers to the firstborn males of each family. Alternate translation: "the firstborn males"

in the tents of Ham

Here the word "tents" is a metonym for families. The word "Ham" refers to Egypt by the name of their ancestor. Alternate translation: "among the families of Egypt"

Psalms 78:52

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

like sheep ... like a flock

The writer speaks about the Israelites as if they were sheep. This means God cared for and protected the people like a shepherd does his sheep.

Psalms 78:53

overwhelmed

completely covered

Psalms 78:54

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

his right hand acquired

The words "right hand" are a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "he won for himself using his own power"

Psalms 78:55

assigned them their inheritance

Possible meanings are 1) God assigned the Israelites their inheritance in the land in which the other nations had once

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lived or 2) God assigned to the nations he had driven out an inheritance somewhere else. "gave them land that would always be theirs"

in their tents

Possible meanings are 1) he settled Israel in their own tents in the land or 2) he settled Israel in the tents from which he had driven the other nations. Most of these "tents" were actually houses, both when the other nations lived in them and when the Israelites lived in them. Alternate translation: "in their homes"

Psalms 78:56

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

challenged and rebelled against

These words mean almost the same thing. The writer uses them both to emphasize that the Israelites did not believe that God would either provide for them or punish evil as he had said he would.

challenged

They wanted God to prove that he could do what he said he would do before they would believe him. See how you translated this idea in Psalms 78:18.

rebelled against

refused to obey

Psalms 78:57

were unfaithful and acted treacherously

These words mean almost the same thing. The writer uses them both to emphasize that the Israelites did not do for God what they had said they would do.

Psalms 78:58

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

made him angry with their high places and provoked him to jealous anger with their idols

These two phrases are in parallel and have similar meanings.

Psalms 78:60

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

Psalms 78:61

He allowed his strength to be captured and gave his glory into the enemy's hand

Asaph speaks of God's strength and glory as if they were physical objects that people could capture and hold. The words "strength" and "glory" are probably mentonyms for the ark of the covenant. The word "hand" is a metonym for the enemy's power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He allowed his enemies to capture the glorious ark of his covenant; he simply gave it to them so they could do whatever they wanted with it"

Psalms 78:62

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

He handed his people over to the sword

Asaph speaks of God's people as if they were a small object God would give as a gift, and of the sword, a metonym for death in war, as if it were a person who could receive a gift. Alternate translation: "He allowed people to kill all his people in war"

he was angry with his heritage

"he was angry with the people he had said would be his forever"

Psalms 78:63

Fire devoured their young men

Possible meanings are 1) "The enemy used fire to kill all their young men" or 2) "Their young men died quickly in battle like a fire burns dry grass." Do not communicate that these people used guns.

devoured

To "devour" is to eat everything very quickly.

young men ... virgins

These words refer to people at the time they are the strongest and most attractive.

wedding

the celebration when people marry

Psalms 78:64

Their priests fell by the sword

Here the word "sword" represents soldiers who fought with swords. The phrase "fell by the sword" is an idiom that means to die in battle. Alternate translation: "Their priests died in battle" or "Enemies killed their priests with swords"

their widows could not weep

Possible meanings are 1) someone forced the widows not to weep or 2) so many priests died that there was no time for proper funerals.

widows

women whose husbands have died

Psalms 78:65

the Lord awakened as one from sleep

The Lord not acting for a period of time is spoken of as if he were asleep, and his beginning to act is spoken of as if he awakened. Alternate translation: "the Lord began to act as if he had awakened from sleep"

like a warrior who shouts because of wine

Possible meanings are 1) like a warrior who had drunk too much wine and has become angry because he was awakened and so wants to fight or 2) like a warrior who drank much wine but is now able to think and fight well because he has slept.

Psalms 78:67

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did for the people of Israel.

the tent of Joseph

Here the word "tent" is a metonym for a family. In this phrase it refers to the descendants of Joseph. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph"

Joseph ... Ephraim

Ephraim was Joseph's son.

Psalms 78:68

Judah ... Mount Zion

Mount Zion was in the land where the tribe of Judah lived.

Psalms 78:69

He built his sanctuary like the heavens

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Possible meanings for this simile are 1) Yahweh has made his sanctuary as high as the heavens. Alternate translation: "He built his sanctuary high, like the heavens" or 2) Yahweh has made his sanctuary as permanent as the heavens. Alternate translation: "He built his sanctuary to last permanently, like the heavens last forever"

like the earth

The verb may be supplied from the previous line. The writer compares the permanence of Yahweh's sanctuary to the permanence of the earth. Alternate translation: "He built his sanctuary to last permanently, like the earth lasts permanently"

Psalms 78:70

General Information:

The writer continues to describe what God did

from the sheepfolds

"from where he was working in the sheepfolds"

sheepfolds

spaces with walls around them where sheep are kept safe

Psalms 78:71

to be shepherd of Jacob, his people, and of Israel, his heritage

The word "shepherd" is a metaphor for one who leads and protects other people. Alternate translation: "to lead and protect the descendants of Jacob, his people, and of Israel, his heritage"

his heritage

"the ones he had chosen to be his forever" See how this is translated in Psalms 78:62.

Psalms 78:72

David shepherded them

The word "shepherded" is a metaphor for leading and protecting. Alternate translation: "David led them and protected them"

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79 A psalm of Asaph.

1 God, foreign nations have come into your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have turned Jerusalem into a heap of ruins.

2 They have given the dead bodies of your servants
as food to the birds of the skies,
the bodies of your faithful ones to the beasts of the earth.

3 They have shed their blood like water around Jerusalem,
and there was none to bury them.

4 We are objects of contempt to our neighbors,
mocking and derision to those who are around us.

5 How long, Yahweh? Will you stay angry forever?
How long will your jealous anger burn like fire?

6 Pour out your wrath on the nations
that do not know you
and on the kingdoms
that do not call upon your name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his villages.

8 Do not hold the iniquities of our forefathers against us;
may your merciful actions come to us,
for we are very low.

9 Help us, God of our salvation,
for the sake of the glory of your name;
save us and forgive our sins
for your name's sake.

10 Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"

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May the blood of your servants that was shed
be avenged on the nations before our eyes.

11 May the groans of the prisoners come before you;
with the greatness of your power keep the children of death alive.

12 Pay back into the laps of our neighboring countries seven times as much
as the contempt with which they have taunted you, Lord.

13 So we your people and sheep of your pasture
will give you thanks forever.
We will tell your praises
to all generations.

Psalm 79 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 79 is a deliverance psalm and a prayer for revenge against their enemies. (See: deliverer and avenge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Destruction

Jerusalem has been destroyed and its people killed. God should destroy these enemy nations who do not pray to him.

Links:

Psalms 79:1

Psalms 79:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

your inheritance

"the land that was to be yours forever" See how this is translated in Psalms 68:9.

Psalms 79:3

They have shed their blood like water

The word "blood" is a metonym for innocent life. To shed blood is to kill innocent people. Most people saw water every day, so for blood to be as common as water, many innocent people would have to die. Alternate translation: "They have killed so many innocent people that the blood is everywhere, like water after it rains"

Psalms 79:4

We are objects of contempt to our neighbors, mocking and derision to those who are around us

The words "being objects of contempt," "mocking," and "making them ashamed" are metonyms for those who insult, mock, and deride. Alternate translation: "We have become people whom our neighbors treat with contempt; those around us mock and deride us"

We are

The pronoun "We" refers to God's people.

derision

strong laughter to shame a person

Psalms 79:5

How long will your jealous anger burn like fire?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It seems as though your jealous anger will never stop burning like fire."

will your jealous anger burn

The abstract noun "anger" can be stated as "angry." Alternate translation: "will you be jealous and angry"

burn like fire

This simile compares the expression of God's anger to a fire that destroys things. Alternate translation: "destroy us"

Psalms 79:6

General Information:

These two pairs of phrases each share similar meanings and are combined for emphasis.

Pour out your wrath on the nations

Asaph speaks of God's wrath as if it were a liquid. Alternate translation: "Since you are angry, punish the nations"

do not call upon your name

The word "name" is a metonym for the person's power and authority. Alternate translation: "do not belong to you" or "do not ask you to help them"

Psalms 79:7

they have devoured Jacob

The word "Jacob" is a mentonym for his descendants, the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "they have completely destroyed the people of Israel"

Psalms 79:8

Do not hold the iniquities of our forefathers against us

"Do not continue to remember the sins of our forefathers and punish us for them" or "Forgive us for the sins of our

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forefathers"

we are very low

The writer speaks of the people being weak and discouraged as if they were in a low position. Alternate translation: "we are very weak" or "we are very discouraged"

Psalms 79:9

God of our salvation

The word "salvation" can be translated with the verb "save": "God who saves us."

for the sake of the glory of your name

The word "name" is a metonym for his reputation, for what people know about him. Alternate translation: "so that people will know about your glory"

for your name's sake

God's name here represents his whole being and the honor that he deserves. Alternate translation: "so that people will honor you" or "for your own sake"

Psalms 79:10

Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The nations should not be able to say, 'Where is their God?'"

Where is their God?

This taunt can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Their God cannot do anything!"

May the blood of your servants that was shed be avenged on the nations before our eyes

To shed blood is a metonym for killing innocent people. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Avenge your innocent servants whom the nations killed where we can see you do it"

before our eyes

"in our sight" or "while we are present"

Psalms 79:11

May the groans of the prisoners come before you

Asaph speaks of the sound made by prisoners in pain and sorrow as if it were a person who appears before a king. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully to the groans of the prisoners and help them"

children of death

This is an idiom that refers to people who are condemned to death. Alternate translation: "those who are condemned to die"

Psalms 79:12

Pay back ... the contempt ... Lord

Asaph speaks of the evil deeds that the neighboring countries did against Israel as "contempt," and as if they were physical items. He asks the Lord to count those deeds, and for every one that the neighboring countries committed, he asks the Lord to have someone do seven evil deeds to the neighboring countries.

Pay back

"Return" or "Give back"

into the laps

onto their knees and thighs as they are sitting. This is a metaphor for "directly and personally."

Psalms 79:13

we your people and sheep of your pasture will give you thanks

The word "sheep" is a metaphor for helpless people whom a shepherd protects and leads. Alternate translation: "we who are your people, whom you protect and lead, will thank you"

tell your praises to all generations

"make sure that all generations to come know all the good things you have done"

your praises

This represents the things that people will praise them the Lord for. Alternate translation: "continue to praise you for the things that you have done"

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80 For the chief musician, set to the Shoshannim Eduth style. A psalm of Asaph.
Give ear, Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock;
you who sit above the cherubim,
shine on us!

2 In the sight of Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your power;
come and save us.

3 God, restore us;
make your face shine on us,
and we will be saved.

4 Yahweh God of hosts,
how long will you be angry at your people when they pray?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in great quantities.

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6 You make us an object of strife for our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh in mockery about us among themselves.

7 God of hosts, restore us;
make your face shine on us,
and we will be saved.

8 You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out nations and transplanted it.

9 You cleared the land for it;
it took root and filled the land.

10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the cedars of God by its branches.

11 It sent out its branches as far as the sea
and its shoots to the Euphrates River.

12 Why have you broken down its walls
so that all who pass by along the road pluck its fruit?

13 The boars out of the forest ruin it,
and the beasts of the field feed on it.

14 Turn back, God of hosts;
look down from heaven and take notice
and take care of this vine.

15 This is the root that your right hand planted,
the son that you have strengthened for yourself.

16 It has been burned and cut down;
they perish because of your rebuke.

17 May your hand be on the man of your right hand,
on the son of man whom you strengthened for yourself.

18 Then we will not turn away from you;
revive us, and we will call on your name.

19 Yahweh God of hosts, restore us;
make your face shine on us, and we will be saved.

Psalm 80 General Notes

Type of psalm

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Psalm 80 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

Israel's enemies threaten them. The psalmist asks Yahweh to look down with joy on them, then they will be saved. (See: save)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The author uses an extended metaphor of Israel as a vine planted by God which is being uprooted.

Links:

Psalms 80:1

Psalms 80:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician, set to the Shoshannim Eduth style. A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship" See how this is translated in Psalms 4:1.

set to the Shoshannim

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 45:1.

Shepherd of Israel

Asaph is referring to God as the one who leads and protects Israel.

you who lead Joseph like a flock

The word "Joseph" refers to the nation of Israel. Asaph speaks of the people as if they were a flock of sheep that Yahweh, who is the shepherd, leads. Alternate translation: "you who lead the descendants of Joseph as though they were a flock of sheep"

Joseph

Here Joseph represents the nation of Israel.

you who sit above the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "you who sit on your throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

shine on us

Asaph speaks of God as if he were the sun, giving light, a metaphor for moral goodness. Alternate translation: "give us light" or "show us the right way to live"

Psalms 80:2

stir up your power

The phrase "stir up" means to "put into action."

Psalms 80:3

make your face shine on us

The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. Alternate translation: "act favorably towards us"

and we will be saved

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "and please save us" or "so that you can save us"

Psalms 80:4

your people

Israel

Psalms 80:5

You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in great quantities

The words "bread of tears" and "tears to drink" are metaphors for continual sadness. Alternate translation: "You have made sure that they are very sad all the time"

Psalms 80:7

General Information:

Asaph is speaking on behalf of the people of Israel. He begins in verse 8 to speak of the way God settled Israel in their land as if God were a man who cleared ground and planted a grapevine. The image of the grapevine continues through verse 16.

make your face shine on us

The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. See how you translated this in [Psalms 80:3]

we will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will save us"

Psalms 80:8

You brought a vine out of Egypt

Asaph compares the nation of Israel to a vine made ready to transplant. Alternate translation: "You brought us, like a vine, out of Egypt"

you drove out nations and transplanted it

The psalmist speaks of his people as if they were a plant that Yahweh was transplanting. Alternate translation: "you drove out nations from their land and gave it to us, the vine, and planted us there"

you drove out nations

It can be made clear where the nations were that God forced out. Alternate translation: "you forced nations out of this land" or "you forced nations to leave the land of Canaan"

Psalms 80:9

General Information:

Asaph continues speaking of Israel in their land as if Israel were a grapevine in a vineyard.

You cleared the land for it

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"You cleared the land for the vine"
it took root
"the vine took root" or "the vine began to grow"
filled the land
"its branches covered the land"
Psalms 80:10
The mountains were covered with its shade, the cedars of God by its branches
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Its shade covered the mountains, its branches the cedars of God"
the cedars of God by its branches
"and the cedars of God were covered by its branches," which copies the verb from the previous sentence. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and its branches covered the cedars of God"
cedars of God
Possible meanings are 1) "the highest cedar trees," the cedar trees that grew on the "mountains" in the land of Lebanon north of Israel, or 2) "God's own cedar trees."
Psalms 80:11
the sea
the Mediterranean Sea to the west of Israel
shoots
the parts of new plants that are just starting to grow above the ground
Psalms 80:12
General Information:
Asaph continues speaking of Israel in their land as if Israel were a grapevine in a vineyard.
its walls
walls of stone, not of wood
Psalms 80:13
boars
wild pigs that ruin gardens and farms and attack people. If your readers do not know what these are, use the word for a wild animal that ruins gardens and farms and attacks people.
forest
land where there are many trees
beasts
wild animals of any kind
field
land where there are many plants but no trees
Psalms 80:14
General Information:
Asaph finishes speaking of Israel in their land as if Israel were a grapevine in a vineyard.
Turn back
The writer wants God to turn back in order to help them. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Turn back to us" or "Come and help us again"
take notice
"look at"
this vine
The writer continues comparing the nation of Israel to the vine.
Psalms 80:15
This is the root that your right hand planted
The right hand represents the Yahweh's power and control. Alternate translation: "This is the root that you, Yahweh, planted"
the son that you have strengthened for yourself
The word "son" here is probably a metaphor for the "shoots" of
Psalms 80:16
down; they perish because of your rebuke
Possible meanings are 1) "down; your people perish because of your rebuke." or 2) "down. May your enemies perish because of your rebuke!"
Psalms 80:17
your hand
This refers to Yahweh's power and control.
the man of your right hand
the nation of Israel, which Yahweh has chosen as his people.
right hand
When a man in Israel wanted to honor another man, he would have that other man stand at his right side, close to his right hand.
Psalms 80:18
we will not turn away from you
Here "turn away" is a metaphor for rejecting someone. This can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "we will not stop worshiping and obeying you" or "we will always worship and obey you"
Psalms 80:19
shine on us
The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. See how you translated this in [Psalms 80:3]
we will be saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will save us"

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81 For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of Asaph.
Shout joyfullly to God our strength;
shout out for joy to the God of Jacob.

2 Sing a song and play the tambourine,
the pleasant harp with the lute.

3 Blow the ram's horn on the day of the new moon,
on the day of the full moon, when our feast day begins.

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4 For it is a statute for Israel,
a decree given by the God of Jacob.

5 He issued it as a regulation in Joseph
when he went against the land of Egypt,
where I heard a voice that I did not recognize:

6 "I removed the burden from his shoulder;
his hands were freed from holding the basket.

7 In your distress you called out, and I helped you;
I answered you from a dark thundercloud.
I tested you at the waters of Meribah.

Selah

8 Listen, my people, for I will warn you,
Israel, if you would only listen to me!

9 There must be no foreign god among you;
you must not worship any foreign god.

10 I am Yahweh your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But my people did not listen to my words;
Israel did not obey me.

12 So I gave them over to their own stubborn way
so that they might follow their own devices.

13 Oh, that my people would listen to me;
oh, that my people would walk in my paths.

14 Then I would quickly subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their oppressors.

15 May those who hate Yahweh cringe in fear before him!
May they be humiliated forever.

16 I would feed Israel with the finest wheat;
I would satisfy you with honey out of the rock."

Psalm 81 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 81 is a wisdom psalm. It is meant to be sung at "new moon" and "full moon" ceremonies. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Obedience

If Israel would obey and worship God, he would destroy their enemies.

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Links:

Psalms 81:1

Psalms 81:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A psalm of Asaph

A psalm that Asaph wrote.

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship;"

set to the Gittith

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 8:1.

God our strength

The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "strong." Alternate translation: "God who causes us to be strong"

the God of Jacob

Here "Jacob" represents all of his descendants. Alternate translation: "the God of Israel, the nation of Jacob's descendants"

Psalms 81:2

play the tambourine, the pleasant harp with the lute

These are musical instruments.

tambourine

a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken

Psalms 81:3

the new moon

This is the beginning of the lunar month.

the day of the full moon

This is the middle of the lunar month.

when our feast day begins

"and on the days when our feasts begin"

Psalms 81:4

For it

Here "it" refers to the feast day.

a decree given by the God of Jacob

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the God of Jacob decreed it" or "the God of Jacob commanded it"

the God of Jacob

Here "Jacob" represents all of his descendants. Alternate translation: "the God of Israel, the nation of Jacob's descendants"

Psalms 81:5

issued it as a regulation

"gave it as a law"

in Joseph

Here "Joseph" represents all of the Israelites. Alternate translation: "to the Israelites"

when he went against the land of Egypt

This refers to the historical events in Egypt when the people of Israel were enslaved and God rescued them.

the land of Egypt

Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the people of Egypt"

Psalms 81:6

General Information:

Here God begins speaking.

removed the burden from his shoulder

Here "the burden from his shoulder" represents the forced labor the Israelites had to do as slaves in Egypt.

his hands were freed from holding the basket

Here "holding the basket" represents the forced labor the Israelites had to do as slaves in Egypt.

Psalms 81:7

In your distress

"In your great suffering"

I answered you from a dark thundercloud

When God came to the Israelites, he hid the fullness of his presence and glory in a dark and threatening cloud.

I tested you at the waters of Meribah

God tested the children of Israel to see if they would trust him to supply water in the desert of Meribah.

Psalms 81:8

General Information:

Yahweh reminds the people what he said while they were in the desert.

for I will warn you

"because I am giving you a warning"

Israel

Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israelites" or "people of Israel"

if you would only listen to me!

"how I wish you would listen to me" or "but you must start listening to me!"

Psalms 81:10

Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it

God taking care of all the needs of the people is spoken of as if he were a mother bird feeding her baby birds.

Psalms 81:11

General Information:

Now Yahweh tells what actually happened after he warned the people.

to my words

"to what I said" or "to me"

Psalms 81:12

So I gave them over to their own stubborn way

God allowing the people to remain stubborn is spoken of as if God were giving them over to an enemy to let the enemy harm them. Alternate translation: "Therefore, I let them be stubborn"

they might follow their own devices

"they might follow their own plans" or "they might do what they think is right"

Psalms 81:13

oh, that my people would walk in my paths

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God wanting the people to obey him is spoken of as if he wanted the people to walk on his paths or roads. Alternate translation: "I wish that they would obey my laws"
Psalms 81:14
turn my hand against
Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "I would destroy" or "I would defeat"
Psalms 81:15
who hate Yahweh ... before him
Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "who hate me ... before me"
cringe in fear
"bow down in fear" or "fall down in fear"
May they be humiliated forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would humiliate them forever" or "I will punish them forever"
Psalms 81:16
I would feed Israel with the finest wheat
God causing the best wheat to grow in Israel is spoken of as if he would literally feed the wheat to the people. Alternate translation: "I would allow the Israelites to eat the finest wheat"
feed Israel ... satisfy you
Both "Israel" and "you" refer to the Israelites.
honey out of the rock
This refers to wild honey. Bees would build hives in the holes in rocks and make the honey there.

82 A psalm of Asaph.
God stands in the divine assembly;
in the midst of the gods he renders judgment.

2 How long will you judge unjustly
and show favoritism to the wicked?

Selah

3 Give justice to the poor and fatherless;
maintain the rights of the afflicted and destitute.

4 Rescue the poor and needy;
take them out of the hand of the wicked.

5 They neither know nor understand;
they wander around in the darkness;
all the foundations of the earth crumble.

6 I said, "You are gods,
and all of you are sons of the Most High.

7 Nevertheless you will die like men
and fall like one of the princes."

8 Arise, God, judge the earth,
for you have an inheritance in all the nations.

Psalm 82 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 82 is a psalm of judgment against the leaders of the other nations. (See: judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Favoritism

The leaders of the nations need to protect the poor and needy and not to favor the evil rich people. (See: favor and evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

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The leaders of the nations are represented by their gods. (See: and falsegod)

Links:

Psalms 82:1

Psalms 82:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

the divine assembly

"the heavenly council" or "the meeting in heaven"

he renders judgment

"he gives judgment." The abstract noun "judgment" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he judges"

the gods

Possible meanings are 1) these are other spiritual beings who dwell in heaven. Alternate translation: "the divine beings" or "the heavenly judges" or 2) these are human judges that God has appointed. Either way, it does not mean they are gods like Yahweh is god. It means God has given them great power and authority. Alternate translation: "the rulers"

Psalms 82:2

How long will you judge unjustly and show favoritism to the wicked?

Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the gods for not judging people fairly.

Psalms 82:3

poor ... fatherless ... afflicted ... destitute

These words are nominal adjectives. They can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who are poor ... those who are fatherless ... those who are afflicted ... those who are destitute"

maintain the rights of the

"do what is right for the"

Psalms 82:4

poor ... needy ... wicked

These are all nominal adjectives. They can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who are poor ... those who are needy ... those who are wicked"

take them out of the hand of the wicked

Here the word "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "stop the wicked people from harming them"

Psalms 82:5

They neither

Possible meanings are 1) "they" refers to the gods or 2) "they" refers to the wicked people.

they wander around in the darkness

Doing what is evil is spoken of as if they were walking in a very dark place.

all the foundations of the earth crumble

The gods corrupting the moral order that Yahweh established is spoken of as if the gods were shaking the earth and making it fall apart.

crumble

fall apart

Psalms 82:6

You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High

Here "gods" refers to the same group as in Psalms 82:1. Whether this refers to spiritual beings or human beings, they are not gods like Yahweh is God, and they are not literally his sons. By calling them "gods" and "sons of the Most High," Yahweh is acknowledging that he has given them great power and authority.

sons of the Most High

Yahweh is speaking about himself as "the Most High."

Psalms 82:7

Nevertheless you

"However you"

and fall

This is a way of speaking of a person dying.

Psalms 82:8

General Information:

The writer is speaking again.

judge the earth

Here "earth" represents the people. Alternate translation: "judge the people of the earth"

for you have an inheritance in all the nations

"for all the nations are your inheritance." Yahweh taking all the people as his own and ruling over them is spoken of as if the nations were a possession that he inherited. Alternate translation: "for you rule over all the people of every nation"

all the nations

Here "nations" represents the people of the nations.

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83 A song. A psalm of Asaph.
God, do not be silent!
Do not ignore us and remain unmoved, God.

2 Look, your enemies are making a commotion,
and those who hate you have raised their heads.

3 They make shrewd plans against your people
and plan together against your protected ones.

4 They have said, "Come, and let us destroy them as a nation.

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Then the name of Israel will no longer be remembered."

5 They schemed together with one strategy;
they made an alliance against you—

6 the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
of Moab and the Hagrites,

7 Byblos,[1] Ammon, Amalek;
and also Philistia and the inhabitants of Tyre.
8 Assyria also has joined with them;
they have become an arm for the descendants of Lot.
Selah

9 Do to them as you did to Midian,
as you did to Sisera and to Jabin at the Kishon River.

10 They perished at Endor
and became like manure for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
and all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna.

12 They said, "Let us take for ourselves
the pastures of God."

13 My God, make them like the whirling dust,
like chaff before the wind,

14 like the fire that burns the forest,
and like the flame that sets the mountains on fire.

15 Chase them with your strong wind,
and terrify them with your windstorm.

16 Fill their faces with shame
so that they might seek your name, Yahweh.

17 May they be put to shame and be terrified forever;
may they perish in disgrace.

18 Then they will know that you alone,
whose name is Yahweh,
are the Most High over all the earth.

[1] Some modern English translations read, Gebal.

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Psalm 83 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 83 is a deliverance psalm. It is a prayer for deliverance from the many nations allied against Israel. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Destruction

God should destroy these enemy nations like he destroyed Israel's enemies during the time of the Judges.

Links:

Psalms 83:1

Psalms 83:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song. A psalm of Asaph

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

remain unmoved

"do nothing to help us"

Psalms 83:2

Look, your enemies are making a commotion

Here "making a commotion" means they are rioting and rebelling. Alternate translation: "Look, your enemies are rebelling against you"

those who hate you have raised their heads

The phrase "raised their heads" is way of saying they are rebelling against God. Alternate translation: "those who hate you are defying you"

Psalms 83:3

your protected ones

"those whom you protect." This refers to the Israelites.

Psalms 83:4

the name of Israel will no longer be remembered

Here "name" represents a reputation or the memory of someone. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever remember the Israelites existed"

Psalms 83:5

They schemed together with one strategy

"Your enemies have agreed together with one plan"

they made an alliance against you

"they have joined together against you"

Psalms 83:6

General Information:

The writer continues to list the people groups who want to destroy Israel.

the tents of Edom

This refers to the people of Edom who lived in tents.

Hagrites

This is the name of a people group that lived on the east side of the Jordan River.

Psalms 83:7

Byblos, Ammon, Amalek ... Philistia

These all represent the people of each area or tribe. Alternate translation: "the people of Byblos, the Ammonites, the Amalekites ... the Philistines"

Byblos

This is the name of a region south of the Dead Sea.

Psalms 83:8

Assyria

This represents the people of Assyria. Alternate translation: "the people of Assyria"

they have become an arm for the descendants of Lot

Here "arm" is a metonym that represents "help." Alternate translation: "they have become a help for the descendants of Lot" or "they are helping the descendants of Lot"

the descendants of Lot

This refers to the people of the nations of Moab and Ammon. You can make clear the understood information.

Psalms 83:9

Do to them as you did to Midian ... Sisera and to Jabin

The writer is asking God to defeat Israel's enemies as he has done in the past.

did to Midian

Here "Midian" represents the people of Midian. Alternate translation: "did to the Midianites"

Sisera ... Jabin

These are names of men. Jabin was king of Hazor. Sisera was the commander of Jabin's army.

Kishon River

This is the name of a river in northern Israel.

Psalms 83:10

Endor

This is the name of a town in northern Israel.

became like manure for the earth

This means the bodies of Sisera and Jabin were not buried but were left to rot.

Psalms 83:11

General Information:

The writer continues to remind God of other enemies he has defeated for Israel in the past.

Oreb ... Zeeb ... Zebah ... Zalmunna

These are all names of kings.

Psalms 83:12

They said

Here "They" refers to Oreb, Zeeb, Zebah and Zalmunna.

the pastures of God

This speaks about the land of Israel as if it were land for sheep to graze and God were the shepherd watching over it.

Psalms 83:13

General Information:

The writer uses similes to describe God's total destruction

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of Israel's enemies.

make them like the whirling dust, like chaff before the wind

Both statements speak of God destroying his enemies as if he were a strong wind easily blowing them away.

Psalms 83:14

like the fire that burns the forest, and like the flame that sets the mountains on fire

Both statements speak of God's punishment as if it were a fire, and the enemies of God are things that burn in the fire.

Psalms 83:15

Chase them with your strong wind, and terrify them with your windstorm

Both statements ask God to destroy the enemies with storms.

Psalms 83:16

Fill their faces with shame

Here "faces" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "Make them very ashamed"

they might seek your name

Here "name" represents God's power. God's enemies acknowledging that God is powerful is spoken of as if they are seeking to find Yahweh. Alternate translation: "they might acknowledge that you are powerful"

seek your name

Possible meanings are 1) God's enemies admit that God is powerful or 2) God's enemies are asking God for help or 3) God's enemies start to worship and obey him.

Psalms 83:17

May they be put to shame and be terrified forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make them ashamed and terrified forever"

may they perish in disgrace

"may they die while they are ashamed"

Psalms 83:18

Then they will know

This can also be stated as the writer making a request to God. Alternate translation: "Cause them to know"

are the Most High over all the earth

God ruling over everything in the earth is spoken of as if he were elevated higher than everything else. Alternate translation: "are supreme, and you rule all things on the earth"

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84 For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of the sons of Korah.
How lovely is the place where you live,
Yahweh of hosts!

2 I long for the courts of Yahweh;
my desire for it has made me exhausted.
My heart and all of my being
shout for joy to the living God.

3 Even the sparrow has found herself a house
and the swallow a nest for herself
where she may lay her young
near your altars, Yahweh of hosts,
my King, and my God.

4 Blessed are they who live in your house;
they praise you continually.

Selah

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways up to Zion.

6 As they go through the Valley of Tears
they make it a place of springs.
The early rains cover it with blessings.[1]

7 They go from strength to strength;
every one of them appears before God in Zion.

8 Yahweh God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, God of Jacob!

Selah

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9 God, watch over our shield;
show concern for your anointed.

10 For one day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God,
than to live within the tents of the wicked.

11 For Yahweh God is our sun and shield;
Yahweh will give grace and glory;
he does not withhold any good thing
from those who walk in integrity.

12 Yahweh of hosts,
blessed is the man who trusts in you.

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[1]Some scholars translate the Hebrew as cover it with pools of water.

Psalm 84 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 84 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Obedience

God blesses all who want to obey him. Praising God in his temple is better than anything else. (See: bless and temple)

Similarity to Psalm 42-43

There are many similarities between these psalms and some scholars suggest they were written by the same people.

Links:

Psalms 84:1

Psalms 84:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician; set to the Gittith style. A psalm of the sons of Korah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to the Gittith

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 8:1.

How lovely

"How beautiful"

Psalms 84:2

I long for the courts of Yahweh

"I really want to be in the courts of Yahweh"

the courts of Yahweh

Here "courts" represent the temple.

my desire for it has made me exhausted

"my desire has exhausted me" or "I am tired because I want it so much"

My heart and all of my being shout for joy

Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I shout for joy with all of my being"

the living God

This means God is living and he also has the power to cause other things to live.

Psalms 84:3

sparrow ... swallow

These are types of birds.

found herself a house

"found herself a home" or "made herself a home"

the swallow a nest

Here the words "has found" or "has made" are understood. Alternate translation: "the swallow has found a nest" or "the swallow has made a nest"

where she may lay her young

"where she may lay her eggs and care for her babies"

Psalms 84:4

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they who live in your house
Possible meanings are 1) "they" refers to the priests who permanently serve at the temple or 2) "they" refers to people in general who come and worship at the temple.
praise you continually
"keep praising you again and again"
Psalms 84:5
Blessed is the man
Here "man" refers to people in general.
whose strength is in you
God is spoken of as if strength was actually found in him. Alternate translation: "whom you strengthen"
in whose heart are the highways up to Zion
This expression is about heart-felt desire. Alternate translation: "Who love to go up to Zion" or "Who earnestly wish go up to Zion"
highways
roads built higher than the surrounding ground
up to Zion
The temple was in Jerusalem on the top of the highest hill, called Mount Zion.
Psalms 84:6
the Valley of Tears
This refers to a dry, arid place. Some Bible versions have "the Valley of Baca." The word "Baca" means "weeping."
The early rains
This means the rain that falls in autumn before the cold season. This is during the months of October and November on Western calendars.
blessings
Here the word "blessings" is a metonym for the pools of water that make people who live in dry lands happy. Alternate translation: "pools of water that make them happy"
Psalms 84:7
They go from strength to strength
This is a way of saying they get stronger.
They go
Here "They" refers to those who strongly desire to go to the temple to worship God.
Psalms 84:9
God, watch over our shield
The king who protects his people is spoken of as if he were a shield. Alternate translation: "God, watch over our king"
Psalms 84:10
For one day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere
This can be stated with the understood information. Alternate translation: "I would rather be in your courts for one day than to be somewhere else for a thousand days"
a thousand
"1,000"
be a doorkeeper
"be a guard at the door" or "stand at the door"
the wicked
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "wicked people" or "those who are wicked"
Psalms 84:11
For Yahweh God is our sun and shield
Yahweh who guides and protects his people is spoken of as if he were the sun and a shield. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh God guides us like the light from the sun, and he protects us like a shield"
Yahweh will give grace and glory
The abstract nouns "grace" and "glory" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will be kind to us and honor us"
who walk in integrity
The way a person conducts their lives or behaves is spoken of as if the person were walking. Alternate translation: "who live honestly" or "who are honest"
Psalms 84:12
blessed is the man
Here "man" means people in general. Alternate translation: "blessed are those"

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85 For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah.
Yahweh, you have shown favor to your land;
you have restored the well-being of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people;
you have covered all their sin.

Selah

3 You have withdrawn all your wrath;
you have turned back from your hot anger.

4 Restore us, God of our salvation,
and let go of your displeasure with us.

5 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you remain angry throughout future generations?

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6 Will you not revive us again?
Then your people will rejoice in you.

7 Show us your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh;
grant us your salvation.

8 I will listen to what Yahweh God says,
for he will make peace with his people, his faithful ones.
Yet they must not turn again to foolish ways.

9 Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him;
then glory will remain in our land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Trustworthiness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

12 Yes, Yahweh will give his good blessings,
and our land will yield its crops.

13 Righteousness will go before him
and make a way for his footsteps.

Psalm 85 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 85 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessings

God has given so many blessings. If the people stop their sinning, then the land will be filled by the glory of God and his blessings. (See: bless and sin and glory)

Group Prayer

Note how this psalm uses the plural to show that it is a group praying.

Links:

Psalms 85:1

Psalms 85:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

you have shown favor to your land

Here "land" represents the nation and people of Israel.

well-being

This refers to a person being happy, healthy and prosperous.

of Jacob

Here "Jacob" represents Jacob's descendents, the Israelites.

Psalms 85:2

you have covered all their sin

Here sin that is forgiven is spoken of as if it were covered so that it can not be seen. Alternate translation: "you have deliberately forgotten their sin"

their sin

This writer thought of himself as belonging to God's people. Alternate translation: "our sin"

Psalms 85:3

You have withdrawn all your wrath

God no longer punishing the Israelites is spoken of as if wrath were an object that Yahweh could take away from the Israelites.

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you have turned back from your hot anger
God no longer being angry with the Israelites is spoken of as if anger were a fire that God from which God turned away.
Psalms 85:4
God of our salvation
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "God who saves us"
let go of your displeasure with us
Asking God to stop being angry with the Israelites is spoken of as if displeasure were an object the writer wants God to let go of.
Psalms 85:5
Will you be angry with us forever? Will you remain angry throughout future generations?
The writer uses these questions to emphasize that he is requesting God to stop being angry with them. These rhetorical questions can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please do not stay angry at us forever."
Psalms 85:6
Will you not revive us again?
The writer uses a question to emphasize his request to God to make the people of Israel prosper and happy again. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please make us prosper again."
Psalms 85:7
Show us your covenant faithfulness
If the sentence is rearranged, the ideas in the abstract noun "covenant faithfulness" can be expressed with the phrase "faithful to your covenant."
grant us your salvation
This is how the writer wants God to show his faithfulness to his people. If the sentence is rearranged, the ideas in the abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "and save us" or "by saving us"
Psalms 85:8
make peace with his people
"have a peaceful relationship with his people" or "bring peace to his people"
Yet they must not turn again to foolish ways
A person changing the way he behaves is spoken of as if he were physically turning to a different direction. Alternate translation: "Yet they must not start doing foolish things again"
Psalms 85:9
Surely his salvation is near to those
God being ready to save someone is spoken of as if salvation were an object that God has placed near someone. Alternate translation: "Surely God is ready to save those"
then glory will remain in our land
Here "glory" represents God's presence. Alternate translation: "then his glorious presence will remain in our land"
Psalms 85:10
Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" are spoken of as if they were persons who meet together. Possible meanings are 1) God constantly loves his people because of his covenant and has done what he promised to do. Alternate translation: "God has loved his people without ceasing and has proven that he is worthy of people trusting him" or 2) God has been faithful because of his covenant and the people have responded by being faithful to him. Alternate translation: "God has loved his people and his people have responded by trusting him"
have met together ... have kissed each other
Most likely the speaker is describing a time in the future when God causes the people to prosper again. Alternate translation: "will meet together ... will kiss each other"
righteousness and peace have kissed each other
Possible meanings are 1) the people will do what is right and God will cause the people to live in peace or 2) God will do what is right and will cause the people to live in peace. Either way righteousness and peace are abstract nouns and are spoken of as if they were persons who kiss each other.
kissed each other
This was a common way for friends to greet each other.
Psalms 85:11
Trustworthiness springs up from the ground
The people on earth being faithful to God is spoken of as if trustworthiness were a plant growing out of the ground. The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be stated as "loyal." Alternate translation: "Here on earth, we will be loyal to God"
righteousness looks down from the sky
The word "righteousness" is an abstract noun, and it is spoken of as a person looking down as God does. Alternate translation: "God will look on us from heaven and will act justly towards us"
Psalms 85:13
Righteousness will go before him and make a way for his footsteps
God doing what is right everywhere he goes is spoken of as if righteousness were a person who goes ahead of God and prepares a path for God to walk.
his footsteps
Here "footsteps" represents where God walks.

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86 A prayer of David.
Listen, Yahweh, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

2 Protect me, for I am faithful;
my God, save your servant who trusts in you.

3 Be merciful to me, Lord,
for I cry out to you all day long.

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4 Make your servant glad,
for to you, Lord, I lift up my soul.

5 You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive,
abounding in steadfast love to all those who cry out to you.

6 Give ear, Yahweh, to my prayer;
hear the sound of my pleas.

7 In the day of my trouble I call on you,
for you will answer me.

8 There is no one who compares to you among the gods, Lord.
There are no deeds like your deeds.

9 All the nations that you have made
will come and bow before you, Lord.
They will honor your name.

10 For you are great and do wonderful things;
you only are God.

11 Teach me your ways, Yahweh.
Then I will walk in your truth.
Unite my heart
to reverence your name.

12 Lord my God, I will praise you with my whole heart;
I will glorify your name forever.

13 For great is your covenant faithfulness toward me;
you have rescued my life from the depths of Sheol.

14 God, the arrogant have risen up against me.
A company of violent men seek my life.
They have no regard for you.

15 But you, Lord, are a merciful and gracious God,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

16 Turn toward me and have mercy on me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the son of your servant woman.

17 Show me a sign of your favor.
Then those who hate me will see it and be put to shame
because you, Yahweh, have helped me and comforted me.

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Psalm 86 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 86 is a deliverance psalm. He is praying for deliverance from his many enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

God has blessed the psalmist and is so loving to him. He has been one of God's servants. Now he needs God to save him. (See: bless and love and save)

Links:

Psalms 86:1

Psalms 86:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A prayer of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

poor and needy

"weak and needy"

Psalms 86:2

save your servant

David refers to himself as "your servant," that is, God's servant. Alternate translation: "save me, your servant"

Psalms 86:3

all day long

This is an exaggeration. David cries out continually, but not literally at all times from dawn to dusk. Alternate translation: "continually"

Psalms 86:4

Make your servant glad

David refers to himself as "your servant," that is, God's servant. Alternate translation: "Make me, your servant" or "Make me"

Psalms 86:5

abounding in steadfast love to all those who cry out to you

The abstract noun "love" can be restated with the verb "loving" Alternate translation: "faithfully loving all those who cry out to you"

Psalms 86:7

In the day of my trouble

"During my times of difficulty"

I call on you

"I pray to you"

Psalms 86:8

among the gods

The writer is not acknowledging these other gods exist. He is referring to false gods that people from other nations worship.

Psalms 86:9

All the nations

Here "the nations" represent the people. Alternate translation: "The people from all nations"

They will honor your name

Here "name" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "They will honor you"

Psalms 86:10

wonderful things

"very good things that amaze me"

you only are God

"you are the only God"

Psalms 86:11

Teach me your ways, Yahweh. Then I will walk in your truth

A person who obeys what God wants is spoken of as if he were walking on God's way or road. Alternate translation: "Teach me your truth, Yahweh. Then I will obey what you say"

Unite my heart to reverence your name

Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts, emotions, and motives. The word "name" is a metonym for the person whose name it is. Asking God to cause a person to respect him completely is spoken of as if the person's heart were in many pieces and that God unites them together. Alternate translation: "Cause me to respect you sincerely with all my heart" or "Cause me to respect you sincerely"

Psalms 86:12

I will praise you with my whole heart

Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts, emotions, and motives. Alternate translation: "I will praise you completely and sincerely"

I will glorify your name

Here "name" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will glorify you"

Psalms 86:13

For great is your covenant faithfulness toward me

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "For you are very faithful to me because of your covenant"

you have rescued my life from the depths of Sheol

This does not mean God brought him back to life after he died. It means God saved him when he was about to die.

Psalms 86:14

the arrogant

This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "arrogant people"

have risen up against me

"are coming together to harm me"

company of violent men

The word "company" here is a general term for a group of people who are together for a common purpose, not a specific term for people working to do harm.

seek my life

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This is a way of saying they want to kill him.
Psalms 86:15
and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be expressed with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "and always loving your people and always being faithful to them"
Psalms 86:16
Turn toward me
Asking God to consider him is spoken of as if he wanted God to turn and look at him.
give your strength to your servant
The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as a verb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "strengthen your servant" or "make your servant strong"
your servant ... the son of your servant woman
The writer is speaking about himself in the third person.
Psalms 86:17
be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will be ashamed"

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87 A psalm of the sons of Korah; a song.
On the holy mount stands the city he founded;
2 Yahweh loves the gates of Zion
more than all the tents of Jacob.

3 Glorious things are said of you,
city of God.

Selah

4 "I mention Rahab and Babylon to my followers.
See, there are Philistia, and Tyre, along with Cush—
and will say, 'This one was born there.'"

5 Of Zion it will be said,
"Each of these was born in her;
and the Most High himself will establish her."

6 Yahweh writes in the census book of the nations,
"This one was born there."

Selah

7 So also the singers and the dancers say together,
"All my fountains are in you."

Psalm 87 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 87 is a psalm about Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Pride
People will be proud to have been born in Jerusalem.
Psalms about Jerusalem
Psalm 46, 48, and 76 are part of a group of psalms that celebrate Jerusalem.

Links:

Psalms 87:1

Psalms 87:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A psalm of the sons of Korah; a song
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say

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that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Psalms 87:2

gates of Zion

Here "gates of Zion" represents the entire city of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "city of Jerusalem"

all the tents of Jacob

The people lived in tents while they wandered in the desert. Here the writer uses "tents of Jacob" to represent where the Israelites live now. Alternate translation: "any of the other dwelling places of the Israelites"

Psalms 87:3

Glorious things are said of you, city of God

The writer speaks to the city of Jerusalem as if it were listening to him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You people in Jerusalem, other people say wonderful things about your city"

Psalms 87:4

I mention

"I tell about." Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

Rahab and Babylon

Here "Rahab" is a poetic way of referring to Egypt. Both "Rahab" and "Babylon" represent the people. Alternate translation: "the people of Egypt and Babylon"

to my followers

"to those who worship me"

This one was born there

"This one" refers to the people from the nations that the writer mentions. Although they were not physically born in Zion, those who follow God are natives of Jerusalem spiritually.

Psalms 87:5

Of Zion it will be said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will say about Zion"

Each of these was born in her

People from other nations that worship Yahweh are spoken of as if they were born in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "It is as though all of these people were born in Jerusalem"

in her

It was common to refer to cities as "her." Alternate translation: "in Jerusalem" or "in Zion"

the Most High himself

The writer uses the reflexive pronoun "himself" to emphasize that it is the Most High who is doing this.

will establish her

"will make Jerusalem strong"

Psalms 87:6

Yahweh writes in the census book of the nations

Yahweh acknowledging that the people from other nations belong to him is spoken of as if he were a king writing down the names of the people who live in his city.

This one was born there

"This one" refers to the people from the nations that the writer mentions. Although they were not physically born in Zion, those who follow God are natives of Jerusalem spiritually. See how you translated this in Psalms 87:4.

Psalms 87:7

All my fountains are in you

Jerusalem being a place where people receive all their blessings is spoken of as if Jerusalem were a spring that provided water to the people.

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88 A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah; for the chief musician; set to the Mahalath Leannoth style. A maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.
Yahweh, God of my salvation,
I cry out day and night before you.

2 Listen to my prayer;
pay attention to my cry.

3 For I am filled with troubles,
and my life has reached Sheol.

4 People treat me like those who go down into the pit;
I am a man with no strength.

5 I am free among the dead;
I am like the dead who lie in the grave,
about whom you care no more
because they are cut off from your power.

6 You place me in the lowest part of the pit,
in the dark and deep places.

7 Your wrath lies heavy on me,
and all your waves crash over me.

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Selah

8 Because of you, my acquaintances avoid me.
You have made me an abomination to them.
I am hemmed in and I cannot escape.

9 My eyes grow weary from trouble;
All day long I call out to you, Yahweh;
I spread out my hands to you.

10 Will you do wonders for the dead?
Will those who have died rise and praise you?
Selah

11 Will your covenant faithfulness be proclaimed in the grave,
your faithfulness in the place of the dead?

12 Will your wonderful deeds be known in the darkness,
or your righteousness in the place of forgetfulness?

13 But I cry to you, Yahweh;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

14 Yahweh, why do you reject me?
Why do you hide your face from me?

15 I have always been afflicted and on the verge of death since my youth.
I have suffered from your terrors;
I am in despair.

16 Your burning anger has passed over me,
and your terrifying deeds have annihilated me.

17 They surround me like water all the day long;
they have all encircled me.

18 You have removed every friend and acquaintance from me.
My only acquaintance is the darkness.

Psalm 88 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 88 is a psalm of deliverance from sickness. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Abandon

Ever since he was a child, the psalmist has been sick, and now all his friends have abandoned him. If he dies he cannot testify about God's healing.

Links:

Psalms 88:1

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Psalms 88:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of the sons of Korah; a song

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A song, a psalm of the sons of Korah

"This is a psalm that the sons of Korah wrote"

for the chief musician

"this is for the director of music to use in worship"

set to the Mahalath Leannoth style

This may refer to a style of music.

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

Heman

This is the name of a man.

God of my salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "you are the one who saves me"

day and night

The writer uses these words with opposite meanings to say that he cries out continually.

Psalms 88:3

For I am filled with troubles

The writer speaks of himself as if he were a container and troubles are the contents that fill the container. Alternate translation: "For I am very troubled"

my life has reached Sheol

Here "life" represents the writer. And "Sheol" represents death. The writer speaks about himself possibly dying soon as if Sheol were a place and he has arrived at that place. Alternate translation: "I am about to die"

Psalms 88:4

People treat me like those who go down into the pit

The word "pit" means the same as "Sheol." The phrase "go down into the pit" represents dying. Alternate translation: "people treat me like I have already died"

Psalms 88:5

I am free among the dead

The word "free" here is the word used for a slave whose master he no longer has to obey. This is probably an ironic metaphor because the word is usually used to describe good things, but here it is used to tell why the writer is unhappy. Alternate translation: "I now share the existence of the dead" or "I am left alone as if I were dead"

the dead ... the dead

This nominal adjective refers to dead people. Alternate translation: "those who have died ... those who have died"

I am like the dead who lie in the grave

The writer feeling like people and God have abandoned him speaks about himself as if he were already a dead person lying in a grave.

about whom you care no more

"who no longer receive your care" or "people you have stopped caring about"

they are cut off from your power

God no longer using his power to help dead people is spoken of as if God literally cut him off or removed him from his power. Alternate translation: "you no longer use your power to help them"

Psalms 88:6

You place me in the lowest part of the pit, in the dark and deep places

The writer feeling like God has abandoned him speaks about himself as if God has put the him in the deepest and darkest grave.

Psalms 88:7

Your wrath lies heavy on me

This speaks about God being very angry with the writer as if God's wrath were a heavy object lying on top of the writer. Alternate translation: "I feel your great anger" or "I feel how very angry you are with me"

all your waves crash over me

This speaks about God being very angry with the writer as if God's anger were large waves rising up from the sea then landing on the writer.

Psalms 88:8

my acquaintances

"those who know me"

You have made me an abomination to them

The words "abomination" here is a hyperbolic metaphor. The psalmist's friends find him disgusting, but probably not in any religious sense. Alternate translation: "You have made me a disgusting sight to them" or "Because of you, they are shocked when they see me"

I am hemmed in

The writer's physical condition that makes him repulsive to his friends is spoken of as if he were in closed into a confining space. Alternate translation: "It is as though I were in a prison" or "I am trapped"

Psalms 88:9

My eyes grow weary from trouble

Here "eyes" represents a person's ability to see. For his eyes to grow weary from trouble is a way of saying that he his troubles cause him to cry so much that it is hard for him to see.

I spread out my hands to you

"I lift up my hands to you." This is an action that shows that he totally depends on God.

Psalms 88:10

Will you do wonders for the dead?

The writer uses a question to emphasize that if God lets him die then God will no longer be able to do wonderful things for him. Alternate translation: "You do not do wonders for dead people."

Will those who have died rise and praise you?

The writer uses a question to emphasize that if God lets him die then he will not be able to praise God any longer. Alternate translation: "You know that those who have died will not stand up and praise you."

Psalms 88:11

Will your covenant faithfulness be proclaimed in the grave, your

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faithfulness in the place of the dead?
Both questions mean the same thing. The writer uses questions to emphasize that a dead person is not able to praise God's faithfulness. The abstract nouns "covenant faithfulness" and "faithfulness" can be translated as adjectives. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nobody will proclaim your covenant faithfulness or faithfulness from the grave." or "Nobody will proclaim from the grave that you are faithful to your covenant and faithful to your people"
the grave ... the place of the dead
These represent the place where people go after they die.
your faithfulness in the place of the dead?
This can be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Will your faithfulness be proclaimed in the place of the dead?" or "Those who are dead will not proclaim your faithfulness."
Psalms 88:12
in the darkness ... the place of forgetfulness
These represent the place where people go after they die.
Will your wonderful deeds be known in the darkness, or your righteousness in the place of forgetfulness?
Both questions mean the same thing. The writer uses questions to emphasize that those who are dead are not able to experience or proclaim the great things God does. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will not talk about your wonderful deeds and righteousness in the dark place of the forgotten dead."
or your righteousness in the place of forgetfulness?
This can be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Will your righteousness be known in the place of forgetfulness?" or "Those who are in the place of forgetfulness will not know about the righteous things you do."
Psalms 88:13
my prayer comes before you
The writer praying to Yahweh is spoken of as if the prayer itself goes to speak with Yahweh.
Psalms 88:14
Why do you hide your face from me?
This speaks of the writer feeling like God has rejected or abandoned him as if God were hiding his face or physically turning away from the writer.
Psalms 88:16
Your burning anger has passed over me
The phrase "burning anger" is a metonym for the deeds that God did because he was angry. It is also a metaphor that speaks of God punishing the writer as if God's actions are a large wave rising out of the sea that fall on and crush the writer. Alternate translation: "It is as if your angry actions crush me"
your terrifying deeds have annihilated me
This exaggeration speaks about God punishing the writer as if God has completely destroyed the writer. Alternate translation: "the terrifying things you do have destroyed me" or "the terrifying things you do have almost destroyed me"
Psalms 88:17
They surround me like water all the day long
The writer compares God's "angry actions" and "terrifying deeds" to a flood of water. Alternate translation: "All day long they threaten to destroy me like a flood"
They
The word "They" refers to God's "angry actions" and "terrifying deeds" from the previous verse.
they have all encircled me
The writer speaks of God's "angry actions" and "terrifying deeds" as if they were enemies who were trying to capture and kill him. Alternate translation: "they have surrounded me like enemy soldiers"
Psalms 88:18
every friend and acquaintance
"every person I love and know"
My only acquaintance is the darkness
This speaks about darkness as if it were a person that could be friends with someone else. The writer is emphasizing that he feels completely alone. Alternate translation: "Everywhere I go it is dark"

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89 A maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.
I will sing of Yahweh's acts of covenant faithfulness forever.
I will proclaim your truthfulness to future generations.

2 For I have said, “Covenant faithfulness has been established forever;
your truthfulness you have established in the heavens.”

3 You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have made an oath to David my servant:

4 ‘I will establish your descendants forever,
and I will establish your throne through all generations.’”

Selah

5 The heavens praise your wonders, Yahweh;
your truthfulness is praised in the assembly of the holy ones.

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6 For who in the skies can be compared to Yahweh?
Who among the sons of the gods is like Yahweh?

7 He is a God who is greatly honored in the council of the holy ones
and is awesome among all who surround him.

8 Yahweh God of hosts,
who is strong like Yah?[1]
Your truthfulness surrounds you.

9 You rule the raging sea;
when the waves surge, you calm them.

10 You crushed Rahab as one who is killed.
You scattered your enemies with your strong arm.

11 The heavens belong to you, and the earth also.
You established the world and all it contains.

12 You created the north and the south.
Tabor and Hermon rejoice in your name.

13 You have a mighty arm
and a strong hand, and your right hand is high.

14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne.
Steadfast love and faithfulness come before you.

15 Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound!
Yahweh, they walk in the light of your face.

16 They rejoice in your name all day long,
and in your righteousness they exalt you.

17 You are their glorious strength,
and by your favor our horn is exalted.

18 For our shield belongs to Yahweh;
our king belongs to the Holy One of Israel.

19 Long ago you spoke in a vision
to your faithful ones;[2]
you said, "I have set a crown on a mighty one."[3]
I have raised up one chosen from among the people.

20 I have chosen David my servant;
with my holy oil have I anointed him.

21 My hand will support him;
my arm will strengthen him.

22 No enemy will deceive him;

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no son of wickedness will oppress him.

23 I will crush his enemies before him;
I will kill those who hate him.

24 My truth and my covenant faithfulness will be with him;
by my name his horn will be exalted.

25 I will place his hand over the sea
and his right hand over the rivers.

26 He will call out to me, 'You are my Father,
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

27 I also will place him as my firstborn son,
the most exalted of the kings of the earth.

28 I will extend my covenant faithfulness to him forever;
and my covenant with him will be secure.

29 I will make his descendants endure forever
and his throne as enduring as the skies above.

30 If his children abandon my law
and do not walk in my regulations,

31 if they break my rules
and do not keep my commands,

32 then will I punish their rebellion with a rod
and their iniquity with blows.

33 But I will not remove my steadfast love from him
or be unfaithful to my promise.

34 I will not break my covenant
or change the words of my lips.

35 Once and for all I have sworn by my holiness—
I will not lie to David:

36 his descendants will continue forever
and his throne as long as the sun before me.

37 It will be established forever like the moon,
the faithful witness in the sky."

Selah

38 But you have refused and rejected;
you have been angry with your anointed king.

39 You have renounced the covenant of your servant.
You have desecrated his crown on the ground.

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40 You have broken down all his walls.
You have ruined his strongholds.

41 All who pass by have robbed him.
He has become the scorn of his neighbors.

42 You have raised the right hand of his enemies;
you have made all his enemies rejoice.

43 You turn back the edge of his sword
and have not made him stand when in battle.

44 You have brought his splendor to an end;
you have brought down his throne to the ground.

45 You have shortened the days of his youth.
You have covered him with shame.

Selah

46 How long, Yahweh? Will you hide yourself forever?
How long will your anger burn like fire?

47 Oh, think about how short my time is,
and for what vanity you have created all the children of mankind!

48 Who can live and not die,
or rescue his own life from the hand of Sheol?

Selah

49 Lord, where are your former acts of covenant faithfulness
that you swore to David in your truthfulness?

50 Call to mind, Lord, the mocking directed against your servants
and how I bear in my heart so many insults from the nations.

51 Your enemies hurl insults, Yahweh;
they mock the footsteps of your anointed one.

52 Blessed be Yahweh forever.
Amen and Amen.

BOOK FOUR

(Psalms 90-106)

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Many ancient copies of the Hebrew text have the singular faithful one instead of faithful ones.
[3]The ancient copies of the Hebrew text have I will place help upon a warrior. Some scholars translate the word for help as crown and that is how the ULB editors have translated the word here.

Psalm 89 General Notes

Type of psalm

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Psalm 89 is a worship and a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's promises

God is mighty and has promised David an eternal kingdom. But now that kingdom is being destroyed. (See: promise and eternity)

Parallelism

This psalm exhibits the kind of parallelism where the second line often emphasizes the first line.

Links:

Psalms 89:1

Psalms 89:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

Ethan

This is the name of the writer.

acts of covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "faithful acts" or "loving acts"

Psalms 89:2

Covenant faithfulness has been established forever

God always doing what he promised to do is spoken of as if his faithfulness were a building that God has built and made firm. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will always be faithful because of your covenant with us"

your truthfulness you have established in the heavens

God always doing what he promised to do is spoken of as if his faithfulness were a building that God has built and made firm.

in the heavens

These words could refer to 1) God's dwelling place, meaning that God rules from heaven and he always does what he promises, or 2) the sky, meaning that God's promises are as constant and permanent as the sky .

Psalms 89:3

I have made a covenant with my chosen one

You can make explicit that "chosen one" refers to David. Alternate translation: "I made a promise to David, the one I chose"

I have made

Yahweh is speaking in 89:3-4.

Psalms 89:4

I will establish your descendants forever

Yahweh always causing one of David's descendants to be king is spoken of as if David's descendants are a building that Yahweh will build and make firm.

I will establish your throne through all generations

Here "throne" represents the power to rule as king. The psalmist speaks of God promising that one of David's descendants will always rule as king as if God will build David's throne and make it firm. Alternate translation: "I will make sure that one of your descendants will rule as king over every generation of my people"

Psalms 89:5

The heavens praise

Here "heavens" represents those who are in heaven.

praise your wonders, Yahweh

"praise you, Yahweh, because of the wonderful things you do"

your truthfulness is praised in the assembly of the holy ones

The abstract noun "truthfulness" can be stated as "you always do what you promise to do." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The assembly of the holy ones praises you because you always do what you promise to do"

the assembly of the holy ones

This refers to the angels in heaven.

Psalms 89:6

For who in the skies can be compared to Yahweh? Who among the sons of the gods is like Yahweh?

Both questions mean the same thing. The writer is using question to emphasize that there in no one in heaven like Yahweh.

sons of the gods

Here "sons of" means having the characteristics of. This is a way of referring to other spiritual beings that live in heaven. Alternate translation: "angels" or "divine beings"

Psalms 89:7

He is a God who is greatly honored in the council of the holy ones

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The council of the holy ones greatly honors God"

the council of the holy ones

"the gathering of heavenly beings" or "the gathering of angels"

Psalms 89:8

who is strong like Yah?

The writer asks the question to emphasize there is no one as strong as Yahweh.

Your truthfulness surrounds you

Yahweh always dong what he promises to do is spoken of as if his truthfulness were a cloak or garment that wraps around him.

Psalms 89:9

You rule the raging sea

"You control the raging sea"

Psalms 89:10

You crushed Rahab as one who is killed

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The word "Rahab" here refers to a monster of the sea.
with your strong arm
Here "arm" represents power. Alternate translation: "with your great power"
Psalms 89:12
the north and the south
The writer uses the words "north" and "south" together to mean that God created everything everywhere.
Tabor and Hermon rejoice in your name
Tabor is a mountain southwest of the sea of Galilee and Hermon is a mountain northeast of the sea of Galilee. The writer describes these mountains as if they were persons who could rejoice. Alternate translation: "It is as if Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon were rejoicing in your name"
in your name
Here "name" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "in you"
Psalms 89:13
You have a mighty arm and a strong hand, and your right hand is high
The words "mighty arm," "strong hand," and "right hand" all represent God's power.
right hand is high
To raise the right hand high into the air is a gesture that indicates power.
Psalms 89:14
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne
God ruling as king and doing what is right and just is spoken of as if God's throne were a building, and righteousness and justice were its foundation.
your throne
The throne represents God's rule as king.
Steadfast love and faithfulness come before you
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" are spoken of as if they come and meet with God. Alternate translation: "You are always faithful to your covenant and are worthy of people trusting you"
Psalms 89:15
who know the joyful sound
Here the words "joyful sound" refer to the sound of people shouting and blowing horns. These were common acts of worship during Israelite festivals.
they walk
Here people living their lives is spoken of as if they were walking. Alternate translation: "they live"
in the light of your face
The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. Alternate translation: "knowing that you act favorably towards them"
Psalms 89:16
in your name
Here "name" represents the person. Alternate translation: "in you"
in your righteousness they exalt you
The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "they exalt you because you always do what is right"
Psalms 89:17
You are their glorious strength
The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "You make them wonderfully strong"
You are their
Here "their" refers to the Israelites. The writer would have included himself as a member of the Israelites. Alternate translation: "You are our"
our horn is exalted
This metaphor speaks of the Israelites winning a battle as if they were a wild ox that has defeated an enemy. Alternate translation: "we win the battle"
our horn
Here "our" refers to the writer and the Israelites but not to Yahweh, to whom he speaks.
Psalms 89:18
For our shield belongs to Yahweh
The king who protects his people and whom Yahweh chose is spoken of as if he were a shield that belongs to Yahweh.
Psalms 89:19
General Information:
The writer assumes that the reader knows the history of how David became the chosen king.
I have set a crown on a mighty one
To place a crown on a person's head is a sign of making him king. Alternate translation: "I have made a mighty man king"
set a crown on a mighty one
Some Bible translations have "given strength to a mighty one" or "helped a mighty one."
I have raised up one chosen from among the people
Here "raised up" means appointed. It is implied that God chose this person to be king. Alternate translation: "I have chosen one from among the people to be king"
Psalms 89:20
with my holy oil have I anointed him
Here to pour oil on someone's head is a sign that God is appointing the person to be king.
Psalms 89:21
My hand will support him; my arm will strengthen him
Here "hand" and "arm" both means the power and control of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will support him and make him strong"
Psalms 89:22
son of wickedness
The writer refers to those who have the nature or character of wickedness as "sons of wickedness." Alternate translation: "wicked person"
Psalms 89:24
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking about David.
My truth and my covenant faithfulness will be with him
God always being loyal and doing what he promises for David is spoken of as if truth and faithfulness were objects that would be with David. The abstract nouns "truth" and "faithfulness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "I will always be truthful with him and I will always act faithfully towards him"
by my name
Here "name" represents God' power. Alternate translation: "I, God, will cause him to be victorious"
his horn will be exalted

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This metaphor speaks of David winning a battle as if he were a wild ox that has defeated an enemy. See how you translated similar words in [Psalm 89:17]

Psalms 89:25

I will place his hand over the sea and his right hand over the rivers

Here "hand" and "right hand" represent power and authority. Here "the sea" seems to refer to the Mediterranean Sea west of Israel, and "rivers" refers to the Euphrates river in the east. This means David will have authority over everything from the sea to the river. Alternate translation: "I will give him authority over everything from the Mediterranean sea to the Euphrates river"

Psalms 89:26

He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "He will say that I am his Father, his God, and the rock of his salvation."

the rock of my salvation

Yahweh protecting and saving David is spoken of as if Yahweh were a high rock that David could stand on top of for protection from enemies.

Psalms 89:27

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking about David.

I also will place him as my firstborn son

Yahweh giving David special rank and privileges over all other people is spoken of as if David would be Yahweh's firstborn son.

Psalms 89:28

I will extend my covenant faithfulness to him forever

Yahweh speaks of continuing to act faithfully towards David is spoken of as if Yahweh's covenant faithfulness were an object that he extends or makes longer. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "I will continue to act faithfully towards him forever"

Psalms 89:29

his throne as enduring as the skies above

Someone from David's family always ruling as king is spoken of as if his his throne would last as long as the sky will last.

his throne

Here "throne" represents the power to rule as king.

Psalms 89:30

his children

"David's descendants"

Psalms 89:32

punish their rebellion with a rod

God punishing David's descendants is spoken of as if he would hit them with a rod. The abstract noun "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "punish them for rebelling against me"

their iniquity with blows

God punishing David's descendants is spoken of as if God would literally hit them. This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "I will punish them because they sinned against me"

Psalms 89:33

I will not remove my steadfast love from him or be unfaithful to my promise

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will always love David, and I will do what I promised to him"

Psalms 89:34

the words of my lips

Here "lips" represent the whole mouth and the person speaking. Alternate translation: "what I said"

Psalms 89:36

his throne as long as the sun before me

The words "will continue" are understood. Alternate translation: "his throne will continue as long as the sun before me"

his throne

Here "throne" represents the power to rule as king. God is promising that one of David's descendants will always be king.

as long as the sun before me

God compares David's rule as king to the sun to emphasize that someone from David's descendants will always rule as king.

Psalms 89:37

It will be established forever

Here "It" stands for David's throne or power to rule as king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause it to last forever"

forever like the moon

God compares David's rule as king to the moon to emphasize that someone from David's descendants will always rule as king.

the moon, the faithful witness in the sky

The moon is spoken of as if it were a person who witnesses God making this promise to David. Alternate translation: "the moon, which is like a faithful witness in the sky"

Psalms 89:38

you have refused and rejected

The words "the king" are understood. Alternate translation: "you have refused and rejected the king"

with your anointed king

"with the king you chose"

Psalms 89:39

You have renounced the covenant

"You have rejected the covenant"

You have desecrated his crown on the ground

To push down into the ground or dust is a sign of great humiliation. Alternate translation: "You have defiled his crown on the ground" or "You have caused his crown to fall into the dirt"

his crown

This represents the king's power as king and his right to rule.

Psalms 89:40

You have broken down all his walls. You have ruined his strongholds

This implies that God allowed enemies to destroy the defenses at Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "You have allowed enemies to break down his walls and ruin his strongholds in Jerusalem"

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Psalms 89:41
the scorn of his neighbors
The abstract noun "scorn" may be translated using a verb. The metonymy speaks of the king as if he were the way that his neighbors react to him. Alternate translation: "the one whom his neighbors scorn" or "the one his neighbors mock"
his neighbors
Here "neighbors" means people of nearby nations.
Psalms 89:42
raised the right hand of his enemies
Here "right hand" represents power. To "raise the right hand" means that Yahweh has made his enemies strong enough to defeat God's chosen king.
Psalms 89:43
turn back the edge of his sword
Here "sword" represents the king's power in battle. To turn the sword back represents making the king unable to win in battle.
the edge of his sword
Here "edge" represents the whole sword. Alternate translation: "his sword"
have not made him stand when in battle
Here "stand" represents being victorious in battle. Alternate translation: "You have not helped him to be victorious in battle"
Psalms 89:44
you have brought down his throne to the ground
Here "throne" represents the power to rule as king. Alternate translation: "you, Yahweh, have ended his reign as king"
Psalms 89:45
You have shortened the days of his youth
This is a way of saying God made the king seem old even while he was still young. Alternate translation: "Even while he is young you have made him weak like an old man"
the days of his youth
"the time when he was young and strong"
covered him with shame
Yahweh completely humiliating the king is spoken of as if shame were a garment that God used to cover the king.
Psalms 89:46
How long, Yahweh? Will you hide yourself forever?
The writer uses these questions to emphasize that he does not want God to continue to refuse the king. Alternate translation: "Please, Yahweh, do not refuse to help the king forever."
Will you hide yourself
God not helping the king is spoken of as if God were hiding from him. Alternate translation: "Will you refuse to help the king"
How long will your anger burn like fire?
The writer uses a question to emphasize that he does not want God to remain angry. Alternate translation: "Please do not continue being angry"
your anger burn like fire
God being very angry is spoken of as if his anger were a hot fire.
Psalms 89:47
for what vanity you have created all the children of mankind
The abstract noun "vanity" can be stated as "short life." Alternate translation: "that you have created all people for such a short life"
the children of mankind
This refers to humans in general. Alternate translation: "humans" or "people"
Psalms 89:48
Who can live and not die, or rescue his own life from the hand of Sheol?
The writer uses these questions to emphasize that all people will die. Alternate translation: "No one can live forever or bring himself back to life after dying"
rescue his own life from the hand of Sheol
Here "hand" refers to power. The writer speaks of Sheol as if it were a person who has power over those who die. Possible meanings are 1) a person cannot bring himself back to life after dying or 2) a person cannot keep himself from dying.
Psalms 89:49
Lord, where are your former acts of covenant faithfulness that you swore to David in your truthfulness?
The writer uses a question to request the Lord to be faithful to his covenant with David. Alternate translation: "Lord, be faithful to your covenant with David as you have been in the past"
your former acts of covenant faithfulness
The abstract nouns "acts" and "faithfulness" can be translated with a verb and an adverb. Alternate translation: "the things that you did before that showed that you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 89:50
Call to mind
The writer asks Yahweh to bring this up in his memory. Alternate translation: "Remember" or "Consider"
the mocking directed against your servants
Here "your servants" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "how they mock us, your servants"
how I bear in my heart so many insults from the nations
Here "heart" represents the person's emotions. Alternate translation: "I endure so many insults from the people of the nations" or "I suffer because the people from the nations insult me"
from the nations
Here "nations" represents the people of the nations.
Psalms 89:51
Your enemies hurl insults
The enemies shouting insults at the king is spoken of as if insults were an object that the enemies throw violently at the king.
they mock the footsteps of your anointed one
Here "footsteps" represents where the king goes. Alternate translation: "they mock your anointed one wherever he goes"
Psalms 89:52
General Information:
This verse is more than the end of this psalm. It is the closing statement for all of Book 3 of the Psalms, which starts at Psalm 73 and ends with Psalm 89.
Blessed be Yahweh forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"May people praise Yahweh forever"
Amen and Amen
The word "Amen" is repeated to emphasize approval of what has been said. See how you translated this in Psalms 41:13.

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90 A prayer of Moses the man of God.
Lord, you have been our refuge
throughout all generations.

2 Before the mountains were formed,
or you formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

3 You return man to dust,
and you say, "Return, you descendants of mankind."

4 For a thousand years in your sight
are as yesterday when it is past,
and as a watch in the night.

5 You sweep them away as with a flood and they sleep;
in the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up.

6 In the morning it blooms and grows up;
in the evening it withers and dries up.

7 Truly, we are consumed in your anger,
and in your wrath we are terrified.

8 You have set our iniquities before you,
our hidden sins in the light of your presence.

9 Our life passes away under your wrath;
our years quickly pass like a sigh.

10 Our years are seventy,
or even eighty if we are healthy;
but even our best years are marked by trouble and sorrow.
Yes, they pass quickly, and we fly away.

11 Who knows the power of your anger,
and your wrath that is equal to the fear of you?

12 So teach us to consider our life
so that we might gain a heart of wisdom.

13 Turn back, Yahweh! How long will it be?
Have pity on your servants.

14 Satisfy us in the morning with your covenant faithfulness
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 Make us glad in proportion to the days you afflicted us
and to the years we have experienced trouble.

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16 Let your servants see your work,
and let our children see your majesty.

17 May the favor of the Lord our God be ours;
prosper the work of our hands;
indeed, prosper the work of our hands.

Psalm 90 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm is a wisdom psalm. God is eternal but a human's life is short. (See: wise and eternity)

Special concepts in this chapter

Life's shortness

Because life is so short, people need to spend it as God wants them to spend it.

Links:

Psalms 90:1

Psalms 90:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A prayer of Moses the man of God

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Lord, you have been our refuge

God protecting his people is spoken of as if God were a refuge or shelter. Alternate translation: "Lord, you have been like a shelter for us"

throughout all generations

"always"

Psalms 90:2

Before the mountains were formed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Before you formed the mountains"

were formed

"were created" or "were shaped"

the world

This represents everything that is in the world.

from everlasting to everlasting

This phrase represents all time past, present, and future.

Psalms 90:3

You return man to dust

This implies that just as God created the first man, Adam, from the soil, God will cause people's bodies to turn back into soil after they die. Alternate translation: "You return people to dust when they die"

return man

Here "man" means people in general.

Return, you descendants

The words "to dust" or "to soil" are understood. Alternate translation: "Return to dust, you descendants" or "Return to soil, you descendants"

you descendants of mankind

This is a way of referring to humans in general. Alternate translation: "you humans" or "you people"

Psalms 90:4

For a thousand years in your sight are as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night

The writer means that a long period of time seems like a short period of time to God. Alternate translation: "You consider a thousand years the same as one day in the past, or as a few short hours in the night" or "Even a thousand years is not a long time to you"

a thousand years

"1,000 years"

in your sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "to you"

Psalms 90:5

You sweep them away as with a flood and they sleep

God causing people to die suddenly is spoken of as if he swept them away with a broom. This sweeping is also spoken of as if it were a flood that carried people away. Alternate translation: "Lord, you destroy the people as with a flood and they die"

they sleep

This is a polite way of speaking of people dying.

Psalms 90:6

it blooms and grows up

Both of these phrases refer to how the grass grows. Alternate translation: "it begins to grow and develop"

it withers and dries up

Both of these phrases refer to how the grass dies. Alternate translation: "it fades and dries up"

Psalms 90:7

we are consumed in your anger

God destroying people in his anger is spoken of as if God's anger were a fire that completely burns up the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You destroy us in your anger"

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in your wrath we are terrified
"when you are angry we are greatly afraid"
Psalms 90:8
You have set our iniquities before you, our hidden sins in the light of your presence
God considering people's sins is spoken of as if sins were an objects he could place in front of himself and look at them. Alternate translation: "You see every sinful thing we do, even the sinful things we do in secret"
Psalms 90:9
Our life passes away under your wrath
The word "because" can be used to make clear that God's wrath causes human life to end. Alternate translation: "Our lives come to an end because of your wrath"
like a sigh
The writer compares human life to a sigh to emphasize that life is very brief.
Psalms 90:10
seventy
"70"
eighty
"80"
even our best years are marked by trouble and sorrow
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Even in our best years we experience trouble and sorrow"
we fly away
This is a polite way of referring to people dying. Alternate translation: "we die"
Psalms 90:11
Who knows the power of your anger, and your wrath that is equal to the fear of you?
The writer uses a question to emphasize that no one has fully experienced God anger. Therefore no one truly reveres God and fears his anger when people sin. Alternate translation: "No one knows the power of your anger. Therefore no one fears your wrath when they sin."
Psalms 90:12
we might gain a heart of wisdom
The word "heart" is a metonym for the person's thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "we might want to be wise and act wisely"
Psalms 90:13
Turn back, Yahweh! How long will it be?
Asking Yahweh to no longer be angry is spoken of as if the writer wants God to turn physically away from his anger. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, please do not be angry any longer"
How long will it be?
The writer uses a question to state that he wants God to stop being angry.
Have pity on your servants
Here "your servants" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Be merciful to us, your servants"
Psalms 90:14
Satisfy us in the morning
"Satisfy us every morning"
with your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "by being faithful because of your covenant with us"
Psalms 90:15
in proportion to the days you afflicted us and to the years we have experienced trouble
Both of these phrases mean the same thing. The writer is asking Yahweh to make them happy for the same amount of time he punished them. Alternate translation: "for the same amount of time that you afflicted us and caused us to suffer"
Psalms 90:16
Let your servants
Here "your servants" refer to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Let us, your servants" or "Let us"
let our children
Here "children" means children and descendants.
see your majesty
The abstract noun "majesty" can be stated as "great things." Alternate translation: "see the great things you do"
Psalms 90:17
May the favor of the Lord our God be ours
The abstract noun "favor" can be stated as "be kind." Alternate translation: "May the Lord our God be kind to us"
prosper the work of our hands
Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "cause us to be successful"

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91 [1] He who lives in the shelter of the Most High
will stay in the shadow of the Almighty.

[2] I will say of Yahweh, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

[3] For he will rescue you
from the snare of the hunter
and from the destructive plague.

[4] He will cover you with his wings,
and under his wings you will find refuge.
His faithfulness is a shield and protection.

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5 You will not be afraid of terror in the night,
or of the arrow that flies by day,

6 or of the plague that stalks in the darkness,
or of the destruction that lays waste at noon.

7 A thousand may fall at your side
and ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not reach you.

8 You will only observe
and see the punishment of the wicked.

9 For Yahweh is my refuge!
Make the Most High your refuge also.

10 No evil will overtake you;
no affliction will come near your tent.

11 For he will put his angels in charge over you,
to guard you in all your ways.

12 They will lift you up with their hand
so that you will not hit your foot on a stone.

13 You will crush lions and asps under your feet;
you will trample on young lions and serpents.

14 Because he delights in me, I will rescue him.
I will protect him because he acknowledges my name.

15 When he calls to me, I will answer him.
I will be with him in trouble;
I will give him victory and will honor him.

16 I will satisfy him with the length of his days,
and show him my salvation.

Psalm 91 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 91 is a wisdom psalm. Those who depend on God are protected by him. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fear

No matter what dangers befall a person, they do not need to fear. God is protecting them from all harm.

Links:

Psalms 91:1

Psalms 91:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

He who lives ... will stay ... of the Almighty

Because "live" and "stay" mean almost the same thing, as do "shelter" and "shadow," which are both metaphors for protection, you may need to combine the two lines into one. Alternate translation: "The Most High, the Almighty, will care for all those who live where he can protect them"

who lives in the shelter of the Most High

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The word "shelter" is a metaphor for protection. Alternate translation: "who lives where the Most High protects him"
the Most High
The words "the Most High" refer to Yahweh. See how this is translated in Psalms 18:13.
will stay in the shadow of the Almighty
The word "shadow" here is a metaphor for protection. Alternate translation: "will stay where the Almighty can protect him"
the Almighty
the one who has power and control over everything. See how this was translated in Psalms 68:14
Psalms 91:2
I will say of Yahweh
"I will say about Yahweh"
my refuge and my fortress
A "refuge" is any place a person can go and have someone or something protect him. A "fortress" is something that people make so they can protect themselves and their property. Asaph uses them here as metaphors for protection. Alternate translation: "the one to whom I can go and he will protect me"
Psalms 91:3
For he will rescue you from the snare of the hunter and from the destructive plague
The words that have been left out can be put in. Alternate translation: "For God will rescue you from the snare of the hunter and he will rescue you from the plagues that can destroy you"
destructive
deadly
the snare of the hunter
"from the snare that the hunter has set to catch you"
Psalms 91:4
He will cover you with his wings, and under his wings you will find refuge
God's protection is here referred to as "wings" which a bird uses to cover its' young from danger. "Cover you with his wings" and "under his wings" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "He will keep you safe and protect you"
His faithfulness is a shield and protection
God's faithfulness is here referred to as a "shield" which can protect people who rely on him. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "trust." Alternate translation: "You can trust him to protect you"
protection
No one knows for sure what this word means. Possible meanings are 1) a small shield strapped to the forearm that soldiers used to defend themselves against arrows and swords or 2) a wall of stones set in a circle inside which soldiers could hide and shoot arrows.
Psalms 91:5
terror in the night
The psalmist speaks of "terror" as if it were a spirit or fierce animal that could attack at night and so terrify people. Alternate translation: "things attacking you at night"
in the night ... by day
These two phrases taken together refer to all possible times of night and day.
the arrow that flies by day
"Arrow" here is a metonym for the people who shoot the arrows. Alternate translation: "people attacking you with arrows during the day"
Psalms 91:6
or of the plague that stalks
The psalmist speaks of illness as if it were a person who went about at night killing other people. Alternate translation: "You will not be afraid of dying from illness"
stalks
sneaks up to attack prey or a victim
in the darkness ... at noon
These two phrases taken together refer to all possible times of night and day.
plague
an illness that makes many people ill at the same time
Psalms 91:7
A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand
"Many people may fall all around you." If translating the exact numbers confuses the readers, you may omit them.
it will not reach you
"the evil will not harm you"
Psalms 91:8
You will only observe and see
"You yourself will not suffer, but you will watch carefully, and you will see"
the punishment of the wicked
The abstract noun "punishment" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "how God punishes the wicked"
Psalms 91:9
Yahweh is my refuge
The writer speaks of Yahweh protecting him as if Yahweh were a safe place for him to find protection from his enemies. Alternate translation: "Yahweh protects me, like a person finds protection in a place of refuge"
Make the Most High your refuge also
"You should make the Most High your refuge also." The psalmist stops speaking to God and speaks to the reader.
Psalms 91:10
No evil will overtake you
The writer speaks of a person experiencing bad or evil things as if evil were a person who overtakes another person. Alternate translation: "Nothing evil will happen to you"
no affliction will come near your tent
The psalmist speaks of people who afflict others as though they were the harm they cause. Alternate translation: "no one will be able to harm your family"
tent
This is an idiom. The Israelites were living in solid houses when this was written. Alternate translation: "home"
Psalms 91:11
in all your ways
The psalmist speaks of the way a person lives his life as if it were a path down which the person walked. Alternate translation: "in everything you do" or "at all times"
Psalms 91:12

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They will lift you
"Yahweh's angels will lift you"
you will not hit your foot on a stone
The angels will protect not only the reader's foot but the rest of his body as well. The words "not ... hit your foot on a stone" is an exaggerated metonym to say that not even small bad things will happen. This should probably not be taken as a promise that no bad things will ever happen again. Alternate translation: "you will not even hit your foot on a stone" or "not even the smallest bad thing will happen to you"
Psalms 91:13
You will crush lions and asps under your feet; you will trample on young lions and serpents
Where "hit your foot on a stone" is a minor problem, lions and snake are examples of great dangers. The psalmist speaks of lions and snakes as if they were small enough to be crushed under a person's foot. Alternate translation: "You will be able kill lions and asps as if they were small animals you could crush under your feet"
asps
types of poisonous snake.
trample
crush by walking heavily on
Psalms 91:14
he acknowledges my name
"he is loyal to me" or "he considers me holy"
Psalms 91:15
I will be with him in trouble
This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I will be with him when he is in trouble"
I will give him victory
The abstract noun "victory" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "I will cause him to be victorious" or "I will enable him to defeat his enemies"
Psalms 91:16
will satisfy him with the length of his days
The idiom "the length of his days" here refers to the duration of his life. It may imply a long life. Alternate translation: "I will satisfy him by giving him a long life" or "I will make him happy by letting him live a very long time"
and show him my salvation
"and I will show him my salvation." The psalmist speaks of the work God does to save people as if it were a physical object. Alternate translation: "I will save him so that he knows I am the one who saved him"

92 A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day.
It is a good thing to give thanks to Yahweh
and to sing praises to your name, Most High,

2 to proclaim your covenant faithfulness in the morning
and your truthfulness every night,

3 with a lute of ten strings
and the resounding music of the harp.

4 For you, Yahweh, have made me glad through your deeds.
I will sing for joy because of the deeds of your hands.

5 How great are your deeds, Yahweh!
Your thoughts are very deep.

6 A brutish person does not know,
nor does a fool understand this:

7 When the wicked sprout like the grass,
and even when all those who behave wickedly thrive,
still they are doomed to eternal destruction.

8 But you, Yahweh, will reign forever.

9 Indeed, look at your enemies, Yahweh!
Indeed, look at your enemies. They will perish!
All those who behave wickedly will be scattered.

10 You have lifted up my horn like the horn of the wild ox;

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I am anointed with fresh oil.

11 My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard of the doom of my evil foes.

12 The righteous will flourish like the palm tree;
they will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 They are planted in the house of Yahweh;
they flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They bear fruit even when they are old;
they stay fresh and green,

15 to proclaim that Yahweh is just.
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

Psalm 92 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 92 is a psalm of praise for God's kindness and faithfulness. (See: faithful)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

God causes evil people to be destroyed and good people to be happy and useful, even after they grow old. (See: justice and evil)

Links:

Psalms 92:1

Psalms 92:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

to sing praises to your name

The words "your name" are a metonym for "you." Alternate translation: "to sing praises to you"

Psalms 92:2

proclaim your covenant faithfulness in the morning

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "proclaim in the morning that you are faithful to your covenant"

your truthfulness every night

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. The abstract noun "truthfulness" can be translated with the adjective "true." Alternate translation: "proclaim every night that everything you say is true"

Psalms 92:4

glad

happy

through your deeds

The abstract noun phrase "your deeds" can be translated with the relative clause "what you have done." Alternate translation: "by what you have done"

the deeds of your hands

The abstract noun phrase "the deeds of your hands" can be translated with the relative clause "what your hands have done." The word "hands" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "What you have done"

your deeds

The abstract noun phrase "your deeds" can be translated with a relative clause. Alternate translation: "what you have done"

Psalms 92:5

Your thoughts are very deep

"We cannot understand what you plan to do until you do it"

Your thoughts

The abstract noun phrase "your thoughts" can be translated with a relative clause. Alternate translation: "What you think" or "What you plan"

Psalms 92:6

brutish

animal-like

Psalms 92:7

When the wicked sprout like the grass

This compares evil people to grass, which grows quickly and in many places. Alternate translation: "When evil people appear quickly and seem to be everywhere, like grass"

they are doomed to eternal destruction

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has decided that he will destroy them completely"

Psalms 92:9

Indeed, look at your enemies, Yahweh

Many texts do not have these words.

They will perish

"They will die" or "You will kill them"

All those who behave wickedly will be scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will scatter all those who behave wickedly"

will be scattered

Many texts read, "have been scattered."

be scattered

"driven away"

Psalms 92:10

You have lifted up my horn like the horn of the wild ox

The psalmist speaks of God as if he had made him as strong as a wild animal. Here his "horn" represents his strength. Alternate translation: "You have made me as strong as a wild ox"

I am anointed with fresh oil

Possible meanings are that the oil that God has put on the psalmist is a metaphor for God 1) making him happy "you have made me very happy" or 2) making him strong, "you have made me strong" or 3) enabling him to defeat his enemies, "you have enabled me to defeat my enemies."

Psalms 92:11

My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies; my ears have heard of the doom of my evil foes

The words "eyes" and "ears" are synecdoches for the person who sees and hears. The lines may be combined. Alternate translation: "I have seen and heard of the defeat of my evil enemies"

Psalms 92:12

The righteous will flourish like the palm tree

Possible meanings are that righteous people will be like a healthy palm tree because they will 1) be strong or 2) live for long time.

they will grow like a cedar in Lebanon

Possible meanings are that righteous people will be like a healthy cedar tree growing in the land of Lebanon because 1) they will be strong or 2) people will honor them.

Psalms 92:13

They are planted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has planted them" or "Yahweh takes care of them as if they were trees he had planted"

in the house of Yahweh ... in the courts of our God

The psalmist speaks of people who truly worship God as if they were trees growing in Yahweh's house.

they flourish

The psalmist speaks of righteous people as if they were healthy trees. Alternate translation: "they are growing well" or "they are very strong"

in the courts of our God

in the courtyard of the temple in Jerusalem.

Psalms 92:14

They bear fruit

The psalmist speaks of righteous people as if they were trees that produce food. Alternate translation: "They please God"

they stay fresh and green

The psalmist speaks of righteous people as if they were trees. Alternate translation: "they remain strong and healthy" or "they always do what pleases God"

Psalms 92:15

to proclaim that

These words continue the thought begun by the words "they stay fresh and green" in (Psalms 92:14). Possible meanings are 1) "they stay fresh and green, so that they can proclaim" or 2) "they stay fresh and green. This shows that."

He is my rock

"Yahweh is the one who protects me." The psalmist speaks of Yahweh as if he were a rock that would protect him. See how this is translated in [Psalms 18:2]

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93 [1] Yahweh reigns; he is robed in majesty;
Yahweh has clothed and girded himself with strength.
The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

[2] Your throne is established from ancient times;
you are from everlasting.

[3] The oceans rise, Yahweh;
they have lifted up their voice;
the oceans' waves crash and roar.

[4] Above the crashing of many waves,
the mighty breakers of the sea,
Yahweh on high is mighty.

[5] Your solemn commands are very trustworthy;

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holiness adorns your house,
Yahweh, for the length of your days.

Psalm 93 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 93 is a worship psalm about the power of Yahweh.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

Yahweh is all powerful; He even controls the ocean.

Links:

Psalms 93:1

Psalms 93:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

he is robed in majesty; Yahweh has clothed and girded himself with strength

The psalmist speaks of Yahweh's strength and majesty as if they were things Yahweh wears. Alternate translation: "he shows everyone that he is a powerful king" or "his majesty is there for all to see, like the robe a king wears; everything about Yahweh shows that he is strong and he is ready to do great work"

majesty

the power of a king and the way a king acts

girded himself

put on a belt—a band of leather or another material that a person wears around his waist—to prepare for work or battle

The world is firmly established

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have firmly established the world"

it cannot be moved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever move it"

Psalms 93:2

Your throne is established from ancient times

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You established your throne in ancient times"

you are from everlasting

"you have always existed"

Psalms 93:3

oceans ... oceans'

Some modern translations read "floods ... floods'." The word often refers to a river (See: "the River" in Psalms 72:8), but "oceans ... oceans'" has been chosen here because oceans, not rivers, have "waves" that "crash and roar."

have lifted up their voice; the oceans' waves crash and roar

The psalmist speaks of the ocean as if it were a person who could speak. Alternate translation: "have made a mighty noise because their waves crash and roar"

roar

make a long, loud sound.

Psalms 93:4

Above the crashing of many waves, the mighty breakers of the sea

The phrase "the mighty breakers of the sea" means basically the same thing as "many waves" and emphasizes how great these waves are. Alternate translation: "Above the crashing of all of the very great waves of the sea"

breakers

large waves coming to land

on high

The psalmist speaks of where God lives as if it were high above the earth. Alternate translation: "in heaven"

Psalms 93:5

solemn

very serious

are very trustworthy

"always stay the same" or "never change"

holiness adorns your house

The psalmist speaks of Yahweh's house as if it were a woman wearing beautiful clothing or jewelry and of Yahweh's holiness as the beautiful clothing or jewelry. Alternate translation: "your house is beautiful because you are holy" or "your holiness makes your house beautiful the way beautiful clothes and jewelry make a woman more beautiful"

adorns

makes beautiful

your house

This refers to the temple in Jerusalem.

for the length of your days

This idiom refers to the duration of God's life. Since God lives forever, it can also be translated as forever. Alternate translation: "for as long as you live" or "forever"

94 [1] Yahweh, God who avenges,
God who avenges, shine over us.

[2] Rise up, judge of the earth,
give recompense to the proud.

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3 How long will the wicked, Yahweh,
how long will the wicked rejoice?

4 They pour out their arrogant words;
all those who behave wickedly boast.

5 They crush your people, Yahweh;
they afflict your heritage.

6 They kill the widow and foreigner who lives in their country,
and they murder the fatherless.

7 They say, "Yah does not see;
the God of Jacob does not take notice of it."[1]

8 Pay attention, you stupid people!
You fools, when will you gain understanding?

9 He who made the ear, does he not hear?
He who formed the eye, does he not see?

10 He who disciplines the nations, does he not correct?
He is the one who gives knowledge to man.

11 Yahweh knows the thoughts of men,
that they are vapor.

12 Blessed is the one whom Yah instructs,
the one whom you teach from your law.[2]

13 You give him rest in times of trouble
until a pit is dug for the wicked.

14 For Yahweh will not abandon his people
or abandon his inheritance.

15 For judgment will again be righteous;
and all the upright in heart will follow it.

16 Who will rise up to defend me against the evildoers?
Who will stand up for me against those who behave wickedly?

17 Unless Yahweh had been my help,
I would soon be lying down in the place of silence.

18 When I said, "My foot is slipping,"
Your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, held me up.

19 When cares within me are many,

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your consolations delight my soul.

20 Can a throne of destruction be allied with you,
one that creates trouble by statute?

21 They conspire together to take the life of the righteous
and they declare guilty the blood of the innocent.

22 But Yahweh has been my high tower,
and my God has been the rock of my refuge.

23 He will bring on them their own iniquity
and will cut them off in their own wickedness.
Yahweh our God will cut them off.

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[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 94 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 94 is a prayer requesting that evil people be punished. (See: evil)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

Evil people expect God to ignore their injustices. But God knows what they are doing and will punish them for their evil deeds. (See: justice and works)

Links:

Psalms 94:1

Psalms 94:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

shine over us

Here "shine" is a metaphor for God revealing himself. Alternate translation: "show yourself" or "reveal your glory"

Psalms 94:2

Rise up

The psalmist speaks of starting to do something as getting up. If your language has a word for beginning to act, use it here. Alternate translation: "Take action" or "Do something"

give recompense to the proud

"give to the proud what they deserve" or "punish people who are proud"

Psalms 94:3

How long will the wicked, Yahweh, how long will the wicked rejoice?

The psalmist repeats the question to show that he is unhappy with how long Yahweh has allowed the wicked to rejoice. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have waited too long Yahweh; you have waited too long to stop the wicked from rejoicing."

will the wicked rejoice

Why the wicked rejoice can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "will the wicked rejoice because you never punish them for the evil deeds they do"

Psalms 94:4

They pour out

"All those who do evil pour out"

They pour out their arrogant words

The psalmist writes of the wicked speaking as if their words were a liquid being poured out.

all those who behave wickedly boast

The translation can make explicit that these people boast about their evil actions. Alternate translation: "all those who behave wickedly boast about their evil deeds"

Psalms 94:5

afflict your heritage

Here the metaphor "heritage" refers to the nation of Israel. The nation is a metonym for the people of the nation. Alternate translation: "afflict the people of the nation"

They crush

The psalmist speaks of powerful people treating powerless people badly as if it were crushing them or breaking them in pieces. See how "break in pieces" is translated in [Psalms 72:4]

Psalms 94:6

the widow

"women whose husbands have died"

the fatherless

"children without fathers"

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Psalms 94:7
the God of Jacob does not take notice of it
"the God of Israel does not see what we do"
Psalms 94:8
General Information:
The writer now instructs the wicked people.
when will you gain understanding?
This rhetorical question emphasizes the anger of the writer with the wicked people he is speaking to. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "stop your foolish ways!" or "learn from your mistakes!"
Psalms 94:9
He who made the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see?
These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements or commands. Alternate translation: "God made ears, so he can hear. God made eyes, so he can see." or "God made ears, so stop acting as if he does not hear. God made eyes, so stop acting as if he does not see."
Psalms 94:10
General Information:
The writer continues instructing the wicked people.
He who disciplines the nations, does he not correct?
This question can be translated as a statement. It is implied that Yahweh corrects his people. Alternate translation: "You know that Yahweh corrects the nations, so you can be sure that he will correct his people!" or "he will punish his people!"
does he not correct
This can be stated in positive form. Possible meanings are 1) God corrects. Alternate translation: "he corrects" or 2) God punishes. "he punishes"
Psalms 94:11
that they are vapor
Here the thoughts of men are compared to vapor or steam that disappears into the air. This metaphor shows how unimportant and useless they are.
vapor
"mist." See how this word is translated in Psalms 39:11
Psalms 94:12
General Information:
Now the writer again talks to Yahweh.
Psalms 94:13
until a pit is dug for the wicked
The psalmist speaks of Yahweh's punishing the wicked as if Yahweh were trapping an animal in a pit. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until you dig a pit for the wicked" or "until you destroy the wicked"
Psalms 94:14
his inheritance
"those whom he has chosen to be with him forever"
Psalms 94:15
judgment will again be righteous
The psalmist speaks of those who judge as if they were the decisions they make. The abstract noun "judgment" can be translated with the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "judges will again judge righteously" or "judges will again make righteous decisions"
the upright in heart
The adjective phrase "upright in heart" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "those whose hearts are right with God"
will follow it
"will want the judges to judge righteously"
Psalms 94:16
Who will rise up to defend me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against those who behave wickedly?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one will defend me against the evildoers. No one will help me fight against those who behave wickedly."
Psalms 94:17
Unless Yahweh had been my help ... silence
This statement describes something that could have happened but did not. Yahweh did help him, so he was not lying in the place of silence. Alternate translation: "If Yahweh had not been my help ... silence
Unless Yahweh had been my help
The abstract noun "help" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "If Yahweh had not helped me"
I would soon be lying down in the place of silence
Here "would be lying down" refers to "death" and "in the place of silence" refers to the grave." Alternate translation: "in a short time, I would be dead, lying in a silent grave"
Psalms 94:18
Your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, held me up
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "You, Yahweh, held me up because you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 94:19
When cares within me are many, your consolations delight my soul
The psalmist speaks of care as if he could count separate cares. The abstract noun "consolations" can be translated with the verb "console" or "comfort." Alternate translation: "When I have been worried about many things, you have comforted me and made me happy"
Psalms 94:20
Can a throne of destruction be allied with you, one that creates trouble by statute?
The writer uses this rhetorical question is used to assure Yahweh that the writer knows that Yahweh loves justice. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A throne of destruction, one that creates trouble by statute, cannot be allied with you"
a throne of destruction
Here the metonym "throne" refers to a king or ruler. Alternate translation: "a wicked ruler" or "corrupt judge"
Psalms 94:21
conspire
secretly plan with a person something harmful or illegal
take the life of
This is an idiom which means to kill someone.
they declare guilty the blood of the innocent
The nominal adjective "innocent" may be translated "innocent person." The word "blood" is a metaphor for the violent death of the innocent person and a metonym for the person himself. Alternate translation: "they declare the innocent person guilty and then kill him"
Psalms 94:22

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Yahweh has been my high tower
Here "tower" is a metaphor for protection. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has protected me from my enemies"
God has been the rock of my refuge
The psalmist speaks of having God protect him as if God were a place where the psalmist could go to be safe. See how "rock" and "refuge" are translated in Psalms 62:7. Alternate translation: "I have asked God to protect me, and he has kept me safe by his power"
Psalms 94:23

will bring on them their own iniquity
Possible meanings are 1) "will do to them the evil things they have done to others" or 2) "will punish them for all the evil things he has done to others."
cut them off
This is an idiom which means "kill them."
in their own wickedness
Possible meanings are 1) "while they are doing wicked things" or 2) "because they have done wicked things."

95 1 Oh come, let us sing to Yahweh;
let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us enter his presence with thanksgiving;
let us shout joyfully to him with psalms of praise.

3 For Yahweh is a great God
and a great King superior to all gods.

4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his.

5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before Yahweh, our Creator:

7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
Today—oh, that you would hear his voice!

8 "Do not harden your heart, as at Meribah,
or as on the day of Massah in the wilderness,

9 where your forefathers tested me;
they put me to the test, though they had seen my deeds.

10 For forty years I was angry with that generation
and said, 'This is a people whose hearts wander astray;
they have not known my ways.'

11 Therefore I swore in my anger
that they would never enter into my resting place."

Psalm 95 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 95 is the first in a series of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100).

Special concepts in this chapter

God's care

God made everything and takes good care of people. People should not be stubborn like the Israelites were in the days of

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Moses. The Israelites with Moses wandered in the desert for forty years.

Links:

Psalms 95:1

Psalms 95:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
the rock of our salvation
The psalmist speaks of Yahweh as if Yahweh were a mountain the people could climb so they would be safe. See how "rock" and "of my salvation" are translated in [Psalms 18:46]
Psalms 95:2
enter his presence
The psalmist speaks as if he is telling the readers to go into the throne room of a king. Alternate translation: "go to where he is"
with thanksgiving
"thanking him as we enter his presence"
Psalms 95:3
superior to all gods
Possible meanings are that Yahweh is a great king 1) "who rules over all other gods," or 2) "who is much better than all gods."
Psalms 95:4
In his hand
This is an idiom which means "in his control" or "he is responsible for."
depths
deep places
heights
high places
Psalms 95:5
his hands formed
The word "hands" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "he himself formed"
Psalms 95:6
kneel
put both knees on the ground, often to show submission
Psalms 95:7
the people of his pasture
The word "pasture" is a metonym for the food that animals eat in the pasture, which in turn is a synecdoche for everything that Yahweh provides for his people. Alternate translation: "we are the people whose needs he meets"
pasture
an area where animals find grass to eat
the sheep of his hand
The word "hand" here refers to how Yahweh protects his people the way a shepherd protects his sheep. Alternate translation: "the people whom he protects like a shepherd protects his sheep"
Today—oh, that you would hear his voice!
"Oh, that you would hear his voice today!" The psalmist purposely interrupts what he is saying.
hear his voice
Here "his voice" represents God speaking or what he says. Alternate translation: "listen to God speak" or "hear what God says"
Psalms 95:8
General Information:
Now the writer writes the words that Yahweh spoke.
harden your heart
"become stubborn"
Meribah, ... Massah
These are places in the desert that Moses named because the Israelites rebelled against God.
Psalms 95:9
tested me ... put me to the test
These two phrases are both metaphors for the people seeing how much evil they could do before Yahweh would punish them. "wanted to see if they could do evil things without me punishing them ... tested me to see if I would continue to be patient with them"
my deeds
"the amazing things I had done"
Psalms 95:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking directly to his people.
forty years
"40 years"
that generation
"all of those people" or "that entire generation of people"
wander astray
God speaks of the people as if they were sheep, which will go wherever they want to and not stay near their shepherd. Alternate translation: "move away from me" or "go their own way"
they have not known my ways
Yahweh's commands are spoken of as if they were paths on which the people should walk. The people not obeying Yahweh's commands is spoken of as if they did not know these paths. Alternate translation: "they have not obeyed my commands"
Psalms 95:11
my resting place
"the place where I would have allowed them to rest"

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96 [1] Oh, sing to Yahweh a new song;
sing to Yahweh, all the earth.

[2] Sing to Yahweh, bless his name;
announce his salvation day after day.

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3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all the nations.

4 For Yahweh is great and is to be praised greatly.
He is to be feared above all other gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but it is Yahweh who made the heavens.

6 Splendor and majesty are in his presence.
Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to Yahweh, you clans of peoples,
ascribe praise to Yahweh for his glory and strength.

8 Give to Yahweh the glory that his name deserves.
Bring an offering and come into his courts.

9 Bow down to Yahweh in the splendor of holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.

10 Say among the nations, "Yahweh reigns."
The world also is established; it cannot be shaken.
He judges the peoples fairly.

11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar and that which fills it shout with joy.

12 Let the fields rejoice and all that is in them.
Then let all the trees in the forest shout for joy

13 before Yahweh, for he is coming.
He is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with his faithfulness.

Psalm 96 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 96 is one of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100).

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh, the king

Yahweh is king over all the earth and is worthy of all praise.

Links:

Psalms 96:1

Psalms 96:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

a new song

a song no one has ever sung before

all the earth

This refers to the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "all you people who live on the earth"

Psalms 96:2

bless his name

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The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "bless Yahweh" or "do what makes Yahweh happy" See how "may his glorious name be blessed" is translated in [Psalms 72:19]

announce his salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated using the verb "save." Alternate translation: "announce that he has saved us" or "tell people that he is the one who saves"

Psalms 96:3

Declare his glory among the nations

"Tell all the people in every nation about his great glory"

Psalms 96:4

Yahweh is great and is to be praised greatly

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is great. Praise him greatly" or "Yahweh is great, and people should praise him greatly"

He is to be feared above all other gods

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Fear him above all other gods"

Psalms 96:6

in his presence

"where he is"

Splendor and majesty are in his presence

The psalmist speaks as if splendor and majesty are people who can stand before a king. Alternate translation: "Everyone knows of his splendor and majesty"

Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary

The words "strength" and "beauty" are metonyms for the ark of the covenant decrees, which is found in the sanctuary. Alternate translation: "It is his sanctuary that contains the ark of the covenant decrees"

Psalms 96:7

Ascribe to Yahweh ... ascribe praise to Yahweh for his glory and strength

This can be restated to removed the abstract nouns "praise," "glory," and "strength." See how these words are translated in [Psalms 29:1]

Psalms 96:8

Give to Yahweh the glory that his name deserves

The abstract noun "glory" can be stated as a verb or adjective. See how these words are translated in [Psalms 29:2]

his name deserves

Here "name" refers to the person of God. Alternate translation: "he deserves"

his courts

the temple courtyard where the priests sacrificed animals to Yahweh

Psalms 96:9

Bow down to Yahweh

The implied information is that the people were to bow down in worship. Alternate translation: "Bow down to worship Yahweh"

in the splendor of holiness

The abstract nouns "splendor" and "holiness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "because he is gloriously beautiful and holy"

tremble

to shake because of fear

all the earth

Here "earth" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of the earth"

Psalms 96:10

The world also is established

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He also established the world"

it cannot be shaken

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing can shake it"

Psalms 96:11

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice

Possible meanings are 1) the heavens and the earth are spoken of as if they have emotions like people. Alternate translation: "Let it be as if the heavens are glad and the earth rejoices" or 2) "the heavens" and "the earth" are metonyms for those who dwell in those places. Alternate translation: "Let those who live in the heavens be glad and let those who live on the earth rejoice"

that which fills it shout with joy

The implied information is that this refers to all the creatures living in the sea. They are spoken of as if they should shout with joy like people might do. Alternate translation: "the sea creatures shout joyfully"

Psalms 96:12

Let the fields rejoice and all that is in them

"Let the fields and all that is in them rejoice." The psalmist speaks as if "the fields" and the animals that live in them have emotions like people. Alternate translation: "Let it be as if the fields themselves and all the animals that live in them are rejoicing"

let all the trees in the forest shout for joy

This speaks about the trees as if they were people who could shout for joy. Alternate translation: "let it be as if all the trees in the forest shout for joy"

Psalms 96:13

He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world ... and the peoples

The three phrase have similar meanings; the last two phases are used to strengthen the first.

to judge ... will judge

Another possible meaning is "to rule ... will rule."

He will judge the world with righteousness

Here "the world" is a metonym for all the people in the world. See how these words are translated in [Psalms 9:8]

the peoples with his faithfulness

The words "he will judge" are understood. Alternate translation: "he will judge the peoples with his faithfulness"

with his faithfulness

The can be restated to remove the abstract noun "faithfulness." Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "fairly, according to what he knows is true" or 2) Alternate translation: "using the same standard for all people"

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97 1 Yahweh reigns; let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad.

2 Clouds and darkness surround him.
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

3 Fire goes before him
and consumes his adversaries on every side.

4 His lightning lights up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.

5 The mountains melt like wax before Yahweh,
the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The skies declare his justice,
and all the nations see his glory.

7 All those who worship carved figures will be shamed,
those who boast in worthless idols—
bow down to him, all you gods!

8 Zion heard and was glad,
and the towns of Judah rejoiced
because of your righteous decrees, Yahweh.

9 For you, Yahweh, are most high above all the earth.
You are exalted far above all gods.

10 You who love Yahweh, hate evil!
He protects the lives of his faithful ones,
and he takes them out of the hand of the wicked.

11 Light is sown for the righteous
and gladness for those with honest hearts.

12 Be glad in Yahweh, you righteous;
and give thanks when you remember his holiness.

Psalm 97 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 97 is one of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's authority

All people who worship idols are disgraced because Yahweh rules over all the world.

Links:

Psalms 97:1

Psalms 97:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad

The earth and the coastlands are said to have emotions like people. Alternate translation: "Rejoice and be glad every person on the earth and near the seas"

coastlands

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Possible meanings are 1) "lands near the seas" or 2) "islands."
Psalms 97:2
Clouds and darkness surround him
"We cannot see him; it is as if he were sitting in the dark with clouds all around him"
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne
The word "throne" is a metonym for the deeds and words of the one who sits on it. The psalmist speaks as if righteousness and justice were physical objects that made the throne secure. Alternate translation: "He is righteous and just in everything he does" or "He is able to rule because he rules righteously and justly"
the foundation of his throne
Here "the foundation of his throne" refers to how Yahweh rules his kingdom.
Psalms 97:3
Fire goes before him
The psalmist speaks as if fire were a person walking before King Yahweh and telling people that the king was coming.
consumes his adversaries
"burns up his enemies"
Psalms 97:4
the earth sees and trembles
The writer speaks of the earth as if it were a person who sees what Yahweh does and trembles in fear. Alternate translation: "like a person, the earth sees and trembles"
trembles
shakes with fear
Psalms 97:5
The mountains melt like wax before Yahweh
The writer speaks of the mountains crumbling before Yahweh as if they were wax that was exposed to a fire. Alternate translation: "The mountains are unable to stand as Yahweh comes near" or "The mountains crumble in Yahweh's presence"
Psalms 97:6
The skies declare his justice
Possible meanings are 1) the psalmist speaks as if the skies are Yahweh's messengers who declare that Yahweh is just. Alternate translation: "Everyone can see that God is just, the same way that everyone can see the skies" or 2) the skies refer to the beings that live in the heavens. Alternate translation: "All those who live in heaven declare that Yahweh is just"
Psalms 97:8
Zion heard ... the towns of Judah
This refers to the people who live in these lands. Alternate translation: "The people of Zion heard ... the people of Judah"
Psalms 97:9
are most high above all
The psalmist speaks as if those who were strong enough to rule were the physically higher than others. Alternate translation: "rule over all the people who live on"
You are exalted far
The psalmist speaks as if those who were strong enough to rule were the physically higher than others. Alternate translation: "You are high, far"
Psalms 97:10
he takes them out of the hand of the wicked
Here the word "hand" represents power. Yahweh rescuing people from the power of wicked people is spoken of as if he took them out of their hands. Alternate translation: "he rescues them from the power of the wicked"
Psalms 97:11
Light is sown for ... and gladness for
These two phrases have similar meanings and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sows light for those who do right, and he sows gladness for those with honest hearts"
Light is sown for the righteous
The word "sown" is a metaphor for actions with future results. "Light" is a metaphor for good things. Alternate translation: "Yahweh plans for good things to happen to the righteous in the future"
the righteous
The adjective "righteous" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "righteous people"
gladness for those with honest hearts
The words "is sown" are understood. The word "sown" is a metaphor for actions with future results. The abstract noun "gladness" can be stated as "happy." Alternate translation: "gladness is sown for those with honest hearts" or "Yahweh plans for people with honest hearts to be happy in the future"
those with honest hearts
The heart is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "honest people"
Psalms 97:12
General Information:
This verse has a command followed by the reason for the command. If your language requires the reason to precede the command: "Because of what Yahweh has done for you, you righteous people, be glad and give thanks when you remember his holiness."
Be glad in Yahweh
This idiom means to be glad because of what Yahweh has done. Alternate translation: "Be glad because of what Yahweh has done"
when you remember his holiness
Possible meanings are 1) "when you remember how holy he is" or 2) "to his holy name," a metonym for "to him."

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98 A psalm.
Oh, sing to Yahweh a new song,
for he has done marvelous things;
his right hand and his holy arm
have given him victory.

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2 Yahweh has made known his salvation;
he has openly showed his justice to all the nations.

3 He calls to mind his steadfast love
and faithfulness for the house of Israel;
all the ends of the earth will see
the victory of our God.

4 Shout for joy to Yahweh, all the earth;
burst into song, sing for joy, and sing praises.

5 Sing praises to Yahweh with the harp,
with the harp and melodious song.

6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn,
shout joyfully before the King, Yahweh.

7 Let the sea shout and everything in it,
the world and those who live in it!

8 Let the rivers clap their hands,
and let the mountains shout for joy.

9 Yahweh is coming to judge the earth;
he will judge the world with righteousness
and the nations with fairness.

Psalm 98 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 98 is one of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100).

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

Everyone and every thing should sing praises to Yahweh because he is worthy of all praise.

Links:

Psalms 98:1

Psalms 98:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

a new song

a song no one has ever sung before. See how this is translated in Psalms 96:1.

his right hand and his holy arm have

The words "right hand" and "holy arm" refer to Yahweh's strength. Together they emphasize how great his strength is. Alternate translation: "his very great power has"

right hand

the more powerful and skilled hand

holy arm

Here "arm" is a metonym for power. Alternate translation: "the power that is his alone"

have given him victory

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "victory." Alternate translation: "have enabled him to be victorious over his enemies" or "has enabled him to defeat his enemies"

Psalms 98:2

made known his salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated using the verb "save." Alternate translation: "showed people that he saves his people"

showed his justice to all the nations

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated using the

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adjective "just." The word "nations" is a metonym for "the people who live in all the nations." Alternate translation: "showed the people who live in all the nations that he is just"
Psalms 98:3
He calls to mind his steadfast love and faithfulness for the house of Israel
See how the idiom "call to mind" is translated in [Psalms 20:3]
all the ends of the earth
This is a metonym for the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "people from all over the world"
will see the victory of our God
The abstract noun "victory" can be translated using the verb "defeat." Alternate translation: "will see our God defeat his enemies"
Psalms 98:4
all the earth
This is a metonym for the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "all people in the world"
burst into song
"suddenly begin singing happily"
sing for joy
"sing because you are happy"
sing praises
"sing praises to God"
Psalms 98:5
melodious
delightful or pleasing musical sound
Psalms 98:6
the horn
an animal horn used as a musical instrument
Psalms 98:7
Let the sea shout and everything in it
The psalmist speaks as if the sea were a person who could shout to God. Alternate translation: "Let it be as if the sea and everything in it were shouting"
the world and those who live in it
The psalmist speaks as if the world were a person. Alternate translation: "and let it be as if the world and those who live in it were shouting"
the world
This is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people in the world"
Psalms 98:8
Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the mountains shout for joy
The psalmist speaks as if the rivers and mountains were people who could clap and shout. Alternate translation: "Let it be as though the rivers are clapping their hands and mountains were shouting for joy"
Psalms 98:9
the nations with fairness
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "he will judge the nations with fairness"
the nations
This is a metonym for "the people who live in the nations."
with fairness
"honestly" or "using the same standard for everyone"

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99 [1] Yahweh reigns;
let the nations tremble.
He sits enthroned above the cherubim;
the earth quakes.

[2] Yahweh is great in Zion;
he is exalted above all the nations.

[3] Let them praise your great and awesome name;
he is holy.

[4] The king is strong, and he loves justice.
You have established fairness;
you have done righteousness
and justice in Jacob.

[5] Praise Yahweh our God
and worship at his footstool.
He is holy.

[6] Moses and Aaron were among his priests,
and Samuel was among those who called on his name.
They called to Yahweh,
and he answered them.

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7 He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud.
They kept his solemn commands
and the statutes that he gave them.

8 You answered them,
Yahweh our God.
A forgiving God you were to them,
but also an avenger of their sinful deeds.

9 Praise Yahweh our God,
and worship at his holy hill,
for Yahweh our God is holy.

Psalm 99 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 99 is one of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100).

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's justice

God is just and fair. Moses, Aaron and Samuel each prayed to him and obeyed him and he answered their prayers. (See: justice)

Links:

Psalms 99:1

Psalms 99:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

the nations

This refers to the people of all nations. Alternate translation: "the people of all nations"

tremble

shake with fear

He sits enthroned above the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "He sits on his throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

quakes

shakes

Psalms 99:2

Yahweh is great in Zion; he is exalted above all the nations

"Not only is Yahweh great in Zion, he is exalted above all the nations" or "Not only does Yahweh rule in Zion, he rules over all the nations"

he is exalted above all the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people in all the nations exalt him" or "people in all nations praise him greatly"

Psalms 99:3

Let them praise your great and awesome name

Here the author shifts from speaking about God, to speaking to God. After this phrase though, he shifts back to speaking about God.

Psalms 99:4

he loves justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated using the phrase "what is just." Alternate translation: "he loves doing what is just"

You have established fairness

The abstract noun "fairness" is a metonym for the laws that are fair. Alternate translation: "The laws you have established are fair"

Psalms 99:5

worship at his footstool

Here the word "footstool" likely refers to the ark of the covenant, which the biblical writers often spoke of as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. The translation can make explicit that the people are to worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "worship Yahweh at his footstool" or "worship Yahweh before his throne in the temple"

Psalms 99:7

solemn

important, given seriously

Psalms 99:8

You answered them

"You answered your people"

Psalms 99:9

his holy hill

"Mount Zion"

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100 A psalm of thanksgiving.
1 Shout joyfully to Yahweh, all the earth.
2 Serve Yahweh with gladness;
come before his presence with joyful singing.

3 Know that Yahweh is God;
he made us, and we are his.
We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving
and into his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him and bless his name.

5 For Yahweh is good; his covenant faithfulness endures forever
and his truthfulness through all generations.

Psalm 100 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 100 is the last of six worship psalms (Psalms 95-100).

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's care for his creation

God made mankind and takes good care of people.

Links:

Psalms 100:1

Psalms 100:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of thanksgiving

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Shout joyfully to Yahweh

"Raise a shout to Yahweh." See how "shout" is translated in Psalms 47:1.

all the earth

This refers to all the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "everyone on the earth"

Psalms 100:2

come before his presence

The psalmist speaks as if he is telling the readers to go into the throne room of a king. Alternate translation: "go to where he is with joyful singing" or "he can hear you, so sing joyfully"

Psalms 100:3

the sheep of his pasture

God's people are like his sheep. Alternate translation: "the people God provides for and protects"

pasture

a grassy area for feeding animals

Psalms 100:4

with thanksgiving

"while thanking him" or "while giving thanks to him"

bless his name

The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "bless Yahweh" or "do what makes Yahweh happy" See how "may his glorious name be blessed" is translated in [Psalms 72:19]

Psalms 100:5

his covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "he is faithful to his covenant forever"

his truthfulness through all generations

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. The abstract noun "truthfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "his truthfulness endures through all generations" or "he is truthful through all generations"

through all generations

"generation after generation." See how this is translated in Psalms 89:4.

101 A psalm of David.
I will sing of covenant faithfulness and justice;
to you, Yahweh, I will sing praises.

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2 I will pay attention to the way of integrity.
Oh, when will you come to me?
I will walk with integrity of heart within my house.

3 I will not put wrongdoing before my eyes;
I hate worthless evil;
it will not cling to me.

4 A perverse heart will leave me;
I am not loyal to evil.

5 I will destroy whoever secretly slanders his neighbor.
I will not tolerate the haughty of eye and arrogant of heart.

6 I will look to the faithful of the land to sit at my side.
Those who walk in the way of integrity may serve me.

7 Deceitful people will not remain within my house;
liars will not be welcome before my eyes.

8 Morning by morning
I will destroy all the wicked from the land;
I will remove all who behave wickedly
from the city of Yahweh.

Psalm 101 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 101 is a psalm asking God's help in living as a person should.

Special concepts in this chapter

Encouragement

The psalmist wanted to encourage all the good people in the land restrain all the evil people. (See: evil)

Links:

Psalms 101:1

Psalms 101:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I will sing of covenant faithfulness and justice

The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "justice" can be translated with adjectives. Alternate translation: "I will sing that you are faithful to your covenant and that you are just"

Psalms 101:2

I will pay attention to the way of integrity

Here the words "pay attention to" are a metonym for the way that David will live because he has paid attention to the way of integrity. Alternate translation: "I will live in a way that is honest and right" or "I will live a life full of integrity"

I will walk with integrity of heart within my house

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Here David speaks about living as if it were "walking." The word "heart" here is a metonym for the way he thinks and feels. Alternate translation: "I will live in my house with integrity"

Psalms 101:3

I will not put wrongdoing before my eyes

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "wrongdoing." The idiom, "put evil before my eyes," means to approve of it. Alternate translation: "I will not approve of anyone doing anything that is wrong in my presence"

it will not cling to me

David describes "evil" as if it were something unable to cling to him. This means that he would avoid evil things and people doing evil things. Alternate translation: "I will completely avoid evil"

cling

hold on to something or someone very tightly

Psalms 101:4

A perverse heart

The word "heart" here is a metonym for the thoughts and feelings of the person. This generic noun phrase refers to any perverse person or people. Alternate translation: "Perverse people"

to evil

"to anything that is evil"

Psalms 101:5

the haughty of eye and arrogant of heart

The words "eye" and "heart" here are metonyms for the person whose eye and heart they are. The generic noun phrase refers to any haughty and arrogant person or people. Alternate translation: "people who are haughty and arrogant"

Psalms 101:6

I will look to the faithful of the land to sit at my side

This means that David would allow those people to be around him and live with him. Alternate translation: "I will allow the faithful of the land to live with me"

the faithful

This refers to the people who are faithful to God. Alternate translation: "the faithful people"

walk in the way of integrity

Here David speaks about "living" as if it were "walking." Alternate translation: "live in a way that is honest and right" or "live lives full of integrity"

Psalms 101:7

Deceitful people will not ... liars will not

These two phrases have the same idea and are used together to emphasize how David will not tolerate deceitful people.

liars will not be welcome

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not welcome liars"

before my eyes

Here "my eyes" refers to David himself. Alternate translation: "before me" or "in my presence"

Psalms 101:8

Morning by morning

"Every day"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "the wicked people"

from the city of Yahweh

David is referring to the city that he is in as "the city of Yahweh." This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "from this city, which is Yahweh's city"

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102 A prayer of the afflicted when he is faint and pours out his lament before Yahweh.

1 Hear my prayer, Yahweh;
hear my cry to you.

2 Do not hide your face from me in my time of trouble.
Listen to me.
When I call out to you,
answer me quickly.

3 For my days pass away like smoke,
and my bones burn like fire.

4 My heart is crushed, and I am like grass that has withered.
I forget to eat any food.

5 With my continual groaning,
I have become very thin.

6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness;
I have become like an owl in the ruins.

7 I lie awake like a solitary bird,
alone on the housetop.

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8 My enemies taunt me all day long;
those who mock me use my name in curses.

9 I eat ashes like bread
and mix my drink with tears.

10 Because of your raging anger,
you have lifted me up to throw me down.

11 My days are like a shadow that fades,
and I have withered like grass.

12 But you, Yahweh, live forever,
and your fame is for all generations.

13 You will rise up and have mercy on Zion.
Now is the time to have mercy upon her;
the appointed time has come.

14 For your servants hold her stones dear
and feel compassion for the dust of her ruins.

15 The nations will respect your name, Yahweh,
and all the kings of the earth will honor your glory.

16 Yahweh will rebuild Zion
and will appear in his glory.

17 At that time, he will respond to the prayer of the destitute;
he will not reject their prayer.

18 This will be written for future generations,
and a people not yet created will praise Yah.[1]

19 For he has looked down from the holy heights;
from heaven Yahweh has viewed the earth,

20 to hear the groaning of the prisoners,
to release those who were condemned to death.

21 Then men will proclaim the name of Yahweh in Zion
and his praise in Jerusalem

22 when the peoples and kingdoms gather together
to serve Yahweh.

23 He has taken away my strength in the middle of life.
He has shortened my days.

24 I said, "My God, do not take me away in the middle of life;
you are here throughout all generations.

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25 In ancient times you established the earth;
the heavens are the work of your hands.

26 They will perish, but you will remain;
they will all grow old like a garment;
like clothing, you will remove them,
and they will disappear.

27 But you are the same,
and your years will have no end.

28 The children of your servants will live on,
and their descendants will live in your presence."

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[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 102 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 102 is a psalm of deliverance from sickness. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Salvation

The author does not want to die young. He also wants to see Jerusalem saved. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 102:1

Psalms 102:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A prayer of the afflicted when he is faint and pours out his lament before Yahweh

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

the afflicted

This refers to a man who is afflicted. Alternate translation: "the afflicted man"

Psalms 102:3

my days pass away like smoke

Here "my days" refers to the author's life and the idea of "smoke" is something that quickly disappears. Alternate translation: "my life passes away quickly"

my bones burn like fire

Here the author refers to his "body" as his "bones." Alternate translation: "my body feels like it is burning"

Psalms 102:4

My heart is crushed

Here the author refers to himself as his "heart." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am in despair"

I am like grass that has withered

This is another way to describe his despair. Alternate translation: "I feel like I am drying up like withered grass"

Psalms 102:6

I am like a pelican of the wilderness

He compares his loneliness to that of a pelican, which is often seem alone instead of with other birds. Alternate translation: "I am lonely and despised like a pelican in the wilderness"

a pelican

a large fish-eating bird

I have become like an owl in the ruins

The author continues to describe loneliness by comparing himself to an owl in abandoned ruins. Alternate translation: "I have become alone like an owl in abandoned ruins"

an owl

This is a bird that is awake at night. Alternate translation: "a night bird"

Psalms 102:7

I lie awake like a solitary bird

The writer compares himself to a bird to emphasize his feeling of loneliness.

Psalms 102:9

I eat ashes like bread

David would have sat in ashes as an act of mourning, therefore ashes would have fallen on his food. Alternate translation: "I eat ashes like I eat bread" or "As I mourn, ashes fall on the bread that I eat"

mix my drink with tears

David did not purposefully mix his drink with tears; rather his tear would have fallen into his cup while he mourned and wept. Alternate translation: "my tears fall into the cup that I drink"

Psalms 102:10

you have lifted me up to throw me down

God has not literally lifted and thrown David's body to the

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ground; rather David says this to describe what he is feeling and experiencing. Alternate translation: "it is like you have lifted me up to throw me down"

Psalms 102:11

My days are like a shadow that fades

David compares his time left to live on earth to a fading shadow. Alternate translation: "My time to remain alive is short like an evening shadow that will soon be gone"

I have withered like grass

As David's body becomes weak and he is nearing the end of his life, he compares himself to withering grass. Alternate translation: "my body has become weak like withered grass"

withered

dry and wrinkled

Psalms 102:12

your fame is for all generations

"you will be recognized for all generations to come"

fame

being known by many people

Psalms 102:13

have mercy on Zion

Here "Zion" refers to the people who live in Zion. Alternate translation: "have mercy on the people of Zion"

upon her

The word "her" refers to Zion.

Psalms 102:14

hold her stones dear

The "stones" refer to the stones that were part of the city walls before they were destroyed. Alternate translation: "still love the stones that were formerly in the city walls"

Psalms 102:15

your name

Here "your name" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you"

will honor your glory

The people will honor Yahweh because of his glory. Here Yahweh is referred to by his glory. Alternate translation: "will honor you because you are glorious"

Psalms 102:16

will appear in his glory

"will be seen as glorious" or "people will see his glory"

Psalms 102:17

the destitute

This refers to destitute people.

he will not reject their prayer

"Yahweh will accept their prayers"

Psalms 102:18

This will be written for future generations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will write this for future generations"

Psalms 102:19

For he has looked down from the holy heights; from heaven Yahweh has viewed

These two phrases have similar meaning and are used together for emphasize how God looks down from heaven.

the holy heights

"his holy place high above the earth"

Psalms 102:20

those who were condemned to death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the authorities had sentenced to die"

Psalms 102:21

proclaim the name of Yahweh in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem

These two phrases have the same meaning and emphasize the idea of praising the name of Yahweh.

Psalms 102:23

taken away my strength

David describes God causing him to become weak as if his strength were a physical item that could be taken away from him. Alternate translation: "has caused me to become weak"

my days

The word "days" here refers to his life. Alternate translation: "my life"

Psalms 102:24

do not take me away

David is asking God to not let him die. Alternate translation: "do not take me away from the earth" or "do not let me die"

you are here throughout all generations

"you are present throughout all generations"

Psalms 102:26

they will all grow old

The word "they" refers to "the earth" and "the heavens."

Psalms 102:27

your years will have no end

"you will live forever"

Psalms 102:28

will live on

"will continue to live"

live in your presence

Here David describes the descendants being protected by Yahweh as being in his presence. Alternate translation: "be protected as they live in your presence"

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103 A psalm of David.
I give praise to Yahweh with all my life,
and with all that is within me,
I give praise to his holy name.

2 I give praise to Yahweh with all my life,
and I remember all of his good deeds.

3 He forgives all your iniquities;
he heals all your diseases.

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4 He redeems your life from the pit;
he crowns you with covenant faithfulness and acts of tender mercy.

5 He satisfies your life with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle.

6 Yahweh does what is fair
and does acts of justice for all who are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways to Moses,
his deeds to the descendants of Israel.

8 Yahweh is merciful and gracious;
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

9 He will not discipline forever;
he will not be angry to eternity.

10 He does not deal with us as our sins deserve
or repay us for what our iniquities demand.

11 For as the skies are high above the earth,
so great is his covenant faithfulness toward those who honor him.

12 As far as the east is from the west,
this is how far he has removed the guilt of our sins from us.

13 As a father has compassion on his children,
so Yahweh has compassion on those who honor him.

14 For he knows how we are formed;
he knows that we are dust.

15 As for man, his days are like grass;
he flourishes like a flower in a field.

16 The wind blows over it, and it disappears,
and no one can even tell where it once grew.

17 But the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh is from everlasting to everlasting
on those who honor him.
His righteousness extends to their descendants.

18 They keep his covenant
and remember to obey his instructions.

19 Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over everyone.

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20 Give praise to Yahweh, you his angels,
you mighty ones who are strong and do his word,
and obey the sound of his word.

21 Give praise to Yahweh, all his hosts,
his servants who do his will.

22 Give praise to Yahweh, all his creatures,
in all the places where he reigns.

I will give praise to Yahweh with all my life.

Psalm 103 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 103 is the first in a series of five psalms of praise to God. (Psalm 103-107)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's grace

God is good to us by forgiving our sins and not punishing us as much as we deserve. His loving-kindness goes on from generation to generation. (See: grace and forgive and sin)

Links:

Psalms 103:1

Psalms 103:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I give praise to Yahweh with all my life, and with all that is within me, I give praise to his holy name

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how much he will praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will praise Yahweh with all that I am"

give praise to his holy name

This refers to praising Yahweh's name as Yahweh.

all that is within me

"all of me" or "all that I am." David uses this phrase to refer to himself and to emphasize his devotion to Yahweh.

Psalms 103:3

your ... you

David is speaking to himself, so he uses the words "your" and "you" to refer to himself. Many translations express this with "my" and "me" as the UDB does.

Psalms 103:4

your ... you

David is speaking to himself, so he uses the words "your" and "you" to refer to himself. Many translations express this with "my" and "me," as the UDB does.

He redeems your life from the pit

Here the words "your life" are a metonym for the person. The words "redeems ... from the pit" here are a metaphor that speaks of Yahweh saving the writer from certain death as if the writer were already dead and Yahweh had paid the one who keeps the dead in a pit so that the writer could come back to life. Alternate translation: "He saves me from dying"

he crowns you with covenant faithfulness and acts of tender mercy

Here blessing someone and treating them with great honor is described as if it were placing a crown on that person's head. The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "mercy" can be translated with adverbs. Alternate translation: "he blesses you by acting faithfully and mercifully towards you"

Psalms 103:5

He satisfies your life with good things

The phrase "your life" refers to "you," but it emphasizes that Yahweh gives blessings throughout life. Alternate translation: "He satisfies you with good things through your life"

your youth is renewed like the eagle

Having your "youth renewed" means to feel young again. Here David compares this feeling of youth to the swiftness and strength of an eagle. Alternate translation: "you feel young and are strong like an eagle"

your youth

The word "youth" refers to the strength one had as a young adult.

Psalms 103:6

does acts of justice for

"causes justice to happen to"

all who are oppressed

Who is doing the oppressing can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "all who are oppressed by men"

Psalms 103:7

his deeds to the descendants of Israel

The words "he made known" are understood from the previous phrase. They may be repeated here. Alternate

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translation: "he made known his deeds to the descendants of Israel"

Psalms 103:8

abounding in steadfast love

The abstract noun "love" can be restated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "he always loves his people"

Psalms 103:10

He does not deal with us ... or repay us

These two phrases are parallel and emphasize that God does not punish us as we deserve. Alternate translation: "He does not repay us with the punishment we deserve for our sins"

deal with us

"punish us"

Psalms 103:11

For as the skies are high ... toward those who honor him

The simile compares the great distance between heaven and earth to the greatness of God's love for his people.

so great is his covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "so he is very faithful to his covenant"

Psalms 103:12

As far as the east ... removed the guilt of our sins from us

The distance between east and west is so far that it cannot be measured. In this simile, that distance is being compared to how far God moves our guilt away from us.

Psalms 103:13

As a father has compassion ... on those who honor him

Here the author compares a father's compassion for his children to Yahweh's compassion for those who honor him.

Psalms 103:14

how we are formed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what our bodies are like" or "how he formed our bodies"

he knows that we are dust

When Yahweh created Adam the first man he created him from dust. Alternate translation: "he remembers that he created us from dust"

Psalms 103:15

As for man, his days are like grass

In this simile, the length of man's life is being compared to the short length of time that grass grows before it dies. Alternate translation: "The length of man's life is short like that of grass"

he flourishes like a flower in a field

In this simile, how man grows over time is compared to how a flower grows.

flourishes

To "flourish" is to grow well or be healthy.

Psalms 103:16

The wind blows over it, and it disappears ... where it once grew

These phrases continue to talk about flowers and grass. They compare how flowers and grass die to how man dies. Alternate translation: "The wind blows over the flowers and grass and they disappear, and no one can tell where they once grew—it is the same way with man"

Psalms 103:17

the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh is

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is faithful to his covenant"

is from everlasting to everlasting

This means that Yahweh's love continues forever. Alternate translation: "will continue forever"

their descendants

"the descendants of those who honor him"

Psalms 103:18

They keep his covenant and remember to obey his instructions

These two phrases have similar meanings.

Psalms 103:19

Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens

Here Yahweh's reign as king is referred to as his "throne." Alternate translation: "Yahweh has taken his seat in the heavens where he rules as king"

has established

"has made"

his kingdom rules

Here Yahweh is referred to by "his kingdom" to emphasize his authority as king. Alternate translation: "he rules"

Psalms 103:21

all his hosts

"all his armies." Here "hosts" refers to the living beings that God created in the heavens. Possible meanings are that they are called hosts 1) because they fight as armies. Alternate translation: "all his angel armies" or 2) because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "all his multitude of angels"

Psalms 103:22

in all the places where he reigns

"praise him in all the places where he reigns"

with all my life

This phrase means that he will praise Yahweh wholeheartedly and is used to emphasize his devotion to him. Alternate translation: "with all of me" or "with all my soul"

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104 [1] I give praise to Yahweh with all my life,
Yahweh my God, you are very magnificent;
you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

[2] You cover yourself with light as with a garment;
you spread out the heavens like a tent curtain.

[3] You lay the beams of your chambers on the clouds;
you make the clouds your chariot;
you walk on the wings of the wind.

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4 He makes the winds his messengers,
flames of fire his servants.

5 He laid the foundations of the earth,
so that it will not totter forever and ever.

6 You covered the earth with water like a garment;
the water covered the mountains.

7 At your rebuke the waters retreated;
at the sound of your thunder they hurried away.

8 The mountains rose and the valleys went down
to the places that you had appointed for them.

9 You have set a boundary for them that they will not cross;
they will not cover the earth again.

10 He made springs flow into the valleys;
the streams flow between the mountains.

11 They supply water for all the animals of the field;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

12 By the riverbanks the birds build their nests;
they sing among the branches.

13 He waters the mountains from his water chambers in the sky.
The earth is filled with the fruit of his labor.

14 He makes the grass grow for the cattle
and plants for man to cultivate,
so that man may produce food from the earth.

15 He makes wine to make man happy,
oil to make his face shine,
and food to sustain his life.

16 The trees of Yahweh get plenty of rain;
the cedars of Lebanon which he planted.

17 There the birds make their nests.
The stork makes the cypress tree her home.

18 The wild goats live on the high mountains;
the mountain heights are a refuge for the hyraxes.

19 He appointed the moon to mark the seasons;

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the sun knows its time for setting.

20 You make the darkness of the night
when all the beasts of the forest come out.

21 The young lions roar for their prey
and seek their food from God.

22 When the sun rises, they retreat
and sleep in their dens.

23 Meanwhile, people go out to their work
and labor away until the evening.

24 Yahweh, how many and varied are your works!
With wisdom you made them all;
the earth overflows with your works.

25 Over there is the sea, deep and wide,
teeming with innumerable creatures,
both small and great.

26 The ships travel there,
and Leviathan is also there, which you formed to play in the sea.

27 All these look to you in hope
that you will give them their food on time.

28 When you give to them, they gather;
when you open your hand, they are satisfied.

29 When you hide your face, they are troubled;
if you take away their breath, they die
and return to dust.

30 When you send out your Spirit,
they are created,
and you renew the surface of the ground.

31 May the glory of Yahweh last forever;
may Yahweh enjoy his creation.

32 He looks down on the earth, and it shakes;
he touches the mountains, and they smoke.

33 I will sing to Yahweh all my life;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

34 May my thoughts be sweet to him;
I will rejoice in Yahweh.

35 May sinners vanish from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.

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I give praise to Yahweh with all my life.
Give praise to Yah.[1]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 104 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 104 is the second in the series of five psalms of praise to God. (Psalm 103-107)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's creation

God has created everything good on earth, in the sky and in the sea.

Links:

Psalms 104:1

Psalms 104:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry. This psalm is a song of praise.

with all my life

This phrase means that he will praise Yahweh wholeheartedly and is used to emphasize his devotion to him. Alternate translation: "with all of me" or "with all my soul"

you are clothed with splendor and majesty

The words "splendor" and "majesty" have similar meanings and emphasize the greatness of Yahweh's glory. They are described as clothing Yahweh like a garment. Alternate translation: "you have splendor and majesty all around you"

Psalms 104:2

You cover yourself with light as with a garment

Yahweh is described as being covered with light as if the light were a garment around him. Alternate translation: "You are covered in light"

you spread out the heavens like a tent curtain

Here God is described as spreading out the heavens like someone spreads out a tent when setting it up. Alternate translation: "you spread out the heavens like someone sets up a tent"

Psalms 104:3

You lay the beams of your chambers on the clouds

"You build your upper rooms in the heavens." This is referring to his house is so tall that the upper floor extends into the clouds.

you make the clouds your chariot

Here the clouds are described as carrying Yahweh as if they were a chariot. Alternate translation: "you make the clouds carry you like a chariot"

you walk on the wings of the wind

Here the blowing of the wind is described as wings on which Yahweh walks. Alternate translation: "you walk upon the wind"

Psalms 104:4

He makes the winds his messengers

Possible meanings are 1) he causes the wind to be able to carry a message like a messenger, "He makes the winds to be like his messengers" or 2) "He makes his messengers swift like the wind"

flames of fire his servants

Possible meanings are 1) "he causes flames of fire to be like his servants." He causes fire to serve him like a servant would or 2) "he makes his servants to be like flames of fire"and

flames of fire his servants

This can be stated with the implied information from the previous line. Alternate translation: "He makes the flames of fire his servants"

Psalms 104:5

He laid the foundations of the earth

Here the phrase "laid the foundations" means "created." Alternate translation: "He created the whole earth"

it will not totter

It will not sway like it is about to fall down.

Psalms 104:6

You covered the earth with water like a garment

Here the water that covered the earth is being compared to how a large garment is able to completely cover something. Alternate translation: "You completely covered the earth with water"

Psalms 104:7

the waters retreated

The word "retreated" refers to a person moving backward. Alternate translation: "rushed away"

Psalms 104:8

The mountains rose and the valleys went down

This tells about how the land changed. Some of the land became mountains and some of it became valleys. Alternate translation: "The mountains grew and the valleys sank"

Psalms 104:9

a boundary for them that they will not cross

Here the psalmist speaks of God causing the waters not to cross the boundary that he created for them as if the waters themselves chose not to cross it. They are described this way to emphasize God's authority over them. Alternate translation: "a boundary for them that they cannot cross"

boundary

border

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Psalms 104:10
streams
small rivers
Psalms 104:11
the wild donkeys quench their thirst
It can be stated clearly that they quench their thirst by drinking the water. Alternate translation: "the wild donkeys drink the water to quench their thirst"
Psalms 104:12
riverbanks
the ground at the edges of a river
they sing among the branches
Here David describes birds chirping as if they were singing. Alternate translation: "they chirp among the tree branches"
Psalms 104:13
He waters the mountains from his water chambers in the sky
This means that God causes it to rain. The waters are described as residing in chambers in the sky. Alternate translation: "He waters the mountains by causing the rains to fall from the sky"
the fruit of his labor
"the many good things that you create"
Psalms 104:14
and plants for man to cultivate
The words "he makes" and "grow" are understood from the previous phrase, and can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "and he makes the plants grow for man to cultivate"
Psalms 104:16
The trees of Yahweh get plenty of rain
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh provides plenty of rain for his trees"
Psalms 104:17
There the birds make their nests
They makes their nests in the cedars. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The birds make their nests in the cedars"
stork
This is a type of bird. Alternate translation: "bird"
Psalms 104:18
hyraxes
I hyrax is a small animal that looks like a large rodent. Alternate translation: "rock badger"
Psalms 104:19
seasons
This word refers to different weather changes through the year. Some places have rainy season and dry season, while others have spring, summer, fall, and winter.
the sun knows its time
Here David describes the sun as if it knows what time of day it is. Alternate translation: "he made the sun to set when it is time"
Psalms 104:20
You make
"Yahweh, you make." Here the authors switches from speaking about Yahweh to speaking to him.
Psalms 104:21
prey
an animal that is food for another animal
and seek their food from God
"but they rely on God to provide their food"
Psalms 104:22
retreat
go back to their dens
dens
the homes of some mammals and small animals
Psalms 104:24
overflows with your works
Here David describes the amount of things that Yahweh had created as if they were a liquid overflowing out of a container. Alternate translation: "is filled with your work"
Psalms 104:25
deep and wide
"it is very deep and very wide." The depth and width of the sea emphasizes how large it is.
teeming with innumerable creatures
"having in them more creatures than anyone could count"
innumerable
more than anyone can count
both small and great
This means creatures of all sizes.
Psalms 104:26
The ships travel there
"The ships travel on the sea"
Psalms 104:27
All these
"All these creatures"
give them their food on time
"give them their food when they need it"
Psalms 104:28
When you give to them, they gather
It may be helpful to state that it is food that is given. Alternate translation: "When you give food to them, they gather it"
gather
collect
when you open your hand
This describes Yahweh as opening his hand to give food to the creatures. Alternate translation: "when you open your hand to feed them"
Psalms 104:29
hide your face
This means that Yahweh does not look at them or pay attention to them. Alternate translation: "when you do not look upon them" or "when you ignore them"
return to dust
This means that their bodies decay and are and become soil again. Alternate translation: "their bodies decay and return to the ground"
Psalms 104:30
When you send out your Spirit
This refers to his Spirit being sent to give life to creatures.
they are created
It is Yahweh's spirit that created them.
you renew the surface of the ground
"you cause the land to be full of new life"
Psalms 104:34
my thoughts be sweet

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He is comparing his thoughts to something that tastes sweet. Alternate translation: "my thoughts be pleasing"
Psalms 104:35
vanish

disappear
let the wicked be no more
The phrase "the wicked" refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "may wicked people disappear"

105 [1] Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations.

[2] Sing to him, sing praises to him;
speak of all his marvelous deeds.

[3] Boast in his holy name;
let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice.

[4] Seek Yahweh and his strength;
seek his presence continually.

[5] Recall the marvelous things he has done,
his miracles and the decrees from his mouth,

[6] you descendants of Abraham his servant,
you people of Jacob, his chosen ones.

[7] He is Yahweh, our God.
His decrees are on all the earth.

[8] He keeps in mind his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded for a thousand generations.

[9] He calls to mind the covenant that he made with Abraham
and his oath to Isaac.

[10] This is what he confirmed to Jacob as a statute
and to Israel as an everlasting covenant.

[11] He said, "I will give you the land of Canaan
as your share of your inheritance."

[12] He said this when they were only few in number,
so very few, and were strangers in the land.

[13] They went from nation to nation
and from one kingdom to another.

[14] He did not allow anyone to oppress them;
he rebuked kings for their sakes.

[15] He said, "Do not touch my anointed ones,
and do not harm my prophets."

[16] He called for a famine on the land;
he cut off the whole staff of bread.

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17 He sent a man ahead of them;
Joseph was sold as a servant.

18 His feet were bound by shackles;
on his neck was put an iron collar,

19 until what he had said came to pass.
The word of Yahweh tested him.

20 The king sent servants to release him;
the ruler of the people set him free.

21 He put him in charge of his house
as ruler of all his possessions

22 to instruct his princes as he wished
and to teach his elders wisdom.

23 Then Israel came into Egypt,
and Jacob lived for a time in the land of Ham.

24 Yahweh made his people fruitful,
and made them stronger than their enemies.

25 He caused their enemies to hate his people,
to mistreat his servants.

26 He sent Moses, his servant,
and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

27 They performed his signs among the Egyptians,
his wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He sent darkness and made that land dark,
and they did not rebel against his commands.

29 He turned their water into blood
and killed their fish.

30 Their land swarmed with frogs,
even in the rooms of their rulers.

31 He spoke, and swarms of flies and gnats came
throughout their country.

32 He turned their rain into hail,
with fire flaming on their land.

33 He destroyed their vines and fig trees;
he broke the trees of their country.

34 He spoke, and the locusts came,
so many locusts.

35 The locusts ate up all of the vegetation in their land;

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They ate up all the crops of the ground.

36 He killed every firstborn in their land,
the firstfruits of all their strength.

37 He brought the Israelites out with silver and gold;
none of his tribes stumbled on the way.

38 Egypt was glad when they went away,
for the Egyptians were afraid of them.

39 He spread a cloud for a covering
and made a fire to light up the night.

40 The Israelites asked for food, and he brought quail
and satisfied them with bread from heaven.

41 He split the rock, and waters gushed from it;
they flowed in the wilderness like a river.

42 For he called to mind his holy promise
that he made to Abraham his servant.

43 He led his people out with joy,
his chosen with shouts of triumph.

44 He gave them the lands of the nations;
they took possession of the fruit of the peoples' labors

45 so that they might keep his statutes
and obey his laws.
Give praise to Yah.[1]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 105 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 105 is the third in a series of five psalms of praise to God. (Psalm 103-107)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

God protected Abraham and Jacob. He worked throughout Israel's history to bring Israel into the Promised Land. (See: promisedland)

Links:

Psalms 105:1

Psalms 105:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

call on his name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "call on him"

the nations

This refers to the people in the nations. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations"

Psalms 105:3

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Boast in his holy name
Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Boast in Yahweh"
let the heart of those who seek Yahweh rejoice
Here "the heart" represents the person who seeks Yahweh. Alternate translation: "let the people who seek Yahweh rejoice"
Psalms 105:4
Seek Yahweh and his strength
To "seek Yahweh's strength" means to ask him to strengthen you. Alternate translation: "Seek Yahweh and ask him to give you his strength"
Psalms 105:5
Recall
remember and think about
his miracles and
The word "recall" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "recall his miracles and"
the decrees from his mouth
Here "mouth" refers to the things that he spoke. Alternate translation: "the decrees that he has spoken"
Psalms 105:6
you descendants of Abraham ... you people of Jacob
The author is speaking to the Israelites, calling them these names.
Abraham his servant
"Abraham, Yahweh's servant"
Psalms 105:8
He keeps in mind ... the word that he commanded
These two phrases share similar meanings and are used together for emphasis. The word "word" refers to the covenant. Alternate translation: "He keeps in mind his covenant forever, the promise he made"
keeps in mind
This means to remember and think about something. Alternate translation: "remembers"
a thousand generations
"1,000 generations"
Psalms 105:9
He calls to mind
The phrase "call to mind" means to remember something. Alternate translation: "he remembers"
the covenant that he made with Abraham ... his oath to Isaac
Both of these phrases "the covenant" and "the oath" refer to the same promise that Yahweh made to his people.
his oath to Isaac
The words "that he made" are undestood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated. Alternate translation: "his oath that he made to Isaac" or "his oath that he gave to Isaac"
Psalms 105:12
Connecting Statement:
The psalmist is writing about Israel.
when they were only few in number
The word "they" refers to the Israelites.
were strangers in the land
It is implied that "the land" refers to Canaan. Alternate translation: "were foreigners in the land of Canaan"
Psalms 105:13
They went from
"They continued to wander"
from nation to nation and from one kingdom to another
These two phrases have similar meanings and are used together for emphasis.
Psalms 105:14
Connecting Statement:
The psalmist is writing about Israel.
for their sakes
"for their own well-being." This is referring to Israel.
Psalms 105:15
Do not touch my anointed ones
Here "touch" means to harm, it's an exaggeration Yahweh used to strengthen his warning to not harm his people. Alternate translation: "Do not harm the people I have anointed"
Psalms 105:16
He called for
"He sent." This means that caused a famine to happen in the land.
the whole staff of bread
Here "staff" is a metaphor for the supply of bread on which the people depend, and "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "the whole supply of food"
Psalms 105:17
He sent a man ahead of them; Joseph
It may be helpful to state that he sent him ahead of them to Egypt. Alternate translation: "He sent a man ahead of them to Egypt; he sent Joseph who"
Joseph was sold as a servant
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave"
Psalms 105:18
shackles
metal restraints used to fasten a prisoner's wrists or ankles together
His feet were bound by shackles; on his neck was put an iron collar
These statements can be restated as active. Alternate translation: "The Egyptians bound his feet in shackles; they put an iron collar around his neck.
Psalms 105:19
The word of Yahweh tested him
"The message of Yahweh tested him"
Psalms 105:20
The king sent servants to release him; the ruler of the people set him free
These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that the king set Joseph free.
Psalms 105:23
Then Israel came into Egypt
Here "Israel" refers to Jacob. Jacob also brought his family with him. Alternate translation: "Then Israel and his family came into Egypt"
Psalms 105:24
Yahweh made his people fruitful
The writer speaks of the increase of Israel as if they were a plant that produced a lot of fruit. "God increased the number of his people greatly"

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Psalms 105:25
to hate his people, to mistreat his servants
"to hate his people and to mistreat his servants"
Psalms 105:27
They performed his signs among the Egyptians ... his wonders in the land of Ham
These two phrases have basically the same meaning. Alternate translation: "Moses and Aaron performed God's miracles in Egypt among the descendants of Ham"
his wonders in the land of Ham
The words "they performed" are understood fromt the previous phrase. They may be repeated here. Alternate translation: "and they performed his wonders in the land of Ham"
the land of Ham
Ham was an ancestor of the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "the land of Ham's descendants"
Psalms 105:28
made that land dark
"made the sky dark"
they did not rebel
Moses and Aaron did not rebel
Psalms 105:30
frogs
a small jumping reptile
even in the rooms of their rulers
"they were even in the rooms of their rulers"
Psalms 105:31
Connecting Statement:
The psalmist continues to describe Yahweh's judgment on Egypt.
swarms
large flying groups
gnats
small flying insects like flies but smaller
Psalms 105:32
hail
ice that falls from the sky like rain
Psalms 105:33
He destroyed ... he broke
God caused the hail, rain, and lightning to ruin the vines and trees. Alternate translation: "He caused it to destroy ... and to break"
Psalms 105:34
so many locusts
"there were so many locusts"
Psalms 105:35
The locusts ate up all of the vegetation ... They ate up all the crops of the ground
These two phrase have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "The insects ate all the plants and all the crops in the land"
Psalms 105:36
He killed every firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their strength
Here the second phrase about the "firstfruits" is used to describe the "firstborn" in the first phrase. Alternate translation: "He killed every firstborn in their land, which were the firstfruits of all their strength" or "Then Yahweh killed the oldest son in every house of the people of Egypt"
Psalms 105:37
He brought the Israelites out with silver and gold
When the Israelites left Egypt they took silver and gold with them. Alternate translation: "He brought the Isrealites out of Egypt with silver and gold in their possession"
none of his tribes stumbled on the way
"every one of his tribes was able to make the journey"
Psalms 105:38
Egypt was glad
Here "Egypt" refers to the people who live in Egypt. Alternate translation: The people of Egypt were glad
Psalms 105:39
He spread a cloud for a covering
Here the psalmist describes Yahweh placing a cloud in the sky as if he were spreading out a garment. The cloud was a "covering" to protect them from the sun. Alternate translation: "He placed a cloud in the sky to protect them from the sun and heat"
made a fire to light up the night
Yahweh placed a pillar of fire in the sky to give light during the night. Alternate translation: "placed a fire it the sky to light up the night"
Psalms 105:40
he brought quail
It may be helpful to make clear that quail are small birds Yahweh sent for them to eat. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sent small birds to eat"
with bread from heaven
Yahweh caused manna, a type of bread, to fall from the sky. Alternate translation: "with bread that fell from the sky"
Psalms 105:41
they flowed
"the waters flowed"
Psalms 105:42
called to mind
This means to remember. Alternate translation: "remembered"
Psalms 105:43
He led his people out ... his chosen with shouts of triumph
These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that God's people were joyful when he led them out of Egypt. The people were shouting joyfully. Alternate translation: "He led his chosen people out with shouts of joy and triumph"
his chosen
Here "chosen" refers to Yahweh's chosen people. Alternate translation: "his chosen people"
shouts of triumph
the sound that people make when they are shouting with joy because they have defeated their enemies
Psalms 105:45
keep his statutes and obey his laws
These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. "To keep" his statutes means to obey them. Alternate translation: "obey his laws and statutes"

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106 [1] Give praise to Yah.[1]
Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

[2] Who can recount the mighty acts of Yahweh
or proclaim in full all his praiseworthy deeds?

[3] Blessed are those who do what is right,
and whose deeds are always just.

[4] Call me to mind, Yahweh, when you show favor to your people;
help me when you save them.

[5] Then I will see the prosperity of your chosen,
rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
and glory with your inheritance.

[6] We have sinned like our ancestors;
we have done wrong, and we have done evil.

[7] Our fathers did not pay attention to your marvelous deeds in Egypt;
they ignored your many acts of covenant faithfulness;
they were rebellious at the sea, the Sea of Reeds.

[8] Nevertheless, he saved them for his name's sake
so that he might reveal his power.

[9] He rebuked the Sea of Reeds, and it dried up.
Then he led them through the depths, as through a wilderness.

[10] He saved them from the hand of those who hated them,
and he rescued them from the hand of the enemy.

[11] But the waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them survived.

[12] Then they believed his words,
and they sang his praise.

[13] But they quickly forgot his deeds;
they did not wait for his instructions.

[14] They had insatiable cravings in the wilderness,
and they challenged God in the desert.

[15] So he gave them what they requested,
but he sent a horrible disease upon them.

[16] In the camp they became jealous of Moses
and Aaron, the holy priest of Yahweh.

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17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan
and covered the company of Abiram.

18 Fire broke out in their company;
the fire consumed the wicked.

19 They made a calf at Horeb
and worshiped a cast metal figure.

20 They traded the glory of God
for the image of a bull that eats grass.

21 They forgot God their Savior,
who had done great deeds in Egypt.

22 He had done wonderful things in the land of Ham
and awesome deeds at the Sea of Reeds.

23 So he said he would destroy them—
had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his anger from destroying them.

24 Then they despised the delightful land;
they did not believe his promise,

25 but grumbled in their tents,
and did not obey Yahweh.

26 Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them
that he would let them die in the desert,

27 scatter their descendants among the nations,
and scatter them in foreign lands.

28 They worshiped the Baal of Peor
and ate the sacrifices offered to the dead.

29 They provoked him to anger with their actions,
and a plague broke out among them.

30 Then Phinehas stood up and mediated,
and the plague subsided.

31 It was counted to him as a righteous deed
to all generations forever.

32 They also angered Yahweh at the waters of Meribah,
and Moses suffered because of them.

33 They made his spirit bitter,

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and he spoke thoughtlessly with his lips.

34 They did not destroy the nations
as Yahweh had commanded them,

35 but they mingled with the nations,
learned their practices,

36 and worshiped their idols,
which became a snare to them.

37 They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons.
38 They shed innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and of their daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan,
desecrating the land with blood.

39 They were defiled by their deeds;
in their actions they were like prostitutes.

40 So Yahweh was angry with his people,
and he abhorred his inheritance.

41 He gave them into the hand of the nations,
and those who hated them ruled over them.

42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were brought into subjection to their authority.

43 Many times he came to help them,
but they were rebellious in their purposes
and were brought low by their own iniquity.

44 Nevertheless, he paid attention to their distress
when he heard their cry for help.

45 He called to mind his covenant with them
and relented because of his steadfast love.

46 He caused all their captors
to have pity on them.

47 Save us, Yahweh, our God.
Gather us from among the nations
so that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praises.

48 May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised
from everlasting to everlasting.

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All the people said, "Amen."
Give praise to Yah.[2]

BOOK FIVE

(Psalms 107-150)

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 106 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 106 is the fourth in a series of five psalms of praise to God. (Psalm 103-107)

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's sin

Although Israel continually sinned in the desert, God still took them to the Promised Land. (See: sin and promisedland)

Links:

Psalms 106:1

Psalms 106:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

for his covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "for he remains faithful to his covenant forever"

Psalms 106:2

Who can recount the mighty acts of Yahweh ... deeds?

The author asks this question to praise God and does not expect an answer. Alternate translation: "No one can recount the mighty acts of Yahweh ... deeds."

praiseworthy deeds

"deeds that are worthy of praise"

Psalms 106:4

Call me to mind

The phrase "call to mind" means to remember something. Alternate translation: "remember me"

Psalms 106:5

of your chosen

The word "chosen" refers to Yahweh's chosen people. Alternate translation: "of your chosen people"

rejoice in the gladness ... and glory

These are things that David says he will do, along with "seeing the prosperity of your chosen." The words "I will" may be repeated here. "I will rejoice in the gladness ... and I will glory"

gladness

joy, delight

glory with your inheritance

Here the phrase "your inheritance" refers to the Isrealites, who are Yahweh's chosen people. Here "glory" means "to boast about" something; in this case they are boasting about Yahweh. Alternate translation: "boast of your greatness with your people" or "boast with your people about you"

Psalms 106:7

they ignored your many acts of covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "they ignored the many things that you did because you are faithful to your covenant"

at the sea ... the Sea of Reeds

These two phrases refer to the same sea. The second is the name of the sea.

Psalms 106:8

Nevertheless, he

"Even though what I have just said is true, he"

for his name's sake

Here "his name" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "for the sake of his own reputation"

Psalms 106:9

through the depths, as through a wilderness

Here David compares the way that Yahweh led the Isrealites through the Sea of Reeds to the way people can be led across the dry ground of a wilderness. "The depths" refers the riverbed that appeared after Yahweh parted the waters. Alternate translation: "through the Seas of Reeds on dry ground"

Psalms 106:10

He saved them from the hand ... and he rescued them from the hand

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize that Yahweh saved them from their enemies.

the hand of those who hated them

Here "hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "the power of those who hated them" or "the control of those who hated them"

Psalms 106:11

covered their adversaries

This is a polite way to talk about them drowning. Alternate translation: "drowned their enemies"

Psalms 106:12

Then they believed his words

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Here the word "they" refers to "their ancestors" and the word "his" refers to "Yahweh."
Psalms 106:13
they did not wait for his instructions
It is implied that they did things without waiting to find out what Yahweh wanted them to go. Alternate translation: "they did things without first waiting for Yahweh's instructions"
Psalms 106:14
insatiable cravings
"cravings that could not be satisfied"
they challenged God
"They rebelled against God"
Psalms 106:15
but he sent a horrible disease
Here David speaks about Yahweh causing the people to be afflicted by a disease as if Yahweh sent a disease to them in the same way that someone sends a person or a messenger. Alternate translation: "but he caused them to suffer from a horrible disease"
a horrible disease
a disease that caused people to slowly become weak and caused some of them to die
Psalms 106:16
In the camp
This refers to the Israelites' camp in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "In the camp in the wilderness"
Psalms 106:17
The earth opened and swallowed up
Here how the ground opens up and buries the people is being compared to how a creature swallows something. Alternate translation: "The earth opened and buried"
Dathan
This was an official who rebelled against Moses.
covered the company of Abiram
The followers of Abiram were also buried when the earth opened and buried Dathan. Alternate translation: "it also covered the company of Abiram" or "it also buried the company of Abiram"
Abiram
This was an official who rebelled against Moses.
Psalms 106:19
They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a cast metal figure
This information can be reordered so that it is clear that the calf was the cast metal figure. Alternate translation: "At Horeb, they made a cast metal figure of a calf and worshiped it"
Psalms 106:20
They traded the glory of God for the image of a bull
This means that instead of worshiping God they worshiped the image of the bull. Alternate translation: "They traded worshiping the glory of God to worship the image of a bull"
the glory of God
Here God is referred to by his glory. Alternate translation: "their glorious God" or "God who is glorious"
Psalms 106:22
the land of Ham
This refers to the land where Ham's descendants lived. Alternate translation: "the land where Ham's descendant live"
Psalms 106:23
stood in the breach before him, to turn away his anger from destroying them
Here David speaks about Moses persuading Yahweh not to destroy the Israelites as intervening with him in the breach. Alternate translation: "stood between Yahweh and the Israelites and begged Yahweh to not destroy them"
Psalms 106:24
his promise
This refers to Yahweh's promise that he would allow them to take the land of Canaan as their possession.
Psalms 106:25
grumbled
complained
Psalms 106:26
raised his hand
The word "his" refers to Yahweh. Also, it was custom to raise a hand when swearing an oath.
Psalms 106:27
scatter their descendants ... in foreign lands
These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "and that he would make their descendants live in foreign lands"
scatter
This means to disperse or spread out something.
Psalms 106:28
the sacrifices offered to the dead
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices that they offered to the dead"
to the dead
"The dead" refers to the idols and gods that the Israelites were worshiping. Alternate translation: "to gods who are dead" or "to lifeless gods"
Psalms 106:29
a plague broke out
"a plague spread"
provoked him to anger
"angered him"
Psalms 106:30
Then Phinehas stood up and mediated
Phinehas stood between God and the people, punishing the people for their sin. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Then Phinehas rose to punish the people on God's behalf because of their sin"
Psalms 106:31
It was counted to him as a righteous deed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People credited it to him as a righteous deed"
Psalms 106:32
Meribah
This is a place.
suffered because of them
Moses suffered because of the peoples' sin. Here the word "them" is a pronoun for the people and a metonym referring to their sin. Alternate translation: "suffered because of their actions"
Psalms 106:33
They made his spirit bitter

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Possible meanings: 1) The word "his" refers to Moses. Alternate translation: "They were rebellious against Moses." Or 2) The word "his" refers to God. Alternate translation: "They were rebellious against the Spirit of God."

Psalms 106:35

but they mingled with the nations

Hey David speaks of the people intermarrying with the women from other nations as "mingling" with them. Alternate translation: "but they mixed in marriage with the other nations"

Psalms 106:36

which became a snare to them

The idols became a snare to them.

Psalms 106:38

They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and of their daughters

The phrase "shedding blood" is a descriptive euphemism used for "killing." Alternate translation: "They shed innocent blood when they killed their sons and daughters"

Psalms 106:39

They were defiled by their deeds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their deeds defiled them"

in their actions they were like prostitutes

Here David compares their unfaithfulness to Yahweh to the unfaithfulness of a prostitute. Alternate translation: "they were as unfaithful to Yahweh as prostitutes"

Psalms 106:40

So Yahweh was angry with his people ... he abhorred his inheritance

"So Yahweh was angry with his people and despised them"

Psalms 106:41

He gave them into the hand of the nations

Here "hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "God allowed the nations to take control of them"

those who hated them

"people who hated them"

Psalms 106:42

they were brought into subjection to their authority

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies caused them to be subject to their authority"

Psalms 106:43

were brought low by their own iniquity

Here the phrase "brought low" means to be destroyed. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their iniquity ruined them"

Psalms 106:44

Nevertheless, he

"Even though what I have just said is true, he." See how you translated this in Psalms 106:8.

their distress

"their affliction" or "their suffering"

Psalms 106:45

called to mind

The phrase "call to mind" means to remember something. Alternate translation: "remembered"

He ... relented because of his steadfast love

"He ... decided that because he still loved them very much he would not punish them"

Psalms 106:46

to have pity on them

"to be compassionate on them"

Psalms 106:47

General Information:

Here 106:48 is more than the end of this psalm. It is the closing statement for all of Book 4 of the Psalms, which starts at Psalm 90 and ends with Psalm 106.

to your holy name

Here Yahweh is referred to by his "holy name." Alternate translation: "to you"

Psalms 106:48

May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May people praise Yahweh the God of Israel"

from everlasting to everlasting

This refers to two extremes and means for all time. See how you translated this in [Psalms 41:13]

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1 107 Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
and his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

2 Let the redeemed of Yahweh speak out,
those he has rescued from the hand of the enemy.

3 He has gathered them out of foreign lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

4 They wandered in the wilderness on a desert road
and found no city in which to live.

5 Because they were hungry and thirsty,
they fainted from exhaustion.

6 Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble,
and he rescued them out of their distress.

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7 He led them by a direct path
so that they would go to a city to live in.

8 Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
and for the amazing things he has done for humanity!

9 For he satisfies the longings of those who are thirsty,
and the desires of those who are hungry he fills up with good things.

10 Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
prisoners in affliction and chains.

11 This was because they had rebelled against God's word
and rejected the instruction of the Most High.

12 He humbled their hearts through hardship;
they stumbled and there was no one to help them up.

13 Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble,
and he saved them out of their distress.

14 He brought them out of darkness and gloom
and broke their bonds.

15 Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
and for the amazing things he has done for humanity!

16 For he has broken the gates of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron.

17 They were foolish in their rebellious ways
and afflicted because of their iniquities.

18 Their soul abhorred all food,
and they came close to the gates of death.

19 Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble,
and he saved them out of their distress.

20 He sent his word and healed them,
and he rescued them from the pits in which they were trapped.

21 Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
and for the amazing things he has done for humanity!

22 Let them offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving
and proclaim his deeds with shouts of joy.

23 Some travel on the sea in ships
and do business overseas.

24 These saw the deeds of Yahweh

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and his wonders on the seas.

25 For he commanded and aroused the windstorm
that stirs up the seas.

26 They reached up to the sky; they went down to the depths.
Their lives melted away in distress.

27 They swayed and staggered like drunkards
and were at their wits' end.

28 Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble,
and he brought them out of their distress.

29 He calmed the storm,
and the waves were stilled.

30 Then they rejoiced because the sea was calm,
and he brought them to their desired harbor.

31 Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
and for the amazing things he has done for humanity!

32 Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people
and praise him in the council of the elders.

33 He turns rivers into a wilderness,
springs of water into dry land,

34 and a fruitful land into a barren place
because of the wickedness of its people.

35 He turns the wilderness into a pool of water
and dry land into springs of water.

36 He settles the hungry there,
and they build a city to live in.

37 They sowed fields and planted vineyards
that yielded a fruitful harvest.

38 He blesses them so they are very numerous.
He does not let their livestock decrease in number.

39 They were diminished and brought low
by oppression, distress, and suffering.

40 He pours contempt on the leaders
and causes them to wander in the wilderness, where there are no roads.

41 But he protects the needy from affliction
and cares for his families like a flock.

42 The upright will see this and rejoice,

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and all wickedness shuts its mouth.

43 Whoever is wise should take note of these things
and meditate on Yahweh's acts of covenant faithfulness.

Psalm 107 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 107 is the last in a series of five psalms of praise to God (Psalm 103-107).

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

The psalmist praises Yahweh for saving people lost in the desert, in prison, sick, in a storm at sea, homeless and oppressed. (See: save and oppress)

Links:

Psalms 107:1

Psalms 107:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

his covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "he remains faithful to his covenant forever"

Psalms 107:2

the redeemed of Yahweh

"The redeemed" refers to the people whom Yahweh has saved. Alternate translation: "those whom Yahweh has saved"

speak out

This means to tell others about something. Alternate translation: "tell about what Yahweh has done"

from the hand of the enemy

Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "from the power of the enemy"

Psalms 107:3

from the east ... and from the south

Here the four directions are given to emphasize that he has gathered them from nations in every direction. Alternate translation: "from every direction" or "from every part of the world"

Psalms 107:4

They wandered

"Some people wandered"

on a desert road

"on a road that was in the desert"

in which to live

"that they could live in"

Psalms 107:6

Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble

It is implied that they are praying to Yahweh so that he will help them. Alternate translation: "Then they prayed to Yahweh to help them in their trouble"

their distress

"their difficulties" or "their afflictions"

Psalms 107:8

Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness

Here the word "Oh" is used to show that the writer has a strong desire for people to praise Yahweh. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Let people praise Yahweh because he is faithful to his covenant" or "People should praise Yahweh because he is faithful to his covenant"

for humanity

"for all people"

Psalms 107:9

For he satisfies the longings of those who are thirsty

"For he gives water to those who desire it—to those who are thirsty"

the desires of those who are hungry he fills up with good things

"to those who are very hungry and desire food, he give them good things to eat"

Psalms 107:10

Some sat

It is implied that these are people that Yahweh has rescued. Alternate translation: "Yahweh also rescued people who sat"

in the shadow of death

Possible meanings are 1) they thought that their captors would kill them or 2) the prison had no light and was very dark.

Psalms 107:11

they had rebelled against God's word ... rejected the instruction of the Most High

These phrases have similar meanings and emphasize how much they had rebelled again God, which is why they had been imprisoned.

Psalms 107:12

He humbled their hearts through hardship

Here the heart represents a person, but specifically his will. Alternate translation: "He humbled them by allowing them to suffer hardship"

hardship

Possible meanings are 1) "trouble" or 2) "hard labor."

they stumbled and there was no one to help them up

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The word "stumbled" refers to times when these people got into very difficult situations. Alternate translation: "they got into trouble and there was no one to help them out of it"
Psalms 107:13
Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble
It is implied that they are praying to Yahweh so that he will help them. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:6]
their distress
"difficulties" or "afflictions." See how you translated this in Psalms 107:6
Psalms 107:14
He brought them
"Yahweh brought those in prison"
darkness and gloom
Both "darkness" and "gloom" have basically the same meaning and are used to emphasize how dark the prison was. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:10]
Psalms 107:15
Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
Here the word "Oh" is used to show that the writer has a strong desire for people to praise Yahweh. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:8]
Psalms 107:16
For he
"because he"
For he has broken the gates of bronze and cut through the bars of iron
Both of these phrases describe Yahweh freeing his people from prison and are used to emphasize that Yahweh truly freed them. Alternate translation: "He freed his people from prison"
Psalms 107:17
They were foolish in their rebellious ways
"They were foolish in the way they rebelled against Yahweh"
and afflicted
"and they suffered." Specifically they were afflicted by becoming sick. Alternate translation: "and they became sick"
Psalms 107:18
they came close to the gates of death
Here the act of "dying" is described as a place, "the gates of death" Alternate translation: "they almost died"
Psalms 107:19
Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble
It is implied that they are praying to Yahweh so that he will help them. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:6]
Psalms 107:20
He sent his word and healed them
Here David describes Yahweh speaking as sending his words as if they were a messenger. Possible meanings are 1) "He commanded for them to be healed and they were healed" or 2) "He encouraged them and healed them"
Psalms 107:21
Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
Here the word "Oh" is used to show that the writer has a strong desire for people to praise Yahweh. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:8]
Psalms 107:22
of thanksgiving
"that show that they are thankful"
with shouts of joy
"by singing about them"
Psalms 107:23
and do business overseas
They would sail to places and buy and sell things with the people there. Alternate translation: "selling things in cities far away"
Psalms 107:25
he commanded and aroused the windstorm that stirs up the seas
"he commanded the wind and caused it become a great windstorm that stirred up the sea"
windstorm
a strong wind, like the wind that accompanies a strong rain storm
that stirs up the seas
Here David describes the winds causing the waves to become high as if the wind was an object fiercely stirring something. Alternate translation: "that caused the waves of the sea to become very high"
Psalms 107:26
They reached up to the sky; they went down to the depths
This describes the ships rising and falling with the waves. The extremes of rising to the sky and falling to the depths are an exaggeration to express how horrible the windstorm was and how large the waves were. Alternate translation: "their ships would rise very high on the waves and then they would fall very low between the waves"
Their lives melted away in distress
This idiom describes the sailors' great fear. Alternate translation: "The men were terrified and greatly distressed"
Psalms 107:27
were at their wits' end
The phrase "at their wit's end" means that they did not know what to do. Alternate translation: "and they did not know what to do" or "they had no idea what to do"
Psalms 107:28
Then they called out to Yahweh in their trouble
It is implied that they are praying to Yahweh so that he will help them. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:6]
Then they
The word "they" refers to the sailors.
he brought them
"he guided them"
Psalms 107:29
He calmed the storm
"He made the wind stop"
the waves were stilled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he made the waves still"
Psalms 107:30
their desired harbor
"to the harbor where they wanted to go"
Psalms 107:31
Oh that people would praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness
Here the word "Oh" is used to show that the writer has a strong desire for people to praise Yahweh. The abstract

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noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 107:8]

Psalms 107:32

praise him in the council of the elders

"when the elders sit together." The elders sat together to discuss issues in the community and to make decisions for the community.

Psalms 107:33

He turns

"Yahweh makes"

Psalms 107:34

because of the wickedness of its people

"because the people that live there are wicked"

Psalms 107:35

He turns the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water

Both of these phrases have similar meaning and emphasize how Yahweh makes water appear in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "He make springs and lakes in land that used to be desert"

Psalms 107:36

He settles the hungry there

The word "there" refers to the places where Yahweh made springs and lakes appear. Also, the phrase "the hungry" refers to people who are hungry. Alternate translation: "Yahweh makes people who are hungry live there"

Psalms 107:37

that yielded a fruitful harvest

"that produced a plentiful harvest"

Psalms 107:38

so they are very numerous

"so that their people are very numerous"

He does not let their livestock decrease in number

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "He keeps their livestock very numerous"

Psalms 107:39

They

The word "They" refers to the people who were hungry that Yahweh had settled in the land. This sentence describes how they were before Yahweh settled them in the land.

They were diminished and brought low

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their leaders diminished their number and brought them low"

were diminished

"became fewer in number"

brought low

This means to be humiliated. Alternate translation: "humiliated"

Psalms 107:40

pours contempt on

Here David speaks of Yahweh showing contempt for the leaders as if contempt were a liquid he poured out on them. Alternate translation: "shows contempt for"

the leaders

"the nobles." This refers to the leaders who oppressed the people. Alternate translation: "the leaders who oppressed them"

where there are no roads

"where people never go"

Psalms 107:41

But he

"But Yahweh"

the needy

This refers to needy people. Alternate translation: "needy people" or "poor people"

cares for his families like a flock

Here David compares how Yahweh cares for his people to how a shepherd cares for his sheep. Possible meanings are 1) "makes the number of people in their families increase like flocks" or 2) "takes care of them like a shepherd cares for his sheep"

Psalms 107:42

The upright

This refers to people who live in an upright way. Alternate translation: "Upright people" or "People who do what is right"

all wickedness

Here wicked people are referred to as "wickedness." Alternate translation: "all wicked people"

shuts its mouth

This means to not say anything in response. Alternate translation: "has nothing to say against Yahweh in reply"

Psalms 107:43

take note of these things

This means to think about these things. Alternate translation: "think about these things" or "remember these things"

meditate on Yahweh's acts of covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "meditate on the things that Yahweh has done that show that he is faithful to his covenant"

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108 A song, a psalm of David.
1 My heart is fixed, God!
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises with all my glory.

2 Wake up, lute and harp;
I will wake up the dawn.

3 I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among the nations.

4 For your covenant faithfulness is great above the heavens;

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and your trustworthiness reaches to the skies.

5 Be exalted, God, above the heavens,
and may your glory be exalted over all the earth.

6 So that those you love may be rescued,
rescue us with your right hand and answer me.

7 God has spoken in his holiness; "I will rejoice;
I will divide Shechem
and apportion out the Valley of Sukkoth.

8 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim also is my helmet;
Judah is my scepter.

9 Moab is my washbasin;
over Edom I will throw my sandal;
I will shout in triumph because of Philistia.

10 Who will bring me into the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?"

11 God, have you not rejected us?
You do not go into battle with our army.

12 Give us help against the enemy,
for man's help is futile.

13 We will triumph with God's help;
he will trample down our enemies.

Psalm 108 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 108 is a psalm of war.

Special concepts in this chapter

Victory

God promised success to the psalmist, but Yahweh failed to help him conquer the country of Edom. He needed God to give him victory over Edom.

Links:

Psalms 108:1

Psalms 108:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song, a psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

My heart is fixed, God

Here David is referring to himself by his heart. Also, the word "fixed" means to trust completely. Alternate translation: "My heart is fixed on you, God" or "I am trusting completely in you, God"

I will sing, yes, I will sing praises with all my glory

Here David is represented by his "glory." David refers to himself as having the honor of praising God. Alternate

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translation: "You honor me by allowing me to sing praises to you"
Psalms 108:2
Wake up, lute and harp
Here David describes playing his instruments as waking them up from sleep. Alternate translation: "I will praise you by playing the lute and the harp"
I will wake up the dawn
Here David is describing the dawn waking up like a person waking up in the morning. Alternate translation: "I will be praising you when the dawn comes"
dawn
when the sun rises
Psalms 108:4
your covenant faithfulness is great above the heavens; and your trustworthiness reaches to the skies
These two phrases have similar meanings. They speak of the greatness of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness as if they were objects that were tall enough to reach up to the sky. The abstract nouns "faithfulness" and "trustworthiness" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "For your covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness are greater than the distance between heaven and earth" or "For you are more faithful to your covenant and more worthy of people trusting you than the sky is higher than the earth"
Psalms 108:5
Be exalted, God, above the heavens
The psalmist is asking God to show that he is exalted. Being exalted above the heavens represents being great. Alternate translation: "God, show that you are exalted above the heavens" or "God, show that you are great in the heavens"
may your glory be exalted
Here Yahweh is referred to by his "glory." Alternate translation: "may you be exalted"
Psalms 108:6
So that those you love may be rescued
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: Because those you love need rescuing" or "Rescue those you love"
with your right hand
Here Yahweh's "right hand" refers to his power. Alternate translation: "by your power"
answer me
Answering here represents responding to his request. Alternate translation: "respond to my request" or "answer my prayer"
Psalms 108:7
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:6.
God has spoken in his holiness
Here David describes God speaking something because he is holy as speaking "in his holiness," as if his holiness were something that he was physically inside of. Alternate translation: "God, because he is holy, has said"
I will divide Shechem and apportion out the Valley of Sukkoth
Here God is speaking about dividing the land of Shechem and the Valley of Sukkoth.
apportion
to divide into portions
Psalms 108:8
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:7.
Ephraim also is my helmet
God speaks of the tribe of Ephraim as if it were his army. The helmet symbolizes equipment for war. Alternate translation: "Ephraim is like a helmet I have chosen" or "The tribe of Ephraim is my army"
helmet
a hard hat that soldiers wear to protect their heads from injury
Judah is my scepter
God chose men from the tribe of Judah to be the kings of his people, and he speaks of that tribe as if it were his scepter. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Judah is like my scepter" or "Judah is the tribe through whom I rule my people"
Psalms 108:9
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:8.
Moab is my washbasin
God speaks of Moab being unimportant as if Moab were a washbasin or a lowly servant. Alternate translation: "Moab is like a bowl that I use for washing"
over Edom I will throw my sandal
God was probably speaking of taking ownership of Edom as if he were symbolically throwing his sandal onto that land to show that he owns it. However some versions have other interpretations. Alternate translation: "I take ownership of the land of Edom" or "I throw my sandal onto the land of Edom to show that it is mine"
Psalms 108:10
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:9.
Psalms 108:11
General Information:
This verse is almost the same as Psalms 60:10.
God, have you not rejected us?
The psalmist uses this question to express his sadness that it seems that God has rejected them. Alternate translation: "It seems like you have rejected us!" or "God, you seem to have abandoned us!"
You do not go into battle with our army
The psalmist speaks of God helping their army as if God were to go and fight with them. Alternate translation: "you do not help our army when we go into battle"
Psalms 108:12
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:11.
is futile
"is worthless"
Psalms 108:13
General Information:
This verse is the same as Psalms 60:12.
will triumph
"will defeat our enemies"
he will trample down our enemies
The psalmist speaks of God helping their army defeat their

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enemies as if God were to trample down the enemies. Alternate translation: "he will enable us to trample down our enemies" or "he will make us able to defeat our enemies.

109 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 God whom I praise,
do not be silent.

2 For the wicked and deceitful attack me;
they speak lies against me.

3 They surround me and say hateful things,
and they attack me without cause.

4 In return for my love they accuse me,
but I pray for them.

5 They repay me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.

6 Appoint a wicked man over such an enemy as these people;
appoint an accuser to stand at his right hand.

7 When he is judged, may he be found guilty;
may his prayer be considered sinful.

8 May his days be few;
may another take his office.

9 May his children be fatherless,
and may his wife be a widow.

10 May his children wander about and beg,
seeking food far from their ruined home.

11 May the creditor seize all he owns;
may strangers plunder the product of his labor.

12 May no one extend any kindness to him;
may no one have pity on his fatherless children.

13 May his descendants be cut off;
may their name be blotted out in the next generation.

14 May his ancestors' iniquity be remembered before Yahweh;
and may the sin of his mother not be forgotten.

15 May their sins always be before Yahweh;
may he cut off their memory from the earth.

16 May Yahweh do this, for that man never bothered to show any covenant faithfulness,
but harassed the oppressed, the needy,
and the brokenhearted to death.

17 He loved cursing;
may it come back upon him.

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He hated blessing;
may it be far from him.

18 He clothed himself with cursing as his garment,
and his curse came into his body like water,
like oil into his bones.

19 May his curses be to him like the clothes he wears to cover himself,
like the belt he always wears.

20 May this be the reward of my accusers from Yahweh,
of those who say evil things about me.

21 Yahweh my Lord, deal kindly with me for your name's sake.
Because your covenant faithfulness is good, save me.

22 For I am oppressed and needy,
and my heart is wounded within me.

23 I am fading away like the shadow of the evening;
I am shaken off like a locust.

24 My knees are weak from fasting;
my body has become thin and has no fat.

25 I have become an object of scorn to my accusers;
when they see me, they shake their heads.

26 Help me, Yahweh my God;
save me by your covenant faithfulness.

27 Let them know that this is your hand,
that you, Yahweh, have done this.

28 They curse, but you bless;
when they attack, may they be put to shame,
but may your servant rejoice.

29 May my adversaries be clothed with shame;
may they wear their shame like a robe.

30 With my mouth I give great thanks to Yahweh;
I will praise him in the midst of a crowd.

31 For he will stand at the right hand of the one who is needy,
to save him from those who condemn him.

Psalm 109 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 109 is a psalm of vengeance against an enemy who has lied about him. (See: avenge)

Special concepts in this chapter

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Enemies destroyed
This enemy lied about the psalmist. So he asked God to completely destroy his enemy and his enemy's family.

Links:

Psalms 109:1

Psalms 109:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
For the chief musician. A psalm of David
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
For the chief musician
"This is for the director of music to use in worship."
Psalms 109:2
For the wicked and deceitful
The words "wicked" and "deceitful" refer to people. They have similar meanings and emphasize how bad these people are. Alternate translation: "For wicked and deceitful men"
Psalms 109:4
In return for my love
"Although I loved them"
my love
"my love for them"
they accuse me
The word "they" refers to the people who are wicked and deceitful. You may need to make explicit that those who accuse the psalmist do so falsely. Alternate translation: "they accuse me falsely" or "they slander me"
Psalms 109:6
Appoint a wicked man ... appoint an accuser
These two phrases are parallel and the phrases "a wicked man" and "an accuser" refer to the same person.
at his right hand
"at my enemy's right hand"
Psalms 109:7
When he is judged, may he be found guilty
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When he is on trial, may the judge find him guilty"
may his prayer be considered sinful
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "consider his prayer sinful"
Psalms 109:8
May his days be few
The phrase "his days" refers to the length of his life. Alternate translation: "May he not live a long time"
his office
"his position of authority"
Psalms 109:10
their ruined home
"their destroyed homes"
Psalms 109:11
the creditor
someone who lends money to another person but expects that the person will pay the money back
plunder
steal by force
Psalms 109:13
May his descendants be cut off; may their name be blotted out
These two phrases have similar meanings and emphasize his descendants being destroyed.
May his descendants be cut off
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Cause his descendants to be cut off" or "Cause his descendants to die"
may their name be blotted out in the next generation
Here the idea of there being no one to carry on the family name is spoke of as "their name being blotted out." Alternate translation: "may there be no one to carry on his name"
Psalms 109:14
May his ancestors' iniquity be remembered before Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh remember the iniquity of this man's ancestors" or "May you remember the iniquity of his ancestors, Yahweh"
may the sin of his mother not be forgotten
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May you not forget the sins that his mother committed"
Psalms 109:15
May their sins always be before Yahweh
Here David speaks about Yahweh thinking about their sins as if their sins were something physically present before him. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh always see their sins" or "May Yahweh always think about their sins"
may he cut off their memory from the earth
David uses the word "earth" to refer to all the people that live on the earth. Also, the phrase "their memory" refers to people remembering the wicked after they have died. Alternate translation: "may Yahweh make it so that no one on earth remembers those wicked people"
Psalms 109:16
that man never bothered to show any covenant faithfulness
This refers to him showing covenant faithfulness to people. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Sometimes this idea is expressed simply as "kindness" or "mercy. Alternate translation: "that man never did anything to show that he was faithful to his covenant with people" or "that man nevered bothered to be kind to people"
the oppressed, the needy
This refers to oppressed and needy people. Alternate translation: "oppressed people, needy people"
the brokenhearted
Possible meanings are 1) people who are very sad or 2) people who are discouraged and have no hope. Alternate translation: "brokenheared people" or "people who have lost hope"
to death

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"until they died." This means that he harassed them until they died.
Psalms 109:17
may it come back upon him
"may his curses come upon him"
Psalms 109:18
He clothed himself with cursing as his garment
David speaks of the wicked person's behavior as if it were his clothing. This probably means he cursed people very often. Alternate translation: “Curses were like his clothing” or “He cursed people all the time”
his curse came into his body like water, like oil into his bones
Possible meanings are: 1) He spoke curses so often that they became a part of his identity. "the curses that he speaks are part of who he is" or 2) David prays that the wicked man will experience his own curses. Alternate translation: “may his curse come into his body like water, like oil into his bones”
like oil into his bones
People believed that oil rubbed on the skin went into the bones.
Psalms 109:19
May his curses be to him like the clothes he wears to cover himself
People wore their clothes everyday. David speaks of a wicked person always being cursed as if his curses always covered him as his clothing does. Alternate translation: "Let his curses be on him every day like the garment he wears"
like the belt he always wears
The words "may his curses be to him" are understood from the previous phrase. They may be repeated here. Alternate translation: "may his curses be to him like the belt he always wears" or "and let his curses always be on him like the belt he always wears"
Psalms 109:20
May this be the reward
"May these curses be the reward"
Psalms 109:21
deal kindly with me
This is a request for Yahweh to treat him kindly. Alternate translation: "treat me kindly"
your name's sake
"the sake of your reputation"
Because your covenant faithfulness is good
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Because you are good and are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 109:22
oppressed and needy
These two words have similar meanings and emphasize that he is unable to help himself.
my heart is wounded within me
Here David speaks of being in great despair as his heart being wounded. Alternate translation: "I am full of grief and despair"
Psalms 109:23
I am fading away like the shadow ... like a locust
David feels like he is going to die soon and describes this feeling by comparing himself to a fading shadow and to how the wind blows away locust. Alternate translation: "I feel like I am about to die, like an evening shadow that will soon disappear, like a locust is easily blown away by the wind"
Psalms 109:24
My knees are weak
This means that he is weak and it is difficult for him to stand. Alternate translation: "My legs are weak" or "I have difficulty standing"
from fasting
"because I am not eating any food"
Psalms 109:25
I have become an object of scorn to my accusers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My accusers ridicule me"
shake their heads
This is an act of disapproval.
Psalms 109:26
save me by your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "save me because you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 109:27
Let them know
The word "them" refers to David's accusers and the people who say bad things about him.
this is your hand
The word "this" refers to God saving him. The phrase "your hand" is a metonym for what God has done. Alternate translation: "this is your work" or "this salvation is your doing"
have done this
"have saved me"
Psalms 109:28
They curse, but you bless
The word "they" refers to the people who accuse David and say bad things about him. Alternate translation: "They curse me, but you bless me"
may they be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "put the to shame" or "may they be ashamed"
but may your servant rejoice
"but may I, your servant, rejoice" or "I am your servant, let me rejoice." David uses the phrase "your servant" to refer to himself.
Psalms 109:29
May my adversaries be clothed ... may they wear
These two phrase have them same meaning and are used together for emphasize how greatly he wishes for them to be ashamed.
be clothed with shame
Here David speaks of them being ashamed as if were clothing they wore. Alternate translation: "be very ashamed"
may they wear their shame like a robe
David speaks of them being ashamed as if it were a robe that they wore. Alternate translation: "may their shame cover them just like their robe is wrapped around them"
Psalms 109:30
With my mouth I give

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This means that he will speak. Alternate translation: "I will speak and give"
Psalms 109:31

will stand at the right hand of the one who is needy
This means that he will help and defend the poor person. Alternate translation: "will defend the one who is needy"

110 A psalm of David.
1 The declaration of Yahweh to my lord:
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool."

2 Yahweh will hold out the scepter of your strength from Zion;
rule among your enemies.

3 Your people will follow you in holy garments
of their own free will on the day of your power;
from the womb of the dawn your youth will be to you like the dew.

4 Yahweh has sworn and will not change his mind:
"You are a priest forever,
after the manner of Melchizedek."

5 The Lord is at your right hand.
He will kill kings on the day of his anger.

6 He will judge the nations;
he will fill the battlegrounds with dead bodies;
he will kill the leaders in many countries.

7 He will drink of the brook along the road,
and then he will lift his head up high after victory.

Psalm 110 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 110 is a psalm honoring the king as he becomes king and also a prophecy about Christ. (See: prophet and christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

King

The king will be able to conquer his enemies. Christ is seen as both high priest and king. (See: highpriest)

Links:

Psalms 110:1

Psalms 110:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Sit at my right hand

The phrase "my right hand" refers to the place of honor. Alternate translation: "Sit at the place of honor which I have for you"

make your enemies your footstool

Here David describes Yahweh placing his master's enemies under his power and control as putting them under his feet like a footstool. Alternate translation: "put your enemies under your power"

Psalms 110:2

General Information:

David continues speaking to the king.

Yahweh will hold out the scepter of your strength

Here David speaks of Yahweh extending the area that the king rules as holding out his scepter. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will extend the area over which you powerfully rule"

rule among your enemies

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"King, rule among your enemies." This is spoken to the king as a command.

Psalms 110:3

of their own free will

"by their own choice." This means that they will chose to follow the king.

on the day of your power

This refers to the day that the king will lead his armies into battle. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "on the day that you lead your armies into battle"

from the womb of the dawn ... like the dew

David describes the dew as a baby to whom the dawn gives birth. Alternate translation: "in the morning ... like the dew"

from the womb of the dawn your youth will be to you like the dew

David is telling the king that he will have youthful strength each morning by comparing it to how the dew appears early each morning. Alternate translation: "each morning you will be filled with youthful strength to sustain you just like each morning the dew appears to water and sustain the earth"

Psalms 110:4

You are

Yahweh is speaking to the lord, the one David calls "my master" in Psalms 110:1.

will not change

This means that he will not change what he has said. Alternate translation: "will not change his mind" or "will not change what he has said"

after the manner of Melchizedek

The idea of being priest is understood from the previous phrase. It can be stated clearly here. Alternate translation: "after the manner that Melchizedek was priest" or "in the same way that Melchizedek was priest"

Psalms 110:5

The Lord is at your right hand

When the lord goes to battle, Yahweh stands at his right hand in order to help him. Alternate translation: "The Lord helps you in battle"

The Lord

The word "Lord" refers to Yahweh.

He will kill

The word "He" refers to Yahweh. He will cause the kings to be defeated and die, but he will allow the king's armies to kill the enemy kings. Alternate translation: "He will cause the kings to die" or "He will allow your armies to kill the kings"

kings

This refers to his enemies. Alternate translation: "enemy kings"

on the day of his anger

Here David speaks of the day when Yahweh will become angry and defeat the kings as "the day of his anger." Alternate translation: "on the day of judgment when his patience turns to anger"

Psalms 110:6

he will fill the battlegrounds with dead bodies

This means that Yahweh will cause this to happen, not that he will personally kill all of the people who die on the battleground. Alternate translation: "he will cause the battlegrounds to be filled with death bodies"

he will kill the leaders in many countries

This means that Yahweh will cause this to happen, not that he will personally kill the leaders. Alternate translation: "he will cause the leaders in many countries to be killed" or "he will allow the leaders in many countries to die"

Psalms 110:7

He will drink of the brook along the road

The king only stops briefly for a drink and then he continues the pursuit of his enemies. Alternate translation: "As he pursues his enemies, he will only stop to drink quickly from a brook"

of the brook

This means the he will drink water from the brook. A brook is a small stream. Alternate translation: "he will drink water from the brook"

and then

"and so" or "therefore"

he will lift his head

Possible meanings are 1) the king lifts up his own head or 2) Yahweh lifts up the head of the king.

he will lift his head up high after victory

People raised their heads when they are victorious, confident, and joyful. Alternate translation: "he will confidently lift his head after victory" or "he will be victorious"

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1 111 Give praise to Yah.[1]
I will give thanks to Yahweh with my whole heart
in the assembly of the upright, in their gathering.

2 The works of Yahweh are great,
eagerly awaited by all those who desire them.

3 His work is majestic and glorious,
and his righteousness endures forever.

4 He does wonderful things that will be remembered;
Yahweh is gracious and merciful.

5 He gives food to his faithful followers.
He will always call to mind his covenant.

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6 He showed his powerful works to his people
in giving them the inheritance of the nations.

7 The works of his hands are trustworthy and just;
all his instructions are reliable.

8 They are established forever,
to be observed faithfully and properly.

9 He sent redemption to his people;
he ordained his covenant forever;
holy and awesome is his name.

10 To honor Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom;
those who carry out his instructions have good understanding.
His praise endures forever.

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[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 111 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 111 is a psalm of praise to God for his miracles and care. (See: miracle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's character

God is great. He has given his people food and a land always keeps his promises to his people. (See: promise and peopleofgod)

Links:

Psalms 111:1

Psalms 111:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

with my whole heart

Here the word "heart" represents the person's entire inner being and emotions. Alternate translation: "with all that I am"

in the assembly of the upright, in their gathering

These two phrases mean that same thing and may be combined if necessary. Alternate translation: "in the gathering of upright people"

Psalms 111:2

eagerly awaited by all those who desire them

The word "them" refers to the "works of Yahweh." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all those who desire the works of Yahweh eagerly await them"

eagerly awaited

Possible meanings are 1) "sought after" or 2) "studied."

Psalms 111:4

that will be remembered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that people will always remember"

Psalms 111:5

call to mind

This is an idiom that means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember"

Psalms 111:6

his powerful works

"his works that demonstrated his power"

the inheritance of the nations

The writer speaks of the land that belonged to the nations in Canaan as if it were their inheritance. Alternate translation: "the land that belonged to other nations"

Psalms 111:7

The works of his hands

Here the word "hands" refers to Yahweh, himself. Alternate translation: "The works that he does"

Psalms 111:8

They are established forever

This means that Yahweh's instructions are unchangeable and will last forever. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He has established them forever" or "They will last forever"

to be observed faithfully and properly

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh has given his instructions in a faithful and proper manner or 2) his people are to observe Yahweh's instructions in a faithful and proper manner. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for his people to observe them faithfully and properly"

Psalms 111:9

holy and awesome is his name

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Here the word "name" refers to Yahweh, himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is holy and awesome"

Psalms 111:10

the beginning of wisdom

The word "wisdom" can be translated as "wise." Alternate translation: "the first step to becoming wise" or "the most important thing to become wise"

those who carry out his instructions

"those who obey his instructions"

His praise endures forever

The word "praise" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "People will praise him forever"

1 112 Give praise to Yah.[1]
Blessed is the man who fears Yahweh,
who greatly delights in his commandments.

2 His descendants will be powerful on earth;
the descendants of the godly man will be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches are in his house;
his righteousness will endure forever.

4 Light shines in the darkness for the godly person;
he is gracious, merciful, and just.

5 It goes well for the man who deals graciously and lends money,
who conducts his affairs with honesty.

6 For he will never be moved;
the righteous person will be remembered forever.

7 He does not fear bad news;
he is confident, trusting in Yahweh.

8 His heart is tranquil, without fear,
until he looks in triumph over his adversaries.

9 He gives freely to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever;
his horn will be exalted with honor.

10 The wicked person will see this and be angry;
he will grind his teeth in rage and he will melt away;
the desire of the wicked people will perish.

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 112 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 112 is a wisdom psalm teaching the value of a righteous life. (See: wise and righteous)

Special concepts in this chapter

Righteous people

The righteous people will be well-known for their generosity and they will not have to worry about bad news because God is taking care of them.

Links:

Psalms 112:1

Psalms 112:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

greatly delights

"takes great pleasure"

Psalms 112:2

the descendants of the godly man will be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"Yahweh will bless the descendants of the godly man"
Psalms 112:3
General Information:
The person who sings this song continues to describe a person who reveres Yahweh.
Wealth and riches are in his house
Here the word "house" represents the family. The words "Wealth" and "riches" mean basically the same thing and indicate an abundance of wealth. Alternate translation: "His family is very wealthy"
Psalms 112:4
Light shines in the darkness for the godly person
The writer speaks of God blessing the godly person in difficult times as if it were a light shining in darkness. Alternate translation: "The blessings that a godly person receives from God are like a light that shines in the darkness"
Psalms 112:5
lends money
The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "lends his money to other people"
Psalms 112:6
General Information:
The person who sings this song continues to describe a person who reveres Yahweh.
For he will never be moved
he will not be troubled or overwhelmed by circumstances for his trust is in Yahweh? This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For nothing will ever move him"
the righteous person will be remembered forever
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will remember the righteous person forever"
Psalms 112:8
General Information:
The person who sings this song continues to describe a person who reveres Yahweh.
His heart is tranquil
"His heart is supported." Here the word "heart" refers to the person. Possible meanings are 1) "He is at peace" or 2) "He is confident"
Psalms 112:9
his righteousness endures forever
"his righteous deeds will endure forever." See how you translated this in Psalms 112:3.
his horn will be exalted with honor
The word "horn" here speaks of the person winning a military victory as if he were a wild ox raising his head. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will give him honor by enabling him to win battles" or "Yahweh will give him honor by defeating his enemies"
Psalms 112:10
will see this
"will see that things go well for the godly person." The word "this" refers to everything good that the writer has described in the previous verses about the godly person.
he will grind his teeth in rage
The grinding of teeth is an expression of extreme anger. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Psalms 35:16]
melt away
The writer speaks of the wicked person's eventual death as if that person were something, such as ice, that can melt. Alternate translation: "eventually die"
the desire of the wicked people will perish
Possible meanings of "desire" are 1) the emotional desire that wicked people have. Alternate translation: "the things that wicked people want to do will never happen" or 2) it is a metonym for the things that wicked people have desired. Alternate translation: "wicked people will lose the things that they desired"

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1 113 Give praise to Yah.[1]
Praise him, you servants of Yahweh;
praise the name of Yahweh.

2 Blessed be the name of Yahweh,
both now and forevermore.

3 From the rising of the sun to its setting,
Yahweh's name should be praised.

4 Yahweh is exalted above all nations,
and his glory reaches above the skies.

5 Who is like Yahweh our God,
who has his seat on high,

6 who humbles himself to look down
at the sky and at the earth?

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7 He raises up the poor out of the dirt
and lifts up the needy from the ash heap,

8 so that he may seat him with princes,
with the princes of his people.

9 He gives a home to the barren woman of the house;
he makes her a joyful mother of children.
Give praise to Yah![2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 113 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 113 is a psalm of praise to God for his goodness. (See: good)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

God helps the poor and gives children to the wife who cannot conceive children.

Links:

Psalms 113:1

Psalms 113:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

the name of Yahweh

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh, himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh"

Psalms 113:3

From the rising of the sun to its setting

This phrase refers to the directions east, where the sun rises, and west, where the sun sets. The writer uses these two extremes to represent everywhere on earth. See how you translated this in [Psalms 50:1]

Yahweh's name should be praised

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh, himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people should praise Yahweh"

Psalms 113:4

his glory reaches above the skies

The glory of God is spoken of as if it was very high. Alternate translation: "his glory is higher than the skies" or "his glory is enormously great"

Psalms 113:5

Who is like Yahweh our God, who has his seat on high

This is the first part of a rhetorical question that the writer asks to emphasize that there is no one like Yahweh. It may be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no one like Yahweh our God, who has his seat on high"

who has his seat on high

"who is enthroned on high" or "who rules in the highest position"

Psalms 113:6

who humbles himself to look down at the sky and at the earth

This is the second part of a rhetorical question that the writer asks to emphasize that there is no one like Yahweh. It may be translated as a statement that begins a new sentence. Alternate translation: "There is no one like Yahweh our God, who humbles himself to look down at the sky and at the earth."

humbles himself to look down

Possible meanings are 1) the writer is speaking literally of Yahweh's thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "is not too proud to look down" Or 2) this is a hyperbolic metaphor that speaks as if Yahweh needs to work to look at the sky and earth from heaven. Alternate translation: "needs to bow so he can look"

Psalms 113:7

He raises up the poor ... from the ash heap

These two phrases are parallel. The writer speaks of Yahweh helping and honoring people who are poor as if Yahweh caused them to stand up from sitting in dirt and ashes.

out of the dirt ... from the ash heap

Sitting in dirt and ashes represents either poverty or despair.

Psalms 113:8

so that he may seat him with princes, with the princes of his people

Here the second phrase clarifies that the first phrase refers to the princes of Yahweh's people. These two statements can be combined. Alternate translation: "so that Yahweh may seat him next to rulers of his people"

Psalms 113:9

He gives a home to the barren woman of the house

Here "home" refers to the children that live in a home. Alternate translation: "He gives children to the woman who had none"

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114 1 When Israel left Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a people who spoke a foreign language,

2 Judah became his holy place,
Israel his kingdom.

3 The sea looked and fled;
the Jordan turned back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills skipped like lambs.

5 Why did you flee, sea?
Jordan, why did you turn back?

6 Mountains, why did you skip like rams?
You little hills, why did you skip like lambs?

7 Tremble, earth, before the Lord,
at the presence of the God of Jacob.

8 He turned the rock into a pool of water,
the hard rock into a spring of water.

Psalm 114 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 114 is a psalm of praise to God for his miracles in bringing the people of Israel to the promised land. (See: miracle and promisedland)

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

The psalmist praised God for opening up the Red Sea for the people to cross, for providing the earthquake that stopped the Jordan River so the people could cross and providing water from a rock for the people to drink.

Links:

Psalms 114:1

Psalms 114:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

When Israel left Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people who spoke a foreign language

These two lines are parallel, with "Israel" and "the house of Jacob" meaning the same thing and "Egypt" and "that foreign people" referring to the same people.

the house of Jacob from a people who spoke a foreign language

The word "house" here represents the family or descendents. The verb may be supplied to this phrase. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Jacob left people who spoke a language that the descendants of Jacob did not understand"

Psalms 114:2

Judah became his holy place, Israel his kingdom

Possible meanings for "Judah" and "Israel" are 1) they refer to the land. Alternate translation: "The land of Judah became Yahweh's holy place, the land of Israel became his kingdom" or 2) they are metonyms for the people of Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah became those among whom Yahweh lived, the people of Israel became those over whom he ruled"

Psalms 114:3

The sea looked and fled

The writer speaks of the Sea of Reeds as if it were a person who fled away as Yahweh led the people of Israel through on dry ground. Alternate translation: "It was as though the sea looked and fled"

the Jordan turned back

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The writer speaks of the Jordan River as if it were a person who retreated as Yahweh led the people of Israel through on dry ground. Alternate translation: "it was as though the Jordan retreated"

Psalms 114:4

The mountains skipped like rams, the hills skipped like lambs

The writer speaks of the mountains and hills as if they are alive. He is probably speaking of an earthquake when he describes their fear at the presence of Yahweh as if they were jumping like rams and lambs. Alternate translation: "It was as if the mountains shook like jumping rams and the hills shook like jumping lambs"

Psalms 114:5

General Information:

Verses 5-6 contain four rhetorical questions. The expected answer to each question is found in verse 7, "because of the presence of the Lord."

Psalms 114:6

skip like rams ... skip like lambs

The writer speaks of the mountains and hills as if they are alive. He is probably speaking of an earthquake when he describes their fear at the presence of Yahweh as if they were jumping like rams and lambs. See how you translated similar phrases in [Psalms 114:4]

Psalms 114:7

Tremble, earth, before the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob

The last two phrases are parallel. The verb may be supplied in the second line. Alternate translation: "Tremble, earth, before the Lord, tremble at the presence of the God of Jacob"

Tremble, earth

Possible meanings are 1) the writer is speaking to the earth as if it were a person and commands it to tremble with fear before God or 2) the word "earth" is a metonym for those who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "Tremble, everyone one earth"

Psalms 114:8

He turned the rock into a pool of water, the hard rock into a spring of water

These two phrases are parallel. The writer describes Yahweh causing water to flow from the rock as if he turned the rock into water.

the hard rock into a spring of water

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "He turned the hard rock into a spring of water"

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115 [1] Not to us, Yahweh, not to us,
but to your name bring honor,
for your covenant faithfulness
and for your trustworthiness.

[2] Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"

[3] Our God is in heaven;
he does whatever he pleases.

[4] The nations' idols are silver and gold,
the work of men's hands.

[5] Those idols have mouths, but they do not speak;
they have eyes, but they do not see;

[6] they have ears, but they do not hear;
they have noses, but they do not smell.

[7] Those idols have hands, but do not feel;
they have feet, but they cannot walk;
nor do they speak from their mouths.

[8] Those who make them are like them,
as is everyone who trusts in them.

[9] Israel, trust in Yahweh;
he is your help and shield.

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10 House of Aaron, trust in Yahweh;
he is your help and shield.

11 You who honor Yahweh, trust in him;
he is your help and shield.

12 Yahweh takes notice of us and will bless us;
he will bless the family of Israel;
he will bless the family of Aaron.

13 He will bless those who honor him,
both young and old.

14 May Yahweh increase your numbers more and more,
yours and your descendants'.

15 May you be blessed by Yahweh,
who made heaven and earth.

16 The heavens belong to Yahweh;
but the earth he has given to mankind.

17 The dead do not give praise to Yah,[1]
nor do any who go down into silence;

18 But we will give praise to Yah,
now and forevermore.
Give praise to Yah![2]

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[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 115 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 115 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

God is in heaven and is able to do whatever he wants. Idols can not do anything. Therefore, people and priests should trust God for their protection. (See: heaven and priest and trust)

Links:

Psalms 115:1

Psalms 115:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Not to us, Yahweh, not to us

The writer repeats the phrase "Not to us" in order to emphasize that they are not worthy to receive the honor that is due only to Yahweh. If necessary, a verbal phrase may be supplied here. Alternate translation: "Do not bring honor to us, Yahweh"

to us

The word "us" refers to the people of Israel.

but to your name bring honor

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh, himself. Alternate translation: "but bring honor to yourself"

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for your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant and you are worthy of people trusting you"
Psalms 115:2
Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"
This rhetorical question emphasizes that there should be no reason for the nations to say what they say. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations should not be able to say, 'Where is their God?'"
Where is their God?
The people of other nations use this question to mock the people of Israel and to express that they do not see Yahweh helping them. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your God is not here to help you."
Psalms 115:4
the work of men's hands
Here the word "hands" represents the people who made the idols. Alternate translation: "things which men have made"
Psalms 115:5
Those idols have mouths
The idols do not have real mouths, eyes, ears, or noses. Rather, people made them with the likeness of mouths, eyes, ears, and noses. The writer is emphasizing that these idols are not really alive. You can make clear the implied information. Alternate translation: "People have given mouths to those idols"
Psalms 115:7
Those idols have hands
The idols do not have real hands, feet, or mouths. Rather, people made them with the likeness of hands, feet, and mouths. The writer is emphasizing that these idols are not really alive. You can make this implicit information clear. Alternate translation: "People have given hands to those idols"
but do not feel
"but those hands do not feel"
Psalms 115:8
Those who make them are like them, as is everyone who trusts in them
Those who make and worship idols become lifeless and powerless, just like those idols. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Those who make them become lifeless like they are, as does everyone who trusts in them"
Psalms 115:9
Israel, trust in Yahweh
The word "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "People of Israel, trust in Yahweh"
your help and shield
The writer speaks of Yahweh as if he were a shield because he protects his people as a shield would protect them from harm. Alternate translation: "the one who helps you and protects you"
Psalms 115:10
House of Aaron
Here the word "House" represents the family or descendants. This phrase refers to the priests, who were descendants of Aaron. Alternate translation: "Descendants of Aaron" or "Priests"
Psalms 115:12
takes notice of us
"has paid attention to us"
the family of Israel
This refers to the people of Israel, who are descendants of Jacob, who also called Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
the family of Aaron
This refers to the priests, who are descendants of Aaron. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Aaron" or "the priests"
Psalms 115:13
both young and old
"both small and great." Possible meanings are that this refers 1) to social status or 2) to age. In either case, the two extremes represent every person, regardless of age or social status.
Psalms 115:14
May Yahweh increase your numbers more and more
The writer is speaking of the number of children that the people of Israel would have. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh increase the number of your children more and more"
yours and your descendants'
"both your children and your descendants' children." The writer clarifies that his request for more children applies not only to the present generation, but to their descendants, as well.
Psalms 115:15
May you be blessed by Yahweh, who made heaven and earth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh, who made heaven and earth, bless you"
Psalms 115:16
the earth he has given to mankind
This does not mean that the earth does not belong to Yahweh, but that has given the earth to mankind as a dwelling place.
Psalms 115:17
The dead
The adjective "dead" may be translated with a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "People who are dead"
nor do any who go down into silence
This parallel phrase has a similar meaning to phrase before it. The verb may be supplied from that previous phrase to make the meaning clear. Alternate translation: "nor do any who go down into silence praise Yahweh"
nor do any who go down into silence
The writer speaks of the grave or the place of the dead as a place of silence where no one can speak. This is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "nor do any who go to the place of the dead"
Psalms 115:18
But we
The word "we" refers to the people of Israel who are still alive.

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1 116 I love Yahweh because he hears
my voice and my pleas for mercy.

2 Because he listened to me,
I will call on him as long as I live.

3 The cords of death surrounded me,
and the snares of Sheol confronted me;
I felt anguish and sorrow.

4 Then I called on the name of Yahweh:
"I beg you, Yahweh, rescue my life."

5 Yahweh is gracious and just;
our God is compassionate.

6 Yahweh protects the naive;
I was brought low, and he saved me.

7 My soul can return to its resting place,
for Yahweh has been good to me.

8 For you rescued my life from death,
my eyes from tears,
and my feet from stumbling.

9 I will serve Yahweh
in the land of the living.

10 I believed in him, even when I said,
"I am greatly afflicted."

11 In my alarm I said,
"All men are liars."

12 How can I repay Yahweh
for all his kindnesses to me?

13 I will raise the cup of salvation,
and call on the name of Yahweh.

14 I will fulfill my vows to Yahweh
in the presence of all his people.

15 Precious in the sight of Yahweh
is the death of his faithful ones.

16 Yahweh, indeed, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the son of your servant woman;

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you have taken away my bonds.

17 I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and will call on the name of Yahweh.

18 I will fulfill my vows to Yahweh
in the presence of all his people,

19 in the courts of the house of Yahweh,
in your midst, Jerusalem.
Give praise to Yah![1]

[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 116 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 116 is a psalm of praise for saving the psalmist's life. (See: save)

Special concepts in this chapter

Healing

The author was very sick and expected to die but God healed him. So he will pay his vow and sacrifice an offering of thanks. (See: vow)

Links:

Psalms 116:1

Psalms 116:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

he hears my voice and my pleas for mercy

Here the word "voice" represents the person who is speaking. The abstract nouns "pleas" and "mercy" can be stated as "plead" and "merciful." Alternate translation: "he hears me when I plead for him to be merciful to me"

Psalms 116:3

General Information:

The person who composed this psalm continues to speak.

The cords of death surrounded me

The writer speaks of death as if it were a person who could capture him and bind him with ropes. See how you translated this in [Psalms 18:4]

the snares of Sheol confronted me

The writer speaks of "Sheol," the place of the dead, as if it were a person who could trap him with snares. Alternate translation: "I felt as if I were ready to enter the grave"

Psalms 116:4

called on the name of Yahweh

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "called out to Yahweh"

rescue my life

Here the word "life" represents the person. Alternate translation: "rescue me" or "keep me from dying"

Psalms 116:5

General Information:

The person who made this song continues to speak.

Psalms 116:6

the naive

This refers to people who are inexperienced or who cannot care for themselves. The adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "those who are naive" or "those who are helpless"

I was brought low

The writer speaks of being humbled as in being in a lower position. Alternate translation: "I was helpless"

Psalms 116:7

General Information:

The person who composed this psalm continues to speak.

My soul can return to its resting place

The writer speaks of having peace and confidence as if it were a place where his soul can rest. The word "soul" represents the person. Alternate translation: "I can rest in peace again"

Psalms 116:8

you rescued my life from death

Here the word "you" refers to Yahweh. The word "life" represents the person. Alternate translation: "you have saved me from death" or "you have kept me from dying"

my eyes from tears

"you have kept me from crying"

my feet from stumbling

The feet here represent the person. Stumbling here probably represents being killed by his enemies. Alternate translation: "you have rescued me from stumbling" or "you have kept me from being killed by my enemies"

Psalms 116:9

General Information:

The person who composed this psalm continues to speak.

in the land of the living

"in this world where people are alive." This is in contrast to the place of the dead.

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Psalms 116:10
I am greatly afflicted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I suffer greatly" or "People afflict me very much"
Psalms 116:11
In my alarm I said
"I said too quickly" or "I said without considering"
All men are liars
"Every person is a liar" or "All people are liars"
Psalms 116:12
General Information:
The person who made this song continues to speak.
How can I repay Yahweh ... to me?
The writer asks this leading question to introduce how he will respond to what Yahweh has done for him. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is how I will repay Yahweh ... to me."
Psalms 116:13
I will raise the cup of salvation
This is probably a reference to a drink offering, which was a sacrifice that involved pouring wine on the altar, and which the writer will offer in response to Yahweh saving him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I will present a drink offering to Yahweh because he saved me"
call on the name of Yahweh
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "call on Yahweh"
Psalms 116:15
Precious in the sight of Yahweh is the death of his faithful ones
The word "Precious" here does not imply that Yahweh values the death of his saints, but that the death of his saints is costly to him and grieves him. Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "Yahweh considers the death of his saints to be a costly thing"
Psalms 116:16
General Information:
The person who composed this psalm continues to speak.
the son of your servant woman
This is likely a reference to the writer's mother and indicates that she faithfully worshiped Yahweh. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "as my mother was"
you have taken away my bonds
The writer speaks of being in danger of dying as if he had been chained in prison. Alternate translation: "you have saved me from death"
Psalms 116:17
the sacrifice of thanksgiving
"a sacrifice to express my thankfulness"
will call on the name of Yahweh
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "will call on Yahweh"
Psalms 116:18
General Information:
The person who made this song continues to speak.
I will fulfill ... all his people
See how you translated Psalms 116:14.
Psalms 116:19
in the courts of the house of Yahweh
The word "house" refers to Yahweh's temple. Alternate translation: "in the courtyards of Yahweh's temple"
in your midst, Jerusalem
The writer speaks to Jerusalem as though it were a person. Alternate translation: "in Jerusalem"

117 [1] Praise Yahweh, all you nations;
exalt him, all you peoples.

[2] For his covenant faithfulness is great toward us,
and the trustworthiness of Yahweh endures forever.
Give praise to Yah![1]

[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 117 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 117 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

Everyone should praise God for his love and unending faithfulness. (See: love and faithful)

Links:

Psalms 117:1

Psalms 117:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
Psalms 117:2
For his
"Because his"
his covenant faithfulness is great toward us
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an

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adjective. Alternate translation: "he does great things for us because he is faithful to his covenant"

the trustworthiness of Yahweh endures forever

The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be translated with an adjective or a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "Yahweh remains trustworthy forever" or "Yahweh will forever be worthy of people trusting him"

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118 [1] Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

[2] Let Israel say,
"His covenant faithfulness endures forever."

[3] Let the house of Aaron say,
"His covenant faithfulness endures forever."

[4] Let the loyal followers of Yahweh say,
"His covenant faithfulness endures forever."

[5] In my distress I called out to Yah;
Yah answered me and set me in a spacious place.[1]

[6] Yahweh is with me; I will not be afraid;
what can man do to me?

[7] Yahweh is on my side as my helper;
I will look in triumph on those who hate me.

[8] It is better to take shelter in Yahweh
than to put confidence in man.

[9] It is better to take refuge in Yahweh
than to put one's trust in princes.

[10] All the nations surrounded me;
in Yahweh's name I cut them off.

[11] They surrounded me; yes, they surrounded me;
in Yahweh's name I cut them off.

[12] They surrounded me like bees;
they disappeared as quickly as fire among thorns;
in Yahweh's name I cut them off.

[13] "You attacked me to knock me down,
but Yahweh helped me.

[14] Yah is my strength and joy,
and he is the one who rescues me."[2]

[15] The joyful shout of victory is heard in the tents of the righteous;

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the right hand of Yahweh conquers.

16 The right hand of Yahweh is exalted;
the right hand of Yahweh conquers.

17 I will not die, but live
and declare what Yah has done.[3]

18 Yah has punished me harshly,
but he has not handed me over to death.[4]

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness;
I will enter them and I will give thanks to Yah.[5]

20 This is the gate of Yahweh;
the righteous enter through it.

21 I will give thanks to you, for you answered me,
and you have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

23 This is Yahweh's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day on which Yahweh has acted;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 We beg you, Yahweh, please give us victory!
We beg you, Yahweh, please give us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh;
we bless you from the house of Yahweh.

27 Yahweh is God, and he has given us light;
bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will exalt you.

29 Oh, give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good,
for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

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[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[3] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[4] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[5] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

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Psalm 118 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 118 is a psalm of war and is about Christ. (See: christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rejected stone

The author praised Yahweh for his rescuing him. God enabled him to overpower his enemies. The new Testament, and even Jesus himself, saw the rejected stone as a reference to the Messiah's rejection by the Jewish leaders. (See: christ)

Links:

Psalms 118:1

Psalms 118:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good

"Thank Yahweh because of the good things he does"

his covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "he remains faithful to his covenant forever"

Psalms 118:2

Let Israel say

The word "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Let the people of Israel say"

Psalms 118:3

Let the house of Aaron say

Here the word "house" represents the family and descendants of a person. This phrase refers to the priests, who were descendants of Aaron. Alternate translation: "Let the descendants of Aaron say" or "Let the priests say"

His covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 118:1-2]

Psalms 118:4

the loyal followers of Yahweh

"those who fear Yahweh" or "those who worship Yahweh"

Psalms 118:5

set me in a spacious place

The writer speaks of Yahweh saving him from distress as if Yahweh had taken him from a place of confinement to a wide open space where he could move about freely.

Psalms 118:6

what can man do to me?

The writer asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is nothing that man can do to hurt him since Yahweh is with him. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "people cannot do anything to harm me."

Psalms 118:7

Yahweh is on my side as my helper

To be on one's side is an idiomatic expression that indicates that that person approves of and will help another. Alternate translation: "Yahweh approves of me and will help me"

I will look in triumph on those who hate me

It is implied that Yahweh is the one who will defeat the writer's enemies, while the writer looks on. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "I will see Yahweh defeating all those who hate me"

Psalms 118:8

to take shelter in Yahweh

God is spoken of as if he were a shelter, a place where people can be protected. Alternate translation: "to seek protection from Yahweh"

Psalms 118:9

to take refuge in Yahweh

This verse is parallel to the one preceding it. God is spoken of as if he were a refuge, a place where people can be protected. Alternate translation: "to seek protection from Yahweh"

Psalms 118:10

All the nations

Here the word "nations" represents the armies of those nations. The writer uses hyperbole to emphasize the great number of armies that surrounded him. Alternate translation: "The armies of many nations"

in Yahweh's name

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "by Yahweh's power"

I cut them off

The writer speaks of defeating the enemy armies as if he were cutting them off like a person would cut a branch off of a plant. Alternate translation: "I defeated them"

Psalms 118:12

They surrounded me like bees

The writer compares the enemy armies to a swarm of bees. Alternate translation: "They surrounded me like a swarm of bees would surround a person"

they disappeared as quickly as fire among thorns

Just like dry thorns burn out quickly, the attack of the enemy armies was quickly over. Alternate translation: "their attack lasted only a short time, as a fire that consumes thorns quickly dies"

Psalms 118:13

to knock me down

The writer speaks of the enemy armies trying to defeat him as if they were trying to push him down onto the ground. Alternate translation: "in order to defeat me"

Psalms 118:14

Yah is my strength and joy

"Yah gives me strength and joy"

Psalms 118:15

The joyful shout of victory is heard in the tents of the righteous

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People hear the joyful shout of victory in the tents of the righteous" or "The righteous shout joyfully for victory in their tents"

the right hand of Yahweh conquers

Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has conquered by his great strength"

Psalms 118:16

The right hand of Yahweh is exalted

Here, to raise one's hand is a gesture of victory. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has exalted his right hand" or "Yahweh has raised his right hand in victory"

Psalms 118:17

I will not die, but live

The writer states the same idea both negatively and positively to emphasize that he will certainly live.

Psalms 118:18

Yah has punished me

"Yah has disciplined me"

he has not handed me over to death

The writer speaks of death as if it were a person under whose power Yahweh could place the writer. Alternate translation: "he has not allowed me to die" or "he has not allowed my enemies to kill me"

Psalms 118:19

Open to me the gates of righteousness

"Open to me the gates through which the righteous people enter." This is a reference to the gates of the temple, and the writer is addressing the gatekeepers. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Open for me the temple gates"

Psalms 118:20

the gate of Yahweh

"the gate that leads to Yahweh's presence" or "Yahweh's gate"

Psalms 118:21

I will give thanks to you

Here the writer begins to speak to Yahweh.

you have become my salvation

The word "salvation" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "you have saved me"

Psalms 118:22

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone

This is likely a proverb that the writer has used to describe either the king or the nation of Israel. That which others have considered worthless, Yahweh has made to be the most important.

Psalms 118:23

it is marvelous in our eyes

Possible meanings are 1) "it is a marvelous thing for us to see" or 2) "we consider it to be a marvelous thing."

Psalms 118:24

rejoice and be glad

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of joy. Alternate translation: "be very glad"

Psalms 118:26

Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh

Here the priests begin to address the king.

he who comes in the name of Yahweh

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "the one who comes in the power of the Yahweh"

we bless you from the house of Yahweh

Here the priests address the people.

the house of Yahweh

The word "house" refers to the temple. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's temple"

Psalms 118:27

he has given us light

The writer speaks of Yahweh blessing his people as if Yahweh were shining a light on them. Alternate translation: "he has blessed us"

bind the sacrifice with cords

"tie the sacrifice with rope"

Psalms 118:28

You are my God

Here the writer begins to speak again and addresses Yahweh directly.

Psalms 118:29

Oh

This is an exclamation that should be translated with whatever exclamation of emphasis you have in your language to make it sound natural.

give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good

"thank Yahweh because of the good things he does." See how you translated this in Psalms 118:1.

his covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 118:1-2]

119

ALEPH

1 Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,
who walk in the law of Yahweh.

2 Blessed are they who keep his solemn commands,
who seek him with all their heart.

3 They do no wrong;
they walk in his ways.

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4 You have commanded us to keep your instructions
so that we should carefully observe them.

5 Oh, that I would be firmly established
in the observance of your statutes!

6 Then I would not be put to shame
when I think of all your commandments.

7 I will give thanks to you with an upright heart
when I learn your righteous decrees.

8 I will observe your statutes;
do not leave me alone.

BETH

9 How can a young person keep his path pure?
By obeying your word.

10 With my whole heart I seek you;
Do not let me stray from your commandments.

11 I have stored up your word in my heart
so that I might not sin against you.

12 Blessed you are, Yahweh;
teach me your statutes.

13 With my mouth I have declared
all the righteous decrees that you have revealed.

14 I rejoice in the way of your covenant decrees
more than in all riches.

15 I will meditate on your instructions
and pay attention to your ways.

16 I delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.

GIMEL

17 Be kind to your servant so that I may live
and keep your word.

18 Open my eyes so that I may see
marvelous things in your law.

19 I am a foreigner in the land;
do not hide your commandments from me.

20 My desires are crushed by the longing to know

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your righteous decrees at all times.

21 You rebuke the proud, who are cursed,
who wander from your commandments.

22 Spare me from disgrace and contempt,
for I have obeyed your solemn commands.

23 Though rulers plot and slander me,
your servant meditates on your statutes.

24 Your solemn commands are my delight,
and they are my counselors.

DALETH

25 My life clings to the dust!
Give me life by your word.

26 I told you my ways, and you answered me;
teach me your statutes.

27 Make me understand the ways of your instructions,
so that I can meditate on your wondrous teachings.

28 I am overwhelmed with grief!
Strengthen me by your word.

29 Turn from me the path of deceit;
graciously teach me your law.

30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness;
I have always kept your righteous decrees before me.

31 I cling to your covenant decrees;
Yahweh, do not let me be shamed.

32 I will run in the path of your commandments,
for you enlarge my heart to do so.

HE

33 Teach me, Yahweh, the way of your statutes,
and I will keep them to the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I will keep your law;
I will observe it with all my heart.

35 Guide me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight to walk in it.

36 Direct my heart toward your covenant decrees
and away from unrighteous gain.

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37 Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things;
revive me in your ways.

38 Carry out for your servant the word
that you gave to those who revere you.

39 Take away the disgrace I dread,
for your judgments are good.

40 See, I have longed for your instructions;
revive me in your righteousness.

VAV

41 Yahweh, give me your unfailing love—
your salvation, according to your word;

42 then I will have a reply for the one who mocks me,
for I trust in your word.

43 Do not take the word of truth from my mouth,
for my hope is in your righteous decrees.

44 I will observe your law continually,
forever and ever.

45 I will walk securely,
for I seek your instructions.

46 I will speak of your solemn commands before kings
and will not be ashamed.

47 I delight in your commandments,
which I love dearly.

48 I will lift up my hands to your commandments, which I love;
I will meditate on your statutes.

ZAYIN

49 Call to mind your word to your servant
because you have given me hope.

50 This is my comfort in my affliction:
that your word has kept me alive.

51 The proud have scoffed at me,
yet I have not turned away from your law.

52 I have thought about your righteous decrees from ancient times, Yahweh,
and I comfort myself.

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53 Hot anger has taken hold of me
because of the wicked who reject your law.

54 Your statutes have been my songs
in the house of my sojourn.

55 I think about your name during the night, Yahweh,
and I keep your law.

56 This has been my practice
because I have observed your instructions.

HETH

57 Yahweh is my portion;
I have determined to observe your words.

58 I earnestly request your favor with my whole heart;
be merciful to me according to your word.

59 I examined my ways
and turned my feet to your solemn commands.

60 I hurry and do not delay
to keep your commandments.

61 The cords of the wicked have ensnared me;
I have not forgotten your law.

62 At midnight I rise to give thanks to you
because of your righteous decrees.

63 I am a companion of all who honor you,
to all who observe your instructions.

64 The earth, Yahweh, is full of your covenant faithfulness;
teach me your statutes.

TETH

65 You have done good to your servant,
Yahweh, by means of your word.

66 Teach me proper discernment and understanding,
for I have believed in your commandments.

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I observe your word.

68 You are good, and you are one who does good;
teach me your statutes.

69 The arrogant have smeared me with lies,

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but I keep your instructions with my whole heart.

70 Their hearts are hardened,
but I delight in your law.

71 It is good for me that I have suffered
so that I would learn your statutes.

72 Instruction from your mouth is more precious to me
than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.

YOD

73 Your hands have made and fashioned me;
give me understanding so that I may learn your commandments.

74 Those who honor you will be glad when they see me
because I find hope in your word.

75 I know, Yahweh, that your decrees are just,
and that in faithfulness you afflicted me.

76 Let your covenant faithfulness comfort me,
according to your word to your servant.

77 Show me compassion so that I may live,
for your law is my delight.

78 Let the proud be put to shame,
for they have slandered me;
but I will meditate on your instructions.

79 May those who honor you turn to me,
those who know your solemn commands.

80 May my heart be blameless with respect to your statutes
so that I may not be put to shame.

KAPH

81 I faint with longing that you might rescue me!
I hope in your word.

82 My eyes long for your word;
when will you comfort me?

83 For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke;
I do not forget your statutes.

84 How long must your servant endure this;
when will you judge those who persecute me?

85 The proud have dug pits for me,

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defying your law.

86 All your commandments are reliable;
those people persecute me wrongfully; help me.

87 They have almost made an end to me on earth,
but I do not reject your instructions.

88 By your steadfast love, keep me alive,
so that I may obey the solemn commands that come from your mouth.

LAMEDH

89 Yahweh, your word stands forever;
your word is established firmly in heaven.

90 Your faithfulness lasts for all generations;
you have established the earth, and it remains.

91 All things continue to this day, just as you said in your righteous decrees,
for all things are your servants.

92 If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.

93 I will never forget your instructions,
for through them you have kept me alive.

94 I am yours; save me,
for I seek your instructions.

95 The wicked prepare to destroy me,
but I will seek to understand your solemn commands.

96 All perfection I have seen has an end;
but your command is exceedingly broad.

MEM

97 Oh how I love your law!
It is my meditation all day long.

98 Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies,
for your commandments are always with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for I meditate on your covenant decrees.

100 I understand more than those older than I am;
this is because I have kept your instructions.

101 I have kept my feet back from every evil path
so that I might observe your word.

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102 I have not turned aside from your righteous decrees,
for you have instructed me.

103 How sweet are your words to my taste,
yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104 Through your instructions I gain discernment;
therefore I hate every false way.

NUN

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light for my path.

106 I have sworn and have confirmed it,
that I will observe your righteous decrees.

107 I am very afflicted;
keep me alive, Yahweh, as you have promised in your word.

108 Yahweh, please accept the freewill offerings of my mouth,
and teach me your righteous decrees.

109 My life is always in my hand,
yet I do not forget your law.

110 The wicked have set a snare for me,
but I have not strayed from your instructions.

111 I claim your covenant decrees as my heritage forever,
for they are the joy of my heart.

112 My heart is set on obeying your statutes
forever to the very end.

SAMEKH

113 I hate those who have a double mind,
but I love your law.

114 You are my hiding place and my shield;
I hope in your word.

115 Get away from me, you evildoers,
so that I may observe the commandments of my God.

116 Sustain me by your word so that I may live
and not be ashamed of my hope.

117 Support me, and I will be safe;
I will always meditate on your statutes.

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118 You reject all those who stray from your statutes,
for their deceit is vain.

119 You remove all the wicked of the earth like slag;
therefore I love your solemn commands.

120 My body trembles in fear of you,
and I am afraid of your righteous decrees.

AYIN

121 I do what is just and right;
do not abandon me to my oppressors.

122 Guarantee the welfare of your servant;
do not let the proud oppress me.

123 My eyes grow tired as I wait for your salvation
and for your righteous word.

124 Show your servant your covenant faithfulness,
and teach me your statutes.

125 I am your servant; give me understanding
so that I may know your solemn commands.

126 It is time for Yahweh to act,
for people have broken your law.

127 Truly I love your commandments
more than gold, more than fine gold.

128 Therefore I carefully follow all your instructions,
and I hate every path of falsehood.

PE

129 Your rules are wonderful,
that is why I obey them.

130 The unfolding of your words gives light;
it gives understanding to the untrained.

131 I open my mouth and pant,
for I long for your commandments.

132 Turn to me and have mercy on me,
as you always do for those who love your name.

133 Direct my footsteps by your word;
do not let any wickedness rule me.

134 Redeem me from human oppression

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so that I may observe your instructions.

135 Let your face shine on your servant,
and teach me your statutes.

136 Streams of tears run down from my eyes
because people do not observe your law.

TSADHE

137 You are righteous, Yahweh,
and your decrees are fair.

138 You have given your solemn commands righteously
and faithfully.

139 Zeal has destroyed me
because my adversaries forget your words.

140 Your word has been tested very much,
and your servant loves it.

141 I am insignificant and despised,
yet I do not forget your instructions.

142 Your justice is forever justice,
and your law is trustworthy.

143 Though distress and anguish have found me,
your commandments are still my delight.

144 Your covenant decrees are righteous forever;
give me understanding that I may live.

QOPH

145 I cried out with my whole heart, "Answer me, Yahweh,
I will keep your statutes.

146 I call to you; save me,
and I will observe your solemn commands."

147 I rise before the dawn of the morning and cry for help.
I hope in your words.

148 My eyes are open before the night watches change
so that I might meditate on your word.

149 Hear my voice in your covenant faithfulness;
keep me alive, Yahweh, as you have promised in your righteous decrees.

150 Those who are persecuting me are coming closer to me,
but they are far from your law.

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151 You are near, Yahweh,
and all your commandments are trustworthy.

152 Long ago I learned from your solemn commands
that you had set them in place forever.

RESH

153 Look on my affliction and help me,
for I do not forget your law.

154 Plead my cause and redeem me;
keep me alive according to your word.

155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not love your statutes.

156 Great are your merciful actions, Yahweh;
keep me alive, as you always do.

157 My persecutors and my foes are many,
yet I have not turned from your covenant decrees.

158 I view the treacherous with disgust
because they do not keep your word.

159 See how I love your instructions;
keep me alive, Yahweh, as you have promised by your covenant faithfulness.

160 The essence of your word is truth;
every one of your righteous decrees lasts forever.

SHIN

161 Princes persecute me without cause,
but my heart stands in awe of your word.

162 I rejoice at your word
like one who finds great plunder.

163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
but I love your law.

164 Seven times a day I praise you
because of your righteous decrees.

165 Great peace they have, those who love your law;
nothing makes them stumble.

166 I hope for your salvation, Yahweh,
and I obey your commandments.

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167 I observe your solemn commands,
and I love them greatly.

168 I keep your instructions and your solemn commands,
for you are aware of everything I do.

TAV

169 Listen to my cry for help, Yahweh;
give me understanding into your word.

170 May my plea come before you;
help me according to your word.

171 May my lips pour out praise,
for you teach me your statutes.

172 Let my tongue sing about your word,
for all your commandments are right.

173 May your hand help me,
for I have chosen your instructions.

174 I long for your rescue, Yahweh,
and your law is my delight.

175 May I live and praise you,
and may your righteous decrees help me.

176 I have wandered off like a lost sheep;
seek your servant,
for I have not forgotten your commandments.

Psalm 119 General Notes

Formatting in this chapter

This is a certain kind of psalm called an acrostic. The Hebrew language has twenty-two letters, and this psalm has twenty-two groups of verses, one group for each letter of the alphabet. Each group has eight verses, and each verse in a group begins with the same letter. The verses in the first group begin with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the verses in the second group begin with the second letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and so on through the whole alphabet.
In the ULB, the names of the Hebrew letters are written in uppercase letters before each group of verses that begin with that letter. The names of the first four Hebrew letters are ALEPH, BETH, GIMEL, and DALETH. You will be able to recognize the names of the other Hebrew letters as you see them because they, too, are written in uppercase letters. These letter names are not actually part of the psalm, but many translations use them to help the readers see its structure.

Type of psalm

Psalm 119 is a wisdom psalm about the Law of God. (See: wise and lawofmoses)

Special concepts in this chapter

The Law
The author loved the law of God and was blessed by obeying it. (See: love and bless)

Links:

Psalms 119:1

Psalms 119:1
General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
General Information:

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"Aleph" is the name of the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Each of verses 1 through 8 begins with this Hebrew letter. See "Formatting in this chapter" in Psalm 119 General Notes.

Blessed are those

"How good it is for those"

those whose ways are blameless

How a person behaves is spoken of as "ways" or "paths." Alternate translation: "those whose behavior is blameless" or "those whom no one can blame for doing wrong"

who walk in the law of Yahweh

The way a person lives or behaves is spoken of as walking. Alternate translation: "who live according to the law of Yahweh" or "who obey the law of Yahweh." This phrase clarifies the meaning of "whose ways are blameless"

Psalms 119:2

who seek him with all their heart

To "seek" God means to want to know him.

with all their heart

This is an idiom which means intensely or sincerely. Alternate translation: "with all their being" or "with everything in them" or "sincerely"

Psalms 119:3

General Information:

Most of this psalm is addressed to God, and the words "you" and "your" almost always refer to him.

They do no wrong

They do not disobey Yahweh.

they walk in his ways

"they walk in Yahweh's ways." Here their behavior is spoken of as "walking," and the way God wants them to behave is spoken of as "his ways." Alternate translation: "they behave as Yahweh wants them to"

Psalms 119:4

keep your instructions

"obey all the things that you have declared that we should do"

carefully observe them

This is to carefully know and understand the commandments and to obey those commandments.

Psalms 119:5

I would be firmly established

The writer speaks of being established in God's commandments as if no one could physically make him move.

observance of your statutes

"in obeying your statutes"

Psalms 119:6

I would not be put to shame

The writer does not want to be ashamed when he is in God's presence.

all your commandments

"all that you have commanded us"

Psalms 119:7

an upright heart

"a sincere heart." A person who is sincere will do what is right. The heart refers to the center of emotions in a person. See how you translated "uprightness" in [Psalms 25:21]

Psalms 119:8

your statutes

"Statutes" refers to God's laws or commands.

Psalms 119:9

General Information

"Beth" is the name of the second letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Each of verses 9 through 16 begins with this Hebrew letter. See "Formatting in this chapter" in Psalm 119 General Notes.

How can a young person keep his path pure?

This question is used to introduce a new value to the word of God. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is how a young person can keep his path pure"

keep his path pure

The writer compares living according to God's law as a path kept clear of obstructions.

Psalms 119:10

With my whole heart

This is an idiom. The heart refers to all of one's emotions, feelings, desires, and will. Alternate translation: "with all my being" or "with everything in me" or "sincerely"

Do not let me stray from your commandments

Here to disobey God's commandments is described as straying off a path. Alternate translation: "Do not let me disobey your commandments"

Psalms 119:11

I have stored up your word in my heart

"I have put your words in my heart." This is a metaphor that means "I have memorized your word." The heart is pictured as a container that can hold what people think.

Psalms 119:14

more than in all riches

"more than all the wealth"

Psalms 119:15

I will meditate ... and pay attention

These are parallel thoughts that have similar meanings, which are repeated for emphasis.

meditate on your instructions

"think carefully about what you have instructed us"

pay attention

This idiom refers to thinking clearly about what is being discussed. Alternate translation: "give careful thought"

Psalms 119:16

I delight

to take pleasure

Psalms 119:17

General Information

"Gimel" is the name of the third letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Each of verses 17 through 24 begins with this Hebrew letter. See "Formatting in this chapter" in Psalm 119 General Notes.

your servant

The writer called himself "your servant" to show his humility.

Psalms 119:18

Open my eyes so that I may see

The author speaks of gaining understanding, knowledge and wisdom as being able to see. Alternate translation: Help me to understand"

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marvelous things in your law
The author speaks of insight into the law as objects to marvel at.
in your law
"in your instructions" or "in your commands"
Psalms 119:19
I am a foreigner in the land
Possible meanings are 1) the writers speaks of his short life on earth as if he were a foreigner who would not stay long in the land. Alternate translation: "I am like a foreigner living a short time in the land" or 2) the writer's ignorance of God's law as if he were a foreigner who did not know the laws of the land. Alternate translation: "I am ignorant like a foreigner in the land"
Psalms 119:20
My desires are crushed by the longing
The writer speaks of his desires being very strong as if they were in pain. Alternate translation: "My inner being strongly desires to know" or "My soul aches because I want so much to know"
Psalms 119:21
who are cursed
Possible meanings are that 1) God will curse them or 2) they deserve God's punishment. Alternate translation: "who deserve your punishment"
who wander from your commandments
The writer speaks of disobeying God's commandments as if they were a path that can be wandered off from. Alternate translation: "who go away from the path of your commandments" or "who disobey your commandments"
Psalms 119:22
Spare me from
"Keep me from" or "Rescue me from"
Psalms 119:23
Though rulers plot and slander me
"Though rulers make plans to harm me and say bad things about me"
Psalms 119:24
Your solemn commands are my delight
"Your solemn commands make me very happy."
they are my counselors
God's decrees are spoken of as if they were people. Alternate translation: "they are like wise counselors to me" or "they give me wise counsel"
Psalms 119:25
General Information
"Daleth" is the name of the fourth letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Each of verses 25 through 32 begins with this Hebrew letter. See "Formatting in this chapter" in Psalm 119 General Notes.
My life clings to the dust
This is an idiom. Possible meanings are that 1) he thought that he would die soon, or 2) he lay in the dust because he was very sad, or 3) he realized that he desired the worthless things of the earth.
Give me life by your word
This is an idiom. Here "life" refers to purpose and significance, not just biological life.
by your word
"according to your promise"
Psalms 119:26
my ways
What a person does or how he behaves is spoken of as if it were a road or way. Alternate translation: "what I have done"
Psalms 119:27
wondrous teachings
"amazing teachings"
Psalms 119:28
with grief
"because I am so sad"
Strengthen me
"Make me strong." This may refer to physical strength or spiritual strength.
Psalms 119:29
Turn from me the path of deceit
The word "path" here refers to a way of behaving. Alternate translation: "Keep me from following the path of deceit" or "Prevent me from being deceptive"
deceit
Possible meanings are 1) "lying" or 2) "believing lies" or "following lies."
Psalms 119:30
the way of faithfulness
How a person behaves or acts is spoken as if it were a road or way. Alternate translation: "to be faithful to you"
Psalms 119:31
I cling to your covenant decrees
Holding tightly to them refers to being committed to obeying them. Alternate translation: "I hold tightly to your covenant decrees" or "I am committed to obeying your covenant decrees"
covenant decrees
This refers to the law of Moses.
Psalms 119:32
I will run in the path of your commandments
The writer speaks of being focused or committed to obeying God's commands as if one is running on a path. Alternate translation: "I will be committed to obey your commands"
you enlarge my heart
This is an idiom. Possible meanings are 1) "you help me gain greater understanding of your commands" or 2) "you give me greater desire to obey your commands"
Psalms 119:33
your statutes
This is another way of describing the law of Moses.
to the end
Possible meanings are 1) "completely" or 2) "to the end of my life" or 3) "to the end of time."
Psalms 119:34
keep your law
"obey your law"
I will observe it with all my heart
"I will surely observe your law" or "I am completely committed to doing what it says"
with all my heart
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "with all my being" or "with everything in me" or "sincerely"

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Psalms 119:35

Guide me in the path of your commandments

"Guide me according to your commandments" or "Teach me to obey your commandments." God's commandments are compared to a path that a person walks in obedience to God.

Psalms 119:36

Direct my heart toward

This is an idiom. The "heart" here refers to the will, desires, and choices that directs one's life. Alternate translation: "Make me want"

your covenant decrees

"to obey your covenant decrees." This is referring to obeying the law of Moses.

unrighteous gain

"the desire for riches." This is referring to wealth gained by illegal methods or wrongdoing towards others.

Psalms 119:37

Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things

This is a metaphor that refers to one desiring things that have no eternal value.

revive me in your ways

"make me able to live as you wish me to live"

revive me

"make my life strong" or "give me strength"

Psalms 119:38

Carry out for your servant the word that you gave to those who revere you

The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh gave by speaking words. Alternate translation: "Do for your servant what you promised to do for those who revere you"

your servant

The writer referred to himself as God's servant to show his humility. Alternate translation: "me, your servant"

Psalms 119:39

I dread

"I am very afraid of"

your judgments are good

God judges rightly and his decisions are good. Alternate translation: "Your judge rightly"

Psalms 119:40

See

This refers to being aware of the situation. The focus is on knowledge or understanding, rather than just observing.

I have longed for your instructions

Possible meanings are 1) "I want very much to know your instructions" or 2) "I want very much to obey what you teach us to do."

revive me in your righteousness

The word "righteousness" is an abstract noun and refers to being righteous. Alternate translation: "revive me because you are righteous"

revive me

Possible meanings are 1) "Keep me alive" or 2) "Make me strong."

Psalms 119:41

your salvation

You may make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "give me your salvation" or "save me"

according to your word

The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh made using words. Alternate translation: "as you promised"

Psalms 119:42

a reply

"an answer" or "a response"

Psalms 119:43

Do not take the word of truth from my mouth

Here the writer is represented by his "mouth." Possible meanings are 1) "never prevent me from speaking the message about the truth" or 2) "never prevent me from speaking the true message."

Psalms 119:44

I will observe

"I will obey"

Psalms 119:45

I will walk securely

To walk securely is to live one's life securely. Alternate translation: "I will live securely in God"

I seek your instructions

To "seek" is to perceive, or gain understanding of God's instructions as if one can see them.

Psalms 119:46

solemn commands before kings

"serious commands to kings" or "instructions to kings"

Psalms 119:47

I delight in your commandments

Possible meanings are 1) "I find delight in studying your commandments" or 2) "I am delighted that I have the opportunity to study your commandments."

Psalms 119:48

lift up my hands to

This is an idiom which means to honor, cherish or respect God's commandments.

Psalms 119:49

Call to mind your word

The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise Yahweh gave by speaking words. See how you translated this in [Psalms 20:3]

Psalms 119:50

This is my comfort in my affliction: that your word has kept me alive

The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise Yahweh gave by speaking words. This clause can be restructured. Alternate translation: "The reason for my comfort is that your promise has kept me alive in my affliction"

Psalms 119:51

The proud

This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "The proud people"

scoffed at

to mock someone or something that is looked down on, doubted, or not honored

Psalms 119:52

from ancient times

This is a reference to when the decrees, the Law, were given to Moses many years before.

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Psalms 119:53
Hot anger has taken hold of me
This is an idiom. Anger is expressed as if it is a person that can grab another person. Alternate translation: "I have become very angry"
Psalms 119:54
Your statutes have been my songs
"I have used your statutes as lyrics to my music" or "I have created songs from your statutes"
Psalms 119:55
I think about your name
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "I think about you, Yahweh"
I keep your law
This is an idiom which means to obey the law. Alternate translation: "I obey your law"
Psalms 119:56
my practice
"my habit"
I have observed your instructions
This is an idiom which means to follow or to obey those instructions. Alternate translation: "I have obeyed your instructions"
Psalms 119:57
Yahweh is my portion
This means Yahweh is all he wants. Just as the Levites did not receive vast territories of land for the Lord was to be their portion so the writer claims Yahweh as the satisfier of his needs.
Psalms 119:58
according to your word
The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh made using words. Alternate translation: "as you promised"
Psalms 119:59
turned my feet
Here "feet" represent the whole person. To repent and choose to obey God's laws is like turning one's feet on a path to head in another direction. Alternate translation: "changed my direction"
Psalms 119:60
I hurry and do not delay
The writer expresses the same idea both positively and negatively in order to emphasize the urgency with which he obeys Yahweh's commands.
Psalms 119:61
The cords of the wicked have ensnared me
In this metaphor, wicked or evil people tried to cause the writer to sin like a hunter seeking to catch an animal with a trap. Alternate translation: "My enemies have tried to catch me"
Psalms 119:63
I am a companion of all who honor you
"I am a friend of all who honor you"
Psalms 119:64
The earth, Yahweh, is full of your covenant faithfulness
People everywhere in the world being able to see evidence of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness is spoken of as if his covenant faithfulness filled the earth. The abstract noun "covenant faithfulness" can be translated as an adjective. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Psalms 33:5]
Psalms 119:65
to your servant
The writer refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "to me, your servant" or "to me"
by means of your word
This is an idiom. "Your word" refers to the promises Yahweh has made to the writer. Alternate translation: "as you have promised"
Psalms 119:66
Teach me proper discernment and understanding, for I have believed in your commandments
Some languages may require change in logical progression. Alternate translation: "Since I have believed in your commandments, teach me proper discernment and understanding"
Psalms 119:67
Before I was afflicted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Before you afflicted me" or "Before you punished me"
I went astray
Disobeying God is spoken of as if the person walked on the wrong path. Alternate translation: "I disobeyed you"
I observe your word
Here "word" represents commandments. Alternate translation: "I obey your commandments"
Psalms 119:69
The arrogant
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Arrogant people"
smeared me with lies
People telling many lies about a person is spoken of as if they made the person dirty by spreading lies over him.
with my whole heart
Here "heart" represents a person's will. Alternate translation: "with complete commitment" or "completely"
Psalms 119:70
Their hearts are hardened
Here "hearts" represents the people's wills. A person being stubborn is spoken of as if their hearts or wills were hard like a rock. Alternate translation: "They are stubborn"
Psalms 119:72
Instruction from your mouth is
Here "mouth" represents what God says. Alternate translation: "The instructions you have spoken are" or "Your instructions are"
than thousands of pieces of gold and silver
This can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "than a large amount of money" or "than great wealth"
Psalms 119:73
Your hands have made and fashioned me
God creating a person is spoken of as if God used his hands to shape the person the way someone may shape clay into an object.
Your hands
Here "hands" represents God's power or action. Alternate translation: "You"
Psalms 119:74

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because I find hope in your word
"because I trust what you say" or "I confidently believe what you say"
Psalms 119:75
in faithfulness you afflicted me
God promises to reward the righteous and punish wrongdoers, so he is faithful to do what he says he will. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "you punished me because you are faithful"
Psalms 119:76
Let your covenant faithfulness comfort me
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Comfort me by showing me that you are faithful to your covenant"
according to your word to
The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh made using words. Alternate translation: "as you promised"
your servant
The writer refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "me, your servant" or "me"
Psalms 119:78
Let the proud be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Put the proud to shame" or "Cause those who are proud to be ashamed"
the proud
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "proud people" or "those who are proud"
Psalms 119:79
turn to me
People returning in friendship to the writer is spoken of as if they physically turn towards him. Alternate translation: "come to me" or "unite with me"
those who know your solemn commands
Possible meanings are 1) this further describes those who honor God or 2) this indicates the purpose for those who honor God to return to the writer. Alternate translation: "so that they may learn your solemn commands"
Psalms 119:80
May my heart be blameless
Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts and motives. Alternate translation: "May I be blameless"
I may not be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I may not be ashamed"
Psalms 119:81
I hope in your word
"I confidently trust in what you say"
Psalms 119:82
My eyes long for your word
Here the word "eyes" represents the whole person and the word "word" is a metonym for the promise Yahweh made by speaking words. Alternate translation: "I wait and wait for you to do what you promised to do"
Psalms 119:83
I have become like a wineskin in the smoke
A wineskin is ruined when it hangs for a long time in a smoke-filled place. The writer compares himself to a wineskin that has been ruined by smoke to emphasize that he feels useless.
Psalms 119:84
How long must your servant endure this; when will you judge those who persecute me?
The writer uses a question to request God to punish those who persecute him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please do not make wait any longer. Punish those who persecute me."
must your servant
The writer refers to himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "must I, your servant" or "must I"
Psalms 119:85
The proud have dug pits for me
The proud are seeking to capture the writer or cause him to do wrong. This is spoken of as if they were hunters digging holes to trap the writer like an animal.
The proud
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Proud people" or "Those who are proud"
Psalms 119:87
They have almost made an end to me on earth
This is a polite way of speaking about someone killing someone else. Alternate translation: "They have almost killed me"
Psalms 119:88
By your steadfast love
"According to your steadfast love." The phrase "steadfast love" or "faithfulness" can be stated as an adverb. Alternate translation: "because you faithfully love me"
Psalms 119:89
your word stands forever
"what you have said will be true forever"
your word is established firmly in heaven
This speaks about what God has said as if it were an object that stands firmly upright. Alternate translation: "what you have said will be true in heaven forever"
Psalms 119:90
for all generations
"for all future generations." This is an idiom that means "forever."
Psalms 119:91
all things are your servants
All created things are spoken of as if they were persons who can serve God. Alternate translation: "all things serve you" or "all things obey your commands"
Psalms 119:93
I will never forget
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will always remember"
for through them you have kept me alive
It is implied that the writer obeys God's instructions. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "for you have kept me alive because I obey them"
Psalms 119:94

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for I seek your instructions
Trying hard to obey God's instructions is spoken of as if instructions were an object for which a person must search.
Psalms 119:95
I will seek to understand
"I will try hard to understand"
Psalms 119:96
All perfection I have seen has an end
Possible meanings are 1) "I have seen that all perfect things eventually cease," referring to the best things that people can do, or 2) "I have seen that everything has limits."
but your command is exceedingly broad
God's command always being true and perfect is spoken of as if God's command were an object that is very wide. Alternate translation: "but your command is without limits" or "but your command is eternal"
Psalms 119:98
your commandments are always with me
Constantly thinking about God's commandments is spoken of as if the commandments were an object that the writer keeps with him always.
Psalms 119:101
I have kept my feet back from every evil path
Avoiding doing what is evil is spoken of as if it were avoiding walking on paths that are evil. Alternate translation: "I have avoided doing what is evil"
kept my feet
Here "feet" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "kept myself"
observe your word
"obey your word" or "observe your commands"
Psalms 119:102
I have not turned aside from your righteous decrees
Continuing to obey God's righteous decrees is spoken of as if the writer has not physically turned away from the righteous decrees. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I always obey your righteous decrees"
Psalms 119:103
How sweet are your words to my taste, yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
The writer delighting in what God says is spoken of as if God's words were food that tasted sweet to the writer. Alternate translation: "Your words are good and delightful!"
Psalms 119:104
I gain discernment
The abstract noun "discernment" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I learn to discern what is right"
therefore I hate every false way
Evil behavior is spoken of as if it were a false way or road.
Psalms 119:105
Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path
These two phrases have similar meanings. They speak about God telling a person how to live as if the person were walking on a path and God's words were a light that helps the person see where to go. Alternate translation: "Your words tell me how to live my life"
Your word
Here "word" represents all that God communicates to people.
Psalms 119:107
as you have promised in your word
"as you have promised to do"
Psalms 119:108
freewill offerings of my mouth
The writer speaks of his prayer as if it were a sacrifice that he is offering to God. Alternate translation: "my prayer as a sacrifice to you"
of my mouth
Here "mouth" represents the whole person.
Psalms 119:109
My life is always in my hand
This is an idiom that means the writer's life is always in danger. Alternate translation: "My enemies are often trying to kill me"
I do not forget your law
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I always remember your laws"
Psalms 119:110
The wicked have set a snare for me
Wicked people trying to capture and kill the writer is spoken of as if they were hunters setting a trap to catch an animal.
The wicked
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Wicked people"
I have not strayed from your instructions
Not disobeying God's instructions is spoken of as if the writer has not walked away from God's instructions. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I obey your instructions"
Psalms 119:111
I claim your covenant decrees as my heritage forever
The writer always cherishing and obeying God's decrees is spoken of as if the decrees are land or a possession that the writer will inherit. Alternate translation: "Your laws will belong to me forever" or "Your covenant decrees are like a heritage I will keep forever"
they are the joy of my heart
Here "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "they make me joyful" or "I delight in them"
Psalms 119:112
My heart is set on obeying
Here "heart" represents the writer's will. The phrase "heart is set" is an idiom. It is a way of saying the writer is determined. Alternate translation: "I am determined to obey"
to the very end
Possible meanings are 1) "every one of them" 2) "to the very end of my life" or 3) "to the very end of time"
Psalms 119:113
who have a double mind
A person who is not sincere and not fully committed to obeying God is spoken of as if the person has two minds. Alternate translation: "who are not completely committed to obeying you" or "who are insincere"
Psalms 119:114

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my hiding place
God making the writer safe is spoken of as if God were a place where the writer could go and hide.
my shield
God protecting the writer is spoken of as if God were the writer's shield.
I hope in your word
Here "wait" means to wait expectantly. This has the idea of hope and trust. Alternate translation: "I trust in your word"
your word
Here "word" represents what God communicates to people.
Psalms 119:116
Sustain me by your word
"Give me strength as you said you would" or "Enable me to be strong as you promised"
and not be ashamed of my hope
Here "my hope" represents the writer's trust in God and his promises. This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "Do not disappoint me" or "Do not cause me shame by not doing what you promised to do"
Psalms 119:117
Support me
"Help me" or "Strengthen me"
Psalms 119:118
their deceit is vain
Possible meanings are 1) "those people lie and no one can trust them" or 2) "those people make deceitful plans but they will fail"
Psalms 119:119
You remove all the wicked of the earth like slag
Slag is the waste or undesired leftovers in the process of refining gold or other metals. Yahweh removes the wicked people as if they were trash.
the wicked
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the wicked people"
like slag
"like trash" or "like waste"
Psalms 119:120
My body trembles in fear of you
Here "body" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I shake because I fear you"
I am afraid of your righteous decrees
It is implied that the writer is afraid of God's righteous decrees because the writer knows that God punishes those who disobey his decrees. You can make the full meaning of this statement explicit.
Psalms 119:121
do not abandon me to my oppressors
"do not allow people to oppress me"
Psalms 119:122
Guarantee the welfare of your servant
The writer speaks about himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "Guarantee my welfare" or "Help and protect me, your servant"
the proud
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are proud" or "proud people"
Psalms 119:123
My eyes grow tired as I wait
Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I grow tired because I wait and wait"
for your salvation and for your righteous word
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "for you to save me as you promised to do"
your righteous word
"your righteous promise"
Psalms 119:124
Show your servant
The writer speaks about himself as "your servant." Alternate translation: "Show me" or "Show me, your servant"
your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as an adverb or adjective. Alternate translation: "that you faithfully love me" or "that you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 119:125
give me understanding
The abstract noun "understanding" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "enable me to understand what you want me to know"
Psalms 119:126
It is time for Yahweh to act
The writer is speaking to Yahweh in the third person. This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "It is time for you to act, Yahweh"
people have broken your law
This is an idiom. Here "have broken" means "disobeyed." This is a way of saying the people have disobeyed God's law.
Psalms 119:128
I carefully follow all your instructions
A person carefully obeying all of God's instructions is spoken of as if as if the instructions were leading a person and that person follows behind. Alternate translation: I carefully obey all of your instructions"
every path of falsehood
People doing what is evil is spoken of as if they are walking on the wrong path. Alternate translation: "all the bad ways some people live"
Psalms 119:130
The unfolding of your words gives light
The writer speaks of Yahweh's words as if those words were fabric that is folded, and of the person who explains Yahweh's words as if they are unfolding that fabric. Alternate translation: "The explanation of your words gives light" or "When someone explains your words, they give light"
The unfolding of your words gives light
The writer speaks of Yahweh's words giving wisdom to a person as if his words were shining a light on them. Alternate translation: "The explanation of your words gives people wisdom"
Psalms 119:131
I open my mouth and pant, for I long for your commandments
The writer speaks of his desire for Yahweh's

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commandments as if he were a dog panting for water. Alternate translation: "I earnestly long for your commandments"
Psalms 119:132
Turn to me
To turn towards someone means to pay attention to that person. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to me"
love your name
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "love you"
Psalms 119:133
Direct my footsteps
Here the word "footsteps" represents the writer as he is walking. He speaks of the way he lives, or his conduct, as if he were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "Direct me" or "Teach me how to live"
do not let any wickedness rule me
The writer speaks of wickedness as if it were a person who has authority over him. Possible meanings are 1) "do not let me habitually do wicked deeds" or 2) "do not let wicked men rule me"
Psalms 119:134
Redeem me from human oppression
The word "oppression" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Save me from people who oppress others"
Psalms 119:135
Let your face shine on your servant
The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards him as if Yahweh's face shone a light on him. Alternate translation: "Act favorably towards your servant"
Psalms 119:136
Streams of tears
The writer speaks of his many tears as if they were streams of water. Alternate translation: "Many tears"
observe your law
"obey your law"
Psalms 119:138
solemn commands
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws." See how you translated this in Psalms 78:5.
Psalms 119:139
Zeal has destroyed me
This is an idiom. The phrase is an exaggeration for "I am extremely angry."
Psalms 119:140
has been tested very much
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have tested your word many times"
your servant loves
The writer speaks of himself as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "I, your servant, love" or "I love"
Psalms 119:141
I am ... despised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People despise me"
Psalms 119:143
distress and anguish have found me
The psalmist speaks of distress and anguish as if they were people. Alternate translation: "I have become distressed and anguished" or "my body and my mind are suffering"
Psalms 119:145
with my whole heart
The psalmist speaks of his whole being as if it were only his heart. Alternate translation: "completely"
Psalms 119:146
solemn commands
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws."See how you translated this in Psalms 78:5.
Psalms 119:147
dawn of the morning
"before the sun first appears"
Psalms 119:148
My eyes are open before the night watches change
This is an idiom. In Hebrew culture, the night was usually divided into three "watches" or periods. Alternate translation: "I am awake all night"
Psalms 119:149
in your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 119:150
they are far from your law
"they have strayed from your law" or "they do not pay any attention to your laws"
Psalms 119:151
all your commandments are trustworthy
"I can trust your commandments"
Psalms 119:152
solemn commands
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws." See how you translated this in Psalms 78:5
set them in place
The psalmist speaks of Yahweh's commands as if they were posts set in the ground. Alternate translation: "given them for people to obey"
Psalms 119:153
Look on my affliction
The psalmist speaks of affliction as if it were an object that people could see. Alternate translation: "Look at how much I am suffering"
Psalms 119:154
Plead my cause
"Defend me against those who accuse me"
keep me
"protect my life" or "give me life"
according to your word
The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh made using words. Alternate translation: "as you promised"
Psalms 119:155
Salvation is far from the wicked
God not saving a person is spoken of as if salvation were far from the person. The abstract noun "Salvation" can be stated as "save." Alternate translation: "You will certainly not save the wicked"
Psalms 119:156

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Great are your merciful actions
Here "great" means "many." Alternate translation: "You have shown mercy to people many times" or "You have done many merciful things"
as you always do
Another possible meaning is "because you do what is just."
Psalms 119:157
My persecutors
"Those who persecute me"
I have not turned from
This is an idiom. "I have not stopped obeying" or "I have not stopped believing"
covenant decrees
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws." See how this is translated in Psalms 78:5.
Psalms 119:158
the treacherous
The adjective "treacherous" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "treacherous people" or "those who betray me" or "my enemies"
do not keep
"do not obey"
Psalms 119:159
See
"Look at me so you can see"
by your covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant"
Psalms 119:160
The essence of your word is truth
"Your word is completely true" or "Your word can be trusted"
Psalms 119:161
my heart stands in awe of your word
The psalmist speaks of the heart as if it could be amazed. The heart is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am amazed at your word"
Psalms 119:162
plunder
Possible meanings are 1) things that soldiers and robbers take from those they have defeated in battle or 2) things of great value or "treasure."
Psalms 119:163
hate and abhor
These two words mean almost the same thing. Alternate translation: "hate very strongly"
falsehood
Possible meanings are this is a metonym for 1) "people who lie" or 2) "the false words that people say."
Psalms 119:165
nothing makes them stumble
Possible meanings are 1) "nothing makes them do wrong" or 2) "nothing causes them trouble."
Psalms 119:167
I observe your solemn commands
"I obey your solemn commands"
solemn commands
Other possible meanings are "testimonies" or "laws." See how you translated this in Psalms 119:2.
Psalms 119:168
I keep your instructions
"I obey your instructions"
Psalms 119:169
give me understanding into your word
The psalmist speaks of the ability to understand as if it were a solid object. Alternate translation: "help me understand your word"
Psalms 119:170
May my plea come before you
The psalmist speaks of the words he says in prayer as if they were people who want to speak to a king. Alternate translation: "May you hear my prayer"
according to your word
The word "word" here is a metonym for the promise that Yahweh made using words. Alternate translation: "as you promised"
Psalms 119:171
May my lips pour out praise
The psalmist speaks of his lips as if they were a container and his praise a liquid that could be poured out. Here the word "lips" is a synecdoche which represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I desire to praise you much"
Psalms 119:172
my tongue sing
The psalmist speaks of his tongue either 1) as if it were a person or 2) as a synecdoche for his whole being. Alternate translation: "me sing"
Psalms 119:173
May your hand help me
The hand is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Please help me"
have chosen
"have chosen to obey"
Psalms 119:174
for your rescue
"you to rescue me"
your law is my delight
The abstract noun "delight" can be stated as a verb. "I very much enjoy obeying your law"
Psalms 119:175
may your righteous decrees help me
The psalmist speaks of Yahweh's decrees as if they were a person who could help him. Alternate translation: "may I listen to your righteous decrees and so become wise and strong"
Psalms 119:176
I have wandered off like a lost sheep
The psalmist compares his disobedience to Yahweh to a sheep that has wandered away from the flock. Alternate translation: "I have left your way like a sheep that has left its flock"
seek your servant
"because I am your servant, come and search for me"

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120 A song of ascents.
1 In my distress I called out to Yahweh,
and he answered me.

2 Rescue my life, Yahweh,
from those who lie with their lips
and deceive with their tongues.

3 How will he punish you,
and what more will he do to you,
you who have a lying tongue?

4 He will punish you with the arrows of a warrior
sharpened over burning coals of the broom tree.

5 Woe is me because I temporarily live in Meshech;
I lived previously among the tents of Kedar.

6 For too long I have lived
with those who hate peace.

7 I am for peace,
but when I speak, they are for war.

Psalm 120 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 120 is a psalm of deliverance from liars. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fighting

The author did not want to fight, but the people he lived with wanted to fight him.

Links:

Psalms 120:1

Psalms 120:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

In my distress

"In my trouble" or "When I was in trouble"

Psalms 120:2

Rescue my life

Here the word "life" represents the person. Alternate translation: "Rescue me"

those who lie with their lips and deceive with their tongues

Here the phrases "their lips" and "their tongues" represent the people who speak lies and deceit. Alternate translation: "those who lie to me and try to deceive me"

Psalms 120:3

How will he punish you, and what more will he do to you, you who have a lying tongue?

The writer asks this as a leading question to explain what God will do to liars. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is how God will punish you, and this is what he will do to you, you who have a lying tongue."

you who have a lying tongue

Here "a lying tongue" represents the person who speaks lies. Alternate translation: "you who tell lies"

Psalms 120:4

He will punish you with the arrows of a warrior

The writer speaks of God severely punishing liars as if God were shooting them with arrows. Alternate translation: "He will punish you severely, as if he were shooting you with warrior's arrows"

sharpened over burning coals of the broom tree

This refers to how people forged the tip of the arrow in a fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"that he sharpened over burning coals of the broom tree"
Psalms 120:5
I temporarily live in Meshech; I lived previously among the tents of Kedar
These two places were far away from each other. The writer is likely using the names metaphorically to represent living among cruel and barbaric people. Alternate translation: "It is as if I live in Meshech or among the tents of Kedar"
the tents of Kedar
This phrase represents the people of Kedar who live in those tents. Alternate translation: "the people who live in Kedar"
Psalms 120:7
I am for peace
"I want peace"
they are for war
"they want war"

121 A song of ascents.
1 I will lift up my eyes to the mountains.
From where will my help come?

2 My help comes from Yahweh,
who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not allow your foot to slip;
he who protects you will not slumber.

4 See, the guardian of Israel
never slumbers or sleeps.

5 Yahweh is your guardian;
Yahweh is the shade at your right hand.

6 The sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.

7 Yahweh will protect you from all harm,
and he will protect your life.

8 Yahweh will protect you in all you do
now and forevermore.

Psalm 121 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 121 is a worship psalm.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection
God always watches over those who believe in him and protects them from harm. (See: believe)

Links:

Psalms 121:1

Psalms 121:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song of ascents
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
lift up my eyes
This expression means "look at" or "focus my attention on."
From where will my help come?
The writer uses this question to focus attention on the

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source of his help. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will tell you from where my help comes."
Psalms 121:2
My help comes from Yahweh
This is the answer to the previous question.
Psalms 121:3
General Information:
There is a shift here to the second person. This may mean 1) the writer begins speaking to the people of Israel or 2) the writer is quoting another person speaking to the writer.
your foot to slip
The slipping of a foot is associated with falling. Alternate translation: "you to fall"
he who protects you will not slumber
Here "slumber" is a metaphor for "stop protecting." The negative form strengthens the statement. Alternate translation: "he will always protect you"
he who protects you
God
Psalms 121:4
the guardian
God
See
This word alerts us to pay attention to the important information that follows.
never slumbers or sleeps
These two words mean the same thing. Here to "slumber" is a metaphor for "stop protecting." The negative form strengthens the statement. Alternate translation: "will not stop protecting you" or "will always protect you"
Psalms 121:5
Yahweh is the shade at your right hand
Here "shade" refers to protection. Alternate translation: "God is beside you to protect you from things that would hurt you"
at your right hand
Here this expression means to be beside or near to the writer.
Psalms 121:6
The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night
The contrasting terms "day" and "night" refer to those extremes and everything in between. Alternate translation: "God protects you from the elements at all times"
nor the moon by night
It is implies that "will not harm you" is implied here. The full meaning of this statement may be made clear. Alternate translation: "nor will the moon harm you by night"
Psalms 121:7
your life
This refers to the writer. Alternate translation: "you"

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122 A song of ascents, of David.
1 I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of Yahweh."

2 Jerusalem, our feet are standing
within your gates!

3 Jerusalem, built
as a city carefully planned!

4 The tribes go up to Jerusalem—the tribes of Yah—1
as a testimony for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of Yahweh.

5 There thrones of judgment were set,
thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May those who love you be at ease.

7 May there be peace within the walls that defend you,
and may they have peace within your fortresses."

8 For the sake of my brothers and my friends
I will say, "May there be peace within you."

9 For the sake of the house of Yahweh our God,
I will seek good for you.

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[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 122 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 122 is a psalm about Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jerusalem

Jerusalem is an important city, the center of government and religious activities; so the author prays for peace for the city.

Links:

Psalms 122:1

Psalms 122:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents, of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A song of ascents

Possible meanings are 1) "song people sang while going up to Jerusalem for a celebration" or 2) "song people sang while going up the steps into the temple" or 3) "song whose words are like steps." See how you translated this in Psalms 120:1

Psalms 122:2

Jerusalem, our feet are standing within your gates!

The writer briefly stops speaking to his audience and speaks directly to the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is spoken to as if it was a person who could hear the writer.

our feet are standing

Here "feet" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "we are standing"

within your gates

Here "gates" refers to the city. Alternate translation: "inside you, Jerusalem"

Psalms 122:4

the name of Yahweh

Here "name" refers to Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh"

Psalms 122:5

the house of David

Here "house" refers to the descendants of David. Alternate translation: "the descendants of David"

Psalms 122:6

May those who love you be at ease

This section states the content of the prayer that the writer wants his audience to pray. He asks them to speak directly to the city of Jerusalem, as if the city were a person who could hear them.

Psalms 122:7

Connecting Statement:

This verse finishes the prayer that the writer wants his audience to pray. He asks them to speak directly to the city of Jerusalem, as if the city was a person who could hear them.

May there be peace within ... may they have peace within

These two phrases have the same meanings and are used together to strengthen each other. Alternate translation: "May the people in Jerusalem live in peace"

within the walls that defend you ... within your fortresses

Here Jerusalem is referred to by the fortress walls that protects it. The terms "walls" and "fortress" refer to the same thing. Alternate translation: "within Jerusalem"

Psalms 122:8

General Information:

In this section, the writer speaks directly to the city of Jerusalem, as if the city was a person who could hear them.

For the sake

"For the well-being"

May there be peace within you

"May the people in you live in peace"

Psalms 122:9

I will seek good for you

The abstract noun "good" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "I will pray that people treat you well"

123 A song of ascents.
[1]To you I lift up my eyes,
you who are enthroned in the heavens.

[2] See, as the eyes of servants look to their master's hand,
as the eyes of a servant girl look to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to Yahweh our God
until he has mercy on us.

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3 Have mercy on us, Yahweh, have mercy on us,
for we are filled with humiliation.

4 We are more than full
of the scoffing of the insolent
and with the contempt of the proud.

Psalm 123 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 123 is a psalm asking for deliverance from the contempt of proud people. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Just as a servant trusts his master to protect him, so the author is trusting God to stop proud people from insulting him. (See: trust)

Links:

Psalms 123:1

Psalms 123:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I lift up my eyes

Here the author refers to his eyes because that is the part of the body used for seeing. Alternate translation: "I look to you"

enthroned

sitting on a throne and ruling as king

Psalms 123:2

as the eyes of servants ... as the eyes of a servant girl ... so our eyes look

These three phrases have similar meanings. The third phrase, about the Israelites, is being compared to how the servants and maids look to their masters and mistresses for help. In each case "eyes" refers to the whole person.

master's hand ... hand of her mistress

Here "hand" refers to the provision for needs. Alternate translation: "master's provision ... provision of her mistress"

mistress

woman who has authority over servant girls

has mercy on us

The abstract noun "mercy" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "act mercifully toward us"

Psalms 123:3

Have mercy on us

The abstract noun "mercy" can be stated as an action. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Psalms 123:2]

we are filled with humiliation

Here humiliation is spoken of as if it were something that could be fill up a person. "we are very disgraced"

Psalms 123:4

We are more than full

This idiom means that the amount is excessive, in a negative sense. Alternate translation: "We have had too much"

of the scoffing ... and with the contempt

There two phrases have very similar meanings and are used together to emphasize how much they have been mocked by the people.

scoffing

"mocking" or "insults"

the insolent

This refers to the insolent people. Alternate translation: "rude and arrogant people"

the proud

This refers to the proud people. Alternate translation: "the people who are proud"

124 A song of ascents. Of David.
1 "If Yahweh had not been on our side,"
let Israel say now,

2 "if it had not been Yahweh who was on our side
when men rose up against us,

3 then they would have swallowed us up alive
when their anger raged against us.

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4 The water would have swept us away;
the torrent would have overwhelmed us.

5 Then the raging waters would have drowned us."

6 Blessed be Yahweh,
who has not allowed us to be torn by their teeth.

7 We have escaped like a bird
out of the snare of the fowlers;
the snare has been broken,
and we have escaped.

8 Our help is in the name of Yahweh,
who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 124 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 124 is a psalm of praise for God's delivering the Israelites from their enemy's attack. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh saves

God saved the Israelites from their enemy who wanted to completely destroy them. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 124:1

Psalms 124:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents. Of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

song of ascents

Possible meanings are 1) "song people sang while going up to Jerusalem for a celebration" or 2) "song people sang while going up the steps into the temple" or 3) "song whose words are like steps." See how you translated this in Psalms 120:1

If Yahweh had not been on our side

This is the beginning of a statement about what could have happened but did not. Yahweh really was on their side.

Psalms 124:2

if it had not been Yahweh who was on our side

This is the continuation of a statement about something that did not actually happen.

Psalms 124:3

then they would have swallowed us up alive

This is the end of a statement that begins with the words "If Yahweh had not been on our side" in [Psalms 124:1]

swallowed us up alive

This metaphor describes how the enemies could have attacked and killed the Israelites to how a fierce animal attacks a smaller animal and eats it. Alternate translation: "killed us all"

their anger raged against us

Here "their anger" refers to the enemies who were angry. Alternate translation: "they were very angry with us"

Psalms 124:4

General Information:

In these two verses the author compares the enemies of Israel to a flood of water.

The water would have swept us away; the torrent would have overwhelmed us

This is another result of the situation described in [Psalms 124:1]

The water would have swept us away

Here the enemies of the writer are spoken of as if they were a flood of water. Alternate translation: "Our enemies would have easily defeated us"

the torrent would have overwhelmed us

Here the enemies of the writer are spoken of as if they were a flood of water that would have drowned the Israelites. Alternate translation: "our enemies would have overwhelmed us"

Psalms 124:5

Then the raging waters would have drowned us

This is another result of the situation described in [Psalms 124:1]

the raging waters would have drowned us

Here the enemies of the writer are spoken of as if they were

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a raging river that would have drowned the Israelites. Alternate translation: "our enemies would have destroyed us"

Psalms 124:6

torn by their teeth

The enemies are spoken of as if they were wild animals that would destroy the Israelites by eating them. Alternate translation: "destroyed as if we were eaten by wild animals"

Psalms 124:7

escaped like a bird out of the snare of the fowlers

The writer describes his escape from the enemies as if he was a bird that had escaped from the snare of the hunters. Alternate translation: "escaped from our enemies as a bird escapes from the trap that hunters have set"

snare

a small trap of string or wire made for catching small animals or birds

the snare has been broken

The plot of the enemies to catch the writer failed as if it was a snare that had broken.

Psalms 124:8

the name of Yahweh

The word "name" here is a metonym for the power and authority of the person or for the person himself. Alternate translation: "the power and authority of Yahweh" "Yahweh himself"

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125 A song of ascents.
1 Those who trust in Yahweh
are like Mount Zion, unshakable, forever enduring.

2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so Yahweh surrounds his people
now and forever.

3 The scepter of wickedness must not rule
in the assigned portion of the righteous.
Otherwise the righteous might do what is wrong.

4 Do good, Yahweh, to those who are good
and to those who are upright in their hearts.

5 But as for those who turn aside to their crooked ways,
Yahweh will lead them away with the those who behave wickedly.
May peace be on Israel.

Psalm 125 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 125 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

God protects good people. He will not allow the evil people to rule over the good people because they might make them do evil. (See: good and evil)

Links:

Psalms 125:1

Psalms 125:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Those who trust in Yahweh are like Mount Zion, unshakable, forever enduring

People who trust in Yahweh are spoken of as if they they were Mount Zion. Mountains are unable to be moved.

Psalms 125:2

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so Yahweh surrounds his people

Yahweh's protection is spoken of as if he was the mountains surrounding Jerusalem. Jerusalem was surrounded by several mountains, which protected it from attack. Alternate translation: "As the hills that surround Jerusalem protect it, so Yahweh protects his people"

now and forever

Here, this phrase means "always."

Psalms 125:3

The scepter of wickedness

Here the scepter of wickedness represents the rule of

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wicked people. Alternate translation: "Wicked people" or "Wicked rulers"
the assigned portion
the land that Yahweh assigned to the people of Israel
Psalms 125:4
Do good, Yahweh
This is a request. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, please do good things" or "Yahweh, I beg you to do good things"
are upright in their hearts
Here, "hearts" refers to their desires. Alternate translation: "desire to do the right"
Psalms 125:5
turn aside
Refusing to obey Yahweh is spoken of as turning away from a good path. Alternate translation: "leave good and go"
their crooked ways
Here wicked ways are spoken of as if they were a path that is not straight. Alternate translation: "their wicked ways"
lead them away
People are lead away in order to punish them. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "lead them away to punish them"

126 A song of ascents.
1 When Yahweh reversed the captivity of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

2 Then our mouths were filled with laughter
and our tongues with joyful shouting.
Then they said among the nations,
"Yahweh has done great things for them."

3 Yahweh did great things for us;
how glad we were!

4 Reverse our captivity, Yahweh,
like the streams in the Negev.

5 Those who sow in tears
will reap with shouts of joy.

6 He who goes out weeping,
carrying seed for sowing,
will return again with shouts of joy,
bringing his bundles of grain with him.

Psalm 126 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 126 is a psalm of praise for Yahweh bringing captives home.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sorrow and joy

People may have sorrow now; but later it will turn into joy. (See: joy)

Links:

Psalms 126:1

Psalms 126:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song of ascents
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
reversed the captivity of Zion
This is an idiom that means that Yahweh restored Zion's good life. Alternate translation: "made Zion prosperous again"
Zion
This is a metonym for the people who lived in Zion. Alternate translation: "the people of Zion"
Psalms 126:2
our mouths were filled with laughter
Laughing is spoken of as if their mouths were a container and their laughter was in it. It can be made clear that this laughter was a response to their joy. Alternate translation:

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"we laughed for joy"

our tongues with joyful shouting

The verbs "were filled" can be stated clearly. Joyful shouting is spoken of as if their tongues were containers and joyful shouting was in them. Alternate translation: "our tongues were filled with joyful shouting" or "we shouted for joy"

they said among the nations

"the people of the nations said among themselves." The pronoun is used before introducing what it references. This is very unusual.

Psalms 126:3

Yahweh did great things for us; how glad we were!

"How glad we were, because Yahweh did these great things for us!"

Psalms 126:4

Reverse our captivity

This is an idiom for a request that Yahweh restore the speakers' good life. See how you translated similar words in [Psalm 126:1]

Psalms 126:5

Those who sow in tears

"Those who weep as they sow"

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127 A song of ascents, of Solomon.
Unless Yahweh builds the house,
they work uselessly, those who build it.
Unless Yahweh guards the city,
the watchman stands guard uselessly.

2 It is useless for you to rise up early,
to come home late,
or to eat the bread of hard work,
for Yahweh provides for his beloved as they sleep.

3 See, children are a heritage from Yahweh,
and the fruit of the womb is a reward from him.

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
so are the children of one's youth.

5 How blessed is the man
that has his quiver full of them.
He will not be put to shame
when he confronts his enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 127 is a wisdom psalm. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Blessings

God wants his people to have rest. It is a blessing to have many children. (See: rest and bless)

Links:

Psalms 127:1

Psalms 127:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents, of Solomon

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

song of ascents

Possible meanings are 1) "song people sang while going up to Jerusalem for a celebration" or 2) "song people sang while going up the steps into the temple" or 3) "song whose words are like steps." See how you translated this in Psalms 120:1

Psalms 127:2

to rise up early, to come home late

A person who works hard often has to wake up earlier in the morning and return home late at night.

eat the bread of hard work

This is an idiom. Bread often represents the food a person needs every day in order to live. Alternate translation: "work hard for your daily needs"

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Psalms 127:3
heritage
property that a person can inherit from his ancestors. Children normally receive an inheritance from their parents. Inheritance goes from parents to children. This passage uses parents inheriting children from Yahweh as a metaphor for Yahweh being the only one who can give children.
Psalms 127:4
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth
Arrows are very important to a warrior because they protect him in battle. Children are spoken of as if they are a warrior's arrow. Alternate translation: "Having many children will help to protect you"
Psalms 127:5
his quiver full of them
A quiver is a container for arrows. Having many children is spoken of as if the children were arrows in a quiver. Alternate translation: "a home full of children" or "many children"

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128 A song of ascents.
Blessed is everyone who honors Yahweh,
who walks in his ways.

2 The labor of your hands you will enjoy;
you will be blessed and prosper.

3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
in your house;
your children will be like olive plants
as they sit around your table.

4 Yes, indeed, the man will be blessed
who honors Yahweh.

5 May Yahweh bless you from Zion;
may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

6 May you live to see your children's children.
May peace be on Israel.

Psalm 128 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 128 is a wisdom psalm. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Respect

Those people who respect God will live well and have many children. (See: life)

Links:

Psalms 128:1

Psalms 128:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song of ascents
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
Blessed is everyone who honors Yahweh
This phrase occurs in the passive voice to avoid implying that Yahweh is obligated to bless those who honor him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless everyone who honors him"
who walks in his ways
Walking here represents behaving. The phrase "his ways" represents what Yahweh wants people to do. Alternative translation: "who behaves the way Yahweh wants people to behave" or "who does what Yahweh commands"
Psalms 128:2
The labor of your hands

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This phrase is a metonym for the food that the labor of the hands produces. Alternate translation: "The food that you work hard to produce"

you will be blessed and prosper

The words "be blessed" and "prosper" share similar meanings and emphasize God's favor. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless you and prosper you" or "Yahweh will make you blessed and prosperous"

Psalms 128:3

like a fruitful vine in your house

The wife is spoke of as a vine producing a lot of fruit. This implies that children are like fruit and the wife will have many children. Alternate translation: "very productive and give you many children"

your children will be like olive plants

Children are compared to olive plants because of the way they grow to surround something. Children will surround the table and make it full. Alternate translation: "you will have many children who will grow and prosper"

around your table

This refers to the place where a family gathers to eat. Often, all those who eat a man's table are under his authority or control.

Psalms 128:4

the man will be blessed who honors Yahweh

This can be stated as an active verb. "Yahweh will bless the man who honors him"

Psalms 128:5

all the days of your life

"throughout your lifetime"

Psalms 128:6

May peace be on Israel

"May Israel have peace"

---

129 A song of ascents.
"Often since my youth they have attacked me,"
let Israel say.

2 "Often since my youth they have attacked me,
yet they have not defeated me.

3 The plowers plowed on my back;
they made their furrows long.

4 Yahweh is righteous;
he has cut off the ropes of the wicked."

5 May they all be put to shame and turned back,
those who hate Zion.

6 May they be like the grass on the housetops
that withers before it grows up,

7 that cannot fill the reaper's hand
or the chest of the one who binds bundles of grain together.

8 May those who pass by not say,
"May the blessing of Yahweh be on you;
we bless you in the name of Yahweh."

Psalm 129 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 129 is a psalm of deliverance from Israel's many enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh saves

Israel's enemies have always persecuted them but God has saved them from their enemies. He prays that this enemy will be destroyed with no one to wish them well. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 129:1

Psalms 129:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

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This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Psalms 129:3

The plowers plowed on my back

The cuts from a whipping are spoken of as the plow of a plowman. A farmer plowed deep lines into a field. Alternate translation: "My enemies have cut me deeply on my back"

they made their furrows long

This is a continuation of the plowing metaphor. The "furrow" is the line the farmer plowed. Alternate translation: "they made their cuts long"

Psalms 129:4

he has cut off the ropes of the wicked

Israel is spoken of as being bound by evil people. Alternate translation: "he has freed us from our enemies"

Psalms 129:5

May they all be put to shame and turned back

Yahweh is not explicitly mentioned as the one who does these things. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh shame them and defeat them"

Psalms 129:6

May they be like the grass on the housetops that withers before it grows up

The psalmist speaks of his enemies dying and being few in number. He compares them to the little bit of grass that grows on the roof of a house and withers and is not enough to cut or bundle. Alternate translation: "May they die and may there be few of them"

Psalms 129:7

that cannot fill ... together

These words finish the simile that begins in

Psalms 129:8

the blessing of Yahweh be on you

"Yahweh bless you"

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130 A song of ascents.
1 Out of the depths I cry to you, Yahweh.
2 Lord, hear my voice;
let your ears be attentive
to my pleas for mercy.

3 If you, Yah, would mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?[1]

4 But there is forgiveness with you,
that you may be revered.

5 I wait for Yahweh, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope.

6 My soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

7 Israel, hope in Yahweh.
Yahweh is merciful,
and with him is great redemption.

8 It is he who will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

---

[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 130 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 130 is a psalm of praise that God forgives sins. (See: forgive and sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

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Forgive
God forgives sin and helps the sinner. So Israel should trust in God for his forgiveness. (See: trust)

Links:

Psalms 130:1

Psalms 130:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song of ascents
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
Out of the depths I
The author's sadness is spoken of as if it were a container. His sadness comes from the bottom of the container. Sadness is often spoken of as being a container that fills from the top to the bottom. Alternate translation: "Because I am very sad, I"
Psalms 130:2
let your ears be attentive
The ears represent Yahweh, but because the author knows that Yahweh hears everything, he is really asking for Yahweh to respond. Alternate translation: "please listen" or "please respond"
to my pleas for mercy
The abstract noun "mercy" can be stated as "merciful." Alternate translation: "to my pleas and be merciful to me"
Psalms 130:3
who could stand?
The speaker uses this question to express the futility of thinking that anyone could stand in this situation. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one could stand."
who could stand
"Stand" often represents escaping or surviving when someone attacks. In this case, it would be to escape from being being punished. Alternate translation: "no one could escape from your punishment" or "no one could survive your punishment"
Psalms 130:6
My soul
"My soul" represents the psalmist. Alternate translation: "I"
My soul waits
The psalmist is spoken of as if he were waiting on something with expectation. Alternate translation: "I hope" or "I trust" or "I desire for something"
My soul waits ... more than watchmen wait for the morning
The psalmist speaks of his desire for the Lord to help him as being greater than the desire that those who work all night have for the morning to come.
watchmen
These are men who guard towns or fields against enemies or robbers. Here it refers to men who have to stay awake at night doing this.
Psalms 130:7
Israel, hope in Yahweh
The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a man. Alternate translation: "You people of Israel, hope in Yahweh"
with him is great redemption
The abstract noun "redemption" here refers to forgiveness, and it can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he is very willing to redeem" or "he is very willing to forgive"
Psalms 130:8
who will redeem Israel from all his iniquities
The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a man. Alternate translation: "who will redeem the people of Israel from all their iniquities"

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131 A song of ascents; of David.
Yahweh, my heart is not proud
or my eyes haughty.
I do not have great hopes for myself
or concern myself with things that are beyond me.

2 Indeed I have stilled and quieted my soul;
like a weaned child with his mother,
my soul within me is like a weaned child.

3 Israel, hope in Yahweh
now and forever.

Psalm 131 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 131 is a wisdom psalm teaching trust in Yahweh. (See: wise and trust)

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Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

This psalm focuses on the concept of trust. A quiet trust in Yahweh is best.

Links:

Psalms 131:1

Psalms 131:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents; of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

song of ascents

Possible meanings are 1) "song people sang while going up to Jerusalem for a celebration" or 2) "song people sang while going up the steps into the temple" or 3) "song whose words are like steps." See how you translated this in Psalms 120:1

my heart is not proud or my eyes haughty

The heart and the eyes represent the person. Alternate translation: "I am not proud or haughty"

I do not have great hopes for myself

Possible meanings are "I do not expect to do great things" or "I do not think I am great."

things that are beyond me

Things that are too hard for a person to understand are spoken of as if they are beyond the person or too far away from the person to be able to reach them. Alternate translation: "things that are too hard to understand"

Psalms 131:2

I have stilled and quieted my soul

The soul represents the person or his emotions. Being calm and peaceful is spoken of has having making one's soul still and quiet. Alternate translation: "I am calm and peaceful"

my soul within me

The soul represents the person or his emotions. Alternate translation: "I"

a weaned child with his mother

The psalmist speaks of himself being content and resting as if he were a young child that no longer demands breast milk from his mother. Alternate translation: "content like a young child that no longer cries for breast milk but rests in his mother's arms" or "content and resting"

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132 A song of ascents.
1 Yahweh, for David's sake call to mind
all his afflictions.

2 Call to mind how he swore to Yahweh,
how he vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob.

3 He said, "I will not enter the tent of my house
or get on the couch of my bed,

4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or rest to my eyelids

5 until I find a place for Yahweh,
a tabernacle for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 See, we heard about it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.

7 We will go into God's tabernacle;
we will worship at his footstool.

8 Arise, Yahweh, to your resting place,
you and the ark of your strength!

9 May your priests be clothed with integrity;

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may your faithful ones shout for joy.

10 For your servant David's sake,
do not turn away from your anointed king.

11 Yahweh swore a sure oath to David,
a sure oath that he will not revoke:
"I will place one of your descendants on your throne.

12 If your sons keep my covenant
and the solemn commands that I will teach them,
their children also will sit on your throne forevermore."

13 Certainly Yahweh has chosen Zion,
he has desired her for his seat.

14 "This is my resting place forever.
I will live here, for I desire her.

15 I will abundantly bless her with provisions.
I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 I will clothe her priests with salvation,
her faithful ones will shout aloud for joy.

17 There I will make a horn to sprout for David
and set up a lamp for my anointed one.

18 I will clothe his enemies with shame,
but on him his crown will shine."

Psalm 132 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 132 is a royal psalm praising David. It might have been sung when David brought the ark to Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ark

The Ark had been moved from one place to another several times. David wanted to make a permanent home for it. God had promised David that his son would be king after him. (See: promise)

Links:

Psalms 132:1

Psalms 132:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

for David's sake

"because of what happened to David"

call to mind

"remember" or "think about"

Psalms 132:2

the Mighty One of Jacob

This refers to God.

Psalms 132:3

He said

"King David said"

the tent of my house or ... the couch of my bed,

Possible meanings are 1) these are two ways of saying the same thing. Alternate translation: "my tent—that is, my house—or ... my couch—that is, my bed—" or "my house

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or ... my bed." Or 2) These are metonyms for the comfort that David enjoyed in his house and bed. Alternate translation: "the comfort of my own house or ... my comfortable bed."

Psalms 132:4

I will not give sleep to my eyes or rest to my eyelids

Sleep and rest are spoken of as if they are things that can be given. Here eyes and eyelids represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will not allow my eyes to sleep or my eyelids to rest" or "I will not sleep or close my eyes and rest"

Psalms 132:5

until I find a place for Yahweh

Building a place for Yahweh is spoken of as finding a place for him. Alternate translation: "until I build a place for Yahweh"

the Mighty One of Jacob

This refers to God.

Psalms 132:6

we heard about it in Ephrathah

The word "it" probably refers to where God's sacred chest was. The phrase "in Ephrathah" probably refers to where they were when they heard about it. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "we who were in Ephrathah heard about where the sacred chest was" or "we in Ephrathah heard that the holy box was in Jaar"

fields of Jaar

Jaar is probably another name for the city of Kiriath Jearim. This probably refers to the fields surrounding the city.

Psalms 132:7

we will worship at his footstool

Worshiping God at the covenant box is spoken of as bowing at the feet of the king who is sitting on his throne. This communicates humility and submission to God. Alternate translation: "we will go to God's covenant box and worship him as king"

Psalms 132:8

Arise, Yahweh, to your resting place

The verb "come" can be stated clearly. "Arise, Yahweh, and come to your resting place"

your resting place

The place God chose for people to worship him is spoken of as if it were a place where he rests or lives eternally. Alternate translation: "the place where you stay" or "your tabernacle"

you and the ark of your strength!

Possible meanings are 1) "come to the ark of your strength" or 2) "come, and make the ark of your strength come."

the ark of your strength

"the ark that shows your great power"

Psalms 132:9

May your priests be clothed with integrity

Integrity is spoken of as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "May people recognize that your priests have integrity" or "I want people see how your priests always do what is right"

Psalms 132:10

For your servant David's sake

"Because of what happened to your servant David." See how you translated a similar phrase in Psalms 132:1.

do not turn away from your anointed king

Here "turning away" means to reject someone. Alternate translation: "do not abandon the king that you anointed"

Psalms 132:11

I will place one of your descendants on your throne

Making a king's descendant become king in his place is spoken of as placing him on that king's throne. Alternate translation: "I will cause one of your descendants to rule Israel in your place"

Psalms 132:12

sit on your throne

Ruling as king is spoken of as sitting on the throne. Alternate translation: "rule as king"

your sons

Here "your sons" represents the descendants of David that would become king. Alternate translation: "your descendants"

Psalms 132:13

General Information:

"He", "my" and "I" refer to Yahweh and "her" refers to Zion.

Zion ... her

The author writes as though the city of Zion were a woman.

he has desired her for his seat

"Yahweh has desired Zion for Yahweh's seat." Here "seat" represents either 1) his throne where he would rule, or 2) the place where he would stay.

Psalms 132:14

her

The author writes as though the city of Zion

my resting place

The place God chose for people to worship him is spoken of as if it were a place where he rests or lives eternally. Alternate translation: "the place where I stay" or "my tabernacle"

Psalms 132:15

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak about the city of Zion as if Zion was a woman.

will abundantly bless her

"will abundantly bless Zion"

will satisfy her poor with bread

Here "poor" refers to the poor people in Zion and "bread" probably represents food in general. Alternate translation: "will satisfy the poor people in Zion with food"

Psalms 132:16

I will clothe her priests with salvation

Salvation is spoken of as if it is clothing. Possible meanings are 1) "I will cause the priests to behave in a manner worthy of ones whom I have saved" or 2) "I will save her priests"

Psalms 132:17

I will make a horn to sprout for David

God speaks of a powerful descendant of David as if he was the powerful horn of an animal. Alternate translation: "I will make a descendant of David become king after him" or "I will cause David to have a descendant who will be a powerful king"

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set up a lamp for my anointed one
God speaks of causing David's descendants to continue to rule as king as if they were a lamp that would continue to shine. Alternate translation: "I will cause my anointed one's descendants to continue to rule as king"
my anointed one
"my chosen king" or "the king I have chosen"
Psalms 132:18
I will clothe his enemies with shame
Shame is spoken of as if it was clothing. This shame would result from losing in war. Alternate translation: "I will cause his enemies to be ashamed" or "I will cause his enemies to be defeated and ashamed"
his crown will shine
The crown represents his rule, and greatness is spoken of as shining. Alternate translation: "he will be a great king" or "his greatness will shine"

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133 A song of ascents. Of David.
Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brothers to live together!

2 It is like fine oil on the head
pouring down on the beard—
Aaron's beard,
and then it pours down on the collar of his robes.

3 It is like the dew of Hermon
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there Yahweh commanded the blessing—
life forevermore.

Psalm 133 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 133 is a wisdom psalm about harmony. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Harmony

Harmony between relatives is refreshing and brings a blessings from God. (See: bless)

Links:

Psalms 133:1

Psalms 133:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
A song of ascents. Of David
This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)
song of ascents
Possible meanings are 1) "song people sang while going up to Jerusalem for a celebration" or 2) "song people sang while going up the steps into the temple" or 3) "song whose words are like steps." See how you translated this in Psalms 120:1
Behold
This word is used to stress the importance of the statement that follows.
for brothers to live together
The relationships among fellow God's people is spoken of as if they were brothers. Alternate translation: "for God's people to live together peacefully as brothers"
Psalms 133:2
It is like fine oil on the head
The goodness of unity among God's people is spoken of as if it were like the fine oil that was poured on Aaron's head. Alternate translation: "This unity is precious like the oil that was poured on Aaron's head"
Psalms 133:3
like the dew of Hermon
The goodness of unity among God's people is spoken of as it if it were refreshing like dew. Alternate translation: "refreshing like the dew of Hermon"
Hermon
This is a mountain in Israel that has snow on its peak year-round.

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134 A song of ascents.
Come, bless Yahweh, all you servants of Yahweh,
you who serve during the night in the house of Yahweh.

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2 Lift up your hands to the holy place
and bless Yahweh.

3 May Yahweh bless you from Zion,
he who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 134 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 134 is a temple psalm. (See: temple)

Special concepts in this chapter

Watchmen

The watchmen who work at night should praise God. Then he will bless them. (See: bless)

Links:

Psalms 134:1

Psalms 134:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A song of ascents

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

all you servants of Yahweh

"all you who serve Yahweh"

Psalms 134:2

Lift up your hands

This is how people prayed or praised God.

to the holy place

Possible meanings are 1) "to the temple" or 2) "to the holy place in the temple."

Psalms 134:3

heaven and earth

The phrase "heaven and earth" here represents all things. Alternate translation: "everything in heaven and earth"

1 135 Give praise to Yah![1]
Praise the name of Yahweh.
Praise him, you servants of Yahweh,

2 you who stand in the house of Yahweh,
in the courtyards of the house of our God.

3 Give praise to Yah, for he is good;[2]
sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant to do so.

4 For Yah has chosen Jacob for himself,[3]
Israel as his own possession.

5 I know that Yahweh is great,
that our Lord is above all gods.

6 Whatever Yahweh desires, he does
in heaven, on earth,
in the seas and all the ocean depths.

7 He brings the clouds from far away,
making lightning bolts accompany the rain
and bringing the wind out of his storehouse.

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8 He killed the firstborn of Egypt,
both of man and animals.

9 He sent signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt,
against Pharaoh and all his servants.

10 He attacked many nations
and killed mighty kings,

11 Sihon king of the Amorites
and Og king of Bashan
and all the kingdoms of Canaan.

12 He gave us their land as an inheritance,
an inheritance to Israel his people.

13 Your name, Yahweh, endures forever;
your renown, Yahweh, endures throughout all generations.

14 For Yahweh defends his people
and has compassion on his servants.

15 The nations' idols are silver and gold,
the work of men's hands.

16 Those idols have mouths, but they do not speak;
they have eyes, but they do not see;

17 they have ears, but they do not give ear,
nor is there breath in their mouths.

18 Those who make them are like them,
as is everyone who trusts in them.

19 Descendants of Israel, bless Yahweh;
descendants of Aaron, bless Yahweh.

20 Descendants of Levi, bless Yahweh;
you who honor Yahweh, bless Yahweh.

21 Blessed be Yahweh in Zion,
he who lives in Jerusalem.
Give praise to Yah.[4]

[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[3] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[4] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 135 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 135 is a worship psalm focusing on worshiping God because his greatness.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Praise
The people, priests and their helpers should praise God because he is so great. He defeated the Egyptians and led his people to the promise land. Idols have no power. (See: priest and promisedland)

Links:

Psalms 135:1

Psalms 135:1
General Information:
Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.
Praise the name of Yahweh
Yahweh's name represents him. "Praise Yahweh" or "Praise him"
Psalms 135:2
stand in the house of Yahweh
This represents serving Yahweh in his temple.
our God
These words refer to Yahweh (Psalms 135:1).
Psalms 135:3
for it is pleasant to do so
"because we get pleasure from praising his name"
Psalms 135:4
Yah has chosen Jacob
"Jacob" here refers to his descendants, the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yah has chosen Jacob's descendants"
Israel as his own possession
The beginning of the sentence can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he has chosen Israel to be his own possession"
Psalms 135:5
that our Lord is above all gods
"I know that our Lord is above all gods." Being greater than something is spoken of as being above it. Alternate translation: "that our Lord is greater than all gods"
Psalms 135:7
bringing the wind out of his storehouse
A storehouse is a place where things are kept for future use. This imagery shows God's power to control the wind. Alternate translation: "causing the wind to blow by his power"
Psalms 135:9
signs and wonders
These two words mean basically the same thing and refer to the miraculous troubles that God had caused in Egypt.
into your midst, Egypt
The psalmist speaks as if the people of Egypt were listening to him. Alternate translation: "among you people of Egypt" or "among the people of Egypt"
against Pharaoh
"to punish Pharaoh"
Psalms 135:11
Sihon ... Og
These are the names of two men.
Psalms 135:12
He gave us their land as an inheritance
God's gift of the land to the Israelites is spoken of as if it were inheritance from father to son. Alternate translation: "He gave us their land to have forever" or "He gave us their land to be ours forever"
Psalms 135:13
Your name
His name here represents his fame or reputation. Alternate translation: "Your fame" or "Your reputation"
Psalms 135:18
Those who make them are like them
Being ignorant and powerless is spoken of as being like idols, which cannot speak, see, hear, or breathe. Alternate translation: "Those who make them are stupid and powerless like their idols"
as is everyone who trusts in them
"and so are those who trust in the idols"
Psalms 135:21
he who lives in Jerusalem
God is spoken of as if he lived in Jerusalem because the temple where the Israelites worshiped him was there. Alternate translation: "he whose temple is in Jerusalem"

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136 [1] Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good.
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

[2] Give thanks to the God of gods.
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

[3] Give thanks to the Lord of lords;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

[4] to him who alone does great wonders;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

[5] to him who by wisdom made the heavens;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

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6 to him who spread out the earth above the waters;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

7 to him who made great lights;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

8 to him who gave the sun to rule by day,
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

9 the moon and stars to rule by night;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

10 to him who killed the firstborn of Egypt
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

11 and brought out Israel from among them
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

12 with a strong hand and a raised arm;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

13 to him who divided the Sea of Reeds
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

14 and made Israel to pass through the middle of it,
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Sea of Reeds;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

16 to him who led his people through the wilderness;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

17 to him who killed great kings;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

18 to him who killed majestic kings,
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

19 Sihon king of the Amorites
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

20 and Og king of Bashan;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

21 to him who gave their land as an inheritance,
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

22 an inheritance to Israel his servant;
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

23 to him who called us to mind and helped us in our humiliation;

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(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

24 to him who has rescued us from our enemies,
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

25 who gives food to all living beings.
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

26 Give thanks to the God of heaven.
(His covenant faithfulness endures forever.)

Psalm 136 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 136 is a worship psalm. It was written to be sung by two parts of the choir. One part would sing the first part of each of the lines and then the other part of the choir would sing the repeated refrain.

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel blessed

God has blessed Israel throughout its history and taken care of the needy people. (See: bless)

Links:

Psalms 136:1

Psalms 136:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

His covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "He remains faithful to his covenant forever"

Psalms 136:2

the God of gods

the God who is greater than the gods that other people worship

Psalms 136:5

by wisdom

That is, because he is wise.

Psalms 136:6

spread out the earth above the waters

The ancient Israelites thought that the earth's dry land was on top of the sea. Alternate translation: "placed the earth over the waters"

Psalms 136:7

great lights

This is a reference to the sources of light for the earth, especially the sun and the moon. Alternate translation: "the sun and the moon and the stars"

Psalms 136:8

to rule by day

The sun is spoken of as if it were a king. Alternate translation: "to mark the time of day"

His covenant faithfulness endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. See how you translated this in [Psalms 136:1]

Psalms 136:9

to rule by night

The moon, and stars are spoken of as if they were kings. Alternate translation: "to mark the time of night"

Psalms 136:11

from among them

"from among the people of Egypt"

Psalms 136:12

with a strong hand and a raised arm

Here "hand" and "arm" represent power. Alternate translation: "with great power"

Psalms 136:13

the Sea of Reeds

The soldiers of Pharaoh drowned in the Sea of Reeds.

Psalms 136:15

overthrew Pharaoh

Here defeat is spoken of as if it were tipping someone over. Alternate translation: "defeated Pharaoh" or "defeated the king of Egypt"

Psalms 136:19

Sihon

a man's name

Psalms 136:20

Og

a man's name

Psalms 136:23

called us to mind

"thought about us"

helped us in our humiliation

The condition of feeling shame is spoken of as if it were a place that the Israelites had been in. This is a reference to the many times when the Israelites' enemies had defeated them in battle and shamed them. Alternate translation: "cared when we were shamed"

Psalms 136:26

the God of heaven

"the God who lives in heaven" or "the God whom the heavenly beings worship"

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137 1 By the rivers of Babylon
we sat down and wept
when we thought about Zion.

2 There on the poplars in the midst of it
we hung our harps.

3 There our captors required songs from us,
and those who mocked us required joy from us, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

4 How could we sing a song about Yahweh
in a foreign land?

5 If I ignore the memory of you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand forget her skill.

6 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
if I think about you no more,
if I do not prefer Jerusalem
more than my greatest delights.

7 Call to mind, Yahweh, what the Edomites did
on the day Jerusalem fell.
They said, "Tear it down, tear it down
to its foundations."

8 Daughter of Babylon, soon to be destroyed—
may the person be blessed, whoever pays you back
for what you have done to us.

9 May the person be blessed,
whoever takes and dashes your little ones against a rock.

Psalm 137 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 137 is a psalm of mourning and vengeance. (See: avenge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Songs of Zion

The captives are told to sing songs of Zion there in Babylon but they felt too unhappy to want to sing. The army from Babylon was cruel when it destroyed Jerusalem and the people of Edom encouraged them to destroy Jerusalem. They prayed that God will be cruel to the people of Edom and Babylon.

Links:

Psalms 137:1

Psalms 137:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

By the rivers of Babylon

"Next to one of the rivers near Babylon"

we sat ... wept ... we thought

The writer does not include the readers.

Psalms 137:2

we hung

The writer does not include the readers.

There on the poplars

Poplar trees do not grow in Israel. "Poplars" may here stand

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for all the trees in Babylon. Alternate translation: "On the trees in Babylon"

Psalms 137:3

our captors required songs from us

"our captors required us to sing"

required joy from us

"made us pretend to be happy"

one of the songs of Zion

This probably refers to songs that the Israelites had used in worship at the temple in Jerusalem.

Psalms 137:5

If I ignore the memory of you, Jerusalem

The writer speaks as if Jerusalem is listening to him. Alternate translation: "If I act as if I did not remember you, Jerusalem" or "If I try to forget you, Jerusalem"

right hand

the hand most people use most often

Psalms 137:7

Call to mind

"Remember" or "Think about"

Call to mind, Yahweh, what the Edomites did

Here remembering what the Edomites did represents punishing them for what they did. Alternate translation: "Punish the Edomites, Yahweh, for what they did"

the day Jerusalem fell

Jerusalem being captured by an enemy army is spoken of as if it had fallen. Who captured Jerusalem can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the day Jerusalem was captured" or "the day the Babylonian army entered Jerusalem"

Psalms 137:8

General Information:

The psalmist addresses the people of Babylon as if they were there listening to him.

Daughter of Babylon

This represents the city of Babylon and its people.

may the person be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may God bless the person"

pays you back for what you have done to us

The writer speaks of someone doing to others what they have done as if were payment. Alternate translation: "does to you what you did to us"

Psalms 137:9

dashes your little ones against a rock

"smashes your babies' heads against rocks"

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138 A psalm of David.
1 I will give you thanks with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing praises to you.

2 I will bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name
for your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness.
You have made your word and your name
more important than anything else.

3 On the day that I called you, you answered me;
you made me bold and strengthened my soul.

4 All the kings of the earth will give you thanks, Yahweh,
for they will hear the words from your mouth.

5 Indeed, they will sing of the deeds of Yahweh,
for great is the glory of Yahweh.

6 For though Yahweh is high, yet he cares for the lowly,
but the proud he knows from far off.

7 Though I walk in the middle of trouble,
you will preserve my life;
you will reach out with your hand against the anger of my enemies,
and your right hand will save me.

8 Yahweh is with me to the end;
your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, endures forever.
Do not abandon the works of your hands.

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Psalm 138 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

Answered prayers

God answers prayers and he protects the psalmist from his enemies.

Links:

Psalms 138:1

Psalms 138:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

I will give you thanks with my whole heart

The heart here represents the emotions. Doing something sincerely or completely is spoken of as doing it with all one's heart. Alternate translation: "I will sincerely thank you"

before the gods

Possible meanings are 1) "in spite of the false idols that exist" or 2) "before the heavenly assembly," which means "in the knowledge of the angels in heaven."

Psalms 138:2

I will bow down

Bowing down is a symbolic action that represents worship and giving honor. Alternate translation: "I will worship you"

give thanks to your name

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "give thanks to you"

for your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because you are faithful to your covenant and you are worthy of people trusting you"

your word

"what you have said" or "your commands and promises"

your name

Possible meanings are 1) "yourself" or 2) "your fame."

Psalms 138:4

your mouth

This expression stands for God himself. Alternate translation: "you"

Psalms 138:6

Yahweh is high, yet he cares for the lowly

Yahweh is above all creation in power, position, and authority. Yet his interest is in those who are humble in spirit, servants to all. This is a simple contrast.

the proud he knows from far off

This expression probably means that God is not faithful to those who are proud.

Psalms 138:7

walk

live, exist

in the middle of trouble

Being in danger is spoken of as being in a physical place.

you will reach out with your hand against the anger of my enemies

God is spoken of as if he will strike the enemies with his hand.

anger of my enemies

The abstract noun "anger" can be stated as "angry." Alternate translation: "my enemies, who are angry"

Psalms 138:8

your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, endures forever

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "you, Yahweh, remain faithful to your covenant forever"

the works of your hands

This expression probably refers to the people of Israel. God is spoken of as if he had physically used hands to create them. Alternate translation: "the people you have created"

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139 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.
1 Yahweh, you have examined me,
and you know me.

2 You know when I sit down and when I get up;
you understand my thoughts from far away.

3 You observe my path and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.

4 For before there is a word on my tongue,
you know it completely, Yahweh.

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5 Behind me and before me you surround me
and place your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is incomprehensible to me;
it is too high, and I cannot reach it.

7 Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I ascend up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there.

9 If I fly away on the wings of the dawn
and go to live in the uttermost parts across the sea,

10 even there your hand will lead me,
your right hand will hold on to me.

11 If I said, "Surely the darkness will cover me,
and the light will become night around me,"

12 even the darkness would not be dark to you.
The night would shine like the day,
for the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

13 You formed my inner parts;
you formed me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise you
because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Your works are wonderful.
My soul knows this very well.

15 My bones were not hidden from you
when I was made in private,
when I was intricately made in the depths of the earth.

16 You saw me inside the womb;
all the days assigned to me were recorded
in your book even before the first one happened.

17 How precious are your thoughts to me, God!
How vast is their sum!

18 If I tried to count them,
they would be more in number than the sand.
When I awake, I am still with you.

19 If only you would kill the wicked, God;
get away from me, you men of bloodshed.

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20 They rebel against you and act deceitfully;
your enemies tell lies.

21 Do I not hate those, Yahweh, who hate you?
Do I not despise those who rise up against you?

22 I hate them completely;
they have become my enemies.

23 Examine me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my thoughts.

24 See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 139 is a psalm of praise.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's care

God created the psalmist in his mother's womb and has taken care of him all of his life. No matter where he goes, God is always with him.

Links:

Psalms 139:1

Psalms 139:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

"This is for the director of music to use in worship."

have examined

"have tested"

Psalms 139:2

when I sit down and when I get up

The psalmist uses these two actions to represent everything he does. Alternate translation: "everything I do" or "everything about me"

Psalms 139:3

my path and my lying down

Here "path" stands for one's behavior. "My path and my lying down" together represent everything about the psalmist.

Psalms 139:4

before there is a word on my tongue

Here "word on the tongue" represents speech. Alternate translation: "before I say anything"

Psalms 139:5

Behind me and before me you surround me

This expression refers to God's presence everywhere.

place your hand upon me

This expression refers to guidance and help. Alternate translation: "you guide and help me"

Psalms 139:6

incomprehensible to me

"too much for me to understand"

it is too high, and I cannot reach it

Being high and out of reach is an expression, in this case, about some knowledge that human beings cannot have. Alternate translation: "it is too difficult to understand"

Psalms 139:7

Where can I go from your Spirit? ... Where can I flee from your presence?

These two questions are in parallel. The psalmist says that he cannot go away from God's presence. Alternate translation: "I cannot escape from your Spirit."

Psalms 139:8

if I make my bed in Sheol

"Making one's bed" refers to staying somewhere. Alternate translation: "even if I stay in Sheol"

Psalms 139:9

If I fly away on the wings of the dawn and go to live in the uttermost parts across the sea

The author uses exaggeration to explain that wherever he is, God is there too.

If I fly away on the wings of the dawn

In the ancient near east, the sun was often imagined as if it

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had wings which enabled it to fly across the sky. Alternate translation: "If the sun could carry me with itself across the sky"

in the uttermost parts across the sea

"very far away to the west"

Psalms 139:10

will hold on to me

"will help me"

Psalms 139:11

If I said, "Surely the darkness will cover me

The psalmist speaks of the night as if it were a blanket that could conceal him.

Psalms 139:12

The night would shine like the day

The night, which is dark, is spoken of as if it were bright with light.

Psalms 139:13

You formed my inner parts

"Inner parts" refers to the interior organs of a person, but here the expression probably stands for the entire body. Alternate translation: "You made my entire body

Psalms 139:14

My soul knows this very well

Here "soul" probably refers to the psalmist's innermost ability to be certain about God's love and guidance. The translator may, however, treat "soul" here as metonymy for the psalmist's mind and heart. Alternate translation: "I know this with all my heart"

Psalms 139:15

intricately made

"made with great complexity"

the depths of the earth

This is probably a way of speaking about a mother's womb

Psalms 139:16

all the days assigned to me were recorded in your book even before the first one happened

This expression implies that ancient Israelites imagined that God wrote down his plans in a book.

Psalms 139:17

How precious are your thoughts to me

"I consider your thoughts very important" or "Your thoughts are very valuable to me"

How vast is their sum!

"Your thoughts are so many."

Psalms 139:18

they would be more in number than the sand

This hyperbole means that the writer would be unable to count God's thoughts. Alternate translation: "there would be more than I could count"

Psalms 139:19

get away from me, you men of bloodshed

The psalmist is only pretending to speak directly to the violent men whom he has in mind. Translators may decide to express this command as a wish.

Psalms 139:20

They rebel against you

"They rebel against your authority, God"

your enemies tell lies

"your enemies lie about you"

Psalms 139:21

Do I not hate those, Yahweh, who hate you? Do I not despise those who rise up against you?

These two sentences have similar meanings. The second one strengthens the thought in the first. Both of these questions actually make statements. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, I hate those who hate you! I despise those who rise up against you!"

rise up against

rebel against

Psalms 139:23

Examine me

This is a request for God to tell the psalmist about any sinful thoughts that he may have. Alternate translation: "Please search me" or "I beg you to search me"

Examine me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts

These two sentences have similar meanings. The second one strengthens the thought in the first.

Psalms 139:24

any wicked way

Here "way" stands for behavior.

the everlasting way

Here "way" refers to trust and obedience in God. Anyone who "walks" this way will have everlasting life.

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140 For the chief musician. A psalm of David.

1 Yahweh, rescue me from the wicked;
preserve me from violent men.

2 They plan evil in their hearts;
they cause battles every day.

3 Their tongues wound like serpents;
vipers' poison is on their lips.

Selah

4 Keep me from the hands of the wicked, Yahweh;
preserve me from violent men

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who plan to push down my steps.

5 The proud have set a trap for me;
they have spread a net;
they have set a snare for me.
Selah

6 I said to Yahweh, "You are my God;
give ear to the sound of my pleas."

7 Yahweh, my Lord, you are powerfully able to save me;
you shield my head in the day of battle.

8 Yahweh, do not grant the desires of the wicked;
do not let their evil plans succeed.
Selah

9 Those who surround me raise their heads;
let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

10 Let burning coals fall on them;
throw them into the fire,
into bottomless pits, never more to rise.

11 May men of tongues not be made secure on the earth;
may evil hunt down the violent man to strike him dead.

12 I know that Yahweh will judge in favor of the afflicted,
and that he will give justice to the needy.

13 Surely the righteous people will give thanks to your name;
the upright people will live in your presence.

Psalm 140 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 140 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's protection

He prayed that God would save him from his enemies who are lying about him. (See: save)

Links:

Psalms 140:1

Psalms 140:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

For the chief musician. A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

For the chief musician

This is for the director of music to use in worship."

Psalms 140:2

they cause battles

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Here "battles" probably refers to conflict of any kind, including quarrels.

Psalms 140:3

Their tongues wound like serpents

People who cause conflict by what they say are spoken of as if they had tongues of serpents. Of course, snakes do not do damage with their tongues, but with their bites and especially with poison. Neither can a person make his tongue sharp. Instead, here the idea of a sharp tongue stands for speaking in a way to cause trouble. And the idea the snakes have sharp tongues stands for the fact that many of them have poison.

Psalms 140:4

the hands of the wicked

That is, the power of the wicked

push down my steps

Possible meanings are 1) "cause my feet to trip so I fall over" or 2) "cause me to fall."

Psalms 140:5

have set a trap ... have spread a net ... have set a snare

The exact kinds of traps are less important than the idea that wicked and proud people are planning to make trouble for the psalmist. If your readers do not know much about different ways of trapping, you may need to reduce this to one line. Alternate translation: "have set a trap to catch me"

Psalms 140:6

give ear to the sound of my pleas

This is a call for help. Alternate translation: "listen to me as I call to you now for help"

Psalms 140:7

you shield my head in the day of battle

A person's head is in great danger during battle. Protecting the person's head represents protecting the whole person. Alternate translation: "you protect me when I go to war"

battle

Here "battle" probably stands for any kind of severe trouble

Psalms 140:8

do not grant the desires of the wicked

"please do not allow the wicked to have what they desire"

the wicked

The adjective "wicked" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "wicked people"

Psalms 140:9

raise their heads

This is a sign of being arrogant. Alternate translation: "are arrogant"

let the mischief of their own lips cover them

This is a prayer that God would make the evildoers suffer from the trouble that they caused by the things they said.

the mischief of their own lips

The trouble that they themselves caused by what they said.

cover them

That is, stop them from causing any more trouble.

Psalms 140:10

Let burning coals fall on them; throw them into the fire

Images of fire stand for severe punishment for the wicked.

bottomless pits

This is probably a reference to Sheol, the world of the dead.

Psalms 140:11

men of tongues

those who speak evil of others without cause

secure on the earth

"safe in this life"

may evil hunt down the violent man

Here evil is spoken of as if it were someone taking revenge on another person.

Psalms 140:12

he will give justice to the needy

The abstract noun "justice" can be stated as "just." Alternate translation: "He will act in a just manner to help the needy"

Psalms 140:13

to your name

This represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to you"

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141 A psalm of David.
Yahweh, I am crying out to you; come quickly to me.
Give ear to my voice when I call to you.

2 May my prayer be like incense before you;
may my lifted hands be like the evening sacrifice.

3 Yahweh, place a guard over my mouth;
guard the door of my lips.

4 Do not let my heart desire any evil thing
or participate in wicked deeds
with men who behave wickedly.
May I not eat any of their delicacies.

5 Let a righteous man hit me; it will be a kindness to me.
Let him correct me; it will be like oil on my head;

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may my head not refuse to accept it.
But my prayer is always against their wicked deeds.

6 Their judges will be thrown down from the top of cliffs;
they will hear that my own words are pleasant.

7 They will have to say, "As when one plows and breaks up the ground,
so our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol."

8 Surely my eyes are on you, Yahweh, Lord;
in you I take refuge; do not leave my soul defenseless.

9 Protect me from the snares that they have laid for me,
from the traps of those who behave wickedly.

10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets
while I escape.

Psalm 141 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 141 is a psalm of deliverance from his enemies and from sin. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's correction

The author prayed that God would keep him from sinning. He is glad to be corrected by good people. He asked God to show that he is right by destroying the evil leaders of the people. (See: sin, good and righteous and evil)

Links:

Psalms 141:1

Psalms 141:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

crying out

"asking you for help"

come quickly to me

The psalmist speaks as if Yahweh were a person who needed to come from another place to help him. What the psalmist wanted Yahweh to do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "come quickly to help me"

Give ear to my voice when I call

"Please hear me when I call" or "I beg you to hear me when I call"

Psalms 141:2

May my prayer be like incense

The psalmist asks Yahweh to accept and be pleased with his prayer the way he would accept and be pleased with incense. Alternate translation: "May the my prayer please you the way the sweet smell of incense pleases people"

my prayer

The psalmist wants Yahweh to be pleased with him because he is praying and because of the words of his prayer.

my lifted hands

"the hands that I have lifted up." Lifted hands are a metonym for prayer. People lifted their hands when they prayed or praised Yahweh. See how you translated "lift up your hands" in Psalms 134:2.

be like the evening sacrifice

The means to be like the animal that was burned on the altar in the evening. The psalmist speaks as if he wants Yahweh to be as pleased with him as he is with those who bring animals to sacrifice. He wants Yahweh to be pleased because the psalmist is praying or because of the words of his prayer.

Psalms 141:3

place a guard over my mouth

The psalmist speaks as if evil words were prisoners trying to escape from his mouth. Alternate translation: "please help me not to say things that are evil"

place a guard over

"tell someone to guard"

guard the door of my lips

The psalmist speaks as if evil words were prisoners trying to escape from his mouth. Alternate translation: "please help me not to say things when I should not"

Psalms 141:4

participate in wicked deeds

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"do evil things"
their delicacies
"their special foods"
Psalms 141:5
hit me
The psalmist speaks as if giving a rebuke were physically hitting someone. Alternate translation: "rebuke me" or "hit me so I will listen when he corrects me"
it will be a kindness to me
The abstract noun "kindness" can be translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "he will be acting kindly to me"
it will be like oil on my head
Possible meanings are that the psalmist speaks as if a person correcting him were putting oil on his head 1) to honor him. Alternate translation: "when he corrects me, I will know that the one who corrects me is doing a good deed to me" or 2) to make his head feel better.
may my head not refuse to accept it
The head is a synecdoche for the person. The litotes can be translated as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "may I accept it gladly"
my prayer is always against their wicked deeds
The words "wicked deeds" are a metonym for the people who do the wicked deeds. Alternate translation: "I always pray that Yahweh will stop wicked people from doing evil deeds"
Psalms 141:6
Their judges will be thrown down
Possible meanings are 1) "Someone will throw their judges down" or 2) "Their judges will throw them down."
judges
political leaders
cliffs
ground that goes straight down a long way
Psalms 141:7
our bones have been scattered
Possible meanings are 1) "people have thrown our bones around in different directions" or 2) as a result of the fall from the cliffs (141:6) "our bodies are broken and our bones lie in disorder."
Psalms 141:8
my eyes are on you
The eyes are a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am looking to see what you will do" or "I expect you to help me"
in you I take refuge
"I am asking you to protect me" See how "take refuge" is translated in [Psalms 118:9]
my soul
The soul is a metonym for the whole person. Alternate translation: "me"
Psalms 141:9
the snares that they have laid for me
The psalmist speaks of deceiving a good man so the good man will sin or so that the evil people can defeat him as if it were laying a trap for an animal. The word "snares" is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "people who are looking for ways to harm me"
snares ... traps
Bible experts disagree on the exact meanings of these words. It would be best either to translate one of them with the word for a net or cage that contains the prey and the other as a rope or vine that catches the prey by the leg or neck or to translate both with the general word for "traps." See how these words are translated in Psalms 140:5.
from the traps of those who behave wickedly
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and protect me from the traps that those who do evil have set"
Psalms 141:10
Let the wicked fall into their own nets
The psalmist speaks of evil people deceiving good people as if hunters were trapping animals. Alternate translation: "Let the wicked fall into the net traps they have made to trap other people" or "Let the bad things the wicked planned for the righteous happen to the wicked instead"

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142 A maschil of David, when he was in the cave; a prayer.
1 With my voice I cry out for help to Yahweh;
with my voice I plead for Yahweh's favor.

2 I pour out my lament before him;
I tell him my troubles.

3 When my spirit is weak within me,
you know my path.
In the way that I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.

4 I look to my right and see
that there is no one who cares about me.
There is no escape for me;

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no one cares about my life.

5 I called out to you, Yahweh;
I said, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living.

6 Listen to my cry,
for I have been brought very low;
rescue me from my persecutors,
for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison
so that I may give thanks to your name.
The righteous will gather around me
because you have been good to me."

Psalm 142 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 142 is a psalm of deliverance from his enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

The psalmist is alone, and has many enemies surrounding him. Despite this, Yahweh will help him. Then, good people will join the author. (See: good)

Links:

Psalms 142:1

Psalms 142:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A maschil of David, when he was in the cave; a prayer

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

A maschil

This may refer to a style of music. See how you translated this in Psalms 32:1.

cave

open place under the earth large enough for people to walk around in

I cry out for help to Yahweh ... I plead for Yahweh's favor

If these two lines are so much the same that the reader will get the wrong meaning, you can translate them as one line.

with my voice

"using my voice" -

Psalms 142:2

pour out my lament before him ... I tell him my troubles

If these two lines are so much the same that the reader will get the wrong meaning, you can translate them as one line.

pour out my lament before him

The psalmist speaks of telling Yahweh why he is sad as if he were pouring all of a liquid out of a container. Alternate translation: "I tell him all about why I am sad"

tell him my troubles

"tell him about everything that makes me worry"

Psalms 142:3

my spirit is weak within me

"I am weak" or "I am extremely discouraged"

you know my path

"you know the path I should take." The psalmist speaks as if what a person does were a path that that person walked along. Alternate translation: "you know the way I should live"

In the way that I walk they have hidden a trap for me

The psalmist speaks of people wanting to harm him as if they were trying to trap an animal. Alternate translation: "They are making plans so that whatever I do they can harm me"

Psalms 142:4

my life

This is a metonym for "me."

Psalms 142:5

called out to you

This is a call for help. Alternate translation: "called to you now for help"

my portion

Possible meanings are 1) "all I want" or 2) "all I need" or 3) "all I have."

in the land of the living

This idiom refers to a person being alive, as opposed to a person who is dead and in the place of the dead. Alternate translation: "while I am living"

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Psalms 142:6
Listen to my cry
This is a call for help. See how you translated this in [Psalms 5:1]
I have been brought very low
Possible meanings are 1) "I am very needy" and 2) "I am very weak." See how "we are very low" is translated in Psalms 78:8.

Psalms 142:7
Bring my soul out of prison
This is a request. The "soul" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "bring me out of prison"
give thanks to your name
The word "name" is a metonym for the person. See how you translated this in [Psalms 5:11]

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143 A psalm of David.
1 Hear my prayer, Yahweh;
give ear to my pleas.
Because of your faithfulness and righteousness,
answer me!

2 Do not enter into judgment with your servant,
for in your sight no one is righteous.

3 The enemy has pursued my soul;
he has crushed me to the ground;
he has made me to live in darkness
like those who have been dead a long time.

4 My spirit is overwhelmed within me;
my heart is appalled.

5 I call to mind the old days;
I meditate on all your deeds;
I reflect on your accomplishments.

6 I spread my hands out to you;
my soul thirsts for you in a parched land.

Selah

7 Answer me quickly, Yahweh,
because my spirit faints.
Do not hide your face from me,
or I will become like those who go down into the pit.

8 Let me hear your covenant faithfulness in the morning,
for I trust in you.
Show me the way where I should walk,
for I lift up my soul to you.

9 Rescue me from my enemies, Yahweh;
I flee to you to hide.

10 Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God.
May your good Spirit

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lead me in the land of uprightness.

11 Yahweh, for your name's sake, keep me alive;
in your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble.

12 In your covenant faithfulness cut off my enemies
and destroy all the enemies of my life,
for I am your servant.

Psalm 143 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 143 is a deliverance psalm. The author prays for deliverance from his enemies. (See: deliverer)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's help

The author prayed for help from Yahweh against his enemies because he is God's servant.

Links:

Psalms 143:1

Psalms 143:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

Hear my prayer

The words "my prayer" are a metonym for the person who is praying. See how these words are translated in [Psalms 39:12]

Psalms 143:2

Do not enter into judgment

To "enter into judgment" is an idiom that means to pronounce judgment. Alternate translation: "Please do not judge" or "I beg you not to judge"

your servant

The psalmist speaks of himself as if he were speaking of another person. Alternate translation: "me"

in your sight no one is righteous

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in your judgment no one is righteous"

Psalms 143:3

pursued my soul

Here the word "soul" represents the person. Alternate translation: "pursued me"

has crushed me to the ground

Defeating an enemy is spoken of as a heavy object crushing a lighter object on the ground. Alternate translation: "has completely defeated me"

Psalms 143:4

My spirit is overwhelmed within me

"I am weak" or "I am extremely discouraged"

my heart is appalled

"I no longer have any hope"

Psalms 143:5

call to mind

"think about"

your accomplishments

"all that you have accomplished" or "all the great things you have done"

Psalms 143:6

spread my hands out to you

What one does with one's body here is a metonym for the purpose of doing so. The Israelites would commonly pray while standing with their hands raised and spread out at their sides. Alternate translation: "pray to you with my hands lifted up at my sides"

my soul thirsts for you in a parched land

The psalmist speaks of wanting to be with God as if he were in a parched land and he also was about to die of thirst. Alternate translation: "I want to be with you the way a person in a parched land who is very thirsty wants water"

my soul thirsts for you

The psalmist desires to know Yahweh. The intensity of his desire to know Yahweh is like one who is very thirsty. Alternate translation: "I long for you"

my soul

The soul is a metonym for the person.

parched land

A land where everything has died because there is no water.

Psalms 143:7

my spirit faints

Here the "spirit" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am weak" or "I am very discouraged"

Do not hide your face from me

This is a request. "I beg you not to hide from me" or "Please, do not hide from me"

Do not hide your face from me

The psalmist speaks of Yahweh refusing to do what the

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psalmist asks as if Yahweh were refusing to even look at the psalmist. This litotes can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "Do not refuse to listen to me" or "Please listen to me"

I will become like those who go down into the pit

Here the word "pit" refers to the place of the dead. This phrase is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "I will become just another dead person"

Psalms 143:8

Let me hear your covenant faithfulness

"Cause me to hear of your covenant faithfulness" or "Tell me of your covenant faithfulness." The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Let me hear of how you are faithful to your covenant"

in the morning

Possible meanings are 1) "in the morning," at the time many people thought was the best time to pray, or 2) "morning by morning," every day.

Show me

"Tell me"

the way where I should walk

The psalmist speaks of the way people live as if it were a path on which they walk. Alternate translation: "how you want me to live"

for I lift up my soul to you

Possible meanings are 1) "I pray to you" or 2) "I believe that you will guide and protect me."

Psalms 143:9

I flee to you to hide

Possible meanings are 1) "I flee to you so I can hide" and 2) "I flee to you so you will hide and protect me."

Psalms 143:10

to do your will

"to do what you want me to do"

lead me in the land of uprightness

Possible meanings are 1) "help me to live righteously" or 2) "may my life be free of trouble"

the land of uprightness

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor for righteous living or 2) "a level land," a metaphor for life free of trouble.

Psalms 143:11

for your name's sake

Yahweh's name represents his reputation and character. Alternate translation: "because of who you are"

Psalms 143:12

the enemies of my life

"the enemies who want to take my life"

In your covenant faithfulness cut off my enemies

"Show your covenant faithfulness by cutting off my enemies." The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "Because you are faithful to your covenant, cut off my enemies"

the enemies of my life

"the enemies of my soul." My "life" may be understood as representing the speaker. Alternate translation: "my enemies"

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144 A psalm of David.
1 Blessed be Yahweh, my rock,
who trains my hands for war
and my fingers for battle.

2 You are my covenant faithfulness and my fortress,
my high tower and the one who rescues me,
my shield and the one in whom I take refuge,
the one who subdues nations under me.

3 Yahweh, what is man that you take notice of him
or the son of man that you think about him?

4 Man is like a breath;
his days are like a passing shadow.

5 Cause the sky to sink and come down, Yahweh;
touch the mountains and make them smoke.

6 Send flashes of lightning and scatter my enemies;
shoot your arrows and drive them back in confusion.

7 Reach out your hand from above;
rescue me out of many waters,

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from the hand of foreigners.

8 Their mouths speak lies,
and their right hand is falsehood.

9 I will sing a new song to you, God;
on a lute of ten strings I will sing praises to you,

10 who gives salvation to kings,
who rescues David your servant from an evil sword.

11 Rescue me and free me
from the hand of foreigners.
Their mouths speak lies,
and their right hand is falsehood.

12 May our sons be like plants
who grow to full size in their youth
and our daughters like carved corner pillars,
shapely like those of a palace.

13 May our storehouses be full
with every kind of produce,
and may our sheep produce thousands
and ten thousands in our fields.

14 Then our oxen will have many young.
No one will break through our walls; there will be no exile
and no outcry in our streets.

15 Blessed is the people with such blessings;
happy is the people whose God is Yahweh.

Psalm 144 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 144 is a worship psalm. It is the first worship psalm in a series consisting of the final seven psalms (Psalms 144-150).

Special concepts in this chapter

Safety

Psalm 144 is a prayer for safety and prosperity for the nation of Israel.

Links:

Psalms 144:1

Psalms 144:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

my rock

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who keeps me safe" or 2) "the one who gives me strength"

who trains my hands for war and my fingers for battle

The words "hands" and "fingers" are synecdoches for "me." If "war" and "battle" are the same word in your language, you can translate this as one line. Alternate translation: "who trains me for war and trains me for battle" or "who trains me for war"

Psalms 144:2

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my covenant faithfulness
The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with anadverb. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who faithfully loves me" or 2) "the one who faithfully protects me."
my fortress ... take refuge
The psalmist uses many metaphors to emphasize that Yahweh will protect him.
my high tower
David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a fortress that protects him from attack. Yahweh is the one who protects David from harm.
my shield
David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a shield that protects a soldier. Yahweh is the one who protects David from harm. See how this is translated in Psalms 18:2.
the one in whom I take refuge
Going to Yahweh for protection is spoken of as taking refuge in him. Alternate translation: "the one to whom I go so he will protect me"
the one who subdues nations under me
"the one who enables me to defeat other nations"
Psalms 144:3
Yahweh, what is man that you take notice of him or the son of man that you think about him?
These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Man is so small compared to everything else you have made that I am surprised that you take notice of man and that you think about the son of man"
man ... son of man
two words for human beings.
Psalms 144:4
like a breath ... like a passing shadow
The writer compares humans to these thing to emphasize how short their lives are.
Psalms 144:5
Cause ... come down ... touch ... make
These words should probably be translated as requests, not commands, since the psalmist knows that God is greater than he is.
Cause the sky to sink
Possible meanings are 1) tear the sky open or 2) bend the heavens like a tree branch bends when someone walks on it or as one bends a bow before shooting arrows.
Psalms 144:6
Send ... scatter ... shoot ... drive
These should probably be translated as requests, not commands, since the psalmist knows that God is greater than he is.
in confusion
"so they do not know what to think or what to do"
Psalms 144:7
Reach out your hand from above; rescue me out of many waters
David speaks as if God were on land above a flood and had physical hands with which he could pull David out of a flood. The flood is a metaphor for the troubles caused by the "foreigners." Alternate translation: "You who are able to act, help me overcome my troubles"
from the hand of foreigners
Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "from the power of foreigners"
Psalms 144:8
Their mouths speak lies
Here the word "mouths" represent the people who speak. Alternate translation: "They speak lies"
their right hand is falsehood
Possible meanings are 1) David speaks of the custom of raising the right hand to swear that what one is about to say in court is true, "they lie even when they swear to tell the truth," or 2) the "right hand" is a metaphor for power, "everything they have gotten, they have gotten by telling lies."
Psalms 144:9
new song
Possible meanings are 1) "a song no one has ever sung before" or 2) "a song I have never sung before."
Psalms 144:10
who gives ... kings, who rescues
You may end a sentence at the end of Psalms 144:9 and start a new sentence here. "you. It is you who gives ... kings. It is you who rescues"
David your servant
David speaks of himself as if he were someone else. "me, David, your servant"
from an evil sword
David speaks of evil people as if they were the swords they use as weapons. Alternate translation: "from evil people who were trying to kill him"
Psalms 144:11
Rescue me and free me
"Please rescue me and free me"
from the hand of foreigners
Here "hand" refers to power. See how you translated these words in [Psalms 144:7]
Their mouths speak lies
The people are represented by their "mouths." See how you translated these words in [Psalms 144:8]
their right hand is falsehood
Possible meanings are 1) David speaks of the custom of raising the right hand to swear that what one is about to say in court is true, "they lie even when they swear to tell the truth," or 2) the "right hand" is a metaphor for power, "everything they have gotten, they have gotten by telling lies."See how you translated these words [Psalms 144:8]
Psalms 144:12
like plants who grow to full size
healthy and strong
in their youth
the time when people develop
our daughters like carved corner pillars
"may our daughters be like carved corner pillars"
carved corner pillars
"beautiful posts that hold up the corners of a large house"
pillars, shapely like those of a palace
"pillars that are carved to make a palace beautiful"
Psalms 144:13
thousands and ten thousands in our fields
"thousands—even tens of thousands!—and fill up our fields"

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Psalms 144:14 No one will break through our walls "No one will be able to invade our city" no outcry	Here the outcry is associated with a severe problem that causes the person to cry out. Alternate translation: "no one crying in pain" or "no one crying for help" or "no one calling out for justice"

145 A psalm of praise. Of David.
1 I will extol you, my God, King;
I will bless your name forever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless you;
I will praise your name forever and ever.

3 Great is Yahweh and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

4 One generation will praise your deeds to the next
and will proclaim your mighty actions.

5 I will meditate on the majesty of your glory
and on your marvelous deeds.

6 They will speak of the power of your awesome works,
and I will declare your greatness.

7 They will declare your abounding goodness,
and they will shout joyfully about your righteousness.

8 Yahweh is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and great in steadfast love.

9 Yahweh is good to all;
his tender mercies are over all his works.

10 All your works will give thanks to you, Yahweh;
your faithful ones will bless you.

11 They will speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and they will tell of your power.

12 They will make known to mankind God's mighty deeds
and the glorious splendor of his kingdom.

13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

14 Yahweh supports all who are falling
and raises up all those who are bent over.

15 The eyes of all wait for you;
you give them their food at the right time.

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16 You open your hand
and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

17 Yahweh is righteous in all his ways
and faithful in all his deeds.

18 Yahweh is near to all those who call to him,
to all who call to him in trustworthiness.

19 He fulfills the desire of those who honor him;
he hears their cry and saves them.

20 Yahweh watches over all those who love him,
but he will destroy all the wicked.

21 My mouth will speak out the praise of Yahweh;
let all mankind bless his holy name
forever and ever.

Psalm 145 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 145 is a worship psalm. This is the second in a series of worship psalms consisting of the final seven psalms (Psalms 144-150).

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

God is worthy of all praise. This is in part because he does such wonderful things for all who worship him.

Links:

Psalms 145:1

Psalms 145:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

A psalm of praise. Of David

This is a superscription that tells about the psalm. Some scholars say that this is part of the scripture and some say that it is not. (See "What are Superscriptions in Psalms" in Introduction to Psalms.)

extol you

"tell people how wonderful you are"

bless your name

The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. See how "may his glorious name be blessed" is translated in [Psalms 72:19]

Psalms 145:2

praise your name

The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "praise you" or "tell people how great you are"

Psalms 145:4

your mighty actions

"the things you can do because you are strong"

Psalms 145:7

declare your abounding goodness

"tell others how very good you are"

Psalms 145:8

great in steadfast love

The psalmist speaks of great in steadfast love as if it were a physical object of which one could possess a large amount. The abstract noun "love" can be translated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "loving your people without ceasing"

Psalms 145:9

his tender mercies are over all his works

"people can see him showing mercy in everything he does"

Psalms 145:10

All your works will give thanks

"All the people you have made will give thanks" or "It will be as if everything you have made will give you thanks"

Psalms 145:13

endures throughout all generations

"remains forever"

Psalms 145:14

supports all who are falling ... raises up all those who are bent over

The psalmist speaks of Yahweh encouraging people as if he were helping people who were physically weak. You may need to translate both lines using only one line. Alternate translation: "encourages those who are discouraged"

Psalms 145:15

The eyes of all wait

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Here the word "eyes" represents those who watch and wait for Yahweh to act. Alternate translation: "Everyone watches and waits"
Psalms 145:16
You open your hand
"You generously provide"
satisfy the desire of every living thing
"you give everyone more than they need and as much as they want"
Psalms 145:17
Yahweh is righteous in all his ways
"People can see from everything that Yahweh does that he is righteous"
faithful in all his deeds
"and he is gracious in all he does" or "people can see from everything that Yahweh does that he is gracious"
Psalms 145:18
is near to all those who call to him
Here "is near" means "ready to help." Alternate translation: "is always ready to help all those who call to him"
to all who call to him in trustworthiness
The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "to all who tell only the truth when they pray" or "to all whom he trusts when they pray"
Psalms 145:21
My mouth will speak
Here the words "My mouth" represent the one speaking. Alternate translation: "I will speak"
will speak out the praise of Yahweh
"tell everyone how good Yahweh is"
let all mankind bless his holy name
The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. See how "may his glorious name be blessed" is translated in [Psalms 72:19]

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1 146 Give praise to Yah.[1]
Praise Yahweh, my soul.

2 I give praise to Yahweh with all my life;
I will sing praises to my God as long as I exist.

3 Do not put your trust in princes
or in mankind, in whom there is no salvation.

4 When a person's life's breath stops, he returns to the ground;
on that day his plans end.

5 Blessed is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,
whose hope is in Yahweh his God.

6 Yahweh made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
he observes trustworthiness forever.

7 He executes justice for the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.
Yahweh frees the prisoners;

8 Yahweh opens the eyes of the blind;
Yahweh raises up those who are bowed down;
Yahweh loves the righteous people.

9 Yahweh protects the foreigners in the land;
he supports the fatherless and widow,
but he opposes the wicked.

10 Yahweh will reign forever,
your God, Zion, for all generations.

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Give praise to Yah.[2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 146 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 146 is a worship psalm. It is the third in series of seven worship psalms. (Psalms 144-150)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

Trusting people for protection is useless because they die. But God blesses everyone who trusts in him. He provides everything people need. (See: trust and save and bless)

Links:

Psalms 146:1

Psalms 146:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Praise Yahweh, my soul

Here "soul" represents the writer's inner being. The writer is commanding his inner being to praise Yahweh. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will praise Yahweh with all my soul" or "I give praise to Yahweh with all my life"

Psalms 146:2

with all my life

"until I die" or "while I live"

Psalms 146:3

in princes

Here "princes" represents all human leaders.

in mankind, in whom there is no salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as "save." Alternate translation: "in any person because they cannot save you"

in mankind

"in humankind" or "in people"

Psalms 146:4

When a person's life's breath stops

This is a polite way to refer to someone dying. Alternate translation: "When a person dies"

he returns to the ground

This means that just as God made the first human, Adam, from the soil, so will a person's body decay and become soil again when he dies.

Psalms 146:6

Yahweh made heaven and earth

The words "heaven" and "earth" represent everything that exists in the physical universe.

observes trustworthiness

The abstract noun "trustworthiness" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "remains trustworthy" or "remains faithful"

Psalms 146:7

He executes justice

"He decides matters fairly"

for the oppressed

This nominal adjective can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "for oppressed people" or "for those whom other people oppress"

to the hungry

This nominal adjective can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "to hungry people" or "to those who are hungry"

Psalms 146:8

opens the eyes of the blind

Causing a blind person to see is spoken of as if Yahweh were opening the person's eyes. Alternate translation: "causes the blind to see"

the blind

This nominal adjective can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "blind people" or "those who are blind"

Yahweh raises up those who are bowed down

Yahweh helping someone is spoken of as if he were physically helping someone to stand up. Alternate translation: "Yahweh helps those who are discouraged" or "Yahweh helps those who are weak"

who are bowed down

This action is a sign of distress or mourning.

Psalms 146:9

supports

God helping someone is spoken of as if he were physically keeping them from falling to the ground.

Psalms 146:10

your God, Zion

Here "Zion" represents all the people of Israel. The writer is speaking to the people of Israel as if they were there listening to him. Alternate translation: "your God, people of Israel"

for all generations

The words "will reign" are understood. Alternate translation: "will reign for all generations" or "will reign forever"

[1]147 Give praise to Yah,[1]

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for it is good to sing praises to our God;
it is pleasant, and praise is suitable.

2 Yahweh rebuilds Jerusalem;
he gathers together the scattered people of Israel.

3 He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.

4 He counts the stars;
he gives names to all of them.

5 Great is our Lord and awesome in power;
his understanding cannot be measured.

6 Yahweh supports the oppressed;
he brings the wicked down to the ground.

7 Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving;
sing praises to our God with a harp.

8 He covers the heavens with clouds
and prepares rain for the earth,
making the grass to grow on the mountains.

9 He gives food to the animals
and to the young ravens when they cry.

10 He finds no delight in the strength of a horse;
he takes no pleasure in the strong legs of a man.

11 Yahweh takes pleasure in those who honor him,
who hope in his covenant faithfulness.

12 Praise Yahweh, Jerusalem;
praise your God, Zion.

13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children among you.

14 He brings prosperity inside your borders;
he satisfies you with the finest of wheat.

15 He sends out his commandment to earth;
his command runs very swiftly.

16 He makes the snow like wool;
he scatters the frost like ashes.

17 He dispenses the hail like crumbs;
who can withstand the cold he sends?

18 He sends out his command and melts them;
he makes the wind to blow and the water to flow.

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19 He proclaimed his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his righteous decrees to Israel.

20 He has not done so with any other nation,
and as for his decrees, they do not know them.
Give praise to Yah.[2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 147 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 147 is a worship psalm. It is the fourth in a series of seven worship psalms. (Psalms 144-150)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's control

Yahweh has created everything and controls all of nature. He provides for the animals and people.

Links:

Psalms 147:1

Psalms 147:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

it is pleasant

The object may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "it is pleasant to sing praises"

praise is suitable

"praise is fitting" or "praise is appropriate"

Psalms 147:3

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds

The writer speaks of the people's sorrow and discouragement as if they were physical wounds, and of Yahweh encouraging them as if he were healing those wounds. Alternate translation: "He encourages those who are sad and helps them to heal from their emotional wounds"

Psalms 147:5

his understanding cannot be measured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can measure his understanding" or "his understanding has no limit"

Psalms 147:6

Yahweh supports the oppressed

The writer speaks of Yahweh honoring those who are oppressed as if Yahweh were keeping them from falling to the ground. Alternate translation: "Yahweh honors the oppressed"

he brings the wicked down to the ground

The writer speaks of Yahweh humiliating the wicked as if Yahweh were forcing them to lie on the ground. Alternate translation: "he humiliates the wicked"

Psalms 147:7

with a harp

"while playing a harp"

Psalms 147:9

animals and to the young ravens when they cry

"animals, and he gives food to the young ravens when they cry"

when they cry

"whey they chirp" or "when they call"

Psalms 147:10

He finds no delight in the strength of a horse

"Strong horses do not delight him"

the strong legs of a man

Possible meanings are 1) "strong legs" is a metonym that represents how swiftly a man can run. Alternate translation: "men who can run swiftly" or 2) "strong legs" represents the strength of the whole man. Alternate translation: "how strong a man is"

Psalms 147:11

who hope in his covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be translated with and adjective. Alternate translation: "who trust him because he is faithful to his covenant"

Psalms 147:12

Jerusalem ... Zion

The writer speaks to Jerusalem, which he also calls Zion, as if it were a person. The names of the city are metonyms for the people who live in it. Alternate translation: "people of Jerusalem ... people of Zion"

Psalms 147:13

For he strengthens the bars of your gates

The phrase "the bars of your gates" represent the city as a whole. Yahweh will make Jerusalem secure from enemy invasion. Alternate translation: "For he protects Jerusalem"

he blesses ... among you

The writer speaks of those who live in Jerusalem as if they were Jerusalem's children. Alternate translation: "he blesses those who live in Jerusalem"

Psalms 147:14

He brings prosperity

"He brings peace." Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh causes the people who live in Jerusalem to prosper materially and financially or 2) the word translated as "prosperity" means

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"peace" and Yahweh keeps Jerusalem safe from enemy attack.

Psalms 147:15

his command runs very swiftly

The writer describes God's command as if it were a messenger that moves quickly to deliver God's message.

Psalms 147:16

He makes the snow like wool; he scatters the frost like ashes

These emphasize how easy it is for him to do these things. He covers the ground with snow as easily as a person covers something with a wool blanket. And, he removes the frost as easily as the wind blows ashes.

Psalms 147:17

He dispenses the hail like crumbs

Yahweh scatters hail as easily as a person would scatter bread crumbs. Alternate translation: "He dispenses the hail easily, as if it were crumbs"

He dispenses

"He sends"

hail

small pieces of ice that fall from the sky like rain

who can withstand the cold he sends?

The writer uses this question to emphasize that it is difficult to endure the cold weather that Yahweh causes. Alternate translation: "no one can live in the cold he sends."

Psalms 147:18

He sends out his command and melts them

The writer speaks of Yahweh's command as if it were his messenger. The word "command" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "He commands the ice to melt"

Psalms 147:19

He proclaimed his word to Jacob, his statutes and his righteous decrees to Israel

These two lines mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh gave his law only to Israel.

his statutes and his righteous decrees to Israel

The verbal phrase can be supplied from the previous line. Alternate translation: "He proclaimed his statutes and his righteous decrees to Israel"

his statutes and his righteous decrees

The words "statutes" and "righteous decrees," along with "word" in the previous line, all refer to the law of Moses. If your language does not have different words for these terms, you may combine the two lines into one, using either "Jacob" or "Israel" for the people who received them.

Psalms 147:20

they do not know them

The other nations do not know Yahweh's decrees.

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148 [1] Give praise to Yah.[1]
Praise Yahweh, you in the heavens;
praise him, you in the heights.

[2] Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts.

[3] Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars.

[4] Praise him, highest heaven
and you waters that are above the sky.

[5] Let them praise the name of Yahweh,
for he gave the command, and they were created.

[6] He has also established them forever and ever;
he issued a decree that will never change.

[7] Praise him from the earth,
you sea monsters and all ocean depths,

[8] fire and hail, snow and clouds,
stormy wind fulfilling his word.

[9] Praise him, mountains and all hills,

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fruit trees and all cedars,

10 Wild animals and all livestock,
creatures that crawl and birds with wings.

11 Praise Yahweh, you kings of the earth and all nations,
you princes, and all you judges of the earth,

12 both young men and young women,
elderly and children.

13 Let them all praise the name of Yahweh,
for his name alone is exalted
and his glory extends over the earth and the heavens.

14 He has lifted up the horn of his people
for praise from all his faithful ones,
the people of Israel, the people near to him.
Give praise to Yah.[2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 148 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 148 is a worship psalm. It is the fifth in a series of seven worship psalms. (Psalms 144-150)

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

All creation, including humans, should praise God for his greatness.

Links:

Psalms 148:1

Psalms 148:1

General Information:

Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Praise Yahweh, you in the heavens ... you in the heights

"Praise Yahweh, you in the heavens ... you in the sky." These two lines are parallel, with phrase "the heights" meaning the same thing as "the heavens" in the previous line.

Psalms 148:2

all his hosts

"all his armies." Here "hosts" refers to the living beings that God created in the heavens. Possible meanings are that they are called hosts 1) because they fight as armies. Alternate translation: "all his angel armies" or 2) because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "all his multitude of angels"

Psalms 148:3

Praise him, sun and moon

The writer speaks to the sun and moon as if they were people and commands them to praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, sun and moon, as people do"

praise him, all you shining stars

The writer speaks to the shining stars as if they were people and commands them to praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, shining stars, as people do"

Psalms 148:4

Praise him, highest heaven

The phrase "highest heaven" is an idiom that refers to heaven itself. The writer speaks to heaven as if it were a person and commands it to praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Praise Yahweh, highest heaven, as people do"

you waters that are above the sky

The writer speaks to "the waters that are above the sky" as if they are people and commands them to praise Yahweh. The verbal phrase can be supplied from the previous line. Alternate translation: "praise him, you waters that are above the sky, as people do"

waters that are above the sky

The writer speaks of a place above the sky where water is stored and from which the rain comes.

Psalms 148:5

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Let them praise the name of Yahweh
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Let them praise Yahweh"
they were created
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he created them"
Psalms 148:6
he issued a decree that will never change
Possible meanings are 1) "he gave a command that is permanent" or 2) "he gave a command that they will not disobey."
he issued
"he gave"
Psalms 148:7
all ocean depths
This phrase represents every creature that lives in the depths of the oceans. Alternate translation: "all creatures in the ocean depths"
Psalms 148:8
fire and hail, snow and clouds, stormy wind
The writer speaks to these natural phenomena as if they are people and commands them to praise Yahweh.
stormy wind fulfilling his word
"stormy wind that does what Yahweh commands"
Psalms 148:9
Connecting Statement:
The writer continues to speak to things that are not human as if they were people and commands them to praise Yahweh.
Psalms 148:10
Wild animals ... all livestock
Together these two phrases encompass all animals. Alternate translation: "all animals"
Psalms 148:11
Connecting Statement:
The writer commands all people to praise Yahweh.
all nations
The word "nations" represents the people who live in those nations. Alternate translation: "people of every nation"
Psalms 148:12
young men and young women, elderly and children
The writer uses two merisms, one related to gender and one related to age, to represent every person.
Psalms 148:13
the name of Yahweh, for his name alone
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, for he alone"
his glory extends over the earth and the heavens
The writer speaks of Yahweh's greatness as his glory being high above earth and heaven.
Psalms 148:14
He has lifted up the horn of his people
The writer speaks of strength as if it were the horn of an animal. Lifting up an animal horn was a symbolic action that represented military victory. Alternate translation: "He has made his people strong" or "He has given his people victory"
for praise from all his faithful ones
"so that all his faithful ones praise him"
the people near to him
The writer speaks of Yahweh loving his people as if his people were physically close to him. Alternate translation: "the people he loves"

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149 Give praise to Yah![1]
Sing to Yahweh a new song;
sing his praise in the assembly of the faithful ones.

2 Let Israel rejoice in the one who made them;
let the people of Zion rejoice in their king.

3 Let them praise his name with dancing;
let them sing praises to him with tambourine and harp.

4 For Yahweh takes pleasure in his people;
he glorifies the humble with salvation.

5 Let the faithful ones rejoice in this honor;
let them sing for joy on their beds.

6 May the praises of God be in their mouths
and a two-edged sword in their hand

7 to execute vengeance on the nations
and acts of punishment on the peoples.

8 They will bind their kings with chains
and their nobles with iron shackles.

9 They will execute the judgment that is written.

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This will be an honor for all his faithful ones.
Give praise to Yah.[2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 149 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 149 is a worship psalm. It is the sixth in a series of seven worship psalms. (Psalms 144-150)

Special concepts in this chapter

Praise

The people of Israel should praise God and conquer the other nations.

Links:

Psalms 149:1

Psalms 149:1

General Information:

The psalmist is speaking to all of God's people, so you should use the plural command form if your language has one. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

a new song

Possible meanings are 1) "a song you have never sung before" or 2) a song no one has ever sung before.

sing his praise

"praise him with songs"

Psalms 149:2

rejoice in the one who made them

Possible meanings are 1) "rejoice because he made them" or 2) "rejoice because the one who made them is good."

rejoice in their king

The words "their king" is likely a reference to God. Possible meanings are 1) "rejoice because he is their king" or 2) "rejoice because their king is good."

Psalms 149:3

praise his name

The word "name" is a metonym for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "praise him" or "tell people how great he is"

tambourine

a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken

Psalms 149:4

glorifies the humble with salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "glorifies the humble by saving them"

the humble

This can be restated to remove the nominal adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are humble"

Psalms 149:5

on their beds

The translation can make explicit that this refers to when a person lies down at night to sleep in a bed. Alternate translation: "as they lie down to sleep at night"

Psalms 149:6

May the praises of God be in their mouths

The mouth represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "May they always be ready to praise God"

a two-edged sword in their hand

If swords are not known, use the name of a local weapon. The word "sword" is a metonym for being ready to fight in war. Alternate translation: "may there be a two-edged sword in their hand" or "may they always be ready to go to war for him"

Psalms 149:7

the nations

The phrase "the nations" is a metonym for the people who live in the nations. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations"

Psalms 149:8

chains

These are made of heavy metal and restrict the movement of prisoners.

shackles

a pair of chains or bands with a chain between that limits the movement of both a person's hands or feet.

Psalms 149:9

They will execute the judgment that is written

The abstract noun "judgment" can be stated as "judge." Alternate translation: "They will judge and punish the people of those nations as God wrote should be done"

[1] 150 Give praise to Yah![1]
Praise God in his holy place;
praise him in the mighty heavens.

[2] Praise him for his mighty acts;

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praise him for his surpassing greatness.

3 Praise him with the blast of the horn;
praise him with lute and harp.

4 Praise him with tambourines and dancing;
praise him with stringed instruments and pipe.

5 Praise him with loud cymbals;
praise him with high sounding cymbals.

6 Let everything that has breath give praise to Yah!
Give praise to Yah![2]

[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Psalm 150 General Notes

Type of psalm

Psalm 150 is a worship psalm. It is last in a series of worship psalms. (Psalms 144-150)

Special concepts in this chapter

Instruments

People should praise Yahweh with every type of musical instrument.

Links:

Psalms 150:1

Psalms 150:1

General Information:

This focuses on praise or worship that is most commonly held in the temple. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

Praise God in his holy place

God's temple was often referred to as his holy place. This was the most common place to go to worship God.

Psalms 150:2

his mighty acts

"the great things he has done." God's "mighty acts" can possibly mean 1) natural such as thunderstorms and earthquakes or 2) miraculous such as healings and great victories in battle.

Psalms 150:3

General Information:

Verses 3 to 5 focus on praising or worshiping God with musical instruments and dance.

Psalms 150:4

tambourines

A tambourine is a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken.

Psalms 150:5

cymbals

two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound

Psalms 150:6

General Information:

This verse is more than the end of this psalm. It is the closing statement for all of Book 5 of the Psalms, which starts at Psalm 107 and ends with Psalm 150.

everything that has breath

This is an exaggeration that calls on all people who are alive to praise God.

Introduction to Proverbs

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Proverbs

Solomon introduces his proverbs (1:1–7) Collection of teachings (1:8–9:18) Proverbs of Solomon (10:1–22:16) Words of wise men (22:17–24:22) More words of wise men (24:23–34) More proverbs of Solomon (25:1–29:27) The words of Agur (30:1–33) The words of Lemuel (31:1–9) A good wife praised (31:10–31)

What is the book of Proverbs about?

A proverb is a short statement that expresses some wisdom or truth. Most societies have their own proverbs. People that speak a given language can readily understand proverbs in that language.

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The Book of Proverbs is a collection of proverbs. It also includes teachings about how to live wisely. Scholars refer to Proverbs, Psalms, Job, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs as wisdom literature.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The title of this book is often translated as "Proverbs." A more general translation would be "Words for Wise People," "Words that Give Wisdom," or something similar.

Who wrote the book of Proverbs?

Proverbs begins with the words, "The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David and King of Israel." But Solomon did not write all of the proverbs. Unnamed wise men may have written some of them. Agur the son of Jakeh (30:1) and King Lemuel (31:1) identify themselves as writing some of the proverbs.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is meant by "wisdom" and "foolishness" in the Book of Proverbs?

"Wisdom" means the understanding and doing of what is true and morally right. A wise person understands and does what Yahweh would judge to be right. Anyone living in this way will also learn to live well with other people and to make good practical decisions in life. The book of Proverbs also acknowledges that it is important to maintain one's honor or reputation in the opinion of other people. Those who fail to live in this way are called "foolish." For this reason, it is possible for a person to be very intelligent and still be foolish. (See: wise and foolish)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What form do the individual proverbs have?

Most proverbs have two parts or two lines that are "parallel" to each other. The second part may strengthen the first, may give more details about the first, or may even say what seems the opposite of the first. Translators should take into account that each proverb is also part of a larger group of proverbs.

How should personification be represented in translation?

In Proverbs, certain qualities such as wisdom and understanding are often represented as if they were wise women, as in [Proverbs 3:15-18]

Proverbs

1 [1]The proverbs of Solomon son of David, the king of Israel.

[2] These proverbs are to teach wisdom and instruction,
to teach words of insight,

[3] that you may receive instruction in prudent behavior,
righteousness, justice, and uprightness.

[4] These proverbs are also to give wisdom to the naive,
and to give knowledge and discretion to the youth.

[5] Let wise people listen and increase their learning,
and let discerning people get wise counsel,

[6] to understand proverbs, parables,
and words of wise people and their riddles.

[7] The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge—
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

[8] My son, hear the instruction of your father
and do not abandon the rules of your mother;

[9] they will be a graceful wreath for your head

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and pendants hanging from your neck.

10 My son, if sinners try to entice you into their sin,
do not go with them.

11 If they say, "Come with us,
let us lie in wait for blood,
let us hide and attack innocent people for no reason;

12 let us swallow them up alive, like Sheol takes away those who are healthy,
and make them like those who go down into the pit;

13 we will find all kinds of valuable things;
we will fill our houses with plunder;

14 throw in your lot with us,
and we will all have one purse together"—

15 my son, do not walk down that path with them;
do not let your foot touch where they walk;

16 their feet run to evil
and they hurry to shed blood.

17 For it is useless to spread the net
in the sight of any bird.

18 These men lie in wait for their own blood—
they set an ambush for their own lives.

19 So are the ways of everyone who gains profit by violence;
unjust gain takes away the lives of those who hold on to it.

20 Wisdom cries aloud in the street,
she raises her voice in the open places;

21 at the head of the noisy streets she cries out,
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks her sayings,

22 "How long, you naive people, will you love being naive?
How long, you mockers, will you delight in mockery,
and how long, you fools, will you hate knowledge?

23 Turn at my correction;
I will pour out my spirit to you;
I will make my words known to you.

24 I have called, and you have refused to listen;
I reached out with my hand, but there was no one who paid attention.

25 But you have ignored all my instruction
and paid no attention to my correction.

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26 I will laugh at your calamity,
I will mock you when the terror comes—

27 when your fearful dread comes like a storm
and disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come upon you.

28 Then they will call upon me, and I will not answer;
they will diligently seek me, but they will not find me.

29 Because they hate knowledge
and did not choose the fear of Yahweh,

30 they would not follow my instruction,
and they despised all my correction.

31 They will eat the fruit of their ways,
and with the fruit of their schemes they will be filled.

32 For the naive are killed when they turn away,
and the indifference of fools will destroy them.

33 But whoever listens to me will dwell in safety
and will rest secure with no fear of disaster."

Proverbs 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first chapter of proverbs begins with a type of introduction in verses 1-7. It mentions Solomon, son of David. Verse 7 contains a foundational verse for the whole book. It defines wisdom.

Special concepts in this chapter

Parallelism

Proverbs are often written without any surrounding context and in two lines of text. Each line will have a certain relationship to the other line.

Links:

Proverbs 1:1 Notes Proverbs intro

Proverbs 1:1

General Information:

Verses 2-33 are poetry.

Proverbs 1:2

to teach wisdom and instruction

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns "wisdom" and "instruction" can be stated as adjectives or verbs. Alternate translation: "to teach you how to be wise and to instruct you about how to live moral lives"

to teach words of insight

"to help you understand wise teachings"

Proverbs 1:3

that you may receive

Here "you" refers to the readers. If it is more natural in your language you can state it as an inclusive "we." Alternate translation: "that we may receive"

may receive instruction in prudent behavior

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "behavior" is stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "may receive instruction in how to live prudently"

Proverbs 1:4

are also to give wisdom to the naive

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "wisdom" can be stated as the adjective "wise." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "also teach to those who are naive how to be wise"

naive

inexperienced or immature

to give knowledge and discretion to the youth

The abstract nouns "knowledge" and "discretion" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "and to teach to the youth what he needs to know and how to discern the right thing to do"

the youth

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"every young person" or "young people"
discretion
knowing what should be done in a particular situation
Proverbs 1:5
Let wise people listen and increase their learning
"Let those who are wise pay attention and learn even more"
let discerning people get wise counsel
"let people who have understanding learn from these proverbs how to make good decisions"
Proverbs 1:6
riddles
sayings that one can understand only after thinking about them
Proverbs 1:7
General Information:
A father teaches his child.
Yahweh
This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.
fools despise wisdom and instruction
"those who do not value what is wise and instructive are fools"
Proverbs 1:8
do not abandon
"do not ignore" or "do not reject"
Proverbs 1:9
they will be a graceful wreath for your head and pendants hanging from your neck
The rules and instructions that parents teach their children are so valuable and important that they are spoken of as if they were a beautiful wreath or pendant that a person wears. Alternate translation: "they will make you wise just as wearing a wreath on your head or a pendant around your neck makes you beautiful"
wreath
an woven circle made of leaves or flowers
pendants
jewelry that is worn around the neck
Proverbs 1:10
try to entice you into their sin
"try to persuade you to sin as they do"
do not go with them
"refuse to go them" or "do not listen to them"
Proverbs 1:11
If they say
Here the speaker gives an example of what sinners may try to entice someone to do.
lie in wait
"hide and wait for the right time"
Proverbs 1:12
General Information:
Verses 12-14 end the imagined statement of the sinners who are trying to entice others to sin.
let us swallow them up alive, like Sheol takes away those who are healthy
The sinners speak of murdering innocent people as if they were Sheol and they would take a living and healthy person down to the place where dead people go.
let us swallow ... like Sheol takes away
This speaks of the grave as if it were a person that swallows humans and takes them down to the place of the dead.
like Sheol takes away those who are healthy
The wicked expect to destroy their victims in the same way Sheol, the place of the dead, takes away even healthy people.
those who go down into the pit
These words could be 1) a literal reference to travelers who fall into a deep hole where no one will ever find them or 2) a euphemism for people who die and enter Sheol, the place of the dead.
Proverbs 1:13
we will find
The word "find" is a euphemism or metonym for "get" or "seize" by violence.
Proverbs 1:14
throw in your lot with us
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "join us"
we will all have one purse together
Here "purse" represents everything that they steal. Alternate translation: "we will equally share everything that we steal"
purse
a bag for carrying money
Proverbs 1:15
General Information
This is the continuation of the sentence that started in 1:11 with "If they say."
do not walk down that path with them; do not let your foot touch where they walk
To avoid behaving the same way as the sinners do is spoken of as if the son were to avoid walking on or even touching the paths that sinners walk on. Alternate translation: "do not go with the sinners, and do not do what they do"
Proverbs 1:16
their feet run to evil
The sinners having an eager interest in doing evil things is spoken of as if they were running to evil. Alternate translation: "they are eager to do wicked things"
their feet run
Here "feet" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "they run"
to shed blood
Here "blood" represents a person's life. To "shed blood" means to murder someone.
Proverbs 1:17
For it is useless to spread the net in the sight of any bird
This metaphor compares the wisdom of birds who avoid traps that they see to the foolishness of sinners who get caught in traps they make for themselves.
Proverbs 1:18
These men lie in wait for their own blood—they set an ambush for their own lives
This finishes the comparison started in [Proverbs 1:17]
These men lie in wait for their own blood
To lie in wait is to hide, ready to do something wicked. Alternate translation: "It is as if they are looking for an opportunity to kill themselves" or "They themselves will be

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killed because they try to kill others"

their own blood

Here "blood" is a metonym for a violent death. Alternate translation: "to kill themselves violently"

they set an ambush for their own lives

Here "their own lives" is a metonym for themselves. Alternate translation: "it is as if they are the ones who are waiting to suddenly attack and kill them"

Proverbs 1:19

So are the ways of everyone

A person's fate or destiny is spoken of as if it were a road a person walks on. Alternate translation: "This is what happens to everyone"

gains profit by violence

If your language has a word for "profit" that has been gained by unjust means, you should use it here.

unjust gain takes away the lives of those who hold on to it

A person destroying themselves by trying to gain wealth through violence, theft, and deceit is spoken of as if the unjust gains will kill those who take it. Alternate translation: "it is like the unjust gains will destroy those who hold on to it"

Proverbs 1:20

General Information:

In 1:20-1:33 Wisdom is spoken of as if it were a woman speaking to the people.

Wisdom cries aloud

If your language does not allow you to treat wisdom as a woman shouting to the people in the city, you might try something like "Grandmother Wisdom cries aloud" or "Honored Miss Wisdom cries aloud" or "Wisdom is like a woman who cries aloud"

raises her voice

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "speaks with a loud voice"

in the open places

This means places where there would be a lot of people. Alternate translation: "in the markets" or "in the town squares"

Proverbs 1:21

at the head of the noisy streets

Possible meanings are 1) "head" refers to the place where busy streets intersect or 2) "head" refers to the top of a wall where people on noisy streets could see and hear wisdom speaking.

Proverbs 1:22

How long, you naive people, will you love being naive?

Wisdom uses this question to rebuke those who are not wise. Alternate translation: "You who are naive must stop loving being naive."

naive

inexperienced or immature

How long, you mockers, will you delight in mockery, and how long, you fools, will you hate knowledge?

Wisdom uses this question to rebuke the mockers and the fools. Alternate translation: "You who mock must stop delighting in mockery, and you fools must stop hating knowledge."

Proverbs 1:23

General Information:

Wisdom continues to speak.

Turn at my correction

Possible meanings are 1) "Repent when you hear me correct you" or 2) "Listen carefully to me when I correct you."

I will pour out my spirit to you

Wisdom telling the people everything she thinks about them is spoken of as if her spirit were a liquid that she would pour out.

spirit

This is a metonym for thoughts. This and the word "words" form a merism of thoughts and words, meaning that wisdom is teaching people everything she has to teach. This word does not refer to the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "thoughts"

I will make my words known to you

"I will tell you what I think"

Proverbs 1:24

I reached out with my hand

This phrase is an idiom that means to beckon someone or to invite a person to come. Alternate translation: "I invited you to come to me"

Proverbs 1:26

General Information:

Wisdom continues to speak, describing what happens to those who ignore her.

I will laugh

This can be stated with the word "therefore" to show that the woman wisdom laughs at them because they ignored her. Alternate translation: "Therefore I will laugh"

at your calamity

"when bad things happen to you"

Proverbs 1:27

when your fearful dread comes like a storm ... like a whirlwind ... come upon you

Terrible things happening to the people is compared to a storm hitting them and causing fear and suffering.

whirlwind

a very strong wind storm that causes damage

Proverbs 1:28

Connecting Statement:

Wisdom continues speaking.

Then they will call upon me

"Then those who ignored me will cry out to me for help"

Proverbs 1:29

Because they hate knowledge

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be stated as the verb "learn." Alternate translation: "Because they refused to learn to be wise"

did not choose the fear of Yahweh

The abstract noun "fear" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "did not fear Yahweh" or "did not honor and respect Yahweh"

Proverbs 1:30

would not follow my instruction

"would not accept my instruction" or "rejected my advice"

Proverbs 1:31

General Information:

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Verse 33 ends wisdom's statement that began in Proverbs 1:22.

eat the fruit of their ways

Here a person's behavior is spoken of as if it were a way or road. Also, a person receiving the results of their behavior is spoken as if the person were eating the fruit of their behavior. Alternate translation: "experience the consequences of their actions"

with the fruit of their schemes they will be filled

"they will eat the fruit of their schemes until they are full." A person receiving the results of their own evil plans is spoken of as eating the fruit of their schemes. Alternate translation: "they will suffer the consequences of their own evil plans"

Proverbs 1:32

naive

inexperienced or immature

are killed when they turn away

A person rejecting wisdom is spoken of as if the person physically turns away from wisdom. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "die because they refuse to learn"

the indifference of fools will destroy them

The abstract noun "indifference" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "fools will die because they do not care about what should be done"

indifference

a lack of interest about something

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2 My son, if you receive my words
and treasure up my commandments with you,

2 make your ears pay attention to wisdom
and incline your heart to understanding.

3 If you cry out for discernment
and raise your voice for understanding,

4 if you seek it like you would seek silver
and search for understanding as you would seek hidden treasures,

5 then you will understand the fear of Yahweh
and you will find the knowledge of God.

6 For Yahweh gives wisdom;
from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
he is a shield for those who walk in integrity;

8 he guards the paths of justice
and he will preserve the way of his faithful ones.

9 Then you will understand righteousness, justice, and equity,
and every good path.

10 For wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.

11 Discretion will watch over you;
understanding will guard you.

12 They will rescue you from the way of evil,
from those who speak perverse things,

13 who abandon the paths of uprightness
and walk in the ways of darkness.

14 They rejoice when they do evil

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and delight in the perversities of evil.

15 They follow crooked paths,
and using deception they hide their tracks.

16 Wisdom and discretion will save you from an adulteress,
from an immoral woman and her flattering words.

17 She abandons the companion of her youth
and forgets the covenant of her God.

18 For her house sinks down to death,
and her tracks will lead you to those in the grave.

19 All who go to her will not return again
and they will not reach the paths of life.

20 So you will walk in the way of good people
and follow the paths of righteous people.

21 For the upright will make a home in the land,
and those with integrity will remain in it.

22 But the wicked will be cut off from the land,
and the faithless will be cut off from it.

Proverbs 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 2 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

My Son

Occasionally, the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only males. Instead, it is simply a form used to pass on advice as a father does to his son.

Links:

Proverbs 2:1 Notes

Proverbs 2:1

General Information:

A father teaches his child using poetry.

if you receive my words

"if you listen to what I am teaching you"

treasure up my commandments with you

Valuing what is commanded is spoken of as if the commandments were a treasure and the person were a safe place to store the treasure. Alternate translation: "consider my commands to be as valuable as a treasure"

Proverbs 2:2

make your ears pay attention

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "force yourself to listen carefully"

to wisdom

This abstract noun can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to the wise things I am teaching you"

incline your heart to understanding

Here "heart" represents a person's mind. The phrase "incline your heart" is an idiom that means to commit or fully dedicate one's mind to a task. Alternate translation: "try hard to understand what is wise" or "fully dedicate yourself to understanding wise teachings"

Proverbs 2:3

raise your voice

This is an idiom that means to speak loudly or to shout.

Proverbs 2:4

if you seek it like you would seek silver and search for understanding as you would seek hidden treasures

Both phrases have the same meaning. These similes emphasize the great effort a person should make to understand what is wise. Alternate translation: "if you seek

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understanding with as much effort as you search for a valuable object"

you seek it ... search for understanding

Trying very hard to understand what is wise is spoken of as if understanding were an object for which a person must search.

Proverbs 2:5

you will find the knowledge of God

To succeed in knowing God is spoken of as if the knowledge of God were an object that a person finds after searching.

Proverbs 2:6

from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding

Here "mouth" represents Yahweh himself or what he says. Alternate translation: "from Yahweh comes knowledge and understanding" or "Yahweh tells us what we need to know and understand"

Proverbs 2:7

He stores up sound wisdom for the upright

Yahweh teaching wisdom to people is spoken of as if wisdom were an item that Yahweh stores and gives to people. Alternate translation: "He teaches what is truly wise to the upright"

the upright

"the person who lives rightly" or "people who live rightly"

sound

"dependable"

he is a shield for those

Yahweh being able to protect his people is spoken of as if he were a shield. Alternate translation: "God protects those"

who walk in integrity

A person behaving with integrity is spoken of as if they were walking in integrity. Alternate translation: "who behave with integrity" or "who live their lives as they should"

Proverbs 2:8

he guards the paths of justice

Possible meanings are 1) justice itself is spoken of as if it were a path. Alternate translation: "God makes sure that people act justly" or 2) a person's life is spoken of as if it were a path. Alternate translation: "God protects those who act justly"

preserve the way of his faithful ones

A person's life is spoken of as if it were a way or road. Alternate translation: "protect those who are faithful to him"

Proverbs 2:9

equity

fairness

every good path

A behavior that is wise and pleases Yahweh is spoken of as if it were a good path. Alternate translation: "ways to live that are pleasing to God"

Proverbs 2:10

wisdom will come into your heart

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. A person becoming wise is spoken of as if wisdom would enter into a person's heart. Alternate translation: "you will gain much wisdom" or "you will learn how to be truly wise"

pleasant to your soul

Here "soul" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "pleasing to you" or "enjoyable to you"

Proverbs 2:11

Discretion will watch over you; understanding will guard you

This speaks of "discretion" and "understanding" as if they were persons who could watch over someone else. Both statements mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Because you think carefully and understand what is right and wrong, you will be safe"

Discretion

the quality of being careful in actions and speech

watch over

to guard, protect or take care of someone or something

Proverbs 2:12

They will rescue you from the way of evil

"They" refers to discretion and understanding, which are spoken of as if they were persons who could rescue someone else. Alternate translation: "You will know to stay away from what is evil"

from the way of evil

Evil behaviors are spoken of as if evil were a way or path on which a person walks.

Proverbs 2:13

who abandon the paths of uprightness and walk in the ways of darkness

A person no longer doing what is right but deciding to do what is evil is spoken of as if the person stops walking on the correct path and chooses to walk down a dark path.

who abandon

The word "who" refers to the people who speak perverse things.

abandon

to leave and never return to someone or something

Proverbs 2:14

They rejoice

"They" refers to the same people as in Proverbs 2:12.

delight in the perversities of evil

This means basically the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Alternate translation: "delight in doing what they know is evil"

Proverbs 2:15

They follow crooked paths

People who lie to others are spoken of as if they walk on crooked or twisted paths. Alternate translation: "They deceive other people"

using deception they hide their tracks

People lying so that others will not find out what they did is spoken of as if they covered the tracks on a path so that no one could follow them. Alternate translation: "they lie so that no one will know what they have done"

Proverbs 2:16

General Information:

The father continues to teach his child how wisdom will protect him.

Wisdom and discretion will save you

The writer speaks of wisdom and discretion as if they were people who save the one who possesses them. Alternate translation: "If you have wisdom and discretion, you will save yourself"

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Proverbs 2:17

the companion of her youth

This refers to her husband, whom she married when she was young.

the covenant of her God

This likely refers to the marriage covenant that she made with her husband in the presence of God.

Proverbs 2:18

her house sinks down to death

Possible meanings are 1) "going to her house leads to death" or 2) "the road to her house is the road to death."

her tracks will lead you

Possible meanings are 1) "the paths to her house will lead you." This refers to the tracks or path that lead to her house, or 2) this is a metaphor that speaks of her way of life as if it were a path on which she walks. Alternate translation: "her way of life will lead you"

to those in the grave

This refers to the spirits of dead people and is a metonym for the place of the dead. Alternate translation: "to the grave"

Proverbs 2:19

go to her

This is a polite way of speaking about haveing sexual relations. Alternate translation: "have sexual relations with her" or "lie with her"

they will not reach the paths of life

Possible meanings are 1) "they will not return to the land of the living" or 2) "they will never live a happy life again."

Proverbs 2:20

So

The writer tells the result of getting understanding and discretion.

you will walk in the way ... follow the paths

A person's conduct is spoken of as if it were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "you will live in the way ... follow the example"

Proverbs 2:22

the wicked will be cut off from the land

The writer speaks of Yahweh removing people from the land as if he were cutting the people off, like a person might cut a branch from a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will remove the wicked from the land"

the wicked ... the faithless

These are nominal adjectives that can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who are wicked ... those who are faithless" or "wicked people ... faithless people"

the faithless will be cut off from it

The writer speaks of Yahweh removing people from the land as if he were cutting the people off, like a person might cut a branch from a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will remove the faithless from it"

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3 [1] My son, do not forget my teaching,
and keep my commandments in your heart,

[2] for the length of your days and years of your life,
they will add peace to you.

[3] Do not let steadfast love and faithfulness ever leave you;
tie them together about your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.

[4] Then you will find favor and a good reputation
in the sight of God and man.

[5] Trust in Yahweh with all your heart
and do not lean on your own understanding;

[6] in all your ways acknowledge him
and he will make your paths straight.

[7] Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear Yahweh and turn away from evil.

[8] It will be healing to your flesh

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and refreshment for your bones.

9 Honor Yahweh with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce,

10 and your storehouses will be filled up
and your vats will be bursting, full of new wine.

11 My son, do not despise Yahweh's instruction
and do not hate his rebuke,

12 for Yahweh disciplines those he loves,
as a father deals with a son who pleases him.

13 The one who finds wisdom is blessed;
he also gets understanding.

14 What you gain from wisdom is better than what silver will give in return
and its profit is better than gold.

15 Wisdom is more precious than jewels
and nothing you desire can compare to her.

16 She has the length of her days in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness
and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of it;
those who hold on to it are happy.

19 By wisdom Yahweh founded the earth;
by understanding he established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge the depths broke open
and the clouds dropped their dew.

21 My son, do not let these depart from your eyes:
guard sound wisdom and discretion.

22 They will be life to your soul
and an adornment of favor to wear around your neck.

23 Then you will walk on your way in safety
and your foot will not stumble;

24 when you lie down, you will not be afraid;
when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

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25 Do not be afraid of sudden terror
or devastation caused by the wicked, when it comes,

26 for Yahweh will be on your side
and will keep your foot from being caught in a trap.

27 Do not withhold good from those who deserve it,
when it is in your power to act.

28 Do not say to your neighbor,
"Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give it,"
when you have the money with you.

29 Do not make a plan to harm your neighbor—
the one who dwells in safety with you.

30 Do not argue with a person without a reason,
when he has done nothing to harm you.

31 Do not envy a violent person
or choose any of his ways.

32 For the devious person is an abomination to Yahweh,
but he brings the upright person into his confidence.

33 The curse of Yahweh is on the house of the wicked person,
but he blesses the home of righteous people.

34 He mocks mockers,
but he gives his favor to humble people.

35 Wise people inherit honor,
but fools will be lifted up in their shame.

Proverbs 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 3 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

My Son

Occasionally, the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only males. Instead, it is simply a form used to pass on advice as a father does to his son.

Wisdom is feminine

You may notice that wisdom is referenced using a feminine pronoun. This is a feature that is carried in from the Hebrew language. This may apply well in your language but if it does not, follow the conventions of your language. (See: wise)

Links:

Proverbs 3:1 Notes

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Proverbs 3:1

General Information:

The writer speaks as a father teaching his child using poetry.

do not forget my teaching

The word "teaching" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "do not forget what I have taught you"

keep my commandments in your heart

This phrase says in positive terms what the previous phrase says in negative terms. Here the word "heart" represents the mind. The word "commandments" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "always remember what I have commanded you"

Proverbs 3:2

for the length of your days and years of your life

These two phrases share similar meanings and refer to the duration of a person's life. Alternate translation: "all your life" or "as long as you live"

Proverbs 3:3

Do not let steadfast love and faithfulness ever leave you

The writer speaks of "steadfast love" and "faithfulness" as if they were people who could leave someone. The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Also, the negative command can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Love God without ceasing and be faithful to him"

tie them together about your neck

The writer speaks of faithfulness and trustworthiness as if they were objects that a person could tie around the neck like a necklace. The image suggests that these are valuable things that the person displays outwardly. Alternate translation: "display them proudly like one would wear a necklace"

write them on the tablet of your heart

Here the heart represents a person's mind. The mind is spoken of as if it were a tablet upon which someone can write messages and commands. Alternate translation: "always remember them, as if you had written them permanently on a tablet"

Proverbs 3:4

in the sight of God and man

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "in the judgment of God and man"

Proverbs 3:5

all your heart

Here the word "heart" represents the inner person. Alternate translation: "your whole being"

do not lean on your own understanding

The writer speaks of relying on one's own understanding as if "understanding" were an object on which a person can lean. Alternate translation: "do not rely on your own understanding" or "do not trust your own understanding"

Proverbs 3:6

in all your ways

The writer speaks of a person's actions as if they were paths on which the person walks. Alternate translation: "in everything you do"

he will make your paths straight

The writer speaks of Yahweh making a person's actions prosperous as if that person's actions were paths on which he walks and which Yahweh makes free of obstacles. Alternate translation: "he will give you success"

Proverbs 3:7

Do not be wise in your own eyes

The writer speaks of a person's opinion as if that person were seeing something with his eyes. Alternate translation: "Do not be wise in your own opinion"

turn away from evil

The writer speaks of not committing evil actions as if it were turning away from evil. Alternate translation: "do not commit evil"

Proverbs 3:8

It will be healing to your flesh

The word "it" refers to the instructions that the writer gives in the previous verse. The full meaning of this can be made clear. The word "flesh" represents the whole body. Alternate translation: "If you do this, it will be healing for your body"

flesh ... bones

These words form a merism that refers to the entire person through metonymy for the outer man and the inner man.

Proverbs 3:9

all your produce

"all the food you harvest"

Proverbs 3:10

your storehouses will be filled up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your storehouses will be full"

storehouses

buildings or rooms where food is stored

your vats will be bursting

your storage containers will be extremely full, as if ready to break open.

Proverbs 3:11

General Information:

The writer writes as a father teaching his son.

Proverbs 3:12

a son who pleases him

"a son in whom he delights." This refers to the father's affection for the son, and not to the father's approval of the son's behavior. Alternate translation: "a son whom he loves"

Proverbs 3:13

The one who finds wisdom

The writer speaks of "wisdom" as if it were an object that one finds. Alternate translation: "The one who attains wisdom"

Proverbs 3:14

what silver will give in return

This refers to the profit that one can make from trading or investing silver.

Proverbs 3:15

General Information:

The author speaks of wisdom as if it were a woman.

more precious

"more valuable"

Proverbs 3:16

She has the length of her days in her right hand; in her left hand are

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riches and honor
The writer speak of the benefits that one gains from having wisdom as if wisdom were a woman who held these qualities in her hands and offered them to people. Alternate translation: "Wisdom gives a person length of days and riches and honor"
length of her days
This idiom refers to the duration of person's life and may imply a long life. Alternate translation: "long life"
Proverbs 3:17
Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace
The writer speaks of wisdom as if it were a woman and of the benefits that wisdom gives a person as if wisdom were leading that person along a way or a path. Alternate translation: "Wisdom will always treat you pleasantly and give you peace"
ways of pleasantness
"pleasant ways"
Proverbs 3:18
She is a tree of life to those who take hold of it
The writer speaks of wisdom as if it were a tree that bears life-giving fruit and of a person who benefits from wisdom as if that person ate of the fruit. Alternate translation: "Wisdom is like a tree that sustains the life of those who eat of its fruit"
a tree of life
"a tree that gives life" or "a tree whose fruit sustains life"
those who hold on to it
"those who hold on to its fruit"
Proverbs 3:19
Yahweh founded the earth ... established the heavens
The writer speaks of Yahweh creating the earth and the heavens as if he were laying the foundation of a building. Alternate translation: "Yahweh created the earth ... made the heavens"
Proverbs 3:20
the depths broke open
In ancient thought, water existed under the earth. This phrase refers to Yahweh causing that water to come out of the earth and make the oceans and rivers exist. Alternate translation: "he caused the rivers to flow" or "he caused the oceans to exist"
dew
water that forms on the ground at night
Proverbs 3:21
do not let these depart from your eyes ... wisdom ... discretion
The word "eyes" is a metonym for what the eyes see, and "wisdom" and "discretion" are spoken of as if they were animals able to escape or wander away. Alternate translation: "do not let these out of your sight ... wisdom ... discretion" or "never forget ... wisdom ... discretion" or "always remember ... wisdom ... discretion"
Proverbs 3:22
They will be life to your soul
Here the word "soul" represents the person. Alternate translation: "They will be life for you"
an adornment of favor to wear around your neck
The writer speaks of "sound judgment" and "discernment" as if they were objects that a person could tie around the neck like a necklace. The image suggests that these are valuable things that the person displays outwardly. Alternate translation: "a display of favor like one would adorn themselves with a necklace"
adornment of favor
Possible meanings are 1) "a favorable adornment" or 2) "an adornment that displays Yahweh's favor."
Proverbs 3:23
you will walk on your way in safety
The writer speaks of living one's life as if the person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "you will live your life in safety"
your foot will not stumble
The word "foot" represents the whole person. The writer speaks of doing wrong as if a person stumbled over an object in his path. Alternate translation: "you will not do things that are wrong"
Proverbs 3:24
when you lie down
It is implied that a person lies down in order to sleep. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "when you lie down to sleep"
your sleep will be sweet
The writer speaks of sleep that is peaceful and refreshing as if it tasted sweet to the person sleeping. The word "sleep" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "your sleep will be pleasant" or "you will sleep peacefully"
Proverbs 3:25
devastation caused by the wicked, when it comes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the wicked cause devastation"
the wicked
This refers to wicked persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "wicked people"
Proverbs 3:26
Yahweh will be on your side
"Yahweh will be by your side." A person standing by another person's side is an idiom that means that the one person will help and support the other. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will support and defend you"
will keep your foot from being caught in a trap
The writer speaks of a person experiencing harm from "terror" and "devastation" as if the person were caught in a trap. The word "foot" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "will protect you from those who want to harm you"
Proverbs 3:27
Do not withhold good
"Do not withhold good things" or "Do not withhold good actions"
when it is in your power to act
"when you are able to help"
Proverbs 3:28
when you have the money with you
"when you have the money with you now." The meaning here is that the person has the money to help today, but tells his neighbor to come back tomorrow.
Proverbs 3:31

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Do not ... choose any of his ways
It is implied that he is not to choose to imitate the actions of the violent person. Alternate translation: "Do not ... choose to imitate any of his ways"
Proverbs 3:32
the devious person is an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates the devious person"
the devious person
the person who is dishonest or deceitful
he brings the upright person into his confidence
Yahweh shares his thoughts with the those who do right as with a close, trusted friend. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is a close friend to the upright"
Proverbs 3:33
The curse of Yahweh is on the house of the wicked person
The writer speaks of Yahweh's curse as if it were an object that he placed on top of the wicked person's house. The word "house" is a metonym for family. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has cursed the family of the wicked person"
he blesses the home of righteous people
The word "home" represents the family. Alternate translation: "he blesses the families of righteous people"
Proverbs 3:34
he gives his favor to humble people
The writer speaks of Yahweh's favor as if it were an object that he gives to people. Alternate translation: "he shows his favor to humble people" or "he is gracious to humble people"
Proverbs 3:35
Wise people inherit honor
The writer speaks of wise people obtaining a reputation of honor as if they inherited honor as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "Wise people will obtain honor" or "Wise people will gain an honorable reputation"
fools will be lifted up in their shame
The writer speaks of Yahweh making the shame of fools evident to everyone as if Yahweh were lifting fools up for everyone to see them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause everyone to see the shame of fools"

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4 1 Listen, sons, to a father's instruction,
and pay attention so you will know what understanding is.

2 I am giving you good instructions;
do not abandon my teaching.

3 When I was a son of my father,
the tender and only child of my mother,

4 he taught me and said to me,
"Let your heart hold fast to my words;
keep my commands and live.

5 Acquire wisdom and understanding;
do not forget and do not reject the words of my mouth;

6 do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you;
love her and she will keep you safe.

7 Wisdom is the most important thing, so acquire wisdom
and spend all you own so you can get understanding.

8 Cherish wisdom and she will exalt you;
she will honor you when you embrace her.

9 She will put a wreath of honor on your head;
she will give you a beautiful crown."

10 Listen, my son, and receive my words,
and you will have many years in your life.

11 I am teaching you in the way of wisdom;
I am leading you in upright paths.

12 When you walk, no one will stand in your way

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and if you run, you will not stumble.

13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go;
guard it, for it is your life.

14 Do not follow the path of the wicked
and do not go along the way of those who do evil.

15 Avoid it, do not go on it;
turn away from it and go another way.

16 For they cannot sleep until they do evil
and they are robbed of sleep until they cause someone to stumble.

17 For they devour the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.

18 But the path of righteous people is like the first light that grows brighter;
it shines more and more until the fullness of the day comes.

19 The way of the wicked is like darkness—
they do not know what it is they stumble over.

20 My son, pay attention to my words;
incline your ear to my sayings.

21 Do not let them turn away from your eyes;
keep them in your heart.

22 For my words are life to those who find them
and health to their whole body.

23 Keep your heart safe and guard it with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life.

24 Put crooked speech away from you
and put corrupt talk far from you.

25 Let your eyes look straight ahead
and fix your gaze straight before you.

26 Make a level path for your foot;
then all your ways will be established.

27 Do not turn aside to the right or to the left;
turn your foot away from evil.

Proverbs 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 4 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

My Son

Occasionally, the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only

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males. Instead, it is simply a form used to pass on advice as a father does to his son.
Wisdom is feminine
You may notice that wisdom is referenced using a feminine pronoun. This is a feature that is carried in from the Hebrew language. This may apply well in your language but if it does not, follow the conventions of your language. (See: wise)

Links:

Proverbs 4:1 Notes

Proverbs 4:1
General Information:
The writer speaks as a father teaching his children.
pay attention
"listen carefully"
you will know what understanding is
"you will know how to understand" or "you will gain understanding"
Proverbs 4:2
I am giving you good instructions
"What I am teaching you is good"
Proverbs 4:3
When I was a son of my father
This refers to the time when the writer was a child still living under his father's care. Alternate translation: "When I was still a boy learning from my father"
the tender and only child
Here the word "tender" refers to a young age at which the child is still weak. It forms a hendiadys with the word "only." Alternate translation: "the tender only child"
Proverbs 4:4
Let your heart hold fast to my words
Here the word "heart" represents the person's mind. The writer speaks of remembering words as if the heart were holding on tightly to them. Alternate translation: "Always remember what I am teaching you"
Proverbs 4:5
General Information:
The father continues to teach his children what his father taught him.
Acquire wisdom
"Work hard to gain for yourself wisdom" or "Get wisdom"
do not forget
"remember"
do not reject
"accept"
the words of my mouth
Here the word "mouth" represents the person who speaks. Alternate translation: "what I am saying"
Proverbs 4:6
do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you; love her and she will keep you safe
The writer speaks of wisdom as if it were a woman who protects the person who is faithful to her.
do not abandon wisdom
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "hold tightly to wisdom" or "be faithful to wisdom"
love her
"love wisdom"
Proverbs 4:7
General Information:
The father finishes teaching his children what his father taught him.
spend all you own so you can get understanding
"value understanding more than all you own"
Proverbs 4:8
Cherish wisdom and she will exalt you
The writer speaks of wisdom as if it were a woman and of wisdom giving great honor to a person as if wisdom lifted that person to a high position. Alternate translation: "If you cherish wisdom, she will give you great honor"
Cherish
to feel or show great love for someone or something
she will honor you when you embrace her
The writer speaks of wisdom as if it were a woman and of a person valuing wisdom as if the person placed his arms around her. Alternate translation: "if you love wisdom greatly, wisdom will cause people to honor you"
Proverbs 4:9
She will put a wreath of honor on your head
The writer speaks of the honor that a person will have from gaining wisdom as if wisdom placed a wreath upon that person's head. Alternate translation: "Wisdom will be like a wreath on your head that shows your great honor"
wreath
a woven circle made of leaves or flowers
she will give you a beautiful crown
The writer speaks of the honor that a person will have from gaining wisdom as if wisdom placed a crown upon that person's head. Alternate translation: "wisdom will be like a beautiful crown on your head"
Proverbs 4:10
receive my words
"be willing to listen carefully to what I teach you"
you will have many years in your life
"you will live many years"
Proverbs 4:11
I am teaching you in the way of wisdom; I am leading you in upright paths
The writer speaks of teaching his son to live wisely as if he were leading his son along the paths where one may find wisdom. Alternate translation: "I am teaching you how to live wisely; I am explaining the right way to live"
I am teaching ... I am leading
If your language has a way of specifying that it is by his words Proverbs 4:10 and that the writer is teaching and leading, you may want to use it here. Alternate translation: "With these words I am teaching ... with them I am leading"
Proverbs 4:12
When you walk, no one will stand in your way and if you run, you will not stumble
These two lines share similar meanings. The writer speaks

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of the decisions and actions that a person makes as if that person were walking or running along a path and of the person being successful as if the path were free of obstacles that might make the person stumble. Alternate translation: "When you plan something, you will succeed in doing it"
Proverbs 4:13
Hold on to instruction, do not let it go
The writer speaks of a person remembering what he has learned as if "instruction" were an object that the person can hold tightly. Alternate translation: "Continue to obey what I have taught you and never forget it"
for it is your life
The writer speaks of discipline preserving a person's life as if it were that person's life. Alternate translation: "for it will preserve your life"
Proverbs 4:14
Do not follow the path of the wicked and do not go along the way of those who do evil
The writer speaks of a person's actions as if that person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "Do not do what wicked people do and do not join in the actions of people who do evil"
Proverbs 4:15
Avoid it
"Avoid the path of the wicked"
Proverbs 4:16
they cannot sleep until they do evil
They probably could literally sleep, but the writer uses an exaggeration to express how intensely they desire to commit evil actions.
they are robbed of sleep
The writer speaks of people being unable to sleep as if sleep were an object that someone stole from them. They probably could literally sleep, but the writer uses an exaggeration to express how intensely they desire to commit evil actions. Alternate translation: "they are unable to sleep"
until they cause someone to stumble
The writer speaks of causing harm to another person as if it were causing that person to stumble. Alternate translation: "until they harm someone"
Proverbs 4:17
they devour the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which the writer speaks of these people constantly committing wickedness and violence as if they ate and drank them like one would drink bread and wine. Alternate translation: "wickedness is like the bread that they eat and violence is like the wine that they drink" or 2) these people get their food and drink by committing wickedness and violence. Alternate translation: "they eat bread that they obtain by doing wicked things and drink wine that they obtain through violence"
devour
eat a great amount quickly
Proverbs 4:18
the path of righteous people
The writer speaks of the actions and lifestyles of righteous people as if they were a "path" or "way" upon which they walk. Alternate translation: "the lifestyle of righteous people"
the path of righteous people is like the first light that grows brighter
The writer compares the path of righteous people to the sunrise, meaning that they are safe because they have light to see where they are walking. Alternate translation: "righteous people walk along their path safely because the morning sun shines on it and grows brighter"
the first light
This refers to the dawn or sunrise.
until the fullness of the day comes
This refers to the time of day at which the sun shines the brightest. Alternate translation: "until the sun shines most brightly" or "until full daylight"
Proverbs 4:19
The way of the wicked
The writer speaks of the actions and lifestyles of wicked people as if they were a "path" or "way" upon which they walk. Alternate translation: "The lifestyle of the wicked"
The way of the wicked is like darkness
The writer compares the way of wicked people to darkness, meaning that they are always in danger because they have no light to see where they are walking. Alternate translation: "Wicked people walk dangerously along their path because they have no light to be able to see"
they do not know what it is they stumble over
The writer speaks of experiencing harm as if it were stumbling over an object in the path along which the person walks. Alternate translation: "they do not know why they experience harm and misfortune"
Proverbs 4:20
pay attention
"listen carefully"
incline your ear to my sayings
Here the word "ear" represents the person who is listening. The writer speaks of listening attentively to someone as if it were leaning forward so that the ear is closer to the one speaking. The word "sayings" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "listen attentively to the things that I am saying"
Proverbs 4:21
Do not let them turn away from your eyes
The writer speaks of always thinking about something as if it were keeping it where one can see it. Alternate translation: "Do not stop thinking about them"
keep them in your heart
The writer speaks of remembering something as if it were keeping it within one's heart. Alternate translation: "always remember them"
Proverbs 4:22
my words are life
The writer speaks of his words preserving a person's life as if they were that person's life. Alternate translation: "my words give life" or "the things I say give life"
to those who find them
The writer speaks of fully understanding his words as if the person searches for them and finds them. Alternate translation: "to those who understand and practice them"
health to their whole body

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The word "their" refers to "those who find them." The subject for this phrase can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "my words will give health to the whole body of those who find them"

Proverbs 4:23

Keep your heart safe and guard it

Here the word "heart" represents a person's mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "Keep your mind safe and guard your thoughts"

with all diligence

with constant and earnest effort

from it flow the springs of life

The word "it" refers to the heart, which is a metonym for the mind and thoughts. The writer speaks of a person's life as if it were a flowing spring that originates from the heart. Alternate translation: "from your thoughts comes everything you say and do" or "your thoughts determine your course of life"

Proverbs 4:24

Put crooked speech away from you and put corrupt talk far from you

The writer speaks of lying or deceitful speech as if it were crooked and of a person not using this kind of language as if it were removing it far away from oneself. Alternate translation: "Do not lie and do not speak deceitfully"

Proverbs 4:25

Let your eyes look straight ahead and fix your gaze straight before you

Here the word "eyes" represents the person who is looking. The writer speaks of a person being committed to doing the right thing as if that person were constantly looking forward without turning his head to look in another direction. Alternate translation: "Always look straight ahead and fix your gaze straight before you"

Proverbs 4:26

Make a level path for your foot

Here the word "foot" represents the person who is walking. The writer speaks of a person's actions as if he were walking along a path, and of planning those actions carefully as if it were making that path level. Alternate translation: "Make a level path to walk on" or "Prepare well what you want to do"

a level path

"a smooth path" or "an even path"

then all your ways will be established

The writer speaks of a person's actions as if the person were walking along a path and of those actions being successful as if the path were safe and secure. Alternate translation: "then everything that you do will be right"

Proverbs 4:27

Do not turn aside to the right or to the left

The directions "right" and "left" form a merism, meaning that the person is not to leave the level path in any direction. Alternate translation: "Walk straight ahead and do not leave the level path"

turn your foot away from evil

Here the word "foot" represents the person who walks. The writer speaks of not committing evil actions as if the person were walking away from evil. Alternate translation: "turn away from evil" or "stay away from evil"

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5 1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom;
incline your ears to my understanding,

2 so you may learn about discretion
and your lips may protect knowledge.

3 For the lips of an adulteress drip with honey
and her mouth is smoother than oil,

4 but in the end she is as bitter as wormwood,
cutting like a sharp sword.

5 Her feet go down to death;
her steps go all the way to Sheol.

6 She gives no thought to the path of life.
Her footsteps wander;
she does not know where she is going.

7 Now, my sons, listen to me;
do not turn away from listening to the words of my mouth.

8 Keep your path far away from her
and do not come near the door of her house.

9 In that way you will not give away your honor to others
or years of your life to a cruel person;

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10 strangers will not feast on your strength;
your labor will not go into the house of foreigners.

11 At the end of your life you will groan
when your flesh and your body waste away.

12 You will say, "How I hated instruction
and my heart despised correction!

13 I would not listen to the voice of my teachers
or incline my ear to my instructors.

14 I was almost completely ruined
in the midst of the assembly,
among the gathering of the people."

15 Drink water from your own cistern
and drink running water from your own well.

16 Should your springs be dispersed everywhere
and your streams of water flow in the public squares?

17 Let them be for yourself alone
and not for strangers with you.

18 May your fountain be blessed
and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth,

19 for she is a loving deer and a graceful doe.
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
may you be continually intoxicated by her love.

20 For why should you, my son, be captivated by an adulteress?
Why should you embrace the bosom of an immoral woman?

21 Yahweh sees everything a person does
and watches all the paths he takes.

22 A wicked person will be seized by his own iniquities;
the cords of his sin will hold him tight.

23 He will die because he lacks instruction;
he is led astray by his great foolishness.

Proverbs 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 5 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

My Son

Occasionally, the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only males. Instead, it is simply a form used to pass on advice as a father does to his son.

Adulteress

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This chapter is unusual because it holds a theme about the adulteress and warns the young man to avoid her. An adulteress is a woman who commits adultery. (See: adultery)

Links:

Proverbs 5:1 Notes

Proverbs 5:1

General Information:

The writer speaks as a father teaching his children.

incline your ears

Here the word "ears" represents the person who is listening. The writer speaks of listening attentively to someone as if it were leaning forward so that the ears are closer to the one speaking. See how you translated this in [Proverbs 4:20]

Proverbs 5:2

discretion

Discretion is the quality of being careful with regard to one's actions and speech. See how you translated this in Proverbs 1:4.

your lips may protect knowledge

Here the word "lips" represents the person who speaks. The writer speaks of a person being careful only to say what is true as if the person's lips were protecting knowledge. Alternate translation: "you will speak only what is true"

Proverbs 5:3

the lips of an adulteress drip with honey

Possible meanings are 1) the word "lips" represents the words of the adulteress and the writer speaks of the attractiveness of her words as if her lips dripped with honey. Alternate translation: "the words of an adulteress are sweet, as if dripping with honey" or 2) the writer speaks of the allure of kissing the adulteress as if her lips dripped with honey. Alternate translation: "the kisses of an adulteress are sweet, as if her lips dripped with honey"

her mouth is smoother than oil

Possible meanings are 1) the word "mouth" represents the speech of the adulteress and the writer speaks of the persuasiveness of her speech as if her mouth were smoother than olive oil. Alternate translation: "her speech is persuasive and smoother than olive oil" or 2) the writer speaks of the pleasure of kissing the adulteress as if her mouth were smoother than oil. Alternate translation: "her kisses are smoother than olive oil"

Proverbs 5:4

but in the end she is as bitter as wormwood

The writer speaks of the harm that comes from having a relationship with an adulteress as if she tasted as bitter as wormwood. Alternate translation: "but in the end, she is like bitter-tasting wormwood and will cause you harm"

wormwood

a plant that tastes bitter

cutting like a sharp sword

The writer speaks of the pain that the adulteress will cause to the one who has a relationship with her as if she were a sharp weapon that cuts the person. Alternate translation: "she wounds a person, as if she were a sharp sword"

Proverbs 5:5

Her feet go down to death

Here "her feet" represent the adulteress as she walks. The writer speaks of her conduct as if she were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "She is walking along a path that leads to death" or "Her lifestyle leads to death"

her steps go all the way to Sheol

The writer speaks of her conduct as if she were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "she walks all the way to Sheol" or "her conduct takes her all the way to Sheol"

Proverbs 5:6

She gives no thought to the path of life

The writer speaks of behavior that gives a person long life as if it were a path that leads to life. Alternate translation: "She does not think about walking along the path that leads to life" or "She is not concerned about conduct that leads to life"

Her footsteps wander

Possible meanings are 1) "She wanders about as if she were lost" or 2) "She walks along the wrong path."

Proverbs 5:7

Now

Here the teacher shifts from warning about the adulteress to giving advice.

listen to me ... do not turn away from listening

These two phrases express the same idea to make the student pay attention.

do not turn away from listening

The writer speaks of stopping an action as if the person physically turned away from it. Alternate translation: "do not stop listening"

the words of my mouth

Here the word "mouth" represents the person who is speaking. Alternate translation: "my words" or "what I am saying"

Proverbs 5:8

Keep your path far away from her

Here the word "path" represents the person's daily conduct and circumstances. Alternate translation: "Keep yourself far away from her" or "Stay away from her"

do not come near the door of her house

Here "the door of her house" represents the house itself. It may be more appropriate to use the word "go" instead of "come" since the latter might imply that the speaker is at the door of her house. Alternate translation: "do not go near the door of her house" or "do not even go near her house"

Proverbs 5:9

In that way

"If you do this." This phrase refers to what he has just said in previous verses.

you will not give away your honor to others

Possible meanings for the word "honor" are 1) it refers to one's reputation. Alternate translation: "You will not lose your good reputation among other people" or 2) it refers to one's wealth and possessions. Alternate translation: "You

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will not give away your wealth to other people" or 3) it refers to strength and represents the prime years of one's life. Alternate translation: "You will not give away the best times of your life to other people"

or years of your life to a cruel person

The writer speaks of a person dying prematurely, possibly by murder, as if the years of his life were items that he gives away to another person. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "or give years of your life to a cruel person" or "or cause a cruel person to kill you while you are still young"

a cruel person

This may refer to the husband of the adulteress, who will deal cruelly with the person who sleeps with her.

Proverbs 5:10

strangers will not feast on your strength

The word "strength" is a metonym for the wealth for which the reader has labored with his strength, and the word "feast" is a metaphor for enjoying. Alternate translation: "strangers will not enjoy all of the wealth you labored hard for"

strangers

unknown people from the same people group or nation

your labor will not go into the house of foreigners

Here the word "labor" is a metonym for the goods and profit that a person has labored to produce, and "house" represents the person's family. Alternate translation: "the things that you have labored for will not end up belonging to the families of strangers"

foreigners

unknown people from other people groups or nations

Proverbs 5:11

your flesh and your body waste away

The words "flesh" and "body" mean basically the same thing and represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "your body wastes away" or "you waste away"

waste away

"physically wear down" or "become weak and unhealthy"

Proverbs 5:12

I hated instruction ... my heart despised correction

These two phrases express the same idea and emphasize how much this person disliked what the teacher had said.

How I hated instruction

The word "How" is an exclamation that emphasizes the strength of his hatred. The word "instruction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I hated it so much when someone would instruct me"

my heart despised correction

Here the word "heart" represents the person and his emotions. The word "correction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I despised people when they corrected me"

Proverbs 5:13

incline my ear to my instructors

Here the word "ear" represents the person who is listening. The writer speaks of listening attentively to someone as if it were leaning forward so that the ear is closer to the one speaking. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Proverbs 4:20]

Proverbs 5:14

in the midst of the assembly, among the gathering of the people

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to the person's community that has gathered together either 1) to worship God or 2) to judge him for his offense.

Proverbs 5:15

water from your own cistern ... running water from your own well

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The writer speaks of a man sleeping only with his wife as if he drank water only from his own cistern or well.

running water

The writer speaks of fresh or flowing water as if the water were running. Alternate translation: "fresh water" or "flowing water"

Proverbs 5:16

General Information:

The writer speaks of adultery using metaphors about wasting the water that was so precious in Israel, where rain was rare.

Should your springs ... your streams of water flow in the public squares?

The writer asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that his son should not do these things. Alternate translation: "Your springs should not ... your streams of water should not flow in the public squares."

Should your springs ... your streams of water flow in the public squares?

Here the words "springs" and "streams of water" are likely euphemisms for male reproductive fluids. Possible meanings for these metaphorical phrases are 1) sleeping with women other than one's wife is spoken of as if it were allowing one's water to flow in the public streets or 2) having children with women other than one's wife is spoken of as if it were allowing one's water to flow in the public streets.

Should your springs be dispersed everywhere and your ... squares?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should you disperse your springs ... everywhere? Should your ... squares?" or "You should not disperse your springs everywhere, and you ... squares."

public squares

Open areas in a city or town where two or more streets meet. A common place for people to meet each other and talk.

Proverbs 5:17

Let them be

The word "them" refers to the "springs" and "streams of water" and what they stand for.

not for strangers with you

"do not share them with strangers"

Proverbs 5:18

May your fountain be blessed

The writer speaks of the son's wife as if she were a fountain. Here the word "blessed" refers to the sense of joy that the man has in his wife. Alternate translation: "May you always find joy with your wife"

the wife of your youth

Possible meanings are 1) "the wife whom you married when you were young" or 2) "your young wife."

Proverbs 5:19

she is a loving deer and a graceful doe

The writer speaks of the son's wife as if she were "a loving deer and a graceful doe." Here "deer" and "doe" mean a female deer. They were symbols of beauty both in their appearance and in their movements. Alternate translation: "she is as beautiful and graceful as a deer or a doe" or "she is as beautiful and graceful as a female deer"

graceful

This word does not mean "full of grace," but "beautiful while moving."

Let her breasts satisfy you

Possible meanings are 1) the wife's breasts excite the husband's sexual desire and possibly represent the wife's entire body. Alternate translation: "Let her breasts satisfy your desires" or "Let her body satisfy your desires" or 2) this is a metaphor in which the writer speaks of the wife's breasts satisfying the husband's desires as they would satisfy the thirst of a hungry baby. Alternate translation: "Let her breasts fill you with delight as a mother's breasts fill her child with food"

may you be continually intoxicated by her love

Intense excitement and joy from the romantic love of one's wife is spoken of as if he was drunk from that love. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let her love control you as alcohol controls someone who is drunk"

by her love

Possible meanings are 1) "by your love for her" or 2) "by her love for you."

Proverbs 5:20

For why should you, my son, be captivated by an adulteress?

The writer asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that his son must not do this. Alternate translation: "My son, do not be captivated by an adulteress!"

be captivated by an adulteress

Intense excitement that arises from the desire for a woman is spoken of as if he were being held captive by that woman. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "allow an adulteress to captivate you" or "allow an adulteress to fascinate you"

Why should you embrace the bosom of an immoral woman?

The writer asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that his son must not do this. Alternate translation: "Do not embrace the bosom of an immoral woman!"

embrace the bosom of an immoral woman

Here the word "embrace the bosom" is probably a euphemism for handling the breasts and a synecdoche for all kinds of sexual activity. Alternate translation: "have sexual relations with an immoral woman"

bosom

chest, shoulders, and arms

an immoral woman

Possible meanings are 1) "a woman who is not your wife" or 2) "a woman who is another man's wife."

Proverbs 5:21

sees everything ... watches all the paths

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that God knows everything that everyone does.

all the paths he takes

The writer speaks of a person's actions or lifestyle as if it were a path on which the person walks. Alternate translation: "everywhere he goes" or "everything he does"

Proverbs 5:22

A wicked person will be seized by his own iniquities

The writer speaks of a wicked person being unable to avoid the consequences of his iniquities as if those iniquities were people who capture the wicked person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A wicked person's own iniquities will seize him" or "A wicked person will be unable to avoid the consequences of his iniquities"

the cords of his sin will hold him tight

The writer speaks of a wicked person being unable to avoid the consequences of his sin as if that sin were a trap made of cords in which the person is caught. Alternate translation: "because of his sin, he will be like an animal caught in a trap"

Proverbs 5:23

he is led astray by his great foolishness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his great foolishness leads him astray"

by his great foolishness

"because he is very foolish"

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6 1 My son, if you set aside your money as a guarantee for your neighbor's loan,
if you gave your promise for a loan of someone you do not know,

2 then you have laid a trap for yourself by your promise
and you have been caught by the words of your mouth.

3 When you are caught by your words, my son,
do this and save yourself,
since you have fallen into the hand of your neighbor;
go and humble yourself
and make your case before your neighbor.

4 Give your eyes no sleep
and your eyelids no slumber.

5 Save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter,

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like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

6 Look at the ant, you lazy person,
consider her ways, and be wise.

7 It has no commander,
officer, or ruler,

8 yet it prepares its food in the summer
and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat.

9 How long will you lie down, you lazy person?
When will you rise from your sleep?

10 "A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest"—

11 and your poverty will come like a robber
and your needs like an armed soldier.

12 A worthless person—a wicked man—
lives by the crookedness of his speech,

13 winking his eyes, making signals with his feet
and pointing with his fingers.

14 He plots evil with perversity in his heart;
he always stirs up strife.

15 Therefore his disaster will overtake him in an instant;
in a moment he will be broken beyond healing.

16 There are six things that Yahweh hates,
seven that are an abomination to him:

17 the eyes of a proud person, a tongue that lies,
hands that shed the blood of innocent people,

18 a heart that invents wicked schemes,
feet that quickly run to do evil,

19 a witness who breathes out lies
and one who sows discord among brothers.

20 My son, obey the command of your father
and do not abandon the teaching of your mother.

21 Always bind them on your heart;
tie them about your neck.

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22 When you walk, they will guide you;
when you lie down, they will watch over you;
and when you wake up, they will teach you.

23 For the commands are a lamp,
and the teaching is a light;
the corrections that come by instruction
are the way of life.

24 It keeps you from the evil woman,
from the smooth tongue of an immoral woman.

25 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty
and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes.

26 The price of a prostitute is the cost of a loaf of bread,
but the wife of another man hunts for a precious life.

27 Can a man carry a fire against his chest
without burning his clothes?

28 Can a man walk on hot coals
without scorching his feet?

29 So is the man who goes to his neighbor's wife;
the one who touches her will not go unpunished.

30 People do not despise a thief if he steals
to satisfy his need when he is hungry.

31 Yet if he is caught, he will pay back seven times what he stole;
he must give up everything of value in his house.

32 The one who commits adultery lacks sense;
the one who does it destroys himself.

33 Wounds and shame are what he deserves
and his disgrace will not be blotted out.

34 For jealousy makes a man furious;
he will show no mercy on the day of vengeance.

35 He will accept no ransom
and he cannot be bought off,
though you offer him many gifts.

Proverbs 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 6 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

My Son

Occasionally, the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only males. Instead, it is simply a form used to pass on advice as a father does to his son.

Adulteress

The latter part of this chapter comes back to the theme about the adulteress and warns the young man to avoid her. An

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adulteress is a woman who commits adultery. (See: adultery)
Numbers
Occasionally, the author will mention a list of six things, or seven things, that Yahweh hates. These numbers are used to draw attention to the list of things. It is not important whether there are six or seven things in the list.
Important figures of speech in this chapter
Rhetorical questions
The author will use rhetorical questions to draw the reader's attention to important points.
Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter
Animals used as types
The gazelle and the ant have certain characteristics which the author uses to give wisdom. If your language does not recognize these characteristics in those animals, you could add a footnote to explain or possibly substitute another animal from your culture that would help explain the same concept. (See: wise)
Links:
Proverbs 6:1 Notes

Proverbs 6:1
set aside your money
Implied here is that your promise and the circumstances forced you to save up your money. Alternate translation: "had to save up some of your money"
a guarantee for your neighbor's loan
Possible meanings are 1) your neighbor may come to you to ask for a loan or 2) your neighbor wants to take out a loan from someone else, but you promise to pay the lender back if your neighbor cannot.
neighbor
This same Hebrew word can also mean "friend."
Proverbs 6:2
you have laid a trap for yourself
This is a figure of speech saying that you are going to trap yourself. Alternate translation: "you have made a trap in which you yourself are caught"
the words of your mouth
"what you said" or "what you promised to do"
Proverbs 6:3
save yourself
"protect yourself" or "help yourself out of these problems"
you have fallen into the hand of your neighbor
This is a figure of speech using the term "hand" to mean "harm." Alternate translation: "your neighbor can bring harm to you if he wants to" or "your neighbor has power over you"
neighbor
"friend"
Proverbs 6:4
Give your eyes no sleep and your eyelids no slumber
"Do not let your eyes sleep; do not let your eyelids slumber." These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize how important it is not to be lazy. It is also stated negatively for even more emphasis. Alternate translation: "Stay awake, and do what you can"
your eyes ... your eyelids
This is a figure of speech using parts of your face to mean your whole body. Alternate translation: "yourself ... yourself"
Proverbs 6:5
Save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter
"Escape from your neighbor like a gazelle that flees from a hunter"
gazelle
This is a big, lean animal that eats grass and that people often hunt for meat. It is famous for running away quickly.
from the hand of the hunter
The hand of the hunter refers to the hunter's control. Alternate translation: "from the control of the hunter"
like a bird from the hand of the fowler
"and escape like a bird that flies away from a bird-hunter"
Proverbs 6:6
Look at ... consider
"Study ... think about" or "carefully observe ... ponder"
ant
An ant is a small insect that lives underground or in a self-built hill. They usually live in groups of thousands, and they can lift things that are much bigger than they are.
consider her ways
This is a figure of speech using the "ways" of an ant to refer to the behavior of the ant. Alternate translation: "consider how the ant behaves"
Proverbs 6:7
commander, officer, or ruler
These three words mean basically the same thing and are used to emphasized that no one has formal authority over an individual ant.
Proverbs 6:8
it prepares its food in the summer ... during the harvest it stores up what it will eat
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are repeated to show how responsible the ant is.
summer
Summer is the time of the year when some trees bear their fruit.
Proverbs 6:9
How long will you lie down, you lazy person? When will you rise from your sleep?
The teacher uses these questions to scold the lazy person for sleeping too much. Alternate translation: "You should not just lie there, you lazy person. You should rise up from your sleep." or "Wake up, you lazy person! Get out of your bed!"

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Proverbs 6:10

A little sleep ... of the hands to rest

These are the kinds of things that lazy people say.

A little sleep, a little slumber

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They can be stated as complete sentences. Alternate translation: "I will just sleep a little longer. Let me sleep lightly a little longer"

folding of the hands to rest

People often fold their hands while reclining in order to rest more comfortably. Alternate translation: "I will just cross my arms comfortably and rest a little"

Proverbs 6:11

and your poverty will come

This can be stated as a new sentence to make clear that this is a result of being lazy. Alternate translation: "If you continue to be lazy, your poverty will come" or "While you sleep, poverty will come"

your poverty will come like a robber

The sudden way a lazy person becomes poor is like the sudden way a robber comes and steals things. Alternate translation: "you will suddenly become poor, just as if a robber came and stole everything you have"

and your needs like an armed soldier

The sudden way a lazy person becomes in need of things is like the sudden way an armed soldier takes things from a person. This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "and your needs will come to you like an armed soldier" or "and you will become needy just as if an armed soldier stole all your things"

an armed soldier

"a soldier who is holding a weapon" or "a man with a weapon"

Proverbs 6:12

A worthless person—a wicked man

These two words have the same meaning and emphasize how bad this person is. Alternate translation: "A person with no value—an evil man"

lives by the crookedness of his speech

Here lies are spoken of as speech that is crooked. Alternate translation: "constantly tells lies"

Proverbs 6:13

winking his eyes, making signals with his feet and pointing with his fingers

All three of these phrases describe a way in which the evil person communicates secretly to deceive other people.

winking his eyes

If someone winks, he closes one eye very briefly as a secret signal to another person. This might be a sign of trust, of approval, or of something else.

Proverbs 6:14

He plots evil

"He plans evil" or "He prepares to do evil deeds"

he always stirs up strife

"he always causes strife" or "he is constantly looking for arguments and making them worse"

Proverbs 6:15

Therefore

"For that reason"

his disaster will overtake him

This implies that the disaster is chasing him like a person or an animal, and that it will catch him soon. Alternate translation: "his disaster will catch him"

his disaster

This refers to the disaster that will happen to him, but also the disaster that he himself caused.

in an instant; in a moment

Both mean the same thing, and one or both of them can be replaced by "suddenly" or "very quickly."

Proverbs 6:16

six things that Yahweh hates, seven that

This whole verse is a parallelism that emphasizes that God hates several things and not just one. Alternate translation: "six things that Yahwah hates; seven things that"

that are an abomination to him

"that he strongly hates." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.

Proverbs 6:17

Connecting Statement:

This begins the list of things that Yahweh hates that was introduced in Proverbs 6:16.

eyes ... tongue ... hands

All of these body parts refer to a whole person. You can translate each of these with "people."

shed the blood of

"kill" or "murder"

Proverbs 6:18

heart ... feet

All of these body parts refer to a whole person. You can translate each of these with "people."

wicked schemes

"evil plans"

Proverbs 6:19

breathes out lies

This figure of speech uses "breathes" to refer to lying constantly. Alternate translation: "constantly lies"

discord

See how you translated this in Proverbs 6:14.

one who sows discord

This figure of speech is using "sows" to refer to causing or bringing about discord. Alternate translation: "a person who causes discord"

Proverbs 6:20

obey the command of your father ... do not abandon the teaching of your mother

These two phrases are very similar in meaning, but the use of both "father" and "mother" explicitly includes women in the teaching process.

do not abandon the teaching of your mother

The abstract noun "teaching" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Do not reject what your mother teaches you"

Proverbs 6:21

bind them on your heart; tie them about your neck

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. They describe the commands and instructions as if they are written down so that you can put it in or on your body to remind yourself.

bind them on your heart

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"love them" or "think about them"
Proverbs 6:22
When you walk ... when you lie down ... when you wake up
These three phrases are used together to emphasize that the lessons are valuable all the time.
they will guide you ... they will watch over you ... they will teach you
The repetition of these phrases is to show that the lessons are valuable for all sorts of things. It also speaks of those lessons as if they were people.
Proverbs 6:23
the commands ... the teaching ... the corrections that come by instruction
These three phrases mean basically the same thing, and together they show the various types of lessons a father and a mother teach.
a lamp ... a light ... the way of life
All three of these mean basically the same thing and are repeated to emphasize the fact that the lessons make life better and easier. Alternate translation: "as useful as a lamp ... as helpful as light in the darkness ... as necessary to follow as the way of life"
the way of life
"the way that leads to life" or "the way of living that God approves of"
Proverbs 6:24
It keeps you from
Here the word "it" refers to the lessons taught by the father and mother in [Proverbs 6:20]
smooth tongue
The word "tongue" here is a metonym for the words the woman uses her tongue to speak. Alternate translation: "deceptive words"
immoral
sexually immoral
Proverbs 6:25
do not let her capture you with her eyelashes
The writer speaks of the woman's eyelashes as if they were a trap into which the young man could fall. They are a synecdoche for her beauty and a metonym for the way the woman looks at the young man to make her want her. Alternate translation: "do not allow her to gain control over you by being beautiful and by the way she looks at you"
in your heart
Here "heart" represents the mind. Alternate translation: "in your thoughts"
her beauty
"what is beautiful about her." This can also be a metonym for the woman. Alternate translation: "her"
capture you
"gain control over you"
her eyelashes
The "eyelashes" stand for the beautiful things about her body that she uses to catch a man's attention. Alternate translation: "her beautiful eyes"
Proverbs 6:26
Connecting Statement:
The writer tells why his son should not have sexual relations with the wife of another man.
General Information:
Be sure your translation clearly communicates that having sexual relations with the wife of another man is much worse than having sexual relations with a prostitute.
The price of a prostitute is the cost of a loaf of bread, but the wife of another man hunts for a precious life
"A prostitute will be satisfied to receive enough money for a loaf of bread, but the wife of another man will be satisfied only when she has taken a precious life" or "Having sexual relations with a prostitute will cost you only as much as a loaf of bread, but having sexual relations with another man's wife will cost you your precious life"
the cost of a loaf of bread ... a precious life
Possible meanings are 1) the reader thinks that the money a prostitute takes is little and his own life is precious or 2) the prostitute is looking only for money so she can eat, while an adulterous wife gives her body hoping to receive love.
the cost of a loaf of bread
This is a metaphor for a small amount of money or something else unimportant. If your language has a common way of saying this, you may want to use it here. Alternate translation: "very small"
hunts for a precious life
The writer speaks of the woman's jealous husband wanting to kill the reader as if it were the woman herself who were trying to kill him. Alternate translation: "is giving her husband the opportunity to kill you" or "is putting you in danger"
Proverbs 6:27
Can a man carry a fire against his chest without burning his clothes?
This action would be very dangerous and would cause harm. The implied answer to the question is "no." Alternate translation: "Every man who carries a fire in his chest will burn his clothes."
without burning
"without destroying" or "and not destroy"
his clothes
His clothes stand for him as a whole person.
Proverbs 6:28
Can a man walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?
Walking on hot coals will scorch a person's feet, so the implied answer is "no." Alternate translation: "Every man who walks on hot coals will have scorched feet."
walk on hot coals
This stands for committing adultery.
walk
That is to slowly walk a long distance, without using tricks or magic.
scorching
"burning"
Proverbs 6:29
the man who goes to his neighbor's wife
This is a polite way of talking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "the man who has sexual relations with his neighbor's wife" or "the man who lies with his neighbor's wife"
Proverbs 6:30
despise a thief
"do not regard a thief with contempt" or "do not think a

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thief is evil"

Proverbs 6:31

if he is caught

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone catches him"

in his house

This figure of speech is saying that everything in his house is all that he owns. Alternate translation: "that he owns"

Proverbs 6:32

The one

"The person" or "The man"

Proverbs 6:33

what he deserves

"the appropriate punishment for what he has done"

his disgrace

This figure of speech is using the term "disgrace" to refer to the feeling of him acting shamefully. Alternate translation: "the memory of his shameful act"

will not be blotted out

This figure of speech is using the negative "will not be blotted out" to refer to it always being there. Alternate translation: "will never go away" or "will always be there"

Proverbs 6:34

furious

very angry

he will show no mercy

The "he" is the neighbor whose wife has committed adultery with another man. Alternate translation: "he will not limit the pain he will cause you" or "he will hurt you as much as he can"

on the day of vengeance

"when he takes revenge"

Proverbs 6:35

General Information:

The writer speaks as if the jealous husband has captured the one who had sexual relations with his wife.

ransom

money to buy the freedom of someone who has been captured

he cannot be bought off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you cannot pay him enough money to change his mind"

off, though

"off. This will be true even if"

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7 1 My son, keep my words
and store up my commands within yourself.

2 Keep my commands and live,
and keep my instruction as the apple of your eye.

3 Tie them on your fingers;
write them on the tablet of your heart.

4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
and call understanding your kinsman,

5 in order to keep yourself from the adulterous woman,
from the immoral woman who makes her words smooth.

6 At the window of my house
I was looking out through the lattice.

7 I looked at the naive people,
and I noticed among the young men
a youth who had no sense.

8 That young man passed down the street near her corner,
and he went toward her house.

9 It was twilight, in the evening of the day,
at the time of night and darkness.

10 There a woman met him,
dressed like a prostitute, with a false heart.

11 She was loud and rebellious;

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her feet did not stay at home.

12 Now in the streets, then in the marketplace,
and at every corner she waited in ambush.

13 So she grabbed him and kissed him,
with a strong face she said to him,

14 "I made my peace offering today,
I fulfilled my vows,

15 so I came out to meet you,
to eagerly seek your face,
and I have found you.

16 I have spread coverings on my bed,
colored linens from Egypt.

17 I have sprinkled my bed
with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning;
let us take great pleasure in acts of love.

19 For my husband is not at his house;
he has gone on a long journey.

20 He took a bag of money with him;
he will come home on the day of the full moon."

21 With her great persuasiveness she turned him;
with her smooth lips she compelled him.

22 Suddenly he went after her
like an ox going to slaughter,
and like a fool is punished with shackles,[1]

23 until an arrow pierces through his liver.
He was like a bird rushing into a snare.
He did not know that it would cost him his life.

24 Now, my sons, listen to me;
pay attention to the words of my mouth.

25 May your heart not turn aside onto her paths;
do not be led astray onto her paths.

26 She has caused many people to fall down pierced;
those she has killed are numerous.

27 Her house is on the paths to Sheol;
they go down to the dark bedrooms of death.

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[1]The Hebrew text is difficult to understand. The ancient Greek translation has: like a dog to the muzzle. Some translations have like a deer to the trap.

Proverbs 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 7 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine.

Special concepts in this chapter

Parallelism

Proverbs are often written without any surrounding context and in two lines of text. Each line will have a certain relationship to the other line.

Many of the proverbs are stated as promises or commands, but they are intended to be advice.

My Son

Occasionally the author addresses a proverb to "my son." This is not intended to restrict the words of that proverb to only males, but is still given in the context of a father warning his son.

Adulteress

This chapter continues the theme about the adulteress and warns the young man to avoid her.

Links:

Proverbs 7:1 Notes

Proverbs 7:1

keep my words

Here keeping represents obeying. Alternate translation: "obey my words"

store up my commands within yourself

Here God's commands are spoken of as if they were objects that someone could put into a storeroom. Alternate translation: "memorize my commands"

Proverbs 7:2

keep my instruction

Here keeping represents obeying. Alternate translation: "obey my instructions"

as the apple of your eye

The apple of the eye is the pupil inside the eye, which people normally instinctively protect when an object flies at their face. Here "the apple of the eye" represents whatever a person values and protects the most. Alternate translation: "as your most valuable possession"

Proverbs 7:3

Tie them on your fingers

Possible meanings are 1) that the writer wanted his son to engrave certain commands from God on a ring and wear it, or 2) that the writer wanted his son to always remember God's commands, as if he always wore a certain ring.

write them on the tablet of your heart

Here the heart represents a person's mind, and remembering something well is spoken of as if the person were writing it on a stone tablet. See how you translated this in Proverbs 3:3. Alternate translation: "remember my commands well as if you were writing them in stone"

Proverbs 7:4

Say to wisdom, "You are my sister

Here wisdom is spoken of as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "Value wisdom as you would love your sister"

call understanding your kinsman

Here the quality of understanding is spoken of as if it were a kinsman or relative. Alternate translation: "treat understanding as you would treat your kinsman"

kinsman

"relative" or "family member"

Proverbs 7:5

who makes her words smooth

Words intended to deceive are spoken of as if they were smooth objects. Alternate translation: "who praises you to deceive you" or "who flatters you with her words"

Proverbs 7:6

lattice

a covering over a window made of thin strips of wood that cross one another in a slanted pattern that forms square-shaped openings in the pattern

Proverbs 7:7

naive

inexperienced or immature

Proverbs 7:8

her corner

Here "her" refers to any female stranger, as referred to in Proverbs 7:5. She was standing at a certain corner, waiting for a suitable man to pass by. Alternate translation: "the corner where a female stranger was standing"

corner

This refers to where two roads meet.

Proverbs 7:9

twilight

the time of day when it is getting darker and about to become night

Proverbs 7:10

with a false heart

Here "heart" represents intentions or plans. Alternate translation: "she planned to deceive someone"

Proverbs 7:11

She was loud and rebellious

"She talked loudly and showed contempt for her husband"

her feet did not stay at home

The phrase "her feet" represent the woman. Alternate translation: "she did not stay at home"

Proverbs 7:12

she waited in ambush

Here the woman is spoken of as if she were preparing to

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physically trap a person or an animal. Also, the idea of trapping someone here represents persuading someone to commit sin. Alternate translation: "she waited to trap someone" or "she waited to find someone she could persuade to sin"
Proverbs 7:13
she
the woman who was introduced in Proverbs 7:10
grabbed him
"took hold of him firmly"
with a strong face
Here "strong" represents "stubborn." A "strong face" means a stubborn expression on a person's face. This implies that the woman is acting in a stubborn way, that she is deliberately doing what she knows is wrong. Alternate translation: "with a shameless expression on her face"
Proverbs 7:14
I fulfilled my vows
Here "vows" represents what the person promised to sacrifice to God. Alternate translation: "I made the sacrifices I promised to God"
Proverbs 7:15
seek your face
Here "face" represents the person and especially the person's presence. Alternate translation: "look for you" or "find out where you are"
Proverbs 7:17
sprinkled my bed with
"scattered on my bed"
aloes
a substance from aloe plants that has a nice smell
cinnamon
This is a spice made from the bark of a tree that smells and tastes good.
Proverbs 7:18
let us drink our fill of love
Here the pleasures of romantic love are spoken of as if they were something good to drink. Alternate translation: "let us make love to each other as much as we want"
acts of love
caresses and sexual relations
Proverbs 7:19
is not at his house
"is not at home"
Proverbs 7:20
full moon
The moon is said to be full when it is a perfectly round disk, shining at its brightest.
Proverbs 7:21
her ... she ... him
The female is the married woman who wants to sleep with "him," the young man.
she turned him ... she compelled him
These two phrases form a merism that emphasizes that she was able to get him to willingly do exactly what she wanted.
she turned him
Causing him to stop doing what is right and start doing what is wrong is spoken of as if she caused him to turn off of the correct path and on to a wrong path. Alternate translation: "she persuaded him"
smooth lips
Here "lips" represents what a person says. When a person flatters someone else by saying things that are not sincere, these words are spoken of as if they were a smooth object. Alternate translation: "flattering, deceiving words"
she compelled him
This hyperbole speaks of the woman flattering the young man so that his desire was so strong he could not resist it as if she were forcing him to sin.
Proverbs 7:22
Suddenly he went after her
This seems to imply that the young man took very little time to think about what he should do. Alternate translation: "He quickly decided to go after her"
like an ox going to slaughter
The naive and unsuspecting way the young man follows the adulteress is compared to the way an animal is unaware of the danger it is in.
slaughter
This refers to killing an animal in order to eat its meat.
like a fool is punished with shackles
The Hebrew for this sentence is not not clear. Many translations say, "like a deer walks into a trap."
Proverbs 7:23
like a bird rushing into a snare
The naive and unsuspecting way the young man follows the adulteress is compared to the way an animal is unaware of the danger he is in.
until an arrow pierces through his liver
This passage implies that a hunter has trapped the deer in order to shoot it with arrows. Alternate translation: "until a hunter shoots it in its most important part"
liver
Here this organ represents a very important part of the deer's body.
it would cost him his life
This is a way of saying that this person will die as a result. Alternate translation: "it would kill him" or "he would die because of it"
Proverbs 7:24
Now
This is to focus the attention of the speaker's sons on the conclusion of this lesson.
Proverbs 7:25
May your heart not turn aside onto her paths
Here "ways" means the paths that a person chooses to walk on. It represents the person's behavior, the things that he decides to do in life. Alternate translation: "Make your heart stay far away from the ways of the adulterous woman" or "Do not let your heart want to do the things that the adulterous woman does"
your heart
Here "heart" represents a person, emphasizing his desires. Alternate translation: "you"
do not be led astray onto her paths
This means the same as the sentence before it. It strengthens the first warning. Alternate translation: "do not

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leave the right path in order to go on her paths"

Proverbs 7:26

She has caused many people to fall down pierced

Being pierced by spears or arrows represents being killed. Alternate translation: "She has caused many people to fall dead"

Proverbs 7:27

Her house is on the paths to Sheol ... they go down

Here "paths" represents the kinds of behavior that foolish people participate in. Sheol was the name for the world of the dead.

on the paths to Sheol ... down to the dark bedrooms of death

These two phrases basically mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize that the woman's victims will be destroyed.

the dark bedrooms of death

This expression pictures the dead as sleeping in many different rooms in Sheol.

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1 8 Does not Wisdom call out?
Does not Understanding raise her voice?

2 On the hilltops beside the road,
at the crossroads, Wisdom has taken her stand.

3 Before the gates at the entrance into the city,
at the entrances into the city, she cries out.

4 "It is to you, people, that I call;
my voice is for the sons of mankind.

5 You who are naive, learn wisdom;
and you who are foolish, you must get an understanding mind.

6 Listen, because I will speak of noble things,
and when my lips open I will say upright things.

7 For my mouth speaks what is trustworthy,
and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

8 All the words of my mouth are just;
in them is nothing twisted or perverse.

9 All of them are straight for the person who understands;
my words are upright for those who find knowledge.

10 Acquire my instruction rather than silver;
acquire knowledge rather than choicest gold.

11 For Wisdom is better than jewels;
no desirable thing is equal to her.

12 I, Wisdom, live with Prudence,
and I possess knowledge and discretion.

13 The fear of Yahweh is to hate evil.
I hate pride and arrogance, the evil way,
and perverted speech. I hate them.

14 I have good advice and sound wisdom;
I am insight; strength belongs to me.

15 By me kings reign,
and rulers make laws that are just.

16 By me princes rule,

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nobles, and all who judge with justice.

17 I love those who love me,
and those who diligently seek me, find me.

18 With me are riches and honor,
lasting wealth and righteousness.

19 My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold;
my produce is better than pure silver.

20 I walk in the path of righteousness,
in the midst of the paths of justice.

21 As a result, I make those who love me inherit wealth;
I fill up their treasuries.

22 Yahweh created me at the beginning,
the first of his deeds long ago.

23 In ages long ago I was established—from the first,
from the beginnings of the earth.

24 Before there were oceans, I was given birth—
before there were springs abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled
and before the hills, I was born.

26 I was born before Yahweh had made the earth or the fields,
or even the first dust in the world.

27 I was there when he established the heavens,
when he drew a circle on the surface of the deep.

28 I was there when he established the clouds above
and when the springs in the deep became fixed.

29 I was there when he made his limit for the sea,
so the waters should not spread beyond his command,
and when there was set the limit for the foundations of the dry land.

30 I was beside him, as a skilled craftsman;
I was his delight day after day,
always rejoicing before him.

31 I was rejoicing in his whole world,
and my delight was in the sons of mankind.

32 Now, my sons, listen to me,
for those who keep my ways will be blessed.

33 Listen to my instruction and be wise;
do not neglect it.

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34 The one who listens to me will be blessed.
He will be watching every day at my doors,
waiting beside the posts of my doors.

35 For whoever finds me, finds life,
and he will find the favor of Yahweh.

36 But he who fails, harms his own life;
all who hate me love death."

Proverbs 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 8 continues a collection of proverbs that ends in chapter nine. These chapters operate more as a unit than many of the following chapters in this book.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom calls out

The addressee of this chapter is broader than "my son," but is personal like the previous chapters' use of "my son." In this case, Wisdom is calling out for all to come and learn of her, in contrast to the adulteress mentioned in chapters 5-7. (See: wise)

Links:

Proverbs 8:1 Notes

Proverbs 8:1

General Information:

In chapter 8 wisdom is spoken of as a woman who teaches people how to be wise. Many verses in chapter 8 have parallelisms.

Does not Wisdom call out?

This question is used to remind the readers of something they should already know. Alternate translation: "Wisdom calls out"

Does not Wisdom call out?

Here wisdom is imagined as a woman. If a language does not allow this kind of metaphor, other possible translations are: 1) "Is not wisdom like a woman who calls out?" 2) "Does not a woman named Wisdom call out?"

Does not Understanding raise her voice?

Here "Understanding" means the same as "Wisdom."

raise her voice

"speak"

Proverbs 8:3

the gates at the entrance into the city

In ancient times, cities usually had outer walls with gates in them.

she cries out

This continues to refer to Wisdom, personified as a woman.

Proverbs 8:4

General Information:

Wisdom speaks to the people in verses 4-36.

my voice is for the sons of mankind

Here "voice" represents the words that are spoken. Alternate translation: "my words are for the sons of mankind"

the sons of mankind

This is metonymy representing all human beings. Alternate translation: "all people"

Proverbs 8:5

naive

inexperienced or immature

learn wisdom

The abstract word "wisdom' refers to what a wise person believes and to the way in which he acts. Alternate translation: "learn how a wise person acts" or "learn what it means to be wise"

you must get an understanding mind

"you must begin to understand things with your mind"

Proverbs 8:6

when my lips open

Here "lips" represents a person's mouth, with which he speaks. Alternate translation: "when I open my mouth to speak"

upright

proper or just

Proverbs 8:7

my mouth speaks

Here "mouth" represents a person who speaks. Alternate translation: "I speak"

what is trustworthy

"what people should believe"

wickedness is an abomination to my lips

Here "lips" represents a person who is speaking. See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32. Alternate translation: "wickedness is an abomination to me" or "saying wicked things would be an abomination to me"

wickedness

Here the abstract noun "wickedness" represents wicked speech.

Proverbs 8:8

the words of my mouth

The "mouth" stands for the person who is speaking.

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Alternate translation: "The things I teach"
nothing twisted
Twisting a message is a metaphor for changing a true message into a false one. Alternate translation: "nothing false"
Proverbs 8:9
straight
honest and clear
my words are upright for those who find knowledge
This probably means that those who find knowledge will easily understand that the speaker's words are upright. Here "words" represent a message or teaching. Alternate translation: "those who know what is right and what is wrong consider what I teach to be right"
upright
true and honest
Proverbs 8:10
Acquire my instruction rather than silver
"You should try much harder to understand my instructions than to get silver"
choicest gold
"the best gold you could ever find"
Proverbs 8:11
For Wisdom is better than jewels; no desirable thing is equal to her
Here Wisdom, personified as a woman, is not speaking. However, it is possible to make Wisdom the speaker here as well. Alternate translation: "For I, Wisdom, am better than jewels; no desirable thing is equal to me"
desirable thing
treasuries
Proverbs 8:12
I, Wisdom, live with Prudence
Prudence is also represented here as a person.
Prudence
caution or good judgment
I possess knowledge and discretion
The abstract ideas "knowledge" and "discrete" can be expressed in other ways. Alternate translation: "I am knowledgeable and discreet" or "I know many things, and I am careful"
discretion
being careful about what we say and do; being cautious not to cause hurt or harm to others
Proverbs 8:13
perverted speech
"wicked talk"
perverted
turned from what is right
Proverbs 8:14
good advice
"wise suggestions"
advice
counsel that is given to help someone
sound
good, reliable
I am insight
Here Wisdom is spoken of as if she were insight. Alternate translation: "I have insight"
Proverbs 8:16
nobles, and all who judge with justice
Translators can supply the missing words. Alternate translation: "and by me nobles and all who judge with justice also rule"
nobles
noblemen, leading members of important families in the nation
Proverbs 8:17
love
This refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member. This is natural human love between friends or relatives.
diligently
with careful and continued effort
Proverbs 8:18
With me are riches and honor
"I have riches and honor"
lasting wealth and righteousness
This explains what is meant by "riches and honor." This can be made clear with the connecting word "therefore." Alternate translation: "therefore, I will give lasting wealth and righteousness to those who find me"
righteousness
"the ability to live in a right way"
Proverbs 8:19
My fruit
what wisdom produces or causes
my produce
the benefit or gain that wisdom causes
Proverbs 8:20
I walk in the path of righteousness
Living the right way is spoken of as walking on the right road. Alternate translation: "I live right" or "I do what is right"
in the midst of the paths of justice
This tells more of what is meant by "the path of righteousness." Alternate translation: "I do what is perfectly just" or "I only do what is just"
Proverbs 8:21
treasuries
storehouses for valuable things. Wisdom is spoken of as a woman who fills the storehouses of her followers with valuable things.
Proverbs 8:22
the first of his deeds long ago
"creating me was one of the first things he did long ago"
Proverbs 8:23
In ages long ago
"Very long ago"
ages
The word "age" refers to a general, extended period of time.
from the beginnings of the earth
The idea of beginnings can be translated in a less abstract way. Alternate translation: "from when God created the earth"
Proverbs 8:24
General Information:
Wisdom continues to speak.
Proverbs 8:25

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Before the mountains were settled
"Before the bases of the mountains were put into place." This can also be put into active form. Alternate translation: "Before God made the foundations of the mountains and put them into their proper places"
Proverbs 8:26
I was born
This is wisdom speaking about herself.
was born
"I was alive"
Proverbs 8:27
I was there
This is wisdom speaking about herself.
established
To establish something is to bring into being on a stable basis. Alternate translation: "created" or "made"
when he drew a circle on the surface of the deep
This refers to setting a limit to how far someone in a ship at sea can see all around himself. Alternate translation: "when he marked on the ocean's surface how far a person at sea can see in every direction"
the deep
"the ocean"
Proverbs 8:28
General Information:
Wisdom continues to speak.
established
brought into permanent being
when the springs in the deep became fixed
This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "when God fixed the springs in the deep"
the springs in the deep
The ancient Hebrews thought that the ocean got its water from springs at the bottom of the sea.
Proverbs 8:29
when he made his limit for the sea
"when he created the shorelines for the oceans. The "limit for the sea" divided the oceans from the dry land.
when there was set the limit for the foundations of the dry land
The Hebrew word for "earth" also often means "land."
when there was set the limit for the foundations of the dry land
This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "when God set the limit for the foundations of the earth"
Proverbs 8:30
I was beside him
This is still wisdom speaking. Wisdom now says she was right next to Yahweh, implying that she was his assistant in creating the world.
skilled craftsman
This is a person who has trained for years to make useful things very well, like furniture or houses.
I was his delight
"I was what made him happy." The word "delight" is an abstract noun that can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he was happy because of me"
day after day
This is a way to express the idea of a habitual action or of a continuous condition. Alternate translation: "continually" or "the whole time"
Proverbs 8:31
his whole world
"the whole world he created" or "everything he created"
the sons of mankind
This refers to human beings in general. Alternate translation: "the people he brought into existence"
Proverbs 8:32
Now
This is to focus the attention of the children to the conclusion of this lesson.
listen to me
This is still wisdom talking about herself.
those who keep my ways
Here "my ways" represents wisdom's behavior. Alternate translation: "those who do what I teach" or "the people who follow my example"
Proverbs 8:33
do not neglect
"do not disregard" Alternate translation: "be sure to pay attention to" or "be sure to follow"
Proverbs 8:34
watching every day at my doors, waiting beside the posts of my doors
These two phrases basically mean the same thing. Wisdom is described as having a home; possible meanings of "watching" are 1) a wise person waits outside wisdom's home in the morning in order to serve her, or 2) a wise person waits outside wisdom's house for her to come and teach him.
Proverbs 8:35
finds me
This is still wisdom talking about herself.
Proverbs 8:36
hate me
This is still wisdom talking about herself.
he who fails
The complete thought is, "he who fails to find me"
his own life
Here "life" represents the person's self.

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9 [1] Wisdom has built her own house;
she has carved seven pillars out of rocks.

[2] She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine,
and she has set her table.

[3] She has sent out her maids; she calls out
from the highest points of the city,

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4 "Who is naive? Let him turn aside here!"
To the one lacking good sense she speaks.

5 "Come, eat my food,
and drink the wine I have mixed.

6 Leave your naive actions and live;
walk in the path of understanding.

7 Whoever disciplines a mocker receives dishonor,
and whoever rebukes a wicked person receives abuse.

8 Do not reprove a mocker, or he will hate you;
reprove a wise man, and he will love you.

9 Give to a wise person, and he will become even wiser;
teach a righteous person, and he will add to his learning.

10 The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

11 For through me your days will be multiplied,
and years of life will be added to you.

12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
and if you mock, you will carry it by yourself."

13 The woman of foolishness is ignorant;
she is untaught and knows nothing.

14 She sits at the door of her house,
on a seat in the highest places of the town.

15 She is calling out to those who pass by in the streets,
to people walking straight on their way.

16 "Let anyone who is naive turn aside here,"
she says to those who have no sense.

17 "Stolen waters are sweet,
and bread of secrecy is delicious."

18 But he does not know that the dead are there,
that her invited guests are in the depths of Sheol.

Proverbs 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 9 concludes a collection of proverbs that operate as a unit about wisdom. (See: wise)

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom calls out

The addressee of chapters 8 and 9 is broader than "my son," but is personal like the previous chapters' use of "my son." In

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this case, Wisdom is calling out for all to come and learn of her.

Links:

Proverbs 9:1 Notes

Proverbs 9:1

General Information:

These verses begin a parable in which wisdom is imagined to be a woman who is giving good advice to people.

Wisdom has built

The writer speaks about wisdom as if it were a woman who has built her own house.

Proverbs 9:2

She has slaughtered her animals

This refers to animals whose meat will be eaten in the dinner that Wisdom will give. Alternate translation: "She has killed the animals for meat at dinner"

mixed her wine

In ancient Israel, people often mixed wine with water. Alternate translation: "prepared her wine by mixing it with water"

she has set her table

"she has prepared her table"

Proverbs 9:3

General Information:

These verses begin to give the message of Wisdom, who is personified as a woman.

She has sent out her maids

These maids went out and invited people to come to the feast that Wisdom had prepared.

her maids

Young women or girls who are in the service of a respectable, adult woman, such as Wisdom.

she calls out

"she proclaims" or "she summons" Alternate translation: "she loudly recites her invitation"

the highest points of the city

The invitation is shouted from the highest points so that it will be best heard by all the people.

Proverbs 9:4

Who is naive? Let ... the one lacking good sense

These two phrases describe the same group of people, those who need more wisdom in their lives. Here the question is addressed to all such people. Alternate translation: "Anyone who is naive, let ... anyone lacking good sense"

is naive

"is inexperienced or immature"

turn aside here

"leave his path and come into my house"

Proverbs 9:5

General Information:

These verses continue the message of Wisdom.

Come ... eat ... drink

All of these commands are plural; Wisdom is addressing many people at the same time.

the wine I have mixed

In ancient Israel, people often mixed wine with water. Alternate translation: "prepared her wine by mixing it with water"

Proverbs 9:6

Leave ... live ... walk

All of these commands are plural; Wisdom is addressing many people at the same time.

Leave your naive actions

Here naive actions are spoken of as if they were a place that a person could leave. Alternate translation: "Stop your naive behavior"

naive actions

"inexperienced, immature actions"

the path of understanding

Here the process of understanding wisdom is spoken of as if it were a path that a person could follow. Alternate translation: "the manner of living that a wise person has"

Proverbs 9:7

General Information:

These verses continue the message of Wisdom.

Whoever disciplines a mocker receives dishonor

The abstract noun "dishonor" is spoken of as if it were a solid object that one person can give to another. It can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "A mocker will dishonor anyone who disciplines him" or "Whoever disciplines a mocker can expect the mocker to dishonor him" or "Whoever disciplines a mocker can expect the mocker to insult him"

a mocker

Someone who habitually mocks people. Alternate translation: "someone who says insulting things about other people" or "someone who likes to make other people look bad"

whoever rebukes a wicked person receives abuse

The writer speaks of "abuse" here as if it were a solid object that one person could give to another. Possible meanings are 1) a wound resulting from physical abuse or 2) a metonym for the disgrace that comes from verbal abuse. Alternate translation: "a wicked person will abuse whoever rebukes him" or "anyone who rebukes a wicked person can expect the wicked person to abuse him"

whoever rebukes

"whoever corrects"

Proverbs 9:8

Do not reprove

"Do not correct"

Proverbs 9:9

Give to a wise person, and he ... teach a righteous person, and he

These two commands actually represent conditional statements. Alternate translation: "If you give to a wise person, he ... if you teach a righteous person, he"

Give to a wise person ... teach a righteous person

These two phrases basically say the same thing.

Give to a wise person

This refers to giving instruction to a wise person.

Proverbs 9:10

General Information:

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These verses finish the message of Wisdom.

The fear of Yahweh

See how you translated this phrase in Proverbs 1:7.

Proverbs 9:11

through me your days will be multiplied

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "I will multiply your days" or "I will cause you to live many more days"

through me

Wisdom, personified as a woman, continues to speak here.

your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you

These two phrases basically mean the same thing and are used to emphasize the great benefits wisdom has.

years of life will be added to you

Wisdom speaks of years of life as if they were physical objects. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will add years of life to you" or "I will add years to your life" or "I will enable you to live longer"

Proverbs 9:12

If you are wise ... and if you mock

These two statements seem to mean that wise people gain advantages for themselves because of their wisdom, and mockers suffer because of their behavior.

you will carry it

This speaks of the consequence of one's bad behavior as if it were a heavy load that one had to carry on his back.

Proverbs 9:13

General Information:

These verses begin to describe foolishness, which is also personified as a woman.

The woman of foolishness

It is possible to translate "foolishness" as a description such as "A foolish woman." However, if a language allows wisdom to be personified, as in the previous part of this chapter, it may also allow foolishness to be personified. Alternate translation: "The woman Foolishness"

she is untaught and knows nothing

These two expressions basically mean the same thing, which is repeated to show how useless the foolish woman is. Alternate translation: "she does not know anything at all"

she is untaught

"she has not learned from experience" or "she is young and naive"

Proverbs 9:15

walking straight on their way

This seems to be an idiom for "thinking only of their own affairs" or "minding their own business."

Proverbs 9:16

is naive

"is inexperienced or immature"

turn aside here

"leave his path and come here"

she says

This is the foolish woman who was introduced in Proverbs 9:13.

those who have no sense

"those who do not have wisdom" or "those who are not wise"

Proverbs 9:17

Stolen waters are sweet, and bread of secrecy is delicious

The foolish woman speaks of the pleasure of stolen waters and bread of secrecy to tell men that if they sleep with her, they will have pleasure. This can be stated clearly in a simile: "You can enjoy me just as you enjoy water that you have stolen or bread that is secret"

Proverbs 9:18

that the dead are there

"that the men who have gone to her are now dead"

in the depths of Sheol

"Sheol" refers to the world of the dead.

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10 [1]The proverbs of Solomon.

A wise son makes his father rejoice
but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.

[2] Treasures accumulated by wickedness give no profit,
but doing what is right delivers from death.

[3] Yahweh does not let the soul of the righteous person go hungry,
but he frustrates the cravings of the wicked.

[4] A lazy hand causes a person to be poor,
but the hand of the diligent person gains riches.

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5 A wise son gathers a crop in the summer,
but it is disgraceful for him to sleep during harvest.

6 Blessings from God are upon the head of the righteous person,
but the mouth of the wicked covers up violence.

7 The righteous person makes those who remember him happy,
but the name of the wicked will rot away.

8 The wise of heart accept commands,
but a talkative fool will come to ruin.

9 He who walks in integrity walks in safety,
but the one who makes his ways crooked, he will be found out.

10 He who winks the eye causes grief,
but a talkative fool will come to ruin.

11 The mouth of the righteous person is a water spring of life,
but the mouth of the wicked covers up violence.

12 Hatred stirs up conflicts,
but love covers over all transgressions.

13 Wisdom is found on the lips of a discerning person,
but a rod is for the back of the one who has no sense.

14 Wise men store up knowledge,
but the mouth of a fool brings destruction near.

15 The wealth of a rich man is his fortified city;
the poverty of the poor is their destruction.

16 The wage of the righteous person leads to life;
the income of the wicked leads them to sin.

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17 There is a path to life for the one who follows discipline,
but the one who rejects correction is led astray.

18 Whoever conceals hatred has lying lips,
and whoever spreads slander is a fool.

19 When there are many words, transgression is not lacking,
but he who is careful in what he says is wise.

20 The tongue of the righteous person is pure silver;
there is little value in the heart of the wicked.

21 The lips of the righteous person nourish many,
but fools die because of their lack of sense.

22 The blessings of Yahweh bring wealth
and he adds no pain to it.

23 Wickedness is a game a fool plays,
but wisdom is a pleasure to a man of understanding.

24 The fear of the wicked person will overtake him,
but the desire of righteous people will be granted.

25 The wicked are like the storm that passes by, and they are no more,
but the righteous person is a foundation that lasts forever.

26 Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes,
so is the lazy person to those who send him.

27 The fear of Yahweh prolongs life,
but the years of the wicked will be short.

28 The hope of righteous people is their joy,

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but the hope of wicked people will perish.

29 The way of Yahweh is a stronghold for those who have integrity,
but it is destruction for those who behave wickedly.

30 The righteous person will never be overthrown,
but the wicked will not remain in the land.

31 Out of the mouth of the righteous person comes the fruit of wisdom,
but the perverse tongue will be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous person know what gains favor,
but the mouth of the wicked, they know what is perverse.

Proverbs 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 10 starts a new section of the book, which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often using contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, and wicked/righteous. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 10:1 Notes

Proverbs 10:1
General Information:
Many verses in Chapter 10 are contrasting parallelisms
The proverbs of Solomon
After the introduction of Chapters 1-9, Chapter 10 begins the collection of the proverbs; short sayings that teach wisdom.
Proverbs 10:2
accumulated
acquired over time
Proverbs 10:3
Yahweh does not let the soul of the righteous person go hungry
Here "soul" refers to the person. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh makes sure those who do what is right have food to eat"
Proverbs 10:4
A lazy hand
"Hand" represents the strength and ability of a person. Alternate translation: "A person unwilling to work"
hand of the diligent
"Hand" represents the strength and ability of a person. Alternate translation: "person who works hard"
Proverbs 10:6
are upon the head
The "head" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "are given to"
mouth of the wicked
The "mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "words the wicked speak"
covers up
hides the truth
Proverbs 10:7
name
The word "name" represents a person's reputation. Alternate translation: "memory"
Proverbs 10:8
come to ruin
"be destroyed" or "be made useless"
Proverbs 10:9
crooked
not straight; deformed; dishonest; deceitful
Proverbs 10:10
He who winks the eye
"Winking the eye" represents a secretive sign for being

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cruel to someone else. Alternate translation: "He who makes a signal with a gesture"

will come to ruin

will lose all the good things he now has

Proverbs 10:11

The mouth of the righteous

Here "mouth" represents what a persons says. Alternate translation: "The speech of a righteous person"

the righteous

This refers to righteous people in general. Alternate translation: "righteous people"

is a water spring of life

This person's speech is spoken of as if it preserved living animals or people, as a water spring would do in a dry land.

the mouth of the wicked covers up violence

That is, the wicked person appears to say harmless things, but plans to violent things against other people.

the mouth of the wicked

Here "mouth" represents what a persons says. Alternate translation: "the speech of a wicked person"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "wicked people"

Proverbs 10:12

Hatred stirs up conflicts

Here the word "hatred" represents anyone who hates others. Alternate translation: "Anyone who hates others stirs up conflict"

stirs up conflicts

"Stirs up conflicts" is a metaphor meaning causes people to quarrel or fight. Alternate translation: "starts fights"

love covers over all transgressions

Here the word "love" represents anyone who loves others. Alternate translation: "Anyone who loves others covers all transgressions"

covers over all transgressions

"Covers over" is a metaphor meaning forgives. Alternate translation: "forgives all wrongs"

Proverbs 10:13

on the lips of a discerning person

"Lips" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "in what a sensible person says"

a rod is for the back

"Rod" represents strong, physical punishment and "the back" represents the person who receives the punishment. Alternate translation: "a person who has no sense needs forceful punishment"

Proverbs 10:14

the mouth of a fool

"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "the words from a foolish person"

Proverbs 10:15

his fortified city

This represents wealth as a safe place. Alternate translation: "his safety"

their destruction

"what destroys them"

Proverbs 10:16

The wage ... the income

These terms normally refer to the money a worker earns. Here they represents the results of either doing what is right or doing what is wrong.

income

"what comes in" when a person sells his labor or something he has produced

Proverbs 10:17

There is a path to life for the one who follows discipline

"The person who obeys wise instruction will have a long and happy life"

but the one who rejects correction is led astray

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but the one who does not obey wise instruction will not have a good life"

Proverbs 10:18

has lying lips

"Lips" represent what a person says. Alternate translation: "tells lies"

Proverbs 10:19

transgression is not lacking

This phrase uses a negative to emphasize a positive idea. Alternate translation: "there is much sin"

Proverbs 10:20

The tongue of the righteous person

"Tongue" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "Whatever a righteous person says"

is pure silver

"Silver" represents valuable sayings. Alternate translation: "is extremely valuable"

Proverbs 10:21

The lips of the righteous

"Lips" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "The sayings of a righteous man"

nourish

cause them to develop or grow stronger

Proverbs 10:23

Wickedness is a game a fool plays

A game is an activity people do for pleasure. Alternate translation: "Fools find pleasure in wickedness"

Proverbs 10:24

overtake

overcome someone

Proverbs 10:25

The wicked are like the storm

Just as storm comes and sweeps everything away so wicked people will disappear.

is a foundation that lasts forever

"Foundation" represents the base or a beginning of something that people build over. Alternate translation: "is a start for something that lasts forever"

Proverbs 10:26

Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes, so is the lazy person to those who send him

"Vinegar" and "smoke" represent things that hurt a person's teeth and eyes. Alternate translation: "A lazy person will make those who send him wish they had not"

vinegar

a sour liquid used to flavor or preserve foods, too much of

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which is painful to drink

Proverbs 10:27

the years of the wicked

"Years" represent the time a person lives. Alternate translation: "the lifetime of the evil person"

Proverbs 10:28

the hope of wicked people

Here "hope" represents what a person hopes for. Alternate translation: "what wicked people hope to obtain"

Proverbs 10:30

will never be overthrown

This can be stated as active and positive: Alternate translation: "will be secure"

Proverbs 10:31

Out of the mouth of the righteous person

"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "From the righteous man's words"

the perverse tongue will be cut out

"Tongue" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "God will shut the mouths of people who say what is false"

Proverbs 10:32

lips of the righteous person know what gains favor

"Lips" represent what a person says. Alternate translation: "righteous person knows how to speak in a way that gains favor"

gains favor

"makes people think well of them"

mouth of the wicked

"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "the words of the wicked"

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11 [1] False scales are an abomination to Yahweh,
but he delights in a precise weight.

[2] When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with humility comes wisdom.

[3] The integrity of the upright guides them,
but the crooked ways of the treacherous destroy them.

[4] Wealth is worthless on the day of wrath,
but doing right delivers you from death.

[5] The right conduct of a blameless person makes his way straight,
but the wicked will fall because of their own wickedness.

[6] The right conduct of the upright keeps them safe,
but the treacherous are trapped by their cravings.

[7] When a wicked man dies, his hope perishes
and the hope that was in his strength comes to nothing.

[8] The righteous person is delivered from trouble
and it comes upon the wicked instead.

[9] With his mouth the godless person destroys his neighbor,

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but through knowledge righteous people are kept safe.

10 When righteous people prosper, a city rejoices;
when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy.

11 Through the blessings of the upright the city is exalted;
by the mouth of the wicked the city is thrown down.

12 The man who has contempt for his friend has no sense,
but a man of understanding keeps quiet.

13 Whoever goes around slandering reveals secrets,
but the trustworthy in spirit keeps a matter covered.

14 Where there is no counsel, a nation falls,
but victory comes through many counselors.

15 Whoever guarantees a loan for a stranger will surely suffer harm,
but the one who hates giving a pledge in that kind of promise is safe.

16 A gracious woman gets honor,
but violent people grasp for wealth.

17 A merciful person benefits himself,
but one who is cruel hurts himself.

18 The wicked person lies to get his wages,
but one who sows what is right reaps the wages of truth.

19 An honest person who does what is right will live,
but the one who pursues evil will die.

20 Those whose hearts are perverse are an abomination to Yahweh,
but he delights in those whose ways are blameless.

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21 Be sure of this—the wicked person will not go unpunished,
but the descendants of righteous people will be kept safe.

22 Like a gold ring in a pig's nose
is a beautiful woman without discretion.

23 The desires of righteous people result in good,
but wicked people can only hope for wrath.

24 There is one who scatters—he will accumulate even more;
another withholds what is just—he comes to poverty.

25 The generous person will prosper
and the one who gives water to others will have water for himself.

26 People curse the man who refuses to sell grain,
but good gifts crown the head of him who sells it.

27 The one who diligently seeks good is also seeking favor,
but the one who searches for evil will find it.

28 Those who trust in their riches will fall,
but like the leaf, righteous people will flourish.

29 The one who brings trouble on his own household will inherit the wind
and the fool will become a servant to the wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
but violence takes away lives.

31 Behold! The righteous person is rewarded on earth;
how much more the wicked and the sinner!

Proverbs 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 11 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Themes
There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often using contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 11:1 Notes

Proverbs 11:1
General Information:
Many verses in Chapter 11 are contrasting parallelisms
False scales are an abomination to Yahweh
"Scales" represent measuring accurately in negotiating. See how you translated "abomination" in [Proverbs 3:32]
but he delights in a precise weight
"Precise weight" represents accuracy in negotiating. Alternate translation: "but he delights in honest ways" or "but he is happy when people are honest"
Proverbs 11:3
the upright
This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright people" or "righteous people" or "honest people"
the treacherous
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "treacherous people" or "those who are treacherous"
Proverbs 11:4
Wealth is worthless on the day of wrath
The "day of wrath" represents a specific event, such as the "day of Yahweh" or "judgment day" or "last days." Alternate translation: "A person's wealth will do him no good when God comes to judge"
Proverbs 11:5
makes his way straight
"has clear direction"
the wicked
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are wicked"
Proverbs 11:6
the treacherous
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are treacherous"
the treacherous are trapped by their cravings
"those who do evil are captured by their passions"
treacherous
ready to betray trust; traitorous; deceptive
Proverbs 11:7
the hope that was in his strength
"the confidence he has in his own power" or "the hope for what he could gain by his power"
comes to nothing
"disappears"
Proverbs 11:8
The righteous person is delivered from trouble
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God delivers from trouble the person who does what is right"
it comes
"trouble comes"
Proverbs 11:9
With his mouth the godless
"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "The words of the godless"
Proverbs 11:11
Through the blessings of the upright
Possible meanings are 1) The upright do good things that cause the people in the city to be prosperous or 2) God blesses the people of the city because of the actions of the upright.
the city is exalted
"City" represents the community or people group. The phrase "is exalted" can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God exalts the people of the city" or "God makes the people in the city prosperous"
by the mouth of the wicked
"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "the words of evil people"
Proverbs 11:13
the trustworthy in spirit
Here the word "spirit" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "a trustworthy person"
keeps a matter covered
"Covered" represents keeping things concealed as much as possible. Alternate translation: "does not tell" or "does not speak about the matter"
Proverbs 11:15
one who hates giving
"one who refuses to give"
Proverbs 11:16
violent people
people without pity or compassion; cruel people
grasp for wealth
"are greedy for wealth"
Proverbs 11:17
one who
"a person who"
Proverbs 11:18
sows what is right
To "sow" represents spreading out to gain more. Alternate translation: "spreads out what is right"
reaps the wages of truth
To "reap" represents acquiring or gathering in" Alternate translation: "will surely be rewarded"
Proverbs 11:19
the one who
"the person who"
pursues evil
"chases after evil" or "seeks to do evil"

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Proverbs 11:20
Those whose hearts are perverse are an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates those whose hearts are perverse." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
whose hearts are perverse
"Heart" represents the feelings, attitudes and motivations of a person. Alternate translation: "who have wicked thoughts"
Proverbs 11:21
will not go unpunished
This phrase uses a negative to emphasize a positive idea. Alternate translation: "will certainly be punished"
Proverbs 11:22
Like a gold ring ... without discretion
A beautiful woman without discretion is compared to a useless and unsuitable golden ring in a pig's nose.
without discretion
"without common sense" or "who is foolish"
Proverbs 11:24
There is one who scatters—he will accumulate even more
This is a metaphor for a person who becomes more wealthy by being generous. Alternate translation: "Some people give freely to others and yet become more wealthy"
one who scatters
You may need to make explicit that the person scatters seeds for crops to grow. This is a metaphor for being generous. Alternate translation: "one who scatters much seed" or "one who is generous"
will accumulate even more
"will gain even more"
withholds what is just
"what he should give" or "wrongly refuses to give." Being unjust is possibly a hyperbole for simply not being generous.
Proverbs 11:25
will prosper
"will gain more"
the one who
"the generous person who" or "anyone who"
Proverbs 11:26
the man who refuses to sell
This describes the person who hoards his wealth instead of helping those in need.
good gifts crown the head of him who sells it
"Crown" represents the reward or award for the person who is willing to sell grain. Alternate translation: "good gifts are given as a crown of honor to him who sells it" or "the person who sells it is honored with many blessings"
Proverbs 11:27
The one who diligently seeks
the one who seeks with careful and continued effort
Proverbs 11:28
will fall
This is an idiom. Here "fall" represents destruction or failure. Alternate translation: "will be destroyed" or "awaits a bad future"
like the leaf, righteous people will flourish
"Leaf" represents growth and prosperity. Alternate translation: "righteous people will prosper in the same way a healthy green leaf grows"
righteous people will flourish
This means that righteous people will thrive or prosper.
Proverbs 11:29
inherit the wind
The "wind" is a metaphor for something that cannot be grasped or has no value. Alternate translation: "inherit nothing"
Proverbs 11:30
The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life
The word "fruit" here is a metonym for the tree that produces the fruit, and the tree is a metaphor for a person who does what is right. Alternate translation: "Those who do right will bring life to themselves and others"
tree of life
See how you translated this in Proverbs 3:18.
but violence takes away lives
"but the one who kills people is violent." Some modern translations read, "and the one who wins souls is wise," that is, a wise person will convince other people to do what is right.
Proverbs 11:31
The righteous person is rewarded on earth
This can be translated using an active verb. Alternate translation: "God rewards the righteous person on earth" or "People reward the righteous person on earth"
righteous person is rewarded on earth
Some translations read, "person who is righteous on earth is rewarded."
is rewarded ... on earth
The phrase "on earth" is a metonym for the life that a person lives on earth. Alternate translation: "is rewarded ... in this life"
how much more
"even more so"

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12 [1] Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
but the one who hates correction is stupid.

[2] Yahweh gives favor to a good man,
but he condemns a man who makes evil plans.

[3] A person cannot be established by wickedness,

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but righteous people cannot be uprooted.

4 A worthy wife is her husband's crown,
but she who brings shame is like a disease that rots his bones.

5 The plans of the righteous are just,
but the advice of the wicked is deceitful.

6 The words of wicked people are an ambush waiting for bloodshed,
but the words of the upright keep them safe.

7 Wicked people are overthrown and they are gone,
but the house of the righteous person will stand.

8 A man is praised for prudent lips,
but the perverse heart is despised.

9 Better the person of low position who has a servant
than the one who honors himself but has no food.

10 The righteous person cares about the needs of his animal,
but even the compassion of the wicked is cruel.

11 The one who works his land will have plenty of food,
but whoever chases after worthless projects has no sense.

12 The evil person desires the plunder of the wicked,
but the righteous root endures.

13 An evil person is trapped by the transgression of his lips,
but the righteous person escapes from trouble.

14 From the fruit of his words a person is filled with good things,
just as the work of his hands rewards him.

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15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
but a wise man listens to advice.

16 A fool shows his anger at once,
but one who ignores an insult is prudent.

17 The one who speaks the truth says what is right,
but a false witness, deceit.

18 The words of one who speaks rashly are like the thrusts of a sword,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

19 Truthful lips last forever,
but a lying tongue is only for a moment.

20 There is deceit in the hearts of those who plan to do evil,
but joy comes to the advisors of peace.

21 No ill comes upon the righteous,
but the wicked are filled with distress.

22 Lying lips are an abomination to Yahweh,
but those who live faithfully are his delight.

23 A prudent man conceals his knowledge,
but the heart of fools shouts out folly.

24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
but lazy people will be put to forced labor.

25 Anxiety in the heart of a person weighs him down,
but a good word makes him glad.

26 The righteous person is a guide for his friend,
but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

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27 Lazy people would not roast their own game,
but the diligent man will obtain precious wealth.

28 Those who walk in the right way find life
and in its path there is no death.

Proverbs 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 12 continues the section of the book (Chapter 10-22) which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often using contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility and integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 12:1 Notes

Proverbs 12:1

General Information:

The author uses throughout this chapter. Verses 1-15 contrast wisdom and foolishness.

Whoever

"Any person who"

the one who hates correction

"the person who does not want to be told what to do"

is stupid

"is foolish" or "is unwise"

Proverbs 12:3

A person cannot be established by wickedness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one can become safe and secure by doing what is wicked"

cannot be uprooted

"Uprooted" represents being pulled out of the ground like a plant or a tree. This cannot happen to those who do right. Alternate translation: "are as stable as a tree with deep roots"

Proverbs 12:4

A worthy wife is her husband's crown

A crown represents the greatest honor a person can receive. Alternate translation: "A good wife is a sign of great honor for her husband"

she who brings shame is like a disease that rots his bones

A disease that rots the bones represents the spoiling of a person's life. Alternate translation: "a wife's shameful acts destroy her husband's influence and happiness"

Proverbs 12:5

the righteous

This refers to righteous persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "righteous people"

Proverbs 12:6

The words of wicked people are an ambush waiting for bloodshed

The deceitful things that wicked people say in order to harm other people are spoken of as if their words are waiting to kill someone by surprise. Alternate translation: "The deceitful things wicked people say are like a person waiting to murder someone by surprise"

the words of the upright keep them safe

"advice from the upright keeps people safe"

the upright

This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright persons" or "righteous persons" or "honest persons"

Proverbs 12:7

Wicked people are overthrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will overthrow the wicked people" or "People will remove the wicked people from power"

house

The term "house" is often used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a person's ancestors, descendants or other relatives. Alternate translation: "family" or "descendants"

Proverbs 12:8

A man is praised for prudent lips

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will praise a man with prudent lips"

for prudent lips

The lips here are either 1) a synecdoche for the man himself. Alternate translation: "because he is prudent" Or 2) a metonym for the words he speaks Alternate translation: "because he speaks prudently."

the perverse heart is despised

The word "heart" here is a synecdoche for the whole person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will despise the one who always thinks evil thoughts" or "people will despise the one who takes

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good things and twists them into bad"
Proverbs 12:9
the person of low position
"the person whom others despise"
the one who honors himself
"the one who boasts about himself"
Proverbs 12:10
is cruel
"causes suffering"
Proverbs 12:11
worthless projects
"worthless plans" or "worthless tasks"
Proverbs 12:12
the plunder of the wicked
"what wicked people steal." That is, what they desire is what they themselves can steal. The writer is not referring to these evil people stealing from other wicked people.
the righteous root endures
This metaphor refers to a person who acts righteously whether people are watching him or not. Alternate translation: "the righteous person endures" or "righteous people endure"
Proverbs 12:13
An evil person is trapped by the transgression of his lips
"Trapped" represents being caught in a snare or being tricked. The evil words a person says are spoken of as if the person's lips themselves were transgressing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The wicked things an evil person says will trap him"
Proverbs 12:14
just as the work of his hands rewards him
The phrase, "the work of his hands" represents work done by physical labor. Alternate translation: "just as the good work he does rewards him"
Proverbs 12:15
in his own eyes
This phrase represents the idea he has from his own observation, imagination or memory. Alternate translation: "in his own opinion"
advice
wise suggestions
Proverbs 12:16
is prudent
"is wise" or "has good sense."
Proverbs 12:18
The words of one who speaks rashly are like the thrusts of a sword
The phrase, "thrusts of a sword" represents cruel words that hurt another. Alternate translation: "What a person says without thinking can hurt as much as if he stabbed with a sword"
the tongue of the wise
"Tongue" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "what wise people say"
brings healing
"comforts and heals"
Proverbs 12:19
Truthful lips last forever
"Lips" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "A truthful person endures forever"
a lying tongue is only for a moment
"Tongue" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "the one who lies lasts only for a moment"
Proverbs 12:20
advisors
those who give recommendations as a guide to action; counselors
Proverbs 12:21
No ill comes
The negative, "No" cancels out the idea of "ill"
Proverbs 12:22
Lying lips are an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates lying lips." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
Lying lips
"Lips" are either a metonym for the words a person says or a synecdoche for the person himself. Alternate translation: "Lies" or "People who tell lies"
Proverbs 12:23
conceals his knowledge
"does not tell everything he knows"
Proverbs 12:24
The hand of the diligent
"Hand" represents what a person does—his works. Alternate translation: "Diligent people"
will be put to forced labor
"Forced labor" describes what a person must do who is not free to do what he wants. Alternate translation: "will become a slave"
Proverbs 12:25
Anxiety
uneasy feeling of fear or dread, worry
weighs him down
"Weighing down" represents the idea of putting a very heavy load on a person so he cannot move freely. This phrase means to make a person sad or depressed. Alternate translation: "causes him to become sad or depressed"
but a good word makes him glad
The abstract noun "word" can be stated as the verb "speak." Alternate translation: "but when others speak kindly to him, he is cheerful again"
Proverbs 12:27
would not roast their own game
"Game" means animals caught and killed while hunting. And "roast" is a way of cooking food.
precious wealth
"valuable treasure"

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[1] 13 A wise son hears his father's instruction,
but a mocker will not listen to rebuke.

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2 From the fruit of his mouth a person enjoys good things,
but the appetite of the treacherous is for violence.

3 The one who guards his mouth protects his life,
but the one who opens wide his lips will ruin himself.

4 The appetite of the lazy person craves but gets nothing,
but the appetite of the diligent person will be richly satisfied.

5 The righteous person hates deceptive words,
but a wicked person makes himself repugnant, and he does what is shameful.

6 Righteousness protects those who are faultless in their path,
but wickedness ruins those who commit sin.

7 There is someone who enriches himself, but has nothing at all,
and there is someone who gives everything away, yet has much wealth.

8 The ransom of a rich man's life is his wealth,
but a poor person does not hear a threat.

9 The light of righteous people rejoices,
but the lamp of wicked people will be put out.

10 Pride only breeds conflict,
but for those who listen to good advice there is wisdom.

11 Wealth dwindles away when there is too much vanity,
but the one who makes money by working with his hand
will make his money grow.

12 When hope is postponed, it breaks the heart,
but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

13 Whoever despises instruction brings destruction on himself,

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but he who respects the commandment will be rewarded.

14 The teaching of a wise person is a fountain of life,
turning you away from the snares of death.

15 Good insight wins favor,
but the way of the treacherous is disaster.[1]

16 Prudent people act out of knowledge in every decision,
but a fool parades his folly.

17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble,
but a faithful envoy brings healing.

18 The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame,
but honor will come to him who learns from correction.

19 A longing realized is sweet to the appetite,
but turning away from evil is an abomination to fools.

20 Walk with wise people and you will be wise,
but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

21 Disaster runs after sinners,
but righteous people are rewarded with good.

22 A good person leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren,
but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous person.

23 An unplowed field owned by the poor could produce much food,
but it is swept away by injustice.

24 The one who does not use his rod hates his son,
but one who loves his son is careful to instruct him.

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25 The righteous person eats until he satisfies his appetite,
but the stomach of the wicked is always hungry.

[1]The ULB is following the ancient Greek translation because the Hebrew is difficult to understand. The Hebrew has: the way of the treacherous is unending.

Proverbs 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 13 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 13:1 Notes

Proverbs 13:1

A wise son hears

Here "hears" represents listening in order to do it. Alternate translation: "A wise son obeys"

will not listen to rebuke

Here "listen" represents paying attention in order to do it. Alternate translation: "will not learn from rebuke" or "will not obey, despite rebuke"

Proverbs 13:2

From the fruit of his mouth

Here "fruit" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "From the words of his mouth" or "From what he says"

the appetite

the desire or liking for something

the treacherous

This nominal adjective can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the treacherous person"

Proverbs 13:3

his mouth

Here "mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "what he says"

opens wide his lips

Opening the lips represents speaking, and opening them wide represents speaking too often or too much. Alternate translation: "speaks a lot" or "talks too much"

Proverbs 13:4

The appetite ... the appetite

See how you translated this in Proverbs 13:2.

craves but gets nothing

"strongly desires but gets nothing"

the appetite of the diligent person will be richly satisfied

Here "appetite" represents desire. Alternate translation: "the diligent person will have a richly satisfied life" or "being diligent will make a person richly satisfied"

the diligent person

this refers to any person who works with careful and continued effort

Proverbs 13:5

repugnant

causing a strong feeling of disgust

Proverbs 13:6

Righteousness protects those

"Righteousness" represents a way of life approved by Yahweh. This quality acts like a person who protects. Alternate translation: "A way of life approved by Yahweh protects"

who are faultless in their path

Here "path" represents how a person directs his life. Alternate translation: "who are faultless in their way of living" or "who live lives of integrity"

wickedness ruins those who commit sin

Here "wickedness" represents an evil conduct of life. This quality acts like a person who ruins those who commit sin. Alternate translation: "wickedness ruins sinners' lives" or "sinners ruin their lives by committing wickedness"

Proverbs 13:7

who enriches himself

"who makes himself rich"

Proverbs 13:8

does not hear a threat

Possible meanings are 1) no one will threaten to steal from him because he has nothing anyone would want to steal or 2) he will not listen when people correct him because he has nothing to lose if they punish him. Alternate translation: "does not listen to rebuke"

Proverbs 13:9

The light of righteous people rejoices

Here the light represents the righteous person's life or good behavior, and rejoicing represents causing people to rejoice. Alternate translation: "The life of a righteous person is like a light that causes people to rejoice"

the lamp of wicked people will be put out

Here the lamp represents the life or behavior of wicked people, and "be put out" is an idiom that means that a fire is stopped. The lamp being put out represents either the person dying or the person's life not giving any joy. Alternate translation: "the lives of wicked people are like a

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lamp whose fire will be stopped"
Proverbs 13:10
Pride only breeds conflict
"Pride always causes conflict"
listen to
"heed" or "follow"
good advice
suggestions that are helpful and profitable
Proverbs 13:11
Wealth dwindles away
"Wealth decreases" or "Wealth slowly disappears"
working with his hand
The phrase "working with his hand" refers to physical work instead of only mental or other types of work. Many people give physical work a low value. Alternate translation: "working with physical strength"
make his money grow
Money is compared to a tree that grows. Alternate translation: "make his money increase"
Proverbs 13:12
When hope is postponed
Here "hope" represents the thing a person hopes for. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When a person hopes for something but does not receive it for a very long time"
it breaks the heart
Breaking a person's heart represents overwhelming that person with sadness. Alternate translation: "it causes intense sadness"
a longing fulfilled is a tree of life
Someone receiving what they hoped for and becoming very happy is spoken of as if the fulfillment of their hope were a tree that gives life. Alternate translation: "a longing fulfilled is like a tree of life"
tree of life
"a tree that gives life" or "a tree whose fruit sustains life." See how you translated this in Proverbs 3:18.
Proverbs 13:13
he who respects the commandment will be rewarded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will reward the one who respects the command"
Proverbs 13:14
fountain of life
A fountain is a good source of water and here represents a source of life. Alternate translation: "a bountiful source of life"
snares of death
Here "snares" represent dangers that will kill. Alternate translation: "traps that lead to death"
Proverbs 13:15
but the way of the treacherous is disaster
Here a person's behavior or conduct is spoken of as if it were a way or path that a person walks. A person being ruined by their own treachery is spoken of as if they are on a way or path that never ends. Alternate translation: "but the behavior of the treacherous will cause their own destruction"
the treacherous
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the treacherous person"
Proverbs 13:16
a fool parades his folly
To "parade" means to display in front of everyone. Alternate translation: "a fool displays his foolishness to everyone"
Proverbs 13:17
falls into trouble
"is unreliable" or "does something evil"
a faithful envoy
"a faithful messenger" or "a faithful ambassador"
brings healing
The word "healing" here is probably a metaphor for reconciliation between the one who sends the envoy and the person to whom the envoy is sent..Alternate translation: "brings reconciliation"
Proverbs 13:18
learns from correction
The abstract noun "correction" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "learns when someone corrects him"
Proverbs 13:19
is sweet
"is a delight" or "brings joy"
the appetite
the desire or liking for something
turning away from evil is an abomination to fools
"fools strongly hate to turn away from evil." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
Proverbs 13:20
will suffer harm
"will experience harm" or "will be ruined"
Proverbs 13:21
Disaster runs after sinners
"Disaster" is given human characteristics like the ability to run. Alternate translation: "Sinners have trouble wherever they go"
righteous people are rewarded with good
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God rewards righteous people with good"
Proverbs 13:22
his grandchildren
"the sons of his sons" or "the children of his children" or "his descendants"
a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous person
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who does right will receive the wealth that a sinner has stored up"
Proverbs 13:23
An unplowed field
"A field that is not prepared for food production" or "An empty field not ready for planting"
but it is swept away by injustice
"Swept away" represents completely removing something. This can be stated in active from. Alternate translation: "but injustice takes away that food" or "but unjust people take the food away"
Proverbs 13:24
is careful to instruct him
"makes sure to instruct him"

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Proverbs 13:25

he satisfies his appetite
"he has satisfied himself" or "he fulfills his desires"

the stomach of the wicked is always hungry

Here "stomach" represents the desires of a person.
Alternate translation: "the wicked person is always hungry for more"

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1 14 The wise woman builds her house,
but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.

2 The one who walks uprightly fears Yahweh,
but the one who is dishonest in his ways despises him.

3 From the mouth of a fool comes a rod for his back,
but the lips of the wise will preserve them.

4 Where there are no cattle, the feeding trough is clean,
but an abundant crop comes from the strength of an ox.

5 A faithful witness does not lie,
but a false witness breathes out lies.

6 A mocker seeks wisdom and there is none,
but knowledge comes easily to the one who is discerning.

7 Walk away from a foolish person,
for you will not find knowledge on his lips.

8 The wisdom of the prudent person is to understand his own way,
but the folly of fools is deception.

9 Fools mock when the guilt offering is sacrificed,
but among the upright favor is shared.

10 The heart knows its own bitterness
and no stranger shares its joy.

11 The house of wicked people will be destroyed,
but the tent of the upright will flourish.

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12 There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end only leads to death.

13 A heart can laugh but still be in pain
and joy may end up being grief.

14 The faithless in heart will get what his ways deserve,
but a good person will get what is his.

15 The one who is naive believes everything,
but the prudent man thinks about his steps.

16 A wise man fears and turns away from evil,
but the fool confidently dismisses a warning.

17 One who is quick to become angry does foolish things,
and a person who makes evil schemes is hated.

18 The naive inherit foolishness,
but prudent people are crowned with knowledge.

19 Evil people will bow down before those who are good
and those who are wicked will bow down at the gates of the righteous person.

20 The poor person is hated even by his own companions,
but the rich people have many friends.

21 The one who shows contempt for his neighbor is sinning,
but the one who shows favor to the poor is blessed.

22 Do not those who plot evil go astray?
But those who plan to do good will receive steadfast love and faithfulness.

23 With all hard work comes a profit,

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but when there is only talk, it leads to poverty.

24 The crown of wise people is their wealth,
but the folly of fools brings them only more folly.

25 A truthful witness saves lives,
but he who breathes out lies brings betrayal.

26 In the fear of Yahweh is strong confidence;
it will be a refuge for his children.

27 The fear of Yahweh is a fountain of life,
so that a person may turn away from the snares of death.

28 The glory of a king is found in the great number of his people,
but without people the prince is ruined.

29 A patient person has great understanding,
but the quick-tempered person exalts folly.

30 A tranquil heart is life for the body,
but envy rots the bones.

31 The one who oppresses the poor insults his Maker,
but the one who shows favor to the needy honors him.

32 The wicked person is brought down by his evil actions,
but the righteous person has a refuge even in death.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of the discerning,
but even among fools she lets herself be known.

34 Doing what is right exalts a nation,
but sin is a disgrace to any people.

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35 The favor of the king is with the servant who acts prudently,
but his anger is for the one who acts shamefully.

Proverbs 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 14 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 14:1 Notes

Proverbs 14:1
builds her house
"builds up her house" or "makes her house better"
house
Possible meanings are 1) this may refer to her actual house, that is the building she lives in or 2) this may refer to her family.
with her own hands
The woman is represented by her "hands." Alternate translation: "by herself" or "by the way she behaves"
Proverbs 14:2
The one who ... the one who
"The person who ... the person who"
walks uprightly
"Walks" represents the conduct of life. Alternate translation: "conducts his life in a just and honest way"
despises him
"grossly disrespects him" or "shows that he hates him"
in his ways despises him
The word "his" refers to the dishonest man and "him" refers to Yahweh.
Proverbs 14:3
the mouth of ... the lips of
The mouth and the lips both refer to what a person says.
a rod for his back
The rod with which people will punish the fool by hitting him on his back for his foolish words is a metonym for the words that come out of his mouth. Alternate translation: "words that will cause people to punish him"
the wise
This word is plural. "wise men" or "wise people"
will preserve them
"will keep them from harm" or "will keep them safe"
Proverbs 14:4
the feeding trough
A "trough" is a container in which you put the food for animals.
an abundant crop
"a good harvest"
from the strength of an ox
"Strength" represents the strong work an ox can do. Alternate translation: "because of the work an ox does"
Proverbs 14:5
breathes out lies
This figure of speech uses "breathes" to refer to lying constantly. Alternate translation: "constantly lies" See how you translated this phrase in Proverbs 6:19.
Proverbs 14:6
and there is none
"and wisdom is not there" or "but he will not find wisdom"
knowledge comes easily to the one who is discerning
"the one who is discerning acquires knowledge easily"
the one who is discerning
"the one who is wise" or "a person who has understanding"
Proverbs 14:7
on his lips
The word "lips" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "from his speech" or "with his comments"
Proverbs 14:8
the prudent
a person who has good judgment or sense
his own way
The word "way" represents the conduct of life of a person. Alternate translation: "his conduct" or "how he lives"
the folly of fools is deception
The foolishness of fools is that they think they are wise, when they are not.
Proverbs 14:9
when the guilt offering is sacrificed
"at guilt" or "at the guilt offering" The meaning behind this phrase is that fools do not apologize to God or men for the things they do wrong.
but among the upright favor is shared
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but the upright enjoy favor together" or "but God's favor is experienced together among the upright"
the upright
This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright people" or "righteous people" or "honest people"
Proverbs 14:10

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its own bitterness
"its own sorrow" or "its own sadness"
no stranger
"those who do not know him"
Proverbs 14:11
the tent
The word "tent" represents everything that happens within it. Alternate translation: "the household"
flourish
The word "flourish" means vigorous blooming of flowers and so represents anything that grows strongly. Alternate translation: "to do well and last long" or "to be healthy" or "to be very successful"
Proverbs 14:12
There is a way that seems right to a man
The word "way" represents the conduct of life a person follows. Alternate translation: "People think that the way they are living is the right way"
Proverbs 14:13
A heart can laugh
The word "heart" represents a person's feelings, attitudes and motivations. Alternate translation: "A person's feelings can show laughter"
be in pain
"experience pain" or "hurt"
Proverbs 14:14
The faithless in heart
"The person who is faithless"
what his ways deserve
The word "ways" represents a person's conduct of life. Alternate translation: "what he deserves, based on how he lived"
what is his
"what belongs to him" or "what he has a right to"
Proverbs 14:15
naive
inexperienced or immature
his steps
Here the idea of footsteps represents a person's behavior. Alternate translation: "his actions"
Proverbs 14:16
turns away from evil
Here evil is spoken of as if it were a place. Alternate translation: "avoids doing evil"
confidently dismisses
"boldly ignores"
Proverbs 14:17
is quick to become angry
"becomes angry quickly"
Proverbs 14:18
naive
inexperienced or immature
inherit foolishness
Here "inherit" represents having permanent possession of something.
foolishness
The word "foolishness" is an abstract noun that represents foolish thinking and foolish actions.
prudent people
"wise people"
are crowned with knowledge
Here knowledge is spoken of as if it were a beautiful ornament worn on one's head, such as a turban with jewels. Alternate translation: "wear knowledge as a turban"
Proverbs 14:19
bow down
This means to bend over to humbly express respect and submission toward someone.
at the gates of the righteous
The word "gates" represents an entrance to meet with another. This means the wicked will have to wait for the righteous person and beg to enter his presence. Alternate translation: "to meet with the righteous person"
Proverbs 14:20
The poor person is hated even by his own companions
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone hates the poor person even his own neighbors"
Proverbs 14:21
The one ... the one
"The person ... the person"
the poor
"poor people"
Proverbs 14:22
Do not those who plot evil go astray?
The assumed answer to this question is "yes." Alternate translation: "Those who plot evil will go astray."
who plot evil
"who make evil plans" or "who make plans to do evil things"
those who plan to do good will receive steadfast love and faithfulness
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." Alternate translation: "God will show those who plan to do what is good that he loves them without ceasing, and he will be faithful to them"
Proverbs 14:23
but when there is only talk
"but if you only talk" or "but when all a person does is talking"
Proverbs 14:24
The crown of wise people
The word "crown" represents the highest achievement possible and visible to all. Alternate translation: "The reward of wise people"
the folly of fools
See how you translated this phrase in Proverbs 14:8.
Proverbs 14:25
breathes out lies
This figure of speech uses "breathes" to refer to lying constantly. See how you translated this phrase in [Proverbs 6:19]
Proverbs 14:26
In the fear of Yahweh is strong confidence
The abstract nouns "fear" and "confidence" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "The person who fears Yahweh also knows that he can trust Yahweh"
it will be a refuge for his children
The confidence that a person who fears Yahweh has is

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spoken of as if it were a a place to which that person's children can go to be safe. Alternate translation: "his children can know that Yahweh will protect them"
Proverbs 14:27
fountain of life
A "fountain" is a bountiful source of water and represents here the source of life. Alternate translation: "source of life"
from the snares of death
A "snare" is a sort of trap used to hunt animals and represents something tricky and dangerous that will kill. Alternate translation: "from the trap that will kill"
Proverbs 14:28
the great number of his people
"how many people he rules"
the prince is ruined
"the prince has nothing and his kingdom will fall"
Proverbs 14:29
the quick-tempered
a person who is quick to become angry
Proverbs 14:30
A tranquil heart
"A peaceful mindset" or "An attitude that is at peace"
rots the bones
The word "rots" represents the decay of a person and "bones" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "causes a person to be unhealthy in body and spirit"
Proverbs 14:31
The one who ... the one who
"The person who ... the person who"
the poor ... the needy
"a poor person ... a needy person"
shows favor to
"is kind to" or "helps"
Proverbs 14:32
is brought down by his evil actions
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "evil actions push over" or "evil actions destroy"
Proverbs 14:33
Wisdom rests in the heart
The word "heart" represents the feelings, attitudes and motivations of a person. Alternate translation: "Wisdom is in the attitude"
the discerning
"a discerning person"
she lets herself be known
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she makes sure people know her"
she
The word "she" refers to wisdom.
Proverbs 14:34
is a disgrace
"brings shame upon to any people" or "should cause any people to be ashamed"
Proverbs 14:35
who acts prudently
"who acts wisely" or "who makes sure bad things do not happen"
the one who
"the servant who"

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15 1 A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.

2 The tongue of wise people compliments knowledge,
but the mouth of fools pours out folly.

3 The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere,
keeping watch over the evil and the good.

4 A healing tongue is a tree of life,
but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

5 A fool has contempt for his father's instruction,
but he who learns from correction is prudent.

6 In the house of the righteous person there is great treasure,

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but the earnings of the wicked person give him trouble.

7 The lips of wise people scatter knowledge about,
but not so the hearts of fools.

8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Yahweh,
but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

9 The way of wicked people is an abomination to Yahweh,
but he loves the one who pursues what is right.

10 Harsh discipline awaits anyone who abandons the way
and he who hates correction will die.

11 Sheol and destruction are open before Yahweh;
how much more the hearts of the sons of mankind?

12 The mocker does not love the one who corrects him;
he will not go to the wise.

13 A joyful heart makes the face cheerful,
but by an injured heart the spirit is broken.

14 The heart of the discerning seeks knowledge,
but the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

15 All the days of the afflicted are miserable,
but a cheerful heart has an unending feast.

16 Better is little with the fear of Yahweh
than great treasure with tumult.

17 Better is a meal with vegetables where there is love
than a fattened calf served with hatred.

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18 An angry man stirs up strife,
but a person who is slow to anger quiets a quarrel.

19 The path of the lazy person is like a place with a hedge of thorns,
but the path of the upright is a built-up highway.

20 A wise son brings joy to his father,
but a foolish person despises his mother.

21 Folly delights a person who lacks sense,
but the one who has understanding walks a straight path.

22 Plans go wrong where there is no advice,
but with numerous advisors they succeed.

23 A person finds joy when he gives a pertinent reply;
how good is a timely word!

24 The path of life leads upward for prudent people,
that they may turn away from Sheol beneath.

25 Yahweh tears down the house of the proud,
but he protects the property of the widow.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to Yahweh,
but pleasant words are pure.

27 The person who profits from unjust gain brings trouble to his family,
but the one who hates bribes will live.

28 The heart of the righteous person ponders before it answers,
but the mouth of wicked people pours out all its evil.

29 Yahweh is far away from wicked people,
but he hears the prayer of righteous people.

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30 The light of the eyes brings joy to the heart
and good news is health to the body.

31 The ear that listens to life-giving rebuke
will dwell among wise people.

32 The one who rejects discipline despises himself,
but he who listens to correction gains understanding.

33 The fear of Yahweh instructs in wisdom,
and humility comes before honor.

Proverbs 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 15 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 15:1 Notes

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath

Causing a person to stop being angry is spoken of as if it were turning that person's wrath away. Alternate translation: "Answering a person gently will calm that person's wrath"

but a harsh word stirs up anger

Causing a person to become more angry is spoken of as if it were stirring up or awakening anger. Alternate translation: "but speaking harshly causes that person to become more angry"

Proverbs 15:2

The tongue of wise people compliments knowledge

Here the word "tongue" refers to the person who speaks. Alternate translation: "Wise people compliment knowledge when they speak"

compliments knowledge

Possible meanings are 1) "makes knowledge attractive" or 2) "uses knowledge correctly."

the mouth of fools pours out folly

The writer speaks of fools' mouths as if they were containers and of folly as if it were the liquid that filled them. When fools speak, their mouths pour out the liquid. The word "mouth" represents those who speak. Alternate translation: "fools are always speaking folly"

Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of Yahweh are everywhere

Here the word "eyes" represents Yahweh and emphasizes his ability to see everything. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sees everything"

the evil and the good

The words "evil" and "good" refer to people. Alternate translation: "evil people and good people"

Proverbs 15:4

A healing tongue is a tree of life

The word "tongue" refers to speech. The writer speaks of the words of a person who says things that help and encourage others as if they were a tree that provides life-giving nourishment. Alternate translation: "Kind words are like a tree that gives life"

a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit

The phrase "a deceitful tongue" refers to speech that is deceitful or hurtful. The writer speaks of a person being hurt or in despair as if that person's spirit were an object that words have crushed. Alternate translation: "deceitful speech causes a person to despair"

Proverbs 15:5

he who learns from correction

The word "correction" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he who learns when someone corrects him"

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is prudent
"is wise"
Proverbs 15:6
the earnings of the wicked person give
The word "earnings" can be translated as a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "the wealth that a wicked person earns gives"
Proverbs 15:7
The lips of wise people scatter knowledge about
The word "lips" represents what wise people say. The writer speaks of knowledge as if it were seeds that wise people scatter around when they speak. Alternate translation: "The speech of wise people spreads knowledge"
not so the hearts of fools
Possible meanings are 1) the word "hearts" is synecdoche for the fools themselves and means that they do not scatter knowledge like wise people do. Alternate translation: "fools do not scatter knowledge about" or 2) fools do not have knowledge in their hearts, with "hearts" being a metonym for the thoughts. Alternate translation: "fools do not understand knowledge"
Proverbs 15:8
The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates the sacrifices that wicked people offer." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
the upright
"the person who lives rightly" or "people who live rightly"
is his delight
"pleases him"
Proverbs 15:9
The way of wicked people is an abomination to Yahweh
The lifestyles of wicked people are spoken of as if they are paths on which those people walk. See how you translated "abomination" in [Proverbs 3:32]
the one who pursues what is right
Being diligent to live rightly is spoken of as if it were chasing after right things. Alternate translation: "the person who strives to live rightly"
Proverbs 15:10
anyone who abandons the way
Here "the way" refers to the way of righteousness. A person who stops doing what is right is spoken of as if he has left the correct path. Alternate translation: "anyone who stops living rightly"
he who hates correction
The word "correction" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the person who hates it when others correct him"
Proverbs 15:11
Sheol and destruction are open before Yahweh
The words "Sheol and destruction" both refer to the place of the dead. Yahweh knowing everything about the place of the dead is spoken of as if it were open before Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh knows everything about the place where dead people are"
how much more the hearts of the sons of mankind?
This rhetorical question emphasizes that since Yahweh knows everything about the place of the dead, it is more obvious that he knows everything about the hearts of men. Alternate translation: "so he certainly knows the hearts of the sons of mankind!"
the hearts of the sons of mankind
Here the word "hearts" represents the thoughts and motivations. The phrase "the sons of mankind" is an idiom for humanity. Alternate translation: "the thoughts of humans"
Proverbs 15:12
he will not go to the wise
It is implied that he will not go to the wise to seek their counsel or advice. Alternate translation: "he will not go to the wise to seek their counsel"
Proverbs 15:13
A joyful heart makes the face cheerful
Here the word "heart" represents the person. Alternate translation: "When a person is joyful, his face is cheerful"
by an injured heart the spirit is broken
The writer speaks of a person being discouraged as if that person's spirit were an object that is broken. Possible meanings are 1) The "injured heart" is spoken of as if it were a person who broke the spirit or 2) a person whose heart has been injured will also be discouraged. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "an injured heart makes a person become discouraged"
Proverbs 15:14
The heart of the discerning
Here the word "heart" represents the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "The mind of the discerning person" or "The discerning person"
the mouth of fools feeds on folly
Here the word "mouth" represents the person. The writer speaks of fools desiring foolish things as if they ate foolish things. Alternate translation: "foolish people desire folly as if it were the food that they eat"
Proverbs 15:15
All the days of the afflicted are miserable
"Oppressed people are miserable all of their days"
a cheerful heart has an unending feast
Here the word "heart" represents the person. The writer speaks of a cheerful person enjoying life as if that person were celebrating a feast that does not end. Alternate translation: "the cheerful person enjoys life, as if he were celebrating an unending feast"
an unending feast
"a feast that never ends"
Proverbs 15:16
with tumult
"with confusion and disorder"
Proverbs 15:17
a meal with vegetables
The vegetables represent a small meal with very little food. Alternate translation: "a small meal" or "very little food"
where there is love
The word "love" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "where people love one another"
a fatted calf served with hatred
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a fatted calf that someone serves with hatred"

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a fatted calf
This refers to a calf that has been fed a lot of food so that it will become fat. Here it represents a delicious meal or a feast. Alternate translation: "a luxurious meal" or "a feast"
with hatred
The word "hatred" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "where people hate one another"
Proverbs 15:18
stirs up strife
Causing people to disagree with each other and to be angry is spoken of as if it were stirring up strife. The abstract noun "strife" can be expressed with the verbs "argue" or "fight." Alternate translation: "causes people to argue" or "makes people want to fight"
Proverbs 15:19
The path of the lazy person ... the path of the upright
The writer speaks of a person's life as if it were a path on which the person walks. Alternate translation: "The life of the lazy person ... the life of the upright"
The path of the lazy person is like a place with a hedge of thorns
The writer compares the way the lazy person lives with trying to walk through a hedge of thorns. Both cause the person to suffer pain. Alternate translation: "Life for the lazy person is like walking through a hedge of thorns"
the path of the upright is a built-up highway
The writer speaks of the blessings that upright people experience in life as if they were walking on a smooth road.
the upright
This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright people" or "righteous people" or "honest people"
built-up highway
This is a road that is wide, flat, smooth, and free of obstacles.
Proverbs 15:21
the one who has understanding walks a straight path
The writer speaks of a person doing the right thing as if he were walking straight ahead on a path. Alternate translation: "the person who has understanding does what is right"
Proverbs 15:22
Plans go wrong
"Plans fail"
where there is no advice
"when there is no one to give advice"
advisors
people who give recommendations as a guide to action
they succeed
"plans succeed"
Proverbs 15:23
a pertinent reply
"a fitting reply" or "an appropriate answer"
how good is a timely word
This exclamation emphasizes that a word spoken at the right time is very good. Alternate translation: "a word that a person speaks at the right time is very good"
Proverbs 15:24
The path of life leads upward ... from Sheol beneath
The writer speaks of a lifestyle that results in life as if it were a path that goes upward towards life and of a lifestyle that results in death as if it were a path that leads down to the place of the dead.
Proverbs 15:25
house
This is a synecdoche for the person's household, property, and wealth.
Proverbs 15:26
The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates the thoughts of wicked people." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
pleasant words are pure
"kind words are pure"
Proverbs 15:28
The heart of the righteous person ponders before it answers
Here the word "heart" is a metonym for the mind and thoughts. This represents the person who thinks. Alternate translation: "The person who does right ponders what to say before he answers"
the mouth of wicked people pours out all its evil
The writer speaks of wicked people's mouths as if they were containers and speaks of evil as if it were the liquid that filled them. When wicked people speak, their mouths pour out the liquid. The word "mouths" represents those who speak. Alternate translation: "wicked people are always saying evil things"
the mouth of wicked people pours out all its evil
It may be more natural in you language to translate all these words as either singular or plural. Alternate translation: "the mouth of the wicked person pours out all its evil" or "the mouths of wicked people pour out all their evil"
Proverbs 15:29
Yahweh is far away from wicked people
The writer speaks of Yahweh not listening to wicked people as if he were physically far away from them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh does not listen to wicked people" or "Yahweh does not answer wicked people"
Proverbs 15:30
The light of the eyes
The writer speaks of an expression of joy on one's face as if the person's eyes emitted light. Alternate translation: "A cheerful expression"
brings joy to the heart
The word "heart" represents the person. Possible meanings are 1) the person who has a cheerful expression becomes joyful or 2) other people become joyful when they see someone with a cheerful expression. Alternate translation: "causes a person to be joyful"
good news is health to the body
Here the word "body" represents the person. Alternate translation: "receiving good news makes a person feel good"
Proverbs 15:31
The ear that listens ... will dwell
The "ear" here is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "The person who listens ... will dwell"
will dwell among

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"will always be welcome to be with"

Proverbs 15:32

listens to correction

The word "correction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "listens when others correct him"

Proverbs 15:33

The fear of Yahweh instructs in wisdom

The words "fear" and "wisdom" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "When a person fears Yahweh, he will learn to be wise"

The fear of Yahweh

See how you translated this phrase in Proverbs 1:7.

humility comes before honor

This means that a person must first learn humility before Yahweh will honor him.

16 1 The plans of the heart belong to a person,
but the answer from his tongue comes from Yahweh.

2 All of a person's ways are pure in his own eyes,
but Yahweh weighs the spirits.

3 Commit your works to Yahweh
and your plans will succeed.

4 Yahweh has made everything for its purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble.

5 Every exalted heart is an abomination to Yahweh,
but be sure of this, they will not go unpunished.

6 By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for
and by the fear of Yahweh people turn away from evil.

7 When a person's ways are pleasing to Yahweh,
he makes even that person's enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better is a little with what is right,
than a large income with injustice.

9 In his heart a person plans out his way,
but Yahweh directs his steps.

10 Insightful decisions are on the lips of a king;
his mouth should not betray justice.

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11 Honest scales come from Yahweh;
all the weights in the bag are his work.

12 Doing evil is an abomination to kings,
for a throne is established by doing what is right.

13 Righteous lips are the delight of the king,
and he loves the person who speaks upright words.

14 A king's wrath is a messenger of death
but a wise man will try to calm his anger.

15 In the light of a king's face is life
and his favor is like a cloud that brings a spring rain.

16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold.
To get understanding should be chosen more than silver.

17 The highway of the upright turns away from evil;
the one who guards his way preserves his life.

18 Pride comes before destruction
and a haughty spirit before a downfall.

19 It is better to be of humble spirit among poor people
than to divide the plunder with proud people.

20 Whoever contemplates what they are taught will find what is good,
and those who trust in Yahweh will be blessed.

21 The one who is wise in heart is called discerning
and sweetness of speech improves the ability to teach.

22 Understanding is a fountain of life to the one who has it,
but the instruction of fools is their foolishness.

23 The heart of a wise person gives insight to his mouth

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and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb—
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

25 There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death.

26 The laborer's appetite works for him;
his hunger urges him on.

27 A worthless person digs up mischief
and his speech is like a scorching fire.

28 A perverse person stirs up conflict
and a gossip separates close friends.

29 A man of violence lies to his neighbor
and leads him down a path that is not good.

30 The one who winks the eye is plotting perverse things;
those who purse the lips will bring evil to pass.

31 Gray hair is a crown of glory;
it is gained by living the right way.

32 It is better to be slow to anger than to be a warrior
and one who rules his spirit is stronger than one who conquers a city.

33 The lots are cast into the lap,
but the decision is from Yahweh.

Proverbs 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 16 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

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King and royalty
Some of these proverbs mention a king. As in other cases, this is intended to apply to all rulers.
Themes
There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 16:1 Notes

Proverbs 16:1
The plans of the heart belong to a person
Here the word "heart" represents the person's mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "A person makes plans in his mind"
the answer from his tongue comes from Yahweh
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh speaks his answer to a person's plans, which is a metaphor meaning that Yahweh determines the outcome of that person's plans or 2) Yahweh enables a person to speak words about the plans that he has made.
the answer from his tongue
The person is represented by his "tongue" to emphasize his speech. Alternate translation: "the answer that he speaks"
Proverbs 16:2
All of a person's ways are pure in his own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. The writer speaks of what a person does as if that person were walking down a path. Alternate translation: "A person thinks that everything he does is pure" or "A person judges everything he does as pure"
Yahweh weighs the spirits
Here the word "spirits" represents people's desires and motives. The writer speaks of Yahweh discerning and judging a person's desires and motives as if he were weighing that person's spirit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh judges the person's motives"
Proverbs 16:4
even the wicked for the day of trouble
The verbal phrase may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "he has made even the wicked for the day of trouble"
Proverbs 16:5
Every exalted heart is an abomination to Yahweh
"Yahweh strongly hates every exalted heart." See how you translated "abomination" in Proverbs 3:32.
Every exalted heart
Here the word "exalted" is a metaphor for "arrogant" because the person himself exalts his heart rather than allowing God or other people to exalt it. The word "heart" represents the person. Alternate translation: "everyone who is arrogant" or "every arrogant person"
they will not go unpunished
The two negatives in this phrase strongly emphasize the positive. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will certainly punish them"
Proverbs 16:6
By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh loves his people without ceasing and is faithful to them, he forgives their sins" or 2) Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the sins of those who love him without ceasing and are faithful to him"
people turn away from evil
The writer speaks of people no longer doing evil things as if they were turning away from evil. Alternate translation: "people stop doing evil things"
Proverbs 16:7
he makes
"Yahweh makes"
Proverbs 16:8
a large income
"earning a lot of money"
with injustice
"with wrongdoing"
Proverbs 16:9
In his heart a person plans out his way
Here the word "heart" represents the mind and thoughts. The writer speaks of a person's actions as if the person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "A person plans in his mind what he will do"
Yahweh directs his steps
The writer speaks of Yahweh determining the outcome of a person's plans as if Yahweh were telling that person where to walk.
Proverbs 16:10
Insightful decisions are on the lips of a king
Here the word "lips" is a metonym for what the king says. Alternate translation: "What a king says are insightful decisions"
his mouth should not betray justice
The word "mouth" represents the king himself. Alternate translation: "he should not speak deceitfully when he judges"
Proverbs 16:11
Honest scales come from Yahweh
Yahweh requires justice and fairness when doing business. Dishonest people used heavier or lighter weights in their scales in order to gain more when buying or selling.
all the weights in the bag are his work
Merchants carried their weights in bags. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh has determined how much every weight must weigh or 2) Yahweh is concerned with every weight that a merchant uses.
Proverbs 16:12
Doing evil is an abomination to kings

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Possible meanings are 1) kings hate evil deeds that their subjects commit or 2) Yahweh hates kings who commit evil deeds.

for a throne is established by doing what is right

Here the word "throne" represents the king's rule. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the king establishes his reign by doing what is right"

Proverbs 16:13

Righteous lips

Here the word "lips" represents the person who speaks. Alternate translation: "A person who speaks the truth"

Proverbs 16:14

A king's wrath is a messenger of death

The writer speaks of an angry king causing someone to die as if the king's wrath were a messenger that he sends out to kill someone. Alternate translation: "An angry king can put people to death"

Proverbs 16:15

General Information:

Verse 15 contrasts with verse 14.

In the light of a king's face is life

The writer speaks of an expression of joy on the king's face as if his face emitted light. Alternate translation: "When the king is cheerful, people live"

his favor is like a cloud that brings a spring rain

The writer compares the king showing favor towards someone with a cloud that brings rain to make crops grow. Both promise blessing to those who receive them.

Proverbs 16:16

How much better it is to get wisdom than gold

This exclamation emphasizes that having wisdom is much better than having gold. Alternate translation: "It is much better to get wisdom than to get gold"

To get understanding should be chosen more than silver

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A person should choose to get understanding more than to get silver"

Proverbs 16:17

The highway of the upright

The writer speaks of the lifestyle of upright people as if it were a well-built road, free of obstacles. Alternate translation: "The righteous way that upright people live"

turns away from evil

The writer speaks of avoiding or no longer doing evil things as if it were turning away from evil. Alternate translation: "keeps them from doing evil"

the one who guards his way preserves his life

The word "way" here is a metaphor that speaks of a person's actions and words as if they were a road that he walks on. A person who "guards his way" is careful to make sure he does not do what his own evil thoughts or others' evil words or actions tempt him to do. Alternate translation: "the one who does not allow evil people to lead him to sin will live a long time"

Proverbs 16:18

a haughty spirit

Here the word "spirit" represents the person's attitude and temperament. Alternate translation: "an arrogant attitude"

a downfall

"ruin" or "failure"

Proverbs 16:19

to be of humble spirit

"to have a humble spirit" or "to be a humble person"

plunder

goods taken in battle

Proverbs 16:20

what they are taught

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what someone has taught them" or "what they have learned"

Proverbs 16:21

The one who is wise in heart is called discerning

This person will have a reputation of being a discerning person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will call the one who is wise in heart discerning" or "The one who is wise in heart will have a reputation of being a discerning person"

The one who is wise in heart

Here the heart represents the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "The one who is wise" or "The one who is wise in his thinking"

sweetness of speech

The writer speaks of kind or pleasant speech as if it were something that tastes sweet. Alternate translation: "kind speech" or "pleasant speech"

Proverbs 16:22

Understanding is a fountain of life

The writer speaks of "Understanding" as if it were a fountain that continuously flows with water and which sustains the life of those who drink from it. Alternate translation: "Understanding is like a fountain flowing with life-giving water"

Proverbs 16:23

The heart of a wise person gives

Here the word "heart" represents the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "The thoughts of a wise person gives"

gives insight to his mouth

Here the word "mouth" is a metonym for speech. Alternate translation: "makes his speech wise"

to his lips

Here the word "lips" is a metonym for speech. Alternate translation: "to what he says"

Proverbs 16:24

sweet to the soul

Possible meanings for the word "soul" are 1) it represents a person's inward desires and pleasures. Alternate translation: "sweet enough to make a person happy" or 2) it can mean "throat" and is a metonym for a person's tongue and ability to taste. Alternate translation: "sweet to a person's taste"

healing to the bones

Here the word "bones" represent a person's body. Alternate translation: "healing to the body"

Proverbs 16:25

There is a way that seems right to a man

The writer speaks of a person's conduct or behavior as if it were a road on which the person is traveling. Alternate translation: "A person thinks that the way he is living is

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right"

but its end is the way to death

The word "its" refers to "way" in the previous line. This "way" is the road that leads to death.

Proverbs 16:26

The laborer's appetite works for him

The writer speaks of the appetite as if it were a person who works on behalf of the laborer. This means that the person who labors is motivated by his desire to eat. Alternate translation: "The laborer works to satisfy his appetite"

his hunger urges him on

The writer speaks of "hunger" as if it were a person who urges the laborer to continue working. Alternate translation: "he keeps on working because he is hungry"

Proverbs 16:27

A worthless person digs up mischief

The writer speaks of a person trying to find ways to harm other people as if that person were digging in the ground to find something buried. Alternate translation: "A worthless person looks for mischief as if he were digging for something in the ground"

worthless

"useless" or "wicked"

mischief

trouble

his speech is like a scorching fire

The writer compares the way this person's words hurt others with the way that fire burns things. Alternate translation: "he hurts people with his words, like a fire scorches the things it touches"

Proverbs 16:28

a gossip

a person who gossips or spreads rumors

Proverbs 16:29

A man of violence lies to his neighbor

It is implied that this man lies to his neighbor in order to get his neighbor to join him in violent actions. Alternate translation: "A man of violence entices his neighbor"

A man of violence

"A violent man" or "A man who practices violence"

leads him down a path that is not good

The writer speaks of a person's actions as if they were a road on which the person walks. Alternate translation: "gets him to do things that are not good"

a path that is not good

The writer uses an understatement to emphasize how bad this path is. Alternate translation: "a very bad path" or "a terrible path"

Proverbs 16:30

The one who winks the eye ... those who purse the lips

Both of these are facial gestures which people might use to signal their plans to others. See how you translated "winks the eye" in Proverbs 10:10.

will bring evil to pass

"will do evil things"

Proverbs 16:31

Gray hair is a crown of glory

The writer speaks of gray hair as if it were a crown. "Gray hair" is a metonym for old age. Alternate translation: "A person who has lived long enough to have gray hair is like one who wears a glorious crown on his head"

it is gained

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a person gains it"

Proverbs 16:32

one who rules his spirit

The writer speaks of a person being able to control his own temper and emotions as if he ruled over his spirit like a king rules his people. Alternate translation: "one who controls his temper"

Proverbs 16:33

The lots are cast into the lap

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A person throws the lots into his lap"

the decision is from Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh decides how the lots will land or 2) it is not the lots, but Yahweh who determines what will happen.

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[1] 17 It is better to have quiet with a dry morsel of bread
than a house full of feasting with strife.

[2] A wise servant will rule over a son who acts shamefully
and will share the inheritance as one of the brothers.

[3] The crucible is for silver and the furnace is for gold,
but Yahweh tests hearts.

[4] The evildoer pays attention to wicked lips;
a liar gives ear to a destructive tongue.

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5 Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker
and the one who rejoices at misfortune will not go unpunished.

6 Grandchildren are the crown of the aged
and parents bring honor to their children.

7 Eloquent speech is not suitable for a fool;
much less are lying lips suitable for a prince.

8 A bribe is like a magic stone to the one who gives it;
wherever he turns, he succeeds.

9 Whoever overlooks an offense seeks love,
but the one who repeats a matter alienates close friends.

10 A rebuke goes deeper into a person who has understanding
than a hundred blows go into a fool.

11 An evil person only seeks rebellion,
so a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

12 It is better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs
than to meet a fool in his foolishness.

13 When someone returns evil for good,
evil will never leave his house.

14 The beginning of conflict is like one who releases water everywhere,
so walk away from the dispute before it has broken out.

15 The person who acquits the wicked person and the person who condemns the righteous person—
both are an abomination to Yahweh.

16 Why should a fool pay money to learn about wisdom

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when he has no sense?

17 A friend is loving at all times
and a brother is born for times of trouble.

18 A man having no sense makes binding promises
and becomes responsible for his neighbor's debts.

19 Whoever loves conflict loves sin;
whoever raises his door seeks destruction.

20 A person who has a crooked heart finds nothing that is good;
the one who has a perverse tongue falls into calamity.

21 Whoever is the parent of a fool brings grief to himself;
and the father of a fool has no joy.

22 A joyful heart is good medicine,
but a broken spirit dries up the bones.

23 A wicked man accepts a secret bribe
to pervert the ways of justice.

24 The one who has understanding sets his face toward wisdom,
but the eyes of a fool are set on the ends of the earth.

25 A foolish son is a grief to his father
and bitterness to the woman who bore him.

26 Also, it is never good to punish the righteous;
neither is it good to flog the noble for their integrity.

27 One who has knowledge uses few words
and he who is cool of spirit has understanding.

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28 Even a fool is thought to be wise if he keeps silent;
when he keeps his mouth shut, he is considered to be intelligent.

Proverbs 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 17 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 17:1 Notes

Proverbs 17:1

to have quiet

Here "quiet" refers to "peace." Alternate translation: "to have peace"

than a house full of feasting with strife

The words "to have" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated. Alternate translation: "than to have a house full of feasting with strife" or "than to be in a house full of feasting where there is strife"

Proverbs 17:3

The crucible is for silver and the furnace is for gold

This refers to how gold and silver are refined. A metal is refined by heating it to a high temperature so that it melts and the impurities may be removed. Alternate translation: "The crucible is used to refine silver and the furnace is used to refine gold"

crucible

a pot in which metals are melted at a very high temperature

Yahweh tests hearts

This speaks of Yahweh testing people to help them stop being evil and foolish as if their hearts were a metal that Yahweh was refining to remove everything that is impure. Alternate translation: "Yahweh tests people's hearts" or "Yahweh refines people's hearts"

Proverbs 17:4

wicked lips

The word "lips" can be translated as either 1) a synecdoche for the person or 2) a metonym for the words that come out from those lips. Alternate translation: "a wicked person" or "wicked talk"

gives ear

This idiom means "listens."

destructive tongue

The word "tongue" can be translated as either 1) a synecdoche for the person or 2) a metonym for the words that the tongue produces. Alternate translation: "a destructive person" or "destructive talk"

Proverbs 17:5

the poor

This refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "those who are poor"

his Maker

This is a name that refers to Yahweh. This is also an abstract noun that can be written as a verb. Alternate translation: "the one who made him"

at misfortune

This refers to the misfortune of others. Alternate translation: "at others' misfortune" or "at other peoples' troubles"

will not go unpunished

This litotes emphasizes that the person will surely be punished. Alternate translation: "will certainly be punished"

Proverbs 17:6

are the crown of

This speaks of older peoples' grandchildren being a sign of honor for them as if their grandchildren were a crown. Alternate translation: "bring honor and respect to"

the aged

This refers to older people. Alternate translation: "those who are older" or "older people"

Proverbs 17:7

Eloquent speech

"Fine speech" or "Excellent speech"

much less are lying lips suitable for a prince

This describes people lying as if it were actually their "lips" that were lying. Alternate translation: "even more it is not suitable for a prince to lie"

Proverbs 17:8

A bribe is like a magic stone to the one who gives it

This speaks of a person's bribe working by comparing it to a magical stone or amulet. Alternate translation: "A bribe works like a magical stone for the one who gives it" or "A bribe works like magic for the one who is giving the bribe"

wherever he turns

Here "turning" refers to the various things the person does. Specifically, this refers to the different things the person does by bribery. Alternate translation: "in whatever he does" or "in everything he tries to do by giving bribes"

Proverbs 17:9

an offense

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an action or word that has hurt him

who repeats a matter

This refers to bringing up a past situation in which a friend was hurt or offended. Alternate translation: "who repeats a past offense"

alienates close friends

"causes people to stop being close friends" or "causes close friends to stop liking each other"

Proverbs 17:10

A rebuke goes deeper into a person ... than a hundred blows go into a fool

This compares how a rebuke effects a man of understanding to how a beating effects a fool. This speaks of the effect on these people as if it could be measured by the depth that it goes into them. Alternate translation: "A rebuke has more effect on a person ... than a hundred blows have on a fool"

a person who has understanding

"a person who has good judgment." The word "understand" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "a person who understands"

a hundred blows go into a fool

"beating a fool a hundred times makes him change his ways"

Proverbs 17:11

seeks rebellion

The word "rebellion" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "seeks to rebel"

a cruel messenger will be sent against him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a cruel messenger will come against him"

will be sent against him

To be "sent against" someone means to be sent to harm them. Alternate translation: "will be sent to harm him"

Proverbs 17:12

a bear robbed of her cubs

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a bear who has just lost her cubs"

in his foolishness

The word "foolishness" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "who is acting foolish"

Proverbs 17:13

evil will never leave his house

Here "evil" is spoken of as if it were a person who would not leave the man's house. Here the word "house" may be taken literally, but it is also a metonym for his family. Alternate translation: "bad things will continue to happen to him and his family" or "bad things will never stop happening to him and his family"

Proverbs 17:14

The beginning of conflict is like one who releases water everywhere

This compares how easily a conflict spreads to how spilled water flows everywhere. Alternate translation: "Starting a conflict is like pumping water and letting it run everywhere"

has broken out

"starts"or "begins"

Proverbs 17:15

acquits

justifies, declares someone not guilty

Proverbs 17:16

Why should a fool pay money to learn about wisdom when he has no sense?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that the fool should not do this. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A fool should not pay money to learn about wisdom because he does not have any sense."

sense

Possible meanings are 1) desire to learn wisdom or 2) ability to learn wisdom.

Proverbs 17:17

a brother is born for times of trouble

One of the purposes of a brother is to be there to help his brother or sister in times of trouble. Alternate translation: "a brother is there for times of trouble"

Proverbs 17:18

no sense

"no good judgement"

binding promises

This refers to promises that must be kept and are often a burden on the person who made them.

Proverbs 17:19

whoever raises his door seeks destruction

Possible meanings are 1) this may represent that person making the entrance to their home look more lofty or fancy. Alternate translation: "the one who makes his doorway more impressive is giving others the opportunity to ruin him" or "the one who makes the entrance to his house high is trying to harm other people" Or 2) the word "door" is a metaphor for the person's mouth. Alternate translation: "the one who speaks proudly is giving others the opportunity to ruin him" or "the one who speaks proudly is trying to harm other people"

raises his door

Possible meanings are 1) literally making either the door itself or the threshold of the entrance high or 2) metaphorically making either the door itself or the house of which it is a part seem great or 3) the word "door" is a metaphor for the person's mouth, which in turn is a metonym for the words the person speaks with his mouth.

Proverbs 17:20

who has a crooked heart

The "heart" represents a person's feelings, attitudes and motivations. Alternate translation: "who is deceptive" or "who is dishonest"

has a perverse tongue

The "tongue" represents a person's speech. Alternate translation: "speaks perversely" or "speaks wickedly"

falls into calamity

"falls into trouble" To "fall into" something means to get into that situation. Alternate translation: "will have calamity"

Proverbs 17:22

A joyful heart is good medicine

This speaks of a joyful heart as being good medicine because it makes a person feel better. Alternate translation: "A joyful heart is like medicine that makes a person feel better"

A joyful heart
The "heart" represents a person's feelings, attitudes and motivations. Alternate translation: "Being joyful"
a broken spirit
Here the "spirit" represents a person's feelings and emotional state. A broken spirit refers to a poor emotional state. Alternate translation: "depression"
dries up the bones
A person's bones represent their physical health and strength. If a person's bones dry up it means that they are very sick and unhealthy. Alternate translation: "makes a person unhealthy and weak"
Proverbs 17:23
to pervert the ways of justice
"to prevent justice from being rendered" or "to pervert justice"
Proverbs 17:24
sets his face toward wisdom
This speaks of a person's focus on acting wisely as if he were looking at wisdom. Alternate translation: "focuses on acting wisely"
the eyes of a fool are
This refers to a fool by his eyes to emphasize what he is focusing on. Alternate translation: "the fool is"
the ends of the earth
This speaks of a fool's impossible dreams as if they were the ends of the earth to emphasize that they are unrealistic. Alternate translation: "strive for things that are as far from him as the ends of the earth" or "focus on impossible things"
Proverbs 17:25
A foolish son is a grief to his father
This speaks of a son causing his father grief as if the son himself were "grief." Alternate translation: "A foolish son brings grief to his father"
A foolish son ... and bitterness to the woman
This speaks of a son causing his mother bitterness as if the son himself were "bitterness." Alternate translation: "A foolish son ... and brings bitterness to the woman"
who bore him
"who gave birth to him"
bitterness
emotional pain, sorrow
Proverbs 17:26
it is never good ... neither is it good
These statements can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "it is always wrong ... and it is evil"
to punish the righteous
"to force the righteous to give up his property."
the righteous
This is a nominal adjective that refers to any righteous person. Another possible meaning is "the innocent," anyone whom others have accused of a crime that he did not commit.
flog
whip severely
the noble
This nominal adjective refers to any noble people. Alternate translation: "noble people"
for their integrity
The word "integrity" can be expressed with the adjective "honest." Alternate translation: "because they are honest"
Proverbs 17:27
uses few words
This refers to the way he speaks. Alternate translation: "speaks with few words"
is cool of spirit
Having a cool spirit is a metaphor for being able to control anger. Alternate translation: "is able to control himself" or "is able to stay calm" or "does not become angry easily"
Proverbs 17:28
Even a fool is thought to be wise
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "People even think a fool is wise"
keeps his mouth shut
This means that he does not speak. Alternate translation: "does not speak"
he is considered to be intelligent
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "people consider him to be intelligent"

18 [1] One who isolates himself seeks his own desire,
and he quarrels with all sound wisdom.

[2] A fool finds no pleasure in understanding,
but only in revealing what is in his own heart.

[3] When a wicked person comes, contempt comes with him—
along with shame and disgrace.

[4] The words of a man's mouth are deep waters;

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the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream.

5 It is not good to be partial to the wicked person,
nor to deny justice to the righteous person.

6 A fool's lips bring him conflict
and his mouth invites a beating.

7 A fool's mouth is his ruin
and he ensnares himself with his lips.

8 The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels
and they go down into the inner parts of the body.

9 Also, one who is slack in his work
is a brother to the one who destroys the most.

10 The name of Yahweh is a strong tower;
the righteous person runs into it and is safe.

11 The wealth of the rich is his fortified city
and in his imagination it is like a high wall.

12 Before his downfall a person's heart is proud,
but humility comes before honor.

13 One who answers before listening—
it is his folly and shame.

14 A person's spirit will endure sickness,
but who can bear a broken spirit?

15 The heart of the intelligent acquires knowledge
and the hearing of the wise seeks it out.

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16 A man's gift may open the way
and bring him before great men.

17 The first to plead his case seems just
until his opponent comes and examines him.

18 Casting the lot settles disputes
and separates strong opponents.

19 An offended brother is harder to be won than a strong city,
and quarrels are like the bars of a castle.

20 From the fruit of his mouth one's stomach is filled;
with the harvest of his lips he is satisfied.

21 Death and life are controlled by the tongue,
and those who love the tongue will eat its fruit.

22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing
and receives favor from Yahweh.

23 A poor person pleads for mercy,
but a rich person answers harshly.

24 The one who claims many friends is brought to ruin by them,
but there is a friend who comes closer than a brother.

Proverbs 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 18 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 18:1 Notes

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Proverbs 18:1

isolates himself

"keeps away from other people"

quarrels with all sound wisdom

This speaks of a person disagreeing with sound judgment as if "sound judgment" were a person he fought with. Alternate translation: "he disagrees with all sound judgment"

sound wisdom

"good judgment" or "wise choices"

Proverbs 18:2

A fool finds no pleasure in understanding, but only

"A fool does not care about understanding, but only about" This means the fool considers "understanding" the opposite of pleasure. Alternate translation: "A fool detests understanding and only finds pleasure in"

but only in revealing what is in his own heart

This means that the fool only finds pleasure in telling other people what he feels and desires in his heart. Alternate translation: "but only in telling others what is in his own heart"

what is in his own heart

The contents of a person's heart refers to the person's thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "what he thinks"

Proverbs 18:3

contempt comes with him—along with shame and disgrace

Here "contempt," "shame," and "disgrace" are spoken of as if they are people who accompany a wicked man. Possible meanings are 1) people show contempt towards the wicked man and cause him to feel shame and disgrace. Alternate translation: "people feel contempt for him along with shame and disgrace" or 2) the wicked man shows contempt for others and causes them to feel shame and disgrace. Alternate translation: "he shows his contempt for other people and causes them to feel shame and disgrace"

shame and disgrace

These two words have similar meaning and are used together to emphasize the "shame" felt by either the wicked man or other people.

Proverbs 18:4

The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; ... the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream

These two lines are parallel and it is implied that the man in the first line is a wise man. Alternate translation: "The words of a wise man's mouth are deep waters; ... the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream"

The words of a man's mouth are deep waters

This speaks of a wise man's words being profound as if they were profound and as deep as deep waters. Alternate translation: "The words of a man's mouth are as profound as deep waters" or "The words of a man's mouth are deep and profound"

a man's mouth

Here the man is referred to by his mouth to emphasize what he says. Alternate translation: "of a man"

the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream

This speaks of the source of wisdom being plentiful as if it were a gushing spring. The gushing of the spring is spoken of as if it were a flowing stream. Alternate translation: "the source of wisdom is as plentiful as the water of a gushing spring"

Proverbs 18:5

It is not good to ... to the righteous person

These phrases can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "It is good to treat the wicked person as he deserves, and to be just to the righteous person"

Proverbs 18:6

A fool's lips bring

Here the fool is referred to by his "lips" to emphasize what he says. Alternate translation: "what a fool says brings"

bring

"cause"

his mouth invites a beating

This speaks of the fool saying things that cause people to want to beat him as if he were inviting them to beat him. Alternate translation: "his mouth makes people want to beat him"

his mouth

Here what the fool says is referred to as his "mouth." Alternate translation: "what he says"

Proverbs 18:7

A fool's mouth ... with his lips

Both of these phrases refer to what a fool says. Alternate translation: "What a fool says ... by what he says"

is his ruin

"will ruin him"

he ensnares himself

This speaks of the man causing problems and trouble for himself as if he were trapping himself like a man traps an animal. Alternate translation: "he will cause problems for himself"

Proverbs 18:8

The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels

This speaks of the words of a gossip being desirable to listen to as if they were delicious food to eat. Alternate translation: "The words of a gossip are desirable to listen to" or

The words of a gossip

This refers to what a gossiping person says. Alternate translation: "The words that a gossiping person speaks"

morsels

small bites of food

they go down into the inner parts of the body

This speaks of the words of a gossip going into a person's mind and affecting his thoughts as if they were food that was going into his stomach. Alternate translation: "and they enter a person's mind and affect his thoughts"

Proverbs 18:9

one who is slack in his work is a brother to the one who destroys

This speaks of the one who is slack being similar to the one who destroys as if they were actually related. Alternate translation: "is closely related to" or "is very similar to"

is slack

"is lazy" or "is not interested"

the one who destroys the most

"the one who destroys everything" or "the one who is always destructive"

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Proverbs 18:10

The name of Yahweh is a strong tower

This speaks of Yahweh protecting his people as if he were a strong tower in which they could take refuge. Alternate translation: "Yahweh protects like a strong tower" or "Yahweh protects his people like a strong tower"

The name of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is referred to by his name. Alternate translation: "Yahweh"

the righteous

This refers to righteous people. Alternate translation: "those who are righteous" or "righteous people"

runs into it and is safe

This speaks of people seeking safety from Yahweh and Yahweh protecting them as if he were a strong tower that they ran into for safety. Alternate translation: "run to him and they are safe" or "seek him and they are safe"

Proverbs 18:11

The wealth of the rich is his fortified city

This speaks of a rich person depending on his wealth as if his wealth were a fortified wall that protects him. Alternate translation: "The wealthy person depends on his wealth as a city depends on its fortified wall"

the rich

This refers to people who are rich. Alternate translation: "the rich person"

fortified city

a city with strong defenses like walls and towers

in his imagination it is like a high wall

This speaks of the rich person believing his wealth will keep him safe like a high wall keeps those inside a city safe. Alternate translation: "he thinks it protects him as well as a high wall"

Proverbs 18:12

Before his downfall a person's heart is proud

"First a person's heart is proud, but then comes his downfall"

downfall

This refers to a significant decline in a person's reputation or health.

a person's heart

Here a person is referred to by his heart to emphasize his thoughts and feelings. Alternate translation: "a person"

humility comes before honor

The word "humility" may be expressed as an adjective and the word "honor" may be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "a person must be humble before he can be honored"

Proverbs 18:13

it is his folly and shame

The abstract nouns "folly" and "shame" may be expressed as adjectives. Alternate translation: "it is foolish of him, and he should be ashamed"

Proverbs 18:14

A person's spirit will endure sickness

Possible meanings are 1) the word "spirit" refers to a person's desire to stay alive. Alternate translation: "Even if a person is sick, he will still want to keep living" Or 2) the word "spirit" refers to the hope a person has that he will survive. Alternate translation: "A person who has hope will be able to survive sickness"

but who can bear a broken spirit?

This is a rhetorical question, expecting the answer that few can bear it. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "but it is very hard to bear a broken spirit."

a broken spirit

This refers to being depressed. Alternate translation: "being depressed"

Proverbs 18:15

The heart of the intelligent acquires

Here the intelligent person is referred to by his heart to emphasize his desires. Alternate translation: "The intelligent desire to acquire"

the intelligent

This refers to people who are intelligent. Alternate translation: "those who are intelligent" or "intelligent people"

acquires

"gains" or "obtains"

the hearing of the wise seeks it out

Here the wise person is referred to by his hearing to emphasize what he desires to listen to. Alternate translation: "the wise seeks to learn about it"

the wise

This refers to people who are wise. Alternate translation: "those who are wise" or "wise people"

seeks it out

Here the word "it" refers to "knowledge"

Proverbs 18:16

may open the way

Here to "open the way" means to create an opportunity. Alternate translation: "may create an opportunity for him"

bring him before

This means to be allowed to see someone. Alternate translation: "let him meet" or "let him be introduced to"

Proverbs 18:17

The first to plead his case

This refers to the person who pleads his case before his opponent pleads his case. Alternate translation: "The first person to plead his case" or "The person who pleads his case first"

examines him

asks him questions

Proverbs 18:18

Casting the lot

"Casting lots"

separates strong opponents

This refers to people who are fighting harshly over a dispute. When they are separated, they are no longer fighting over their dispute. Alternate translation: "causes opponents to stop fighting over their dispute"

Proverbs 18:19

An offended brother is harder to be won than a strong city

This speaks of the difficulty of making peace with a brother you have offended by comparing it to the difficulty of winning a war against a strong city. Alternate translation: "If you offend your brother, finding a way to have peace with him again may be harder than waging a battle to win

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a city"

quarrels are like the bars of a castle

This speaks of the difficulty of resolving quarrels by comparing it to the difficulty of breaking down the bars of a castle. Alternate translation: "resolving quarrels is as difficult as breaking down the bars of a castle"

castle

a fortified palace

Proverbs 18:20

From the fruit of his mouth one's stomach is filled; with the harvest of his lips he is satisfied

These two lines have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize what is said. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "A person is satisfied by the results of the good things that he says"

the fruit of his mouth

This speaks of the good things that a person says as if they were fruit that came from his mouth. Alternate translation: "his wise speech" or "his good words"

one's stomach is filled

This speaks of a person being satisfied or content by the result of what they have said as if they had eaten and become satisfied" Alternate translation: "a person is satisfied"

the harvest of his lips

This speaks of the good things that a person says as if they were fruit that is harvested. Alternate translation: "his wise speech" or "his good words"

he is satisfied

"he is pleased"

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are controlled by the tongue

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "The tongue can lead to life of death" or "What people say can lead to life or death"

by the tongue ... love the tongue

Here the "tongue" refers to speech. Alternate translation: "by what people say ... love speaking"

will eat its fruit

This speaks of a person receiving the consequence for what he says as if the consequences were fruit that he receives. Alternate translation: "will receive its consequences"

Proverbs 18:24

many friends is brought to ruin by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many friends—they will bring him to ruin" or "many friends—his friends will destroy him"

comes closer than

"is more faithful than" or "stays more loyal than"

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19 [1] Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity
than one who is perverse in speech and is a fool.

[2] Also, it is not good to have desire without knowledge
and the one who runs too fast misses the path.

[3] A person's folly ruins his life
and his heart rages against Yahweh.

[4] Wealth adds many friends,
but a poor person is separated from his friends.

[5] A false witness will not go unpunished
and he who breathes out lies will not escape.

[6] Many will ask for a favor from a generous person
and everyone is a friend of the one who gives gifts.

[7] All the brothers of a poor man hate him;
how much more do his friends who go far away from him!
He pursues them with words,

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but they are gone.

8 He who gets wisdom loves his own life;
but he who keeps understanding will find what is good.

9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
but the one who breathes out lies will perish.

10 It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury—
much less for a slave to rule over princes.

11 Discretion makes a person slow to anger
and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

12 The wrath of the king is like the roaring of a young lion,
but his favor is like dew on the grass.

13 A foolish son is ruin to his father
and a quarreling wife is a constant dripping of water.

14 A house and wealth are inherited from parents,
but a prudent wife is from Yahweh.

15 Laziness throws a person into a deep sleep,
but the one not willing to work will go hungry.

16 The one who obeys the command guards his life,
but the one who despises his ways will die.

17 Whoever is gracious to the poor lends to Yahweh
and he will repay him for what he has done.

18 Discipline your son while there is hope
and do not set your desire on putting him to death.

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19 A person with great anger must bear the penalty;
if you rescue him, you will have to do it a second time.

20 Listen to advice and accept instruction,
so you may become wise by the end of your life.

21 Many are the plans in a person's heart,
but it is the purpose of Yahweh that will stand.

22 Loyalty is what a person desires
and a poor person is better than a liar.

23 Honor for Yahweh leads people to life;
anyone who has it will rest satisfied and not afflicted by harm.

24 The lazy person buries his hand in the dish;
he will not even bring it back up to his mouth.

25 Strike a mocker, and the naive person will become prudent;
discipline one who is discerning, and he will gain knowledge.

26 The one who robs his father and drives his mother away
is a son who brings shame and disgrace.

27 If you cease to hear instruction, my son,
you will stray from the words of knowledge.

28 A corrupt witness mocks justice
and the mouth of the wicked swallows iniquity.

29 Judgments are ready for mockers
and flogging for the backs of fools.

Proverbs 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 19 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 19:1 Notes

Proverbs 19:1

Better is a poor person

"It is better to be a poor person"

who walks in his integrity

This is an idiom. Here walking refers to living. Alternate translation: "who lives in his integrity" or "who lives an honest life"

is perverse in speech

The word "speech" may be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "speaks perversely" or "speaks in an evil way"

Proverbs 19:2

to have desire without knowledge

This refers to people trying to do something without the knowledge for how to correctly do it. Alternate translation: "to work hard without knowing what you are doing"

the one who runs too fast misses the path

This speaks of a person doing something too quickly and making mistakes as if running too quickly and missing the path. Alternate translation: "the one who acts too quickly makes mistakes" or "the one who acts too quickly makes poor choices"

Proverbs 19:3

his heart rages

Here a person is referred to by his "heart" to emphasize his emotions. Alternate translation: "he rages"

Proverbs 19:4

Wealth adds many friends

This means that a person who is wealthy will have many friends because wealth attracts people. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Those who are wealthy easily find many friends"

a poor person is separated from his friends

A poor person is separated from many of his friends because of his poverty. The meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "poverty causes a person to lose his friends"

Proverbs 19:5

A false witness will not go unpunished

The double negative here emphasizes the positive. This can be written in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "A false witness will certainly be punished" or "They will certainly punish a false witness"

he who breathes out lies will not escape

This means that he will be captured. Alternate translation: "they will capture the one who breathes out lies"

breathes out lies

This is an idiom. Here "breathes" refers to lying constantly. See how you translated this phrase in [Proverbs 6:19]

Proverbs 19:6

a generous person

someone who often gives away things

everyone is a friend

The word "everyone" is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "it seems that everyone is a friend" or "almost everyone is a friend"

Proverbs 19:7

He pursues them with words

Using words to pursue people is a metaphor for calling out to them or pleading with them for help. Alternate translation: "He calls out to them" or "He pleads with them to help him"

how much more do his friends who go far away from him!

This phrase is an exclamation to show that this is more likely than the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "therefore his friends will certainly hate him and go far away from him!"

Proverbs 19:8

loves his own life

Here the person is referred to by his "life" to emphasize himself being alive. Alternate translation: "loves himself"

keeps understanding

"has understanding"

Proverbs 19:9

A false witness will not go unpunished

This can be written in positive and active form. See how you translated this phrase in [Proverbs 19:5]

breathes out lies

This figure of speech uses "breathes" to refer to lying constantly. See how you translated this phrase in [Proverbs 6:19]

Proverbs 19:10

It is not fitting

"It is not right"

much less for a slave

The words "it is" and "fitting" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated. Alternate translation: "it is much less fitting for a slave" or "it is even worse for a slave"

Proverbs 19:11

Discretion makes a person slow to anger

"A person who has discretion is slow to become angry"

Discretion

This means to know what should be done in a particular situation. See how you translated this word in Proverbs 1:4.

it is his glory to overlook

"it will bring him glory to overlook" or "others will consider it honorable if he overlooks"

to overlook

to forget on purpose

Proverbs 19:12

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The wrath of the king is like the roaring of a young lion
Here the lion's roaring refers to attacking. The wrath of a king is compared to the unpredictable and dangerous attack of a young lion. Alternate translation: "The wrath of the king is as dangerous as the attack of a young lion"
but his favor is like dew on the grass
The favor of the king is compared to the refreshing water that appears on grass in the morning. Alternate translation: "but his favor is refreshing like dew on grass" or "but his favor is refreshing like the dew on the ground in the morning"
Proverbs 19:13
is ruin to his father
"will ruin a father"
a quarreling wife is a constant dripping of water
This speaks of an annoying wife as if she were the constant dripping of water. Alternate translation: "a quarreling wife is as annoying and distracting as a constant dripping of water"
a quarreling wife
"an arguing wife" or "a disagreeing wife"
Proverbs 19:14
A house and wealth are inherited from parents
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Children inherit a house and wealth from their parents"
prudent
See how you translated this word in Proverbs 12:23.
a prudent wife is from Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gives a prudent wife"
Proverbs 19:15
Laziness throws a person into a deep sleep
This speaks of how laziness causes a person to sleep a lot as if laziness forcefully throws the person into sleep. Alternate translation: "Laziness makes a person sleep a lot" or "A lazy person sleeps a lot"
go hungry
This is an idiom which means to not eat. Alternate translation: "not eat" or "be hungry"
Proverbs 19:16
the command
"the command that he was taught"
guards his life
"protects his life"
despises his ways
Possible meanings are 1) the phrase "his ways" refers to the ways of Yahweh, the way in which Yahweh commands his people to live. Alternate translation: "despises the ways of Yahweh" Or 2) the phrase "his ways" refers to the ways of "the one." Alternate translation: "does not care how he lives"
Proverbs 19:17
Whoever is gracious to the poor lends to Yahweh
Yahweh considers kindness shown to the poor to be kindness shown to him. One of the ways people are kind to the poor is by giving. Alternate translation: "The person who gives to the poor is giving to Yahweh"
the poor
This refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "those who are poor" or "poor people"
Proverbs 19:18
while there is hope
This refers to while the child is young and will still accept discipline and instruction. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "while he is young" or "while he can still be taught"
and do not set your desire on putting him to death
Possible meanings are 1) this phrase describes punishing your child. Alternate translation: "but do not punish him so severely that he might die" or 2) this phrase describes what it is like if you do not punish your child. Alternate translation: "for if you do not punish him you are helping him destroy himself"
set your desire on putting him
This idiom means to be determined to cause something to happen. Alternate translation: "be determined to put him"
Proverbs 19:19
A person with great anger
This idiom refers to a person who is easily angered. Alternate translation: "A person who does not control his temper" or "A person who becomes angry quickly"
must bear the penalty
This refers to the person bearing the consequences for what happens when he gets angry. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "must bear the consequences of his anger" or "must bear the consequences of what he does in his anger"
if you rescue him
"if you save him." This refers to rescuing him when he has acted out of his anger. The meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "if you rescue him after he has had an outburst"
a second time
"another time" or "again"
Proverbs 19:20
Listen to advice and accept instruction
These two phrases mean basically the same and are repeated to emphasize how important it is.
Listen to advice
This is an idiom. Here "listening" does not mean to merely listen, but to learn from the advice you are given and to follow it. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to advice" or "Follow advice"
Proverbs 19:21
in a person's heart
Here the "heart" is used to refer to the "mind" to emphasize a person's desire. Alternate translation: "in a person's mind" or "that a person desires"
the purpose of Yahweh
"Yahweh's purpose" or "Yahweh's plans"
that will stand
This idiom means to "happen." Alternate translation: "that will happen"
Proverbs 19:23
Honor for Yahweh leads people to life; anyone who has it will rest satisfied
This means that they will live a long time if they honor Yahweh. The full meaning of this statement can be made

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clear. Alternate translation: "Those who honor Yahweh will live a long time; anyone who honors Yahweh will rest satisfied"

anyone who has it

Here the word "it" refers to "honor for Yahweh."

rest satisfied

Here "rest" or sleep is a metaphor for living. Alternate translation: "live satisfied"

satisfied and not afflicted by harm

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "satisfied; nothing will harm him" or "satisfied; he will be safe"

Proverbs 19:24

buries his hand in the dish

"dips his hand in the dish" or "puts his hand in his plate." In the Biblical culture people usually ate with their hands as people do in many cultures today.

he will not even bring it back up to his mouth

He does not bring his hand back to his mouth because he is too lazy. Alternate translation: "but he is too lazy to bring his hand up to his mouth to feed himself"

Proverbs 19:25

Strike a mocker, and the naive person

"If you strike a mocker, the naive person"

Strike a mocker

"Punish a mocker"

naive person

"inexperienced person" or "immature person"

prudent

See how you translated this word in Proverbs 12:23.

discipline one who is discerning, and

"if you discipline one who is discerning,"

he will gain knowledge

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be stated as "know." Alternate translation: "he will know more"

Proverbs 19:26

brings shame and disgrace

Possible meanings are 1) he brings it to himself. Alternate translation: "brings shame and disgrace to himself" or 2) he brings it to his family. Alternate translation: "brings shame and disgrace to his family"

Proverbs 19:27

If you cease to hear instruction

Here "listening and obeying" is spoken of as if it were "hearing." Alternate translation: "If you stop paying attention to instruction" or "If you stop obeying instruction"

you will stray from

"you will abandon" or "you will turn your back on"

the words of knowledge

"knowledge"

Proverbs 19:28

the mouth of the wicked swallows iniquity

This speaks of how wicked people enjoy doing evil by saying that they swallow iniquity as easily as they swallow food. Alternate translation: "the wicked enjoy doing evil as much as they enjoy eating food"

the mouth of the wicked swallows

The phrase "the mouth of the wicked" represents wicked people. Alternate translation: "wicked people swallow" or "the wicked swallow"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "the wicked person"

Proverbs 19:29

Judgments are ready for mockers and flogging for

The word "Judgments" is probably a metonym for the condemnation or punishment that will follow the judgments. The words "judgments" and "flogging" may be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is ready to judge mockers and to flog"

Judgments are ready for

Alternate translation: "Punishment is ready for" or "Condemnation is ready for" or "Yahweh is ready to punish" or "Yahweh is ready to condemn"

flogging for the backs of fools

The words "is ready" are understood from the previous phrase and may be repeated. Alternate translation: "flogging is ready for the backs of fools" or "he is ready to flog the backs"

flogging

beating with a whip or stick

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20 [1] Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler;
whoever is led astray by drink is not wise.

[2] The fear of a king is like the fear of a young lion that is roaring;
the one who makes him angry forfeits his life.

[3] It is an honor for anyone to avoid conflict,
but every fool jumps into an argument.

[4] The lazy person does not plow in autumn;

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he seeks a crop at harvest time but will have nothing.

5 The purpose in a human heart is like deep water,
but someone with understanding will draw it out.

6 Many a person proclaims he is loyal,
but who can find one who is faithful?

7 The righteous person walks in his integrity,
and his sons who follow after him will be blessed.

8 A king who sits on the throne performing the duties of a judge
is winnowing with his eyes all the evil that is before him.

9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure;
I am clean from my sin"?

10 Differing weights and unequal measures—
both are abominations to Yahweh.

11 Even a youth is known by his actions,
by whether his conduct is pure and upright.

12 Ears that hear and eyes that see—
Yahweh made them both.

13 Do not love sleep or you will come to poverty;
open your eyes and you will have plenty to eat.

14 "Bad! Bad!" says the buyer,
but when he goes away he boasts.

15 There is gold and an abundance of costly stones,
but lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

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16 Take a garment of one who has put up security for a stranger,
and hold it in pledge when he puts up security for an immoral woman.

17 Bread gained by deceit tastes sweet,
but afterward his mouth will be full of gravel.

18 Plans are established by advice
and only with wise guidance should you wage war.

19 A slanderer reveals secrets,
and so you should not associate with people who talk too much.

20 If a person curses his father or his mother,
his lamp will be put out in the middle of darkness.

21 An inheritance gained quickly at the beginning
will not be blessed in the end.

22 Do not say, "I will pay you back for this wrong!"
Wait for Yahweh and he will rescue you.

23 Unequal weights are an abomination to Yahweh,
and deceptive scales are not good.

24 A person's steps are directed by Yahweh;
how then can he understand his way?

25 It is a snare for a person to say rashly, "This thing is holy,"
and begin to think about what it means only after making his vow.

26 A wise king winnows the wicked
and he turns a threshing wheel over them.

27 The spirit of a person is the lamp of Yahweh,
searching all his inmost parts.

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28 Steadfast love and faithfulness preserve the king;
he makes his throne strong by love.

29 The glory of young men is their strength
and the splendor of old people is their gray hair.

30 Blows that make a wound cleanse away evil
and beatings make the innermost parts clean.

Proverbs 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 20 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 20:1 Notes

Proverbs 20:1

Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize the danger of too much alcohol.

Wine is a mocker

Here "wine" refers to the person who is drunk with wine. Alternate translation: "A person who is drunk with wine mocks"

strong drink is a brawler

Here "strong drink" refers to a person who is drunk with strong drink. Alternate translation: "a person who is drunk with strong drink starts fights"

a brawler

a person who fights noisily, usually in a public place

whoever is led astray by drink is not wise

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whoever drinks until they can no longer think clearly"

by drink

Here "drink" refers to alcoholic drinks

is not wise

This means the opposite of "wise" which is "foolish." Alternate translation: "is foolish"

Proverbs 20:2

The fear of a king is like the fear of a young lion that is roaring

This compares how people fear a king's wrath to how they fear a young roaring lion. Alternate translation: "The king's wrath makes people as afraid as if they were facing a young lion roaring at them"

makes him angry

"makes the king angry"

forfeits his life

This refers to being killed. "Life" here refers to physical life. Alternate translation: "will die"

Proverbs 20:3

It is an honor

"It is honorable." This means that a person will be honored.

every fool jumps into an argument

This speaks of entering an argument quickly as if the argument were something the fool physically jumped into. Alternate translation: "every fool quickly gets into an argument" or "every fool is quick to join an argument"

Proverbs 20:4

plow

to prepare land for planting

in autumn

"during the season for planting crops"

but will have nothing

This means that there will be nothing growing in his field for him to harvest. Alternate translation: "but will have nothing to harvest"

Proverbs 20:5

The purpose in a human heart is like deep water

This speaks of how difficult it is to understand the reasons for a person's actions by comparing it to the difficulty of reaching the water in a deep well. Alternate translation: "It is as difficult to understand the purpose in the human heart as it is to reach the water in a deep well" or "The purpose of in the human heart is very difficult to understand"

someone with understanding

"a person who has understanding"

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will draw it out
This speaks of figuring out the purpose of the human heart as if it was water being drawn from a deep well. Alternate translation: "will cause the purpose to be known" or "will figure it out"
Proverbs 20:6
is loyal
"is faithful" or "is trustworthy"
but who can find one who is faithful?
The implicit answer is "few can find someone like that." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "but few men can find a person who is faithful!" or "but it is hard to find a person who really is faithful!"
Proverbs 20:7
walks in his integrity
Here walking refers to living. See how you translated this phrase in [Proverbs 19:1]
his sons who follow after him
This simply means that they "follow after him" since they are younger than he and his children. If this phrase is awkward in your language it may be left to be implied. Alternate translation: "his sons after him" or "his sons"
Proverbs 20:8
is winnowing with his eyes all the evil that is before him
This speaks of the king judging between various types of evil as if he were separating them as a person winnows grain. Alternate translation: "sees and sorts the different kinds of evils that are brought before him"
Proverbs 20:9
Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"?
The implicit answer to this question is, "No one can say that." This rhetorical question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can say that his heart is clean and that he is free from sin"
my heart
Here a person's "heart" refers to his thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "my thoughts"
clean
A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person where physically clean.
I am clean from my sin
"I am without sin" or "I have not sinned"
Proverbs 20:11
Even a youth is known by his actions
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People know a young man by his actions"
whether his conduct is pure and upright
"whether his conduct is pure and upright or not"
his conduct
"his deeds" or "what he does"
pure and upright
These two words basically mean the same thing and emphasize how good this young person is. They can be combined into one word if necessary. Alternate translation: "pure"
Proverbs 20:13
come to poverty
The phrase "come to" here means to transition into a new situation; to become. Alternate translation: "become poor"
open your eyes
Here "opening one's eyes" is spoken of as "being awake." Alternate translation: "stay awake" or "be alert"
Proverbs 20:14
"Bad! Bad!" says the buyer, but when he goes away he boasts
Here a buyer is criticizing what someone is selling to get a low price from him. After he buys he boasts about the good price that he pursuaded the seller to give him. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "'Bad! Bad!' says the buyer criticizing the seller's wares, but after he buys he goes away he boasting about the low price that he paid"
Proverbs 20:15
lips of knowledge are a precious jewel
This speaks of the value of lips of knowledge by comparing them to a precious jewel. Alternate translation: "lips of knowledge are as valuable as an expensive jewel"
lips of knowledge
Here "words" are referred to as "lips." Alternate translation: "wise words" or "words of knowledge"
Proverbs 20:16
Take a garment of one who has put up security for a stranger
When lending money, the lender would take something from the borrower, such as a garment, as a guarantee of repayment. He would return it after the money was repaid. If the borrower was too poor, someone else could give something to the lender as a guarantee for him. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Take a garment as security from the one who guarantees that what a stranger has borrowed will be paid back"
puts up security
This is an idiom. It means that someone gives something to a lender as a guarantee that what was borrowed will be paid. Alternate translation: "guarantees that what has been borrowed will be paid back" or "promises to pay a loan"
hold it in pledge
This is an idiom. To "hold something in pledge" means to hold on to something that someone has given as a pledge, or promise, that he will pay a debt. Alternate translation: "hold onto his coat as a guarantee of repayment"
for an immoral woman
One Hebrew tradition and some English translations read, "for foreigners."
Proverbs 20:17
Bread gained by deceit
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Bread that someone gained by deceit"
by deceit
The word "deceit" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "by deceiving others"
Bread
Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "Food"
tastes sweet
"tastes good"
but afterward his mouth will be full of gravel
This speaks of the food tasting unpleasant as if his mouth

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were actually full of gravel instead of food. Alternate translation: "but afterwards it tastes like gravel in his mouth" or "but soon it tastes like sand in his mouth"
gravel
small pieces of rock
Proverbs 20:18
Plans are established by advice
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People establish plans based on advice"
Proverbs 20:19
A slanderer
Because the problem is that the person talks too much, not that what he says is false, many English translations read, "A gossip."
you should not associate with
"you should not be friends with"
Proverbs 20:20
If a person curses
This means if a someone express a desire that bad things will happen to someone else.
his lamp will be put out in the middle of darkness
This speaks of a person dying suddenly and unexpectedly as if his life were a lamp put out in the dark. Alternate translation: "his life will end as suddenly as the light of a lamp that is put out in the dark" or "he will die suddenly"
his lamp will be put out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his lamp will go out"
his lamp
This refers to a lamp with a burning flame. Here the lamp's flame is referred to as the lamp itself. Alternate translation: "the flame of his lamp"
Proverbs 20:21
at the beginning
This refers to a person receiving his inheritance before he is supposed to receive it. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "before the right time"
Proverbs 20:22
I will pay you back
This means to do wrong to someone because they have done wrong to you. Alternate translation: "I will punish you"
Wait for Yahweh
This means to have faith that Yahweh will deal with the situation. Alternate translation: "Have faith in Yahweh" or "Hope in Yahweh"
Proverbs 20:24
A person's steps are directed by Yahweh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh directs a person's steps"
A person's steps
This refers to the various things a person does. Alternate translation: "A person's actions"
how then can he understand his way?
The implicit answer is that he cannot understand it. This rhetorical question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "therefore, a person cannot understand his way"
understand his way
This is an idiom. The phrase "his way" refers to the person's life. Alternate translation: "understand why some things happen in his life"
Proverbs 20:25
It is a snare
This speaks of something being dangerous as if it were a trap or a snare. Alternate translation: "It is dangerous"
to say rashly
to say something quickly and without careful consideration of what it might mean
making his vow
The person has made a vow declaring that something is holy and dedicated to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "dedicating it to Yahweh" or "declaring it holy"
Proverbs 20:26
winnows the wicked
This speaks of the king separating the wicked people as if they were grain that he was winnowing. Alternate translation: "separates the wicked"
the wicked
This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "those who are wicked" or "the wicked people"
he turns a threshing wheel over them
This speaks of the king punishing the wicked as if he were driving a threshing wheel over them. Alternate translation: "he severely punishes them"
threshing wheel
"threshing cart." This is a tool used to crush grain and help separate it from the chaff.
Proverbs 20:27
The spirit of a person is the lamp of Yahweh, searching all his inmost parts
This speaks of a person's spirit as if it were a lamp. A person's spirit helps him to understand his inner self. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has given us a spirit to understand our deepest selves, just as a lamp makes you see in the dark"
Proverbs 20:28
Steadfast love and faithfulness preserve the king
The abstract nouns "love" and "faithfulness" can be stated with the verb "love" and the adjective "faithful." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The king preserves himself by loving Yahweh without ceasing and by being faithful to him"
preserve the king
keep the king safe from harm
he makes his throne strong by love
Here "throne" represents the king's power to rule. The abstract noun "love" can be stated as a verb. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he ensures that he will rule for a long time by loving others"
Proverbs 20:30
Blows that make a wound cleanse away evil and beatings make the innermost parts clean
Both statements mean the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. Using physical punishment to correct a person is spoken of as if the evil were dirt and the beatings cleansed him. Alternate translation: "Beating a person who has done

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wrong will correct him and cause him to be a better
person"

21 1 The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of Yahweh;
he turns it wherever he pleases.

2 Every person's way is right in his own eyes,
but it is Yahweh who weighs the hearts.

3 To do what is right and just
is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice.

4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart—
the lamp of the wicked—are sin.

5 The plans of the diligent lead only to prosperity,
but everyone who acts too quickly comes only to poverty.

6 Acquiring treasures by a lying tongue
is a fleeting vapor and a deadly snare.

7 The violence of the wicked will drag them away,
for they refuse to do what is just.

8 The way of a guilty person is crooked,
but the one who is pure does what is right.

9 It is better to live on a corner of the roof
than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

10 The appetite of the wicked craves evil;
his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

11 When the mocker is punished, the naive become wise,
and when the wise person is instructed, he lays hold of knowledge.

12 The righteous person watches the house of the wicked person;

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he brings wicked people to disaster.

13 The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor,
he also will cry out, but he will not be answered.

14 A gift in secret appeases anger
and a concealed gift appeases strong wrath.

15 When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous person,
but it brings terror to workers of iniquity.

16 The one who wanders from the way of understanding,
he will rest in the assembly of the dead.

17 Whoever loves pleasure will become poor;
the one who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

18 A wicked person is ransom for the righteous,
and the treacherous person is ransom for the upright.

19 It is better to live in the desert
than with a quarreling and angry wife.

20 Desirable treasure and oil are kept in the dwelling of the wise,
but a foolish person swallows it all up.

21 The one who does right and is kind—
this person finds life, righteousness, and honor.

22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty ones,
and he brings down the stronghold in which they trusted.

23 Whoever guards his mouth and tongue
keeps himself out of trouble.

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24 The proud and haughty person—"Mocker" is his name—
acts with arrogant pride.

25 The desire of the lazy person kills him,
for his hands refuse to work.

26 All day long he craves and craves more,
but the righteous person gives and does not hold back.

27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination;
it is even more detestable when he brings it with evil motives.

28 A false witness will perish,
but the one who listens will speak for all time.

29 A wicked man makes his face hard,
but the upright is certain about his ways.[1]

30 There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, and there is no advice
that can stand against Yahweh.

31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle,
but the victory belongs to Yahweh.

[1] Some ancient copies of the Hebrew text have but the upright thinks about his way.

Proverbs 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 21 continues the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 21:1 Notes

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of Yahweh

The writer speaks of the king's heart as if it were an irrigation ditch in a dry area through which people direct water to plants that need it. Alternate translation: "Yahweh controls the king's heart as a man directs water for irrigation"

The king's heart

The heart is a metaphor for what a person thinks and what he wants to do. Alternate translation: "The king's thoughts and actions" or "What the king thinks and what he wants to do"

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Proverbs 21:2

Every person's way is right in his own eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. The writer speaks of what a person does as if it that person were walking down a path. Alternate translation: "Every person thinks that what he does is good" or "Every person judges what he does as good"

who weighs the hearts

The writer speaks of Yahweh deciding whether a person desires to do what is right as if Yahweh were looking at a physical object and deciding whether it is of good quality. Alternate translation: "who will judge the motives"

Proverbs 21:3

To do what is right

"To do what Yahweh thinks is right"

To do what is ... just

"To treat people the way Yahweh wants people to treat other people"

just is more acceptable to Yahweh

"just—Yahweh wants this more"

Proverbs 21:4

Haughty eyes and a proud heart

The words "eyes" and "heart" are synecdoches for a person who considers himself better than other people and wants other people to know it. Alternate translation: "People who want others to think that they are better than other people"

Haughty eyes

This is a synecdoche for a person who wants others to know that he thinks he is better than they are.

proud heart

This is a synecdoche for a person who thinks he is better than others.

the lamp of the wicked

The things that help the wicked are spoken of as a lamp. Alternate translation: "the things that help a wicked person like a lamp helps to see in the dark"

Proverbs 21:5

the diligent

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "a diligent man" or "a man who works hard"

comes only to poverty

The abstract noun "poverty" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "only becomes poor"

Proverbs 21:6

Acquiring treasures

"Gaining wealth" or "Getting rich"

by a lying tongue

The tongue is a metonym for what a person says. Alternate translation: "by deceitful words" or "by telling lies"

is a fleeting vapor

A fleeting vapor is a mist that quickly goes away in the morning. If someone tells lies in order to get wealth, that wealth will not last. Alternate translation: "is like a disappearing mist"

and a deadly snare

A snare is a kind of trap. If someone tells lies in order to get wealth, he puts himself in terrible danger. Alternate translation: "and is like a snare that kills"

Proverbs 21:7

The violence of the wicked will drag them away

The writer speaks as though violence were a person who could drag other people away. God will punish wicked people who harm their innocent neighbors.

violence of the wicked

The abstract noun "violence" refers to violent deeds or things people do to harm their innocent neighbors. The word "wicked" is a nominal adjective that refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "The violent actions of wicked people"

drag them away

This phrase refers to dragging a net through water to catch fish. The wicked being destroyed by their own actions is spoken of as if their actions trapped them in a net like one would catch fish. Alternate translation: "drag them away like fish" or "destroy them as easily as one catches fish in a net"

Proverbs 21:8

The way of a guilty person is crooked

This compares the way one lives to a crooked road one may travel. This is also an idiom. Alternate translation: "The way a guilty person lives is crooked"

crooked

Here "crooked" means bent or not straight. This is a metaphor for morally wrong. Alternate translation: "wrong"

Proverbs 21:9

a corner of the roof

Houses in those days had flat roofs. Ancient Israelites spent much time on their roofs, where it was often cooler than inside the house, and sometimes people would build a shelter large enough for a person to sleep in on one corner of the roof.

quarrelsome wife

"wife who often argues and complains"

Proverbs 21:10

The appetite of the wicked craves evil

The writer speaks of a person's appetite, the physical desire for food and drink, as if it were a person who could desire something. The word "wicked" is a nominal adjective that refers to evil people, and the word "evil" is a nominal adjective that refers to evil deeds. Alternate translation: "Evil people desire to do evil deeds just as they desire to eat and drink"

craves

desires strongly

his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes

The idiom to "find favor" means to have someone approve of and act kindly towards the one who finds favor. Also, the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents a person's thoughts and attitude towards another person. Alternate translation: "his neighbor does not receive favor from him" or "he does not act kindly towards his neighbor"

Proverbs 21:11

the naive

"those who have no experience" or "those who are not mature"

the mocker

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"the person who mocks others"

when the wise person is instructed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone instructs the wise person"

lays hold of knowledge

Here knowledge is spoken of as if it were an object that someone could grasp and keep for himself.

Proverbs 21:12

The righteous

Possible meanings are 1) any righteous person or 2) "Yahweh the one who is righteous."

watches the house

"pays careful attention to the house" "looks to see what happens to the house"

he brings wicked people to disaster

Here disaster is spoken of as if it were a place that someone could be brought to. Alternate translation: "he destroys them"

Proverbs 21:13

The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The one who will not listen when poor people ask for help"

he will not be answered

The word "answered" is a metonym for a person hearing another person ask for help and acting to help. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will do anything to help him"

Proverbs 21:14

appeases anger

"makes an angry person feel better so he is no longer angry"

Proverbs 21:15

When justice is done

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated as a noun phrase. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "When rulers do what is just"

workers of iniquity

"those who do evil" or "evildoers"

Proverbs 21:16

wanders from the way of understanding

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "no longer lives wisely"

he will rest in the assembly of the dead

"he will remain in the assembly of dead spirits"

Proverbs 21:18

is ransom for

The word "ransom" is a metaphor for one person who takes the place of another person. Here the person who does what is wrong is punished instead of the person who does what is right.

the treacherous

a person who harms those who trust him by lying and otherwise dealing falsely

the upright

"the person who lives rightly" or "people who live rightly"

Proverbs 21:20

wise

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "wise person"

swallows it all up

"uses it all for no good purpose" or "wastes it"

Proverbs 21:22

scales the city

"climbs up and over the wall that surrounds the city"

the city of the mighty ones

"a city in which mighty men are living" or "a city of mighty warriors"

he brings down

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he destroys"

the stronghold in which they trusted

"the walls and towers around the city that they did not think anyone would be able to get past into the city, so they felt safe"

Proverbs 21:23

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue

Both "mouth" and "tongue" refer to what a person says. Alternate translation: "Whoever is careful in what he says"

Proverbs 21:24

The proud and haughty person ... acts with arrogant pride

"You can expect a proud and haughty people to act with arrogant pride"

proud and haughty

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how prideful the person is.

"Mocker" is his name

The word "name" is a metonym for what people would call him. Alternate translation: "a mocker is what you should call him"

Proverbs 21:25

The desire of the lazy person kills him

The writer speaks of what a person wants as if it were a person who could kill a lazy person. Here the lazy person wants to be idle and not work. Alternate translation: "A lazy person only wants to be idle, and because of that he will die" or "A lazy person will die because he does not want to work"

his hands refuse

The hand is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "he refuses"

Proverbs 21:26

craves

desires strongly

gives and does not hold back

The phrase "does not hold back" can be stated positively, and what he gives can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "gives everything he should" or "gives generously"

Proverbs 21:27

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination

The writer does not mention Yahweh here, as in Proverbs 15:8, but the reader should understand that it is Yahweh who detests the sacrifice of the wicked.

the wicked

The nominal adjective "wicked" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "the wicked person" or "wicked people"

it is even more detestable

"Yahweh detests the sacrifice even more"

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Proverbs 21:28
will speak for all time
This is because people will never forget what he said.
Proverbs 21:29
makes his face hard
Possible meanings are 1) "pretends to be courageous" or 2) "will not listen to correction."
is certain about his ways
A person's actions are spoken of as if they were a path upon which the person walks. Alternate translation: "is certain about what he does" or "is confident about what he does"
Proverbs 21:30
There is no wisdom, there is no understanding, and there is no advice that
The words "there is" are repeated to emphasize the abstract nouns "wisdom," "understanding," and "advice." Yahweh is greater than anything that anyone can know or think or say. Your language may require that you not repeat "there is no." The abstract nouns can be translated as adjectives or verbs. Alternate translation: "There is no wise person, there is no one who understands anything, and there is no one who tells others what to do who" or "There is no wisdom, understanding, or advice that"
stand against Yahweh
"defeat Yahweh" or "work against what Yahweh wants to do" or "show that he is right and Yahweh is wrong"
Proverbs 21:31
The horse is prepared for the day of battle
These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Soldiers prepare horses for the day of battle"
the day of battle
The word "day" refers to time that may be longer or shorter than a day. Alternate translation: "when there is a battle"

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22 [1] A good name is to be chosen over great riches
and favor is better than silver and gold.

[2] Rich and poor people have this in common—
Yahweh is the maker of all of them.

[3] The prudent sees trouble and hides himself,
but the naive go on and suffer because of it.

[4] The reward for humility and fear of Yahweh
is riches, honor, and life.

[5] Thorns and snares lie in the path of the perverse;
whoever guards his life will keep far from them.

[6] Teach a child the way he should go
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.

[7] Rich people rule over poor people
and one who borrows is a slave to the one who lends.

[8] He who sows injustice will reap trouble
and the rod of his fury will fade away.

[9] The one who has a generous eye will be blessed,

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for he shares his bread with the poor.

10 Drive away the mocker, and out goes strife;
disputes and dishonor will cease.

11 The one who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious,
he will have the king for his friend.

12 The eyes of Yahweh keep watch over knowledge,
but he overthrows the words of the treacherous.

13 The lazy person says, "There is a lion in the street!
I will be killed in the open places."

14 The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit;
Yahweh's anger is stirred up against anyone who falls into it.

15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child,
but the rod of discipline drives it far away.

16 The one who oppresses poor people to increase his wealth,
or gives to rich people, will come to poverty.

17 Incline your ear and listen to the words of the wise
and apply your heart to my knowledge,

18 for it will be pleasant for you if you keep them within you,
if all of them are ready on your lips.

19 So your trust may be in Yahweh,
I teach them to you today—even to you.

20 Have I not written for you thirty sayings
of instruction and knowledge,

21 to teach you truth in these trustworthy words,
so you may give trustworthy answers
to those who sent you?

22 Do not rob the poor because he is poor,
or crush the needy at the gate,

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23 for Yahweh will plead their case,
and he will rob of life those who robbed them.

24 Do not make a friend of someone who is ruled by anger
and you must not go with one who rages,

25 or you will learn his ways
and entangle yourself in a snare.

26 Do not be one who strikes hands in making a pledge,
or who puts up security for debts.

27 If you lack the means to pay,
what could stop someone from taking away your bed from under you?

28 Do not remove the ancient boundary stone
that your fathers have set.

29 Do you see a man skilled at his work? He will stand before kings;
he will not stand before common people.

Proverbs 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 22 ends the section of the book which is attributed to Solomon and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

The second half of this chapter and the first half of the next chapter are attributed to the "Wise Men." The exact identity of the men is unknown.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

With this new section of proverbs, the author begins to use many rhetorical questions. The obvious answers should convince the reader.

Links:

Proverbs 22:1 Notes

Proverbs 22:1

A good name is to be chosen over great riches

These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "A person should choose a good name rather than great riches"

A good name

"To have others think that one is a good person"

Proverbs 22:3

The prudent

This nominal adjective refers to any prudent person. See how you translated "prudent" in [Proverbs 12:16]

the naive

This nominal adjective refers to any naive person. To be naive is to lack experience and to not be mature.

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Proverbs 22:5

Thorns and snares lie in the path of the perverse

The writer speaks of the way perverse people live as if it were a path on which the perverse will have trouble because of the natural "thorns" and man-made "snares."

snares

traps to catch animals

the perverse

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "perverse people"

whoever guards his life

A person doing what he needs to do so he can live a long time is spoken of as if that person were keeping thieves away from a physical object. Alternate translation: "people who want to live a long time"

Proverbs 22:6

the way he should go

How a person lives is spoken of as if it were a path on which he walks. Alternate translation: "how he should live"

Proverbs 22:7

borrows ... lends

You may need to make explicit what it is that is borrowed or lent. Alternate translation: "borrows money ... lends money"

Proverbs 22:8

He who sows injustice will reap trouble

The writer speaks of a ruler or other powerful person treating those less powerful unjustly as if he were planting seeds that will give birth to plants that bring trouble. Alternate translation: "If a person treats those less powerful than he is unjustly, they will cause him trouble later on"

the rod of his fury will fade away

The word "rod" is a metonym for power over other people. Possible meanings are 1) the unjust ruler will lose the power that he had that allowed him to treat other people unjustly or 2) when the people respond to the injustice he had done by harming him, he will have no power to stop them. Alternate translation: "he will no longer have the power that he had used to harm people"

rod of his fury

The word "rod" is a metonym for power over other people. The unjust man was harming innocent people as if he were very angry with them. Alternate translation: "the rod he had used as if he were punishing people" or "the power he used to harm others"

will fade away

The word translated "fade away" is also used of plants drying up.

Proverbs 22:9

The one who has a generous eye will be blessed

These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless the one who has a generous eye"

one who has a generous eye

The eye is a metonym for seeing what other people need, and the "generous eye" not only sees but gives what the other people need. The eye is also a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "generous person" or "person who is willing to give things to other people"

bread

Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, it is often used to refer to food in general.

Proverbs 22:10

disputes and dishonor will cease

The abstract nouns "disputes" and "dishonor" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "people will no longer argue with each other or say things that dishonor each other"

Proverbs 22:11

loves a pure heart

It is his own heart that the person wants to be pure. The heart is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "loves having a pure heart" or "wants to be pure"

is gracious

"is kind"

Proverbs 22:12

The eyes of Yahweh keep watch over

The eyes are a synecdoche for the person. The writer speaks as if Yahweh had physical eyes like a person. Alternate translation: "Yahweh keeps watch over" or "Yahweh guards knowledge"

keep watch over knowledge

Keeping watch is s metonym for protecting. Alternate translation: "protect knowledge"

he overthrows

"he destroys"

the treacherous

The nominal adjective treacherous can be translated as a noun phrase. Translate "treacherous" as in [Proverbs 11:3]

Proverbs 22:13

The lazy person says

The quote that follows is a lie and an excuse for not working. If your language introduces false statements in a special way, you can use that here.

Proverbs 22:14

The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit

The word "mouth" is a metonym for the words that come out of the mouth. The writer speaks of a person being unable to escape having people punish him for evil deeds as if that person had fallen into a hole someone had dug in the ground from which he could not escape. Alternate translation: "The words spoken by an adulteress will draw you in, and it will be as if you have fallen into a deep and dangerous pit"

an adulteress

See how you translated this in Proverbs 5:3.

Yahweh's anger is stirred up

Here "stirred up" means that his anger increased. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is angry"

falls into it

Adultery is spoken of as if it is something that a person can fall into. Alternate translation: "sins because of the adulteress"

Proverbs 22:15

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child

"The heart of a child is full of foolish things"

the rod of discipline

The writer speaks of a parent using any form of discipline

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as if that parent were hitting the child with a wooden rod.
drives it far away
The writer speaks as if foolishness were a person that another person could use a physical rod to drive away. Alternate translation: "will make a child wise"
Proverbs 22:16
to increase his wealth
"to become richer" or "to gain more money"
gives to rich people
"gives money to rich people"
will come to poverty
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will become poor"
Proverbs 22:17
General Information:
Verse 17 begins the introduction to a new section of the Book of Proverbs.
Incline your ear and listen
Here the word "ear" represents the person who is listening. The writer speaks of listening attentively to someone as if it were leaning forward so that the ear is closer to the one speaking. See how you translated "incline your ear" in [Proverbs 4:20]
the words of the wise
"what wise people say"
apply your heart to
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "do your best to understand and remember"
my knowledge
The person speaking is probably the same as the father from [Proverbs 1:8]
Proverbs 22:18
all of them are ready on your lips
The person being ready to speak is spoken of as if it were the words that were ready. Alternate translation: "you are able to speak of them at any time"
Proverbs 22:19
today—even to you
"today. Yes, I am teaching you," The speaker is emphasizing that it is the hearer, not someone else whom he is teaching, and he is teaching the hearer because the hearer needs to learn. If it is awkward in your language to emphasize in this way, you can emphasize in another way or the words "even to you" can be left untranslated.
Proverbs 22:20
General Information:
These verses continue and end the introduction that began in Proverbs 22:17.
thirty sayings
Some translations read, "excellent sayings."
Proverbs 22:21
to teach you ... who sent you?
These words end the rhetorical question that began with the words "Have I not written" in Proverbs 22:20. It can be translated as a statement. "You need to know that I have written ... to teach you ... who sent you."
to those who sent you
This implies that the hearer is or will be one whom others send to gain and bring back information.
Proverbs 22:22
General Information:
These verses begin the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not rob ... or crush
If your language has a way of showing that this is the way one person would speak strongly to another, different from a general rule that people are supposed to obey, you should use it here.
the poor
This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "any poor person" or "poor people"
crush
grind into powder. This is a metaphor for "treat unjustly."
the needy
This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "any needy person" or "any person who does not have what he needs to live"
at the gate
The place where people bought and sold items and settled legal arguments is used as a metonym for business and legal activity. Alternate translation: "in court"
Proverbs 22:23
Yahweh will plead their case
The metaphor is of a lawyer defending the needy in front of a judge. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will defend the needy from those who oppress them" or "Yahweh will see that the needy receive justice"
he will rob of life those who robbed them
Yahweh is not a thief, but like a thief he will take life from those who do not choose to give it. Alternate translation: "he will destroy those who oppress poor people"
Proverbs 22:24
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
someone who is ruled by anger
someone who is unable to control his anger
rages
shows violent anger
Proverbs 22:25
you will ... entangle yourself in a snare
A person who wants to be like an angry person is like an animal taking the bait in a trap. Alternate translation: "you will be like an animal that eats bait that closes a trap and then is unable to escape"
Proverbs 22:26
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
strikes hands
A person would strike his hand against another person's hand to bind himself to do what he had agreed to do. Here the speaker warns the hearer not to strike hands as a way to promise to pay off someone's debts.
in making a pledge
"and agree to pay what someone owes to another person"
Proverbs 22:28
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
ancient
very old
boundary stone

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a large stone that shows where one person's land ends and another person's land begins

fathers

ancestors

Proverbs 22:29

Do you see a man skilled at his work?

This rhetorical question is actually a command. Alternate translation: "Think of someone you know who is skilled at his work"

stand before

This represents becoming a servant of the important person. Kings and other important people will think so highly of him that they will use his services.

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23 1 When you sit to eat with a ruler,
observe carefully what is before you,

2 and put a knife to your throat
if you are a person who likes to eat a lot of food.

3 Do not crave his delicacies,
for it is the food of lies.

4 Do not work too hard to gain wealth;
be wise enough to know when to stop.

5 Will you let your eyes light upon it? It will be gone,
for it will surely take up wings like an eagle
and fly off to the sky.

6 Do not eat the food of one with an evil eye—
and do not crave his delicacies,

7 for he is the kind of man
who counts the price of the food.
"Eat and drink!" he says to you,
but his heart is not with you.

8 You will vomit up the little you have eaten
and you will have wasted your compliments.

9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

10 Do not move an ancient boundary stone
or encroach on the fields of orphans,

11 for their Redeemer is strong
and he will plead their case against you.

12 Apply your heart to instruction
and your ears to words of knowledge.

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13 Do not withhold instruction from a child,
for if you beat him with the rod, he will not die.

14 It is you who must beat him with the rod
and save his soul from Sheol.

15 My son, if your heart is wise,
then my heart also will be glad;

16 my kidneys will rejoice
when your lips speak what is right.

17 Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but continue in the fear of Yahweh all the day.

18 Surely there is a future
and your hope will not be cut off.

19 Hear—you!—my son, and be wise
and direct your heart in the way.

20 Do not associate with those who drink much wine,
or with gluttonous eaters of meat,

21 for the drunkard and the glutton become poor
and slumber will clothe them with rags.

22 Listen to your father who begot you
and do not despise your mother when she is old.

23 Buy the truth, but do not sell it;
buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

24 The father of the righteous person will greatly rejoice,
and he who begets a wise child will be glad in him.

25 Let your father and your mother be glad
and let her who bore you rejoice.

26 My son, give me your heart
and let your eyes observe my ways.

27 For a prostitute is a deep pit,
and an immoral woman is a narrow well.

28 She lies in wait like a robber
and she increases the number of the treacherous among humanity.

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29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?
Who has strife? Who has complaining?
Who has wounds for no reason? Who has bloodshot eyes?

30 Those who linger over wine,
those who try the mixed wine.

31 Do not look at the wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup
and goes down smoothly.

32 In the last it bites like a serpent
and it stings like an adder.

33 Your eyes will see strange things
and your heart will utter perverse things.

34 You will be as one who sleeps on the high seas
or lies down on the top of a mast.

35 "They hit me," you will say, "but I was not hurt.
They beat me, but I did not feel it.
When will I wake up?
I will seek another drink."

Proverbs 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 23 continues the section beginning in the previous chapter of the book and is filled mainly with short, individual proverbs.

The second half of this chapter and the first half of the next chapter are attributed to general sayings.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 23:1 Notes

Proverbs 23:1
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Proverbs 23:2
put a knife to your throat
Possible meanings of this exaggeration are 1) "be very careful not to eat too much" or 2) "do not eat anything at all"
Proverbs 23:3
Do not crave
"Do not strongly desire." See how you translated "craves" in Proverbs 21:9.
his delicacies
"his special and expensive food"
it is the food of lies
This is an idiom. "he is giving it to you so he can deceive you"
Proverbs 23:4
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not work too hard
"Do not work so much that you are always tired"
Proverbs 23:5
light upon it
land like a bird upon the wealth
it will surely take up wings like an eagle and fly off
A person losing his wealth is spoken of as if the wealth were a bird. Alternate translation: "the wealth will disappear as quickly as an eagle can fly away"
wings like an eagle
wings like an eagle's wings
Proverbs 23:6
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

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do not crave
"do not strongly desire." See how you translated "craves" in Proverbs 21:9.
his delicacies
"his special and expensive food." See how you translated this in Proverbs 23:3.
Proverbs 23:7
he is the kind of man who counts the price of the food
Some modern translations read, "eating with him is like getting hair stuck in your throat" or "giving you food is like getting hair stuck in his throat."
his heart is not with you
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he really does not want you to enjoy the meal"
Proverbs 23:8
You will vomit up the little you have eaten
This is an exaggeration for wishing one had not eaten anything. Alternate translation: "You will wish that you had not eaten anything"
you will have wasted your compliments
Compliments are spoken of as if they were valuable objects. The abstract noun "compliments" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "he will not be happy even if you say good things about him and the food"
Proverbs 23:9
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
in the hearing of a fool
The abstract noun "hearing" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "where a fool can hear you"
Proverbs 23:10
ancient
very old. See how you translated this in Proverbs 22:28.
boundary stone
This is a large stone to show where one person's land ends and another person's land begins. See how you translated this in Proverbs 22:28.
encroach
This means to slowly take or begin to use land (or some thing) that belongs to someone else.
orphans
children whose parents are dead
Proverbs 23:11
their Redeemer
Yahweh
he will plead their case against you
The metaphor is of a lawyer defending the needy in front of a judge. Alternate translation: "he will defend the orphans against you" or "he will see that the orphans receive justice and punish you"
Proverbs 23:12
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Apply your heart to
This is an idiom. See how you translated this in [Proverbs 22:17]
instruction
Possible meanings are 1) "what people who know what is right and what is wrong tell you" or 2) "what people say and do when they correct you."
your ears
The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "apply your ears" or "listen carefully"
to words of knowledge
"to me when I tell you what I know"
Proverbs 23:13
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not withhold instruction from a child
The abstract noun "instruction" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Do not neglect to instruct a child" or "Do not refuse to instruct a child"
withhold
refuse to give something that one knows another person needs
beat him with the rod
These words are either 1) a metaphor for training and disciplining him even when he considers the training and discipline painful or 2) to be taken literally. Alternate translation: "discipline him"
Proverbs 23:14
rod
piece of wood
It is you who must beat him ... and save his soul
"You are the one who must beat him ... and save his soul." No one else will do it. The hearer is responsible to save the child's soul from Sheol, and the way to save him is to beat him.
save his soul from Sheol
If the hearer beats his children with the rod, they will not die young because they have done foolish or evil things. The word "soul" is a metonym for the person. Sheol is the world of the dead; going to the world of the dead is a euphemism for dying. Alternate translation: "you will keep him from the world of the dead" or "you will keep him from dying"
Proverbs 23:15
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Proverbs 23:16
my kidneys
The "kidneys" are a metonym for the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "my inner being"
when your lips speak
"Your lips" means the whole person. Alternate translation: "when you speak"
Proverbs 23:17
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not let your heart envy sinners
The word "heart" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Do not allow yourself to envy sinners" or "Make sure you do not envy sinners"
Proverbs 23:18
your hope will not be cut off
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not allow anyone to cut off your hope" or "God will keep the promises he made to you"

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Proverbs 23:19

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

Hear—you!—my son

"Listen carefully, my son." The speaker speaks an extra word to make sure the hearer is paying attention.

direct your heart in the way

Deciding to do what is right is spoken of as if one person were showing another person the correct path to follow. Alternate translation: "make sure you do what is wise"

Proverbs 23:20

gluttonous eaters of meat

Possible meanings are 1) "people who eat more meat than they need to" or 2) "meat" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "people who eat more food than they need to"

Proverbs 23:21

slumber will clothe them with rags

The word "slumber" is an exaggeration for a person spending so much time enjoying food and drink that he does not do necessary work. This activity is spoken of as if it were a parent putting clothes on a child. Alternate translation: "because they spend so much time eating and drinking, they will do no work and so will become poor"

Proverbs 23:22

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

do not despise

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "show respect for"

Proverbs 23:23

Buy the truth, but do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding

Another possible meaning is "Buy the truth, and do not sell wisdom, instruction, or understanding." The words "truth," "wisdom," "instruction," and "understanding" are abstract nouns that are spoken of as if they were physical items that a person can buy and sell in a market. They can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "Do what you need to do so you can know what is true, so you can be wise, so you can learn how to act, and so you can tell good from bad; never think of anything else as more important than these things"

Proverbs 23:24

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

The father of the righteous person will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will be glad in him

Another possible meaning is that the words "he that begets a wise child" explain who "the father of the righteous person" is. Alternate translation: "The father of the righteous person, he who begets a wise child, will greatly rejoice and will be glad in him"

will be glad in him

"will be glad because of him"

Proverbs 23:26

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

give me your heart

The word "heart" is a metonym for what a person thinks and decides to do. Possible meanings are 1) "pay careful attention" or 2) "trust me completely."

let your eyes observe

The eyes are a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "observe" or "look carefully at"

observe

Some modern translations read, "delight in."

Proverbs 23:27

prostitute ... immoral woman

There are two types of sexually immoral women. The "prostitute" is unmarried, "another man's wife" is married. Together they form a merism for any kind of sexually immoral woman.

a prostitute is a deep pit

The word "pit" is a metaphor for what happens to men who sleep with prostitutes. Alternate translation: "sleeping with a prostitute is like falling into a deep pit"

prostitute

Here the word refers to any unmarried woman who engages in sexual activity, not only those who do so for money.

deep pit ... narrow well

These are two places easy to fall into and hard to get out of, the "pit" because it is "deep" and the "well" because it is "narrow."

an immoral woman is a narrow well

Doing evil for which one will be punished is spoken of as falling into a narrow place from which one cannot escape. Alternate translation: "Sleeping with another man's wife is like falling into a narrow well"

well

a hole in the ground that people have dug to get to water

Proverbs 23:28

lies in wait

stays hidden, ready to attack when a victim approaches

the treacherous

This nominal adjective can be translated as an adjective or verb. Alternate translation: "treacherous people" or "those who harm others by deceiving them"

Proverbs 23:29

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds for no reason? Who has bloodshot eyes?

The writer uses these questions to prepare the reader for the point he is about to make about a particular type of person. He does not expect an answer to each question. Your language may have a different way of introducing a lesson. Alternate translation: "Listen to me while I tell you what kind of person has woe, sorrow, fights, complaining, wounds for no reason, and bloodshot eyes."

bloodshot eyes

"eyes red, like the color of blood"

Proverbs 23:30

Those who linger over wine, those who try the mixed wine

These words answer the questions in verse 29 and describe people who drink too much wine.

linger over wine

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spend much time drinking wine and so drink much wine

the mixed wine

Possible meanings are 1) different wines mixed together or 2) other drinks that are stronger than wine.

Proverbs 23:31

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

Proverbs 23:32

In the last

"After you drink it"

it bites like a serpent ... it stings like an adder

The word "it" refers to "the wine when it is red." "Bites" and "stings" are metaphors for the way too much wine makes people feel. Alternate translation: "it makes you feel as bad as if a serpent had bitten you or an adder had stung you"

adder

a type of poisonous snake

Proverbs 23:33

your heart will utter perverse things

The "heart" represents the person and emphasize what he thinks and decides to do. Alternate translation: "you will think about and decide to do perverse things"

perverse things

things that God says are morally wrong and bad; things that are wicked

Proverbs 23:34

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20). It is the continuation of the description of a drunk person.

lies down on the top of a mast

The place on the mast where the person lies can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "lies down in the basket near the top of a mast"

mast

the long wooden pole to which are attached the sails of a sailing ship

Proverbs 23:35

They hit me, ... but I was not hurt. They beat me, but I did not feel it.

Because the drunk person is not thinking clearly, he is imagining that people are hitting and beating him, yet he feels no pain and cannot remember anything.

When will I wake up?

The drunk person is wondering when he will be sober again; when the effect of the wine will stop.

---

24 [1] Do not be envious of those who are evil,
nor desire to associate with them,

[2] because their hearts plot violence
and their lips talk about trouble.

[3] Through wisdom a house is built
and by understanding it is established.

[4] By knowledge the rooms are filled
with all precious and pleasant riches.

[5] A warrior of wisdom is strong,
and a man of knowledge increases his strength;

[6] for with guidance you can wage your war
and with many advisors there is victory.

[7] Wisdom is too high for a fool;
in the gate he does not open his mouth.

[8] There is one who plans to do evil—
people call him a master of schemes.

[9] A foolish plan is sin
and a mocker is an abomination to people.

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10 If you become weak with fear in the day of trouble,
then your strength is small.

11 Rescue those who are being taken away to death
and hold back those who are staggering to the slaughter.

12 If you say, "Behold, we knew nothing about this,"
does not the one who weighs the heart understand what you are saying?
The one who guards your life, does he not know it?
Will God not give to each one what he deserves?

13 My son, eat honey because it is good,
because the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste.

14 Such is wisdom for your soul—
if you find it, there will be a future
and your hope will not be cut off.

15 Do not lie in wait like the wicked person who attacks the house of the righteous person.
Do not destroy his home!

16 For the righteous person falls down seven times and rises again,
but wicked people stumble at calamity.

17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls
and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles,

18 or Yahweh will see and disapprove
and turn away his wrath from him.

19 Do not be angry because of evildoers,
and do not envy wicked people,

20 for the evil person has no future
and the lamp of wicked people will go out.

21 Fear Yahweh, and fear the king, my son;
do not associate with those who rebel against them,

22 for suddenly their disaster will come,
and who knows the extent of the destruction that will come from both of them?

23 These also are sayings of the wise.

Partiality in judging a case at law is not good.

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24 Whoever says to the wicked person, "You are a righteous person,"
will be cursed by peoples and abhorred by nations.

25 But those who discipline the wicked will have delight
and gifts of goodness will come to them.

26 The one who gives a straight answer
gives a kiss on the lips.

27 Prepare your outdoor work,
and make everything ready for yourself in the field;
after that, build your house.

28 Do not bear witness against your neighbor without cause
and do not deceive with your lips.

29 Do not say, "I will do to him what he has done to me;
I will pay him back for what he has done."

30 I went by the field of a lazy person,
past the vineyard of the man having no sense.

31 Thorns had grown up everywhere,
the ground was covered with nettles,
and its stone wall was broken down.

32 Then I saw and considered it;
I looked and received instruction.

33 A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest—

34 and poverty comes marching upon you,
and your needs like an armed soldier.

Proverbs 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 24 continues the section beginning in the previous chapter and is mainly filled with short, individual proverbs. The second half of this chapter finishes the section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Lazy man story

Unlike much of Proverbs, verses 30-34 tell a short story about a lazy man, which ends in a very memorable proverb.

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 24:1 Notes

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Proverbs 24:1

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

Proverbs 24:2

their hearts

The words "their hearts" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "they"

their lips

The words "their lips" refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "they"

talk about trouble

"talk about causing harm" or "talk about creating problems"

Proverbs 24:3

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

Through wisdom a house is built

The abstract noun "wisdom" can be translated as an adjective. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People need to be wise if they are to build a good house"

by understanding it is established

The abstract noun "understanding" can be translated as a verb. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People need to understand what is morally good and what is morally bad if they are to establish a house"

it is established

The word "established" means made stable and strong. The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, and the house being physically stable and strong is a metaphor for a family that lives in peace.

Proverbs 24:4

By knowledge the rooms are filled

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated as a verb. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People need to know what is precious and pleasant if they are to fill their rooms"

Proverbs 24:5

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

warrior of wisdom

The abstract noun "wisdom" can be translated as "wise." Alternate translation: "wise warrior"

a man of knowledge increases his strength

The abstract nouns "knowledge" and "strength" can be translated as the verb "know" and the adjective "strong." Alternate translation: "a man who knows many things is stronger because he knows these things"

Proverbs 24:6

with guidance

The abstract noun "guidance" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "if wise people guide you"

wage your war

"fight your war"

advisors

those who tell government officials what those officials should do

Proverbs 24:7

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

too high for a fool

This is an idiom. "too difficult for a fool to understand"

open his mouth

The mouth is a metonym for the words that come from the mouth. Alternate translation: "speak"

Proverbs 24:8

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

a master of schemes

one who is skillful at making evil plans. Alternate translation: "a mischievous person" or "a troublemaker"

Proverbs 24:10

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

your strength is small

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you have very little strength" or "you are certainly weak"

Proverbs 24:11

General Information:

These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).

those who are being taken away

These words can be translated in active form by using the term "they" which could be anyone, but are probably government officials. Alternate translation: "those whom they are taking away"

taken away

Another possible meaning is "dragged away."

staggering

walking unsteadily and almost falling. This word would also describe the way a person walks when he is being dragged away.

the slaughter

The abstract noun "slaughter" can be translated as a verb. The writer speaks as if those who take them away think of them as no better than animals. If your language has a word for killing animals that would fit here, you might want to use it. Alternate translation: "where people will kill them as they would kill animals"

Proverbs 24:12

If you say, "Behold, ... this," does

The writer is answering something that the reader may wrongly be thinking. Alternate translation: "You may say, 'Behold, ... this,' but does"

Behold, we

"Listen to us! We" or "But we" or "We have done nothing wrong, because we"

does not the one who weighs the heart understand what you are saying?

The writer assumes the readers know the answer and asks this for emphasis. Alternate translation: "the one who weighs the heart understands what you are saying."

the one who

The writer expects the reader to know that "the one" is Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who"

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weighs the heart
The word "heart" is a metonym for what a person thinks and desires. The writer speaks as if what a person thinks and desires were a physical object that a person could weigh, and weighing an object is a metaphor for looking closely at something to see how good it is. Alternate translation: "knows how good what people really think and desire is"
The one who guards your life, does he not know it?
The writer assumes the readers know the answer and asks this for emphasis. Alternate translation: "The one who guards your life knows it."
Will God not give to each one what he deserves?
The writer assumes the readers know the answer and asks this for emphasis. Alternate translation: "God will give to each one what he deserves."
Proverbs 24:13
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Proverbs 24:14
your hope will not be cut off
Possible meanings are 1) this is a simple passive that can be translated as in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will take your hope away" or 2) this is litotes that can be translated in positive form. Alternate translation: "your hope will surely continue"
Proverbs 24:15
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not lie in wait
The words "lie in wait" are an idiom. Translate "lie in wait" as in [Proverbs 1:11]
his home
the home of the righteous person
Proverbs 24:16
General Information:
Bad things happen to righteous people, but God gives them the courage to continue doing good. God uses the bad things that happen to wicked people to discourage them.
rises again
"gets back on his feet" or "stands up again"
wicked people stumble at calamity
Possible meanings are 1) "wicked people stumble in times of calamity" or 2) "wicked people stumble because of calamity." Some modern translations understand "calamity" as the means by which the wicked people stumble. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "wicked people are brought down by calamity" or "God uses calamity to bring wicked people down"
calamity
times when bad things happen to people and their property
Proverbs 24:17
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
your enemy falls
"something bad happens to your enemy"
let not your heart be glad
This is a strong command. The word "heart" represents the person. Alternate translation: "do not allow yourself to be glad" or "stop yourself from being glad"
Proverbs 24:18
turn away his wrath from him
The words "turn away his wrath" are an idiom for no longer being angry. What Yahweh would do instead can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "stop being angry with him and be angry with you instead"
Proverbs 24:19
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Do not be angry
Many modern translations read, "Do not fret," which is advice not to worry so much that one becomes angry.
Proverbs 24:20
the lamp of wicked people will go out
or "the lamp of wicked people will be put out" or "they will put out the lamp of wicked people"
the lamp ... go out
This is a metaphor for either 1) life. Alternate translation: "the life ... will end" Or 2) the person's accomplishments. Alternate translation: "the hard work ... come to nothing"
Proverbs 24:21
General Information:
These verses continue the "thirty sayings" (Proverbs 22:20).
Fear
a deep respect and awe for a person in authority
Proverbs 24:22
who knows the extent of the destruction that will come from both of them?
The writer asks this question to emphasize the disaster. Alternate translation: "no one knows the extent of the destruction that will come from both of them."
both of them
these words refer to Yahweh and the king
Proverbs 24:23
These also are sayings of the wise
This sentence starts a new collection of proverbs.
a case at law
a situation that is brought before a judge in which someone is accused of breaking the law
Proverbs 24:24
Whoever says to the wicked person, ... will be cursed by peoples and abhorred by nations
The word "nations" is a metonym for the people who live in the nations. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will curse whoever says to the wicked person, ... , and the people of other nations will abhor him"
the wicked person ... a righteous person
Possible meanings are 1) people should never call any wicked person a righteous person or 2) no one should say of a person guilty of a crime that he is innocent. Alternate translation: "a person guilty of a crime ... innocent"
Proverbs 24:25
will have delight
"will be very happy"
gifts of goodness will come to them
Gifts are spoken of as if they were people who could move by themselves. The abstract noun "goodness" can be

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translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "people will give them good gifts"

gifts of goodness

"good things" or "blessings"

Proverbs 24:26

straight answer

The word "straight" here is a metaphor for either 1) "honest" or 2) "correct."

gives a kiss on the lips

A kiss was a sign of respect and devotion in that culture. Alternate translation: "shows true friendship"

Proverbs 24:28

with your lips

The lips are a metonym for the words a person speaks. Alternate translation: "by what you say"

Proverbs 24:29

pay him back

This is an idiom. "take revenge against him"

Proverbs 24:31

Thorns

useless plants with sharp spines

nettles

plants that are covered with stinging leaves and hairs

was broken down

"had fallen down"

Proverbs 24:32

received instruction

"learned a lesson"

Proverbs 24:34

and poverty comes

This finishes a thought begun with the words "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest" [Proverbs 24:33]

poverty comes marching upon you

Some translations read, "poverty comes upon you like a robber." Poverty is spoken of as if it were a person or animal that can attack a lazy person.

your needs like an armed soldier

Needs are spoken of as if they were a person who could attack the lazy person. Alternate translation: "your needs will come to you like an armed soldier"

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25 [1]These are more proverbs of Solomon, copied by the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah.

[2] It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
but the glory of kings to search it out.

[3] Like the heavens are for height and the earth is for depth,
so the heart of kings is unsearchable.

[4] Remove the dross from the silver
and a metal worker can use the silver in his craft.

[5] Even so, remove wicked people from the presence of the king
and his throne will be established by doing what is right.

[6] Do not honor yourself in the king's presence
and do not stand in the place designated for great people.

[7] It is better for him to say to you, "Come up here,"
than for him to humiliate you before a nobleman.

What you have witnessed,

[8] do not bring quickly to trial.
For what will you do in the end
when your neighbor puts you to shame?

[9] Argue your case between you and your neighbor himself
and do not reveal another's secret,

[10] or else the one who hears you will bring shame upon you

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and an evil report about you that cannot be silenced.

11 Apples of gold in settings of silver
is a word spoken in the right situation.

12 A gold ring or jewelry made of fine gold
is a wise rebuke to a listening ear.

13 Like the cold of snow at harvest time
is a faithful messenger for those who sent him;
he brings back the life of his masters.

14 Clouds and wind without rain
is the one who boasts about a gift he does not give.

15 With patience a ruler can be persuaded
and a soft tongue can break a bone.

16 If you find honey, eat just enough—
otherwise, having too much of it, you vomit it up.

17 Do not set your foot in your neighbor's house too often;
he may become tired of you and hate you.

18 A man who bears false witness against his neighbor
is like a club used in war, or a sword, or a sharp arrow.

19 An unfaithful man in whom you trust in a time of trouble
is like a bad tooth or a foot that slips.

20 Like a person who takes off a garment in cold weather,
or like vinegar poured upon carbonate of soda,
is the one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat,
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,

22 for you will shovel coals of fire on his head

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and Yahweh will reward you.

23 As surely as the north wind brings rain,
so a tongue that tells secrets will result in angry faces.

24 It is better to live on a corner of the roof
than in a house shared with a quarreling wife.

25 Like cold waters to one who is thirsty,
so is good news from a far country.

26 Like a fouled spring or a ruined fountain
is a righteous person tottering before wicked people.

27 It is not good to eat too much honey;
that is like searching for honor after honor.[1]

28 A person without self-control
is like a city breached and without walls.

[1] Many modern translations have different interpretations of this difficult verse.

Proverbs 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 25 begins the second section of the book (Chapter 25-29) which is attributed to Solomon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 25:1 Notes

Proverbs 25:2

to conceal a matter

"to keep some things secret"

but the glory

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "but it is the glory"

search it out

"search that matter out" or "search for those things that God has concealed"

Proverbs 25:3

Like the heavens are for height and the earth is for depth, so the heart of kings is unsearchable

The hearts of kings are compared to the size of the heavens and the earth. Alternate translation: "Just as no one can measure the height of the heavens or the depth of the earth, even so no one can understand the heart of kings"

heavens

This refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars.

Proverbs 25:4

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dross

the material in a metal that people do not want and they remove by heating the metal

Proverbs 25:5

his throne will be established by doing

The throne is a metonym for the power to rule. These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king will establish his throne by doing" or "he will have the power to rule because he does"

Proverbs 25:7

It is better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than

Here "up" means to move to a place at the table that is closer to the king. It is a great honor for a person to sit closer to the king. Alternate translation: "It is better for someone to invite you to sit closer to the king than"

before a nobleman

"in front of a nobleman"

Proverbs 25:8

For what will you do in the end when your neighbor puts you to shame?

This question is asked to make the reader consider the possibility that he may have misunderstood the situation. The way in which the neighbor might put the reader to shame can be stated plainly. Alternate translation: "For you will not know what to do in the end when your neighbor puts you to shame." or "For if your neighbor has an explanation, he will put you to shame, and you will have nothing to say to defend yourself."

Proverbs 25:9

your case

"your disagreement"

do not reveal another's secret

"do not share your neighbor's secret with other people"

Proverbs 25:10

an evil report about you that cannot be silenced

Here "evil report" refers to harmful things that the person will tell others. The phrase "cannot be silenced" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will not be able to stop him from telling other people harmful things about you" or "he will tell people evil things about you and you will never have a good reputation again"

Proverbs 25:11

Apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in the right situation

The goodness of "a word spoken at the right time" is spoken of as if it were the physical beauty of "apples of gold in settings of silver." Most translations translate this metaphor as a simile and change the order of the phrases. Alternate translation: "A word spoken at the right time is beautiful like apples of gold in settings of silver"

Apples of gold in settings of silver

The ancient Israelites did not know the apples that most people know today. Possible meanings are 1) "apples" should be translated as "design." Alternate translation: "a golden design carved into a silver bowl" or 2) "apples" refers to another type of fruit with a golden color that someone has placed on a silver plate or bowl. Alternate translation: "Golden colored fruit placed in a silver bowl"

is a word spoken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is a message that someone speaks"

Proverbs 25:12

A gold ring or jewelry made of fine gold is a wise rebuke to a listening ear

The value and importance of "a wise rebuke" is spoken of as if it had the beauty and value of gold. Most translations translate this metaphor as a simile and change the order of the phrases. Alternate translation: "A wise rebuke to a listening ear is beautiful and valuable like a golden ring or golden jewelry"

listening ear

The ear is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "person who is willing to listen"

Proverbs 25:13

Like the cold of snow at harvest time is a faithful messenger

Here a faithful messenger is being compared to the cold of snow, because both are pleasant.

the cold of snow

Snow only fell on the tops of mountains, and the harvest took place in hot weather, so this is probably a metaphor for cool, fresh water from a clean stream. If your language has no word for snow, consider "cool, fresh, clean water."

snow

white flakes of ice that fall from the sky like rain

brings back the life of his masters

This means he makes his masters, who are weak and tired, to be strong and rested again.

Proverbs 25:14

Clouds and wind without rain is the one who boasts ... not give

Most translations translate this metaphor as a simile and change the order of the phrases. Rain was important to the Israelites because only small amounts of it fell, so a cloud without rain was useless and brought disappointment to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "The one who boasts ... not give is like clouds and wind without rain" or "The one who boasts ... not give is useless and a disappointment, like clouds and wind without rain"

Proverbs 25:15

With patience a ruler can be persuaded

These words can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone who is patient can persuade a ruler" or "Someone who is patient can speak to a ruler and change his mind"

a soft tongue can break a bone

The word "tongue" is a metonym for the words the person speaks using the tongue. The word "bone" is a metaphor for strong opposition. Alternate translation: "gentle speech can overcome strong opposition"

Proverbs 25:16

General Information:

Verse 16 states a general principle, and verse 17 gives one specific example. The idea of eating too much honey and then vomiting it up is a metaphor for taking too much of any good thing and regretting it later.

Proverbs 25:18

A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a club used in war, or a sword, or a sharp arrow

A false witness is compared to three weapons that can hurt or kill people.

Proverbs 25:19

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An unfaithful man in whom you trust in a time of trouble is like a bad tooth or a foot that slips

A foolish man is compared to a part of the body that causes trouble for a person. Alternate translation: "Trusting in an unfaithful man in time of trouble will bring you pain like a bad tooth or a foot that slips"

Proverbs 25:20

carbonate of soda

This is a kind of mineral that hisses and bubbles violently when it comes into contact with acids like vinegar. Many translations translate this phrase as "a wound."

sings songs

You may need to make explicit what kind of songs the singer sings. Alternate translation: "sings happy songs"

a heavy heart

The heart is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "a sad person"

Proverbs 25:22

shovel coals of fire on his head

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cause him to have a guilty conscience and be ashamed of what he has done"

Proverbs 25:23

the north wind

In Israel, wind from the north often brought rain. Translators are free to substitute different kinds of wind for the same effect, for example, "a cold wind."

a tongue that tells secrets

Some modern translations read "someone who tells secrets."

result in angry faces

The face is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "makes other people so angry you can see it in their faces"

Proverbs 25:24

a corner of the roof

Houses in those days had flat roofs. Ancient Israelites spent much time on their roofs, where it was often cooler than inside the house, and sometimes people would build a shelter large enough for a person to sleep in on one corner of the roof.

a quarreling wife

a wife who often argues or complains

Proverbs 25:25

Like cold waters to one who is thirsty, so is good news from a far country

Cold water is compared to good news that is both refreshing and delightful.

Proverbs 25:26

Like a fouled spring or a ruined fountain is a righteous person tottering before wicked people

One expects a spring or fountain to have clear water, just as one expects a righteous man to stand for what he believes. A polluted spring or fountain is compared to a righteous man who falls.

tottering before wicked people

Tottering is a metaphor for either 1) refusing to fight wicked people or 2) joining in their wickedness. Alternate translation: "who allows wicked people to do wickedness" or "who starts to do what wicked people do"

tottering

Swaying and about to fall down. This is a metaphor for being unable to continue to do good. Alternate translation: "unable to stand"

before wicked people

Possible meanings are 1) "when wicked people attack him" or 2) "when wicked people urge him to do evil."

Proverbs 25:27

It is not good to eat too much honey; that is like searching for honor after honor.

Both wanting others to honor you and eating honey are good, but you can eat too much honey, and you can try too hard to have people honor you.

It is not good

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "It is a bad thing"

that is like searching for honor after honor

"that is like always thinking about how others should honor you." The meaning of the original language is uncertain. Some versions of the Bible translate this as "that is like speaking too many compliments to people."

Proverbs 25:28

A person without self-control is like a city breached and without walls.

Both a person without self-control and a city without walls are weak and vulnerable.

breached and without walls

"whose walls an army has knocked down and destroyed"

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1 26 Like snow in summer or rain in harvest,
so a fool does not deserve honor.

2 As the sparrow flutters and the swallow darts when they fly,
so an undeserved curse does not alight.

3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle is for the donkey
and a rod is for the back of fools.

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4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly,
or you will become like him.

5 Answer a fool and join in on his folly,
so he will not become wise in his own eyes.

6 Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool
cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.

7 Like the legs of a paralytic which hang down
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

8 Like tying a stone in a sling
is giving honor to a fool.

9 Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

10 Like an archer who wounds all those around him
is one who hires a fool or hires anyone who passes by.

11 As a dog returns to his own vomit,
so is a fool who repeats his folly.

12 Do you see someone who is wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.

13 The lazy person says, "There is a lion on the road!
There is a lion between the open places!"

14 As the door turns on its hinges,
so is the lazy person upon his bed.

15 The lazy person puts his hand into the dish
and yet he has no strength to lift it up to his mouth.

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16 The lazy person is wiser in his own eyes
than seven men who respond with good judgment.

17 Like one who takes hold of the ears of a dog
is a passerby who becomes angry at a dispute that is not his own.

18 Like a madman who throws
firebrands, arrows, and death

19 is the one who deceives his neighbor
and says, "Was I not telling a joke?"

20 For lack of wood, the fire goes out;
and where there is no gossiper, quarreling ceases.

21 As charcoal is to burning coals and wood is to fire,
so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife.

22 The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels;
they go down into the inner parts of the body.

23 Like the glaze overlaying an earthen vessel,
so are burning lips and an evil heart.

24 One who hates others disguises his feelings with his lips
and he lays up deceit within himself.

25 He will speak graciously, but do not believe him,
for there are seven abominations in his heart.

26 Though his hatred is covered with deception,
his wickedness will be revealed in the assembly.

27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it
and the stone will roll back on the one who pushed it.

28 A lying tongue hates the people it crushes
and a flattering mouth brings about ruin.

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Proverbs 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 26 continues the second section of the book (Chapter 25-29) which is attributed to Solomon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. Wisdom and folly are particularly prominent in this chapter.(See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 26:1 Notes

Proverbs 26:1

Like snow in summer or rain in harvest

Normally snow does not fall during the summer and rain does not fall during the harvest. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Just as it would be very strange to have snow in summer or rain during the harvest"

Proverbs 26:2

so an undeserved curse does not alight

A curse that does not harm a person is spoken of as if it were a bird that does not land. Alternate translation: "so an undeserved curse does not land on its mark"

an undeserved curse

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "a curse on a person who does not deserve it"

alight

land on someone or something

Proverbs 26:3

A whip is for the horse, a bridle is for the donkey and a rod is for the back of fools

A whip, a bridle, and a rod are things that people use to make the horse, donkey, and fool do what they want.

a bridle is for the donkey

A bridle is made of straps. People put it on a donkey's head and hold one of the straps to make the donkey go the way they want it to go.

a rod is for the back of fools

In the Bible, people would hit their children or their slaves with a wooden rod in order to discipline them.

Proverbs 26:5

Answer a fool and join in on his folly

Joining in on a fool's folly when answering him represents answering him in a foolish way. Alternate translation: "Answer a fool according to his folly" or "Answer a fool foolishly"

so he will not become wise in his own eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "so that he will not become wise according to his judgement" or "so that he does not consider himself to be wise"

Proverbs 26:6

Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool

Here the hand represents the fool's responsibility to deliver the message. Alternate translation: "Whoever sends a fool to deliver a message"

cuts off his own feet

Cutting off one's own feet is an exaggeration for harming one's self. Alternate translation: "harms himself like a person who cuts off his own feet and drinks violence"

drinks violence

Violence is spoken of as if it were a poisonous liquid that someone might drink. Alternate translation: "harms himself by being violent"

Proverbs 26:7

Like the legs ... is a proverb in the mouth of fools

The phrases can be reordered. Alternate translation: "A proverb in the mouth of fools is like the legs of a paralytic which hang down" or "A proverb in the mouth of fools is as useless as the legs of a paralytic which hang down"

a paralytic

a person who is unable to move or feel all or part of his body

in the mouth of fools

Here "mouth" is a metonym for speaking. Alternate translation: "in the speech of fools" or "that fools say"

Proverbs 26:8

tying a stone in a sling

In order to throw a stone very far, people put it into a sling and swing the sling so that the stone will fly from it very quickly. The result of tying a stone in a sling can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tying a stone in a sling so that it cannot be thrown"

giving honor to a fool

"honoring a fool"

Proverbs 26:9

Like a thorn ... is a proverb in the mouth of fools

How the two are alike can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "A proverb in the mouth of fools is as dangerous as a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard"

a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard

Possible meanings are 1) if a drunk person holds a thornbush, a thorn will prick his hand, or 2) if a drunk person is angry, he will pick up a thornbush and swing it at people. For the second meaning, the word "thorn" represents a thornbush.

in the mouth of fools

Here "mouth" is a metonym for speaking. Alternate translation: "in the speech of fools" or "that fools say"

Proverbs 26:10

hires a fool

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"gives a job to a fool"
Proverbs 26:11
As a dog returns to his own vomit
"As a dog eats its own vomit"
Proverbs 26:12
Do you see someone who is wise in his own eyes?
This question is used to lead the reader to think about someone who is wise in his own eyes. The phrase "is wise in his own eyes" means "thinks he is wise," and here it implies that the person is not truly wise. Alternate translation: "Consider the person who thinks he is wise but is not."
There is more hope for a fool than for him
"A fool can become wise more easily than he can"
Proverbs 26:13
The lazy person says, "There is a lion ... between the open places!"
The lazy person lies and says that he cannot go outside and work because there is a lion on the road or between the open places.
There is a lion on the road
See how you translated this in Proverbs 22:13.
the open places
This refers to the places in town where there is a lot of room for people to walk around or where people gather. Alternate translation: "the town plazas" or "the streets"
Proverbs 26:14
hinges
metal pieces that attach a door to something and allow it to open and close
As the door turns on its hinges, so is the lazy person upon his bed
Both the door and the lazy person move, but they do not go anywhere.
Proverbs 26:15
puts his hand into the dish
"puts his hand into the dish to get food" or "reaches for food"
he has no strength to lift it up to his mouth
This is an exaggeration for doing necessary work that would clearly do him good.
Proverbs 26:16
The lazy person is wiser in his own eyes than seven men
The phrase "his own eyes" represents his thoughts. Alternate translation: "The lazy person thinks he is wiser than seven men"
Proverbs 26:17
Like one who takes hold of the ears of a dog is a passerby who becomes angry at a dispute that is not his own
This can be reordered. Alternate translation: "A passerby who becomes angry at some other people's dispute is like a person who grabs hold of a dog's ears"
Like one who takes hold of the ears of a dog
The implied information is that the dog will get angry and bite the person. Alternate translation: "Like a person who angers a dog by grabbing its ears" or "Like a person who grabs a dog's ears and is bitten by the dog"
is a passerby who becomes angry at a dispute that is not his own
The implied information is that the passerby will start arguing, and the people who were fighting will get angry with him and hurt him.
Proverbs 26:18
throws firebrands, arrows, and death
If your language cannot have "firebrands," "arrows," and "death" as objects of "throws," you may need to supply different verbs, or you may need to treat this as a hendiadys. Alternate translation: "throws firebrands, shoots arrows, and tries to kill people" or "shoots flaming arrows that can kill people"
firebrands
burning pieces of wood
Proverbs 26:19
the one who deceives
Both the "madman" (Proverbs 26:18) and the one who deceives hurt people but do not take responsibility for it.
Was I not telling a joke?
The deceiver uses this question to imply that since he his joke was only for fun, he should not be blamed for any harm he has caused. Alternate translation: "I did nothing wrong. I was only telling a joke."
Proverbs 26:20
gossiper
a person who gossips a lot
Proverbs 26:21
As charcoal is to burning coals and wood is to fire
What charcoal does to coals and what wood does to fire can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "As charcoal helps coals burn and as wood helps fire burn"
kindling strife
To kindle something means to set it on fire. Setting strife on fire is a metaphor for causing people to fight or argue. Alternate translation: "causing people to fight" or "causing people to argue"
Proverbs 26:22
The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels
This speaks of gossip being desirable to listen to as if it were delicious food to eat. Alternate translation: "The words of a gossip are desirable to listen to" or
they go down into the inner parts of the body
This speaks of the words that a gossip says going into a person's mind and affecting his thoughts as if they were food that was going into his stomach. This sentence is equivalent to [Proverbs 18:8]
Proverbs 26:23
Like the glaze overlaying an earthen vessel, so are burning lips and an evil heart
This simile means that a person who says things to hide the evil in their heart are like a earthen vessel covered in glaze to make it look good. These phrases can be reordered. Alternate translation: "People who have burning lips and an evil heart are like an earthen vessel covered with glaze"
the glaze overlaying an earthen vessel
"the shiny glaze that covers a clay pot." A clay pot is cheap and common. So people covered it was a glaze to make it shiny and appear more expensive.
so are burning lips and an evil heart
This represents a person who has burning lips and an evil heart. Alternate translation: "so is a person who has burning lips and an evil heart" or "so is a person who says nice things but whose heart is evil"

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burning lips
The word "burning" is a metaphor for "strongly emotional" and the word "lips" is a metonym for "speech." Alternate translation: "emotional speech" or "saying nice things"
an evil heart
The heart represents a person's thoughts, attitudes, desires, or feelings. Alternate translation: "evil thoughts" or "evil desires"
Proverbs 26:24
disguises his feelings with his lips
Disguising his feelings represents keeping people from knowing what his feelings are. The phrase "his lips" is a metonym for what he says. Alternate translation: "hides his feelings with what he says" or "speaks in such a way that people cannot know his true feelings"
he lays up deceit within himself
Being deceitful is spoken of as if he were storing deceit within himself. Possible meanings are that "deceit" refers to lies. Alternate translation: "he likes his many lies" or 2) deceit refers secret plans to harm people. Alternate translation: "he secretly plans to harm people"
Proverbs 26:25
but do not believe him
"but do not believe what he says"
for there are seven abominations in his heart
The number seven represents completeness. Possible meanings are 1) "abominations" refers to attitudes that God hates. Alternate translation: "for his heart is completely filled with hateful things" or 2) "abominations" refers to his hatred for people. Alternate translation: "for his heart is completely filled with hatred"
Proverbs 26:26
Though his hatred is covered with deception
This can be stated actively. Alternate translation: "Though deception covers his hatred" or "Though he covers his hatred with deception"
Though his hatred is covered with deception
Keeping people from knowing that he hates them is spoken of as covering his hatred. Alternate translation: "Though he lies to keep people from knowing that he hates them" or "Though he lies so that people will not know that he hates them"
his wickedness will be revealed in the assembly
Being exposed represents being discovered or becoming known. Alternate translation: "his wickedness will become known in the assembly" or "the assembly will discover his wickedness"
the assembly
"the community of Israel"
Proverbs 26:27
Whoever digs a pit will fall into it
It is implied that the person digs the pit as a trap so that someone will fall into it. Alternate translation: "Whoever digs a pit to trap someone will fall into it" or "If someone digs a pit in order to trap someone, the one who dug it will fall into it"
the stone will roll back on the one who pushed it
It is implied that the person pushed a large stone so that it would roll downhill and crush someone there. Alternate translation: "if someone pushed a stone so that it would roll downhill and crush someone, the stone will roll back on him instead" or "if someone maked a stone roll so that it would hurt someone, the stone will crush him instead"
Proverbs 26:28
A lying tongue hates the people it crushes
The phrase "a lying tongue" represents a person who tells lies. Crushing people represents causing them trouble. Alternate translation: "A liar hates those he hurts by his lies"
a flattering mouth brings about ruin
The phrase "a flattering mouth" represents a person who flatters people. Possible meanings are 1) a person who flatters others causes trouble or 2) a person who flatters others ruins them
flattering
praising someone in a manner that is not sincere, or praising someone about things that are not true

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27 [1] Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring.

[2] Let someone else praise you and not your own mouth;
a stranger and not your own lips.

[3] Consider the heaviness of a stone and the weight of sand—
the provocation of a fool is heavier than both.

[4] There is the cruelty of rage and the flood of anger,
but who is able to stand before jealousy?

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5 Better is a rebuke that is clearly seen
than hidden love.

6 Faithful are the wounds caused by a friend,
but many are the kisses of an enemy.

7 A person who has eaten to the full rejects even a honeycomb,
but to the hungry person, every bitter thing is sweet.

8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest
is a man who strays from where he lives.

9 Perfume and incense make the heart rejoice,
but the sweetness of a friend comes from his sincere counsel.[1]

10 Do not abandon your friend and your friend's father,
and do not go to your brother's house on the day of your calamity.
Better is a neighbor who is nearby
than a brother who is far away.

11 Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice;
then I will give back an answer to the one who mocks me.

12 The prudent sees trouble and hides himself,
but the naive go on and suffer for it.

13 Take a garment of one who has put up security for a stranger,
and hold it in pledge when he puts up security for an immoral woman.

14 Whoever gives his neighbor a blessing with a loud voice early in the morning,
that blessing will be considered to be a curse!

15 A quarreling wife is like
the constant dripping on a rainy day;

16 restraining her is like restraining the wind,

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or trying to catch oil in your right hand.

17 Iron sharpens iron;
in the same way, a man sharpens his friend.

18 The one who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
and the one who protects his master will be honored.

19 Just as water reflects a person's face,
so a person's heart reflects the person.

20 Just as Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
so a man's eyes are never satisfied.

21 A crucible is for silver and a furnace is for gold;
and a person is tested when he is praised.

22 Even if you crush a fool
with the pestle—along with the grain—
yet his foolishness will not leave him.

23 Be sure you know the condition of your flocks
and be concerned about your herds,

24 for wealth is not forever.
Does a crown endure for all generations?

25 You should know when the hay is gone and the new growth appears,
and the time when the grass from the hills is gathered in.

26 Those lambs will provide your clothing
and the goats will provide the price of the field.

27 There will be goats' milk for your food
—the food for your household—
and nourishment for your servant girls.

[1] Many modern translations have different interpretations of this difficult verse.

Proverbs 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 27 continues the second section of the book (Chapter 25-29) which is attributed to Solomon.

Special concepts in this chapter

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

Themes
There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 27:1 Notes

Proverbs 27:1

Do not boast about tomorrow

This is a warning not to brag about what you expect to happen tomorrow. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Do not speak proudly about your plans for tomorrow"

what a day may bring

Something happening on a certain day is spoken of as if the day were to bring that event. Alternate translation: "what will happen on a day" or "what will happen tomorrow"

Proverbs 27:2

and not your own mouth ... and not your own lips

Here a person is represented by his "mouth" and "lips" because those are the parts of the body used to speak. Alternate translation: "and do not let your own mouth praise you ... and do not let your own lips praise you" or "and do not praise yourself ... and do not praise yourself"

a stranger

The words "let ... praise you" are understood from the first phrase. The words can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "let a stranger praise you"

Proverbs 27:3

the provocation of a fool is heavier than both

The difficulty of being patient with a fool who provokes you is spoken of as if that difficulty were heavy. Alternate translation: "the provocation of a fool is harder to tolerate than either of them" or "It is harder to be patient when a fool provokes you than it is to be patient while carrying them"

the provocation of a fool

"the trouble caused by a fool." "Provocation" means actions or words that cause anger or irritation.

Proverbs 27:4

There is the cruelty of rage and the flood of anger, but who is able to stand before jealousy?

The abstract nouns "rage", "anger" and "jealousy" can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "A raging person is cruel and an angry person is overwhelming, but who can stand before a jealous person?"

cruelty

"harshness"

the flood of anger

"the destructiveness of anger." Anger is spoken of here as if it were a powerful flood.

but who is able to stand before jealousy?

This question implies that no one can stand before jealousy. It can be reworded as a statement. Alternate translation: "but no one is able to stand before jealousy"

to stand before jealousy

Here standing represents being strong and resisting being harmed by a jealous person who attacks. Alternate translation: "to resist a jealous person" or "to remain strong when a jealous person attacks him"

Proverbs 27:5

Better is a rebuke that is clearly seen

The abstract noun "rebuke" can be expressed with the verb "rebuke." Alternate translation: "It is better to be openly rebuked"

than hidden love

"than love that is not openly shown." The abstract noun "love" can be translated as a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "than to be loved secretly"

Proverbs 27:6

Faithful are the wounds caused by a friend

"The wounds that a friend causes are trustworthy." The word "wounds" here represents the pain and sadness that a person feels when a friend rebukes or corrects him.

Faithful are the wounds caused by a friend

The trustworthiness of a friend's rebuke is spoken of as if the sadness that his rebuke causes is trustworthy. Alternate translation: "Though it causes sadness, a friend's rebuke is trustworthy"

but many are the kisses of an enemy

It can be stated clearly that the enemy's kisses are not trustworthy. Alternate translation: "but the enemy's many kisses are not trustworthy" or "but an enemy may try to deceive you by kissing you may times" or

Proverbs 27:7

A person who has eaten to the full

"A person who is satisfied" or "A person who has eaten enough to be full"

rejects even a honeycomb

A honeycomb would normally be desirable, but not to the person who has already eaten enough to be satisfied.

every bitter thing is sweet

"everything that is bitter tastes sweet"

Proverbs 27:8

Like a bird that wanders from its nest is a man who strays from where he lives

The words "wanders" and "strays" mean the same thing in this verse.

Proverbs 27:9

Perfume

The word "perfume" here means a desirable oil or ointment.

make the heart rejoice

Here "the heart" represents the feelings or emotions of a person. Alternate translation: "make a person feel joyful" or "make a person glad"

the sweetness of a friend comes from his sincere counsel

Possible meanings are 1) "sweetness" represents kindness. Alternate translation: "we recognize our friend's kindness

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by his counsel" or 2) "sweetness" represents what we appreciate about a person. Alternate translation: "what we appreciate about a friend is his advice"
Proverbs 27:10
your brother's house
Here the word "brother" is a general reference to relatives, such as members of the same tribe, clan, or people group.
calamity
extreme troubles and misfortune
Proverbs 27:11
make my heart rejoice
Here the "heart" represents the person's feelings or emotions. Alternate translation: "make me feel joyful" or "make me glad"
then I will give back an answer to the one who mocks me
Here "answer" does not mean to answer a question. It means to respond or to reply to someone who is mocking. How this relates to the clause before it can be made clear. Alternate translation: "then I will reply to the one who mocks me by telling him about you"
mocks
makes fun of someone, especially in a cruel way
Proverbs 27:12
The prudent sees trouble and hides himself, but the naive go on and suffer for it.
See how you translated a similar phrase in Proverbs 22:3.
The prudent
This nominal adjective refers to any prudent person. See how you translated "prudent" in [Proverbs 12:16]
the naive
This nominal adjective refers to any naive person. To be naive is to lack experience and to not be mature.
Proverbs 27:13
Take a garment of one who has put up security for a stranger
When lending money, a lender would take something from the borrower, such as a garment, as a guarantee of repayment. He would return it after the money was repaid. If the borrower was too poor, someone else could give something to the lender as a guarantee for him. See how you translated this in [Proverbs 20:16]
who has put up security
This means for someone to give something to a lender as a guarantee that what was borrowed will be paid. See how you translated this in [Proverbs 20:16]
hold it in pledge
To "hold something in pledge" means to hold on to something that someone has given as a pledge, or promise, that he will pay a debt. See how you translated this in [Proverbs 20:16]
Proverbs 27:14
Whoever gives his neighbor a blessing
"If anyone gives his neighbor a blessing"
that blessing will be considered to be a curse
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the neighbor will consider that blessing to be a curse"
Proverbs 27:15
quarreling
This means making people angry with each other or causing strong disagreements between people.
the constant dripping
The implied information is that it is rain that is constantly dripping. Alternate translation: "the constant dripping of rain"
a rainy day
"a day of continual rain"
Proverbs 27:16
restraining her is like restraining the wind, or trying to catch oil in your right hand
The implied information is that it is as difficult or useless to try and restrain her as it is to try to restrain the wind or catch oil in your hand
restraining her
"holding her back" or "keeping her under control." The implied information is that it is trying to stop her from quarreling. Alternate translation: "restraining her from quarreling"
restraining the wind
"holding back the wind" or "keeping the wind under control"
Proverbs 27:17
Iron sharpens iron; in the same way, a man sharpens his friend.
These two phrases are comparing how iron and a man can be improved. Alternate translation: "As iron can sharpen another piece of iron, so a man's character is improved by contact with his friend"
Proverbs 27:18
who tends
"who takes care of"
the one who protects his master will be honored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a master will honor the one who protects him"
Proverbs 27:19
a person's heart
Here this means a person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "what a person thinks"
Proverbs 27:20
Abaddon
This is a name that means "destroyer." Alternate translation: "the Destroyer"
are never satisfied
"are never filled up"
a man's eyes
Here the "eyes" represent a man's desires. Alternate translation: "a man's desires"
Proverbs 27:21
A crucible is for silver and a furnace is for gold
This refers to how gold and silver are refined. A metal is refined by heating it to a high temperature so that it melts and the impurities may be removed. See how you translated the very similar phrase in [Proverbs 17:3]
crucible
a container used for heating substances to very high temperatures
furnace
an oven that can be made extremely hot
a person is tested when he is praised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when one praises a person, they are also testing that

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person"
Proverbs 27:22
Even if you crush a fool ... yet his foolishness will not leave him
This means that even if a fool is made to suffer hardship or pain
pestle
a hard tool with a rounded end, used for crushing things in a bowl
Proverbs 27:23
Be sure you know the condition of your flocks and be concerned about your herds
These two phrases have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis.
your flocks
"flocks of sheep"
your herds
"herds of goats"
Proverbs 27:24
Does a crown endure for all generations?
This question expects a negative answer to make the point that the reign of earthly rulers does not last forever. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "A crown does not endure for all generations"
a crown
Here "crown" is a metonym for a king's rule over his kingdom. Alternate translation: "a king's rule"
Proverbs 27:25
the new growth appears
"the new sprouts appear" or "the new grass starts to grow"
Proverbs 27:26
Connecting Statement:
Verses 26 and 27 go together with verses 23 to 25 as one proverb.
Those lambs will provide your clothing
The implied information is that the wool
the goats will provide the price of the field
The implied information is that the money received by selling the goats will be enough to buy a field. Alternate translation: "selling your goats will provide the price of the field"
Proverbs 27:27
nourishment for your servant girls
The implied information is that there will also be enough goats' milk to feed the servant girls. Alternate translation: "there will be goat's milk to nourish your servant girls"
nourishment
"food"

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28 [1] The wicked people run away when no one chases them,
but righteous people are as bold as a young lion.

[2] Because of the transgression of a land, it has many rulers,
but with a man of understanding and knowledge, it will last a long time.

[3] A poor person who oppresses other poor people
is like a beating rain that leaves no food.

[4] Those who abandon the law praise wicked people,
but those who keep the law fight against them.

[5] Evil men do not understand justice,
but those who seek Yahweh understand everything.

[6] It is better for a poor person who walks in his integrity
than for a rich person who is crooked in his ways.

[7] He who keeps the law is a son who has understanding,
but one who is a companion of gluttons shames his father.

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8 The one who makes his fortune by usury and interest
gathers his wealth for another who will be gracious to the poor.

9 If one turns away his ear from hearing the law,
even his prayer is an abomination.

10 Whoever misleads the upright into an evil way
will fall into his own pit,
but the blameless will have a good inheritance.

11 The rich person may be wise in his own eyes,
but a poor person who has understanding will find him out.

12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory;
but when the wicked arise, people are sought out.

13 The one who hides his sins will not prosper,
but the one who confesses them and abandons them will be shown mercy.

14 The one who always lives with reverence is blessed,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into trouble.

15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear
is a wicked ruler over poor people.

16 The ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor,
but the one who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.

17 If a man is burdened with a person's blood,
he will be a fugitive until death
and no one will help him.

18 Whoever walks with integrity will be kept safe,
but the one whose way is crooked will suddenly fall.

19 The one who works his land will have plenty of food,

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but whoever follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.

20 A faithful man will have great blessings,
but the one who gets rich quickly will not go unpunished.

21 It is not good to show partiality,
but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.

22 A stingy man hurries after riches,
but he does not know that poverty will come upon him.

23 Whoever disciplines someone, afterward will find more favor from him
than from the one who flatters him with his tongue.

24 Whoever robs his father and his mother and says, "That is no sin,"
he is the companion of the one who destroys.

25 A greedy man stirs up conflict,
but the one who trusts in Yahweh will prosper.

26 One who trusts in his own heart is a fool,
but whoever walks in wisdom will be delivered.

27 The one who gives to the poor will lack nothing,
but whoever closes his eyes to them will receive many curses.

28 When the wicked arise, people hide themselves;
but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 28 continues the second section of the book (Chapter 25-29) which is attributed to Solomon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 28:2

Because of the transgression of a land

The abstract noun "transgression" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Because of how a land transgresses"

the transgression of a land

This is a metonym for the sins of the people living in a land. Alternate translation: "the transgression of the people of a land"

with a man of understanding and knowledge

The implied information is that this man is a ruler or leader. The abstract nouns "understanding" and "knowledge" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "with a man who understands and knows how to rule"

Proverbs 28:3

who oppresses

"who severely mistreats"

like a beating rain that leaves no food

The poor man who oppresses other poor people is compared to a rain that falls so hard that it leaves no crop to harvest.

beating rain

This is a metaphor for a rain coming down hard enough to cause crops to be driven down. Alternate translation: "damaging rain"

Proverbs 28:4

abandon the law

"reject God's law" or "refuse to obey the law"

those who keep the law

To "keep the law" means to do what God's law requires. Alternate translation: "those who obey God's law"

fight against them

"struggle against them." This means to strongly oppose or resist them.

Proverbs 28:5

Evil men

Here "men" means people in general. Alternate translation: "People who do evil things"

do not understand justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "do not understand what is just"

those who seek Yahweh

Those who want to know Yahweh and please him are spoken of as if they are literally seeking to find Yahweh.

understand everything

The implied information is that those who seek Yahweh understand all about justice. Alternate translation: "completely understand what is just"

Proverbs 28:6

It is better for a poor person ... than for a rich person

"It is better to be a poor person ... than it is to be a rich person"

walks in his integrity

This represents a person living a life of integrity. The abstract noun "integrity" can be expressed as an adverb. Alternate translation: "walks honestly" or "lives honestly"

who is crooked in his ways

Rich people who are dishonest are spoken of as if they walk on crooked or twisted paths. Alternate translation: "who is not honest in what he does"

Proverbs 28:7

He who keeps the law

To "keep the law" means to do what God's law requires. Alternate translation: "He who obeys God's law"

a son who has understanding

The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "a son who understands"

of gluttons

"of people who eat too much." A "glutton" is a person who often eats and drinks excessively.

shames his father

"puts his father to shame" or "dishonors his father"

Proverbs 28:8

makes his fortune

"increases his wealth"

usury and interest

"forcing people who have borrowed money from him to pay back more than they borrowed"

interest

money that a borrower pays for the use of someone else's money

gathers his wealth

"brings his wealth together"

for another

"for another person"

Proverbs 28:9

If one

"If a person"

turns away his ear from hearing the law

This represents the whole person turning away from and rejecting God's law. Alternate translation: "turns away from hearing and obeying the law"

even his prayer is an abomination

"even his prayer is offensive to God." This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "God detests even his prayer"

abomination

See how you translated this in Proverbs 3:32.

Proverbs 28:10

Whoever misleads the upright into an evil way

This is a metaphor for leading upright people in an evil direction. Alternate translation: "Whoever causes the upright to go in an evil direction"

Whoever misleads ... evil way will fall

"If anyone misleads ... evil way, he will fall"

the upright

This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright people" or "righteous people" or "honest people"

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will fall into his own pit
"will fall into the trap that he has dug." This is a metaphor for ending up in the same bad place as others had been led toward. Alternate translation: "will end up in the same evil place toward which he guided other people"
the blameless
This refers to blameless persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "blameless persons"
will have a good inheritance
"will inherit what is good"
Proverbs 28:11
be wise in his own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "be wise in his own thoughts" or "think he is wise"
who has understanding
The abstract noun "understanding" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "who understands"
will find him out
This is an idiom that means the poor person will be able to determine whether or not the rich person is really wise. Alternate translation: "will see his true nature" or "will see what he is truly like"
Proverbs 28:12
the righteous
This refers to righteous persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "righteous people"
triumph
"succeed"
when the wicked arise
This is an idiom that means when the wicked gain power or start to rule. Alternate translation: "when the wicked rise to power"
the wicked
This refers to wicked people in general. Alternate translation: "wicked people"
people are sought out
You may need to make explicit that those who "are sought out" have hidden themselves to escape from the wicked. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they seek people out" or "they seek out the people who hide from them"
Proverbs 28:13
hides his sins
"covers his sins." This is the opposite of confessing and forsaking sins, and is spoken of as covering sins rather than bringing them into the open
will not prosper
"will not succeed" or "will not advance"
the one who confesses them and abandons them will be shown mercy
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will show mercy to the one who confesses and forsakes them"
Proverbs 28:14
The one who always lives with reverence is blessed
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless the one who always lives with reverence"
lives with reverence
The abstract noun "reverence" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "lives a reverent life"
reverence
This refers to deeply respecting Yahweh and showing that respect by obeying him.
whoever hardens his heart
"the one who hardens his heart"
hardens his heart
This is an idiom that means to be stubborn or unwilling to obey God. Alternate translation: "refuses to obey God"
will fall into trouble
This represents ending up in misery and distress. Alternate translation: "will end up in trouble"
Proverbs 28:15
Like a roaring lion or a charging bear is a wicked ruler over poor people
Poor people who are helpless against an evil ruler are compared to people who have a lion roaring at them or a bear attacking them.
a charging bear
A bear is a large, furry, dangerous animal that walks on four legs and has sharp claws and teeth.
Proverbs 28:16
The ruler who lacks understanding
The abstract noun "understanding" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The ruler who does not understand"
oppressor
a person who treats people harshly and makes their lives very difficult
the one who hates unjust gain
The abstract noun "unjust gain" can be translated as a verb. Possible meanings are that this person 1) hates other people's unjust gain. Alternate translation: "the one who becomes angry when other people gain dishonestly" Or 2)he would never want to be dishonest. Alternate translation: "the one who hates gaining dishonestly"
the one
This phrase can refer to 1) the "ruler" or 2) any person.
prolong his days
Possible meanings are 1) this is an idiom that means his living for more time. Alternate translation: "live longer" or 2) this is an idiom that means extending the length of his reign. Alternate translation: "rule for a longer time"
Proverbs 28:17
is burdened with a person's blood
Here "blood" is a metonym for the murder or violent death of an innocent person in which blood is shed. Alternate translation: "is guilty because he has murdered someone"
fugitive
a person who is running away to avoid being captured
until death
"until he dies." This means for the rest of his life. Alternate translation: "all of his life"
Proverbs 28:18
Whoever walks with integrity will be kept safe
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "God will keep safe anyone who walks with integrity"

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Whoever
"Anyone who"
walks with integrity
This represents a person living a life of integrity. The abstract noun "integrity" can be expressed as an adverb. Alternate translation: "walks honestly" or "lives honestly"
the one whose way is crooked
A dishonest person is spoken of as if he walks on crooked or twisted paths. Alternate translation: "the one who does not live honestly"
will suddenly fall
What will happen to a dishonest person is spoken of as if he suddenly fell down. Alternate translation: "will suddenly be ruined" or "will suddenly perish"
Proverbs 28:19
works his land
This means to till, sow, and care for his crops.
whoever follows
"anyone who follows"
follows worthless pursuits
"chases after worthless projects." The person who is busy doing things that do not produce anything is spoken of as chasing after useless things.
will have plenty of poverty
The person following worthless pursuits is spoken of as getting the opposite of plenty of food. The abstract noun "poverty" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "will be very poor"
Proverbs 28:20
the one who gets rich quickly will not go unpunished
The double negative "will not go unpunished" is used for emphasis. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly punish the one who gets rich quickly"
the one who gets rich quickly
The implied information is that this person gains wealth by unfaithful or dishonest means. Alternate translation: "the one who tries to get rich quickly"
Proverbs 28:21
for a piece of bread a man will do wrong
"A piece of bread" here is an exaggeration for a very small bribe or reward. Alternate translation: "a man will sin for very little gain"
do wrong
"sin"
Proverbs 28:22
A stingy man
"A selfish man." This is a person who does not like to share his possessions or spend money.
hurries after riches
The stingy man is spoken of as if he was chasing after wealth. Alternate translation: "is greedy for riches"
poverty will come upon him
The result of being stingy is spoken of as if poverty was overtaking the stingy person. The abstract noun "poverty" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "he will suddenly become poor"
Proverbs 28:23
Whoever disciplines someone, afterward will find more favor from him than from the one who flatters him with his tongue
This can be stated in active form, with the abstract noun "favor" being expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "A person will favor the one who disciplines him more than he favors the person who flatters him with his tongue"
Whoever disciplines
"If a person disciplines"
disciplines
trains people to obey a set of guidelines for moral behavior
flatters him with his tongue
The tongue here represents speaking. Alternate translation: "flatters him with words"
flatters
praises someone in a manner that is not sincere, or praises someone about things that are not true
Proverbs 28:24
Whoever robs
"The one who robs"
says, "That is no sin," he
This can be expressed as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "says that it is not a sin, he"
the companion of
Possible meanings are: 1) "the friend of" or 2) an idiom that means having the same character as. Alternate translation: "the same kind of person as"
Proverbs 28:25
A greedy man
a person who selfishly wants more things, money or food than what he needs
stirs up conflict
The action of the greedy man is spoken of as if he were stirring up or awakening conflict. Alternate translation: "causes conflict"
Proverbs 28:26
One who trusts in his own heart
Depending on one's self is spoken of as trusting in one's own heart. Alternate translation: "The person who relies on himself"
whoever walks
"any person who walks"
walks in wisdom
Possible meanings are 1) this is an idiom that means to live wisely. Alternate translation: "lives wisely" or 2) this is an idiom that means to follow the teachings of wise people. Alternate translation: "follows wise teachings"
Proverbs 28:27
The one
"The person"
the poor
This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: "poor people"
lack nothing
This double negative is used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "have everything they need"
whoever closes his eyes to them will receive many curses
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) they will receive many curses from the poor. Alternate translation: "the poor will give many curses to whoever closes his eyes to them" or 2) they will receive many curses

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from people in general. Alternate translation: "people will give many curses to whoever closes his eyes to the poor" or 3) they will receive many curses from God. Alternate translation: "God will give many curses to whoever closes his eyes to the poor"

whoever closes

"anyone who closes"

closes his eyes to

Closing the eyes represents not responding to the needs of the poor. Alternate translation: "ignores" or "chooses not to help"

Proverbs 28:28

When the wicked arise

This is an idiom that means when wicked people gain power or start to rule. Alternate translation: "When the wicked rise to power"

the wicked

This refers to wicked persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "wicked people"

people hide themselves

This is an exaggeration for doing everything they can to avoid having wicked people harm them. Alternate translation: "people go into hiding"

perish

Possible meanings are 1) "go away" or 2) "fall from power" or 3) "are destroyed."

the righteous

This refers to righteous persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "righteous people"

increase

Possible meanings are 1) "multiply" or 2) "rise to power."

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29 [1] A person who has received many rebukes but who stiffens his neck
will be broken in a moment beyond healing.

[2] When righteous people increase, the people rejoice,
but when a wicked person is the ruler, the people sigh.

[3] Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice,
but he who keeps company with prostitutes destroys his wealth.

[4] The king establishes the land by justice,
but the one who demands bribes throws it down.

[5] A man who flatters his neighbor
is spreading a net for his feet.

[6] In the sin of an evil person is a trap,
but the righteous person sings and rejoices.

[7] The righteous person knows the rights of the poor;
the wicked person does not understand such knowledge.

[8] Mockers set a city on fire,
but those who are wise turn away wrath.

[9] When a wise person has a legal dispute with a fool,

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he rages and laughs, and there will be no rest.

10 Men of bloodshed hate the one who is blameless
and seek the life of the upright.

11 A fool brings forth all his spirit,
but a wise man soothes it back.

12 If a ruler pays attention to lies,
all his officials will be wicked.

13 The poor person and the oppressor are similar,
for Yahweh gives light to the eyes of them both.

14 If a king judges the poor by the truth,
his throne will be established forever.

15 The rod and correction give wisdom,
but a child freed from discipline puts his mother to shame.

16 When wicked people are in power, transgression increases,
but righteous people will see the downfall of those wicked people.

17 Discipline your son and he will give you rest;
he will bring delight into your life.

18 Where there is no prophetic vision the people run wild,
but the one who keeps the law is blessed.

19 A slave will not be corrected by words,
for though he understands, there will be no response.

20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.

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21 One who pampers his slave from youth,
at the end of it there will be trouble.

22 An angry person stirs up strife
and a master of rage commits many sins.

23 A person's pride brings him low,
but one who has a humble spirit will be given honor.

24 One who shares with a thief hates his own life;
he hears the curse and says nothing.

25 The fear of man makes a snare,
but the one who trusts in Yahweh will be protected.

26 Many are those who seek the face of the ruler,
but from Yahweh is justice for a person.

27 An unjust man is an abomination to righteous people,
but the one whose way is upright is an abomination to the wicked person.

Proverbs 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 29 concludes the second section of the book (Chapter 25-29) which is attributed to Solomon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Themes

There are individual proverbs that run along common themes, often including contrasting elements: wise/foolish, money, lazy/diligent, truth telling, wicked/righteous, sluggard, pride/humility, integrity/crookedness. (See: wise, foolish and evil and righteous)

Links:

Proverbs 29:1 Notes

Proverbs 29:1

who stiffens his neck

A person becoming stubborn is spoken of as if he stiffens his neck. Alternate translation: "who becomes stubborn" or "who refuses to listen"

will be broken in a moment

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will suddenly break him"

beyond healing

"and no one will be able to heal him." Sickness is a metaphor for any kind of bad situation. Alternate translation: "and no one will be able to help him"

Proverbs 29:2

the people sigh

The people let out long, loud breaths that show that they are weary and sad. Alternate translation: "the people will be weary and sad"

Proverbs 29:4

establishes the land

makes the land peaceful so the king can rule for a long time

by justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "by doing what is just" or "by making just laws"

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Proverbs 29:5
flatters his neighbor
knowingly tells his neighbor things that are not true so that the neighbor will do what the speaker wants him to do
spreading a net for his feet
The writer compares the flattery of a person to setting that person up to being caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "setting a trap to catch that person"
Proverbs 29:6
In the sin of an evil person is a trap
When an evil person sins, it is as if he is stepping into a trap. He desires to do evil to other people, but God will use what he does to punish him.
Proverbs 29:8
set a city on fire
Here the word "city" represents the people who live in the city. Mockers causing the people to experience turmoil and possibly to become violent is spoken of as if they set the city on fire. Alternate translation: "create turmoil for the people of a city"
turn away wrath
This idiom means to cause angry people no longer to be angry. Alternate translation: "calm the wrath of angry people"
Proverbs 29:9
has a legal dispute with a fool
A "legal dispute" is where two people or groups go to a judge so he can make a decision that the government will enforce. Alternate translation: "goes to court with a fool" or "sues a fool"
he rages and laughs
The fool becomes very angry and tries to keep the wise person from speaking or the court judge from judging.
rages
This means to be loud and excited and to move with powerful movements like a strong storm. Alternate translation: "yells angrily"
there will be no rest
"they will not be able to settle the problem"
Proverbs 29:10
Men of bloodshed
"Bloodshed" here is a metonym for murder, and it describes "men." Alternate translation: "Murderous men" or "People who are happy when they commit murder"
seek the life of
This idiom means to "want to kill."
the upright
This refers to upright persons in general. This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "upright people" or "righteous people" or "honest people"
Proverbs 29:11
brings forth all his spirit
He has no self-control. He lets everyone know what he is thinking and feeling, especially when he is angry.
a wise man soothes it back
This line is not clear, but the idea is clearly that the wise man does the opposite of what the fool does: he quiets and holds back his anger and calms himself down so that he can control what he says and does.
Proverbs 29:12
pays attention
"listens." See how you translated this in Proverbs 17:4.
all his officials will be wicked
The actions of the ruler are spoken of by stating the result they will cause. Alternate translation: "it is as if he is teaching his officials to be wicked"
Proverbs 29:13
oppressor
a person who treats people harshly and makes their lives very difficult
Yahweh gives light to the eyes of them both
This idiom means "Yahweh makes both of them alive."
Proverbs 29:14
his throne
The throne is a metonym for the kingdom he rules from his throne. Alternate translation: "his kingdom"
Proverbs 29:15
The rod and correction give wisdom
The writer speaks as if a rod and correction were people who could give wisdom as a physical gift. Alternate translation: "If a parent uses the rod on his child and corrects him, the child will become wise" or "If parents discipline their child and tell him when he has done wrong, the child will learn to live wisely"
The rod
Parents in Israel used wooden rods as instruments to discipline children by striking them. Alternate translation: "discipline"
correction
When a person gives correction to another person, he tells that person that he does not approve of what that other person is doing and he expects the person to change his behavior.
Proverbs 29:16
transgression increases
The abstract noun "transgression" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "more people will transgress and their sins will become worse"
the downfall of those wicked people
The abstract noun "downfall" can be translated with the verb "fall," which is a metaphor for losing the power to rule. Alternate translation: "those wicked people fall" or "those wicked people lose their power to rule"
Proverbs 29:18
the one who keeps the law is blessed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless the one who keeps the law"
Proverbs 29:19
A slave will not be corrected by words
This can be translated in active form."You will not be able to correct a slave simply by talking to him"
Proverbs 29:20
Do you see a man who is hasty in his words?
The writer is using a question to get the reader's attention. Alternate translation: "You should notice what happens to a man who is hasty in his words."
Proverbs 29:21

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who pampers his slave
"who allows his slave to avoid work and who treats his slave better than he treats other slaves"
at the end of it
"at the end of the slave's youth" or "when the slave is grown"
there will be trouble
These words translate a Hebrew word whose meaning no one knows for sure. Some understand it to mean that the slave will be weak, others that the slave will rule the household.
Proverbs 29:22
stirs up strife
Causing people to argue more is spoken of as if it were stirring up or awakening arguments. The abstract noun "strife" can be stated as "argue." See how you translated similar words in [Proverbs 15:18]
a master of rage
This idiom means "a person who becomes angry easily."
Proverbs 29:23
one who has a humble spirit will be given honor
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "men will give honor to a person who has a humble spirit" or "a person who has a humble spirit will receive honor from men" or "Yahweh will cause men to honor a person who has a humble spirit"
Proverbs 29:24
hates his own life
"becomes his own enemy"
he hears the curse and says nothing
Possible meanings are 1) people have put the "one who shares with a thief" under oath to tell the truth about what he knows about what the thief stole, and he knows he will be punished if he tells the truth. Alternate translation: "he does not dare to testify under oath" or 2) people do not know who the thief is but they call on God to curse the thief, and the "one who shares" is afraid to confess and so come out from under the curse because he is afraid of the thief. Alternate translation: "he says nothing even after people have cursed him"
Proverbs 29:25
The fear of man makes a snare
Being afraid of what other people might do is spoken of as stepping into a trap. Alternate translation: "Anyone who is afraid of what other people might do to him is like a person who has become snared in a trap"
a snare
a trap that catches animals with ropes
the one who trusts in Yahweh will be protected
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will protect the one who trusts in him"
Proverbs 29:26
Many are those who seek the face of the ruler
The word "face" is a metonym for the ruler listening to people telling him what they want him to do and then doing it. Alternate translation: "Many people want their ruler to pay attention to them"
from Yahweh is justice for a person
It is Yahweh, not human rulers, who will see that people treat a person justly. The abstract noun "justice" can be stated as "just." Alternate translation: "it is Yahweh who is truly just towards a person"
Proverbs 29:27
an abomination
a person whom others should hate. See how you translated this in Proverbs 3:32.

30 [1]The words of Agur son of Jakeh—the burden.
This man declares to Ithiel,
to Ithiel and Ucal:[1]
[2] Surely I am more like an animal than any human,
and I do not have the understanding of a human being.

[3] I have not learned wisdom,
nor do I have knowledge of the Holy One.

[4] Who has gone up to heaven and come down?
Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands?
Who has wrapped up the waters in a cloak?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is his name, and what is the name of his son?
Surely you know!

[5] Every word of God is tested;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

[6] Do not add to his words,
or he will discipline you,

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and you will be proved to be a liar.

7 Two things I ask of you;
do not withhold them from me before I die:

8 Put vanity and lies far away from me.
Give me neither poverty nor riches,
just let me eat the food that is my portion.

9 For if I have too much, I might deny you
and say, "Who is Yahweh?"
Or if I become poor, I might steal
and profane the name of my God.

10 Do not slander a slave before his master,
or he will curse you and you will be held guilty.

11 There is a generation that curses their father
and does not bless their mother.

12 There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,
and yet they are not washed of their filth.

13 There is a generation whose eyes are raised up,
and how high are their eyelids lifted up!

14 There is a generation whose teeth are swords
and whose jawbones are knives,
so they may devour the poor from the earth
and the needy from among humanity.

15 The leech has two daughters:
"Give and give," they cry.

There are three things that are never satisfied,
four that never say, "Enough":

16 Sheol; the barren womb;
land that is never satisfied with water;
and the fire that never says, "Enough!"

17 The eye that mocks a father
and scorns obedience to a mother
will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley
and will be eaten by the vultures.

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18 There are three things that are too wonderful for me,
four that I do not understand:

19 the way of an eagle in the sky;
the way of a snake on a rock;
the way of a ship in the heart of the sea;
and the way of a man with a young woman.

20 This is the way of an adulteress:
she eats and she wipes her mouth
and says, "I have not behaved wickedly."

21 Under three things the earth trembles,
and under four it cannot bear up:

22 a slave when he becomes king;
a fool when he is filled with food;

23 a hated woman when she marries;
and a slave girl when she takes the place of her mistress.

24 Four things on earth are small
and yet they are very wise:

25 the ants are creatures that are not strong,
but they prepare their food in the summer;

26 the rock badgers are not mighty creatures,
but they make their homes in the rocks.

27 Locusts have no king,
but all of them march in rank.

28 As for the lizard, you can hold it in your two hands,
yet it is found in kings' palaces.

29 There are three things that are stately in their stride
and four that are stately in how they walk:

30 a lion, strongest among wild animals—
it does not turn away from anything;

31 a strutting rooster; a goat;
and a king whose soldiers are beside him.

32 If you have been foolish, exalting yourself,
or if you have been devising evil—
put your hand over your mouth.

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33 As churning milk makes butter
and as one's nose will produce blood if it is twisted,
so deeds done in anger produce conflict.

[1]The second line of some ancient Greek translations of the ancient Hebrew reads This man declares: I am weary. I am weary and helpless. They appear to have translated the Hebrew names Ithiel and Ucal into the Greek as weary and helpless.

Proverbs 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 30 is a chapter in Proverbs attributed to Agur, who is a person otherwise unknown.

Special concepts in this chapter

Agur

His full title is Agur, Son of Jakeh. Agur comes from a Hebrew word that means "gatherer" and so some scholars believe this is not a real name, but possibly a way of referring to Solomon as a gatherer of proverbs. However, it is still prudent to simply use this as a name.

Three things and four

From verses 15 through 32, the author uses a specific technique to explain some things. He says there are three things and even four and lists items that exemplify a feature like "small and yet wise." The numbering is not meant to be so literal, but as a memory device that introduces the items. (See: wise)

Themes

The sayings of Agur address several themes including the wisdom of God compared to human wisdom (30:1-6), wicked people (30:11-14), things that are never satisfied (30:15-16), things too amazing for Agur to understand (30:18-19), things that are small but wise (30:24-28), and things that walk in a strong and proud way (30:29-31).

Links:

Proverbs 30:1 Notes

Proverbs 30:1

Agur ... Jakeh ... Ithiel ... Ucal

These are the names of men.

Agur son of Jakeh

This is the literal son of Jakeh, not a grandchild.

the burden

This is a metaphor for a message that is very important because it comes from God. Alternate translation: "the important message"

to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal

"to Ithiel—that is, to Ithiel and Ucal"

Proverbs 30:2

Surely

"Certainly" or "There is no doubt that"

I do not have the understanding of a human being

The abstract noun "understanding" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I do not understand anything the way human beings are supposed to understand them"

Proverbs 30:3

nor do I have knowledge of the Holy One

The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "nor do I really know anything about the Holy One"

Proverbs 30:4

Who has ... down? Who has ... hands? Who has ... cloak? Who has ... earth?

The writer asks these questions to get the reader thinking about how much greater Yahweh is than people. Alternate translation: "No person has ever ... down. No person has ever ... hands. No person has ever ... cloak. No person has ever ... earth." or "Who has ... down? Who has ... hands? Who has ... cloak? Who has ... earth? No one has ever done any of these things."

heaven

where God lives

gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands

The writer speaks of the wind as if it were something that a person could catch and hold in his hand. Alternate translation: "has caught the wind in his hands"

the hollow of his hands

the way his hands are shaped when he is scooping up, for example, water or sand. "his cupped hands"

gathered up

brought small scattered objects into a pile so they can be lifted

has established all the ends of the earth

"has set up the limits for where the earth ends" or "has marked the boundaries for the ends of the earth"

What is his name, and what is the name of his son?

The writer uses these questions to command the reader to give an answer. Alternate translation: "Tell me his name and the name of his son, if you know them."

Surely you know!

The writer uses irony to show that neither he nor the reader know any person who can do what the "who" in the earlier questions can do. Alternate translation: "I do not think you really know anyone who can do those things."

Proverbs 30:5

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is tested
Words are spoken of as if they were metals that need someone to clean the bad parts out of them. Alternate translation: "is like a precious metal from which someone has removed all the useless material"
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him
The word "shield" is a metaphor for something that protects a person. Alternate translation: "he protects those who come and ask him to protect them"
Proverbs 30:6
add to his words
say more than he has said
you will be proved to be
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will prove that you are"
Proverbs 30:7
General Information:
Many translations understand this to be the beginning of a prayer.
of you
"of you, Yahweh"
Proverbs 30:8
Put vanity and lies far away from me
Possible meanings are 1) "Do not allow people to speak vanity and lies to me" or 2) "Do not allow me to speak vanity and lies"
vanity
false, useless words
Give me neither poverty nor riches
The writer speaks as if "poverty" and "riches" were physical objects that someone could give to another. They are also abstract nouns that can be stated as "poor" and "rich." Alternate translation: "Do not allow me to be either very poor or very rich"
the food that is my portion
"the food that is properly mine" or "the food that you, Yahweh, have assigned to me"
Proverbs 30:9
if I have too much, I might deny you and say
This describes a situation that has not happened but is possible if the writer becomes rich.
if I become poor, I might steal and profane
This describes a situation that has not happened but is possible if the writer becomes poor.
I might steal and profane the name of my God
"I might steal things and that would cause people to think badly about God" or "I might harm God's reputation by stealing"
Proverbs 30:10
slander
speak falsely about another person with the desire to harm him
he will curse
"the servant will curse"
you will be held guilty
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will hold you guilty"
Proverbs 30:11
There is a generation that curses
"Some people curse" or "Stay away from people who curse"
a generation that curses ... and does not bless
"a generation of people who curse ... and do not bless"
Proverbs 30:12
There is a generation that is
"Some people are" or "Stay away from people who are." See how you translated similar words in Proverbs 30:11.
is pure in their own eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "considers themselves pure" or "believes they are pure"
they are not washed of their filth
The words "washed" and "filth" speak of God forgiving people who sin as if he were washing physical filth off of the people. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has not forgiven them of their sins"
filth
This should be translated with a polite term that includes human or animal vomit and waste.
Proverbs 30:13
There is a generation whose eyes
"Some people's eyes are" or "Stay away from people whose eyes are." See how you translated similar words in Proverbs 30:11.
eyes are raised up ... their eyelids lifted up
This describes people who think that they are better than other people. Their eyes show that they are proud, and the way they look at others shows that they think they are better than those other people.
Proverbs 30:14
There is a generation whose teeth are swords and whose jawbones are knives, so they may devour the poor ... and the needy
This is a metaphor for being cruel and treating poor and needy people cruelly, like an animal with sharp teeth that tears apart other animals and eats them. The sharp teeth may be a metaphor specifically for cruel words. Devouring the poor and needy may be specifically about taking poor people's possessions, leaving them even poorer.
There is a generation whose teeth
"Some people's teeth" or "Stay away from people whose teeth." See how you translated similar words in Proverbs 30:11.
jawbones
the bones of the face where teeth grow
Proverbs 30:15
The leech has two daughters
This is an example of something that always wants more. Alternate translation: "Greed has two daughters"
leech
a type of worm that attaches itself to the skin and sucks blood
"Give and give" they cry
Another possible meaning is "and they are both named Give Me."
There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, "Enough"
This use of the numbers "three" and "four" together here is likely a poetic device. Alternate translation: "There are four things that are never satisfied, who never say, 'Enough'"

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are never satisfied
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "always want more"
Proverbs 30:16
land that is never satisfied with water
Land that is no longer producing food because there has been no rain is spoken of as if it were a person who does not have enough water to drink.
Proverbs 30:17
The eye that mocks ... mother will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley and will be eaten by the vultures
The eye is a synecdoche for the whole person. The writer is saying that a person who mocks his parents will die alone in a wilderness and not be buried, a metaphor for dying with no friends or family to care. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The ravens of the valley will peck out the eyes of the person who mocks ... mother, and the vultures will eat them" or "A person who mocks ... mother will die alone, and no one will mourn their death"
scorns obedience to a mother
The word "obedience" is a metonym for the mother herself. It is also an abstract noun that can be stated as "obey." Alternate translation: "considers his mother worthless and will not obey her"
ravens
large, shiny, black birds that eat plants and dead animals
vultures
any one of several large birds that eat dead animals and have small, featherless heads
Proverbs 30:18
There are three things that are ... four that I do not understand:
The use of the numbers "three" and "four" here is likely a poetic device. Alternate translation: "There are some things that are too wonderful for me that I do not understand—four of them are:"
Proverbs 30:19
in the heart of the sea
The "heart" refers to the middle. Alternate translation: "in the middle of the sea" or "on the open sea"
Proverbs 30:20
she eats and she wipes her mouth
This seems to be both a euphemism and a metaphor for committing adultery and then taking a bath.
Proverbs 30:21
Under three things the earth trembles, and under four it cannot bear up
The use of the numbers "three" and "four" here is likely a poetic device. "There are some things that make the earth tremble, that it cannot endure. Four of these are:"
Proverbs 30:22
a fool when he is filled with food
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a fool who has had enough to eat"
Proverbs 30:23
a hated woman when she marries
That is, people rightly hated her before she married; once she marries, she will be worse than she was before she married. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a woman whom good people have hated when she marries" or "an outcast woman when she marries"
takes the place of her mistress
Possible meanings are 1) the slave girl is able to rule over the wife and children or 2) the man loves the slave girl more than he loves his wife.
mistress
This is the female form of "master," so it refers to the wife of the man of the house.
Proverbs 30:26
rock badgers
an animal with small, rounded ears, short legs, and no tail
Proverbs 30:28
lizard
a small reptile that has four legs, a long, slender body, and a tail
Proverbs 30:29
There are three things that are ... four that are stately in how they walk
The use of the numbers "three" and "four" here is likely a poetic device. Alternate translation: "There are some things that walk stately. Four of these are"
stately
majestic or dignified, like a king
Proverbs 30:31
strutting rooster
an adult male chicken that walks proudly
Proverbs 30:33
churning
strongly stirring
butter
Animal milk that someone has stirred and made thick.

31 [1]The words of King Lemuel—a burden his mother taught him.
[2] What, my son? What is it, son of my womb?
What do you want, son of my vows?

[3] Do not give your strength to women,
or your ways to those who destroy kings.

[4] It is not for kings, Lemuel,
it is not for kings to drink wine,
or for rulers to crave strong drink,

[5] because when they drink they forget what has been decreed,

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and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.

6 Give strong drink to a person who is perishing
and wine to those in bitter distress.

7 He will drink and he will forget his poverty
and he will not remember his trouble.

8 Speak for those who cannot speak,
for the causes of all who are perishing.

9 Speak out and judge by the measure of what is right
and plead the cause of poor and needy people.

10 Who can find a capable wife?
Her value is far more than jewels.

11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will never be poor.

12 She does good things for him and not evil
all the days of her life.

13 She searches for wool and flax
and works with the delight of her hands.

14 She is like the merchant ships;
she brings her food from far away.

15 She rises while it is night
and gives food to her household,
and she distributes portions to her female servants.

16 She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

17 She girds herself with strength
and makes her arms strong.

18 She knows what will make a good profit for her;
all night long her lamp is not extinguished.

19 She puts her hands on the spindle,
and her hands grasp the twisting thread.

20 She reaches out with her hand to poor people;
she reaches out with her hands to needy people.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household,
for all her household are clothed in scarlet.

22 She makes coverings for her bed,
and she wears clothes of fine purple linen.

23 Her husband is known at the gates,

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when he sits with the elders of the land.

24 She makes linen garments and sells them,
and she supplies sashes to the merchants.

25 She is clothed with strength and honor,
and she laughs at the future.

26 She opens her mouth with wisdom
and the law of kindness is on her tongue.

27 She watches over the ways of her household
and does not eat the bread of idleness.

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed,
and her husband praises her, saying,

29 "Many women have done well,
but you surpassed them all."

30 Elegance is deceptive, beauty is vain,
but a woman who fears Yahweh, she will be praised.

31 Give her the fruit of her hands
and let her works praise her in the gates.

Proverbs 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 31 begins with 9 verses from King Lemuel. The last portion of this chapter is a poem about a godly wife. (See: godly)

King Lemuel

This person is unknown in Scripture, other than here. It is important to recognize that the words in this chapter are words of his mother addressed to him. They are formed like advice of a mother to her son.

Special concepts in this chapter

An acrostic poem

Verse 10 through 31 is tightly formed as a poem in the original language. There are 22 lines in the Hebrew language that each begin with a successive letter of the alphabet. However, each language will have a different set of letters. Therefore, it is important to realize this was a single composition with a single theme of a noble or godly wife.

Themes

King Lemuel advice to his son addresses themes of avoiding drinks with alcohol and of being fair and righteous (31:1-9). The final section about the godly wife addresses several themes, including the great value of a godly wife (30:10-12), her hard work (31:13-19), her generosity (31:20), her care for her family (31:21-23), and her dignity, wisdom, and fear of the Lord (31:25-31).

Links:

Proverbs 31:1 Notes

Proverbs 31:1

a burden

This phrase is a metaphor for an important message.

Alternate translation: "an important message"

Proverbs 31:2

What, my son? What is it, son of my womb? What do you want, son of my vows?

Possible meanings of the rhetorical question "What" are 1) "What are you doing?" or "You should not be doing what you are doing" or 2) "What shall I tell you?" or "Listen to what I am telling you" or 3) "Do not do the things I am about to warn you against."

my son ... son of my womb ... son of my vows

The speaker wants the hearer to notice carefully and to respect the one who is talking to him.

son of my womb

The womb is a synecdoche for the person. It is best to use a polite term for the body part in which babies grow before they are born.

son of my vows

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The "vows" could be 1) the mother's marriage vows or 2) a vow after she married that if God allowed her to have a child she would dedicate him to God.

Proverbs 31:3

Do not give your strength to women

"Do not work hard trying to have sex with women," either outside of marriage or with concubines.

or your ways to those who destroy kings

"or allow those who destroy kings to advise you"

your ways

Possible meanings are 1) "the way you live your life" or 2) "the work you do"

those who destroy kings

probably the immoral "women" to whom he is not to give his strength

Proverbs 31:4

Lemuel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in Proverbs 31:1.

Proverbs 31:5

what has been decreed

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "what God has decreed" or 2) "what the kings themselves have decreed"

pervert the rights of all the afflicted

"deny afflicted people their legal rights"

pervert

exchange good for evil

all the afflicted

"all those people whom others wrongfully harm"

Proverbs 31:6

and wine

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "and give wine"

in bitter distress

"who's souls are bitter" or "who are in misery"

Proverbs 31:7

his poverty

The abstract noun "poverty" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "how poor he is"

his trouble

The abstract noun "trouble" can be translated as a clause. Alternate translation: "the bad things that are happening to him"

Proverbs 31:8

Speak for those who cannot speak

Speaking is a metonym for using words to defend innocent people. Alternate translation: "Defend those who cannot defend themselves"

for the causes of all who are perishing

The cause represents the person whose cause it is. Alternate translation: "so that people will treat all who are perishing justly"

for the causes

The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "speak for the causes" or "speak out for"

Proverbs 31:9

poor and needy people

These two words have basically the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "people who are poor and cannot get the things that they need"

Proverbs 31:10

Who can find a capable wife?

The writer asks a question to show that he is beginning a new section. Alternate translation: "Not many men can find a capable wife." or "Not many men can find a wife who is able to do many things well."

Her value is far more than jewels

"She is more precious than jewels"

Proverbs 31:11

he will never be poor

This litotes can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "he will always have what he needs"

Proverbs 31:13

wool

sheep's hair that is used to make cloth

flax

a plant whose fiber is used to make linen

with the delight of her hands

Possible meanings are that the word "delight" describes 1) how she feels as she works, "gladly with her hands," or 2) how she feels about the wool and flax, "with her hands on things that she enjoys working with"

Proverbs 31:14

merchant

someone who buys and sells

Proverbs 31:15

distributes portions to her female servants

Possible meanings are 1) "gives the right amount of food to her female servants" or 2) "tells her female servants what work each of them is to do that day."

Proverbs 31:16

the fruit of her hands

The money she has earned from the work she did with wool and flax

Proverbs 31:17

She girds herself with strength

Putting on clothes is a metonym for preparing for work. Alternate translation: "She prepares herself for hard physical work"

makes her arms strong

"she strengthens her arms by doing her work"

Proverbs 31:18

all night long her lamp is not extinguished

This is probably an exaggeration: she works late into the night, but not from dusk to dawn. Alternate translation: "She burns a lamp through the night as she works"

Proverbs 31:19

spindle

a thin rod or stick with pointed ends that is used in making thread

Proverbs 31:20

reaches out with her hand to poor

The hand is a metonym for the help the woman uses her hand to give. Alternate translation: "helps poor"

reaches out with her hands to

These words translate the same words translated "puts her hands on" in Proverbs 31:19.

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Proverbs 31:21

are clothed in scarlet

Here "scarlet" does not refer to the color of the cloth, but that the clothing is expensive and warm. Alternate translation: "have expensive, warm clothing"

scarlet

The color red, but with a hint of orange.

Proverbs 31:22

linen

cloth made of flax yarn

Proverbs 31:23

Her husband is known

This can be translated in active form. The verb "know" is a metonym for respect. Alternate translation: "People respect her husband"

when he sits with the elders of the land

to make laws and settle arguments

Proverbs 31:24

linen

cloth made from flax yarn

sashes

long pieces of cloth worn around the waist or over one shoulder

Proverbs 31:25

She is clothed with strength and honor

Having strength and honor is spoken of as if the woman were wearing them. This can be translated in active form. The abstract nouns "strength" and "honor" can be translated by an adjective and a verb, respectively. Alternate translation: "Everyone can see that she is strong, and so they honor her"

laughs at the future

This is probably an exaggeration to show that she is not afraid. Alternate translation: "is not afraid of what will happen in the future"

Proverbs 31:26

opens her mouth with wisdom

The act of opening her mouth is a metonym for speaking. The abstract noun "wisdom" can be translated as an adverb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "she speaks wisely" or "she speaks wise words"

the law of kindness is on her tongue

The phrase "on her tongue" refers to her speaking, as the tongue is part of the mouth. The phrase "the law of kindness" refers to her teaching people to be kind. Alternate translation: "she teaches people to be kind"

Proverbs 31:27

watches over the ways of her household

The word "ways" refers to the way people live. Alternate translation: "makes sure her whole family lives in a way that pleases God"

does not eat the bread of idleness

To "eat the bread of" something means to do something. Alternate translation: "she is not idle"

idleness

doing nothing and being lazy

Proverbs 31:28

rise up and

Possible meanings are 1) literally "stand up and" or 2) as a metonym, "actively."

call her blessed

saying that good things have happened to her because she has done good things. This can be translated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "congratulate her" or "say, 'Yay, Mom!'"

Proverbs 31:29

you surpassed

"you have done better than"

Proverbs 31:30

Elegance is deceptive

The abstract noun "elegance" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "A gracious woman can deceive people" or "A woman with good manners could really be evil" See how you translated this in [Proverbs 11:16]

beauty is vain

The abstract noun "beauty" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "a woman who is beautiful now will not always be beautiful"

she will be praised

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will praise her"

Proverbs 31:31

the fruit of her hands

The money she has earned from the work she did with wool and flax

let her works praise her in the gates

She will be praised for her works, not by her works. Those "in the gates" are the important people of the city who conduct business and legal affairs near the gates of the city. Alternate translation: "may the important people of the city praise her because of the works she has done"

Introduction to Ecclesiastes

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Ecclesiastes

The author questions the nature of life and the limits of human wisdom (1:1–6:12) The author teaches about making wise choices in how one lives (7:1–12:7) The conclusion and ending (12:8–14)

What is the Book of Ecclesiastes about?

Ecclesiastes is a group of short teachings that try to answer questions such as "What do people gain from all their labor?" Ecclesiastes is a series of thoughts about a variety of subjects, all of them about the purpose and worth of various actions and events. The author concludes that all the work we perform and all the knowledge and skill we gain is like a vapor that disappears, and that we must fear Yahweh and keep his commandments.

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How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title for this book is "Ecclesiastes." Its meaning is similar to "religious assembly." Translators might decide on a title that better describes the content of the book, such as "Words of a Teacher" or "Teachings of a Wise Man."

Who wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes?

The author appears to be Solomon, "the Teacher, the descendant of David and king in Jerusalem." This is consistent with what Solomon was known for:

his wisdom (Ecclesiastes 1:16 and twenty-six other references to wisdom); his vast wealth (Ecclesiastes 2:8](../../ecc/02/08.md)), and the pain that comes from wealth ([Ecclesiastes 5:13-14; Ecclesiastes 4:8; and Ecclesiastes 9:11); his large number of servants (Ecclesiastes 2:7 and Ecclesiastes 10:7); his limitless opportunities for worldly pleasures (Ecclesiastes 2:1-2, Ecclesiastes 2:10; Ecclesiastes 3:13; Ecclesiastes 4:8; Ecclesiastes 5:4; and Ecclesiastes 12:1); and the wide range of his many building projects (Ecclesiastes 2:4-6).

Solomon appears to have written the Book of Ecclesiastes near the end of his life, as he reflected on what he gained from all that he did.

Why are there so many apparent contradictions in the Book of Ecclesiastes?

Some scholars think the author was a faithful man. Other scholars think that the author made bad decisions and was sorrowful when he wrote this book. Apparent contradictions in the book may indicate that Solomon's faith was sometimes weak. Or, it is also possible that the teachings in the book differ from each other in order to relate to different things happening in the lives of readers.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What does this book teach about how God repays people?

In the ancient Near East, people were concerned with why they were being punished or blessed. They often connected these things to their gods. The writer of Ecclesiastes explains that Yahweh will bless and reward people for the right things they do and punish people for the evil things they do. But this might not happen in this life. (See: bless, justice, falsegod and righteous and evil)

What value did the Israelites place on the Book of Ecclesiastes?

The Israelites have often questioned the value of this book. This is due in large part to its unusual wording and teachings. At times, it appears to disagree with the rest of Scripture. While many have questioned its authority, it has been affirmed to be Scripture. It gives valuable lessons concerning the uselessness of pursuing any goal other than to give Yahweh glory.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of "under the sun?"

"Under the sun" here is another way of saying "on the earth." When the author says that there is "nothing new under the sun," this means that every kind of thing has already happened before on the earth. While a particular event may not have specifically occurred before, something similar has already occurred.

How do I translate harsh or shocking passages?

Parts of the Book of Ecclesiastes can be shocking or surprising to read in Scripture. For example, "If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but if his heart is not satisfied with good and he is not buried with honor, then I say that a baby that is born dead is better off than he is" (6:3). The translator should allow these difficulties to remain and not try to make them less surprising.

How is life described in the Book of Ecclesiastes?

The author of Ecclesiastes concludes that everything in this life quickly passes away, like a vapor that disappears. A person's circumstances or character and even all of the things of this world have little or no significance apart from God. That is because God gives meaning to everything.

At the end of their life, people often say that the years of their life seemed short. The author of Ecclesiastes used the metaphor of vapor or breath to describe how life ends while it seems to be just beginning.

Ecclesiastes

1 [1]These are the words of the Teacher, the descendant of David and king in Jerusalem.

[2] "Meaningless! Meaningless!
says the Teacher.
"Absolutely meaningless!
Everything is meaningless!"

[3] What profit does a man gain from all the work
that he labors at under the sun?

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4 One generation goes, and another generation comes,
but the earth remains forever.

5 The sun rises,and it goes down
and hurries back to the place where it rises again.

6 The wind blows south
and circles around to the north,
always going around along its pathway
and coming back again.

7 All the rivers flow into the sea,
but the sea is never full.
To the place where the rivers go,
there they go again.

8 Everything becomes wearisome,
and no one can explain it.
The eye is not satisfied by what it sees,
nor is the ear fulfilled by what it hears.

9 Whatever has been is what will be,
and whatever has been done is what will be done.
There is nothing new under the sun.

10 Is there anything about which it may be said,
'Look, this is new'?
Whatever exists has already existed for a long time,
during ages which came long before us.

11 No one seems to remember the things that happened in ancient times,
and the things that happened much later and that will happen in the future
will not likely be remembered either."

12 I am the Teacher, and I have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. 13 I applied my mind to study and to search out by
wisdom everything that is done under heaven. That search is a burdensome task that God has given to the children of
mankind to be busy with. 14 I have seen all the deeds that are done under the sun, and look, they all are meaningless and
chasing the wind.
15 The twisted cannot be straightened!
The missing cannot be counted!

16 I have spoken to my heart, saying, "Look, I have acquired greater wisdom than all who were before me in Jerusalem. My
mind has seen great wisdom and knowledge." 17 So I applied my heart to know wisdom and also madness and folly. I came
to understand that this also was an attempt to shepherd the wind.
18 For in the abundance of wisdom there is much frustration,
and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

Ecclesiastes 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:2-11 and 15.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Tone

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The tone of this chapter is sad, or depressing. The author believes that everything in life is pointless. The metaphors in this chapter all describe the idea that nothing ever changes. This is also known as "fatalism."

Links:

Ecclesiastes 1:1 Notes Ecclesiastes intro

Ecclesiastes 1:2

"Meaningless! Meaningless! says the Teacher. "Absolutely meaningless! Everything is meaningless!"

This speaks of how everything in life vanishes and has no lasting value as if everything were like a disappearing vapor or breeze. Alternate translation: "'Like a vapor of mist vanishes and like a breeze in the wind disappears,' says the Teacher, 'everything vanishes and has no lasting value.'"

Ecclesiastes 1:3

What profit does a man gain from all the work that he labors at under the sun?

The author uses this rhetorical question to cause the reader to think deeply about important things. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "A man seems to gain no lasting benefit from all the work that he labors at under the sun." or "People seem to gain no lasting benefit from all the work that they labor at under the sun."

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. Alternate translation: "on the earth"

Ecclesiastes 1:4

General Information:

The writer is presenting the natural order of life as he understands it.

Ecclesiastes 1:5

hurries back to the place

This speaks of how the sun sets at the end of the day and is soon ready to rise again, as if it were a person that quickly ran from the place where it sets to the place from which it rises. Alternate translation: "quickly returns to the place" or "quickly goes to the place"

Ecclesiastes 1:7

General Information:

The writer continues with observations about the natural order.

Ecclesiastes 1:8

Everything becomes wearisome

"Everything becomes tiring." Since man is unable to explain these things, it becomes useless to try.

The eye is not satisfied by what it sees

Here the "eye" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "A person is not satisfied by what his eyes see"

nor is the ear fulfilled by what it hears

Here the "ear" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "nor is a person content by what his ears hear"

Ecclesiastes 1:9

General Information:

There is nothing new regarding man and his activities.

whatever has been done is what will be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whatever has happened before is what will happen again"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 1:10

Is there anything about which it may be said, 'Look, this is new'?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that man cannot say there is anything new. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing about which it may be said, 'Look, this is new.'"

about which it may be said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about which someone may say"

Ecclesiastes 1:11

that will happen in the future

"the things that will happen in the future"

will not likely be remembered either

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will not likely remember them either"

Ecclesiastes 1:13

I applied my mind

Here the author refers to himself by his "mind" to emphasize his thoughts. Alternate translation: "I determined" or "I applied myself"

to study and to search out

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how diligently he studied.

under heaven

This refers to things that are done on earth. Alternate translation: "on the earth"

children of mankind

"human beings"

Ecclesiastes 1:14

all the deeds that are done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that people do"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

look

The author uses this word to draw attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "indeed" or "really"

chasing the wind

The author says that everything that people do is as useless as if they were trying to control the wind. Alternate translation: "are as useless as trying to control the wind"

Ecclesiastes 1:15

The twisted cannot be straightened! The missing cannot be counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People cannot straighten things that are twisted! They cannot count what is not there"

Ecclesiastes 1:16

I have spoken to my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I have

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spoken to myself"

My mind has seen

Here the author refers to himself by his "mind" to emphasize what he has learned. Alternate translation: "I have gained" or "I have learned"

Ecclesiastes 1:17

I applied my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I determined" or "I applied myself"

madness and folly

The words "madness" and "folly" share similar meanings and refer to foolish thinking and behavior, respectively.

an attempt to shepherd the wind

The author says learning wisdom and madness and folly is as useless as trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

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2 [1]I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with happiness. So enjoy pleasure." But look, this also is meaningless.[2]I said about laughter, "It is crazy," and about pleasure, "What use is it?"
[3]I explored in my heart how to gratify myself with wine. I let my mind guide me with wisdom although I was still holding on to folly. I wanted to find out what is good for the children of mankind to do under heaven during the days of their lives.

[4]I accomplished great things. I built for myself houses and planted for myself vineyards.[5]I built for myself gardens and parks, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them.[6]I created pools of water to water a forest where trees were grown.
[7]I purchased male slaves and female slaves; I had slaves born in my palace. I also had large herds and flocks of livestock, much more than any king who ruled before me in Jerusalem.[8]I also accumulated for myself silver and gold, the treasures of kings and provinces. I got singers, both male and female, and many concubines, the delight of the children of men.[1]
[9]So I became greater and wealthier than all who were before me in Jerusalem, and my wisdom remained with me.
[10] Whatever my eyes desired, I did not withhold from them.
I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,
because my heart rejoiced in all my labor
and pleasure was my reward for all my labor.

[11] Then I looked on all the deeds that my hands had accomplished,
and on the labor that I had done,
but again, everything was meaningless—like chasing the wind.
There was no profit under the sun in it.

[12] Then I turned to consider wisdom,
and also madness and folly.
For what more can the man who becomes the next king do
than what the king has already done?

[13] Then I began to understand that wisdom has advantages over folly,
just as light is more profitable than darkness.

[14] The wise man uses his eyes in his head to see where he is going,
but the fool walks in darkness,
although I know
the same event happens to all of them.

[15]Then I said in my heart,
"What happens to the fool, will also happen to me.
So what difference does it make if I am very wise?"
I concluded in my heart,
"This too is meaningless."
[16] For the wise man, like the fool, is not remembered for very long.
In the days to come everything will have been long forgotten.
The wise man dies just like the fool dies.

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[17]So I detested life because all the work done under the sun was evil to me. This was because everything is meaningless—like chasing the wind.[18]I hated all my toil for which I had toiled under the sun because I must leave it behind to the man who comes after me.
[19]For who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will be master over everything under the sun that my labor and wisdom have built. This also is meaningless.[20]So I began to give my heart to despair over all the labor that I had done under the sun.
[21]For there might be someone who labors with wisdom, knowledge, and skill, but he will leave everything he has to a man who has not made any of it. This also is meaningless—a great injustice.[22]What profit does a man gain from all the work and from the striving of heart that he labors at under the sun?[23]Every day his work is painful and stressful, so at night his soul does not find rest. This also is meaningless.

[24]There is nothing better for a person than to simply eat and drink and find enjoyment in his labor. I saw that this truth comes from the hand of God.[25]For who can eat or who can have any kind of pleasure apart from God?
[26]For to a person who pleases him, God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy. However, to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and storing up so that he may give it away to someone who pleases God. This also is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

[1]Many modern translations interpret the last part of this verse in different ways: and many concubines, and everything that pleases men or and everything that pleases people.

Ecclesiastes 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:10-16.

Special concepts in this chapter

Pleasures

When the author thought about the pointlessness of life, he decided to fill it with pointless pleasures. He believed that this type of living would have no effect on the world. Therefore, he indulged in every type of pleasure.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Assumed knowledge

It is assumed that the author is going to reject the way of living in this chapter. He is certainly not encouraging this way of living even though he does not say this explicitly.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 2:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 2:1

I said in my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I said to myself"

I will test you with happiness

Here the word "you" refers to himself. The word "happiness" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "I will test myself with things that make me happy"

So enjoy pleasure

The word "pleasure" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "So I will enjoy things that please me"

this also is meaningless

"this also only lasted for a short time, like a temporary breeze"

Ecclesiastes 2:2

I said about laughter, "It is crazy,"

The direct quotation can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I said that laughter is crazy"

laughter

If your language has a special word for laughter about meaningless things, you might want to use it here.

What use is it?

The author uses a rhetorical question to emphasize that pleasure is useless. Alternate translation: "It is useless."

Ecclesiastes 2:3

I explored in my heart

This speaks of thinking hard for a long time as if it were exploring. Also, the author speaks of his feelings and his thoughts as if they were his "heart." Alternate translation: "I thought hard about"

to gratify myself with wine

"to use wine to make myself happy"

I let my mind guide me with wisdom

Here the author speaks of using the wisdom that he had been taught to guide himself as if this wisdom were a person who guided him. Alternate translation: "I thought about the things that wise people had taught me"

under heaven

This refers to things that are done on earth. Alternate

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translation: "on the earth"

during the days of their lives

"during the time that they are alive"

Ecclesiastes 2:4

I built for myself houses and planted for myself vineyards

The writer probably told people to do the work for him. Alternate translation: "I had people build houses and plant vineyards for me"

Ecclesiastes 2:5

I built for myself gardens and parks, and I planted

The writer probably told people to do the work. Alternate translation: "I had people build for me gardens and parks; I had them plant"

gardens and parks

These two words share similar meanings and refer to beautiful orchards of fruit trees.

Ecclesiastes 2:6

I created

The writer probably told people to do the work. Alternate translation: "I had them create"

to water a forest

"to provide water for a forest"

forest where trees were grown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "forest where trees grew"

Ecclesiastes 2:7

I had slaves born in my palace

"I had slaves that were born in my palace" or "My slaves bore children and they also were my slaves"

much more than any king

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "much more than any other king had"

Ecclesiastes 2:8

the treasures of kings and provinces

This refers to the gold and other wealth that neighboring countries were forced to pay to the king of Israel. Alternate translation: "that I acquired from the treasures of kings and the rulers of provinces"

provinces

Here "provinces" represents the rulers of the provinces. Alternate translation: "the rulers of provinces"

and many concubines, the delight of the children of men

This means that he had many concubines that he enjoyed sleeping with, as any man enjoys sleeping with women. Alternate translation: "I greatly enjoyed many concubines, as would delight any man"

Ecclesiastes 2:9

than all who were before me in Jerusalem

This refers to all the previous rulers of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "than all the kings who had ruled before me in Jerusalem"

my wisdom remained with me

This is an idiom. "I continued to act wisely" or "I continued to be wise"

Ecclesiastes 2:10

Whatever my eyes desired ... from them

Here the author refers to himself by his "eyes" to emphasize what he sees. Alternate translation: "Whatever I saw and desired ... from myself"

I did not withhold from them

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "I got for them"

I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his desires. This can be stated positively and the word "pleasure" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "I did not keep myself from any pleasure" or "I allowed myself to enjoy everything that made me happy"

my heart rejoiced

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his desires. Alternate translation: "I rejoiced"

Ecclesiastes 2:11

all the deeds that my hands had accomplished

Here the author refers to himself by his "hands." Alternate translation: "all that I had accomplished"

the labor that I had done

"the hard work that I had done"

like chasing the wind

The author says that everything that people do is as useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

There was no profit under the sun in it

"But it had no profit under the sun"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 2:12

madness and folly

The words "madness" and "folly" have similar meanings and refer to foolish thinking and behavior, respectively. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:17]

For what more can the man who becomes the next king do than what the king has already done?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize his point that the next king will not be able to do anything more valuable that what he had already done. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "For the next king who comes after the king can do nothing that a king before him has not already done."

the man who becomes the next king

"the man who succeeds the current king" or "the next king who comes after me"

Ecclesiastes 2:13

wisdom has advantages over folly, just as light is more profitable than darkness

This speaks of how wisdom is better than folly by comparing it to how light makes life better for people than darkness does.

Ecclesiastes 2:14

The wise man uses his eyes in his head to see where he is going

This speaks of a wise man making wise decisions as walking and paying attention to where he is going. Alternate translation: "The wise man is like a person who uses his eyes to see where he is going"

uses his eyes in his head to see

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "pays attention and looks to see"

the fool walks in darkness

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This compares a fool making bad decisions to someone walking in darkness. Alternate translation: "the fool is like a person who walks in the dark"

the same event

death

Ecclesiastes 2:15

I said in my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I said to myself"

So what difference does it make if I am very wise?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no benefit to being wise. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "So it makes no difference if I am very wise."

I concluded in my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I concluded"

Ecclesiastes 2:16

For the wise man, like the fool, is not remembered for very long

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People do not remember the wise man for very long, just as they do not remember the fool for very long"

everything will have been long forgotten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will have long forgotten everything"

Ecclesiastes 2:17

all the work done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the work that people do"

was evil to me

"troubled me"

like chasing the wind

The author says everything that people do is as useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 2:18

all my toil for which I had toiled

The word "toil" here is a metonym for the results of toiling. Alternate translation: "everything I had gained from toiling"

to the man who comes after me

"to the man who inherits it after me"

Ecclesiastes 2:19

For who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one knows the character the man who will inherit his wealth. Alternate translation: "For no one knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool."

he will be

The word "he" refers to the author's heir.

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

that my labor and wisdom have built

Here the author's "labor" and "wisdom" represent himself and the things he did in his wisdom. He probably had help with the literal buildings. Alternate translation: "that I worked very hard and wisely to build"

Ecclesiastes 2:20

I began to give my heart to despair

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I began to despair" or "I began to lose all hope"

Ecclesiastes 2:21

who labors with wisdom, knowledge, and skill

"who works wisely and skillfully, using the things that he has learned"

who has not made any of it

"who has not worked for any of it"

a great injustice

"a great disaster"

Ecclesiastes 2:22

What profit does a man gain from all the work and from the striving of heart that he labors at under the sun?

The author uses a rhetorical question to cause the reader to think deeply about important things. Translate "what profit does a man gain from all the work" as you did in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 2:23

painful and stressful

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how difficult the person's work is.

his soul does not find rest

Here man's mind is referred to as his "soul" to emphasize his deep thoughts. Alternate translation: "his mind does not rest" or "he continues to worry"

Ecclesiastes 2:24

the hand of God

Here God is represented by his "hand" to emphasize how he provides for people. Alternate translation: "from God"

Ecclesiastes 2:25

For who can eat or who can have any kind of pleasure apart from God?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no pleasure can be had without God's provision. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "For no one can eat or have any kind of pleasure apart from God."

Ecclesiastes 2:26

so that he may give it away to someone who pleases God

Possible meanings for the word "he" are 1) God or 2) the sinner. This also can be translated without making it clear who it is that gives the things that the sinner stored. Alternate translation: "so that the one who pleases God may have it"

like chasing the wind

The author speaks of everything that people do as being useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

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3 1 For everything there is an appointed time,
and a season for every matter under heaven.

2 There is a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to pull up plants,

3 a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build up.

4 There is a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

5 a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones,
a time to embrace other people, and a time to refrain from embracing.

6 There is a time to look for things and a time to stop looking,
a time to keep things and a time to throw away things,

7 a time to tear clothing and a time to repair clothing,
a time to keep silent and a time to speak.

8 There is a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

9 What profit does the worker gain in his labor? 10 I have seen the work that God has given to human beings to complete.
11 God has made everything suitable for its own time. He has also placed eternity in their hearts. But mankind cannot understand the deeds that God has done, from their beginning all the way to their end.
12 I know that there is nothing better for a person than to rejoice and to do good so long as he lives— 13 and that everyone should eat and drink, and should understand how to find enjoyment in his labor. This is God's gift to mankind.
14 I know that whatever God does lasts forever. Nothing can be added to it or taken away, because it is God who has done it so that people will approach him with honor.
15 Whatever exists has already existed;
whatever will exist has already existed.
God makes human beings seek hidden things.[1]

16 I have seen the wickedness that is under the sun,
where there should be justice,
and in place of righteousness, wickedness was there.

17 I said in my heart,
"God will judge
the righteous and the wicked
at the right time for every matter and every deed."

18 I said in my heart, "God tests human beings to show them that they are like animals."
19 For the fate of the children of mankind and the fate of animals is the same. The death of one is like the death of the other. The breath is the same for all of them. There is no advantage for mankind over the animals. Everything is meaningless. 20 Everything is going to the same place. Everything comes from the dust, and everything returns to the dust.
21 Who knows whether the spirit of mankind goes upward and the spirit of animals goes downward into the earth?[2] 22 So again I realized that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy his work, for that is his assignment. Who can bring him back to see what happens after him?

[1] Instead of God makes human beings seek hidden things, other modern translations interpret this line in different ways.
[2] Some modern translations have Who knows the spirit of mankind, which goes upward, and the spirit of animals, which goes downward into the earth?

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Ecclesiastes 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:1-8 and 3:15.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Parallelism

The chapter uses parallelism with the phrase, "a time to." This gives the quotation a poetic style. Their overall purpose is to show that Yahweh directs the events of the world and therefore, they have purpose.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 3:1

General Information:

The writer uses merisms to describe various aspects of life from one extreme to the other.

every matter

"every event" or "every activity" or "everything that can happen"

under heaven

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 3:2

a time to pull up plants

Possible meanings are 1) "a time to harvest" or 2) "a time to uproot."

Ecclesiastes 3:4

General Information:

The writer continues with merisms to describe various aspects of life from one extreme to the other.

Ecclesiastes 3:5

embrace

to hold someone in your arms to show love or friendship

Ecclesiastes 3:6

General Information:

The writer continues with merisms to describe various aspects of life from one extreme to the other.

Ecclesiastes 3:8

General Information:

The writer concludes using merisms to describe various aspects of life from one extreme to the other.

Ecclesiastes 3:9

What profit does the worker gain in his labor?

This is a thought-provoking question to focus the reader on the next discussion topic. Translate "What profit does ... gain" as you did in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 3:11

God has made everything suitable for its own time

"God has fixed a time that is right for everything to happen" or "God has set a time that is right for each thing to happen:

placed eternity in their hearts

Here the word "their" refers to human beings. Here the "hearts" of the people represent their thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "placed eternity in the hearts of human beings" or "caused people to think about eternal things"

from their beginning all the way to their end

This refers to the beginning and the end and all that is in between.

Ecclesiastes 3:13

should understand how to find enjoyment

"should learn how to enjoy" or "should enjoy"

Ecclesiastes 3:14

Nothing can be added to it or taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one can add anything to or take anything away from it"

Ecclesiastes 3:16

I have seen the wickedness ... wickedness was there

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how common wicked behavior is.

in place of righteousness

"where there should be righteousness"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 3:17

I said in my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I said to myself"

the righteous and the wicked

This refers to righteous and wicked people. Alternate translation: "those who are righteous and those who are wicked" or "the righteous people and the wicked people"

every matter and every deed

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to every action that people do.

Ecclesiastes 3:18

I said in my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "I said to myself"

they are like animals

Here the author says that human beings are like animals. In the next verse the author explains clearly how humans are like animals.

Ecclesiastes 3:19

is the same

"is the same for both of them"

The breath is the same for all of them

"All of them breathe same"

There is no advantage for mankind over the animals

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"Mankind is no better off than the animals"
Ecclesiastes 3:20
Everything is going to the same place
This means that all people and all animals die and decay and become part of the soil. Alternate translation: "Everything dies and goes to the same place"
dust
soil
Ecclesiastes 3:21
Who knows whether the spirit ... into the earth?
The author asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one truly knows what happens after people and animals die. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one knows whether the spirit ... into the earth."
Ecclesiastes 3:22
there is nothing better for a person than to
See how you translated this phrase in Ecclesiastes 3:12.
Who can bring him back to see what happens after him?
The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one will see what happens after he dies. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one of us knows what happens to us after we die."

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4 [1]Once again I thought about all the oppression that is done under the sun.
And behold, the tears of oppressed people,
and they had no one to comfort them!
Power was in the hand of their oppressors,
and there was no one to comfort them!
[2] So I considered those
who are already dead
more fortunate than the living,
who are still alive.

[3] However, more fortunate than both of them
is the one who has not yet lived,
the one who has not seen any of the evil acts
that are done under the sun.

[4]Then I saw that every act of labor and every skillful work became the envy of one's neighbor. This also is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

[5] The fool folds his hands and does not work,
so his food is his own flesh.

[6] But better is a handful of profit with quiet work
than two handfuls with the labor
that tries to shepherd the wind.

[7]I returned and I saw something meaningless under the sun.
[8] There is the kind of man who is alone.
He does not have a companion, no son or brother,
and yet there is no end to all his work,
and his eyes are not satisfied with gaining wealth.
He wonders, "For whom am I toiling
and depriving myself of pleasure?"
This also is meaningless—
a bad situation.

[9] Two people work better than one;
together they can earn a good wage for their labor.

[10] For if one falls,
the other can lift up his friend.
However, woe to the one who is alone when he falls
if there is no one to lift him up.

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[11] If two lie down together, they can be warm,
but how can one be warm alone?

[12] One man alone can be overpowered,
but two can withstand an attack,
and a three-strand rope is not quickly broken.

[13]It is better to be a poor but wise youth than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to listen to warnings.[14]This is true even if the young man becomes king from prison, or even if he was born poor in his kingdom.
[15]I saw everyone who was alive and was walking around under the sun, along with a youth who was to rise up to take his place.[16]There is no end to all the people who want to obey the new king, but later many of them will no longer praise him. Surely this also is meaningless—like chasing the wind.

Ecclesiastes 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:1-3, 4:5-6, and 4:8-12.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony

The teacher looks at the oppression in the world and is saddened by it, but he is the king and has the power to change things. He also laments being alone even though he has many wives, children, and concubines.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 4:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 4:1

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

behold, the tears

"I looked and I saw"

the tears of oppressed people

Here "tears" represent weeping. Alternate translation: "the oppressed people were weeping"

Power was in the hand of their oppressors

This means that their oppressors were powerful. Here their "hand" represents what thet possess. Alternate translation: "Their oppressors were powerful"

Ecclesiastes 4:2

the living, who are still alive

The word "living" is a nominal adjective that refers to people who are living. The phrase "those who are still alive" means the same thing as "the living." Alternate translation: "the people who are still alive"

Ecclesiastes 4:3

more fortunate than both of them is the one who has not yet lived

"the one who has not yet been born is better off than both of them"

both of them

This refers to those who are dead and to those who are alive. Alternate translation: "both those who are dead and those who are living"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 4:4

became the envy of one's neighbor

The word "envy" may be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "made one's neighbor envious"

the envy of one's neighbor

possible meanings are 1) The neighbor envies the object his neighbor made, or 2) the neighbor envies the skills his neighbor has.

like chasing the wind

The author speaks of everything that people do as being useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

Ecclesiastes 4:5

The fool folds his hands and does not work

To fold the hands is a gesture of laziness and is another way of saying that the person refuses to work. Alternate translation: "The fool refuses to work"

so his food is his own flesh

This speaks of a person destroying himself as if he were eating his own body. Alternate translation: "as a result, he causes his own ruin" or "and as a result, he destroys himself"

Ecclesiastes 4:6

a handful

"a small amount"

two handfuls

"a large amount." It is understood that this refer to profit gained. Alternate translation: "two handfuls of profit" or "a large amount of profit"

that tries to shepherd the wind

The author speaks of everything that people do as being useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how

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you translated a similar phrase in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]
Ecclesiastes 4:7
I returned and I saw something meaningless
Possible meanings for "returned" are 1) he returned to thinking. Alternate translation: "I thought again and and I saw something meaningless" or 2) he returned to seeing something meaningless. Alternate translation: "Again I saw something meaningless"
under the sun
This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]
Ecclesiastes 4:8
no son or brother
This person has no family. Alternate translation: "he has no family"
his eyes are not satisfied
Here the whole person is represented by his "eyes" to emphasize his desires. Alternate translation: "he is not satisfied"
For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure
"Will anyone benefit from me working hard and not enjoying myself"
Ecclesiastes 4:10
woe to the one who is alone when he falls
"the person who is alone when he falls is really in trouble"
Ecclesiastes 4:11
If two lie down together, they can be warm
The writer speaks of two people keeping each other warm on a cold night. Alternate translation: "If two people lie down together at night, they can be warm"
how can one be warm alone?
This refers to a person lying down. The author use this rhetorical question to emphasize that two people can keep each other warm but one person cannot. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "a person cannot be warm when he is alone." or "a person who lies down alone cannot be warm."
Ecclesiastes 4:12
One man alone can be overpowered
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone can overpower a person who is alone"
but two
"but two people"
withstand an attack
"defend themselves against an attack"
a three-strand rope
This speaks of three people together being stronger as if they were a three-strand rope. Alternate translation: "three people are even stronger, like a three-strand rope that"
a three-strand rope is not quickly broken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people cannot easily break a rope made with three strands"
Ecclesiastes 4:13
wise youth
"wise young man"
who no longer knows how
Here knowing represents willingness. Alternate translation: "who is no longer willing"
Ecclesiastes 4:14
from prison
"after being in prison"
he was born poor in his kingdom
This means that he had poor parents. Alternate translation: "he was born to poor parents who lived in the land that he will someday rule"
Ecclesiastes 4:15
General Information:
Instead of choosing the wise youth, the people choose the king's son, who may not be any wiser.
alive ... walking around
The words "alive" and "walking around" mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize living people.
under the sun
This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]
Ecclesiastes 4:16
There is no end to all the people
This is an exaggeration used to emphasize a large number of people. Alternate translation: "There are very many people"
like chasing the wind
The author speaks of everything that people do as being useless as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

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5 [1]Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do
not understand that they are doing what is wrong.

[2] Do not be too quick to speak with your mouth,
and do not let your heart be too quick
to bring any matter up before God.
God is in heaven,
but you are on earth,
so let your words be few.

[3] If you have too many things to do and worry about, you will probably have bad dreams.
The more words you speak, the more foolish things you will probably say.

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[4]When you make a vow to God, do not delay to do it, for God has no pleasure in fools. Do what you vow you will do.[5]It is better not to make a vow than to make one that you do not carry out.
[6]Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin. Do not say to the priest's messenger, "That vow was a mistake." Why make God angry by vowing falsely, provoking God to destroy the work of your hands?[7]For when there are many dreams and many words, they are meaningless. Instead, fear God!

[8]When you see the poor being oppressed and robbed of just and right treatment in your province, do not be astonished as if no one knows, because there are people in power who watch those under them, and there are even higher ones over them.[9]In addition, the produce of the land is for everyone, and the king himself takes produce from the fields.

[10] Whoever loves silver will not be satisfied with silver,
nor will he who loves wealth be satisfied with his income.
This, too, is meaningless.

[11] As prosperity increases,
so also do the people who consume it.
What advantage in wealth is there to the owner
except to watch it with his eyes?

[12] The sleep of a laborer is sweet,
whether he eats little or a lot,
but the wealth of a rich person
does not allow him to sleep well.

[13]There is an evil that I have seen under the sun:
riches hoarded by the owner, resulting in his own misery.
[14] When the rich man loses his wealth through bad luck,
his own son, one whom he has fathered,
is left with nothing in his hands.

[15] As a man comes from his mother's womb,
so also he will leave naked.
He can take none of the fruits of his labor
in his hand.

[16]Another evil is
that as a person comes, so he goes away.
So what profit is there for him
who labors for the wind?
[17] During his days he eats with darkness
and is greatly distressed with sickness and anger.

[18]Look, what I have seen to be good and suitable is for a person to eat and drink and to find enjoyment in his labor as he labors under the sun during the days of this life that God has given him. For this is man's assignment.
[19]Every person to whom God has given riches and wealth and the ability to receive his share and rejoice in his labor—this is a gift from God.[20]For he does not call to mind very often the days of his life, because God makes him keep busy with the things that he enjoys doing.

Ecclesiastes 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 5:2-3, and 5:10-17.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Materialism

The author describes the pointlessness of pursuing material things. This is known as "materialism." Those who pursue after things will always want more. At the end of their life, they will not be able to use these things.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 5:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 5:1

Guard your steps

Here "steps" are a metonym for a person's conduct. Alternate translation: "Be careful how you conduct yourself"

Ecclesiastes 5:2

Do not be too quick ... do not let your heart be too quick

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that you should think first before you speak to God about a matter.

to speak with your mouth

Here the phrase "with your mouth" emphasizes and describes a person speaking. Alternate translation: "to speak"

do not let your heart

Here a person is represented by his "heart" to emphasize his emotions and desires. Alternate translation: "do not"

let your words be few

"do not say too much"

Ecclesiastes 5:4

do not delay to do it, for God has no pleasure in fools

It is implied that it is foolish to delay in fulfilling a vow that you have made to God. Alternate translation: "do not foolishly delay in doing it, because God is not pleased with foolish people"

Ecclesiastes 5:6

Do not allow your mouth to cause your flesh to sin

Here a person's "mouth" represents a person's speech, and the person himself is represented by his "flesh." Alternate translation: "Do not let what you say cause you to sin"

Why make God angry by vowing falsely, provoking God to destroy the work of your hands?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that it is foolish to make a vow that you will not keep. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It would be foolish to make God angry by vowing falsely, provoking God to destroy the work of your hands."

destroy the work of your hands

Here a person is represented by his "hands." Alternate translation: "destroy everything you do"

Ecclesiastes 5:8

the poor being oppressed and robbed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people oppressing the poor and robbing them"

the poor

This refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "those who are poor" or "poor people"

just and right treatment

The words "just" and "right" mean basically the same thing and refer to the kind of treatment that people deserve. Alternate translation: "fair treatment"

do not be astonished as if no one knows, because there are people

"do not be surprised, for there are people

there are people in power

"there are people with authority"

even higher ones over them

There are other men who rule over the men in authority. Alternate translation: "men who have even more authority than they do"

Ecclesiastes 5:9

the produce of the land ... produce from the fields

The word "produce" may be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "the food that the land produces ... crops from the fields"

Ecclesiastes 5:11

As prosperity increases

The word "prosperity" may be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "As a person becomes more prosperous"

so also do the people who consume it

Possible meanings are 1) "so also the person spends more money" or 2) "so also there will be more people who use his wealth."

who consume it

This speaks of people spending wealth as if they were "eating" it. Alternate translation: "who use it"

What advantage in wealth is there to the owner except to watch it with his eyes?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that the wealthy do not benefit from their wealth. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The only benefit that the owner has from wealth is that he can look at it"

Ecclesiastes 5:12

The sleep of a laborer is sweet

This speaks of a person's sleep being fulfilling and peaceful as if it were sweet like something he eats. Alternate translation: "The sleep of a laborer is peaceful"

whether he eats little or a lot

"whether he eats a little bit of food or a lot of food"

but the wealth of a rich person does not allow him to sleep well

"but the wealth of a rich person keeps him awake at night."

This speaks of a rich person not being able to sleep because he is worried about his money as if his money were a person that would not allow him to sleep. Alternate translation: "but rich people do not sleep well because they worry about their money"

Ecclesiastes 5:13

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

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riches hoarded by the owner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "an owner hoards riches"

Ecclesiastes 5:14

through bad luck

Possible meanings are 1) "through misfortune" or 2) "through a bad business deal."

his own son, one whom he has fathered, is left with nothing in his hands

Here the phrase "in his hands" represents ownership. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he leaves no possession for his own son"

Ecclesiastes 5:15

As a man comes from his mother's womb ... he will leave naked

It is implied that a man is naked when he is born. In addition to being without clothing, here the word "naked" emphasizes that people are born without any possessions. Alternate translation: "As a man is naked and owns nothing when he is born ... he will leave this life the same way"

comes from his mother's womb

"is born"

he will leave

This refers to dying. Alternate translation: "he will die"

He can take none of the fruits of his labor in his hand

Here a man's possessions are spoken of as if they are fruit that he grew with his labor. Alternate translation: "He can not take any of his possessions with him"

Ecclesiastes 5:16

as a person comes, so he goes away

This refers to the birth and death of a person and expresses the same idea as the previous verse. This refers to women as well as men. Alternate translation: "as people bring nothing into the world when they are born, so they take nothing with them when they die and leave this world"

So what profit is there for him who labors for the wind?

The writer uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no benefit in working for the wind. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one gets any profit in laboring for the wind."

labors for the wind

Possible meanings are 1) This speaks of the person receiving no lasting profit as if he were trying to control the wind. Alternate translation: "tries to shepherd the wind" or "work that is as useless as trying to shepherd the wind" or 2) This implies that the person only receives the air that he breaths as his profit. Alternate translation: "labors to receive the air he breathes"

Ecclesiastes 5:17

During his days he eats with darkness

This speaks of a person mourning throughout his life as if he always ate in darkness. Here "darkness" represents sadness and mourning. Alternate translation: "He spends his life in mourning and sadness"

his days

Here a person's "days" represent his life. Alternate translation: "his life"

is greatly distressed with sickness and anger

The words "sickness" and "anger" can be expressed as adjectives. Alternate translation: "suffers greatly, being sick and angry"

Ecclesiastes 5:18

Look

The author uses this word here to draw his reader's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention" or "Listen"

what I have seen to be good and suitable

Here the words "good" and "suitable" mean basically the same thing. The second intensifies the meaning of the first. Alternate translation: "what I have seen to be the best thing to do"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in Ecclesiastes 1:3. Alternate translation: "on the earth"

during the days of this life that God has given him

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "as long as God allows him to live"

For this is man's assignment

Possible meanings are 1) "For this is man's reward" or 2) "For these are the things that he allows man to do"

Ecclesiastes 5:19

riches and wealth

These two words mean basically the same thing. They refer to money and the things that a person can buy with money.

to receive his share

"to accept what he is given"

Ecclesiastes 5:20

he does not call to mind

Here the word "he" refers to the person to whom God has given a gift. The phrase "call to mind" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "he does not remember" or "he does not think about"

the days of his life

This refers to the things that happened during his lifetime. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the things that have happened during his lifetime"

keep busy

"stay busy"

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6 [1]There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it weighs heavy on men.[2]God gives riches, wealth, and honor to a man so that he lacks nothing that he desires for himself, but then God gives him no ability to enjoy them. Instead, a stranger enjoys them. This is meaningless and a terrible affliction.

[3]If a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but if his heart is not satisfied with good and he is not buried, then I say that a baby that is born dead is better off than he is.[4]Such a baby is born without meaning and passes away in darkness, and its name is covered in darkness.
[5]Although this child does not see the sun or know anything, it has rest even though that man did not.[6]Even if a man should live for two thousand years but does not learn to enjoy good things, he goes to the same place as everyone else.

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7 All a man's labor is for his mouth,
yet his appetite is not satisfied.

8 Indeed, what advantage has the wise person
over the fool?
What advantage does the poor man have
even if he knows how to act in front of other people?

9 What the eye sees
is better than what the soul wanders after.
This also is meaningless—
like chasing the wind.

10 Whatever has existed has already been given its name,
and what mankind is like has already been known.
So it has become useless for a man to dispute
with the one who is stronger than he is.

11 The more words there are,
the more meaningless they become.
What advantage is that to a man?

12 For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days he passes through like a shadow? Who can tell a person what will happen under the sun after he is gone?

Ecclesiastes 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 6:7-11.

Special concepts in this chapter

Satisfaction

While a person may be given a great many things, they are worthless and provide no sense of satisfaction or peace. It is assumed that only Yahweh can provide these things to man. Solomon is depressed that he had everything he could have ever wanted in life, but they were not enough to give him satisfaction or peace.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 6:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 6:1

it weighs heavy on men

Here evil is spoken of as something that is a heavy load to carry. Alternate translation: "it causes hardship for people"

Ecclesiastes 6:2

riches, wealth

These two words mean basically the same thing. They refer to money and the things that a person can buy with money.

he lacks nothing

This is a double negative. Alternate translation: "he has everything"

God gives him no ability

"God does not give him the ability"

Ecclesiastes 6:3

fathers a hundred children

"fathers 100 children." This is also applicable to people with fewer than 100 children. Alternate translation: "fathers many children"

lives many years, so that the days of his years are many

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. Alternate translation: "lives many years"

his heart is not satisfied with good

This refers to a man by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. Alternate translation: "he is not content with good things"

he is not buried

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "no one buries him at all" or 2) he receives no honor, "no one buries him properly."

Ecclesiastes 6:4

Such a baby is born without meaning

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"Such a baby is born for nothing"

passes away in darkness

This speaks of the death of the baby being as unexplainable as "darkness." Alternate translation: "dies unexplainably"

its name is covered in darkness

This speaks of no one knowing the baby's name as if it were a hidden object. Alternate translation: "no one knows its name"

Ecclesiastes 6:6

Even if a man should live for two thousand years

This exaggerates the great number of years a man might live to show that it does not matter how long a person lives if he does not enjoy the good things in life.

two thousand years

"2,000 years"

he goes to the same place as everyone else

This means that he dies like all other people. Alternate translation: "he dies and go to the same place as everyone else" or "he goes to the grave just like everyone else"

Ecclesiastes 6:7

is for his mouth

Here putting food in a man's mouth represents feeding him. Alternate translation: "is to put food in his mouth" or "is to feed him"

his appetite is not satisfied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he does not satisfy his appetite"

Ecclesiastes 6:8

what advantage has the wise person over the fool?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that a wise person does not have any more lasting benefits than a fool. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "it seems the wise person has no advantage over the fool."

What advantage does the poor man have even if he knows how to act in front of other people?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that a poor man does not have any more lasting benefits than someone else. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The poor man has no advantage even if he knows how to act in front of other people."

how to act

"how to conduct himself"

Ecclesiastes 6:9

What the eye sees

A person can see these things because he already has them. Alternate translation: "What a person has"

what the soul wanders after

This refers to things that a person wants but does not have. Alternate translation: "what a person wants but does not have"

meaningless ... chasing the wind

Both phrases are metaphors that emphasize the idea of things being useless and futile.

chasing the wind

The author speaks of everything that people do as being useless, as if they were trying to control the wind. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

Ecclesiastes 6:10

Whatever has existed has already been given its name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have already named everything that exists"

what mankind is like has already been known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people already know what mankind is like"

the one who is stronger than he is

"God, who is the stronger than he is"

Ecclesiastes 6:11

The more words there are

"The more words that people speak"

the more meaningless they become

The more a person speaks, the more likely he will speak about meaningless things. Alternate translation: "the more meaningless those words are"

What advantage is that to a man?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no advantage for a man to talk a lot. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "That is no advantage to a man."

Ecclesiastes 6:12

For who knows what is good for a person ... he passes through like a shadow?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no person truly knows what is good for man. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one knows what is good for a person ... he passes through like a shadow."

in life, during the few and meaningless days he passes through like a shadow

This speaks of how life passes quickly by saying that it is like a shadow that quickly disappears. The phrase "numbered days" emphasizes that a person's life is short. Alternate translation: "during his futile, short life, which he passes through as quickly as a shadow passes by"

Who can tell a person ... after he is gone?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one knows what will happen after a person dies. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can tell a person ... after he is gone."

what will happen under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated "under the sun" in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

after he is gone

This is a polite expression for death. Alternate translation: "after he dies"

7

1 A good name is better than costly perfume,
and the day of death is better than the day of birth.

2 It is better to go to a house of mourning

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than to a house of feasting,
for mourning comes to all people at the end of life,
so living people must take this to heart.

3 Grief is better than laughter,
for after sadness of face comes gladness of heart.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning,
but the heart of fools is in the house of feasting.

5 It is better to listen to the rebuke of the wise
than to listen to the song of fools.

6 For like the crackling of thorns burning under a pot,
so also is the laughter of fools.
This too is meaningless.

7 Extortion certainly makes a wise man foolish,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.

8 Better is the end of a matter than the beginning;
and the people patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit.

9 Do not be quick to anger in your spirit,
for anger resides in the hearts of fools.

10 Do not say, "Why were the days of old better than these?"
For it is not because of wisdom that you ask this question.

11 Wisdom, like an inheritance, is good.
It benefits those who see the sun.

12 For wisdom provides protection
as money can provide protection,
but the advantage of knowledge
is that wisdom gives life to whoever has it.

13 Consider the deeds of God:
Who can straighten out
anything he has made crooked?

14 When times are good, live happily in that good,
but when times are bad, consider this:
God has allowed both
to exist side by side.
For this reason, no one will find out
anything that is coming after him.

15 In my meaningless life I have seen everything.
There is a righteous person who perishes in spite of his righteousness,
and there is a wicked person who lives a long life in spite of his evil deeds.
16 Do not be self-righteous,
wise in your own eyes.

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Why should you destroy yourself?

17 Do not be too wicked
or foolish.
Why should you die before your time?

18 It is good that you should take hold of this wisdom,
and that you should not let go of righteousness.
For the person who fears God will meet all his obligations.[1]

19 Wisdom is powerful in the wise man,
more than ten rulers in a city.

20 There is not a righteous man on earth
who does good and never sins.

21 Do not listen to every word that is spoken,
because you might hear your servant curse you.

22 For very many times, your heart knows,
even you have cursed others.

23 All this have I proven by wisdom. I said,
"I will be wise,"
but it was more than I could be.

24 Wisdom is far off and very deep.
Who can find it?

25 I turned my heart to learn and examine
and seek wisdom and the explanations of reality,
and to understand that evil is stupid
and that folly is madness.

26 I found that more bitter than death
is any woman
whose heart is full of snares and nets,
and whose hands are chains.
Whoever pleases God will escape from her,
but the sinner will be caught by her.

27 "Consider what I have discovered," says the Teacher.
"I have been adding one discovery to another in order to find an explanation of reality.
28 This is what I am still looking for,
but I have not found it.
I did find one righteous man among a thousand,
but a woman among all those I did not find.

29 I have discovered only this:
God created humanity upright,
but they have gone away looking for many difficulties."

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[1]Instead of will meet all his obligations, many modern translations have different interpretations of this difficult passage.

Ecclesiastes 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:1-26.

Special concepts in this chapter

Advice

This chapter gives a series of disconnected pieces of advice. Translators should not try to smooth the transitions between these pieces of advice. The advice in these statements do not apply in every situation. Therefore, they should be seen as "good ideas."

Links:

Ecclesiastes 7:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 7:1

A good name

Here a person's "name" is used to represent their reputation. Alternate translation: "A good reputation"

Ecclesiastes 7:2

must take this to heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "must think seriously about this"

Ecclesiastes 7:3

sadness of face

This refers to being sad. Alternate translation: "an experience that makes a person sad"

gladness of heart

Here the word "heart" refers to a person's thoughts and emotions. "Gladness" describes either 1) the state of the emotions of being happy and peaceful or 2) the ability to understand the truth. Alternate translation: "right thinking"

Ecclesiastes 7:4

The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning

Here wise people are referred to by their "hearts." This speaks of the wise person mourning as being in a house of mourning. Alternate translation: "Wise people think deeply about death"

but the heart of fools is in the house of feasting

Here foolish people are referred to by their "hearts." This speaks of foolish people thinking only about what makes them happy as being in a house of feasting. Alternate translation: "but foolish people think only about enjoying themselves"

the house of mourning ... the house of feasting

These phrases refer to what happens in these places.

Ecclesiastes 7:5

to the rebuke of the wise

The word "rebuke" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "when wise people rebuke you"

to listen to the song of fools

"to listen to fools sing"

Ecclesiastes 7:6

For like the crackling of thorns burning under a pot, so also is the laughter of fools

This speaks of how listening to fools talk and laugh will teach you nothing, as if their speech and laughter were the sound of burning thorns. Alternate translation: "For listening to the laughter of fools will not teach a man any more than if he were listening to the crackling of thorns burning under a pot"

Ecclesiastes 7:7

Extortion

This refers to forcing someone to give money or other valuable items to another so that the other person does not harm him. It is considered wrong.

makes a wise man foolish

Possible meanings are 1) "turns the wise man into a foolish man" or 2) "makes the advice of the wise man appear to be foolish advice."

corrupts the heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the mind. Alternate translation: "ruins a person's ability to think and judge rightly"

Ecclesiastes 7:8

the people patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit

Here the word "spirit" refers to a person's attitude. Alternate translation: "patient people are better than proud people" or "a patient attitude is better than a prideful attitude"

Ecclesiastes 7:9

Do not be quick to anger in your spirit

Here the word "spirit" refers to a person's attitude. Alternate translation: "Do not become angry quickly" or "Do not have a bad temper"

anger resides in the hearts of fools

This speaks of a person being full of anger as if the anger lived inside him. This speaks of the anger being in the person's heart because the "heart" is thought to be the source of a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "foolish people are full of anger"

Ecclesiastes 7:10

Why were the days of old better than these?

The person asks this rhetorical question in order to complain about the present time. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Things were better in the past than they are now."

it is not because of wisdom that you ask this question

Here the author uses irony to rebuke the person's question. Alternate translation: "if you were wise you would not ask this question"

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Ecclesiastes 7:11

those who see the sun

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "those who are alive"

Ecclesiastes 7:12

the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life

Possible meanings are 1) that the writer uses the words "knowledge" and "wisdom" to mean the same thing, or 2) "the advantage of knowing wisdom is that it gives life."

gives life to whoever has it

This speaks of how wisdom helps to preserve a person's life as if it gave life to that person. When a person is wise he makes good decisions that help him to live a more prosperous and longer life. Alternate translation: "preserves a person's life" or "helps a person to make good decisions and to live a longer life"

Ecclesiastes 7:13

Who can straighten out anything he has made crooked?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can change something that God has done. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can straighten out anything he has made crooked."

Ecclesiastes 7:14

When times are good ... when times are bad

The word "times" is an idiom for "things happening." Alternate translation: "When good things happen ... when bad things happen"

live happily in that good

"be happy about those good things"

both to exist side by side

The phrase "side by side" is an idiom that means "this one" and "this one." Alternate translation: "both to exist" or "there to be both good and bad"

anything that is coming after him

Possible meanings are 1) "anything that happens in the future" or 2) "anything that happens to him after he dies."

Ecclesiastes 7:15

There is a righteous person who perishes in spite of his righteousness, and there is a wicked person who lives a long life in spite of his evil deeds.

The phrases "righteous person" and "wicked person" refer to any righteous or wicked person or people. "There are righteous people who perish in spite of their righteousness, and there are wicked people who live a long life in spite of their evil deeds."

in spite of his righteousness

"even though he is righteous"

in spite of his evil deeds

"even though he is evil"

Ecclesiastes 7:16

self-righteous, wise in your own eyes

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis.

Do not be self-righteous

"Do not think that you are more righteous than you actually are"

wise in your own eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "being wise in your own opinion" or "being wise according to your own judgement"

Why should you destroy yourself?

The writer uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that being self-righteous destroys a person. Alternate translation: "There is no reason to destroy yourself." or "If you think this way you will destroy yourself."

Ecclesiastes 7:17

Why should you die before your time?

The author uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no reason for people to do things that will cause them to die early. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no reason for you to die sooner than you should."

Ecclesiastes 7:18

take hold of this wisdom

This speaks of striving to be wise as if "wisdom" were an object that a person could hold on to. Alternate translation: "commit yourself to this wisdom"

you should not let go of righteousness

This speaks of striving to be righteous as if "righteousness" were an object that a person could hold on to. Alternate translation: "you should not stop trying to be righteous" or "you should keep trying to be righteous"

will meet all his obligations

"will do everything that God expects of him"

Ecclesiastes 7:19

Wisdom is powerful in the wise man, more than ten rulers in a city

"Wisdom makes a man powerful; it makes him more powerful than ten rulers in a city"

Ecclesiastes 7:20

does good and never sins

"does good things and does not sin"

Ecclesiastes 7:21

every word that is spoken

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that people say"

Ecclesiastes 7:22

For very many times, your heart knows, even you have cursed others

"For even you have cursed others very many times, and your heart knows it." The words "many times" placed at the beginning of the sentence and the word "even" before "you" emphasize that the reader is guilty and has been guilty many times.

your heart knows

The heart here is a metonym for the ability to think. "you certainly know."

Ecclesiastes 7:23

All this have I proven

here the word "this" refers to all of the things the author has written about. Alternate translation: "All this that I have already written about have I proven"

it was more than I could be

"it was beyond my ability to understand" or "but I was not able to do it"

Ecclesiastes 7:24

far off and very deep

This speaks of wisdom being difficult to understand as if it were something located far away or in a very deep place. Alternate translation: "difficult to understand"

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Who can find it?
The writer uses this rhetorical question to emphasize the difficulty in understanding wisdom. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can understand it."
Ecclesiastes 7:25
I turned my heart
Here the word "heart" refers to the mind. Also, here the word "turned" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I directed my thoughts" or "I determined"
the explanations of reality
"the reason for things." This word "explanations" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "how to explain various things in life"
Ecclesiastes 7:26
any woman whose heart is full of snares and nets, and whose hands are chains
The writer says that the seductive woman is like traps that hunters use to catch animals. The author speaks of a woman being seductive as if she traps men like a hunter traps animals. Her "heart" represents her thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "any woman who traps men by seducing them"
snares and nets
These two words both refer to ways in which people trap animals to emphasize how the woman traps men.
whose hands are chains
Here the word "hands" refers to her power and control. This speaks of her being seductive as if hands were chains that she bound people with. Alternate translation: "from whom no one can escape"
the sinner will be caught by her
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she will capture the sinner"
Ecclesiastes 7:27
adding one discovery to another
The word "discovery" can be expressed as a verb. The word "adding" here is used as an idiom. Alternate translation: "discovering one thing after another"
in order to find an explanation of reality
This word "explanation" can be expressed as a verb. See how the phrase "explanations of reality" is translated in [Ecclesiastes 7:25]
Ecclesiastes 7:28
one righteous man among a thousand
"1 righteous man among 1,000." Only one righteous man was found in a group of 1,000 people.
a woman among all those
There were no righteous women found in a group of 1,000 people.
Ecclesiastes 7:29
they have gone away looking for many difficulties
Possible meanings are 1) "they have made many sinful plans" or 2) "they have made their own lives difficult."
they have gone away
Here the word "they" refers to "humanity." This speaks of humanity changing from being upright to not being upright as if they were going from one place to another.

8

1 Who is a wise man?
Who knows what the events in life mean?
Wisdom in a man causes his face to shine,
and the hardness of his face is changed.

2 I advise you to obey the king's command because of God's oath to protect him. 3 Do not hurry out of his presence, and do not stand in support of something wrong, for the king does whatever he desires. 4 The king's word rules, so who will say to him, "What are you doing?"

5 Whoever keeps the king's commands avoids harm.
A wise man's heart recognizes the proper course and time of action.

6 For every matter there is a correct response and a time to respond,
because the troubles of man are great.

7 No one knows what is coming next.
Who can tell him what is coming?

8 No one has power over the wind to restrain it,[1]
and so, no one has power over the day of his death.
No one is discharged from the army during a battle,
and wickedness will not rescue those who are its slaves.

9 I have realized all this; I have applied my heart to every kind of work that is done under the sun. There is a time when a person exercises authority over another person to that person's hurt.[2]

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[10]So I saw the wicked buried publicly. They were taken from the holy area and buried and were praised by people in the city where they had done their wicked deeds. This also is meaningless.[3]
[11]When a sentence against an evil crime is not executed quickly, it entices the hearts of human beings to do evil.
[12]Even though a sinner does evil a hundred times and still lives a long time, yet I know that it will be better for those who respect God, for those who stand before him and show him respect.[13]But it will not go well for a wicked man; his life will not be prolonged. His days are like a fleeting shadow because he does not honor God.

[14]There is something else meaningless that is done on the earth: there are righteous people who get what the wicked deserve, and there are wicked people who get what the righteous deserve. I said this too is meaningless.[15]So I recommend enjoyment, because a man has no better thing under the sun than to eat and drink and to be merry. It is happiness that will accompany him in his labor for all the days of his life that God has given him under the sun.

[16]When I applied my heart to know wisdom and to understand the work that is done on the earth, work often done without sleep for the eyes at night or in the day,[17]then I considered all of God's deeds, and that man cannot understand the work that is done under the sun. No matter how much a man labors to find the answers, he will not find them. Even though a wise man might believe he knows, he really does not.

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[1]Some scholars translate the Hebrew as: No one is ruler over the wind so as to stop the wind.
[2]Some modern translations have to his own hurt.
[3]Many modern translations have different interpretations of this difficult verse: I saw wicked people come and go into the holy place. They proudly spoke in the city about the things they had done. This also is meaningless. Other modern translations have I saw wicked people come and go into the holy place. They were praised in the city for the things they had done. This also is meaningless.

Ecclesiastes 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:1 and 8:5-8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom

Solomon, known for his wisdom, gives a detailed description of wisdom. True wisdom is seeking to honor God. This is the only thing that lasts. (See: wise)

Links:

Ecclesiastes 8:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 8:1

Who is a wise man? Who knows what the events in life mean?

The writer asks these as leading questions to provide the answer in what he says next.

causes his face to shine

This means that the person's face will show that he has wisdom. Alternate translation: "shows on his face"

the hardness of his face

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "his harsh appearance"

is changed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "changes"

Ecclesiastes 8:2

God's oath to protect him

"the oath you made before God to protect him"

Ecclesiastes 8:3

Do not hurry out of his presence

Possible meanings are 1) not to be hasty to physically leave the king's presence or 2) This is a metaphor that speaks of being loyal to the king as being in his presence. Alternate translation: "Do not abandon the king"

Ecclesiastes 8:4

The king's word rules

"What the king says is the law"

who will say to him

This rhetorical question emphasizes that no one will ask the king the following question. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one can say to him"

What are you doing?

This rhetorical question is a rebuke. This question can be written as as statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be doing what you are doing."

Ecclesiastes 8:5

A wise man's heart recognizes

Here a man is represented by his "heart" to emphasize his thoughts. Alternate translation: "A wise man recognizes"

the proper course and time of action

"the correct time to do things and the right way to do them"

Ecclesiastes 8:7

Who can tell him what is coming?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that no one knows what will happen in the future. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can tell him what is coming."

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Ecclesiastes 8:8

No one has power over the wind to restrain it ... no one has power over the day of his death

Just as no one has the ability to stop the wind from blowing, no one can continue living when it is time to die.

the day of his death

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "when he will die"

No one is discharged from the army

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "No army discharges anyone" or "No army allows soldiers to leave"

wickedness will not rescue those who are its slaves

This speaks of wickedness as if it were a master who had slaves. Alternate translation: "evil people will not be saved by doing what is evil"

Ecclesiastes 8:9

I have applied my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:17]

every kind of work that is done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "every kind of work that people do"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

There is a time when a person exercises authority over another person to that person's hurt

Sometimes one person will oppress another and cause that second person to be hurt.

Ecclesiastes 8:10

the wicked buried publicly

This can be stated in active form. Evil people that died were given honorable burials. Alternate translation: "people bury the wicked publicly"

They were taken from the holy area and buried and were praised by people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People took them from the holy area and buried them and praised them"

Ecclesiastes 8:11

When a sentence against an evil crime is not executed quickly

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When people in authority do not quickly execute a sentence against an evil crime"

entices the hearts of human beings

Here people are represented by their "hearts" to emphasize their will and desires. Alternate translation: "entices human beings"

Ecclesiastes 8:12

a hundred times

"100 times"

it will be better for those who respect God

The phrase "it will be better" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "life will be better for those who respect God"

who respect God ... who stand before him and show him respect

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize people respecting God.

Ecclesiastes 8:13

his life will not be prolonged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not prolong his life"

His days are like a fleeting shadow

This speaks of how the wicked man's life passes quickly by saying that it is like a shadow that quickly disappears. Alternate translation: "His days will pass as quickly as a shadow disappears"

His days are

"His life is"

Ecclesiastes 8:14

something else meaningless that is done on the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "another meaningless thing that people do on the earth"

Ecclesiastes 8:15

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

for all the days of his life that God has given him

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "for as long as God allows him to live"

Ecclesiastes 8:16

I applied my heart

Here the author refers to himself by his "heart" to emphasize his feelings. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:17]

the work that is done on the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the work that people do on the earth"

without sleep for the eyes

Here a person is represented by his "eyes." Alternate translation: "without sleeping"

Ecclesiastes 8:17

the work that is done under the sun

Possible meanings are 1) "the work that God does under the sun" or 2) "the work that God allows people to do under the sun."

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

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9 [1]So all of this I laid to my heart, to make it clear, and I concluded that the righteous and the wise, and all that they do,
are in the hand of God, but no one knows whether love or hate awaits him.
[2]Everyone has the same fate. The same fate awaits righteous people and wicked, the good,[1] the clean and the unclean, and
the one who sacrifices and the one who does not sacrifice.
As good people will die,
so also will the sinner.
As the one who swears will die,
so also will the man who fears to make an oath.

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[3]There is an evil fate for everything that is done under the sun, the same event happens to them all. The hearts of human beings are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live. So after that they go to the dead.
[4]Whoever is joined with all the living has hope—even a live dog is better than a dead lion.
[5] For those who are alive know they will die,
but the dead do not know anything.
They no longer have any reward
because their memory is forgotten.

[6] Their love, hatred,
and envy have vanished long ago.
They will never have a place again
in anything done under the sun.

[7]Go your way, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a happy heart, for God approves of your deeds.[8]Let your clothes be always white and your head anointed with oil.
[9]Enjoy life with the wife whom you love all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your reward in life for your difficult work that you labored in under the sun.
[10]Whatever your hand finds to do, work at it with your strength, because there is no work or explanation or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, where you are going.

[11]Again I saw under the sun:
the race is not to the swift,
nor is the battle to the strong,
nor does food come to the wise,
nor riches to the intelligent,
nor favor to those with knowledge,
but time and chance happen to them all.

[12]Surely, no one knows when his time will come.
As fish are caught in a deadly net,
or birds are caught in a snare,
the children of human beings are ensnared by evil times
that suddenly fall upon them.

[13]I have also seen wisdom under the sun in a way that seemed great to me.[14]There was a small city with only a few men in it, and a great king came against it, he surrounded it and built great siege ramps against it.[15]Now in the city was found a poor, wise man, who by his wisdom saved the city. Yet later, no one remembered that same poor man.
[16]So I concluded, "Wisdom is better than strength, but the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard."

[17] The words of wise people spoken quietly are heard better
than the shouts of any ruler among fools.

[18] Wisdom is better than weapons of war,
but one sinner can ruin much good.

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[a]Some modern translations follow ancient translations which have the good and the bad. In this way, they make the phrase complete. Translators may decide to imitate them.

Ecclesiastes 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 9:2, 5-6, and 11-12.

Special concepts in this chapter

Judgment

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This chapter explains that there is one thing that awaits all people: judgment. When people die, they will all face Yahweh's judgment. (See: judge)

Links:

Ecclesiastes 9:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 9:1

all of this I laid to my heart

"I thought very deeply about all this"

in the hand of God

Here the word "hand" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "under God's control"

whether love or hate awaits him

This speaks of "love" and "hate" as if they are people that may come to visit someone else. Alternate translation: "whether he will experience love or hate"

Ecclesiastes 9:2

righteous people and wicked

This refers to all people, emphasizing the two opposites of righteous and wicked people.

wicked ... the good ... the clean and the unclean

All of these phrases refer to people. Alternate translation: "wicked people ... good people ... clean people and unclean people"

the clean and the unclean

This refers to all people, emphasizing the two opposites of clean and unclean people.

the clean

A person who is acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically clean.

the unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

the one who sacrifices and the one who does not sacrifice

This refers to all people, emphasizing the two opposites of those who sacrifice and those who do not.

As good people ... so also will the sinner

This refers to all people, emphasizing the two opposites of good people and sinners.

will the sinner ... will the man who fears to make an oath

It is understood that this refers to people dying. Alternate translation: "the sinner will die ... the man who fears to make an oath will die"

the one who swears ... so also will the man who fears to make an oath

This refers to all people, emphasizing the two opposites of those who swear oaths and those who do not.

Ecclesiastes 9:3

everything that is done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that happens"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

the same event

death

The hearts of human beings are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts

Here the word "hearts" refers to the thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "Human beings are full of evil, and their thoughts are of madness"

madness

"folly"

they go to the dead

The phrase "the dead" refers to dead people. Here dead people represent the place where people go after they die. Alternate translation: "they go to the place where dead people are" or "they die and go to the grave"

Ecclesiastes 9:4

the living

This refers to people who are alive. Alternate translation: "who are alive"

even a live dog is better than a dead lion

A dog was considered a lowly animal while a lion was considered a noble animal. This speaks of it being better to be lowly and alive than to be considered noble and dead. Alternate translation: "As lowly as a dog is, it is better to be a dog and to be alive than to be noble like a lion and to be dead"

Ecclesiastes 9:5

the dead

This refers to people who are dead. Alternate translation: "those who are dead"

their memory is forgotten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will forget them"

Ecclesiastes 9:6

Their love, hatred, and envy

This refers to the love, hatred, and envy that the dead people showed others when they were alive.

anything done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "anything that people do"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 9:7

eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a happy heart

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize the importance of enjoying the basic activities of life.

your bread

This refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "your food"

drink your wine with a happy heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the emotions. Alternate translation: "drink your wine joyfully"

Ecclesiastes 9:8

Let your clothes be always white and your head anointed with oil

Wearing white clothes and anointing one's head with oil were both signs of gladness and celebration.

your head anointed with oil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "anoint your head with oil"

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Ecclesiastes 9:9

Enjoy life with the wife whom you love

One should love the wife he has. Alternate translation: "Since you have a wife whom you love, live happily with her"

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

your ... days

"your ... lifetime"

this is your reward

The word "that" refers to living happily with his wife.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever your hand finds to do

Here a person is represented by his "hand" since a person often uses his hands to work. Alternate translation: "Whatever you are able to do"

there is no work or explanation or knowledge or wisdom

The nouns "work, "explanation," and "knowledge" can be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "the dead do not work or explain or know or have wisdom"

Ecclesiastes 9:11

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

the race is not to the swift, nor is the battle to the strong

"the race is not always won by the swift, nor is the battle always won by the strong"

the swift ... the strong ... the wise ... the intelligent

These words are used to describe persons with those qualities. Alternate translation: "the quickest person ... the strongest person ... the wisest person ... the mose intelligent person"

but time and chance happen to them all

This is an idiom. It means that all people experience things that they do not expect, are out of their control, and may not seem fair or right. Alternate translation: "but at certain times, unexpected things happen to them all"

Ecclesiastes 9:12

when his time will come

This refers to when a person dies. Alternate translation: "when he will die" or "when the time of his death will come"

fish are caught ... birds are caught ... the children of human beings are ensnared

This speaks of people dying when they do not expect it, in the same way that people catch animals and kill them when they do not expect it.

the children of human beings are ensnared by evil times

This can be stated in active form. Also, this speaks of people experiencing disaster and unfortunate times as if they were being imprisoned or trapped. Alternate translation: "evil times are coming upon the children of human beings"

that suddenly fall upon them

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "at times when they do not expect them to happen" or "that suddenly happen to them"

Ecclesiastes 9:13

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 9:14

a great king came against it

Here the "king" represents himself and his whole army. Alternate translation: "a great king and his army"

great siege ramps

This refers to dirt ramps the army built up against the city walk so that they could climb up and attack the city.

Ecclesiastes 9:15

in the city was found a poor, wise man

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in the city, people found a poor, wise man" or "a poor, wise man lived in the city"

Ecclesiastes 9:16

the poor man's wisdom is despised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people despise the poor man's wisdom"

his words are not heard

this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they do not listen to what he says" or "they do not take his advice"

Ecclesiastes 9:17

The words of wise people spoken quietly are heard better

Here "heard" represents understanding. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is easier to understands the words that wise people speak quietly"

10

1 As dead flies cause perfume to stink,
so a little folly can outweigh wisdom and honor.

2 The heart of a wise person tends to the right,
but the heart of a fool tends to the left.

3 When a fool walks down a road,
his thinking is deficient,
proving to everyone he is a fool.

4 If the emotions of a ruler rise up against you,
do not leave your work.
Calm can quiet down great outrage.

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5 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun,
a kind of error that comes from a ruler:

6 Fools are given leadership positions,
while wealthy men are given low positions.

7 I have seen slaves riding horses,
and princes walking on the ground like slaves.

8 The one who digs a pit will fall into it,
and whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake.

9 Whoever cuts out stones can be hurt by them,
and the man who chops wood is endangered by it.

10 If an iron blade is dull,
and a man does not sharpen it,
then he must use more strength,
but wisdom provides an advantage for success.

11 If a snake bites before it is charmed,
then there is no advantage for the charmer.

12 The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious,
but the lips of a fool consume him.

13 As words begin to flow from a fool's mouth, foolishness comes out,
and at the end his mouth flows with wicked madness.

14 A fool multiplies words,
but no one knows what is coming.
Who knows what is coming after him?

15 The toil of fools wearies them,
so that they do not even know the road to town.

16 Woe to you, land, if your king is a young boy,
and if your leaders begin feasting in the morning!

17 But blessed are you, land, if your king is the son of nobles,
and if your leaders eat at the right time,
for strength, and not for drunkenness!

18 Because of laziness the roof sinks in,
and because of idle hands the house leaks.

19 People prepare food for laughter,
wine brings enjoyment to life,

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and money fills the need for everything.

20 Do not curse the king, not even in your mind,
and do not curse rich people in your bedroom.
For a bird of the sky might carry your words;
whatever has wings can spread the matter.

Ecclesiastes 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in all of chapter 10.

Special concepts in this chapter

Advice

This chapter gives a series of disconnected pieces of advice. Translators should not try to smooth the transitions between these pieces of advice. The advice in these statements do not apply in every situation. Therefore, they should be seen as "good ideas."

Links:

Ecclesiastes 10:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 10:1

As dead flies ... so a little folly

Just as flies can ruin perfume, so folly can ruin a person's reputation for wisdom and honor. This speaks of how a little folly can ruin a person's reputation in the same way that a few dead flies ruin perfume.

a little folly can outweigh wisdom and honor

This speaks of how a person acting foolishly can ruin his reputation as if his folly could weigh more than his wisdom and honor. Alternate translation: "committing a little folly can ruin a person's wisdom and honor"

Ecclesiastes 10:2

The heart of a wise person ... the heart of a fool

Here the word "heart" refers to the mind or will. Alternate translation: "The way a wise person thinks ... the way a fool thinks"

tends to the right ... tends to the left

Here the words "right" and "left" refer to what is right and wrong. Alternate translation: "tends to doing what is right ... tends to doing what is wrong"

Ecclesiastes 10:3

his thinking is deficient

This refers to the way that he acts. Alternate translation: "he is stupid"

Ecclesiastes 10:4

If the emotions of a ruler rise up against you

Here a ruler is represented by his "emotions" Alternate translation: "If a ruler becomes angry with you"

Calm can quiet down great outrage

"By remaining calm you may cause an outraged person to become quiet." Many modern translations read, "Calm can undo great offenses"

Ecclesiastes 10:5

under the sun

This refers to things that are done on earth. See how you translated this in [Ecclesiastes 1:3]

Ecclesiastes 10:6

Fools are given leadership positions

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Rulers give positions of leadership to fools"

wealthy men are given low positions

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they give low positions to wealthy men"

wealthy

If your language has a word for people who are wealthy because they are wise, you might want to use it here.

low positions

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "unimportant positions"

Ecclesiastes 10:7

princes walking on the ground like slaves

Slaves were usually forced to walk and were not permitted to ride.

walking on the ground

If the words "on the ground" here would cause confusion, since on the ground is where most people walk, you can omit them.

Ecclesiastes 10:8

whoever breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a snake may bite whoever breaks through a wall"

a snake

This refers to a snake that was hiding inside the wall.

Ecclesiastes 10:9

cuts out stones

This refers working in a quarry and cutting larger stones.

can be hurt by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those stones can hurt him"

is endangered by it

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the wood may injure him"

Ecclesiastes 10:10

wisdom provides an advantage for success

A wise person would have sharpened his blade and would not have had to work so hard.

Ecclesiastes 10:11

before it is charmed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before the snake charmer charms it"

Ecclesiastes 10:12

The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious

Here the wise man's speech is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "The things that a wise man says are gracious"

the lips of a fool consume him

Here the fool's speech is represented by his "lips." This speaks of the fool destroying himself by his speech as if it were eating him. Alternate translation: "The things that a foolish man says destroy him"

Ecclesiastes 10:13

As words begin to flow from a fool's mouth

A fool's speech is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "As a fool begins to speak"

at the end his mouth flows with wicked madness

A fool's speech is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "as he finishes talking, he speaks wicked madness"

Ecclesiastes 10:14

multiplies words

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "keeps on talking"

what is coming

"what will happen in the future"

Who knows what is coming after him?

The writer asks this question to emphasize that no one knows what will happen in the future after one's death. This question can be written as as statement. Alternate translation: "No one knows what is coming after him." or "No one knows what will happen after he dies."

Ecclesiastes 10:15

wearies them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Fools become weary by their toil" or "Fools feel tired by the work that they do"

so that they do not even know the road to town

Possible meanings are 1) "so much that he is unable to find the road to town." That the foolish person becomes so tired from working too hard that he is unable to find his way anywhere, or 2) "because he does not even know the way to town." That the foolish person becomes tired from working too hard because he does not know enough to go home.

Ecclesiastes 10:16

Woe to you, land

The writer is speaking to the people of the nation as if they were the land itself, and he is speaking to the land as if it were a person.

if your king is a young boy

This means that the king is inexperienced or immature.

begin feasting in the morning

This implies that the leaders are more concerned with having a good time than with leading the nation.

Ecclesiastes 10:17

blessed are you, land

The writer is speaking to the people of the nation as if they were the land itself, and he is speaking to the land as if it were a person.

king is the son of nobles

This implies that the son has been trained by his elders in the customs of being a good king. Alternate translation: "king has trained by nobles"

for strength, and not for drunkenness

This explains why the blessed leaders eat.

Ecclesiastes 10:18

Because of laziness the roof sinks in

A lazy person does not keep up on the regular house maintenance. Alternate translation: "Because a lazy person does not repair his house, the roof sinks in"

because of idle hands

Here a person is represented by his "hands" Alternate translation: "because of an idle person" or "because the person is idle"

the house leaks

Here the roof is represented by the whole house. Alternate translation: "the roof leaks"

Ecclesiastes 10:19

People prepare food for laughter

The word "laughter" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "People prepare food in order to laugh"

wine brings enjoyment to life

The word "enjoyment" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "wine helps people to enjoy life"

money fills the need for everything

Possible meanings are 1) "money provides for every need" or 2) "money provides for both food and wine"

Ecclesiastes 10:20

not even in your mind

A person's thoughts are represented by the person's "mind." Alternate translation: "not even in your thoughts"

rich people in your bedroom

"rich people when you are in your bedroom." This means that you should not curse rich people even when you are in a private place where no one else will hear.

For a bird of the sky ... can spread the matter

These two lines mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. This speaks of people finding out what you have said as if a small bird would hear what you say and tell other people. Alternate translation: "For a bird may hear what you say and tell the matter to other people"

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11 Send out your bread on the waters,
for you will find it again after many days.

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2 Share it with seven, even eight people,
for you do not know what disasters are coming on the earth.

3 If the clouds are full of rain,
they empty themselves on the earth,
and if a tree falls toward the south or toward the north,
wherever the tree falls, there it will remain.

4 He who watches the wind might not plant,
and he who watches the clouds might not harvest.

5 As you do not know the path of the wind,
nor how a baby's bones grow in the pregnant womb,[1]
so also you cannot comprehend the work of God,
who created everything.

6 In the morning plant your seed;
until the evening, work with your hands as needed,
for you do not know which will prosper,
whether morning or evening, or this or that,
or whether they will both alike be good.

7 Truly the light is sweet,
and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to see the sun.

8 If someone lives many years,
let him rejoice in all of them,
but let him think about the coming days of darkness,
for they will be many.
Everything to come is meaningless.

9 Take joy, young man, in your youth,
and let your heart be joyful in the days of your youth.
Pursue the good desires of your heart,
and whatever is within the sight of your eyes.
However, know that God will bring you into judgment
for all these things.

10 Drive anger away from your heart,
and ignore any pain in your body,
because youth and its strength are meaningless.

[1] Some modern translations have As you do not know the path of the spirit to the baby's bones in the pregnant womb.

Ecclesiastes 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in all of chapter 11.

Special concepts in this chapter

Advice

This chapter gives a series of disconnected pieces of advice. Translators should not try to smooth the transitions between

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these pieces of advice. The advice in these statements do not apply in every situation. Therefore, they should be seen as "good ideas."

Links:

Ecclesiastes 11:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 11:1

Send out your bread on the waters, for you will find it again after many days

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor that means a person should be generous with his possessions and will then receive generously from others , or 2) that a person should invest his resources overseas and will make a profit from it.

Ecclesiastes 11:2

Share it with seven, even eight people

Possible meanings are 1) to share your possessions with many people, or 2) to invest your resources in multiple places.

seven, even eight people

"7, even 8 people." This is an idiom that means "numerous" people. Alternate translation: "numerous people" or "multiple people"

what disasters are coming on the earth

Disasters happening is spoken of as if disasters were something that come to a place. Here "on the earth" may imply that these disasters happen to the person who is commanded to share. Alternate translation: "what disasters may happen in the world" or "what bad things may happen to you"

Ecclesiastes 11:3

the clouds are full of rain

"the clouds are dark with rain"

empty themselves on the earth

"empty themselves on the ground"

toward the south or toward the north

Here "south" and "north" represent any direction. Alternate translation: "in any direction"

Ecclesiastes 11:4

He who watches the wind might not plant

Possible meanings are 1) "Any farmer who pays attention to the wind will not plant when the wind is blowing in the wrong direction" or 2) "Any farmer who pays too much attention to the wind will never plant"

he who watches the clouds might not harvest

Possible meanings are 1) "any farmer who pays attention to the clouds will not harvest when it is about to rain" or 2) "any farmer who pays too much attention to the clouds will never harvest"

Ecclesiastes 11:5

As you do not know the path of the wind

This speaks of wind blowing as if wind traveled on a path. Alternate translation: "As you do not know where the wind comes from or where it goes"

how a baby's bones grow

Possible meanings are 1) Here "bones" is a synecdoche representing the baby as a whole. Alternate translation: "how a baby grows" or 2) literally, "how the bones of a baby grow"

Ecclesiastes 11:6

work with your hands

Here "hands" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "keep on working"

whether morning or evening, or this or that

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the person's work may prosper, no matter what time he has done it. Alternate translation: "whether the seed that you planted in the morning or the seed that you planted in the evening"

Ecclesiastes 11:7

light is sweet

Here the word "light" refers to being able to see the sun and therefore being alive. And, this speaks of the joy of being alive as if the light had a sweet taste. Alternate translation: "it is a joy to be able to see the sun" or "being alive is delightful"

for the eyes to see the sun

The "eyes" represent the whole person. This phrase means basically the same thing as the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "for a person to see the sun" or "to be alive"

Ecclesiastes 11:8

let him rejoice in all of them

"he should enjoy them all" or "he should rejoice without ceasing in all of them"

the coming days of darkness

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming" And, here the word "darkness" refers to death. Alternate translation: "how many days that he will be dead"

for they will be many

Here the word "they" refers to the "days of darkness" Alternate translation: "for he will be dead for many more days than he is alive" or "for he will be dead forever"

Everything to come is meaningless

Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "No one knows what will happen after he dies" or 2) Alternate translation: "Everything to come is meaningless"

Everything to come

Possible meanings are 1) "Everything that happens after death" or 2) "Everything that happens in the future"

Ecclesiastes 11:9

Take joy, young man, in your youth, and let your heart be joyful in the days of your youth

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize that the man should be happy while he is young.

let your heart be joyful

Here the word "heart" represents the emotions. Alternate translation: "be joyful"

Pursue the good desires of your heart

Here the word "heart" may represent the mind or emotions. Alternate translation: "Pursue the good things that you desire" or "Pursue the good things that you have

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determined to pursue"

whatever is within the sight of your eyes

Here "eyes" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "whatever you see that you desire" or "whatever you see to be best"

God will bring you into judgment for all these things

The abstract noun "judgment" can be stated as "judge" or "make you account" Alternate translation: "God will judge you for all these things" or "God will make you account for all of your actions"

Ecclesiastes 11:10

Drive anger away from your heart

Refusing to be angry is spoken of as if anger were something that can be forced away. Also, "heart" represents a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "Refuse to be angry"

because youth and its strength are meaningless

The authors speaks of things as being useless and meaningless as if they were "vapor" Just as vapor disappears and does not last, the author speaks of things having no lasting value. See how you translated "vapor" in [Ecclesiastes 1:14]

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12 [1] Also call to mind your Creator
in the days of your youth,
before the days of difficulty come,
and before the years arrive when you say,
"I have no pleasure in them";

[2] do this before the light of the sun
and the moon and the stars grows dark,
and dark clouds return after the rain.

[3] That will be the time when the palace guards will tremble,
and strong men are bent over,
and the women who grind cease because they are few,
and those who look through windows become dim.

[4] That will be the time when the doors are shut in the street,
and the sound of grinding stops,
when men are startled at the voice of a bird,
and the singing of girls' voices fades away.

[5] That will be the time when men become afraid of heights
and of terrors along the road,
and when the almond tree blossoms,
and when grasshoppers drag themselves along,
and when natural desires fail.
Then the man goes to his eternal home
and the mourners go around in the streets.

[6] Call to mind your Creator before the silver cord is cut,
or the golden bowl is crushed,
or the pitcher is shattered at the spring,
or the water wheel is broken at the cistern,

[7] before the dust returns to the earth where it came from,
and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

[8] "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher.
"Everything is meaningless!"

[9]The Teacher was wise and he taught the people knowledge. He studied and searched out and set in order many proverbs.
[10]The Teacher sought to write using vivid, upright words of truth.
[11]The words of wise people are like goads. Like nails driven deeply are the words of the masters in collections of their proverbs, which are taught by one shepherd.

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[12]My son, be warned about something more. The making of many books has no end, and much study brings weariness to the body.

[13] The end of the matter
after everything has been heard,
is that you must fear God and keep his commandments,
for this is the whole duty of mankind.

[14] For God will bring every deed into judgment,
along with every hidden thing,
whether it is good or evil.

Ecclesiastes 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:1-7 and 12:13-14.

Special concepts in this chapter

Advice

This chapter gives a series of disconnected pieces of advice. Translators should not try to smooth the transitions between these pieces of advice. The advice in these statements do not apply in every situation. Therefore, they should be seen as "good ideas."

Yahweh

At the end of a very impressive life, Solomon looks back and sees that the only real lasting thing in this world is Yahweh. The purpose of his life was to honor Yahweh, something he should have done far more throughout his life. Therefore, he felt that his life was wasted.

Links:

Ecclesiastes 12:1 Notes

Ecclesiastes 12:1

call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remember"

before the days of difficulty come

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming" Alternate translation: "before you experience difficult times" or "before bad things happen to you"

before the years arrive when you say, "I have no pleasure in them"

Future time is spoken of as if "years arrive" Alternate translation: "before you become old when you say, 'I no longer enjoy being alive'"

Ecclesiastes 12:2

do this before the light of the sun ... after the rain

Growing old and dying is spoken of as if the sun and moon go dark and dark clouds return. Alternate translation: "do this before it seems to you that the light of the sun ... after the rain"

Ecclesiastes 12:3

General Information:

The writer describes a house in which various activities stop. This appears to be a metaphor for the human body as it becomes old.

strong men are bent over

"strong men become weak"

the women who grind cease because they are few

"the women who grind grain stop grinding grain because there are few of them"

those who look through windows become dim

Possible meanings of this metaphor, where "windows" represents the old person's eyes, are 1) the old person himself can no longer see clearly. Alternate translation: "those who try to see can only see dimly." Or 2) what the old person sees is no longer clear. Alternate translation: "the people whom they see looking at them are dim"

Ecclesiastes 12:4

General Information:

The writer continues his metaphor.

the doors are shut in the street

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people shut the doors that lead to the street"

when men are startled at the voice of a bird

It is implied that the voice of the birds startle the men awake. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the voice of a bird startles men awake"

the singing of girls' voices fades away

Here "girls" may be a metaphor for the birds. Alternate translation: "the songs of the birds fade away"

Ecclesiastes 12:5

General Information:

The writer continues his metaphor.

terrors along the road

The word "terrors" is a metonym for things that cause people terror. Alternate translation: "things along the road that frighten them"

when the almond tree blossoms

The "almond tree" is a tree that blossoms in the winter with white flowers.

when grasshoppers drag themselves along

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A grasshopper is a large, straight-winged insect with long, jointed back legs that give it the ability to jump a long way. Here it can only drag itself because it has gotten old and weak.

when natural desires fail

The abstract noun "desires" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when people no longer desire what they once did naturally"

Then the man goes to his eternal home

This refers to death. Alternate translation: "Then the man goes to the place of the dead forever" or "Then the person dies and never returns to life"

the mourners go around in the streets

Possible meanings are 1) that mourners go around in the streets to attend a funeral, or 2) that mourners go around in the streets to the house of the person who is about to die.

Ecclesiastes 12:6

Call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Remember"

before the silver cord is cut ... or the water wheel is broken at the cistern

The writer speaks of dying as if it were one of these various broken items. Death will break the body just as suddenly as people accidentally break these items while they are using them.

the silver cord is cut

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone cuts the silver cord"

the golden bowl is crushed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone crushes the golden bowl"

the pitcher is shattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone shatters the pitcher"

the water wheel is broken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone breaks the water wheel"

Ecclesiastes 12:7

dust returns to the earth

Here the word "dust" refers to the human body that has decomposed.

Ecclesiastes 12:8

Meaningless

Or "vapor."

the Teacher

See how you translated this in Ecclesiastes 1:1.

Ecclesiastes 12:9

searched out and set in order

"thought much about and arranged" or "thought much about and wrote down"

Ecclesiastes 12:10

using vivid ... words

The Teacher wanted the words to be pleasurable to the listener. They bring pleasure because they are well written, not because they are comforting.

Ecclesiastes 12:11

The words of wise people ... taught by one shepherd

The writer speaks of the teacher who uses his words to instruct people as if the teacher were a shepherd who uses his tools to lead his flock.

The words of wise people are like goads

This is a simile. Alternate translation: "Wise people encourage people to act, like a sharp stick encourages an animal to move"

Like nails driven deeply are the words of the masters in collections of their proverbs

This is a simile. Alternate translation: "Like you can depend on a nail that a person drives firmly into a piece of wood, so you can depend on the words of the masters in collections of their proverbs"

the words of the masters in collections of their proverbs

"the wise words collected in their proverbs" or "the sayings of the wise"

which are taught by one shepherd

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which one shepherd teaches"

Ecclesiastes 12:12

be warned about something more

Possible meanings are 1) these words refer to what follows or 2) these words refer to the material in verse 11, "be careful of anything in addition to that."

The making of many books has no end

The noun phrase "the making" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "People will never stop making many books"

brings weariness to the body

Here "body" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "makes the person tired"

Ecclesiastes 12:13

The end of the matter

"The final conclusion on the matter"

after everything has been heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you have heard everything"

Ecclesiastes 12:14

along with every hidden thing

Things done in secret is spoken of as if they were an object that was hidden. Alternate translation: "along with everything that people do in secret"

Introduction to the Song of Songs

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Song of Songs

The bride longs for the bridegroom to arrive (1:1–2:7) The bridegroom praises the woman he loves (2:8–3:5) The bridegroom arrives and praises the bride (3:6–5:1) The bride longs for the bridegroom (5:2–6:9) The bridegroom praises the beauty of his bride (6:1–8:4) Final thoughts about love between a man and a woman (8:5–14)

What is the Song of Songs about?

The Song of Songs is a poem or a series of poems that celebrate love and intimacy between a man and a woman. Jews traditionally have interpreted the book as a picture of God's love for his people Israel. In the same way, many Christians interpret it as a picture of love between Christ and his bride, the church of all believers.

Who wrote the Song of Songs?

The first verse of the book ("The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's") gives the idea that King Solomon of Israel wrote it. However, people have interpreted this verse in different ways, so not everyone is persuaded that Solomon wrote it.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book is traditionally titled "Song of Songs," which means the very best song, or "Song of Solomon." It may also be called "Songs of Love," "Great Poems of Love," or "The Love Songs of Solomon."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What place do the descriptions of sexual behavior have in the Song of Songs?

The Song of Songs approves of sexual behavior expressing love between a husband his wife.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How many characters are in the Song of Songs?

The two main characters in this book are the man and the woman, who love each other. The woman also speaks to a group of women called the "daughters of Jerusalem," and these women make comments. However, it is possible that the group of women is not real and the woman is only imagining them. Some interpreters believe there may be more characters than these, but this is not certain.

The poem shows the thoughts and words of all these people. However, the author does not identify the speakers and their audience, so it is not always clear who the speaker and audience are. The Translation Notes give information about who they might be throughout the book.

How should one translate the Song of Songs if the readers will view certain terms as coarse, vulgar, or improper?

Readers might consider many images or forms appearing in the Song of Songs as improper when translated. The translator should try to avoid offensive language if possible, by using expressions that will not cause offense.

How do I translate metaphors and similes in this book?

There are many metaphors and similes in this book. These figures of speech are often unclear. If they have sexual meanings, figures of speech describing feelings or emotions are often used to avoid offense by hiding their meaning. However, since their meanings are often unclear, ambiguity in translation is encouraged. You can translate the words as they are written in order to avoid committing to a specific meaning.

Song of songs

1 [1]The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

[2] Oh, that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,
for your love is better than wine.

[3] Your anointing oils have a pleasing fragrance;
your name is like flowing perfume,
so the young women love you.

[4] Take me with you, and we will run.
The king has brought me into his rooms.

We are glad; We rejoice about you;
let us praise your love; it is better than wine.
It is right for the other women to love you.

[5] I am dark but lovely,
you daughters of Jerusalem—
dark like the tents of Kedar,
lovely like the curtains of Solomon.

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6 Do not stare at me because I am dark,
because the sun has scorched me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I have not kept.

7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
where do you feed your flock?
Where do you rest your flock at noontime?
Why should I be like someone who wanders
beside the flocks of your companions?

8 If you do not know, most beautiful among women,
follow the tracks of my flock,
and pasture your young goats near the shepherds' tents.

9 I compare you, my love,
to a mare among Pharaoh's chariot horses.

10 Your cheeks are beautiful with ornaments,
your neck with strings of jewels.

11 We will make for you gold ornaments
with silver studs.

12 While the king lay on his couch,
my nard emitted its fragrance.

13 My beloved is to me like a bag of myrrh
that spends the night lying between my breasts.

14 My beloved is to me like a cluster of henna flowers
in the vineyards of En Gedi.

15 Listen, you are beautiful, my love;
listen, you are beautiful;
your eyes are doves.

16 Listen, you are handsome, my beloved, how handsome.
The lush plants are our bed.

17 The beams of our house are cedars;
our rafters are firs.

Song of Songs 1 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Kisses

The kisses in this chapter are a type of kiss that was only done between a husband a wife. It is an intimate kiss.

Love and affection

This chapter is centered on the feelings of love, affection, and attraction. Different cultural standards may make translation difficult and the translator may use euphemisms to avoid offending people.

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Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"I am dark"

In the ancient Near East, rich people usually had lighter skin because they did not need to work outside in the sun. This young woman had to work out in the sun, and her skin became darker than it was when she was younger.

Links:

Song of Songs 1:1 Notes Song of Songs intro

Song of Solomon 1:1

General Information:

See: and

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are.

The Song of Songs

"The Best Song" or "The Most Excellent Song"

which is Solomon's

Possible meanings are "which is about Solomon" or "which Solomon composed."

Song of Solomon 1:2

Oh, that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth

The woman thinks this or says this to herself.

your love is better than wine

"The ways you show you love me are better than wine." The woman says this to the man.

Song of Solomon 1:3

General Information:

The woman continues speaking to the man.

Your anointing oils

"The oils that you put on your body"

have a pleasing fragrance

"smell wonderful"

your name is like flowing perfume

Perfume has a good smell that spreads as the air moves. The name is either a metonym for 1) the person's reputation, what other people think of him. Here the speaker says that people always think that the hearer is a good person, or 2) the person himself.

Song of Solomon 1:4

Take

"Pull" or "Drag." Here the woman describes herself as being like a captive who is willing to follow her captor.

with you ... about you ... your love ... to love you.

The word "you" and "your" in this verse is masculine singular, so it refers to the man.

we will run

The word "we" refers to the young woman together with the man.

The king has brought me into his rooms.

The king is the man that the woman loves. The woman is probably talking to herself.

We are glad ... We rejoice ... let us praise

The woman speaks of herself as if she were more than one person. Some versions change the pronoun to "I" as the UDB does. Other versions present these as the words of the woman's friends speaking about either the woman or the man.

about you

"because of you"

It is right for the other women to love you

"Women who love you are doing as they should do"

Song of Solomon 1:5

General Information:

In 1:5-6 the woman speaks to the to the other women.

I am dark but lovely

"My skin is dark, but I am still beautiful" or "Even though my skin is dark, I am beautiful"

dark like the tents of Kedar

The nomadic tribes in Kedar used black goat skins to build their homes. The woman is comparing her skin to these tents.

lovely like the curtains of Solomon

Solomon produced beautiful curtains either for his own palace or for the Temple. She says that her skin is beautiful.

Song of Solomon 1:6

scorched

This exaggeration for "burned" or "made black" refers to the sun changing her skin from light to dark.

My mother's sons

"My half-brothers." These brothers probably had the same mother as the woman but not the same father.

made me keeper of the vineyards

"forced me to take care of the vineyards"

but my own vineyard I have not kept

The woman compares herself to a vineyard. Alternate translation: "but I have not been able to take care of myself"

Song of Solomon 1:7

General Information:

In 1:7 the woman speaks to the man.

my soul loves

The soul is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "I love"

feed your flock

"graze your flocks"

rest your flock

"have your flock lie down"

Why should I be like someone who wanders beside the flocks of your companions?

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The woman asks this question to emphasize that she has a closer relationship to the man than other women do. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me so that I will not need to wander around among the flocks of your companions when I am looking for you."

who wanders

"who goes all around." She does not want to have to look for the man. Perhaps she is afraid other men will think she is a prostitute looking for business.

your companions

"your friends" or "your co-workers"

Song of Solomon 1:8

General Information

In 1:8-11 the man speaks to the woman.

most beautiful among women

"you who are the most beautiful of all women"

follow the tracks of my flock

"follow along behind the flock"

tracks

marks of the hooves of the flock on the ground

pasture your young goats

"graze your young goats" or "let your young goats eat"

Song of Solomon 1:9

General Information:

The man continues speaking to the woman.

I compare you, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariot horses

The Jews of those days considered horses beautiful, and the Pharaoh's horses would have been the most beautiful he could find. The man considers the young woman beautiful. Alternate translation: "My love, you are as beautiful as any of Pharaoh's chariot horses"

my love

"you whom I love"

Pharaoh's chariot horses

"the horses that pull Pharaoh's chariots"

Song of Solomon 1:10

Your cheeks are beautiful with ornaments

These ornaments could be 1) jewels hanging from a band around the head or 2) earrings or 3) a metaphor for her long hair.

Song of Solomon 1:11

We will make

The man speaks as if he were many people. Some versions change this to singular "I." Other versions take these to be the words of the woman's friends.

with silver studs

"with spots of silver"

Song of Solomon 1:12

General Information

In 1:12-14 the woman speaks to herself.

lay on his couch

"sat eating his special meal." This probably refers to one of the couches on which people would lie around a table at a banquet. You could translate using the common word for what people do with their bodies when they eat special meals.

nard

an oil that people got from the expensive nard or spikenard (valerian plant with small pink or white flowers) and used to make their skin soft and to have a pleasant odor.

emitted its fragrance

"gave off its good smell"

Song of Solomon 1:13

My beloved is to me like a bag of myrrh ... breasts

Women would place a small bag or pouch of myrrh on a necklace so it would lie between their breasts and they could enjoy its pleasant fragrance. This woman enjoys having her beloved close to her. She adds "to me" to show that she does not expect anyone else to enjoy her beloved in this way. Alternate translation: "I enjoy my beloved as much as I enjoy having a bag of myrrh ... breasts"

My beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." Alternate translation: "My dear one" or "My lover"

lying between my breasts

If this phrase would offend your readers, you could use a euphemism. Alternate translation: "close to me"

Song of Solomon 1:14

My beloved is to me like a cluster of henna flowers

Henna flowers have a fragrance that people enjoy. The woman enjoys her beloved. She adds "to me" to show that she does not expect anyone else to enjoy her beloved in this way. Alternate translation: "I enjoy my beloved as much as I enjoy the smell of clusters of henna flowers"

henna flowers

flowers from a small desert tree that people used as a perfume

Song of Solomon 1:15

General Information

In 1:15 the man speaks to the woman.

Listen, you

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: you"

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9

your eyes are doves

Possible meaning are 1) the Israelites considered doves to be gentle and soft birds, and the man considers the woman's eyes beautiful because the way the woman looks at him makes him think she is gentle. Alternate translation: "you are very gentle" or 2) the man is speaking of the woman's white eyeballs or the shape of her eyes as being like the shape of a dove.

Song of Solomon 1:16

General Information

In 1:16-17 the woman speaks to the man.

Listen, you

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: you"

handsome

Use the word in your language that describes a good-looking man.

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In

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some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

lush plants are our bed

This speaks of the lush plants as if they were a bed. Alternate translation: "lush plants are what we lie down on to sleep"

The lush plants

plants that are green, moist, and grow abundantly

Song of Solomon 1:17

The beams of our house are cedars; our rafters are firs

The woman describes the forest as though it were a house in which they were lying down.

beams ... rafters

Possible meanings are 1) "beams" refers to large logs used to support everything above the walls and "rafters" refers to the large pieces of wood to which the roof is attached or 2) "beams" refers to the rafters and "rafters" refers to the strips attached to the beams, onto which the builders attached the roofing materials.

cedars ... firs

Cedars were large and strong trees. The word translated "firs" is a general term for trees like cedars but smaller. If cedar and fir trees are unknown in your area, you could use general terms for the tallest and strongest trees.

2

1 I am a meadow flower of Sharon,
a lily of the valleys.

2 As a lily among thorns,
so is my love among the young women.

3 As an apricot tree among the trees of the forest,
so is my beloved among the young men.
I sit down under his shadow with great delight,
and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

4 He brought me to the house of wine,
and his banner over me was love.

5 Revive me with raisin cakes and refresh me with apricots,
for I am weak with love.

6 His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand embraces me.

7 I want you to swear, daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles and the does of the fields,
that you will not awaken or arouse love
until she pleases.

8 There is the sound of my beloved! Listen, here he comes,
leaping over the mountains,
jumping over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag;
look, he is standing behind our wall,
gazing through the window,
peering through the lattice.

10 My beloved spoke to me and said,
"Arise, my love;
My beautiful one, come away with me.

11 Look, the winter is past;

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the rain is over and gone.

12 The flowers have appeared in the land;
the time for pruning and the singing of birds has come,
and the sound of the doves is heard in our land.

13 The fig tree ripens her green figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give off their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away.

14 My dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret clefts of the mountain crags,
let me see your face.
Let me hear your voice,
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely."

15 Catch the foxes for us,
the little foxes that spoil vineyards,
for our vineyard is in blossom.

16 My beloved is mine, and I am his;
he grazes among the lilies with pleasure.

17 Go away, my beloved,
before the day breathes and the shadows flee away.
Go away; be like a gazelle or a young stag
on the rugged mountains.

Song of Songs 2 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Women are compared to flowers in this chapter. This metaphor may describe a woman's beauty and delicacy.

Euphemisms

It is possible that some of the metaphors used in this chapter are actually euphemisms. These euphemisms would refer to sex or the physical love between a husband a wife.

Links:

Song of Songs 2:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 2:1

General Information:

See: and

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In 2:1 the woman speaks to the man.

I am a meadow flower of Sharon

The woman speaks as if she were one of many flowers in a land known for beautiful flowers.

Sharon

the name of a land that is flat, has no trees, and grows many different kinds of grasses and flowers

lily of the valleys

The woman speaks as if she were one of many flowers in a land known for beautiful flowers.

lily

a sweet smelling flower that grows in places where there is much water. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:1-2.

valleys

flat areas between mountains and near water

Song of Solomon 2:2

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General Information
In 2:2 the man speaks to the woman.
As a lily among thorns ... young women
A flower is much more beautiful than a thorn bush. The man thinks the woman is much more beautiful than the other women.
my love
"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9.
the young women
"the other young women"
Song of Solomon 2:3
General Information
In 2:3-4 the woman speaks to herself.
As an apricot tree ... the young men
People enjoy the fruit of an apricot tree, but the trees of the forest do not bear fruit. The woman enjoys being with the man, but not with the other young men.
apricot tree
a tree that produces a small yellow fruit that is very sweet. If your readers will not know what this is, you could use the word for another fruit tree or the general word "fruit tree."
the forest
The Hebrew word here refers to land where trees grow for which people have no use.
my beloved
This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"
I sit down under his shadow with great delight
The woman finds great joy and comfort in being so near to the man.
his fruit is sweet to my taste
The woman enjoys eating sweet fruit, and she enjoys being near to the man.
Song of Solomon 2:4
the house of wine
Possible meanings are 1) the very large room where the king would serve many people large meals with wine or 2) a small booth in a vineyard where the man and woman could be alone together.
his banner over me was love
Possible meanings are 1) the banner is a metonym for a military escort. And, the military escort is a metaphor that represents the man's love which gives courage to the woman who was nervous to enter the large room where the king served many people. Alternate translation: "but his loving protection guided me and gave me courage" or 2) the woman knew that the man wanted to make love to her from the way he looked at her. Alternate translation: "he looked at me lovingly" or "when he looked at me, I knew he wanted to make love to me" or 3) they made love. Alternate translation: "he lovingly covered me"
Song of Solomon 2:5
General Information
In 2:5 the woman speaks to the man.
Revive me
"Return my strength" or "Give me energy"
with raisin cakes
"by giving me raisin cakes to eat." Raisin cakes were cakes made of dried grapes pressed together.
refresh me with apricots
"support me by giving me apricots" or "help me by giving me apricots"
for I am weak with love
The woman speaks of feeling weak because her love is so strong as if love were a kind of sickness. Alternate translation: "because my love is so strong that I feel feeble"
Song of Solomon 2:6
General Information
In 2:6 the woman speaks to herself.
left hand ... right hand
"left arm ... right arm"
embraces me
"holds me"
Song of Solomon 2:7
General Information
In 2:7 the woman speaks to the other women.
daughters of Jerusalem
"young women of Jerusalem." These young women could not hear her and were not present, but the woman speaks as if they were present and could hear her.
by the gazelles and the does of the fields
Although the daughters of Jerusalem could not hear her, the woman speaks to them as if they could hear saying that the gazelles and the does will punish them they break their promise.
the gazelles
These are animals that look like deer and move quickly.
does
female deer
of the fields
"that live in the countryside." This was land that has not been farmed.
will not awaken or arouse love until she pleases
Here "love" is spoken of as if it were a person asleep that does not want to be awakened. This is a metaphor that represents the man and woman who do not want to be disturbed until they are finished making love. Alternate translation: "will not disturb us until we have finished making love"
will not awaken or arouse
If your language has only one word for waking people out of sleep, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "will not awaken"
Song of Solomon 2:8
General Information:
In 2:8-14 the woman is speaking either to herself or to the daughters of Jerusalem.
Listen
Possible meanings are 1) "Listen carefully to what I am about to say." You could use a word in your language that tells the hearer to listen carefully, or 2) "Listen so you can hear him coming."
my beloved

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This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

leaping ... jumping

The woman shows that she is excited to see the man come by using as few words as possible to describe what he is doing. Your language may have a different way of showing that the speaker is excited about what is happening.

leaping over the mountains, jumping over the hills

"leaping on the mountains, running quickly on the hills." The woman speaks of the man as if he were "a gazelle or a young stag"

Song of Solomon 2:9

gazing ... peering

The woman shows that she is excited to see the man come by using as few words as possible to describe what he is doing. Your language may have a different way of showing that the speaker is excited about what is happening.

like a gazelle or a young stag

Gazelles and young stags move quickly over rough ground. The woman imagines the man coming as fast as he can to be with her. You could translate using animals in your language that people think of as fast.

a gazelle

This is an animal that looks like a deer and moves quickly. Translate as the singular of "the gazelles" as in Song of Songs 2:7.

a young stag

"a young male deer"

look

"listen carefully" or "what I am about to say is important." You could use a word in your language that tells the hearer to listen carefully.

behind our wall

"on the other side of our wall." The woman is in a house and the man is outside the house.

our wall

The word "our" refers to the woman and the other people in the house with her. If she is speaking to herself, it is inclusive, but if she is speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem, whether she is referring to herself and her companions or to herself only in plural, as in "We are glad ... We rejoice ... let us celebrate"

gazing through the window

"he stares in through the windows"

peering through the lattice

"he peeks through the lattice"

lattice

a cover for a window or some other entrance that someone has made by weaving long strips of wood together. Lattices have holes that people can look through.

Song of Solomon 2:10

My beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "My dear one" or "My lover"

Arise, my love

"Get out of bed, my love"

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9

Song of Solomon 2:11

Look

"Listen carefully" or "What I am about to say is important." You could use a word in your language that tells the hearer to listen carefully.

the winter is past; the rain is over and gone

In winter it is too cold and wet to make love outside, but the cold, wet time has passed.

the winter is past

Winter is the cold time of year when plants do not grow and people prefer to stay inside their houses. You could use the term in your language for that time of year.

the rain is over and gone

In Israel it only rains during the winter. The rain here is cold and unpleasant, not the refreshing rain of the hot season.

Song of Solomon 2:12

The flowers have appeared

"People can see flowers"

in the land

"all over this land"

for pruning

for cutting off branches from a plant so that it will produce more fruit or look better

the singing of birds

"for birds to sing"

the sound of the doves is heard

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people can hear the sound of doves" or "the doves are cooing"

Song of Solomon 2:13

The fig tree ripens her green figs

The tree is spoken of as if it were actively causing its fruit to ripen. This is a collective singular and can be translated as a plural. Alternate translation: "The figs on the trees are becoming ripe"

vines are in blossom

"vines are flowering" or "vines have flowers"

they give off

The word "they" refers to the blossoms on the vines.

their fragrance

"their sweet smell"

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9

Song of Solomon 2:14

General Information:

The man is speaking.

My dove

The Israelites considered doves beautiful birds with pleasant voices. The man thinks the woman's face and voice are beautiful. If calling a woman a "dove" would be offensive, you could leave out the metaphor. Alternate

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translation: "My beautiful woman"

the clefts

large cracks in the side of mountain rocks large enough for people to hide in

the mountain crags

"the steep rocks on the sides of the mountains"

your face

Some versions translate this as "your appearance" or "your form" or "what you look like."

Song of Solomon 2:15

Catch

This is plural, as if the woman is speaking to more than one man, but most versions translate who she is speaking to as the man, so you could translate this as singular.

the foxes

These animals look like small dogs and were often used in love poetry to represent eager young men who would spoil a young woman.

for us ... our vineyard

The words "us" and "our" could possibly be 1) exclusive, referring to the woman herself, as in [Song of Songs 1:4]

foxes

Another possible meaning is "jackals." A jackal is a type of thin wild dog with long legs.

the little foxes that spoil

Foxes spoil or destroy vineyards by digging holes and eating vines and grapes. This could be a metaphor for young men who spoil young women.

in blossom

This implies that the vineyard is healthy and the grapes have appeared, but they are not ready for harvest. This could be a metaphor for a young lady ready for marriage and bearing children. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:13.

Song of Solomon 2:16

General Information:

The woman speaks about the man.

My beloved is mine

"My beloved belongs to me"

I am his

"I belong to him"

he grazes

"feeds" or "eats grass." The woman speaks of the man as if he were "a gazelle or a young stag"

lilies

sweet-smelling flowers that grow in places where there is much water. Translate as the plural of "lily" in Song of Songs 2:1.

Song of Solomon 2:17

General Information

The woman speaks to the man.

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

before the day breathes

"before dawn" or "before daybreak"

the shadows flee away

The woman describes the shadows as though they were running away from the light of the sun. Alternate translation: "the shadows disappear"

like a gazelle or a young stag

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:9.

gazelle

an animal that looks like a deer and moves quickly. Translate as the singular of "gazelles" as in Song of Songs 2:7.

stag

an adult male deer

rugged mountains

"rocky mountains" or "rough mountains"

3

1 At night on my bed
I was longing for him whom my soul loves;
I looked for him, but I could not find him.

2 I said to myself, "I will get up and go through the city,
through the streets and squares;
I will search for him whom my soul loves."
I searched for him, but I did not find him.

3 The watchmen found me
as they were making their rounds in the city.
I asked them, "Have you seen him whom my soul loves?"

4 It was only a little while after I had passed them
that I found him whom my soul loves.
I held on to him and would not let him go
until I had brought him into my mother's house,
into the bedroom of the one who had conceived me.

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5 I want you to swear, daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles and the does of the fields,
that you will not awaken or arouse love
until she pleases.

6 What is that coming up from the wilderness
like a column of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the powders sold by merchants?

7 Look, it is the bed of Solomon;
sixty warriors surround it—
the mighty men of Israel.

8 All of them are skilled with a sword
and are experienced in warfare.
Every man has his sword at his side,
armed against the terrors of the night.

9 King Solomon made himself a sedan chair
of the wood from Lebanon.

10 Its posts were made of silver;
the back was made of gold,
and the seat of purple cloth.
Its interior was decorated with love
by the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go out, daughters of Zion,
and gaze on King Solomon,
bearing the crown with which his mother crowned him
on his wedding day,
on the day of the joy of his heart.

Song of Songs 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Longing

This chapter describes a feeling of longing, or the waiting in anticipation of the one you love.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures.

Links:

Song of Songs 3:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 3:1

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In 3:1-4 The woman speaks to herself.

I was longing for him ... could not find him

"I had a strong desire to be with him ... loves, but he was not there"

him whom my soul loves

The soul is a metonym for the whole person. Here it makes a stronger statement of the woman's love for the man than "my beloved"

Song of Solomon 3:2

go through the city

"walk through the city"

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through the streets and squares
The word "squares" indicates the center area of a town where streets or roads come together. It is often an area where people sell items, a market, and a place where people come together to talk.
will search
"will to look for"
Song of Solomon 3:3
watchmen
men who have the job of keeping guard of the town at night to keep the people safe
as they were making their rounds in the city
"who were walking around the city on the walls"
him whom my soul loves
The soul is a metonym for the whole person. Here it makes a stronger statement of the woman's love for the man than "my beloved"
Song of Solomon 3:4
the bedroom
"the room for sleeping"
the one who had conceived me
This is a metonym for her mother.
Song of Solomon 3:5
General Information:
In 3:5 the woman speaks to the other women. Translate this verse as in Song of Songs 2:7.
daughters of Jerusalem
"young women of Jerusalem." These young women could not hear her and were not present, but the woman speaks as if they were present and could hear her.
by the gazelles and the does of the fields
Although the daughters of Jerusalem are not there to hear her, the woman is telling them that the gazelles and the does will punish them they break their promise.
the gazelles
animals that look like deer and move quickly.
does
female deer
of the fields
"that live in the countryside." This refers to land that has not been farmed.
will not awaken or arouse love until she pleases
Here "love" is spoken of as if it were a person asleep that does not want to be awakened. This is a metaphor that represents the man and woman who do not want to be disturbed until they are finished making love. See how you translated these words in [Song of Songs 2:7]
will not awaken or arouse
If your language has only one word for waking people out of sleep, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: "will not awaken"
Song of Solomon 3:6
General Information:
In 3:6-10 the woman speaks to herself about sixty men coming with Solomon from the wilderness to Jerusalem.
What is that coming up from the wilderness
The group of people is traveling from the wilderness to Jerusalem. They must go up in order to reach Jerusalem because the wilderness is low in the Jordan valley and Jerusalem is high in the mountains.
What is that
Many versions translate this "Who is that."
like a column of smoke
The dust looked like smoke from far away because the people raised much dust in the air as they traveled.
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense
"with the sweet smell of myrrh and frankincense"
with all the powders sold by merchants
The words "perfumed with" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "perfumed with all the powders sold by merchants" or "and with the sweet smell of all the powders that merchants sell"
powders
a fine dust made by crushing something solid
Song of Solomon 3:7
Look
"Listen carefully" or "What I am about to say is important." You could use a word in your language that tells the hearer to listen carefully. The speaker now discovers the answer to the question in verse 6.
it is the bed
This refers to a piece of furniture people used to carry an important person from one place to another. It may have been like a couch or a chair with a long seat that the important person could rest their legs on.
sixty warriors surround it—the mighty men of Israel
These two phrases refer to the same sixty people. The second phrase clarifies that the "warriors" are "mighty men of Israel."
warriors
men who fight
Song of Solomon 3:8
General Information:
The description of sixty men carrying Solomon's bed up from the wilderness to Jerusalem, begun in Song of Songs 3:6, continues.
Connecting Statement:
A description of the bed itself begins in verse 9. You could use words in your language that show that this is background information.
are experienced in warfare
"can fight battles well"
armed against
"so that he can fight against"
terrors of the night
The abstract noun "terrors" is a metonym for evil people who frighten others by attacking them. Alternate translation: "evil people who attack others at night"
Song of Solomon 3:9
sedan chair
This is a chair or couch for important people to sit or lie on. It rests on long poles that people can use to carry it. This is probably the same as the "bed" in verse 7.
Song of Solomon 3:10
Connecting Statement:
The description of the bed itself that began in [Song of Songs 3:9]

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Its posts
The word "its" refers to King Solomon's sedan chair.
posts
The word "posts" here refers to pieces either made of silver or made of wood covered with silver that hold up the tent of cloth around his chair.
Its interior was
"The inside of it was"
with love
Possible meanings are 1) "with love," indicating that the women made the sedan beautiful in a special way to show their love for Solomon, or 2) "with leather."
Song of Solomon 3:11
General Information
The woman speaks to the women of Jerusalem
daughters of Zion
"you young women who live in Zion"
gaze on King Solomon
"look at King Solomon." The word "gaze" refers to look at someone or something for a long time, usually with strong emotional feeling.
bearing the crown
"wearing the crown"
the day of the joy of his heart
The word "heart" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "the day on which he truly rejoiced" or "the happiest day of his life"

4

1 Oh, you are beautiful, my love; you are beautiful.
Your eyes are doves behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
going down from Mount Gilead.

2 Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes,
coming up from the washing place.
Each one has a twin,
and none among them is bereaved.

3 Your lips are like a thread of scarlet;
your mouth is lovely.
Your cheeks are like pomegranate halves
behind your veil.

4 Your neck is like the tower of David built in rows of stone,
with a thousand shields hanging on it,
all the shields of soldiers.

5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle,
grazing among the lilies.

6 Before the day breathes and the shadows flee away,
I will go to the mountain of myrrh
and to the hill of frankincense.

7 You are beautiful in every way, my love
and there is no blemish in you.

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride.
Come with me from Lebanon;
come from the top of Amana,
from the top of Senir and Hermon,
from lions' dens,
from mountain dens of leopards.

9 You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride;
you have stolen my heart,

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with just one look at me,
with just one jewel of your necklace.

10 How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your perfume than any spice.

11 Your lips, my bride, drip honey;
honey and milk are under your tongue;
the fragrance of your garments
is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

12 My sister, my bride is a garden locked up,
a garden locked up, a spring that is sealed.

13 Your branches are a grove of pomegranate trees with fine fruits,
and of henna and nard plants,

14 nard and saffron,
calamus and cinnamon with all trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes with all the finest spices.

15 You are a garden spring,
a well of fresh water,
streams flowing down from Lebanon.

16 Awake, north wind;
come, south wind;
blow on my garden
so that its spices may give off their fragrance.
May my beloved come into his garden
and eat some of its fine fruit.

Song of Songs 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The woman is described as the epitome of beauty in ancient Israel. Not all cultures share the same the same standards of beauty.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures.

"My sister, my bride"

The woman described is not the sister of her husband. They are not related. Instead, this is a reference to a woman who is a fellow Israelite.

Links:

Song of Songs 4:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 4:1

General Information:

See: and

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who

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some scholars think the speakers are. In 4:1-15 the man speaks to the woman.

Your eyes are doves

One possibility is that the man is speaking of the woman's white eyeballs or the shape of her eyes, the shape of a dove. Another possibility is that the Israelites considered doves to be gentle and soft birds, and the man considers the woman's eyes beautiful because the way the woman looks at him makes him think she is gentle. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 1:15]

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9.

Your hair is like a flock of goats going down from Mount Gilead

Goats in Israel were usually dark in color. The woman's hair was probably dark. You may need to specify that the goats were dark or even use another simile that the reader will understand that refers to something dark and beautiful. People thought of Mount Gilead as beautiful and fertile. The speaker considered the woman beautiful and ready to become the mother of his children. If you remove the simile of the goats, you may have to remove the simile of the mountain as well. Alternate translation: "Your hair is as dark as storm clouds above a fertile land"

Song of Solomon 4:2

Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes

After sheep have their wool cut off, they are washed and their skin looks very white. The woman's teeth are white.

a flock of newly shorn ewes

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a flock of ewes whose wool people have cut off"

coming up from the washing place

The ewes are coming up out of the water. Alternate translation: "that are coming up out of the water after people have washed them"

Each one has a twin

Sheep usually give birth to two lambs at one time. These twin lambs usually look like one another. Each of the woman's teeth has a matching tooth on the other side of her mouth.

none among them is bereaved

Each of the woman's teeth has a matching tooth on the other side of her mouth. She has not lost any of her teeth.

bereaved

lost a loved one who has died

Song of Solomon 4:3

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

are like a thread of scarlet

Scarlet is a beautiful red color, and scarlet thread was very expensive. The woman's lips were red. Alternate translation: "are a deep red like scarlet thread" or "are red and very beautiful"

scarlet

a dark red color that is very similar to the color of blood

is lovely

"is beautiful"

are like pomegranate halves

Pomegranates are smooth, round, and rich red. The man thinks the woman's cheeks are beautiful and show that she is healthy. Alternate translation: "are red and round like two halves of a pomegranate" or "are red and full and healthy"

behind your veil

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:1.

Song of Solomon 4:4

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

Your neck is like the tower of David

No one knows if this was a real tower. A tower is a tall, slender building, and saying that David built it implies that it was beautiful. The man considered the woman's neck long and slender and so beautiful. Alternate translation: "Your neck is long and beautiful like the tower of David"

of David

"that David built"

built in rows of stone

Women had necklaces that covered their entire necks with rows of decorations. The man compares these rows of decorations with the rows of stone on the tower. Alternate translation: "that has many rows of stone"

with a thousand shields

The man compares the decorations of the woman's necklace with shields hanging on the tower. The necklace probably went around her neck many times.

a thousand shields

"1,000 shields."

all the shields of soldiers

"all of the shields belong to mighty warriors"

Song of Solomon 4:5

two breasts

If the word "two" seems unnecessary and so out of place, you could omit it.

like two fawns, twins of a gazelle

The man implies that the woman's breasts are matching, soft, and perhaps small.

twins

the babies of a mother who gave birth to two babies at one time

gazelle

an animal that looks like a deer and moves quickly. Translate as the singular of "gazelles" as in Song of Songs 2:7.

grazing among the lilies

"eating plants among the lilies." While it is clear that the man "grazing among the lilies" is a metaphor for making love (Song of Songs 2:16), it is not clear what these words refer to. It is best to translate them literally.

lilies

sweet-smelling flowers that grow in places where there is much water. Translate as the plural of "lily" in Song of Songs 2:1.

Song of Solomon 4:6

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

Before the day breathes and the shadows flee away

Translate these words as you did in Song of Songs 2:17.

I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense

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The "mountain of myrrh" and "hill of frankincense" are metaphors for the woman's breasts
the mountain of myrrh
"the mountain made of myrrh" or "the mountain that has myrrh growing on it"
the hill of frankincense
"the hill where there are clouds of smoke from burning frankincense in the air"
Song of Solomon 4:7
You are beautiful in every way
"Every part of you is beautiful" or "All of you is beautiful"
my love
"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9.
there is no blemish in you
"you have no blemish"
Song of Solomon 4:8
General Information:
The man continues to speak to the woman. He speaks of them not being free to make love as if they were in a wild, dangerous, foreign place.
from Lebanon
"away from Lebanon"
my bride
This Hebrew word can refer to a woman who is married or to one whom a man has arranged to become his son's wife. If your language has a polite word that a man would use to his wife and that has not been used yet in this book, you could use it here. Otherwise you could use any polite term a man would use with his wife.
Amana
the name of a mountain north of Israel
Senir
the name of a mountain near Amana and Hermon. Some people think that this refers to the same mountain as Hermon.
dens
places where lions and leopards live, like caves or holes in the ground
Song of Solomon 4:9
General Information:
The man continues to speak to the woman.
You have stolen my heart
Possible meanings of this idiom are 1) "My heart now belongs completely to you" or 2) "I strongly desire to make love to you"
my sister
This is an idiom of affection. They are not actually brother and sister. Alternate translation: "my dear" or "my darling"
my bride
This Hebrew word can refer to a woman who is married or to one whom a man has arranged to become his son's wife. If your language has a polite word that a man would use to his wife and that has not been used yet in this book, you could use it here. Otherwise you could use any polite term a man would use with his wife. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:8.
heart, with just one look at me, with just one jewel
"heart. All you have to do is look at me once or show me just one jewel." Both the woman's eyes and her jewelry attract the man to her.
necklace
This necklace probably went around her neck many times (Song of Songs 4:4).
Song of Solomon 4:10
General Information:
The man continues to praise the woman.
How beautiful is your love
"Your love is wonderful"
my sister
This is an idiom of affection. They are not actually brother and sister. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:9]
my bride
This Hebrew word can refer to a woman who is married or to one whom a man has arranged to become his son's wife. If your language has a polite word that a man would use to his wife and that has not been used yet in this book, you could use it here. Otherwise you could use any polite term a man would use with his wife. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:9.
How much better is your love than wine
"Your love is much better than wine." See how you translated a similar phrase in Song of Songs 1:2.
the fragrance of your perfume than any spice
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "how much better is the fragrance of your perfume than the fragrance of any spice"
fragrance ... perfume
See how you translated these words in Song of Songs 1:3.
spice
dried plants or seeds that have a good smell or taste
Song of Solomon 4:11
Your lips ... drip honey
Possible meanings are that honey is a metaphor for 1) the sweet taste of the woman's kisses or 2) the woman's words.
honey and milk are under your tongue
Because "milk and honey" is a common phrase in the Bible, you should translate literally. Possible meanings are that honey is a metaphor for 1) the sweet taste of the woman's kisses or 2) the woman's words. Milk is a metaphor for luxury, owning many things that help people enjoy life. When the woman kisses the man, he enjoys life.
the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon
"the smell of your clothes is like the smell of Lebanon." Many cedar trees grew in Lebanon. Cedar trees smell very good, so Lebanon would have smelled sweet and fresh.
Song of Solomon 4:12
General Information:
The man continues to praise the woman.
My sister
This is an idiom of affection. They are not actually brother and sister. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:9]
my bride
This Hebrew word can refer to a woman who is married or to one whom a man has arranged to become his son's wife. If your language has a polite word that a man would use to

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his wife and that has not been used yet in this book, you could use it here. Otherwise you could use any polite term a man would use with his wife. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:9.

is a garden locked up

"is a garden that no one can enter." The garden is a metaphor for the woman, and the lock is a metaphor for her still being a virgin.

a spring that is sealed

"a spring with a cover on it." The spring or well is a metaphor for the woman, and the cover is a metaphor for her being a virgin.

Song of Solomon 4:13

Your branches

branches or channels of rivers, a clear euphemism for the female body part. If any reference to this would be offensive, translate it as a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "You"

a grove

a place where many trees grow together

with fine fruits

"with the best kinds of fruits"

nard plants

plants that give oil that people used to make their skin soft and to have a pleasant odor. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:14.

henna

small desert trees that people used as a perfume. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:14.

Song of Solomon 4:14

saffron

a spice that comes from the dried parts from the yellow thread in the center of a certain flower

calamus

a reed with a pleasant smell that people used to make anointing oil.

cinnamon

a spice made from the bark of a tree that people used for cooking

myrrh

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13.

aloes

a type of large plant that had a very sweet smell

all the finest spices

"all the best spices"

Song of Solomon 4:15

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

You are a garden spring

"You are a spring in a garden." A garden spring gives sweet, clean water that people enjoy drinking. The man enjoys being close to the woman.

fresh water

water that is good to drink

streams flowing down from Lebanon

Because Lebanon had mountains covered with trees, the streams from Lebanon were clean and cool.

Song of Solomon 4:16

General Information:

In 4:16 the woman speaks to the man.

Awake, north wind; come, south wind; blow

The woman speaks to the north wind and the south wind as though they were people. Alternate translation: "I wish the north wind and south wind would come and blow"

Awake, north wind

"North wind, start blowing"

blow on my garden

The garden is a metaphor for her body, which she has covered with sweet-smelling oils

may give off their fragrance

"may send out their good smells"

May my beloved ... fine fruit

The woman is inviting the man to make love to her.

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

fine fruit

"wonderful fruit"

5

1 I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice.
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.

Eat, friends;
drink and be drunk with love.

2 I was asleep, but my heart was awake.
There is the sound of my beloved knocking and saying,
"Open to me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfect one,
for my head is wet with dew,
my hair with the night's dampness."

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3 I have taken off my robe; must I put it on again?
I have washed my feet; must I get them dirty?

4 My beloved put in his hand through the opening of the door latch,
and my heart was stirred up for him.

5 I got up to open the door for my beloved;
my hands were dripping with myrrh,
my fingers with moist myrrh,
on the door handle.

6 I opened the door for my beloved,
but my beloved had turned and gone.
My heart sank when he spoke.[1]
I looked for him, but I did not find him;
I called him, but he did not answer me.

7 The watchmen found me
as they were making their rounds in the city.
They struck me and wounded me;
the guards on the walls took my cloak away from me.

8 I want you to swear, daughters of Jerusalem,
that if you find my beloved—
What will you make known to him?—
that I am weak with love.

9 How is your beloved better than another beloved man,
most beautiful among women?
Why is your beloved better than another beloved,
that you ask us to take an oath like this?

10 My beloved is radiant and ruddy,
outstanding among ten thousand.

11 His head is the purest gold;
his hair is curly and as black as a raven.

12 His eyes are like doves beside streams of water,
bathed in milk, mounted like jewels.

13 His cheeks are like beds of spices,
yielding aromatic scents.[2]
His lips are lilies,
dripping with myrrh.

14 His arms are rounded gold set with jewels;
his abdomen is ivory covered with sapphires.

15 His legs are pillars of marble, set on bases of pure gold;
his appearance is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars.

16 His mouth is most sweet;
he is completely lovely.
This is my beloved, and this is my friend,
daughters of Jerusalem.

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[1]The ancient Greek and Latin translations and other ancient translations of the Hebrew copies reads he turned away.
[2]The Hebrew text: yielding aromatic scents. This phrase may possibly be read as: garden beds made of balsam.

Song of Songs 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verses 2-7 describe a dream the woman had.

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The woman is described as the epitome of beauty in ancient Israel. Not all cultures share the same standards of beauty.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"My sister, my bride"

The woman described is not the sister of her husband. They are not related. Instead, this is a reference to a woman who is a fellow Israelite.

Links:

Song of Songs 5:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 5:1

General Information:

See: and

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In the beginning of 5:1 the man speaks to the woman.

I have come

It is clearly the woman's lover who is speaking.

have come into my garden

The word "garden" is a metaphor for the woman. The man is finally able to fully enjoy the woman as they make love.

my sister

This is an idiom of affection. They are not actually brother and sister. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:9]

my bride

This Hebrew word can refer to a woman who is married or to one whom a man has arranged to become his son's wife. If your language has a polite word that a man would use to his wife and that has not been used yet in this book, you could use it here. Otherwise you could use any polite term a man would use with his wife. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:9.

myrrh ... spice ... honeycomb ... honey ... wine ... milk

These are all metaphors for the man enjoying the woman's body

spice

plants that have a strong smell or taste

Eat ... drink ... be drunk with love

The friends say this to the man and woman. Eating and drinking are metaphors for making love. Alternate translation: "Make love ... make love ... make love until you are fully satisfied"

Song of Solomon 5:2

General Information:

In 5:2-7 the woman speaks to herself. She uses euphemisms to describe her dream so that it can be interpreted in two different ways: 1) she describes a dream about a night when the man came to visit her at her house; and 2) she describes a dream about starting to sleep with the man.

but my heart was awake

The heart is the center of thought and feeling. Alternate translation: "but I could think clearly" or "but I knew what I was feeling"

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

Open to me

Possible meanings are 1) literal, "Open the door for me," or 2) metaphorical, "Let me make love to you."

my sister

This is an idiom of affection. They are not actually brother and sister. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:9. Alternate translation: "my dear" or "my darling"

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9.

my dove

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:14.

my perfect one

"my faithful one" or "my innocent one"

dew

drops of water or mist that form as the night becomes cool

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my hair with the night's dampness
The words "is wet" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "my hair is wet with the night's dampness"
Song of Solomon 5:3
I have taken off my robe ... dirty?
This is what the woman thought to herself when she heard the man speak.
robe
thin linen clothing that people wore on their skin
must I put it on again?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not want to put it on again."
must I get them dirty?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I do not want to get them dirty."
Song of Solomon 5:4
My beloved put in his hand through the opening of the door latch
Possible interpretations are 1) literal, the lover reaches into the house through a hole in the door in order to open the door or 2) euphemisic, they have begun to make love.
My beloved
This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "My dear one" or "My lover"
door latch
"door lock"
Song of Solomon 5:5
I got up to open the door for my beloved
Possible meanings are 1) literal, the young woman got out of bed in order to let the man into the house, or 2), metaphorical. Alternate translation: "I prepared myself to make love with my beloved"
my hands ... my fingers ... door handle
While these may be euphemisms for the woman's and man's bodies, it is best to translate literally.
with moist myrrh
"with liquid myrrh"
Song of Solomon 5:6
General Information:
The woman continues to describe her dream.
my beloved
See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13.
My heart sank
The heart is a metaphor for the person, and sinking, going down, is a metaphor for becoming weak or sad. Alternate translation: "I was very sad"
Song of Solomon 5:7
The watchmen
men who have the job of keeping guard of the town at night to keep the people safe. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 3:3.
as they were making their rounds in the city
"who were walking around the city on the walls." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 3:3.
found me
found the woman
struck me
"beat me" or "hit me"
wounded me
"injured me"
the guards on the walls
"the men who guard the walls"
cloak
a garment that people wore over the other clothing on their upper body when they went outdoors in public
Song of Solomon 5:8
General Information:
The woman speaks to the women of the city.
I want you to swear
See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:7.
daughters of Jerusalem
"young women of Jerusalem." These young women could not hear her and were not present, but the woman speaks as if they were present and could hear her. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 2:7]
my beloved—What will you make known to him?—that I am
The woman uses a question to introduce what she wants the daughters of Jerusalem to tell her beloved. Alternate translation: "my beloved, this is what I want you to say to him: tell him that"
weak with love
She loves the man so strongly that she feels weak.
Song of Solomon 5:9
General Information:
In 5:9 the women of the city speak to the woman.
your beloved
This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for the other women to refer to him as "your lover." See how you translated "my beloved" in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "your dear one" or "your lover"
most beautiful among women
"you who are the most beautiful of all women." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:8.
Why is your beloved better
"What makes your beloved better"
that you ask us to take an oath like this
"and causes you to have us take this oath"
an oath like this
the oath in Song of Songs 5:8
Song of Solomon 5:10
General Information:
In 5:10-16 the woman speaks to the women of the city.
My beloved
This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "My dear one" or "My lover"
is radiant and ruddy
This phrase refers to his complexion. Alternate translation: "has radiant and ruddy skin"
radiant
"is completely healthy" or "is pure." The man has skin that does not have any problems.

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ruddy
a healthy color of the skin that is brownish red
outstanding among ten thousand
"the best of 10,000." Alternate translation: "better than anyone else" or "no one else is like him."
Song of Solomon 5:11
His head is the purest gold
The man's head is as precious to the woman as the purest gold.
a raven
a bird with very black feathers
Song of Solomon 5:12
General Information:
The young woman continues to describe the man.
His eyes are like doves
Translate "eyes are like doves" as in [Song of Songs 1:15]
doves beside streams of water
Birds that the Israelites considered gentle sitting beside a gently flowing stream are a metaphor for a gentle person.
streams of water
"gently flowing water"
bathed in milk
Milk is a metaphor for the whiteness of the doves. Alternate translation: "doves that are white like milk" or 2) milk is a metaphor for the white part of the man's eyes. Alternate translation: "his pupils are like doves bathing in white milk"
mounted like jewels
His eyes are beautiful. Jewels that a craftsman has carefully put in place are beautiful.
Song of Solomon 5:13
General Information:
The young woman continues to describe the man.
His cheeks ... aromatic scents
This explains that his cheeks are like beds of spices because they both give off wonderful smells.
beds of spices
gardens or parts of gardens where people grow spices. Spices give people pleasure. The man's body gives the woman pleasure.
yielding aromatic scents
"that give off wonderful smells."
His lips are lilies
The woman probably compares his lips with lilies because they are beautiful and smell wonderful.
lilies
See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:16.
dripping with myrrh
"that drip with the best myrrh." His lips are moist and have a wonderful smell like myrrh.
Song of Solomon 5:14
General Information:
The young woman continues to describe the man.
His arms are rounded gold set with jewels
"His arms are rods of gold that have jewels all over them." The woman uses this image to say that his arms are beautiful and precious.
his abdomen is ivory covered with sapphires
"his belly is smooth ivory that has sapphires all over it." The woman uses this image to say that his belly is beautiful and precious.
ivory
the white tusk or tooth of an animal that is similar to bone. People use ivory to make smooth and shiny pieces of art.
sapphires
valuable stones that are either 1) blue or 2) clear and either blue or golden
Song of Solomon 5:15
General Information:
The woman continues to describe the man.
His legs are pillars of marble, set on bases of pure gold
Marble and gold are strong and beautiful.
marble
a very strong stone that has many different colors and that people polish to make very smooth
his appearance is like Lebanon
"he looks like Lebanon." Lebanon was a very beautiful area with many mountains and cedar trees.
Song of Solomon 5:16
General Information:
The young woman continues to describe the man.
His mouth is most sweet
The mouth is a metonym for either 1) the man's sweet kisses or 2) the sweet words that he says.
he is completely lovely
"every part of him is lovely" or "all of him is lovely"
This is my beloved, and this is my friend
The word "This" refers to the man that the woman has just finished describing. Alternate translation: "That is what the one I love is like, and that is what my friend is like"
my beloved
This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"
daughters of Jerusalem
"young women of Jerusalem." These young women could not hear her and were not present, but the woman speaks as if they were present and could hear her. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 2:7]

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6 1 Where has your beloved gone,
most beautiful among women?
In what direction has your beloved gone,
so that we may seek him with you?

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2 My beloved has gone down to his garden,
to the beds of spices,
to graze in the garden and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine;
he grazes among the lilies with pleasure.

4 You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my love,
as lovely as Jerusalem,
as awe-inspiring as an army with its banners.

5 Turn your eyes away from me,
for they overwhelm me.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
going down from the slopes of Gilead.

6 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
coming up from the washing place.
Each one has a twin,
and none among them is bereaved.

7 Your cheeks are like pomegranate halves
behind your veil.

8 There are sixty queens, eighty concubines,
and young women without number.

9 My dove, my perfect one, is the only one;
she is the only daughter of her mother;
she is the pure child of the woman who bore her.
The young women saw her and called her blessed;
the queens and the concubines saw her also,
and they praised her:

10 "Who is this who appears like the dawn,
as beautiful as the moon,
as pure as the sun,
as awe-inspiring as an army with its banners?"

11 I went down into the grove of nut trees
to see the young growth in the valley,
to see whether the vines had budded,
and whether the pomegranates were in bloom.

12 I did not know when my soul placed me
on the chariots of my noble people.

13 Turn back, turn back, you Shulammite![1]
Turn back, turn back so that we may gaze on you!

Why do you gaze on the Shulammite,
as if on the dance of Mahanaim?[2]

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[1]The meaning of Shulammite is uncertain. It may mean you perfect woman or you woman from Shulam.
[2]The meaning of Mahanaim is uncertain. It may be the name of a place or "two armies." Two of the possible meanings of this last phrase of verse 13 are on the dance of Mahanaim and on the dance between two armies.

Song of Songs 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The woman is described as the epitome of beauty in ancient Israel. Not all cultures share the same standards of beauty.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Metaphors

In the ancient Near East, it was common to describe a woman using metaphors involving animals. In many cultures today, this can be considered offensive. Different metaphors of beauty are used in different cultures.

Links:

Song of Songs 6:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 6:1

General Information:

See: and.

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In 6:1, the women of Jerusalem speak to the woman.

In what direction has your beloved gone

"Which way did your beloved go"

your beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for the other women to refer to him as "your lover." See how you translated "my beloved" in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "your dear one" or "your lover" or "the man you love"

most beautiful among women

"you who are the most beautiful of all women." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:8.

gone, so that we may seek him with you?

The words "tell us" are understood from the context. They can be stated clearly Alternate translation: "gone? Tell us, so that we can look for him with you."

Song of Solomon 6:2

General Information:

In 6:2-3 the woman speaks to herself.

My beloved has gone down to his garden

The word "garden" is a metaphor for the woman. The man is finally able to fully enjoy the woman as they make love. See the explanation of this metaphor in [Song of Songs 5:1]

beds of spices

gardens or parts of gardens where people grow spices. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 5:13]

to graze in the garden and to gather lilies

These words are metaphors for the man enjoying her body.

graze

"feeds" or "eats grass." The woman speaks of the man as if he were "a gazelle or a young stag" (Song of Songs 2:17) that eats plants among the lilies. Grazing is probably a metaphor for lovemaking (Song of Songs 2:1-2). See how you translated "he grazes" in Song of Songs 2:16.

to gather lilies

"to pick lilies"

lilies

sweet-smelling flowers that grow in places where there is much water. Translate as the plural of "lily" in Song of Songs 2:1.

Song of Solomon 6:3

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine

See how you translated the similar phrase "My beloved is mine, and I am his" in Song of Songs 2:16.

he grazes among the lilies with pleasure

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:16.

Song of Solomon 6:4

General Information:

In 6:4-7 the man speaks to the woman.

as beautiful as Tirzah, my love, as lovely as Jerusalem

These cities were famous for being beautiful and pleasant to be in. The man thinks the woman is beautiful, and he takes pleasure in being with her.

my love

"you whom I love." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:9.

lovely

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:5.

as awe-inspiring as an army with its banners

The beauty of the woman is so powerful that it makes the man feel helpless, as if an army were approaching him.

Song of Solomon 6:5

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

overwhelm me

"terrify me." The eyes of the woman are so beautiful that it

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makes the man feel weak and afraid because he cannot resist their power.

Your hair ... from the slopes of Gilead

Translate "Your hair ... from Mount Gilead" as in Song of Songs 4:1.

Song of Solomon 6:6

General Information:

The man continues to praise the woman.

Your teeth are like a flock of ewes

After sheep have their wool cut off, they are washed and their skin looks very white. The woman's teeth are white. See how "Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes" is translated in [Song of Songs 4:2]

coming up from the washing place

The ewes are coming up out of the water. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:2]

Each one has a twin

Sheep usually give birth to two lambs at one time. These twin lamb usually look like one another. Each of the woman's teeth has a matching tooth on the other side of her mouth. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:2]

none among them is bereaved

Each of the woman's teeth has a matching tooth on the other side of her mouth. She has not lost any of her teeth. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:2.

bereaved

lost a loved one who has died. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:2.

Song of Solomon 6:7

are like pomegranate halves

Pomegranates are smooth, round, and rich red. The man thinks the woman's cheeks are beautiful and show that she is healthy. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:3]

behind your veil

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:1.

Song of Solomon 6:8

General Information:

In 6:8-9 the man speaks to himself.

There are sixty queens, eighty concubines ... young women without number

These numbers are to be large, then larger, and then beyond counting. Alternate translation: "There are 60 queens, 80 concubines ... more young women than anyone could count" or "There are many queens, even more concubines, and more young women than anyone could count"

Song of Solomon 6:9

My dove

The Israelites considered doves beautiful birds with pleasant voices. The man thinks the woman's face and voice are beautiful. If calling a woman a "dove" would be offensive, you could leave out the metaphor. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 2:14]

my perfect one

Or "my faithful one" or "my innocent one." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 5:2.

the only daughter of her mother

This is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "her mother's special daughter" or "completely different from her mother's other daughters"

the woman who bore her

"the woman who gave birth to her." This phrase refers to her mother.

young women ... queens ... concubines

the women spoken of in Song of Songs 6:8.

called her blessed

"said that things had gone especially well for her"

Song of Solomon 6:10

General Information:

In 1:6 either the queens and the concubines speak about the woman or the man speaks about the woman.

Who is this who appears like the dawn ... banners?

They are using this question to say that they think the young woman is amazing. Alternate translation: "This is an amazing woman! She comes into view like the dawn ... banners!"

who appears like the dawn

The dawn is beautiful. The woman is beautiful. Alternate translation: "who comes into view like the dawn"

as awe-inspiring as an army with its banners

The beauty of the woman is so powerful that it makes the other women feel helpless, as if an army were approaching them. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 6:4.

Song of Solomon 6:11

General Information:

In 6:11-12 the man speaks to himself. Looking to see if plants had matured is probably a metaphor for enjoying the sight of the woman's body.

grove

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:13.

young growth

"young plants" or "new shoots"

had budded

"had grown their buds." Buds are the small round parts of plants which open up into flowers.

were in bloom

"were opening their flowers"

Song of Solomon 6:12

I did not know when my soul placed me

Or "before I knew it, my soul placed me"

my soul

Or "my desire." She was on the chariots because she wanted to be.

placed me on

Or "made me like"

on the chariots of my noble people

Or "on the chariots of Ammi-nadib"

Song of Solomon 6:13

General Information:

In some versions this is 7:1, the first verse of chapter seven.

General Information:

In this verse either the friends speak to the woman and she replies, or the friends speak to the woman and the man replies, or the man speaks to the woman and she replies.

Turn back ... gaze on you

Possible interpretations are 1) the friends are speaking to the woman or 2) the man is referring to himself in plural.

Turn back, turn back

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"Come back, come back." This is repeated for emphasis.

Shulammite
This word refers to the woman.

we may gaze
Possible interpretations are 1) the woman's friends are speaking to her, or 2) the man is speaking to her, but he refers to himself with the plural pronoun "we". Alternate translation: "I may gaze"

gaze
look intently for a long time

Why do you gaze on the Shulammite
The word "Shulammite" refers to the woman. Possible interpretations are 1) the woman is speaking. Alternate translation: "Why do you gaze on me" or 2) the man is speaking.

as if on the dance of Mahanaim
Possible meanings are 1) "the dance of Mahanaim" is a kind of dance from Mahanaim, or 2) Mahanaim means "two armies." Alternate translation: "as if on a dance of two armies" or "as if she were dancing before two armies"

7

1 How beautiful your feet appear in your sandals,
prince's daughter!
The curves of your thighs are like jewels,
the work of the hands of a master craftsman.

2 Your navel is like a round bowl;
may it never lack mixed wine.
Your belly is like a mound of wheat
encircled with lilies.

3 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle.

4 Your neck is like a tower of ivory;
your eyes are the pools in Heshbon
by the gate of Bath Rabbim.
Your nose is like the tower in Lebanon
that looks toward Damascus.

5 Your head is on you like Carmel;
the hair on your head is dark purple.
The king is held captive by its tresses.

6 How beautiful and how lovely you are,
my love, with delights![1]

7 Your height is like that of a date palm tree,
and your breasts like clusters of fruit.

8 I said, "I want to climb that palm tree;
I will take hold of its branches."
May your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
and may the fragrance of your nose be like apricots.

9 May your mouth be like the best wine,
flowing smoothly for my beloved,
gliding over the lips of those who sleep.[2]

10 I am my beloved's,
and he desires me.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go out into the countryside;
let us spend the night in the villages.[3]

12 Let us rise early to go to the vineyards;
let us see whether the vines have budded,

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whether their blossoms have opened,
and whether the pomegranates are in flower.
There I will give you my love.

13 The mandrakes give off their fragrance;
at the door where we are staying are all sorts of choice fruits,
new and old,
that I have stored up for you, my beloved.

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[1]Some other ancient Hebrew copies are translated: How beautiful, you are a beloved one.
[2]Some copies of the ancient Greek translation and other ancient translations of the Hebrew copies have: over my lips and teeth.
[3]The Hebrew could be read as either in the villages or among the henna blossoms.

Song of Songs 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Beauty

The woman is described as the epitome of beauty in ancient Israel. Not all cultures share the same the same standards of beauty.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes

There are many similes in this chapter. Their purpose is to describe the beauty of the woman.

Links:

Song of Songs 7:1 Notes

Song of Solomon 7:1

General Information:

Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In 7:1-9 the man speaks to the woman.

General Information:

In some versions this is 7:2, the second verse of chapter seven.

How beautiful your feet appear in your sandals

"Your feet are so very beautiful in your sandals"

prince's daughter

Another possible interpretation is "you who have a noble character."

The curves of your thighs are like jewels

The shape of the woman's thighs remind the speaker of a beautiful precious stone that a skilled workman has carved. Alternate translation: "The curves of your thighs are beautiful like the beautiful curves of jewel that a skilled craftsman has made"

your thighs

The word "thighs" refers to the hips of a woman and the part of her legs that is above her knee.

the work of the hands of a master craftsman

The hands are a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "the work of a master craftsman" or "something that a master craftsman has made"

Song of Solomon 7:2

General Information:

The young woman's lover continues describing the one he loves.

Your navel is like a round bowl

A bowl is round. The woman's navel is round.

navel

the spot on the stomach left from the cord that attaches a baby to its mother

may it never lack mixed wine

People used large bowls to mix wine with water or spices at feasts. Drinking wine is a metaphor for enjoying beauty. The litotes can be translated as a positive. Alternate translation: "may it always contain mixed wine" or "may I always enjoy its beauty"

Your belly is like a mound of wheat encircled with lilies

The Israelites thought mounds of wheat and lilies were pleasant to look at. Much wheat was a sign that there would be much food to eat. They threshed wheat in high, dry places, and lilies grow in low, wet places, so this simile combines beautiful sights that people would not usually see at the same time.

Your belly is like a mound of wheat

People thought that the color of wheat was the most beautiful color of skin and that round piles of wheat were beautiful. Alternate translation: "Your belly has a beautiful color and is round like a pile of wheat"

a mound of wheat

This is a pile of the grains of wheat after people remove the parts of it that they do not use.

encircled with lilies

"with lilies all around it"

lilies

sweet-smelling flowers that grow in places where there is much water. Translate as the plural of "lily" in Song of

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Songs 2:1.

Song of Solomon 7:3

General Information:

The man continues describing the woman.

two breasts

If the word "two" seems unnecessary and so out of place, you could omit it. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:5.

like two fawns, twins of a gazelle

The man implies that the woman's breasts are matching, soft, and perhaps small. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 4:5]

twins

the babies of a mother who gave birth to two babies at one time. See how you translated this in Song of Songs 4:5.

gazelle

an animal that looks like a deer and moves quickly. Translate as the singular of "gazelles" as in Song of Songs 2:7.

Song of Solomon 7:4

Your neck is like a tower of ivory

A tower is long and straight. Ivory is white. The woman's neck is long and straight, and her skin is light in color.

a tower of ivory

"a tower that people have decorated with ivory"

ivory

the white tusk or tooth of an animal that is similar to bone. People use ivory to make art and to make things look beautiful.

your eyes are the pools in Heshbon

The woman's eyes are spoken of as if they are clear pools of water. Pools of water are clear and sparkle in the sunlight and so are pleasant to look at. The woman's eyes are clear and sparkle and so are pleasant to look at. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "your eyes are as clear as the pools in Heshbon"

Heshbon

This is the name of a city east of the Jordan River

Bath Rabbim

This is the name of a city.

nose is like the tower in Lebanon

A tower is tall and straight, and her nose is tall and straight.

that looks toward Damascus

The tower looking is a metonym for people on the tower looking. Alternate translation: "that allows people to look toward Damascus"

Song of Solomon 7:5

General Information:

The man continues to describe the woman.

Your head is on you like Carmel

Mount Carmel is higher than everything else around it. The man wants to look at the woman's head more than at anything else. Alternate translation: "Your head is on you like a crown, higher than anything else"

dark purple

Other possible translations are 1) "dark black" or 2) "dark red."

The king is held captive by its tresses

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your hair that hangs down is so beautiful that the king is not able to stop admiring it"

tresses

the clusters of hair that hang down from a woman's head

Song of Solomon 7:6

my love, with delights

"my love. You delight me"

Song of Solomon 7:7

General Information:

The man describes what he would like to do with the woman .

Your height is like that of a date palm tree

"You stand up like a date palm tree." Date palm trees are tall and straight, and their branches are only at the top, with the fruit under the branches.

date palm tree

a tall, straight tree that produces a sweet, brown, and sticky fruit that grows in groups

your breasts like clusters of fruit

The dates on a palm tree grow soft and round in large bunches that hang from the tree just below the branches, which are all at the top. The woman's breasts are soft and round and are just lower than her arms.

Song of Solomon 7:8

I said

"I thought" or "I said to myself." The man said this silently.

I want to climb ... its branches

The man wants to embrace the woman.

May your breasts be like clusters of the vine

The man wants to touch her breasts. Clusters of grapes are round and soft.

the vine

This phrase is a metonym for the grapes that grow on the vine. Alternate translation: "grapes"

may the fragrance of your nose be like apricots

The word "nose" is a metonym for the breath coming out of the nose. Alternate translation: "may the breath coming from your nose smell sweet like apricots"

apricots

sweet yellow fruit

Song of Solomon 7:9

General Information:

The man continues describing what he would like to do with the woman.

May your mouth be like the best wine

The mouth is a metonym for the lips. Wine tastes good. The man wants to kiss the woman's lips.

flowing smoothly for my beloved

"that flows smoothly for the one I love." The man enjoys the smooth kisses of the woman.

gliding over the lips of those who sleep

"that flows over our lips as we sleep"

Song of Solomon 7:10

General Information

In 7:10-13 the woman speaks to the man.

I am my beloved's

See how you translated a similar phrase in Song of Songs 6:3.

my beloved's

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This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one's" or "my lover's"

he desires me

"he wants to make love to me" or "he wants me"

Song of Solomon 7:11

spend the night in the villages

Though the words here translated "spends the night" and "villages" appear together in Song of Songs 1:13-14 as "spends the night" and "henna flowers," and the context both here and there is lovemaking, the ULB chooses this reading because the immediate metaphor is of the man and woman sleeping in the village, rising in the morning, and going out into the vineyards. The word for "henna plants" and the word for "villages" sound exactly the same.

Song of Solomon 7:12

General Information:

The woman continues to speak to the man.

rise early

"get up early" or "wake up early"

have budded

"have begun to bloom"

blossoms

flowers when they are open

are in flower

"have flowers open on the plant"

I will give you my love

"I will make love with you"

Song of Solomon 7:13

General Information:

The woman continues to speak to the man.

mandrakes

This is the name of plants that give off a strong but pleasant scent. The scent is slightly intoxicating and stimulating, which increases the desire to make love.

give off their fragrance

"produce their scent" or "smell very nice"

at the door

The doors belong to their house. Alternate translation: "above the entrances of our house" or "by the doors of our house"

are all sorts of choice fruits, new and old

"is every kind of the best fruit, both old fruit and new fruit"

stored up for you

"saved so I can give to you"

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

8

1 I wish that you were like my brother,
who nursed at my mother's breasts.
Then whenever I met you outside, I could kiss you,
and no one would despise me.

2 I would lead you and bring you into my mother's house—
she who taught me.
I would give you spiced wine to drink
and some of the juice of my pomegranates.

3 His left hand is under my head
and his right hand embraces me.

4 I want you to swear, daughters of Jerusalem,
that you will not awaken or arouse love
until she pleases.

5 Who is this who is coming up from the wilderness,
leaning on her beloved?

I awakened you under the apricot tree;
there your mother conceived you;
there she gave birth to you, she delivered you.

6 Set me as a seal over your heart,
like a seal on your arm,
for love is as strong as death.

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Jealousy is as unrelenting as Sheol;
its flames burst out; it is a blazing flame,
a flame hotter than any other fire.

7 Surging waters cannot quench love,
nor can floods sweep it away.
If a man gave all the possessions in his house for love,
the offer would be utterly despised.

8 We have a little sister,
and her breasts have not yet grown.
What can we do for our sister
on the day when she will be promised in marriage?

9 If she is a wall,
we will build on her a tower of silver.
If she is a door,
we will adorn her with boards of cedar.

10 I was a wall, and my breasts were now like fortress towers;
so I am in his eyes as one who brings peace.[1]

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon.
He gave the vineyard to those who would maintain it.
Each one was to bring a thousand shekels of silver for its fruit.

12 My vineyard, my very own, is before me;
the thousand shekels are for you, Solomon,
and the two hundred shekels are for those who maintain its fruit.

13 You who live in the gardens,
my companions are listening for your voice;
let me hear it.

14 Hurry, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle or a young stag
on the mountains of spices.

[1] Some scholars read a play on the Hebrew word for "peace" and translate the Hebrew either: I am in his eyes as one who brings peace or: so I have found favor in his eyes.

Song of Songs 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Kisses

The kisses in this chapter are a type of kiss that was only done between a husband a wife. It is an intimate kiss.

Passion

The chapter describes the passion that can exist between a husband a wife. This is the feeling of strong or uncontrollable desire for another person.

Links:

Song of Songs 8:1 Notes

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Song of Solomon 8:1
General Information:
See: and
General Information:
Throughout the book, it is not always clear who is speaking or who they are speaking to. We have notes telling who some scholars think the speakers are. In 8:1-2 the woman speaks to the man.
you were like my brother
A woman could show affection for her brother in public. This woman wanted to be able to show affection for the man in public.
you outside
"you in public"
I could kiss you
A woman would probably kiss her brother on his cheek order to greet him.
would despise me
"would think that I am a bad person"
Song of Solomon 8:2
General Information:
The young woman continues to speak to the man.
she who taught me
taught her how to make love
I would give you spiced wine to drink and some of the juice of my pomegranates
The woman uses these images to say that she will give herself to the man and make love with him.
spiced wine
"wine with spices" or "wine that has spices in it." This represents the intoxicating power of lovemaking.
Song of Solomon 8:3
General Information:
In 8:2 the woman speaks to herself.
His left hand ... embraces me
See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:6.
left hand ... right hand
"left arm ... right arm"
embraces me
"holds me"
Song of Solomon 8:4
General Information
In 8:4 the woman speaks to the other women
I want you to swear
See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:7
daughters of Jerusalem
"young women of Jerusalem." These young women could not hear her and were not present, but the woman speaks as if they were present and could hear her. See how you translated this in [Song of Songs 2:7]
will not awaken or arouse love until she pleases
Here "love" is spoken of as if it were a person asleep that does not want to be awakened. This is a metaphor that represents the man and woman who do not want to be disturbed until they are finished making love. See how you translated these words in [Song of Songs 2:7]
Song of Solomon 8:5
General Information:
In 8:5 the women of Jerusalem ask a question. Then the woman speaks to the man and continues speaking through 8:7.
Who is this who is coming up
They are using this question to say that they think the young woman is amazing. A similar phrase was translated in in [Song of Songs 6:10]
I awakened you
"I woke you up" or "I aroused you"
the apricot tree
a tree that produces a small yellow fruit that is very sweet. If your readers will not know what this is, you could use the word for another fruit tree or the general word "fruit tree." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:3.
there
under the apricot tree
she delivered you
"she bore you"
Song of Solomon 8:6
General Information:
The young woman continues to speak to the man.
Set me as a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm
Possible meanings are 1) because seals were very important, people always kept them around their neck or on their hand. The woman wants to be with the man constantly like a seal, or 2) a seal shows who owns the thing that has the seal on it, and the woman wants herself as the seal on the man's heart and arm to show that all of his thoughts, emotions, and actions belong to her.
for love is as strong as death
When someone dies, it is as if death is a strong person who does not release the person and let him live again. So also, when someone loves someone, that love is strong, and that person does not stop loving the other person.
Jealousy
Possible meanings are 1) this refers to the woman's desire that the man would love only her, or 2) this refers to the woman's own strong love for the man.
Jealousy is as unrelenting as Sheol
When someone dies and goes to Sheol, it is as if Sheol is a strong person who does not release the person and let him leave. So also, when someone is jealous for someone, his jealousy is strong and he does not stop being jealous for that person.
its flames burst out ... any other fire
Love is very powerful like fire.
burst out
"burn suddenly"
Song of Solomon 8:7
General Information:
The young woman continues to speak to the man.
Surging waters cannot quench love
Love is so strong that it is like a fire that is so hot that it cannot be put out even with an ocean full of water.
Surging waters
"Oceans of water" or "Huge amounts of water"
cannot quench
"cannot extinguish" or "cannot put out"
nor can floods sweep it away
Love never changes and always stays the same so it is like

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something that not even a powerful flood can move.
floods
In Israel, water from the rain flows into deep and narrow valleys. This creates a flood of water so powerful that it can move huge boulders and trees.
sweep it away
"carry it away" or "wash it away"
If a man gave ... the offer would be utterly despised
Love is so valuable that even all a man's possessions would not be enough to buy love. Some versions translate this as "Even if a man ... he would be utterly despised."
gave
offered to give
all the possessions in his house
"everything he owns"
for love
"in order to get love" or "in order to buy love"
the offer would be utterly despised
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people would completely despise it" or "people would harshly ridicule him"
Song of Solomon 8:8
General Information:
In 8:8-9 the woman's brothers speak among themselves.
little sister
"young sister"
What can we do ... in marriage?
The speaker uses this question to introduce what he wants to say. Alternate translation: "This is what we will do ... in marriage."
she will be promised in marriage
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a man comes and wants to marry her"
Song of Solomon 8:9
General Information:
The young woman's brothers continue to speak among themselves.
If she is a wall ... If she is a door
The little sister
we will build on her a tower of silver ... we will adorn her with boards of cedar
The brothers decide to decorate the little sister with silver and cedar, symbols of riches, so that she will be more likely to attract a good husband.
will adorn her
"will decorate her"
Song of Solomon 8:10
General Information:
In 8:10-12 the woman speaks to herself.
I was a wall
The wall is a metaphor for a woman with small breasts.
my breasts were now like fortress towers
Fortress towers are tall.
I am in his eyes as one
Here eyes are a metonym for judgment or value. Alternate translation: "I am in his judgment as one" or "he thinks of me as one"
brings peace
You may need to make explicit to whom the woman brings peace. Alternate translation: "brings him peace"
peace
"well-being"
Song of Solomon 8:11
General Information:
Possible interpretations: 1) The woman contrasts the way she wants to give herself to the man, who will give her his love, to the way Solomon leases out his vineyard to those who will give him money. 2) The man contrasts the woman, whom he will not give to another man, to Solomon's vineyard, which he gave to other men.
Baal Hamon
This is the name of a town in the northern part of Israel.
gave the vineyard
leased, agreed to let other people pay him so they could grow grapes in the vineyard
to those who would maintain it
"to people who would take care of it"
Each one was to bring a thousand shekels of silver for its fruit
It may be helpful to state that this payment was for the fruit of the vineyard. Alternate translation: "Each man was supposed to give Solomon a thousand shekels as payment for the fruit of the vineyard"
to bring a thousand shekels of silver
"to bring 1,000 shekels of silver."
shekels
"coins"
Solomon
Some versions understand the woman to be speaking directly to Solomon. Others understand her to be speaking in an apostrophe to her friends, to the man, or to herself.
Song of Solomon 8:12
My vineyard, my very own
The woman refers to herself as a vineyard, as in [Song of Songs 1:6]
is before me
This is an idiom that means the a person has the right to do what they want with something. Alternate translation: "is at my disposal" or "is mine to do with as I desire"
the thousand shekels are for you, Solomon
The woman knows that Solomon has leased out the vineyard so he can get money, but she does not want money.
the two hundred shekels
The speaker has not mentioned these before, but the hearer would understand that she is speaking of the money that those who worked the vineyard would have left for their own after they paid Solomon.
Song of Solomon 8:13
General Information
In 8:13 the man speaks to the woman.
You who live
The man is speaking to the woman, so "you" and "live" are feminine singular.
listening for your voice
The voice is a metonym for what the person says. If your language has a word for thinking only of what one is listening for, you could use it here. Alternate translation: "waiting to hear you start speaking" or "waiting to hear

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what you have to say"

let me hear it

"let me hear your voice."

Song of Solomon 8:14

General Information

In 8:14 the woman speaks to the man.

my beloved

This phrase refers to the man whom the woman loves. In some languages it may be more natural for her to refer to him as "my lover." See how you translated this in Song of Songs 1:13. Alternate translation: "my dear one" or "my lover"

like a gazelle or a young stag

See how you translated this in Song of Songs 2:9.

gazelle

a type of slender deer-like animal with long curved horns

stag

an adult male deer

the mountains of spices

"the mountains that have spices all over them." The woman uses this metaphor to invite the man to make love to her. See how the man uses the metaphor of a mountain of myrrh and a hill of frankincense in [Song of Songs 4:6]

Introduction to Isaiah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Isaiah

Yahweh judges his people but gives them hope (chapters 1–12) Isaiah prophesies against many nations (13–23) Universal judgment and promise of redemption (24–27) The people of Yahweh judged (28–31) The righteous kingdom (32–33) The nations judged; the ransomed will be restored (34–35) Hezekiah and Sennacherib (36–39) Yahweh comforts his people and will restore them (40–45) Prophecies against Babylon (46–48) The servant of Yahweh (49–55) Ethics of Yahweh's kingdom (56–59) Restored Jerusalem (60–66)

What is the Book of Isaiah about?

The first part of the Book of Isaiah (chapters 1-39) contains many different prophecies. Some of Isaiah's prophecies are about how God would send an army to destroy the southern kingdom of Judah. Some of the prophecies are about how God would punish other nations of the world. The end of the first part (chapters 36-39) tells how Isaiah helped King Hezekiah when the Assyrians were about to attack Jerusalem.

The second part of the Book of Isaiah (chapters 40-66) has prophecies about how God will comfort and restore his people. He will do this through his chosen servant. By the suffering of this servant, God will forgive his people (chapter 53). This servant will also cause Gentiles to worship Yahweh. The Book of Isaiah ends with a prophecy about God creating a new heavens and earth.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators can use the traditional title, "The Book of Isaiah" or just "Isaiah." Or they may call it "The Book about Isaiah" or "The Sayings of Isaiah."

When was the Book of Isaiah written?

Isaiah prophesied around 740–700 B.C., when the Assyrian Empire was becoming more powerful. Isaiah spoke the prophecies from God to the people of Judah during the reigns of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The story of Isaiah helping King Hezekiah (chapters 36-39) is also found in 2 Kings 19–20.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What did Isaiah prophesy about the future Messiah of Israel?

Jews and Christians have interpreted many passages in Isaiah to be about the Messiah. In 9:1-7, Isaiah described a child being born who would rule over David's kingdom. In chapter 11, Isaiah described a descendant of David who would have God's spirit upon him. Several prophecies in chapters 40-66 are about "the servant." This servant will comfort the people, rule righteously, and suffer so that God will forgive the people for sinning against him. The New Testament writers interpret these prophecies to be about Jesus Christ.

What did Isaiah mean by the "last days"?

Isaiah prophesied of the "last days" (2:2) as some later or final period of time. The New Testament writers understood the "last days" to be the church age (Acts 2:17, Hebrews 1:2). The Book of Isaiah was one of the first books to include prophesies about the last days. Isaiah explained that in the last days there would be a future kingdom of Israel. Jerusalem would be its main city. And people from all over the world will go there to learn about Yahweh and worship him.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was the son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. (See: israel)

What are some characteristics of prophetic literature in the Book of Isaiah?

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Most of Isaiah's prophecies are in poetic form. Many prophets in Israel used poetry when they spoke important messages that were meant to be remembered.
Sometimes Isaiah's messages are hard to understand. He assumed his original hearers would know what he was talking about. But readers today do not always understand what he meant. However, Isaiah's basic messages are still clear to us today. These messages are about how God's people sinned against him, how he would punish them, and how he would eventually comfort and restore them.
Isaiah also speaks about the Servant of Yahweh, in four different poems that are today called the "Four Servant Songs." Christians understand these very clearly as prophecies about Jesus Christ, the Messiah. These "songs" are in Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:1-7; 50:4-9; and 52:13-53:12. (See: sin and mercy and christ)

Isaiah

1 [1]The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, that he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

[2] Hear, heavens, and give ear, earth;
for Yahweh has spoken:
"I have nourished and brought up children,
but they have rebelled against me.

[3] The ox knows his owner,
and the donkey his master's feeding trough,
but Israel does not know,
Israel does not understand."

[4] Woe! Nation, sinners,
a people weighed down with iniquity,
offspring of evildoers,
sons who act corruptly!
They have abandoned Yahweh,
they have despised the Holy One of Israel,
they have estranged themselves from him.

[5] Why are you still being beaten?
Why do you rebel more and more?
The whole head is sick,
the whole heart is weak.

[6] From the sole of the foot to the head
there is no health;
only wounds, and bruises,
and fresh open wounds;
they have not been closed, cleansed, bandaged,
nor treated with oil.

[7] Your country is ruined;
your cities are burned;
your fields—in your presence,
strangers are destroying them—
abandoned devastation, overthrown by strangers.

[8] The daughter of Zion is left
like a hut in a vineyard,
like a shed in a garden of cucumbers,
like a besieged city.

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9 If Yahweh of hosts had not left for us a few survivors,
we would have been like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of Yahweh,
you rulers of Sodom;
listen to the instruction of our God,
you people of Gomorrah:

11 "What is the multitude of your sacrifices to me?"
says Yahweh.
"I have had enough of the burnt offerings of rams,
and the fat of fatted beasts;
and in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats
I do not delight.

12 When you come to appear before me,
who has required this of you, to trample my courts?

13 Bring no more meaningless offerings;
incense is an abomination to me;
your new moon and Sabbath assemblies—
I cannot tolerate these wicked assemblies.

14 I hate your new moons and your appointed feasts;
they are a burden to me; I am tired of enduring them.

15 So when you spread out your hands in prayer,
I hide my eyes from you;
even though you offer many prayers, I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.

16 Wash, cleanse yourselves;
remove the evil of your deeds from my sight;
stop being evil;

17 learn to do good;
seek justice, make straight the oppression,[1]
give justice to the fatherless,
defend the widow."

18 "Come now, and let us reason together,"
says Yahweh;
"though your sins are like scarlet,
they will be white like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they will be like wool.

19 If you are willing and obedient,
you will eat the good of the land,

20 but if you refuse and rebel,
the sword will devour you,"
for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it.

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21 How the faithful city
has become a prostitute!
She who was full of justice—
she was full of righteousness,
but now she is full of murderers.

22 Your silver has become impure,
your wine mixed with water.

23 Your princes are rebels
and companions of thieves;
everyone loves bribes
and runs after payoffs.
They do not defend the fatherless,
nor does the widow's legal plea come before them.

24 Therefore this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts,
the Mighty One of Israel:
"Woe to them! I will comfort myself concerning my adversaries
and avenge myself against my enemies;

25 I will turn my hand against you,
refine away your dross as with lye,
and take away all your dross.

26 I will restore your judges as at the first,
and your counselors as at the beginning;
after that you will be called
the city of righteousness,
a faithful town."

27 Zion will be redeemed by justice,
and her repentant ones by righteousness.

28 Rebels and sinners will be crushed together,
and those who abandon Yahweh will be done away with.

29 "For you will be ashamed of the sacred oak trees
that you desired,
and you will be embarrassed by the gardens
that you have chosen.

30 For you will be like an oak whose leaf withers,
and like a garden that has no water.

31 The strong man will be like tinder,
and his work like a spark;
they will both burn together,
and no one will quench them."

[1] Instead of make straight the oppression, some of the ancient Hebrew copies have a phrase that may mean, help the oppressed.

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Isaiah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:2-31, which is a vision Isaiah receives. These are the words of Yahweh.

Special concepts in this chapter

Woe

The prophecy of this chapter serves as a warning to the people of the kingdom of Judah. If they do not change their evil ways, Yahweh will punish them. (See: woe and prophet and evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

There are many vivid metaphors used to describe Judah's sin. Their sin is described as a sickness that spreads. (See: and sin)

Rhetorical Questions

Yahweh uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these questions is to convince the people of Judah of their sin.

Links:

Isaiah 1:1 Notes Isaiah intro

Isaiah 1:1

The vision of Isaiah ... that he saw

"This is the vision of Isaiah ... that Yahweh showed him" or "This is what God showed Isaiah"

Amoz

Amoz was the father of Isaiah.

Judah and Jerusalem

"Judah" refers to the southern kingdom of Israel. "Jerusalem" was its most important city. The names of the places represent the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "those living in Judah and Jerusalem" or "the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah

This is an idiom and refers to the time when each king reigned. They reigned one after the other, not all at the same time. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah were kings of Judah"

Isaiah 1:2

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Hear, heavens, and give ear, earth

Although these prophecies were meant for the people of Jerusalem and Judah to hear, Isaiah knows they will not listen. Possible meanings are 1) he speaks in apostrophe, as though the "heavens" and "earth" would be able to listen to what Yahweh said, or 2) the words "heavens" and "earth" are metonyms and a merism for all living beings everywhere. Alternate translation: "you who live in the heavens ... you who live on the earth"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

I have nourished and brought up children, but they have rebelled against me

Words that Yahweh spoke and which Isaiah is speaking to the Israelites for Yahweh.

I have nourished and brought up children

Yahweh speaks as if his words were food and as if the Israelites were his children. Alternate translation: "I have taken care of the people living in Judah like they were my children"

Isaiah 1:3

The ox knows ... does not understand

Words that Yahweh spoke and which Isaiah is speaking to the Israelites for Yahweh.

the donkey his master's feeding trough

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "the donkey knows his master's feeding trough" or "the donkey knows where his master gives him food"

but Israel does not know, Israel does not understand

This probably means "but the people of Israel do not know me, they do not understand that I am the one who cares for them."

Israel

This is a metonym for the people of Israel. Judah is part of what had been the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

Isaiah 1:4

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Nation, sinners

Possible meanings are 1) Isaiah is saying two different things about them. Alternate translation: "Nation of Israel, you sinners" or 2) he is saying only one thing about them. Alternate translation: "Nation of sinners"

a people weighed down with iniquity

Something very heavy that a person might carry is a metaphor for their many sins. Alternate translation: "their sin is like a heavy bag on their shoulders that makes it hard for them to walk"

offspring of evildoers

The word "offspring" is a metaphor for people who do what others have done. Alternate translation: "people who do the same evil they see others doing"

act corruptly

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do evil deeds

They have abandoned Yahweh

"They have gone away from Yahweh"

have despised

"have refused to obey" or "have refused to respect"

Israel

Judah is part of what had been the nation of Israel.

they have estranged themselves from him

Though at one time they were friends, they now treat him as though they do not know him.

Isaiah 1:5

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Why are you still being beaten? Why do you rebel more and more?

Isaiah uses these questions to scold the people of Judah. The questions can be translated as statements. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You keep doing things that Yahweh has to punish you for. You continue to rebel against him."

you

Here the word "you" refers to the people who live in Judah and so is plural.

The whole head is sick, the whole heart is weak

This metaphor compares the nation of Israel to a person who has been beaten. Alternate translation: "You are like someone whose head is wounded and whose heart is weak" or "You are like someone whose whole mind and heart are sick"

Isaiah 1:6

there is no health

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "there is disease"

they have not been closed, cleansed, bandaged, nor treated with oil

This metaphor compares the punishment God has given Israel to physical wounds. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one has closed, cleansed, bandaged, or treated them with oil"

Isaiah 1:7

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Your country is ruined

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They have ruined your country" or "Your enemies have ruined your country"

your cities are burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they have burned your cities"

your fields—in your presence, strangers are destroying them

"people who are not from your own country steal the crops from your fields while you watch"

abandoned devastation

"empty and devastated." This abstract noun phrase can be expressed as verb phrases. Alternate translation: "they have destroyed the land and no one lives there"

overthrown by strangers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "strangers have overthrown your country" or "a foreign army has completely conquered it"

Isaiah 1:8

The daughter of Zion is left

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have left the daughter of Zion"

The daughter of Zion

The "daughter" of a city means the people of the city. Alternate translation: "The people of Zion" or "The people who live in Zion"

is left like a hut in a vineyard, like a shed in a garden of cucumbers

Possible meanings are 1) "has become as small as a hut in a vineyard or a shed in a garden of cucumbers" or 2) "is left the way a farmer leaves a hut in a vineyard or a shed in a garden of cucumbers when he is finished with them"

like ... cucumbers, like a besieged city

Another possible meaning is "like ... cucumbers. She is a besieged city"

Isaiah 1:9

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

If Yahweh of hosts had not left for us a few survivors

This describes something that could have happened in the past but did not. Yahweh actually did leave a few survivors.

us ... we

Here these words refer to Isaiah and includes all the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

we would have been like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah

How Judah would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "God would have destroyed us, like he destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

Isaiah 1:10

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

listen to the instruction of our God

"listen and let our God rebuke you." The word "instruction" here probably includes the idea of rebuke.

you rulers of Sodom ... you people of Gomorrah

Isaiah is comparing the people of Judah to Sodom and Gomorrah to emphasize how sinful they have become. Alternate translation: "you rulers who are as sinful as the people of Sodom ... you people who are as wicked as those who lived in Gomorrah"

Isaiah 1:11

What is the multitude of your sacrifices to me?

God is using a question to scold the people. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your many sacrifices mean nothing to me!"

Isaiah 1:12

General Information:

Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

who has required this of you, to trample my courts?

The word "trample" means to step on and crush with one's feet. God is using a question to scold the people who live in Judah. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one told you to stomp around in my courtyards!"

Isaiah 1:13

Bring no more meaningless offerings

"Do not bring me any more of your worthless gifts"

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incense is an abomination to me

Here the abstract noun "abomination" can expressed as the verb "hate." Alternate translation: "I hate the incense the priests burn"

I cannot tolerate these wicked assemblies

Possible meanings are 1) "I cannot allow you to gather together because of the wicked things you do" or 2) "I cannot allow myself to watch you gather together because of the wicked things you do."

Isaiah 1:14

General Information:

Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

your new moons and your appointed feasts

The words "new moons" are a metonym for the celebrations of the new moon. They are also a synecdoche for all regular celebrations. Alternate translation: "your celebrations of the new moon and your other regular feasts"

new moons

A new moon is when the moon first shows light after having been dark.

they are a burden to me; I am tired of enduring them

This compares how God feels about the people's celebrations to carrying a heavy object. Alternate translation: "they are a heavy load that I am tired of carrying"

Isaiah 1:15

I hide my eyes from you

This idiom is a way of saying "I will not look at you" or "I will not pay attention to you"

your hands are full of blood

This is the reason that God will not listen to their prayers. The blood likely refers to violence that they have done against people. Alternate translation: "because it is like your hands are covered with the blood of those you have harmed" or "because you are guilty of violence"

Isaiah 1:16

General Information:

Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Wash, cleanse yourselves

Here God compares a person who stops sinning with one who washes his body. Alternate translation: "Repent and wash the sin from your heart like you wash the dirt from your body"

remove the evil of your deeds from my sight

God was not telling them to do their evil deeds somewhere else, but to stop doing them. Alternate translation: "stop doing the evil deeds that I see you doing"

Isaiah 1:17

make straight the oppression

“correct oppression”. Correcting someone’s behavior is spoken of as making it straight. In this case it would mean to stop people from oppressing others. Alternate translations: “rebuke oppressors” or “help those who are oppressed”

give justice to the fatherless

"be fair to the children who do not have fathers"

defend the widow

"protect the women whose husbands have died"

Isaiah 1:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Judah.

Come now, and let

Yahweh graciously and lovingly invites the people to listen to what he is about to say. "Please listen to me. Let" or "Pay attention; I want to help you. Let"

let us reason together

"let us think about this together" or "we need to discuss this" or "what are we going to do?" Yahweh invites the people to discuss the future. Here the word "us" refers to Yahweh and includes the people of Judah.

though your sins are like scarlet, they will be white like snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool

Isaiah is speaking of the people as if they were wearing clothes that were supposed to be white wool and of their sins as if they were red stains on the clothes. If Yahweh forgives their sins, it will be as if their clothes become white again.

like scarlet

Scarlet is a bright red color. Alternate translation: "bright red"

white like snow

White is often a symbol for holiness or purity. "Snow" refers to something like frozen rain that is very white. Since this simply describes something as very white, you could replace it with something else that is white: "white as a seashell" or "white as a dove." This means that their sins will be forgiven.

red like crimson

Crimson is a dark red color. Alternate translation: "dark red"

like wool

Wool is the hair of a sheep or goat. How they will be like wool can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "white like wool"

Isaiah 1:19

General Information:

God continues to speak to the people of Judah.

If you are willing and obedient

Here, "willing" and "obedient" are used together to express one idea. Alternate translation: "If you willingly obey"

you will eat the good of the land

"the land will produce good food for you to eat"

Isaiah 1:20

but if you refuse and rebel

"but if you refuse to listen and instead disobey me"

the sword will devour you

The word "sword" refers to Judah's enemies. Also, the word "devour" compares Judah's enemies coming to kill them to a wild animal that attacks and eats other animals. Alternate translation: "your enemies will kill you"

the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it

The word "mouth" emphasizes that Yahweh has spoken and what he says will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has spoken" or "Yahweh has said that this will happen"

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Isaiah 1:21

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

How the faithful city

This exclamation shows Isaiah's anger and sadness about the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "See how the people of Jerusalem, who had been faithful to God"

has become a prostitute

Isaiah compared the people to a woman who is not loyal to her husband but who sleeps with other men for money. The people were no longer loyal to God but were worshiping false gods. Alternate translation: "acts like a prostitute"

but now she is full of murderers

The word "she" refers to Jerusalem and its people. Those who wrote the Bible often refer to cities as women. Alternate translation: "but now the people of Jerusalem are murderers"

Isaiah 1:22

Your silver has become impure, your wine mixed with water

Possible meanings are that Isaiah uses silver and wine as metaphors for 1) the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "You are like silver that is no longer pure, and like wine that is mixed with water" or 2) the good deeds that the people formerly did. Alternate translation: "You used to do good deeds, but now your bad deeds make your good deeds worthless"

silver ... impure

Someone needs to clean silver often or it will no longer shine brightly.

wine ... water

Wine with water in it has little taste and so is no better than water.

Isaiah 1:23

General Information:

Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Your princes are rebels

"Your leaders rebel against God"

companions of thieves

"they are friends with people who steal from others"

bribes ... payoffs

People give "bribes" as gifts to dishonest rulers so the rulers will then act unjustly. Rulers receive "payoffs" as gifts from those who make profits from unjust laws that the ruler has passed.

runs after payoffs

A person eagerly desiring for someone to give him a bribe is spoken of as if the payoff were running away and the person were running after it. Alternate translation: "everyone desires for someone to pay money to them to make dishonest decisions"

They do not defend the fatherless

"they do not protect those who do not have fathers"

nor does the widow's legal plea come before them

"nor do they listen when widows go to them for help against those who break the law" or "and they do not help widows who go to them for help against those who break the law"

Isaiah 1:24

General Information:

Isaiah begins to speak Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Therefore

"For that reason"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what the Lord Yahweh of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, the Mighty One of Israel, have declared"

I will comfort myself concerning my adversaries

Yahweh will comfort himself by taking just vengeance on his adversaries.

I will ... avenge myself against my enemies

"I will justly punish my enemies"

Isaiah 1:25

I will turn my hand against you

Here "hand" refers to God's power which he would use to punish his people. Alternate translation: "I will begin to use all my power against you"

refine away your dross as with lye

Here the process in which God removes his people's sin is spoken of as if her were separating metal from the bad things mixed with it. The words "as with lye" adds another metaphor, because lye is used in soap, not in refining metal. Alternate translation: "and like fire removing the dirt from silver, I will remove all the evil from among you"

dross

This is the dirt and other things that people remove from metals so the metal will be pure.

Isaiah 1:26

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

at the first ... at the beginning

These are two ways of speaking of the first part or beginning of Israel's history, when Israel first became a nation.

you will be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will call you"

the city of righteousness, a faithful town

Here "city" and "town" refer to the people living in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the city where the people are righteous and loyal to God"

Isaiah 1:27

General Information:

Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Zion will be redeemed by justice, and her repentant ones by righteousness

This can be stated in active form. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh will redeem Zion because the people there do what is just, and he will redeem those who repent because they do what Yahweh says is right" or 2) "Yahweh will redeem Zion because he is just, and he will redeem those who repent because he is righteous"

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Zion
This is a metonym for the people who live on Mount Zion.
Isaiah 1:28
Rebels and sinners will be crushed together
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will destroy those who rebel and sin against him"
those who abandon Yahweh will be done away with
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh will completely do away with those who turn away from him" or "and Yahweh will kill all who reject him"
Isaiah 1:29
General Information:
Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.
the sacred oak trees ... gardens
These phrases refer to places where the people of Judah worshiped idols.
you will be embarrassed by
Some modern translations read, "you will blush because of." A person blushes when his face turns hot and red, often because he feels that he has done something wrong.
Isaiah 1:30
For you will be like an oak whose leaf withers, and like a garden that has no water
Water gives life to trees and gardens. The people have cut themselves off from Yahweh, who gives them life.
Isaiah 1:31
General Information:
Isaiah speaks Yahweh's words to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.
The strong man
"The strong person" or "Whoever is powerful." This may refer to people who are important and who influence other people.
tinder
dry material that burns easily
his work like a spark
This compares the person's deeds or evil works to a spark that falls on tinder and sets it on fire. Alternate translation: "his work will be like a spark that starts a fire"

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2 [1]The things that Isaiah son of Amoz saw in a vision, concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

[2] It will be in the last days
that the mountain of the house of Yahweh
will be established as the highest of the mountains,
and it will be raised up above the hills,
and all the nations will flow to it.

[3] Many peoples will come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
so he may teach us some of his ways,
and we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion will go the law,
and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.

[4] He will judge between the nations
and will render decisions for many peoples;
they will hammer their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation will not lift up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war any longer.

[5] House of Jacob, come,
and let us walk in the light of Yahweh.

[6] For you have abandoned your people,
the house of Jacob,
because they are filled with customs from the east
and they practice divination like the Philistines,
and they shake hands with sons of foreigners.

[7] Their land is full of silver and gold,
and there is no limit to their wealth;

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their land also is full of horses,
nor is there limit to their chariots.

8 Their land also is full of idols;
they worship the craftsmanship of their own hands,
things that their own fingers have made.

9 People bow down,
and men abase themselves.
So do not raise them up.

10 Go into the rocky places and hide in the ground
from the terror of Yahweh
and from the glory of his majesty.

11 The lofty gaze of man will be abased,
and the haughtiness of men will be brought down,
and Yahweh alone will be exalted on that day.

12 For there will be a day of Yahweh of hosts
against everyone who is proud and raised up,
and against everyone who is arrogant—
and he will be abased—

13 and against all the cedars of Lebanon
that are high and lifted up,
and against all the oaks of Bashan.

14 That day of Yahweh of hosts
will be against all the high mountains,
and against all the hills that are lifted up,

15 and against every high tower,
and against every impregnable wall,

16 and against all the ships of Tarshish,
and against all delightful sailing vessels.

17 The pride of man will be brought down,
and the haughtiness of men will be abased;
Yahweh alone will be exalted on that day.

18 The idols will completely pass away.

19 Men will go into the caves of the rocks
and the holes of the ground,
from the terror of Yahweh,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.

20 On that day people will throw away
their idols of silver and of gold
that they have made for themselves to worship—
they will throw them away to the moles and bats.

21 The people will go into the crevices in the rocks
and into the clefts of the ragged rocks,

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from the terror of Yahweh
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.

22 Stop trusting in man,
whose life-breath is in his nostrils,
for what does he amount to?

Isaiah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:2-22.

Special concepts in this chapter

Latter days

This is probably a reference to the "last days." This makes parts of this prophecy reference events near the end of this world. Most scholars expect these prophecies to be fulfilled by Jesus. (See: lastday and prophet and fulfill)

Idolatry

While the first prophecy of Isaiah concerned the lack of justice in Judah, this chapter focuses on the presence of idolatry in Judah. (See: justice)

Links:

Isaiah 2:1 Notes

Isaiah 2:1

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

Judah and Jerusalem

"Judah" and "Jerusalem" are metonyms for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "those living in Judah and Jerusalem"

Isaiah 2:2

in the last days

"in the future"

the mountain of the house of Yahweh

This can be stated 1) as a description. Alternate translation: "The mountain of Yahweh's house will stand" or 2) in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will establish the mountain on which his temple is built"

as the highest of the mountains

Isaiah speaks of importance as if it were physical height. Alternate translation: "the most important of the mountains" or "the most important place in the world"

it will be raised up above the hills

Isaiah speaks of honor in metaphor as if it were physical height. This can be stated 1) in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will honor it more than any other hill" or 2) as a metonym for the people who worship there. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will honor the people who worship there more than he honors any other people"

all the nations

Here "nations" is a metonym for the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "people from all the nations"

will flow to it

The people around the world going to the mountain of Yahweh is compared to how a river flows. This emphasizes that many people will come, not just a few people. Alternate translation: "will flow like a river to it" or "will go to it"

Isaiah 2:3

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

to the house of the God of Jacob

The words "let us go up" are understood from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob"

Jacob, so he may teach ... and we may walk

Another possible meaning is "Jacob. He will teach ... and we will walk"

he may teach us some of his ways, and we may walk in his paths

The words "ways" and "paths" are metaphors for the way a person lives. If your language has only one word for the ground on which people walk, you may combine these phrases. Alternate translation: "he may teach us his will so that we may obey him"

For out of Zion will go the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem

These phrases mean the same thing. Isaiah was emphasizing that all nations will understand that the truth is found in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "People in Zion will teach God's law, and people in Jerusalem will teach the word of Yahweh"

For out of Zion will go the law

"For the law will go out from Zion." Isaiah speaks as if the law were something like a river that moves without people doing anything. Alternate translation: "Those to whom they teach the law will go out from Zion" or "Yahweh will proclaim his law from Zion"

the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem

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"the word of Yahweh will go out from Jerusalem." Isaiah speaks as if the word of Yahweh were something like a river that moves without people doing anything. You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "Those to whom they teach the word of Yahweh will go out from Jerusalem" or "Yahweh will proclaim his word from Jerusalem"

Isaiah 2:4

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.

He will judge

"Yahweh will judge"

will render decisions

"will solve disputes"

they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks

The people of the nations will turn their weapons of war into tools for farming.

they will hammer

"they will use hammers to shape"

swords ... spears ... sword

These words are synecdoches for weapons of any kind.

plowshares ... pruning hooks

These words are synecdoches for tools of any kind that people use in peaceful activity.

they will hammer their swords into plowshares

"they will make their swords into tools for planting seeds." A plowshare is a blade that people use to dig into soil so they can plant seeds there.

their spears into pruning hooks

"they will hammer their spears into pruning hooks" or "they will make their spears into tools for caring for plants." A pruning hook is a knife that people use to cut unwanted branches off of plants.

nation will not lift up sword against nation

"no nation will lift up its sword against another nation." The sword is a metonym for war. Alternate translation: "one nation will not fight wars against another nation"

nor will they train for war

"nor will they even train to fight wars." The writer expects his reader to believe that those who fight wars train before they fight and that some who train do not fight.

Isaiah 2:5

General Information:

In 2:5 Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah, and in 2:6 he speaks to Yahweh. Both times he speaks in the form of a poem.

House of Jacob

"You descendants of Jacob." The word "house" is a metonym for the people who live in the house, the family. Here "Jacob" represents the nation of Judah, but it would be best to use "Jacob" here.

come

a gentle encouragement to do what the speaker is about to tell the hearer to do

let us walk in the light of Yahweh

Isaiah speaks of people learning and then doing what Yahweh wants them to do as if they were walking at night with a lamp that Yahweh has provided so they can see the path. Alternate translation: "let us learn how Yahweh wants us to live and then live that way"

Isaiah 2:6

For you have abandoned your people

"For you have left your people" and do not care what happens to them. Here the word "you" refers to Yahweh and so is singular.

they are filled with customs from the east

Isaiah speaks as if the people were containers who were full of something from the east. Possible meanings are that he speaks of 1) the deeds that the eastern peoples do. Alternate translation: "they do all the time the evil things the people who live in lands east of Israel do" or 2) people, specifically those who claim to speak to dead people, who have come from the east to do evil deeds. Alternate translation: "many diviners have come from the east and now live there"

they practice divination

they try to tell the future by looking at things like animal parts and leaves

they shake hands with sons of foreigners

Clasping hands together is the symbol of friendship and peace. Alternate translation: "they make peace and work together with people who are not from Israel"

Isaiah 2:7

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to Yahweh in the form of a poem.

Their land is full of silver and gold ... their land also is full of horses

Isaiah speaks as if the land were a container in which someone had placed silver, horses, and idols. The word "land" is a metonym for the people themselves, and the words "is full of" is a metaphor for the people possessing these items. Alternate translation: "They possess much silver and gold ... they also possess many horses"

Isaiah 2:8

Their land also is full of idols

Isaiah speaks as if the land were a container in which someone had placed silver, horses, and idols. The word "land" is a metonym for the people themselves, and the words "is full of" is a metaphor for the people possessing these items. Alternate translation: "They also possess many idols"

the craftsmanship of their own hands, things that their own fingers have made

These two phrases mean almost the same thing and emphasize that these are not real gods. If your language has no general word for something someone has made, you can combine these two phrases into one. Alternate translation: "things that they themselves have made"

craftsmanship of their own hands

The word "hands" is a synecdoche for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "their own craftsmanship" or "their own work" or "things they have made with their hands"

things that their own fingers have made

The word "fingers" is a synecdoche for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "things that they have made with their own fingers"

Isaiah 2:9

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General Information:
In 2:9 Isaiah finishes speaking to Yahweh. In 2:10-11 Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah. Both times he speaks in the form of a poem.
People bow down, and men abase themselves
Possible meanings are 1) this continues the thought of [Isaiah 9:8]
People
human beings, as opposed to animals
men
"each person"
do not raise them up
The words "raise them up" are a metaphor for Yahweh forgiving the people. Alternate translation: "do not forgive them"
Isaiah 2:10
Go into the rocky places
Possible meanings are the people should go into 1) caves on steep hillsides or 2) places where there are many large rocks among which to hide.
hide in the ground
Possible meanings are that the people should hide 1) in natural holes in the ground or 2) in pits that they dig in the ground.
from the terror of Yahweh
Here the abstract noun "terror" can be expressed by the verb "terrifying." Alternate translation: "to get away from Yahweh's terrifying presence" or "from Yahweh because you will be extremely afraid of him"
the glory of his majesty
"the great beauty and power he has as king" or "his royal splendor." See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:10.
Isaiah 2:11
The lofty gaze of man will be abased
"Yahweh will abase the lofty gaze of man." A man with a "lofty gaze" is looking above everyone to show them that he is better than they are. Here all people are guilty of thinking they are better than Yahweh, and the way they look at those who worship Yahweh, is a metonym for their pride. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make ashamed all people because they think they are better than he is"
abased
See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:9.
the haughtiness of men will be brought down
The phrase "the haughtiness of men" here is a metonym for haughty people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will abase haughty men"
Yahweh alone will be exalted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will praise only Yahweh"
on that day
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "on the day that Yahweh judges everyone"
Isaiah 2:12
General Information:
Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem.
who is proud and raised up
One who is "raised up" is proud and considers himself better than other people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who is proud and who raises himself above other people" or "who is proud and thinks that he is better than other people"
who is proud ... who is arrogant
Someone who is arrogant speaks and acts as if he is better than other people. These two phrases have similar meanings and are used together to emphasize that Yahweh will punish them.
he will be abased
"every proud person will be abased." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will abase him"
abased
See how you translated this word in Isaiah 2:9.
Isaiah 2:13
against all the cedars of Lebanon ... against all the oaks of Bashan
The "day of Yahweh of Hosts" will be against the cedars and oaks. Possible meanings are 1) these trees are a metaphor for the proud people whom God will judge or 2) God will actually destroy these mighty trees.
Isaiah 2:14
General Information:
Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem. He continues to describe what will happen on the day of Yahweh of Hosts
against
In 2:14-16 Isaiah lists things that God will destroy. Possible meanings are 1) these refer to prideful people that God will humble or 2) God will actually destroy all these things in the list.
mountains ... hills
These words are metaphors for the pride of the Israelites. They also appear in [Isaiah 2:2]
that are lifted up
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that are very high"
Isaiah 2:15
high tower ... impregnable wall
These refer to things people would build around their cities so they could defend themselves against their enemies. They are a metaphor for the Israelites' pride and belief that they had no need for Yahweh and could stand against any punishment Yahweh would mete out to them for their sins.
impregnable wall
"wall that nothing can break down or go through"
Isaiah 2:16
ships of Tarshish ... delightful sailing vessels
These refer to large boats that people used to travel far on the sea and bring back goods to the cities.
ships of Tarshish
"ships on which they go to Tarshish"
delightful
"beautiful" or "desirable"
Isaiah 2:17
General Information:
Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem. He continues to describe what will happen on the day of Yahweh of Hosts
The pride of man will be brought down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will bring down every proud man" or "He will humiliate

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every proud man"

brought down ... abased

See how you translated these words in Isaiah 2:11.

the haughtiness of men will be abased

The abstract noun "haughtiness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those people who are haughty will stop being haughty"

Yahweh alone will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:11. Alternate translation: "people will praise only Yahweh"

Isaiah 2:18

The idols will completely pass away

"All idols will disappear" or "There will be no more idols"

Isaiah 2:19

Men will go ... from the terror

The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Men will go ... to hide from the terror"

the caves of the rocks

"the caves in the rocks." These are large rocks, not small stones that can be held in the hand.

from the terror of Yahweh, and from the glory of his majesty

See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:10.

from the terror of Yahweh

because they are very afraid of Yahweh

the glory of his majesty

Here the word "glory" describes "majesty." Alternate translation: "the beauty he has as king"

when he rises to terrify the earth

"when Yahweh takes action and causes the people of the earth to be terribly afraid of him"

Isaiah 2:20

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah in the form of a poem. He continues to describe what will happen on the day of Yahweh of Hosts

to the moles and bats

Moles are small animals that dig and live underground. Bats are small flying animals that sometimes live in caves. Alternate translation: "to the animals"

Isaiah 2:21

the crevices in the rocks ... the clefts of the ragged rocks

If your language does not have two different words for "crevice" and "cleft," the space that appears between the two parts of a rock when it splits, you can combine these two phrases into one.

from the terror of Yahweh

because they are very afraid of Yahweh. See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:19.

the glory of his majesty

"the great beauty and power he has as king" or "his royal majesty." See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:10.

when he rises to terrify the earth

"when Yahweh takes action and causes the people of the earth to be terribly afraid of him." See how you translated this in Isaiah 2:19.

Isaiah 2:22

whose life-breath is in his nostrils

This describes how man is human and weak by emphasizing that he needs to breath to live. Alternate translation: "who is weak and will die" or "who needs the breath in his nose to live"

nostrils

the holes in the nose through which people breathe

for what does he amount to?

Isaiah uses a question to remind the people of something they should already know. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "for man amounts to nothing!" or "for man is not worth anything!"

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3 [1] See, the Lord Yahweh of hosts
is about to take away from Jerusalem and from Judah
support and staff:
the whole supply of bread
and the whole supply of water,

[2] the mighty man and the warrior,
the judge and the prophet,
the one who practices divination and the elder,

[3] the captain of fifty
and the respected citizen,
the counselor, the expert craftsman
and the skillful enchanter.

[4] "I will place mere youths as their leaders,
and the young will rule over them.

[5] The people will be oppressed,
every one by another,
and every one by his neighbor;

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the child will act arrogantly toward the elderly,
and the degraded will challenge the honorable.

6 A man will even take hold of his brother
in his father's house and say,
'You have a coat; be our ruler,
and let this ruin be in your hands.'

7 On that day he will shout and say,
'I will not be a healer;
I have no bread or clothing.
You will not make me ruler of the people.'"

8 For Jerusalem has stumbled,
and Judah has fallen,
because their speech and their actions are against Yahweh,
rebelling against the eyes of his glory.

9 The look on their faces witnesses against them;
and they tell of their sin like Sodom;
they do not hide it.
Woe to them!
For they have completed a catastrophe for themselves.

10 Tell the righteous person that it will be well,
for they will eat the fruit of their deeds.

11 Woe to the wicked! It will go badly for him,
for what his hands have earned will be done to him.

12 My people—children are their oppressors,
and women rule over them.
My people, those who guide you lead you astray
and confuse the direction of your path.

13 Yahweh stands up for an accusation;
he is standing to accuse the people.

14 Yahweh will come with judgment
against the elders of his people and their leaders:
"You have ruined the vineyard;
the plunder from the poor is in your houses.

15 Why do you crush my people
and grind the faces of the poor?"
This is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts.

16 Yahweh says that because the daughters of Zion are proud,
they walk with their necks extended,
with flirting eyes, walking with tiny steps as they go,
making tinkling sounds from bracelets on their ankles.

17 Therefore the Lord will form scabs

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on the heads of the daughters of Zion,
and Yahweh will make them bald.

[18]On that day the Lord will remove their beautiful ankle jewelry, head bands, the crescent ornaments,[19]the ear pendants, the bracelets, and the veils;[20]the headscarves, the ankle chains, the sashes, and the perfume boxes, and the amulets.

[21]He will remove the rings and the nose jewels;[22]the festive robes, the mantles, the veils, and the handbags;[23]the hand mirrors, the fine linen, the head pieces, and the wraps.

[24] Instead of sweet perfume there will be stench;
and instead of a belt, a rope;
instead of well-arranged hair, baldness;
and instead of a robe, a covering of sackcloth;
and branding instead of beauty.

[25] Your men will fall by the sword,
and your strong men will fall in war.

[26] Jerusalem's gates will lament and mourn;
and she will be alone and sit upon the ground.

Isaiah 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the material in the previous chapter. Some translations Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:1-26, which is a vision Isaiah receives. These are the words of Yahweh.

Judgment

This chapter is structured as a judgment against the Jews. God is acting as a judge reading the list of convictions against them and then he reads the judgment. (See: judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Exile

While the previous part of the prophecy in chapter 2 discussed the last days, this part of the prophecy predicts the exile of Judah to Babylon. (See: prophet and lastday)

Links:

Isaiah 3:1 Notes

Isaiah 3:1

See

The word "see" here adds emphasis to what follows. It can also be translated as "Listen" or "Indeed."

support and staff

Both of these words refer to a walking stick, on which someone leans for support. This idea here stands for the things that people need the most in order to live: food and water. Alternate translation: "everything that supports you" or "everything that you depend on"

Isaiah 3:2

the mighty man ... the warrior ... the judge ... the prophet ... the one who practices divination ... the elder

This is a list of categories of people that others depend on. Since they do not refer to particular individuals, they can all be translated with plural nouns as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "the mighty men ... the warriors ... the judges ... the prophets ... the ones who practices divination ... the elders"

the one who practices divination

This is a person who claims that he can tell the future by looking at things like animal parts and leaves. See how you translated similar words in Isaiah 2:6.

Isaiah 3:3

the captain of fifty ... the respected citizen ... the counselor ... the expert craftsman ... the skillful enchanter

This is a list of categories of people that others depend on. Since they do not refer to particular individuals, they can all be translated with plural nouns as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "the captains of fifty ... the respected citizens ... the counselors ... the expert craftsmen ... the skillful enchanters"

the captain of fifty

Possible meanings are 1) the word "fifty" represents the exact amount of soldiers that the captain led. Alternate translation: "the captains of 50 soldiers" or 2) the word translated as "fifty" does not represent an exact number, but is the name of a small military unit. Alternate

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translation: "the captain of a small military unit"
fifty
"50"
Isaiah 3:4
I will place mere youths as their leaders, and the young will rule over them
These phrases mean basically the same thing. Possible meanings are 1) "I will place young people as their leaders, and those young people will rule over them" or 2) "youths" is a metaphor for simple and foolish men. Alternate translation: "I will place over them leaders who are immature, like young people, and those bad leaders will rule over them"
I will place
Here the word "I" refers to Yahweh. This can also be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Yahweh says, 'I will place"
Isaiah 3:5
The people will be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will be cruel to others and will mistreat his neighbor"
the degraded
"the people who are without honor" or "the people whom no one respects"
the honorable
"the people with honor" or "the people whom everyone respects"
Isaiah 3:6
let this ruin be in your hands
Here "hands" represents authority. Alternate translation: "take charge of this ruin" or "rule over this ruin"
this ruin
Possible meanings are 1) many or most of the buildings in the city of Jerusalem were destroyed or 2) the people in Jerusalem have no more prosperity or leadership. Alternate translation: "this city, which is now ruined"
Isaiah 3:7
I will not be a healer
Solving the people's troubles is spoken of as if it were healing them. Alternate translation: "No, I cannot fix this problem" or "No, I cannot help you"
Isaiah 3:8
Connecting Statement:
The prophet begins to comment on this situation.
Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen
Disobeying God is spoken of as if it were stumbling and falling.
the eyes of his glory
Here "the eyes" stands for God himself, who is glorious. Alternate translation: "him who is glorious" or "Yahweh, who is glorious"
Isaiah 3:9
The look on their faces witnesses against them
Expressions of arrogance on people's faces are spoken of as if the expressions were persons who could testify against the proud people. Alternate translation: "The prideful looks on their faces show that they oppose Yahweh"
they tell of their sin like Sodom; they do not hide it
Here the people of Judah are said to be like the people of Sodom, because they openly boasted about their sins. Alternate translation: "like the people of Sodom, they talk about their sins and let everyone know about them"
For they have completed a catastrophe for themselves
The catastrophe is still coming, but the people have finished doing what will cause it to come. The catastrophe's causes are spoken of here as if they were the catastrophe itself. Alternate translation: "For they have done everything that will cause a catastrophe to happen"
Isaiah 3:10
Tell the righteous person that it will be well
"Tell the one who is doing what is right that I will make things good for him"
the righteous person
This refers to righteous people in general. Alternate translation: "righteous people"
for they will eat the fruit of their deeds
Deeds are spoken of as if they were trees giving fruit that can be eaten. The fruit stands for the reward for doing good deeds. Alternate translation: "for they will receive their reward for their good deeds" or "for they will receive their reward for the good things they have done"
they will eat the fruit of their deeds
The Hebrew text has these plural pronouns here, but they refer to any righteous person. Translators can choose to translate them as singular: "he will eat the fruit of his deeds."
Isaiah 3:11
for what his hands have earned will be done to him
Here "hands" stands for the deeds that the person has done. Alternate translation: "for what the wicked person has done to others will be done to him"
Isaiah 3:12
My people ... My people
Possible meanings are 1) Isaiah is talking and "My" refers to Isaiah, or 2) Yahweh is talking and "My" refers to Yahweh.
children are their oppressors
Possible meanings are 1) "young people have become their leaders and they oppress the people" or 2) "their leaders are immature like children and oppress the people."
women rule over them
Possible meanings are 1) "women rule over the people" or 2) "their leaders are weak like women."
those who guide you lead you astray and confuse the direction of your path
It was common in the Ancient Middle East to speak of a nation's leaders as if they were shepherds. As shepherds lead the sheep along good paths to safety, leaders should teach the people the truth and help them do what is right. Judah's leaders were not doing this. Alternate translation: "your leaders are like bad shepherds who lead you away from good paths and do not show you where to go"
Isaiah 3:13
Yahweh stands up for an accusation; he is standing to accuse the people
Isaiah speaks of Yahweh's decision to harm the people as if Yahweh were bringing a legal accusation in a courtroom against the people of Israel. The second part of this line means the same thing as the first part, but it says it a little

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more completely. Alternate translation: "It is as though Yahweh had taken his place in a courtroom and were ready to accuse the people"

Isaiah 3:14

will come with judgment

Judgment is spoken of as if it were an object that one could bring to another person. Alternate translation: "will announce his judgment" or "will declare his judgment"

You have ruined the vineyard

Here "you" refers to the elders and rulers. Yahweh is speaking of his people as if they were a vineyard. Like someone who fails to care for a vineyard so that the vines give no more grapes, the elders and leaders are discouraging the Israelites from serving God. Alternate translation: "My people are like a vineyard, and you have ruined it"

the plunder from the poor is in your houses

"the things you have taken from the poor are in your houses"

the poor

This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are poor"

Isaiah 3:15

Why do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?

Yahweh asks this question in order to accuse the leaders of the people. This accusation can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am angry with you evil men because you are crushing my people and grinding the faces of the poor!"

crush my people

Making people suffer is spoken of as if it were crushing them with a very heavy weight. Alternate translation: "cruelly harm my people"

grind the faces of the poor

Making people suffer is spoken of as if it were rubbing their faces into the ground. Alternate translation: "harm the poor and make them suffer"

This is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what the Lord Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, the Lord Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

Isaiah 3:16

the daughters of Zion

Zion, meaning here the city of Jerusalem, is spoken of as if it were a woman with her daughters. Alternate translation: "the women of Zion"

with their necks extended

"in an arrogant way"

with flirting eyes

Looking at men in a way that makes the men think the women want sexual relations.

walking with tiny steps as they go

This is how they would walk to attract men, possibly because the bracelets on their ankles were connected by chains decorated with bells so they could not take normal steps.

Isaiah 3:18

General Information:

This continues to describe how Yahweh will judge the women of Jerusalem.

the Lord will remove

Here what the Lord causes others to do is spoken of as the Lord doing it himself. Alternate translation: "the Lord will cause others to remove"

ankle jewelry

a decoration that women wear on the ankle, just above the foot

head bands

a decoration that women wear over the head and hair

crescent ornaments

moon-shaped ornaments that people wear in the belief that they will protect the person from evil

Isaiah 3:19

ear pendants

jewelry that hangs from the ear or over the ear

bracelets

a decoration that women wear on the arm near the hands

veils

a very thin material used to cover a woman's head and face

Isaiah 3:20

headscarves

long, thin pieces of cloth that women tie around the head or hair

ankle chains

These are decorations that women wear near the feet. Often the chains hang down to make a gentle noise.

sashes

a piece of cloth that people wear around the waist or across the chest mostly for decoration

perfume boxes

a small box or bag containing perfume that women wore on chains or strings around their necks so they smelled good

amulets

ornaments or jewelry that people wear because they believe that those things will protect them from evil, danger, or sickness

Isaiah 3:21

rings

a decoration worn around the finger

nose jewels

a decoration worn in or through the nose

Isaiah 3:22

festive robes

a long, loose garment with decorations that was worn over other clothes for everyone to see

mantles

a cloth worn over the shoulders on the outside of the clothes

veils

See how you translated this in Isaiah 3:19.

handbags

a bag to used to carry small things

Isaiah 3:23

hand mirrors

a small surface, held in one's hand and used to see oneself

fine linen

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a soft cloth worn by rich people

head pieces

a cloth or small hat worn over the hair

wraps

a decorative cloth that a woman would wrap around herself to make her beautiful

Isaiah 3:24

belt

This is a general word for a piece of cloth or leather that people wear around the waist. Some are for decoration, but others are to hold weapons.

a rope

This may refer to a rope that enemies would tie on the people of Judah when they captured them. Or it might mean that Jerusalem's women would have nothing to wear but rough clothing secured with ropes.

well-arranged hair, baldness

"pretty hair, their heads will be bald"

Isaiah 3:25

Your men will fall by the sword, and your strong men will fall in war

Falling represents being killed, and the sword represents battle. Alternate translation: "Your men will be killed in battle, and your strong men will be killed in war" or "Enemies will kill your soldiers in battle"

Isaiah 3:26

Jerusalem's gates will lament and mourn

Here the city gates represent the people who sit at the public places near the city gates. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem will sit at the city gates and cry and mourn"

she will be alone and sit upon the ground

Isaiah speaks of the people of Jerusalem, whom no one will save from their enemies, as if they were the city itself and as if they were a woman who sits on the ground because all her friends have deserted her.

---

[1] 4 On that day seven women
will take hold of one man and say,
"Our own food we will eat,
our own clothing we will wear.
But let us take your name
to remove our shame."

[2]On that day the branch of Yahweh will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and delight of the escaped remnant in Israel.

[3]It will happen that the one who is left in Zion and the one who remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who is written down as living in Jerusalem.[4]This will happen when the Lord will have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and will have cleansed the blood stains from the midst of Jerusalem, by means of the spirit of judgment and the spirit of flaming fire.

[5]Then over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her place of assembly, Yahweh will create cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; it will be a canopy over all the glory.[6]It will be a shelter for shade in the daytime from the heat, and a refuge and a cover from the storm and rain.

Isaiah 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

More women than men

This chapter describes a time when there will be many more women than men in Judah. This is because so many of Judah's fighting men will have died before the exile. Those who come through this difficult time will be a holy remnant. (See: and holy and remnant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Branch of Yahweh

Scholars are divided over the possible meaning of this metaphor. Some believe it is a reference to the Messiah, while others believe it is a reference to the faithful remnant. (See: and christ and faithful)

Links:

Isaiah 4:1 Notes

Isaiah 4:1

let us take your name

This phrase means "let us marry you."

Isaiah 4:2

the branch of Yahweh will be beautiful

Possible meanings are 1) "branch" is a synecdoche that represents the crops Yahweh will cause to grow in the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the

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crops in Israel to be beautiful" or 2) "branch" is a metaphor that refers to the Messiah.

will be beautiful and glorious

"will be full of beauty and glory"

the fruit of the land will be the pride and delight of the escaped remnant in Israel

The phrase "fruit of the land" speaks a synecdoche for all food crops that grow on the land. The words "pride" and "delight" are metonyms for what it is that brings pride and delight. Alternate translation: "the fruit of the land will be what makes those survivors in Israel proud and what they delight in"

Isaiah 4:3

the one who is left in Zion and the one who remains in Jerusalem

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Here "the one who" does not refer to a specific person but to people in general who are still alive in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "everyone who remains in Jerusalem"

will be called holy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord will call them holy" or "will belong to the Lord"

everyone who is written down as living in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone whose name is on the list of the people who live in Jerusalem"

Isaiah 4:4

when the Lord will have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion

This expression speaks of sin as if it were physical dirt. Alternate translation: "after the Lord removes the sins of the daughters of Zion as someone washes away filth"

filth

This word can refer to dung or to vomit, so you should use a general word here that can refer to either.

the daughters of Zion

Possible meanings are 1) the women of Jerusalem or 2) the people of Jerusalem.

will have cleansed the blood stains from the midst of Jerusalem

"Blood stains" here represents violence and murder. Alternate translation: "will have taken away those in Jerusalem who harm innocent people"

by means of the spirit of judgment and the spirit of flaming fire

This is how God would remove the sin from Jerusalem. Here "spirit" probably represents the activity of judging and burning. Alternate translation: "by judgment and flaming fire"

spirit of judgment

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will punish the people or 2) Yahweh will declare the people guilty.

the spirit of flaming fire

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor that means Yahweh will remove sinners from Zion like a fire removes impurities or 2) "flaming fire" is a metonym that represents the destruction in general of all the sinners.

Isaiah 4:5

a canopy over all the glory

Possible meanings are 1) a canopy for protecting the glorious city, or 2) a canopy consisting of God's glory that will protect the city. If the first meaning is followed, then it may further mean that the city is glorious because Yahweh is present in it.

canopy

This is a cloth that is hung over something to cover it for protecton.

---

5 1 Let me sing for my well beloved,
a song of my beloved about his vineyard.
My well beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

2 He spaded it, removed the stones,
and planted it with an excellent kind of vine.
He built a tower in the middle of it,
and also built a winepress.
He waited for it to produce grapes,
but it only produced wild grapes.

3 So now, inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

4 What more could have been done for my vineyard,
that I have not done for it?
When I looked for it to produce grapes,
why did it produce wild grapes?

5 Now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard:
I will remove the hedge,
I will turn it into a pasture,

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I will break down its wall,
and it will be trampled down.

6 I will lay it waste,
and it will not be pruned nor hoed.
Instead, briers and thorns will spring up.
I will also command the clouds
not to rain on it.

7 For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the man of Judah
his pleasant planting;
he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing;
for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help.

8 Woe to those who join house to house,
who join field to field,
until no room remains,
and you alone remain in the land!

9 Yahweh of hosts told me,
many houses will be desolate,
even great and impressive ones,
without any inhabitant.

10 For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one bath,
and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah.

11 Woe to those who rise up early in the morning
to obtain strong drink,
those who linger late into the night
until wine inflames them.

12 They have harp and lute,
tambourine, flute, and wine at their feasts,
but they do not honor what Yahweh has done
or respect the work of his hands.

13 Therefore my people have gone into captivity
for lack of understanding;
their honored leaders are famished,
and their common people have nothing to drink.

14 Therefore Sheol has made its appetite greater
and has opened its mouth very wide;
their elite, the people, their leaders, and the revelers
and those who are happy among them, descend into Sheol.

15 People bow low,
and men abase themselves.
the eyes of the lofty will be abased.

16 Yahweh of hosts will be exalted in his justice,
and God the Holy One will show himself holy by his righteousness.

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17 Then the sheep will feed as in their own pasture,
and in the ruins, lambs will graze as foreigners.[1]

18 Woe to those who pull along iniquity with useless cords
and who pull along sin as if it were with a cart rope.

19 Woe to those who say, "Let God hurry,
let him work quickly, so we can see it happen;
and let the plans of the Holy One of Israel come,
so that we may know them."

20 Woe to those who call evil good,
and good evil;
who represent darkness as light,
and light as darkness;
who represent bitter as sweet,
and sweet as bitter!

21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
and prudent in their own understanding!

22 Woe to those who are champions at drinking wine,
and masters at mixing strong drinks;

23 who acquit the wicked for a bribe,
and deprive those in the right of what is right!

24 Therefore as the tongue of fire devours stubble,
and as chaff goes down in flame,
so their root will rot,
and their blossom will blow away like dust.
This will happen because they have rejected
the law of Yahweh of hosts,
and because they have despised
the word of the Holy One of Israel.

25 Therefore the anger of Yahweh is kindled against his people.
He has reached out with his hand against them
and has punished them.
The mountains tremble,
and their corpses are like garbage in the streets.
In all these things, his anger does not subside;
his hand is still stretched out.

26 He will lift up a signal flag for faraway nations
and will whistle for those at the end of the earth.
Look, they will come
speedily and promptly.

27 None tire or stumble among them;
none slumbers or sleeps.
Nor are their belts loose,
or the thongs of their sandals broken.

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28 Their arrows are sharp
and all their bows are bent;
their horses' hooves are like flint,
and their chariot wheels like storms.

29 Their roaring will be like a lion;
they will roar like young lions.
They will growl and seize the prey
and drag it away, with none to rescue.

30 On that day they will roar against the prey
as the sea roars.
If anyone looks over the land,
he will see darkness and suffering;
even the light will be made dark by the clouds.

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[1]Some modern translations have and in the ruins of the rich, lambs will graze.

Isaiah 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Woe

This chapter presents a series of woes, or judgments against those who are spoken against. Most of these judgments are due to the lack of justice in Judah. (See: woe and judge and justice)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Allegory

This chapter begins as an allegory. An allegory is a story with a symbolic meaning. This allegory is meant to teach the Jews that they sinned against Yahweh and that there was nothing more he could have done for them. (See: spirit and sin) ==Animals being present where people once lived== Verse 17 ("Then the sheep will feed as in their own pasture, and in the ruins of the rich people, lambs will graze") is an example of the Old Testament's prophets' habit of describing complete ruin and desolation in terms of a picture of animals—usually wild animals, but here sheep and lambs—living in or feeding in those places. Whether the picture is of flocks or wild animals, the purpose is to say that the human habitation has gone back to wild nature, and that this has happened because of God's punishment on the people.

Links:

Isaiah 5:1 Notes

Isaiah 5:1

General Information:

Isaiah tells a parable about a farmer and his vineyard. The farmer represents God and the vineyard represents the people of Judah, the southern kingdom of the Israelites.

my well beloved

"my dear friend"

on a very fertile hill

"on a hill where very good crops could grow"

Isaiah 5:2

He spaded it

"He prepared the soil." This expresson refers to using a tool to dig into the ground to prepare it for planting.

He built a tower in the middle of it

"He made a tall building in the middle of the vineyard to watch over it." Someone would stand at the top of the tower to watch the vineyard and make sure that no animals or people went into it. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

built a winepress

"dug a pit to squeeze out the grape juice." A winepress is a low place carved out of rock in the ground where workers step on the grapes to crush them with their feet, in order to remove the grape juice.

wild grapes

"worthless grapes" or "bad tasting grapes"

Isaiah 5:3

General Information:

In Isaiah's parable of the vineyard, the owner of the vineyard, who represents God, speaks to the people of Jerusalem and Judah about his vineyard.

inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah

These expressions refer in general to all people living in Jerusalem and Judah, so they can be translated with plural

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nouns. Alternate translation: "all of you who live in Jerusalem and Judah"

Jerusalem ... Judah

"Judah" was the name of the southern kingdom of Israelites, and Jerusalem was the capital city.

judge between me and my vineyard

The idea of a space separating two things is often used to express the idea of choosing one or the other of those things. Alternate translation: "decide who has acted right, I or my vineyard"

Isaiah 5:4

What more could have been done for my vineyard, that I have not done for it?

The owner uses this question to make a statement about his vineyard. This rhetorical questions can be translated as a stataement. Alternate translation: "I have done all that I could do for my vineyard!"

When I looked for it to produce grapes, why did it produce wild grapes?

The owner uses a question to say that his vineyard should have produced good grapes. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I wanted it to make good grapes, but it only produced worthless grapes"

Isaiah 5:5

General Information:

In Isaiah's parable, the owner of the vineyard continues to talk about his vineyard.

remove the hedge

"take away the border of bushes." A hedge is a row of bushes or small trees that have been planted in order to protect a garden or some other kind of area. Here "hedge" probably refers to the thorn bushes that were planted to grow on the stone wall surrounding the vineyard.

I will turn it into a pasture

"I will allow animals to go there and eat." This is a grassy place where animals feed.

it will be trampled down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "animals will trample it down"

Isaiah 5:6

I will lay it waste

"I will destroy it"

it will not be pruned nor hoed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will prune it or hoe it" or "no one will cut off the branches that are not needed, and no one will take care of the soil"

briers and thorns will spring up

Briers and thorns are often used as symbols of ruined cities and land.

Isaiah 5:7

General Information:

Isaiah explains the parable of the vineyard.

For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel

Isaiah states that the vineyard in the parable represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts represents the house of Israel" or "The people of Israel are like the vineyard of Yahweh, Lord of the angel armies"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of Israel"

the man of Judah his pleasant planting

The people of Judah are spoken of as if they are a vine that Yahweh planted. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah are like a vine that that Yahweh planted for Yahweh's pleasure"

the man of Judah

Here "man" represents all the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing

This can be changed so that the abstract noun "justice" can be expressed by the verb "do what is fair." The abstract noun "killing" can be expressed as "killed one another." Alternate translation: "Yahweh waited for the people to do what is fair, but instead they killed one another"

for righteousness

The phrase "he waited" is understood from earlier in the verse. It can be repeated to make the meaning clear. Alternate translation: "he waited for righteousness" or "he waited for them to do what is right"

instead, a shout for help

The words "there was" are understood from earlier in the verse. They can be repeated to make the meaning clear. The reason people shouted out for help can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "instead, there was a shout for help" or "instead, those who were weak shouted out for someone to help them because others were attacking them"

a shout

This expression probably stands for many shouts.

Isaiah 5:8

General Information:

Isaiah announces God's judgment.

to those who join house to house, who join field to field

"to those who take more and more houses, and who take more and more fields." Isaiah assumes that his audience knows that the law forbids someone from taking land from a family permanently. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

Isaiah 5:9

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

without any inhabitant

"without anyone living in it"

Isaiah 5:10

a ten-yoke vineyard

The size of the vineyard is represented by the number of pairs of oxen that could plow it in one day. Each pair of oxen would be connected by a yoke. Alternate translation: "a vineyard that is large enough for ten pairs of oxen to plow it"

only one bath

The words "of wine" are implied. Alternate translation: "only one bath of wine"

one bath

A bath is eqaul to 22 liters.

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one homer of seed will yield only an ephah
A homer is equal to 220 liters.
only an ephah
The words "of grain" are implied. Alternate translation: "only an ephah of grain"
an ephah
An ephah is equal to 22 liters.
Isaiah 5:11
those who rise up early in the morning ... who linger late into the night
This refers to people who do nothing all day but drink alcoholic drinks.
until wine inflames them
Here the power of wine to make its drinkers drunk is spoken of as if it were inflaming them, that is, setting them on fire. Alternate translation: "until they are drunk with wine"
Isaiah 5:12
harp and lute, tambourine, flute, and wine
These musical instruments and the wine imply that the people enjoying these things are celebrating very much.
tambourine
A musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be beaten with the hand. It probably had pieces of metal around the side that sounded when the player shook it. The tambourine was small enough for the player to hold it and shake it with one hand.
the work of his hands
Here the metonym "hands" represents the person who has done something. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh has done"
Isaiah 5:13
General Information:
These verses tell what will happen to the people because they have disobeyed God.
my people have gone into captivity
In prophecy things that will happen in the future are often referred to as if they had already happened. This emphasizes that the prophecy will certainly come true. Alternate translation: "enemies from other countries will take my people, Israel, as slaves"
for lack of understanding
What they do not understand can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "because they do not understand Yahweh or his law"
are famished
"are extremely hungry"
Isaiah 5:14
Sheol has made its appetite greater and has opened its mouth very wide
This phrase speaks of Sheol, which stands here for the grave, to an animal that is ready to eat other animals. It implies that many, many people will die. Alternate translation: "death is like a hungry animal that has opened its mouth wide to eat up many people"
their elite, the people, their leaders, and the revelers and those who are happy among them, descend into Sheol
The prophet speaks of the future as if it were happening now. Alternate translation: "Many people of Israel, their important people and common people, their leaders and those who enjoy wild parties, will go into Sheol"
Isaiah 5:15
People bow low, and men abase themselves
See how you translated these words in [Isaiah 2:9]
the eyes of the lofty will be abased
Looking down is often a sign of being ashamed. See how you translated similar words in [Isaiah 2:11]
the lofty
Here proud, arrogant people are spoken of as if they are high above other people. Alternate translation: "proud"
Isaiah 5:16
Yahweh of hosts will be exalted in his justice
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will praise Yahweh of hosts because he is just"
Yahweh of hosts
See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.
will be exalted
Being honored is spoken of as if it were being lifted high. Alternate translation: "will be greatly honored"
Isaiah 5:17
the sheep will feed as in their own pasture
Yahweh will destroy the city of Jerusalem, which was called a "vineyard" in Isaiah 5:1. It will become good for nothing except for sheep to eat grass there.
graze
eat grass
in the ruins, lambs will graze as foreigners
That is, the lambs will graze there. The land will be worthless for any other use.
Isaiah 5:18
Woe to those who pull along iniquity with useless cords and who pull along sin as if it were with a cart rope
These phrases mean basically the same thing. They speak of people who continue to sin on purpose as if they were using all their strength to pull a heavy cart along. God will punish them for their sin. Alternate translation: "Woe to those who work hard to sin as a person who drags a cart by a rope"
Isaiah 5:19
those who say
This refers to those who continue to sin
let the plans of the Holy One of Israel come
God's plans are spoken of as if they were objects that could come by themselves. Alternate translation: "let the Holy One of Israel accomplish his plans"
the Holy One of Israel
Translate "the Holy One" as in Isaiah 5:16.
Isaiah 5:20
who represent darkness as light, and light as darkness ... bitter as sweet, and sweet as bitter
Those who do these things are the same as those "who call evil good, and good evil." These things are opposites and people know the difference between them, but some people lie and say that bad things are good. Alternate translation: "They are like people who call darkness light and light darkness. They are like people who call bitter things sweet and sweet things bitter"
Isaiah 5:21
to those who are wise in their own eyes
Here the metonym "eyes" refers to their thoughts. Alternate

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translation: "to those who consider themselves to be wise"
prudent in their own understanding
"think they understand everything"
Isaiah 5:23
who acquit the wicked for a bribe
This passage is speaking about corrupt judges in courts of law.
acquit the wicked
"declare guilty people innocent"
deprive those in the right of what is right
"do not treat innocent people fairly"
Isaiah 5:24
General Information:
Yahweh threatens to destroy the evil people of Isaiah 5:18-23.
tongue of fire
"flame of fire" or "flame"
stubble ... chaff
"Stubble" and "chaff" are the useless parts of the food grain plant. During harvest they are dry and so burn easily.
stubble
The dry pieces of plants that are left in the ground after the stalks have been cut.
chaff
or "dry grass"
their root will rot, and their blossom will blow away like dust
Isaiah speaks of these people as if they were a dying plant. Alternate translation: "they will die like a plant whose roots have rotted and whose blossom has dried up and blown away in the wind"
Isaiah 5:25
the anger of Yahweh is kindled
Isaiah speaks of Yahweh's anger as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is very angry"
He has reached out with his hand against them and has punished them
The prophet speaks of the future as if it had already happened. He does this to insist that the prophecy certainly will come about. Alternate translation: "he will punish them with his powerful hand"
has reached out with his hand against them
Here "hand" refers to God's power and control. Alternate translation: "has shown his power against them"
corpses
dead bodies
their corpses are like garbage in the streets
The dead bodies are allowed to lie in the streets as if they were garbage. This implies that many will die but that no one will be there to bury them. The word "garbage" can also be translated as "refuse" or "manure."
In all these things, his anger does not subside; his hand
"Even though all these things have happened, he is still angry, and his hand"
his hand is still stretched out
Here "hand" represents God's power and control. Isaiah speaks as if Yahweh were a person about to hit another person with his fist. This is a metaphor for Yahweh punishing Israel. Alternate translation: "he will still be ready to punish them"
Isaiah 5:26
He will lift up a signal flag for faraway nations and will whistle for those at the end of the earth
Isaiah says the same thing in two different ways. God causing the armies of nations that are far away from Judah to come and attack is spoken of as if he would raise a flag and whistle to call them to Judah Alternate translation: "He will call for the armies of nations that are far away from Judah and tell them to come"
whistle
a loud, high pitched noise a person makes with their mouth to call a person or animal that is far away
they will come
"the enemy army will come"
speedily and promptly
These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how quickly they will come. Alternate translation: "very quickly"
Isaiah 5:27
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe the army that will attack Judah. He describes it as if it were already existing (Isaiah 5:26).
tire ... stumble ... slumbers ... sleeps
These four words progress from being tired from work to being unable to walk well, to being unable to stay awake, to full sleep, so all four should appear in the translation.
Nor are their belts loose
The soldiers kept their clothes tight so it would easier to move and fight.
the thongs of their sandals
"the straps of their sandals"
Isaiah 5:28
their horses' hooves are like flint
"their hooves are like hard stone." Isaiah compares the hard part of a horse's foot to flint, which is a hard stone that can cause sparks when struck. Possible meanings are 1) Isaiah compares their hooves to flint so to describe the frightening image of their feet causing sparks as they run or 2) Isaiah compares their hooves to flint to emphasize how strong their hooves are which enables the horse to do whatever their master want them to do.
their chariot wheels like storms
Isaiah compares the chariot wheels to storms in order to imply that they will destroy everything in their path. Alternate translation: "the wheels of the chariots will spin like a windstorm"
chariot wheels
These wheels often had sharp blades attached to them that would cut to pieces anyone the chariot passed close to.
Isaiah 5:29
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe the army that will attack Judah (Isaiah 5:26).
young lions
A young age is a metonym for strength. Alternate translation: "the strongest lions"
They will growl and seize the prey
Isaiah compares the enemy killing the people of Judah to a lion killing a weaker animal. Possible meanings are 1) lions

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make a sound not as loud as a roar just before they strike, or 2) the writer is using two words to mean the same thing.

prey

animals that another animal wants to catch and kill

with none to rescue

"and no one will be able to save them"

Isaiah 5:30

will roar ... sea roars

The word "roar" here is translated "growl" in verse 29. Use your language's word for the sound of waves in a storm or heavy rain or some other frightening natural sound.

even the light will be made dark by the clouds

Here darkness represents suffering and disaster. This metaphor can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the dark clouds will completely block the light of the sun"

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6 [1]In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne; he was high and elevated, and the hem of his robe
filled the temple.[2]Above him were the seraphim; each one had six wings; with two each covered his face, and with two
he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
[3]Each one called to another and said,
"Holy, holy, holy, is Yahweh of hosts!
The whole earth is full of his glory."

[4]The foundations of the thresholds shook at the voices of those who were crying out, and the house was filled with smoke.
[5]Then I said, "Woe is me! For I am doomed because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips,
because my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh, Yahweh of hosts!"

[6]Then one of the seraphim flew to me; he had a glowing coal in his hand, that he had taken with the tongs from off the
altar.[7]He touched my mouth with it and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt has been taken away, and your
sin atoned for."

[8]I heard the voice of the Lord say, "Whom will I send; who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am; send me."[9]He said, "Go
and tell this people,
'Hearing, you will hear, but you will not understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will not know.'
[10] Make the heart of this people insensitive,
and their ears dull, and blind their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart, and then turn and be healed."

[11]Then I said, "Lord, how long?" He answered,
"Until cities crash into ruins
and are without inhabitants,
and the houses are without people,
and the land falls into a desolate waste,
[12] and until Yahweh has sent the people far away,
and the whole land is completely abandoned.

[13] Even if a tenth of the people remain in it,
it will again be destroyed;
as a terebinth or an oak is cut down and whose trunk remains,
the holy seed is in its stump."

Isaiah 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 6:3-4,7, 9-13.

Special concepts in this chapter

Heaven

This vision described in this chapter is probably a scene in heaven. (See: heaven)

Isaiah's call

This chapter record Isaiah's call to prophetic ministry. It recognizes the holiness of God and Isaiah recognizes his need for

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holiness. (See: call and prophet and holy)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Inevitability

The way Yahweh speaks in this chapter shows the inevitability of the punishment of Yahweh against the people of Judah. The punishment must now come. It is too late for repentance. (See: repent)

Links:

[Isaiah 6:1 Notes]

Isaiah 6:1

he was high and elevated

The words "high" and "elevated" emphasize that the throne was very high and above everything around it. The height of the throne represents how great and powerful the Lord is.

filled the temple

"filled the palace." The word used for temple here is often used to refer to the palace of kings.

Isaiah 6:2

Above him were the seraphim

The word "seraphim" is the plural of seraph. This means the Lord was seated on the throne and the seraphim were standing or flying near the Lord ready to serve him.

seraphim

This word suggests that the creatures might have a fiery appearance or resemble snakes. Because we do not know exactly what "seraphim" means, you could translate this as "winged creatures" or "winged living things." Or, you can borrow the word and use it in your language.

each one had six wings

"each seraph had six wings" or "each creature had six wings"

with two each covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew

The words "wings" and "seraph" are understood. Alternate translation: "with two wings each seraph covered his face, and with two wings he covered his feet, and with two wings he flew"

Isaiah 6:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe his vision.

Each one called to another and said

"The seraphim called out to one another and said" or "The winged creatures proclaimed to one another"

Holy, holy, holy, is Yahweh of hosts

Repeating the word "holy" three times indicates God is completely holy. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts is holy beyond all else" or "Yahweh of hosts is completely holy"

The whole earth is full of his glory

This speaks of the earth as if it were a container and glory were the contents in the container. Alternate translation: "Everything on the earth is evidence of God's glory"

Isaiah 6:4

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe his vision.

The foundations of the thresholds shook at the voices of those who were crying out

"When the seraphim called out, their voices shook the doorways and their foundations"

the house was filled with smoke

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "smoke filled the temple" or "smoke filled the palace"

Isaiah 6:5

Woe is me! For I am doomed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am in great trouble! Terrible things will happen to me"

of unclean lips

Here "lips" represent what a person speaks. And, people saying things that are unacceptable to God is spoken of as if their lips were physically unclean.

Yahweh, Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh, the ruler of the angel armies"

my eyes have seen

Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I have seen"

Isaiah 6:6

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe his vision.

seraphim

This word suggests that the creatures might have a fiery appearance or resemble snakes. Because we do not know exactly what "seraphim" means, you could translate these as "creatures" or "living things" or "beings." Or you can borrow the word and use it in your language. See how you translated this word in [Isaiah 6:2]

tongs

a tool used for grabbing or holding objects

Isaiah 6:7

your guilt has been taken away, and your sin atoned for

These two phrases say basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has taken away your guilt and has forgiven your sins"

your guilt has been taken away

Yahweh no longer considering a person to be guilty is spoken of as if "guilt" were an object that someone could take away from someone else.

Isaiah 6:8

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe his vision.

the voice of the Lord say

Here "voice" represents the Lord himself. Alternate translation: "the Lord say"

Whom will I send

It is implied that Yahweh will send someone to speak his message to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Whom will I send to be a messenger to my people"

who will go for us

It seems "us" refers to Yahweh and the members of his

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heavenly council to whom he is speaking.

Isaiah 6:9

this people

"the people of Israel"

Hearing, you will hear, but you will not understand; seeing, you will see, but you will not know

If needed, you can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "You will hear Yahweh's message, but you will not understand what it means; you will see what Yahweh is doing, but you will not know what it means"

Isaiah 6:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Isaiah what he must do when Yahweh sends him to preach to the people.

Make the heart of this people insensitive

Here "heart" represents a person's mind. A person who does not think clearly and is unable to understand and care about what is happening is spoken of as if his heart were insensitive. Alternate translation: "Make these people unable to understand" or "Make the minds of these people dull"

Make the heart of this people

It may be more natural to translate "heart" and "this" as plurals. Alternate translation: "Make the hearts of these people"

Make the heart ... insensitive

This command means that Yahweh will use Isaiah's message to cause the people to understand even less and to make them less sensitive to what Yahweh is doing.

their ears dull, and blind their eyes

"make it so that they cannot hear, and make it so that they cannot see." Isaiah making people to not understand Yahweh's message or what he is doing is spoken of as if Isaiah were making them deaf and blind.

they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears

People being able to understand Yahweh's message and what he is doing is spoken of as if the people were able physically to see and hear.

understand with their heart

Here "heart" represents as person's mind. Truly understanding something and caring about what is happening is spoken of as if the people were to understand with their hearts.

then turn

Repenting and starting to obey Yahweh is spoken of as if the people were physically to turn towards him. Alternate translation: "follow me again" or "then start trusting in me again"

be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would heal them"

Isaiah 6:11

Until cities crash into ruins and are without inhabitants, and the houses are without people

"Until all the cities and houses are ruined and no one lives there"

the land falls into a desolate waste

Here "falls into" is an idiom that means to become something worse. Alternate translation: "the land becomes a desolate waste"

Isaiah 6:12

until Yahweh has sent the people far away, and the whole land is completely abandoned

Here Yahweh speaks about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "until I, Yahweh, have sent all the people far away from their land, so that no one is left"

Isaiah 6:13

it will again be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "armies will again destroy the land of Israel"

as a terebinth or an oak is cut down and whose trunk remains, the holy seed is in its stump

This simile means that even after Yahweh destroys Israel, he will still set apart people from among the Israelites to serve him.

terebinth

a kind of oak tree

trunk ... stump

A trunk is the thick main stem of a tree. A stump is the part of a tree that remains in the ground after the tree is cut down.

the holy seed

The people who will serve Yahweh after armies destroy Israel are spoken of as if they were set apart as a holy seed.

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7 [1]During the days of Ahaz son of Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Rezin the king of Aram, and Pekah son of
Remaliah, king of Israel, went up to Jerusalem to war against it, but they could not prevail against it.[2]It was reported to the house of David that Aram was allied with Ephraim. His heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest shake in the wind.[1]

[3]Then Yahweh said to Isaiah, "Go out with your son Shear-Jashub to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, on the road to Launderer's Field.[4]Tell him, 'Be careful, remain calm, do not be afraid or intimidated by these two smoldering firebrands, by the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, and of Pekah son of Remaliah.
[5]Aram, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah have planned evil against you; they have said,[6]"Let us attack Judah and terrify her, and let us break into her and set up our king there, the son of Tabeel."
[7]The Lord Yahweh says,
"It will not take place;
it will not happen,
8 because the head of Aram is Damascus,
and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

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Within sixty-five years,
Ephraim will be shattered and will no longer be a people.

9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria,
and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son.
If you do not remain firm in faith,
surely you will not remain secure.""

10 Then Yahweh spoke again to Ahaz,11 "Ask a sign of Yahweh your God; ask for it in Sheol below or in the height
above."12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test Yahweh."
13 So Isaiah replied, "Listen, house of David. Is it not enough for you people to test the patience of people? Must you also
test the patience of my God?14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you people a sign: See, the young woman will conceive,
bear a son, and will call his name Immanuel.15 He will eat curds and honey when he knows to refuse the evil and choose
the good.
16 For before the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.
17 Yahweh will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house days unlike any since Ephraim seceded from
Judah—he will bring on you the king of Assyria."

18 At that time Yahweh will whistle for a fly from the distant streams of Egypt, and for a bee from the land of Assyria.19 They
will all come and settle down into all the gorges, into the clefts of the rocks, on all the thornbushes, and onto all the
pastures.

20 At that time the Lord will shave with a razor that was hired beyond the Euphrates River—the king of Assyria—the head
and the hair of the legs; it will also sweep away the beard.21 On that day, a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep,
22 and because of the abundance of milk they give, he will eat curds, for everyone left in the land will eat curds and honey.

23 At that time, where there were a thousand vines worth a thousand silver shekels, there will be nothing but briers and
thorns.24 Men will go there to hunt with bows, because all the land will be briers and thorns.25 They will stay away from all
the hills that were cultivated with the hoe, for fear of the briers and thorns; but it will be a place where cattle and sheep
graze.

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[a] Instead of that Aram was allied with Ephraim, some scholars translate the Hebrew to read: that Aram had camped in Ephraim.

Isaiah 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:7-9, 18-25.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Young woman"

Some translations choose to translate this as "virgin" and believe it is a reference to the Messiah being born of a virgin woman. This is only one possible translation, therefore most translations have avoided forcing this specific connotation into the meaning of the term. (See: christ)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

In this chapter, Israel is a reference to the northern kingdom of Israel and not the nation as a whole. They are also called Ephraim in this chapter after its most prominent tribe.

Links:

Isaiah 7:1 Notes

Isaiah 7:1

During the days of Ahaz ... king of Judah

"When Ahaz ... was king of Judah" This was when the events happened.

Rezin ... Pekah ... Remaliah

men's names

Rezin ... and Pekah ... went up

The author speaks as if the kings were the armies they led. Alternate translation: "Rezin ... and Pekah ... led their armies up"

to war against it

The author speaks as if the city itself were the people who

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live in it. Alternate translation: "to war against the people of Jerusalem"

Isaiah 7:2

It was reported to the house of David

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the house of David heard the report" or "someone reported to the house of David"

the house of David

The word "house" is a metonym for the family living in the house. Alternate translation: "King Ahaz and his counselors"

that Aram was allied with Ephraim

Here "Aram" and "Ephraim" refer to their kings. Here "Ephraim" represents the whole northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "that Rezin, the king of Aram was helping Pekah, the king of Israel"

His heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest shake in the wind

The trembling of their hearts at this news is compared to the way trees shake when the wind blows through them. Alternate translation: "Ahaz and his people were very afraid"

Isaiah 7:3

General Information:

Isaiah writes about what happened to him as if it had happened to someone else.

Shear-Jashub

Translators may also add a footnote that says, "The name Shear-Jashub means 'a remnant will return.'" The meaning may have given hope to Ahaz.

at the end of the conduit of the upper pool

"where the water flows out of the tunnel and enters the upper pool"

conduit

man-made ditch or tunnel through which water flows

road

If your language has a word for a road or path that people have made smooth by filling in the low places and lowering the high places, you can use it here.

Launderer's Field

Possible meanings are 1) this is the proper name by which the people called the field or 2) this is the common noun that the people used to talk about the field, "the launderer's field" or "the field where men wash wool" or "the field where women wash clothes."

Launderer's Field

A launderer is either 1) a man who washes wool that someone has cut from the sheep, "Wool Washer Field," or 2) a woman who washes dirty clothes, "Clothes Washer Field."

Isaiah 7:4

Tell him

"Tell Ahaz"

do not be afraid or intimidated by these two smoldering firebrands, by the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram, and of Pekah son of Remaliah

God compares Rezin and Pekah to burning sticks whose fire has gone out and are making smoke now. God is emphasizing that they are not real threats to Judah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "do not let Rezin and Pekah make you afraid; their fierce anger is like a burning stick whose fire has gone out and there is only smoke"

afraid or intimidated

The words "afraid" and "intimidated" mean the same thing and can be translated as one word. Alternate translation: "afraid"

Isaiah 7:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Isaiah what he should tell Ahaz (Isaiah 7:3).

Aram, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah

The words "Aram" and "Ephraim" refer to the kings of these lands. Also, "Ephraim" represents the northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Rezin the king of Aram and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel"

Remaliah

This is the name of a man. Translate his name as in Isaiah 7:1.

have planned evil against you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Ahaz.

Isaiah 7:6

son of Tabeel

It is unknown who this man is.

Isaiah 7:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell Isaiah what he should tell Ahaz (Isaiah 7:3).

Isaiah 7:8

the head of Damascus is Rezin

Here "head" is a metonym for the most important part. It is implied that Rezin is only a man, and therefore cannot stop Yahweh's plan. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "the king of Damascus is Rezin, who is only a man"

sixty-five years

"65 years"

Ephraim will be shattered and will no longer be a people

Here "Ephraim" refers to all of the northern kingdom of Israel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "an army will destroy Ephraim, and there will no longer be a people of Israel"

Isaiah 7:9

the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son

This means Pekah is the king of Samaria and all of Israel. Alternate translation: "the king of Samaria is Pekah, who is a weak man"

If you do not remain firm in faith, surely you will not remain secure

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "If you continue to believe in me, you will certainly remain safe"

If you do not remain

"Unless you remain"

Isaiah 7:11

ask for it in Sheol below or in the height above

Yahweh uses the words "Sheol" and "height" to mean Ahaz could ask him for anything.

the height

The abstract noun "height" can be translated with a preposition. "places far above you"

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Isaiah 7:12
will not ask
"will not ask Yahweh for a sign"
Isaiah 7:13
house of David
The word "house" is a metonym for the family living in the house. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 7:2]
Is it not enough for you people to test the patience of people? Must you also test the patience of my God?
These questions emphasize that the king has sinned greatly. Alternate translation: "You test the patience of people! Now you even test the patience of my God!"
Isaiah 7:14
the young woman will conceive
Some ancient versions and some contemporary versions translate, "the virgin will conceive," while others translate "the young woman will conceive."
his name Immanuel
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Immanuel means 'God with us.'"
Isaiah 7:15
He will eat curds and honey when he knows to refuse the evil and choose the good
Possible meanings are 1) "By the time that child is old enough to eat curds and honey, he will be able to reject what is evil and choose what is good." This emphasizes that the child will be very young when he knows to choose what is right instead of wrong or 2) "By the time the child is old enough to reject what is evil and choose what is good, he will be eating curds and honey." The people of Judah considered a child to be responsible for doing what is right when he was 12 years old. This emphasizes that within twelve years the people will be able to eat much curds and honey because most of the people of Israel will be killed or taken as captives.
curds
milk that people have treated to make it into a soft solid
refuse the evil and choose the good
Here "the evil" and "the good" refer to evil and good things in general. Alternate translation: "refuse to do evil deeds and choose to do good deeds"
Isaiah 7:16
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe the sign that God will give the house of David.
refuse the evil and choose the good
Here "the evil" and "the good" refer to evil and good things in general. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 7:15]
you dread
"you fear." Here "you" is singular and refers to Ahaz.
Isaiah 7:17
your people
This refers to the people of Judah.
Isaiah 7:18
At that time
before the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good (Isaiah 7:15)
Yahweh will whistle for
"Yahweh will call" or "Yahweh will summon"
for a fly from the distant streams of Egypt, and for a bee from the land of Assyria
Here the armies of Egypt and Assyria are spoken of as if they are insects that will invade the land of Israel. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "for the armies of Egypt and Assyria, and their soldiers will be everywhere like flies and bees"
Isaiah 7:20
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe the time when the army of Assyria will attack Israel.
the Lord will shave with a razor that was hired beyond the Euphrates River—the king of Assyria
The word "razor" is a metaphor for the king of Assyria and his army, and Yahweh speaks of the king as if the king were a man who would do Yahweh's work and then receive money from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the Lord will call the king of Assyria from beyond the Euphrates River to work for him to shave you"
that was hired
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he bought"
the head ... the hair of the legs ... also ... the beard
It was bad to have someone shave the top of the head; it was worse to have someone shave "the hair of the legs"; it was worst of all to have someone shave the beard.
the head ... the hair of the legs ... the beard
Isaiah does not say whose head, hair, and beard the Lord is going to shave, but Ahaz and the reader would understand that this is a man; the man is a metaphor for the people living in the land of Judah.
the head
Here "the head" represents the hair that grows on it. Alternate translation: "the hair on the head"
the hair of the legs
Possible meanings are 1) this is a polite way to speak of the hair on the lower body or 2) this speaks of the hair on the legs.
it will also sweep
"the razor will also sweep." If your language requires a person to be the subject of "will ... sweep," you can say, "the Lord will also sweep."
Isaiah 7:22
because of the abundance of milk they give
The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated as a clause. Alternate translation: "because they will give so much milk"
Isaiah 7:23
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe the time when the army from Assyria will attack the land of Israel.
there were a thousand vines ... briers and thorns
"there were 1,000 vines." That is, when Isaiah wrote, there were vineyards, in some of which were 1,000 vines or more each. He says that these vineyards will become full of briers and thorns.
a thousand silver shekels
"1000 silver shekels." A shekel is a silver coin worth 4 days wage. Alternate translation: "1,000 silver coins"

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briers and thorns
The words "briers" and "thorns" both refer to useless, thorny plants. It is not necessary to translate both words.
Alternate translation: "thorn bushes" or "brier bushes"
Isaiah 7:24
because all the land will be briers and thorns
Why the hunters come to these lands can be made explicit.
Alternate translation: "because there will be nothing in these lands but briers, thorns, and wild animals"
Isaiah 7:25
They will stay away from all the hills that were cultivated with the hoe
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will stay away from the hills where they once prepared the soil to plant crops"

8 [1]Yahweh said to me, "Take a large tablet and write on it, 'Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.'[2]I will summon faithful witnesses to attest for me, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah."
[3]I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then Yahweh said to me, "Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.[4]For before the child knows to cry, 'My father,' and, 'My mother,' the riches of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried away by the king of Assyria."

[5]Yahweh spoke to me again,
[6] "Because this people has refused
the gentle waters of Shiloah
and rejoices over Rezin
and the son of Remaliah,

[7] therefore the Lord is about to bring up on them
the waters of the River, mighty and many,
the king of Assyria and all his glory.
It will come up over all its channels
and overflow its banks.

[8] The River will sweep onward into Judah,
flooding and passing on, until it reaches to your neck.
Its outstretched wings will fill the breadth of your land,
Immanuel."

[9] You peoples will be broken to pieces.
Listen, all you distant countries:
gird yourselves and be broken to pieces;
gird yourselves and be broken to pieces.

[10] Form a plan, but it will not be carried out;
issue the command, but it will not be carried out,
for God is with us.

[11]Yahweh spoke to me, with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people.
[12] Do not call conspiracy
anything that this people calls conspiracy,
you will not fear what they fear,
and do not be terrified.

[13] It is Yahweh of hosts whom you will honor as holy;
he is the one you must fear,
and he is the one you must dread.

[14] He will become a sanctuary;
but he will be a stone of striking,
and a stone of stumbling—
for both the houses of Israel,
and he will be a trap and a snare
to the people of Jerusalem.

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15 Many will stumble over it
and fall and be broken,
and be ensnared and captured.

16 Bind up my testimony,
seal the official record, and give it to my disciples.

17 I will wait for Yahweh,
who hides his face from the house of Jacob;
I will trust in him.

18 See, I and the sons whom Yahweh has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from Yahweh of hosts, who lives on Mount Zion.

19 They will say to you, "Consult with sorcerers and spiritists," the ones who chirp and mutter incantations. But should a people not consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? 20 To the law and to the testimony! If they do not say such things, it is because they have no light of dawn.
21 They will pass through the land greatly distressed and hungry. When they are hungry, they will become angry and curse their king and their God, as they turn their faces upward. 22 They will look at the earth and see distress, darkness, and gloom that causes anguish. They will be banished to thick darkness.

Isaiah 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:6-18, 21-22.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust in Yahweh

Israel will not trust in Yahweh. Instead, they will trust in their own power, their Gentile allies and the power of false gods. They will be punished because the power of Yahweh is greater than all of these. (See: trust and falsegod)

Links:

Isaiah 8:1 Notes

Isaiah 8:1

Yahweh said to me

Here the word "me" refers to Isaiah.

Isaiah 8:2

I will summon faithful witnesses to attest for me

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is speaking: "I will call honest men to be witnesses" or 2) Isaiah is speaking: "I called honest men to be witnesses" or 3) Yahweh is commanding Isaiah: "Call honest men to be witnesses."

Isaiah 8:3

I went to the prophetess

The phrase "went to" here is a euphemism for sexual relations. It can be stated explicitly that Isaiah is married to the prophetess. Alternate translation: "I had sexual relations with the prophetess" or "I had sexual relations with my wife, the prophetess"

Isaiah 8:4

the riches of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried away by the king of Assyria

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria will carry away all the treasures of Damascus and Samaria"

Isaiah 8:6

Because this people has refused the gentle waters of Shiloah

The words "gentle waters" are a metaphor for the law of the Lord. Alternate translation: "Because this people has rejected Yahweh's law, which is like the gentle waters of Shiloah"

this people

"this people group." If your language needs a plural here, you can translate this phrase and the following verbs as "these people have refused ... are happy."

rejoices over Rezin and the son of Remaliah

The full meaning can be made explicit. See how you translated these men's names in [Isaiah 7:1]

Isaiah 8:7

therefore the Lord is

Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were someone else to remind the people of who he is. Alternate translation: "therefore I, the Lord, am"

bring up on them

The verb is "bring up"; the adverb is "on them."

on them

"on the people of Judah"

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the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory
The river symbolizes the army of Assyria. Alternate translation: "the army from Assyria, which is powerful like a mighty river"
the River
the Euphrates River in Assyria
Isaiah 8:8
General Information:
The Lord continues to describe the army of Assyria as a river that will flood Judah (Isaiah 8:7).
The River will sweep onward into Judah, flooding and passing on, until it reaches to your neck
The army of Assyria is like a flood of water. Alternate translation: "More and more soldiers will come like a river rising up to your neck"
The River
This refers to the Euphrates River in Assyria. This is a metonym for the Assyrian soldiers, who will come from their homes by the Euphrates River
Its outstretched wings will fill
Possible meanings are 1) as "the River" in the metaphor rises, its "wings" flow over and cover what had been dry land or 2) Isaiah changes metaphors and now speaks of Yahweh as a bird who is protecting the land, "But his outstretched wings will cover."
Immanuel
Translators may add a footnote that says: "The name Immanuel means 'God with us.'" See how you translated this in Isaiah 7:14.
Isaiah 8:9
You peoples will be broken to pieces
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will break your armies to pieces"
Listen, all you distant countries
Isaiah speaks as if people in other countries can hear him. Alternate translation: "Listen, all you people in far away places"
gird yourselves and be broken to pieces; gird yourselves and be broken to pieces
Yahweh is mocking the peoples and saying that no matter how they prepare for war, he will defeat them. These words are stated twice for emphasis. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will prepare yourselves for battle, but I will destroy you"
Isaiah 8:10
Form a plan, but it will not be carried out; issue the command, but it will not be carried out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You can prepare to attack Judah, but you will not succeed"
it will not be carried out ... it will not be carried out
To "carry out" a plan or command is to do what the person who makes the plan or command wants the hearer to do. These clauses can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will not be able to do what you plan to do ... your soldiers will not be able to do what their commanders tell them to do"
Isaiah 8:11
Yahweh spoke to me, with his strong hand upon me
Here "his strong hand upon me" is an idiom that refers to Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke to me in a very powerful way"
warned me not to walk in the way of this people.
This is an indirect quote that ends in 8:17. Alternate translation: "warned me and said, 'Do not act like this people.'"
Isaiah 8:12
Do not call conspiracy anything that this people calls conspiracy
The people imagine there are conspiracies, and it makes them anxious. Alternate translation: "Do not worry like this people who think someone is always trying to harm them"
Isaiah 8:13
It is Yahweh of hosts whom you will honor as holy; he is the one you must fear, and he is the one you must dread
If you translate this as a direct quote, you can also translate it with Yahweh speaking in the first person: "But you will consider me, Yahweh of Hosts, as holy. And you will fear and be in awe of me"
Isaiah 8:14
General Information:
Isaiah continues the indirect quote of Yahweh that began in [Isaiah 8:11-13]
He will become a sanctuary
The word "sanctuary" is a metaphor for Yahweh keeping his people safe and protecting them. Alternate translation: "He will protect them when they go to him"
he will be a trap and a snare to the people of Jerusalem
The words "trap" and "snare" mean almost the same thing and emphasize that when Yahweh decides to punish the people of Jerusalem they will not be able to escape. Alternate translation: "he will trap the people of Jerusalem so they cannot escape him"
trap
a device that catches a bird in a net or basket
snare
a trap that catches and holds an animal's leg or nose
Isaiah 8:15
Many will stumble over it and fall and be broken, and be ensnared and captured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Many people will stumble over the stone, and when they fall they will not get up. And many people will step into the trap, and they will not be able to get out"
ensnared and captured
These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that they will be caught in the trap.
Isaiah 8:16
Bind up my testimony, seal the official record
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Close up tightly the scroll with this message written on it"
my testimony ... my disciples
It is unclear to whom the word "my" refers. It could be Isaiah or Yahweh. It is best to leave the pronouns ambiguous if your language will allow it.
Isaiah 8:17
I will wait for Yahweh
Here "I" refers to Isaiah.

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who hides his face from the house of Jacob

Yahweh's "face" is a metonym for his blessing or favor. Alternate translation: "who has taken away his blessing from the house of Jacob" or "who no longer looks with favor on the house of Jacob"

house of Jacob

people of Israel

Isaiah 8:18

I and the sons whom Yahweh has given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel

"I and the sons Yahweh has given me are like signs to warn the people of Israel." The sons are Shear-Jashub and Maher-shalal-hash-baz, whose names are a message to the people of Israel. (See: Isaiah 7:3 and Isaiah 8:1)

Isaiah 8:19

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking.

They will say to you, "Consult with sorcerers and spiritists," the ones who chirp and mutter incantations. But should a people not consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?

Other possible meanings are 1) "They will say to you, 'Consult with the mediums and spiritists, those who chirp and mutter incantations. Should a people not consult their gods? They should consult the dead on behalf of the living for teaching and for testimony.'" or 2) "When they say to you, 'Consult with the mediums and spiritists, those who chirp and mutter incantations,' should a people not consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony!"

They will say to you

The word "they" refers to those who do not trust Yahweh. The word "you" is plural and refers to those who trust Yahweh.

the ones who chirp and mutter incantations

The words "chirp" and "mutter" refer to the sounds mediums and spiritists made when trying to speak to dead people. Alternate translation: "they people who whisper and mutter their magic words to try and speak to dead people"

chirp

make sounds like birds

But should a people not consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?

These questions are to show that people should consult God instead of foolishly trying to talk to dead people. Alternate translation: "But people should ask Yahweh to guide them. They should not seek answers from those who have died."

Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony

Possible meanings are 1) "Pay attention to God's instructions and teaching" or 2) "Then you must remember the teaching and testimony I gave." (Isaiah 8:16).

the law

This is the same word translated "official record" in Isaiah 8:16.

the testimony

See how you translated this in Isaiah 8:16.

If they do not say such things

"If they do not speak of the law and the testimony"

it is because they have no light of dawn

Isaiah speaks of people who do not know God as if they were people walking in darkness without any light. Alternate translation: "it is because they are like a person lost in the dark"

Isaiah 8:22

gloom that causes anguish

"darkness that makes them very sad"

They will be banished to thick darkness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will drive them out into complete darkness"

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9 [1]The gloom will be dispelled from her who was in anguish. In an earlier time he humiliated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make it glorious, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

[2] The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who have lived in the land of the shadow of death,
the light has shone on them.

[3] You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased their joy.
They rejoice before you like the joy at harvest time,
as men rejoice when they divide the plunder.

[4] For the yoke of his burden,
the beam across his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken to pieces as on the day of Midian.

[5] For every boot treading in the tumult
and the garments rolled in blood
will be burned,
fuel for the fire.

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6 For to us a child has been born,
to us a son has been given;
and the government will be on his shoulder;
and his name will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
as he rules on the throne of David,
and over his kingdom,
to establish it and sustain it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and for evermore.
The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.

8 The Lord sent a word against Jacob,
and it fell on Israel.

9 All the people will know,
even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria,
who say in pride
and with an arrogant heart,

10 "The bricks have fallen,
but we will rebuild with chiseled stone;
the sycamores have been cut down,
but we will put cedars in their place."

11 Therefore Yahweh will raise up against him Rezin,
his adversary, and will stir up his enemies,

12 the Arameans on the east, and the Philistines on the west.
They will devour Israel with open mouth.
In all these things, his anger does not subside;
his hand is still stretched out.

13 Yet the people will not turn to him who struck them,
nor will they seek Yahweh of hosts.

14 Therefore Yahweh will cut off from Israel head and tail,
palm branch and reed, in one day.

15 The elder and the noble man are the head;
and the prophet that teaches lies is the tail.

16 Those who lead this people lead them astray,
and those who are led by them are swallowed up.

17 Therefore the Lord will not rejoice over their young men
nor will he have compassion on their fatherless and widows,
since every one is godless and an evildoer,
and every mouth speaks foolish things.
In all these things, his anger does not subside;
his hand is still stretched out.

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18 Wickedness burns like a fire;
it devours the briers and thorns;
it even burns the thickets of the forest,
which rise in a column of smoke.

19 Through the fury of Yahweh of hosts
the land is scorched,
and the people are like fuel for the fire.
No man spares his brother.

20 They will grab food on the right hand
but still be hungry;
they will eat food on the left hand
but will not be satisfied.
Each will even eat the flesh of his own arm.[1]

21 Manasseh will devour Ephraim, and Ephraim, Manasseh;
and they together will attack Judah.
In all these things, his anger does not subside;
his hand is still stretched out.

[1]Instead of the flesh of his own arm, some scholars understand the Hebrew here to mean the flesh of his own children.

Isaiah 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with a prophecy that is a continuation of the prophecy concluding the previous chapter. Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 9:1-21. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

The prophecy in 9:1-7 is about the coming Messiah. Parts of this prophecy were fulfilled when he first came to earth. Other parts are to be fulfilled when he will return in glory to earth. (See: christ and fulfill)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Fulfillment of prophecies

Some of the prophecies in this chapter were fulfilled in Isaiah's lifetime while others are fulfilled in the distant future. Some scholars believe that there can be multiple fulfillments of each of these prophecies, while others see only one complete fulfillment.

Links:

Isaiah 9:1 Notes

Isaiah 9:1

The gloom will be dispelled from her who was in anguish

Isaiah speaks of people who are spiritually lost as if they were walking around in total darkness. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will remove the darkness from her who was in anguish"

The gloom

This word means "partial or total darkness." Translate as you translated "gloom" in Isaiah 8:22.

her who was in anguish

"her who was suffering great pain and sadness." This is probably a metaphor for the people of Judah.

In an earlier time he humiliated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali

"Land" refers to the people who live in an area. Alternate translation: "In the past, the Lord humbled those living in Zebulun and Naphtali"

but in the latter time he will make it glorious, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations

Here "it" refers to Galilee which represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "but in the future, the Lord will honor the people of Galilee of the nations, which is on the road between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River"

Galilee of the nations

Here "nations" represents the people from other nations

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that live in Galilee. Alternate translation: "Galilee, where many foreigners live"

Isaiah 9:2

walked in darkness ... lived in the land of the shadow of death

Isaiah speaks of the people living sinful lives and suffering because of it as if they had been walking in a dark or living in a land of shadow of death.

a great light ... light has shone

Here "light" represents hope and deliverance.

the land of the shadow of death

The phrase "shadow of death" is an idiom that means absolute darkness. Alternate translation: "the land of deepest darkness"

Isaiah 9:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe the time when God will save the people of Israel. Although these events will happen in the future

You have multiplied the nation; you have increased their joy

The word "you" refers to Yahweh. The word "their" refers to the people of Israel, but Isaiah includes himself as part of Israel. Alternate translation: "Lord, you will greatly increase our people and our joy"

They rejoice before you like the joy at harvest time, as men rejoice when they divide the plunder

The joy that Yahweh will give Israel is described as the same kind of joy people have when they bring in a harvest or divide valuable plunder. Alternate translation: "They will rejoice before you as people rejoice when they gather their crops or when a battle is over and soldiers divide what they took"

Isaiah 9:4

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe the time when God will save the people of Israel. Although these events will happen in the future

For the yoke of his burden ... you have broken to pieces as on the day of Midian

Isaiah speaks of the Israelites, who are the Assyrians' slaves, as if they were an ox wearing a yoke. This will happen in the future, but he speaks as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "For as on the day of Midian you will set the people of Israel free from being slaves to their oppressors like a person removes a yoke from the shoulders of an animal"

For the yoke of his burden ... his shoulder ... his oppressor

Isaiah speaks of the people of Israel as if they were one man. Alternate translation: "For the yoke of their burden ... their shoulders ... their oppressor"

the beam across his shoulder

The beam is the part of the yoke that goes over the shoulders of the ox.

beam

Another possible meaning is "staff," a long piece of wood that a person uses to beat the oxen so they will work and a symbol of one person's power to rule other people.

the rod of his oppressor

Isaiah speaks of the power the oppressor has over the people of Judah as if it were the piece of wood used by a person to beat oxen so they will work.

as on the day of Midian

The word "day" is an idiom that can refer to an event that takes more than one day to happen. Alternate translation: "as when you defeated the Midianites"

Isaiah 9:5

every boot treading in the tumult and the garments rolled in blood will be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will burn the boots of the soldiers and their clothes, which are covered with blood"

burned, fuel for the fire

This can be made more explicit by translating it as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "burned. You will make the boots and the garments fuel for the fire"

Isaiah 9:6

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe the time when God will save the people of Israel. Although these events will happen in the future

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The word "us" refers to both the speaker and the hearer and so is inclusive. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the Lord will give to us a child"

the government will be on his shoulder

His authority to rule is spoken of as if it were the robe that is a symbol of his authority. Alternate translation: "he will wear his royal robe on his shoulder" or "he will have authority to rule as king."

Counselor

one who advises kings

Isaiah 9:7

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end

"As time passes he will rule over more and more people and enable them to live more and more peacefully"

rules on the throne of David

Sitting on the "throne of David" is a metonym for having the right to rule; only David's descendants could be king over Israel. Alternate translation: "has the right to rule as David's descendant"

his kingdom, to establish it and sustain it with justice and with righteousness

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "his kingdom. He will establish and protect his kingdom, and he will do what is fair and just"

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

Isaiah 9:8

The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it fell on Israel

"Send a word" means to speak. Alternate translation: "The Lord has spoken against the people of Israel"

Jacob ... Israel

These names refer to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Isaiah 9:9

Ephraim ... Samaria

These names all refer to the people of the northern kingdom of Israel.

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All the people will know, even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria
What they will know can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "All the people will know that the Lord has judged them, even those in Ephraim and Samaria"
Isaiah 9:10
The bricks have fallen, but we will rebuild with chiseled stone; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place
The full meaning can be made explicit. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We will replace the common bricks of our destroyed cities with expensive cut stone, and we will plant great cedar trees where ordinary sycamore trees grew"
Isaiah 9:11
Therefore Yahweh will raise up against him Rezin, his adversary
Here "Rezin" represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "Therefore, Yahweh will bring Rezin and his army against the people of Israel"
Rezin
This is the name of a man. See how you translated Rezin in [Isaiah 7:1]
will stir up his enemies
The phrase "stir up" is an idiom that means to incite them to attack. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause Israel's enemies to attack"
Isaiah 9:12
They will devour Israel with open mouth
"Devour" is how wild animals eat their prey. Alternate translation: "Like a wild beast eating its prey, the army of the enemy will destroy the people of Israel"
In all these things, his anger does not subside; his hand
"Even though all these things have happened, he is still angry, and his hand." See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:25.
his hand is still stretched out
Isaiah speaks as if Yahweh were a person about to hit another person with his fist. This is a metaphor for Yahweh punishing Israel. See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:25. Alternate translation: "he will still be ready to punish them"
Isaiah 9:13
Yahweh of hosts
See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.
Isaiah 9:14
head and tail
Isaiah explains this metaphor in verse 15. The "head," the part of an animal a person would want to be, is "the leader and the noble man," and the "tail," the dirty part of the animal, is "the prophet who teaches lies."
palm branch and reed
The "palm branch" grows high on the tree and is a metaphor for people who are important and rule others. The "reed" grows in shallow water and is a metaphor for people who are poor and unimportant and are ruled by others.
Isaiah 9:16
Those who lead this people lead them astray
The leaders causing people to disobey is spoken of as if the leaders led them on the wrong path. Alternate translation: "The leaders of Israel have caused the people to disobey God"
those who are led by them are swallowed up
This is a metaphor that can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "those that they lead become confused" or 2) Alternate translation: "Yahweh destroys those that they lead"
Isaiah 9:17
every mouth speaks foolish things
The word "mouth" refers to the person. Alternate translation: "every person speaks foolish things"
In all these things, his anger does not subside; his hand
"Even though all these things have happened, he is still angry, and his hand." See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:25.
his hand is still stretched out
Isaiah speaks as if Yahweh were a person about to hit another person with his fist. This is a metaphor for Yahweh punishing Israel. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 5:25]
Isaiah 9:18
Wickedness burns like a fire; it devours the briers and thorns; it even burns the thickets of the forest
The people's evil deeds are spoken of as if they were a very destructive fire. This fire burns even the briers and thorns, plants that grow in places where people no longer live, and "the thickets of the forest" where no one has ever lived, because it has already destroyed the places where people were living.
briers ... thorns
The words "briers" and "thorns" both refer to useless, thorny plants; they can be translated using one word. See how you translated these words in [Isaiah 7:23]
Isaiah 9:19
Through the fury of Yahweh of hosts the land is scorched
Translate "Yahweh of hosts" as in [Isaiah 1:9]
No man spares his brother
"No one stops himself from harming his own brother" or "Everyone harms even his own brother." To "spare" a person means to want to harm him but to not harm him.
Isaiah 9:20
They will grab food on the right hand ... on the left hand
"They will grab food that lies to the right of them ... that lies to the left of them." They will grab food wherever they can find it.
Each will even eat the flesh of his own arm
Possible meanings are 1) people will be so hungry that they will want to eat or will actually eat their own arms or 2) the word "arm" is a metaphor for the person's neighbor.
Isaiah 9:21
In all these things, his anger does not subside; his hand
"Even though all these things have happened, he is still angry, and his hand." See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:25.
his hand is still stretched out
Isaiah speaks as if Yahweh were a person about to hit another person with his fist. This is a metaphor for Yahweh punishing Israel. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 5:25]

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[1] 10 Woe to those who decree unjust decrees
and write unjust laws.

[2] They deprive the needy of justice,
rob the poor of my people of their rights,
plunder widows,
and make the fatherless their prey!

[3] What will you do on judgment day
when the destruction comes from far away?
To whom will you flee for help,
and where will you leave your wealth?

[4] Nothing remains, and you crouch among the prisoners
or fall among the killed.
In all these things, his anger does not subside;
his hand is still stretched out.

[5] Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger,
the staff by whom I wield my fury!

[6] I send him against a godless nation
and against the people who bear my overflowing wrath.
I order him to take the plunder, to take the prey,
and to trample them like mud in the streets.

[7] But this is not what he intends,
nor does he think this way.
It is in his heart to destroy
and eliminate many nations.

[8] For he says, "Are not all my princes kings?
[9] Is not Kalno like Carchemish?
Is not Hamath like Arpad?
Is not Samaria like Damascus?

[10] As my hand has overcome idolatrous kingdoms,
whose carved figures were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria,

[11] just as I did to Samaria and her worthless idols,
will I not also do the same to Jerusalem and to her idols?"

[12]When the Lord has finished his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and his prideful looks.[13]For he says,
"By my strength and by my wisdom I acted.
I have understanding,
and I have removed the boundaries of the peoples.
I have stolen their treasures,
and like a bull I have brought down the inhabitants.
[14] My hand has seized, as from a nest,
the wealth of nations,
and as one gathers abandoned eggs,
I gathered all the earth.
None fluttered their wings
or opened their mouth or chirped."

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15 Will the ax boast about itself against the one who wields it?
Will the saw praise itself more than the one who cuts with it?
It is as if a rod could lift up those who raise it,
or as if a staff could lift up a person.

16 Therefore the Lord Yahweh of hosts
will send emaciation among his elite warriors;
and under his glory there will be kindled
a burning like fire.

17 The light of Israel will become a fire,
and his Holy One a flame;
it will burn and devour his thorns and briers
in one day.

18 Yahweh will consume the glory of his forest
and of his fruitful land, both soul and body;
it will be like when a sick man's life wastes away.

19 The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few,
that a child could count them.

20 On that day, the remnant of Israel,
the family of Jacob that has escaped,
will no longer rely on the one
who defeated them,
but will indeed depend on Yahweh,
the Holy One of Israel.

21 A remnant of Jacob
will return to the mighty God.

22 For though your people, Israel, are like the sand of the seashore,
only a remnant of them will return.
Destruction is decreed,
as overflowing righteousness demands.

23 For the Lord Yahweh of hosts is about to carry out
the destruction determined throughout the land.

24 Therefore the Lord Yahweh of hosts says,
"My people who live in Zion,
do not fear the Assyrian.
He will strike you with the rod
and raise his staff against you, as the Egyptians did.
25 Do not fear him,
for in a very short time
my anger against you will end,
and my anger will lead to his destruction."

26 Then Yahweh of hosts will wield a whip against them,
as when he defeated Midian at the rock of Oreb.
He will raise his rod over the sea and lift it up
as he did in Egypt.

27 On that day, his burden is lifted from your shoulder
and his yoke from off your neck,

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and the yoke will be destroyed
because of fatness.[1]

28 The enemy has come to Aiath
and has passed through Migron;
at Mikmash he has stored his provisions.

29 They have crossed over the pass
and they lodge at Geba.
Ramah trembles
and Gibeah of Saul has fled.

30 Cry aloud, daughter of Gallim!
Pay attention, Laishah!
Answer her, Anathoth!

31 Madmenah is fleeing,
and the inhabitants of Gebim run for safety.

32 This very day he will halt at Nob
and shake his fist
at the mountain of the daughter of Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

33 Behold, the Lord Yahweh of hosts
will lop off the boughs with a terrifying crash;
the tallest trees will be cut down,
and the lofty will be brought down.

34 He will chop down the thickets of the forest with an ax,
and Lebanon in his majesty will fall.

[1]The last line of this verse is difficult because it does not seem to fit the context. Some modern translations leave out because of fatness. Other modern translations have and the yoke will be destroyed from off your neck. He has gone up from Rimmon. Here He means the Assyrian king and his army.

Isaiah 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with a prophecy that is a continuation of the prophecy beginning in 8:21. Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. ULB does this with the poetry in 10:1-11, 13-14, 15-19, 27-34. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's sovereignty

Yahweh has so much power and authority that he controls all of the nations. He even controls the nations who do not worship him. He uses Assyria to punish the kingdom of Israel.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

There are many rhetorical questions in this chapter. Yahweh uses rhetorical questions to make statements about Israel's sin. The Assyrians use rhetorical questions in order to boast in their pride. (See: and sin)

Links:

Isaiah 10:1 Notes

Isaiah 10:1
to those who decree unjust decrees and write unjust laws

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "to those who make laws and decrees that are

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not fair to everyone"

Isaiah 10:2

They deprive the needy of justice, rob the poor of my people of their rights

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "They are unjust to the poor and needy among my people"

the needy

"poor people"

plunder widows

"take everything from women whose husbands have died"

make the fatherless their prey

Isaiah compares orphans to animals that other animals hunt and eat. This emphasizes that orphans are powerless and judges can easily harm them. Alternate translation: "harm children who do not have parents like an animal that goes after its prey"

prey

Translated "prey" as in Isaiah 5:29.

Isaiah 10:3

What will you do on judgment day ... away?

Isaiah uses a question to scold those in Judah who harm the poor and weak people. Alternate translation: "You will be able to do nothing on judgment day ... away!"

judgment day

"the day when Yahweh comes to judge you" or "the day when Yahweh punishes you"

To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth?

Isaiah uses a question to scold those in Judah who harm the poor and weak people. Alternate translation: "You have nowhere to run for help, and you will have nowhere to hide your riches!"

Isaiah 10:4

Nothing remains, and you crouch

Possible meanings are 1) "None of your wealth remains as you crouch" or 2) "You can do nothing else but crouch."

you crouch among the prisoners or fall among the killed

"your enemies will either take you as a prisoner or will kill you"

In all these things, his anger does not subside

"Even though all these things have happened, he is still angry." See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:25.

his hand is still stretched out

Isaiah speaks as if Yahweh were a person about to hit another person with his fist. This is a metaphor for Yahweh punishing Israel. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 5:25]

Isaiah 10:5

Woe

This word marks the beginning of God's announcement about a severe punishment against Assyria.

the Assyrian

This refers to the king of Assyria.

the rod of my anger, the staff by whom I wield my fury

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh compares the king of Assyria to a weapon a person holds in his hand and hits other people with. It emphasizes that the king of Assyria and his army are a tool that Yahweh uses to punish Israel. Alternate translation: "who will be like a weapon in my hands that I will use to show my anger"

Isaiah 10:6

I send him ... I order him

The word "him" here also refers to the king of Assyria. But it does not mean God is only sending the king; he is sending with him the army of Assyria. Alternate translation: "I send the army of Assyria ... I order them"

against a godless nation and against the people who bear my overflowing wrath

"to attack a nation full of proud people who have made me very angry"

who bear my overflowing wrath

Yahweh speaks of his wrath as if it were more liquid than a container could hold; "the people" are trying to carry this container, but it is heavy, and Yahweh keeps pouring liquid in even after it starts to spill out. Alternate translation: "at whom I continue to be angry even after I have punished them"

to take the plunder

"to take everything they have"

to take the prey

to take the people like prey. See how you translated "prey" in Isaiah 5:29.

trample them like mud

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh compares the army of Assyria attacking Israel to people stomping through mud who do not care what happens to the mud. Alternate translation: "trample them until they become like mud" or 2) the people are stomping on other people so they are lying in the mud and unable to rise. This is a metaphor for completely defeating them. Alternate translation: "completely defeat them"

Isaiah 10:7

But this is not what he intends, nor does he think this way

The meaning of "this" and "this way" can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But the king of Assyria does not intend to do what I tell him, nor does he think that I am using him as my weapon"

It is in his heart to destroy and eliminate many nations

The words "destroy" and "eliminate" mean basically the same thing. They are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "He wants to completely destroy many nations"

Isaiah 10:8

Are not all my princes kings?

The king of Assyria uses a question to emphasize what he believes everyone should already know. Alternate translation: "I have made captains of my army kings over lands I have conquered!"

Isaiah 10:9

Is not Kalno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus?

The king of Assyria uses these questions for emphasis. Alternate translation: "Kalno is no different from Carchemish. Hamath is no different from Arpad. Samaria is no different from Damascus. I have conquered them all!"

Kalno ... Carchemish ... Hamath ... Arpad

These are all names of cities.

Isaiah 10:10

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General Information:
Yahweh continues to quote what the king of Assyria says (Isaiah 10:8).
As my hand has overcome
"Hand" here is a reference to military strength. Alternate translation: "As my powerful army has defeated" or "As I have conquered"
my
This refers to the king of Assyria.
whose carved figures were greater
During this time people believed that the greatness of an idol showed how powerful the kingdom that had built it was. The king of Assyria is saying that because the idols in Jerusalem are not as great as the idols of the kingdoms he has defeated, Jerusalem would be less able to defeat him than they were.
Isaiah 10:11
just as I did to Samaria and her worthless idols
The word "Samaria" refers to the people who lived there, and "her" refers to the city of Samaria. Cities and nations were often spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: "just as I did to the people of Samaria and their worthless idols"
will I not also do the same to Jerusalem and to her idols?
The king of Assyria used this question to emphasize the certainty that he will conquer the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "I will certainly do the same to Jerusalem and her idols!"
Isaiah 10:12
When the Lord has finished his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish
Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were someone else. "When I, the Lord, have finished my work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish"
his work on ... and on
his work of punishing. "punishing ... and punishing"
I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and his prideful looks
"I will punish the king of Assyria for the arrogant things he has said and the look of pride on his face"
Isaiah 10:13
For he says
"For the king of Assyria says"
I have removed ... I have stolen
Here the word "I" refers to the king of Assyria. He was the leader of the Assyrian army and took credit for what the army did at his command. Alternate translation: "my army has removed ... They have stolen"
like a bull
"as strong as a bull." Some ancient texts read, "like a mighty man."
I have brought down the inhabitants
Possible meanings are 1) the king of Assyria has shamed the people of the countries he conquered or 2) he has removed the kings of the nations so they no longer rule.
I have brought
Here the word "I" refers to the king of Assyria. He was the leader of the Assyrian army and took credit for what the army did at his command. Alternate translation: "I and my army have brought" or "we have brought
Isaiah 10:14
General Information:
Yahweh is still quoting the king of Assyria (Isaiah 10:13).
My hand has seized
The hand is a metonym for either the king's power or his army. Alternate translation: "In my power I have seized" or "My army has seized"
My hand has seized, as from a nest, the wealth of nations
The king of Assyria compares taking the treasures from the nations to a person taking eggs out of a bird's nest. This emphasizes how easy it was for him and his army to conquer these other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "My army has stolen the wealth from the nations just as easily as a man takes eggs from a nest"
as one gathers abandoned eggs, I gathered all the earth
The king of Assyria speaks of taking over nations as if he was gathering eggs. Alternate translation: "just as a person takes eggs from a nest when the bird is not there to protect them, my army has taken the treasures of every nation"
None fluttered their wings or opened their mouth or chirped
This compares the nations to a bird who sits quietly while her eggs are taken. This emphasizes that the nations did nothing while the army of Assyria took all of their possessions. Alternate translation: "And like a bird that does not make a sound or flap her wings when someone steals her eggs, the nations did nothing as we took their treasure"
Isaiah 10:15
Will the ax boast about itself against the one who wields it? Will the saw praise itself more than the one who cuts with it?
The speaker uses these questions to mock the king of Assyria. Alternate translation: "An ax cannot boast that it is better than the one who holds it. And a saw does not get more glory than the one who cuts with it."
the saw
a sharp tool used for cutting wood
It is as if a rod could lift up those who raise it, or as if a staff could lift up a person
These phrases mean basically the same thing and are used to strengthen the meaning of the two questions before it. This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "And neither can a rod or staff lift the person who picks it up"
Isaiah 10:16
Therefore the Lord Yahweh of hosts will send emaciation among his elite warriors
It is unclear whether Yahweh or Isaiah is speaking. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "emaciation" is expressed as the verb "make weak." Alternate translation: "Therefore I, Lord Yahweh of hosts, will make the king's strongest soldiers weak"
under his glory there will be kindled a burning like fire
Yahweh compares his punishment to a fire. This emphasizes that his punishment will completely destroy all the splendor and greatness of the kingdom of Assyria. Alternate translation: "I will destroy his greatness as if I were starting a fire to burn everything he is proud of"
Isaiah 10:17
The light of Israel will become a fire

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The phrase "light of Israel" refers to Yahweh. It is unclear whether Yahweh or Isaiah is speaking. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, the light of Israel, will become like a fire, able to destroy everyone that does not honor me"

his Holy One a flame

"I, Yahweh, the Holy one of Israel, will become like a flame." See how you translated "Holy One" in Isaiah 1:4.

it will burn and devour his thorns and briers

"The fire will burn and devour the king of Assyria's thorns and briers." The speaker compares the king of Assyria's army to thorns and briers. This emphasizes how easily God will destroy them. Alternate translation: "I will destroy the Assyrians like a fire burning thorns and briers"

thorns ... briers

The words "briers" and "thorns" both refer to useless, thorny plants; they can be translated using one expression. See how you translated these words in [Isaiah 7:23]

Isaiah 10:18

Yahweh will consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful land

Possible meaning are 1) "Yahweh will destroy the great forests and farmlands in the nation of Assyria" or 2) "Yahweh will destroy the army of Assyria as a fire burns up great forests and farmlands."

both soul and body

Possible meanings are 1) this emphasizes that God will completely destroy the forests and farmlands. Alternate translation: "completely" or 2) this means God will completely destroy the people of Assyria. The phrase "soul and body" refers to the spiritual part and the physical part of a person.

it will be like when a sick man's life wastes away

This compares either the forests and farmlands of Assyria or the army of Assyria to a sick man as he lies in bed dying. This emphasizes how something so great can become weak and dying. Alternate translation: "they will be like a sick man who grows weak and dies"

Isaiah 10:19

The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few

"What remains of the trees in the king's forest will be so few"

Isaiah 10:20

On that day

This refers to the time when God does the things that are described in [Isaiah 10:16-19]

that has escaped

The meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "that has escaped from the army of Assyria"

will no longer rely on the one who defeated them

"will no longer rely on the king of Assyria, who harmed them"

Holy One

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:4.

Isaiah 10:22

your people, Israel, are

Here "your" is singular. Possible interpretations are 1) God is speaking to Isaiah and "your" refers to Isaiah. Alternate translation: "your people Israel are" or 2) Isaiah or God is speaking to the nation of Israel and "your" refers to the nation. Alternate translation: "your people, O Israel, are"

are like the sand of the seashore

This emphasizes that there were a great number of people of Israel. Alternate translation: "are too many to count, like the sand on the seashore"

Destruction is decreed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has decreed that he will destroy most of those who live in Israel"

as overflowing righteousness demands

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "This must be done for the sake of perfect righteousness" or "Yahweh must do this because he is completely righteous"

Isaiah 10:23

carry out the destruction determined throughout the land

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "destroy everything in the land just as he has determined to do" or 2) Alternate translation: "destroy the people in the land just as he has determined to do."

determined

"decided"

Isaiah 10:24

the Assyrian

Isaiah speaks of the king of Assyria and his army as if he were one man. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria and his army"

He will strike you with the rod and raise his staff against you

The words "rod" and "staff" refer to pieces of wood that people use as clubs to beat animals and other people. Isaiah speaks of the way the Assyrians will rule over the Israelites as if the Assyrians were beating the Israelites with clubs. Alternate translation: "He will rule over you and make slaves of you"

He will strike

The word "He" refers to "the Assyrian" which represents the king of Assyria and his army. Alternate translation: "He and his army will strike"

rod ... staff

See how you translated these words in Isaiah.

as the Egyptians did

The full meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "as the Egyptians ruled over your ancestors and made them slaves"

Isaiah 10:25

my anger will lead to his destruction

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will destroy him because I am angry with him"

Isaiah 10:26

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

will wield a whip against them

"will beat the Assyrians with a whip." God will not really use a whip. This refers to God's power to punish the Assyrians severely. Alternate translation: "will punish the Assyrians severely as if with a whip"

as when he defeated Midian at the rock of Oreb

This refers to when God helped a man named Gideon

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defeat the army of Midian.

He will raise his rod over the sea and lift it up as he did in Egypt

This speaks of God rescuing the people from the Assyrians as if they were the Egyptian army. This refers to when God caused the water of the Red Sea to split so the people of Israel could escape from the Egyptian army and so that the Egyptian army would drown in it. Alternate translation: "He will help you escape from the army of Assyria as he helped your ancestors escape the army of Egypt"

Isaiah 10:27

his burden is lifted from your shoulder and his yoke from off your neck

"Yahweh will lift the burden that Assyria has put on your shoulder, and he will remove the yoke that they have put on your neck." These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The words "burden" and "yoke" refer to slavery. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will remove the Assyrians who oppress you and will stop them from making you their slaves"

the yoke will be destroyed because of fatness

This expression suggests that the neck of the animal that is wearing the yoke will become too fat to fit the yoke any longer. This is a metaphor for Israel becoming so strong that the Assyrians can no longer rule them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your neck will become so fat that it will break the yoke" or "you will become so strong that you will no longer be the Assyrians' slaves"

Isaiah 10:28

has come ... has passed ... has stored

Isaiah speaks of these future events as though they have already happened.

Aiath ... Migron ... Mikmash

These are all cities and villages near Jerusalem that the army of Assyria went through and caused trouble in.

Isaiah 10:29

have crossed ... lodge ... trembles ... has fled

Isaiah speaks of these future events as though they have already happened.

Geba ... Ramah ... Gibeah

These are all cities and villages near Jerusalem that the army of Assyria went through and caused trouble in.

Ramah trembles and Gibeah of Saul has fled

Here "Ramah" and "Gibeah of Saul" refer to the people who lived in those cities. Alternate translation: "The people of Ramah tremble and the people of Gibeah of Saul have fled"

Isaiah 10:30

daughter of Gallim

The word "daughter" here refers to the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "Gallim" or "people of Gallim"

Gallim ... Laishah ... Anathoth

These are names of more cities and villages near Jerusalem that the Assyrian army traveled through causing fear among the people. All of these refer to the people who live in these places.

Isaiah 10:31

Madmenah ... Gebim

These are names of more cities and villages near Jerusalem that the Assyrian army traveled through causing fear among the people. All of these refer to the people who live in these places.

Isaiah 10:32

Nob

This is the name of a village or city near Jerusalem that the Assyrian army traveled through causing fear among the people. It refers to the people who live in this place.

he will halt at Nob and shake his fist

Here "he" and "his" refer to the king of Assyria and his soldiers. People would shake their fists at people whom they were threatening. Alternate translation: "the army of Assyria will stop at Nob and threaten"

the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem

The words "mount" and "hill" are metonyms for the people who live on them. The words "mount of the daughter of Zion" mean almost the same thing as the words "hill of Jerusalem." See how they are translated in [Isaiah 2:14]

Isaiah 10:33

Behold

This can be translated as "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

will lop off the boughs ... the lofty will be brought down

Isaiah speaks of the army of Assyria as if it were the tall trees in Lebanon. God will destroy the army like people cutting down the mighty trees of Lebanon. This emphasizes that though the army is strong, God has the power to destroy it.

will lop off the boughs

"will cut off the big branches of the trees." In order to make it clear that this refers to the army of Assyria, it can be translated as a simile: He will destroy the army of Assyria like strong men cutting off the big branches of trees.

with a terrifying crash

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "crash" is expressed as the verb "make a noise." Alternate translation: "and the branches will crash down on the ground and make a terrifying noise" or "and the branches will fall to the ground with a very loud noise"

the tallest trees will be cut down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will cut down the tallest trees"

the tallest trees

This is a metaphor for "the strongest soldiers."

the lofty will be brought down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will bring down the lofty people"

lofty

proud

Isaiah 10:34

He will chop down the thickets ... and Lebanon in his majesty will fall

Isaiah speaks of the army of Assyria as if it were the tall trees in Lebanon. God will destroy the army like people cutting down the mighty trees of Lebanon. This emphasizes that though the army is strong, God has the power to destroy it.

the thickets of the forest

"the dense shrubs in the forest." This is possibly a metaphor

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for those people who are not well known.
Lebanon in his majesty will fall
"the forests of Lebanon will no longer be so grand." This is possibly a metaphor for the Assyrian army. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will defeat the army of Assyria, as mighty as it is"

11
1 A shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch out of his roots will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of Yahweh will rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of instruction and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh.

3 His delight will be the fear of the Lord;
he will not judge by what his eyes see,
nor decide by what his ears hear.

4 Instead, he will judge the poor with righteousness
and decide fairly for the humble of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked.

5 Righteousness will be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his hips.

6 The wolf will live with the lamb,
and the leopard will lie down with the young goat;
the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together,
and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow and the bear will graze together,
and their young will lie down together.
The lion will eat straw like the ox.

8 A baby will play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child will put his hand on the den of the adder.

9 They will not hurt nor destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of knowledge of Yahweh,
as the waters cover the sea.

10 On that day, the root of Jesse will stand as a signal flag for the peoples. The nations will seek him out, and his resting place will be glorious. 11 On that day, the Lord will again extend his hand to recover the remnant of his people who remain in Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the islands of the sea.

12 He will set up a signal flag for the nations
and will gather the outcasts of Israel
and the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.

13 He will turn aside the envy of Ephraim,
and hostilities of Judah will be cut off.
Ephraim will not envy Judah,
and Judah will no longer be hostile to Ephraim.

14 Instead they will swoop down on the Philistine hills on the west,

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and together they will plunder the people of the east.
They will possess Edom and Moab,
and the people of Ammon will obey them.

15 Yahweh will completely destroy
the gulf of the Sea of Egypt.
With his scorching wind he will wave his hand
over the Euphrates River
and will divide it into seven streams,
so it can be crossed over in sandals.

16 There will be a highway for the remnant of his people
that return from Assyria,
as there was for Israel in their coming up
from the land of Egypt.

Isaiah 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

The prophecies of this chapter focus on the coming Messiah. Some of these prophecies concern the first coming of Jesus, while some reference a future day of restoration. The author transitions between these time periods without telling his reader. (See: prophet and christ and restore)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Ambiguity

It is uncertain what period of time these prophecies refer to or who will fulfill them. The translator should allow this uncertainty and ambiguity to remain. (See: fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 11:1 Notes

Isaiah 11:1

A shoot will sprout from the stump of Jesse ... a branch out of his roots will bear fruit

Isaiah speaks of Jesse and his descendants as if they were a tree that had been cut down. Both of these phrases tell about a descendant of Jesse who would be king. Alternate translation: "As a shoot sprouts out of a tree stump, so a descendant of Jesse will become king over what remains of Israel"

the stump of Jesse

A stump is what remains of a tree after it is chopped down. The "stump of Jesse" represents what was left of the kingdom that Jesse's son David was once king of.

Isaiah 11:2

The Spirit of Yahweh will rest upon him

Resting upon him represents being with him and helping him. The word "him" refers to the one who would become king.

the Spirit of wisdom ... the Spirit of instruction ... the Spirit of knowledge ... the fear of Yahweh

Here the word "Spirit" refers to an ability or quality that the Spirit of Yahweh would give him. Alternate translation: "and he will cause him to have wisdom and understanding, instruction and might, knowledge and the fear of Yahweh"

Isaiah 11:3

Connecting Statement:

Isaiah continues to describe the king.

he will not judge by what his eyes see

The phrase "what his eyes see" refers to seeing things that are not important for judging a person rightly. Alternate translation: "he will not judge a person simply by seeing what the person looks like"

nor decide by what his ears hear

"and he will not decide by what his ears hear." The phrase "what his ears hear" refers to hearing what people say about someone. Alternate translation: "and he will not judge a person simply by hearing what others say about him"

Isaiah 11:4

the poor ... the humble ... the wicked

These phrases refer to people who have these qualities. Alternate translation: "poor people ... humble people ... wicked people"

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth ... with the breath of

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his lips he will kill the wicked

These two phrases mean basically the same thing.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth

The word "earth" here represents the people on earth. Striking them with the rod of his mouth represents judging them, and that judgement will lead to punishment. Alternate translation: "He will judge the people of the earth, and they will be punished"

with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked

The "breath of his lips" represents him judging them. Alternate translation: "he will judge wicked people, and they will be killed"

Isaiah 11:5

the belt of his waist ... the belt around his hips

Possible meanings are 1) the belt is used to secure one's clothes so he can work, or 2) the belt is an undergarment, or 3) the belt is a sash that a king wears to show his authority.

Righteousness will be the belt of his waist

Wearing righteousness like a belt represents being righteous. Possible meanings are 1) the king's righteousness will enable him to rule. Alternate translation: "His righteousness will be a like a belt around his waist" or 2) the king's righteousness would show his authority to rule. Alternate translation: "He will rule righteously"

faithfulness the belt around his hips

The words "will be" are understood in this phrase. Alternate translation: "faithfulness will be the belt around his hips"

faithfulness the belt around his hips

Wearing faithfulness like a belt represents being faithful. Possible meanings are 1) the king's faithfulness will enable him to rule, or 2) the king's faithfulness will show his authority to rule. Alternate translation: "his faithfulness will be a like a belt around his hips" or "he will rule faithfully"

Isaiah 11:6

General Information:

Isaiah describes what the world will be like when the king rules. There will be complete peace in the world. This is shown by the peace that there will be even among animals. Animals that normally kill other animals will not kill them, and they will all be safe together.

The wolf ... the leopard ... the young lion

These phrases refer to these animals in general, not to a specific wolf or leopard. These are all strong animals that attack and eat other animals. Alternate translation: "Wolves ... leopards ... young lions"

the lamb ... the young goat ... the calf ... the fattened calf

The phrases refer to these animals in general, not to a specific lamb or goat. These are all animals that eat grass and straw. Other animals sometimes attack and eat them. Alternate translation: "lambs ... young goats ... calves ... fattened calves"

leopard

a large cat with yellow fur and black spots that kills and eats other animals

the calf, the young lion, and the fattened calf together

The phrase "will be" is understood. Alternate translation: "the calf, the lion, and the fattened calf will be together"

a little child will lead them

A child will take care of them and lead them to good places to drink water and eat grass or hay.

Isaiah 11:7

the bear ... The lion

These phrases refer to these animals in general, not to a specific wolf or leopard. These are all strong animals that attack and eat other animals. Alternate translation: "Wolves ... leopards ... young lions ... bears ... Lions"

The cow ... the ox

The phrases refer to these animals in general, not to a specific lamb or goat. These are all animals that eat grass and straw. Other animals sometimes attack and eat them. Alternate translation: "lambs ... young goats ... calves ... fattened calves ... Cows ... oxen"

bear

a very large animal with thick hair and sharp claws that kills and eats other animals

will graze together

"will eat grass together"

their young

This refers to the animals' offspring shortly after they are born.

Isaiah 11:8

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe the complete peace in the world when the king rules.

A baby will play over the hole of the asp

It can be stated clearly that the baby will be safe because the asp will not bite him. Alternate translation: "Babies will play safely over the hole of the asp"

the asp ... the den of the adder

These phrases refer to poisonous snakes in general. Alternate translation: "snakes ... serpents' dens"

the weaned child

a child who no longer drinks his mother's milk

Isaiah 11:9

on all my holy mountain

The "holy mountain" is Mount Zion, in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "on all of Yahweh's holy mountain"

the earth will be full of knowledge of Yahweh

The phrase "knowledge of Yahweh" represents people who know Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the earth will be full of those who know Yahweh" or "those who know Yahweh will cover the earth"

as the waters cover the sea

This phrase is used to show how full the earth will be of people who know Yahweh. It may be clearer that it does this if its words are similar to the words in the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "as the seas are full of water"

Isaiah 11:10

the root of Jesse

This refers to Jesse's and King David's descendant who would become the king that was told about in [Isaiah 1:1]

will stand as a signal flag for the peoples

"will attract the peoples to come to him"

signal flag

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.

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The nations
"The people of the nations"
Isaiah 11:11
the Lord will again extend his hand to recover the remnant of his people
The hand is a reference to God's power. Alternate translation: "the Lord will again use his power to bring back the remnant of his people"
Pathros ... Elam ... Hamath
These are names of places.
Isaiah 11:12
He will set up a signal flag for the nations
Possible meanings are 1) "The Lord will set up the king as a signal flag for the nations" or 2) "The king will set up a signal flag for the nations"
a signal flag for the nations
"a flag for the nations to see" or "a flag to call the nations to himself"
signal flag
See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.
the dispersed of Judah
"the people of Judah who had been scattered around the world"
from the four corners of the earth
The earth is pictured as if it has four corners, and those corners are its most distant places. This refers to everywhere on earth where those people might be. Alternate translation: "from even the most distant places of the earth" or "from all over the earth"
Isaiah 11:13
He will turn aside the envy of Ephraim
Ephraim here refers to the descendants of the northern kingdom of Israel. The noun "envy" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "He will stop the people of Ephraim from being envious"
Judah will no longer be hostile to Ephraim
Judah here refers to the descendants of the southern kingdom. This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will stop the people of Judah from being hostile" or "he will stop the people of Judah from hating"
Isaiah 11:14
they will swoop down on the Philistine hills
The people of Israel and Judah are pictured as if they were birds that fly down quickly to attack a person or animal. Alternate translation: "they will go quickly to the Philistine hills to attack the people there"
They will possess Edom and Moab
This means that they will conquer the people of Edoma and Moab and will rule over them. Alternate translation: "They will take the land of Edom and Moab" or "They will rule over Edom and Moab"
Isaiah 11:15
the gulf of the Sea of Egypt
A "gulf" is a large area of water that land partly surrounds.
With his scorching wind he will wave his hand over the Euphrates River
Waving his hand over something represents his power to change it. Alternate translation: "By his power he will cause a scorching wind to blow on the Euphrates River"
his scorching wind
This is a strong or hot wind that causes some of the water in rivers to dry up.
so it can be crossed over in sandals
"so that people can cross over it even while wearing their sandals"
Isaiah 11:16
There will be a highway
A highway is a large road that many people can travel on. "Yahweh will make a road"
in their coming up from the land of Egypt
"when they came up from the land of Egypt"

---

12 [1]On that day you will say,
"I will give thanks to you, Yahweh.
For though you were angry with me,
your wrath has turned away,
and you have comforted me.
[2] See, God is my salvation;
I will trust and will not fear,
for Yah, yes, Yahweh is my strength and song.
He has become my salvation."[1]

[3] With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.

[4]On that day you will say,
"Give thanks to Yahweh and call upon his name;
declare his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that his name is exalted.
[5] Praise Yahweh in song, for he has done majestic things;
let this be known throughout the earth.

[6] Cry aloud and shout for joy, you inhabitants of Zion,

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for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

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[1] Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.

Isaiah 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"That day"

The time of this day is unclear. It may be a time in the near future for Isaiah, or a time in the distant future for him. In the latter case, it would reference the last days. (See: lastday)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Tense

Extra care must be taken in translating the tense of this chapter. The author talks about the future, but frequently changes to speak in the present tense. Some languages will have difficulty speaking in this way.

Links:

Isaiah 12:1 Notes

Isaiah 12:1

General Information:

Here Isaiah continues to describe what it will be like when the king that God has chosen rules (Isaiah 11:1-2).

On that day

It can be stated clearly what time is being referred to. Alternate translation: "At that time" or "When the king rules"

your wrath has turned away

God's wrath is spoken of as if it were a person that could turn away and leave. It means that God has stopped being angry. Alternate translation: "You are no longer angry with me"

Isaiah 12:2

God is my salvation

God causing someone's salvation is spoken of as if God were that salvation. The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the noun "savior" or the verb "save." Alternate translation: "God causes my salvation" or "God is my savior" or "God is the one who saves me"

Yahweh is my strength

God causing someone to be strong is spoken of as if Yahweh were their strength. Alternate translation: "Yahweh makes me strong"

song

The word "song" here represents what a person sings about. Alternate translation: "the one I joyfully sing about"

He has become my salvation

"He has saved me"

Isaiah 12:3

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation

Isaiah speaks of people being saved as if they were getting salvation the way people get water out of well. Alternate translation: "you will rejoice when he saves you, as people rejoice when they draw water from a well"

Isaiah 12:4

call upon his name

Here "his name" refers to Yahweh. Calling on him represents either praising him or asking him for help. Alternate translation: "praise him loudly" or "call to him to help you"

declare his deeds among the peoples

The noun "deeds" can be expressed with the phrase "what he has done." Alternate translation: "Tell the peoples about the great things he has done"

proclaim that his name is exalted

Here "his name" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "proclaim that he is exalted" or "proclaim that he is great"

Isaiah 12:5

General Information:

Isaiah continues to tell what the people will say when the king rules.

Praise Yahweh in song

"Sing songs of praise to Yahweh"

Isaiah 12:6

for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel

"because the Holy One of Israel, who lives among you, is mighty" or "because the Holy One of Israel is mighty and he lives among you"

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13 [1]A declaration about Babylon, that Isaiah son of Amoz received:

[2] On the bare mountain set up a signal flag,
cry aloud to them,
wave your hand for them
to go into the gates of the nobles.

[3] "I have commanded my consecrated ones;

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I have summoned my mighty ones to vent my anger—
those who rejoice in my triumph.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains,
as of many people!
The noise of a tumult of the kingdoms
like many nations gathered together!
Yahweh of hosts is mustering
the army for the battle.

5 They come from a far country,
from way over the horizon.
It is Yahweh with his instruments of indignation,
to destroy the whole land.

6 Wail, for the day of Yahweh is near;
it comes with destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore all hands hang limp,
and every heart melts.

8 They will be terrified;
pain and agony will seize them,
like a woman in labor.
They will look in amazement at one another;
their faces will be aflame.

9 See, the day of Yahweh comes
with cruel wrath and overflowing anger,
to make the land a desolation
and to exterminate the sinners from it.

10 The stars of heaven and the constellations
will not give their light.
The sun will be darkened even from dawn,
and the moon will not shine.

11 I will punish the world for its evil
and the wicked for their iniquity.
I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud
and will abase the arrogance of the ruthless.

12 I will make men more rare than fine gold
and mankind harder to find than the pure gold of Ophir.

13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,
and the earth will be shaken out of its place,
by the fury of Yahweh of hosts,
and on the day of his fierce anger.

14 Like a hunted gazelle or like a sheep
with no one to gather them,
every man will turn toward his own people
and will flee to his own land.

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15 Every one who is found will be thrust through,
and every one who is swept up will die by the sword.

16 Their infants also will be dashed in pieces before their eyes.
Their houses will be plundered and their wives raped.

17 Look, I am about to stir up the Medes to attack them,
who will not be concerned about silver,
nor do they delight in gold.

18 Their bows will strike down the young men;
they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb
and they will not look with pity on children.

19 Then Babylon, the most admired of kingdoms,
the splendor of Chaldean arrogance,
will be overthrown by God
like Sodom and Gomorrah.

20 It will never be inhabited
or lived in from generation to generation.
The Arab will not pitch his tent there,
nor will shepherds have their flocks rest there.

21 But wild animals of the desert will lie there.
Their houses will be full of owls;
and ostriches and wild goats will skip about there.

22 Hyenas will cry in their fortresses,
and jackals in the beautiful palaces.
Her time is near,
and her days will not be delayed.

Isaiah 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecies

It is unclear who is addressed by these prophecies. At times, it appears to be the people of Judah, while at other times it seems to reference the last days. This ambiguity should remain in translation. (See: prophet and lastday)

Links:

Isaiah 13:1 Notes

Isaiah 13:1

about Babylon

The name of the city stands for the people of Babylon. Alternate translation: "about the people of Babylon"

Amoz

Amoz was the father of Isaiah. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 1:1]

Isaiah 13:2

signal flag

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.

cry aloud to them

The word "them" refers to soldiers from another country.

the gates of the nobles

Possible meanings are 1) "the gates of Babylon where the nobles live" or 2) "the gates of the nobles' large houses"

the nobles

"the respected people" or "the rulers"

Isaiah 13:3

my consecrated ones

"the ones I have set apart for myself" or "the army that I

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have set apart for myself"

I have summoned my mighty ones to vent my anger

Venting God's anger represents punishing people because of God's anger. Alternate translation: "I have called my mighty soldiers to punish the people of Babylon because they have made me angry"

in my triumph

"because I have defeated my enemies"

Isaiah 13:4

The noise of a multitude in the mountains, as of many people

The words "there is" are understood. The phrases "multitude" and "many people" mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "There is the noise of many people in the mountains" or "There is the noise of a great crowd of people in the mountains"

The noise of a tumult of the kingdoms like many nations gathered together

The words "there is" are understood. The words "kingdoms" and "nations" here refer to the same thing. Alternate translation: "There is the noisy commotion of many kingdoms gathered together"

is mustering

"is gathering"

Isaiah 13:5

from way over the horizon

"from places far beyond the horizon" or "from very distant places"

his instruments of indignation

The soldiers that God is sending to attack Babylon are spoken of as if they were weapons in God's hands. "Indignation" is a metonym for the punishment that God will inflict on Babylon because he is indignant. Alternate translation: "the army that he will use to punish Babylon"

Isaiah 13:6

Wail

cry out loud. The word is usually used of an animal making a sound because it is in pain.

the day of Yahweh is near

Something that is about to happen soon is spoken of as if it is coming near. Alternate translation: "the day of Yahweh will happen soon"

it comes with destruction from the Almighty

The word "it" refers to the day of Yahweh. "It comes with destruction" means that destruction will happen on that day. "Destruction from the Almighty" means that the Almighty will destroy them. Alternate translation: "on that day, the Almighty God will destroy them"

Isaiah 13:7

all hands hang limp

This shows that all the people are very weak and unable to do anything.

every heart melts

People being terribly afraid is spoken of as if their hearts melt. Alternate translation: "everyone is terribly afraid"

Isaiah 13:8

pain and agony will seize them

People suddenly feeling terrible pain and sorrow is spoken of as if the pains and sorrows were people who grab them. Alternate translation: "they will suddenly feel terrible pain and agony"

like a woman in labor

Being in labor represents giving birth to a baby. Alternate translation: "like a woman giving birth to a baby" or "like the pain of a woman who is giving birth to a baby"

their faces will be aflame

Their faces being hot and red is spoken of as if they were burning. Possible reasons for their faces being hot are 1) the people are very afraid or 2) the people feel ashamed or 3) the people cry. Alternate translation: "their faces will be hot and red"

Isaiah 13:9

the day of Yahweh comes with cruel wrath and overflowing anger

The day coming with wrath and anger means that there will be wrath and anger on that day. The abstract nouns "wrath" and "anger" can be expressed with the adjectives "furious" and "angry." Alternate translation: "on the day of Yahweh, he will be furious and extremely angry"

overflowing anger

Anger here is spoken of as if the one who is angry is a container filled with anger. Overflowing anger means that he is extremely angry.

to make the land a desolation

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "desolation" is expressed with the verb "ruin." Alternate translation: "to ruin the land"

Isaiah 13:10

The stars of heaven and the constellations

"The stars in the sky"

will not give their light

Giving light represents "shining." Alternate translation: "will not shine"

The sun will be darkened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will darken the sun" or "The sun will be dark"

Isaiah 13:11

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to talk about what he will do on the day of Yahweh.

the world

This refers to people. Alternate translation: "the people of the world"

the wicked ... the proud ... the ruthless

These phrases refer to people who have these qualities. Alternate translation: "wicked people ... proud people ... ruthless people"

the ruthless

"cruel people"

will abase the arrogance of the ruthless

Here the word "arrogance" is a metonym for the people who are arrogant. Alternate translation: "will abase the ruthless"

Isaiah 13:12

I will make men more rare than fine gold

Why there will be so few people can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will cause so many people to die that living people will be more rare than fine gold"

men more rare than fine gold ... mankind harder to find than the pure gold of Ophir

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These two phrases mean basically the same thing.
pure gold of Ophir
Ophir was the name of a place where there was pure gold.
Isaiah 13:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
Isaiah 13:14
Like a hunted gazelle or like a sheep with no one to gather them
Yahweh speaks of the defenseless people of Israel as if they were a gazelle or a sheep that was being chased by hunters or wild animals. Alternate translation: "Like gazelles that run away swiftly when people hunt them, and like sheep that have no shepherd run away from wild animals"
gazelle
an animal that is similar to a deer. People hunt them, and wild animals sometimes attack and kill them.
like a sheep with no one to gather them
Sheep that have no shepherd have no one to keep them together and protect them from harm.
Isaiah 13:15
Every one who is found will be thrust through ... every one who is swept up will die by the sword
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy will kill with the sword everyone they find"
swept up
captured
Isaiah 13:16
Their infants also will be dashed in pieces
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy will also dash their infants to pieces" or "The enemy will beat their infants until they die"
before their eyes
Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. It can be stated clearly that the parents are unable to help their infants. Alternate translation: "in front of them" or "while their parents helplessly watch"
Their houses will be plundered
This means that everything valuable will be stolen from their houses. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy will plunder the people's houses" or "The enemy will steal everything valuable from the people's houses"
their wives raped
This means that the enemies will attack the women and force them to have sex with them. The words "will be" are understood. This can also be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "their wives will be raped" or "their enemies will rape their wives"
Isaiah 13:17
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking.
I am about to stir up the Medes to attack them
Making people want to do something is spoken of as stirring them up. Alternate translation: "I am about to make the Medes want to attack them"
Isaiah 13:18
Their bows will strike down
Here "their bows" is a metonym for the soldiers who use the bows. Alternate translation: "Their soldiers will use bows and arrows to kill"
Isaiah 13:19
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking.
the most admired of kingdoms
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the kingdom that people most admire"
Then Babylon, the most admired of kingdoms, the splendor of Chaldean arrogance, will be overthrown by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then God will destroy Babylon, the most admired of kingdoms, the splendor of Chaldean arrogance, as he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah"
the splendor of Chaldean arrogance
The abstract nouns "splendor" and "arrogance" can be translated with adjectives. The word "splendor" refers to the beautiful appearance of Babylon. Alternate translation: "the beautiful city that the Chaldeans are so proud of"
Isaiah 13:20
It will never be inhabited or lived in
The two verbs mean basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will ever live in it"
from generation to generation
The phrase "generation to generation" refers to all generations of people who will live in the future. Alternate translation: "for ever" or "ever again"
The Arab
This refers to Arab people in general, not one person. Alternate translation: "Arabs" or "Arab people"
Isaiah 13:21
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Babylon.
will lie there
"will lie in Babylon"
Their houses
"The people's houses"
owls
Owls are wild birds that hunt at night.
ostriches
Ostriches are large wild birds that run fast and cannot fly.
Isaiah 13:22
Hyenas
Hyenas are large wild animals that look like dogs and eat dead animals. Their loud cry sounds like a person laughing.
jackals in the beautiful palaces
The words "will cry" are understood. Alternate translation: "jackals will cry in the beautiful palaces"
jackals
wild dogs
Her time is near, and her days will not be delayed
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. "Her time" and "her days" both refer to the time that God has chosen for Babylon to be destroyed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The time that all of this will happen to the people of Babylon is near, and nothing

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will stop it"

14
1 Yahweh will have compassion on Jacob;
he will again choose Israel
and restore them into their own land.
Foreigners will join with them
and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

2 The nations will bring them to their own place.
Then the house of Israel will take possession of them
in the land of Yahweh as male servants and female servants.
They will take captive those who had captured them,
and they will rule over their oppressors.

3 On the day that Yahweh gives you rest from your suffering and anguish, and from the hard labor which you were required to perform, 4 you will sing this taunt song against the king of Babylon,
"How the oppressor has come to an end,
the proud fury ended![1]
5 Yahweh has broken the staff of the wicked,
the scepter of those rulers,

6 that struck the peoples in wrath
with unceasing blows,
that ruled the nations in anger,
with an attack that was unrestrained.

7 The whole earth is at rest and is quiet;
they begin celebrating with singing.

8 Even the cypress trees rejoice over you
with the cedars of Lebanon;
they say, 'Since you are laid low,
no woodcutter comes up to cut us down.'

9 Sheol below is eager
to meet you when you go there.
It arouses the dead for you,
all the leaders of the earth,
making them rise up from their thrones,
all the kings of the nations.

10 They all will speak and say to you,
'You have become as weak as us.
You have become like us.

11 Your pomp has been brought down to Sheol
with the sound of your lutes.
Maggots are spread under you,
and worms cover you.'

12 How you are fallen from heaven,
daystar, son of the dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who made the nations weak!

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13 You had said in your heart,
'I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne
above the stars of God,
and I will sit on the mount of assembly,
in the far reaches of the north.

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High God.'

15 Yet you are now brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the pit.

16 Those who see you will gaze at you
and they will pay attention to you.
They will say, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
who shook kingdoms,

17 who made the world like a wilderness, who overthrew its cities
and did not let his prisoners go home?'

18 All the kings of the nations,
all of them lie down in honor, each one in his own tomb.

19 But you are cast out of your grave
like an abhorrent branch.
Those who were killed cover you like a garment,
those pierced by the sword,
who go down to the stones of the pit
like a trampled corpse.

20 You will not join them in burial,
because you have destroyed your land
and killed your people.
The offspring of evildoers will never be mentioned again."

21 Prepare your slaughter for his children,
for the iniquity of their ancestors,
so they will not rise up and possess the earth
and fill the whole world with cities.

22 "I will rise up against them—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.
I will cut off from Babylon name, descendant, and posterity—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

23 I will also make her into a possession of owls,
and into pools of water,
and I will sweep her with the broom of destruction—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts."

24 Yahweh of hosts has sworn,
"Surely, as I have intended, so it will come about;
and as I have purposed, so it will be:
25 I will break the Assyrian in my land,

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and on my mountains trample him underfoot.
Then his yoke will be lifted from off them
and his burden from off their shoulder."

26 This is the plan that has been devised for the whole earth,
and this is the hand that is raised over all the nations.

27 For Yahweh of hosts has planned this; who will stop him?
His hand is raised, and who will turn it back?

28 In the year that king Ahaz died this declaration came:
29 Do not rejoice, all you Philistines,
that the rod that struck you is broken.
For out of the serpent's root will grow an adder,
and his offspring will be a fiery flying serpent.

30 The firstborn of the poor will graze their sheep in my pastures,
and the needy will lie down in safety.
I will kill your root with famine
that will put to death all your survivors.

31 Wail, gate; cry, city;
all of you will melt away, Philistia.
For out of the north comes a cloud of smoke,
and there is no straggler in his ranks.

32 How will they respond
to the messengers of that nation?
"Yahweh has founded Zion,
and in her the afflicted of his people will find refuge."

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[1] Because the Hebrew translated as proud fury ended is very difficult, other modern scholars and translations have tried other meanings such as: the golden city ended, the turmoil ended, the hostility ended, or the arrogance ended, and others.

Isaiah 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 14:4-27, 29-32.

Special concepts in this chapter

Satan

It is believed that this chapter references Satan. It describes Satan as a star fallen from heaven. There are five important statements beginning with the words "I will" which appear to show the essence of Satan's sin.

Babylon

This is the name of the kingdom that conquered Judah, but it is also the name representing Satan's kingdom in prophecies. They were not yet a world power when these words were spoken. It should be translated as "Babylon," but translators should be aware of its dual meaning.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

The use of Israel in this chapter is in reference to the nation or people group of Israel. It is this Israel who will be restored and not the kingdom of Israel. (See: restore)

Links:

Isaiah 14:1 Notes

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Isaiah 14:1

Yahweh will have compassion on Jacob

Here "Jacob" refers to the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will have mercy on the descendants of Jacob"

attach themselves to the house of Jacob

The house of Jacob refers to the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites. Alternate translation: "unite with the descendants of Jacob"

Isaiah 14:2

The nations will bring them to their own place

"The nations will bring the descendants of Jacob back to the land of Israel"

the house of Israel

This refers to the Israelites, the descendants of Israel. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Israel"

will take possession of them

"will possess the people of the nations"

as male servants and female servants

"as male and female servants"

They will take captive those who had captured them

"The Israelite soldiers will take as captives those who had captured Israelites"

Isaiah 14:3

from your suffering and anguish

The word "your" is singular, but it refers to the people of Israel. Also, "suffering" and "anguish" mean basically the same thing and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "from the things that have caused you to suffer greatly"

Isaiah 14:4

How the oppressor has come to an end

"The oppressor has come to an end." This is an exclamation.

the proud fury ended

The words "how" and "has" are understood. Alternate translation: "how the proud fury has ended" or "his pride and fury have ended"

the proud fury ended

The "proud fury" refers to the king of Babylon being proud and treating other nations cruelly. Alternate translation: "his cruelty has ended" or "he can no longer oppress people"

Isaiah 14:5

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon.

Yahweh has broken the staff of the wicked

The staff of the wicked probably refers to a stick that wicked people would hit other people with. Breaking that stick represents destroying their power to treat people cruelly. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has destroyed the power of the wicked"

the scepter of those rulers

A scepter represents a ruler's power to rule. Breaking the scepter represents destroying the ruler's power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has destroyed the power of the wicked rulers"

Isaiah 14:6

that struck the peoples

"who struck the peoples." Wicked people struck the peoples with their staff.

with unceasing blows

"without stopping" or "again and again"

that ruled the nations

"who conquered other nations"

with an attack that was unrestrained

"attacking them without stopping"

Isaiah 14:7

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon.

The whole earth

This refers to everyone on earth. Alternate translation: "everyone on earth"

Isaiah 14:8

Even the cypress trees rejoice over you with the cedars of Lebanon

Isaiah speaks of the trees as if they were people who could rejoice. This emphasizes that it is such a great thing that God has stopped the king of Babylon that even nature would rejoice if it could. Alternate translation: "It will be as if even the cyprus trees and the cedars of Lebanon rejoice over you"

rejoice over you

Why they rejoice can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "rejoice that God has made you powerless"

Since you are laid low

Being laid low represents being made powerless and unimportant. Alternate translation: "Since you have become powerless"

Isaiah 14:9

Sheol below is eager to meet you

Sheol is spoken of as if it were a person who is eager to meet his guests. This implies that the king dies. Alternate translation: "Sheol is like a host eager to meet you"

It arouses the dead for you, all the leaders of the earth

"it wakes up the dead for you, all the leaders of the earth." Sheol is spoken of as if it were a person that could wake up those who are in it. Alternate translation: "All the dead leaders of the earth in Sheol wake up to greet you"

Isaiah 14:10

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon. Here they sing about what the dead kings in Sheol will say to him.

They all will speak and say to you

The word "they" refers to the dead kings in Sheol, and the word "you" refers to the king of Babylon.

Isaiah 14:11

Your pomp has been brought down to Sheol

The dead kings will speak of the king of Babylon having no more splendor as if his splendor had gone down to Sheol. Alternate translation: "Your splendor ended when God sent you here to Sheol"

with the sound of your lutes

People would make music on lutes to honor the king. The dead kings will speak of people no longer honoring the king of Babylon with music as if the music went to Sheol. Alternate translation: "along with the sound of people

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playing music to honor you"

Maggots are spread under you

The maggots under his dead body are spoken of as if they were a mat or bed. Alternate translation: "You lie on a bed of maggots" or "You lie on many maggots"

worms cover you

The worms all over his body are spoken of as if they were covering him like a blanket. Alternate translation: "Worms cover you like a blanket" or "There are worms all over your body"

Isaiah 14:12

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon.

How you are fallen from heaven, daystar, son of the dawn

The daystar is a bright star that rises just before dawn. The people of Israel will refer to the king of Babylon in terms of this star in order to imply that he once was great, but now he was not. Alternate translation: "You were like the bright morning star, but you have fallen from the sky"

How you are cut down to the ground

The people of Israel will speak of the king of Babylon as if he were a tree that was cut down. Alternate translation: "You are defeated like a tree that someone has cut down to the ground"

Isaiah 14:13

I will sit on the mount of assembly

This alludes to the myth that many people in the Ancient Near East knew, that the Canaanite gods met in council on the top of a mountain in the northern part of Syria. Sitting on the mountain represents ruling with the gods. Alternate translation: "I will rule on the mountain where the gods assemble"

in the far reaches of the north

"in the most northern places." The mountain in the north was apparently called Zaphon. Some modern English translations say, "far away on the sides of Zaphon."

Isaiah 14:15

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon.

Yet you are now brought down to Sheol

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But now God has sent you down to Sheol"

Isaiah 14:16

Is this the man

The people will use this question either to mock the king of Babylon, or to express their shock at what has happened to him. Alternate translation: "Surely, this is not the man"

who made the earth tremble

Possible meanings are 1) the earth trembled as the king's army marched to conquer people, or 2) this refers to the people of the earth trembling in fear of him.

shook kingdoms

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor for "conquered kingdoms" or 2) this is metonymy for "terrified the people of kingdoms."

Isaiah 14:17

who made the world like a wilderness

"who made the places where people lived into a wilderness"

Isaiah 14:18

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the taunt song that the Israelites will sing to the king of Babylon.

all of them lie down in honor

This means that their bodies were buried in an honorable way. Alternate translation: "all the kings who have died are buried in an honorable way"

Isaiah 14:19

But you are cast out of your grave

Being thrown out of the grave represents not being buried. Alternate translation: "But you are not buried. Your body is left on the ground"

like an abhorrent branch

While this simile is unclear, an "abhorrent branch" clearly represents something disgusting. Alternate translation: "like something disgusting that is tossed aside"

Those who were killed cover you like a garment

This represents many dead bodies being on top of his body. Alternate translation: "The bodies of dead people completely cover your body" or "The bodies of dead soldiers are piled on top of your body"

those pierced by the sword

This describes "the dead" spoken of at the beginning of this sentence. Being pierced by the sword represents being killed in battle. Alternate translation: "those who were killed in battle"

who go down to the stones of the pit

The pit refers either to hell, or to a large hole in the ground where many dead bodies are simply dumped.

Isaiah 14:20

You will not join them in burial

The word "them" refers to the other kings who died and were buried properly. Joining them in burial represents being buried as they were. Alternate translation: "you will never be buried as other kings were buried"

The offspring of evildoers will never be mentioned again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever speak again about the descendants of evildoers"

Isaiah 14:21

Prepare your slaughter for his children

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "slaughter" is expressed with the verb "kill." Alternate translation: "Get ready to kill the children of the king of Babylon"

for the iniquity of their ancestors

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "iniquity" is expressed as the verb "sinned greatly." Alternate translation: "because their forefathers have sinned greatly"

so they will not rise up

Here "rise up" represents either becoming powerful or attacking. Alternate translation: "so they will not become powerful" or "so they will not attack"

possess the earth

This represents taking control of the people on the earth, in this case by conquering them. Alternate translation: "take control of the peoples on the earth" or "conquer the peoples

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on the earth"

fill the whole world with cities

This represents causing the world to have many cities on it. Alternate translation: "build cities all over the world"

Isaiah 14:22

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

Isaiah 14:23

I will also make her

The word "her" refers to the city of Babylon. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: "I will also make it"

a possession of owls

This represents wild animals living in the city because there are no people there. Alternate translation: "a place where owls live" or "a place where wild animals live"

into pools of water

Causing there to be swamps or ponds of stagnant water where the city was is spoken of as making the city into those things. Alternate translation: "into a place where there are stagnant ponds"

Isaiah 14:24

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

as I have intended, so it will come about; and as I have purposed, so it will be

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "the things that I have planned will surely happen"

Isaiah 14:25

I will break the Assyrian in my land

Breaking represents defeating. Alternate translation: "I will defeat the Assyrian in my land" or "I will cause the Assyrian in my land to be defeated"

the Assyrian

This represents the Assyrian king and his army. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria and his army" or "the Assyrian army"

trample him underfoot

This represents completely defeating him.

Then his yoke will be lifted from off them and his burden from off their shoulder

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "Then I will lift his yoke from them and his burden from their shoulder"

Then his yoke will be lifted from off them and his burden from off their shoulder

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Lifting the yoke and burden represents setting people free from slavery. Alternate translation: "Then I will set the Israelites free from slavery to Assyria like removing a heavy burden from their shoulder"

his yoke ... his burden

The word "his" refers to Assyria.

from off them ... from off their shoulder

The words "them" and "their" refer to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 14:26

General Information:

This may be Isaiah speaking or it may be Yahweh speaking.

This is the plan that has been devised for the whole earth

The idea of "has been devised" can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "This is the plan that God intends for the whole earth"

this is the hand that is raised over all the nations

God being ready to punish the nations is spoken of as if he raised his hand in order to hit them. The word "hand" may also represent his power. Alternate translation: "this is Yahweh's power to punish all the nations" or "this is how Yahweh will punish the nations"

Isaiah 14:27

who will stop him?

This question emphasizes that no one can stop Yahweh. Alternate translation: "there is no one who can stop him."

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

His hand is raised

This represents Yahweh being ready to punish the nations. Alternate translation: "He is ready to punish them"

who will turn it back?

This question is used to say that no one can turn back God's hand. Turning back his hand represents stopping him from punishing the nations. Alternate translation: "no one can turn it back." or "no one can stop him from punishing them."

Isaiah 14:29

the rod that struck you is broken

The rod that struck Philistia represents a king who sent his army to attack them. Being broken represents either being dead or being defeated. Alternate translation: "the king that sent his army against you is dead" or "the army that attacked you is defeated"

For out of the serpent's root will grow an adder ... his offspring will be a fiery flying serpent

These two phrases are both the image of a serpent's offspring being even more harmful than the serpent. They represent a king's successor being more powerful and cruel than the first king.

an adder

a kind of poisonous snake

a fiery flying serpent

Here the word "fiery" probably refers to the serpent's poisonous bite, and the word "flying" refers to its quick movements. Alternate translation: "a quickly moving poisonous snake"

Isaiah 14:30

The firstborn of the poor

This represents the poorest people. Alternate translation: "The poorest people" or "The poorest of my people"

I will kill your root with famine that will put to death all your survivors

Here "your root" refers to the people of Philistia. Alternate translation: "I will kill your people with famine that will put to death all your survivors"

Isaiah 14:31

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Wail, gate; cry, city
Here "gate" and "city" represent the people at the city gates and in the cities. "Wail, you people at the city gates; cry, you people in the cities"
you will melt away
Melting away represents becoming weak because of fear. Alternate translation: "you will grow weak with fear"
For out of the north comes a cloud of smoke
This implies that a large army is coming from the north. Alternate translation: "For from the north comes a large army with a cloud of smoke"
a cloud of smoke
Possible meanings are 1) this represents a cloud of dust that the army stirs up as they travel on dry dirt roads. Alternate translation: "a cloud of dust" or 2) there is a lot of smoke because of all the things that the army destroys and burns. Alternate translation: "much smoke"
there is no straggler in his ranks
"no one in his ranks walks slowly behind the others" Isaiah 14:32
How will they respond to the messengers of that nation?
The author uses this question to introduce his instruction about how the Israelites should speak to the messengers. Alternate translation: "This is how we will answer the messengers of Philistia."
Yahweh has founded Zion
"Yahweh started Zion"
in her
"in Jerusalem" or "there"
the afflicted of his people
"those of his people who have been afflicted"

---

15 [1]A declaration about Moab.
Indeed, in one night
Ar of Moab is laid waste and destroyed;
indeed, in one night
Kir of Moab is laid waste and destroyed.
[2] They have gone up to the temple,
the people of Dibon went up to the heights to weep;
Moab wails over Nebo and over Medeba.
All their heads are shaved bare
and all their beards are cut off.

[3] In their streets they wear sackcloth;
on their housetops and in the square
everyone wails, melting in weeping.

[4] Heshbon and Elealeh call out for help;
their sound is heard as far as Jahaz.
So the armed men of Moab cry out for help;
they tremble within themselves.

[5] My heart cries out for Moab;
her fugitives flee to Zoar
and to Eglath Shelishiyah.
They go up the ascent of Luhith weeping;
on the road to Horonaim
they raise a cry of distress over their destruction.

[6] The waters of Nimrim are a desolation;
the grass is withered;
the vegetation has dried up;
there is no more green grass.

[7] The abundance they have grown and stored
they carry away over the brook of the poplars.

[8] The cry has gone around the territory of Moab;
the wailing as far as Eglaim and Beer Elim.

[9] For the waters of Dimon are full of blood;
but I will bring even more upon Dimon.
A lion will attack those who escape from Moab

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and also those remaining in the land.

Isaiah 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter shifts from discussing Judah to the nation of Moab. Moab is punished by Yahweh, even though he is not a god they worship. (See: god)

Links:

Isaiah 15:1 Notes

Isaiah 15:1

General Information:

Often in prophecy events that will happen in future are described as happening now or in the past. This emphasizes that the event will certainly happen.

A declaration

"This is what Yahweh declares" or "This is a message from Yahweh"

Ar ... Kir

These are names of cities and towns in Moab.

Ar of Moab is laid waste and destroyed

The words "laid waste" and "destroyed" mean the same thing and emphasize that the city was completely ruined. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemy armies will completely destroy Ar of Moab"

Isaiah 15:2

Dibon ... Nebo ... Medeba

These are names of cities and towns in Moab.

went up to the heights to weep

Here "up to the heights" refers to a temple or altar that was built on high ground like a hill or mountain side. Alternate translation: "went up to the temple on the hilltop to weep"

Moab wails over Nebo and over Medeba

These place names refer to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab will weep because of what happened to the cities of Nebo and Medeba"

All their heads are shaved bare and all their beards are cut off

They do this to show their extreme sadness. Alternate translation: "They will all shave their heads and cut off their beards and grieve"

Isaiah 15:3

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present (Isaiah 15:1-2).

they wear sackcloth

They do this to show their extreme sadness. Alternate translation: "they wear sackcloth and mourn"

Isaiah 15:4

Heshbon ... Elealeh ... Jahaz

These are names of cities and towns.

Heshbon and Elealeh call out

These city names represent the people of these cities. "The people of Heshbon and Elealeh call out"

they tremble within themselves

Physical trembling is a symptom of fear and represents fear. Alternate translation: "they will be completely filled with fear" or "they tremble with fear"

Isaiah 15:5

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present (Isaiah 15:1-2).

My heart cries out for Moab

Here God is represented by his "heart" which emphasizes his emotions. God speaks of his great sadness as if his heart cried out. Alternate translation: "I am extremely sad about what is happening to Moab"

her fugitives flee

"the fugitives from Moab will flee." A fugitive is a person who runs away so that his enemy will not capture him.

Zoar ... Eglath Shelishiyah ... Luhith ... Horonaim

These are names of cities and towns.

over their destruction

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "destruction" is expressed as the verb "destroyed." Alternate translation: "because their city is destroyed"

Isaiah 15:6

Nimrim

This is the name of a city or town.

Isaiah 15:7

The abundance

"Everything"

brook of the poplars

This may refer to the river at the southern border of Moab.

Isaiah 15:8

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present (Isaiah 15:1-2).

The cry has gone around the territory of Moab

People's crying out and others hearing it is spoken of as if the cry had gone out. Alternate translation: "People all over the territory of Moab cry out"

the wailing as far as Eglaim and Beer Elim

The words "has gone" are understood. People's wailing and others hearing it is spoken of as if the wailing had gone as

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far away as these two places. Alternate translation: "the wailing has gone as far as Egalim and Beer Elim" or "people even as far away as Elaim and Beer Elim wail"

Eglaim ... Beer Elim

These are names of cities and towns. Dimon was the principal city of the country of Moab. Several modern versions have "Dibon" instead of "Dimon."

Isaiah 15:9

Dimon

This is the name of a city or town. Dimon was the principal city of the country of Moab. Several modern versions have "Dibon" instead of "Dimon."

but I will bring even more upon Dimon

Here "I" refers to Yahweh. Also, "Dimon" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "but I will cause even more trouble for the people of Dimon"

16 [1] Send rams to the ruler of the land
from Selah in the wilderness,
to the mount of the daughter of Zion.

[2] As wandering birds,
as a scattered nest,
so the women of Moab are
at the fords of the Arnon River.

[3] "Give instruction, execute justice;
provide some shade like night in the middle of the day;
hide the outcasts;
do not betray the fugitives.

[4] Let them live among you, the outcasts from Moab;
be a hiding place for them from the destroyer."
For the oppression will stop,
and destruction will cease,
those who trample will disappear from the land.

[5] A throne will be established in covenant faithfulness;
and one from David's tent will faithfully sit there.
He will judge as he seeks justice and does righteousness.

[6] We have heard of Moab's pride, his arrogance,
his boasting, and his anger.
But his boastings are empty words.

[7] So Moab wails for Moab—they all wail!
Mourn, you who are utterly destroyed,
for the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth.

[8] The fields of Heshbon have dried up
as well as the vines of Sibmah.
The rulers of the nations
have trampled the choice vines
that reached to Jazer
and spread into the desert.
Its shoots spread abroad;
they went over to the sea.

[9] Indeed I will weep along with Jazer
for the vineyard of Sibmah.
I will water you with my tears,
Heshbon and Elealeh.
For on your fields of summer fruits and harvest
I have ended the shouts of joy.

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10 Gladness and joy are taken away from the fruit tree groves;
and there is no singing, or shouts in the vineyards.
No one treads out wine in the presses,
for I have put an end to the shouts of the one who treads.

11 So my heart sighs like a harp for Moab,
and my inward being for Kir Hareseth.

12 When Moab wears himself out on the high place
and enters his sanctuary to pray,
his prayers will accomplish nothing.

13 This is the word that Yahweh spoke concerning Moab previously. 14 Again Yahweh speaks, "Within three years, the glory of Moab will be dishonored; in spite of his many people, the remnant will be very few and insignificant."

Isaiah 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter and is a prophecy against the nation of Moab. (See: prophet)
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 16:1-12.

Links:

Isaiah 16:1 Notes

Isaiah 16:1

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present. This verse is probably what God says the rulers of Moab will say to each other (Isaiah 15:1-2).

Send rams to the ruler of the land

The Moabites will send rams to the king of Judah so that he might protect them from the enemy army.

Selah

This is the name of a city.

the daughter of Zion

The "daughter" of a city means the people of the city. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 1:8]

Isaiah 16:2

As wandering birds, as a scattered nest, so the women of Moab are at the fords of the Arnon River

All the people of Moab, which includes the women, are forced to flee from their homes. Alternate translation: "Like birds without a home, the women of Moab will flee across the river to another land"

As wandering birds, as a scattered nest

These two phrases mean basically the same thing.

Isaiah 16:3

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present. Verses 3 and 4 is probably the message that the Moabite rulers send to the king of Judah (Isaiah 15:1-2).

provide some shade like night in the middle of the day

The heat of the middle of the day represents the Moabites' suffering from their enemies, and shade represents protection from their enemies. Comparing the shade to night shows that they want strong protection. Alternate translation: "protect us completely from our enemies as a large shadow protects people from the hot sun"

Isaiah 16:4

Let them live among you, the outcasts from Moab

"Allow the refugees from Moab to live with you." Here "you" refers to the people of Judah.

be a hiding place for them from the destroyer

Providing a hiding place is spoken of as being a hiding place. Alternate translation: "give them a place to hide from those who are trying to destroy them" or "hide them from those who want to destroy them"

Isaiah 16:5

A throne will be established in covenant faithfulness

Here "throne" refers to the power to rule as king. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will be faithful to the covenant and he will appoint a king"

one from David's tent will faithfully sit there

Here "David's tent" represents David's family, including his descendants. Sitting on the throne represents ruling. Alternate translation: "a descendant of David will rule faithfully"

as he seeks justice

Seeking justice represents wanting to do what is just.

Isaiah 16:6

General Information:

This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present (Isaiah 15:1-2).

We have heard of Moab's pride, his arrogance, his boasting, and his

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anger
The words "Moab's" and "his" refer to the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "We have heard that the people of Moab are proud and arrogant, boastful and angry"
We have heard
Possible meanings are that 1) Isaiah is speaking and "We" refers to him and the people of Judah, or 2) God is speaking and "We" refers to God.
But his boastings are empty words
"But what they say about themselves means nothing" or "But what they boast about is not true"
Isaiah 16:7
So Moab wails for Moab—they all wail
"Moab" represents the people of Moab. "So all the people of Moab will cry out loud over what has happened to their cities"
for the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth
"because there are no raisin cakes in Kir Hareseth"
raisin cakes
The Hebrew word used here means either "raisin cakes" or "men."
Kir Hareseth
"Kir Hareseth" is the name of a city.
Isaiah 16:8
General Information:
This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it happened in the past (Isaiah 15:1-2).
Heshbon
Translate the name of this city as you did in Isaiah 15:4.
Sibmah ... Jazer
These are names of cities.
The rulers of the nations have trampled the choice vines
The land of Moab was known for its vineyards. Here God describes the land of Moab as one large vineyard. This emphasizes that the rulers, which refers to the armies, completely destroyed everything in Moab.
Isaiah 16:9
General Information:
This continues to describe the land of Moab as one large vineyard (Isaiah 16:8). God describes events that will happen in the future as if they are happening in the present.
Indeed I will weep
In 16:9-10 the word "I" refers to Yahweh.
I will water you with my tears
God speaks of his deep sorrow for these places as if he would cry much and his many tears would fall on them. Alternate translation: "I will cry much for you"
Jazer ... Sibmah
Translate the names of these cities as you did in Isaiah 16:8.
Heshbon ... Elealeh
Translate the names of these cities as you did in Isaiah 15:4.
For on your fields of summer fruits and harvest I have ended the shouts of joy
The "shouts of joy" represent people shouting for joy about the harvest of their fruit trees. Alternate translation: "Because of what I will do, you will no longer shout for joy when you harvest your fields of summer fruit"
Isaiah 16:10
I have put an end to the shouts of the one who treads
Here "the shouts" refers to the joy of the people who tread the grapes to produce the wine. Alternate translation: "therefore the people who tread the grapes do not shout with joy"
Isaiah 16:11
General Information:
This continues the prophecy about the people of Moab. God describes events that will happen in the future as if it is happening in the present (Isaiah 15:1-2).
So my heart sighs like a harp for Moab
The phrase "my heart" represents Yahweh and his sad feelings. He compares his sigh to the sound of a sad song played on a harp. Alternate translation: "So I sigh like a sad song on a harp"
Moab
This refer to the people of Moab.
my inward being for Kir Hareseth
The phrase "my inward being" represents Yahweh. The word "sighs" is understood from the previous phrase. See how you translated Kir Hareseth in [Isaiah 16:7]
Kir Hareseth
This is a metonym for the people of the city. Alternate translation: "the people of Kir Hareseth"
Isaiah 16:12
Moab ... himself ... his
All of these words refer to the people of Moab.
his prayers will accomplish nothing
"his prayers will not be answered"
Isaiah 16:13
This is the word
"This is the message." This refers to all he said in 15:1-16:12.
concerning Moab
The word "Moab" refers to the people of Moab.
Isaiah 16:14
the glory of Moab will be dishonored
This can be translated using an active verb. Alternate translation: "I will destroy everything for which Moab is honored"

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17 [1]A declaration about Damascus.
Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city,
and it shall be a fallen ruin.
[2] The cities of Aroer will be abandoned.
They will be places for flocks to lie down,
and no one will frighten them.

[3] Fortified cities will disappear from Ephraim,

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the kingdom from Damascus,
and the remnant of Aram—
the glory of the people of Israel—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.

4 It will come about on that day
that the glory of Jacob will become thin,
and the fatness of his flesh will become lean.

5 It will be as when a harvester gathers the standing grain,
and his arm reaps the heads of grain.
It will be as when one gleans heads of grain
in the Valley of Rephaim.

6 Gleanings will be left,
however, as when the olive tree is shaken:
two or three olives in the top of the uppermost bough,
four or five in the highest branches of a fruitful tree—
this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

7 On that day men will look toward their Maker,
and their eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel.

8 They will not look to the altars,
the work of their hands,
nor will they look to what their fingers have made,
the Asherah poles or the sun images.

9 On that day their strong cities will be like the abandoned wooded slopes on the hill summits, which were abandoned because of the people of Israel, and they will become a desolation.

10 For you have forgotten the God of your salvation,
and have ignored the rock of your refuge.
So you plant pleasant plants,
and set out vine branches received from a stranger.

11 But though on the day you plant them you hedge them in,
and though in the morning your seed grows,
the harvest will fail on a day of grief
and of desperate sorrow.

12 Woe! The uproar of many peoples,
who roar like the roaring of the seas,
and the rushing of nations,
who rush like the rushing of mighty waters!

13 The nations will roar like the rushing of many waters,
but he will rebuke them and they will flee far away,
they will be chased before the wind like chaff on the mountains,
and like weeds whirling before a storm.

14 In the evening, see, terror!
Before the morning they will be gone!
This is the portion of those who loot us,
the lot of those who rob us.

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Isaiah 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

The ULB sets the lines in 17:1-6, 9-14 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Damascus

This chapter prophesies destruction against the people of Damascus. Damascus was the capital of Aram. The people of Damascus worship gods other than Yahweh and have fought Yahweh's people. (See: prophet, falsegod and peopleofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Ephraim

This chapter prophesied destruction against the kingdom of Israel. They are also called Ephraim in this chapter. Both the northern kingdom of Israel and Aram were conquered at about the same time in history.

Links:

Isaiah 17:1 Notes

Isaiah 17:1

about Damascus

Damascus is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 7:8]

Isaiah 17:2

The cities of Aroer will be abandoned

This can be stated in active form. "All the people will abandon the cities of Aroer"

no one will frighten them

The word "them" refers to the sheep.

Isaiah 17:3

Fortified cities will disappear from Ephraim

Ephraim was the largest tribe in Israel. Here it represents the entire northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Strong cities will disappear from Israel"

will disappear

This does not mean that they will vanish, but that the cities will be destroyed.

the kingdom from Damascus

The words "will disappear" are understood from the previous phrase. Damascus was where the king of Aram ruled from. The kingdom disappearing represents the king no longer having royal power. Alternate translation: "the kingdom will disappear from Damascus" or "there will be no royal power in Damascus"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 14:22]

Isaiah 17:4

It will come about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event that will happen. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

the glory of Jacob will become thin, and the fatness of his flesh will become lean

Here "Jacob" refers to the kingdom of Israel. Israel would no longer be glorious. Rather it would be weak and poor.

Isaiah 17:5

It will be as when a harvester gathers the standing grain ... in the Valley of Rephaim

There will be nothing left in the land after God punishes the people of Israel.

the Valley of Rephaim

This is a valley where people normally grew and harvested much food.

Isaiah 17:6

General Information:

This continues to compare the nation of Israel with a field after it is harvested (Isaiah 17:4-5).

Gleanings will be left

The word "Gleanings" here represents the people who will still live in Israel. Alternate translation: "But there will be a few people left in Israel"

as when the olive tree is shaken

People harvested olive trees by shaking them so that the olives would fall out. Alternate translation: "like the few olives that remain on the olive trees after people harvest them"

four or five

The word "olives" is understood from the phrase before this. Alternate translation: "four or five olives"

this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of Israel

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, the God of Israel, have declared"

Isaiah 17:7

men will look toward their Maker ... will look to the Holy One of Israel

Looking toward God here represents hoping that he will help them. Alternate translation: "men will hope that their Maker, the Holy One of Israel, will help them"

men will look

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The word "men" represents people in general. Alternate translation: "people will look"

their eyes will look

Here "eyes" represents the people who look. Alternate translation: "they will look" or "the people will look"

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:4.

Isaiah 17:8

They will not look to the altars

Looking to the altars represents worshiping idols with the hope that the idols will help them. Alternate translation: "They will not worship idols at their altars" or "The people of Israel will not go to their altars and ask their idols to help them"

the work of their hands

Here the people are represented by their "hands" to emphasize that they made the altars or idols. Alternate translation: "that they made with their hands" or "which they themselves built"

what their fingers have made ... the Asherah poles or the sun images

The second phrase identifies the things that the people made. Speaking of the fingers here emphasizes that the people made them, so these things are not real gods. Alternate translation: "the Asherah poles or the sun images, which they themselves made"

Isaiah 17:9

which were abandoned because of the people of Israel

It can be made explicit who left these lands. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the Hivites and Amorites left after the people of Israel came"

Isaiah 17:10

For you have forgotten

Here "you" refers to the people of Israel. The word "forgotten" does not mean they have no memory of God. It means they no longer obey him. Alternate translation: "For you no longer obey"

the God of your salvation

"the God who saves you"

have ignored the rock of your refuge

This compares God to a large rock which people could climb on to get away from their enemies or hide behind. Alternate translation: "have ignored God, who is like a rock that protects you" or "have ignored the one who protects you"

Isaiah 17:11

the harvest will fail

"there will not be much fruit for you to harvest"

Isaiah 17:12

The uproar of many peoples, who roar like the roaring of the seas

An uproar is a very loud noise. Alternate translation: "The sound of many people, that is very loud like the seas"

the rushing of nations, who rush like the rushing of mighty waters

The enemy armies appear to be a powerful force that no one can stop. Alternate translation: "the nations come rushing in like the mighty waters"

the rushing of nations

The word "nations" refers to the armies of those nations. Alternate translation: "the rushing of the enemy armies"

Isaiah 17:13

before the wind like chaff on the mountains ... like weeds whirling before a storm

These two phrases mean the same thing. The enemy armies seem powerful but God will easily stop them and send them away. Alternate translation: "like chaff on the mountains that the wind blows away ... like weeds that whirl and blow away as a storm approaches"

Isaiah 17:14

This is the portion of those

What happens to them is spoken of as if it is a portion that they inherit. Alternate translation: "This is what happens to those"

loot us ... rob us

The word "us" refers to Isaiah and the people of Judah.

---

18 [1] Woe to the land of the rustling of wings,
which is along the rivers of Cush;

[2] who send ambassadors by the sea,
in vessels of papyrus on the waters.
Go, you swift messengers,
to a nation tall and smooth,
to a people feared far and near,
a nation strong and treading down,
whose land the rivers divide.

[3] All you inhabitants of the world
and you who live on the earth,
when a signal flag is lifted up on the mountains, look;
and when the ram's horn is blown, listen.

[4] This is what Yahweh said to me,
"I will quietly observe from my home,
like the simmering heat in sunlight,
like a cloud of mist in the heat of harvest.

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5 Before the harvest, when the blossoming is over,
and the flower is ripening into a grape,
he will cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks,
and he will cut down and take away the spreading branches.

6 They will be left together for the birds of the mountains
and for the animals of the earth.
The birds of prey will spend the summer on them,
and all the animals of the earth will spend harvest time on them."

7 At that time tribute will be brought to Yahweh of hosts

from a people tall and smooth,
from a people feared far and near,
nation strong and trampling down,
whose land the rivers divide,

to the place of the name of Yahweh of hosts, to Mount Zion.

Isaiah 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cush

This chapter records prophecies against the nation of Cush. They are being punished by Yahweh. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

This chapter uses many metaphors to describe the destruction coming to the people of Cush.

Links:

Isaiah 18:1 Notes

Isaiah 18:1

Woe to the land of the rustling of wings, which is along the rivers of Cush

Possible meanings of "the rustling of wings" are 1) the boats that have sails are spoken of as having wings. Alternate translation: "Woe to those who live in the land beyond the rivers of Cush, whose many ships look like insects on the water" or 2) the rustling of wings refers to the noise of insects that have wings, perhaps locusts.

Isaiah 18:2

by the sea

The Nile River was very wide, and people in Egypt and Cush referred to it as "the sea." Alternate translation: "on the great river" or "along the Nile River"

vessels of papyrus

Papyrus is a tall plant that grows along the side of the Nile River. People bound together papyrus bundles to make boats. Alternate translation: "papyrus boats" or "boats made of reeds" or

a nation tall and smooth ... a people feared far and near ... a nation strong and treading down, whose land the rivers divide

These phrases all describe the people of one nation.

a nation tall and smooth

The word "nation" here refers to the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "a nation whose people are tall and have smooth skin"

a people feared far and near

The words "far" and "near" are used together to mean "everywhere." Alternate translation: "a people who are feared everywhere" or "a people that everyone in the earth fears"

a nation strong and treading down

Treading down represents conquering other nations. Alternate translation: "a nation that is strong and conquers other nations"

the rivers divide

This probably refers to many rivers that flow through the nation so they divide it into different parts.

Isaiah 18:3

Connecting Statement:

Verse 3 tells what the messengers in Isaiah 18:2 must say to the people of the world.

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All you inhabitants of the world ... you who live on the earth
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "All you people on the earth"
when a signal flag is lifted up on the mountains, look; and when the ram's horn is blown, listen
The signal flag and ram's horn were to call people to battle. The commands to look and listen are commands to pay attention and prepare for battle. Alternate translation: "pay attention when the signal flag is lifted up on the mountains and the ram's horn is blown"
when a signal flag is lifted up on the mountains, look
The signal was a flag used to call people to battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "pay attention when you see the battle flag on the mountains"
signal flag
See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.
when the ram's horn is blown, listen
The trumpets were used to call people to battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "pay attention when you hear the sound of the battle trumpets"
Isaiah 18:4
General Information:
God uses a parable about a farmer in a vineyard in order to describe how he will punish a certain nation. That nation is either Ethiopia or Ethiopia's enemy.
This is what Yahweh said to me
"Yahweh said to me." Here the word "me" refers to Isaiah.
I will quietly observe from my home
What God will observe can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will quietly observe that nation from my home" or "From my home, I will quietly watch what the people of that nation do"
like the simmering heat in sunlight, like a cloud of mist in the heat of harvest
These phrases show how quietly God will watch the nation.
Isaiah 18:5
Before the harvest
This is a harvest of grapes. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Before the grape harvest"
when the blossoming is over
It can be stated clearly that this refers to blossoms on grape vines. Alternate translation: "when flowers have finished growing on the grape vines"
he will cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks
Yahweh will cut off the branches before the grapes can ripen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cut off the branches with knives before their produce fruit"
pruning hooks
A pruning hook is a knife that people use to cut branches off of vines or other plants.
he will cut down and take away the spreading branches
Yahweh will throw away the branches in judgment.
Isaiah 18:6
They will be left together
God seems to change from telling the parable to speaking more directly about the nation. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Those who are killed will be left together" or "Like branches that are cut off and thrown away, the bodies of those who are killed will be left on the ground"
The birds of prey will spend the summer on them
"The birds of prey will eat them during the summer"
all the animals of the earth
"all kinds of wild animals"
will spend harvest time on them
"will eat them in the winter"
Isaiah 18:7
a people tall and smooth ... a people feared far and near ... a nation strong and trampling down, whose land the rivers divide
These phrases all describe the people of one nation. See how you translated these phrases in Isaiah 18:2.
a people tall and smooth
"a people who are tall and have smooth skin"
a people feared far and near
The words "far" and "near" are used together to mean "everywhere." Alternate translation: "a people who are feared everywhere" or "a people that everyone in the earth fears"
a nation strong and trampling down
Trampling down represents conquering other nations. Alternate translation: "a nation that is strong and conquers other nations"
to the place of the name of Yahweh of hosts, to Mount Zion
The word "name" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to Mount Zion, where Yahweh of hosts dwells"

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19 [1]A declaration about Egypt.
See, Yahweh rides on a swift cloud
and is coming to Egypt;
the idols of Egypt quake before him,
and the hearts of the Egyptians melt within themselves.

[2] "I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians:
A man will fight against his brother,
and a man against his neighbor;
city will be against city,
and kingdom against kingdom.

[3] The spirit of Egypt will be weakened from within.
I will destroy his advice,
though they sought the advice of idols,

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dead men's spirits, sorcerers, and spiritists.

4 I will give the Egyptians
into the hand of a severe master,
and a strong king will rule over them—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts."

5 The waters of the sea will dry up,
and the river will dry up and become empty.

6 The rivers will become foul;
the streams of Egypt will dwindle and dry up;
the reeds and flags will wither away.

7 The reeds along the Nile,
at the mouth of the Nile,
and every sown field beside the Nile will become parched,
will be driven away, and will be no more.

8 The fishermen will wail and mourn,
and all who cast a hook into the Nile will mourn,
and those who spread nets on the waters will waste away.

9 The workers in combed flax
and those who weave white cloth will turn pale.

10 The cloth workers of Egypt will be crushed;
all who work for wages will be grieved within themselves.

11 The princes of Zoan
are completely foolish.
The advice of the wisest advisors of Pharaoh
has become stupid.
How can you say to Pharaoh,
"I am the son of wise men, a son of ancient kings?"

12 Where then are your wise men?
Let them tell you and make known
what Yahweh of hosts plans concerning Egypt.

13 The princes of Zoan have become fools,
the princes of Memphis are deceived;
they have made Egypt go astray,
who are the cornerstones of her tribes.[1]

14 Yahweh has mixed a spirit of distortion into her midst,
and they have led Egypt astray in all she does,
like a drunk staggering in his vomit.

15 There is nothing anyone can do for Egypt,
whether head or tail, palm branch or reed.

16 In that day, the Egyptians will be like women. They will tremble and fear because of the upraised hand of Yahweh of hosts that he raises over them. 17 The land of Judah will become a cause of staggering to Egypt. Whenever anyone reminds them of her, they will be afraid, because of the plan of Yahweh of hosts, that he is planning against them.

[18]In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to Yahweh of hosts. One of these will be called The City of the Sun.[2]

[19]In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the middle of the land of Egypt, and a stone pillar at the border to Yahweh.[20]It will be as a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, he will send them a savior and a defender, and he will deliver them.
[21]Yahweh will become known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will acknowledge Yahweh on that day. They will worship with sacrifices and offerings, and will make vows to Yahweh and fulfill them.[22]Yahweh will afflict Egypt, afflicting and healing. They will return to Yahweh; he will hear their prayer and will heal them.

[23]In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come to Egypt, and the Egyptian to Assyria; and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.
[24]In that day, Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth;[25]Yahweh of hosts will bless them and say, "Blessed be Egypt, my people; Assyria, the work of my hands; and Israel, my inheritance."

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[1]The name Memphis, is used in most modern translations, and that name represents the place in Egypt that is known in Hebrew as Noph.
[2]Instead of The City of the Sun, which probably refers to the Egyptian city of Heliopolis, some ancient and modern translations have The City of Destruction.

Isaiah 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 19:1-18.

Special concepts in this chapter

Egypt

This chapter prophesied destruction against the nation of Egypt. Their destruction will come from internal division instead of being conquered by another nation. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Imagery

Some of the imagery used in this chapter may be connected to the worship of specific false gods. One important god the people of Canaan worshiped was Baal, the god of rain or storms. One of the important gods the Egyptians worshiped was Ra, the god of the sun. (See: falsegod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"In that day"

This changes the reference from the time when Assyria comes to dominate the world and looks to a more distant future day.

Links:

Isaiah 19:1 Notes

Isaiah 19:1

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Yahweh rides on a swift cloud

Yahweh seems to be pictured here as riding on a cloud as if he was riding in a chariot.

the idols of Egypt quake before him

The idols are described as having feelings of fear as Yahweh approaches. Alternate translation: "the idols of Egypt tremble in fear before Yahweh"

the hearts of the Egyptians melt within themselves

The heart melting represents losing their courage. Alternate translation: "the Egyptians have no more courage"

Isaiah 19:2

a man against his neighbor

The words "will fight" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "a man will fight against his neighbor"

city will be against city

The word "city" represents the people of the city. Alternate translation: "people of one city will fight against people of another city" or "people from different cities will fight against one another"

kingdom against kingdom

The words "will be" or "will fight" are understood from the previous phrases. Alternate translation: "kingdom will be against kingdom" or "kingdom will fight against kingdom"

kingdom against kingdom

The word "kingdom" refers to a smaller kingdom within Egypt. It may also be called a province. It represents the people of that kingdom or province. Alternate translation: "the people of one province will be against the people of another province" or "people from different provinces will fight against one another"

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Isaiah 19:3

The spirit of Egypt will be weakened from within. I will destroy his advice

The nation of Egypt is spoken of here as if it was a person.

The spirit of Egypt will be weakened from within

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "I will weaken the spirit of Egypt from within"

I will destroy his advice, though they sought the advice of ... spiritists

"They sought the advice of ... spiritists, but that will do them no good. It will not stop me from destroying his advice"

I will destroy his advice

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will cause the advice that he gives to be ineffective or 2) Yahweh will cause him to be unable to give any advice. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "advice" is expressed as the verb "advise." Alternate translation: "I will confuse those who advise the king"

sorcerers ... spiritists

These are people who claim to speak with those who have died.

Isaiah 19:4

I will give the Egyptians into the hand of a severe master

Here "hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "I will give the Egyptians over to the control of a severe master"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 3:15]

Isaiah 19:5

The waters of the sea will dry up, and the river will dry up and become empty

Egyptians referred to the Nile River as "the sea." These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "The Nile River will completely dry up"

Isaiah 19:6

become foul

"become foul-smelling" or "stink"

will dwindle

"become smaller and smaller"

the reeds and flags will wither away

"Reeds" and "flags" refer to two similar kinds of water plants. Alternate translation: "the plants along the river will die and decay"

Isaiah 19:7

every sown field beside the Nile

"the fields near the Nile where people have planted crops"

Isaiah 19:8

The fishermen will wail and mourn, and all who cast a hook into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread nets on the waters will waste away

These three phrases mean basically the same thing. If necessary, the reason they will grieve can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The fishermen who catch fish with hooks or nets will cry in despair because the fish in the Nile have died"

cast a hook into the Nile

In order to catch fish, some people put a little food on a hook, tie the hook to a string, and throw the hook into the water. When a fish tries to eat the food, its mouth gets stuck on the hook, and the person pulls the fish out of the water.

cast

throw

spread nets on the waters

In order to catch fish, some people toss a net on the water. When fish get caught in it, they pull the net with the fish out of the water.

will waste away

"will grieve." This weakness probably comes from grief.

Isaiah 19:9

The workers in combed flax

"Those who work with combed flax"

combed flax

Flax is a plant that grows along the Nile River. People comb its fibers in order to separate them, and use them to make thread for linen cloth.

will turn pale

"will be ashamed"

Isaiah 19:10

The cloth workers of Egypt

"The people of Egypt who make cloth"

will be crushed

Being crushed represents being discouraged. Alternate translation: "will be discouraged"

work for wages

"work for pay"

will be grieved within themselves

"will feel very sad"

Isaiah 19:11

The princes of Zoan are completely foolish. The advice of the wisest advisors of Pharaoh has become stupid

These two phrases are similar in meaning. Either the "princes of Zoan" are also "the wisest advisors of Pharaoh," or they are another group of people that also are shown to be foolish.

Zoan

This is a city in northern Egypt.

How can you say to Pharaoh ... kings?

Isaiah uses a question to mock those in Egypt who claim to be wise. Alternate translation: "You foolishly say to Pharaoh ... kings."

Isaiah 19:12

Where then are your wise men?

Isaiah uses a question to mock the wise men. The word "your" refers to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "You do not have any wise men." or "Your wise men are fools."

Let them tell you and make known what Yahweh of hosts plans concerning Egypt

Isaiah is implying that wise men should be able to understand God's plans, but Isaiah does not really believe they are wise. Alternate translation: "If they were really wise, they would be able to tell you what Yahweh of hosts plans concerning Egypt"

Isaiah 19:13

they have made Egypt go astray, who are the cornerstones of her tribes

The princes of Zoan and Memphis are spoken of as if they are the cornerstones of buildings because they are an important part of the community. Alternate translation: "the leaders have made Egypt go astray"

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princes of Zoan

Zoan is a city in northern Egypt. See how you translated this in Isaiah 19:11.

Memphis

This is a city in the northern part of Egypt.

made Egypt go astray

The word "Egypt" represents the people of Egypt. Going astray represents doing what is wrong. Alternate translation: "made the people of Egypt go astray" or "made the people of Egypt do what is wrong"

Isaiah 19:14

Yahweh has mixed a spirit of distortion into her midst

Isaiah speaks of Yahweh's judgment as if Egypt was a cup of wine. He speaks of Yahweh causing the leaders' thoughts to be distorted as if their distorted thoughts were a liquid that Yahweh mixed in with the wine. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has judged them by distorting their thoughts" or "Yahweh has judged Egypt by distorting its leaders' thoughts, as intoxicating drinks confuse people's thoughts"

distortion

"perverseness" or "confusion"

into her midst

Here "her" refers to Egypt. Nations are sometimes spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: "within Egypt"

they have led Egypt astray

Here, "they" refers to the leaders described in the previous verses. The word "Egypt" represents the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "the princes have led the people of Egypt astray"

have led Egypt astray

Leading people astray represents influencing them to do what is wrong.

like a drunk staggering in his vomit

Isaiah speaks of the people of Egypt doing what is wrong as if they were made to wander about like a drunken person.

Isaiah 19:15

whether head or tail

The "head," the part of an animal a person would want to be, represents the leader. The "tail" is the opposite and represents people who follow. Alternate translation: "whether leader or follower"

palm branch or reed

The "palm branch" grows high on the tree and represents people who are wealthy and important. The "reed" grows in shallow water and represents people who are poor and unimportant. See how you translated similar phrases in Isaiah 9:14. Alternate translation: "whether they are important or unimportant" or "whether rich or poor"

Isaiah 19:16

Egyptians will be like women

This emphasizes that the people of Egypt will be afraid and helpless when God punishes them.

because of the upraised hand of Yahweh of hosts that he raises over them

Here "hand" refers to God's power, and raising the hand against them represents punishing them. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh of hosts has raised his powerful hand to punish them"

Isaiah 19:17

The land of Judah will become a cause of staggering to Egypt

The "land of Judah" and "Egypt" refer to the people in those places. The Egyptians will stagger because they are afraid. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah will cause the Egyptians to stagger" or "The people of Judah will cause the Egyptians to be terribly afraid"

Whenever anyone reminds them of her, they will be afraid

Here, "them" and "they" refer to the Egyptians and "her" refers to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "Whenever anyone reminds the Egyptians of the people of Judah, the Egyptians will be afraid"

Isaiah 19:18

there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak

This refers to the people of those cities. Alternate translation: "the people in five Egyptian cities will speak"

the language of Canaan

This refers to Hebrew, the language of the people of God living in the land of Canaan. Here Canaan represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the language of the people of Canaan"

swear allegiance

"promise to be loyal"

One of these will be called

This can be stated in active form. "People will call one of these cities"

called The City of the Sun

It is not clear whether the Hebrew word translated "Sun" here means "sun" or "destruction." Is is also not clear what the name tells us about the city. Alternate translation: "the city called Sun City" or "the city called Destruction City"

Isaiah 19:19

a stone pillar at the border to Yahweh

The phrase "the border" refers to the border of Egypt. Alternate translation: "a stone pillar to Yahweh at the border of Egypt"

Isaiah 19:20

It will be as a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt

The abstract nouns "sign" and "witness" can be expressed with the verbs "show" and prove." Alternate translation: "The altar will show and prove that Yahweh of hosts is in the land of Egypt"

to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt

Yahweh being in the land of Egypt represents the people of Egypt worshiping him. Alternate translation: "that the people in the land of Egypt worship Yahweh of hosts"

When they cry

"When the Egyptians cry"

because of oppressors

"because people are treating them harshly" or "because others are causing them to suffer"

he will send them a savior and a defender

"Yahweh will send someone to save and defend the Egyptians"

he will deliver them

Who Yahweh will deliver them from can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will deliver the Egyptians from their oppressors"

Isaiah 19:21

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Yahweh will become known to Egypt
Here "Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make the people of Egypt know him"
will acknowledge Yahweh
"will accept the truth about Yahweh" or "will agree to the truth about Yahweh"
They will worship
The object of their worship can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "They will worship Yahweh"
will make vows to Yahweh and fulfill them
"will make promises to Yahweh and keep them" or "they will make promises to Yahweh and they will do what they have promised to do"
Isaiah 19:22
Yahweh will afflict Egypt
Here, "Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will afflict the people of Egypt"
afflict
"strike" or "punish"
afflicting and healing
The word "them" is understood in this phrase. Alternate translation: "afflicting them and healing them"
afflicting and healing
How this phrase relates to the phrase before it can be made clear with the words "after" and "also." Alternate translation: "and after he afflicts them, he will also heal them"
Isaiah 19:23
there will be a highway
A highway is a large road on which many people can travel.
the Assyrian will come
"the Assyrian" refers to a person from Assyria, but represents anyone from Assyria who comes to Egypt. Alternate translation: "Assyrians will come"
the Egyptian to Assyria
The words "will come" are understood. Alternate translation: "the Egyptian will come to Assyria"
the Egyptian
This refers to a person from Egypt, but represents anyone from Egypt who comes to Assyria. Alternate translation: "Egyptians"
the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians
The object of their worship can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the Egyptians and Assyrians will worship Yahweh"
Isaiah 19:24
Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria
The names of the three nations represent the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "the Israelites will be the third with the Egyptians and Assyrians"
be the third with
Possible meanings are 1) "join together with" or 2) "be the third blessing with" or 3) "be equal to."
Isaiah 19:25
Blessed be Egypt, my people; Assyria, the work of my hands; and Israel, my inheritance
The names of the three nations refer to the people of those nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have blessed you, people of Egypt, because you are my people; and I have blessed you, people of Assyria, because I created you; and I have blessed you, people of Israel, because I securely possess you"
the work of my hands
Here "hands" refers to God's power and action.

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20 [1]In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, he fought against Ashdod and took it.[2]At that time Yahweh spoke by Isaiah son of Amoz and said, "Go and remove the sackcloth from your waist, and take your sandals off your feet." He did so, walking naked and barefoot.
[3]Yahweh said, "Just as my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years, it is a sign and a wonder concerning Egypt and concerning Cush—[4]in this way the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt, and the exiles of Cush, young and old, naked and barefoot, and with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.
[5]They will be dismayed and ashamed, because of Cush their hope and of Egypt their glory.[6]The inhabitants of these coasts will say on that day, 'Indeed, this was our source of hope, where we fled for help to be rescued from the king of Assyria, and now, how can we escape?'"

Isaiah 20 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Naked and barefoot
This is an image used in this chapter to describe Assyria's victory over Egypt and Ethiopia. While they will be defeated, they will not be totally destroyed. Instead, they will be left with nothing.

Links:

Isaiah 20:1 Notes

Isaiah 20:1
Tartan
the name of the chief commander of the armies of Assyria
Sargon
the name of the king of Assyria
he fought against Ashdod and took it
Ashdod refers to the army of Ashdod. Alternate translation: "he fought against the army of Ashdod and defeated it"

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Isaiah 20:2
walking naked and barefoot
"walking around without clothes and without sandals." Here the word "naked" probably refers to wearing only his undergarments.
Isaiah 20:3
a wonder
"a warning"
Isaiah 20:4
the king of Assyria will lead away the captives
The king orders his army to do this task. Alternate translation: "the king of Assyria will have his army lead away the captives"
will lead away the captives of Egypt, and the exiles of Cush
It can be stated clearly that they will first attack and capture people. Alternate translation: "will attack Egypt and Cush and capture their people and lead them away"
to the shame of Egypt
Egypt refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "which will bring shame on the people of Egypt"
Isaiah 20:5
dismayed and ashamed
"afraid and put to shame"
because of Cush their hope and of Egypt their glory
Hope and glory refer to their trust in the military power of these countries. Alternate translation: "because they had trusted in the power of the armies of Cush and Egypt"
Isaiah 20:6
The inhabitants of these coasts
the people who lived in the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea
where we fled for help to be rescued
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where we fled to so they would rescue us"
now, how can we escape?
The author uses this question to emphasize how hopeless their situation was. Alternate translation: "now there is no way for us to escape!"

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21 [1]A declaration about the desert by the sea.

Like stormwinds sweeping through the Negev it comes
passing through from the wilderness, from a terrible land.

[2] A severe vision has been given to me:
the treacherous man deals treacherously,
and the destroyer destroys.
Go up and attack, Elam; besiege, Media;
I will stop all her groaning.

[3] Therefore my loins are filled with pain;
pains like the pains of a woman in labor
have taken hold of me;
I am bowed down by what I heard;
I am disturbed by what I saw.

[4] My heart pounds; I shake with fear.
Twilight was my desire, but it brought me terror.

[5] They prepare the table,
they spread rugs and eat and drink;
arise, princes,
anoint your shields with oil.

[6]For this is what the Lord said to me,
"Go, post a watchman;
he must report what he sees.
[7] When he sees a chariot, a pair of horsemen,
riders on donkeys, and riders on camels,
then he must pay attention
and be very alert."

[8]The watchman cries out,[1]

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"Lord, on the watchtower I stand all day, every day,
and at my post I stand all night long."
9 Here comes a chariot with a man and a pair of horsemen.
He calls out, "Babylon has fallen, fallen,
and all the carved figures of its gods
are broken to the ground."

10 My threshed and winnowed ones,
children of my threshing floor!
What I have heard from Yahweh of hosts,
the God of Israel, I have declared to you.

11 A declaration about Dumah.
One calls to me from Seir,
"Watchman, what is left of the night?
Watchman, what is left of the night?"
12 The watchman said,
"The morning comes and also the night.
If you want to ask, then ask;
and come back again."

13 A declaration about Arabia.
In the wilderness of Arabia you spend the night,
you caravans of Dedanites.
14 Bring water for the thirsty;
inhabitants of the land of Tema,
meet the fugitives with bread.

15 For they have fled from the sword,
from the drawn sword,
from the bent bow,
and from the weight of war.

16 For this is what the Lord said to me, "Within a year, as a laborer hired for a year would see it, all the glory of Kedar will end. 17 Only a few of the archers, the warriors of Kedar will remain," for Yahweh, the God of Israel, has spoken.

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[a] Instead of The watchman cries out which is attested by ancient Hebrew copies, but there are some ancient Hebrew copies that have A lion cries out. The second reading, lion, appears to be a misspelling of the Hebrew for watchman.

Isaiah 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 21:1-10, 13-17.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cush

Dumah and Seir are places in Edom. Part of this chapter is a prophecy against Cush. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The desert by the sea

This is a metaphor for an unknown nation. Scholars are divided over the proper identity of this nation, but it is probably Babylon.

Mystery

The fulfillment of this chapter is very mysterious. It is unknown who is truly being addressed and how this is to be fulfilled in history. The translator should not attempt to give the reader insight into this prophecy's fulfillment. (See:

fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 21:1 Notes

Isaiah 21:1

A declaration

"This is what Yahweh declares" or "This is Yahweh's message"

about the desert by the sea

This refers to the people who live in Babylon as being a desert, even though God has not made it into a desert yet. This event will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "about the people who live in a land that soon will be a desert"

Like stormwinds sweeping through the Negev

Isaiah compares the army that will attack the people to a storm with strong winds. They will be quick and powerful.

from the wilderness

Here "wilderness" refers to the wilderness of Judea.

from a terrible land

The army is from a people that cause great fear.

Isaiah 21:2

A severe vision has been given to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh showed me a troubling vision"

the treacherous man deals treacherously

"those who deceive will deceive"

the destroyer destroys

"those who destroy will destroy"

Go up and attack, Elam; besiege, Media

In the vision given to Isaiah, Yahweh speaks to the armies of Elam and Media as if they are there listening to him.

Go up and attack, Elam; besiege, Media

It is understood that they are to attack the Babylonians. Alternate translation: "Go up and attack the Babylonians, you soldiers of Elam; go and besiege the Babylonians, you soldiers of Media"

Elam ... Media

Here "Elam" and "Media" represent the soldiers from these places.

I will stop all her groaning

Here "her" represents all the people who are suffering because of the Babylonians. Yahweh will cause them to stop groaning when he sends the armies of Elam and Media to destroy the Babylonians.

Isaiah 21:3

my loins are filled with pain

The vision that Isaiah sees is so troubling it causes him physical pain. Here he describes the pain and cramping in the middle part of his body.

pains like the pains of a woman in labor have taken hold of me

Isaiah compares his pain to the pain of a woman giving birth. This emphasizes the great pain he is feeling.

I am bowed down by what I heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What I heard has caused me to bend over in pain"

I am disturbed by what I saw

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what I saw has greatly troubled me"

Isaiah 21:4

My heart pounds; I shake with fear

"My heart beats fast and I am shaking"

Isaiah 21:5

They prepare

Here "They" refers to the leaders of Babylon.

prepare the table

Here "table" represents the food that people will eat at the feast.

arise, princes

Here "princes" refers in general to men with authority and not necessarily to sons of kings.

anoint your shields with oil

Soldiers would put oil on their leather shields so they would stay soft and not crack during battle.

Isaiah 21:6

post a watchman

"tell a watchman to stand on the wall of Jerusalem"

Isaiah 21:7

a chariot, a pair of horsemen

"a soldier riding in a chariot, a pair of horses pulling it"

Isaiah 21:8

Lord, on the watchtower I stand

Here "Lord" refers to the person with authority that commanded the watchman to stand on the wall of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 21:9

Babylon has fallen, fallen

Babylon being completely defeated by their enemies is spoken of as if Babylon has fallen. Here "Babylon" is a metonym that represents the people of Babylon. Alternate translation: "The people of Babylon are completely defeated"

fallen, fallen

The word "fallen" is repeated to emphasize that the people of Babylon were completely defeated by their enemies.

Isaiah 21:10

My threshed and winnowed ones, children of my threshing floor

The people of Israel suffering because of the Babylonians is spoken of as if the people were grain that was threshed and winnowed.

My threshed

The word "my" refers to Isaiah.

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

Isaiah 21:11

A declaration

"This is what Yahweh declares" or "This is a message from Yahweh"

about Dumah

This is another name for Edom. Here "Dumah" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "about the people of Dumah" or "about the people of Edom"

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One calls to me
Here "me" refers to Isaiah.
Seir
This is the name of mountains west of Edom.
Watchman, what is left of the night? Watchman, what is left of the night?
This is repeated to emphasize that the person asking the question is worried and nervous.
Isaiah 21:12
If you want to ask, then ask; and come back again
"Ask me now what you want to know, but also come back later and ask again"
Isaiah 21:13
A declaration
"This is what Yahweh declares" or "This is the message of Yahweh"
about Arabia
Arabia refers to the population of Arabia. Alternate translation: "about the people of Arabia"
In the wilderness of Arabia
Arabia does not have a forest. Alternate translation: "Far off from the road in Arabia" or "Out in the bushes of Arabia"
caravans
a group of people traveling together
Dedanites
This is a people group that lived in Arabia.
Isaiah 21:14
land of Tema
This is the name of a city in Arabia.
fugitives
A fugitive is a person who runs away so that his enemy will not capture him. See how you translated this in Isaiah 15:5.
with bread
Here "bread" represents food in general.
Isaiah 21:15
from the sword, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow
Here "sword" and "bow" represents the soldiers who attack the inhabitants of Tema. Alternate translation: "from their enemies who attack them with swords and bows"
from the weight of war
The terror and suffering that is experienced during war is spoken of as if war were a heavy weight on people. Alternate translation: "from the horrors of war"
Isaiah 21:16
as a laborer hired for a year would see it
"as a hired laborer would count the days of a year." A hired worker is careful to count the days so that he works exactly the amount of time he is paid to work. This means Kedar will be defeated in exactly one year.
of Kedar
This is a region in Arabia. Kedar represents the population of Kedar. Alternate translation: "of the people of Kedar"

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22 [1]A declaration about the Valley of Vision:
What is the reason that you have all gone up
to the housetops?
[2] Is it so you may hear a city full of noises,
a town full of revelry?
Your dead were not killed with the sword,
and they did not die in battle.

[3] All your rulers fled away together,
but they were captured without using a bow;
all of them were captured together,
though they had fled far away.

[4] Therefore I said, "Do not look at me,
I will weep bitterly;
do not try to comfort me concerning the destruction
of the daughter of my people."

[5] For there is a day of tumult, treading down,
and confusion for the Lord Yahweh of hosts,
in the Valley of Vision,
a breaking down of the walls,
and people crying out to the mountains.

[6] Elam takes up the quiver,
with chariots of men and horsemen,
and Kir lays the shield bare.

[7] It will come about that your choicest valleys
will be full of chariots,
and the horsemen will take their positions at the gate.

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8 He took away the protection of Judah;
and you looked in that day
to the weapons in the Palace of the Forest.

9 You saw the breaches of the city of David,
that they were many,
and you collected the water
of the lower pool.

10 You counted the houses of Jerusalem,
and you tore down the houses to fortify the wall.

11 You made a reservoir between the two walls
for the water of the old pool.
But you did not consider the city's maker,
who had planned it long ago.

12 The Lord Yahweh of hosts called on that day
for weeping, for mourning,
for shaved heads, and the wearing of sackcloth.

13 But look, there is celebration and gladness,
killing cattle and slaughtering sheep,
eating meat and drinking wine:
"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we will die."

14 This was revealed in my ears by Yahweh of hosts:
"Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you,
even when you die,"
says the Lord Yahweh of hosts.

15 The Lord Yahweh of hosts, says this,
"Go to this administrator, to Shebna,
who is over the house, and say,
16 'What are you doing here and who gave you permission
to cut out a tomb for yourself,
hewing out a grave on the heights
and carving out a resting place in the rock?'"

17 See, Yahweh is about to throw you, a mighty man,
about to throw you down; he will grasp you tightly.

18 He will surely wind you round and round,
and toss you like a ball into a vast country.
There you will die, and there your glorious chariots will be;
you will be the shame of your master's house!

19 "I will force you out of your office and from your station.
You will be pulled down.

20 It will come about on that day that I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah. 21 I will clothe him with your tunic and put on him your sash, and I will transfer your authority into his hand. He will be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem

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and to the house of Judah.[22]I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder; he will open, and none will shut; he will shut, and none will open.
[23]I will fasten him, a peg in a secure place, and he will become a seat of glory for his father's house.[24]They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and descendants, every small container from the cups to all the jugs.

[25]On that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—the peg driven in a firm place will give way, break off, and fall, and the load that was on it will be cut off—for Yahweh has spoken.

Isaiah 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

On this day of judgment, Judah should be repenting of their sin. Instead, they are celebrating it. Although Judah avoids Yahweh's punishment through the Assyrians, their punishment will still come. (See: judge and repent and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Valley of Visions"

This is a metaphor used in this prophecy against the nation of Judah. (See: and prophet)

Links:

Isaiah 22:1 Notes

Isaiah 22:1

A declaration

"This is what Yahweh declares" or "This is Yahweh's message"

about the Valley of Vision

Here "Valley" refers to those who live in the valley, that is, Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "about those who live in the Valley of Vision" or "about those who live in Jerusalem"

What is the reason that you have all gone up to the housetops?

Isaiah uses a question to scold the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "You should not go and stand on the tops of your houses."

Isaiah 22:2

a town full of revelry

"a town full of people celebrating"

Your dead were not killed with the sword

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemy soldiers did not kill your people"

with the sword

Here "sword" represents the soldiers who fight in battle.

Isaiah 22:3

but they were captured without using a bow

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but the enemy captured your rulers who were not even carrying a bow"

all of them were captured together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy captured all of them together"

Isaiah 22:4

Therefore I said

Here "I" refers to Isaiah.

of the daughter of my people

Here "daughter" represents the people and may imply Isaiah's feeling of love for them. Alternate translation: "of my people whom I love" or "of my people"

Isaiah 22:5

For there is a day

"For there will be a time"

of tumult, treading down, and confusion for the Lord Yahweh of hosts

"when the Lord Yahweh of hosts will cause panic, treading down, and confusion"

treading down

Treading down represents conquering other nations. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 18:2]

in the Valley of Vision

This refers to Jerusalem. See how you translated this in Isaiah 22:1.

people crying out to the mountains

Possible meanings are 1) "people in the mountains will hear their cries" or 2) "the people's cries will echo off the mountains"

Isaiah 22:6

Elam takes up the quiver

The quiver is a bag to carry arrows and represents the archer's weapons. Alternate translation: "The soldiers of Elam take their bows and arrows"

Kir lays the shield bare

Here "Kir" represents the soldiers. Alternate translation: "the soldiers of Kir will take their shields out of their covers"

Kir

Kir is a city in Media.

Isaiah 22:7

your choicest valleys

Here "your" refers to the people of Jerusalem. Isaiah does include himself as one of the people of Jerusalem. Alternate

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translation: "our best valleys"
Isaiah 22:8
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when an army will attack the people of Jerusalem. Past tense verbs can be translated with future tense verbs.
He took away the protection of Judah
The abstract noun "protection" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will take away everything that has protected the people of Judah"
you looked in that day to the weapons
Here the phrase "to look to" means to trust in something. Alternate translation: "to defend yourselves you will get the weapons"
Palace of the Forest
This was a part of the temple in Jerusalem where they stored their weapons.
Isaiah 22:9
you collected the water of the lower pool
The people will store water so that they will have enough to drink while their enemies surround the city.
Isaiah 22:10
General Information:
Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when an army will attack the people of Jerusalem.
You counted the houses
Here "counted" means they inspected the houses to find material to help them rebuild the city wall.
Isaiah 22:11
You made a reservoir
"You made a storage place"
between the two walls
It is unclear what two walls Isaiah meant. The main point is that they built the reservoir within the city walls.
the city's maker
These words could refer to 1) the original human builder of the city or 2) Yahweh.
Isaiah 22:12
Yahweh of hosts
See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.
for shaved heads
This was a sign of mourning and repenting.
Isaiah 22:13
Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we will die
Here "eat and drink" represents having a party and eating a lot of food and drinking a lot of wine. It can be stated clearly that this is what the people were saying. Alternate translation: "You say, 'Let us feast and drink all we want, for we will die soon.'"
Isaiah 22:14
This was revealed in my ears by Yahweh of hosts
Here "ears" represents Isaiah as a whole. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts revealed this to me"
Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you, even when you die
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Surely I will not forgive you for these sinful things you have done, even when you die"
even when you die
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will never forgive them, even after they die or 2) Yahweh will not forgive them until they die.
Isaiah 22:15
Shebna
This is the name of the manager of the king's palace in Jerusalem.
who is over the house
Here "house" represents those in the king's palace. Alternate translation: "who is in charge of all those who work in the palace"
Isaiah 22:16
What are you doing here and who gave you permission ... in the rock?
Yahweh uses this question to scold Shebna. Alternate translation: "You have no right ... in the rock!"
cut out a tomb ... hewing out a grave ... carving out a resting place
These three phrases all refer to making a burial tomb.
on the heights
The most important people in Israel had tombs in the highest places.
Isaiah 22:17
General Information:
Isaiah continues to speak God's message to Shebna.
Isaiah 22:18
He will surely wind you round and round, and toss you like a ball into a vast country
The enemy soldiers coming and taking Shebna as a captive to a foreign land is spoken of as if Yahweh were throwing him like a ball into another land.
you will be the shame of your master's house
Here "house" represents the people who work in the king's palace. Alternate translation: "you will cause shame for all those in your master's palace"
Isaiah 22:19
I will force you out of your office and from your station. You will be pulled down
Yahweh causing Shebna to no longer work in the king's palace is spoken of as if Yahweh will throw him to the ground.
You will be pulled down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bring you down from your honored position"
Isaiah 22:20
General Information:
Isaiah continues to speak God's message to Shebna.
It will come about on that day
"It will happen at that time"
Eliakim ... Hilkiah
These are names of men.
Isaiah 22:21
I will clothe him with your tunic and put on him your sash
Yahweh causing Eliakim to take Shebna's place in the king's palace is spoken of as if Yahweh will dress Eliakim in Shebna's clothes that represent his authority in the king's palace.
your tunic ... your sash
Here the tunic and sash represent authority in the king's palace.
sash

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This is a piece of cloth that people wear around the waist or across the chest. See how you translated this in Isaiah 3:20.

into his hand

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "to him"

He will be a father

Eliakim caring for and protecting the people of Judah is spoken of as if he would be their father. Alternate translation: "He will be like a father"

to the house of Judah

Here "house" represents the people. Alternate translation: "to the people of Judah"

Isaiah 22:22

I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder ... none will open

Here "key" represents authority. This speaks of Eliakim having authority that no one can oppose as if he had the key to the palace and no one else could lock or unlock the door. Alternate translation: "I will put him in charge of those who work in the king's palace, and when he makes a decision no one will be able to oppose him"

Isaiah 22:23

General Information:

Yahweh continues to describe Eliakim, who will replace Shebna in the king's palace.

I will fasten him, a peg in a secure place

Yahweh causing Eliakim's authority to be strong and secure in the king's palace is spoken of as if Eliakim were a peg and Yahweh will set him firmly in the palace wall.

he will become a seat of glory for his father's house

Here "seat of glory" represents a place of honor. Alternate translation: "Eliakim will bring honor to his family"

his father's house

Here "house" represents family. Alternate translation: "his father's family" or "his family"

Isaiah 22:24

They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house

Yahweh causing Eliakim's whole family to be honored because of Eliakim is spoken of as if Eliakim were a peg in the wall and his family were something that hangs on the peg. Alternate translation: "They will give honor to his whole family because of him"

every small container from the cups to all the jugs

This continues to speak of Eliakim as a peg. His offspring will be like cups that hang on the peg. This means his descendants will be honored because of him.

the cups to all the jugs

A cup is a small container that holds water. A jug is a larger container that holds water.

Isaiah 22:25

General Information:

This continues the imagery from Isaiah 22:23-24.

the peg driven in a firm place ... will be cut off

Yahweh causing Shebna to lose his authority in the king's palace is spoken of as if Shebna were a peg in the wall that breaks off and falls to the ground. This emphasizes that Shebna thought his authority was secure but God will remove him.

the load that was on it will be cut off

Here "load" represents Shebna's power and authority. It is spoken of as if it were an object hanging on the peg that represents Shebna. Yahweh causing Shebna to lose his power and authority is spoken of as if someone were to cut off the object that was hanging on the peg.

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23 [1]A declaration about Tyre:
Wail, you ships of Tarshish;
Tyre has been devastated,
with neither home nor harbor;
from the land of Cyprus
it has been revealed to them.[1]

[2] Be silent, you inhabitants of the coast;
the merchant of Sidon,
who travels over the sea, has filled you.[2]

[3] Upon the great waters
was the grain of Shihor,
the harvest of the Nile was her produce;
and it became the commerce of the nations.

[4] Be ashamed, Sidon; for the sea has spoken,
the fortress of the sea. He says,
"I have not labored nor given birth,
nor have I raised young men nor brought up young women."

[5] When the report comes to Egypt,
they will be grieved concerning Tyre.

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6 Cross over to Tarshish;
wail, you inhabitants of the coast.

7 Has this happened to you, the joyful city,
whose origin is from ancient times,
whose feet carried her far away
to foreign places to settle?

8 Who has planned this against Tyre,
the giver of crowns,
whose merchants are princes,
whose traders are the honored ones of the earth?

9 Yahweh of hosts has planned it
to dishonor her pride and all her glory,
to shame all her honored ones of the earth.

10 Plow your land, as one plows the Nile,
daughter of Tarshish.
There is no longer a marketplace in Tyre.[3]

11 Yahweh has reached out with his hand over the sea,
and he has shaken the kingdoms;
he has given a command concerning Phoenicia,
to destroy the strongholds.

12 He said, "You will not rejoice again,
oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon;
arise, pass over to Cyprus;
but neither there you will have rest."

13 See the land of the Chaldeans.
This people has ceased to be;
the Assyrians have made it
a wilderness for wild animals.
They set up their siege towers;
they demolished its palaces;
they made it a heap of ruins.

14 Wail, you ships of Tarshish;
for your refuge has been destroyed.

15 In that day, Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, like the days of a king. After the end of seventy years there will happen in Tyre something like in the song of the prostitute.
16 Take a harp, go about the city,
you forgotten prostitute;
play it well, sing many songs,
so that you may be remembered.

17 It will come about that after seventy years, Yahweh will help Tyre, and she will start making her prostitute's wages again by doing the work of a prostitute, and she will offer her services to all the kingdoms of the earth.18 Her profits and prostitute's wages will be set apart to Yahweh. They will not be stored up or kept in the treasury, for her profits will be given to those who live in Yahweh's presence and will be used to supply them with abundant food and so they can have the best quality clothing.

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[1]Instead of Cyprus, some modern translations keep Kittim, the Hebrew name for this island.
[2]Some ancient and modern translations have Be silent, you inhabitants of the coast; the merchants of Sidon, who travel over the sea, have filled you or Be silent, you inhabitants of the coast and you merchants of Sidon, whom those who travel over the sea have filled.
[3]The Hebrew is difficult here. Instead of ULB, Plow your land, some scholars have translated the Hebrew to mean Cross over your land or Flood your land.

Isaiah 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Phoenicia

This chapter prophesies destruction against several cities in Phoenicia as well as in Tarshish. The exact location of Tarshish is unknown. Because of the locations mentioned in this chapter, it appears that the Assyrians will conquer many of the nations on the Mediterranean Sea. (See: prophet)

Links:

Isaiah 23:1 Notes

Isaiah 23:1

General Information:

Isaiah continues to tell what God has judged against the nations in 13:1-23:18.

A declaration about Tyre

"This is what Yahweh declares about Tyre"

Wail, you ships of Tarshish

Here "ships" represents the men on the ships. Isaiah speaks to the men on the ships of Tarshish as if they could hear him. Alternate translation: "Cry out in despair you men on the ships of Tarshish"

harbor

an area of the sea that is near land and safe for ships

from the land of Cyprus it has been revealed to them

This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men heard about Tyre when they were in the land of Cyprus"

Isaiah 23:2

Be silent, you inhabitants of the coast

Isaiah speaks to the people who live on the coast as if they could hear him.

Be silent

This is an idiom. Here silence is meant to signal shock and amazement. Alternate translation: "Be shocked"

of the coast

The "coast" is the land near or around the sea or ocean. Here it refers to the people who live in Phoenicia which borders the Mediterranean sea.

the merchant of Sidon, who travels over the sea, has filled you

Here "merchant" means "many merchants." Alternate translation: "the merchants of Sidon, who travel over the sea, have made you rich"

Isaiah 23:3

Upon the great waters was the grain of Shihor

Shihor was the name of a valley near the Nile River in Egypt known for its production of grain. Alternate translation: "The men traveled on the large sea to transport the grain from Shihor in Egypt"

the harvest of the Nile was her produce

The "harvest of the Nile" refers to the grain that was harvested near the Nile River and transported on the river and then to Phoenicia.

her produce

"its produce." It was common to refer to the river as "her."

it became the commerce of the nations

Commerce is the activity of buying and selling goods. Here "nations" represents the people. Alternate translation: "you were where people from other nations came to buy and sell goods"

Isaiah 23:4

for the sea has spoken, the fortress of the sea ... nor brought up young women

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh describes the city of Tyre

young men ... young women

Or "sons and daughters." Some modern translations read, "young men ... virgins," but the emphasis here is on the girls' youth, in parallel with "young men," not on their sexual purity.

Isaiah 23:6

Cross over to Tarshish

"Make your way to Tarshish." Tarshish was the farthest land the people of Tyre traveled to do business. It will be the only place of safety for those who escape from Tyre.

Isaiah 23:7

Has this happened to you, the joyful city, whose origin is from ancient times ... to settle?

Yahweh uses a question to mock Tyre. This rhetorical questions can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This has indeed happened to you who were full of joy in the ancient city of Tyre ... to settle."

the joyful city

Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the joyful people who live in the city of Tyre"

whose feet carried her far away to foreign places to settle

Here "feet" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "who went to distant places to live and make money"

her far away

Here "her" refers to the city of Tyre which represents the people of Tyre.

Isaiah 23:8

Who has planned this against Tyre ... of the earth?

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Isaiah uses a question to mock Tyre. The word "this" refers to God's plans to destroy Tyre which Isaiah described in 23:1-7. Also, "Tyre" refers to the people who live in Tyre. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It was Yahweh who has planned to destroy the people of Tyre ... of the earth."

the giver of crowns

Here "crown" refers to the power a person has as a ruler over people. Alternate translation: "who gives people power to rule over others"

whose merchants are princes

The merchants are compared to princes to emphasize how much power they had when they went to different lands. Alternate translation: "whose merchants are like princes"

whose traders are the honored ones of the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose traders the people of the earth give the highest honors"

Isaiah 23:9

to dishonor her pride and all her glory

"to dishonor them because they were proud of their own glory"

her pride ... her glory ... her honored ones

Here "her" refers to the city of Tyre which represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "their pride ... their glory ... their honored one"

Isaiah 23:10

Plow your land, as one plows the Nile, daughter of Tarshish. There is no longer a marketplace in Tyre

Possible meanings are 1) Isaiah is telling the people of Tarshish to start planting crops since they can no longer trade with Tyre or 2) Isaiah is telling the people of Tarshish they are free from Tyre's control. Alternate translation: "Pass through your land like a river, daughter of Tarshish. The people of Tyre no longer have any power"

daughter of Tarshish

The "daughter" of a city represents the people of the city. Alternate translation: "the people of Tarshish" or "the people who live in Tarshish"

Isaiah 23:11

Yahweh has reached out with his hand over the sea, and he has shaken the kingdoms

Yahweh using his power to control the sea and the people of mighty kingdoms is spoken of as if Yahweh reached out his hand and shook kingdoms.

has reached out with his hand over the sea

Here "hand" refers to God's power and control. Alternate translation: "has shown his power over the sea"

Isaiah 23:12

oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon

Here "virgin daughter" represents the people of Sidon. Alternate translation: "people of Sidon, because other people will oppress you"

Isaiah 23:13

See the land of the Chaldeans

"Chaldeans" here is another name for Babylonians. Alternate translation: "See what happened to the land of the Babylonians" or "See what has happened to Babylonia"

siege towers

Soldiers built towers or dirt ramps to attack over the walls of a city.

Isaiah 23:14

Wail, you ships of Tarshish

Here "ships" represents the men on the ships. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 23:1]

for your refuge has been destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for enemies have destroyed your refuge"

Isaiah 23:15

In that day

"At that time" or "Then"

Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years

Since people will no longer go to Tyre to buy or sell goods, it will be like they have forgotten about the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for seventy years it will be like the people have forgotten about Tyre"

for seventy years

"for 70 years"

like the days of a king

"like the years of a king" or "which is about as long as a king lives"

like in the song of the prostitute

This speaks about the people of Tyre as if they were a prostitute.

Isaiah 23:16

Take a harp, go about the city, you forgotten prostitute ... so that you may be remembered

This speaks about the people of Tyre as if they were a prostitute

so that you may be remembered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that people remember you" or "so that people return to you"

Isaiah 23:17

It will come about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event that will happen. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

seventy years

"70 years"

Yahweh will help Tyre

Here "Tyre" represents the people who live in Tyre. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will help the people of Tyre"

she will start making her prostitute's wages again by doing the work of a prostitute ... of the earth

Isaiah compares the people of Tyre with a prostitute. Just as the prostitute sells herself for money to any man, the people of Tyre will again buy and sell to all kingdoms. Alternate translation: "And like a prostitute they will buy and sell will all the kingdoms of the earth"

she will start making her prostitute's wages again

"once again she will begin making as much money as she made when she was a prostitute"

Isaiah 23:18

prostitute's wages

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 23:17.

They will not be stored up or kept

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"The merchants will not store away their money"
those who live in Yahweh's presence
"those who obey and serve Yahweh"
to supply them with abundant food
"so they will have enough food to eat"

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24 [1] Look, Yahweh is about to empty the earth,
to devastate it, mar its surface, and scatter its inhabitants.

[2] It will come about that, as with the people, so with the priest;
as with the servant, so with his master;
as with the servant girl, so with her mistress;
as with the buyer, so with the seller;
as with the creditor, so with the debtor;
as with the receiver of interest, so with the giver of interest.

[3] The earth will be completely devastated and completely plundered;
for Yahweh has spoken this word.

[4] The earth mourns and withers, the world shrivels up and withers,
the prominent people of the earth waste away.

[5] The earth is polluted by its inhabitants
because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes,
and broken the everlasting covenant.

[6] Therefore a curse devours the earth,
and its inhabitants are found guilty.
The inhabitants of the earth burn up, and few people are left.

[7] The new wine mourns, the vine wastes away,
all the merry-hearted groan.

[8] The happy sound of the tambourines stops,
and the revelry of those who rejoice;
the joy of the harp ceases.

[9] They no longer drink wine and sing,
and the strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

[10] The city of chaos has been broken down;
every house is closed up and empty.

[11] There is a crying in the streets because of the wine;
all joy is darkened, the gladness of the land has disappeared.

[12] In the city is left a desolation,
and the gate is broken into a ruin.

[13] For this is how it will be on the whole earth
among the nations,
as when an olive tree is beaten,
as the gleanings when the grape harvest is done.

[14] They will lift up their voices
and shout the majesty of Yahweh,
and will joyfully shout from the sea.

[15] Therefore in the east glorify Yahweh,

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and in the isles of the sea give glory
to the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel.

16 From the farthest part of the earth we have heard songs,
"Glory to the righteous one!"
But I said, "I have wasted away,
I have wasted away, woe is me!
The treacherous have dealt treacherously;
yes, the treacherous have dealt very treacherously."

17 Terror, the pit, and the snare
are upon you, inhabitants of the earth.

18 He who flees from the sound of terror
will fall into the pit,
and he who comes up out of the middle of the pit
will be caught in the snare.
The windows of the heavens will be opened,
and the foundations of the earth will shake.

19 The earth will be completely broken, the earth ripped apart;
the earth will be violently shaken.

20 The earth will stagger like a drunkard,
and it will sway back and forth like a hut.
Its sin will be heavy on it
and it will fall and never rise again.

21 On that day Yahweh will punish
the host of the heaven in the heavens,
and the kings of the earth on the earth.

22 They will be gathered together,
prisoners in a pit,
and will be shut up in a prison;
and after many days they will be punished.

23 Then the moon will be ashamed,
and the sun disgraced,
for Yahweh of hosts will reign
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before his elders in glory.

Isaiah 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

While it appears that this chapter is a continuation of the prophecy from the previous chapter, it actually looks at the whole of the Assyrian conquest as Yahweh's punishment on the world. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant

The mention of an "everlasting covenant" in this chapter is probably not to a specific covenant with Abraham or Moses. Instead, it is an expectation that mankind would obey Yahweh. Some consider this to be a covenant Yahweh made with Adam. (See: eternity and covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Reign of Yahweh

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This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. This chapter pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator should not add explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and prophet and christ)

Links:

Isaiah 24:1 Notes

Isaiah 24:1

to empty the earth

"to make the earth desolate" or "to destroy everything on the earth"

Isaiah 24:2

It will come about that

This phrase marks an important event. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

as with ... so with

What Yahweh will do is not stated here, but it is understood. This shows that God will treat all people the same way. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh scatters ... so he will scatter"

the priest ... the giver of interest

In 24:2 Isaiah lists several classes of people. They can be expressed as plural nouns as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "the priests ... those who give interest"

the receiver of interest

"the one who owes money." The word "interest" means the extra money someone has to pay so that he may borrow money.

the giver of interest

"the one who is owed money"

Isaiah 24:3

The earth will be completely devastated and completely plundered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will completely devastate the earth and he will remove from it everything of value"

Yahweh has spoken this word

"Yahweh has said he would"

The earth

everything that is on the earth

Isaiah 24:4

The earth ... the world

Both of these are metonyms for everything that is on the earth.

Isaiah 24:5

The earth is polluted by its inhabitants

The people sinning and making the earth unacceptable to God is spoken of as if the people made the earth physically unclean. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people have polluted the earth"

they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, and broken the everlasting covenant

"they have not obeyed God's laws and statutes, and they have broken God's eternal covenant"

Isaiah 24:6

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when God will judge the earth. Prophets sometimes describe a future event as something in the past or in the present. This emphasizes the event certainly will happen.

a curse devours the earth

Yahweh cursing the earth and destroying it is spoken of as if a curse were either a wild animal that completely eats the earth or a fire that completely burns up the earth.

its inhabitants are found guilty

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will declare that the people are guilty"

Isaiah 24:8

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when God will judge the earth. Prophets sometimes describe a future event as something in the past or in the present. This emphasizes the event certainly will happen.

tambourines ... harp

These are musical instruments. See how you translated these in Isaiah 5:12.

Isaiah 24:10

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when God will judge the earth. Prophets sometimes describe a future event as something in the past or in the present. This emphasizes the event certainly will happen.

The city of chaos has been broken down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will break down the city of chaos"

The city of chaos

Possible meanings are 1) the city was in chaos before the Lord breaks it down; the people did not obey God, the government was corrupt, and the city was full of drinking and parties, or 2)the city will be in chaos after God breaks it down. The walls and buildings that were once built strong and tall are now in ruins on the ground. With either meaning it does not mean one city. It refers to cities in general.

every house is closed up and empty

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people will close up their houses and leave them empty"

Isaiah 24:11

because of the wine

"because there is no wine"

all joy is darkened, the gladness of the land has disappeared

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "all joy will be gone from the earth"

gladness of the land

Here "land" represents the people of the earth.

Isaiah 24:12

General Information:

Isaiah continues to describe a time in the future when God will judge the earth. Prophets sometimes describe a future event as something in the past or in the present. This emphasizes the event certainly will happen.

In the city is left a desolation

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The abstract noun "desolation" can be stated as "desolate" or "empty." Alternate translation: "The city is desolate" or "The city is left empty"

In the city

This is not a specific city but cities in general.

Isaiah 24:13

as when an olive tree is beaten, as the gleanings when the grape harvest is done

This compares the nations after Yahweh devastates the land to trees and vines after their fruit has been picked. This means there will be very few people left in the land.

Isaiah 24:14

They will lift up their voices and shout the majesty of Yahweh

The phrase "lift up their voices" is an idiom that means to speak loudly. Alternate translation: "They will sing and shout about the majesty of Yahweh"

They will

Here "They" refers to those who are still alive after Yahweh devastates the earth.

and will joyfully shout from the sea

Here "the sea" refers to the Mediterranean Sea which is west of Israel. Alternate translation: "and those in the west towards the sea will shout with joy"

Isaiah 24:15

Therefore in the east glorify Yahweh

The phrase "in the east" represents the people living east of Israel. Isaiah is commanding these people as if they were there with him. But, he is talking to the people in the future after God devastates the earth. Alternate translation: "Therefore everyone from distant lands in the east will glorify Yahweh"

in the isles of the sea give glory

Isaiah is commanding the people who live on the islands in the Mediterranean sea as if they were there with him. But, he is talking to the people in the future after God devastates the earth. Alternate translation: "everyone in the islands will give glory"

to the name of Yahweh

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to Yahweh"

Isaiah 24:16

we have heard

Here "we" refers to Isaiah and the people of Israel. Isaiah is describing something in the future as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "we will hear"

I have wasted away, I have wasted away

Isaiah repeats this phrase to emphasize his anguish. He was very concerned because he saw people who deceived others and did not do what they promised to do. Alternate translation: "I have become very weak"

The treacherous have dealt treacherously; yes, the treacherous have dealt very treacherously

Isaiah repeats this phrase to emphasize his anguish. Alternate translation: "Indeed, those who deceive are now deceiving others" or "Indeed, the deceivers have acted deceitfully"

Isaiah 24:17

Terror, the pit, and the snare are upon you, inhabitants of the earth

"You people of the earth will experience terror, the pit, and the snare"

the pit, and the snare

Here "pit" and "snare" represent all the different bad things that will happen to people. People will run away to escape one bad thing but they will just experience another bad thing.

Isaiah 24:18

caught in the snare

Here the "snare" represents all the different bad things that will happen to people. People will run away to escape one bad thing but they will just experience another bad thing.

the sound of terror

"the terrifying sound"

will be caught in the snare

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the snare will catch him"

The windows of the heavens will be opened

This speaks of large amounts of rain falling from the sky as if Yahweh opened a window in the sky and let the water pour through. Alternate translation: "The sky will split open and torrents of rain will fall"

the foundations of the earth will shake

The word "foundation" normally refers to a stone structure that gives support to a building from underneath. Here it describes a similar structure that was thought to support and hold the earth in place. Isaiah says even the structure that holds the earth will shake. Alternate translation: "the earth will shake terribly" or "there will be a terrible earthquake"

Isaiah 24:19

The earth will be completely broken, the earth ripped apart; the earth will be violently shaken

These passive clauses can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The earth will break and split apart; the earth will shake violently"

Isaiah 24:20

The earth will stagger like a drunkard, and it will sway back and forth like a hut

These similes emphasize how the earth will shake back and forth, which is a metaphor for how sin will cause the people of the earth to suffer.

Its sin will be heavy on it and it will fall and never rise again

This speaks of the earth as if it were a person and transgressions were a heavy object. The person tries to carry the heavy weight but the weight causes the person to fall and not be able to stand back up. Here the earth represents the people of the earth who cause Yahweh to destroy the earth because of their sins. Alternate translation: "The sins of the people are many and so Yahweh will destroy the earth, and the earth will be like a person who falls and cannot get back up"

Isaiah 24:21

On that day

"At that time"

the host of the heaven in the heavens

"the army of heaven in the heavens." Here "the host of the heaven" refers to living beings that God created in the heavens. In this passage it refers to the living beings who are evil. Possible meanings are that they are called the host

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1) because they fight as an army. Alternate translation: "the heavenly army in heaven" or 2) because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "the multitude of powerful beings in the heavens" or "the evil spiritual beings in the heavens"

Isaiah 24:22

They will be gathered together, prisoners in a pit, and will be shut up in a prison

Here "pit" refers to a dark room or hole in a prison. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will gather them together as his prisoners and lock them in the dungeon of a prison"

they will be punished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will punish them"

Isaiah 24:23

Then the moon will be ashamed, and the sun disgraced

The sun and the moon are described as a person who is ashamed of being in front of someone with greater power. In the presence of Yahweh, the light of the moon and sun will seem less bright.

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25 [1] Yahweh, you are my God;
I will exalt you, I will praise your name;
for you have done wonderful things,
things planned long ago, in perfect faithfulness.

[2] For you have made a city a heap,
a fortified city a ruin;
a palace of foreigners is no longer a city;
it will never be rebuilt.

[3] Therefore a strong people will glorify you;
a city of ruthless nations will fear you.

[4] For you have been a place of safety
for the one who is poor,
a shelter for the one who is needy in his distress—
a shelter from the storm and a shade from the heat.
When the breath of the ruthless
was like a storm against a wall,

[5] and like heat in a dry land,
you subdued the noise of foreigners,
as the heat is subdued by the shade of a cloud,
so the song of the ruthless ones is answered.

[6] On this mountain Yahweh of hosts
will make for all peoples a feast of tender meats,
a feast of choice wines,
of tender meats filled with marrow,
of refined choice wines.

[7] He will destroy on this mountain
the covering over all peoples,
the web woven over all the nations.

[8] He will swallow up death forever,
and the Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears
from off all faces;
the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for Yahweh has spoken it.

[9] It will be said on that day,
"Look, this is our God;
we have waited for him, and he will save us.

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This is Yahweh; we have waited for him,
we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

10 For on this mountain the hand of Yahweh will rest;
and Moab will be trampled down in his place,
even as straw is trampled down in a pit filled with manure.

11 They will spread their hands in the midst of it,
as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim.
But Yahweh will bring down their pride
in spite of the skill of their hands.

12 The stronghold of your fortress walls he will bring down,
he will abase,
he will cause to fall to the ground, to the dust.

Isaiah 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter shifts from being a prophecy against the nations to the personal praises of Isaiah. He praises Yahweh for the deliverance of his people. (See: prophet and deliverer and peopleofgod)

Special concepts in this chapter

Reign of the Messiah

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. This chapter pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator should not add explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and prophet and christ)

Links:

Isaiah 25:1 Notes

Isaiah 25:1

praise your name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "praise you"

things planned long ago

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "things you planned long ago"

in perfect faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." Alternate translation: "because you are perfectly faithful"

Isaiah 25:2

a city

This is not referring to a certain city. It means cities in general.

a palace of foreigners is no longer a city

"a city where foreigners had a palace is no more"

Isaiah 25:3

a city of ruthless nations

Here "city" and "nations" represent the people who live there.

Isaiah 25:4

you have been a place of safety ... a shelter ... a shelter from the storm ...

a shade from the heat

Yahweh protecting his people is spoken of as if he were a place that the people could go to be safe and comforted.

When the breath of the ruthless was like a storm against a wall

Ruthless people oppressing the people of God is spoken of as if they were a storm beating against a wall.

When the breath

"When the wind" or "When the blast"

the ruthless

This is a nominal adjective. Alternate translation: "ruthless people" or "those who are ruthless"

Isaiah 25:5

like heat in a dry land

This compares the enemies of God's people to the heat that dries up the land. This emphasizes how much the enemies cause the people of God to suffer.

as the heat is subdued ... ruthless ones is answered

Yahweh stopping ruthless people from singing and boasting is compared to a cloud providing shade on a hot day. This emphasizes that Yahweh comforts his people by stopping those who cause them to suffer.

as the heat is subdued by the shade of a cloud

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just like when a cloud passes overhead and subdues the heat"

the song of the ruthless ones is answered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will stop the ruthless people from singing"

Isaiah 25:6

On this mountain

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This refers to Jerusalem or Mount Zion.

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

refined choice wines

choice wine that has been refined, the best wine

Isaiah 25:7

the covering over all peoples, the web woven over all the nations

Death, suffering, and sadness are spoken of as if they were a dark cloud or web that covers everyone on the earth.

Isaiah 25:8

He will swallow up death forever

Yahweh causing people to live forever is spoken of as if he would swallow death.

the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth

Yahweh causing the people to never be ashamed again is spoken of as if disgrace were an object that Yahweh would take away.

Isaiah 25:9

It will be said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will say"

on that day

"at that time"

Isaiah 25:10

For on this mountain the hand of Yahweh will rest

The "hand" represents God's power. For Yahweh's hand to rest on "this mountain" means he will protect his people Alternate translation: "The power of Yahweh will be on this mountain" or "For on Mount Zion Yahweh will protect his people"

Moab will be trampled down in his place, even as straw is trampled down in a pit filled with manure

Yahweh destroying the people of Moab is spoken of as if he would step on them and crush them. This is compared to how people trampled on straw to mix it with manure.

Moab will be trampled down in his place

Here Moab represents the people of Moab. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will trample the people in the land of Moab"

Isaiah 25:11

They will spread their hands ... his hands to swim

This simile emphasizes how badly Yahweh will humiliate the people of Moab. They will spread their hands in dung like a swimmer spreads his hands in water.

They will spread their hands in the midst of it

"The people of Moab will push their hands through the dung"

as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim

"as if they were swimming"

will bring down their pride

Yahweh humiliating a proud person is spoken of as if pride were something high and Yahweh would cause it to be low.

in spite of the skill of their hands

Here "hands" represents the power to do or make something. Alternate translation: "in spite of the great things they have built" or "in spite of the great things they have done"

Isaiah 25:12

The stronghold of your fortress walls he will bring down, he will abase, he will cause to fall

This speaks of Yahweh causing armies to bring down the walls as if he himself were going to bring them down. To "abase" the "wall" is a metonym for humiliating the Moabites by destroying the walls they were proud of. Alternate translation: "He will send an army to humiliate you by bringing down the stronghold of your fortress walls and making them fall"

your fortress

Here "your" refers to the people of Moab. It can be stated in third person to be consistent with the previous verse. Alternate translation: "their fortress"

bring down ... abase

See how you translated similar words in Isaiah 2:11.

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26 [1]In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:
We have a strong city;
God has made salvation its walls and ramparts.
[2] Open the gates,
that the righteous nation that keeps faith may enter in.

[3] The mind that is stayed on you,
you will keep him in perfect peace, for he trusts in you.

[4] Trust in Yahweh forever;
for in Yah, Yahweh is an everlasting rock.[1]

[5] For he will bring down those
who live in the high place, the lofty city.
He will abase it.
He will abase it to the ground;
he will cause it to fall to the dust.

[6] It will be trampled down
by the feet of the poor and the treading of the needy.

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7 The path of the righteous is level,
Righteous One; the path of the righteous you make straight.

8 Yes, in the path of your judgments,
Yahweh, we wait for you;
your name and your reputation are our desire.

9 I have longed for you in the night;
yes, my spirit within me seeks you earnestly.
For when your judgments come on the earth,
the inhabitants of the world learn about righteousness.

10 Let favor be shown to the wicked one,
but he will not learn righteousness.
In the land of uprightness he acts wickedly
and does not see the majesty of Yahweh.

11 Yahweh, your hand is lifted up,
but they do not notice.
But they will see your zeal for the people and be put to shame,
because fire of your adversaries will devour them.

12 Yahweh, you will ordain peace for us;
for indeed, you have also performed all our works for us.

13 Yahweh our God, other masters besides you have ruled over us;
but we praise your name alone.

14 They are dead, they will not live;
they are deceased, they will not arise.
Indeed, you came in judgment and destroyed them,
and made every memory of them to perish.

15 You have increased the nation, Yahweh,
you have increased the nation; you are honored;
you have extended all the borders of the land.

16 Yahweh, in trouble have they looked to you;
they whispered prayers when your discipline was on them.[2]

17 As a pregnant woman nears the time for her to give birth,
when she is in pain and cries out in her labor pains,
so we have been before you, Lord.

18 We have been pregnant, we have been in labor,
but it is as if we have only given birth to wind.
We have not brought salvation to the earth,
and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen.

19 Your dead will live; their dead bodies will arise.
Awake and sing for joy, you who live in the dust;
for your dew is the dew of light,
and the earth will bring forth its dead.

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20 Go, my people, enter into your rooms
and shut your doors behind you;
hide for a short time,
until the indignation has passed by.

21 For, look, Yahweh is about to come out of his place
to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity;
the earth will uncover her bloodshed,
and will no longer conceal those she killed.

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[1]Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
[2]This is a difficult verse and is translated in several ways by different modern English translations.

Isaiah 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"That day"

This is a common phrase in this section of Isaiah. This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. This chapter pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator should not add explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 26:1 Notes

Isaiah 26:1

In that day

"At that time"

this song will be sung in the land of Judah

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people in the land of Judah will sing this song"

We have a strong city

This refers to the city of Jerusalem.

God has made salvation its walls and ramparts

God's power to protect and save his people is spoken of as if his salvation were walls around a city.

ramparts

Ramparts are walls built around a city to keep enemy armies from getting into the city.

Isaiah 26:2

the righteous nation that keeps faith

Here "nation" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the righteous and faithful people"

Isaiah 26:3

The mind that is stayed on you

Here "mind" represents a person's thoughts. Also "you" refers to Yahweh. The phrase "stayed on you" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The person who continually thinks about you"

Isaiah 26:4

Yahweh is an everlasting rock

Yahweh having the power to protect his people is spoken of as if he were a tall rock where people could go to escape from their enemies.

Isaiah 26:5

he will bring down those who live in the high place

Yahweh humiliating those who are proud is spoken of as if proud people were up high and he would cause them to come down low.

in the high place, the lofty city. He will abase it.

Another possible translation is, "in the high place. The lofty city he will abase."

the lofty city

This means fortified cities in general not a specific city.

He will abase ... he will cause it to fall

Yahweh causing an army to destroy fortified cities is spoken of as if Yahweh would do it himself.

abase

Isaiah 26:6

It will be trampled down by the feet of the poor and the treading of the needy

Both statements mean the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The poor and oppressed people will trample on the ruins of the city"

Isaiah 26:7

The path of the righteous is level ... the path of the righteous you make straight

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. People obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if they were walking on his

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path. Yahweh ensuring the people that what they do is right is spoken of as if he were making the path level and straight for them.

Isaiah 26:8

in the path of your judgments, Yahweh, we wait for you

Doing what Yahweh judged to be right is spoken of walking on his path. Alternate translation: "we wait for you, Yahweh, as we continue to do what you judged to be right"

of your judgments

"of your laws" or "of your teachings"

we wait

Here "we" refers to Isaiah and all righteous people who are speaking to Yahweh.

your name and your reputation are our desire

Here "name" and "reputation" represent Yahweh's character which represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "our only desire is to honor you"

Isaiah 26:9

my spirit within me seeks you earnestly

Wanting to know Yahweh and his laws better is spoken of as if the person were seeking to find Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I earnestly want to know you better"

my spirit within me seeks you earnestly

Here "spirit" represents the speaker as a whole.

Isaiah 26:10

Let favor be shown to the wicked one, but he will not learn righteousness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Even if Yahweh is kind to wicked people, they still do not learn to do what is right"

the wicked one

This means wicked people in general.

In the land of uprightness

Here "land" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "In the land where the people do what is right"

does not see the majesty of Yahweh

Here "see" represents realizing something. Alternate translation: "does not realize that Yahweh is great"

Isaiah 26:11

your hand is lifted up

Yahweh preparing to punish wicked people is spoken of as if his hand were raised and about to hit the wicked people.

but they do not notice

"but the wicked people do not notice"

they will see your zeal for the people

Here "see" represents realizing something. Alternate translation: "they will realize that you are eager to bless your people"

be put to shame

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will be ashamed"

fire of your adversaries will devour them

Yahweh punishing and completely destroying his adversaries is spoken of as if he would send a fire that will completely burn them up.

fire of your adversaries

Here "of" does not mean the fire belongs to the adversaries but that the fire is intended to be used against the adversaries. Alternate translation: "your fire will completely burn them up"

Isaiah 26:12

you will ordain peace for us

"you will enable us to live in peace" or "you will bring about peace for us"

for us

Here "us" refers to Isaiah and includes all the righteous people.

Isaiah 26:13

but we praise your name alone

Here "name" represents the person of God. Alternate translation: "but we praise you alone"

Isaiah 26:14

they will not arise

"they will not come back to life"

made every memory of them to perish

Yahweh causing people to no longer remember those he destroyed is spoken of as if Yahweh made their memory perish or die.

Isaiah 26:15

You have increased the nation, Yahweh, you have increased the nation

This clause is repeated for emphasis. Here "nation" represents the people. Alternate translation: "You have greatly increased the number of people in our nation"

Isaiah 26:16

they looked to you

Here "they" refers to the people of Israel. This would include Isaiah. Alternate translation: "we looked to you"

looked to you

This idiom means they asked Yahweh for help.

when your discipline was on them

The abstract noun "discipline" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when you disciplined them"

Isaiah 26:17

As a pregnant woman ... cries out in her labor pains

This compares the people to a woman giving birth. This emphasizes their suffering and crying when Yahweh disciplined them.

Isaiah 26:18

General Information:

Isaiah continues to compare the suffering of the people of Judah to a woman giving birth.

but it is as if we have only given birth to wind

"but it is as if we have only given birth to air" or "it is like we gave birth to nothing." This is a simile that emphasizes that the people's suffering resulted in nothing. Alternate translation: "but nothing good resulted from it"

We have not brought salvation to the earth, and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen

Here "earth" represents the people who live on the earth. The meaning is unclear, but it seems to mean that the people of Israel have not been able to save themselves or other people by defeating their enemy in battle.

We have not brought salvation to the earth

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "salvation" is expressed as the verb "save." Alternate translation: "We have not saved the inhabitants of the earth"

and the inhabitants of the world have not fallen

"nor have we caused the wicked people of the world to fall

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in battle"

Isaiah 26:19

Your dead will live

This can be reworded so that the nominal adjective "dead" is expressed as the verb "have died." Alternate translation: "Your people who have died will live again"

Your dead

Possible meanings are 1) "Your" refers to Yahweh or 2) "Your" refers to the people of Israel. If you choose option two you could translate it as "Our dead."

Awake

This speaks of dead people coming back to life as if they were waking up from sleep.

you who live in the dust

This is a polite way of referring to those who have died. Alternate translation: "those who are dead and buried"

for your dew is the dew of light

Yahweh acting kindly towards his people and bringing them back to life is spoken of as if it were the dew that causes the plants to live.

for your dew

Possible meanings are 1) "your" refers to Yahweh and this is the dew that Yahweh gives or 2) "your" refers to the people of Israel and this is the dew they receive from Yahweh.

dew of light

Possible meanings are 1) "light" refers to Yahweh's power to make dead people alive again. Alternate translation: "dew from Yahweh" or 2) "light" refers to the morning time when dew is on the plants. Alternate translation: "dew in the morning"

the earth will bring forth its dead

"the earth will give birth to those who died." Yahweh causing dead people to come back to life is spoken of as if the earth would give birth to those who have died. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh will cause those who have died to rise from the earth"

Isaiah 26:20

my people

Here "my" refers to Isaiah. Also "people" refers to the people of Israel.

until the indignation has passed by

You may want to translate the abstract noun "indignation" as the adjective "indignant" or "angry." Alternate translation: "until Yahweh is no longer angry with us"

Isaiah 26:21

the earth will uncover her bloodshed, and will no longer conceal those she killed

Yahweh revealing all murders that have happened on the earth so that he can punish the murderers is spoken of as if the earth itself will reveal everyone who has been murdered.

---

27 [1]On that day
Yahweh with his hard, great and fierce sword
will punish Leviathan the slithering serpent,
Leviathan the squirming serpent,
and he will kill the monster that is in the sea.

[2]In that day:
A vineyard of wine, sing of it.
[3] "I, Yahweh, am its protector;
I water it every moment.
I guard it night and day
so no one will hurt it.

[4] I am not angry,
Oh, that there were briers and thorns!
In battle I would march against them;
I would burn them all together;

[5] unless they take hold of my refuge
and make peace with me; let them make peace with me.

[6] In the coming day, Jacob will take root;
Israel will blossom and bud;
and they will fill the surface of the world with fruit."

[7] Has Yahweh attacked Jacob and Israel
as he attacked those nations who attacked them?
Have Jacob and Israel been killed
as their killers were killed?

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8 In exact measure you have contended,
sending Jacob and Israel away;
he drove them away with his severe breath
in the day of the east wind.[1]

9 So in this way, the iniquity of Jacob will be atoned for,
for this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin:
when he will make all the altar stones
as chalk and crushed to pieces,
and no Asherah poles or incense altars
will remain standing.

10 For the fortified city is desolate,
the habitation is deserted and abandoned like the wilderness.
There a calf feeds, and there he lies down
and consumes its branches.

11 When the boughs are withered, they will be broken off.
Women will come and make fires with them,
for this is not a people of understanding.
Therefore their Maker will not have compassion on them,
and he who made them will not be merciful to them.

12 It will come about on that day that Yahweh will thresh from the Euphrates River to the Brook of Egypt and you, the people of Israel, will be gathered together one by one. 13 On that day a great ram's horn will be blown; and the perishing ones in the land of Assyria will come, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt. They will worship Yahweh on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

[1] Instead of In exact measure, many modern translations have an idea similar to By driving them away.

Isaiah 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Leviathan

This was an ancient type of dragon or serpent. It is possible that this is a reference to Satan, who is also described as a serpent and a dragon.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"That day"

This is a common phrase in this section of Isaiah. This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. This chapter pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator should not add explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 27:1 Notes

Isaiah 27:1

On that day

"At that time"

Yahweh with his hard, great and fierce sword will punish

Yahweh having the power to destroy his enemies is spoken of as if he had strong, large sword.

the monster that is in the sea

This refers to Leviathan.

Isaiah 27:2

A vineyard of wine, sing of it

"Sing about the vineyard of wine." This speaks about the people of Israel as if they were a vineyard that produced fruit. Alternate translation: "Sing about the people of Israel as if they were a vineyard that produced grapes for wine"

Isaiah 27:3

I, Yahweh, am its protector

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"I, Yahweh, protect the vineyard"

night and day

The words "night" and "day" are combined here to mean "all the time." Alternate translation: "all the time" or "continually"

Isaiah 27:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues to speak about the people of Israel as if they were a vineyard (Isaiah 27:2-3).

I am not angry, Oh, that there were briers and thorns! In battle I would march against them

"I am not angry. If there were briers and thorns I would march against them in battle"

I am not angry

It is understood that Yahweh is not angry with his people any longer. Alternate translation: "I am not angry with my people any longer"

that there were briers and thorns

The enemies of the people of Israel are spoken of as if they were briers and thorns growing in the vineyard.

briers and thorns

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 5:6.

In battle I would march against them

Yahweh fighting his enemies is spoken of as if he were a warrior in an army.

I would march against them; I would burn them all together

Here Isaiah combines different images to speak of Yahweh's enemies. He speaks of them as if they are briers and thorns but also as soldiers in an army.

Isaiah 27:5

unless they take hold of my refuge

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "refuge" is expressed as the verb "protect." Alternate translation: "unless they ask me to protect them"

make peace with me; let them make peace with me

"they ask to live peacefully with me; I want them to live peacefully with me"

Isaiah 27:6

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking. He continues to describe the people of Israel as a vineyard (Isaiah 27:2).

In the coming day

This speaks about a day as if it travels and arrives somewhere. Alternate translation: "In the future"

Jacob will take root; Israel will blossom and bud

Yahweh blessing the people of Israel and causing them to prosper is spoken of as if they were a vine that grows roots and blossoms. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Israel will prosper like a vine that has taken root and blossomed"

Jacob ... Israel

Here "Jacob" and "Israel" are metonyms that represent the descendants of Jacob.

they will fill the surface of the world with fruit

Yahweh causing the people of Israel to prosper greatly so that they can help other people is spoken of as if they were a vine that grows so much fruit that it would cover the earth.

Isaiah 27:7

Has Yahweh attacked Jacob and Israel as he attacked those nations who attacked them?

The question is used to contrast the severity of God's punishment. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has certainly punished the enemy nations more severely than he punished the people of Israel."

Jacob ... Israel

These represent the descendants of Jacob.

Have Jacob and Israel been killed as their killers were killed?

This question too is used to contrast the severity of God's punishment. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has not killed the people of Israel like they killed their enemies from other nations."

Isaiah 27:8

In exact measure you have contended

Here "you" refers to God. Yahweh punishing his people as much as they needed is spoken of as if God's punishment were something that could be measured. Alternate translation: "But you did punish them as much as was needed"

sending Jacob and Israel away

This represents the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "sending the Israelites away"

he drove them away with his severe breath in the day of the east wind

Yahweh's power to send his people away to a foreign country is spoken of as if Yahweh used his breath to blow them to a foreign country. Alternate translation: "the power of Yahweh drove them out like a severe wind from the east"

Isaiah 27:9

So in this way

Possible meanings are 1) "this" refers to Yahweh sending the people into exile as Isaiah mentioned in the previous verse or 2) "this" refers to the actions that Isaiah will mention in the next part of verse 9.

the iniquity of Jacob will be atoned for

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will purge the sin from the Israelites" or "Yahweh will forgive the sins of the Israelites"

iniquity of Jacob ... removal of his sin

Here "Jacob" represents the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "iniquity of the Israelites ... removal of their sins"

for this will be

Here "this" refers to the actions that Isaiah will describe in the next part of verse 9.

the full fruit

This speaks of the results of an action as if it were the fruit that grows as on a tree or vine. Alternate translation: "the result"

he will make all the altar stones as chalk and crushed to pieces, and no Asherah poles or incense altars will remain standing

Here "he" refers to Jacob who represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "They will completely destroy all the altars on which they sacrifice to false gods, and they will remove all the Asherah idols and the altars on which they burn incense to false gods"

Isaiah 27:10

For the fortified city is ... consumes its branches

Here Isaiah describes an event that will happen in the

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future as if it already happened. This emphasizes that it certainly will happen.

For the fortified city is desolate, the habitation is deserted and abandoned like the wilderness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The cities that were strong and had many people living in them will become empty like a desert"

the fortified city ... the habitation

This does not refer to a specific city or habitation but to cities and habitations in general.

a calf feeds, and there he lies down and consumes

Here "calf" represents calves or cattle in general. Alternate translation: "calves feed, and there they lie down and consume"

Isaiah 27:11

When the boughs ... not a people of understanding

The people becoming so weak because they disobey Yahweh so that enemies can easily destroy them is spoken of as if they are dry branches that women break off of a tree.

When the boughs are withered, they will be broken off. Women will come and make fires with them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the branches wither, women will come and break them off and make fires with them"

this is not a people of understanding

This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "this is not a people who understands Yahweh or his law"

a people

Possible meanings are 1) "people" refers to the people of Israel or 2) "people" refers the people of foreign nations who oppress the people of Israel.

Therefore their Maker will not have compassion on them, and he who made them will not be merciful to them

Both clauses mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "Because they do not understand, Yahweh, the one who made them, will not be merciful to them"

Isaiah 27:12

It will come about

This phrase marks an important event that will happen.

on that day

"at that time"

Yahweh will thresh

Yahweh gathering his people to bring them back from the foreign nations to the land of Israel is spoken of as if he were threshing wheat to separate the grain from the chaff.

from the Euphrates River to the Brook of Egypt

Isaiah mentions the Euphrates River and the Wadi of Egypt to mean that Yahweh will bring back the people of Israel who were exiled in lands near those waters, that is, Assyria and Egypt. The Euphrates River is northeast of Israel, and the Brook of Egypt is southwest of Israel.

you ... will be gathered together one by one

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will gather you together one by one"

Isaiah 27:13

a great ram's horn will be blown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will blow a ram's horn loudly"

will come

"will return to Jerusalem"

and the outcasts in the land of Egypt

The verb "will come" is understood from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "the outcasts in the land of Egypt will come"

holy mountain

The "holy mountain" is Mount Zion, in Jerusalem. See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.

---

28 [1] Woe to the proud garland crown
that is worn by each of the drunkards of Ephraim,
and to the fading flower of its glorious beauty,
the garland that is set on the head of the lush Valley
of those who are overcome with wine!

[2] Behold, the Lord sends one who is mighty and strong;
like a storm of hail and a destructive windstorm,
like a driving rain and overflowing waters;
and he will throw each garland crown down to the ground.

[3] The proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim
will be trodden underfoot.

[4] The fading flower of his glorious beauty,
which is on the head of the rich valley,
will be as the first ripe fig before the summer,
that, when someone sees it,
while it is yet in his hand, he swallows it down.

[5] In that day Yahweh of hosts will become a beautiful crown
and a diadem of beauty for the remainder of his people,

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6 a spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment,
and strength for those who turn back their enemies at their gates.

7 But even these reel with wine,
and stagger with strong drink.
The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink,
and they are swallowed up by wine.
They stagger with strong drink,
staggering in vision and reeling in decision.

8 Truly, all tables are covered with filthy vomit,
so that there is no clean place.

9 To whom will he teach knowledge,
and to whom will he explain the message?
To those who are weaned from milk
or to those just taken from the breasts?

10 For it is
command upon command, command upon command;
rule upon rule, rule upon rule;
here a little, there a little.

11 Indeed, with mocking lips and a foreign tongue
he will speak to this people.

12 In the past he said to them
"This is the rest, give rest to him who is weary;
and this is the refreshing,"
but they would not listen.

13 So the word of Yahweh will be to them
command upon command, command upon command;
rule upon rule, rule upon rule;
here a little, there a little;
so that they may go and fall backward,
and be broken, ensnared, and captured.

14 So listen to the word of Yahweh, you who mock,
you who rule over this people who are in Jerusalem.

15 This will happen because you said,
"We have made a covenant with death,
and with Sheol we have reached an agreement.
So when the overwhelming whip passes through,
it will not reach us.
For we have made a lie our refuge,
and taken shelter in falsehood."

16 Therefore the Lord Yahweh says,
"See, I will lay in Zion a foundation stone, a tried stone,
a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.
He who believes will not be ashamed.

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17 I will make justice the measuring stick,
and righteousness the plumbline.
Hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and the floodwaters will overwhelm the hiding place.

18 Your covenant with death will be dissolved,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand.
When the raging flood passes through,
you will become its trampling place.

19 Whenever it passes through, it will overwhelm you,
and morning by morning it will pass through
and by day and night it will come.
When the message is understood,
it will cause terror.

20 For the bed is too short for a man to stretch out on,
and the blanket too narrow for him to wrap himself in."

21 Yahweh will rise up as on Mount Perazim;
he will rouse himself as in the Valley of Gibeon
to do his work, his strange work,
and perform his strange deed.

22 Now therefore do not mock,
or your bonds will be tightened.
I have heard from the Lord Yahweh of hosts,
a decree of destruction on the earth.

23 Pay attention and listen to my voice;
be attentive and listen to my words.

24 Does a farmer who plows all day to sow, only plow the ground?
Does he continually break up and harrow the field?

25 When he has prepared the ground,
does he not scatter caraway seed, sow the cumin,
put in the wheat in rows and the barley in the right place,
and the spelt at its edges?[1]

26 His God instructs him;
he teaches him wisely.

27 Moreover, the caraway seed is not threshed with a sledge,
nor is a cartwheel rolled over the cumin;
but caraway is beaten out with a stick,
and cumin with a rod.

28 Bread grain is crushed,
but the one who grinds it does not thresh it forever.
The wheel of his cart and his horses would destroy it,
so he does not continue to grind it.

29 This too comes from Yahweh of hosts,
who gives wonderful counsel
and whose sound wisdom is great.

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¸The identification of some of these spices is in doubt, so different translations may have a different list of spices than here. In addition, other modern translations give different meaning to the expressions translated in the ULB as in rows and in the right place, because these expressions are uncertain in Hebrew.

Isaiah 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

There are many metaphors used to describe Yahweh's punishment as well as the sin of the people of Ephraim. In one such metaphor, they are described as being drunk. Construction and weather metaphors are also used in this chapter. (See: and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"That day"

This is a common phrase in this section of Isaiah. This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. This chapter pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 28:1 Notes

Isaiah 28:1

Woe to the proud garland ... on the head of the lush Valley of those who are overcome with wine

A "garland" is a crown made of flowers. Here it represents the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel, which sits above a fertile valley. Samaria and its people being destroyed is spoken of as if the flowers in the garland will grow old and stop being beautiful.

who are overcome with wine

"who are drunk with wine"

Isaiah 28:2

Behold

"Listen" or "Pay attention"

the Lord sends one who is mighty and strong

Here "one" refers to a mighty king who also represents his powerful army. Alternate translation: "the Lord sends a king with his powerful army"

storm of hail

A "storm of hail" or hailstorm happens when hard pieces of ice fall from the sky. Here it is a simile that refers to the enemy army that Yahweh will send to destroy the people of Samaria.

he will throw each garland crown down to the ground

The king and his powerful army destroying the people of Samaria and their city is spoken of as if the king will throw the people's garlands onto the ground.

Isaiah 28:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues to speak about the people and the city of Samaria as if they were a garland (Isaiah 28:1-2).

The proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim will be trodden underfoot

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy army will crush the proud drunkards of Samaria as if they were crushing flowers under their feet"

proud garland ... of Ephraim

A "garland" is a crown made of flowers. Here it represents the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel, which sits above a fertile valley.

Isaiah 28:4

which is on the head of the rich valley

The city of Samaria, the capital of Israel, sits above a fertile valley.

will be as the first ripe fig ... swallows it down

This speaks of the enemy soldiers seeing the beauty of Samaria and quickly plundering it as if they were a person who sees the first fig of the season and quickly eats it.

Isaiah 28:5

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

will become a beautiful crown and a diadem of beauty

Yahweh is spoken of as if he were to become a beautiful crown that the people who honor him as their true king would wear.

a beautiful crown and a diadem of beauty

These mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "a beautiful crown"

Isaiah 28:6

a spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment, and strength for those who

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns "justice" and "strength" are expressed as adjectives. These words can begin a new sentence. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the judges to be just and will cause to be strong those who"

a spirit of justice

A person who has a "spirit of justice" is someone who has the characteristic of justice and is a just person.

sits in judgment

This idiom means the person has the authority to judge.

strength for those who turn back their enemies at their gates

Here "to turn back" is an idiom that means to defeat in

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battle. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the soldiers to be strong so that they defeat their enemies when the enemies attack their city"

Isaiah 28:7

But even these

"But even the leaders"

The priest and the prophet

This does not mean a specific priest or prophet. It refers to priests and prophets in general. Alternate translation: "The priests and the prophets"

reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the priests and the prophets cannot do their job because they are very drunk. Alternate translation: "stumble around because they are drunk"

they are swallowed up by wine

Their drinking so much that they can no longer think properly is spoken of as if the wine swallowed them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the wine is causing them to be confused"

staggering in vision and reeling in decision

Just like they are too drunk to walk correctly, they are too drunk to understand the visions God gives them or to make good decisions.

Isaiah 28:9

To whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the message?

The drunk prophets and priests use a question to criticize Isaiah, who is trying to correct them. Alternate translation: "The drunk prophets and priests say, 'Isaiah should not be trying to teach us about Yahweh's message!'"

To those who are weaned from milk or to those just taken from the breasts?

The drunk prophets and priests use a question to criticize Isaiah, because they feel that he is treating them like babies. Alternate translation: "He should not treat us like babies!"

Isaiah 28:10

For it is command upon command, command upon command; rule upon rule, rule upon rule; here a little, there a little

The drunk prophets and priests criticize Isaiah because they feel that Isaiah is repeating simple commands as if he were talking to a child.

Isaiah 28:11

with mocking lips and a foreign tongue he will speak to this people

Here "lips" and "tongue" represent the foreigners who speak a different language than the Israelites do. It is implied that this refers to the Assyrian army that will attack Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will speak to this people through enemy soldiers who will speak a foreign language"

mocking lips

"stammering lips"

Isaiah 28:12

This is the rest

The abstract noun "rest" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "This is the resting place"

give rest to him who is weary

The abstract noun "rest" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "let whoever is tired come and rest"

this is the refreshing

The abstract noun "refreshing" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "this is the place where you can be refreshed"

Isaiah 28:13

So the word of Yahweh

"So Yahweh's message"

command upon command, command upon command; rule upon rule, rule upon rule; here a little, there a little

These are the words that the drunk priests and prophets used to criticize how Isaiah teaches them. See how you translated this in Isaiah 28:10.

so that they may go and fall backward, and be broken, ensnared, and captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in order that the army of Assyria will come and defeat them and take them as captives"

go and fall backward, and be broken

People losing in battle to the enemy army is spoken of as if the people will fall down and break.

ensnared

The enemy soldiers capturing the people of Israel is spoken of as if they were hunters that catch an animal in a snare.

Isaiah 28:14

So listen to the word of Yahweh

"So listen to Yahweh's message"

Isaiah 28:15

We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have reached an agreement

Both of these statements mean basically the same thing. Possible meanings are 1) the leaders of Jerusalem have used magic or sorcery to try to make an agreement with the gods of the place of the dead so that these gods would protect them from dying or 2) this is a metaphor that speaks of the leaders having made an agreement with the leaders of Egypt. The leaders of Jerusalem were so confident that the Egyptians would protect that it was like they had made an agreement with the gods of the place of the dead.

So when the overwhelming whip passes through, it will not reach us

This speaks of Yahweh's judgment and punishment as if it were a whip that would strike the people. And the whip is spoken of as if it were a flood that would pass through Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "As a result, when everyone else is suffering and dying, nothing will harm us"

For we have made a lie our refuge, and taken shelter in falsehood

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. A "lie" and "falsehood" are spoken of as if they were places where a person could go to hide. The leaders in Jerusalem would not have said they trust in a lie. They believed they were truly safe. But Isaiah knows they are not safe, because they trust in lies. Alternate translation: "For lies and falsehoods have become like a place where we can hide from danger"

a lie our refuge ... taken shelter in falsehood

Possible meanings are 1) the leaders trust in their own lies that they have said in order to protect themselves or 2) the leaders trust that the covenant they have made with the false gods of the place of the dead will keep them safe or 3)

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the leaders trust that the agreement they have made with the Egyptians will keep them safe.

Isaiah 28:16

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

I will lay in Zion a foundation stone ... sure foundation

Yahweh sending a strong person to help the people of Israel is spoken of as if Yahweh is constructing a strong foundation for a building.

a tried stone

"a stone that is solid"

a sure foundation

"a firm support"

He who believes will not be ashamed

"Anyone who trusts in this foundation stone will not be sorry"

Isaiah 28:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues to compare what he will do for the people in Jerusalem to a builder setting up a building (Isaiah 28:16).

I will make justice the measuring stick, and righteousness the plumbline

Yahweh testing according to his justice and righteousness to determine if the people are just and righteous is spoken of as if he were a builder using tools to determine that something is the correct length and perfectly level.

the measuring stick

A builder uses a measuring stick to determine if something is the correct length.

the plumbline

A builder uses a plumbline to determine if something is straight and level.

Hail will sweep away

Yahweh causing a large amount of hail to fall is spoken of as if it would be an overwhelming flood. Alternate translation: "Hailstorms will destroy"

Hail ... the floodwaters

Possible meanings are 1) these are a synecdoche representing anything in general that will cause destruction or 2) these are a metaphor referring to the enemy army that Yahweh will send to destroy the people of Jerusalem.

Hail

hard pieces of ice that fall from the sky

the refuge of lies ... the hiding place

This speaks about "lies" as if they were a place a person could go to hide. They represent what the leaders of Jerusalem trusted in to keep them safe from Yahweh's punishment. Possible meanings are 1) the leaders trust in their own lies that they have said in order to protect themselves or 2) the leaders trust that the covenant they have made with the false gods of the place of the dead will keep them safe or 3) the leaders trust that the agreement they have made with the Egyptians will keep them safe. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 28:15]

Isaiah 28:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Jerusalem.

Your covenant with death will be dissolved, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cancel the covenant you have with death, and I will cancel the agreement you have with Sheol"

covenant with death ... agreement with Sheol

Possible meanings are 1) the leaders of Jerusalem had used magic or sorcery to try to make an agreement with the gods of the place of the dead so that these gods would protect them from dying or 2) this is a metaphor that speaks of the leaders having made an agreement with the leaders of Egypt. The leaders of Jerusalem were so confident that the Egyptians would protect that it was like they had made an agreement with the gods of the place of the dead. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 28:15]

will not stand

"will not last"

When the raging flood passes through

Possible meanings are 1) "flood" is a synecdoche that represents anything in general that will cause destruction or 2) "flood" is a metaphor referring to the enemy army that Yahweh will send to destroy the people of Jerusalem.

you will become its trampling place

The flooding river is personified as a soldier who tramples those who mock

Isaiah 28:19

morning by morning

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "every day"

by day and night

This means "throughout the entire day"

Isaiah 28:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Jerusalem.

For the bed is too short for a man to stretch out on, and the blanket too narrow for him to wrap himself in

This was probably a proverb that the people knew at the time. It means that what they believe will keep them safe from Yahweh's punishment will disappoint them like a bed that is too short or a blanket that is too narrow.

Isaiah 28:21

Yahweh will rise up

Yahweh preparing to act is spoken of as if he were sitting and then rising up.

Mount Perazim ... Valley of Gibeon

These refer to places where God miraculously defeated enemy armies.

he will rouse himself

"he will become very angry"

his strange work ... his strange deed

These two phrases mean the same thing. This work is strange because God is using a foreign army to defeat the people of Jerusalem rather than helping the people of Jerusalem defeat their enemies.

Isaiah 28:22

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

your bonds will be tightened

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Yahweh punishing the people even more severely is spoken of as if he would tighten their bonds. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will tighten your bonds" or "Yahweh will punish you even more severely"

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

a decree of destruction on the earth

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "destruction" is expressed as the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "that he is going to destroy people throughout the land"

Isaiah 28:23

General Information:

This begins a parable that ends in 28:29.

Pay attention and listen to my voice; be attentive and listen to my words

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second phrase is used to strengthen the first.

to my voice

Here "voice" represents what Isaiah says. Alternate translation: "to what I say"

to my words

"to my message"

Isaiah 28:24

Does a farmer who plows all day to sow, only plow the ground? Does he continually break up and harrow the field?

Isaiah uses rhetorical questions to make the people think deeply. Alternate translation: "A farmer does not plow the ground over and over and continually work the soil without ever sowing seed."

Isaiah 28:25

General Information:

Isaiah continues telling a parable to the people of Jerusalem.

When he has prepared the ground

"When the farmer has plowed the soil"

does he not scatter caraway seed, sow the cumin, put in the wheat in rows and the barley in the right place, and the spelt at its edges?

Isaiah uses a question to make the people of Jerusalem think deeply. If your language does not have a word for each of these seeds, they can be stated more generally. Alternate translation: "he will certainly plant each kind of seed in the correct way and in the proper places."

caraway ... cumin

These are names of plants that are spices. Translators may represent them in general as seeds of spices used to spice food.

wheat ... barley ... spelt

These are all names of plants that are grains. Translators may represent them in general as seeds of grains.

Isaiah 28:26

His God instructs him; he teaches him wisely

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Yahweh helps the farmer know how to care for each kind of plant"

Isaiah 28:27

General Information:

Isaiah continues telling a parable to the people of Jerusalem.

the caraway seed is not threshed with a sledge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the farmer does not separate the caraway seed from the plant with a heavy club"

caraway

See how you translated this in Isaiah 28:25.

nor is a cartwheel rolled over the cumin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor does he roll a heavy wheel over the cumin seed"

cumin

See how you translated this in Isaiah 28:25.

but caraway is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod

Isaiah describes the correct way for a farmer to separate the seed from the plant. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but he beats the caraway with a stick, and he beats cumin with a rod"

Isaiah 28:28

Bread grain is crushed, but the one who grinds it does not thresh it forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The farmer grinds the grain for bread, but he eventually stops grinding it"

Isaiah 28:29

This too comes ... whose sound wisdom is great

This concludes the parable started in [Isaiah 28:23]

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:9.

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29 [1] Woe to Ariel, Ariel,
the city where David encamped!
Add year to year;
let the festivals come round.

[2] But I will besiege Ariel,
and she will be mourning and lamenting;
and she will be to me like Ariel.

[3] I will encamp against you in a circle
and will lay siege against you with a garrison,
and I will raise siege works against you.

[4] You will be abased and will speak from the ground;
your speech will be bowed down from the dust.

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Your voice will sound like a spirit that speaks from the ground,
and out of the dust your speech will whisper.

5 The great number of your invaders will become like fine dust,
and the multitude of the ruthless ones as chaff that passes away.
It will happen suddenly, in an instant.

6 Yahweh of hosts will come to you
with thunder, earthquake, great noise,
with strong winds and violent storm, and the flames of a devouring fire.

7 It will be like a dream, a vision of the night:
A horde of all the nations will fight against Ariel
and her stronghold.
They will attack her and her fortifications to press upon her.

8 It will be like when a hungry man dreams he is eating,
but when he awakes, his stomach is empty.
It will be like when a thirsty man dreams that he is drinking
and he awakes faint, with his thirst not quenched.
Yes, so will be the great number of nations
that fights against Mount Zion.

9 Astonish yourselves and be astonished;
blind yourselves and be blind!
Be drunk, but not with wine;
stagger, but not with strong drink.

10 For Yahweh has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep.
He has closed your eyes, the prophets,
and has covered your heads, the seers.

11 All revelation has become to you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men might give to one who is learned, saying, "Read this." He also says, "I cannot, for it is sealed."
12 If the book is given to one who cannot read, saying, "Read this," he says, "I cannot read."

13 The Lord said,
"This people comes close to me with their mouths
and honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.
Their honor for me
is only a commandment of men that has been taught.
14 Therefore, see, I will proceed to do a marvelous thing
among this people, wonder after wonder.
The wisdom of their wise men will perish,
and the understanding of their prudent men will disappear."

15 Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from Yahweh,
and whose deeds are in darkness.
They say, "Who sees us, and who knows us?"

16 You turn things upside down!
Should the potter be considered like clay,
so that the thing that is made should say about him who made it,
"He did not make me,"
or the thing formed say about him who formed it,

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"He does not understand"?

17 In just a little while,
Lebanon will be turned into a field,
and the field will become a forest.

18 On that day the deaf will hear the words of a book,
and the eyes of the blind will see out of the deep darkness.

19 The oppressed will again rejoice in Yahweh,
and the poor among men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

20 For the ruthless will cease, and the mocker will vanish.
All those who love to do evil will be eliminated,

21 who by a word make a man out to be an offender.
They lay a snare for him who seeks justice at the gate
and put the righteous down with empty lies.

22 Therefore this is what Yahweh says concerning the house of Jacob—Yahweh, who redeemed Abraham,
"Jacob will no longer be ashamed,
nor will his face be pale.
23 But when he sees his children, the work of my hands,
they will make my name holy.
They will make holy the name of the Holy One of Jacob
and they will stand in awe of the God of Israel.

24 Those who err in spirit will gain understanding,
and complainers will accept instruction."

Isaiah 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter begins a series of "woes" against specific nations. It presents judgments against the kingdoms of Ephraim and eventually Judah. (See: woe and judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Ariel

This is another name for Jerusalem. It is an uncommon name.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Prophecies

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and prophet and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 29:1 Notes

Isaiah 29:1

Woe to Ariel

Here "Ariel" represents the people who live in the city of Ariel. Alternate translation: "How terrible it will be for the people of Ariel"

Ariel

This is another name for Jerusalem, and it means "altar." If possible translate this as "Ariel" rather than "Jerusalem" since the meaning of "Ariel" is important in 29:2.

David encamped

"David dwelled" or "David lived"

Add year to year; let the festivals come round

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"Keep celebrating your festival year after year." This is an ironic statement. Yahweh tells the people to keep celebrating their festivals where they sacrifice to him, but he knows it will not prevent him from destroying them.
Isaiah 29:2
But I will besiege
The word "I" refers to Yahweh. This represents Yahweh causing an enemy army to besiege Jerusalem.
she will
Here "she" refers to Ariel, which represents the people of Ariel. Alternate translation: "the people of Ariel will"
mourning and lamenting
The words "mourning" and "lamenting" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of mourning. Alternate translation: "they will mourn deeply"
like Ariel
Translators may add a footnote that says, "The name Ariel means 'altar.'"
Isaiah 29:3
I will encamp against you
The word "I" refers to Yahweh. This represents Yahweh causing an enemy army to surround Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "I will command the army of your enemies to surround you"
Isaiah 29:4
You will be abased
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your enemy will humble you"
your speech will be bowed down from the dust
"you will speak with a quiet voice from the dust" or "you will be talking as you lie facedown in the dust"
Isaiah 29:5
The great number of your invaders will become like fine dust, and the multitude of the ruthless ones as chaff that passes away
This emphasizes how weak and insignificant the invading army is before God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will easily remove the horde of your invaders and the multitude of the ruthless ones"
great number of your invaders
"many soldiers that will attack you"
the ruthless ones as chaff
The translator can supply the verb "will become." Alternate translation: "the ruthless ones will become as chaff" or "the soldiers who show you no mercy will become as chaff"
Isaiah 29:6
Yahweh of hosts will come to you
The word "you" refers to the people of Jerusalem. Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh of hosts will come to help you" or 2) "Yahweh of hosts will come to punish you."
Isaiah 29:7
It will be like a dream, a vision of the night
The phrase "a vision of the night" is the same thing as "a dream." The two phrases emphasize that soon it will be like the invading army was never there.
A horde of all the nations
"Large armies from all the nations"
fight against Ariel
The name "Ariel" is another name for Jerusalem, and it represents the people who live there. See how you translated "Ariel" in [Isaiah 29:1]
her stronghold. They will attack her and her fortifications to press upon her
The word "her" refers to Ariel which represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "their stronghold. They will attack the city of Ariel and its defenses and cause the people to be in great distress"
Isaiah 29:8
It will be like when a hungry man dreams he is eating ... his thirst not quenched
These similes mean that the enemy will expect victory but they will fail because God will not allow them to conquer Jerusalem.
Yes, so will be the great number of nations that fights against Mount Zion
Here "Mount Zion" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "Yes, this will be what happens to the armies from the nations who fight against the people who live on Mount Zion"
Isaiah 29:9
Astonish yourselves and be astonished
The word "yourselves" refers to the people of Jerusalem. Why they are astonished can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Be astonished at what I am telling you"
blind yourselves and be blind
The people ignoring what Yahweh says is spoken of as if they would make themselves blind. Alternate translation: "keep being ignorant and spiritually blind to what I am showing you"
Be drunk, but not with wine; stagger, but not with strong drink
The people being senseless and not understanding what Yahweh is doing is spoken of as if they were drunk. Alternate translation: "Be senseless like a drunk person, but it is not because you have drunk too much wine or strong drink"
Isaiah 29:10
For Yahweh has poured out on you the spirit of deep sleep
Here "the spirit of" means "to have the characteristic of" being asleep. Yahweh causing the people to be asleep is spoken of as if "the spirit" were a liquid that he poured out on the people. Also "deep sleep" is a metaphor that means the people are senseless and cannot understand what Yahweh is doing. Alternate translation: "The reason you are senseless is because Yahweh has caused you to be spiritually asleep"
He has closed your eyes, the prophets, and has covered your heads, the seers
Yahweh causing the people to be senseless and not to understand what he is doing is spoken of as if he closed their eyes and covered their heads so they could not see. Alternate translation: "It is as though Yahweh has closed the eyes of the prophets and covered the heads of the seers"
Isaiah 29:11
All revelation has become to you as the words of a book that is sealed
The other prophets in Jerusalem are unable to hear or understand God's message. Alternate translation: "All that Yahweh has revealed is to you like a sealed book"
is sealed, which men might give to one who is learned
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation:

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"is sealed. A person may take the sealed book to someone who can read"

Isaiah 29:12

If the book is given to one who cannot read

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If a person takes the book to someone who cannot read"

Isaiah 29:13

This people comes close to me with their mouths and honors me with their lips

The words "mouths" and "lips" represent what people say. Here it also represents saying something but not truly meaning it. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem pretend to worship me and honor me with what they say"

but their heart is far from me

Here "heart" is a metonym that represents a person's thoughts and emotions. The people not being truly devoted to Yahweh is spoken of as if their hearts were far away from him. Alternate translation: "but they do not honor me in their thoughts" or "but they are not truly devoted to me"

Their honor for me is only a commandment of men that has been taught

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They honor me only because that is what people tell them to do"

Isaiah 29:14

Therefore, see, I will proceed to do a marvelous thing among this people, wonder after wonder

"Therefore, look and see! I am going to do wonderful and marvelous things among you that you will not be able to explain"

The wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the understanding of their prudent men will disappear

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Yahweh showing that the wise people cannot understand or explain what Yahweh does is spoken of as if their wisdom and understanding will vanish.

Isaiah 29:15

General Information:

This may be Isaiah speaking or it may continue Yahweh's speech in 29:13-14.

who deeply hide their plans from Yahweh

People trying to make plans without Yahweh knowing about it is spoken of as if they hide their plans in a deep place where Yahweh cannot see. Alternate translation: "who try to hide their plans from Yahweh" or "who try to keep Yahweh from finding out what they are planning to do"

whose deeds are in darkness

It is implied that they are secretly doing evil things. Alternate translation: "who do evil things in the dark so no one can see them"

Who sees us, and who knows us?

They use a question to emphasize that they believe no one knows what they are doing. Alternate translation: "No one, not even Yahweh, sees us or knows what we are doing!"

Isaiah 29:16

You turn things upside down

This is an idiom that means to distort what is true. Alternate translation: "You make things opposite of the way they should be" or "You distort the truth"

Should the potter be considered like clay, so that the thing that is made should say about him who made it ... "He does not understand"?

Yahweh who created humans is spoken of as if he were a potter and humans were the clay. This metaphor emphasizes that it is foolish for humans to reject or criticize the one who created them. Alternate translation: "Should you consider me, your maker, to be like the clay rather than the potter? It is as if a potter created something, and that thing said about the potter, 'He did not make me,' or 'He does not understand.'"

Should the potter be considered like clay ... "He does not understand"?

This question is used to scold the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Obviously, the potter should not be considered like clay ... 'He does not understand.'"

Isaiah 29:17

Lebanon will be turned into a field, and the field will become a forest

Possible meanings are 1) this is literal and Yahweh will cause the places where trees grew wild in Lebanon to become fruitful fields or 2) this is a metaphor and the large forests of Lebanon represent powerful oppressors, and the crops that grow in the field and become a forest are the common people who are suffering. This means Yahweh will humble those who are powerful, but he will honor those who are suffering.

Lebanon will be turned into a field

Here "Lebanon" represents the large cedar forests in Lebanon. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will turn the mighty forests of Lebanon into a field"

Isaiah 29:18

the deaf will hear the words of a book, and the eyes of the blind will see out of the deep darkness

Possible meanings are 1) this is literal and Yahweh will cause deaf people to hear and blind people to see or 2) this is a metaphor that means Yahweh will enable the people to hear and understand his message or 3) it may mean both options 1 and 2.

the eyes of the blind

Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "those who are blind"

Isaiah 29:19

The oppressed will again rejoice in Yahweh, and the poor among men will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "The poor and oppressed people will again be happy because of what Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, has done"

Isaiah 29:20

For the ruthless will cease

The nominal adjective "the ruthless" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "For the ruthless people will cease" or "For there will no longer be cruel people"

the mocker will vanish

The nominal adjective "the mocker" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "those who mock will vanish" or "the people who mock will disappear"

All those who love to do evil will be eliminated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"Yahweh will eliminate all those who love to do evil"
Isaiah 29:21
who by a word make a man out to be an offender
This refers to giving testimony in court against someone. Alternate translation: "who testify against a man and make him out to be an offender" or "who say in court that an innocent man is guilty of doing something wrong"
They lay a snare for him who seeks justice at the gate and put the righteous down with empty lies
The evil people doing anything they can to stop a good person is spoken of as if the evil people set a trap like a hunter catching his prey. Alternate translation: "They lie and try to stop those who want to do what is fair and right"
who seeks justice at the gate
The city gate was often the place where the city leaders made official decisions.
Isaiah 29:22
who redeemed Abraham
This possibly refers to when Yahweh called Abraham from his home country and sent him to the promised land.
Jacob will no longer ... his face
Here "Jacob" represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "Jacob's descendants will no longer ... their faces"
nor will his face be pale
This is an idiom that means he will no longer be afraid. Alternate translation: "nor will he be afraid"
Isaiah 29:23
he sees his children
The words "he" and "his" speak of Jacob
But when he sees his children, the work of my hands
Here "hands" represents Yahweh's power and action. Alternate translation: "When they see all the children I have given them and all that I have done"
they will make my name holy
Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "they will honor me"
They will make holy the name of the Holy One of Jacob
Here "name" represents Yahweh. Yahweh refers to himself as "the Holy One of Jacob." Alternate translation: "They will honor me, the Holy One of Jacob"
of the God of Israel
Yahweh refers to himself as "the God of Israel." Alternate translation: "of me, the God of Israel"
Isaiah 29:24
Those who err in spirit
Here "spirit" represents a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "Those who are wrong in what they think" or "Those who are wrong in their attitude"
will gain understanding
This can be made more explicit to explain what they will understand. Alternate translation: "will begin to understand Yahweh and his laws"

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30 [1] "Woe to the rebellious children—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
They make plans, but not from me;
they make alliances with other nations,
but they were not directed by my Spirit,
so they add sin to sin.

[2] They set out to go down into Egypt,
but have not asked for my direction.
They seek protection from Pharaoh
and take refuge in the shadow of Egypt.

[3] Therefore Pharaoh's protection will be your shame,
and the refuge in Egypt's shade, your humiliation,

[4] although their princes are at Zoan,
and their messengers have come to Hanes.

[5] They will all be ashamed
because of a people who cannot help them,
who are neither help nor aid,
but a shame, and even a disgrace."

[6] A declaration about the animals of the Negev:
Through the land of trouble and anguish,
of the lioness and the lion,
the viper and fiery flying serpent,
they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys,

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and their treasures on the camels' humps,
to a people who cannot help them.
7 For Egypt's help is vain and empty;
therefore I have called her Rahab, who sits still.

8 Now go, write it in their presence on a tablet,
and inscribe it on a scroll,
that it may be preserved
for the time to come as a testimony.

9 For these are a rebellious people, lying children,
children who will not hear the instruction of Yahweh.

10 They say to the seers, "Do not see;"
and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy the truth to us;
speak flattering words to us,
prophesy illusions.

11 Turn aside from the way, stray off the path;
cause the Holy One of Israel
to cease speaking before our face."

12 Therefore the Holy One of Israel says,
"Because you reject this word
and trust in oppression and deceit and lean on it,
13 so this iniquity will be to you
like a broken part ready to fall, like a bulge in a high wall
whose fall will happen suddenly, in an instant."

14 It will break as a potter's vessel is broken;
he will not spare it,
so that there will not be found among its pieces a shard
with which to scrape fire from the hearth,
or to scoop up water out of the cistern.

15 For this is what the Lord Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel says,
"In returning and resting you will be saved;
in quietness and in trust will be your strength.
But you were not willing.
16 You said, 'No, for we will flee on horses,'
so you will flee;
and, 'We will ride upon swift horses,'
so those who pursue you will be swift.

17 One thousand will flee at the threat of one;
at the threat of five you will flee
until your remnant will be
like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,
or like a signal flag on a hill."

18 Yet Yahweh is waiting to be gracious to you,
therefore he is ready to show you mercy.

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For Yahweh is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for him.

19 For a people will live in Zion, in Jerusalem, and you will weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of
your cry. When he hears it, he will answer you.
20 Though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, even so, your teacher will not hide himself
anymore, but you will see your teacher with your own eyes. 21 Your ears will hear a word behind you saying, "This is the
way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.
22 You will desecrate your carved figures overlaid with silver and your gold cast figures. You will throw them away like a
menstrual rag. You will say to them, "Get out of here."

23 He will give the rain for your seed when you sow the ground, and bread with abundance from the ground, and the crops
will be abundant. In that day your cattle will graze in broad pastures. 24 The oxen and the donkeys, who plow the ground,
will eat seasoned feed that has been winnowed with a shovel and a fork.
25 On every high mountain and on every high hill, there will be flowing brooks and streams of waters, in the day of the
great slaughter when the towers fall. 26 The light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be
seven times brighter, like the sunlight of seven days. Yahweh will bind up the breaking of his people and heal the bruises
of his wounding them.

27 Look, the name of Yahweh comes from a distant place,
burning with his anger and in dense smoke.
His lips are full of fury,
and his tongue is like a devouring fire.

28 His breath is like an overflowing torrent
that reaches up to the middle of the neck,
to sift the nations with the sieve of worthlessness.
His breath is a bridle in the jaws of the peoples
to cause them to wander away.

29 You will have a song
as in the night when a holy feast is observed,
and gladness of heart,
as when one goes with a flute to the mountain of Yahweh,
to the Rock of Israel.

30 Yahweh will make the splendor of his voice heard
and show the motion of his arm
in raging anger and flames of fire,
with windstorm, rainstorm, and hailstones.

31 For at the voice of Yahweh, Assyria will be dismayed;
he will strike them with a staff.

32 Every stroke of the appointed rod
that Yahweh will lay on them
will be accompanied with the music of tambourines and harps
as he battles, waving his weapons, and fights with them.

33 For a place of burning was prepared long ago.
Indeed, it is prepared for the king,
and God has made it deep and wide.
The pile is ready with a fire and much wood.
The breath of Yahweh, like a stream of sulfur,
will set it on fire.

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Isaiah 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter continues the series of "woes" against specific nations. It presents judgments against the people of Ephraim and Judah when they desired to make an alliance with Egypt. (See: woe and judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Negev

This is an area between Egypt and Judah. The people would have had to travel through it in order to get to Egypt. No one really lived in this area and it was known to be very dangerous.

Trust

The people were to trust in Yahweh. Only he could provide them with protection. The people were punished for their lack of trust when they were in trouble, but Yahweh only required that they trust him. (See: trust)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"That day"

This is a common phrase in this section of Isaiah. The chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 30:1 Notes

Isaiah 30:1

the rebellious children

Yahweh speaks about his people as if they were his children.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

They make plans, but not from me

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "plans" can be stated as the verb "plan." Alternate translation: "They plan to do things, but they do not ask me what I want them to do"

but they were not directed by my Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but my Spirit did not direct them"

they add sin to sin

Continuing to sin is spoken of as if sins were objects that could be stacked on one another. Alternate translation: "they continue to sin more and more"

Isaiah 30:2

They seek protection from Pharaoh

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "protection" is expressed as the verb "protect." Alternate translation: "They ask Pharaoh to protect them"

take refuge in the shadow of Egypt

Egypt's protection from enemy armies is spoken of as if it were a shadow that protects someone from the burning heat of the sun. Alternate translation: "they rely on the Egyptians to keep them safe"

Isaiah 30:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Judah.

Therefore Pharaoh's protection will be your shame, and the refuge in Egypt's shade, your humiliation

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns "protection," "shame," and "humiliation" are expressed as adjectives or verbs. Alternate translation: "Therefore you will be ashamed because you relied on Pharaoh to protect you; you will be humiliated because you relied on the Egyptians to keep you safe"

the refuge in Egypt's shade

Egypt's protection from enemy armies is spoken of as if it were a shadow that protects someone from the burning heat of the sun.

Isaiah 30:4

their princes

Here "princes" mean an official or ambassador, not necessarily sons of the king.

their ... their

belonging to the people of Judah

Zoan ... Hanes

These were cities in the northern part of Egypt.

have come to Hanes

Here "come" can be stated as "gone."

Isaiah 30:5

They ... them

These words refer to the people of Judah.

because of a people

"because of the people of Egypt"

Isaiah 30:6

General Information:

This continues God's declaration concerning the people of Judah.

A declaration

"This is what Yahweh declares"

of the lioness and the lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent

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This refers to these types of animals in general. Alternate translation: "where lionesses and lions dwell, and where there are vipers and serpents"
fiery flying serpent
Here the word "fiery" probably refers to the serpent's poisonous bite and the word "flying" refers to its quick movements. See how you translated this in Isaiah 14:29.
they carry their riches
"the people of Judah carry their riches"
Isaiah 30:7
vain and empty
This doublet emphasizes that Egypt's help is worthless.
I have called her Rahab, who sits still
There were popular stories about a sea monster named Rahab. The name Rahab means "strength" or "arrogance." Alternate translation: "I call Egypt a loud boaster who does nothing"
Isaiah 30:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Isaiah.
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in Yahweh's declaration about Judah. Here he tells Isaiah to do something.
in their presence
"in the presence of the people of Judah"
for the time to come
This speaks of time as if it travels and arrives somewhere. Alternate translation: "for a future time"
Isaiah 30:9
lying children, children who will not hear the instruction of Yahweh
This speaks of Yahweh's people as if they were his children. This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "They behave like children who lie and do not listen to what Yahweh commands"
Isaiah 30:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Judah.
Isaiah 30:11
Turn aside from the way, stray off the path
How Yahweh wants his people to behave is spoken of as if it were a way or path on which to walk. To disobey Yahweh is spoken of as if the person strays away from Yahweh's path.
Holy One of Israel
See how you translated this name in Isaiah 1:4.
Isaiah 30:12
Holy One of Israel
See how you translated this name in Isaiah 1:4.
you reject this word
"you reject this message"
trust in oppression and deceit and lean on it
Possible meanings are 1) the leaders of Judah are trusting in the Egyptian leaders who rule by oppressing and deceiving others or 2) the leaders of Judah have oppressed and deceived their own people in order to take their money and send it to the Egyptians leaders as payment for protection.
lean on it
Here the word "it" refers to "oppression and deceit." Alternate translation: "lean on them"
lean on
This is an idiom that means to trust or rely on something.
Isaiah 30:13
so this iniquity will be to you like a broken part ... in an instant
This simile means that God will destroy the people of Judah suddenly because of their iniquity.
like a broken part ready to fall
It is understood that this is a broken part of a wall. Alternate translation: "like a broken part of a wall that is ready to fall"
whose fall will happen suddenly
This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "fall" is expressed as the verb "fall." Alternate translation: "that will suddenly fall"
suddenly, in an instant
These mean the same thing and emphasize how quickly the wall will fall.
Isaiah 30:14
General Information:
Isaiah describes how Yahweh will destroy the people of Judah (Isaiah 30:12-13).
It will break
Here "it" refers to the part in the wall that is about to fall. The part in the wall is a metaphor that represents the people of Judah and their sin mentioned in [Isaiah 30:12-13]
as a potter's vessel is broken
This simile means that the piece of wall will break as quickly and completely as a clay jar that falls to the ground.
potter
A potter is a person who makes pots and jars out of clay.
there will not be found
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will be able to find" or "there will not be"
a shard with which to scrape
"a shard big enough to scrape"
fire from the hearth
The word "fire" here refers here to ashes. Alternate translation: "ashes from the fireplace"
Isaiah 30:15
Holy One of Israel
See how you translated this name in Isaiah 1:4.
In returning and resting you will be saved
Repenting is spoken of as if it were physically returning to Yahweh. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will save you from your enemies if you will repent and rest knowing that I will take care of you"
resting
It is implied that the people rest because they trust that Yahweh will take care of them.
in quietness and in trust will be your strength
Quietness here refers to not being anxious and worried. It is implied that they are not worried because they trust in Yahweh. Alternate translation: "You will be strong if you are quiet and trust in me"
Isaiah 30:16
we will flee on horses
Apparently these are horses that the people of Judah

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received from the Egyptians.

Isaiah 30:17

One thousand will flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you will flee

The word "solider" is understood. Alternate translation: "One thousand soldiers will flee at the threat of one enemy soldier; at the threat of five enemy soldiers all of your soldiers will flee"

One thousand

"1,000"

until your remnant will be like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, or like a signal flag on a hill

This simile means there will be so few people left that they will be like a single signal flag on top of a hill.

signal flag

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.

Isaiah 30:18

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

Isaiah 30:19

you will ... to you ... answer you

Here "you" refers to the people who will live in Zion.

he will answer you

"he will help you"

Isaiah 30:20

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

the bread of adversity and the water of affliction

Here "bread" and "water" make up the diet of a very poor person. The whole phrase represents the hard times and poverty of the people.

your teacher

This refers to Yahweh.

you will see your teacher with your own eyes

Here "eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "you yourselves will see your teacher"

Isaiah 30:21

Your ears will hear

Here "ears" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "You will hear"

a word behind you saying

"him speaking behind you saying"

This is the way, walk in it

How Yahweh wants his people to behave is spoken of as if it were a way or path. To obey Yahweh is spoken of as if it were a person walking on his path.

when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left

Disobeying Yahweh is spoken of as if the person turned left or right off of Yahweh's path.

Isaiah 30:22

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

You will throw them away like a menstrual rag

This simile means they will throw away their idols like they were garbage.

You will say to them, "Get out of here."

This speaks of the idols as if they could hear and get up and leave a place. Yahweh means that the people will no longer need or want the idols.

Isaiah 30:23

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

He will give

"Yahweh will give"

bread with abundance from the ground

Here "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "he will cause the ground to produce plenty of food for you to eat"

In that day

"At that time"

Isaiah 30:24

that has been winnowed with a shovel and a fork

Shovels and forks were used to throw the grain in the air so the wind would blow away the chaff, leaving only the part that could be eaten. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you have winnowed with a shovel and a pitchfork"

Isaiah 30:25

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

On every high mountain ... every high hill

Isaiah describes what will be an ideal situation after Yahweh rescues his people. Although the language may be exaggerated, you should translate this just as Isaiah described it.

in the day of the great slaughter when the towers fall

"when Yahweh slaughters your enemies and causes their strong towers to fall"

in the day

"at the time"

Isaiah 30:26

The light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the sunlight of seven days

Isaiah describes what will be an ideal situation after Yahweh rescues his people. Although the language may be exaggerated, you should translate this just as Isaiah described it.

the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the sunlight of seven days

"the sun will shine as bright as seven suns" or "the sun will give as much light in one day as it normally does in seven days"

Yahweh will bind up the breaking of his people and heal the bruises of his wounding them

Yahweh comforting his people and causing their suffering to end is spoken of as if he would put bandages on their wounds.

Isaiah 30:27

the name of Yahweh ... like a devouring fire

Yahweh being extremely angry is spoken of as if he were a large fire.

the name of Yahweh comes

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh comes"

His lips are full of fury, and his tongue is like a devouring fire

Here "lips" and "tongue" are metonyms that represent Yahweh speaking. And, Yahweh speaks with so much anger and power that it is spoken of as if his tongue were a fire.

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Alternate translation: "When he speaks his fury is like a fire that destroys everything"

Isaiah 30:28

His breath is like an overflowing torrent

This compares the air coming out of Yahweh's mouth to a flood to emphasize its power to destroy.

to sift the nations with the sieve of worthlessness

Yahweh separating the people of the nations and destroying the wicked people is spoken of as if Yahweh puts the nations in a sieve. This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will separate and destroy the wicked people of the nations"

sieve of worthlessness

"sieve that gets rid of what is worthless." Many modern translations read, "sieve of destruction."

His breath is a bridle in the jaws of the peoples to cause them to wander away

Yahweh having the power to cause people's plans to fail or causing them to be destroyed is spoken of as if his breath were a bridle that steers people off the correct path.

a bridle in the jaws of the peoples

A "bridle" is a device that people put over a horse's head to guide it. The bridle contains a small piece called a "bit" that goes in the horse's mouth. Alternate translation: "a bridle on the heads of the peoples" or "a bit in the jaws of the peoples"

Isaiah 30:29

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

You will have a song

This can be reworded so the noun "song" is stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "You will sing"

as in the night when a holy feast is observed

This simile emphasizes how happy the people will be.

when a holy feast is observed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when you observe a holy feast"

gladness of heart

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "you will be glad"

as when one goes ... Rock of Israel

This simile emphasizes how happy the people will be.

to the Rock of Israel

Yahweh having the power to protect his people is spoken of as if he were a rock on which the people could climb and escape from enemies. Alternate translation: "to Israel's protective rock" or "which is like a protective rock for Israel"

Isaiah 30:30

show the motion of his arm

Here "arm" represents the power of God. It is implied that Yahweh will show his power by destroying his people's enemies. Alternate translation: "show that he is powerful by destroying your enemies"

in raging anger and flames of fire

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a storm or a fire. Alternate translation: "in anger that is like a storm and flames of fire" or "in great anger"

with windstorm, rainstorm, and hailstones

"with storms full of wind, rain, and hail"

hailstones

hard pieces of ice that fall from the sky like rain

Isaiah 30:31

Assyria will be dismayed

The word "dismayed" can also mean "shattered," a metaphor for "totally defeat." Possible meanings of this phrase are 1) the Assyrians will hear Yahweh's voice and become terrified that he will strike them with his staff. Alternate translation: "Assyria will be terrified" Or 2) Yahweh will shatter Assyria with his voice and staff. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will shatter Assyria" or "Yahweh will totally defeat Assyria"

Assyria

Here this is a metonym for the soldiers of Assyria.

Isaiah 30:32

Every stroke of the appointed rod that Yahweh will lay on them

Yahweh causing an army to defeat the Assyrians is spoken of as if Yahweh would hit the Assyrians with a rod.

will be accompanied

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah will accompany it"

tambourines

This is a musical instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around the side that sound when the instrument is shaken. See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:12.

he battles, waving his weapons, and fights with them

Yahweh causing the enemy army to defeat the Assyrians is spoken of as if Yahweh were a warrior who would fight along with the enemy army.

Isaiah 30:33

For a place of burning was prepared long ago

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For long ago Yahweh prepared a place for burning"

a place of burning

Some English translations read, "Topheth," the name of a place in the Hinnom Valley, south of Jerusalem, where at one time people burned their children as sacrifices to a false god.

it is prepared for the king

It is implied that this refers to the king of Assyria. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh prepared it for the king of Assyria"

The pile is ready with a fire and much wood

"The pile is ready with much wood to make a fire"

The breath of Yahweh, like a stream of sulfur, will set it on fire

This speaks of Yahweh's breath as if it were a river of fire that will set the pile on fire.

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31 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help
and lean on horses,
and trust in chariots (for they are many)
and in horsemen (for they are mighty).

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But they are not concerned about the Holy One of Israel,
nor do they seek Yahweh!

2 Yet he is wise, and he will bring disaster
and will not retract his words.
He will arise against the evil house
and against the helpers of those who behave wickedly.

3 Egypt is a man and not God,
their horses flesh and not spirit.
When Yahweh reaches out with his hand,
both the one who helps will stumble,
and the one who is helped will fall; both will perish together.

4 This is what Yahweh says to me,
"As a lion, even a young lion, growls over its torn prey,
when a group of shepherds is called out against it,
but it is not frightened by their voices,
nor does it creep away from their sound;
thus Yahweh of hosts will descend
to fight on Mount Zion, on that hill.
5 Like birds in flight,
so Yahweh of hosts will protect Jerusalem;
he will protect and rescue
as he passes over it and preserves it.

6 Return to him from whom you have deeply turned away, people of Israel. 7 For in that day each one will throw away his idols of silver and his idols of gold that your own hands have made as a sin.

8 Assyria will fall by the sword;
a sword not wielded by man will consume him.
He will flee from the sword,
and his young men will be forced to do hard labor.

9 They will lose all confidence because of terror,
and his princes will be afraid
at the sight of Yahweh's signal flag—
this is the declaration of Yahweh—
whose fire is in Zion and whose firepot is in Jerusalem."

Isaiah 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter continues the series of "woes" against specific nations. It presents judgments against the people of Ephraim and Judah when they desired to make an alliance with Egypt. It also prophesies the destruction of Assyria. (See: woe and judge and prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

The people were to trust in Yahweh. Only he could provide them with protection. They were punished for their lack of trust when they were in trouble, but Yahweh only required that they trust him. (See: trust)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"That day"

This is a common phrase in this section of Isaiah. This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an

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explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and fulfill)

Israel

The use of the term "Israel" in this chapter is in reference to the northern kingdom of Israel exclusively.

Links:

Isaiah 31:1 Notes

Isaiah 31:1

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Judah.

go down to Egypt

The phrase "go down" is used here because Egypt is lower in Elevation than Jerusalem.

those who go down

"those people of Judah who go down"

lean on horses

This speaks about people relying on their horses to help them as if they were leaning on their horses. Alternate translation: "rely on their horses"

they are mighty

The word "mighty" here implies that they are mighty because there are so many of them.

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this name in Isaiah 1:4.

nor do they seek Yahweh

"nor do they ask Yahweh to help them"

Isaiah 31:2

he will bring disaster

Here the word "bring" means to "cause." Alternate translation: "he will cause disasters to happen"

will not retract his words

The phrase "retract his words" speaks of a person not fulfilling what they said they will do as if the words that he had said were something that he could pull back to himself. Here it says that Yahweh will not do this, meaning he will fulfill what he has said. Alternate translation: "he will do what he said he would do"

arise against

"punish"

evil house

This refers to evil people who live there. Alternate translation: "all who do evil things"

Isaiah 31:3

Egypt is a man

Here Egypt refers to the soldiers of Egypt. Alternate translation: "The soldiers of Egypt are men"

their horses flesh and not spirit

This means that their horses are only horses and not spiritual beings. Alternate translation: "their horses are only horses; they are not powerful spirits"

When Yahweh reaches out with his hand

The term "hand" is often used in reference to God's power and action. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh uses his power against them"

both the one who helps will stumble, and the one who is helped will fall

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Stumbling and falling are metaphors of failing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "these two things will happen: I will destroy Egypt, who helps you, and I will destroy you, whom Egypt helps"

the one who is helped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who is seeking help"

Isaiah 31:4

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to Isaiah.

As a lion ... thus Yahweh of hosts

"A lion ... in the same way Yahweh of hosts." Here Yahweh speaks of how he will defend the people who belong to him and not be scared away by comparing himself to a lion who guards it's prey.

thus Yahweh of hosts will descend ... that hill

It may be more clear if you move the last line to before the first line: "Yahweh of hosts will descend to fight on Mount Zion, on that hill, as a lion, even a young lion"

a lion, even a young lion

"a female lion or killer lion." This is a doublet with both phrase referring to a fierce lion. Alternate translation: "a lion"

growls

warns others to stay away

when a group of shepherds is called out against it

The phrase "called out against it" means to be sent out to chase the lion away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone sends shepherds to chase the lion away"

from their sound

The shepherds would make loud noises to try and chase away the lion. Alternate translation: "from the loud noises that they make"

will descend

"will come down." This refers to descending from heaven. Alternate translation: "will come down from heaven"

on Mount Zion, on that hill

Both of the phrases refer to Mount Zion. Alternate translation: "on Mount Zion"

Isaiah 31:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Like birds in flight, so Yahweh of hosts will protect Jerusalem

Here the way that Yahweh protects Jerusalem is compared to the way that a mother bird protects her baby birds in their nest.

he will protect and rescue as he passes over it and preserves it

This speaks of how Yahweh protects and rescues Jerusalem, describing him as a bird that flies over the city. Alternate translation: "he will protect and rescue the city from it's enemies"

Yahweh of hosts

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See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:9.

Jerusalem

This refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem"

Isaiah 31:6

Return to him from whom you have deeply turned away

"Return to the one against whom you have rebelled"

Isaiah 31:7

that your own hands have made as a sin

Here the people are referred to by their "hands" the emphasize that they made something with their hands. Alternate translation: "that you have sinned by making with you own hands"

Isaiah 31:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Judah, referring to the Assyrians as though they are one person.

Assyria will fall by the sword; a sword not wielded by man will consume him

"Sword" refers to military might. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God's sword, and not a man's sword, will destroy the Assyrian army"

He will flee

"The Assyrians will flee"

his young men will be forced to do hard labor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemies will capture their young men and force them to do hard labor"

Isaiah 31:9

They will lose all confidence because of terror

The word "confidence" can be expressed with the adjective "confident." The word "terror" can be expressed with the adjective "terrified." Alternate translation: "They will no longer be confident because they are so terrified"

his princes

"their leaders"

signal flag

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.

whose fire is in Zion and whose firepot is in Jerusalem

Both of these clauses mean the same thing and are used together for emphasis. Here God's presence and his power to judge and destroy are spoken of as if they were a fire. Alternate translation: "whose powerful presence is in Zion"

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32 [1] Look, a king will reign in righteousness,
and princes will rule in justice.

[2] Each one will be like a shelter from the wind
and a refuge from the storm,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a great rock in a land of weariness.

[3] Then the eyes of those who see will not be dim,
and the ears of those who hear will hear attentively.

[4] The rash will think carefully with understanding,
and the stutterer will speak distinctly and with ease.

[5] The fool will no longer be called honorable,
nor the deceiver called principled.

[6] For the fool speaks folly,
and his heart plans evil
and godless actions,
and he speaks wrongly against Yahweh.
He makes the hungry empty,
and the thirsty he causes to lack drink.

[7] The deceiver's methods are evil.
He devises wicked schemes
to destroy the poor with deceitful words,
even when the poor say what is right.

[8] But the honorable man makes honorable plans;
and because of his honorable actions he will stand.

[9] Rise up, you women who are at ease,
and listen to my voice;

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you carefree daughters,
give ear to my word.

10 For in a little more than a year
your confidence will be broken,
you carefree women,
for the grape harvest will fail,
the ingathering will not come.

11 Tremble, you women who are at ease;
be troubled, you confident ones;
take off your fine clothes and make yourselves bare;
gird your loins with sackcloth.

12 You will wail for the pleasant fields,
for the fruitful vines.

13 The land of my people
will be overgrown with thorns and briers,
even in all the joyful houses in the jubilant city.

14 For the palace will be abandoned,
the crowded city will be deserted;
the hill and the watchtower will become caves forever,
a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks;

15 until the Spirit is poured on us from on high,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is considered as a forest.

16 Then justice will reside in the wilderness;
and righteousness will live in the fruitful field.

17 The work of righteousness will be peace;
and the result of righteousness,
quietness and confidence forever.

18 My people will live in a peaceful habitation,
in secure homes, and in quiet resting places.

19 Though hail flattens the forest
and the city is completely brought down,

20 you will be blessed
when you sow your seed beside every stream
and let the foot of the ox and donkey range free.

Isaiah 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Reign of the Messiah

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

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Links:

Isaiah 32:1 Notes

Isaiah 32:1

Look

This word is used here to draw peoples' attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

Isaiah 32:2

Each one will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm

This compares the king and princes who protect the people to a shelter. Alternate translation: "the rulers will protect the people like a shelter does in a storm"

like streams of water in a dry place

This is another comparison that means that the rulers will provide for the needs of the people. Alternate translation: "they will provide for the people like streams of water in a dry place"

like the shade of a great rock in a land of weariness

This is another comparison that means that the rulers will provide comfort and rest for the people. Alternate translation: "they will provide rest for the people like a huge rock gives shade to weary people"

Isaiah 32:3

Then the eyes ... attentively

Both of these phrases emphasize that the leaders will enable the people to understand God's truth.

will not be dim

"will see clearly"

Isaiah 32:4

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing the people after God restores righteous rulers in Judah (Isaiah 32:1-3).

The rash ... the stutterer

This refers to people who act rashly and people who stutter. Alternate translation: "The rash person ... the stuttering person"

Isaiah 32:5

The fool will no longer be called honorable

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will give honor to the fool"

nor the deceiver called principled

This can be stated in active form. "The deceiver" refers to a person who is deceptive. Alternate translation: "nor will anyone show respect to the person who deceives"

Isaiah 32:6

For the fool speaks folly, and his heart plans evil

"The fool" refers to foolish people. Also, "folly" and "evil" may be expressed as adjectives. Alternate translation: "For the foolish person says foolish things and his heart plans evil things"

his heart plans evil

Here the foolish person is referred to by his heart to emphasize his inner thoughts. Alternate translation: "he plans evil things in his heart"

He makes

The word "he" refers to the foolish person.

the hungry empty

"The hungry" refers to hungry people. They are hungry because they have empty stomachs. Alternate translation: "the hungry person have an empty stomach"

the thirsty he causes to lack drink

"The thirsty" refers to people who are thirsty. Alternate translation: "he causes the thirsty person to have nothing to drink"

Isaiah 32:7

The deceiver's

This refers to a person who deceives others. Alternate translation: "The deceptive person's"

to destroy the poor with deceitful words

"The poor" refers to poor people. Also, the phrase "to destroy" does not means to kill them but to harm them by telling lies about them. Alternate translation: "to harm the poor people by telling lies"

Isaiah 32:8

he will stand

This means that he will be successful. Alternate translation: "he will be successful"

Isaiah 32:9

Rise up

"Stand up" or "Pay attention"

at ease

"secure" or "carefree"

my voice

Isaiah refers to himself by his voice to emphasize what he says. Alternate translation: "me speak"

give ear to my word

The phrase "give ear" is a metonym for listening with the ear, and it implies that the hearer is to obey a command or act in accordance with what he learns. Alternate translation: "listen to what I am saying and prepare to act"

Isaiah 32:10

your confidence will be broken

This can be stated in active form. Also, Isaiah speaks of them no longer being confident as if their confidence were a physical object that is broken. Alternate translation: "you will no longer be confident"

the grape harvest will fail

This means that there would not be good grapes to harvest. Alternate translation: "there will be no grapes for you to harvest"

the ingathering will not come

"the time for gathering crops will not happen"

Isaiah 32:11

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

Tremble

shake from fear

at ease

"secure" or "carefree"

take off your fine clothes and make yourselves bare

Here "bare" does not necessarily mean naked, but to wear minimal covering such as undergarments. Alternate

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translation: "take off you fine clothes and make yourself unclothed" or "take off your fancy clothes"

gird your loins with sackcloth

The girding of loins with sackcloth is an act of grieving or mourning. "Gird your loins" is also a metonym, a command to prepare for work or battle, so this is an ironic way of emphasizing how miserable the people will be. Alternate translation: "put sackcloth around waists as you grieve"

Isaiah 32:12

You will wail for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vines

This means that they will cry out loudly as they grieve what happens to their fruitful fields and vines. Alternate translation: "You will wail because of what happens to your pleasant fields and fruitful vines"

Isaiah 32:13

thorns and briers

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 5:6.

in all the joyful houses in the jubilant city

"in all the formerly joyful houses in the formerly jubilant city." The houses and city will not be joyful after the thorns and briers grow up.

the joyful houses

Here the houses are described as joyful because of the joyful people in them. Alternate translation: "your houses where you were joyful"

the jubilant city

Here the city is described as joyful because of the joyful people in it. Alternate translation: "your city where you were joyful"

Isaiah 32:14

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

For the palace will be abandoned, the crowded city will be deserted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the people will abandon the palace, and the crowds will leave the city" or "For the people will leave the palace, and the city that was crowded with people will be empty"

the hill

This refers to the fort built on the top of the hill. Alternate translation: "the fort on the hill"

the hill and the watchtower will become caves

This speaks of the fort and the watchtower being abandoned as if they became caves. Alternate translation: "the hill and the watchtower will become abandoned and empty"

a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks

This means the these animals will enjoy the grass that grows among the abandon fort and watchtower. Alternate translation: "the wild donkeys and the flocks of sheep will eat the grass there"

forever

This is an exaggeration for a very long time. Alternate translation: "an extremely long time"

Isaiah 32:15

until the Spirit is poured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until Yahweh pours the Spirit"

the Spirit is poured on us

This speaks of Yahweh giving him Spirit to his people as if his Spirit were a liquid that he would pour on them. Alternate translation: "the Spirit is given to us"

from on high

Here heaven is referred to as "on high." Alternate translation: "from heaven"

the fruitful field is considered as a forest

This can be written in active form. This compares how overly bountiful the fruitful fields are by comparing them to a thick, dense forest. Alternate translation: "people will say that the fruitful fields have grown thick like a forest" or "the fruitful fields will be overly bountiful"

Isaiah 32:16

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

justice will reside ... righteousness will live

Isaiah describes "justice" and "righteousness" as a person who lives in these places. This means the people who live in these places will do what is just and right. Alternate translation: "people will act justly in the wilderness and people will act righteously in the fertile fields

Isaiah 32:17

The work of righteousness will be peace; and the result of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever

These two phrases are parallel and both give results of righteousness. These can be combined. Alternate translation: "The result of people acting righteously is that there will be peace, and quietness, and confidence forever"

Isaiah 32:18

habitation

place where people live

Isaiah 32:19

hail

See how you translated this in Isaiah 28:2.

hail flattens the forest and the city is completely brought down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "hail destroys the forest and completely destroys the city"

Isaiah 32:20

you will be blessed when you sow your seed beside every stream and let the foot of the ox and donkey range free

This can be stated in active form. This refers to Yahweh blessing all of his people and speaks of the things that are normal for his people to do. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bless you when you plant your crops in fields alongside the streams and as you send out your ox and donkey to graze in the pasture"

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33 Woe to you, destroyer who has not been destroyed!
Woe to the betrayer whom they have not betrayed!
When you stop destroying, you will be destroyed.
When you stop betraying, they will betray you.

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2 Yahweh, be gracious to us; we wait for you;
be our arm every morning,
our salvation in the time of trouble.

3 At the loud noise the peoples flee;
when you arise, the nations are scattered.

4 Your plunder is gathered as the locusts gather;
as locusts leap, men leap on it.

5 Yahweh is exalted. He lives in a high place.
He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.

6 He will be the stability in your times,
abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge;
the fear of Yahweh is his treasure.

7 Look, their envoys cry in the streets;
the ambassadors of peace weep bitterly.

8 The highways are deserted;
there are no more travelers.
Covenants are broken, witnesses are despised,
and mankind is not respected.[1]

9 The land mourns and wastes away;
Lebanon is ashamed and withers away;[2]
Sharon is like a desert plain;
and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves.

10 "Now will I arise," says Yahweh;
"now I will be lifted up; now I will be elevated.

11 You conceive chaff, and you give birth to stubble;
your breath is a fire that will consume you.

12 The peoples will be burned to lime,
as thornbushes are cut down and are burned.

13 You who are far away, hear what I have done;
and, you who are near, acknowledge my might."

14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
trembling has seized the godless ones.
Who among us can sojourn with a raging fire?
Who among us can sojourn with everlasting burnings?

15 He who walks righteously and speaks honestly;
who despises the gain of oppression,
who shakes his hand so that it will not accept a bribe,
who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed,
and who shuts his eyes from looking on evil—

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16 this is the man who will dwell on the heights,
his stronghold will be the fortress among the cliffs,
his food will be given,
and his water will be in steady supply.

17 Your eyes will see the king in his beauty;
they will see a land off in the distance.

18 Your heart will recall the terror;
where is the scribe,
where is he who weighed the money?
Where is he who counted the towers?

19 You will no longer see the defiant people,
people who mock you
in a language that you do not understand.

20 Look at Zion, the city of our feasts;
your eyes will see Jerusalem as a quiet habitation,
a tent that will not be removed,
whose stakes will never be pulled up
nor will any of its cords be broken.

21 There Yahweh in majesty will be with us,
in a place of broad rivers and streams,
where no warship with oars will travel,
and no large ships will sail.

22 For Yahweh is our judge, Yahweh is our lawgiver,
Yahweh is our king; he will save us.

23 Your riggings are slack;
they cannot hold the mast in place;
they cannot spread the sail;
when the plunder of abundant prey is divided,
even the lame will take away booty.

24 The inhabitants will not say, "I am sick;"
the people who live there will be forgiven for their iniquity.

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[1]Some ancient Hebrew copies have the word for cities, but this is seen by many scholars to be a corruption of the more likely Hebrew word for witnesses, which is the ULB translation.
[2]The word mourns can be also be read as dries up. The two Hebrew words are spelled the same. Isaiah 24:4 is similar, and the meaning there is clearly dries up.

Isaiah 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.
This chapter continues the series of "woes." It speaks against ungodly or evil people in general. (See: woe and godly and evil)

Links:

Isaiah 33:1 Notes

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Isaiah 33:1

General Information:

Isaiah speaks in poetry for Yahweh to the Assyrians.

who has not been destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom others have not destroyed"

you will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "others will destroy you"

they will betray

"others will betray"

Isaiah 33:2

be our arm

Here Yahweh's arm refers to his strength. This speaks of Yahweh strengthening them as if Yahweh would use his strength to act for them. Alternate translation: "give us strength"

every morning

This refers to the whole day, not just the morning. Alternate translation: "every day"

our salvation

This understood verb "be" may be supplied. Also, the word "salvation" may be expressed with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "be our salvation" or "save us"

in the time of trouble

This refers to the times when they are experiencing trouble. Alternate translation: "when we have troubles"

Isaiah 33:3

At the loud noise the peoples flee

Possible meanings of "the loud noise" are 1) it refers to Yahweh's voice. Alternate translation: "The peoples flee at the sound of your loud voice" or 2) it refers the loud sounds of Yahweh's army. Alternate translation: "The people flee at the sound of your army"

arise

This means to begin doing something. Alternate translation: "begin acting"

the nations are scattered

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "the nations scatter"

Isaiah 33:4

Your plunder is gathered as the locusts gather; as locusts leap, men leap on it

This compares how quick and eager Yahweh's people are when they gather the spoils from their enemies to the eagerness of locusts when they gather food. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your people gather spoils from your enemies with the same fierceness as the locusts have who devour green plants"

Isaiah 33:5

General Information:

Isaiah speaks to the people of Judah.

Yahweh is exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is greater than anyone else"

He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness

This speaks of Yahweh ruling Zion with his justice and righteousness as if he were filling Zion with justice and righteousness. Alternate translation: "He will rule Zion with justice and righteousness"

Isaiah 33:6

He will be the stability in your times

This speaks of Yahweh causing his people to be secure as if he were the stability himself. The phrase "your times" refers to their lives. Alternate translation: "He will make you secure all your lives"

abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge

This refers to the things that Yahweh will give to them. The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verb "save." The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "knowledge" can be expressed with adjectives. Alternate translation: "and he will give you an abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge" or "he will save you and cause you to be very wise and knowledgeable"

the fear of Yahweh is his treasure

This speaks of fearing Yahweh as if it were a treasure that Yahweh gives his people. Alternate translation: "revering Yahweh will be like a valuable treasure that he will give to you" or "to fear Yahweh will be as valuable to you as a treasure"

Isaiah 33:7

Look

This word is used here to draw peoples' attention to what is said next. It is also used here to mark a new section in the book. Alternate translation: "Listen"

envoys

messengers

the ambassadors of peace weep bitterly

This means they weep because they do not succeed in making peace. Alternate translation: "the ambassadors who hope for peace do not succeed, and so they weep bitterly"

Isaiah 33:8

The highways are deserted; there are no more travelers

Both of the phrases emphasize that there are no travelers on the highways. These can be combined and stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People no longer travel on the highways"

Covenants are broken, witnesses are despised, and mankind is not respected

This passage may refer to general conditions of corruption in Israel, or it may refer to the nation's inability to make reliable peace treaties with Assyria. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People break covenants that they have made, people ignore the testimony of witnesses, and people do not respect one another"

Isaiah 33:9

The land mourns and wastes away

This speaks of the land becoming dry as if it were a person mourning. Alternate translation: "The land becomes dry and its plants wither away"

Lebanon is ashamed and withers away

Here "Lebanon" represents Lebanon's trees. This speaks of the trees withering and decaying as if they were a person who is ashamed. Alternate translation: "Lebanon's trees

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wither and decay"

Sharon ... Bashan ... Carmel

Many trees and flowers once grew in these places.

Sharon is like a desert plain

This compares how dry Sharon is to a desert plain. Alternate translation: "Sharon is as dry as a desert plain"

Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves

Here Bashan and Carmel are represented by their trees. Alternate translation: "there are no more leaves on the trees in Bashan and Carmel"

Isaiah 33:10

will I arise

To arise or stand up is a metaphor for no longer watching and thinking and instead beginning to act. Alternate translation: "will I begin to act"

now I will be lifted up; now I will be elevated

This can be stated in active form. These two phrases have basically the same meaning and emphasize Yahweh being exalted. Alternate translation: "now I will exalt myself and show that I deserve for everyone to honor me"

Isaiah 33:11

You conceive chaff, and you give birth to stubble

This speaks of the Assyrians making plans as if they were conceiving and giving birth to their plans as a mother gives birth to a baby. This speaks of their plans being useless by comparing them to chaff. Alternate translation: "You make plans that are as useless as chaff and straw"

stubble

The dry pieces of plants that are left in the ground after the stalks have been cut.

your breath is a fire that will consume you

Here the Assyrians' plans are referred to as their "breath." This speaks of their plans causing them to die as if their plans would literally burn up their bodies. Alternate translation: "your plans will cause you to die"

Isaiah 33:12

The peoples will be burned to lime, as thornbushes are cut down and are burned

This compares how the peoples' dead bodies will be burned to the way thornbushes are burned. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Fire will burn the peoples' bodies to lime in the same way that a farmer cuts down thornbushes and burns them"

lime

the ashes from burned bones

Isaiah 33:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak.

You who are far away, hear what I have done; and, you who are near, acknowledge my might

Yahweh uses the words "far away" and "near" to mean all people. The word "might" can be expressed with the adjective "mighty." Alternate translation: "All people everywhere hear what I have done and acknowledge that I am mighty"

Isaiah 33:14

trembling has seized the godless ones

This speaks of the godless people trembling as if their trembling were an enemy that had seized them. Alternate translation: "the godless ones are overwhelmed with trembling"

Who among us ... burnings?

It is implied that the sinners in Zion ask these questions. Alternate translation: "They say, 'Who among us ... burnings?'"

Who among us can sojourn with a raging fire? Who among us can sojourn with everlasting burnings?

These rhetorial questions have basically the same meaning and emphasize that no one can live with fire. Here fire represents Yahweh's judgment. Alternate translation: "No one can live with raging fire! No one can sojourn where things are always burning!" or "No one can live bearing Yahweh's judgment, it is like an everlasting fire!"

sojourn

live in a place that is not one's home

everlasting burnings

"things that never stop burning"

Isaiah 33:15

He who walks

Here walking refers to living. Alternate translation: "He who lives"

who despises the gain of oppression

The noun phrase "the gain of oppression" can be expressed as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "who hates the riches that come from harming other people"

Isaiah 33:16

this is the man who will dwell on the heights, his stronghold will be the fortress among the cliffs

This speaks of the man being safe as if he lived in a home on a high hill. These two phrase are parallel and the second phrase describes the place where the man lives. Alternate translation: "he will be safe, like a man who home is built on a high hill, in a rocky place that is easy to defend"

the heights

This refers to a high hill or mountainside. Alternate translation: "the high hill" or "the mountainside"

the fortress among the cliffs

This speaks of rocky areas that are easy to defend as if they were actually fortresses. Alternate translation: "the large piles of rocks"

will be in steady supply

"will always be available"

Isaiah 33:17

Your eyes will see ... they will see

This refers the audience by their "eyes." Alternate translation: "You will see ... you will see"

the king in his beauty

The king's royal robes are referred to as "his beauty." Alternate translation: "the king in his beautiful robes"

Isaiah 33:18

Your heart will recall the terror

This refers to the audience by their "hearts." "The terror" refers to their war with the Assyrians. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You will remember the terror that the Assyrians caused you when they attacked"

where is the scribe, where is he who weighed the money? Where is he who counted the towers?

These rhetorical question are asked to emphasize that the

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Assyrian officials are gone. These questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "The officers of Assyria who counted the tax money that we were forced to pay to them have disappeared! Those men who counted our towers are gone!"

weighed the money

Money was valuable metal; its value was determined by its weight.

Isaiah 33:20

General Information:

Isaiah continues to speak to the people of Judah.

the city of our feasts

This means that they have their festival and feasts at this city. Alternate translation: "the city where we have our feasts" or "they city where we celebrate our festivals"

your eyes will see

The people are referred to by their "eyes" to emphasize what they are seeing. Alternate translation: "you will see"

a tent that will not be removed

This speaks of Zion being secure and well establish as if it were secure tent. This can be stated in active form and written as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "it will be secure, like a tent that no one will ever remove"

whose stakes will never be pulled up nor will any of its cords be broken

This is part of the metaphor that compares Zion to a secure tent. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose stakes no one will ever pull up and whose cords no one will ever break"

Isaiah 33:21

There Yahweh in majesty will be with us, in a place of broad rivers and streams

Here "us" refers to Isaiah and includes the people of Judah. This speaks of the safety of living with Yahweh as if it were a place that has rivers around it so that enemies cannot attack it. Alternate translation: "Yahweh who is majestic will be with us there, and we will be safe as if we were in a place surrounded by broad rivers"

Isaiah 33:22

our ... us

This refers to Isaiah and includes the people of Judah.

Isaiah 33:23

Your riggings are slack; they cannot hold the mast in place; they cannot spread the sail

Possible meanings: 1) The Assyrian army is like a boat that is unable to move through the water: the ropes that support the mast and sail have come loose and no longer support the mast, so the sail is useless

mast

tall poles that support the sail

sail

a large cloth that fills with wind and moves a boat through the water

when the plunder of abundant prey is divided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when they divide the plunder of abundant prey"

the plunder of abundant prey

"the plunder they can take from all of their victims"

the lame

This refers to people who are cannot walk. Alternate translation: "those who are lame"

Isaiah 33:24

the people who live there will be forgiven for their iniquity

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will forgive the sins of the people who live there"

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34 [1] Come near, you nations, and listen;
pay attention, you people!
The earth and all that fills it must listen,
the world and all its produce.

[2] For Yahweh is angry with all the nations,
and furious against all their armies;
he has completely destroyed them,
he has handed them over to the slaughter.

[3] The bodies of their dead will be thrown out.
The stench of the dead bodies will be everywhere;
and the mountains will soak up their blood.

[4] All the host of heaven will waste away,
and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll;
and all their stars will fade away,
as the leaf fades from off the vine,
and as the overripe figs from the fig tree.

[5] For when my sword will have drunk its fill in heaven;
look, it will now come down on Edom,
on the people I am setting apart for destruction.

[6] The sword of Yahweh is dripping with blood

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and covered with fat,
dripping with the blood of lambs and goats,
covered with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah
and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.

7 Wild oxen will fall with them,
and young bulls with the mighty ones.
Their land will be drunk with blood,
and their dust made fat with fatness.

8 For it will be a day of vengeance for Yahweh
and a year when he will pay them back for the cause of Zion.

9 The streams of Edom will be turned into pitch,
her dust into sulfur,
and her land will become burning pitch.

10 It will burn night and day;
its smoke will rise forever;
from generation to generation it will be a wasteland;
no one will pass through it forever and ever.

11 But wild birds and animals will live there;
the owl and the raven will make their nest in it.
He will stretch over it the measuring line of ruin
and the plumbline of destruction.

12 Her nobles will have nothing left to call a kingdom,
and all her princes will be nothing.

13 Thorns will overgrow her palaces,
nettles and thistles her fortresses.
It will be a habitation of jackals,
a place for ostriches.

14 The wild animals of the desert and the hyenas will meet there,
and the wild goats will cry to one another.
Nocturnal animals will settle there
and find for themselves a resting place.

15 Owls will make nests, lay and hatch their eggs,
hatch and protect their young.
Yes, there hawks will gather,
each one with its mate.

16 Search through the scroll of Yahweh;
not one of these will be missing.
None will lack for a mate; for his mouth has commanded it,
and his spirit has gathered them.

17 He has cast lots for their places,
and his hand has measured it out for them by a cord.
They will possess it forever;
from generation to generation they will live there.

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Isaiah 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Destruction

There are many images used in this chapter which describe destruction. Here each of these metaphors describes complete destruction.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Prophecy

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and prophet and fulfill)

Links:

[Isaiah 34:1 Notes]

Isaiah 34:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking in poetry.

The earth and all that fills it must listen, the world and all its produce

Here the earth is spoken of as being required to listen to Yahweh to emphasize that it is under Yahweh's authority. These two parallel phrases are metonyms for all the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "In all places everywhere on earth, everyone must listen to what I say"

the world and all its produce

This is the second of two parallel phrases. The understood words may be supplied in this phrase. Alternate translation: "the world and all things that come from it must listen"

Isaiah 34:2

he has completely destroyed them, he has handed them over to the slaughter

Often prophets speak of things that will happen in the future as if they have already happened. This emphasizes the event will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "he will completely destroy them, he will give them over to the slaughter"

Isaiah 34:3

The bodies of their dead will be thrown out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will bury their dead"

their dead

This refers to the dead people. Alternate translation: "those who died"

the mountains will soak up their blood

"the mountains will be covered in their blood"

Isaiah 34:4

the host of heaven

The stars in the sky are spoken of as an army.

the sky will be rolled up like a scroll

This can be stated in active form. This compares what Yahweh will do to the sky to a person rolling up a scroll. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will roll up the sky in the same way that a person rolls up a scroll"

all their stars will fade away, as the leaf fades from off the vine, and as the overripe figs from the fig tree

This emphasizes even the things in the sky that people thought would be there forever will fall as easily as a leaf. Alternate translation: "all the stars will fall from the sky like a leaf falls from a vine or a fig falls from a tree"

Isaiah 34:5

when my sword will have drunk its fill in heaven

Yahweh describes himself as a warrior bearing a sword. The phrase "drunk its fill" speaks of Yahweh's sword as if it were a person who has eaten and become satisfied. Yahweh uses this imagery to emphasize that there will be a lot of destruction in heaven and to state its completion. Alternate translation: "when I am finished destroying things in heaven"

look

This word is used here to draw the listener's attention and to have them imagine the things being said. Alternate translation: "listen" or "and then"

it will now come down on Edom, on the people I am setting apart for destruction

The word "it" refers to Yahweh's sword. This continues the metaphor about Yahweh destroying things with a sword. Alternate translation: "I will come to punish the people of Edom, the people whom I have set aside for me to destroy"

on Edom

Edom refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "on the people of Edom"

Isaiah 34:6

The sword of Yahweh is dripping with blood and covered with fat ... of rams

This speaks of Yahweh killing the people as if he were a priest sacrificing animals. He does this by describing the sword of a priest. Alternate translation: "Yahweh sacrifices them as a priest sacrifices animals, whose sword drips with the blood and fat of lambs, goats, and rams"

For Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom

The words "sacrifice" and "slaughter" may be expressed here as verbs. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh will sacrifice many people in Bozrah and kill many people in

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the land of Edom"

Bozrah

This is an important city in Edom.

Isaiah 34:7

will fall

"will die"

young bulls with the mighty ones

"both young bulls and mighty bulls" or "both weak and strong bulls"

Their land will be drunk with blood

This describes the amount of blood that will soak into the ground by comparing the land to a drunk person. Alternate translation: "Their land will be soaked with blood"

their dust made fat with fatness

Here "dust" means the dirt on the ground. This describes the amount of fat that will soak into the dirt by comparing it to a person that has become fat from eating so much animal fat. Alternate translation: "the dirt will be full of the fat of the animals"

Isaiah 34:8

it will be a day of vengeance for Yahweh

Here "day" is an idiom for a point in time; it is not a literal "day." Alternate translation: "it will be the time when Yahweh gets revenge"

he will pay them back for the cause of Zion

This means that he will take revenge on them for how they had previously waged war against the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "he will give them the punishment they deserve for what they had done to the people of Zion"

Isaiah 34:9

The streams of Edom will be turned into pitch ... become burning pitch

The water and land becoming useless for drinking or growing food because it is burnt and covered in pitch and sulfur is spoken of as if their streams and land will actually become pitch and sulfur. Alternate translation: "The streams in Edom will be full of pitch and the ground will be covered with burning sulfur and burning pitch"

her dust ... her land

"Edom's dust ... Edom's land"

pitch

a thick, black substance that burns for a long time

Isaiah 34:10

It will burn night and day

This means all of the time. Alternate translation: "It will burn throughout the night and the day" or "It will burn constantly, all night and all day"

from generation to generation

The phrase "generation to generation" refers to all generations of people who will live in the future. See how you translated this phrase in [Isaiah 13:20]

Isaiah 34:11

will live there

"will live in the land of Edom"

owl

See how you translated this in Isaiah 13:21.

raven

This is a large black bird. It is difficult to identify some of the precise kinds of birds mentioned in this passage. However, they were all birds that preferred to live in places where there were no people, so they symbolize deserted places.

in it

"there." This refers to Edom.

He will stretch over it the measuring line of ruin and the plumbline of destruction

This speaks of Yahweh as if he were a careful builder as he causes destruction in Edom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will measure that land carefully; he will measure it to to decide where to cause ruin and destruction"

measuring line ... plumbline

These are builders' tools. See how you translated similar words in Isaiah 28:17.

Isaiah 34:12

Her nobles ... her princes

"The nobles of Edom ... the princes of Edom"

all her princes will be nothing

This exaggerates the princes losing their royal status by saying that they will become nothing. Alternate translation: "all her princes will no longer rule"

Isaiah 34:13

Thorns ... nettles ... thistles

These are all weeds with thorns. Nettles' thorns have poison that causes itching.

jackals

Translate the name of this animal the same as you did in Isaiah 13:22.

ostriches

Translate the name of this animal the same as you did in Isaiah 13:21.

Isaiah 34:14

wild animals of the desert

Translate this the same as you did in Isaiah 13:21.

hyenas

Translate the name of this animal as you did in Isaiah 13:22.

Nocturnal animals

animals that are awake and active at night

Isaiah 34:15

Owls

Translate this word the same as you did in Isaiah 13:21.

hawks

birds that kill small animals for food

Isaiah 34:16

Search through the scroll of Yahweh

The phrase "the scroll of Yahweh" means that it contains the messages spoken by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Read carefully what is written in this scroll that contains the messages of Yahweh"

not one of these

"not one of the animals"

None will lack for a mate

"Each will have a mate"

for his mouth has commanded it

Yahweh is referred to by his "mouth" to emphasize what he has said. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh has commanded it"

Isaiah 34:17

He has cast lots for their places

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This speaks of Yahweh deciding where to cause the animals to live as if he actually cast lots for their places. Alternate translation: "He has determined where they will live"

his hand has measured it out for them by a cord

This refers to the way that people measured things in biblical times. Alternate translation: "he has given the animals their places"

from generation to generation they will

The phrase "generation to generation" refers to all generations of people who will live in the future. See how you translated the phrase "from generation to generation" in [Isaiah 13:20]

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1 35 The wilderness and the Arabah will be glad;
and the desert will rejoice and blossom.
Like the rose,

2 it will blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and joyful shouting;
the glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of Yahweh,
the splendor of our God.

3 Strengthen the weak hands,
and make steady the knees that shake.

4 Say to those with a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Look, your God will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God. He will come and save you."

5 Then the eyes of the blind will see,
and the ears of the deaf will hear.

6 Then the lame man will leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue will shout for joy,
for water breaks out in the Arabah,
and streams in the wilderness.

7 The burning sand will become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the place where jackals lived,
in their resting place, will be grass with reeds and rushes.

8 A highway will be there called The Holy Way.
The unclean will not travel it.
But it will be for him who walks in it.
No fool will go on it.

9 No lion will be there, no ferocious beast will be on it;
they will not be found there,
but the redeemed will walk there.

10 The ransomed of Yahweh will return
and come with singing to Zion,
and everlasting joy will be on their heads;
gladness and joy will overtake them;
sorrow and sighing will flee away.

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Isaiah 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Reign of the Messiah

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. (See: restore and prophet and christ)

Links:

Isaiah 35:1 Notes

Isaiah 35:1

The wilderness and the Arabah will be glad; and the desert will rejoice

These two phrases have basically the same meaning. These places are described as being glad, like a person is glad, because they have received water and are blossoming. Alternate translation: "It will be like the wilderness and the Arabah are glad and the desert will rejoice"

blossom

This speaks of the plants in the desert blossoming as if the desert itself were blossoming. Alternate translation: "its plants will blossom"

Isaiah 35:2

it will blossom abundantly

This compares the way the plants of the desert blossom to the way a rose

and rejoice with joy and joyful shouting

This speaks of the desert as if it were happy and shouting joyfully like a person. Alternate translation: "it will be as though everything is rejoicing and shouting joyfully"

the glory of Lebanon will be given to it

This can be stated in active form. This speaks of Yahweh making the desert looks as glorious as Lebanon as if he were giving the desert Lebanon's glory. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will give it the glory of Lebanon" or "Yahweh will make it as glorious as Lebanon"

the splendor of Carmel and Sharon

This speaks of Yahweh making the desert look beautiful as Carmel and Sharon as if he were giving the desert their splendor. The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "the splendor of Carmel and Sharon will be given to it" or "Yahweh will make it as splendid as Carmel and Sharon"

the glory of Yahweh, the splendor of our God

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize Yahweh's appearance.

Isaiah 35:3

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking to the people of Judah.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make steady the knees that shake.

The words "weak hands" and "knees that shake" represent a person who is fearful. Alternate translation: "Strengthen those whose hands are weak and whose knees shake from fear"

Isaiah 35:4

those with a fearful heart

Here people are referred to by their hearts, which emphasize their inner feelings. Alternate translation: "to those who are fearful"

Look

This is used here to draw the listeners' attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns "vengeance" and "recompense" are expressed as the verb "punish." The words "vengeance" and "recompense" mean the same thing and emphasize that God will punish Judah's enemies. Alternate translation: "your God will punish your enemies for what they have done"

Isaiah 35:5

General Information:

These verses begin a description of the glorious future for God's people.

the eyes of the blind will see

"The blind" refers to people who are blind. They are referred to by their "eyes" to emphasize their healing. Alternate translation: "blind people will see"

the ears of the deaf will hear

"The deaf" refers to people who cannot hear. They are referred to by their "ears" to emphasize their healing. Alternate translation: "deaf people will hear"

Isaiah 35:6

the lame man will leap like a deer

Deer can jump far and high. Jumping like a deer is an exaggeration for being able to move about quickly and easily. Alternate translation: "the lame man will jump high"

the mute tongue will shout for joy

This refers to people who cannot speak. They are referred to by their "tongues" to emphasize their healing. Alternate translation: "mute people will shout for joy"

streams in the wilderness

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "streams will flow in the wilderness"

Isaiah 35:7

The burning sand will become a pool

This means that a pool of water will appear in the hot sand. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "A pool will appear in the burning sand"

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the thirsty ground
Here the dry ground is described as being thirsty. Alternate translation: "the dry ground"
the thirsty ground springs of water
This means that springs will appear in the dry ground. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "springs of water will appear in the thirsty ground"
jackals
See how you translated this in Isaiah 13:22.
reeds and rushes
These are plants that grow in wet areas.
Isaiah 35:8
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the glorious future for God's people.
A highway will be there called The Holy Way
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A highway will be there that has the name The Holy Way"
highway
See how you translated this word in Isaiah 11:16.
The unclean
This refers to unclean people. A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "Those who are unclean" or "People who are not acceptable to God"
him who walks in it
This is an idiom. Here "walking" refers to "living." This refers to the person who lives a holy life. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "who lives in the holy way" or "who lives a holy life"
Isaiah 35:9
they will not be found there
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will find them there"
the redeemed
This refers to people who God has redeemed. Alternate translation: "those who are redeemed" or "those who God has redeemed"
Isaiah 35:10
The ransomed of Yahweh
To "ransom" means to "rescue." This refers to people whom Yahweh has rescued. Alternate translation: "Those whom Yahweh has rescued"
everlasting joy will be on their heads
This uses a person's head to mean the person as a whole. Alternate translation: "they will have everlasting joy"
gladness and joy ... sorrow and sighing
The words "gladness" and "joy" mean basically the same thing, as do "sorrow" and "sighing." Together they emphasize the intensity of these emotions.
gladness and joy will overtake them
This speaks of the people being overwhelmed by gladness and joy by giving these emotions the human quality of being able to overtake someone by force. Alternate translation: "they will be overwhelmed by joy and gladness"
sorrow and sighing will flee away
This speaks of the people no longer being sorrowful and sighing by giving these emotions the human ability to run away. Alternate translation: "they will no longer be sorrowful and sighing"

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36 [1]In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.[2]Then the king of Assyria sent the chief commander from Lachish to Jerusalem to King Hezekiah with a great army. He approached the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway to the launderers' field, and stood by it.[3]The Israelite officials who went out of the city to talk with them were Hilkiah's son Eliakim, the palace administrator, Shebna the king's secretary, and Asaph's son Joah, who wrote down the government decisions.

[4]The chief commander said to them, "Tell Hezekiah that the great king, the king of Assyria, says, 'What is the source of your confidence?[5]You speak only useless words, saying there is counsel and strength for war. Now in whom are you trusting? Who has given you courage to rebel against me?
[6]Look, you are trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed that you use as a walking staff, but if a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt is to anyone who trusts in him.[7]But if you say to me, "We are trusting in Yahweh our God," is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, "You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem"?
[8]Now therefore, I want to make you a good offer from my master the king of Assyria. I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able to find riders for them.
[9]How could you resist even one captain of the least of my master's servants? You have put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen![10]Now then, have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this land and destroy it? Yahweh said to me, "Attack this land and destroy it."'"

[11]Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah said to the chief commander, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramean language, Aramaic, for we understand it. Do not speak with us in the language of Judah in the ears of the people who are on the wall."[12]But the chief commander said, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?"

[13]Then the chief commander stood and shouted in a loud voice in the language of Judah, saying, "Listen to the words of

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the great king, the king of Assyria.[14]The king says, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to rescue you.
[15]Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh, saying, "Yahweh will surely rescue us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."'
[16]Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and from his own fig tree, and drink from the water in his own cistern.[17]You will do this until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.'
[18]Do not let Hezekiah mislead you, saying, 'Yahweh will rescue us.' Has any of the gods of the peoples rescued them from the hand of the king of Assyria?[19]Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they rescued Samaria from my power?[20]Among all the gods of these lands, is there any god who has rescued his land from my power, as if Yahweh could save Jerusalem from my power?"

[21]But the people remained silent and did not respond, for the king's command was, "Do not answer him."[22]Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and reported to him the words of the chief commander.

Isaiah 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The previous chapters have been constructed as prophecy and contain many poetic elements. This chapter switches to a narrative and is a discussion between the officials from Assyria and Judah. To make the meaning clear here, it may be helpful to set apart the extended quotations by setting them farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Trust

The people of Judah were to trust in Yahweh because only he could provide them with protection. The people of Jerusalem were protected because they trusted in Yahweh. (See: trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The Assyrian commanders use rhetorical questions in this chapter to mock or insult Judah and their God, Yahweh.

Links:

Isaiah 36:1 Notes

Isaiah 36:1

the fourteenth year

"year 14"

King Hezekiah

See how you translated the name of this king in Isaiah 1:1.

Sennacherib

This is the name of the king of Assyria.

Sennacherib ... attacked all the fortified cities

Here Sennacherib represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "Sennacherib and his army ... attacked all the fortified cities"

Isaiah 36:2

the chief commander

Some versions of the Bible translate this as "the Rabshakeh." This is the Assyrian word for one of the highest ranking military leaders in Assyria.

Lachish

This is a city southwest of Jerusalem.

conduit

man-made ditch or tunnel through which water flows. See how you translated this in Isaiah 7:3.

the launderers' field

Possible meanings are 1) this is the proper name by which the people called the field or 2) this is the common noun that the people used to talk about the field, "the launderers' field" or "the field where men wash wool" or "the field where women wash clothes." See how you translated this in Isaiah 7:3.

the launderers' field

Launderer are either 1) men who wash wool that someone has cut from the sheep, "wool washers field," or 2) women who wash dirty clothes, "clothes washers field." See how you translated this in Isaiah 7:3.

Isaiah 36:3

Hilkiah ... Eliakim

See how you translated these men's names in [Isaiah 22:20]

Shebna

See how you translated this man's name in [Isaiah 22:15]

Asaph ... Joah

These are names of men.

Isaiah 36:4

said to them

"said to Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah"

What is the source of your confidence?

The king of Assyria uses this question to challenge Hezekiah and to say that he does not have a good source for

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confidence. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have no reliable source for your confidence."

Isaiah 36:5

there is counsel and strength for war

"you have the council and the strength to go to war." The phrase "strength for war" refers to having a large enough and strong enough army with weapons. Alternate translation: "you have enough military council, strong men, and weapons to go to war"

Now in whom are you trusting? Who has given you courage to rebel against me?

The king of Assyria uses questions to ridicule Hezekiah for believing he has the strength to rebel. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No matter in whom you trust, you will not have the courage to rebel against me."

Isaiah 36:6

General Information:

This continues the king of Assyria's message to Hezekiah. The chief commander is speaking the message to Hezekiah's men (Isaiah 36:4-5).

Look

Sennacherib uses this word to draw Hezekiah's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

trusting in Egypt

Here "Egypt" refers to the Egyptian army. Alternate translation: "trusting in the Egyptian army"

that splintered reed that you use as a walking staff, but if a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce it

This speaks of Egypt, specifically its army and its Pharaoh, as if it were a splintered reed to emphasize that relying on them would not help them but would only harm them. Alternate translation: "that is like walking with a splintered reed for a staff. If a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce it"

splintered reed

A reed is the long, thin stem of a plant like tall grass. If it is splintered or damaged it cannot carry any weight.

walking staff

This is a stick that someone would use for support when walking, made of whatever kind of tree limb that is found along the way.

Isaiah 36:7

is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away ... Jerusalem"?

The king of Assyria uses this question to ridicule the people and to imply that Yahweh was angry about what Hezekiah did and would not protect them. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "he is the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away ... Jerusalem." or "he is the one whom Hezekiah insulted by tearing down his high places and altars ... Jerusalem."

has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, "You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem"?

This can be written as an indirect quote. "Judah" and "Jerusalem" refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "has told the people of Judah and Jerusalem that they must worship only at this altar in Jerusalem."

Isaiah 36:8

General Information:

This continues the king of Assyria's message to Hezekiah by speaking the message to Hezekiah's men (Isaiah 36:4-5).

two thousand horses

"2,000 horses"

if you are able to find riders for them

The chief commander continues to ridicule Hezekiah and his army by implying that he did not have many soldiers.

Isaiah 36:9

General Information:

This continues the king of Assyria's message to Hezekiah by speaking the message to Hezekiah's men (Isaiah 36:4-5).

How could you resist even one captain ... servants?

The chief commander continues to ridicule Hezekiah and his army. When he says "you," referring to Hezekiah, he is actually referring to Hezekiah's army. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your army could not even defeat one captain ... servants."

Isaiah 36:10

Now then, have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this land and destroy it?

The chief commander uses another question to ridicule Hezekiah and the people of Judah. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I came here with Yahweh's command to destroy Jerusalem."

without Yahweh

Here "Yahweh" refers to Yahweh's orders. Alternate translation: "without Yahweh's command"

against this land and destroy it ... Attack this land and destroy it

This means to fight against the people and cause destruction in the place where they live. The land referred to here is Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "against this people and destroy their land ... Attack these people and destroy their land"

Isaiah 36:11

Eliakim ... Hilkiah ... Shebnah

See how you translated these men's names in Isaiah 22:20.

Shebnah

See how you translated this man's name in Isaiah 22:15.

Joah

See how you translated this man's name in Isaiah 36:3

chief commander

See how you translated this in Isaiah 36:2.

Please speak to your servants

Eliakim, Shebnah, and Joah refer to themselves as the chief commander's servants. This is a polite way to speak to someone who has greater authority.

the Aramean language, Aramaic

"Aramean" is the name of a people group. "Aramaic" is the name of their language.

in the ears of the people who are on the wall

The idiom "to speak in someone's ear" means to speak where they can hear you. Alternate translation: "where the people who are on the wall may hear us"

who are on the wall

This means that they are standing on the wall. The top of the wall was wide and a place where people could sit or

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stand. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "who are standing on the wall"
Isaiah 36:12
Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words?
The chief commander uses this question to emphasize that his message is for all the people of Judah. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly, my master has sent me to speak this message to you and to all who can hear."
Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to ... you?
The chief commander uses this question to emphasize his insult. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "My master has sent me to everyone who hears this, who will have to ... you."
will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you
This is a very offensive statement. He is implying that they will need to eat these things because they will have nothing else to eat because their city will be under attack. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "will soon need to eat their own dung and drink their own urine, just as you will, because you will have nothing else to eat"
Isaiah 36:13
the chief commander
See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 36:2.
Isaiah 36:15
this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not give Jerusalem into the hand of the king of Assyria"
the hand of the king
The king's "hand" refers to his "control." Alternate translation: "the control of the king"
Isaiah 36:16
General Information:
The chief commander continues speaking to the people of Judah.
Make peace with me
This idiom means to agree officially to act peacefully towards one another. Alternate translation: "Let us agree to have peace"
come out to me
This idiom means to surrender. Alternate translation: "surrender to me"
Isaiah 36:17
until I come and take
Here the king of Assyria is referring to his army as himself. Alternate translation: "until my army comes and takes"
a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards
These two phrase have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize how prosperous the land will be.
a land of grain ... a land of bread
This means that they land is full of natural resources, such as grain. Alternate translation: "a land where there is plenty of grain ... a land where there is plenty of bread"
Isaiah 36:18
General Information:
The chief commander continues speaking the king of Assyria's message to the people of Judah (Isaiah 36:16).
Has any of the gods of the peoples rescued them from ... Assyria?
The chief commander uses this question to ridicule the people of Judah. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "None of the gods of the peoples rescued them from ... Assyria."
the hand of the king
The king's control is referred to as his "hand." Alternate translation: "the control of the king"
Isaiah 36:19
Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they rescued Samaria from my power?
The chief commander uses these questions to ridicule the people of Judah. These questions may be combined and written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The gods of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, and Samaria did not rescue their people from my power."
Hamath ... Arpad
Translate the names of these cities the same as you did in [Isaiah 10:9]
Sepharvaim
This is the name of a city.
Isaiah 36:20
is there any god who has rescued ... as if Yahweh could save Jerusalem from my power?
The chief commander uses this question to ridicule the people of Judah. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "there is no god who has rescued ... and Yahweh will not save you in Jerusalem from my power."
his land
This refers to the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "his people"
Isaiah 36:22
Eliakim ... Hilkiah ... Shebna ... Joah ... Asaph
Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [Isaiah 36:3]
over the household
This idiom means that he was in charge of the affairs of the palace household. Alternate translation: "in charge of the palace"
with their clothes torn
Hezekiah's officials tore their clothes as a sign of mourning and distress. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "with their clothes torn because they were extremely distressed"

37 [1]It came about that when King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Yahweh.[2]He sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, all covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet.
[3]They said to him, "Hezekiah says, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace, like when a child is ready to be born, but the mother has no strength to give birth to her child.[4]It may be Yahweh your God will hear the words of the chief

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commander, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to defy the living God, and will rebuke the words which Yahweh your God has heard. Now lift up your prayer for the remnant that is still here.'"

5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah,6 and Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master: 'Yahweh says, "Do not be
afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me.7 Look, I will put
a spirit in him, and he will hear a rumor and go back to his own land. I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own
land."'"

8 Then the chief commander returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the
king had gone away from Lachish.9 Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized to fight
against him, so he sent messengers again to Hezekiah with a message:10 "Say to Hezekiah, king of Judah, 'Do not let your
God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria."
11 See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them completely. So will you be
rescued?12 Have the gods of the nations rescued them, the nations that my fathers destroyed: Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and
the people of Eden in Tel Assar?13 Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, of
Hena, and Ivvah?'"

14 Hezekiah received this letter from the hand of the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the house of Yahweh and
spread it before him.15 Hezekiah prayed to Yahweh:16 "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, you who sit above the cherubim, you
are God alone over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth.
17 Turn your ear, Yahweh, and listen. Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has
sent to mock the living God.18 It is true, Yahweh, the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the nations and their lands.
19 They have put their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, just wood and stone. So the
Assyrians have destroyed them.20 So now, Yahweh our God, save us from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth
may know that you are Yahweh alone."

21 Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah, saying, "Yahweh, the God of Israel says, 'Because you have prayed
to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria,22 this is the word that Yahweh has spoken about him:
"The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and mocks you;
the daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head at you.
23 Whom have you defied and insulted?
Against whom have you exalted your voice
and lifted up your eyes in pride?
Against the Holy One of Israel.

24 By your servants you have defied the Lord
and have said, 'With the multitude of my chariots
I have gone up to the heights of the mountains,
to the highest elevations of Lebanon.
I will cut down its tall cedars
and choice cypress trees there,
and I will enter into its farthest high places,
its most fruitful forest.

25 I have dug wells and drunk water;1
I dried up all the rivers of Egypt under the soles of my feet.'

26 Have you not heard
how I determined it long ago
and worked it out in ancient times?
Now I am bringing it to pass.
You are here to reduce impregnable cities
into heaps of ruins.

27 Their inhabitants, of little strength,
are dismayed and ashamed.
They are plants in the field, green grass,

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the grass on the roof or in the field,
before the east wind.

28 But I know your sitting down, your going out,
your coming in, and your raging against me.

29 Because of your raging against me,
and because your arrogance has reached my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose, and my bit in your mouth;
I will turn you back the way you came."

30 This will be the sign for you:
This year you will eat what grows wild,
and in the second year what grows from that.
But in the third year you must plant and harvest,
plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
31 The remnant of the house of Judah that survives
will again take root and bear fruit.

32 For from Jerusalem a remnant will come out;
from Mount Zion an escaped remnant will come.
The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.'"

33 Therefore Yahweh says this about the king of Assyria:
"He will not come into this city
and he will not shoot an arrow here.
He will not come before it with shield
or build up a siege ramp against it.
34 The way by which he came will be the same way he will leave;
he will not enter this city—this is Yahweh's declaration.

35 For I will defend this city and rescue it
for my own sake and for the sake of David my servant."

36 Then the angel of Yahweh went out and attacked the camp of the Assyrians, putting to death 185,000 soldiers. When the men arose early in the morning, dead bodies lay everywhere. 37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria left Israel and went home and stayed in Nineveh.
38 Later, as he was worshiping in the house of Nisrok his god, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword. Then they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

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[1] Some ancient and modern translations have I have dug wells and drunk water in foreign lands.

Isaiah 37 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 37:22-38.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tearing clothes and putting on sackcloth

This was a sign of great distress. While it is often accompanies repentance, in this chapter it is intended to show the king's anger at the blasphemy of the Assyrians when they spoke against Yahweh. (See: sign and repent and blasphemy)

Prayer

Hezekiah was different from the other kings because when he was threatened by Assyria, he went to Yahweh in prayer. He did not trust in his army or make an alliance with Egypt. (See: trust)

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Links:

Isaiah 37:1 Notes

Isaiah 37:1

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth

This is a sign of mourning and distress. Alternate translation: "he tore his clothes and covered himself with sackcloth because he was very distressed"

Isaiah 37:2

Eliakim ... Shebna

Translate the names of these men the same as you did in [Isaiah 36:3]

over the household

This is an idiom that means that he was in charge of the affairs of the palace household. Alternate translation: "in charge of the palace"

all covered with sackcloth

This is a sign of mourning and distress.

Isaiah 37:3

They said to him

"The men sent by Hezekiah said to Isaiah"

like when a child is ready to be born, but the mother has no strength to give birth to her child

This comparison is made to emphasizes that they are in a time of extreme difficulty. Alternate translation: "It is as terrible as the day when a child is ready to be born, but the mother has no strength to give birth to her child"

Isaiah 37:4

It may be Yahweh your God will hear the words

Hezekiah is indirectly suggesting that if the people pray Yahweh may listen and act upon what the chief commander had said. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Maybe if you pray to Yahweh your God will hear the message"

the chief commander

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 36:2.

his master

This phrase means that the king is the chief commander's master.

will rebuke the words which Yahweh your God has heard

Here the phrase "the words which Yahweh your God has heard" refers to what the king of Assyria had said. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God will rebuke the king of Assyria for what he has said"

lift up your prayer

Praying to Yahweh is described this way to emphasize that Yahweh is in heaven. A prayer is spoken of as if they were objects that could be lifted high into the sky. Alternate translation: "pray"

for the remnant that is still here

This refers to the people who are left in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "for the few of us that are still here"

Isaiah 37:7

I will put a spirit in him, and he will hear a rumor and go back to his own land

The phrase "put a spirit in him" means that God will influence him to make a specific decision. The word "spirit" here means a strong attitude or feeling. Alternate translation: "he will hear a rumor, and when he does, I will cause him to go back to his own land"

Look

This word is used here to draw the peoples' attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land

The phrase "fall by the sword" is an idiom that means that his enemy will kill him with a sword. Alternate translation: "And there in his own land, I will cause his enemies to kill him with their swords"

Isaiah 37:8

Lachish

See how you translated the name of this city in [Isaiah 36:2]

Libnah

This is a city in southern Judah.

Isaiah 37:9

Sennacherib

See how you translated this man's name in [Isaiah 36:1]

Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized to fight against him

"Tirhakah" is the name of a man. He had mobilized his army so that they were ready to fight. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized his army"

to fight against him

The word "him" represents Sennacherib. Here Sennacherib represents his army. Alternate translation: "to fight against the army of Sennacherib"

Isaiah 37:10

Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria

This can be stated in active form. The word "hand" refers to the king's military power. Alternate translation: "The king of Assyria and his army will not conquer you in Jerusalem"

Isaiah 37:11

General Information:

This continues the king of Assyria's message to Hezekiah.

See, you have heard

The word "see" here is used to add emphasis to what is said next. Alternate translation: "You have certainly heard"

So will you be rescued?

The king of Assyria uses this question to ridicule Hezekiah and his army. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "So you too will not be saved." or "So of course no one will rescue you either!"

Isaiah 37:12

Have the gods of the nations rescued them ... Tel Assar?

The king of Assyria uses this question to ridicule Hezekiah and his army. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The nations' god did not rescue the nations that my fathers destroyed ... Tel Assar!"

that my fathers destroyed

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These men destroyed the cities listed by conquering them with their armies. Here the word "fathers" refers to his father and his other ancestors who were kings. Alternate translation: "that my fathers destroyed with their armies"

Gozan ... Haran ... Rezeph ... Eden ... Tel Assar

These are places that the Assyrians had conquered.

Isaiah 37:13

Hena ... Ivvah

These are places that the Assyrians had conquered.

Where is the king ... Ivvah?

The king of Assyria uses this question to ridicule Hezekiah and his army. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We also conquered the king ... Ivvah!"

Hamath ... Arpad ... Sepharvaim

Translate the names of these cities the same as you did in Isaiah 36:19.

Isaiah 37:14

from the hand of the messengers

Here the messengers are referred to by their "hand" to emphasize that they personally gave it to the king. Alternate translation: "that the messengers gave him"

he went up to the house of Yahweh

The house of Yahweh was at the highest place in Jerusalem, so it is spoken of as "up."

spread it before him

"spread out the letter in front of Yahweh." Being in the house of Yahweh is considered the same as being in Yahweh's presence. The letter was a scroll that could be unrolled and spread out.

Isaiah 37:16

you who sit above the cherubim

You may need to make explicit that the cherubim are those on the lid of the ark of the covenant. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: "you who sit on your throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant"

you are God alone

"only you are God"

over all the kingdoms

This idiom means to have authority and to rule over all the kingdoms. Alternate translation: "have authority over all the kingdoms"

You made the heavens and the earth

This means that he created everything. Alternate translation: "You made everything"

Isaiah 37:17

General Information:

Hezekiah continues praying to Yahweh.

which he has sent

Hezekiah is referring to the letter from Sennacherib. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "in the message he has sent"

Turn your ear

"Incline your ear" or "Turn your head." This means to turn your head so that you can hear something better.

Sennacherib

See how you translated this man's name in [Isaiah 36:1]

Isaiah 37:18

all the nations and their lands

This is a generalization. The kings had destroyed many of the nearby lands, but not necessarily all lands. Alternate translation: "many of the nations and their lands"

Isaiah 37:19

General Information:

Hezekiah continues praying to Yahweh.

for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, just wood and stone

This emphasizes that humans made these idols with their own hands and are therefore worthless. Alternate translation: "because they were false gods that men made out of wood and stone"

Isaiah 37:20

from his power

"from the king of Assyria's power"

all the kingdoms

This refers to the people in the kingdoms. Alternate translation: "all the people in the kingdoms"

you are Yahweh alone

"only you, Yahweh, are God"

Isaiah 37:21

sent a message

This means that he sent a messenger to give a message to the king. Alternate translation: "sent someone to give a message"

Isaiah 37:22

is the word that Yahweh has spoken

"is what Yahweh has said"

shakes her head

This is a gesture of scorn.

The virgin daughter of Zion ... the daughter of Jerusalem

These are idioms. Both of these phrases have the same meaning. The "daughter" of a city means the people who live in the city. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 1:8]

Isaiah 37:23

Whom have you defied and insulted? ... Against the Holy One of Israel.

Yahweh uses these rhetorical questions to ridicule the king of Assyria. These can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You have defied and insulted Yahweh, you have shouted at and acted pridefully against the Holy One of Israel!"

have you exalted your voice

This refers to speaking loudly as if the person's voice were an object that they lifted high. Alternate translation: "have you shouted"

lifted up your eyes in pride

This is an idiom that means to look at something pridefully, considering yourself more important that you should. Alternate translation: "looked at pridefully" or "acted pridefully"

Isaiah 37:24

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to the king of Assyria.

By your servants

This refers to to the servants that he had sent to Hezekiah with a message. This can be stated clearly. Alternate

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translation: "In the messages you sent with your servants"

I have gone ... I will cut ... I will enter

Here Sennacherib speaks of himself conquering many things. He is actually conquering them with the armies and chariots that he commands. Alternate translation: "We have gone ... We will cut ... we will enter"

its tall cedars

"Lebanon's tall cedars"

its most fruitful forest

Here the word "fruitful" refers to the forest being dense and full of healthy trees. The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "and into its most fruitful forest"

Isaiah 37:25

I have dug ... I dried ... my feet

Here Sennacherib speaks of himself conquering many things. He is actually conquering them with the armies and chariots that he commands. Alternate translation: "We have dug ... we dried ... our feet"

I dried up all the rivers of Egypt under the soles of my feet

Here Sennachrib is exaggerating his conquest and travels across the rivers of Egypt by claiming to have dried up the rivers when he marched his army through them. Alternate translation: "I have marched through all the rivers of Egypt as if they were dry under my feet"

Isaiah 37:26

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to the king of Assyria.

Have you not heard how ... times?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to remind Sennacherib of information that he should already be aware of. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly you have heard how ... times."

You are here to reduce impregnable cities into heaps of ruins

Yahweh had planned for Sennacherib's army to destroy the cities that they had destroyed. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I planned that your army would destroy cities and cause them to become piles of rubble"

impregnable

strong and heavily guarded

I am bringing it to pass

The idiom "to bring something to pass" means to cause a specific thing to happen. Alternate translation: "I am causing it to happen" or "I am causing these things to take place"

Isaiah 37:27

of little strength

"who are weak"

They are plants in the field, green grass, the grass on the roof or in the field, before the east wind

This speaks of how weak and vulnerable the cities are before the Assryian army by comparing the cities to grass. Alternate translation: "The cities are as weak as the grass in the fields before your armies. They are as weak as the grass that grows on the roofs of houses and is scorched by the hot east wind"

before the east wind

The east wind is hot and dry from the desert and plants die when it blows.

Isaiah 37:28

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to the king of Assyria.

But I know your sitting down, your going out, your coming in

This refers to all activities of life. Alternate translation: "I know everything you do"

and your raging against me

The word "raging" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "how you rage against me"

Isaiah 37:29

your arrogance

Here the king's "arrogance" refers to his arrogant speech. Alternate translation: "your arrogant speech"

your arrogance has reached my ears

This speaks of Yahweh hearing the king's speech as if the king's speech were something that traveled to his ear. Alternate translation: "I have heard you speaking arrogantly"

I will put my hook in your nose, and my bit in your mouth

A person uses a hook and bit to lead an animal around. This speaks of Yahweh controlling the king as if the king were an animal Yahweh controlled with a bit and hook. Alternate translation: "I will control you like a man controls his animal by place a hook in its nose and a bit in its mouth"

I will turn you back the way you came

This refers to causing the king to return to his own home country. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "I will force you to return to your own country"

Isaiah 37:30

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to Hezekiah (Isaiah 37:21).

sign for you

"sign for you, Hezekiah." Here "you" is singular and refers to Hezekiah.

you will eat ... you must plant

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Judah.

in the second year what grows

This describes what the people will eat. The words "you will eat" are understood from the previous phrase Alternate translation: "in the second year you will eat what grows" or "next year you will eat what grows"

what grows from that

"what grows wild from that" or "what grows wild"

in the third year

This refers to the year after the second year. Alternate translation: "the year after that" or "in the following year"

Isaiah 37:31

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to Hezekiah.

remnant

A "remnant" is a part of something that remains after the rest is gone. Here this refers to the people who are left in Judah.

the house of Judah

Here Judah's "house" refers to his descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Judah"

will again take root and bear fruit

This speaks of the people of Judah becoming prosperous as

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if they were plants that would root and bear fruit. Alternate translation: "will prosper like a plant that takes root and produces fruit"

Isaiah 37:32

The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this

This speaks of Yahweh doing something because of his zeal as if his "zeal" were actually doing the action. Alternate translation: "Because of his zeal, Yahweh of hosts will do this" or "Yahweh of hosts will do this because of his zeal"

Isaiah 37:33

He will not come ... He will not come

Here the Assyrian king refers to both him and his army. Alternate translation: "His army will not come ... They will not come"

with shield

"with shields"

siege ramp

a large mound of dirt built against the wall of a city that better enables an army to attach the city

Isaiah 37:34

he came ... he will not enter

Here the Assyrian king refers to both him and his army. Alternate translation: "they came ... they will not enter"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

Isaiah 37:35

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

for my own sake and for the sake of David my servant

"so that things will be better for me and for my servant David"

Isaiah 37:36

putting to death

This idiom means to kill. Alternate translation: "killing"

185,000 soldiers

"one hundred and eighty-five thousand soldiers"

Isaiah 37:37

Sennacherib king of Assyria left Israel and went home and stayed in Nineveh

Here Sennacherib refers to both him and his army. They all left Israel and returned home to Assryia. Sennacherib returned to the city Nineveh. Alternate translation: "Sennacherib and his army left Israel and went home, and Sennacherib stayed in Nineveh"

Sennacherib

See how you translated this man's name in [Isaiah 36:1]

Isaiah 37:38

as he was worshiping

"as Sennacherib was worshiping"

Nisrok

This is the name of a false god.

Adrammelek ... Sharezer ... Esarhaddon

These are the names of men.

with the sword

"with their swords"

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38 [1]In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying. So Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet, came to him, and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Set your house in order; for you will die, not live.'"[2]Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to Yahweh.[3]He said, "Please, Yahweh, I beg you, call to mind how I have faithfully walked before you with my whole heart, and how I have done what was good in your sight." Then Hezekiah wept loudly.
[4]Then the word of Yahweh came to Isaiah, saying,[5]"Go and say to Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what Yahweh, the God of David your ancestor, says: I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears. See, I am about to add fifteen years to your life.[6]Then I will rescue you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city.
[7]This will be the sign to you from Yahweh, that I will do what I have promised.[8]Look, I will cause the shadow on the stairs of Ahaz to go back ten steps.'" So the shadow went back ten steps of the stairs on which it had advanced.

[9]This was the written prayer of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick and then recovered:

[10] "I said that halfway through my life
I will go through the gates of Sheol;
I am sent there for the rest of my years.

[11] I said that I will no longer see Yah,
Yah in the land of the living;[1]
I will no longer look on mankind
or the inhabitants of the world.[2]

[12] My dwelling place is removed
and carried away from me like a shepherd's tent;
I have rolled up my life like a weaver;
you are cutting me off from the loom;
between day and night you are ending my life.

[13] I cried out[3] until the morning;
like a lion he breaks all my bones.
Between day and night you are ending my life.

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14 Like a swallow I chirp;
I coo like a dove;
my eyes grow tired with looking upward.
Lord, I am oppressed; help me.

15 What can I say?
He has both spoken to me, and has done it;
I will walk slowly all my years
because of the bitterness of my soul.

16 Lord, the sufferings you send are good for me;
may my life be given back to me;
you have restored my life and health.

17 It was for my benefit
that I experienced such bitterness.
You have rescued me from the pit of destruction;
for you have thrown all my sins behind your back.

18 For Sheol does not thank you;
death does not praise you;
those who go down into the pit
do not hope in your trustworthiness.

19 The living person, the living person,
he is the one who gives you thanks, as I do this day;
a father makes known to children
your trustworthiness.

20 Yahweh is about to save me,
and we will celebrate with music
all the days of our lives in the house of Yahweh."

21 Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a lump of figs and put it on the boil, and he will recover."22 Hezekiah also had said, "What will be the sign that I should go up to the house of Yahweh?"

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1 Yah is a short form of the name Yahweh.
2 the inhabitants of the world: Most modern translations have this meaning. Ancient Hebrew copies have the inhabitants of the place of non-existence (that is, brief existence).
3 The Hebrew could be read: I cried out or I calmed myself.

Isaiah 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 38:10-20.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Poetry

This chapter is written as a narrative, but the section including Hezekiah's prayer is written as poetry. The tone of this prayer shifts from sorrow to praise.

Links:

Isaiah 38:1 Notes

Isaiah 38:1
Set your house in order

This means to prepare your family and those in charge of your affairs so that they know what to do after you die. This

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can be written clearly. Alternate translation: "You should tell the people in your palace what you want them to do after you die"

Isaiah 38:3

call to mind

This idiom means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember"

faithfully walked before you

This is an idiom. Here "walk" means to "live." The phrase means to live in a way the pleases Yahweh. Alternate translation: "faithfully lived before you" or "faithfully served you"

with my whole heart

Here the "heart" refers to the inner-being which represents a person's complete devotion. Alternate translation: "with all my inner being" or "with my complete devotion"

what was good in your sight

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what pleases you" or "what you consider to be good"

Isaiah 38:4

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke this message" or "Yahweh spoke these words"

Isaiah 38:5

See

This is used to ask the listener to pay attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

fifteen years

"15 years"

Isaiah 38:6

the hand of the king of Assyria

Here the king's "hand" refers to his power. Alternate translation: "the power of the king of Assyria"

Isaiah 38:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Hezekiah.

Isaiah 38:8

Look

Yahweh uses this word to draw the listener's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

stairs of Ahaz

These stairs are referred to this way because they were built while Ahaz was king. You can make this information clear.

Isaiah 38:10

that halfway through my life

"that before I have grown old." This refers to dying at middle age, before growing old.

I will go through the gates of Sheol

This speaks of dying as if Sheol were a kingdom that has gates that one enters. Alternate translation: "I will die and go to Sheol"

I am sent there for the rest of my years

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before I have lived all of my years I will go to the grave"

Isaiah 38:11

in the land of the living

"The living" refers to people who are alive. Alternate translation: "in the land where people are alive" or "in this world where people are alive"

Isaiah 38:12

General Information:

Hezekiah continues his written prayer.

My dwelling place is removed and carried away from me like a shepherd's tent

This speaks of how Yahweh is ending Hezekiah's life quickly by comparing it to how a shepherd removes his tent from the ground. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has taken my life away from me quickly like a shepherd packs up his tent and carries it away"

My dwelling place is removed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has taken my dwelling place"

I have rolled up my life like a weaver; you are cutting me off from the loom

This speaks of Yahweh quickly ending Hezekiah's life by comparing it to how a weaver cuts his cloth from the loom and rolls it up. Alternate translation: "you are ending my life quickly, like a weaver cuts his cloth from the loom when it is finished"

you are cutting

Here "you" is singular and refers to God.

loom

a device used to weave thread together to make cloth

Isaiah 38:13

like a lion he breaks all my bones

Hezekiah speaks of how he is in extreme pain by comparing it to having his body torn apart by lions. Alternate translation: "my pain was as though I were being torn apart by lions"

Isaiah 38:14

General Information:

Hezekiah continues his written prayer.

Like a swallow I chirp; I coo like a dove

Both of these clauses mean the same thing and they emphasize how sad and pitiful Hezekiah's cries were. A swallow and a dove are types of birds. Alternate translation: "My cries are pitiful—they sound like the chirp of a swallow and the coo of a dove"

my eyes

Here Hezekiah refers to himself my his "eyes" to emphasize that he is looking for something. Alternate translation: "I"

with looking upward

This refers to Hezekiah looking to heaven for God to help him. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "of waiting for help to come from heaven" or "of waiting for you to help me"

I am oppressed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My sickness oppresses me"

Isaiah 38:15

What can I say?

Hezekiah uses a question to emphasize he has nothing left to say. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have nothing left to say."

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I will walk slowly
This is an idiom. Here "walking" refers to living. Alternate translation: "I will like humbly"
all my years
This refers to the rest of his life. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "the rest of my life"
because of the bitterness of my soul
The word "soul" is a metonym for the whole person. The phrase "bitterness of my soul" is an idiom for being very sad. Alternate translation: "because I am very sad"
Isaiah 38:16
General Information:
Hezekiah continues his written prayer.
may my life be given back to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may you give my life back to me"
Isaiah 38:17
from the pit of destruction
Hezekiah did not die but he was close to dying. This refers Yahweh saving him from dying. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "from dying and going to the pit of destruction" or "so that I did not die"
for you have thrown all my sins behind your back
Hezekiah speaks of Yahweh forgiving his sins as if they were objects that Yahweh threw behind himself and forgot about. Alternate translation: "for you have forgiven all my sins and no longer think about them"
Isaiah 38:18
General Information:
Hezekiah continues his written prayer.
For Sheol does not thank you; death does not praise you
Here "Sheol" and "death" refer to "dead people." Alternate translation: "For those in Sheol do not thank you; dead people do not praise you"
those who go down into the pit
"those who go down to the grave"
do not hope in your trustworthiness
"do not have hope in your faithfulness." Here "your" is singular and refers to Yahweh.
Isaiah 38:19
The living person, the living person
Hezekiah repeats this phrase to emphasize that only a living person, not a dead person, can give thanks to Yahweh.
Isaiah 38:20
General Information:
Hezekiah continues his written prayer.
save me
This refers to him being saved from dying. It can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "save me from dying"
we will celebrate
Here "we" refers to Hezekiah and the people of Judah.
Isaiah 38:21
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. This gives background information about Isaiah and Hezekiah.
Let them
"Let Hezekiah's servants"
a lump of figs
This was used as an ointment. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "use an ointment of mashed figs"
boil
a painful area on the skin that is infected

39 [1]At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah; for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick and had recovered.[2]Hezekiah was pleased by these things; he showed the messengers his storehouse of valuable things—the silver, the gold, the spices and precious oil, the storehouse of his weapons, and all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them.
[3]Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say to you? Where did they come from?" Hezekiah said, "They came to me from the distant country of Babylon."[4]Isaiah asked, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them."
[5]Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to the word of Yahweh of hosts:[6]'Look, the days are about to come when everything in your palace, the things that your ancestors stored away until this present day, will be carried to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says Yahweh.
[7]They will take away some of your own descendants, whom you will father, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"[8]Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of Yahweh that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and stability in my days."

Isaiah 39 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pride

Although it is not said why it was sinful for Hezekiah to show the king of Babylon his riches, the sin was probably because of his pride. It can be viewed as bragging to another king about how rich and powerful he was without giving proper credit to Yahweh. Because of this sin, Yahweh punished him.

Babylon

At this time, Babylon was not very powerful, but was little more than a city. In a short time, however, Babylon became a

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very powerful nation and conquered Assyria.

Links:

Isaiah 39:1 Notes

Isaiah 39:1

Marduk-Baladan ... Baladan

These are names of men.

Isaiah 39:2

Hezekiah was pleased by these things

This can be made more explicit. Alternate translation: "When the king's messengers arrived, Hezekiah was pleased with what they brought to him"

showed the messengers his storehouse of valuable things

"he showed the messengers everything of value he had"

storehouse

a building where goods are kept

all that was found in his storehouses

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that was in his storehouses"

There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them

This is a generalization, as Hezekiah probably showed them everything that the writer thought was important, but not absolutely everything. Also, this can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "Hezekiah showed them every important thing in his house and in his kingdom"

Isaiah 39:4

They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them

These two sentences mean the same thing and are used together to emphasize how much Hezekiah showed the men.

everything in my house

This is a generalization, as Hezekiah showed them many things, but not necessarily everything in the palace.

Alternate translation: "almost everything in my house"

There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "I showed them all the valuable things in my palace"

Isaiah 39:5

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:9.

the word

"the message"

Isaiah 39:6

Look

This word is used here to draw Hezekiah's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

when everything in your palace ... will be carried to Babylon

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "when the enemy army will take everything in your palace ... back to Babylon"

Isaiah 39:7

General Information:

Isaiah continues to speak Yahweh's message to Hezekiah.

They will take

"The Babylonians will take"

your own descendants, whom you will father

Hezekiah was really the ancestor, not the father, of the generation that Yahweh sent to Babylon. Yahweh uses this hyperbolic metaphor to emphasize that Hezekiah should be as sad to know that his distant descendants would go to Babylon as he would be if it were his own son. Alternate translation: "your descendants, whom you should love as your own sons"

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[1] 40 "Comfort, comfort my people,"
says your God.

[2] "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem;
and proclaim to her
that her warfare has ended,
that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received double
from Yahweh's hand for all her sins."

[3] A voice cries out,
"In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh;
make straight in the Arabah a highway for our God."[1]
[4] Every valley will be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill will be brought low;
and the rugged land will be made level,
and the rough places a plain;

[5] and the glory of Yahweh will be revealed,
and all people will see it together;
for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it.

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6 A voice says, "Cry."
Another answers, "What should I cry?"
"All flesh is grass,
and all their covenant faithfulness is like the flower of the field.

7 The grass withers and the flower fades
when the breath of Yahweh blows on it;
surely humanity is grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever."

9 Go up on a high mountain,
Zion, bearer of good news.[2]
Shout out loud,
Jerusalem. You who bring good news, raise your voice, do not be afraid.[3]
Say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"

10 Look, the Lord Yahweh comes as a victorious warrior,
and his strong arm rules for him.
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense goes before him.

11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd,
he will gather in his arm the lambs,
and carry them close to his heart,
and will gently lead the ewes nursing their young.

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
measured the sky with the span of his hand,
held the dust of the earth in a basket,
weighed the mountains in scales,
or the hills in a balance?

13 Who has comprehended the mind of Yahweh,
or instructed him as his counselor?

14 From whom did he ever receive instruction?
Who taught him the correct way to do things,
and taught him knowledge,
or showed to him the way of understanding?

15 Look, the nations are like a drop in a bucket,
and are regarded like the dust on the scales;
see, he weighs the isles as a speck.

16 Lebanon is not sufficient fuel,
nor its wild animals sufficient for a burnt offering.

17 All the nations are insufficient before him;
they are regarded by him as nothing and emptiness.

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18 To whom then will you compare God?
To what idol will you liken him?

19 An idol! A craftsman casts it:
The goldsmith overlays it with gold
and forges silver chains for it.

20 To make an offering
one chooses a wood that will not rot;
he seeks a skillful artisan
to make an idol that will not fall over.

21 Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 He is the one who sits above the horizon of the earth;
and the inhabitants are like grasshoppers before him.
He stretches out the heavens like a curtain
and spreads them out as a tent to live in.

23 He reduces rulers to nothing
and makes the rulers of the earth emptiness.

24 They are barely planted, barely sown,
their stem has barely taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them and they wither,
and the wind carries them away like straw.

25 "To whom then will you compare me,
whom do I resemble?" says the Holy One.

26 Look up at the sky!
Who has created all these stars?
He leads out their formations
and calls them all by name.
By the greatness of his might and by the strength of his power,
not one is missing.

27 Why do you say, Jacob, and declare, Israel,
"My way is hidden from Yahweh,
and my God is not concerned about my vindication"?

28 Have you not known?
Have you not heard?
The everlasting God, Yahweh,
the Creator of the ends of the earth,
does not get tired or weary;
there is no limit to his understanding.

29 He gives strength to the tired;
and to the one who lacks might he gives power.

30 Even young people become tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall:

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31 but those who wait for Yahweh will renew their strength;
they will soar with wings like eagles;
they will run and not be weary;
they will walk and not faint.

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[1]Some older English translations have A voice cries out in the wilderness which follows Matthew 3:3.
[2]Instead of Go up on a high mountain, Zion, bearer of good news, some modern translations have You who are bearing good news to Zion, go up on a high mountain.
[3]Some modern translations have Jerusalem, proclaimer of good news. Some other modern translations have proclaim good news to Jerusalem.

Isaiah 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Yahweh uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. These rhetorical questions help to prove the point he is making and convince the reader.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"She has received double from Yahweh's hand for all her sins"

It is common in many languages to use the feminine "she" to refer to a nation, rather than the word "it," which is neither masculine or feminine. The translator should use the pronoun that aligns with the common usage in the target language. Therefore, it is acceptable to use "he," "she," or "it" in reference to a nation.

The phrase "received double" indicates that Jerusalem was punished more severely than the other nations. This is because they had the privilege of a special relationship to Yahweh and had more knowledge than the other nations.

Reign of Yahweh

This chapter appears to prophesy about a time of restoration when the Messiah will reign. It pictures a time of great peace and harmony in the world. The translator does not need to add an explanation, but should try to maintain the tense of the original text, as a future or uncompleted action. It does not appear that this prophecy was fulfilled in the days of Isaiah. (See: restore, prophet and christ and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 40:1 Notes

Isaiah 40:1

Comfort, comfort

The word "comfort" is repeated for emphasis.

says your God

Here "your" is plural and refers to those whom the prophet tells to comfort God's people.

Isaiah 40:2

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem

The prophet speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a woman whom Yahweh has forgiven. As such, Jerusalem represents the people who live in that city. Alternate translation: Speak tenderly to the people of Jerusalem"

proclaim to her ... her warfare ... her iniquity ... she has received ... her sins

These pronouns refer to Jerusalem but may be changed if "the people of Jerusalem" is adopted as a translation. Alternate translation: "proclaim to them ... their warfare ... their iniquity ... they have received ... their sins"

her warfare

Possible meanings are that the word "warfare" refers 1) to military battle or 2) to forced labor.

her iniquity is pardoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has pardoned her iniquity"

from Yahweh's hand

Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "from Yahweh"

Isaiah 40:3

A voice cries out

The word "voice" represents the person who cries out. Alternate translation: "Someone cries out"

In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh; make straight in the Arabah a highway for our God

These two lines are parallel and mean basically the same thing. The people preparing themselves for Yahweh's help is spoken of as if they were to prepare roads for Yahweh to travel upon.

Arabah

See how you translated this word in Isaiah 35:1.

Isaiah 40:4

Every valley will be lifted up, and every mountain and hill will be brought low

These phrases explain how the people are to prepare a highway for Yahweh. They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Lift up every valley, and bring low every mountain and hill"

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Every valley will be lifted up
Making the valleys level with the rest of the ground is spoken of as if it were lifting up the valleys. Alternate translation: "Every valley will be filled in"
brought low
made level
and the rugged land will be made level, and the rough places a plain
These phrases explain how the people are to prepare a highway for Yahweh. They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "make the rugged land level, and make the rough places into a plain"
and the rough places a plain
The words "will be made" are understood from the context. Alternate translation: "and the rough places will be made a plain"
Isaiah 40:5
the glory of Yahweh will be revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will reveal his glory"
for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it
The word "mouth" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh has spoken it"
Isaiah 40:6
All flesh is grass
The word "flesh" refers to people. The speaker speaks of humans as if they are grass, because they both die quickly. Alternate translation: "All people are like grass"
all their covenant faithfulness is like the flower of the field
The speaker compares the covenant faithfulness of people to flowers that bloom and then die quickly. The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [Isaiah 16:5]
covenant faithfulness
Possible meanings are 1) covenant faithfulness or 2) beauty.
Isaiah 40:7
when the breath of Yahweh blows on it
Possible meanings are 1) "when Yahweh blows his breath on it" or 2) "when Yahweh sends a wind to blow on it."
humanity is grass
The speaker speaks of humans as if they are grass, because they both die quickly. Alternate translation: "people die as quickly as grass"
Isaiah 40:8
the word of our God will stand forever
The speaker speaks of what God says lasting forever as if his word stands forever. Alternate translation: "the things that our God says will last forever"
Isaiah 40:9
Go up on a high mountain, Zion, bearer of good news
The writer speaks of Zion as if it were a messenger who declares good news from a mountain top.
Go up on a high mountain
Messengers would often stand on elevated land, such as mountains, so that many people could hear what they proclaimed.
Zion
This refers to the people who live in Zion. Alternate translation: "you people of Zion"
Jerusalem. You who bring good news
The writer speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a messenger who declares good news.
Isaiah 40:10
his strong arm rules for him
Here the word "arm" represents God's power. Alternate translation: "he rules with great power"
his recompense goes before him
The word "recompense" is a metaphor for the people he has rescued. They are his "reward" for his work. Alternate translation: "those he has rescued go before him"
Isaiah 40:11
He will feed his flock like a shepherd
The writer speaks of Yahweh's people as if they were sheep and of Yahweh as if he were their shepherd. Alternate translation: "He will care for his people like a shepherd feeds his flock"
Isaiah 40:12
Who has measured ... or the hills in a balance?
These rhetorical questions anticipate a negative answer and emphasize that only Yahweh is able to do these things. Alternate translation: "No one but Yahweh has measured ... and the hills in a balance."
measured the waters in the hollow of his hand
Yahweh knowing how much water is in the oceans is spoken of as if Yahweh held the water in his hand.
measured the sky with the span of his hand
A "span" is the measure of length between the thumb and little finger when the hand is outstretched. Yahweh knowing the length of the sky is spoken of as if he measured it with his hand.
held the dust of the earth in a basket
Yahweh knowing how much dust there is on the earth is spoken of as if he carried it in a basket.
weighed the mountains in scales, or the hills in a balance?
Yahweh knowing how heavy the mountains are is spoken of as if he weighed them in scales and balances.
Isaiah 40:13
General Information:
Isaiah continues using questions to emphasize Yahweh's uniqueness.
Who has comprehended the mind of Yahweh, or instructed him as his counselor?
This rhetorical question anticipates a negative answer and emphasizes that no one is able to do these things. Alternate translation: "No one has comprehended the mind of Yahweh, and no one has instructed him as his counselor."
comprehended the mind of Yahweh
Here the word "mind" refers not only to Yahweh's thoughts, but also to his desires and motivations.
Isaiah 40:14
From whom did he ever receive instruction?
This rhetorical question anticipates a negative answer and emphasizes that no one has ever done this. Alternate translation: "He has never received instruction from anyone."
Who taught him the correct way to do things, and taught him knowledge, or showed to him the way of understanding?
This rhetorical question anticipates a negative answer and emphasizes that no one has ever done these things.

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Alternate translation: "No one taught him the correct way to do things. No one taught him knowledge. No one showed to him the way of understanding."

Isaiah 40:15

Look ... see

These words add emphasis to what follows.

the nations are like a drop in a bucket, and are regarded like the dust on the scales

The prophet compares the nations to a drop of water and to dust in order to emphasize how small and insignificant they are to Yahweh.

like a drop in a bucket

Possible meanings are 1) a drop of water that falls into a bucket or 2) a drop of water that drops out of a bucket.

are regarded like the dust on the scales

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh regards them as dust on the scales"

Isaiah 40:17

they are regarded by him as nothing

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he regards them as nothing"

Isaiah 40:18

To whom then will you compare God? To what idol will you liken him?

Isaiah uses two similar questions to emphasize that there is no idol that can compare with God. Alternate translation: "There is no one to whom you can compare God. There is no idol to which you can liken him."

you

This is plural and refers to all of God's people.

Isaiah 40:19

A craftsman casts it: The goldsmith overlays it with gold and forges silver chains for it

"A skilled worker forms it, another covers it with gold and makes a silver chain for it"

Isaiah 40:21

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to God's people.

Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

Isaiah uses these questions to emphasize that the people should know Yahweh's greatness as the creator. Alternate translation: "You certainly know and have heard! It has been told to you from the beginning; you have understood from the foundations of the earth!"

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Have people not told you from the beginning?"

from the foundations of the earth

The prophet speaks of Yahweh creating the earth as if the earth were a building for which Yahweh laid the foundation. Alternate translation: "from the time that Yahweh created the earth"

Isaiah 40:22

He is the one who sits above the horizon of the earth

The prophet speaks of Yahweh ruling the earth as if Yahweh were seated on a throne above the earth.

the inhabitants are like grasshoppers before him

The prophet compares the way Yahweh considers humans to the way humans would consider grasshoppers. Just as grasshoppers are small to humans, humans are small and weak before God.

He stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out as a tent to live in

These two lines share similar meanings. The prophet speaks of Yahweh creating the heavens as if he had erected a tent in which to live. Alternate translation: "He spreads out the heavens as easily as a person would stretch out a curtain or erect a tent in which to live"

Isaiah 40:23

He reduces

"Yahweh reduces"

emptiness

See how you translated this word in Isaiah 40:17

Isaiah 40:24

They are barely planted ... and they wither

The prophet speaks of rulers being helpless before Yahweh as if they were new plants that wither away when a hot wind blows on them.

They are barely planted, barely sown

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to the point at which the plants or seeds are placed into the ground. They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As soon as someone plants them ... as soon as someone sows them"

he blows upon them

The prophet speaks of Yahweh removing the rulers from power as if Yahweh were a scorching wind that blows upon the plants and causes them to wither.

the wind carries them away like straw

This simile extends the metaphor of the rulers as plants and Yahweh as the wind that causes them to wither. The wind of Yahweh's judgement will remove the withered plants as easily as wind blows away straw.

Isaiah 40:25

To whom then will you compare me, whom do I resemble?

Yahweh uses two similar rhetorical questions to emphasize that there is no one like him. Alternate translation: "There is no one to whom you can compare me. There is no one whom I resemble."

Isaiah 40:26

Who has created all these stars?

This is a leading question that anticipates the answer, Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has created all these stars!"

He leads out their formations

Here the word "formations" refers to military formations. The prophet speaks of the stars as if they were soldiers whom Yahweh commands to appear.

By the greatness of his might and by the strength of his power

The phrases "the greatness of his might" and "the strength of his power" form a doublet that emphasizes Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "By his great might and powerful strength"

not one is missing

This negative statement emphasizes the positive. Alternate translation: "every one is present"

Isaiah 40:27

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Why do you say, Jacob, and declare, Israel ... vindication"?
The question emphasizes that they should not say what they say. Alternate translation: "'You should not say, O people of Israel ... vindication'."
Why do you say, Jacob, and declare, Israel
These two phrases both refer to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Why do you say, O people of Israel"
My way is hidden from Yahweh
Yahweh not knowing what happens to them is spoken of as if Yahweh could not see the road upon which they travel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh does not know what happens to me"
my God is not concerned about my vindication
Possible meanings are 1) "my God is not concerned about others treating me unjustly" or 2) "my God is not concerned about treating me justly."
Isaiah 40:28
Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Isaiah uses these questions to emphasize that the people should know Yahweh's greatness. See how you translated these in [Isaiah 40:21]
the ends of the earth
The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. This phrase also forms a merism and refers to everywhere in between the ends. Alternate translation: "the farthest places of the earth" or "the entire earth"
Isaiah 40:29
He gives strength
"Yahweh gives strength"
Isaiah 40:31
they will soar with wings like eagles
People receiving strength from Yahweh is spoken of as if the people were able to fly like eagles fly. An eagle is a bird often used as a symbol for strength and power.
they will run and not be weary; they will walk and not faint
These two lines share similar meanings. People receiving strength from Yahweh is spoken of as if they were able to run and walk without tiring.

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41 [1] "Listen before me in silence, you coastlands;
let the nations renew their strength;
let them come near and speak;
let us come near together to argue a dispute.

[2] Who has stirred up one from the east,
calling him in righteousness to his service?
He hands nations over to him
and helps him subdue kings.
He turns them to dust with his sword,
like windblown stubble with his bow.

[3] He pursues them and passes by safely,
by a swift path that his feet scarcely touch.

[4] Who has performed and accomplished these deeds?
Who has summoned the generations from the beginning?
I, Yahweh, the first, and with the last ones, I am he.

[5] The isles have seen and are afraid;
the ends of the earth tremble;
they approach and come.

[6] Everyone helps his neighbor,
and every one says to one another, 'Be encouraged.'

[7] So the carpenter encourages the goldsmith,
and he who works with the hammer
encourages him who works with an anvil,
saying of the welding, 'It is good.'
They fasten it with nails so it will not topple over.

[8] But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob whom I have chosen,
the descendants of Abraham my friend,

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9 I took you from the ends of the earth
and called you from the farthest places,
saying to you, 'You are my servant.'
I have chosen you and I have not rejected you.

10 Do not fear, for I am with you.
Do not be anxious, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, and I will help you,
and I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

11 See, they will be ashamed and disgraced,
all who have been angry with you;
they will be as nothing and will perish,
those who oppose you.

12 You will seek and will not find
those who contended with you;
those who warred against you
will be like nothing, absolutely nothing.

13 For I, Yahweh your God, will hold your right hand,
saying to you, 'Do not fear; I am helping you.'

14 Do not fear, Jacob you worm, and you men of Israel;
I will help you—this is the declaration of Yahweh,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

15 Look, I am making you like a sharp threshing sledge,
new and two-edged;
you will thresh the mountains and crush them;
you will make the hills like chaff.

16 You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them away;
the wind will scatter them.
You will rejoice in Yahweh,
you will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

17 The oppressed and needy look for water, but there is none,
and their tongues are parched for thirst;
I, Yahweh, will respond to their prayers;
I, the God of Israel, will not abandon them.

18 I will make streams to flow down the slopes,
and springs in the middle of the valleys;
I will make the desert into a pool of water,
and the dry land into springs of water.

19 In the wilderness I will set the cedar,
the acacia, and the myrtle, and the olive tree.
I will set the cypress in the desert plain,
with the pines and the cypress box trees.

20 I will do this so that the people
may see, learn, consider, and gain understanding together,
that the hand of Yahweh has done this,
that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

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21 'Present your case,' says Yahweh,
'present your best arguments for your idols,'
says the King of Jacob.

22 Let them bring us their own arguments;
have them come forward and declare to us what will happen,
so we may know these things well.
Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations,
so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.

23 Tell things about the future,
that we may know if you are gods;
do something good or evil,
that we may be frightened and impressed.

24 See, you idols are nothing and your deeds are nothing;
the one who chooses you is detestable.

25 I have raised up one from the north, and he comes;
from the sun's rising I summon him who calls on my name,
and he will trample the rulers like mud,
like a potter who is treading on the clay.

26 Who announced this from the beginning, that we might know?
Before this time, that we may say, 'He is in the right'?
Indeed none of them decreed it,
yes, none heard your words.

27 I first said to Zion,
'Look here they are!' I sent a herald to Jerusalem.

28 When I look, there is no one,
not one among them who can give good advice,
who, when I ask, can answer a word.

29 Look, all of them are nothing,
and their deeds are nothing;
their cast metal figures are wind and emptiness.

Isaiah 41 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Mocking

Yahweh tells the people to present their best arguments in favor of honoring their idols. In this Yahweh challenges the people. Yahweh mocks or insults these false gods because they are not real and have no power. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Isaiah 41:1 Notes

Isaiah 41:1

Listen before me in silence

Here "me" refers to God.

you coastlands

This refers to the people who live on the islands and in the lands bordering or beyond the Mediterranean Sea.

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renew their strength

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 40:31.

let them come near and speak; let us come near together to argue a dispute

These two phrases share similar meanings. The second explains the reason for the first. Alternate translation: "then let them come near so they may speak and reason with me"

Isaiah 41:2

Who has stirred up one from the east, calling him in righteousness to his service?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is the one who caused this ruler from the east to be victorious. Alternate translation: "I am the one who called this powerful ruler from the east and put him in my good service."

He hands nations over to him

"I give the nations over to him" or "The one who does these things hands nations over to him"

subdue kings

"conquer kings and force them to obey him"

He turns them to dust with his sword, like windblown stubble with his bow

Turning them to dust and stubble is a metaphor or exaggeration for completely destroying everything the people of these nations have made. The armies of one from the east will conquer these nations and scatter the people easily.

Isaiah 41:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the coastlands and the nations.

He pursues them and passes by safely

"The ruler from the east pursues the nations"

by a swift path that his feet scarcely touch

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which he and his army moving very quickly is spoken of as if his feet barely touch the ground. Alternate translation: "by a path on which he moves with great speed" or 2) "feet" represents the whole person and the phrase indicates that this is a path that they have not traveled before. Alternate translation: "by a path that he has never traveled before"

Isaiah 41:4

Who has performed and accomplished these deeds?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is the one who has done these things. Alternate translation: "I have performed and accomplished these deeds."

Who has summoned the generations from the beginning?

Here the word "generations" represents all of human history, which Yahweh created and directed throughout history. The rhetorical question anticipates the answer, Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I have summoned the generations of humanity from the beginning."

performed and accomplished

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh is the one who has done these things.

the first, and with the last ones

Possible meanings are 1) that Yahweh existed before creation and will exist at the end of creation or 2) that Yahweh was before the first generation of humanity and will be at the last generation of humanity.

Isaiah 41:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

The isles ... the ends of the earth

These phrases represent the people who live in those places. Alternate translation: "People who live on the isles ... people who live at the ends of the earth"

The isles

You can translate "isles" the same way you translated "coastlands" in Isaiah 41:1.

the ends of the earth

The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. Alternate translation: "the farthest places of the earth"

they approach and come

This doublet means that the people gather together. Alternate translation: "they come together"

Isaiah 41:7

anvil

an iron block on which a person shapes metal with a hammer

saying of the welding

Here the word "welding" refers to the process of fastening the gold to the wood as the workers finish making the idol.

They fasten it with nails so it will not topple over.

Here "it" refers to the idol that they have made.

Isaiah 41:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Isaiah 41:9

I took you from the ends of the earth and called you from the farthest places

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh is bringing the people of Israel back to their land from distant countries.

the ends of the earth

The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 41:5]

I have chosen you and I have not rejected you

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second states in negative terms what the first states in positive terms.

Isaiah 41:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand

Yahweh strengthening his people is spoken of as if he were holding them with his hand.

my righteous right hand

Here "right hand" represents Yahweh's power. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh's right hand is righteous in that he will always do the right thing. Alternate translation: "my righteous power" or 2) Yahweh's right hand is victorious in that he will always succeed in what he does. Alternate translation: "my victorious power"

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Isaiah 41:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

they will be ashamed and disgraced, all who have been angry with you

"all who have been angry with you will be ashamed and disgraced"

ashamed and disgraced

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of their shame.

they will be as nothing and will perish, those who oppose you

"those who oppose you will be as nothing and will perish"

Isaiah 41:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 41:13

I ... will hold your right hand

Yahweh helping the people of Israel is spoken of as if he were holding their right hand.

Isaiah 41:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Jacob you worm, and you men of Israel

Here "Jacob" and "men of Israel" mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "you people of Israel who are like worms"

Jacob you worm

Possible meanings are 1) that this refers to the opinions of other nations regarding the people of Israel or 2) that this refers to Israel's own opinion of themselves. Yahweh speaks of their insignificance as if they were a worm.

this is the declaration of Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:4.

Isaiah 41:15

I am making you like a sharp threshing sledge ... you will make the hills like chaff

Yahweh speaks of enabling Israel to defeat their enemies as if he were making the nation a threshing sledge that will level mountains.

a sharp threshing sledge

A threshing sledge was a board with sharp spikes that someone would drag over the wheat to separate the grain from the chaff.

two-edged

This refers to the edges of the spikes that were attached to the threshing sledge. That they are "two-edged" means that they are very sharp.

you will thresh the mountains and crush them

This is a double metaphor. The mountains are a metaphor for grain, and threshing grain is a metaphor for the Israelites defeating the powerful enemy nations near them. Alternate translation: "you will thresh your enemies and crush them as if they were grain, even though they appear to be as strong as mountains"

you will make the hills like chaff

The hills are a metaphor for the powerful enemy nations near Israel. People having the wind blow the chaff away after they have threshed the grain is a metaphor for them allowing Yahweh to destroy their enemies.

Isaiah 41:16

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to use the metaphor of separating grain from chaff to describe how Israel will defeat their enemies.

You will winnow them ... the wind will scatter them

Here the word "them" refers to the mountains and hill in [Isaiah 41:15]

the wind will carry them away; the wind will scatter them

These two phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "the wind will blow them away"

Isaiah 41:17

General Information:

Yahweh speaks of people who are in extreme need as if they are extremely thirsty, and of his provision for them as if he caused water to appear in places where it normally would not appear.

Isaiah 41:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

the myrtle ... the pines and the cypress box trees

These are types of trees.

Isaiah 41:20

the hand of Yahweh has done this

Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has done this"

Isaiah 41:21

General Information:

In these verses, Yahweh is mocking the people and their idols. He is challenging the idols to tell what will happen in the future, but he knows they cannot.

Isaiah 41:23

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to mock the idols and the people who worship them (Isaiah 41:21-22).

do something good or evil

The words "good" and "evil" form a merism and represent anything. Alternate translation: "do anything at all"

Isaiah 41:24

the one who chooses you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the idols. Alternate translation: "the person who chooses you idols"

Isaiah 41:25

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

I have raised up one

Yahweh speaks of appointing a person as if he raised that person up. Alternate translation: "I have appointed one"

from the sun's rising

This refers to the east, the direction from which the sun rises. Alternate translation: "from the east"

him who calls on my name

Possible meanings are 1) that this person invokes Yahweh for his success or 2) that this person worships Yahweh.

he will trample the rulers

Conquering the rulers of other nations is spoken of as if it were trampling them under foot. Alternate translation: "he will conquer the rulers"

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like a potter who is treading on the clay
Yahweh compares the way in which this person will trample the other rulers with the way that a potter tramples on clay to mix it with water.
Isaiah 41:26
Who announced this from the beginning, that we might know? Before this time, that we may say, 'He is in the right'?
Yahweh uses these rhetorical questions to mock the idols that the people worship. The implied answers are 1) that the idols have not done these things and 2) that Yahweh is the one who has done these things. The ellipsis in the second question can be filled in. Alternate translation: "None of the idols announced this from the beginning, that we might know. And none of them announced this before time, that we may say, 'He is in the right.'"
Before this time
The words "who announced this" are understood from the previous question. Alternate translation: "Who announced this before this time"
Indeed none of them decreed it, yes, none heard your words
"Indeed, none of the idols decreed it. Indeed, no one heard you idols say anything"
Isaiah 41:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
Isaiah 41:28
not one among them
"not one idol"
Isaiah 41:29
their cast metal figures are wind and emptiness
Yahweh speaks of the worthlessness of the idols as if the idols are wind and nothing at all. Alternate translation: "their idols are all worthless"

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[1] 42 Behold, my servant, whom I uphold;
my chosen one, in him I take delight.
I have put my Spirit upon him;
he will bring justice to the nations.

[2] He will not cry out nor shout,
nor make his voice heard in the streets.

[3] A crushed reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench:
he will faithfully execute justice.

[4] He will neither grow faint nor be crushed
until he has established justice on the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his law.

[5] This is what God Yahweh says—
the one who created the heavens and stretched them out,
the one who made the earth and all its produce,
the one who gives breath to the people on it
and life to those who live on it:

[6] "I, Yahweh, have called you in righteousness
and will hold your hand.
I will keep you and set you as a covenant for the people,
as a light for the Gentiles,

[7] to open the eyes of the blind,
to release the prisoners from the dungeon,
and from the house of imprisonment
those who sit in darkness.

[8] I am Yahweh, that is my name;
and my glory I will not share with another
nor my praise with carved idols.

[9] See, the previous things came to pass,
now I am about to declare new events.
Before they begin to occur I will tell you about them."

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10 Sing to Yahweh a new song,
and his praise from the end of the earth;
you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it,
the coastlands, and those who live there.

11 Let the desert and the cities cry out,
the villages where Kedar lives, shout for joy!
Let the inhabitants of Sela sing;
let them shout from the mountaintops.

12 Let them give glory to Yahweh
and declare his praise in the coastlands.

13 Yahweh will go out as a warrior;
as a man of war he will stir up his zeal.
He will shout, yes, he will roar his battle cries;
he will show his enemies his power.

14 I have kept quiet for a long time;
I have been still and restrained myself;
now I will cry out like a woman in labor;
I will gasp and pant.

15 I will lay waste mountains and hills
and dry up all their vegetation;
and I will turn the rivers into islands
and will dry up the marshes.

16 I will bring the blind by a way that they do not know;
in paths that they do not know I will lead them.
I will turn the darkness into light before them,
and make the crooked places straight.
These things I will do,
and I will not abandon them.

17 They will be turned back, they will be completely put to shame,
those who trust in carved figures,
who say to cast metal figures, "You are our gods."

18 Listen, you deaf;
and look, you blind, that you may see.

19 Who is blind but my servant?
Or deaf like my messenger I send?
Who is as blind as my covenant partner,
or blind as Yahweh's servant?

20 You see many things, but do not comprehend;
ears are open, but no one hears.

21 It pleased Yahweh to praise his justice
and to make his law glorious.

22 But this is a people robbed and plundered;
they are all trapped in pits, held captive in prisons;

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they have become prey with no one to rescue them,
and no one says, "Bring them back!"

23 Who among you will listen to this?
Who will listen and hear in the future?

24 Who gave Jacob over to the robber,
and Israel to the looters?
Was it not Yahweh, against whom we have sinned,
in whose ways they refused to walk,
and whose law they refused to obey?

25 Therefore he poured out on them
the heat of his anger and the violence of war,
Its flames encircled them, yet they did not understand;
it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart.

Isaiah 42 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Many scholars believe that there are four songs or poems which Isaiah records about the Messiah. Isaiah 42:1-4 is the first of these songs. They are often called the "servant songs" because they focus on the Messiah being a servant. (See: christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Servant

Israel is called Yahweh's servant. The Messiah is also called the servant of Yahweh. It is likely that the two different usages of the word "servant" are intended to contrast with one another.

Links:

Isaiah 42:1 Notes

Isaiah 42:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Behold, my servant

"Look, my servant" or "Here is my servant"

in him I take delight

"with whom I am very happy"

Isaiah 42:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

A crushed reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench

Yahweh speaks of weak and helpless people as if they were crushed reeds and dimly burning wicks.

crushed reed

A reed is the long, thin stem of a plant like tall grass. If it is crushed, it cannot carry any weight. See how you translated this in Isaiah 36:6.

he will not break

"My servant will not break"

Isaiah 42:4

be crushed

This is a metaphor for being discouraged. Alternate translation: "be discouraged"

the coastlands

This refers to the people who live on the islands and in the lands bordering or beyond the Mediterranean Sea. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 41:1]

Isaiah 42:5

the one who created the heavens and stretched them out, the one who made the earth

The prophet speaks of Yahweh creating the heavens and the earth as if the heavens and earth were fabric which Yahweh stretched out.

gives breath to the people on it and life to those who live on it

These phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh gives life to every person. The word "breath" is a metonym for life. Alternate translation: "gives life to the people who live on the earth"

Isaiah 42:6

have called you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Yahweh's servant.

I will ... set you as a covenant for the people

Here the word "covenant" is a metonym for the one who establishes or mediates a covenant. Alternate translation: "I will ... make you be the mediator of a covenant with the people"

a light for the Gentiles

Yahweh speaks of making his servant the one who delivers the nations from bondage as if he were making him a light

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that shines in dark places for the Gentiles.

Isaiah 42:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing what his servant will do.

to open the eyes of the blind

Causing blind people to see is spoken of as if it were opening their eyes. Also, Yahweh speaks of his servant delivering those who have been wrongly imprisoned as if his servant were restoring sight to blind people. Alternate translation: "to enable the blind to see"

to release the prisoners from the dungeon, and from the house of imprisonment those who sit in darkness

The verb may be supplied in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "to release the prisoners from the dungeon, and to release those who sit in darkness from the house in which people have imprisoned them"

Isaiah 42:8

nor my praise with carved idols

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "nor will I share my praise with carved idols"

my praise

This refers to the praise that Yahweh receives from people.

Isaiah 42:9

I will tell you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 42:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

the sea, and all that is in it, the coastlands, and those who live there

"and all the creatures that live in the sea, and all those who live on the coastlands"

Isaiah 42:11

Let the desert and the cities cry out

This refers to the people who live in the desert and the cities.

Kedar

This is a city north of Arabia. See how this was translated in Isaiah 21:16

Sela

a city in Edom

Isaiah 42:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Let them give glory

Here "them" refers to the people along the coastlands.

Isaiah 42:13

Yahweh will go out as a warrior; as a man of war

Yahweh is compared with a warrior who is ready to defeat his people's enemies.

he will stir up his zeal

Here "zeal" refers to the passion that a warrior experiences when he is about to fight a battle. Yahweh stimulating his zeal is spoken of as if he stirred it up like the wind stirs up waves of water.

Isaiah 42:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

I have kept quiet for a long time; I have been still and restrained myself

These two lines share similar meanings. Yahweh's inactivity is described as quietness and stillness.

I have been still and restrained myself

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and indicate that Yahweh has kept himself from acting. Alternate translation: "I have kept myself from doing anything"

I will cry out like a woman in labor; I will gasp and pant

Yahweh's activity as a shouting warrior is compared with a pregnant woman who cries from labor pains. This emphasizes sudden unavoidable action after a period of inactivity.

Isaiah 42:15

I will lay waste mountains ... will dry up the marshes

Yahweh uses this metaphorical language to describe his great power to conquer his enemies.

the marshes

A marsh is an area of soft, wet land with pools of water.

Isaiah 42:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

I will bring the blind by a way that they do not know; in paths that they do not know I will lead them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "I will lead the blind in paths that they do not know"

the blind

Yahweh speaks of his people being helpless as if they could not see because they were blind.

that they do not know

Possible meanings are 1) "that they have never traveled" or 2) "with which they are unfamiliar."

I will turn the darkness into light before them

Yahweh speaks of his people being helpless as if they could not see because they walked in darkness, and of his helping them as if he caused light to shine in the darkness.

Isaiah 42:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

They will be turned back, they will be completely put to shame

Rejecting those who worship idols is spoken of as if it is forcing them to turn back and move the opposite direction. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will reject them and put them to shame"

Isaiah 42:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

you deaf ... you blind

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel. Yahweh speaks of their failure to listen to him and obey him as if they are deaf and blind.

Isaiah 42:19

Who is blind but my servant? Or deaf like my messenger I send?

Yahweh asks these rhetorical questions to scold his people and to emphasize that no one is as blind or deaf as they are. Alternate translation: "No one is as blind as my servant. No one is as deaf as my messenger whom I send."

Who is as blind as my covenant partner, or blind as Yahweh's servant?

Yahweh asks these rhetorical questions to scold his people

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and to emphasize that no one is as blind or deaf as they are. Alternate translation: "No one is as blind as my covenant partner. No one is as blind as Yahweh's servant."

Isaiah 42:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

You see many things, but do not comprehend

"Although you see many things, you do not understand what they mean"

ears are open, but no one hears

The ability to hear is spoken of as if the ears were open. Here the word "hears" refers to understanding what one hears. Alternate translation: "people hear, but no one understands what they hear"

Isaiah 42:21

It pleased Yahweh to praise his justice and to make his law glorious

"Yahweh was pleased to honor his justice by making his law glorious." The second part of the phrase explains how Yahweh accomplished the first part.

Isaiah 42:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

But this is a people robbed and plundered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But the enemy has robbed and plundered this people"

robbed and plundered

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the enemy had plundered them.

they are all trapped in pits, held captive in prisons

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy has trapped them all in pits and held them captive in prisons"

Isaiah 42:23

General Information:

Here Isaiah begins speaking.

Who among you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 42:24

Who gave Jacob over to the robber, and Israel to the looters?

These two phrases mean the same thing. Isaiah uses this as a leading question in order to emphasize the answer that he will give in the next phrase. Alternate translation: "I will tell you who gave the people of Israel over to robbers and looters."

Was it not Yahweh ... refused to obey?

Isaiah uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that Yahweh alone was responsible for Israel's situation, and to explain the reason that Yahweh did it. Alternate translation: "It was certainly Yahweh ... refused to obey."

against whom we have sinned

Here the word "we" refers to the people of Israel and to Isaiah.

in whose ways they refused to walk, and whose law they refused to obey

The word "they" also refers to the people of Israel and to Isaiah. The two phrases mean the same thing. In the first, obeying Yahweh's laws is spoken of as if it were walking in the paths in which Yahweh commanded them to walk.

Isaiah 42:25

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

Therefore he

"Therefore Yahweh"

he poured out on them the heat of his anger

Isaiah speaks of Yahweh's anger as if it were a liquid that could be poured out. Alternate translation: "he showed them just how angry he was"

on them

"against us." Here "them" refers to the people of Israel, but Isaiah still included himself as part of the people.

and the violence of war

The word "devastation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "by devastating them with war"

Its flames encircled them ... it consumed them

Isaiah speaks of Yahweh's fierce anger as if it were a fire that burned the people.

they did not take it to heart

Paying attention to something and learning from it is spoken of as if it were placing that thing on one's heart. Alternate translation: "they did not pay attention" or "they did not learn from it"

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[1] **43** But now this is what Yahweh says,
he who created you, Jacob, and he who formed you, Israel:
"Do not be afraid, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by your name, you are mine.

[2] When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you.
When you walk through the fire you will not be burned,
and the flames will not destroy you.

[3] For I am Yahweh your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I have given Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

[4] Since you are precious and special in my sight, I love you;
therefore I will give people in exchange for you,

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and other peoples in exchange for your life.

5 Do not be afraid, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and gather you from the west.

6 I will say to the north, 'Hand them over;'
and to the south, 'Do not hold any back;'
Bring my sons from afar,
and my daughters from the remote regions of the earth,

7 everyone who is called by my name,
whom I have created for my glory,
whom I have formed, yes, whom I have made.

8 Bring out the people who are blind,
even though they have eyes,
and the deaf,
even though they have ears.

9 All the nations gather together,
and the peoples assemble.
Who among them could have declared this
and announced to us earlier events?
Let them bring their witnesses so they can be justified;
let them listen and affirm, 'It is true.'

10 You are my witnesses—this is Yahweh's declaration—
and my servant whom I have chosen,
so that you may know and believe in me,
and understand that I am he.
Before me there was no god formed,
and there will be none after me.

11 I, I am Yahweh,
and there is no savior but me.

12 I have declared, saved, and proclaimed,
and there is no other god among you.
You are my witnesses—
this is Yahweh's declaration—I am God.

13 From this day on I am he,
and no one can rescue anyone from my hand.
I act, and who can turn it back?"

14 This is what Yahweh says,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:
"For your sake I send to Babylon
and lead them all down as fugitives,
turning the Chaldeans' expressions of joy
into songs of lamentation.

15 I am Yahweh, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King."

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16 This is what Yahweh says
(who opened a way through the sea
and a path in the mighty waters,

17 who led out the chariot and the horse,
the army and the mighty man. They fell down together;
they will never rise again;
they are extinguished, quenched like a burning wick.)

18 "Do not think about these former things,
nor consider the things of long ago.

19 Look, I am about to do a new thing;
now it begins to happen; do you not know it?
I will make a road in the desert
and streams of water in the wilderness.

20 The wild animals of the field will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches,
because I give water in the wilderness,
and rivers in the desert,
for my chosen people to drink,

21 this people whom I formed for myself,
that they might recount my praises.

22 But you have not called on me, Jacob;
you have become tired of me, Israel.

23 You have not brought me
any of your sheep as burnt offerings,
or honored me with your sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with grain offerings,
nor wearied you with demands for incense.

24 You have bought me no sweet-smelling cane with money,
neither have you poured out to me the fat of your sacrifices;
but you have burdened me with your sins,
you have wearied me with your evil deeds.

25 I, yes, I, am he who blots out your offenses for my own sake;
and I will not call to mind your sins any longer.

26 Remind me of what happened. Let us debate together;
present your cause, that you may be proved to be in the right.

27 Your first father sinned,
and your teachers have transgressed against me.

28 Therefore I will defile the holy officials;
I will hand Jacob over to complete destruction,
and Israel to abusive humiliation."

Isaiah 43 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Exodus

This chapter pictures Judah's eventual return from exile in Babylon as a kind of second exodus. It was reminiscent of their exodus from Egypt.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Exile

This chapter prophesies about the Jews return from Babylon, but the exile has yet to happen and is still more than a hundred years in the future. These events will show that Yahweh alone is God.

Links:

Isaiah 43:1 Notes

Isaiah 43:1

he who created you, Jacob, and he who formed you, Israel

Both clauses mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "the one who created you, O people of Israel"

Isaiah 43:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

When you pass through the waters ... the flames will not destroy you

Yahweh speaks of suffering and difficult experiences as if they are deep waters and fires through which the people walk. The words "waters" and "flames" form a merism and emphasize any difficult circumstance.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you

These two statements mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people will experience no harm because Yahweh is with them.

you will not be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will not burn you"

Isaiah 43:3

I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that Yahweh will allow Israel's enemy to conquer these nations instead of Israel.

Seba

This is the name of a nation.

Isaiah 43:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Since you are precious and special in my sight

The words "precious" and "special" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how much Yahweh values his people. Alternate translation: "Because you are very precious to me"

therefore I will give people in exchange for you, and other peoples in exchange for your life

Both phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "therefore I will let the enemy conquer other peoples instead of you"

Isaiah 43:5

I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west

The directions "east" and "west" form a merism and represent from every direction. Alternate translation: "I will bring you and your offspring from every direction"

Isaiah 43:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

say to the north ... to the south

Yahweh speaks to "the north" and "the south" as if commanding the nations in those locations.

my sons ... my daughters

Yahweh speaks of the people who belong to him as if they were his children.

Isaiah 43:7

everyone who is called by my name

Here to be called by someone's name represents belonging to that person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone whom I have called by my name" or "everyone who belongs to me"

whom I have formed, yes, whom I have made

Both of these mean the same thing and emphasize that it is God who made the people of Israel.

Isaiah 43:8

the people who are blind ... the deaf

Yahweh speaks of those who do not listen to him or obey him as if they were blind and deaf.

Isaiah 43:9

Who among them could have declared this and announced to us earlier events?

This rhetorical question applies to the gods whom the people of the nations worship. The implied answer is that none of them could do this. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "None of their gods could have declared this or announced to us earlier events."

announced to us earlier events

This phrase refers to their ability to tell about events that happened in the past before they happened. Alternate translation: "announced to us earlier events before they happened"

Let them bring their witnesses so they can be justified; let them listen and affirm, 'It is true.'

Yahweh challenges the gods whom the nations worship to provide witnesses who will testify that they have been able to do these things, although he knows that they cannot do so. Alternate translation: "These gods have no witnesses who will prove them right, witnesses who will listen and

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affirm, 'It is true'"
Isaiah 43:10
You ... my servant
Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel. The phrase "my servant" refers to the nation, as a whole.
Before me ... after me
In speaking this way, Yahweh is not saying that there was a time before which he did not exist or a time after which he will not exist. He is asserting that he is eternal and that the gods whom the people of other nations worship are not.
Before me there was no god formed
Here the word "formed" indicates that Yahweh is speaking of idols that people have made. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "None of the gods whom people have formed existed before me"
there will be none after me
"none of those gods will exist after me"
Isaiah 43:11
I, I am Yahweh
The word "I" is repeated to emphasize the focus on Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I alone am Yahweh" or "I myself am Yahweh"
there is no savior but me
This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "I am the only savior" or "I am the only one who can save you"
Isaiah 43:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Isaiah 43:13
no one can rescue anyone from my hand
Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "no one can rescue anyone from my power"
who can turn it back?
Yahweh uses this question to say that no one can turn back his hand. It can be translated as a statement. Turning back his hand represents stopping him from doing something. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 14:27]
Isaiah 43:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Holy One of Israel
See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:4.
I send to Babylon and lead them all down
The object of the verb "send" may be supplied in translation. Alternate translation: "I send an army to Babylon"
lead them all down as fugitives
"lead all of the Babylonians down as fugitives"
fugitives
A fugitive is a person who runs away so that his enemy will not capture him.
Isaiah 43:16
who opened a way ... mighty waters
Isaiah speaks of the events following the exodus from Egypt, when Yahweh divided the sea to let the Israelites walk through on dry ground but then drowned the Egyptian army. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
Isaiah 43:17
who led out ... a burning wick
Isaiah speaks of the events following the exodus from Egypt, when Yahweh divided the sea to let the Israelites walk through on dry ground but then drowned the Egyptian army. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.
They fell down together; they will never rise again
Dying is spoken of as if it were falling down to the ground. Alternate translation: "They all died together; they will never live again"
they are extinguished, quenched like a burning wick
The people dying is spoken of as if they were burning candle wicks that someone has extinguished. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their lives have ended, like a person extinguishes the flame of a burning candle"
Isaiah 43:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Do not think about these former things, nor consider the things of long ago.
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that they are not to worry about what happened in the past.
Isaiah 43:19
Look
This word is used to draw attention to the important information that follows. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention"
do you not know it?
Yahweh uses a question to teach the people of Israel. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "surely you have noticed it."
Isaiah 43:20
wild animals of the field will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches
Here animals honor Yahweh as if they were people.
the jackals and the ostriches
These are examples of "the animals of the field" that will honor Yahweh. See how you translated the names of these animals in Isaiah 13:21-22.
Isaiah 43:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Isaiah 43:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
sweet-smelling cane
This is a plant with a pleasant smell used to make anointing oil. It did not grow in the land of Israel so the people had to buy it from other nations.
burdened me with your sins, you have wearied me with your evil deeds
These both mean the same thing and emphasize the complaint Yahweh has with his people.
burdened me with your sins
"troubled me with your sins"
Isaiah 43:25
General Information:

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Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I, yes, I

The word "I" is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I alone"

who blots out your offenses

Forgiving sins is spoken of as either 1) blotting them out or wiping them away or 2) erasing a written record of the sins. Alternate translation: "who forgives your offenses like someone wiping something away" or "who forgives your offenses like someone who erases a record of sins"

for my own sake

"for my own honor" or "for my own reputation"

call to mind

"remember"

Isaiah 43:26

present your cause, that you may be proved to be in the right

Yahweh challenges the people to offer proof that they are innocent of the charges that he has brought against them, although he knows that they cannot do so. Alternate translation: "present your case, but you cannot prove yourselves to be to be in the right"

that you may be proved to be in the right

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you may prove yourselves to be in the right"

Isaiah 43:27

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Your first father sinned

This refers to the founder of Israel and may represent either Abraham or Jacob.

your teachers

the false prophets

Isaiah 43:28

I will hand Jacob over to complete destruction

Here to "hand over" represents putting someone under the power of another. The noun "destruction" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I will cause the enemy to completely destroy Jacob"

Israel to abusive humiliation

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase, with which this phrase is parallel. The noun "humiliation" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I will hand Israel over to abusive humiliation" or "I will allow the enemy to abuse and humiliate Israel"

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44 [1] Now listen, Jacob my servant,
and Israel, whom I have chosen:

[2] This is what Yahweh says,
he who made you and formed you in the womb
and who will help you: "Do not fear, Jacob my servant;
and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

[3] For I will pour water on the thirsty ground,
and flowing streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit on your offspring
and my blessing on your descendants.

[4] They will spring up among the grass,
like willows by the streams of water.

[5] One will say, 'I belong to Yahweh,'
and another will call out the name of Jacob,
and another will write on his hand 'Belonging to Yahweh,'
and name himself by the name of Israel."

[6] This is what Yahweh says—
the King of Israel and his Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts:
"I am the first, and I am the last;
and there is no God but me.

[7] Who is like me? Let him announce it and explain to me
the events that occurred since I established my ancient people,
and let them declare the events to come.

[8] Do not fear or be afraid.
Have I not declared to you long ago, and announced it?
You are my witnesses: Is there any God besides me?
There is no other Rock; I know of none."

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9 All who fashion idols are nothing;
the things they delight in are worthless;
their witnesses cannot see or know anything,
and they will be put to shame.

10 Who would form a god
or cast an idol that is worthless?

11 Look, all his associates will be put to shame;
the craftsmen are only men.
Let them assemble together; let them stand up;
they will tremble and be put to shame.

12 The smith works with his tools,
forming it, working over the coals.
He shapes it with hammers
and works it with his strong arm.
He is hungry, and his strength wanes;
he drinks no water and becomes faint.

13 The carpenter measures the wood with a line,
and marks it with a stylus.
He shapes it with his tools
and marks it out with a compass.
He shapes it after the figure of a man,
like a glorious human, so it may stay in a house.

14 He cuts down cedars,
or chooses a cypress tree or an oak tree.
He makes it grow for himself among the trees in the forest.
He plants a fir tree and the rain makes it grow.

15 Then a man uses it for a fire and warms himself.
Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread.
Then he makes from it a god and bows down to it;
he makes an idol and bows down to it.

16 He burns part of the wood for the fire,
roasting his meat over it. He eats and is satisfied.
He warms himself and says,
"Ah, I am warm, I have seen the fire."

17 With the rest of the wood he makes a god, his carved image;
he bows down to it and reverences it,
and prays to it saying, "Rescue me, for you are my god."

18 They do not know, nor do they understand,
for their eyes are blind and cannot see,
and their hearts cannot gain understanding.

19 No one's heart remembers, and no one has the knowledge,
no one has the understanding to say,
"I have burned part of the wood in the fire;
yes, I have also baked bread upon its coals.
I have roasted meat over its coals and eaten.
Now should I make the other part

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of the wood into an abomination?
Should I bow down to a block of wood?"

20 It is as if he were eating ashes; his deceived heart misleads him.
He cannot rescue himself, nor does he say,
"This thing in my right hand is a false god."

21 Think about these things, Jacob,
and Israel, for you are my servant:
I have formed you; you are my servant:
Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.

22 I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your rebellious deeds,
and like a cloud, your sins;
return to me,
for I have redeemed you.

23 Sing, you heavens, for Yahweh has done this;
shout for joy, you depths of the earth.
Break out into a shout of joy, you mountains,
you forest with every tree in it;
for Yahweh has redeemed Jacob,
and will show his glory in Israel.

24 This is what Yahweh says, your Redeemer,
he who formed you from the womb:
"I am Yahweh, who made everything,
who alone stretched out the heavens,
who alone fashioned the earth.

25 I who frustrate the omens of the empty talkers
and who disgrace those who interpret omens;
I who overturn the wisdom of the wise
and make their advice foolish.

26 I, Yahweh, who confirmed the words of his servant
and brings to pass the predictions of his messengers,
who says of Jerusalem, 'She will be inhabited,'
and of the towns of Judah,
'They will be built again, and I will raise up their ruins';

27 who says to the deep sea,
'Be dry, and I will dry up your currents.'

28 Yahweh is the one who says of Cyrus,
'He is my shepherd, he will do my every wish;
he will decree about Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,'
and about the temple, 'Let its foundations be laid.'"

Isaiah 44 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Yahweh's power

There is a prophecy in this chapter that gives the name of the king who will end the exile of the Jews from Babylon and rebuild the temple, even though the exile has not yet even occurred. This emphasizes that Yahweh knows the future, so the translator should translate the name of Cyrus given here. There are many other aspects of this chapter that show Yahweh's power as well. (See: prophet and temple)

Links:

Isaiah 44:1 Notes

Isaiah 44:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Jacob my servant

This refers to Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob, my servants"

Isaiah 44:2

he who made you and formed you in the womb

Yahweh speaks of creating the nation of Israel as if it were forming the nation as a baby in its mother's womb. Alternate translation: "he who made you, as I form a baby in the womb"

you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen, do not fear"

Jeshurun

This also refers to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 44:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I will pour water on the thirsty ground, and flowing streams on the dry ground

Yahweh speaks of giving his Spirit to the people of Israel as if he were causing rain to fall and streams to flow on dry ground.

and flowing streams on the dry ground

The words "I will pour" are understood from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "and I will pour flowing streams on the dry ground"

the thirsty ground

Dry ground is spoken of as if it were a thirsty person. Alternate translation: "the dry ground"

I will pour my Spirit on your offspring

Yahweh speaks of giving his Spirit to the people as if his Spirit were liquid that he pours out on them. Alternate translation: "I will give my Spirit to your offspring"

my blessing on your descendants

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "I will pour out my blessing on your descendants" or "I will give my blessing to your descendants"

Isaiah 44:4

They will spring up among the grass, like willows by the streams of water

The people of Israel being prosperous and multiplying is spoken of as if they were plants that grow because they have plenty of water.

willows

A willow is a tree with thin branches that grows near the water.

Isaiah 44:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel

another will call out the name of Jacob

"another person will say he is a descendant of Jacob"

name himself by the name of Israel

"call himself a descendant of Israel"

Isaiah 44:6

his Redeemer

"Israel's Redeemer"

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:9.

I am the first, and I am the last

This phrase emphasizes Yahweh's eternal nature. Possible meanings are 1) "I am the one who began all things, and I am the one who ends all things" or 2) "I am the one who has always lived, and I am the one who always will live."

Isaiah 44:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Who is like me? Let him announce

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there is no one like him. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If anyone thinks he is like me, let him announce"

Isaiah 44:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Do not fear or be afraid

Yahweh uses two similar expressions in order to strengthen his encouragement. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid"

Have I not declared to you long ago, and announced it?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is the one who predicted the events that have now happened. This can be translated as a statement. The word "announced" means basically the same thing as "declared." Alternate translation: "I declared these things to you long ago."

Is there any God besides me?

Yahweh uses a question again to emphasize that there is no other God. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no God besides me."

There is no other Rock

Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were a large rock under which people can find shelter. This means he has the power to protect his people.

Isaiah 44:9

General Information:

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Yahweh continues speaking.
the things they delight in are worthless
"the idols they delight in are worthless"
their witnesses cannot see or know anything
This phrase refers to those who worship these idols and who claim to be witnesses of the idols' power. Yahweh speaks of their inability to understand the truth as if they were blind. Alternate translation: "those who serve as witnesses for these idols are like blind people who know nothing"
they will be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will be ashamed" or "their idols will put them to shame"
Isaiah 44:10
Who would form a god or cast an idol that is worthless?
Yahweh is using this question to rebuke those who make idols. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only fools would form a god or cast an idol that is worthless."
cast an idol that is worthless
The word "worthless" does not distinguish worthless idols from idols that have worth, because all idols are worthless. Alternate translation: "cast worthless idols"
Isaiah 44:11
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
all his associates
These words could refer to 1) the associates of the craftsman who makes the idol. Alternate translation: "all of the craftsman's associates" Or 2) those who associate themselves with the idol by worshiping it. Alternate translation: "all those who worship the idol"
be put to shame
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will be ashamed"
Let them assemble together
"Let them all come together before me"
they will tremble
"they will be terrified." To "cower" is to bend over in fear.
Isaiah 44:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
forming it
"forming the idol" or "creating the idol"
Isaiah 44:13
with a line
A string was used to outline the shape of the idol in the wood.
stylus
This is a sharp tool to scratch the wood so the craftsman can see where to cut.
a compass
This is a tool with two points that spread out used to help mark the wood to make the idol.
Isaiah 44:14
He cuts down
"The carpenter cuts down" or "the woodcarver cuts down"
makes it grow for himself
He works so that the tree will grow strong and he can use it.
cypress tree
a tall evergreen tree
Isaiah 44:15
Then a man uses it
"The man uses the wood"
he makes an idol and bows down to it
This part of the sentence says basically the same as the first to emphasize it.
Isaiah 44:18
for their eyes are blind and cannot see
Yahweh speaks of those who cannot understand the foolishness of worshiping idols as if they were blind.
for their eyes are blind
Here "their eyes" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "for they are blind"
their hearts cannot gain understanding
Here the people are represented by their "hearts." Alternate translation: "they cannot understand"
Isaiah 44:19
Now should I make ... an abomination? Should I bow down to a block of wood?
Yahweh says that these people should be asking themselves these rhetorical questions. The questions anticipate negative answers and emphasize how foolish it would be for a person to do these things. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I should not now make ... something disgusting to worship. I should not bow down to a block of wood."
Isaiah 44:20
It is as if he were eating ashes
Yahweh speaks of a person worshiping an idol as if that person were eating the burned ashes of the wood from which he made the idol. Just as eating ashes does not benefit a person, neither does worshiping an idol.
his deceived heart misleads him
The heart represents the inner person. Alternate translation: "he misleads himself because he is deceived"
He cannot rescue himself
"The person who worships idols cannot save himself"
Isaiah 44:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
Jacob, and Israel
This refers to people descended from Jacob, Israel. Alternate translation: "you descendants of Israel"
you will not be forgotten by me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not forget you"
Isaiah 44:22
I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your rebellious deeds, and like a cloud, your sins
Yahweh speaks of how he has forgiven Israel's sins as if he were a cloud that has completely covered the sun. Alternate translation: "Like a thick cloud that covers the sun, I have blotted out your rebellious deeds, and like a cloud covers the sun, I have forgiven your sins"
like a cloud, your sins
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase.

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Alternate translation: "like a cloud, I have blotted out your sins"

Isaiah 44:23

Sing, you heavens ... glory in Israel

Here Isaiah speaks various parts of creation as if they were people and commands them to praise Yawheh.

you depths of the earth

"you lowest parts of the earth." Possible meanings are 1) that this refers to very deep places on the earth such as caves or canyons and forms a merism with "heavens" in the previous phrase or 2) that this refers to the place of the dead.

Isaiah 44:24

Redeemer

See how you translated this word in Isaiah 41:14.

he who formed you from the womb

Yahweh speaks of creating the nation of Israel as if it were forming the nation as a baby in its mother's womb. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 44:2]

who alone stretched out the heavens

Yahweh speaks of creating the heavens as if they were fabric which he stretched out. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 42:5]

Isaiah 44:25

omens

These are signs that people used to attempt to predict the future.

the empty talkers

This refers to people who say things that are meaningless.

Isaiah 44:26

who confirmed the words of his servant and brings to pass the predictions of his messengers

Yahweh is saying the same thing twice to emphasize that it is only he, Yahweh, who causes the prophesies to be fulfilled.

the words of his servant ... the predictions of his messengers

The abstract nouns "words" and "predictions" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "what his servant declares ... what his messengers announce"

She will be inhabited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will live there again"

They will be built again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will rebuild them"

I will raise up their ruins

The phrase "ruins" refers to places that have been destroyed. Yahweh speaks of rebuilding them as if he were raising them up. Alternate translation: "I will rebuild what others have destroyed"

Isaiah 44:28

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

He is my shepherd

Yahweh speaks of Cyrus ruling and protecting the people of Israel as if Cyrus is their shepherd.

She will be rebuilt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let the people rebuild the city"

Let its foundations be laid

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let the people lay its foundations"

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45 [1] This is what Yahweh says to his anointed,
to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold,
in order to subdue nations before him, to disarm kings,
and to open the doors before him, so that gates remain open:

[2] "I will go before you
and level the mountains;
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut in pieces their iron bars,

[3] and I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden away,
that you may know that it is I, Yahweh, who call you by your name,
I, the God of Israel.

[4] For Jacob my servant's sake,
and Israel my chosen,
I have called you by your name,
giving you a title of honor,
though you have not known me.

[5] I am Yahweh, and there is no other;
there is no God but me.
I will gird you,
though you have not known me;

[6] that people may know

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from the rising of the sun, and from the west,
that there is no god but me:
I am Yahweh, and there is no other.

7 I form the light and create darkness;
I bring peace and create disaster;
I am Yahweh, who does all these things.

8 You heavens, rain down from above!
Let the skies rain down righteousness.
Let the earth absorb it,
that salvation may bear fruit,
and righteousness spring up together with it.
I, Yahweh, have created them both.

9 Woe to anyone who argues with the one who formed him,
to him who is like any other earthen pot
among all the earthen pots in the ground!
Does the clay say to the potter,
'What are you making?'
or 'Your work has no handles on it'?

10 Woe to him who says to a father,
What are you fathering?'
or to a woman,
'What are you giving birth to?'

11 This is what Yahweh says,
the Holy One of Israel, his Maker:
'Why do you ask questions about what I will do for my children?
Do you command me concerning the work of my hands?'

12 'I made the earth
and created man on it.
It was my hands that stretched out the heavens,
and I commanded all the stars to appear.

13 I stirred Cyrus up in righteousness,
and I will smooth out all his paths.
He will build my city;
he will let my exiled people go home,
and not for price nor bribe,'"
says Yahweh of hosts.

14 This is what Yahweh says,

"The produce of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush
with the Sabeans, men of tall stature,
will be brought to you.
They will be yours.

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They will follow after you,
coming in chains.
They will bow down to you
and plead with you saying,
'Surely God is with you,
and there is no other except him.'"

15 Truly you are a God who hides yourself,
God of Israel, Savior.

16 They will all be ashamed and disgraced together;
those who carve idols will walk in humiliation.

17 But Israel will be saved by Yahweh
with an everlasting salvation;
you will never again be ashamed or humiliated.

18 This is what Yahweh says,
who created the heavens,
the true God
who created the earth and made it,
who established it.
He created it, not as a waste,
but designed it to be inhabited:
"I am Yahweh,
and there is no other.

19 I have not spoken in secret,
in some dark land;
I did not say to Jacob's descendants,
'Seek me in vain!'
I am Yahweh, who speaks what is right;
I declare the things that are upright.

20 Assemble yourselves and come!
Gather together, you refugees from among the nations!
They have no knowledge, those who carry carved images
and pray to gods that cannot save.

21 Come close and declare it to me, bring the evidence!
Let them conspire together.
Who has shown this from long ago?
Who announced it?
Was it not I, Yahweh?
There is no God except me,
a just God and a Savior;
there is no one besides me.

22 Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.

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23 By myself I swear,
speaking my just decree,
and it will not turn back:
'To me every knee will bend,
every tongue will swear.

24 They will say of me, "In Yahweh alone
are righteousness and strength."""
They will all be ashamed
who are angry at him.

25 In Yahweh all the descendants of Israel will be justified;
they will take pride in him.

Isaiah 45 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Potter and clay

The potter and the clay are important images used in Scripture. They emphasize the power and control of God. This chapter connects this to the truth that Yahweh is the creator of all, which it repeatedly emphasizes. He is even able to "anoint" or chose a future, pagan king. (See: anoint)

Links:

Isaiah 45:1 Notes

Isaiah 45:1

whose right hand I hold

Yahweh helping Cyrus and causing him to be successful is spoken of as if he were holding his right hand.

Isaiah 45:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Cyrus.

level the mountains

Yahweh speaks of removing obstacles that would hinder Cyrus's success as if it were leveling mountains before him.

the mountains

The Hebrew word used in the text is rare and is of an uncertain meaning. Some modern versions have "rough places" or "crooked places."

their iron bars

This refers to the iron bars on the bronze gates.

Isaiah 45:3

the treasures of darkness

Here "darkness" refers to places that are secret. Alternate translation: "treasures in dark places" or "the treasures in secret places"

Isaiah 45:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Cyrus.

Jacob ... Israel

These both refer to the descendants of Israel.

Isaiah 45:5

I will gird you

Possible meanings are 1) "I will strengthen you for battle" or 2) "I will equip you for battle."

Isaiah 45:6

from the rising of the sun, and from the west

Since the sun rises in the east, this phrase forms a merism and means everywhere on earth. Alternate translation: "from every place on earth"

Isaiah 45:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

I form the light and create darkness; I bring peace and create disaster

Both of these expressions form merisms that emphasize that Yahweh is sovereign creator of everything.

Isaiah 45:8

You heavens, rain down from above ... righteousness spring up together with it

Yahweh speaks of his righteousness as if it were rain that falls on the earth, and of his righteousness and salvation as plants that grow on the earth.

You heavens

Yahweh momentarily turns his attention from his people and begins to speak to the heavens.

Isaiah 45:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

any other earthen pot among all the earthen pots in the ground

Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were a potter, and of the one who would argue with him as if that person and the rest of humanity were all clay pots. Alternate translation: "like one piece of pottery among many other pieces of pottery scattered on the ground"

earthen pot

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Possible meanings are 1) "clay pot" or 2) "piece of broken clay pottery."

Does the clay say to the potter ... on it'?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke those who argue with him about what he does. Alternate translation: "The clay should not say to the potter ... on it!'"

Isaiah 45:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to scold those who argue with him about what he does.

Woe to him who says to a father, ... 'What are you giving birth to?'

Yahweh speaks of those who would argue him as if they were unborn children who argue with their own parents.

What are you fathering? ... What are you giving birth to?

The unborn child asks these rhetorical questions to scold his parents for giving birth to him. These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You should not be my father ... You should give birth to me." or "You are not fathering me correctly ... You are not giving birth to me correctly."

Isaiah 45:11

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:4.

Why do you ask questions about what I will do for my children? Do you command me concerning the work of my hands?

Yahweh uses questions to scold those who argue with him about what he does. Alternate translation: "Do not question me about what I do for my children. Do not command me concerning the work of my hands."

my children

This refers to the people of Israel.

the work of my hands

Here the word "hands" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the things that I have made"

Isaiah 45:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

It was my hands that

Here the word "hands" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "It was I who"

stretched out the heavens

Yahweh speaks of creating the heavens as if they were fabric that he stretched out. See how you translated a similar phrase in Isaiah 42:5.

Isaiah 45:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

I stirred Cyrus up in righteousness

Here the word "righteousness" refers to right action. Possible meanings are 1) that Yahweh has stirred up Cyrus to do the right thing or 2) that Yahweh was right to stir up Cyrus.

I stirred Cyrus

Yahweh speaks of causing Cyrus to act as if it were stirring him from slumber.

I will smooth out all his paths

Yahweh speaks of removing obstacles and causing Cyrus to be successful as if he were making the paths smooth on which Cyrus walks.

He will build my city

This refers to Jerusalem.

not for price nor bribe

Here the words "price" and "bribe" share similar meanings. Cyrus will not do these things for financial gain. Alternate translation: "he will not do these things for money"

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:9.

Isaiah 45:14

The produce of Egypt and the merchandise of Cush with the Sabeans, men of tall stature, will be brought to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Egypt, Cush, and the tall people of Seba will bring to you their produce and their merchandise"

The produce of Egypt

"The crops that grow in Egypt"

Sabeans

These are people from the nation of Seba.

to you

Here "you" refers to the people of Jerusalem.

there is no other except him

This double negative emphasizes that the speakers believe that the God of Israel is the only true God. Alternate translation: "the only true God is your God"

Isaiah 45:16

They will all be ashamed and disgraced together; those who carve idols will walk in humiliation

These two lines share similar meanings, with the second clarifying the subject of the first.

They will all be ashamed and disgraced together

The words "ashamed" and "disgraced" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of shame. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their idols will leave them all completely ashamed"

will walk in humiliation

Living in continual humiliation is spoken of as if it were walking in humiliation. Alternate translation: "will be continually humiliated"

Isaiah 45:17

Israel will be saved by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will save the people of Israel"

you will never again be ashamed or humiliated

Here "you" refers to the people of Israel. The words "ashamed" and "humiliated" mean basically the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will ever humiliate you again"

Isaiah 45:18

not as a waste

"not to be empty." Here the word "waste" refers to an empty, barren place.

but designed it to be inhabited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but he designed it so people could live on it"

Isaiah 45:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

things that are upright

Here "upright" is a metaphor for things that are true and

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morally good. Alternate translation: "things that are good and true"

Isaiah 45:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking

refugees

people who have fled from their homes so the enemy will not capture or kill them

Isaiah 45:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the refugees (Isaiah 45:20).

Let them conspire together

Here the word "them" refers to the refugees from among the nations who worship idols.

Who has shown this from long ago? Who announced it? Was it not I, Yahweh?

Yahweh uses questions to emphasize that he was the one who told them these things would happen. Alternate translation: "I will tell you who has shown this from long ago. I will tell you who announced it. It was I, Yahweh."

There is no God except me ... there is no one besides me

These double negatives emphasize that the speaker is the only God. Alternate translation: "I am the only God ... I am the only one"

Isaiah 45:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Turn to me and be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Turn to me and I will save you"

all the ends of the earth

The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. This phrase also forms a merism and refers to everywhere in between the ends. Alternate translation: "all the farthest places of the earth" or "the entire earth"

all the ends of the earth

Here this phrase represents the people who live at "the ends of the earth." Alternate translation: "you who live at the farthest places of the earth" or "all of you who live on the earth"

Isaiah 45:23

To me every knee will bend, every tongue will swear

The words "knee" and "tongue" represent the people. Alternate translation: "Every person will kneel before me, and everyone will swear"

Isaiah 45:24

They will say

All the people on the earth are speaking.

Isaiah 45:25

In Yahweh all the descendants of Israel will be justified

Here the word "justified" does not refer to Yahweh forgiving their sins, but to proving to the nations that Israel was right to worship him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will justify all the descendants of Israel" or "Yahweh will vindicate all the descendants of Israel"

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46 [1] Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low.
Their idols weigh down the animals who carry them,
and you load your cattle with heavy burdens
for weary animals.

[2] Together they bend low, kneel down;
they cannot rescue the images,
and they themselves have gone off into captivity.

[3] Listen to me, house of Jacob,
all the remnant of the house of Israel,
who have been carried by me from before your birth,
carried from the womb.

[4] Even to your old age I am he,
and until your hair is gray I will carry you.
I made you and I will bear you;
I will carry you and I will rescue you.

[5] To whom will you compare me? Who do you think I resemble,
so that we may be compared?

[6] People pour out gold from the bag
and weigh silver on the scale.
They hire a metalsmith, and he makes it into a god;

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they bow down and worship it.

7 They lift it on their shoulder and carry it;
they set it in its place, and it stands in its place
and does not move from it.
They cry out to it, but it cannot answer
nor save anyone from his trouble.

8 Think about these things;
never ignore them, you rebels!

9 Think about the earlier things, those of times past,
for I am God, and there is no other,
I am God, and there is no one like me.

10 I announce the end from the beginning,
and beforehand what has not yet happened;
I say, "My plan will happen,
and I will do as I desire."

11 I call a bird of prey from the east,
the man of my choice from a distant land;
yes, I have spoken; I will also accomplish it;
I have purposed, I will also do it.

12 Listen to me, you stubborn people,
who are far from doing what is right.

13 I am bringing my righteousness near;
it is not far away,
and my salvation does not wait;
and I will give salvation to Zion
and my beauty to Israel.

Isaiah 46 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Yahweh and the false gods

This chapter is intended to compare Yahweh with various false Gods whom the Israelites worship. There really is no comparison at all because Yahweh alone is God. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Isaiah 46:1 Notes

Isaiah 46:1

Bel bows down, Nebo stoops low. Their idols ... for weary animals

Isaiah speaks of people placing the idols of Bel and Nebo into a cart for animals to transport as if these gods were made to "bow down" and "stoop." These are both postures of humiliation.

Bel ... Nebo

These were the two primary gods whom the Babylonians worshiped.

Their idols

the idols that represented Bel and Nebo

Isaiah 46:2

they cannot rescue the images

"Bel and Nebo cannot rescue their images"

they themselves have gone off into captivity

Isaiah speaks of people carrying off these idols as if the false gods whom they represent are being carried off to captivity.

Isaiah 46:3

Listen to me

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Here "me" refers to Yahweh.

who have been carried by me from before your birth, carried from the womb

Yahweh speaks of the nation of Israel as if it were a person, and of the nation's beginning as if it were its birth.

who have been carried by me

Yahweh speaks of helping and rescuing the people of Israel as if he were carrying them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I have carried"

Isaiah 46:4

Even to your old age I am he, and until your hair is gray I will carry you

Yahweh speaks of the nation of Israel becoming very old as if it were an old man with gray hair.

Isaiah 46:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

To whom will you compare me? Who do you think I resemble, so that we may be compared?

Yahweh uses questions to emphasize that there is no one like him. Alternate translation: "There is no one to whom you can compare me. I resemble no one, so that we might be compared."

so that we may be compared

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you may compare us"

Isaiah 46:7

They lift it

"They" refers to the people who make idols and "it" refers to the idol that they have created.

Isaiah 46:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to his people.

Isaiah 46:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to his people.

I announce the end from the beginning, and beforehand what has not yet happened

This basically repeats the same idea for emphasis. The verb from the first phrase may be supplied for the second. Alternate translation: "I announce the end from the beginning, and I announce beforehand what has not yet happened"

Isaiah 46:11

I call a bird of prey from the east

Yahweh speaks of Cyrus as if he were "a bird of prey." As a bird swiftly captures its prey, so Cyrus will swiftly accomplish Yahweh's purpose to conquer the nations.

I have spoken; I will also accomplish it; I have purposed, I will also do it.

This repeats the same idea for emphasis.

Isaiah 46:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

who are far from doing what is right

Yahweh speaks of the people stubbornly doing wrong as if they were physically far away from doing the right thing.

Isaiah 46:13

my salvation does not wait

Yahweh speaks of saving his people soon as if his salvation were a person who does not wait to act. The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "I will not wait to save you"

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1 47 Come down and sit in the dust,
virgin daughter of Babylon;
sit on the ground without a throne,
daughter of the Chaldeans.
You will no longer be called
dainty and delicate.

2 Take the millstone and grind flour;
remove your veil,
strip off your flowing robe, uncover your legs,
cross the streams.

3 Your nakedness will be uncovered,
yes, your shame will be seen:
I will take vengeance
and will not spare a man.

4 Our Redeemer, Yahweh of hosts is his name,
the Holy One of Israel.

5 Sit in silence and go into darkness,
daughter of the Chaldeans;
for you will no longer be called

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queen of kingdoms.

6 I was angry with my people;
I defiled my heritage
and gave them over into your hand,
but you showed them no mercy;
you placed a very heavy yoke on the old people.

7 You said, "I will rule forever
as sovereign queen."
You did not take these things to heart,
nor did you consider how they would turn out.

8 So now hear this, you who love pleasure
and sit securely;
you who say in your heart,
"I exist, and there is no one else like me;
I will never sit as a widow,
nor will I ever experience loss of children."

9 But these two things will come to you
in a moment in one day:
the loss of children and widowhood;
in full force they will come on you,
despite your sorceries
and your many incantations and amulets.

10 You have trusted in your wickedness;
you have said, "No one sees me";
your wisdom and your knowledge lead you astray,
but you say in your heart,
"I exist, and there is no one else like me."

11 Disaster will overcome you;
you will not be able to drive it away with your incantations.
Destruction will fall on you;
you will not be able to ward it off.
Calamity will strike you suddenly,
before you know it.

12 Persist in casting your spells
and your many sorceries
which you have faithfully recited since your childhood;
perhaps you will profit from them,
perhaps you will cause trembling.

13 You are tired out from so much counsel;
let those men stand up and save you—
those who chart the heavens and prophesy by the stars,
those who declare the new moons—
let them save you from what will happen to you.

14 See, they will become like stubble.
The fire will burn them up.
They will not save themselves

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from the hand of the flame.
There are no coals to warm them
and no fire for them to sit by!

15 This is what they have become to you—
those with whom you have worked,
and you have bought and sold with them since your youth—
they wandered about each one in his own direction;
there is no one who can rescue you."

Isaiah 47 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Babylon

This chapter prophesied the destruction of Babylon. At the time that the prophesy was written, Assyria was still in power and Babylon had not yet become a world power. The Chaldeans were not yet a powerful nation either. The people of Judah would become servants or slaves of Babylon and be forced to work very hard. (See: prophet)

Links:

Isaiah 47:1 Notes

Isaiah 47:1

General Information:

In this chapter, Yahweh speaks to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground ... daughter of the Chaldeans.

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Sitting in the dust was a sign of humiliation.

virgin daughter of Babylon ... daughter of the Chaldeans

Both of these phrases refer to the city, Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a daughter. That the city is a "daughter" indicates how people think fondly of her.

without a throne

Here "throne" refers to the power to rule. Alternate translation: "without the power to rule"

You will no longer be called dainty and delicate

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will no longer call you dainty and delicate"

dainty and delicate

These two words share similar meanings. They describe one who is beautiful and lives in luxury. Alternate translation: "very beautiful" or "very luxurious"

Isaiah 47:2

millstone

a large stone used to grind grain

Isaiah 47:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

Your nakedness will be uncovered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will be naked"

your shame will be seen

Here the word "shame" is a euphemism for one's private parts. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will see your shame" or "people will see your private parts"

Isaiah 47:4

Our Redeemer

"Our" refers to Isaiah and the people of Israel. See how you translated "Redeemer" in [Isaiah 41:14]

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:24.

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 5:16.

Isaiah 47:5

daughter of the Chaldeans

This phrase refers to the city, Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a daughter. That the city is a "daughter" indicates how the Chaldeans think fondly of her. See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 47:1.

for you will no longer be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for people will no longer call you"

queen of kingdoms

Yahweh speaks of Babylon being the capital city of the Babylonian empire as if it were a queen who ruled many kingdoms.

Isaiah 47:6

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

I was angry

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

I defiled my heritage

Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel being his special possession as if they were his heritage or inheritance. Alternate translation: "I defiled my people, who are my

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special possession"

gave them over into your hand

Here the word "hand" represents Babylon's power or control. Alternate translation: "I put them under your power"

you placed a very heavy yoke on the old people

Yahweh speaks of the Babylonians oppressing the old people as if they had treated the old people like cattle and put heavy yokes on their necks.

Isaiah 47:7

I will rule forever as sovereign queen

Babylon speaks of permanently ruling over many nations as if she were a queen who would rule forever.

You did not take these things to heart

Yahweh speaks of thinking carefully about something as if it were placing that thing on one's heart. Alternate translation: "You did not consider these things"

Isaiah 47:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

you who love pleasure

"you luxurious one." This refers to the many luxuries that Babylon enjoyed.

sit securely

This refers to Babylon's false sense of security in thinking that she will never lose her position of wealth and honor. Alternate translation: "who think you are safe"

I will never sit as a widow ... loss of children

Babylon believing that other nations will never be able to conquer her is spoken of as if she will never become a widow or never have children die.

I will never sit as a widow

"I will never become a widow"

Isaiah 47:9

in a moment in one day

"suddenly at the same time"

amulets

ornaments or jewelry that people wear because they believe that those things will protect them from evil, danger, or sickness

Isaiah 47:10

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

you say in your heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the inner person. Alternate translation: "you say to yourself"

Isaiah 47:11

Disaster will overcome you

Yahweh speaks of disaster as if it were a person who captures Babylon. Alternate translation: "You will experience disaster"

Destruction will fall on you

Yahweh speaks Babylon being destroyed as if destruction were an object that falls upon the city. Alternate translation: "You will experience destruction" or "Others will destroy you"

Calamity will strike you

Yahweh speaks of Babylon experiencing calamity as if calamity were a person who strikes Babylon. Alternate translation: "You will experience calamity"

Isaiah 47:12

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

Persist in casting your spells ... perhaps you will cause trembling

Yahweh mocks Babylon by telling her to continue to practice her sorcery to keep bad things away, but he knows that it will not help her.

cause trembling

The one whom Babylon would cause to tremble in fear is probably the personification of disaster. Babylon would be trying to keep disaster away or to avoid suffering disaster. Alternate translation: "cause disaster to tremble in fear and stay away" or "keep yourselves from suffering disaster"

Isaiah 47:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak to Babylon about her downfall as if she were a queen who is humiliated.

they will become like stubble. The fire will burn them up

Yahweh compares the magicians and sorcerers to straw that burns quickly in a fire. This means that Yahweh will destroy them as easily as fire burns stubble, and so they are powerless to save Babylon.

the hand of the flame

Here the word "hand" represents strength. Alternate translation: "the power of the flame"

There are no coals to warm them and no fire for them to sit by

Yahweh emphasizes that this is a destructive fire by stating that it is not one that people will use to warm themselves.

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[1] 48 Hear this, house of Jacob,
who are called by the name Israel
and have come from the waters of Judah;
you who swear by the name of Yahweh
and invoke the God of Israel,
but not sincerely nor in a righteous manner.

[2] For they call themselves people of the holy city
and trust in the God of Israel.
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

[3] "I have declared the things from long ago;

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they came out from my mouth, and I made them known;
then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass.

4 Because I knew that you were obstinate,
your neck muscles tight as iron,
and your forehead like bronze,

5 therefore I declared these things to you beforehand;
before they happened I informed you,
so you could not say,
'My idol has done them,'
or 'My carved figure and my cast metal figure has ordained these things.'

6 You heard about these things; look at all this evidence;
and you, will you not admit what I said is true?

From now on, I am showing you new things,
hidden things that you have not known.

7 Now, and not from previously, they come into being,
and before today you have not heard about them,
so you will not be able to say,
'Yes, I knew about them.'

8 You never heard; you did not know;
these things were not unfolded to your ears beforehand.
For I knew that you have been very deceitful,
and that you have been a rebel from birth.

9 For the sake of my name I will defer my anger,
and for my honor I will hold back from destroying you.

10 Look, I refined you, but not as silver;
I have purified you in the furnace of affliction.

11 For my own sake, for my own sake I will act;
for how can I allow my name to be profaned?
I will not give my glory to anyone else.

12 Listen to me, Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called:
I am he;
I am the first, I also am the last.

13 Yes, my hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I call to them,
they stand up together.

14 Assemble yourselves, all of you, and listen!
Who among you has announced these things?
Yahweh's ally will accomplish his purpose against Babylon.
He will carry out Yahweh's will against the Chaldeans.

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15 I, I have spoken,
yes, I have summoned him,
I have brought him,
and he will succeed.

16 Come near to me, listen to this:
From the beginning I have not spoken in secret; when it happens, I am there."
Now the Lord Yahweh has sent me, and his Spirit.

17 This is what Yahweh,
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel says,
"I am Yahweh your God,
who teaches you how to profit,
who leads you by the way that you should go.

18 If only you had obeyed my commandments!
Then your peace and prosperity would have flowed like a river,
and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

19 Your descendants would have been as numerous as the sand,
and the offspring from your womb as numerous as the grains of sand;
their name would not have been cut off
nor blotted out from before me.

20 Come out from Babylon!
Flee from the Chaldeans!
With the sound of a ringing cry announce it!
Make this known,
make it go out to the ends of the earth!
Say, 'Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob.'

21 They did not thirst when he led them through the deserts;
he made the water to flow out of the rock for them;
he split open the rock,
and the waters gushed out.

22 There is no peace for the wicked—says Yahweh."

Isaiah 48 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Yahweh and the false gods

This chapter is set up to compare Yahweh with various false Gods whom the Israelites worship. There really is no comparison between the two because Yahweh alone is God. (See: falsegod)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Exile

Yahweh explains purpose behind the Jews exile in Babylon, even though it is still in the future. This emphasizes that that Yahweh is much more powerful than the false gods.

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Links:

Isaiah 48:1 Notes

Isaiah 48:1

Hear this

"Listen to my message." Yahweh is speaking.

house of Jacob

Here "house" refers to the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob"

who are called by the name Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom everyone calls the people of Israel"

have come from the waters of Judah

This phrase emphasizes that they are the direct, physical descendants of Judah. Alternate translation: "are the descendants of Judah"

the waters of Judah

The word "waters" here is a euphemism for semen. You may need either to translate using a different euphemism or to specify the meaning of the euphemism. Alternate translation: "the family line of Judah" or "the loins of Judah" or "the sperm of Judah"

invoke the God of Israel

"call on the God of Israel"

Isaiah 48:2

they call themselves

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "you call yourselves"

the holy city

This refers to Jerusalem.

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:9.

Isaiah 48:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

they came out from my mouth

"Mouth" refers to someone speaking. Alternate translation: "I spoke these things"

Isaiah 48:4

your neck muscles tight as iron, and your forehead like bronze

Yahweh compares the tightness of their neck muscles and the hardness of their foreheads to the hardness of iron and bronze. Here, to have a tight neck or a hard forehead is a metaphor that means the people are stubborn. Alternate translation: "it is as if your necks were iron and your heads were bronze"

Isaiah 48:5

I declared these things to you beforehand; before they happened I informed you

This is saying the same thing twice for emphasis.

Isaiah 48:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

will you not admit what I said is true?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people of Israel for not admitting what they should know is true. Alternate translation: "you are stubborn and will not admit what I said is true."

Isaiah 48:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

these things were not unfolded to your ears beforehand

Yahweh speaks of explaining something as if it were unfolding it. The word "ears" represents the people who are listening. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I did not explain these things to you beforehand"

from birth

Yahweh speaks of the nation's beginning as if it were its birth.

Isaiah 48:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

For the sake of my name I will defer my anger

Here the word "name" refers to Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "For the sake of my reputation I will delay my anger"

for my honor I will hold back from destroying you

This part of the sentence means basically the same thing as the first part.

Isaiah 48:10

Look, I refined you, but not as silver; I have purified you in the furnace of affliction

Yahweh speaks of using affliction to purify his people as if they were precious metals and affliction were a furnace in which he refines them.

Isaiah 48:11

for how can I allow my name to be profaned?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he can never allow his own name to be dishonored. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for I cannot allow anyone to profane my name."

Isaiah 48:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Jacob, and Israel

Both of these refer to the people of Israel.

I am the first, I also am the last

This phrase emphasizes Yahweh's eternal nature. Possible meanings are 1) "I am the one who began all things, and I am the one who ends all things" or 2) "I am the one who has always lived, and I am the one who always will live." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 44:6]

Isaiah 48:13

my hand laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand spread out the heavens

Here "hand" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I laid the foundation of the earth, and I spread out the heavens"

the foundation of the earth

The word "foundation" normally refers to a stone structure that gives support to a building from underneath. Here it describes a similar structure that was thought to support and hold the earth in place. See how you translated this in

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Isaiah 24:18.

spread out the heavens

Yahweh speaks of creating the heavens as if they were fabric which Yahweh stretched out. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 42:5]

when I call to them, they stand up together

Standing up when Yahweh calls is a metaphor for being ready to obey him. Yahweh speaks of the earth and the heavens as if they were able to hear him and obey him.

when I call to them

Possible meanings are 1) "when I call the earth and the heavens" or 2) "when I call the stars in the heavens."

Isaiah 48:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Who among you has announced these things?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the idols have not told them these things. Alternate translation: "None of your idols has told this to you."

Yahweh's ally will accomplish his purpose against Babylon. He will carry out Yahweh's will against the Chaldeans

Here "ally" refers to Cyrus. Both of these sentences mean the same thing and are used for emphasis.

his purpose

"Yahweh's purpose"

Isaiah 48:15

I, I

The word "I" is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I myself"

Isaiah 48:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I have not spoken in secret

"I have spoken plainly and clearly"

sent me

Here "me" refers to an unknown servant of Yahweh, maybe Isaiah or Cyrus or the promised Messiah.

Isaiah 48:17

your Redeemer ... your God

Here "your" refers to the people of Israel.

Redeemer

See how you translated this word in Isaiah 41:14.

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:4.

who leads you by the way that you should go

Yahweh teaching the people how they should live is spoken of as if he were leading them to walk on the correct paths.

to profit

to succeed

Isaiah 48:18

If only you had obeyed my commandments

Yahweh describes something that could have happened but did not.

Then your peace and prosperity would have flowed like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea

These two phrases share similar meanings. In both, Yahweh speaks of Israel's experiencing abundant blessings as if those blessings flowed like water.

your righteousness like the waves of the sea

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "your righteousness would have flowed like the waves of the sea"

righteousness

This is probably a metonym for the salvation that come from righteousness. Alternate translation: "salvation"

Isaiah 48:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Israel what would have happened if they had obeyed his commandments, but they had not obeyed.

Your descendants would have been as numerous as the sand, and the offspring from your womb as numerous as the grains of sand

These both mean that the people would have had more descendants than they could count.

the offspring from your womb

Yahweh speaks of the descendants of the people of Israel as if they were children to which the nation gives birth.

their name would not have been cut off nor blotted out

The people of Israel being destroyed is spoken of as if their name had been cut off, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree, or blotted out. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would not have cut off nor blotted out their name"

their name

Here the word "name" refers to the descendants who would carry on the name of Israel. Alternate translation: "they"

cut off nor blotted out

These two expressions in this context refer to destroying the people. Alternate translation: "destroyed"

Isaiah 48:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

to the ends of the earth

The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. This phrase also forms a merism and refers to everywhere in between the ends. Alternate translation: "to all the farthest places of the earth" or "to the entire earth"

his servant Jacob

This refers to the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel, his servants"

Isaiah 48:21

They did not thirst ... the waters gushed out

This refers to an event in the history of the people of Israel when Yahweh took care of them while they lived in the desert after escaping Egypt.

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49 [1] Listen to me, you coastlands!
Now pay attention, you distant peoples.
Yahweh has called me from birth by name,
when my mother brought me into the world.

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2 He has made my mouth like a sharp sword;
he hid me in the shadow of his hand;
he has made me into a polished arrow;
in his quiver he has hidden me.

3 He said to me, "You are my servant,
Israel, through whom I show my glory."

4 But I replied, "Though I thought I have labored in vain,
I have spent my energy for nothing,
yet my justice is with Yahweh,
and my reward is with my God."

5 Now Yahweh has spoken—
he who formed me from birth to be his servant,
to restore Jacob again to himself,
so that Israel would be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the eyes of Yahweh,
and my God has become my strength—

6 and he says, "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant
to reestablish the tribes of Jacob,
and to restore the survivors of Israel.
I will make you a light to the Gentiles,
that you may be my salvation to the ends of the earth."

7 This is what Yahweh says,
the Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One,
to the one whose life is despised, hated by the nations,
and a slave of rulers,
"Kings will see you and arise,
and princes will see you and bow down,
because of Yahweh who is faithful,
even the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

8 This is what Yahweh says,

"At a time I decide to show my favor I will answer you,
and in a day of salvation I will help you;
I will protect you,
and give you as a covenant for the people,
to rebuild the land,
to reassign the desolate inheritance.
9 You will say to the prisoners, 'Come out;'
to those in dark dungeons, 'Show yourselves.'
They will graze along the roads,
and on all the bare slopes will be their pasture.

10 They will not be hungry or thirsty;
nor will the heat or sun beat on them,

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for he who has mercy on them will lead them;
he will guide them to springs of water.

11 Then I will make all my mountains into a road,
and make my highways level."

12 Look, these will come from far away,
some from the north and the west;
and others from the land of Sinim.

13 Sing, heavens, and be joyful,
earth; break into joyful shouting, you mountains!
For Yahweh comforts his people,
and will have compassion on his afflicted.

14 But Zion said, "Yahweh has abandoned me,
and the Lord has forgotten me."

15 "Can a woman forget her baby, nursing at her breast,
so she does not have compassion on the son she has borne?
Yes, they may forget,
but I will not forget you.

16 Look, I have inscribed your name on my palms;
your walls are continually before me.

17 Your children are hurrying back,
while those who destroyed you and made you desolate are going away.

18 Look around and see,
they are all gathering and coming to you.
As surely as I live—this is Yahweh's declaration—
you will surely wear them like jewelry,
and you will put them on like a bride.

19 Though you were a waste and desolate,
a land that was in ruins,
now you will be too small for the inhabitants,
and those who devoured you will be far away.

20 The children born during the time of your bereavement
will say in your hearing,
'The place is too cramped for us,
make room for us, so we may live here.'

21 Then you will say in your heart,
'Who has borne these children for me?
I was bereaved and barren,
exiled and divorced.
Who has raised these children?
Look, I was left all alone;

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where did these come from?'"

22 This is what the Lord Yahweh says,

"Look, I will raise my hand to the nations;
I will raise my signal flag to the peoples.
They will bring your sons in their bosoms
and carry your daughters on their shoulders.
23 Kings will be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursemaids;
they will bow down to you with their faces to the earth
and lick the dust of your feet;
and you will know that I am Yahweh;
those who wait for me will not be put to shame."

24 Can the booty be taken from the warrior,
or captives be rescued from the ruthless?[1]

25 But this is what Yahweh says,

"Yes, the captives will be taken away from the warrior,
and booty will be rescued from the ruthless;
for I will oppose your adversary
and save your children.
26 I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh;
and they will get drunk on their own blood, as if it were wine.
Then all mankind will know
that I, Yahweh, am your Savior and your Redeemer,
the Mighty One of Jacob."

[1] Instead of from the ruthless, the copies of the ancient Hebrew text have from the righteous, but most modern translations correct it to from the ruthless.

Isaiah 49 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Many scholars believe that there are four songs or poems which Isaiah records about the Messiah. Isaiah 49:1-6 is the second of these songs. They are often called the "servant songs" because they focus on the Messiah being a servant. (See: christ)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

A day of salvation

It is unclear if this is a reference to the gospel proclaimed by the Messiah or to the day of restoration of all things. The translator should not try to explain its reference to the reader. (See: save, goodnews and restore)

Links:

Isaiah 49:1 Notes

Isaiah 49:1
Listen to me

Here "me" refers to Yahweh's servant.
you coastlands

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This refers to the people who live on the coastlands. Alternate translation: "you who live on the coastlands"
Isaiah 49:2
He has made my mouth like a sharp sword
Here the word "mouth" represents the words that he speaks. His words are compared to a sharp sword to emphasize that they will be effective. Alternate translation: "He has made my words as effective as a sharp sword"
he hid me in the shadow of his hand
Yahweh protecting his servant and keeping his purpose secret is spoken of as if Yahweh's hand cast a shadow over him.
he has made me into a polished arrow; in his quiver he has hidden me
Yahweh's servant being able to carry out Yahweh's purposes effectively is spoken of as if the servant were a sharp, new arrow.
in his quiver he has hidden me
Yahweh protecting his servant and keeping his purpose secret is spoken of as if Yahweh kept him hidden in a quiver.
quiver
a case used to carry arrows
Isaiah 49:3
General Information:
Yahweh's servant continues speaking.
He said
"Yahweh said"
You are my servant, Israel
"You are my servant, whom I call Israel"
Isaiah 49:5
General Information:
Yahweh's servant continues speaking.
that Israel would be gathered to him
This part of the sentence means the same as the part before it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to bring the people of Israel back to himself"
I am honored in the eyes of Yahweh
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has honored me"
Isaiah 49:6
I will make you a light to the Gentiles
The servant bringing Yahweh's message to the Gentiles and helping them to understand it is spoken of as if Yahweh made the servant a light that shines among the Gentiles. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 42:6]
to the ends of the earth
The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. This phrase also forms a merism and refers to everywhere in between the ends. Alternate translation: "to all the farthest places of the earth" or "to the entire earth"
Isaiah 49:7
Redeemer
See how you translated this word in Isaiah 41:14.
to the one whose life is despised, hated by the nations, and a slave of rulers
Here the word "life" represents the person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to the one whom people despised, whom the nations hated and held as slaves"
Holy One of Israel
See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 1:4.
Isaiah 49:8
At a time I decide to show my favor I will answer you, and in a day of salvation I will help you
These two clauses mean basically the same thing.
I will answer you
Here "you" refers to Yahweh's servant.
in a day of salvation
The word "salvation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when the time comes for me to save you"
give you as a covenant for the people
Here the word "covenant" is a metonym for the one who establishes or mediates a covenant. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 42:6]
to rebuild the land
Here the word "land" represents the cities in the land that had been destroyed. Alternate translation: "to rebuild the ruined places in the land"
to reassign the desolate inheritance
Yahweh speaks of the land as if it were an inheritance that the people of Israel received as a permanent possession. It is implied that the servant is to reassign the land to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "to reassign the desolate land to the people of Israel as their inheritance"
Isaiah 49:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to his servant.
They will graze along the roads, and on all the bare slopes will be their pasture
Yahweh speaks of the people living freely and prosperously as if they were sheep that had plenty of pasture in which to graze.
Isaiah 49:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
They will not
Here "they" refers to God's people.
nor will the heat or sun beat on them
Here the word "heat" describes the word "sun." The people suffering from the sun's heat is spoken of as if the heat struck them. Alternate translation: "nor will they suffer from the sun's heat"
for he who has mercy on them ... he will guide them
Yahweh speaks of himself in the third person. He speaks of protecting the people and caring for them as if he were their shepherd. Alternate translation: "I, the one who has mercy on them ... I will guide them"
Isaiah 49:11
I will make all my mountains into a road, and make my highways level
Yahweh speaks of guiding his people safely and removing obstacles from their path as if he turned mountains into roads and level highways.
Isaiah 49:12
the land of Sinim
The location of this place is uncertain, but it may refer to a region in the southern part of Egypt.

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Isaiah 49:13

Sing, heavens, and be joyful, earth; break into joyful shouting, you mountains!

Isaiah turns his attention from the people of Israel and speaks to the heavens, earth, and mountains as if they were people.

Isaiah 49:14

But Zion said

The word "Zion" is another name for Jerusalem. Isaiah speaks of the city as if it were a woman who complains that Yahweh has forgotten her.

Isaiah 49:15

Can a woman forget her baby, nursing at her breast, so she does not have compassion on the son she has borne?

Yahweh uses a question to help his people understand that he will never forget about them or stop caring for them. Alternate translation: "A woman would not forget her nursing baby or stop caring for the son she bore."

Isaiah 49:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion.

I have inscribed your name on my palms

Yahweh speaks of his unwavering devotion to Zion as if he had written her name on the palms of his hands.

your walls are continually before me

Yahweh speaks of always thinking about Zion as if her walls were always before him. The word "walls" is a metonym for the city. Alternate translation: "I am continually thinking about your walls" or "I am always thinking about you"

Isaiah 49:17

Your children are hurrying back

Yahweh speaks of the people who are returning to live in Jerusalem as if they were the city's children. Alternate translation: "Your inhabitants are hurrying back"

destroyed you and made you desolate

This is a doublet. Alternate translation: "completely destroyed you"

Isaiah 49:18

you will surely wear them like jewelry, and you will put them on like a bride

Yahweh speaks of the inhabitants of Zion as if they were jewelry that the city wears to show her beauty and joy.

you will put them on like a bride

The last part of the phrase can be clarified from the previous line. Alternate translation: "you will put them on, like a bride wears jewelry"

Isaiah 49:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a woman.

Though you were a waste and desolate

The words "a waste" and "desolate" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the enemy has destroyed Zion and left it empty. Alternate translation: "Though you were completely desolate"

those who devoured you

The enemy destroying Zion is spoken of as if they had devoured it. Alternate translation: "those who destroyed you"

Isaiah 49:20

The children born during the time of your bereavement

Yahweh speaks of the time when the people of Jerusalem were in exile as if the city was bereaved of her children. Those who were born while the people were in exile are spoken of as the city's children. Alternate translation: "Those who will inhabit you, who were born while the people were in exile"

The place is too cramped for us

This means that there will be so many people that the city will be too small for them all to live in it.

Isaiah 49:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a woman.

say in your heart

Here the word "heart" is a metonym for the whole person. Alternate translation: "say to yourself" or "ask yourself"

Who has borne these children for me?

Zion speaks of the people who are returning to inhabit the city as if those people were her children. Zion's question expresses her surprise that so many children now belong to her.

I was bereaved and barren, exiled and divorced

Zion describes herself as a woman incapable of having more children. She indicates the reasons for her great surprise.

I was bereaved and barren

"I was mourning over my dead children and unable to have more"

exiled and divorced

"I was sent away, without a husband"

Who has raised these children? Look, I was left all alone; where did these come from?

Again, Zion uses questions to expresses her surprise. Alternate translation: "Look, I was left all alone; now all of these children that I did not raise have come to me."

Isaiah 49:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a woman. He explains how she is able to have so many children.

I will raise my hand to the nations; I will raise my signal flag to the peoples

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "I will raise my hand and signal with a flag for the people of the nations to come"

signal flag

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.

They will bring your sons in their bosoms and carry your daughters on their shoulders

Yahweh speaks of the people who will inhabit Jerusalem as if they were the city's children. He also speaks of the people of other nations helping the Israelites to return to Jerusalem as if they were carrying the Israelites.

bosoms

The word "bosom" refers to the chest, shoulders, and arms.

Isaiah 49:23

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a woman.

Kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursemaids

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Yahweh speaks of the people who will inhabit Zion as if they were the city's children. The terms "foster fathers" and "nursemaids" refer to men and women who become responsible for the care of children. Alternate translation: "The kings and queens of other nations will provide for your inhabitants"

they will bow down to you with their faces to the earth and lick the dust of your feet

These phrases describe gestures that people used to express complete submission to a superior.

lick the dust of your feet

Possible meanings are 1) that this is a literal expression of submission where the person licks the dust off of a superior's foot or from the ground at the superior's foot or 2) that this is an idiom that describes a person prostrating himself before a superior.

will not be put to shame

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not be ashamed" or "will not be disappointed"

Isaiah 49:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a woman.

Can the booty be taken from the warrior, or captives be rescued from the ruthless?

Isaiah uses a question to express the difficulty of taking anything from a mighty soldier or a very strong warrior. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A person cannot take the booty from a warrior or rescue captives from ruthless soldiers."

booty

valuable items taken from the losers in a battle

the ruthless

This nominal adjective refers to any ruthless person, not to one particular ruthless person. Alternate translation: "ruthless people"

Isaiah 49:25

the captives will be taken away from the warrior, and booty will be rescued

Yahweh says that he will do what is usually impossible for people to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will take the captives from the warrior, and I will rescue the booty"

the ruthless

This nominal adjective refers to any ruthless person, not to one particular ruthless person. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 49:24]

I will ... save your children

Yahweh speaks of the people who will inhabit Zion as if they were the city's children.

Isaiah 49:26

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Zion as if it were a person.

I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh

Possible meanings are 1) the oppressors will be so hungry that they will eat the flesh of their friends who have died. Alternate translation: "I will cause your oppressors to eat their own flesh" or 2) Yahweh speaks of the oppressors fighting against and destroying themselves as if they were eating themselves. Alternate translation: "I will cause your oppressors to destroy themselves, as if they were eating their own flesh"

they will get drunk on their own blood, as if it were wine

Possible meanings are 1) the oppressors will be so thirsty that they drink the blood of their friends who have died. Alternate translation: "they will drink their friends' blood and be like weak people who are drunk on wine" or 2) Yahweh speaks of the oppressors fighting against and destroying themselves as if they were drinking their own blood. Alternate translation: "they will shed so much of their friends' blood that it will be as though they were getting drunk with wine"

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50 [1]This is what Yahweh says,

"Where is the certificate of divorce
with which I divorced your mother?
To which of my creditors did I sell you?
Look, you were sold because of your iniquities,
and because of your rebellion your mother was sent away.
[2] Why did I come but there was no one there?
Why did I call but no one answered?
Was my hand too short to ransom you?
Was there no power in me to rescue you?
Look, at my rebuke I dry up the sea;
I make the rivers a desert;
their fish die for lack of water and rot.

[3] I clothe the sky with darkness;
I cover it with sackcloth."

[4] The Lord Yahweh has given me a tongue as one of those who are taught,
so that I speak a sustaining word to the weary one;

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he wakes me morning by morning;
he awakens my ear to hear like those who are taught.

5 The Lord Yahweh has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
nor did I turn away backward.

6 I gave my back to those who beat me,
and my cheeks to those who plucked out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from acts of shame and spitting.

7 For the Lord Yahweh will help me;
therefore I am not disgraced;
so I have made my face like flint,
for I know that I will not be put to shame.

8 He who will justify me is close by.
Who will oppose me?
Let us stand and confront one another.
Who is my accuser?
Let him come near to me.

9 See, the Lord Yahweh will help me.
Who will declare me guilty?
See, they will all wear out like a garment;
the moth will eat them up.

10 Who among you fears Yahweh?
Who obeys the voice of his servant?
Who walks in deep darkness
without light?
He should trust in the name of Yahweh
and lean on his God.

11 Look, all you who light fires,
who equip yourselves with torches:
walk in the light of your fire
and in the flames that you have ignited.
This is what you have received from me:
You will lie down in a place of pain.

Isaiah 50 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Many scholars believe that there are four songs or poems which Isaiah records about the Messiah. Isaiah 50:4-9 is the third of these songs. They are often called the "servant songs" because they focus on the Messiah being a servant. (See: christ)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

There are many rhetorical questions in this chapter. These questions prove Yahweh's point and are intended to convince the readers.

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Links:

Isaiah 50:1 Notes

Isaiah 50:1

Where is the certificate of divorce with which I divorced your mother?

Yahweh speaks of Zion as if the city were the mother of the people who lived there and of sending the people into exile as if he were divorcing their mother.

Where is the certificate of divorce with which I divorced your mother?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question so that the people would produce "the certificate of divorce," which would provide the reason Yahweh sent them into exile. Alternate translation: "Show me the certificate of divorce with which I divorced your mother."

To which of my creditors did I sell you?

Yahweh speaks of sending the people into exile as if he were selling them.

To which of my creditors did I sell you?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize that he did not sell them because he owed a debt to a creditor. It is implied that this is what the people had thought. Alternate translation: "I did not sell you because I owed a debt to someone."

you were sold because of your iniquities, and because of your rebellion your mother was sent away

Yahweh gives the reason for sending the people into exile, which he speaks of as if he had sold them and divorced their mother. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I sold you because of your sins, and I divorced your mother because of your rebellion"

Isaiah 50:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Why did I come but there was no one there? Why did I call but no one answered?

These two sentences mean basically the same thing. Yahweh uses questions to emphasize that the people are in exile because they did not respond to him, not because he was unwilling to save them. Alternate translation: "When I came to you, you should have been there, but you were not. When I called you, you should have answered, but you did not." or "When I came to speak to you, you did not respond to me."

Was my hand too short to ransom you? Was there no power in me to rescue you?

Yahweh uses two similar questions to rebuke the people for believing that he was not strong enough to rescue them. Alternate translation: "My hand was certainly not too short for me to ransom you, and I had the power to rescue you!" or "I certainly have the power to rescue you from your enemies."

Was my hand too short

Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Yahweh not being strong enough is spoken of as if his hand were short. Alternate translation: "Was I not strong enough"

Was there no power in me

"Did I not have the power"

I make the rivers a desert

Yahweh speaks of drying up the rivers as if he were turning them into a desert. Alternate translation: "I make the rivers as dry as a desert"

their fish die for lack of water and rot

"their fish die and rot for lack of water." The word "their" refers to the sea and the rivers.

Isaiah 50:3

I clothe the sky with darkness; I cover it with sackcloth

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh speaks of causing the sky to become dark as if he were clothing it with sackcloth. Alternate translation: "I make the sky dark, as if it were wearing dark sackcloth"

Isaiah 50:4

General Information:

Yahweh's servant begins to speak.

The Lord Yahweh has given me a tongue as one of those who are taught

The word "tongue" represents what he says. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh has enabled him to speak as one who has learned to speak skillfully. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has enabled me to be a skillful speaker" or 2) Yahweh has taught him what to say. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has enabled me to speak what he has taught me"

he awakens my ear to hear

Here "my ear" refers to Yahweh's servant. Yahweh enabling him to hear and understand what Yahweh teaches him is spoken of as if Yahweh awakened his ear from sleep. Alternate translation: "he has enabled me to understand what he says"

like those who are taught

The servant compares himself with a student who learns from his teacher. Possible meanings are 1) "like one who learns from his teacher" or 2) "like one whom he has taught"

Isaiah 50:5

General Information:

The servant of Yahweh continues speaking.

The Lord Yahweh has opened my ear

Yahweh enabling his servant to hear and understand is spoken of as if Yahweh opened his ear. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has enabled me to hear and understand him"

I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away backward

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Disobeying what Yahweh said is spoken of as if it were turning one's back toward him. This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "I obeyed what he said"

Isaiah 50:6

I gave my back to those who beat me, and my cheeks to those who plucked out my beard

Allowing people to beat him and pluck out his beard is spoken of as if it were giving his back and cheeks to them. Alternate translation: "I allowed people to beat me on my back and to pluck out my beard from my cheeks"

I did not hide my face from acts of shame and spitting

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Hiding one's face means to protect oneself. Alternate translation: "I did not defend myself when they mocked me and spat on me"

Isaiah 50:7

General Information:

Yahweh's servant continues speaking.

therefore I am not disgraced

Even though the servant has been mistreated, he will not be ashamed because he has obeyed Yahweh. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "therefore I will not be ashamed"

so I have made my face like flint

Here "my face" refers to the servant. The servant being steadfastly determined to obey Yahweh is spoken of as if his face were as hard as flint. Alternate translation: "so I am absolutely determined"

for I know that I will not be put to shame

The servant looks to the future with confidence, secure in Yahweh's calling. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for I know that my enemies will not be able to make me feel shame"

Isaiah 50:8

General Information:

Yahweh's servant continues speaking.

Who will oppose me? Let us stand ... Who is my accuser? Let him come

The servant uses these questions to emphasize that there is no one who can legitimately accuse him of wrong. Alternate translation: "If anyone would oppose me, let us stand ... If anyone would accuse me, let him come"

Isaiah 50:9

Who will declare me guilty?

The servant uses this question to assert that no one can declare him guilty. Alternate translation: "There is no one who can declare me guilty."

they will all wear out like a garment; the moth will eat them up

There being no one left to accuse the servant of being guilty is spoken of as if the accusers were garments that wear thin and are eaten by moths.

Isaiah 50:10

General Information:

The servant continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Who among you fears Yahweh? Who obeys the voice of his servant? Who walks in deep darkness without light? He should ... his God.

The servant uses these questions to identify those to whom he is speaking. Alternate translation: "If someone among you fears Yahweh and obeys the voice of his servant, but he walks in deep darkness without light, then he should ... his God."

obeys the voice of his servant

Here the word "voice" represents what the servant says. Alternate translation: "obeys his servant"

walks in deep darkness without light

The servant speaks of people who are suffering and feel helpless as if they were walking in a very dark place. Alternate translation: "is suffering and feels helpless"

trust in the name of Yahweh and lean on his God

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Trusting in God is spoken of as if it were leaning on him. Alternate translation: "trust in Yahweh, his God"

Isaiah 50:11

all you who light fires ... flames that you have ignited

This continues the metaphor from the previous verse of people who walk in darkness. Here people who try to live according to their own wisdom instead of trusting in Yahweh are spoken of as if they lit their own fires and carried about torches in order to see in the dark.

You will lie down in a place of pain

Here to "lie down" refers to dying. Dying painfully is spoken of as if it were lying down in a place where they will experience pain. Alternate translation: "You will die with great suffering"

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51 [1] Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek Yahweh:
look at the rock from which you were chiseled
and to the quarry from which you were cut.

[2] Look at Abraham, your father,
and to Sarah, who bore you;
for when he was a lone individual,
I called him. I blessed him and made him many.

[3] Yes, Yahweh will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste places;
her wilderness he made like Eden,
and her desert plains beside the Jordan River valley like the garden of Yahweh;
joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving, and the sound of singing.

[4] "Be attentive to me, my people;
and listen to me, my people!
For a law will go out from me,

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and I will make my justice to be a light for the nations.

5 My righteousness is near;
my salvation will go out,
and my arm will judge the nations;
the coastlands will wait for me;
for my arm they will eagerly wait.

6 Lift up your eyes to the sky,
and look at the earth beneath,
for the heavens will vanish away like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment,
and its inhabitants will die like flies.
But my salvation will continue forever,
and my righteousness will never stop working.

7 Listen to me, you who know what is right,
you people who have my law in your heart:
Do not fear the scorn of men,
nor be dismayed by their abuse.

8 For the moth will eat them up like a garment,
and the worm will eat them like wool;
but my righteousness will be forever,
and my salvation to all generations."

9 Awake, awake, clothe yourself with strength,
arm of Yahweh.
Awake as in the days of old,
the generations of ancient times.
Is it not you who crushed Rahab,
you who pierced the sea monster?

10 Did you not dry up the sea,
the waters of the great deep,
and make the depths of the sea into a way
for the redeemed to pass through?

11 The ransomed of Yahweh will return
and come to Zion with cries of joy
and with gladness forever on their heads;
and gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and mourning will flee away.

12 "I, I, am he who comforts you.
Why are you afraid of men, who will die,
the sons of mankind, who are made like grass?

13 Why have you forgotten Yahweh your Maker,
who stretched out the heavens
and laid the foundations of the earth?
You are in constant dread every day
because of the hot fury of the oppressor

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when he decides to destroy.
Where is the fury of the oppressor?

14 The one who is bent down, Yahweh will hurry to release;
he will not die and go down to the pit, nor will he lack bread.

15 For I am Yahweh your God,
who churns up the sea so that its waves roar—
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

16 I have placed my words in your mouth,
and I have covered you in the shadow of my hand,
that I may plant the heavens,
lay the foundations of the earth,
and say to Zion, 'You are my people.'"

17 Awake, awake,
stand up, Jerusalem,
you who have drunk out of the hand of Yahweh
from the bowl of his anger;
you who have drunk out of the bowl,
down to the dregs from the cup of staggering.

18 There is no one among all the sons she has born
to guide her;
there is no one among all the sons that she has raised
to take her by the hand.

19 These two troubles happened to you—
who will grieve with you?—
desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword.
Who will comfort you?[1]

20 Your sons have fainted;
they lie at every street corner,
like an antelope in a net;
they are filled with the anger of Yahweh,
the rebuke of your God.

21 But now hear this, you oppressed one
and drunken one, but not drunk with wine:

22 Your Lord Yahweh, your God,
who pleads the cause of his people, says this,
"See, I have taken the cup of staggering from your hand—
the bowl, which is the cup of my anger—
so that you will not drink it again.

23 I will put it into the hand of your tormentors,
those who have said to you,
'Lie down, that we may walk over you';
you made your back like the ground
and like the street for them to walk on."

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text and some modern translations have How will I comfort you?, most modern translations correct this passage to Who will comfort you?

Isaiah 51 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

There are many rhetorical questions in this chapter. These questions prove Yahweh's point and are intended to convince the readers.

Awake

In this chapter the author uses sleeping as a metaphor for sin. The people are told to "awake," meaning they are to repent and return to Yahweh. (See: sin and repent)

Links:

Isaiah 51:1 Notes

Isaiah 51:1

Listen to me

Here the word "me" refers to Yahweh.

look at the rock ... and to the quarry

Looking at something represents thinking about it. Alternate translation: "think about the rock ... and the quarry"

the rock from which you were chiseled and to the quarry from which you were cut

God speaks of the nation of Israel as if it were a building made of stones and as if their ancestors were a rock or quarry from which God cut them. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "your ancestors, who are like a rock from which you were chiseled and a quarry from which you were cut"

the rock from which you were chiseled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the rock from which I chiseled you"

chiseled

"cut with a chisel" or "cut"

the quarry from which you were cut

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the quarry from which I cut you"

Isaiah 51:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Abraham, your father

God speaks of their ancestor as if he were their father. Alternate translation: "Abraham, your forefather" or "Abraham, your ancestor"

Sarah, who bore you

God speaks of Abraham's wife as if she were their mother and had given birth to them. Alternate translation: "Abraham's wife, Sarah, of whom you are all descendants"

when he was a lone individual

This means when he did not have any children yet. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "when he had no children"

made him many

God speaks of Abraham's descendants being many as if Abraham were many. Alternate translation: "made his descendants many" or "made him have many descendants"

Isaiah 51:3

Yahweh will comfort Zion

The city of Zion, which is also called Jerusalem, here represents the people of Zion. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will comfort the people of Zion"

he will comfort all her waste places

Here "waste places" represents the people who live in those desolate areas. Alternate translation: "he will comfort the people who live in all her waste places"

her waste places ... her wilderness ... her desert plains

The word "her" refers to Zion. Cities are often spoken of as if they were women.

waste places

places that have been destroyed

her wilderness he made like Eden, and her desert plains ... like the garden of Yahweh

These phrases mean that God will make the empty places in Israel beautiful. In prophecy, events that will happen in the future are often described as being in the past. This emphasizes that they will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "he will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert plains ... like the garden of Yahweh

joy and gladness will be found in her

Joy and gladness mean the same thing. Being found there represents being there. Alternate translation: "there will be joy and gladness in Zion again"

Isaiah 51:4

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to the people of Israel.

Be attentive to me ... listen to me

These two phrases mean the same thing. Together they strengthen the command to listen.

I will make my justice to be a light for the nations

Here God's justice represents his law, and a light represents knowledge of what is right. This means the people of the nations will understand and obey God's law. Alternate translation: "my law will teach the nations what is right" or "the nations will know my law"

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a law will go out from me
A law is spoken of as if it were able to move itself. Alternate translation: "I will issue a law"
law
or "decree" or "instruction"
Isaiah 51:5
My righteousness is near
The idea of "near" represents "soon." God's righteousness being near represents him soon showing his righteousness. He will do this this by fulfilling his promises and saving people. Alternate translation: "I will soon show my righteousness"
my salvation will go out
God speaks of saving people as if his salvation were a thing that could go out to them. Alternate translation: "I will save people"
my arm will judge the nations
Here God's arm represents his power, and judging represents ruling. Alternate translation: "I will rule the nations with my power"
the coastlands
This refers to the people who live on the coasts of distant lands across the sea. Alternate translation: "the people who live on the coastlands" or "the people who live in the lands across the sea"
for my arm they will eagerly wait
Here God's arm represents what he will do. Here it refers to him saving people. Alternate translation: "they will eagerly wait for me to do something" or "they will eagerly wait for me to save them"
Isaiah 51:6
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Lift up your eyes to the sky
Lifting the eyes represents looking at something above. Alternate translation: "Look up at the sky"
like smoke ... like a garment ... like flies
All of these refer to things that quickly and easily disappear or become useless.
my salvation will continue forever
God's "salvation" here represents the result of his salvation, which is freedom. Alternate translation: "I will save you, you will be free forever"
my righteousness will never stop working
God's "righteousness" here represents him ruling righteously. Alternate translation: "my righteous rule will never end" or "I will rule righteously forever"
Isaiah 51:7
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
who have my law in your heart
Having God's law in the heart represents knowing God's law and wanting to obey it. Alternate translation: "who know and honor my law"
nor be dismayed by their abuse
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and do not lose your courage when they hurt you"
Isaiah 51:8
For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool
God speaks of people who abuse those who are righteous as if they were wool garments, and of their being destroyed as if insects ate them.
my righteousness will be forever
God's "righteousness" here represents him ruling righteously. Alternate translation: "my righteous rule will be forever" or "I will rule righteously forever"
and my salvation to all generations
God's "salvation" here represents the result of his salvation, which is freedom. Being "to all generations" represents lasting forever. Alternate translation: "I will save you, and you will be free forever"
Isaiah 51:9
Awake, awake, clothe yourself with strength, arm of Yahweh
People urgently ask Yahweh's arm to help them as if his arm were a person. If it would be odd to speak to the arm, this can be addressed directly to Yahweh instead. Alternate translation: "Awake, awake, Yahweh, and clothe your arm with strength"
Awake, awake ... arm of Yahweh
People speak as if Yahweh's arm were asleep because it has not been helping them. Here the "arm of Yahweh" represents Yahweh, specifically him helping people. The word "Awake" is repeated to show that they need God's help urgently.
clothe yourself with strength
Strength is spoken of as if it were some kind of clothing that people would wear to strengthen themselves in battle. Alternate translation: "make yourself strong"
Is it not you who crushed Rahab, you who pierced the sea monster?
The speaker uses a question to emphasize Yahweh's power to do mighty things. Alternate translation: "It is you who crushed Rahab, you who pierced the monster."
Rahab ... the sea monster
Rahab was the name of this mythological serpent in the sea. Rahab can symbolize either the nation of Egypt or evil and chaos.
Isaiah 51:10
Did you not dry up the sea ... for the redeemed to pass through?
Again, the speaker uses questions to emphasize Yahweh's power to do mighty things. This refers to Yahweh opening the Red Sea for the Israelites to cross and escape the army of Egypt. Alternate translation: "You dried up the sea ... for the redeemed to pass through."
Isaiah 51:11
General Information:
This is very similar to Isaiah 35:10.
The ransomed of Yahweh
To "ransom" means to "rescue." This refers to people whom Yahweh has rescued. Alternate translation: "Those whom Yahweh has rescued"
with gladness forever on their heads
This uses a person's head to mean the person as a whole. Alternate translation: "they will be glad forever"
gladness and joy ... sorrow and mourning
The words "gladness" and "joy" mean basically the same thing, as do "sorrow" and "mourning." Together they emphasize the intensity of these emotions.

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gladness and joy will overtake them
This speaks of the people being overwhelmed by gladness and joy by giving these emotions the human quality of being able to overtake someone. Alternate translation: "they will be overwhelmed by joy and gladness" or "they will be extremely glad and joyful"
sorrow and mourning will flee away
This speaks of the people no longer being sorrowful and mourning by speaking of these emotions as if they could run away. Alternate translation: "they will no longer be sorrowful and mourning"
Isaiah 51:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
I, I, am he
The word "I" is repeated for emphasis. If this is unnatural in your language, the repetition does not need to be used. Alternate translation: "I am he"
Why are you afraid of men ... like grass?
This rhetorical question emphasizes that people who have the Lord's protection should not be afraid of human beings. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid of men ... like grass."
who are made like grass
This phrase compares men to grass to emphasize that their lives are short and that they die quickly. Alternate translation: "who live and die quickly like grass" or "who will wither and disappear like grass"
who are made like
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who are like"
Isaiah 51:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Why have you forgotten Yahweh ... earth?
Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that they should not forget Yahweh. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have forgotten Yahweh ... earth."
Maker
See how you translated this name for Yahweh in Isaiah 17:7.
who stretched out the heavens
"who spread out the sky." This speaks of Yahweh having created the heavens as if he had stretched them out in the same way one would stretch out a large garment. Alternate translation: "who stretched out the heavens like a garment"
the foundations of the earth
The word "foundation" normally refers to a stone structure that gives support to a building from underneath. Here it describes a similar structure that was thought to support and hold the earth in place. See how you translated this phrase in Isaiah 24:18.
the hot fury of the oppressor when he decides to destroy
"the oppressor's hot fury when he decides to cause destruction"
hot fury
Here the word "hot" means "strong" or "great." Alternate translation: "great fury"
Where is the fury of the oppressor?
Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the people should not fear those who want to oppress them. Their oppressors are no longer a threat to them. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The fury of the oppressor is not a threat!"
Isaiah 51:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
The one who is bent down
This refers to the people of Israel who are slaves of the Babylonians. This phrase describes how they work. Alternate translation: "The slave"
the pit
This refers to Sheol. Alternate translation: "the pit of Sheol" or "the grave"
nor will he lack bread
Here "bread" represents food in general. This can be written in positive form. Alternate translation: "nor will he be without food"
Isaiah 51:15
who churns up the sea
This speaks of Yahweh causing the sea to move and the waves to rise and fall as if he were stirring the sea as one stirs the contents of a bowl with a large spoon. Alternate translation: "who causes the sea to churn" or "who makes the sea move up and down"
Yahweh of hosts
See how you translated this name for Yahweh in Isaiah 1:9.
Isaiah 51:16
I have placed my words in your mouth
This speaks of Yahweh telling Isaiah what to say as if his words were a physical object Yahweh had placed in Isaiah's mouth. Alternate translation: "I have told you what to say"
I have covered you in the shadow of my hand
Yahweh's "hand" refers to his power. This speaks of Yahweh protecting Isaiah as if his hand were covering him to protect him. Alternate translation: "my power has kept you safe" or "I have protected you and kept you safe"
that I may plant the heavens
The word "plant" means to establish something in the ground. Here Yahweh firmly establishing the heavens is spoken of as if the heavens were a tent that he would spread out and firmly set it in place with tent pegs. Alternate translation: "that I may establish the heavens"
lay the foundations of the earth
The word "foundation" normally refers to a stone structure that gives support to a building from underneath. Here it describes a similar structure that was thought to support and hold the earth in place. See how you translated a similar phrase in Isaiah 24:18.
Isaiah 51:17
Awake, awake, stand up, Jerusalem
Here "Jerusalem" represents the people who live there. Yahweh speaks to the people of Jerusalem as if they were there listening to him. Alternate translation: "Awake, awake, stand up, you people of Jerusalem"
Awake, awake, stand up
"Be alert and arise." The repetition of the word "awake"

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emphasizes the urgency of the call to arouse the people of Israel. It is not used to wake them from literal sleep.

you who have drunk out of the hand of Yahweh ... from the cup of staggering

Yahweh speaks of having punished his people as if he had forced them to drink from a bowl that was filled with his anger. And when they drank from the bowl of his anger, they staggered as if they had drank a lot of wine.

down to the dregs

The word "dregs" means the solid pieces at the very bottom of a container that has a liquid in it. Alternate translation: "down to the very bottom"

out of the hand of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is referred to by his hand to emphasize that he is the one who gave the bowl to his people. Alternate translation: "that he gave to you"

from the cup of staggering

"from the cup that caused you to stagger as if you were drunk on wine"

staggering

not walking straight, or stumbling while walking

Isaiah 51:18

There is no one ... to guide her; there is no one ... to take her by the hand

These two clauses have the same meaning and can be combined. This speaks of Jerusalem being helpless as if the city were a drunk woman without a son to help her walk safely. Alternate translation: "You have no one to help you! You are like a drunk old woman without a son to take her by the hand and guide her"

Isaiah 51:19

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

who will grieve with you? ... Who will comfort you?

Isaiah uses questions to emphasize that now there is no one to weep with them or comfort them. These questions may be written as statements. Alternate translation: "but there is no one to grieve with you ... There is no one to comfort you."

These two troubles

The two troubles refer to the following two phrases: "desolation and destruction" and "the famine and the sword."

desolation and destruction

These words have similar meanings and emphasize the destruction of the land caused by the opposing army. Alternate translation: "your enemies have left your city empty and ruined"

the famine and the sword

The words "famine" and "sword" describe the trouble that will come upon the people. The "sword" refers to "war." Alternate translation: "many of you have died from hunger and war"

Isaiah 51:20

they lie at every street corner

This is generalization. Many children will lie in the street, but not necessarily on every street corner. Alternate translation: "they lie on the street"

like an antelope in a net

This speaks of the children being exhausted and helpless as if they were an antelope caught in a trap. Alternate translation: "they are helpless, like an antelope caught in a net" or "as helpless as a trapped antelope"

antelope

This is an animal, similar to a deer, that has horns and runs very fast. Alternate translation: "deer"

they are filled with the anger of Yahweh, the rebuke of your God

The "anger of Yahweh" refers to Yahweh punishing his people because of his anger against them. This speaks of the people having been severely punished as if they had become full of Yahweh's anger. Also, the word "rebuke" can be written as a verb. Alternate translation: "they have been severely punished by Yahweh because he was angry with them and rebuked them"

Isaiah 51:21

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

you oppressed one and drunken one

Yahweh uses the word "one" here to refer to all of the oppressed people. Alternate translation: "you oppressed people and drunken people"

drunken one, but not drunk with wine

This speaks of the people acting drunk because they are suffering as if they have become drunk from being forced to drink the bowl of Yahweh's anger. Alternate translation: "you who are drunk from drinking the wine of the bowl of Yahweh's anger" or "you who act drunk, because you have suffered greatly"

Isaiah 51:22

See, I have taken the cup of staggering from your hand—the bowl, which is the cup of my anger—so that

This speaks of Yahweh no longer being angry with his people as if his anger were the contents of a cup that he was taking away from them. Alternate translation: "I will no longer be angry with you. See, it is like I have taken away from you the cup that made you stagger, that is, the cup that was full of my anger, so that"

See

This is used to draw the listeners' attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

the cup of staggering

The word "cup" refers to what is in the cup. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 51:17]

the bowl, which is the cup of my anger

Yahweh speaks of having punished people as if he had forced them to drink from a bowl that was filled with his anger. See how you translated a similar phrase in Isaiah 51:17. Alternate translation: "the bowl which is filled with my anger" or "the cup which is filled with my anger"

Isaiah 51:23

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I will put it into the hand of your tormentors

This speaks of Yahweh punishing their enemies as if he were going to force them to drink from the cup filled with his anger.

I will put it into the hand of your tormentors

It is implied that by putting the cup of his anger in their hand Yahweh will be forcing them to drink what is in the

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cup. Alternate translation: "I will force your tormentors to drink from the wine of the bowl of my anger"

your tormentors

The word "tormentors" may be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "those who have tormented you" or "those who have caused you to suffer"

you made your back like the ground and like the street for them to walk on

This compares the way their enemies walked on their back to the way people walk on the street. Alternate translation: "you lay in the streets so your enemies could walk on your backs"

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52 [1] Awake, awake,
put on your strength, Zion;
put on your beautiful garments,
Jerusalem, holy city;
for never again will the uncircumcised
or the unclean enter you.

[2] Shake yourself off from the dust;
arise and sit, Jerusalem;
take off the chain from your neck,
captive, daughter of Zion.

[3] For this is what Yahweh says,

"You were sold for nothing,
and you will be redeemed without money."

[4] For this is what the Lord Yahweh says,

"In the beginning my people went down to live temporarily in Egypt;
and Assyria has oppressed them for no good reason.

[5] Now what do I have here—this is Yahweh's declaration—
seeing that my people are taken away for nothing?
Those who rule over them mock—this is Yahweh's declaration—
and my name is blasphemed continually
all day long.[1]
[6] Therefore my people will know my name;
they will know in that day that I am the one who says,
"Yes, it is I!"

[7] How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who brings good news,
who announces peace,
who bears good tidings,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion,
"Your God reigns!"

[8] Listen, your watchmen raise their voices,
together they shout for joy,
for they will see, every eye of theirs,
Yahweh's return to Zion.

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9 Break out into joyful singing together,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for Yahweh has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

10 Yahweh has bared his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations;
all the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

11 Leave, leave, go out from there;
touch nothing unclean;
leave from her midst; purify yourselves,
you who carry the vessels of Yahweh.

12 For you will not go out in a rush,
nor will you leave in a panic;
for Yahweh will go before you;
and the God of Israel will be your rearguard.

13 Look, my servant will act wisely;
he will be high and lifted up, and he will be exalted.

14 As many were horrified at you—
his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man,
and his form no longer looked like anything human.

15 Even so, my servant will sprinkle many nations
and kings will shut their mouths because of him.
For that which they had not been told, they will see,
and that which they had not heard, they will understand.

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[1]Instead of the ULB mock, which follows the Dead Sea Scrolls and the ancient Latin translation of the Hebrew copies; some ancient Hebrew copies have wail.

Isaiah 52 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

The prophecies of this chapter occur after the exile in Babylon and are not in reference to the people contemporary to Isaiah. (See: prophet)

There is an important teaching or prophecy about the Messiah beginning in this chapter and continues through the next chapter. This prophesy begins in 52:13 and scholars usually note that it portrays the Messiah as a "suffering servant." (See: christ)

Links:

Isaiah 52:1 Notes

Isaiah 52:1

Awake, awake

This word is repeated for emphasis and shows urgency. Isaiah trying to arouse the people is spoken of as if he were trying to wake them up from sleep.

put on your strength

Being strong again is spoken of as if strength were clothing that a person puts on. Alternate translation: "be strong"

Zion ... Jerusalem

Both of these refer to the people who live in Jerusalem.

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Isaiah is speaking to the people as if they were there listening to him. Alternate translation: "people of Zion ... people of Jerusalem"

the uncircumcised or the unclean

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "Those who are uncircumcised or those who are unclean"

the unclean

This refers to unclean people. A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "those who are not acceptable to God"

enter you

Here "you" refers to Jerusalem which represents the people who live there. It is understood that the uncircumcised and unclean people would enter the city to attack the people. Alternate translation: "enter your city to attack you"

Isaiah 52:2

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Shake yourself off from the dust; arise and sit, Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "People of Jerusalem, sit up and shake the dirt off of yourself"

take off the chain from your neck, captive

It is implied that the people of Jerusalem were wearing chains because they were slaves while exiled in Babylon. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

daughter of Zion

This is an idiom. The "daughter" of a city means the people of the city. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 1:8]

Isaiah 52:3

You were sold for nothing, and you will be redeemed without money

This speaks about Yahweh as if he were the owner of the people of Israel. Since he is the rightful owner he can give them away or take them back whenever he wants. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I sold you for nothing, and I will redeem you without money"

Isaiah 52:4

In the beginning

Here "beginning" refers to the start of Israel's history as they were first becoming a people.

went down to ... Egypt

"went to ... Egypt." It was common to use the phrase "went down" when speaking of traveling from Canaan to Egypt.

Assyria has oppressed them

Assyria refers to the people of Assyria. Alternate translation: "the people of Assyria have treated them badly"

Isaiah 52:5

Now what do I have here ... seeing that my people are taken away for nothing?

Yahweh uses a question to make the people pay attention to what he is about to say. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now look at what is happening ... my people are again taken away for nothing."

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

seeing that my people are taken away for nothing

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I see the enemy taking my people away for nothing"

for nothing

Possible meanings are 1) "for nothing" means the Babylonians took the people unjustly and without cause or 2) this continues the metaphor from [Isaiah 52:3]

Those who rule over them mock

This refers to the Babylonians who have conquered the people. However, some versions have, "Those who rule over them wail." For these versions, this passage refers to the leaders of the Israelites in captivity.

my name is blasphemed continually all day long

Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who watch the enemy take away my people are continually saying evil things about me"

Isaiah 52:6

Therefore my people will know my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "Therefore my people will truly know who I am"

Isaiah 52:7

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking to the people of Israel.

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news

Here "feet" represents a messenger who is walking. Alternate translation: "It is beautiful to see a messenger coming over the mountains to announce good news"

to Zion

Here "Zion" represents the people of Zion. Alternate translation: "to the people of Zion"

Isaiah 52:8

raise their voices

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "shout loudly"

every eye of theirs

Here "eye" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "every one of them"

Isaiah 52:9

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

you ruins of Jerusalem

Isaiah speaks of the ruins of Jerusalem as if they were a person that could rejoice. This represents the people of Jerusalem who were defeated. Alternate translation: "you people who live among the ruins of Jerusalem"

he has redeemed Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people. Alternate translation: "he has redeemed the people of Jerusalem"

Isaiah 52:10

bared his holy arm

Here "arm" represents Yahweh's power. Yahweh showing all the people of the nations that he is holy and powerful is spoken of as if Yahweh were a warrior who removed his cloak, baring his arms for battle. Alternate translation: "showed his holiness and mighty power"

all the nations; all the earth

Here "nations" and "earth" represent the people of all the

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nations all over the earth.

Isaiah 52:11

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Leave, leave

This word is repeated to emphasize that the people must indeed leave, although not necessarily right away.

go out from there

It is assumed knowledge that the people of Israel were slaves in Babylon. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "go out from the land where you are slaves"

touch nothing unclean

Something that Yahweh has stated is unfit to touch or eat is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "touch nothing that is unacceptable to Yahweh"

leave from her midst

Here "her" represents Babylon.

Isaiah 52:12

Yahweh will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rearguard

Yahweh protecting his people from their enemies is spoken of as if he were the warriors who go ahead of the people and the warriors who stay behind the people to protect them.

Isaiah 52:13

he will be high and lifted up, and he will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. These two phrases "high and lifted up" and "will be exalted" have basically the same meaning and emphasize that Yahweh will honor his servant. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 33:10]

Isaiah 52:14

his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man

It is implied that the servant is disfigured because enemies beat him very badly. The full meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "his enemies beat his body so badly that he did not even look like a human anymore"

Isaiah 52:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about his servant.

my servant will sprinkle many nations

The servant causing the people of the nations to be acceptable to Yahweh is spoken of as if the servant were a priest who sprinkles the blood of a sacrifice to make someone or something acceptable to Yahweh.

will sprinkle

The Hebrew word translated "sprinkle" here can also be translated as "surprise" or "startle," which some versions of the Bible do.

many nations

Here "nations" represents the people of the nations.

kings will shut their mouths

The phrase "shut their mouths" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "kings will stop talking" or "kings will be silent"

that which they had not been told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that which no one had told them" or "something no one had told them"

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53 [1] Who has believed our message,
and to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed?

[2] For he grew up before Yahweh like a sapling,
and like a sprout out of parched earth;
he had no remarkable appearance or splendor;
when we saw him, there was no beauty to attract us.

[3] He was despised and rejected by people;
a man of sorrows, and one familiar with pain.
Like one from whom men hide their faces,
he was despised; and we considered him insignificant.

[4] But surely he has borne our sicknesses
and carried our sorrows;
yet we thought he was being punished by God,
struck by God, and afflicted.

[5] But he was pierced because of our rebellious deeds;
he was crushed because of our iniquities.
The punishment for our peace was on him,
and with his wounds we are healed.

[6] We all like sheep have gone astray;
we have each turned to his own way,
and Yahweh has placed on him

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the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed; yet when he humbled himself,
he did not open his mouth;
as a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and as a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

8 By coercion and judgment he was taken away.
As for his generation, who thought that he was cut off from the land of the living,
or that he was punished
for the transgression of my people?

9 They placed his grave with the criminals,
with a rich man in his death,
although he had done no violence,
nor had there been any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it was Yahweh's will to crush him and make him ill.
When he makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring, he will prolong his days,
and Yahweh's purpose will be accomplished through him.

11 After the suffering of his life,
he will see light and be satisfied by his knowledge.[1]
My righteous servant will justify many;
he will bear their iniquities.[2]

12 Therefore will I give him his portion among the multitudes,
and he will divide the plunder with the many,
because he exposed himself to death
and was numbered with the transgressors.
He bore the sin of many
and made intercession for the transgressors.

[1] Instead of After the suffering of his life, some modern translations have From the suffering of his life he will see the result.
[2] Many modern translations supply light. Some modern translations have By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many.

Isaiah 53 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

In this chapter there is an important teaching or prophecy about the Messiah and his life and ministry. It begins in 52:13 and scholars usually note that it portrays the Messiah as a "suffering servant." (See: prophet and christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Atonement

This chapter prophesies about the death of Christ for sin. Most scholars believe it teaches that Christ was a righteous man who died for the sins of mankind. This is usually referred to as the atonement. (See: sin and righteous and atonement)

Links:

Isaiah 53:1 Notes

Isaiah 53:1

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant. Here Isaiah describes events that will happen in the future as if they happened in the past. This emphasizes that they certainly will happen.

Who has believed our message

What Isaiah just found out is so amazing that he wonders if the exiles will believe it. The "we" includes him and those in exile. Alternate translation: "It is hard for anyone to believe what we are telling them"

to whom has the arm of Yahweh been revealed?

Arm refers to God's power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has revealed his power to people."

Isaiah 53:2

For he grew up before Yahweh like a sapling

Here "he" refers to God's servant whom Isaiah compares to a very young tree. This emphasizes that he will appear weak.

out of parched earth

"parched earth" is hard and dry ground that will not allow plants to grow and represents where the servant of Yahweh will come. Alternate translation: "out of an impossible situation"

Isaiah 53:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

He was despised and rejected by people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People considered him as nothing and rejected him"

a man of sorrows

"a man knowing all kinds of sadness"

from whom men hide their faces

"Face" represents a person's attention or fellowship. Hiding one's face means to turn away from someone. Alternate translation: "from whom people turn away"

he was despised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they considered him to be worthless"

Isaiah 53:4

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

he has borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows

To "bear" or carry an abstraction like sickness and sorrow represents taking it up. Alternate translation: "he has taken our sicknesses and sorrows upon himself"

yet we thought he was being punished by God, struck by God, and afflicted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "yet we thought God was punishing and afflicting him"

Isaiah 53:5

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

But he was pierced because of our rebellious deeds; he was crushed because of our iniquities

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that the servant suffered because of the people's iniquities. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed the enemy to stab him and kill him because of our iniquities"

The punishment for our peace was on him

This refers to peace with God. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "He accepted this punishment so we could live in harmony"

with his wounds we are healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he healed us by his suffering of the wounds"

Isaiah 53:6

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

We all like sheep have gone astray

Sheep often leave the path on which the shepherd leads them. Isaiah means that we do what we want instead of what God commands.

the iniquity of us all

Our "iniquity" here represents the guilt for our sin. Alternate translation: "the guilt for the sin of every one of us"

Isaiah 53:7

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

He was oppressed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They treated him harshly"

he did not open his mouth

"Mouth" represents what a person says. Opening one's mouth means to speak. Alternate translation: "he did not protest"

as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is silent

Isaiah compares the servant to a lamb and a sheep to emphasize that he will remain silent as people harm and humiliate him.

as a lamb that is led to the slaughter

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as a lamb is silent as a person slaughters it"

Isaiah 53:8

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

By coercion and judgment he was taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They coerced him, judged him, and took him away"

coercion

forcing a person to do what that person does not want to do

As for his generation, who thought that he was cut off ... my people?

Some modern translations read, "As for his generation, who thought about it? He was cut off ... my people." In this reading, the words "his generation" refers to "his descendants," and the rhetorical question can be translated as a statement, "No one thought about his descendants."

As for his generation, who thought that ... my people?

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This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one in his generation thought that ... my people."

he was cut off from the land of the living

"Cut off" here refers to death. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he died" or "death took him away"

of my people

"of the people of Israel"

Isaiah 53:9

nor had there been any deceit in his mouth

"Mouth" represents what a person says. Alternate translation: "nor did he deceive anyone when he spoke"

Isaiah 53:10

General Information:

Isaiah continues describing Yahweh's servant (Isaiah 53:1-2).

he will see his offspring

Here, "offspring" means those people that Yahweh has forgiven because of the servant's sacrifice.

he will prolong his days

This speaks of making him live for more time. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make his servant live again"

Yahweh's purpose will be accomplished through him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will accomplish his purpose through his servant"

Isaiah 53:11

After the suffering of his life

Here "his life" refers to the servant. Alternate translation: "After the servant has suffered"

he will see light

Many versions understand "light" here to stand for life. That is, the servant will become alive again.

My righteous servant

Here "my" refers to Yahweh.

he will bear their iniquities

The word "bear" means carry. Possible meanings are 1) "their iniquities" is a metonym representing the punishment for their sins. Alternate translation: "he will take their punishment" or "he will be punished for their sins" or 2) "their iniquities" is a metonym representing their guilt. Alternate translation: "he will take their guilt upon himself" or "he will be guilty for their sins"

Isaiah 53:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing his servant.

Therefore will I give him his portion among the multitudes, and he will divide the plunder with the many

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. "Portion" and "plunder" refer to what a king rewards his army with after a battle. This means God will greatly honor his servant because of his sacrifice.

the multitudes

Many versions interpret this expression as "the many" or "the strong."

because he exposed himself to death

"Exposed" means to be vulnerable or unprotected. The servant of Yahweh put himself in a situation where he would die. Alternate translation: "he willingly accepted the possibility of death"

was numbered with the transgressors

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "allowed people to treat him as a criminal"

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54 1 "Sing, you barren woman,
you who have not given birth;
break into joyful singing and cry aloud,
you who have never been in birth labor.
For the children of the desolate one
are more than the children of the married woman,"
says Yahweh.

2 "Make your tent larger
and spread your tent curtains farther out,
unsparingly;
lengthen your ropes
and strengthen your stakes.

3 For you will spread out to the right hand and to the left,
and your descendants will conquer nations
and resettle desolate cities.

4 Do not fear for you will not be ashamed,
nor be discouraged for you will not be disgraced;
you will forget the shame of your youth
and you will remember no more the disgrace of your widowhood.

5 For your Maker is your husband;

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Yahweh of hosts is his name.
The Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer;
he is called the God of the whole earth.

6 For Yahweh has called you back
as a wife abandoned and grieved in spirit,
like a woman married young and rejected,"
says your God.

7 "For a short time I abandoned you,
but with great compassion I will gather you.

8 In a flood of anger
I hid my face from you for a moment;
but with everlasting covenant faithfulness
I will have mercy on you—
says Yahweh, the one who rescues you.

9 For this is like the waters of Noah to me:
as I swore that the waters of Noah would never again pass over the earth,
so have I sworn
that I will not be angry with you or rebuke you.

10 Though the mountains may fall
and the hills be shaken,
yet my steadfast love will not turn away from you,
nor will my covenant of peace be shaken—
says Yahweh, who has mercy on you.

11 Afflicted one, storm-driven and uncomforted one,
look, I will set your pavement in turquoise,
and lay your foundations with sapphires.

12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies
and your gates of sparkling stones,
and your outer wall of beautiful stones.

13 Then all your children will be taught by Yahweh;
and the peace of your children will be great.

14 In righteousness you will be established,
and you will be far from oppression,
for you will not fear;
and you will be far from terror,
for it will not come near to you.

15 Look, if anyone stirs up trouble, it will not be from me;
anyone who stirs up trouble with you will fall in defeat.

16 See, I have created the craftsman,
who blows the burning coals
and forges weapons as his work,
and I have created the destroyer to destroy.

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17 No weapon that is formed against you will succeed;
and you will condemn everyone who accuses you.
This is the heritage of the servants of Yahweh,
and their vindication from me—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

Isaiah 54 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's covenant faithfulness

This chapter focuses on Yahweh's faithfulness to fulfill his covenants. It references several different covenant promises in this chapter. (See: covenantfaith, faithful, fulfill and covenant and promise)

Links:

Isaiah 54:1 Notes

Isaiah 54:1

you barren woman ... children of the married woman

Yahweh telling the people of Jerusalem to rejoice because there will be many people living in Jerusalem again is spoken of as if Yahweh were telling a barren women she is going to have many children.

break into joyful singing and cry aloud, you who have never been in birth labor

This statement means the same thing as the first part of the sentence.

For the children of the desolate one are more

An event that will happen in the future is spoken of as if it happened in the past. This emphasizes that the event will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "For the children of the desolate woman will be more"

the desolate one

Here "desolate" means that the woman's husband had rejected and abandoned her

Isaiah 54:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Make your tent larger ... strengthen your stakes

This continues the metaphor that began in [Isaiah 54:1]

Isaiah 54:3

For you will spread out

Here "you" is singular and refers to the barren woman. She represents herself and all of her descendants. Alternate translation: "For you and your descendants will spread out"

will conquer nations

Here "nations" represents the people. Alternate translation: "will conquer the people of other nations"

Isaiah 54:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

you will remember no more the disgrace of your widowhood

When Israel is sent into exile, Yahweh says this is like a woman becoming a widow. When they come back from exile, they will be so happy they will be like a woman who no longer remembers the disgrace of being a widow. Alternate Translation: "you will not remember how disgraced you felt when you were like a widow"

Isaiah 54:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

For your Maker is your husband

Yahweh loving and taking care of his people is spoken of as if he were their husband.

Maker

See how you translated this in Isaiah 17:7.

Yahweh of hosts

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:24.

The Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:16.

Redeemer

See how you translated this in Isaiah 41:14.

he is called the God of the whole earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he is the God of the whole earth"

Isaiah 54:6

Yahweh has called you back as a wife ... like a woman married young and rejected

Yahweh sending his people away into exile then bringing them back is spoken of as if Yahweh were a husband who had rejected his wife but now accepts her.

grieved in spirit

Here "spirit" represents a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "grieved" or "made sad"

Isaiah 54:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 54:8

In a flood of anger

Yahweh being very angry is spoken of as if his anger were a flood that overwhelms people. Alternate translation: "When I was very angry"

I hid my face from you

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Here "hid my face" is an idiom that means God abandoned his people and let them suffer. Alternate translation: "I abandoned you"

but with everlasting covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [Isaiah 16:5]

says Yahweh, the one who rescues you

Here Yahweh speaks about himself in the third person. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "that is what I, Yahweh, your rescuer, say to you"

Isaiah 54:9

the waters of Noah

This refers to the flood that Yahweh caused during the time of Noah.

Isaiah 54:10

Though the mountains may fall and the hills be shaken, yet my steadfast love will not ... be shaken

Mountains and hills are normally stable. Yahweh speaks of the possiblity of them falling and being shaken to show that his steadfast love and his covenant of peace are even more stable. Alternate translation: "Even if the mountains were to fall and the hills were to shake, my steadfast love will not ... be shaken"

the hills be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the hills may shake"

my steadfast love will not turn away from you

Yahweh's continuing to love his people is spoken of as if his love would not turn away from the people. Alternate translation: "I will not stop loving you"

nor will my covenant of peace be shaken

Yahweh's not canceling his covenant with the people is spoken of as if his covenant were an object that would not be shaken. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and I will not cancel my covenant of peace" or "and I will surely give you peace as I promised in my covenant"

says Yahweh, who has mercy on you

Here Yahweh speaks about himself in the third person. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "that is what I, Yahweh, who acts mercifully, say"

Isaiah 54:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Afflicted one

Here Yahweh speaks to the city of Jerusalem as if it were listening to him. Here Jerusalem represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "You afflicted people of Jerusalem"

storm-driven

Yahweh speaks of the people as if they were blown around and damaged by the winds and storms. This means the people were hurt and without stability.

uncomforted one

"without comfort"

I will set your pavement in turquoise ... lay your foundations with sapphires

Yahweh describes in ideal terms how he will restore Jerusalem and cause it to be beautiful again. Although the language may be exaggerated, you should translate this just as Yahweh described it.

turquoise ... sapphires

These are precious gemstones. Turquoise is light blue-to-green, sapphires are typically dark blue.

Isaiah 54:12

I will make ... beautiful stones

Yahweh describes in ideal terms how he will restore Jerusalem and cause it to be beautiful again. Although the language may be exaggerated, you should translate this just as Yahweh described it.

rubies

These precious gemstones are red to pink.

Isaiah 54:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Then all your children will be taught by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "And Yahweh will teach all your children"

by Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself in the third person. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "by me, Yahweh"

Isaiah 54:14

In righteousness you will be established

The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as the adjective "right." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to be strong again because you will do what is right"

it will not come near to you

No one in the city or outsiders will ever terrify the inhabitants of Jerusalem again.

Isaiah 54:15

General Information:

Yahweh continue speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

stirs up trouble

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "causes trouble" or "troubles you"

will fall in defeat

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you will defeat them in battle"

Isaiah 54:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

No weapon that is formed against you will succeed

Enemies not succeeding against Yahweh's people is spoken of as if their weapons would not succeed against Yahweh's people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemies may form weapons to attack you but they will not defeat you"

This is the heritage of the servants of Yahweh

The reward that Yahweh will give to those who serve him is spoken of as if the reward were something they would inherit.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

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55 1 "Hey! Everyone who is thirsty,
come to the water,
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.

2 Why do you weigh out silver for what is not bread,
and why do you labor for what does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in fatness.

3 Turn your ears and come to me!
Listen, that you may live!
I will make an everlasting covenant with you—
my reliable, faithful love that I promised to David.

4 Look, I have placed him as a witness to the nations,
as a leader and commander to the peoples.

5 Look, you will call to a nation that you did not know;
and a nation that did not know you will run to you
because of Yahweh your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
who has glorified you."

6 Seek Yahweh while he may be found;
call on him while he is nearby.

7 Let the wicked leave his path,
and the man of sin his thoughts.
Let him return to Yahweh, and he will pity him,
and to our God, who will abundantly forgive him.

8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways—
this is Yahweh's declaration—

9 for as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain and snow
come down from heaven
and do not return there
unless they saturate the earth
and make it produce and sprout
and give seed to the farmer who sows and bread to the eater,

11 so also my word will be that goes from my mouth—
it will not return to me empty,
but it will achieve the purpose
for which I sent it.

12 For you will go out in joy

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and be led along peacefully;
the mountains and the hills
will break out in joyful shouts before you,
and all the trees of the fields
will clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thornbushes, the cypress will grow;
and instead of the brier, the myrtle tree will grow,
and it will be for Yahweh, for his name,
as an everlasting sign
that will not be cut off."

Isaiah 55 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gentiles

Many scholars believe this chapter prophesies that Gentiles will be able to come to a saving faith in Yahweh. At this time, the Israelites believed that only an Israelite could be saved. (See: prophet and save and faith)

Links:

Isaiah 55:1 Notes

Isaiah 55:1

General Information:

Yahweh speaks of blessing the people freely as if he were selling food and drink to needy people for free.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem in exile through Isaiah.

Hey

This short word is called or shouted at people to get their attention for any reason. You should use whatever word or sound is used in your language to get people's attention.

come ... come ... Come

This word is repeated three times so the hearers will know that the speaker is sincere.

buy wine and milk without money and without cost

There is a sense of irony in this statement since a person usually has to use money to buy something. This emphasizes Yahweh's amazing grace in giving these things freely.

Isaiah 55:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Why do you weigh out ... bread, and why do you labor ... satisfy?

Yahweh asks these questions to rebuke the people. He speaks of the people seeking happiness apart from Yahweh as if they were purchasing things to eat that were not food and working for things that could not satisfy them. Alternate translation: "You should not weigh out silver ... bread, and you should not labor ... satisfy"

weigh out silver

This refers to counting silver coins in order to pay someone for something. Alternate translation: "pay money"

for what is not bread

Here the word "bread" represents food in general. It is implied that the people were buying things to eat that were not really food. Alternate translation: "for things to eat that are not really food"

eat what is good, and delight yourselves in fatness

The people trusting Yahweh for blessing and happiness is spoken of as if they are eating good food that is making them happy.

in fatness

The word "fatness" refers to meat that has plenty of fat on it and is an idiom for fine food. Alternate translation: "with the best foods"

Isaiah 55:3

Turn your ears

Listening to or paying attention to someone is spoken of as if it were turning one's ears to someone. Alternate translation: "Pay attention"

Isaiah 55:4

I have placed him

These words could refer to 1) what Yahweh did for King David in the past or 2) what God will do through one of David's descendants.

Isaiah 55:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

the Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:4.

Isaiah 55:6

Seek Yahweh while he may be found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Seek Yahweh while you can still find him"

Isaiah 55:7

Let the wicked leave his path

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The word "wicked" refers to wicked people. Yahweh speaks of wicked people no longer sinning as if they were to stop walking along a path that they had been traveling. Alternate translation: "Let wicked people change the way they live"

the man of sin his thoughts

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "let the sinful man leave his thoughts"

his thoughts

Possible meanings are 1) "the way he thinks" or 2) "his plans"

he will pity him

"Yahweh will pity him"

to our God

The verb may be supplied from the first phrase in this sentence. Alternate translation: "let him return to our God"

Isaiah 55:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 55:9

for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts

Yahweh speaks of the things that he does and how he thinks as being far superior to or higher than what people do and think, just like the sky is much higher than the earth.

Isaiah 55:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

For as the rain and snow ... do not return there

This is likely a description of the rain and snow evaporating.

Isaiah 55:11

so also my word ... it will achieve the purpose for which I sent it

Yahweh speaks of his word as if it were a person whom he sends out as his messenger to accomplish a task.

my word will be that goes from my mouth

Here the word "mouth" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "the word that I speak"

it will not return to me empty

Here the description of the word returning to Yahweh means that it has completed the task that Yahweh had sent it to complete. That it will not return "empty" means that it will not fail to accomplish its task. Alternate translation: "it will not fail to complete its task"

Isaiah 55:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

be led along peacefully

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will lead you along peacefully"

the mountains and the hills will break out in joyful shouts before you, and all the trees of the fields will clap their hands

Yahweh speaks of the mountains, hills, and trees as if they were people with voices and hands, celebrating as Yahweh rescues his people.

Isaiah 55:13

Instead of the thornbushes, the cypress will grow; and instead of the brier, the myrtle tree will grow

The words "thornbushes" and "brier" refer to species of plants that have sharp thorns growing on them. The words "cypress" and "myrtle" refer to species of evergreen trees. The thorny plants symbolize desolation, while the evergreens symbolize life and prosperity.

for his name

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's fame. Alternate translation: "for his fame" or "for his honor"

that will not be cut off

Something ceasing to exist is spoken of as if it were cut off, as a branch is cut off of a tree or a piece of fabric is cut off of clothing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that will never end" or "that will last forever"

56

1 This is what Yahweh says,
"Observe what is right, do what is just;
for my salvation is near,
and my righteousness is about to be revealed.

2 Blessed is the man that does this,
and who holds it tightly.
He observes the Sabbath, not defiling it,
and keeps his hand from doing any evil."

3 Let no foreigner who has become a follower of Yahweh say,
"Yahweh will certainly exclude me from his people."
The eunuch should not say,
"See, I am a dry tree."

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[4]For this is what Yahweh says,

"To the eunuchs who observe my Sabbaths
and choose what pleases me,
and hold fast my covenant,
[5] to them I will set up in my house and within my walls
a monument
that is better than having sons and of daughters.
I will give them an everlasting monument
that will never be cut off.

[6] Also foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh—
to serve him,
and who love the name of Yahweh,
to be his servants,
every one who observes the Sabbath and who keeps from defiling it,
and who holds fast my covenant—

[7] I will bring to my holy mountain
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar.
For my house will be called
a house of prayer for all nations,

[8] this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel—
I will still gather others
in addition to them."

[9] All you wild beasts of the field,
come and devour, all you beasts in the forest!

[10] All their watchmen are blind,
they do not understand.
They are all silent dogs
who cannot bark.
They dream,
and lying down they love to sleep.

[11] The dogs have big appetites;
they can never get enough;
they are shepherds without discernment;
they have all turned to their own way,
each one covetous for unjust gain.

[12] "Come," they say, "let us get wine
and drink much strong drink.
Tomorrow will be like today,
a day great beyond measure."

Isaiah 56 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gentiles

Many scholars believe this chapter prophesies that Gentiles will be able to come to a saving faith in Yahweh. At this time, the Israelites believed that only an Israelite could be saved. (See: prophet and save and faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Beasts

The Israelites are compared to beasts and dogs in this chapter. This would have been very offensive to them.

Links:

Isaiah 56:1 Notes

Isaiah 56:1

for my salvation is near, and my righteousness is about to be revealed.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will soon save you and show you that I am righteous"

Isaiah 56:2

who holds it tightly

Here "holds it tightly" is an idiom that means to continue to observe something. Alternate translation: "who is careful to always do this"

keeps his hand from doing any evil

Here the "hand" represents the whole person and emphasizes the person's actions or behaviors. Alternate translation: "does not do evil things"

Isaiah 56:3

See, I am a dry tree

This means eunuchs may have thought they could not be a part of God's people because they were deformed by castration

Isaiah 56:5

in my house and within my walls

These two phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "inside the walls of my temple"

that will never be cut off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that will never end" or "that will never be forgotten"

Isaiah 56:6

who love the name of Yahweh

Yahweh's "name" represents himself. Alternate translation: "who love Yahweh"

Isaiah 56:7

holy mountain

See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.

will be accepted on my altar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will accept on my altar"

my house will be called a house of prayer

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my house will be a house of prayer"

Isaiah 56:9

All you wild beasts of the field, come and devour, all you beasts in the forest

God is calling armies of other nations by comparing them to animals to come and attack the people of Israel.

Isaiah 56:10

All their watchmen are blind

This means Israel's leaders cannot or perhaps do not want to see what is going on in society.

They are all silent dogs

The leaders are supposed to open their mouths and warn the people, but they do not. Comparing someone to a dog in this society is a great insult.

They dream, and lying down they love to sleep

This means the leaders are not bringing God's word of warning to Israel but prefer their own comfort.

Isaiah 56:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues describing the evil leaders of his people.

The dogs have big appetites

Yahweh continues comparing Israel's bad leaders to dogs.

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57 [1] The righteous perish,
but no one considers it,
and the people of covenant faithfulness are gathered away,
but no one understands
that the righteous is gathered
away from the evil.

[2] He enters into peace;
they rest in their beds,
those who walk in their uprightness.

[3] But come here, you sons of the sorceress,

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children of the adulterer and the woman who has prostituted herself.

4 Whom are you merrily mocking?
Against whom are you opening the mouth
and sticking out the tongue?
Are you not children of rebellion,
children of deceit?

5 You heat yourselves up sleeping together under the oaks,
under every green tree,
you who kill your children in the dry riverbeds,
under the rocky overhangs.

6 Among the smooth things of the river valley are the things that have been assigned to you.
They are the object of your devotion.
You pour out your drink offering to them
and raise up a grain offering.
Concerning these things should I repent?

7 You prepared your bed on a high mountain;
you also went up there to offer sacrifices.

8 Behind the door and the doorposts
you set up your symbols;
you deserted me, made yourselves naked, and went up;
you made your bed wide.
You made a covenant with them; you loved their beds;
you saw their private parts.

9 You went to Molech with oil
and increased your perfumes.[1]
You send your ambassadors far away;
you went down to Sheol.

10 You were tired from your long journey,
but you never said, "It is hopeless."
You found life in your hand;
therefore you did not weaken.

11 "Whom are you worried about? Whom do you fear?
Is that the reason that you have acted deceitfully,
so that you do not remember me
or think about me?
Is it because I was silent for so long
that you are no longer afraid of me?"

12 I will proclaim all your righteous acts and tell all that you have done,
but they will not help you.

13 When you cry out,
let your collection of idols rescue you.
The wind will carry them all away,
a breath will carry them all away.
But he who takes refuge in me
will inherit the land

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and will possess my holy mountain.

p

14 He will say,

'Build, build! Clear a way!
Remove all the stumbling blocks from the path of my people!'"
15 For this is what the high and elevated One says,
who lives eternally, whose name is holy,
"I live in the exalted and holy place,
with him also that is of a crushed and humble spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble ones,
and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16 For I will not accuse forever,
nor will I be angry forever,
for then man's spirit would faint before me,
the lives that I have made.

17 Because of the sin of his violent gain,
I was angry, and I punished him; I hid my face and was angry,
but he went backward in the way of his heart.

18 I have seen his ways, but I will heal him.
I will lead him and comfort and console those who mourn for him,

19 and I create the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to those who are far off and to those who are near—
says Yahweh—I will heal them.

20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea,
which cannot rest,
and its waters churn up mire and mud.

21 There is no peace for the wicked one—says God."

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[1] Instead of to Molech, some scholars emend the Hebrew to read to the king.

Isaiah 57 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Child sacrifice

This chapter references the killing of children. Some religions in the ancient Near East practiced the sacrificing of their children. This was considered evil by Yahweh. (See: evil)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Mocking

The people abandoned the worship of Yahweh in favor of other gods. When they needed help, he tells them to ask these false gods. This is mocking the power of the false gods and shows the people the uselessness of their worship of these gods. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Isaiah 57:1 Notes

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Isaiah 57:1

the people of covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [Isaiah 16:5]

are gathered away ... is gathered away

"die and go away ... dies and goes away"

that the righteous is gathered away from the evil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the righteous people die, and Yahweh takes them away from all that is evil"

Isaiah 57:2

He enters into peace

"The righteous enter into peace"

they rest

they die

those who walk in their uprightness

"those who have done what is right"

Isaiah 57:3

But come here

God is calling all of the unfaithful people to come before him so he can judge them in a strong contrast to the promises for the righteous that came before.

sons of the sorceress

This is a strong insult against the people who practice sorcery because sorcery and magic includes idolatry.

children of the adulterer and the woman who has prostituted herself

This refers to actual and spiritual adultery. They have abandoned the worship of God and now worship other gods and idols along with actual prostitution in pagan Canaanite ceremonies.

Isaiah 57:4

Whom are you merrily mocking? Against whom are you opening the mouth and sticking out the tongue?

Yahweh uses questions to scold the people who are mocking him through false worship. Alternate translation: "You are mocking me and making fun of me by opening your mouth wide and sticking out the tongue!"

Are you not children of rebellion, children of deceit?

Yahweh uses another question to scold the people. This does not refer to their birth but to their spiritual state. Alternate translation: "You are children of rebellion, children of deceit!"

Isaiah 57:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of Israel.

You heat yourselves ... under the rocky overhangs

All of these actions are associated with worshiping idols. The oaks were sacred trees to the Canaanites. People thought such activity would increase fertility for people and the land.

Isaiah 57:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of Israel.

that have been assigned to you

This can be stated in active form. The exact meaning in Hebrew is unclear. Alternate translation: "that is your lot" or "that is your inheritance"

Concerning these things should I repent?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people. Alternate translation: "I should certainly not change my mind about how I will deal with these things you have done."

Isaiah 57:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of Israel.

You prepared your bed

This refers to sleeping with prostitutes as a part of worshiping false gods.

on a high mountain

People often went on top of hills and mountains to worship false gods. They thought those were the best places for worship. This might even refer to Jerusalem, too.

Isaiah 57:8

You made a covenant with them

"You made a contract with them"

Isaiah 57:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of Israel.

you went down to Sheol

The people did not literally go to Sheol, the world of the dead. Instead, Yahweh is indicating by exaggeration that the people were willing to go anywhere to find new gods to worship.

Isaiah 57:10

You found life in your hand

After trying so hard, the idolators found they still had strength to keep going. Here "hand" equals "strength" or "capacity."

Isaiah 57:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of Israel.

Whom are you worried about? Whom do you fear? Is that the reason that you have acted deceitfully, so that you do not remember me or think about me?

Yahweh uses these questions to scold the people because they feared others rather than him. They didn't even think about him. Alternate translation: "Apparently you really fear others because you have acted deceitfully and you do not rememer me or think about me!"

you have acted deceitfully

Possible meanings are that they lied to God or that they were not faithful to him.

so that you do not remember me or think about me

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that, although the people should have remembered Yahweh, they did not.

Isaiah 57:12

I will proclaim all your righteous acts and tell all that you have done

Yahweh is being sarcastic, calling their evil deeds so-called righteousness.

Isaiah 57:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the unfaithful people of

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Israel.

let your collection of idols rescue you

Yahweh is mocking the people and their idols. He knows the idols cannot rescue them.

The wind will carry them all away, a breath will carry them all away

This is saying the same thing in two ways to emphasize that idols are helpless and worthless. Alternate translation: "The wind, or even a breath, will blow them away"

holy mountain

The "holy mountain" is Mount Zion, in Jerusalem. See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.

Isaiah 57:14

Build, build! Clear a way! Remove all the stumbling blocks from the path of my people

Yahweh is emphatic and urgent that a clear and level road be available for the people to return to him and free of obstacles to worshiping Yahweh. This echoes [Isaiah 40:3]

Isaiah 57:15

For this is what the high and elevated One says

The words "high" and "elevated" have basically the same meaning here and emphasize Yahweh being exalted. See how you translated this in Isaiah 6:1 and Isaiah 33:10. See how you translated a similar phrase in Isaiah 52:13.

to revive the spirit of the humble ones, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will strengthen and encourage those who humble themselves before him.

spirit ... heart

Here these refer to a person's thoughts and emotions, not the spirit and heart literally.

Isaiah 57:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 57:17

I hid my face

This means God gave up on his people and no longer helped or blessed them.

he went backward in the way of his heart

This means the Israelites kept rejecting the true God for false ones. Here "backward" and "way" are location words representing motivations and feelings.

Isaiah 57:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

his ways

"their ways." Here "his" refers to the people of Israel.

comfort and console those who mourn for him

"I will soothe and calm those who feel sad for the people's suffering because of their sinful behavior"

Isaiah 57:19

I create the fruit of the lips

Here "fruit of the lips" refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: "I cause them to praise and thank me"

Peace, peace, to those who are far off

"I have made peace with them who are far off." The word "Peace" is repeated for emphasis.

Isaiah 57:20

But the wicked are like the tossing sea ... mire and mud

This compares the wicked to rough water on the shore that makes the water dirty.

---

58 [1] "Cry loudly; do not hold back.
Lift up your voice like a ram's horn.
Confront my people with their rebellion,
and the house of Jacob with their sins.

[2] Yet they seek me daily
and delight in the knowledge of my ways,
like a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not abandon the law of their God.
They ask me for righteous judgments;
they take pleasure in the thought of God coming near.

[3] 'Why have we fasted,' they say,
'but you do not see it?
Why have we humbled ourselves,
but you do not notice?'

Look, on the day of your fast you find your own pleasure
and oppress all your laborers.

[4] Look, you fast in quarreling and strife,
and to hit with your fist of wickedness;
you do not fast today
to make your voice heard above.

[5] Is this really the kind of fast that I would want:

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A day for anybody to humble himself,
for him to bow down his head like a reed,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under himself?
Do you really call this a fast,
a day that pleases Yahweh?

6 Is not this the fast that I choose:
To release wicked bonds,
to undo the ropes of the yoke,
to set the crushed ones free,
and to break every yoke?

7 Is it not to break your bread with the hungry,
to bring the poor and homeless into your house,
to cloth the naked when you see them,
and not to hide yourself from your own relatives?

8 Then your light would be broken open like the sunrise,
and your healing would quickly sprout up;
your righteousness would go before you,
and the glory of Yahweh would be your rearguard.

9 Then you would call, and Yahweh would answer;
you would cry out for help, and he would say, 'Here I am.'

If you take away from among yourselves the yoke,
the accusing finger, and the speech of wickedness,

10 if you yourselves provide for the hungry
and satisfy the need of the distressed;
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your darkness will be like the noonday.

11 Then Yahweh will lead you continually
and satisfy you in regions where there is no water,
and he will strengthen your bones.
You will be like a watered garden,
and like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

12 Some of you will rebuild the ancient ruins;
you will raise up the ruins of many generations;
you will be called 'The repairer of the wall,'
'The restorer of streets to live on.'

13 Suppose that you turn back your feet from traveling on the Sabbath day,
and from doing your own pleasure on my holy day.
Suppose that you call the Sabbath a delight,
and that you call the matters of Yahweh holy and honored.
Suppose that you honor the Sabbath by leaving your own business,
and by not finding your own pleasure and by not speaking your own words.

14 Then you will find delight in Yahweh;
and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth;
I will feed you from the inheritance of Jacob your father—

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for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken."

Isaiah 58 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Fasting

The practice of fasting became more common after the exile. This was intended to bring people into a right relationship with God by creating a designated time to concentrate on him. It may have been believed that Yahweh heard people better when they fasted. The significance of fasting is derived from the faster's attitude of repentance and faith in Yahweh and not the practice itself. (See: repent and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Yet they seek me daily"

The people did not truly seek Yahweh every day. They practiced the outward aspects of the Jewish religion, but their hearts were far from Yahweh.

Links:

Isaiah 58:1 Notes

Isaiah 58:1

Lift up your voice like a ram's horn

This means shout loudly. Here "your" refers to Isaiah.

Confront my people with their rebellion, and the house of Jacob with their sins

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they strengthen the urgency to confront Yahweh's people.

Isaiah 58:3

'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'but you do not see it? Why have we humbled ourselves, but you do not notice?'

The people of Israel use questions to complain to God because they feel he is ignoring them.

Isaiah 58:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel by answering their challenging question.

Look

"Behold!" or "Pay attention." Yahweh confronts their questioning by telling them to pay attention.

fist of wickedness

"wicked fist." This shows that they fight viciously. "Fist" represents anger that is physically violent.

Isaiah 58:5

Is this really the kind of fast that I would want ... under himself?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people. They act like they are humble before God, but they are hurting other people. Alternate translation: "This is not the kind of fast I want ... under himself."

A day for anybody to humble himself, for him to bow down his head like a reed

This means the person is bowing down, but he is not truly humble. "A reed" represents a weak plant that bends easily.

Do you really call this a fast, a day that pleases Yahweh?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not think this kind of fast pleases me!"

Isaiah 58:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Is not this the fast that I choose ... break every yoke?

Yahweh uses a question to teach the people about the kind of fast that pleases him. Alternate translation: "This is the fast that I choose ... break every yoke."

To release wicked bonds, to undo the ropes of the yoke, to set the crushed ones free, and to break every yoke

All of these phrases mean they should help those people whom the wicked are hurting and oppressing.

Isaiah 58:7

Is it not to ... your own relatives?

Yahweh uses another question to teach the people. The word "it" refers to the kind of fasting that God wants the people to do. Alternate translation: "It is to ... your relatives." or "The fast I choose for you to do is to ... your own relatives."

to break your bread with the hungry

This phrase represents sharing food with those who do not have any. The host would start the meal by tearing the loaf of bread apart. Alternate translation: "to share your food with those who are hungry"

Isaiah 58:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Then your light would be broken open like the sunrise

"Break open" here is an idiom that means when a light begins to shine brightly. This means that if they help people in need, their deeds will be like lights others will see, as when the sun comes up after a dark night. Or the light may refer to the light of the Lord, shining on them and blessing them.

your healing would quickly sprout up

This means God will bless and restore them quickly, as a wound heals quickly.

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your righteousness would go before you, and the glory of Yahweh would be your rearguard
This refers to the time when God protected the people of Israel as they escaped from Egypt. This means God will again protect them from their enemies if they will do what is right.
your righteousness
This expression in Hebrew can also be interpreted as the one who gives righteousness or even victory. In this context, this expression would refer to God. A few modern versions have this interpretation.
Isaiah 58:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Isaiah 58:10
then your light will rise in the darkness, and your darkness will be like the noonday
"Your light" represents the acts of kindness that will be examples to everyone, and the "darkness," the bad deeds, will be overcome by their good deeds.
Isaiah 58:11
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
satisfy you in regions where there is no water
"Water" represents all they need for an abundant life even when their surroundings do not have enough.
You will be like a watered garden
"A watered garden" represents abundance and plenty so they will have all they need.
like a spring of water, whose waters never fail
"A spring of water" represents a source of abundance in a land where water is precious.
Isaiah 58:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
you will be called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will call you"
Isaiah 58:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
you turn back your feet from traveling on the Sabbath day, and from doing your own pleasure on my holy day
Here the people are represented by their "feet." God did not allow long travels or work on the day of rest. Alternate translation: "you stop traveling and doing what you want to do on the Sabbath, my holy day"
Isaiah 58:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
I will make you ride on the heights of the earth
This refers to God exalting the nation in reputation and power in response to living righteously.
for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken
The word "mouth" symbolizes what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh has spoken it"

59 1 Look, Yahweh's hand is not so short that it cannot save;
nor his ear so dull, that it cannot hear.

2 Your iniquities, however,
have separated you from your God,
and your sins have made him hide his face from you
and from hearing you.

3 For your hands are stained with blood
and your fingers with iniquity.
Your lips speak lies
and your tongue speaks maliciously.

4 No one calls in righteousness,
and none pleads his case in truth.
They trust in empty words, and tell lies;
they conceive trouble and give birth to iniquity.

5 They hatch eggs of an adder
and weave a spider's web.
Whoever eats of their eggs dies,
and if an egg is crushed, it hatches into a viper.

6 Their webs cannot be used for garments,
nor can they cover themselves with their works.
Their works are works of sin,
and deeds of violence are in their hands.

7 Their feet run to evil,
and they run to pour out innocent blood.

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Their thoughts are thoughts of sin;
violence and destruction are their roads.

8 The way of peace they do not know,
and there is no justice in their paths.
They have made crooked paths;
whoever travels these paths does not know peace.

9 Therefore justice is far from us,
nor does righteousness reach us.
We wait for light, but see darkness;
we look for brightness, but we walk in darkness.

10 We grope for the wall like the blind,
like those who cannot see.
We stumble at noonday as in the twilight;
among the strong we are like dead men.

11 We growl like bears
and moan like doves;
we wait for justice, but there is none;
for rescue, but it is far from us.

12 For our many transgressions are before you,
and our sins testify against us;
for our transgressions are with us,
and we know our iniquities.

13 We have rebelled, denying Yahweh
and turning away from following our God.
We have spoken extortion and turning aside,
conceived complaining from the heart and words of lying.

14 Justice is driven back,
and righteousness stands far off;
for truth stumbles in the public square,
and uprightness cannot come near.

15 Trustworthiness has gone away,
and he who turns away from evil makes himself prey.

Yahweh saw it and was displeased
that there was no justice.

16 He saw that there was no man,
and was appalled that there was no one to intervene.
Therefore his own arm brought salvation for him,
and his righteousness sustained him.

17 He put on righteousness as a breastplate
and a helmet of salvation upon his head.
He clothed himself with garments of vengeance
and wore zeal as a mantle.

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18 He repaid them for their deeds,
wrath on his adversaries,
recompense to his enemies;
he repaid recompense to the islands.

19 So they will fear the name of Yahweh from the west,
and his glory from the sun's rising;
for he will come as a rushing stream,
driven by the breath of Yahweh.

20 "A redeemer will come to Zion
and to those who turn from their rebellious deeds in Jacob—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

21 As for me, this is my covenant with them—says Yahweh—my spirit who is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, will not leave your mouth, or go out of the mouth of your children, or go out of the mouths of your descendants—says Yahweh—from this time and forever."

Isaiah 59 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's deliverance

When Israel was conquered, they were being punished for their sin. Yahweh is strong enough to deliver them, but he did not because he desired to refine them through the experience of the exile. (See: deliverer and sin)

Links:

Isaiah 59:1 Notes

Isaiah 59:1

Look

"Behold!" or "You should know!" Yahweh tells the people to pay attention.

Yahweh's hand is not so short

"Hand" represents power and ability. A "short" hand does not have power and ability. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is fully able"

Isaiah 59:2

your ... you

These plural pronouns refer to the people of Israel as a single group.

your sins have made him hide his face from you

"Face" represents being present and looking upon. Alternate translation: "your sins have made him turn away from you"

Isaiah 59:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

For your hands are stained with blood and your fingers with iniquity

Here "hands" and "fingers" refers to their actions. This means they are guilty of doing violent and sinful things. "Your" is plural. Alternate translation: "For you have committed violent sins"

Your lips speak lies and your tongue speaks maliciously

The parts of the body that make speech represent what people say. Alternate translation: "You speak lies and malicious things"

Isaiah 59:4

they conceive trouble and give birth to iniquity

"Conceiving" and "giving birth" emphasize how carefully they plan to do sinful things. Here "they" still refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "they work hard to do sinful things"

Isaiah 59:5

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel about the evil they do using the metaphors of poisonous snakes and spider's webs. The metaphor here is meant to be emotional, not real: snakes are born alive, not from eggs that are laid.

They hatch eggs of an adder

Eggs of a poisonous snake hatch into more dangerous snakes. "Poisonous snakes" represents evil the people do that harms more and more. Alternate translation: "They make evil that spreads out to make more evil"

weave a spider's web

This represents the deeds of the people that are useless. Alternate translation: "produce things and activities that are useless"

Whoever eats of their eggs dies, and if an egg is crushed, it hatches into

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a viper

Eating a poisonous egg will kill the one that eats it and represents self-destruction. Breaking the egg allows the young poisonous snake to hatch and represents spreading destruction. Alternate translation: "The activities they do will destroy them and will spread destruction to others"

if an egg is crushed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone crushes an egg"

Isaiah 59:6

Their webs cannot be used for garments, nor can they cover themselves with their works

This means their sinful deeds cannot be covered and hidden, just as a web cannot serve as clothing and cover someone. Alternate translation: "Their evil deeds will be exposed as useless"

Their webs cannot be used for garments

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They cannot clothe themselves with their webs"

deeds of violence are in their hands

"Hands" represents the ability and power to do these things and therefore their responsibility. Alternate translation: "they are fully responsible for the violence they do"

Isaiah 59:7

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Their feet run to evil

Here people are represented by their "feet." This speaks of them doing something quickly as their feet running to it. Alternate translation: "They are quick to do evil things"

are their roads

"roads" represents their way of life. Alternate translation: "are all they do"

Isaiah 59:8

there is no justice in their paths

"paths" represents their way of life. Alternate translation: "they never do what is just" or "everything they do is unjust"

They have made crooked paths

"Crooked paths" represents the way of life that is corrupt. Alternate translation: "They say and do dishonest things. They are devious"

Isaiah 59:9

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

justice is far from us

Here "us" refers to Isaiah and the people of Israel. "Far" represents that justice is gone and difficult to get. Alternate translation: "justice is gone and very difficult to get"

We wait for light, but see darkness; we look for brightness, but we walk in darkness

Each of these phrases means that the people are waiting for God's goodness, but it seems like he has abandoned them.

Isaiah 59:10

We grope for the wall like the blind ... like dead men

This means that because God is not coming to them, they feel helpless, not finding the right path and despairing of the future, with no hope for a vibrant life.

Isaiah 59:11

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

We growl like bears and moan like doves

These refer to the sounds the people made because they were distressed and mourning.

Isaiah 59:12

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

our many transgressions

Here "our" refers to Isaiah and the people of Israel.

before you

Here "you" refers to Yahweh.

our sins testify against us

Isaiah describes the sins as a person who goes before God to declare that the people are guilty.

for our transgressions are with us

"With us" represents being aware of them. Alternate translation: "for we are aware of our transgressions"

Isaiah 59:14

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

Justice is driven back

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people drive justice back"

Justice ... righteousness ... truth ... right

These are ideas that Isaiah describes as acting like persons.

Isaiah 59:15

Trustworthiness

Isaiah describes this idea as acting like a person.

Isaiah 59:16

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

He saw that there was no man, and was appalled that there was no one to intervene.

"Yahweh was appalled that no one came to help those who were suffering." or "Yahweh was astonished that no one came to help those who were suffering."

Therefore his own arm brought salvation for him

Yahweh's "arm" represents his ability and power. Alternate translation: "Yahweh used his own power to save the people"

his righteousness sustained him

"Righteousness" here is a quality that acts like a person. The word can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "he did right as he always would do"

Isaiah 59:17

He put on righteousness as a breastplate and a helmet of salvation upon his head. He clothed himself with garments of vengeance and wore zeal as a mantle

"breastplate," "helmet," "garments," and "mantle" are clothing for war and fighting. Isaiah describes Yahweh as putting these on to punish his people.

mantle

a loose, flowing robe

Isaiah 59:18

He repaid them

Isaiah is describing a future event as if it happened in the past. This means that it will certainly happen.

wrath on his adversaries

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The word "wrath" is a metonym for the punishment he brought on his adversaries. Alternate translation: "punished his adversaries for wha they had done"

he repaid recompense to the islands

"he punished the islands as they deserved"

the islands

This phrase is a metonym for the people who lived on the islands or coastlands. Alternate translation: "teh people who live on the islands" or "the people who live on the coastlands"

Isaiah 59:19

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

fear the name of Yahweh

Here "name" refers to Yahweh's reputation and character. Alternate translation: "fear Yahweh"

from the west ... from the sun's rising

Isaiah combines these words to mean people in all places of the world.

for he will come as a rushing stream

Narrow valleys in Judah were dry most of the year until a sudden, heavy rain turned them into fast-moving water. When that happened there was a lot of noise and wind.

driven by the breath of Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the breath of Yahweh drives"

Isaiah 59:20

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

Isaiah 59:21

my words which I have put in your mouth

"the message I have given you to speak"

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60 1 Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of Yahweh has risen on you.

2 Though darkness will cover the earth,
and thick darkness the nations;
yet Yahweh will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen on you.

3 Nations will come to your light,
and kings to your bright light that is rising.

4 Look all around and see.
They all gather themselves together and come to you.
Your sons will come from far,
and your daughters will be carried in their arms.

5 Then you will look and be radiant,
and your heart will rejoice and overflow,
because the abundance of the sea will be poured out to you,
the wealth of the nations will come to you.

6 Camel caravans will cover you,
the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
all of them will come from Sheba;
they will bring gold and frankincense,
and will bring the good news of the praises of Yahweh.

7 All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you,
the rams of Nebaioth will serve your needs;
they will be acceptable offerings on my altar;
and I will glorify my glorious house.

8 Who are these who fly along like a cloud,
and like the doves to their shelters?

9 The coastlands look for me,
and the ships of Tarshish lead,

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to bring your sons from far,
    their silver and their gold with them,
for the name of Yahweh your God,
    and for the Holy One of Israel,
    because he has honored you.

10 Sons of foreigners will rebuild your walls,
    and their kings will serve you;
though in my wrath I punished you,
    yet in my favor I will have compassion on you.

11 Your gates also will remain open continually;
    they will not be shut day or night,
so that the wealth of the nations may be brought,
    with their kings being led.

12 Indeed, nations and kingdoms that will not serve you will perish;
    those nations will be completely ruined.

13 The glory of Lebanon will come to you,
    the cypress tree, the fir, and the cypress box tree together,
to beautify my sanctuary;
    and I will glorify the place of my feet.

14 They will come to you to bow down, the sons of those who humbled you;
    those who showed contempt for you will bow at the soles of your feet;
they will call you The City of Yahweh,
    Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

15 Instead of you remaining abandoned and hated,
    with no one passing through you,
I will make you a thing of pride forever,
    a joy from generation to generation.

16 You will also drink the milk of the nations,
    and will nurse at the breast of kings;
you will know that I, Yahweh, am your Savior and your Redeemer,
    the Mighty One of Jacob.

17 Instead of bronze I will bring gold,
    instead of iron I will bring silver;
instead of wood,
    bronze, and instead of stones, iron.
I will appoint peace as your governors,
    and justice your rulers.

18 Violence will no longer be heard in your land,
    neither devastation nor crushing within your borders;
but you will call your walls Salvation,
    and your gates Praise.

19 The sun will no longer be your light by day,
    nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you;

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but Yahweh will be your everlasting light,
and your God your glory.

20 Your sun will no longer set,
nor will your moon withdraw and disappear;
for Yahweh will be your everlasting light,
and the days of your mourning will be ended.

21 All your people will be righteous;
they will take possession of the land for all time,
the branch of my planting,
the work of my hands,
that I may be glorified.

22 The least of you will become a thousand,
and the smallest one a mighty nation;
I, Yahweh, will swiftly accomplish these things
when the time comes.

Isaiah 60 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's restoration

This chapter pictures a time when Israel will be fully restored to Yahweh. They will be everything Yahweh intended them to be. All the nations will look to Israel and acknowledge her special relationship to Yahweh. (See: restore)

Links:

Isaiah 60:1 Notes

Isaiah 60:1

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Yahweh has risen on you

This refers to the glorious things Yahweh has done for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are now to show that glory through what they do and say and have hope in the future.

Isaiah 60:2

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking to the people of Israel. He continues the metaphor about "light" (Isaiah 60:1).

Though darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the nations

Both of these phrases mean the same thing and are combined for emphasis. They refer to "spiritual darkness." This means all the other people of the world will not know Yahweh or how to please him. This is a metaphor for divine judgment.

yet Yahweh will arise upon you

This means the light of God's presence will appear for the people of Israel, and it will show the way they should go.

his glory will be seen on you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations will see his glory on you"

Isaiah 60:4

General Information:

Here Yahweh begins speaking.

They all gather themselves

"They" refers to the rest of the people of Israel who will come together to return to Jerusalem.

your daughters will be carried in their arms

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will carry your daughters in their arms" or "they will carry your daughters on their hips"

Isaiah 60:5

Then you will look and be radiant, and your heart will rejoice and overflow

These phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that they will be very happy because of what will happen in Jerusalem.

the abundance of the sea

This refers to the riches and goods that will come to Jerusalem by way of shipping, perhaps from along the Mediterranean Sea.

be poured out to you

This describes that the abundance will be like water that gushes out.

Isaiah 60:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

the dromedaries

"the young camels"

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Ephah

an area in Arabia

bring the good news of the praises of Yahweh

"joyfully proclaim and praise the goodness of Yahweh"

Isaiah 60:7

Kedar ... Nebaioth

These are the names of areas in Arabia.

All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Kedar will gather their flocks for you"

the rams of Nebaioth will serve your needs

This refers to their need for sacrifices.

they will be acceptable offerings on my altar

"I, Yahweh, will accept them on my altar"

Isaiah 60:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Who are these who fly along like a cloud, and like the doves to their shelters?

Yahweh uses questions and poetic images to draw attention here. He compares the sails of the ships to clouds and doves. This is also a picture of the Israelites returning to the country where they belong. Alternate translation: "Look, I see something like clouds moving quickly and like doves returning to their shelters."

Isaiah 60:9

The coastlands

This refers to the people who live on the coastlands and describes the area of coastlands as if it was people looking out. Alternate translation: "The people from the coastlands"

the ships of Tarshish

This expression usually means large merchant ships suitable for long voyages.

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:4.

he has honored you

"Yahweh has honored you, the people of Israel"

Isaiah 60:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 60:11

they will not be shut day or night

Here "day" and "night" together mean "all the time." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever shut them"

so that the wealth of the nations may be brought, with their kings being led

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the people of the nations may bring their wealth, along with their kings"

Isaiah 60:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

those nations will be completely ruined

The phrase "those nations" is a metonym for the people who live in those nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy the people of those nations"

Isaiah 60:13

The glory of Lebanon

This refers to Lebanon being famous for its beautiful trees, especially cypress and cedar. The exact identification of all the trees is not known.

the place of my feet

This refers to Yahweh's temple.

Isaiah 60:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Holy One of Israel

See how you translated this in Isaiah 1:4.

Isaiah 60:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

with no one passing through you

"with everyone avoiding your land" or "with all the foreigners avoiding your land"

Isaiah 60:16

You will also drink the milk of the nations, and will nurse at the breast of kings

This refers to the wealth and plenty that will be drained from foreign nations. Both clauses repeat the same idea for emphasis.

Redeemer

See how you translated this in Isaiah 41:14.

the Mighty One of Jacob

See how you translated this in Isaiah 49:26.

Isaiah 60:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron

Yahweh will give more valuable building materials to them now. Alternate translation: "instead of wood, I will bring bronze, and instead of stones, I will bring iron"

I will appoint peace as your governors, and justice your rulers

Yahweh describes "peace" and "justice" as human rulers. This means there will be complete peace and justice in the land of Israel.

Isaiah 60:18

Violence will no longer be heard in your land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There will no longer be reports of violence in your land"

but you will call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise

The physical objects have the names of spiritual qualities. The city of Jerusalem will be a safe place, and the people there will praise Yahweh.

Isaiah 60:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Isaiah 60:20

for Yahweh will be your everlasting light

Both verses repeat this same idea for emphasis.

Your sun will no longer set, nor will your moon withdraw and disappear

The moon will not literally disappear. This exaggeration is saying that the light of the sun and the moon will be much less bright than the light of Yahweh.

Isaiah 60:21

General Information:

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Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

the branch of my planting, the work of my hands

These phrases mean approximately the same and are repeated for emphasis.

the branch of my planting

Yahweh is comparing the people to young shoots coming up that he planted as if he was a gardener. Yahweh has placed his people in the land of Israel. This gives hope to the people.

the work of my hands

Yahweh compares the people of Israel to something made by the skill of his handicraft.

that I may be glorified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that all people may glorify me"

Isaiah 60:22

a thousand

"1,000"

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1 61 The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is on me,
because Yahweh has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the afflicted.
He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison for those who are bound.

2 He has sent me to proclaim the year of Yahweh's favor,
the day of vengeance of our God,
and to comfort all who mourn.

3 He has sent me—to give to those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a turban instead of ashes,
oil of joy
instead of mourning,
a mantle of praise
in place of a spirit of dullness,
to call them oaks of righteousness,
the planting of Yahweh,
that he may be glorified.

4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins;
they will restore the former desolations.
They will restore the ruined cities,
the desolations from many former generations.

5 Foreigners will stand and feed your flocks,
and sons of foreigners will be your farmers and vineyard workers.

6 You will be called the priests of Yahweh;
they will call you servants of our God.
You will eat the wealth of the nations,
and you will boast in their riches.

7 Instead of your shame
you will have double;
and instead of dishonor
they will rejoice over their share.
So they will have a double share of their land;
everlasting joy will be theirs.

8 For I, Yahweh, love justice,
and I hate robbery and violent injustice.

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I will faithfully repay them,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 Their descendants will be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge them,
that they are the people whom Yahweh has blessed.

10 I will greatly rejoice in Yahweh;
in my God I will be very glad.
For he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;
he has clothed me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns himself with a turban,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth produces its sprouting plants,
and as the garden makes its planting grow,
so the Lord Yahweh will cause righteousness
and praise to sprout up in front of all the nations.

Isaiah 61 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

The first part of this chapter is probably a prophecy about the coming Messiah and not Isaiah because this was different than the message Isaiah delivered. (See: christ)

Special concepts in this chapter

Restoration

This chapter prophesies concerning a future time of peace and restoration. It is unlikely to have been fulfilled in Isaiah's day. (See: restore and prophet and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 61:1 Notes

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is on me

"Spirit" here is the Holy Spirit of Yahweh who compels or motivates the person. See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:2 or in Isaiah 42:1.

the afflicted

This refers to poor people, those in great sorrow, or oppressed people who have problems they cannot overcome by themselves.

liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison for those who are bound

These two phrases mean the same thing. They state that God will certainly give freedom to captives.

Isaiah 61:2

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

the year of Yahweh's favor, the day of vengeance

Both of these phrases refer to the same span of time. "Year" and "day" are both specific examples that represent the greater whole.

year of Yahweh's favor

"time when Yahweh will act kindly toward his people"

Isaiah 61:3

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

to give ... to give

Isaiah repeats this for emphasis.

a turban

"a headdress" or "a beautiful head covering." This is a long piece of cloth that is wrapped around the head.

oil of joy ... a mantle of praise

People put oil on themselves and dressed in beautiful, long robes during times of celebration and joy.

in place of a spirit of dullness

"in place of sadness" or "in place of mourning"

oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh

This means Yahweh has caused the people to be strong and sturdy.

that he may be glorified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the people's lives may glorify him"

Isaiah 61:4

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General Information:
Isaiah continues speaking using parallelisms in each line.
Isaiah 61:6
General Information:
Yahweh's servant continues speaking to the people of Israel with each line a parallelism.
You will be called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will call you"
Isaiah 61:7
you will have double
This probably refers to a double portion of land.
they will rejoice over their share ... they will ... their land ... will be theirs
This still refers to the people of Israel. This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "you will rejoice over your share ... you will ... your land ... will be yours"
Isaiah 61:9
Their descendants will be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples
These two clauses mean the same thing. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People from other nations will know their descendants"
their offspring among the peoples
This clause assumes the same verb as the previous one. Alternate translation: "their offspring will be known among the peoples"
Isaiah 61:10
I will greatly rejoice in Yahweh
"I" refers to the people of God speaking as one person whom Yahweh has restored.
clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has clothed me with the robe of righteousness
The people of God speaking as one person now have salvation and righteousness as their distinct appearance visible to all. "Garments" and "robe" are clothing that everyone can see.
as a bridegroom adorns himself with a turban, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels
This comparison emphasizes that the speaker is extremely happy, joyful, celebrating.
turban
See how you translated this in Isaiah 61:3.
Isaiah 61:11
For as the earth produces its sprouting plants, and as the garden makes its planting grow
This is saying the same thing in two ways. The fact that whatever God says he will do is certainly going to happen is compared to the fact that seeds sprout after planting. Alternate translation: "Just as seeds sown in a garden sprout from the soil and grow"
righteousness and praise to sprout up
This expression describes these virtues as growing from seed like plants do.

62 [1] For Zion's sake I will not be silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness proceeds brightly,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

[2] The nations will see your righteousness,
and all kings your glory.
You will be called by a new name
that Yahweh will choose.

[3] You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh,
and a turban of kingship in the hand of your God.

[4] It will no more be said of you, "Abandoned";
nor of your land any longer will it be said, "Desolate."
Indeed, you will be called "My delight is in her,"
and your land "Married,"
for Yahweh delights in you,
and your land will be married.

[5] Truly, as a young man marries a young woman,
so your sons will marry you,
and as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride,
your God will rejoice over you.

[6] I have put watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem;
they are not silent day or night.
You who keep reminding Yahweh,
do not pause.

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7 Do not allow him to rest until he reestablishes Jerusalem
and makes it a praise on earth.

8 Yahweh has sworn by his right hand
and by the arm of his strength,
"Surely I will no longer give your grain
as food for your enemies.
Foreigners will not drink your new wine,
for which you have worked.

9 For those who harvest the grain will eat it
and praise Yahweh,
and those who gather the grapes will drink the wine
in the courts of my holy sanctuary."

10 Come through, come through the gates!
Prepare the way for the people!
Build it, build the highway!
Gather out the stones!
Raise up a signal flag for the nations!

11 Look, Yahweh announces
to the ends of the earth,
"Say to the daughter of Zion:
Look, your salvation is coming!
See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense is going before him."

12 They will call you, "The holy people;
the redeemed of Yahweh,"
and you will be called "Sought after;
a city not abandoned."

Isaiah 62 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Restoration

This chapter prophesies concerning a future time of peace and restoration. It is unlikely to have been fulfilled in Isaiah's day. (See: restore and prophet and fulfill)

Links:

Isaiah 62:1 Notes

Isaiah 62:1

For Zion's sake I will not be silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Here "Zion" and "Jerusalem" both represent the people who live in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "For the sake of the people of Jerusalem I will not be silent"

I will not be silent

It is most likely that "I" refers to Isaiah.

until her righteousness proceeds brightly, and her salvation as a

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burning torch
Both clauses reassure the people that God will eventually come and save the people of Israel and that it will be as apparent as light is.
Isaiah 62:3
You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh, and a turban of kingship in the hand of your God
These mean the same thing and are combined for emphasis. They say that Jerusalem will become a royal city under the power and authority of God. Yahweh's hand is a metonym for his power and authority.
Isaiah 62:4
It will no more ... will it be said, "Desolate."
These mean the same thing are combined for emphasis.
It will no more be said of you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will no longer say about you"
nor of your land any longer will it be said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor will people any longer say about your land"
your land will be married
This means Yahweh will love the people of Israel and will always be with them as is a husband.
Isaiah 62:5
as a young man marries a young woman, so your sons will marry you
Here "sons" refers to the people of Israel and "you" refers to Judah, the land of Israel. This means the people will take possession of the land as a man takes possession of his young wife.
as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, your God will rejoice over you
This emphasizes God's happiness about his relationship with his people.
Isaiah 62:6
I have put
Here "I" may refer to Isaiah or to Yahweh.
watchmen on your walls
This refers to prophets, officials, or possibly angels, who are constantly praying for the people of Jerusalem like watchmen who constantly guard the city. See how you translated "watchmen" in [Isaiah 52:8]
they are not silent day or night
This means they are continually pleading to Yahweh or calling to each other. Alternate translation: "they are earnestly praying to Yahweh throughout the entire day"
Isaiah 62:7
Do not allow him to rest
Here "him" refers to Yahweh.
Isaiah 62:8
by his right hand and by the arm of his strength
The right hand and arm represent power and authority. Alternate translation: "by his power and authority"
Surely I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies
This means Yahweh will not let enemies conquer the people of Israel and take their grain anymore. Perhaps enemies took the grain in the past as a tax or to feed their own armies.
I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies ... Foreigners will not drink your new wine
These statements are set together for emphasis and completion.
Isaiah 62:10
Come through, come through the gates
The phrase "come through" is repeated to show urgency.
Build it, build the highway
The word "build" is repeated to emphasize that Yahweh urgently wants the road prepared. The "highway" represents the way the people can return. This is similar to [Isaiah 40:3]
Gather out the stones
"Take the stones out of the road to make it smooth." Stones represent all the obstacles to quick travel.
Raise up a signal flag for the nations
A signal flag represents something to draw the attention of others. This means Yahweh is calling the people of the other nations to take notice of the land of Israel and to see what Yahweh has accomplished as he said he would.
signal flag
See how you translated this in Isaiah 5:26.
Isaiah 62:11
Look
"Take notice!"
the ends of the earth
The places on the earth that are very far away are spoken of as if they were the places where the earth ends. This phrase also forms a merism and refers to everywhere in between the ends. See how you translated this in [Isaiah 40:28]
the daughter of Zion
"Daughter" represents the people of Jerusalem
See, his reward is with him, and his recompense is going before him
These clauses represent the same idea for emphasis. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Isaiah 40:10]
Isaiah 62:12
you will be called
This can be stated actively, "they will call you"

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63 [1] Who is this who comes from Edom,
wearing red garments, from Bozrah?
Who is this, splendid in his clothing,
marching in the greatness of his strength?
"It is I, speaking in righteousness,
and mighty to save."

[2] Why are your clothes red,

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and why do your garments look like you have been treading grapes in a winepress?

3 "I have trodden grapes in the winepress alone,
and no one from the nations joined me.
I trod them in my anger
and trampled them in my fury.
Their blood is spattered on my clothes
and stained all my clothes.

4 For I looked forward to the day of vengeance,
and the year for my redemption had arrived.

5 I looked, and there was no one to help.
I was appalled that there was none to help,
but my own arm brought victory for me,
and my strong anger drove me on.

6 I trampled down the peoples in my anger
and made them drunk in my wrath,
and I poured out their blood on the earth."

7 I will tell of the acts of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness,
the praises of Yahweh.
I will tell of all that Yahweh has done for us,
and of his great goodness to the house of Israel.
This compassion he has shown us because of his mercy,
and with many deeds of covenant faithfulness.

8 For he said, "For certain they are my people,
children who are not disloyal."
He became their Savior.

9 Through all their suffering, he suffered too,
and the angel from his presence saved them.
In his love and mercy he saved them,
and he lifted them up and carried them
through all the ancient times.

10 But they rebelled
and grieved his holy Spirit.
So he became their enemy
and fought against them.

11 His people thought about the ancient times of Moses.
They said, "Where is God, who brought them up out of the sea
with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is God,
who put his holy Spirit among them?

12 Where is God,
who made his glorious power go with the right hand of Moses,
and divided the water before them,
to make an everlasting name for himself?

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13 Where is God, who led them through the deep water?
Like a horse running in the wilderness,
they did not stumble.

14 As the cattle that go down into the valley,
the Spirit of Yahweh gave them rest.
So you led your people,
to make yourself a glorious name.

15 Look down from heaven and take notice
from your holy and glorious habitation.
Where are your zeal and your mighty acts?
Your pity and your compassionate actions are kept from us.

16 For you are our Father,
though Abraham does not know us,
and Israel does not recognize us,
you, Yahweh, are our Father.
'Our Redeemer' has been your name from ancient times.

17 Yahweh, why do you make us wander from your ways
and harden our hearts so we do not fear you?
Return for your servants' sake,
the tribes of your inheritance.

18 Your holy people possessed your sanctuary for a short time,
but then our enemies trampled it.

19 We have become like those over whom you never ruled,
like those who were never called by your name."

Isaiah 63 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Imagery

The imagery of judgment in this chapter is intended to be rather vivid. The translator should avoid euphemisms, if possible. Overall, this chapter prophesies a day of great judgment and God's wrath. (See: judge and prophet and wrath)

Links:

Isaiah 63:1 Notes

Isaiah 63:1

Who is this who comes from Edom ... Bozrah

Isaiah speaks as a watchman using the question and answer format to present this information about Yahweh's judgment on Edom, an enemy of Israel. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, am coming from Edom, clothed in red from Bozrah"

Bozrah

This is the capital city of Edom.

It is I

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

Isaiah 63:2

Why are your clothes red, and why ... winepress?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The red on your clothing looks makes you look like you have been treading on grapes in a winepress."

winepress

A winepress is a low place carved out of rock in the ground where workers step on the grapes to crush them with their feet, in order to remove the grape juice.

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Isaiah 63:3

I have trodden grapes

Here "I" refers to Yahweh. This imagery refers to Yahweh destroying his enemies.

Isaiah 63:4

the day of vengeance

"the time of vengeance" or "the time for vengeance"

vengeance

Yahweh will punish in an appropriate way to bring about justice. His kind of vengeance differs from man's vengeance.

the year for my redemption

Here "year" refers to a specific time appointed by Yahweh for restoring Israel. Alternate translation: "the time for my redemption"

Isaiah 63:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

but my own arm

Here "arm" represents power.

Isaiah 63:6

made them drunk in my wrath

This means Yahweh made them stunned and senseless by his full wrath and punishment.

I poured out their blood

Here "blood" represents the life of Yahweh's enemies that was gushing out so they would die.

Isaiah 63:7

I will tell of the acts of Yahweh's covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithfully" or "faithful." See how you translated "covenant faithfulness" in [Isaiah 16:5]

the praises of Yahweh

The word "praises" is a metonym for the acts for which people praise Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the praiseworthy deeds of Yahweh"

I will tell

Here "I" refers to Isaiah.

done for us

Here "us" refers to Isaiah and the people of Israel.

Isaiah 63:9

Through all their suffering

"Through all our suffering." Here "their" refers to the people of Israel. Isaiah included himself as a member of the people.

he suffered too

Here "he" refers to Yahweh.

the angel from his presence

This is a representative who is sent from God's presence.

he lifted them up and carried them

This refers to when God protected and saved the people of Israel from the Egyptians many years earlier. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear.

Isaiah 63:10

But they rebelled

"but we rebelled." Here "they" refers to the people of Israel. Isaiah included himself as a member of the people.

his holy Spirit

"Yahweh's Holy Spirit"

Isaiah 63:11

They said

"we said." Here "they" refers to the people of Israel. Isaiah included himself as a member of the people.

who brought them up out of the sea

The story of Yahweh miraculously splitting the waters of the Sea of Reeds so that the Israelites could cross and escape the Egyptians is assumed knowledge.

the shepherds of his flock

Leaders are sometimes referred to as "shepherds." Alternate translation: "the leaders of his people"

Isaiah 63:12

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking.

who made his glorious power go with the right hand of Moses

Here "right hand" represents the power of Yahweh through Moses. This means it was God's power that enabled Moses to divide the water of the Reed Sea.

Isaiah 63:13

Like a horse running in the wilderness, they did not stumble

This means that the people of Israel were sure-footed as horses in open country on their travels toward Israel from Egypt.

Isaiah 63:14

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking.

As the cattle that go down into the valley ... rest

This image pictures cattle going into a valley where there is green grass and water and emphasizes that God led the people of Israel and took care of them.

to make yourself a glorious name

Here "glorious name" refers to an honorable reputation. Alternate translation: "to make sure people know who you are and honor you"

Isaiah 63:15

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking.

Where are your zeal and your mighty acts?

The writer uses a question to express deep emotion and concern because it seems God is not helping them. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We do not see your zeal and your mighty acts!"

Your pity and your compassionate actions are kept from us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You keep your pity and compassion from us"

Isaiah 63:16

though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not recognize us

These ancestors of the nation of Israel would not able to identify their descendants because they changed so much. "Abraham" and "Israel" represent the people from the distant past.

Israel

This refers to the name also called "Jacob."

Isaiah 63:17

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking.

Yahweh, why do you make us wander from your ways and harden our hearts so we do not fear you?

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Here the writer uses a question to express a complaint of the people to God. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you have made us wander from your ways and become stubborn so that we do not fear you."

why do you make us wander from your ways

To not do what Yahweh commands is spoken of as if a person wanders off of the correct path. Alternate translation: "why do you make do what is wrong"

harden our hearts

This means to become resistant to Yahweh's teaching by refusing to listen and obey. Here "heart" represents their motives, feelings and desires.

Isaiah 63:18

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking.

Isaiah 63:19

who were never called by your name

This can be stated in active form. The word "name" refers to a family relationship. Alternate translation: "who never belonged to your family"

We have become ... called by your name

Some modern versions interpret this passage differently: "We are like the people over whom you have not ruled, like those who have not been called by your name."

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64 [1] "Oh, if you had split open the heavens and come down!
The mountains would have shaken at your presence,

[2] as when fire kindles the brushwood,
or the fire makes water boil.
Oh, that your name would be known by your adversaries,
that the nations would tremble at your presence!

[3] Previously, when you did awesome things that we had not expected,
you came down, and the mountains trembled at your presence.

[4] Since ancient times no one has heard or listened,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who takes action for the one who waits for him.

[5] You come to help those who rejoice in doing what is right,
those who remember you in your ways.
You became angry with us because we sinned for a long time.
How will we be saved?

[6] For we have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a menstrual rag.
We have all withered like leaves;
our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away.

[7] There are none who calls on your name,
who makes an effort to take hold of you.
For you have hidden your face from us
and made us waste away in the hand of our iniquities.

[8] Yet, Yahweh, you are our Father;
we are the clay. You are our potter;
and we all are the work of your hand.

[9] Be not too angry, Yahweh,
nor remember our iniquity against us forever.
Please look at us all,
your people.

[10] Your holy cities have become a wilderness;
Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation.

[11] Our holy and beautiful temple, where our fathers praised you,

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has been destroyed by fire, and all that was so dear is in ruins.

12 How can you still hold back, Yahweh?
How can you remain silent and continue to humiliate us?"

Isaiah 64 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

This chapter records the repentance of the righteous remnant of Judah. (See: repent, righteous and remnant and prophet)

Links:

Isaiah 64:1 Notes

Isaiah 64:1

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking to Yahweh (Isaiah 63:11).

Oh, if you had split open the heavens and come down!

Isaiah uses a strong exclamation to express what he wishes God had done. He wishes that God had shown himself very dramatically by tearing open the sky and coming down. The words "split open" are the same words used to describe ripping apart a piece of cloth.

mountains would have shaken

This is what would have happened if God had split open the heavens and come down. The mountains would have trembled as in an earthquake.

Isaiah 64:2

as when fire kindles the brushwood, or the fire makes water boil

This possibly emphasizes how easily God's presence would have caused the mountains and the people to tremble.

Isaiah 64:3

General Information:

The people of Israel continues speaking to Yahweh.

Isaiah 64:4

no eye has seen

Here the "eye" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "and no one has seen"

Isaiah 64:5

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking to Yahweh.

Isaiah 64:6

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking to Yahweh.

all our righteous deeds are like a menstrual rag

A "menstrual rag" is a cloth that a woman uses during the time of month when she bleeds from her womb. This means all their attempts to please God fail. This sentence was meant to be shocking.

We have all withered like leaves

Isaiah compares the people of Israel to leaves that dry up when dead.

our iniquities, like the wind, carry us away

This means their sins, as a community, are the reason for their failure. Isaiah compares the iniquities to the wind as the force for their suffering Yahweh's punishment.

Isaiah 64:7

you have hidden your face from us

This means God gave up on his people and let them suffer.

in the hand of our iniquities

Here the word "hand" is a metonym for the power of those who are punishing the people for their iniquities. Alternate translation: "as you punish us for our iniquities"

Isaiah 64:8

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking to Yahweh.

we are the clay. You are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand

This means God created the people of Israel.

Isaiah 64:9

look at us all

Isaiah asks Yahweh to pay attention to their situation.

Isaiah 64:10

General Information:

The people of Israel continue speaking to Yahweh.

Your holy cities have become a wilderness

This emphasizes that the cities have been destroyed and no one lives there.

Isaiah 64:11

Our holy and beautiful temple, where our fathers praised you, has been destroyed by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy has destroyed our holy and beautiful temple, where our fathers praised you, by fire"

Isaiah 64:12

How can you still hold back, Yahweh? How can you remain silent and continue to humiliate us?

They use questions to express their frustration because God has not yet come to help them. Alternate translation: "Please do not hold back, Yahweh! Please do not remain silent and continue to humiliate us!"

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65 1 "I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask;
I was ready to be found by those who did not seek.
I said, 'Here I am! Here I am!'
to a nation that did not call on my name.

2 I have spread out my hands all day
to a stubborn people,
who walk in a way that is not good,
who have walked after their own thoughts and plans!

3 They are a people who continually provoke me,
offering sacrifices in gardens,
and burning incense on brick tiles.

4 They sit among the graves
and keep watch all night,
and eat pork with the broth of foul meat in their dishes.

5 They say, 'Stand away, do not come near to me,
for I am holier than you.'
These things are smoke in my nose,
a fire that burns all day long.

6 Look, it is written before me:
I will not keep quiet, for I will pay them back;
I will repay them into their laps,

7 for their iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together,"
says Yahweh.
"I will repay them for burning incense on the mountains
and for mocking me on the hills.
I will therefore measure out their past deeds
into their laps."

8 This is what Yahweh says,

"As when new wine is found in a cluster of grapes,
when one says, 'Do not ruin it,
for there is good in it,'
this is what I will do for my servants' sake:
I will not ruin them all.
9 I will bring descendants from Jacob,
and from Judah ones who will possess my mountains.
My chosen ones will possess the land,
and my servants will live there.

10 Sharon will become a pasture for the flocks,
and the Valley of Achor a resting place for herds,
for my people who seek me.

11 But you who abandon Yahweh,
who forget my holy mountain,
who prepare a table for Fortune,

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and fill wine glasses of mixed wine for Destiny.

12 I will appoint you for the sword,
and you will all bow down to the slaughter,
because when I called, you did not answer;
when I spoke, you did not listen.
But you did what was evil in my sight
and chose to do what displeases me."

13 This is what the Lord Yahweh says,

"Look, my servants will eat,
but you will be hungry;
look, my servants will drink,
but you will be thirsty;
look, my servants will rejoice,
but you will be put to shame.
14 Look, my servants will shout with joy
because of gladness of heart,
but you will cry because of the pain of the heart,
and will wail because of the crushing of the spirit.

15 You will leave behind your name
as a curse for my chosen ones to speak;
I, the Lord Yahweh, will kill you;
I will call my servants by another name.

16 Whoever pronounces a blessing on the earth
will be blessed by me, the God of truth.
Whoever takes an oath on the earth
will swear by me, the God of truth,
because the former troubles will be forgotten,
for they will be hidden from my eyes.

17 For see, I am about to create
new heavens and a new earth;
and the former things will not be remembered
or be brought to mind.
18 But you will be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am about to create.
See, I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,
and her people as a source of gladness.

19 I will rejoice over Jerusalem
and be glad over my people;
the sounds of weeping and cries of distress
will no longer be heard in her.

20 Never again will an infant live there
only a few days;
nor will an old man die before his time.

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One who dies at one hundred years old
will be considered a young person.
Anyone who fails to reach the age of one hundred years old
will be considered cursed.

21 They will build houses and inhabit them,
and they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

22 No longer will they build a house and another live in it;
they will not plant, and another eat;
for as the days of trees
will be the days of my people.
My chosen will fully outlive
the work of their hands.

23 They will not labor in vain,
nor give birth to dismay.
For they are the children of those blessed by Yahweh,
and their descendants with them.

24 Before they call, I will answer;
and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

25 The wolf and the lamb will graze together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox;
but dust will be the serpent's food.
They will no longer do evil or harm
on all my holy mountain,"
says Yahweh.

Isaiah 65 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

This chapter is Yahweh's response to the repentance of the people. (See: repent)

Special concepts in this chapter

Judgment and hope

This chapter records that Yahweh's judgment on the people must come. Despite this, there is hope that in the end, Yahweh will make all things new and restore them to himself. (See: judge and hope and restore)

Links:

Isaiah 65:1 Notes

Isaiah 65:1

I was ready

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

Isaiah 65:2

I have spread out my hands all day to a stubborn people

"Spreading out my hands" here is a person's gesture to show imploring or a strong request. Alternate translation: "I have continually begged a stubborn people to receive my help"

Isaiah 65:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Israel.

in gardens ... on brick tiles

These refer to Canaanite places for worshiping idols. Their sacred altars were made of bricks, which Yahweh forbid for his altars. Yahweh's altars were made of stone.

Isaiah 65:4

sit among the graves and keep watch all night

This is a reference to consulting the dead, a practice that Yahweh prohibited.

eat pork

Yahweh did not allow the people of Israel to eat meat from pigs.

Isaiah 65:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to and about the people of Israel.

These things are smoke in my nose

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Yahweh compares these people who are continually annoying him to smoke that irritates a person's breathing.
a fire that burns all day long
Yahweh compares the people of Israel to a slow-burning fire that sends out smoke without stopping as it irritates.
Isaiah 65:6
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Israel.
Look, it is written
"Take notice and pay attention"
into their laps
This means God will punish them to the fullest extent. This expression compares Yahweh punishing the people to dumping on their legs as they are sitting.
Isaiah 65:8
As when new wine is found in a cluster of grapes
Yahweh compares the people of Israel to a cluster of grapes that still has some good new wine in it.
when new wine is found in a cluster
This can be stated in an active way. Alternate translation: "when you find new wine in a cluster"
I will not ruin them all
This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "I will spare some of them who are righteous"
Isaiah 65:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
my mountains
This refers to the highest locations of Jerusalem and all of Judea.
Isaiah 65:10
Sharon
This was a fertile grazing area.
Valley of Achor
This is the name of a valley that possibly ran from Jerusalem to south of Jericho. This was also a fertile grazing area.
Isaiah 65:11
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
holy mountain
See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.
who prepare a table ... and fill wine glasses of mixed wine
People would bring food and drink and place it in front of the idol as part of their worship.
mixed wine
wine mixed with spices
Fortune ... Destiny
These are names of false gods. They are also called "Gad" and "Meni."
Isaiah 65:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to those in Israel who worship idols.
appoint you for the sword
"The sword" represents various weapons of war that Yahweh will use to punish those who do not respond to Yahweh's call.
when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen
Both clauses mean the same and are repeated for emphasis.
Isaiah 65:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to those in Israel who worship idols.
Look, my servants
"Take notice and pay attention" Yahweh repeats this for emphasis.
Isaiah 65:14
but you will cry because of the pain of the heart, and will wail because of the crushing of the spirit
These clauses mean the same and the repetition is for emphasis.
crushing of the spirit
This expression compares the feeling of terrible disappointment and sorrow to something becoming deformed due to high pressure.
Isaiah 65:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to those in Israel who worship idols.
Isaiah 65:16
will be blessed by me, the God of truth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I, the God who always speaks the truth, will bless him"
the former troubles will be forgotten ... will be hidden
These clauses can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will forget the former troubles, for these troubles will be out of my memory"
they will be hidden from my eyes
"hidden from my eyes" represents the attention and memory of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will not even think about them again"
Isaiah 65:17
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
For see
"Notice! Pay attention!"
new heavens and a new earth
Both are extremes that also represent everything between.
the former things will not be remembered or be brought to mind
Both of these clauses mean the same thing and are combined for emphasis. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will not even think about what happened in the past"
Isaiah 65:18
But you will be glad
Here "you" refers to all of God's servants.
Isaiah 65:19
weeping and cries of distress will no longer be heard in her
You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will hear weeping and cries of distress any longer in her"
Isaiah 65:20
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about his faithful people.
one hundred years
"100 years"
will be considered a young person

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will consider him a young person"

will be considered cursed

This can be stated this in active form. Alternate translation: "people will consider this person as cursed"

Isaiah 65:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about his faithful people.

for as the days of trees will be the days of my people

"for my people will live as long as trees live"

Isaiah 65:23

they are the children of those blessed by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they are the children of those whom Yahweh blessed"

Isaiah 65:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about his faithful people.

Isaiah 65:25

holy mountain

See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.

66 [1]This is what Yahweh says,

"Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
Where then is the house you will build for me?
Where is the place where I may rest?
[2] My hand has made all these things;
that is how these things came to be—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

This is the man of whom I approve,
the broken and contrite in spirit,
and who trembles at my word.

[3] He who slaughters an ox
also murders a man;
he who sacrifices a lamb
also breaks a dog's neck;
he who offers a grain offering
offers swine's blood;
he who offers a memorial of incense
also blesses wickedness.
They have chosen their own ways,
and they take pleasure in their abominations.

[4] In the same way I will choose their own punishment;
I will bring on them what they fear,
because when I called, no one answered;
when I spoke, no one listened.
They did what was evil in my sight,
and chose to do what displeases me."

[5] Hear the word of Yahweh,
you who tremble at his word,
"Your brothers who hate
and exclude you for my name's sake have said,
'May Yahweh be glorified,
then we will see your joy,'
but they will be put to shame.

[6] A sound of battle tumult comes from the city,
a sound from the temple,
the sound of Yahweh

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giving recompense to his enemies.

7 Before she goes into labor,
she gives birth;
before pain is upon her,
she gave birth to a son.

8 Who has heard of such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Will a land be born in one day?
Can a nation be established in one moment?
Yet as soon as Zion goes into labor,
she gives birth to her children.

9 Do I bring a baby to the birth opening
and not permit the child to be born?—asks Yahweh.
Or do I bring a child to moment of delivery
and then hold it back?—asks your God."

10 Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her,
all you who love her;
rejoice with her,
all you who mourned over her!

11 For you will nurse and be satisfied;
with her breasts you will be comforted;
for you will drink them to the full
and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

12 This is what Yahweh says,

"I am about to spread prosperity over her like a river,
and the riches of the nations like an overflowing stream.
You will nurse at her side, be carried in her arms,
and be dandled on her knees.
13 As a mother comforts her child,
so I will comfort you,
and you will be comforted in Jerusalem."

14 You will see this, and your heart will rejoice,
and your bones will sprout like the tender grass.
The hand of Yahweh will be made known to his servants,
but he will show his anger against his enemies.

15 For look, Yahweh is coming with fire,
and his chariots are coming like the windstorm
to bring the heat of his anger
and his rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For Yahweh executes judgment on mankind
by fire and with his sword.

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Those killed by Yahweh will be many.

[17]They consecrate themselves and make themselves pure, so they may enter the gardens, following the one in the middle of those who eat the flesh of pig and abominable things like mice.[1] "They will come to an end—this is Yahweh's declaration.

[18]For I know their deeds and their thoughts. The time is coming when I will gather all nations and languages. They will come and will see my glory.[2] [19]I will set a sign among them. Then I will send survivors from them to the nations: To Tarshish, the Libyans and Lydians,[3] who draw the bow, to Tubal, Greece,[4] and to the distant coastlands that have not heard reports about me nor seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations.
[20]They will bring back all your brothers out of all the nations, as an offering to Yahweh. They will come on horses, and in chariots, in wagons, on mules, and on camels, to my holy mountain Jerusalem—says Yahweh. For the people of Israel will bring a grain offering in a clean vessel into the house of Yahweh.[21]Some of these I will even choose as priests and Levites —says Yahweh.

[22]For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I will make will remain before me—this is Yahweh's declaration—so your descendants will remain, and your name will remain.[23]From one month to the next, and from one Sabbath to the next, all people will come to bow down to me—says Yahweh.
[24]They will go out and see the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me, for the worms that eat them will not die, and the fire that consumes them will not be quenched; and it will be an abhorrence to all flesh."

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[1]Modern translations provide various interpretations for this difficult verse.
[2]Modern translations provide various interpretations for this difficult verse.
[3]Some modern English translations read, Tarshish, Put, and Lud.
[4]Some modern English translations read, Javan.

Isaiah 66 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 66:1-17, 21-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

In the end

In the end, Yahweh will enact his perfect justice. This is the true hope of this world. The new heaven and the new earth are an important part of this. In the end, this will be the perfect creation of Yahweh and will last forever. (See: justice and hope and eternity)

Links:

Isaiah 66:1 Notes

Isaiah 66:1

Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool

Yahweh compares heaven to a throne and the earth to a footstool to emphasize how great he is.

Where then is the house you will build for me? Where is the place where I may rest?

Yahweh uses questions to emphasize that humans cannot build a place for him to dwell.

Isaiah 66:2

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

My hand has made all these things

Yahweh is represented by his hand which emphasizes his power and authority. Alternate translation: "I have made all these things"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

the broken and contrite in spirit

Here "broken" and "contrite" refers to a person who is truly humble and who suffers for his faith.

Isaiah 66:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

He who slaughters ... also blesses wickedness

These four clauses all describe different ways evil people act and come to the same meaning for emphasis.

They have chosen their own ways

"They have chosen to do evil things that violate the ways of Yahweh"

Isaiah 66:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about the wicked people.

what was evil in my sight

Here sight represents judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what I consider to be evil" or "what is evil in my judgement"

Isaiah 66:5

May Yahweh be glorified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"Glorify Yahweh" or "May Yahweh glorify himself"

but they will be put to shame

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but I will put them to shame"

Isaiah 66:6

General Information:

Yahweh describes the punishment for the hypocrisy of the worshipers.

A sound of battle tumult

The sound represents the real fighting that is going on in the temple as Yahweh is carrying out the punishment.

Isaiah 66:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before pain is upon her, she gave birth to a son

Yahweh speaks about Zion as if it were a woman who is about to give birth. Although Zion was destroyed and the people no longer lived there, Yahweh promises that without delay and with little effort an entire nation will come from her.

Isaiah 66:8

Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Will a land be born in one day? Can a nation be established in one moment?

Yahweh uses questions to emphasize how unique this event will be. The series of questions builds tension until Zion is finally mentioned.

Isaiah 66:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about Jerusalem as if it were a mother (Isaiah 66:7-8).

Do I bring a baby to the birth opening ... born?

Yahweh uses questions to emphasize that he will not fail to fulfill his promises to the people of Jerusalem.

Isaiah 66:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about Jerusalem as if it were a mother and the inhabitants of Jerusalem as if they were newly born children (Isaiah 66:7-8).

Isaiah 66:11

For you will nurse and be satisfied; with her breasts you will be comforted

This means Jerusalem will be a place of safety and comfort for God's people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For she will satisfy you with her milk; she will comfort you with her breasts"

Isaiah 66:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about Jerusalem as if it were a mother (Isaiah 66:7-8).

like a river ... like an overflowing stream

This means God will cause the people of the nations to bring a very large amount of riches, which will be permanent like a river and abundant.

You will nurse at her side, be carried in her arms, and be dandled on her knees

This means Jerusalem will be a place of safety and comfort for God's people.

be carried in her arms, and be dandled on her knees

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she will carry you in her arms and bounce you on her knees with delight"

Isaiah 66:13

so I will comfort you, and you will be comforted in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so I will comfort you in Jerusalem"

Isaiah 66:14

General Information:

Isaiah is speaking to God's faithful people.

your bones will sprout

"Bones" refers to the whole body.

will sprout like the tender grass

"Tender grass" grows fast and strong and compares to the health and vigor of God's faithful people.

The hand of Yahweh will be made known to his servants

Here "hand" refers to his power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will reveal his power to his servants"

Isaiah 66:15

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking to God's faithful people.

coming with fire

Yahweh's appearances in the Old Testament are often accompanied by fire that represents Yahweh's anger and judgment.

like the windstorm

Storms represent Yahweh's powerful actions to make his judgment effective.

Isaiah 66:16

with his sword

"Sword" is one weapon that represents all of warfare and killing.

Those killed by Yahweh will be many

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will kill many people"

Isaiah 66:17

General Information:

Isaiah continues speaking.

They consecrate themselves

"They" are those who worship Yahweh but go against his laws.

enter the gardens

This is a place where people would go to worship idols.

the one in the middle

This describes the leader of those of go to worship idols.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Translate as in [Isaiah 30:1]

Isaiah 66:18

For I know

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

their deeds ... their thoughts

Here "their" refers to the worshipers that are hypocrites whom Yahweh has described before.

Isaiah 66:19

the Libyans and Lydians, ... to Tubal, Greece

These are names of people groups and areas that are far from the land of Israel.

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Isaiah 66:20

They will bring

Here "they" refers to the foreigners who survived and witnessed to the nations. They will return to Jerusalem with exiled Israelites.

holy mountain

See how you translated this in Isaiah 11:9.

Isaiah 66:22

the new heavens and the new earth

See how you translated this in Isaiah 65:17.

Isaiah 66:24

General Information:

Yahweh finishes speaking.

They will go out

Here "they" refers to all the people, the faithful Israelites and foreigners, who come to worship Yahweh.

the worms ... and the fire

Both clauses describe the same idea to emphasize Yahweh's punishment.

the worms that eat them

The worms represent the horror of decay and rot that are Yahweh's punishment on the wicked.

the fire that consumes

Fire also represents Yahweh's judgment.

will not be quenched

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "will burn forever"

all flesh

This expression represents all created living beings that shrink from the dead.

Introduction to Jeremiah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Jeremiah

Yahweh calls Jeremiah to be a prophet (1:1-19) Yahweh will judge and punish Judah (2:1-29:32) Judah called to repent of spiritual adultery (2:1–6:30) Judah judged for its false religion (7:1–10:16) Jeremiah stands between Yahweh and his people (11:1–20:19) Jeremiah confronts his people (21:1–29:32)

Yahweh promises to restore Judah (30:1-33:26) Yahweh will bring the people of Judah back to their land (30:1–24) Yahweh will create a new covenant with them (31:1–40) The people will come back (32:1–44) Kings descended from David will rule again (33:1–26)

Jeremiah suffers (34:1-45:5) Before Yahweh punishes Judah (34:1–36:32) While Yahweh punishes Judah (37:1–39:18) After Yahweh punishes Judah (40:1–45:5)

Yahweh will judge and punish the nations (46:1-51:64) Egypt (46:1–28) Philistia (47:1–28) Moab (48:1–47) Ammon (49:1–6) Edom (49:7–22) Damascus (49:23–27) Kedar (49:28–33) Elam (49:34–39) Babylonia (50:1–51:64)

Jerusalem captured and destroyed (52:1–34)

What is the Book of Jeremiah about?

The Book of Jeremiah gives the prophesies of a priest named Jeremiah. It also tells how Jeremiah suffered in different ways while he prophesied.

Jeremiah began prophesying about 626 B.C. After the death of King Josiah, many groups of people in Israel opposed Jeremiah. Some of these people wanted to depend on Egypt to protect the nation. Others were idol worshipers. They hated Jeremiah for denouncing their gods. (See: falsegod)

During the reign of King Jehoiakim, Jeremiah prophesied about the temple of Yahweh. King Jehoiakim received some of these prophecies in writing and burned the document. The next king, Zedekiah, put Jeremiah in prison when he told the king to surrender to Babylon.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia invaded Judah in 597 B.C. He conquered Jerusalem in 587 B.C. He offered Jeremiah housing and money if Jeremiah would go to Babylon. But Jeremiah remained in Jerusalem to help the few Jews left there. Shortly after that, Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had chosen to be governor over Judah, was murdered. Some Jewish rebels captured Jeremiah and took him to Egypt. Those rebels went to Egypt to be protected there rather than to live under Nebuchadnezzar's rule. Jeremiah may have died soon after being taken to Egypt. But while in Egypt he prophesied that the Babylonians would invade and conquer Egypt.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Jeremiah" or just "Jeremiah." Translators may also call it the "The Book about Jeremiah" or "What the Prophet Jeremiah Said."

Who wrote the Book of Jeremiah?

Jeremiah was a priest and a prophet living in Judah. He spoke the prophesies in the Book of Jeremiah. A friend named Baruch wrote down many of the prophecies as Jeremiah spoke them to him.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the new covenant that is presented in the Book of Jeremiah?

Jeremiah introduced a "new covenant" between Yahweh and Israel (chapter 31). Yahweh would "write this covenant on

the hearts" of the people. This means that the covenant would be a part of the people instead of just written on stone or paper. The people would obey the new covenant with all their heart. (See: covenant)

What relationship do Jeremiah's prophecies have to the other nations besides Israel?

Much of the Old Testament before this time is only about the nation of Israel. But Jeremiah also spoke of how Yahweh would judge other nations of the world. Yahweh would also punish the other nations for their wicked deeds. (See: judge and sin)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

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

Many of the events in the Book of Jeremiah are not told in the order that they actually happened. Instead, the various prophecies appear to be arranged by topic.

Why does the Book of Jeremiah refer to this prophet as "he" or "him"?

Many times in the book, the author refers to Jeremiah as "Jeremiah" or "he." This is unusual if Jeremiah wrote the book. The reason this occurs is perhaps because Baruch, Jeremiah's secretary, wrote down some parts of the book. Translators should keep the words "Jeremiah" and "he."

Jeremiah

1 [1]These are the words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin.[2]The word of Yahweh came to him in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.[3]It also came in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem were taken away as prisoners.

[4]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
[5] "Before I formed you in the womb, I chose you;
before you came out from the womb I set you apart;
I made you a prophet to the nations."

[6]"Ah, Lord Yahweh!" I said, "I do not know how to speak, for I am too young."
[7]But Yahweh said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go everywhere I send you, and you must say whatever I command you![8]Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to rescue you—this is Yahweh's declaration."
[9]Then Yahweh reached out with his hand, touched my mouth, and said to me, "Now, I have placed my word in your mouth.[10]I am appointing you today over nations and over kingdoms, to uproot and break down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and plant."

[11]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying, "What do you see, Jeremiah?"I said, "I see an almond branch."

[12]Yahweh said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to carry it out."

[13]The word of Yahweh came to me a second time, saying, "What do you see?"I said, "I see a heated pot, whose surface is churning, tipping away from the north."

[14]Yahweh said to me, "Disaster will be opened up out of the north on all who live in this land.
[15]For I am calling all the tribes of the northern kingdoms—this is Yahweh's declaration.
They will come, and everyone will set his throne
at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem,
against all the walls that surround it,
and against all the cities of Judah.

[16] I will pronounce sentence against them
for all their evil in abandoning me,
in burning incense to other gods,
and in worshiping the works of their own hands.

[17]Gird up your loins! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be shattered before them, or I will shatter you before them![18]Behold! Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the

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whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land.[19]They will fight against you, but they will not defeat you, for I will be with you to rescue you—this is Yahweh's declaration."

Jeremiah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:4-10.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jeremiah appointed as prophet

God chose Jeremiah to be his prophet and although many powerful people would be against him, God promised to protect him. This chapter emphasizes that Jeremiah was chosen by God to be his prophet. (See: appoint, prophet and elect and promise)

Northern kingdom

This was not a reference to the northern kingdom of Israel; it had already been conquered. It was a reference to a kingdom located north of Judah, that is, to Babylon. The Babylonian armies would attack Judah and conquer it.

Opposition

The people were supposed to listen to God's prophet. When he prophesied, they should have repented. Instead, they persecuted Jeremiah. (See: repent)

Links:

Jeremiah 1:1 Notes Jeremiah intro

Jeremiah 1:1

Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests

"Jeremiah son of Hilkiah. Jeremiah was one of the priests"

Hilkiah

This is the name of a man.

Anathoth

This is the name of a town.

the land of Benjamin

"the land that belongs to the tribe of Benjamin"

Jeremiah 1:2

The word of Yahweh came to him

This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave messages to him" or "Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah

Here "in the days of" is an idiom that refers to the time when a king reigned. Alternate translation: "when Josiah son of Amon was king of Judah"

the thirteenth

The word "thirteenth" is the ordinal form of "13."

Amon

This is the name of a man.

his reign

"Josiah's reign"

Jeremiah 1:3

the eleventh

The word "eleventh" is the ordinal form of "11."

It also came

"The word of Yahweh also came"

in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah

Here "in the days of" is an idiom that refers to the time when a king reigned. Alternate translation: "when Johoiakim son of Josiah was king of Judah"

the fifth month

This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

of Zedekiah

This refers to the rule of Zedekiah. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "of the reign of Zedekiah"

when the people of Jerusalem were taken away as prisoners

This can be stated in active form. It can be stated clearly that they were taken to Babylon. Alternate translation: "when the army of Babylon took the people of Jerusalem away as prisoners" or "when the army of Babylon took the people of Jerusalem as prisoners to Babylon"

Jeremiah 1:4

The word of Yahweh came to me, saying

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave me a message. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to me"

Jeremiah 1:5

formed you

"shaped you"

before you came out from the womb

This can also be expressed without referring to the womb. Alternate translation: "before you were born"

Jeremiah 1:6

Ah, Lord Yahweh

Here "Ah" shows Jeremiah's fear of doing what God has said.

I do not know how to speak

Jeremiah may have been exaggerating to show his fear of speaking in public. Alternate translation: "I do not know how to speak in public" or "I do not know how to make announcements to people"

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Jeremiah 1:8

Do not be afraid of them

"Do not be afraid of the people I will send you to speak to"

this is Yahweh's declaration

The word "this" refers to what Yahweh just said in verses 7 and 8.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Jeremiah 1:9

Then Yahweh reached out with his hand, touched my mouth

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor representing Yahweh giving Jeremiah special authority to speak. Alternate translation: "Then it was as though Yahweh touched my mouth" or 2) Jeremiah was seeing a vision and Yahweh actually did this as a symbolic act of giving Jeremiah authority to speak. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh touched my mouth with his hand"

I have placed my word in your mouth

This phrase represents giving Jeremiah his message. Alternate translation: "I have given you my message for you to speak to the people" or "I have enabled you to tell the people my message"

Jeremiah 1:10

I am appointing you ... to uproot and break down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and plant

Jeremiah would do these things to various nations by saying that they would happen.

to uproot and break down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and plant

He would uproot, break down, destroy and overthrow some nations, and he would build and plant other nations.

to uproot

God speaks of Jeremiah destroying the nations by what he says as if the nations were plants and he were to pull them up out of the ground.

to destroy and overthrow

Jeremiah uses these words, which mean almost the same thing, to show that this will certainly happen.

to build and plant

God speaks of Jeremiah causing nations to become strong as if they were a building and he would build them, and as if they were plants and he would plant them.

Jeremiah 1:11

The word of Yahweh came to me, saying, "What

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 1:4]

I see an almond branch

Yahweh shows Jeremiah a spiritual vision.

an almond branch

An almond tree is a kind of nut tree.

Jeremiah 1:12

I am watching over my word to carry it out

This represents guaranteeing that he will do what he has said. Alternate translation: "I am remembering my word to carry it out" or "I guarantee that I will do what I have said"

for I am watching over my word

The Hebrew words for "almond" and "watch over" sound almost the same. God wants Jeremiah to remember that God will make his word succeed.

Jeremiah 1:13

The word of Yahweh came to me a second time, saying

The idiom "The word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

whose surface is churning

The surface refers to the surface of the water in the pot. Jeremiah could see the water boiling. Alternate translation: "whose water is boiling"

tipping away from the north

This means that it was tipping toward the south, where Jeremiah was in Judah.

Jeremiah 1:14

Disaster will be opened up out of the north

"Disaster will be let loose from the north." This represents God causing disaster to come from the north to the south. Alternate translation: "Disaster will come from the north" or "I will send disaster from the north"

Jeremiah 1:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah about the disaster that would come from the north.

everyone

This generalization refers to the kings of the northern kingdoms. Alternate translation: "every king" or "all of the northern kings"

will set his throne at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem

Possible meanings are 1) this represents ruling over Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "will rule at the gates of Jerusalem" or 2) this represents judging Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "will judge Jerusalem"

against all the walls that surround it

Setting their thrones "against all the walls that surround it" represents commanding their armies to destroy the walls surrounding Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "and they will command their armies to destroy the walls surrounding Judah"

against all the cities of Judah

Setting their thrones "against all the cities of Judah" represents commanding their armies to destroy all the cities of Judah.

Jeremiah 1:16

I will pronounce sentence against them

"I will announce how I will punish them"

I will pronounce sentence against them

"I will pronounce sentence against the people of Judah"

worshiping the works of their own hands

Since the people had made the idols with their own hands, they should have known that the idols are not worthy of worship.

Jeremiah 1:17

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah.

Gird up your loins

This metaphor is a command for Jeremiah to get ready to do what God commands him to do as if he were tucking his clothes into his belt so he could do physical work or fight in

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battle. Alternate translation: "Get ready for action"

Do not be shattered ... I will shatter you

Here "be shattered" represents being extremely afraid, and "shatter" represents causing Jeremiah to be extremely afraid. Alternate translation: "Do not be terrified ... I will terrify you"

Jeremiah 1:18

Behold!

"Pay attention!"

Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls against the whole land

Being strong like these things represents being confident and unchanging in saying what God had told him to say. Alternate translation: "I have made you strong against the whole land like a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls"

iron ... bronze

These were the strongest materials known at that time.

the whole land

This represents all the people of the land.

Jeremiah 1:19

They will fight against you

This refers to the people of Judah.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

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2 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem. Say, 'Yahweh says this:
I have called to mind on your behalf
the covenant faithfulness of your youth,
your love at the time when we were engaged,
when you went after me in the wilderness,
the land that was not sown.
[3] Israel was set apart to Yahweh,
the firstfruits of his harvest!
All who ate from the firstfruits were held guilty;
disaster came upon them—
this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

[4] Hear the word of Yahweh, house of Jacob,
all you clans of the house of Israel.

[5]Yahweh says this,

"What did your fathers find wrong with me,
that they went far from following me?
That they went after useless idols
and became useless themselves?
[6] They did not say,
'Where is Yahweh,
who brought us up from the land of Egypt?
Where is Yahweh,
who led us to the wilderness,
into the land of the Arabah and pits,
in a land of drought and utter darkness,
a land through which no one passes and where no one lives?'

[7] But I brought you to the land of Carmel,
to eat its fruit and other good things!
Yet when you came,
you defiled my land,
you made my inheritance an abomination!

[8] The priest did not say
'Where is Yahweh?'
and the experts in the law did not care about me!
The shepherds transgressed against me.
The prophets prophesied for Baal

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and walked after unprofitable things.

9 So I will still accuse you—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
and I will accuse your sons' sons.

10 For cross over to the coasts of Cyprus[1] and look.
Send messengers out to Kedar and find out
and see if there has ever before been anything like this.

11 Has a nation exchanged gods,
even though they were not gods?
But my people have exchanged their glory
for what cannot help them.[2]

12 Shudder, heavens, because of this
Be shocked and very desolate—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

13 For my people have committed two evils against me:
They have abandoned the springs of living waters,
and they have dug out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

14 Is Israel a slave?
Was he born in his master's home?
So why has he become plunder?

15 Young lions roared against him.
They made a lot of noise
and made his land a horror.
His cities are destroyed
without any inhabitants.

16 Also, the people of Memphis and Tahpanhes
will shave your skull.

17 Did you not do this to yourselves
when you abandoned Yahweh your God,
while he was leading you along the way?

18 So now, why take the road to Egypt
and drink the waters of Shihor?
Why take the road to Assyria
and drink the waters of the Euphrates River?

19 Your wickedness rebukes you,
and your acts of apostasy punish you.
So think about it and understand
that it is wicked and bitter
when you abandon Yahweh your God,
and have no fear of me—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts.

20 For in ancient days I broke your yoke;
I tore your fetters off you.

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Still you said,
'I will not serve!'
On every high hill and beneath every leafy tree
you lay down as a prostitute.

21 I planted you as a choice vine,
completely from pure seed.
How then have you have changed yourself
into a corrupt, worthless vine?

22 For even if you clean yourself in the river
or wash with strong soap,
your iniquity is a stain before me—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh.

23 How can you say,
'I am not defiled!
I have not walked after the Baals'?
Look at what you did in the valleys!
Consider what you have done—
you are a swift female camel
running here and there,

24 a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness,
in her heat sniffing the wind!
Who can restrain her lust?
None of the males need wear themselves out pursuing her;
in her month they will find her.

25 You must restrain your feet from becoming bare
and your throat from being thirsty!
But you have said, 'It is hopeless!
No, I love strangers and go after them!'

26 Like the shame of a thief when he is found,
so the house of Israel will be ashamed—
they, their kings, their princes, and their priests and prophets!

27 These are the ones who say to the tree,
'You are my father,'
and to the stone, 'You gave birth to me.'
For their back faces me and not their faces.
Nevertheless, they say in the time of troubles,
'Arise and save us!'

28 Yet where are the gods that you made for yourselves?
Let them arise if they wish to save you in your time of troubles,
for your idols equal your cities in number, Judah!

29 So why do you accuse me of doing wrong?
All of you have sinned against me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

30 I have punished your people in vain.
They would not accept discipline.
Your sword has devoured your prophets
like a destructive lion!

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[31]You who belong to this generation! Pay attention to my word, the word of Yahweh!
Have I been a wilderness to Israel?
Or a land of deep darkness?
Why would my people say,
'Let us wander around, we will not go to you anymore'?
[32] Will a virgin forget her jewelry,
a bride her sash?
Yet my people have forgotten me
for days without number!

[33] How well you make your way to look for love.
You have even taught your ways to wicked women.

[34] The blood that was the life of innocent, poor people
has been found on your clothes.
These people were not discovered
in acts of burglary.

[35] Yet you say,
'I am innocent;
surely his anger has turned away from me.'
But look! I will bring down judgment on you
because you say, 'I have not sinned.'

[36] Why do you treat so very lightly
this change in your ways?
You will also be disappointed by Egypt,
just as you were by Assyria.

[37] You will also go out from there dejected,
with your hands on your head,
for Yahweh has rejected the ones whom you trusted,
so you will not be helped by them."

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[1]Some modern English translations read, Kittim.
[2]Instead of their glory, some ancient copies have my glory.

Jeremiah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:1-31.

The prophecy revealed to Jeremiah is recorded in 2:1-3:5. Despite covering more than one chapter, this should be seen as one unit. (See: prophet and reveal)

Special concepts in this chapter

The people refuse to learn

The people worshiped other gods, particularly the fertility gods of Baal and Ashtoreth. Even when the nation was punished, the people did not learn. (See: falsegod)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Israel is compared to a female camel or a wild donkey for being unstable and lustful.

Links:

Jeremiah 2:1 Notes

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Jeremiah 2:1

The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 2:2

Go and proclaim in the hearing of Jerusalem

"Go and speak where the people in Jerusalem can hear you"

I have called to mind on your behalf

"I remember about you"

the covenant faithfulness of your youth, your love

The abstract nouns "faithfulness," "youth" and "love" can be expressed with the adjectives "faithful" and "young," and the verb "love." Alternate translation: "how, when you were young, you were faithful to our covenant, and how you loved me"

when we were engaged

God speaks of his relationship with the people of Israel as though they had been engaged to be married. Alternate translation: "when we first agreed that we would marry each other"

the land that was not sown

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "the land where no one had sown seed" or "the land where no food was growing"

Jeremiah 2:3

the firstfruits of his harvest

God speaks of Israel as if they were an offering dedicated to God. Alternate translation: "like the firstfruits of his harvest"

All who ate from the firstfruits were held guilty

God speaks of those who attacked Israel as if they were eating the offering that was set apart for God. Alternate translation: "All who attacked Israel were held guilty like people who ate from the first fruits of his harvest"

disaster came upon them

The phrase "came upon them" is a metaphor for happened to them. Alternate translation: "Disasters happened to them" or "I made terrible things happen to them"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 2:4

house of Jacob, all you clans of the house of Israel

Jacob and Israel were two names for one man, and these two phrases refer to the same group of people. Alternate translation: "all you descendants of Jacob"

house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants, who had become the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelites" or "the Israelite people group"

Jeremiah 2:5

What did your fathers find wrong with me, that they went far from following me? That they went after useless idols and became useless themselves?

Yahweh uses these questions to say that since he has done no wrong, his people should not have rejected him and worshiped idols. Alternate translation: "I did nothing wrong to your forefathers, so they should not have gone far from following me, and they should not have gone after useless idols. By doing that they themselves have become useless!"

they went far from following me

This represents rejecting God and refusing to be loyal to him. Alternate translation: "they rejected me"

they went after useless idols

This represents choosing to be loyal to idols and worship them. Alternate translation: "they worshiped useless idols"

useless idols

idols that people can use for nothing good. The translation should not make people think that there are some idols that are useful.

Jeremiah 2:6

They did not say

It is implied that they should have said what follows. Alternate translation: "They should have said"

Where is Yahweh, who brought us ... Egypt?

This rhetorical question would have been used to show the people's need of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "We need Yahweh. He is the one who brought us ... Egypt."

Where is Yahweh, who led us ... lives?

This rhetorical question would have been used to show the people's need of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "We need Yahweh. He is the one who led us ... lives."

a land of drought and utter darkness

A "land of drought" is a land that does not have enough water. Here "utter darkness" is a metaphor for danger. Alternate translation: "a dangerous land where there is not enough water"

Jeremiah 2:7

you defiled my land, you made my inheritance an abomination!

These two phrases mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "you sinned and made the land I gave you disgusting to me!"

you defiled my land

Here "defiled" represents making the land unacceptable to God. They did this by sinning against him there when they worshiped idols. Alternate translation: "by sinning, you made my land no good"

you made my inheritance an abomination

"you made my inheritance disgusting by your sin" or "by sinning, you made my inheritance repulsive"

my inheritance

Possible meanings are 1) God is speaking of his land as if he had inherited it. Alternate translation: "my land" or 2) God is speaking of the land he gave to Israel as if he had given it to them as an inheritance. Alternate translation: "the land I gave you" or "the land I gave you as an inheritance"

Jeremiah 2:8

Where is Yahweh?

This question would have shown that they wanted to obey Yahweh. Alternate translation: "We need to obey Yahweh!"

did not care about me

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"were not committed to me" or "rejected me"

The shepherds transgressed against me

The leaders are spoken of as if they were shepherds and the people who followed them were sheep. Alternate translation: "Their leaders sinned against me"

walked after unprofitable things

Here "walked after" represents obeying or worshiping. Alternate translation: "obeyed unprofitable things" or "worshiped unprofitable things"

unprofitable things

Unprofitable things are things that cannot help a person. Here it refers to idols.

Jeremiah 2:9

your sons' sons

"your future generations"

Jeremiah 2:10

cross over to the coasts of Cyprus

"Cyprus" represents all the lands far to the west of Israel. Alternate translation: "go west across the ocean to Cyprus"

Send messengers out to Kedar

Kedar is the name of a land far to the east of Israel. Alternate translation: "Send messengers far east to the land of Kedar"

Jeremiah 2:11

Has a nation exchanged gods ... gods?

God uses this question to tell the people of Israel that other nations continue to worship their own gods. They do not change and worship other gods. Alternate translation: "You will see that no nation has ever exchanged gods ... gods."

But my people have exchanged their glory for what cannot help them

Here God speaks as though he were not speaking directly to his people. Alternate translation: "But you, my people, have exchanged me, your glorious God, for what cannot help you"

their glory

This expression refers to God himself, who is glorious. Alternate translation: "their glorious God" or "me, your glorious God"

for what cannot help

Here false gods are spoken of in terms of what they cannot do. Alternate translation: "for false gods, which cannot help" or "for gods who cannot help"

Jeremiah 2:12

Shudder, heavens ... Be shocked and very desolate

Yahweh speaks as if the heavens could hear him, probably to shame the people of Judah, who were refusing to listen to him. Alternate translation: "People of Judah, if the heavens could see you, they would shudder ... They would be shocked and very desolate"

very desolate

This metaphor speaks of horror as if it were desolation. Alternate translation: "totally horrified" or "appalled"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 2:13

have abandoned the springs of living waters

God speaks of himself as if he were springs of living waters. Alternate translation: "have abandoned me, their springs of living waters" or "have abandoned me, who is like springs of living water"

have dug out cisterns for themselves

God speaks of false gods as if they were cisterns that people dig in order to get water. Alternate translation: "have gone to false gods, which are like cisterns they have dug for themselves"

cisterns

deep holes for storing water

Jeremiah 2:14

Is Israel a slave? Was he born in his master's home? So why has he become plunder?

Though Yahweh was speaking to the people of Israel, he used the third person as though he were talking to someone else about Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel, are you a slave? Were you born at home? So why have you become plunder?"

Is Israel a slave? Was he born in his master's home?

Yahweh uses these questions to tell why Israel should not have become plunder. Alternate translation: "Israel is not a slave. Israel was not born at home."

Was he born in his master's home

Here "born in his master's home" is metonym for being born into slavery. Alternate translation: "Was he born a slave"

So why has he become plunder?

Yahweh uses this question to indicate that Israel should not have become plunder. Alternate translation: "So he should not have become plunder."

So why has he become plunder

Here "become plunder" represents being attacked and taken as captives to another country. Alternate translation: "So why has Israel been taken away as captives" or "So why have Israel's enemies taken Israel away as captives"

Jeremiah 2:15

Young lions roared against him. They made a lot of noise

God speaks of Israel's enemies attacking Israel as if the enemies were lions roaring and attacking Israel.

made his land a horror

This represents destroying the land in such a way that people will feel horror when they see it. Alternate translation: "destroyed Israel's land"

Young lions roared

A roar is a loud sound that a wild animal makes when it attacks.

His cities are destroyed without any inhabitants

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They have destroyed Israel's cities and now no one lives in them"

inhabitants

people who live in a certain place

Jeremiah 2:16

Memphis and Tahpanhes

These are the names of two cities in Egypt.

will shave your skull

The Egyptians shaved the head of their slaves to mark them as slaves.

will shave your skull

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Some versions interpret the Hebrew text as "have cracked your skull."

Jeremiah 2:17

Did you not do this to yourselves when you abandoned Yahweh your God, while he was leading you along the way?

Yahweh uses this question to remind Israel that it is their own fault that their enemies attacked them. Alternate translation: "You caused this yourselves by abandoning Yahweh your God while he was leading you along the way."

Jeremiah 2:18

So now, why take the road to Egypt and drink the waters of Shihor? Why take the road to Assyria and drink the waters of the Euphrates River?

Yahweh uses these questions to remind his people that it does not do any good to ask Egypt and Assyria to help them. Alternate translation: "It does not help you to go to Egypt and drink from the waters of the Shihor River, or to go to Assyria and drink from the waters of the Euphrates River."

why take the road to Egypt and drink the waters of Shihor ... Why take the road to Assyria and drink the waters of the Euphrates River

These are a metaphor for asking the Egyptian and Assyrian armies to help them. Alternate translation: "why ask the Egyptians to help you ... Why ask the Assyrians to help you"

Shihor

This is the name of a stream associated with Egypt. It may have been a branch of the Nile River. Some versions call it the Nile. Alternate translation: "the Shihor Stream" or "the Shihor River" or "the Nile River"

Jeremiah 2:19

Your wickedness rebukes you, and your acts of apostasy punish you

Both of these phrases mean that their punishment is the result of their wicked behavior. Alternate translation: "Because you have been wicked and unfaithful, I will punish you"

it is wicked and bitter

Here the word "bitter" describes "wicked." Alternate translation: "it is bitterly wicked" or "it is extremely wicked"

Jeremiah 2:20

For in ancient days I broke your yoke; I tore your fetters off you. Still you said, 'I will not serve!'

Here "broke your yoke" and "tore your fetters off you" are metaphors for setting them free from slavery. The people of Israel had been slaves in Egypt. Alternate translation: "Long ago I released you from slavery, but still you refused to worship me!"

fetters

chains used to restrain a person or an animal

On every high hill and beneath every leafy tree you lay down as a prostitute

Here "prostitute" translates a word that can also refer to a woman who commits adultery or fornication. It is a metaphor for someone who is unfaithful to God. To "lie down as a prostitute" is a metaphor for bowing down to the idols that people worshiped "on every high hill and beneath every leafy tree." Alternate translation: "On every high hill and beneath every leafy tree you worshiped idols instead of me, like an adulterous wife who is unfaithful to her husband"

beneath

under

Jeremiah 2:21

I planted you as a choice vine, completely from pure seed

God speaks of making his people into a great nation in Canaan as if they were the seed of a grapevine that he had planted. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, started you with a very good beginning, like a farmer who uses excellent seed to plant the best kind of vine"

a choice vine

"a vine of very good quality"

completely from pure seed

Here "pure seed" is the best seed that has not been mixed with seed that is not good. Alternate translation: "that grew from excellent seed"

How then have you have changed yourself into a corrupt, worthless vine?

God uses this question to rebuke his people for changing and becoming like a corrupt worthless vine. Alternate translation: "But you have changed yourself into a corrupt, worthless vine!"

Jeremiah 2:22

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 2:23

How can you say, 'I ... have not walked after the Baals'?

God uses this question to rebuke his people for saying that they have not worshiped the Baals. Alternate translation: "You lie when you say, 'I ... have not walked after the Baals.'

walked after

This is a metaphor for serving or worshiping.

you are a swift female camel running here and there

God speaks of Israel worshiping other gods as if they were like a female camel running in different directions looking for a male camel to mate with. Alternate translation: "You are like a swift female camel running back and forth looking for a male camel to mate with"

swift

able to run quickly

Jeremiah 2:24

a wild donkey accustomed to the wilderness, in her heat sniffing the wind

God speaks of Israel worshiping other gods as if they were a wild female donkey running to find male donkeys. Alternate translation: "You are like a young female donkey that lives in the desert. When she wants to mate she is out of control and constantly sniffs the breeze to find a mate"

in her heat

This phrase is an idiom referring to the time when a female donkey wants to mate with male donkeys. Alternate translation: "when she wants to mate"

Who can restrain her lust?

This question is used to emphasize that no one can control a female donkey when she is wants to mate with a male donkey. Alternate translation: "No one can turn her around when she wants to mate."

in her month

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Like the phrase "in her heat," this phrase refers to the time when she is ready to mate. Alternate translation: "when she is ready to mate" (

Jeremiah 2:25

You must restrain your feet from becoming bare and your throat from being thirsty!

God speaks of Israel wanting to worship other gods as if they were running around in the desert looking for those gods. Alternate translation: "I have told you to stop running here and there chasing after false gods, because all that it does is wear out your sandals and make you very thirsty"

It is hopeless

"There is no hope for us to restrain ourselves." This implies that they cannot stop themselves from running after other gods. Alternate translation: "We cannot stop ourselves"

No, I love strangers and go after them!

Here "strangers" represents foreign gods, and "go after them" represents worshiping them. Alternate translation: "We must follow after foreign gods and worship them!'"

Jeremiah 2:26

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 2:4]

when he is found

This idiom means that someone discovers that the person's actions. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone finds him" or "when people know that he has stolen things"

they, their kings, their princes, and their priests and prophets

This list shows that everyone belonging to Israel will be ashamed.

Jeremiah 2:27

These are the ones who say to the tree, 'You are my father,' and to the stone, 'You gave birth to me.'

Here "tree" and "stone" represent idols carved from wood and stone. These words emphasize that the idol was made of ordinary things and is not worthy of worship. Alternate translation: "These people are the ones who say to a carved piece of wood, 'You are my father,' and to a carved stone, 'You gave birth to me.'"

their back faces me and not their faces

"their backs are toward me; their faces are not toward me." This represents them rejecting God. Alternate translation: "they have turned away from me" or "they have turned their backs toward me and not their faces" or "they have completely rejected me"

Arise and save us

It can be made clear that they say this to Yahweh. "Yahweh, come and save us"

Jeremiah 2:28

Yet where are the gods that you made for yourselves?

With this question God implies that people should ask the gods they worship to help them. He uses this irony to show that he is angry that they worship other gods. Alternate translation: "You should ask the gods you made to help you." or "You do not ask the gods you made to help you."

Let them arise if they wish to save you in your time of troubles

God implies that false gods should help the people who worship them. He knows that false gods cannot help people. When he said this he was using irony to show that he was angry that his people worshiped false gods. Alternate translation: "You do not ask them because know you that they cannot save you in your time of troubles"

Jeremiah 2:29

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 2:30

They would not accept discipline

Here "accept discipline" represents learning from discipline. Alternate translation: "They refused to learn from discipline" or "When I disciplined them, they refused to learn to obey me"

Your sword has devoured your prophets like a destructive lion

God speaks of the people of Israel killing the prophets as if their sword were a lion that ate the prophets. Alternate translation: "You have killed the prophets brutally with your sword like a destructive lion"

destructive

capable of causing a very large amount of damage

Jeremiah 2:31

You who belong to this generation! Pay attention to my word, the word of Yahweh

The phrase "this generation" refers to the people who lived when Jeremiah lived. Alternate translation: "You who live today, pay attention to what I, Yahweh, say to you"

Have I been a wilderness to Israel? Or a land of deep darkness?

Here "a wilderness" and "a land of deep darkness" are metaphors for danger. God uses this question to rebuke the Israelites for behaving as though he had been dangerous. Alternate translation: "You act as though I have been like a wilderness or a land of deep darkness to you"

Why would my people say, 'Let us wander around, we will not go to you anymore'?

God uses this question to rebuke his people for saying this. Alternate translation: "You my people say 'We can go where we want to go and not worship Yahweh anymore.'"

wander

move around or go to different places usually without any particular purpose or direction

Jeremiah 2:32

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her sash?

God uses this question to introduce the idea of remembering things that are important to someone. Alternate translation: "You know that a virgin would never forget to put on her jewelry, and a bride would never forget to put on her sash."

Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her sash

The words "will" and "forget" are understood to be part of the second phrase also. Alternate translation: "Will a virgin forget her jewelry, and will a bride forget her sash"

sash

This word refers to an ornament that is wrapped around the body, arms, or legs. You may need to translate it as a general word like "attire" or "ornament."

days without number

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"a very long time"

Jeremiah 2:33

How well you make your way to look for love

God appears to be praising his people for looking for love, but this is irony. He was showing that he was angry with them for being unfaithful to him.

to look for love

God speaks of his people worshiping other gods as if they were a woman who is unfaithful to her husband and is looking for other men to love her.

You have even taught your ways to wicked women

God speaks of how unfaithful his people are to him as though they were even teaching prostitutes how to be unfaithful to their husbands and find other men to be their lovers.

Jeremiah 2:34

The blood that was the life of innocent, poor people has been found on your clothes

Blood on their clothes was evidence that they had killed people. Alternate translation: "The blood of innocent, poor people on your clothes shows that you are guilty of killing them" or "You are guilty of killing poor and innocent people"

The blood that was the life

"The blood that represents the life"

These people were not discovered in acts of burglary

If they found people in an act of burglary, this might have been an excuse for killing them. But the people that they murdered were innocent. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You did not discover these people stealing things" or "But you killed them even though they were not even stealing anything"

Jeremiah 2:35

surely his anger has turned away from me

Here anger is spoken of as if it were a person that could turn away from Israel. Its turning represents Yahweh's stopping be angry with Israel. Alternate translation: "surely Yahweh has stopped being angry with me"

I will bring down judgment on you

Here "judgment" represents punishment. Alternate translation: "I will punish you"

Jeremiah 2:36

Why do you treat so very lightly this change in your ways?

Yahweh is scolding the Israelites because they changed from one kingdom to another for help but did not rely on God for help.

lightly

without care or concern

You will also be disappointed by Egypt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Egypt will also disappoint you"

You will also be disappointed by Egypt

The people of Israel will be sad because the army of Egypt will not be able protect them. Alternate translation: "You will be disappointed when Egypt does not protect you"

just as you were by Assyria

The word "disappointed" is understood from the previous phrase. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as you were disappointed by Assyria" or "just as Assyria disappointed you"

Jeremiah 2:37

You will also go out from there

"You will go out from Egypt"

with your hands on your head

This is a symbol of shame.

so you will not be helped by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so they will not help you"

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3 [1] "If a man divorces his wife and she goes from him
and becomes another man's wife,
will he return to her again?
Would that land not be greatly polluted?
You have lived as a prostitute who has many lovers;
and would you return to me?—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

[2] Lift up your eyes to the barren heights and look!
Is there any place where you have not had illicit sex?
By the roadsides you sat waiting for your lovers,
as an Arab in the wilderness.
You have polluted the land
with your prostitution and wickedness.

[3] So the showers have been withheld
and the spring rains have not come;
yet you have the forehead of a prostitute;
you refuse to be ashamed.

[4] Have you not just now called to me: 'My Father!
My closest friend even from my youth!

[5] Will he always be angry?

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Will he always keep his wrath to the end?'
Look! This is what you have said,
but you do all the evil you can!"

[6]Then Yahweh said to me in the days of Josiah the king, "Do you see what apostate Israel has done? She has gone up every high hill and under every leafy tree, and there she has acted like a prostitute.[7]I said, 'After she does all these things, she will return to me,' but she did not return. Then her faithless sister Judah saw these things.
[8]So I saw that, in the same way that apostate Israel had committed adultery and I had sent her away and had given a certificate of divorce against her, her faithless sister Judah did not fear; she also went out and acted like a prostitute.[9]Her prostitution was nothing to her; she defiled the land, and she committed adultery with stones and trees.[10]Then after all of this, her faithless sister Judah returned to me, not with all her heart, but with a lie—this is Yahweh's declaration."

[11]Then Yahweh said to me, "Apostate Israel has been more righteous than faithless Judah![12]Go and proclaim these words to the north. Say,
'Return, apostate Israel!—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
I will not always be angry with you.
Since I am faithful—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
I will not stay angry forever.

[13] Acknowledge your iniquity,
for you have transgressed against Yahweh your God;
you have shared your ways with strangers
under every leafy tree!
For you have not listened to my voice!—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

[14]Return, faithless people!—this is Yawheh's declaration—I am your husband! I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion! [15]I will give you shepherds after my heart, and they will shepherd you with knowledge and insight.
[16]Then it will happen that you will increase and bear fruit in the land in those days—this is Yahweh's declaration-they will no longer say, "The ark of the covenant of Yahweh!" This matter will no longer come up in their hearts or be remembered; it will not be missed, and another one will not be made.'
[17]In that time they will proclaim about Jerusalem, 'This is Yahweh's throne,' and all the other nations will gather at Jerusalem in Yahweh's name. They will no longer walk in the stubbornness of their wicked hearts.[18]In those days, the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel. They will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your ancestors as an inheritance.
[19] As for me, I said,
'How I want to treat you as my son
and give you a delightful land,
an inheritance more beautiful
than what is in any other nation!'
I would have said, 'You will call me "my Father".'
I would have said
that you would not turn from following me.

[20] But like a woman faithless to her husband,
you have betrayed me, house of Israel—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

[21] A voice is heard on the plains,
the weeping and pleading of the people of Israel!
For they have changed their ways;
they have forgotten Yahweh their God.

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22 "Return, faithless people!
I will heal you of your apostasy!"
"Behold! We will come to you,
for you are Yahweh our God!

23 Surely lies come from the hills,
a confusing noise from the mountains;
surely Yahweh our God
is the salvation of Israel.

24 Yet since our youth shameful idols
have consumed the labor of our ancestors—
their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters!

25 Let us lie down in shame.
May our shame cover us,
for we have sinned against Yahweh our God!
We ourselves and our ancestors,
from the time of our youth to this present day,
have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God!"

Jeremiah 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:1-5, 12-17, 19-25.

The prophecy revealed to Jeremiah is recorded in 2:1-3:5. Despite covering more than one chapter, this should be seen as one unit. The same is true for 3:19-4:3. (See: prophet and reveal)

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah told to repent

If Judah repents, God will bring the people back from the captivity into which he is going to send them. In this book, "Israel" serves as another name Judah because the northern kingdom of Israel no longer exists. The people group formed by these ten tribes had been scattered among the other nations by the Assyrians, who had conquered them. (See: repent)

Adultery

Judah's faithlessness to God is often pictured as adultery. This is a common image in Scripture. When Judah does not worship God, their nation is spoken of as if it were a woman unfaithful to her husband. (See: adultery)

Links:

Jeremiah 3:1 Notes

Jeremiah 3:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking. This is part of the prophecy that he starts revealing to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 2:1.

will he return to her again?

God uses this question to remind the people that a man would never return to his wife if another man marries her. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "he would not return to her again."

Would that land not be greatly polluted?

God uses this question to remind the people that a married man would not return to his wife if she married another man, because he knows that the land would become ceremonially unclean. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He knows that if he did, the land would be greatly polluted."

greatly polluted

This is a metaphor for being terribly unacceptable to God. Alternate translation: "completely unacceptable to God"

You have lived as a prostitute who has many lovers

God speaks of Israel worshiping many idols as being like a woman having sex with many men. Alternate translation: "You have given your love and trust to idols the way a prostitute gives her body to men who are not her husband"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 3:2

Lift up your eyes

Here "your eyes" represents looking at something. Alternate translation: "Look up"

Is there any place where you have not had illicit sex?

God speaks of Israel worshiping idols as if they were a

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woman who had sex with many different men. He uses this question to tell the Israelites that he knows that they have worshiped idols everywhere. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is no place where you have not had illicit sex!" or "As a whore sleeps with many men, you have worshiped your idols everywhere!"

By the roadsides you sat waiting for your lovers

God speaks of his people being eager to worship any idol as being like a prostitute waiting by the road for any man to come along. Alternate translation: "Like a prostitutes waiting at the roadside for her lovers, you were eager to worship any idol you learned about"

as an Arab in the wilderness

God speaks of his people being eager to worship any idol as being like someone in the wilderness waiting for anyone to come along so he could rob them. Alternate translation: "like an Arab in the wilderness waiting for people he might rob"

an Arab in the wilderness

An Arab is a person from Arabia. Some Arabs lived as nomads in the desert and would rob others who came near them. Alternate translation: "a nomad in the wilderness" or "a robber in the wilderness"

Jeremiah 3:3

So the showers have been withheld

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So I withheld the showers from you" or "So I prevented the rains from falling"

you have the forehead of a prostitute

The arrogance showing on a person's face is spoken of as if the face itself were arrogant. Alternate translation: "But the expression on your face shows that you arrogant, like the face of a prostitute"

Jeremiah 3:5

Connecting Statement:

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you not" in verse 4 ends here.

Will he ... to the end?'

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "Have you not" in verse 4 ends here. God uses this question to rebuke his people for calling out to him and saying these things. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have just called out to me: 'My father ... youth! Will he ... to the end?'"

Will he always be angry? Will he always keep his wrath to the end?

These questions express the people's hope that God will not be angry with them forever. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Surely he will not always be angry. Surely he will not always keep his wrath to the end."

Look!

"pay attention" or "listen"

Jeremiah 3:6

Do you see what apostate Israel has done?

God uses this question to draw Jeremiah's attention to Israel's apostasy. It can be translated as a command or a statement. Alternate translation: "See how apostate Israel is!" or "You see how apostate Israel is."

She has gone up

The people of Israel are spoken of as if Israel were a woman. Alternate translation: "Israel's people have gone up" or "They have gone up"

every high hill and under every leafy tree

The tops of hills and under shade trees were common places for people to worship idols. The word "every" is used as a generalization to show that the people were worshiping idols in many different places.

she has acted like a prostitute

God speaks as of Israel worshiping idols as if she were a woman having sex with many men. Alternate translation:

Jeremiah 3:7

her faithless sister Judah saw

God speaks of Israel and Judah as if they were sisters. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah, who also did not obey me, saw"

Jeremiah 3:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak of Israel and Judah being unfaithful to him as if they were two sisters who were unfaithful wives.

certificate of divorce

Something that a man writes to certify that he has divorced his wife.

Jeremiah 3:9

Her prostitution was nothing to her

Here prostitution being "nothing" represents Judah not caring about it. Alternate translation: "She did not care about her prostitution" or "She was not ashamed of her prostitution"

she defiled the land

Here "defiled" represents making the land unacceptable to God. They did this by sinning against him there when they worshiped idols. Alternate translation: "she made my land no good"

she committed adultery with stones and trees

Here "stones" and "trees" represent the stone and wood material that was used to create idols. The people's idol worship is spoken of as if they were committing adultery.

Jeremiah 3:10

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 3:11

Apostate Israel has been more righteous than faithless Judah!

By calling Israel "more righteous" than Judah, God emphasizes that Judah is very guilty. Alternate translation: "Israel has been unfaithful to me, but Judah is even more guilty than Israel"

Jeremiah 3:12

Go and proclaim these words to the north

Here the north represents the people of Israel who had been taken north to Assyria. Alternate translation: "Go and proclaim these words to the people of Israel"

Jeremiah 3:13

Acknowledge your iniquity

"Admit how you have sinned." God was speaking to Israel.

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you have shared your ways with strangers under every leafy tree!
The phrase "shared your ways" is a euphemism for having sexual relations. The word "strangers" is a metaphor for foreign gods. God speaks of Israel worshiping foreign gods as if Israel were a woman who was having sex with strangers.
under every leafy tree
People would worship idols under trees. The word "every" is a generalization used to show that the people of Israel worshiped many gods under many different trees.
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 3:14
I am your husband
God speaks of Israel belonging to him as if he were Israel's husband. Alternate translation: "you belong to me as a wife belongs to her husband"
Jeremiah 3:15
I will give you shepherds ... they will shepherd you
Here God speaks of leaders as if they were shepherds and the people they led were sheep. Alternate translation: "I will give you leaders ... they will lead you"
shepherds after my heart
Here "heart" represents Yahweh's desire or will. The phrase "after my heart" is an idiom that describes people who do God's will. Alternate translation: "shepherds who do my will" or "shepherds who do what I want"
Jeremiah 3:16
you will increase and bear fruit
The word "you" refers to the people of Israel. The phrase "bear fruit" is a metaphor for having many descendants. Alternate translation: "you will increase greatly in number"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
This matter will no longer come up in their hearts
Here "come up in their hearts" represents thinking about it. Alternate translation: "They will no longer think of this matter"
Jeremiah 3:17
This is Yahweh's throne
Here "Yahweh's throne" represents the place from where Yahweh rules. Alternate translation: "This is from where Yahweh rules"
They will no longer walk in the stubbornness of their wicked hearts
Yahweh speaks of people's actions as if the people were walking along a path. Here the word "hearts" represents their minds or wills. Alternate translation: "They will no longer stubbornly do the wicked things that they want to do"
Jeremiah 3:18
the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel
Here "walk with" represents being united. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah will be united with the people of Israel"
the house of Judah
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the kingdom of Judah" or "the people of Judah"
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of Israel"
the land that I gave your ancestors as an inheritance
God speaks of giving them the land to possess forever as if it were an inheritance. Alternate translation: "the land that I gave to your ancestors so that it would belong to their descendants forever"
Jeremiah 3:19
As for me
the word "me" refers to Yahweh
How I want to treat you as my son ... nation
This is an exclamation that expresses God's desire. Alternate translation: "I want so much to treat you as my son ... nation"
I want to treat you as my son
God speaks of Israel as if Israel were his son.
an inheritance more beautiful
God speaks of the land he wanted to give to Israel as if it were an inheritance.
Jeremiah 3:20
But like a woman faithless to her husband, you have betrayed me
God speaks of Israel being unfaithful to him as if she were an unfaithful wife.
house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 3:21
A voice is heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People hear a noise"
the weeping and pleading of the people of Israel
"the people of Israel crying and begging loudly"
they have forgotten Yahweh their God
Here "have forgotten" represents neglecting or ignoring. Alternate translation: "They have ignored Yahweh their God"
Jeremiah 3:22
I will heal you of your apostasy!
Possible meanings are 1) "heal you of your apostasy" represents causing Israel to stop being unfaithful to God. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to stop being unfaithful to me" or 2) "heal you of your apostasy" represents forgiving Israel for being unfaithful. Alternate translation: "I will forgive your apostasy"
heal you of your apostasy
"heal you so you will stop being unfaithful to me"

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Behold! We will come to you
It is understood that this is what the people of Israel will say. Alternate translation: "The people will reply, 'Behold! We will come to you" or "You will say "Behold! We will come to you"
Behold
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
Jeremiah 3:23
Surely lies come from the hills
Here "the hills" represent the people's worship of false gods on the hills. The people now realize that those false gods could not guide and help them. Alternate translation: "The false gods that we worshiped on the hills could not guide us"
a confusing noise from the mountains
People made a lot of noise on the hills and mountains when they worshiped false gods. Alternate translation: "We made a confusing noise on the mountains while we worshiped them, but they did not help us"
surely Yahweh our God is the salvation of Israel
"surely Yahweh our God is the savior of Israel" or "surely Yahweh our God is the only one who can save Israel"
Jeremiah 3:24
the labor of our ancestors
"what our ancestors have worked for"
their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters
This is a list of animals and people that the people of Israel had killed and offered to the idols.
Jeremiah 3:25
Let us lie down in shame. May our shame cover us
These phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that the people are fully aware of their shameful behavior. Alternate translation: "Let us be completely humiliated"
May our shame cover us
Being fully aware of their shame is spoken of as if shame were covering them like a blanket or a garment.
from the time of our youth
Possible meanings are that 1) "the time of our youth" refers to when each person was young. Alternate translation: "from when we were young" or 2) "the time of our youth" is a metaphor that refers to when Israel was first becoming a nation. Alternate translation: "from when we were first becoming a nation"
have not listened to the voice of Yahweh our God
Here "listened" represents obeying, and "the voice of Yahweh" represents what Yahweh has said. Alternate translation: "have not obeyed what Yahweh our God has said"

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4 [1] "If you return, Israel—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
then it should be to me that you return.
If you remove your detestable things from before me
and do not wander from me again,

[2] and if you are truthful, just, and righteous
when you swear, 'As Yahweh lives,'
then the nations will bless themselves in him,
and in him they will glory."

[3] For Yahweh says this to each person in Judah and Jerusalem:
'Plow your own ground,
and do not sow among thorns.

[4] Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh,
and remove the foreskins of your heart,
men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
or else my fury will break out like fire,
and burn with no one to quench it,
because of the wickedness of your practices.

[5] Report in Judah and let it be heard in Jerusalem.
Say, "Blow the ram's horn in the land."
Proclaim, "Gather together.
Let us go to the fortified cities."

[6] Lift up the signal flag and point it toward Zion,
and run for safety!
Do not stay, for I am bringing disaster

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from the north and great crushing.

7 A lion is coming out from his thicket
and someone who will destroy nations is setting out.
He is leaving his place to bring horror to your land,
to turn your cities into ruins, where no one will live.

8 Because of this, gird yourselves with sackcloth,
lament and wail.
For the force of Yahweh's anger
has not turned away from us.

9 Then it will happen in that day—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
that the hearts of the king and his officials will die.
The priests will be appalled,
and the prophets will be astounded.'"

10 So I said, "Ah! Lord Yahweh. Surely you have completely deceived this people and Jerusalem by saying, 'There will be peace for you.' Yet the sword is striking against their life."

11 In that time it will be said of this people and Jerusalem, "A burning wind from the plains of the desert will make its way to the daughter of my people. It will not winnow or cleanse them. 12 A wind far stronger than that will come at my command, and I will now pass sentence against them.
13 See, he comes up like clouds,
and his chariots are like a storm.
His horses are faster than eagles.
Woe to us, for we will be devastated!

14 Cleanse your heart from wickedness, Jerusalem,
so that you might be saved.
How long will wicked thoughts lodge within you?
15 For a voice is bringing news from Dan
and a report of trouble from the mountains of Ephraim.
16 Make the nations think about this:
See, announce to Jerusalem
that besiegers are coming from a distant land
to shout in battle against the cities of Judah.
17 They will be like the watchmen
of a cultivated field against her all around,
since she has been rebellious against me—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
18 and your conduct and your deeds
have done these things to you.
This will be your punishment.
How bitter it will be!
It will strike your very heart.

19 My heart! My heart!
I am in anguish in my heart.
My heart is turbulent within me.
I cannot keep quiet for I hear the sound of the horn,

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an alarm for battle.

[20]Disaster follows after disaster;
for all the land lies in ruins.
Suddenly my tents are destroyed,
my curtains in a moment.
[21]How long will I see the signal flag?
Will I hear the sound of the horn?

[22] For the foolishness of my people—
they do not know me.
They are stupid children,
and they have no understanding.
They are skilled at doing evil,
but they do not know how to do good.

[23] I saw the land. Behold!
It was formless and empty.
For there was no light for the heavens.

[24] I looked at the mountains.
Behold, they were trembling,
and all the hills were shaking about.

[25] I looked. Behold, there was no one,
and all the birds of the heavens had fled.

[26] I looked. Behold, the productive land was a wilderness
and all the cities had been pulled down before Yahweh,
before the fury of his wrath."

[27]This is what Yahweh says,

"All the land will become a devastation,
but I will not completely destroy it
[28] For this reason, the land will mourn,
and the heavens above will darken.
For I have declared my intentions;
I will not hold back;
I will not turn from carrying them out.

[29] Every city will flee from the noise of the horseman
and the archer with a bow;
they will run into the forests.

Every city will climb up into the rocky places.
The cities will be abandoned,
for there will be no one to inhabit them.

[30]Now that you have been devastated, what will you do? For though you are clothed in scarlet, and though you adorn yourself with gold jewelry, and though you make your eyes look bigger with paint, you are making yourself beautiful in vain. The men who lusted for you now reject you. They are trying to take away your life.

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31 So I hear the sound of anguish,
distress as in the birth of a firstborn child,
the sound of the daughter of Zion.
She is gasping for breath.
She spreads out her hands,
'Woe to me! I am fainting because of these murderers.'"

Jeremiah 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:1-9.

The prophecy revealed to Jeremiah is recorded in 3:19-4:3. Despite covering more than one chapter, this should be seen as one unit. (See: prophet and reveal)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's punishment

This chapter prophecies Yahweh's punishment on Judah. This should bring Judah to repentance, but it does not. It is also intended to make the nations fear the power of Yahweh and make them desire to worship him. (See: repent and fear)

Links:

Jeremiah 4:1 Notes

Jeremiah 4:1

then it should be to me that you return

Possible meanings are that 1) this is a command that emphasizes who they should return to. Alternate translation: "then come back to me" or "then worship me" 1) this is a repetition of the first phrase, which expresses a condition. Alternate translation: "if you will come back to me" or "if you will start worshiping me again"

If you remove your detestable things from before me

Here "detestable things" refers to idols, which God hates. Alternate translation: "If you remove your disgusting idols from my presence"

and do not wander from me again

Here "wander" is a metaphor for being unfaithful. Alternate translation: "and if you remain faithful to me"

Jeremiah 4:2

As Yahweh lives

"As surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I solemnly swear"

the nations will bless themselves in him

Here "the nations" is a metonym for people of other nations. The word "him" refers to Yahweh. Since Yahweh is speaking, it can also be translated as "me." Alternate translation: "people of other nations will bless themselves in me"

the nations will bless themselves in him

Here "bless themselves in him" is a metonym for asking Yahweh to bless them. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations will ask Yahweh to bless them"

in him they will glory

The word "him" refers to Yahweh. Since Yahweh is speaking, "him" can also be translated as "me." Alternate translation: "they will boast in me" or "they will praise me"

Jeremiah 4:3

Plow your own ground, and do not sow among thorns

Yahweh tells the people to prepare their lives like a farmer prepares the ground for planting.

Jeremiah 4:4

Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh, and remove the foreskins of your heart

Yahweh describes the people's devotion to him in terms of the physical sign of covenant. Alternate translation: "Dedicate yourselves completely to Yahweh"

Circumcise yourselves ... remove the foreskins of your heart

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the command.

my fury will break out like fire, and burn with no one to quench it

Yahweh speaks of becoming extremely angry as if his anger were fire. Alternate translation: "my anger will burn like a fire and no one will be able to stop it" or "I will be extremely angry, and no one will be able to stop me"

fury

"great anger"

because of the wickedness of your practices

"because of how wicked your practices are" or "because of the wicked things that you do"

Jeremiah 4:5

Report in Judah and let it be heard in Jerusalem

These phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the command.

let it be heard in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "cause the people in Jerusalem to hear it"

Blow the ram's horn in the land

The ram's horn would warn the people that their enemies were coming to attack them.

Let us go to the fortified cities

They would go to the fortified cities for protection from their enemies.

Jeremiah 4:6

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disaster ... great crushing
These words mean basically the same thing. The phrase "great crushing" defines what the "disaster" will be.
for I am bringing disaster from the north and great crushing
This represents God sending an army from the north to cause disaster and destruction in Judah. Alternate translation: "for I will cause an army from the north to come and destroy you"
from the north
This represents an enemy army that would come from the north.
great crushing
The abstract noun "crushing" can be translated as a verb. You may need to make explicit who is crushed and who does the crushing. Alternate translation: "the enemy will crush you" or "the enemy will completely destroy you"
Jeremiah 4:7
A lion is coming
God speaks of a powerful army as if it were a fierce lion. Alternate translation: "A powerful and merciless army approaches"
thicket
a set of bushes that grew closely together
someone who will destroy nations
Here "someone" represents a king and his army.
is setting out
This idiom refers to starting to move. Alternate translation: "is starting to march"
to bring horror to your land
This represents destroying the land, which would cause people who see it to be horrified. Alternate translation: "to destroy your land"
Jeremiah 4:8
gird yourselves with sackcloth
People would wear sackcloth to show that they were very sad. In this context it would be to show that they were very sorry for the bad things they had done. The command "gird yourselves," which usually means "prepare for work" or "prepare for battle" is ironic: they are to prepare to mourn, not to work or fight. Alternate translation: "put on the clothes that show you are mourning" or "prepare to mourn"
wail
cry loudly
For the force of Yahweh's anger has not turned away from us
Anger is spoken of as if it were a living thing that could turn away from people. Here "Yahweh's anger has not turned away from us" means that Yahweh is still very angry with the people. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh is still very angry with us"
Jeremiah 4:9
the hearts of the king and his officials will die
Here "hearts" represent courage. Also "the hearts ... will die" represents losing courage and being afraid. Alternate translation: "the king and his officials will stop being courageous" or "the king and his officials will be terrified"
Jeremiah 4:10
the sword is striking against their life
Here enemies being ready to kill people is spoken of as if the sword was a person striking at people. Alternate translation: "our enemies are ready to slaughter us with their swords"
Jeremiah 4:11
it will be said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will say"
burning wind from the plains
Here a "burning wind" represents a fierce and merciless enemy.
will make its way
"will travel" or "will rush"
the daughter of my people
Yahweh shows his love for his people by speaking of them as a daughter. Alternate translation: "my people, who are like a daughter to me" or "my dear people"
It will not winnow or cleanse them
The words "winnow" and "cleanse" refer to blowing away the useless skins from grain. Only a light wind was needed for that. Alternate translation: "It will not be a light wind for blowing the chaff away from the grain"
Jeremiah 4:12
A wind far stronger than that
far stronger than the "burning wind" of verse 11. The wind is a metaphor for a fierce and merciless enemy.
will come at my command
"will come when I command it to come"
at my command
This expression in Hebrew is interpreted by some modern versions as "for me" or "from me."
pass sentence against them
"announce their punishment"
Jeremiah 4:13
See, he comes up like clouds
The word "he" refers to the enemy king and his army. The great size of the army is spoken of as if they were giant storm clouds. Alternate translation: "See, great armies like giant clouds are gathering" or "See, great armies are gathering"
comes up
"approaches." If your language has a word for what clouds do just before a strong storm, you might want to use it here.
his chariots are like a storm
The enemies' chariots are spoken of as if they were like a storm. Storms can be noisy, destructive, and fast-moving. Alternate translation: "the roar of their chariots coming is like a fierce storm"
Woe to us
"This is terrible"
for we will be devastated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for they will devastate us" or "for they will destroy us all"
Jeremiah 4:14
Cleanse your heart from wickedness, Jerusalem
This is a warning to the people living in Jerusalem to repent. "Cleanse your heart" is a metaphor for removing evil from their lives. Alternate translation: "People of Jerusalem, stop being evil" or "People of Jerusalem, stop living wickedly"
How long will wicked thoughts lodge within you?

This question is used to rebuke the people for always planning how to sin. Alternate translation: "Your deepest thoughts are about how to sin!" or "You are always thinking about how to sin!"
Jeremiah 4:15
a voice is bringing news from Dan
Here "a voice" represents a messenger. Alternate translation: "a messenger comes and tells about what is happening in Dan"
Dan
This probably refers to the region of Dan, which was west of Jerusalem.
from Dan ... mountains of Ephraim
By hearing that the enemies had gotten to Dan and Ephraim, people in Jerusalem would understand that the enemies were getting closer to them.
Jeremiah 4:16
besiegers are coming
Besiegers are soldiers who surround a city in order to keep the people in the city from being able to get supplies of food and water.
Jeremiah 4:17
They will be like the watchmen of a cultivated field against her all around
Carefully guarding a city to keep people from going in and out is spoken of as if they are carefully watching a field to keep people from stealing from it. Alternate translation: "they will guard Jerusalem carefully like watchmen who carefully guard a cultivated field"
against her all around
The word "her" refers to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was often spoken of as if it were a woman.
Jeremiah 4:18
your conduct and your deeds have done these things to you
Here "conduct" and "deeds" are spoken of as if they are people that could do things. These abstract nouns can be expressed with the phrase "what you have done." Alternate translation: "These things are happening to you because of what you have done"
It will strike your very heart
Here "heart" probably refers to the emotions, and "strike your very heart" probably refers to causing them to suffer terribly. Alternate translation: "It will be as if it strikes your very heart" or "It will cause you to suffer terrible anguish"
Jeremiah 4:19
My heart! My heart!
Here "heart" represents painful emotions, such as grief and fear. The phrase is repeated to express the intensity of the pain.
I am in anguish in my heart
The speaker feels severe emotional pain that causes severe physical pain.
My heart is turbulent within me
"My heart is beating wildly." Here "heart" refers to the body part. It is turbulent because it is beating much stronger and faster than normal.
turbulent
full of confusion, violence, or disorder; not stable or steady
Jeremiah 4:20
Suddenly my tents are destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemies have suddenly destroyed my tents"
my curtains in a moment
The words "are destroyed" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "my curtains are destroyed in a moment" or "and enemies have destroyed my curtains in a moment"
my curtains
Curtains are cloths that are hung to separate the rooms in the tents.
Jeremiah 4:21
How long will I see the signal flag? Will I hear the sound of the horn?
Jeremiah uses these questions to show his distress about seeing the battle flag and hearing the sound of the horn for such a long time. He wishes that the battle would end soon. It can be stated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Oh, how I wish that the battle would end, and the flag would be lowered, and the sound of the army's horn would stop"
the sound of the horn
Someone would blow the horn as a signal for battle.
Jeremiah 4:22
For the foolishness of my people ... do not know how to do good.
It can be stated clearly that Yahweh says this. This is probably his reply to Jeremiah, telling why the battle is still happening. Alternate translation: "Yahweh replied, 'It is because of the foolishness of my people ... do not know how to do good.'"
Jeremiah 4:23
General Information:
Jeremiah describes a vision that God gave him about things that would happen later.
Behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
formless and empty
This vision is a prophecy of what the land of Israel would be like after the people were all taken into captivity.
there was no light for the heavens
"there were no lights in the sky"
Jeremiah 4:26
the productive land
"the land that in the past had produced much food"
all the cities had been pulled down
"all the cities had been destroyed" or "all the cities were a heap of ruins"
before Yahweh, before the fury of his wrath
This indicates that all these things would happen because Yahweh was so angry with the people of Judah.
Jeremiah 4:27
All the land will become a devastation
"All the land of Judah will be devastated" or "all the land of Judah will be ruined"
Jeremiah 4:28
the land will mourn, and the heavens above will darken
Jeremiah emphasizes Yahweh's judgment by saying that the earth itself expresses great sorrow.
I will not hold back

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"I will not change my mind"

I will not turn from carrying them out

Here "turn" represents deciding not to do what he said he would do. Alternate translation: "I will not change my mind about doing what I said I would do" or "I will not refuse to do what I planned to do"

Jeremiah 4:29

Every city

Here "city" represents the people living in the city. Alternate translation: "The people of every city"

the horseman and the archer with a bow

The words "horseman" and "archer" here are generic nouns that refer to a group of horsemen and a group of archers, not to one particular horseman or archer. Alternate translation: "horsemen and archers with bows"

archer

a person who shoots a bow

they will run into the forests

They will run away to the forests for safety.

The cities will be abandoned, for there will be no one to inhabit them

These two clauses have similar meanings. The second one strengthens the thought in the first. Alternate translation: "The cities will be empty. There will be no one left to live in them"

Jeremiah 4:30

General Information:

Yahweh speaks of the people of Judah as if they were a prostitute because they were unfaithful to him by worshiping other gods.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Judah.

Now that you have been devastated, what will you do?

This question is used to tell the people of Judah that there is nothing they can do to help themselves. Alternate translation: "Now that your enemies have devastated you, there is nothing you can do to find help.

you are clothed in scarlet ... gold jewelry ... eyes ... with paint

God speaks of the people of Judah as if they were a prostitute making herself look beautiful in order to attract men to her. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Like a prostitute you are clothed in scarlet ... good jewelry ... eyes ... with paint"

you are clothed in scarlet

Here "scarlet" represents expensive, red clothing. Alternate translation: "you wear expensive red clothing"

you adorn yourself with gold jewelry

"you put on gold jewelry"

The men who lusted for you now reject you

God speaks of the nations that Judah had depended on for wealth and business as if they were men who lusted after Judah. Those nations would reject Judah when they see God's judgment.

They are trying to take away your life

Here "trying to take your life away" represents trying to kill the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "They are trying to kill you" or "They want to kill you"

Jeremiah 4:31

distress as in the birth

This simile is used to show how greatly distressed Judah will be. Alternate translation: "severe distress as in the pain and suffering a woman has while giving birth"

the daughter of Zion

God shows his love for the people of Jerusalem by speaking of them as a daughter. Alternate translation: "my dear daughter, Zion"

Woe to me

"I am in great danger"

I am fainting

"I am becoming weak"

---

5 1 "Rush about through the streets of Jerusalem;
search in her city squares, too.
Then look and think about this:
If you can find a man or anyone who is acting justly
and trying to act faithfully,
then I will forgive Jerusalem.

2 Although they say, 'As Yahweh lives,'
yet they are swearing falsely."

3 Yahweh, do your eyes not look for faithfulness?
You struck the people, but they do not feel pain.
You have completely defeated them,
but they still refuse to receive discipline.
They make their faces harder than rock,
for they refuse to repent.

4 So I said,
"Surely these are only poor people.
They are foolish, for they do not know Yahweh's ways
nor their God's decrees.

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5 I will go to the important people
and declare God's messages to them,
for they at least know Yahweh's ways,
the decrees of their God."
But they all broke their yoke together;
they all tore apart the chains that bound them to God.

6 So a lion from a thicket will attack them.
A wolf from the Arabah will devastate them.
A leopard is watching their cities
Anyone who goes outside his city will be torn apart.
For their transgressions increase.
Their acts of apostasy are numerous.

7 Why should I pardon these people?
Your sons have abandoned me
and have made oaths by what are not gods.
I fed them fully
but they committed adultery
and walked in great number to the houses of prostitutes.

8 They were horses in heat.
They roamed about wanting to mate.
Each man neighed to his neighbor's wife.

9 So should I not punish them—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
and should I not avenge myself
on a nation that is like this?

10 Go up onto her vineyards' terraces and destroy.
But do not bring complete destruction to them.
Trim their vines,
since those vines do not come from Yahweh.

11 For the houses of Israel and Judah
have completely betrayed me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

12 They have spoken falsely about Yahweh
and they said, "He will do nothing;
no harm will come upon us,
and we will not see sword or famine.

13 The prophets will become wind,
the word is not in them,
so let what they say be done to them."

14 So Yahweh, the God of hosts says this,

"Because you have said this, see,
I am about to place my word in your mouth.

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It will be like a fire,
and this people will be like wood!
For it will consume them.
15 Behold! I am about to bring a nation
against you from far away, house of Israel—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
it is a lasting nation, an ancient nation!
It is a nation whose language you do not know,
nor will you understand what they say.

16 Its quiver is like an open tomb.
They are all soldiers.

17 They will eat up your harvest and your food.
They will devour your sons and daughters.
They will devour your flocks and herds.
They will devour your vines and fig trees.
They will beat down with a sword
your fortified cities in which you put your trust.

18 But even in those days—this is Yahweh's declaration—I do not intend to destroy you completely. 19 When you, Israel and Judah, say, 'Why has Yahweh our God done all these things to us?' then you, Jeremiah, will say to them, 'Just as you abandoned Yahweh and served foreign gods in your land, so you must also serve strangers in a land that is not your own.'
20 Report this to the house of Jacob
and let it be heard in Judah. Say,

21 'Hear this, you foolish people
who have no understanding;
you have eyes but you cannot see,
and you have ears but you cannot hear.

22 Do you not fear me—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
or tremble before my face?
I have placed a border of sand against the sea
an ongoing decree that it does not violate—
even though the sea rises and falls,
still it does not violate it.
Even though its waves roar,
they do not cross it.

23 But this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart.
They have turned aside and gone away.

24 For they do not say in their hearts,
"Let us fear Yahweh our God,
the one who brings the rain—
the early rain and the late rains—
in their right time,
keeping the appointed weeks of the harvest for us."

25 Your iniquities kept these things from happening.
Your sins have stopped good from coming to you.

26 For wicked men are found with my people.
They watch as someone crouches to capture birds;

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they set a trap and catch people.

27 Like a cage full of birds,
their houses are full of deceit.
So they grow large and become rich.

28 They have become fat;
they shine with well-being.
They crossed over all bounds of wickedness.
They do not plead the cause of the people,
or the cause of the orphan.
They prosper even though they have not
given justice to the needy.

29 Should I not punish them for these things—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
and will I not take vengeance for myself
on a nation like this?

30 An appalling and horrifying thing
has occurred in the land.

31 The prophets prophesy with deceit,
and the priests rule with their own power.
My people love it this way,
but what will happen in the end?'"

Jeremiah 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 5:1-31.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Hyperbole

It is possible that Yahweh is using the word "a" (meaning "even one") as hyperbole when he states, "If you can find a man or anyone who is acting justly and trying to act faithfully, then I will forgive Jerusalem." The purpose of this is to show how evil Jerusalem had become. (See:, justice, faith and forgive and evil)

Rhetorical questions

Yahweh asks several rhetorical questions in this chapter. This is intended to show Jeremiah the justness of his actions.

Links:

Jeremiah 5:1 Notes

Jeremiah 5:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

Rush about through the streets

"Go quickly through the streets"

Then look and think about this

"look and find out"

city squares

broad and open places in a city where people can gather

who is acting justly

"who does what is just"

Jeremiah 5:2

Although they say

The word "they" refers to the people of Jerusalem.

As Yahweh lives

"as surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:2]

Jeremiah 5:3

do your eyes not look for faithfulness?

Jeremiah uses this question to emphasize that what Yahweh really wants is faithfulness. Wanting people to be faithful is spoken of as looking for faithfulness. Alternate translation: "you look for faithfulness." or "you want people to be faithful."

You struck the people, but they do not feel pain.

God punished his people in various ways. Here it is spoken of as if he hit them. Alternate translation: "You punish the

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people, but they do not pay attention"

they still refuse to receive discipline

Here "to receive discipline" represents learning from discipline to do what is right. Alternate translation: "they still refuse to learn their lesson"

They make their faces harder than rock

Hard faces represents the expression on their faces that shows that they are stubborn. The simile "harder than rock" shows that the people are extremely stubborn. Alternate translation: "They are extremely stubborn"

Jeremiah 5:4

So I said

Jeremiah is speaking.

Jeremiah 5:5

But they all broke their yoke together; they all tore apart the chains that bound them to God.

The yoke and chains represent the law which bind God and his people.

Jeremiah 5:6

So a lion ... A wolf ... A leopard

These are dangerous animals that can kill people. Possible meanings are that 1) this really is about wild animals killing people or 2) these wild animals are metaphors for enemy armies.

So a lion ... A wolf ... A leopard ... torn apart

One possible meaning is that these are metaphors for enemy armies who will attack Judah. Alternate translation: "Like a lion from the thicket, a wolf from the Arabah, and a leopard, enemy armies will come against their cities, attack them, and destroy them. Anyone who goes outside his city will be killed"

thicket

a set of bushes that grew closely together.

wolf

a large wild dangerous dog

is watching

"is watching for an opportunity to attack"

For their transgressions increase

The abstract noun "transgressions" can be translated with the verb "sin." Alternate translation: "For they sin much"

Their acts of apostasy are numerous

The abstract nouns in "acts of apostasy" can be translated as "the ways they disobey me." Alternate translation: "They disobey me in very many ways"

Jeremiah 5:7

Why should I pardon these people?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he has no reason to pardon these people. Alternate translation: "Because of the things that they do, I cannot pardon these people."

these people

the people of Jerusalem

Your sons

Yahweh is speaking to Jerusalem as though she were a woman who had children. Jerusalem's "sons" represent the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem"

I fed them fully

Providing all they needed is spoken of as feeding them. Alternate translation: "I gave them everything they needed"

they committed adultery and walked in great numbers to the houses of prostitutes

This may be a metaphor for being unfaithful to God and worshiping idols, but idol worship also included prostitution. Alternate translation: "they were unfaithful to me and went in large numbers to the houses of prostitutes"

walked in great numbers to the houses of prostitutes

"went in large groups to the houses of prostitutes" or "large groups of them went to the houses of prostitutes"

Jeremiah 5:8

They were horses in heat ... neighed to his neighbor's wife

Because the God speaks of them as if they were horses that wanted to mate with other horses. Alternate translation: "They were like horses in heat ... neighed to his neighbor's wife"

in heat

ready to mate

mate

when animals breed to reproduce

Each man neighed to his neighbor's wife

Male horses neigh loudly to female horses when they want to mate with them. Alternate translation: "Like horses who mate with more than one horse, these men wanted to sleep with other men's wives"

Jeremiah 5:9

So should I not punish them ... and should I not avenge myself on a nation that is like this?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that the things that they are doing are so bad that he will no have mercy but will punish them. Alternate translation: "Because they do these things, I will punish them ... I will certainly get revenge for myself against them."

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 5:10

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak. Here he speaks to the enemies of Israel.

Go up onto her vineyards' terraces

In verses 10-13 Yahweh speaks to Israel's enemies. This can be made clear in the quotation. Alternate translation: "You enemies of Israel, go up onto her vineyards' terraces"

Go up onto her vineyards' terraces and destroy

Yahweh speaks of Israel and Judah as if they were a vineyard and the people there were vines. Alternate translation: "Go up into Israel and Judah, which are like a vineyard to me, and destroy them"

do not bring complete destruction to them

"do not completely destroy them"

Trim their vines, since those vines do not come from Yahweh

The word "their" refers to the vineyards. Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel and Judah as if they were vines. Alternate translation: "like farmers who trim the vines of a vineyard, you must remove many of the people of Israel and Judah, because they do not belong to Yahweh"

Jeremiah 5:11

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For the houses of Israel and Judah
The word "house" is a metonym for a person's descendants. In this case it refers to the people of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Alternate translation: "For the people of Israel and Judah"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 5:12
They have spoken falsely about Yahweh and they said
"They have spoken falsely about Yahweh by saying"
no harm will come upon us, and we will not see sword or famine
These two sentences say the same thing, the second is more specific than the first.
no harm will come upon us
The idiom "come upon us" means "happen to us." Alternate translation: "No harm will happen to us" or "no one will harm us"
we will not see sword or famine
Here "see" is a metaphor for experience, and "sword" is a metonym for war. Alternate translation: "we will not experience war or famine"
Jeremiah 5:13
The prophets will become wind
Here "prophets" is a metonym that represents what the prophets say, and "wind" is a metaphor for something that does not do anything. Alternate translation: "The prophets words are just noisy wind" or "The prophets make noise like the wind, but what they prophesy will not happen"
the word is not in them
Here "the word" refers to God's message. Alternate translation: "God's message is not in them" or "the messages that they speak are not from God"
so let what they say be done to them
It can be stated clearly what kinds of things the prophets were talking about. Alternate translation: "so let the harm that the prophets talk about come to them" or "since the prophets say that bad things will happen to us, let those bad things happen to the prophets"
Jeremiah 5:14
Because you
The word "you" refers to the people of Israel and Judah.
have said this
See what the people said in Jeremiah 5:12.
see
"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I am about to place my word in your mouth
Here "place my word in your mouth" represents causing Jeremiah to speak God's message. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to speak my message"
It will be like a fire, and this people will be like wood
Yahweh speaks of his message as if it were a fire, and of his people as if they were wood.
For it will consume them
"For my message will consume them." Yahweh's message was about how he would punish his people, so he speaks as if his message would destroy them as a fire destroys wood.
Alternate translation: "For when you speak my message, it will destroy the people of Israel as fire destroys wood"
Jeremiah 5:15
against you
"to attack you." The word "you" refers to the people of Israel.
it is a lasting nation, an ancient nation
These phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how long the nation has existed. This refers to the nation from far away that Yahweh will bring against Israel. Alternate translation: "it is a very old and enduring nation"
a lasting nation
"an enduring nation" or "a very strong nation"
It is a nation whose language you do not know, nor will you understand what they say
These phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the Israelites do not know the language of those people. It may imply that the Israelites have not had much contact with them. Alternate translation: "It is a nation whose language you will not understand at all"
Jeremiah 5:16
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.
Its quiver ... They are all soldiers
Here "Its quiver" represents the enemy nation's army, and the arrows in the quiver represent the soldiers in the army.
quiver
a container for holding arrows
Its quiver is like an open tomb
An open tomb is one that is prepared to have many dead bodies put in it. The enemy army will kill many people. Alternate translation: "That nation's army will use their arrows and kill many people" or "Because of the arrows of its army, many people will die and be buried"
Jeremiah 5:17
They will eat
The word "They" refers to the army of that nation.
They will beat down with a sword your fortified cities
The sword is a synecdoche for all of the different weapons that people use in war. Alternate translation: "They will use their weapons to conquer your strong cities that you trusted to protect you"
your fortified cities
Fortified cities had a wall around them to protect the people inside from their enemies outside.
in which you put your trust
"that you thought were strong enough to keep you safe"
Jeremiah 5:18
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel and Jeremiah.
do not intend to destroy
"will not destroy"
Jeremiah 5:19
done all these things to us
The phrase "these things" refers to sending armies to attack them. Alternate translation: "done all these things to harm us" or "sent foreign armies to attack us"

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Just as you ... served foreign gods in your land, so you must also serve strangers
Here "served foreign gods" represents worshiping foreign gods. God would punish them for serving foreign gods by making them serve foreign people. Alternate translation: "Because you ... worshiped foreign gods in your land, you will have to serve foreigners"
Jeremiah 5:20
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.
Report this
"Tell this"
the house of Jacob
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. Translate "house of Jacob" as in [Jeremiah 2:4]
let it be heard in Judah
This can be expressed in active from. Alternate translation: "Let those in Judah hear it" or "announce it in Judah"
Jeremiah 5:21
who have no understanding
"who do not understand" or "who understand nothing"
you cannot see
Here "cannot see" is a metonym for not understanding. Alternate translation: "you do not understand"
you cannot hear
Here "cannot hear" represents not understanding. "Alternate translation: "you do not understand"
Jeremiah 5:22
Do you not fear me ... face?
Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that the people are extremely foolish because they do not fear Yahweh. Alternate translation: "It is foolish that you do not fear me ... face!"
or tremble before my face
The trembling would be because of fear, and being "before my face" represents being aware of who God is. Alternate translation: "or shake with fear because of me"
I have placed a border of sand against the sea
"I placed the sand as the border for the sea"
an ongoing decree that it does not violate
God speaks of the ocean not going past the border of sand as if the border were a law, and as if the ocean were a person who obeys the law. Alternate translation: "an everlasting limit that it cannot cross"
rises and falls
"moves back and forth"
it does not violate it
"the ocean does not violate my decree." God speaks of ocean not going past the border of sand as if the border were a law, and as if the ocean were a person who obeys the law. Alternate translation: "it does not succeed in going past the border"
Jeremiah 5:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.
this people has a stubborn and rebellious heart. They have turned
The people's heart represents their attitude toward God. If Yahweh is speaking to the people, this can also be expressed with the word "you." Alternate translation: "but you people have a stubborn and rebellious heart. You have turned" or "but you people are stubborn and rebellious. You have turn"
They have turned aside and gone away
This metaphor presents the people no longer obeying God and doing evil as they please as if they had purposefully left the proper path to somewhere and gone far away from it.. Alternate translation: "They have rebelled and disobey me"
Jeremiah 5:24
they do not say in their hearts
Here "their hearts" represent their thoughts, and "say" represents thinking. Alternate translation: "they do not think"
keeping the appointed weeks of the harvest for us
Here "keeping the appointed weeks of the harvest" represents making sure that those weeks happen at the right time. Alternate translation: "making sure for us that the weeks of harvest happen when they are supposed to"
Jeremiah 5:25
Your iniquities
The word "Your" refers to the descendants of Jacob and the people of Judah.
these things
This refers to the rains and the harvests.
Your sins have stopped good from coming to you
Good things "coming" represents good things happening. "Because of your sins, good things have stopped happening to you"
Jeremiah 5:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak.
For wicked men are found with my people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For I have found wicked men among my people"
They watch as someone crouches to capture birds
God speaks of wicked people wanting to harm someone as if they were waiting to capture birds. Alternate translation: "Like someone hiding and waiting to capture birds"
they set a trap and catch people
God speaks of wicked people intentionally harming others as if they were setting a trap. Alternate translation: "They set things up so that they can take advantage of people"
Jeremiah 5:27
Like a cage full of birds, their houses are full of deceit
Here "deceit" represents the things that were taken by deceit. Alternate translation: Like a cage full of birds that a hunter has caught, wicked people's houses are full of things that they have taken by deceiving people
they grow large and become rich
Here "large" represents powerful. Alternate translation: "these wicked people become powerful and rich"
Jeremiah 5:28
they shine with well-being
Possible meanings are 1) their skin shines because of the healthy food they eat, or 2) their body is smooth because of the muscle and fat between their bones and skin. It indicates that they eat well.
They crossed over all bounds of wickedness

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Doing all kinds of wicked things is spoken of as if there were a boundary separating some wicked things from things that are even more wicked. Alternate translation: "They do all kinds of wicked things" or "They even do the most wicked things"

They do not plead the cause of the people, or the cause of the orphan

"They do not plead with the rulers to give the people and the orphans what they need" or "They do not plead with the rulers to give justice to the people and the orphans"

they have not given justice to the needy

"they have not helped the needy by doing what is just for them"

Jeremiah 5:29

Should I not punish ... a nation like this?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that the things that they are doing are so bad that he will no have mercy but will punish them. See how you translated a similar sentence in [Jeremiah 5:9]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 5:30

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak.

An appalling and horrifying thing has occurred

This can be stated more actively. Alternate translation: "People do terrible and horrible things"

in the land

Here "the land" refers to the land of Israel.' Alternate translation: "in the land of Israel"

Jeremiah 5:31

The prophets prophesy with deceit, and the priests rule with their own power

These are the atrocities and horrors that are spoken of in verse 30.

The prophets prophesy with deceit

"The prophets prophesy lies" or "The prophets tell lies when they prophesy"

the priests rule with their own power

Possible meanings are 1) the priests do not submit to God's authority. Alternate translation: "the priests rule by their own authority" or 2) the priests rule according to the directions of the prophets

but what will happen in the end?

"but what will you do at the end of all of this?" Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that the people will regret being wicked when he punishes them for it. Alternate translation: "but in the end I will punish you and you will be regret your wicked behavior"

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1 6 Find safety, people of Benjamin, by leaving Jerusalem.
Blow a ram's horn in Tekoa.
Raise up over Beth Hakkerem a signal,
since wickedness is appearing from the north;
a great crushing is coming.

2 The daughter of Zion,
the beautiful and delicate woman, will be destroyed.

3 The shepherds and their flocks will go to them;
they will set up tents against her all around;
each man will shepherd with his own hand.

4 "Dedicate yourselves to the gods for the battle.
Arise, let us attack at noon.
Woe to us! For the daylight is fading away
and the evening shadows are falling.

5 But let us attack at night
and destroy her fortresses."

6 For Yahweh of hosts says this:
Cut her trees,
and heap up siege works against Jerusalem.
This is the right city to attack,
because it is filled with oppression.
7 As a well pours out fresh water,
so this city keeps producing wickedness.
Violence and devastation are heard within her;
sickness and wounds are continually before my face.

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8 Accept discipline, Jerusalem,
or I will turn away from you
and make you into a ruin, an uninhabited land.'"

9 Yahweh of hosts says this,
"They will certainly glean the remnant of Israel like a vineyard.
Reach out again with your hand to pick grapes from the vines.

10 To whom should I declare and warn
so they will listen?
Look! Their ears are uncircumcised;
they are not able to pay attention!
Look! The word of Yahweh has come to them to correct them,
but they do not want it."

11 But I am filled with Yahweh's fury.
I am tired of holding it in.
He said, to me,
"Pour it out on the children in the streets
and on the groups of young men.
For every man will be taken away with his wife;
and every old person heavy with years.

12 Their houses will be turned over to others,
both their fields and their wives together.
For I will attack the inhabitants of the land with my hand—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

13 Yahweh declares that from the least to the greatest,
all of them are greedy for dishonest gain.
From the prophet to the priest,
all of them practice deceit.

14 They have healed the brokenness of my people lightly,
saying, 'Peace, Peace,' when there is no peace.

15 Were they ashamed when they practiced abominations?
They were not ashamed;
they did not know how to blush!
So they will fall among the fallen;
they will be brought down
when they are punished, says Yahweh.

16 Yahweh says this,
"Stand at the road crossing and look;
ask for the ancient pathways.
'Where is this good way?'
Then go on it and find a resting place for yourselves.
But the people say,
'We will not go.'
17 I appointed for you watchmen to listen for the ram's horn.
But they said, 'We will not listen.'

18 Therefore, nations, listen!
See, you witnesses, what will happen to them.

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19 Hear, earth!
See, I am about to bring disaster to this people,
the fruit of their thoughts,
because they paid no attention to my word
and they have rejected my law.

20 What does this frankincense going up from Sheba mean to me
or these sweet smells from a distant land?
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable to me,
nor are your sacrifices.

21 So Yahweh says this,
'See, I am about to place a stumbling block against this people.
They will stumble over it-fathers and sons together.
Inhabitants and their neighbors will also perish.'

22 Yahweh says this,
'See, a people is coming from the land of the north,
a great nation is being stirred up from the farthest parts of the earth.
23 They will pick up bows and spears.
They are cruel and have no compassion.
Their sound is like the sea roar,
and they are riding on horses,
set out in order as men for battle,
against you, daughter of Zion.'"

24 We have heard the reports about them
and our hands fall limp in distress.
Anguish seizes us as a woman giving birth.

25 Do not go out to the fields,
and do not walk on the roads,
for the swords of the enemy and terror are all around.

26 Daughter of my people,
gird yourself with sackcloth and roll in ashes;
mourn with painful sobs as for an only son,
for the destroyer will suddenly come upon us.

27 "I have made you, Jeremiah,
one who tests my people like one would test metal,
so you will inspect and test their ways.

28 They are all the most stubborn of people,
who go about slandering others.
All of them are bronze and iron, acting corruptly.

29 The bellows are scorched by the fire that is burning them;
the lead is consumed in the flames.
The refining continues among them,
but it is useless, because the evil is not removed.

30 They will be called rejected silver,

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for Yahweh has rejected them."

Jeremiah 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 6:1-30.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gods and battle

In the ancient Near East, it was commonly believed that a nation's gods were responsible for military victory. It may have been believed that a god would not defend an evil city. (See: falsegod and evil)

Links:

Jeremiah 6:1 Notes

Jeremiah 6:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Find safety ... by leaving Jerusalem

Here "Find safety" represents doing what they can in order to be safe. Alternate translation: "Be safe .. by leaving Jerusalem" or "Leave Jerusalem ... so that you can be safe"

people of Benjamin

This is who Yahweh was speaking to.

Blow a ram's horn in Tekoa

A ram's horn is used as a warning that people will be attacked. Alternate translation: "Blow a ram's horn in Tekoa to warn the people that they will be attacked"

Tekoa

This is the name of a town about 18 kilometers south of Jerusalem. The name means "a horn for blowing."

Raise up over Beth Hakkerem a signal

Possible meanings are 1) the signal is smoke from a fire. Alternate translation: "Light a fire to send up smoke at Beth Hakkerem to warn people about the enemy coming" or 2) the signal is a flag. Alternate translation: "Raise up a flag over the town of Beth Hakkerem to warn people about the enemy coming"

Beth Hakkerem

the name of a town about 10 kilometers south of Jerusalem. The name means "the place of the vineyard."

wickedness is appearing from the north

Here "wickedness" represents disaster and the people who will cause it. Alternate translation: "enemies will come from the north and cause disaster to happen to you" or "enemies coming from the north will destroy you"

a great crushing is coming

How the crushing will come can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Enemies will come and crush you" or "Enemies will come and destroy you"

Jeremiah 6:2

The daughter of Zion, the beautiful and delicate woman

Zion is another name for Jerusalem. Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem as though it were a woman. He speaks of it as a daughter to show his love for Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "My dear Zion, which is like a beautiful and delicate woman" or "My dear Zion"

Jeremiah 6:3

The shepherds and their flocks will go to them

Kings were often spoken of as shepherds of their people. Alternate translation: "The kings and their soldiers will go to them"

they will set up tents against her all around

The phrase "against her" means "in order to attack Zion." Alternate translation: "they will set up tents all around Zion in order to attack it"

each man will shepherd

God speaks of kings leading their armies to destroy the land, as if they were shepherds leading their sheep to eat grass. Alternate translation: "like a shepherd each king will lead his army" or "each king will lead his army"

with his own hand

Here "hand" represents the portion of something someone his assigned to take in his hand. Here it refers to the portion of land the king is assigned to conquer. Alternate translation: "and conquer his portion of the land"

Jeremiah 6:4

General Information:

A king from the attacking army is speaking to the men under his control.

Dedicate yourselves

It can be stated clearly that the kings say this. Alternate translation: "The kings say to their armies, 'Dedicate yourselves"

Dedicate yourselves to the gods for the battle

The attacking army tries to ensure that their gods will help them during the war by performing ceremonies and making sacrifices to them. Alternate translation: "Prepare for war by purifying yourselves and sacrificing to the gods"

Arise, let us attack

To arise or stand up is a metaphor for no longer watching and thinking and instead beginning to act. Alternate translation: "Let us stop thinking and begin to attack"

let us attack at noon

"Let us attack Jerusalem at noon"

Woe to us! For the daylight is fading away and the evening shadows are falling

The kings say this later in the day when they want their army to keep fighting even though it is getting dark.

Woe to us! For

"It is too bad that" or "We are sorry to see that"

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the daylight is fading away
The end of the day is spoken of in terms of its light becoming dark. Alternate translation: "the day is ending" or "it is beginning to get dark"
are falling
"are stretching out" or "are getting longer"
Jeremiah 6:5
at night
"during the night even though it is dark"
her fortresses
People often spoke of cities as if they were women. Her the word "her" refers to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the strong buildings of Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 6:6
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh.
Cut her trees
God says this to the army that will attack Jerusalem. The word "her" refers to Jerusalem; cities were often spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: "Cut down the trees outside of Jerusalem"
heap up siege works against Jerusalem
Siege works are either high mounds of dirt or high ramps made of wood that the enemies build outside the city wall in order go on top of the wall and attack the people inside the city.
because it is filled with oppression
Here "it is filled with oppression" represents people there always oppressing people. Alternate translation: "because its people are always oppressing each other"
Jeremiah 6:7
As a well pours out fresh water, so this city keeps producing wickedness
Here "this city keeps producing wickedness" represents people in the city continuing to do wicked things.
Violence and devastation are heard within her
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I hear the sound of violence and devastation in her"
sickness and wounds are continually before my face
These things being "before" God's face represents him seeing them. Alternate translation: "I constantly see sickness and wounds"
Jeremiah 6:8
Accept discipline, Jerusalem ... make you into a ruin, an uninhabited land
Here God speaks to the people of Jerusalem as if he were speaking to the city itself. Alternate translation: "Accept discipline, you people of Jerusalem ... make your land into a ruin, an uninhabited land"
Accept discipline
"Accept discipline" here is a metaphor for learning from discipline. Alternate translation: "Learn from your discipline" or "When I punish you, learn to do what is right"
an uninhabited land
"a land that has no people living in it"
Jeremiah 6:9
They will certainly glean the remnant of Israel like a vineyard
Yahweh speaks of the enemy attacking those who remain as if the enemy were to pick grapes that remain in a vineyard after others have harvested it. Alternate translation: "After destroying Israel, they will certainly come back to attack the people who are still alive"
They will certainly
The word "They" refers to the enemy that Yahweh sends to destroy Israel.
Reach out again with your hand to pick grapes from the vines
Yahweh commands the enemy to attack those who remain in Israel as if the enemy were pick to grapes that remain in a vineyard after others have harvested it. Alternate translation: "Come back and attack the people of Israel who remain" or "Like people who reach out again to pick grapes from vines that they have already harvested, come back and attack the people who remain"
Jeremiah 6:10
To whom should I declare and warn so they will listen
Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that none of the people of Israel would listen to him even after they survived the attack of their enemies. Alternate translation: "There is no one left for me to speak to and warn who might listen"
Look
"You can see it yourself"
Their ears are uncircumcised
This represents their stubborn unwillingness to listen to God. Alternate translation: "Their ears are closed" or "They refuse to listen"
Their ears
The word "Their" refer to the people of Israel.
The word of Yahweh has come to them
This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to them. He did this through his prophets. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has sent messages to them" or "Yahweh has spoken to them"
they do not want it
"they do not want to listen to the word of Yahweh"
Jeremiah 6:11
But I am filled with Yahweh's fury
Jeremiah is speaking. He feels the same anger that Yahweh feels, and he speaks of being extremely angry as if he were filled with anger. Alternate translation: "I am completely angry as Yahweh is"
I am tired of holding it in
Jeremiah speaks of not showing Yahweh's anger as if he were holding the anger inside himself. Alternate translation: "I am tired from not expressing this anger" or "I am tired of not doing anything about this anger"
Pour it out on the children in the streets and on the groups of young men
God speaks of punishing the people of Israel as if his anger were a liquid that he wanted Jeremiah to pour out on them. Alternate translation: "In anger punish the children in the streets and the groups of young men"
For every man will be taken away with his wife
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Because enemies will capture every man with his wife"
every old person heavy with years
The words "will be taken" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "every old person

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heavy with years will be taken" or "they will take every old person heavy with years"

every old person heavy with years

The phrase "heavy with years" is an idiom that means "very old." It reinforces the phrase "old person." Alternate translation: "every very old person"

Jeremiah 6:12

Their houses will be turned over to others

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their houses will become the possession of other people" or "There people will take their houses"

both their fields and their wives together

The phrase "will be turned over to others" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and their their fields and their women will also be turned over to others"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 6:13

that from the least to the greatest, all of them are greedy

The phrase "from the least to the greatest" shows that all the people of Israel are included in the phrase "all of them," regardless of how important they are. Alternate translation: "all of them, including the least powerful, the most powerful, and every one else, are greedy"

the least

This refers to the least powerful and least important people. Alternate translation: "the least powerful people"

the greatest

This refers to the most powerful and most important people. Alternate translation: "the greatest people" or "the most powerful people"

all of them

"all of the people of Israel"

are greedy for dishonest gain

The abstract noun "gain" can be expressed with the phrases "get more money" or "get more things." Alternate translation: "want to get more money by lying to people" or "strongly desire to get more things and will even trick people in order to get them"

all of them practice deceit

"all of them deceive people" or "all of them are liars"

Jeremiah 6:14

They have healed the brokenness of my people lightly

Possible meanings are 1) the brokenness represents the problems the people have as a result of their sin. Alternate translation: "They act as though my people's problems are not serious" or 2) the brokenness represents the people's sin. Alternate translation: "They act as though my people's sins are not serious"

the brokenness of my people

"the places where my people were broken" or "my people, who were broken,"

lightly

Here "lightly" represents treating the wounds as if they were not serious, as if it were easy to heal them.

'Peace, Peace,' when there is no peace

"'All is well, All is well,' but it is not well"

Jeremiah 6:15

Were they ashamed when they practiced abominations?

God uses this question to show his anger that the people were not ashamed of their sins. Alternate translation: "They committed terrible sins, and they were not ashamed"

they did not know how to blush

When a person is ashamed, his face normally turns red. Alternate translation: "their faces did not even turn red"

they will fall among the fallen

Here "fall" represents being killed. Alternate translation: "they will be killed along with the others who are killed"

they will be brought down when they are punished

Here "will be brought down" represents being destroyed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will destroy them when I punish them"

Jeremiah 6:16

Yahweh says this

It can be stated clearly who Yahweh says this to. Alternate translation: "Yahweh says this to the people of Israel" or "Yahweh says this to his people"

Stand at the road crossing ... We will not go

The roads and pathways refer to ways that people live their lives. Yahweh wants the people of Israel to ask what is the good way to live their lives and for them to live that way.

the road crossing

This refers to the place where two roads meet.

ask for the ancient pathways

The ancient pathways represent their ancestors's behavior, how their ancestors lived long ago. Alternate translation: "ask about the pathways that your ancestors walked on" or "ask about how your ancestors behaved"

Where is this good way

Possible meanings are 1) "this good way" represents the good way to live. Alternate translation: "What is the good way to live" or 2) "this good way" represents the way to live that results in blessings. Alternate translation: "Where is the way to what is good" or "What is the way to live that results in blessing"

Then go on it

"Then walk on that path." Going on that path represents living that way. Alternate translation: "Then live that way"

We will not go

This represents not living that way. Alternate translation: "We will not live that way"

Jeremiah 6:17

I appointed for you watchmen to listen for the ram's horn

Yahweh speaks of his prophets as if they were watchmen who were sent to warn the people of danger.

appointed for you

The word "you" refers to the people of Israel.

to listen for the ram's horn

"to listen to the sound of the ram's horn." Yahweh speaks of his warning messages to his prophets as if the messages were a ram's horn being blown to warn people about the danger that would come. The prophets were to listen to the warning and tell the people about it.

Jeremiah 6:18

Therefore, nations, listen! See, you witnesses, what will happen to them.

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These two sentences are telling the people of other nations to witness what Yahweh will do to the rebellious people of Judah. Alternate translation: "Therefore, you people of other nations, listen! You witnesses, see what will happen to my people"

Therefore, nations, listen!

"Therefore, nations, listen to what I am about to say!"

you witnesses

"you who are witnesses"

will happen to them

The word "them" refers to the people of Israel.

Jeremiah 6:19

Hear, earth

Jeremiah is speaking to the people of nations far away from him as if they could hear him. He is speaking as if to the earth itself. Alternate translation: "Listen, everyone who lives on the earth"

I am about to bring disaster to this people

"soon I will punish these people severely"

the fruit of their thoughts

Here the word "fruit" represents results or consequences. Alternate translation: "the consequences of their thoughts"

they paid no attention to my word and they have rejected my law

Here "paid no attention to my word" refers to not listening to what God said, and "rejected my law" refers to refusing to obey God's law. Alternate translation: "they did not listen to what I said and they have not obeyed my law"

Jeremiah 6:20

What does this frankincense going up from Sheba mean to me? Or these sweet smells from a distant land?

God uses these questions to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "Frankincense from Sheba and sweet smelling cane from a distant land mean nothing to me." or "I do not want your burnt offerings of frankincense from Sheba or sweet smelling cane from a distant land."

these sweet smells

People would burn sweet smelling cane as an offering to God.

are not acceptable to me

"do not please me" or "do not make me happy"

Jeremiah 6:21

See, I

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I"

I am about to place a stumbling block against this people

"I am about to put obstacles in front of this people." Yahweh speaks of the troubles that he will make happen to the people of Israel as if they were a blocks that people stumble over.

fathers and sons together

The phrase "will stumble" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "fathers and sons will both stumble" or "fathers and sons will both be hurt"

Inhabitants and their neighbors

"Neighbors and their friends"

Jeremiah 6:22

a people is coming

Their purpose can be made clear. Alternate translation: "a people is coming to attack you" or "an army is coming"

a great nation

Here "nation" represents the army of the nation. Alternate translation: "the army of a great nation"

is being stirred up from the farthest parts of the earth

Being "stirred up" represents preparing to do something. Alternate translation: "is being prepared to come from a distant land"

Jeremiah 6:23

They will pick up bows and spears

"The soldiers will carry bows and spears"

Their sound is like the sea roar

The loud noise that the soldiers make is compared to the loud noise of the ocean. Alternate translation: "The sound that they make is very loud, like the sound of the ocean"

they are riding on horses, set out in order as men for battle

The phrase "set out in order" means that they have organized themselves and are riding in rows. The phrase "as men for battle" indicates that they are ready to fight. Alternate translation: "they are riding on horses in their assigned rows, and they are ready to fight against you"

Jeremiah 6:24

We have heard

The word "We" probably refers to Jeremiah and the people of Judah.

our hands fall limp in distress

"our hands are weak because we are anxious"

Anguish seizes us

Feeling great anguish is spoken of as if the anguish grabs them. Alternate translation: "We feel terrible anguish"

as a woman giving birth

The anguish that they feel because the enemy coming to attack them is compared to the anguish that a woman feels when she is about to give birth to a baby. Alternate translation: "like a woman who is about to give birth"

Jeremiah 6:25

General Information:

Jeremiah speaks to the people of Jerusalem. Some versions interpret this as Yahweh speaking to the people of Jerusalem.

for the swords of the enemy and terror are all around

The phrase "swords of the enemy" represents the enemy with their swords ready to attack. The abstract noun "terror" refers to things that cause people to be frightened and can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "For the enemy is everywhere with their swords and everyone else is terrified"

Jeremiah 6:26

Daughter of my people

Jeremiah shows Yahweh's love for his people by speaking to them as a daughter. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 4:11]

gird yourself with sackcloth and roll in ashes

People do these things to show that they are extremely sad. Alternate translation: "Show how sad you are by wearing sackcloth and rolling in ashes"

gird yourself with sackcloth

People would wear sackcloth to show that they were very sad. In this context it would be to show that they were very sorry for the bad things they had done. The command "gird

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yourselves," which usually means "prepare for work" or "prepare for battle" is ironic: they are to prepare to mourn, not to work or fight. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 4:8]

mourn with painful sobs as for an only son

Jeremiah compares the people's great sadness to the sadness that a mother feels if her only son dies. Alternate translation: "mourn with painful sobs as you would if your only son died"

for the destroyer will suddenly come upon us

"because the enemy army will suddenly come to attack us"

Jeremiah 6:27

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Jeremiah. God speaks of the people of Israel being very sinful as if they were silver that was full of impurities. God speaks of punishing Israel to make them stop sinning as if he were boiling silver and lead in a hot fire in order to remove the impurities from the silver.

one who tests my people like one would test metal

Yahweh compares Jeremiah testing his people to a person who tests metal to see how good it is.

their ways

"their behavior" or "how they live"

Jeremiah 6:28

who go about slandering others

"and constantly slander other people"

All of them are bronze and iron

Bronze and iron are hard metals. Yahweh speaks of the people being stubborn as if they were hard like bronze and iron. Alternate translation: "All of them are hard like bronze and iron" or "All of them are stubborn, as hard as bronze and iron"

Jeremiah 6:29

The bellows are scorched by the fire that is burning them; the lead is consumed in the flames

God speaks of punishing his people as if they were silver and he was boiling the silver in a very hot fire. These phrases emphasize that the one boiling the metal was working very hard.

The bellows are scorched by the fire that is burning them

The fire is so hot that it burns the bellows. This can be stated in active form. This very hot fire represents God's judgment. Alternate translation: "The fire is so hot that it scorches the bellows" or "The punishment is so severe that it is like a fire that even burns the bellows"

The bellows are scorched

Bellows are a tool used to blow large amounts of air into a burning fire to make the fire hotter.

the lead is consumed in the flames

The silver has so many impurities in it that the lead is used up before it can remove them all. This represents the people of Israel being so full of sin, that they continue to sin even after God punishes them. Alternate translation: "the silver is so full of impurities, that the lead that is used to remove them is used up" or "they are like silver that is so full of impurities that the lead cannot remove them all"

The refining continues among them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will continue to refine them" or "You will continue to try to purify them"

because the evil is not removed

God speaks of Israel continuing to be evil as if they were silver and the impurities remained in the silver. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the evil remains" or "the impurities remain"

Jeremiah 6:30

They will be called rejected silver, for

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will say about the people of Israel, 'They are rejected silver,' for"

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7 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,[2]"Stand at the gate of the house of Yahweh and proclaim this word! Say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Judah, you who enter these gates to worship Yahweh.
[3]Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Make your ways and practices good, and I will let you continue to live in this place.[4]Do not entrust yourself to deceitful words and say, "Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh!"
[5]For if you actually make your ways and practices good; if you completely execute justice between a man and his neighbor—[6]if you do not oppress the sojourner, the orphan, or the widow and do not pour out innocent blood in this place, and do not walk after other gods to your own harm—[7]then I will let you stay in this place, in the land that I gave to your ancestors from ancient times and forever.

[8]Behold! You are entrusting yourselves to deceitful words that do not help you.[9]Do you steal, kill, and commit adultery? Do you swear deceitfully and offer incense to Baal and walk after other gods whom you have not known?[10]Then do you come and stand before me in this house that is called by my name and say, "We are saved," so you can do all of these abominations?[11]Is this house, which carries my name, a den of bandits in your eyes? But behold, I have seen it—this is Yahweh's declaration.'

[12]'So go to my place that was in Shiloh, where I allowed my name to stay there in the beginning, and look at what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.[13]So now, on account of your doing all of these practices—this is Yahweh's declaration—I spoke to you time and time again, but you did not listen. I summoned you, but you did not answer.
[14]Therefore, what I did to Shiloh, I will also do to this house that is called by my name, the house in which you have trusted, this place that I gave to you and your ancestors.[15]For I will send you out from before me just as I had sent out all your brothers, all the descendants of Ephraim.'

[16]As for you, Jeremiah, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up a cry of distress or say a prayer on their behalf, and

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do not petition me, for I will not listen to you.[17]Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?[18]The children are gathering wood and the fathers kindling the fire! The women are kneading dough to make cakes for the queen of the heavens and pour out drink offerings for other gods so that they will provoke me.
[19]Are they truly provoking me?—this is Yahweh's declaration—is it not themselves whom they are provoking, so that shame is on them?[20]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'See, my anger and wrath will gush out onto this place, on both man and animals, on the tree in the fields and the fruit on the ground. It will burn and never be extinguished.'

[21]Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel says this: 'Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat the meat.[22]For when I brought your ancestors out from the land of Egypt, I did not require anything from them. I gave them no command about matters of burnt offerings and sacrifices.[23]I only gave them this command, "Listen to my voice, and I will be your God and you will be my people. So walk in all the ways that I am commanding you, so that it may go well with you."
[24]But they did not listen or incline their ear. They lived by their own stubborn plans of their wicked hearts, so they went backwards, not forward.[25]Ever since the day when your ancestors went out from the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent every one of my servants, my prophets, to you. I persisted in sending them.[26]But they did not listen to me or incline their ear. Instead, they stiffened their necks. They were more wicked than their ancestors.'

[27]So proclaim all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. Proclaim these things to them, but they will not answer you.[28]Say to them: This is a nation that does not listen to the voice of Yahweh its God and does not receive discipline. Truth is destroyed and cut off from their mouths.

[29]Cut off your hair and shave yourself, and throw away your hair. Sing a dirge over the open places. For Yahweh has rejected and abandoned this generation in his rage.[30]For the sons of Judah have done evil in my eye—this is Yahweh's declaration—they have set their detestable things in the house that is called by my name, in order to defile it.
[31]Then they built the high place of Topheth that is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom. They did this to burn their sons and daughters in fire—something that I did not command, nor did it enter my mind.[32]So see, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when it will no longer be called Topheth or Valley of Ben Hinnom. It will be the Valley of Slaughter; they will bury bodies in Topheth until there is no room left.
[33]The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the skies and the wild animals of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.[34]I will put an end to the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride, for the land will become a desolation."

Jeremiah 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 7:29-34, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice in society

Jeremiah commanded the people of Jerusalem to live justly. Without justice, they did not truly have faith in Yahweh. Without this faith in Yahweh, the temple and its rituals were useless. (See: justice and faith and temple)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Do not pray for this people"

Yahweh wanted the people to repent. This statement, and the others that follow, may be taken in another way. They are intended to show that it is too late for the people, and their punishment will come regardless of their response. (See: repent)

Links:

Jeremiah 7:1 Notes

Jeremiah 7:1

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 7:2

all you of Judah

"all you people of Judah"

Jeremiah 7:3

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Make your ways and practices good, and I will let you continue

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"If you improve your ways and your practices, then I will let you continue"

in this place

This means in the land of Judah, not in the temple.

Jeremiah 7:4

Do not entrust yourself to deceitful words and say

The reflexive pronoun "yourself" emphasizes the personal risk to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "Do not trust in deceitful words to protect you, saying"

Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh! Temple of Yahweh!

It is implied that, since the temple belongs to Yahweh and represents his presence, he will protect it and the people of Judah will be safe. Possible meanings for why "Temple of Yahweh" is repeated three times are 1) it was repeated for emphasis or 2) it was repeated as part of a temple liturgy. Alternate translation: "This is the temple of Yahweh so it is absolutely certain that no one will destroy it and we are safe."

Jeremiah 7:5

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

make your ways and practices good

"improve your ways and practices." See how you translated this in Jeremiah 7:3.

completely execute justice

The abstract noun "justice" can be translated using the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "judge rightly"

Jeremiah 7:6

if you do not oppress the sojourner, the orphan, or the widow

This can be expressed in positive terms. "if you treat the sojourner, the orphan, and the widow justly"

orphan

child whose parents have died

pour out innocent blood

Here pouring out innocent blood represents killing those not deserving death. Alternate translation: "kill innocent people"

walk after other gods

Here walking after is a metonym for following after with the intent to serve and obey. Alternate translation: "serve other gods"

in this place

Here "this place" refers to the land of Judah.

Jeremiah 7:7

will let you stay

"will let you continue to live"

from ancient times and forever

"from ancient times and continually." This means Yahweh gave the land to the people of Judah to be their permanent possession.

Jeremiah 7:8

General Information:

The word "you" in these verses refers to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

Behold!

The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the information that follows.

Jeremiah 7:9

Do you steal, kill, and commit adultery? Do you swear ... and walk after other gods whom you have not known?

These questions expect a positive answer to make the point that God knows the sins they are committing. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You steal, kill, and commit adultery. You swear ... and walk after other gods whom you have not known."

swear deceitfully

"lie even in your oaths"

walk after other gods

Here walking after is a metonym for following after with the intent to serve and obey. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:6]

Jeremiah 7:10

Then do you come and stand ... so you can do all of these abominations?

This question expects a positive answer to make the point that God knows the hypocrisy of their words and actions. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Then you come and stand ... so you can do all of these abominations."

house that is called by my name

This is a metonym for Yahweh's temple. It can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "house that belongs to me" or "temple where you worship me"

Jeremiah 7:11

Is this house, which carries my name, a den of bandits in your eyes?

This question expects a positive answer to make the point that God knows what they think about Yahweh's temple. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This house, which carries my name, is a den of bandits in your eyes!" or "You act as though you think this house, which is called by my name, should be a place where bandits can go to hide!"

this house, which carries my name

Yahweh's temple is spoken of as if it was carrying the name of Yahweh. This has a similar meaning to "this house that is called by my name" in the previous verse.

bandits

violent people who steal and destroy

But behold, I have seen it

"But I certainly have seen what you are doing"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 7:12

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

my place that was in Shiloh, where I allowed my name to stay there in the beginning

Here "where I allowed my name to stay" is an idiom that means this was a place where Yahweh was worshiped.

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Alternate translation: "the place in Shiloh where I first allowed my people to worship me"
Jeremiah 7:13
time and time again
This hendiadys is also an idiom that means something is done many times. Alternate translation: "repeatedly" or "persistently"
Jeremiah 7:14
this house that is called by my name
This is a metonym for Yahweh's temple. It can be expressed in active form. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:10]
Jeremiah 7:16
General Information:
Yahweh speaks to Jeremiah about the people of Judah. In these verses, "this people" refers to the people of Judah.
do not pray for this people, and do not lift up a cry of distress or say a prayer on their behalf, and do not petition me
These four clauses each mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis.
lift up a cry of distress
"cry out with sadness"
on their behalf
"for their benefit" or "for them"
petition me
"plead with me"
Jeremiah 7:17
Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?
This question expects a positive answer and is asked to bring these things to Jeremiah's attention. They can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look at what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem!"
Jeremiah 7:18
kindling the fire
"starting the fire"
kneading dough
mixing dough by hand
dough
a thick mixture of flour and liquid used for baking
the queen of the heavens
This was the name of a false god. Alternate translation: "the false god known as 'the queen of the heavens'"
will provoke me
"will anger me"
Jeremiah 7:19
General Information:
In these verses, "they" and "themselves" refer to the people of Judah.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to speak to Jeremiah about the people of Judah.
is it not themselves whom they are provoking, so that shame is on them?
This question expects a positive answer. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "they are provoking themselves, so that shame is on them!" or "they are troubling and bringing shame on themselves!"
shame is on them
The abstract noun "shame" can be translated using the verb "shamed." Alternate translation: "they are shamed"
Jeremiah 7:20
See
This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
my anger and wrath will gush out onto this place
Yahweh speaks of his anger as if it were something that could be poured out. Alternate translation: "I will punish this place"
anger and wrath
These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's anger.
gush out
"pour out"
It will burn and never be extinguished
Yahweh speaks of his anger as if it were a fire that could not be put out. Alternate translation: "No one will will be able to stop my anger"
never be extinguished
"never stop burning"
Jeremiah 7:21
General Information:
In these verses, "you" and "your" refer to the people of Judah.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat the meat
The people were supposed to burn the burnt offering completely and only eat the meat from certain sacrifices. Because the people have been disobeying the moral law, God sarcastically tells them to eat the burnt offering as well since he was rejecting it. Alternate translation: "I do not care if you eat the meat from the burnt offerings as well as the meat from your sacrifices"
Jeremiah 7:23
Listen to my voice
Here listening to Yahweh's voice means to both hear his words and obey what he says. Alternate translation: "Hear and obey what I say"
walk in all the ways that I am commanding you
Yahweh speaks of obeying his commands as if one were walking in them, like person would walk along a road. Alternate translation: "do everything that I am commanding you"
Jeremiah 7:24
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the people of Judah. "They" refers to the ancestors of the people of Judah.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the

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people of Judah.

they did not listen or incline their ear

These phrases mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis.

incline their ear

To "incline the ear" is to lean toward the speaker so as to better hear the words. This is a metaphor for listening carefully and paying attention. Alternate translation: "listen carefully" or "pay attention"

by their own stubborn plans of their wicked hearts

"according to their own plans because they were wicked and stubborn"

they went backwards, not forward

This is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) they refused to pay attention to Yahweh, instead of eagerly obeying him. Alternate translation: "they went away from me instead of drawing closer to me" or 2) they got worse and worse instead of improving. Alternate translation: "they got worse instead of better"

Jeremiah 7:25

Ever since the day when your ancestors went out from the land of Egypt until this day

This is a generalization that means over this entire period of time, not every day during this period of time. Alternate translation: "From the time your ancestors went out from the land of Egypt until now"

I persisted in sending them

"I sent them again and again" or "I repeatedly sent them"

Jeremiah 7:26

they stiffened their necks

This is an idiom that means they were stubborn. Alternate translation: "they became stubborn" or "they resisted me"

They were more wicked

"Each generation was more wicked"

Jeremiah 7:27

General Information:

The words "them" and "they" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

So proclaim all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. Proclaim these things to them, but they will not answer you.

These two sentences say the same thing, The second emphasizes the message of the first. Alternate translation: "Tell them my message, but they will not listen to you or answer you."

Jeremiah 7:28

the voice of Yahweh its God

Here "the voice of Yahweh" represents what Yahweh has said. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:25]

Truth is destroyed and cut off from their mouths

Yahweh speaks of truth as if it was something the people could destroy and stop saying. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people destroy truth and cut it off from their mouths" or "The people tell only lies"

Truth is destroyed

The abstract noun "truth" can be translated using the adjective "truthful." Alternate translation: "What is truthful is destroyed"

Jeremiah 7:29

General Information:

The word "your" in these verses refers to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

Cut off your hair and shave yourself, and throw away your hair

This would be done as a sign of mourning.

rejected and abandoned

These two words have similar meanings and are repeated for emphasis.

Jeremiah 7:30

sons of Judah

This refers to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "people of Judah"

their detestable things

Here "detestable things" refers to idols, which God hates. Alternate translation: "their disgusting idols"

house that is called by my name

This is a metonym for Yahweh's temple. It can be expressed in active form. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:10]

Jeremiah 7:31

General Information:

The words "they" and "their" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to describe the evil things that the people of Judah had done.

the high place of Topheth

This is the name of a place where the people of Israel sacrificed their children to a false god by burning them with fire.

the Valley of Ben Hinnom

This is the name of a valley south of the city of Jerusalem, where people sacrificed to false gods.

nor did it enter my mind

Here the word "mind" refers to Yahweh's thoughts. Alternate translation: "nor did I ever think about it"

Jeremiah 7:32

So see

The word "see" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed"

days are coming ... when it

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." Alternate translation: "in the future ... it" or "there will be a time ... when it"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

it will no longer be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will no longer call it"

they will bury bodies

"they will bury dead people"

no room left

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"no place remaining"

Jeremiah 7:33

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak of his judgment on the people of Judah.

The corpses

"The dead bodies"

this people

"the people of Judah"

the birds of the skies

See how you translated "the birds of the heavens" in Jeremiah 4:25.

the wild animals of the earth

Another possible meaning is "the wild animals of the land," referring to Judah.

to frighten them away

"to scare them away"

Jeremiah 7:34

I will put an end to

"I will remove from"

the sound of joy and the sound of gladness

These two phrases mean almost the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. The abstract nouns "joy" and "gladness" can be translated using the verb "rejoicing" and the adjective "glad." Alternate translation: "the sounds of people rejoicing and being glad"

the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride

This is a metonym for what happens at marriage ceremonies. Alternate translation: "and people celebrating marriage"

will become a desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be translated using the adjective "desolate." Alternate translation: "will become desolate"

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8 [1]"At that time—this is Yahweh's declaration—they will bring out from the graves the bones of the kings of Judah and its officials, the bones of the priests and the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.[2]Then they will spread them out in the light of the sun and moon and all the stars of the skies; these things in the sky that they have followed and served, that they have walked after and sought, and that they have worshiped. The bones will not be gathered or buried again. They will be like dung on the surface of the earth.[3]In every place where I have driven them, death will be chosen instead of life by all who remain from this evil family—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.

[4]So say to them, 'Yahweh says this:
Does anyone fall and not get up?
Does anyone get lost and not try to return?
[5] Why has this people, Jerusalem,
turned away in permanent apostasy?
They hold on to deceit
and refuse to repent.

[6] I paid attention and listened,
but they did not speak right;
no one repented of his wickedness,
no one who says, "What have I done?"
All of them go where they wish,
like a horse rushing toward battle.

[7] Even the stork in heaven knows the right times;
and the doves, swifts, and cranes.
They go on their migrations at the right time,
but my people do not know Yahweh's decrees.

[8] How can you say,
"We are wise, for the law of Yahweh is with us"?
Indeed, see!
The deceitful pen of the scribes has created deceit.

[9] The wise men will be ashamed.
They are dismayed and trapped.
Behold! They reject Yahweh's word,
so what use is their wisdom?

[10] So I will give their wives to others,
and their fields to those who will possess them,

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because from the least to the greatest,
all of them are greedy for dishonest gain!
From the prophet to the priest,
all of them practice deceit.

11 They have healed the brokenness of my people lightly,
saying, "Peace, Peace," when there is no peace.

12 Were they ashamed when they practiced abominations?
They were not ashamed;
they did not know how to blush!
So they will fall among the fallen;
they will be brought down when they are punished,
says Yahweh.

13 I will remove them completely—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
there will be no grapes on the vine,
nor will there be figs on the fig trees.
For the leaf will wither,
and what I have given to them will pass away.

14 Why are we sitting here?
Come together;
let us go to the fortified cities,
and we will become silent there in death.
For Yahweh our God will silence us.
He will make us drink poison,
since we have sinned against him.

15 We are hoping for peace,
but there will be nothing good.
We are hoping for a time of healing,
but see, there will be terror.

16 The snorting of his stallions is heard from Dan.
The whole earth shakes
at the sound of the neighing of his strong horses.
For they will come
and consume the land and its wealth,
the city and the ones living in it.

17 For see, I am sending out snakes among you,
adders that you cannot charm.
They will bite you—
this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

18 My sorrow has no end
and my heart is sick.

19 Behold! The cry for help of the daughter of my people
from a land far away!

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Is Yahweh not in Zion?
Is her king no longer there?

Why then do they provoke me to anger with their carved figures
and their worthless foreign idols?

20 The harvest has passed on, summer is over.
But we have not been saved.

21 I am hurt because of the hurt of the daughter of my people.
I mourn at the horrible things that have happened to her;
I am dismayed.

22 Is there no medicine in Gilead?
Is there no healer there?
Why will the healing of the daughter of my people not happen?

Jeremiah 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:5-22.

The prophecy revealed to Jeremiah is recorded in 8:5-9:12. Despite covering more than one chapter, this should be seen as one unit. (See: prophet and reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Hyperbole

The author frequently uses hyperbole in this chapter to describe the complete destruction of Jerusalem.

Links:

Jeremiah 8:1 Notes

Jeremiah 8:1

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak of his judgment on the people of Judah.

they will bring

This word "they" here refers to the enemies of the people of Judah.

its officials

"its princes" or "its rulers"

Jeremiah 8:2

will spread them out

The word "them" refers to the bones of the people listed in the previous verse.

that they have followed and served, that they have walked after and sought, and that they have worshiped

The word "they" here refers to the people of Judah. These three phrases mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis.

walked after

This is a metaphor for serving or worshiping. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 2:23]

The bones will not be gathered or buried again

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will gather their bones or bury them again"

They will be like dung on the surface of the earth

The bones are compared to dung on the ground both to emphasize that they will be disgusting and because they will not be buried.

on the surface of the earth

"all over the ground"

Jeremiah 8:3

where I have driven them

The word "them" refers to the people of Judah.

death will be chosen instead of life by all who remain from this evil family

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "all who remain from this evil family will choose death instead of life"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 1:8]

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Jeremiah 8:4

General Information:

The words "them" and "they" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to speak of his judgment on the people of Judah.

So say to them

Yahweh is telling Jeremiah what to say to the people of Judah.

Does anyone fall and not get up? Does anyone get lost and not try to return?

These questions make the point that the way that the people of Judah were acting did not make sense. They can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that when someone falls, he gets back up, and when someone gets lost, he tries to find his way back."

Jeremiah 8:5

Why has this people, Jerusalem, turned away in permanent apostasy?

Yahweh is saying that the way the people of Judah are acting does not make sense. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It does not make sense that this people, Jerusalem, has turned away in permanent apostasy."

Jerusalem

The word "Jerusalem" here is a synecdoche for all the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "Judah"

hold on to deceit

What the people of Judah were doing is spoken of as if they were clinging to deceit and would not let it go.

They hold on to deceit

The abstract noun "deceit" is spoken of as if it were a physical object that a person could hold on to. It can be translated using the verb "deceive." Holding on to something is a metaphor for loving. Alternate translation: "They refuse to turn away from what deceives them" or "They love the people who deceive them"

Jeremiah 8:6

General Information:

The words "they" and "them" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

paid attention and listened

These two things mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis.

did not speak right

"did not say what is right"

of his wickedness

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be translated using the adjective "wicked." Alternate translation: "for being wicked"

What have I done?

The implied information is that this is a question that the people of Judah should have been asking. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have done a terrible thing."

go where they wish

"go their own way"

like a horse rushing toward battle

The eagerness of the people to follow their own evil way is compared to the eagerness of a war horse running toward a battle.

Jeremiah 8:7

Even the stork in heaven knows the right times; and the doves, swifts, and cranes

The implied information is that these types of birds know the right times to migrate, which means to fly from one place to another at different times of the year for feeding or breeding.

stork ... doves, swifts, and cranes

All of these are different types of birds that migrate.

They go on their migrations at the right time, but my people do not know Yahweh's decrees

The implied information is that the people should have naturally known Yahweh's decrees.

They go on their migrations

The abstract noun "migrations" can be translated using the verb "migrate." Alternate translation: "They migrate" or "They fly from one region to another"

Jeremiah 8:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

How can you say, "We are wise, for the law of Yahweh is with us"?

Yahweh asks this question to make the people of Judah think about what they were saying. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You think that you are wise because you have the law of Yahweh with you."

How can you say

The "you" here refers to the people of Judah.

Indeed, see!

These words tell the hearer to pay close attention to what follows.

The deceitful pen of the scribes

The pen represents the words that the scribes write. Alternate translation: "The false things that the scribes write"

has created deceit

"has given you false ideas"

Jeremiah 8:9

The wise men will be ashamed

This is irony because the wise men are normally honored for their wisdom. Alternate translation: "Those men who think they are wise will feel ashamed"

dismayed

terrified or shattered

Behold!

"Pay attention!"

so what use is their wisdom?

This question expects a negative answer and is intended to make the hearers think about how little what they consider wisdom is really worth when they reject Yahweh's word. Alternate translation: "so what they think is wise does not do them any good."

Jeremiah 8:10

because from the least to the greatest, all of them are greedy for

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dishonest gain! From the prophet to the priest, all of them practice deceit

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:13.

because from the least to the greatest, all of them are greedy

The phrase "from the least to the greatest" shows that all the people of Judah are included in the phrase "all of them," regardless of how important they are. Alternate translation: "because all of them, including the least powerful, the most powerful, and everyone else, are greedy"

the least

This refers to the least powerful and least important people. Alternate translation: "the least powerful people"

the greatest

This refers to the most powerful and most important people. Alternate translation: "the greatest people" or "the most powerful people"

all of them

"all of the people of Judah"

are greedy for dishonest gain

The abstract noun "gain" can be expressed with the phrases "get more money" or "get more things." Alternate translation: "want to get more money by lying to people" or "strongly desire to get more things and will even trick people in order to get them"

all of them practice deceit

"all of them deceive people" or "all of them are liars"

Jeremiah 8:11

General Information:

The words "they," "their" and "them" in these verses refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Jeremiah his message to the people of Judah.

They have healed the brokenness of my people lightly

Possible meanings are 1) the brokenness represents the problems the people have as a result of their sin. Alternate translation: "They act as though my people's problems are not serious" or 2) the brokenness represents the people's sin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 6:14]

the brokenness of my people

"the places where my people were broken" or "my people, who were broken,"

lightly

Here "lightly" represents treating the wounds as if they were not serious, as if it were easy to heal them.

"Peace, Peace," when there is no peace

"'All is well, All is well,' but it is not well"

Jeremiah 8:12

Were they ashamed when they practiced abominations?

God uses this question to show his anger that the people were not ashamed of their sins. Alternate translation: "They committed terrible sins, and they were not ashamed."

they did not know how to blush

"their faces did not even turn red." When a person is ashamed, his face normally turns red. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:15

they will fall among the fallen

Here "fall" represents being killed. Alternate translation: "they will be killed along with the others who are killed"

they will be brought down when they are punished

Here "will be brought down" represents being destroyed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will destroy them when I punish them"

Jeremiah 8:13

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

the leaf will wither

"the leaf will dry up"

what I have given to them will pass away

The meaning of the original text is uncertain here.

Jeremiah 8:14

General Information:

The words "we," "us" and "our" refer to the people of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message by telling us what the people of Judah will say at the time of their punishment.

Why are we sitting here?

This question is asked to motivate action. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We should not stay here."

Come together; let us go to the fortified cities

The "fortified cities" were cities with high walls and strong defenses. See how you translated the similar phrases in Jeremiah 4:5.

we will become silent there in death

Here "become silent" means to die. Alternate translation: "let us die there" or "let us wait for our enemies to kill us there"

For Yahweh our God will silence us

Here "silence" is a metaphor for condemning to death. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh our God has condemned us to die"

He will make us drink poison

This is an idiom for Yahweh's judgment on his people.

Jeremiah 8:15

but there will be nothing good

"but nothing good will happen"

but see

"but understand"

Jeremiah 8:16

General Information:

The words "his" and "they" in these verses refer to the enemies of Judah.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message about the punishment coming to Judah.

The snorting of his stallions is heard from Dan

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Dan hear the snorting of his stallions"

snorting

a loud sound that a horse makes with its nose

stallions

adult male horses

The whole earth shakes

This is an exaggeration that is a metaphor for the people of Judah trembling with fear. Alternate translation: "All the

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people of the land shake with fear"
at the sound of the neighing of his strong horses
"when they hear the sound of the enemy's strong horses"
neighing
a sound that a horse makes
they will come and consume
Here the word "consume" means to eat up. It is an idiom for how the enemies come and destroy the land and its inhabitants. Alternate translation: "they will come and destroy"
Jeremiah 8:17
For see
"Now pay attention"
adders that you cannot charm
To charm means to sing or make music in order to control snakes.
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 8:18
General Information:
Jeremiah and Yahweh have a conversation about the people of Judah.
My sorrow has no end
The word "my" refers to Jeremiah. The original text is unclear and is interpreted here in different ways by modern versions.
has no end
These words are an exaggeration that express the great extent of Jeremiah's sorrow. Alternate translation: "is very great"
my heart is sick
Here "heart" represents Jeremiah, emphasizing his feelings and emotions. Alternate translation: "I feel sick deep down inside me"
Jeremiah 8:19
Behold!
This alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows. "Pay attention!"
the daughter of my people
Jeremiah is speaking about the people of Judah in a way that shows his affection for them, as if for a daughter. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:11]
from a land far away
Possible meanings are 1) From exile. Alternate translation: "from exile in a distant land" or 2) From throughout the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "throughout our land"
Is Yahweh not in Zion? Is her king no longer there?
These two questions are similar in meaning. They imply that the people of Judah are wondering why Yahweh is not saving them. Alternate translation: "Why does Yahweh not save us if he is the king in Zion?"
Why then do they provoke me to anger with their carved figures and their worthless foreign idols?
The word "me" refers to Yahweh. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If they want me to save them, then they must not offend me with their carved figures."
Jeremiah 8:20
General Information:
The word "we" refers to the people of Judah. The words "I" and "my" refer to Jeremiah.
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues talking about the people of Judah.
The harvest has passed on
"Harvest time is over"
But we have not been saved
Jeremiah tells what the people of Judah are saying. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But Yahweh has not saved us"
Jeremiah 8:21
I am hurt because of the hurt of the daughter of my people. I mourn at the horrible things that have happened to her; I am dismayed
These statements express the same idea in more than one way for emphasis.
Jeremiah 8:22
Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no healer there? Why will the healing of the daughter of my people not happen?
These questions are asked to make the point that the people of Judah have not been saved. Alternate translation: "There is medicine in Gilead, and there are healers there, so tell me why the healing of my dear people will not happen."

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9 [1] If only my head could produce water,
and my eyes be a fountain of tears!
For I wish to weep day and night for those
among the daughter of my people who have been killed.

[2] If only someone would give me a place for travelers in the wilderness to stay,
where I could go to abandon my people.
If only I could leave them,
since all of them are adulterers, a company of traitors!

[3] "They bend their tongues like their bows for lies,
and it is not because of any faithfulness of theirs
that they grow strong on the earth.
For they go from one wicked act to another.

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They do not know me." This is Yahweh's declaration.

4 Each of you, be on guard against your neighbor
and do not trust in any brother.
For every brother is certainly a deceiver,
and every neighbor walks in slander.

5 Each man mocks his neighbor
and does not speak the truth.
Their tongues teach deceitful things.
They are exhausted from committing iniquity.

6 Your dwelling is in the midst of deception;
in their deceit they refuse to acknowledge me—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

7 Yahweh of hosts says this,
"See, I am about to refine them and test them,
for what else can I do, because of what my people have done?
8 Their tongues are deadly arrows; they speak deceit.
With their mouths they proclaim peace with their neighbors,
but with their hearts they lie in wait for them.

9 Should I not punish them because of these things—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
and should I not avenge myself on a nation that is like this?

10 I will sing a song of mourning and wailing for the mountains,
and a dirge will be sung for the meadows in the wilderness.
For they have been made desolate
and no one can pass through them,
and the lowing of the cattle is not heard.
The birds of the skies and the animals
have all fled away.

11 So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins,
a hideout for jackals.
I will make Judah's cities ruined places
without inhabitants."

12 What man is wise enough to understand this? To whom has the mouth of Yahweh spoken, and he will declare it? Why has the land perished and been made desolate like the wilderness that no one can pass through?

13 Yahweh says, "It is because they have abandoned my law that I set before them, because they do not listen to my voice or walk by it. 14 It is because they have walked by their stubborn hearts and have followed the Baals as their fathers taught them to do.
15 Therefore Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to make this people eat wormwood and drink poisonous water. 16 Then I will scatter them among the nations that they have not known, neither they nor their ancestors. I will send out a sword after them until I have completely destroyed them.'"

17 Yahweh of hosts says this,
"Think about this: Summon
funeral singers; let them come.
Send out for women skilled at lamenting;

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let them come.
18 Let them hurry and sing a mournful song over us,
so our eyes may run with tears and our eyelids flow with water.

19 For the sound of wailing is heard in Zion,
'How we are devastated.
We are greatly ashamed,
for we have abandoned the land
since they tore down our houses.'

20 So you women, hear Yahweh's word;
pay attention to the messages that come from his mouth.
Then teach your daughters a mourning song,
and each neighbor woman a dirge.

21 For death has come through our windows;
it goes into our palaces.
It destroys children from outside,
and young men in the city squares.

22 Declare this, 'This is Yahweh's declaration—
the corpses of men will fall like dung in the fields,
and like grain stalks after the reapers,
and there will be no one to gather them.'"

23 Yahweh says this,
"Do not let the wise man take pride in his wisdom,
or the warrior in his might.
Do not let the wealthy man take pride in his riches.
24 For if a man takes pride in anything,
let it be in this, that he has insight and knows me.
For I am Yahweh, who acts with covenant loyalty,
justice and righteousness on earth.
For it is in these that I take pleasure—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

25 "See, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will punish all the circumcised who are such only in their body.26 I will punish Egypt and Judah, Edom, the people of Ammon, Moab, and all the desert people who cut the hair on the sides of their heads very short. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel has an uncircumcised heart."

Jeremiah 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 9:1-12, 17-24.

The prophecy revealed to Jeremiah is recorded in 8:5-9:12. Despite covering more than one chapter, this should be seen as one unit. (See: prophet and reveal)

Special concepts in this chapter

Funeral

This chapter pictures Jerusalem as having a funeral with its typical songs. This is an image used to describe their destruction. It is a time of great sadness.

Circumcision

Circumcision is used here in an unusual way. Since circumcision was intended to be a display of faith, the author uses the term to differentiate between those who have faith in Yahweh and those who don't. This is a type of metaphor. Those who

have a circumcised heart have faith in Yahweh while those with an uncircumcised heart do not have faith in Yahweh, regardless of whether they are physically circumcised.

Links:

Jeremiah 9:1 Notes

Jeremiah 9:1

General Information:

Yahweh and Jeremiah continue talking about the people of Judah.

If only my head could produce water, and my eyes be a fountain of tears

This is Jeremiah speaking. These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how much Jeremiah is weeping. Alternate translation: "I wish I could make more tears"

day and night

By mentioning both "day" and "night" this phrase means all the time. Alternate translation: "all the time" or "continually"

the daughter of my people

Yahweh shows his love for his people by speaking of them as a daughter. Here Jeremiah uses this same phrase for the people that Yahweh uses. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:11]

who have been killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the enemy has killed"

Jeremiah 9:2

If only someone would give me

"I wish someone would give me." This is still Jeremiah speaking.

a place for travelers in the wilderness to stay

This refers to a building for people traveling in the wilderness, where they can stop and sleep overnight.

abandon my people

"leave my people"

a company of traitors

a group of people who work together t betray other people"

Jeremiah 9:3

This is Yahweh's declaration

See how you translated these words in Jeremiah 1:8.

They bend their tongues like their bows for lies

God speaks of liars as if they were people who shoot others with bows and arrows. People who use bows and arrows bend their bows in order to fasten the bowstrings. Just as they prepare to shoot arrows, liars prepare to tell lies. Alternate translation: "Their tongues are like bows which they prepare to shoot out lies" or "Their lies are like arrows that they shoot with their tongues"

They

Here the word "They" refers to God's people.

and it is not because of any faithfulness of theirs that they grow strong on the earth

Apparently God's people thought that the reason they were strong was that they were faithful. But they were not faithful. Alternate translation: "and they grow strong on the earth, but it is not because they are faithful" or "and they grow strong on the earth, but not by being faithful"

For they go from one wicked act to another

Committing one evil action after another is spoken of as if the evildoers were going from one action to another. Alternate translation: "For they keep doing evil things"

Jeremiah 9:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking with Jeremiah about the people of Judah.

Each of you

The word "you" refers to the people of Judah.

be on guard against your neighbor and do not trust in any brother

"be careful not to trust your fellow Israelites, and do not even trust your own brother"

every neighbor walks in slander

Here "walking" is an idiom for living. Alternate translation: "every neighbor slanders one another" or "every neighbor is a slanderer"

Jeremiah 9:5

Each man mocks his neighbor and does not speak the truth

"All of the people mock each other, and they do not tell the truth"

Their tongues teach deceitful things

Here people are represented by their "tongues" to emphasize their speech. Alternate translation: "They teach deceitful things"

They are exhausted from committing iniquity

"They are tired from committing so much sin"

Jeremiah 9:6

Your dwelling is in the midst of deception

Yahweh speaks of living among people who are liars as living in the middle of deception. Alternate translation: "Your dwelling is among the dwellings of liars" or "You dwell in the midst of liars"

in their deceit

"By telling all of these lies"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 9:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about the people of Judah.

See

Yahweh uses this word here to draw Jeremiah's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

to refine them

Yahweh speaks of testing the people and dealing with their evil ways, as if they were metal that he were melting in a crucible to remove its impurities.

for what else can I do, because of what my people have done?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to state that this is how he needs to deal with his people because of what they have done. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "for this is how I must deal with my

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people because of what they have done."
Jeremiah 9:8
Their tongues are deadly arrows
This speaks of people's tongues as if they were deadly arrows because of how the people hurt others by what they say. Here their speech is represented by their "tongues." Alternate translation: "Their words are like arrows that kill other people"
they speak deceit
The word "they" refers to "their tongues," which is a metonym for the people whose tongues they are.
With their mouths they proclaim peace with their neighbors
Here people's speech is represented by their "mouths." Alternate translation: "They speak, saying that they want peace with their neighbors"
but with their hearts they lie in wait for them
Here a people's desires are represented by their "hearts." This speaks of them wanting to hurt their neighbors as if they were an animal crouching and waiting to attack its prey. Alternate translation: "but what they really want is to destroy their neighbors"
Jeremiah 9:9
Should I not punish them because of these things ... should I not avenge myself on a nation that is like this?
Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that the things that they are doing are so bad that he will not have mercy and stop himself from punishing them. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 5:9]
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 9:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Judah. In verse 12, Jeremiah makes a comment.
I will sing a song of mourning ... a dirge will be sung for the meadows
Yahweh is mourning for the land of Israel as if it were a person who died.
a dirge will be sung
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will sing a dirge"
the meadows
"the fields of grass that the livestock eats"
For they have been made desolate
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Because someone has laid waste the meadows and pastures" or "Because someone has destroyed the meadows and pastures"
the lowing of the cattle is not heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nobody will hear the sound of cattle there"
Jeremiah 9:11
a hideout for jackals
"a place for jackals to hide." Jackals are fierce wild dogs.
places without inhabitants
"places where no people live"
Jeremiah 9:12
What man is wise enough to understand this?
Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that only a very wise person will understand the things he has said. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only people who are very wise can understand these things."
To whom has the mouth of Yahweh spoken, and he will declare it?
Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that only the people he has spoken to can declare these things. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only those who have been taught by Yahweh can explain these things to others."
the mouth of Yahweh
Here Yahweh's speech is represented by his "mouth." Alternate translation: "Yahweh"
Why has the land perished and been made desolate ... pass through?
Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that only a wise person could explain why the land has been made desolate. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Only a wise person could explain why the land has perished and been made desolate ... pass through."
has the land perished and been made desolate
This can be stated in active form. Both "perished" and "been made desolate" describe the land being empty of all good things. Alternate translation: "has the land perished? Why has Yahweh made it desolate" or "is the land now empty of all good things"
Jeremiah 9:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Judah.
It is because
"These things will happen because"
they have abandoned my law
Yahweh speaks of the people not obeying his law as if it were something that they had walked away from. Alternate translation: "they have rejected my law"
they do not listen to my voice
Here Yahweh's "voice" represents what he says. Alternate translation: "they do not pay attention to the things I tell them"
or walk by it
Here "walk" is an idiom for "live." Alternate translation: "or live the way I tell them to live"
Jeremiah 9:14
they have walked by their stubborn hearts
Here the people's "stubborn hearts" represent their stubborn desires and stubborn will. Also, here "walked" represents living. Alternate translation: "they have been stubborn and lived the way they want to live"
have followed the Baals
"have worshiped the Baals"
Jeremiah 9:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the people of Judah.
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
See

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Yahweh uses this word here to draw the people's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

wormwood

a plant that tastes bitter

Jeremiah 9:16

Then I will scatter them among the nations

"Then I will force them to leave here and live in many different countries"

neither they nor their ancestors

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "that neither they nor their ancestors have known"

I will send out a sword after them

Here the word "sword" refers to an enemy army. Alternate translation: "I will send an army of soldiers to fight against them"

I have completely destroyed them

This is a metonym for Yahweh causing the people's enemies to destroy them. Alternate translation: "I have caused their enemies to completely destroy them"

Jeremiah 9:17

General Information:

Yahweh tells the people of Judah to mourn for the coming destruction of the land.

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Summon funeral singers; let them come ... Send out for women skilled at lamenting; let them come

These two phrases have the same meaning. They emphasize that they are to call funeral singers to come. Alternate translation: "Get women who are trained in mourning and bring those women here"

Summon funeral singers

"Call women who are professional singers at funerals"

let them come

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "tell the women to come"

Send out for women skilled at lamenting

The phrase "send out for" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Send people out to get women who are skilled at mourning"

Jeremiah 9:18

Let them hurry and sing a mournful song ... and our eyelids flow with water

Here Yahweh says what the people of Judah will say when the destruction comes. The words "us" and "our" refer to the people of Judah and does not include Yahweh. This may be written instead as a command from Yahweh to the people. Alternate translation: "Tell them to hurry and sing a song to mourn for you, so your eyes may run with tears and your eyelids flow with water"

so our eyes may run with tears and our eyelids flow with water

This describes the people crying a lot. Alternate translation: "so we will cry very hard with tears flowing from our eyes"

Jeremiah 9:19

General Information:

Here Yahweh is saying what the people of Judah will say when he destroys the land.

For the sound of wailing is heard in Zion

This refers to the people of Zion wailing loudly and can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Zion are crying loudly, saying"

How we are devastated

Yahweh tells what the people of Judah will say when the land is destroyed. Alternate translation: "We are very upset"

We are greatly ashamed, for we have abandoned the land since they tore down our houses

"Our shame is great, because enemies destroyed our houses and we had to leave the land of Israel"

Jeremiah 9:20

hear Yahweh's word; pay attention to the messages that come from his mouth

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the command to listen to what Yahweh says. In the second phrase Yahweh's "mouth" is a metonym for himself. Alternate translation: "listen to what Yahweh says. Pay attention to his words"

each neighbor woman a dirge

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "teach each neighbor woman a dirge"

Jeremiah 9:21

General Information:

Here Yahweh is saying what the people of Judah will say when he destroys the land.

For death has come through our windows ... young men in the city squares

The people of Judah will compare death to a person who can climb in windows to attack the people inside and attacks people in the palaces, streets, and city squares.

palaces

fancy houses where kings live. Death will come to rich and poor alike.

city squares

marketplaces

Jeremiah 9:22

This is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

the corpses of men will fall like dung ... like grain stalks after the reapers

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the large number dead bodies. Alternate translation: "dead bodies will fall all over the place"

corpses of men will fall like dung in the fields

This describes the great number of people who will die, by comparing their bodies to dung that falls in the fields. Alternate translation: "dead bodies will drop everywhere like animal dung falls all over the fields"

like grain stalks after the reapers

This describes the great number of people who will die, by comparing their bodies to cut stalks of grain. Alternate translation: "like stalks of grain fall everywhere after the farmers cut them down"

there will be no one to gather them

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"there will be nobody to gather the dead bodies"
Jeremiah 9:23
General Information:
These are the words of Yahweh.
Do not let the wise man take pride in his wisdom
"A wise man should not be proud because he is wise"
or the warrior in his might
The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "or let the warrior take pride in his might"
Do not let the wealthy man take pride in his riches
"A rich man should not be proud because he is rich"
Jeremiah 9:24
has insight and knows me
"understands who I am and knows me." Both of these phrases have similar meanings. They emphasize people knowing who Yahweh is and understanding who he is.
For I am Yahweh
This refers to people knowing Yahweh and his ways. Alternate translation: "Because people should understand that I am Yahweh"
For it is in these that I take pleasure
The word "these" refers to covenant loyalty, justice, and righteousness.
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 9:25
General Information:
These are the words of Yahweh.
See
Yahweh uses this word here to draw the people's attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Indeed"
all the circumcised who are such only in their body
This refers to the people of Israel who have entered into Yahweh's covenant by getting circumcised physically, but who have not changed their inner beings by following his laws. Alternate translation: "all those people who have changed their bodies by circumcising them but who have not changed their inner beings"
Jeremiah 9:26
all the desert people who cut the hair on the sides of their heads very short
This probably refers to people who cut their hair short in order to honor a pagan god. Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression as "all the people who live on the edge of the wilderness."
For all these nations are uncircumcised
The word "nations" refers to the people who live in these places. Foreigners being uncircumcised was a sign that they were not in Yahweh's covenant. Alternate translation: "For the people of these nations did not enter into a covenant with Yahweh through circumcision"
all the house of Israel has an uncircumcised heart
The "heart" represents a person's will and desires. An "uncircumcised heart" represents the character of a person that does not follow Yahweh and his laws. Also, the "house" of Israel refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the people of Israel are only circumcised on the outside and have not changed their hearts"

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10 [1]"Hear the word that Yahweh is announcing to you, house of Israel.[2]Yahweh says this,
'Do not learn the ways of the nations,
and do not be dismayed by the signs in the heavens,
for the nations are dismayed by these.
[3] For the customs of these people are worthless.
Someone cuts down a tree from the forest.
It is the work of the hands of a craftsman using an axe.

[4] Then they decorate it with silver and gold.
They strengthen it with hammer and nails so it will not fall over.

[5] What they make with their hands is like scarecrows in a cucumber field,
because they, too, can say nothing,
and they have to be carried because they cannot walk.
Do not fear them, for they cannot bring about evil,
nor are they able to do anything good.'"

[6] There is no one like you, Yahweh.
You are great, and your name is great in power.

[7] Who does not fear you, king of the nations?
For this is what you deserve,
for there is no one like you among all the wise men of the nations
or all their royal kingdoms.

[8] They are both brutish and stupid.
Their vain discipline—it is nothing but wood.

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9 They bring hammered silver from Tarshish,
and gold from Uphaz made by artificers,
the hands of refiners.
Their clothes are blue and purple cloth.
Their skillful men made all of these things.

10 But Yahweh is the true God.
He is the living God and eternal king.
The earth quakes at his anger,
and the nations cannot endure his anger.

11 You will speak to them like this, "The gods that did not make the heavens and earth will perish from the earth and from under these heavens."
12 But it was he who made the earth by his power,
and he established the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding he stretched out the heavens.

13 His voice makes the roar of waters in the heavens,
and he brings up the mists from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain
and sends out wind from his storehouse.

14 Every man has become stupid, without knowledge.
Every metalworker is put to shame by his idols.
For his cast metal images are frauds;
there is no life in them.

15 They are useless, the work of mockers;
they will perish at the time of their punishment.

16 But God, the portion of Jacob, is not like these,
for he is the molder of all things.
Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

17 Gather your bundle and leave the land,
you people who have been living under the siege.

18 For Yahweh says this,
"See, I am about to throw the inhabitants of the land out this time.
I will cause them distress,
and they will find it to be so."

19 Woe to me!
Because of my broken bones, my wound is infected.
So I said,
"Surely this is agony, but I must bear it."

20 My tent is devastated,
and all of my tent cords are cut in two.
They have taken my children away from me,
so they no longer exist.
There is no longer anyone to spread out my tent
or to raise up my tent curtains.

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21 For the shepherds are stupid
and they do not seek Yahweh;
so they have not prospered,
and all their flock has been scattered.

22 The report of news has arrived, "See! It is coming,
a great earthquake is coming from the land of the north
to make the cities of Judah into ruins,
hideouts for jackals."

23 I know, Yahweh,
that the way of a man does not come from himself.
No person walking directs his own steps.

24 Discipline me, Yahweh, with justice,
not in your anger or you would destroy me.

25 Pour your fury on the nations that do not know you
and on the families that do not call on your name.
For they have devoured Jacob and consumed him
so as to completely destroy him and demolish his habitation.

Jeremiah 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 10:1-25 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are a long quotation.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's power

This chapter contrasts the great power of Yahweh with the powerlessness of any other false god. It is intended to question why the Jews would worship any other god. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Jeremiah 10:1 Notes

Jeremiah 10:1

General Information:

Yahweh has just reminded the people of Judah, as well as Egypt, Edom, Ammon, Moab and all people, that they will be punished.

Hear the word

"Hear the message"

house of Israel

Here the "house" of Israel represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "people of Israel"

Jeremiah 10:2

Do not learn the ways of the nations

"Do not act like the other nations act"

dismayed

worried or upset

by the signs in the heavens

"by strange things in the sky"

for the nations are dismayed by these

Here "the nations" refer to the people who live in them. This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "for the people of the nations are afraid of the strange things they see in the sky"

Jeremiah 10:3

General Information:

Yahweh has just reminded them not to learn the ways of the nations nor be worried by things that happen in the sky.

craftsman

a man skilled in his work

Jeremiah 10:5

What they make with their hands is like scarecrows

A scarecrow is a man-like figure made to scare birds and prevent them from eating the crops. Here Yahweh compares the idols to scarecrows because they are not capable of doing anything.

cucumber

a vegetable that is usually long, with green skin and white flesh that contains much water

they have to be carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people have to carry them"

Jeremiah 10:6

General Information:

Jeremiah has just been talking about idol worship.

your name is great in power

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Here Yahweh's "name" refers to himself and his reputation. Alternate translation: "you are very powerful"
Jeremiah 10:7
Who does not fear you, king of the nations?
Jeremiah asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that everyone should fear Yahweh. Here he refers to Yahweh as "king of the nations." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Everyone should fear you, king of the nations."
what you deserve
"what you have earned"
Jeremiah 10:8
They are both brutish and stupid
The words "brutish" and "stupid" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how foolish the people are for worshiping idols. Alternate translation: "They are all very stupid"
Their vain discipline—it is nothing but wood
The writer writes as if he gets halfway through his statement and cannot continue. "As for what they work so hard to serve, it is only a piece of wood"
Jeremiah 10:9
Tarshish ... Uphaz
places where silver and gold are mined
gold from Uphaz made by artificers, the hands of refiners
This can be stated in active form. Also, the refiners are represented here by their "hands" because they do their work with their hands. Alternate translation: "gold from Uphaz that skilled craftsmen and refiners have made"
artificers
"skilled craftsmen"
refiners
people who heat gold to remove from it anything that is not gold
Their clothes are blue and purple cloth
"The people dress the idols in blue and purple cloth"
Jeremiah 10:10
The earth quakes at his anger
This speaks of the earth shaking as an emotional response to Yahweh's anger, when actually Yahweh causes the earth to quake. Alternate translation: "The earth quakes when he is angry"
quakes
"shakes"
Jeremiah 10:11
General Information:
God is speaking to Jeremiah.
You will speak to them like this
The word "you" refers to the Israelites and the word "them" refers to the people of the other nations.
will perish from the earth
This speaks of the idols disappearing and losing their significance as if they were dying. This emphasizes their lack of power. Alternate translation: "will disappear from the earth"
Jeremiah 10:12
stretched out the heavens
This speaks of Yahweh creating the sky as if it were a large sheet that he stretched out. Alternate translation: "created the heavens" or "created the sky"
Jeremiah 10:13
His voice makes the roar of waters in the heavens
Here Yahweh is represented by his "voice" to emphasize his speech. The phrase "the roar of waters" refers to loud storms. Alternate translation: "His voice causes the storms in the sky"
he brings up the mists from the ends of the earth
This means that he causes the mists to evaporate and form clouds. The phrase "the ends of the earth" refers to all of the earth. Alternate translation: "he causes clouds to form over every part of the earth"
sends out wind from his storehouse
This speaks of Yahweh causing the wind to blow as if the wind were kept in a storehouse and brought out when he desires.
storehouse
a building where things are kept
Jeremiah 10:14
has become stupid
"is lacking knowledge" or "is as ignorant as an animal"
Every metalworker is put to shame by his idols
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Every metalworker's idols put him to shame" or "As for every metalworker, his idols shame him"
Jeremiah 10:15
they will perish at the time of their punishment
This speaks of the final destruction of the idols. Alternate translation: "there will be a time when God will destroy them"
Jeremiah 10:16
the portion of Jacob
Here "Jacob" represents the people of Israel. God being their "portion" is an idiom that means that they worship him. Alternate translation: "the portion of Israel" or "whom the people of Israel worship"
the molder of all things
"the creator of all things" or "the one who created all things"
Israel is the tribe of his inheritance
This speaks of Israel belonging to Yahweh as if it were something that Yahweh gained through inheritance. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Israel belongs to him"
Jeremiah 10:17
Gather your bundle
"Gather your belongings"
who have been living under the siege
"whose city has been surrounded by your enemies' army" or "who have been living in your city while an enemy army surrounds it"
Jeremiah 10:18
See
Yahweh uses this word here to draw the peoples' attention to what he says next. Alternate translation: "Listen"
I am about to throw the inhabitants of the land out this time
Here Yahweh speaks of causing the people to leave the land as if they were objects that he were throwing out of a container. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people living in the land to leave that land"

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inhabitants of the land
"people who live in the land"
distress
great pain or suffering
Jeremiah 10:19
General Information:
Jeremiah is speaking as if he were the whole tribe of Israel.
Woe to me! Because of my broken bones, my wound is infected
Jeremiah speaks of the peoples' distress as if they were physically wounded by broken bones and infection. Alternate translation: "Woe to us! It is as though we have broken bones and an infected wound"
but I must bear it
Here Jeremiah represents the whole tribe of Israel. Alternate translation: "but we must bear it"
Jeremiah 10:20
My tent is devastated, and all of my tent cords are cut in two
Here Jeremiah speaks of the enemy having destroyed their city as if their tent had been destroyed. Alternate translation: "It is as though our great tent is destroyed; the ropes that held it up have been cut" or "The enemy has completely destroyed our city"
My tent is devastated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My enemy has devastated my tent" or "Our enemy has destroyed our tent"
They have taken my children away from me
Here Jeremiah represents the whole tribe of Israel. Alternate translation: "Our enemies have taken our children away from us"
so they no longer exist
The children no longer existing is a metaphor for the parents never seeing them again. Alternate translation: "and it is like they no longer exist" or "and they will never return again"
There is no longer anyone to spread out my tent or to raise up my tent curtains
Here Jeremiah speaks of them not having descendants to rebuild their city as if their city were a tent that needs to be rebuilt. Alternate translation: "There is no one to rebuild our city"
Jeremiah 10:21
For the shepherds are stupid ... all their flock has been scattered
Here the leaders of Israel are spoken of as if they were shepherds and the people of Israel are spoken of as if they were flocks of sheep. Alternate translation: "For the shepherds of our people are stupid ... all the people of their flock have been scattered"
all their flock has been scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and their enemies have scattered all their flock"
Jeremiah 10:22
See! It is coming, a great earthquake is coming
Here the marching enemy armies are spoken of as if they were an earthquake. The word "See!" is used here as an idiom to draw the listener's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Look! The enemy army is coming, they sound like a great earthquake as they are marching"
jackals
a type of fierce wild dog
Jeremiah 10:23
General Information:
Jeremiah prays for the people of Israel.
that the way of a man does not come from himself. No person walking directs his own steps
These two phrases mean the same thing. This means that no one has control over the various things that will happen to him during his life. Alternate translation: "that no person controls what will happen to him; no one is able to direct the events that he will experience"
Jeremiah 10:25
Pour your fury on the nations
Here "the nations" refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "In your fury, punish the nations" or "In your anger, punish the nations of the people"
that do not call on your name
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that do not worship you"
For they have devoured Jacob and consumed him so as to completely destroy him
These three phrases have the same meaning. Jeremiah repeats this idea three times to emphasize the utter destruction of Israel. This speaks of the enemy armies attacking the people of Israel as if the armies were a fierce animal attacking and devouring its prey. Alternate translation: "For they have fiercely attacked the people of Israel and consumed them so as to completely destroy them"
demolish his habitation
"demolish their homes"

11 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,[2]"Listen to the words of this covenant, and declare them to each man in Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
[3]Say to them, 'Yahweh, God of Israel says this: Cursed is anyone who does not listen to the words of this covenant.[4]This is the covenant that I commanded your ancestors to keep the day I brought them out from the land of Egypt, from the furnace for smelting iron. I said, "Listen to my voice and do all of these things just as I have commanded you, for you will be my people and I will be your God."[5]Obey me so that I may confirm the oath that I swore to your ancestors, the oath that I would give them the land flowing with milk and honey, where you live today.'" Then I, Jeremiah, answered and said, "Let it be so, Yahweh!"

[6]Yahweh said to me, "Proclaim all these things in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Say, 'Listen to the words of this covenant and carry them out.[7]For I have been giving solemn commands to your ancestors from the day I brought them up from the land of Egypt until this present time, persistently warning them and saying, "Listen to my

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voice.'"[8]But they did not listen or incline their ear. Each person has been walking in the stubbornness of his wicked heart. So I brought all the curses in the covenant that I commanded them to obey, but the people still did not obey."

[9]Next Yahweh said to me, "A conspiracy has been discovered among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
[10]They have returned to the iniquities of their earliest ancestors, who refused to listen to my word. They walked after other gods to worship them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah broke my covenant that I established with their ancestors.
[11]Therefore Yahweh says this, 'See, I am about to bring disaster on them, disaster from which they will not be able to escape. Then they will call out to me, but I will not listen to them.[12]The cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and call out to the gods to which they had given offerings, but they will certainly not be saved by them at the time of their disaster.[13]For you Judah, the number of your gods has increased to equal the number of your cities. You have made the number of shameful altars in Jerusalem, incense altars for Baal, equal to the number of her streets.

[14]So you yourself, Jeremiah, must not pray for this people. You must not cry for help or pray on their behalf. For I will not be listening when they call on me in their disaster.
[15] Why is my beloved one
the one who has had so many wicked intentions,
in my house?
The meat of your sacrifices cannot help you.
You rejoice because of your evil actions.

[16] In the past Yahweh called you a leafy olive tree,
beautiful with lovely fruit.
But he will light a fire on it that will sound like the roar of a storm;
its branches will be broken.

[17]For Yahweh of hosts, the one who planted you, has decreed disaster against you because of the wicked acts that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have committed—they have angered me by giving offerings to Baal.'"

[18]Yahweh made me know these things, so I know them. You, Yahweh, made me see their deeds.[19]I was like a gentle lamb being led to the slaughter. I did not know that they had formed plans against me,
"Let us destroy the tree with its fruit!
Let us cut him off from the land of the living
so his name will be no longer remembered."
[20] Yet Yahweh of hosts is the righteous judge
who examines the heart and the mind.
I will witness your vengeance against them,
for I have presented my case to you.

[21]Therefore Yahweh says this concerning the people of Anathoth who are seeking your life, "They say, 'You must not prophesy in the name of Yahweh, or you will die by our hand.'[22]Therefore Yahweh of hosts says this, 'See, I am about to punish them. Their vigorous young men will die by the sword. Their sons and their daughters will die by famine.[23]No remnant will be left for them, because I am bringing disaster against the people of Anathoth, a year of their punishment.'"

Jeremiah 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 11:15-17, 20.

Special concepts in this chapter

The covenant

The covenant Yahweh made with Moses is prominent in this chapter. Because the people disobeyed this covenant, God will not help them. (See: covenant)

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Links:

Jeremiah 11:1 Notes

Jeremiah 11:1
The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 7:1]
Jeremiah 11:2
the inhabitants of Jerusalem
"the people who live in Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 11:3
Cursed is anyone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will curse anyone"
Jeremiah 11:4
from the land of Egypt, from the furnace for smelting iron
This speaks of the horrible circumstances and oppression the Israelites were living in in Egypt by comparing them to a smelting furnace. Alternate translation: "of Egypt. What happened to them in Egypt was terrible; it was as though they were living in a hot furnace"
smelting
heating iron to liquid form
Listen to my voice
The word "voice" here is a metonym for what the speaker says with the voice, and "listen" is a metonym for "obey." Alternate translation: "Obey what I say"
Jeremiah 11:5
the land flowing with milk and honey
"the land where milk and honey flow." God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: "the land that is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops"
Jeremiah 11:6
the words of this covenant
"the terms of this covenant"
carry them out
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "obey them"
Jeremiah 11:7
solemn
serious and important
Listen to my voice
The word "voice" here is a metonym for what the speaker says with the voice, and "listen" is a metonym for "obey." Alternate translation: "Obey what I say"
Jeremiah 11:8
Each person has been walking in the stubbornness of his wicked heart.
Here "walking" is an idiom for the way a person lives. The word "heart" is a metonym for a person's desires and emotions. Alternate translation: "Each person has refused to change and has been living by his own wicked desires" or "Each person has refused to change and continues to do the evil things that they want to do"
So I brought all the curses in the covenant that I commanded them to obey
"So I punished them with all the curses that I described in this covenant that I had commanded them to obey"
Jeremiah 11:9
A conspiracy has been discovered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There is a conspiracy"
conspiracy
a secret plan to do something that is harmful or illegal
the inhabitants of Jerusalem
"the people who live in Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 11:10
They have returned to the iniquities of their earliest ancestors
"They have returned to committing the same iniquities that their earliest ancestors committed"
walked after
"followed after"
The house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]
the house of Judah
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]
Jeremiah 11:11
See
This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Jeremiah 11:12
The cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem
Here the "cities of Judah" represents the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "The people who live in the cities of Judah and in Jerusalem"
but they will certainly not be saved by them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but their gods will certainly not save them"
Jeremiah 11:13
to equal
"to as many as"
her streets
"the streets in Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 11:14
You must not cry for help
Or "You must not make a loud cry of sadness"
Jeremiah 11:15
Why is my beloved one, the one who has had so many wicked intentions, in my house?
Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that the people Judah no longer have a right to be in his temple. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "My beloved one, the one who has had so many wicked intentions, should not be in my house."
is my beloved one, the one who has had
The people of Judah are spoken of as if they were a single woman greatly beloved. Alternate translation: "are the

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people whom I love, those who have had" or "are the people of Judah whom I love, who have had"

Jeremiah 11:16

In the past Yahweh called you a leafy olive tree

In the Old Testament people were often compared to trees or plants. Those who were prosperous and healthy were spoken of as leafy, fruitful tree. Alternate translation: "In the past Yahweh said that you were like a leafy olive tree"

will light a fire on it

This expression continues the metaphor of the tree. The fire stands for the destruction of the people.

that will sound like the roar of a storm

This compares the sound of the raging fire to the sound of a severe storm.

its branches will be broken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will break off your branches"

Jeremiah 11:17

the one who planted you

This speaks of Yahweh placing the people of Israel and Judah in the places where they live as if they were a tree that Yahweh had planted. Alternate translation: "who planted you like a farmer plants a tree" or "the one who placed you to live in the land of Israel and Judah"

has decreed disaster against you

"has decreed that disaster will come upon you"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

Jeremiah 11:18

Yahweh made me know these things, so I know them

"You have revealed things to me and so I know them." The refers to Yahweh revealing to Jeremiah that his enemies were planning to kill him.

made me see their deeds

The refers to Yahweh revealing to Jeremiah that his enemies were planning to kill him. This is spoken of here as if Jeremiah has already see their actions. Alternate translation: "have revealed to me their evil plans"

Jeremiah 11:19

I was like a gentle lamb being led to the slaughter

This speaks of Jeremiah being unaware of his enemies' plans to kill him by comparing him to a lamb who is being led to be slaughtered.

being led to the slaughter

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that my enemies were leading to a butcher"

Let us destroy the tree with its fruit

Here Jeremiah's enemies speak of killing him as if he were a fruit tree that they were planning to destroy.

Let us cut him off from the land of the living

The phrase "cut him off" means to destroy him. Also, "the living" refers to living people. Alternate translation: "Let us kill him so he is no longer in the land of those who are alive" or "Let us destroy him so that he is no longer among the world of living people"

his name will be no longer remembered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will no longer remember his name"

Jeremiah 11:20

the heart and the mind

The heart is a metonym for what a person feels and desires and "the mind" is a metonym for what a person thinks and decides. Alternate translation: "a person's feelings and thoughts"

I will witness your vengeance

The word "vengeance" here can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will watch you take revenge"

Jeremiah 11:21

Anathoth

This is the name of a special city where priests live.

seeking your life

This phrase represents wanting or trying to kill someone. Alternate translation: "wanting to kill you"

They say

"They say to me." The men are speaking to Jeremiah.

you will die by our hand

Here the men refer to their "hand" to emphasize that they plan to kill him themselves. Alternate translation: "we ourselves will kill you"

Jeremiah 11:22

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

See

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen"

vigorous young men

men at the strongest time of their lives

will die by the sword

Here the "sword" represents battle. Alternate translation: "will die in battle"

Jeremiah 11:23

No remnant will be left

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will leave none of them"

a year of their punishment

The word "year" here is a idiom that describes a specific period of time that Yahweh decides. Alternate translation: "in the time of their punishment" or "for the time of their punishment is coming"

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12 You are righteous, Yahweh,
whenever I bring disputes to you.
I must certainly tell you of my reason to complain:
Why do the ways of the wicked succeed?

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All the treacherous are at ease.

2 You planted them and they took root.
They continue to produce fruit.
You are near to them in their mouths,
but far away from their hearts.

3 Yet you, Yahweh, know me.
You see me and you test my heart toward you.
Take them away like sheep to the slaughter,
and set them apart for the day of slaughter!

4 How long will the land mourn
and the grass in the field be withered?
Because those who live in it are wicked,
the animals and the birds have been swept away,
because the people said,
"He will not see what happens to us."

5 Yahweh said, "Indeed, if you, Jeremiah,
have run with foot soldiers and they have tired you out,
how can you compete against horses?
And if you are confident only in a peaceful land,
how will you do in the majesty along the Jordan?

6 For even your brothers and your father's family
have betrayed you and have raised their voice against you.
Do not trust in them,
even if they say nice things to you.

7 I have abandoned my house;
I have abandoned my inheritance.
I have given my beloved into the hands of her enemies.

8 My inheritance has become to me
like a lion in a thicket;
she sets herself against me with her own voice,
so I hate her.

9 Has not my prized possession become a speckled bird,
that other birds of prey go against her all around?
Go and gather all the wild beasts
and bring them to devour her.

10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard.
They have trampled on my portion of land;
they turned my delightful portion into a wilderness,
a desolation.

11 They have made her a desolation.
I mourn for her; she is desolate.
All the land has been made desolate,
for there is no one who takes it to heart.

12 Destroyers have come against all

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the bare places in the wilderness,
for Yahweh's sword is devouring
from one end of the land to the other.
There is no safety in the land
for any living creature.

13 They have sown wheat but harvest thornbushes.
They are exhausted from work but have gained nothing.
So be ashamed of your gain
because of Yahweh's anger."

14 Yahweh says this against all my neighbors, the wicked ones who strike at the possession that I made my people Israel
inherit, "See, I am the one who is about to uproot them from their own ground, and I will pull up the house of Judah from
among them. 15 Then after I uproot those nations, it will happen that I will have compassion on them and bring them back;
I will return them—each man to his inheritance and his land.
16 It will come about that if those nations carefully learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name 'As Yahweh lives' just
as they have taught my people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up in the midst of my people. 17 But if any do not
listen, then I will uproot that nation. It will certainly be uprooted and destroyed—this is Yahweh's declaration."

Jeremiah 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:1-13.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jeremiah complains that evil men prosper

Jeremiah complains that evil men prosper. He questions Yahweh's justice. Yahweh's response: if Jeremiah is upset by the people of Anathoth, how will he face enemies in Jerusalem? (See: evil and justice)

Yahweh's grace to the other nations

Yahweh gives a gracious offer to the Gentile nations. If the other nations who have been against Judah leave their idols and worship God, then God will allow them to return to their lands. (See: grace)

Links:

Jeremiah 12:1 Notes

Jeremiah 12:1

General Information:

Jeremiah speaks to Yahweh.

the wicked

This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "wicked people" or "those who are wicked"

Jeremiah 12:2

You planted them and they took root. They continue to produce fruit

Here Jeremiah speaks of the wicked as if they were fruit trees. Alternate translation: "They are like fruit trees that you planted, that you allow to prosper and to produce lots of fruit"

You are near to them in their mouths, but far away from their hearts

Here "mouths" represents what a person says. And, "hearts" represents what a person thinks or feels. Also, being loyal is spoken of as if it were being near a person, and being disloyal is spoken of as if it were being far away from a person. Alternate translation: "They always say good things about you, but they do not love or respect you"

Jeremiah 12:3

General Information:

Jeremiah continues speaking to Yahweh.

my heart

Here the "heart" represents a person's thoughts and true feelings. Alternate translation: "my thoughts" or "my inner feelings"

Take them away like sheep to the slaughter

Here Jeremiah asks Yahweh to prepare to punish the wicked as if they were sheep to be taken away to be slaughtered. Alternate translation: "Take the wicked people away, like sheep for slaughter" or "Prepare to punish those wicked people"

the day of slaughter

"the day they will be destroyed"

Jeremiah 12:4

How long will the land mourn and the grass in the field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked, the animals ... away, because

Some modern translations read, "How long will the land mourn and the grass in the field be withered because those who live in it are wicked? the animals ... away, because." The words "because those who live in it are wicked" can be understood to explain either why the land and grass have dried up or why the animals and birds have died or both. Because the writer is not looking for an answer to his question, some versions change the order of the clauses and remove the rhetorical question. Alternate translation:

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"Because those who live in the land are wicked, the land is mourns and the grass in the field is withered and the animals ... away. This is because."

How long will the land mourn

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor for the land being parched, so dry that nothing will grow. Alternate translation: "How long will the land be parched" Or 2) this is a metonym for the people who live in the land mourning because there is nothing to eat. Alternate translation: "How long will the people in the land mourn"

withered

dried up and so dead

the animals and the birds have been swept away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The animals and the birds are gone" or "The animals and the birds have all died"

He will not see what happens to us

Possible meanings are 1) The people are saying that God does not know what things will happen to them in their future or 2) God is unaware of their sin. Alternate translation: "God does not see the sinful things that we do"

Jeremiah 12:5

how can you compete against horses?

This rhetorical question implies that he would not be able to run with horses. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will never compete well against horses."

if you are confident

Some translations read, "if you fall down."

a peaceful land

This refers to the open countryside, where it is easy to travel quickly, in contrast to the overgrown thickets along the Jordan River, where it is difficult to move.

how will you do in the majesty along the Jordan?

This rhetorical question implies that he would not be able to run through the "majesty" along the Jordan. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will surely not be able to run in the majesty along the Jordan."

majesty

This is a metonym for the majestic forests or thickets on the banks of the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "forest" or "thickets"

Jeremiah 12:6

raised their voice against you

"have publicly accused you of doing evil"

Jeremiah 12:7

I have abandoned my house; I have abandoned my inheritance. I have given my beloved into the hands of her enemies.

These three sentences have similar meanings. The words "my house," "my inheritance" and "my beloved" all refer to God's people, the nation of Israel. The third sentence tells how God abandoned the nation.

I have abandoned my house; I have abandoned my inheritance

The two phrases are metaphors in which Yahweh speaks of his people as if they were his "house" and his "inheritance." Alternate translation: "I have abandoned my people Israel, the people whom I chose to belong to me"

into the hands of her enemies

Here the word "hands" represents control. Alternate translation: "to be conquered by her enemies" or "over to the control of her enemies"

of her enemies

Here Yahweh refers to his people, the nation of Israel, with a feminine pronoun as if the nation were a woman. Alternate translation: "of their enemies"

Jeremiah 12:8

she sets herself against me with her own voice

This continues to speaks of Yahweh's people as a lion. This speaks of the people showing they are against him as if they were roaring at him. Alternate translation: "it is like she roars at me to defy me"

she sets herself ... with her ... hate her

Here Yahweh refers to his people as a female by using feminine pronouns. Alternate translation: "they set themselves ... with their ... hate them"

Jeremiah 12:9

Has not my prized possession become a speckled bird, that other birds of prey go against her all around?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that his people are surrounded by their enemies. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "My prized possession has become a speckled bird and other birds of prey go against her all around."

Has not my prized possession

Here Yahweh speaks of his people as his "prized possession." Alternate translation: "Have not my people, who are my prized possession"

become a speckled bird, that other birds of prey go against her all around

Here Yahweh speaks of his people being in danger and surrounded by their enemies as if they were a speckled bird surrounded by birds of prey. Alternate translation: "become like a speckled bird, and her enemies are like birds of prey attacking her on all sides"

a speckled bird

"a strange looking bird." This refers to a bird that was often picked on and eaten by other birds.

birds of prey

birds that attack and eat animals

Go and gather all the wild beasts and bring them to devour her

Yahweh speaks here in the form of a command to strengthen what he says. This command is not directed to a specific person and may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Let all the wild beasts in the fields come and eat her"

Jeremiah 12:10

Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard

Here Yahweh speaks of his land and his people being destroyed by armies as if they were a vineyard that shepherds had destroyed. Alternate translation: "My people and my land are like a vineyard that many shepherds have destroyed"

Many shepherds have destroyed

Here the word "shepherds" refers to their sheep. Alternate translation: "Many shepherds have allowed their sheep to destroy"

They have trampled on

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"They have crushed under their feet"

my portion of land

"the ground I planted" or "my field"

Jeremiah 12:11

All the land has been made desolate

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All the land is desolate"

takes it to heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cares" or "pays any attention"

Jeremiah 12:12

Destroyers have come

"Destroying armies have come"

bare places in the wilderness

"places in the wilderness where nothing grows"

for Yahweh's sword is devouring

Here Yahweh speaks of the armies that he is using to punish his people as being his "sword." His "sword" is described here as if it were a large animal that attacked and devoured the people. Alternate translation: "for the armies are my sword that I am using to punish you" or "for I am sending the destroying armies to attack you"

from one end of the land to the other

This refers to the whole land that belongs to his people.

Jeremiah 12:13

They have sown wheat but harvest thornbushes

"They have sown wheat, but there is nothing to harvest but thornbushes"

They have

"My people have"

thornbushes

a large plant that is covered in sharp points

exhausted

unable to do more, without any more strength

So be ashamed of your gain because of Yahweh's anger

"So be ashamed of your tiny harvest because Yahweh is angry with you." Here the word "gain" does not mean a large amount of something, but refers to a small amount.

Jeremiah 12:14

strike at the possession

"have been trying to take away the land"

made my people Israel inherit

"gave my people Israel as an inheritance"

See

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

to uproot them from their own ground

God speaks of forcing the people to leave their land as if they were plants that he was pulling out of the ground. See how you translated this concept in [Jeremiah 1:10]

I will pull up the house of Judah from among them

Here Yahweh speaks of causing the people of Judah to leave the lands of the other nations as if they were plants that he was pulling out of the ground. Alternate translation: "I will cause the house of Judah to leave their lands as well"

pull up

"uproot"

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

Jeremiah 12:15

I uproot those nations

God speaks of forcing the people to leave their land as if they were plants that he was pulling out of the ground. Alternate translation: "I make those nations leave their lands and move to different places"

Jeremiah 12:16

General Information:

God's word about Judah's neighbors.

It will come about that

"It will happen that"

As Yahweh lives

"As surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. Swearing in Yahweh's name instead of in Baal's name indicates that they worship Yahweh instead of Baal. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:2]

they will be built up in the midst of my people

This speaks of the people becoming prosperous as if they were a building that was being built. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will build them up in the midst of my people" or "I will make them wealthy and they will live among my people"

midst

middle

Jeremiah 12:17

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

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13 [1]Yahweh said this to me, "Go and buy a linen undergarment and put it on around your waist, but do not put it in water first."[2]So I bought an undergarment as Yahweh directed, and I put in on around my waist.[3]Then the word of Yahweh came to me a second time, saying,[4]"Take the undergarment that you purchased that is around your waist, get up and go now to Perath.[1] Hide it there in a rock crevice."[5]So I went and hid it in Perath, just as Yahweh had commanded me. [6]After many days, Yahweh said to me, "Get up and go back to Perath. Take from there the undergarment that I commanded you to hide."[7]So I went back to Perath[2] and dug out the undergarment where I had hid it, and behold, it was destroyed and completely useless.

[8]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[9]"Yahweh says this: In the same way I will destroy the pride of Judah and the great majesty of Jerusalem.[10]This wicked people who refuses to listen to my word, who walk in the hardness of their heart, who go after other gods to worship them and bow down to them—they will be like this undergarment that is good

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for nothing.[11]For just as an undergarment clings to someone's hips, so I have made all the house of Israel and all the house of Judah cling to me—this is Yahweh's declaration—to be my people, to bring me fame, praise, and honor. But they would not listen to me.

[12]So you must speak this word to them, 'Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: Every jar will be filled with wine.' They will say to you, 'Do we not indeed know that every jar will be filled with wine?'[13]So say to them, 'Yahweh says this: See, I am about to fill with drunkenness every inhabitant of this land, the kings who sit on David's throne, the priests, prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.[14]Then I will smash each man against the other, fathers and children together—this is Yahweh's declaration—I will not pity them or have compassion, and I will not spare them from destruction.'"

[15] Listen and pay attention.
Do not be arrogant, for Yahweh had spoken.

[16] Give honor to Yahweh your God
before he brings darkness,
and before he causes your feet to stumble
on the mountains at twilight.
For you are hoping for light,
but he will turn it to deep darkness
and change it to deep gloom.

[17] So if you will not listen,
I will weep alone because of your pride.
My eyes will certainly weep and flow with tears,
for Yahweh's flock has been taken captive.

[18] "Say to the king and to the queen mother,
'Humble yourselves! Sit!
For your splendid crowns
have fallen from your heads.'

[19] The cities in the Negev will be shut up,
with no one to open them.
All Judah will be taken captive,
completely taken captive.

[20] Lift up your eyes
and look at the ones coming from the north.
Where is the flock he gave to you,
the flock that was so beautiful to you?

[21] What will you say when God sets over you
those whom you yourself had trained
to be your special allies?
Are these not the beginnings of the labor pains
that will seize you just like a woman in childbirth?

[22] Then you might say in your heart,
'Why are these things happening to me?'
It will be for the multitude of your iniquities
that your skirts are raised up
and you have been violated.

[23] Can the people of Cush change their skin color,
or a leopard change its spots?
If so, then you yourself,

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although accustomed to wickedness,
would be able to do good.

24 So I will scatter them like chaff
that perishes in the desert wind.

25 This is what I have given to you,
the portion I have decreed for you—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
because you have forgotten me
and trusted in deceit.

26 So also I myself will strip your skirts off you,
and your nakedness will be seen.

27 I have seen your adultery and neighing,
the wickedness of your prostitution
on the hills and in the fields,
and I have seen these detestable things!
Woe to you, Jerusalem!
How long until you are made clean again?"

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[1]Some transate Perath as the Euphrates.
[2]Some transate Perath as the Euphrates.

Jeremiah 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 13:15-27.

===Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter ===

Symbolism

The action of hiding the undergarment was intended to be a symbolic event. It was supposed to get the Jews' attention and be a lesson for them to learn. Jeremiah performed the action, but it was not the action itself that was important.

Links:

Jeremiah 13:1 Notes

Jeremiah 13:1

linen

a type of very fine cloth

undergarment

clothing that people wear under their clothes; underwear

waist

the middle part of the body, usually the narrowest, between the hips and chest

do not put it in water first

"do not wash it or get it wet"

Jeremiah 13:3

the word of Yahweh came to me a second time, saying,

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 13:4

rock crevice

a space between rocks or a crack in a rock, big enough to put something into it

Jeremiah 13:8

the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 13:9

Judah ... Jerusalem

Here "Judah" and "Jerusalem" refer to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "of the people of Judah ... the people of Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 13:10

to listen to my word

"to obey what I say"

who walk in the hardness of their heart

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "who are stubborn

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and only do the things they desire"

Jeremiah 13:11

clings to ... cling to me

"sticks to ... stick to me" or "stays close to ... stay close to me"

all the house of ... all the house of

"all the people of ... all the people of"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 13:12

Every jar will be filled with wine ... every jar will be filled with wine

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Every wineskin should be full of wine ... every wineskin should be full of wine" or "Every wine jar should be full of wine ... every wine jar should be full of wine"

Jeremiah 13:13

See

This word is used here to draw someone's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

fill with drunkenness every inhabitant of this land

"cause all the people of this land to be drunk"

the kings who sit on David's throne

Here the throne that the king of Judah sits on is represented as "David's throne." Alternate translation: "the kings who sit on Judah's throne" or "the kings of the nation of Judah"

Jeremiah 13:14

smash each man against the other, fathers and children together

Here the words "each man" refer to both men and women. Alternate translation: "Then I will cause the people to fight with each other, even parents and children will fight one another"

fathers and children together

The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "I will smash fathers and children together"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will not pity

"I will not feel sorry for"

will not spare them from destruction

"will not withhold punishment from them." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will allow them to be destroyed"

Jeremiah 13:15

arrogant

falsely believing oneself to be important

Jeremiah 13:16

he brings darkness

"he causes darkness to come." Here trouble and despair are spoken of as if they were "darkness." Alternate translation: "he brings trouble and despair" or "he cause great troubles to come"

before he causes your feet to stumble

Here a person is referred to by his "feet" to emphasize that he is walking. Alternate translation: "before he causes you to trip and fall as you walk"

twilight

early morning or evening when it is partially dark, when the sun is beginning to rise or when the sun is almost set

For you are hoping for light, but he will turn it to deep darkness and change it to deep gloom

This speaks of goodness and blessings as "light" and of trouble and despair as "darkness." Alternate translation: "For you were hoping for light and blessings, but Yahweh will give you darkness and great despair—you will feel like you are surrounded by a dark cloud"

Jeremiah 13:17

for Yahweh's flock has been taken captive

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for enemies have captured Yahweh's flock"

for Yahweh's flock has been taken captive

Here Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh's people as Yahweh's "flock" because he cares for them like a shepherd cares for his sheep. This event has not happened yet, but it is written here as if it already has. This can be written in future tense. Alternate translation: "for you who are Yahweh's flock, your enemies will soon capture you"

Jeremiah 13:18

General Information:

Yahweh is continuing to talk to Jeremiah. He is telling Jeremiah what to say to the king of Judah and the king's mother.

queen mother

the mother of the king

Humble yourselves! Sit!

This is a hendiadys in which the first verb modifies the second. Alternate translation: "Humbly sit down" or "Take lowly seats" or "Come down from your thrones"

For your splendid crowns have fallen from your heads

A king and queen mother wear crowns to represent their royal positions as the king and queen mother. Also, this event has not happened yet, but it is written here as if it already has. This can be written in future tense. Alternate translation: "For you will no longer be the king and queen mother, for your crowns, your pride and glory, will fall off"

Jeremiah 13:19

The cities in the Negev will be shut up, with no one to open them

This means that the cities will be surrounded by their enemies, who will not allow anyone to go in or come out of the cities. Alternate translation: "The cities in the Negev will be shut up, and no one will be able to go into them or come out of them"

The cities in the Negev will be shut up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will shut the cities in the Negev up"

All Judah will be taken captive, completely taken captive

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Here "Judah" represents the people who live there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemies will take all of the people of Judah captive into exile"

Jeremiah 13:20

General Information:

Yahweh is talking to the people of Jerusalem.

Lift up your eyes and look at the ones coming from the north

Here the word "look" is an idiom that means to pay attention and be aware of what is happening. Also, "Lift up your eyes" represents looking at something. Alternate translation: "Pay attention and be aware of the ones coming from the north"

the ones coming from the north

This refers an enemy army that will come from the north. Alternate translation: "the enemy army coming from the north" or "the enemy army marching from the north"

Where is the flock he gave to you, the flock that was so beautiful to you?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that the people of Judah will be captured by the enemy armies. This question is asked as if the people of Judah had already been captured even though this has not yet happened. The question can be written as a statement and in future tense. Alternate translation: "I gave you the people of Judah to care for, like a beautiful flock of sheep, but the enemy army will capture them."

the flock

This speaks of the people of Judah as a "flock" of sheep to emphasize that the leaders of Judah were supposed to care for them and look after them.

Jeremiah 13:21

What will you say when God sets over you those whom you yourself had trained to be your special allies?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that the people who Judah's leaders thought they were at peace with will conquer them. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The people you thought were your friends will conquer you and rule over you."

Are these not the beginnings of the labor pains that will seize you just like a woman in childbirth?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to tell the people that their capture is just the beginning of the suffering they will go through. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "These things that you will suffer are like the beginning of the labor pains of a woman in childbirth."

Jeremiah 13:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues to talk to Jeremiah. He is telling Jeremiah what to say to the king of Judah and the king's mother.

that your skirts are raised up and you have been violated

This means that the enemy soldiers will rape the Judean women. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the enemy soldiers will lift up the skirts of your women and rape them"

Jeremiah 13:23

Can the people of Cush change their skin color, or a leopard change its spots?

This rhetorical question is used to state an example of something that is impossible. This question can be written as a statement. Also, the understood verb "can" maybe be supplied in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "The people of Cush cannot change their skin color and a leopard cannot change its spots."

If so, then you yourself, although accustomed to wickedness, would be able to do good

This statement is ironic because the examples about the Cushite and the leopard are impossible situations. This states that if those impossible things could happen then they could do good. Alternate translation: "Just like these things are impossible, so it is also impossible for you who always do evil to do good"

Jeremiah 13:24

I will scatter them like chaff that perishes in the desert wind

"I will scatter them like chaff that is blown away by the wind." Yahweh is saying He will scatter His people throughout the world just as chaff is scattered by the wind.

Jeremiah 13:26

I myself will strip your skirts off you, and your nakedness will be seen.

This means that Yahweh will make them feel ashamed. These words do not in any way mean that he will rape them. The word "nakedness" is a metonym for the person's private parts. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is as though I myself will strip your skirts off of you so that everyone will see your private parts and you will be ashamed"

Jeremiah 13:27

neighing

This is the sound of a male horse desiring a female horse. Alternate translation: "lusting"

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14 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah regarding the drought,

[2] "Let Judah mourn;
let her gates waste away.
They are wailing for the land;
their cries for Jerusalem are going up.

[3] Their mighty ones send out their servants for water.
When they go to the trenches,
they cannot find water.
They all return with empty vessels;
they cover their heads ashamed and dishonored.

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4 Because of this the ground is cracked,
for there is no rain in the land.
The plowmen are ashamed
and cover their heads.

5 For even the doe leaves her young in the fields
and abandons them, for there is no grass.

6 The wild donkeys stand on the bare plains
and they pant in the wind like jackals.
Their eyes fail to work,
for there is no vegetation."

7 Even though our iniquities testify against us
Yahweh, act for the sake of your name.
For our acts of apostasy increase;
we have sinned against you.

8 You are the Hope of Israel,
the one who saves him in the time of distress,
why will you be like a stranger in the land,
like a foreign wanderer who stretches out and spends just one night?

9 Why are you like someone who is astounded,
or like a warrior who has no power to rescue?
You are in our midst, Yahweh,
and your name is called over us.
Do not leave us!

10 Yahweh says this to this people:
"Since they love to wander,
they have not held back their feet from doing so."
Yahweh is not pleased with them
Now he calls to mind their iniquity
and has punished their sins.

11 Yahweh said to me, "Do not pray for good on behalf of this people. 12 For if they fast, I will not listen to their outcry, and if they offer up burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not take pleasure in them. For I will put an end to them by sword, famine, and plague."

13 Then I said, "Oh, Lord Yahweh! Behold! The prophets are saying to the people, 'You will not see the sword; there will be no famine for you, for I will give you true peace in this place.'"
14 Yahweh said to me, "The prophets prophesy deceit in my name. I did not send them out, nor did I give them any command or speak to them. But deceitful visions and worthless divination and the deceitfulness of their hearts—that is what they are prophesying to you."
15 Therefore Yahweh says this, "About the prophets prophesying in my name but whom I did not send out—those who say there will be no sword or famine in this land: These prophets will perish by sword and famine. 16 Then the people to whom they prophesied will be thrown out in the streets of Jerusalem because of famine and sword, for there will be no one to bury them—them, their wives, their sons, or their daughters—for I will pour out their wickedness on them.

17 Say this word to them:
'Let my eyes flow with tears
night and day.
Do not let them stop,
for there will be a great collapse
of the virgin daughter of my people—
a great and incurable wound.

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18 If I go out to the field,
there are the ones who were killed by the sword!
If I come to the city,
there are the diseases that are caused by famine.
Both the prophet and the priest wander about the land,
and they do not know.'"

19 Have you completely rejected Judah?
Do you hate Zion?
Why will you afflict us when there is no healing for us?
We hoped for peace, but there was nothing good—
and for a time of healing,
but see, there is only terror.

20 We admit, Yahweh, our offenses,
the iniquity of our ancestors,
for we have sinned against you.

21 Do not reject us!
For the sake of your name,
do not make your glorious throne a disgrace.
Remember and do not break
your covenant with us.

22 Do any of the worthless idols of the nations bring rain?
Or can the skies themselves send down showers?
Are you not the one, Yahweh our God?
We wait for you, for you are the one
who does all these things.

Jeremiah 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 14:1-10, 17-22.

Special concepts in this chapter

False prophets

The false prophets promised there would not be any war or drought. They gave people a false sense of hope, when they needed to repent. Because of this, Yahweh sent a drought and said that the false prophets would die of drought and war. This showed that these were not true prophets of Yahweh. (See: prophet, promise and hope and repent)

Links:

Jeremiah 14:1 Notes

Jeremiah 14:1

General Information:

Yahweh, through the prophet Jeremiah, has just talked about the adultery of the people.

This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 14:2

Let Judah mourn

Here "Judah" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "Let the people of Judah mourn"

let her gates waste away

Here the word "gates," which keep enemies out of cities and where people conduct business and government, is a synecdoche for Judah's cities, and Judah's cities are a metonym for the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "let her cities fall apart" or "let the people in her cities become unable to defend themselves"

waste away

"rot away and fall into pieces"

their cries for Jerusalem are going up

The phrase "going up" is an idiom. Alternate translation:

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"They are calling out loudly in prayer for Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 14:3
Their mighty ones
"The rich people"
ashamed and dishonored
Both of these words have similar meaning and together emphasize that the servants were ashamed that they were unable to get water.
they cover their heads
In biblical times, people would wear a headcovering to show that they were ashamed.
Jeremiah 14:4
General Information:
Yahweh, through the prophet Jeremiah, has continued to tell the people about the drought.
The plowmen are ashamed and cover their heads
In biblical times, people would wear a headcovering to show that they were ashamed.
Jeremiah 14:5
the doe leaves her young in the fields and abandons them
These two phrase have the same meaning and emphasize that the doe leaves her young deer because she cannot provide for them. A doe is a female deer. Alternate translation: "the deer leaves her young in the field"
for there is no grass
This means that there is no grass for the deer to eat. Alternate translation: "for there is no grass for them to eat"
Jeremiah 14:6
they pant in the wind like jackals
This speaks of the donkeys panting because they are thirsty by saying that they pant like jackals. Jackals are fiece wild dog which pant a lot. Alternate translation: "they pant in the wind like thirsty jackals"
Their eyes fail to work, for there is no vegetation
"They become blind because there is no grass to eat"
Jeremiah 14:7
General Information:
Yahweh, through the prophet Jeremiah, has just told the people about the drought.
our iniquities testify against us
Here their "iniquities" are spoken of as if they were people who testified against them about their wrong doing. Alternate translation: "our iniquities give evidence of our wrongdoing"
for the sake of your name
Here Yahweh's "name" refers to his reputation. Alternate translation: "for the sake of your reputation" or "in order that everyone can see that you are very great and keep your promises"
Jeremiah 14:8
Hope of Israel
This is another name for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "You are the hope of Israel"
why will you be like a stranger in the land, like a foreign wanderer who stretches out and spends just one night?
The people are asking if Yahweh is unconcerned with his people and unable to help them. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you should not be like a stranger in the land, like a foreign wanderer who stretches out and spends just one night."
why will you be like a stranger in the land, like a foreign wanderer ... just one night
This question speaks of the possibility of Yahweh being unconcerned with helping his people as if he were a stranger just travelling though a place unconcerned with those living there.
Jeremiah 14:9
Why are you like someone who is astounded, or like a warrior who has no power to rescue?
This speaks of the possibility of Yahweh being unable to help his people as if he were a confused warrior who was unable to rescue anyone. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You do nothing to help us, like someone who is astounded or like a warrior who has no power to rescue us."
astounded
unable to understand or to think clearly
your name is called over us
This can be stated in active form. This speaks of the people being Yahweh's people by saying that his name is over them. Alternate translation: "we bear your name" or "we are your people"
Jeremiah 14:10
General Information:
Jeremiah has been praying and asking Yahweh not to leave them alone.
they love to wander
"they love to wander away from me." This speaks of people being unfaithful to Yahweh and not obey him as if they had wandered from the place where he is.
have not held back their feet
Here the people are referred to by their "feet" to emphasize their walking away from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "have not kept themselves"
calls to mind
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "remembers" or "recalls"
Jeremiah 14:11
on behalf of
"to assist" or "to help"
Jeremiah 14:12
outcry
loud crying because of sorrow
I will put an end to them
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to die"
by sword
Here war is represented by the "sword" which was the common weapon used in battle. Alternate translation: "by war" or "by battle"
Jeremiah 14:13
General Information:
Yahweh has just told Jeremiah not to pray for the people of Judah.
You will not see the sword
Here "sword" represents war, and to "see" represents experiencing. Alternate translation: "You will not experience any war"

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I will give you true peace
Here "peace" is spoken of as if it were an object that someone could give to another person. Alternate translation: "I will allow you to live securely" or "I will make it so there is peace where you live"
Jeremiah 14:14
prophesy deceit
The word "deceit" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "prophesy deceitfully"
in my name
This phrase refers to speaking with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative.
I did not send them out
This means that Yahweh did not send them out with messages to give to the people. Alternate translation: "I did not send them to prophesy to other people"
the deceitfulness of their hearts
"the deceitful things that they think up themselves"
Jeremiah 14:15
General Information:
Jeremiah has just been talking to Yahweh about the things the false prophets have been prophesying.
in my name
This phrase refers to speaking with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 14:14]
there will be no sword ... perish by sword
Here the "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "there will be no war ... perish by war"
Jeremiah 14:16
famine and sword
Here the "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "famine and war"
Then the people to whom they prophesied will be thrown out in the streets of Jerusalem because of famine and sword
This can be stated in active form. This means that whole families will die and people will throw their bodies into the streets instead of burying them. Alternate translation: "Then the people to whom they prophesied will die by famine and sword and people will throw their bodies into the streets of Jerusalem"
their wives, their sons, or their daughters
This describes who is referred to by the word "them," that is, everyone who died by famine and sword.
I will pour out their wickedness on them
Here Yahweh speaks of punishing the people in accordance to their wicknedness as if their own wickedness were a liquid that he would pour upon them. Alternate translation: "I will punish them like they deserve to be punished"
Jeremiah 14:17
night and day
Here two opposite times of the day are given to mean all the time. Alternate translation: "all the time, both night and day"
incurable wound
a cut or break in skin that cannot be cured
Jeremiah 14:18
who were killed by the sword
This can be stated in active form. Also, here the "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "who died by the sword" or "who died in war"
there are the diseases that are caused by famine
Here the "diseases" represent the people who have these diseases because of their starvation. Alternate translation: "there are the ones who are sick because of famine"
wander
move around without purpose
they do not know
It may be helpful to state what they do not know. Alternate translation: "they do not know what they are doing"
Jeremiah 14:19
for a time of healing
The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "we hoped for a time of healing"
Jeremiah 14:20
We admit, Yahweh, our offenses, the iniquity of our ancestors
"Yahweh, we admit our wicked offenses and our ancestors' iniquity"
Jeremiah 14:21
General Information:
Jeremiah continues his prayer to Yahweh.
For the sake of your name
Here Yahweh's "name" refers to his reputation. Alternate translation: "For the sake of your reputation" or "In order that everyone can see that you are very great and keep your promises"
your glorious throne
Yahweh's "throne" is represented by Zion, that is Jerusalem. His "throne" also represents the place where he rules as king. Alternate translation: "do disgrace Zion where you glorious throne is" or "do not disgrace Zion, where you rule as king"
Jeremiah 14:22
can the skies themselves send down showers
"Can the skies decide when they make the rain to fall?"

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15 [1]Then Yahweh said to me, "Even if Moses or Samuel were standing in front of me, I would still not be in favor of this
people. Send them out from before me, for them to go away.[2]It will happen that they will say to you, 'Where should
we go?' Then you must say to them, 'Yahweh says this:
Those who are for death should go to death;
those who are for the sword should go to the sword.
Those who are for famine should go to famine;
and those who are for captivity should go to captivity.'

[3]For I will assign them to four groups—this is Yahweh's declaration—the sword to slaughter some, the dogs to drag some
away, the birds of the skies and the wild animals of the earth to consume and destroy some.[4]I will make of them a

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horrifying thing to all the kingdoms of the earth, because of what Manasseh son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem.

5 For who will have compassion for you, Jerusalem?
Who will grieve for you?

6 You have abandoned me—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
you have gone back from me.
So I will strike you with my hand and destroy you.
I am tired of relenting.

7 So I will winnow them with a pitchfork
at the gates of the land.
I will bereave them.
I will destroy my people
since they will not turn from their ways.

8 I will make their widows more numerous
than the sands of the seashore.
Against the mothers of young men I will send
the destroyer at noonday.
I will make horror and dismay suddenly fall on them.

9 The mother who has borne seven children will waste away.
She will gasp.
Her sun will set while it is still day.
She will be ashamed and embarrassed,
for I will give those who remain to the sword
in the presence of their enemies—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

10 Woe to me, my mother!
For you have borne me,
I who am a man of strife and argument through all the land.
I have not lent, nor has anyone lent to me,
but they all curse me.

11 Yahweh said:
"Will I not rescue you for good?
I will certainly make your enemies beg for help
in the time of calamity and distress.

12 Can one smash iron?
Especially iron from the north that is mixed with bronze?

13 I will give to your enemies
your wealth and treasures as free plunder.
I will do this because of all your sins
committed within all your borders.

14 Then I will make you serve your enemies
in a land that you do not know,
for a fire will ignite,

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kindled in my wrath against you."[1]

15 Yahweh, you know
Remember me and help me
Bring vengeance for me
against those who persecute me.
You are patient, but do not allow them to take me away;
know that I have suffered insult for your sake.

16 Your words have been found, and I consumed them
Your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart,
for I bear your name,
Yahweh God of hosts.

17 I did not sit in the circle
of those who celebrated or rejoiced.
I sat alone because of your powerful hand,
for you filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my pain constant and my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Will you be like deceitful waters to me,
waters that dry up?

19 Therefore Yahweh said this,
"If you repent, Jeremiah,
then I will restore you,
and you will stand before me and serve me.
For if you separate the foolish things from the precious things,
you will be like my mouth.
The people will come back to you,
but you yourself must not go back to them.
20 I will make you like an impenetrable bronze wall to this people,
and they will wage war against you.
But they will not defeat you,
for I am with you to save and rescue you—
this is Yahweh's declaration—

21 for I will rescue you from the hand of the wicked
and redeem you from the hand of the ruthless."

[1] Instead of Then I will make you serve your enemies, some ancient copies have Then I will make your enemies take you.

Jeremiah 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 15:2, 5-21.

Special concepts in this chapter

Do not pray for the people

God told Jeremiah not to pray for the people because God was punishing them. This was meant to be an illustration for Jeremiah. Jeremiah was not to pray because the punishment was already determined. Yahweh also explains that even the great Moses could not help the sinful Jews. (See: sin)

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Yahweh uses Gentile nations

Yahweh is going to use the Gentile nations to punish Judah. This would have been very offensive to the Jews. They would have also been surprised to learn that Yahweh was using the Gentile nations to punish his people.

Links:

Jeremiah 15:1 Notes

Jeremiah 15:1

General Information:

Jeremiah has just been praying to Yahweh.

were standing in front of me, I would still not be in favor of this people

This implies that they are pleading for Yahweh to spare the people. Alternate translation: "were standing in front of me pleading for these people, I would still not be in favor of them"

Send them out from before me, for them to go away

Yahweh repeats this idea of sending away his people to add emphasis to it.

Jeremiah 15:2

Those who are for

"Those whom I have appointed to go to"

should go to death

This speaks of dying as if death were a place that people can go to. Alternate translation: "should die"

those who are for the sword should go to the sword

Here the "sword" represents war. To be "for the sword" means that God has appointed them to die in war. Alternate translation: "those whom I have appointed to die in war should go to die in war"

Those who are for famine should go to famine

This means that Yahweh has appointed these to die because of famine, and these words speak of dying by famine as if "famine" were a place that people can go to. Alternate translation: "Those whom I have appointed to die by famine should go and die by famine"

should go to captivity

"should go into captivity"

Jeremiah 15:3

General Information:

Yahweh has just told them he will send some of them to death, some to die by the sword, some to die by famine, and some to be captives.

the sword

Here the "sword" refers to the enemy soldiers. Alternate translation: "the enemy soldiers"

Jeremiah 15:4

I will make of them

Here the word "them" refers to the people of Judah, not to the four groups listed in the previous verse.

because of what Manasseh ... did in Jerusalem

Manasseh was a very wicked king who did many evil things in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "because of the wicked things that Manasseh ... did in Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 15:5

General Information:

Yahweh has just told them he will assign them to four groups to kill them—the sword, dogs, birds, and beasts.

For who will have compassion for you, Jerusalem? Who will grieve for you?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one should mourn for Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one should have compassion on you, Jerusalem. No one should mourn for your destruction."

for you, Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "for you people who live in Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 15:6

You have abandoned me ... you have gone back from me

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people have, indeed, turned away from Yahweh. They have disobeyed him and broken the covenant he had made with them.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

gone back from me

"left me" or "gone away from me"

I will strike you with my hand

Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "I will use my power to strike you"

Jeremiah 15:7

So I will winnow them with a pitchfork at the gates of the land

Here Yahweh speaks of scattering the people and causing them to leave Jersalem as if they were winnowed chaff being blown away on the wind.

pitchfork

a farm tool with a long handle and sharp metal prongs, used especially for lifting and tossing grain in the air for winnowing

I will bereave them

"I will cause their children to die" or "I will let their enemies kill their children"

Jeremiah 15:8

General Information:

Yahweh has just told them no one will care about them and that he will destroy his people since they would not turn from their wicked ways.

widows

women whose husbands have died

than the sands of the seashore

"than the grains of sand on the seashore." This comparison is an exaggeration used to emphasize an uncountable number. Alternate translation: "than you can count"

Against the mothers of young men I will send the destroyer at noonday

This means that Yahweh will send an enemy army to kill young men, which will cause their mothers great sorrow. Alternate translation: "At noonday I will send an enemy army to destroy young men and cause their mothers to

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weep"
fall on them
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "happen to them"
Jeremiah 15:9
She will be ashamed and embarrassed
The words "ashamed" and "embarrassed" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of shame. Alternate translation: "She will be completely ashamed"
will waste away
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will grow faint"
Her sun will set while it is still day
This speaks of a woman becoming sorrowful because her children have died, as if her life were a day in which the sun had set early and turned to darkness. Here the darkness represents her sorrow. Alternate translation: "Because of her sorrow, it will be as though the sun has set and her day has turned to darkness"
I will give those who remain to the sword in the presence of their enemies
Here the "sword" represents the enemy soldiers. This means that Yahweh will allow the enemy solider to kill any of her children that remain. Alternate translation: "I will allow the enemy soldiers to kill those of her children that remain alive"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 15:10
General Information:
In these verse, Jeremiah speaks to Yahweh about his suffering, and Yahweh answers him.
Woe to me, my mother
Jeremiah pretends to speak to his mother as a way to emphasize how sad he is.
a man of strife and argument
The words "strife" and "argument" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize how much Jeremiah is arguing. Alternate translation: "a man with whom everyone argues all the time"
I have not lent, nor has anyone lent to me
This refers to lending money to people. Often lending money causes people to fight with one another. Alternate translation: "I have not lent money to anyone, nor has anyone lent money to me" or "I have not made anyone angry by lending or borrow money and then quarreling about it"
Jeremiah 15:11
Will I not rescue you for good?
The implicit answer to this rhetorical question is "yes." This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will certainly rescue you for good!"
your enemies
Those are the enemies of Jeremiah who disagreed with his prophecies.
in the time of calamity and distress
Here the words "calamity" and "distress" mean basically the same thing. They emphasize the amount or intensity of the calamity. Alternate translation: "in the time of great calamity"
Jeremiah 15:12
Can one smash iron? Especially iron from the north that is mixed with bronze?
In these questions Yahweh speaks of the strength of Judah's enemies as if they were iron mixed with bronze. These rhetorical questions can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can smash iron, especially if it is as strong as the iron from the north that is mixed with bronze." or "But Judah's enemies, who are as strong as iron or bronze, will attack Judah from the north, no one will be able to stop them"
Jeremiah 15:13
General Information:
In these verse, Yahweh speaks to the nation of Israel as if it were one person.
wealth and treasures
The words "wealth" and "treasures" mean the same thing and refer to anything that people consider to be valuable.
plunder
things that you steal from a city after conquering it
all your sins committed
This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "all of the sins you have committed"
within all your borders
"throughout your country"
Jeremiah 15:14
a land that you do not know
"to a land that is strange to you"
for a fire will ignite, kindled in my wrath against you
The wrath of God is spoken of as if it were a destructive fire. Alternate translation: "I will destroy you because I am very angry with you"
for a fire will ignite, kindled in my wrath against you
Here Yahweh speaks of his wrath as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "for my wrath is like a fire that I will kindle against you" or "for I will come against you in my wrath, and my wrath will be like a burning fire"
kindled
to light a fire
Jeremiah 15:15
General Information:
Jeremiah speaks to Yahweh.
You are patient, but do not allow them to take me away
Jeremiah is asking Yahweh not to be patient with the sins of his enemies. The phrase "take me away" refers to him being killed. Alternate translation: "Please do not continue to be patient with them and allow them to kill me"
Jeremiah 15:16
Your words have been found
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have heard your message"
I consumed them
Jeremiah speaks of listening and understanding Yahweh's message as if it were food that he ate. Alternate translation: "I understood your message"
the delight of my heart
Here the "heart" represents a person emotions and feelings. Alternate translation: "what I love most"

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I bear your name
"people know that I serve you"
Jeremiah 15:17
I did not sit in the circle of
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I did not spend time with"
of your powerful hand
Here Yahweh's "powerful hand" refers to his control and influence over Jeremiah. Alternate translation: "you powerfully influence me" or "you are the one who controls what I do"
Jeremiah 15:18
Why is my pain constant and my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?
Jeremiah uses this rhetorical question to emphasize his pain. He speaks of his pain as if it were a physical wound. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "My pain is constant, it is like a wound that will not heal."
refusing to be healed
This speaks of Jeremiah's wound as if it were a person that refuses to be healed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that will not heal"
Will you be like deceitful waters to me, waters that dry up?
Jeremiah uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that he feels like he cannot depend on Yahweh. He speaks of this as if Yahweh were a stream that dries up. Alternate translation: "It feels like you are undependable to me, like a stream I go to for a drink only to find it dried up."
Jeremiah 15:19
you will be like my mouth
Jeremiah is compared to the mouth of Yahweh because he will be used to speak Yahweh's message. Alternate translation: "you will speak for me"
you yourself
The pronoun, "yourself", is used here to emphasis the command was specifically for Jeremiah.
Jeremiah 15:20
like an impenetrable bronze wall to this people
Yahweh compares Jeremiah to a wall because the people will not be able to defeat him. Alternate translation: "I will make you strong, like a bronze wall"
they will wage war against you
This speaks of the people fighting with Jeremiah as if he were an army that they waged war against. Alternate translation: "they will fight against you" or "they will oppose you"
save and rescue
The words "save" and "rescue" mean the same thing and emphasize the safety that God promises.
Jeremiah 15:21
rescue you from ... and redeem you from
These phrases have similar meanings and are used together to emphasize the safety that God provides.
the hand of the wicked ... the hand of the ruthless
Here the word "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "the control of the wicked ... the control of the ruthless"
the wicked
This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "wicked people" or "those who are wicked"
the ruthless
This nominal adjective refers to a person who is cruel and who does not care if he hurts other people. It is used here as a generic noun that refers to ruthless people in general, not one particular person. Alternate translation: "ruthless people" or "cruel people who will harm you"

16 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Do not take a wife for yourself, and do not have sons or daughters for yourself in this place.[3]For Yahweh says this to the sons and daughters who are born in this place, to the mothers who bear them, and to the fathers who caused them to be born in this land,[4]"They will die diseased deaths. They will not be mourned or buried. They will be like dung on the ground. For they will come to an end by sword and famine, and their corpses will be food for the birds of the skies and the wild animals of the earth.'

[5]For the word of Yahweh came to me, saying, 'Do not enter a house where there is mourning. Do not go to mourn or to show sympathy for them, for I have taken away my peace from this people—this is Yahweh's declaration—and my steadfast love and mercy.[6]Both the great and the small will die in this land. They will not be buried, and no one will mourn for them or cut themselves or shave their heads for them.
[7]No one must share any food in mourning to comfort them because of the deaths, and none must give a comforting cup to his father or his mother in order to comfort them.[8]You must not go to a banquet house to sit with them in order to eat or drink.'[9]For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, before your eyes, in your days and in this place, I am about to put an end to the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride.'

[10]Then it will happen that you will report all these words to this people, and they will say to you, 'Why has Yahweh decreed all this great disaster against us? What is our iniquity and sin that we sinned against Yahweh our God?'[11]So say to them, 'Because your ancestors abandoned me—this is Yahweh's declaration—and they went after other gods and worshiped and bowed down to them. They abandoned me and have not kept my law.
[12]But you yourselves have brought about more wickedness than your ancestors, for see, each person is walking by the stubbornness of his wicked heart; there is no one who listens to me.[13]So I will throw you from this land to a land that you have not known, neither you nor your ancestors, and you will worship other gods there by day and night, for I will not give any favor to you.'

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[14]Therefore, behold, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when it will no longer be said, 'As Yahweh lives, the one who brought up the people of Israel from the land of Egypt.'[15]but, 'As Yahweh lives, the one who brought up the people of Israel from the land of the north and from the lands where he had scattered them.' For I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors.

[16]Behold! I will send for many fishermen—this is Yahweh's declaration—so they will fish the people out. After this I will send for many hunters so they will hunt for them among all the mountains and hills, and in rock crevices.[17]For my eye is on all their ways; they cannot be hidden from before me. Their iniquity cannot be concealed from before my eyes.[18]I will first pay back double for their iniquity and sin. They have polluted my land. They have filled my inheritance with the corpses of their detestable idols and their abominations."

[19] Yahweh, you are my stronghold and my refuge,
my place of safety in the day of distress.
The nations will go to you from the ends of the earth and say,
"Surely our ancestors inherited deceit.
They are empty;
there is no profit in them.

[20] Do people make gods for themselves?
But they are not gods."

[21] Therefore see! I will cause them to know in this time,
I will cause them to know my hand and my power,
so they will know that Yahweh is my name.

Jeremiah 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 16:19-21. This poem also continues in chapter 17, and these should be seen as one section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Coming punishment

The punishment that is prophesied in this chapter will happen quickly. The author gives many illustrations which describe how quickly this punishment will come. (See: prophet)

Israel restored

God will bring his people back from captivity. Even though the punishment of Judah will be great, Yahweh promised a future restoration. (See: promise and restore)

Links:

Jeremiah 16:1 Notes

Jeremiah 16:1

the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 16:4

They will die diseased deaths

"They will die from deadly diseases"

They will not be mourned or buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will mourn for them or bury them"

They will be like dung on the ground

The sons and daughters born in the land are compared to dung on the ground to emphasize that they will be disgusting and that no one will bury them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 8:2]

they will come to an end by sword and famine

The phrase "come to an end" is a mild way to say that they will die. The word "sword" represents an army whose soldiers fight with swords. The phrase represents dying in battle. Alternate translation: "they will die in battle or from famine"

Jeremiah 16:5

the word of Yahweh came to me, saying, 'Do

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 1:4]

where there is mourning

The word "mourning" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "where people are mourning"

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I have taken away my peace from this people ... and my steadfast love and mercy

Yahweh speaks of no longer acting towards the people with peace, steadfast love, and mercy as if these were items that he has taken away from them. Alternate translation: "I will no longer act towards them with peace ... or with steadfast love and mercy"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 16:6

Both the great and the small will

This refers to all kinds of people and uses size to refer to how important they are. Alternate translation: "Both the important and the unimportant" or "Many people, regardless of how important they are, will"

They will not be buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will bury them"

no one will ... cut themselves or shave their heads for them

Cutting oneself and shaving one's head were symbolic actions that expressed strong grief, especially when a loved one died.

Jeremiah 16:7

No one must share any food in mourning to comfort them because of the deaths ... none must give a comforting cup to his father or his mother

These two clauses have a similar meaning. God said basically the same thing twice for emphasis. It was customary to take food or wine to people whose relative had died. Yahweh has removed all comfort from the people because of their sin.

none must give a comforting cup

Here the word "cup" represents the drink that the cup holds. Alternate translation: "none must give a comforting drink"

Jeremiah 16:8

a banquet house

"a house where people are feasting"

Jeremiah 16:9

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

before your eyes

Here the word "your" is plural and refers to the people of Israel. The idiom means that Yahweh will do this where they can see. Alternate translation: "in front of you" or "where you can see"

in your days

This idiom means during their lifetime. Alternate translation: "during your lifetime"

the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 7:34.

Jeremiah 16:11

worshiped and bowed down to them

The words "bowed down to" mean basically the same thing as "worshiped" and describe the posture that people used in worship. God said essentially the same thing twice for emphasis.

Jeremiah 16:12

ancestors, for see, each person

"ancestors. Look at these people and you will see that each person"

walking by the stubbornness of his wicked heart

Yahweh speaks of a person's actions as if the person were walking along a path. Here the word "heart" represents the mind or will. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 11:8]

who listens to me

"who does what I tell him to do"

Jeremiah 16:13

throw you from this land

Yahweh speaks of forcefully removing the people from the land as if he were throwing them from the land. Alternate translation: "force you to leave this land and go"

by day and night

The mention of both "day" and "night" means all the time. Alternate translation: "all the time" or "continually"

Jeremiah 16:14

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

when it will no longer be said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when people will no longer say"

As Yahweh lives

"As surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:2]

Jeremiah 16:16

I will send for many fishermen ... so they will fish the people out

Yahweh speaks of enemy armies who will attack and kill the people as if they were fishermen who are catching fish.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will send for many hunters so they will hunt for them among

Yahweh speaks of enemy armies who will attack and kill the people as if they were hunters who are hunting animals.

Jeremiah 16:17

my eye is on all their ways

Here the word "eye" represents Yahweh who sees all that they do. Alternate translation: "I am watching everything they do"

they cannot be hidden from before me

Here the word "they" may refer either to the people or to their actions. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they cannot hide from me" or "they cannot hide their ways from me"

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Their iniquity cannot be concealed from before my eyes
Here the word "eyes" represents Yahweh who sees. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They cannot conceal their iniquity from me"
Jeremiah 16:18
They have polluted my land
The verb "polluted my land" is a hyperbolic metaphor: Yahweh speaks as if the people's sin is so bad that he hates even the land they live on. The words "their polluting" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because they have polluted my land"
They have filled my inheritance with the corpses of their detestable idols
The words "have filled" means that they have placed many idols in the land. Alternate translation: "There are very many detestable idols in my inheritance"
my inheritance
Yahweh speaks of the land as if it were his inheritance that he has claimed as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "the land that is my inheritance"
the corpses of their detestable idols and their abominations
The idols never had life, so "corpses" here is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) the "detestable idols" and "abominations" themselves are the "corpses." Alternate translation: "their detestable idols and abominations, which are useless, like corpses" Or 2) the "detestable idols" are the religious symbols of a murderous society, the "abominations" are the disgusting practices of those who worship the idols, and the "corpses" are the innocent victims of those murderous, disgusting practices. Alternate translation: "the corpses of those whom you have killed with the abominations that your detestable idols command"
Jeremiah 16:19
Yahweh, you are my stronghold
Here Jeremiah begins speaking to Yahweh.
my stronghold and my refuge, my place of safety
Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh as a place where enemies cannot attack him. He repeats the same idea three times.
The nations will go to you
Here the word "nations" represents the people from the nations. Alternate translation: "The people from the nations will go to you" or "The people of the nations will come to you"
the ends of the earth
This is an idiom that means the farthest places on the earth. By referencing both ends, it refers to everywhere in between. Alternate translation: "the farthest places on the earth" or "everywhere on earth"
our ancestors inherited deceit
Here the word "deceit" refers to false gods. Alternate translation: "our ancestors inherited nothing but false gods"
They are empty; there is no profit in them
Here the words "They" and "them" refer to the false gods that the ancestors taught them to believe in. The two phrases mean basically the same thing, with the second explaining how they "are empty."
Jeremiah 16:20
Do people make gods for themselves? But they are not gods
The people ask this rhetorical question to emphasize that people cannot make gods for themselves. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "People cannot make gods for themselves. The things that they make are not gods"
Jeremiah 16:21
Therefore see
"Therefore, indeed." Here Yahweh begins speaking. The word "see" adds emphasis to what follows.
I will cause them to know
Here the word "them" refers to the people from the nations. Yahweh repeats this phrase for emphasis.
my hand and my power
Here the word "hand" refers to power and authority. The two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize Yahweh's great power. Alternate translation: "my great power"
they will know that Yahweh is my name
Here the word "name" refers to Yahweh's entire person. Alternate translation: "they will know that I am Yahweh, the true God"

17 [1] "The sin of Judah is written
with an iron stylus having a diamond point.
It is engraved on the tablet of their heart
and on the horns of your altars.

[2] Even their children remember their altars
and their Asherah poles
that were beside the spreading trees
and on the high hills.

[3] My mountain in the open country,
and your wealth and all your treasures
I will give away as plunder,
together with your high places,
because of the sin you committed in all your territories.

[4] You will, by your own actions,
let go of the inheritance that I gave to you.

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I will enslave you to your enemies
in a land that you do not know,
for you have ignited a fire in my wrath,
which will burn forever."

5 Yahweh says,
"The person who trusts in mankind is accursed;
he makes flesh his strength
but turns his heart away from Yahweh.
6 For he will be like a small bush in the Arabah
and will not see anything good coming.
He will stay in the stony places in the wilderness,
barren land without inhabitants.

7 But the person who trusts in Yahweh is blessed,
for Yahweh is his reason for confidence.

8 For he will be like a tree planted by water,
its roots will spread out by the stream.
It will not fear the heat when it comes,
for its leaves are always green.
It is not anxious in a year of drought,
and it will not stop producing fruit.

9 The heart is more deceitful than anything else.
It is sick; who can understand it?

10 I am Yahweh,
the one who searches through the mind,
who tests the hearts.
I give to each person according to his ways,
according to the fruit of his deeds.

11 A partridge hatches an egg that she did not lay.
Someone may become rich unjustly,
but when half his days are over,
those riches will abandon him,
and in the end he will be a fool."

12 "The place of our sanctuary is a glorious throne,
elevated from the beginning.

13 Yahweh is the hope of Israel.
All who abandon you will be put to shame;
those in the land who turn away from you
will be written in the earth,
for they have abandoned Yahweh,

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the fountain of living waters.

14 Heal me, Yahweh, and I will be healed!
Rescue me, and I will be rescued
For you are my song of praise.

15 See, they are saying to me,
'Where is the word of Yahweh? Let it come!'

16 As for me,
I did not run from being a shepherd following you.
I did not long for the day of disaster.
You know the proclamations that came from my lips.
They were made in your presence.

17 Do not be a terror to me.
You are my refuge on the day of calamity.

18 May my pursuers be ashamed,
but do not let me be ashamed.
May they be dismayed,
but do not let me be dismayed.
Send the day of disaster against them
and shatter them with a double share of destruction."

19 Yahweh said this to me: "Go and stand in the gate of the people where the kings of Judah enter and where they exit, then
in all the other gates of Jerusalem. 20 Say to them, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, kings of Judah and all you people of Judah,
and every resident of Jerusalem who comes in through these gates.
21 Yahweh says this: "Be careful for the sake of your lives and do not carry a burden on the Sabbath day to bring it to the
gates of Jerusalem. 22 Do not bring a load out from your house on the Sabbath day. Do not do any work, but set apart the
Sabbath day, just as I commanded your ancestors to do.'" 23 They did not listen or pay attention, but stiffened their neck so
they would not hear me nor accept discipline.

24 It will happen that if you truly listen to me—this is Yahweh's declaration—and do not bring a load to the gates of this city
on the Sabbath day but instead set apart the Sabbath day and not do any work on it, 25 then kings, princes, and those who
sit on David's throne will come to the gates of this city in chariots and with horses, they and their leaders, men of Judah
and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited forever.
26 They will come from the cities of Judah and from all around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin and the lowlands,
from the mountains, and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, thank
offerings to the house of Yahweh. 27 But if you do not listen to me—to set apart the Sabbath day and to not carry heavy
loads and to not enter the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day—then I will light a fire in its gates, and it will consume
the fortresses of Jerusalem, and it cannot be put out."

Jeremiah 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 17:1-18. This poem is a continuation of 16:19-21, and these should be seen as one section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Trusting God or humans

Trust is an important part of this chapter. Those who trust in human wisdom will not prosper. Those who trust in God will have all of their needs met. (See: trust and wise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

The person who depends on the power of other people is compared to a bush in the desert which always has to struggle for life. But the person who trusts in God is like a tree growing by a stream and has all his needs supplied.

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Links:

Jeremiah 17:1 Notes

Jeremiah 17:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

The sin of Judah is written ... on the horns of your altars

Yahweh speaks of Judah's sins being so great that they cannot stop committing them as if someone had engraved their sin permanently.

The sin of Judah is written

Here the word "Judah" represents the people of Judah. This may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has written the sin of Judah"

It is engraved

This may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has engraved it"

engraved on the tablet of their hearts

The sinful habits of the people are spoken of as if their sins had been engraved on their own hearts. The word "hearts" refers to the whole person: their thoughts, emotions, and actions. Alternate translation: "engraved in their very beings"

on the horns of your altars

The word "horns" refers to the projections on the corners of the altars.

Jeremiah 17:3

your wealth and all your treasures

The words "wealth" and "treasures" mean the same thing and refer to anything that they consider valuable.

plunder

This refers to things that people steal or take by force.

Jeremiah 17:4

You will, by your own actions, let go of the inheritance that I gave to you

Yahweh speaks of the land as if it were an inheritance that he had given to the people of Judah as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "You will, because of your own actions, lose the land that I have given to you as an inheritance"

you have ignited a fire in my wrath, which will burn forever

Yahweh speaks of the fierceness of his anger as if his anger were a fire that burns those with whom he is angry. Alternate translation: "you have made me so angry that my anger will be like a fire that will burn forever"

Jeremiah 17:5

The person who trusts in mankind is accursed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will curse any person who trusts in mankind"

he makes flesh his strength

Here the word "flesh" represents humans. Alternate translation: "he depends on mere humans for strength"

turns his heart away from Yahweh

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "turns his devotion away from Yahweh"

Jeremiah 17:6

like a small bush

The person who trusts in man instead of Yahweh will be like a plant that struggles to survive in an infertile land.

the wilderness, barren land without inhabitants

The phrase "barren land without inhabitants" describes and means basically the same thing as "wilderness." Alternate translation: "the barren wilderness where no person lives"

Jeremiah 17:8

he will be like a tree planted by water

The person who trusts in Yahweh will always prosper, just like a tree does when it is planted by a river. It is not affected when there is no rain. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will be like a tree that someone has planted by water"

It will not fear the heat when it comes ... It is not anxious in a year of drought

Yahweh speaks of a tree that draws its water from a stream being unaffected by heat and drought as if the tree were unafraid of these things. Alternate translation: "The heat will not affect it when it comes ... No harm is caused to it in a year of drought"

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is more deceitful

Here the word "heart" refers to the minds and thoughts of people. Alternate translation: "The human mind is more deceitful"

who can understand it?

The speaker uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can understand the human heart. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "no one can understand it."

Jeremiah 17:10

who tests the hearts

Here the word "hearts" represents the emotions. Alternate translation: "who tests the emotions"

according to his ways

Here a person's behavior is spoken of as if it were the paths along which he walks. Alternate translation: "according to how he lives"

the fruit of his deeds

Here the results of a person's actions are spoken of as if they were fruit. Alternate translation: "what he has done"

Jeremiah 17:11

A partridge hatches an egg ... become rich unjustly

This analogy of a bird that hatches another bird's eggs is meant to illustrate a rich man who makes his money by robbing others.

when half his days are over

Here the word "days" stands for someone's entire life. Alternate translation: "when he has lived only half of his life"

those riches will abandon him

The riches are spoken of as if they were servants who would abandon their owner. Alternate translation: "he will lose his wealth"

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in the end
"at the end of his life"
Jeremiah 17:12
The place of our sanctuary is a glorious throne
Jeremiah speaks of the sanctuary being a "glorious throne" because it is there that Yahweh dwells and rules.
The place of our sanctuary
This refers to Mount Zion in Jerusalem.
Jeremiah 17:13
All who abandon you
Here the word "you" refers to Yahweh.
those in the land who turn away from you will be written in the earth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will write in the dust those in the land who turn away from you"
will be written in the earth
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of people dying and being forgotten as if someone writes their names in the dust, and those names quickly disappear. Alternate translation: "will disappear like names that someone writes in the dust" or 2) the word "earth" is a metonym for the place of the dead. The phrase is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of people going to the place of the dead as if someone enrolled their names in the records of those who have died. Alternate translation: "will join those in the place of the dead"
Yahweh, the fountain of living waters
Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh being the source of life as if he were a fountain of living waters. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, who is like a fountain of living waters"
the fountain of living waters
Jeremiah speaks of fresh, running water as if it were living water. Alternate translation: "the fountain of fresh, running water"
Jeremiah 17:14
I will be healed ... I will be rescued
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you really will have healed me ... you really will have rescued me"
For you are my song of praise
Possible meanings are 1) "For you are the one whom I praise" or 2) "For you are the reason I sing praise."
Jeremiah 17:15
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."
they are saying to me
Here the word "me" refers to Jeremiah and the word "they" to his enemies.
Where is the word of Yahweh?
The people use this question to ridicule Jeremiah because the things that he said had not yet happened. It can also be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Where are the things that Yahweh told you would happen?" or "The things that Yahweh told you would happen have not happened."
Let it come
"Let what Yahweh has said happen"
Jeremiah 17:16
I did not run from being a shepherd following you
Jeremiah speaks of leading and caring for the people as if he were a shepherd caring for sheep. He speaks of his abandoning that work as if he were running away from it.
I did not long for
"I did not desire"
the proclamations that came from my lips
Here the word "lips" represents Jeremiah who spoke. The word "proclamations" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "the proclamations that I spoke" or "the things that I proclaimed"
They were made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I made them"
Jeremiah 17:17
You are my refuge
Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh as a place where enemies cannot attack him.
on the day of calamity
"in times of calamity"
Jeremiah 17:18
May my pursuers be ashamed, but do not let me be ashamed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Bring shame on my pursuers, but do not bring shame on me"
May they be dismayed, but do not let me be dismayed
This phrase means basically the same thing as the previous one and adds emphasis to Jeremiah's prayer. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Make them very afraid, but do not make me afraid"
shatter them with a double share of destruction
Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh destroying his enemies as if they were objects that Yahweh would shatter. The idiom "a double share" means to give twice as much. Alternate translation: "shatter them with complete destruction" or "destroy them twice as much"
Jeremiah 17:19
then in all the other gates of Jerusalem
The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "then go and stand in all the other gates of Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 17:21
for the sake of your lives
"to protect your lives"
Jeremiah 17:22
set apart the Sabbath day
God had commanded his people treat the Sabbath day as special day to rest and to worship him. Alternate translation: "set apart the Sabbath to Yahweh" or "keep the Sabbath day holy"
Jeremiah 17:23
They did not listen or pay attention
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the people refused to listen. Alternate translation: "They refused to listen" or "They refused to obey"
stiffened their neck
Jeremiah speaks of the people being stubborn as if they had made their necks stiff and unmovable. Alternate

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translation: "became stubborn"

Jeremiah 17:24

set apart the Sabbath day

See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 17:22.

Jeremiah 17:25

those who sit on David's throne

Here the throne that the king of Judah sits on is represented as "David's throne." See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 13:13]

this city will be inhabited forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will inhabit this city forever"

Jeremiah 17:27

I will light a fire in its gates

"I will set the gates of Jerusalem on fire"

it cannot be put out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people cannot put it out"

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18 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,[2]"Arise and go out to the potter's house, for I will have you hear my word there."[3]So I went out to the potter's house, and behold! The potter was working on the potter's wheel. [4]But the pot he was making from the clay was ruined in the potter's hand, so he returned the clay and formed it into another pot, and he made that pot an object that was pleasing in his eyes.

[5]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[6]"Should I not be able to act like this potter with you, house of Israel?—this is Yahweh's declaration. Behold! Like clay in a potter's hand—that is how you are in my hand, house of Israel.[7]At one moment, I may proclaim something about a nation or a kingdom, that I will drive it out, tear it down, or destroy it.[8]But if the nation about which I have made that proclamation turns from its evil, then I will relent from the disaster that I was planning to bring upon it.

[9]At another moment, I may proclaim something about a nation or a kingdom, that I will build it up or plant it.[10]But if it does evil in my eyes by not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had said I would do for them.
[11]So now, speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and say, 'Yahweh says this: See, I am about to form disaster against you. I am about to devise a plan against you. Repent, each person from his wicked way, so your ways and your practices will bring good to you.'[12]But they will say, 'This is no use. We will act according to our own plans. Each one of us will do what his evil, stubborn heart desires.'

[13]Therefore Yahweh says this,
'Ask the nations,
who has ever heard of such a thing as this?
The virgin Israel has committed a horrible act.
14 Does the snow in Lebanon
ever leave the rocky hills on its sides?
Are the mountain streams coming from far away
ever destroyed, those cold streams?

15 Yet my people have forgotten me.
They have made offerings to useless idols
and been made to stumble in their paths;
they have left the ancient paths
to walk lesser paths.

16 Their land will become a horror,
an object of everlasting hissing.
Everyone who passes by her
will be astonished and shake his head.

17 I will scatter them before their enemies
like an eastern wind.
I will show them my back, and not my face,
on the day of their disaster.'"

[18]So the people said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah, since the law will never perish from the priests, or advice from the wise men, or words from the prophets. Come, let us attack him with our words and no longer pay attention to anything he proclaims."
19 Pay attention to me, Yahweh,

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and listen to the voice of my enemies.

20 Will disaster from them really be my reward
for being good to them?
For they have dug a pit for me.
Remember how I stood before you to speak for their welfare,
to cause your fury to turn away from them.

21 Therefore give their children over to famine,
and give them to the hands of those who use the sword.
So let their women become bereaved and widows,
and their men be killed,
and their young men killed by the sword in battle.

22 Let a distressed shout be heard from their houses,
as you suddenly bring raiders against them.
For they have dug a pit to capture me
and have hidden traps for my feet.

23 But you, Yahweh
you know all of their plans against me to kill me.
Do not forgive their iniquities.
Do not wipe their sins away from you.
Let them be overthrown before you.
Act against them in the time of your wrath.

Jeremiah 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 18:13-17, 19-23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Attacking Jeremiah

Things were so bad in Judah, they even attacked Jeremiah. To attack Yahweh's prophet was to attack Yahweh himself. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

Like a potter can change what he is making from one type of pot to another, God can change his plans and not punish people if they repent. The image of God as a potter and mankind as clay is an important one in Scripture.

Links:

Jeremiah 18:1 Notes

Jeremiah 18:1

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 7:1]

Jeremiah 18:2

the potter's house

"the workshop of the potter." A potter is someone who makes pots from clay.

Jeremiah 18:3

behold!

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

on the potter's wheel

The potter's wheel is a small table that spins. A potter uses it to make pots.

Jeremiah 18:4

the pot he was making from the clay was ruined in the potter's hand

The word "ruined" means that something about the pot made the potter unhappy. This can be stated in active form.

Alternate translation: "the pot that the potter was making with his hands was not good"

was making

"was forming" or "was shaping"

he returned the clay and formed it into another pot

He stopped making the pot, crushed the clay back into a lump, and then used that lump of clay to make another pot.

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that was pleasing in his eyes
Here the word "eyes" represents sight and sight represents one's opinion. Alternate translation: "that he thought was good"
Jeremiah 18:5
the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 1:4]
Jeremiah 18:6
Should I not be able to act like this potter with you, house of Israel?
With this question, Yahweh emphasizes his authority to do as he pleases with Israel. Alternate translation: "I am allowed to act toward you, house of Israel, like the potter acts toward the clay."
house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Behold
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
Like clay in a potter's hand—that is how you are in my hand
Yahweh compares his being able to remake Israel as he see fit to the way that the potter is able to remake a lump of clay as he sees fit.
Jeremiah 18:7
tear it down, or destroy it
These two expressions basically mean the same thing. In the first expression, Yahweh speaks of destroying a kingdom as if the kingdom were a plant or a building that he tears down.
Jeremiah 18:8
relent from
"withhold" or "not bring"
Jeremiah 18:9
build it up or plant it
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh speaks of strengthening kingdoms as if they were buildings that he would build, and as if they were plants that he would plant.
Jeremiah 18:10
if it does evil in my eyes
Here the word "it" refers to a nation or kingdom, which is a metonym for the people in that nation or kingdom. The word "eyes" represents seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "if the people of that nation do things that I consider to be evil"
not listening to my voice
Here the word "voice" represents the words that Yahweh speaks. Here, "not listening" is an idiom that means that they do not obey. Alternate translation: "not obeying what I say"
Jeremiah 18:11
See
This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I am about to form disaster against you. I am about to devise a plan against you
Yahweh speaks of planning disaster as if disaster were an object that he forms, like the potter would form clay. The second sentence repeats the same idea as the first using different words. Alternate translation: "I am about to devise a plan to bring disaster against you"
devise a plan
"make a plan"
his wicked way
Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a "way" or path along which the person walks. Alternate translation: "his wicked way of living"
so your ways and your practices will bring good to you
The words "ways" and "practices" both refer to a person's actions and general lifestyle. Alternate translation: "so your actions will result in good happening to you"
Jeremiah 18:12
But they will say
The word "they" refers to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.
This is no use
Possible meanings for this idiom are 1) the people do not care about what Jeremiah will say to them. Alternate translation: "We do not care what you say" or 2) The people do not think that anything good will come of what Jeremiah tells them to do. Alternate translation: "What you are saying will not work"
what his evil, stubborn heart desires
Here the word "heart" represents the person's mind or will. Alternate translation: "what his evil, stubborn mind desires" or "whatever evil things that we stubbornly want to do"
Jeremiah 18:13
Ask the nations, who has ever heard of such a thing as this?
Here the word "nations" represents the people in the nations. Yahweh asks this question to scold the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "Ask the nations if any of them have ever heard of such a thing as this." or "Nowhere on earth has anyone ever heard of such a thing like this."
The virgin Israel has committed a horrible act
It was common to refer to nations as if they were women. Yahweh speaks of Israel being pure and faithful towards him as if she were a virgin and of Israel being unfaithful to him as if she had "committed a horrible act." Alternate translation: "Israel, who is like a virgin, has done something horrible"
Jeremiah 18:14
Does the snow in Lebanon ever leave the rocky hills on its sides?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the snow on the mountains never melts. Alternate translation: "The snow in Lebanon never leaves the rocky hills on its sides."
the rocky hills on its sides
"the sides of the rocky hills"
Are the mountain streams coming from far away ever destroyed, those cold streams?

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Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the mountain streams never cease to flow. He speaks of the streams drying up as if they were destroyed. Alternate translation: "Those cold mountain streams that come from far away never cease to flow."

Jeremiah 18:15

been made to stumble in their paths

Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a path along which he walks, and of living unfaithfully to him as if the person stumbled along the path. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this caused them to stumble in their paths" or "it is like they stumbled while walking on a path"

they have left the ancient paths to walk lesser paths

Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a path along which he walks. Here, "the ancient paths" represents the way that Yahweh had told their ancestors to live and "lesser paths" represents living unfaithfully to Yahweh.

Jeremiah 18:16

will become a horror

The word "horror" may be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "will become something that horrifies people"

an object of everlasting hissing

The word "hissing" refers to a sound that shows strong disapproval and can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "an object at which people will always hiss"

passes by her

Here the word "her" refers to "Their land."

Jeremiah 18:17

I will scatter them before their enemies like an eastern wind

Yahweh speaks of causing the people to flee before their enemies as if he were an eastern wind that scatters dust and debris. Alternate translation: "I will be like an eastern wind and scatter them before their enemies" or "I will scatter them before their enemies like an eastern wind scatters dust and debris"

will scatter them

Here the word "them" refers to "my people."

I will show them my back, and not my face

"I will turn my back toward them, and not my face." Turning one's back towards someone is a symbolic action that represents rejection and turning one's face towards someone is a symbolic action that represents favor. Alternate translation: "I will reject them and not act favorably towards them"

Jeremiah 18:18

let us make plots against Jeremiah

"let us make plans to harm Jeremiah"

the law will never perish from the priests, or advice from the wise men, or words from the prophets

The words "will never perish" can be supplied to each of these phrases. This can also be expressed in positive terms. Alternate translation: "the law will never perish from the priests, and advice will never perish from the wise men, and words will never perish from the prophets" or "the priests will always have the law, the wise men will always give advice, and the prophets will always speak"

words from the prophets

Here "words" represents messages that the prophets speak from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "words of Yahweh from the prophets"

attack him with our words

The people speak of speaking harmful words against Jeremiah as if their words were weapons with which they attack him. Alternate translation: "say things that will harm him"

Jeremiah 18:19

Pay attention to me

Here Jeremiah begins speaking to Yahweh.

Jeremiah 18:20

Will disaster from them really be my reward for being good to them?

Jeremiah asks this question to emphasize that good actions should not be repaid with bad things. Alternate translation: "Disaster from them should not be my reward for being good to them."

they have dug a pit for me

Jeremiah speaks of his enemies planning to kill him as if they had dug a pit in which to trap him.

to cause your fury to turn away from them

Here the word "fury" represents the punishment that Yahweh intended to inflict upon them. Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh not punishing them as if he were turning his fury away from them. Alternate translation: "so that you would not punish them in your anger"

Jeremiah 18:21

give their children over to famine

The idiom "give over" means to place a person in the power of another person. Jeremiah speaks of "famine" as if it were a person who could have power over others. Alternate translation: "cause their children to die from famine"

give them to the hands of those who use the sword

Here the word "hands" represents power. Alternate translation: "cause those who use the sword to have power over them" or "cause them to die in battle"

let their women become bereaved and widows

"let the children and husbands of their women die." The word "bereaved" refers to a woman whose children have all died.

their men be killed

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let their men be killed" or "let people kill their men"

their young men killed by the sword in battle

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let their young men be killed by the sword in battle" or "let people kill their young men with swords in battle"

Jeremiah 18:22

Let a distressed shout be heard

The phrase "a distressed shout" can be translated with a verbal phrase. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let people hear a distressed shout" or "Let people hear others shout in distress"

For they have dug a pit to capture me and have hidden traps for my feet

These two phrases share similar meanings. Jeremiah speaks of his enemies planning to kill him as if they had

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dug a pit for him to fall into and set traps in which to capture him.

they have dug a pit

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 18:20.

have hidden traps for my feet

Here the word "feet" represents Jeremiah. Alternate translation: "have hidden traps for me" or "have hidden traps for me to step on"

Jeremiah 18:23

Do not wipe their sins away from you

Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh forgiving his enemies' sins as if someone had written their sins down and Yahweh would erase them. This phrase means the same thing as the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "Do not pardon their sins"

Let them be overthrown before you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let people overthrow them in your presence"

in the time of your wrath

The word "wrath" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "when you are still angry with them"

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19 [1]Yahweh said this, "Go and purchase a potter's clay flask while you are with the elders of the people and the priests.
[2]Then go out to the Valley of Ben Hinnom at the entry of the Broken Pottery Gate, and there proclaim the words that I will tell you.[3]Say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, "See, I am about to bring disaster on this place, and the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle.
[4]I will do this because they have abandoned me and profaned this place. In this place they offer sacrifices to other gods that they did not know. They, their ancestors, and the kings of Judah have also filled this place with innocent blood.[5]They built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to him—something that I did not command or mention, nor did it enter my mind.

[6]Therefore, see, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when this place will no longer be called Topheth, the Valley of Ben Hinnom, for it will be the Valley of Slaughter.[7]In this place I will make the plans of Judah and Jerusalem useless. I will make them to fall by the sword before their enemies and by the hand of the ones seeking their lives. Then I will give their corpses as food to the birds of the heavens and the wild animals of the earth.[8]Then I will make this city a ruin and the object of hissing, for everyone passing by it will be astonished and hiss regarding all of its plagues.[9]I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and daughters; each man will consume the flesh of his neighbor in the siege and in the distress with which their enemies and the ones seeking their lives distress them."'

[10]Then you will break the clay flask in the sight of the men who went with you.[11]You will say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: I will do this same thing to this people and this city—this is Yahweh's declaration—just as Jeremiah shattered the clay flask so that it could not be repaired again. People will bury the dead in Topheth until there is no place left for any more dead.
[12]This is what I will do to this place and its inhabitants when I make this city like Topheth—this is Yahweh's declaration—
[13]so the houses of Jerusalem and of the kings of Judah will become like Topheth—all the houses on whose rooftops the unclean people worship all the stars of the heavens and pour out drink offerings to other gods.'"

[14]Then Jeremiah went from Topheth, where Yahweh had sent him to prophesy. He stood in the courtyard of the house of Yahweh and he said to all the people,[15]"Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to bring to this city and to all of its towns all the disaster that I have proclaimed against it, since they stiffened their neck and refused to listen to my words.'"

Jeremiah 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

People horrified

The destruction of Jerusalem will be so complete that it will leave dead bodies everywhere and horrify people who see it.

Links:

Jeremiah 19:1 Notes

Jeremiah 19:1

potter's clay flask

A potter is someone who makes pots from clay.

flask

"jar" or "bottle"

Jeremiah 19:2

Valley of Ben Hinnom

This is the name of a valley south of the city of Jerusalem, where people sacrificed to false gods. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 7:31.

Jeremiah 19:3

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in

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Jeremiah 6:6.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle

Here "ears ... will tingle" is an idiom that means everyone will be shocked by what they hear. Alternate translation: "it will shock everyone who hears of it"

will tingle

Possible meanings are 1) "will ring" or 2) "will quiver."

Jeremiah 19:4

they have abandoned me

Here the word "they" refers to the people of Judah.

filled this place with innocent blood

Here "innocent blood" represents the murder of innocent people. Yahweh speaks of murdering many people as filling a place with blood. Alternate translation: "murdered many innocent people in this place"

Jeremiah 19:5

nor did it enter my mind

Here the word "mind" refers to Yahweh's thoughts. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:31]

Jeremiah 19:6

see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

this place will no longer be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will no longer call this place"

Topheth ... the Valley of Ben Hinnom ... the Valley of Slaughter

See how you translated the names of these places in Jeremiah 7:31.

Jeremiah 19:7

I will make them to fall by the sword before their enemies

The idiom "to fall by the sword" means to die in battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will enable their enemies to kill them with swords"

I will make them

The word "them" refers to the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

by the hand of the ones seeking their lives

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. The idiom "fall ... by the hand of" means to be killed by someone, with the word "hand" representing the whole person. Alternate translation: "I will enable those who want to kill them to kill them"

Jeremiah 19:8

the object of hissing

The word "hissing" refers to a sound that shows strong disapproval and can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "an object at which people hiss"

Jeremiah 19:9

I will make them eat

"I will make the people who live in Jerusalem eat"

in the siege

"because of the siege"

distress them

"bring upon them"

Jeremiah 19:10

in the sight of the men who went with you

The abstract noun "sight" can be expressed with the verb "watching." Alternate translation: "while the men who went with you are watching"

Jeremiah 19:11

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

it could not be repaired again

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can repair it again"

Jeremiah 19:13

of the kings of Judah

"the houses of the kings of Judah"

the unclean people

People who are not acceptable for God's purposes are spoken of as if they were physically unclean.

Jeremiah 19:15

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

stiffened their neck and refused to listen

These two phrases both speak of the people being stubborn. In the first phrase, Yahweh speaks of the people being stubborn as if they had made their necks stiff. Alternate translation: "stubbornly refused to listen"

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20 [1]Pashhur son of Immer the priest—he was a leading officer—heard Jeremiah prophesying these words before the house of Yahweh.[2]So Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet and then placed him in the stocks that were at the Upper Gate of Benjamin in the house of Yahweh.

[3]It happened on the next day that Pashhur brought Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then Jeremiah said to him, "Yahweh has not called your name Pashhur, but you are Magor Missabib.[4]For Yahweh says this, 'Look, I will make you an object of horror, you and all of your loved ones, for they will fall by the sword of their enemies and your eyes will see it. I will give all of Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon. He will make them captives in Babylon or attack them with the sword.

[5]I will give him all the wealth of this city and all the products of its labor, all of its precious items, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah. I will place these things in the hand of your enemies, and they will plunder them. They will seize them and bring them to Babylon.[6]But you, Pashhur, and all the inhabitants of your house will go into captivity. You will go to Babylon and die there. You and all of your loved ones to whom you prophesied deceitful things will be buried there.'"

7 "Yahweh, you deceived me, and I was deceived.
You are stronger than I,

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and you overpowered me.
I have become a laughingstock all day long;
everyone mocks me.

8 For whenever I have spoken,
I have called out and proclaimed,
'Violence and destruction.'
So the word of Yahweh
has brought me insult and mocking all the day.

9 If I say, 'I will not think about Yahweh anymore.
I will not speak any longer in his name.'
Then it is like a burning fire in my heart,
held within my bones.
So I struggle to contain it but I cannot.

10 I have heard rumors of terror
from many people all around.
'Report! We must report it!'
Every one of my men of peace
watches to see if I will fall.
'Perhaps he can be tricked.
If so, we can overpower him
and take our revenge on him.'

11 But Yahweh is with me like a terrifying warrior,
so the ones pursuing me will stagger.
They will not defeat me.
They will be greatly ashamed,
because they will not succeed.
They will have unending shame,
it will never be forgotten.

12 But Yahweh of hosts,
you examine the righteous
and see the mind and the heart.
Let me see your vengeance on them
for I have committed my cause to you.

13 Sing to Yahweh!
Praise Yahweh!
For he has rescued the lives of those
who are oppressed from the hand of evildoers.

14 Let the day when I was born be cursed.
Do not let the day that my mother bore me be blessed.

15 Let the man who brought the joyful news
to my father be cursed,
the one who said,
'A male child has been born to you,' causing great joy.

16 Let that man be like the cities that Yahweh overthrew

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and he did not have compassion on them.
Let him hear a cry for help in the dawn,
a battle cry at noontime,

17 because he did not kill me in the womb,
making my mother to be my tomb,
a womb that was pregnant forever.

18 Why is it that I came out from the womb
to see troubles and agony,
so that my days are filled with shame?"

Jeremiah 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 20:7-18.

Special concepts in this chapter

Pashhur

This chapter prophesied punishment against a specific leader named Pashhur. He was in charge of protecting the temple and had Jeremiah beaten and arrested. (See: prophet and temple)

Different Reactions to Suffering

Jeremiah and the Jews reacted differently to suffering. Jeremiah told the Jews that God said that he would punish them and they would suffer, so the Jews became angry and were cruel to Jeremiah. Jeremiah suffered when they were cruel to him, and he complained to God about it. However, Jeremiah also praised God for always being with him, and he trusted that God would punish the people who had harmed him. (See: and trust)

Links:

Jeremiah 20:1 Notes

Jeremiah 20:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

Pashhur ... Immer

These are names of men.

Jeremiah 20:2

Pashhur beat Jeremiah

Possible meanings are 1) that Pashhur himself beat Jeremiah or 2) that Pashhur ordered other men to beat Jeremiah.

stocks

Stocks are a wooden frame with holes in it that people use to lock up a prisoner's hands, feet, and head.

Upper Gate of Benjamin

This gate is different from the gate in the city wall that shared the same name.

Jeremiah 20:3

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

you are Magor Missabib

This name means "terror on every side" or "surrounded by terror."

Jeremiah 20:4

Look,

This word adds emphasis to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

they will fall by the sword of their enemies

The idiom "fall by the sword" means that they will die in battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies will kill them with swords" or "their enemies will kill them in battle"

your eyes will see it

Here the word "eyes" represents Pashhur. Alternate translation: "you will see it"

I will give all of Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon

Here the word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "I will enable the king of Babylon to conquer all of Judah"

Jeremiah 20:5

I will give him

Here the word "him" refers to the king of Babylon.

all the wealth ... all the products of its labor, all of its precious items, and all the treasures

Yahweh repeats the same basic idea four times for emphasis. Babylon will take away all the wealth of Israel, including the king's possessions.

I will place these things in the hand of your enemies

Placing things in people's hands represents giving thing to the people or allowing the people to take the things. Alternate translation: "I will give these things to your enemies" or "I will allow your enemies to take possession of

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these things"

Jeremiah 20:6

You and all of your loved ones to whom you prophesied deceitful things will be buried there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There, people will bury you and all of your loved ones to whom you prophesied deceitful things"

Jeremiah 20:7

General Information:

Jeremiah speaks to Yahweh.

Yahweh, you deceived me, and I was deceived

Some modern versions interpret these Hebrew expressions as "Yahweh, you persuaded me, and I was indeed persuaded."

I was deceived

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you deceived me"

I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the way others mock him.

laughingstock

This is a person whom others laugh at and make fun of.

Jeremiah 20:8

called out and proclaimed

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that he proclaimed Yahweh's message boldly. Alternate translation: "openly proclaimed" or "proclaimed loudly"

the word of Yahweh has brought me insult and mocking all the day

Here "word" refers to the message of Yahweh. The words "insult" and "mocking" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "people insult and mock me all day because I proclaim Yahweh's message"

Jeremiah 20:9

I will not speak any longer in his name

Possible meanings are 1) "I will never mention Yahweh or say anything about him" or 2) the word "name" represents authority. Alternate translation: "I will no longer speak as his messenger"

it is like a burning fire in my heart, held within my bones

Here the words "heart" and "bones" represent Jeremiah's innermost being. Jeremiah speaks of being unable to not speak Yahweh's message as if Yahweh's message were a fire that burns within him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's word is like a fire that burns deep within me"

Jeremiah 20:10

Report! We must report it

Jeremiah's enemies say these words.

my men of peace

This is an ironic term for people whom the speaker thought were friends but turned out to be enemies. Alternate translation: "my treacherous friends" or "my so-called friends"

watches to see if I will fall

Jeremiah speaks of his enemies waiting for him to do something wrong for which they might accuse him as if they were watching for him to fall down.

Perhaps he can be tricked ... take our revenge on him

Jeremiah's enemies say these words.

Perhaps he can be tricked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Perhaps we can trick him"

Jeremiah 20:11

Yahweh is with me like a terrifying warrior

Jeremiah compares Yahweh helping him and defending him against his enemies to a terrifying warrior.

so the ones pursuing me will stagger

Jeremiah speaks of his enemies trying to harm him as if they were chasing after him and of their failing to harm him as if they were to stagger.

They will be greatly ashamed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will bring great shame upon them"

it will never be forgotten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will never forget it"

Jeremiah 20:12

see the mind and the heart

The word "mind" is a metonym for what a person thinks and decides, and the word "heart" is a metonym for what a person feels and desires. Alternate translation: "know every person's thoughts and feelings"

Jeremiah 20:13

those who are oppressed from the hand of evildoers

Here the word "hand" represents power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom evildoers oppress with their power"

Jeremiah 20:14

General Information:

Jeremiah continues speaking to Yahweh.

Let the day when I was born be cursed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Curse the day I was born" or "Let people curse the day when I was born"

Do not let the day that my mother bore me be blessed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not bless the day that my mother bore me" or "Do not let people bless the day that my mother bore me"

Jeremiah 20:15

Let the man who brought the joyful news to my father be cursed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Curse the man who informed my father" or "Let people curse the man who informed my father"

Jeremiah 20:16

that man

This refers to the man who informed Jeremiah's father of Jeremiah's birth.

the cities that Yahweh overthrew

This refers to Sodom and Gomorrah.

he did not have compassion

Here the word "he" refers to Yahweh.

Let him hear a cry for help

Here the word "him" refers to "that man."

Jeremiah 20:17

making my mother to be my tomb

Jeremiah speaks of his dying while his mother was still pregnant with him as if his mother's womb were his tomb.

a womb that was pregnant forever

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Jeremiah speaks of his pregnant mother never giving birth to the baby in her womb as if she had been pregnant forever.

Jeremiah 20:18

Why is it that I came out from the womb to see troubles and agony ... shame?

Jeremiah uses this rhetorical question to complain that there was no good reason for him to be born. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "There was no reason for me to be born only to see troubles and agony ... shame."

to see troubles and agony

The words "troubles" and "agony" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the amount and severity of suffering. Alternate translation: "to experience so much suffering"

my days are filled with shame

Here the word "days" represents all the days of Jeremiah's life. Alternate translation: "my life is filled with shame"

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21 [1]The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh when King Zedekiah sent Pashhur son of Malkijah and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest to him, and they said,[2]"Seek advice from Yahweh on our behalf, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is making war on us. Perhaps Yahweh will do miracles for us, as in times past, and will make him withdraw from us."

[3]So Jeremiah said to them, "This is what you must say to Zedekiah,[4]'Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: See, I am about to turn back the instruments of war that are in your hand, with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are closing you in from outside the walls! For I will gather them in the middle of this city.[5]Then I myself will fight against you with a raised hand and a strong arm, and with wrath, fury, and great anger.
[6]For I will attack the inhabitants of this city, both man and animal. They will die in a severe plague.[7]After this—this is Yahweh's declaration—Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants, the people, and whoever remains in this city after the plague, the sword, and the famine, I will give them all into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those seeking their life. Then he will kill them with the edge of the sword. He will not pity them, spare them, or have compassion.'

[8]Then to this people you must say, 'Yahweh says this: See, I am about to place before you the way of life and the way of death.[9]Anyone staying in this city will die by the sword, famine, and plague; but anyone going out and falling on his knees before the Chaldeans who have closed in against you will live. His life will be his loot.[10]For I have set my face against this city in order to bring disaster and not to bring good—this is Yahweh's declaration. It has been given into the hand of the king of Babylon and he will burn it.'

[11]Concerning the house of the king of Judah, listen to the word of Yahweh.[12]House of David, Yahweh says,
'Bring about justice in the morning.
Rescue the one who has been robbed
by the hand of the oppressor,
or my fury will go out like fire and burn,
and there is no one who can quench it,
because of the wickedness of your practices.
[13] See, inhabitant of the valley!
I am against you, rock of the plain—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
I am against anyone who is saying,
"Who will come down to attack us?"
or "Who will enter our houses?"

[14] I have assigned the fruit of your practices
to come against you—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
and I will light a fire in the thickets,
and it will consume everything around it.'"

Jeremiah 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 21:12-14.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Jerusalem doomed

God will fight against Jerusalem and will use the nation of Babylon to fight his battle. If the Jews wanted to live, they needed to surrender to Babylon. Most of the Jews would have rather died than to surrender to Babylon. Usually, fighting against a Gentile nation was a sign of trust in Yahweh's power. In this instance, it was a sign of trust in Yahweh to surrender. (See: sign and trust)

Links:

Jeremiah 21:1 Notes

Jeremiah 21:1

The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:1]

Pashhur

This is not the same Pashhur that was mentioned in Jeremiah 20:1.

Pashhur ... Malkijah ... Maaseiah

These are names of men.

and they said

"Pashhur and Zephaniah said to Jeremiah"

Jeremiah 21:2

Seek advice from Yahweh on our behalf ... making war on us

This was a polite, but urgent request. Alternate translation: "Please speak to Yahweh for us ... attacking us"

as in times past

"as he did in the past"

will make him withdraw from us

"will make him go away"

Jeremiah 21:4

See

This tells the hearer to pay special attention to what follows.

turn back

Possible meanings are 1) to make useless or 2) to send back into the city.

the instruments of war that are in your hand

Possible meanings are 1) the instruments of war refers to the soldiers who carry them and "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "the soldiers that you command" or 2) the instruments of war are literal weapons and "your hand" represent both the king and his soldiers. Alternate translation: "the weapons that you and your soldiers carry"

Chaldeans

This term here is another name for the Babylonians.

closing you in

"coming close to you"

I will gather them

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will allow the Babylonians to enter the city or 2) Yahweh will cause the Israelites to bring their weapons back into the center of the city.

Jeremiah 21:5

Then I myself

This is emphatic and stresses that Yahweh is the one who will do this.

with a raised hand and a strong arm

Both of these phrases are idiomatic expressions that refer to great power. Alternate translation: "with very great power"

with wrath, fury, and great anger

These words all mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the great intensity of his anger. Alternate translation: "with extremely great anger"

Jeremiah 21:6

inhabitants of this city

"those who live in Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 21:7

the sword

Here this refers to the battle in which swords are used. Alternate translation: "the war"

into the hand

Here "hand" refers to the power of their enemies over them. Alternate translation: "into the power"

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon ... their enemies ... those seeking their life

All of these phrases refer to Nebuchadnezzar and his army.

seeking their life

"wanting to kill them"

with the edge of the sword

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metonym for death in battle. Alternate translation: "in battle" or 2) they will be killed by literal swords.

He will not pity them, spare them, or have compassion

These three phrases have the same meaning and emphasize that Nebuchadnezzar will deal severely with them. Alternate translation: "He will not show them any mercy or compassion at all"

Jeremiah 21:8

this people

"the people of Jerusalem"

I am about to place before you the way of life and the way of death

Yahweh is offering the people of Jerusalem a choice that will determine whether they live or die.

Jeremiah 21:9

by the sword, famine, and plague

Death by the sword refers to death in battle. Alternate translation: "in battle and by famine and plague"

falling on his knees before

This symbolic act represents surrender. Alternate translation: "surrendering to"

closed in against you

"attacked you from all sides"

His life will be his loot

The word "loot" here is a metaphor for something taken away from Jerusalem after the Babylonians conquer it. This is ironic because the Babylonians would take physical objects, but although the Judeans who surrendered would not die, they would take no physical objects with them. Alternate translation: "He will escape with his life" or "He

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will not die, but he will lose all his possessions"

Jeremiah 21:10

I have set my face against this city

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "I have made up my mind to oppose this city"

have set my face against

"am staring angrily at"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

It has been given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have given it"

into the hand of the king

Here "hand" represents the power of the king to destroy the city. Alternate translation: "into the power of the king"

Jeremiah 21:11

Concerning the house of the king of Judah, listen to the word of Yahweh

This may serve as a title for 21:12-23:8. Alternate translation: "Listen to what Yahweh says about the king of Judah, his family, and his servants"

the house of the king of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to king and his family. Alternate translation: "the king of Judah and his family"

Jeremiah 21:12

House of David

This refers to the same people as "the house of the king of Judah." All of the kings of Judah were descendants of David. Alternate translation: "Descendants of David"

Bring about justice in the morning

The abstract noun "justice" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Always treat the people whom you rule over fairly"

the hand of the oppressor

Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "the power of the one who oppresses them"

my fury will go out like fire and burn

Here Yahweh's punishment is spoken of as if it was a fire that would burn up those who did evil. Alternate translation: "I will punish and destroy you in my anger quickly and completely"

there is no one who can quench it

Jeremiah continues the simile of Yahweh's punishment as a fire that was so hot that no one could put it out with water.

the wickedness of your practices

"the evil things you do" or "how evil what you do is." See how this is translated in Jeremiah 4:4.

Jeremiah 21:13

See

This alerts whoever is hearing to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention"

inhabitant of the valley

Possible meanings are 1) this may refer to Jerusalem, which was located above a valley, because "inhabitant" is singular and feminine, as is Jerusalem or 2) this is directed to another city or group of people. Most versions leave the original form rather than specifying the city.

I am against

"I oppose" or "I am going to punish"

Who will come down to attack us? ... Who will enter our houses?

These questions are used to state their confidence that they can resist attack. Alternate translation: "No one will attack us! ... No one will enter our houses!"

Jeremiah 21:14

I have assigned the fruit of your practices to come against you

The result of their evil deeds is spoken of as fruit which grew from those practices. Alternate translation: "I will punish you as you deserve because of the things you have done"

in the thickets

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor for the columns of wood that supported the palace or 2) these are literal patches of brush.

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22 [1]This is what Yahweh says, "Go down to the house of the king of Judah and proclaim this word there.[2]Say, 'King of Judah, listen to the word of Yahweh—you who sit on David's throne—you, and your servants, and your people who come through these gates.[3]Yahweh says this, "Perform justice and righteousness, and anyone who has been robbed—rescue him from the hand of the oppressor. Do not mistreat any foreigner in your land, or any orphan or widow. Do not commit violence or pour out innocent blood in this place.
[4]For if you truly do these things, then kings sitting on David's throne will enter the gates of this house riding in a chariot and on horses—he, his servants, and his people![5]But if you do not listen to these words, then I have sworn by myself—this is Yahweh's declaration—that this royal house will become a ruin.'"

[6]For Yahweh says this concerning the house of the king of Judah,
'You are like Gilead,
or like the summit of Lebanon to me.
Yet I will turn you into a wilderness,
into cities with no inhabitants.
[7] For I have appointed destroyers to come against you!
Men with their weapons
will cut off the best of your cedars
and let them fall into the fire.

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[8]Then many nations will pass by this city. Each person will say to the next, "Why has Yahweh acted in this way toward this great city?"[9]Then the other will answer, "Because they abandoned the covenant of Yahweh their God and bowed down to other gods and worshiped them."

[10] Do not weep for the one who is dead
or mourn for him;
but weep bitterly for him who is about to go away,
because he will never return
and see the land of his birth again.'

[11]For Yahweh says this about Shallum son of Josiah king of Judah, who served as king instead of Josiah his father, 'He has gone from this place and will not come back.[12]He will die there in the place to where they have exiled him, and he will never again see this land.'

[13] Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness,
his upper rooms by injustice,
who makes his neighbor work for him for nothing,
and he does not give him his wages;

[14] he says, 'I will build for myself a large house
with spacious upper rooms.'
So he cuts out large windows for it,
and he panels it with cedar, and he paints it red.

[15] Is this what makes you a good king,
that you wanted to have boards of cedar?
Did not your father also eat and drink,
yet do justice and righteousness?
Then things went well for him.

[16] He judged in favor of the poor and needy.
It was good then.
Is this not what it means to know me?
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

[17]But there is nothing in your eyes and heart
except worry for your unjust profit
and for pouring out innocent blood,
for producing oppression and crushing of others.

[18]Therefore this is what Yahweh says about Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:
They will not lament for him, saying,
'Woe, my brother!' or 'Woe, my sister!'
They will not lament for him, saying,
'Woe, master!' or 'Woe, majesty!'
[19] He will be buried with a donkey's burial,
dragged away and thrown out
beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

[20] Go up Lebanon's mountains and shout.
Lift your voice in Bashan.
Shout from the Abarim mountains,
for all of your friends will be destroyed.

[21] I spoke to you when you were safe,
but you said, 'I will not listen.'

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This was your custom since your youth,
for you have not listened to my voice.

22 The wind will shepherd away all your shepherds,
and your friends will go into captivity.
Then you will certainly be ashamed and humiliated
by all of your evil deeds.

23 You who live in 'Lebanon,'
who is nestled in cedar buildings,
how you will be pitied when the labor pains come upon you,
pain like that of a woman in labor!

24"As I live—this is Yahweh's declaration—even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet on my right hand, I would tear you off.25For I have given you to the hand of the ones seeking your life and to the hand of those before whom you are afraid, even to the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Chaldeans.26I will throw you and your mother who bore you into another land, a country where you were not born, and there you will die.
27About this land to which they will want to return, they will not come back here.
28 Is this a despised and shattered vessel?
Is this man Jehoiachin a pot that pleases no one?
Why have they thrown him and his descendants out,
and have poured them out into a land that they did not know?

29 Land, Land, Land!
Hear the word of Yahweh!

30 Yahweh says this,
'Write about this man Jehoiachin:
He will be childless.
He will not prosper during his days,
and no one among his descendants
will achieve success
or ever again sit on David's throne
and rule over Judah.'"

Jeremiah 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 22:6-10, 13-28, 28-30.

Special concepts in this chapter

Luxury and oppression

Because the king lived in luxury and oppressed the poor, God was sending him and his mother into captivity unless he repented. The king lacked justice. (See: oppress and repent and justice)

Links:

Jeremiah 22:1 Notes

Jeremiah 22:1

the house of the king of Judah

"the palace of the king of Judah." The word "house" has a range of possible meanings. In this case it refers to the royal palace where the king lived.

proclaim this word

"proclaim this message"

Jeremiah 22:2

your people who come through these gates

These gates are the gates of the king's palace. Alternate translation: "your people who come to visit the king"

Jeremiah 22:3

Perform justice and righteousness

The abstract nouns "justice" and "righteousness can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "Act fairly and justly"

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anyone who has been robbed—rescue him from the hand of the oppressor
"rescue anyone who has been robbed from the hand of the oppressor"
the hand of the oppressor
Here "the hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "the power of the oppressor" or "the one who would harm him"
Do not mistreat
"Do not treat badly"
orphan
a child who does not have parents
Do not ... pour out innocent blood
Here "pour out ... blood" is associated with murder, and "blood" refers to the murdered people. Alternate translation: "Do not ... murder innocent people"
in this place
Possible meanings are 1) Jerusalem or 2) the whole country of Judah. This does not imply that it is good to murder people in other places.
Jeremiah 22:4
kings sitting on David's throne
The metonym "throne" refers to kingly authority like David had. Alternate translation: "kings, ruling like David before them"
the gates of this house
This refers to the gates to the courtyard of the palace.
riding in a chariot and on horses
This phrase is a metonym that describes the kings as powerful and wealthy.
he, his servants, and his people
This sentence lists all who will be powerful and wealthy. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he, his servants, and his people will ride into the palace on chariots and horses"
Jeremiah 22:5
if you do not listen to
"if you refuse to pay attention to" or "if you do not obey"
this royal house
This phrase here appears to refer specifically to the royal palace.
Jeremiah 22:6
the house of the king of Judah
These words could be 1) a reference to the literal royal palace where the king lived or 2) a metonym for the family, the royal line of the kings of Judah, that lived in the house. Alternate translation: "the royal dynasty of Judah"
You are like Gilead, or like the summit of Lebanon
Possible meanings are 1) "You are as beautiful as Gilead or the summit of Lebanon" or 2) "You give me as much pleasure as Gilead or the summit of Lebanon."
turn you into a wilderness
What was formerly beautiful is said to become bare and deserted. Alternate translation: "cause you to become empty like the desert"
Jeremiah 22:7
I have appointed destroyers to come against you
"I have chosen an army to attack you"
the best of your cedars
Possible meaning are 1) the beams of the palace or 2) the leading men of the royal family.
fall into the fire
Possible meanings are 1) a literal fire that will burn the palace beams or 2) the destruction of the royal family is spoken of as if they were burned in a fire.
Jeremiah 22:8
Then many nations will pass by this city
Here "nations" refers to the people from those nations that pass by. Alternate translation: "Then many people from various nations will pass by this city"
Jeremiah 22:9
bowed down to other gods and worshiped them
These two phrases mean the same thing. The phrase "bowed down" describes the posture that people used in worship. Alternate translation: "they worshiped other gods"
Jeremiah 22:10
General Information:
Yahweh has shifted from addressing the King of Judah and is now speaking to a general audience.
the one who is dead
This is singular, and refers to King Josiah who had been killed.
him who is about to go away
This refers to King Jehoahaz who was taken into exile in Egypt.
never return and see the land of his birth
"never come back and see the land of Israel again" or "never return and see the place where he was born"
Jeremiah 22:11
Shallum
The name in Hebrew is "Shallum," but he is better known as Jehoahaz.
who served as king instead of Josiah his father
"who became king when his father, Josiah, died"
Jeremiah 22:13
him who builds ... his upper rooms ... who makes ... for him ... he does not give
The words "him" and "his" and "who" and "he" refer to King Jehoahaz (verse 11).
builds his house by unrighteousness, his upper rooms by injustice
The abstract nouns "unrighteousness" and "injustice" have similar meanings, are repeated for emphasis, and can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "unjustly forced men to build his house and his upper rooms"
his house
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jehoahaz
him his wages
This refers to any of the neighbors of King Jehoahaz (verse 11) whom the king forces to work.
Jeremiah 22:14
he says ... he cuts ... he panels ... he paints
These refer to King Jehoahaz (verse 11).
a large house with spacious upper rooms ... large windows ... cedar ... red
These characteristics all describe a very expensive house.
Jeremiah 22:15
Is this what makes you a good king, that you wanted to have boards of

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cedar?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to rebuke Jehoiakim for his expensive palace. Alternate translation: "Having a cedar palace does not make you a good king."
Did not your father also eat and drink, yet do ... righteousness?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Jehoiakim about the example of his father, King Josiah. Alternate translation: "Your father King Josiah enjoyed his life, yet did ... righteousness."
do justice and righteousness
These abstract nouns have similar meanings, are repeated for emphasis and can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "act justly and fairly"
Jeremiah 22:16
It was good then
"Things went well for him"
Is this not what it means to know me?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to rebuke Jehoiakim for not following the example of his father, King Josiah. Alternate translation: "This is what it means to know me."
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 22:17
there is nothing in your eyes and heart except worry ... crushing of others
Here "eyes" is a metonym for seeing and "heart" is a metonym for thinking. Alternate translation: "you never look for or think about anything except ... crushing of others" or "you only look for and think about ways to cheat others and pour out innocent blood, and to oppress and crush others"
unjust profit
This is getting money by cheating or by using unfair means.
pouring out innocent blood
Here "pouring out ... blood" is associated with murder, and "blood" refers to the murdered people. Alternate translation: "murdering innocent people"
crushing of others
"doing violence to others in order to get money"
Jeremiah 22:18
They will not lament for him
In verse 18, Yahweh stops speaking directly to Jehoiakim and begins to speak to other people. Here "lament" refers to grieving at Jehoiakim's death. Alternate translation: "They will not lament for Jehoiakim when he dies"
Woe, my brother! ... Woe, my sister! ... Woe, master! ... Woe, majesty!
Yahweh uses the word "Woe" several times for emphasis. He addresses the various people who would normally show great sadness when someone dies.
Jeremiah 22:19
He will be buried with a donkey's burial, dragged away and thrown out
The burial of Jehoiakim is spoken of as being the same as the manner in which people would bury a donkey. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will bury his dead body the way they would bury a dead donkey; they will drag it away and throw it out"
Jeremiah 22:20
General Information:
It appears that Yahweh is here speaking to the people of Jerusalem, telling them that they will be destroyed.
Lift your voice
This idiom refers to shouting. In this case, they are crying out in grief. Alternate translation: "Cry out"
Abarim mountains
a mountain range that was southeast of Jerusalem
Jeremiah 22:21
I spoke to you when you were safe
"I spoke to you when you were doing well"
This was your custom
"This was your way of life"
you have not listened to my voice
Listening is a metonym for obeying. Alternate translation: "you have not obeyed me"
Jeremiah 22:22
The wind will shepherd away all your shepherds
This is a wordplay—Yahweh uses the idea of "shepherd" in two different ways. Here "shepherds" is a metaphor for the leaders of Jerusalem, and the wind "leads" them away. The wind represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will take your leaders away as if the wind had blown them away"
go into captivity
"become captives" or "go into exile"
Jeremiah 22:23
You who live in 'Lebanon,' who is nestled in cedar buildings
Yahweh speaks of the royal palace as "Lebanon" and "cedar buildings" because it was constructed with a lot of cedar. Alternate translation: "You who live in a palace made from the cedars of Lebanon"
You who live
This "You" is singular and refers to the king.
how you will be pitied
The meaning of the Hebrew is not clear. This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "they will greatly pity you" or 2) "you will groan greatly."
when the labor pains come upon you, pain like that of a woman in labor
The pain that the king will feel when his enemies defeat him will be as intense as the pain a woman feels in childbirth. Alternate translation: "when you experience pain as intense as the pain of a woman in childbirth"
Jeremiah 22:24
even if you ... were the signet on my right hand
Yahweh speaks to Jehoiachin as if it were possible for him to be the ring on Yahweh's hand.
the signet on my right hand
A signet ring was used by a king to place his seal of authority on documents. The signet ring therefore represents authority to rule. The right hand also represents authority to rule. Alternate translation: "the signet ring on my right hand that represented my authority to be king"
I would tear you off
"I would tear you off from my hand" or "I would quickly pull you off of my hand"
Jeremiah 22:25
I have given you to the hand of the ones seeking your life
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I

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have made it possible for the ones seeking your life to capture you"

to the hand of

Here the metonym "hand" represents power and control.

seeking your life

This phrase represents wanting or trying to kill someone. See how this phrase is translated in [Jeremiah 11:21]

Jeremiah 22:27

this land to which they will want to return

This refers to the land of Judah.

Jeremiah 22:28

Is this a despised and shattered vessel? ... did not know?

It is not clear who is speaking in verse 28.

Is this a despised and shattered vessel? Is this man Jehoiachin a pot that pleases no one?

Jehoiachin is spoken of as a pot that was completely worthless and not liked by anyone. The questions emphasize that he has no value or friends. Alternate translation: "Jehoiachin is as useless as a broken vessel and no one is happy with him."

Why have they thrown him and his descendants out, and have poured them out into a land that they did not know?

This rhetorical question explains what will happen to the worthless Jehoiachin. Alternate translation: "Therefore the enemy will remove Jehoiachin and his family from the land and take them to a foreign land."

have poured them out

Jehoiachin and his descendants are spoke of as if they had been poured out in another country like garbage from a vessel.

Jeremiah 22:29

Land, Land, Land

Yahweh speaks his message to all the people of the land by calling out to the land where they live. The title is repeated to call attention to the message.

Jeremiah 22:30

He will be childless

Jehoiachin has several sons. This phrase, then, means it is as if he was childless. His children will not succeed him as king. Alternate translation: "It will be as if he did not have any children"

sit on David's throne

Sitting on a throne is a metonym for ruling as king. Alternate translation: "become king"

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23 [1]"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture—this is Yahweh's declaration."[2]Therefore Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this concerning the shepherds who are shepherding his people, "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away. You have not cared for them. So I am about to punish you for the wickedness of your practices—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[3]I myself will gather the remnant of my flock from all of the lands where I have driven them, and I will return them to a grazing place, where they will be fruitful and increase.[4]Then I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them so they will no longer fear or be dismayed. None of them will go missing—this is Yahweh's declaration.

[5] See, the days are coming
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—when I will raise up for David a righteous branch.
He will reign as king;
he will act wisely
and cause justice and righteousness in the land.

[6] In his days Judah will be rescued,
and Israel will live in security.
Then this is the name by which he will be called:
Yahweh is our righteousness.

[7]Therefore see, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when they will no longer say, 'As Yahweh lives, who brought the people of Israel up from the land of Egypt.'[8]Instead they will say, 'As Yahweh lives, who brought up and who led back the descendants of the house of Israel from the northern land and all the lands where I had driven them.' Then they will live in their own land."

[9]Regarding the prophets,
my heart is broken in me,
and all of my bones tremble.
I have become like a drunk man,
like a man whom wine has overpowered,
because of Yahweh and his holy words.

[10] For the land is full of adulterers.
Because of the curse the land mourns.
The meadows in the wilderness dry up.
These prophets' paths are wicked;
their power is not used in a right manner.

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11 "For both the prophets and the priests are polluted.
I even found their wickedness in my house!
—this is Yahweh's declaration—

12 therefore their way will be
like a slippery place in the darkness.
They will be pushed down.
They will fall in it.
For I will send disaster against them
in the year of their punishment
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

13 For I have seen the prophets in Samaria
doing what is repulsive:
They prophesied by Baal
and led my people Israel astray.

14 Among the prophets in Jerusalem
I have seen horrible things:
They commit adultery and walk in deceit.
They strengthen the hands of evildoers;
no one turns back from his wickedness.
All of them have become like Sodom to me
and its inhabitants like Gomorrah!"

15 Therefore Yahweh of hosts says this concerning the prophets,
"Look, I am about to make them eat wormwood
and drink poisonous water,
for pollution has gone out from the prophets of Jerusalem
to all the land."

16 Yahweh of hosts says this,
"Do not listen to the words of the prophets
who prophesy to you.
They are leading you into vanity!
They are announcing visions from their own minds,
not from Yahweh's mouth.
17 They are constantly saying to those who dishonor me,
'Yahweh declares there will be peace for you.'
For everyone walking
in the stubbornness of his own heart says,
'Disaster will not come upon you.'

18 Yet who has stood in Yahweh's council meeting?
Who sees and hears his word?
Who pays attention to his word and listens?

19 See, there is a storm coming from Yahweh!
His fury is going out, and a tempest is whirling about.
It is whirling around the heads of the wicked.

20 Yahweh's wrath will not return
until it has carried out

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and brought into being his heart's purposes.
In the final days,
you will understand it.

21 I did not send out these prophets,
but they ran.
I did not proclaim anything to them,
but they have still prophesied.

22 For if they had stood in my council meeting,
they would have caused my people to hear my word;
they would have caused them to turn from their wicked words
and from the wickedness of their practices.

23 Am I only a God nearby
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—and not also a God far away?

24 Can anyone hide in a secret place so I cannot see him?
—this is Yahweh's declaration—
and do I not fill the heavens and the earth?
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

25 I have heard what the prophets have said, those who were prophesying deceit in my name. They said, 'I had a dream! I had a dream!' 26 How long will this go on, prophets who prophesy lies from their minds, and who prophesy from the deceit in their hearts? 27 They are planning on making my people forget my name with the dreams that they report, each one to his neighbor, just as their ancestors forgot my name in favor of Baal's name.

28 The prophet who has a dream, let him report the dream. But the one to whom I have declared something, let him declare my word truthfully. What does straw have to do with grain?—this is Yahweh's declaration— 29 Is not my word like fire?—this is Yahweh's declaration—and like a hammer that shatters a rock into pieces? 30 So see, I am against the prophets —this is Yahweh's declaration—anyone who steals words from another person and says they come from me.
31 See, I am against the prophets—this is Yahweh's declaration—who use their tongues to prophesy proclamations. 32 See, I am against the prophets who dream deceitfully—this is Yahweh's declaration—and then proclaim them and in this way mislead my people with their deceit and boasting. I am against them, for I have not sent them out nor given them commands. So they will certainly not help this people—this is Yahweh's declaration.

33 When these people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, 'What is the burden of Yahweh?' you will say to them, 'You are the burden, and I will cast you off'—this is Yahweh's declaration. 34 As for the prophets, priests, and people who are saying, 'This is the burden of Yahweh' I will punish that man and his house.
35 You continue to say, each person to his neighbor and each man to his brother, 'What did Yahweh answer?' and 'What did Yahweh declare?' 36 But you must no longer talk about the 'burden of Yahweh,' for the burden is every man's own word, and you have perverted the words of the living God, Yahweh of hosts, our God.
37 This is what you will say to the prophet, 'What answer did Yahweh give you?' or 'What did Yahweh say?' 38 But if you say, 'The burden of Yahweh', this is what Yahweh says: 'Because you have said these words, 'The burden of Yahweh,' when I sent to you, saying, 'You will not say, "The burden of Yahweh,"' 39 therefore, behold, I am about to pick you up and throw you away from me, along with the city that I gave you and your ancestors. 40 Then I will put everlasting disgrace and everlasting shame on you that will not be forgotten.'"

Jeremiah 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 23:5-6, 9-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Prophesying lies

The false prophets had encouraged people to continue sinning by saying everything will be alright. (See: prophet and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wordplay

In Hebrew, the word for "message" can also mean "burden." In translations that are using footnotes, you may want to explain the wordplay in a footnote. In translations that are not using footnotes or which will primarily be distributed in an oral form, you may need a sentence like "What message has the Lord burdened you with now?" or "You (plural) call God's message a heavy burden on you."

Links:

Jeremiah 23:1 Notes

Jeremiah 23:1

General Information:

In verses 1-4, Yahweh refers to Israel as his pasture, the people of Israel as his sheep, and the leaders of Israel as the shepherds. Shepherds have a duty to protect the sheep, but the leaders were not doing that.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 23:2

You have scattered my flock and have driven them away

These two phrases have similar meanings. The second one strengthens the thought in the first.

the wickedness of your practices

"the evil things you do" or "how evil what you do is." See how this is translated in Jeremiah 4:4.

Jeremiah 23:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about the people of Israel as if they were his sheep and the leaders of Israel as if they were his shepherds.

to a grazing place

Yahweh refers to the land of Israel as if it were good pasture for his people. This good pasture is a metonym for provision for their needs. Alternate translation: "to good pasture" or "to where all their needs will be supplied"

they will be fruitful and increase

The word "increase" explains how they will be "fruitful." Alternate translation: "they will increase greatly in number"

Jeremiah 23:4

I will raise up

"I will appoint"

they will no longer fear or be dismayed

The words "be dismayed" mean that someone has caused them to be afraid and mean basically the same thing as "fear." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will make them afraid anymore"

None of them

"None of my people"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 23:5

See

This word alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

I will raise up

This idiom means he will appoint a successor.

a righteous branch

This future king descended from David is spoken of as if he were a branch grown on a tree. Alternate translation: "a righteous descendant"

a righteous branch

Some modern versions translate this as "a legitimate successor to the throne."

cause justice and righteousness in the land

The abstract nouns "justice" and "righteousness" can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "cause people to act justly and rightly"

in the land

Here "land" refers to the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "for all the people in the nation"

Jeremiah 23:6

Judah will be rescued

Here "Judah" refers to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah will be rescued"

Judah will be rescued

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will rescue Judah from their enemies"

Israel will live in security

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel will live in security"

he will be called

this refers to the king

Yahweh is our righteousness

The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, the one who does what is right for us"

Jeremiah 23:7

General Information:

This verse is very similar to Jeremiah 16:14, although not exactly the same. Compare how you translated that verse.

see

The word "see" here alerts the reader to pay attention to the important information that follows.

As Yahweh lives

"as surely as Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 4:2]

Jeremiah 23:8

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General Information:
This verse is very similar to Jeremiah 16:15, although not exactly the same. Compare how you translated that verse.
who brought up and who led back
These two phrases mean the same thing and can be combined. Alternate translation: "who brought back"
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]
the northern land and all the lands where I had driven them
This refers to the way the northern ten tribes of Israel were captured and spread out among the surrounding countries.
Then they will live in their own land
This refers to Israel, from where they were scattered. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Then they will live in their own land again"
Jeremiah 23:9
General Information:
In verses 9-32 Jeremiah delivers Yahweh's message to the false prophets and the priests. Jeremiah is speaking in verse 9, but it is not clear if verse 10 are the words of Jeremiah or of Yahweh.
Regarding the prophets, my heart is broken in me, and all of my bones tremble
The prophet speaks of his heart being broken and his bones trembling because he is afraid of the judgment that will result from the lies of the false prophets. Alternate translation: "I have great fear for what will happen because of the false prophets"
my heart is broken in me
This idiom refers to deep sadness. Alternate translation: "I am very sad"
all of my bones tremble
Here trembling is associated with fear. Alternate translation: "I am very afraid"
I have become like a drunk man, like a man whom wine has overpowered
People who are drunk are not able to control themselves. Likewise, Jeremiah has lost control of himself out of fear of Yahweh's punishment. Alternate translation: "I am like a drunk man; I cannot control myself"
Jeremiah 23:10
the land is full of adulterers
The land is spoken of as if it were a container and the adulterers were objects that filled the container completely. That is, everyone in the land is an adulterer, which in turn is an exaggeration for very many people being adulterers.
adulterers
This word here probably has two senses. It has the literal meaning that the men in the nation had committed adultery against their own wives, and it also has the figurative meaning that they had abandoned Yahweh in order to worship idols.
the land mourns
Possible meanings are 1) the dried up land is spoken of as if it were a person mourning. Or 2) the land is a metonym for the people who live in the land, who are mourning because the land is dried up. Alternate translation: "the people of the land mourn"
These prophets' paths are wicked
The wicked actions of the false prophets are spoken of as if they were walking on an evil path. Alternate translation: "These prophets are doing things that are wicked"
Jeremiah 23:11
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues to deliver Yahweh's message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.
the prophets and the priests are polluted
The prophets and priests are defiled by sin in the same way that water can be polluted by filth. Alternate translation: "the prophets and the priests are sinful"
Jeremiah 23:12
their way will be like a slippery place in the darkness
The danger of their actions is spoken of as if they were about to fall off the slippery edge of a cliff in the dark and injure themselves. Alternate translation: "there actions are unstable and dangerous, like walking on a slippery place in the darkness"
I will send disaster against them
Yahweh speaks of disaster as an enemy that he will send to attack the priests and false prophets. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to experience disaster"
Jeremiah 23:13
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues to deliver Yahweh's message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.
led my people Israel astray
The deception of the people by the false prophets is spoken of as leading them down the wrong path. Alternate translation: "deceived my people, the Israelites"
Jeremiah 23:14
They commit adultery
Possible meanings are 1) they were literally unfaithful to their wives or 2) their worship of other gods is spoken of as spiritual adultery.
walk in deceit
This idiom means they lived a life of deceit. Alternate translation: "live in dishonesty"
They strengthen the hands of evildoers
Here "hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "They strengthen those who do evil" or "They encourage people who do evil"
no one turns back from his wickedness
"everyone continues in their sin"
All of them have become like Sodom ... like Gomorrah
Sodom and Gomorrah were cities that were so wicked that God destroyed them with fire from heaven. Alternate translation: "They all became as evil as Sodom ... as wicked as Gomorrah"
Jeremiah 23:15
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Look
The word "look" here alerts the reader to pay attention to the important information that follows.

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I am about to make them eat wormwood and drink poisonous water
Wormwood is a plant that is very bitter and unpleasant to eat. This phrase describes the punishment that Yahweh was going to bring about on the evil prophets. In the same way wormwood was bitter and the water was poisonous, so would Yaweh's judgment be on the evil prophets.
I am about to
"I will soon"
pollution has gone out from the prophets
Here the evil teaching of the priests and false prophets is spoken of as if it were something filthy that ruined the land. Alternate translation: "evil has come from the prophets"
pollution
dirty and unsafe things that spoil the air, water, or land where they are found
Jeremiah 23:16
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues to deliver Yahweh's message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
They are leading you into vanity!
"The prophets have caused you to believe something that is not true!" or "They are leading you to do useless actions!"
visions from their own minds
Here "minds" refers to the thoughts of the false prophets. Alternate translation: "visions that they imagined"
not from Yahweh's mouth
Here "mouth" refers to what Yahweh said. Alternate translation: "not what Yahweh said"
Jeremiah 23:17
They are constantly saying
The word "constantly" is an exaggeration to emphasize that this is what they normally say.
everyone walking in the stubbornness of his own heart says
Here "heart" refers to their desires. To follow those desires is spoken of as walking in them. Alternate translation: "everyone stubbornly does whatever they desire to do"
Disaster will not come upon you
"Nothing bad will happen to you"
Jeremiah 23:18
Yet who has stood in Yahweh's council meeting? Who sees and hears his word? Who pays attention to his word and listens?
These questions are used to rebuke the false prophets for speaking lies. Alternate translation: "None of them has stood in Yahweh's council meeting. None of them sees and hears his word. None of them pays attention to his word and listens."
who has stood in Yahweh's council meeting
Standing in the Yahweh's council represents being one of those who meets with him to learn what he is thinking. Alternate translation: "who has attended Yahweh's council meeting" or "who has met with Yahweh to listen to him"
pays attention to his word and listens
These two phrases mean the same thing. They can be combined in one phrase. Alternate translation: "obeys his word at all"
Jeremiah 23:19
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues to deliver Yahweh's message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.
there is a storm coming from Yahweh ... His fury is going out ... a tempest is whirling about
These three phrases all refer to a great storm that is a metaphor for Yahweh's anger. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's anger is coming like a great storm, going out with fury and whirling like a tempest"
a tempest
a violent windstorm
It is whirling around the heads of the wicked
Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a windstorm whirling around the wicked. Alternate translation: "It is coming upon the wicked like a windstorm"
Jeremiah 23:20
Yahweh's wrath will not return until it
Yahweh's wrath is spoken of as if it were alive and could act on its own. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not stop being angry until he"
carried out and brought into being his heart's purposes
Here "heart's purposes" refers to the things that Yahweh wanted to happen. Alternate translation: "completed and accomplished all the punishment that he had planned"
the final days
"the future"
Jeremiah 23:21
General Information:
Yahweh is the speaker in verses 21-40.
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah continues to deliver Yahweh's message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.
but they ran
This is probably a hyperbolic metaphor for the prophets prophesying as much as they pleased without hearing from Yahweh. They may have walked. Alternate translation: "but they ran off to prophesy" or "but they prophesied anyway"
they have still prophesied
It is understood that they are prophesying falsely. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they have prophesied falsely anyway"
Jeremiah 23:22
if they had stood in my council meeting
Standing in Yahweh's council represents being one of those who meets with him to learn what he is thinking. This is a condition that is contrary to fact; the false prophets had not stood in his council meeting.
had stood in my council meeting
See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 23:18.
to turn from
This idiom means they would stop doing these things.
the wickedness of their practices
"the evil things they do." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 4:4.
Jeremiah 23:23
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false

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prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

Am I only a God nearby ... and not also a God far away?

Yahweh uses this question to rebuke the priests and false prophets for thinking that he did not rule everywhere. Alternate translation: "I am not only a God who is here in Jerusalem ... but I am everywhere!"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 23:24

Can anyone hide in a secret place so I cannot see him?

Yahweh uses this question to rebuke the priests and false prophets for thinking that he did not see the evil that they were doing. Alternate translation: "No one can hide in a secret place so I cannot see him."

do I not fill the heavens and the earth?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he is everywhere in heaven and on earth. Alternate translation: "I am everywhere, both in the heavens and on the earth."

Jeremiah 23:25

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

prophesying deceit

The word "deceit" can be expressed as an adjective or an adverb. Alternate translation: "prophesying deceit things" or "prophesying deceitfully"

in my name

This phrase refers to speaking with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative. See how you translated this phrase in [Jeremiah 14:14]

I had a dream!

They meant that this dream was from God. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I had a dream from Yahweh"

Jeremiah 23:26

How long will this go on, prophets who prophesy lies from their minds, and who prophesy from the deceit in their hearts?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize that this is something that should not continue. Alternate translation: "This should not continue, prophets declaring lies which they themselves have made up."

prophesy lies from their minds ... prophesy from the deceit in their hearts

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the false prophets made up their prophesies. Alternate translation: "prophesy things that come only from their own minds"

Jeremiah 23:27

forget my name ... forgot my name

Here the word "name" refers to the whole being of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "forget me ... forgot me" or "forget who I am ... forgot who I am"

in favor of Baal's name

Here "Baal's name" refers to the god Baal. Alternate translation: "leading my people to worship Baal instead of me"

Jeremiah 23:28

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 23:29

Is not my word like fire? ... and like a hammer that shatters a rock into pieces?

Yahweh uses these questions to emphasize that his word is much more powerful than the words of mere men. In that way, his word is like fire or a hammer. Alternate translation: "My word is powerful like fire ... and powerful like a hammer that shatters a rock into pieces."

Jeremiah 23:30

I am against

"I am opposed to"

steals words from another person

This implies that the false prophets are thieves. They are so evil that they take each other's messages without permission rather than make up their own false messages.

Jeremiah 23:31

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

See

This alerts the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention"

who use their tongues

Here "tongues" is a metonym for the ability to speak.

Jeremiah 23:33

General Information:

In verses 33-40 there is a wordplay with the word "burden." Sometimes it means "a message" and other times it means "a heavy load to carry." This wordplay should be retained if possible.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

asks you ... you will say

These two instances of "you" are singular and refer to Jeremiah.

What is the burden of Yahweh?

Here "burden" means a message or prophecy from Yahweh.

You are the burden ... cast you off

These two instances of "you" are plural and refer to the false prophets and the priests.

You are the burden

Here "burden" means a heavy load. This is a metaphor that means they annoy Yahweh and he no longer wants to put up with them. Alternate translation: "You are a burden that I am tired of carrying"

this is Yahweh's declaration

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Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 23:34

This is the burden of Yahweh

Here "burden" means a message or prophecy from Yahweh.

his house

Here "house" is a metonym for the family that lives inside it. Alternate translation: "his family"

Jeremiah 23:35

General Information:

In verses 33-40 there is a wordplay with the word "burden." Sometimes it means "a message" and other times it means "a heavy load to carry." This wordplay should be retained if possible.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to deliver his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9 and completes in Jeremiah 23:40.

You continue to say ... 'What did Yahweh declare?'

It may be helpful to reorder this sentence. Alternate translation: "Each person continues to ask his neighbor and his brother, 'What did Yahweh answer?' and 'What did Yahweh declare?'"

Jeremiah 23:36

But you must no longer talk about the 'burden of Yahweh,' for the burden is every man's own word, and

Possible meaning are 1) both instances of "burden" mean "message." Alternate translation: "You must no longer call your visions the 'burden of Yahweh' because they are really only every man's own words, and" or 2) the first 'burden' means "message" and the second means "heavy load." Alternate translation: "You must no longer talk about the 'message of Yahweh' because the words that each of you speak are what is a 'heavy load.' In this way"

you have perverted the words ... our God

To "pervert" something is to twist or distort it. Alternate translation: "you have changed the message of the living God, Yahweh of hosts, our God, to say what you want it to say and not what God said"

Jeremiah 23:37

General Information:

In verses 33-40 there is a wordplay with the word "burden." Sometimes it means "a message" and other times it means "a heavy load to carry." This wordplay should be retained if possible.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh completes his message about the false prophets and priests that he began in Jeremiah 23:9.

This is what you will say

Here "you" is singular and refers to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 23:38

But if you say ... Because you have said ... when I sent to you ... You will not say

All of these instances of "you" are plural and refer to the priests and false prophets.

Jeremiah 23:39

therefore, behold

"therefore, pay attention." This alerts the reader to pay special attention to what follows.

I am about to pick you up and throw you away from me

Yahweh speaks of sending these priests and false prophets into exile as if they were an object that he was going to throw far away. Alternate translation: "I am about to drive you away from me"

pick you up ... throw you ... I gave you

All of these instances of "you" are plural and refer to the priests and false prophets.

the city that I gave you

This refers to Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 23:40

shame on you

This instance of "you" is plural and refers to the priests and false prophets.

I will put everlasting disgrace and everlasting shame on you that will not be forgotten

"I will cover you with dishonor that will last forever and shame that you will never forget" or "I will cause people to make fun of you forever. People will never forget that you were disgraced." Yahweh speaks of the humiliation of the priests and false prophets as if he would put disgrace and shame on them like clothing.

that will not be forgotten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that will last forever"

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24 [1]Yahweh showed me something. Behold, two baskets of figs were placed before the temple of Yahweh. (This vision happened after Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took into exile Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, the officials of Judah, the craftsmen and the metalworkers from Jerusalem and brought them to Babylon.)[2]One basket of figs was very good, like first ripe figs, but the other basket of figs was so very bad that they could not be eaten.[3]Yahweh said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs. Figs that are very good and figs that are so very bad they cannot be eaten."

[4]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[5]"Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: I will look on the exiles of Judah for their benefit, just like these good figs, the exiles whom I have sent out from this place to the land of Chaldea.[6]I will set my eyes on them for good and restore them to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down. I will plant them, and not uproot them.[7]Then I will give them a heart to know me, for I am Yahweh. They will be my people and I will be their God, so they will turn to me with all their heart.

[8]But like the bad figs that are too bad to be eaten—this is what Yahweh says—I will act in this way with Zedekiah, king of Judah, with his officials, and with the rest of Jerusalem who remain in this land or go to stay in the land of Egypt.[9]I will turn them into a terrifying thing, a disaster, in the sight of all the kingdoms on earth, a disgrace and a subject for

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proverbs, taunts, and curses in every place where I will have driven them.[10]I will send out sword, famine, and plague against them, until they are destroyed from the land that I gave them and their ancestors."

Jeremiah 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The exiles are blessed and the others punished

God will bless the people who were taken away into Babylon but punish the people left in the land because they still did not repent and turn to him. (See: bless and repent)

Links:

Jeremiah 24:1 Notes

Jeremiah 24:1

me

All instances of this pronoun refer to Jeremiah.

Behold

The word "Behold" here shows that Jeremiah saw something interesting.

This vision happened ... them to Babylon

This part of the story is used to provide historical information to show when the events of the happened.

craftsmen

people skilled at building things

metalworkers

people skilled at creating things out of metal

Jeremiah 24:2

they could not be eaten

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could eat them"

Jeremiah 24:3

they cannot be eaten

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could eat them .. no one can eat them"

Jeremiah 24:4

the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 24:5

I will look on the exiles of Judah for their benefit

Here "look on" is an idiom that means Yahweh will take care of them. Alternate translation: "I will take good care of the exiles of Judah"

just like these good figs

The good figs represent those Judean exiles sent to the land of Chaldea.

Jeremiah 24:6

I will set my eyes on them for good

Here "set my eyes" means he will see them. Seeing them is a metonym for caring for them. Alternate translation: "I will bless them"

I will build them up, and not tear them down. I will plant them, and not uproot them

These two metaphors have similar meanings. The second one strengthens the thought in the first. Alternate translation: "I will help them to prosper in Chaldea"

I will build them up, and not tear them down

Yahweh speak of the exiles as a building which Yahweh will build and not tear down. Alternate translation: "I will help them flourish in the land, and not ruin them"

I will plant them, and not uproot them

Yahweh speak of the exiles as plants which Yahweh will plant in good soil and not pull out. Alternate translation: "I will establish them in the land, and not remove them"

Jeremiah 24:9

I will turn them into a terrifying thing, a disaster ... a disgrace and a subject for proverbs, taunts, and curses

These phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how thoroughly Yahweh will judge the people of Jerusalem. They will become something that will frighten other people when they see it.

Jeremiah 24:10

I will send out sword, famine, and plague against them

"I will kill them with war, famine and sicknesses"

I will send out sword

Here "sword" refers to war or enemy armies. Alternate translation: "I will send enemy armies" or "I will send out war"

sword, famine, and plague

These things are spoken of as if they were living things that could attack the people of Jerusalem.

they are destroyed from the land

"none of them remain in the land"

25 [1]This is the word that came to Jeremiah about all the people of Judah. It came in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah. That was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.[2]Jeremiah the prophet proclaimed this to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
[3]He said, "For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah until this day, Yahweh's words have been coming to me and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.[4]Yahweh sent out all his servants the prophets to you again and again, but you have not listened or turned your ear to hear.
[5]These prophets said, 'Let each man turn from his wicked way and the wickedness of his practices and return to the land that Yahweh gave in ancient times to your ancestors and to you, as a permanent gift.[6]So do not walk after other gods to worship them or bow down to them, and do not provoke him with the work of your hands so that he does you harm.'

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[7]But you have not listened to me—this is Yahweh's declaration—so you have provoked me with the work of your hands to do harm to you.[8]So Yahweh of hosts says this, 'Because you did not listen to my words,[9]see, I am about to send out a command to gather all the peoples of the north—this is Yahweh's declaration—with Nebuchadnezzar my servant, king of Babylon, and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all the nations around you. For I will set them apart for destruction. I will turn them into a horror, an object for hissing, and an unending desolation.
[10]I will put an end to the sound of joy and sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.[11]Then all of this land will become a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.

[12]Then it will happen when seventy years have been completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans—this is Yahweh's declaration—for their iniquity and make it an unending desolation.[13]Then I will carry out against that land all the words that I had spoken, and everything written in this book that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.[14]For also many other nations and great kings will make slaves out of these nations. I will repay them for their deeds and the works of their hands.'"

[15]For Yahweh, God of Israel, said this to me, "Take this cup of the wine of fury from my hand and make all the nations to which I am sending you drink it.[16]For they will drink and then stagger about and rant madly before the sword that I am sending out among them."
[17]So I took the cup from Yahweh's hand, and I made all the nations to which Yahweh had sent me drink it:[18]Jerusalem, the cities of Judah and her kings and officials—to turn them into ruins and a waste, and into an object for hissing and cursing, as they are at this present day.
[19]Other nations also had to drink it: Pharaoh king of Egypt and his servants; his officials and all his people;[20]all people of mixed heritage and all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of the Philistines—Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod;[21]Edom and Moab and the people of Ammon.
[22]The kings of Tyre and Sidon, the kings of the coasts on the other side of the sea,[23]Dedan, Tema, and Buz with all the ones who cut the hair on the sides of their heads very short, they also had to drink it.
[24]All the kings of Arabia and all the kings of people of mixed heritage who live in the wilderness;[25]all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes;[26]all the kings of the north, the ones close by and the ones far away—everyone with his brother and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the surface of the earth, all of them had to drink the cup from Yahweh's hand. Finally, the king of Babylon will also drink from that cup.

[27]Yahweh said to me, "Now you must say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Drink and become drunk, then vomit, fall down, and do not rise before the sword that I am sending among you.'[28]Then it will happen that if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, you will say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: You must certainly drink it.[29]For see, I am about to bring disaster on the city that is called by my name, and should you yourselves be free from punishment? You will not be free, for I am calling a sword against all the inhabitants of the land!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.'

[30]You must prophesy all these words against them, and say to them,
'Yahweh will roar from the heights
and he will shout with his voice from his holy dwelling,
and he will roar mightily against his fold;
and he will shout, like those who tread the grapes
against all those who live on the earth.
[31] The sound of battle will resound to the ends of the earth,
for Yahweh brings charges against the nations,
and he brings judgment on all flesh,
and the wicked ones he will put to the sword
—this is Yahweh's declaration.'

[32]Yahweh of hosts says this,
'See, disaster is going out from nation to nation,
and a great storm is beginning
from the farthest parts of the earth.

[33]Then those killed by Yahweh will on that day extend from one end of the earth to the other; they will not be mourned, gathered, or buried. They will be like dung on the ground.
[34] Wail, shepherds, and shout for help!

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Roll about in the dust, you noblemen of the flock,
for the days of your slaughter have come;
you will be scattered when you fall like fine pottery.

35 There is no refuge for the shepherds,
there will be no escape for the noblemen of the flock.

36 Hear the outcry of the shepherds
and the wails of the noblemen of the flock,
for Yahweh is destroying their pastures.

37 So the peaceful pastures will be devastated
because of Yahweh's fierce anger.

38 Like a young lion, he has left his den,
for their land will become a horror
because of the oppressor's anger,
because of his angry wrath.'"[1]

[1] Instead of the oppressor's anger, some ancient Hebrew copies and some modern translations have the oppressor's sword.

Jeremiah 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 25:30-38.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seventy years

Babylon will rule over Judah for seventy years. Because Yahweh is just, he will soon punish Babylon for their evil actions. (See: justice and evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

Jeremiah uses the idiom of drinking the cup of wine of God's punishment to say that Babylon will destroy all the surrounding nations and then be destroyed.

Links:

Jeremiah 25:1 Notes

Jeremiah 25:1

This is the word that came to Jeremiah

It is implied that the word that came to Jeremiah was from Yahweh. This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 7:1]

the fourth ... the first

Jeremiah 25:3

Amon

This is a man's name.

Jeremiah 25:5

Let each man turn from his wicked way and the wickedness of his practices

Jeremiah speaks of people who stop committing an action as if those people were turning away from that action.

his wicked way and the wickedness of his practices

The terms "wicked way" and "wickedness of his practices" mean the same thing and refer to every sinful thing that they do.

the wickedness of his practices

"the evil things he does." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 4:4.

Jeremiah 25:6

do not walk after other gods

Jeremiah speaks of a person being devoted to a god as if the person were walking behind the god. Alternate translation: "do not become devoted to other gods"

do not provoke him with the work of your hands

The word "him" refers to Yahweh. Possible meanings for the phrase "the work of your hands" are 1) it is a reference to the idols that the people have made with their hands. Alternate translation: "do not provoke Yahweh with the idols that you have made" or 2) It is an idiom that refers to the actions of a person, with the word "hands" being a synecdoche that represents the person who does those actions. Alternate translation: "do not provoke Yahweh by the things that you do"

Jeremiah 25:7

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you have provoked me with the work of your hands to do harm to you
See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 25:6]
to do harm to you
"so that I do harm to you"
Jeremiah 25:8
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Jeremiah 25:9
see
"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what i am about to tell you"
bring them against this land
The idiom to "bring ... against this land" means that they will attack the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "bring them to attack this land"
I will set them apart for destruction
The idiom "set ... apart for destruction" means to destroy something completely. Alternate translation: "I will destroy them completely"
I will turn them into a horror
The word "horror" may be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I will turn them into something that horrifies people"
an object for hissing
The word "hissing" refers to a sound that shows strong disapproval and can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "an object at which people will hiss"
Jeremiah 25:10
millstones
These are two large, round stones used to grind grain.
the sound of joy and sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 7:34.
Jeremiah 25:11
all of this land will become a desolation and a horror
The words "desolation" and "horror" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I will cause this land to be desolate and something that horrifies people"
Jeremiah 25:12
when seventy years have been completed
"after seventy years" or "after seventy years have passed"
an unending desolation
The noun "desolation" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "desolate forever"
Jeremiah 25:13
everything written in this book
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that Jeremiah has written in this book" or "everything that one has written in this book"
Jeremiah 25:14
I will repay them for their deeds and the works of their hands
Yahweh speaks of punishing the people of the nations for what they have done as if he were paying them back.
their deeds and the works of their hands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The idiom "the works of their hands" refers to the actions of a person, with the word "hands" being a synecdoche that represents the person who does those actions. Alternate translation: "everything that they have done"
Jeremiah 25:15
Take this cup of the wine of fury
Yahweh speaks of his extreme anger as if it were wine that fills a cup. Alternate translation: "Take this cup of wine that represents my fury"
make all the nations ... drink it
The word "nations" represents the people of the nations. Yahweh speaks of people experiencing his fury as if they were to drink the wine that is in the cup. Alternate translation: "make all the people of the nations ... drink the wine"
Jeremiah 25:16
they will drink and then stagger about and rant madly
Yahweh speaks of the people being terrified about his fury as if they were drunk from drinking the wine from the cup.
before the sword that I am sending out among them
Here the word "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "because of the wars that I am causing to happen among them"
Jeremiah 25:17
Connecting Statement:
This passage continues the metaphor of Yahweh's extreme anger as wine that he causes the people of the nations to drink from a cup.
I made all the nations ... drink it
The word "nations" represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "I made all the people of the nations ... drink the wine from the cup"
Jeremiah 25:18
a waste
Another possible meaning is "an object of horror" or "a terrifying thing."
an object for hissing and cursing
The word "hissing" refers to a sound that shows strong disapproval. Both "hissing" and "cursing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "an object at which people hiss and which they curse"
they are at this present day
Possible meanings are that this phrase 1) refers to the time when the book of Jeremiah was written and some time after Jeremiah had proclaimed this prophecy or 2) means that the things about which Jeremiah prophesies here have already started to happen.
Jeremiah 25:19
Connecting Statement:
This passage continues the metaphor of Yahweh's extreme anger as wine that he causes the people of the nations to drink from a cup.
Other nations also had to drink it
The word "nations" represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "People from other nations also had to drink the wine from the cup"
Jeremiah 25:20
people of mixed heritage
Possible meanings are 1) people whose ancestors were from different people groups or 2) foreigners who lived in Egypt.

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Uz

This is the name of a place.

Jeremiah 25:22

Connecting Statement:

This passage continues the metaphor of Yahweh's extreme anger as wine that he causes the people of the nations to drink from a cup.

the sea

This is a reference to the Mediterranean Sea.

Jeremiah 25:23

Dedan, Tema, and Buz

These are the names of places.

all the ones who cut the hair on the sides of their heads

This probably refers to people who cut their hair short in order to honor a pagan god. Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression as "all the people who live on the edge of the wilderness." See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 9:26.

they also had to drink it

"they also had to drink the wine from the cup"

Jeremiah 25:24

Connecting Statement:

This passage continues the metaphor of Yahweh's extreme anger as wine that he causes the people of the nations to drink from a cup.

Jeremiah 25:25

Zimri

This is the name of a place.

Jeremiah 25:26

everyone with his brother

This is an idiom that means every person, one after another. Alternate translation: "one after another"

all of them had to drink the cup from Yahweh's hand

Here "the cup" is a metonym for the wine that it contains. Alternate translation: "all of these people had to drink the wine from the cup in Yahweh's hand"

Jeremiah 25:27

Connecting Statement:

This passage continues the metaphor of Yahweh's extreme anger as wine that he causes the people of the nations to drink from a cup.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

before the sword that I am sending among you

Here the word "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "before the wars that I am causing to happen among you"

Jeremiah 25:29

the city that is called by my name

This refers to Jerusalem and can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the city that I have called by my name" or "Jerusalem, which I have called by my name"

and should you yourselves be free from punishment?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke the people and to emphasize that he will certainly punish them. Alternate translation: "so do not think that you yourselves will be free from punishment."

I am calling a sword against all the inhabitants of the land

Here the word "sword" represents war. Yahweh speaks of declaring war against the people as if he were calling a sword against them. Alternate translation: "I am declaring war against all the inhabitants of the land" or "I am bringing war against all the inhabitants of the land"

Jeremiah 25:30

Yahweh will roar

Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh shouting very loudly as if he were roaring like a lion.

from the heights

This phrase is a metonym for heaven. Alternate translation: "from heaven"

he will roar mightily against his fold

Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh as if he were a lion and his people were a flock of sheep. The people will be helpless when Yahweh comes to punish them, as sheep are helpless when a lion attacks.

those who tread the grapes

This refers to people who crush grapes in a winepress with their feet in order to make wine.

Jeremiah 25:31

to the ends of the earth

This is an idiom that means the farthest places on the earth. By referencing both ends, it refers to everywhere in between. Alternate translation: "to the farthest places on the earth" or "to everywhere on earth"

on all flesh

Here the word "flesh" represents humanity. Alternate translation: "on all mankind" or "on all people"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 25:32

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

disaster is going out from nation to nation

Yahweh speaks of great disasters happening in each nation as if "disaster" were a person who goes from nation to nation. Alternate translation: "great disasters are going to happen in one nation after another"

a great storm is beginning from the farthest parts of the earth

Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) Yahweh speaks of Babylonian army and the destruction that it will cause as if it were a great storm or 2) Yahweh speaks of his great anger as if it were a great storm that causes much destruction.

Jeremiah 25:33

those killed by Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom Yahweh killed"

will on that day extend from one end of the earth to the other

By mentioning both ends of the earth, this phrase

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represents everywhere in between those ends. Alternate translation: "will on that day cover the entire earth"

they will not be mourned, gathered, or buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will mourn them, gather them, or bury them"

They will be like dung on the ground

The bodies are compared to dung on the ground to emphasize that they will be disgusting and that no one will bury them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 16:4]

Jeremiah 25:34

shepherds

Yahweh speaks of the leaders of Israel as if they were shepherds who are responsible for protecting and caring for the people, who, implicitly, are spoken of as if they are the sheep.

Roll about in the dust

This is a sign of sorrow, mourning or distress.

you noblemen of the flock

This phrase also refers to the leaders of Israel who are responsible to care for the people, who are spoken of as if they were a flock of sheep. Alternate translation: "you leaders of the people"

for the days of your slaughter have come

Usually it is the sheep that are slaughtered, but here Yahweh says that he will slaughter the shepherds. The word "slaughter" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "for the time has come for me to slaughter you"

you will be scattered when you fall like fine pottery

Yahweh speaks of the leaders of Israel being destroyed as if they are pieces of pottery that shatter when they fall to the ground. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will fall like fine pottery and your shattered pieces will scatter on the ground"

Jeremiah 25:36

Yahweh is destroying their pastures

Yahweh speaks of the nation in which the leaders think that they live peacefully as if it were the "pastures" in which they care for the sheep

Jeremiah 25:37

So the peaceful pastures will be devastated

Yahweh continues to speak of the leaders of Israel as if they were shepherds. Here he speaks of the nation as the "pastures" in which they think they live peacefully.

the peaceful pastures will be devastated because of Yahweh's fierce anger

This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will devastate the peaceful pastures because of he extremely angry"

Jeremiah 25:38

Like a young lion, he has left his den

Yahweh punishing his people in his extreme wrath is spoken of as if Yahweh were a lion who leaves his den in search of prey.

their land will become a horror

The word "horror" may be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "their land will become something that horrifies people"

the oppressor's anger

This refers to the anger of Israel's enemies.

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26 [1]In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from Yahweh, saying,
[2]"Yahweh says this: Stand in the courtyard of my house and speak about all the cities of Judah who come to worship at my house. Proclaim all the words that I have commanded you to say to them. Do not cut short any word![3]It may be that they will listen, that each man will turn from his wicked ways, so I will relent concerning the disaster that I am planning to bring on them because of the wickedness of their deeds.
[4]So you must say to them, 'Yahweh says this: If you do not listen to me so as to walk in my law that I have placed before you—[5]if you do not listen to the words of my servants the prophets whom I am persistently sending to you—but you have not listened!—[6]then I will make this house like Shiloh; I will turn this city into a curse in the sight of all the nations on earth.'"

[7]The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah announcing these words in the house of Yahweh.[8]So it happened that when Jeremiah had finished announcing all that Yahweh commanded him to say to all the people, the priests, prophets, and all the people seized him and said, "You will certainly die![9]Why have you prophesied in Yahweh's name and said that this house will become like Shiloh and this city will become desolate, with no inhabitant?" For all the people had assembled together against Jeremiah in the house of Yahweh.

[10]Then the officials of Judah heard these words and went up from the house of the king to the house of Yahweh. They sat in the gateway at the New Gate of the house of Yahweh.[11]The priests and the prophets spoke to the officials and to all the people. They said, "It is right for this man to die, for he prophesied against this city, just as you heard with your own ears!"[12]So Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people and said, "Yahweh has sent me out to prophesy against this house and this city, to say all the words that you have heard.
[13]So now, improve your ways and your practices, and listen to the voice of Yahweh your God so that he will relent concerning the disaster that he has proclaimed against you.[14]I myself—look at me!—am in your hand. Do to me what is good and right in your eyes.[15]But you must surely know that if you kill me, then you are bringing innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and its inhabitants, for Yahweh has truly sent me to you to proclaim all these words for your ears."

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[16]Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and prophets, "It is not right for this man to die, for he has proclaimed things to us in the name of Yahweh our God."[17]Then men from the elders of the land rose up and spoke to the entire assembly of the people.
[18]They said, "Micah of Moresheth was prophesying in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah. He spoke to all the people of Judah and said, 'Yahweh of hosts says this:

Zion will become a plowed field,
Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble,
and the hill of the temple will become a thicket.'

[19]Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all of Judah put him to death? Did he not fear Yahweh and appease the face of Yahweh so that Yahweh would relent concerning the disaster that he proclaimed to them? So will we do greater evil against our own lives?"

[20]Meanwhile there was another man who prophesied in the name of Yahweh—Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath Jearim—he also prophesied against this city and this land, agreeing with all of Jeremiah's words.[21]But when King Jehoiakim and all his soldiers and officials heard his word, then the king tried to put him to death, but Uriah heard and was afraid, so he ran away and went to Egypt.
[22]Then King Jehoiakim sent out men to go to Egypt—Elnathan son of Akbor and men to go into Egypt after Uriah.[23]They took Uriah out from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim. Then Jehoiakim killed him with a sword and sent his corpse out to the graves of the ordinary people.[24]But the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, so he was not given into the hand of the people to be put to death.

Jeremiah 26 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The people want to kill Jeremiah

The people wanted to kill Jeremiah but other people intervened and said that they should listen to Jeremiah and repent. They represent the remnant of the faithful Jews. (See: repent and remnant and faithful)

Links:

Jeremiah 26:1 Notes

Jeremiah 26:1

this word came from Yahweh, saying

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 18:1]

this word came from Yahweh, saying

It can be stated clearly who Yahweh gave this message to. Alternate translation: "this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Jeremiah"

Jeremiah 26:2

cities of Judah

The word "cities" is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "people from the cities of Judah"

Do not cut short any word!

"Do not leave anything out from what I have told you!"

Jeremiah 26:3

each man will turn from his wicked ways

Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a "way" or path along which the person walks. Alternate translation: "each man will stop his wicked way of living"

so I will relent concerning the disaster

"so I will change my mind and I will not send the disaster." God will not send the disaster if the people listen to him and turn from their wicked ways.

because of the wickedness of their deeds

"because of how wicked their deeds are" or "because of the wicked things that they do." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 4:4.

Jeremiah 26:6

then I will make this house like Shiloh

Yahweh had destroyed a place of worship at Shiloh, and he was threatening to destroy this place of worship.

I will turn this city into a curse

What Yahweh would turn the city into is a metonym for what people would use the city for. Alternate translation: "I will make this city so that people will ask me to destroy others the way I have destroyed this city"

in the sight of all the nations on earth

"so that all the nations on earth can see me do it"

Jeremiah 26:7

the house of Yahweh

the temple

Jeremiah 26:8

all the people seized him and said, "You will certainly die!

Possible meanings are 1) The people chose to believe the lie of false peace and did not want to be confronted with the truth, or 2) the people believed the other prophets proclaiming peace and saw Jeremiah as a false prophet who should be stoned for leading the people astray.

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Jeremiah 26:9
Why have you prophesied ... inhabitant?
This rebuke can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have prophesied ... inhabitant."
Jeremiah 26:10
the New Gate
the name of the gate through which people went into the temple
Jeremiah 26:11
you heard with your own ears
"you heard"
Jeremiah 26:12
this house and this city
"the people who worship in Yahweh's temple and those who live in the city of Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 26:13
your ways ... your practices
These two phrases mean almost the same thing. Alternate translation: "the things you do"
listen to the voice of Yahweh
The voice is a synecdoche for the person, and the same word can be translated "listen" or "obey." Alternate translation: "obey Yahweh"
Jeremiah 26:14
Do to me what is good and right in your eyes
The words "good" and "right" mean the same thing. The eye is a metonym for the person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "Do to me whatever you think is the right thing to do"
Jeremiah 26:15
you are bringing innocent blood on yourselves and on this city and its inhabitants
Blood is a metonym for violent death, and to bring blood on someone is to make them guilty of violent death. Alternate translation: "you are making yourselves and this city and its inhabitants guilty of the violent death of an innocent person"
this city and its inhabitants
These are two ways of speaking of the same people, perhaps first as a group and then as individuals. The city is a metonym for the people in the city. Alternate translation: "all the people in the city and every one of the people who live here"
for your ears
The ear is a metonym for what the ear hears. Alternate translation: "for you to hear"
Jeremiah 26:16
in the name of Yahweh our God
The person's name is a metonym for his authority. Alternate translation: "with the authority of Yahweh our God"
Jeremiah 26:18
General Information:
See:
Moresheth
This is a town in Judah.
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Zion will become a plowed field ... and the hill of the temple will become a thicket
"Zion" and "the hill of the temple" refer to the same place. When a farmer plows a field, he turns over all the dirt and uproots all the plants that are growing there. A thicket is so full of bushes that no one can use it for anything. These two metaphors cannot be literally true at the same time, but they emphasize that Yahweh will allow the invaders to completely destroy the temple area.
Jeremiah 26:19
Did Hezekiah ... put him to death?
The speakers are trying to get the hearers to agree with what they are saying. Alternate translation: "You know very well that Hezekiah ... did not put him to death."
all of Judah
The land is a metonym for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah"
Did he not fear Yahweh and appease the face of Yahweh ... them?
The speakers are trying to get the hearers to agree with what they are saying. Alternate translation: "You know very well that he feared Yahweh and appeased the face of Yahweh so that Yahweh ... them."
appease the face of Yahweh
The face is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "cause Yahweh to be less angry"
So will we do greater evil against our own lives?
The speakers are trying to get the hearers to agree with what they are saying. The word "lives" is a metonym for the people. Alternate translation: "If we kill Jeremiah, we will do greater evil against our own lives." or "We do not want to do worse things to ourselves."
Jeremiah 26:20
Connecting Statement:
Jeremiah stops telling about his own life and begins telling about what happened to another prophet.
Meanwhile there was
"While what I was just telling you about was happening, there was"
prophesied against this city and this land
The words "city" and "land" are metonyms for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "prophesied that bad things would happen to the people who lived in this city and this land"
Jeremiah 26:21
heard his word
"heard what he said"
Jeremiah 26:22
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the story of Uriah.
Elnathan ... Akbor
men's names
Jeremiah 26:23
corpse
dead body
Jeremiah 26:24
the hand of Ahikam ... was with Jeremiah
The hand is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises. Ahikam was not a soldier, so he probably was

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able to talk to people and change their minds. Alternate translation: "Ahikam ... was able to help Jeremiah" or "Ahikam ... was able to keep the people from harming Jeremiah"

Ahikam ... Shaphan

men's names

he was not given into the hand of the people to be put to death

The hand is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Ahikam did not allow the people to have the power to put Jeremiah to death" or "the people could not kill Jeremiah because Ahikam did not give them the power to"

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27 [1]In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh.
[1] [2]This is what Yahweh said to me, "Make fetters and a yoke for yourself. Place them on your neck.[3]Then send them out to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the people of Ammon, the king of Tyre, and to the king of Sidon. Send them by the hand of those kings' ambassadors who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah.[4]Give commands to them for their masters and say, 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: This is what you must say to your masters,
[5]"'I myself made the earth by my great strength and my raised arm. I also made men and animals on the earth, and I give it to anyone who is right in my eyes.[6]So now, I myself am giving all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant. Also, I am giving the living things in the fields to him to serve him.[7]For all the nations will serve him, his son, and his grandson until the time for his land comes. Then many nations and great kings will subdue him.
[8]So the nation and the kingdom that does not serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and that does not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon—I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with the plague—this is Yahweh's declaration—until I have destroyed it by his hand.
[9]So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, and sorcerers, who have been speaking to you and saying, 'Do not serve the king of Babylon.'[10]For they are prophesying deceit to you in order to send you far away from your lands, for I will drive you away, and you will die.[11]But the nation that places its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him, I will allow it to rest in its land—this is Yahweh's declaration—and they will cultivate it and make their homes in it.""

[12]So I spoke to Zedekiah king of Judah and gave him this message, "Place your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him and his people, and you will live.[13]Why will you die—you and your people—by the sword, famine, and plague, just as I have declared about the nation that refuses to serve the king of Babylon?
[14]Do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you and say, 'Do not serve the king of Babylon,' for they are prophesying lies to you.[15]'For I have not sent them out—this is Yahweh's declaration—for they are prophesying deceit in my name so that I will drive you out and you will perish, both you and the prophets who are prophesying to you.'"

[16]I proclaimed this to the priests and all the people and said, "Yahweh says this: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you and say, 'Look! The objects belonging to the house of Yahweh are being returned from Babylon now!' They are prophesying lies to you.[17]Do not listen to them. You should serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city become a ruin?[18]If they are prophets, and if the word of Yahweh has truly come to them, let them beg Yahweh of hosts not to send to Babylon the objects that remain in his house, the house of the king of Judah, and Jerusalem.
[19]Yahweh of hosts says this about the pillars, the large basin known as "The Sea" and its base, and the rest of the objects that remain in this city—[20]the objects that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon did not take when he carried Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem.
[21]Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this about the objects that remain in the house of Yahweh, the house of the king of Judah, and Jerusalem,[22]"They will be brought to Babylon, and they will remain there until the day I have set to come for them—this is Yahweh's declaration—then I will bring them up and restore them to this place.'"

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[1]Although most Hebrew copies have Jehoiakim, most modern translations have Zedekiah, because the events in this chapter occur during his reign.

Jeremiah 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The nations should serve Babylon

Jeremiah told the king of Judah, and all the surrounding nations, to serve the Babylonians and live in their land. If they refused, Babylon would take them as captives to another land.

Links:

Jeremiah 27:1 Notes

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Jeremiah 27:2

fetters

things that keep a person from moving freely

Jeremiah 27:3

Then send them out

This seems to mean that Jeremiah was to send a set of fetters and yoke to each king listed. But some versions of the Bible translate this as "Then send out messages."

Send them by the hand of those kings' ambassadors who ... Judah

The hand is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "Have those kings' ambassadors, who ... Judah, take them"

Jeremiah 27:4

Give commands to them for their masters

Jeremiah was instructed to give a set of chains and yoke to each ambassador and a message for each king regarding the chains and yoke.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Jeremiah 27:5

by my great strength and my raised arm

The phrase "raised arm" refers to great power and intensifies the first phrase. Alternate translation: "by my very great power"

I give it to anyone who is right in my eyes

Another possible meaning is "I give it to anyone I want to."

Jeremiah 27:6

I ... am giving all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar ... servant

The hand is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises, and the word "lands" is a metonym for the people who live in those lands. Alternate translation: "I ... am putting the people who live in all these lands under the power of Nebuchadnezzar ... servant"

Jeremiah 27:7

the time for his land comes

You may need to make explicit the nature of the time. Alternate translation: "the time for me to destroy his land"

subdue him

Here "him" refers to Nebuchadnezzar who represents the kingdom of Babylon. Alternate translation: "will defeat Babylon"

Jeremiah 27:8

that does not put its neck under the yoke of the king

Being the king's slave is spoken of as being an animal on to the shoulders of which the king puts a yoke so it can do heavy work. Alternate translation: "and whose people do not willingly become slaves of the king"

I have destroyed it by his hand

The hand here could be a metonym for Nebuchadnezzar's power, or it could be a metonym for Nebuchadnezzar's armies. Alternate translation: "I have used Nebuchadnezzar's power to destroy it" or "I have enabled Nebuchadnezzar's armies to destroy i"

Jeremiah 27:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak through Jeremiah to the people of Judah

soothsayers

people who say what will happen in the future

Jeremiah 27:11

the nation that places its neck under the yoke of the king

Being the king's slave is spoken of as being an animal onto the shoulders of which the king puts a yoke so it can do heavy work. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 27:8]

the nation that places

The nation here is a metonym for the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "the nation of people who place"

cultivate

This means to prepare and use land to grow food crops

make their homes in it

"make their homes in their own land"

Jeremiah 27:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak through Jeremiah to the king of Judah.

Place your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon

Being the king's slave is spoken of as being an animal onto the shoulders of which the king puts a yoke so it can do heavy work. See how similar words were translated in Jeremiah 27:8.

Place your necks

The word "your" refers to Zedekiah and the people of Judah and so is plural.

Jeremiah 27:13

Why will you die ... king of Babylon?

Jeremiah uses this question to warn the king that his actions will lead to his death. Alternate translation: "For if you do not do this, you will surely die ... king."

Jeremiah 27:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak through Jeremiah to the king and people of Judah.

Do not listen to the words

Yahweh is warning the people about all the false prophets that he did not send and that are lying to them.

Jeremiah 27:15

they are prophesying deceit in my name

The phrase "in my name" represents speaking with Yahweh's power and authority or as his representative. Here these prophets claim that they received their message from Yahweh, but that had not. The abstract noun "deceit" can be translated as the verb "deceiving." Alternate translation: "they say they are speaking for me when they prophesy, but they are deceiving you"

I will drive you out

"I will force you to leave your home country"

Jeremiah 27:16

General Information:

Jeremiah continues to speak the words of Yahweh.

The objects belonging to the house of Yahweh are being returned from Babylon now!

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People are bringing back all the gold items that they took from Yahweh's temple!"

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Jeremiah 27:17

Why should this city become a ruin?

Yahweh uses a question to warn the people. Alternate translation: "You can keep this city from becoming a ruin if you do what Yahweh wants you to do."

Jeremiah 27:18

If they are prophets, and if the word of Yahweh has truly come to them, let them beg Yahweh

Yahweh speaks as if it were possible that they were prophets, and he challenges them to beg of him. But he knows that they are not true prophets and they will not beg of him.

if the word of Yahweh has truly come to them

The phrase "word of Yahweh" refers to messages from God. Alternate translation: "if Yahweh has truly given them messages" or "if Yahweh truly spoke messages to them"

the word of Yahweh ... beg Yahweh of hosts not

Yahweh is speaking of himself in third person. Alternate translation: "my word ... be me, Yahweh of hosts, not"

the house of the king of Judah

The word "house" has a range of possible meanings. In this case it refers to the royal palace where the king lived. Alternate translation: "the palace of the king of Judah"

Jeremiah 27:19

General Information:

Jeremiah continues to bring the message of Yahweh.

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

the pillars, the large basin known as "The Sea" and its base

These were objects that were in the temple. "The Sea" was a large bronze bowl.

Jeremiah 27:20

Jehoiachin

The Hebrew text has "Jeconiah," which is a variation of the name "Jehoiachin." Many modern versions have "Jehoiachin" in order to make it clear that the same king is being referred to.

Jeremiah 27:21

General Information:

Jeremiah continues to speak the words of Yahweh.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

the house of the king of Judah

The word "house" has a range of possible meanings. In this case it refers to the royal palace there the king lived. Alternate translation: "the palace of the king of Judah"

Jeremiah 27:22

They will be brought to Babylon

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will bring them to Babylon" or "I will bring them to Babylon"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will bring them up

The reader should understand that Yahweh will have people carry them up.

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28 [1]It happened in that year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year and the fifth month, Hananiah son of Azzur the prophet, who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the house of Yahweh in front of the priests and all the people. He said,[2]"Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: I have broken the yoke imposed by the king of Babylon.
[3]Within two years I will bring back to this place all the objects belonging to the house of Yahweh house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took from this place and transported to Babylon.[4]Then I will bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the captives of Judah who were sent to Babylon—this is Yahweh's declaration—for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."

[5]So Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Hananiah the prophet in front of the priests and to all the people who stood in the house of Yahweh.[6]Jeremiah the prophet said, "Let it be so! May Yahweh confirm the words that you prophesied and bring back to this place the objects belonging to the house of Yahweh and all the captives from Babylon.[7]However, listen to the word that I am proclaiming in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people.
[8]The prophets who existed before me and you from long ago also prophesied about many nations and against great kingdoms, about war, famine[1] , and plague.[9]So the prophet who prophesies that there will be peace—if his word comes true, then it will be known that he is indeed a prophet sent out by Yahweh."
[10]But Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet and broke it.[11]Then Hananiah spoke in front of all the people and said, "Yahweh says this: Just like this, within two years I will break from off the neck of every nation the yoke imposed by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon." Then Jeremiah the prophet went on his way.

[12]After Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[13]"Go and speak to Hananiah and say, 'Yahweh says this: You broke yokes of wood, and in their place you have made yokes of iron.'[14]For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: I have placed a yoke of iron on the neck of all of these nations to serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they will serve him. I have also given him the wild beasts in the fields to rule over."
[15]Next Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, "Listen Hananiah! Yahweh has not sent you, but you yourself have caused this people to trust in a lie.[16]So Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to send you out from the earth. You will

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die this year, since you proclaimed rebellion against Yahweh."[17]In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died.

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[1]Some ancient copies have disaster instead of famine.

Jeremiah 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

False prophecies continue

A false prophet prophesied that the captives would return from Babylon with all the temple vessels. Jeremiah told the false prophet that he would die that year for prophesying lies, and he did die. (See: prophet and temple)

Links:

Jeremiah 28:1 Notes

Jeremiah 28:1

General Information:

Hananiah claims to speak for God.

in the fourth year and the fifth month

This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars. This was after Zedekiah had been king for three years.

Azzur

This is the name of a man.

Jeremiah 28:2

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

I have broken the yoke imposed by the king of Babylon

Hananaiah speaks of the people being in slavery as if they were oxen on which the Babylonians had put yokes to make them do heavy work. Alternate translation: "I have made it so you are no longer slaves of the king of Babylon" or "I have set you free from slavery to the king of Babylon"

Jeremiah 28:3

General Information:

Hananiah continues to speak.

Jeremiah 28:4

Jehoiachin

The Hebrew text has "Jeconiah," which is a variation of the name "Jehoiachin." Many modern versions have "Jehoiachin" in order to make it clear that the same king is being referred to.

who were sent

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I sent"

Jeremiah 28:6

May Yahweh confirm the words that you prophesied

"May Yahweh prove you have prophesied truly"

Jeremiah 28:8

The prophets who existed before me and you from long ago

"The prophets who lived long ago before you and I"

Jeremiah 28:9

then it will be known that he is indeed a prophet sent out by Yahweh

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "then you will know that he is indeed a true prophet and that Yahweh has sent him out"

Jeremiah 28:10

the yoke from the neck of Jeremiah

This was the yoke that God had told Jeremiah to make and put on himself in Jeremiah 27:2.

Jeremiah 28:11

Just like this

"Just as Hananiah has taken the yoke off Jeremiah's neck"

I will break from off the neck of every nation the yoke imposed by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

Hananaiah speaks of the people being in slavery as if they were oxen on which the Babylonians had put yokes to make them do heavy work. Alternate translation: "I will make it so all nations are no longer slaves of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon" or "I will set every nation free from slavery to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon"

every nation

The word "nation" is a metonym for the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "the people of every nation"

the yoke imposed by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the yoke that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has imposed"

imposed

put on people

Jeremiah 28:12

the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 28:13

yokes of iron

Iron is a very strong metal and it would be very difficult to break yokes made of iron.

Jeremiah 28:14

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

I have placed a yoke of iron on the neck of all of these nations to serve Nebuchadnezzar

Yahweh speaks of making nations to be slaves of Nebuchadnezzar as if he were putting yokes on oxen to make them do heavy work. Alternate translation: "I have

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made all of these nations slaves, and they will have to serve Nebuchadnezzar"

Jeremiah 28:16

you proclaimed rebellion against Yahweh

It is not clear why Yahweh speaks of himself by name. Alternate translation: "you urged people to rebel against me"

Jeremiah 28:17

In the seventh month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

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29 [1]These are the words in the scroll that Jeremiah the prophet sent out from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the captives and to the priests, prophets, and all the people that Nebuchadnezzar exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon.
[2]This was after Jehoiachin the king, the queen mother, and the high officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen had been sent away from Jerusalem.[3]He sent this scroll by the hand of Elasah son of Shapan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah whom Zedekiah, king of Judah, had sent to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
[4]The scroll said, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this to all the captives whom I caused to be exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon,[5]'Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their fruit.
[6]Take wives and give birth to sons and daughters. Then take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands. Let them give birth to sons and daughters and increase there so you do not become too few.[7]Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be exiled, and intercede with me on its behalf since there will be peace for you if it is at peace.'
[8]For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'Do not let your prophets who are in your midst and your diviners deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that you encourage them to dream.[9]For they are prophesying deceitfully to you in my name. I did not send them—this is Yahweh's declaration.'

[10]For Yahweh says this, 'When Babylon has ruled you for seventy years, I will help you and carry out my good word for you to bring you back to this place.[11]For I myself know the plans that I have for you—this is Yahweh's declaration—plans for peace and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.
[12]Then you will call to me, and go and pray to me, and I will listen to you.[13]For you will seek me and find me, since you will seek me with all your heart.[14]Then I will be found by you—this is Yahweh's declaration—and I will reverse your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and places where I scattered you—this is Yahweh's declaration—for I will bring you back to the place from where I caused you to be exiled.'

[15]Since you said that Yahweh has raised up prophets for us in Babylon,[16]Yahweh says this to the king who sits on the throne of David and to all the people who are staying in that city, your brothers who have not gone out with you into captivity—[17]Yahweh of hosts says this, 'See, I am about to send sword, famine, and plague on them. For I will make them like rotten figs that are too bad to be eaten.
[18]Then I will pursue them with sword, famine, and plague and make them a terrifying thing to all the kingdoms on earth —a horror, an object of curses and hissing, and a shameful thing among all the nations where I scattered her.[19]This is because they did not listen to my word—this is Yahweh's declaration—that I sent out to them through my servants the prophets. I repeatedly sent them, but you would not listen—this is Yahweh's declaration.'
[20]So you yourselves listen to the word of Yahweh, all you exiles whom he has sent out from Jerusalem to Babylon,
[21]'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy falsely to you in my name: See, I am about to put them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He will kill them before your eyes.
[22]Then a curse will be spoken about these persons by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon. The curse will say: "May Yahweh make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in fire."'[23]This will happen because of the disgraceful things they did in Israel when they committed adultery with their neighbor's wives and declared false words in my name, things that I never commanded them to say. For I am the one who knows; I am the witness—this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

[24]About Shemaiah the Nehelamite, say this:[25]"'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Because you sent out letters in your own name to all the people in Jerusalem, to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, and said,
[26]'Yahweh has made you priest instead of Jehoiada the priest, for you to be the overseer of the house of Yahweh. You are in control of all the people who rave and make themselves into prophets. You should put them in stocks and chains.
[27]So now, why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, who makes himself into a prophet against you?[28]For he has sent to us in Babylon and said, 'It will be a long time. Build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat their fruit.'"'"[29]Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet.
[30]Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[31]"'Send word to all the exiles and say, 'Yahweh says this about Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you when I myself did not send him, and he has caused you to trust in a lie,[32]therefore Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his

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descendants. There will not be a man for him to stay among this people. He will not see the good that I will do for my people—this is Yahweh's declaration—for he has proclaimed rebellion against Yahweh.'"

Jeremiah 29 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Two letters

Jeremiah sent a letter to Babylon telling the exiles to prepare for a long stay. A false prophet in Babylon wrote back to the chief priest telling him to punish Jeremiah. Even though Jeremiah had prophesied the exile, the Jews still did not believe him. (See: prophet and believe)

Links:

Jeremiah 29:1 Notes

Jeremiah 29:1

sent out from Jerusalem

"proclaimed from Jerusalem"

remaining elders

"elders who were still alive"

Jeremiah 29:2

Jehoiachin

The Hebrew text has "Jeconiah," which is a variation of the name "Jehoiachin." Many modern versions have "Jehoiachin" in order to make it clear that the same king is being referred to.

the queen mother

the king's mother

high officials

"very important officials"

Jeremiah 29:3

by the hand of Elasah

Jeremiah gave the scroll to Elasah so that Elasah could take it to Babylon. The reader should understand that Elasah probably put the scroll in a container to keep it safe as he traveled.

Elasah ... Shapan ... Gemariah ... Hilkiah

These are the names of men.

Jeremiah 29:4

Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this to all the captives

When people wrote letters in that society, they would write their name first, then the name of the person to whom they were writing, and then the main part of the letter. Yahweh speaks of himself by name as if he were writing the letter himself.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Jeremiah 29:5

Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their fruit

Yahweh is telling them they will be there for a long time.

Jeremiah 29:6

take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands

Parents commonly arranged their children's marriages.

Jeremiah 29:7

Seek the peace of the city

The peace of the city is a metonym for the people living in peace. Alternate translation: "Do everything you can so the people of the city live in peace"

the city ... its behalf ... it is at peace

These words refer to the city of Babylon.

Jeremiah 29:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the captive Israelites.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

you encourage them to dream

Another possible meaning is "you yourselves are having."

Jeremiah 29:9

they are prophesying deceitfully ... I did not send them

Possible meanings are 1) these words refer to the prophets and diviners, not to the dreams or 2) "they are prophesying deceitfully" refers to the dreams, and "I did not send them" refers to the prophets and diviners.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 29:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to the captives of Israel.

you

the captive Israelites

seventy years

"70 years"

Jeremiah 29:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to the captives of Israel.

you will call to me

Praying is spoken of as calling out with a loud voice.

I will listen to you

This implies that Yahweh will give them what they want.

Jeremiah 29:13

you will seek me

Wanting to know what Yahweh requires is spoken of as trying to find where Yahweh is. Alternate translation: "you will want to do what I require you to do"

you will seek me with all your heart

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"you will be completely sincere when you seek me"
Jeremiah 29:14
reverse your captivity
"free you from your captivity." The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. Alternate translation: "free you from those who had captured you"
I caused you to be exiled
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I sent you into exile" or "I sent you to be exiles"
Jeremiah 29:15
General Information:
Jeremiah speaks to the captive Israelites.
Jeremiah 29:16
the king who sits on the throne of David
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for ruling as king. Alternate translation: "the king who rules the Israelites as David did"
Jeremiah 29:17
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
See
This alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention"
I am about to send sword, famine, and plague on them
The word "sword" is a metonym for war. The sword, famine, and plague are spoken of as people who can obey Yahweh's command to harm the Israelites. Alternate translation: "I am going to punish them by having them die in war, from hunger, and from illness"
For I will make them like rotten figs that are too bad to be eaten
Rotten figs are useless because they cannot be eaten, and Yahweh sees no use for the people of Israel.
Jeremiah 29:18
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Israel.
a horror, an object of curses and hissing, and a shameful thing
These words all share similar meanings and describe how the people of other nations will react when they see what Yahweh has done to the people of Judah.
hissing
the sound people make when they disapprove of something
Jeremiah 29:19
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 29:20
So you yourselves listen
Yahweh is now about to issue a command and wants them to pay attention. Alternate translation: "But as for you, listen carefully"
Jeremiah 29:21
Kolaiah ... Maaseiah
These are the names of men.
who prophesy falsely to you in my name
Here "name" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "liars who tell you that they are speaking my words to you"
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I am about to put them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon
Here "hand" is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "I will allow Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to conquer them"
before your eyes
"where you can see him do it"
Jeremiah 29:22
a curse will be spoken about these persons by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the exiles from Judah in Babylon will say a curse about these persons"
roasted
This word usually refers to cooking food over an open fire or in a pan, not to burning completely. Possible meanings are 1) this is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "burned to death" or 2) the king's men attached them to poles over the fire close enough that the fire would slowly kill them but far enough away that it would not totally consume their bodies.
Jeremiah 29:23
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 29:24
Shemaiah
This is a man's name.
Nehelamite
This is the name of a people group.
Jeremiah 29:25
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
in your own name
The word "name" refers to a person's authority and reputation. Alternate translation: "based on your own authority and reputation"
Maaseiah
This is a man's name.
Jeremiah 29:26
Jehoiada
This is a man's name.
stocks
a wooden frame that holds the feet, hands, or head of a person whom someone is punishing
Jeremiah 29:27
General Information:
This finishes the letter by Shemaiah that he sent out to the people in Jerusalem.
why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth ... against you?
Shemaiah uses a rhetorical question to scold the people of

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Jerusalem for not rebuking Jeremiah. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I want you to rebuke Jeremiah of Anathoth ... against you."
Jeremiah 29:28
he has sent to us
You may need to make explicit what it was that Jeremiah sent. Alternate translation: "he has sent a message to us"
Build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat their fruit
See how you translated similar words in Jeremiah 29:5.
Jeremiah 29:29
in the hearing of Jeremiah the prophet
"so that Jeremiah the prophet could hear him read it." See how you translated similar words in Jeremiah 2:2.
Jeremiah 29:30
the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]
Jeremiah 29:31
Shemaiah the Nehelamite
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 29:24.
Jeremiah 29:32
the good
This can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "the good things"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
he has proclaimed rebellion against Yahweh
It is not clear why Yahweh speaks of himself by name. Alternate translation: "he has urged people to rebel against me"

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30 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,[2]"This is what Yahweh, God of Israel, says, 'Write in a scroll all the words that I have spoken to you.[3]For look, days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will reverse the captivity of my people, Israel and Judah. I, Yahweh, have said it. For I will bring them back to the land that I gave their ancestors, and they will possess it.'"

[4]These are the words that Yahweh declared concerning Israel and Judah,[5]"For Yahweh says this,
'We have heard a trembling voice
of dread and not of peace.
6 Ask and see if a man bears a child.
Why do I see every young man with his hand on his loins
like a woman bearing a child?
Why have all their faces become pale?

7 Woe! For that day will be great,
with none like it.
It will be a time of distress for Jacob,
but he will be rescued from it.

8 For it will be in that day
—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts
—that I will break the yoke off your neck,
and I will shatter your chains,
so foreigners will no longer enslave you.

9 But they will worship Yahweh their God
and serve David their king,
whom I will make king over them.

10 So you, my servant Jacob, do not fear
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—and do not be dismayed, Israel.
For see, I am about to deliver you from the faraway place,
and your descendants from the land of captivity.
Jacob will return and be at ease;
he will rest secure,
and there will be no more terror.

11 For I am with you

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—this is Yahweh's declaration
—to save you.
Then I will bring a complete end
to all the nations where I have scattered you.
But I will certainly not put an end to you,
though I discipline you justly
and will certainly not leave you unpunished.'

12 For Yahweh says this,
'Your injury is incurable;
your wound is infected.
13 There is no one to plead your case;
there is no remedy for your wound to heal you.

14 All of your lovers have forgotten you.
They will not look for you,
for I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy
and the discipline of a cruel master
because of your many iniquities
and your numerous sins.

15 Why do you call for help for your injury?
Your pain is incurable.
Because of your many iniquities,
your numerous sins,
I have done these things to you.

16 So everyone who consumes you
will be consumed,
and all of your adversaries will go into captivity.
For the ones who have plundered you
will become plunder,
and I will make all of the ones despoiling you a spoil.

17 For I will bring healing on you;
I will heal you of your wounds
—this is Yahweh's declaration—
I will do this because they called you:
Outcast. No one cares for this Zion.'"

18 Yahweh says this,
"See, I am about to bring back
the fortunes of Jacob's tents
and have compassion on his homes.
Then a city will be built on the heap of ruins,
and a stronghold will exist again where it used to be.
19 Then a song of praise and a sound of merriment
will go out from them,
for I will increase them and not diminish them;
I will honor them so they will not be humbled.

20 Then their people will be like before,
and their assembly will be established before me
when I punish all the ones
who are now oppressing them.

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21 Their ruler will come from among them.
He will emerge from their midst
when I draw him near and when he approaches me.
If I do not do this,
who would dare come close to me?
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

22 Then you will be my people,
and I will be your God.

23 See, the tempest of Yahweh,
his fury, has gone out.
It is a continual tempest.
It will whirl on the heads of the wicked people.

24 Yahweh's wrath will not return
until it has carried out and brought into being
his heart's purposes.
In the final days,
you will understand it."

Jeremiah 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:5-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

God promises restoration

Despite the prophesied punishment in this chapter, Yahweh promises to restore Judah. In addition to this, he also declares that he will ultimately restore Israel. (See: prophet, promise and restore)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The author uses the term "Israel" in two different ways. He uses it in reference to the nation of Israel. He also uses it in reference to the people who used to inhabit the northern kingdom of Israel, namely the people group of Israel.

Links:

Jeremiah 30:1 Notes

Jeremiah 30:1

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 30:3

For look

"For listen carefully." This phrase brings attention to what Yahweh is going to say next.

days are coming ... when I will reverse the captivity

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

reverse the captivity of my people, Israel and Judah

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 29:14]

Jeremiah 30:4

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

Jeremiah 30:5

We have heard

Possible meanings are 1) that these are the words of Yahweh referring to himself as "we." Alternate translation: "I have heard" or 2) that these are the words of the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "You people of Jerusalem say, 'We have heard"

a trembling voice of dread and not of peace

Possible meanings are 1) "people cry out in dread because

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there is no peace" or 2) "you cry out in dread because there is no peace."
Jeremiah 30:6
Ask and see if a man bears a child
"You know that no man has ever given birth to a child"
Why do I see every young man with his hand on his loins like a woman bearing a child? Why have all their faces become pale?
A woman about to give birth is in great pain and unable to do anything. The young men are so frightened that their bodies hurt, and they are unable to fight. Alternate translation: "The young men are holding their bellies like a woman giving birth; they all look sick because they are so afraid."
Jeremiah 30:7
for Jacob, but he will be rescued from it
The name Jacob is a metonym for the man's descendants. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the descendants of Jacob, but I will rescue them from it"
Jeremiah 30:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to the Israelites.
I will break the yoke off your neck, and I will shatter your chains
Being a slave is spoken of as wearing a yoke like an animal and wearing chains like a prisoner.
Jeremiah 30:9
they will worship Yahweh their God ... their king ... over them
Yahweh continues speaking about the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "you will worship Yahweh your God ... your king ... over you"
David their king
This is a metonym for one of David's descendants. Alternate translation: "a man descended from their King David"
Jeremiah 30:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
my servant Jacob ... Israel
"Jacob" and "Israel" are the two names of the ancestor of the Israelites, and these names are metonyms for the Israelites. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob ... you Israelite people"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
do not be dismayed
"do not be discouraged"
For see, I am
"Listen carefully while I tell you why: I am"
from the land of captivity
The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated using the noun "captive." Alternate translation: "from the place where they were captives"
Jacob will return ... he will rest secure
Jacob's name is a metonym for his descendants. Yahweh speaks to Jacob as if he were speaking to another person. You may need to make explicit to where Jacob will return. Alternate translation: "Jacob will return to his own land ... he will rest secure" or "The descendants of Jacob will return ... they will rest secure" or "You descendants of Jacob will return ... you will rest secure"
secure
"safe"
no more terror
"no one to terrify him"
Jeremiah 30:11
where I have scattered you
"where I have sent you"
But I will certainly not put an end to you
"But I will not completely destroy you"
will certainly not leave you unpunished
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "will certainly punish you"
Jeremiah 30:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Your injury is incurable; your wound is infected
This means that Yahweh has punished them so severely that there is no one who can help them.
Jeremiah 30:13
There is no one to plead your case
"There is no one who asks me to show you mercy"
no one to plead your case ... no remedy for your wound
Yahweh has punished them so severely that there is no one who can help them.
Jeremiah 30:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.
All of your lovers
Yahweh describes the people of Israel as an unfaithful wife who takes lovers other than her husband. Here "lovers" refers to other nations. The Israelites allied with them and worshiped their gods instead of relying on Yahweh.
They will not look for you
"They no longer want to be your friends"
I have wounded you with the wound of an enemy
Yahweh has treated his people like he would treat his enemy.
the discipline of a cruel master
Yahweh has treated his people like a cruel master would treat a rebellious slave.
your numerous sins
"your many sins" or "your sins, which are too many to count"
Jeremiah 30:15
Why do you call for help for your injury?
Yahweh asks a question here to make the people think about why they are asking him for help now. Alternate translation: "You are calling for help for your injury because you have disobeyed me." or "Do not call for help for your injury."
Jeremiah 30:16
So everyone who consumes you will be consumed
Destroying the nation is spoken of as consuming or eating it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So those who destroy you, their enemies will destroy them" or "So I will destroy everyone who destroys you"
have plundered ... plunder

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To plunder is to steal from peaceful people using violence, and plunder is what people steal.

despoiling ... spoil

To despoil here is to take items from an enemy one has defeated, and the items one takes are the spoil.

Jeremiah 30:17

healing ... wounds

See how you translated these words in Jeremiah 30:12.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

they called you: Outcast

An outcast is a person whom other people do not accept or allow to associate with them. Alternate translation: "they called you: Rejected" or "they said, 'Nobody wants you'"

No one cares for this Zion

The place name "Zion" is a metonym for the people who live in Zion. Alternate translation: "No one cares about the people of Zion"

Jeremiah 30:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

I am about to bring back the fortunes of Jacob's tents and have compassion on his homes

The places where people live are metonyms for the people who live in those places. Alternate translation: "I am about bring back the fortunes of the descendants of Jacob, and I will have compassion on them"

I am about to bring back the fortunes of Jacob's tents

"I will cause things to go well for the people in Jacob's tents again" or "I will cause the people in Jacob's tents to live well again." See how you translated similar words in Jeremiah 29:14.

Then a city will be built on the heap of ruins

This can be translated in active form. You may need to make explicit that the city they will build will be Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Then they will rebuild Jerusalem on its ruins"

Jeremiah 30:19

Then a song of praise and a sound of merriment will go out from them

"Then they will sing songs of praise and joy"

for I will increase them and not diminish them

"I will cause them to increase in number, not to become fewer"

so they will not be humbled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that no one will humble them"

Jeremiah 30:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

their assembly will be established before me

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will establish them as a people before me"

Jeremiah 30:21

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translates this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 30:23

See, the tempest of Yahweh, his fury, has gone out

This speaks of God's anger and punishment as if it were a storm. This emphasizes his power and ability to destroy wicked people.

Jeremiah 30:24

his heart's purposes

The abstract noun "purposes" can be translated using the verb "intends." The heart is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "what he intends to do"

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31 [1]"At that time—this is Yahweh's declaration—I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they will be my people."

[2]Yahweh says this,
"The people who have survived the sword
have found favor in the wilderness;
I will go out to give rest to Israel."

[3]Yahweh appeared to me in the past and said,
"I have loved you, Israel, with everlasting love.
So I have drawn you toward myself
with covenant faithfulness.
[4] I will build you up again
so you will be built, virgin Israel.
You will again pick up your tambourine
and go out with happy dances.

[5] You will plant vineyards again
on the mountains of Samaria;
the farmers will plant and put the fruit to good use.

[6] For a day will come
when the watchmen in the mountains of Ephraim will proclaim,

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'Arise, let us go up to Zion to Yahweh our God.'

7 For Yahweh says this,
"Shout for joy over Jacob!
Shout in gladness for the chief people of the nations!
Let praise be heard.
Say, 'Yahweh has rescued his people, the remnant of Israel.'
8 See, I am about to bring them from the northern lands.
I will gather them from the farthest parts of the earth.
The blind and lame will be among them;
pregnant women and those who are about to give birth
will be with them.
A great assembly will return here.

9 They will come weeping;
I will lead them as they make their pleas.
I will have them journey to streams of water
on a straight road.
They will not stumble on it,
for I will be a Father to Israel,
and Ephraim will be my firstborn.

10 "Hear the word of Yahweh, nations.
Report along the coasts in the distance.
You nations must say,
'The one who scattered Israel is gathering her up
and keeping her as a shepherd keeps his sheep.'

11 For Yahweh has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from the hand
that was too strong for him.

12 Then they will come and rejoice on the heights of Zion.
Their faces will shine because of Yahweh's goodness,
over the grain and the new wine,
over the oil and the offspring of the flocks and herds.
For their lives will become like a watered garden,
and they will never again feel any more sorrow.

13 Then virgins will rejoice with dancing,
and young and old men will be together.
For I will change their mourning into celebration.
I will comfort them and give them joy for their sorrow.

14 Then I will saturate the lives of the priests
with abundance.
My people will fill themselves with my goodness
—this is Yahweh's declaration."

15 Yahweh says this
"A voice is heard in Ramah,
wailing and bitter weeping.
It is Rachel weeping for her children.
She refuses to be comforted over them,
for they live no longer."

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[16]Yahweh says this,
"Hold your voice back from weeping
and your eyes from tears;
there is a reward for your work
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—your children will return from the land of the enemy.
[17] There is hope for your future
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—your descendants will return inside their borders.

[18] "I have certainly heard Ephraim sorrowing,
'You punished me,
and I have been punished like an untrained calf.
Bring me back and I will be brought back,
for you are Yahweh my God.

[19] For after I turned back to you, I repented;
after I was trained, I slapped my thigh.
I was ashamed and humiliated,
for I have borne the disgrace of my youth.'

[20] Is not Ephraim my precious child?
Is he not my dear, delightful son?
For whenever I speak against him,
I certainly still call him to my loving mind.
In this way my heart longs for him.
I will certainly have compassion on him
—this is Yahweh's declaration."

[21] Place road signs for yourself.
Set up guideposts for yourself.
Set your mind on the right path,
the way you should take.
Come back, virgin Israel!
Come back to these cities of yours.

[22] How long will you waver, faithless daughter?
For Yahweh has created something new on earth
—a woman surrounds a strong man.

[23]Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says this, "When I reverse their captivity, they will say this in the land of Judah and its cities, 'May Yahweh bless you, you righteous place where he lives, you holy mountain.'[24]For Judah and all its cities will live together there, as will farmers and those who set out with flocks.[25]For I will cause those who are weary to drink their fill, and I fill up those who are faint."[26]After this I awoke, and I realized that my sleep had been refreshing.

[27]"Look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will sow the houses of Israel and Judah with the seed of man and the seed of animals.[28]In the past, I kept them under surveillance in order to uproot them and to tear them down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring them harm. But in the coming days, I will watch over them, in order to build them up and to plant them—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[29]In those days no one will say any longer,
'Fathers have eaten sour grapes,

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but the children's teeth are dulled.'

30 For each man will die in his own iniquity; everyone who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be dulled.
31 Look, the days are coming—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
when I will establish a new covenant
with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

32 It will not be like the covenant
that I established with their fathers in the days
when I took them by their hand
to bring them out from the land of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant,
although I was a husband for them—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

33 This is the covenant
that I will establish with the house of Israel
after these days
—this is Yahweh's declaration.
I will place my law within them
and will write it on their heart,
for I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

34 Then each man will no longer teach his neighbor,
or a man teach his brother and say, 'Know Yahweh!'
For all of them will know me,
from the smallest of them to the greatest
—this is Yahweh's declaration—
for I will forgive their iniquity
and will no longer call their sins to mind."

35 Yahweh says this,
it is he who gives the sun for light by day
and the ordinance of the moon and stars
for light by night.
He is the one who sets the sea in motion
so that its waves roar—
Yahweh of hosts is his name.
36 "Only if these permanent things vanish from my sight
—this is Yahweh's declaration—
will Israel's descendants ever stop
from forever being a nation before me."

37 Yahweh says this,
"Only if the highest heavens can be measured,
and only if the earth's foundation below can be discovered,
will I reject all of Israel's descendants
because of all that they have done
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

38 "Look, the days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when the city will be rebuilt for me, from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 Then the measuring line will go out again farther, to the hill of Gareb and around Goah. 40 The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the terraced fields going out to the Kidron Valley as far as the corner of the Horse Gate on the east, will be set apart for Yahweh. The city will not be pulled up or overthrown again, forever."

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Jeremiah 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 31:1-6, 8-22, 35-37.
The ULB sets 31:29 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is an important quotation.
This chapter begins with a transition from the previous chapter. "At that time" is a reference to the day of restoration mentioned in Jeremiah 30:24. (See: restore)

Special concepts in this chapter

The new covenant

This chapter is an important teaching regarding the new covenant. God will make a new covenant that will bring forgiveness of sins and a desire to obey God. Scholars disagree about whether this new covenant has begun. (See: covenant and forgive and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

In this chapter, Jeremiah uses the term "Israel" in reference to the nation of Israel as a whole. He also uses it in reference to the northern kingdom of Israel and their people group.

Links:

Jeremiah 31:1 Notes

Jeremiah 31:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

Jeremiah 31:2

The people who have survived the sword have found favor in the wilderness

The phrase "found favor" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "While the people who have survived the sword have been in the wilderness, I have had grace on them"

who have survived the sword

The word "sword" is a metonym for war. Alternate translation: "who have survived the war"

wilderness; I will go out to give rest to Israel

Another possible meaning is "wilderness, where Israel went out to find rest."

Jeremiah 31:3

Yahweh appeared to me

Jeremiah speaks of himself as if he were the people of Israel.

I have drawn you toward myself with covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful" or "faithfully." Alternate translation: "I have been faithful to my covenant and brought you near to me" or "I have faithfully loved you and brought you near to me"

Jeremiah 31:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

I will build you up again so you will be built

Yahweh purposefully repeats the idea that he will build Israel to emphasize it. If your language can only use active verbs and has some other way to emphasize the idea, you may want to use it here. Alternate translation: "I will build you up again. Remember this: I will build you"

virgin Israel

It was common to refer to nations as if they were women. However, "virgin" makes a person think about a young woman who has never married and so has never had the opportunity to be faithless to her husband. Therefore, calling Israel a virgin is an ironic use of language. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 18:13]

tambourines

musical instruments with heads like a drum that can be hit and with pieces of metal around their sides that sound when the instruments are shaken

Jeremiah 31:7

Shout ... Shout ... Let praise be heard ... Say

Yahweh is speaking in an apostrophe to all people of the world, so these verbs are plural.

the chief people of the nations

"the most important people group of all the nations" or "the people group that is more important than any other"

Let praise be heard

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Cause everyone to hear your praise"

Jeremiah 31:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about how he will bring the Israelite people back from being captives in Babylon.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

to bring them

"to bring the Israelite people"

Jeremiah 31:9

I will lead them as they make their pleas

Yahweh will lead them and they will be praying to Yahweh. Some ancient translations read, "Yahweh will lead them and will comfort them."

I will be a Father to Israel, and Ephraim will be my firstborn

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Here "Ephraim" is another name for "Israel." Alternate translation: "I will be like a father to the people of Israel, and they will be like my firstborn child"

my firstborn

The firstborn had special honor and responsibility.

Jeremiah 31:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about how he will bring the Israelite people back from being captives in Babylon.

Hear ... Report

Yahweh is speaking to the nations, so these verbs are plural.

The one who scattered Israel is gathering her up and keeping her

Yahweh speaks of himself as if he were someone else, and he speaks of the people of Israel as if they were a helpless woman. Alternate translation: "I caused my people Israel to be scattered among the nations, but now I am bringing them home and keeping them"

as a shepherd keeps his sheep

A shepherd cares for and protects his sheep, and Yahweh is promising to care for and protect the Israelites.

Jeremiah 31:11

For Yahweh has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from the hand that was too strong for him

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that it is Yahweh who has rescued the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh has rescued the people of Israel from their enemy who was too strong for them"

Jeremiah 31:12

on the heights of Zion

"on Zion, the high place" or "on Mount Zion." Being on top of a hill is a metaphor for being happy. If your language associates mountain tops with sadness, it would be best to leave out the metaphor.

like a watered garden

This means they will be strong and healthy, and they will prosper.

they will never again feel any more sorrow

The world "never" is a generalization. The Israelites will almost always feel joy.

Jeremiah 31:13

I will change their mourning into celebration

The abstract nouns "mourning" and "celebration" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to mourn no longer but instead to celebrate" or "I will make it so they are no longer sad but happy"

I will change

"Yahweh will change"

Jeremiah 31:14

I will saturate the lives of the priests with abundance

The abstract noun "abundance" can be translated as "many good things." The lives of the priests are spoken of as if they were a field that would become completely wet when much rain falls on it. Life is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "I will give the priests all the good things they would like" or "I will satisfy the priests with good things"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 31:15

A voice is heard in Ramah

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I hear a voice in Ramah"

It is Rachel weeping for her children

Rachel was the wife of Jacob/Israel and was the mother of the tribes of Joseph and Benjamin. Her name is a metonym for the women of Israel who are crying because the Babylonians have killed their children or taken them away.

She refuses to be comforted over them, for they live no longer

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "She will not let anyone comfort her, for her children are dead"

Jeremiah 31:16

Hold your voice back from weeping and your eyes from tears

The voice and eyes are spoken of as if they were people whom Rachel needed to keep from moving. Alternate translation: "Stop weeping aloud and stop crying tears"

Hold your voice ... your eyes ... your work ... your children

Yahweh is speaking to the Israelites as if he were speaking to Rachel

this is Yahweh's declaration

In both instances of this phrase, Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 31:17

your future ... your descendants

Yahweh is speaking to the Israelites as if he were speaking to Rachel

Jeremiah 31:18

I have certainly heard Ephraim sorrowing

Ephraim was the ancestor of the largest tribe in Israel. His name is a metonym for the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I have certainly heard the descendants of Ephraim sorrowing" or "I have certainly heard the people of Israel sorrowing"

You punished me, and I have been punished

The speaker repeats the phrase to show either that Yahweh punished him severely or that Ephraim learned what Yahweh wanted to teach him through punishing him. The words "I have been punished" can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "You punished me. Yes, you punished me severely" or "You punished me, and I learned from you when you punished me"

I have been punished like an untrained calf

When people train calves, they strike them and otherwise cause them to suffer. Yahweh had caused the people of Israel to suffer.

punished

Another possible meaning is "disciplined."

Jeremiah 31:19

I slapped my thigh

in grief. If people use a different phrase or action in your language to show that they are very sad, you may want to use it here. Alternate translation: "I rubbed my brow"

I was ashamed and humiliated

The words "ashamed" and "humiliated" mean basically the

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same thing and intensify the idea of shame. Alternate translation: "I was completely ashamed"

Jeremiah 31:20

Is not Ephraim my precious child? Is he not my dear, delightful son?

Yahweh is speaking tenderly, trying to comfort the people. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "Ephraim is my precious child. He is my dear, delightful son.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 31:21

General Information:

God continues to speak from verse 7.

Place road signs for yourself ... Set up guideposts for yourself ... Set your mind ... you should take ... Come back

These commands and instances of "yourself" and "your" and "you" are addressed to "virgin Israel" and so are singular.

Come back, virgin Israel!

God is referring to a changed Israel.

Jeremiah 31:22

How long will you waver, faithless daughter?

Yahweh is telling his people that he is becoming impatient with them because they are not obeying him. Alternate translation: "Do not hesitate to start obeying me."

waver

Possible meanings are 1) be unable to decide what to do or 2) often go off the correct path, a metaphor for disobeying Yahweh.

new on earth—a woman surrounds a strong man

Possible meanings are 1) the people will be so safe that women will not need anyone to protect them or 2) this is an idiom for something no one would ever expect. Alternate translation: "new on earth—something as strange as a woman protecting a man"

Jeremiah 31:23

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

reverse their captivity

Here the word "their" refers to the people of Judah. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 29:14]

May Yahweh bless you, you righteous place where he lives, you holy mountain

Jerusalem is on the top of a hill, and the temple was built at the highest point in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh bless those who live in Jerusalem with Yahweh, where his temple is"

you holy mountain

Mount Zion, where the temple had stood

Jeremiah 31:24

Judah and all its cities will live together there

The name of the man Judah is a metonym for the land on which his descendants, the people of the tribe of Judah, live, and the cities of Judah are spoken of as if they were the family of the man Judah, all of them living "there," in the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "it will be as if the land were a house in which Judah lived with his family"

as will farmers and those who set out with flocks

"and farmers and those who set out with flocks will also live there"

those who set out with flocks

people who take care of sheep and goats

Jeremiah 31:26

had been refreshing

"had refreshed me"

Jeremiah 31:27

Look

"Pay attention" or "Listen"

days are coming ... when I will sow

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will sow the houses of Israel and Judah with the seed of man and the seed of animals

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the people of Israel and the people of Judah. The house in turn is spoken of as if it were a field in which Yahweh would sow seed, and the people and the animals they raise for food, milk, and skins are spoken of as if they are that seed. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people of Israel and Judah to become many people with many animals"

Jeremiah 31:28

I kept them under surveillance in order to uproot them

"looked for ways to uproot them"

uproot ... tear them down ... overthrow ... destroy

See how you translated these ideas in Jeremiah 1:9.

in order to build them up and to plant them

Yahweh speaks of the Israelites as if they were a house or a food crop. Alternate translation: "in order to make them strong and many"

Jeremiah 31:29

Fathers have eaten sour grapes, but the children's teeth are dulled

These words are a proverb that Jeremiah heard people say when they were complaining that Yahweh was punishing children for the sins of their fathers.

sour grapes

Possible meanings are 1) grapes with too much acid in them or 2) grapes that are not ripe. If grapes are not part of your culture, you may want to use a general word for fruit.

teeth are dulled

Use the common words in your language for how people's mouths feel when they eat sour or unripe fruit.

Jeremiah 31:30

For each man will die in his own iniquity

"For each man will die because of his own sins"

everyone who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be dulled

Jeremiah restates the proverb so that it now means people will suffer as a consequence of their own behaviors.

Jeremiah 31:31

Look

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"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am going to tell you"

days are coming ... when I will establish

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

Jeremiah 31:32

I took them by their hand

as a loving husband would hold the hand of his wife as they walk

Jeremiah 31:33

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will place my law within them and will write it on their heart

These two phrases have similar meanings and emphasize that Yahweh's law will become a part of them, rather than merely written on stone. Here "heart" represents "emotions" or "mind." Alternate translation: "My law will be part of their thoughts and emotions"

Jeremiah 31:34

from the smallest of them to the greatest

This phrase refers to every person, from the least important to the most important. Alternate translation: "every single one of them"

Jeremiah 31:36

Only if these permanent things vanish ... will Israel's descendants ever stop from forever being a nation

Yahweh speaks of a situation that will never happen in order to assure the people of Israel that they will never stop being a nation. Alternate translation: "Just as these permanent things will never vanish ... Israel's descendants will never stop from forever being a nation"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 31:37

Only if the highest heavens can be measured, and only if the earth's foundation below can be discovered, will I reject all of Israel's descendants

Yahweh speaks of situations that will never happen to assure his people that he will never reject all of Isreal's descendants. Alternate translation: "Just as the highest heavens can never be measured, and the earth's foundation below can never be discovered, I will never reject all of Israel's descendants"

the highest heavens ... earth's foundation

These phrases refer to the whole of creation.

the earth's foundation below can be discovered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone can dig all the way down to the earth's foundation"

foundation below

"deepest part." The "foundation" is the part of a house on which every other part rests.

reject

throw away or refuse to take

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 31:38

days are coming ... when the city will be rebuilt

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

the city will be rebuilt for me

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will rebuild the city for me" or "I will have them rebuild the city"

Tower of Hananel ... Corner Gate

These are the names of places.

Jeremiah 31:39

hill of Gareb ... Goah

These are the names of places.

Jeremiah 31:40

The whole valley ... will be set apart for Yahweh

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will set apart the whole valley ... for me" or "I will have them make the whole valley ... holy for me"

Kidron Valley ... Horse Gate

These are the names of places.

set apart

"made holy"

The city will not be pulled up or overthrown again

The city is spoken of as if it were a plant that someone could pull out of the ground or a building that someone could break down. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not allow anyone to pull up or overthrow the city again" or "No one will tear the city down or destroy it again"

[1]This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.[2]At that time, the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was imprisoned in the courtyard of the guard at the house of the king of Judah.
[3]Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him and said, "Why do you prophesy and say, 'Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to give over this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.[4]Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, for he will certainly be given into the hand of the king of Babylon. His mouth will speak to the king's mouth, and his eyes will see the king's eyes.[5]He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and he will remain there until I have dealt with him—this is Yahweh's declaration. Though you fight against the Chaldeans, you will not succeed.'?"

[6]Jeremiah said, "The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[7]'Look, Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you and will say, "Buy my field that is in Anathoth for yourself, for the right of redemption belongs to you."'"
[8]Then, as Yahweh had declared, Hanamel, the son of my uncle, came to me in the courtyard of the guard, and he said to me, "Buy my field that is in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of inheritance is yours, and the right of redemption belongs to you. Buy it for yourself." Then I knew that this was Yahweh's word.[9]So I bought the field in Anathoth from Hanamel, the son of my uncle, and I weighed out for him the silver, seventeen shekels in weight.
[10]Then I wrote in a scroll and sealed it, and had witnesses witness it. Then I weighed the silver in the scales.[11]Next I took the deed of purchase that was sealed, following the command and the statutes, as well as the unsealed deed.[12]I gave the sealed scroll to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah in front of Hanamel, the son of my uncle, and the witnesses who had written in the sealed scroll, and in front of all the Jews who sat in the courtyard of the guard.
[13]So I gave a command to Baruch before them. I said,[14]"Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Take these documents, both this receipt of purchase that is sealed and the unsealed copies of the deed of purchase, and put them in a clay jar so they will last for a long time.[15]For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land."

[16]After I gave the receipt of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to Yahweh and said,
[17]"Woe, Lord Yahweh! Look! You alone have made the heavens and the earth by your great strength and with your raised arm. Nothing you say is too difficult for you to do.[18]You show steadfast love to thousands and pour the guilt of fathers into the laps of their children after them. You are the great and mighty God; Yahweh of hosts is your name.
[19]You are great in wise counsel and mighty in deeds, for your eyes are open to all the ways of people, to give to each man what his conduct and deeds deserve.[20]You did signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. To this present day here in Israel and among all mankind, you have made your name famous.[21]For you brought your people Israel out from the land of Egypt with signs and wonders, with a strong hand, with a raised arm, and with great terror.
[22]Then you gave them this land—which you had sworn to their ancestors to give to them—a land flowing with milk and honey.[23]So they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or live in obedience to your law. They did nothing of what you had commanded them to do, so you brought all this disaster on them.
[24]Look! The siege mounds have reached up to the city to capture it. For because of sword, famine, and plague, the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. For what you have said would happen is happening, and see, you are watching.[25]Then you, Lord Yahweh, said to me, "Purchase a field for yourself with silver and have witnesses witness it, even though this city is being given into the hand of the Chaldeans."

[26]The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[27]"Look! I am Yahweh, God of all mankind. Is anything too difficult for me to do?[28]Therefore Yahweh says this, 'See, I am about to give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He will capture it.
[29]The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city will come and set fire to this city and burn it, along with the houses on the roofs of which the people worshiped Baal and poured out drink offerings to other gods in order to provoke me.[30]For the people of Israel and Judah have certainly been people who have been doing evil before my eyes since their youth. The people of Israel have certainly provoked me to anger with the works of their hands—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[31]Yahweh declares that this city has been a provocation of my wrath and fury since the day that they built it. It has been that right up to this present day. So I will remove it from before my face[32]because of all the wickedness of the people of Israel and Judah, the things that they have done to provoke me—they, their kings, princes, priests, prophets, and every person in Judah and inhabitant of Jerusalem.
[33]They turned their backs to me instead of their faces. Though I persistently taught them, not one of them listened in order to receive correction.[34]They set up their abominable idols in the house that is called by my name, to defile it.[35]They built high places for Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom in order to put their sons and daughters in the fire for Molech. I did not command them. It never entered my mind that they should do this detestable thing and so cause Judah to sin.'

[36]So now therefore, I, Yahweh, the God of Israel, say this concerning this city, the city about which you are saying, 'It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon by sword, famine, and plague.'[37]See, I am about to gather them from every land

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where I had driven them in my wrath, fury, and great anger. I am about to bring them back to this place and enable them to live in security.
[38]Then they will be my people, and I will be their God.[39]I will give them one heart and one way to honor me every day so it will be good for them and their descendants after them.[40]Then I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. I will set honor for me in their hearts, so that they will never turn away from me.
[41]Then I will rejoice in doing good to them. I will faithfully plant them in this land with all my heart and all my life.
[42]For Yahweh says this, 'Just as I have brought all this great disaster on this people, so I will bring on them all the good things that I have said I would do for them.
[43]Then fields will be bought in this land, about which you are saying, "This is a ruined land, which has neither man nor animal. It has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans."'[44]They will buy fields with silver and write in sealed scrolls. They will assemble witnesses in the land of Benjamin, all around Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, in the cities in the hill country and in the lowlands, and in the cities of the Negev. For I will reverse their captivity—this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

Jeremiah 32 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The king should have listened to the prophet Jeremiah and repented of his sin. Instead, he objected to his message. Yahweh punished him because of this. (See: prophet and repent and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

The term "Israel" is used exclusively in reference to the nation of Israel as a whole in this chapter.

Links:

Jeremiah 32:1 Notes

Jeremiah 32:1

This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh

This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to Jeremiah. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:2]

in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar

"after Zedekiah had been king of Judah for more than nine years and Nebuchadnezzar had been king for more than seventeen years"

Jeremiah 32:2

Jeremiah the prophet was imprisoned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were keeping Jeremiah as a prisoner"

Jeremiah the prophet was imprisoned

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person. Alternate translation: "I was imprisoned"

the courtyard of the guard at the house of the king of Judah

This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners.

Jeremiah 32:3

Zedekiah king of Judah had imprisoned him

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people helped Zedekiah do this.

had imprisoned him

Here "him" refers to Jeremiah. It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.

Why do you prophesy and say

Zekekiah uses a question to rebuke Jeremiah. Alternate translation: "It is wrong for you to continue prophesying and saying"

I am about to give over this city into the hand of the king of Babylon

Yahweh speaks of the city as if it were a small object that one person could give to another. The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "I am about to put this city under the control of the king of Babylon" or "I am about to allow the king of Babylon to do whatever he wants with this city"

he will capture it

It might be best to translate so that the reader understands that other people would help the king of Babylon take control of the city.

Jeremiah 32:4

he will certainly be given into the hand of the king of Babylon

The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will certainly put him under the control of the king of Babylon" or "I will certainly allow the king of Babylon to do whatever he wants with him"

His mouth will speak to the king's mouth, and his eyes will see the king's eyes

Here "mouth" and "eyes" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "Zedekiah himself will see and directly speak with Nebuchadnezzar"

Jeremiah 32:5

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

you fight

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people in Jerusalem.

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Jeremiah 32:6
Jeremiah said
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person. Alternate translation: "I said"
The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 1:4]
Jeremiah 32:7
'Look, Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you and will say, "Buy my field that is in Anathoth for yourself, for the right of redemption belongs to you.""'
The long quotation that begins with the words "The word of Yahweh" in verse 6 ends here. You may translate this as indirect speech. Alternate translation: "Jeremiah said that the word of Yahweh had come to him and told him that Hanamel son of Shallum his uncle was coming to him and would tell him to buy his uncle's field that was in Anathoth for himself, for the right of redemption belonged to Jeremiah."
Hanamel ... Shallum
These are the names of men.
Anathoth
This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 1:1.
Jeremiah 32:8
General Information:
Jeremiah continues speaking, but he begins to speak of himself in first person.
the courtyard of the guard
This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 32:9
seventeen shekels
A shekel is 11 grams. Alternate translation: "17 shekels" or "187 grams"
Jeremiah 32:10
General Information:
Jeremiah continues speaking.
in a scroll and sealed it, and had witnesses witness it
This refers to the deed that a person would sign to purchase land. Other people would be witnesses to confirm that Jeremiah had purchased this land.
had witnesses witness it
"had people watch me purchase the land so they could tell others that I had purchased the land"
Jeremiah 32:11
that was sealed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I sealed"
unsealed deed
"opened copy" or "the deed that did not have a seal on it"
Jeremiah 32:12
Baruch ... Neriah ... Mahseiah
These are names of men.
the courtyard of the guard
The open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 32:13
General Information:
Jeremiah continues speaking.
before them
Here "them" refers to Hanamel, the witnesses, and the Judeans.
Jeremiah 32:14
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Jeremiah 32:15
Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel will buy houses, vineyards and fields again in this land"
Jeremiah 32:16
General Information:
Jeremiah continues speaking. He begins a long prayer, a lament with a long introduction of praise.
the receipt of purchase
This means the sealed scroll and the unsealed scroll.
Jeremiah 32:17
Woe, Lord Yahweh! Look!
The word "woe" here indicates that in this prayer Jeremiah is sad, complaining or lamenting. The word "look" here indicates that the next words are an introduction or background for the most important part of the prayer.
by your great strength and with your raised arm
The phrase "raised arm" is a metonym for the strength of the arm, so the words "your great strength" and "your raised arm" form a doublet. Alternate translation: "by your great power"
Jeremiah 32:18
You show steadfast love to thousands
The abstract noun "love" can be stated as the verb "love." Alternate translation: "You love thousands without ceasing"
pour the guilt of fathers into the laps of their children after them
The word "guilt" is a metonym for Yahweh punishing people because they are guilty of doing evil things. Yahweh punishing people is spoken of as if he were pouring a large container full of liquid or small objects into people's laps as they sit. Alternate translation: "you punish children for the sins of their parents"
Jeremiah 32:19
General Information:
Jeremiah continues praying the introduction to his lament to Yahweh.
for your eyes are open to all the ways of people
Open eyes are a metonym for what the person sees. How a person lives is spoken of as if he were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "You see everything that people do"
to give to each man what his conduct and deeds deserve
The abstract nouns "conduct" and "deeds," which are similar in meaning, can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "and will reward everyone according to how good or evil the things they do are"
Jeremiah 32:20

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You did signs and wonders in the land of Egypt
This refers to an event in the past when God used his power to free the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt.
To this present day
"To this day"
among all mankind
"among all people"
you have made your name famous
Here "name" refers to God's reputation. Alternate translation: "you have made yourself famous"
Jeremiah 32:21
with a strong hand, with a raised arm
The phrase "strong hand" is a metonym for strength, and the phrase "raised arm" is a metonym for the strength of the arm, so the phrases "strong hand" and "raised arm" form a doublet. Alternate translation: "by your great strength"
Jeremiah 32:22
General Information:
Jeremiah continues praying to Yahweh. He ends the introduction to his lament ("Woe," Jeremiah 32:17) with the words "took possession of it" and begins the lament with "but they did not obey."
gave them
"gave the people of Israel"
land flowing with milk and honey
"land where milk and honey flow." God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 11:5]
Jeremiah 32:23
But they did not obey your voice
The voice is a metonym for the message the speaker gives. Alternate translation: "But they did not obey what you said"
Jeremiah 32:24
General Information:
Jeremiah continues praying to Yahweh.
The siege mounds have reached up to the city to capture it
The large piles of dirt and rocks that the enemy built around the city so they could stand on them and attack it are spoken of as if they were the attackers themselves reaching out to capture the city. Alternate translation: "The enemy's seige mounds are so close to the city that the enemy will be able to capture the city"
because of sword
The word "sword" is a metonym for war, where soldiers use swords. Alternate translation: "because soldiers will attack"
famine, and plague
These abstract nouns can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "people have no food to eat, and everyone is weak from being ill"
the city has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans
Here "hand" means power or control. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have given Jerusalem to the Chaldean army"
happening, and see, you are watching
"happening, as you can see very well"
Jeremiah 32:25
have witnesses witness it
"have people watch you purchase the land so they can tell others that you have purchased the land"
this city is being given
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am giving this city"
Jeremiah 32:26
The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]
came to Jeremiah
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.
Jeremiah 32:27
Is anything too difficult for me to do?
Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he can do anything. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Nothing is too difficult for me to do."
Jeremiah 32:28
See, I am about to give
"Listen carefully! I am the one who will give"
give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans
Yahweh speaks of the city as if it were a small object that he could put into a person's hand. The word "hand" is a metonym for the power that the hand puts into action. Alternate translation: "put this city under the power of the Chaldeans"
Jeremiah 32:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah.
in order to provoke me
"so that I would become very angry"
Jeremiah 32:30
doing evil before my eyes
Here the metonym "eyes" represents what God sees. Possible meanings are 1) "doing what I consider evil" or 2) "doing evil knowing that I am watching"
since their youth
A person being young is a metaphor for the people of Israel first becoming a nation. Alternate translation: "from the time they were young" or "from the time that they became a nation"
the works of their hands
Possible meanings of this are 1) the word "hand" is a synecdoche for the person and the referent is the idols they had made. Alternate translation: "the idols they have made" Or 2) the phrase is a metonym for their evil practices. Alternate translation: "their evil practices"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 32:31
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah.
this city has been a provocation of my wrath and fury since the day that they built it
Here "city" is a metonym for the people that live there. The words "wrath" and "fury" mean basically the same thing

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and emphasize how very angry he is. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem have made me very angry since the day they built their city"

has been a provocation of

The abstract noun "provocation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "has been something that has provoked"

It has been that right up to this present day

"They continue to make me angry even now"

from before my face

The face is a metonym for the person's presence. Alternate translation: "from my presence" or "completely"

Jeremiah 32:33

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah about what the people of Israel had done.

They turned their backs to me instead of their faces

One turns one's face to someone to show that one is listening, and one's back to show that one refuses to listen. Alternate translation: "Instead of listening carefully to me, they refused to listen at all" or "They refused to listen"

to receive correction

"to learn how to act correctly"

Jeremiah 32:34

their abominable idols

"their idols which I hate"

the house that is called by my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the house that belongs to me" or "the building in which they worship me"

Jeremiah 32:35

Valley of Ben Hinnom

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 7:31.

It never entered my mind

Here "mind" refers to Yahweh's thoughts. Alternate translation: "I never thought at all"

Jeremiah 32:36

which you are saying

Here "you" is plural. These words could refer to 1) Jeremiah and those with him, or 2) all the people.

It is given into the hand of the king of Babylon

Here "hand" means power or control. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has given it to the king of Babylon" or "Yahweh has given the king of Babylon the power to rule it"

Jeremiah 32:37

to gather them

"to gather my people"

wrath, fury, and great anger

All three words mean the same thing and emphasize how very angry he is. Alternate translation: "extreme anger"

in security

"where they are safe"

Jeremiah 32:38

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

Jeremiah 32:39

one heart and one way to honor me

The people of Israel will want to work together to honor Yahweh.

Jeremiah 32:40

an everlasting covenant

"eternal agreement"

will not turn away from doing good

"stop doing good"

I will set honor for me in their hearts

Honor is spoken of as if it were a solid object put in a container from which no one can remove it. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to always honor me"

so that they will never turn away from me

"so that they will never stop obeying and worshiping me"

Jeremiah 32:41

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking.

doing good to them

Here "them" refers to the people of Israel.

I will faithfully plant them in this land

Yahweh speaks of having his people live in the land forever as if he were planting plants in a garden. Alternate translation: "I will permanently settle the Israelites in this land"

with all my heart and all my life

Together, these two phrases form an idiomatic expression that refers to a person's entire being. Alternate translation: "with all that I am" or "wholeheartedly"

Jeremiah 32:42

I have brought all this great disaster on this people, so I will bring on them all the good things

"I have caused all these bad things to happen to this people, and now I will cause the good things to happen to them"

Jeremiah 32:43

Then fields will be bought in this land

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then people will buy fields in this land"

you are saying

Here "you" refers to the people of Israel.

It has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans

Here "hand" is a metonym for power or control. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has given it to the Chaldeans" or "Yahweh has given the Chaldeans power over it"

Jeremiah 32:44

write in sealed scrolls. They will assemble witnesses

The "sealed scrolls" are the deeds that a person would sign to purchase land. Other people would be witnesses to confirm the purchase.

reverse their captivity

"free them from their captivity." The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 29:14]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

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33 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut within the courtyard of the guard,
saying,[2]"Yahweh the maker, says this—Yahweh, who forms in order to establish—Yahweh is his name,[3]'Call to me, and
I will answer you. I will demonstrate great things to you, mysteries that you do not understand.'
[4]For Yahweh, God of Israel, says this concerning the houses in this city and the houses of the kings of Judah that are torn
down because of the siege ramps and the sword,[5]"The Chaldeans are coming to fight and to fill the houses with corpses of
people whom I will kill in my wrath and fury, when I hide my face from this city because of all their wickedness.
[6]But see, I am about to bring healing and a cure, for I will heal them and will bring to them abundance, peace, and
faithfulness.[7]For I will reverse the captivity of Judah and Israel; I will build them up as in the beginning.[8]Then I will purify
them from all the iniquity that they have committed against me. I will pardon all the iniquities that they have done
against me, and all the ways that they rebelled against me.[9]For this city will become for me a joyful name, a song of praise
and honor for all the nations of the earth who will hear of all the good things that I am going to do for it. Then they will
fear and tremble because of all the good things and the peace that I will give to it.'

[10]Yahweh says this, 'In this place about which you are now saying, "It is desolate, a place with neither man nor animal," in
the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, having neither man nor animal, there will be heard
again[11]the sound of joy and the sound of gladness, the sound of the groom and the sound of the bride, the sound of those
who say, while they bring thank offerings to the house of Yahweh,
"Give thanks to Yahweh of hosts, for Yahweh is good,
and his unfailing love lasts forever!"
For I will reverse the captivity of the land to what they were before,' says Yahweh.

[12]Yahweh of hosts says this: 'In this desolate place, where now there is neither man nor animal—in all its cities there will
again be pastures where shepherds can rest their flocks.[13]In the cities in the hill country, the lowlands, and the Negev,in
the land of Benjamin and all around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, the flocks will again pass under the hands of
the ones counting them,' says Yahweh.

[14]"Look! Days are coming—this is Yahweh's declaration—when I will do what I have promised for the house of Israel and
the house of Judah.
[15] In those days and in that time
I will make a righteous branch to grow for David,
and he will carry out justice and righteousness in the land.

[16] In those days Judah will be saved,
and Jerusalem will live in security,
for this is what she will be called,
"Yahweh is our righteousness."'

[17]For Yahweh says this: 'A man from David's line will never be lacking to sit on the throne of the house of Israel,[18]nor will a
man from the Levitical priests be lacking before me to raise burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to perform
sacrifices all the time.'"

[19]The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[20]"Yahweh says this: 'If you can break my covenant with day and night so
that there will no longer be day or night at their proper times,[21]then you will be able to break my covenant with David my
servant, so that he will no longer have a descendant to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests, my
servants.[22]As the hosts of heaven cannot be counted, and as the sand of the seashores cannot be measured, so I will
increase the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who serve before me.'"

[23]The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[24]"Have you not considered what this people has declared when they said,
'The two families that Yahweh chose, now he has rejected them'? In this way they despise my people, saying that they are
no longer a nation in their sight.
[25]I, Yahweh, say this, 'If I have not established the covenant of day and night, and if I have not fixed the laws of heaven
and earth,[26]then I will reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant and not bring from them a person to rule
over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will reverse their captivity and show mercy to them.'"

Jeremiah 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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Covenant faithfulness
Despite the great punishment Judah is facing and Israel has undergone, there is hope. This hope is based in the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh. Ultimately, he will restore his people. (See: covenantfaith, hope and restore and peopleofgod)

Links:

Jeremiah 33:1 Notes

Jeremiah 33:1
General Information:
See: and
the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was ... guard, saying,
The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:13]
came to Jeremiah
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. There is no need to translate using first person.
he was still shut within
"he was still a prisoner in"
the courtyard of the guard
This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 33:2
who forms in order to establish
who creates things so he can make them exist forever
Jeremiah 33:4
that are torn down because of the siege ramps and the sword
This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) the people tore the houses down to make walls to defend against the Chaldeans. Alternate translation: "that the people have torn down to defend against the siege ramps and the sword" or 2) Alternate translation: "the houses that the Chaldeans have torn down to make siege ramps so they can make war"
the sword
This is a metonym for people dying violently when soldiers kill with swords.
Jeremiah 33:5
in my wrath and fury
The words "wrath" and "fury" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his wrath. Alternate translation: "in my extreme wrath"
I hide my face
Yahweh is represented by his "face." This phrase shows Yahweh's displeasure with the city. Alternate translation: "I have turned away from you" or "I am no longer concerned with you"
Jeremiah 33:7
I will reverse the captivity of Judah and Israel
The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 29:14]
Jeremiah 33:9
this city ... do for it ... give to it
The city is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "the people who live in this city ... do for the people who live there ... give to the people who live there"
for me a joyful name
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh himself will rejoice when he thinks of the name of Jerusalem or 2) when people in other lands hear the name of the city, they will know that Yahweh has given the people who live there joy.
a song of praise and honor for all the nations of the earth
The word "song" is a metonym for the object about which people will sing the song. Alternate translation: "something about which all the people groups of the earth will sing songs of praise and honor to me, Yahweh"
they will fear and tremble
The hendiadys "fear and tremble" can be translated by a single verb. Alternate translation: "they will tremble with fear"
fear
Another possible meaning is "awe."
because of all the good things and the peace that I will give to it
The abstract noun "peace" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "because of all the good things that I will give to it and because I will cause it to be peaceful"
Jeremiah 33:11
the house of Yahweh
the temple in Jerusalem
I will reverse the captivity of the land
The word "land" is a metonym for the people who live on the land. The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and it may be understood as a metaphor for Yahweh making the people prosper in a general sense. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 29:14]
to what they were before
This refers to the time before the exile to Babylon. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "to what they were before I sent the Israelites into exile in Babylon"
Jeremiah 33:12
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
Jeremiah 33:13
the flocks will again pass under the hands of the ones counting them
This refers to the practice of a shepherd counting and inspecting his sheep as the sheep walked under his hand. Alternate translation: "shepherds will again count their sheep as the sheep walk by"
Jeremiah 33:14
Look
"Listen carefully"
Days are coming ... when I will do
Future time is spoken of as if the "Days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]
this is Yahweh's declaration

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Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 3:18]

Judah

This is a metonym for the people who live in Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

Jeremiah 33:15

In those days and in that time

The phrase "in that time" means the same thing as, and intensifies the phrase "In those days." Alternate translation: "In those very days" or "At that very time"

I will make a righteous branch to grow for David

Yahweh speaks of a descendant of David as if he were a branch off of a tree trunk. Alternate translation: "I will cause a righteous man to come from and bring glory to the line of David"

the land

the nation of Israel

Jeremiah 33:16

Judah ... Jerusalem

These towns' names are metonyms for the people who live in the towns. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah ... the people of Jerusalem"

Judah will be saved

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will save Judah"

Jerusalem will live in security

"the people of Judah will be safe from their enemies"

this is what she will be called

Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem as if the town were a woman. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what they will call her" or "this is what I will call the town"

Jeremiah 33:17

A man from David's line will never be lacking

"There will always be a man from David's line"

A man from David's line

a male descendant of King David

to sit on the throne of the house of Israel

The throne is a metonym for the king. Alternate translation: "to be king over the house of Israel"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 3:18. Alternate translation: "Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel"

Jeremiah 33:18

nor will a man from the Levitical priests be lacking before me to raise burnt offerings

"and there will always be a man from the Levitical priests to raise burnt offerings"

raise burnt offerings

"offer burnt offerings"

Jeremiah 33:19

The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. There is no need to translate using first person.

Jeremiah 33:20

Yahweh says

Yahweh is speaking of himself here. Alternate translation: "I say"

If you can break my covenant with day and night ... proper times

This phrase starting with "If" is a condition that is contrary to fact. No one can break God's covenant with night and day.

Jeremiah 33:21

then you will be able to break my covenant with David ... and my covenant with the Levitical priests, my servants

This completes the sentence that began in verse 20 with the condition that is contrary to fact, "If you can break my covenant ... proper times." God said this to assure his people that no one can change God's covenants with David and the Levitical priests. This would give the people hope that God will keep his covenant. Alternate translation: "Just as you cannot break my covenant ... proper times, so you will never be able to break my covenant with David ... and my covenant with the Levitical priests, my servants"

to reign on his throne

The throne is a metonym for the king who sits on the throne. Alternate translation: "to rule the kingdom I have given to him"

Jeremiah 33:22

As the hosts of heaven cannot be counted

This is part of a simile, and it can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "As the hosts of heaven are so many that they cannot be counted" or "As no one can count the hosts of heaven"

the hosts of heaven

"the armies of heaven." This refers to the lights we see in the sky, including the sun, moon, stars. They are called the hosts because there are so many of them, just as armies have many soldiers. Alternate translation: "the multitude of things in the sky"

as the sand of the seashores cannot be measured

This is part of a simile, and it can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "as the sand of the seashores is so abundant that it cannot be measured" or "as no one can measure the sand of the seashores"

Jeremiah 33:23

The word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. There is no need to translate using first person.

Jeremiah 33:24

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Have you not considered what this people has declared when they said, 'The ... them'?
Yahweh wants Jeremiah to think deeply about what the people have said. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have noticed what this people are really saying when they said, 'The ... them.'"
In this way they despise my people, saying ... sight
"What they are really saying is that my people are worthless and that my people will never again be a nation."
my people ... are no longer a nation in their sight
Sight is a metonym for thinking. Alternate translation: "they no longer think of my people as a nation"
Jeremiah 33:25
If I have not established ... and if I have not fixed ... earth
This phrase starting with "If" is a condition that is contrary to fact. God established his covenant with day and night, and he fixed the laws of heaven and earth.
Jeremiah 33:26
then I will reject the descendants ... and not bring
This completes the sentence that began in verse 25 with the condition that is contrary to fact, "If I have not established ... and if I have not fixed ... earth." God said this to assure his people that he will not reject them and he will bring someone to rule over them. Alternate translation: "Just as I have established the covenant ... so I will never reject the descendants ... and I will bring"
I will reverse their captivity
The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 29:14]
show mercy to
See how the words "have compassion on" are translated in (Jeremiah 30:18).

34 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all of his army, together with all the kingdoms of the earth, the domains under his dominion, and all their people were waging war against Jerusalem and all of her cities, saying:[2]"Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: Look, I am about to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon. He will burn it.[3]You will not escape from his hand, for you will certainly be seized and given into his hand. Your eyes will look at the eyes of the king of Babylon; he will speak directly to you as you go to Babylon.'
[4]Listen to the word of Yahweh, Zedekiah king of Judah! Yahweh says this concerning you, 'You will not die by the sword.
[5]You will die in peace. As in the funeral burning of your ancestors, the kings who were before you, they will burn your body. They will say, "Woe, master!" They will lament for you. Now I have spoken—this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

[6]So Jeremiah the prophet proclaimed to Zedekiah king of Judah all these words in Jerusalem.[7]The army of the king of Babylon made war against Jerusalem and all the remaining cities of Judah: Lachish and Azekah. These cities of Judah remained as fortified cities.

[8]The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem, to proclaim freedom to them,[9]that each man must send away his Hebrew slaves free, both male and female, so no one was to make a slave of a Jew, who was his brother.
[10]So all the leaders and people entered into the covenant that each person would free his male and female slaves so that they would not be enslaved any longer. They obeyed and set them free.[11]But after this they changed their minds. They brought back the slaves whom they had sent away free. They forced them to become slaves again.

[12]So the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[13]"Yahweh, God of Israel, says this, 'I myself made a covenant with your ancestors on the day that I brought them out from the land of Egypt, out from the house of slavery. That was when I said,
[14]"At the end of every seven years, each man must send away his brother, his fellow Hebrew who had sold himself to you and served you for six years. Send him away in freedom." But your ancestors did not listen to me or incline their ears to me.
[15]Now you yourselves repented and began to do what is right in my eyes. You proclaimed freedom, each man to his neighbor, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name.[16]But then you turned and polluted my name; you caused each man to bring back his male and female slaves, the ones whom you had sent away free. You forced them to become your slaves again.'

[17]Therefore Yahweh says this, 'You yourselves have not listened to me. You should have proclaimed freedom, every one of you, to your brothers and fellow Israelites. So look! I am about to proclaim freedom to you—this is Yahweh's declaration—freedom for the sword, the plague, and famine, for I am going to make you a terrifying thing in the sight of every kingdom on earth.[18]Then I will deal with the people who have broken my covenant, who did not keep the words of the covenant that they established before me when they cut a bull in two and walked between its parts,[19]and then the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the eunuchs and the priests, and all the people of the land walked between the parts of the bull.
[20]I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who are seeking their lives. Their corpses will be food for the birds of the skies and the wild animals on the earth.[21]So I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his leaders into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who are seeking their life, and into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon that has risen up against you.[22]Look, I am about to give a command—this is Yahweh's declaration—and

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will bring them back to this city to wage war against it and take it, and to burn it. For I will turn the cities of Judah into ruined places in which there will be no inhabitants.'"

Jeremiah 34 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Law of Moses

According to the law of Moses, the people were required to free their indebted slaves after a period of time. The king led them in freeing their fellow Israelites whom they held as slaves, but later they changed their minds and enslaved them again. (See: lawofmoses and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Actions with cultural meaning

When the people of Israel made a sacred promise to God, they cut a calf in two and passed between its parts. It was a very serious sin not to do what one had promised.

Links:

Jeremiah 34:1 Notes

Jeremiah 34:1

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, when Nebuchadnezzar ... her cities, saying:

This idiom "The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 7:1]

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name in this chapter. There is no need to translate using first person.

waging war

"fighting"

all of her cities

This refers to all the towns around Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 34:2

to give this city

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:28

into the hand of the king of Babylon

Here the word "hand" is a metonym for the control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "under the control of the king of Babylon"

Jeremiah 34:3

You will not escape from his hand

Here the word "hand" is a metonym for the control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "You will not escape from his control"

you will certainly be seized and given

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Babylonians will certainly seize you and give you"

Jeremiah 34:4

You will not die by the sword.

The word "sword" is a metonym for dying in war. Alternate translation: "You will not die in battle"

Jeremiah 34:5

the funeral burning of your ancestors

The people would burn spices in honor of people who had recently died. They did not burn the dead people's bodies.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 34:7

Lachish and Azekah

These are names of cities.

These cities of Judah remained as fortified cities

"the only fortified cities of Judah that the Babylonians had not yet captured"

Jeremiah 34:8

The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. However, the actual message does not begin until [Jeremiah 34:12]

word

message

after King Zedekiah had made a covenant ... freedom to them

These words begin to provide background information to events that will be described later.

Jeremiah 34:9

that each man ... his brother

The background information that begins with the words "after King Zedekiah had made a covenant" in verse 8 ends here.

Jeremiah 34:10

Connecting Statement:

Jeremiah continues giving the background information that began in Jeremiah 34:8.

Jeremiah 34:12

Connecting Statement:

Jeremiah resumes the story from Jeremiah 34:8 after the background information of Jeremiah 34:8-Jeremiah 11.

the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 34:13

house of slavery

This is an idiom. "place where you were slaves"

Jeremiah 34:14

each man must send away his brother, his fellow Hebrew who had sold himself to you and served you

"each of you must free any fellow Hebrews who sold

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themselves to you and have been your slaves"
Send him away in freedom
"You must let them be free from serving you"
did not ... incline their ears to me
To incline the ear, to lean the head toward the speaker so as to hear better, is a metonym for paying attention to what the speaker is saying. Alternate translation: "did not ... pay attention to what I said"
Jeremiah 34:15
Now you yourselves repented
Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
right in my eyes
"Eyes" here is a metonym for someone's opinion or idea. Alternate translation: "what I consider to be right"
the house that is called by my name
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the house that belongs to me" or "the building in which they worship me"
Jeremiah 34:16
turned and polluted my name
A person's name is a metonym for what people think of him. Alternate translation: "stopped doing what was right and did evil things that have made people think that I am evil"
Jeremiah 34:17
So look!
"Listen!" or "Pay attention to the important thing I am going to tell you!"
I am about to proclaim freedom to you ... freedom for the sword, the plague, and famine
Jeremiah uses irony to say that the "freedom" the people will enjoy will actually be suffering. Alternate translation: "I will proclaim misery to you ... misery from the sword, the plague, and famine"
proclaim freedom to you
"proclaim that you are free"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
sword
This is a metonym for soldiers who carry swords. Alternate translation: "enemy soldiers to kill you"
am going to make you a terrifying thing in the sight of every kingdom on earth
Here "sight" represents judgment or evaluation. The word "kingdom" is a metonym for the people who live in the kingdom. Alternate translation: "I am going to terrify the people in every kingdom on earth by what I do to you"
Jeremiah 34:18
when they cut a bull ... walked between its parts
These words begin to describe how the people established the covenant.
established before me
"agreed to with me" or "established while I was watching"
Jeremiah 34:19
and then the leaders ... walked between the parts of the bull
The description of how the people established the covenant that began with the words "when they cut" in verse 18 ends here.
Jeremiah 34:20
I will give them into the hand of their enemies
The word "hand" here is a metonym for the power or control that the enemies will exercise using their hands. Alternate translation: "I will allow their enemies to have complete control over them"
seeking their lives
This is a polite way to say that they wanted to kill them. Alternate translation: "seeking to kill them"
into the hand of their enemies
Here the word "hands" represents control. Alternate translation: "to be conquered by their enemies" or "over to the control of their enemies"
Jeremiah 34:21
risen up
"come to fight"
Jeremiah 34:22
bring them
bring the Babylonian armies

35 [1]The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,[2]"Go to the family of the Rekabites and speak with them. Then bring them to my house, into one of the rooms there, and give them wine to drink."
[3]So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah and his brothers, all his sons, and all the family of the Rekabites.
[4]I took them to the house of Yahweh, into the rooms of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God. These rooms were beside the room of the leaders, which was above the room of Maaseiah son of Shallum, the gatekeeper.
[5]Then I placed bowls and cups full of wine in front of the Rekabites and said to them, "Drink some wine."[6]But they said, "We will not drink any wine, for our ancestor, Jonadab son of Rekab, commanded us, 'Do not drink any wine, neither you nor your descendants, forever.[7]Also, do not build any houses, sow any seeds, or plant any vineyards; this is not for you. For you must live in tents all your days, so that you might live many days in the land where you are staying as foreigners.'
[8]We have obeyed the voice of Jonadab son of Rekab, our ancestor, in all that he commanded us, to never drink wine all of our days, we, our wives, our sons, and our daughters.[9]We will never build houses to live in, and there will be no vineyard, field, or seed in our possession.[10]We have lived in tents and we have obeyed and done all that Jonadab our ancestor commanded us.[11]But when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked the land, we said, 'Come, we must go to Jerusalem to escape from the Chaldean and Aramean armies.' So we are living in Jerusalem."

[12]Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,[13]"Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'Go and say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, "Will you not receive correction and listen to my words?—this is Yahweh's

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declaration.[14]The words of Jonadab son of Rekab that he gave to his sons as a command, not to drink any wine, have been observed to this very day. They have obeyed their ancestor's command. But as for me, I myself have been making persistent proclamations to you, but you do not listen to me.
[15]I persistently sent to you all my servants, the prophets, saying 'Let each person turn from his wicked way and do good deeds; let no one walk any longer after other gods and worship them. Then you will live in the land that I gave to you and your ancestors.' But you did not incline your ears and you did not listen to me.[16]For the descendants of Jonadab son of Rekab have observed the commands of their ancestor that he commanded them, but this people refuses to listen to me.'"
[17]So Yahweh, God of hosts and God of Israel, says this, 'Look, I am bringing upon Judah and on everyone living in Jerusalem, all the disasters I pronounced against them because I spoke to them, but they did not listen; I called to them, but they did not answer.'"

[18]Jeremiah said to the family of the Rekabites, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: You have listened to the commands of Jonadab your ancestor and have kept them all—you have obeyed all that he commanded you to do—[19]so Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'There will always be someone descended from Jonadab son of Rekab to serve me.'"

Jeremiah 35 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The Rechabites

The actions of the Rechabites contrasted with the actions of the Jews. The Rechabites obeyed the commands their ancestor had give while living in Canaan, but Judah did not obey Yahweh's commands. Because the Rechabites were obedient, Yahweh preserved their clan. The Rechabites' history is found in the book of Judges.

Links:

Jeremiah 35:1 Notes

Jeremiah 35:1

The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh in the days ... of Judah, saying,

The idiom "The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.

Jeremiah 35:2

Rekabites

This is a people group.

my house

the temple

Jeremiah 35:3

Jaazaniah ... Habazziniah

These are the names of men.

Jeremiah 35:4

Hanan ... Igdaliah ... Maaseiah ... Shallum

These are the names of men.

Jeremiah 35:5

Rekabites

See how you translated this in Jeremiah 35:2.

Jeremiah 35:6

Jonadab ... Rekab

These are the names of men.

Jeremiah 35:7

live many days in the land

"live many years in the land." "Days" refers to the span of time.

Jeremiah 35:8

the voice of Jonadab

The word "voice" is a metonym for the command that Jonadab spoke. Alternate translation: "the command of Jonadab"

all of our days

"as long as we live." "Days" refers to the span of time.

Jeremiah 35:12

the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, saying,

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.

Jeremiah 35:13

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Will you not receive correction and listen to my words?

Yahweh is telling Israel to listen carefully to his rebuke. Alternate translation: "You must certainly receive this correction and listen to my words."

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 35:14

The words of Jonadab son of Rekab that he gave to his sons as a command, not to drink any wine, have been observed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The sons of Jonadab son of Rekab have observed their

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father's command to not drink wine"

Jonadab ... Rekab

These are the names of men.

Jeremiah 35:15

let no one walk any longer after other gods

Walking after a god is a metaphor for obeying the laws of that god. Alternate translation: "do not follow other gods" or "do not obey other gods"

you did not incline your ears

When people incline their ears, they turn their head so they can hear someone or something better. This is a metonym for paying attention. Alternate translation "you did not pay attention to me"

Jeremiah 35:16

the commands of their ancestor that he commanded them

"the commands of their ancestor that he gave them" or "the things that their ancestor commanded them to do"

Jeremiah 35:17

Look

This word tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows.

Jeremiah 35:18

Jeremiah said

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person. Alternate translation: "I said"

Rekabites

This is the name of the people group. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 35:2.

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Jonadab

a man's name. See how you translated it in Jeremiah 35:5.

Jeremiah 35:19

Jonadab ... Rekab

These are the names of men. See how you translated these in Jeremiah 35:5.

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36 [1]It came about in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, and he said,[2]"Take a scroll for yourself and write on it all the words that I have told you concerning Israel and Judah, and every nation. Do this for everything I have told from the days of Josiah until this very day.[3]Perhaps the people of Judah will listen to all the disasters that I intend to bring on them. Perhaps everyone will turn away from his wicked way, so I can forgive their iniquity and their sin."

[4]Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote in a scroll, at Jeremiah's dictation, all the words of Yahweh spoken to him.[5]Next Jeremiah gave a command to Baruch. He said, "I am in prison and cannot go to the house of Yahweh.
[6]So you must go and read from the scroll that you wrote at my dictation. On the day of the fast, you must read Yahweh's words in the hearing of the people in his house, and also in the hearing of all of Judah who have come from their cities. Proclaim these words to them.
[7]Perhaps their pleas for mercy will come before Yahweh. Perhaps each person will turn from his wicked way, since the wrath and fury that Yahweh has proclaimed against this people are severe."[8]So Baruch son of Neriah did everything that Jeremiah the prophet had commanded him to do. He read aloud from the scroll the words of Yahweh in the house of Yahweh.

[9]It came about in the fifth year and ninth month of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, that all the people in Jerusalem and the people who came to Jerusalem from the cities of Judah proclaimed a fast before Yahweh.[10]Baruch read aloud from the scroll Jeremiah's words in the house of Yahweh, from the room of Gemariah son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper courtyard, by the gate of the entrance to the house of Yahweh. He did this in the hearing of all the people.

[11]Now Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all of Yahweh's words in the scroll.[12]He went down to the house of the king, to the secretary's room. Look, all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Akbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the officials.
[13]Then Micaiah reported to them all the words that he had heard that Baruch read aloud from the scroll in the hearing of the people.[14]So all the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cushi, to Baruch. Jehudi said to Baruch, "Take the scroll in your hand, the scroll from which you were reading in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and went to the officials.[15]Then they said to him, "Sit down and read this in our hearing." So Baruch read the scroll.
[16]It happened that when they heard all these words, each man turned in fear to the one next to him and said to Baruch, "We must certainly report all of these words to the king."[17]Then they asked Baruch, "Tell us, how did you come to write all these words at Jeremiah's dictation?"[18]Baruch said to them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them in ink on this scroll."[19]Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go, hide yourself, and Jeremiah, too. Do not let anyone know where you are."

[20]So they put the scroll in the room of Elishama the secretary, and they went to the king in the courtyard and they reported everything in the hearing of the king.[21]Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. Jehudi took it from the room of

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Elishama the secretary. Then he read it in the hearing of the king and all the officials who were standing beside him.[22]Now the king was staying in the winter house in the ninth month, and a brazier was burning in front of him.
[23]It happened that as Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut it off with a knife and throw it into the fire in the brazier until all of the scroll was destroyed.[24]But neither the king nor any of his servants who heard all these words were frightened, nor did they tear their clothes.
[25]Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah had even urged the king not to burn the scroll, but he did not listen to them.[26]Then the king commanded Jerahmeel, a relative, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet, but Yahweh had hidden them.

[27]Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after the king had burned the scroll and the words that Baruch had written at Jeremiah's dictation, saying,[28]"Go back, take another scroll for yourself, and write in it all the words that were on the original scroll, the one that Jehoiakim king of Judah burned.[29]Then you must say this to Jehoiakim king of Judah: 'You burned that scroll, saying, "Why have you written on it, 'The king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, for he will cut off both man and animal from it'?"'"
[30]Therefore Yahweh says this concerning you, Jehoiakim king of Judah: "No descendant of yours will ever sit on the throne of David. As for you, your corpse will be thrown out into the heat of day and the frost of night.[31]For I will punish you, your descendants, and your servants for the iniquity of you all. I will bring on you, on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on every person in Judah all the disasters with which I have threatened you—but you paid no attention."
[32]So Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch son of Neriah the scribe. Baruch wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words that had been in the scroll burned by Jehoiakim king of Judah. Furthermore, many other similar words were added to this scroll.

Jeremiah 36 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Opposition to Jeremiah

Jeremiah wrote God's prophesies on a scroll but the king burned it. It is possible that this action was intended to be understood as representing the definitiveness of these prophecies. (See: prophet)

Links:

Jeremiah 36:1 Notes

Jeremiah 36:1

General Information:

See: and

It came about

"It happened." This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim ... king of Judah

Jehoiakim had been king of Judah for more than three years. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 25:1]

that this word

The phrase "this word" refers to the message that follows.

to Jeremiah

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.

he said

"Yahweh said"

Jeremiah 36:2

every nation

"all of the nations"

I have told from

"I have told you from"

from the days of Josiah until this very day

"from the time Josiah was king until today"

Jeremiah 36:3

Perhaps the people

"It is possible that the people"

to bring on them

"to cause to happen to them"

his wicked way

Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a "way" or path along which the person walks. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 18:11]

forgive their iniquity and their sin

The words "iniquity" and "sin" are metonyms for the persons who commit iniquity and sin. Alternate translation: "forgive them for their iniquity and their sin"

Jeremiah 36:4

Jeremiah called ... at Jeremiah's dictation ... to him

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person. Alternate translation: "I called ... at my dictation ... to me ... I gave ... I said"

Baruch wrote in a scroll, at Jeremiah's dictation, all the words of Yahweh spoken to him

"while Jeremiah was speaking, Baruch wrote in a scroll all of Yahweh's words that Yahweh had spoken to Jeremiah"

Jeremiah 36:5

Jeremiah gave ... He said

It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person. Alternate translation: "I called ... at my dictation ... to me ... I gave ... I

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said"
Jeremiah 36:6
read from the scroll
"read out loud from the scroll" or "proclaim from the scroll"
must read
"must read out loud" or "must proclaim"
in the hearing of the people in his house
"so that the people in Yahweh's house can hear them." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
in the hearing of all of Judah who have come from their cities
"so all the people of Judah who have come from their cities can hear them." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
Jeremiah 36:7
General Information:
Jeremiah continues to give instructions to Baruch.
Perhaps their pleas
"It is possible that their pleas"
their pleas for mercy will come before Yahweh
"Yahweh will hear them plead for mercy and do as they ask"
their pleas for mercy
The word "their" refers to the people in the house of Yahweh and the people of Judah who had come to the house of Yahweh from their cities.
from his wicked way
Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle as if it were a "way" or path along which the person walks. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 18:11]
the wrath and fury
"the anger and rage"
Jeremiah 36:9
It came about
See how you translated this phrase in Jeremiah 36:1.
in the fifth year and ninth month of Jehoiakim ... king of Judah
This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on Western calendars. "after Jehoiakim ... had been king of Judah for more than four years, during the ninth month"
of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah
See how you translated this phrase in Jeremiah 25:1.
proclaimed a fast
"told everyone that they were going to fast"
Jeremiah 36:10
Jeremiah's words
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here.
Gemariah son of Shaphan
This is the name of a person.
the scribe
"who was a scribe"
by the gate of the entrance to the house of Yahweh
"in the entrance of the new gate of the house of Yahweh"
He did this
He read aloud Jeremiah's words.
in the hearing of all the people
"where all the people could hear him." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
Jeremiah 36:11
Now
Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan
"Micaiah who was the son of Gemariah, who was the son of Shaphan"
Micaiah
This is a man's name.
Gemariah son of Shaphan
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 36:10.
Jeremiah 36:12
Look
"Pay attention to what I am going to say"
Elishama ... Delaiah
These are names of people.
Shemaiah
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 26:20.
Elnathan son of Akbor
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 26:22.
Zedekiah
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 1:3.
Hananiah
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 28:1.
all the officials
"all of the other officials"
Jeremiah 36:13
Micaiah
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 36:11.
reported to them
The word "them" refers to officials in Jeremiah 36:12.
in the hearing of the people
"so that the people could hear" See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
Jeremiah 36:14
Jehudi ... Nethaniah ... Shelemiah ... Cushi
These are men's names.
Jeremiah 36:15
in our hearing
"so we can hear you read it" See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
read the scroll
"read the scroll aloud"
Jeremiah 36:16
It happened that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
when they heard
The word "they" refers to the officials.
all these words
the words that Baruch read aloud from the scroll
Jeremiah 36:17
how did you come to write
"how did you write"
at Jeremiah's dictation
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 36:4.
Jeremiah 36:18
dictated
Jeremiah spoke out loud so that Baruch could write down

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his words.
wrote them in ink
"used ink to write them"
ink
a dark liquid that is used for writing
Jeremiah 36:19
Jeremiah, too
You may need to make this a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "hide Jeremiah, too" or "Jeremiah should hide himself, too"
where you are
The word "you" refers to Baruch and Jeremiah and so is plural.
Jeremiah 36:20
So they
"Then the officials"
put the scroll in the room of Elishama
"put the scroll in the room of Elishama so it would be safe"
Elishama the secretary
See how you translated "Elishama the scribe" in Jeremiah 36:12.
in the hearing of the king
"where the king could hear him" See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 2:2.
Jeremiah 36:21
Jehudi
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 36:14.
Jeremiah 36:22
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Jeremiah starts to tell a new part of the story.
in the ninth month
This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. This is at the end of the sowing season and the beginning of the cold season. It is during the last part November and the first part of December on Western calendars.
a brazier was burning in front of him
"the brazier was in front of him with a blazing fire"
a brazier
a fireplace that people can move
Jeremiah 36:23
It happened that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Jehudi
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 36:14.
columns
these are columns of words on the scroll
would cut it off
"would cut that part of the scroll off"
with a knife
"using a scribe's knife" or "using the kind of knife that scribes use"
brazier
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 36:22.
until all of the scroll was destroyed
"until the scroll was completely gone"
Jeremiah 36:24
all these words
the words from the scroll that Baruch wrote as Jeremiah dictated
nor did they tear their clothes
People tore their cloths when they were extremely sad. Alternate translation: "nor did they mourn by tearing their clothes"
Jeremiah 36:25
Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah
See how you translated these names in Jeremiah 36:12.
urged the king
"pleaded with the king"
Jeremiah 36:26
Jerahmeel ... Seraiah ... Azriel ... Shelemiah ... Abdeel
These are the names of men.
a relative
"a relative of the king"
Jeremiah the prophet ... hidden them
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.
Jeremiah 36:27
Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah after ... dictation, saying,
The idiom "The word of Yahweh came" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]
to Jeremiah ... Jeremiah's dictation
It is not clear why Jeremiah is referring to himself by name here. You may translate using first person, as the UDB does.
at Jeremiah's dictation
See how you translated similar words in Jeremiah 36:4.
Jeremiah 36:28
Go back, take another scroll for yourself
"Take another scroll for yourself again"
the original scroll
"the first scroll"
Jeremiah 36:29
Why have you written on it ... animal from it'?
Jehoiakim uses this question to emphasize that Jeremiah should not have written that the king of Babylon would come and attack. Alternate translation: "You should not have written ... animal from it!" or "You were wrong to write ... animal from it'!"
for he will cut off
"for he will destroy"
Jeremiah 36:30
will ever sit on the throne of David
Sitting on the throne is a metonym for ruling as king. See how you translated "sits on the throne of David" in [Jeremiah 29:16]
your corpse will be thrown out
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will throw your dead body outside"
your corpse
"your dead body"
into the heat of day
"so that it is exposed to the dry heat of the daytime"
frost
ice that forms on grass during cold nights
Jeremiah 36:31

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of you all
"of all of you"
Jeremiah 36:32
Jeremiah took ... Jeremiah's dictation
Jeremiah speaks of himself by name for reasons that are not clear.
Baruch wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation
The abstract noun "dictation" can be translated as a verb.
See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 36:4]
burned by Jehoiakim king of Judah
"that Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire"
Furthermore, many other similar words were added to this scroll
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Furthermore, Jeremiah and Baruch added to this scroll many more words which were similar to the words that had been in the first scroll"

37 [1]Now Zedekiah son of Josiah reigned as king in place of Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had made Zedekiah king over the land of Judah.[2]But Zedekiah, his servants, and the people of the land did not listen to the words of Yahweh that he proclaimed by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet.

[3]So King Zedekiah, Jehukal son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest sent a message to Jeremiah the prophet. They said, "Pray on our behalf to Yahweh our God."[4]Now Jeremiah was coming and going among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison.[5]Pharaoh's army came out from Egypt, and the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the news about them and left Jerusalem.

[6]Then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying,[7]"Yahweh, God of Israel, says this: This is what you will say to the king of Judah, because he has sent you to seek advice from me, 'See, Pharaoh's army, which came to help you, is about to go back to Egypt, its own land.[8]The Chaldeans will return. They will fight against this city, capture it, and burn it.'
[9]Yahweh says this: Do not deceive yourselves by saying, 'Surely the Chaldeans are leaving us,' for they will not leave.
[10]Even if you had defeated the entire Chaldean army that is fighting you so that only badly wounded men were left in their tents, they would get up and burn this city."

[11]So it was when the Chaldean army had left Jerusalem as Pharaoh's army was coming,[12]then Jeremiah went out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin. He wanted to take possession of a tract of land there among his people.[13]As he was in the Benjamin Gate, a chief guard was there. His name was Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah. He grabbed hold of Jeremiah the prophet and said, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans."
[14]But Jeremiah said, "That is not true. I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Irijah did not listen to him. He took Jeremiah and brought him to the officials.[15]The officials were angry with Jeremiah. They beat him and put him in prison, which had been the house of Jonathan the scribe, for they had turned it into a prison.

[16]So Jeremiah was put into a dungeon, where he stayed for many days.[17]Then King Zedekiah sent someone who brought him to the palace. In his house, the king asked him privately, "Is there any word from Yahweh?" Jeremiah answered, "There is a word: You will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon."
[18]Then Jeremiah said to King Zedekiah, "How have I sinned against you, your servants, or this people so that you have placed me in prison?[19]Where are your prophets, the ones who prophesied for you and said the king of Babylon will not come against you or against this land?[20]But now listen, my master the king! Let my plea for favor come before you. Do not return me to the house of Jonathan the scribe, or I will die there."
[21]So King Zedekiah gave an order. His servants confined Jeremiah in the courtyard of the guard. A loaf of bread was given him every day from the street of the bakers, until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

Jeremiah 37 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Ironic situation
Jeremiah was thrown into prison and beaten for prophesying the word of God. Then the king asked him, "Is there any word from Yahweh?" This is a type of irony. The king simply did not agree with God's original word. (See: prophet and wordofgod)

Links:

Jeremiah 37:1 Notes

Jeremiah 37:1
Jehoiachin
The Hebrew text has "Coniah," which is a variation of the name "Jehoiachin." Many modern versions have "Jehoiachin" in order to make it clear that the same king is being referred to.

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Jeremiah 37:2
of the land
"of the land of Judah"
he proclaimed by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet
The hand is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "he had Jeremiah the prophet proclaim"
he proclaimed
"Yahweh proclaimed"
Jeremiah the prophet
Jeremiah refers to himself by name for reasons that are not clear.
Jeremiah 37:3
Jehukal
This is a man's name.
Shelemiah
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 36:14.
Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest
See how you translated these men's names in Jeremiah 21:1.
on our behalf
"for us" or "for our sake." The word "our" refers to King Zedekiah and the rest of the people of Judah.
Jeremiah 37:4
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. The narrator tells background information about what Jeremiah had been doing before Zedekiah sent the message.
Jeremiah was coming and going among the people
Here "coming and going" is an idiom that means he was free to move about. Alternate translation: "Jeremiah was able to go wherever he wanted with everybody else"
for he had not yet been put in prison
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "because no one had put him in prison"
Jeremiah 37:5
came out
"had set out"
besieging
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 37:6
the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]
Jeremiah 37:7
you will say
The word "you" refers to the two men that king Zedekiah had sent to Jeremiah, Jehukal son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest.
to seek advice from me
The word "me" refers to Yahweh.
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Jeremiah 37:8
They will fight against this city, capture it, and burn it
Compare how you translated "to wage war against it and take it, and to burn it" in Jeremiah 34:22.
Jeremiah 37:9
Do not deceive yourselves
The word "yourselves" refers to King Zedekiah and the rest of the people of Judah.
Surely the Chaldeans are leaving us
The people of Judah think that they will be safe because the Chaldeans had left. Alternate translation: "Surely we are safe because the Chaldeans are leaving us"
Jeremiah 37:10
they would get up
"the wounded men would get up"
Jeremiah 37:11
So it was
"It came about that." This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Jeremiah 37:12
a tract of land
"a piece of land" or "some land"
among his people
"among his relatives." Jeremiah was from the town of Anathoth in the land of Benjamin (Jeremiah 1:1).
Jeremiah 37:13
Benjamin Gate
This is the name of the gate.
Irijah
This is the name of a person.
Shelemiah
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 36:14.
Hananiah
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 28:1.
deserting
escaping trouble and leaving people who need help
Jeremiah 37:14
deserting
This means escaping trouble and leaving people who need help.
Irijah
See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 37:13]
officials
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 1:18.
Jeremiah 37:15
Jonathan the scribe
"Jonathan, who was a scribe." This is a man's name.
Jeremiah 37:16
Jeremiah was put into a dungeon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the officials put Jeremiah into a room that was under the ground"
Jeremiah 37:17
brought him
"brought Jeremiah"
his house
the palace of King Zedekiah
You will be given into the hand of the king of Babylon
The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 32:4]

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Jeremiah 37:18

How have I sinned against you ... prison?

Jeremiah uses this question to emphasize that he has not done anything wrong. Alternate translation: "I have not done anything wrong to you ... prison."

this people

the people of the kingdom of Judah

have placed

"have put"

Jeremiah 37:19

Where are your prophets, the ones who prophesied ... against this land?

Jeremiah uses this question to emphasize that the other prophets were lying but that he had done nothing wrong because he had told the truth. Alternate translation: "Your prophets who prophesied ... against this land were obviously wrong, but now it is clear that I was telling you the truth."

your prophets

The word "your" refers to King Zedekiah and the other people of the kingdom of Judah.

will not come against you or against this land

"will not attack you or attack this land"

Jeremiah 37:20

Let my plea for favor come before you

"Hear me plead for mercy and do as I ask." See how you translated "their pleas for mercy will come before Yahweh" in Jeremiah 36:7.

the house of Jonathan the scribe

"the house of Jonathan, who is a scribe." See how you translated this in Jeremiah 37:15.

Jeremiah 37:21

the courtyard of the guard

This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.

A loaf of bread was given him

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "His servants also gave Jeremiah a loaf of bread"

from the street of the bakers

"from the street where the bakers worked"

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38 [1]Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jehukal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malkijah heard the words that Jeremiah was declaring to all the people. He was saying,[2]"Yahweh says this: Anyone staying in this city will be killed by sword, famine, and plague. But anyone who goes out to the Chaldeans will survive. His life will be his loot, but he will survive.[3]Yahweh says this: This city will be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it."

[4]So the officials said to the king, "Let this man die, for in this way he is weakening the hands of the fighting men who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people. He is proclaiming these words, for this man is not working for safety for this people, but disaster."[5]So King Zedekiah said, "Look, he is in your hand since there is no king able to resist you."

[6]Then they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malkijah, son of the king. The cistern was in the courtyard of the guard. They lowered Jeremiah down on ropes. There was no water in the cistern, but it was muddy, and he sank down into the mud.

[7]Now Ebed-Melek the Cushite was one of the eunuchs in the king's house. He heard that they had placed Jeremiah in the cistern. Now the king was sitting at the Benjamin Gate.[8]So Ebed-Melek went from the king's house and spoke with the king. He said,[9]"My master the king, these men have done evil with the way they have treated Jeremiah the prophet. They threw him into a cistern for him to die in it from hunger, since there is no more food in the city."

[10]Then the king gave a command to Ebed-Melek the Cushite. He said, "Take command of thirty men from here and take Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies."[11]So Ebed-Melek took command of those men and went to the king's house, to a storeroom for clothing under the house. From there he took rags and worn-out clothing and then let them down by ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.

[12]Ebed-Melek the Cushite said to Jeremiah, "Put the rags and worn-out clothing under your arms and on top of the ropes." So Jeremiah did so.[13]Then they pulled Jeremiah by the ropes. In this way they brought him up from the cistern. So Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the guard.

[14]Then King Zedekiah sent word and brought Jeremiah the prophet to himself, to the third entrance in the house of Yahweh. The king said to Jeremiah, "I want to ask you something. Do not keep the answer from me."[15]Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I answer you, will you not certainly kill me? But if I give you advice, you will not listen to me."[16]But King Zedekiah swore to Jeremiah in private and said, "As Yahweh lives, the one who made us, I will not kill you or give you into the hand of those men who are seeking your life."

[17]So Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Yahweh, God of hosts, God of Israel, says this: If you indeed go out to the officials of the king of Babylon then you will live, and this city will not be burned. You and your family will live.[18]But if you do not go out to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldeans. They will burn it, and you will not escape from their hand."

[19]King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "But I am afraid of the Jews who have deserted to the Chaldeans, because I might be given over into their hand, for them to treat me badly."

[20]Jeremiah said, "They will not give you over to them. Obey the message from Yahweh that I am telling you, so that things will go well for you, and so that you will live.[21]But if you refuse to go out, this is what Yahweh has shown me. [22]Look! All

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the women who are left in your house, king of Judah, will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon. These women will say to you,
'You have been deceived by your men of peace;
they have ruined you.
Your feet are now sunk into the mud,
and your friends will turn away from you.'

[23]For all of your wives and children will be brought out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself will not escape from their hand. You will be captured by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned."

[24]Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Do not inform anyone about these words, so that you do not die.[25]If the officials hear that I have talked with you, and if they come and say to you, 'Tell us what you said to the king and do not hide it from us, or we will kill you,'[26]then you must say to them, 'I made a humble plea before the king that he would not return me to the house of Jonathan to die there.'"
[27]Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him, so he answered them as the king had commanded him. So they stopped talking with him, because they had not heard the conversation between Jeremiah and the king.[28]So Jeremiah remained in the courtyard of the guard until the day Jerusalem was captured.

Jeremiah 38 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Surrender and live

If the king obeyed God and surrendered to the Babylonians, he would be allowed to live and the city would not be burned. But if he refused, he would be captured and the city burned. This took faith that Yahweh was using this ungodly, Gentile nation. (See: faith and godly)

Links:

Jeremiah 38:1 Notes

Jeremiah 38:1

Shephatiah ... Mattan, Gedaliah ... Pashhur, Jehukal ... Shelemiah ... Pashhur ... Malkijah

men's names

Jeremiah 38:2

Anyone staying in this city will be killed by sword, famine, and plague

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Anyone staying in this city will die by sword, famine, and plague" or "I will kill anyone staying in this city with sword, famine, and plague"

His life will be his loot

The word "loot" here is a metaphor for something taken away from Jerusalem after the Babylonians conquer it. This is ironic because the Babylonians would take physical objects, but although the Judeans who surrendered would not die, they would take no physical objects with them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 21:9]

Jeremiah 38:3

This city will be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon

The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will allow the army of the king of Babylon to conquer Jerusalem"

he will capture it

The reader should understand that others will help the king of Babylon capture the city. "his army will capture it"

Jeremiah 38:4

Let this man die

"Order someone to kill this man"

he is weakening the hands of the fighting men who remain in this city, and the hands of all the people

Weak hands are a metonym for a person who is afraid. Alternate translation: "he is causing the soldiers and all the people in the city to lose courage"

for this man is not working for safety for this people, but disaster

"for Jeremiah is not working to help this people be safe, but he is working for bad things to happen to this people"

Jeremiah 38:5

Look

"Listen carefully"

he is in your hand

The hand is a metonym for the power that the hand has. Alternate translation: "you are able do whatever you want with him"

Jeremiah 38:6

they ... threw him into the cistern

They literally "lowered Jeremiah down on ropes," but the word "threw" is an exaggeration to say that they treated him roughly. Your language may have another way of saying this. Alternate translation: "they ... roughly pushed him into the cistern"

cistern

a deep hole in the ground where people collect and store rain water

the courtyard of the guard

This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.

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They lowered Jeremiah down on ropes
This tells how "they threw him into the cistern."
Jeremiah 38:7
Now Ebed-Melek
The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the narrator starts to tell a new part of the story.
Ebed-Melek the Cushite
This is the name of a man from Cush.
Now the king
Here the word "now" marks a stop in the main story. Here the narrator tells background information about what the king was doing.
sitting at the Benjamin Gate
King Zedekiah was probably hearing and judging legal cases.
Benjamin Gate
This is an entrance into the city of Jerusalem that people named after Benjamin, Jacob's son.
Jeremiah 38:10
thirty men
"30 men"
Jeremiah 38:11
let them down by ropes
"used ropes to lower them down"
Jeremiah 38:12
under your arms and on top of the ropes
"between your arms and the ropes"
Jeremiah 38:13
they pulled Jeremiah
Here the word "they" refers to some of the thirty men who were with Ebed-Melech.
the courtyard of the guard
This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 38:15
If I answer you, will you not certainly kill me?
Jeremiah uses this question to express his belief that the king will kill him if he answers truthfully. Alternate translation: "If I tell you the truth, you will certainly kill me"
Jeremiah 38:16
As Yahweh lives, the one who made us
"as surely as Yahweh, the one who made us, is alive." This is a way of making a solemn promise. The king says it to emphasize that what he is about to say next is true. See how you translated "As Yahweh lives" in [Jeremiah 4:2]
I will not ... give you into the hand of those men
Here the word "hand" refers to the men's control or power. Alternate translation: "I will not ... allow those men to capture you"
seeking your life
This phrase represents wanting or trying to kill someone. See how this phrase is translated in [Jeremiah 11:21]
Jeremiah 38:17
God of Israel
The name of the people group is metonym for the people of that group. Alternate translation: "God of the people of Israel"
this city will not be burned
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Babylonian army will not burn this city"
Jeremiah 38:18
this city will be given into the hand of the Chaldeans
The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 38:2]
you will not escape from their hand
The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "you will not escape from their power"
Jeremiah 38:19
deserted
escaped trouble and left people who needed help. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 37:13.
I might be given over into their hand
The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Chaldeans might put me under the control of the people of Judah who have deserted" or "the Chaldeans might allow the people of Judah who have deserted to do whatever they want with me"
for them to treat me badly
Here the word "them" refers to the people of Judah who have deserted.
Jeremiah 38:20
They will not give you over to them
"The Chaldeans will not give you over to the Judeans." Here "you" refers to Zedekiah.
Jeremiah 38:21
this is what Yahweh has shown me
Here the word "this" refers to what Jeremiah will say next.
Jeremiah 38:22
General Information:
Jeremiah continues speaking with King Zedekiah.
All the women who are left ... will be brought out to the officials of the king of Babylon
The reader should understand that the officials will take these women as slaves. Alternate translation: "Soldiers will bring all the women who are left ... out to the officials of the king of Babylon"
You have been deceived by your men of peace
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your men of peace have deceived you"
men of peace
This is an ironic term for people whom the speaker thought were friends but turned out to be enemies. See how you translated it in [Jeremiah 20:10]
Your feet are now sunk into the mud
The king is now helpless.
Jeremiah 38:23
For all of your wives and children will be brought out to the Chaldeans
The reader should understand that the officials will take these people as slaves. Alternate translation: "Soldiers will bring your wives and children out to the Chaldeans"
will not escape from their hand

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The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: "will not escape from their power"

You will be captured by the hand of the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned

The word "hand" is a metonym for the power or control that the hand exercises. This can be translated in active form. The reader should probably understand that many people will help the king do this. Alternate translation: "The army of the king of Babylon will capture you and will burn the city"

Jeremiah 38:26

Jonathan

See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 37:15.

Jeremiah 38:27

the conversation between Jeremiah and the king

The abstract noun "conversation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "what Jeremiah and the king said to each other"

Jeremiah 38:28

the courtyard of the guard

This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.

until the day Jerusalem was captured

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the day that the Babylonian army captured Jerusalem"

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39 [1]In the ninth year and tenth month of Zedekiah king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem and besieged it.[2]In the eleventh year and fourth month of Zedekiah, on the ninth day of the month, the city was broken into.[3]Then all the officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim an important official, and Nebo-Sarsekim a high official, and all the remaining officials of the king of Babylon.

[4]It happened that when Zedekiah, king of Judah, and all his fighting men saw them, they fled. They went out at night from the city by the king's garden path, through the gate between the two walls. The king went out in the direction of the Arabah.[5]But the army of Chaldeans pursued them and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. Then they captured him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where Nebuchadnezzar passed sentence on him.
[6]The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his own eyes at Riblah. He also slaughtered all the noblemen of Judah.[7]Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes and bound him in bronze chains in order to take him to Babylon.
[8]Then the Chaldeans burned the king's house and the people's houses. They also tore down the walls of Jerusalem.
[9]Nebuzaradan, the commander of the king's bodyguards, took into exile in Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the city. This included the people who had deserted to the Chaldeans and the rest of the people who were left in the city.
[10]But Nebuzaradan the commander of the king's bodyguards allowed the poorest people who had nothing for themselves to remain in the land of Judah. He gave them vineyards and fields on that same day.

[11]Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had given an order about Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the commander of the king's bodyguards. He had said,[12]"Take him and care for him. Do not harm him. Do for him anything he tells you."[13]So Nebuzaradan the commander of the king's bodyguards, Nebushazban the high eunuch, Nergal-Sharezer the high official, and all the most important officials of the king of Babylon sent men out.[14]Their men took Jeremiah from the courtyard of the guard and entrusted him to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, to take him home, so Jeremiah stayed among the people.

[15]Now the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah while he was under arrest in the courtyard of the guard, saying,[16]"Speak to Ebed-Melek the Cushite and say, 'Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: See, I am about to carry out my words against this city for disaster and not for good. For they will all come true before you on that day.
[17]But I will rescue you on that day—this is Yahweh's declaration—and you will not be given into the hand of the men whom you fear.[18]For I will certainly rescue you. You will not fall by the sword. Your life will be your loot since you trust in me—this was Yahweh's declaration.'"

Jeremiah 39 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophesied destruction of Jerusalem is over and the actual conquering of the Promised Land by Babylon begins in this chapter. (See: prophet and promisedland)

Links:

Jeremiah 39:1 Notes

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Jeremiah 39:1
came ... against Jerusalem
"came to attack Jerusalem"
In the ninth year and tenth month of Zedekiah king of Judah
This is after Zedekiah had been king of Judah for eight years, in the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "In the tenth month of the ninth year that Zedekiah was king of Judah"
ninth ... tenth
See:
Jeremiah 39:2
In the eleventh year and fourth month of Zedekiah, on the ninth day of the month
This is after Zedekiah had been king of Judah for more than ten years, in the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. The eleventh day is near the beginning of July on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "On the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year that Zedekiah was king"
eleventh ... fourth
See:
Jeremiah 39:3
Nergal-Sharezer ... Samgar ... Nebo-Sarsekim
These are the names of men.
in the middle gate
"in the middle entrance to the city." It was common for leaders to sit at the gate of the city to discuss important matters.
Jeremiah 39:4
They went out at night from the city by the king's garden path
"They left the city at night going out on a path in the king's garden"
Jeremiah 39:5
the plains of the Jordan River valley
This is the flat land at the southern end of the valley.
at Riblah in the land of Hamath
Riblah was a town in the territory of Hamath, which is in Syria.
pursued them and overtook
"followed them and caught"
passed sentence on him
"decided how to punish him"
Jeremiah 39:6
slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his own eyes
The eyes are a synecdoche for the whole person. The reader should also understand that others probably helped the king of Babylon kill Zedekiah's sons. Alternate translation: "forced Zedekiah to watch as the king's soldiers killed Zedekiah's sons"
Jeremiah 39:7
he put out Zedekiah's eyes
"the king's men made Zedekiah blind." Use the common words for making a person blind. It is not clear that the king of Babylon took Zedekiah's eyes out of his head. The reader should also understand that others probably helped the king of Babylon make Zedekiah blind.
Jeremiah 39:8
the king's house
Zedekiah's house
the people's houses
the houses that had belonged to the people of Jerusalem
Jeremiah 39:9
Nebuzaradan
This is the name of a man.
the king's bodyguards
"Nebuchadnezzar's guards"
the rest of the people who were left in the city
This is probably a generalization. Alternate translation: "the people who were still living in the city"
Jeremiah 39:10
who had nothing for themselves
The word "nothing" is probably an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "who owned nothing of great value"
Jeremiah 39:13
Nebushazban
a man's name
sent men out
They sent them out to get Jeremiah. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "sent men out to get Jeremiah"
Jeremiah 39:14
Gedaliah ... Ahikam ... Shaphan
These are the names of men.
the courtyard of the guard
This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
among the people
You may need to make explicit which people the speaker is speaking of. Alternate translation: "among the people who remained in Judah"
Jeremiah 39:15
General Information:
This story happened before the events in the first part of the chapter.
Now
This word is used here to mark a return to the main story. Here the narrator tells what Yahweh had said to Jeremiah after Nebuchadnezzar gave the orders about Jeremiah
the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah while he was ... guard, saying,
The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]
the courtyard of the guard
This was an open area attached to the king's palace that was surrounded by buildings and in which they kept prisoners. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 32:2.
Jeremiah 39:16
Ebed-Melek the Cushite
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 38:7.
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
I am about to carry out my words against this city for disaster and not for good
"I am bringing disaster, not good, against this city, just as I

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said I would"

For they will all come true before you on that day

"For you will see it all happen on that day"
Jeremiah 39:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah.

you will not be given into the hand of the men whom you fear

Here "hand" refers to power or control. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the men you fear will not harm you" or "I will not allow anyone to put you under the control of the people whom you fear"
Jeremiah 39:18

You will not fall by the sword

The sword is a metonym for dying in war. Alternate translation: "No one will kill you with their sword" or "You will not die in war"

Your life will be your loot

The word "loot" here is a metaphor for something taken away from Jerusalem after the Babylonians conquer it. This is ironic because the Babylonians would take physical objects, but although the Judeans who surrendered would not die, they would take no physical objects with them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 21:9]

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40 [1]The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh after Nebuzaradan the commander of the king's bodyguards had released him at Ramah. He had found Jeremiah bound with chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were being carried into exile to Babylon.[2]The chief guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "Yahweh your God decreed this disaster for this place.
[3]So Yahweh brought it about. He did just as he had decreed, since you people sinned against him and did not obey his voice. That is why this thing has happened to you people.[4]But now look! I have released you today from the chains that were on your hands. If it is good in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will take care of you. But if it is not good in your eyes to come with me to Babylon, then do not do so. Look at all the land before you. Go where it is good and right in your eyes to go."
[5]When Jeremiah did not reply, Nebuzaradan said, "Go to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has put in charge of the cities of Judah. Stay with him among the people or go wherever it is good in your eyes to go." The commander of the king's bodyguards gave him food and a gift, and then sent him away.[6]So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. He stayed with him among the people who were left behind in the land.

[7]Now some commanders of Judean soldiers who were still in the countryside—they and their men—heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah son of Ahikam governor over the land. They also heard that he had put him in charge of the men, women, and children who were the poorest people in the land, those who had not been exiled to Babylon.[8]So they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. These men were Ishmael son of Nethaniah; Johanan and Jonathan, sons of Kareah; Seraiah son of Tanhumeth; the sons of Ephai the Netophathite; and Jaazaniah son of the Maakathite—they and their men.
[9]Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan took an oath to them and to their men and said to them, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you.[10]Look, I am living in Mizpah to meet with the Chaldeans who came to us. So harvest wine, summer fruit, and oil and store them in your containers. Live in the cities that you have occupied."
[11]Then all the Jews in Moab, among the people of Ammon, and in Edom, and in every land heard that the king of Babylon had allowed a remnant of Judah to stay, that he had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan over them.[12]So all the Jews returned from every place where they had been scattered. They came back to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah. They harvested wine and summer fruit in great abundance.

[13]Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders in the countryside came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.[14]They said to him, "Do you realize that Baalis king of the people of Ammon sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to murder you?" But Gedaliah son of Ahikam did not believe them.
[15]So Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah in Mizpah and said, "Allow me to go kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah. No one will suspect me. Why should he kill you? Why allow all of Judah that has been gathered to you to be scattered and the remnant of Judah destroyed?"[16]But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, "Do not do this thing, for you are telling lies about Ishmael."

Jeremiah 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Peace in Judah

After Babylon conquered Jerusalem, this chapter reveals an unfolding peace in the area. Ammon, who was supposed to be Judah's ally against Babylon, probably sought to distract Babylon from attacking them by ruining the peace in the region of Judah.

Links:

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Jeremiah 40:1
The word came to Jeremiah from Yahweh
This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to Jeremiah. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 32:1]
Nebuzaradan
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 39:9]
who were being carried into exile to Babylon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the soldiers were about to take to Babylon as exiles"
Jeremiah 40:3
this thing
"this disaster"
Jeremiah 40:4
But now look!
Nebuzaradan says this to bring Jeremiah's attention to the present moment.
it is good in your eyes
"Eyes" here is a metonym for what the person thinks. Alternate translation: "it is what you consider to be right"
Jeremiah 40:5
Gedaliah ... Ahikam ... Shaphan
These are the names of men. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 39:14.
among the people
"among the Judeans"
it is good in your eyes
"Eyes" here is a metonym for what the person thinks. Alternate translation: "it is what you consider to be right"
Jeremiah 40:6
who were left behind in the land
"who stayed in Judah"
Jeremiah 40:7
Now
This marks a new part of the story.
those who had not been exiled to Babylon
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the enemy soldiers had not sent to Babylon"
Jeremiah 40:8
Ishmael ... Nethaniah ... Johanan ... Jonathan ... Kareah ... Seraiah ... Tanhumeth ... Ephai ... Jaazaniah
These are the names of men.
Netophathite ... Maakathite
people from the regions of Netophah and Maakah
Jeremiah 40:9
took an oath to them
"swore to the Judean commanders"
Jeremiah 40:10
Look
"Listen carefully" or "Pay attention"
summer fruit
"fruit that becomes ripe during the summer"
you have occupied
"you have taken over." "Occupy" here is a military term. Gedaliah was talking to soldiers (Jeremiah 40:7) who may have conquered or otherwise taken control of cities.
Jeremiah 40:11
remnant of Judah
"remnant of the people of Judah"
had appointed ... over them
"had put ... in charge of them"
Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 39:14.
over them
"over the people of Judah"
Jeremiah 40:12
where they had been scattered
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "where the Babylonians had driven them"
wine and summer fruit in great abundance
"a huge amount of grapes and summer fruit"
summer fruit
"fruit that becomes ripe during the summer." See how you translated this in Jeremiah 40:10.
Jeremiah 40:13
Johanan ... Kareah
See how you translated these names in [Jeremiah 40:8]
Gedaliah
See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 39:14]
Jeremiah 40:14
Do you realize that Baalis king of the people of Ammon sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to murder you?
Johanan and the commanders use a rhetorical question to warn Gedaliah. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You need to understand that Baalis king of the people of Ammon sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to murder you!"
Baalis
This is the name of a man.
Ishmael ... Nethaniah
Translate these names as in Jeremiah 40:8.
Ahikam
See how you translated this name in Jeremiah 26:24.
Jeremiah 40:15
Johanan ... Kareah
See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 40:8]
Gedaliah
See how you translated this name in Jeremiah 39:14.
Ishmael ... Nethaniah
See how you translated these men's names in Jeremiah 40:8.
No one will suspect me
"No one will think that I did it"
Why should he kill you?
Johanan uses a rhetorical question to try to change Gedaliah's thinking. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not allow him to kill you."
Why allow all of Judah that has been gathered to you to be scattered and the remnant of Judah destroyed?
Johanan uses a rhetorical question to try to get Gedaliah to

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think about what will happen if Gedaliah does what Gedaliah is planning to do. Alternate translation: "If you do this, all of Judah that has been gathered to you will be scattered and the remnant of Judah will be destroyed."

all of Judah

The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "many of the people of Judah"

that has been gathered to you

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "who have come to you" or "whom Yahweh has brought to you"

to be scattered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to have the Chaldeans scatter them" or "to flee away to many different lands"

the remnant of Judah destroyed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "allow the Chaldeans to destroy the remnant of Judah" or "and allow the remnant of Judah to perish"

remnant of Judah

"remnant of the people of Judah." See how you translated this in Jeremiah 40:11.

Jeremiah 40:16

Ahikam

See how you translated this name in Jeremiah 26:24.

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41 [1]But it happened that in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, from the royal family, and some officers of the king, came—ten men were with him—to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. They ate food together there in Mizpah.[2]But Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him rose up and attacked Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, with the sword. Ishmael killed Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.[3]Then Ishmael killed all the Jews who were with Gedaliah in Mizpah and the Chaldean fighting men found there.

[4]Then it was the second day after the killing of Gedaliah, but no one knew.[5]Some men came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria—eighty men who had shaved their beard, torn their clothes, and cut themselves—with food offerings and frankincense in their hands to go to the house of Yahweh.
[6]So Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them as they went, walking and weeping. Then it happened that as he encountered them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam!"[7]It came about that when they came into the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah slaughtered them and threw them into a pit, he and the men who were with him.
[8]But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for there are provisions of ours in a field: Wheat and barley, oil and honey." So he did not kill them with their other companions.[9]The cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies that he had killed, was a large cistern that King Asa dug to make a defense against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it in with the dead.
[10]Next Ishmael captured all the people who remained in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who were left in Mizpah whom Nebuzaradan the chief guard had assigned to Gedaliah son of Ahikam. So Ishmael son of Nethaniah captured them and went to cross over to the people of Ammon.

[11]But Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders with him heard of all the harm that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had done.[12]So they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They found him at the great pool of Gibeon.
[13]Then it happened that when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders who were with him, they were very happy.[14]So all the people whom Ishmael had captured at Mizpah turned around and went to Johanan son of Kareah.

[15]But Ishmael son of Nethaniah fled with eight men from Johanan. He went to the people of Ammon.[16]Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders with him took from Mizpah all the people who had been rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah. This was after Ishmael had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Johanan and his companions took the strong men, the fighting men, the women and children, and the eunuchs who had been rescued at Gibeon.
[17]Then they went and stayed for a while in Geruth Kimham, which is near Bethlehem. They were going to go to Egypt[18]because of the Chaldeans. They were afraid of them since Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the land.

Jeremiah 41 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Life in Judah

This chapter explains what life was like in Judah after the Babylonian conquest. It was a difficult and dangerous time, but some of the faithful remained in the Promised Land. (See: faithful and promisedland)

Links:

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Jeremiah 41:1
it happened that
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
in the seventh month
This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
Ishmael son of Nethaniah
See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 40:8]
Elishama
This is the name of a man.
Jeremiah 41:2
Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan
See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 39:14]
in charge of the land
Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "in charge of the people of Judah"
Jeremiah 41:3
Then Ishmael killed
Here "Ishmael" represents himself and the ten men with him. Alternate translation: "Then Ishmael and the ten men with him killed"
the Chaldean fighting men found there
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "also the Chaldean soldiers there"
Jeremiah 41:4
the second day after
The word "second" is the ordinal form of the number 2. Possible meanings are 1) "the day after" or 2) "two days after"
Jeremiah 41:5
eighty men
"80 men"
in their hands
Having things in the hands here is probably a metaphor for carrying those things or having them in their possession. Alternate translation: "in their possession"
to go to the house of Yahweh
"to go worship Yahweh at his temple"
Jeremiah 41:6
to meet them
"to meet the 80 men"
Then it happened
This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Jeremiah 41:7
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Ishmael son of Nethaniah slaughtered them and threw them into a pit, he and the men who were with him
It is stated it in Jeremiah 41:8 that Ishmael and his men did not kill all 80 men. You can state here that they killed most of the 80 men. Alternate translation: "Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and the men who were with him, killed most of the 80 men and threw them into a pit"
Jeremiah 41:8
ten men among them
The word "them" refers to the 80 men.
for there are provisions of ours in a field
It is implied that they would give their provisions to Ishmael and his men. Alternate translation: "for we will give you our provisions that we have hidden in a field"
provisions
supplies to be used to provide for future needs
Jeremiah 41:9
The cistern where Ishmael ... against King Baasha of Israel
This is background information about the cistern that Ishmael used. King Asa had his men dig the cistern so his people would have a water supply when King Baasha attacked them.
that King Asa dug
Here King Asa represents his men. Alternate translation: "that King Asa ordered his men to dig"
against King Baasha of Israel
Here King Baasha represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: "against Baasha, king of Israel, and his army"
Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it
Here Ishmael represents himself and all of his men. Alternate translation: "Ishmael and his men filled it"
with the dead
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "with those who were dead" or "with those they had killed"
Jeremiah 41:10
Ishmael captured
Here Ishmael represents himself and his men. Alternate translation: "Ishmael and his men captured"
Nebuzaradan
See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 39:9]
went to cross over to the people of Ammon
"traveled towards the land of the Ammonites"
Jeremiah 41:11
Ishmael son of Nethaniah
Here "Ishmael" represents himself and all of his men. Alternate translation: "Ishmael and his men"
Jeremiah 41:12
Ishmael son of Nethaniah ... found him
Here "Ishmael" represents himself and all of his men. Alternate translation: "Ishmael and his men ... found them"
Jeremiah 41:13
Then it happened that
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

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when all the people who were with Ishmael

Here "people" refers to those whom Ishmael and his men had captured.

Jeremiah 41:14

whom Ishmael had captured

Here "Ishmael" represents himself and all of his men. Alternate translation: "whom Ishmael and his men had captured"

Jeremiah 41:15

He went to the people of Ammon

"He" refers to Ishmael who represents himself and the eight men with him. Alternate translation: "They went to the people of Ammon"

Jeremiah 41:16

who had been rescued

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom they had rescued"

This was after Ishmael had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam

The author stops the story to refer to a previous event so that the order of events are understood.

the strong men, the fighting men

These both refer to soldiers. Alternate translation: "the soldiers"

who had been rescued at Gibeon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom they had rescued at Gibeon"

Jeremiah 41:17

they went

"Johanan, his companions, and all the people they rescued went"

Geruth Kimham

This is the name of a place.

Jeremiah 41:18

because of the Chaldeans

It is implied that they were afraid that the Chaldeans would attack them. Alternate translation: "because they thought the Chaldeans may attack them"

in charge of the land

Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "in charge of the people of Judah"

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42 [1]Then all the army commanders and Johanan son of Kareah, Jezaniah son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the
least to the greatest approached Jeremiah the prophet.[2]They said to him, "Let our plea for favor come before you.
Pray for us to Yahweh your God for these people who remain since we are so few in number, as you see.[3]Ask Yahweh
your God to tell us the way we should go and what we should do."
[4]So Jeremiah the prophet said to them, "I have heard you. Look, I will pray to Yahweh your God as you have requested.
Whatever Yahweh answers, I will tell you. I will keep nothing back from you."[5]They said to Jeremiah, "May Yahweh be a
true and faithful witness against us, if we do not do everything that Yahweh your God tells us to do.[6]Whether it is good or
if it is bad, we will obey the voice of Yahweh our God, to whom we are sending you, so that it may be well with us when
we obey the voice of Yahweh our God."

[7]At the end of ten days, the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah.[8]So Jeremiah called to Johanan son of Kareah and all the
army commanders with him, and to all the people from the least to the greatest.[9]Then he said to them, "This is what
Yahweh, the God of Israel—to whom you sent me so I might lay your pleas before him—says,[10]'If you go back and live in
this land, then I will build you and not tear you down; I will plant you and not pull you up, for I will relent concerning the
disaster that I have brought on you.
[11]Do not fear the king of Babylon, whom you are fearing. Do not fear him—this is Yahweh's declaration—since I am with
you to save you and rescue you from his hand.[12]For I will give you mercy. I will have compassion on you, and I will bring
you back to your land.
[13]But suppose that you say, "We will not stay in this land"—if you do not listen to my voice, the voice of Yahweh your God.
[14]Suppose that you say, "No! We will go to the land of Egypt, where we will not see any war, where we will not hear the
sound of the ram's horn, and we will not go hungry for food. We will live there."
[15]Now listen to this word of Yahweh, you remnant of Judah. Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'If you actually set
out to go to Egypt, to go and live there,[16]then the sword that you fear will overtake you there in the land of Egypt. The
famine that you are anxious about will pursue you to Egypt, and you will die there.[17]So it will happen that all the men
who set out to go to Egypt to live there will die by sword, famine, or plague. There will be no survivor of them, no one to
escape the disaster that I will bring on them.

[18]For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this: Just as my wrath and my fury were poured out on the inhabitants of
Jerusalem, in the same way my fury will be poured out on you if you go to Egypt. You will become an object of cursing
and a horror, an object for speaking curses, and something dishonorable, and you will not see this place again.'"[19]Then
Jeremiah said, "Yahweh has spoken concerning you—the remnant of Judah. Do not go to Egypt! You certainly know that I
have been a witness against you today.
[20]For you fatally deceived yourselves when you sent me to Yahweh your God and said, 'Pray to Yahweh our God for us.
Everything that Yahweh our God says, tell us, and we will carry it out.'[21]For I have reported to you today, but you have not
listened to the voice of Yahweh your God or to anything about which he sent me to you.[22]So now, you should certainly
know that you will die by sword, famine, and plague in the place where you desired to go to live."

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Jeremiah 42 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Life in Babylon

The remaining army commanders, who scattered after the Babylonian victory, asked Jeremiah to ask Yahweh about where they should go. Yahweh encouraged them to go to Babylon because they would soon return to the Promised Land. They would be punished if they went to Egypt or anywhere else. (See: promisedland)

Links:

Jeremiah 42:1 Notes

Jeremiah 42:1

Johanan ... Kareah

See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 40:13]

Jezaniah ... Hoshaiah

These are the names of men.

all the people from the least to the greatest

This is a way to refer to people from every social status. Here "least" and "greatest" represent those who are least important and those who are most important. Alternate translation: "all the people from every social status" or "all the people, including the least important and the most important people"

all the people

Most likely not every individual in the town went. The word "all" is a generalization that means very many people went. Alternate translation: "many other people"

Jeremiah 42:2

Let our plea for favor come before you

"Let us present our urgent request to you." The abstract noun "pleas" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Listen as we plead with you for your favor"

Jeremiah 42:4

Look

"Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will keep nothing back from you

The phrase "keep nothing back from you" is an idiom that means to tell someone everything. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will tell you everything the Lord tells me"

Jeremiah 42:5

May Yahweh be

This is a way of beginning an oath. Alternate translation: "We ask Yahweh to be" or "Yahweh will be"

true and faithful

Here these words share similar meanings. They describe Yahweh as a witness whom no one will be able to contradict. Alternate translation: "trustworthy"

Jeremiah 42:6

Whether it is good or if it is bad

The people mention both extremes to emphasize that they will obey no matter what Yahweh's answer is. Alternate translation: "Whatever he answers"

the voice of Yahweh our God

Here "voice" represents what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh our God says" or "we will obey Yahweh our God"

Jeremiah 42:7

the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah

This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to Jeremiah. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:2]

Jeremiah 42:8

to all the people from the least to the greatest

This is a way to refer to people from every social status. Here "least" and "greatest" represent those who are least important and those who are most important. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 42:1]

to all the people

Most likely not every individual in the town went. The word "all" is a generalization that means very many people went. Alternate translation: "to many other people"

Jeremiah 42:10

I will build you and not tear you down

Yahweh refers to the people of Israel like a wall that can be built or torn down. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to prosper and I will not destroy you"

I will plant you and not pull you up

Yahweh uses another example to express how he will cause the people of Israel to prosper and not be destroyed. He refers to them like a plant in the same way he referred to them as a wall.

I will relent concerning the disaster that I have brought on you

A disaster is here spoken of as something that a person can put onto someone else. Alternate translation: "I have changed my mind about the disaster that I have caused to happen to you"

Jeremiah 42:11

to save you and rescue you

The words "save" and "rescue" mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will, indeed, save. Alternate translation: "to save you completely"

rescue you from his hand

Here the word "hand" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "rescue you from his power" or "rescue you from him"

Jeremiah 42:13

if you do not listen to my voice, the voice of Yahweh your God

Here "voice" represents a command. To not obey is like the people did not hear Yahweh's command. Alternate translation: "if you do not obey my commands, even though I am Yahweh, your God"

Jeremiah 42:14

where we will not see any war, where we will not hear the sound of the ram's horn

Both of these phrases describe being at war by the ability to

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see or hear it. Alternate translation: "where we will not experience the hardships of war"

we will not go hungry for food

Being hungry for food is used to describe famine.

Jeremiah 42:15

Now

The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

to this word of Yahweh

"to Yahweh's message"

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

set out to go to

"depart for" or "leave for"

Jeremiah 42:16

the sword that you fear will overtake you

Here "the sword" represents war. The Israelites experiencing war even if they go to Egypt is spoken of as if the sword would chase after the people catch up with them. Alternate translation: "you will experience the terrible results of war"

The famine that you are anxious about will pursue you to Egypt

The Israelites experiencing famine even in Egypt is spoken of as if famine would chase after them. Alternate translation: "You worry about famine in Israel but if you go to Egypt you will suffer from famine there"

Jeremiah 42:17

all the men who set out

The men are used to refer to all the people because they are the leaders in their families. Alternate translation: "anyone who sets out"

the disaster that I will bring on them

Causing a disaster is spoken of as if disaster were an object that is brought to a person. Alternate translation: "the disaster that I will cause to happen to them"

Jeremiah 42:18

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

my wrath and my fury were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem

Yahweh punishing people because he is very angry is spoken of as if wrath and fury were liquids that he poured out on the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I became very angry and punished the people of Jerusalem"

my wrath and my fury

The words "wrath" and "fury" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the intensity of his wrath. Alternate translation: "my terrible wrath"

in the same way my fury will be poured out on you

Yahweh punishing people because he is very angry is spoken of as if fury were a liquid that he pours out on the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will became very angry and punish you"

You will become an object of cursing and a horror, an object for speaking curses, and something dishonorable

All of these statements mean basically the same thing and emphasize how badly the nations will treat the people of Judah after Yahweh punishes them. Alternate translation: "People will be terrified when they see what has happened to you. They will curse and mock you"

Jeremiah 42:19

I have been a witness against you

The phrase "been a witness against" is an idiom that means to give a warning. Alternate translation: "I have warned you"

Jeremiah 42:20

we will carry it out

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "we will do it"

Jeremiah 42:21

you have not listened

"you have not paid attention"

to the voice of Yahweh your God

Here "voice" represents what Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "to what Yahweh your God commanded"

Jeremiah 42:22

now

The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

you will die by sword

Here "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "you will die in warfare"

in the place where you desired to go to live

They desired to live in Egypt. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "in Egypt, where you thought you would be safe"

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43 [1]It happened that Jeremiah finished proclaiming to all the people all the words of Yahweh their God that Yahweh their God had told him to say.[2]Azariah son of Hoshaiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and all the arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling lies. Yahweh our God has not sent you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to live there.'[3]For Baruch son of Neriah is inciting you against us to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, for you to cause our death and to make us captives in Babylon."

[4]So Johanan son of Kareah, all the princes of the army, and all the people refused to listen to Yahweh's voice to live in the land of Judah.[5]Johanan son of Kareah and all the army commanders took away all the remnant of Judah who had returned from all the nations where they had been scattered to live in the land of Judah.[6]They took the men and women, the children and the king's daughters, and every person whom Nebuzaradan, the commander of the king's bodyguards, had let remain with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan. They also took Jeremiah the prophet and Baruch son of Neriah.[7]They went to the land of Egypt, to Tahpanhes, because they did not listen to Yahweh's voice.

[8]So the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,[9]"Take some large stones in your hand, and, in the sight of

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some Jewish men, hide them in the mortar in the pavement at the entrance to Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes."[10]Then say to them, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to send messengers to bring Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, my servant. I will place his throne over these stones that you, Jeremiah, have buried. Nebuchadnezzar will place his pavilion over them.
[11]For he will come and attack the land of Egypt. Anyone who is assigned to death will be given to death. Anyone who is assigned to captivity will be taken captive. Anyone who is assigned to the sword will be given to the sword.[12]Then I will light a fire in the temples of Egypt's gods. Nebuchadnezzar will burn them or capture them. He will clean out the land of Egypt just as shepherds clean vermin off their clothes. He will go out from that place in victory.[1][13]He will break the stone pillars at Heliopolis in the land of Egypt. He will burn the temples of Egypt's gods.'"

[1]Instead of I will light a fire, some ancient and modern translations have he will light a fire.

Jeremiah 43 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

They did not believe Jeremiah

After Jeremiah prophesied the destruction of Judah, the people did not believe him. Judah was conquered and destroyed. Even after this, the people did not believe they would be safe in Babylon as Jeremiah prophesied. This is shocking. (See: prophet and believe)

Babylon invades Egypt

Babylon is described as invading part of Egypt. This would have been unthinkable for the people. It would have gotten their attention.

Other possible translation issues in this chapter

Symbolic actions

Jeremiah's burial of the stones was intended to be a symbolic action for the people. This was supposed to teach the people a lesson.

Links:

Jeremiah 43:1 Notes

Jeremiah 43:1

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Jeremiah 43:2

Azariah

Possible meanings are 1) this is another name for Jezaniah in [Jeremiah 42:1]

Hoshaiah

See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 42:1]

Johanan ... Kareah

See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 40:13]

Jeremiah 43:3

inciting

to cause someone to act in a harmful or violent way

to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "to give us over to the Chaldeans"

for you to cause our death and to make us captives in Babylon

The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "to kill." Alternate translation: "for you to cause the Chaldeans to either kill us or to take us as captives to Babylon"

Jeremiah 43:4

all the people

This probably did not include every individual there. The word "all" is a generalization that means many people. Alternate translation: "many of the people"

refused to listen to Yahweh's voice

Here "voice" represents commands. And here "to listen" means "to obey." Alternate translation: "would not obey Yahweh's command"

Jeremiah 43:5

where they had been scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where Yahweh had scattered them"

Jeremiah 43:6

Nebuzaradan

See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 39:9]

Gedaliah ... Ahikam ... Shaphan

See how you translated these men's names in [Jeremiah 39:14]

Jeremiah 43:7

Tahpanhes

See how you translated the name of this city in [Jeremiah 2:16]

Jeremiah 43:8

the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 1:4]

Jeremiah 43:9

in the sight of some Jewish men

The abstract noun "sight" can be expressed with the verb "watching." Alternate translation: "while some Jewish men

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are watching"

mortar

a substance used to hold bricks together

to Pharaoh's house

"to Pharaoh's royal building"

Jeremiah 43:10

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

I will place his throne over these stones that you, Jeremiah, have buried. Nebuchadnezzar will place his pavilion over them

Both the king's "throne" and "pavilion" are used to refer to his royal authority. Alternate translation: "I will cause him to rule as king over the people of Egypt. He will place his throne and pavilion over these stones you have buried"

pavilion

a very large tent

Jeremiah 43:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling his message.

he will come

Here "he" refers to Nebuchadnezzar who represents his whole army. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar's army will come"

Anyone who is assigned to death will be given to death

The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "die." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will die whom I have decided must die"

Anyone who is assigned to captivity will be taken captive

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Babylonians will take everyone captive whom I have decided must go into captivity"

Anyone who is assigned to the sword will be given to the sword

Here "sword" represents battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will die in battle whom I have decided will die in battle"

Jeremiah 43:12

Then I will light a fire

Here "I" refers to Yahweh. This represents Yahweh sending the Babylonian army to light a fire. Alternate translation: "Then I will cause the Babylonian army to light a fire"

Nebuchadnezzar will ... He will

Here Nebuchadnezzar represents his army. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar's army will ... They will"

burn them or capture them

"burn the Egyptian idols or take them"

He will clean out the land of Egypt just as shepherds clean vermin off their clothes

Taking or destroying everything in Egypt is compared to how a shepherd carefully cleans off his clothes. Alternate translation: "He will take or destroy everything valuable in Egypt just as a shepherd is careful to get every insect off of his clothes"

Jeremiah 43:13

Heliopolis

This is the name of a city. The name means "city of the sun." In this city was a temple where they worshiped a sun god.

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44 [1]The word came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews who lived in the land of Egypt, the ones staying in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in Upper Egypt:[2]"Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says, 'You yourselves have seen all the disasters that I brought on Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah. See, they are ruins today. There is no one to live in them.
[3]This is because of the wicked things they did to provoke me to anger by going to burn incense and to worship other gods. These were gods that neither they themselves, nor you, nor your ancestors knew.'
[4]So I repeatedly sent all of my servants the prophets to them. I sent them to say, 'Stop doing these abominable things that I hate.'[5]But they did not listen. They refused to pay attention or turn from their wickedness in burning incense to other gods.[6]So my fury and my wrath were poured out and kindled a fire in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. So they became ruins and devastations, as at this present day.'
[7]So now Yahweh, the God of hosts and the God of Israel, says this, 'Why are you doing great wickedness against yourselves? Why are you causing yourselves to be cut off from among Judah—men and women, children and babies? No remnant of you will be left.[8]By your wickedness you have provoked me to anger with the deeds of your hands, by burning incense to other gods in the land of Egypt, where you have gone to live. You have gone there so that you will be destroyed, so that you will be a curse and a taunt among all the nations of the earth.
[9]Have you forgotten the wickedness committed by your ancestors and the wickedness committed by the kings of Judah and their wives? Have you forgotten the evil committed by yourselves and your wives in the land of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem?[10]To this day, they still are not humbled. They do not honor my law or decrees that I placed before them and their ancestors, nor do they walk in them.'

[11]Therefore Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'See, I am about to set my face against you to bring disaster to you and to destroy all of Judah.[12]For I will take the remnant of Judah that has set out to go to the land of Egypt to live there. I will do this so that they will all perish in the land of Egypt. They will fall by sword and famine. From the least to the greatest they will die by sword and famine. They will die and will become a curse, an object of horror—a curse and an insult.
[13]For I will punish the people inhabiting the land of Egypt just as I punished Jerusalem with the sword, with famine, and with the plague,[14]so that none of the remnant of Judah who have gone to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive or return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return and live; and none of them will return except a few who escaped from there.'"

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[15]Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning incense to other gods, and all the women who were in the great assembly, and all the people who were living in Lower and Upper Egypt, answered Jeremiah.[16]They said, "About the word that you have told us in Yahweh's name—we will not listen to you.[17]For we will certainly do all the things that we said we would do—burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out drink offerings to her just as we, our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders did in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. Then we will be filled with food and will prosper, without experiencing any disaster.
[18]When we refrained from doing these things, not offering incense to the queen of heaven and not pouring out drink offerings to her, we were all suffering poverty and were dying by sword and famine."[19]The women said, "When we were making incense offerings before the queen of heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, was it against our husbands that we did these things, making cakes in her image and pouring out drink offerings to her?"

[20]Then Jeremiah said to all the people—to the men and women, and all the people who answered him—he proclaimed and said,[21]"Did not Yahweh remember the incense that you burned in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem—you and your ancestors, your kings and leaders, and the people of the land? For Yahweh calls this to mind; it comes to his thoughts.
[22]Then he was no longer able to bear it because of the wickedness of your practices, because of the abominations that you did. Then your land became a desolation, a horror, and a curse so there was no longer an inhabitant as at this present day.[23]Because you burned incense and sinned against Yahweh, and because you would not listen to his voice, his law, his statutes, or his covenant decrees, this disaster against you has happened as at this present day."

[24]Then Jeremiah said to all the people and all the women, "Hear the word of Yahweh, all of Judah who are in the land of Egypt.[25]Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this, 'You and your wives both have said with your mouths and carried out with your hands what you said, "We will certainly carry out the vows that we made to worship the queen of heaven, to pour out drink offerings to her." Now fulfill your vows; carry them out.'
[26]So then, hear the word of Yahweh, all of Judah who are staying in the land of Egypt, 'See, I have sworn by my great name—says Yahweh. My name will no longer be called upon by the mouths of any of the men of Judah in all the land of Egypt, you who now say, "As the Lord Yahweh lives."[27]See, I am watching over them for disaster and not for good. Every person of Judah in the land of Egypt will perish by sword and famine until they are all finished.[28]Then the survivors of the sword will return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, only a small number of them. So all the remnant of Judah who went to the land of Egypt to live there will know whose word will stand—mine or theirs.
[29]This will be the sign for you—this is Yahweh's declaration—that I am setting against you in this place, so that you will know that my words will certainly attack you with disaster.'[30]Yahweh says this, 'Look, I am about to give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek to kill him. It will be the same as when I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.'"

Jeremiah 44 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

The people called Ashtoreth the goddess of the Canaanites, "the queen of heaven." (See: and prophet)

Links:

Jeremiah 44:1 Notes

Jeremiah 44:1

The word came to Jeremiah

It is implied that the word that came to Jeremiah was from Yahweh. This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 7:1]

Migdol

This is the name of a city.

Tahpanhes ... Memphis

Translate the names of these cities as you did in Jeremiah 2:16.

in Upper Egypt

This refers to the southern region of Egypt. It is sometime called "Pathros."

Jeremiah 44:2

Yahweh of hosts ... says

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 6:6.

You yourselves have seen

The word "yourselves" is used for emphasis to specify the people of Judea who live in the land of Egypt.

all the disasters that I brought on Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah

Causing disasters is spoken of as if disasters were an object that can be put on something. Alternate translation: "all the disaster that I caused to happen to Jerusalem and all the

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cities of Judah"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

Jeremiah 44:3

they did to provoke me to anger

"the people of Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah did to provoke me to anger"

they themselves

The word "themselves" is used for emphasis to specify the people of Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people from the ruined cities"

Jeremiah 44:4

So I repeatedly sent

The word "I" refers to Yahweh.

Jeremiah 44:5

or turn from their wickedness in burning incense to other gods

To stop doing something is spoken of as if it were physically turning away from something. Alternate translation: "or to stop behaving wickedly by burning incense to other gods"

Jeremiah 44:6

my fury and my wrath were poured out

Becoming angry and punishing people is spoken of as if fury and wrath were liquids there could be poured on people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I became very angry and punished them"

my fury and my wrath

The words "fury" and "wrath" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his wrath. Alternate translation: "my terrible wrath"

kindled a fire

Yahweh becoming angry and punishing the people of Judah is spoken of as his fury and wrath were a fire. Alternate translation: "my fury and wrath were like a fire" or "my punishment was like a fire"

they became ruins and devastations

The words "ruins" and "devastations" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the complete devastation of Judah and Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "they became completely devastated"

as at this present day

This refers to the current time at which Yahweh was speaking this message.

Jeremiah 44:7

Why are you doing ... yourselves? Why are you causing ... and babies?

Yahweh uses these questions to rebuke the people for doing things that cause him to punish them. Alternate translation: "You are doing ... yourselves. You are causing ... and babies."

Why are you doing great wickedness against yourselves?

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be stated as "wicked." Alternate translation: "Why are you doing these wicked things that harm yourselves?" or "You are doing wicked things that cause terrible things to happen to you."

Why are you causing yourselves to be cut off from among Judah ... and babies?

Being separated from the people of Judah is spoken of as if the people are cut off from Judah the way a person may cut off a branch from a vine or cut off a piece of cloth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Why are you causing me to remove you from the people of Judah ... and babies?" or "You are causing me to remove you from the people of Judah ... and babies."

Jeremiah 44:8

By your wickedness you have provoked me to anger with the deeds of your hands

The abstract noun "wickedness" represents actions that are "wicked." Here "hand" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "You have offended me with the wicked things you have done"

You have gone there so that ... so that

"The result of going to Egypt is that ... and that"

you will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will cause me to destroy you" or "you will destroy yourselves"

you will be a curse and a taunt among all the nations of the earth

Here "nations" represent the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of all the nations of the earth will curse you and hate you"

Jeremiah 44:9

Have you forgotten the wickedness committed by your ancestors and the wickedness committed by the kings of Judah and their wives?

Yahweh rebukes the people for not thinking about the wicked behavior of their ancestors and how Yahweh punished them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Think about what happened to your ancestors and the kings of Judah and their wives when they did wicked things."

Have you forgotten the evil committed by yourselves and your wives in the land of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem?

Yahweh rebukes the people for not thinking about their own wicked behavior and how Yahweh punished them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Think about what happened to you and your wives when you did evil things in the land Judah and the streets of Jerusalem."

the streets of Jerusalem

Jerusalem is referred to by the part of the city where people walk. This means the people did evil things in public places. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem" or "the public places of Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 44:10

they still are not humbled

"the people of Judah are still not humble." Yahweh is still speaking to the people of Judah, so this can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "you are still not humble"

nor do they walk in them

Obeying the laws is spoken of as if it were walking in the laws. Alternate translation: "nor do they obey them" or "nor do you obey them"

Jeremiah 44:11

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

I am about to set my face against you

This idiom means he "firmly decided." See how you

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translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 21:10]
set my face against
"stare angrily at"
to bring disaster to you
Causing disaster to happen is spoken of as if disaster were an object that can be brought to someone. Alternate translation: "to cause disaster to happen to you"
Jeremiah 44:12
They will fall by sword and famine
Here "fall" means to die. And "sword" represents the enemies carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill some of them and others will die of hunger"
From the least to the greatest
This is a way to refer to people from every social status. Here "least" and "greatest" represent those who are least important and those who are most important. Alternate translation: "all the people from every social status" or "all the people, including the least important and the most important people"
will die and will become a curse, an object of horror—a curse and an insult.
"people will be horrified because of what happened to the people of Judah, and people will mock and curse them"
Jeremiah 44:13
I punished Jerusalem
Here "Jerusalem" represents the people. Alternate translation: "I punished the people of Jerusalem"
with the sword, with famine, and with the plague
Here "sword" represents enemies carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "by causing enemies to kill some of them, others to starve to death, and others to die because of disease"
Jeremiah 44:14
none of them will return except a few who escaped from there
This double negative emphasizes that the few people who escaped from there would be the only ones who will return. Alternate translation: "the only ones of them who will return are the few who escaped from there"
Jeremiah 44:15
in the great assembly
"in the large crowd"
Lower ... Egypt
"Lower Egypt" refers to the northern region of Egypt.
Upper Egypt
This refers to the southern region of Egypt. It is sometime called "Pathros."
Jeremiah 44:16
About the word that you have told us in Yahweh's name—we will not listen to you
Here "in Yahweh's name" means "in Yahweh's authority" or "as Yahweh's representative." Alternate translation: "We will not obey this message that you say Yahweh told you to tell us"
Jeremiah 44:17
queen of heaven
This a title of a false goddess that the people of Judah worshiped. This goddess is also called "Asherah."
the streets of Jerusalem
Here "streets" represent the public places in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "in the public places of Jerusalem" or "in Jerusalem"
Then we will be filled with food and will prosper, without experiencing any disaster
The people of Judah thought they would prosper because the queen of heaven would bless them if they worshiped her.
Then we will be filled with food
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then we will have plenty of food"
Jeremiah 44:18
General Information:
The remnant of the people living in Egypt continue to speak. Beginning in 44:19, the women address Jeremiah.
were dying by sword and famine
Here "sword" represents enemies carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "enemy soldiers were killing some of us and some of us were dying of hunger"
Jeremiah 44:19
was it against our husbands that we did these things ... to her?
The women were claiming to be innocent because their husband approved of what they were doing. Alternate translation: "our husbands knew what we were doing ... to her."
cakes in her image
These were probably small cakes shaped like stars or the crescent moon.
Jeremiah 44:21
Did not Yahweh remember ... of the land?
Jeremiah uses a question to scold the people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh certainly knew about ... of the land."
For Yahweh calls this to mind; it comes to his thoughts
Both of these phrases mean the same thing. They emphasize that Yahweh knows that the people were worshiping false gods. Alternate translation: "Yes, Yahweh knows what you were doing, and he does not forget"
Jeremiah 44:22
was no longer able to bear it
"was no longer able to tolerate it"
the wickedness of your practices
"the evil things you did" or "how evil what you did was." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 4:4.
because of the abominations that you did
The abstract noun "abominations" can be stated as "things he hated." Alternate translation: "because you did things that he hated"
Then your land became a desolation, a horror, and a curse so there was no longer an inhabitant as at this present day
This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "a desolation," "a horror," and "a curse." Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh caused it so that no one lives in the land. He made it a desolate and horrifying place. People use its name to curse others. And this is how it is even to this day"
Jeremiah 44:23
burned incense
Why people burn incense can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "burned incense to false gods"
you would not listen to his voice
Here "voice" refers to Yahweh's commands. Alternate

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translation: "you would not obey his commands"

Jeremiah 44:24

all of Judah

Here "Judah" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah"

Jeremiah 44:25

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

have said with your mouths and carried out with your hands what you said

Here "mouths" and "hands" represent the whole person. Alternate translation: "have done what you promised to do when you said"

carry out the vows

"fulfill the vows" or "complete the vows"

Now fulfill your vows; carry them out

This is an ironic statement. Yahweh does not really want them to fulfill their vow to a false goddess. Yahweh knows they will not listen to him so he tells them to go ahead and do what they want. Alternate translation: "Very well! If that is what you want to do, then go fulfill your vows and do what you promised to do"

Now

The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

Jeremiah 44:26

all of Judah

Here "Judah" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of Judah"

My name will no longer be called upon by the mouths of any of the men of Judah in all the land of Egypt

Here "name" represents the whole being of Yahweh. And, "mouth" represents the whole person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No person of Judah living in the land of Egypt will ever call upon me again"

As the Lord Yahweh lives

"as surely as the Lord Yahweh is alive." The people use this expression to show that what they say next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you transited "As Yahweh lives" [Jeremiah 4:2]

Jeremiah 44:27

Every person of Judah in the land of Egypt will perish by sword and famine until they are all finished

Here "Every person" is a generalization that means "very many people." Also, "sword" represents enemies carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "Nearly every person of Judah in the land of Egypt will die. Enemies will kill many of them and many of them will starve to death until there is very few of them left"

Jeremiah 44:28

Then the survivors of the sword

Here "sword" represents enemies carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "Then those whom the enemies do not kill"

Jeremiah 44:29

I am setting against you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I am opposed to you"

my words will certainly attack you with disaster

Yahweh causing disaster on the people as he promised is spoken of as if his word would attack them. Alternate translation: "what I have said will happen and you will have a disaster"

Jeremiah 44:30

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention"

I am about to give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those who seek to kill him

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "I will allow the enemies who want to kill Pharaoh Hophra, the king of Egypt, to defeat him"

Hophra

This is the name of a man.

when I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life

Here "hand" represents power or control. And, Nebuchadnezzar represents his whole army. The phrase "sought his life" is an idiom that means to want to kill someone. Alternate translation: "when I allowed the army of Nebuchadnezzar to defeat Zedekiah king of Judah"

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45 [1]This is the word that Jeremiah the prophet told Baruch son of Neriah. This happened when he wrote in a scroll these words from the mouth of Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah. He said,[2]"Yahweh, God of Israel, says this to you, Baruch:[3]You have said, 'Woe is me, for Yahweh has added agony to my pain. My groaning has wearied me; I find no rest.'

[4]This is what you must say to him: 'Yahweh says this: See, what I built, I am now tearing down. What I planted, I am now pulling up—I will do this throughout all the earth.[5]But are you hoping for great things for yourself? Do not hope for that. For see, disaster is coming on all humanity—this is Yahweh's declaration—but I am giving you your life as loot everywhere you will go.'"

Jeremiah 45 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter forms a break in the narrative sequence. It records prophecies that have already occurred. (See: prophet)

Links:

Jeremiah 45:1 Notes

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Jeremiah 45:1
in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah
This information can be placed at the beginning of 45:1, as in the UDB.
in the fourth year of Jehoiakim
The words "of the rule" are understood. Alternate translation: "in the fourth year of the rule of Jehoiakim"
fourth year
The word "fourth" is the ordinal form of the number four.
He said
"Jeremiah said to Baruch"
Jeremiah 45:3
for Yahweh has added agony to my pain
"for I was already suffering and now Yahweh causes me to be sad as well"
My groaning has wearied me
The abstract noun "groaning" can be stated as "cry." Alternate translation: "I am tired because I cry so much"
Jeremiah 45:4
This is what you must say to him
Yahweh is telling Jeremiah what to say to Baruch.
Jeremiah 45:5
But are you hoping for great things for yourself?
Yahweh uses a question to state that he knows Baruch is hoping for others to treat him in a special way. Alternate translation: "I know you hope for great things for yourself." or "I know you hope others will honor you."
For see
"For understand" or "Be aware"
your life as loot everywhere you will go
Allowing Baruch to escape and remain alive is spoken of as if his life were plunder that he would take after a battle. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 21:9]
loot
things stolen from a place by force

46 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

[2]For Egypt: "This is about the army of Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt that was at Carchemish by the Euphrates River. This was the army that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

[3] Get the small shields and the large shields ready,
and go forward to fight.

[4] Put the harness on the horses;
mount up on the horses
and take your stand with your helmets on;
polish the spears and put on your armor.

[5] What am I seeing here?
They are dismayed and are running away,
for their soldiers have been completely destroyed.
They are fleeing for refuge and are not looking back.
Terror is all around
—this is Yahweh's declaration—

[6] the swift cannot run away,
and the soldiers cannot escape.
They stumble in the north
and fall beside the Euphrates River.

[7] Who is this who rises like the Nile,
whose waters toss up and down like the rivers?

[8] Egypt rises like the Nile,
like rivers of water that rise and fall.
Egypt says, 'I will go up and I will cover the earth.
I will destroy cities and their inhabitants.

[9] Go up, horses.
Be angry, you chariots.
Let the soldiers go out,
Cush and Put, men skillful with a shield, and Lydia,[1]

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men skillful at bending their bows.'

10 That day will be the day of vengeance
for the Lord Yahweh of hosts,
and he will avenge himself on his foes.
The sword will devour and be satisfied.
It will drink its fill of their blood.
For there will be a sacrifice
to the Lord Yahweh of hosts
in the northern land by the Euphrates River.

11 Go up to Gilead and obtain medicine,
virgin daughter of Egypt.
It is useless that you put much medicine on yourself.
There is no cure for you.

12 The nations have heard of your disgrace.
The earth is filled with your cry of distress,
for soldier stumbles against soldier;
both of them fall together."

13 This is the word that Yahweh told Jeremiah the prophet when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came and attacked the land of Egypt:
14 "Announce in Egypt,
and proclaim it in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes.
'Take your station and prepare yourself,
for the sword will devour those around you.'

15 Why are your mighty ones facedown on the ground?
They will not stand,
because Yahweh has pushed them to the ground.

16 He increases the numbers of those who stumble.
Each soldier falls against the next one.
They are saying, 'Get up. Let us go home.
Let us go back to our own people,
to the land of our birth,
and away from the sword of the oppressor.'

17 They proclaimed there,
'Pharaoh the king of Egypt is only a noise,
one who has let his opportunity slip away.'

18 As I live—declares the King,
whose name is Yahweh of hosts—
someone will come like Mount Tabor
and Mount Carmel by the sea.

19 Pack for yourselves baggage to carry into exile,
you who live in Egypt.
For Memphis will become a waste;
it will be burned, and no one will live there.

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[20] Egypt is a very beautiful young cow,
but a stinging insect is coming from the north
It is coming.

[21] The hired soldiers in her midst are like a fattened bull,
but they will also turn away and run away.
They will not stand together,
for the day of their disaster is coming against them,
the time of their punishment.

[22] Egypt hisses like a snake and crawls away,
for her enemies are marching against her.
They are going toward her like woodcutters with axes.

[23] They will cut down the forests
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—although it is very dense.
For the enemies will be more numerous than locusts,
unable to be counted.

[24] The daughter of Egypt will be made ashamed.
She will be given into the hand of people from the north."

[25]Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says, "See, I am about to punish Amon of Thebes, Pharaoh, Egypt and her gods, her kings the Pharaohs, and those who trust in them.[26]I am giving them into the hand of the ones seeking their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his servants. Then after this Egypt will be inhabited as in previous days —this is Yahweh's declaration.
[27] But you, my servant Jacob, do not fear.
Do not be dismayed, Israel, for see,
I am about to deliver you from the faraway place,
and your descendants from the land of their captivity.
Jacob will return and be at ease;
he will rest secure, and there will be no more terror.

[28] You, my servant Jacob, do not fear
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—for I am with you,
so I will bring complete destruction against all the nations
where I scattered you.
But I will not destroy you completely.
Yet I will discipline you justly
and will certainly not leave you unpunished."

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[1]Some modern English translations read, Lud.

Jeremiah 46 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 46:3-12, 14-24.
This begins a section where Jeremiah prophesies about other nations. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

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Much of Jeremiah is concerned with Yahweh's punishment of Judah. Yahweh used Egypt to punish Judah. Because Yahweh is just, he is going to punish Egypt for their evil deeds as well. (See: justice and evil and works)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Battle preparations

Jeremiah commands the Egyptian army to prepare for battle, even though they will not be able to defend themselves. Their punishment has already been determined by Yahweh.

Links:

Jeremiah 46:1 Notes

Jeremiah 46:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 14:1]

Jeremiah 46:2

For Egypt

This phrase indicates this message is intended for the nation of Egypt.

Necho

This is the name of a man.

Carchemish

This is the name of a city on the west bank of the Euphrates.

that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

Here Nebuchadnezzar represents his army. Alternate translation: "that the army of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon"

in the fourth year of Jehoiakim

This refers to the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim"

the fourth year

The word "fourth" is the ordinal form of "four."

Jeremiah 46:4

Put the harness on the horses; mount up on the horses

A "harness" is a set of straps placed on a horse so that it can pull a chariot. Here "mount up on the horses" means that the soldiers rode in the chariots that the horses were pulling.

helmets

A helmet is armor which protects the head in battle.

polish the spears

This phrase means to "sharpen" the spear.

Jeremiah 46:5

General Information:

Jeremiah's vision for Egypt continues.

What am I seeing here?

The word "I" here refer to Yahweh. Yahweh uses a question to introduce the vision and to draw attention to what he says next. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look at what is happening here"

their soldiers have been completely destroyed

The phrase "completely destroyed" is an exaggeration for complete defeat. This may be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy has completely destroyed their soldiers" or "the enemy has killed all their soldiers"

Jeremiah 46:6

the swift cannot run away, and the soldiers cannot escape

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that no one, not even the strongest and fastest, can escape. The nominal adjective "the swift" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "even the swiftest soldier cannot escape"

They stumble in the north and fall beside the Euphrates River

Both statements mean the same thing. Being and dying in battle is spoken of as if the soldiers stumble and fall. Alternate translation: "The Egyptian soldiers suffer defeat and die in the north by the Euphrates River"

Jeremiah 46:7

General Information:

Jeremiah continues quoting Yahweh's declaration to the nation of Egypt.

Who is this who rises like the Nile ... the rivers?

Yahweh uses a question to draw attention to what he is about to say concerning Egypt. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look at who rises like the Nile ... the rivers."

Jeremiah 46:8

Egypt rises like the Nile

The Nile river floods its banks once a year, covering the surrounding area with water. Yahweh compares the kingdom of Egypt to the Nile because the Egyptian people think they are mighty enough to destroy cities in all the lands.

Egypt rises ... Egypt says ... I will

Here "Egypt" represents all the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "The Egyptians rise ... The Egyptians say ... We will"

Jeremiah 46:9

Go up, horses. Be angry, you chariots

Here "horses" and "chariots" represent the soldiers who use horses and chariots in battle. The leaders of Egypt are ordering their soldiers to start the battle. Alternate translation: "Go up to battle, you soldiers on horses. Fight furiously, you soldiers in chariots"

Let the soldiers go out, Cush and Put, men skillful with a shield

This command can be addressed directly to the soldiers. What they were to go out for can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You soldiers from Cush and Put, who are skillful with your shields, go out to battle"

Cush ... Put

These are biblical names for the countries of Ethiopia and Libya.

Lydia, men skillful at bending their bows

The ideas of soldiers and going out to battle are understood

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from earlier in the sentence. They can be repeated. This command can also be addressed directly to the soldiers. Alternate translation: "you soldiers from Lud, who are skillful at bending your bows, go out to battle"

Lydia

This is the name of the people group from the nation of Lydia.

skillful at bending their bows

The phrase "bend the bow" means to pull the string of the bow back with an arrow in order to shoot the arrow. Alternate translation: "skillful at shooting arrows from their bows" or "skillful with the bow and arrow"

Jeremiah 46:10

General Information:

Jeremiah's quotation of Yahweh's declaration to the nation of Egypt continues.

That day

This phrase refers to the day the Egyptians lose the battle to the Babylonians.

for the Lord Yahweh of hosts, and he will avenge himself on his foes

Yahweh speaks of himself in third person. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "for me, Lord Yahweh of hosts, and I will avenge myself on my foes"

The sword will devour and be satisfied. It will drink its fill of their blood

This speaks of Yahweh's sword as if it were devouring people and drinking blood. Both these phrases are saying similar thing and are combined to emphasize that there will be complete destruction. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy my enemy. It will be like my sword devours them and gets drunk on their blood"

The sword will devour

Yahweh punishing and killing his enemies is spoken of as if he would use a sword to kill them.

For there will be a sacrifice

Yahweh avenging himself by causing the Egyptians to lose in battle against the Babylonians is spoken of as if the Egyptian army would be a sacrifice to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "For the Egyptians will be like a sacrifice"

Jeremiah 46:11

General Information:

Yahweh finishes his declaration to Egypt.

Go up to Gilead and obtain medicine

Gilead was a region famous for having people skillful with medicine. Yahweh is mocking the Egyptians by telling them to go get medicine, but he knows it will not help them.

virgin daughter of Egypt

The people of Egypt are spoken of as if they were the virgin daughter of Egypt. Alternate translation: "people of Egypt"

Jeremiah 46:12

disgrace

This word means a condition of feeling ashamed or the loss of respect.

The earth is filled with your cry of distress

Here "earth" is a metonym for the people of the earth and a generalization for the people who know what has happened to Egypt. All the people of the earth hearing the Egyptians crying is spoken of as if their cry of distress filled the earth. Alternate translation: "All the people of the earth hear you crying"

for soldier stumbles against soldier; both of them fall together

Soldiers dying in battle is spoken of as if they were stumbling and falling down. Alternate translation: "for your soldiers die in battle"

Jeremiah 46:13

when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

Here Nebuchadnezzar represents his army. Alternate translation: "when the army of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon"

the land of Egypt

Here "land" represents the people. Alternate translation: "the people of Egypt" or "the Egyptians"

Jeremiah 46:14

Migdol

Translate the name of this city as you did in [Jeremiah 44:1]

Memphis ... Tahpanhes

Translate the names of these cities as you did in [Jeremiah 2:16]

the sword will devour those around you

The word "sword" here represents soldiers carrying weapons. The enemy soliders killing people is spoken of as if their swords were devouring people. Alternate translation: "your enemies will kill people all around you"

Jeremiah 46:15

Why are your mighty ones facedown on the ground? They will not stand

Some Bibles translate this as "Why has Apis fled? Why did your bull not stand?" Apis was an Egyptian god that was represented by the form of a bull. The bull is often a symbol for strength. That is why the ULB and other versions of the Bible translate this as "strong ones" or "mighty ones," which refers to soldiers.

Why are your mighty ones facedown on the ground? They will not stand

Yahweh uses a question to mock the strength of the Egyptian soldiers. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your soldiers are facedown on the ground and will not stand"

Jeremiah 46:16

He increases the numbers of those who stumble

"Yahweh causes more and more of your soldiers to stumble"

the land of our birth

"the land where we were born"

away from the sword of the oppressor

Here "sword" represents the enemy soldiers who are carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "away from the soldiers that are oppressing us"

Jeremiah 46:17

They proclaimed there

Possible meanings are 1) "they" refers to people in general who are in Egypt or 2) "they" refers to the foreign soldiers who are fleeing to their native lands of Cush, Put, and Lud.

Pharaoh the king of Egypt is only a noise, one who has let his opportunity slip away

These two phrases are saying that the nation of Egypt has become of little importance. The phrase "only a noise" is an idiom that means a person says he will do something but he does not do it. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh brags much

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but cannot do what he brags he will"
Jeremiah 46:18
declares the King
Here "King" refers to Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "this is what I, the King, declare"
someone will come like Mount Tabor and Mount Carmel by the sea
This refers to the nation of Babylon who will be as overwhelming to the nation of Egypt as the these two mountains are to the plains that surround them.
Mount Tabor
This is the name of a mountain in the northern part of Israel.
Jeremiah 46:19
Pack for yourselves baggage to carry into exile
"Prepare to go into exile"
Jeremiah 46:20
Egypt is a very beautiful young cow
The nation of Egypt, which was very strong and prosperous, is spoken of as if it were a beautiful young cow. Alternate translation: "Egypt is like a very beautiful heifer"
but a stinging insect
The enemy army coming to attack the Egyptians is spoken of as if the army were an insect that stings. Alternate translation: "but a powerful army like a stinging insect"
Jeremiah 46:21
soldiers in her midst are like a fattened bull
The writer compares soldiers to "fattened bulls" because the soldiers are well cared for by the Egyptians just as a farmer takes care of a bull and makes it fat.
They will not stand together
To "stand together" is an idiom meaning to remain united. The writer is saying that the soldiers will not fight as a unit but will run away thinking only of saving themselves.
the day of their disaster is coming against them
This speaks of a day as if it travels and arrives in a location. Alternate translation: "they will experience disaster on that day"
Jeremiah 46:22
Egypt hisses like a snake and crawls away
The inability of the Egyptians to do anything to stop their enemy is spoken of as if they were snakes that can only hiss and crawl away.
They are going toward her like woodcutters with axes
The enemies coming with the weapons to destroy the Egyptians is spoken of as if they were woodcutters with axes preparing to cut down a tree.
Jeremiah 46:23
They will cut down the forests ... although it is very dense
This continues speaking of the enemy army attacking the Egyptians as if the army were woodcutters cutting down trees. Alternate translation: "The enemy army will kill many Egyptians like woodcutters cutting down a forest ... even though there are very many trees"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
locusts
This is a type of insect that travels in very large groups and can cause great destruction by eating crops.
unable to be counted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will be able to count them"
Jeremiah 46:24
The daughter of Egypt will be made ashamed
The people of Egypt are spoken of as if they were the daughter of Egypt. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy army will humiliate the people of Egypt"
She will be given into the hand of people from the north
Here "hand" represents power or control. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, will allow the people from the north to defeat the Egyptians"
Jeremiah 46:25
Amon of Thebes
"Amon" is the king of the Egyptian gods. "Thebes" is the capital of the northern part of Egypt, and here it represents the people of Thebes. Alternate translation: "Amon, god of Thebes" or "Amon, god of the people of Thebes"
Egypt and her gods
Here "Egypt" represents the people. Alternate translation: "all the people of Egypt and the gods they worship"
Jeremiah 46:26
I am giving them into the hand of the ones seeking their lives
Here "hand" represents power or control. The phrase "seeking their lives" is an idiom that mean to want to kill someone. Alternate translation: "I will allow those who are wanting to kill them to defeat them"
and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his servants
Here "hand" represents power or control. "Nebuchadnezzar ... his servants" names specifically "the ones seeking their lives." Alternate translation: "that is, I will allow Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his servants to defeat the Egyptians"
Then after this Egypt will be inhabited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then after this, people will live in Egypt again"
Jeremiah 46:27
my servant Jacob, do not fear. Do not be dismayed, Israel
These two phrases mean the same thing. Here "Jacob" and "Israel" represent the people of Israel. Yahweh is emphasizing that the people should not be afraid. Alternate translation: "people of Israel, my servants, do not be afraid"
from the land of their captivity
"from the land where they are captives"
Jacob will return and be at ease; he will rest secure, and there will be no more terror
See how you translated this in Jeremiah 30:10.
no more terror
"no one to terrify him"
Jeremiah 46:28
I will bring complete destruction against all the nations
The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated using the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy all the nations"
will certainly not leave you unpunished
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation:

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"will certainly punish you"

47 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines. This word came to him
before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

[2]"Yahweh says this:
See, floods of water are rising in the north.
They will be like an overflowing river!
Then they will overflow the land and everything in it,
its cities and its inhabitants!
So everyone will shout for help,
and all the inhabitants of the land will howl.
[3] At the sound of the stamping of their strong horses' hooves,
at the roar of their chariots and the noise of their wheels,
fathers will not help their children
because of the weakness of their own hands.

[4] For the day is coming that will devastate all of the Philistines,
to cut off from Tyre and Sidon
every survivor who wants to help them.
For Yahweh is devastating the Philistines,
those who remain from the island of Caphtor.

[5] Baldness will come upon Gaza.
Ashkelon has been silenced.
You remnant in their valley,
how long will you cut yourself?

[6] Woe, sword of Yahweh!
How long will it be until you become silent?
Go back to your scabbard!
Stop and be silent.

[7] How can it rest when Yahweh has commanded it,
when he has appointed it to attack Ashkelon
and the coastlands along the sea?"

Jeremiah 47 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 47:2-7.

Jeremiah's prophesies about other nations continue in this chapter. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Flood waters

This chapter uses the imagery of a flood to describe the enemies who conquer the Philistines. Their destruction will be swift and complete.

Links:

Jeremiah 47:1 Notes

Jeremiah 47:1

This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah

The idiom "the word of Yahweh that came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 14:1]

This word came to him

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The idiom "this word came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave this message to Jeremiah" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Jeremiah"

before Pharaoh

Here "Pharaoh" represents the Egyptians army. Alternate translation: "before Pharaoh's army"

Jeremiah 47:2

See

The word "see" alerts us to pay attention to what is about to be said.

floods of water are rising in the north. They will be like an overflowing river!

The two phrases have a similar meaning. The enemy army is spoken of as if it were a flood. Alternate translation: "an army in the north will come like a flood. They will be powerful like an overflowing river"

they will overflow the land

This continues speaking of the army from the north as an overflowing river. Alternate translation: "like an overflowing river, the army from the north will destroy the land"

Jeremiah 47:3

At the sound of the stamping of their strong horses' hooves, at the roar of their chariots and the noise of their wheels

Together these represent the sounds of an oncoming army.

at the roar of their chariots and the noise of their wheels

These two phrase have similar meanings and they are combined to emphasize the loud noise they will make. Alternate translation: "at the very loud sound of the wheels of the chariots"

Jeremiah 47:4

For the day is coming that will devastate all of the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre

This speaks of a day as if it were something that travels and arrives in a place. Alternate translation: "For on that day, the enemy army will devastate all of the Philistines and cut off from Tyre"

to cut off from Tyre and Sidon every survivor who wants to help them

Removing someone is spoken of as if they were cut off the way a person may cut a branch from a tree or a piece of cloth from a garment. Alternate translation: "to remove anyone who may want to help Tyre and Sidon"

Caphtor

This is the name of an island of the northern region of the Philistines.

Jeremiah 47:5

Baldness will come upon Gaza

The abstract noun "baldness" can be stated as "bald." "Gaza" represents the people. Alternate translation: "The people of Gaza will shave their heads bald"

Baldness

The shaving of the entire head or portions of the head is a sign of great sorrow practiced by idol worshipers in nations such as Philistia.

Ashkelon has been silenced

Possible meanings are 1) the people are silent because they are mourning or 2) this is a euphemism that means the enemy soldiers has killed them.

You remnant in their valley, how long will you cut yourself?

"You people who remain in their valley, how long will you cut yourselves?"

their valley

the valley in which the Philistines of Gaza and Ashkelon lived

how long will you cut yourself?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the people of Ashkelon will never stop mourning. Yahweh speaks to the people as if he were speaking to one woman, who is a metaphor for the city itself. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will forever cut yourself."

cut yourself

The cutting of one's skin was another practice done by the idol worshipers when they mourned the dead. Alternate translation: "cut yourself in mourning"

Jeremiah 47:6

sword of Yahweh! How long will it be until you become silent? Go back to your scabbard! Stop and be silent.

The Philistines speak to the sword of Yahweh as if it were a person who could hear them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, you who are holding your sword! When will you stop striking us with your sword? Stop your sword and put it back in its scabbard!"

sword of Yahweh

Yahweh punishing the Philistines by sending the army from the north is spoken of as if Yahweh were striking them with a sword.

How long will it be until you become silent?

The people of the Philistines use this question to express their deep frustration about the devastation caused by their enemies. This may be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Please be silent!" or "Please, Yahweh, stop striking us with your sword!"

you become silent

A sword makes a noise as it slashes back and forth. Asking the sword to be silent means to ask it to stop slashing and killing. Alternate translation: "you rest" or "you stop slashing"

scabbard

This is the case used to protect the blade of a sword.

Jeremiah 47:7

How can it rest ... along the sea?

Here Jeremiah is speaking. He continues speaking of the sword of Yahweh as if it were a person who could rest. Yahweh punishing the Philistines by sending the army of the north is spoken of as if Yahweh were striking the people with a sword. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It cannot rest ... along the sea."

How can it rest when Yahweh has commanded it, when he has appointed ... the sea?

Jeremiah uses a question to mean that the sword cannot stop since Yahweh has commanded it to continue killing. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It cannot stop, for Yahweh has commanded it. He has appointed ... the sea."

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48 [1]To Moab, Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this,
"Woe to Nebo, for it has been devastated.
Kiriathaim has been humiliated and captured.
Her fortress has been disgraced and crushed.
[2] The honor of Moab is no more.
Their enemies in Heshbon plotted disaster against her.
They said, 'Come and let us destroy her as a nation.
Madmen will also perish
—a sword will go after you.'

[3] Listen! A sound of an outcry is coming from Horonaim,
where there is ruin and great destruction.

[4] Moab has been destroyed.
Her children have made their cries heard.

[5] They go up the hill of Luhith weeping,
for on the way down to Horonaim,
screams are heard because of the destruction.

[6] Flee! Save your lives
and become like a juniper bush in the wilderness.

[7] For because of your trust in your practices
and your wealth
you also will be captured.
Then Chemosh will go away into captivity
together with his priests and leaders.

[8] For the destroyer will come to every city;
no city will escape.
So the valley will perish
and the plain will be devastated,
as Yahweh has said.

[9] Give wings to Moab,
for she must certainly fly away.
Her cities will become a wasteland,
where there is no one to live in them.

[10] May anyone who is lazy in doing Yahweh's work
be cursed!
May anyone who keeps his sword back from shedding blood
be cursed!

[11] Moab has rested secure since he was young.
He is like his wine that has never been poured from pot to pot.
He has never gone into captivity.
Therefore he tastes as good as ever;
his flavor remains unchanged.

[12] So see, the days are coming
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—when I will send him those who will tip him over
and pour out all his pots and shatter his jars.

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13 Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh
just as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel,
their object of trust.

14 How can you say,
'We are soldiers, powerful fighting men'?

15 Moab will be devastated and its cities attacked.
For its finest young men
have gone down to the place of slaughter.
This is the king's declaration!
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

16 Moab's disaster is soon to happen;
calamity is hurrying quickly.

17 All you who are around Moab, wail;
and all you who know its fame, shout this,
'Woe, the strong staff,
the honored rod, has been broken.'

18 Come down from your honored place
and sit on the dry ground,
you daughter living in Dibon.
For the destroyer of Moab will come up against you,
he will ruin your strongholds.

19 Stand on the road and watch,
you people who live in Aroer.
Ask the ones who are fleeing and escaping.
Say, 'What has happened?'

20 Moab has been shamed,
for it has been shattered.
Howl and lament;
shout for help.
Tell it to people by the Arnon River
that Moab has been devastated.

21 Now punishment has come to the hill country,
to Holon, Jahzah, and Mephaath,

22 to Dibon, Nebo, and Beth Diblathaim,
23 to Kiriathaim, Beth Gamul, and Beth Meon,
24 To Kerioth and Bozrah,
and to all the cities in the land of Moab—
the farthest and the closest cities.

25 The horn of Moab has been hacked off;
its arm has been broken
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

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26 Make him drunk,
because he acted proudly against Yahweh.
Let Moab wallow in his vomit,
and let him be an object of ridicule.

27 For did not Israel become an object for laughter to you?
Was he found among thieves,
so that you shook your head at him
as often as you spoke about him?

28 Abandon the cities and camp on the cliffs,
inhabitants of Moab.
Become like a dove that is nesting
over the mouth of a hole in the rocks.

29 We have heard of Moab's pride
—his arrogance,
his haughtiness, his pride,
his self-glory and the conceit in his heart.

30 This is Yahweh's declaration
—I myself know his arrogant speech,
which amounts to nothing, like his deeds.

31 So I will howl a lament for Moab,
and I will shout in sorrow for all of Moab.
I will lament for the people of Kir Hareseth.

32 I will weep for you more than I did for Jazer,
vine of Sibmah!
Your branches passed across the Salt Sea
and reached as far as Jazer.
The destroyer has attacked
your summer fruit and your grapes.

33 So celebration and rejoicing have been taken away
from the fruit trees and the land of Moab.
I have put an end to the wine from their winepresses.
They will not tread with joyful shouts.
Any shouts will not be shouts of joy.

34 From the shouts at Heshbon as far as Elealeh
their sound is heard at Jahaz,
from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath Shelishiyah,
since even the waters of Nimrim have become desolate.

35 For I will put an end to anyone in Moab
who makes sacrifices on the high places
and burns incense to his gods
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

36 So my heart is lamenting for Moab like a flute.
My heart is lamenting like flutes
for the people of Kir Hareseth.
The riches they gained are gone.

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37 For every head is bald and every beard shaved.
Incisions are on every hand,
and sackcloth is around their waists.

38 There is mourning everywhere,
on every flat roof of Moab and in Moab's plazas.
For I have destroyed Moab like pots that no one wants
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

39 How it has been shattered!
How they howl in their lamenting!
Moab turns its back in shame!
So Moab will become an object of derision
and a terror to all those who are around him."

40 For Yahweh says this,
"See, the enemy will come flying like an eagle,
spreading out his wings over Moab.
41 Kerioth has been captured,
and its strongholds have been seized.
For in that day the hearts of Moab's soldiers
will be like the hearts of women in birth labor.

42 So Moab will be destroyed and be no longer a people,
because he made himself to be great against Yahweh.

43 Terror, the pit, and a trap are coming on you,
inhabitant of Moab
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

44 Anyone who flees because of terror will fall into the pit,
and anyone who climbs out of the pit
will be caught in the trap
for I will bring this on them, the people of Moab,
in the year of my vengeance against them
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

45 The ones who flee will stand in the shadow of Heshbon
without any strength,
for fire will go out from Heshbon,
flame from the middle of Sihon.
It will devour the forehead of Moab
and the scalps of the boastful people.

46 Woe to you, Moab!
Chemosh's people are destroyed,
For your sons are taken as captives
and your daughters into captivity.

47 But I will reverse the captivity of Moab in later days
—this is Yahweh's declaration."
The judgment on Moab ends here.

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Jeremiah 48 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 48:1-25, 28-33, 39-47.

Jeremiah's prophesies about other nations continue in this chapter. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Obeying Yahweh

Moab worshiped and served other gods. Despite this, Yahweh expected every nation to worship and serve him and him alone. They were punished because of it. (See: falsegod)

Links:

Jeremiah 48:1 Notes

Jeremiah 48:1

General Information:

Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.

To Moab

Here "Moab" represents the people. Alternate translation: "To the people of Moab"

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Woe to Nebo, for it has been devastated

Here "Nebo" represents the people. Alternate translation: "How terrible it is for the people of Nebo, for their city is devastated"

Nebo

This is the name of a city near Mount Nebo in Moab.

Kiriathaim has been humiliated

Here "Kiriathaim has been humiliated" represents the people being humiliated. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy has captured the city of Kiriathaim and humiliated the people who live there"

Kiriathaim

This is the name of a city in Moab.

Her fortress has been disgraced

Here "fortress has been disgraced" represents the people being disgraced. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy has destroyed the fortress in Kiriathaim and disgraced its people"

Jeremiah 48:2

The honor of Moab is no more

"People no longer honor Moab" or "People no longer praise Moab"

Heshbon

This is the name of a city.

Madmen will also perish

"Madmen" here is a town in Moab. The name of the city has nothing to do with the English word "madmen." Alternate translation: "Their enemies will destroy the city of Madmen"

a sword will go after you

Here "sword" represents the enemy army carrying weapons. Alternate translation: "your enemies will chase after you and kill you"

Jeremiah 48:3

General Information:

Jeremiah continues to tell of the destruction of Moab.

Horonaim

This is the name of a town in the south of Moab.

ruin and great destruction

These two terms mean the same thing. Together they emphasize complete destruction.

Jeremiah 48:4

Moab has been destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy army has destroyed Moab"

Her children

Possible meanings are 1) the children who lived in Moab or 2) "children" is a metonym that represents the people of Moab in general. Alternate translation: "The people of Moab"

Jeremiah 48:5

Luhith

This is the name of a place in Moab.

because of the destruction

The abstract noun "destruction" can be stated as "destroyed." Alternate translation: "because their town is destroyed"

Jeremiah 48:6

Save your lives

The word "your" refers to the people of Moab.

become like a juniper bush in the wilderness

The people fleeing from their cities into the desert is compared to a bush or shrub that grows in the desert. Alternate translation: "become like a shrub that grows in the wilderness"

Jeremiah 48:7

because of your trust

The abstract noun "trust" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you trusted"

in your practices

"in your own efforts" or "in your own work"

you also will be captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy army will also capture you"

Then Chemosh will go away into captivity

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"Chemosh" is the chief god of the Moabites. This means the enemy army will take the idol of Chemosh that the people made to worship. Alternate translation: "The enemy army will take your god Chemosh as a captive"

Jeremiah 48:8

For the destroyer will come to every city

Here "the destroyer" represents the enemy army. Alternate translation: "For the enemy army will come to every city and destroy it"

no city will escape

Here "city" represents the people. Alternate translation: "no people from any city will escape"

So the valley will perish and the plain will be devastated

Here "valley" and "plain" represent the cities and the people in those places Alternate translation: "So the enemy army will destroy everything in the valleys and on the plains"

Jeremiah 48:9

Give wings to Moab, for she must certainly fly away

Helping the people is spoken of as if they would put wings on the people so that could fly away. Alternate translation: "Help the people of Moab to escape as if you were giving them wings to fly away"

Give wings to Moab, for she must certainly fly away

The translation of the original language is uncertain. Some Bibles translate this as "Set up a tombstone for Moab, for the enemy will certainly destroy it." Other Bibles translate it as "Put salt on the cities of Moab, for the enemy will completely destroy it." Enemies through salt on ruins to keep thing from ever growing there again.

Jeremiah 48:10

from shedding blood

Here "blood" represents a person's life. And "shedding blood" is an idiom that means to kill. Alternate translation: "from killing people"

Jeremiah 48:11

Moab has rested secure since he was young ... He is ... his wine ... He has never gone ... he tastes ... his flavor

Here Yahweh speaks of Moab as if it were a man. Here it represents the people of Moab. All occurrences of "he" and "his" can be stated as "they," "their," or "them." Alternate translation: "Even from their earliest times, the people of Moab have rested secure ... They are ... their wine ... They have never gone ... they tastes ... their flavor"

He is like his wine that has never been poured from pot to pot

For wine to taste good, it has to be left undisturbed for a long time and not poured from one pot to another. Yahweh compares the people of Moab, who are prosperous because no one has ever conquered them and taken them as captives, to wine that is undisturbed and has a good flavor.

Jeremiah 48:12

So see, the days are coming

"Listen carefully because there will be a time"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will send him those who will tip him over and pour out all his pots and shatter his jars

The enemy army defeating the people of Moab and taking them as captives is spoken of as if the people of Moab are wine and someone will come and pour them out and break the wine jars. Alternate translation: "I will send an army that will destroy them as if they were pouring out wine and breaking the jars"

send him ... tip him over ... his pots ... his jars

Here Yahweh speaks of Moab as if it were a man. Here it represents the people of Moab. All occurrences of "he," "his," and "him" in 48:11-12 can be stated as "they," "their," or "them." Alternate translation: "send them ... tip them over ... their pots ... their jars"

Jeremiah 48:13

Then Moab

Here "Moab" represents the people. Alternate translation: "Then the people of Moab"

Chemosh

Chemosh is the chief god of the Moabites. See how you translated this name in [Jeremiah 48:7]

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 2:4. Alternate translation: "the Israelites" or "the Israelite people group"

Bethel

This could be the name of 1) the city in which the Israelites worshiped a golden calf or 2) a false god the Israelites worshiped.

Jeremiah 48:14

How can you say, 'We are soldiers, powerful fighting men'?

Here Yahweh is speaking to the soldiers of Moab. Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the soldiers. Alternate translation: "No longer can you say, 'We are soldiers, powerful fighting men.'"

Jeremiah 48:15

Moab will be devastated and its cities attacked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy army will devastate Moab and attack its cities"

its finest young men have gone down to the place of slaughter

The best men of Moab going to battle and being killed is spoken of as if they were animals taken to a place to be slaughtered. Alternate translation: "their fine young men will all be slaughtered" or "the enemy army will kill all of the finest men of Moab"

This is the king's declaration

Here "king" refers to Yahweh. This can be stated in first person. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 46:18]

Jeremiah 48:16

Moab's disaster is soon to happen; calamity is hurrying quickly

These two sentences mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Moab's destruction will happen very soon. Alternate translation: "Moab's enemies will destroy her very soon"

calamity is hurrying quickly

Something terrible happening soon is spoken of as if calamity were something that could move quickly to a place. Alternate translation: "terrible things will happen very soon"

Jeremiah 48:17

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the strong staff, the honored rod, has been broken
Here the words "staff" and "rod" represent the power and political support that Moab provided to other nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moab's enemies have ended her great power"
Jeremiah 48:18
you daughter living in Dibon
The people of Dibon are spoken of as if they were the daughter of Dibon. Alternate translation: "you people living in Dibon"
Dibon
This is the name of a city in Moab.
the destroyer of Moab
"the enemy army that will destroy Moab"
Jeremiah 48:19
Aroer
This is the name of a city in Moab.
Ask the ones
"Ask the people" or "Ask the men and women"
Jeremiah 48:20
Moab has been shamed, for it has been shattered
Here "Moab" represents the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people are disgraced, for the enemy army has destroyed Moab"
Howl and lament
"Cry loudly in pain and anger"
that Moab has been devastated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the enemy army has devastated Moab"
Jeremiah 48:21
punishment has come to the hill country, to Holon ... Mephaath
Yahweh punishing the people of the hill country and cities of Moab is spoken of as if punishment were something that could travel and arrive in a place. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will punish the people of the hill country, of Holon ... Mephaath"
Holon, Jahzah, and Mephaath
These are cities in Moab.
Jeremiah 48:24
Bozrah
a city in Moab
Jeremiah 48:25
The horn of Moab has been hacked off; its arm has been broken
Both of these statements mean the same thing. Here "horn" and "arm" represent power. To have these hacked off or broken means to lose one's power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moab has become weak; the people are not able to fight anymore"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 48:26
Make him drunk, because he acted proudly against Yahweh
Yahweh is speaking. The command "Make him drunk" indicates what Yahweh will cause to happen. Here "him" and "he" refers to Moab which represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, will cause the people of Moab to be drunk, for they acted proudly against me"
Make him drunk
Here people experiencing Yahweh's punishment is spoken of as if they were drunk on wine, acting foolishly so that people laugh at them. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to be like a drunk person"
Let Moab wallow in his vomit ... an object of ridicule
Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Moab as if they were a drunk person. Alternate translation: "Now the people of Moab will be like a person who wallows in his vomit ... an object of ridicule
let him be an object of ridicule
"so that people will laugh at him"
Jeremiah 48:27
For did not Israel become an object for laughter to you?
Yahweh uses a question to remind the people of Moab how they treated the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "For you used to mock and laugh at the people of Israel."
Israel ... Was he found ... at him ... about him
Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel ... Were they found ... at them ... about them"
Was he found among thieves, so that you shook your head ... about him?
Here Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the people of Moab for treating the people of Israel with shame though they did nothing wrong. Alternate translation: "Although they were not thieves, you still shook your head ... about him."
shook your head at him
This is a symbolic action that shows feeling of scorn or disgust towards someone.
Jeremiah 48:28
cliffs
A cliff is a steep side of a mountain.
Become like a dove ... in the rocks
This simile emphasizes the people should leave their cities and live in the rocky cliffs to hide from their enemies.
the mouth of a hole in the rocks
Here "mouth of a hole" is an idiom that means the entrance to a cave. Alternate translation: "the entrance to caves" or "an opening in the rocks"
Jeremiah 48:29
We have heard
Here "We" refers generally to all the people in the surrounding area.
arrogance ... haughtiness ... pride ... self-glory ... conceit in his heart
All of these words have similar meanings. They are used together to emphasize the extreme pride of the people of Moab.
the conceit in his heart
Here "heart" represents a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "his conceit"
Jeremiah 48:30
I myself know his arrogant speech
The word "myself" is used to emphasize that Yahweh was the one who knew about Moab's arrogant speech.
his arrogant speech ... like his deeds
Here "his" refers to Moab which represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "their arrogant speech ... like their deeds"

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his arrogant speech
The abstract noun "speech" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "that he has spoken arrogantly" or "that he has spoken arrogant words"
Jeremiah 48:31
I will howl a lament for Moab, and I will shout in sorrow for all of Moab
Both of these statements mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "I will cry loudly for the people of Moab"
I will howl
Possible meanings are 1) "I" refers to Jeremiah or 2) "I" refers to Yahweh.
howl
a sad and loud cry that a person makes when he is in pain or deep sorrow
Kir Hareseth
This is the name of the old capital city of Moab.
Jeremiah 48:32
Jazer ... Sibmah
These are the names of two towns in Moab.
vine of Sibmah! Your branches passed ... your grapes
The town of Sibmah had many vineyards. Here, Yahweh speaks to the people of Sibmah by speaking to the vines as if the vines could hear him. Alternate translation: "people of Sibmah! Your grapevine had branches that passed ... your grapes"
The destroyer has attacked your summer fruit and your grapes
Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Sibmah as if they were a grapevine. Alternate translation: "The destroyers have attacked you and have taken the fruit from your orchards and your grapes"
The destroyer has
"The enemy army has"
summer fruit
dates and figs
Jeremiah 48:33
So celebration and rejoicing have been taken away from the fruit trees and the land of Moab
The abstract nouns "celebration" and "rejoicing" can be stated as verbs. The phrase "have been taken away" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Moab will no longer celebrate and rejoice because of their fruit trees"
I have put an end to the wine from their winepresses
"I have stopped the wine from their winepresses" or "I have stopped the people from making wine"
I have put an end
Here "I" refers to Yahweh.
They will not tread
The wine makers would stomp on the grapes to squeeze out the juice. Alternate translation: "The wine makers will not stomp the grapes"
Jeremiah 48:34
Heshbon
Translate the name of this city as you did in [Jeremiah 48:2]
Elealeh ... Jahaz ... Zoar ... Horonaim ... Eglath Shelishiyah
These are names of other cities in Moab.
Nimrim
This is the name of a stream or river near the Dead Sea.
become desolate
"dried up."
Jeremiah 48:35
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 48:36
my heart is lamenting for Moab like a flute
Here "heart" represents the whole person. The person's sad crying is compared to the sad music played on a flute at a funeral. Alternate translation: "I cry sadly for Moab. My cries are like the sad music a person plays on a flute at a funeral"
my heart
Possible meanings are 1) "my" refers to Jeremiah or 2) "my" refers to Yahweh.
Kir Hareseth
Kir Hareseth was an ancient capital of Moab. See how you translated this name in [Jeremiah 48:31]
Jeremiah 48:37
For every head is bald and every beard shaved. Incisions are on every hand, and sackcloth is around their waists
These are all things that the people of Moab did when they were mourning or expressing deep sorrow.
Incisions
cuts made on the skin
Jeremiah 48:38
There is mourning everywhere
The abstract noun "mourning" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "There are people mourning everywhere"
every flat roof
"every housetop"
plazas
open public areas, such as open marketplaces
For I have destroyed
The word "I" refers to Yahweh
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 48:39
How it has been shattered! How they howl in their lamenting!
Here "How" begins exclamations. The phrase "has been shattered" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have completely shattered them! They shout loudly and weep!"
howl
a sad and loud cry that a person makes when he is in pain
Moab turns its back in shame
Here Moab represents the people. To turn one's back is a sign of feeling ashamed. Alternate translation: "The people of Moab turn their backs in shame" or "The people of Moab are ashamed and will not show their faces"
So Moab will become an object of derision and a terror to all those who are around him
This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "derision" and "terror." Alternate translation: "So all the people nearby will be terrified at what happened to the

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people of Moab and they will mock them"

Jeremiah 48:40

the enemy will come flying like an eagle, spreading out his wings

These phrases compare how a powerful army will descend on Moab and conquer it to the way an eagle swoops down to capture its prey.

Jeremiah 48:41

Kerioth has been captured, and its strongholds have been seized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy has captured Kerioth and seized its strongholds"

Kerioth

This is a city in Moab. See how you translated this name in [Jeremiah 48:24]

in that day the hearts of Moab's soldiers ... women in birth labor

This phrase compares the fear that will overwhelm the soldiers of Moab to the fear a woman may feel when she is about to give birth to her child.

the hearts of Moab's soldiers will be like the hearts of women in birth labor

Here "hearts" represent a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "Moab's soldiers will be afraid like a woman about to give birth"

Jeremiah 48:42

So Moab will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the enemy will destroy the people of Moab"

Jeremiah 48:43

Terror, the pit, and a trap are coming on you

Here "coming on you" is an idiom that means "to experience" something. Alternate translation: "You will experience the terror, the pit, and a trap" or "You will be terrified, and you will fall into pits and traps"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 48:44

fall into the pit ... caught in the trap

Here "the pit" and "the trap" represent all the different bad things that will happen to the people. People will run away to escape one bad thing but they will just experience another bad thing.

in the year of

Here, "year" could be translated as "time" or "season" or "time period."

Jeremiah 48:45

The ones who flee

This refers to the people who were able to run away during the destruction of Moab.

will stand in the shadow of Heshbon

Here "in the shadow" represents protection or shelter. Alternate translation: "will hide in Heshbon for protection" or "will go to Heshbon for shelter"

for fire will go out from Heshbon, flame from the middle of Sihon

These two phrases have similar meanings and emphasize that Moab's destruction will begin and spread out from Heshbon, where King Sihon once lived. Alternate translation: because a fire will burn in Heshbon, which is the city where King Sihon lived long ago

Heshbon

Translate the name of this city as you did in [Jeremiah 48:2]

Sihon

This is the name of an Amorite king who once ruled over Heshbon.

It will devour the forehead of Moab and the scalps of the boastful people

Here "forehead" and "scalps" represent the people of Moab as a whole. Alternate translation: "It will burn up all the people in Moab who noisily boasted very much"

forehead

the part of the face that is above the eyes, but below the hairline

Jeremiah 48:46

Chemosh's people are destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy army has destroyed the people who worship Chemosh"

Chemosh

This is the chief god of the Moabites. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 48:7.

your sons are taken as captives and your daughters into captivity

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy army has taken your sons and daughters as captives"

Jeremiah 48:47

I will reverse the captivity of Moab

The words "reverse the captivity" are an idiom that means that Yahweh will allow the Moabites to live well again. Alternate translation: "I will restore the fortunes of Moab" or "I will cause Moab to live well again." See how similar words are translated in Jeremiah 29:14.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

The judgment on Moab ends here

"That is the end of what Jeremiah prophesied about Moab"

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49 [1]About the people of Ammon, Yahweh says this,
"Does Israel have no children?
Is there no one to inherit anything in Israel?
Why does Molech occupy Gad,
and his people live in its cities?[1]
[2] So look, the days are coming
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—when I will cause a trumpet call
for battle against Rabbah

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to be heard among the people of Ammon,
so it will become a deserted heap
and its villages will be set on fire.
For Israel will possess those who possessed him,"
says Yahweh.

3 "Howl in lament, Heshbon,
for Ai will be devastated!
Shout out, daughters of Rabbah!
Gird yourselves with sackcloth.
Lament and run about in futility,
for Molech is going into captivity,
together with his priests and leaders.

4 Why do you brag about your valleys,
your valleys that are so fruitful, faithless daughter?
you who trust in your wealth and say,
'Who will come against me?'

5 See, I am about to bring terror on you
—this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts—
this terror will come from all those who surround you.
Each one of you will be scattered before it.
There will be no one to gather those running away.

6 But after this I will reverse the captivity of the people of Ammon
—this is Yahweh's declaration."

7 About Edom, Yahweh of hosts says this,
"Is there no longer any wisdom to be found in Teman?
Has good advice disappeared
from those who have understanding?
Has their wisdom become corrupted?
8 Flee! Turn back!
Stay in holes in the ground, inhabitants of Dedan.
For I am bringing the disaster of Esau on him
at the time that I punish him.

9 If grape harvesters came to you,
would they not leave a little bit behind?
If thieves came in the night,
would they not spoil only as much as they wanted?

10 But I have stripped Esau bare.
I have revealed his hiding places.
So he will not be able to hide himself.
His children, his brothers, and his neighbors are destroyed,
and he is gone.

11 Leave your orphans behind.
I will take care of their lives,
and your widows can trust in me."

12 For Yahweh says this, "See, those who did not deserve it must certainly drink some of the cup. Do you yourself think you will go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, for you will certainly drink. 13 For I have sworn by myself—this is

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Yahweh's declaration—that Bozrah will become a horror, a disgrace, a devastation, and an object for cursing. All of its cities will become ruins forever.

14 I have heard news from Yahweh,
and a messenger has been sent out to the nations,
'Gather together and attack her.
Get ready for battle.'

15 "For see, I have made you small compared to the other nations,
despised by people.

16 As for your fearsomeness,
your heart's pride has deceived you,
inhabitants of places on the cliff,
you who have occupied the highest hills
so that you may make your nest high like an eagle.
I will bring you down from there
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

17 Edom will become a horror to everyone passing by it.
Every such person will be appalled
and hiss because of all of its disasters.

18 Like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah
and their neighbors, says Yahweh,
and no one will live there;
no person will stay there.

19 See, he will go up like a lion
from the majesty of the Jordan
to the green pasturelands.
For I will quickly make Edom run from it,
and I will put someone who will be chosen in charge of it.
For who is like me,
and who will summon me?
What shepherd is able to resist me?

20 So listen to the plans that Yahweh has decided against Edom,
the plans that he has formed
against the inhabitants of Teman.
They will certainly be dragged away,
even the smallest flock.
Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places.

21 At the sound of their falling the earth shakes.
The sound of cries of distress is heard at the Sea of Reeds.

22 See, someone will attack like an eagle,
and swoop down and spread his wings over Bozrah.
Then on that day, the hearts of Edom's soldiers
will become like the heart of a woman in birth labor."

23 About Damascus:

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"Hamath and Arpad will be ashamed,
for they have heard news of disaster.
They melt away!
Anxiety is in the sea.
It cannot stay calm.
24 Damascus has become very weak.
It turns away to flee;
terror seizes it.
Distress and pain seize it,
like the pain of a woman giving birth.

25 How has the city of praise not been abandoned,
the town of my joy?

26 Therefore its young men will fall in its plazas,
and all the fighting men will perish on that day
—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts."

27 "For I will light a fire on the wall of Damascus,
and it will devour the strongholds of Ben-Hadad."

28 About Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, Yahweh says this to Nebuchadnezzar (now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon was going to attack these places):
"Arise and attack Kedar
and destroy those people of the east.
29 Their tents and their flocks will be taken,
along with their tent curtains and all of their equipment;
their camels will be led away from them,
and men will shout to them,
"Terror is on every side!"

30 Flee! Wander far away!
Stay in holes in the ground, inhabitants of Hazor
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon
has devised a plan against you.
Flee! Turn back!

31 Arise! Attack the nation at ease,
that lives in safety," says Yahweh.
"They have no gates or bars in them,
and its people live by themselves.

32 For their camels will become plunder,
and the abundance of their property
will become war plunder.
Then I will scatter to every wind
those who cut the hair on the sides of their heads very short,
and I will bring disaster on them from every side
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

33 Hazor will become a lair of jackals,
a permanent wasteland.
No one will live there;
no human being will stay there."

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[34]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah the prophet about Elam. This happened at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, and he said,
[35]"Yahweh of hosts says this:
See, I am about to break the bowmen of Elam,
the main part of their power.
[36]For I will bring the four winds
from the four corners of the heavens,
and I will scatter the people of Elam to all of those winds.
There is no nation
to which those scattered from Elam will not go.
[37] So I will shatter Elam before their enemies
and before those who seek their lives.
for I will bring disaster against them, the fury of my wrath
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—and I will send the sword after them
until I have consumed them.

[38] Then I will put my throne in Elam
and will destroy its king and leaders from there
—this is Yahweh's declaration

[39] —and it will happen in later days
that I will reverse the captivity of Elam
—this is Yahweh's declaration."

[1]Instead of Molech, some modern translations have their king.

Jeremiah 49 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 49:1-11, 14-27, 29-33, 37-39 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long quotation.
Jeremiah's prophesies about other nations conclude in this chapter. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Covenant with Abraham

Ammon is destroyed because it drove the people of the tribe of Gad from their homeland. This is in line with the promises of the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham to curse those who curse Abraham's descendants. (See: promise and covenant and curse)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

There are many rhetorical questions in this chapter. The purpose of these rhetorical questions is to convict those Yahweh addresses.

Links:

Jeremiah 49:1 Notes

Jeremiah 49:1

General Information:

See: and

Yahweh says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 6:6.

Does Israel have no children? Is there no one to inherit anything in Israel? Why does Molech occupy Gad, and his people live in its cities?

Yahweh uses a question to express that the people of Israel should be living in Gad rather than those who worship Molech. This question can be translated as a statement.
Alternate translation: "There are plenty of Israelites to inherit the land of Israel. The people who worship the false

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idol, Molech, should not live in Gad."

Why does Molech

Here "Molech" represents the people who worship Molech. Alternate translation: "Why do the people who worship Molech"

Jeremiah 49:2

So look

This adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look and listen"

days are coming ... when I will

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

when I will cause a trumpet call for battle against Rabbah to be heard

Yahweh causing an army to attack is spoken of as if he would sound the signal for the battle to start. Alternate translation: "when I will cause the enemy army to sound the signal for battle against Rabbah"

its villages will be set on fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy army will burn their villages"

For Israel will possess those who possessed him

Here "Israel" represents the people of Israel. "Those" refers to people of Ammon, who represent the land that they took from Israel. Alternate translation: "Then the people of Israel will again possess the land that the people of Ammon took away from them"

Jeremiah 49:3

Howl in lament

"Cry loudly and weep"

Heshbon

Translate the name of this city as you did in [Jeremiah 48:2]

for Ai will be devastated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for your enemies will devastate Ai"

daughters of Rabbah

Possible meanings are 1) "daughters" represent the women who live in Rabbah. Alternate translation: "women of Rabbah" or 2) all the people in general are spoken of as if they are the daughters of Rabbah. Alternate translation: "people of Rabbah"

Gird yourselves with sackcloth

People would wear sackcloth to show that they were very sad. The command "gird yourselves," which usually means "prepare for work" or "prepare for battle" is ironic: they are to prepare to mourn, not to work or fight. See how you translated similar words in [Jeremiah 4:8]

for Molech is going into captivity

"for your enemies will take your god Molech captive." This means the enemies will take the idol that represents Molech back to their land.

Jeremiah 49:4

Why do you brag about your valleys ... daughter?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people for bragging about the large amount of fruit that grows in their valleys. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do not be proud of your valleys ... daughter."

Why do you brag about your valleys, your valleys that are so fruitful

Some versions of the Bible read, "Why do you brag about your strength, your strength which is ebbing away"

faithless daughter

Here, the people of Ammon are spoken of as if they were a daughter. Alternate translation: "faithless people" or "rebellious people"

say, 'Who will come against me?'

The Ammonites use this question to state that they do not believe anyone can defeat them. It can be reworded as an indirect statement. Alternate translation: "falsely think that no one can defeat you."

Jeremiah 49:5

you

The word "you" refers to the people of Ammon.

this terror will come from all those who surround you. Each one of you will be scattered before it

The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as the verb "terrify." The phrase "will be scattered" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause all those around you to terrify you. Each one of you flee to different directions"

Jeremiah 49:6

reverse the captivity of the people of Ammon

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and here it is probably a metaphor for Yahweh making the Ammonites prosper in a general sense. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 29:14]

Jeremiah 49:7

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

Is there no longer any wisdom to be found in Teman?

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people of Teman for not acting wisely. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It seems that there are no longer any wise people in Teman!"

Teman

This is the name of a district in Edom.

Has good advice ... understanding? Has their wisdom become corrupted?

The same idea is expressed in two different ways.

Has good advice disappeared from those who have understanding?

Yahweh uses this question to scold the people. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It seems that there are no longer any wise people in Teman district in Edom!"

Has their wisdom become corrupted?

Yahweh uses this question to scold the people. This question may be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Their advice is no longer wise."

Jeremiah 49:8

Dedan

The is the name of a city in Edom.

I am bringing the disaster of Esau on him at the time that I punish him

Here "Esau" represents the people of Edom. The Edomites

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were descendants of Esau. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people of Edom to experience disaster when I punish them"

on him ... I punish him

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Edom. This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "on you ... I punish you"

Jeremiah 49:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Edom.

If grape harvesters ... would they not leave a little bit behind?

Yahweh uses a question to cause the people to think about how grape harvesters leave some grapes behind. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If grape harvesters ... they would certainly leave some grapes behind."

If thieves ... would they not spoil only as much as they wanted?

Yahweh uses a question to cause the people to think about how thieves only take what they want. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If thieves ... they would only spoil as much as they wanted."

spoil

This is a metonym for "steal." They would spoil the crop by stealing it.

Jeremiah 49:10

But I have stripped Esau bare

Yahweh causing an enemy army to come and take everything is spoken of as if Yahweh stripped all the clothes off of Esau. Alternate translation: "But I have sent an army to take everything away from Esau"

Esau ... his hiding ... he will not ... hide himself ... His children ... he is gone

Here "Esau" represents the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom ... their hiding ... they will not ... hide themselves ... Their children ... they are gone"

I have revealed his hiding places

"I have made known to the enemy soldiers where the people of Edom hide"

Jeremiah 49:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Edom.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

must certainly drink some of the cup ... for you will certainly drink

Here "the cup" is a metonym that represents the contents in the cup that the people must drink. The people experiencing Yahweh's punishment is spoken of as if Yahweh's punishment were liquid in a cup and the people must drink it. Alternate translation: "must certainly experience my punishment ... for you will certainly experience my punishment" or "I will certainly still punish ... for I will certainly punish you"

Do you yourself think you will go unpunished?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize the people of Edom have sinned and will certainly be punished. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly, you must be aware that you will personally experience my punishment for your sins."

you yourself

The words "you" and "yourself" refer to Edom, which represents the people of Edom. The word "yourself" is used to draw attention to the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "you yourselves"

You will not go unpunished

"You will certainly be punished"

Jeremiah 49:13

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Bozrah will become a horror, a disgrace, a devastation, and an object for cursing

The abstract nouns "a horror," "a disgrace," and "a devastation" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "People will be horrified when they see that the city of Bozrah is devastated. And they will mock the city and use its name when they curse others"

Bozrah

This is the name of a city in Edom.

All of its cities

"All of Edom's cities"

Jeremiah 49:14

General Information:

Jeremiah is now speaking to the people of Edom.

I have heard

The word "I" refers to Jeremiah.

a messenger has been sent out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has sent out a messenger"

to the nations, 'Gather together ... for battle.'

It is understood "Gather together" is the beginning of the messenger's message. Alternate translation: "to tell the nations, 'Gather together ... for battle.'" or "to the nations, and he will tell them, 'Gather together ... for battle.'"

attack her

The word "her" refers to Edom.

Jeremiah 49:15

I have made you

The word "I" refers to Yahweh. Here "you" refers to the nation of Edom.

made you small

Here "small" represents having the least political importance. Alternate translation: "made you least important"

despised by people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and people despise you"

Jeremiah 49:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Edom.

As for your fearsomeness

Here the abstract noun "fearsomeness" can be translated with either an adjective or a verb. Alternate translation: "As for how terrifying you think you are" or "Although you

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think you scare other people"

your heart's pride has deceived you

Here "heart" represents the whole person. People deceiving themselves is spoken of as if their pride deceived them. Alternate translation: "you have become prideful, but you have deceived yourselves"

so that you may make your nest high like an eagle

It is implied that the people made homes in high places to remain safe from enemies. Alternate translation: "live in safety like an eagle in the heights of the mountains"

eagle

This is a very large, powerful bird of prey. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 4:13.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 49:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Edom.

Edom will become a horror to everyone passing by it

The abstract noun "horror" can be stated using the verb "horrified." Alternate translation: "The people passing by will be horrified when they what happened to Edom"

be appalled and hiss

The word "hiss" refers to a sound that shows horror or awe. Alternate translation: "shake from fear and gasp"

Jeremiah 49:18

no one will live there; no person will stay there

Yahweh says the same thing twice to emphasize that Edom will be completely uninhabited.

Jeremiah 49:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Edom.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

he will go up like a lion from the majesty of the Jordan to the green pasturelands

This simile means that when Yahweh punishes the people of Edom, it will be fierce and unexpected like when a lion attacks sheep. This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "When I punish the people of Edom, it will be fierce and unexpected like when a lion comes out of forest and attacks sheep in the pasture"

majesty

This is a metonym for the majestic forests or thickets on the banks of the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "forest" or "thickets"

pasturelands

This is land covered with grass where animals feed on the grass.

Edom run from it

Here "Edom" represents the people. "It" refers to the land. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom will run from their land"

who will be chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I will choose"

For who is like me, and who will summon me?

Yahweh uses the question to emphasize that no one is like him. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "For no one is like me, no one can summon me."

who will summon me

"who will challenge me" or "who will call me to account"

What shepherd is able to resist me?

Yahweh uses the question to show no one can defeat him. Here "shepherd" is a metaphor for "king" or "ruler." This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No king is able to resist me!"

Jeremiah 49:20

the inhabitants of Teman

"the people who live in Teman"

Teman

Translate the name of this city as you did in Jeremiah 49:7.

They will certainly be dragged away, even the smallest flock

This continues speaking of Yahweh punishing the people of Edom as if he would come like a lion and attack the sheep. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will drag them away, even the smallest flock"

even the smallest flock

Here the youngest and weakest people of Edom are spoken of as if they are the smallest flock of sheep. Alternate translation: "even the weakest and the smallest people"

Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places

Here the land of Edom is spoken of as if it were pasturelands for flocks. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will turn their pasturelands into ruined places" or "He will completely get rid of the people who live there"

Jeremiah 49:21

At the sound of their falling the earth shakes

The loud sound of Edom being destroyed is spoken of as if Edom were a large object that shakes the earth when it falls. Alternate translation: "When enemies come and destroy Edom, the noise will be extremely loud, with the result that the earth will shake"

The sound of cries of distress is heard at the Sea of Reeds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People at the Sea of Reeds will hear the people of Edom crying"

Jeremiah 49:22

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

someone will attack like an eagle, and swoop down and spread his wings

This simile means that when the enemy army attacks it will be vicious and unexpected.

Bozrah

Translate the name of this city as you did in [Jeremiah 48:24]

the hearts of Edom's soldiers will become like the heart of a woman in birth labor

Here "hearts" represent a person's emotions. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 48:41]

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Jeremiah 49:23
General Information:
Yahweh tells what will happen to the people of Damascus.
Hamath and Arpad will be ashamed
Here "Hamath" and "Arpad" represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people who live in Hamath and Arpad will be ashamed"
Hamath and Arpad
These are cities in Syria.
They melt away
A person being afraid is spoken of as if the person were melting. Alternate translation: "They are very afraid"
Anxiety is in the sea. It cannot stay calm.
The water of the sea is always moving and is never still. This is compared to the people who cannot rest because they are so anxious about the bad news they heard.
Jeremiah 49:24
Damascus has become very weak. It turns ... seizes it
Here "Damascus" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people of Damascus have become very weak. They turn ... seizes them"
terror seizes it
The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as the verb "terrified." Alternate translation: "Damascus is terrified" or "The people of Damascus are terrified"
Distress and pain seize it, like the pain of a woman giving birth
This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "distress" and "pain." The people are compared to a woman giving birth to emphasize their pain and fear. Alternate translation: "The people are afraid and suffering like a woman giving birth"
Jeremiah 49:25
How has the city of praise not been abandoned, the town of my joy?
Yahweh uses a question to show surprise that the people have not left the city when danger is coming. He may have meant that they should have left the city. This can also be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: “Why have they not abandoned the city of praise, the town of my joy?” or “They should have abandoned the city of praise, the town of my joy.”
the city of praise ... the town of my joy
These two phrases both refer to Damascus.
the city of praise
“the city that people used to praise” or “the famous city”
the town of my joy
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh had felt joy because of the town. Alternate translation: “the town that brought me joy” or 2) the people in the town were usually joyful. Alternate translation: “the joyous town” or “the town that had joy”
Jeremiah 49:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Damascus.
its
The word "its" refers to Damascus and its people.
its young men will fall in its plazas
They young men being killed is spoken of as if they will fall. Alternate translation: "enemies will kill the young men of Damascus in its plazas"
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 49:27
I will light a fire
Causing the enemy army to light a fire is spoken of as if Yahweh will light the fire. Alternate translation: "I will cause the enemy army to light a fire"
it will devour
"the fire will completely burn up"
Ben-Hadad
This the name or title of the king of Damascus.
Jeremiah 49:28
General Information:
Jeremiah speaks about what will happen to Kedar.
Kedar
This is the name of a land far to the east of Israel. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 2:10]
Hazor
This is the name of kingdom or district far to the east of Israel.
now Nebuchadnezzar
Here "now" introduces background information about Nebuchadnezzar.
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon was going to attack
Here "Nebuchadnezzar" represents his army. Alternate translation: "the army of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon was going to attack"
Jeremiah 49:29
Their tents and their flocks will be taken, along with their tent curtains and all of their equipment
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your soldiers will take their flocks, tent curtains, and all of their equipment"
their camels will be led away from them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your soldiers will take their camels from them"
men will shout to them, "Terror is on every side!"
Possible meanings are 1) these are men being attacked by the enemy. Alternate translation: "men will shout, 'We are terrified because terrible things are happening all around us!'" or 2) these are soldiers in the invading army. Alternate translation: "soldiers will shout at them, 'Be afraid because we are all around you!'"
Jeremiah 49:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor.
Flee! Wander ... Turn back!
Here Yahweh is speaking to the people of Kedar.
inhabitants of Hazor
"people who live in Hazor"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
devised a plan
"made a plan"

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Jeremiah 49:31

Arise! Attack ... themselves

Here Yahweh is speaking to Nebuchadnezzar as if he was there listening to him.

Attack the nation at ease, that lives in safety

Here "nation" represents the people living there. Alternate translation: "Attack this nation, whose people feel safe and secure"

They ... them

The words "They" and "them" refer to the people who feel safe and secure.

Jeremiah 49:32

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Nebuchadnezzar to attack the people of Kedar and the kingdom of Hazor.

For their camels will become plunder, and the abundance of their property will become war plunder

Yahweh is still speaking to Nebuchadnezzar as if he were there listening to him. This can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "For your soldiers will take their camels and all of their property"

Then I will scatter to every wind

Here "every wind" represents the nations. Alternate translation: "Then I will send to nations in all different directions"

those who cut the hair on the sides of their heads very short

This probably refers to people who cut their hair short in order to honor a pagan god. Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression as "those who live on the edge of the wilderness." See how you translated a similar phrase in Jeremiah 9:26.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 49:33

a lair of jackals

"a place where jackals live." Jackals are fierce wild dogs. See how you translated "jackals" in Jeremiah 9:11.

No one will live there; no human being will stay there

These two lines mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Hazor will be completely uninhabited.

Jeremiah 49:34

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about what will happen to Elam.

This is the word of Yahweh that came to Jeremiah

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 14:1]

Jeremiah 49:35

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

I am about to break the bowmen of Elam, the main part of their power

"The archers made Elam very powerful, but I will stop them"

bowmen

men who are skilled with a bow and arrows

Jeremiah 49:36

I will bring the four winds from the four corners of the heavens

Here "four winds from the four corners" is an idiom that represents wind blowing from every direction. Alternate translation: "I will cause the winds to blow from every direction"

I will bring the four winds from the four corners of the heavens

Here "winds" represents nations. And the nations are a synecdoche representing the armies from those nations. Causing armies to come from all directions is spoken of as if Yahweh will cause wind to blow from all directions Alternate translation: "I will bring your enemies from every direction to attack you"

to all of those winds

Here "winds" represents "nations." Alternate translation: "to all those nations"

There is no nation to which those scattered from Elam will not go

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will scatter the people of Elam to every nation on earth"

Jeremiah 49:37

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about what will happen to Elam.

I will shatter Elam

These words are a metonym for Yahweh causing enemies to destroy Elam. Alternate translation: "I will cause Elam's enemies to destroy Elam"

Elam

the people of Elam

those who seek their lives

Seeking a person's life represents wanting or desiring to kill someone. Alternate translation: "those who want to kill them"

I will bring disaster against them

Yahweh causing people to experience disaster is spoken of as if he would bring disaster against them. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to experience disaster" or "I will cause terrible things to happen to them"

the sword after them

Here "sword" represents the enemy army carrying their weapons. Alternate translation: "the enemy army to pursue and kill them"

Jeremiah 49:38

I will put my throne in Elam

Here "throne" represents Yahweh's right to rule and judge as the king. Alternate translation: "I will judge the people of Elam"

Jeremiah 49:39

in later days

"in the future"

reverse the captivity of Elam

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and here it is probably a metaphor for Yahweh making Elam prosper in a general sense. The word "Elam" is a metonym for the Elamites, the people of Elam. See how similar words are translated in [Jeremiah 29:14]

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50 [1]This is the word that Yahweh declared about Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet,

[2] "Report to the nations and cause them to listen.
Lift up a signal and cause them to listen.
Do not conceal it.
Say, 'Babylon is taken. Bel is made ashamed.
Marduk is dismayed.
Its idols are put to shame;
its images are dismayed.'

[3] A nation from the north will arise against it,
and make her land a desolation.
No one will live in it;
both men and animals will flee away.

[4] In those days and at that time
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—the people of Israel and the people of Judah
will come together to go with weeping
and seek Yahweh their God.

[5] They will ask the way to Zion
and will set off toward it, saying,
We will go and join ourselves to Yahweh
in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten."

[6] My people have been a lost flock.
Their shepherds have led them astray in the mountains;
they have turned them around from hill to hill.
They went, they have forgotten their resting place.

[7] Everyone who went out to them devoured them.
Their adversaries said, 'We are not guilty,
because they sinned against Yahweh,
their true home—Yahweh,
the hope of their ancestors.'

[8] Leave from the midst of Babylon;
go out from the land of the Chaldeans;
be like male goats
that leave before the rest of the flock does.

[9] For see, I am about to set in motion
and raise up a group of great nations
from the north against Babylon.
They will arrange themselves against her.
Babylon will be captured from there.
Their arrows are like a skilled warrior
who does not return empty-handed.

[10] Chaldea will become plunder.
All those who plunder it will be satisfied
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

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11 You rejoice, you celebrate the plundering of my inheritance;
you jump around like a calf stamping in its pasture;
you neigh like a powerful horse.

12 So your mother will be greatly ashamed;
the one who bore you will be embarrassed.
See, she will be the least of nations,
a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

13 Because of Yahweh's anger,
Babylon will not be inhabited,
but will be a complete devastation.
Everyone who passes by will be appalled because of Babylon
and will hiss because of all of its wounds.

14 Arrange yourselves against Babylon all around her.
Everyone who bends a bow must shoot at her.
Do not spare any of your arrows,
for she has sinned against Yahweh.

15 Raise a shout against her all around!
She has surrendered;
her towers have fallen;
her walls are torn down,
for this is Yahweh's vengeance.
Take vengeance on her!
Do to her just as she has done!

16 Destroy both the farmer who sows seed
and the one who uses a sickle
at the time of harvest in Babylon.
Let each person turn back to his own people
from the oppressor's sword;
let them flee to their own land.

17 Israel is a scattered flock
driven away by lions.
First the king of Assyria devoured him; then after this,
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon broke his bones.

18 Therefore Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says this:
See, I am about to punish the king of Babylon and his land,
just as I punished the king of Assyria.
19 I will restore Israel to his homeland;
he will graze on Carmel and Bashan.
Then he will be satisfied
in the hill country of Ephraim and Gilead.

20 In those days and at that time, says Yahweh,
iniquity will be looked for in Israel,
but none will be found.

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I will inquire about the sins of Judah,
but none will be found,
for I will forgive the remnant that I spare.

21 "Arise against the land of Merathaim,
against it and the ones inhabiting Pekod.
Put them to the sword and completely destroy them
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—do everything that I am commanding you.

22 The sounds of battle and enormous destruction
are in the land.

23 How the hammer of all the lands
has been cut apart and destroyed.
How Babylon has become an object of horror
among the nations.

24 I have set a trap for you and you were taken, Babylon,
and you did not know it!
You were found and captured,
because you opposed Yahweh.

25 Yahweh has opened his armory
and is bringing out the weapons
for carrying out his anger.
There is work for the Lord Yahweh of host
in the land of the Chaldeans.

26 Attack her from far away.
Open her granaries
and pile her up like heaps of grain.
Set her apart for destruction.
Leave no remnant of her.

27 Kill all her bulls.
Send them down to the place of slaughter.
Woe to them, for their day has come
—the time for their punishment.

28 There is the sound of those fleeing,
of those who are survivors,
from the land of Babylon.
These will report the vengeance of Yahweh our God for Zion,
and vengeance for his temple.

29 "Summon the archers against Babylon
—all those who bend their bows.
Camp against her,
and let no one escape.
Repay her for what she has done.
Do to her by the measure she has used.
For she had acted arrogantly against Yahweh
—against the Holy One of Israel.

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30 So her young men will fall in the city squares,
and all her fighting men will be destroyed on that day
—this is Yahweh's declaration."

31 "See, I am against you, proud one
—this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh of hosts
—for your day has come, proud one,
the time when I will punish you.

32 So the proud ones will stumble and fall.
No one will raise them up.
I will set fire to their cities;
it will devour everything around him.

33 Yahweh of hosts says this:
The people of Israel are oppressed,
together with the people of Judah.
All the ones who captured them still hold them;
they refuse to let them go.
34 The one who rescues them is strong.
Yahweh of hosts is his name.
He will truly plead their case,
in order to bring rest to the land,
and to bring strife to the ones inhabiting Babylon.

35 A sword is against the Chaldeans
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—and against the inhabitants of Babylon,
her leaders, and her wise men.

36 A sword against those who say empty words!
They will become fools!
A sword against her soldiers!
They will be filled with terror.

37 A sword is coming against their horse their chariots
and all of the people who are in the midst of Babylon,
so they will become like women.
A sword is coming against her storerooms,
and they will be plundered.

38 A drought is coming on her waters,
so they will become dry.
For she is a land of worthless idols,
and they act like people
made insane by their dreadful idols.

39 So desert beasts with the jackals will inhabit there,
and the young of ostriches will live in her.
For all time, she will no longer be inhabited.
From generation to generation, she will not be lived in.

40 Just as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors
—this is Yahweh's declaration

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—no one will live there;
no person will stay in her.

41 "See, a people is coming from the north;
a great nation and many kings
are being stirred up from the farthest parts of the earth.

42 They will pick up bows and spears.
They are cruel and have no compassion.
Their sound is like the sea roar,
and they are riding on horses,
set out in order as men for battle, against you,
daughter of Babylon.

43 The king of Babylon heard the reports about them
and his hands fell limp in distress.
Anguish seized him
like a woman giving birth.

44 Behold! He goes up like a lion
from the majesty of the Jordan
to the enduring grazing place
For I will quickly cause them to run from it,
and I will put someone who will be chosen in charge of it.
For who is like me,
and who will summon me?
What shepherd is able to resist me?

45 So listen to the plans that Yahweh has decided against Babylon,
the plans that he has planned
against the land of the Chaldeans.
They will certainly be dragged away,
even the smallest flock.
Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places.

46 At the sound of conquered Babylon the earth shakes,
and their shout of distress is heard among the nations."

Jeremiah 50 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 50:1-5, 6-46.

Special concepts in this chapter

Babylon destroyed

Babylon will be conquered and the Jews will return to their homeland. At this time, Babylon controlled almost the entire Near East. The fulfillment of this prophecy would have been unthinkable. (See: fulfill and prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

The author sometimes uses the term "Israel" to refer to the people of the old northern kingdom of Israel, and at other times to the nation of Israel as a whole. He switches between these uses several times without warning the reader.

Links:

Jeremiah 50:1

General Information:

God gives Jeremiah a message about Babylon. See: and

This is the word that Yahweh declared

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "This is the message that Yahweh gave" or "This is the message that Yahweh spoke"

by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet

The hand is a synecdoche for the person. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 37:2]

Jeremiah 50:2

cause them to listen ... cause them to listen

This phrase is repeated to emphasize the importance of the command.

Lift up a signal

"Put up a sign"

Babylon is taken

"Babylon is conquered"

Bel is made ashamed. Marduk is dismayed. Its idols are put to shame; its images are dismayed

These lines mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh has disgraced the gods of Babylon.

Bel ... Marduk

These are two names for the chief god of Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:3

arise against it ... live in it

Here "it" refers to Babylon in both phrases.

her land

The word "her" refers to Babylon.

make her land a desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "destroy her land"

Jeremiah 50:4

In those days and at that time

These phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the importance of that future time. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 33:15]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

seek Yahweh their God

Seeking Yahweh their God represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him.

Jeremiah 50:5

They will ask

The word "They" refers to the people of Israel or the people of Judah who are returning from Babylon to Jerusalem.

join ourselves to Yahweh

This is figurative language used to explain a spiritual connection to Yahweh.

that will not be forgotten

This states that the covenant will be obeyed forever. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one will forget"

Jeremiah 50:6

My people have been a lost flock

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a group of sheep that was lost. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "My people have been like a lost flock of sheep"

Their shepherds

The leaders of Israel are spoken of as if they were the shepherds of people. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "Their leaders were like shepherds who"

turned them around from hill to hill

"lead them around to many different places"

Jeremiah 50:7

devoured them

Attacking the people of Israel is spoken of as if a wild animal ate them. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "devoured them like a wild animal would eat its prey"

they sinned

The word "they" refers to the people of Israel.

Yahweh, the hope of their ancestors

Yahweh is spoken of as the source of their trust. The abstract noun "hope" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "the one whom their ancestors confidently expected to help them"

Jeremiah 50:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to his people in captivity in Babylon.

Leave from the midst of Babylon

This command is addressed to the people of Israel who were in exile in Babylon.

be like male goats that leave

Male goats tend to be more independent than the rest of the flock. Possible meanings are 1) they should be the first to leave Babylon or 2) they should lead the rest of the Israelites away from Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:9

For see

The word "see" alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention, because"

set in motion

"stir up"

Babylon will be captured from there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "These nations will capture Babylon"

from there

Possible meanings are 1) "from the north" or 2) "from their battle positions."

Their arrows are like a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed

The effectiveness of the arrows of the attacking nations are spoken of as if they were soldiers that always accomplish their mission. The idiom "empty-handed" means "without success." Alternate translation: Each of their arrows are like skilled soldiers that always hit their target"

Jeremiah 50:10

this is Yahweh's declaration

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Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Chaldea will become plunder

"They will plunder Chaldea"

Jeremiah 50:11

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Babylon.

You rejoice, you celebrate

These terms mean the same thing and are used to emphasize how happy they were to conquer Israel. Alternate translation: "You people of Babylon rejoice, celebrate"

You rejoice ... you jump ... you neigh

Each instance of "You" or "you" is plural and refers to the people of Babylon.

you jump around like a calf stamping in its pasture

The joy of the people of Babylon is compared to a calf who runs around joyfully in a pasture.

stamping

the action a calf makes when kicking the ground

you neigh like a powerful horse

The people of Babylon are compared to stallions that are making loud noises because they are excited.

Jeremiah 50:12

bore you

The word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Babylon.

So your mother will be greatly ashamed; the one who bore you will be embarrassed

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of her embarrassment. The words "mother" and "the one who bore you" refer either to Babylonia or to the city of Babylon.

the least of nations

"the most unimportant nation"

a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert

These words have basically the same meaning and emphasize the complete barrenness of the land. Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor for an uninhabited place or 2) this refers to Babylon literally becoming a barren wilderness.

Jeremiah 50:13

a complete devastation

The abstract noun "devastation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "completely destroyed"

be appalled

shake violently due to fear

hiss

make a sound like a snake that means great disapproval

Jeremiah 50:14

General Information:

Yahweh tells the other nations to attack Babylon.

Arrange yourselves against Babylon

Yahweh is speaking to the enemies of Babylon. Alternate translation: "You enemies of Babylon arrange yourselves against her"

Arrange yourselves

"Line up in military formation" or "Form battle lines"

Everyone who bends a bow

This refers to the soldiers who use bows and arrows to fight.

shoot at her

Jeremiah speaks of the people who live in the city of Babylon as if they were the city itself, and he speaks of the city as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "shoot at the people in the city"

Do not spare any of your arrows

This emphasizes that they should shoot all their arrows. Alternate translation: "Shoot every one of your arrows at her"

she has sinned

Jeremiah speaks of the people who live in the city of Babylon as if they were the city itself, and he speaks of the city as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the people of the city"

Jeremiah 50:15

She has surrendered ... she has done

Jeremiah speaks of the people who live in the city of Babylon as if they were the city itself, and he speaks of the city as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "The people of Babylon have surrendered ... they have done"

her towers ... her walls

Jeremiah speaks of the city of Babylon as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the towers of the city ... the walls of the city"

her walls are torn down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the nations have torn down her walls"

Jeremiah 50:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues to tell the other nations to attack Babylon.

the farmer who sows seed and the one who uses a sickle

These people collectively represent all the farmers and harvesters of Babylon.

the one who uses a sickle at the time of harvest

A "sickle" is a farm tool that people use to harvest grain. Together with the previous phrase, Yahweh is saying that all planting and harvesting will stop in Babylon.

Let each person turn back to his own people ... let them flee to their own land

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they strengthen the command for foreigners to flee from Babylon back to their own countries.

from the oppressor's sword

Here the word "sword" refers to the armies that will attack Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:17

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to Jeremiah about Israel.

Israel is a scattered flock driven away by lions

Yahweh speaks of Israel as if it were a flock of sheep that had run away in all directions to escape from hungry lions. This metaphor can be stated as a simile and in active form. Alternate translation: "Israel is like a sheep that lions scattered and drove away"

Israel

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This refers collectively to all the people of Israel.

the king of Assyria

This refers to the army of the king of Assyria.

devoured him

The destruction of Israel by Assyria is spoken of as if Israel were a sheep that Assyria ate.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon

This refers to the army of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

broke his bones

The destruction of Israel by Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of if it were a sheep which had its bones crushed by a lion. Alternate translation: "destroyed Israel"

Jeremiah 50:18

Yahweh of hosts ... says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

See, I am about to

The word "See" means to pay special attention to what follows.

his land

Here "land" is a metonym for the people who live in the land of Babylon. Alternate translation: "the Babylonian people"

Jeremiah 50:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Jeremiah about Israel.

I will restore

The word "I" refers to Yahweh.

Israel to his homeland ... he will be satisfied

This refers collectively to all the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel to their homeland ... they will be satisfied"

he will graze on Carmel and Bashan

Israel is spoken of as if they were sheep that eat grass. Alternate translation: "they will eat food that grows in Carmel and Bashan"

Jeremiah 50:20

In those days and at that time

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that future time. See how you translated this in as [Jeremiah 33:15]

iniquity will be looked for in Israel, but none will be found. I will inquire about the sins of Judah, but none will be found

These two lines mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that Yahweh will completely forgive the sins of the people of Israel.

iniquity will be looked for in Israel, but none will be found

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will look for iniquity in the people of Israel, but will not find any"

that I spare

They will escape the destruction of Babylon. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "that I allow to escape the destruction of Babylon"

Jeremiah 50:21

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to Jeremiah about the enemies of Babylon.

Arise against the land

Yahweh is speaking to the enemies of Babylon. Alternate translation: "You enemies of Babylon, arise against the land"

Merathaim

This is another name for Babylon. This is a name that means "double rebellion."

Pekod

This is another name for the Chaldeans. This is a name that means "visitation."

Put them to the sword

This refers to having a sword come down on people to kill them. Alternate translation: "Kill them"

Put them to the sword

Here the word "sword" represents war. Yahweh speaks of Babylon's enemies killing them in battle as if he were placing those people under the sword's power. Alternate translation: "Kill them in battle"

Jeremiah 50:22

The sounds of battle and enormous destruction are in the land

These sounds are heard during battle and great destruction. They are spoken of in the present tense to indicate that this will certainly happen soon. Alternate translation: "The sounds of fierce battle and terrible destruction are going to happen soon in the land"

Jeremiah 50:23

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to the people of Babylon.

How the hammer of all the lands has been cut apart and destroyed

The army of Babylon is spoken of as if it were a hammer. The destruction of this army is spoken of as if the hammer was to be cut up and destroyed. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "The mighty army of Babylon that conquered all the nations is like a hammer that will be broken into pieces and destroyed"

How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations

Babylon was a nation like the other nations, but it will become a complete ruin, totally destroyed.

Jeremiah 50:24

I have set a trap for you and you were taken

The destruction of Babylon is spoken of as if Yahweh had caught them in a trap like an animal. Alternate translation: "I set a trap and caught you in it as a hunter catches an animal" or "You people of Babylon, I have set a trap for you"

you were taken ... You were found and captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have captured you ... I found you and captured you"

Jeremiah 50:25

Yahweh has opened his armory and is bringing out the weapons for carrying out his anger

Yahweh's anger that causes him to send enemies against Babylon is spoken of as if Yahweh had an armory and weapons. To open an armory is a metonym for preparing for battle. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has prepared for war and is sending the nations to attack Babylon in his anger"

armory

this is a building or room where weapons of war are stored

Jeremiah 50:26

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Attack her from far away
Yahweh speaks to the enemies of Babylon. Alternate translation: "You enemies of Babylon, attack her from far away"
Open her granaries
Here "granaries" represent where Babylon stored its treasures. Alternate translation: "Raid the places where her treasures are stored"
granaries
buildings where grain is stored
pile her up like heaps of grain
Possible meanings are 1) reduce the city to piles of rubble that look like stacks of grain or 2) stack up the plunder from the city like piles of grain.
Set her apart for destruction
This idiom means to destroy something completely. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Jeremiah 25:9]
Leave no remnant of her
This is stated in a negative way to emphasize the completeness of the destruction. Alternate translation: "Kill every person in her"
Jeremiah 50:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling how to destroy the people of Babylon and Chaldea.
Kill all her bulls. Send them down to the place of slaughter
Possible meaning of "bulls" is 1) soldiers or 2) strong young men. Killing them is spoken of as taking them to a place of slaughter.
Kill all her bulls
Yahweh speaks this to the enemies of Babylon. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "You enemies of Babylon, kill all her bulls"
her bulls
The word "her" refers to Babylon.
them ... their
The word "them" and "their" refer to the people of Babylon.
their day has come—the time for their punishment
The phrases "their day" and "the time" mean the same thing and can be combined. Alternate translation: "the time for their punishment has come"
Jeremiah 50:28
There is the sound of those fleeing
"Listen and you will hear those who are fleeing"
those ... those ... These
The words "those" and "These" refer to the survivors from Babylon who will tell others about Yahweh's vengeance.
the vengeance of Yahweh our God for Zion, and vengeance for his temple
The abstract noun "vengeance" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Yahweh our God has taken revenge for what they did to Zion and to his temple in Jerusalem"
Jeremiah 50:29
General Information:
Yahweh continues telling how to destroy the people of Babylon and Chaldea.
the archers ... those who bend their bows
These phrases refer to the same people and are repeated for poetic effect.
her ... her ... she
The words "her" and "she" refer to Babylon.
let no one escape
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "capture or kill every person"
Do to her by the measure she has used
The evil things the Babylonians did to Israel are spoken of as if Babylon measured them. Alternate translation: "Measure out punishment for her with the same amount she used to punish Israel"
Jeremiah 50:30
her young men will fall
"they will kill her young men"
all her fighting men will be destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will destroy all her fighting men"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 50:31
See, I am against you
Yahweh speaks this to the people of Babylon. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "See, I am against you, people of Babylon"
See
This alerts the reader to pay special attention to what follows.
proud one
This is Yahweh's description of Babylon.
for your day has come ... the time when I will punish you
These two phrases mean the same thing. The second phrase defines the "day" that the first phrase mentions. Alternate translation: "for the day when I will punish you has come"
your day
"your time." This refers to the entire span of time during which the horrible judgment will come upon Babylon.
Jeremiah 50:32
the proud ones will stumble and fall
Here "stumble and fall" are idioms that refer to defeat and death. Alternate translation: "I will cause enemies to defeat and kill the proud ones"
it will devour everything around him
Fire burning the cities of Babylon is spoken of as if the fire were an animal that ate them.
around him
Here "him" refers to the "proud one" which describes Babylon.
Jeremiah 50:33
General Information:
Yahweh now speaks through Jeremiah about Israel and Judah.
Yahweh of hosts says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
The people of Israel are oppressed, together with the people of Judah
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Babylonians are oppressing the people of Israel and

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Judah"
captured them
The word "them" refers to the people of Israel and Judah who were captured and taken into exile.
Jeremiah 50:34
He will truly plead their case
Yahweh is spoken of as if he were a lawyer who represents the people of Israel in court.
in order to bring rest to the land
Here "the land" is a metonym for the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "in order that the people who live in Israel might live in peace"
bring rest ... bring strife
These two terms represent opposite ideas and bring a strong contrast to how Yahweh will treat Israel and Babylon.
bring rest
"give peace"
Jeremiah 50:35
A sword is against ... and against
Here "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "War will soon happen to ... and to"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 50:36
A sword against
Here "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "War will soon happen to"
They will become fools
"Their actions are foolish, and everyone will see that they are fools"
They will be filled with terror
"they will be terrified"
Jeremiah 50:37
A sword is coming against
Here "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "War will soon happen to"
they will become like women
The weakness of the Babylonian soldiers is spoken of as if they were women. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "they will all become as weak as women"
storerooms
A storeroom is a place where supplies or valuables are kept.
they will be plundered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemy soldiers will plunder them"
Jeremiah 50:38
A drought is coming on her waters
"A drought will soon happen that will affect all her waters"
her waters
Here "waters" represent all the sources of water for the Babylonians, especially the river that went through the city.
Jeremiah 50:39
desert beasts with the jackals
Possible meanings are 1) "wild animals and hyenas" or 2) "wild demons and evil spirits."
jackals
A jackal is a wild dog found in Asia and Africa.
ostriches
very large African birds that run fast but cannot fly. Some versions translate this as "owl."
will live in her
The word "her" refers to Babylon.
For all time, she will no longer be inhabited. From generation to generation, she will not be lived in
These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Babylon will be completely uninhabited. Alternate translation: "People will never live there again; it will be uninhabited forever"
she will not be lived in
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will live in her"
Jeremiah 50:40
no one will live there; no person will stay in her
These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Babylon will be completely uninhabited. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "no one will ever live there again"
Jeremiah 50:41
General Information:
These verses are almost identical to Jeremiah 6:22 and Jeremiah 6:23. See how you translated those verses.
See, a people is coming
Yahweh speaks to the people of Babylon. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "See, people of Babylon, a people is coming"
See, a people
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: a people"
a great nation and many kings
This phrase refers to the time when the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon in 539 BC. Here "nation" represents their armies. Alternate translation: "the armies of a great nation and many kings"
are being stirred up from the farthest parts of the earth
Being "stirred up" represents being urged to take action. Alternate translation: "are preparing to come from the most distant places on earth"
Jeremiah 50:42
They will pick up bows and spears
"The soldiers will carry bows and spears"
Their sound is like the sea roar
The loud noise that the soldiers make is compared to the loud noise of the sea. Alternate translation: "The sound that they make is very loud, like the sound of the sea"
they are riding on horses, set out in order as men for battle
The phrase "set out in order" means that they have organized themselves and are riding in rows. The phrase "as men for battle" indicates that they are ready to fight. Alternate translation: "they are riding on horses in their assigned rows, and they are ready to fight"
daughter of Babylon
This phrase refers to the Babylonian people.
Jeremiah 50:43
General Information:

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This verse is almost identical to Jeremiah 6:24. See how you translated that verse.

his hands fell limp in distress

"his hands were weak because he was anxious"

Anguish seized him

Feeling great anguish is spoken of as if anguish grabs the king of Babylon. Alternate translation: "He felt terrible anguish"

Anguish

suffering and grief that would bring a person to tears

like a woman giving birth

The anguish that they feel because the enemy coming to attack them is compared to the anguish that a woman feels when she is about to give birth to a baby. Alternate translation: "like a woman who is about to give birth"

Jeremiah 50:44

General Information:

This verse is almost identical to Jeremiah 49:19. See how you translated that verse.

Behold!

The word "Behold" here tells the reader to pay attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention!"

He goes up like a lion from the majesty of the Jordan to the enduring grazing place

This simile means that when Yahweh punishes the people of Babylon, it will be fierce and unexpected like when a lion attacks sheep. This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "When I punish the people of Babylon, it will be fierce and unexpected like when a lion comes out of a forest and attacks sheep in the pasture"

majesty

This is a metonym for the majestic forests or thickets on the banks of the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "forest" or "thickets"

the enduring grazing place

This is land covered with grass where animals feed on the grass.

I will quickly cause them to run from it

Here "them" refers to the Babylonian people; the word "it" refers to the invasion.

who will be chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I will choose"

For who is like me, and who will summon me?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that no one is like him. Alternate translation: "For no one is like me, no one can summon me."

who will summon me

"who will challenge me" or "who will call me to account"

What shepherd is able to resist me?

Yahweh uses this question to show no one can defeat him. Here "shepherd" is a metaphor for "king" or "ruler." Alternate translation: "No king is able to resist me."

Jeremiah 50:45

General Information:

These verses are almost identical to Jeremiah 49:20 and Jeremiah 49:21. See how you translated those verses.

the plans that Yahweh has decided against Babylon, the plans that he has planned against the land of the Chaldeans

These two phrases have the same meaning and are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "the plans that Yahweh has decided for the people of Babylon and the Chaldeans"

They will certainly be dragged away, even the smallest flock

This continues speaking of Yahweh punishing the people of Babylon as if he would come like a lion and attack the sheep. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will drag them away, even the smallest flock"

even the smallest flock

Here the youngest and weakest people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the smallest flock of sheep. Alternate translation: "even the youngest and weakest"

Their pasturelands will be turned into ruined places

Here the land of Babylonia is spoken of as if it were pasturelands for flocks. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will turn their pasturelands into ruined places" or "He will completely destroy the people who live there"

Jeremiah 50:46

At the sound of conquered Babylon the earth shakes

This phrase compares the fall of the once powerful nation of Babylon to the extremely loud noise of an earthquake. Alternate translation: "The fall of Babylon will sound like a mighty earthquake"

distress

pain or unhappiness

their shout of distress

"their shout of pain"

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51 [1]"Yahweh says this:
See, I am about to stir up a wind of destruction
against Babylon and against those
who live in Leb Kamai.
[2] I will send foreigners to Babylon.
They will scatter her and devastate her land,
for they will come against her
from all around on the day of disaster.

[3] Do not let the archers bend their bows;
do not let them put on armor.
Do not spare her young men;
set her whole army apart for destruction.

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4 For the wounded people
will fall in the land of the Chaldeans;
those who are thrust through will fall in her streets.

5 For Israel and Judah are not abandoned by their God,
by Yahweh of hosts,
although their land is filled with offenses
committed against the Holy One of Israel.

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon;
let each man save himself.
Do not perish in her iniquity.
For it is the time of Yahweh's vengeance.
He will repay all of it to her.

7 Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of Yahweh
that made all the world drunk;
nations drank her wine and became insane.

8 Babylon will fall suddenly and be destroyed.
Wail for her
Give her medicine for her pain;
perhaps she can be healed.

9 'We wished to heal Babylon,
but she is not healed.
Let us all leave her and go away,
to our own land.
For her guilt reaches up to the heavens;
it is piled up to the clouds.

10 Yahweh has brought about our vindication.
Come, let us give a full account in Zion
the deeds of Yahweh our God.'

11 Sharpen the arrows and take up the shields.
Yahweh is stirring up
the spirit of the king of the Medes
in a plan to destroy Babylon.
This is for Yahweh's vengeance,
vengeance for the destruction of his temple.

12 Lift up a signal flag over Babylon's walls;
make the watch strong;
set up watchmen;
prepare the ambushes;
for the LORD will do what he has said
concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.

13 You people who live by many streams of water,

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you people who are rich with treasures,
your end has come.
The thread of your life is now cut short.

14 Yahweh of hosts has sworn by his own life,
'I will fill you with men, like a swarm of locusts,
and they will raise a battle cry against you.'

15 He has made the earth by his power;
he set in place the world by his wisdom.
By his understanding he stretched out the heavens.

16 When he thunders,
there is the roar of waters in the heavens,
for he brings up the mist from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightning for rain
and sends out wind from his storehouses.

17 Every man has become stupid,
without knowledge.
Every metalworker is put to shame
by his idols.
For his cast metal images are frauds,
and there is no life in them.

18 They are useless, the work of mockers;
they will perish at the time of their punishment.

19 But God, the portion of Jacob, is not like these,
for he is the molder of all things.
Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

20 You are my war hammer,
my weapon for battle.
With you I will smash nations
and destroy kingdoms.

21 With you I will smash horses and their riders;
with you I will smash chariots and their drivers.

22 With you I will smash each man and woman;
with you I will smash the old and the young.
With you I will smash the young men and the virgin girls.

23 With you I will smash the shepherds and their flocks;
with you I will smash the plowmen and their teams.
With you I will smash the governors and officials.

24 For in your sight I will pay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all of the evil that they did in Zion—this is Yahweh's declaration.
25 See, I am against you, mountain of destruction

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—this is Yahweh's declaration
—which destroys the whole earth.
I will stretch out my hand against you,
and roll you down from the cliffs,
and make you a burned-out mountain.

26 So they will not take from you any stone
to construct a building's corner or foundation;
for you will become an everlasting devastation
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

27 Lift up a signal flag over the earth.
Blow the ram's horn over the nations.
Call the nations to attack her:
the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.
Appoint a commander to attack her;
bring up horses like swarming locusts.

28 Prepare the nations to attack her:
The kings of the Medes and his governors,
all of his officials and all the lands under his rule.

29 For the land will shake and be in anguish,
since Yahweh's plans continue against Babylon,
to make the land of Babylon a wasteland
where there is no inhabitant.

30 The soldiers in Babylon have stopped fighting;
they stay in their strongholds.
Their strength has failed;
they have become women
—her homes are on fire,
the bars of her gates are broken.

31 A messenger runs to proclaim to another messenger,
and a runner tells another runner
to report to the king of Babylon
that his city has been taken from end to end.

32 So the fords over the river are seized;
the enemy is burning the reed marshes,
and Babylon's fighting men are confused.

33 For Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, says this:
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor.
It is time to trample her down.
In a little while the time of harvest will come to her.

34 'Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has devoured me,
he has driven me into confusion
and has made me an empty pot.
Like a sea monster he has swallowed me,
he has filled his stomach with my delicious foods,
and then he has spit me out.'

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35 The one who lives in Zion will say,
'May the violence done to me and my flesh
be on Babylon.'
Jerusalem will say,
'May my blood be on the inhabitants of Chaldea.'

36 Therefore Yahweh says this:
See, I am about to plead your case
and bring about vengeance for you.
For I will dry up Babylon's water
and make her springs run dry.
37 Babylon will become heaps of rubble,
a den of jackals, a horror,
an object of hissing,
where there are no inhabitants.

38 The Babylonians will roar together like young lions.
They will growl like lion cubs.

39 When they become hot with greed,
I will make a feast for them;
I will make them drunk so they become joyful
and then sleep an unending sleep and not wake up
—this is Yahweh's declaration—

40 I will send them down like lambs to the slaughter,
like rams with male goats.

41 How Babylon has been captured!
So the praise of all the earth is seized.
How Babylon has become a ruined place among the nations.

42 The sea has come up over Babylon
She is covered with its roaring waves.

43 Her cities have become a desolation,
a dry land and a wilderness,
a land that no one inhabits,
and no human being passes through.

44 So I will punish Bel in Babylon;
I will bring out from his mouth what he swallowed,
and the nations will no longer flow
to him with their offerings.
The walls of Babylon will fall.

45 Go out from her midst, my people.
Let each of you save his own life
from the fury of my wrath.

46 Do not let your hearts be timid
or fear the news that is heard in the land,
for the news will come one year.
After it in the next year there will be news,

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and violence will be in the land.
Ruler will be against ruler.

47 Therefore, see, days are coming
when I will punish the carved idols of Babylon.
All of her land will be ashamed,
and all of her slaughtered ones will fall in her midst.

48 Then the heavens and the earth,
and all that is in them will rejoice over Babylon.
For destroyers will come for her from the north
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

49 As Babylon has made the killed of Israel fall,
so the killed of all her land will fall in Babylon.

50 Survivors of the sword, go away!
Do not stay still.
Call Yahweh to mind from far away;
let Jerusalem come to mind.

51 We are ashamed, for we have been insulted;
shame has covered our faces,
for foreigners have entered the holy places
of the house of Yahweh.

52 Therefore, see, days are coming
—this is Yahweh's declaration
—when I will punish her carved idols,
and the wounded people will groan in all of her land.

53 For even if Babylon went up to the heavens
or fortified her highest fortresses,
destroyers would come from me to her
—this is Yahweh's declaration.

54 A cry of distress came from Babylon,
great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans.

55 For Yahweh is destroying Babylon.
He is causing her loud voice to perish.
Their enemies roar like the waves of many waters;
their noise becomes very strong.

56 For the destroyers have come against her
—against Babylon!
—and her warriors have been captured.
Their bows are shattered,
for Yahweh is the God of vengeance;
he will surely carry out this repayment.

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[57] For I will make her princes and her wise men drunk,
as well as her governors, her officials, and her soldiers.
and they will sleep in an unending sleep
and never wake up
—this is the King's declaration:
Yahweh of hosts is his name.

[58]Yahweh of hosts says this:
The thick walls of Babylon will be completely demolished,
and her high gates will be burned.
Then the peoples coming to her aid will labor uselessly;
everything that the nations try to do for her
will be burned up."

[59]This is the word that Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah son of Neriah son of Mahseiah when he went with Zedekiah king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was a chief officer.[60]For Jeremiah had written in a scroll about all the disaster that was going to come on Babylon—all these words that were written about Babylon.
[61]Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you go to Babylon, then you will see and you will read these words aloud.[62]Then you will say, 'Yahweh, you yourself have declared that you would destroy this place, and that no man or animal will live in it, and it will be desolate forever.'
[63]Then when you have finished reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates.[64]Say, 'Babylon will sink like this. It will not arise because of the disaster that I am sending against it, and they will fall.'"
Jeremiah's words end here.

Jeremiah 51 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 51:1-64.
The prophesied destruction of Babylon continues in this chapter. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

Babylon destroyed
Babylon will be conquered and the Jews will return to their homeland. At this time, Babylon controlled almost the entire Near East. The fulfillment of this prophecy would have been unthinkable. (See: fulfill)
Covenant with Abraham
Babylon is destroyed because it drove the people of Judah from their homeland. This is in line with the promises of the covenant Yahweh made with Abraham to curse those who curse Abraham's descendants. (See: promise and covenant and curse)

Links:

Jeremiah 51:1 Notes

Jeremiah 51:1
General Information:
Jeremiah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism.
See
This draws attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully" or "Pay attention"
a wind of destruction
Possible meanings are 1) "a wind that destroys" or 2) "the spirit of a destroyer." This would mean that Yahweh would cause or inspire the enemy army to go and attack Babylon.
Leb Kamai
This is code name for Chaldea, a region of Babylonia. It is not clear why Jeremiah uses this name here, so you may want to translate as "Chaldea" or "Babylonia."
Jeremiah 51:2
scatter her and devastate her land ... they will come against her
The word "her," a metaphor that refers to Babylon as if it were a woman, is also a metonym for the people who live in Babylon. Alternate translation: "separate the people who live there from each other, send them in different directions, and make their land empty ... foreigners will attack the people of Babylon"
on the day of disaster
The phrase "day of" is a Hebrew idiom for "when." Alternate translation: "when I destroy Babylon"
Jeremiah 51:3
Do not let ... do not let

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Yahweh wants the attack to be so sudden that the archers have no time to prepare for battle.
Jeremiah 51:4
those who are thrust through
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the attackers thrust through"
Jeremiah 51:5
Israel and Judah are not abandoned by their God, by Yahweh of hosts
The words "Israel" and "Judah" are metonyms for the people of Israel and Judah. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts, the God of the people of Israel and Judah, has not abandoned them"
their land is filled with offenses committed against the Holy One of Israel
The land in which they live is spoken of as if it were a container and their offenses as if they were solid objects that could fill the container. The abstract noun "offenses" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "they have offended the Holy One of Israel everywhere throughout the land"
Jeremiah 51:6
in her iniquity
Babylon is spoken of as if it were a woman. The word "iniquity" is a metonym for God punishing the people for their iniquity. Alternate translation: "when Yahweh punishes Babylon"
will repay all of it to her
Babylon is spoken of as if it were a woman, and the iniquity of the people is spoken of as if Yahweh needed to pay back a debt. The word "her," meaning Babylon, is a metonym for the people of Babylon. Alternate translation: "will punish the Babylonians as much as they deserve"
Jeremiah 51:7
Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of Yahweh that made all the world drunk
The word "world" is a metonym for the people living in the nations surrounding Babylon. Possible meanings are 1) Making those people drunk could be a metaphor for Yahweh punishing those nations by allowing Babylon to conquer them. Alternate translation: "Babylon was a strong nation that Yahweh used to punish all the people of the surrounding nations severely" or 2) It could be a metaphor for those nations joining Babylon in worshiping idols and being violent. Alternate translation: "Babylon was a rich and powerful nation, and other nations wanted to become sinful just like it"
Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of Yahweh
Babylon being a powerful nation that Yahweh used for his own purposes is spoken of as if Babylon were a golden cup in his hand. Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power.
nations drank her wine and became insane
Possible meanings are 1) "Babylon defeated and destroyed other nations" or 2) "nations enjoyed her riches and power and became evil."
insane
unable to think clearly
Jeremiah 51:8
Babylon will ... be destroyed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will destroy Babylon"
Wail
to make a long, loud cry that shows that the person is sad
perhaps she can be healed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "perhaps Yahweh can heal her"
Jeremiah 51:9
General Information:
Yahweh used Babylon to punish Judah and the nation. It is either the people of Judah or the people of the nations who are speaking the words in this quotation.
Babylon ... she is not healed ... leave her ... her guilt
The name of the city is a metonym for the people who live there, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the people of Babylon ... they are not healed ... leave them ... their guilt"
she is not healed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "we have not been able to heal her"
For her guilt reaches up to the heavens; it is piled up to the clouds
Guilt is spoken of as if it were an object that could be made into a pile. The words "to the heavens" and "to the clouds" are an exaggeration for something that is very high. Alternate translation: "For Babylon is so very guilty"
Jeremiah 51:10
Yahweh has brought about our vindication
Yahweh had punished the Israelites for their sins, but now has let them return to him.
Jeremiah 51:11
General Information:
Jeremiah is speaking to the people of Jerusalem as if he were speaking to the people of Babylon and their enemies, who cannot hear him, telling them that Yahweh will destroy Babylon before the Babylonians can prepare to defend themselves.
Jeremiah 51:12
Lift up a signal flag over Babylon's walls
"Give a signal to attack Babylon's walls"
make the watch strong
"make sure the guards are strong and have good weapons"
set up watchmen
"make sure there are enough men watching the city"
prepare the ambushes
This was done in order to catch anyone running from the city.
Jeremiah 51:13
General Information:
Jeremiah continues to speak to the people of Jerusalem as if he were speaking to the people of Babylon, who cannot hear him.
The thread of your life is now cut short
The people's lives are spoken of as if they were threads that God could cut. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your lives will be ended quickly"
Jeremiah 51:14
like a swarm of locusts
The large number of enemy soldiers is spoken of as if they were a mass of locusts invading the city. Alternate translation: "with a large number of soldiers"

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battle cry
This is a shout that a soldier makes in battle.
Jeremiah 51:16
When he thunders, there is the roar of waters in the heavens
These phrases compare the voice of Yahweh to the loud sound made by thunder and rain.
storehouses
A storehouse is a building where people keep things they might want to use in the future.
Jeremiah 51:17
General Information:
Translate many of the words in this verse as in Jeremiah 10:14.
has become stupid
"has become like an animal" or "has become senseless"
Every metalworker is put to shame by his idols
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Every metalworker's idols put him to shame" or "As for every metalworker, his idols shame him"
Jeremiah 51:18
General Information:
Translate many of the words in this verse as in Jeremiah 10:15.
they will perish at the time of their punishment
This speaks of the final destruction of the idols. Alternate translation: "there will be a time when God will destroy them"
Jeremiah 51:19
General Information:
Translate many of the words in this verse as in Jeremiah 10:16.
the portion of Jacob
Here "Jacob" represents the people of Israel. God being their "portion" is an idiom that means that they worship him. Alternate translation: "the portion of Israel" or "whom the people of Israel worship"
the molder of all things
"the creator of all things" or "the one who created all things"
Israel is the tribe of his inheritance
This speaks of Israel belonging to Yahweh as if it were something that Yahweh gained through inheritance. Alternate translation: "The tribe of Israel belongs to him"
Jeremiah 51:20
You are
"You, the Babylonian army, are"
With you I will smash
Yahweh speaks of punishing people as if he were smashing them with a hammer. Alternate translation: "With you I will punish"
With you I will
"I will use you to"
Jeremiah 51:22
With you I will smash
Yahweh speaks of punishing people as if he were smashing them with a hammer. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 51:20]
With you I will
"I will use you to." See how you translated this in Jeremiah 51:20.
Jeremiah 51:24
in your sight I will pay
The abstract noun "sight" can be expressed with the verb "see." Alternate translation: "you will see it when I pay"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 51:25
General Information:
Yahweh speaks to the people of Jerusalem, who could hear him, as if he were speaking to the people of Babylon, who could not hear him. He speaks to the city of Babylon as if he were speaking to the people of Babylon itself. He speaks of the city as if it were a mountain.
I will stretch out my hand against you
The word "hand" is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises. See how "I will attack the inhabitants of the land with my hand" is translated in [Jeremiah 6:12]
I will ... roll you down from the cliffs
Yahweh stops speaking of Babylon as a mountain and speaks of it as a building that he is breaking down and throwing away.
cliffs
A cliff is the steep side of a mountain or hill.
I will ... make you a burned-out mountain
Yahweh speaks of Babylon as no longer being the great "mountain of destruction" but now a mountain that he has destroyed. Alternate translation: "I will ... make you a pile of useless rocks"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]
Jeremiah 51:26
you will become an everlasting devastation
The abstract noun "devastation" can be translated as a verb "devastate." Alternate translation: "I will devastate you and no one will ever rebuild you" or "I will turn you into an empty place where no one will ever live"
Jeremiah 51:27
Lift up a signal flag ... Blow the ram's horn ... Call ... to attack
Lifting a signal flag and blowing a ram's horn are both ways of calling people to attack.
signal flag
"battle flag." This is large flag for the soldiers to follow in battle.
attack her
The city of Babylon is a metonym for the people of Babylon, and it is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "attack the people of Babylon"
Ararat ... Minni ... Ashkenaz
These are names of nations or people groups.
bring up horses like swarming locusts
Yahweh compares a great number of horses to a swarm of locusts. Alternate translation: "bring many horses with soldiers quickly"
Jeremiah 51:28

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governors ... officials
See how you translated these words in Jeremiah 51:23.
Jeremiah 51:29
the land will shake and be in anguish
The land is a metonym for the people who live on the land. Shaking and being in anguish are metonyms for being very afraid. Alternate translation: "the people who live in Babylon will shake with fear and be in anguish"
anguish
suffering and grief that would bring a person to tears
against Babylon
The city of Babylon is a metonym for the people of Babylon. Alternate translation: "against the people of Babylon"
there is no inhabitant
"no one lives"
Jeremiah 51:30
General Information:
Yahweh speaks of what will happen as if it had already happened.
her homes are on fire, the bars of her gates are broken
The city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the homes in the city are on fire, the bars of the city gates are broken"
Jeremiah 51:31
his city has been taken
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemies have overcome the whole city"
Jeremiah 51:32
the fords over the river are seized
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemies have taken control of all the fords over the river"
fords
shallow parts of a river where people can walk across
marshes
places with shallow water and grasses growing in deep mud
confused
unable to think clearly
Jeremiah 51:33
Yahweh of hosts ... says this
Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.
The daughter of Babylon
"Daughter of Babylon" here is another name for the people who live in Babylon.
is like a threshing floor
People thresh grain by trampling it on a threshing floor, and Yahweh speaks of people punishing the daughter of Babylon as if they were threshing grain.
It is time to trample her down
Yahweh punishing the daughter of Babylon is spoken of as if he were trampling and threshing grain on a threshing floor. Alternate translation: "It is time to punish her"
the time of harvest will come to her
The harvest is a metaphor for the result of the actions that the people did before. Babylon will experience the result of its people's sins. Alternate translation: "God will punish her for her sins"
Jeremiah 51:34
General Information:
The speaker speaks as if he were a woman. The woman is a metaphor for the city of Jerusalem, which in turn is a metonym for the people of Jerusalem.
he has driven me into confusion
Possible meanings are 1) "he has caused me to be unable to think clearly" or 2) "he has crushed me."
has made me an empty pot
Babylon has taken everything from Israel.
Like a sea monster
Here Babylon is compared to a sea monster.
he has swallowed me
Jerusalem compares its destruction to being swallowed.
he has filled his stomach with my delicious foods
This continues to speak of Babylon as if it were a monster. This states in another way the previous idea that Babylon has taken everything from Israel. Here "foods" represents all the good things that were there before.
he has spit me out
Nebuchadnezzar took what he wanted and spit out what he did not want. Alternate translation: "he has vomited me up"
Jeremiah 51:35
The one who lives in Zion
"She who lives in Zion"
The one ... to me and my flesh ... my blood
All of these phrases refer to a woman.
inhabitants of Chaldea
"people who live in Chaldea"
Jeremiah 51:36
General Information:
This begins Yahweh's reply to Jerusalem's request in verses 34 and 35.
I am about to plead your case and bring about vengeance
Yahweh defending his people is spoken of as if he were a lawyer pleading their case in court. Alternate translation: "I will be like your lawyer to defend you and I will bring about vengeance"
Jeremiah 51:37
heaps of rubble
buildings that have become piles of rock
den of jackals
home for wild dogs
a horror
something that terrifies everyone who looks at it
hissing
a sound people make to show that they dislike something very much
there are no inhabitants
"no one lives"
Jeremiah 51:38
roar
loud sound made by a lion
growl
a sound animals make to frighten other animals
Jeremiah 51:39
become joyful
As a soldier is joyful when he defeats a strong enemy.

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Another possible meaning is "are very drunk" .

Jeremiah 51:40

like lambs ... male goats

Lambs and goats do not know before it happens that people are going to slaughter them, and the Babylonians will not know before it happens that Yahweh is going to destroy them.

Jeremiah 51:41

How Babylon has been captured ... How Babylon has become a ruined place

The word "how" here shows that something that people thought was impossible has happened. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We never thought that enemies could capture Babylon, but they have captured her ... We never thought that Babylon could become a ruined place, but it has become a ruined place"

the praise of all the earth is seized

The word "praise" is a metonym for the thing that people praised, and the word "earth" is a metonym for the people living on the earth. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemies have seized Babylon, the nation that everyone on earth praised"

Jeremiah 51:42

The sea ... roaring waves

Babylon's enemies have overcome her. "Waves" represent many people groups overcoming Babylon. The words "sea" and "water" often represent the nations.

She is covered with its roaring waves

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Its roaring waves have covered her"

Jeremiah 51:43

Her cities

"Babylon's cities"

Jeremiah 51:44

I will punish Bel

Bel was the main god of the Babylonians and represents the whole country and the people that worshiped it.

out from his mouth what he swallowed

Yahweh compares all the sacrifices and offerings to Bel to things he ate.

the nations will no longer flow

The many nations that come to Babylon to sacrifice to Bel is spoken of as a river that moves along. Alternate translation: "the people of other nations will no longer come in large groups"

Jeremiah 51:46

the news that is heard in the land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when you hear the news that is in the land"

Ruler will be against ruler

The ruler is a metonym for the nations under his control. Alternate translation: "Nations will fight against other nations"

Jeremiah 51:47

see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what i am about to tell you"

days are coming ... when I will punish

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

I will punish the carved idols of Babylon

Removing the idols of Babylon is spoken of as if Yahweh would punish the idols. Alternate translation: "I will remove the carved idols of Babylon"

Babylon ... her land ... her slaughtered ones ... her midst

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the people of Babylon ... their land ... their slaughtered ones ... their midst"

Jeremiah 51:48

over Babylon ... come for her

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "over the Babylonians ... come for them ... the Babylonians have made ... their land"

the heavens and the earth

Heaven and earth are viewed as if they were people.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

Jeremiah 51:49

Babylon has made ... her land

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "the people of Babylon ... their land ... their slaughtered ones ... their midst ... over the Babylonians ... come for them ... the Babylonians have made ... their land"

the killed of all her land

"those whom the Babylonians' enemies have killed in the land"

Jeremiah 51:50

General Information:

Jeremiah speaks to the Israelite people in verse 50.

Survivors of the sword

The sword is a metonym for war, in which soldiers use swords. Alternate translation: "You who have survived the war"

Call Yahweh to mind from far away; let Jerusalem come to mind

The phrases "Call ... to mind" and "come to mind" are idioms that mean to think about or remember. Alternate translation: "Though you are far away, think about Yahweh; think about Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 51:51

we have been insulted

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "people have insulted us" or "people have scorned us"

shame has covered our faces

Possible meanings are 1) "our faces show that we feel very ashamed" or 2) "we cover our faces because we feel ashamed."

Jeremiah 51:52

see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what i am about to tell you"

days are coming ... when I will punish

Future time is spoken of as if the "days are coming." See

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how you translated this metaphor in [Jeremiah 7:32]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 1:8]

I will punish her carved idols

Removing or destroying idols is spoken of as if Yahweh would punish the idols. Alternate translation: "I will destroy her carved idols" or "I will remove her carved idols"

her carved idols ... her land

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "their carved idols ... their land ... the Babylonians ... their highest fortresses ... to them"

groan

to cry out because of pain or sadness

Jeremiah 51:53

her highest fortresses ... to her

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "their highest fortresses ... to them"

even if Babylon went up to the heavens or fortified her highest fortresses, destroyers would come

God says this to assure Israel that it does not matter how strong Babylon might be; God will send people to destroy Babylon.

destroyers would come from me to her

This can be expressed with God as the subject. The word "her" refers to Babylon. Alternate translation: "I would send destroyers to her" or "I would send enemies to destroy Babylon"

Jeremiah 51:54

A cry of distress came from Babylon, great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans

The same thought is expressed in two different ways for emphasis.

Jeremiah 51:55

destroying Babylon ... her loud voice

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "destroying the people of Babylon ... their loud voices"

Their enemies ... their noise

"The enemies of the people of Babylon ... the noise of the enemies"

enemies roar like the waves of many waters

The waves of the ocean and of flooding rivers make a loud sound, and the enemies will make a very loud sound as they come.

Jeremiah 51:56

against her—against Babylon!—and her warriors

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "against the people of Babylon—yes, against Babylon!—and their warriors"

her warriors have been captured

This phrase can be changed to have an active verb. Alternate translation: "her enemies have captured her warriors"

Jeremiah 51:57

her princes and her wise men ... her governors, her officials, and her soldiers

The people of Babylon are spoken of as if they were the city itself, and the city is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "their princes and their wise men ... their governors, their officials, and their soldiers"

they will sleep in an unending sleep and never wake up

They will be dead. See how you translated this in [Jeremiah 51:39]

Jeremiah 51:58

Yahweh of hosts says this

Jeremiah often uses these words to introduce an important message from Yahweh. See how you translated this in Jeremiah 6:6.

The thick walls of Babylon will be completely demolished

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The invaders willl completely demolish the thick walls of Babylon"

her high gates ... her aid ... for her

The city of Babylon is spoken of as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "their high gates ... their aid ... for them"

her high gates will be burned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will burn her high gates"

everything ... will be burned up

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will burn up everything that the nations try to do for her"

Jeremiah 51:59

Seraiah ... Neriah ... Mahseiah

These are the names of men.

in the fourth year of his reign

"after he had been king for three years." This "fourth" is the ordinal number for four.

Jeremiah 51:60

that were written about Babylon

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he had written about Babylon"

Jeremiah 51:62

animal

If your language has a word for animals that normally live with people, you might want to use it here, because Jeremiah 51:37 states that Babylon will be inhabited by wild animals.

Jeremiah 51:64

Babylon will sink like this

The stone and scroll will disappear in the water, the water will destroy the scroll, and Babylon will no longer look like a city or have buildings for people to live in.

will not arise

"will never again be a city"

they will fall

This means the Babylonians will fall because they are exhausted. Many translations do not include these words.

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52 [1]Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's
name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.[2]He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he
did everything that Jehoiakim had done.[3]Through Yahweh's anger, all these events happened in Jerusalem and Judah,
until he drove them from before himself. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.
[4]It happened that in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month,
Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came with all his army against Jerusalem. They camped opposite it, and they built a
siege wall around it.[5]So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign.
[6]By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the
land.[7]Then the city was broken into, and all the fighting men fled and went out of the city at night by the way of the gate
that was between the two walls, by the king's garden, although the Chaldeans were all around the city. So they went in the
direction of the Arabah.[8]But the army of Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of the Jordan
River valley near Jericho. All his army was scattered away from him.
[9]They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he passed
sentence on him.[10]The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his own eyes, and at Riblah he also slaughtered
all the leaders of Judah.[11]Then he put out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and brought him to Babylon. The
king of Babylon put him in prison until the day of his death.

[12]Now in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of King
Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan came to Jerusalem. He was the commander of the king's bodyguards and
a servant of the king of Babylon.[13]He burned the house of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; also
every important building in the city he burned.[14]As for the walls around Jerusalem, all the army of the Chaldeans who
were with the commander of the bodyguards destroyed them.
[15]As for the poorest people, the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon,
and the rest of the craftsmen—Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguards, took some of them away into exile.[16]But
Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguards, left some of the poorest of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

[17]As for the bronze pillars that belonged to the house of Yahweh, and the stands, and the large bronze basin called "The
Sea" that were in the house of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke them into pieces and carried all the bronze back to Babylon.
[18]The pots, shovels, lamp trimmers, bowls, and all the utensils of bronze with which the priests had served in the temple—
the Chaldeans took them all away.[19]The basins and the incense burners, the bowls, pots, lampstands, pans, and basins that
were made of gold, and those made of silver—the commander of the king's guard took them away as well.
[20]The two pillars, the large bronze basin known as "The Sea," and the twelve bronze bulls that were under the stands,
things that King Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh, contained more bronze than could be weighed.[21]The pillars
were eighteen cubits high each, and a line around each one measured twelve cubits. Each was four fingers thick and
hollow.
[22]A capital of bronze was on top of it. The capital was five cubits high, with latticework and pomegranates all around. It
was all made of bronze. The other pillar and its pomegranates were the same as the first.[23]So there were ninety-six
pomegranates on the capital's sides, and one hundred pomegranates above the surrounding latticework.

[24]The commander of the bodyguards took prisoner Seraiah, the high priest, together with Zephaniah, the second priest,
and the three gatekeepers.[25]From the city he took prisoner an officer who was in charge of soldiers, and seven men of
those who advised the king, who were still in the city. He also took prisoner the king's army officer responsible for
drafting men into the army, along with sixty important men from the land who were in the city.
[26]Then Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguards, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.
[27]The king of Babylon put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile.

[28]These were the people who Nebuchadnezzar exiled:
In the seventh year, 3,023 Jews.
[29]In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar
he took 832 people from Jerusalem.
[30]In the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan,
the commander of the king's bodyguards,
exiled 745 Jewish people.
All the exiled people totaled 4,600.

[31]It happened later in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin, king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-
fifth day of the month, that Awel-Marduk, king of Babylon released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. This happened
in the year that Awel-Marduk began to reign.

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[32]He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat more honorable than that of the other kings who were with him in Babylon.
[33]Awel-Marduk removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes, and Jehoiachin ate regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life,
[34]and a regular food allowance was given to him by the king of Babylon every day for the rest of his life until his death.

Jeremiah 52 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter returns to a previous sequence of events and records Babylon's conquering of Judah. It also records the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. (See: temple)

Links:

Jeremiah 52:1 Notes

Jeremiah 52:1

General Information:

Because of the words "Jeremiah's words end here" in Jeremiah 51:64 and because the words here appear in other books of the Bible, many scholars believe that this chapter was written by someone other than Jeremiah and attached to the scroll that Jeremiah and Baruch wrote.

Hamutal

This is the name of a woman.

Libnah

This is the name of a place.

Jeremiah

This refers to another man named Jeremiah, not the prophet Jeremiah who wrote this book.

Jeremiah 52:2

what was evil in the sight of Yahweh

The sight of Yahweh represents Yahweh's judgment or evaluation. Alternate translation: "what was evil in Yahweh's judgment" or "what Yahweh considers to be evil"

Jeremiah 52:4

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month

after Zedekiah had been king for eight years, in the tenth calendar month, on the tenth day of the month

in the ninth year

"in year nine"

in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month

This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the beginning of January on Western calendars.

They camped opposite it

"Nebuchadnezzar's army camped opposite Jerusalem"

Jeremiah 52:5

until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign

until Zedekiah had been king for more than ten years

eleventh year

"year eleven"

So the city was besieged

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "So they besieged the city"

Jeremiah 52:6

By the ninth day of the fourth month

This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. The ninth day is near the beginning of July on Western calendars. Zedekiah had been king for ten years, three months, and eight days.

city

This refers to Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 52:7

the city was broken into

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Babylonians broke through the wall around the city"

the two walls

the wall of the king's garden and the wall of the city

Jeremiah 52:8

plains

flat land

All his army was scattered

This can be translated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "the Chaldeans scattered his entire army" or 2) "all of his soldiers ran away in different directions."

Jeremiah 52:9

at Riblah in the land of Hamath

Riblah was a town in the territory of Hamath.

passed sentence on him

"decided how to punish him"

Jeremiah 52:10

slaughtered Zedekiah's sons before his own eyes

The eyes are a synecdoche for the whole person. The reader should also understand that others probably helped the king of Babylon kill Zedekiah's sons. Alternate translation: "forced Zedekiah to watch as the king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah's sons"

Jeremiah 52:11

he put out Zedekiah's eyes

"the king's men made Zedekiah blind." Use the common words for making a person blind. It is not clear that the king of Babylon took Zedekiah's eyes out of his head. The reader should also understand that others probably helped the king of Babylon make Zedekiah blind.

the day of his death

the day of Zedekiah's death

Jeremiah 52:12

in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar

Nebuchadnezzar had been king for eighteen years, four months, and nine days. This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. The tenth day is near the beginning of August on Western calendars.

the nineteenth year

"during year nineteen"

Nebuzaradan

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This is the name of a man.
bodyguards
people whose job is to protect someone
Jeremiah 52:15
Nebuzaradan
This is the name of a man.
Jeremiah 52:16
the poorest of the land
"the poorest people who lived on the land"
Jeremiah 52:17
The Sea
This is a basin of water used in the worship of Yahweh.
Jeremiah 52:21
eighteen cubits ... twelve cubits
A cubit was about 46 centimeters long. Alternate translation: "18 cubits ... 12 cubits" or "about 8.3 meters ... about 5.5 meters"
hollow
The pillars had empty space inside them.
Jeremiah 52:22
capital
This is the top part of each pillar.
five cubits
A cubit was about 46 centimeters long. Alternate translation: "5 cubits" or "about 2.3 meters"
Jeremiah 52:24
Seraiah
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 36:26.
gatekeepers
people who guard the gate of a city
Jeremiah 52:25
drafting men into the army
"forcing men to fight in the army"
Jeremiah 52:26
Nebuzaradan
See how you translated this man's name in [Jeremiah 39:9]
Riblah
This is the name of a city.
Jeremiah 52:28
seventh
3,023
"three thousand and twenty-three"
Jeremiah 52:29
eighteenth
832
"teight hundred and thirty-two"
Jeremiah 52:30
twenty-third
Nebuzaradan
See how you translated this man's name in Jeremiah 39:9.
745 ... 4,600
"seven hundred and forty-five ... four thousand six hundred"
Jeremiah 52:31
in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin
after Jehoiachin had been an exile for more than 36 years
in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month
This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fifth day is near the middle of March on Western calendars.
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.
Awel-Marduk
He became the king of Babylon after Nebuchadnezzar.
Jeremiah 52:32
He spoke kindly to him
"Awel-Marduk spoke kindly to Jehoiachin"
a seat more honorable
"a seat at the table that was closer to where Awel-Marduk sat"
Jeremiah 52:33
removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes
The reader should understand that removing his prison clothes represents making him a free man.

Introduction to Lamentations

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Lamentations

First lament: Yahweh and his people have abandoned Jerusalem (1:1–22) Second lament: Yahweh was angry with Jerusalem and caused it to be destroyed (2:1–22) Third lament (3:1-66) The people grieve (3:1–20) Yahweh comforts those who turn back to him (3:21–39) Judah is learning to return to Yahweh (3:40–54) Judah cries out to be avenged of its enemies (3:55–66)
Fourth lament: The terrors of the siege of Jerusalem (4:1-4:22) The people's sin caused Jerusalem to be punished (4:1–20) Their being punished satisfied Yahweh's wrath for their sin (4:21–22a) Edom will be punished also (4:22b)
Fifth lament: The broken nation cries out to Yahweh (5:1–22)

What is the Book of Lamentations about?

The Babylonians captured the city of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. In the Book of Lamentations, the writer grieves over Jerusalem being destroyed.
The Book of Lamentations is organized into five poems. The writer describes how God allowed Jerusalem to be destroyed because the people sinned against him. However, the writer also states that God is always loving and faithful to his people. (See: sin and faith)

Who wrote the Book of Lamentations?

The text of Lamentations does not give the name of the author. The traditional view is that Jeremiah wrote it. The writer seems to have personally seen Jerusalem destroyed. The serious and grieving words in the Book of Jeremiah are similar to those in the Book of Lamentations.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may use the traditional title of "Lamentations." Or they may call the book "Poems of Sadness." If translators want to take the view that the prophet Jeremiah wrote this book, they might decide on a title such as "The Sad Sayings of Jeremiah."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Did God abandon Israel?

The author of Lamentations often speaks of God abandoning Israel. But this did not mean that God had completely given up on Israel. He rejected Israel for a period of time as the special place where he would be present. However, God remained faithful to what he promised Israel in his covenant.

While it was common in the ancient Near East to think that a god might leave its city, it usually did so because it was too weak to defend the city. In Lamentations, Yahweh abandons Jerusalem because the people sinned against him, not because he was too weak to defend the city. (See: falsegod)

What is a funeral song?

People groups commonly sing songs after someone dies or during a funeral. Depending on the culture, these songs can sound either happy or sad. The Book of Lamentations is like a sad song, called a "lament," sung at a funeral. Some scholars think the rhythm of the laments in Hebrew makes them sound slow like a funeral procession.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What style of writing is Lamentations?

Lamentations is a collection of five poems. The Jewish exiles living in captivity in Babylon may have sung or chanted these laments. The Jews who remained in Jerusalem after the Babylonians conquered it may also have sung them. In Chapters 1, 2, and 4, each line of the poem begins with a different Hebrew letter, in the order of the Hebrew alphabet. The third chapter repeats three lines starting with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The next three lines begin with next letter in the Hebrew alphabet.

Who are the woman and the man in Lamentations?

The author uses the image of an abandoned woman and a persecuted man to represent Judah and Jerusalem. He uses this type of personification to help readers understand the pain and sorrow.

Lamentations

1 [1] The city that once was full of people
is now sitting all alone.
She has become like a widow,
though she was a mighty nation.
She was a princess among the nations,
but is now forced into slavery.

[2] She weeps bitterly in the night,
and her tears cover her cheeks.
None of her lovers comfort her.
All her friends have betrayed her.
They have become her enemies.

[3] Judah has gone into exile
after affliction and great labor.
She lives among the nations
and finds no rest.
All her pursuers overtook her
in her desperation.

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4 The roads of Zion mourn
because none come to the appointed feasts.
All her gates are desolate.
Her priests groan.
Her virgins are afflicted,
and as for her, it is bitter for her.

5 Her adversaries have become her master;
her enemies prosper.
Yahweh has afflicted her for her many sins.
Her little children go into captivity to her adversary.

6 Splendor has left
the daughter of Zion.
Her princes have become like deer
that cannot find pasture,
and they go without strength
before their pursuer.

7 In the days of her affliction and her homelessness,
Jerusalem will call to mind all her precious treasures
that she had in former days.
When her people fell
into the hand of the adversary,
no one helped her.
The adversaries saw her
and mocked at her destruction.

8 Jerusalem sinned greatly,
therefore, she has become scorned
as something that is filthy.
All who honored her now despise her
since they have seen her nakedness.
She groans
and tries to turn away.

9 She has become unclean beneath her skirts.
She did not think about her future.
Her fall was astonishing.
There was no one to comfort her.
She cried out, "Look at my affliction, Yahweh,
for the enemy has become too great!"

10 The adversary has put his hand
on all our precious treasures.
She has seen the nations

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enter her sanctuary,
even though you had commanded
that they must not enter into your assembly place.

11 All her people groan
as they search for bread.
They have given their precious treasures
for food to restore their lives.
Look, Yahweh, and consider me,
for I have become worthless.

12 Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look and see
if there is anyone else's sorrow
like the sorrow that is being inflicted on me,
since Yahweh has tormented me
on the day of his fierce anger.

13 It is from on high that he has sent fire into my bones,
and it has conquered them.
He has spread a net for my feet and turned me back.
He has made me constantly desolate and weak.

14 The yoke of my transgressions
is bound together by his hand.
They are knit together and placed upon my neck.
He has made my strength fail.
The Lord has given me over into their hands,
and I am not able to stand.

15 The Lord has tossed aside
all my mighty men who defended me.
He has called an assembly against me
to crush my vigorous men.
The Lord has trampled the virgin daughter of Judah
in the winepress.

16 For these things I weep,
my eyes overflow with tears;
for a comforter is far from me,
one who restores my life.
My children are desolate
because the enemy has conquered me.

17 Zion has spread her hands wide;

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there is none to comfort her.
Yahweh has commanded
that those around Jacob should be his adversaries.
Jerusalem is something unclean to them.

18 Yahweh is righteous,
for I have rebelled against his commandment.
Hear, all you peoples, and see my sorrow.
My virgins and my vigorous men
have gone into captivity.

19 I called for my lovers,
but they were treacherous toward me.
My priests and my elders perished in the city,
while they sought food to restore their lives.

20 Look, Yahweh, for I am in distress;
my stomach churns,
my heart is disturbed within me,
for I have been very rebellious.
Outside, the sword bereaves;
inside the house there is only death.

21 They have heard my groaning,
but there is no one to comfort me.
All my enemies have heard of my trouble,
and they are glad that you have done it.
You have brought the day you proclaimed;
now let them become like me.

22 Let all their wickedness come before you.
deal with them as you have dealt with me
because of all my transgressions.
My groans are many and my heart is faint.

Lamentations 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Judah destroyed for her sin

Judah used to be great, but is now a slave. The temple is stripped of all its valuables. (See: sin and temple)

Links:

Lamentations 1:1 Notes Lamentations intro

Lamentations 1:1

General Information:

Various poetic forms are used throughout this book.

is now sitting all alone

This speaks of the city of Jerusalem being empty, as if it were a woman who was sitting alone. Alternate translation: "is now empty"

She

The writer of Lamentations writes about the city of Jerusalem as if it were a woman.

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like a widow

This speaks of Jerusalem as being without protection, as if it were a vulnerable widow.

She was a princess among the nations

This speaks of Jerusalem being honored as if it were a princess. Alternate translation: "She was like a princess among the nations"

forced into slavery

"forced to become a slave." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but she is now a slave"

Lamentations 1:2

She weeps bitterly ... and her tears cover her cheeks

The author describes Jerusalem as having emotions like a human being. The city also stands for her inhabitants. Alternate translation: "Those who live in her weep and wail ... and their tears cover their cheeks"

None of her lovers comfort her. All her friends have betrayed her

This speaks of the people groups that had been faithful to Jerusalem betraying Jerusalem, as if the people groups were Jerusalem's lovers and friends.

Lamentations 1:3

General Information:

In this verse, the people of Judah are spoken of as if they were a woman.

Judah has gone into exile

Here Judah refers to its inhabitants. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah have gone into exile" or "the people of Judah have been taken into a foreign land"

after affliction and great labor

Possible meanings are 1) "after suffering affliction and having done great labor" or 2) "because of the affliction she suffered and the great labor was forced to do" or 3) "through while she is being afflicted and having to do great labor."

She lives ... finds

Here the kingdom of Judah is described as a woman. "She" also stands for the citizens of Judah. Alternate translation: "Her people live ... they find"

finds no rest

"does not find rest" or "is always afraid"

All her pursuers overtook her in her desperation

This speaks of the people of Judah being captured by their enemies as if they were a woman who was captured by those pursuing her.

All her pursuers overtook her

"Everyone who was chasing her managed to capture her" or "Everyone who was hunting for her found her"

in her desperation

The word "desperation" can be expressed as an adjective. Alternate translation: "when she was desperate" or "when she was distressed"

Lamentations 1:4

General Information:

The city of Zion is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city.

The roads of Zion mourn

The author speaks of the roads that lead to Zion mourning as if they were human beings.

the appointed feasts

"the feasts that God told them to celebrate"

All her gates are desolate

The word "her" refers to Zion. Alternate translation: "All of Zion's gates are empty"

Her virgins are afflicted, and as for her, it is bitter for her

Here the people of Zion being distressed are spoken of as if they were a woman in distress. Alternate translation: "Zion's virgins are sorrowful, and life is bitter for her"

Lamentations 1:5

Her adversaries have become her master; her enemies prosper

"Zion's adversaries rule over it; its enemies prosper"

Yahweh has afflicted her for her many sins

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the people of Zion for their sins as if they were a woman that Yahweh was punishing. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has afflicted her people because of the sins they have committed"

Her little children go into captivity to her adversary

The word "captivity" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Her enemy captures her little children"

Lamentations 1:6

General Information:

The city of Zion is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city.

Splendor has left the daughter of Zion

This speaks of everything beautiful in Zion being destroyed as if "splendor" were a person that left Zion. Alternate translation: "Everything that was beautiful about the daughter of Zion is destroyed"

daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.

Her princes have become like deer that cannot find pasture

This speaks of Zion's princes having nothing to eat like deer that cannot find grass to eat. Alternate translation: "Her princes are starving, they are like deer that cannot find grass to eat"

deer

A deer is a medium-sized, grass-eating animal that is often hunted by humans for food. It is also a beautiful animal to look at.

they go without strength before

"they are not strong enough to run away from" or "they are very weak before"

their pursuer

"the person that is pursuing them"

Lamentations 1:7

In the days of her affliction and her homelessness

"During the time of her affliction and her homelessness"

Jerusalem will call to mind

Here "Jerusalem" refers to the people who live there. The phrase "call to mind" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem will remember" or "Jerusalem will remember"

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

in former days

"in the past." This refers to the time before the people of

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Jerusalem were captured. Alternate translation: "before this disaster happened"

When her people fell into the hand of the adversary

Here the word "hand" refers the control of the enemy army. Alternate translation: "When the adversary conquered and captured her people"

saw her and mocked at her destruction

This means that they were glad and mocked the people of Jerusalem when the city was destroyed.

at her destruction

This word "destruction" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "because she was destroyed" or "while they destroyed her"

Lamentations 1:8

General Information:

The city of Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were a woman. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city.

Jerusalem sinned greatly, therefore, she has become scorned as something that is filthy

This speaks of Jerusalem being scorned in the same way that a woman is scorned when she is unclean. According to the law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during her monthly bleeding. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem's sins have made her filthy and unclean, and therefore she was unacceptable before God"

Jerusalem sinned greatly

This describes Jerusalem as a woman who sinned, while it also stands for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem sinned greatly"

has become scorned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has become an object of scorn"

her nakedness

"her naked." Jerusalem is described as a woman whose private parts have been exposed to everyone to shame her.

Lamentations 1:9

She has become unclean beneath her skirts

According to the law of Moses, a woman was considered unclean during her monthly bleeding. This speaks of Jerusalem being unclean, as if it were a menstruating woman. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem has become unclean, as when a woman is unclean beneath her skirts"

unclean

A person who God considers to be spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Her fall was astonishing

The phrase "her fall" is an metaphor for the city being destroyed. Alternate translation: "Those who saw how she was destroyed were astonished" or "Those who saw how the city was destroyed were astonished"

astonishing

Usually this word refers to a miracle that helps people, but here it refers to an event that no one thought could happen, but that has been so harmful that people have a hard time believing what they see.

Look at my affliction, Yahweh

Possible meanings are that 1) the author of Lamentations now talks directly to Yahweh or 2) Jerusalem is described as talking to Yahweh like a person.

Look at

"Pay attention to"

the enemy has become too great

This means that they enemy army has become too large and powerful and has defeated Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the enemy army has defeated me"

Lamentations 1:10

has put his hand on

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "has taken possession of" or "has stolen"

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

She has seen

The word "She" refers to Jerusalem.

the nations

This refers to people from various nations, not the entire population of those nations. Alternate translation: "people from the nations"

you had commanded

The word "you" refers to Yahweh.

Lamentations 1:11

her people

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem which is described as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "her inhabitants" or "the people of the city"

bread

This refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

They have given their precious treasures for food

This means they traded their wealth and their valuables in exchange for food. Alternate translation: "They have traded their precious treasures in exchange for food"

precious treasures

This refers to their valuable possessions.

to restore their lives

"to save their lives" or "to restore their strength"

Look, Yahweh, and consider me

Here Jerusalem speaks directly to Yahweh.

Lamentations 1:12

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?

This rhetorical question is an accusation aganist the people who walk past Jerusalem and do not care about its well-being. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "All you who pass by should care more for my affliction!"

Is it nothing to you

Here Jerusalem continues to speak, but now to people who pass by instead of to Yahweh.

Look and see

These words share similar meanings. Together they invite the reader to understand by seeing that no one has suffered so much.

the sorrow that is being inflicted on me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sorrow that Yahweh is inflicting upon me"

on the day of his fierce anger

Here the word "day" is used as an idiom. Alternate translation: "when he was fiercely angry"

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Lamentations 1:13

General Information:

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself.

on high

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "heaven"

he has sent fire into my bones, and it has conquered them

This speaks of Yahweh punishing Jerusalem as if Jerusalem were a person that Yahweh were punishing with fire. Alternate translation: "he has sent a painful punishment into my inner being, and it has destroyed me" or "he has sent a destructive punishment into the middle of Jerusalem, and it has destroyed the city"

has sent fire into my bones

Here "fire" represents pain and "bones" represents one's inner being. Alternate translation: "has sent pain into my bones" or "has sent pain into my inner being"

He has spread a net for my feet

This speaks of Yahweh punishing Jerusalem as if Jerusalem were a person that Yahweh had set a trap for. This refers to a type of trap usually used to catch an animal.

turned me back

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "prevented my from walking any further"

Lamentations 1:14

The yoke of my transgressions ... They are knit together and placed upon my neck

This speaks of the people of Jerusalem's sins as if they were a yoke bearing a heavy burden that Yahweh had placed on their necks. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My transgressions are like a yoke that he has bound together with his hands and placed upon my neck"

given me over into their hands

"given me over into the hands of my enemies." Here their enemies' control is represented by their "hands." Alternate translation: "given my over to the control of my enemies" or "let my enemies defeat me"

I am not able to stand

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I cannot resist them"

Lamentations 1:15

General Information:

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself.

mighty men

"strongest soldiers"

an assembly

Here the enemy army attacking Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were a meeting of people who have come together in order to accuse and condemn someone. Alternate translation: "a great army"

to crush my vigorous men

This speaks of the enemy army defeating the soldiers of Jerusalem as if they crushed them. Alternate translation: "to defeat my vigorous men"

vigorous men

This refers to men at the strongest time of their lives.

The Lord has trampled ... in the winepress

Here the judgment of God is described as if Jerusalem were grapes on which he had trampled in order to squeeze out the juice. Alternate translation: "It is as though the Lord has trampled upon the virgin daughter of Judah in a winepress"

the virgin daughter of Judah

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. The word "virgin" suggests that this woman is pure.

Lamentations 1:16

General Information:

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself. In Lamentations, Zion and Jerusalem are names used to refer to the same city.

for a comforter is far from me, one who restores my life

This speaks of Jerusalem having no one to comfort her as if she did have a comforter, but that he was far away. The word "comforter" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "for there is no one to comfort me and restore my life"

restores my life

"revives me"

Lamentations 1:17

Zion has spread her hands wide

Here Jerusalem no longer speaks about herself; instead the author describes Jerusalem. He speaks of Zion as if it were a woman that lifts up her hands to ask for help. Alternate translation: "Zion has reached out for help"

those around Jacob

"the people around Jacob" or "the nations surrounding Jacob"

around Jacob should be his adversaries

Here "Jacob" refers to his descendants, that is Israel. Alternate translation: "around Jacob's descendants should be their adversaries"

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Lamentations 1:18

General Information:

In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself.

Yahweh is righteous

This implies that what Yahweh has done, he has done because he is righteous. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has acted out of his righteousness" or "What Yahweh has done is right"

Hear ... see

These imperatives are spoken as polite requests, not commands.

see my sorrow

The word "sorrow" can be expressed as a "sad." Alternate translation: "see how extremely sad I am"

My virgins and my vigorous men have gone into captivity

Here all of the people of Jerusalem who were taken into captivity are represented by the "virgins" and the "vigorous men" who were taken. Alternate translation: "Many of my people, including my virgins and vigorous men, have gone into captivity"

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vigorous men
This refers to men at the strongest time of their lives. See how you translated this in Lamentations 1:15.
Lamentations 1:19
I called for my lovers
The word "lovers" is a metaphor for the other nations that the people of Judah hoped would help them fight their enemy. Alternate translation: "I called for my allies to help me"
they were treacherous toward me
This means that they betrayed him. Alternate translation: "they betrayed me"
to restore their lives
"to save their lives" or "to restore their strength"
Lamentations 1:20
General Information:
In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself.
Look, Yahweh, for I am in distress
Jerusalem continues to talk about herself as if she were a woman, but now talks directly to Yahweh.
my stomach churns
The word "churn" means to move around violently, normally in a circular rotation. This does not mean the stomach is literally churning, but describes how the woman, representing Jerusalem, feels. Alternate translation: "my insides ache" or "my stomach hurts"
my heart is disturbed within me
Here the woman, representing Jerusalem, refers to her "heart" to emphasize her feelings. Alternate translation: "my heart is broken" or "I am extremely sad"
the sword bereaves
The "sword" represents the enemy. The word "bereaves" speaks of what is done to the parent, probably the mother, of the person whom the enemy kills. Alternate translation: "the enemy kills a mother's children"
inside the house there is only death
Possible meanings are 1) "inside the house, everyone is dying" or 2) "and inside the house the dead people are kept"
Lamentations 1:21
General Information:
In this section Jerusalem is portrayed as a woman speaking about herself.
They have heard my groaning
"People have heard my groaning." Jerusalem continues to speak as if she were a woman.
you have done it
Here the word "you" refers to Yahweh.
You have brought the day you proclaimed
The phrase "the day" is an idiom that refers to a specific event happening. Alternate translation: "You have done what you have proclaimed"
you proclaimed
You may need to make explicit that the proclamation was a promise. Alternate translation: "you promised"
now let them become like me
This is a request for Jerusalem's enemies to suffer as the people of Jerusalem have. Alternate translation: "now let them suffer like me"
Lamentations 1:22
Let all their wickedness come before you
This is a request for Yahweh to judge Jerusalem's enemies for their wickedness. The phrase "come before you" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to all of the wickedness they have committed" or "Judge them for all of their wickedness"
deal with them as you have dealt with me
This is a request for Yahweh to punish Jerusalem's enemies as he punished the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "punish them as you have punished me"
my heart is faint
Here the "heart" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am faint"

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1 2 The Lord has covered the daughter of Zion
under the cloud of his anger.
He has thrown the splendor of Israel
down from heaven to earth.
He has not remembered his footstool
on the day of his anger.

2 The Lord has swallowed up
and has had no compassion on
all the towns of Jacob.
In the days of his anger he has thrown down
the fortified cities
of the daughter of Judah;
in dishonor he has brought down to the ground
the kingdom and its rulers.

3 With fierce anger he has cut off

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every horn of Israel.
He has withdrawn his right hand
from before the enemy.
He has burned up Jacob like a blazing fire
that devours everything around it.

4 He has bent his bow toward us like an enemy,
he has set his right hand like an adversary.
He has slaughtered all
who had been so pleasing to him
in the tent of the daughter of Zion;
he has poured out his wrath like fire.

5 The Lord has become like an enemy.
He has swallowed up Israel.
He has swallowed up all her palaces.
He has destroyed her strongholds.
He has increased mourning and lamentation
within the daughter of Judah.

6 He has done violence to his tabernacle like a garden.
He has destroyed the place of the solemn assembly.
Yahweh has caused both solemn assembly
and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion,
for he has despised both king and priest
in the indignation of his anger.

7 The Lord has rejected his altar
and disowned his sanctuary.
He has given over the walls of her palaces
into the hand of the enemy.
They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh,
as on the day of an appointed feast.

8 Yahweh decided to destroy the city wall
of the daughter of Zion.
He has stretched out the measuring line
and has not withheld his hand from destroying the wall.
He has made the ramparts and wall to lament;
together they wasted away.

9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;
he has destroyed and broken the bars of her gate.
Her king and her princes
are among the nations,
the law is no more

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and her prophets find no vision from Yahweh.

10 The elders of the daughter of Zion
sit on the ground in silence.
They have thrown dust on their heads
and girded themselves with sackcloth.
The virgins of Jerusalem
have bowed their heads to the ground.

11 My eyes have failed from their tears;
my stomach churns;
my inner parts are poured out to the ground
because of the destruction of the daughter of my people;
children and infants faint
in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers,
"Where is grain and wine?"
as they faint like a wounded man
in the streets of the city,
their lives are poured out
on the bosom of their mothers.

13 What will I testify for you? To what can I compare you,
daughter of Jerusalem?
To what can I liken you, that I may comfort you,
virgin daughter of Zion?
Your wound is as great as the sea.
Who can heal you?

14 Your prophets have seen
false and worthless visions for you.
They have not exposed your iniquity
to reverse your captivity,
but for you they gave utterances
that are false and misleading.

15 All those who pass along the road
clap their hands at you.
They hiss and shake their heads
against the daughter of Jerusalem and say,
"Is this the city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,'
'The Joy for All of Earth'?"

16 All your enemies open

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their mouths against you.
They sneer and grind their teeth in rage and say,
"We have swallowed her up!
This is the day we have waited for!
We have lived to see it!"

17 Yahweh has done
what he planned to do.
He has fulfilled his word,
which he commanded in former days.
He has overthrown you without pity,
for he has permitted the enemy to rejoice over you;
he has lifted up the horn of your enemies.

18 Their heart cried out to the Lord,
walls of the daughter of Zion!
Make your tears flow down like a river day and night.
Give yourself no relief, your eyes no relief.

19 Arise, cry out in the night,
at the beginning of the night watches!
Pour out your heart like water
before the face of the Lord.
Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children
who faint with hunger at the corner of every street."

20 See, Yahweh, and consider
those you have dealt in this way.
Should women eat the fruit of their wombs,
the children whom they have cared for?
Should priest and prophet be slaughtered
in the sanctuary of the Lord?

21 Both the young and the old
lie on the dust of the streets.
My virgins and my young men
have fallen by the sword;
you have slaughtered them in the day of your anger
without taking pity on them.

22 You have summoned,
as you would call the people to a feast day,
my terrors on every side,
on the day of the anger of Yahweh
no one escaped or survived;
those I cared for and raised,
my enemy has destroyed.

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Lamentations 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

God has become Judah's enemy. He is determined to destroy them.

Links:

Lamentations 2:1 Notes

Lamentations 2:1

General Information:

A new poem begins. The writer of Lamentations uses many different ways to express that the people of Israel have lost God's favor.

The Lord has covered the daughter of Zion under the cloud of his anger

This speaks of the Lord's anger against Jerusalem

the daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. Translate as you did in [Lamentations 1:6]

He has thrown the splendor of Israel down from heaven to earth

The phrase "the splendor of Israel" refers to Jerusalem. This passage speaks of the people of Jerusalem losing favor with the Lord as if he threw them out of his presence. The phrase "from heaven to earth" is a great distance used to represent how much they lost favor with the Lord. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem, the splendor of Israel, has lost all favor with the Lord" or "Jerusalem has lost all favor with the Lord"

He has not remembered his footstool

This is a reference to the Lord having considered Jerusalem his "footstool" in the past, which symbolized that he had authority over them and that they were submissive to him. This speaks of the Lord disregarding Jerusalem as his footstool as if he did not remember them. Alternate translation: "He disregarded Jerusalem as his footstool"

not remembered

This speaks of the Lord not paying attention to Jerusalem as if he did not remember them. Alternate translation: "disregarded" or "paid no attention to"

on the day of his anger

Here "day" is used as an idiom that refers to a general period of time. Alternate translation: "at the time when he displays his anger" or "at the time he acts in his anger"

Lamentations 2:2

the daughter of Judah

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.

the days of his anger

Here "day" is used as an idiom that refers to a general period of time. Alternate translation: "the time of his anger" or "the time of his anger"

swallowed up

This speaks of the Lord completely destroying the towns as if he were an animal who ate them. Alternate translation: "completely destroyed"

all the towns of Jacob

Here "the towns of Jacob" refers to the towns where his descendants lived. Alternate translation: "all the towns of Israel"

the fortified cities of the daughter of Judah

Possible meanings are 1) the fortified cities throughout Judah or 2) the fortified walls of Jerusalem.

Lamentations 2:3

General Information:

The author continues the use of metaphors to express how the Lord opposed Judah.

he has cut off every horn of Israel

This speaks of the Lord taking away Israel's strength as if he were cutting off its horns. The word "horn" refers to an animal horn, not a musical instrument. Alternate translation: "he has taken away all of Israel's strength"

withdrawn his right hand from before the enemy

Here the Lord's protection is represented by his "right hand." Alternate translation: "stopped protecting us from our enemies"

He has burned up Jacob like a blazing fire that devours everything around it

This speaks of how the Lord has destroyed Jacob as if a fire has completely burned it. Alternate translation: "He has destroyed Jacob like a blazing fire destroys everything"

Jacob

Here "Jacob" refers to the places where his descendants lived. Alternate translation: "Israel"

Lamentations 2:4

He has bent his bow toward us like an enemy, he has set his right hand like an adversary

A soldier has to bend his bow in order to shoot an arrow from it. This speaks of the Lord preparing to attack Israel as if he were an enemy about to shoot them with a bow and arrow. Alternate translation: "He has prepared to kill us, like an enemy who has made his bow ready to shoot us"

like an enemy ... like an adversary

"As if he were our enemy ... as if he were our adversary"

he has set his right hand like an adversary. He has slaughtered all

Some modern translations read, "he has set his right hand. Like an adversary, he has slaughtered all"

he has set his right hand

He has pulled back the bowstring and is ready to shoot an arrow. Most bowmen pull back the string and arrow with their right hands.

in the tent of the daughter of Zion

The "daughter of Zion" is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. The phrase "tent of the daughter of Zion" speaks of Jerusalem as a "tent" emphasizing that it is the home of those who live there. Alternate translation: "who live in Jerusalem"

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he has poured out his wrath like fire
This speaks of the Lord's wrath as if it were a liquid that he were pouring out on the people. His wrath is also compared to a "fire" to emphasize how destructive it is. Alternate translation: "in his anger he has destroyed everything like a blazing fire"
Lamentations 2:5
swallowed up
This speaks of the Lord completely destroying Israel as if he were animal who ate them. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:2]
her palaces ... her strongholds
Israel is spoken of as if it were female.
He has increased mourning and lamentation within the daughter of Judah
The words "mourning" and "lamentation" can be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "He has caused more and more people within the daughter of Judah to mourn and lament"
daughter of Judah
This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "Judah"
Lamentations 2:6
He has done violence to his tabernacle like a garden
The words "He has done violence to" are a metonym for the Lord enabling Israel's enemies to attack the "tabernacle." He did not do it himself. The word "tabernacle," usually a temporary shelter made of sticks and branches, is an ironic metaphor for the temple, which the people expected to be a permanent building. The enemies destroyed the temple easily, as if they were destroying a garden. Alternate translation: "He has caused their enemies to destroy his tabernacle as easily as if they were destroying a garden"
a garden
Some modern translations read "a garden hut," referring to a very small building for holding farming tools or for sheltering someone who is guarding a garden.
He has destroyed the place of the solemn assembly
The Lord caused Israel's enemies to destroy it. He did not destroy it himself. Alternate translation: "He has caused the place of the solemn assembly to be destroyed" or "He has caused their enemies to destroy the place of the solemn assembly"
caused both solemn assembly and Sabbath to be forgotten in Zion
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "caused the people in Zion to forget both solemn assembly and Sabbath"
in the indignation of his anger
"because he was extremely angry with them"
Lamentations 2:7
He has given over the walls of her palaces into the hand of the enemy
Here the enemy's "hand" refers to the enemy's control. Alternate translation: "He has allowed the enemy to capture the walls of her palaces"
the walls of her palaces
Here the word "her" may refer either to the temple or to Jersualem. Possible translations are 1) "the walls of the temple" or 2) "the walls of Jerusalem's palaces." The word "walls" is a synecdoche for the whole building, and the building is a synecdoche for all of Jerusalem.
They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh, as on the day of an appointed feast
This is an ironic comparison between the happy, noisy festivals of Israel and the loud shouts of victory of the Babylonians. Alternate translation: "They have raised a shout in the house of Yahweh, as the Israelites would during an appointed feast"
have raised a shout
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "have shouted victoriously"
Lamentations 2:8
Yahweh decided to destroy the city wall
Yahweh chose to have the wall destroyed and caused Jerusalem's enemy to destroy it. He did not destroy it himself.
daughter of Zion
This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.
He has stretched out the measuring line
This speaks of preparing to destroy the wall as if he measured it before he destroyed it, so that he knew how much to destroy. Alternate translation: "It is as though he has measured the wall"
has not withheld his hand from destroying
The double negative here emphasizes the positive. Also, the word "hand" is a synecdoche for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "has used his hand to completely destroy" or "has himself completely destroyed"
He has made the ramparts and wall to lament; together they wasted away
The walls and ramparts are spoken of as if they were people who lamented and died. Alternate translation: "Because he has destroyed the ramparts and walls, they are like people who lament and have lost their strength"
ramparts
Ancient cities had a main "wall" to keep attackers out, and an outer line of "ramparts" to keep attackers from the wall.
Lamentations 2:10
daughter of Zion
This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.
sit on the ground in silence
Often people would sit on the ground to show they were mourning. Alternate translation: "sit on the ground, mourning in silence"
They have thrown dust on their heads and girded themselves with sackcloth
These are actions of mourning. Alternate translation: "To show their mourning, they have thrown dust on their heads and put on sackcloth"
have bowed their heads to the ground
This is an action of mourning. Alternate translation: "have sorrowfully bowed their heads to the ground"
Lamentations 2:11
General Information:
The author shifts from describing Jerusalem to describing his own experience.
My eyes have failed from their tears

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This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I have cried until I cannot cry anymore"

my stomach churns

The word "churn" means to move around violently, normally in a circular rotation. This does not mean the stomach is literally churning, but describes how the author feels. Alternate translation: "my insides ache" or "my stomach hurts"

my inner parts are poured out to the ground

The author speaks of feeling grief in his inner being as if his inner body parts had fallen out of his body onto the ground. Alternate translation: "my entire inner being is in grief"

the daughter of my people

This is a poetic name of Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "my people"

Lamentations 2:12

Where is grain and wine?

This rhetorical question is used as a request for something to eat. The children are telling their mother that they are hungry. The phrase "grain and wine" represents food and drink. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Give us something to eat and drink."

as they faint like a wounded man

This speaks of the children fainting from hunger and thirst in the same way that a wounded man faints.

their lives are poured out on the bosom of their mothers

This speaks of the children dying as if their lives were a liquid that was being poured out. Alternate translation: "they slowly die in the arms of their mothers"

bosom

chest, shoulders, and arms

Lamentations 2:13

General Information:

The author begins to address Jerusalem.

What will I testify for you?

The author uses this rhetorical question to express that he does not know what to say to help Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Some modern translations read, "To what can I compare you?" Alternate translation: "There is nothing that I can say to testify for you." or "There is nothing to which I can compare you."

To what can I compare you, ... Jerusalem?

The author uses this rhetorical question to express that he does not know what to say to help Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing to which I can compare you, ... Jerusalem."

daughter of Jerusalem ... virgin daughter of Zion

These are poetic names for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. "Zion" is another name for Jerusalem.

To what can I liken you ... Zion?

The author uses this rhetorical question to express that he does not know how to give comfort to Jerusalem. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing to which I can liken you ... Zion."

Your wound is as great as the sea

This speaks of Jerusalem's great suffering as if it were as terrible as the sea is great. Alternate translation: "Your suffering is as terrible as the sea is large"

Who can heal you?

"Who can restore you?" The author uses this rhetorical question to express that there is no one who can restore Jerusalem to the way it was before. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one can heal you." or "No one can restore you."

Lamentations 2:14

They have not exposed your iniquity to reverse your captivity

Possible meanings are that the prophets have not rebuked the people for their sins, and so 1) Yahweh has not brought them back from captivity or 2) Yahweh did not prevent them from going into captivity. The abstract noun "captivity" here can be translated as a verbal clause and may be a metaphor for Yahweh's punishment. Alternate translation: "They have not rebuked you for your sins so that Yahweh could free you from those who had captured you" or "They have not rebuked you for your sins so that Yahweh would not have to punish you"

for you they gave utterances

The word "utterances" can be expressed with the verb "spoke." Alternate translation: "they spoke things to you"

Lamentations 2:15

clap their hands ... hiss and shake their heads

These actions are used to mock and insult others. Alternate translation: "mock you by clapping their hands ... hiss and shake their heads"

the daughter of Jerusalem

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.

Is this the city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,' 'The Joy for All of Earth'?

This rhetorical question is used to express sarcasm. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This city that they called 'The Perfection of Beauty,' 'The Joy for All of Earth,' is not so beautiful or joyful anymore!"

The Perfection of Beauty

"Perfectly Beautiful"

Lamentations 2:16

grind their teeth

This action shows a person's anger and that they are mocking others.

We have swallowed her up

Here the people speak of destroying Jerusalem as if they were an animal swallowing its food. Alternate translation: "We have completely destroyed Jerusalem"

We have lived to see it

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "We have greatly desired to see it happen"

Lamentations 2:17

He has overthrown

"He has destroyed"

to rejoice over you

This means that the enemy rejoiced because they defeated them. Alternate translation: "to rejoice over defeating you"

he has lifted up the horn of your enemies

Here "horn"

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Lamentations 2:18

Their heart cried out to the Lord

Here the word "heart" represents the whole person emphasizing one's innermost being. Possible meanings of who cried out are 1) the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem shouted to the Lord from their innermost being" or 2) the walls are being personified. Alternate translation: "You walls, cry out to the Lord from your innermost being"

walls of the daughter of Zion! Make your tears flow ... no relief

The writer speaks to the walls of Jerusalem. He wants the people of Jerusalem to do what he is telling the walls to do. Some translations take this whole section to be spoken to the "walls," though this can be written with the first phrase "walls of the daughter of Zion!" spoken to the "walls," and the rest of the section spoken directly to the people.

the daughter of Zion

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman.

Make your tears flow down like a river

This speaks of the people crying so much that their tears would flow like a river. Alternate translation: "Cry many, many tears"

day and night

These two opposite times of day refer to all the time. Alternate translation: "all of the time"

Give yourself no relief, your eyes no relief

"Do not allow yourself and your eyes to rest from crying"

Lamentations 2:19

Arise, cry out ... of every street

The writer continues speaking to the walls of Jerusalem. He wants the people of Jerusalem to do what he is telling the walls to do. Some translations take this whole section to be spoken to the "walls," though this can be written with the first phrase "walls of the daughter of Zion!" spoken to the "walls," and the rest of the section spoken directly to the people.

at the beginning of the night watches

"many times during the night." This refers to every time a watchman came on duty.

Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord

The phrase "pour out your heart like water" is an idiom. Here the Lord is represented by his "face" to emphasize his presence. Alternate translation: "Tell the Lord how you feel in your inner being"

Lift up your hands to him

This was an action often performed while praying. Alternate translation: "Lift up your hands to him in prayer"

for the lives of your children

This means for them to request that the Lord save their children. Alternate translation: "to save the lives of your children"

at the corner of every street

The word "every" here is an exaggeration for "many." Alternate translation: "where the streets come together" or "by the roads"

Lamentations 2:20

Should women eat the fruit of their wombs ... for?

This rhetorical question is asked to emphasize that it is not right for women to eat their children. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Woman should not eat their own children ... for!"

the fruit of their wombs

This speaks of children having come from their mother as if they were fruit that came from her womb. Alternate translation: "their children that they have given birth to" or "their own children"

Should priest and prophet be slaughtered in the sanctuary of the Lord?

This rhetorical question is used to emphasize that the prophets and priests should not be killed. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "The prophets and priests should not be slaughtered in the sanctuary of the Lord!"

Should priest and prophet be slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should our enemies slaughter priests and prophets"

Lamentations 2:21

Both the young and the old lie on the dust

It is implied here that this refers to dead people. Alternate translation: "The corpses of both the young and the old lie on the dust"

Both the young and the old

These phrases refer to people. These two opposites are used to refer to all ages of people. Alternate translation: "Both young people and old people" or "People of all ages"

My virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword

Here the "sword" refers to their enemies. This is a euphemism that means that they were murdered by their enemies. Alternate translation: "My virgins and my young men have been murdered by their enemies" or "My enemies have murdered my virgins and my young men"

virgins

Here this is probably a synecdoche for young women in general, the most valuable of whom would be virgins.

you have slaughtered them

This speaks of Yahweh allowing the poeple to be slaughtered as if he killed them himself. Alternate translation: "you allowed them to be slaughtered" or "you allowed this to happen"

Lamentations 2:22

as you would call the people to a feast day

"as if they were coming to a feast." This speaks of how Yahweh summoned his enemies as if he were inviting them to a feast.

my terrors

Here the people the author fears are referred to as his "terrors." Alternate translation: "the attackers I was afraid of"

on every side

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "to attack from every direction"

on the day of the anger of Yahweh

Here "day" is used as an idiom that refers to a general period of time. Alternate translation: "at the time when Yahweh acted in his anger" or "during the time that Yahweh displayed his anger"

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3 1 I am a man who has seen affliction
under the rod of Yahweh's fury.

2 He drove me away and caused me to walk
in darkness rather than light.

3 Surely he turned his hand against me again and again,
the whole day long.

4 He made my flesh and my skin waste away;
he broke my bones.

5 He built up siege works against me,
and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship.

6 He made me live in dark places,
like those who died long ago.

7 He built a wall around me and I cannot escape.
He made my chains heavy

8 and though I call out and cry for help,
he shut out my prayer.

9 He blocked my path with a wall of hewn stone;
he made my paths crooked.

10 He is like a bear waiting to ambush me,
a lion in hiding;

11 he turned aside my paths,
he has made me desolate.

12 He bent his bow and set me
as a target for his arrow.

13 He pierced my kidneys
with the arrows of his quiver.

14 I became a laughingstock to all my people,
their taunting song all day long.

15 He filled me with bitter herbs
and forced me to drink wormwood.

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16 He has made my teeth grind with gravel,
and he made me cower in the ashes.

17 My soul is deprived of peace;
I have forgotten what prosperity is.

18 So I say, "My endurance has perished
and so has my hope in Yahweh."

19 Remember my affliction and my wanderings,
the wormwood and bitterness.

20 I continually remember it
and my soul is bowed down within me.

21 But I call this to mind
and therefore I have hope:

22 The steadfast love of Yahweh never ceases
and his compassions never end,

23 they are new every morning;
your faithfulness is great.

24 "Yahweh is my inheritance," says my soul,
therefore I will hope in him.

25 Yahweh is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul who seeks him.

26 It is good to wait silently
for the salvation of Yahweh.

27 It is good for a man
that he bear the yoke in his youth.

28 Let him sit alone in silence,
when it is laid upon him.

29 Let him put his mouth in the dust—
there may yet be hope.

30 Let him offer his cheek to the one who strikes him,

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and let him be filled to the full with insults.

31 For the Lord will not
reject us forever,

32 but though he causes grief, he will have compassion
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

33 For he does not afflict from his heart
or torment the children of mankind.

34 To crush underfoot
all the prisoners of the earth,

35 to deny a man justice
in the presence of the Most High,

36 to deprive a person of justice in his lawsuit—
the Lord would not approve such things!

37 Who has spoken and it came to pass,
unless the Lord decreed it?

38 Is it not from the mouth of the Most High
that both calamities and the good come?

39 How can any person alive complain?
How can a person complain about the punishment for his sins?

40 Let us examine our ways and test them,
and let us return to Yahweh.

41 Let us lift up our hearts and our hands
to God in the heavens:

42 "We have transgressed and rebelled,
and you have not forgiven.

43 You have covered yourself with anger and pursued us,
you have killed and you have not spared.

44 You have covered yourself with a cloud
so that no prayer can pass through.

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45 You have made us like filthy scum
and refuse among the peoples.

46 All our enemies
curse us,

47 panic and pitfall have come upon us,
ruin and destruction.

48 My eyes flow with streams of tears
because of the destruction my people.

49 My eyes will shed tears
without ceasing, without relief,

50 until Yahweh from heaven
looks down and sees.

51 My eyes cause grief to my soul
because of all the daughters of my city.

52 I have been hunted like a bird
by those who were my enemies;
they hunted me without a reason.

53 They cut off my life in the pit,
and they threw a stone on me,

54 and they caused waters to overflow, covering my head.
I said, 'I have been cut off!'

55 I called on your name, Yahweh,
from the depths of the pit.

56 You heard my voice when I said,
'Do not close your ear to my cry for help.'

57 You came near on the day I called on you;
you said, 'Do not fear.'

58 Lord, you defended my soul's case,
you redeemed my life!

59 Yahweh, you have seen

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the wrong they have done to me;
judge my case.

60 You have seen all their vengeance,
all their plots against me.

61 You have heard their insults, Yahweh,
and all their plots against me.

62 The lips and the meditations of my enemies
come against me all the day.

63 Look at how they sit and then rise up;
they mock me with their songs.

64 Pay back to them what they deserve, Yahweh,
according to the deeds of their hands.

65 You will let their hearts be shameless!
May your condemnation be upon them!

66 You pursue them in anger
and destroy them from under the heavens, Yahweh!"

Lamentations 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Troubles

Here the author speaks of the suffering experienced by the people of Jerusalem during the Babylonian siege and after the city's fall. He speaks of these sufferings as if they had been directed against him personally, as if God had personally attacked him. However, we should understand the writer's feelings as having been shared by everyone in the city.

In verse 19, the writer begins to think about the lessons that he and his fellow citizens should learn about God and his anger and his mercy. He also thinks about what it means to repent and to trust in God.

In verse 43, the writer speaks again about the suffering that God has caused to Jerusalem, but here the writer speaks of "we" and "us," not "I" and "me." But in verse 48, he begins to speak about how he himself will continually mourn over what has happened.

In verse 52, the writer begins to think about his personal enemies in Jerusalem, those who persecuted him for bringing Yahweh's messages to the city. He asks for God to show his enemies that he was doing right, and to take revenge on them for their crimes against him.

Links:

Lamentations 3:1 Notes

Lamentations 3:1

Connecting Statement:

A new poem begins. Here the author speaks of the sufferings that his people experienced. He speaks about them as if God had personally attacked only him. However, the writer intends to speak for everyone in the city.

who has seen affliction

Here the phrase "has seen" is a metaphor for experiencing something. Alternate translation: "who has experienced affliction" or "who has suffered"

under the rod of Yahweh's fury

Being "under the rod" represents being beaten with a rod. The author speaks of God's punishment as if God had beaten him with a rod. Alternate translation: "because Yahweh was very angry and has beaten me with a rod" or "because Yahweh was very angry and has punished me severely"

Lamentations 3:2

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He drove me away

"He forced me to go away"

caused me to walk in darkness rather than light

Here "darkness" represents suffering. Alternate translation: "caused me to suffer terribly with no hope, like a person walking in darkness rather than light"

Lamentations 3:3

he turned his hand against me

Here "turned his hand against me" represents attacking him. The author speaks of God causing bad things to happen to him as if God had attacked him. Alternate translation: "he has attacked me" or "he has caused many bad things to happen to me, like someone who attacks a person"

Lamentations 3:4

He made my flesh and my skin waste away; he broke my bones

Possible meanings are 1) these things are a result of being beaten or 2) these are more ways that God punished the man.

Lamentations 3:5

He built up siege works against me

Siege works are ramps that an army builds around a city to enable them to climb over the city walls and invade the city.

He built up siege works against me

Possible meanings are 1) the author speaks of God causing bad things to happen to him as if he were a city and God was an enemy that built up siege works against him. Alternate translation: "God attacked me like an enemy army that sets up siege works around a city" or 2) the author speaks of God causing the enemy army to attack Jerusalem as if God were the enemy. Alternate translation: "God caused the enemy army to build up siege works against me"

surrounded me with bitterness and hardship

This represents God causing him to experience much bitterness and hardship. Alternate translation: "caused me to experience much bitterness and hardship" or "caused me to suffer and have many problems"

bitterness

Here "bitterness" represents suffering.

Lamentations 3:6

He made me live in dark places, like those who died long ago

Here "dark places" is a metaphor for suffering. The author compares the intensity of his suffering to the intensity of the darkness that those who died long ago experience. Alternate translation: "The suffering that he causes me is intense like the darkness of the grave" or "He makes me suffer terribly, as if I were in the darkness of those who died long ago"

Lamentations 3:7

He built a wall around me and I cannot escape. He made my chains heavy

This represents the continuing suffering. Like a person who cannot escape from prison, the author cannot make his suffering stop. Alternate translation: "My suffering continues. It is as though he has built a wall around me and put heavy chains on me, and I cannot escape"

Lamentations 3:8

he shut out my prayer

The author speaks about God refusing to listen to his prayers as though God was shutting his ears so that the author's prayers could not go into them. Alternate translation: "he refuses to hear my prayer"

Lamentations 3:9

He blocked my path

The author speaks of God causing him to continue to suffer as if God was preventing him from escaping the suffering by blocking his path. Alternate translation: "It is as though he blocked my path"

a wall of hewn stone

"a wall of cut stones." People would cut stones into regular shapes that could fit together well in order to build a strong wall.

he made my paths crooked

Crooked paths do not lead people to where they want to go. Here they represent unsuccessful ways of escaping suffering. Alternate translation: "it is as though he has made my paths crooked" or "I have tried to make the suffering stop, but God has prevented me, like one who prevents another from escaping by making his paths crooked"

Lamentations 3:10

He is like a bear waiting to ambush me, a lion in hiding

The author speaks of God being ready to cause him to suffer more, as if God were a wild animal waiting to attack him.

Lamentations 3:11

he turned aside my paths

Possible meanings are 1) "he dragged me off the path" or 2) "he caused my path to turn in the wrong direction"

he has made me desolate

"he has made me hopeless" or "he has not allowed me to have any help"

Lamentations 3:12

General Information:

God is often spoken of as if he were a warrior.

He bent his bow

A soldier has to bend his bow in order to shoot an arrow from it. The author speaks of God deciding to cause him trouble as if God were a warrior ready to shoot him with an arrow. See how you translated this in Lamentations 2:4. Alternate translation: "It was as if God made his bow ready to shoot"

Lamentations 3:13

He pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver

The author speaks of the deep grief he feels as if God had shot his kidneys with an arrow. Alternate translation: "My grief is great. It is as if he pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver"

my kidneys

The kidneys are abdominal organs that move urine into the bladder. They are a metaphor for a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "deep into my body" or 2) "my heart"

quiver

a bag worn on the back in which to store arrows

Lamentations 3:14

a laughingstock to all my people

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The word "all" is a generalization, meaning "most."
Alternate translation: "a laughingstock to most of my people" or "someone whom all my people mock"
laughingstock
someone whom many people mock
their taunting song
Jeremiah speaks of being the person about whom they sing their taunt song as if he were the song itself. Alternate translation: "and I am the one about whom they sing taunting songs" or "and they sing taunting songs about me"
Lamentations 3:15
General Information:
The writer gives two metaphors to describe how Yahweh has made him suffer. The first metaphor speaks of Yahweh as if he were forcing Jeremiah to eat bitter herbs, and the second as if he were forcing him to drink a bitter liquid.
He filled me with bitter herbs
Here the phrase "bitter herbs" is a metaphor for suffering. Alternate translation: "I suffer as if he caused me eat a great amount of bitter herbs"
forced me to drink wormwood
Wormwood is the bitter juice from the leaves and flowers of a certain plant. Drinking that bitter juice represents suffering. Alternate translation: "I suffer as if he forced me to drink fill my stomach with wormwood"
forced me to drink wormwood
The word "drink" here speaks of drinking a large amount of something. Some modern translations read, "forced me to drink so much wormwood that I became drunk."
Lamentations 3:16
He has made my teeth grind with gravel
Possible meanings are 1) the author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had forced him to chew gravel. Alternate translation: "He has humiliated me, like someone who forces another to chew gravel" or 2) the author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had pushed his face down into the gravel on the ground. Alternate translation: "He has humiliated me, like someone who pushes another man's face down into the gravel"
he made me cower in the ashes
The author speaks of God humiliating him as if God had pushed him down into the ashes of a fire on the ground.
cower
make oneself as small as possible because of fear of something one cannot fight against
Lamentations 3:17
My soul is deprived of peace
Possible meanings are 1) the author's experiences are not peaceful. Alternate translation: "I have no peace in my life" or 2) the author does not feel peace. Alternate translation: "I feel no peace in my soul"
Lamentations 3:18
My endurance has perished and so has my hope in Yahweh
The author speaks as if his ability to endure more suffering and his hope that Yahweh will help him were living beings that have died. Alternate translation: "I cannot endure anymore suffering and I can no longer hope that Yahweh will help me"
endurance
Some versions translate this as "glory" or "splendor."
Lamentations 3:19
General Information:
In verses 19 to 42, the writer thinks about the lessons that he and his fellow citizens should learn about God and his anger and mercy.
wormwood and bitterness
Wormwood is a plant that gives a liquid which is very bitter to drink. Together "wormwood" and "bitterness" represent severe suffering.
Lamentations 3:20
my soul is bowed down within me
"I am depressed" or "I am discouraged"
Lamentations 3:21
But I call this to mind
This means to intentionally think about something. The word "this" refers to something that the author will start to speak about in the next verse. Alternate translation: "But I choose to think about this" or "But I remember this"
I have hope
"I hope"
Lamentations 3:22
The steadfast love of Yahweh never ceases
The abstract noun "steadfast love" can be expressed with the phrase "love faithfully." Alternate translation: "Yahweh never stops loving his people faithfully"
his compassions never end
The abstract noun "compassions" can be translated with the verb "care." Alternate translation: "he never stops caring for those who suffer"
Lamentations 3:23
they are new every morning
The word "they" refers to God's steadfast love and compassions. Their being new represents God continuing to act according to them. Alternate translation: "every morning he treats us again with steadfast love and compassion"
your faithfulness
The word "your" refers to Yahweh.
Lamentations 3:24
Yahweh is my inheritance
When God gave each tribe of Israel their land, he called it an inheritance. The author speaks of Yahweh being all he needs as if Yahweh were the inheritance that he had received. Alternate translation: "Because Yahweh is with me, I have everything I need"
says my soul
The phrase "my soul" is a synecdoche for Jeremiah himself. Alternate translation: "I say"
therefore I will hope in him
Many versions treat these words as the end of the quotation that begins the verse.
Lamentations 3:25
Yahweh is good to those who wait for him
Here "good" refers to kindness. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is kind to those who wait for him" or "Yahweh does good things for those who wait for him"
those who wait for him
Possible meanings are 1) "all those who depend on him" or

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2) "the one who waits patiently for him to act."

the soul who seeks him

Possible meanings for "seeks him" are 1) asking God for help or 2) wanting to know God.

the soul

This phrase is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "the person"

Lamentations 3:27

that he bear the yoke in his youth

Here "bear the yoke" represents suffering. The abstract noun "his youth" can be expressed with the word "young." Alternate translation: "that he suffer while he is young"

Lamentations 3:28

Let him sit alone in silence

The phrase "in silence" refers to not speaking. Here it may refer specifically to not complaining. Alternate translation: "Let him sit alone without speaking" or "Let him sit alone and not complain"

when it is laid upon him

"when the yoke is laid upon him." Here the yoke represents suffering. Alternate translation: "when he suffers"

Lamentations 3:30

General Information:

The writer speaks of the one who waits for Yahweh (Lamentations 3:25).

Let him offer his cheek to the one who strikes him

The word "him" refers to anyone who is suffering and who waits for Yahweh. Here "offer his cheek" represents allowing someone to strike his cheek. Alternate translation: "Let him allow people to hit him on the face"

let him be filled to the full with insults

The author speaks of a person as if he were a container and reproach were a liquid. Being filled with insults represents being insulted again and again. The implication is that he should be patient when this happens. Alternate translation: "let him be insulted much" or "let him be patient when people insult him"

Lamentations 3:32

though he causes grief

"though the Lord causes people to suffer" or "though he afflicts people"

he will have compassion

"he will be compassionate to them"

Lamentations 3:33

For he does not afflict from his heart

Here the heart represents desire or pleasure, and afflicting from the heart represents afflicting with pleasure. Alternate translation: "For it does not make him happy to afflict people" or "He does not take pleasure in afflicting people"

the children of mankind

This refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "human beings" or "people"

Lamentations 3:34

General Information:

The author wrote in general terms about what is true for all people, but it shows God's concern for his people, the people of Israel, who were being mistreated by their enemies.

To crush underfoot

Here "crush underfoot" represents abusing and mistreating people. Alternate translation: "To abuse" or "To mistreat" -

To crush

"If people crush"

Lamentations 3:35

to deny a man justice

"if they deny a man justice." This refers to not allowing a person to have what he deserves. Alternate translation: "to deny a person his rights" or "to keep a person from having what he deserves"

in the presence of the Most High

Doing something "in the presence of the Most High" represents doing it while knowing that God sees it. Alternate translation: "knowing that the Most High sees it"

Lamentations 3:36

to deprive a person of justice

Here "deprive a person of justice" refers to not making a just decision for a person in a legal concern. Alternate translation: "to judge a person wrongly in court" or "to keep a person who goes to a judge from getting what is right"

to deprive a person of justice

"if they deny justice to a person" or "if they do not treat a person justly"

Lamentations 3:37

Who has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord decreed it?

The author uses this rhetorical question to teach that when someone commands something to happen, it will happen only if God has already decreed that it should happen. Alternate translation: "No one has spoken and it came to pass, unless the Lord decreed it." or "What someone has commanded to happen has never happened unless the Lord decreed it."

has spoken

It can be expressed clearly that this refers to commanding something to happen. Alternate translation: "has commanded that something should happen"

it came to pass

"what he said happened"

Lamentations 3:38

Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and the good come?

The author uses this rhetorical question to teach that both calamities and good things happen only because God has commanded them to happen. Alternate translation: "It is only from the mouth of the Most High that both calamities and the good come." or "It is only because the Most High has commanded it that both calamities and good things happen."

from the mouth of the Most High

Here "mouth" represents what God says or commands. Alternate translation: "from the command of the Most High" or "because the Most High has commanded it"

both calamities and the good come

Here "come" represents happening. Also, the nominal adjective "the good" can be stated as "good things." Alternate translation: "both calamities and good things happen"

Lamentations 3:39

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How can any person alive complain? How can a person complain about the punishment for his sins?

The author uses these rhetorical questions to teach that people should not complain when God punishes them. Alternate translation: "A person should not complain when God punishes him for his sins."

How can any person alive complain

Possible meanings are 1) it is implied that mere people cannot fully understand God's actions. Alternate translation: "How can a mere person complain" or 2) it is implied that being alive is a gift from God. Alternate translation: "How can a person who is blessed to be alive complain"

Lamentations 3:40

General Information:

The writer speaks again about the suffering that God has caused to Jerusalem, but here he speaks of "we" and "us," not "I" and "me." In verse 42 the author starts a prayer that he and the people of Israel should pray.

let us return to Yahweh

Here "return to Yahweh" represents submitting to him again. Alternate translation: "let us submit to Yahweh again"

Lamentations 3:41

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands

Here "lift up our hearts" represents praying sincerely. It was customary for the Israelites to raise their hands when praying to God. Alternate translation: "Let us pray sincerely with lifted hands" or "Let us lift up our hands and pray sincerely"

Lamentations 3:42

We have transgressed and rebelled

The words "transgressed" and "rebelled" share similar meanings. Together they indicate that transgression is the same as rebelling against Yahweh.

Lamentations 3:43

You have covered yourself with anger

Here anger is spoken of as if it were a garment that God has put on. Hebrew often spoke of emotions as if they were clothing. Alternate translation: "You have been angry"

you have killed

"you have killed many of us"

you have not spared

Here "spared" represents having pity. Alternate translation: "you have not had pity on us"

Lamentations 3:44

Connecting Statement:

The prayer that began in Lamentations 3:42 continues.

You have covered yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through

This represents God refusing to listen to the people's prayer. Alternate translation: "You refuse to listen to our prayers. It is as though you put a cloud between us and you so that our prayers cannot get to you"

Lamentations 3:45

You have made us like filthy scum and refuse among the peoples

The people of Israel are compared to filthy scum and refuse. Possible meanings are 1) God has caused the peoples to think of his people as worthless. Alternate translation: "You have made the peoples think of us as scum and garbage" or 2) God's forcing his people to live among the peoples is like throwing them away as garbage. Alternate translation: "You have thrown us away like filthy garbage among the peoples"

peoples

nations or other groups of people who are not Israelites

Lamentations 3:47

panic and pitfall have come upon us, ruin and destruction

The abstract nouns "panic," "pitfall," "ruin" and "destruction" can be expressed with verbs. Alternate translation: "we are panicking. We are trapped, and we are being ruined and destroyed" or "we are terrified and trapped. We are being completely destroyed"

pitfall

This refers to falling into a pit. Here it represents being trapped in any way.

have come upon us

"have happened to us"

ruin and destruction

These two words share similar meanings and refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "total destruction"

Lamentations 3:48

General Information:

The author speaks about himself again.

My eyes flow with streams of tears

Here the author speaks of the great amount of his tears as if they were streams. He uses exaggeration to show that he is very sad and has cried much. Alternate translation: "Tears flow from my eyes like water flowing in a river"

because of the destruction my people

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated using the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "because enemies have destroyed my people"

Lamentations 3:49

without ceasing, without relief

Both of these phrases means the same thing. The author speaks of his continuing to cry as if his eyes were a person and had no rest from crying. Alternate translation: "without stopping"

Lamentations 3:50

until Yahweh from heaven looks down and sees

What the author hopes Yahweh will see can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "until Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees what has happened to my people"

Lamentations 3:51

My eyes cause grief to my soul

The phrase "My eyes" represents what he sees, and the word "soul" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "What I see causes me to grieve"

because of all the daughters of my city

It can be stated clearly that the "daughters of my city" are suffering. Alternate translation: "because the daughters of my city are suffering" or "because I see the daughters of my city suffering"

all the daughters of my city

Possible meanings are 1) the women of Jerusalem or 2) all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

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Lamentations 3:52
I have been hunted like a bird by those who were my enemies
The author speaks of people looking for him in order to kill him as if he were an animal that they were hunting. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My enemies have looked for me in order to kill me like people who hunt for a bird"
Lamentations 3:53
They cut off my life in the pit
"They tried to kill me by throwing me into a pit"
pit
Possible meanings are 1) any deep hole in the ground that is hard to climb out of or 2) a hole dug to hold water.
threw a stone on me
Possible meanings are 1) "threw stones down on me" or 2) "covered the pit with a stone"
Lamentations 3:54
they caused waters to overflow, covering my head
"the level of the water in the pit rose up over my head"
I have been cut off
Being "cut off" often represents being killed. Here it represents dying very soon. Alternate translation: "I am about to die"
Lamentations 3:55
I called ... from the depths of the pit
These words could mean either 1) the author was calling from the bottom of a literal pit into which he had been thrown. Alternate translation: "I called ... from the bottom of the pit" Or 2) the author was afraid he was about to die and he spoke of death as a pit out of which he could not climb. Alternate translation: "from the pit of the dead"
I called on your name
God's name represents his character, and here, "called on your name" represents trusting God's character and calling on him for help. Alternate translation: "I called to you for help"
Lamentations 3:56
You heard my voice
Here "voice" represents what he said. Alternate translation: "You heard my words"
Do not close your ear
Here "close your ear" represents refusing to listen. Alternate translation: "Do not refuse to listen"
Lamentations 3:57
You came near
People often come near to a person they help. Here "came near" represents helping the man. Alternate translation: "you helped me"
Lamentations 3:58
you defended my soul's case
The author speaks of God keeping him from being killed by his enemies as if God had defended him in court as a lawyer defends someone and kept him from being killed. The word "soul" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "you saved my life from my enemies. It is as though you defended me in court"
you redeemed my life
Jeremiah speaks of Yahweh saving him from death as if Yahweh had paid Jeremiah's captor so Jeremiah could go free.
Lamentations 3:59
judge my case
Here God is no longer pictured as a lawyer, but as the judge. It can be stated clearly that he wanted God to judge in his favor. Alternate translation: "make a decision about me, and show my enemies that I am right"
Lamentations 3:60
You have seen all their vengeance
Jeremiah is referring to people insulting him. Alternate translation: "You have seen how they have taken revenge against me"
all their plots against me
This is another thing that God has seen. Plots against someone are plans to harm him. Alternate translation: "and how they have made many plans to harm me"
Lamentations 3:61
You have heard their insults ... all their plots against me
The plural abstract noun "insults" can be expressed with the verbs "taunt," or "mock." It can be stated clearly that the plans were to harm him. Alternate translation: "You heard how they have taunted me ... and all they plan to do to me" or "You have heard them mock me ... and plan ways to harm me"
Lamentations 3:62
The lips and the meditations of my enemies come against me all the day
Here the phrase "The lips" refers to what his enemies say, and "the meditations" refers to what his enemies are planning to do to harm him. The author speaks as if their words and thoughts were soldiers that come to attack him all day. Alternate translation: "My enemies speak against me and think about how to harm me the whole day"
Lamentations 3:63
how they sit and then rise up
These two actions together represent everything the people do. Alternate translation: "everything they do"
Lamentations 3:64
Pay back to them what they deserve, Yahweh, according to the deeds of their hands
Here "Pay back to them" represents punishing them. What they have done can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Punish them as they deserve, Yahweh, according to what they have done" or "Yahweh, they have made me suffer, so please make them suffer just as much"
Lamentations 3:65
You will let their hearts be shameless
Here the "heart" is a metonym that represents their attitudes and emotions, and being "shameless" means not feeling ashamed of their sins even though they should. Their not being ashamed would give even more reason for God to punish them. Alternate translation: "You will let them feel no shame for their sins"
May your condemnation be upon them
The abstract noun "condemnation" can be expressed with the verbs "condemn" or "curse." Alternate translation: "Condemn them" or "Curse them"
Lamentations 3:66
from under the heavens
Here "from under the heavens" represents everywhere on

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earth. Alternate translation: "wherever they are on earth"

4 [1] The gold has become tarnished;
how the purest gold has changed!
The holy stones are scattered
at the corner of every street.

[2] The precious sons of Zion
were worth their weight in pure gold,
but now they are considered like clay jars,
the work of the potter's hands!

[3] Even the jackals offer the breast
to nurse their cubs,
but the daughter of my people has become cruel,
like the ostriches in the desert.

[4] The tongue of the nursing baby
sticks to the roof of his mouth by thirst;
the children ask for food,
but there is none for them.

[5] Those who used to eat delicacies
are now desolate in the streets.
Those who were brought up wearing scarlet clothing
now lie on piles of ashes.

[6] The iniquity of the daughter of my people
is greater than the sin of Sodom,
which was overthrown in a moment
and no hands were wrung for her.

[7] Her princes were purer than snow,
whiter than milk;
their bodies were more ruddy than coral,
their form was like sapphire.

[8] Their appearance now is darker than soot;
they are not recognized in the streets.
Their skin has shriveled on their bones;
it has become as dry as wood.

[9] Those killed by the sword

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are better than those killed by hunger,
who wasted away,
pierced by the lack of any harvest from the field.

10 The hands of compassionate women
have boiled their own children;
they became their food during the time
when the daughter of my people was being destroyed.

11 Yahweh showed all his wrath;
he poured out his fierce anger.
He kindled a fire in Zion
that consumed her foundations.

12 The kings of the earth did not believe,
nor did any of the inhabitants of the world believe,
that adversary or enemy
could enter the gates of Jerusalem.

13 This happened because of the sins of her prophets
and the iniquities of her priests
who have shed the blood of the righteous
in her midst.

14 They wandered, blind,
through the streets.
They were so defiled by that blood
that no one could touch their clothes.

15 "Away! Unclean!" people cried at them.
"Away! Away! Do not touch!"
So they wandered about;
people said among the nations,
"They can stay here no longer."

16 Yahweh himself scattered them;
he does not watch over them anymore.
They did not honor the priests,
and they did not show favor to the elders.

17 Our eyes failed, looking in vain for help;
from our watchtowers we watched
for a nation

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that could not rescue us.

18 They followed our steps,
we could not walk in our streets.
Our end was near and our days were numbered,
our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were swifter
than the eagles in the sky.
They chased us to the mountains
and lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

20 The breath in our nostrils—Yahweh's anointed one—
he was the one who was captured in their pits;
of whom it was said,
"Under his shadow we will live among the nations."

21 Rejoice and be glad, daughter of Edom,
you who live in the land of Uz.
But to you also the cup will be passed;
you will be drunk and strip yourself naked.

22 Daughter of Zion,
your punishment will come to an end;
he will not extend your exile.
But daughter of Edom,
he will punish your iniquity;
he will uncover your sins.

Lamentations 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Judah being destroyed continues in this chapter. Famine destroyed the rulers and the priests. (See: priest)

Links:

Lamentations 4:1 Notes

Lamentations 4:1

General Information:

A new poem begins. See and and.

The gold has become tarnished; how the purest gold has changed

The people of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were gold that is no longer shiny, and therefore no longer valuable. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem are like gold that is no longer shiny. They are like pure gold that is no longer beautiful"

how the purest gold has changed

This is an exclamation that shows the author's sadness that this has happened.

The holy stones are scattered at the corner of every street

This may refer to the temple being destroyed and its stones scattered throughout the city. It may also be a metaphor for the people being scattered.

at the corner of every street

"wherever the streets come together" or "by all the roads"

Lamentations 4:2

sons of Zion

Here people of a city are spoken of as if they were the sons of the city. These words could refer to 1) only the young

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men of Jerusalem or 2) all the people of Jerusalem.
they are considered like clay jars, the work of the potter's hands
The author speaks of the precious sons of Zion as if they were considered to be inexpensive clay jars. Alternate translation: "people think of them as worthless, like the clay jars that potters make"
Lamentations 4:3
General Information:
Because of the lack of food in the city, the people of Jerusalem do not give their children all they need.
the jackals offer the breast to nurse their cubs
This means that mother jackals feed their baby jackals.
jackals
fierce wild dogs
the daughter of my people ... like the ostriches in the desert
The people in Jerusalem are compared to ostriches because they are cruel to their children.
the daughter of my people has
This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11]
ostriches
large birds that abandon some of their eggs
Lamentations 4:4
The tongue of the nursing baby sticks to the roof of his mouth by thirst
"Nursing babies are so thirsty that their tongues stick to the top of their mouths"
Lamentations 4:5
are now desolate in the streets
These people no longer have homes, so they live outside along the streets and do not have enough to eat.
Those who were brought up wearing scarlet clothing
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who grew up wearing scarlet clothing" or "those who wore scarlet clothing when they were growing up"
scarlet clothing
Here this phrase is a metonym for luxurious, expensive, and comfortable clothing, at least some of which was probably scarlet. Alternate translation: "luxurious clothing"
now lie on piles of ashes
This is because they no longer have homes and soft beds.
Lamentations 4:6
The iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom
Possible meanings are 1) "the daughter of my people has sinned worse than the people of Sodom sinned" or 2) the words "iniquity" and "sin" are metonyms for the punishment for iniquity and sin: "Yahweh has punished the daughter of my people worse than he punished the people of Sodom."
the daughter of my people
This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11]
which was overthrown in a moment
The word "which" refers to Sodom. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which God destroyed in a moment"
no hands were wrung for her
Possible meanings are 1) people wringing their hands is a metaphor for people who are worried or sad because of what has happened, so no one was sad about what happened to her, or 2) the phrase "wrung for" should be translated "turned against," meaning that only Yahweh, and no people, harmed her, or 3) the phrase "wrung for" should be translated "turned toward," meaning that no people helped her.
her
Possible meanings are that this is a metaphor for 1) Sodom or 2) Jerusalem.
Lamentations 4:7
Her princes were purer than snow, whiter than milk
Possible meanings are 1) Jerusalem's leaders were beautiful to look at because they were physically healthy or 2) the leaders were morally pure as new snow and milk are pure white.
Her princes
"Jerusalem's leaders"
their bodies were more ruddy than coral
"their bodies were redder than coral." This implies that they were healthy. Alternate translation: "their bodies were healthy and red"
coral
a rock-hard red substance that comes from the ocean and was used for making decorations
sapphire
a costly blue stone used in jewelry
Lamentations 4:8
Their appearance now is darker than soot
This may be because 1) the sun has darkened the leaders' skin or 2) the soot from the fires that burned Jerusalem has covered their faces.
they are not recognized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can recognize them"
Their skin has shriveled on their bones
This implies that there was not much muscle or fat under the skin.
it has become as dry as wood
Their dry skin is compared to dry wood.
Lamentations 4:9
Those killed by the sword
Here the "sword" represents an enemy's attack. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those whom enemy soldiers have killed"
are better than
"are happier than" or "do not suffer as much as"
those killed by hunger
Here "hunger" represents starvation. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who starved to death"
who wasted away
"who became extremely thin and weak"
pierced by the lack of any harvest from the field
Here "harvest from the field" is a metonym that represents food to eat. Lack of food is spoken of here as if it were a sword that pierces people. Alternate translation: "who died because there was not enough food to eat"

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Lamentations 4:10

The hands of compassionate women

Here the women are represented by their "hands." Because they were so hungry, women who had been compassionate in the past were no longer compassionate toward their children; instead they boiled them for food. Alternate translation: "Compassionate women" or "Women who had been compassionate in the past"

they became their food

"their children became the women's food." If your language has a word for food that a person eats when he is ill or very sad, consider using it here.

the daughter of my people was

This is a poetic name for Jerusalem, which is spoken of here as if it were a woman. See how you translated this in [Lamentations 2:11]

Lamentations 4:11

Yahweh showed all his wrath; he poured out his fierce anger

Yahweh was very angry, and he did everything he wanted to do to show that he was angry.

he poured out his fierce anger

God's punishing his people is spoken of as if his anger were a burning hot liquid that he poured out on them. Alternate translation: "because of his fierce anger, he punished his people" or "in fierce anger he responded to his people"

He kindled a fire in Zion

This represents God causing Israel's enemies to start a fire in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "He caused a fire to start in Zion"

that consumed her foundations

Here "her foundations" represents the whole city, even the part of the city that would be ruined last. Alternate translation: "that burned down the city, even its foundations"

Lamentations 4:12

The kings of the earth did not believe, nor did any of the inhabitants of the world believe,

"The kings of the earth and the rest of the inhabitants of the world did not believe"

adversary or enemy

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that these are people who desired to harm Jerusalem. These may be translated as plurals. Alternate translation: "adversaries or enemies" or "any kind of enemy" or "any of Jerusalem's enemies"

Lamentations 4:13

the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests

These two lines share similar meanings and emphasize that these spiritual leaders were largely responsible for the fall of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the terrible sins of her prophets and priests"

who have shed the blood of the righteous

Both the priests and the prophets were guilty of murder. Here "shed the blood" represents murder. Alternate translation: "who have murdered the righteous"

Lamentations 4:14

They wandered, blind, through the streets

The priests and prophets are spoken of as if they were blind because they wandered through the streets, not knowing where to go. Alternate translation: "They wandered through the streets like blind men"

They were so defiled by that blood

Here "defiled" represents being unacceptable to God. Because the priests and prophets murdered people, they were ritually unclean, unable to worship God or be with ordinary people.

defiled by that blood

"defiled by the blood that they shed." Possible meanings are 1) the blood was on their clothes or 2) "blood" is a metonym for murder.

no one could touch their clothes

No one wanted to become unclean by touching the clothes of the priests and prophets v. 13.

Lamentations 4:15

Away! Unclean

"Go away! You are unclean"

Away! Away! Do not touch

"Go away! Go away! Do not touch us"

Lamentations 4:16

scattered them

"scattered the prophets and priests"

he does not watch over them anymore

Here "watch over them" represents being concerned about them and helping them. Alternate translation: "he does not care about them anymore"

They did not honor the priests

The word "they" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "The people did not honor the priests" or "The priests are not honored"

Lamentations 4:17

Our eyes failed, looking in vain for help

Their eyes failing represents their seeking and not being able to find what they were looking for. These two phrases together emphasize that they were trying hard to find help. Alternate translation: "We continued looking, but we could not find anyone to help us"

for help

The abstract noun "help" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "for people to help us"

in vain

without succeeding

we watched for a nation that could not rescue us

Here "watched" represents hoping. It can be stated clearly that they were hoping that a nation would come and rescue them. Alternate translation: "we hoped for a nation to come and rescue us, but it could not rescue us"

Lamentations 4:18

They followed our steps

Here "our steps" represents where they went. Alternate translation: "Our enemies followed us everywhere we went"

Our end was near

Here "near" is a metaphor for "soon." Alternate translation: "Our end would be soon" or "Our enemies would soon destroy us"

Our end

Possible meanings are 1) "Our end" refers to the end of living in their own city because their enemies would

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destroy the city and capture them. Alternate translation: "Our destruction" or "Our capture" or 2) "Our end" refers to the end of their lives. Alternate translation: "Our death" or "The time for us to die"

our days were numbered

Being numbered represents being so few that they could be easily counted. Alternate translation: "we had very little time"

our end had come

The phrase "had come" means that what they had expected was now happening. Alternate translation: "it was now the end for us" or "our enemies were attacking us"

Lamentations 4:19

Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles in the sky

The author compares the speed of their pursuers to the speed of eagles flying. Eagles fly very quickly to catch other animals. Alternate translation: "Those who were chasing us were faster than eagles"

lay in wait for us

"waited to attack us"

Lamentations 4:20

he was the one who was captured in their pits

Here "pits" refers to the enemies' plans to capture him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he was the one whom our enemies captured by their plans" or "our enemies made plans to capture our king, and they did capture him"

of whom it was said

This phrase with the quote following it gives us more information about the king. The quote shows what the people had hoped the king would do for them before he was trapped. It can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "even though we had said about him"

Under his shadow we will live among the nations

Here "his shadow" represents him protecting them. Alternate translation: "Under his protection we will live among the nations" or "Though we may have to live in other nations, he will protect us"

Lamentations 4:21

Rejoice and be glad

"Rejoice" and "be glad" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of gladness. The writer uses these words to mock the people. He knew that the people of Edom would be glad that Jerusalem is being destroyed. Alternate translation: "Be very glad"

daughter of Edom

The people of the land of Edom are spoken of as if they were a woman. They were Israel's enemy.

But to you also the cup will be passed

The cup is a metonym for the wine in it. The wine is a metaphor for punishment. Alternate translation: "But Yahweh will also punish you"

Lamentations 4:22

Daughter of Zion

The people of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were a woman. \

your punishment will come to an end

"your punishment will end." The abstract noun punishment can be expressed with the verb "punish." Alternate translation: "Yahweh will stop punishing you"

he will not extend your exile

"Yahweh will not make your time in exile longer" or "Yahweh will not make you stay in exile longer"

he will uncover your sins

Here the sins not being known by others are spoken of as if they are under a cover. Removing the cover represents letting other people know about them. Alternate translation: "he will expose your sins" or "he will cause other people to know how you have sinned"

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5 1 Remember, Yahweh, what has happened to us;
look and see our disgrace.

2 Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers;
our houses to foreigners.

3 We have become orphans, without a father,
and our mothers are like widows.

4 We must pay silver for the water we drink,
and we must pay silver to get our own wood.

5 Those who are coming after us are close behind us;
we are weary and we can find no rest.

6 We have given ourselves to Egypt and to Assyria
to get enough food.

7 Our fathers sinned, and they are no more,

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and we bear their iniquities.

8 Slaves rule over us,
and there is no one to deliver us from their hand.

9 We get our bread only by risking our lives,
because of the sword in the wilderness.

10 Our skin has grown as hot as an oven
because of the burning heat of hunger.

11 Women are raped in Zion,
and virgins in the cities of Judah.

12 Princes are hung up by their own hands,
and no honor is shown to the elders.

13 Young men are forced to grind grain with a millstone,
and boys stagger under heavy loads of wood.

14 The elders have left the city gate,
and the young men have left their music.

15 The joy of our heart has ceased
and our dancing has turned into mourning.

16 The crown has fallen from our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!

17 For this our heart has become sick,
for these things our eyes grow dim

18 for Mount Zion lies desolate,
with jackals prowling over it.

19 But you, Yahweh, reign forever,
and you will sit upon your throne
from generation to generation.

20 Why do you forget us forever?
Why do you abandon us
for the length of your days?

21 Restore us to yourself, Yahweh,
and we will be restored.

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Renew our days
as they were long ago—

22 unless you have utterly rejected us
and you are angry with us beyond measure.

Lamentations 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Judah was destroyed for her sin. As slaves, life was very hard. The author wondered if God would be angry forever. (See: sin and eternity)

Links:

Lamentations 5:1 Notes

Lamentations 5:1

General Information:

A new poem begins. See and and.

Remember, Yahweh, what has happened to us

"Remember" here is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, think about what has happened to us"

look and see our disgrace

"look at the shameful state we are in"

Lamentations 5:2

Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers; our houses to foreigners

The idea of things being turned over to others can be expressed with an active form. Since it is also understood in the second part of the sentence, those words can be repeated there. Alternate translation: "You have turned our inheritance over to strangers; you have turned our houses over to strangers" or "You have allowed strangers to take possession of our inheritance; you have allowed foreigners to take possession of our houses"

Lamentations 5:3

We have become orphans ... our mothers are like widows

The people of Jerusalem have no one to protect them because the men have either died in battle or have gone into exile. This speaks of the people not having their fathers and husbands present as if they had actually become orphans and widows.

orphans, without a father

These two phrases have the same meaning and emphasize that the people no longer have their fathers. Alternate translation: "orphans who have no fathers"

Lamentations 5:4

We must pay silver for the water we drink ... our own wood

This means that their enemies are making them pay money to have the water and wood that they once used for free. Alternate translation: "We have to pay silver to our enemies in order to drink our own water ... our own wood"

we must pay silver to get our own wood

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "our enemies sell us our own wood"

Lamentations 5:5

Those who are coming after us

"Our enemies who are chasing after us." This refers to the Babylonian army.

we can find no rest

This speaks of being able to rest as if "rest" were an object that could be found. Alternate translation: "we are unable to rest"

Lamentations 5:6

We have given ourselves to Egypt and to Assyria to get enough food

This phrase "given ourselves" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "We have made a treaty with Egypt and with Assyria so that we would have food to eat" or "We have surrendered to Egypt and to Assyria to have enough food to remain alive"

Lamentations 5:7

they are no more

This refers to them being dead. Alternate translation: "they have died"

we bear their iniquities

Here "iniquities" represents the punishment received because of their ancestors' sins. Alternate translation: "we bear the punishment for their sins"

Lamentations 5:8

Slaves rule over us

Possible meanings are 1) "Now the people who rule over us are themselves slaves to their own masters in Babylon" or 2) "People who used to be slaves in Babylon now rule over us."

to deliver us from their hand

Here the word "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "to rescue us from their control"

Lamentations 5:9

bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

because of the sword in the wilderness

Here robbers with swords are represented by their "swords." Alternate translation: "because there are robbers in the wilderness who kill others with swords"

Lamentations 5:10

Our skin has grown as hot as an oven because of the burning heat of hunger

This speaks of the peoples' bodies being hot and feverish as if their skin was as hot as an oven. The people have fever

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because of their hunger. Alternate translation: "Our skin has become hot like an oven, and we have a very high fever because we are extremely hungry"

Lamentations 5:11

Women are raped in Zion, and virgins in the cities of Judah

These two phrases have similar meaning and emphasize that the women are being violated. The words "are raped" are understood in the second part of this sentence and can be repeated. Alternate translation: "Women are raped in Zion, and virgins are raped in the cities of Judah"

Women are raped ... and virgins

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Our enemies have raped the women ... and the virgins" or "Our enemies have violated the women ... and the virgins"

Lamentations 5:12

Princes are hung up by their own hands

Possible meanings are 1) the word "their" refers to their enemies. Alternate translation: "With their own hands, they hung princes" or 2) they tied each prince's hands together with one end of a rope and tied the other end so the prince's feet could not touch the ground.

no honor is shown to the elders

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they have shown no honor to the elders"

Lamentations 5:13

Young men are forced

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They force young men"

boys stagger under heavy loads of wood

The boys are forced to carry the loads of wood. Alternate translation: "boys stagger because they are forced to carry heavy loads of wood" or "they force the boys to carry heavy loads of wood which make them stagger"

Lamentations 5:14

the city gate

This is where the elders would give legal advice, but also where people would meet socially.

the young men have left their music

Playing music was part of the social life at the city gate. This speaks of the men no longer playing their music as if the act of playing music were a place that they left. Alternate translation: "the young men have stopped playing their music"

Lamentations 5:15

The joy of our heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the whole person and emphasizes their emotions. Alternate translation: "Our joy"

Lamentations 5:16

The crown has fallen from our head

Possible meanings are 1) "We no longer wear flowers on our heads for celebrations" or 2) The "crown" represents their king and their "head" represents a place of authority over the people. Alternate translation: "We no longer have a king"

Lamentations 5:17

For this our heart has become sick

The "heart" represents a person's emotions. This speaks of a person being discouraged as if their emotions were sick. Alternate translation: "Because of this we are discouraged"

for these things our eyes grow dim

This means that they have a hard time seeing because they are crying. Alternate translation: "and we can hardly see because our eyes are full of tears"

Lamentations 5:18

for Mount Zion lies desolate

Here "Mount Zion" refers to Jerusalem. The phrase "lies desolate" means that no one lives there.

jackals

These are fierce wild dogs. See how you translated this in Lamentations 4:3.

Lamentations 5:19

sit upon your throne

Here sitting on the throne represents ruling as king. Alternate translation: "rule as king"

from generation to generation

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "always"

Lamentations 5:20

Why do you forget us forever? Why do you abandon us for the length of your days?

The author uses these rhetorical questions to express his feelings that Yahweh has forgotten them. These questions can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is as though you will forget us forever or not come back to us for a very long time!"

for the length of your days

Here this idiom refers to the duration of God's life. Since God lives forever, it can also be translated as "forever." Perhaps the writer was uing hyperbole and exaggerating the length of time he believed that God was forsaking them. Alternate translation: "for as long as you live" or "forever"

Lamentations 5:21

Restore us to yourself

"Bring us back to yourself"

Lamentations 5:22

unless you have utterly rejected us and you are angry with us beyond measure

Possible meanings are that 1) the writer is afraid that Yahweh is too angry to restore them or 2) the writer hopes that Yahweh is not too angry to restore them.

are angry with us beyond measure

This speaks of Yahweh being very angry as if his anger cannot be measured. Alternate translation: "are extremely angry with us"

Introduction to Ezekiel

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ezekiel

Yahweh calls Ezekiel to speak his words (1:1–3:27) Yahweh judges Judah and Jerusalem (4:1-24:27) Ezekiel prophesies against nearby nations (25:1–32:32) Yahweh explains the fall of Jerusalem (33:1–33) Ezekiel brings messages of hope

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(34:1–
48:35) A new shepherd (34:1–31) Edom destroyed (35:1–15) Israel restored (36:1–37:28) Gog and Magog (38:1–39:29) Jerusalem and the temple restored (40:1–48:35)

What is Ezekiel about?

The Book of Ezekiel contains words that Ezekiel prophesied between 592 B.C. and 573 B.C. The Jewish people were exiled in Babylonia. Ezekiel told them that God had punished them because they sinned against him. However, Ezekiel assured them that God would restore them. God was using Babylon to punish them. But eventually another nation would defeat the Babylonians. Ezekiel also prophesied about how God will restore Jerusalem and the temple so that the people can worship and sacrifice to him again. Ezekiel then described how the land will be divided again among the tribes of Israel.

How should the title of this book be translated?

"Ezekiel" or "The Book of Ezekiel" is the traditional name for this book. Translators may also call it "The Messages from God Brought by Ezekiel."

Who wrote the Book of Ezekiel?

Ezekiel wrote the prophecies in the Book of Ezekiel. He was a prophet and priest who lived near Babylon in the time of the exile.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was Ezekiel's temple?

Several chapters of the Book of Ezekiel give instructions about building a new temple. However, this temple is not the same as the temple the people would build after going back to Jerusalem. Because Ezekiel's temple has never been built, some scholars think that this temple is to be built in the future. Other scholars think that Ezekiel's temple is symbolic of the Church.

Do the sacrifices in Ezekiel follow the law of Moses?

The sacrifices in Ezekiel 46 are somewhat different than the required sacrifices in Numbers 28. This may be because Ezekiel prophesied about a new temple with new sacrifices.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How should one represent Ezekiel's visions in translation?

The Book of Ezekiel has many complicated visions. Some are similar to passages in other Scripture books that describe future events. Some of these visions are about God rescuing Israel in the distant future.

It is unclear whether Ezekiel actually traveled to the particular places named in the visions, or whether what he described were mental ideas. For this reason, Ezekiel's viewpoint is sometimes difficult to understand, even though the meanings of the visions may be clear.

Translators should avoid trying to explain these visions in their translations. Instead, they should present the visions just as they are in the source text.

What does "and you will know that I am Yahweh" mean?

This is a common phrase in the Book of Ezekiel. It is meant to assure the reader that these messages truly came from God, and that he will do what he has promised. The translator may also use the phrase "and you will understand that I am Yahweh and what I say will happen." The UDB translates it as "then you will know that I, Yahweh, have the power to do what I say that I will do."

Ezekiel

1 [1]In the thirtieth year, the fourth month, and the fifth day of the month, it came about that I was living among the captives by the Kebar Canal. The heavens opened, and I saw visions of God.[2]On the fifth day of that month—it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin—[3]the word of Yahweh came to Ezekiel son of Buzi the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Kebar Canal, and the hand of Yahweh was upon him there.

[4]Then I looked, and there was a windstorm coming from the north; a great cloud with fire flashing within it and brightness surrounding it and inside of it, and the fire was the color of amber inside the cloud.[5]In the middle was the likeness of four living creatures. This was their appearance: They had the likeness of a man,[6]but they had four faces each, and each of the creatures had four wings.
[7]Their legs were straight, but the soles of their feet were like the hooves of a calf that shone like polished bronze.[8]Yet they had human hands under their wings on all four sides. For all four, their faces and wings were like this:[9]their wings touched each other. They did not turn when they moved; each one went straight ahead.
[10]The likeness of their faces was like the face of a man. The four of them had the face of a lion to the right side, and the four of them had the face of an ox on the left side. They four had also the face of an eagle.[11]Their faces were like that, and their wings were spread out above, so that each creature had a pair of wings that touched another creature's wing, and

also a pair of wings that covered their bodies.[12]Each went straight forward, so that wherever the Spirit directed them to go, they went without turning.
[13]As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; bright fire also moved about among the creatures, and there were flashes of lightning.[14]The living creatures were moving swiftly back and forth, and they had the appearance of lightning!

[15]Then I looked at the living creatures; and I saw one wheel on the ground beside each of the living creatures with its four faces.[16]This was the appearance and structure of the wheels: Each wheel was like beryl, and the four had the same likeness; their appearance and workmanship was like a wheel intersecting another wheel.
[17]As they moved, they went in any of their four directions, without turning as they went.[18]As for their rims, they were high and fearsome, for the rims were full of eyes round about.
[19]Whenever the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them. When the living creatures rose up from the earth, the wheels also rose up.[20]Wherever the Spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose up beside them, for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.[21]Whenever the creatures moved, the wheels also moved; and when the creatures stood still, the wheels stood still; when the creatures rose up from the earth, the wheels rose up beside them, because the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

[22]Over the heads of the living creatures was the likeness of an expansive dome; it looked like awe-inspiring crystal stretched out over their heads above.[23]Beneath the dome, each one of the creature's wings stretched out straight and touched another creature's wings. Each of the living creatures also had a pair to cover themselves; each had a pair to cover his own body.
[24]Then I heard the sound of their wings. Like the noise of many waters. Like the voice of the Almighty whenever they moved. Like the sound of a rainstorm. Like the sound of an army. Whenever they stood still, they lowered their wings.[25]A voice came from above the dome over their heads whenever they stood still and lowered their wings.

[26]Above the dome over their heads was the likeness of a throne that was like the appearance of a sapphire stone, and on the likeness of the throne was a likeness like the appearance of a man.
[27]I saw a figure with the appearance of glowing metal with fire in it from the appearance of his hips up; I saw from the appearance of his hips downward the appearance of fire and brightness all around.[28]Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day was the appearance of the bright light surrounding it. It was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh. When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice speaking.

Ezekiel 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Ezekiel's call

Ezekiel had a vision of God calling him to prophetic ministry. (See: call and prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 1:1 Notes Ezekiel intro

Ezekiel 1:1

In the thirtieth year

This is the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's life.

the fourth month, and the fifth day of the month

"the fifth day of the fourth month." This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifth day is around the end of June on Western calendars.

it came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

I was living among the captives

The word "I" refers to Ezekiel. "I was one of the captives"

I saw visions of God

"God showed me unusual things"

the Kebar Canal

This is a river that people in Chaldea had dug to give water to their gardens. "the Kebar River"

Ezekiel 1:3

to Ezekiel ... upon him there

Ezekiel speaks of himself as if he were another person. Alternate translation: "to me, Ezekiel ... upon me there"

the word of Yahweh came to Ezekiel

The idiom "the word of Yahweh came to" is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Ezekiel"

Buzi

This is a man's name.

the hand of Yahweh was upon him

The word "hand" is often used to refer to someone's power or action. A person with his hand on another person has power over that other person. Alternate translation: "Yahweh was controlling him"

Yahweh

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This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Ezekiel 1:4

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to describe his vision.

a windstorm

This is a storm that has a lot of wind.

coming from the north

North is the direction to your left when you look toward the sun while it is rising.

a great cloud with fire flashing within it

This can be translated as a new sentence: "The storm had a very large cloud with fire flashing in it"

fire flashing

Possible meanings are 1) "flashing lightning" or 2) "constant lightning."

brightness surrounding it and inside of it

"a very bright light was around the cloud and inside of it"

the color of amber

"bright yellow like amber" or "bright yellow" or "glowing yellow"

amber

a hard yellow resin that is used as a beautiful decoration on jewelry

Ezekiel 1:5

In the middle

"Inside the storm"

the likeness of four living creatures

Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like these things. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "what looked like four living creatures"

This was their appearance

The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "This is what they looked like"

They had the likeness of a man

The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "The four creatures looked like people"

Ezekiel 1:6

but they had four faces each, and each of the creatures had four wings

"but each of them had four different faces and four wings." Each creature had a face on the front, a face on the back, and a face on each side of its head.

Ezekiel 1:7

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to describe his vision.

but the soles of their feet were like the hooves of a calf

"but their feet looked like calf hooves" or "but their feet looked like the feet of calves"

hooves of a calf

the hard part of a calf's foot

that shone like polished bronze

"that were shiny like bronze that has been polished." This describes the feet of the creatures. Alternate translation: "and they shone like polished bronze"

Ezekiel 1:8

on all four sides

"on all four sides of their bodies"

For all four, their faces and wings were like this

"For all four of the creatures, their wings and their faces were like this"

Ezekiel 1:9

They did not turn when they moved

"The creatures did not turn as they moved"

Ezekiel 1:10

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to describe his vision.

The likeness of their faces was like the face of a man

Ezekiel is describing the faces of the creatures on their front side. The abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like a man's face. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "The face of each creature looked like the face of a man"

The four of them had the face of a lion to the right side

"The face on the right side of each one's head looked like the face of a lion"

the four of them had the face of an ox on the left side

"the face on the left side of the head of each one looked like the face of an ox"

They four had also the face of an eagle

"The face on the back of the head of each one looked like the face of an eagle"

Ezekiel 1:11

their wings were spread out above, so that each creature had a pair of wings that touched another creature's wing

"each creature held up two of his wings so that one wing touched the wing of the creature on one side of him, and the other wing touched the wing of the creature on the other side of him"

and also a pair of wings that covered their bodies

This can be translated as a new sentence: "The other two wings of each creature covered its body"

Ezekiel 1:12

Each went straight forward

"Each creature moved with a face looking forward"

Ezekiel 1:13

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to describe his vision.

As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals

Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like these things. Both "likeness" and "appearance" are abstract nouns that can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "As for what the living creatures looked like, they were similar to burning coals"

there were flashes of lightning

"lightning came out from the fire."

Ezekiel 1:14

The living creatures were moving swiftly back and forth, and they had the appearance of lightning

Lightning flashes and then disappears quickly, and the creatures moved from one place to another quickly. The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The living creatures were moving swiftly back and forth, and they looked like lightning"

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Ezekiel 1:15

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to tell about his vision.

Ezekiel 1:16

This was the appearance and structure of the wheels

"This is what the wheels looked like and how they were made"

like beryl

Beryl is a kind of clear, valuable stone, often of yellow or golden color. "clear and yellow like a beryl stone" or "clear and yellow like a precious stone"

the four had the same likeness

Here the abstract noun "likeness" refers to what the four wheels looked like. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "all four of the wheels looked the same"

their appearance and workmanship was like a wheel intersecting another wheel

The abstract nouns "appearance" and "workmanship" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "they appeared to be made with one wheel going through another wheel"

Ezekiel 1:17

Connecting Statement:

Ezekiel continues to describe his vision.

they went in any of their four directions

Possible meanings are 1) "their" refers to the creatures. Alternate translation: "they would go straight in any one of the four directions that the creatures looked towards" or 2) "their" refers to the wheels.

Ezekiel 1:18

As for their rims

"This is what the rims of the wheels looked like"

they were high and fearsome

"the rims were very tall and awe-inspiring" or "the rims where tall and frightening"

for the rims were full of eyes round about

"because the rims had very many eyes around all four of the wheels"

Ezekiel 1:19

When the living creatures rose up from the earth

The creatures were flying in the air after they left the ground. Alternate translation: "So when the creatures left the ground and went up into the air"

the wheels also rose up

"the wheels also left the ground and went into the air"

Ezekiel 1:20

Wherever the Spirit would go, they went

The word "they" refers to the creatures.

the wheels rose up beside them

"the wheels went up into the air with the living creatures"

the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels

Possible meanings are 1) Ezekiel is speaking of the "creatures" of verse 19 as if they were one creature. Alternate translation: "the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels" or 2) Ezekiel is using an idiom. Alternate translation: "the spirit of life was in the wheels" or "the living spirit was in the wheels" or 3) the spirit in the creatures and in the wheels is the same. Alternate translation: "the same spirit that gave life to the creatures also gave life to the wheels"

Ezekiel 1:22

the likeness of an expansive dome

Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like "an expansive dome." The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "what looked like an expansive dome"

an expansive dome

A dome looks like a hollow ball that is cut in half. "Expansive" means very large. "a huge upside-down bowl"

awe-inspiring crystal

"awe-inspiring ice" or "crystal that makes people marvel when they look at it"

stretched out over their heads above

"and the expansive dome was spread out above the heads of the creatures" or "and the expansive dome took up a lot of space over the heads of the creatures"

Ezekiel 1:23

Beneath the dome

"under the dome"

Each of the living creatures also had a pair to cover themselves; each had a pair to cover his own body

"Each of the living creatures also had two other wings, which they used to cover their bodies"

Ezekiel 1:24

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about his vision of the living creatures.

Then I heard the sound of their wings. Like the noise of many waters. Like the voice of the Almighty whenever they moved. Like

Other possible meanings are that the words "whenever they moved" refer to 1) all the words before them in this verse, "Whenever they moved, I heard the sound of their wings. Like the noise of rushing water. Like the voice of the Almighty. Like" or 2) to the words that follow, "wings. Like the noise of rushing water. Like the voice of the Almighty. Whenever they moved, it sounded like."

Like ... waters. Like ... moved. Like ... rainstorm. Like ... army.

These sentences are not complete because Ezekiel was showing that he was excited about what he saw. They can be translated as complete sentences: "The wings sounded like ... water. They sounded like ... moved. They sounded like ... rainstorm. They sounded like ... army."

many waters

This simply means "a lot of water." It could refer to a loud river or a large waterfall or the waves crashing at the ocean. All of these are very loud.

Like the voice of the Almighty

The Bible sometimes refers to thunder as "the voice of the Almighty." Alternate translation: "It sounded like the voice of the Almighty God" or "It sounded like the thunder of the Almighty"

Like the sound of a rainstorm

Possible meanings are: 1) "Like the sound of very big storm" or 2) "Like the sound of a very large crowd of people" Alternate translation: "There was a sound that was loud like a big storm" or "There was a sound that was loud like a very large crowd of people"

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Whenever they stood still
"Whenever the creatures stopped moving"
they lowered their wings
"the creatures let their wings hang down by their sides." They did this when they were not using their wings to fly.
Ezekiel 1:25
A voice came from above the dome
"Someone who was above the dome spoke." If you need to tell whose voice this is, you should probably identify it as the voice of Yahweh (Ezekiel 1:3).
the dome over their heads
"the dome that was over the heads of the creatures"
the dome
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:23.
Ezekiel 1:26
over their heads
"over the heads of the living creatures"
was the likeness of a throne
Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like a throne. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "was something that looked like a throne"
sapphire
a very valuable stone that is clear blue and very shiny
on the likeness of the throne was
The abstract noun "likeness" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "on what looked like a throne there was"
a likeness like the appearance of a man
The abstract nouns "likeness" and "appearance" can be translated with verbal phrases. If you need to tell who this is, you should probably identify him as Yahweh (Ezekiel 1:3). Alternate translation: "something that looked similar to what appeared to be a man"
Ezekiel 1:27
General Information:
Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision.
from the appearance of his hips up
The person's body above the hips looked like glowing metal that had fire in it. The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "from what appeared to be his hips up"
from the appearance of his hips downward the appearance of fire and brightness all around
The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "all around him below what appeared to be his hips, I saw what looked like fire and a bright light"
Ezekiel 1:28
Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day was the appearance of the bright light surrounding it
The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The brightness surrounding it appeared to be like the way a rainbow appears in the clouds on a rainy day"
rainbow
the colorful strip of light that appears in the rain when the sun shines from behind the viewer
It was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Yahweh
The abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like the glory of Yahweh. Both "appearance" and "likeness" can be translated as with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "It appeared to be what looked like the glory of Yahweh"
I fell on my face
"I bowed down to the ground" or "I lay on the ground." Ezekiel did not fall by accident. He went down to the ground to show that he respected and feared Yahweh.
I heard a voice speaking
The word "voice" is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "I heard someone speaking" or "Someone spoke, and I heard his voice"

2 [1]He said to me, "Son of man, stand up on your feet; then I will speak to you."[2]Then, as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.[3]He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to rebellious nations that have rebelled against me—both they and their ancestors have sinned against me up to this very day!
[4]Their descendants have stubborn faces and hard hearts. I am sending you to them, and you will say to them, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says.'[5]Either they will listen or they will not listen. They are a rebellious house, but they will at least know that a prophet has been among them.
[6]You, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid, although you are with briers and thorns and although you live with scorpions. Do not fear their words or be dismayed by their faces, since they are a rebellious house.
[7]But you will speak my words to them, whether they listen or not, because they are most rebellious.
[8]But you, son of man, listen to what I am saying to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am about to give to you!"
[9]Then I looked, and a hand was extended out to me; in it was a written scroll.[10]He spread it out before me; it had been written on both its front and back, and written on it were lamentations, mourning, and woe.

Ezekiel 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Ezekiel's call continues in this chapter. God appointed Ezekiel to be a prophet but warned him that the people were very rebellious and would not listen to him. (See: call and appoint and prophet)

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Links:

Ezekiel 2:1 Notes

Ezekiel 2:1

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision that he saw.

He said to me

If your language has to identify the one speaking, it would be best to identify the speaker as the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26). It was not "the Spirit."

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Ezekiel 2:2

the Spirit

Other possible meanings are 1) "a spirit" or 2) "a wind."

Ezekiel 2:3

up to this very day

"even now" or "even today." This means that the people of Israel were continuing to disobey God.

Ezekiel 2:4

General Information:

God continues to speak to Ezekiel.

Their descendants

the descendants of the past generations of Israel who had rebelled against God, referring to the people living in Israel at the time Ezekiel writes

have stubborn faces

"have expression on their faces that show that they are stubborn"

stubborn faces and hard hearts

The words "stubborn faces" refer to the way they act on the outside, and the words "hard hearts" refer to the way they think and feel. Together they emphasize that the people of Israel would not change how they lived in order to obey God.

stubborn

This describes a person who refuses to change what he thinks or what he is doing.

hard hearts

Rocks never change and become soft, and these people never change and become sorry when they do evil things.

Ezekiel 2:5

house

This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. Alternate translation: "people group"

a prophet has been among them

"the one whom they have refused to listen to was a prophet"

Ezekiel 2:6

General Information:

God continues to speak to Ezekiel

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

briers and thorns and ... scorpions

These words describe the people of Israel who will not treat Ezekiel kindly when he tells them what God says.

briers and thorns

Briers are bushes with sharp points on the branches. The sharp points on the branches are called thorns.

scorpions

A scorpion is a small animal with two front claws, six legs, and a large tail with a poisonous stinger. Its sting is very painful.

Do not fear their words

"Do not be afraid of what they say."

be dismayed by their faces

The words "their faces" are a metonym for the message the people express with their faces. Alternate translation: "lose your desire to serve me because of the way they look at you"

Ezekiel 2:7

General Information:

God continues to speak to Ezekiel.

are most rebellious

"are very rebellious" or "totally rebel against me"

Ezekiel 2:8

house

This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]

Ezekiel 2:9

a hand was extended out to me

It was as if 1) a person in the heavens had extended his hand out toward Ezekiel and all Ezekiel could see was from the hand to the elbow or shoulder or 2) the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26) extended his hand.

a written scroll

"a scroll that had writing on it"

Ezekiel 2:10

He spread it out

The word "He" refers to the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26).

it had been written on both its front and back

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had written on both its front and its back"

written on it were lamentations, mourning, and woe

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "lamentations," "mourning," and "woe." Alternate translation: "someone had written on it that these people would lament, be sad the way they would be if someone they loved had died, and have bad things happen to them"

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3 [1]He said to me, "Son of man, what you have found, eat. Eat this scroll, then go speak to the house of Israel."[2]So I opened
my mouth, and he fed me that scroll.[3]He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly and fill your stomach with this scroll
that I have given to you!" So I ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.

[4]Then he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak my words to them.[5]For you are not being sent to a people of strange speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel—[6]not to many peoples of strange speech or a difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely if I sent you to them, they would have listened to you.[7]But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me. So all the house of Israel is strong browed and hard hearted.
[8]Behold! I have made your face as hard as their faces and your brow as hard as their brows.[9]I have made your brow like a diamond, harder than flint! Do not fear them or be discouraged by their faces, since they are a rebellious house."
[10]Then he said to me, "Son of man, all the words that I announce to you—take them into your heart and hear them with your ears![11]Then go to the captives, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says,' whether they will listen or not."

[12]Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of Yahweh from his place!"[13]It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they touched one another, and the sound of the wheels that were with them, and the sound of a great earthquake.
[14]The Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went with bitterness in the anger of my spirit, and the strong hand of Yahweh was on me.[15]So I went to the captives at Tel Aviv who lived along the Kebar Canal, and I stayed there among them for seven days, overwhelmed in amazement.

[16]Then it happened after seven days that the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[17]"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel, so listen to the word from my mouth, and give them my warning.[18]When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die' and you do not warn him or speak a warning to the wicked about his evil deeds so he might live—the wicked one will die for his iniquity, but I will require his blood from your hand.[19]But if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked deeds, then he will die for his iniquity, but you will have rescued your own life.
[20]If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and acts unjustly, and I set a stumbling block before him, he will die. Because you did not warn him, he will die in his sin, and I will not call to mind the righteous deeds that he performed, but I will require his blood from your hand.[21]But if you warn the righteous man to stop sinning so that he no longer sins, he will surely live since he was warned; and you will have rescued your own life."

[22]So the hand of Yahweh was on me there, and he said to me, "Arise! Go out into the plain, and I will speak with you there!"[23]I arose and went out into the plain, and there the glory of Yahweh was staying, like the glory that I had seen beside the Kebar Canal; so I fell on my face.
[24]The Spirit came to me and stood me up on my feet; and he spoke with me, and said to me, "Go and shut yourself up within your house,[25]for now, son of man, they will place ropes upon you and tie you so you cannot go out among them.
[26]I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth, so you will be mute, and you will not be able to rebuke them, since they are a rebellious house.[27]But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth so you will say to them, 'This is what the Lord Yahweh says.' The one who will hear will hear; the one who will not listen will not listen, for they are a rebellious house!"

Ezekiel 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Ezekiel's call concludes in this chapter. God told Ezekiel more about what he should say to the people and how he should say it. (See: call)

Links:

Ezekiel 3:1 Notes

Ezekiel 3:1

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision that he saw.

He said to me

The word "He" refers to the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26).

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

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what you have found
This refers to the scroll that God was giving him (Ezekiel 2:9).
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. Alternate translation: "the Israelites" or "the Israelite people group"
Ezekiel 3:2
that scroll
Many versions have "the scroll" or "this scroll."
Ezekiel 3:3
feed your belly and fill your stomach with this scroll
The word "belly" refers to the part of the body people can see from the outside. The word "stomach" refers to the internal organs inside the belly.
it was as sweet as honey
Honey tastes sweet, and the scroll tasted sweet.
Ezekiel 3:4
General Information:
Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision that he saw.
he said to me
If your language has to identify the one speaking, it would be best to identify the speaker as the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26). It was not "the Spirit."
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 3:6
of strange speech or a difficult language
"who speak a strange or difficult language"
not to many peoples of strange speech
"I am not sending you to a mighty nation whose people speak a strange language"
if I sent you to them, they would have listened to you
This is a situation that could have happened, but it did not. Yahweh did not send Ezekiel to people who did not understand his language.
if I sent you to them
The word "them" refers to a mighty nation other than Israel.
Ezekiel 3:7
strong browed and hard hearted
These mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "very rebellious" or "very stubborn"
strong browed
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "unwilling to change"
hard hearted
This phrase suggests that the people resist God and are unwilling to obey him. The heart is used to describe the place in the body where a person decides what they want to do. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:4]
Ezekiel 3:8
General Information:
The Spirit of God continues speaking to Ezekiel.
Behold!
The word "Behold" here alerts Ezekiel to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
I have made your face as hard as their faces
A hard face is a metaphor for being stubborn. Alternate translation: "I have made you as stubborn as they are"
I have made ... your brow as hard as their brows
The "brow" is the forehead or eyebrow and is a metonym for what the person thinks. Alternate translation: "I have made ... you strong so you will not stop doing what you are doing"
Ezekiel 3:9
I have made your brow like a diamond, harder than flint
"I have made your brow like the hardest stone, harder than flint"
flint
a stone that is hard enough to start a fire by hitting it with metal or another stone
house
This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]
Ezekiel 3:10
take them into your heart and hear them with your ears
Here "heart" represents a person's mind. Alternate translation: "remember them and listen carefully"
Ezekiel 3:11
Then go to the captives
The word "captives" refers to the people of Israel who were living in Babylon.
your people
"your people group." Ezekiel had lived in Judah before the Babylonians took him to Babylon.
Lord Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.
Ezekiel 3:12
General Information:
Ezekiel continues telling about the vision he saw.
I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake: "Blessed be the glory of Yahweh from his place!"
Some versions take "Blessed ... place!" as a words that the "great earthquake" spoke: "I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake, which said, 'Blessed be the glory of Yahweh from his place!'" Others understand the sound of the earthquake as the sound of the glory of Yahweh leaving his place, "as the glory of Yahweh left its place, I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake."
the sound of a great earthquake
It is not clear if the sound came from an earthquake, from a voice that was loud like an earthquake, or from the wings and wheels. Alternate translation: "a sound like the sound of a great earthquake" or "a voice speaking; the voice sounded like a great earthquake" or "a loud rumbling noise"
the glory of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:28.
the sound of a great earthquake
"a loud, deep and powerful rumbling sound like the sound of an earthquake"
Ezekiel 3:14

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and I went with bitterness in the anger of my spirit
"and as I went, I felt bitter and my spirit was full of anger" or "and as I went, I was bitter and angry"
bitterness
Ezekiel speaks of his emotions as if there were a bad taste in his mouth. Possible meanings are 1) bitterness is a metaphor for sadness, or 2) bitterness is a metaphor for anger.
the strong hand of Yahweh was on me
The word "hand" is often used to refer to someone's power or actions. If needed, it can be stated explicitly how Yahweh's hand was on Ezekiel. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh made Ezekiel feel as he did about the people's sin, or 2) Yahweh was giving Ezekiel power.
Ezekiel 3:15
Tel Aviv
A town in Babylon, about 80 kilometers southeast of the main city, which was also called Babylon.
the Kebar Canal
This is a river that people in Chaldea had dug to give water to their gardens. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:1.
overwhelmed in amazement
"unable to do anything because I was so amazed"
Ezekiel 3:16
General Information:
Ezekiel tells about his experience at Tel Abib.
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke this message" or "Yahweh spoke these words"
Ezekiel 3:17
watchman
God told Ezekiel to warn the people of Israel just as a watchman would warn the people of a city if enemies were coming, so that they could prepare and be safe.
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 3:18
the wicked
"wicked people"
require his blood from your hand
This is an idiom for holding someone responsible or guilty of murder. Alternate translation: "treat you as if you had murdered him"
Ezekiel 3:19
he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked deeds
The phrase "wicked deeds" means the same thing as "wickedness." Alternate translation: "he does not stop doing wicked things"
Ezekiel 3:20
set a stumbling block before him
Possible meanings are 1) "make something bad happen to him" or 2) "cause him to sin openly."
he will die in his sin
"he will die as a sinner" or "he will die as a guilty person because he has disobeyed me"
I will require his blood from your hand
This is an idiom for holding someone responsible or guilty of murder. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:18]
Ezekiel 3:21
since he was warned
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "since you warned him"
Ezekiel 3:22
the hand of Yahweh
The word "hand" is often used to refer to someone's power or action. Alternate translation: "the power of Yahweh"
Ezekiel 3:23
the glory of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:28.
the Kebar Canal
This is a river that people in Chaldea had dug to give water to their gardens. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:1.
I fell on my face
"I bowed down to the ground" or "I lay on the ground."
Ezekiel did not fall by accident. He went down to the ground to show that he respected and feared Yahweh. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 1:28]
Ezekiel 3:24
he spoke with me
If your language has to identify the one speaking, it would be best to identify the speaker as the "one who looked like a man" (Ezekiel 1:26). It was not "the Spirit."
Ezekiel 3:25
they will place ropes upon you and tie you so you cannot go out among them
This is best translated literally.
Ezekiel 3:26
General Information:
The Spirit continues speaking to Ezekiel.
the roof of your mouth
"the top of your mouth"
you will be mute
"you will not be able to speak"
house
This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]
Ezekiel 3:27
I will open your mouth
"I will make you able to speak"
the one who will not listen will not listen
"the one who refuses to listen will not listen"
Lord Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

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4 [1]"But you, son of man, take a brick for yourself and place it before you. Then carve the city of Jerusalem on it.[2]Then lay siege against it, and build forts against it. Raise up a siege ramp against it and set camps around it. Place battering rams

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all around it.[3]Then take for yourself an iron pan and use it as an iron wall between yourself and the city and set your face against it, for it will be under siege, and you are to put the siege against it. This will be a sign to the house of Israel.

[4]Then, lie on your left side and put the sin of the house of Israel on it; you will bear their iniquity for the number of the days that you lie down against the house of Israel.[5]I myself am assigning to you one day to represent each year of their punishment: 390 days! In this way, you will bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.
[6]When you have completed these days, then lie down a second time on your right side, for you will bear the iniquity of the house of Judah for forty days. I am assigning to you one day for each year.[7]Set your face toward Jerusalem that is under siege, and with your arm uncovered prophesy against it.[8]For behold! I am placing bonds on you so you will not turn from one side to the other until you have completed the days of your siege.

[9]Take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them in a single container and make bread for yourself according to the number of the days that you will lie upon your side. For 390 days you will eat it.[10]The food you will eat will be by weight, twenty shekels per day, and you will eat it at set times each day.[11]Then you will drink water, measured out to a sixth of a hin, and you will drink it at set times.
[12]You will eat it as barley cakes, but you will bake it on excrement of human dung within their sight!"[13]For Yahweh says, "This means that the bread that the people of Israel will eat will be unclean, there among the nations where I will banish them."
[14]But I said, "Alas, Lord Yahweh! I have never been unclean! I have never eaten either an animal that died by itself or anything killed by animals, from my youth until now, and foul meat has never entered my mouth!"[15]So he said to me, "Look! I have given you cow manure instead of human dung so you can prepare your bread over that."
[16]He also said to me, "Son of man! Behold! I am breaking the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they will eat bread while rationing it in anxiety and drink water while rationing it in horror.[17]Because they will lack bread and water, every man will be appalled at his brother, and they will waste away because of their iniquity."

Ezekiel 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Destruction of Jerusalem

The destruction of Jerusalem is pictured in this chapter. Ezekiel showed the lack of food and water that would occur during the siege of Jerusalem.

Links:

Ezekiel 4:1 Notes

Ezekiel 4:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel. He tells Ezekiel to take a brick and dirt and pieces of wood and act as if he were Yahweh destroying the city of Jerusalem.

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

carve the city of Jerusalem

You may need to make explicit that Ezekiel is to carve a picture. Alternate translation: "carve a picture of the city of Jerusalem"

Ezekiel 4:2

lay siege against it

"surround the city in order to capture it"

build forts against it

"build strong walls against it." The walls would keep people from leaving the city.

Raise up a siege ramp against it

"Build a ramp outside of it for the enemies to get inside." Jerusalem had a wall around it to protect the people inside. The enemies could only get inside if they had a ramp to climb up over the wall.

Place battering rams all around it

"Set around it huge poles people would use to break down the gates and get inside." "Battering rams" are large trees or poles that many men in an army would pick up and hit against a wall or door so they could break it down and get inside.

Ezekiel 4:3

set your face against it

This is a command to stare at the model of the city as a symbol of punishing the city. Alternate translation: "stare angrily at the city" or "stare at the city so that it will be harmed"

set your face

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set your face" refers to literally staring at something.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 3:1. Alternate translation: "the Israelites" or "the

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Israelite people group"
Ezekiel 4:4
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
put the sin of the house of Israel on it
Possible meanings are 1) "symbolically bear the punishment for the sins of the Israelites" or 2) "suffer by lying on your side because of their sin."
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
you will bear their iniquity
Possible meanings are 1) "you will be guilty of their sin" or 2) "you will be punished for their sin." Either of these meanings will be demonstrated "symbolically" by Ezekiel, as noted in the UDB.
lie down against the house of Israel
"lie facing the kingdom of Israel in a hostile manner"
Ezekiel 4:5
I myself am assigning to you one day to represent each year of their punishment
"I myself command you to lie on your side for the same number of days as the number of years that I will punish them"
each year of their punishment
Possible meanings are 1) each year that they will be punished for their sins or 2) each year that they have sinned.
390 days
"three hundred and ninety days"
Ezekiel 4:6
General Information:
The Spirit continues speaking to Ezekiel.
these days
the days Ezekiel lies down on his left side to illustrate the siege of the kingdom of Israel
you will bear the iniquity
Possible meanings are 1) "you will be guilty of the sin" or 2) "you will be punished for the sin." Either of these meanings will be demonstrated symbolically by Ezekiel as noted in the UDB. See how you translated these words in Ezekiel 4:4.
the house of Judah
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Judah over many years. See how you translated these words in [Ezekiel 3:1]
I am assigning to you one day for each year
"I will make you do this one day for each year that I will punish them"
Ezekiel 4:7
Set your face toward Jerusalem that is under siege
This is a command to stare at the model of Jerusalem as a symbol of punishing Jerusalem. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 4:3]
Set your face
Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze. "Set your face" refers to literally staring at something.
prophesy against it
"prophesy about the bad things that will happen to Jerusalem"
Ezekiel 4:8
For behold
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
I am placing bonds on you
Bonds are ropes or chains that keep a person from moving. It is not clear whether the word "bonds" is a metaphor for something Yahweh does that is as if he had bound Ezekiel or if he is using literal, physical ropes.
Ezekiel 4:9
General Information:
The Spirit continues speaking to Ezekiel.
wheat, barley ... millet, and spelt
These are different kinds of grains.
beans
vines whose seeds, which grow in a single row inside its otherwise empty fruit, can be eaten
lentils
These are like beans, but their seeds are very small, round, and somewhat flat.
390 days
"three hundred and ninety days"
Ezekiel 4:10
twenty shekels per day
"20 shekels per day." A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: 200 grams of bread each day"
Ezekiel 4:11
a sixth of a hin
"1/6 hin" or "a sixth part of a hin" or "about one-half liter"
a hin
A hin is 3.7 liters.
Ezekiel 4:12
General Information:
The Spirit continues speaking to Ezekiel.
You will eat it
The word "it" refers to the bread (Ezekiel 4:9).
barley cakes
flat bread made of barley
you will bake it on excrement of human dung
"you will cook it over a fire made with pieces of human solid waste." Your language may have a way of expressing this politely.
Ezekiel 4:13
will banish
will send away by force
Ezekiel 4:14
Alas, Lord Yahweh
"Lord Yahweh, it would be wrong for me to do that." Ezekiel is very troubled by what the Lord has told him to do.
Lord Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4. Here Ezekiel is speaking to the Lord.
foul meat has never entered my mouth
"I have never eaten foul meat"
foul meat
"disgusting, unclean meat." This refers to meat that is

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unclean because it has come from an animal that has died of sickness or old age or was killed by another animal. The word "foul" shows his disgust over meat like this.

Ezekiel 4:15

Look

"Listen" or "Pay attention to the important thing I will tell you now"

I have given you

"I will allow you to use"

cow manure

solid waste from cows. Your language may have a polite way of expressing this.

human dung

solid waste from humans. Your language may have a polite way of expressing this. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 4:12.

Ezekiel 4:16

Behold

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I am breaking the staff of bread in Jerusalem

"I will stop the supply of food to Jerusalem"

the staff of bread

The supply is called a staff because some people need a staff to walk and do their work, and people need bread to live. Bread represents all kinds of food. Alternate translation: "the supply of food"

they will eat bread while rationing it in anxiety

You may need to make explicit why they will ration the bread. "they will carefully divide their bread because they fear that there will not be enough"

while rationing it in anxiety

The abstract noun "anxiety" can be expressed with the adjective "anxious" or the adverb "anxiously". Alternate translation: "while being anxious and rationing it" or "while rationing it anxiously"

rationing

giving small amounts of something of which there is not enough to many people

while rationing it in horror

The abstract noun "horror" can be expressed with the adjective "afraid" or the adverb "fearfully". Alternate translation: "while being afraid and rationing it" or "while rationing it fearfully"

Ezekiel 4:17

every man will be appalled at his brother

Here the word "brother" simply refers to another person. Possible meanings are 1) "everyone will look at his brother and worry that they are not eating enough " or 2) "every one of them will be dismayed"

they will waste away

The phrase "waste away" is usually used of flesh or wood rotting. Here it is a metaphor for people becoming thin and dying because they have no food.

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5 [1]"Then you, son of man, take a sharp sword as a barber's razor for yourself, and pass the razor over your head and your beard, then take scales to weigh and divide your hair.[2]Burn a third of it with fire in the midst of the city when the days of the siege are completed, and take a third of the hair and strike it with the sword all around the city. Then scatter a third of it to the wind, and I will draw out a sword to chase after the people.
[3]But take a small number of hairs from them and tie them into the folds of your robe.[4]Then take more of the hair and throw it into the midst of the fire; and burn it in the fire; from there a fire will go out to all the house of Israel."

[5]The Lord Yahweh says this, "This is Jerusalem in the midst of the nations, where I have placed her, and where I have surrounded her with other lands.[6]But she has rebelled against my ordinances more wickedly than the nations have, and my statutes more than the lands that surround her. The people have rejected my ordinances and have not walked in my statutes."
[7]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, "Because you are more troublesome than the nations that surround you and have not walked in my statutes or acted according to my decrees, or even acted according to the decrees of the nations that surround you,"[8]therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, "Behold! I myself will act against you. I will execute judgments within your midst for the nations to see.
[9]I will do to you what I have not done and the like of which I will not do again, because of all your disgusting practices.
[10]Therefore fathers will eat the children in your midst, and sons will eat their fathers, since I will execute judgment on you and scatter to every direction all of you who remain.
[11]Therefore, as I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—it is certainly because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your disgusting practices, that I myself will reduce you in number; my eye will not have pity on you, and I will not spare you.[12]A third of you will die by plague, and they will be consumed by famine in your midst. A third will fall by the sword surrounding you. Then I will scatter a third in every direction, and draw out a sword to chase after them as well.

[13]Then my wrath will be completed, and I will cause my fury toward them to rest. I will be comforted, and they will know that I, Yahweh, have spoken in my jealousy when I have completed my fury against them.[14]I will make you a ruin and an object of scorn to the nations that surround you and in the sight of everyone who passes by.
[15]So Jerusalem will become something for other people to condemn and to mock, a warning and a horror to the nations that surround you. I will execute judgments against you in wrath and fury, and with furious rebukes—I, Yahweh have declared this![16]I will send out harsh arrows of famine against you that will become the means with which I will destroy you. For I will increase the famine on you and break your staff of bread.[17]I will send a famine and disasters against you so

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you will be childless. Plague and blood will pass through you, and I will bring a sword against you—I, Yahweh, have declared this."

Ezekiel 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The destruction of Jerusalem

The destruction of Jerusalem is continued to be pictured in this chapter. Ezekiel showed the destruction of Jerusalem by fire and war.

Links:

Ezekiel 5:1 Notes

Ezekiel 5:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel. All instances of "the city" refer to the "city" that Ezekiel carved onto the brick (Ezekiel 4:1).

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

barber's razor

"blade for cutting hair"

pass the razor over your head and your beard

"shave your head and your face" or "remove the hair from your head and the beard from your face"

Ezekiel 5:2

Burn a third of it

"Burn a third of your hair"

midst

middle

when the days of the siege are completed

"when the days of Jerusalem's siege have ended" or "when the days have ended that you show how Jerusalem will put under siege"

take a third of the hair

"take one of the three piles of hair"

strike it with the sword all around the city

"hit it with your sword all over the city"

scatter a third of it to the wind

"let the wind blow the last third of your hair in different directions"

I will draw out a sword to chase after the people

The word "sword" is a metonym for enemy soldiers who will attack with their swords, and to "draw out a sword" is to send the soldiers into battle. Alternate translation: "I will cause their enemies to pursue them and attack them with swords"

I will draw out a sword

"I will pull a sword out of its container"

Ezekiel 5:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Ezekiel.

a small number of hairs from them

"a few hairs from the piles"

tie them

The word "them" refers to the hairs. Possible meanings are 1) the hairs were long enough so Ezekiel could tie them or 2) Ezekiel was to sew the hairs or otherwise attach them 3) Ezekiel was to place the hairs loosely in a fold of the garment.

the folds of your robe

Possible meanings are 1) "the cloth on your arms" ("your sleeves") or 2) "the end of the cloth on your robe" ("your hem") or 3) the fold in the garment where it is tucked into the belt.

Ezekiel 5:4

Then take

This continues the instructions Yahweh gives to Ezekiel beginning with the words "But take" in verse 3. Ezekiel was to "take a small number of hairs" and "take more of the hair and throw it" when he shaved his hair and beard

from there a fire will go out to all the house of Israel

"from there a fire will spread out and burn up all the people of Israel." Yahweh speaks of how he will punish Israel as if he were going to set fire to a house and of the people of Israel as if they were the family that lives in that house but were at that time outside the house.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 5:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak.

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

This is Jerusalem

"This carving represents Jerusalem" (Ezekiel 4:1)

in the midst of the nations

Possible meanings are 1) other nations were on all sides of Jerusalem or 2) "more important than all other nations."

I have placed her

Jerusalem is referred to as "her" and "she."

other lands

"the neighboring countries" or "the countries around her"

Ezekiel 5:6

have rejected my ordinances

"have refused to obey my orders"

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Ezekiel 5:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel and Judah.

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

Because you are more troublesome than

"because your sinfulness is worse than" or "because you are more unruly than"

that surround you

"that are all around you."

have not walked in my statutes

Walking is a metaphor for the way a person lives. Alternate translation: "have not lived according to my statutes" or "have not obeyed my statutes"

or acted according to my decrees

"or obeyed my decrees"

Ezekiel 5:8

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I will execute judgments within your midst

"I will judge you in various ways" or "I will punish you" .

Ezekiel 5:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel and Jerusalem.

what I have not done and the like of which I will not do again

"as I have not done before and will not do in a similar way again" or "like I have never done before and will never do again" .

because of all your disgusting practices

"because of all the disgusting things you do." God was angry because the people were worshiping idols and false gods.

Ezekiel 5:10

fathers will eat the children in your midst, and sons will eat their fathers

Ezekiel is probably telling what will really happen when the people have no food.

I will execute judgment on you

"I will judge you" or "I will punish you severely"

scatter to every direction all of you who remain

"I will force all of you who remain to go to different places."

Ezekiel 5:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel and Judah.

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

defiled ... sanctuary

ruined the place that Yahweh had set aside to be only for his use

with all your detestable things

"with all of those things of yours that I hate." You may need to make explicit that this refers to idols: "with all your idols, which I hate" or "with all your disgusting idols."

with all your disgusting practices

"with all the disgusting things that you do"

my eye will not have pity on you

The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "I will not pity you"

I will not spare you

"I will surely punish you"

Ezekiel 5:12

they will be consumed by famine in your midst

"many of them will die because of famine"

Ezekiel 5:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel and Judah.

my wrath will be completed

"I will no longer be angry because I will have done everything I wanted to do because I was angry"

I will cause my fury toward them to rest

The word "fury" means violent anger, and here it is a metonym for punishment. "I will stop punishing them because I will have punished them fully."

I will be comforted

You may need to make explicit why Yahweh will be appeased. Alternate translation: "I will be comforted in knowing that I have punished them enough"

when I have completed my fury against them

"when I have finished punishing them"

Ezekiel 5:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel and Judah.

in wrath and fury

The words "wrath" and "fury" mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh is very angry. Alternate translation: "because I will be very angry with you"

Ezekiel 5:16

will send out harsh arrows of famine against you

The word "arrows" is a metonym for the sharp pains that people feel when they have had no food for a long time. Alternate translation: "will make you feel the pain of intense hunger"

increase the famine on you

"make the famine more severe for you" or "make the famine last longer for you" or "make sure that there is less and less for you to eat"

break your staff of bread

A "staff" was something that people leaned upon to support them. This phrase is a metaphor that means removing the supply of food that the people were depending upon. See how "staff of bread" is translated in [Ezekiel 4:16]

Ezekiel 5:17

Plague and blood will pass through you

Sickness and violent death are spoken of as if they were soldiers going through the city killing everyone they could. Alternate translation: "Many people will die of disease, and many others will die in war"

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6 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, set your face against the mountains of Israel and prophesy to them.[3]Say, 'Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Lord Yahweh! The Lord Yahweh says this to the mountains and

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to the hills, to the streambeds, and to the valleys: Behold! I am bringing a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places.
[4]Then your altars will become desolate and your pillars will be destroyed, and I will throw down your dead in front of their idols.[5]I will lay the dead bodies of the people of Israel before their idols, and scatter your bones around your altars.
[6]Everywhere you live, cities will be laid waste and the high places ruined, so that your altars will be laid waste and made desolate. Then your idols will be broken and disappear, your pillars will be cut down and your works will be wiped away.
[7]The dead will fall down in your midst and you will know that I am Yahweh.

[8]But I will preserve a remnant among you, and there will be some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered throughout the lands.[9]Then those who escape will think of me among the nations where they will be held captive, that I was grieved by their promiscuous heart that turned away from me, and by their eyes that whored after their idols. Then they will show loathing on their face for the wickedness which they have committed with all their abominations.[10]So they will know that I am Yahweh. It was for a reason that I said I would bring this evil to them.

[11]The Lord Yahweh says this: Clap your hands and stomp your foot! Say, 'Alas!' because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! For they will fall by sword, famine, and plague.[12]The one far away will die by plague, and the one who is near will fall by the sword. Those who remain and survive will die by famine. In this way I will accomplish my fury against them.
[13]Then you will know that I am Yahweh, when their dead lie among their idols, around their altars, on every high hill—on all the mountain peaks, and under every flourishing tree and thick oak—the places where they burned incense to all their idols.[14]I will strike with my hand and make the land desolate and a waste, from the wilderness to Diblah, throughout all the places where they live. Then they will know that I am Yahweh."[1]

[1]Instead of Diblah, some ancient Hebrew copies and modern translations have Riblah.

Ezekiel 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Shrines on the hill tops

God will destroy all those who have been worshiping idols at the hill top shrines.

Links:

Ezekiel 6:1 Notes

Ezekiel 6:1

General Information:

Yahweh is telling Ezekiel to speak to the mountains as if they were people so that the people of Israel would hear the words and know that Ezekiel's words were for them.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 6:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

set your face against the mountains of Israel

This is a command to stare at the mountains as a symbol of punishing the people there. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 4:3]

set your face against the mountains of Israel

The mountains of Israel were far away, so Ezekiel could not see them, but staring in that direction would be a symbol of harming it. Alternate translation: "turn toward the mountains of Israel and stare angrily" or "stare toward the mountains of Israel so that the people there will be harmed"

set your face

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze.

the mountains of Israel

"the mountains in the land of Israel"

Ezekiel 6:3

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

I am bringing a sword against you

The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation: "I am bringing soldiers to come and kill you"

Ezekiel 6:4

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

Then your altars will become desolate and your pillars will be destroyed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will no longer worship at your altars and your

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enemy will destroy your pillars"

I will throw down

Yahweh was speaking of sending soldiers

your dead

"your people who have died"

Ezekiel 6:5

I will lay ... and scatter

Yahweh was speaking of sending soldiers

Ezekiel 6:6

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

cities will be laid waste

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemy armies will lay waste your cities"

your idols will be broken

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemy armies will break your idols" or "enemy armies will break them"

your pillars will be cut down

This can be translated in active form. See how you translated "pillars" in Ezekiel 6:4. Alternate translation: "they will cut down your pillars"

your works will be wiped away

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will remember what you have done" or "they will destroy everything you have made"

Ezekiel 6:7

The dead will fall down in your midst

"You will see the enemy kill many people"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. Alternate translation: "understand that I am Yahweh, the one true God" or "realize that I, Yahweh, have supreme power and authority"

Ezekiel 6:8

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

some who escape the sword

The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation: "some whom the soldiers do not kill"

when you are scattered throughout the lands

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "when I scatter you into different lands" or "when I force you to live in other lands"

throughout the lands

You may need to treat this as a metonym for living among the people who live in those other lands or countries. Life would be hard for the Jews in other lands or countries because the people there would persecute them. Alternate translation: "among the peoples of other countries"

Ezekiel 6:9

I was grieved by their promiscuous heart that turned away from me

Yahweh speaks of the Israelites as if they were a woman who sleeps with many people. Alternate translation: "I was sad because they were like a wife who has left me to sleep with other men"

by their eyes that whored after their idols

Yahweh speaks of the Israelites as if they were a married woman who looks at other men and desires to sleep with them. Alternate translation: "by the way they desired strongly to worship idols"

they will show loathing on their face for the wickedness which they have committed

Possible meanings are 1) "their faces will show that they hate themselves because of the wicked things they have done" or 2) "their faces will show that they hate the wicked things that they have done."

Ezekiel 6:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Ezekiel.

The Lord Yahweh says this

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and the people that what he is saying is important. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord Yahweh, say this"

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

Clap your hands and stomp your foot

Ezekiel was to do this symbolic action to get the people's attention. This was not applause.

Alas

This word is spoken by those who see people doing bad things and realize that bad things will happen to the evildoers as a result. If your language has a similar word, you might want to use it here.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

they will fall by sword, famine, and plague.

To "fall" is a euphemism for to "die." The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation:

Ezekiel 6:12

I will accomplish my fury against them

"I will satisfy my anger against them" or "I will punish them until I am no longer angry"

Ezekiel 6:13

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

hill—on all the mountain peaks, and under every flourishing tree and thick oak

Another possible meaning is "hill, on all the mountain peaks, under every flourishing tree, and under every thick oak."

flourishing

healthy and growing

oak

a large tree with strong wood that provided shade for worshipers

Ezekiel 6:14

Diblah

This is the name of a city.

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7 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"You, son of man—the Lord Yahweh says this to the land of Israel.
'An end! An end has come
to the four borders of the land.
[3] Now the end is upon you,
for I am sending out my wrath on you,
and I will judge you according to your ways;
then I will bring all your abominations upon you.

[4] For my eye will not pity you,
and I will not spare you.
Instead, I will bring your ways upon you,
and your abominations will be in your midst.
Then you will know that I am Yahweh.'

[5]"The Lord Yahweh says this:
Disaster! A unique disaster!
Behold, it is coming.[1]
[6] An end is surely coming.
The end has woken up against you.
Behold, it is coming!

[7] Your doom is coming to you who inhabit the land.
The time has come; the day is near—
tumult and not joyful shouting on the mountains.

[8] Now before long I will pour out my fury against you
and fill up my wrath upon you
when I judge you according to your ways
and bring all your abominations upon you.

[9] For my eye will not look compassionately,
and I will not spare you.
As you have done, I will do to you;
and your abominations will be in your midst
so you will know that I am Yahweh, the one punishing you.

[10] Behold, the day!
Behold, it is coming!
Doom has gone out!
The rod has blossomed,
arrogance has budded!

[11] Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness—
none of them, and none of their multitude,
none of their wealth, and none of their importance will last!

[12] The time is coming; the day has come close.
Do not let the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn,
since my anger is on the entire multitude!

[13] For the seller will not return to the land he sold as long as they both live,
because the vision concerning the entire multitude will not be reversed;
and because of their iniquity, none of them will be strengthened!

[14] They have blown the trumpet

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and made everything ready,
but there is no one marching to battle;
since my anger is on the entire multitude.

15 The sword is on the outside,
and plague and famine are inside the building.
Those who are in the field will die by the sword,
while famine and plague will consume those in the city.

16 But some survivors will escape from among them,
and they will go to the mountains.
Like doves of the valleys, all of them will moan—
each man for his iniquity.

17 Every hand will falter
and every knee will be weak as water,

18 and they will gird themselves sackcloth,
and trembling will cover them;
and shame will be on every face,
and baldness on all of their heads.

19 They will throw their silver into the streets
and their gold will be an impure thing.
Their silver and their gold will not be able to rescue them
in the day of Yahweh's rage.
Their lives will not be saved,
and their hunger will not be satisfied,
because their iniquity has become a stumbling block.

20 In their pride they took the beauty of his jeweled ornaments,
and with them they made their abominable images and their detestable idols.
Therefore, I am turning these into an unclean thing to them.

21 Then I will give those things into the hand of strangers as plunder
and to the wicked of the earth as plunder,
and they will defile them.

22 Then I will turn my face away from them
when they defile my cherished place;
bandits will enter it and defile it.

23 Make a chain,
because the land is filled with the judgment of blood,
and the city is full of violence.

24 So I will bring the most wicked of the nations,
and they will possess their houses,
and I will bring an end to the pride of the mighty,
for their holy places will be defiled!

25 Fear will come!
They will seek peace,
but there will be none.

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[26] Disaster upon disaster will come,
and there will be rumor after rumor.
Then they will seek a vision from the prophet,
but the law will perish from the priest
and advice from the elders.

[27] The king will mourn
and the prince will be clothed in horror,
while the hands of the people of the land will tremble in fear.
According to their own ways I will do this to them!
I will judge them with their own standards
until they know that I am Yahweh.'"

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[a] Instead of Disaster! A unique disaster! some ancient copies have Disaster after disaster!

Ezekiel 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Now is the time for punishment

The people will be punished severely for their idol worship and the temple will be destroyed. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 7:1 Notes

Ezekiel 7:1

General Information:

This starts God's prophecy of judgment on Israel.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 7:2

the Lord Yahweh says this

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and the people that what he is saying is important. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord Yahweh, say this"

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

to the land of Israel

The word "land" is a metonym for the people who live on the land. Alternate translation: "to the people of Israel"

An end!

"The end has come!"

the four borders of the land

"the entire land" The "four borders" are to the north, east, south, and west.

Ezekiel 7:3

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

the end is upon you

The "end" is spoken of as if it were a robber attacking the people. Alternate translation: "your life is finished"

I am sending out my wrath on you

"Wrath" is spoken of as if it were an arrow that Yahweh was shooting at the people. Alternate translation: "I am angry, and I will punish you"

according to your ways

"according to the things you do" or "because of the wicked things you do"

I will bring all your abominations upon you

"I will punish you for doing those things that I hate so much"

Ezekiel 7:4

For my eye will not pity you

The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "For I will not pity you"

I will bring your ways upon you

The way a person lives is spoken of as a path on which one walks. Alternate translation: "I will punish you for the things you have done"

your abominations will be in your midst

Possible meanings are 1) "I will punish all of you because of your abominations" or 2) "this will happen as long as you continue to commit abominations"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 7:5

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.

The Lord Yahweh says this

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and the people that what he is saying is important. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:11]

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

Disaster! A unique disaster! Behold, it is coming.

These exclamations are meant to make the passage very

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strong. Alternate translation: "Behold, a terrible disaster is coming, one that no one has ever experienced before"
Behold, it
"You can be absolutely sure that it"
Ezekiel 7:6
The end has woken up against you
The judgment that is coming is treated as if it were an enemy waking up from sleep.
Ezekiel 7:8
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words to the people of Israel.
Now before long
"Very soon now"
I will pour out my fury against you and fill up my wrath upon you
Yahweh uses the terms "pour out" and "fill up" to speak of his anger as if it were water that he poured out into a jar. These phrases emphasize that Yahweh will punish the people severely. Alternate translation: "I will punish you severely because I am very angry"
fury
"wrath" or "great anger"
Ezekiel 7:9
For my eye will not look compassionately
The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "I will not look on them with compassion" or "I will not be compassionate to them"
I will not spare you
"I will not leave you without punishment" or "I will punish you"
your abominations will be in your midst so you will know that I am Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 7:4.
Ezekiel 7:10
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
Behold, the day! Behold, it is coming!
"Behold! The day is coming!" You may need to make explicit which day is coming. Alternate translation: "Behold! The day when I will punish you is coming!"
Behold
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Doom has gone out
"Disaster has begun to come to Israel" or "Terrible things have begun to happen"
The rod has blossomed, arrogance has budded
Possible meanings are 1) "The people of Israel have grown very proud" or "The people of Israel have become very violent and very proud."
Ezekiel 7:12
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
The time is coming; the day has come close
Both "The time" and "the day" refer to the time when God will punish the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel's punishment will happen very soon"
my anger is on the entire multitude
"I am angry with the whole multitude"
multitude
a very large number of people. Here it refers to the people of Israel.
Ezekiel 7:13
as long as they both live
as long as "the buyer" and "the seller" (7:12) both live
the vision concerning the entire multitude will not be reversed
"God will surely do to the multitude what he has shown me"
none of them will be strengthened
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not strengthen any of them"
Ezekiel 7:14
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
They have blown the trumpet
"They have blown the trumpet to call people to fight against the enemy"
my anger is on the entire multitude
"I am angry with the whole multitude." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 7:12.
Ezekiel 7:15
The sword is on the outside
The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation:
the building
the city
while famine and plague will consume those in the city
The word "consume" is a metaphor for "totally destroy." Alternate translation: "and most of the people in the city will die from hunger and sickness"
Ezekiel 7:17
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
Every hand will falter and every knee will be weak as water
The hands and knees are synecdoches for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "Everyone will be so terrified that they will be unable to work and their knees will become weak so that they cannot stand"
falter
fail to do what it is supposed to do
every knee will be weak as water
Another possible translation is, "every knee will flow with water," a euphemism for all the people losing control of their bladders because they are so frightened.
knee ... weak as water
Water cannot stand up, and the people's knees will be so weak that the people are unable to stand on their legs.
Ezekiel 7:18
trembling will cover them
Trembling, a metonym for terror, is spoken of as if it were clothing. Alternate translation: "everyone will see them tremble and know how terrified they are"
baldness on all of their heads
Shaving the head was a sign of sadness. Alternate translation: "all of them will shave their heads"
Ezekiel 7:19
in the day of Yahweh's rage
"in the day when Yahweh acts on his anger" or "when Yahweh punishes them"

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the day
This can be a time period of more or less than one 24-hour day.
their hunger will not be satisfied
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will not be able to satisfy their hunger" or "they will still be hungry even after they eat all they have"
their iniquity has become a stumbling block
Possible meanings are 1) "because having a lot of gold and silver has led them to sin" or 2) "because they are evil, they are committing sins that show how evil they are."
Ezekiel 7:20
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
with them
with the jeweled ornaments
Ezekiel 7:21
I will give those things into the hand of strangers
The word "hand" is used to refer to control. "I will give those idols into the control of people they do not know" or "I will give those idols to people they do not know"
plunder
things that are stolen or taken by force
they will defile them
The strangers and wicked people will defile the idols that the people of Israel had made.
Ezekiel 7:22
I will turn my face away
"I will not pay attention" or "I will look away" or "I will not notice"
my cherished place
"the place I love." This refers to God's temple.
bandits
violent people who steal and destroy
Ezekiel 7:23
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words to Ezekiel about Israel.
Make a chain
Chains are used to hold slaves or prisoners. God says this to show the people that they will become slaves or prisoners.
the land is filled with the judgment of blood
Possible meanings are 1) "everywhere in the country God is judging people because they violently killed others" or 2) "the courts everywhere in the country are murdering people." The word "blood" here represents murder and death.
the city is full of violence
The city is spoken of as if it were a container, and violence is spoken of as an object that can be put in a container. The abstract noun "violence" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "violence is everywhere in the city" or "many people in the city are doing violent things to others"
Ezekiel 7:24
they will possess their houses
the wicked will take the Israelites' houses
I will bring an end to the pride of the mighty
"I will cause the powerful people in Israel to stop being proud of themselves"
their holy places will be defiled!
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemies will defile the places where they worship"
their holy places
the places in which they worshiped idols
Ezekiel 7:25
Fear will come
"The people will be afraid"
They will seek peace
"They will try to make peace with their enemies"
but there will be none
"but they will be unable to make peace with their enemies"
Ezekiel 7:26
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Israel.
Disaster upon disaster will come
Disaster is spoken of as if it could move by itself. Alternate translation: "One disaster after another will happen"
they will seek a vision from the prophet
"they will ask the prophets what visions they have seen"
the law will perish from the priest and advice from the elders
"The priests will not teach the law, and the elders will not be able to give good advice." This is because God will not give them wisdom.
Ezekiel 7:27
the prince
Possible meanings are 1) "the king's son" or 2) every male member of the royal family except the king.
will be clothed in horror
Possible meanings are 1) clothing is a metonym for what a person feels, "will have no hope," or 2) "will dress in clothes that show he is mourning."
the hands of the people of the land will tremble in fear
The word "hands" is a synecdoche for the people. Alternate translation: "the people of the land will be so afraid that their hands will tremble"

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8 [1]So it came about in the sixth year and the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord Yahweh again fell upon me there.[2]So I looked, and behold, there was a likeness with the appearance of a man. From the appearance of his hips downward there was fire. And from his hips upward there was the appearance of something shining, like glowing metal.
[3]Then he reached out the form of a hand and took me by the hair of my head; the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and in visions from God, he brought me to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the inner northern gate, where the idol that provokes great jealousy was standing.[4]Then behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision I had seen on the plain.

[5]Then he said to me, "Son of man, lift up your eyes to the north." So I lifted up my eyes to the north, and to the north of the

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gate leading to the altar, there in the entrance, was the idol of jealousy.[6]So he said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing? These are great abominations that the house of Israel is doing here to make me go far from my own sanctuary. But you will turn and see even greater abominations."

[7]Then he brought me to the doorway of the courtyard, and I looked, and there was a hole in the wall.[8]He said to me, "Son of man, dig into this wall." So I dug into the wall, and there was a door.[9]Then he said to me, "Go and see the wicked abominations that they are doing here."
[10]So I went in and looked, and behold, I saw there portrayed all over the walls every form of creeping things and detestable animals, and all the idols of the house of Israel.[11]Seventy elders of the house of Israel were there, and Jaazaniah son of Shaphan was standing in their midst. They were standing in front of the images, and each man had his censer in his hand so that the smell of the cloud of incense went up.
[12]He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark? Each one does this in the hidden chamber of his idol, for they say, 'Yahweh does not see us! Yahweh has abandoned the land.'"[13]Then he said to me, "Turn again and see the other great abominations that they are doing."

[14]Next he brought me to the entrance of the gate of the house of Yahweh that was on the north side, and behold! The women were sitting there mourning for Tammuz.[15]So he said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? Turn again and see even greater abominations than these."

[16]He brought me into the inner courtyard of the house of Yahweh, and behold! at the entrance of the temple of Yahweh between the portico and the altar, there were about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of Yahweh and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun.
[17]He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? Is it a little thing for the house of Judah to do these abominations that they are doing here? For they have filled the land with violence and they have turned again to provoke me to anger, putting the branch to their noses.[18]So I will also act among them; my eye will not have compassion, and I will not spare them. Though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them."

Ezekiel 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah's sin

The people have contaminated the temple with their worship of other gods and through their sin. (See: temple and falsegod and sin)

Links:

Ezekiel 8:1 Notes

Ezekiel 8:1

General Information:

Ezekiel tells about another vision he saw.

So it came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the sixth year

You may need to make explicit the time period of which this is the sixth year. Alternate translation: "in the sixth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month

This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifth day is near the beginning of September on Western calendars. Alternate translation: "the fifth day of the sixth month"

the hand of the Lord Yahweh again fell upon me

This should be translated literally, as Ezekiel later sees something like a hand. Others may choose to consider the hand a metaphor for Yahweh's presence or power.

Lord Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:4.

fell upon

"took hold of"

Ezekiel 8:2

a likeness with the appearance of a man

Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like a man. Both "likeness" and "appearance" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "there was someone who appeared to be a man"

glowing metal

When metal is very hot, it glows with a yellow or orange light.

the appearance of his hips ... the appearance of something shining

The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "what appeared to be his hips ... what appeared to be something shining"

Ezekiel 8:3

General Information:

Ezekiel continues telling about the vision from God.

he reached out

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The word "he" probably refers to the "figure like a man" (Ezekiel 8:2).

between earth and heaven

"between the ground and the sky"

in visions from God, he brought me to Jerusalem

The words "in visions" mean that this experience is happening in Ezekiel's thoughts. His body would still be in his home while God shows him these things.

the inner northern gate

"the inner northern gate of the temple." The temple was surrounded by two walls, one inside the other. This gate was on the north side of the inner wall.

the idol that provokes great jealousy

"the idol that causes God to be very jealous"

Ezekiel 8:4

according to the vision I had seen on the plain

Possible meanings are 1) "who looked the same as what I had seen in the vision that I saw when I was on the plain" or 2) "who looked the same as what I saw when I was on the plain."

the plain

a large area of flat land that has few trees.

Ezekiel 8:5

General Information:

The "figure like a man" (Ezekiel 8:2) speaks to Ezekiel.

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:1]

lift up your eyes ... lifted up my eyes

This idiom means that he should look towards something. Alternate translation: "look up ... looked up" or "turn your head and look ... turned my head and looked"

gate leading to the altar

"gate through which people would walk so they could go to the altar"

Ezekiel 8:6

do you see what they are doing?

God uses this question to bring Ezekiel's attention to what the people were doing. Alternate translation: "I want you to understand why I hate what the people here are doing."

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 8:7

the courtyard

You may need to make explicit which courtyard. "the temple courtyard"

Ezekiel 8:10

behold

This word shows that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw. Your language may have a different word to show this.

every form of creeping things and detestable animals

"carvings in the wall of all kinds of creeping animals and detestable beasts." The phrase "creeping thing" refer to insects and other small animals.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 8:11

Jaazaniah ... Shaphan

men's names

censer

a pan that people burn incense in when they worship God or false gods

Ezekiel 8:12

do you see what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark?

God is commanding Ezekiel to look at what the elders are doing. Alternate translation: "look at what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark."

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

the hidden chamber of his idol

"the room where no one can see him worship his idol"

Ezekiel 8:14

the entrance of the gate of the house of Yahweh that was on the north side

This was the outer north gate—not the same one as in Ezekiel 8:3.

behold!

This word shows that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.

mourning for Tammuz

grieving because the false god Tammuz had died

Ezekiel 8:15

Do you see this ... man?

Yahweh is commanding Ezekiel to think about what he has just seen. Alternate translation: "Think about this ... man."

Ezekiel 8:16

behold!

This word shows that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.

portico

covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support

their faces toward the east

"they were looking toward the east"

Ezekiel 8:17

Do you see this ... man?

Yahweh is commanding Ezekiel to think about what he has just seen. Alternate translation: "Think about this ... man."

Is it a little thing for the house of Judah to do these abominations that they are doing here?

God uses this question to show that he is right to be angry at the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "I am right to be angry at the house of Judah because of these abominations that they are doing here."

house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Judah over many

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years. See how you translated these words in [Ezekiel 3:1]

they have filled the land with violence

"throughout the country they are doing violent things or "all over the country they are attacking one another"

to provoke me to anger

"to make me angry"

putting the branch to their noses

Possible meanings are 1) the people were using the branches in false worship or 2) the people were using the branches to show rebellion against Yahweh. The words "branch to ... noses" may be a literal tree branch and literal noses, or they could be the term for a hand gesture.

Ezekiel 8:18

my eye will not have compassion

The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "I will not look on them with compassion" or "I will not be compassionate to them"

I will not spare them

"I will still punish them"

Though they cry in my ears with a loud voice

"Though they yell their prayers to me with a loud voice"

I will not hear them

"I will not listen to them"

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9 [1]Then he cried in my hearing with a loud voice, and said, "Let the guards come up to the city, each with his weapon of destruction in his hand."[2]Then behold! Six men came from the pathway of the upper gate that faces north, each with his weapon of slaughter in his hand. There was a man in their midst dressed in linen with a scribe's equipment at his side. So they went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

[3]Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherubim where it had been to the threshold of the house. He called to the man dressed in linen who had the scribe's equipment at his side.[4]Yahweh said to him, "Pass through the midst of the city—the midst of Jerusalem—and make a mark on the foreheads of those who groan and sigh about all the abominations being performed in the midst of the city."
[5]Then he spoke to the others within my hearing, "Pass through the city after him and kill. Do not let your eyes have compassion, and do not spare anyone.[6]Kill—completely destroy—old man, young man, virgin, little children or women. But do not approach anyone who has the mark on his head. Begin at my sanctuary!" So they began with the elders who were in front of the house.
[7]He said to them, "Defile the house, and fill its courtyards with the dead. Proceed!" So they went out and attacked the city.
[8]As they were attacking it, I found myself alone and I fell on my face and cried out and said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh, will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?"

[9]He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood and the city full of perversions, since they say, 'Yahweh has forgotten the land,' and 'Yahweh does not see!'[10]But as for me, my eye will not pity them, and I will not spare them. I will bring their deeds upon their heads."[11]Behold! The man dressed in linen who had the scribe's equipment by his side came back. He reported and said, "I have done all that you have commanded."

Ezekiel 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sorrow over sin

God was looking for people who were sad that there was so much evil being done. Yahweh would keep these faithful people from being killed with the rest of the people. (See: sin and evil and faithful)

Links:

Ezekiel 9:1 Notes

Ezekiel 9:1

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision God gave him. It started in Ezekiel 8:1.

he cried in my hearing

"I heard him call out"

he cried

the "figure like a man" (Ezekiel 8:2) cried

weapon of destruction

weapon for destroying people or things

Ezekiel 9:2

weapon of slaughter

weapon for killing many people

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the upper gate that faces north

"the upper northern gate" or "the north gate of the inner court"

linen

a strong, smooth cloth made from a plant. It is worn by many people in places that are hot. Alternate translation: "smooth cloth"

scribe's equipment

tools that scribes write with

bronze

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A dark gold-colored metal. It is made from mostly copper with tin added for strength.

Ezekiel 9:3

from the cherubim where it had been

Possible meanings are 1) "from above the four winged creatures"

threshold of the house

The "house" refers to God's temple.

linen

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:2.

scribe's equipment

tools that scribes write with. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:2.

Ezekiel 9:4

groan and sigh

These are sounds people make when they feel very sad or grieved about something.

the abominations being performed in the midst of the city

"the horrible things being done in the city" or "the detestable things that people are doing in the city

Ezekiel 9:5

he spoke to the others within my hearing

The word "others" refers to the guards (Ezekiel 9:1).

Do not let your eyes have compassion

The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "Do not have compassion"

do not spare

"do not refrain from killing"

Ezekiel 9:6

mark on his head

These were the people who groaned about the abominations happening in Jerusalem. See how you translated "mark" in Ezekiel 9:4.

Begin at my sanctuary

You may need to make explicit what the people are to begin to do at the sanctuary. Alternate translation: "Begin to kill the ones who do not have the mark at my sanctuary"

the elders

Possible meanings are 1) the "seventy elders of the house of Israel" (Ezekiel 8:11) or 2) any "old man" (see the beginning of the verse).

Ezekiel 9:7

General Information:

God continuing to speak to the guards judging the people of Israel.

the house

the temple

attacked the city

The word "city" is a metonym for the people in the city. Alternate translation: "attacked the people in the city"

Ezekiel 9:8

I fell on my face

"I bowed down to the ground" or "I lay on the ground." Ezekiel did not fall by accident. He went down to the ground to show that he respected and feared Yahweh. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 1:28]

Ah, Lord Yahweh

Ezekiel says this because he is very troubled by what the Lord told the men to do to Jerusalem. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 4:14.

will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?

Ezekiel is pleading with Yahweh not to destroy the remnant. Alternate translation: "please do not destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem!"

in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem

Wrath is spoken of as if it were a liquid that Yahweh could pour out of a container. The word "Jerusalem" is a metonym for the people in the city. The abstract noun "outpouring" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when you pour out your wrath on Jerusalem" or "when you punish the people of Jerusalem because you are very angry with them"

Ezekiel 9:9

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

exceedingly great

"very great"

The land is full of blood and the city full of perversions

Here "land" is spoken of as if it were a container filled with blood. Here "blood" is metonym for murder. And "city" is spoken of as if it were a container and "perversions" were the contents inside of it. Alternate translation: "All over the land people are killing innocent people, and all over the city people are doing wicked things"

Ezekiel 9:10

my eye will not pity them

The eye is a synecdoche for the person whose eye it is. Alternate translation: "I will not look on them with pity" or "I will not be pity them"

I will bring their deeds upon their heads

To bring deeds upon someone's head means to punish them for bad conduct. Alternate translation: "I will punish them as they deserve"

Ezekiel 9:11

Behold

"Pay attention to what I am about to say"

linen

a strong, smooth cloth made from a plant. It is worn by many people in places that are hot. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 9:2]

He reported and said

"He reported to Yahweh and told him"

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10 [1]As I looked toward the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim; something appeared above them like a sapphire with the appearance of the likeness of a throne.[2]Then Yahweh spoke to the man dressed in linen and said, "Go between the wheels underneath the cherubim, and fill both your hands with fiery coals from between the cherubim and scatter them over the city." Then the man went in as I watched.

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[3]The cherubim stood on the right side of the house when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner courtyard.[4]The glory of Yahweh rose up from the cherubim and stood over the threshold of the house. It filled the house with the cloud, and the courtyard was full of the brightness of Yahweh's glory.[5]The sound of the cherubim's wings was heard as far as the outer courtyard, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.
[6]It came about, when God commanded the man dressed in linen and said, "Take fire from between the wheels that are between the cherubim," the man went in and stood beside a wheel.[7]A cherub reached out his hand between the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, and lifted it up and placed it into the hands of the one dressed in linen. The man took it and went back out.[8]I saw on the cherubim something like a man's hand under their wings.

[9]So I looked, and behold! Four wheels were beside the cherubim—one wheel beside each cherub—and the appearance of the wheels was like a beryl stone.[10]Their appearance was the same likeness for all four of them, like a wheel intersecting another wheel.[11]When they moved, they went in any of their four directions, without turning as they went; but whatever direction the head faced, they followed after it without turning as they went.
[12]Their whole body—including their backs, their hands, and their wings—was covered with eyes, and eyes covered the four wheels all around also.[13]As I listened, the wheels were called, "Whirling."[14]They had four faces each; the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face was the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

[15]Then the cherubim—these were the living creatures that I had seen by the Kebar Canal—rose up.[16]Whenever the cherubim moved, the wheels would go beside them, and whenever the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise up from the earth, the wheels did not turn. They still stayed beside them.[17]When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when they rose up, the wheels rose up with them, for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

[18]Then the glory of Yahweh went out from over the threshold of the house and stood over the cherubim.[19]The cherubim lifted up their wings and rose from the earth in my sight when they went out, and the wheels did the same beside them. They stood at the eastern entrance to the house of Yahweh, and the glory of the God of Israel came upon them from above.

[20]These were the living creatures that I had seen below the God of Israel by the Kebar Canal, so I knew that they were cherubim![21]They had four faces each and four wings each, and the likeness of human hands under their wings,[22]and the likeness of their faces was like the faces that I had seen in the vision at the Kebar Canal, and each of them went straight ahead.

Ezekiel 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The throne
Ezekiel once again saw and described the throne, its wheels, and the cherubim. See also his description in Ezekiel 1.
Symbolism
God told the man dressed in lenin to take coals from between the wheels of the throne and scatter them over the city of Jerusalem. This was a symbolic action that showed God's judgment against the city and that it would be destroyed.
God left the temple
God now abandoned Jerusalem and left the temple. This was devastating to the religious life of Judah. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 10:1 Notes

Ezekiel 10:1
General Information:
Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision that started in Ezekiel 8:1.
toward the dome
"toward the curved roof"
cherubim
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:3.
like a sapphire
a valuable blue or green gemstone
with the appearance of the likeness of a throne
"that looked like something that looked like a throne."
Ezekiel is not willing to say for sure that it looked like a throne.
Ezekiel 10:2
linen
a strong, smooth cloth made from a plant. It is worn by many people in places that are hot. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 9:2]
Go between the wheels
Translate the word "wheels" as in Ezekiel 1:15.
fiery coals
Coals are the burned pieces of wood left over after a fire. They are black, but they glow red and orange when they

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are very hot. They are also called charcoal.
scatter them over the city
"sprinkle them over the city" or "spread them over the city"
Ezekiel 10:3
Connecting Statement:
Ezekiel interrupts his description of what was happening and describes what he saw.
The cherubim stood ... inner courtyard
This is background information for the events that follow.
cherubim
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:3.
on the right side
As one faces east, "the right side" is toward the south. Alternate translation: "on the south side"
the house
the temple
Ezekiel 10:4
The glory of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:28.
It filled
the glory of Yahweh filled
Ezekiel 10:6
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark when the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
when God commanded the man dressed in linen and said
This is a repeat of the information that was given in Ezekiel 10:2. After talking about the cherubim and God's glory in 10:3-5, Ezekiel returns to telling about the man who was wearing linen.
the man dressed in linen
Translate "linen" as in Ezekiel 9:1.
beside a wheel
Translate "wheel" as in Ezekiel 1:15.
Ezekiel 10:8
I saw on the cherubim something like a man's hand under their wings
"I saw that the cherubim had something like a man's hand under their wings"
Ezekiel 10:9
behold
Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw
wheels
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:15.
the appearance of the wheels was like a beryl stone
The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the wheels appeared to be like a beryl stone" or "what appeared to be wheels were like a beryl stone"
beryl stone
"Beryl" here is a very hard, valuable stone. This beryl was probably green or blue.
Ezekiel 10:10
Their appearance was the same likeness for all four of them
The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. The abstract noun "likeness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "All four of them appeared to be similar"
a wheel intersecting another wheel
The word "intersecting" means "crossing" or "passing through."
Ezekiel 10:11
they went in any of their four directions
Possible meanings are 1) "their" refers to the creatures. Alternate translation: "they would go straight in any one of the four directions that the creatures looked towards" or 2) "their" refers to the wheels.
whatever direction the head faced, they followed
Possible meanings for "the head" are 1) this refers to the winged creatures. Alternate translation: "they went in whatever direction the winged creatures were looking" or 2) this refers to the front wheel. Alternate translation: "they followed in whatever direction the front wheel went"
Ezekiel 10:12
wheels
Translate the word "wheels" as in Ezekiel 1:15.
Ezekiel 10:13
the wheels were called, "Whirling."
The word "Whirling" means "Spinning." Here it is the name of the wheels. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone called the wheels, 'Whirling.'" or "the name of the wheels was 'Whirling.'"
Ezekiel 10:14
They had four faces each
"Each cherub had four faces" or "Each of the cherubim had four faces." Each creature had a face on the front, a face on the back, and a face on each side of its head. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:6.
Ezekiel 10:15
living creatures
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:13.
rose up
"went up into the air"
Ezekiel 10:16
They still stayed beside them
"The wheels stayed with the cherubim." Alternate translation: "The wheels moved with the cherubim"
Ezekiel 10:17
stood still
"stayed still" or "did not move"
the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels
Possible meanings are 1) Ezekiel is speaking of the "creatures" of verse 15 as if they were one creature. Alternate translation: "the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels" or 2) Ezekiel is using an idiom. Alternate translation: "the spirit of life was in the wheels" or "the living spirit was in the wheels" or 3) the spirit in the creatures and in the wheels is the same. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 1:20]
Ezekiel 10:18
the glory of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:28.
the house
the temple
stood over
"stayed over" or "waited over"
Ezekiel 10:19
came upon them from above

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"went above the cherubim"
Ezekiel 10:20
the living creatures
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:13.
the Kebar Canal
This is a river that people in Chaldea had dug to give water to their gardens. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:1.
Ezekiel 10:21
the likeness of human hands
Here the abstract noun "likeness" means that what Ezekiel saw looked like human hands. The word can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "something that looked like human hands"
Ezekiel 10:22
the likeness of their faces was like the faces that I had seen
The abstract noun "likeness" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "their faces looked like the faces that I had seen"
went straight ahead
"faced forward" or "looked directly ahead"

11 [1]Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the eastern gate of the house of Yahweh, facing east, and behold, in the doorway of the gate there were twenty-five men. I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people, among them.
[2]God said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity, and who decide wicked plans in this city.[3]They are saying, 'The time to build houses is not now; this city is the pot, and we are the meat.'[4]Therefore prophesy against them. Prophesy, son of man."

[5]Then the Spirit of Yahweh fell on me and he said for me to say: This is what Yahweh says, "That is what you are saying, house of Israel; for I know what goes through your mind.[6]You have multiplied the people you have killed in this city and filled its streets with them.[7]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this: The people you have killed, whose bodies you have laid in the midst of Jerusalem, are the meat, and this city is the pot. But you are going to be brought out from the midst of this city.
[8]You have feared the sword, so I am bringing the sword upon you—this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh.[9]I will bring you out of the midst of the city, and put you into the hands of foreigners, for I will bring judgments against you.[10]You will fall by the sword. I will judge you within the borders of Israel so you will know that I am Yahweh.
[11]This city will not be your cooking pot, nor will you be the meat within her midst. I will judge you within the borders of Israel.[12]Then you will know that I am Yahweh, whose statutes you have not walked in and whose decrees you have not obeyed. Instead, you have followed the decrees of the nations that surround you."

[13]It came about that as I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah, died. So I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, "Alas, Lord Yahweh, will you completely destroy the remnant of Israel?"
[14]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[15]"Son of man, your brothers! Your brothers! The men of your kindred and all the house of Israel! All of them are those of whom it is said by those living in Jerusalem, 'They are far away from Yahweh! This land was given to us as our possession.'
[16]Therefore say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Though I have removed them far off among the nations, and though I have scattered them among the lands, yet I have been a sanctuary for them for a little while in the lands where they have gone.'[17]Therefore say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you from the lands where you were scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.'[18]Then they will go there and remove every detestable thing and every abomination from that place.
[19]I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them. I will take out the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,[20]so that they will walk in my statutes, they will carry out my decrees and do them. Then they will be my people, and I will be their God.[21]But to those who walk with affection toward their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their conduct on their own heads—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

[22]The cherubim lifted up their wings and the wheels that were beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high up over them.[23]Then the glory of Yahweh went up from within the midst of the city and stood on the mountain to the east of the city.
[24]The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into Chaldea, to the exiles, in the vision from the Spirit of God, and the vision that I had seen went up from upon me.[25]Then I declared to the exiles all the things of Yahweh that I had seen.

Ezekiel 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Safety
The people were trusting Jerusalem to keep them safe. But God was going to pull them out of Jerusalem. (See: trust)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

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The people in Jerusalem used the metaphor "this city is the pot and we are the meat in the pot" meaning they were safe in Jerusalem.

Links:

Ezekiel 11:1 Notes

Ezekiel 11:1

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision that started in Ezekiel 8:1.

to the eastern gate of the house of Yahweh, facing east

This gate was part of the wall that surrounded the temple area. Alternate translation: "the gate on the eastern side of the wall surrounding the house of Yahweh" or "the gate on the eastern wall of the temple courtyard"

the house of Yahweh

See how you translated this phrase in Ezekiel 8:16.

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

twenty-five men

"25 men"

Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah

These are the names of men.

among them

"among the twenty-five men"

Ezekiel 11:2

General Information:

Ezekiel continues to tell about the vision.

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Ezekiel 11:3

The time to build houses is not now

This shows the people feel so secure they are not worried about building houses now. Other versions of the Bible read, "Now is the time to build our houses." This would mean that the people want to build houses because they feel secure.

this city is the pot, and we are the meat

The people speak of themselves as if they were good cuts of meat and of the city as if it were a pot in which the meat was stored or cooked. The metaphor suggests that they are important and safe within the city. Alternate translation: "This city is like a pot that will protect us as a pot protects meat"

the pot

Possible meanings are 1) a pot for storing meat or 2) a pot for cooking meat.

Ezekiel 11:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to talk to the prophet Ezekiel.

the Spirit of Yahweh fell on me

Ezekiel speaks of the Spirit of Yahweh inspiring and empowering him to prophesy as if the Spirit of Yahweh fell upon him. Alternate translation: "the Spirit of Yahweh empowered me"

That is what you are saying

"You are saying these things." This refers to what the people were saying in Ezekiel 11:3.

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 11:7

The people you have killed ... are the meat, and this city is the pot

Yahweh speaks of the people whom they have killed as if they were good cuts of meat and of the city as if it were a pot in which the meat was stored or cooked. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 11:3]

But you are going to be brought out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But I am going to bring you out"

Ezekiel 11:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 11:9

put you into the hands of foreigners

Here the metonym "hands" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "put you into the power of foreigners" or "enable foreigners to capture you"

Ezekiel 11:10

You will fall by the sword

The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation: "They will kill you with their swords" or "You will die in battle"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 11:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.

This city will not be your cooking pot, nor will you be the meat

The people had spoken of themselves as if they were good cuts of meat and of the city as if it were a pot in which the meat was stored or cooked. Yahweh says that this is not true. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 11:3]

within the borders of Israel

"in the land of Israel"

Ezekiel 11:12

whose statutes you have not walked in

Yahweh speaks of obeying as if it were walking, and

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statutes as if they were a road. Alternate translation: "whose statutes you have not obeyed"

Ezekiel 11:13

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Pelatiah son of Benaiah

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 11:1]

I fell on my face

"I bowed down to the ground" or "I lay on the ground." Ezekiel did not fall by accident. He went down to the ground to show that he respected and feared Yahweh.

Alas, Lord Yahweh

The word "Alas" is an exclamation that expresses fear and sadness. Alternate translation: "Oh no, Lord Yahweh" or "Ah, Lord Yahweh"

Ezekiel 11:14

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 11:15

your brothers! Your brothers!

This is stated twice for emphasis.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family, in this case the Israelites who are the descendants of Jacob. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

All of them are those of whom it is said by those living in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people living in Jerusalem say about all of them"

All of them are those of whom

Some versions have "All of them are those to whom"

This land was given to us as our possession

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has given this land to us as our possession" or "This land has become our possession"

Ezekiel 11:16

General Information:

Yahweh gives this message to Ezekiel about the Israelites who were in exile.

I have been a sanctuary for them

Yahweh speaks of dwelling among the people who are in exile as if he were a sanctuary for them. Alternate translation: "I have been with them" or "I have been like their place of worship"

Ezekiel 11:17

I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you from the lands

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The repetition emphasizes the surety of Yahweh's promise to bring the exiles back to the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "I will bring you back from all of the nations"

where you were scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where I scattered you"

Ezekiel 11:18

every detestable thing and every abomination

These words have similar meanings and emphasize that God will remove all the idols from Israel.

every detestable thing

This means things that cause hatred or disgust. Here it refers to idols.

Ezekiel 11:19

General Information:

God continues the prophecy of what will happen to the scattered Israelites.

I will give them one heart ... give them a heart of flesh

Yahweh speaks of all of the Israelites who are in exile as if they are one person, with one heart and one spirit.

I will give them one heart

Here the metonym "heart" represents the will and emotions. Yahweh speaks of causing all of the people to share the same new emotions as if he were giving them one heart.

I will put a new spirit within them

Here the metonym "spirit" represents the thoughts and disposition. Yahweh speaks of causing the people to think new thoughts as if he were giving them a new spirit.

I will take out the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh

Yahweh speaks of the people being stubborn as if they had a stone heart and of their being willingly obedient as if they had a heart of flesh. He speaks of causing them to become willingly obedient as if he were exchanging those two hearts. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to stop being stubborn and instead cause them to obey me willingly"

Ezekiel 11:20

they will walk in my statutes, they will carry out my decrees and do them

Each of these phrases have similar meanings and describes the people as obeying what Yahweh has commanded them to do. They are repeated for emphasis.

they will walk in my statutes

Yahweh speaks of obeying his statutes as if it were walking in them, like a person would walk along a road. Alternate translation: "they will obey my statutes"

Ezekiel 11:21

those who walk with affection toward their detestable things

Yahweh speaks of a person's conduct as if it were the person walking. Alternate translation: "those who conduct their lives out of devotion to their detestable things"

detestable things

This means things that cause hatred or disgust. Here it refers to idols. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 11:18.

I will bring their conduct on their own heads

Here the metonym "conduct" represents the consequences of their actions. The idiom "bring ... on their own heads" means they will experience these consequences. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to suffer the consequences of their actions"

Ezekiel 11:22

General Information:

The cherubim and the glory of God leave the temple and city.

cherubim

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See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:3.

Ezekiel 11:24

the vision that I had seen went up from upon me

Ezekiel speaks of the vision ending as if the vision was an object that had been upon him and then left him. Alternate translation: "the vision that I had seen ended"

12 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, you live in the midst of a rebellious house, where they have eyes to see but they do not see; and where they have ears to hear but do not listen, because they are a rebellious house.
[3]Therefore as for you, son of man, prepare your things for exile, and begin going out by day in their sight, for I will exile you in their sight from your place to another place. Perhaps they will begin to see, though they are a rebellious house.
[4]You will bring out your things for an exile in the day in their sight; go out in the evening in their sight in the way that anyone goes into exile.[5]Dig a hole through the wall in their sight, and go out through it.[6]In their sight, lift up your things onto your shoulder, and bring them out in the darkness. Cover your face, for you must not see the land, since I have set you as a sign to the house of Israel."

[7]So I did this, just as I was commanded. I brought out my things of exile in the daytime, and in the evening I dug a hole through the wall by hand. I brought my things out in the dark, and lifted them up on my shoulder in their sight.
[8]Then the word of Yahweh came to me in the morning, saying,[9]"Son of man, is the house of Israel, that rebellious house, not asking, 'What are you doing?'[10]Say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: this prophetic action concerns the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel in whose midst they are.'
[11]Say, 'I am a sign to you.' As I have done, so it will be done to them; they will go into exile and into captivity.[12]The prince who is among them will lift up his things upon his shoulder in the dark, and will go out through the wall. They will dig through the wall and bring out their things. He will cover his face, so he will not see the land with his eyes.[13]I will spread out my net over him and he will be caught in my snare; then I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it. He will die there.
[14]I will also scatter in every direction all of those around him who were to assist him and his entire army, and I will send out a sword after them.[15]Then they will know that I am Yahweh, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands.[16]But I will spare a few men from among them from the sword, famine, and plague, so they may record all of their abominations in the lands where I take them, so they will know that I am Yahweh."

[17]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[18]"Son of man, eat your bread with trembling, and drink your water with shaking and anxiety.
[19]Then say to the people of the land, 'The Lord Yahweh says this concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel, "They will eat their bread with trembling and drink their water with horror, since the land will be stripped of its fullness because of the violence of all those who dwell there.[20]So the cities that were inhabited will be desolate, and the land will become a wasteland; so you will know that I am Yahweh."'"

[21]Again the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[22]"Son of man, what is this proverb that you have in the land of Israel that says, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision fails'?[23]Therefore, say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: I will put an end to this proverb, and the people of Israel will no longer use it.' Say to them, 'The days have drawn near when every vision will be fulfilled.
[24]For there will no longer be any false visions or favorable divinations within the house of Israel.[25]For I am Yahweh! I speak, and I carry out the words that I speak. The matter will no longer be delayed. For I will speak this word in your days, rebellious house, and I will carry it out!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[26]Again the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[27]"Son of man! Behold, the house of Israel has said, 'The vision that he sees is for a time many days from now, and he prophesies of far off times.'[28]Therefore say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: My words will not be delayed any longer, but the word that I have spoken will be done—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

Ezekiel 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Exile

God warned that very soon the people in Jerusalem would be exiled to Babylon.

Links:

Ezekiel 12:1 Notes

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Ezekiel 12:1

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 12:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

a rebellious house

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]

they have eyes to see but they do not see ... they have ears to hear but do not listen

People being unable to understand Yahweh's message and what he is doing is spoken of as if the people were unable physically to see and hear.

Ezekiel 12:3

General Information:

Yahweh is telling Ezekiel to act out another parable.

Therefore as for you

"So then, this is what I say to you"

in their sight

"as they watch"

Perhaps they will begin to see

People being able to understand Yahweh's message and what he is doing is spoken of as if the people were able physically to see.

a rebellious house

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]

Ezekiel 12:4

General Information:

God is speaking to Ezekiel and describing how he should act out the parable.

in their sight

"as they watch"

Ezekiel 12:6

have set you as a sign

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special warning to those who see it. Yahweh speaks of Ezekiel and his actions as being this warning. Alternate translation: "have made you to be a warning"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 12:7

General Information:

Ezekiel shows the people of Israel they will soon be forced into exile.

just as I was commanded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh commanded me"

dug a hole through the wall by hand

"dug a hole through the wall with my hands"

in the dark

"at night"

Ezekiel 12:8

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 12:9

Son of man, is the house of Israel, that rebellious house, not asking, 'What are you doing?'

God asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel of something he already knew—that the people had asked him this question. Alternate translation: "Son of man, the house of Israel, that rebellious house, is asking, 'What are you doing?'"

the house of Israel, that rebellious house

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. Translate "rebellious house" as in [Ezekiel 2:5]

What are you doing

Since the people had seen what Ezekiel was doing, their question implies their desire to know the reason why he was doing it. Alternate translation: "What is the meaning of the things you are doing"

Ezekiel 12:10

in whose midst they are

The phrase "in whose midst" refers to Jerusalem, while "they" refers to the "house of Israel." Alternate translation: "who are in Jerusalem"

Ezekiel 12:11

I am a sign to you

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special warning to those who see it. Ezekiel speaks of himself and his actions as being this warning. Alternate translation: "I am a warning to you"

so it will be done to them

The word "them" refers to the people living in Jerusalem. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so others will do to them"

Ezekiel 12:12

in the dark

"at night"

They will dig through the wall

The word "They" refers to the people living in Jerusalem.

He will cover his face

"The prince will cover his face"

Ezekiel 12:13

I will spread out my net over him and he will be caught in my snare

Yahweh speaks of enabling the Chaldeans to capture the prince as if he himself were catching the prince in a trap that he had set.

I will bring him to Babylon

Yahweh speaks of enabling the Chaldeans to bring the

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prince to Babylon as if he himself were bringing the prince there. Alternate translation: "I will cause the Chaldeans to bring him to Babylon"
Ezekiel 12:14
I will send out a sword after them
The word "sword" is a metonym for enemy armies who will attack with their swords. Alternate translation: "I will send armies to pursue them with swords"
Ezekiel 12:15
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "when I cause them to separate from each other and live in different nations"
Ezekiel 12:16
I will spare ... from the sword, famine, and plague
The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. You may need to make explicit that they will not die from famine or plague. Alternate translation: "I will keep ... from dying in battle, from starving to death, and from dying of disease"
Ezekiel 12:17
The word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 12:19
the land will be stripped of its fullness
The word "fullness" refers to everything in the land. The word "stripped" means that people will empty the land of everything in it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "others will empty the land of everything in it"
Ezekiel 12:20
the cities that were inhabited will be desolate
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cities where people lived will be desolate"
Ezekiel 12:21
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 12:22
what is this proverb that you have in the land of Israel that says, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision fails'?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel something he already knows. The question is a mild rebuke for the people who use the proverb. Alternate translation: "the people in the land of Israel have this proverb that says, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision fails.'
The days are prolonged
This idiom means that many days have passed. Alternate translation: "Many days have passed" or "Time has gone by"
every vision fails
This means that the visions that the prophets receive and communicate to the people fail to happen. Alternate translation: "every prophetic vision fails to happen"
Ezekiel 12:23
The days have drawn near
This phrase refers to the days in which Israel will be judged. Alternate translation: "The days of judgment are coming soon"
every vision will be fulfilled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will fulfill every vision"
Ezekiel 12:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell Ezekiel what to say to the people of Israel.
house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 12:25
I carry out the words that I speak
This idiom means that Yahweh does what he says. Alternate translation: "I do the things that I say"
The matter will no longer be delayed
The "matter" refers to the things that Yahweh says will happen. Alternate translation: "What I say will no longer be delayed" or "What I say will happen soon"
I will speak this word
"I will speak this message" or "I will speak this prophecy"
in your days
This idiom refers to the period of time in which a person lives. Alternate translation: "while you are alive" or "during you lifetime"
rebellious house
This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 12:26
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 12:27
Behold
The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
The vision that he sees is for a time many days from now, and he prophesies of far off times
These phrases are both ways the people of Israel are saying Ezekiel's warnings will not happen in their lifetime but will

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happen far in the future. Ezekiel 12:28 My words will not be delayed any longer	This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will no longer delay the word I have spoken" or "I will no longer delay doing what I said I would do"

13 [1]Again, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets who are prophesying in Israel, and say to those who are prophesying out of their own imaginations, 'Listen to the word of Yahweh.[3]The Lord Yahweh says this: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, but who have seen nothing![4]Israel, your prophets have been like jackals in the wastelands.
[5]You have not gone to the breaks in the wall around the house of Israel in order to repair it, in order to resist in battle on the day of Yahweh.[6]The people have false visions and practice false divination, those who say, "Such and such is Yahweh's declaration." Yahweh has not sent them, but they nevertheless have made people hope that their messages would come true.[7]Have you not had false visions and practice false divination, you who say, "Such and such is Yahweh's declaration" when I myself have not spoken?'

[8]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Because you have had false visions and have told lies—therefore this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration against you:[9]My hand will be against the prophets who have lying visions and who practice false divination. They will not be in the assembly of my people, or enrolled in the record of the house of Israel; they must not go to the land of Israel. For you will know that I am the Lord Yahweh!
[10]Because of this, and because they led my people astray and said, "Peace!" when there is no peace, they are building a wall that they will paint with whitewash.'[11]Say to those who are whitewashing the wall, 'It will fall down; there will be a downpour of rain, and I will send hailstones to make it fall down, and a windstorm wind to break it down.[12]See, the wall will fall down. Have others not said to you, "Where is the whitewash that you put on it?"
[13]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: I will bring a windstorm in my rage, and there will be floods of rain in my wrath! Hailstones in my rage will completely destroy it.[14]For I will tear down the wall that you have covered with whitewash, and I will demolish it to the ground and lay bare its foundations. So it will fall, and you will be annihilated in the middle of it all. Then you will know that I am Yahweh.
[15]For I will annihilate in my fury the wall and those who whitewashed it. I will say to you, "The wall exists no more, nor do the people who whitewashed it—[16]the prophets of Israel who prophesied about Jerusalem and who had visions of peace for her. But there is no peace!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."'

[17]So you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who prophesy out of their own minds, and prophesy against them.[18]Say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Woe to the women who sew magic charms onto every part of their hand and make veils for their heads of every size, used to hunt down people. Will you hunt down my people but save your own lives?
[19]You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread, to kill people who should not die, and to preserve the lives of those who should not continue to live, because of your lies to my people who heard you.

[20]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: I am against the magic charms that you have used to ensnare the people's lives as if they were birds. Indeed, I will tear them from your arms; and the people whom you have trapped like birds—I will let them go free.[21]I will tear away your veils and rescue my people from your hand, so they will no longer be trapped in your hands. You will know that I am Yahweh.
[22]Because you discouraged the heart of the righteous with lies, even though I did not cause him grief, and because you strengthened the hands of the wicked so that he does not turn from his evil ways and save his life,[23]therefore you will no longer see false visions or practice divination. I will rescue my people out of your hand. You will know that I am Yahweh.'"

Ezekiel 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

False prophets

God spoke against people who said they were prophesying but had not received any message from God. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

God said of people who encourage others to feel safe even when they continue to sin were not strengthening a wall but just putting whitewash on it to hide the imperfections.

Links:

Ezekiel 13:1 Notes

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Ezekiel 13:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 13:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

prophesying out of their own imaginations

"prophesying only the things that they imagine"

Ezekiel 13:3

who follow their own spirit

Here the word "spirit" represents the thoughts and ideas of the person. To "follow" here is an idiom that means to do what their own ideas suggest for them to do. Alternate translation: "who act according to their own ideas"

Ezekiel 13:4

like jackals in the wastelands

Like jackals that scavenge for food and shelter among the abandoned ruins of cities, the prophets are using the destruction of Jerusalem for their own benefit.

jackals

wild animals that are related to dogs and that scavenge for food in abandoned places.

Ezekiel 13:5

the wall around the house of Israel

This refers to the wall surrounding the city of Jerusalem.

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

resist in battle

You can supply the implicit information here. Alternate translation: "resist the enemy armies" or "defend the city"

the day of Yahweh

This refers to the time when Yahweh will judge his people by means of an enemy army. Alternate translation: "the day of Yahweh's judgment" or "the day when Yahweh judges you by sending enemy armies to attack you"

Ezekiel 13:6

Such and such

This is a phrase used to refer to anything the prophet may have said. Your language may have another way to say this.

Yahweh's declaration

"is what Yahweh has declared"

Ezekiel 13:7

Have you not had false visions ... when I myself have not spoken?

Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the false prophets. Alternate translation: "You have had false visions ... because I myself have not spoken."

had false visions and practice false divination

Since the false prophets have not really received a message from Yahweh, what they predict about the future is not true.

practice false divination

"utter false prophecies"

Ezekiel 13:8

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 13:9

My hand will be against the prophets

Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh's power. That his hand will be against them is a metaphor that means that he will punish them with his power. Alternate translation: "I will punish the prophets"

They will not be in the assembly of my people

This means that Yahweh will not consider these false prophets to be part of the people of Israel.

or enrolled in the record of the house of Israel

This probably refers to an official record of the citizens of Israel. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor will anyone enroll their names in the record of the house of Israel"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

know that I am the Lord Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 13:10

General Information:

In these verses, Yahweh speaks of the false security that the prophets have given to the people by speaking of peace as if the prophets had built a poorly-constructed wall and covered it over with white paint in order to make it look good.

Because of this

The word "this" refers to the prophets reporting false visions to the people and telling them lies.

they led my people astray

Yahweh speaks of the prophets deceiving the people and getting them to believe lies as if the prophets had led the people away from the path upon which they should have been walking.

they are building a wall that they will paint with whitewash

Here "a wall" stands for peace and security that the false prophets told the people that Yahweh was promising to give them.

whitewash

The word "whitewash" refers to a white liquid mixture or paint used to cover up impurities and make surfaces white.

Ezekiel 13:11

whitewashing

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The word "whitewashing" refers to covering a surface with a white liquid mixture to cover up impurities and make the surface white.

I will send hailstones to make it fall down, and a windstorm wind to break it down

Yahweh refers to the judgment that he will send upon the people as if it were a severe storm that breaks down the wall.

hailstones

balls of ice that sometimes falls from the sky during a rainstorm.

Ezekiel 13:12

Have others not said to you, "Where is the whitewash that you put on it?"

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that others will ask the prophets what happened to their whitewash. Alternate translation: "Others will certainly say to you, 'Where is the whitewash that you put on it?'"

Where is the whitewash that you put on it?

Possible meanings are 1) that this is an honest question for which the people expect and answer or 2) this is a rhetorical question that the people ask out of sarcasm. Alternate translation: "The whitewash that you put on it did no good."

Ezekiel 13:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak of the false security that the prophets have given to the people by speaking of peace as if the prophets had built a poorly-constructed wall and covered it over with white paint in order to make it look good.

I will bring a windstorm ... completely destroy it.

Yahweh refers to the judgment that he will send upon the people as if it were a severe storm that breaks down the wall.

in my rage ... in my wrath ... in my rage

"because of my rage ... because of my wrath ... because my rage."

Ezekiel 13:14

lay bare

"uncover"

you will be annihilated in the middle of it all

The phrase "in the middle of it all" refers to the stones of the wall that Yahweh will break down. He speaks of destroying the people in his judgment as if the wall would crush them to death when he breaks it down. Alternate translation: "all of its stones will crush you to death"

annihilated

"destroyed"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 13:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak of the false security that the prophets have given to the people by speaking of peace as if the prophets had built a poorly-constructed wall and covered it over with white paint in order to make it look good.

I will annihilate in my fury

"Because I am very angry, I will annihilate"

whitewashed it

The word "whitewash" refers to a white liquid mixture or paint used to cover up impurities and make surfaces white. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 13:10.

Ezekiel 13:16

the prophets of Israel who prophesied about Jerusalem and who had visions of peace for her

This phrase defines who "the people who whitewashed it" are.

visions of peace for her

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 13:17

set your face against the daughters

This is a command to stare at the women as a symbol of punishing them. Translate "set your face against" as you did in [Ezekiel 4:3]

set your face against

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set your face" represents staring. Alternate translation: "stare at"

daughters of your people

This idiom refers to women who belong to the same people group as Ezekiel does. Alternate translation: "women of Israel" or "your countrywomen"

prophesy out of their own minds

"prophesying only the things that they think in their own minds." See how you translated a similar phrase in Ezekiel 13:2.

prophesy against

"prophesy about the bad things that will happen to them." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 4:7.

Ezekiel 13:18

sew magic charms onto every part of their hand

This means that they sew magic charms together and then attach them to their hands, not that they sew them directly onto their hands.

charms

objects believed to have magical powers.

used to hunt down people

Yahweh speaks of these women using beauty, mystery, and lies to deceive people as if the people were animals that the women hunted down and trapped with their charms. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they use to hunt down people"

make veils for their heads of every size

This means that they make veils to put on the heads of people of different height. Alternate translation: "make veils for the heads of women of every stature"

Will you hunt down my people but save your own lives?

Yahweh asks this as a leading question to rebuke the women who do these things. The implicit answer is, "no." Alternate translation: "Do not think that you will be able to save your own lives after you have hunted down my people!"

Ezekiel 13:19

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General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak against the false prophetesses in Israel.
handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread
Barley is a grain used to make bread and the word "crumb" is a small amount of bread. Both phrases are small amounts of food and are used to emphasize how small the payment was to the prophetesses.
Ezekiel 13:20
the magic charms that you have used to ensnare the people's lives as if they were birds
Yahweh speaks of these women using their magic charms to deceive people as if the people were birds that the women trapped with those charms.
charms
objects believed to have magical powers
to ensnare
"to trap" "to catch in a snare"
tear them from your arms
"tear the charms from your arms"
Ezekiel 13:21
rescue my people from your hand
Here the word "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "rescue my people from your power"
they will no longer be trapped in your hands
Here the word "hand" represents power or control. Yahweh speaks of the people being in the control of these women as if the women had trapped them with their hands. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will no longer trap them like prey in your hands" or "you will no longer control them with your power"
Ezekiel 13:22
discouraged the heart of the righteous
Here the word "heart" represents the person and his emotions. Alternate translation: "discouraged the righteous"
the righteous ... did not cause him grief
Here the words "the righteous" are used to talk about righteous people. Alternate translation: "righteous people ... did not cause them grief"
strengthened the hands of the wicked
Here the word "hands" represents the person and his actions. Alternate translation: "strenghtened the wicked" or "encouraged the wicked"
the wicked so that he does not turn from his evil ways and save his life
Here the words "the wicked" are used to talk about wicked people. Alternate translation: "wicked people so that they do not turn from their evil ways and save their lives"
turn from his evil ways
To stop doing something is referred to as turning in a different direction. Alternate translation: "stop doing evil things"
Ezekiel 13:23
see false visions or practice divination
Both of these phrases refer to talking about what will happen in the future. Alternate translation: "continue to make false predictions"
I will rescue my people out of your hand
Here the word "hand" represents power or control. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 13:21]

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14 [1]Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me.[2]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[3]"Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts and have put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their own faces. Should I be inquired of at all by them?
[4]Therefore announce this to them and say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Every man of the house of Israel who takes his idols into his heart, or who puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and who then comes to a prophet—I, Yahweh, will answer him according to the number of his idols.[5]I will do this so that I may take back the house of Israel in their hearts that have been driven far from me through their idols.'

[6]Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Repent and turn away from your idols! Turn back your faces from all your abominations.
[7]For every one from the house of Israel and every one of the foreigners sojourning in Israel who deserts me, who takes his idols into his heart and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his own face, and who then comes to a prophet to seek me—I, Yahweh, will answer him myself.[8]So I will set my face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, for I will cut him off from the midst of my people, and you will know that I am Yahweh.
[9]If a prophet is deceived and speaks a message, then I, Yahweh, will deceive that prophet; I will reach out with my hand against him and destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.[10]They will carry their own iniquity; the iniquity of the prophet will be the same as the iniquity of the one who inquires from him.[11]Because of this, the house of Israel will no longer wander away from following me nor defile themselves any longer through all their transgressions. They will be my people, and I will be their God—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[12]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[13]"Son of man, when a land sins against me by committing faithlessness so that I reach out with my hand against it and break the staff of its bread, and send out over it a famine and cut off both men and animals from the land;[14]then even if these three men—Noah, Daniel, and Job—were in the land's midst, they could only rescue their own lives by their righteousness—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[15]If I send evil beasts through the land and make it barren so that it becomes a wasteland where no man may pass through because of the beasts,[16]then even if these same three men were in it—as I live, declares the Lord Yahweh—they would not be able to rescue even their own sons or daughters; only their own lives would be rescued, but the land would become a wasteland.

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[17]Or if I bring a sword against that land and say, 'Sword, go through the land and cut off both men and animals from it',
[18]then even if these three men were in the midst of the land—as I live, declares the Lord Yahweh—they would not be able to rescue even their own sons or daughters; only their own lives would be rescued.
[19]Or if I send a plague against this land and pour out my fury against it through bloodshed, in order to cut off both men and animals,[20]then even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in that land—as I live, declares the Lord Yahweh—they would not be able to rescue even their own sons or daughters; only their own lives would be rescued by their righteousness.

[21]For the Lord Yahweh says this: I will certainly make things worse by sending my four judgments—famine, sword, wild animals, and plague—against Jerusalem to cut off both men and animals from her.
[22]Yet, behold! An escaped remnant will be left in her, survivors who will go out with sons and daughters. Behold! They will go out to you, and you will see their ways and actions and be comforted concerning the punishment that I have sent to Jerusalem, and about everything else that I have sent against the land.[23]The survivors will comfort you when you see their ways and their actions, so you will know all these things I have done against her, that I have not done them in vain! —this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

Ezekiel 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jerusalem deserves punishment

When the captives from Jerusalem arrive in Babylon, it will be obvious why God has punished them.

Links:

Ezekiel 14:1 Notes

Ezekiel 14:1

Some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me

The elders sat before Ezekiel in order to inquire of the Lord through Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 14:2

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 14:3

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

have taken their idols into their hearts

Yahweh speaks of the elders committing themselves to worshiping idols as if the elders had "taken their idols into their hearts." Alternate translation: "have devoted themselves to idols"

have put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their own faces

Yahweh speaks of the idols that the elders worship as if they were blocks over which the elders stumble, and of being determined to worship those idols as if they had placed those stumbling blocks in front of their faces. Alternate translation: "have resolutely determined to worship the things that lead to iniquity"

stumbling block of their iniquity

Possible meanings are 1) the idols are a stumbling block that leads to the elders' iniquity or 2) worshiping idols is an iniquity that causes the elders to stumble.

Should I be inquired of at all by them?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the elders should not be inquiring of him. This question can be translated as a statement. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should I permit them to inquire of me at all?" or "They should not be inquiring of me at all."

Ezekiel 14:4

Therefore announce this to them

The word "them" refers to the "men from the elders of Israel."

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

who takes his idols into his heart

Yahweh speaks of the people committing themselves to worshiping idols as if they had taken their idols into their hearts. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 14:3]

who puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face

Yahweh speaks of the idols that people worship as if they were blocks over which the people stumble, and of being determined to worship those idols as if they had placed those stumbling blocks in front of their faces. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 14:3]

I, Yahweh, will answer him according to the number of his idols

This phrase refers to the many idols that the people worship. It is implied that the severity of Yahweh's answer will as great as the number of idols that they worship. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh, will give him the answer that he deserves because he worships so many idols"

Ezekiel 14:5

I may take back the house of Israel in their hearts

Here the word "hearts" represents the minds and affections of the people. Yahweh speaks of causing them to be devoted

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to him once again as if he were to capture their hearts. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people of Israel to be devoted to me again"

their hearts that have been driven far from me through their idols

Here the word "hearts" represents the minds and affections of the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who have all left me to worship their idols"

Ezekiel 14:6

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Repent and turn away from your idols! Turn back your faces from all your abominations

Both of these phrases are ways to tell the people of Israel to stop worshiping idols.

Repent and turn away

The words "repent" and "turn way" mean basically the same thing. Together they strengthen the command to stop worshiping idols.

Turn back your faces

Here the word "faces" represents the people. Alternate translation: "Turn back"

Ezekiel 14:7

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

who takes his idols into his heart

Yahweh speaks of the people committing themselves to worshiping idols as if they had taken their idols into their hearts. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 14:3]

puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his own face

Yahweh speaks of the idols that people worship as if they were blocks over which the people stumble, and of being determined to worship those idols as if they had placed those stumbling blocks in front of their faces. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 14:3]

Ezekiel 14:8

I will set my face against that man

Yahweh speaks of being opposed to a person as if he were to set his face against that person. Alternate translation: "I will be against that man" or "I will oppose that man"

set my face against

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set my face" refers to staring. Alternate translation: "stare angrily at"

make him a sign and a proverb

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special warning to those who see it. The word proverb refers to what people will say about that sign when they see it. Alternate translation: "I will make that man to be a warning and a proverb"

I will cut him off from the midst of my people

Yahweh speaks of causing a person no longer to belong to his people as if he were cutting that person off from the people, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "I will cause him no longer to belong to my people"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 14:9

I will reach out with my hand against him

God's "hand" refers to what he does. Alternate translation: "I will work against him"

Ezekiel 14:10

They will carry their own iniquity

Here the word "iniquity" represents the guilt that people incur for committing iniquity. Yahweh speaks of people suffering the consequences of their iniquity as if they were carrying the iniquity. Alternate translation: "They will suffer the consequences of their own iniquity"

Ezekiel 14:11

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

will no longer wander away from following me

Yahweh speaks of the people no longer worshiping him as if they were to wander away from him and no longer follow him. Alternate translation: "will no longer stop worshiping me"

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 14:13

when a land sins against me

Here the word "land" represents the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "when the people who live in a land sin against me"

break the staff of its bread

Yahweh speaks of the supply of bread as if it were a staff. The word "bread" represents all kinds of food. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 4:16]

cut off both men and animals from the land

Yahweh speaks of killing people and animals as if he were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "kill both men and animals in the land"

Ezekiel 14:16

these same three men

Noah, Daniel, and Job

as I live

"as surely as I am alive." Yahweh uses this expression to show that what he says next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

only their own lives would be rescued

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they could only rescue their own lives"

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Ezekiel 14:17
if I bring a sword against that land
The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation:
Sword, go through the land
Here the word "sword" represents the soldiers of an enemy army who attack with swords. Alternate translation: "Army, go through the land"
cut off both men and animals from it
Yahweh speaks of killing people and animals as if it were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "kill both men and animals in the land"
Ezekiel 14:18
these three men
Noah, Daniel, and Job
only their own lives would be rescued
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they would only rescue their own lives"
Ezekiel 14:19
pour out my fury
Yahweh speaks of expressing his fury as if his fury were a liquid that he pours out from a container. Alternate translation: "I will express my fury"
cut off both men and animals
Yahweh speaks of killing people and animals as if he were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "kill both men and animals"
Ezekiel 14:20
only their own lives would be rescued
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they would only rescue their own lives"
Ezekiel 14:21
to cut off both men and animals from her
Yahweh speaks of killing people and animals as if it were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. The word "her" refers to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "to kill both men and animals in Jerusalem"
Ezekiel 14:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak with Ezekiel about the punishment of the people of Israel.
Behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the information that follows.
left in her
The word "her" refers to Jerusalem.
be comforted concerning the punishment
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will comfort you concerning the punishment"
Ezekiel 14:23
done against her
The word "her" refers to Jerusalem.
their ways and their actions
Both of these phrases refer to what the people of Israel have done. Alternate translation: "the way they live" or "the things they do"

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15 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, how is a vine better than any tree with branches that is among the trees in a forest?[3]Do people take wood from a vine to make anything? Or do they make a peg from it to hang anything on it?[4]See! If it is thrown into a fire as fuel, and if the fire has burned both of its ends and also the middle, is it good for anything?
[5]See! When it was complete, it could not make anything; surely then, when the fire has burned, then it still will not make anything useful.[6]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Unlike the trees in the forests, I have given the vine as fuel for fires; I will act in the same way toward the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
[7]For I will set my face against them. Though they come out from the fire, yet the fire will consume them; so you will know that I am Yahweh, when I set my face against them.[8]Then I will make the land into an abandoned wasteland because they have committed faithlessness—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

Ezekiel 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Useless
God said that the people of Jerusalem were useless to him. He uses a simile to show just how useless they were.

Links:

Ezekiel 15:1 Notes

Ezekiel 15:1
General Information:
Yahweh is talking to Ezekiel in this section.
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 15:2
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
how is a vine better than any tree with branches that is among the trees in a forest?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel of

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something he already knows. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "a vine is not better than any tree with branches that is among the trees in a forest."
Ezekiel 15:3
Do people take wood from a vine to make anything?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel of something he already knows. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "People do not take wood from a vine to make anything."
do they make a peg from it to hang anything on it?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel of something he already knows. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "they do not make a peg from it to hang things on it."
Ezekiel 15:4
If it is thrown into a fire as fuel ... is it good for anything?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel of something he already knows. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If it is thrown into a fire as fuel ... it is not good for anything."
If it is thrown into a fire as fuel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If a person throws it into a fire as fuel"
Ezekiel 15:5
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking about the vine.
See!
The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
When it was complete
"When it was whole" or "Before the fire burned it"
it could not make anything
"no one could make anything from it"
Ezekiel 15:7
General Information:
Yahweh speaks to Ezekiel about the people of Israel.
I will set my face against them
Yahweh speaks of being opposed to them as if he were to set his face against them. Alternate translation: "I will be against them" or "I will oppose them"
set my face against them
Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set my face" refers to staring. Alternate translation: "stare angrily at them"
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Though they come out from the fire, yet the fire will consume them
Yahweh speaks of the punishment that he will afflict upon the people as if it were a fire that burns them.
the fire will consume them
Yahweh speaks of fire burning things as if the fire consumed them. Alternate translation: "the fire will destroy them"
Ezekiel 15:8
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

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16 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations,[3]and declare, 'The Lord Yahweh says this to Jerusalem: Your beginning and your birth took place in the land of Canaan; your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite.
[4]On the day of your birth, your mother did not cut your navel, nor did she purify you in water or rub you down with salt, or wrap cloth around you.[5]No eye had compassion for you to do any of these things for you, to be compassionate toward you. On the day that you were born, with loathing for your life, you were thrown out into the open field.

[6]But I passed by you, and I saw you writhing in your own blood; so I said to you in your blood, "Live!" I said to you in your blood, "Live!"[1][7]I made you grow like a plant in a field. You multiplied and became great, and you became the jewel of jewels. Your breasts became firm, and your hair grew thick, though you had been naked and bare.
[8]I passed by you again, and I saw you. See! the time of love came for you, so I spread my robe over you and covered your nakedness. Then I swore to you and brought you into a covenant—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—and you became mine.
[9]So I washed you with water and rinsed your blood off you, and I anointed you with oil.[10]I dressed you in embroidered clothes and placed leather sandals on your feet. I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk.[11]Next I adorned you with jewelry, and I put bracelets on your hands, and a chain around your neck.[12]I put a nose ring in your nostrils and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head.
[13]So you were adorned with gold and silver, and you were dressed in fine linen, silk, and embroidered clothes; you ate fine flour, honey, and oil, and you were very beautiful, and you became a queen.[14]Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect in the majesty that I had given to you—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[15]But you trusted in your own beauty, and you acted like a prostitute because of your fame; you poured out your acts of prostitution on everyone who passed by, so that your beauty became his.[16]Then you took your clothes and with them you made high places for yourself decorated in various colors, and there you acted like a prostitute. This should not have happened. Nor should such a thing exist.
[17]You took the beautiful jewels of the gold and silver that I gave you, and you made for yourself male figures, and you did with them as a prostitute would do.[18]You took your embroidered garments and covered them, and you set my oils and

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incense before them.[19]My bread I gave you—made with fine flour, oil, and honey—you set before them for a fragrant aroma, for this is what happened—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[20]Then you took your sons and daughters whom you bore for me, and you sacrificed them to the images to be devoured as food. Are your acts of prostitution a small matter?[21]You slaughtered my children to the idols and made them pass through the fire.[22]In all your abominations and your acts of prostitution you have not thought about the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare as you thrashed about in your blood.

[23]Woe! Woe to you!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—therefore, in addition to all this wickedness,[24]you built yourself a mound and made yourself a high place in every public place.
[25]You built your high place at the head of every road and made your beauty abominable, and you spread your legs to anyone who passed by, and you multiplied your acts of prostitution.[26]You have acted like a prostitute with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and you committed many more acts of prostitution, provoking me to anger.
[27]See! I will strike you with my hand and cut off your food. I will hand your life over to your enemies, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your obscene behavior.[28]You have acted like a prostitute with the Assyrians because you could not be satisfied. You acted like a prostitute and still were not satisfied.[29]You performed many more acts of prostitution in the land of the merchants of Chaldea, and even this did not satisfy you.

[30]How weak is your heart—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—that you would do all these things, deeds of a shameless prostitute?[31]You have built your mounds at the head of every street and made your high places in every public square. Yet you were not like a prostitute because you scoffed at taking payment.
[32]You adulterous woman, you accept strangers instead of your husband.[33]People give payment to every prostitute, but you give your wages to all your lovers and bribe them to come to you from all around for your acts of prostitution.[34]So there is a difference between you and other women in your fornication. No one offers payment for you to act like a prostitute. You are the very opposite. You gave them payment and none was given to you.

[35]Therefore, you prostitute, listen to the word of Yahweh.[36]The Lord Yahweh says this: Because you have poured out your lust and uncovered your nakedness through your acts of prostitution with your lovers and with all your detestable idols, and because you gave them your children's blood,[37]therefore, behold, I will gather all your lovers that you have met, all those whom you loved and all those whom you hated, and I will gather them against you on every side. I will uncover your nakedness to them so they see all your nakedness.
[38]For I will punish you for adultery and the shedding of blood, and I will bring on you the bloodshed of my anger and jealousy.[39]I will give you into their hands so they will throw down your vaulted chamber and break down your high places and they will strip you of your clothes and take all of your jewelry. They will leave you naked and bare.
[40]Then they will bring up a crowd against you and stone you with stones, and they will cut you apart with their swords.
[41]They will burn your houses and will perform many judgments on you in the sight of many women, for I will put a stop to your prostitution, and you will no longer pay your lovers.[42]Then I will calm my fury against you; my jealousy will leave you, for I will be satisfied, and will no longer be angry.
[43]Because you did not call to mind the days of your youth and have made me shake with anger because of all these things, therefore, behold! I myself will bring down on your own head the punishment for what you have done—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration. Have you not added prostitution to all your other detestable practices?

[44]Behold! Everyone who speaks proverbs concerning you will say, "As the mother is, so also is her daughter."[45]You are the daughter of your mother, who detested her husband and her children, and you are the sister of your sisters who detested their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite, and your father was an Amorite.
[46]Your older sister was Samaria and her daughters were the ones living in the north, while your younger sister was the one living south of you, that is, Sodom and her daughters.
[47]You not only walked in their ways and committed their disgusting practices, but in all your ways you have acted more corruptly than they.[48]As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—your sister Sodom and her daughters, have not done as much evil as you and your daughters have done.
[49]Behold! This was the iniquity of your sister Sodom that she was arrogant in her leisure, careless and unconcerned about anything. She did not strengthen the hands of the poor and needy people.[50]She was arrogant and committed disgusting practices before me, so I took them away just as you have seen.
[51]Samaria did not commit even half of your sins. You have done many more disgusting things than they did, and you have made your sisters appear more righteous than you because of all the disgusting things you have done![52]Bear your disgrace, for you have furnished justification for your sisters. Because of your sins, which you committed so abominably, you have made your sisters appear to be more righteous than you. So then, be ashamed and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

[53]For I will reverse their captivity—the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her

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daughters—and your captivity will be among them.[54]On account of these things you will show your shame; you will be humiliated because of everything that you have done, and in this way you will be a comfort to them.[55]So your sister Sodom and her daughters will be restored to their former condition, and Samaria and her daughters will be restored to their former estate. Then you and your daughters will be restored to your former condition.
[56]Sodom your sister was not even mentioned by your mouth in the days when you were proud,[57]before your wickedness was revealed. Now you are scorned by the daughters of Edom and to all the daughters of the Philistines around her—all those around you despise you.[2] [58]You will show your shame and your disgusting practices!—this is Yahweh's declaration!
[59]The Lord Yahweh says this: I will deal with you as you deserve, you who have despised your oath by breaking the covenant.

[60]But I myself will call to mind my covenant with you made in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.[61]Then you will call to mind your ways and be ashamed when you receive your older sisters and your younger sisters. I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant.
[62]I myself will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am Yahweh.[63]Because of these things, you will call everything to mind and be ashamed, so you will no longer open your mouth to speak because of your shame, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[1]Some modern translations leave out the second occurrence of I said to you in your blood, "Live!".
[2]Instead of Edom, some ancient Hebrew copies and some modern translations have Aram, that is, Syria.

Ezekiel 16 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

God compared Judah to an adulteress because she worshiped idols instead of God who had done so much to help her. Adultery is a common image used to describe the worship of idols by Israel.

Links:

Ezekiel 16:1 Notes

Ezekiel 16:1

General Information:

In this chapter, Yahweh speaks about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful bride. He describes her growth from infancy to adulthood. The city represents the people who live there.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 16:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Ezekiel 16:3

Your beginning and your birth

These two phrases share similar meanings. Yahweh speaks of when people founded the city as if it were the city's birth.

your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite

The Amorites and Hittites were both pagan people groups who lived in the land before the people of Israel conquered it. Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem's father and mother belonging to these people groups to express that she was born into idolatry.

Ezekiel 16:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were an infant. The city represents the people who live there.

your mother did not cut your navel

Here "navel" refers to the umbilical cord that is attached to the navel. Alternate translation: "you mother did not cut your umbilical cord"

Ezekiel 16:5

No eye had compassion for you

Here the word "eye" represents the person who sees. Alternate translation: "Nobody who saw you had compassion for you"

with loathing for your life

"because your parents hated you"

you were thrown out into the open field

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your parents threw you out into the open field"

Ezekiel 16:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were an infant. The city represents the people who live there.

But I passed by you

Yahweh is walking near the newborn baby.

I said to you in your blood

The implicit information can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "I said to you as you were lying in your blood"

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Ezekiel 16:7

I made you grow like a plant in a field

Here Yahweh compares growing quickly with the way a plant grows quickly.

You multiplied and became great

These two phrases share similar meanings. They both refer to her growing and becoming taller. Alternate translation: "You matured and grew taller"

you became the jewel of jewels

Here the woman, who represents Jerusalem, is spoken of as if she had become the finest of all jewels, that is, as if she had become the most beautiful of all women.

you became the jewel of jewels

Some modern versions translate "You became old enough to wear jewels."

naked and bare

These two words mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "completely naked"

Ezekiel 16:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were a young woman. The city represents the people who live there.

See!

The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

the time of love came for you

This is to say that Yahweh sees the young woman is old enough to be married.

Ezekiel 16:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were a young woman. The city represents the people who live there.

Ezekiel 16:10

embroidered clothes

"beautiful clothes." To embroider is to sew a design into a piece of cloth.

Ezekiel 16:11

I adorned you with jewelry

"I put jewelry on you"

Ezekiel 16:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were a young woman. The city represents the people who live there.

you were adorned with gold and silver, and you were dressed in fine linen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I adorned you with gold and silver, and dressed you in fine linen"

Ezekiel 16:14

Your fame went out among the nations

"Many people in many nations knew who you were"

it was perfect

"your beauty was perfect"

Ezekiel 16:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were a young woman. The city represents the people who live there.

you trusted in your own beauty

"you placed your confidence in your own beauty"

acted like a prostitute

Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem as if the city were an unfaithful wife who sleeps with other men in exchange for payment.

you poured out your acts of prostitution

Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem's immoral actions as if they were liquids and of committing those actions repeatedly as if it were pouring those liquids from a container. Alternate translation: "you repeatedly committed your acts of prostitution"

so that your beauty became his

This Hebrew phrase is translated in many different ways by various modern versions. For example, some Bibles read "so that you gave yourself to him" or "his it was"

Ezekiel 16:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

male figures

"statues of men" or "idols that look like men"

you did with them as a prostitute would do

Possible meanings are 1) this is a polite way to say the young woman was sleeping with the male figures. Alternate translation: "you slept with them" or 2) this is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of her worshiping the figures as if she were sleeping with them. Alternate translation: "you worshiped them"

Ezekiel 16:19

set before them

"placed as an offering in front of them"

Ezekiel 16:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

whom you bore for me

"who were my children"

you sacrificed them to the images to be devoured as food

Here Yahweh speaks of something that the people of Israel had actually done. They sacrificed their children to pagan idols. In these ancient pagan sacrifices, the people believed that the gods would eat the food that they offered to them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you sacrificed them to the images so that those images could devour them as food"

Are your acts of prostitution a small matter?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the woman is acting as if her prostitution was not bad enough and so she decided to sacrifice her children as well. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You must think that your acts of prostitution are a small matter." or "I do not think your acts of prostitution are a small matter."

Ezekiel 16:21

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made them pass through the fire
Here Yahweh speaks of something that the people of Israel had actually done. They sacrificed their children to pagan idols. It is implicit that she put them into the fire in order to offer them as burnt offerings to her images. Alternate translation: "sacrificed them as burnt offerings"
Ezekiel 16:22
naked and bare
These two words mean the same thing. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 16:7]
Ezekiel 16:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
Ezekiel 16:24
you built yourself a mound and made yourself a high place in every public place
Possible meanings are that she built a place where 1) she could worship her idols or 2) she could practice her prostitution.
Ezekiel 16:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
at the head of every road
Yahweh speaks of the beginning of a road as if it were its head. Alternate translation: "at the beginning of every road"
Ezekiel 16:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
See!
The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
I will strike you with my hand
Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "I will use my power to strike you"
cut off your food
Yahweh speaks of stopping the supply of food as if it were cutting off the food. Alternate translation: "stop your food supply"
I will hand your life over
Here "life" represents the person. Alternate translation: "I will hand you over"
the daughters of the Philistines
Here Yahweh speaks of the cities of Philistia as if they were the daughters of the Philistines. The cities represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the Philistine people"
Ezekiel 16:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem and the people of Israel as his unfaithful wife.
How weak is your heart ... that you would do all these things, deeds of a shameless prostitute?
Yahweh asks the rhetorical question in order to rebuke Jerusalem. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your heart must be very weak ... that you would do all these things, deeds of a shameless prostitute!"
How weak is your heart
Here the word "heart" represents the will and emotions. Yahweh speaks of her inability to control her desires as if her heart were weak. Alternate translation: "How weak-willed are you"
Ezekiel 16:31
built your mounds ... made your high places
Possible meanings are that she built a place where 1) she could worship her idols or 2) she could practice her prostitution. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 16:24.
at the head of every street
Yahweh speaks of the beginning of a street as if it were its head. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 16:25]
Ezekiel 16:32
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
you accept strangers instead of your husband
This refers to accepting someone to sleep with her. Alternate translation: "you accept strangers into your bed instead of your husband"
Ezekiel 16:35
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
Ezekiel 16:36
you have poured out your lust
Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem's lust as if it were liquid and of committing actions repeatedly to gratify that lust as if it were pouring that liquid from a container. Alternate translation: "you repeatedly committed actions to gratify your lust"
poured out your lust
Some modern versions translate "poured your wealth out."
you gave them your children's blood
This refers to killing children as a sacrifice to idols.
Ezekiel 16:37
behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
so they see all your nakedness
Stripping a person naked in front of others was an action intended to humiliate the person. The word "nakedness" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "so they can see you completely naked"
Ezekiel 16:38
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
the shedding of blood
This phrase represents murder in any form. Alternate

translation: "murder"

I will bring on you the bloodshed of my anger and jealousy

Here "bloodshed" represents murder in any form. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh speaks of punishing her for murder as if he were bringing bloodshed upon her. Alternate translation: "In my anger and jealousy, I will punish you for committing murder" or 2) Yahweh speaks of putting her to death as if he were bringing bloodshed upon her. Alternate translation: "In my anger and jealousy, I will shed your blood"

Ezekiel 16:39

I will give you into their hands

Here "hands" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "I will place you in their control" or "I will allow them to have power over you"

throw down your vaulted chamber

Possible meanings are that they will destroy 1) the place where she worshiped her idols or 2) the place where she practiced her prostitution. See how you translated "vaulted chamber" in Ezekiel 16:24.

naked and bare

These two words mean the same thing. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 16:7]

Ezekiel 16:40

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. He speaks about enemy soldiers as her lovers. The city represents the people who live there.

Ezekiel 16:41

will perform many judgments on you

The word "judgments" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "will punish you in many different ways"

in the sight of many women

"where many women can see" or "while many women watch"

Ezekiel 16:42

I will calm my fury against you; my jealousy will leave you

The words "fury" and "jealousy" refer to the punishment that Yahweh inflicts because he is angry and jealous. Alternate translation: "I will stop punishing you because I will no longer be angry with you"

Ezekiel 16:43

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

call to mind

This idiom means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember"

have made me shake with anger because of all these things

Here "shake" refers to a physical response that a person has when he is extremely angry. As Jerusalem was doing these things, she did not think about what Yahweh had done when she was young.

behold!

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

Ezekiel 16:44

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

Behold!

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

Ezekiel 16:45

who detested her husband

"who hated her husband"

Your mother was a Hittite, and your father was an Amorite

The Amorites and Hittites were both pagan people groups who lived in the land before the people of Israel conquered it. Yahweh speaks of Jerusalem's father and mother belonging to these people groups to express that she was born into idolatry. See how you translated these phrases in [Ezekiel 16:3]

Ezekiel 16:46

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

Your older sister was Samaria ... your younger sister was the one living south of you, that is, Sodom

Samaria and Sodom were both cities that Yahweh had judged for their idolatry and wickedness. Yahweh speaks of these cities being Jerusalem's sisters to express that she belonged to a family that practiced idolatry and wickedness.

Ezekiel 16:47

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

You not only walked in their ways

The way a person lives is spoken of as if the person were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "You not only acted like them"

committed their disgusting practices

did the disgusting things that they did

Ezekiel 16:49

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

arrogant in her leisure, careless and unconcerned about anything

Yahweh describes Sodom as a rich woman who has more than enough food and lives in security.

She did not strengthen the hands of the poor and needy people

Here the word "hands" represents the people who work with their hands. The words "poor" and "needy" emphasize that these are people who cannot help themselves. Alternate translation: "She did not help the people who could not help themselves"

Ezekiel 16:51

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.

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Ezekiel 16:52
Bear your disgrace
Yahweh uses this phrase twice to emphasize how shamefully the people of Jerusalem have acted.
bear your disgrace
"be ashamed" or "bear your insults"
Ezekiel 16:53
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
I will reverse their captivity—the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters—and your captivity will be among them
The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and here it is probably a metaphor for Yahweh making the people prosper in a general sense. See how you translated "will reverse the captivity" in [Ezekiel 16:53]
Sodom and her daughters ... Samaria and her daughters
The writer writes as if the people who lived in the cities of Sodom and Samaria were the cities themselves and as if the smaller villages and towns around those cities were the cities' daughters. Alternate translation: "the people living in Sodom and the villages around it ... the people living in Samaria and the villages around it"
Ezekiel 16:54
you will show your shame
"you will be ashamed" or "you will bear your disgrace"
you will be humiliated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will humiliate you"
you will be a comfort to them
The noun "comfort" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "you will comfort Sodom and Samaria"
Ezekiel 16:55
your sister Sodom and her daughters will be restored to their former condition
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will restore your sister Sodom and her daughters to their former condition"
Samaria and her daughters will be restored to their former estate
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will restore your sister Samaria and her daughters to their former estate"
estate
"condition"
you and your daughters will be restored to your former condition
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will restore you and your daughters to your former condition"
Ezekiel 16:56
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
Sodom your sister was not even mentioned by your mouth
Here the word "mouth" represents the person who speaks. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You did not even mention your sister Sodom"
Ezekiel 16:57
before your wickedness was revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before you revealed your wickedness" or "before I revealed your wickedness"
you are scorned by the daughters of Edom
The word "scorned" is a metonym for the way other people talk about Jerusalem. It is also an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "now people treat you with shame" or "now people insult you"
the daughters of Edom and to all the daughters of the Philistines
Here Yahweh speaks of the cities of Edom and Philistia as if they were the daughters of Edom and of the Philistines. The cities represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the Edomite people and to all the Philistine people"
despise
hate very much
Ezekiel 16:58
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 16:59
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
despised your oath by breaking the covenant
Jerusalem broke her marriage covenant with Yahweh, thereby showing that she did not care about the oaths that she had made to him. Alternate translation: "despised your oath to me by breaking the covenant that you made with me"
Ezekiel 16:60
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were his unfaithful wife. The city represents the people who live there.
call to mind
This idiom means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember"
made in the days of your youth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I made with you when you were young"
Ezekiel 16:62
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 16:63
call everything to mind
This idiom means to remember. Alternate translation: "remember everything"
you will no longer open your mouth to speak because of your shame
This means that Jerusalem will be too ashamed to speak.

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17 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, present a riddle and speak a parable to the house of Israel.
[3]Say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: A large eagle with large wings and long pinions, full of feathers, and that was multicolored went to Lebanon and took hold of the top of a cedar tree.[4]It broke off the tips of the branches and took them to the land of Canaan; he planted it in a city of merchants.

[5]He also took some seed of the land and planted it in fertile soil. He placed it beside a large body of water like a willow.
[6]Then it sprouted and became a spreading vine low to the ground. Its branches turned toward him, and its roots grew under it. So it became a vine and produced branches and sent out shoots.

[7]But there was another great eagle with large wings and many feathers. Behold! This vine turned its roots toward the eagle, and it spread out its branches toward the eagle from the place it had been planted so it would be watered.[8]It had been planted in good soil beside a large body of water so it would produce branches and sprout fruit, to become a glorious vine.'

[9]Say to the people, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Will it prosper? Will it not be uprooted and stripped of its fruit so that it withers, and all its fresh growth will wither? No strong arm or many people will be needed to pull it out by its roots.[10]So behold! After it has been planted, will it grow? Will it not wither when the eastern wind touches it? It will completely wither away in the garden plot where it sprouted.'"

[11]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[12]"Speak to the rebellious house, 'Do you not know what these things mean? Behold! The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and took her king and her princes and brought them to him in Babylon.
[13]Then he took a royal descendant, made a covenant with him, and brought him under an oath. He took away the mighty men of the land,[14]so the kingdom might become lowly and not lift itself up. By keeping his covenant the land will survive.
[15]But the king of Jerusalem rebelled against him by sending his ambassadors to Egypt to acquire horses and an army. Will he succeed? Will the one doing these things escape? If he breaks the covenant, will he escape?
[16]As I live!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—he will surely die in the land of the king who made him king, the king whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he broke. He will die in the middle of Babylon.
[17]Pharaoh with his mighty army and a great company of men will not help him in battle, when ramps are constructed and siege walls are built up to cut off many lives.[18]For the king despised his oath by breaking the covenant. Behold, he reached out with his hand to make a promise and yet he did all these things. He will not escape.

[19]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: As I live, was it not my oath that he despised and my covenant that he broke? So I will bring his punishment on his head![20]I will spread my net out over him, and he will be caught in my hunting net. Then I will bring him to Babylon and execute judgment on him there for his faithlessness that he committed when he betrayed me![21]All of his refugees in his armies will fall by the sword, and the ones who remain will be scattered in every direction. Then you will know that I am Yahweh; I have declared this would happen."

[22]The Lord Yahweh says this, 'So I myself will take a twig from the highest part of the cedar tree and I will plant it. I will break off a tender twig, and I myself will plant it on a high mountain.[23]I will plant it on the mountains of Israel so it will bear branches and produce fruit, and it will become a majestic cedar so that every winged bird will live under it. They will nest in the shade of its branches.
[24]Then all the trees of the field will know that I am Yahweh. I bring down the high trees and I raise up the low trees. I wither the watered tree and I cause the dried tree to bloom. I am Yahweh, I have declared that this will happen; and I have done it.'"

Ezekiel 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Breaking allegiance

The king of Judah had vowed to obey Babylon but instead he followed Egypt. Therefore, God said he would not prosper. (See: vow)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Judah is compared to a vine that grows one direction and then another.

Links:

Ezekiel 17:1 Notes

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Ezekiel 17:1

General Information:

Ezekiel reports a message that God gives him.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 17:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

present a riddle and speak a parable

"give them a puzzle to think about" or "tell this story as an illustration"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 17:3

long pinions, full of feathers

"the ends of its wings were long and full of feathers." The word "pinion" means the outer end of the wings.

that was multicolored

The eagle's feathers were many different colors.

Ezekiel 17:4

It broke off the tips of the branches

"It broke off the highest part of the tree"

took them

"took the top of the tree" or "took the branches"

he planted it in a city of merchants

"he planted it in a city that had many merchants." A merchant is a person who sells things.

Ezekiel 17:5

General Information:

This is a continuation of the parable about the eagle.

He also took

The word "he" is the eagle in the parable.

fertile soil

"good ground"

He placed it beside a large body of water

"the eagle planted the seed in a place where there was a lot of water"

planted it ... like a willow

Willow trees grow in places where there is a lot of water. If the eagle planted the seed like a willow, it means that he planted it in a place with a lot of water. Alternate translation: "and planted the seed like one would plant a willow tree by water"

Ezekiel 17:6

Then it sprouted

"Then the seed began to grow into a plant"

a spreading vine low to the ground

"a vine that spreads out on the ground"

Its branches turned toward him

The branches of the vine turned toward the eagle. This means that they began to grow upward towards the sky.

its roots grew under it

Possible meanings are 1) "its roots grew under itself into the ground" or "the roots of the vine grew under the eagle."

So it became a vine

"That is how the vine grew"

produced branches and sent out shoots

"grew branches and spread its shoots"

Ezekiel 17:7

General Information:

The introductory "but" shows that a different eagle is being described other than the one before.

another great eagle

"another large eagle"

Behold!

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

This vine turned its roots toward the eagle

Yahweh speaks of the vine as if it were able to behave like a person and intentionally turned its roots toward the other eagle to receive nourishment from it. Alternate translation: "The roots of the vine grew toward the eagle"

from the place it had been planted so it would be watered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "from the place that the first eagle had planted it so that it would have water"

Ezekiel 17:8

It had been planted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The first eagle had planted the vine"

Ezekiel 17:9

Will it prosper?

Yahweh asks this as a leading question to emphasize the negative answer. This can be translated as as statement. Alternate translation: "It will not prosper."

Will it not be uprooted and stripped of its fruit so that it withers, and all its fresh growth will wither?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the vine will certainly be judged. The question can be translated as a statement. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone will pull up its roots and pluck out its fruit so all of its growth of leaves will wither away."

No strong arm or many people will be needed to pull it out

The phrase "strong arm" represents a strong person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There will be no need for a strong person or many people to pull it out"

Ezekiel 17:10

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

will it grow?

Yahweh asks this as a leading question to emphasize the negative answer. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It will not grow."

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Will it not wither when the eastern wind touches it?
Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that this will certainly happen. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "It will wither when the eastern wind touches it."
when the eastern wind touches it
"when the eastern wind blows on it"
Ezekiel 17:11
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 17:12
the rebellious house
This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]
Do you not know what these things mean?
Yahweh asks this as a leading question in order to provide the answer. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is what these things mean."
Behold
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
her king and her princes
The word "her" refers to Jerusalem.
Ezekiel 17:13
brought him under an oath
"made him swear an oath"
Ezekiel 17:14
so the kingdom might become lowly and not lift itself up
The kingdom being small and weak is spoken of as if it were lowly and being large and powerful as if it lifted itself up. Alternate translation: "so the kingdom might remain small and not become great"
the land will survive
Here the word "land" represents the kingdom of Judah and the people in it. Alternate translation: "the kingdom will continue to exist"
Ezekiel 17:15
General Information:
Yahweh speaks about the king of Jerusalem rebelling against the king of Babylon.
Will he succeed?
Yahweh asks this leading question to emphasize the negative answer. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He will certainly not succeed."
Will the one doing these things escape?
Yahweh asks this leading question to emphasize the negative answer. This may be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The one doing these things will not escape."
If he breaks the covenant, will he escape?
Yahweh asks this leading question to emphasize the negative answer. This question can be translated as as statement. Alternate translation: "If he breaks the covenant, he will certainly not escape."
Ezekiel 17:16
the land of the king who made him king, the king whose oath he despised
"the land of the king of Babylon who made him King of Judah, the king of Babylon whose oath he despised"
Ezekiel 17:17
General Information:
Yahweh speaking about the king of Jerusalem.
his mighty army and a great company of men
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how large and strong Pharaoh's army is.
will not help him
Here the word "him" refers to the king of Judah.
siege walls
this refers to a tower with ladders that can be placed next to a wall and allow soldiers to get over the wall and into the city.
to cut off many lives
"to kill many people"
Ezekiel 17:18
Behold, he reached out
"He did something even worse than that: he reached out"
reached out with his hand to make a promise
This refers to taking hold of another person's hand as a sign of friendship and agreement. Here it represents the covenant oath that he made with the king of Babylon.
Ezekiel 17:19
was it not my oath that he despised and my covenant that he broke?
Yahweh asks this leading question to emphasize the affirmative answer. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "it was my oath that the king of Jerusalem despised and my covenant that he broke."
I will bring his punishment on his head
The idiom "bring ... on his head" means that he will experience this punishment. See how you translated this idiom in [Ezekiel 11:21]
Ezekiel 17:20
I will spread my net out over him, and he will be caught in my hunting net
Yahweh speaks of enabling the enemy army to capture the king as if he were trapping the king in a net.
he will be caught in my hunting net
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will catch him in my hunting net"
Ezekiel 17:21
All of his refugees ... armies will fall by the sword
The word "fall" is a euphemism for "die." Here the word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people with swords. Alternate translation: "Soldiers will kill all his refugees ... armies"
the ones who remain will be scattered in every direction
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the ones who remain alive will flee in every direction" or "the enemy soldiers will scatter in every directions the ones who remain alive"
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

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Ezekiel 17:22
General Information:
Yahweh resumes the parable that he had told in [Ezekiel 17:1]
Ezekiel 17:23
bear branches
"grow new branches"
Ezekiel 17:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about Jerusalem as if the city were a branch that he plants on the mountains of Israel and of other nations as if they were other trees.
Then all the trees of the field will know that I am Yahweh
Yahweh speaks of trees as if they are people who can know about him. The trees represent the nations and the people who live in them.
I bring down the high trees and I raise up the low trees
"I cut down the tall trees and I cause the little trees to grow"
wither
when a plant dries up and dies.

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18 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me again, saying,[2]"What do you mean, you who use this proverb concerning the land of Israel and say, 'Fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are made blunt'?

[3]As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—there will certainly no longer be any occasion for you to use this proverb in Israel.[4]Behold! Every life belongs to me—the life of the father as well as the life of the son, they belong to me! The soul who sins is the one who will die!

[5]What can be said about a man who is righteous and who carries out justice and righteousness—[6]if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and he does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman during her impurity, is he a righteous man?
[7]What can be said about a man who does not oppress anyone, who gives back to the debtor his pledge, and who does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and covers the naked with clothing—is he a righteous man?
[8]What can be said about a man who does not loan money for usury or take interest but keeps his hand from injustice? It is said of him that he carries out justice and establishes faithfulness between people.[9]If that man walks in my statutes and keeps my decrees to act faithfully, then the promise for this righteous man is this: He will surely live!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[10]But suppose that he has a violent son who sheds blood and does any one of these things that were mentioned,[1][11](though his father has not done any of these things). He eats upon the mountains and he defiles his neighbor's wife, what can be said about him?
[12]He oppresses the poor and needy; he commits robbery and does not return a pledge, and he lifts up his eyes to the idols and commits disgusting practices,[13]and he loans money for usury and takes interest, should that man live? Surely he will not live! He will certainly die and his blood will be on him because he has done all these detestable things.

[14]But behold! Suppose there is a man who bears a son, and his son sees all the sins that his father has committed, and though he sees them, he does not do those things.
[15]That son does not eat upon the mountains, and he does not lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, and he does not defile his neighbor's wife, what can be said about him?
[16]That son does not oppress anyone, or require a pledge, or commit robbery, but instead gives his food to the hungry and covers up the naked with clothing.[17]That son does not oppress anyone or loan money for usury or take interest, but he carries out my decrees and walks according to my statutes; that son will not die for his father's iniquity: He will surely live!
[18]His father, since he oppressed others by extortion and robbed his brother, and did what is not good among his people—behold, he will die in his iniquity.

[19]But you say, 'Why does the son not bear the iniquity of his father?' Because the son carries out justice and righteousness and keeps all my statutes; he does them. He will surely live![20]The one who sins, he is the one who will die. A son will not bear his father's iniquity, and a father will not bear his son's iniquity. The righteousness of the one who acts rightly will be on himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be on himself.

[21]But if the wicked turns away from all his sins that he has done, and obeys all my statutes and performs justice and righteousness, then he will certainly live and not die.[22]All the transgressions that he has committed will not be called to mind against him. He will live by the righteousness that he practices.
[23]Do I greatly rejoice over the death of the wicked—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—and not in his turning away from his way so that he may live?
[24]But if the righteous person turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity and practices abominations like all the abominations that the wicked person does, then will he live? All the righteousness that he had done will not be called to mind when he betrays me in his treachery. So he will die in the sins that he committed.

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[25]But you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair!' Listen, house of Israel! Are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?[26]When the righteous man turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity and dies because of them, then he will die in the iniquity that he has done.
[27]But when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness that he has done and performs justice and righteousness, then he will preserve his life.[28]For he has seen and turned away from all the transgressions that he had done. He will surely live, and he will not die.
[29]But the house of Israel says, 'The way of the Lord is not fair!' How is my way not fair, house of Israel? It is your ways that are not fair.[30]Therefore I will judge each man among you according to his ways, house of Israel!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration. Repent and turn away from all your transgressions so that they will not be stumbling blocks of iniquity against you.
[31]Throw away from yourselves all of the transgressions that you have committed; make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why should you die, house of Israel?[32]For I have no delight in the death of the one who dies—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—so repent and live!"

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[a]Some ancient Hebrew copies and many modern translations leave out to a brother.

Ezekiel 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Inherited Guilt

God does not punish children for the sins of their parents, but only punishes them for their own sins. Despite this, the parents' sins may still have consequences for their children. (See: sin)

Links:

Ezekiel 18:1 Notes

Ezekiel 18:1

The word of Yahweh came to me again

The phrase "the word of Yahweh came" is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke to me again"

Ezekiel 18:2

What do you mean, you who use this proverb ... 'Fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are made blunt'?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to remind Ezekiel something he already knows. The question is a rebuke for the people who use the proverb. Alternate translation: "The people in the land of Israel have this proverb ... 'Fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are made blunt'."

What do you mean, you who use this proverb

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

land of Israel

This refers to the people of Israel.

Fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are made blunt

This proverbs means that children experience the consequences of their parents' actions.

the children's teeth are made blunt

The idiom "teeth are made blunt" refers to the sour taste in one's mouth that is a result of eating unripe or sour fruit. Alternate translation: "the children get a sour taste in their mouths"

Ezekiel 18:4

Behold!

The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

The soul who sins

Here the word "soul" represents the person. Alternate translation: "The person who sins"

Ezekiel 18:6

he does not eat upon the mountains

People often worshiped and offered sacrifices to pagan gods on the mountains. It is implied that this person has not participated in these kinds of pagan rituals. Alternate translation: "he does not eat meat sacrificed to idols on the mountains"

lift up his eyes to the idols

The idiom "lift up his eyes" refers to looking toward something. With reference to idols, this gesture represents worshiping or praying to idols. Alternate translation: "worship the idols" or "pray to the idols"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

approach a woman during her impurity

It is implicit that he has not approached a woman in order to sleep with her. Alternate translation: "tried to sleep with a woman during her impurity"

during her impurity

The word "impurity" is a euphemism for the time every month when a woman bleeds from her womb. It is also an abstract noun that can be translated as an adjective or verb. Alternate translation: "when she is unclean" or "during her monthly period"

Ezekiel 18:7

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gives back to the debtor his pledge
"returns to the debtor the item that the debtor gave him as security for the loan." When a person borrowed something, sometimes the person giving the loan required the borrower to give something as a pledge. A pledge was given to ensure that the borrower would pay back whatever he borrowed. The person who gave the loan was supposed to return the pledge to the borrower once the debt was paid.
Ezekiel 18:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues to describe the actions of the righteous man.
interest
This word refers to the money paid by a person to use borrowed money. However, some modern versions interpret "any interest" in this passage as "too much interest."
establishes faithfulness between people
This means that he judges fairly the disputes that may arise between people.
Ezekiel 18:9
that man walks in my statutes
Yahweh speaks of a person obeying his statutes as if the statutes were a path in which the person walks. Alternate translation: "that man obeys my statutes"
Ezekiel 18:10
who sheds blood
This phrase represents murder in any form. Alternate translation: "who murders"
any one of these things
This refers to the sinful actions that Yahweh had mentioned beginning in Ezekiel 18:5.
Ezekiel 18:11
eats upon the mountains
People often worshiped and offered sacrifices to pagan gods on the mountains. It is implied that this person has participated in these kinds of pagan rituals. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 18:5]
Ezekiel 18:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about the violent son.
the poor and needy
The words "poor" and "needy" share similar meanings and emphasize that these are people who cannot help themselves.
he lifts up his eyes to the idols
The idiom "lifts up his eyes" refers to looking toward something. With reference to idols, this gesture represents worshiping or praying to idols. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 18:6]
does not return a pledge
"does not return to the debtor the item that the debtor gave him as security for the loan." When a person borrowed something, sometimes the person giving the loan required the borrower to give something as a pledge. A pledge was given to ensure that the borrower would pay back whatever he borrowed. The person who gave the loan was supposed to return the pledge to the borrower once the debt was paid.
Ezekiel 18:13
interest
This word refers to the money paid by a person to use borrowed money. However, some modern versions interpret "any interest" in this passage as "too much interest." See how you translated this word in Ezekiel 18:8.
should that man live? Surely he will not live!
Yahweh asks this as a leading question in order to emphasize the negative answer. Alternate translation: "he will certainly not live!"
his blood will be on him
Here the word "blood" represents death. For blood to be on a person is an idiom that means the person is responsible for that death. Alternate translation: "he will be responsible for his own death"
Ezekiel 18:14
behold!
The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows.
Ezekiel 18:15
That son does not eat upon the mountains
People often worshiped and offered sacrifices to pagan gods on the mountains. It is implied that this person has not participated in these kinds of pagan rituals. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 18:6]
he does not lift up his eyes to the idols
The idiom "lifted up his eyes" refers to looking toward something. With reference to idols, this gesture represents worshiping or praying to idols. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 18:6]
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 18:16
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak about the son who does not commit the same sins as his father.
require a pledge
"require a debtor to give an item as security for the loan." When a person borrowed something, sometimes the person giving the loan required the borrower to give something as a pledge. A pledge was given to ensure that the borrower would pay back whatever he borrowed. The person who gave the loan was supposed to return the pledge to the borrower once the debt was paid.
Ezekiel 18:17
interest
This word refers to the money paid by a person to use borrowed money. However, some modern versions interpret "interest" in this passage as "too much interest." See how you translated this word in Ezekiel 18:8.
walks according to my statutes
Yahweh speaks of obeying his statutes as if his statutes were a path in which the person walks. Alternate translation: "obeys my statutes"
Ezekiel 18:18
General Information:
Yahweh speaks about the son's father who has not obeyed

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God's law.

extortion

to take something from someone else by using threats or force.

robbed his brother

"robbed his fellow Israelite"

behold, he

"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: he"

in his iniquity

"because of his iniquity"

Ezekiel 18:19

Why does the son not bear the iniquity of his father?

Yahweh speaks of a person being responsible for or guilty of iniquity as if the iniquity were an object that the person carries. Alternate translation: "Why is the son not responsible for the iniquity of his father?" or "Why is the son not guilty of the iniquity of his father?"

Ezekiel 18:20

The righteousness of the one who acts rightly will be on himself

For righteousness to be on a person is an idiom that means the person is responsible for that righteousness. Alternate translation: "The one who acts rightly will be responsible for his own righteousness"

the wickedness of the wicked will be on himself

For wickedness to be on a person is an idiom that means the person is responsible for that wickedness. Alternate translation: "the wicked person will be responsible for his own wickedness"

Ezekiel 18:21

General Information:

Yahweh speaking of the wicked person who changes and does what is righteous.

Ezekiel 18:22

All the transgressions that he has committed will not be called to mind against him

The idiom "call to mind" means to remember. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not remember all the transgressions that he has committed and will not hold them against him"

by the righteousness that he practices

"because of the righteous things he has done"

Ezekiel 18:23

General Information:

Yahweh speaks about his desire for wicked people.

Do I greatly rejoice over the death of the wicked ... and not in his turning away from his way so that he may live?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question in order to emphasize the opposite. Alternate translation: "I do not greatly rejoice over the death of the wicked ... but I do greatly rejoice if he turns away from his way so that he may live."

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

not in his turning away from his way

Yahweh speaks of a person's lifestyle or behavior as if it were a way on which the person walks. The idiom "to turn away" from something means to stop doing that thing. Alternate translation: "not in his ceasing to live the way that he lives"

Ezekiel 18:24

General Information:

Yahweh gives an example of a man who turns from righteousness to wickedness.

then will he live?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the negative answer. Alternate translation: "then he will surely not live."

All the righteousness that he had done will not be called to mind

The idiom "call to mind" means to remember. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not remember all the righteousness that he had done"

treachery

crime done against a country or against God by someone who is expected to be loyal

he will die in the sins

"he will die because of the sins"

Ezekiel 18:25

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Are my ways unfair?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the negative answer. Alternate translation: "My ways are not unfair."

Is it not your ways that are unfair?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the positive answer. Alternate translation: "It is your ways that are unfair."

Ezekiel 18:26

dies because of them ... die in the iniquity that he has done

These phrases repeat the thought of a man dying because of his sin to express that it was his fault and the fault of no one else.

Ezekiel 18:28

he has seen

Yahweh speaks of the person thinking about and understanding something as if the person were seeing it. Alternate translation: "he has considered" or "he has understood"

Ezekiel 18:29

General Information:

Yahweh continues to teach the people of Israel why his way is fair.

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

The way of the Lord is not fair ... How is my way not fair ... It is your ways that are not fair

Actions or behaviors are spoken of as if they were a way or path that a person travels. Alternate translation: "The Lord does not act fairly ... How do I not act fairly ... It is you who do not act fairly"

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Ezekiel 18:30

according to his ways

Yahweh speaks of a person's actions as if the person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "according to his actions"

turn away from all your transgressions so that they will not be stumbling blocks of iniquity against you

Yahweh speaks of "transgressions" causing people to rebel against him as if they were blocks over which the people stumble.

stumbling blocks of iniquity against you

Possible meanings are 1) the stumbling blocks cause the person to commit more iniquity. Alternate translation: "stumbling blocks that cause you to commit more iniquity" or 2) The word "iniquity" is a metonym for the punishment that a person receives for his iniquity. Alternate translation: "stumbling blocks that lead to your punishment"

Ezekiel 18:31

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.

Throw away from yourselves all of the transgressions that you have committed

Yahweh speaks of the people determining to stop committing transgressions as if the transgressions were objects, such as clothing, that they removed and threw away. Alternate translation: "Get rid of all of the transgressions that you have committed"

make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit

Here the word "heart" represents the will and emotions and the word "spirit" represents the thoughts and disposition. Yahweh speaks of the people having new emotions and thoughts as if they were making a new heart and spirit for themselves. Alternate translation: "get for yourselves new emotions and a new way of thinking"

Why should you die, house of Israel?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to comfort the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "There is no reason for you to die, house of Israel."

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

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19 [1]"Now you, take up a lamentation against the leaders of Israel[2]and say,
'Who was your mother?
A lioness, she lived with a lion's son;
in the midst of young lions, she nurtured her cubs.
3 She is the one who raised up one of her cubs to become a young lion,
a lion who learned to tear apart his prey,
and then he devoured men.

4 Then the nations heard about him.
He was caught in their trap,
and they brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt.

5 Then she saw that although she had waited for his return,
her expectation was now gone,
so she took another of her cubs
and raised him to become a young lion.

6 This young lion roamed about in the midst of lions.
He was a young lion and learned to tear his victims;
he devoured men.

7 He seized their widows
and ruined their cities.
The land and its fullness were made desolate
because of the sound of his roaring.[1]

8 But the nations came against him
from the surrounding provinces;
they spread their nets over him.
He was caught in their trap.

9 With hooks they put him in a cage
and then they brought him to the king of Babylon.
They brought him to the strongholds

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so that his voice would no longer be heard
on the mountains of Israel.

10 Your mother was like a vine
planted in your blood beside the water.[2]
It was fruitful and full of branches
because of the abundance of water.

11 It had strong branches that were used for rulers' scepters,
and its size was exalted above the branches,
and its height was seen by the greatness of its foliage.

12 But the vine was uprooted in fury
and thrown down to the earth,
and an eastern wind dried out its fruit.
Its strong branches were broken off and withered
and fire consumed them.

13 So now it is planted in the wilderness,
in a land of drought and thirst.

14 For fire went out from her large branches
and consumed its fruit.
There is no strong branch on it,
no scepter to rule.'
This is a lamentation and will be sung as a lamentation."

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[1]Instead of He seized their widows, some ancient Hebrew copies and many modern translations have He destroyed their fortresses.
[2]Instead of in your blood, some ancient Hebrew copies and many modern translations have in your vineyard.

Ezekiel 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Judah destroyed

The first king was taken as a captive to Egypt, the next was taken as a captive to Babylon. Now Judah is not prospering.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The kings of Judah are compared to man-eating lions.

Links:

Ezekiel 19:1 Notes

Ezekiel 19:1

General Information:

Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak to the people of Israel. He tells a story where the nation of Israel is a lioness and some of the past kings in the kingdom of Judah are her cubs.

take up a lamentation

This idiom means to sing a lamentation. Alternate translation: "sing a lamentation"

Ezekiel 19:2

Who was your mother?

Yahweh asks this ask a leading question in order to introduce the answer. Alternate translation: "This is who your mother is."

lioness

a female lion

Ezekiel 19:4

He was caught in their trap

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They caught him in their trap"

Ezekiel 19:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to describe the nation of Israel as a lioness and the kings of the kingdom of Judah as her cubs.

Ezekiel 19:7

He seized their widows

"He seized the widows of the men whom he devoured"

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The land and its fullness were made desolate
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People abandoned the land and its fullness"
its fullness
"everything in it"
Ezekiel 19:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues to describe the nation of Israel as a lioness and the kings of the kingdom of Judah as her cubs.
from the surrounding provinces
"from the provinces surrounding the land of Israel"
He was caught in their trap
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They caught him in their trap"
Ezekiel 19:9
his voice would no longer be heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people would no longer hear his voice"
Ezekiel 19:10
General Information:
Yahweh speaks of the nation of Israel as though it was the mother of the leaders of Israel. Here he begins to tell a story where she is a prosperous vine.
a vine planted in your blood
Possible meanings are that "blood" represents 1) the violence of the kings of Judah who had murdered people. Alternate translation: "a vine planted by means of violence" or 2) The plentiful wine of Judah which had become a symbol of prosperity. Alternate translation: "a vine planted in your prosperity"
Ezekiel 19:11
strong branches that were used for rulers' scepters
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "branches strong enough that people used them for rulers' scepters"
its height was seen by the greatness of its foliage
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people could see how tall it was by the greatness of its foliage"
Ezekiel 19:12
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell a story in which the nation of Israel is a vine.
the vine was uprooted in fury and thrown down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh uprooted the vine in fury and threw it down" or "people uprooted the vine in fury and threw it down"
Its strong branches were broken off and withered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh broke off its strong branches and they withered" or "People broke off its strong branches and they withered"
Ezekiel 19:13
in a land of drought and thirst
The very dry land is spoken of as if it were thirsty. Alternate translation: "in a very dry land of drought"
Ezekiel 19:14
General Information:
Yahweh continues to tell a story in which the nation of Israel is a vine.
no scepter to rule
The implicit information may be supplied from [Ezekiel 19:11]
will be sung as a lamentation
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must sing it as a lamentation"

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20 [1]It came about in the seventh year, on the tenth day of the fifth month, that elders of Israel came to inquire of Yahweh and sat before me.
[2]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[3]"Son of man, declare to the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Have you come to inquire of me? As I live, I will not be inquired of by you!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'
[4]Will you judge them? Will you judge, son of man? Let them know about their fathers' abominations.[5]Say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: On the day that I chose Israel and raised my hand to swear an oath to the descendants of the house of Jacob, and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt, when I raised my hand to swear an oath to them. I said, "I am Yahweh your God"—[6]on that day I raised my hand to swear an oath to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had carefully selected for them. It was flowing with milk and honey; it was the most beautiful ornament among all the lands.
[7]I said to them, "Let each man throw away the detestable things from before his eyes and the idols of Egypt. Do not make yourselves unclean; I am Yahweh your God."
[8]But they rebelled against me and were unwilling to listen to me. Each man did not throw away the detestable things from before his eyes nor abandon the idols of Egypt, so I determined to pour out my fury upon them to satisfy my wrath among them in the middle of the land of Egypt.[9]I acted for my name's sake so it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations among whom they were staying. I made myself known to them, in their eyes, by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

[10]So I sent them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness.[11]Then I gave them my statutes and made my decrees known to them, by which a man will live if he obeys them.[12]I also gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between myself and them, for them to know that I am Yahweh who makes them holy.
[13]But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes; instead, they rejected my decrees, by which a man will live if he obeys them, and they greatly profaned my Sabbaths. So, I said I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness in order to end them.[14]But I acted for my name's sake so it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out of Egypt.

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[15]So I myself also raised my hand to swear an oath to them in the wilderness not to bring them into the land that I had
been going to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey, which was the most beautiful ornament among all the
lands.[16]I swore this because they had rejected my decrees and did not walk in my statutes, and they profaned my
Sabbaths, since their hearts walked after their idols.[17]But my eye spared them from their destruction and I did not
completely destroy them in the wilderness.

[18]I said to their children in the wilderness, "Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, or keep their rules, or defile
yourselves with their idols.[19]I am Yahweh your God, walk in my statutes; keep my decrees and obey them.[20]Keep my
Sabbaths holy so that they will be a sign between me and you, so that you will know that I am Yahweh your God."
[21]But their sons and daughters rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes or keep my decrees, by which a man
might live if he obeys them. They profaned my Sabbaths, so I determined to pour out my fury upon them to satisfy my
wrath against them in the wilderness.[22]But I turned my hand away and acted for my name's sake, so it would not be
profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought out the Israelites.
[23]I myself also lifted up my hand to swear to them in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the nations and
disperse them among the lands.[24]I decided to do this since they had not obeyed my decrees, and since they had rejected
my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths. Their eyes were longing after their fathers' idols.
[25]Then I also gave them statutes that were not good, and decrees by which they could not live.[26]I declared them to be
unclean through their gifts—they made a sacrifice of every firstborn of the womb and caused them to pass through the
fire—that I might fill them with horror so they will know that I am Yahweh!'

[27]Therefore, son of man, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: In this also your fathers
blasphemed me when they were unfaithful to me.[28]When I brought them into the land that I had sworn to give them, and
then whenever they saw any high hill and leafy tree, they offered their sacrifices, they provoked me by their offerings,
and there they also burned their fragrant incense and poured out their drink offerings.[29]Then I said to them, "What is this
high place where you bring offerings there?" So the name is called Bamah to this day.'
[30]Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Why do you make yourselves unclean with the ways of
your fathers? So why do you act like prostitutes, searching for disgusting things?[31]When you offer up your gifts—when
you cause your sons to pass through the fire—to this day you defile yourselves with all your idols. So why should I let you
seek me, house of Israel? As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—I will not allow you to seek me.[32]The thought
that is forming in your mind will never happen. You say, "Let us be like the other nations, like the clans in the other lands
who worship wood and stone."

[33]As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—I will certainly reign over you with a mighty hand, a raised arm, and
fury that will be poured out on you.[34]I will bring you out from the other peoples and will gather you out of the lands
among whom you have been scattered. I will do this with a mighty hand and with fury poured out.[35]Then I will bring you
into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will judge you face to face.
[36]As I judged your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so also I will judge you—this is the Lord Yahweh's
declaration.[37]I will cause you to pass under my rod, and I will make you obey the requirements of the covenant.[38]I will
purge from among you the rebels and those who revolt against me. I will send them out from the land where they are
staying as foreigners, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am Yahweh.
[39]So to you, house of Israel, the Lord Yahweh says this: Each of you should go to his own idols. Worship them if you will
refuse to listen to me, but you must no longer profane my holy name with your gifts and your idols.

[40]For on my holy mountain, on the mountain peak of Israel—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—all of the house of
Israel will worship me there in the land. I will be pleased to require your contributions there, and also the firstfruits of
your tribute with all your holy things.[41]I will accept you like fragrant incense when I bring you out from the peoples and
gather you out of the lands where you have been scattered. I will show myself as holy among you for the nations to see.
[42]Then, when I bring you to the land of Israel, to the land that I have lifted up my hand to swear to give to your fathers,
you will know that I am Yahweh.[43]There you will call to mind your conduct and all of your deeds by which you defiled
yourselves, and you will despise yourselves in your own eyes for all your evil deeds that you have done.[44]So you will
know that I am Yahweh when I do this to you because of my name's sake, and not because of your evil deeds, and not
because of your corrupt deeds, house of Israel—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[45]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[46]"Son of man, set your face toward the southern lands, and speak against
the south; prophesy against the forest of the Negev.[47]Say to the forest of the Negev, 'This is Yahweh's declaration—the Lord
Yahweh says this: See, I will set a fire among you. It will devour every fresh tree and every dried tree among you. The
fiery flame will not be quenched; every face from the south to the north will be burned.
[48]Then all flesh will see that I am Yahweh when I light the fire, and it will not be quenched.'"[49]Then I said, "Alas! Lord
Yahweh, they are saying of me, 'Is he not a mere teller of parables?'"

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Ezekiel 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Rebels cannot ask for help

The people of Israel have rebelled against God again and again. Now they cannot come to God for help in their troubles.

Links:

Ezekiel 20:1 Notes

Ezekiel 20:1

It came about

This phrase is used to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

in the seventh year

The implicit information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "in the seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

the tenth day of the fifth month

This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the beginning of August on Western calendars.

before me

"in front of me"

Ezekiel 20:2

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 20:3

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

As I live

"As surely as I am alive." Yahweh uses this expression to show that what he says next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Have you come to inquire of me?

Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that the elders should not be inquiring of him. Alternate translation: "You should not come to inquire of me."

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 20:4

Will you judge them? Will you judge, son of man?

Yahweh asks Ezekiel the same question twice in order to secure Ezekiel's commitment to pronounce the judgement. Alternate translation: "Are you ready to pronounce judgment on them, son of man?"

Ezekiel 20:5

I ... raised my hand to swear an oath

Here "raised my hand" is a symbolic action that shows he will truly do what he has sworn to do. Alternate translation: "I ... solemnly swore an oath"

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Jacob over many years. Translate "the house of" as in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 20:6

It was flowing with milk and honey

"It was a land where plenty of milk and honey flowed." Yahweh speaks of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: "It was land that was excellent for raising livestock and growing crops"

the most beautiful ornament among all the lands

The lands in which people live are spoken of as if they are jewelry or other things that are pleasant to look at. Alternate translation: "the most beautiful of all lands"

Ezekiel 20:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.

to them

"to the descendants of the house of Jacob"

the detestable things from before his eyes

Yahweh speaks of the people worshiping the detestable things as if they had placed those idols in front of their eyes. Alternate translation: "the detestable things that he worships"

the idols of Egypt

"throw away the idols of Egypt"

Do not make yourselves unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Ezekiel 20:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.

they rebelled against me

The word "they" refers to "the descendants of the house of Jacob."

were unwilling to listen to me

"would not obey me"

the detestable things from before his eyes

Yahweh speaks of the people worshiping the detestable things as if they had placed those idols in front of their eyes. Alternate translation: "the detestable things that he worshiped"

to pour out my fury upon them

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Yahweh speaks of expressing his fury by punishing them as if his fury were a liquid that he poured out on them. Alternate translation: "to act against them in my fury"
Ezekiel 20:9
for my name's sake
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "for the sake of my reputation"
so it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the people would not profane it in the eyes of the nations"
in the eyes
The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in the opinion" or "in the judgment"
the nations
The word "nations" is a metonym for the people who live in the nations. Alternate translation: "the people who live in other nations"
they were staying
"they were living"
I made myself known to them, in their eyes
Here the word "them" refers to the nations. The idiom "in their eyes" refers to being in a position where people can see. Alternate translation: "I revealed myself to them, in their presence"
bringing them
"bringing the people of Israel"
Ezekiel 20:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
I sent them
The word "them" refers to "the descendants of the house of Jacob."
Ezekiel 20:12
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 20:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
They did not walk in my statutes
Yahweh speaks of obeying his statutes as if the statutes were a path along which a person walks. Alternate translation: "They did not obey my statutes"
I would pour out my fury upon them
Yahweh speaks of expressing his fury by punishing them as if his fury were a liquid that he poured out on them. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 20:8. Alternate translation: "I would act against them in my fury"
in order to end them
The euphemism "to end them" refers to killing them. Alternate translation: "in order to kill them"
Ezekiel 20:14
I acted for my name's sake
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:9]
so it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:9]
in the eyes of the nations
Here the "nations" refer to the people who live in those places. The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:9]
in whose sight I had brought them out of Egypt
"in whose presence I brought my people out of Egypt"
Ezekiel 20:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
I myself also raised my hand to swear an oath
Here "raised my hand" is a symbolic action that shows he will truly do what he has sworn to do. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:5]
to them
"to the house of Israel"
a land flowing with milk and honey
"a land where plenty of milk and honey flowed." Yahweh speaks of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:6]
the most beautiful ornament among all the lands
The lands in which people live are spoken of as if they are jewelry or other things that are pleasant to look at. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:6]
Ezekiel 20:16
did not walk in my statutes
Yahweh speaks of obeying his statutes as if they were a path along which a person walks. Alternate translation: "did not obey my statutes"
their hearts walked after their idols
Here the word "heart" represents the person's thoughts and emotions. Yahweh speaks of being dedicated to idols as if a person's heart walked after them. Alternate translation: "they were dedicated to worshiping their idols"
Ezekiel 20:17
my eye spared them
Here the word "eye" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I spared them"
Ezekiel 20:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers
Yahweh speaks of a person obeying statutes as if the statutes were paths along with a person walks. Alternate translation: "Do not obey the statutes of your parents"
Ezekiel 20:19
walk in my statutes
Yahweh speaks of a person obeying statutes as if the statutes were paths along with a person walks. Alternate translation: "Do not obey the statutes of your parents ...

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obey my statutes"
keep my decrees and obey them
To "keep" Yahweh's decrees is the same as to "obey them."
Ezekiel 20:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
They did not walk in my statutes
Yahweh speaks of a person obeying his statutes as if the statutes were a path along which the person walks. Alternate translation: "They did not obey my statutes"
to pour out my fury upon them
Yahweh speaks of expressing his fury by punishing them as if his fury were a liquid that he poured out on them. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 20:8. Alternate translation: "to act against them in my fury"
Ezekiel 20:22
I turned my hand away
Here the word "hand" represents Yahweh and turning his hand away means that he does not do what he was going to do. Alternate translation: "But I did not do that"
for my name's sake
Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "for the sake of my reputation"
so it would not be profaned in the eyes of the nations
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:9]
in the eyes of the nations
Here the "nations" refer to the people who live in those places. The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in the thoughts of the people in other nations"
Ezekiel 20:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
I myself also lifted up my hand to swear
Here "lifted up my hand" is a symbolic action that shows he will truly do what he has sworn to do. Alternate translation: "I myself also solemnly swore"
scatter them among the nations and disperse them among the lands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 12:15]
Ezekiel 20:24
Their eyes were longing after their fathers' idols
Here the word "eyes" represents the person who looks to the idols to worship them. Alternate translation: "They were longing after their fathers' idols"
Ezekiel 20:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the elders of Israel.
Then I also gave them statutes that were not good, and decrees by which they could not live
The words statutes in this phrase do not refer to God's law. God permitted them to live by human laws and judgments that were not good.
gave them
The word "them" refers to the children of those whom Yahweh brought out of Egypt.
Ezekiel 20:26
they made a sacrifice of every firstborn of the womb
The phrase "firstborn of the womb" refers to the firstborn child of a woman. The phrase "made a sacrifice" can be translated with the verb "sacrifice." Alternate translation: "they sacrificed every woman's firstborn child"
Ezekiel 20:29
What is this high place where you bring offerings there?
Yahweh asks this question in order to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "This is not a high place where you are to bring offerings!"
the name is called Bamah
The name "Bamah" means "high place," a place for worshiping idols. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people have called that place Bamah"
Ezekiel 20:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
Why do you make yourselves unclean with the ways of your fathers?
Yahweh asks this question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "You should not make yourselves unclean by doing the things that your fathers did."
Why do you make yourselves unclean
A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
So why do you act like prostitutes, searching for disgusting things?
Yahweh asks this question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "You should not act like prostitutes, searching for disgusting things."
why do you act like prostitutes
Yahweh speaks of the people being unfaithful to him as if they were acting like women who sleep with men to whom they are not married.
Ezekiel 20:31
So why should I let you seek me, house of Israel?
Yahweh asks this question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "I will not let you come close to me, house of Israel."
Ezekiel 20:33
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
with a mighty hand, a raised arm
The words "hand" and "arm" both represent power. Alternate translation: "with very great power"
fury that will be poured out on you
Yahweh speaks of expressing his fury as if the fury were a liquid that he pours on on the people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fury that I will pour out on you" or "I will express my fury towards you"
Ezekiel 20:34
among whom you have been scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "among whom I have scattered you"
Ezekiel 20:36
General Information:

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Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

Ezekiel 20:37

I will cause you to pass under my rod

This refers to the practice of a shepherd counting and inspecting his sheep as the sheep walked under his staff. Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will count his people whom he gathers from the nations to ensure that they are all present. Alternate translation: "I will count you carefully as a shepherd counts his sheep" or 2) Yahweh will inspect each person as they pass under his staff in order to separate the faithful from the unfaithful. Alternate translation: "I will inspect you carefully as a shepherd inspects his sheep"

Ezekiel 20:39

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

to listen to me

"to obey me" or "to pay attention to me"

profane my holy name

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "dishonor me"

Ezekiel 20:40

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

to require your contributions

"to require you to bring your offerings"

the firstfruits of your tribute

Yahweh speaks of the best things among all that they give to him as if they were "firstfruits." Alternate translation: "the best of your contributions"

your holy things

"the offerings that you set aside to give to me"

Ezekiel 20:41

I will accept you like fragrant incense

Yahweh speaks of his people worshiping him as they should as if the people themselves were the incense offering.

bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the lands

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will bring his people back from all of the nations to which he had scattered them. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 20:34]

where you have been scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where I have scattered you"

Ezekiel 20:42

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

I have lifted up my hand to swear

Here "lifted up my hand" is a symbolic action that shows he will truly do what he has sworn to do. Alternate translation: "I have solemnly sworn"

Ezekiel 20:43

you will call to mind

This idiom means to remember. Alternate translation: "you will remember"

you defiled yourselves

A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were defiled.

you will despise yourselves in your own eyes

Here the eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "you will hate yourselves"

Ezekiel 20:44

because of my name's sake

Here the word "name" represents Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: "because of my reputation"

Ezekiel 20:45

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 20:46

set your face toward the southern lands

This is a command to stare at the southern lands as a symbol of punishing the people there. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 4:3]

set your face

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set your face" represents staring. Alternate translation: "stare"

Ezekiel 20:47

The fiery flame will not be quenched

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The fiery flame will not go out" or "No one will be able to quench the fiery flame"

every face from the south to the north will be burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the fire will burn every face from the south to the north"

every face from the south to the north

Here the word "face" represents the person. By mentioning the opposite directions, Yahweh refers to everyone who lives in the north, in the south, and everywhere in between. Alternate translation: "every person who lives in that area"

Ezekiel 20:48

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the forest of the Negev.

all flesh will see

Here the word "flesh" represents all humans. The idiom to "see" means to understand. Alternate translation: "all people will understand"

it will not be quenched

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will not go out" or "no one will quench it"

Ezekiel 20:49

Alas

a word that expresses distress or grief

Is he not a mere teller of parables?

The people use this question to insult Ezekiel and dismiss

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what he is telling them. Alternate translation: "He is merely telling parables"

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21 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, and speak against the sanctuaries; prophesy against the land of Israel.[3]Say to the land of Israel, 'Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against you! I will draw my sword from its sheath and cut off both the righteous person and the wicked person from you!
[4]In order for me to cut off both the righteous and the wicked from you, my sword will go out from its sheath against all flesh from the south to the north.[5]Then all flesh will know that I, Yahweh, have drawn my sword from its sheath. It will no longer hold back!'
[6]As for you, son of man, groan as your loins break! In bitterness groan before their eyes![7]Then it will happen that they will ask you, 'For what reason are you groaning?' Then you will say, 'Because of the news that is coming, for every heart will melt, and every hand will falter! Every spirit will grow faint, and every knee will flow like water. Behold! It is coming and it will be like this!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[8]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[9]"Son of man, prophesy and say, 'The Lord says this:
Say: A sword! A sword!
It will be sharpened and polished!
[10] It will be sharpened in order to engage in great slaughter!
It will be polished in order to be like lightning!
Should we rejoice in my son's scepter?
The coming sword hates every such rod!

[11] So the sword will be given to be polished,
and then to be grasped by the hand!
The sword is sharpened and it is polished
and it is to be given into the hand of the one who kills!'"

[12] Call for help and wail, son of man!
For that sword has come against my people!
It is against all the leaders of Israel.
They are thrown against the sword with my people.
Therefore, slap your thigh!

[13] For there is a trial,
but what if the scepter that despises does not last?
—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[14] Now you, son of man, prophesy
and hit your two hands together,
for the sword will attack even a third time!
A sword for the ones to be slaughtered!
It is a sword for the many to be slaughtered,
piercing them everywhere!

[15] In order to melt their hearts and to multiply their fallen,
I have set the sword for slaughter at all their gates.
Ah! It is made like lightning, it is grasped for slaughter.

[16] Strike sharply to the righthand side!
Strike to the lefthand side!
Go wherever your face is turned.

[17] For I will also hit my two hands together,
and then I will bring my fury to rest!
I, Yahweh, declare it!"

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[18]The word of Yahweh came to me again, saying,[19]"Now you, son of man, assign two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to come. The two roads will start in the same land, and a signpost will mark one of them as leading to a city.
[20]Mark one road for the sword to come to Rabbah, the city of the Ammonites. Mark the other to lead the army to Judah and the city of Jerusalem, which is fortified.
[21]For the king of Babylon will stop at the crossroads, at the junction, in order to practice divination. He will shake some arrows and ask direction from some idols and he will examine a liver.[22]In his right hand will be a divination about Jerusalem, to set battering rams against it, to open his mouth to order the slaughter, to sound a war cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to build a ramp, and to erect siege towers.[23]It will seem to be a false divination in their eye, those who had sworn an oath to the Babylonians! But the king will accuse them of iniquity in order to besiege them!

[24]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Because you have made your guilt to be remembered, making your transgressions to be revealed, so that in all your actions your sins will be seen—because you have done this you will be taken in hand.

[25]As for you, profane and wicked ruler of Israel, whose day of punishment has come, and whose time of committing iniquity has ended,[26]the Lord Yahweh says this to you: Remove the turban and take off the crown! Things will no longer be the same! Exalt the lowly and humble the exalted![27]A ruin! A ruin! I will make it a ruin! It will not be restored until the one comes who is assigned to execute judgment.

[28]So you, son of man, prophesy and say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this to the people of Ammon concerning their coming disgrace: A sword, a sword is drawn! It is sharpened for the slaughter in order to devour, so it will be like lightning!
[29]While prophets see empty visions for you, while they practice divination to make up lies for you, this sword will lie on the necks of the wicked who are about to be killed, whose day of punishment has come and whose time of iniquity is about to end.

[30]Return the sword to its sheath. In the place of your creation, in the land of your origin, I will judge you![31]I will pour out my indignation on you! I will fan the fire of my rage against you and put you into the hand of cruel men, craftsmen of destruction!
[32]You will become fuel for the fire! Your blood will be in the midst of the land. You will not be remembered, for I, Yahweh have declared this!'"

Ezekiel 21 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Refusing to learn

Judah has refused to learn from their punishment, so God is about to destroy the nation in war.

Links:

Ezekiel 21:1 Notes

Ezekiel 21:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 21:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity or "Mortal person" or "Human." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1.

set your face toward Jerusalem

This is a command to stare at Jerusalem as a symbol of punishing the people there. Alternate translation: "stare at Jerusalem" or "stare at Jerusalem so that the people there will be harmed"

set your face toward Jerusalem

Jerusalem was far away, so Ezekiel could not see it, but staring in that direction would be a symbol of harming it. See how you translated a similar phrase in Ezekiel 6:2 Alternate translation: "Turn toward Jerusalem and stare" or "stare toward Jerusalem so that the people there will be harmed"

Ezekiel 21:3

I will draw my sword from its sheath and cut off both the righteous person and the wicked person from you

This speaks of Yahweh causing these people to die as if he actually killed them with his own sword. Alternate translation: "I am opposed to you, and it will be as though I pull my sword from its sheath to kill both the righteous and the wicked people among you"

the righteous person and the wicked person

"righteous people and wicked people." This refers to

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multiple people, not just one righteous person and one wicked person.

sheath

something that holds and covers a sword when no one is using it

cut off

This is a euphemism that means to kill. Alternate translation: "kill"

Ezekiel 21:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the land of Israel.

cut off

This is a euphemism that means to kill. Alternate translation: "kill"

the righteous ... the wicked

This refers to righteous and wicked people. Alternate translation: "those who are righteous ... those who are wicked" or "the righteous people ... the wicked people"

from you

"among you"

my sword will go out from its sheath against

This speaks of Yahweh causing these people to die as if he actually killed them with his own sword. Alternate translation: "it will be as though I pull my sword from its sheath and strike"

all flesh

Here "flesh" is a metonym for "people." Alternate translation: "all people"

from the south to the north

This is a merism that refers to the area to the north, and to the south, and all places in between. Alternate translation: "in every direction" or "everywhere"

Ezekiel 21:5

that I, Yahweh, have drawn my sword from its sheath

This speaks of Yahweh causing people to die as if he actually killed them with his own sword. Alternate translation: "it is as though I, Yahweh, have struck people with my sword"

It will no longer hold back

This speaks of Yahweh not holding back his sword from attacking people as if his sword were a person that was no longer holding itself back from attacking. Alternate translation: "and I will not put it back in its sheath again" or "I will not hold back from attacking people"

Ezekiel 21:6

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Ezekiel.

groan as your loins break

Yahweh tells Ezekiel to groan as a sign to accompany his message. He tells him to groan deeply as if his abdomen was in great pain. "groan deeply as if your loins were in great pain" or "groan deeply with great sorrow"

In bitterness groan

"With great grief" or "With great sorrow"

before their eyes

Here the Israelites are referred to by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "before them" or "before the Israelite people"

Ezekiel 21:7

the news that is coming

This speaks of the "news" as if it were a person that was soon coming to them. Alternate translation: "the news that they will soon hear"

for every heart will melt

This speaks of people becoming afraid as if their hearts were melting. Also, this speaks of the people fainting as a result of fear. Alternate translation: "for everyone will become fearful and unable to act"

will falter

"will be weak"

Every spirit will grow faint

This speaks of people becoming fearful in their spirits as if their spirits were about to faint. Alternate translation: "Everyone will be fearful in their inner being"

every knee will flow like water

"every knee will be as weak as water." This is a euphemism for people being so afraid that they lose their bladder control and urinate on themselves. Alternate translation: "every leg will be wet with urine" or "everyone will lose control of their urine"

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 21:8

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 21:9

A sword! A sword! It will be sharpened and polished!

This passage describes the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for an enemy army that Yahweh will use to attack Jerusalem. This metaphor begins here and continues through Ezekiel 21:17.

It will be sharpened and polished

This phrase indicates that the sword is ready for someone to use it. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is sharp and polished"

polished

Someone made the sword smooth, shiny, and clean by rubbing it with a rough material.

Ezekiel 21:10

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to describe the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for the enemy army that Yahweh will use to attack Jerusalem.

It will be sharpened ... It will be polished in order to

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will sharpen it ... I will polish it so that it will"

in order to be like lightning

This means that the sword will be so shiny that light reflects off of it easily and brightly. Alternate translation: "so that it flashes like lightning" or "so that light reflects off of it as brightly as lightning"

Should we rejoice in my son's scepter?

This rhetorical question emphasizes that the people of

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Israel will not celebrate their king's power, because it cannot resist the "sword." Alternate translation: "The people of Judah will not celebrate about their king's scepter." or "we should not celebrate the power of our king's scepter."

Should we

The word "we" refers to Ezekiel and the people of Israel.

in my son's scepter

Here Yahweh refers to the king of Judah as his son. The king's scepter represents his rule as king. It is important to maintain the image of the king's scepter here, as the words "every such rod" refer to the scepter. Alternate translation: "in the king's scepter" or "in the power that the king's scepter represents"

The coming sword hates every such rod

Here the "sword" is personified as coming to attack the people. This speaks of the king not being able to resist the "sword", as if the "sword" were hating the king's scepter. Alternate translation: "the sword will overpower his scepter like that of any other ruler" or "for the king will not be able to resist when the sword is brought against him"

such rod

This phrase is used to mock the king's scepter by calling it a "rod." Alternate translation: "such scepter"

Ezekiel 21:11

the sword will be given to be polished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will polish the sword"

then to be grasped by the hand

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "then the right person will hold it in his hand"

it is to be given into the hand of the one who kills

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it is ready for the killer to use"

Ezekiel 21:12

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to describe the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for the enemy army that Yahweh will use to attack Jerusalem.

that sword has come against my people! It is against all

This speaks of Yahweh's sword attacking his people as if the sword itself were the attacker. Alternate translation: "I will use my sword to kill my people! I will bring it against all"

They are thrown against the sword with my people

This speaks of the leaders of Israel being killed with a sword as if they are thrown against the sword. Alternate translation: "They are killed with the sword along with my people" or "The sword will kill them along with my people"

slap your thigh

In Ezekiel's culture, slapping one's thigh was a sign of grief. Some other translation use the gesture of beating one's breast which is a sign of grief in many cultures. Alternate translation: "beat your chests"

Ezekiel 21:13

General Information:

The original Hebrew of this verse is unclear, and scholars do not agree on what the writer intended to say.

the scepter

Here the king of Judah is represented by his scepter. Alternate translation: "the king"

does not last

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cannot resist" or "is destroyed"

Ezekiel 21:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to describe the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for the enemy army that Yahweh will use to attack Jerusalem.

hit your two hands together

This means for him to clap his hands as a sign of his grief. Alternate translation: "clap your hands to show that you are very sad"

even a third time

This is an idiom that means multiple times. Alternate translation: "again and again"

A sword for the ones to be slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is a sword for slaughtering people"

It is a sword for the many to be slaughtered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is a sword for slaughtering many people"

piercing them everywhere

"attacking them from every side." Some Bibles translate this as "which enters into their rooms." This means no matter where they hide, the sword will kill them.

piercing them

The word "them" refers to the people of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel.

Ezekiel 21:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to describe the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for the enemy army that Yahweh will use to attack Jerusalem.

to melt their hearts

This speaks of causing the people to be so terrified that it is as if their hearts were melting. Alternate translation: "to fill them with terror" or "to cause them to be terrified"

to multiply their fallen

Here "fallen" refers to the people killed in battle. This means there will be a greater number of people killed. Alternate translation: "to kill many people among them"

set the sword for slaughter

Here the sword of Yahweh represents men with swords that are to attack Jerusalem. Also, the word "slaughter" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "placed soldiers armed with swords at their gates, ready to slaughter the people"

their gates

The word "their" refers to the people of Jerusalem.

It is made like lightning

This compares how the sword is well polished and how it reflects light to appear like lightning. Alternate translation: "My sword is polished and flashes like lightning" or "It is polished and reflects light as being like lightning"

it is grasped for slaughter

The sword of Yahweh represents the men with swords that are to attack Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "released to slaughter the people"

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Ezekiel 21:16

Strike sharply to the righthand side! ... Go wherever your face is turned.

Here Yahweh speaks to those who will attack his people as if they could hear him and as if they were a sword that they would use in the attack. He does this to emphasize that he is in control of what is happening during the attack. The phrase "wherever your face is turned" is an idiom for "wherever you desire to go." Alternate translation: "I tell those attacking with swords, 'Strike to the right! ... Attack in every direction.'"

Ezekiel 21:17

hit my two hands together

"clap my hands." Here clapping hands is a sign of triumph. Alternate translation: "clap my hands in triumph"

Ezekiel 21:18

The word of Yahweh came to me again

The phrase "the word of Yahweh came" is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 18:1]

Ezekiel 21:19

the sword of the king of Babylon

The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill people using swords. Alternate translation: "the soldiers of the king of Babylon" or "the Babylonian army"

a signpost will mark one of them as leading to a city

This is a sign posted where the road divides into two roads. Alternate translation: "a sign will be posted where the road divides into two roads"

Ezekiel 21:20

the sword

This is a metonym for the Babylonian army. Alternate translation: "the Babylonian army"

Ezekiel 21:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message.

at the crossroads, at the junction

Both of these phrases refer to the place where the two roads meet. Alternate translation: "at the crossroads"

He will shake some arrows and ask direction from some idols and he will examine a liver

These are divination practices.

Ezekiel 21:22

In his right hand will be a divination about Jerusalem

This means the he will hold one of the articles of his divination that was read as a divination against Jerusalem in his right hand. Alternate translation: "In his right hand will be an article of divination with an omen against Jerusalem"

battering rams

A battering ram was a cut tree or large log with a sharpened end or an end covered in metal. It was held by several men who would pound the end against a wall.

to build a ramp

These were large dirt ramps that the Babylonian soldiers built so that they could get onto the walls of Jerusalem.

siege towers

These were wooden towers that the Babylonian soldiers built around Jerusalem to enable them to shoot arrows over the walls of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 21:23

in their eyes

The eyes are a metonym for thoughts or judgment about what the person sees. The word "their" refers to the people in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "in the thoughts of the people in Jerusalem"

accuse them of iniquity

"accuse them of violating the treaty they made"

Ezekiel 21:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Jerusalem.

Because you have made your guilt to be remembered

"Because you remind me of your iniquity"

you will be taken in hand

This can be stated in active form. The "enemy's hand" represents the enemy's control. Alternate translation: "your enemy will take you in his hand" or "your enemies will capture you and take you into captivity"

Ezekiel 21:25

General Information:

Yahweh gives Ezekiel his message to the ruler of Israel.

whose day of punishment has come

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "whom Yahweh will now punish"

whose time of committing iniquity has ended

"at the time when Yahweh ends iniquity"

Ezekiel 21:26

the turban

"the king's turban." A turban is a beautiful piece of cloth that kings wore wrapped on their heads as a symbol of their authority.

the lowly ... the exalted

This refers to people with low status and people who are exalted. Alternate translation: "those who are lowly ... those who are exalted" or "those with low status ... those with high status"

Ezekiel 21:27

It will not be restored

Here the crown represents the position of king. The kingship will not be restored until the Messiah comes. Alternate translation: "There will no longer be a king"

the one comes who is assigned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one comes who I assign"

Ezekiel 21:28

concerning their coming disgrace

The word "disgrace" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "about how he will disgrace them"

A sword, a sword is drawn! It is sharpened for the slaughter

This refers to the sword of Yahweh which is a metaphor for the soldiers that Yahweh uses to kill a large number of people who have been disobedient to him. Alternate translation: "Swords! My soldiers have drawn their swords! They are sharpened for the slaughter"

is drawn

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is out of its sheath"

It is sharpened for the slaughter in order to devour

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This speaks of the soldiers killing people as if they were animals devouring their prey. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is sharp in order to slaughter and to kill people"

so it will be like lightning

This means that the sword is so shiny that light reflects off of it easily and brightly. Alternate translation: "and light reflects off of it as brightly as lightning"

Ezekiel 21:29

empty visions for you ... practice divination to make up lies for you

"empty visions for you Ammonites ... with lies for you Ammonites." The word "you" refers to the people of Ammon. In the original Biblical language, the word "your" is feminine singular and refers to the nation of Ammon. Nations were often thought of as a woman.

empty visions

This speaks of visions being false and meaningless as if they were empty containers. Alternate translation: "visions that are not true" or "false visions"

the wicked

This refers to wicked people. Alternate translation: "those who are wicked"

who are about to be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who are about to die"

whose day of punishment has come and whose time of iniquity is about to end

The phrases "day of" and "time of" are idioms. Alternate translation: "for the time has come for them to be punished and for their iniquity to end" or "for the time has come for me to punish them and for them to no longer be able to commit wickedness"

Ezekiel 21:30

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Ammon.

Return the sword to its sheath

"Later the sword will be put back in its sheath." This speaks of the soldiers withdrawing from attacking Jerusalem, by saying that Yahweh's sword is put back in its sheath. Alternate translation: "But later the soldiers will return their swords to their sheaths, for the time of slaughter will be over"

sheath

This is something that holds and covers a sword when no one is using it. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 21:3.

In the place of your creation

The word "creation" may be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "In the place that I created you"

Ezekiel 21:31

I will pour out my indignation on you

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the Babylonians because of his indignation against them as if his indignation were a liquid that he poured out of a container upon them. Alternate translation: "I will punish you because of indignation against you" or "Out of my anger I will punish you"

I will fan the fire of my rage against you

This compares Yahweh's rage to a consuming fire. Alternate translation: "I will bring my rage upon you like a blazing fire" or "I will punish you in my fierce anger"

the hand of cruel men

The "hand" of the men refers to their control. Alternate translation: "the control of cruel men"

craftsmen of destruction

"men who cause great destruction"

Ezekiel 21:32

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Ammon.

You will become fuel for the fire

"The fire will burn up your bodies"

Your blood will be in the midst of the land

"Your blood will soak into the ground of your land"

You will not be remembered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will remember you"

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22 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

[2]"Now you, son of man, will you judge? Will you judge the city of blood? Make her know all her abominations.[3]You must say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: This is a city that pours out blood in her midst so that her time may come; a city that makes idols to make herself unclean.
[4]You have become guilty by the blood that you have poured out, and you have become unclean by the idols that you have made. You have drawn your days to a close, and the end of your years has come. Therefore I will make you an object of scorn to the nations and a laughingstock to all the lands.[5]Both those who are near and those who are far away from you will mock you—you unclean city—with the reputation known everywhere as being full of confusion.

[6]Behold! The rulers of Israel, each one by his own power, have come to you to pour out blood.[7]They have dishonored fathers and mothers within you, and they have performed oppression on the foreigners in your midst. They have mistreated the orphans and the widows within you.[8]You have despised my holy things and have profaned my Sabbaths.
[9]Slanderous men have come within you in order to pour out blood, and they eat on the mountains. They perform wickedness in your midst.
[10]Within you men uncover the nakedness of their father. Within you they have violated unclean women during their impurity.[11]Men who commit abominations with their neighbors' wives, and men who make their own daughters-in-law shamefully unclean; men who abuse their own sisters—daughters of their own fathers—all these are done within you.
[12]These men take bribes within you in order to pour out blood and you have loaned money for usury and taken interest,

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and you have treated your neighbors violently for profit by extortion, and you have forgotten me—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[13]See! With my hand I have struck the dishonest gain that you have made, and the bloodshed that is done in the midst of you.[14]Will your heart stand, will your hands be strong on the days when I myself will deal with you? I, Yahweh, am declaring this, and I will do it.[15]So I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the lands. In this way, I will purge your uncleanness from you.[16]So you will become unclean in the eyes of the nations. Then you will know that I am Yahweh.'"[1]

[17]Next the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[18]"Son of man, the house of Israel has become dross to me. All of them are the leftovers of bronze and tin, and iron and lead in the midst of you. They will be like the dross of silver in your furnace.
[19]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Because all of you have become like dross, therefore, behold! I am about to gather you into the midst of Jerusalem.
[20]As men gather silver, bronze, iron, lead and tin and put it inside a furnace to melt it, and they blow the fire on it in order to melt it, so I will gather you in my anger and my wrath, and I will put you there and melt you.[21]I will gather you and blow on you the fire of my wrath, and you will be melted in the midst of it.[22]As silver is melted in a furnace, you will be melted in it, and you will know that I, Yahweh, have poured out my wrath on you!'"

[23]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[24]"Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that has not been cleansed. There is no rain on the day of wrath![25]There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst, like a roaring lion tearing apart a victim. They consume life and take precious wealth; they make many widows within her![2]
[26]Her priests do violence to my law, and they profane my holy things. They do not distinguish between holy things and profane things, and do not teach the difference between the unclean and the clean. They hide their eyes from my Sabbaths so that I am profaned in their midst.[27]Her princes within her are like wolves tearing apart their victims. They pour out blood and destroy life for unjust gain.[28]Her prophets have painted them over with whitewash—their seers of false visions and diviners of lies. They say "The Lord Yahweh says this" when Yahweh has not spoken.
[29]The people of the land have oppressed through extortion and plundered through robbery, and they mistreat the poor and needy, and oppress the foreigner without justice.
[30]So I searched for a man from them who would build up a wall and who would stand before me in its breach for the land so I would not destroy it, but I found no one.[31]So I will pour out my indignation upon them. I will finish them with the fire of my indignation and set their way on their own heads—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

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[1]Instead of you will become unclean, some ancient copies have I will give you your inheritance.
[2]Instead of There is a conspiracy of her prophets within her, some ancient copies have whose princes.

Ezekiel 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Continuous evil

Murder, idolatry and all sorts of evil have been done in Jerusalem; so God will destroy the city and scatter the people among the nations. (See: evil)

Links:

Ezekiel 22:1 Notes

Ezekiel 22:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 22:2

Now you, son of man, will you judge? Will you judge the city of blood?

This rhetorical question functions as a command. Alternate translation: "Son of man, go and judge. Go and judge the city of blood."

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

the city of blood

The word "blood" is a metonym for murder. Alternate translation: "the city where many people murder their neighbors"

her

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem. Cities were often thought of as a woman.

Ezekiel 22:3

her ... herself

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem. Cities were often

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thought of as a woman. This continues through verse 32.
This is a city that pours ... her midst
Here the "city" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people who live in this city pour ... its midst"
that pours out blood in her midst
The word "blood" is a metonym for murder. Alternate translation: "where many people murder their neighbors"
so that her time may come
This refers to the time when Yahweh will destroy them. Alternate translation: "so that the time of her destruction may come" or "so that the time may come for her to be destroyed"
unclean
A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
Ezekiel 22:4
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak through Ezekiel to the people of Jerusalem.
by the blood that you have poured out
This speaks of murdering people as pouring out blood. Alternate translation: "because you murdered innocent people"
unclean
A person whom God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
You have drawn your days to a close, and the end of your years has come
The images of days being brought to a close and years coming to an end are both idioms representing ending by death or by destruction. By saying that Jerusalem has brough her days to a close, Yahweh implies that Jerusalem would soon be destroyed because of the people's sin. Alternate translation: "Because of these things you have done, you are approaching the end of your time" or "You are bringing your existence to an end" (See: and)
have drawn your days to a close
"have brought your days to an end" or "have ended your life"
I will make you an object of scorn to the nations and a laughingstock to all the lands
This can be reworded so that the nouns "scorn" and "laughingstock" are expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "I will make the nations scorn you and all the lands ridicule you"
an object of scorn
someone whom people disapprove of or treat with disgust
a laughingstock
a person whom people ridicule or mock
to all the lands
This generalization refers to the places who are familiar with Jerusalem and represents the people who live in these places. Alternate translation: "of the people of every nearby land"
Ezekiel 22:6
General Information:
Yahweh speaking about the ruler of Israel in Jerusalem.
Behold
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
each one by his own power, have come
"have each used their authority to come to you."
come to you
Yahweh speaks to the city of Jerusalem itself as if it were a woman who could hear him speak. Alternate translation: "come to Jerusalem"
to pour out blood
This speaks of murdering people as pouring out blood. Alternate translation: "to murder people"
Ezekiel 22:7
They have dishonored fathers
"The rules of Israel have dishonored their fathers"
within you ... in your midst ... within you
Yahweh speaks to the city of Jerusalem itself as if it were a woman who could hear him speak. Alternate translation: "within Jerusalem ... in the midst of Jerusalem ... within Jerusalem." The words "you" and "your" refer to Jerusalem.
performed oppression on
"oppressed"
Ezekiel 22:9
they eat on the mountains
Here "the mountains" refer to the altars on the mountains that are dedicated to idols. They men eat meat that has been sacrificed to the idols in order to be have the blessing of false gods. Alternate translation: "they eat the meat that has been sacrificed to idols"
perform wickedness in your midst
"do evil things among you"
Ezekiel 22:10
General Information:
God continues to speak through Ezekiel about the terrible things that the people of Jerusalem have done. He speaks to the people of Jerusalem as if they were the city itself, and of the city of Jerusalem as if it were a woman. The word "you" is always feminine singular.
Within you
In all instances of this phrase, the writer refers to the people of Jerusalem as if they were the city itself, and of the city of Jerusalem as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "within this city" or "among you people of Jerusalem"
men uncover the nakedness of their father
This means that men shame their father by having sexual relations with their father's wife. Alternate translation: "there are men who have sexual relations with their father's wife"
they have violated unclean women during their impurity
These are all ways to express that the men have had slept with women they should not have and how sinful their actions are. Alternate translation: "They have raped unclean women during their impurity"
unclean ... impurity
A person whom God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. The word "impurity" is a euphemism for the time

of the month when a woman bleeds from her womb. Women were considered to be unclean at this time.
Ezekiel 22:11
commit abominations with their neighbors' wives ... make their own daughters-in-law shamefully unclean ... abuse their own sisters
These are all ways to express that the men have had slept with women they should not have and how sinful their actions are. Alternate translation: "commit abominations by sleeping with their neighbors' wives... make their own daughters-in-law shamefully unclean by sleeping with them ... rape their own sisters"
Ezekiel 22:12
to pour out blood
This speaks of murdering people as pouring out blood. Alternate translation: "to murder people"
interest
This word refers to the money paid by a person to use borrowed money. However, some modern versions interpret "interest" in this passage as "too much interest." See how you translated this word in Ezekiel 18:8.
you have forgotten me
Refusing to obey Yahweh is like forgetting that he exists.
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 22:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Jerusalem by speaking directly to the city of Jerusalem as if it were a woman.
With my hand I have struck
"I have shaken my fist against" or "I have clapped my hands against." This is a symbolic action that shows anger and disapproval. Alternate translation: "I have shown my anger and disapproval against"
the bloodshed that is done in the midst of you
"the murder that people commit in you"
Ezekiel 22:14
Will your heart stand, will your hands be strong on the days when I myself will deal with you?
Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize how hurt they will be when he punishes them. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your heart will not stand and your hands will not be strong on the days when I myself will deal with you."
Will your heart stand
Here the whole person is referred to by his "heart" to emphasize his emotions and will. Here the idea of "standing" is an idiom that means to be courageous. Alternate translation: "Will you stand" or "Will you be courageous"
will your hands be strong
Here the whole person is referred to by his "hands." Alternate translation: "will you be strong"
Ezekiel 22:15
So I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the lands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 12:15]
purge
remove something unwanted
uncleanness
A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
the nations
Here the "nations" refer to the people who live in those places. Alternate translation: "the people in other nations"
Ezekiel 22:16
So you will become unclean in the eyes of the nations
Here the "nations" refer to the people who live in those places. The "eyes" represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "So the nations will consider you unclean"
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 22:17
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 22:18
the house of Israel has
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
has become dross to me
Dross is the impurities that are left over after silver or gold has been purified in a furnace. Here Yahweh speaks of the people being worthless to him as if they were dross. Alternate translation: "has become as worthless to me as dross"
All of them are the leftovers of bronze and tin ... like the dross of silver in your furnace
Yahweh continues to speaks about how the people have become worthless to him as if they were dross. Alternate translation: "All of them are as worthless as the leftover of bronze and tin, and iron and lead that remain after you melt silver in the furnace"
Ezekiel 22:19
behold
"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Ezekiel 22:20
General Information:
God continues to describe his punishment of the people of Israel in Jerusalem as if they were metals that he was melting and purifying in a furnace.
I will gather you in my anger and my wrath
The phrases with "anger" and "wrath" are used together to emphasize that he was extremely angry. Alternate translation: "Because of my great anger and wrath, I will gather you" or "I will be furiously angry with you, and I will

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gather you"
Ezekiel 22:21
I will gather you and blow on you the fire of my wrath
This is the image of a person gathering the metals in the furnace and blowing the fire to make it hotter. Yahweh speaks of the greatness of his wrath as if it were a fire that he was blowing to make it hotter. Alternate translation: "I will gather you, and my wrath will be like a fire that I will blow on you"
Ezekiel 22:22
you will be melted in it
The word "it" refers to Jerusalem.
have poured out my wrath on you
God speaks of punishing the people as if his wrath were a liquid that he would pour on them. Alternate translation: "have punished you in my anger"
Ezekiel 22:23
General Information:
Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak to Jerusalem.
The word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 22:24
You are a land that has not been cleansed
This can be stated in active form. The word "land" here refers to Israel and to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "You are a land and a people that is unclean"
not been cleansed
A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.
There is no rain on the day of wrath
Rain is used as an example of God's blessing. Alternate translation: "There is no blessing on the day of wrath"
Ezekiel 22:25
There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst
The word "her" refers to Israel. Alternate translation: "The prophets within Israel plot conspiracies"
conspiracy
a secret plan made by two or more people to do something harmful or illegal
like a roaring lion tearing apart a victim. They consume life and take precious wealth
This compares the prophets of Israel to lions who attack and kill their victims. Alternate translation: "They kill people for they are like roaring lions who attack and kill their prey. They take peoples' precious wealth"
they make many widows within her
The word "her" refers to Israel. They "make many widows" by killing married men. Alternate translation: "they make many women into widows by killing their husbands"
Ezekiel 22:26
do violence to my law
"disobey my laws"
the unclean and the clean
This refers to unclean and clean things. Something that God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "things that are unclean and things that are clean"
They hide their eyes from my Sabbaths
This speaks of the people ignoring and not observing the Sabbath and if they were hiding their eyes from the Sabbath" Alternate translation: "They ignore my Sabbaths"
so that I am profaned in their midst
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and profane me among themselves"
Ezekiel 22:27
her
This pronoun refers to Jerusalem.
Her princes within her are like wolves tearing apart their victims
This compares Israel's princes to wolves who attack and kill their victims.
They pour out blood and destroy life
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the violence that the princes practice. Alternate translation: "They murder people"
for unjust gain
"so that they can make a profit through dishonest actions"
Ezekiel 22:28
Her prophets have painted them over with whitewash
This speaks of the prophets trying to hide these sins as if they were something that they could paint over with whitewash. Alternate translation: "It is like her prophets have painted over their sins with whitewash" or "Their prophets try to hide these evil things"
whitewash
This is a solution that is painted on things to make them white that is similar to white paint.
their seers
The word "their" refers to the priests (Ezekiel 22:26) and princes (Ezekiel 22:27) .
Ezekiel 22:29
have oppressed ... and plundered
The understood words may be supplied. Alternate translation: "have oppressed people ... and plundered others"
extortion
This refers to when someone threatens or hurts another person in order to make them give him money.
the poor and needy
This refers to poor and needy people. Alternate translation: "those who are poor and needy"
Ezekiel 22:30
General Information:
Yahweh compares the leaders of Jerusalem to a wall and himself to an invading army.
a man from them who would build up a wall
This speaks of a man who would take responsibility to pray for the people and to lead them to repentance as if that man were to build a wall to protect the people from Yahweh. Alternate translation: "a man from among them who would act like he built a wall"
stand before me in its breach
Its "breach" refers to a gap in the wall. This speaks of the man defending the people before Yahweh as if he were a warrior standing in the breach to defend the city.
for the land so I would not destroy it

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Here the "land" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "for the people so that I would not destroy them"

Ezekiel 22:31

pour out my indignation upon them

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the people as if his indignation were a liquid that he poured out on them. Alternate translation: "I will punish the people because of my indignation for them" or "I will punish the people because of my anger against them"

indignation

anger of a person who has suffered injustice

I will finish them with the fire of my indignation

This speaks of how harsh Yahweh's judgement is by comparing it to a fire. Here destroying the people is referred to as "finishing" them. Alternate translation: "I will destroy them with my wrath which is as intense as a blazing fire" or "I will destroy them with my wrath"

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23 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, there were two women, daughters of the same mother.[3]They acted as prostitutes in Egypt in the time of their youth. They acted as prostitutes there. Their breasts were squeezed and their virgin nipples were fondled there.[4]Their names were Oholah—the older sister—and Oholibah—her younger sister. Then they became mine and bore sons and daughters. Their names mean this: Oholah means Samaria, and Oholibah means Jerusalem.

[5]But Oholah acted as a prostitute even when she was mine; she lusted for her lovers, for the Assyrians who were dominant,[6]for the governor clothed in purple, and for his officials, who were strong and handsome, all of them men riding on horses.[7]So she gave herself as a prostitute to them, to all the best of Assyria's men, and she made herself unclean with everyone she lusted for—and with all their idols.
[8]For she had not left her prostitute behavior behind in Egypt, when they had lain with her when she had been a young girl, when they caressed her virgin bosom and poured out their lust upon her.[9]Therefore I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians for whom she lusted.[10]They uncovered her nakedness, took her sons and daughters, killed her with the sword, and she became notorious among other women, so they executed judgment on her.

[11]Her sister Oholibah saw this, but her lust was more passionate than her sister's, and her prostitution was worse.[12]She lusted for the Assyrians, the governors and the dominating officials who dressed impressively, who were men riding horses. All of them were strong, handsome men.[13]I saw that she had made herself unclean. It was the same for both sisters.
[14]Then she increased her prostitution even more. She saw men carved on walls, figures of Chaldeans painted in red,
[15]wearing belts around their waists, with flowing turbans on their heads. All of them had the appearance of officers of chariot troops, the likeness of sons of Babylonia, whose native land is Chaldea.
[16]As soon as her eyes saw them, she lusted for them, so she sent out messengers to them in Chaldea.[17]Then the Babylonians came to her and to her bed of lust, and they made her unclean with their fornication. By what she had done she was made unclean, so she turned herself away from them in disgust.
[18]When she displayed her acts of prostitution and uncovered her nakedness, I turned away from her, just as I had turned away in disgust from her sister.[19]Then she increased her prostitution as she remembered the days of her youth, when she was a prostitute in the land of Egypt.
[20]So she lusted for her lovers, whose private parts were like those of donkeys and whose reproductive emissions were like those of horses.[21]This is how you committed shameful acts of your youth, when the Egyptians fondled your nipples and squeezed your young breasts.

[22]Therefore, Oholibah, the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Behold! I will turn your lovers against you. Those from whom you turned away, I will bring them against you from every side:[23]the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, strong, handsome men, governors and officials, all of them are officers and men of reputation, all of them riding on horses.
[24]They will come against you with weapons, and with chariots and wagons, and with a great crowd of people. They will set large shields, small shields, and helmets against you all around. I will give them the opportunity to punish you, and they will judge you according to their judgments.[25]For I will set my jealous anger on you, and they will deal with you in fury. They will cut off your noses and your ears, and your survivors will fall by the sword. They will take away your sons and your daughters, and your survivors will be devoured by fire.
[26]They will strip you of your clothes and take away all of your beautiful jewelry.[27]So I will remove your shameful behavior from you and your acts of prostitution from the land of Egypt. You will not lift up your eyes toward them with longing, and you will think of Egypt no longer.'

[28]For the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Behold! I will give you into the hand of the ones you hate, back into the hand of the ones from whom you had turned away.[29]They will deal with you hatefully; they will take all the products of your labor and abandon you naked and bare. The nakedness of your fornication will be uncovered—and your wicked deeds and your fornications.

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[30]These things will be done to you in your acting like a prostitute, lusting after nations by which you became unclean with their idols.[31]You have walked in the way of your sister, so I will put her cup of punishment into your hand.'

[32]The Lord Yahweh says this,
'You will drink your sister's cup that is deep and large.
You will become a laughingstock and a subject for derision—
this cup contains a great amount.
[33] You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,
the cup of horror and devastation;
the cup of your sister Samaria.

[34] You will drink it and drain it empty;
then you will shatter it
and tear your breasts with the pieces.
For I have declared it—
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'

[35]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Because you have forgotten me and thrown me away behind your back, so also you will bear the consequences of your shameful behavior and acts of sexual immorality.'"

[36]Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? So present to them their disgusting practices,
[37]since they have committed adultery, and since there is blood on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and they have even caused their sons to pass through the fire, as food for their idols.
[38]Then they continue to do this to me: They make my sanctuary unclean, and on the same day they defile my Sabbaths.
[39]For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, then they came to my sanctuary on the same day to defile it! So behold! This is what they have done in the middle of my house.
[40]You sent out for men who came from far away, to whom messengers had been sent—now behold. They indeed came, those for whom you bathed, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with jewelry.[41]There you sat on a beautiful bed and at a table arranged before it where you placed my incense and my oil.
[42]So the sound of a carefree crowd was around her, including all kinds of men, even Sabeans were brought in from the wilderness, and they put bracelets on their hands and beautiful crowns on their heads.

[43]Then I said of her who was worn out by adulteries, 'Now they will fornicate with her, and she with them.'[44]They went to her as men go to a prostitute. In this way they went to Oholah and Oholibah, immoral women.[45]But righteous men will pass judgment and punish them as adulteresses, and they will punish them with the sentence for those who shed blood, because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.
[46]So the Lord Yahweh says this: I will raise up a company against them and give them up to be terrorized and plundered.
[47]Then that company will stone them with stones and cut them down with their swords. They will kill their sons and daughters and burn down their houses.
[48]For I will remove shameful behavior from the land and discipline all the women so they will no longer act like prostitutes.[49]So they will set your shameful behavior against you. You will bear the guilt of your sins with your idols, and in this way you will know that I am the Lord Yahweh."

Ezekiel 23 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Israel and Judah have been unfaithful to God by worshiping idols. They are compared to two unfaithful wives who have repeatedly committed adultery.

Links:

Ezekiel 23:1 Notes

Ezekiel 23:1

General Information:

Yahweh speaks of how the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria have been unfaithful to him in a metaphor in which he refers to them as two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that

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God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 23:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Ezekiel 23:3

Their breasts were squeezed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Men squeezed their breasts"

their virgin nipples were fondled there

This phrase means basically the same thing as the previous phrase and emphasizes the immoral behavior of the two young women. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there men fondled their virgin nipples"

fondled

to be touched lovingly or softly

Ezekiel 23:4

they became mine

This means that he married them and they became his wives. Alternate translation: "they became my wives"

Their names mean this: Oholah means Samaria, and Oholibah means Jerusalem

"Oholah represents Samaria, and Oholibah represents Jerusalem." In this metaphor Samaria is spoken of as if it were Oholah and Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were Oholibah. This speaks of how these cities were unfaithful to Yahweh as if they were unfaithful wives.

Oholah

This is the name of a woman that means "her tent."

Oholibah

This is the name of a woman that means "my tent is in her."

Ezekiel 23:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

when she was mine

This refers to when she was his wife. Alternate translation: "while she was still my wife"

who were dominant

"who ruled over her"

Ezekiel 23:7

all the best of Assyria's men

This identifies who the word "them" refers to.

she made herself unclean with everyone she lusted for—and with all their idols

This implies that she slept with all of these men and worshiped the idols they worshiped. Alternate translation: "she made herself unclean by sleeping with everyone she lusted for and by worshiping all their idols"

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

Ezekiel 23:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

when they had lain with her

The phrase "had lain with her" is a polite way of speaking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "when they had sexual relations with her"

poured out their lust upon her

This speaks of lust as if it were a large amount of water that they were pouring out on her. Alternate translation: "to act lustfully toward her"

bosom

Here this word, which refers to the chest, shoulders, and arms is probably a euphemism for the breasts. Alternate translation: "breasts"

Ezekiel 23:9

I gave her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians

The word "hand" refers to power or control. The two phrases have the same meaning and the second phrase explains that "her lovers" were "the Assyrians." Alternate translation: "I gave her over to her lovers, the Assyrians"

Ezekiel 23:10

they executed judgment on her

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they talked about her disgrace" or "she had a bad reputation among them"

Ezekiel 23:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

Oholibah

This is the name of a woman that means "my tent is in her." See how you translated this name in [Ezekiel 23:4]

Ezekiel 23:13

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 23:7]

It was the same for both sisters

This refers to how they had both made themselves unclean. Alternate translation: "Both sisters became unclean through their acts of prostitution"

Ezekiel 23:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

Ezekiel 23:15

turbans

hats made out of long cloth and wrapped around the top of a man's head

had the appearance of officers of chariot troops, the likeness of sons

The abstract nouns "likeness" and "appearance" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation:

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"appeared the way officers of chariot troops do, and they looked like sons"

chariot troops

soldiers who drive chariots and who run ahead of and beside them

sons of Babylonia

"Babylonians"

Ezekiel 23:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

Ezekiel 23:17

her bed of lust

This refers to her bed where she slept with men and acted lustfully. Alternate translation: "her bed where she acted lustfully"

they made her unclean with their fornication

This means that they slept with the woman. Alternate translation: "they slept with her and made her unclean"

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 23:7]

so she turned herself away from them

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "so she rejected them"

Ezekiel 23:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

Ezekiel 23:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

whose private parts were like those of donkeys

This compares the size of the mens' private parts to those of a donkey to show how wicked Oholibah's desires were. This is an exaggeration as they could not be as large as those of a donkey. Alternate translation: "whose private parts were very long, like those of a donkey"

whose reproductive emissions were like those of horses

This compares the volume of the mens' emissions to those of a horse to show how wicked Oholibah's desires were. This is an exaggeration as they could not be like those of a horse. Alternate translation: "whose reproductive emissions were huge, like those of a horse"

Ezekiel 23:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

Behold!

"Listen!" The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

I will bring them against you from every side

"I will cause them to attack you from all directions"

Ezekiel 23:23

the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them

This does not refer to all of the people who live in these places, but rather to soldiers from there. Alternate translation: "soldiers from Babylon and all of Chaldea, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the soldiers of Assyria with them"

Pekod, Shoa, and Koa

These are the names places in Babylonia. These places represent the soldiers from these places. Alternate translation: "those from Pekod, Shoa, and Koa"

strong, handsome men, governors and officials ... all of them riding on horses

This is the description of the men of Assyria that Oholah had slept with who are now turning against her. This is similar to the description given in Ezekiel 23:6.

Ezekiel 23:24

General Information:

Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.

will come against you

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will attack you"

with weapons

The Hebrew word translated here as "weapons" is rare. Many modern versions translate it in this way, but some versions leave this phrase out.

They will set large shields, small shields, and helmets against you all around

These defensive items are used to refer to various types of soldiers. Alternate translation: "Soldiers will attack you on all sides carrying large shields, small shields, and wearing helmets"

they will judge you

The word "judge" is a metonym for the punishment that follows the judgment. Alternate translation: "they will punish you"

according to their judgments

"according to their customs" or "according to the way they punish people" or "as they think best"

Ezekiel 23:25

For I will set my jealous anger on you, and they will deal with you in fury

Here Yahweh speaks of causing the armies to attack them because he is angry with them as if his anger where something that he was placing upon them. Alternate translation: Because I am very jealous for you, I will cause them to act furiously towards you"

They will cut off your noses and your ears

This describes the punishment in Babylon for married women who slept with men that are not their husbands. Alternate translation: "They will punish you as an adulteress, by cutting of your noses and your ears"

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your survivors will fall by the sword
The word "fall" is a euphemism for "die." The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who kill with swords. Alternate translation: "men will kill your survivors with their swords"
your survivors will be devoured by fire
This speaks of the survivors being burned by fire as if the fire were an animal attacking and eating them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your survivors will be burned by fire" or "fire will burn your survivors"
Ezekiel 23:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.
Ezekiel 23:27
from the land of Egypt
This refers to her prostitution as beginning in Egypt. Alternate translation: "which you began in the land of Egypt"
You will not lift up your eyes toward them with longing
This is a way to refer to a person turning their head to look at something. Here looking represents desire. Alternate translation: "You will not look toward them with longing" or "You will not desire these things"
you will think of Egypt no longer
Here "Egypt" represents the shameful things that she did in Egypt. Alternate translation: "you will think about the things you did in Egypt no longer" or "you will not think about what you did in Egypt any more"
Ezekiel 23:28
General Information:
Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.
Behold
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
give you into the hand of the ones you hate ... into the hand of the ones from whom you had turned away
These two phrases have the same meaning. It means that they will be captured by the men they used to prostitute themselves to. Alternate translation: "allow you to be captured by those you hate and had turned away from"
into the hand
Here the word "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "into the control"
Ezekiel 23:29
naked and bare
These two words mean the same thing and emphasize that she will be completely uncovered.
The nakedness of your fornication will be uncovered
The words "nakedness" and "fornication" here are euphemistic metonyms for the body parts that a person uses for fornication. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will reveal the nakedness of your fornication" or "Your private parts will be uncovered and everyone will be able to see that you have been fornicating"
fornication ... fornications
These instances of the same English word translate two different Hebrew words that have the same meaning. Some modern translations use the idea of prostitution in one or both instances since the Bible presents both acts as the same kind of sexual immorality.
your wicked deeds
Or "your wicked plans." The word "wickedness" here is probably specifically sexual immorality.
Ezekiel 23:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.
These things will be done to you in your acting
"These things will be done to you because you have acted." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "These things will happen to you because you have acted"
acting like a prostitute, lusting after nations
Ezekiel speaks of Oholibah, who represents Judah
became unclean with their idols
She became unclean by worshiping the idols. Alternate translation: "became unclean by worshiping their idols"
unclean
A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 23:7.
Ezekiel 23:31
so I will put her cup of punishment into your hand
This refers to Oholibah's punishment that she will receive as if it were a cup of wine. Alternate translation: "so I will cause you to be punished in the same way as your sister"
Ezekiel 23:32
General Information:
Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women. This metaphor continues through Ezekiel 23:34.
You will drink your sister's cup
Here Yahweh speaks of punishment as if it were a cup of wine the woman drank. Alternate translation: "You will drink the same cup of punishment as your sister"
your sister's cup that is
Here the "cup" represents what is in the cup. Alternate translation: "from your sister's cup that is" or "all that is in your sister's cup, and her cup is"
a laughingstock ... a subject for derision
Both of these phrases refer to a person who is laughed at and criticized because of their foolish behavior. Derision is mocking or ridiculing something or someone.
this cup contains a great amount
This sentence does not say what is in the cup because it is understood by reading [Ezekiel 23:31]
Ezekiel 23:33
General Information:
Yahweh continues his metaphor in which he speaks of the

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cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women.

You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow

This speaks of being very drunk and full of sorrow as if drunkenness and sorrow were things that filled her body. Alternate translation: "You will become very drunk and very sad"

the cup of horror and devastation

"the cup that causes horror and devastation." The words "horror" and "devastation" share similar meanings here and emphasize how terrible her punishment will be. Alternate translation: "for what is in that cup causes horror and devastation"

the cup of your sister Samaria

Oholibah's sister Oholah represents Samaria. Samaria is called by it's name but still referred to as a sister. The cup is a symbol for the punishment that she received. Alternate translation: "for this is the same cup of punishment that your sister, who represents Samaria, drank"

Ezekiel 23:34

tear your breasts

"cut your beasts"

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 23:35

thrown me away behind your back

Yahweh speaks of Oholibah rejecting him as if he were an object that she had thrown behind her back and forgotten. Alternate translation: "rejected me"

Ezekiel 23:36

Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question as a command for Ezekiel. This question can be written as a statement. The cities of Jerusalem and Samaria are represented by Oholah and Oholibah. Alternate translation: "Son of man, you will judge Oholah and Oholibah!" or "Son of man, judge the people of those two cities represented by Oholah and Oholibah."

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1.

Ezekiel 23:37

there is blood on their hands

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they have murdered people"

Ezekiel 23:38

General Information:

Yahweh speaks about how the people of Jerusalem and Samaria have been unfaithful to him.

unclean

A person or thing God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 23:7]

on the same day they defile my Sabbaths

The phrase "same day" refers to the previous phrase "make my sanctuary unclean." Alternate translation: "on the same day on which they make my sanctuary unclean, they defile my Sabbaths"

Ezekiel 23:39

behold!

"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

in the middle of my house

This refers to the house in general. The reference to the "middle" emphasizes that what was done happened openly in the temple and defiled the whole place. Alternate translation: "in my own house"

Ezekiel 23:40

General Information:

Yahweh again refers to the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women.

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

you bathed, painted your eyes, and adorned yourself with jewelry

These are things done by a woman to make her appear more beautiful to a man.

you bathed

Here the word "you" switches to singular and refers to only one sister, but the situation is probably the same for both sisters. If one sister must be specified in your language, refer to Oholibah here.

Ezekiel 23:41

you sat

Here the word "you" switches to singular and refers to only one sister, but the situation is probably the same for both sisters. If one sister must be specified in your language, refer to Oholibah here.

my incense and my oil

These are items used in worship to Yahweh.

Ezekiel 23:42

General Information:

Yahweh continues to refer to the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women.

So the sound of a carefree crowd was around her

The sound of the crowd is used to refer to the crowd of people. Alternate translation: "So there was a carefree crowd around her"

carefree crowd

Many modern translations read "noisy crowd" because happy, carefree crowds are noisy.

was around her ... on their hands

"was around her ... on her and her sister's hands." This verse begins by referring to one of the sisters but the situation is probably the same for both sisters. If one sister must be specified in your language, refer to Oholibah here. In the second part of the verse it switches back to referring to both sisters with the word "their."

Sabeans were brought

This can be stated in active form. The word "Sabeans" refers to people from Sheba. Alternate translation: "Sabeans had come"

they put bracelets

The word "they" refers to the men.

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Ezekiel 23:43
General Information:
Yahweh continues to refer to the cities of Jerusalem and Samaria as if they were two sexually immoral women.
her who was worn out ... with her, and she with them
This refers to one of the sisters but the situation is probably the same for both sisters. If one sister must be specified in your language, refer to Oholibah here.
by adulteries
"by committing adultery so many times"
Ezekiel 23:44
They went to her
This is a polite way of saying that they had sexual relations with her.
In this way they went to Oholah and Oholibah
"This is how they had sexual relations with Oholah and Oholibah"
Ezekiel 23:45
pass judgment
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "condemn"
who shed blood ... blood is on their hands
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "who murder people ... murderers"
Ezekiel 23:46
raise up a company
The phrase "raise up" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "gather a large group of people"
against them and give them
"against Jerusalem and Samaria and give them"
give them up
Yahweh gives up the responsibility to take care of them and allows them to suffer.
to be terrorized and plundered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the company to terrorize and plunder them"
Ezekiel 23:47
cut them down
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "kill them"
Ezekiel 23:49
So they will set your
"So the company will set your." The word "they" refers to the "company" of people from Ezekiel 23:47.
set your shameful behavior against you
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cause you to accept responsibility for your shameful behavior" or "punish you for your shameful behavior"
bear the guilt of your sins with your idols
"accept responsibility for the guilt of your sins with your idols." This implies that they will be punished for their sins. Alternate translation: "receive the punishment for sinning by worshiping your idols"

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24 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month, saying,
[2]"Son of man, write for yourself the name of this day, this exact day, for this exact day the king of Babylon has besieged Jerusalem.
[3]So speak a proverb against this rebellious house, a parable. Say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this:
Place the cooking pot.
Place it and pour water into it.
[4] Gather pieces of food within it,
every good piece—the thigh and shoulder—
and fill it with the best bones.

[5] Take the best of the flock,
and pile up the bones under it.
Bring it to a boil
and cook the bones in it.

[6]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Woe to the city of blood, a cooking pot that has rust in it and that rust will not come out of it. Take piece after piece from it, but do not cast lots for it.

[7]For her blood is in the midst of her. She has set it on the smooth rock; she has not poured it out on the ground to cover it with dust,[8]so it brings fury up to exact vengeance. I placed her blood on the smooth rock so it could not be covered.

[9]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this: Woe to the city of blood. I will also enlarge the pile of wood.[10]Stack up the wood and kindle the fire. Cook the meat well and mix in the spices and let the bones be charred.
[11]Then set the pot on its coals empty, in order to heat and scorch its bronze, so its uncleanness within it will be melted, its corrosion consumed.'[12]She has become weary because of toil, but her corrosion has not gone out of her by the fire.

[13]Your shameful behavior is in your uncleanness. Because I tried to cleanse you but still you would not be cleansed from your uncleanness, you will not be cleansed anymore until I have satisfied my fury upon you.

[14]I, Yahweh, have declared it, and I will do it. I will not relent nor will I rest from it. As your ways were, and as your activities, they will judge you!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

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[15]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[16]"Son of man! Behold, I am taking the delight of your eyes from you with a plague, but you must not mourn nor weep, and your tears must not flow.[17]You must groan silently. Do not conduct a funeral for the dead. Tie your turban on you and place your sandals on your feet, but do not cover your facial hair or eat the bread of men who mourn for having lost their wives."
[18]So I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening. In the morning I did what I had been commanded to do.

[19]The people asked me, "Will you not tell us what these things mean, the things that you are doing?"[20]So I said to them, "The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[21]'Say to the house of Israel, the Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I will desecrate my sanctuary—the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and the yearning of your soul, and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind will fall by the sword.
[22]Then you will do exactly as I have done: you will not veil your facial hair, nor eat the bread of mourning men![23]Instead, your turbans will be on your heads, and your sandals on your feet; you will not mourn nor weep, for you will rot away in your iniquities, and each man will groan for his brother.[24]So Ezekiel will be a sign for you, as everything that he has done you will do when this comes. Then you will know that I am the Lord Yahweh!'

[25]"But you, son of man, on the day that I capture their stronghold, the joy of their splendor, and the delight of their eyes and the burden of their soul, their sons and daughters,[26]on that day, a refugee will come to you to give you the news![27]On that day your mouth will be opened up to that refugee and you will speak—you will no longer be silent. You will be a sign for them so that they will know that I am Yahweh."

Ezekiel 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Too many sins to be forgiven

The people of Jerusalem cannot be cleaned from their sin. (See: clean and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Jerusalem is compared to a pot, so rusted that it cannot be cleaned from its rust. They have been completely rotted by their sin.

Links:

Ezekiel 24:1 Notes

Ezekiel 24:1

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to Ezekiel.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

in the ninth year

"in year 9." This refers to how long they had been in exile under King Jehoiachin. Alternate translation: "in the ninth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month

"the tenth day of the tenth month" or "the 10th day of the 10th month." This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the beginning of January on Western calendars.

Ezekiel 24:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

the king of Babylon has besieged

The army of Babylon is referred to by its leader. Alternate translation: "the army of the king of Babylon has besieged"

Ezekiel 24:3

General Information:

Yahweh speaks a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

this rebellious house

This is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 2:5]

Ezekiel 24:4

Gather pieces of food

Here "food" refers specifically to meat. Alternate translation: "Place pieces of meat"

Ezekiel 24:5

the best of the flock

Here the "flock" refers to sheep, not birds.

pile up the bones under it

Some cultures add bones to a fire because they burn longer than wood. This refers to the bones that remained after the best bones were placed in the pot. Alternate translation: "place the rest of the bones under the pot to fuel the fire"

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Ezekiel 24:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

the city of blood

Here "blood" is a reference to "murder." Alternate translation: "the city of murderers"

a cooking pot

Yahweh continues to compare Jerusalem to a cooking pot. Alternate translation: "it is like a cooking pot"

rust

the red material that forms on metal. Rust eats away at metal and eventually destroys it

Take piece after piece

Yahweh does not give this command to a specific person. This is a general command given to an unspecified person within this metaphor.

but do not cast lots for it

Casting lots was a way of choosing which pieces of meat to take out, but because Yahweh wants to take out all of the pieces of meat, there is no need to cast lots.

Ezekiel 24:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

For her blood is in the midst of her

This means that the blood from those who were murdered in Jerusalem is still there. Alternate translation: "For the blood of those who were murdered among her is still there"

her

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem, which is represented by the cooking pot.

She has set it on the smooth rock; she has not poured it out on the ground to cover it with dust

This personifies Jerusalem as a person who murdered the people and chose where to put their blood. Alternate translation: "They were murdered on the smooth rocks; not on the dirt where the dust would hide their blood" or "Their blood fell on the smooth rocks; it did not fall on the ground where the dust would cover it"

has set it on the smooth rock

"has put the blood on bare rocks"

Ezekiel 24:8

so it brings fury up to exact vengeance

Here Yahweh is speaking about himself taking revenge on those who murdered the people in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "in order that I could see it and then be angry and get revenge"

so it could not be covered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that no one could cover it"

Ezekiel 24:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

the city of blood

Here "blood" is a reference to "murder." Alternate translation: "the city of murderers"

I will also enlarge the pile of wood

It is implied that the pile of wood is under the cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. "I will make the pile of wood on the fire under you even bigger"

Ezekiel 24:10

kindle the fire

"light the fire"

let the bones be charred

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "burn the bones"

Ezekiel 24:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

scorch

to burn the surface of something

so its uncleanness within it will be melted, its corrosion consumed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to melt the uncleanness within it and to consume its corrosion"

uncleanness

A person whom God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean.

corrosion

rust

consumed

burned away

Ezekiel 24:12

She has become weary

Here the word "she" refers to the cooking pot. This is the cooking pot that is metaphorical for Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem has become tired"

toil

difficult labor

but her corrosion has not gone out of her by the fire

The phrase "has not gone out of her" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "but the fire did not burn away her corrosion"

Ezekiel 24:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through Ezekiel 24:14.

until I have satisfied my fury upon you.

This speaks of Yahweh punishing the people in his anger as if it were his "fury" that were punishing them. Alternate translation: "until I am finished punishing you and am no longer furious with you" or "until I have punished you and I am longer angry with you"

Ezekiel 24:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling a parable to Ezekiel about a cooking pot that represents Jerusalem. This parable continues through the end of this verse.

nor will I rest from it

"nor will I rest from punishing you." The word "it" refers to

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Yahweh punishing the people.

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 24:15

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 24:16

the delight of your eyes from

This refers to Ezekiel's wife. Yahweh refers to Ezekiel by the part of his body he uses to see his wife. Alternate translation: "your wife, whom you love very much, from"

delight

or "desire" in a good way

with a plague

"by a disease"

you must not mourn nor weep, and your tears must not flow

These phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Ezekiel is not to cry about his wife dying. Alternate translation: "you must not mourn nor weep"

Ezekiel 24:17

the dead

This refers to his dead wife. Alternate translation: "your dead wife"

turban

a head covering made of a long cloth wrapped around the head

sandals

a simple shoe held onto the foot with straps around the ankles

do not cover your facial hair

In Israel, men would shave their beards to express sorrow, then cover their faces until their facial hair grew back. Yahweh told Ezekiel not to cover his facial hair in order to show that he had not shaved his face to express his sorrow. Alternate translation: "do not mourn by veiling your facial hair" or "do not mourn by shaving and covering your beard"

Ezekiel 24:18

In the morning

"The next morning"

Ezekiel 24:19

General Information:

The people of Israel question Ezekiel, and Ezekiel tells them what Yahweh has said to them.

Ezekiel 24:20

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 24:21

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

I will desecrate my sanctuary—the pride of ... of your soul, and your sons

"I will desecrate my sanctuary which is the pride ... of your soul. Your sons"

the pride of your power

This describes the temple as the building that the people are proud of. This speaks of it as being their "pride" instead of the source of their pride. Alternate translation: "the building that you are proud of" or "the source of your strong pride"

the delight of your eyes

Here Yahweh refers to the people by their "eyes." Alternate translation: "the building that you delight to look at"

the yearning of your soul

Here Yahweh refers to the people by their "soul" to emphasize their inner feelings. Alternate translation: "the building that you truly love"

your sons and your daughters ... will fall by the sword

This refers to their enemies by their swords. Alternate translation: "your sons and daughters ... will be killed in war" or "your enemies will kill your sons and your daughters ... with their swords"

Ezekiel 24:23

you will rot away

Here "rot away" is a metaphor for wasting away and dying. Alternate translation: "you will become very thin and slowly die"

in your iniquities

This implies that God will not forgive the sins of these people. Alternate translation: "and I will not forgive your sins"

groan

This is the sound a person makes who wants help, but who has too much pain or sorrow to speak.

Ezekiel 24:24

So Ezekiel will be a sign for you

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special warning to those who see it. Yahweh speaks of Ezekiel and his actions as being this warning. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 12:6]

Ezekiel 24:25

that I capture their stronghold

Here "stronghold" is a metaphor for the temple. Yahweh speaks of destroying the temple as if he were an army invading a fortified city. Alternate translation: "that I destroy their temple"

stronghold, the joy of their splendor, and the delight of their eyes and the burden of their soul, their sons

"stronghold, which is the joy of their splendor, and the delight of their eyes and the burden of their soul, which are their sons"

the joy of their splendor

"the splendor in which they take joy" or "the splendid building in which they take joy"

the delight of their eyes

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"the temple, which they love very much." See how you translated similar words in Ezekiel 24:16.

the burden of their soul

Here the word "burden" is used in a good sense. "What they think most about" or "What they love the most."

Ezekiel 24:26

refugee

someone who has been forced to leave his country because of war or another disaster

Ezekiel 24:27

your mouth will be opened up

This can be stated in active form. Ezekiel being given understanding and the ability to speak is represented by his mouth being opened. Alternate translation: "I will open your mouth" or "you will know what to say" or "I will cause you to know what to say"

you will speak—you will no longer be silent

Both of these phrases mean that Ezekiel will speak. In the second phrase it is stated in negative form to emphasize that he will speak.

You will be a sign for them

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special warning to those who see it. Yahweh speaks of Ezekiel and his actions as being this warning. See how you translated this metaphor in [Ezekiel 12:6]

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

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25 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, set your face against the people of Ammon and prophesy against them.
[3]Say to the people of Ammon, 'Hear the word of the Lord Yahweh. This is what the Lord Yahweh says: Because you said, "Aha!" over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into exile,[4]therefore, behold, I am giving you to a people in the east as their possession. They will set up camp against you and set up their tents among you. They will eat your fruit and they will drink your milk.[5]I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and the people of Ammon a field for flocks. Then you will know that I am Yahweh.
[6]For the Lord Yahweh says this: You have clapped your hands and stamped your feet, and rejoiced with all the contempt within you against the land of Israel.[7]Therefore, behold! I will strike you with my hand and give you as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from among the lands! I will destroy you, and you will know that I am Yahweh.'

[8]The Lord Yahweh says this, 'Because Moab and Seir say, "Behold! The house of Judah is like every other nation."[9]Therefore, behold! I will open the slopes of Moab, starting at his cities on the border—the splendor of Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim—[10]to the people of the east who have been against the people of Ammon. I will give them up as a possession so that the people of Ammon will not be remembered among the nations.[11]So I will perform judgments against Moab, and they will know that I am Yahweh.'

[12]The Lord Yahweh says this, 'Edom has taken vengeance against the house of Judah and has committed wrong in doing so.[13]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this: I will strike Edom with my hand and destroy all men and animals there. I will make them a ruined, abandoned place, from Teman to Dedan. They will fall by the sword.
[14]I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel, and they will do to Edom according to my anger and my fury, and they will know my vengeance—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'

[15]The Lord Yahweh says this, 'Because the Philistines have acted vengefully and taken vengeance with contempt in their heart as enemies trying to destroy Judah for all time,[16]this is what the Lord Yahweh says: Behold! I will reach out with my hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Kerethites and destroy the remnant who are along the seacoast.[17]For I will take great vengeance against them with furious acts of punishment, so they will know that I am Yahweh, when I take my vengeance on them.'"

Ezekiel 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Prophecy against other nations

This chapter includes prophecies against some Gentile nations. Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia will all be destroyed. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 25:1 Notes

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Ezekiel 25:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 25:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

set your face against the people of Ammon

This is a command to stare at the people of Ammon as a symbol of punishing them. Alternate translation: "stare angrily at the people of Ammon" or "stare at the people of Ammon so that they will be harmed"

set your face against the people of Ammon

Ammon was far away, so Ezekiel could not see the people there, but staring in that direction would be a symbol of harming the people. See how you translated a similar phrase in Ezekiel 6:2. Alternate translation: "Turn toward the people of Ammon and stare angrily" or "stare toward Ammon so that the people there will be harmed"

the people of Ammon

"the descendants of Ammon" or "those who live in the land of Ammon"

prophesy against them

"prophesy about the bad things that will happen to them." This means to prophesy about the horrible things that will happen to the people of Ammon. See how you translated a similar phrase in in Ezekiel 4:7.

Ezekiel 25:3

General Information:

Yahweh tells Ezekiel what to say to the people of Ammon.

Hear the word of the Lord Yahweh

"Listen to this message from the Lord Yahweh"

you said, "Aha!"

"you cheered." The word "Aha" is a sound people make when they are happy about something. In this case the people were happy because bad things happened to Israel and Judah.

over my sanctuary when it was profaned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "against my sanctuary when the enemy army profaned it"

against the land ... against the house

"over the land ... over the house"

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Judah over many years. See how you translated these words in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 25:4

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I am giving you to a people in the east as their possession

This speaks of the enemy army conquering the land of Ammon and taking possession of the land and everything in it as if the enemy were taking the people of Ammon as their possession. It is not implied here that the enemy took the people of Ammon as slaves. Alternate translation: "I will cause an army from a land that is east of you to come and conquer you"

They will set up camp against you and set up their tents among you

"They will set up tents and live in your country"

They will eat your fruit and they will drink your milk

It may be helpful to specify the source of the fruit and milk. Alternate translation: "They will eat the fruit from your trees and drink the milk from your cattle"

Ezekiel 25:5

the people of Ammon a field for flocks

Here the phrase "the people of Ammon" refers to the land that belonged to the people of Ammon. Also, the understood information at the beginning of this phrase may be supplied. Alternate translation: "I will make the rest of the land of Ammon a field for flocks"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 25:6

You have clapped your hands and stamped your feet

These actions are ways to show strong emotions. In this case the people are cheering and showing their contempt against Israel.

all the contempt within you against the land of Israel

Here the phrase "the land of Israel" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "all of the hatred you feel towards the people who live in Israel"

Ezekiel 25:7

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what i am about to tell you"

I will strike you with my hand

"I will hit you with my powerful hand." Here Yahweh speaks of punishing the people as if he were literally hitting them with his hand. Alternate translation: "I will punish you"

give you as plunder to the nations

The word "you" refers to the people of Ammon but is also a metonym for their land and their possessions. Alternate translation: "I will allow enemies to defeat you and take you, your land, and your possessions as plunder"

I will cut you off from the peoples ... make you perish from among the lands

These phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will completely destroy the people of Ammon so that they are no longer a nation. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy you so that you are no longer a nation"

Ezekiel 25:8

Moab and Seir

These places refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab and Seir"

Behold! The house of Judah is like

"Look at the house of Judah. It is like"

The house of Judah is

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The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Judah over many years. See how you translated these words in Ezekiel 3:1. Alternate translation: "The Judah people group are" or "The people of Judah are"

Ezekiel 25:9

behold! I will open

"look! I will open" or "listen! I will open" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you! I will open"

starting at his cities

Here the city of Moab is spoken of with the masculine pronoun "his." Alternate translation: "starting at its cities"

Ezekiel 25:10

to the people of the east who have been against the people of Ammon

"I will send the same army from the people in the east who attacked Ammon"

I will give them up as a possession

Here Yahweh speaks of allowing the armies from the east to conquer Ammon as if Ammon were a possession that he was giving them. Alternate translation: "I will allow the armies to conquer them"

so that the people of Ammon will not be remembered among the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the nations will not remember the people of Ammon"

Ezekiel 25:12

Edom has taken

Here "Edom" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people of Edom have taken"

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the descendants of Judah over many years. See how you translated these words in Ezekiel 3:1. Alternate translation: "the Judah people group" or "the people of Judah"

Ezekiel 25:13

I will strike Edom with my hand

Here Yahweh speaks of punishing the people as if he were literally hitting them with his hand. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 25:7]

I will make them ... from Teman to Dedan

"I will make all of Edom ... from Teman to Dedan." These are two cities at opposite ends of Edom. This means that Yahweh will destroy all of Edom.

They will fall by the sword

The word "fall" represents being killed and the word "sword" refers to their enemies who will kill them in battle. Alternate translation: "Their enemies will kill them with their swords"

Ezekiel 25:14

I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel

Here the "hand" of Israel is a metonym for Israel's army. Yahweh speaks of taking revenge on the people of Edom as if his vengeance were like a sheet that he covered them with. The abstract noun "vengeance" can be translated with the verb "to punish." Alternate translation: "I will use my people Israel to punish the people of Edom"

they will do to Edom according to my anger and my fury

"they will show Edom my anger and fury" or "they will punish Edom according to my anger and fury against the people of Edom"

my anger and my fury

The word "fury" means basically the same thing as and intensifies the word "anger." Alternate translation: "my furious anger" or "my extreme anger"

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 25:15

to destroy Judah

Here "Judah" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "to destroy the people of Judah"

Ezekiel 25:16

Behold

This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will reach out with my hand against the Philistines

Here Yahweh's power is represented by his "hand." Alternate translation: "I will turn my powerful hand against the Philistines" or "I will turn my great power against the Philistines"

I will cut off

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will destroy" or "I will get rid of"

Kerethites

people who lived in the city of Kereth in Philistia

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26 [1]So it was in the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, that the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, 'Aha! The gates of the people are broken! She has turned to me; I will be filled up because she is ruined.'
[3]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Behold! I am against you, Tyre, and I will raise up many nations against you like the sea raises its waves.[4]They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down her towers. I will sweep her dust away and make her like a bare rock.
[5]She will become a place for nets to dry out in the midst of the sea, since I have declared it—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—and she will become plunder for the nations.[6]Her daughters who are in the fields will be slaughtered by the swords, and they will know that I am Yahweh.'

[7]For this is what the Lord Yahweh says: Behold, from the north I am bringing Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, against Tyre, with horses and chariots, and with horsemen and a great crowd of people.[8]He will kill your daughters in the field with the sword. He will set up a siege work and build a ramp against your walls and raise up shields against you.

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[9]He will place his battering rams to hit against your walls, and with his tools he will tear down your towers.[10]His horses will be so many that their dust will cover you. Your walls will shake with the sound of horsemen, wagons, and chariots. When he enters your gates, he will enter as men come into a city whose walls have been broken down.[11]The hooves of his horses will trample all of your streets. He will kill your people with the sword and your mighty stone pillars will fall to the ground.
[12]They will plunder your riches and loot your merchandise. They will tear down your walls and destroy your delightful homes. Your stones, your timber, and the rubble they will throw into the waters.[13]I will stop the noise of your songs. The sound of your harps will be heard no more.[14]I will make you a bare rock, you will become a place where nets are spread out to dry. You will never be built again, for I, Lord Yahweh have spoken—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[15]The Lord Yahweh says this to Tyre, 'Will not the islands quake with the sound of your downfall, and with the groans of the wounded when the terrible slaughter is in your midst?[16]Then all the princes of the sea will step down from their thrones and remove their robes and cast off their embroidered garments. They will clothe themselves with trembling, they will sit on the ground and tremble every moment, and they will be appalled because of you.
[17]They will lift up a lament for you and say to you,
How you, who were inhabited by sailors,
have been destroyed.
The famous city that was so strong—
it is now gone from the sea.
The ones living in her
once spread a terror about themselves
upon everyone who lived near them.
[18] Now the coasts tremble on the day of your downfall.
The islands in the sea are terrified,
because you are no longer in your place.'

[19]For the Lord Yahweh says this: When I make you a desolate city, like the other cities that are not inhabited, when I raise up the deeps against you, and when the great waters cover you,[20]then I will bring you down to the people of ancient times, like the others who have gone down into the pit; for I will make you live in the lowest parts of the earth as in ruins of ancient times. Because of this you will not come back and stand in the land of the living.[1][21]I will place disaster on you, and you will be no more forever. Then you will be sought, but you will never be found ever again—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

[1]The expression and stand in the land of the living follows the ancient Greek translation. The ancient Hebrew copies have I will place glory in the land of the living, which does not seem to fit the context here.

Ezekiel 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section of prophecy against Tyre. The Babylonians will destroy Tyre. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 26:1 Notes

Ezekiel 26:1

in the eleventh year

"in year 11." This means the eleventh year after King Jehoiachin was taken into exile in Babylon. Alternate translation: "in the eleventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

on the first day of the month

"on day 1 of the month." It is uncertain which month of the Hebrew calendar Ezekiel meant.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 26:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Tyre has said against Jerusalem

Here the city names "Tyre" and "Jerusalem" represent the people of those cities. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre have said against the people of Jerusalem"

Aha!

The word "Aha" is a sound people make when they discover

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something. Alternate translation: "Yes!" or "This is great!"

The gates of the people are broken

The people of Tyre use these words to refer to Jerusalem as if it were a city gate through which traders from the surrounding nations pass. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Armies have broken down the gates of the people"

She has turned to me

Here the word "she" refers to the word "gates" which have "turned" on their hinges to open to Tyre. This phrase means that Tyre has now replaced Jerusalem as the city through which the traders from many nations pass. Alternate translation: "The gateway has opened to me"

I will be filled up

Here to be "filled up" represents being prosperous. Alternate translation: "I will become prosperous"

she is ruined

"Jerusalem is ruined"

Ezekiel 26:3

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I will raise up many nations against you like the sea raises its waves

Here the word "nations" refers to their armies. Alternate translation: "I will gather armies from many nations that will beat against you like the waves in the raging sea"

Ezekiel 26:4

I will sweep her dust away and make her like a bare rock

Yahweh speaks of how he will cause Tyre to be completely destroyed. Alternate translation: "I will cause the armies to completely destroy the city, and they will leave nothing there"

Ezekiel 26:5

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

She will become

The city of Tyre is spoken of here as if it were a woman. Alternate translation: "Tyre will become" or "It will become"

a place for nets to dry out in the midst of the sea

Part of Tyre was an island. This expression is a metonym for the results of Tyre's destruction. Alternate translation: "an empty island used for drying fishing nets" or "a deserted island where people dry out their fishing nets"

she will become plunder for the nations

"Plunder" means things that people steal or take by force. Here Tyre becoming plunder represents its wealth being carried off by other nations. Alternate translation: "the armies of the nations will take away every valuable thing from Tyre"

Ezekiel 26:6

Her daughters who are in the fields will be slaughtered by the swords

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy armies will slaughter with swords her daughters who are in the fields"

Her daughters who are in the fields

Possible meanings are 1) "Her daughters" were the young women of Tyre who were working in the fields or 2) "Her daughters" is a metonym for nearby towns and villages on the mainland that supported the main city of Tyre. Alternate translation: "Her daughter communities who are on the mainland"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 26:7

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

Behold

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings

The phrase "king of kings" was a title, meaning that he was the greatest of kings, the king that other kings obeyed. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the greatest king"

a great crowd of people

This emphasizes the great size of Nebuchadnezzar's army.

Ezekiel 26:8

He will kill

Here the word "He" refers to Nebuchadnezzar and is a metonym for his army. Alternate translation: "His army will kill"

your daughters in the field

Possible meanings are 1) "your daughters" refers to the young women of Tyre who were working in the fields or 2) "your daughters" is a metonym for nearby towns and villages on the mainland that supported the main city of Tyre. See how you translated a similar phrase in Ezekiel 26:6. Alternate translation: "your daughter communities who are on the mainland"

Ezekiel 26:9

General Information:

The words "he" and "his" in these verses refer to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and represent the soldiers in Nebuchadnezzar's army doing these actions. The word "your" refers to the city of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

He will place his battering rams to hit against your walls, and with his tools he will tear down your towers

Although the battering rams and tools are spoken of as acting against the walls and towers of Tyre, they would have been used by the soldiers in Nebuchadnezzar's army against the walls and towers.

battering rams

"Battering rams" are large trees or poles that many men in an army would pick up and hit against a wall or door so they could break it down and get inside. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 4:2.

tools

Weapons or instruments made of iron used to tear down the towers

Ezekiel 26:10

When he enters your gates, he will enter as men come into a city whose walls have been broken down

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Here Yahweh uses a simile to describe how Nebuchadnezzar's army will enter into the city of Tyre.

whose walls have been broken down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after breaking down its walls"

Ezekiel 26:12

General Information:

The word "They" in these verses refers to the soldiers in the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. The words "your" and "you" refer to the city of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

They will plunder your riches and loot your merchandise

The phrases "plunder your riches" and "loot your merchandise" mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis.

Your stones, your timber, and the rubble

These refer to what is left after the walls and homes are torn down.

into the waters

"into the sea"

Ezekiel 26:13

The sound of your harps will be heard no more

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will hear the sound of your harps anymore"

Ezekiel 26:14

I will make you a bare rock

This metaphor describes the results after Yahweh completely destroys Tyre. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 26:4]

you will become a place where nets are spread out to dry

This metaphor also describes the results after Yahweh destroys Tyre. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 26:5]

you will become a place where nets

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will make you a place where nets"

Ezekiel 26:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

Will not the islands quake ... in your midst?

This question expects a positive answer and emphasizes the results of Tyre's destruction. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The islands will quake ... in your midst."

Will not the islands quake

Here "the islands" represents the people living on the islands. Alternate translation: "Will not the people of the islands quake with fear"

Ezekiel 26:16

princes of the sea

"princes of the coastlands"

They will clothe themselves with trembling

This metaphor represents the princes trembling enough to seem like it was their clothing.

be appalled because of you

"be unable to speak because what has happened to you is so bad"

Ezekiel 26:17

General Information:

In these verses, "They" refers to the "princes of the sea" in the previous verse, and "you" refers to Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

lift up

"sing"

How you, who were inhabited by sailors, have been destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "How your enemies have destroyed you—you who were inhabited by sailors"

spread a terror about themselves upon everyone who lived near them

The abstract noun "terror" can be translated using the adjective "terrified." Alternate translation: "caused all the people around them to be terrified"

Ezekiel 26:18

Now the coasts tremble on the day of your downfall. The islands in the sea are terrified, because you are no longer in your place

These two lines are similar in meaning and emphasize the response of the surrounding people to the destruction of Tyre.

Now the coasts tremble

Here "the coasts" represents the people living there. Alternate translation: "Now the people of the coastlands tremble"

The islands in the sea are terrified

Here "the islands in the sea" represents the people living there. Alternate translation: "The people of the islands are terrified"

you are no longer in your place

The destruction of Tyre is spoken of as if it was a person who had died. Alternate translation: "you have departed" or "you exist no more"

Ezekiel 26:19

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

When I make you

The word "you" here refers to the city of Tyre. In the original language "you" here is feminine singular.

When I make you a desolate city, like the other cities that are not inhabited

Here Tyre is compared to other cities that no longer had people living in them.

the deeps

Here "the deeps" means the deep waters of the sea. Alternate translation: "the deep waters"

Ezekiel 26:20

then I will bring you down to the people of ancient times, like the others who have gone down into the pit; for I will make you live in the lowest parts of the earth as in ruins of ancient times

What Yahweh would do to Tyre is compared to people going to the grave and cities falling into ruin.

the pit

This refers to the grave. Because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world.

stand in the land of the living

This represents being restored to the city's former existence.

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Ezekiel 26:21
I will place disaster on you
The abstract noun "disaster" can be translated using the adjective "terrible" or the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "I will bring you to a terrible end" or "I will destroy you"

27 [1]Again the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Now you, son of man, begin a lamentation concerning Tyre,[3]and say to Tyre, who lives within the gates of the sea, merchants of peoples to many islands, 'The Lord Yahweh says this to you:

Tyre, you have said, "I am perfect in beauty."
4 Your borders are in the heart of the seas;
your builders have perfected your beauty.

5 They have made all your planks with cypress from Senir;
they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.

6 They made your oars from the oaks of Bashan;
they made your decks out of cypress wood from Cyprus,
and they overlaid them with ivory.

7 Your sails were made from colorful linen from Egypt
that served as your signal flag;
the colors of blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah
are used for the awning on your boat.

8 Those who were living in Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;
the wise men of Tyre were within you;
they were your pilots.

9 The elders of Byblos filled your seams;
all the ships of the sea and their sailors among you
were carrying your merchandise for trade.

10 Persia, Lydia, and Libya were in your army,
your men of war.
They hung shield and helmet within you;
they showed your splendor.

11 The men of Arvad and Helek in your army
were on your walls surrounding you,
and the people of Gammad were in your towers.
They hung up their shields on your walls all around you!
They completed your beauty.

[12]Tarshish was a trading partner with you because of your abundant wealth of goods to sell: Silver, iron, tin, and lead. They bought and sold your wares![13]Greece,[1] Tubal, and Meshech—they traded slaves and in items made of bronze. They handled your merchandise.
[14]Beth Togarmah provided horses, warhorses, and mules as your merchandise.[15]The men of Rhodes traded with you on many coasts. Merchandise was in your hand; they sent back horn, ivory, and ebony as payment!
[16]Aram was a trading partner for the many products of your labor; they provided emeralds, purple, colored cloth, fine fabric, pearls, and rubies as your merchandise.[17]Judah and the land of Israel were trading with you. They provided wheat from Minnith, cakes, honey, oil, and balsam as your merchandise.[18]Damascus was a trading partner for the many products of your labor, of all your enormous wealth, and of the wine of Helbon and the wool of Zahar.
[19]Dan and Javan from Izal provided you with merchandise of wrought iron, cinnamon, and calamus. This became merchandise for you.[20]Dedan was your dealer in fine saddle blankets.[21]Arabia and all the chiefs of Kedar were your trading partners; they provided you with lambs, rams and goats.

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[22]The traders of Sheba and Raamah came to sell you the best of every spice and in all kinds of precious gems; they traded
gold for your merchandise.[23]Haran, Kanneh, and Eden were your trading partners, along with Sheba, Ashur, and Kilmad.
[24]These were your dealers in ornate robes of violet cloths with woven colors, and in blankets of multicolored,
embroidered, and well-woven cloth in your marketplaces.
[25] The ships of Tarshish
were the transporters of your merchandise!
So you were filled up,
heavily laden with cargo in the heart of the seas!

[26] Your rowers have brought you into vast seas;
the eastern wind has broken you in the middle of them.

[27] Your wealth, merchandise, and trade goods;
your sailors and pilots, and ship builders;
your traders of merchandise and all the men of war who are in you,
and all your company—
they will sink into the depths of the sea
on the day of your overthrow.

[28] Cities at the sea will tremble
at the sound of your pilots' cry.

[29] All those who handle oars will come down from their ships;
mariners and all the pilots on the sea will stand on the land.

[30] Then they will make their voices heard over you
and they will cry aloud bitterly;
they will cast dust up on their heads.
They will roll about in ashes.

[31] They will shave their heads bald for you
and bind themselves with sackcloth,
and they will weep bitterly over you
and they will cry out.

[32] They will lift up their wails of lamentation for you
and sing dirges over you,
Who is like Tyre, who has now been brought to silence
in the middle of the sea?

[33] When your merchandise went ashore from the sea,
it satisfied many peoples;
you enriched the kings of the earth
with your great wealth and merchandise!

[34] But when you were shattered by the seas, by deep waters,
your merchandise and all your company sank!

[35] All the inhabitants of the coasts were appalled at you,
and their kings bristled in horror!
Their faces trembled!

[36] The traders among the people hiss at you;
you have become a horror,
and you will be no more forever.'"

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[a]Some modern English translations read, Javan.

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Ezekiel 27 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophecy against Tyre continues in this chapter. Tyre has become wealthy from trade as far as Spain, but Tyre will be destroyed. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Tyre is compared to a ship built with the very best materials. Despite its strength and power, Yahweh will destroy it.

Links:

Ezekiel 27:1 Notes

Ezekiel 27:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 27:2

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

begin a lamentation

The abstract noun "lamentation" can be translated using the verb "lament." Alternate translation: "begin to lament"

Ezekiel 27:3

say to Tyre

Here the word "Tyre" represents the people living in Tyre. Alternate translation: "say to the people of Tyre"

who lives within the gates of the sea

"who lives at the gates of the sea" or "who lives at the entry to the sea"

Tyre, you have said

Here the word "Tyre" represents the people living in Tyre. Alternate translation: "People of Tyre, you have said"

I am perfect in beauty

The abstract noun "beauty" can be translated using the adjective "beautiful." Alternate translation: "I am perfectly beautiful" or "I am entirely beautiful"

Ezekiel 27:4

General Information:

"Your" and "you" in these verses refer to Tyre. The city of Tyre is described here and in the following verses as if it were a beautiful ship.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.

Your borders

"Your boundaries"

heart of the seas

"middle of the seas"

Ezekiel 27:5

planks

long, flat pieces of wood; thick boards

a mast

a large pole on a ship that holds up the sails of the ship

Ezekiel 27:6

General Information:

"They" in these verses refers to the builders of Tyre. "Your" refers to Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre. The city of Tyre continues to be described as if it were a beautiful ship.

oars

long pieces of wood with flat blades at one end that people use to make a boat move

decks

the parts of the boat that people can walk on

overlaid them

"covered them"

ivory

a white, beautiful, and hard material that is made from the long teeth of some animals

Ezekiel 27:7

sails

large pieces of cloth that move a ship when the wind blows on them

Your sails were made from colorful linen from Egypt that served as your signal flag

The sails of the ship are compared to the signal flags of Tyre's military.

Ezekiel 27:8

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre. The city of Tyre continues to be described as if it were a beautiful ship.

Arvad

This is the name of a small island off the coast of Syria.

pilots

A pilot is a person who controls where a ship goes by steering the ship.

Ezekiel 27:9

Byblos

This is the name of a city on the Syrian coast. Other versions call it by the name "Gebal."

filled your seams

"repaired your cracks" or "repaired your leaks"

sailors

A sailor is one of the team of workers on a ship.

Ezekiel 27:10

General Information:

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The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Persia, Lydia ... Libya
These are the names of places.
your men of war
"men who fought in your wars" or "serving as your warriors"
your splendor
The abstract noun "splendor" can be translated using the adjective "splendid." Alternate translation: "how splendid you were" or "how majestic you were"
Ezekiel 27:11
Arvad ... Helek ... Gammad
These are the names of places.
They completed your beauty
The abstract noun "beauty" can be translated using the adjective "beautiful." Alternate translation: "They finished making you beautiful" or "They made you perfectly beautiful"
Ezekiel 27:12
General Information:
The word "your" in these verses refers to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Silver, iron, tin, and lead
metals that were used during that time period
your wares
"the things you offered for sale"
Ezekiel 27:13
Greece
Some English translations read, "Javan." This is the name of a coastal region also known as Ionia.
They handled your merchandise
"They traded for your merchandise"
Ezekiel 27:14
General Information:
The word "your" in these verses refers to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Beth Togarmah
the name of a place
warhorses
adult male horses
Ezekiel 27:15
Rhodes
This is the name of a place.
Merchandise was in your hand
Having things in the hands here is probably a metaphor for carrying those things or having them in their possession. Alternate translation: "You owned things that you sold to them"
horn
This refers to the tusks or elongated teeth of certain animals.
ebony
a dark brown to black hardwood that is very dense or heavy
Ezekiel 27:16
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Aram was a trading partner
Here "Aram" refers to the people of Aram. Alternate translation: "The people of Aram were trading partners"
emeralds
An emerald is a type of green precious stone.
purple
Here purple cloth or yarn is referred to by just its color. Alternate translation: "purple cloth" or "purple yarn"
pearls
beautiful beads of hard white material that come from creatures in the sea
rubies
A ruby is a type of red precious stone.
Ezekiel 27:17
Judah and the land of Israel were trading with you
Here "Judah and the land of Israel" refers to the people of those places. Alternate translation: "The people of Judah and Israel were trading with you"
Minnith
This is the name of a place.
cakes
The meaning of the Hebrew word translated here as "cakes" is uncertain. Other versions may translate it as another type of food.
balsam
a sweet-smelling gum or resin that comes from a tree
Ezekiel 27:18
Helbon ... Zahar
names of places
enormous wealth
"abundant wealth" or "great wealth"
Ezekiel 27:19
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Dan ... Javan ... Izal
These are names of places.
Dan and Javan
This is a metonym for the people of Dan and Javan. Alternate translation: "The people of Dan and Javan"
wrought iron
a form of iron that can be shaped with a hammer
cinnamon
This is a type of spice that comes from the bark of a tree. "Cassia" is another name for this spice.
calamus
a type of grass that people used as perfume and for medicine
Ezekiel 27:20
Dedan was
This is a metonym for the people of Dedan. Alternate translation: "The people of Dedan were"
saddle blankets
A saddle blanket is a piece of cloth that people place on a

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horse beneath a saddle or seat.
Ezekiel 27:21
Arabia ... Kedar
These are names of places.
Arabia
This is a metonym for the people of Arabia. Alternate translation: "The people of Arabia" or "The Arabians"
Ezekiel 27:22
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Sheba ... Raamah
These are the names of places.
precious gems
"valuable stones"
Ezekiel 27:23
Haran, Kanneh, and Eden were your trading partners, along with Sheba, Ashur, and Kilmad
This refers to the people from these places. Alternate translation: "The people of Haran, Kanneh, and Eden traded with you in the past, along with the people of Sheba, Ashur, and Kilmad"
Haran ... Kanneh ... Eden ... Sheba ... Ashur ... Kilmad
These are the names of places.
Ezekiel 27:24
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
These were your dealers
"They traded with you"
ornate robes of violet cloths with woven colors
"purple robes with many different colors"
blankets of multicolored, embroidered, and well-woven cloth
"blankets with many colors that had designs and were of high quality"
Ezekiel 27:25
The ships of Tarshish were the transporters of your merchandise
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The ships of Tarshish carried your merchandise"
you were filled up, heavily laden with cargo
Tyre's abundance is spoken of as if it was a ship that was full of cargo.
heart of the seas
"middle of the seas." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:4.
Ezekiel 27:26
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre. The city of Tyre is described here and in the following verses as if it were a wrecked ship.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre.
Your rowers
"The people that row you"
vast seas
"great waters"
the eastern wind
"the strong wind from the east"
middle of them
"heart of the seas" or "middle of the seas." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:4.
Ezekiel 27:27
sailors
men who sail boats
all your company
Possible meanings are 1) "all the people on the ship" or 2) "all of your companions."
depths of the sea
"heart of the seas" or "middle of the seas." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:4.
on the day of your overthrow
The abstract noun "overthrow" can be translated using the verb "overthrow." Alternate translation: "at the time they overthrow you" or "when they destroy you"
Ezekiel 27:28
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre. The city of Tyre continues to be described as if it were a wrecked ship.
Cities at the sea will tremble
Here "Cities at the sea" represents the people in those cities. Alternate translation: "The people of the cities by the sea will tremble"
Ezekiel 27:29
All those who handle oars
"All the rowers"
Ezekiel 27:30
make their voices heard over you
"raise their voices because of what has happened to you"
cry aloud bitterly
because they are sad
they will cast dust up on their heads. They will roll about in ashes
These are expressions of grieving and mourning.
Ezekiel 27:31
General Information:
The word "they" in these verses refer to the people mentioned in verses 28 and 29. The words "you" and "your" refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre. The city of Tyre continues to be described as if it were a wrecked ship.
They will shave their heads bald for you and bind themselves with sackcloth
These are expressions of grieving and mourning.
bald
having no hair on the head
Ezekiel 27:32
They will lift up their wails of lamentation
The abstract noun "lamentation" can be translated using the verb "lament." Alternate translation: "They will cry out and lament"
sing dirges
"sing funeral songs"

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Who is like Tyre, who has now been brought to silence in the middle of the sea?
This question expects a negative answer and emphasizes Tyre being different from all other cities. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "No other city is like Tyre, who has now been brought to silence in the middle of the sea."
who has now been brought to silence
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "who its enemies have now silenced"
Ezekiel 27:33
When your merchandise went ashore
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "When people brought your merchandise ashore"
ashore
"onto the land"
you enriched the kings of the earth
"you made the kings of the earth rich"
Ezekiel 27:34
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to Tyre.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Tyre. The city of Tyre continues to be described as if it were a wrecked ship.
when you were shattered by the seas, by deep waters
This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "when the seas, the deep waters, shattered you"
shattered
To "shatter" is to break up into pieces.
all your company
Possible meanings are 1) "all the people on the ship" or 2) "all of your companions." See how you translated this phrase in Ezekiel 27:27.
Ezekiel 27:35
were appalled at you
"were shocked and terrified by what happened to you"
their kings bristled in horror
The abstract noun "horror" can be translated using the verb "were afraid." Alternate translation: "their kings bristled because they were afraid"
bristled
"were taken aback" or "were startled." These are natural physical reactions to messages that surprise and frighten.
Their faces trembled
Here "faces" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "They appear to be trembling"
Ezekiel 27:36
hiss at you
Hissing was making a whistling sound through the teeth. It may have been out of dismay, grief, or surprise.
you have become a horror
The abstract noun "horror" can be translated using the adjective "dreadful." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have become dreadful"

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28 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Your heart is arrogant! You have said, "I am a god! I will sit in the seat of the gods in the heart of the seas!" Even though you are a man and not a god, you make your heart like the heart of a god;[3]you think that you are wiser than Daniel, and that no secret amazes you!
[4]You have made yourself wealthy with wisdom and skill, and obtained gold and silver in your treasuries![5]By great wisdom and by your trading, you have multiplied your wealth, so your heart is arrogant because of your wealth.

[6]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this: Because you have made your heart like the heart of a god,[7]I will therefore bring foreigners against you, terrifying men from other nations. They will bring their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they will profane your splendor.
[8]They will send you down to the pit, and you will die the death of those who die in the heart of the seas.[9]Will you truly say, "I am a god" to the face of one who kills you? You are a man and not God, and you will be in the hand of the one who pierces you.[10]You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners, for I have declared it—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[11]The word of Yahweh came again to me, saying,[12]"Son of man, lift up a lament for the king of Tyre and say to him, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.[13]You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone covered you: ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made from gold. It was on the day you were created that they were prepared.
[14]I placed you on the holy mountain of God as the cherub I anointed to guard mankind. You were in the midst of the fiery stones where you walked about.[15]You had integrity in your ways from the day you were created until injustice was found within you.
[16]Through your great trade you were filled with violence, and so you sinned. So I threw you out of the mountain of God, as a one who was defiled, and I destroyed you, guardian cherub, and drove you from among the fiery stones.[17]Your heart was arrogant with your beauty; you ruined your wisdom because of your splendor. I have sent you down to the earth. I have placed you before kings so they may see you.
[18]Because of your many iniquities and your dishonest trade, you have defiled your holy places. So I have made fire come out from you; it will consume you. I will turn you into ashes on the earth in the sight of all who look at you.[19]All the ones who knew you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have become terrified, and you will be no more forever.'"

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[20]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[21]"Son of man, set your face against Sidon and prophesy against her.[22]Say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against you, Sidon! For I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am Yahweh when I execute judgments within her. I will be shown to be holy in her.
[23]I will send out a plague in her and blood in her streets, and those who are fatally wounded will fall in the midst of her. When the sword comes against her from all around, then they will know that I am Yahweh.
[24]Then there will no longer be pricking briers and painful thorns for the house of Israel from all those around them who despise them, so they will know that I am the Lord Yahweh!'

[25]The Lord Yahweh says this, 'When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they were scattered, and when I am set apart among them, so the nations may see, then they will make their homes in the land I will give to my servant Jacob.[26]Then they will live securely within her and build houses, plant vineyards, and live securely when I execute judgments on all the ones who now despise them from all around; so they will know that I am Yahweh their God!'"

Ezekiel 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophecy against Tyre concludes in this chapter. Tyre will be destroyed because of its pride and unfair business practices. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 28:1 Notes

Ezekiel 28:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 28:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

Your heart is arrogant

Here "heart" represents the will or thoughts of the ruler of Tyre. Alternate translation: "You are arrogant"

arrogant

falsely believing oneself to be importantbelieving oneself to be important

I will sit in the seat of the gods

"I will sit on the throne of the gods." Here sitting in the seat of the gods represents claiming to be in the same exalted position as if he were one of the gods.

heart of the seas

"middle of the seas." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:4.

you make your heart like the heart of a god

Here "heart" represents the mind or thinking. A god thinks of himself as better than people. Alternate translation: "you think that you have the mind of a god" or "you have allowed yourself to think that you are better than other people"

Ezekiel 28:3

you think that you are wiser than Daniel

Here the ruler of Tyre compares himself to Daniel the prophet in how wise he thought he was.

Ezekiel 28:4

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the ruler of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the ruler of Tyre.

You have made yourself wealthy with wisdom and skill

The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "skill" can be translated using the adjectives "wise" and "skillful." Alternate translation: "You have become wealthy by your own wisdom and skill" or "You have become wealthy by being wise and skillful"

obtained gold and silver

"stored up gold and silver"

treasuries

places to store valuable objects and keep them safe

Ezekiel 28:5

By great wisdom and by your trading, you have multiplied your wealth, so your heart is arrogant because of your wealth

The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "wealth" can be translated using the adjectives "wise" and "wealthy." Alternate translation: "By being very wise and by your trading, you have become more and more wealthy, so your heart is arrogant because of how wealthy you are"

your heart is arrogant

Here "heart" represents the will or thoughts of the ruler of Tyre. Alternate translation: "you are arrogant"

Ezekiel 28:6

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the ruler of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the ruler of

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Tyre.

you have made your heart like the heart of a god

Here "heart" represents the mind or thinking. A god thinks of himself as better than people. See how you translated the similar phrase in [Ezekiel 28:2]

Ezekiel 28:7

the beauty of your wisdom

The abstract nouns "beauty" and "wisdom" can be translated using the adjective "beautiful" and the adverb "wisely." Alternate translation: "the beautiful things that you have so wisely made"

profane your splendor

The abstract noun "splendor" can be translated using the adjective "splendid." Alternate translation: "profane how splendid you are" or "defile how majestic you are"

Ezekiel 28:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the ruler of Tyre. The word "They" refers to foreign armies. The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the king of Tyre.

down to the pit

Here "the pit" refers to the grave or to hell. Alternate translation: "down to the grave"

in the heart of the seas

"in the middle of the seas"

Ezekiel 28:9

Will you truly say, "I am a god" to the face of one who kills you?

This question expects a negative answer to emphasize the irony when one who claims to be a god is destroyed by men. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You will not say 'I am a god' to the face of one who kills you!"

to the face of

Here the face represents being in the presence of another person. Alternate translation: "in the presence of" or "before"

in the hand of

Here being in the hand of someone represents being under their control. Alternate translation: "under the control of"

Ezekiel 28:10

by the hand of foreigners

Here "hand" is a metonym for the actions of the foreigners' army. Alternate translation: "by an army of foreigners"

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 28:11

The word of Yahweh came again to me, saying,

The idiom "The word of Yahweh came again to" is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated similar words in [Ezekiel 18:1]

Ezekiel 28:12

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

lift up

"sing"

You were the model of perfection

The abstract nouns "model" an d "perfection" can be translated using the words "completely" and "perfect." Alternate translation: "You were completely perfect"

full of wisdom and perfect in beauty

The abstract nouns "wisdom" and "beauty" can be translated using the adjectives "wise" and "beautiful." Alternate translation: "fully wise and perfectly beautiful"

Ezekiel 28:13

Every precious stone covered you

"You wore every kind of precious stone"

ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl

These are all precious stones of different colors.

settings and mountings

pieces of metal that hold the precious stones

It was on the day you were created that they were prepared

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I prepared them on the day that I created you"

prepared

"made ready"

Ezekiel 28:14

General Information:

The word "you" in these verses refers to the king of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the king of Tyre.

cherub

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:9.

the fiery stones

"the stones of fire." Possible meanings are 1) a metaphor for the colorful and bright stones mentioned in [Ezekiel 28:13]

Ezekiel 28:15

from the day you were created until injustice was found within you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "since the day that I created you until I found injustice within you"

Ezekiel 28:16

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the king of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the king of Tyre.

great trade

"large volume of trade"

you were filled with violence

Yahweh speaks of the king of Tyre as if he were a container that was filled up with violence. The king is a synecdoche for himself and his people The abstract noun "violence" can be translated using the adjective "violent." Alternate translation: "you and your people became completely violent" or "you and your peoplewere completely violent"

guardian cherub

"guarding cherub"

the fiery stones

"the stones of fire." See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 28:14]

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Ezekiel 28:17

Your heart was arrogant

Here the "heart" represents the whole person, emphasizing the person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "You were arrogant"

arrogant

falsely believing oneself to be importantbelieving oneself to be important

Your heart was arrogant with your beauty; you ruined your wisdom because of your splendor

The abstract nouns "beauty," wisdom" and "splendor" can be translated using the adjectives "beautiful," "wise" and "splendid." Alternate translation: "Your heart was arrogant because you were beautiful; you became unwise because you were so splendid"

before kings

"in front of kings "

so they may see you

"so they may look at you"

Ezekiel 28:18

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" in these verses refer to the king of Tyre.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the king of Tyre.

it will consume you

"it will devour you." The fire is spoken of here as if it was eating him up. Alternate translation: "it will burn you up"

turn you into ashes

This idiom means burning up until only ashes are left. Alternate translation: "burn you up to ashes" or "burn you up completely"

Ezekiel 28:19

are appalled

shake or tremble with fear

you will be no more forever

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:36.

you have become terrified

Another possible meaning is "you have become a terror" or "those who see you will be terrified."

Ezekiel 28:20

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 28:21

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

set your face against Sidon

Sidon was far away, so Ezekiel could not see it, but staring in that direction would be a symbol of harming the people there. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 6:2]

prophesy against

"prophesy about the bad things that will happen to." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 4:7.

Ezekiel 28:22

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I will be glorified in your midst

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will reveal my glory among you"

they will know ... within her ... in her

Here "they" and "her" refer to the people of Sidon. This can be translated with second person pronouns. Alternate translation: "you will know ... within you ... in you"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

when I execute judgments within her

The abstract noun "judgments" can be translated using the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "when I judge her" or "when I punish her the way she deserves"

I will be shown to be holy in her

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will show that I am holy when I punish her"

Ezekiel 28:23

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Sidon.

in her ... in her ... midst of her ... against her ... then they

Here "her" and "they" refer to the people of Sidon. If you used second person pronouns in the previous verse, you may want to use them here. Alternate translation: "in you ... in you ... midst of you ... against you ... then you"

blood in her streets

Here "blood" refers to the blood of the people of Sidon and represents those whom their enemies would kill.

When the sword comes against her

Here "sword" is a metonym for an attacking enemy army. Alternate translation: "When enemy armies attack her"

Ezekiel 28:24

Then there will no longer be pricking briers and painful thorns for the house of Israel from all those around them who despise them

Here the briers and thorns represent what would cause suffering and pain. Alternate translation: "Then there will no longer be people anywhere around the house of Israel who wound them like briers, hurt them like thorns, and despise them"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

around them ... them ... they will know

The words "them" and "they" refer to the people of Israel.

Ezekiel 28:25

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

among whom they were scattered

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This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "among whom I scattered them"

so the nations may see
"in such a way as the nations will see it"

my servant Jacob
Here "Jacob" represents the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "the descendants of my servant Jacob"

Ezekiel 28:26

within her
"in the land"

when I execute judgments on all
The abstract noun "judgments" can be translated using the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "when I judge all" or "when I punish all"

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29 [1]In the tenth year, in the tenth month on the twelfth day of the month, the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son
of man, set your face against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt; prophesy against him and against all of Egypt.[3]Declare and
say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this:
Behold! I am against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt.
You, the great sea monster that lurks in the midst of the river,
that says, "My river is my own. I have made it for myself."
[4] For I will place hooks in your jaw,
and the fish of your Nile will cling to your scales;
I will lift you up from the middle of your river
along with all the fish of the river that cling to your scales.

[5] I will throw you down into the wilderness,
you and all the fish from your river.
You will fall on the open field;
you will not gather together or assemble.
I will give you as food to the living things of the earth
and to the birds of the heavens.

[6] Then all the inhabitants of Egypt will know
that I am Yahweh,
because they have been a walking stick
made of a reed to the house of Israel.

[7] When they took hold of you in their hand,
you broke and tore open their shoulder;
and when they leaned on you,
you were broken,
and you caused their legs to be unsteady.

[8]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I will bring a sword against you. I will cut off both men and animals from
you.[9]So the land of Egypt will become desolate and a ruin. Then they will know that I am Yahweh, because the sea
monster had said, "The river is mine, for I have made it."[10]Therefore, behold! I am against you and against your river, so I
will give the land of Egypt over to desolation and waste, and you will become a wasteland from the Migdol to Syene and
the borders of Cush.
[11]No man's foot will pass through it, and no wild animal's foot will pass through it. It will not be inhabited for forty years.
[12]For I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of uninhabited lands, and its cities in the midst of wasted
cities will become a desolation for forty years; then I will scatter Egypt among the nations, and I will disperse them
though the lands.

[13]For the Lord Yahweh says this: At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples among whom they were
scattered.[14]I will reverse the captivity of Egypt and bring them back to the region of Pathros, to the land of their origin.
Then they will be a lowly kingdom there.
[15]It will be the lowliest of the kingdoms, and it will not be lifted up any more among the nations. I will diminish them so
they will no longer rule over nations.[16]Egypt will no longer be a reason for confidence for the house of Israel. Instead, it
will be a reminder of the iniquity that Israel committed when they turned to Egypt for help. Then they will know that I
am the Lord Yahweh.'"

[17]Then it came about in the twenty-seventh year on the first of the first month, that the word of Yahweh came to me,
saying,[18]"Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon stationed his army to do hard work against Tyre. Every head

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was rubbed until it was made bald, and every shoulder was made raw. Yet he and his army received no payment from Tyre for the hard work that he carried out against it.
[19]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Behold! I am giving the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and he will capture its loot, steal its plunder, and carry off all he finds there; that will be his army's wages.[20]I have given him the land of Egypt as the wages for the work they did for me—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[21]On that day I will make a horn sprout up for the house of Israel, and I will make you speak in their midst, so that they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

Ezekiel 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a prophecy against Egypt and its king, Pharaoh. Because Egypt did not fulfill its promise of protecting Judah, it will be conquered by Babylon. (See: prophet and fulfill and promise)

Links:

Ezekiel 29:1 Notes

Ezekiel 29:1

In the tenth year

It can be stated clearly that this was the tenth year of Jehoiachin's exile. Alternate translation: "In the tenth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

in the tenth month on the twelfth day of the month

"on the twelfth day of the tenth month." This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twelfth day is near the beginning of January on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 29:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

set your face against Pharaoh

This is a command to stare at Pharaoh as a symbol of punishing him and his people. Pharaoh was far away, so Ezekiel could not see him, but staring in his direction would be a symbol of harming him and his people. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 6:2]

prophesy against him and against all of Egypt

"tell the terrible things that will happen to him and everyone in Egypt"

Ezekiel 29:3

the great sea monster

"the huge creature that lives in the water." Yahweh calls Pharaoh a monster that lives in the water. The monster is probably a crocodile.

Ezekiel 29:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh, speaking of him as though he were a monster in the water and the people of Egypt were fish.

hooks

sharp and bent pieces of metal or wood that people use to catch fish and other animals in the water

scales

hard pieces of skin that are on fish, crocodiles, and other animals

Ezekiel 29:5

gather together or assemble

The phrase "gather together" and the word "assemble" mean the same thing and form a doublet. You may need to omit one or the other in your translation. Alternate translation: "never again gather together"

Ezekiel 29:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh.

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

they have been a walking stick made of a reed

The word "they" refers to the inhabitants of Egypt. A walking stick made of a reed is unreliable because it is easily broken. Yahweh speaks of them as a reed stalk because the people of Israel relied on the Egyptians to help them in war, but the Egyptians did not help them. Alternate translation: "they have been as unreliable as a walking stick made of a reed"

reed

a plant that grows near water and looks like very large grass

Ezekiel 29:7

When they took hold of you in their hand

God speaks of Israel relying on Egypt as if they were taking hold of a reed stalk in order to use it as a crutch. Alternate translation: "When they relied on you"

When they took hold of you

The word "they" refers to the Israelites and the word "you" refers to Pharaoh or Pharaoh and Egypt.

you caused their legs to be unsteady

Because Egypt did not help the Israelites, the Israelites could not defend themselves against their enemy, the Babylonians. God speaks of the Israelites being unable to

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defend themselves as if their legs were unsteady. Alternate translation: "you caused them to be like people whose legs are unsteady"

Ezekiel 29:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh.

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" This word adds emphasis to what is said next. This is the Lord's message to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I will bring a sword against you

Here "sword" is a metonym for battle, and "bring a sword against you" is a metaphor for causing an enemy army to come fight against Egypt. Alternate translation: "I will cause your enemies to come fight against you"

a sword against you

The word "you" refers to the nation of Egypt.

I will cut off both men and animals from you

Here "cut off" is a metaphor for destroying. God would do this by causing the enemy army to do it.

Ezekiel 29:10

I am against you and against your river

The word "you" refers to Pharaoh. God speaks to Pharaoh as if Pharaoh were a monster in the river.

I will give the land of Egypt over to desolation and waste

"I will put Egypt into the power of desolation and waste." Desolation and waste are spoken of as if they were people who could be given power over Egypt. Alternate translation: "I will cause Egypt to become a desolate waste"

you will become a wasteland

Here "you" refers to Pharaoh and represents Egypt, the country he rules over. Alternate translation: "your country will become a wasteland"

from the Migdol to Syene and the borders of Cush

This refers to all of Egypt. Where these places are can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "throughout all of Egypt, from Migdol in the north to Syene in the south and the borders of Cush further south"

Migdol

This is the name of a place in the far northern part of Egypt.

Syene

This the name of a town in southern Egypt. It is now called Aswan.

the borders of Cush

These borders of Cush were south of Syene. Some versions say Sudan or Ethiopia, the modern names of countries south of Egypt.

Ezekiel 29:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh.

No man's foot will pass through it

Here "man's foot" represents people. Alternate translation: "No man will walk through the land of Egypt"

no wild animal's foot will pass through it

Here "animal's foot" represents animals. Alternate translation: "not even a wild animal will walk through it"

Ezekiel 29:12

For I will make the land of Egypt a desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be expressed with the adjective "desolate." Alternate translation: "For I will make the land of Egypt desolate"

I will scatter Egypt among the nations

Here "Egypt" represents the people of Egypt, and "scatter" represents causing them to move to other places. Alternate translation: "I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations" or "I will make the people of Egypt go and live among the nations"

Ezekiel 29:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh.

I will gather Egypt

Here "Egypt" is a metonym for the people of Egypt, and "gather" is a metaphor for causing them to return to Egypt. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people of Egypt to return to Egypt"

among whom they were scattered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "among whom I scattered them"

Ezekiel 29:14

I will reverse the captivity of Egypt

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. The word "Egypt" here is a metonym for the people of Egypt. Translate "will reverse the captivity" as in [Ezekiel 16:53]

the region of Pathros

the southern part of Egypt between the Delta and the land of Cush. This is also called Upper Egypt.

a lowly kingdom

Here "lowly" represents unimportant. Alternate translation: "an unimportant kingdom"

Ezekiel 29:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Pharaoh.

the lowliest of the kingdoms

Here "lowliest" represents least important. Alternate translation: "the least important of the kingdoms"

it will not be lifted up any more among the nations

Here "be lifted up" represents becoming important. Alternate translation: "it will not become important again among the nations"

I will diminish them

"I will make them small." Here "diminish them" represents making Egypt weak or unimportant.

Ezekiel 29:16

Egypt will no longer be a reason for confidence for the house of Israel

The abstract noun "confidence" can be translated with the verbs "trust" or "rely on." Alternate translation: "The house of Israel will no longer trust in Egypt" or "The house of Israel will no longer rely on Egypt"

Egypt

Here "Egypt" represents the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "The people of Egypt" or "The Egyptians"

the house of Israel

Here "house" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "the nation of Israel"

it will be a reminder of the iniquity that Israel committed

How Egypt would be a reminder can be stated clearly. The abstract nouns "reminder" and "iniquity" can be expressed

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with the verbs "remember" and "sin." Alternate translation: "when Israel sees what I do to Egypt, Israel will remember how Israel sinned"

when they turned to Egypt for help

Here "turn ... for help" is a metonym for "ask ... for help." Alternate translation: "whenever they asked Egypt to help them"

Ezekiel 29:17

it came about

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the twenty-seventh year

This was after King Jehoiachin and the people of Judah were taken as exiles to Babylon. Alternate translation: "in the twenty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

on the first of the first month

"on the first day of the first month." This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the beginning of April.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 29:18

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

to do hard work against Tyre

The kind of hard work they did can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to work hard at attacking Tyre"

Every head ... every shoulder

This refers to the heads and shoulders of the Babylonian soldiers.

Every head was rubbed until it was made bald

Either their helmets or the heavy things they carried on their heads rubbed the hair off their heads.

every shoulder was made raw

Either their armor or the heavy things they carried on their shoulders rubbed the skin off their shoulders. Alternate translation: "every shoulder was rubbed raw" or "every shoulder was rubbed bare"

he and his army received no payment from Tyre

Here "payment" represents the valuable things that Nebuchadnezzar's army would steal from Tyre as a reward for defeating it. God speaks of these things as if they were what God would pay them for working for him. Alternate translation: "he and his army did not get any valuable things from Tyre as reward"

Ezekiel 29:19

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" This word adds emphasis to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I am giving the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon

Yahweh speaks of causing the army of Babylon to defeat Egypt as if God were giving Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar. Alternate translation: "I will cause the army of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to defeat Egypt"

that will be his army's wages

God speaks of these things that Nebuchadnezzar's army would take as if they were what God would pay them for working for him. Alternate translation: "his army will receive those things as if they were payment"

Ezekiel 29:20

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 29:21

I will make a horn sprout up for the house of Israel

An animal horn represents the animal's strength, so horn is a metonym for strength. God speaks of making Israel strong as if Israel were an animal, and he were to cause its horn to grow. Alternate translation: "I will make the people of Israel strong"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. Here it refers to the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob whom God called Israel. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "the nation of Israel"

speak in their midst

"speak to them"

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30 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, prophesy and say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this:
Wail, "Woe is the coming day."
[3] The day is near.
The day is near for Yahweh.
It will be a day of clouds
a time of doom for nations.

[4] Then a sword will come against Egypt,
and there will be anguish in Cush
when the killed people fall in Egypt—
when they take her wealth,
and when her foundations are ruined.

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[5]Cush and Put, Lydia and all Arabia, and Libya, together with the people belonging to the covenant—they will all fall by the sword.

[6]Yahweh says this:
So the ones who support Egypt will fall,
and the pride of her strength will go down.
From Migdol to Syene their soldiers will fall by the sword—
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[7] They will be appalled in the midst of the abandoned lands,
and their cities will be among all the ruined cities.

[8] Then they will know that I am Yahweh,
when I set fire in Egypt,
and when all of her helpers are destroyed.

[9]In that day messengers will go out from before me in ships to terrorize a secure Cush, and there will be anguish among them on the day of Egypt's doom. For behold! It is coming.

[10]The Lord Yahweh says this: I will make an end of the multitudes of Egypt by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon.[11]He and his army with him, the terror of nations, will be brought to destroy the land; they will draw out their swords against Egypt and fill the land with those who have been killed.
[12]I will make the rivers into dry ground, and I will sell the land into the hand of wicked men. I will make the land and its fullness desolate by the hand of strangers—I, Yahweh, have spoken.

[13]The Lord Yahweh says this: I will destroy idols, and I will bring an end to the worthless idols of Memphis. There will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt, and I will put fear on the land of Egypt.[14]Then I will make Pathros desolate and set fire in Zoan, and I will execute acts of judgment on Thebes.
[15]For I will pour out my fury on Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the multitude of Thebes.[16]Then I will set fire in Egypt; Pelusium will be in great agony, Thebes will be broken up, and Memphis will face enemies every day.
[17]The young men in Heliopolis and Bubastis will fall by the sword, and their cities will go into captivity.[18]In Tahpanhes, the day will become dark when I break the yoke of Egypt there, and the pride of her strength will be finished. There will be a cloud covering her, and her daughters will walk into captivity.[19]I will execute acts of judgment in Egypt, so they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

[20]Then it came about in the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[21]"Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Behold! It has not been bound up for healing or set with a splint so that it can become strong enough to grasp a sword.
[22]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this, 'Behold, I am against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. For I will break his arm, both the strong one and the broken one, and I will make the sword fall from his hand.[23]Then I will scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them among the lands.[24]I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and place my sword in his hand so that I might destroy Pharaoh's arms. He will groan before the king of Babylon with the groans of a dying man.
[25]For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, while Pharaoh's arms will fall. Then they will know that I am Yahweh, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon; for he will attack the land of Egypt with it.[26]So I will scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them through the lands. Then they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

Ezekiel 30 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophecy against Egypt and its king continues in this chapter. Babylon will destroy all the towns of Egypt and their allies will not be able to help them. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 30:1 Notes

Ezekiel 30:1

General Information:

Ezekiel tells about a message that Yahweh gave him.

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated

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this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 30:2
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
Wail
cry out with grief
Woe is the coming day
This exclamation expresses the fear that people would feel about a certain day when terrible and frightening things will happen. Alternate translation: "Oh that day" or "Oh, what a frightening day is coming"
Ezekiel 30:3
The day is near
"That day is soon" or "It will soon be that day"
The day is near for Yahweh
It is implied that on that day, Yahweh will punish people. Alternate translation: "It will soon be the day when Yahweh will punish you"
a day of clouds
Dark storm clouds represent danger and fear. Alternate translation: "It will be like a day with dark clouds" or "It will be frightening like a day with dark clouds"
a time of doom for nations
The abstract noun "doom" can be translated with the phrase "terrible things will happen." Alternate translation: "a time when terrible things will happen to the nations"
Ezekiel 30:4
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Egypt.
Then a sword will come against Egypt
The word "sword" here represents war or an army that attacks. Alternate translation: "There will be war against Egypt" or "An enemy army will attack Egypt"
there will be anguish in Cush
The abstract noun "anguish" can be expressed in terms of how the people feel. Alternate translation: "the people of Cush will be very sad" or "the people of Cush will suffer"
when they take her wealth
"when the attackers take away the wealth of Egypt"
when her foundations are ruined
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the attackers destroy the foundations of the buildings in Egypt"
Ezekiel 30:5
Cush and Put, Lydia and all Arabia, and Libya
These names refer to the people of these countries. Alternate translation: "The people of Cush and Put, Libya, and all Arabia, and Lydia"
Libya
Libya is a country west of Egypt.
Lydia
This probably refers to the kingdom of Lydia which was in what is now Turkey.
will all fall by the sword
Here the sword represents battle. Alternate translation: "will all die in battle" or "will all die in the war"
will all fall by the sword
The word "all" here is a generalization. It means that many people will die.
Ezekiel 30:6
Yahweh says this
"This is what Yahweh says." This sentence introduces what the Lord would say.
So the ones
"In this way, the peoples" or "In this manner, the nations"
who support Egypt
"who help Egypt"
will fall
"will die" or "come to ruin"
the pride of her strength will go down
This represents Egypt no longer being proud of their strength. The reason that they will not be proud is that they will no longer be strong. Alternate translation: "Egypt will no longer be proud about being strong" or "Egypt will no longer have the strength that they were so proud of"
From Migdol to Syene
Ezekiel names towns on the borders of Egypt in order to refer to all of Egypt. Alternate translation: "In all of Egypt" or "From the northern border of Egypt to the southern border of Egypt"
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 30:7
They will be appalled in the midst of the abandoned lands
"The soldiers of the allies of Egypt will be appalled when they are left surrounded by nothing but abandoned lands"
in the midst of
"among" or "surrounded by"
their cities will be among all the ruined cities
Being "among" the ruined cities represents being ruined like the ruined cities of other countries. Alternate translation: "their cities will be ruined like the cities of other countries"
Ezekiel 30:8
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Egypt.
Then they
Possible meanings are 1) "Then people" or 2) "Then the Egyptians."
they will know that I am Yahweh
Yahweh is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated as similar phrase in [Ezekiel 6:7]
when I set fire in Egypt
Here "set fire in Egypt" represents sending an army to attack Egypt and set fires. Alternate translation: "when I send an army to burn Egypt with fire"
all of her helpers are destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I destroy all of the allies of Egypt" or "when armies destroy all of those who help Egypt"
Ezekiel 30:9

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messengers will go out from before me in ships to terrorize a secure Cush
Messengers will bring the news of Egypt's destruction to Cush, who will be frightened by the news.
to terrorize a secure Cush
"in order to frighten Cush, who now feels safe from danger"
there will be anguish among them on the day of Egypt's doom
The abstract noun "anguish" and "doom" can be translated with the words "suffer" and "punish." Alternate translation: "the people of Cush will also suffer when I punish Egypt"
behold!
The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. It can also be translated as "indeed!"
It is coming
"It" refers to the "great pain" or "great sorrow" that Cush will have when they are punished along with Egypt.
Ezekiel 30:10
The Lord Yahweh says this
The word "this" refers to what follows. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 5:5.
I will make an end of the multitudes of Egypt
"I will make it so that Egypt will no longer have many people."
by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar
Here "the hand" represents Nebuchadnezzar's military power. Nebuchadnezzar will be the one who brings this punishment about.
Ezekiel 30:11
He and his army with him ... will be brought to destroy the land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bring Nebuchadnezzar and his army ... to destroy the land"
He and his army ... will be brought to destroy the land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause him and his army ... to go destroy the land of Egypt"
He and his army with him, the terror of nations
Yahweh calls Nebuchadnezzar "the terror of the nations" because all of the nations are greatly afraid of his army. Alternate translation: "He and his army with him, the one who terrifies many nations"
they will draw out their swords against Egypt
Here "draw out their swords" represents fighting with their swords. Alternate translation: "they will use their swords and fight against Egypt"
fill the land with those who have been killed
This is an exaggeration to show that the Babylonians will kill very many Egyptians. There will be so many dead Egyptians that it will seem that their dead bodies cover all of the land of Egypt. Alternate translation: "kill so many people that it will seem like dead bodies are everywhere"
Ezekiel 30:12
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Egypt.
I will make the rivers into dry ground
"I will dry up the rivers of Egypt"
I will sell the land into the hand of wicked men
Yahweh will give the Babylonians control over Egypt just as a person who sells something gives the one who buys it control over that thing. Alternate translation: "I will give control of the land to wicked men"
its fullness
"everything in the land"
Ezekiel 30:13
The Lord Yahweh says this
The word "this" refers to what follows. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 5:5.
I will bring an end to the worthless idols
"I will destroy the worthless idols"
Memphis
Memphis was a very important city in Egypt. It was near modern-day Cairo.
a prince in the land of Egypt
"an important ruler in the land of Egypt"
I will put fear on the land of Egypt
Here "put fear on the land" represents causing the people of the land to be very afraid. Alternate translation: "I will make the people of Egypt very afraid"
Ezekiel 30:14
Pathros
This was a region in southern Egypt.
set fire in Zoan
"I will burn Zoan with fire"
Zoan
Zoan was another important city in Egypt.
I will execute acts of judgment on Thebes
The phrase "acts of judgment" refers to punishment. Alternate translation: "I will punish Thebes"
Thebes
This was the capital city of southern Egypt.
Ezekiel 30:15
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words about Egypt.
For I will pour out my fury on Pelusium
Here "pour out my fury" represents punishing the people because of his great anger. Alternate translation: "For I will act in great anger against Pelusium" or "Because I am so angry, I will punish Pelusium severely"
Pelusium
Pelusium is the name of a fortress in northern Egypt.
cut off the multitude of Thebes
Here "cut off" represents killing the people. Alternate translation: "kill the very large number of people in Thebes"
Thebes
This was the capital city of southern Egypt. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 3:14.
Ezekiel 30:16
Then I will set fire in Egypt
Here "set fire" is an idiom meaning "start a fire." Alternate translation: "I will start a fire in Egypt"
Pelusium will be in great agony
Here "Pelusium" is a metonym for the people of the city near Pelusium, and "be in great agony" can be translated with the verb "suffer." Alternate translation: "The people of Pelusium will suffer terribly" or "The people of Pelusium will feel terrible pain"
Thebes will be broken up

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemies will break up the walls and buildings in Thebes" or "enemies will destroy the Thebes"

Memphis will face enemies every day

Here "face enemies" represents seeing or having enemies. The name of the city is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "The people of Memphis will have enemies every day" or "Enemies will fight against the people of Memphis every day"

Memphis

Memphis was a very important city in Egypt. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 30:13.

Ezekiel 30:17

General Information:

These are Yahweh's words about Egypt.

Heliopolis and Bubastis

These were cities in northern Egypt.

will fall by the sword

The word "sword" is used here to refer to a battle or war. Alternate translation: "will die in battle" or "will die in the war"

their cities will go into captivity

Here "cities" represents the people of the cities. The abstract noun "captivity" can be expressed with the more concrete noun "captive" or the verb "capture" Alternate translation: "the people of their cities will become captives" or "their enemies will capture their people and take them away"

Ezekiel 30:18

Tahpanhes

This was an important city in northern Egypt.

the day will become dark

The people of Egypt losing everything they value is spoken of as being a frightening miracle like a day with no light. Alternate translation: "the day will be dark"

when I break the yoke of Egypt there

The word "yoke" here refers to Egypt's power to oppress people. Alternate translation: "when I stop Egypt from oppressing people" or "when I end Egypt's power to cruelly control other nations"

the pride of her strength will be finished

This represents Egypt no longer being proud of their strength. The reason that they will not be proud is that they will no longer be strong. Alternate translation: "Egypt will no longer be proud about being strong" or "Egypt will no longer have the strength that they were so proud of"

There will be a cloud covering her

Possible meanings are 1) the dark cloud represents how sad the people of Egypt will feel. Alternate translation: "It will be as if there is a cloud over Egypt" or 2) there will be a cloud of dust over Egypt from everything that is destroyed. Alternate translation: "A cloud of dust will be over Egypt"

her daughters

Possible meanings are 1) the people of the Egyptian towns or 2) the daughters of the Egyptian people

Ezekiel 30:19

I will execute acts of judgment in Egypt

The phrase "acts of judgment" refers to punishment. Alternate translation: "I will punish Egypt in many ways"

so they

"so the Egyptians"

Ezekiel 30:20

General Information:

God speaks of making Pharaoh's army weak as if he were to break Pharaoh's arm, and of the army not being able to become strong again as if Pharaoh's arm could not be healed.

Then it came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the eleventh year

This is the eleventh year after King Jehoiachin was taken into exile in Babylon. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 26:1.

in the first month, in the seventh day of the month

"in the seventh day of the first month." This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The seventh day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 30:21

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

I have broken the arm of Pharaoh

Here "arm" represents the powerful army of a king.

Behold

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

It has not been bound up for healing or set

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one has bound up his arm so it will heal or set it" or "No one has wrapped up his arm for healing or set it"

set with a splint

This phrase refers to the arm being bound tightly to a straight piece of wood so that the parts of the bone will stay together and heal.

Ezekiel 30:22

General Information:

God continues speaking of Pharaoh's army as if it were a broken arm. He also speaks of strengthening the army of Babylon as if it were the arms of the king of Babylon.

the Lord Yahweh says this

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 3:11.

both the strong one and the broken one

"both the arm that is healthy and the arm that is already broken"

I will make the sword fall from his hand

"I will knock the sword out of Pharaoh's hand"

Ezekiel 30:23

scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them among the lands

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you translated similar phrases in [Ezekiel 12:15]

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among the lands
"among the places in which people live"
Ezekiel 30:24
I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon
"I will make the arms of the king of Babylon strong"
He will groan before the king of Babylon
"When the king of Babylon comes to attack Egypt, Pharaoh will groan."
groan
A groan is a noise that people make when they have a lot of pain or are dying.
with the groans of a dying man
"as a man who is dying groans" or "like a man who is dying"
Ezekiel 30:25
General Information:
God continues speaking of the armies of Egypt and Babylon as if the armies were the arms of their kings. He also speaks of making the army of Babylon strong to attack others as if he had a sword and put it in the Babylonian king's hand.
For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon
Here "arms" are a metonym for the army. Alternate translation: "I will make the army of the king of Babylon strong"
while Pharaoh's arms will fall
Here "Pharaoh's arms" is a metonym for his army, and "will fall" represents being weak. Alternate translation: "but Pharaoh's army will be unable to defeat enemies"
Then they
The word "they" possibly refers to 1) "the Egyptians" or 2) "all people who hear what Yahweh has done."
for he will attack the land of Egypt with it
"and the king of Babylon will attack the land of Egypt with my sword"
Ezekiel 30:26
scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them through the lands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you translated similar phrases in [Ezekiel 12:15]

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31 [1]Then it came about in the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, that the word of Yahweh
came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, say to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and to his multitudes around him,
'In your greatness, who are you like?
[3] Behold! Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon with beautiful branches,
giving shade to the forest,
and the tallest in height,
and the branches formed its treetop.

[4] Many waters made it tall;
the deep waters made it huge.
Rivers flowed all around the place where it was planted,
for their channels stretched out to all the trees in the field.

[5] Its great height was more than any of the other trees in the field,
and its branches became very many;
its branches grew long
because of many waters as they grew.

[6] Every bird of the heavens
nested in its branches,
while every living thing of the field
gave birth to its young under its foliage.
All of the many nations
lived under its shade.

[7] For it was beautiful in its greatness
and the length of its branches,
for its roots were in many waters.

[8] Cedars in the garden of God could not equal it.
None among the cypress trees matched its branches,
and the plane tree could not equal its boughs.
There was no other tree in the garden of God
that was like it in its beauty.

[9] I made it beautiful with its many branches
and all the trees of Eden that were in the garden of God envied it.

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[10]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Because it was tall in height, and it set its treetop between its branches, it lifted up its heart because of its height.[11]I have given it into the hand of a mighty one of the nations, to deal with it according to what its wickedness deserves. I have thrown it out.
[12]Foreigners who were the terror of all the nations cut it off and left it to die. Its branches fell on the mountains and all the valleys, and its boughs lay broken in all the ravines of the land. Then all the nations on earth came out from under its shade and they went away from it.
[13]All the birds of the sky rested on the trunk of the fallen tree and every animal of the field came to its branches.
[14]This happened so that no other trees that grow by the waters will lift up their foliage to the height of the tallest trees, and that no other trees that grow beside the waters will reach up to that height. All of them have been assigned to death, to the earth below, among the children of humanity, with those that go down to the pit.

[15]The Lord Yahweh says this: On the day when the cedar went down to Sheol I brought mourning to the earth. I covered the deep waters over it, and I held back the ocean waters. I kept back the great waters, and I brought mourning to Lebanon for him. So all the trees of the field mourned because of it.
[16]I brought shuddering to the nations at the sound of its downfall, when I threw it down to Sheol with those who went down into the pit. So I comforted all the trees of Eden in the lowest parts of the earth. These had been the choicest and best trees of Lebanon; the trees that drank the waters.
[17]For they also went down with it to Sheol, to the ones who had been killed by the sword. These were its strong arm, those nations who had lived in its shade.[18]Which of the trees in Eden was your equal in glory and greatness? For you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the lowest parts of the earth among the uncircumcised; you will lie down with those who were killed by the sword.'This is Pharaoh and all of his multitudes—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

Ezekiel 31 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophecy against Egypt and its king continues in this chapter. God told Egypt to remember what happened to Assyria when it became proud. This same things will now happen to Egypt. (See: prophet)

Links:

Ezekiel 31:1 Notes

Ezekiel 31:1

it came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the eleventh year

"in year 11." This means the eleventh year after King Jehoiachin was taken into exile in Babylon. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 26:1]

in the third month, on the first day of the month

"on the first day of the third month." This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. This first day is near the beginning of June on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 31:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

In your greatness, who are you like?

"Who is as great as you are?" Yahweh uses this question to introduce a new topic. Pharaoh thought that his nation was the greatest, but God is about to talk about another great nation. Alternate translation: "You think that there is no country whose power is as great as the power of your country."

Ezekiel 31:3

General Information:

These are God's words to Pharaoh about Assyria. God gives his message in the form of a parable about a great cedar tree.

Behold!

"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

Assyria was a cedar

In this parable, God speaks about Assyria as if it were a great tree to emphasize how great and powerful the Assyrians were. This parable continues until 31:9. Alternate translation: "Assyria was like a cedar"

the branches formed its treetop

"its top was above the branches of the other trees." Some versions of the Bible translate this as "the top of the tree was in the clouds."

Ezekiel 31:4

Many waters made it tall

"Because the cedar had a lot of water, it grew very tall"

the deep waters made it huge

"the water deep in the ground made the cedar grow very big"

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for their channels stretched out to all the trees in the field
"and streams flowed from the rivers to all the trees of the field"
Ezekiel 31:5
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
Its great height was more than any of the other trees in the field
"The cedar was taller than any of the other trees of the field"
its branches became very many
"it grew very many branches"
because of many waters as they grew
"because it had a lot of water"
Ezekiel 31:6
Every bird of the heavens nested in its branches
"All kinds of birds that fly in the sky made nests in its branches"
while every living thing of the field gave birth to its young under its foliage
"and all of the creatures that live in the field gave birth under the cedar's branches"
All of the many nations lived under its shade
"All of the great nations lived in the shade of that tree." Here "nations" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people from all the nations lived in the shade of that tree"
Ezekiel 31:7
it was beautiful in its greatness and the length of its branches
"It was beautiful because it was very big and its branches were very long"
Ezekiel 31:8
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
Cedars in the garden of God could not equal it
Since these were God's words to Pharaoh, it can also be translated with the first person. Alternate translation: "The cedar trees in my garden were not as great as that tree"
the garden of God
This is another way of referring to "the garden of Eden."
None among the cypress trees matched its branches
Yahweh was comparing how many branches the trees had. Alternate translation: "None of the cypress trees had as many branches as the cedar"
cypress trees
Cypress trees have very many branches. They can grow very tall. See how you translated "cypress" in Ezekiel 27:5.
the plane tree could not equal its boughs
It was implied Yahweh was comparing the long branches of the cedar tree with the long branches of the plane tree. Alternate translation: "the plane tree did not have branches like the cedar tree" or "no plane tree had branches as long as the branches of the cedar tree"
plane tree
A plane tree was a large, leafy tree with strong branches. It is similar to a sycamore tree.
was like it in its beauty
"was as beautiful as the cedar tree"
Ezekiel 31:9
I made it beautiful with its many branches
"I made the cedar beautiful by giving it many long branches"
envied it
"were jealous of the cedar tree"
Ezekiel 31:10
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this
Since Yahweh is speaking this can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "Therefore, this is what I, Yahweh the Lord, say"
it set its treetop between its branches
"its top was above the branches of the other trees." Some versions of the Bible translate this as "the top of the tree was in the clouds."
Ezekiel 31:11
I have given it into the hand of a mighty one of the nations
The word "hand" represents control. Alternate translation: "I put it in the power of the strongest nation" or "I gave the strongest nation power over it"
I have thrown it out
"I sent the cedar away from the cedar's land because the cedar was wicked"
Ezekiel 31:12
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
who were the terror of all the nations
The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as "afraid." And here "nations" represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "who made the people of all the nations afraid"
cut it off
"cut the cedar down"
its boughs lay broken
"the foreigners broke the boughs of the cedar"
boughs
Boughs are very large branches that grow on trees. Usually, many smaller branches grow on the boughs.
came out from under its shade
"left the shade of the cedar"
Ezekiel 31:13
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
All the birds of the sky
"All the birds that fly in the sky"
rested on the trunk of the fallen tree
"rested on the remains of the cedar"
trunk
The trunk is a very thick part of the tree that comes out of the ground and holds up the rest of the tree.
every animal of the field came to its branches
"the wild animals lived in the branches of the cedar"
Ezekiel 31:14
that no other trees that grow by the waters
"that no other trees that get a lot of water"
will lift up their foliage to the height of the tallest trees
"will grow taller than the branches of other trees." Some Bibles translate this as "will set their tops among the clouds."

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that no other trees that grow beside the waters will reach up to that height
"that no other trees that get a lot of water will ever grow that tall again"
All of them have been assigned to death, to the earth below
This can be stated in active form. And the abstract noun "death" can be stated "die." Alternate translation: "For I made it so that they all will die and go deep under the ground"
among the children of humanity, with those that go down to the pit
"to be with those people who have died and gone down to the grave"
the pit
This refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 26:20]
Ezekiel 31:15
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues. Here, Yahweh speaks about the great sadness caused by the tree being cut down as if even the waters, Lebanon, and the wild trees all mourned for the cedar.
On the day when the cedar went down to Sheol
The phrase "went down to Sheol" means "died." Alternate translation: "On the day that the cedar died" or "On the day that the cedar was chopped down"
I brought mourning to the earth
The abstract noun "mourning" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I caused the earth to mourn"
I covered the deep waters over it
The word "covered" possibly refers to putting on clothes for mourning. Alternate translation: "I made the water from the springs mourn for the cedar" or "it was as though the springs that watered it mourned for it"
I held back the ocean waters
"I kept the water in the ocean from watering the earth"
I kept back the great waters
"I made it so that there would not be a lot of water anymore"
I brought mourning to Lebanon for him
The abstract noun "mourning" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I made Lebanon mourn for the cedar"
Ezekiel 31:16
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
when I threw it down to Sheol with those who went down into the pit
Here "threw it down to Sheol" is an idiom that means to kill. "The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 31:14]
in the lowest parts of the earth
"that were already deep down in the ground." This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that had already died and are now in Sheol"
the choicest and best trees of Lebanon; the trees that drank the waters
"the best trees of Lebanon that everyone would want; trees that got a lot of water." This is describing the trees of Eden that were in the lowest parts of the earth.
the choicest
This is something that everyone would want because it is very good.
Ezekiel 31:17
General Information:
Yahweh's parable about the cedar continues.
they also went down with it to Sheol
Here "went down ... to Sheol" is an idiom that means to die. Alternate translation: "those trees of Lebanon also died and went down to Sheol with the cedar"
who had been killed by the sword
Here "sword" represents enemies who fought them in battle. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom enemies had killed with swords" or "who had died in battle"
These were its strong arm
"These trees of Lebanon were its strong arm." The phrase "strong arm" represents "power." Alternate translation: "These trees of Lebanon were the power of the cedar" or "These trees strengthened the cedar"
Ezekiel 31:18
Which of the trees in Eden was your equal in glory and greatness?
"Which of these trees in Eden had as much glory as you and was as great as you?" God asks Pharaoh this question to show him that the parable applies to him and his country. It can start with "So Pharaoh" or "So Egypt." Alternate translation: "None of the trees in Eden was your equal in glory and greatness!"
For you will be brought down
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For I will bring you down"
with the trees of Eden
"like the other trees of Eden"
to the lowest parts of the earth
"to a place deep in the ground"
among the uncircumcised
"where you will be with people who are not circumcised"
you will lie down with those who were killed by the sword
"Lie down" is an idiom that means "die." Alternate translation: "you will die and join those who were killed by the sword" or "you will die, like those who were killed by the sword"
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

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32 [1]Then it happened in the twelfth month of the twelfth year, on the first of the month, that the word of Yahweh came
to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, lift up a lament concerning Pharaoh the king of Egypt; say to him,
'You are like a young lion among the nations,
but you are like a monster in the seas;

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you churn up the water,
you stir up the waters with your feet and muddy their waters.

3 The Lord Yahweh says this:
So I will spread my net over you in the assembly of many peoples,
and they will lift you up in my net.
4 I will abandon you in the land.
I will throw you into a field
and cause all the birds of the heavens to settle on you;
the hunger of all living animals on earth will be satisfied by you.

5 For I will put your flesh on the mountains,
and I will fill the valleys with your worm-filled corpse.

6 Then I will pour your blood over the mountains,
and the stream beds will be filled with your blood.

7 Then when I extinguish you,
I will cover the heavens and darken their stars;
I will cover the sun with clouds,
and the moon will not shine its light.

8 All the shining lights in the heavens
I will darken over you,
and I will put darkness over your land—
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

9 So I will terrify the heart of many peoples in lands that you do not know, when I bring about your destruction among the nations, among lands that you have not known.[1] 10 I will shock many peoples concerning you; their kings will bristle in horror concerning you when I swing my sword before them. Every moment each one will tremble because of you, on the day of your ruin.

11 For the Lord Yahweh says this: The sword of the king of Babylon will come against you.
12 I will cause your multitudes to fall by warriors' swords—
each warrior a terror of nations.
These warriors will devastate the pride of Egypt
and destroy all of its multitudes.

13 For I will destroy all the cattle from beside the plentiful waters;
the foot of man will no longer stir the waters up,
neither will the hooves of cattle stir them.

14 Then I will calm their waters
and make their rivers run like oil—
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

15 When I make the land of Egypt a desolation,
when the land is made desolate of all its fullness,
when I attack all the inhabitants in her,
they will know that I am Yahweh.

16 There will be a lament; the daughters of the nations will lament over her; they will lament over Egypt, over all her multitudes they will lament—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

17 Then it happened in the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, that the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,
18 "Son of man, weep for the multitudes of Egypt and bring them down—her and the daughters of majestic nations—to the lowest earth with those who have gone down to the pit.

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[19] 'Are you really more beautiful than anyone else?
Go down and lie down with the uncircumcised.'

[20]They will fall among those who were killed by the sword. The sword has been drawn! She has been given to the sword;
they will seize her and her multitudes.[21]The strongest of the warriors in Sheol will declare about Egypt and her allies,
'They have come down here! They will lie down with the uncircumcised, with those who were killed by the sword.'

[22]Assyria is there with all her assembly. Her graves surround her; all of them were killed by the sword.[23]Those whose
graves are set in the recesses of the pit are there, with all her assembly. Her graves surround all of those who were killed,
who fell by the sword, those who brought terror on the land of the living.

[24]Elam is there with all her multitudes. Her graves surround her; all of them were killed— those who fell by the sword,
who have gone down uncircumcised to the lowest parts of the earth, who brought their terrors on the land of the living
and who carry their own shame, together with the ones going down to the pit.[25]Among those who were killed, they have
made a bed for her, with her multitude all around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, pierced by the sword,
because they had brought their terrors on the land of the living. So they carry their shame with those who go down to the
pit; they are laid among those who were killed.

[26]Meshech, Tubal, and all their multitudes are there! Their graves surround them. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by
the sword, because they had brought their terrors on the land of the living.[27]They do not lie down with the fallen warriors
of the uncircumcised who have gone down to Sheol with all their weapons of war, and with their swords placed under
their heads and their iniquities over their bones. For they were the terror of warriors in the land of the living.
[28]So you, Egypt, will be broken in the midst of the uncircumcised! You will lie alongside those who were pierced by the
sword.
[29]Edom is there with her kings and all her leaders. They have been placed in their strength with those killed by the sword.
With the uncircumcised they lie, with those who have gone down to the pit.

[30]The princes of the north are there—all of them and all the Sidonians who went down with the ones who had been
pierced. They were powerful and terrorized others, but now they lie down there in shame, uncircumcised with those who
were pierced by the sword. They carry their own shame, together with the ones going down to the pit.

[31]Pharaoh will look and be comforted about all his multitudes who were pierced by the sword—Pharaoh and all his army
—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[32]I put him as my terrifying one in the land of the living, but he will be laid down
in the midst of the uncircumcised, among those pierced by the sword, Pharaoh and all his multitudes—this is the Lord
Yahweh's declaration."

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[a]Instead of when I bring about your destruction among the nations, some ancient translations and some modern translations have when I take you into captivity among the nations.

Ezekiel 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The prophecy against Egypt and its king concludes in this chapter. Egypt will have its army destroyed, just as happened to so many other nations. Beginning in verse 1, the land of Egypt is addressed through Pharaoh, its king, so God refers to Egypt as "he" and "him." However, beginning in verse 12, Egypt is referred to as "she" and "her," as if she were a woman. It was common in Hebrew for lands and countries to be referred to as if they were women.

Links:

Ezekiel 32:1 Notes

Ezekiel 32:1

Then it happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the twelfth month ... on the first of the month

This is the twelfth and final month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the end of February.

of the twelfth year

This refers to the twelfth year of the reign of King Jehoiachin. Alternate translation: "of the twelfth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin"

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that

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God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 32:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

lift up

"sing"

You are like a young lion ... like a monster in the seas

Possible meanings are 1) he thought he was like a lion, but he was really only a monster, or 2) he was like a lion and a monster.

like a young lion among the nations

Egypt was stronger than other nations, like lions are stronger than other animals.

like a monster in the seas

Pharaoh was powerful, but he only caused trouble for others, like this monster in the water.

monster

A monster is an animal that is big and dangerous. This one might be a crocodile. See how you translated this word in Ezekiel 29:3.

Ezekiel 32:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Pharaoh and to speak of him as if he were a monster, perhaps a crocodile, in the water.

The Lord Yahweh says this

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 5:5.

So I will spread my net over you in the assembly of many peoples

God's punishment of Pharaoh is spoken of as if the king were the river monster caught in a net. Alternate translation: "So I will gather many peoples and throw my net over you"

Ezekiel 32:4

I will abandon you in the land

"I will leave you helpless on the land." The monster that was fearsome and powerful when it was in the water cannot do anything when it is left on dry land.

all the birds of the heavens

"all the birds that fly in the sky"

the hunger of all living animals on earth will be satisfied by you

This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "I will let all the animals of the earth eat your body until they are hungry no longer"

Ezekiel 32:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Pharaoh and to compare him to a monster that lives in the water.

your worm-filled corpse

The worms help the dead body to rot. Alternate translation: "your rotting body"

Ezekiel 32:6

the stream beds will be filled with your blood

This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "I will fill the streams with your blood"

Ezekiel 32:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Pharaoh what he will do to Egypt.

when I extinguish you

It was common to speak of a person's life as if it were a lamp that could be put out. Alternate translation: "When I destroy you"

I will cover the heavens

Yahweh speaks of making the stars dark as if he were putting a cover over the sky. Alternate translation: "I will make everything in the sky go dark"

Ezekiel 32:8

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 32:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Pharaoh.

I will terrify the heart of many peoples

Here "heart" represents the people's emotions. Alternate translation: "I will make the hearts of many peoples afraid" or "I will cause many people to be terrified"

in lands that you do not know

The way that Yahweh destroys Egypt will make afraid even people in lands that Pharaoh never knew about.

when I bring about your destruction among the nations

The nation of Egypt, symbolized by its king, is spoken of as if it were a building that was collapsing. Alternate translation: "when nations hear about the way I destroyed you"

Ezekiel 32:10

when I swing my sword

Here swinging a sword represents using the sword. Alternate translation: "when I use my sword"

Every moment each one will tremble because of you

Here "tremble" is an action that people often do when they are very afraid. Alternate translation: "Every one of them will keep shaking because of their fear"

on the day of your ruin

The idea of becoming a ruin represents dying. Alternate translation: "when I destroy you"

Ezekiel 32:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to Pharaoh.

The sword of the king of Babylon will come against you

Here "sword" represents an army. Alternate translation: "The army of the king of Babylon will attack you"

Ezekiel 32:12

each warrior a terror of nations

The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as "terrifies" or "afraid." Alternate translation: "Each warrior terrifies the nations" or "each one of them makes the nations afraid"

will devastate the pride of Egypt

The abstract noun "pride" can be stated as "proud." Alternate translation: "will cause the Egyptians to no longer be proud"

destroy all of its multitudes

Here "all" is probably a generalization that refers to the killing of large numbers of soldiers, and perhaps other

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people also. Alternate translation: "kill a very large number of people who live in Egypt"
Ezekiel 32:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
from beside the plentiful waters
"in the places where there is a lot of water"
the foot of man will no longer stir the waters up
The foot here is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "people will no longer stir the waters up with their feet"
stir the waters
make clear water muddy
the hooves of cattle stir them
The hoof is a synecdoche for cattle. Alternate translation: "cattle stir them with their hooves"
Ezekiel 32:14
Then I will calm their waters
Possible meanings are 1) "I will make the water calm" or 2) "I will make the water clear." When no one stirs up the water, the dirt settles down and the water becomes clear.
Ezekiel 32:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
When I make the land of Egypt a desolation
This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "When I make the land of Egypt a place where no one is living"
when the land is made desolate of all its fullness
"when the country is made to lose all its wealth"
when I attack all the inhabitants in her
Here the idea of attacking represents destroying. Alternate translation: "when I destroy all who live in her"
in her
It was normal in biblical language to represent countries and lands as if they were women. Alternate translation: "in it"
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 32:16
over her
It was normal in biblical language to represent countries and lands as if they were women. Alternate translation: "over it"
the daughters of the nations
Possible meanings are 1) "the women of other nations" or 2) "people of other nations"
over Egypt, over all her multitudes
"about Egypt, about all her multitudes" or "about the disaster that happened to Egypt, about the disaster that happened to all her multitudes"
Ezekiel 32:17
Then it happened
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new message. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
in the twelfth year
Possible meanings are 1) This happened in the twelfth year after the Babylonians took the Israelites to Babylon or 2) this happened in the twelfth year after the Babylonians took Jehoiachin to Babylon.
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 32:18
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
bring them down—her and the daughters of majestic nations
God is perhaps telling Ezekiel to cause this to happen by giving a prophetic command.
her
Once again, the land of Egypt is referred to as a woman.
the daughters of majestic nations
Possible meanings are 1) "the people of powerful nations" or 2) "other powerful nations."
the lowest earth
"to the places under the ground." When people died, they were put in the ground. So "bring them down ... to the lowest earth" means "make them die."
with those who have gone down to the pit
"with everyone else who has died and gone into the ground"
the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 31:16]
Ezekiel 32:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel. He speaks of the people of Egypt as if they were a woman.
Are you really more beautiful than anyone else? Go down and lie down with the uncircumcised.
This is a question and command that the prophet is to ask the Egyptians. Alternate translation: "Go down and lie down with the uncircumcised. Ask them all: 'Are you really more beautiful than anyone else?'"
Go down
It is implied that they must go down to Sheol. Alternate translation: "Go down to Sheol"
lie down
as in death. If your language has a word for dead people lying down that is different from the word for live people lying down to sleep, use it here.
Are you really more beautiful than anyone else?
This question really makes a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not more beautiful than anyone else."
Ezekiel 32:20
They will fall
"Egypt and her people will fall"

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who were killed by the sword
The word "sword" is a metonym for a soldier who kills people with a sword.This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "whom enemy soldiers killed with swords" or "who died in battle"
The sword has been drawn!
The word "sword" here is a metonym for war that people fight with swords. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "War has begun"
She has been given to the sword
This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "I have given Egypt to the sword"
they will seize her and her multitudes
"her enemies will seize Egypt and her people"
Ezekiel 32:21
about Egypt and her allies
"about the Egyptians and those who join them"
Ezekiel 32:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about nations in Sheol. Because what God is showing Ezekiel may be for future time, either the present tense or the future tense is suitable for these verses and the following verses.
Assyria is there with all her assembly
The land of Assyria is represented as a woman. Alternate translation: "The people of Assyria and all its army are there in Sheol"
her assembly
"all her people together"
all of them were killed by the sword
The word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who use swords to kill people. This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "Soldiers used swords to kill them all"
Ezekiel 32:23
are set in the recesses of the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 32:18]
all of those who were killed, who fell by the sword
This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "all those whom enemies killed in battle"
fell by the sword
The word "fell" here is a euphemism for "died."
those who brought terror on the land of the living
The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as "afraid." Alternate translation: "those who, when they were still alive, caused people to be extremely afraid"
the land of the living
This represents the people who were alive.
Ezekiel 32:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about nations in Sheol.
Elam is there
Here "Elam" refers to the people of that country. Alternate translation: "The people of Elam are also there in Sheol"
her multitudes
Possible meanings are 1) her many people or 2) her army.
Her graves surround her
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 32:22.
all of them were killed
Here "them" refers to the people of Elam. This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "enemies killed all the people of Elam"
those who fell by the sword
Translate "who fell by the sword" as in Ezekiel 32:23.
by the sword
Here "the sword" is a metonym for soldiers who use swords to kill people. Alternate translation: "in battle"
who have gone down uncircumcised
"who were uncircumcised when they went down"
to the lowest parts of the earth
"to places deep down in the ground" or "to the land deep down in the ground." See how you translated "in the lowest realms of the earth" in Ezekiel 26:20.
who brought their terrors
The abstract noun "terrors" can be stated as "afraid." See how you translated "brought terror" in [Ezekiel 32:23]
the land of the living
This represents the people who were alive. See how you translated "the land of the living" in Ezekiel 32:23.
who carry their own shame
Shame is spoken of as if it were an object that one could carry where he goes. Alternate translation: "who feel ashamed" or "who are now disgraced"
the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 32:23.
Ezekiel 32:25
General Information:
Ezekiel continues to speak about Elam.
they have made a bed for her
Space being made in Sheol for the dead is spoken of as if the dead were given beds to lie on. Alternate translation: "they have prepared a place for her"
All of them are uncircumcised
The Israelites did not respect people who were not circumcised.
pierced by the sword, because
The word "pierced" here is a metonym for "killed." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies have killed them with swords because"
they had brought their terrors on the land of the living
The abstract noun "terror" can be stated as "afraid." The phrase "the land of the living" represents people who were alive. Alternate translation: "they had caused those who are in the land of the living to be extremely afraid"
So they carry their shame with those who go down to the pit
Here "shame" is spoken about as if it were an object that a person carries. Alternate translation: "So they are ashamed as they go with others down to the pit"
the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in

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[Ezekiel 31:16]
Ezekiel 32:26
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about nations in Sheol.
Meshech ... Tubal
See how you translated these names in Ezekiel 27:13.
Their graves surround them
See how you translated "her graves surround her" in Ezekiel 32:22.
killed by the sword
Here "the sword" represents warfare. Alternate translation: "killed in battle"
they had brought their terrors on the land of the living
Causing people to fear is spoken of as if it were the act of bringing an object to them. The abstract noun "terrors" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "they terrified everyone in the land of the living"
All of them ... land of the living
See how you translated "All of them ... land of the living" in Ezekiel 32:25.
Ezekiel 32:27
their iniquities over their bones
The warriors' iniquities cover their bodies, although one would expect that their shields would cover them in death.
they were the terror of warriors in the land of the living
"while they were still alive, they made other warriors very afraid"
in the land of the living
The time during which these warriors were living is spoken of as if it were a place. Alternate translation: "while they were alive"
Ezekiel 32:28
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking.
you ... will be broken
"Broken" here represents "destroyed." This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "I will destroy you"
in the midst of
"in the middle of"
those who were pierced
The word "pierced" here is a metonym for "killed." This can be translated in active form. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 32:25]
by the sword
This represents being in warfare. Alternate translation: "in battle"
Ezekiel 32:29
Edom is there with her kings and all her leaders
Here "Edom" represents all the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom are in Sheol with their kings and all their leaders"
the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 32:25.
Ezekiel 32:30
The princes of the north
"The princes who ruled nations in the north"
are there
"are in Sheol"
went down
"went down to Sheol"
had been pierced
The word "pierced" here is a metonym for "killed." This can be translated in active form. See how you translated similar words in [Ezekiel 32:25]
now they lie down there in shame
"Lie down" is an idiom that means "die." Alternate translation: "now they lie dead there in shame"
by the sword
This represents being in warfare. Alternate translation: "in battle"
They carry their own shame
Shame is spoken of as if it were an object that one could carry where he goes. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 32:25]
the pit
"The pit" refers to the grave; because the grave was thought to be the entrance to the world of the dead, the pit also represents that world. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 32:29.
Ezekiel 32:31
Pharaoh will look
It can be made explicit who Pharaoh will see. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh will see all the dead people from other nations"
be comforted about all his multitudes
It is implied that Pharaoh will be comforted because the armies of other great kings also died. Alternate translation: "will comfort himself that he was not the only king whose entire army died"
Ezekiel 32:32
I put him as my terrifying one in the land of the living
"While Pharaoh was still alive, I made him to terrify people"
he will be laid down in the midst of the uncircumcised
This can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "Others will lay him in the midst of the uncircumcised"

33 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, declare this to your people; say to them, 'When I bring a sword against any land, then the people of that land take one man from among themselves and make him a watchman for them.[3]He looks for the sword as it comes on the land, and he blows his horn to warn the people![4]If the people hear the sound of the horn but do not pay attention, and if the sword comes and kills them, then each one's blood is on his own head.
[5]If someone hears the sound of the horn and pays no attention, his blood is on him; but if he pays attention, he will save his own life.
[6]"However, if the watchman sees the sword as it is coming, but if he does not blow the horn, with the result that the

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people are not warned, and if the sword comes and takes anyone's life, then that person dies in his own iniquity, but I will require his blood from the watchman.'

[7]"Now you yourself, son of man! I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; you will hear the words from my mouth and warn them on my behalf.[8]If I say to a wicked person, 'Wicked one, you will surely die!' but if you do not announce this so as to warn the wicked about his way, then he who is wicked will die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood from your hand![9]But you, if you warn the wicked about his way, so that he might turn back from it, and if he does not turn back from his way, then he will die in his iniquity, but you yourself will have saved your own life.

[10]"So you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'You are saying this, "Our transgressions and our sins are on us, and we are rotting away in them! How can we live?"'[11]Say to them, 'As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—I do not delight in the death of the wicked, for if the wicked repents from his way, then he will live! Repent! Repent from your wicked ways! For why should you die, house of Israel?'
[12]So now you, son of man, say to your people, 'The righteousness of a righteous person will not save him if he sins! The wickedness of a wicked person will not cause him to perish if he repents from his wickedness! For the righteous person will not be able to live because of his righteousness if he sins.[13]If I say to the righteous, "He will surely live!" and if he trusts in his righteousness and then commits injustice, I will not call to mind any of his righteousness. He will die for the wickedness he committed.
[14]So if I say to the wicked, "You will surely die," but if he then repents from his sins and does what is just and right—[15]if he restores the loan guarantee that he wickedly demanded, or if he makes restitution for what he has stolen, and if he walks in the statutes that give life and no longer commits injustice—then he will surely live. He will not die.[16]None of the sins that he has committed will be called to mind for him. He has done justice and righteousness, and so, he will surely live!

[17]'But your people say, "The way of the Lord is not fair!" but it is your ways that are not fair![18]When the righteous person turns away from his righteousness and commits injustice, then he will die in it![19]When the wicked turns away from his wickedness and does what is just and righteous, he will live because of those things![20]But you people say, "The way of the Lord is not fair!" I will judge each of you according to his way, house of Israel!'"

[21]It happened in the twelfth year, on the fifth day of the tenth month of our captivity, that a fugitive came to me from Jerusalem and said, "The city has been captured!"[22]The hand of Yahweh had been on me in the evening before the fugitive came, and my mouth was opened by the time that he came to me in the dawn. So my mouth was open; I was no longer mute!

[23]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[24]"Son of man, the ones inhabiting those ruins in the land of Israel are talking and say, 'Abraham was only one person, and he inherited the land, but we are many! The land has been given to us as a possession.'
[25]Therefore say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: You eat blood, and you lift up your eyes towards your idols, then you pour out people's blood. Should you really possess the land?[26]You have depended on your swords and have done abominations; each man defiles his neighbor's wife. Should you really possess the land?'
[27]You will say this to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: As I live, surely the ones in the ruins will fall by the sword, and I will give those in the fields to the living creatures as food, and those in fortresses and in caves will die of plagues.[28]Then I will turn the land into a desolation and a horror, and the pride of its might will end, for the mountains of Israel will be deserted, and there will be no one to pass through them.'[29]So they will know that I am Yahweh, when I make the land a desolation and a waste because of all the abominations that they have done.

[30]"So now you, son of man—your people are saying things about you beside the walls and the gates of the houses, and each says to one another—each man to his brother, 'Let us go and listen to the prophet's word that comes out from Yahweh!'[31]So my people will come to you, as they often do, and will sit in front of you and listen to your words, but they will not obey them. Right words are in their mouths, but their hearts are going after unjust profit.
[32]For you are like a lovely song to them, a beautiful sound that is well played on a stringed instrument, so they will listen to your words, but none of them will obey them.[33]So when all of this happens—behold! it will happen!—then they will know that a prophet has been among them."

Ezekiel 33 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Repentance

God does not want sinners to die. He wants them to repent and live. (See: sin and repent)

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Links:

Ezekiel 33:1 Notes

Ezekiel 33:1
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 33:2
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
a sword against any land
The word "sword" refers to an enemy army that attacks. Also, "land" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "an army to attack the people of any land"
make him a watchman
"appoint him as a guard" or "make him guard"
Ezekiel 33:3
He looks for the sword
Here "sword" represents an enemy army. Alternate translation: "He looks for an enemy army"
Ezekiel 33:4
do not pay attention
"ignore the warning"
each one's blood is on his own head
Here "blood" represents death. The phrase "on his own head" is an idiom that means the person will be held responsible. Alternate translation: "it is their own fault if they die"
Ezekiel 33:5
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the Israelites.
his blood is on him
Here "blood" represents a person's death. The phrase "on him" is an idiom that means that person is considered responsible. Alternate translation: "it will be his own fault that he dies"
save his own life
"will keep himself from dying"
Ezekiel 33:6
the sword as it is coming
The word "sword" refers to an enemy army. Alternate translation: "the enemy army as it is coming"
with the result that the people are not warned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and he does not warn the people"
the sword comes and takes anyone's life
Here "sword" represents an enemy army. Alternate translation: "the enemy army comes and kills anyone"
that person dies in his own iniquity
"that person dies because of his own iniquity"
I will require his blood from the watchman
Here "blood" represents a person's death. The phrase "I will require his blood from" is an idiom that means to consider someone responsible. Alternate translation: "I will consider that person's death to be the fault of the watchman"
Ezekiel 33:7
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
you will hear the words from my mouth and warn them on my behalf
Here "mouth" represents what Yahweh says. Alternate translation: "you will hear the message that I speak and you will warn them on my behalf"
warn them on my behalf
"warn them as my representative" or "give them the warning from me"
Ezekiel 33:8
do not announce this
"do not say this"
about his way
"the way he acts" or "the things he does." See how you translated "your ways" in Ezekiel 7:3.
I will require his blood from your hand
Here "blood" represents a person's death. The phrase "require ... from your hand" is an idiom that means to consider someone responsible. Alternate translation: "I will consider you responsible for his death"
Ezekiel 33:9
he might turn back from it, and if he does not turn back from his way
A person no longer behaving in a certain way is spoken of as if he physically turns and goes back on a path. Alternate translation: "he might stop doing bad things, and if he does not stop doing bad things"
will have saved your own life
"will have kept yourself alive"
Ezekiel 33:10
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the Israelites.
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
You are saying this
"This is what you have said"
Our transgressions and our sins are on us
Possible meanings are 1) "on us" is a metaphor that means they feel guilty for their transgressions and sins or 2) "on us" is a metaphor that means they realize that Yahweh is punishing them for their transgressions and sins.
we are rotting away in them
"we are rotting away because of them." Being destroyed because of sin is spoken of as if the person's flesh were rotting. Alternate translation: "they are destroying us" or "they are killing us"
in them

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"because of them"

How can we live?

The people ask this question to emphasize that they have no hope of living. Alternate translation: "We have no hope of living." or "We will certainly die."

Ezekiel 33:11

I do not delight in the death of the wicked

The abstract noun "death" can be stated as "die." And the nominal adjective "the wicked" can be stated as "wicked people." Alternate translation: "It does not make me happy when wicked people die"

if the wicked repents from his way

Here "way" represents how a person behaves. Alternate translation: "if the wicked person stops doing bad things"

For why should you die, house of Israel?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he does not want the people of Israel to die. Alternate translation: "Do not choose to die, house of Israel!"

Ezekiel 33:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the Israelites.

The righteousness of a righteous person will not save him if he sins!

The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as the adjective "right." It is implied that they will not be saved from God's punishment. Alternate translation: "If righteous people start to sin, the fact that they did what was right before will not stop me from punishing them"

The wickedness of a wicked person will not cause him to perish

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be stated as the adjective "wicked." Alternate translation: "A person who does what is wicked will not perish"

Ezekiel 33:13

if he trusts in his righteousness

The person thinks that because he was righteous, Yahweh will not punish him, even if he sins. The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as the adjective "right." Alternate translation: "if he depends on the right things he has done"

commits injustice

"does what is evil" or "does wicked things"

I will not call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I will not think about" or "I will not recall"

for the wickedness he committed

The abstract noun "wickedness" can be stated as the adjective "wicked" Alternate translation: "because of the wicked things he has done"

Ezekiel 33:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the Israelites.

to the wicked

The nominal adjective "the wicked" can be stated as "the wicked person." Alternate translation: "to the wicked person"

Ezekiel 33:15

if he restores the loan guarantee

"if he gives back the loan guarantee"

loan guarantee

something a person leaves with another person to show that he will keep his promise to pay back what he has borrowed

makes restitution for what he has stolen

"returns what he has stolen" or "pays back the value of what he stole"

walks in the statutes that give life

Acting or behaving in a certain way is spoken of as if it were walking. Alternate translation: "lives according to the laws that give life"

Ezekiel 33:16

will be called to mind for him

The phrase "call to mind" is an idiom that means to remember. The phrase "will be called" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will I think about" or "will I recall"

Ezekiel 33:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the Israelites.

your people

These are the people of Israel. The word "your" refers to Ezekiel.

The way of the Lord ... your ways that are not fair

Behaviors or actions is spoken of as if they were a way or road on which a person travels. Alternate translation: "What the Lord does ... the things you do that are not fair"

but it is your ways

The word "your" refers to the people of Israel. This can be stated in third person. Alternate translation: "but it is their ways"

Ezekiel 33:18

turns away from his righteousness

No longer doing something is spoken of as if it were physically turning away from something. Alternate translation: "stops doing what is right"

die in it

"die because of his sins"

Ezekiel 33:19

turns away from his wickedness

No longer doing something is spoken of as if it were physically turning away from something. Alternate translation: "stops doing wicked things"

because of those things

"because he does what is just and righteous"

Ezekiel 33:20

you people

These are the people of Israel.

house of Israel

Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "people of Israel"

Ezekiel 33:21

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

the twelfth year ... fifth day ... tenth month

"year 12 ... day 5 ... month 10"

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on the fifth day of the tenth month
This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifth day is near the beginning of January on Western calendars.
of our captivity
Here "our" refers to Ezekiel and the Israelites who have been in Babylon since the time the Babylonians forced King Jehoiachin to leave Jerusalem, but not to the reader. Alternate translation: "after we became captives" or "after the Babylonians took us as captives to Babylon"
a fugitive came to me from Jerusalem
"someone escaped from Jerusalem and came to me" The Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and killed the people of Jerusalem, but a few people escaped.
The city has been captured
The phrase "the city" refers to "Jerusalem." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Babylonians have destroyed Jerusalem"
Ezekiel 33:22
The hand of Yahweh had been on me
The word "hand" is often used to refer to someone's power or action. A person with his hand on another person has power over that person. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 1:3]
my mouth was opened
This phrase is an idiom that means to be able to speak. It can be stated in active form. See how you translated "I will open your mouth" in [Ezekiel 3:27]
dawn
The word "dawn" refers to the time early in the morning when the light of the sun first appears.
I was no longer mute
"I was no longer forced to be silent" or "I was no longer unable to speak" Ezekiel had been unable to speak anything except prophetic words since Ezekiel 3:26.
Ezekiel 33:23
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 33:24
those ruins
Possible meanings are 1) "those ruined buildings" or 2) "those ruined cities"
he inherited the land
Yahweh giving the land to Abraham is spoken of as if Abraham inherited the land. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave him the land"
the land
"the land of Israel"
The land has been given to us
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has given us the land"
as a possession
The abstract noun "possession" can be stated as "possess." Alternate translation: "so that we can possess it"
Ezekiel 33:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about the people who were living in the ruins of Israel.
You eat blood
It is implied that they eat blood by eating meat that still has blood in it. Yahweh had commanded them to drain out the blood. Alternate translation: "You eat meat with blood in it"
you lift up your eyes towards your idols
"you look to your idols" This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "you worship your idols"
you pour out people's blood
Here "blood" represents a person's life. To pour out blood is an idiom that means to murder. Alternate translation: "you murder people"
Should you really possess the land?
Yahweh used this question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "You should not possess this land!" or "You do not deserve this land!"
Ezekiel 33:26
You have depended on your swords
Here "swords" represent doing violent things. Alternate translation: "You have committed violent acts with your swords to get what you want"
done abominations
"done things that I hate very much"
each man defiles his neighbor's wife
It is implied that they defile their neighbor's wives by sleeping with them. Alternate translation: "each man sleeps with his neighbor's wife"
Ezekiel 33:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about the people who were living in the ruins of Israel.
As I live
"As surely as I am alive." Yahweh uses this expression to show that what he says next is certainly true. This is a way of making a solemn promise. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
the ones in the ruins will fall by the sword
The phrase "fall by the sword" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "enemies will kill the ones living in the ruins"
those in fortresses and in caves will die of plagues
"plagues will kill the people who live in fortresses and caves"
fortresses
A fortress is a building that people build to protect themselves from enemies who attack them.
caves
Caves are natural holes in the side of a mountain or down in the ground. They are usually made of rock.
Ezekiel 33:28
the pride of its might will end
The word "it" refers to the land, which refers to the people of the land. Alternate translation: "the people of the land will not be proud anymore that they are strong"
the mountains of Israel will be deserted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will live in the mountains of Israel"
there will be no one to pass through them
"there will be no one left to travel through the land or over the mountains"
Ezekiel 33:29

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know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
all the abominations that they have done
The abstract noun "abominations" can be stated as "things I hate." Alternate translation: "all the things they have done that I hate"
they have done
"the people have done"
Ezekiel 33:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
that comes out from Yahweh
"that Yahweh tells him to speak" or "that Yahweh gives him"
Ezekiel 33:31
Right words are in their mouths, but their hearts are going after unjust profit
Here "mouths" represent speaking. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "They speak about loving me, but their hearts are going after unjust profit" or 2) Alternate translation: "They speak about the things they lust after, and their hearts are going after unjust profit"
their hearts are going after unjust profit
Here "hearts" represents desire. Alternate translation: "in their hearts they want to get their unjust profit" or "they desire to get things in ways that are not just"
Ezekiel 33:32
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about the people of Israel.
you are like a lovely song to them
Here "you" refers to Ezekiel, and here he represents the message he speaks. This compares Ezekiel's message to a lovely song, which means the people enjoy listening to him, but they do not think his message is important enough to obey. Alternate translation: "they think that your words are like a lovely song"
a lovely song
Possible meanings are 1) "a beautiful song" or 2) "a love song" or "a song about love."
that is well played on a stringed instrument
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone plays very well on a stringed instrument"
stringed instrument
something that has strings and people use to make music
Ezekiel 33:33
behold!
The word "behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "indeed!"
that a prophet has been among them
"that I really sent you as a prophet to them"

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34 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this to the shepherds: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who are shepherding themselves. Should not shepherds guard the flock?[3]You eat the fatty portions and you clothe yourselves in wool. You slaughter the fatlings of the flock. You do not shepherd at all.
[4]You have not strengthened those who are weak, nor do you heal the ones who are ill. You do not bind up the ones who are broken, and you do not restore the outcasts or seek the lost. Instead, you rule over them through strength and violence.[5]Then they were scattered without a shepherd, and they became food for all the living beasts in the fields, after they were scattered.[6]My flock strays on all of the mountains and on every high hill, and it is dispersed over the entire surface of the earth. Yet no one is searching for them.

[7]Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh:[8]As I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—because my flock has become plunder and food for all the beasts in the fields, because there was no shepherd and none of my shepherds sought my flock, but the shepherds guarded themselves and did not shepherd my flock.
[9]Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh:[10]The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against the shepherds, and I will require my flock from their hand. Then I will dismiss them from shepherding the flock; neither will the shepherds any longer shepherd themselves since I will take away my flock from their mouths, so that my flock will no longer be food for them.

[11]For the Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I myself will seek out my flock and I will look after them,[12]like a shepherd seeking his flock on the day he is within the midst of his scattered flock. Thus I will seek my flock, and I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on the day of clouds and darkness.[13]Then I will bring them out from among the peoples; I will gather them from the lands and bring them to their land. I will put them in pastures on the mountainsides of Israel, by the streams, and in every settlement in the land.
[14]I will put them in good pastures; the high mountains of Israel will be their grazing places. They will lie down there in good places for grazing, in abundant pastures, and they will graze on the mountains of Israel.[15]I myself will shepherd my flock, and I myself will make them lie down—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—[16]I will seek the lost and restore the outcast. I will bind up the broken sheep and heal the sick sheep, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd with justice.

[17]So now you, my flock—this is what the Lord Yahweh says—behold, I will be a judge between sheep and sheep and between rams and male goats.[18]Is it not enough to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample down with your feet

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what is left of the pasture; and to drink from clear waters, that you must muddy the rivers with your feet?[19]Must my sheep eat what you have trampled with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

[20]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this to them: Behold! I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the thin ones,[21]for you have pushed them with your sides and shoulders, and you have gored all of the weak ones with your horns until you have scattered them away from the land.
[22]I will save my flock and they will no longer be plunder, and I will judge between one sheep and another![23]I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will shepherd them, he will feed them, and he will be their shepherd.[24]For I, Yahweh, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among them—I, Yahweh, have declared this.

[25]Then I will make a covenant of peace with them and remove the evil wild animals from the land, so that they will live securely in the wilderness and safely sleep in the forests.[26]I will also bring blessings on them and on the places around my hill, for I will send out showers in due season. These will be showers of blessing.[27]Then the trees of the field will produce their fruit, and the earth will yield its produce. My sheep will be secure in their land; then they will know that I am Yahweh, when I break the bars of their yoke, and when I rescue them from the hand of those who enslaved them.
[28]They will no longer be plunder for the nations, and the wild animals on the earth will no longer devour them. For they will live securely, and no one will frighten them.[29]For I will provide them a renowned plantation; so they will not be victims of famine in the land, and they will not bear the insults of the nations.
[30]Then they will know that I, Yahweh their God, am with them. They are my people, the house of Israel—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[31]For you are my sheep, the flock of my pasture, and my people, and I am your God—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

Ezekiel 34 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God protects the people

God is against those who exploit others. He will protect and take care of his people. (See: peopleofgod)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The people of Israel are compared to sheep and God and the son of David as good shepherds. This is a common metaphor in scripture.

Links:

Ezekiel 34:1 Notes

Ezekiel 34:1

General Information:

In chapter 34, Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and the leaders of Israel were the shepherds that were supposed to care for the flock but have not.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 34:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

the shepherds of Israel

The leaders of Israel are spoken as if they were shepherds. They were supposed to take care of their people like shepherds take care of their flock. Alternate translation: "the leaders of Israel who are like shepherds"

are shepherding themselves

The leaders taking care of themselves instead of the people are spoken of as if they were shepherding themselves. Alternate translation: "are feeding and taking care of themselves"

Should not shepherds guard the flock?

Yahweh uses this question to scold the leaders for not taking care of the people. Alternate translation: "Shepherds should feed the flock and take care of it."

Ezekiel 34:3

You eat the fatty portions ... clothe yourselves in wool

This continues speaking of the leaders of Israel as if they were bad shepherds that kill the best animals in their flock for food and clothing. Alternate translation: "You are like shepherds who eat the fatty portions ... clothe yourselves in wool"

You eat the fatty portions

The fatty portions come from the sheep and the goats. Alternate translation: "You eat the fatty parts of the sheep and goats" or "You eat the best parts of the sheep and goats"

clothe yourselves in wool

"wear the wool from the sheep"

the fatlings

"the youngest and fattest sheep and goats"

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do not shepherd at all
"do not feed and take care of the flock"
Ezekiel 34:4
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and the leaders of Israel as if they were shepherds who have not cared for the flock.
You do not bind up the ones who are broken
"You do not wrap cloth around the broken bones of those who are wounded"
the ones who are broken
"the sheep that have broken bones" or "the sheep that are injured"
you do not restore
"you do not bring back"
the outcasts
"the sheep that have been chased away" or "those that others have chased away"
the lost
The words "the sheep or goats" are left out of this phrase, but they are intended to be understood. Alternate translation: "the sheep or goats that are lost"
through strength and violence
"forcefully and cruelly"
Ezekiel 34:5
Then they were scattered without a shepherd
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then they scattered because they did not have a shepherd"
they became food for all the living beasts in the fields
"all of the wild animals could attack and eat them"
Ezekiel 34:6
it is dispersed over the entire surface of the earth
"my flock is spread out all over the earth"
Ezekiel 34:7
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and the leaders of Israel as if they were shepherds who have not cared for the flock.
hear the word of Yahweh
This is an idiom that is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "listen to Yahweh's message"
Ezekiel 34:8
because my flock has become plunder and food for all the beasts in the fields
This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "because all the beasts in the fields steal my flock and eat them"
plunder
things that are stolen
all the beasts in the fields
Here "all" is a generalization that refers to all the wild animals that eat sheep. Alternate translation: "all the wild animals in the fields"
because there was no shepherd
"because they did not have a shepherd"
none of my shepherds sought my flock
"none of my shepherds tried to find my flock"
guarded themselves
"shepherded themselves" or "fed and cared for themselves"
did not shepherd my flock
"did not feed and care for my flock"
Ezekiel 34:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and the leaders of Israel as if they were shepherds who have not cared for the flock.
hear the word of Yahweh
"listen to Yahweh's message." This is an idiom that is used to introduce a special message from God.
Ezekiel 34:10
The Lord Yahweh says this
This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord Yahweh, say this"
Behold!
The word "Behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed!"
I am against the shepherds
"I am opposed to the shepherds"
I will require my flock from their hand
The phrase "require ... from their hand" is an idiom that means to hold or consider someone responsible for something. Alternate translation: "I will hold them responsible for all the bad things that happen to my flock" or "I will punish them for all the bad things they let happen to my flock"
I will dismiss them from shepherding the flock
"I will not let them shepherd the flock any longer" or "I will not let them be the shepherds of the flock any longer"
shepherd themselves
"feed and take care of themselves"
from their mouths
Here "mouths" represent eating. Alternate translation: "so they cannot eat them"
my flock will no longer be food for them
"the shepherds will no longer eat the sheep and the goats of my flock"
Ezekiel 34:11
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep. Here he speaks of himself as if he were their shepherd and will take care of them.
For the Lord Yahweh says this
This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "For this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say"
Behold!
The word "Behold" here alerts the shepherds to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
will seek out
"will look for"
Ezekiel 34:12
within the midst of his scattered flock
"with his scattered flock"
they were scattered

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It is is implied that the animals in the flock scattered because they did not have a shepherd to care for them or protect them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they scattered because they did not have a shepherd to care for them"

on the day of clouds and darkness

"on the cloudy and dark day." Disasters are spoken of as if they were a day of darkness. Alternate translation: "when terrible disasters happened to them"

Ezekiel 34:13

bring them

"bring my sheep and my goats" or "bring my flock"

from among the peoples

"from the places where they lived with other peoples"

I will put them in pastures ... every settlement in the land

Yahweh bringing his people back from exile to their land so that he can care for them and keep them safe is spoken of as if he were their shepherd who puts his flock in a place where there is plenty of land, food, and water.

pastures

land that has grass and small plants that sheep and goats can eat

settlement

This is a place where people live. Usually they live in houses in a settlement.

Ezekiel 34:14

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the leaders of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep. Here he speaks of himself as their shepherd who will take care of them.

their grazing places

"places where they can eat"

abundant pastures

"lands that have a lot of grass and plants to eat"

graze

eat grass and other plants

Ezekiel 34:15

I myself

The word "myself" adds emphasis. God would do this because the shepherds were not doing it.

will shepherd

"will feed and take care of"

Ezekiel 34:16

the lost

The words "the sheep or goats" are left out of this phrase, but they are intended to be understood. Alternate translation: "the sheep or goats that are lost"

restore the outcast

"bring back those that others have chased away"

bind up the broken sheep

"wrap a cloth around any sheep's broken bone" or "wrap a cloth around any sheep's wound"

the fat and the strong

The word "sheep" is understood. Alternate translation: "the fat sheep and the strong sheep"

Ezekiel 34:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel his message. Now it is to the people of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and of himself as their shepherd.

behold, I

"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important, I"

I will be a judge between sheep and sheep

"I will judge between one sheep and another"

rams and male goats

The male sheep and goats are usually the strongest in the flock and can get whatever they want from the other animals in the flock.

Ezekiel 34:18

Is it not enough ... feet

God uses these questions to scold Israel's leaders, who are spoken of as if they were the stronger animals in the flock that were unkind to the weaker ones. You can translate this as a statement as in the UDB.

Ezekiel 34:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and of himself as their shepherd.

the Lord Yahweh says this

This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say"

to them

"to my flock"

Behold!

The word "Behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed!"

I myself

The word "myself" emphasizes that it is Yahweh who will judge.

will judge between the fat sheep and the thin ones

"will make sure that the fat sheep and goats and the skinny sheep and goats are treating each other fairly"

the fat sheep and the thin ones

The leaders and strong people in Israel are spoken of as if they were fat and strong animals in the flock. The poor and weak people in Israel are spoken of as if they were the thin and weak animals in the flock.

Ezekiel 34:21

for you

The word "you" refers to the sheep and goats that were not treating other sheep and goats well.

with your sides

"with the sides of your body"

have gored

Possible meanings are 1) "have pushed" or "have shoved" 2) "have stabbed" or "have pierced"

scattered them

"made them go in many different directions"

away from the land

"away from the land of Israel"

Ezekiel 34:22

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and of himself as their shepherd.

they will no longer be plunder

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not allow anyone to plunder them" or "I will not allow anyone to steal them"

will no longer be plunder

"will no longer be things that are stolen." The shepherds and wild animals have been stealing the sheep and the goats from Yahweh's flock.

Ezekiel 34:23

I will set over them one shepherd

The phrase "set over" is an idiom that means to cause a person to rule someone else. Alternate translation: "I will assign one shepherd to be in charge of my sheep and the goats"

my servant David

Here "David" refers to a descendant of David. Alternate translation: "a descendant of my servant David"

He will shepherd them

The descendant of David who will be king over the people of Israel is spoken of as if he would be their shepherd.

Ezekiel 34:25

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Israel. Yahweh continues speaking of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep.

a covenant of peace

"a covenant that brings peace"

the evil wild animals

These are wild animals that could kill the sheep and the goats.

Ezekiel 34:26

I will also bring blessings on them and on the places around my hill

Some versions of the Bible translate this as "I will also turn them and the places around my hill into a blessing."

my hill

This refers to Mount Zion.

I will send out showers

"I will cause it to rain"

in due season

"at the right time"

These will be showers of blessing

"This rain will be a blessing"

Ezekiel 34:27

the earth will yield its produce

"the earth will grow food" or "food will grow on the earth"

will be secure

"will be safe"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

when I break the bars of their yoke

Slavery is spoken of as if it were a yoke that people wear like some animals. Alternate translation: "when I free them from being slaves"

from the hand of those who enslaved them

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "from the control of those who made them slaves" or "from those who made them slaves"

Ezekiel 34:28

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Israel.

They will no longer be plunder for the nations

Here "nations" represents the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations will no longer steal from them"

plunder

These are things that are stolen or taken by force. See how you translated "plunder" in Ezekiel 7:21.

Ezekiel 34:29

be victims of famine

"be starved" or "be starving because of lack of food"

they will not bear the insults of the nations

Here "nations" represents the people of the nations. The abstract noun "insults" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "they will no longer hear the people of the nations insult them"

Ezekiel 34:30

I, Yahweh their God, am with them

Here "I ... am with them" is an idiom that means Yahweh helps them. Alternate translation: "I, Yahweh their God, am helping them"

with them. They are my people

This can be stated as one sentence. Alternate translation: "with them, and that they are my people"

Ezekiel 34:31

For you are my sheep, the flock of my pasture

This speaks of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep and Yahweh is their shepherd.

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35 [1]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it.
[3]Say to it, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will strike you with my hand and make you a desolation and a waste.
[4]I will make your cities ruins, and you yourself will become desolate; then you will know that I am Yahweh.[5]Because you have always been hostile to the people of Israel, and because you poured them out into the hands of the sword at the time of their distress, at the time their punishment was at its greatest.[6]Therefore, as I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—I will prepare you for bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you! Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.
[7]I will make Mount Seir a complete desolation when I cut off from it anyone who passes through and returns again.[8]I will fill its mountains with those who were killed; on your high hills and valleys and in all your streams those who were killed by the sword will fall.[9]I will make you a perpetual desolation. Your cities will not be inhabited, but you will know that I am Yahweh.

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[10]You have said, "These two nations and these two lands will become mine, and we will possess them," even when Yahweh was present with them.[11]Therefore, as I live—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—so I will do according to your anger and according to your jealousy that you had in your hatred of Israel, and I will show myself to them when I judge you. [12]So you will know that I am Yahweh. I have heard all the insults you spoke against the mountains of Israel, when you said, "They have been destroyed; they have been given over to us to devour."[13]You exalted yourselves against me with what you said, and you multiplied the words you said against me; and I heard it all.

[14]The Lord Yahweh says this: I will make you a desolation, while the entire earth rejoices.[15]As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the people of Israel because of its desolation, I will do the same to you. You will become a desolation, Mount Seir, and all of Edom—all of it! Then they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

Ezekiel 35 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Edom

Because the people of Edom rejoiced at the destruction of Israel, they too will be destroyed.

Links:

Ezekiel 35:1 Notes

Ezekiel 35:1

General Information:

Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak a prophecy. Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir, but the message is for all of the people of Edom.

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 35:2

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

set your face against Mount Seir

Mount Seir was far away, so Ezekiel could not see it, but Yahweh commands him to stare in that direction as a symbol of harming the people there. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 6:2]

Mount Seir and prophesy against it

"the mountain of Seir." Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak to Mount Seir as if it could hear him. The message is for all of the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "Mount Seir and prophesy against it because of what the people of Edom have done"

Ezekiel 35:3

to it

"to the mountain" or "to the people of Edom"

Behold! I am against you, Mount Seir, and I will strike you with my hand and make you a desolation and a waste

Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak to Mount Seir as if it could hear him. The message is for all of the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "Listen, Mount Seir, I will strike you with my hand and make you a desolation and a waste because of what your people did"

Behold!

The word "Behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Listen!" or "Indeed!"

I am against you

"I am your enemy" or "I oppose you"

I will strike you with my hand

Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "I will use my power to strike you"

make you a desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "make you desolate"

Ezekiel 35:4

General Information:

This continues the message that Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir. The message is for all the people of Edom.

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

Ezekiel 35:5

you poured them out into the hands of the sword

Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) "you gave them over to their enemies who killed them with swords" or 2) "you killed them with swords."

at the time of their distress

"at a time of disaster"

Ezekiel 35:6

I will prepare you for bloodshed

Here "bloodshed" is a metonym for killing. Alternate translation: "I will make it easy for your enemies to kill many of you"

bloodshed will pursue you

Here "bloodshed" is a metonym for killing. Yahweh speaks of bloodshed as if it were a person who could chase them. Alternate translation: "your enemies will chase you down and kill you you"

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Since you did not hate bloodshed
Here "bloodshed" is a metonym for killing. Alternate translation: "Since you did not hate it when enemies brutally killed the people of Israel"
Ezekiel 35:7
General Information:
This continues the message that Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir. The message is for all the people of Edom.
when I cut off from it anyone who passes through and returns again
Possible meanings are 1) "cut off" is a metaphor that means to destroy. Alternate translation: "I will destroy anyone who enters it or leaves it" or 2) "cut off" is a metaphor that means to stop someone from doing something. Alternate translation: "I will make it so that people do not travel back and forth through it"
Ezekiel 35:8
those who were killed by the sword
Here "sword" represents enemies who fought them in battle. This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 31:17]
Ezekiel 35:9
a perpetual desolation
"desolate forever." This may be an exaggeration to emphasize the destruction.
Your cities will not be inhabited
This can be stated in active form. This may be an exaggeration for emphasis. Alternate translation: "People will not live in your cities"
but you will know
Here "you" is plural. God is speaking to the people of Mount Seir, rather than to a single mountain.
Ezekiel 35:10
General Information:
This continues the message that Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir. The message is for all the people of Edom.
You have said
The word "You" refers to the mountain of Seir. Ezekiel is to speak to the mountain as if it can hear him. The message is for the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "Your people said"
these two lands
"the lands of Israel and Judah"
will become mine
The word "mine" can be stated in plural form. Alternate translation: "will become ours"
we
The word "we" refers to the people of Edom.
even when Yahweh was present with them
It is implied that Yahweh was protecting Israel and Judah. Alternate translation: "but Yahweh was there protecting Israel and Judah"
Ezekiel 35:11
I will do according to your anger and according to your jealousy
Possible meanings are 1) "I will punish you because of your anger and jealousy" or 2) "just as you acted against the people of Israel with anger and jealousy, I will act against you with anger and jealousy."
Ezekiel 35:12
General Information:
This continues the message that Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir. The message is for all the people of Edom.
against the mountains of Israel
Here "mountains" represents the whole land of Israel.
They have been destroyed
This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They are in ruins"
they have been given over to us to devour
The people of Mount Seir taking the land of Israel and using it for themselves is spoken of as if they were wild animals that would devour the mountains of Israel. Alternate translation: "they are here for us to devour"
Ezekiel 35:14
General Information:
This continues the message that Ezekiel is to speak to Mount Seir. The message is for all the people of Edom.
The Lord Yahweh says this
This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "This is what I, the Lord Yahweh, say"
I will make you a desolation
Here "you" refers to Mount Seir, but the message is for the people of Edom. The abstract noun "desolation" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Because of what your people did I will make you desolate"
the entire earth rejoices
Here "earth" represents the people of the earth. The word "entire" is a generalization that refers only to people near Mount Seir. Alternate translation: "people who know that I have destroyed you rejoice"
Ezekiel 35:15
As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the people of Israel because of its desolation
This speaks of the land that Yahweh gave to the Israelites as their inheritance. Alternate translation: "As you rejoiced when I made the land of the Israelites desolate"
I will do the same to you
Possible meanings are 1) I will make your land desolate" or 2) "I will rejoice when your land is desolate" or 3) "I will make other people rejoice because of your desolation."
Then they will know
The word "they" possibly refers to 1) "the people of the earth" or 2) "the people of Israel and Judah."

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36 [1]"Now you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, 'Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of Yahweh.[2]The Lord Yahweh says this: The enemy has said about you, "Aha!" and "The ancient high places have become our possession."'[3]Therefore prophesy and say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Because of your desolation and because of the attacks that came on you from all sides, you have become a possession of the other nations; you have been the subject of slanderous lips and tongues, and of people's stories.
[4]Therefore, mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Lord Yahweh: The Lord Yahweh says this to the mountains and the high hills, to the streambeds and valleys, to the uninhabited desolations and the abandoned cities that have become

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plunder and a subject of mocking for the other nations that surround them—[5]therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: I have certainly spoken in the fire of my zeal against the other nations, against Edom and all who took my land for themselves as a possession, against all those who had both joy in their heart and contempt in their spirit, as they seized my land that they might claim its pasturelands for themselves.'[6]Therefore, prophesy to the land of Israel and say to the mountains and to the high hills, to the streambeds and to the valleys, 'the Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! In my zeal and in my anger I am declaring this because you have borne the insults of nations.
[7]Therefore, the Lord Yahweh says this: I myself will lift up my hand to swear that the nations that surround you will certainly carry their own shame.

[8]But you, mountains of Israel, you will grow branches and bear fruit for my people Israel, since they will soon come back to you.[9]For behold, I am for you, and I treat you with favor; you will be plowed and sown with seed.
[10]So I will multiply upon you the number of your people, even the whole house of Israel. The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.[11]I will multiply men and animals on you mountains so that they will multiply and be fruitful. Then I will cause you to be inhabited as you previously were, and I will do you more good than in the past, for you will know that I am Yahweh.[12]I will bring men, my people Israel, to walk on you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance, and you will no longer cause their children to die.
[13]The Lord Yahweh says this: Because they are saying to you, "You devour men, bereaving your nation of children,"[14]therefore you will not consume people any longer, and you will no longer make your nation mourn their deaths. This is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[15]Nor will I allow you to hear the insults of the nations any longer; you will no longer have to suffer the scorn of the peoples or cause your nation to fall—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'"

[16]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[17]"Son of man, when the house of Israel inhabited their land, they defiled it with their ways and their deeds. Their ways were like the uncleanness of the impurity before me.[18]So I poured out my fury against them for the blood that they poured out on the land and for their pollution of it by their idols.
[19]I scattered them among the nations; they were dispersed through the lands. I judged them according to their ways and their deeds.[20]Then they went to the nations, and wherever they went, they profaned my holy name when people said of them, 'Are these really the people of Yahweh? For they have been thrown out of his land.'[21]But I had compassion for my holy name that the house of Israel had defiled among the nations, when they went there.

[22]Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: I am not doing this for your sake, house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations everywhere you have gone.[23]For I will make my great name holy, which you have profaned among the nations—in the midst of the nations, you profaned it. Then the nations will know that I am Yahweh—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—when you see that I am holy.
[24]I will take you from the nations and gather you from every land, and I will bring you to your land.[25]Then I will sprinkle pure water on you so you will be clean; you will be purified from all of your uncleanness, and I will purify you from all of your idols.
[26]I will give you a new heart and a new spirit in your innermost parts, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh. For I will give you a heart of flesh.[27]I will set my Spirit in you and enable you to walk in my statutes and keep my decrees, so you will do them.[28]Then you will inhabit the land that I gave to your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God.
[29]For I will save you from all of your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and multiply it. I will no longer put famine upon you.[30]I will multiply the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field so that you will no longer bear the shame of famine among the nations.[31]Then you will think of your wicked ways and your deeds that were not good, and you will show loathing on your faces because of your own iniquities and your disgusting practicies.

[32]I am not doing this for your sake—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—let this be known to you. So be ashamed and disgraced because of your ways, house of Israel.[33]The Lord Yahweh says this: On the day that I purify you from all your iniquity, I will cause you to inhabit the cities and to rebuild the ruined places.[34]For you will plow the ruined land until it is no longer a ruin before the eyes of all who pass by.
[35]Then they will say, "This land was desolate, but it has become like the garden of Eden; the desolate cities and the uninhabited ruins that were torn down are now fortified and inhabited."[36]Then the other nations around you will know that I am Yahweh, that I built up the ruins and replanted the deserted places. I am Yahweh. I have declared it and I will do it.

[37]The Lord Yahweh says this: Again I will be asked by the house of Israel to do this for them, to increase them like a flock of people.[38]Like the flock is set apart for sacrifices, like the flock in Jerusalem at her appointed feasts, so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people and they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

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Ezekiel 36 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel restored

Israel is promised to be restored by Yahweh. Because of his honor, God will bring Israel back to their land. (See: promise and restore)

New hearts

God will forgive Israel's sin and give them the desire to obey him. This is expressed by the metonym "heart." (See: forgive and sin)

Links:

Ezekiel 36:1 Notes

Ezekiel 36:1

General Information:

Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak a prophecy. Ezekiel is to speak to the mountains of Israel, but the message is for all of the people of Israel.

son of man

"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"

prophesy to the mountains of Israel

God wants Ezekiel to speak to the mountains as if they were people. The message is for the people of Israel.

Ezekiel 36:2

Aha

This is an expression of joy. It can be translated as "I am very happy" or "This is great."

The ancient high places

"The very old mountains." This refers to the high mountains of Israel.

have become our possession

"now belong to us"

Ezekiel 36:3

Because of your desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be stated as "desolate." Alternate translation: "Because you, mountains of Israel, have become desolate"

because of the attacks that came on you from all sides

"because you were attacked from every direction" or "because your enemies attacked you from every direction"

you have been the subject of slanderous lips and tongues, and of people's stories

Here, "lips" and "tongues" represent people speaking. Alternate translation: "people are saying bad things about you, and the nations are telling bad stories about you"

Ezekiel 36:4

General Information:

This continues the message that Yahweh tells Ezekiel to speak to the mountains of Israel. The message is for all of the people of Israel. It may be helpful to use a verse bridge here, as the UDB does, to arrange the text in a more logical order.

listen to the word of the Lord Yahweh

"listen to the message of the Lord Yahweh"

the uninhabited desolations

The abstract noun "desolations" can be stated as "desolate cities." Alternate translation: "the desolate cities which have no people living in them"

the abandoned cities

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cities that people have left behind"

that have become plunder

"that enemies have stolen from"

Ezekiel 36:5

in the fire of my zeal

This speaks of Yahweh's zeal as if it were a fire. Yahweh loves Israel very much, so he becomes jealous and angry when other nations mock it. Alternate translation: "because of my intense jealousy" or "because of my very strong anger"

against Edom and all

"and against all of Edom"

had both joy in their heart and contempt in their spirit, as they seized my land

Here "heart" and "spirit" represent a person's inner being. The ideas of having joy and disdain can be expressed with the verbs "rejoiced" and "despised." Alternate translation: "who despised the people of Israel and rejoiced while they took my land"

Ezekiel 36:6

Behold!

The word "Behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed!"

In my zeal and in my anger

The words "zeal" and "anger" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize the intensity of his anger. Alternate translation: "Because I am extremely angry"

you have borne the insults of nations

"other nations have insulted you" or "other nations have mocked you"

Ezekiel 36:7

General Information:

This continues Yahweh's message to the mountains of Israel. The message is intended for the people of Israel.

I myself will lift up my hand to swear

Here "lift up my hand" is a symbolic action that shows he will truly do what he has sworn to do. Alternate translation: "I solemnly swear"

that the nations that surround you will certainly carry their own shame

The people experiencing shame are spoken of as if they will carry their shame. Alternate translation: "that people will

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certainly mock the nations that surround you"
surround you
The word "you" refers to the mountains of Israel.
Ezekiel 36:8
General Information:
This continues Yahweh's message to the mountains of Israel. The message is intended for the people of Israel.
you will grow branches and bear fruit
Here "you" refers to the mountain of Israel which here represents the trees on the mountain that will grow fruit. Alternate translation: "your trees will grow branches and bear fruit"
Ezekiel 36:9
behold, I
"pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: I"
I am for you
"I want to do good things to you." The word "you" refers to the mountains of Israel.
I treat you with favor
"I will be kind to you"
you will be plowed and sown with seed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my people, Israel, will plow your ground and sow it with seed"
Ezekiel 36:10
General Information:
This continues Yahweh's message to the mountains of Israel. The message is intended for the people of Israel.
So I will multiply upon you
Yahweh is speaking to the mountains. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "So, mountains of Israel, I will multiply upon you"
even the whole house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "all of the people of Israel"
The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then people will live in the cities and will rebuild the ruins"
Ezekiel 36:11
they will multiply and be fruitful
Here "be fruitful" is an idiom that means to have many children and descendants. Alternate translation: "they will become very many people and have very many children"
you to be inhabited as you previously were
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people to live on you mountains as they did before"
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 36:12
They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance
The people living in the mountains and land of Israel permanently is spoke of as if the people would inherit them. Alternate translation: "They will possess you permanently"
you will no longer cause their children to die
It is implied that in the past children died because there was not enough food in the land. Now the land would produce enough food.
Ezekiel 36:13
General Information:
This continues Yahweh's message to the mountains of Israel. The message is meant for the people of Israel.
they are saying to you
"other nations are saying to you mountains"
You devour men
Not enough food growing in Israel so that people die is spoken of as if the mountains of Israel were devouring the people. Alternate translation: "You cause many people to die"
bereaving your nation of children
"you cause your people's children to die"
Ezekiel 36:14
you will not consume people any longer
Not enough food growing in Israel so that people die is spoken of as if the mountains of Israel were consuming the people. Alternate translation: "you will no longer cause the people to die"
This is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 36:15
Nor will I allow you to hear the insults of the nations any longer
This speaks of the mountains as if they were able to hear when people insult them. Alternate translation: "I will no longer allow the other nations to insult you"
you will no longer have to suffer the scorn of the peoples
Experiencing shame is spoken of as if the mountains could bear shame. Alternate translation: "the peoples will no longer cause you to feel ashamed"
Ezekiel 36:16
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 36:17
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
with their ways and their deeds
"by the way they lived and the things they did"
Their ways were like the uncleanness of the impurity before me
The words "the impurity" are a euphemism for the unclean rags a woman uses at the time of the month when she bleeds from her womb. This simile emphasizes how disgusting the people's behavior was to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "Their ways were as disgusting to me as the unclean menstruation of a woman"

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Ezekiel 36:18
I poured out my fury against them
Yahweh punishing people because he is angry is spoken of as if his fury were a liquid that he poured out. Alternate translation: "I did things to them that showed how angry I was"
for the blood that they poured out on the land
This is an idiom that refers to killing someone. Alternate translation: "because they made the blood of many people spill onto the land" or "because they murdered many people"
for their pollution of it by their idols
The people worshiping idols is spoken of as if the idols made the land physically dirty. Alternate translation: "because they defiled the land with their idols"
Ezekiel 36:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel about Israel.
I scattered them among the nations; they were dispersed through the lands
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 12:15]
they were dispersed through the lands
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I dispersed them through the lands"
their ways and their deeds
Here "ways" and "deeds" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "the things that they have done"
Ezekiel 36:20
they profaned my holy name
Here "name" represents Yahweh and his reputation. Alternate translation: "they mocked me"
when people
"because other people said"
Are these really the people of Yahweh?
The people use a question to express their surprise at what they saw. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe these are really the people of Yahweh!"
For they have been thrown out of his land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh has forced them out of his land"
his land
This refers to the land of Israel.
Ezekiel 36:21
But I had compassion for my holy name that the house of Israel had defiled among the nations, when they went there
Here "name" represents Yahweh and his reputation. Alternate translation: "When the house of Israel went among the nations, they caused me disgrace, but I wanted people to know that I am holy"
I had compassion for my holy name
"I cared about my holy name"
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
Ezekiel 36:22
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel, and he gives him a message to Israel.
the house of Israel
Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
for your sake
"because of you" or "in order to help you"
but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations everywhere you have gone
Here "name" represents Yahweh and his reputation. Alternate translation: "but so that the people of the nations, who mock me because of you, will know that I am holy"
you have profaned among the nations everywhere you have gone
"you have caused the people of the nations to mock everywhere you have gone"
Ezekiel 36:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.
Ezekiel 36:25
I will sprinkle pure water on you so you will be clean; you will be purified from all of your uncleanness, and I will purify you from all of your idols
Yahweh forgiving the people and causing them to no longer sin is spoken of as if he would cleanse them with water. The phrase "you will be purified" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will forgive you and cause you not to sin as if I were sprinkling pure water on you so you will be clean; I will purify you from all of your uncleanness, and I will purify you from all of your idols"
all of your uncleanness
"all the things that made you unclean"
Ezekiel 36:26
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.
I will give you a new heart and a new spirit in your innermost parts, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh. For I will give you a heart of flesh
Yahweh causing the people to no longer be stubborn but to love and serve Yahweh is spoken of as if he will take away their old heart and give them a new heart and spirit.
a new heart and a new spirit
Here "heart" and "spirit" represent a person's thoughts, attitudes, and emotions. See how you translated "heart" and "spirit" in Ezekiel 11:19.
in your innermost parts
"within you" or "inside of you"
the heart of stone
This speaks of people being stubborn as if their hearts were made of stone. See how you translated "stone heart" in Ezekiel 11:19. Alternate translation: "the heart that is as hard as stone"
your flesh
"your body"
a heart of flesh
People being willing to serve Yahweh is spoken of as if their hearts were soft like flesh. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 11:19. Alternate translation: "a heart that is soft like flesh"
Ezekiel 36:27
enable you to walk in my statutes
A person acting or behaving in a certain way is spoken of is

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if it were a person walking. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 11:20]

Ezekiel 36:29

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.

For I will save you from all of your uncleanness

Something that is unacceptable to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "For I will save you from everything that made me reject you"

I will summon the grain

"I will call the grain to come." This phrase presents the grain as a servant of Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will cause there to be grain in the land of Israel"

I will no longer put famine upon you

Yahweh causing a famine in the land is spoken of as if he put famine on the people. Alternate translation: "I will no longer cause there to be a famine" or "I will no longer cause there to be no food"

Ezekiel 36:30

you will no longer bear the shame of famine among the nations

Experiencing shame is spoken of as if the people had to carry the shame. Alternate translation: "the nations will no longer make you feel ashamed because you suffer from famine"

Ezekiel 36:32

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.

let this be known to you

"know this" or "you can be sure of this." Yahweh says this to emphasize that it is not because the people are good that he will restore them. This phrase can be moved to the beginning of the verse.

So be ashamed and disgraced

The words "ashamed" and "disgraced" share similar meanings. Together they emphasize the intensity of the shame. Alternate translation: "So be very ashamed"

because of your ways

"because of what you do"

house of Israel

Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "people of Israel"

Ezekiel 36:34

you will plow the ruined land

"you will farm the ruined land"

before the eyes of all who pass by

The eyes represent sight. Alternate translation: "to those who pass by and see it"

Ezekiel 36:35

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Israel.

Then they

The word "they" refers to the people who walk through the land of Israel.

the uninhabited ruins

"the ruins that no one lived in"

that were torn down

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "that enemies had torn down" or 2) Alternate translation: "that people could not get into"

are now fortified and inhabited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people have now rebuilt them and have started living there again"

Ezekiel 36:36

that I built up the ruins

"and that I built up the cities that enemies had torn down"

replanted the deserted places

"planted crops in the desolate land"

Ezekiel 36:37

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.

I will be asked by the house of Israel

Here "house" represents people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel will ask me"

to increase them like a flock of people

Yahweh causing the people to multiply greatly and quickly is spoken of as if they were a flock of sheep. Sheep multiply very quickly. Alternate translation: "to make them multiply like a flock of sheep" or "to make the people multiply quickly like sheep"

Ezekiel 36:38

Like the flock is set apart for sacrifices, like the flock in Jerusalem at her appointed feasts

The phrase "is set apart" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Like the great number of sheep that the people set apart for sacrifices or bring to Jerusalem for the appointed feasts"

so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people

This speaks of the people of Israel as if they were a flock of sheep. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so will the great number of people be who will be living in the cities that are now ruined but the people will rebuild"

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37 [1]The hand of Yahweh was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of Yahweh and set me down in the midst of a valley; it was full of bones.[2]Then he made me pass through them round and round. Behold! A great many of them were in the valley. Behold! They were very dry.[3]He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live again?" So I said, "Lord Yahweh, you alone know."

[4]Then he said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones. Listen to the word of Yahweh.[5]The Lord Yahweh says this to these bones: Behold! I am about to put breath into you, and you will live.[6]I will place sinews over you and bring flesh onto you. I will cover you with skin and put breath within you so you will live. Then you will know that I am Yahweh.'"

[7]So I prophesied as I was commanded; as I prophesied, behold, a sound came, that of shaking. Then the bones drew

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together—bone against bone.[8]I looked and, behold, sinews were now on them, and flesh grew up and skin covered them. But there was still no breath in them.
[9]Then Yahweh said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Breath, come from the four winds, and breathe on these who have been killed, so they may live.'"[10]So I prophesied as I was commanded; the breath came into them and they lived. Then they stood on their feet, a very great army.

[11]Then Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the entire house of Israel. Behold! They are saying, 'Our bones have dried up, and our hope is gone. We have been cut off.'[12]Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I will open your graves and lift you out from them, my people. I will bring you back to the land of Israel.
[13]Then you will know that I am Yahweh, when I open your graves and bring you out from them, my people.[14]I will place my Spirit within you so you will live, and I will cause you to rest in your land when you know that I am Yahweh. I declare and will do it—this is Yahweh's declaration.'"

[15]Then the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[16]"So now you, son of man, take one stick for yourself and write on it, 'For Judah and for the people of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the branch of Ephraim, and for all the people of Israel, their companions.'[17]Bring both of them together into one stick, so that they become one in your hand.
[18]When your people speak to you and say, 'Will you not tell us what these things of yours mean?'[19]then say to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am taking the branch of Joseph that is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel his companions and joining it to the branch of Judah, so that they will make one branch, and they will become one in my hand.'[20]Hold in your hand the branches that you wrote on before their eyes.

[21]Declare to them, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am about to take the people of Israel from among the nations where they went. I will gather them from the surrounding lands and I will bring them to their land.[22]I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and there will be one king as king over all of them, and they will no longer be two nations. They will no longer be divided into two kingdoms.[23]Then they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, their disgusting things, or any of their other sins. For I will save them from all of their faithless actions with which they have sinned, and I will purify them, so they will be my people and I will be their God.[1]

[24]David my servant will be king over them. So there will be one shepherd over them all, and they will walk according to my decrees and they will keep my statutes and obey them.[25]They will live in the land that I have given to my servant Jacob, where your fathers had stayed. They will live in it forever—they, their children, and their grandchildren, for David my servant will be their chief forever.
[26]I will establish a covenant of peace with them. It will be an everlasting covenant with them. I will establish them and multiply them and set my holy place in their midst forever.[27]My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.[28]Then the nations will know that I am Yahweh who sets Israel apart, when my holy place is among them forever.'"

[1]Some ancient translations of the Hebrew copies and most modern translations read in this way: from all of their faithless actions. However, the Hebrew text, as it is, is difficult to translate. It reads: from their dwelling places, which many think makes little sense in this context.

Ezekiel 37 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel restored

God will unite the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah and the Messiah will rule over them. This will come in a prophesied day of restoration. (See: christ and restore)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The people are discouraged and compare themselves to skeletons, but God will cause them to become a nation again.

Links:

Ezekiel 37:1 Notes

Ezekiel 37:1

General Information:

Ezekiel is speaking.

The hand of Yahweh was upon me

The word "hand" is often used to refer to someone's power or action. A person with his hand on another person has power over that other person. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 1:3]

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in the midst
"in the middle"
Ezekiel 37:2
round and round
"in every direction"
Behold!
The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
Ezekiel 37:3
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
Ezekiel 37:4
General Information:
Yahweh speaks to Ezekiel.
Listen to the word of Yahweh
"Listen to Yahweh's message"
Ezekiel 37:5
Behold
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
to put breath into you
The noun "breath" can be stated as the verb "breathe." Alternate translation: "I will cause you to breathe"
breath
The Hebrew word translated as "breath" in these verses is translated as "spirit" by a few modern versions. It is also translated as "wind" in Ezekiel 37:9.
Ezekiel 37:6
sinews
the tissue that connects muscles to bones
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 37:7
General Information:
Ezekiel is speaking.
as I was commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh had commanded me to speak"
behold
The word "behold" here shows that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.
Ezekiel 37:8
sinews
This refers to the parts of human bodies that are like hard strings and hold the bones and muscles together. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 37:6.
But there was still no breath in them
The noun "breath" can be stated as the verb "breathing." Alternate translation: "But they were not breathing" or "But they were not alive"
Ezekiel 37:9
the breath
Possible meanings are: 1) "breath" or 2) "spirit" or 3) "wind."
from the four winds
"from the four directions that the wind can blow in." This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "from every direction"
these who have been killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "these people that enemies and disasters have killed"
Ezekiel 37:10
as I was commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Yahweh had commanded me"
Ezekiel 37:11
the entire house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Behold!
The word "Behold" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed!"
We have been cut off
The people being destroyed and removed from their land is spoken of as if they had been cut off like a person would cut off a branch or piece of cloth. Alternate translation: "Our nation is destroyed"
Ezekiel 37:12
I will open your graves and lift you out from them
Yahweh restoring the people and bringing them back to their land is spoken of as if he will bring them back to life again.
Ezekiel 37:13
General Information:
These are Yahweh's words to the house of Israel.
Ezekiel 37:14
to rest in your land
"to live peacefully in your own land"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 37:15
the word of Yahweh came
This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]
Ezekiel 37:16
For Judah
Here "For" means "representing." Alternate translation: "Representing Judah" or "Belonging to Judah"
Judah
The tribe of Judah lived in the southern kingdom of Israel which was called Judah. Here the name is used to refer to the whole southern kingdom.
the people of Israel, his companions
This refers to the Israelites who lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. Alternate translation: "all the tribes of Judah" or "the tribes of Israel who are part of the kingdom of Judah"

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For Joseph, the branch of Ephraim
Joseph was Ephraim's father. The tribe of Ephraim lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. Here the names are used to represent the whole northern kingdom.
all the people of Israel, their companions
This refers to the Israelites who lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "all the tribes of Israel" or "the Israelites who were part of the kingdom of Israel"
Ezekiel 37:17
into one stick
"so that they become one stick"
Ezekiel 37:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
what these things of yours mean
"what your sticks mean" or "why you have these sticks"
Ezekiel 37:19
Behold!
This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"
the branch of Joseph
"the stick of Joseph." This represents the kingdom of Israel.
that is in the hand of Ephraim
The word "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "that is in the power of Ephraim" or "that the tribe of Ephraim rules over"
the tribes of Israel his companions
"the other tribes of Israel who are his companions" or "the other tribes of Israel who are part of that kingdom"
the branch of Judah
"the stick of Judah." This represents the kingdom of Judah.
Ezekiel 37:20
before their eyes
Here the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: "while they watched you"
Ezekiel 37:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
Behold!
"Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"
Ezekiel 37:23
they will be my people and I will be their God
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 11:20.
Ezekiel 37:24
General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking to Ezekiel.
David my servant
Yahweh said "David" to refer to a descendant of David. See how you translated "my servant David" in [Ezekiel 34:23]
one shepherd over them
This speaks of a king ruling a people as if he were a shepherd leading sheep. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 34:23]
over them
"over the people of Israel"
will walk according to my decrees
This speaks of acting or behaving in a certain way as if it were a person walking. Alternate translation: "will live as I have commanded"
Ezekiel 37:25
had stayed
"had lived"
Ezekiel 37:26
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking about the people of Israel.
I will establish
"I will set up" or "I will create"
a covenant of peace
"a covenant that brings peace." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 34:25.
I will establish them
It was implied that Yahweh would establish them in the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "I will set them in the land of Israel" or "I will cause them to live securely in the land of Israel"
multiply them
"cause their people to increase in number"
my holy place
"my holy sanctuary" or "my holy temple"
in their midst
"among them"
Ezekiel 37:27
My dwelling place
"The place where I live"
I will be their God, and they will be my people
See how you translated a similar phrase in Ezekiel 11:20.

38 [1]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[2]"Son of man, set your face toward Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; and prophesy against him.[3]Say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.
[4]So I will turn you around and set hooks in your jaw; I will send you out with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all of them dressed in full armor, a great company with large shields and small shields, all of them holding swords![5]Persia, Cush, and Libya are with them, all of them with shields and helmets![6]Gomer and all her troops, and Beth Togarmah, from the far parts of the north, and all its troops! Many peoples are with you!

[7]Get ready! Yes, prepare yourself and your troops assembled with you, and be their commander.[8]You will be called after many days, and after some years you will go to a land that has recovered from the sword and that has been gathered from many peoples, gathered back to the mountains of Israel that had been a continuous ruin. But the land's people will be brought out of the peoples, and they will live in safety, all of them![9]So you will go up as a storm goes; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, all the many soldiers with you.

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[10]The Lord Yahweh says this: It will happen on that day that plans will form in your heart, and you will devise wicked schemes.'[11]Then you will say, 'I will go up to the open land; I will go to the quiet people living in safety, all of them living where there are no walls or bars, and where there are no city gates.[12]I will capture booty and steal plunder, in order to bring my hand against the ruins that are newly inhabited, and against the people gathered from the nations, people who are gaining livestock and property, and who are living at the center of the earth.'
[13]Sheba and Dedan, and the traders of Tarshish along with all its young warriors will say to you, 'Have you come to take booty? Have you assembled your company to take away plunder, to carry off silver and gold, to take their livestock and property and to haul away much plunder?'

[14]Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: On that day, when my people Israel are living securely, will you not learn about them?[15]You will come from your place far away in the north with a great army, all of them riding on horses, a great company, a large army.[16]You will attack my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, so the nations might know me when I show myself through you, Gog, to be holy before their eyes.

[17]The Lord Yahweh says this: Are you not the one of whom I spoke in former days by the hand of my servants, the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in their own time for years that I would bring you against them?[18]So it will come to be in that day when Gog attacks the land of Israel—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—my wrath will mount up in my anger.
[19]In my zeal and in the fire of my anger, I declare that on that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.
[20]They will shake before me—the fish of the sea and the birds of the skies, the beasts of the fields, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth, and every person who is on the surface of the land. The mountains will be thrown down and the cliffs will fall, until every wall falls to the earth.
[21]I will summon a sword against him on all my mountains—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—each man's sword will be against his brother.[22]With plague and blood I will enter into judgment with him, and I will rain on him and on his troops—and on the many nations with him—a torrential downpour and hailstones, fire and sulfur.[23]For I will show my greatness and my holiness and I will make myself known in the eyes of the many nations, and they will know that I am Yahweh.'"

Ezekiel 38 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section prophesying against Gog. Later Gog will try to conquer Israel.

Links:

Ezekiel 38:1 Notes

Ezekiel 38:1

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that is used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:16]

Ezekiel 38:2

set your face toward Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince ... Tubal

This is a command to stare at Gog and Magog as a symbol of punishing the people there. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 4:3]

set your face

Here "face" is a metonym for attention or gaze, and "set your face" represents staring. Alternate translation: "stare"

Gog, the land of Magog

It is implied that Magog is the land over which Gog rules. Alternate translation: "Gog who rules over the land of Magog"

Gog

This is the name of a leader or king who ruled in the land of Magog.

Magog

This is the name of an ancient nation that was probably located in the land that is now Turkey. Magog might be the ancient nation of Lydia.

the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal

This expression occurs twice in these verses. Some modern versions, however, interpret the Hebrew expression as "the chief of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." This is another title for Gog. Alternate translation: "who is the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal"

Meshech ... Tubal

See how you translated these names in Ezekiel 32:26.

Ezekiel 38:3

Behold!

This emphasizes the importance of the statement that follows. It can be translated as "Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"

I am against you

This idiom means "I am your enemy."

Ezekiel 38:4

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General Information:
These verses list the various nations who will join Gog's army.
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Gog.
set hooks in your jaw
Here "hooks in your jaw" represents God's control over Gog. People put hooks in the mouths of animals so that they could lead the animals wherever they wanted.
in full armor ... holding swords
These phrases describe an army that is ready for battle.
Ezekiel 38:5
with shields and helmets
This phrase describes an army that is ready for battle.
Ezekiel 38:6
Gomer
a nation that lived north of the Black Sea
Beth Togarmah
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:14.
Ezekiel 38:7
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Gog.
your troops assembled with you
"all of your troops that you have gathered to yourself" or "all of your army that you have brought together for yourself"
Ezekiel 38:8
You will be called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will call you to come for war"
recovered from the sword
Here the "sword" represents war. Alternate translation: "recovered from war"
that has been gathered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I have gathered together"
from many peoples
"from many nations"
a continuous ruin
"destroyed for a long time"
the land's people will be brought out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bring the Israelites out"
Ezekiel 38:9
you will go up as a storm goes
This simile means Gog will bring destruction like a large storm does.
a cloud covering the land
This simile means the army will be so large that it will cover the entire land.
Ezekiel 38:10
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Gog.
on that day that
"at that time"
plans will form in your heart ... you will devise wicked schemes
These phrases mean the same thing and can be combined into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "you will plan to do something very evil"
plans will form in your heart
Here "heart" refers to his thinking. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will think of plans"
Ezekiel 38:11
I will
Gog will not do these things alone. His army will do most of them. Alternate translation: "My army and I will"
the open land
The following phrases explain that this refers to a land without walls or bars or gates.
Ezekiel 38:12
capture booty and steal plunder
These phrases mean the same thing and can be combined into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "take away all their valuable possessions"
bring my hand
Here "hand" refers to Gog's military power.
against the ruins
Here "ruins" refers to the people who live in the destroyed cities. Alternate translation: "against the people who live in the ruins"
at the center of the earth
"in the middle of the most important countries in the world"
Ezekiel 38:13
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues speaking to Gog.
Sheba
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 27:22.
Dedan
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 25:13.
Have you come to take booty? Have you assembled your company ... to haul away much plunder?
These two questions are used to accuse Gog of attacking Israel without cause. These can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "It is not right for you to assemble your army to plunder, to carry off silver and gold, to take their livestock and property, and to haul away much plunder!"
to take their livestock and property ... to haul away much plunder
These phrases have similar meaning and can be combined into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "to take away their livestock and all their valuable possessions"
Ezekiel 38:14
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh tells Ezekiel what he is to say to Gog.
son of man
"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"
On that day ... learn about them?
Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that Gog will indeed hear about the people living in Israel. Alternate translation: "On that day, when my people Israel are living securely, you will hear about them."
Ezekiel 38:16
like a cloud that covers the land

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This simile means the army will be so large that it will cover the entire land. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Ezekiel 38:9]

In the latter days

This refers to the distant future before the world ends. Alternate translation: "In the last days" or "At the end of time" or "In the distant future"

In the latter days ... to be holy before their eyes

All the nations will understand that Yahweh is holy when they see what he does to Gog.

might know me

"might know who I am"

Ezekiel 38:17

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Ezekiel what he is to say to Gog.

Are you not the one ... bring you against them?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize that he was the one who brought Gog to the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "You are the one ... bring you against them."

of whom I spoke

"that I spoke about"

in former days

"in the past" or "a long time ago"

by the hand of my servants

Here "hand" refers to the fact that these prophets wrote down Yahweh's message. Alternate translation: "by means of my servants" or "through my servants"

against them

"against the people of Israel"

Ezekiel 38:18

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

my wrath will mount up in my anger

Here "mount up" means "rise up" and expresses that his wrath will increase. The words "wrath" and "anger" mean the same thing and emphasize how intense his anger will be. Alternate translation: "my anger will greatly increase" or "I will be very angry with you"

Ezekiel 38:19

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message about Gog.

In my zeal

Here "zeal" refers to Yahweh's desire to defend his honor against Gog's attacks.

in the fire of my anger

The intensity of Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were as hot as fire. Alternate translation: "because my anger was intense"

Ezekiel 38:20

The mountains will be thrown down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will make mountains fall down"

Ezekiel 38:21

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message about Gog. He speaks of the people of Gog as if they were one man.

I will summon a sword against him

The word "sword" here is a metonym for soldiers who use swords to kill people. Alternate translation: "I will cause soldiers to attack him"

each man's sword will be against his brother

Here "sword" is a metonym for the person who uses the sword to fight. Alternate translation: "all of his soldiers will fight each other"

his brother

"his fellow soldier"

Ezekiel 38:22

With plague and blood I will enter into judgment with him

Here "blood" is a metonym for injury and death. Alternate translation: "I will judge him by causing him to be sick and by sending soldiers to kill him"

I will rain on him and on his troops—and on the many nations with him —a torrential downpour and hailstones, fire and sulfur

It may be helpful to change the order of this sentence. Alternate translation: "I will rain down overflowing rain and hailstones, fire, and burning sulfur upon him and his troops—and on the many nations with him"

hailstones

ice that falls out of the sky

Ezekiel 38:23

show my greatness and my holiness

The abstract nouns "greatness" and "holiness" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "show that I am great and holy"

I will make myself known in the eyes of the many nations

Here "eyes" refers to sight, which is a metonym for understanding. Alternate translation: "I will cause many nations to understand who I am"

know that I am Yahweh

When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]

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39 [1]"Now you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Behold! I am against you, Gog, chief of Meshech and Tubal.[2]I will turn you and lead you on; I will bring you up from the far north and bring you to the mountains of Israel.[3]Then I will knock your bow out of your left hand and make the arrows fall from your right hand. [4]You will fall on the mountains of Israel—you and all your troops and the soldiers who are with you. I will give you to the birds of prey and the wild beasts of the fields for food.[5]You will fall on the open field, for I myself declare it—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[6]Then I will send out fire on Magog and on those living in safety on the coasts, and they will know that I am Yahweh.

[7]For I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel, and I will no longer allow my holy name to be profaned; the nations will know that I am Yahweh, the Holy One in Israel.[8]Behold! The day is coming, and it will take place—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

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[9]The ones living in the cities of Israel will go out and they will use weapons to kindle and make fires and burn them—small shields, large shields, bows, arrows, the clubs and spears; they will make fires with them for seven years.[10]They will not gather wood from the fields or cut down trees from the forests, since they will kindle fires with the weapons; they will take from those who wanted to take from them; they will plunder those who wanted to plunder them—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

[11]Then it will happen on that day that I will make a place there for Gog—a grave in Israel, a valley for those who journey to the east of the sea. It will block those who wish to cross over. There they will bury Gog with all his multitudes. They will call it the Valley of Hamon Gog.
[12]For seven months the house of Israel will bury them in order to purify the land.[13]For all the people of the land will bury them; it will be a day of renown for them when I am glorified—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[14]Then they will designate men to continually go through the land, to find those who were traveling through, but who died and their bodies remained on the surface of the land, so that they may bury them, in order to cleanse the land. At the end of the seventh month they will begin their search.[15]As these men pass through the land, when they see any human bone, they will put a marker by it, until gravediggers come and bury it in the Valley of Hamon Gog.[16]There will be a city there by the name of Hamonah. In this way they will purify the land.

[17]Now to you, son of man, the Lord Yahweh says this: Say to all the winged birds and all the wild beasts in the fields, 'Gather together and come. Gather from all around to the sacrifice that I myself am making for you, a large sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, so that you may consume flesh and drink blood.[18]You will consume the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the princes of the earth; they will be rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, they were all fattened in Bashan.
[19]Then you will eat fat to your satisfaction; you will drink blood until you become drunk; this will be the sacrifice that I will slaughter for you.[20]You will be satisfied at my table with horse, chariot, warrior, and every man of war—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.'

[21]I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations will see my judgment that I perform and my hand that I have set against them.[22]The house of Israel will know that I am Yahweh their God from that day onward.
[23]The nations will know that the house of Israel went into captivity because of their iniquity by which they betrayed me, so I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries so that all of them fell by the sword.[24]I did to them according to their uncleanness and their sins, when I hid my face from them.

[25]Therefore the Lord Yahweh says this: Now I will reverse the captivity of Jacob, and I will have compassion on all the house of Israel, when I act with zeal for my holy name.[26]Then they will bear their shame and all the treachery by which they betrayed me. They will forget all this when they rest in their land in safety, with no one to terrify them.[27]When I restore them from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies, I will show myself to be holy in the sight of many nations.
[28]Then they will know that I am Yahweh their God, for I sent them into captivity among the nations, but then I will gather them back to their land. I will not leave any of them among the nations.[29]I will no longer hide my face from them when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

Ezekiel 39 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter concludes the prophecy against Gog. God will destroy Gog and his army.

Links:

Ezekiel 39:1 Notes

Ezekiel 39:1
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh gives Ezekiel his message to Gog.
son of man
"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"
Behold!
This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"
I am against you
"I am your enemy"
chief of Meshech and Tubal
Some modern versions interpret the Hebrew expression as "prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal." This is another title for Gog. See how you translated these names in [Ezekiel 38:2]

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Ezekiel 39:2
I will turn you and lead you on
God speaks of leading Gog as if Gog was an animal.
bring you up
God speaks of bringing Gog "up" to Israel because it was located in the mountains.
Ezekiel 39:3
I will knock your bow out of your left hand and make the arrows fall from your right hand.
Knocking Gog's bow and arrows out of his hands is spoken of as if God is destroying Gog's military power.
Ezekiel 39:4
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Gog.
your troops and the soldiers
These refer to the same people. It can be stated as a single phrase. Alternate translation: "all your soldiers"
I will give you to the birds of prey and the wild beasts of the fields for food
The scavengers eating the corpses is spoken of as if Yahweh was giving food to them.
Ezekiel 39:5
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 39:6
I will send out fire on Magog
Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh will send literal fire down on Gog and his army or 2) "fire" is a metonym for the destruction that it causes.
Magog
This is the name of an ancient nation that probably lived in the land that is now Turkey. Magog might be the ancient nation of Lydia. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 38:2.
know that I am Yahweh
When Yahweh says that people will know that he is Yahweh, he is implying that they will know that he is the one true God who has supreme authority and power. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:7]
Ezekiel 39:7
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Gog.
I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel
Here the metonym "my holy name" refers to Yahweh's character. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will make my people, Israel, know that I am holy"
Ezekiel 39:8
Behold!
This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look!" or "Listen!" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you!"
is coming ... will take place
These two phrases have similar meaning and emphasize the fact that this will really happen. Alternate translation: "is surely going to happen"
Ezekiel 39:9
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to Gog.
to kindle and make fires
These two phrases mean the same thing. The Israelites will use the wood from the weapons as kindling for fires. Alternate translation: "to start fires"
small shields, large shields, bows, arrows, the clubs and spears
This list includes all the typical weapons of war of that day. It may represent weapons in general.
clubs
wooden sticks used as a weapon
Ezekiel 39:10
wanted to take ... wanted to plunder
Here "to take" and "to plunder" mean the same thing. Gog intended to take Israel's possessions, but Yahweh prevented him so that he was not able to do that.
will plunder ... wanted to plunder
Translate "plunder" as in Ezekiel 23:46.
Ezekiel 39:11
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh begins to tell Ezekiel what will happen to Gog.
it will happen on that day that
This signals an important event. If your language has a way for doing this, you could use it here.
to the east of the sea
A few modern versions interpret the Hebrew expression here as "to the east toward the sea."
It will block
Possible meanings are 1) "The grave will block" or 2) "The dead army will block."
There they
"There the house of Israel"
They will call it
"People will call it"
Valley of Hamon Gog
"Valley of the Great Army of Gog"
Ezekiel 39:12
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to tell Ezekiel what will happen to Gog.
seven months
"7 months."
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
will bury them in order to purify the land
In Jewish law, a dead body defiled anything it touched and made it "unclean." Burying these bodies is spoken of as cleansing or purifying the land.
bury them
"bury the soldiers of Gog's army"
Ezekiel 39:13
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 39:14
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to tell Ezekiel what will happen to Gog.

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through the land
"through the land of Israel"
those who were traveling through, but who died and their bodies remained on the surface of the land
This refers to the dead bodies of Gog's soldiers whom Yahweh killed as they entered the land.
so that they may bury them
"so that the designated men may bury the dead bodies"
to cleanse the land
In Jewish law, a dead body defiled anything it touched and made it "unclean." Burying these bodies is spoken of as cleansing or purifying the land.
seventh month
This "seventh" is the ordinal number for seven.
Ezekiel 39:15
any human bone
Bones would be all that remained of the corpses after a period of time.
they will put a marker by it, until gravediggers come and bury it
There are apparently two groups of men. The first will mark the location of corpses, and the second group will bury them.
Ezekiel 39:16
purify the land
In Jewish law, a dead body defiled anything it touched and made it "unclean." Burying these bodies is spoken of as cleansing or purifying the land.
Hamonah
This name means "Great Army."
Ezekiel 39:17
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh gives Ezekiel a message for the birds and the wild animals about what they will do to Gog.
son of man
"son of a human being" or "son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "mortal person" or "human"
to the sacrifice
"to the feast" or "to the slaughter." Yahweh means that he will give the birds and animals a very good meal and not that he is worshiping them.
Ezekiel 39:18
they will be rams, lambs, goats, and bulls
Yahweh is speaking with irony. Normally people sacrificed animals to God. Here, God is sacrificing people to animals. Alternate translation: "as if they were male sheep, lambs, goats, and bulls"
they were all fattened in Bashan
That can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they all became fat while grazing in Bashan"
Ezekiel 39:19
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel a message for the birds and the wild animals about what they will do to Gog.
to your satisfaction
The abstract noun "satisfaction" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "until you are satisfied"
Ezekiel 39:20
chariot
The metonym "chariot" refers to the men in the chariots. Alternate translation: "chariot driver"
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 39:21
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh gives Ezekiel a message about what will happen to Israel.
I will set my glory among the nations
Yahweh speaks of his glory as if he will place it in the middle of the nations where they can see it. Alternate translation: "I will make the nations see my glory"
my judgment that I perform and my hand that I have set against them
Both of these phrases refer to the punishment that Yahweh will inflict upon Israel and are repeated for emphasis. They can be combined into a single phrase. Alternate translation: "the way that I will judge them"
my hand
Here the metonym "hand" refers to Yahweh's power that he uses to bring punishment.
against them
"against Gog and his great army"
Ezekiel 39:22
The house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 39:23
Connecting Statement:
Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel a message about what will happen to Israel.
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
because of their iniquity by which they betrayed me
The abstract noun "iniquity" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because they sinned and betrayed me"
I hid my face from them
Here "face" refers to Yahweh's help and protection. Alternate translation: "I stopped protecting them and taking care of them"
gave them into the hand of their adversaries
Here the metonym "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "gave their enemies power over them"
all of them fell by the sword
Here falling represents being killed, and the sword represents battle. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 32:23. Alternate translation: "their enemies killed them all in battle"
Ezekiel 39:24
their uncleanness and their sins

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This speaks of the people's disgusting behavior as if they were physically unclean. Here "uncleanness" means basically the same as "sins." Alternate translation: "their disgusting behavior and their sins" or "their sins"

Ezekiel 39:25

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel a message about what will happen to Israel.

will reverse the captivity of Jacob

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and it may be understood as a metaphor for Yahweh making the people prosper in a general sense. See how similar words are translated in [Ezekiel 16:53]

Jacob

"the descendants of Jacob"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

act with zeal for my holy name

"make sure that they honor me"

Ezekiel 39:26

they will bear their shame and all the treachery

Experts do not agree on the meaning of this phrase. Possible meanings are 1) "they will regret their shame and all the treachery" or 2) "they will forget their shame and all the treachery."

the treachery

"the unfaithfulness"

Ezekiel 39:27

I will show myself to be holy in the sight of many nations

Here "sight" is a metonym for understanding. Alternate translation: "many nations will understand that I am holy because of what I did for the house of Israel"

Ezekiel 39:28

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues to give Ezekiel a message about what will happen to Israel.

I sent them into captivity ... I will gather them back to their land

At the time when Ezekiel wrote, Israel was still in captivity in Babylon.

Ezekiel 39:29

I will no longer hide my face from them

Here "no longer hide my face" is an idiom that means Yahweh will not continue to abandon Israel to exile in Babylon. Alternate translation: "I will no longer abandon them"

when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel

Here to give the Spirit abundantly is spoken of as to "pour out" the Spirit. Alternate translation: "when I generously give my Spirit to the house of Israel"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

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40 [1]In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity at the beginning of the year on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was captured—on that same day, the hand of Yahweh was upon me and he took me there.[2]In visions from God he brought me to the land of Israel. He brought me to rest on a very high mountain; to the south were what appeared to be buildings of a city.
[3]Then he brought me there. Behold, a man! His appearance was like the appearance of bronze. A linen cord and a measuring stick were in his hand, and he stood in the city gate.[4]The man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes and listen with your ears, and fix your mind on all that I am revealing to you, for you were brought here so I could reveal them to you. Report everything that you will see to the house of Israel."

[5]There was a wall surrounding the temple area. The length of the measuring stick in the man's hand was six long cubits. Each long cubit was a cubit and a handbreadth in length. So he measured the wall, and it was one measuring stick thick and one measuring stick high.[6]Then he went to the temple gate that faced east. He went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gate—one stick in depth.[1][7]The guard chambers were each one stick in length and one stick in width; there were five cubits between any two of the chambers, and the threshold of the temple gate by the temple portico was one stick deep.
[8]He measured the portico of the gate; it was one stick in length.[9]He measured the portico of the gate. It was one stick deep. The doorposts were two cubits in width. This was the portico of the gate facing the temple.[10]There were three guard chambers on either side of the east gate, and each of them had the same measurement, and the walls that separated them had the same measurement.
[11]Then the man measured the width of the gateway entrance—ten cubits; and he measured the length of the gateway entrance—thirteen cubits.[12]He measured the wall that was bordering the front of the chambers—one cubit high. The chambers measured six cubits on each side.[13]Then he measured the gateway from the roof of one chamber to that of the next chamber—twenty-five cubits, from the entrance of the first chamber to that of the second.
[14]Then he measured the wall that went between the guard chambers—sixty cubits in length; he measured as far as the gate's portico.[15]The entrance from the front of the gate to the other end of the gate's portico was fifty cubits.[16]There were closed windows toward the chambers and toward their pillars within the gates all around; and it was the same for the porches. There were windows all around the inside, and each jamb was decorated with palm trees.

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[17]Then the man brought me to the outer courtyard of the temple. Behold, there were rooms, and there was pavement in the courtyard, with thirty rooms next to the pavement.[18]The pavement went up to the side of the gates, and its width was the same as the gates' length. This was the lower pavement.[19]Then the man measured the distance from the front of the lower gate to the front of the inner gate; it was one hundred cubits on the east side, and the same on the north side.

[20]Then he measured the length and width of the gate that was at the north of the outer court.[21]There were three chambers on either side of that gate, and the gate and its portico measured the same as the main gate—fifty cubits in total length and twenty-five cubits in width.
[22]Its windows, portico, chambers, and its palm trees corresponded to the gate that faced east. Seven steps went up to it and to its portico.[23]There was a gate to the inner courtyard in front of the gate facing north, just as also there was a gate to the east; the man measured from one gate to the other gate—one hundred cubits in distance.

[24]Next the man brought me to the gate of the southern entrance, and its walls and portico measured the same as the other outer gates.[25]There were closed windows in the gateway and its portico just as at that gate. The south gate and its portico measured fifty cubits in length and twenty-five cubits in width.
[26]There were seven steps up to the gate and its portico, and there were carvings of palm trees on the walls on either side.
[27]There was a gate to the inner courtyard on the southern side, and the man measured from that gate to the gate of the south entrance—one hundred cubits in distance.

[28]Then the man brought me to the inner courtyard by way of its southern gate, which had the same measurements as the other gates.[29]Its chambers, walls, and porticos measured the same as the other gates; there were windows all around in the portico. The inner gate and its portico measured fifty cubits in length and twenty-five cubits in width.[30]There were also porticos all around the inner wall; these were twenty-five cubits in length and five cubits in width.[31]This portico faced the outer courtyard with carved palm trees on its walls and eight steps going up to it.

[32]Then the man brought me to the inner courtyard by the eastern way and measured the gate, which had the same measurements as the other gates.[33]Its chambers, walls, and portico measured the same as the other gates, and there were windows all around. The inner gate and its portico measured fifty cubits in length and twenty-five cubits in width.[34]Its portico faced the outer courtyard; it had palm trees on either side of it and eight steps going up it.

[35]Next the man brought me to the northern gate and measured it; it measured the same as the other gates.[36]Its chambers, walls, and portico measured the same as the other gates, and there were windows all around. The gateway and its portico measured fifty cubits in length and twenty-five cubits in width.[37]Its portico faced the outer courtyard; it had palm trees on either side of it and eight steps going up it.

[38]There was a room with a door by each of the inner gateways. This was where they rinsed the burnt offerings.[39]There were two tables on each side of each portico, on which the burnt offering was slaughtered, and also the sin offering and the guilt offering.
[40]By the wall of the courtyard, going up to the gate to the north, there were two tables. Also on the other side there were two tables at the gate's portico.[41]There were four tables on either side by the gate; they slaughtered animals on the eight tables.
[42]There were four tables of cut stone for the burnt offerings, one and a half cubits in length, one and a half cubits in width, and one cubit tall. On them they laid the tools with which they slaughtered the burnt offerings for the sacrifices.[43]Two-pronged hooks a handbreadth in length were fastened in the portico all around, and the flesh of the offerings would be put on the tables.

[44]On the outside of the inner gate, within the inner courtyard, were singers' chambers, one on the north side facing south, and the other on the south side facing north.[45]Then the man said to me, "This room facing south is for the priests who are on duty in the temple.
[46]The room facing north is for the priests on duty at the altar. These are the sons of Zadok who come near to Yahweh to serve him; they are among the sons of Levi."[47]Next he measured the courtyard—one hundred cubits in length and one hundred cubits in width in a square, with the altar in front of the house.

[48]Then the man brought me to the portico of the house and measured its doorposts—they were five cubits thick on either side. The gateway itself was fourteen cubits in width, and the walls on each side of it were three cubits in width.[2][49]The length of the portico was twenty cubits, and its depth was eleven cubits.[3] There were steps[4] that went up to it and columns that stood on either side of it.

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[1]After one stick in depth, many copies of the ancient Hebrew text contains the additional phrase: one threshold one stick in depth". Many modern translations, however, leave this expression out, because it seems to be a repetition of preceding verse.
[2]Instead of the walls on each side of it were three cubits in width, the copies of the ancient Hebrew text read the entrance was three cubits in width, but this seems to be a mistake, judging from the preceding words in this verse.
[3]Instead of eleven cubits, some ancient translations of the Hebrew copies and many modern translations read twelve cubits.
[4]Instead of steps, some copies of the ancient Hebrew text, and some modern translations read ten steps.

Ezekiel 40 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The new temple and city

In a vision, Ezekiel saw a man measuring the wall of a new temple. The next chapters will give precise measurements for the construction of a temple to be built. This was not the temple of Ezra's day. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 40:1 Notes

Ezekiel 40:1

twenty-fifth ... tenth ... fourteenth

These words are the ordinal forms of 25, 10, and 14.

of our captivity

Here "our" refers to Ezekiel and the Israelites who have been in Babylon since the Babylonians forced King Jehoiachin to leave Jerusalem, but not to the reader. Alternate translation: "after we became captives" or "after the Babylonians took us as captives to Babylon"

the beginning of the year on the tenth day of the month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is in April on Western calendars.

the city was captured

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Babylonians captured the city of Jerusalem"

the hand of Yahweh

Here "hand" refers to Yahweh's power to show Ezekiel supernatural visions. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:3.

Ezekiel 40:2

He brought me to rest

"He put me down"

Ezekiel 40:3

he brought me there

"Yahweh brought me to the place that had the buildings"

Behold

Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.

His appearance was like the appearance of bronze

The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The way he appeared was like the way bronze appears"

linen cord

"a rope made of linen." This is a tool for measuring very long distances.

linen

This is a type of cloth. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:2.

measuring stick

This is a tool for measuring shorter distances.

Ezekiel 40:4

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

fix your mind on

This idiom means "pay attention to" or "think about."

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]

Ezekiel 40:5

surrounding the temple area

"entirely around the temple area"

Each long cubit was a cubit and a handbreadth in length

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "These were the long cubits, which were the length of a regular cubit plus a handbreadth"

a handbreadth

"the width of a hand." This was about 8 centimeters.

Ezekiel 40:6

one stick

"it was one stick wide." This was about 3.2 meters.

the temple gate that faced east

This gate was part of the wall that surrounded the temple area. It was not part of the temple building itself. Alternate translation: "the gate on the eastern side of the wall surrounding the temple" or "the gate on the eastern wall of the temple courtyard"

up its steps

"up the steps of the gate"

in depth

"from the front edge of the threshold to its back edge"

Ezekiel 40:7

The guard chambers

These were rooms that were built inside of the gate where guards stayed to protect the gate.

five cubits

about 2.7 meters

there were five cubits between any two of the chambers

"the chambers next to each other were five cubits apart" or "there were five cubits between a chamber and the one

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next to it"
the chambers
"the rooms"
portico
This was a covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
Ezekiel 40:8
portico
This was a covering in front of a doorway or gateway with columns or posts for support. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
one stick
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
Ezekiel 40:9
the portico of the gate facing the temple
Here "facing the temple" means that the portico was attached to the gate in the temple courtyard. Alternate translation: "the portico of the gate on the inner side of the wall that surrounded the temple"
two cubits
about one meter
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
Ezekiel 40:10
had the same measurement
"were the same size"
Ezekiel 40:11
ten cubits
about 5.4 meters
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
thirteen cubits
about 7 meters
Ezekiel 40:12
The chambers measured six cubits
"The chambers were 6 cubits long"
six cubits
about 3.2 meters
one cubit
"54 centimeters" or "about one-half meter"
Ezekiel 40:13
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
that of the second
"the entrance of the second chamber"
Ezekiel 40:14
sixty cubits
about 32 meters
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
portico
This was a covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
Ezekiel 40:15
fifty cubits
about 27 meters
Ezekiel 40:16
closed windows
Possible meanings are 1) "closed windows" or 2) "windows with shutters" or 3) "narrow windows."
it was the same for the porches
"the porches also had closed windows all around"
each jamb
jambs are the sides of a wooden frame of a door
Ezekiel 40:17
General Information:
There were two walls surrounding the temple. The outer wall surrounded the outer courtyard, and within that, the inner wall surrounded the inner courtyard. The inner courtyard was higher than the outer courtyard. Each wall had gates on the east, north, and south sides.
the man brought me to the outer courtyard of the temple
"The man brought me from outside the temple area into the outer courtyard of the temple"
outer courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:5.
Behold
The word "Behold" here indicates that Ezekiel saw something interesting.
pavement
a flat floor that is made out of rocks
with thirty rooms next to the pavement
"and there were 30 rooms all around the pavement"
Ezekiel 40:18
went up to
"went all the way to"
Ezekiel 40:19
the front of the lower gate to the front of the inner gate
The lower gate was on the wall of the outer courtyard, and the inner gate was on the wall of the inner courtyard. Alternate translation: "the front of the outer gate to the front of the inner gate"
one hundred cubits
about 54 meters
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
the same on the north side
"it was the same on the north side" or "on the north side, the distance from the outer gate to the inner gate was also one hundred cubits"
Ezekiel 40:21
chambers
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:7.
portico
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
measured the same
"had the same measurement"
fifty cubits
about 27 meters.
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
Ezekiel 40:22
General Information:
Ezekiel continues to describe the vision of the temple and

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of the man who looked like bronze.
Its windows
The word "Its" refers to the gate that was on the north side of the outer courtyard. Alternate translation: "The northern gate's windows"
chambers
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:7.
corresponded to the gate that faced east
"were like those of the eastern gate" or "were like those of the eastern gate of the outer courtyard"
Ezekiel 40:23
inner courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
in front of the gate facing north
"directly across from the northern gate" or "across the outer courtyard from the northern gate"
the gate facing north
"the gate on the northern side of the outer courtyard"
just as also there was a gate to the east
"just as there was a eastern gate to the inner courtyard" or "just as there was a gate to the inner courtyard in front of the eastern gate"
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
one hundred cubits
about 54 meters
Ezekiel 40:24
measured the same as the other outer gates
"had the same measurements as the northern and eastern gates"
Ezekiel 40:25
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
fifty cubits
about 27 meters
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
Ezekiel 40:26
portico
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16
on either side
"on both sides"
Ezekiel 40:27
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
one hundred cubits
about 54 meters
Ezekiel 40:28
inner courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
by way of its southern gate
"through its southern gate"
Ezekiel 40:29
chambers
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:7.
porticos
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
measured the same
"had the same measurements"
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
fifty cubits
about 27 meters
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
five cubits
about 2.7 meters
Ezekiel 40:31
This portico faced the outer courtyard
"The portico's entrance was towards the outer courtyard"
with carved palm trees
"and it had carvings of palm trees"
Ezekiel 40:32
to the inner courtyard by the eastern way
"to the east side of the inner courtyard"
Ezekiel 40:33
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
fifty cubits
about 27 meters
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
Ezekiel 40:34
Its portico faced the outer courtyard
The entrance of its portico was towards the outer courtyard
Ezekiel 40:35
measured the same
"had the same measurements"
Ezekiel 40:36
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
fifty cubits
about 27 meters
twenty-five cubits
about 13.5 meters
Ezekiel 40:37
Its portico faced the outer courtyard
"The entrance of its portico was toward the outer courtyard"
on either side of it
"on both sides of it"
Ezekiel 40:38
by each of the inner gateways
"in each of the inner gates"
they rinsed the burnt offerings
Possible meanings for "they" are 1) the people who were bringing offerings or 2) the priests who killed the animals.
the burnt offerings
the animals that would be killed and burned as offerings
Ezekiel 40:39
There were two tables on each side of each portico
there were four tables—two on each side of each portico
the burnt offering was slaughtered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed the burnt offering" or "they killed the animals that they would burn as an offering"
Ezekiel 40:42
There were four tables of cut stone

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These were apparently different tables than the eight tables on which the sacrifices were killed. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "There were also four tables of cut stone" or "There were four other tables made of cut stone"
of cut stone
"that were made out of stone that had been cut"
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
one and a half cubits
about 0.8 meter
one cubit
about one-half meter
Ezekiel 40:43
Two-pronged hooks a handbreadth in length were fastened in the portico all around
"All around the portico, people had attached hooks that were a handbreadth long and had two prongs each"
Two-pronged hooks
something that has two long curved points, which people can hang things on
a handbreadth in length
about 8 centimeters
the flesh of the offerings would be put on the tables
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they would put the flesh of the offerings on the tables"
Ezekiel 40:44
the inner gate
This is the inner gate on the north.
singers' chambers
"rooms for singers." However, some ancient and modern translations read only "chambers" without the reference to singers.
one on the north side facing south, and the other on the south side facing north
The word "chamber" or "room" is understood from the previous phrase. The phrase "facing south" means that its door is on its south side, and "facing north" means that its door is on its north side. Alternate translation: "one room on the north side facing south, and the other room on the south side facing north"
Ezekiel 40:45
This room facing south
This refers to the chamber on the north side of the inner courtyard. Alternate translation: "This room whose door is on its south side" or "This room on the north side of the inner courtyard"
who are on duty in the temple
"who are working in the temple" or "who are responsible for guarding the temple"
Ezekiel 40:46
General Information:
The man continues speaking to Ezekiel in the vision.
The room facing north
This refers to the room on the south side of the inner courtyard. The door of the room was on the north side of the room. Alternate translation: "This room whose door is on its north side" or "This room on the south side of the inner courtyard"
the priests on duty at the altar
"the priests who were offering sacrifices on the altar"
come near to Yahweh to serve him
"approach Yahweh in his temple in order to serve him"
Ezekiel 40:47
he measured
"the man measured"
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
one hundred cubits
about 54 meters
with the altar
"and the altar was"
the house
This refers to the temple.
Ezekiel 40:48
portico
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
the house
this refers to the temple
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
five cubits
about 2.7 meters
fourteen cubits
about 7.5 meters
three cubits
about 1.6 meters
Ezekiel 40:49
twenty cubits
about 11 meters
eleven cubits
about 6 meters
columns
pieces of stone that were tall and narrow and supported the roof of the building

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41 [1]Then the man brought me into the temple's holy place and measured the doorposts—six cubits in width on either side.[1] [2]The width of the doorway was ten cubits; the wall on each side was five cubits in length. Then the man measured the dimensions of the holy place—forty cubits in length and twenty cubits in width.
[3]Then the man went into the very holy place and measured the posts of the doorway—two cubits, and the doorway was six cubits in width. The walls on either side were seven cubits in width.[4]Then he measured the room's length—twenty cubits. Its width—twenty cubits to the front of the temple hall. Then he said to me, "This is the most holy place."

[5]Then the man measured the wall of the house—it was six cubits thick. The width of each side room around the house was four cubits in width.[6]There were side rooms on three levels, one room above another, thirty rooms on each level. There were ledges around the wall of the house, to support all of the side rooms, for there was no support put in the wall

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of the house.[7]So the side rooms widened and went around going up, for the house went around higher and higher all around; the rooms widened as the house went up, and a stairway went up to the highest level, through the middle level.
[8]Then I saw a raised part all around the house, the foundation for the side chambers; it measured a full stick in height—six cubits.[9]The width of the wall of the side rooms on the outside was five cubits. There was an open space to the outside of these rooms in the sanctuary.
[10]On the other side of this open space were the priests' outer side rooms; this space was twenty cubits in width all around the sanctuary.[11]There were doors into the side rooms from another open space—one doorway was on the north side, and the other on the south side. The width of this open area was five cubits all around.

[12]The building that faced the courtyard on the west side was seventy cubits in width. Its wall measured five cubits thick all around, and it was ninety cubits in length.[13]Then the man measured the sanctuary—one hundred cubits in length. The separated building, its wall, and the courtyard also measured one hundred cubits in length.[14]The width of the front of the courtyard in front of the sanctuary was also one hundred cubits.

[15]Then the man measured the length of the building behind the sanctuary, to its west, and the galleries on either side—one hundred cubits. The holy place and the portico,[16]the inner walls and the windows, including the narrow windows, and the galleries all around on three levels, were all paneled in wood.[17]Above the entryway to the inner sanctuary and spaced along the walls there was a measured pattern.
[18]It was decorated with cherubim and palm trees; with a palm tree between each cherub, and each cherub had two faces:
[19]the face of a man looked toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a young lion looked toward a palm tree on the other side. They were carved all around the entire house.[20]From the ground to above the doorway, cherubim and palm trees were carved on the outer wall of the house.

[21]The gate posts of the holy place were square. Their appearance was like the appearance of[22]the wooden altar in front of the holy place, which was three cubits high and two cubits in length on each side. Its corner posts, base, and frame were made of wood. Then the man said to me, "This is the table that stands before Yahweh."[2][23]There were double doors for the holy place and the most holy place.[24]These doors had two hinged door panels each, two panels for one door and two panels for the other.
[25]Carved on them—on the doors of the holy place—were cherubim and palm trees just as the walls were decorated, and there was a wooden roof over the portico at the front.[26]There were narrow windows and palm trees on either side of the portico. These were the side rooms of the house, and they also had overhanging roofs.

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[1]After six cubits in width on either side, ancient Hebrew copies and some modern translations add the width of the tent.
[2]Instead of Their appearance was like the appearance of the wooden altar in front of the holy place, which was, some modern translations have They all looked like each other. The wooden altar in front of the holy place was.

Ezekiel 41 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. This chapter focuses on the measurements for the construction of the temple to be built. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 41:1 Notes

Ezekiel 41:1
General Information:
The man in Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 40:3) continues to show Ezekiel around the temple.
the temple's holy place
the room in the temple in front of the "most holy place"
six cubits in width on either side
These cubits were the "long" cubits (Ezekiel 40:5), 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
"they were six cubits in width on both sides"
six cubits
about 3.2 meters.
cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
Ezekiel 41:2
ten cubits
about 5.4 meters
five cubits
about 2.7 meters
the dimensions
"the size"
forty cubits
about 22 meters
twenty cubits
about 11 meters
Ezekiel 41:3
two cubits

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about 1.1 meter
cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
six cubits
about 3.2 meters
seven cubits
about 3.8 meters
Ezekiel 41:4
twenty cubits
about 11 meters
Ezekiel 41:5
the house
the temple
six cubits
about 3.2 meters
cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
four cubits
about 2 meters
Ezekiel 41:6
three levels
"three stories"
There were ledges around the wall of the house
"The house had ledges all around for the side rooms all around." This way the side rooms could rest on the ledge of the wall.
to support
"so that the ledges could support"
for there was no support put in the wall of the house
"for there were no supports in the wall of the house." The people who built the temple did not want stones or wood that would support the side rooms to be sticking out from the wall of the sanctuary.
Ezekiel 41:8
a raised part
a platform
chambers
small rooms
a full stick
Translate "stick" as in Ezekiel 40:5.
cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
six cubits
about 3.2 meters
Ezekiel 41:9
five cubits
about 2.7 meters
Ezekiel 41:10
the priests' outer side rooms
"the side rooms of the priests that were further out from the sanctuary"
twenty cubits
about 11 meters
cubits
See how you translated these "long" cubits in Ezekiel 40:5.
Ezekiel 41:11
five cubits
about 2.7 meters
The width of this open area was five cubits all around
"The entire space between the chambers and the temple was five cubits wide, all around the temple"
Ezekiel 41:12
The building that faced the courtyard on the west side was seventy cubits in width
This can be stated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "There was a building on the west side of the temple area, and its entrance was towards the courtyard. It was seventy cubits in width"
seventy cubits ... five cubits ... ninety cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 41:13
one hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 41:15
the galleries
"the balconies." The balconies were places that were built higher up than the rest of the building. People could go into balconies and look down on the main floor of the building.
one hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
the portico
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
Ezekiel 41:18
was decorated
"was made beautiful"
cherubim
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:3.
cherub
This is the singular form of "cherubim." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:9.
Ezekiel 41:20
the house
"the temple"
Ezekiel 41:22
the wooden altar in front of the holy place, which was
These words are the end of the sentence that begins with the words "Their appearance was like the appearance of" in verse 21. Possible meanings of the sentence are 1) as it is translated in the ULB or 2) "The appearance of one was like the appearance of the other. The wooden altar in front of the holy place was." The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "They appeared the same way the wooden altar in front of the holy place appeared. They were"
three cubits ... two cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 41:23
There were double doors for the holy place and the most holy place
"The holy place and the most holy place both had two doors"
Ezekiel 41:24

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These doors had two hinged door panels each
"Each door had two parts that were on hinges." Hinges connect doors to the wall and allow the doors to swing.
two panels for one door and two panels for the other
"both of the doors for both the holy place and the most holy place had two parts"
Ezekiel 41:25

just as the walls were decorated
"just as the walls also had carvings of cherubim and palm trees"
portico
covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.

42 [1]Next the man sent me out to the outer courtyard on the north side, and he brought me to rooms in front of the outer courtyard and the northern outer wall.[2]Those rooms were one hundred cubits along their front and fifty cubits in width.[3]Some of those rooms faced the inner courtyard and were twenty cubits away from the sanctuary. There were three levels of rooms, and the ones above looked down on the ones below and were open to them, having a walkway. Some of the rooms looked out onto the outer courtyard.
[4]A passage ten cubits in width and one hundred cubits in length ran in front of the rooms. The rooms' doors were toward the north.[1][5]But the upper halls were smaller, for the walkways took away from them more space than they did in the lowest and middle levels of the building.[6]For the halls on the third story had no columns, unlike the courtyards, which did have columns. So the highest level's rooms were smaller in size compared to the rooms in the lowest and middle levels.
[7]The outside wall ran along the rooms toward the outer courtyard, the courtyard that was in front of the rooms. That wall was fifty cubits in length.[8]The length of the rooms of the outer courtyard was fifty cubits, and the rooms facing the sanctuary were one hundred cubits in length.[9]There was an entrance to the lowest rooms from the east side, coming from the outer courtyard.

[10]Along the wall of the outer courtyard on the eastern side of the outer courtyard, in front of the sanctuary's inner courtyard, there were also rooms[2][11]with a walkway in front of them. They were as the appearance of the rooms on the northern side. They had the same length and breadth and the same exits and arrangements and doors.[12]On the south side were doors into rooms that were just the same as on the north side. A passage on the inside had a door at its head, and the passage opened into the various rooms. On the east side there was a doorway into the passage at one end.

[13]Then the man said to me, "The northern rooms and the southern rooms that are in front of the outer courtyard are holy rooms where the priests who work nearest to Yahweh may eat the most holy food. They will put the most holy things there—the food offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for this is a holy place.[14]When the priests enter there, they must not go out of the holy place to the outer court, without laying aside the clothes in which they served, since these are holy. So they must dress in other clothes before going near the people."

[15]The man completed measuring the inner house and then took me out to the gate that faced the east and measured all the surrounding area there.
[16]He measured the east side with a measuring stick—five hundred cubits with the measuring stick.[3][17]He measured the north side—five hundred cubits with the measuring stick.[4][18]He also measured the south side—five hundred cubits with the measuring stick.[5][19]He also turned and measured the west side—five hundred cubits with the measuring stick.[6]
[20]He measured it on four sides. It had a wall around it that was five hundred cubits in length, and five hundred cubits in width, to separate the holy from the profane.

[1]Some ancient translations of the Hebrew copies and many modern translations read one hundred cubits. Other ancient Hebrew copies some other modern translations read one cubit.
[2]Many copies of the ancient Hebrew text and some modern translations read on the eastern side. However, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew copies and most modern translations read on the southern side.
[3]The ancient Greek translation and most modern translations read five hundred cubits, and appears to be correct; but the Hebrew copies read: five hundred measuring sticks, which seems to be an error.
[4]The ancient Greek translation and most modern translations read five hundred cubits,; but the ancient Hebrew copies read: five hundred measuring sticks, which seems to be an error.
[5]The ancient Greek translation and most modern translations read five hundred cubits; but the ancient Hebrew copies read: five hundred measuring sticks, which seems to be an error.
[6]The ancient Greek translation and most modern translations read five hundred cubits; but the ancient Hebrew copies read: five hundred measuring sticks, which seems to be an error.

Ezekiel 42 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. This chapter focused on the storerooms for keeping the holy things of the temple. (See: temple and holy)

Links:

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Ezekiel 42:1 Notes

Ezekiel 42:1
the outer courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:5.
Ezekiel 42:2
one hundred cubits ... fifty cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 42:3
twenty cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Some of those rooms faced the inner courtyard
"Some of those rooms were toward the inner courtyard" or "The entrance of some of those rooms was toward the inner courtyard"
inner courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
were open to them
"looked out onto the inner courtyard"
having a walkway
"because there was a place where one could walk along the rooms"
Some of the rooms looked out onto the outer courtyard
"Some of the rooms were toward the outer courtyard" or "The entrance of some of the rooms was toward the outer courtyard"
Ezekiel 42:4
ten cubits ... one hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 42:6
smaller in size compared to the rooms
"smaller than the rooms"
Ezekiel 42:7
fifty cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 42:8
fifty cubits ... one hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 42:11
They were as the appearance of the rooms on the northern side
The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The way the rooms on the northern side appeared was the way these rooms appeared"
Ezekiel 42:12
at its head
"at its beginning"
Ezekiel 42:13
the food offering
the grain or flour that the people offered to show that they were thankful to God
Ezekiel 42:15
to the gate that faced the east
"out to the east gate" or "out through the east gate"
Ezekiel 42:16
He measured
The word "he" refers to the man who looked like bronze (Ezekiel 40:3).
measuring stick
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:5.
five hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 42:20
It had a wall around it
"The house had a wall all around it"
five hundred cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
profane
not holy

43 [1]The man then brought me to the gate that opened to the east.[2]Behold! The glory of the God of Israel came from the
east; his voice was like the sound of many waters, and the earth shone with his glory.
[3]It was according to the appearance of the vision that I saw, according to the vision that I saw when he had come[1] to
destroy the city, and the visions were like the vision that I saw at the Kebar Canal—and I fell to my face.[4]So the glory of
Yahweh came to the house by way of the gate that opened to the east.[5]Then the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into
the inner court. Behold! The glory of Yahweh was filling the house.

[6]The man was standing beside me, and I heard someone else speaking to me from the house.[7]He said to me, "Son of man,
this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live in the midst of the people of Israel
forever. The house of Israel will no longer defile my holy name—they or their kings—with their faithlessness or with the
corpses of their kings at their high places.[8]They will no longer profane my holy name by putting their threshold next to
my threshold, and their gateposts next to my gateposts, with nothing but a wall between me and them. They defiled my
holy name with their disgusting practices, so I consumed them with my anger.
[9]Now let them remove their faithlessness and the corpses of their kings from before me, and I will live in their midst
forever.

[10]Son of man, you yourself must tell the house of Israel about this house so they will be ashamed of their iniquities. They
should think about this description.[11]For if they are ashamed of all that they have done, then reveal to them the design of

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the house, its details, its exits, its entrances, and all its designs, all its decrees and rules. Then write this down before their eyes so they will keep to all its design and all its rules, so as to obey them.
[12]This is the regulation for the house: From the peak of the hill to all the surrounding border around it, it will be most holy. Behold! This is the law for the house.

[13]These will be the measurements of the altar in cubits—that cubit being a regular cubit and a handbreadth in length. So the gutter around the altar will be a cubit deep, and its width will also be a cubit. The border around its surrounding edge will be one span. This will be the base of the altar.[14]From the gutter at the ground level up to the lower ledge of the altar is two cubits, and that ledge itself is one cubit in width. Then from the small ledge up to the large edge of the altar, it is four cubits, and the large edge is a cubit in width.
[15]The hearth on the altar for the burnt offerings is four cubits high, and there are four horns pointing upward on the hearth.[16]The hearth is twelve cubits in length and twelve cubits in width, a square.[17]Its border is fourteen cubits in length and fourteen cubits in width on each of its four sides, and its rim is a half cubit in width. The gutter is a cubit in width all around with its steps facing east."

[18]Next he said to me, "Son of man, the Lord Yahweh says this: These are the regulations for the altar on the day they make it, for raising the burnt offering onto it, and for sprinkling blood on it.[19]You will give a young bull from the herd as a sin offering for the Levitical priests who are the descendants of Zadok, those who come near to me to serve me—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[20]Then you will take some of its blood and place it on the altar's four horns and the four sides of its edge and on the surrounding rim; you will cleanse it and make atonement for it.[21]Then take the bull for the sin offering and burn it in the appointed part of the temple area outside of the sanctuary.
[22]Then on the second day you will offer a male goat without blemish from the goats as a sin offering; the priests will cleanse the altar just as they cleansed it with the bull.[23]When you finish its cleansing, offer an unblemished bull from the herd and an unblemished ram from the flock.[24]Offer them before Yahweh; the priests will throw salt onto them and raise them up as a burnt offering to Yahweh.
[25]You must prepare a male goat as a sin offering daily for seven days, and the priests must also prepare an unblemished bull from the herd and an unblemished ram from the flock.[26]They must atone for the altar for seven days and purify it, and in this way they must consecrate it.[27]They must complete these days, and on the eighth day and onward it will come about that the priests will prepare your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar, and I will accept you—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

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[a]Instead of when he had come which some Hebrew copies and some ancient and many modern translations read, some other copies of the Hebrew text read: when I came.

Ezekiel 43 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. God entered the temple. He told the people not to defile the temple by being idol worshipers or by having the funerals of their kings in the temple courtyard. He also told them what offerings to make each day. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 43:1 Notes

Ezekiel 43:2

Behold!

The word "Behold" here alerts the reader to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

many waters

This simply means "a lot of water." It could refer to a loud river or a large waterfall or the waves crashing at the ocean. All of these are very loud. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:24.

the earth shone with his glory

"the earth was full of bright light from his glory"

Ezekiel 43:3

It was

"The glory of God coming from the east was"

It was according to the appearance of the vision that I saw, according to the vision that I saw when he had come to destroy the city

Possible meanings are 1) the second phrase beginning with "according to" explains the meaning of the first phrase beginning with "according to." Alternate translation: "It was according to the appearance of the vision that I saw when he had come to destroy the city" or 2) the first phrase refers to the vision that Ezekiel had just seen of God's glory. Alternate translation: "The appearance of this vision that I saw was according to the vision that I saw when he had come to destroy the city"

according to the appearance of the vision

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The abstract noun "appearance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "just like what appeared in the vision"

according to the vision

"like the vision"

when he had come to destroy the city

"when the God of Israel had come to destroy the city." If the earlier Hebrew reading "when I had come to destroy the city" is used, then "destroy the city" is a synecdoche for "prophesy that the city will be destroyed." Alternate translation: "when I had come to prophesy that the city will be destroyed" or "when I had come to prophesy that the God of Israel will destroy the city"

Ezekiel 43:5

Behold

Your language may have a different word to show that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.

Ezekiel 43:7

the corpses of their kings

The idols that the people's kings worshiped are spoken of as if they are corpses because the idols are not alive. Alternate translation: "the lifeless idols that their kings worshiped"

Ezekiel 43:8

They defiled

"The Israelites defiled"

disgusting practices

"the disgusting things they did." God was angry because the people were worshiping idols and false gods. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 5:9.

consumed them with my anger

The phrase "consumed" here means "completely destroyed." Alternate translation: "completely destroyed them because I was angry"

Ezekiel 43:9

the corpses of their kings

The idols that the people's kings worshiped are spoken of as if they are corpses because the idols are not alive. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 43:7]

Ezekiel 43:10

this description

"this pattern" or "this plan"

Ezekiel 43:11

before their eyes

Here the Israelites are referred to by their "eyes" to emphasize what they see. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 21:6]

will keep to all its design

"will keep its pattern"

Ezekiel 43:12

the regulation

"the instruction" or "the rule"

the surrounding border

The word "border" probably refers to the wall that goes all the way around the temple.

most holy

"absolutely holy"

Behold!

"This is important!" Your language may have a way of indicating that the words that follow are important.

Ezekiel 43:13

a cubit

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

The border around its surrounding edge

"The border going around its edge"

one span

A span was 23 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "about 23 centimeters"

This will be the base of the altar

"These will be the measurements of the base of the altar"

the base of the altar

"the bottom supporting the altar" or "the foundation of the altar"

Ezekiel 43:14

two cubits ... four cubits

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

ledge

a narrow and flat surface that sticks out from a wall

Ezekiel 43:15

The hearth

the place where sacrifices were either cooked or burnt up with fire

four cubits

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

horns

The horns were the parts of the altar at the four corners of the altar that stuck up above the rest of the altar.

Ezekiel 43:16

twelve cubits

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

Ezekiel 43:17

fourteen cubits ... a half cubit ... a cubit

Each "long cubit" was about 54 centimeters. You may choose not to include this information if you give modern measurements instead of "cubits" as the UDB does. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

with its steps facing east

"with steps on the east side of the altar" or "and the altar's steps are on its east side"

Ezekiel 43:18

he said

"Yahweh said"

Son of man

"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human

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being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"

the regulations

"the rules" or "the instructions"

Ezekiel 43:19

You will

The word "you" is singular.

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

Ezekiel 43:20

Then you will take

The word "you" is singular. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 43:19]

four horns

The horns were the parts of the altar at the four corners of the altar that stuck up above the rest of the altar. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 43:15.

Ezekiel 43:22

you will offer

The word "you" and the command refer to Ezekiel and so are singular. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 43:19]

Ezekiel 43:23

you finish ... offer

All instances of "you" and the commands refer to Ezekiel and so are singular. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 43:19]

Ezekiel 43:24

Offer them before Yahweh

The altar on which they will sacrifice the bull and ram is in front of the temple, where the presence of Yahweh dwells.

Ezekiel 43:25

You must prepare

This is spoken to Ezekiel and so the word "You" is singular. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 43:19]

Ezekiel 43:27

it will come about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important part of the instructions. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

your burnt offerings ... your peace offerings ... accept you

The words "your" and "you" are second person plural and refer to the people of Israel in general.

will accept you

"will gladly receive you"

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44 [1]Then the man brought me back to the outer sanctuary gate that faced east; it was closed tightly.[2]Yahweh said to me, "This gate has been sealed shut; it will not be opened. No man will go through it, for Yahweh, the God of Israel, has come through it, so it has been closed tightly.[3]The ruler of Israel will sit in it to eat food before Yahweh. He will enter by way of the gate's portico and go out the same way."

[4]Then he brought me by way of the northern gate to the front of the temple, and I looked, and behold, the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh, and I fell to my face.[5]Then Yahweh said to me, "Son of man, set your heart and look with your eyes and listen with your ears to all that I am declaring to you, to all the statutes of the house of Yahweh and all its laws. Think about the house's entrance and the sanctuary's exits.
[6]Then say to the rebellious ones, the house of Israel, 'The Lord Yahweh says this: Let all of your disgusting practices be enough for you, house of Israel—[7]that you brought foreigners with uncircumcised hearts and uncircumcised flesh to be in my sanctuary, profaning my house, while you were offering me food, fat and blood—you have broken my covenant by all your disgusting practices.
[8]You have not carried out your duties regarding my holy things, but you appointed others to take up your duties, and you assigned them to care for my holy place.[9]The Lord Yahweh says this: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, from any of those who live among the people of Israel, may enter my holy place.
[10]Yet the Levites went far from me—they wandered away from me, going after their idols—but they will pay for their iniquity.[11]They are servants in my sanctuary, watching the gates of the house and serving in the house and they slaughter the burnt offerings and the people's sacrifices, and they will stand before the people and serve them.[12]But because they performed the sacrifices before their idols, they became stumbling blocks for sin for the house of Israel. Therefore I will lift up my hand to swear an oath against them—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration—they will bear their punishment.
[13]They will not come near me to serve me as priests or to come near any of my holy things, to my most holy things. Instead, they will bear their shame and their disgusting practices that they have done.[14]But I will place them as keepers of the work in the house, for all of its duties and everything that is done in it.

[15]Then the Levitical priests and the descendants of Zadok who fulfilled the duties of my sanctuary when the people of Israel were wandering away from me, they will come near to me to minister to me; they will stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[16]They will come to my sanctuary; they will approach my table to worship me and to fulfill their duties to me.
[17]So it will be that when they come to the gates of the inner courtyard, they must be clothed in linen clothes, for they must not come in wool inside the gates of the courtyard and its house.[18]There should be linen turbans on their heads and linen underclothes on their hips. They must not gird themselves in clothes that make them sweat.

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[19]When they go out to the outer courtyard, to the outer courtyard in order to go to the people, they must take off the clothes they wore when they served; they must take them off and lay them down in a holy room, so they do not make other people holy by contact with their special clothing.
[20]Also they must neither shave their heads nor allow their hair to hang loosely, but they must trim the hair of their heads.
[21]No priest may drink wine when he comes to the inner court,[22]nor take a widow or a divorced woman as a wife for himself, but only a virgin from the line of the house of Israel or a widow who was previously married to a priest.
[23]For they will teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane; they will make them know the unclean from the clean.[24]In a dispute they will stand to judge with my decrees; they must be just. They will keep my law and my statutes in every feast, and they will celebrate my holy Sabbaths.
[25]They must not defile themselves by going near to a dead person; however, if the dead person was his father or mother, son or daughter, brother or unmarried sister, then they may defile themselves.[26]After a priest has become unclean, they will count off a period of seven days for him.[27]On the day he enters the holy place, into the inner courtyard to serve in the holy place, he must bring a sin offering for himself—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[28]This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I will be their property![29]They will eat the food offerings, the sin offerings, the guilt offerings, and everything devoted to Yahweh in Israel, will be theirs.
[30]The best of the firstfruits of all things and every contribution, anything from all of your contributions will belong to the priests, and you will give the first of your dough to the priests so that blessing may rest on your house.[31]The priests will not eat any carcass or animal torn by a wild animal, whether bird or beast.

Ezekiel 44 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. Foreigners and the Levites who have worshiped idols are not allowed in the temple. The priests alone will do the temple work. (See: temple and priest)

Links:

Ezekiel 44:1 Notes

Ezekiel 44:1
to the outer sanctuary gate that faced east
"to the outer sanctuary gate on the east side of the temple"
Ezekiel 44:2
it will not be opened
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will open it"
the God of Israel
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:4.
Ezekiel 44:3
He will enter by way of the gate's portico and go out the same way
He will enter the courtyard through another gate and then sit in the portico of the east gate and eat.
portico
covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support. In this case, the portico opens into the courtyard and is between the entrance to the temple and the inside of the gate. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
before Yahweh
"in front of Yahweh" or "in the presence of Yahweh"
Ezekiel 44:4
Then he
Possible meanings are 1) "Then the man" or 2) "Then Yahweh."
behold
The word "behold" here shows that Ezekiel was surprised by what he saw.
the glory of Yahweh
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 1:28.
I fell to my face
"I bowed down to the ground" or "I lay on the ground." Ezekiel did not fall by accident. He went down to the ground to show that he respected and feared Yahweh. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 1:28]
Ezekiel 44:5
set your heart
"pay attention to" or "think about." Translate as you translated "fix your mind on" in [Ezekiel 40:4]
all its laws
"all the instructions about the house of Yahweh"
Ezekiel 44:6
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Let all of your disgusting practices be enough for you
"Your disgusting practices have been more than enough for you" or "You have done far too many disgusting deeds"
disgusting practices
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 5:9.
Ezekiel 44:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
Ezekiel 44:10

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General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
went far from me ... wandered away from me, going after their idols
The way a person lives is spoken of as walking on a path. Alternate translation: "stopped worshiping me ... stopped doing what I wanted them to do. Instead, they worshiped their idols"
Ezekiel 44:11
are servants in my sanctuary
"will be the servants in my temple"
watching the gates of the house
"performing guard duty at the gates of the house"
they will stand before the people and serve them
"these Levites will stand before the people, so that they can serve the people"
Ezekiel 44:12
became stumbling blocks for sin for the house of Israel
A person who causes another person to sin is spoken of as if he were something on a path over which people stumble. Alternate translation: "became people who caused the house of Israel to sin"
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
I will lift up my hand to swear an oath
In those days a person would raise his right hand to show that he realized that God would punish him if he did not do what he swore to do. See how you translated these words in [Ezekiel 20:6]
against them
"that I will punish them"
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
they will bear their punishment
The abstract noun "punishment" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will certainly punish them"
Ezekiel 44:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
They
Here "They" refers to the Levites (Ezekiel 44:10).
They will not come near
"I will not permit them to come near." Yahweh does not want them to come to him the way a servant comes to a king to receive commands.
will bear their shame and their disgusting practices
"will be ashamed and suffer when I punish them for the disgusting practices" or "will be ashamed of the their disgusting practices"
disgusting practices
"the disgusting things." God was angry because the people were worshiping idols and false gods. See how you translated "disgusting practices" in Ezekiel 5:9.
Ezekiel 44:14
keepers
people who guard or take care of something
that is done in it
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they need to do in it"
Ezekiel 44:15
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.
and the descendants of Zadok who fulfilled
"who are descendants of Zadok and who fulfilled"
Ezekiel 44:17
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
So it will be that
"So"
the inner courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.
linen
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 9:2.
wool
cloth or clothing made of the soft hair of sheep
Ezekiel 44:18
turbans
A turban is a head covering that is that is made of a long cloth wrapped around the head.
Ezekiel 44:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about how the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests are to do their duties.
outer courtyard
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:5.
Ezekiel 44:20
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
must trim the hair of their heads
must keep their hair neat
Ezekiel 44:22
widow
a woman whose husband has died
from the line of the house of Israel
"who is a descendant of the people of Israel"
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 44:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
Ezekiel 44:24

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In a dispute they will stand to judge with my decrees
"When people are arguing, they will be the ones who decide who is right by applying my laws"
Ezekiel 44:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
Ezekiel 44:27
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 44:28
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
you
The word "you" refers to the people of Israel and so is plural.
property
land that a person owns and uses to provide for the needs of his family
in Israel
"in the land of Israel"
Ezekiel 44:30
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel about the descendants of Zadok who serve as priests.
every contribution, anything from all of your contributions
"every gift of whatever kind from all your gifts" or "all gifts of every sort of all of your gifts"
so that blessing may rest on your house
This phrase means "so that I will bless your family and everything that belongs to you."
Ezekiel 44:31
or animal torn by a wild animal, whether bird or beast
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "or any creature that a bird or a wild animal has torn apart"

45 [1]When you cast lots to divide up the land as an inheritance, you must make an offering to Yahweh; this offering will be a holy part of the land, twenty-five thousand cubits in length, and ten thousand cubits in width. It will be holy, all its area round about.[1][2]From this there will be a five hundred cubits by five hundred cubits square surrounding the holy place, with a surrounding border fifty cubits in width.
[3]From this area you will measure a portion that is twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand in width; it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.[4]It will be a holy place in the land for the priests who serve Yahweh, who come near Yahweh to serve him. It will be a place for their houses and a holy area for the holy place.[5]So it will be twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand in width, and it will be for towns that belong to the Levites who serve in the house.
[6]You will designate an area for the city, five thousand cubits in width and twenty-five thousand in length, that will be next to the area reserved for the holy place; this city will belong to all the house of Israel.[7]The prince's land will be on both sides of the area reserved for the holy place and the property of the city. It will be to their west and to their east. The length will correspond to the length of one of those portions, from the west to the east.
[8]This land will be property for the prince in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people; instead, they will give the land to the house of Israel, for their tribes.

[9]The Lord Yahweh says this: It is enough for you, princes of Israel! Remove violence and strife; do justice and righteousness! Quit your evictions of my people!—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.[10]You must have just scales, just ephahs, and just baths![11]The ephah and the bath will be the same amount, so that a bath will be a tenth of a homer; the ephah will be a tenth of a homer. Their measure will be corresponding to the homer.[12]The shekel will be twenty gerahs; sixty shekels will make a mina for you.

[13]This is the contribution that you must present: A sixth of an ephah for every homer of wheat, and you will give a sixth of an ephah for every homer of barley.[14]The regulation offering of oil will be a tenth of a bath for every cor (which is ten baths), or for every homer, since a homer is also ten baths.[15]One sheep or goat will be taken from the flock for every two hundred animals from the well-watered land of Israel. These will be used for the grain offerings, the burnt offerings, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the people—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.
[16]All the people of the land will give this contribution to the prince in Israel.[17]It will be the prince's responsibility to furnish animals for the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the drink offerings at the festivals and the new moon celebrations, and on the Sabbath days—all the fixed festivals of the house of Israel. He will provide for the sin offerings, the grain offerings, the burnt offerings, and the peace offerings for atonement on behalf of the house of Israel.

[18]The Lord Yahweh says this: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you will take an unblemished bull from the herd and perform a sin offering for the sanctuary.[19]The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering and place it on the doorposts of the house and on the four corners of the border of the altar, and on the doorposts of the gate to the inner court.[20]You will do this on the seventh of the month for each person's sin by accident or ignorance; in this way you will atone for the temple.

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[21]In the first month on the fourteenth day of the month, there will be for you the Passover, a seven-day festival. You will eat unleavened bread.[22]On that day, the prince will prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bull as a sin offering.
[23]For the seven days of the festival, the prince will prepare a burnt offering for Yahweh: Seven bulls and seven unblemished rams each day for seven days, and a male goat each day as a sin offering.[24]Then the prince will perform a food offering of an ephah for each bull and an ephah for each ram with a hin of oil for each ephah.
[25]In the seventh month on the fifteenth day of the month, at the festival, the prince will perform offerings on these seven days: Sin offerings, burnt offerings, food offerings, and offerings of oil.

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[a]Instead of ten thousand, which the copies of the ancient Hebrew text and some modern translations have, some copies of the ancient Hebrew text and many modern translations have twenty thousand.

Ezekiel 45 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. There should be an area around the temple complex for the homes of the priests and Levites who work at the temple. People should celebrate the festivals. (See: temple and priest)

Links:

Ezekiel 45:1 Notes

Ezekiel 45:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

twenty-five thousand cubits in length ... ten thousand cubits in width

Each cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

all its area round about

"all of the area inside of the borders around it"

Ezekiel 45:2

five hundred cubits ... fifty cubits in width

Each cubit was about 54 centimeters. Alternate translation: "500 cubits ... 50 cubits wide" or "about 270 meters ... about 27 meters wide"

Ezekiel 45:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

this area

the temple and the border surrounding it

a portion

"a portion of land"

twenty-five thousand cubits ... ten thousand

Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

Ezekiel 45:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

five thousand cubits ... twenty-five thousand

Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

reserved for the holy place

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you gave for the holy place"

Ezekiel 45:7

The length will correspond to the length of one of those portions

It is implied that Ezekiel is comparing the prince's land with the size of the land given to each of the tribes. Alternate translation: "The length will be the same as the length of one of the portions given to the tribes"

from the west to the east

It is implied that these are the western and eastern borders of the land of Israel. "from the western border of Israel at the sea to the eastern border at the Jordan River"

Ezekiel 45:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the house of Israel.

This land will be property for the prince in Israel

"This portion of the land will be the property of the prince among the people of Israel"

Ezekiel 45:9

this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

It is enough for you

"You have done too many bad things" or "You have been acting badly for far too long"

Ezekiel 45:10

scales

instruments that were used to weigh things that people sold or bought

Ezekiel 45:11

The ephah and the bath

An ephah and a bath are measurments that are equal to about 22 liters.

so that a bath will be a tenth of a homer

"so that ten baths will be the same amount as a homer"

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homer
A homer is equal to about 220 liters.
Ezekiel 45:12
shekel
about 11 grams
gerahs
about 0.55 grams
mina
about 660 grams
Ezekiel 45:13
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
for every homer of wheat
It is implied that this is the amount of wheat that the people harvest. Alternate translation: "for every homer of wheat from the harvest"
Ezekiel 45:14
The regulation offering of oil will be a tenth of a bath
"You must offer one tenth of a bath of oil"
bath
This equals about 22 liters.
cor
This equals about 220 liters.
homer
This equals about 220 liters.
Ezekiel 45:15
the well-watered land of Israel
"the parts of Israel that get a good amount of water"
These will be used for the grain offerings, the burnt offerings, and the peace offerings
The word "These" refers to the items listed in verses 13 through 15. Alternate translation: "The wheat or barley and the oil will be used for the grain offerings, and the sheep or goats will be used for the burnt offerings and the peace offerings"
will be used for
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will use for"
Ezekiel 45:16
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
Ezekiel 45:17
the fixed festivals
the festivals that happen at the same time every year or month or week
the house of Israel
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob over many years. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 3:1]
Ezekiel 45:18
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
The Lord Yahweh says this
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and the people that what he is saying is important. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:11]
In the first month, on the first day of the month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the end of March on Western calendars.
you will take
The word "you" is singular and refers to whoever is the prince in Israel.
Ezekiel 45:20
on the seventh of the month
"on the seventh day of the first month"
for each person's sin by accident or ignorance
"for each person who had sinned without meaning to or because he did not know he was sinning" or "for each person who had sinned by accident or because he did not now what was right"
Ezekiel 45:21
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
In the first month on the fourteenth day of the month
This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourteenth day is near the beginning of April.
for you
The word "you" is plural and refers to the prince and the rest of the people of the house of Israel.
Ezekiel 45:23
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
Seven bulls and seven unblemished rams
"Seven bulls and seven rams that are completely healthy"
Ezekiel 45:24
food offering
This is also called a "grain offering."
an ephah
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "twenty-two liters"
a hin
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "four liters"
each ephah
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "each twenty-two liters"
Ezekiel 45:25
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.
In the seventh month on the fifteenth day of the month
This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of October.
at the festival
This is a different festival from the festival Ezekiel was describing before.

46 [1]The Lord Yahweh says this: The gate of the inner courtyard, facing east, will be shut for the six days of work, but on the Sabbath it will be opened, and on the day of the new moon it will be opened.[2]The prince will enter the outer

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courtyard by the way of the gate and its portico from outside, and he will stand before the doorposts of the inner gate while the priests perform his burnt offering and peace offering. Then he will worship at the threshold of the inner gate and go out, but the gate will not be shut until evening.
[3]The people of the land will also worship before Yahweh at the entrance to this gate on the Sabbaths and new moons.[4]The burnt offering that the prince offers to Yahweh on the Sabbath day will be six unblemished lambs and an unblemished ram.[5]The grain offering with the ram will be an ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs will be what he wishes to give, and a hin of oil with each ephah of grain.

[6]On the day of the new moon he must offer an unblemished bull from a herd, six lambs, and an unblemished ram.[7]He must make a grain offering of an ephah for the bull and an ephah for the ram, and what he wishes to give for the lambs, and a hin of oil for every ephah of grain.[8]When the prince enters by the way of the gate and its portico, he must leave by the same way.

[9]But when the people of the land come before Yahweh at the appointed festivals, anyone entering through the north gate to worship must leave through the south gate; and anyone entering through the south gate must leave through the north gate. No one may turn back to the gate through which he entered, for he must go out straight ahead.[10]The prince must be in their midst; when they go in, he must go in, and when they leave, he must leave.
[11]At the festivals, the grain offering must be an ephah of grain for the bull and an ephah for the ram, and whatever he wishes to give with the lambs, and a hin of oil for every ephah.[12]When the prince gives a freewill offering, either a burnt offering or a peace offering to Yahweh, the gate facing east will be opened for him. He will offer his burnt offering or his peace offering as he does it on the Sabbath day. Then he must go out, and after he has gone out the gate will be shut.

[13]In addition, you will give an unblemished lamb one year old as a burnt offering to Yahweh daily; you will do this morning after morning.[14]You will give a grain offering with it morning after morning, a sixth of an ephah and a third of a hin of oil to moisten the flour of the grain offering for Yahweh, according to a permanent statute.[15]They will prepare the lamb, the grain offering, and the oil morning after morning, a permanent burnt offering.

[16]The Lord Yahweh says this: If the prince gives a gift to one of his sons, it is his inheritance. It will also belong to his descendants. It is their property by inheritance.[17]But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, then it will be that servant's until the year of liberty, and then it will return to the prince. His inheritance will certainly be for his sons.[18]The prince will not take the people's inheritance, oppressing them by taking their own property; he must provide for his sons from his own property so that my people will not be scattered, each man from his own property.'"

[19]Next the man brought me through the entrance at the gate to the holy rooms for the priests, which faced north and behold! There was a place toward the west.[20]He said to me, "This is the place where the priests must boil the guilt offering and the sin offering and where they must bake the grain offering. They must not bring the offerings into the outer courtyard, for then the people would be consecrated."
[21]Then he brought me to the outer courtyard and he led me past the four corners of that courtyard, and I saw that in every corner of the courtyard there was another court.[22]In the four corners of the outer courtyard there were four small courtyards, forty cubits in length and thirty in width. The four courtyards were the same size.[1][23]There was a row made of stone all around the four of them, and cooking hearths were under the stone row.[24]The man said to me, "These are the places where the temple servants will boil the people's sacrifices."

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[1]The Hebrew word translated here as small is unclear. Some ancient and some modern translations translate it as "small". However, there is some uncertainty about this word, and others translate it differently.

Ezekiel 46 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. This chapter focuses on many of the temple's rules. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 46:1 Notes

Ezekiel 46:1

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.

The Lord Yahweh says this

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and

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the people that what he is saying is important. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:11]

The gate of the inner courtyard, facing east

"the gate on the east side of the inner courtyard" or "the eastern gate of the inner courtyard"

inner courtyard

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.

Ezekiel 46:2

inner gate

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 40:19.

Ezekiel 46:3

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.

before Yahweh

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 43:24.

Ezekiel 46:6

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.

unblemished

perfectly healthy and normal

Ezekiel 46:8

portico

covering in front of an entrance with columns or posts for support. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 8:16.

Ezekiel 46:9

before Yahweh

"in front of Yahweh" or "in the presence of Yahweh." See how you translated this in Ezekiel 44:3.

appointed festivals

Translate as you translated "appointed feasts" in Ezekiel 36:37.

Ezekiel 46:12

the gate facing east will be opened for him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Levites will open the gate facing east for him"

the gate facing east

"the eastern gate" or "the gate on the east side of the courtyard"

Ezekiel 46:13

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the princes of Israel.

Ezekiel 46:14

to moisten

"which will soak"

Ezekiel 46:16

The Lord Yahweh says this

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to remind Ezekiel and the people that what he is saying is important. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 6:11]

Ezekiel 46:17

year of liberty

This is the year that a servant gains freedom. This is also called the "Year of Jubilee."

Ezekiel 46:19

which faced north

"which had their main entrances to the north"

behold!

Ezekiel saw something interesting.

Ezekiel 46:20

outer courtyard

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:5.

Ezekiel 46:21

outer courtyard

See how you translated this in Ezekiel 10:5.

Ezekiel 46:22

forty cubits ... thirty

Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]

Ezekiel 46:23

cooking hearths

places where people can build fire and cook food

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47 [1]Then the man took me back to the entrance to the temple, and there was water flowing out from under the temple threshold of the house toward the east—for the front of the temple faced east—and the water was flowing down the south side of the temple, to the right of the altar.[2]So he brought me out through the northern gate and led me around to the gate facing east, and there the water was flowing from this gate on its south side.

[3]As the man was going toward the east, there was a measuring line in his hand; he measured off one thousand cubits and brought me through the water to ankle-deep water.[4]Then he measured one thousand cubits again and brought me through the water to knee-deep water; and he measured another thousand cubits and brought me to hip-deep water.
[5]Next he measured off another thousand cubits, but it was a river that I could not cross through because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—it was a river that could not be crossed.

[6]The man said to me, "Son of man, do you see this?" and he brought me out and had me walk back along the riverbank.[7]As I walked back, there the riverbank had many trees on this side and also the other side.[8]The man said to me, "This water is going out to the eastern territory and down to the Arabah; this water flows into the Salt Sea and will make it fresh.
[9]It will be that every living creature that swarms will live where the water goes; there will be many fish, for these waters flow there. It will make the salt water fresh. Everything will live wherever the river goes.[10]Then it will happen that fishermen of En Gedi will stand by the water, and there will be a place to dry out the fishing nets by En Eglaim. There will be many kinds of fish in the Salt Sea, like the fish in the Great Sea for their abundance.
[11]But the Salt Sea's swamps and marshes will not be made fresh; they will be for providing salt.[12]Beside this river on its banks, on both sides, all kinds of trees will grow that bear food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will never fail

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to grow. Each month the trees will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves will be for healing.

[13]The Lord Yahweh says this: This will be the way that you divide the land up for the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph will have two portions.[14]You are to divide equally what I lifted up my hand and swore to give to your fathers. This land will come to you as an inheritance.

[15]This will be the boundary of the land on the north side from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon, and then to Zedad.[1][16]Then the boundary will go to Berothah, to Sibraim, which is between Damascus and Hamath, and then to Hazer Hattikon, which is beside the boundary of Hauran.[17]So the boundary will go from the sea to Hazar Enan on the border with Damascus and Hamath to the north. This will be the north side.

[18]On the east side the boundary will run between Hauran and Damascus, along the Jordan River between Gilead and the land of Israel. You will measure from the border to the eastern sea. This will be the eastern border.[2]
[19]Then on the south side the boundary will run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribah Kadesh, then along the brook of Egypt to the Great Sea. This will be the boundary on the south side.
[20]Then the boundary on the west side will be the Great Sea to a point opposite Lebo Hamath. This will be the west side.

[21]In this way you will divide this land for yourselves, for the tribes of Israel.[22]So you will distribute the inheritances for yourselves and for the foreigners in your midst, those who have given birth to children in your midst and who are, with you, like the native born people of Israel. You will cast lots for inheritances among the tribes of Israel.[23]Then it will happen that the foreigner will be with the tribe among whom he is living. You must give him an inheritance—this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration."

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text read: by way of Hethlon, and then to Zedad, but some modern translations follow Ezekiel 48:1 at this point, and add Lebo Hamath.
[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text read: You will measure from the border to the eastern sea. However, the ancient Greek translations of the Hebrew copies, and many modern translations read to the eastern sea as far as Tamar.

Ezekiel 47 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. There was a river flowing from the temple. The land was to be divided among the tribes. The landscape of Jerusalem will have changed in a significant way. (See: temple)

Links:

Ezekiel 47:1 Notes

Ezekiel 47:1
to the right of the altar
This is the right side of the altar when a person looks at it while they are facing east, so it is on the south side of the altar. Alternate translation: "on the south side of the altar"
Ezekiel 47:2
the gate facing east
"the eastern gate" or "the eastern gate of the outer wall"
Ezekiel 47:3
measuring line
a string or a rope that people use to measure longer distances
one thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. Alternate translation: "1,000 cubits" or "about 540 meters"
Ezekiel 47:5
a river that could not be crossed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "a river that no one could cross on foot"
Ezekiel 47:6
Son of man
"Son of a human being" or "Son of humanity." God calls Ezekiel this to emphasize that Ezekiel is only a human being. God is eternal and powerful, but humans are not. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 2:1. Alternate translation: "Mortal person" or "Human"
do you see this?
Yahweh is commanding Ezekiel to think about what he has just seen. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 8:15]
Ezekiel 47:10
Then it will happen
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 21:7.
En Gedi
This is the name of a very large spring on the western side of the Salt Sea.
a place to dry out the fishing nets
"a place for people to dry out their fishing nets"
En Eglaim
This is the name of a large spring on the eastern side of the Salt Sea.
Ezekiel 47:11
swamps

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places with shallow water and trees growing in deep mud
marshes
places with shallow water and grasses growing in deep mud
Ezekiel 47:13
Joseph will have two portions
The person is a metonym for his descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph will receive two areas of land"
Ezekiel 47:14
I lifted up my hand and swore
In those days a person would raise his right hand to show that he realized that God would punish him if he did not do what he swore to do.
Ezekiel 47:15
boundary
the end of an area of land
Hethlon ... Zedad
These are the names of towns.
Ezekiel 47:16
Berothah ... Sibraim ... Hazer Hattikon ... Hauran
These are the names of towns.
Ezekiel 47:17
Hazar Enan
the name of a town
border
where two areas of land meet
Ezekiel 47:18
Hauran
This is the name of a town.
Ezekiel 47:19
Tamar ... Meribah Kadesh
These are the names of towns.
the brook of Egypt
a very large ravine in the northeast part of the Sinai
Ezekiel 47:20
Hamath
This is the name of a town.
Ezekiel 47:23
Then it will happen that
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 21:7.
this is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]

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48 [1]These are the names of the tribes. The tribe of Dan will receive one portion of land; its boundary will run along the northern boundary of Israel by way of Hethlon and Lebo Hamath. Its boundary will go on to Hazar Enan and along the border with Damascus to the north and then on to Hamath. Dan's boundary will go from east all the way to the Great Sea.[2]Adjoining the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher will have one portion.[3]Adjoining the border of Asher from the east side to the west, Naphtali will have one portion.
[4]Adjoining the border of Naphtali from the east side to the west, Manasseh will have one portion.[5]Adjoining the border of Manasseh from the east side to the west, Ephraim will have one portion.[6]Adjoining the border of Ephraim from the east side to the west, Reuben will have one portion.[7]Adjoining the border of Reuben from the east side to the west, Judah will have one portion.

[8]The offering of land that you will make will be along the border with Judah and extend from the east side to the west side; it will be twenty-five thousand cubits in width. Its length will correspond to one tribe's portion from the east side to the west side, and the sanctuary will be in the middle of it.[9]This land that you will offer up to Yahweh will be twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand cubits in width.
[10]These will be the assignments of this holy portion of land: The priests will have land assigned to them measuring twenty-five thousand cubits in length on the north side; ten thousand cubits in width on the west side; ten thousand cubits in width on the east side; and twenty-five thousand cubits in length on the south side, with the holy place of Yahweh in the middle of it.[11]This will be for the consecration of the priests of the line of Zadok, who have served me faithfully and who did not go astray when the people of Israel went astray, as the Levites did.[12]The offering for them will be a portion of this most holy land, extending to the border of the Levites.

[13]The Levites' land along the border with the priests' land will be twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand cubits in width. The entire length of the two tracts of land will be twenty-five thousand cubits in length and twenty thousand cubits in width.[14]They must not sell it or exchange it; none of this firstfruits of the land of Israel must ever be separated from these tracts, for it all is holy to Yahweh.

[15]The remaining land, five thousand cubits in width and twenty-five thousand cubits in length, will be for the collective use of the city, the houses, and the pastureland; the city will be in its midst.[16]These will be the city's measurements: The north side will be 4,500 cubits in length; the south side will be 4,500 cubits in length; the east side will be 4,500 cubits in length; and the west side will be 4,500 cubits in length.
[17]There will be pasture for the city toward the north, 250 cubits deep; to the south, 250 cubits deep; to the east, 250 cubits deep, and to the west, 250 cubits deep.[18]The remaining area of the holy offering will stretch for ten thousand cubits to the east and ten thousand cubits to the west. It will stretch along the border of the holy offering, and its produce will be food for those working in the city.

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[19]The people who work in the city, from all the tribes of Israel, will farm the land.[20]All the land offering will measure twenty-five thousand cubits by twenty-five thousand cubits. In this way you will make the holy offering of land, together with the land for the city.

[21]The rest of the land on either side of the holy offering and the city area will be for the prince. The prince's tract of land to the east will extend for twenty-five thousand cubits from boundary of the holy offering to the eastern border—and his tract to the west will extend for twenty-five thousand cubits to the western border. In the middle will be the holy offering, and the holy place of the temple will be in its midst.[22]The land extending from the property of the Levites and the area of the city in its midst will be for the prince; it will be between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin—this land will be for the prince.

[23]As for the remaining tribes, their portions will also run from the eastern side to the west side. Benjamin will receive one portion.[24]Adjoining the border of Benjamin from the east side to the west, Simeon will have one portion.[25]Adjoining the border of Simeon from the east side to the west, Issachar will have one portion.[26]Adjoining the border of Issachar from the east side to the west, Zebulun will have one portion.
[27]To the south of Zebulun's boundary, running from the east side to the west side, will be the land of Gad—one portion.
[28]The southern boundary of Gad will extend from Tamar to the waters of Meribah Kadesh, and farther to the brook of Egypt, and then to the Great Sea.[29]This is the land for which you will cast lots; it will be the inheritance of the tribes of Israel. These will be their portions. This is the Lord Yahweh's declaration.

[30]These will be the exits from the city: On the north side, which will measure 4,500 cubits in length,[31]will be three gates, named for tribes of Israel: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Levi.[32]On the east side, which will measure 4,500 cubits in length, will be three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan.
[33]On the south side, which is 4,500 cubits in length, will be three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun.[34]On the west side, which will measure 4,500 cubits, will be three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali.[35]The distance around the city will be eighteen thousand cubits; from that day on, the city's name will be "Yahweh Is There."

Ezekiel 48 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Instructions for the new temple and city continue in this chapter. There is more dividing of the land between the tribes in this chapter as well.

Links:

Ezekiel 48:1 Notes

Ezekiel 48:1
one portion of land
"one piece of the land that you will distribute"
boundary will run ... boundary will go
"boundary will be ... boundary will be"
Hethlon
This is the name of a town. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 47:15.
Lebo Hamath
This is the name of a town. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 47:15 or Ezekiel 47:20
Hazar Enan
This is the name of a town. See how you translated this in Ezekiel 47:17.
Ezekiel 48:4
one portion
Translate as you translated "one portion of land" in Ezekiel 48:1.
from the east side to the west
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 48:3.
Ezekiel 48:8
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Israel.
twenty-five thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:9
twenty-five thousand cubits ... ten thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:10
The priests will have land assigned to them
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "The leaders of the Israelites will assign land to the priests"
twenty-five thousand cubits ... ten thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:12
The offering for them will be a portion of this most holy land
"This smaller portion within the holy portion of the land will belong to these priests, a portion that is more holy than the rest of the holy portion of the land"
Ezekiel 48:13
twenty-five thousand cubits ... ten thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you

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translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:14
this firstfruits
"this land which is the firstfruits." Here "firstfruits" probably means the best things among all the offerings set aside to give to God. This land is spoken of in that way, as land set aside for Yahweh's use.
Ezekiel 48:15
five thousand cubits ... twenty-five thousand cubits
"5000 cubits ... 25,000 cubits." Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
will be for the collective use of the city
"will be an area that all the people of the city will share and use"
the houses, and the pastureland
"as a place for houses and for an open space"
Ezekiel 48:16
4,500 cubits
"four thousand five hundred cubits." Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:17
250 cubits
"two hundred and fifty cubits." A cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:18
ten thousand cubits
"10,000 cubits." A cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
its produce
"the food that grows there"
Ezekiel 48:19
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Israel.
Ezekiel 48:20
twenty-five thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
In this way you will make the holy offering of land, together with the land for the city.
"You will offer the holy offering and also the property of the city"
you
This is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
the holy offering
the land that the people of Israel gave to Yahweh for the Levites, the priests, and the temple
Ezekiel 48:21
the holy offering
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 48:18.
twenty-five thousand cubits
Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:23
one portion
Translate as you translated "one portion of land" in Ezekiel 48:1.
Ezekiel 48:27
General Information:
Yahweh continues giving Ezekiel his message to the people of Israel.
Ezekiel 48:28
Tamar ... Meribah Kadesh
names of towns. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 47:19]
the brook of Egypt
a very large ravine in the northeast part of the Sinai. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 47:19]
Ezekiel 48:29
you
This is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
cast lots
See how you translated this in Ezekiel 45:1.
This is the Lord Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 5:11]
Ezekiel 48:30
4,500 cubits
"four thousand five hundred cubits." Each long cubit was about 54 centimeters. See how you translated this in [Ezekiel 40:5]
Ezekiel 48:33
4,500 cubits
"four thousand five hunded cubits." This is about 2.4 kilometers.

Introduction to Daniel

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Daniel

Daniel and his friends in the court of Nebuchadnezzar (1:1–21) Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's first dream (2:1–49) Daniel's friends delivered from the fiery furnace (3:1–30) Daniel interprets Nebuchadnezzar's second dream (4:1–37) Belshazzar's feast and the writing on the wall (5:1-31) Daniel in the den of lions (6:1–28) Daniel's vision of four beasts (7:1–28) Daniel's vision of a ram and a goat (8:1–27) Daniel prays and Gabriel answers (9:1–23) Daniel's vision of seventy weeks (9:24–27) Daniel's vision of a man (10:1–11:1) The kings of the south and north (11:2–20) An evil king exalts himself (11:21-39) The time of the end (11:40–12:13)

What is the Book of Daniel about?

The first part of the Book of Daniel (chapters 1–6) is a narrative about Daniel and his friends. They were young men from Jerusalem who were taken to Babylon as prisoners. These chapters tell how they were faithful to Yahweh while living in a

pagan land serving a pagan king. And it tells how God rewarded them because they were faithful.
The rest of the Book of Daniel is a series of prophetic visions. Chapters 7 and 8 deal with images representing the kingdoms and kings of the major nations. Chapters 9–11 are prophecies and visions about wars and a type of the great enemy of God appearing. Chapter 12 is a vision that describes end times.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Daniel" or just "Daniel." Translators may call it "The Book About Daniel" or "The Book About the Deeds and Visions of Daniel."

Who wrote the Book of Daniel?

Daniel was a Jew who became a Babylonian government official during the exile. He may have written the book himself. Or he may have written the parts of the book and someone else put the parts together at a later time.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why do Daniel and his friends each have two names?

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were four men from Judah. Their names were Hebrew names. When the king of Babylon forced them to go to Babylon, his chief official gave them Babylonian names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. In chapters 1 and 2, Daniel's friends are primarily called by their Hebrew names. Chapters 3 and 4 tell about their interactions with the Babylonian king, and in those chapters their Babylonian names are used. Throughout the book Daniel refers to himself with his Hebrew name, but in chapters 4, 5, and 10, he also mentions his Babylonian name several times.

Is there a missing week in Daniel's prophecy?

Scholars disagree about what may appear to be a missing week in 9:24-27. It is best for translators to allow apparent mysteries such as this to remain in the text.

When did the seventy weeks begin?

The seventy weeks in 9:24-27 began when a decree was issued to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. But there were several decrees that allowed this to happen. Translators do not need to understand how prophecies were or will be fulfilled to translate the text.

Who was Darius the Mede?

Darius the Mede was a Babylonian king who sent Daniel into a den of lions. People have not found his name in history outside of the Book of Daniel. Scholars have tried to explain who Darius was, but they are not certain.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does Daniel use the word "king"?

Many kings are in the Book of Daniel, but not all of the kings ruled over all of Babylon or Persia. Some of the kings may have ruled over regions or cities.

Why is the book of Daniel longer in some Bibles than in others?

The book of Daniel was first written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Later it was translated into Greek. The oldest Greek translation includes the following stories that the Hebrew and Aramaic version does not have: "The Prayer of Azariah," "The Song of the Three Holy Children," "Susanna and the Elders," and "Bel and the Dragon." These are not included in the Unlocked Literal Bible. However, if your church teaches that these stories should be included in the Bible, then you may translate them from versions of the Bible that include them.

Daniel

1 [1]In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia came to Jerusalem and surrounded the city to cut off all supplies to it.[2]The Lord gave Nebuchadnezzar victory over Jehoiakim king of Judah, and he gave him some of the sacred objects from the house of God. He brought them into the land of Babylonia, to the house of his god, and he placed the sacred objects in his god's treasury.
[3]The king spoke to Ashpenaz, his chief official, to bring in some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility—[4]young men without blemish, attractive in appearance, having insight in all wisdom, filled with knowledge and understanding, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.[5]The king counted out for them a daily portion of his delicacies and some of the wine that he drank. These young men were to be trained for three years, and after that, they would serve the king.
[6]Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, some of the people of Judah.[7]The chief official gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

[8]But Daniel intended in his mind that he would not pollute himself with the king's delicacies or with the wine that he drank. So he asked permission from the chief official that he might not defile himself.[9]Now God gave Daniel favor and compassion through the respect that the chief official had for him.[10]The chief official said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my

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master the king. He has commanded what food and drink you should have. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men of your own age? The king might have my head because of you."
[11]Then Daniel spoke to the steward whom the chief official had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.[12]He said, "Please test us, your servants, for ten days. Give us only some vegetables to eat and water to drink.[13]Then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the king's delicacies, and treat us, your servants, based on what you see."

[14]So the steward agreed with him to do this, and he tested them for ten days.[15]At the end of ten days their appearance was more healthy, and they were better nourished, than all the young men who ate the king's delicacies.[16]So the steward took away their delicacies and their wine and gave them only vegetables.

[17]As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and insight in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel could understand all kinds of visions and dreams.[18]At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.
[19]The king spoke with them, and among the whole group there were none to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They stood before the king, ready to serve him.[20]In every question of wisdom and understanding that the king asked them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and those who claimed to speak with the dead, who were in his entire kingdom.[21]Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Daniel 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Training for government jobs

Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were chosen to be trained for service in the Babylonian kingdom. It was not unusual for foreigners to be given positions in the Babylonian government as advisors or cultural ambassadors.

Special concepts in this chapter

Food laws

The food from the king included things the Jews were not allowed to eat according to the law of Moses. Daniel requested permission not to eat the king's food. He proved to the king that this food was not necessary for good health. (See: lawofmoses)

Links:

Daniel 1:1 Notes Daniel intro

Daniel 1:1

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia

This refers to Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers, not only to Nebuchadnezzar. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia and his soldiers"

to cut off all supplies to it

"to stop the people from receiving any supplies"

Jehoiakim king of Judah

This refers to Jehoiakim and his soldiers, not only to Jehoiakim. Alternate translation: "the army of Jehoiakim king of Judah"

Daniel 1:2

gave Nebuchadnezzar

This refers to Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers, not only to Nebuchadnezzar. Alternate translation: "gave Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia and his soldiers"

he gave him

Jehoiakim gave Nebuchadnezzar

He brought ... he placed

Although Nebuchadnezzar did not do these things alone, it may easier for the reader to retain the singular pronouns. Alternate translation: "They brought ... they placed"

He brought them

Here "them" probably refers to Jehoiakim and other prisoners, as well as the sacred objects.

in his god's treasury

This was an act of devotion to his god.

Daniel 1:3

The king spoke

This refers to Nebuchadnezzar.

Ashpenaz

This is the chief official.

Daniel 1:4

without blemish

These two negative words together emphasize a positive idea. Alternate translation: "with perfect appearance"

filled with knowledge and understanding

This is an idiom. This means they knew much and could organize and use that information.

king's palace

This is the large house or building where the king lives.

He was to teach them

"Ashpenaz was to teach them"

the literature

"the writings"

Daniel 1:5

The king counted out for them

The king's officials did this task for him. Alternate

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translation: "The king's officials counted out for them"

his delicacies

the special, rare, good foods that the king ate

These young men were to be trained

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Ashpenaz was to train these young men"

trained

"taught skills"

Daniel 1:6

Among these

"Among the young men from Israel"

Daniel 1:7

The chief official

This refers to Ashpenaz who was King Nebuchadnezzar's highest official.

Belteshazzar ... Shadrach ... Meshach ... Abednego

These are all men's names.

Daniel 1:8

Daniel intended in his mind

Here "mind" refers to Daniel himself. Alternate translation: "Daniel decided to himself"

pollute himself

To "pollute" something is to make is unclean. Some of the food and drink of the Babylonians would make Daniel ceremonially unclean according to God's law. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "make himself unclean according to God's law"

delicacies

This refers to the special, rare, good foods that the king ate. See how you translated this in Daniel 1:3.

Daniel 1:10

Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men of your own age?

The official uses this question to explain what he thought would happen. It can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He does not want to see you looking worse than the other young men of your own age."

The king might have my head

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The king might cut off my head" or "The king might kill me"

Daniel 1:13

compare our appearance with the appearance

Daniel asked the steward to see if he and his friends looked worse than the other young men. Alternate translation: "compare our appearance to see if it is worse than the appearance"

Daniel 1:14

tested them

tested Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah

Daniel 1:15

their appearance ... they were

The pronouns refer to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

nourished

This means to have been made healthy from what you have eaten.

Daniel 1:16

their delicacies ... their wine ... gave them

All of these pronouns refer to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

Daniel 1:17

God gave them knowledge and insight

This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns "knowledge" and "insight" can be expressed as the verbs "learn" and "understand." Alternate translation: "God gave them the ability to learn and understand clearly"

in all literature and wisdom

Here "all" is a generalization to show that they had a very good education and understanding. Alternate translation: "in many things that the Babylonians had written and studied"

Daniel 1:19

The king spoke with them

The king spoke with the "four young men" (Daniel 1:17).

among the whole group there were none to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah pleased him much more than anyone else in the whole group"

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah

These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in Daniel 1:6.

Daniel 1:20

ten times better

Here "ten times" is an exaggeration representing great quality. Alternate translation: "much better"

Daniel 1:21

the first year of King Cyrus

"the first year that King Cyrus ruled Babylon"

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2 [1]In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he had dreams. His mind was troubled, and he could not sleep.
[2]Then the king summoned the magicians and those who claimed to speak with the dead. He also called the sorcerers and educated men. He wanted them to tell him his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king.
[3]The king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my mind is anxious to know what the dream means."[4]Then the educated men spoke to the king in Aramaic, "King, live forever! Tell the dream to us, your servants, and we will reveal the interpretation."
[5]The king replied to the educated men, "This matter has been settled. If you do not reveal to me the dream and its interpretation, your bodies will be torn apart and your houses made into rubbish heaps.[6]But if you will tell me the dream and its interpretation, you will receive gifts from me, a reward, and great honor. So tell to me the dream and its interpretation."
[7]They replied again and said, "Let the king tell us, his servants, the dream and we will tell you its interpretation."[8]The king answered, "I know for certain that you want more time because you see how firm my decision is about this.[9]But if you do not tell me the dream, there is only one sentence for you. You have decided to prepare false and corrupt words that you

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agreed together to say to me until I change my mind. So then, tell me the dream, and then I will know that you can tell the interpretation."
[10]The educated men replied to the king, "There is not a man on earth able to meet the king's demand. There is no great king or ruler who has demanded such a thing from any magician, or from anyone who claims to speak with the dead, or from an educated man.[11]What the king demands is difficult, and there is no one who can tell it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans."
[12]This made the king angry and very furious, and he gave an order to destroy all the wise men in Babylon.[13]So the decree went out to put the wise men to death, and they sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death.

[14]Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch the commander of the king's bodyguard, who had come to kill all the wise men in Babylon.[15]Daniel asked the king's commander, "Why is the king's decree so urgent?" So Arioch told Daniel what had happened.[16]Then Daniel went in and requested an appointment with the king so that he could present the interpretation to the king.

[17]Then Daniel went to his house and explained to his companions Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah what had happened.
[18]He urged them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his friends might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.
[19]That night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven[20]and Daniel said,

"Praise the name of God forever and ever,
for wisdom and power belong to him.
[21] He changes the times and seasons;
he removes kings and places kings on their thrones.
He gives wisdom to wise men
and knowledge to those who have understanding.

[22] He reveals the deep and hidden things
because he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light lives with him.

[23] God of my ancestors, I thank you and praise you
for the wisdom and power you gave to me.
Now you have made known to me what we asked of you;
you have made known to us the matter that concerns the king."

[24]Then Daniel went in to see Arioch (the one the king appointed to kill everyone who was wise in Babylon). He went and said to him, "Do not destroy the wise men in Babylon. Take me to the king and I will show the king the interpretation of his dream."

[25]Then Arioch quickly brought in Daniel before the king and said, "I have found among the exiles of Judah a man who will reveal the interpretation of the king's dream."[26]The king said to Daniel (whose name was Belteshazzar), "Are you able to tell me the dream that I saw and its interpretation?"
[27]Daniel answered the king and said, "The mystery that the king has asked about cannot be revealed by wise men, nor by those who claim to speak with the dead, nor by magicians, and not by astrologers.[28]Nevertheless, there is a God who lives in the heavens, who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to you, King Nebuchadnezzar, what will happen in the days to come. These were your dream and the visions of your mind as you lay on your bed.
[29]As for you, king, your thoughts on your bed were about things to come, and the one who reveals mysteries has made known to you what is about to happen.[30]As for me, this mystery was not revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living person. This mystery was revealed to me so that you, king, may understand the interpretation, and so that you may know the thoughts of your mind.

[31]King, you looked up and you saw a great statue. This statue, which was large and had exceeding splendor, stood before you. Its brightness was terrifying.[32]The head of the statue was made of fine gold. Its breast and arms were of silver. Its middle and its thighs were made of bronze,[33]and its legs were made of iron. Its feet were made partly of iron and partly of clay.
[34]You looked up, and a stone was cut out, although not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and it shattered them.[35]Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold at the same time were broken into pieces and became like the chaff of the threshing floors in the summer. The wind carried them away and there was no trace of them left. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

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[36]This was the dream. Now we will tell the king the interpretation.[37]You, king, are king of the kings to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength, and the honor.[38]He has given into your hand the place where the human beings live. He has given over the animals of the field and the birds of the heavens into your hand, and he has made you rule over them all. You are the statue's head of gold.
[39]After you, another kingdom will arise that is inferior to you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze will rule over all the earth.
[40]There will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks other things into pieces and shatters everything. It will shatter all these things and crush them.
[41]Just as you saw, the feet and toes were partly made of baked clay and partly made of iron, so it will be a divided kingdom; some of the strength of iron will be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay.[42]As the toes of the feet were partly made of iron and partly made of clay, so the kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle.[43]As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so the people will be a mixture; they will not stay together, just as iron does not mix with clay.
[44]In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be conquered by another people. It will break the other kingdoms into pieces and put an end to all of them, and it will remain forever.
[45]Just as you saw, a stone was cut out of the mountain, but not by human hands. It broke the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold into pieces. The great God has made known to you, king, what will happen after this. The dream is true and this interpretation is reliable."

[46]King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face before Daniel and honored him; he commanded that an offering be made and that incense be offered up to him.[47]The king said to Daniel, "Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and the one who reveals mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery."
[48]Then the king made Daniel highly honored and gave him many wonderful gifts. He made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon. Daniel became chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon.[49]Daniel made a request of the king, and the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be administrators over the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.

Daniel 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in Daniel's prayer in 2:20-23.

Special concepts in this chapter

The king's dream

Daniel told the king's dream and what the dream meant. In the ancient Near East, it was believed that only people in touch with the gods could interpret dreams. (See: falsegod)

How Daniel knew the dream

Daniel gave Yahweh the honor for having told him the dream and its meaning in answer to the prayers of the four men.

Links:

Daniel 2:1 Notes

Daniel 2:1

In the second year

"In year two"

he had dreams

"Nebuchadnezzar had dreams"

His mind was troubled

Here "mind" refers to his thoughts. Alternate translation: "His thoughts disturbed him"

and he could not sleep

His troubled thoughts prevented him from sleeping. Alternate translation: "so that he could not sleep"

Daniel 2:2

Then the king summoned the magicians

"Then the king called the magicians"

the dead

"people who had died"

educated men

Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge.

they came in

"they came into the palace"

stood before

"stood in front of"

to tell him his dreams

"to tell him what he had dreamed"

Daniel 2:3

my mind is anxious

Here "mind" refers to the king himself. Alternate translation: "I am anxious"

anxious

"troubled"

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Daniel 2:4

educated men

Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 2:2.

Aramaic

This is the language that people in Babylon spoke.

King, live forever!

The men probably said this to show the king that they were loyal to him. Alternate translation: "King, we hope you will live forever!"

us, your servants

The men called themselves the king's servants to show him respect.

we will reveal

Here the word "we" refers to the men that the king is speaking to and does not include the king.

will reveal the interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "will interpret it for you" or "will reveal what the dream means"

Daniel 2:5

educated men

Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 2:2.

This matter has been settled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have already decided what to do about this matter"

reveal to me the dream and its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

your bodies will be torn apart and your houses made into rubbish heaps

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will command my soldiers to tear your bodies apart and to make your houses into rubbish heaps"

Daniel 2:6

tell me the dream and its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

you will receive gifts from me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give you gifts"

Daniel 2:7

Let the king tell us

The wise men addressed the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: "Please tell us"

we will tell you its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 2:8

you see how firm my decision is about this

A decision that will not be changed is spoken of as something firm. Alternate translation: "you see that I will not change my decision about this"

Daniel 2:9

there is only one sentence for you

"there is only one punishment for you"

false and corrupt words

These two words mean approximately the same thing and emphasize that these are "lies intended to deceive."

you can tell the interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 2:10

educated men ... educated man

or "Chaldeans ... Chaldean." These phrases translate a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated similar words in Daniel 2:2.

Daniel 2:11

there is no one who can tell it to the king except the gods

This double negative emphasizes that only the gods can tell it to the king. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "the only ones who can tell it to the king are the gods" or "only the gods can tell this to the king"

Daniel 2:12

angry and very furious

These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of his anger. Alternate translation: "incredibly angry"

wise men

This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise.

Daniel 2:13

So the decree went out

The decree is spoken of as if it was alive and able to go out by itself. Alternate translation: "So the king issued a command" or "So the king gave a command"

to put the wise men to death

"to kill the wise men"

wise men

This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.

Daniel 2:14

prudence and discretion

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of his prudence. Alternate translation: "caution and careful judgment"

Arioch

This is the name of the king's commander.

bodyguard

This is a group of men whose job is to protect the king.

who had come to kill

"whom the king had sent out to kill"

all the wise men in Babylon

The phrase "wise men" translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.

Daniel 2:16

Daniel went in

Daniel probably went to the palace. Alternate translation: "Daniel went to the palace" or "Daniel went to talk with the king"

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requested an appointment with the king
"asked for a set time to meet with the king"
he could present the interpretation to the king
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4]
Daniel 2:17
his house
This is referring to Daniel's house.
what had happened
"about the king's decree"
Daniel 2:18
He urged them to seek mercy
"He begged them to pray for mercy"
so that Daniel and his friends might not be destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the king would not destroy Daniel and his friends" or "so that the king's bodyguard would not destroy Daniel and his friends"
destroyed
killed
wise men
This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.
Daniel 2:19
That night the mystery was revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "That night God revealed the mystery"
the mystery
This is referring to the king's dream and its meaning.
Daniel 2:20
Praise the name of God
Here "name" refers to God himself. Alternate translation: "Praise God"
Daniel 2:21
General Information:
These verses are also part of Daniel's prayer.
he removes kings
"he takes away kings' authority to rule"
places kings on their thrones
Here being on the "throne" refers to ruling over a kingdom. Alternate translation: "makes new kings rule over their kingdoms"
wise men
This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.
Daniel 2:22
the light lives with him
"the light comes from where God is"
Daniel 2:23
General Information:
This verse is also part of Daniel's prayer. He stops addressing God in the third person and switches to the more personal second person.
made known to me what we asked of you
"told me what my friends and I asked you to tell us"
made known to us the matter that concerns the king
"told us what the king wants to know"
Daniel 2:24
Arioch
This is the name of the king's commander. See how you translated this name in [Daniel 2:14]
wise men
This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.
I will show the king the interpretation of his dream
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
Daniel 2:25
will reveal the interpretation of the king's dream
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
the king's dream
Arioch speaks to the king in third person to show him respect. Alternate translation: "your dream"
Daniel 2:26
whose name was Belteshazzar
Belteshazzar was the name the Babylonians gave to Daniel. See how you translated this name in [Daniel 1:7]
tell me the dream that I saw and its interpretation
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
Daniel 2:27
The mystery that the king has asked about ... not by astrologers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those who have wisdom, those who claim to speak with the dead, magicians, and astrologers cannot reveal the mystery about which the king has asked"
The mystery that the king has asked about
This phrase refers to the king's dream.
wise men
This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.
Daniel 2:29
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
the one who reveals mysteries
This phrase refers to God. Alternate translation: "God, who reveals mysteries" or "God, who makes mysteries known"
Daniel 2:30
this mystery was not revealed to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not reveal this mystery to me"
This mystery was revealed to me so that you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He revealed the mystery to me so that you"
you ... may understand the interpretation
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4]
know the thoughts of your mind
"know the thoughts of your innermost being" or "know your innermost thoughts"
Daniel 2:31
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.

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Daniel 2:32
was made of fine gold
"was of fine gold" or "was fine gold"
Daniel 2:33
were made partly of iron and partly of clay
"were partly of iron and partly of clay" or "were partly iron and partly clay"
Daniel 2:34
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
a stone was cut out, although not by human hands, and it
This can be stated in active form if it is divided into two sentences. Alternate translation: "someone cut a stone from a mountain, but it was not a human who cut it. The stone"
Daniel 2:35
like the chaff of the threshing floors in the summer
This phrase is comparing the pieces of the statue to small and light things which could be blown away by the wind. Alternate translation: "like dry pieces of grass blowing away in the wind"
there was no trace of them left
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "they were completely gone"
filled the whole earth
"spread over the whole earth"
Daniel 2:36
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
Now we will tell the king
Here "we" refers only to Daniel. He may have used to plural form in humility to avoid taking credit for knowing the meaning of the dream that God had revealed to him.
we will tell the king the interpretation
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
we will tell the king
Daniel speaks of himself in plural and to the king in third person to show respect. Alternate translation: "I will tell you"
Daniel 2:37
king of the kings
"the most important king" or "a king who rules over other kings"
the power, the strength
These words mean basically the same thing.
Daniel 2:38
He has given into your hand the place
Here "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "He has given you control over the place"
the place where the human beings live
The place is used to represent the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of the land"
He has given over the animals ... into your hand
Here "hand" refers to control. Alternate translation: "He has given you control over the animals of the fields and the birds of the heavens"
animals of the field
"wild animals in the fields." Here "the field" is places where the plants that grow there are useless to people.
birds of the heavens
Here "heavens" is used in the sense of "skies."
You are the statue's head of gold
In the king's dream the statue's head represents the king. Alternate translation: "The golden head symbolizes you" or "The golden head is a symbol of you and your power"
Daniel 2:39
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
another kingdom will arise
In the king's dream his kingdom is gold so an inferior kingdom would be silver. Alternate translation: "another kingdom, which is of silver, will arise" or "another kingdom, which is represented by the silver parts of the statue, will arise"
yet a third kingdom of bronze
This is symbolic language where the bronze of parts of the statue represent a future kingdom. Alternate translation: "then still another kingdom, which is represented by the bronze parts of the statue"
a third kingdom
"kingdom number three"
Daniel 2:40
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
There will be a fourth kingdom
"There will be a kingdom number four"
strong as iron
The fourth kingdom is spoken of as being as strong as iron.
It will shatter all these things and crush them
This symbolic language means the fourth kingdom will defeat and replace the other kingdoms.
all these things
"the previous kingdoms"
Daniel 2:41
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
Just as you saw
Nebuchadnezzar saw that the feet consisted of clay and iron. He did not see the process of making the feet.
were partly made of baked clay and partly made of iron
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "were a mixture of baked clay and iron"
Daniel 2:43
they will not stay together
"they will not remain united"
Daniel 2:44
General Information:
Daniel continues talking to the king.
In the days of those kings
Here "those kings" refers to the rulers of the kingdoms symbolized by the different parts of the statue.
that will never be destroyed, nor will it be conquered by another people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one will ever destroy, and that another people never conquer"
Daniel 2:45
a stone was cut out of the mountain, but not by human hands
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"someone cut a stone from the mountain, but it was not a human who cut it"

this interpretation is reliable

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

reliable

trustworthy and correct

Daniel 2:46

fell on his face

This symbolic act showed that the king was honoring Daniel. Alternate translation: "lay down with his face on the ground"

an offering be made and that incense be offered up to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his servants make an offering and offer up incense to Daniel"

Daniel 2:47

Truly your God

"It is true that your God"

the God of gods, the Lord of kings

"greater than all the other gods, and King over all other kings"

the one who reveals mysteries

Translate "the one who reveals mysteries" as in Daniel 2:29.

to reveal this mystery

"to reveal the mystery of my dream"

Daniel 2:48

He made him ruler

"The king made Daniel the ruler"

wise men

This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.

Daniel 2:49

Shadrach ... Meshach ... Abednego

These were the Babylonian names of the three Jewish men who were brought to Babylon with Daniel. See how you translated these names in Daniel 1:7

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3 [1]King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue that was sixty cubits tall and six cubits wide. He set it up in the Plain of Dura
in the province of Babylon.[2]Then Nebuchadnezzar sent messages out to gather together the provincial governors,
regional governors, and local governors, together with the counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the high
officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the statue that the king had set up.
[3]Then the provincial governors, regional governors, and local governors, together with the counselors, treasurers, judges,
magistrates, and all the high officials of the provinces gathered together to the dedication of the statue that King
Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They stood before it.[4]Then a herald loudly shouted, "You are commanded, peoples, nations,
and languages,[5]that at the time you hear the sound of the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, and pipes, and all kinds of
music, you must fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.
[6]Whoever does not fall down and worship, at that very moment, will be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing
fire."[7]So when all the peoples heard the sounds of the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, and pipes, and all kinds of music,
all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set
up.

[8]Now at this time certain Chaldeans came and brought accusations against the Jews.[9]They said to Nebuchadnezzar the
king, "King, live forever![10]You, king, have made a decree that every person who hears the sounds of the horns, flutes,
zithers, lyres, harps, and pipes, and all kinds of music, must fall down and worship the golden statue.
[11]Whoever does not fall down and worship must be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire.[12]Now there are
certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon; their names are Shadrach, Meshach,
and Abednego. These men, king, pay no attention to you. They will not serve your gods or worship the golden statue you
have set up."

[13]Then Nebuchadnezzar, filled with anger and rage, commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought to
him. So they brought these men before the king.[14]Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Have you made your minds up,
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you will not serve my gods or worship to the golden statue that I have set up?
[15]Now if you are ready—when you hear the sounds of the horns, flutes, zithers, lyres, harps, and pipes, and all kinds of
music—to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, all will be well. But if you do not worship, you will
immediately be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire. Who is the god who is able to rescue you out of my
hands?"
[16]Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.
[17]If there is an answer, it is that our God whom we serve is able to keep us safe from the furnace of blazing fire, and he
will rescue us out of your hand, king.[18]But if not, let it be known to you, king, that we will not serve your gods, and we will
not worship the golden statue you set up."

[19]Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage; the look on his face changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He
commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was normally heated.[20]Then he commanded
some very strong men in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of
blazing fire.

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[21]They were tied up still wearing their robes, tunics, turbans, and other clothing, and they were thrown into the middle of the furnace of blazing fire.[22]Because the king's command was strictly followed and the furnace was exceedingly hot, the flames of the fire killed the men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.[23]These three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell into the middle of the furnace of blazing fire while they were tied up.

[24]Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was amazed and stood up quickly. He asked his advisors, "Did we not throw three men tied up into the fire?" They replied to the king, "Certainly, king."[25]He said, "But I see four men who are not tied up walking around in the fire, and they are not hurt. The brilliance of the fourth is like a son of the gods."
[26]Then Nebuchadnezzar came near the door of the furnace of blazing fire and called out, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of God Most High, come out! Come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the middle of the fire.[27]The provincial governors, regional governors, other governors, and the king's counselors who had gathered together saw these men. The fire had not hurt their bodies; the hair on their heads was not singed; their robes were not harmed; and there was no smell of fire on them.

[28]Nebuchadnezzar said, "Let us praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his messenger and rescued his servants who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and they gave up their bodies rather than serve or worship any god except their God.
[29]Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language that speaks anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego must be torn apart, and that their houses must be made into rubbish heaps because there is no other god who is able to save like this."[30]Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

Daniel 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The king's new idol

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to worship the new idol. In the ancient Near East, refusing to worship the king was a sign of rebellion against the king. It was often considered the crime of treason. (See: sign)

The furnace

There was a fourth person with them in the furnace, and because of this they were not hurt. Most scholars believe this to be Jesus before he was born.

Links:

Daniel 3:1 Notes

Daniel 3:1

Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ... He set it up

Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to make a gold statue ... They set it up"

sixty cubits tall and six cubits wide

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "about 27 meters tall and almost 3 meters wide"

Plain of Dura

This is a location within the kingdom of Babylon.

Daniel 3:2

provincial governors ... regional governors ... local governors

These are officials who have authority over different sizes of territory.

treasurers

These officials are in charge of money.

Daniel 3:3

the provincial governors, regional governors, ... officials of the provinces

See how you translated this list in Daniel 3:2.

the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up

Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar's men had set up"

Daniel 3:4

herald

This person is an official messenger for the king.

You are commanded

This can be stated in active form. "The king commands you"

peoples, nations, and languages

Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. Alternate translation: "people from different nations and who speak different languages"

Daniel 3:5

zithers

These are musical instruments similar to harps. They are shaped like triangles and have four strings.

fall down

Here "fall down" means "quickly lie down"

fall down and worship the golden statue

"stretch yourselves out on the ground, face down, in worship of the golden statue"

Daniel 3:6

Whoever does not fall down and worship, at that very moment, will be

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thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers will throw into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire anyone who does not fall down and worship the statue at the very moment they hear the music"
fall down
Here "fall down" means "quickly lie down"
Daniel 3:7
all the peoples, nations, and languages
Here "all" that means all the people who were present.
peoples, nations, and languages
Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated this in [Daniel 3:4]
the horns, flutes ... and pipes
These are musical instruments. See how you translated these words in Daniel 3:5.
fell down and worshiped the golden statue
They did this to worship the statue. Alternate translation: "stretched themselves out on the ground face down in worship of the golden statue"
fell down
Here "fell down" means "quickly lay down"
the golden statue that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up
Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar's men had set up"
Daniel 3:8
Now
This word is used to mark a stop in the main story. Here the writer tells about some new people in the story.
certain Chaldeans
Or "certain educated men." The word translated "Chaldeans" here is translated "educated men" in Daniel 2:2, 4, 5, 10, but here it is not clear whether the author is referring to that group of men or simply to some Chaldean people.
Daniel 3:9
King, live forever
This was a common greeting to the king.
Daniel 3:10
the horns, flutes ... and pipes
These are musical instruments. See how you translated these words in Daniel 3:5.
must fall down and worship
"stretch himself out on the ground face down in worship of"
fall down
Here "fall down" means "quickly lie down"
Daniel 3:11
Whoever does not fall down and worship must be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Soldiers must throw into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire anyone who does not lie down on the ground and worship"
fall down
Here "fall down" means "quickly lie down"
the middle of a furnace of blazing fire
See how you translated this in Daniel 3:6.
Daniel 3:12
affairs
matters having to do with government
Shadrach ... Meshach ... Abednego
These are the Babylonian names of the three Jewish friends of Daniel. See how you translated these names in Daniel 1:7.
pay no attention to you
"do not pay attention to you"
the golden statue you have set up
Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the golden statue your men have set up"
Daniel 3:13
filled with anger and rage
Nebuchadnezzar's anger and rage were so intense that they are spoken of as if they had filled him up. Here "anger" and "rage" mean about the same thing and are used to emphasize how upset the king was. Alternate translation: "extremely angry"
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
These are the Babylonian names of the three Jewish friends of Daniel. See how you translated these names in Daniel 1:7.
Daniel 3:14
Have you made your minds up
Here "mind" refers to deciding. To "make up your mind" is an idiom that means to firmly decide. Alternate translation: "Have you firmly decided"
the golden statue that I have set up
Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the golden statue that my men have set up"
Daniel 3:15
the horns, flutes ... and pipes
These are musical instruments. See how you translated this list in Daniel 3:5.
fall down and worship
"stretch yourselves out on the ground face down in worship of"
fall down
Here "fall down" means "quickly lie down"
all will be well
"there will no longer be a problem" or "you will be free to go"
the statue that I have made
Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the statue that my men have made"
you will immediately be thrown into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my soldiers will immediately throw you into the middle of a furnace of blazing fire"
the middle of a furnace of blazing fire
See how you translated this in Daniel 3:6.
Who is the god ... my hands?
The king does not expect an answer. He is threatening the

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three men. Alternate translation: "No god is able to rescue you from my power!"

out of my hands

Here "hands" refers to power to punish. Alternate translation: "from my punishment"

Daniel 3:17

furnace of blazing fire

See how you translated similar words in Daniel 3:6.

out of your hand

Here "hand" refers to power to punish. Alternate translation: "from your punishment"

Daniel 3:18

But if not, let it be known to you, king, that

"But king, we must let you know that even if our God does not rescue us"

the golden statue you set up

Nebuchadnezzar commanded his men to do this work, he did not do the work himself. Alternate translation: "the golden statue your men set up"

Daniel 3:19

Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage

The king was so angry that rage is spoken of as if it were filling him up. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar became extremely angry"

He commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was normally heated

Here "seven times hotter" is an idiom that means to make it very much hotter. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He commanded his men to make the furnace very much hotter than they normally make it"

Daniel 3:21

turbans

A turban is a head covering made of wrapped cloth.

the middle of the furnace of blazing fire

See how you translated similar words in Daniel 3:6.

Daniel 3:22

Because the king's command was strictly followed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Because the men did exactly what the king commanded"

Daniel 3:23

the middle of the furnace of blazing fire

See how you translated similar words in Daniel 3:6.

Daniel 3:24

Did we not throw three men tied up into the fire

"We threw three men tied up into the fire, right"

Daniel 3:25

The brilliance of the fourth is like a son of the gods

The gods were believed to shine brightly with light. Alternate translation: "Man four is shining brightly with light as a son of the gods would shine"

Daniel 3:27

The provincial governors, regional governors, other governors

These are officials who have authority over different sizes of territory. See how you translated these in Daniel 3:2.

the hair on their heads was not singed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the fire had not singed the hair on their heads"

was not singed

"was not burned even a little"

their robes were not harmed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the fire did not harm their robes"

there was no smell of fire on them

"they did not smell like fire"

Daniel 3:28

set aside the king's command

Not obeying the king's command is spoken of as if they had physically moved it away from them. Nebuchadnezzar refers to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "they ignored my command"

they gave up their bodies

This phrase refers to the three men's willingness to die for what they believed. Alternate translation: "they were willing to die"

any god except their God

"any other god except their God"

Daniel 3:29

any people, nation, or language ... must be torn apart, and that their houses must be made into rubbish heaps

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my servants will tear apart any people, nation, or language ... and make their houses into piles of garbage"

any people, nation, or language that speaks

Here "nations" and "language" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Daniel 3:4]

speaks anything against the God

"speaks words that do not respect the God"

must be torn apart

"must have their bodies torn apart"

there is no other god who is able to save like this

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "only their God is able to save like this"

Daniel 3:30

caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to prosper

"made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego powerful officials"

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4 [1]King Nebuchadnezzar sent this decree to all peoples, nations, and languages who lived on the earth: May your peace increase.

[2]It has seemed good to me to tell you about the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me.

[3] How great are his signs,
and how mighty are his wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and his dominion lasts from generation to generation."

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[4]I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living happily in my house, and I was enjoying prosperity in my palace.[5]But a dream I had made
me afraid. As I lay there, the images I saw and the visions in my mind troubled me.[6]So I gave a decree to bring before me
all the wise men of Babylon so they could interpret the dream for me.
[7]Then came the magicians, those who claimed to speak with the dead, the educated men, and the astrologers. I told them
the dream, but they could not make known the interpretation to me.[8]But at last Daniel came in—the one who is named
Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods—and I told him the dream.
[9]"'Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in you and that no mystery is too difficult
for you. Tell me the appearance of my dream and its interpretation.
[10]These were the sights that I saw in my mind as I lay upon my bed: I looked, and there was a tree in the middle of the
earth, and its height was very great.[11]The tree grew and became strong. Its top reached to the heavens, and it could be
seen to the ends of the whole earth.[12]Its leaves were beautiful, its fruit was abundant, and on it was food for all. The
animals of the field found shade under it, and the birds of the heavens lived in its branches. All living creatures were fed
from it.
[13]I saw in my mind as I lay on my bed, and a watcher, a holy one came down from the heavens.[14]He shouted and said,
'Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves, and scatter its fruit. Let the animals flee from under it
and the birds fly away from its branches.
[15]Leave the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the middle of the tender grass of the
field. Let it be wet with the dew from the heavens. Let it live with the animals among the plants on the ground.[16]Let his
mind be changed from a man's mind, and let an animal's mind be given to him until seven years pass by.
[17]This sentence is by the decree of the watchers, a decision made by the holy ones, so that those who are alive may know
that the Most High rules over the kingdoms of people and gives them to anyone he wishes to place over them, even to the
most humble men.'[18]I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had this dream. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me the interpretation, because
none of the wise men in my kingdom can interpret it for me. But you are able to do so, because the spirit of the holy gods
is in you."

[19]Then Daniel, who was also named Belteshazzar, was greatly upset for a brief time, and his thoughts alarmed him. The
king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation alarm you." Belteshazzar replied, "My master, may the
dream be for those who hate you; may its interpretation be for your enemies.
[20]The tree that you saw—which grew and became strong, and whose top reached up to the heavens, and which could be
seen to the ends of the whole earth—[21]whose leaves were beautiful, and whose fruit was abundant, so that in it was food
for all, and under it the animals of the field found shade, and in which the birds of the heavens lived—[22]this tree is you,
king, you who have grown so strong. Your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion reaches
to the ends of the earth.
[23]You, king, saw a watcher, a holy one coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave
the stump of its roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the middle of the tender grass of the field. Let
it be wet with the dew from the heavens. Let it live with the animals in the field until seven years pass by.'
[24]This is the interpretation, king. It is a decree of the Most High that has reached you, my master the king.[25]You will be
driven from among men, and you will live with the animals in the field. You will be made to eat grass like cattle, and you
will be wet with the dew from the heavens, and seven years will pass by until you acknowledge that the Most High rules
over the kingdoms of people and that he gives them to anyone he wishes.
[26]As it was commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree, in this way your kingdom will be returned to you from
the time you learn that heaven rules.[27]Therefore, king, let my advice be pleasing to you. Stop sinning and do what is right.
Turn away from your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed, and it may be that your prosperity will be extended."

[28]All these things happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.[29]Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace
in Babylon,[30]and he said, "Is this not the great Babylon, which I have built for my royal residence, by the might of my
power and for the glory of my majesty?"
[31]While the words were still on the lips of the king, a voice came from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, it is announced to
you that this kingdom has been taken away from you.[32]You will be driven away from people, and your home will be with
the animals in the field. You will be made to eat grass like cattle. Seven years will pass until you acknowledge that the
Most High rules over the kingdoms of people and he gives them to anyone he wishes."
[33]This decree against Nebuchadnezzar was carried out immediately. He was driven away from people. He ate grass like
cattle, and his body was wet with the dew from the heavens. His hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails
became like birds' claws.

[34]At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was given back to me.
"I praised the Most High,

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and I honored and glorified the one who lives forever.
For his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
and his kingdom endures from all generations to all generations.
35 All the earth's inhabitants
are considered by him to be as nothing;
he does among the army of heaven
and the inhabitants of the earth
whatever suits his will.
No one can stop him or challenge him.
No one can say to him, 'Why have you done this?'"

36 At the same time that my sanity returned to me, my majesty and splendor returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My counselors and my noblemen sought my favor. I was brought back to my throne, and even more greatness was given to me. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, extol, and honor the King of heaven, for all his deeds are true, and his ways are just. He can humble those who walk in their own pride.

Daniel 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:3 and 4:34-35.

Special concepts in this chapter

The king becomes insane

The king became insane until he realized that Yahweh was the ruler over everyone, including him.

Links:

Daniel 4:1 Notes

Daniel 4:1

General Information:

In this chapter, Nebuchadnezzar tells what God did to him. In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God. Verses 19-33 switch to the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar. Verses 34-37 change back to first person as Nebuchadnezzar describes his response to God.

King Nebuchadnezzar sent

This phrase is referring to the king's messenger as the king himself. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar sent his messengers with"

peoples, nations, and languages

Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated this in Daniel 3:4. Alternate translation: "people from different nations and who speak different languages"

who lived on the earth

Kings would often exaggerate how wide their kingdom was. Nebuchadnezzar did rule over most of the known world at the time this book was written. Alternate translation: "who lived in the kingdom of Babylon"

May your peace increase

This is a common greeting.

Daniel 4:2

signs and wonders

These words share similar meanings and refer to the amazing things that God had done.

Daniel 4:3

How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders!

Both of these phrases have the same meaning and are used to emphasize how great God's signs and wonders are.

His kingdom is ... generation to generation

Both of these phrases have the same meaning and are repeated to emphasize how God's reign is forever.

Daniel 4:4

General Information:

In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God.

was living happily ... was enjoying prosperity

These two phrases are parallel and mean the same thing.

my house ... my palace

These two phrases mean basically the same thing.

Daniel 4:5

a dream ... the images ... the visions

These phrases mean basically the same thing.

made me afraid ... troubled me

These phrases are parallel and they mean the same thing.

Daniel 4:6

wise men

This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.

Daniel 4:7

General Information:

In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God.

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educated men
Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 2:2.
they could not make known the interpretation to me
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
Daniel 4:8
who is named Belteshazzar
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who I named Belteshazzar"
Belteshazzar
This was the name the Babylonians gave to Daniel. See how you translated this name in Daniel 1:7.
Daniel 4:9
no mystery is too difficult for you
The can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you understand the meaning of every mystery"
Tell me the appearance of my dream and its interpretation
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]
the appearance of my dream
"what I saw as I was dreaming" or "what my dream looked like"
Daniel 4:10
General Information:
In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God.
sights
things that you see
its height was very great
"it was very tall"
Daniel 4:11
Its top reached to the heavens ... it could be seen to the ends of the whole earth
This is symbolic language that exaggerates how tall and how well-known the tree was. Alternate translation: "It seemed that its top reached up to the sky and that everyone in the world could see it"
Daniel 4:12
its fruit was abundant
"there was a lot of fruit on the tree"
was food for all
"was food for all people and animals"
animals of the field
"wild animals in the fields." Here "the field" is places where the plants that grow there are useless to people. See how you translated this in Daniel 2:38.
Daniel 4:13
General Information:
In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God.
I saw in my mind
This refers to seeing a dream or vision. Alternate translation: "I saw in my dream"
a watcher
Some versions translate this phrase as "a messenger."
Daniel 4:14
He shouted and said
It can be made clear that the holy messenger was speaking to more than one person. Alternate translation: "He shouted to some people and said"
Let the animals flee ... from its branches
"The animals will flee from under it and the bird will fly away from its branches"
Daniel 4:15
General Information:
In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God. The holy messenger in the vision continues shouting to some people.
stump of its roots
This is the part of the tree that is left above the ground after a tree is cut down.
dew
the moisture on the ground that is found in the mornings
Daniel 4:16
Let his mind be changed ... seven years pass by
Since the tree represents Nebuchadnezzar, the masculine pronouns "his" and "him" in verse 16 refer to the same tree as the neuter pronoun "it" in verse 15. Alternate translation: "The man's mind will change from a man's mind to an animal's mind for a period of seven years"
Daniel 4:17
General Information:
In verses 1-18, Nebuchadnezzar describes in the first person his vision from God.
the watchers
Some versions translate this phrase as "the messengers." See how you translated the words "a watcher" in Daniel 4:13-14.
a decision made by the holy ones
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a decision that the holy ones have made"
the holy ones
This phrase probably refers to angels. Alternate translation: "the holy angels"
those who are alive
"every living person" or "everyone"
gives them
"gives the kingdoms"
Daniel 4:18
Belteshazzar
This was the name the Babylonians gave to Daniel. See how you translated this name in Daniel 1:7.
you are able to do so
"you are able to interpret it"
the spirit of the holy gods
Nebuchadnezzar believed that Daniel's power came from the false gods that Nebuchadnezzar worshiped. These are not the same as "the holy ones" in verse 17. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 4:8.
I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had this dream. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me the interpretation
The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4] The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated them in [Daniel 2:5]

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Daniel 4:19

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

who was also named Belteshazzar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who I also named Belteshazzar"

was greatly upset for a brief time, and his thoughts alarmed him

Daniel's understanding of the meaning of the vision is what alarmed him. This can be explicitly stated. Alternate translation: "did not say anything for a brief time because he was very worried about the meaning of the dream"

may the dream be for those who hate you; may its interpretation be for your enemies

Daniel is expressing his wish that the dream was not about Nebuchadnezzar, even though he knew that it really was about the king.

the dream ... its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 4:20

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar . Many terms in this verse are almost the same as in Daniel 4:11. See how you translated that verse.

to the heavens ... to the ends of the whole earth

These phrases are exaggerations to emphasize that everyone everywhere knew how great Nebuchadnezzar was.

Daniel 4:21

General Information:

Many terms in this verse are almost the same as Daniel 4:12. See how you translated that verse.

whose fruit was abundant

"which bore a great amount of fruit"

Daniel 4:22

this tree is you, king

"this tree represents you, king"

Your greatness has grown ... your dominion reaches

These two phrases mean similar things.

Your greatness has grown

This phrase is using the word "grown" as a way of saying the king's greatness has increased. Alternate translation: "Your greatness has increased"

Daniel 4:23

General Information:

This verse is almost the same as [Daniel 4:13-14]

a watcher

Some versions translate this phrase as "a messenger." See how you translated it in Daniel 4:13.

the stump of its roots

This is the part of the tree that is left above ground after a tree is cut down.

in the middle of the tender grass of the field

"surrounded by the tender grass of the field"

dew

the moisture that settles on the ground in the mornings

animals in the field

"wild animals in the fields." Here "the field" is places where the plants that grow there are useless to people. See how you translated this in Daniel 2:38.

Daniel 4:24

the interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Daniel 2:4]

that has reached you

"that you have heard"

Daniel 4:25

You will be driven from among men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Men will drive you away from them"

animals in the field

"wild animals in the fields." Here "the field" is places where the plants that grow there are useless to people. See how you translated this in Daniel 2:38.

You will be made to eat grass

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will eat grass"

Daniel 4:26

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

heaven rules

Here "heaven" refers to God who lives in heaven. Alternate translation: "God in heaven is the ruler of all"

Daniel 4:27

let my advice be pleasing to you

These words express a desire. Alternate translation: "I hope you will be pleased with my advice and do what I advise you to do"

Turn away from your iniquities

Here rejecting iniquity is spoken of as turning away from it. Alternate translation: "Reject your iniquities"

the oppressed

This nominal adjective refers to people who are oppressed. Alternate translation: "people who are oppressed"

it may be that your prosperity will be extended

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God may extend your prosperity"

Daniel 4:28

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 4:29

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

Twelve months

"12 months"

Daniel 4:30

Is this not the great Babylon ... for the glory of my majesty?

Nebuchadnezzar asks this question to emphasize his own glory. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is the great Babylon ... for the glory of my majesty!"

for the glory of my majesty

"to show people my honor and my greatness"

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Daniel 4:31

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

While the words were still on the lips of the king

This idiom means the king was still in the act of speaking. Alternate translation: "While the king was still speaking"

a voice came from heaven

"he heard a voice from heaven"

King Nebuchadnezzar ... has been taken away from you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "King Nebuchadnezzar, a decree went out against you that this kingdom no longer belongs to you"

Daniel 4:32

You will be driven away from people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will chase you away from them"

animals in the field

"wild animals in the fields." Here "the field" is places where the plants that grow there are useless to people. See how you translated this in Daniel 2:38.

anyone he wishes

"whoever he chooses"

Daniel 4:33

General Information:

Verses 19-33 use the third person to describe the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar.

This decree against Nebuchadnezzar was carried out immediately

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This decree against Nebuchadnezzar happened immediately"

He was driven away from people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People chased him away from them"

his nails became like birds' claws

"his fingernails looked like birds' claws"

Daniel 4:34

General Information:

In verses 34-37 Nebuchadnezzar speaks in the first person to describe his response to God.

At the end of the days

This refers back to the seven years in Daniel 4:32.

my sanity was given back to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my sanity came back to me" or "I became sane again"

I praised ... and I honored

The two phrases refer to the same action.

For his dominion is an everlasting dominion ... his kingdom endures from all generations to all generations

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are used to emphasize how God's reign never ends. Alternate translation: "He rules forever and his kingdom will never end"

Daniel 4:35

General Information:

In verses 34-37 Nebuchadnezzar speaks in the first person to describe his response to God.

All the earth's inhabitants are considered by him to be as nothing

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He considers all the earth's inhabitants as nothing"

All the earth's inhabitants

"All the people on the earth"

the army of heaven

"the angel armies in heaven"

whatever suits his will

"whatever satisfies his purpose" or "anything he wants to do"

No one can stop him

It may be helpful to add additional detail. Alternate translation: "When he decides to do something, no one can stop him"

No one can say to him, 'Why have you done this?'

This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "No one can question what he does."

Daniel 4:36

General Information:

In verses 34-37 Nebuchadnezzar speaks in the first person to describe his response to God.

my sanity returned to me

Here his sanity is spoken of as if it was able to return by its own power. Alternate translation: "I became sane again"

my majesty and splendor returned to me

Here his majesty and splendor are spoken of as if they were able to return by their own power. Alternate translation: "I regained my majesty and my splendor again"

majesty and splendor

These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of his glory.

my noblemen sought my favor

"my noblemen requested my help again"

I was brought ... greatness was given to me

Here "throne" refers to his authority to rule. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I returned to rule my kingdom again, and I received even more greatness"

Daniel 4:37

praise, extol, and honor

All three of these words have basically the same meaning and emphasize how greatly he praised God.

who walk in their own pride

This phrase uses "walk" to refer to the person who acts proud. Alternate translation: "who are proud"

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5 [1]Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his noblemen, and he drank wine in front of all one thousand of them.[2]While Belshazzar tasted the wine, he gave orders to bring the containers made of gold or silver that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem, from which the king, his noblemen, and his wives and concubines could drink.

[3]The servants brought the gold containers that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God, in Jerusalem. The king, his noblemen, and his wives and concubines drank from them.[4]They drank the wine and praised their idols made of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

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[5]At that moment the fingers of a human hand appeared in front of the lampstand and wrote on the plaster wall in the king's palace. The king could see part of the hand as it wrote.[6]Then the king's face changed and his thoughts frightened him; his limbs could not support him, and his knees were knocking together.
[7]The king shouted a command to bring in those who claimed to speak with the dead, the educated men, and the astrologers. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and makes known its interpretation to me will be clothed with purple and will have a gold chain around his neck. He will have the authority of the third highest ruler in the kingdom."
[8]Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or make known its interpretation to the king.
[9]Then King Belshazzar was greatly alarmed and the look on his face changed. His noblemen were perplexed.

[10]Now the queen came into the banquet house because of what the king and his nobles had said. The queen said, "King, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you. Do not let the look on your face change.
[11]There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him. King Nebuchadnezzar, your father the king, made him chief of the magicians, as well as chief of those who speak with the dead, of the educated men, and of the astrologers.[12]An excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting of dreams, explaining of riddles and solving of problems—these qualities were found in this man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now call for Daniel and he will tell you the interpretation."

[13]Then Daniel was brought before the king. The king said to him, "You are that Daniel, one of the people of the exiles of Judah, whom my father the king brought out of Judah.[14]I have heard about you, that the spirit of the gods is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.
[15]Now the wise men and those who claim to speak with the dead have been brought in before me to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not make known to me the interpretation of the message.[16]I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you will be clothed with purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck, and you will have the authority of the third highest ruler in the kingdom."

[17]Then Daniel answered before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another person. Nevertheless, I will read the writing to you, king, and will tell you the interpretation.[18]As for you, king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father the kingdom, greatness, honor, and majesty.[19]Because of the greatness God gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared him. He killed those he wanted to die, and he kept alive those he wished to live. He raised up those he wanted, and he humbled those he wished.
[20]But when his heart was arrogant and his spirit was hardened so that he acted presumptuously, he was brought down from his royal throne, and they took away his glory.[21]He was driven away from humanity, he had the mind of an animal, and he lived with the wild donkeys. He ate grass like cattle. His body was wet with the dew from the heavens until he learned that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of people and that he sets over them anyone he wishes.
[22]You his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this.[23]You have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. From his house they brought you the containers that you, your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from, and you praised the idols made of silver and gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone—idols that do not see, hear, or know anything. You have not honored the God who holds your breath in his hand and who knows all your ways.[24]Then God sent out a hand from his presence and this inscription was written.

[25]This is the writing that was done: 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Pharsin.'
[26]This is the interpretation of the message: 'Mene,' 'God has numbered your kingdom and brought it to an end.'
[27]'Tekel,' 'you are weighed in the scales and are found lacking.'
[28]'Peres,' 'your kingdom is divided and is given to the Medes and Persians.'"

[29]Then Belshazzar gave a command, and they clothed Daniel with purple. A chain of gold was put around his neck, and the king made a proclamation about him that he would have the authority of the third highest ruler in the kingdom.[30]That night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed,[31]and Darius the Mede received the kingdom when he was about sixty-two years old.

Daniel 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The writing on the wall

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God told the new king that he had failed and God was replacing him, showing that God is the real ruler over everything, even kingdoms that do not worship him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin

These are words in Aramaic. Daniel "transliterates" these words by writing them with Hebrew letters, and then he explains their meanings. In the ULB and UDB they are written with English letters. Translators are encouraged to write them using the letters of the target language alphabet.

Links:

Daniel 5:1 Notes

Daniel 5:1

Belshazzar

This is the son of Nebuchadnezzar who became king after his father.

for a thousand

"for 1,000"

he drank wine in front of

"he drank wine in the presence of"

Daniel 5:2

the containers made of gold or silver

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the gold or silver containers that the Israelites had made"

containers

These were cups and other items that were small enough for a person to hold and to drink from them.

Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken

Here "Nebuchadnezzar" refers to Nebuchadnezzar's army. Alternate translation: "his father Nebuchadnezzar's army" or "the army of Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken"

Daniel 5:3

the gold containers that had been taken out of the temple

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the gold containers that the army of Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple"

out of the temple, the house of God

"out of God's temple." The phrase "the house of God" tells us something more about the temple.

Daniel 5:5

At that moment

"As soon as they did that" or "Suddenly"

plaster

cement or mud that is spread on walls or ceilings to give them a smooth hard surface when it dries

Daniel 5:6

the king's face changed

"his face became pale." This was caused by his fear.

his limbs

"his legs"

his knees were knocking together

This was the result of his extreme fear.

Daniel 5:7

educated men

Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 2:2.

wise men

This phrase translates a word for a group of men whom people thought were wise. See how you translated it in Daniel 2:12.

Whoever reads this writing and makes known its interpretation to me will be clothed with purple and will have a gold chain around his neck

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give purple clothes and a gold neck chain to whoever reads this writing and makes known its interpretation"

makes known its interpretation to me

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

clothed with purple

Purple cloth was rare and reserved for royal officials. Alternate translation: "dressed in royal clothing"

the third highest ruler

"the number three ruler"

Daniel 5:8

make known its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated similar words in [Daniel 5:7]

Daniel 5:9

Belshazzar

This is the son of Nebuchadnezzar who became king after his father. See how you wrote this name in [Daniel 5:1]

the look on his face changed

"his face became even more pale." The face of the king grew even more pale than in Daniel 5:6.

perplexed

unable to understand, confused

Daniel 5:10

the queen

Some modern versions understand this to be a reference to the queen mother, that is, to the king's mother. The queen mother received much honor in ancient Babylon.

King, live forever!

This was a normal way to greet the king.

Do not let the look on your face change

"There is no need for your face to look so pale"

Daniel 5:11

the spirit of the holy gods

The queen believed that Daniel's power came from the false gods that Nebuchadnezzar worshiped. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 4:8.

In the days of your father

"When your father was ruling"

light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he had light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom

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of the gods"

King Nebuchadnezzar, your father the king

"Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar"

educated men

Or "Chaldeans." This phrase translates a word that refers to a group of men whom people thought had special knowledge. See how you translated this phrase in Daniel 2:2.

Daniel 5:12

these qualities were found in this man Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, had all of these qualities"

the interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 5:13

Then Daniel was brought before the king

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then they brought Daniel before the king" or "Then the soldiers brought Daniel before the king"

whom my father the king brought out of Judah

In this phrase "father" is being used to represent all of the soldiers. Alternate translation: "whom my father's soldiers brought out of Judah"

Daniel 5:14

the spirit of the gods

Belshazzar believed that Daniel's power came from the false gods that Belshazzar worshiped. See how you translated a similar phrase in Daniel 4:8.

light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have light and understanding and excellent wisdom"

Daniel 5:15

Now the wise men ... have been brought in before me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Now the wise men ... have come in before me"

they could not make known to me the interpretation of the message

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 5:16

give interpretations ... make known to me its interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

you will be clothed with purple and have a gold chain placed around your neck

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will give you purple clothes and a gold neck chain"

clothed with purple

Purple cloth was rare and reserved for royal officials. Alternate translation: "dressed in royal clothing"

the third highest ruler

"the number three ruler"

Daniel 5:17

Let your gifts be for yourself, and

"I do not want your gifts, so"

will tell you the interpretation

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

Daniel 5:19

all peoples, nations, and languages

This phrase uses the word "all" as a generalization that represents a large number. Alternate translation: "a great number of people, of different nations and languages"

peoples, nations, and languages

Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated this in [Daniel 3:4]

trembled and feared him

These words mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of the fear. Alternate translation: "were very afraid of him"

He killed those he wanted to die

King Nebuchadnezzar commanded others to do the killing. He did not do it himself. Alternate translation: "Nebuchadnezzar commanded his soldiers to kill those he wanted to die"

He raised up those he wanted

"He raised up those he wanted to raise up"

wanted ... wished

These words here mean the same thing.

he humbled those he wished

"he humbled those he wished to humble"

Daniel 5:20

his heart was arrogant

Here "heart" refers to the king himself. Alternate translation: "the king was arrogant"

his spirit was hardened

Here "spirit" refers to the king himself. His stubbornness is spoken of as if he were hardened. Alternate translation: "the king became stubborn"

presumptuously

rudely and overly confident

he was brought down from his royal throne

Here the phrase "royal throne" refers to his authority to rule. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people took away his kingdom"

Daniel 5:21

He was driven away from humanity

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people chased him away from them"

he had the mind of an animal

Here "mind" represents his thoughts. Alternate translation: "he thought as an animal thinks"

dew

the moisture on the ground that is found in the mornings

anyone he wishes

"whomever he chooses"

Daniel 5:22

Belshazzar

This is the son of Nebuchadnezzar who became king after his father. See how you wrote this name in [Daniel 5:1]

have not humbled your heart

Here "heart" refers to Belshazzar himself. Alternate translation: "have not humbled yourself"

Daniel 5:23

You have lifted yourself up against the Lord

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To rebel against God is spoken of as raising oneself up against him. Alternate translation: "You have rebelled against the Lord"

From his house

What and where "his house" is can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "From his temple in Jerusalem"

God who holds your breath in his hand

Here "breath" refers to life and "hand" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "God who gives you breath" or "God who has control over your entire life"

all your ways

"everything you do"

Daniel 5:24

this inscription was written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it wrote this message"

Daniel 5:25

This is the writing that was done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is the message that the hand wrote"

Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Pharsin

These are the Aramaic words that were written on the wall. Spell these words with the sounds that fit your language.

Daniel 5:26

the interpretation of the message

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

'Mene,' 'God has numbered

"'Mene' means 'God has numbered"

Daniel 5:27

'Tekel,' 'you are weighed

"'Tekel' means 'you are weighed"

you are weighed in the scales and are found lacking

Judging the worthiness of the king to rule is spoken of as weighing him. This means that the king is not worthy to rule. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has examined your worthiness to rule, and he has found that you are not worthy"

Daniel 5:28

'Peres,' 'your kingdom

"'Peres' means 'your kingdom."

Peres

This is the singular form of "Pharsin" in 5:25.

your kingdom is divided and is given to the Medes and Persians

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has divided your kingdom and given it to the Medes and Persians"

Daniel 5:29

Belshazzar

This is the son of Nebuchadnezzar who became king after his father. See how you wrote this name in [Daniel 5:1]

A chain of gold was put around his neck

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They put a chain of gold around his neck"

the third highest ruler

"the number three ruler"

Daniel 5:31

received the kingdom

"became the ruler of the kingdom"

when he was about sixty-two years old

"when he was about 62 years old"

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6 [1]It seemed good to Darius to appoint over the kingdom 120 provincial governors who would rule over all the kingdom.
[2]Over them there were three chief administrators, and Daniel was one of them. These chief administrators were appointed so that they might supervise the provincial governors, so that the king should suffer no loss.[3]Daniel was distinguished above the other chief administrators and the provincial governors because he had an extraordinary spirit. The king was planning to put him over the whole kingdom.

[4]Then the other chief administrators and the provincial governors looked for mistakes in the work Daniel did for the kingdom, but they could find no corruption or failure in his duty because he was faithful. No mistakes or negligence was found in him.[5]Then these men said, "We cannot find any reason to complain against this Daniel unless we find something against him regarding the law of his God."
[6]Then these administrators and governors brought a plan before the king. They said to him, "King Darius, may you live forever![7]All the chief administrators of the kingdom, the regional governors, and the provincial governors, the advisors, and the governors have consulted together and decided that you, the king, should issue a decree and enforce a prohibition, so that whoever makes a petition to any god or man for thirty days, except to you, king, that person must be thrown into the den of lions.
[8]Now, king, issue the prohibition and sign the document so that it may not be changed, as directed by the law of the Medes and Persians, so it cannot be repealed."[9]So king Darius signed the document, the prohibition.

[10]When Daniel learned that the document had been signed into law, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his upper room toward Jerusalem), and he got down on his knees, as he did three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done before.[11]Then these men who had formed the plot together saw Daniel make requests and seek favor from God.
[12]Then they approached the king and spoke with him about his prohibition: "Did you not make a prohibition that everyone who makes a petition to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, king, must be thrown into the den of lions?" The king answered, "The matter is settled, as directed by the law of the Medes and Persians; it cannot be repealed."

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[13]Then they replied to the king, "That person Daniel, who is one of the people of the exile from Judah, pays no attention to you, king, or to the prohibition that you have signed. He prays to his God three times a day."[14]When the king heard this, he was terribly distressed, and he applied his mind to rescue Daniel from this ruling. He labored until sunset to try to save Daniel.
[15]Then these men who had formed the plot gathered together with the king and said to him, "Know, king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians, that no prohibition or statute that the king issues can be changed."

[16]Then the king gave an order, and they brought in Daniel, and they threw him into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you."
[17]A stone was brought over the entrance to the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.[18]Then the king went to his palace and he went through the night fasting. No entertainment was brought before him, and sleep fled from him.

[19]Then at daybreak the king got up and he quickly went to the lions' den.[20]As he came near to the den, the king called out to Daniel in a sad voice, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"
[21]Then said Daniel to the king, "King, live forever![22]My God has sent his messenger and has shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me. For I was found blameless before him and also before you, king, and I have done you no harm."
[23]Then the king was very happy. He gave an order that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was lifted up out of the den. No harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

[24]The king gave an order, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel and threw them into the den of lions—them, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the floor, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones to pieces.[25]Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that live in all the earth:
"May peace increase for you.

[26]I hereby make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel,
for he is the living God
and lives forever,
and his kingdom will not be destroyed;
his dominion will last to the end.
[27] He makes us safe and rescues us,
and he does signs and wonders
in heaven and in earth;
he has kept Daniel safe
from the strength of the lions."

[28]So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and during the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

Daniel 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set the content of letters farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the letter in 6:25-27.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in the letter in 6:26-27.

Special concepts in this chapter

Daniel and the lions
Daniel was thrown into the lions' den for praying to Yahweh, but Yahweh protected him and the lions did not hurt him at all.

Links:

Daniel 6:1 Notes

Daniel 6:1
Connecting Statement:
The events in this chapter take place after the Persians conquered the Babylonians and Darius the Mede began to rule in Babylon.
It seemed good to Darius

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"It was pleasing to Darius" or "Darius was pleased"
120 provincial governors
"one hundred and twenty provincial governors"
Daniel 6:2
Over them
The word "them" refers to the 120 provincial governors.
so that the king should suffer no loss
"so that nothing should be stolen from the king" or "so that no one would steal anything from the king"
Daniel 6:3
was distinguished above
"excelled above" or "was more capable than"
he had an extraordinary spirit
Here "spirit" refers to Daniel. It means he had was unusually capable. Alternate translation: "he was and exceptional person"
extraordinary spirit
spirit that made him do better than the others
to put him over
"to give him authority over" or "to put him in charge of"
Daniel 6:4
Then the other chief administrators and the provincial governors ... for the kingdom
The other administrators were jealous of Daniel. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Then the other chief administrators and the provincial governors became jealous. So they looked for mistakes in the work Daniel did for the kingdom"
No mistakes or negligence was found in him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They could find no mistakes or negligence in his work"
negligence
overly looking your responsibilities
Daniel 6:5
to complain against this Daniel
"to complain about Daniel"
Daniel 6:6
brought a plan before the king
"presented a plan to the king"
may you live forever!
This was a normal way to greet a king.
Daniel 6:7
issue a decree and enforce a prohibition
A "prohibition" always only tells people what they cannot do, but a "decree" can permit people to do things.
enforce a prohibition
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." Alternate translation: "use force to prohibit people from doing what they have been doing" or "force people to stop doing what they have been doing"
for thirty days
"for 30 days"
whoever makes a petition
"whoever makes a request"
that person must be thrown into the den of lions
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your soldiers must throw that person into the den of lions"
den of lions
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept.
Daniel 6:8
Connecting Statement:
In verse 8, the administrators continue to speak to the king.
issue the prohibition
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." See how you translated "prohibition" in [Daniel 6:7]
as directed by the law
"according to the law"
cannot be repealed
"cannot be canceled"
Daniel 6:9
the prohibition
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." See how you translated "prohibition" in [Daniel 6:7]
Daniel 6:10
When Daniel learned that the document had been signed into law
It is important to the story to state clearly that Daniel knew about the new law before he prayed to God.
now his windows were open in his upper room toward Jerusalem
This is background information that explains how Daniel's enemies knew he was praying to God.
gave thanks before his God
"gave thanks to his God"
Daniel 6:11
plot
a plan with evil intent
Daniel 6:12
Did you not make a prohibition ... lions?
They asked this rhetorical question to make the king confirm that he had made the prohibition. Alternate translation: "You know and we know that you made a prohibition ... lions."
about his prohibition: "Did you not make a prohibition
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." See how you translated "prohibition" in [Daniel 6:7]
who makes a petition
"who makes a request"
den of lions
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept. See how you translated this in Daniel 6:7.
as directed by the law
"according to the law"
Daniel 6:13
That person Daniel
This is not a respectful way of referring to Daniel. They intentionally used this phrase to avoid giving Daniel the respect he was due as a chief administrator.
who is one of the people of the exile from Judah
"who is one of the exiles from Judah" or "who is an exile from Judah"
pays no attention to you
This idiom means he ignores the king. Alternate translation: "does not obey you"
the prohibition that you have signed
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." See how you translated "prohibition" in

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[Daniel 6:7]
Daniel 6:14
he applied his mind
Here "mind" refers to his thinking. Alternate translation: "he thought very hard about how"
He labored
This refers to mental labor, rather than to physical labor.
Daniel 6:15
that no prohibition or statute that the king issues can be changed
The abstract noun "prohibition" can be translated as the verb "prohibit." See how you translated "prohibition" in [Daniel 6:7]
no prohibition ... can be changed
The men were implying that since no decree or statute of the king can be changed, Daniel must be thrown into the pit of lions. This can be stated clearly if needed. Alternate translation: "no prohibition ... can be changed. Someone must throw Daniel into the pit of lions"
Daniel 6:16
they brought in Daniel
"his soldiers went and got Daniel"
lions' den
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept. See how you translated this in Daniel 6:7.
May your God ... rescue you
The king is expressing his desire for God to save Daniel.
rescue you
"save you from the lions"
Daniel 6:17
den
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept. See how you translated this in Daniel 6:7.
the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles ... concerning Daniel
The function of the signet ring can be stated clearly. The king and the noblemen pressed their rings into a seal made of wax. Alternate translation: "the king pressed his signet ring into a wax seal, the nobles did this too. No one was allowed to break the seal and help Daniel"
nothing might be changed concerning Daniel
"no one could help Daniel"
Daniel 6:18
he went through the night fasting
This symbolic act showed that the king was worried about Daniel.
No entertainment was brought before him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He did not have anyone entertain him"
sleep fled from him
Sleep is spoken of as if it could run away from the king. Alternate translation: "he did not sleep at all that night"
Daniel 6:19
lions' den
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept. See how you translated this in Daniel 6:7.
Daniel 6:22
For I was found blameless
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He knows that I have done nothing wrong"
I have done you no harm
"I have not harmed you at all"
Daniel 6:23
den
This may refer to a room or pit where lions were kept. See how you translated this in Daniel 6:7.
No harm was found on him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They did not find any wounds on Daniel"
Daniel 6:24
Before they reached the floor
"Before they reached the floor of the lions' den"
broke all their bones to pieces
"crushed their bones"
Daniel 6:25
peoples, nations, and languages
Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated this in [Daniel 3:4]
in all the earth
King Darius wrote his message to his entire kingdom which was huge. Here it says "all the earth" as a generalization to emphasis how large his kingdom was, though it did not include everyone on the earth. Alternate translation: "in his kingdom"
May peace increase for you
This is a form of greeting that is used to wish someone well in all areas of life.
Daniel 6:26
Connecting Statement:
This continues to state the message that Darius sent to everyone in his kingdom.
tremble and fear
These two words are similar and can be combined. Alternate translation: "shake with fear"
the God of Daniel
"the God that Daniel worships"
he is the living God and lives forever
The two phrases "the living God" and "lives forever" express the same concept, that God lives forever.
his kingdom will ... his dominion will
These two phrases are parallel, emphasizing how God's kingdom will never end.
his kingdom will not be destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will destroy his kingdom" or "his kingdom will last forever"
his dominion will last to the end
"he will rule forever"
Daniel 6:27
he has kept Daniel safe from the strength of the lions
"he has not allowed the strong lions to hurt Daniel"
Daniel 6:28
during the reign of Darius and during the reign of Cyrus the Persian
Cyrus the Persian was the king who ruled after Darius.

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7 [1]In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylonia, Daniel had a dream and visions in his mind while lying on his bed.
Then he wrote down what he had seen in the dream. He wrote down the most important events:[2]Daniel explained, "In
my vision at night I saw that the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea.[3]Four large animals, each one
different from the other, came up out of the sea.
[4]The first was like a lion but had eagle's wings. As I was looking, its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground
and made to stand on two feet, like a man. The mind of a man was given to it.[5]Then there was a second animal, like a
bear, and it was bending over; it had three ribs between its teeth in its mouth. It was told, 'Get up and devour many
people.'
[6]After this I looked again. There was another animal, one that looked like a leopard. On its back it had four wings like bird
wings, and it had four heads. It was given authority to rule.[7]After this I saw in the visions of the night a fourth animal,
terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what
was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns.
[8]While I was considering the horns, I looked and saw another horn grow up among them, a little horn. Three of the first
horns were wrenched out by the roots. I saw in this horn eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that was boasting about
great things.

[9]As I looked,
thrones were set in place,
and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
His clothing was as white as snow,
and the hair of his head was like pure wool.
His throne was flames of fire,
and its wheels were burning fire.
[10] A river of fire
flowed out from before him;
millions served him,
and one hundred million were standing before him.
The court was in session,
and the books were opened.

[11]I continued to look because of the sound of the boastful words spoken by the horn. I watched while the animal was
killed, and its body was destroyed, and it was given over to be burned up.[12]As for the rest of the four animals, their
authority to rule was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a period of time.

[13]In my visions that night,
I saw one coming with the clouds of heaven like a son of man;
he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
[14] Authority to rule and glory and royal power were given to him
so that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.
His authority to rule is an everlasting authority that will not pass away,
and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

[15]As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved inside of me, and the visions I saw in my mind troubled me.[16]I approached one
of them standing there and asked him to show me the interpretation of these things.
[17]"These large animals, four in number, are four kings that will arise from the earth.[18]But the holy people of the Most High
will receive the kingdom, and they will possess it forever and ever.'
[19]Then I wanted to know more about the fourth animal—it was so different from the others and very horrifying with its
iron teeth and bronze claws; it devoured, broke into pieces, and trampled on what was left with its feet.[20]I wanted to
know about the ten horns on its head, and about the other horn that grew up, and before which the three horns fell
down. I wanted to know about the horn that had eyes and about the mouth that boasted about great things and that
seemed greater than its companions.
[21]As I looked, this horn waged war against the holy people and was defeating them[22]until the Ancient of Days came, and
justice was given to the holy people of the Most High. Then the time came when the holy people took possession of the
kingdom.

[23]This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal,

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it will be a fourth kingdom on earth
that will be different from all the other kingdoms.
It will devour the whole earth,
and it will trample it down
and break it into pieces.
24 As for the ten horns,
out of this kingdom ten kings will arise,
and another will arise after them.
He will be different from the previous ones,
and he will subdue the three kings.

25 He will speak words against the Most High
and will oppress the holy people of the Most High God.
He will try to change the festivals and the law.
These things will be given into his hand
for one year, two years, and half a year.

26 But the court will be in session,
and they will take his royal power away
to be consumed and destroyed at the end.

27 The kingdom and the dominion,
and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
will be given to the people
who belong to the holy people of the Most High.
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and all other kingdoms will serve and obey him.'

28 Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me and my face changed in appearance. But I kept these things to myself."

Daniel 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:9-10, 13-14, and 23-27.

Special concepts in this chapter

The four beasts

There will be four successive kingdoms before Yahweh sets up his eternal kingdom. (See: eternity)

The Son of Man

God will give the Son of Man an eternal kingdom and he will judge people from the books. (See: sonofman and judge)

Links:

Daniel 7:1 Notes

Daniel 7:1

General Information:

Chapters 7 and 8 are not in chronological order. They happened while Belshazzar was still the king, before the rule of Darius and Cyrus that was discussed in chapter 6. In Daniel's vision, he saw animals that were symbols of other things. Later in the vision someone explains the meaning of those symbols.

Belshazzar

This was the name of Nebuchadnezzar's son, who became king after him. See how you wrote this name in Daniel 5:1.

a dream and visions

The words "dream" and "visions" both refer to the same dream that is described in this chapter. Alternate translation: "visions while he was dreaming"

Daniel 7:2

the four winds of heaven

"winds from everywhere" or "strong winds from all four directions"

stirring up

"whipped up" or "agitated" or "caused high waves in"

Daniel 7:4

The first was like a lion but had eagle's wings

This was a symbolic creature, and not an animal that exists.

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its wings were torn off and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet, like a man

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone tore off its wings and lifted it up from the ground and made it stand on two feet like a human being"

The mind of a man was given to it

Here "mind" refers to thinking. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave it the ability to think like a human being"

Daniel 7:5

a second animal, like a bear

This was not an actual bear, but a symbolic animal that was similar to a bear.

ribs

large curved bones of the chest that connect to the spine

It was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone told it"

Daniel 7:6

another animal, one that looked like a leopard

This was not an actual leopard, but a symbolic animal that was similar to a leopard.

four wings ... four heads

The four wings and four heads are symbols, but their meaning is unclear.

it had four heads

"the animal had four heads"

It was given authority to rule

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave it authority to rule"

Daniel 7:7

a fourth animal ... it had ten horns

This is also not an actual animal. It is a symbolic creature.

trampled underfoot

"walked on and crushed"

Daniel 7:8

General Information:

Daniel continues to describe his vision of the fourth animal that the saw in Daniel 7:7.

the horns

Translators may write a footnote like this: "Horns are a symbol of power and represent powerful leaders."

Three of the first horns were wrenched out by the roots

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The little horn tore out three of the first horns"

a mouth that was boasting about great things

Here the horn was boasting, using its mouth to do so. Alternate translation: "the horn had a mouth and boasted about doing great things"

Daniel 7:9

General Information:

Most of the text of verses 9-14 is symbolic language with parallel lines that have similar meaning. For this reason, the ULB and UDB present them in poetic form.

thrones were set in place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone set thrones in their places"

the Ancient of Days

This is a title for God that means he is eternal. Alternate translation: "the One Who Has Lived Forever" or "the One Who Has Always Lived"

took his seat ... His clothing ... the hair of his head

This passage describes God as sitting down, with clothing and hair like a person. This does not mean that God really is like this, but it is how Daniel saw God in a vision.

took his seat

This is an idiom that means he sat down. Alternate translation: "sat down on his throne"

His clothing was as white as snow

His clothing is compared to snow to show that it was very white. Alternate translation: "His clothing was very white"

the hair of his head was like pure wool

Something about God's hair looked like pure wool. Possible meanings are that 1) it was very white or 2) it was thick and curly.

pure wool

"clean wool" or "wool that is washed"

His throne was flames ... its wheels were burning fire

This describes the throne of God and its wheels as if they were made of fire. The words "flames" and "burning fire" mean basically the same thing and can be translated the same way.

its wheels

It is unclear why God's throne is described as having wheels. Thrones normally do not have wheels, but the text clearly states that this throne has some kind of wheels. Use a general term for "wheels" if possible.

Daniel 7:10

General Information:

Daniel continues to describe his vision of the court in heaven and the response to the fourth animal that he saw in [Daniel 7:7]

A river of fire flowed out from before him

The quick way in which fire came from the presence of God is spoken of as if it was water flowing in a river. Alternate translation: "Fire poured out in front of him like water in a river"

before him

The word "him" refers to God, the Ancient of Days from Daniel 7:9.

millions

This probably refers to a large group rather than to a precise number. Alternate translation: "thousands of thousands" or "great numbers of people"

one hundred million

This probably refers to a large group rather than to a precise number. Alternate translation: "tens of thousands times tens of thousands" or "uncountable numbers of people"

The court was in session

This means that God, the judge, was ready to investigate the evidence and make his judgment. Alternate translation: "The judge was ready to judge" or "The judge was seated"

the books were opened

These are the books that contain the evidence to be used in court. Alternate translation: "the books of evidence were opened"

Daniel 7:11

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General Information:

Daniel continues to describe his vision of the court in heaven and the response to the fourth animal that he saw in Daniel 7:7.

the animal was killed ... to be burned up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed the fourth animal, destroyed its body, and gave it to someone to burn it up"

the animal was killed

The animal was killed because the judge determined that it was guilty. Alternate translation: "they executed the animal" or "the judge commanded and they killed the animal"

the animal

This refers to the fourth animal that had the ten horns and the horn that spoke boastfully. Alternate translation: "the most frightening animal" or "the animal that had the boastful horn"

Daniel 7:12

the rest of the four animals

It may be clearer to say, "the other three animals."

their authority to rule was taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the judge took away their authority to rule" or "their authority to rule ended"

their lives were prolonged for a period of time

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they continued to live for a period of time" or "the judge let them live a little longer"

Daniel 7:13

General Information:

Most of the text of verses 9-14 is symbolic language with parallel lines that have similar meaning. For this reason, the ULB presents them in poetic form.

I saw one coming ... like a son of man

The person that Daniel saw was not a normal man, but had a human figure like a man. "I also saw that night someone coming who resembled a son of man, that is, he had a human figure"

with the clouds of heaven

"with the clouds of the sky"

the Ancient of Days

This refers to God who is eternal. See how you translated this title in Daniel 7:9

was presented before him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they presented this son of man to the Ancient of Days" or "he stood before him"

Daniel 7:14

Authority to rule and glory and royal power were given to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The one who looked like a son of man received authority to rule, glory, and royal power"

royal power

This, here, refers to "authority."

peoples, nations, and languages

Here "nations" and "languages" represent people from different nations who speak different languages. See how you translated this in [Daniel 3:4]

will not pass away ... will never be destroyed

These two phrases mean the same thing.

that will never be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one will ever destroy"

Daniel 7:15

my spirit was grieved inside of me ... the visions I saw in my mind troubled me

These two phrases describe how Daniel was feeling. The second one gives more information about the first one, explaining about his grieved spirit.

my spirit was grieved inside of me

Here "my spirit" refers to Daniel himself. Alternate translation: "I was very sad inside"

Daniel 7:16

one of them standing there

This is one of the heavenly beings who were standing before God's throne. Possible meanings 1) these are angels, spirits who serve God 2) these are people who have died and are now in heaven.

to show me

"to tell me" or "to explain to me"

the interpretation of these things

The abstract noun "interpretation" can be translated as a verb. See how you translated it in [Daniel 2:4]

these things

"the things I had seen"

Daniel 7:17

These large animals, four in number,

"These four large animals"

are four kings

"represent four kings"

four kings that will arise from the earth

Here "from the earth" means they are real people. Alternate translation: "four kings who will come to power on the earth" or "four men who will rise up from among the people of the earth and become kings"

Daniel 7:18

they will possess it

"they will rule over it"

forever and ever

This repetition of ideas emphasizes that this kingdom will never come to an end.

Daniel 7:19

very horrifying

"very frightening"

trampled on

"walked on and crushed"

Daniel 7:20

the ten horns on its head

"the ten horns on the head of the fourth animal"

grew up, and before which the three horns fell down

"grew up, and about the three horns that fell down in front of it" or "grew up, and about the three horns that fell down because of it"

before which the three horns fell down

Here "fell down" is a euphemism that means they were destroyed." Alternate translation: "which destroyed the three horns"

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the mouth that boasted
"its mouth that boasted" or "the mouth of the new horn, that boasted"
that seemed greater than its companions
the horn with the eyes and a mouth seemed to be greater than the other horns
Daniel 7:21
this horn
"this fourth horn." This refers to the horn that is described in Daniel 7:20.
Daniel 7:22
until the Ancient of Days came, and justice was given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the Ancient of Days came and brought justice"
Ancient of Days
This is a title for God that emphasizes that he is eternal. See how you translated this title in Daniel 7:9.
Daniel 7:23
General Information:
Most of the text of verses 23-27 is symbolic language. For this reason, the ULB presents them in poetic form.
This is what that person said
This is the person that Daniel approached in Daniel 7:16.
that person said
"that person answered"
As for the fourth animal
"Concerning the fourth animal" or "Now, about the fourth animal"
It will devour ... it into pieces
This does not mean the fourth kingdom will destroy the planet, but that it will brutally attack, conquer, and destroy all other kingdoms on earth.
Daniel 7:24
As for the ten horns
"Concerning the ten horns" or "Now, about the ten horns"
out of this kingdom ten kings will arise
They will rule one after the other. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "ten kings will rule over this fourth kingdom, one after another"
another will arise after them
This other king is not one of the ten. It may be helpful to refer to him as "the eleventh king." Alternate translation: "after that an eleventh king will become powerful"
He will be different from the previous ones
"He will be different from the other ten kings"
he will subdue the three kings
He will defeat three of the original ten kings. It may be helpful to state that those three kings are represented by the three horns that were pulled out. Alternate translation: "he will defeat the three kings that were represented by the three horns that were pulled out"
Daniel 7:25
General Information:
The man in Daniel's vision continues talking to Daniel. Most of the text of verses 23-27 is symbolic language. For this reason, the ULB presents them in poetic form.
He will speak words against the Most High
This means that the newest king will openly disagree with and say bad things about the Most High.
He will try ... into his hand
The words "He" and "his" refer to the newest king, not the Most High.
the holy people
"God's holy people"
change the festivals and the law
Both terms refer to the law of Moses. The festivals were an important part of the religion of Israel in the Old Testament.
These things will be given into his hand
Here "his hand" refers to his control. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The newest king will control the religous festivals and laws"
one year, two years, and half a year
This means "three and half years." This is not the normal way the Israelites counted. Try to translate it in a way that preserves this way of counting. Alternate translation: "one year plus two years plus six months"
Daniel 7:26
the court will be in session
This means that the judge will be ready to investigate evidence and make his judgment. Alternate translation: "the judge will judge" or "The judge will sit down"
they will take his royal power away
"the members of the court will take the royal power away from the newest king"
royal power
This, here, refers to "authority." See how you translated this in Daniel 7:14.
to be consumed and destroyed at the end
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and consume and destroy it in the end" or "and completely destroy his royal power in the end"
Daniel 7:27
General Information:
The man in Daniel's vision continues talking to Daniel. Most of the text of verses 23-27 is symbolic language. For this reason, the ULB presents them in poetic form.
The kingdom and the dominion ... will be given to the people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give the kingdom and the dominion ... to the people"
The kingdom and the dominion
These two terms mean basically the same thing and emphasize that this will concern all forms of official authority.
the greatness of the kingdoms
The abstract noun "greatness" can be translated with the adjective "great." Alternate translation: "everything that is great about the kingdoms"
of the kingdoms under the whole heaven
The idiom "under the whole heaven" refers to the kingdoms on earth. Alternate translation: "of all the kingdoms on earth"
His kingdom
"The kingdom of the Most High"
an everlasting kingdom
"a kingdom that will exist forever" or "a kingdom that will never end"

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Daniel 7:28

Here is the end of the matter

This means that Daniel has finished describing the vision. Alternate translation: "That is what I saw in my vision" or "This is the end of the description of what I saw in my vision"

my face changed in appearance

"my face became pale"

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8 [1]In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, I, Daniel, had a vision appear to me (after the one that appeared to me at first).[2]I saw in the vision, as I was looking, that I was in the fortress of Susa in the province of Elam. I saw in the vision that I was beside the Ulai Canal.
[3]I looked up and saw before me a ram with two horns, standing beside the canal. One horn was longer than the other, but the longer one grew more slowly than the shorter and was passed up in length by it.[4]I saw the ram pushing west, then north, and then south; no other animal could stand before him. None of them was able to rescue anyone out of his hand. He did whatever he wanted, and he became great.

[5]As I was thinking about this, I saw a male goat come from the west, who went across the surface of the whole earth, running fast, not seeming to touch the ground. The goat had a large horn between his eyes.[6]He came to the ram who had two horns—I had seen the ram standing on the bank of the canal—and the goat rushed toward the ram in a powerful rage.
[7]I saw the goat come close to the ram. He was very angry at the ram, and he hit the ram and broke off its two horns. The ram was powerless to stand before him. The goat knocked him down to the ground and trampled on him. There was no one who could rescue the ram from his power.[8]Then the goat became very large. But when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in its place four other large horns grew up that pointed toward the four winds of the heavens.

[9]Out of one of them grew another horn, little at first, but which grew exceedingly large toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.[10]It became so large as to engage in war with the army of heaven. Some of that army and some of the stars were thrown down to the earth, and it trampled on them.
[11]It made itself to be as great as the commander of the army. It took away from him the regular burnt offering, and the place of his sanctuary was polluted.[12]Because of rebellion, the army will be given over to the goat's horn, and the burnt offering will be stopped. The horn will throw truth down to the ground, and it will succeed in what it does.
[13]Then I heard a holy one speaking and another holy one answering him, "How long will these things last, this vision about the burnt offering, the sin that brings destruction, the handing over of the sanctuary, and heaven's army being trampled on?"[14]He said to me, "It will last for 2,300 evenings and mornings. After that the sanctuary will be restored."

[15]When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I tried to understand it. Then there stood before me one who looked like a man.[16]I heard a man's voice calling between the banks of the Ulai Canal. He said, "Gabriel, help this man understand the vision."[17]So he came near where I stood. When he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."
[18]When he spoke to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. Then he touched me and made me stand up.
[19]He said, "See, I will make known to you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time for the end.
[20]As for the ram you saw, the one that had two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia.[21]The male goat is the king of Greece. The large horn between his eyes is the first king.
[22]As for the horn that was broken, in the place of which four others arose—four kingdoms will arise from his nation, but not with his great power.[23]At the latter time of those kingdoms, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a grim-faced king, one who is very intelligent, will arise.
[24]His power will be mighty—but not by his own power. He will be amazing in what he destroys; he will act and succeed. He will destroy mighty ones and the holy people.[25]By his craftiness he will make deceit prosper under his hand. He will become great in his own mind. He will unexpectedly destroy many people. He will even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he will be broken, but not by any human hand.
[26]The vision about the evenings and mornings that has been told is true. But seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future."
[27]Then I, Daniel, was overcome and lay weak for several days. Then I got up, and went about the king's business. But I was astounded by the vision, and there was no one who understood it.

Daniel 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The vision of the ram and the male goat

Although specific interpretation of this vision is not given, most scholars believe Daniel saw Greece overthrowing Media-

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Persia before breaking up into four kingdoms. One of these kingdoms stopped the temple worship for a while and then it was restored. (See: temple and restore)

Links:

Daniel 8:1 Notes

Daniel 8:1

General Information:

Chapters 7 and 8 are not in chronological order. They happened while Belshazzar was still the king, before the rule of Darius and Cyrus that was discussed in chapter 6. In Daniel's vision, he saw animals that were symbols of other things. Later in the vision someone explains the meaning of those symbols.

In the third year

"In year three"

Belshazzar

This is the son of Nebuchadnezzar who became king after his father. See how you translated this name in Daniel 5:1.

had a vision appear to me (after the one ... first)

This is background information to remind the reader that this is Daniel's second vision. Alternate translation: "had a second vision appear to me"

Daniel 8:2

fortress

a walled city that was guarded and protected

Susa ... Elam ... Ulai Canal

These are names of places.

Canal

A canal is a narrow man-made waterway.

Daniel 8:3

a ram with two horns

It is normal for rams to have two horns. These horns, however, have symbolic meaning.

but the longer ... passed up in length by it

"but the longer one grew more slowly than the shorter one, and the shorter one grew to be even longer than it"

Daniel 8:4

I saw the ram pushing

"I saw the ram using its head to push things out of its way" or "I saw the ram running very quickly"

to rescue anyone out of his hand

Rams do not have hands. Here "hand" refers to the ram's power. Alternate translation: "to rescue anyone from him" or "to rescue anyone from his power"

Daniel 8:5

across the surface of the whole earth

The phrase "the whole earth" is an exaggeration that means he came from far away. Alternate translation: "from far away across the surface of the land"

The goat had a large horn between his eyes

Goats have two horns on the sides of their heads. This image should be explained. Alternate translation: "The goat had a single large horn in the center of his head"

Daniel 8:6

in a powerful rage

"and it was very angry"

Daniel 8:7

trampled

to crush something by stepping on it

the ram from his power

"the ram from the goat because of his power"

Daniel 8:8

the goat became very large

"the goat became very large and strong"

the large horn was broken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "something broke off the large horn"

toward the four winds of the heavens

Here "the four winds of heaven" is an idiom that refers to the four main directions

Daniel 8:9

but which grew exceedingly large toward

"but which became very large" or "but which pointed itself toward." This is probably a metonym for the goat, which is a metaphor for a king or nation, ruling powerfully over the lands to the south and east and over the Beautiful Land.

Daniel 8:10

It became so large as to engage in war

Here the horn is given qualities of a person and is engaging in war.

Some of that army ... thrown down to the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: The horn threw some of that army and some of the stars down to the earth"

it trampled on them

Here the horn is given qualities of a person that tramples on the stars and on the army.

Daniel 8:11

General Information:

The horn is given qualities of a person.

Connecting Statement:

Daniel continues describing his vision of the horn (Daniel 8:9).

the commander of the army

This refers to God himself, who is the leader of the angel army.

It took away from him the regular burnt offering

Here "took away" means the horn stopped the offering. Here "him" refers to God, the commander of the army. Alternate translation: "It stopped the people from making their regular burnt offering to him"

the place of his sanctuary was polluted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it defiled his sanctuary"

Daniel 8:12

The horn will throw truth down to the ground

The horn ignoring truth and godliness is spoken of as if it will throw truth to the ground. Alternate translation: "The horn will reject the truth"

Daniel 8:13

holy one

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"angel"

the handing over of the sanctuary

"the surrender of the sanctuary"

heaven's army being trampled on

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the horn trampling on heaven's army"

Daniel 8:14

2,300 evenings and mornings

"Two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings." Here "evenings and mornings" is a merism that refers to everything in between, which means full days. Alternate translation: "2,300 sunsets and sunrises" or "2,300 days"

the sanctuary will be restored

"the temple will be purified and set in order again"

Daniel 8:16

a man's voice calling between the banks of the Ulai Canal

Here a man is being referred to by his voice. Alternate translation: "a man calling from the Ulai Canal"

Ulai Canal

A canal is a narrow man-made waterway. See how you translated this name in Daniel 8:2.

Daniel 8:17

fell on my face

This is an act of worship in which someone lies flat on the ground.

the time of the end

"the final days" or "the end of the world." This does not refer to the final moment in time, but rather to the events that will happen immediately before the end.

Daniel 8:18

a deep sleep

This is a type of sleep when someone is sleeping heavily and does not wake up easily.

Daniel 8:19

the time of wrath

This refers to the time when God will judge. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the time when God judges in anger"

the appointed time for the end

"the time when the world will end"

Daniel 8:20

General Information:

In these verses, the angel explains to Daniel the symbolic meaning of the things he saw in his vision. The animals and horns actually represent human rulers and kingdoms.

two horns—they are

"two horns—they represent"

the kings of Media and Persia

These words could either 1) refer to the literal kings of Media and Persia or 2) be a metonym in which the kings represents the kingdoms of Media and Persia. Alternate translation: "the kingdoms of Media and Persia"

Daniel 8:21

the king of Greece

These words could be 1) a literal reference to the king of Greece or 2) a metonym for the kingdom of Greece. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of Greece"

The large horn between his eyes is

"The large horn between his eyes represents"

Daniel 8:22

General Information:

In these verses, the angel explains to Daniel the symbolic meaning of the things he saw in his vision. The animals and horns actually represented human rulers or kingdoms.

As for the horn that was broken ... four others arose

"Where the large horn was broken off, four others arose"

four kingdoms will arise from his nation

The four horns represent the four new kingdoms. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they represent the four kingdoms into which the kingdom of the first king will be divided"

but not with his great power

"but they will not have as much power as the king represented by the large horn"

Daniel 8:23

At the latter time of those kingdoms

"As those kingdoms approach their end"

have reached their limit

"have reached their full" or "have run their course"

grim-faced

This means someone who looks defiant, or like he will refuse to obey.

Daniel 8:24

General Information:

In these verses, the angel explains to Daniel the symbolic meaning of the things he saw in his vision. The animals and horns actually represented human rulers or kingdoms.

but not by his own power

"but someone else will give him his power"

Daniel 8:25

he will make deceit prosper

Here "deceit" is spoken of as if it is a person who will prosper. Alternate translation: "the amount of deception will increase"

under his hand

Here "hand" refers to his rule. Alternate translation: "under his rule"

the Prince of princes

"the mightiest prince" or "the prince who rules over all other princes." Most English versions capitalize the word "Prince" because the phrase probably refers either to God or to a man whom God appoints to rule.

he will be broken

Here "he" refers to his power. Alternate translation: "his rule will end"

not by any human hand

Here "hand" refers to power. This can be also stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "not by any human power" or "by divine power"

Daniel 8:26

General Information:

The angel continues to instruct Daniel about the visions that Daniel saw.

seal up the vision

The angel speaks about the vision as if it were a scroll that could be closed with a wax seal. This prevented anyone from seeing the contents until the seal was broken. Alternate translation: "close and seal up what you have

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written about the vision" or "do not tell anyone about the vision now"

Daniel 8:27

was overcome and lay weak for several days

"was exhausted and lay in bed sick for several days"

went about the king's business

"did the work that the king had assigned to me"

I was astounded by the vision

"I was dismayed by the vision" or "I was very confused by the vision"

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9 [1]In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus[1] —a descendant of the Medes, who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—[2]in the first year of Darius' reign, I, Daniel, was studying the books containing Yahweh's word, the word that had come to Jeremiah the prophet. I observed that there would be seventy years until Jerusalem's desolations would end.

[3]I turned my face to the Lord God, to seek him with prayer and humble requests, with fasting, wearing sackcloth, and sitting in ashes.[4]I prayed to Yahweh my God, and I made confession of our sins. I said, "I beg you, Lord—you are the great and awesome God—you are the one who keeps the covenant and is faithful to love those who love you and keep your commandments.
[5]We have sinned and have done what is wrong. We have acted wickedly and we have rebelled, turning aside from your commands and decrees.[6]We have not listened to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings, our leaders, our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.
[7]To you, Lord, belongs righteousness. To us today, however, belongs shame on our faces—for the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem, and to all Israel. This includes those who are near and those who are far away in all the lands where you scattered them. This is because of the faithless deeds that we committed against you.[8]To us, Yahweh, belongs shame on our faces—to our kings, to our leaders, and to our ancestors—because we have sinned against you.
[9]To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him.[10]We have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God by walking in his laws he gave us through his servants the prophets.[11]All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. The curse and oath that are written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, for we have sinned against him.
[12]Yahweh has confirmed the words that he spoke against us and against our rulers over us, by bringing on us a great disaster. For under the whole of heaven there has not been done anything that could compare with what has been done to Jerusalem.[13]As it is written in the law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not begged for mercy from Yahweh our God by turning away from our iniquities and paying attention to your truth.[14]Therefore Yahweh has kept the disaster ready and has brought it on us, for Yahweh our God is righteous in all the deeds he does, yet we have not obeyed his voice.
[15]Now, Lord our God, you brought out your people from the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and you have made a famous name for yourself, as in this present day. But still we sinned; we have done wicked things.[16]Lord, because of all your righteous deeds, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain. Because of our sins, and because of the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people have become an object of mockery to all those around us.
[17]Now, our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his humble requests; for your sake, Lord, make your face shine on your sanctuary that is desolate.[18]My God, incline your ears and listen; open your eyes and see. We have been devastated; look at the city that is called by your name. We do not bring our humble requests to you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy.[19]Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, pay attention and take action! For your own sake, do not delay, my God, for your city and your people are called by your name."

[20]While I was speaking—praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my humble request before Yahweh my God on behalf of God's holy mountain—[21]while I was praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, flew down to me in rapid flight, at the time of the evening sacrifice.
[22]He gave me understanding and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding.[23]When you began presenting your humble requests, the order was given and I have come to tell you the answer, for you are precious. Therefore consider this word and understand the revelation.

[24]Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to end the guilt and put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring everlasting righteousness, to carry out the vision and the prophecy, and to consecrate the most holy place.[25]Know and understand that from the issuing of the order to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the anointed one (who will be a leader), there will be seven sevens and sixty-two sevens. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a moat, despite the times of distress.
[26]After the sixty-two sevens, the anointed one will be destroyed and will have nothing. The army of a coming ruler will destroy the city and the holy place. Its end will come with a flood, and there will be war even to the end. Desolations have been decreed.

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[27]He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven. In the middle of the seven he will put an end to the sacrifice and the offering. On the wing of abominations will come someone who makes desolate until the complete destruction that has been decreed is poured out on the one who has made the desolation."

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[1]Also known as Ahasuerus.

Daniel 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Daniel told the future

Gabriel told Daniel a prophecy that Jerusalem would be rebuilt. Then later an anointed person would be killed and the worship at the temple stopped. (See: prophet and anoint and temple)

The unusual expression of numbers in 9:24-26

This passage uses the expressions "seventy sevens of years," "seven sevens and sixty-two sevens," and "sixty-two sevens of years" to denote "490 years," "49 years and then 434 years," and "434 years," respectively. The original language uses the idea of a "week" to express the idea of a group of sevens, but these numbers are clearly meant to denote years, not weeks. Most translators should use the ways normal in their languages to express these numbers.

Links:

Daniel 9:1 Notes

Daniel 9:1

General Information:

Chapters 7 and 8 were not in chronological order. They happened while Belshazzar was still the king. Chapter 9 now returns to the events of the reign of Darius who became king in chapter 6.

Ahasuerus ... who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans

This is background information about who Ahasuerus was. The UDB places this in parentheses to make that clear.

who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who became king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans" or "who conquered the Chaldeans"

over the kingdom

Or "over the country"

Daniel 9:2

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

there would be seventy years until Jerusalem's desolations would end

"from the time Jerusalem was destroyed, it would remain in ruins for 70 years"

Daniel 9:3

I turned my face to the Lord God

Here "face" represents Daniel's attention. Alternate translation: "I focused my attention on the Lord God" or "I directed my thoughts toward the Lord God"

to seek him

Those who want to know Yahweh and please him are spoken of as if they are literally seeking to find Yahweh.

fasting, wearing sackcloth, and sitting in ashes

These are symbolic acts of repentance and sorrow.

Daniel 9:4

I made confession of our sins

"I confessed our sins"

I beg you

This phrase translates a word that shows that the speaker is helpless and is begging the hearer to act. If your language has another word or phrase for this purpose, you may want to use it here.

you are the one who keeps the covenant and is faithful to love those

"you do what what you said you would do in your covenant, and you faithfully love those"

Daniel 9:5

General Information:

Daniel continues praying to the Lord about the people of Israel.

We have sinned and have done what is wrong

These two phrases express one idea in two different ways for emphasis.

We have acted wickedly and we have rebelled

These two phrases express one idea in two different ways for emphasis.

your commands and decrees

The words "commands" and "decrees" share similar meanings and refer to the whole law.

Daniel 9:6

We have not listened to your servants

Here "not listened" means they did not obey their message. Alternate translation: "We have not obeyed the message of your prophets"

spoke in your name

Here "name" refers to God's authority. Alternate translation: "spoke with your authority" or "spoke as your representative"

the people of the land

Here "land" refers to Israel. Alternate translation: "the Israelite people"

Daniel 9:7

General Information:

Daniel continues praying to the Lord about the people of Israel.

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To you, Lord, belongs righteousness
Being righteous is spoken of as if "righteousness" were an object that belongs to Yahweh. The abstract noun "righteousness" can be stated as "righteous." Alternate translation: "Lord, you are righteous"
To us today, however, belongs shame on our faces—for the people
Being ashamed is spoken of as if "shame" were an object that belongs to people. The abstract noun "shame" can be stated as "ashamed." Alternate translation: "But as for us, we are ashamed of what we have done—the people"
To us today
The word "us" includes Daniel and the Israelites, but it does not include God.
belongs shame on our faces
This idiom means their shame is visible to all.
because of the faithless deeds that we committed against you
"because we were very unfaithful to you"
Daniel 9:9
General Information:
Daniel continues praying to the Lord about the people of Israel.
To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness
Having these traits is spoken of as if they belonged to the Lord. Alternate translation: "The Lord our God is compassionate and forgives"
Daniel 9:10
We have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God
Here "voice" refers to the commands that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: "We have not obeyed what Yahweh told us to do"
Daniel 9:11
turned aside
The words "turned aside" mean that Israel stopped obeying God's laws.
that are written in the law of Moses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Moses wrote about in the law"
have been poured out on us
The abundance of the curse and the oath are spoken of as if they were poured out like water. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have brought upon us"
Daniel 9:12
General Information:
Daniel continues praying to the Lord about the people of Israel.
For under the whole of heaven
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "For in the whole world"
there has not been done anything
"nothing has been done." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nothing has happened"
what has been done to Jerusalem
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what you have done to Jerusalem"
Daniel 9:13
As it is written in the law of Moses
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As Moses wrote in the law"
turning away from our iniquities
Here stopping evil activity is spoken of as turning away from them. Alternate translation: "stopping our evil actions"
Daniel 9:14
Yahweh has kept the disaster ready
"Yahweh has prepared this disaster"
we have not obeyed his voice
Here "voice" refers to the things that Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "we have not done what he told us to do"
Daniel 9:15
with a mighty hand
Here "mighty hand" is a metonym for strength. Alternate translation: "with great strength"
you have made a famous name for yourself, as in this present day
"you caused people to know how great you are, as you still do today"
still we sinned; we have done wicked things
These two clauses mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize how bad sin is.
we sinned; we have done wicked things
Daniel and Israel sinned and did wicked things, but "we" does not include God.
Daniel 9:16
your anger and your wrath
The words "anger" and "wrath" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how terrible God's anger is when he acts on it.
your holy mountain
This mountain may be holy because God's temple is there. Alternate translation: "the mountain where your holy temple is"
our sins ... our ancestors
Here "our" refers to Daniel and Israel, but not to God.
an object of mockery
"something that people will mock" or "something for which people will mock us"
Daniel 9:17
Now
This does not mean "at this moment", but it is a way to show that the next phase in Daniel's prayer is about to start.
your servant ... his humble requests
The words "your servant" and "his" here refer to Daniel. He speaks about himself in the third person as a sign of respect for God.
make your face shine on
The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably as if Yahweh's face shone a light. Alternate translation: "act kindly toward" or "act with favor toward"
your sanctuary
This refers to the temple in Jerusalem.
Daniel 9:18
incline your ears and listen
These two phrases means the same thing and emphasize Daniel's desire for God to listen to his prayer. Alternate translation: "listen very carefully" or "pay close attention"
incline your ears
To "incline the ear" is to lean toward the speaker so as to

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better hear the words. This is a metaphor for listening carefully and paying attention. Alternate translation: "listen carefully" or "pay attention"

open your eyes and see

To "open the eyes" is an idiom that means to see. These two phrases means the same thing and emphasize Daniel's desire for God to pay attention to his prayer. Alternate translation: "notice us" or "pay attention"

is called by your name

Here "name" represents ownership. Alternate translation: "is your city" or "belongs to you"

Daniel 9:19

do not delay

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "act quickly"

Daniel 9:20

my people Israel

"the people of Israel to whom I belong"

Daniel 9:21

the man Gabriel

This is the same angel Gabriel who appeared in the form of a man in [Daniel 8:16]

in the vision at the first

This may refer to the first vision that Daniel had while he was awake. Alternate translation: "in the previous vision" or "in the vision I saw before" or "in a vision before"

flew down to me in rapid flight

"flew down to me quickly"

at the time of the evening sacrifice

The Jewish people sacrificed to God each evening just before the sun went down.

Daniel 9:22

insight and understanding

The words "insight" and "understanding" mean the same thing and emphasize that Gabriel will help Daniel to understand the message completely.

Daniel 9:23

the order was given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave the order"

you are precious

"you are precious to God" or "God loves you very much"

consider this word

"think about this message"

the revelation

This refers back to the prophesy of Jeremiah in Daniel 9:2.

Daniel 9:24

Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to

God decreed that he would do the things in this verse for the people and the holy city.

Seventy sevens

This is not the normal way the Israelites counted. If possible, try to translate in a way that preserves this use of the number seven. Alternate translation: "Seventy times seven years"

your people and your holy city

The word "your" here refers to Daniel. The people are the Israelites and the holy city is Jerusalem.

to end the guilt and put an end to sin

The idea is repeated to emphasize how certain it is that this will happen.

to carry out the vision

Here "carry out" is an idiom that means to accomplish. Alternate translation: "to accomplish the vision"

the vision and the prophecy

These words in this context mean the same thing. They ensure Daniel that Jeremiah's vision was indeed a prophecy.

Daniel 9:25

and sixty-two sevens

This is not the normal way the Israelites counted. If possible, try to translate in a way that preserves this use of the number seven. Alternate translation: "seven times seven years ... and sixty-two times seven years"

Know and understand

These words are used together to make the importance clear. Alternate translation: "You must clearly understand" or "You must know for sure"

the anointed one

Anointing is a symbolic act to show that someone is chosen. Alternate translation: "the person that God anoints" or "the person that God chooses"

seven sevens ... and sixty-two sevens

These added together are 69 of the 70 sevens spoken of in verse 24.

Jerusalem will be rebuilt

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will rebuild Jerusalem"

moat

a deep ditch around a city or building, usually with water in it

the times of distress

"a time of great trouble"

Daniel 9:26

sixty-two sevens

This is not the normal way the Israelites counted. If possible, try to translate in a way that preserves this use of the number seven. See how you translated this number in Daniel 9:25. Alternate translation: "sixty-two times seven"

the anointed one will be destroyed and will have nothing

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will destroy the anointed one and he will have nothing"

the anointed one

Anointing is a symbolic act to show that someone is chosen. See how you translated this title in Daniel 9:25. Alternate translation: "the person that God anoints" or "the person that God chooses"

a coming ruler

This is a foreign ruler, not "the anointed one." Alternate translation: "a foreign ruler who will come" or "a powerful ruler who will come"

Its end will come with a flood

The army will destroy the city and the holy place just as a flood destroys things.

Desolations have been decreed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has decreed ruin for the city and sanctuary" or "God

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has declared that the enemy army will destroy everything"

Daniel 9:27

He will ... he will

This refers to the coming ruler who will destroy the anointed one.

one seven ... In the middle of the seven

Here "seven" is used to refer to a period of seven years. Alternate translation: "seven years ... Halfway through the seven years"

put an end to

"stop" or "halt"

the sacrifice and the offering

These words basically mean the same thing. The repetition is to show that the ruler will prevent all types of sacrifices. Alternate translation: "all forms of sacrificing" or "every type of offering"

the wing of abominations

This may refer to the defensive structures on top of the walls of the temple, which are called "abominations" because they are full of idols. Alternate translation: "the walls of the temple that are full of abominations"

someone who makes desolate

"a person who completely destroys"

the complete destruction that has been decreed is poured out on the one who has made the desolation

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated using the verb "destroy." Here God completely destroying a person is spoken of as if God were pouring a liquid on that person. The phrases "has been decreed" and "is poured out" can be translated using active form. Alternate translation: "God, just as he said he would, completely destroys the one who made the desolation "

the one who has made the desolation

The abstract noun "desolation" can be translated using a verb or an adjective. You may need to make explicit that Daniel is speaking of the "desolation" of the holy place in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the person who made the holy place desolate" or "the person who destroyed the holy place"

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10 [1]In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. This message was true. It was about a great conflict. Daniel understood the message when he had insight from the vision.
[2]In those days I, Daniel, was in mourning for three weeks.[3]I ate no delicacies, I ate no meat, I drank no wine, and I did not anoint myself with oil until the completion of three entire weeks.
[4]On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was beside the great river (that is, the Tigris),[5]I looked up and saw a man dressed in linen, with a belt around his waist made of pure gold from Uphaz.[6]His body was like topaz, and his face was like lightning. His eyes were like flaming torches, and his arms and his feet were like polished bronze. The sound of his words was like the sound of a great crowd.
[7]I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision. However, a great terror came on them, and they ran away to hide themselves.[8]So I was left alone and saw this great vision. No strength remained in me; my bright appearance was turned into a ruined look, and no strength remained in me.[9]Then I heard his words—and as I heard them, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.

[10]A hand touched me, and it made me tremble in my knees and the palms of my hands.[11]The angel said to me, "Daniel, precious man, understand the words that I am speaking to you. Stand upright, for I have been sent to you." When he had spoken this message to me, I stood up trembling.
[12]Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you set your mind to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come because of your words.[13]The prince of the kingdom of Persia resisted me, and I was kept there with the kings of Persia for twenty-one days. But Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.[1]
[14]Now I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the last days. For the vision is for days yet to come."[15]While he was speaking to me using these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was unable to speak.
[16]One who was like the sons of man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and spoke to him who stood before me: "My master, I am in agony because of the vision; I have no strength left.[17]I am your servant. How can I talk with my master? For I now have no strength, and there is no breath left in me."

[18]Again the one with an appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me.[19]He said, "Do not be afraid, precious man. May peace be to you! Be strong now, be strong!" While he was speaking to me, I was strengthened. I said, "Let my master speak, for you have strengthened me."
[20]He said, "Do you know why I have come to you? I will soon return to fight against the prince of Persia. When I go, the prince of Greece will come.[21]But I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. There is no one who shows himself to be strong with me against them, except Michael your prince.

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[1]Instead of kings of Persia, some ancient copies have prince of the kings of Persia.

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Daniel 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section where Daniel is given a prophecy about the future from an angel. This section continues for the remainder of the book. (See: prophet)

Links:

Daniel 10:1 Notes

Daniel 10:1

the third year of Cyrus king of Persia

"year 3 of the rule of Cyrus the king of Persia"

a message was revealed to Daniel

This can also be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "God revealed a message to Daniel"

insight

the ability to understand more than what can be seen

Daniel 10:3

delicacies

These are expensive or rare kinds of food. Alternate translation: "fancy foods"

until the completion of three entire weeks

"until the end of three entire weeks"

Daniel 10:4

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of April on Western calendars.

Daniel 10:5

with a belt around his waist

"and he was wearing a belt"

Uphaz

Uphaz is a place. Its location is not known

Daniel 10:6

His body was like topaz

His body gleamed with blue or yellow light as if it were made of topaz. Alternate translation: "his body gleamed like topaz"

topaz

a blue or yellow gemstone, also known as beryl, peridot, or chrysolite

his face was like lightning

His face shone brightly as a bolt of lightning shines. Alternate translation: "his face shone with light as bright as the flash of lightning"

His eyes were like flaming torches

His eyes were bright with light as if they were flaming torches. Alternate translation: "his eyes were so bright that it seemed they had torches burning inside them"

his arms and his feet were like polished bronze

His arms and feet were as shiny as if they were made of polished bronze. Alternate translation: "his arms and feet shone like polished bronze that reflects the light around it"

The sound of his words was like the sound of a great crowd

His voice was so loud that it was as if a crowd of people were all talking loudly. Alternate translation: "his voice was as loud as a huge crowd all calling out together"

Daniel 10:8

So I was left alone and saw

This can be stated in active form. "No one was with me, and I saw"

my bright appearance was turned into a ruined look

This can be stated in active form. "my bright appearance turned into looking ruined"

my bright appearance

This describes the face of someone who is healthy. Alternate translation: "my healthy-looking face"

a ruined look

Someone's unhealthy, pale face is spoken of as if it were a ruined building. Alternate translation: "pale"

Daniel 10:9

I fell on my face in deep sleep

Possible meanings are: 1) Daniel was so scared by what he saw that he deliberately lay on the ground, where he then fainted or 2) Daniel fainted and then fell forward onto the ground.

Daniel 10:10

A hand touched me

Here a person's hand represents that person, probably the man whom Daniel saw in [Daniel 10:5]

Daniel 10:11

Daniel, precious man

"Daniel, you who are precious to God"

Daniel 10:12

you set your mind to understand

"you determined to understand the vision"

your words were heard

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "God heard your words"

Daniel 10:13

prince

Here this refers to a spirit who has authority over a human nation. Alternate translation: "spirit prince"

the kings of Persia

This probably refers to the various kings who ruled over nations in the Persian Empire, and who had to obey the king of Persia.

Michael, one of the chief princes

"Michael, on of the chief angels" or "Michael, one of the archangels"

Daniel 10:14

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

Daniel 10:15

I turned my face toward the ground

"I looked at the ground." Daniel may have done this to show humble reverence, or because he was afraid.

Daniel 10:16

One who was like the sons of man

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This may refer to the one who had just spoken to Daniel. However, some versions interpret it as referring to a different person. Alternate translation: "This one, who looked like a human"

like the sons of man

Here this expression refers to human beings in general. Alternate translation: "like a human being"

agony

severe emotional suffering

Daniel 10:17

I am your servant. How can I talk with my master?

Daniel asks this question meaning that he cannot speak to the angel because he is not the angel's equal. These sentences can be combined. Alternate translation: "I am not able to answer you because I am only your servant"

there is no breath left in me

This idiom refers to breathing. Alternate translation: "I cannot breathe" or "it's very hard to breathe"

Daniel 10:18

the one with an appearance of a man

"the one who looked like a human"

Daniel 10:19

Be strong now, be strong

The words "be strong" are repeated for emphasis.

precious man

"you who are precious to God"

I was strengthened

This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I became strong"

Daniel 10:20

the prince of Persia

Here "prince" refers to a spirit who rules and guards a human nation. See how you translated a similar phrase in Daniel 10:13. Alternate translation: "the spirit prince of Persia"

Daniel 10:21

But I will tell you

This implies that the angel will tell Daniel about this immediately, before he goes away. Alternate translation: "But first I will tell you"

what is written in the Book of Truth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Book of Truth says" or "what someone wrote in the Book of Truth"

There is no one who shows himself to be strong with me against them, except Michael your prince

This double negative emphasizes that Michael is the only one who shows himself strong. Alternate translation: "The only one who shows himself to be strong with me against them is Michael your prince" or "Michael your prince is the only one to show himself strong with me against them"

who shows himself to be strong with me against them

"who proves himself to be strong with me against them" or "who helps me against them"

Michael your prince

The word "your" is plural. It refers to Daniel and the rest of the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Michael, the prince of your people"

Michael your prince

"Michael your guardian angel." Translate "prince" when it refers to Michael as you did Daniel 10:13.

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11 [1]In the first year of Darius the Mede, I myself came to support and protect Michael.[2]Now I will tell you the truth.
Three kings will arise in Persia, and a fourth will be far richer than all the others. When he has gained power through his riches, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.
[3]A mighty king will rise up who will rule a very great kingdom, and he will act according to his desires.[4]When he has risen up, his kingdom will be broken and divided to the four winds of heaven, but not to his own descendants, and not with the authority he had when he was ruling. For his kingdom will be uprooted for others besides his descendants.

[5]The king of the South will become strong, but one of his commanders will become even stronger than he and will have dominion. His dominion will be a great dominion.[6]After a few years, when the time is right, they will make an alliance. The daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to confirm the agreement. But she will not keep her arm's strength, nor will he stand, or his arm. She will be abandoned—she and those who brought her, and her father, and the one who supported her in those times.[1]

[7]But a branch from her roots will rise up in her place. He will attack the army and enter the fortress of the king of the North. He will fight them, and he will conquer them.[8]He will capture their gods, along with their cast metal figures and their precious vessels of silver and of gold, and take them to Egypt. For some years he will stay away from the king of the North.[9]Then the king of the North will invade the kingdom of the king of the South, but he will withdraw to his own land.

[10]His sons will get ready and assemble a great army. It will keep coming and will flood everything; it will pass through all the way to his fortress.
[11]Then the king of the South will become very angry; he will go and fight against him, the king of the North. The king of the North will raise up a great army, but the army will be given into his hand.[12]The army will be carried off, and the heart of the king of the South will be lifted up, and he will make tens of thousands to fall, but he will not be victorious.
[13]Then the king of the North will raise up another army, greater than the first. After some years, the king of the North will surely come with a great army supplied with much equipment.
[14]In those times many will rise against the king of the South. Sons of the violent among your people will set themselves in order to fulfill a vision, but they will stumble.

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[15]The king of the North will come, pour out earth for siege mounds, and capture a city with fortifications. The forces of the South will not be able to stand, not even their best soldiers. There will be no strength to stand.[16]The one who comes against him will do as he desires, and no one will stand in his way. He will stand in the Beautiful Land, and destruction will be in his hand.
[17]The king of the North will set his face to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, and with him will be an agreement that he will make with the king of the South. He will give him a daughter of women in marriage to ruin the kingdom of the South. But the plan will not succeed or help him.[18]After this, the king of the North will pay attention to the coastlands and will capture many of them. But a commander will end his contempt and will cause his contempt to turn back upon him.[19]Then he will pay attention to the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall; he will not be found.

[20]Then someone will rise up in his place who will make a tax collector pass through for the sake of the splendor of the kingdom. But in the next days he will be broken, but not in anger or in battle.[21]In his place will rise up a despised person to whom the people will not have given the honor of royal power; he will come unexpectedly and will take over the kingdom by trickery.[22]An army will be swept away like a flood from before him. Both that army and the leader of the covenant will be destroyed.
[23]From the time an alliance is made with him, he will act deceitfully; with only a small number of people he will gain power.[24]Without warning he will come into the richest part of the province, and he will do what neither his father nor his father's father did. He will spread among his followers the booty, the plunder, and the wealth. He will plan the overthrow of fortresses, but only for a time.
[25]He will wake up his power and his heart against the king of the South with a great army. The king of the South will wage war with an extremely large and mighty army, but he will not stand because others will make plots against him.[26]Even those who eat his fine food will try to destroy him. His army will be swept away like a flood, and many of them will fall killed.[27]Both these kings, with their hearts set on evil against each other, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but it will be of no use. For the end will come at the time that has been fixed.

[28]Then the king of the North will go back into his land with great riches, with his heart set against the holy covenant. He will act and then will return to his own land.
[29]At the appointed time he will return and come against the South again. But this time it will not be as before.[30]For ships of Kittim will come against him, and he will become afraid. He will return and be furious against the holy covenant, and he will take action. He will return and show favor to those who abandon the holy covenant.
[31]His forces will rise up and profane the fortress sanctuary. They will put an end to the regular burnt offering, and they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.[32]As for those who acted wickedly against the covenant, he will deceive them and corrupt them. But the people who know their God will be strong and will take action.
[33]Those among the people who have insight will make many understand. But they will stumble by the sword and by flame; they will stumble into captivity and into being robbed for days.[34]In their stumbling, they will be helped with a little help. In hypocrisy many will join themselves with them.[35]Some of those who have insight will stumble so that refining will happen to them, and cleansing, and purifying, until the time of the end. For the appointed time is still to come.

[36]The king will act according to his desires. He will lift himself up and make himself great above every god. Against the God of gods he will say astonishing things, for he will succeed until the wrath is completed. For what has been decreed will be done.[37]He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers, not even the god desired by women, nor will he regard any other god, but will exalt himself above them all.
[38]He will honor the god of fortresses instead of these. It is a god whom his fathers did not know that he will honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and other precious things.[39]He will attack the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. To anyone who acknowledges him, he will give much honor. He will make them rulers over many people, and he will divide up the land as a reward.[2]

[40]At the time of the end, the king of the South will attack. The king of the North will storm against him with chariots and horsemen and with many ships. He will go against lands, flood them, and pass through.[41]He will go into the Beautiful Land, and tens of thousands of Israelites will fall. But these will escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the remainder of the people of Ammon.
[42]He will extend his hand into lands; the land of Egypt will not be rescued.[43]He will have control over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; the Libyans and the Cushites will be in his footsteps.
[44]But news from the east and the north will frighten him, and he will go out with great rage to completely destroy and to set many apart for destruction.[45]He will set up the tent of his royal residence between the seas and the mountain of the beauty of holiness. He will come to his end, and there will be no helper for him.

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[1]Instead of his arm, which the Hebrew text has, some ancient translations of the Hebrew text and many modern translations read his seed, that is, his children.
[2]Instead of He will attack the strongest fortresses, some modern translations have He will defend his fortress.

Daniel 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The final prophecy continues in this chapter. The kings of the North and of the South will fight many wars against each other. The king of the South is probably a reference to Egypt. (See: prophet)

Links:

Daniel 11:1 Notes

Daniel 11:1

General Information:

In Daniel 11:1 through 12:4, the one who was speaking to Daniel in chapter 10 tells him what is written in the book of truth. This is as he said he would do in Daniel 10:21.

In the first year of Darius

Darius was the King of the Medes. "The first year" refers to the first year that he was king. Alternate translation: "In the first year of the reign of Darius"

Daniel 11:2

Three kings will arise in Persia

"Three kings will rule over Persia"

a fourth will be far richer than all the others

"after them a fourth king will come into power who will have more money than the three before him"

power

Possible meanings are 1) authority or 2) military power.

he will stir up everyone

"he will cause everyone to want to fight"

Daniel 11:3

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

A mighty king will rise up

The idea of rising up or standing is often used for someone who becomes powerful. Alternate translation: "A mighty king will begin to reign"

who will rule a very great kingdom

Possible meanings are 1) that the size of this kingdom would be very great, or 2) that the king would rule his kingdom with very great power.

Daniel 11:4

his kingdom will be broken and divided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his kingdom will break apart and divide" or "his kingdom will break apart into pieces"

the four winds of heaven

See how you translated this in Daniel 7:2.

but not to his own descendants

The idea of not being divided and shared out is implied here. Alternate translation: "but it will not be divided for his own descendants" or "but it will not be shared by his own descendants"

his kingdom will be uprooted for others besides his descendants

The kingdom is spoken of as if it were a plant that someone destroyed by uprooting it. This idea can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "another power will uproot and destroy his kingdom and others who are not his descendants will rule over it"

Daniel 11:5

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

His dominion will be a great dominion

"His kingdom will be a great kingdom" or "He will rule over a great kingdom." Some English versions understand this "dominion" to be a kingdom other than the kingdom of the South, but others understand it to be the kingdom of the South.

Daniel 11:6

they will make an alliance

The king of the South will make an alliance with the king of the North. This alliance would be a formal agreement that both nations are required to follow. Alternate translation: "the king of the South and the king of the North will promise to work together"

The daughter of the king of the South will come ... to confirm the agreement

The king of the South will give his daughter in marriage to the king of the North. The marriage will confirm the agreement between the two kings.

her arm's strength ... his arm

Here "arm" stands for power.

She will be abandoned

This appears to refer to a plot to kill her and those who made the alliance. This phrase may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "They will abandon her"

Daniel 11:7

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

a branch from her roots

This family is spoken of as if it were a tree. The roots represent ancestors, and the branch represents a descendant. Alternate translation: "a descendant of her ancestors" or "one of her descendants"

her roots

The word "her" refers to the daughter of the king of the South in Daniel 11:6.

He will attack the army

The word "he" refers to her descendant, and here it also refers to his army. Alternate translation: "He and his army will attack the army of the king of the North"

He will fight them

Here "them" represents the soldiers of the enemy army. Alternate translation: "He will fight the enemy soldiers"

Daniel 11:9

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but he will withdraw
The word "he" refers to the king of the North.
Daniel 11:10
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
His sons
"The sons of the king of the North"
assemble a great army
"gather together many men who can fight in battles"
will flood everything
The way the large army covers the land will be like a flood of water. Alternate translation: "will be so great in number that they will cover all the land"
Daniel 11:11
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
will raise up a great army
"will assemble a great army"
the army will be given into his hand
Here "hand" represents the control of the king of the South. Alternate translation: "the king will surrender the army to the king of the South"
Daniel 11:12
The army will be carried off
This may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "The king of the South will capture the army of the North"
will be lifted up
Being lifted up represents the idea of becoming very proud. Alternate translation: "will become very proud"
will make tens of thousands to fall
Here falling represents dying in battle. Alternate translation: "will have his army kill many thousands of his enemies" or "will kill many thousands of his enemies"
tens of thousands
"many thousands"
Daniel 11:13
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
a great army supplied with much equipment
This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a great army that has much equipment"
Daniel 11:14
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
many will rise against the king
Here the idea of rising up represents rebelling. Alternate translation: "many people will rebel against the king"
Sons of the violent among your people
Possible meanings are 1) this speaks of the literal children of that society's violent people, who are themselves violent, or 2) this is a metaphor for "Those among your people who are violent."
they will stumble
Here stumbling represents failing. Alternate translation: "they will not succeed"
Daniel 11:15
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
The king of the North will come
Here "king of the North" includes his army also. Alternate translation: "The army of the king of the North will come"
pour out earth for siege mounds
This refers to the piling up of earth in order for soldiers to reach the height of city walls in order to attack them. Soldiers and slaves would put loose earth in baskets, carry them to the right place, and pour it out in order to raise the mounds.
fortifications
walls and other things built to defend a city or fort from enemy soldiers
will not be able to stand
Here standing represents the ability to fight. Alternate translation: "will not be able to keep fighting against them"
Daniel 11:16
The one who comes against him will do as he desires
"The invading king will do whatever he wants against the other king"
He will stand in
Here standing represents ruling. Alternate translation: "The king will begin to rule"
the Beautiful Land
This refers to the land of Israel. See how you translated this in Daniel 8:9.
destruction will be in his hand
Here "destruction" represents the power to destroy. Also, the power to destroy is spoken of as if it were something that someone could hold in his hand. Alternate translation: "he will have power to destroy anything"
Daniel 11:17
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
set his face
This is an idiom for a person deciding to do something and not being willing to change his mind. Alternate translation: "decide"
come with the strength of his entire kingdom
This probably refers to military power. Alternate translation: "come with the force of all his army"
a daughter of women
This is an elegant way of saying "a woman."
Daniel 11:18
will end his contempt
"will make the king of the North stop being arrogant"
will cause his contempt to turn back upon him
"will cause the king of the North to suffer because he was arrogant toward others"
Daniel 11:19
he will pay attention
"the king of the North will pay attention"
he will not be found
This is a way of saying that he will die. This idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will disappear" or "he will die"
Daniel 11:20
General Information:
The angel continues speaking to Daniel.
someone will rise up in his place
Rising up in a king's place represents becoming king in

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place of the previous king. Alternate translation: "another man will become king of the North instead of that king"

will make a tax collector pass through

The tax collector will go through the land forcing people to pay taxes. Alternate translation: "will send someone to take taxes from the people" or "will send someone to oppress the people"

for the sake of the splendor of the kingdom

This collector will collect money so that the king can be wealthy.

he will be broken

Here "he" refers to the new king. Being broken represents dying. Alternate translation: "the new king will die"

but not in anger

Possible meanings are 1) no one was angry at the king, or 2) that the occasion and cause of the king's death were kept secret.

Daniel 11:21

a despised person to whom the people will not have given the honor of royal power

The people will refuse to acknowledge him as king because he is not a descendant of kings. Alternate translation: "a person whom the people will despise and will not honor as king"

Daniel 11:22

An army will be swept away like a flood from before him

Being swept away represents being destroyed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His army will completely destroy a great army as a flood destroys everything in its path"

Both that army and the leader of the covenant will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will destroy that army and the leader of the covenant"

the leader of the covenant

"the leader of the priests." This phrase refers to the person who filled the most important religious position that God required in his covenant, that of the high priest.

Daniel 11:23

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

From the time an alliance is made with him

This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When other rulers make a peace treaty with him"

Daniel 11:24

will spread among his followers

"will distribute to his followers"

the booty, the plunder, and the wealth

"the valuable things that he and his army take from the people they defeat"

Daniel 11:25

General Information:

The angel continues speaking to Daniel.

He will wake up his power and his heart

Power and heart

heart

Here this represents courage.

with an extremely large and mighty army

Some modern translations read, "with a large and extremely mighty army."

will wage war

"will fight against him"

he will not stand

Not standing represents being defeated. Alternate translation: "the king of the South will be defeated" or "his army will be defeated"

Daniel 11:26

those who eat his fine food

This refers to the king's advisers. It was usual for a king's most trusted advisers to eat meals with him. Alternate translation: "the king's best advisers"

His army will be swept away like a flood

Here the severe defeat of an army is spoken of as a flood of water that completely sweeps it away. Alternate translation: "The enemy will completely defeat his army" or "His enemy will completely destroy his army as a flood destroys everything in its path"

many of them will fall killed

Here "fall" is an idiom that refers to dying in battle, so "fall" and "killed" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "many of his soldiers will die in battle"

Daniel 11:27

with their hearts set on evil against each other

Here "heart" represents a person's desires. Desires are spoken of here as if they were an object that someone could set or place in a certain position. Alternate translation: "each determined to do evil to the other"

will sit at the same table

Sitting at the same table represents the act of talking to each other.

but it will be of no use

"but their talking will not help them"

For the end will come at the time that has been fixed

This tells why their meetings will not be successful. Alternate translation: "The result of their actions will only come at the time that God has fixed"

Daniel 11:28

riches, with his heart set against the holy covenant

Here "heart" represents the mind or thoughts of a person. The idiom "his heart set against" means to be determined to oppose something. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "riches. He will be determined to oppose the holy covenant"

with his heart set against the holy covenant

The king's desire to act against the holy covenant represents his desire to stop the Israelites from obeying that covenant. Alternate translation: "determined to stop the Israelites from obeying the holy covenant"

the holy covenant

Here "holy" describes God's covenant with Israel. It implies that the covenant should be honored and obeyed because it comes from God himself. Alternate translation: "God's covenant, which all the Israelites should obey"

He will act

This implies that the king will do certain actions in Israel. Alternate translation: "He will do what he wants to in Israel"

Daniel 11:30

ships of Kittim will come against him

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The ships represent the army coming in those ships. Alternate translation: "an army will come from Kittim in ships in order to fight his army"

Kittim

This may refer to a settlement on the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea.

he will become afraid. He will return and be furious

Some modern translations read, "he will become afraid and will turn back. He will be furious"

be furious against the holy covenant, and he will take action

Some modern translations read, "act in his fury against the holy covenant."

be furious against the holy covenant

"hate the holy covenant"

show favor to those

"act in favor for those" or "help those"

Daniel 11:31

His forces will rise up

"His army will appear" or "His army will come." The word "His" refers to the king of the North.

the fortress sanctuary

"the sanctuary that the people use as a fortress"

They will put an end to the regular burnt offering

They will prevent people from offering it. Alternate translation: "They will stop the priests from presenting the regular burnt offering"

the abomination that causes desolation

This refers to an idol that will make the temple desolate, that is, that will cause God to leave his temple. Alternate translation: "the disgusting idol that will cause God to abandon the temple" or "the disgusting thing that will make the temple unclean"

Daniel 11:32

acted wickedly against the covenant

"wickedly disobeyed the covenant"

corrupt them

"persuade them to do evil"

who know their God

Here "know" means "be faithful." Alternate translation: "who are faithful to their God"

will be strong and will take action

"will be firm and resist them"

Daniel 11:33

they will stumble by the sword and by flame

Here "stumble" is a metaphor that represents experiencing a disaster of one kind or another, including death itself. Here "sword" represents battles and warfare, and "flame" represents fire. Alternate translation: "they will die in battle and by burning to death"

they

This refers to the wise persons among the Israelites.

they will stumble into captivity and into being robbed for days

Here "stumble" is a metaphor that represents experiencing a disaster of one kind or another, including death itself. The phrase "being robbed" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will become slaves and their enemies will rob them of their possessions for days"

Daniel 11:34

they will be helped with a little help

This may be put into active form. Alternate translation: "others will give them a little help"

In hypocrisy many will join themselves with them

This refers to other people who will pretend to help the wise persons, but not because they truly wish to help them.

will join themselves

Here "join themselves" represents "come to help." Alternate translation: "will come to help them"

Daniel 11:35

Some of those who have insight will stumble ... until the time of the end

This suffering will continue until the time when God has decided that it will end.

Some of those who have insight will stumble

Here "stumble" represents experiencing a disaster of one kind or another, including death itself.

so that refining will happen to them

Here "so that" means "with the result that." Alternate translation: "with the result that refining will happen to them"

refining will happen to them, and cleansing, and purifying

These three activities are expressed here as if they were things. However, they may be expressed as actions, either in passive form or in active form. Alternate translation: "they will be refined, cleansed, and purified" or "their suffering will refine, cleanse, and purify them"

refining

This refers to the purifying of metal by melting it in a fire. When God makes his people more faithful to himself, this is spoken of as if they were metal that a worker was making more pure by putting it into fire.

cleansing

This refers to making people, places, or objects suitable for God's use by separating them from sin and other forms of evil. It speaks of evil as if it were physical dirtiness that could be removed by washing.

purifying

This idea is very similar to refining, discussed earlier. Metal that is refined can also be said to be purified.

time of the end

"the final days" or "the end of the world." See how you translated this in Daniel 8:17.

the appointed time is still to come

Here "appointed time" implies that God has set the time. This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has set the time in the future"

Daniel 11:36

The king will act according to his desires

"The king will do whatever he wants"

The king

This refers to the king of the North.

lift himself up and make himself great

The phrases "lift himself up" and "make himself great" mean the same thing and indicate that the king will become very proud.

lift himself up

Here this represents becoming very proud.

make himself great

Here this represents pretending to be very important and powerful.

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the God of gods

This refers to the one true God. Alternate translation: "the supreme God" or "the only true God"

astonishing things

"terrible things" or "shocking things"

until the wrath is completed

This phrase pictures God as storing up his wrath until his storeroom is completely full of it and he is ready to act according to it. Alternate translation: "until God is completely angry with him" or "until God is angry enough to take action against him"

Daniel 11:37

the god desired by women

This seems to refer to the pagan god named Tammuz.

Daniel 11:38

the god of fortresses

The king probably believed that this false god would help him to attack other people's fortresses and keep his own. Alternate translation: "the god that controls fortresses"

instead of these

The word "these" refers to the gods mentioned in Daniel 11:37.

Daniel 11:39

he will divide up the land as a reward

Possible meanings are 1) "he will give the land to his followers as a reward" or 2) "he will sell land to his followers"

Daniel 11:40

the time of the end

"the final days" or "the end of the world." See how you translated this in Daniel 8:17.

the king of the South ... The king of the North

These phrases stand for the kings and their armies. Alternate translation: "the king of the South and his army ... The king of the North and his army"

will storm against him

Violently attacking with an army is spoken of as if a storm happened. Alternate translation: "will attack him like a violent storm" or "will violently attack him"

flood them

When an army overruns a country, it is spoken of as if a flood occurred. See how you translated this in Daniel 11:10.

pass through

Nothing will stop the army. Alternate translation: "will pass through the lands with no one to stop him"

Daniel 11:41

the Beautiful Land

This refers to the land of Israel. See how you translated this in Daniel 8:9.

will fall

Here falling represents the action of dying. Alternate translation: "will die"

But these will escape from his hand

Here "hand" represents power. Alternate translation: "But these will escape from his power" or "But he will not be able to destroy these nations"

Daniel 11:42

General Information:

This is still about the king of the North.

He will extend his hand into lands

Here "hand" represents power and control. Alternate translation: "He will extend his control over various lands"

into lands

Here the idea is many lands or various lands.

the land of Egypt will not be rescued

This can be put into active form. Alternate translation: "the land of Egypt will not escape"

Daniel 11:43

the Libyans and the Cushites will be in his footsteps

Here "footsteps" represent submission. Alternate translation: "the Libyans and the Cushites will have to serve him"

the Libyans and the Cushites

"the people of Libya and Cush." Libya is a country west of Egypt, and Cush is a country south of Egypt.

Daniel 11:44

General Information:

This is still about the king of the North.

he will go out with great rage

The abstract noun "rage" can be expressed with the word "angry." It can be stated clearly that he would go out with his army. Alternate translation: "he will be very angry and will go out" or "he will become very angry and will go out with his army"

go out

To "go out" represents the action of attacking the enemy.

to set many apart for destruction

"to destroy many people"

Daniel 11:45

the tent of his royal residence

This refers to the king's luxurious tents that he lived in when he was with his army in time of war.

between the seas and the mountain of the beauty of holiness

This probably refers to the region between the Mediterranean Sea and Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

the mountain of the beauty of holiness

This refers to the hill in Jerusalem where God's temple was. See how you translated somewhat similar phrases in [Daniel 9:16]

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12 [1]At that time Michael, the great prince who guards your people, will rise up. There will be a time of trouble such as never was since the beginning of any nation until that time. At that time your people will be saved, everyone whose name is found written in the book.[2]Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
[3]Those who have insight will shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness are like the stars forever and ever.[4]But you, Daniel, close up these words; keep the book sealed until the time of the end. Many will run here and there, and knowledge will increase."

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[5]Then I, Daniel, looked, and there were two others standing. One stood on the bank on this side of the river, and one stood on the bank on the other side of the river.[6]One of them said to the man clothed in linen, the one who was upstream along the river, "How long will it be to the end of these amazing events?"
[7]I heard the man clothed in linen, who was upstream along the river—he raised his right hand and his left hand to heaven and swore by the one who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time. When they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these things will be completed.
[8]I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My master, what will be the outcome of all these things?"[9]He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.
[10]Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly. None of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.[11]From the time that an end is put to the regular burnt offering and the abomination that causes complete desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.
[12]Blessed is the one who waits until the end of the 1,335 days.[13]You must go your way until the end, and you will rest. You will rise in the place assigned to you, at the end of days."

Daniel 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The final prophecy concludes in this chapter. It tells about the future resurrection of the dead and the final judgment. (See: resurrection and judgmentday)

Links:

Daniel 12:1 Notes

Daniel 12:1

General Information:

The angel who appeared to Daniel in Daniel 10:5 continues speaking.

Michael, the great prince

Michael is an archangel. Here he is also given the title "great prince."

Michael ... will rise up

Here "rise up" is an idiom that means to appear. Alternate translation: "Michael ... will appear"

your people will be saved

This can be stated in active form. You can also make it clear that God will save the people. Alternate translation: "God will save your people"

whose name is found written in the book

This can be stated in active form. You can also make it clear that God writes names in the book. Alternate translation: "whose name God has written in the book"

Daniel 12:2

those who sleep in the dust of the earth will rise up

The phrase "sleep in the dust of the earth" is another way of referring to those who have died. Here "rise up" is an idiom that means to come back to life. Alternate translation: "those who have died will come back to life"

Daniel 12:3

hose who have insight will shine like the brightness of the sky above

This refers to God's people who will share their wisdom with those around them.

those who turn many to righteousness

This refers to those who help others understand that they are separated from God, as if they were changing the direction in which they were going. Alternate translation: "those who teach others to live righteously"

those who turn ... are like the stars forever and ever

These people are compared to the stars that shine. Alternate translation: "those who turn ... will shine brightly like the stars forever and ever"

Daniel 12:4

close up these words; keep the book sealed

Here "words" represents the book. Alternate translation: "close this book and keep it sealed"

time of the end

"the final days" or "the end of the world." See how you translated this in Daniel 8:17.

Many will run here and there, and knowledge will increase

This seems to happen before "the time of the end" during which time the book is sealed. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Before that happens, many people will travel here and there, learning more and more about many things"

Daniel 12:5

General Information:

Daniel goes on to tell what he saw next in this vision that began in Daniel 10:1.

there were two others standing

"there were two other angels standing"

Daniel 12:6

the man clothed in linen

This refers to the angel who appeared to Daniel in [Daniel 10:5]

upstream along the river

Possible meanings are 1) the angel clothed in linen was above the river or 2) the angel was further upstream along the river.

How long will it be to the end of these amazing events?

"How long will these amazing events last?" This refers to the time from the beginning to the end of the events.

these amazing events

At the time when the angel spoke to Daniel, none of the events in this vision had happened. This definitely refers to the events in Daniel 12:1-4, and may possibly also include the events in the vision from chapter 11.

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Daniel 12:7
the man clothed in linen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man who was wearing linen clothes" or "the angel who was wearing linen clothes"
the one who lives forever
"God, who lives forever"
it would be for a time, times, and half a time
It is best to leave it ambiguous as to when this begins. If you must choose a starting point, the three and a half years probably start with the events of Daniel 12:1-4.
a time, times, and half a time
"three and a half years." These "times" are generally understood to refer to years. One and two and a half equal three and a half.
they finish shattering the power of the holy people
The writer does not tell who he means by the word "they." Some languages use the passive here: "the power of the holy people is finally shattered"
all these things will be completed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all these things will have happened"
all these things
At the time when the man clothed in linen spoke to Daniel, none of the events in this vision had happened. This refers to the events in Daniel 12:1-4, and may include the events in the vision from chapter 11.
Daniel 12:8
My master
Daniel refers to the angel clothed in linen as "My master" to show respect to the angel.
of all these things
At the time when the angel clothed in linen spoke to Daniel, none of the events in this vision had happened. This definitely refers to the events in Daniel 12:1-4, and may possibly also include the events in the vision from chapter 11.
Daniel 12:9
for the words are shut up and sealed
The vision that was given to Daniel was not to be explained. The book was sealed and no one could access it. Alternate translation: "for you are to close up and seal the words you have written"
the time of the end
"the final days" or "the end of the world." See how you translated this in Daniel 8:17.
Daniel 12:10
General Information:
The angel clothed in linen continues speaking to Daniel.
Many will be purified, cleansed, and refined
Yahweh does the purifying. These three terms mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will purify, cleanse, and refine many people"
refined
purified by removing anything that does not belong in them
but the wicked will act wickedly
The evil people will do evil or sinful things.
None of the wicked will understand
The evil people can not understand spiritual knowledge.
Daniel 12:11
an end is put to the regular burnt offering and the abomination that causes complete desolation is set up
The king of the north is the one who stops the temple sacrifices. Alternate translation: "the king of the North puts an end to the regular burnt offering and sets up the abomination that causes complete desolation"
the abomination that causes complete desolation
This refers to an idol that will make the temple desolate, that is, that will cause God to leave his temple. See how you translated this in [Daniel 11:31]
1,290 days
"one thousand two and hundred ninety days" or "twelve hundred and ninety days." Here "days" refers to a period of time. Most commonly rendered as days, but can also imply years.
Daniel 12:12
General Information:
The angel clothed in linen continues speaking to Daniel.
Blessed is the one who waits
"Blessed is the person who waits" or "Blessed is anyone who waits"
who waits
"who remains faithful"
the 1,335 days
"one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days" or "thirteen hundred and thirty-five days." Here "days" is referring to a period of time most commonly rendered as days. However, it can also imply years.
Daniel 12:13
You must go
"Daniel, you must go" This refers to Daniel continuing to live and serve the kings until the appointed time of his death.
you will rest
This is a gentle way of saying "you will die."
You will rise
This is referring to the first resurrection of the dead when the righteous people will be raised up.
the place assigned to you
"the place God has assigned to you"

Introduction to Hosea

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Hosea

God tells Hosea to marry Gomer as a picture of how Israel relates to Yahweh (1:1–3:5) Israel betrays, wanders, and sins; Yahweh appeals and pleas to return to him (4:1–7:3) The conflict between Yahweh and Israel explained in various ways (7:4–
13:8) Similes: oven, cake, dove, bow (7:4–16) Israel openly lies and rebels (8:1–14) The end of Israel predicted (9:1–17)

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Similes: grapes, vine, calf, lion, children, birds, and doves (10:1–11:11) Israel sins, betrays, and breaks alliances (11:12–12:1) Israel's history remembered (12:2–13:16) Idolatry (13:1–8)
Israel is hostile to Yahweh (13:9–16) Yahweh's last appeals to Israel (14:1–9)

What is the Book of Hosea about?

This book contains the prophecies of Hosea, son of Beeri. Hosea lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. He often called this kingdom Ephraim or Samaria. Hosea prophesied for about 38 years and predicted that Assyria would destroy the northern kingdom of Israel.
Hosea began to prophesy around 753 B.C., just before King Jeroboam II died. At this time, the kingdom of Israel was prosperous but spiritually weak. Hosea warned how Yahweh would punish Israel unless the people turned back to Yahweh and were faithful to him.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book is traditionally named "The Book of Hosea" or just "Hosea." Translators may also call it "The Book About Hosea" or "The Sayings of Hosea."

Who wrote the Book of Hosea?

Although this book tells what Hosea prophesied, it is uncertain whether Hosea wrote the book himself. It was probably written after Samaria, the capital of the norther kingdom, was destroyed in 721 B.C.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did God command Hosea to marry a prostitute?

God told Hosea to marry the prostitute Gomer. This represented how the kingdom of Israel related to Yahweh. Israel was unfaithful to Yahweh and broke the covenant with him. This is compared to a woman who is unfaithful to her husband breaks her marriage agreement with him. (See: and faithful and covenant)

What is a lawsuit?

Many cultures have a process for resolving disputes through law courts. These legal disputes are called lawsuits. The Book of Hosea contains some legal terms. This is because Yahweh is spoken of as if he were a husband accusing his wife in court of being unfaithful to him. Part of the Book of Hosea follows the form of a lawsuit. A problem is identified (4:1), someone is accused (4:4), someone is found guilty (4:15), and the guilty ones will be punished (5:1).

Who did the people of the kingdom of Israel worship?

Israel was supposed to worship Yahweh alone. But they worshiped both Yahweh and the Canaanite gods such as Baal. This was a major reason why Yahweh judged the kingdom of Israel. (See: falsegod and judge)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What does the phrase "the declaration of Yahweh" mean?

The prophet used the phrase "the declaration of Yahweh" to mark a message as truly coming from God.

Why are English translations of Hosea very different?

Hosea 4–14 has many problems of interpretation. Some phrases in Hosea are beyond how we currently understand the Hebrew language. Many English versions have translated these difficult sections very differently.

What does the term "Israel" mean in Hosea?

In Hosea, "Israel" is used only to refer to the northern kingdom of Israel. It is not used to refer to the southern kingdom or to the two kingdoms together. (See: kingdomofisrael)

Hosea

1 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Hosea son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah,Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboamson of Joash, king of Israel.

[2]When Yahweh spoke at first through Hosea, he said to him,
"Go, take for yourself a wife who is a prostitute.
She will have children who are the result of her prostitution.
For the land is committing great prostitution
by abandoning Yahweh."

[3]So Hosea went and married Gomer daughter of Diblaim,and she conceived and bore him a son. [4]Yahweh said to Hosea,
"Call his name Jezreel.
For in a little while
I will punish the house of Jehu
for the bloodshed at Jezreel,
and I will put an end

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to the kingdom of the house of Israel.
5 It will happen on the day
that I break the bow of Israel
in the Valley of Jezreel."

6 Gomer conceived again and bore a daughter. Then Yahweh said to Hosea,
"Call her name Lo-Ruhamah,
for I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel,
that I should forgive them at all.
7 Yet I will have mercy on the house of Judah,
and I will save them by myself, Yahweh their God.
I will not save them
by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen."

8 Now after Gomer had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore another son.
9 Then Yahweh said,
"Call his name Lo-Ammi,
for you are not my people,
and I am not your God.

10 Yet the number of the people of Israel
will be like the sand of the seashore,
which cannot be measured or counted.
It will be that where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,'
it will be said to them,
'You are people of the living God.'

11 The people of Judah and the people of Israel
will be gathered together.
They will appoint one leader for themselves,
and they will go up from the land,
for great will be the day of Jezreel.

Hosea 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:2-11.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hosea's marriage

God does not approve of prostitution, but he told Hosea to marry a prostitute so that the message of Israel's unfaithfulness would be shown to the people. (See: faithful)

Hosea's marriage to Gomer is a metaphor for the kingdom of Israel's relationship to Yahweh. Israel was unfaithful to Yahweh and broke the covenant with him. Gomer was a woman who was unfaithful to her husband broke her marriage agreement with him. (See: and covenant)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Hosea 1-4 is controlled by a metaphor that Hosea lived out. He was personifying the relationship between Israel and Yahweh. Hosea played the part of Yahweh, and Gomer played the part of Israel.

Links:

Hosea 1:1 Notes Hosea intro

Hosea 1:1

the word of Yahweh that came

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the word that Yahweh God spoke"

Beeri

This is the name of a man.

Uzziah ... Jotham ... Ahaz ... Hezekiah ... Jeroboam ... Joash

The events in this book happened during the time of these kings.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Hosea 1:2

great prostitution

Here "prostitution" represents the people being unfaithful to God.

Hosea 1:3

Gomer ... Diblaim

These are names of people.

Hosea 1:4

the house of Jehu

Here "house" means "family," including Jehu's descendants.

the house of Israel

This expression refers to kingdom of Israel.

Hosea 1:5

the bow of Israel

Here "bow" refers to the power of the army. Alternate translation: "the military power of Israel"

Hosea 1:6

Lo-Ruhamah

This name means "no mercy." The translator may choose to represent this meaning as the name. Alternate translation: "No Mercy"

Hosea 1:8

Lo-Ruhamah

This name means "no mercy." The translator may choose to represent this meaning as the name. See how you translated this in [Hosea 1:6]

Hosea 1:9

Lo-Ammi

This name means "not my people." The translator may choose to represent this meaning as the name. Alternate translation: "Not My People"

Hosea 1:10

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

like the sand of the seashore

This emphasizes the great number of Israelites.

which cannot be measured or counted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which no one can measure or count"

It will be that where it was said to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Where God said to them"

where it was said to them

This expression probably refers to Jezreel, the city where crimes had been committed by kings of Israel, and which was a symbol of God's punishment of them.

it will be said to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will say to them"

Hosea 1:11

will be gathered together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will gather them together"

go up from the land

This expression might refer to the land where the people of Israel were in captivity.

the day of Jezreel

This refers to the time when God will put his people back in the land of Israel. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

---

1 2 Say to your brothers, 'My people!'
and to your sisters, 'You have been shown compassion.'"

2 Bring a lawsuit against your mother, bring a lawsuit,
for she is not my wife,
and neither am I her husband.
Let her put away her prostitution from before herself,
and her acts of adultery from between her breasts.

3 If not, I will strip her naked
and show her nakedness as on the day that she was born.
I will make her like the wilderness,
like a parched land,
and I will make her die from thirst.

4 I will not have any mercy on her children,
for they are children of prostitution.

5 For their mother has been a prostitute,
and she who conceived them has acted shamefully.
She said, "I will go after my lovers,

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for they give me my bread and water,
my wool and flax,
my oil and drink."

6 Therefore I will build up a hedge to block her way with thorns.
I will build up a wall against her
so she cannot find her way.

7 She will pursue her lovers,
but she will not overtake them.
She will seek them,
but she will not find them.
Then she will say,
"I will return to my first husband,
for it was better for me then than it is now."

8 For she had not known that it was I who gave her
the grain, the new wine and the oil,
and who lavished on her silver and gold,
which they then used for Baal.

9 So I will take back her grain at harvest time,
and my new wine in its season.
I will take back my wool and flax
that were used to cover her nakedness.

10 Then I will strip her naked in the sight of her lovers,
and no one will rescue her out of my hand.

11 I will stop all her rejoicing—
her feasts, her new moon celebrations,
her Sabbaths, and all her appointed festivals.

12 "I will destroy her vines and her fig trees,
of which she has said,
'These are the wages that my lovers gave me.'
I will make them a forest,
and the animals of the field will eat them.

13 I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals,
when she burned incense to them,
when she adorned herself with her rings and jewelry,
and she went after her lovers and forgot me—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

14 So I am going to allure her.
I will bring her into the wilderness
and speak tenderly to her.

15 I will give her back her vineyards,
and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope.
She will answer me there as she did in the days of her youth,
as in the days that she came out of the land of Egypt.

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16 "It will be in that day—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
that you will call me, 'My husband,'
and you will no longer call me, 'My Baal.'

17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth;
their names will not be remembered anymore.

18 On that day I will make a covenant for them
with the beasts in the fields, with the birds in the sky,
and with the crawling things on the ground.
I will drive away the bow, the sword,
and the battle from the land,
and I will make you lie down in safety.

19 I will promise to be your husband forever.
I will promise to be your husband in righteousness, justice,
covenant faithfulness, and mercy.

20 I will pledge myself to you in faithfulness,
and you will know Yahweh.

21 On that day,
I will answer—this is Yahweh's declaration—
I will answer the heavens,
and they will answer the earth.

22 The earth will answer the grain,
the new wine and the oil,
and they will answer Jezreel.

23 I will plant her for myself in the land,
and I will have mercy on Lo-Ruhamah.
I will say to Lo-Ammi, 'You are my people,'
and they will say to me, 'You are my God.'"

Hosea 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of this chapter, which is poetry, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. Hosea 1-2 is a single series forming one narrative.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Many relationships are used in this chapter that are metaphors for the relationship between Israel and her God. Brother, sister, husband, wife, mother, and children are examples.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter creates an abrupt change of address. The prophet is now addressing the children directly in the first few verses, but the whole chapter is written against Gomer as an illustration of Israel as an adulterous people. God uses Gomer as an illustration to teach the people of Israel how they should be faithful to him. (See: adultery and faithful)

Links:

Hosea 2:1 Notes

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Hosea 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

My people!

This exclamation may be presented as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are my people!"

You have been shown compassion

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has shown you compassion"

compassion

"kindness" or "mercy"

Hosea 2:2

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

lawsuit

This is a complaint by one person against another person in a court of law.

your mother

Here "mother" refers to the nation of Israel.

for she is not my wife

Yahweh is stating that Israel, spoken of here as a woman, is no longer acting like a wife to Yahweh. Instead Israel has turned away from following and worshiping him.

neither am I her husband

Yahweh can no longer be in relationship with the nation of Israel as a husband would be to his wife.

her acts of adultery

A wife who is adulterous leaves her husband to sleep with another man. This is how Israel was acting toward Yahweh.

from between her breasts

This imagery suggests that Israel is relying on the idols and not Yahweh.

Hosea 2:3

I will strip her naked and show her nakedness as on the day that she was born

Yahweh will no longer protect and provide for Israel because the nation has turned away from him. In Israel, husbands were obliged by law to provide clothes for their wives. Not to do so was a sign that a man was rejecting his wife. The full meaning of this may be made clear.

I will make her like the wilderness

Yahweh will change Israel to resemble the wilderness, which is a region that is bare and unproductive.

I will make her die from thirst

Here "thirst" refers to the need to worship and rely on Yahweh, not idols, or Israel will not be able to survive as a nation.

Hosea 2:4

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

for they are children of prostitution

The Israelites are acting like they do not belong to Yahweh. Just as their parents did not worship God, Neither do they.

Hosea 2:5

For their mother has been a prostitute

The previous generation who sought out other gods were considered prostitutes for they were unfaithful to Yahweh.

I will go after my lovers, for they give me my bread and water, my wool and flax, my oil and drink

Here "my lovers" refers to Baal and other false gods, whom Israel has chosen to worship instead of Yahweh. The list of things are essential items that allow the people to live.

Hosea 2:6

General Information:

Yahweh is talking to Hosea.

Therefore I will build up a hedge to block her way with thorns. I will build up a wall against her so she cannot find her way

This passage indicates that Yahweh will prevent his people from finding success and prosperity, becuase they continue to worship idols.

Hosea 2:7

Then she will say, "I will return to my first husband, for it was better for me then than it is now."

Israel will return to Yahweh not because of their love for him, but because they are disappointed by their worship of Baal.

Hosea 2:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

Hosea 2:9

I will take back my wool and flax that were used to cover her nakedness

This probably means that Israel's harvests and flocks will fail. Yahweh will remove his blessings from Israel, and the people will be left alone and in danger of attack.

were used to cover her nakedness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people used to clothe themselves"

Hosea 2:10

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea.

Then I will strip her naked in the sight of her lovers

This means God will humiliate the people of Israel in front of the other nations nearby. See how you translated this in [Hosea 2:3]

no one will rescue her out of my hand

No one will try to help Israel. Here "hand" refers to God's power to punish.

Hosea 2:11

her rejoicing

Some versions read, "her celebrations," taking this word to be a general term that introduces the words "feasts," "new moon celebrations," "Sabbaths," and "appointed festivals."

Hosea 2:12

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea about what he will do to Israel.

These are the wages that my lovers gave me

This refers to payment that Israel received from the false gods or Baals. This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "that these were the wages that her lovers had given to her"

make them a forest

Yahweh will destroy the vineyards and fruit trees by allowing other trees and weeds to grow among them.

Hosea 2:13

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what

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Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Hosea 2:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is speaking about Israel.

to allure her

to attract her

Hosea 2:15

the Valley of Achor as a door of hope

As Yahweh lead Israel out of Egypt, he will lead Israel to the Valley of Achor so that Israel will hope again in Yahweh.

She will answer me there as she did in the days of her youth, as in the days that she came out of the land of Egypt

Yahweh hopes that the nation of Israel will repent and again choose to worship him as their God.

She will answer

Some modern versions understand the Hebrew word to mean "She will sing."

Hosea 2:16

My husband

This means the people of Israel will love and be faithful to Yahweh just as a wife is to a husband.

My Baal

"Baal" means "master" and also refers to the false god that the Canaanites worship.

Hosea 2:17

For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth

The Israelites will not speak the names of Baal and the idols again. The people are represented by their mouths. Alternate translation: "For I will cause you to not speak the names of the Baals"

Hosea 2:18

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea about what he will do to Israel.

On that day

This phrase is used to talk about a future restoration between Israel and Yahweh.

I will make a covenant for them

Yahweh's new covenant will include peace for the animals.

I will drive away the bow, the sword, and the battle from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety

Yahweh will keep Israel's enemies away from them, there will be no more war, the people will be safe. Here "the bow, the sword, and the battle" represent war.

lie down in safety

This expression refers to living in safety.

Hosea 2:19

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea about what he will do for Israel.

I will promise to be your husband forever

Yahweh will be like the husband, and Israel will be like Yahweh's wife.

in righteousness, justice, covenant faithfulness, and mercy

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns. Alternate translation: "and do what is right, just, faithful, and merciful"

Hosea 2:20

you will know Yahweh

Here "know" means to acknowledge Yahweh as their God and to be faithful to him.

Hosea 2:21

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea about what he will do for Israel.

Hosea 2:22

The earth will answer the grain, the new wine and the oil, and they will answer Jezreel

The land will meet the need for grain, new wine, and olive oil. These things will also meet the needs of Jezreel. The land and these products are spoken of as if they were people who could meet the needs of others.

Jezreel

Here the name of this valley stands for all the people of Israel.

Hosea 2:23

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to Hosea about what he will do for Israel.

I will plant her for myself in the land

When God makes his people safe and prosperous in their land again, they are spoken of if they were agricultural crops. Alternate translation: "I will take care of the Israelite people as a farmer plants his crops and takes care of them"

Lo-Ruhamah

This name means "no mercy." The translator may choose to represent this meaning as the name. See how you translated this in [Hosea 1:6]

Lo-Ammi

This name means "not my people." The translator may choose to represent this meaning as the name. See how you translated this in [Hosea 1:9]

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3 [1]Yahweh said to me, "Go again, love a woman, loved by her husband,but who is an adulteress. Love her just as I, Yahweh, love the people of Israel,although they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."

[2]So I bought her for myself for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a lethek of barley.[3]I said to her, "You must live with me many days. You will not be a prostituteor belong to any other man. In the same way, I will be with you."

[4]For the people of Israel will live for many days without a king, prince,sacrifice, stone pillar, ephod or household idols.
[5]Afterward the people of Israel will return and seek Yahweh their God and David their king,and in the last days, they will come trembling before Yahweh and his goodness.

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Hosea 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter focuses on the meaning of the illustration of Hosea's marriage. It is a very short chapter written in prose to show the truth of Israel's relationship with Yahweh. After bearing a number of children for Hosea, Gomer leaves him and prostitutes herself with other men, showing little to no regard for their marriage covenant. (See: covenant)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

This chapter contains a continuation of the metaphor played out in chapter 2. Hosea is told to go and buy his wife out of slavery. Gomer must have been captured and held as a slave due to her adulterous activity. (See: and adultery)

Links:

Hosea 3:1 Notes

Hosea 3:1

Go again, love a woman, loved by her husband, but who is an adulteress

This refers back to Hosea 1:2. Yahweh again tells Hosea to love an adulterous woman.

Love her just as I, Yahweh, love the people of Israel

By loving the adulterous woman, Hosea will be an example of Yahweh's love for Israel.

they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes

People ate raisin or fig cakes during festivals where they worshiped false gods.

Hosea 3:2

fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a lethek of barley

This was the price to buy a slave.

fifteen pieces

"15 pieces"

a homer and a lethek of barley

This can be stated in modern units. Alternate translation: "330 liters of barley"

Hosea 3:4

For the people of Israel will live for many days without a king, prince, sacrifice, stone pillar, ephod or household idols

Just as Hosea lived without his wife because she committed adultery, Israel will live without a king and without worshiping God, because they committed idolatry.

Hosea 3:5

seek Yahweh their God

Here "seek" means they are asking God to accept them and their worship.

David their king

Here "David" represents all the descendants of David. Alternate translation: "a descendant of David to be their king"

in the last days

"in the future"

they will come trembling before Yahweh and his goodness

Here "trembling" represents feelings of awe and humility. Alternate translation: "they will come back to Yahweh and will humble themselves, honor him, and ask for his blessings"

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4 [1] Hear the word of Yahweh,
you people of Israel.
Yahweh has a lawsuit
against the inhabitants of the land,
because there is no truthfulness or covenant faithfulness,
no knowledge of God in the land.

[2] There is cursing, deception, killing,
stealing and adultery.
The people have broken all bounds,
and bloodshed comes after bloodshed.

[3] So the land mourns,
and everyone living in it is wasting away;
the beasts in the fields and the birds in the sky,
even the fish in the sea, are being taken away.

[4] But do not allow anyone to bring a lawsuit;
do not let anyone accuse anyone else.
For it is you, the priests, whom I am accusing.
[5] You priests will stumble during the day;

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the prophets will also stumble with you by night,
and I will destroy your mother.

6 My people are being destroyed
because of the lack of knowledge.
Because you priests have rejected knowledge,
I will also reject you as priests to me.
Because you have forgotten my law,
although I am your God,
I also will forget your children.

7 The more the priests multiplied,
the more they sinned against me.
They exchanged their honor for shame.

8 They feed on the sin of my people;
they are greedy for more of their iniquity.

9 It will be the same for the people as for the priests:
I will punish them all for their practices;
I will repay them for their deeds.

10 They will eat but not have enough;
they will commit prostitution but not increase,
because they stopped listening to Yahweh.

11 Prostitution, wine, and new wine
take away understanding.

12 My people consult their wooden idols,
and their walking sticks give them prophecies.
A spirit of prostitution has led them astray,
and they have acted as prostitutes
instead of being faithful to their God.

13 They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains
and burn incense on the hills,
under oaks, poplars and terebinths,
because the shade is good.
So your daughters commit sexual immorality,
and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.

14 I will not punish your daughters
when they choose to commit sexual immorality,
nor your daughters-in-law
when they commit adultery.
For the men also go apart with prostitutes,
and they offer sacrifices
so they can commit immoral acts with sacred prostitutes.
So this people who does not understand
will be thrown down.

15 Though you, Israel, have committed adultery,

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may Judah not become guilty.
Do not go to Gilgal, you people;
do not go up to Beth Aven,
and do not swear, saying, "As Yahweh lives."

16 For Israel has behaved stubbornly,
like a stubborn heifer.
How can Yahweh bring them to pasture
like lambs in a meadow?

17 Ephraim united himself with idols;
leave him alone.

18 Even when their strong drink is gone,
they continue to commit adultery;
her rulers dearly love their shame.

19 The wind will wrap her up in its wings;
and they will be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

Hosea 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author stops using the metaphor of a husband/wife relationship and begins using a new illustration using lawsuits. God is suing the people of Israel because of all the wrong they have done.

Special concepts in this chapter

Lawsuits

Lawsuits are special cases where people go to court when they have a legal issue to resolve between them. Normally, one party is accusing another party of having done wrong.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

Metonymy is used in the first few verses of this chapter. Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing or idea is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. Bloodshed is associated with murder. Stumbling represents sinning. (See: and sin)

Links:

Hosea 4:1 Notes

Hosea 4:1

General Information:

This chapter begins Yahweh's argument against the unfaithful Israelites.

Yahweh has a lawsuit against the inhabitants of the land

Yahweh stating that the people of Israel have sinned against him and broken his covenant is spoken of as if Yahweh were accusing them in court.

lawsuit

This is a complaint by one person against another person in a court of law. See how you translated this in Hosea 2:2.

Hosea 4:2

The people have broken all bounds

Here "bounds" stands for the limits of what the law allows. Alternate translation: "The people have disobeyed the law in every possible way"

bloodshed comes after bloodshed

Here "bloodshed" stands for "murder" which often involves making the victim bleed. Alternate translation: "you commit one murder after another"

Hosea 4:3

the land mourns, and everyone living in it is wasting away

The phrase "the land mourns" is either 1) a metaphor for the land drying up because of a drought, when no rain falls for a long time. Alternate translation: "the land dries up, and everyone living in it is wasting away" Or 2) a metonym for the people of the land mourning because they have nothing to eat. Alternate translation: "the people living on the land mourn and waste away"

wasting away

becoming weak and dying because of sickness or lack of food

the beasts ... sea, are being taken away

Possible meanings are 1) this is a euphemism for dying.

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Alternate translation: "the beasts ... sea, are dying" Or 2) this can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is taking away the beasts ... sea"

Hosea 4:4

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about Israel.

lawsuit

a complaint by one person against another person in a court of law

do not let anyone accuse anyone else

No one should accuse another person of anything because everyone is guilty of something.

it is you, the priests, whom I am accusing

Many modern translations read, "your people are like those who accuse a priest."

Hosea 4:5

You priests will stumble

Here "stumble" means to disobey God or even to stop trusting him.

I will destroy your mother

Here "mother" refers to the nation of Israel. See how you translated this in Hosea 2:2.

Hosea 4:6

General Information:

In 4:6, Yahweh is talking to the priests about the people of Israel. But in 4:7, he is talking about the priests, not to them. It is possible for the translator to follow the example of the UDB, which portrays Yahweh as talking to the priests also in 4:7.

My people are being destroyed because of the lack of knowledge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My people are perishing because you, the priests, have not properly taught them about me so that they will obey me"

knowledge

Here "knowledge" refers to the knowledge of God.

Hosea 4:7

They exchanged their honor for shame

Possible meanings are 1) "honor" is a metonym that represents Yahweh, and "shame" is a metonym that represents idols. Alternate translation: "They have stopped worshiping me, their honorable God, and now worship shameful idols" or 2) some Bible versions translate this as "I will exchange their honor for shame." This means Yahweh will take away the things which the priests honor and cause the priests to be ashamed.

Hosea 4:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking about the priests.

They feed on the sin of my people

When people sinned, they would offer sacrifices so God would forgive them. The priests were allowed to eat these sacrifices. The priests eating these sacrifices for sin is spoken of as if they would actually feed on the people's sins.

they are greedy for more of their iniquity

The priests want the people to sin more so that the people will offer more sacrifices that the priests may eat.

Hosea 4:9

It will be the same for the people as for the priests

"The people and the priests will be punished in the same way"

their practices

"their habits" or "their conduct"

Hosea 4:10

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

but not increase

"but not have children"

to Yahweh

Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. This can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "to me"

Hosea 4:11

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

Prostitution, wine, and new wine take away understanding

The people of Israel are pursuing sex outside of marriage and drinking too much wine. In doing these activities they have forgotten Yahweh's commands. These actions are spoken of here as if they were someone who could prevent people from understanding the importance of obeying Yahweh.

Hosea 4:12

their walking sticks give them prophecies

Idol worshipers used walking sticks to help them predict the future. The walking sticks are spoken of here as if they were people who spoke prophecies.

A spirit of prostitution has led them astray

Here "spirit" refers to a person's desire. Here "prostitution" refers to spiritual prostitution that the people commit when they worship idols. Alternate translation: "Their desire to act as a prostitute has led them astray"

has led them astray

Causing someone to sin is described as leading a person in the wrong direction. Alternate translation: "has caused the people to sin"

Hosea 4:13

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

on the tops of the mountains ... on the hills

It was common for the people to set up idols in these places, often called "high places" in the Old Testament.

daughters-in-law

Some modern translations read, "brides."

Hosea 4:14

daughters-in-law

Some modern translations read, "brides." See how you translated this word in Hosea 4:13.

sacred prostitutes

These were women who had sexual relations with men who came to worship certain idols. This was viewed as a sacred action in honor of the false gods.

So this people who does not understand will be thrown down

Yahweh will destroy the nation of Israel because they do not understand or obey God's commandments.

Hosea 4:15

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Judah and Israel.

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may Judah not become guilty
God knows how sinful Israel has become and does not want Judah to do the same thing.
Do not go to Gilgal, you people; do not go up to Beth Aven
The people of Judah are being warned not to go to the cities of Gilgal or Beth Aven to worship idols in those places. Gilgal was once a place where Yahweh had been worshiped, but it had become a place of idol worship.
Beth Aven
This was a city on the border between the northern kingdom of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin in the southern kingdom.
Hosea 4:16
like a stubborn heifer
Israel is compared to a young cow that will not obey its master.
How can Yahweh bring them to pasture like lambs in a meadow?
Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that he cannot continue to take care of the people because they are stubborn. Yahweh no longer taking care of his people is spoken of as if he were a shepherd that could not take his lambs into the field to eat because they are stubborn. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not shepherd a rebellious people." or "Therefore Yahweh will not continue to take care of them."
How can Yahweh
Here Yahweh is speaking of himself in the third person. It can be stated in the first person. Alternate translation: "How can I"
Hosea 4:17
General Information:
Yahweh is talking about Israel.
Ephraim united himself with idols; leave him alone
Here "Ephraim" represents the whole northern kingdom of Israel, which is a metonym for the people who live there. They chose to worship idols, instead of Yahweh. Yahweh is commanding Hosea to not try to correct them. The people of Israel will not listen.
Hosea 4:18
her rulers dearly love their shame
The rulers are not ashamed of what they are doing when they worship idols and turn against Yahweh.
Hosea 4:19
The wind will wrap her up in its wings
Here "wind" represents God's judgment and anger against the nation of Israel. Yahweh will allow the enemy army to defeat the people of Israel and take them as captives.

---

5 1 "Hear this, priests!
Pay attention, house of Israel!
Listen, house of the king!
For judgment is coming against you all.
You have been a snare at Mizpah
and a net spread over Tabor.

2 The rebels stand deep in slaughter,
but I will punish all of them.[1]

3 I know Ephraim,
and Israel is not hidden from me.
Ephraim, now you have become like a prostitute;
Israel is defiled.

4 Their deeds will not allow them
to turn to God,
for the mind of prostitution is in them,
and they do not know Yahweh.

5 The pride of Israel testifies against him;
so Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their guilt;
and Judah also will stumble with them.

6 They will go with their flocks
and herds to seek Yahweh,
but they will not find him,
for he has withdrawn himself from them.

7 They were unfaithful to Yahweh,

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for they have borne illegitimate children.
Now the new moon festivals
will devour them with their fields.

8 Blow the ram's horn in Gibeah,
and the trumpet in Ramah.
Sound a battle cry at Beth Aven:
'We will follow you, Benjamin!'

9 Ephraim will become a desolation
on the day of rebuke.
Among the tribes of Israel
I have declared what is certain to happen.

10 The leaders of Judah
are like those who move a boundary stone.
I will pour my wrath on them like water.

11 Ephraim is oppressed;
he is crushed in judgment,
because he has willingly walked after idols.

12 So I will be like a moth to Ephraim,
and like rot to the house of Judah.

13 When Ephraim saw his sickness,
and Judah saw his wound,
then Ephraim went to Assyria,
and Judah sent messengers to the great king.
But he was not able to cure you people
or heal your wound.

14 So I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
and like a young lion to the house of Judah.
I, even I, will tear them apart and go away;
I will carry them off,
and there will be no one to rescue them.

15 I will go and return to my place,
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face,
until they earnestly seek me in their distress."

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[1] Some modern translations have The rebels have dug a deep pit, The rebels have dug deep at Shittim, or, continuing on from the previous verse, a pit dug deep at Shittim.

Hosea 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues using the poetic form exclusively.

Special concepts in this chapter

The author uses Ephraim and Israel interchangeably. They both refer to the northern kingdom of Israel. Judah is also mentioned and refers to the southern kingdom of Judah. Benjamin is part of the southern kingdom of Judah.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

This chapter is full of metaphors and similes. The writer uses these figures of speech to show how Yahweh will treat his people for not obeying his instructions. (See: and and peopleofgod)

Links:

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Hosea 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

You have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread over Tabor

A snare and a net are both objects used to catch prey. In this case, the priests and the royal household had devised ways to keep the people away from Yahweh, while enticing them into idolatry. Mizpah and Tabor were places for idol worship in the land of Israel.

Hosea 5:2

The rebels stand deep in slaughter

Here "rebels" refers to all of those people who had turned away from Yahweh, and "deep in slaughter" could refer to the murder of innocent people, or to the slaughter of animals offered to pagan idols.

The rebels

The translator can represent this as "You rebels," because God is really talking to the rebellious people of Israel.

in slaughter

Some modern versions interpret the Hebrew expression as standing for wickedness.

I will punish all of them

The translator can represent this as "I will punish all of you."

Hosea 5:3

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hidden from me

Here, "Ephraim" and "Israel" both refer to the whole northern kingdom of Israel, and represent the people who live there. Here God says that he knows what they are like and what they are doing.

Ephraim, now you have become like a prostitute

Ephraim is presented in terms of a prostitute because the people have become unfaithful to God, as a prostitute is faithful to no man.

Hosea 5:4

for the mind of prostitution is in them

This means they have the desire to be unfaithful to God. They want to worship idols.

to turn to God ... they do not know Yahweh

The translator can represent this as "to turn to me ... they do not know me," or "to turn to me ... they do not know me, Yahweh."

they do not know Yahweh

Israel no longer obeys Yahweh in any way. They do not acknowledge Yahweh as their God.

Hosea 5:5

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

The pride of Israel testifies against him

This describes "pride" as a person who testifies against the people of Israel in court. Their prideful attitude and behavior show that they are guilty of no longer obeying Yahweh.

so Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their guilt; and Judah also will stumble with them

The two kingdoms will become completely disobedient to God because of their pride and sin.

Hosea 5:7

They were unfaithful to Yahweh, for they have borne illegitimate children

Possible meanings are 1) this means the Israelites were marrying people from other nations and having children with them or 2) this means the Israelite parents were unfaithful to Yahweh and they were teaching their children to worship idols.

Now the new moon festivals will devour them with their fields

The people of Israel were supposed to celebrate during the new moon. Here this expression seems to describe the new moon festival as a beast that will eat the people and their fields. However, it is hard to interpret this expression; many versions translate it without making much sense of it. However, the overall meaning is certainly that God will punish the people for their unfaithfulness to him.

Hosea 5:8

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel.

Sound a battle cry at Beth Aven: 'We will follow you, Benjamin!'

Here "Benjamin" represents the soldiers from the tribe of Benjamin. This may be a request for them to lead the people into battle. But modern versions make various attempts to interpret this expression.

Beth Aven

This was a city on the border between the northern kingdom of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin in the southern kingdom. See how you translated this in [Hosea 4:15]

Hosea 5:9

the day of rebuke

Many versions understand the word "rebuke" here as a euphemism for "punishment."

Among the tribes of Israel I have declared what is certain to happen

"I will do to the tribes of Israel what I have declared"

Hosea 5:10

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Judah and Israel.

The leaders of Judah are like those who move a boundary stone

To "move a boundary stone" refers to moving the landmark that marked the border of some property, which was a crime under Israelite law.

I will pour my wrath on them like water

Yahweh's wrath against Judah will be like a large stream of water that destroys them. In the scriptures, emotions and moral qualities are often spoken of as if they were liquids.

Hosea 5:11

Ephraim is oppressed

"Ephraim" is a synecdoche for "Israel," the northern kingdom, and a metonym for the people who live in that northern kingdom. This can be stated in active form.

Alternate translation: "Ephraim's enemies oppress him" or "The enemies of the people of Israel oppress them"

he is crushed in judgment

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The word "he" refers to "Ephraim," which is a synecdoche for "Israel," the northern kingdom, and a metonym for the people who live in that northern kingdom. The word "crushed" is a metaphor for "severely oppressed." The abstract noun "judgment" can be expressed using the verb "judge," the subject of which is either Yahweh or the enemies of the people of Israel. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "and I am judging the people of Israel by crushing them" or "and I am judging the people of Israel by having their enemies crush them"

walked after idols

Here "walked" represents the idea of worshiping.

idols

The Hebrew word translated here as "idols" is uncertain in its meaning, and is translated by modern versions in many different ways.

Hosea 5:12

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Judah and Israel.

I will be like a moth to Ephraim, and like rot to the house of Judah

A moth on a piece of wool and rot in a piece of wood are both destructive. Yahweh will destroy both nations.

moth ... rot

These two terms are translated in various ways because the meaning of the Hebrew word is either very broad or it is uncertain.

Hosea 5:13

When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound

Both Ephraim

then Ephraim went to Assyria, and Judah sent messengers to the great king

Ephraim and Judah asked Assyria for help instead of asking Yahweh for help. "Great king" was a title for the king of Assyria.

But he was not able

Here "he" refers to the king of Assyria.

Hosea 5:14

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Judah and Israel.

So I will be like a lion to Ephraim

Yahweh is going to pursue and attack Ephraim like a lion.

like a young lion to the house of Judah

Yahweh is going to treat Judah in a similar way. Yahweh is showing his displeasure with both the northern and the southern kingdoms.

I, even I

Yahweh is emphasizing that he is the one that is bringing judgment on all of his people.

will tear

As a lion tears apart the animal it is eating, so Yahweh will tear his people away from their homes and country.

Hosea 5:15

I will go and return to my place

Yahweh will leave his rebellious people.

seek my face

Try to come into God's presence by means of worship and sacrifice. Alternate translation: "ask me to pay attention to them"

---

1 6 "Come, let us return to Yahweh.
For he has torn us apart, but he will heal us;
he has injured us, but he will bandage our wounds.

2 After two days he will revive us;
he will raise us up on the third day,
and we will live before him.

3 Let us know Yahweh;
let us press on to know Yahweh.
His coming out is as sure as the dawn;
he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the land."

4 Ephraim, what will I do with you?
Judah, what will I do with you?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

5 So I have cut them to pieces by the prophets;
I have killed them with the words of my mouth.
Your judgments are like the light that shines out.

6 For I delight in covenant faithfulness and not sacrifice,
and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

7 Like Adam they have broken the covenant;

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they were unfaithful to me.

8 Gilead is a city of those who do evil,
with footprints of blood.

9 As gangs of robbers wait for someone,
so the priests band together
to commit murder on the way to Shechem;
they have committed shameful crimes.

10 In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing;
Ephraim's prostitution is there,
and Israel has become unclean.

11 For you also, Judah, a harvest has been appointed,
when I will reverse the captivity of my people.

Hosea 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues using the poetic form to show how Yahweh will still show mercy to his wayward people, the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Gilead is an area in the northern kingdom of Israel where several of the tribes lived. (See: mercy)

Special concepts in this chapter

Change in speaker

There is a change in person from 6:1-3 to 6:4-11. In the first passage, the speaker is an anonymous Israelite, but in the rest of the chapter, the speaker is Yahweh.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Throughout the chapter, the author uses the metaphor of prostitution to say that his people have abandoned him.

Links:

Hosea 6:1 Notes

Hosea 6:1

Connecting Statement:

The people of Israel confess their need to repent.

he has torn us apart ... he has injured us

God has punished the people of Israel because they disobeyed him and worshiped idols.

he will heal us ... he will bandage our wounds

Israel believes that God will be merciful to them when they repent and he will deliver them from their troubles.

Hosea 6:2

After two days he will revive us; he will raise us up on the third day

This represents a short period of time. Israel believes God will quickly come to rescue them from their enemies.

two days ... the third day

"2 days ... day 3"

Hosea 6:3

Let us know Yahweh

Here "know" means not only to learn God's character and laws, but also to become faithful to him.

His coming out is as sure as the dawn

Yahweh will come to help his people just as surely as the sun rises each morning.

Hosea 6:4

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh is speaking.

what will I do with you?

God is expressing that his patience is coming to an end and what remains is judgment. Alternate translation: "it is hard to know what to do with you!"

Hosea 6:5

So I have cut them to pieces by the prophets

Through his prophets, Yahweh has pronounced destruction on the rebellious nation. The destruction, here called "cutting to pieces," is as sure as the condemnation.

Your judgments are like the light that shines out

Yahweh has judged Ephraim [Hosea 6:4]

Your judgments

Some modern translations read, "My judgments," referring to the actions Yahweh has taken against Ephraim.

Hosea 6:6

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

For I delight in covenant faithfulness and not sacrifice

This grammatical construction in Hebrew signals here the idea of "more than," as the next line shows ("and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings"). Alternate

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translation: "For I delight in covenant faithfulness more than I delight in sacrifice" or "For I delight in sacrifices, but I delight in covenant faithfulness even more"

Hosea 6:7

Like Adam

These words could be 1) a literal reference to Adam, the first man or 2) a metonym that represents the people who live in a city in Israel called Adam. Alternate translation: "Like the people in the city of Adam" or 3) a literal reference to people in general. The word "Adam" means "man" or "humankind." Alternate translation: "Like all of humankind"

Hosea 6:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Gilead is a city ... with footprints of blood

"Footprints of blood" probably represents the evildoers and their acts of murder.

Hosea 6:9

the priests band together to commit murder on the way to Shechem

We do not know what this refers to. Were priests actually guilty of attacking people on their way to Shechem, which was an important religious and political center? Or is the prophet saying that the priests have "killed" true knowledge and worship of Yahweh? It is best to translate this expression as plainly as possible.

Hosea 6:10

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Ephraim's prostitution

Here "prostitution" refers to Ephraim's worship of false gods.

Israel has become unclean

Israel has become unacceptable to God because of her actions.

Hosea 6:11

For you also, Judah, a harvest has been appointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have set a time of harvest for you also, Judah"

harvest

Here "harvest" represents God's final judgment on Israel and Judah.

I will reverse the captivity of my people

"I will reverse the captivity of my people." The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause. Alternate translation: "I will free my people from those who had captured them"

---

7 1 Whenever I want to heal Israel,
the iniquity of Ephraim is exposed,
as well as the evil deeds of Samaria,
for they practice deceit;
a thief comes in,
and a marauding band attacks in the street.

2 They do not realize in their hearts
that I remember all their evil deeds.
Now their deeds surround them;
they are before my face.

3 With their evil they make the king glad,
and by their lies the officials.

4 They are all adulterers,
like an oven heated by the baker,
who ceases to stir the fire
from the kneading of the dough
until it is leavened.

5 On the day of our king
the officials made themselves sick
with the heat of wine.
He reached out with his hand
to those who were mocking.

6 For with hearts like an oven,
they devise their deceitful plans.
Their anger smolders all night;
in the morning it burns high like a flaming fire.

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7 They all are as hot as an oven,
and they devour those who rule over them.
All their kings have fallen;
none of them calls on me.

8 Ephraim mixes himself among the peoples.
Ephraim is a flat cake that has not been turned over.

9 Foreigners have devoured his strength,
but he does not know it.
Gray hairs are sprinkled on him,
but he does not know it.

10 The pride of Israel testifies against him;
however, they have not returned to Yahweh their God,
nor have they sought him, in spite of all this.

11 Ephraim is like a dove,
gullible and without sense,
calling out to Egypt,
then flying to Assyria.

12 When they go,
I will spread my net over them;
I will bring them down
like the birds of the sky.
I will punish them
in their flocking together.
13 Woe to them!
For they have strayed from me.
Devastation is coming to them!
They have rebelled against me!
I would have rescued them,
but they spoke lies against me.

14 They have not cried to me with all their heart,
but they wail on their beds.
They gather together for grain and new wine,
and they turn away from me.[1]

15 Though I trained them and strengthened their arms,
they are now plotting evil against me.

16 They return,
but they do not return to me, the Most High.
They are like a slack bow.
Their officials will fall by the sword
because of the insolence of their tongues.
This will become their mockery
in the land of Egypt.

[1] Instead of They gather together, which the copies of the ancient Hebrew text have, some ancient translations of the copies of the Hebrew text, and many modern translations have They cut themselves, an allusion to the pagan custom of idol worshipers wounding themselves in the frenzy of prayer.

Hosea 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This chapter continues using poetic forms to speak of Yahweh's anger over the sin of the people. The people are not seeking Yahweh; they are seeking other gods and looking for salvation from other nations like Egypt and Assyria. (See: sin, falsegod and save)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Baking

Baking of bread is an extended metaphor in this chapter. Yahweh uses various aspects of this activity to show his displeasure with their sins.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel and Ephraim

This chapter begins by using two different names for the same group of people: Israel and Ephraim. It also mentions Samaria, which was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Links:

Hosea 7:1

Hosea 7:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

I want to heal Israel

Making Israel obedient to God again and receivers of his blessing is spoken of as if it were healing.

for they practice deceit

The people are selling and buying products dishonestly.

marauding band

This is a group of people who are attacking other people without cause.

Hosea 7:2

their deeds surround them

The people's evil deeds are probably spoken of here as if they were other people ready to accuse them of their crimes.

they are before my face

Here God is represented by his "face" which emphasizes his presence and awareness. Alternate translation: "and I see it all"

Hosea 7:3

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking. The Hebrew text is not clear in various places. However, many people interpret it as describing the royal officials as being unfaithful to God, and also as planning to assassinate the king, and then carrying out their plans. This seems to have happened more than once. These crimes are mentioned as illustrations of the wickedness into which the nation has sunk.

by their lies the officials

The missing information can be supplied. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "by their lies they make the officials glad" or 2) Alternate translation: "by their lies the officials make the king glad"

Hosea 7:4

They are all adulterers

The people committed spiritual adultery by worshiping idols and being unfaithful to Yahweh. They were probably also being unfaithful to their husbands or wives by sleeping with other people.

like an oven heated by the baker

This can be stated in active form. This means the people had strong desires to do evil. Alternate translation: "like an oven which the baker heats"

kneading of the dough

This is a part of the process of making bread.

Hosea 7:5

On the day of our king

This is perhaps a festival held by the king.

He reached out with his hand

This probably means to unite or join with someone. It may mean that the king joins with his officials to mock things or people that should not be mocked, even God himself.

Hosea 7:6

General Information:

The court officials' plotting is described. Their anger is what motivates them to kill their king.

For with hearts like an oven

This means like a fire burns in an oven, these people have strong evil desires within them. The people's desires are represented by their "hearts."

Their anger smolders

The word "smolders" means something is burning slowly without a flame. Alternate translation: "Their anger grows slowly and quietly"

it burns high like a flaming fire

The intensity of their anger is spoken of as if it was a very hot fire. Alternate translation: "it gets very intense"

Hosea 7:7

They all are as hot as an oven

This compares their anger to the heat that comes from an oven.

they devour those who rule over them

This seems to mean that the court officials kill their kings.

Hosea 7:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Ephraim mixes himself among the peoples

This is probably a reference to the efforts made by the northern kingdom's kings to ally themselves with other nations for protection against attack.

Ephraim is a flat cake that has not been turned over

This can be stated in active form. Here "Ephraim" refers to the northern kingdom of Israel. The nation is weak, as flat bread that has not been doubled over in the oven by the baker for more strength. Alternate translation: "The people

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of Ephraim are like a cake that no one has turned over"
Hosea 7:9
Gray hairs are sprinkled on him
Here "gray hairs" represent old age.
but he does not know it
However, this "old age" is clearly a way of saying that the northern kingdom is getting weaker and weaker, because the nation does not know it is "old."
Hosea 7:10
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
The pride of Israel testifies against him
This describes "pride" as a person who testifies against the people of Israel in court. This means their prideful attitude and behavior show that they are guilty of no longer obeying Yahweh.
nor have they sought him
Israel's lack of interest in Yahweh is spoken of as if he was lost and they were not trying to find him. Alternate translation: "nor have they tried to get him to pay attention to them"
in spite of all this
Here "this" refers God allowing foreigners to defeat them and make them weak.
Hosea 7:11
Ephraim is like a dove, gullible and without sense
Doves were thought to be foolish birds.
Egypt ... Assyria
These were powerful nations that Israel could ask for help.
Hosea 7:12
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
I will spread my net over them
This is a way to catch birds. Yahweh continues to compare the people of Israel to doves. When they go to Egypt or Assyria for help, Yahweh will punish them.
I will bring them down like the birds of the sky
Yahweh speaks of the way he will judge Israel as if they were birds that he would catch in a net. Alternate translation: "I will hunt them like birds" or "I will catch them like a hunter catches birds"
in their flocking together
This expression extends the metaphor of the birds. Alternate translation: "when they gather together"
Hosea 7:14
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
they wail on their beds
It was usual for idol worshipers to eat ceremonial meals while reclining on couches or beds.
They gather together
Some modern translations read, "they slash themselves" to make themselves bleed.
they turn away from me
Here no longer worshiping God is spoken of as turning away from him. Alternate translation: "they no longer worship me"
Hosea 7:15
Though I trained them and strengthened their arms
This may be a military metaphor, in which God training the Israelites to love him and obey him is spoken of as if he had been training their men for war.
Hosea 7:16
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
They are like a slack bow
That is, a bow that has no bowstring, or that has no tension.
because of the insolence of their tongues
Here "tongue" refers to what the officials say. Alternate translation: "because they insult me" or "because they curse me"
This will become their mockery in the land of Egypt
The abstract noun "mockery" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "This is why people in Egypt will mock and laugh at Israel"

---

8 1 "Place a ram's horn at your lips!
An eagle is coming over the house of Yahweh
because the people have broken my covenant
and rebelled against my law.

2 They cry out to me,
'My God, we in Israel know you.'

3 But Israel has rejected what is good,
and the enemy will pursue him.

4 They have set up kings,
but not by me.
They have made princes,
but without my knowledge.
With their silver and gold
they have made idols for themselves,
but it was only so they might be cut off."

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5 "Your calf has been rejected, Samaria.
My anger is burning against these people.
For how long will they be incapable of innocence?

6 For this idol came from Israel;
a workman made it;
it is not God!
The calf of Samaria
will be broken to pieces.

7 For the people sow the wind
and reap the whirlwind.
The standing grain has no heads;
it yields no flour.
If it does come to maturity,
foreigners will devour it.

8 Israel is swallowed up;
now they lie among the nations
like a useless pot.

9 For they went up to Assyria
like a wild donkey all alone.
Ephraim has hired
lovers for herself.

10 Even though they have hired lovers among the nations,
I will now gather them together.
They will begin to waste away
because of the burden of the king of princes.

11 For Ephraim has multiplied altars for sin offerings,
but they have become altars for committing sins.

12 I could write down my law for them ten thousand times,
but they would view it as something strange to them.

13 As for the sacrifices of my offerings,
they sacrifice meat and eat it,
but I, Yahweh, do not accept them.
Now I will think about their iniquity
and punish their sins.
They will return to Egypt.

14 Israel has forgotten me, his Maker,
and has built palaces.
Judah has fortified many cities,
but I will send fire on his cities;
it will destroy his fortresses.

Hosea 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to use the poetic form to communicate several other ways the people of Israel have sinned against God. First, Yahweh notes that they have set up a king without consulting him. Next, they set up or reinstalled the golden

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calves of Samaria. Last, they were seeking help from other nations like Egypt and Assyria. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

This chapter contains some references to the "calf of Samaria." This most likely refers to an image that was set up by an earlier king of Israel. He did this in order to discourage his people from going to Jerusalem, which was part of the southern kingdom of Judah.

Links:

Hosea 8:1 Notes

Hosea 8:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about the coming of the Assyrian army to attack the northern kingdom.

An eagle is coming over the house of Yahweh

The eagle, a bird of prey, is sometimes used to represent the enemies of Israel. Alternate translation: "As an eagle hunts another animal, the enemies of Israel are coming to capture my people"

broken my covenant

Here "broken" represents "disobeyed," "violated."

Hosea 8:2

know you

"are faithful to you"

Hosea 8:4

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

but it was only so they might be cut off

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but the result will be that I will destroy the people"

Hosea 8:5

Your calf has been rejected

Possible meanings are 1) this is the prophet speaking. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has rejected your calf" or 2) Yahweh is speaking. Alternate translation: "I myself have rejected your calf"

Your calf

The people worshiped an idol that looked like a calf, so Yahweh is speaking of their worship as if it were the calf itself. Alternate translation: "Because you worship your calf idol, your worship"

My anger is burning against these people

Anger is often spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "I am very angry with these people"

For how long will they be incapable of innocence?

Possible meanings of this rhetorical question are 1) Yahweh is expressing his anger about his people being guilty of sin. Alternate translation: "I am angry with these people because they have no desire to be innocent." Or 2) he is threatening to punish them soon. Alternate translation: "They will not be able to avoid being punished for much longer."

Hosea 8:6

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Hosea 8:7

For the people sow the wind and reap the whirlwind

To sow or plant the wind is to act in useless or destructive ways. To reap the whirlwind is to suffer disaster from one's own actions.

The standing grain has no heads

Here "head" refers to the part of the plant where the grain is. A stalk with no head has nothing to give to the farmer. In the same way, Israel's actions will result in nothing good.

If it does come to maturity, foreigners will devour it

If any of Israel's actions do happen to result in something good, Israel's enemies will come and take it from them.

Hosea 8:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Israel is swallowed up

"swallowed" means to be defeated and taken into exile. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemies of Israel have taken the Israelites away to other lands"

Hosea 8:9

like a wild donkey all alone

People often think of donkeys as being stubborn. This means the people of Israel refused to listen to Yahweh but instead went to the people of Assyria for help.

Ephraim has hired lovers for herself

Ephraim's alliances with other nations are spoken of as if they had paid them to become prostitutes for Ephraim. Alternate translation: "The people of Israel have tried to pay other nations to protect them"

Hosea 8:10

because of the burden of the king of princes

That is, because the Assyrian king, also called "the Great King," will make the people suffer.

burden

This probably refers to a tax or other form of oppression.

Hosea 8:11

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Hosea 8:12

I could write down my law for them ten thousand times, but they would

Ten thousand is a very large number. It did not matter how many times God might give the law to the people of Israel; they would view it as strange to them. Alternate translation: "Even if I wrote down my law for them very many times, they would" (See:

ten thousand

"10,000"

they would view it as something strange to them

"they would think of it as something strange to them" or "they would think of it as something foreign to them"

Hosea 8:13

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

They will return to Egypt

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Because of their sin, God will send his people away as slaves to the Egyptians.

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9 1 Do not rejoice, Israel,
with joy like the other peoples.
For you have been unfaithful,
abandoning your God.
You love to pay the wages a prostitute requires
on all the floors for threshing grain.

2 But the threshing floor and the winepress
will not feed them;
the new wine will fail them.

3 They will not continue to live in Yahweh's land;
instead, Ephraim will return to Egypt,
and one day they will eat unclean food in Assyria.

4 They will pour out no wine offerings to Yahweh,
neither will they be pleasing to him.
Their sacrifices will be to them like mourners' food:
all who eat it will be defiled.
For their food will be for themselves only;
it will not come into the house of Yahweh.

5 What will you do on the day of an appointed festival,
on the day of a festival for Yahweh?

6 For, look, if they escape from destruction,
Egypt will gather them,
and Memphis will bury them.
As for their precious things of silver—
sharp briers will possess them,
and thorns will fill their tents.

7 The days for punishment are coming;
the days for retribution are coming.
Let all Israel know these things.
The prophet is a fool,
and the inspired man is insane,
because of your abundant iniquity
and great hostility.

8 The prophet is the watchman
for my God over Ephraim.
But a bird snare is on all of his paths,
and hostility toward him is in the house of his God.

9 They have deeply corrupted themselves
as in the days of Gibeah.
God will call to mind their iniquity,
and he will punish their sins.

10 Yahweh says, "When I found Israel,
it was like finding grapes in the wilderness.

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Like the very first fruit of the season on the fig tree,
I found your fathers.
But they went to Baal Peor,
and they devoted themselves to that shameful idol.
They became as detestable
as the idol they loved.

11 As for Ephraim,
their glory will fly away like a bird.
There will be no birth,
no pregnancy, and no conception.

12 Though they have brought up children,
I will bereave all of them.
Woe to them
when I turn away from them!

13 I have seen Ephraim, just like Tyre,
planted in a meadow,
but Ephraim will bring out his children
to someone who will slaughter them."

14 Give them, Yahweh—
what will you give them?
Give them a miscarrying womb
and breasts that give no milk.

15 "Because of all their wickedness in Gilgal,
that is where I began to hate them.
Because of their sinful deeds,
I will drive them out of my house.
I will love them no more;
all their officials are rebels.

16 Ephraim is diseased,
and their root is dried up;
they bear no fruit.
Even if they have children,
I will put the precious ones of their womb to death."

17 My God will reject them
because they have not obeyed him.
They will become wanderers
among the nations.

Hosea 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter is written in poetic form to speak of Yahweh's displeasure with Israel's sins. He is showing the many ways in which they do not honor him. The priests and kings do not understand how they have totally broken their covenant with Yahweh. (See: sin and priest and covenant)

Special concepts in this chapter

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Exile
Because the covenant has been broken, the people will be exiled into another land. This actually shows the mercy of God toward his people. He did not destroy them; he simply moved them to another place. However, this chapter goes into detail about many parts of their society to show how far they have moved away from truly worshiping Yahweh. (See: mercy and peopleofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Change in speaker
In verse 16, Yahweh is speaking; but in verse 17, Hosea starts speaking. There is a change in pronouns; the use of "my God" must imply that someone other than Yahweh is speaking.

Links:

Hosea 9:1 Notes

Hosea 9:1
General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
Hosea 9:2
But the threshing floor and the winepress will not feed them
This describes the threshing floor and the winepress as if they were humans that can feed someone. This means that the harvest will not provide enough grain for threshing to meet the needs of the people, and that it will not provide the grapes for pressing to make enough wine.
the new wine will fail them
There will not be enough grape juice to make wine with.
Hosea 9:3
General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
Yahweh's land
This expression signals that Yahweh continues to view the land of Israel as his property, not the property of the Israelites.
unclean food
This is food that the Israelites would normally refuse to eat because it would make them unacceptable to Yahweh.
Hosea 9:4
Their sacrifices will be to them like mourners' food
Here "mourners' food" refers to what people would eat while they mourning because they were defiled and not acceptable to God. This means Yahweh will consider the people's sacrifices to be defiled and he will not accept them.
For their food will be for themselves only; it will not come into the house of Yahweh
The people of Israel will have food to eat, but Yahweh will not accept it as a sacrifice.
it will not come into the house of Yahweh
The unclean food is spoken of as if it were able to go places by itself. Of course, people actually had to take it with them.
Hosea 9:5
General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
What will you do on the day of an appointed festival, on the day of a festival for Yahweh?
Hosea uses this question to emphasize that the people will no longer be able to observe their festivals when their enemies defeat them and take them captive. Alternate translation: "You will not be able to celebrate the festivals that Yahweh appointed for you."
the day of an appointed festival ... the day of a festival for Yahweh
Both of these mean the same thing.
Hosea 9:6
if they escape
Here "they" still refers to the people of Israel. You can continue stating this is second person. Alternate translation: "if you escape"
Egypt will gather them, and Memphis will bury them
Egypt and Memphis refer to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the army of Egypt will capture you. You will die there, and the people in the city of Memphis will bury you"
As for their precious things of silver—sharp briers will possess them
Briers growing in the places where Israelites stored their silver is spoken of as if the briers were human enemies that would take the Israelite's precious possessions for themselves. Alternate translation: "Sharp briers will grow where they store their precious things of silver"
sharp briers will possess them, and thorns will fill their tents
Here "sharp briers" and "thorns" mean the same thing. To have briers and thorns growing represents a land that has become desolate and like a wilderness.
their tents
Here "tents" represents the Israelites' homes.
Hosea 9:7
General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
The days for punishment are coming; the days for retribution are coming
Hosea says these two similar phrases to emphasize that Yahweh will soon judge the people of Israel for their evil deeds.
The prophet is a fool, and the inspired man is insane
These phrases mean basically the same thing. Possible meanings are 1) that the people regarded the prophets as madmen or 2) that the prophets had become crazy because of the sins that the people had committed.
The prophet is a fool, and the inspired man is insane
Here "prophet" and "inspired man" both mean a person who claims to receive messages from God. It is implied that these people are false prophets and only thought they received messages from God.
because of your abundant iniquity and great hostility
The phrases "abundant iniquity" and "great hostility" share similar meanings. The iniquity of the people manifested itself in hostility towards Yahweh and his prophets.
Hosea 9:8

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General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
The prophet is the watchman for my God over Ephraim
A "watchman" watches outside his city to see if danger is coming. The prophet warning the people when they are sinning and are in danger of having his God punish them is spoken of as if he were a watchman for the city. Alternate translation: "The prophet is like a watchman for God over Ephraim"
The prophet is the watchman for my God over Ephraim
Some versions translate this passage as "The prophet with my God is the watchman over Ephraim."
The prophet is
This refers to prophets in general that God has appointed. Alternate translation: "Prophets are" or "True prophets are"
Ephraim
Here "Ephraim" represents all the people of Israel.
a bird snare is on all of his paths
A "bird snare" is a trap used to catch a bird. This means the people of Israel do whatever they can to stop God's prophet. Alternate translation: "the people set a trap for him wherever he goes" or "the people do all they can to harm him"
Hosea 9:9
They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah
"The people of Israel have sinned and become very corrupt as they did at Gibeah long ago." This is probably a reference to the shocking actions of the tribe of Benjamin recounted in Judges 19-21.
Hosea 9:10
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
When I found Israel
This refers to when Yahweh first started his relationship with the people of Israel by claiming them as his own special people.
it was like finding grapes in the wilderness. Like the very first fruit of the season on the fig tree
Both of these statements emphasize situations that are pleasing to a person. This means Yahweh was very happy when his relationship with the people of Israel started.
Baal Peor
This is the name of a mountain in the land of Moab where the false god Baal was worshiped.
Hosea 9:11
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
their glory will fly away like a bird
The people of Ephraim, or the northern kingdom of Israel, will lose everything that makes other nations respect them. Their glory will quickly disappear, as a bird flies away.
Alternate translation: "their glory will be like a bird that flies away from them"
Hosea 9:12
when I turn away from them
When God stops helping the northern kingdom, it will be as if he physically turned away from them.
Hosea 9:13
General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
I have seen Ephraim, just like Tyre, planted in a meadow
This speaks of the people being in a safe place as if they were a tree planted in a peaceful meadow. Alternate translation: "The nation of Israel was once beautiful and pleasant like the city of Tyre, like a tree that someone plants in a meadow"
Ephraim ... Tyre
Here "Ephraim" represents the whole northern kingdom of Israel. These places refer to the people who live in them.
but Ephraim will bring out his children
The word "children" are the people from that nation. Alternate translation: "but the people of Israel will bring out their children"
Hosea 9:14
Give them, Yahweh—what will you give them? Give them
Hosea uses a question to emphasize that he wants Yahweh to give the people of Israel what they deserve. Alternate translation: "This is what I ask you, Yahweh, to give them: give them"
a miscarrying womb
To "miscarry" means that a pregnancy ends too early and the baby dies. Hosea is asking that all the nation's women be like that.
Hosea 9:15
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking.
I will drive them out of my house
Yahweh is stating that he will force Israel out of his land, the land of Canaan. Here "my house" represents Canaan.
their officials
the men who serve the king
Hosea 9:16
General Information:
Yahweh is speaking in verse 16. Hosea begins speaking in verse 17.
Ephraim is diseased, and their root is dried up; they bear no fruit
Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel as if they were a diseased tree that does not produce fruit and is ready to be cut down. This is a statement that the people have become weak, and that soon their enemies will come and defeat them.

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[1] 10 Israel is a luxuriant vine that produces his fruit.
As his fruit increased,
the more altars he built.
As his land produced more,
he improved his pillars.

[2] Their heart is deceitful;

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now they must bear their guilt.
Yahweh will demolish their altars;
he will destroy their pillars.

3 For then they will say,
"We have no king,
for we did not fear Yahweh,
and a king—
what could he do for us?"

4 They speak empty words
and make covenants by swearing falsely.
So justice springs up
like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field.

5 The inhabitants of Samaria will be afraid
because of the calves of Beth Aven.
Its people mourned over them,
as did those idolatrous priests
who had rejoiced over them and their splendor,
but they are no longer there.

6 They will be carried to Assyria
as tribute for the great king.
Ephraim will be disgraced,
and Israel will be ashamed of its idol.

7 Samaria's king
will be destroyed,
like a chip of wood
on the surface of the water.

8 The high places of wickedness
will be destroyed.
This is the sin of Israel!
Thorns and thistles will grow over their altars.
The people will say to the mountains, "Cover us!"
and to the hills, "Fall on us!"

9 "Israel, you have sinned since the days of Gibeah;
there you have remained.
Will not war overtake
the sons of wrong in Gibeah?

10 When I desire it,
I will discipline them.
The peoples will gather together against them
and put them in bonds for their double iniquity.

11 Ephraim is a trained heifer
that loves to thresh the grain,
so I will put a yoke on her fair neck.
I will put a yoke on Ephraim;
Judah will plow;
Jacob will pull the harrow by himself.

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12 Sow righteousness for yourselves,
and reap the fruit of covenant faithfulness.
Break up your unplowed ground,
for it is time to seek Yahweh,
until he comes and rains righteousness on you.

13 You have plowed wickedness;
you reaped injustice.
You have eaten the fruit of deception
because you trusted in your plans
and in your many soldiers.

14 So a tumult of war
will rise among your people,
and all your fortified cities will be destroyed.
It will be as Shalman destroyed Beth Arbel
on a day of battle,
when mothers were dashed to pieces
with their children.

15 So it will happen to you, Bethel,
because of your great wickedness.
At dawn the king of Israel
will be completely cut off."

Hosea 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and continues the theme of Israel's many sins against Yahweh. Even though Israel prospered for a time as they multiplied their sins, Yahweh was leading them toward destruction. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's relationship to his people was not based on his people's actions. Even though they rebelled, Yahweh still desired to rescue them. (See: peopleofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Jacob

The repeated use of different names for the two kingdoms can be confusing. In verse 11, "Ephraim" refers to the northern kingdom of Israel, and "Judah" refers to the southern kingdom of Judah. However, Jacob is also mentioned. This use of "Jacob" makes us think of the earlier unified nation and may also refer to a future unified nation.

Links:

Hosea 10:1 Notes

Hosea 10:1

General Information:

Hosea is speaking about Israel.

Israel is a luxuriant vine that produces his fruit

Israel is spoken of as a vine that was very fruitful. For a while the people prospered and were strong.

a luxuriant vine

This vine produces more fruit than normal.

As his fruit increased ... As his land produced more

Both of these mean as the people prospered and grew stronger and richer.

Hosea 10:2

Their heart is deceitful

The "heart" refers to the whole person, emphasizing their emotions and desires. Alternate translation: "They are deceitful"

now they must bear their guilt

Here "guilt" is a metonym for the punishment that is associated with it. This punishment is spoken of as if it was a heavy load for them to carry. Alternate translation: "now is the time that Yahweh will punish them for their sins"

Hosea 10:3

General Information:

Hosea is speaking about Israel.

and a king—what could he do for us?

The people wills say that their kings could not have helped them. Alternate translation: "Even if we had a king now, he could not help us."

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Hosea 10:4

They speak empty words

Here "empty words" refers to lies. Alternate translation: "They speak lies"

So justice springs up like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field

What they people called justice in their laws and legal decisions is spoken of as if it were a plant sprouting up. Alternate translation: "So their decisions are not just; instead, they are harmful"

like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field

Their lies and injustice spread throughout their nation and harm everyone like poisonous plants.

Hosea 10:5

General Information:

Hosea is speaking about Israel.

Beth Aven

This was a city on the border between the northern kingdom of Israel and the tribe of Benjamin in the southern kingdom. See how you translated this in [Hosea 4:15]

Hosea 10:6

They will be carried to Assyria

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Assyrians will carry them away"

the great king

Some modern translations read, "King Jareb."

Ephraim will be disgraced, and Israel will be ashamed of its idol

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "And the people of Israel will be very ashamed because they had worshiped idols"

its idol

Many versions interpret the Hebrew word in this passage as "advice," "plans," or "intentions."

Hosea 10:7

Samaria's king will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Assyrians will destroy the king of Samaria"

like a chip of wood on the surface of the water

This means the king of Samaria will be as helpless as a small piece of wood that waves of the water toss back and forth.

Hosea 10:8

The high places of wickedness will be destroyed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Assyrians will destroy Israel's high places, where the people acted very wickedly"

The people will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!"

People do not normally speak to things that cannot think or hear them. Translators may choose to have a different format for this passage if their languages do not allow such speech. Alternate translation: "The people will say, 'We wish the mountains would cover us!' and 'We wish the hills would fall on us!'"

Hosea 10:9

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

days of Gibeah

This is probably a reference to the shocking actions of the tribe of Benjamin recounted in Judges 19-21. See how you translated this in Hosea 9:9.

there you have remained

This passage probably means that the people of the present time continue to act in the same ways that their ancestors did at Gibeah. Alternate translation: "and you think just as they did"

Will not war overtake the sons of wrong in Gibeah?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that those in Gibeah who do wrong will certainly have to endure war. And this speaks of the people having to endure war when their enemies come as if war were a person that would catch up with them. Alternate translation: "War will certainly come on those who do wrong in Gibeah." or "Enemies will certainly attack those who do wrong in Gibeah."

the sons of wrong

Here "son of" is an idiom that means "having the characteristic of." Alternate translation: "those who do wrong" or "the evildoers"

Hosea 10:10

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

double iniquity

This refers to the many sins of Israel.

Hosea 10:11

Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh

A heifer loves to thresh because they can walk around freely without a yoke. Yahweh means that he has allowed the people of Israel to be free and have a pleasant life.

I will put a yoke on her fair neck. I will put a yoke on Ephraim

Here "yoke" refers to suffering and slavery. Yahweh has been kind to the people of Israel, but the people have been unfaithful to him. So he will punish them and send them away as slaves.

her fair neck

The irony here is that the "heifer" views herself as "fair"—that is, as beautiful and delicate—but Yahweh views her as ugly and so will put a yoke on her, which will destroy her beauty.

Judah will plow; Jacob will pull the harrow by himself

Here "Judah" refers to the people of the southern kingdom and "Jacob" is the people of the northern kingdom. This means God will cause difficult times for both kingdoms.

harrow

a tool used to smooth the land and cover the seeds after plowing

Hosea 10:12

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Sow righteousness for yourselves, and reap the fruit of covenant faithfulness

Righteousness and covenant faithfulness are spoken of as if they were crops that could be sown and harvested. The abstract nouns "righteousness" and "faithfulness" can be stated as "right" and "faithful." Alternate translation: "Plow, now, and do what is right, and you will reap the fruit of faithful love"

Break up your unplowed ground

When the ground is "unplowed" it is not ready to be planted. Yahweh means he wants the people to repent so

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they can start doing what is right.
Hosea 10:13
You have plowed wickedness; you reaped injustice
Wickedness and injustice are spoken of as if they were crops that could be sown and harvested.
You have eaten the fruit of deception
The result of deception are spoken of as if they were a food that could be eaten. Alternate translation: "You now suffer the consequences of having deceived each other"
Hosea 10:14
It will be as Shalman destroyed Beth Arbel on a day of battle
The coming war is being compared to a battle long ago.
Shalman
This is the name of a king who destroyed the city of Beth Arbel around 740 BC. His army murdered women and children in the attack.
Beth Arbel
This is likely the name of a city of the tribe of Naphtali.
Hosea 10:15
So it will happen to you, Bethel, because of your great wickedness
Here "Bethel" represents the people who live there. The prophet addresses the people of Bethel as if they were there listening to him.

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1 11 "When Israel was a young man I loved him,
and I called my son out of Egypt.

2 The more they were called,
the more they went away from me.
They sacrificed to the Baals
and burned incense to idols.[1]

3 Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk.
It was I who lifted them up by their arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.

4 I led them with cords of humanity,
with bands of love.
I was to them like someone who eased the yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them.

5 Will they not return to the land of Egypt?
Will Assyria not rule over them
because they refuse to return to me?

6 The sword will fall on their cities
and destroy the bars of their gates;
it will destroy them
because of their own plans.

7 My people are determined
to turn away from me.
Though they call to the Most High,
no one will help them.

8 How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I make you like Zeboyim?
My heart has changed within me;
all my compassions have been stirred up.

9 I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim.
For I am God
and not a man;

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I am the Holy One among you,
and I will not come in wrath.

10 They will follow Yahweh;
and he will roar like a lion.
When he roars,
his children will come trembling from the west.

11 They will come trembling
like a bird from Egypt,
like a dove from the land of Assyria.
I will make them live in their homes—
this is the declaration of Yahweh.

12 Ephraim surrounds me with falsehood,
and the house of Israel with deceit.
But Judah is still going about with God
and is faithful to the Holy One."

[1]Some ancient translations of the Hebrew text and most modern translations have they went away from me. The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have they went away from them.

Hosea 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues using the poetic form to communicate about Yahweh's relationship to the northern kingdom of Israel.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

This chapter contains an extended metaphor of Israel as a male child in the care of Yahweh, his parent.

Rhetorical question

Yahweh uses rhetorical questions to show his disappointment and anger at Israel's persistent rejection of him.

Links:

Hosea 11:1 Notes

Hosea 11:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking of caring for Israel like a parent cares for a child.

When Israel was a young man

Yahweh is speaking about the people of Israel as if they were a young man. Yahweh is referring to when he first started his relationship with the nation.

I called my son out of Egypt

"son" refers to the people of God the Father. Alternate translation: "I led my son out of Egypt"

Hosea 11:2

The more they were called, the more they went away from me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The more I called them to be my people, the more they refused me"

Hosea 11:3

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about how he cared for Israel.

it was I who taught Ephraim to walk

Yahweh refers to Israel as a small child whom he taught to walk.

lifted them up by their arms

This expression continues the metaphor. Alternate translation: "took care of them"

Hosea 11:4

I led them with cords of humanity, with bands of love

Yahweh loved his people in ways that they as humans could understand and appreciate.

I was to them like someone who eased the yoke on their jaws

Yahweh is speaking of the nation of Israel as a hardworking animal whose work he made easier.

I bent down to them and fed them

This expression continues the metaphor in which Israel is pictured as a young child. It may mean that Yahweh provided for all their physical needs.

Hosea 11:5

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about Israel.

Will they not return to the land of Egypt?

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This question means that the nation of Israel will once again be slaves as they were in Egypt.

Will Assyria not rule over them because they refuse to return to me?

The nation of Israel will be captives of Assyria as a result of their refusal to remain faithful to Yahweh.

Hosea 11:6

The sword will fall on their cities

Here "sword" represents the enemies of Israel who will destroy Israel's cities.

destroy the bars of their gates

Gates offered security to city inhabitants from their enemies, and the bars secured the closed gates. To destroy the bars meant to take away the people's security.

Hosea 11:7

Though they call to the Most High

Here God is speaking about himself in the third person. It can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "Though they call to me, the Most High"

no one will help them

Yahweh will not allow anyone to help Israel because they turned away from him.

Hosea 11:8

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about Israel.

How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel?

Yahweh loves his people so much that he will not totally destroy them. These questions may be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I will not give you up, Ephraim. I will not hand you over, Israel."

How can I make you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim?

Yahweh loves his people so much that he will not totally destroy them. These questions may be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "I do not want to act toward you as I acted toward Admah or make you like Zeboyim—cities that I destroyed along with Sodom"

My heart has changed within me

Here "heart" represents God's will and decisions.

Hosea 11:9

For I am God and not a man

God is not like people, who often decide very quickly to take revenge.

I will not come in wrath

The abstract noun "wrath" can be stated as the adjective "angry." Alternate translation: "I will not come to you and be angry with you"

Hosea 11:10

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking about when he will restore his people.

They will follow Yahweh

Worshiping and honoring Yahweh is spoken of as if it were following him

he will roar like a lion

Yahweh making it possible for his people to return to his land is spoken of as if he were calling to his people.

Hosea 11:11

They will come trembling like a bird ... like a dove

They will come home quickly as a bird returns to its nest. "Trembling" may refer to the fluttering of a bird's wings. It may also signal the people's feelings of humility and reverence for God

the declaration of Yahweh

"what Yahweh has declared" or "what Yahweh has solemnly said." See how you translated this in Hosea 2:13.

Hosea 11:12

General Information:

Yahweh is talking about Israel and Judah.

Ephraim surrounds me with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit

Lies and deceitful acts are spoken of as if they were objects that the people of the northern kingdom surrounded Yahweh with.

But Judah is still going about with God and is faithful to the Holy One

Many modern translations read, "And Judah is rebelling against God and against the Holy One"

Judah is ... is

Here "Judah" is a metonym for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah are ... are"

God and ... the Holy One

Yahweh is speaking of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "me, God, and ... me, the Holy One"

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12 [1] Ephraim feeds on the wind
and follows after the east wind.
He continually multiplies lies and violence.
They make a covenant with Assyria
and carry olive oil to Egypt.

[2] Yahweh also has a lawsuit against Judah
and will punish Jacob for what he has done;
he will repay him for his deeds.

[3] In the womb Jacob grasped his brother by the heel,
and in his manhood he struggled with God.

[4] He struggled with the angel and won.
He wept and begged for his favor.
He met God at Bethel;
there God spoke with him.

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5 This is Yahweh, the God of hosts;
"Yahweh" is his name to be called on.

6 So turn to your God.
Keep covenant faithfulness and justice,
and wait continually for your God.

7 The merchants have deceitful scales in their hands;
they love to defraud.

8 Ephraim said,
"I have certainly become very rich;
I have found wealth for myself.
In all my labors
they will not find any iniquity in me,
anything that would be sin."

9 "I am Yahweh your God
from the land of Egypt.
I will again make you live in tents,
as in the days of the appointed festival.

10 I spoke to the prophets,
and I gave them many visions for you.
By the hand of the prophets
I gave parables."

11 If there is wickedness in Gilead,
surely the people are worthless.
In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls;
their altars will be like heaps of stone
in the furrows of the fields.

12 Jacob fled to the land of Aram;
Israel labored in order to get a wife;
and he kept flocks of sheep to get a wife.

13 Yahweh brought Israel out of Egypt by a prophet,
and by a prophet he took care of them.

14 Ephraim has bitterly angered Yahweh.
So his Lord will leave his blood on him
and will turn back on him his disgrace.

Hosea 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Jacob

There is a parallel between Jacob and the northern kingdom of Israel. In the same way that Jacob returned to Yahweh, the northern kingdom should repent of their idolatry and turn back to Yahweh. (See: repent)

Links:

Hosea 12:1 Notes

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Hosea 12:1

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

Ephraim feeds on the wind

Here "Ephraim" represents all the people of Israel. Also "wind" represents something that is useless or temporary. The people of Israel doing things that will not help them is spoken of as if they eat the wind.

follows after the east wind

East winds were very hot and destructive to the land. Here it represents anything that is destructive. The people doing things that will destroy themselves is spoken of as if they are following the east wind.

carry olive oil to Egypt

The people of Israel sent olive oil as a present to the king of Egypt to try and persuade him to help them.

Hosea 12:2

Yahweh also has a lawsuit against Judah

Yahweh stating that the people of Judah have sinned against him and broken his covenant is spoken of as if Yahweh were accusing them in court. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hosea 4:1]

against Judah ... punish Jacob for what he has done ... repay him for his deeds

Here "Judah" and "Jacob" both represent the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "against the people of Judah ... punish them for what they have done ... repay them for their deeds"

lawsuit

This is a complaint by one person against another person in a court of law. See how you translated this in Hosea 2:2.

Hosea 12:3

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking about Jacob the ancestor of the Israelites.

In the womb Jacob grasped his brother by the heel

Jacob wanted to take his brother's place as the firstborn, so he tried to keep his brother from being born first.

Hosea 12:4

He struggled with the angel and won

Jacob fought with an angel so that the angel would bless him.

Hosea 12:5

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

is his name to be called on

This can be stated in active form. Here "name" represents the entire character of God. Alternate translation: "is his name to which we pray" or "is his name by which we worship him"

Hosea 12:6

Keep covenant faithfulness and justice

This refers to obeying God's law and doing what is right.

Hosea 12:7

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking about Israel.

The merchants have deceitful scales in their hands

The phrase "deceitful scales" is a metonym for the merchants who use scales that do not accurately measure the weight of the money or products they are buying or selling so that they can get higher prices for what they sell and lower prices for what they buy. Alternate translation: "These deceitful merchants use the scales in their hands to deceive people"

they love to defraud

The merchants cheat their customers by lying to them and taking more money than they should.

Hosea 12:8

I have certainly become very rich; I have found wealth for myself

These two phrases mean the same thing and mean that the people of Ephraim consider themselves to be very prosperous.

I have found wealth

Becoming wealthy by trading is spoken of as finding wealth. Alternate translation: "I have made much money"

they will not find any iniquity in me, anything that would be sin

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that the people of Ephraim consider themselves to be blameless. Learning that someone has sinned is spoken of as finding sin in that person. Alternate translation: "they will not discover that I have done anything sinful"

Hosea 12:9

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt

Possible meanings are 1) "I am Yahweh your God, who brought your ancestors from the land of Egypt" or 2) "I have been your God ever since you were in the land of Egypt" or 3) "I became your God when you were in the land of Egypt"

I will again make you live in tents

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is threatening to force the people of Israel from their homes and make them live in tents. So, here to "live in tents" would represent being sent into exile, or 2) it is a promise that after their exile the people will live in tents again, and Yahweh will take care of them as he did when the Israelites left Egypt. So, here "to live in tents" would represent a return to an ideal situation when Yahweh took care of his people.

Hosea 12:10

By the hand of the prophets

Here "hand" represents the one who carries out an action. Alternate translation: "Through the prophets"

Hosea 12:11

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

their altars will be like heaps of stone in the furrows of the fields

The altars where the people worshiped will be thrown down and become piles of stones.

Hosea 12:12

Jacob fled to the land of Aram; Israel labored in order to get a wife

Here "Jacob" and "Israel" refer to the same person. Jacob's name became Israel later in his life.

Hosea 12:13

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General Information:
Hosea the prophet is speaking.
by a prophet
That is, Moses.
Hosea 12:14
bitterly
The anger that the people have caused in Yahweh is extremely great.
So his Lord will leave his blood on him
Here "blood" refers to the guilt incurred by people who murder others. God will not forgive their sins.
will turn back on him his disgrace
The idea of making someone suffer the results of his own actions is spoken of as if those actions were objects that were thrown back at him. Alternate translation: "will make him suffer from his own disgraceful actions"

13 1 "When Ephraim spoke,
there was trembling.
He exalted himself in Israel,
but he became guilty
because of Baal worship, and he died.

2 Now they sin more and more.
They make cast metal figures from their silver,
idols as skillfully worked as possible,
all of them the work of the craftsmen.
People say of them,
'These men who sacrifice kiss calves.'

3 So they will be like the morning clouds,
like the dew that goes away early,
like the chaff that is driven by the wind
away from a threshing floor,
and like smoke out of a chimney.

4 But I am Yahweh your God
from the land of Egypt.
You must acknowledge no God but me;
you must acknowledge that besides me,
there is no other Savior.

5 I knew you in the wilderness,
in the land of great dryness.

6 When you had pasture,
then you became full;
and when you were filled,
your heart became lifted up.
For that reason you forgot me.

7 I will become like a lion to them;
like a leopard I will watch along the path.

8 I will attack them as a bear
that is robbed of her cubs.
I will rip open their chests,
and there I will devour them as a lion,
as a wild beast would tear them to pieces.

9 I will destroy you, Israel;
who will be able to help you?

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10 Where now is your king,
that he may save you in all your cities?
Where are your rulers,
about whom you said to me,
'Give me a king and princes'?

11 I gave you a king in my anger,
and I took him away in my wrath.

12 Ephraim's iniquity has been bound up;
his sin has been stored up.

13 Pains of childbirth will come on him,
but he is not a wise son,
for when it is time to be born,
he does not come out of the womb.

14 Will I rescue them from the hand of Sheol?
Will I rescue them from death?
Where, death, are your plagues?
Where, Sheol, is your destruction?
Compassion is hidden from my eyes."

15 Though Ephraim is prosperous among his brothers,
an east wind will come;
the wind of Yahweh
will blow in from the wilderness.
Ephraim's spring will dry up,
and his well will have no water.
His enemy will plunder his storehouse
of every precious object.

16 Samaria will be guilty,
for she has rebelled against her God.
They will fall by the sword;
their young children will be dashed to pieces,
and their pregnant women will be ripped open.

Hosea 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter uses poetry to communicate Yahweh's disgust and anger with the northern kingdom of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Israel" and "Ephraim" are terms used to speak about the people of the northern kingdom. Samaria was the capital of the northern kingdom.

This chapter makes it clear that the northern kingdom is going to be nearly decimated as a people. They will no longer exist as a nation.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

Hosea uses rhetorical questions throughout this chapter. They are not questions requesting information but rather questions indicating some emotion like anger or dissatisfaction.

Links:

Hosea 13:1 Notes

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Hosea 13:1

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

When Ephraim spoke

Hosea uses the term "Ephraim" to refer to the entire northern kingdom, although it was also the name of one of the ten tribes. Hosea seems to be speaking of a long-past time, when the northern kingdom was strong and honored, unlike at the present time.

there was trembling

It is understood that people were trembling because they were afraid of Ephraim. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "there was trembling among the people" or "people trembled in fear" (See: [[rc://en/ta/man/jit/figs-explicit])

He exalted himself in Israel

Here "exalting" means to make oneself important.

but he became guilty because of Baal worship, and he died

When the people of Ephraim began worshiping Baal, they grew weak, and their enemies defeated them. Here "died" refers to the nation growing weak.

Hosea 13:2

Now they sin more and more

Here "they" refers to the tribe of Ephraim and the entire nation of Israel, who followed Ephraim's example.

These men who sacrifice kiss calves

Part of idol worship was kissing idol figures that were images of calves.

Hosea 13:3

So they will be like the morning clouds ... like the dew ... like the chaff ... like smoke out of a chimney

These expressions state that Israel is temporary and will soon disappear if they continue to worship idols instead of following Yahweh.

that is driven by the wind away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the wind blows away"

Hosea 13:4

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking of his people as if they had been a flock of sheep that he found wandering in the wilderness. He says that he claimed them there for his own.

Hosea 13:5

I knew you in the wilderness

Yahweh claimed the Hebrew people as his own special people, and he took care of them there.

Hosea 13:6

When you had pasture, then you became full

The image of sheep is continued with this expression.

your heart became lifted up

Becoming arrogant is spoken of as one's heart being lifted up. Alternate translation: "you became proud"

Hosea 13:7

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

like a lion ... like a leopard

These are wild animals that attack and kill other animals. Yahweh continues to say that he will destroy his people for their sins.

Hosea 13:8

as a bear ... as a lion ... as a wild beast

These are wild animals that attack and kill other animals. Yahweh continues to say that he will destroy his people for their sins.

as a bear that is robbed of her cubs

The words "would attack" are left out because they are understood. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "like a bear would attack an animal that takes her cubs"

as a lion

The words "would devour them" are left out because they are understood. Alternate translation: "as a lion would devour them"

Hosea 13:9

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

who will be able to help you?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that no one will be able to help the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "there will be no on able to help you."

Hosea 13:10

Where now is your king, that he may save you in all your cities? Where are your rulers, about whom you said to me, 'Give me a king and princes'?

Yahweh asks these questions to tell Israel that when they rebel against him, no king or ruler can help them. Only Yahweh can save them from destruction.

Hosea 13:12

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Ephraim's iniquity

Possible meanings are 1) the word "iniquity" refers to the actual acts of iniquity, or 2) it is a metonym for the guilt that God attaches to iniquity, or 3) it is a metonym for the punishment God will give for that iniquity.

has been bound up

Yahweh speaks of his own remembering Ephraim's iniquity as if he were a scribe who had written down a record of them, rolled up the scroll, bound it, and put it away so he could show it to people in the future.

his sin has been stored up

Ephraim's guilt is spoken of as if it were a solid object that a person could store for later use.

his sin

Possible meanings are 1) the word "sin" refers to the actual acts of sin, or 2) it is a metonym for the guilt that God attaches to sin, or 3) it is a metonym for the punishment God will give for that sin.

Hosea 13:13

Pains of childbirth will come on him

Here Yahweh speaks of the suffering the people of Israel will suffer as if it were the pains of child birth.

but he is not a wise son, for when it is time to be born, he does not come out of the womb

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Yahweh now describes the people of Israel as the baby to which the mother is giving birth. The baby is unwise because it does not want to be born. The people do not want to repent and obey Yahweh.

Hosea 13:14

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

Will I rescue them from the hand of Sheol? Will I rescue them from death?

Yahweh uses these questions to tell the people of Israel that he is not going to save them from dying. He will certainly punish them. Alternate translation: "I will certainly not rescue them from death and from going down to Sheol."

Where, death, are your plagues? Where, Sheol, is your destruction?

Yahweh speaks to "death" and "Sheol" as if they were people. Yahweh uses questions to say that he will destroy the people soon. Alternate translation: "Now I will cause plagues and let the people of Israel die. I will destroy them and send them to Sheol."

Compassion is hidden from my eyes

Not to think about having compassion is spoken of as if compassion were hidden so that it cannot be seen. The abstract noun "compassion" can be translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "I have no compassion for them" or "I will not be compassionate towards them"

Hosea 13:15

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

his brothers

This expression seems to stand for the nations around the northern kingdom, especially Judah, the southern kingdom.

an east wind will come; the wind of Yahweh

A wind from the east was very hot and destructive. Here it refers to the armies from the east that Yahweh will send to destroy the people of Israel.

Ephraim's spring will dry up, and his well will have no water

Hosea continues to describe how God will punish the people of Israel. Here water represents life, vitality, and strength.

his storehouse

This refers to all of the peoples' possessions.

Hosea 13:16

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

Samaria will be guilty, for she has rebelled against her God

Here "Samaria" refers to the people in the city of Samaria who are guilty of rebelling against God.

They will fall

Here to "fall" represents dying.

by the sword

Here the "sword" represents the enemy soldiers who used swords in battle.

their young children will be dashed to pieces, and their pregnant women will be ripped open

These phrases can be put into the active voice. Alternate translation: "the enemy will dash their young children to pieces, and they will rip open the pregnant women"

---

14 [1] Israel, return to Yahweh your God,
for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

[2] Take with you words
and return to Yahweh.
Say to him, "Take away all our iniquity
and accept what is good,
so that we may offer to you
the fruit of our lips.[1]

[3] Assyria will not save us;
we will not ride on horses to war.
Neither will we say anymore
to the work of our hands,
'You are our gods,'
for in you the orphan finds compassion."

[4] "I will heal their apostasy;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned away from him.

[5] I will be like the dew to Israel;
he will blossom like the lily
and take root like a cedar in Lebanon.

[6] His branches will spread out;
his beauty will be like the olive trees,

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and his fragrance like the cedars in Lebanon.

7 The people who live in his shade will return;
they will revive like grain
and blossom like vines.
His fame will be like
the wine of Lebanon.

8 Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols?
I will answer him and care for him.
I am like a cypress
whose leaves are always green;
from me comes your fruit."

9 Who is wise
that he may understand these things?
Who understands these things
so that he may know them?
For the ways of Yahweh are right,
and the righteous will walk in them,
but the rebellious will stumble in them.

---

[1]The phrase so that we may offer to you the fruit of our lips represents the interpretation of some ancient translations of the Hebrew text. The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have so that we may offer bulls, our lips. Some modern translations interpret this to mean, so that we may offer to you bulls, which we have promised to do.

Hosea 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This last chapter of Hosea ends with hope. In this chapter, Hosea calls for Israel to confess to Yahweh and repent. This chapter continues to be written in poetic form, using metaphors and other devices to communicate God's love for his sinful people.

Why are confession and repentance even suggested here for a people that Yahweh has already condemned to be destroyed? It is because this is a teaching that Yahweh is a merciful God who loves his people. (See: mercy)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Speaker

The use of first and second person in this chapter often signifies a change in speaker. In this chapter, Hosea is speaking to the northern kingdom to tell them that Yahweh loves them. There are several places in this chapter where the writer switches from the third person to the second or the first person. This may cause some confusion about who is speaking.

Links:

Hosea 14:1 Notes

Hosea 14:1

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

for you have stumbled because of your iniquity

The people sinning is spoken of here as if they were stumbling.

Hosea 14:2

Take with you words

This probably means words of confession and praise. Alternate translation: "Confess your sins"

the fruit of our lips

What a person says is called the fruit of his lips. Modern versions have different translations of this difficult passage. Alternate translation: "our words and songs of praise"

Hosea 14:3

General Information:

Hosea is speaking

to the work of our hands

Here people are represented by their "hands" to refer to the people making things. Alternate translation: "to the idols we made"

the orphan

This expression stands perhaps for the entire nation. It indicates God's enormous compassion for his people.

finds compassion

Here the act of God having compassion is spoken of as if it were an object that someone experiencing that compassion had found. The abstract noun "compassion" can be

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translated with an adjective. Alternate translation: "finds one who is compassionate"

Hosea 14:4

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

I will heal their apostasy

Stopping the people from turning away from God is spoken of as if he were healing them.

Hosea 14:5

I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily

God is spoken of as if he were dew that brought needed moisture to plants, and Israel is spoken of as if it were one person, and as if he were a flower that could blossom.

take root like a cedar in Lebanon

The picture of Israel in the form of a plant is continued here, but this time in the form of a tall cedar tree in Lebanon, which was known for such trees.

Hosea 14:6

His branches will spread out ... like the cedars in Lebanon

This passage continues the same image.

Hosea 14:7

General Information:

Yahweh is speaking.

The people who live in his shade will return

The people of Israel will once again live protected by God. Israel is spoken of as living in his shade.

they will revive like grain and blossom like vines

Israel's new prosperity is spoken of in agricultural terms.

His fame will be like the wine of Lebanon

Just as Lebanon's wine was famous, so Israel will be famous. Alternate translation: "People everywhere will know about the nation of Israel"

Hosea 14:8

what more have I to do with idols?

This passage signifies that God will stop the people of Israel from worshiping idols any longer.

a cypress whose leaves are always green

A cypress is a tree whose leaves stay green all year. This represents Yahweh and his blessings on Israel.

from me comes your fruit

Here "fruit" represents every good thing that comes from Yahweh.

Hosea 14:9

General Information:

Hosea the prophet is speaking.

Who is wise that he may understand these things? Who understands these things so that he may know them?

The prophet uses these questions to say that wise people will understand and listen to what has been said to them.

For the ways of Yahweh are right, and the righteous will walk in them

Yahweh's commandments are spoken of as ways to walk in.

stumble

Disobeying Yahweh is spoken of as if it were stumbling while walking.

Introduction to Joel

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Joel

The land ruined; the day of Yahweh is coming (1:1–2:11) Locusts and drought (1:1–20) The day of Yahweh (2:1–11)

Yahweh restores his people

(2:12-32) The people should turn to Yahweh, for he will pity them (2:12–27) The Spirit of Yahweh, wonders, and salvation (2:28–32)

Yahweh will judge the nations (3:1-21) Yahweh judges the nations (3:1–16) Yahweh dwells in Zion (3:17–21)

What is the Book of Joel about?

The main idea in the Book of Joel is "the day of Yahweh." This expression is found five times (1:15, 2:1, 2:11, 2:21, 3:14). The people of Israel looked forward to "the day of Yahweh" as a day that Yahweh would judge the nations around them. But Joel warns that Yahweh would also judge Israel for being unfaithful to him. After judging them, Yahweh will restore his people.

Joel's message applies to the people of God in the church age. For Yahweh says, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh" and "everyone who calls on Yahweh will be saved" (2:28 and 2:32, quoted by Peter in Acts 2:17 and 2:21).

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Joel" or just "Joel." Translators may also call it the "The Book about Joel" or "The Sayings of Joel."

Who wrote the Book of Joel?

This book contains the prophecies of an Israelite named Joel, son of Pethuel. The book does not tell when Joel prophesied.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the meaning of the locust attacks in Joel 1 and 2, and of the drought in Joel 2?

Locust attacks occurred often in the ancient Near East. Certain kinds of grasshoppers would come in countless numbers. There would be so many that they would darken the sky like a black cloud that blocked the sunlight. They often came after a long period of no rain. They came down on whatever crops were surviving in the fields and stripped them bare of their leaves. The locusts could not be stopped and caused terrible damage. For this reason, locust attacks served as a powerful image of military attacks in the Old Testament. In Chapters 1 and 2, Joel described locust attacks using military

terms. He may have been speaking of enemy invaders coming and destroying the land its people.
There are various names for locusts in the original language of the Old Testament. It is uncertain whether these refer to different kinds of locusts or to the same kind of locust in different stages of growth. For this reason, versions of the Bible differ in how they translate these terms.
Joel also described a drought in Chapter 2. It might have been a real lack of rain. Or Joel may have been speaking of either enemy invaders or Yahweh himself coming to punish his people and the other nations.
Translators should simply translate the locust attacks and drought as Joel described them and not worry about the various possible meanings.

What did Joel prophesy about the future for God's people?

Joel prophesied that God will defeat Israel's enemies, rebuild the city of Jerusalem, and rule as victorious king over the whole world. At the same time, God will give his Spirit to all his people, and they will receive messages from him in dreams and visions. (See: holyspirit)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How should one translate the poetry of the Book of Joel?

All of the text in the Book of Joel is poetry. The ULB presents it in this way. The UDB, however, presents the text as prose. Translators may choose to use prose in their versions. Translators who want to translate the book as poetry should read about poetry and parallelism.

Joel

1

1 This is the word of Yahweh that came to Joel son of Pethuel.

2 Hear this, you elders,
and listen, all you inhabitants of the land.
Has anything like this happened in your days
or in the days of your ancestors?

3 Tell your children about it,
and let your children tell their children,
and their children the next generation.

4 What the swarming locust has left,
the great locust has eaten;
what the great locust has left,
the grasshopper has eaten;
and what the grasshopper has left,
the caterpillar has eaten.

5 Wake up, you drunkards, and weep!
Wail, all you drinkers of wine,
because the sweet wine has been cut off from you.

6 For a nation has come up upon my land,
mighty and without number.
His teeth are the teeth of a lion,
and he has the teeth of a lioness.

7 He has made my vineyard into a desolate place
and has stripped my fig tree bare.
He has stripped its bark
and thrown it away;
the branches are bare white.

8 Mourn like a virgin girded in sackcloth
for the death of her young bridegroom.

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9 The grain offering and the drink offering
have been cut off from the house of Yahweh.
The priests, Yahweh's servants, mourn.

10 The fields are ruined;
the ground is mourning
because the grain has been destroyed.
The new wine has dried up;
the oil fails.

11 Be ashamed, you farmers,
and wail, you vine growers,
for the wheat and the barley.
For the harvest of the fields has perished.

12 The vines have withered
and the fig trees have dried up;
the pomegranate trees, also the palm trees, and the apple trees—
all the trees of the field have withered.
For joy has withered away
from the descendants of mankind.

13 Gird yourselves with sackcloth and mourn, you priests!
Wail, you servants of the altar.
Come, lie all night in sackcloth,
you servants of my God.
For the grain offering and the drink offering
have been withheld from the house of your God.

14 Call for a holy fast,
and call a holy assembly.
Gather the elders
and all the inhabitants of the land
to the house of Yahweh your God,
and cry to Yahweh.

15 Alas for the day!
For the day of Yahweh is almost here.
With it will come destruction from the Almighty.

16 Has not food been cut off
from before our eyes,
and joy and gladness
from the house of our God?

17 The seeds rot under their clods,
the storehouses are desolate,
and the barns have been torn down,
for the grain has withered.

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18 How the cattle groan!
Their herds are wandering in confusion
because they have no pasture.
Even the flocks of sheep are suffering.

19 Yahweh, I cry to you.
For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,
and flames have burned all the trees of the fields.

20 Even the animals of the fields pant for you,
for the water brooks have dried up,
and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Joel 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Joel is written in poetic form and with striking imagery. The ULB is written in poetic form, but the UDB has been transferred to a prose form. If possible, use the poetic form to communicate the meaning of this book in order to stay closer to the original meaning of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Locusts

This book starts very dramatically with the imagery of the locusts and the devastation they produce. There are five different kinds of locusts that appear to come and they progressively destroy the vegetation including the crops, vineyards and even the trees of the whole land of Israel.

It was common for farmers in the ancient Near East to experience large locust swarms that would come and eat all crops in their fields. Joel might be describing such attacks in this first chapter. Because Joel uses military terms and images to describe these locust attacks, his descriptions might represent enemy invaders who would come and destroy the land its people.

Translators should translate simply, presenting the scenes of locusts as Joel describes them, and not worry about the various possible meanings.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The author also uses rhetorical questions that communicate surprise and alarm.

Links:

Joel 1:1 Notes Joel intro

Joel 1:1

General Information:

God speaks through Joel to the people of Israel using poetry.

the word of Yahweh that came to Joel

This idiom is used to announce that God gave messages to Joel. Alternate translation: "the message Yahweh gave to Joel" or "the message Yahweh spoke to Joel"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Pethuel

Joel's father

Joel 1:2

Has anything like this happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors?

Joel is preparing the elders to listen to what he has to say. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Nothing like this has ever happened before either to you or to your ancestors"

Joel 1:3

their children the next generation

You may need to fill in the words that have been left out. Alternate translation: "let their children tell the generation after them"

Joel 1:4

the swarming locust

large groups of insects like grasshoppers that fly together and eat large areas of food crops

swarming locust ... great locust ... grasshopper ... caterpillar

These are, respectively, an adult locust that can fly, a locust too large to fly easily, a locust with wings too young to fly,

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and a newborn locust that has not yet developed wings. Use names that would be understood in your language.
Joel 1:5
General Information:
God warns the people of Israel about the coming locust army.
you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you drinkers of wine
If your language has only one word for "weep" and "wail," you can combine the lines: "you people who love wine should cry out in sorrow"
Joel 1:6
a nation
The locust swarm is like an invading army.
His teeth ... he has the teeth
The locusts are like a nation which is like one person. You can refer to the nation as "it," or to the locusts as "they," or to the invader as one person.
His teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he has the teeth of a lioness.
These two lines share similar meanings. The reference to the locusts' teeth being as sharp as lions' teeth emphasize how fierce they are as they eat all of the crops of the land.
my land
Yahweh's land
Joel 1:7
He has made ... He has stripped
The locusts are like a nation which is like one person. You can refer to the nation as "it," or to the locusts as "they," or to the invader as one person.
my vineyard ... my fig tree
Yahweh's vineyard and fig tree
desolate
empty and without life
Joel 1:8
General Information:
God continues speaking to the people of Israel.
Joel 1:10
the ground is mourning
Here the land is spoken of as if it were a person. These words could also be seen as a metonym for the people who are mourning or even as hyperbole, that the famine is so bad that even things that are not alive are mourning. Alternate translation: "the farmers are mourning"
the grain has been destroyed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the locusts have destroyed all of the grain"
Joel 1:11
General Information:
God continues speaking to the people of Israel.
barley
a type of grass, like wheat, whose seeds can be used to make bread
Joel 1:12
withered
dried up and died
fig ... pomegranate ... apple
different types of fruit
Joel 1:13
General Information:
God speaks to the priests in Israel
the grain offering and the drink offering
regular offerings in the temple
Joel 1:14
the house of Yahweh your God
the temple in Jerusalem
Joel 1:15
General Information:
This is what God is telling the priests to say.
With it will come destruction from the Almighty
The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated using the verb "destroy." You may need to make explicit what it is the Almighty will destroy. Alternate translation: "On that day the Almighty will destroy his enemies"
Joel 1:16
Has not food been cut off from before our eyes, and joy and gladness from the house of our God?
It is certain that destruction will come from the Almighty because these things have already happened. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "We know this is true because we have already seen the Almighty cut off our supply of food, and he has cut off joy and gladness from the house of our God."
from before our eyes
"from us." This refers to all of the nation of Israel.
joy and gladness from the house of our God
You may need to fill in the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "joy and gladness have been cut off from the house of our God"
joy and gladness
These two words mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that there is no kind of joyful activity happening at the temple.
Joel 1:17
clods
lumps of dirt
Joel 1:18
General Information:
God continues to tell the priests how they should pray for Israel.
groan
make a deep sound because of pain
Joel 1:20
brooks
small streams

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2 Blow the ram's horn in Zion,
and sound an alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble in fear,
for the day of Yahweh is coming;
indeed, it is near.

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2 It is a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness.
Like the dawn that spreads on the mountains,
a large and mighty army is approaching.
There has never been an army like it,
and there never will be again,
even after many generations.

3 A fire is consuming everything in front of it,
and behind it a flame is burning.
The land is like the garden of Eden in front of it,
but behind it there is a ruined wilderness.
Indeed, nothing will escape from it.

4 The army's appearance is like horses,
and they run like horsemen.

5 They jump with a noise like that of chariots
on the tops of the mountains,
like the sound of fiery flames that devour the stubble,
like a mighty army ready for battle.

6 At their presence people are in anguish
and all their faces become pale.

7 They run like mighty warriors;
they climb the walls like soldiers;
they march, every one in step,
and do not break their ranks.

8 Neither does one thrust another aside;
they march, each in his path;
they break through the defenses
and do not fall out of line.

9 They rush on the city,
they run on the wall,
they climb in the houses,
and they go through the windows like thieves.

10 The earth shakes in front of them,
the heavens tremble,
the sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars stop shining.

11 Yahweh raises his voice
in front of his army,
for his warriors are very numerous;
for they are strong,
those who carry out his commands.
For the day of Yahweh is great
and very terrible.

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Who can endure it?

12 "Yet even now"—this is Yahweh's declaration—
"Return to me with all your heart.
Fast, weep, and mourn."

13 Tear your heart
and not only your garments,
and return to Yahweh your God.
For he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love
and relenting from inflicting punishment.

14 Who knows? Will he perhaps turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for Yahweh your God?

15 Blow the ram's horn in Zion,
call for a holy fast,
and call a holy assembly.

16 Gather the people;
call for the holy assembly.
Assemble the elders;
gather the children
and the nursing infants.
Let the bridegrooms come out of their rooms,
and the brides out of their bridal chambers.

17 Let the priests, the servants of Yahweh,
weep between the porch and the altar.
Let them say, "Spare your people, Yahweh,
and do not make your inheritance into an object of scorn,
that the nations mock them.
Why should they say among the nations,
'Where is their God?'"

18 Then Yahweh was zealous for his land
and had pity on his people.

19 Yahweh answered his people,
"Look, I will send you grain, new wine, and oil.
You will be satisfied with them,
and I will no longer make you
a disgrace among the nations.

20 I will remove the northern attackers far from you,
and will drive them into a dry and desolate land.
The front of their army will go into the eastern sea,
and the rear into the western sea.
Its stench will rise,

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and its bad smell will rise."

Indeed, he has done great things.

21 Do not fear, land; be glad and rejoice,
for Yahweh will do great things.

22 Do not fear, you wild animals!
For the pastures of the wilderness will sprout,
the trees will bear their fruit,
and the fig trees and the vines will yield their full harvest.

23 Be glad, people of Zion,
and rejoice in Yahweh your God.
For he will give you the autumn rain
as vindication
and bring down showers for you,
the autumn rain and the spring rain as before.

24 The threshing floors will be full of wheat,
and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

25 "I will restore to you the years of crops
that the swarming locust has eaten—
the great locust, the devouring locust, and the destroying locust—
my mighty army that I sent among you.

26 You will eat plentifully and be satisfied,
and praise the name of Yahweh your God,
who has done wonders among you,
and I will never again bring shame on my people.

27 You will know that I am among Israel,
and that I am Yahweh your God,
and there is none else,
and I will never bring shame on my people.

28 It will come about afterward
that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters will prophesy.
Your old men will dream dreams;
your young men will see visions.

29 Also on servants and female servants,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

30 I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth,
blood, fire, and pillars of smoke.

31 The sun will turn into darkness
and the moon into blood,
before the great and terrible day of Yahweh comes.

32 It will be that everyone who calls

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on the name of Yahweh will be saved.
For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem
there will be an escaped remnant,
as Yahweh has said,
and among the survivors,
those whom Yahweh calls.

Joel 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues in the poetic form with striking imagery of armies and soldiers.

Special concepts in this chapter

Locusts

This book starts very dramatically with the imagery of the locusts and the devastation they produce. There are five different kinds of locusts that appear to come and progressively destroy the vegetation including the crops, vineyards and even the trees of Israel.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

This chapter uses simile to a great extent as Joel tries to describe this army.

Metaphor

The drought, or severe lack of rain, Joel describes is probably a real drought. It might also be a picture of either enemy invaders or of Yahweh himself coming to punish his people and the other nations. Translators should translate simply, presenting the scenes of locusts and drought as Joel describes them, and not worry about the various possible meanings.

Links:

Joel 2:1 Notes

Joel 2:1

General Information:

Joel continues poetry that began in the previous chapter.

Blow the ram's horn ... sound an alarm

Joel is emphasizing the importance of calling Israel together in preparation for the destruction that is coming.

Joel 2:2

day of darkness and gloom

The words "darkness" and "gloom" share similar meanings and emphasize that the darkness will be very dark. Both words refer to a time of disaster or divine judgment. Alternate translation: "day that is full of darkness" or "day of terrible judgment"

gloom

total or partial darkness

day of clouds and thick darkness

This phrase means the same thing as, and intensifies the idea of the previous phrase. Like that phrase, both "clouds" and "thick darkness" refer to divine judgment. Alternate translation: "day full of dark storm clouds"

Like the dawn that spreads on the mountains, a large and mighty army is approaching

When direct sunlight shines on a mountain at dawn, it begins at the top and spreads to the bottom. When an army comes over a mountain range, it comes over the top and spreads out as it comes down. Alternate translation: "A large, mighty army comes over the mountains into the land. They spread over the land like the light from the rising sun"

a large and mighty army

The words "large" and "mighty" share similar meanings here and emphasize that the army will be very strong. The word "army" could possibly be 1) a metaphor for a swarm of locusts or 2) referring to a human army.

Joel 2:3

General Information:

Joel's description of the coming army continues.

A fire is consuming everything in front of it

A fire destroys everything as it moves, and the "army"

behind it a flame is burning

After a wall of flame goes through dry land and burns the dryest and smallest fuel, there will still be flames as the larger and less dry fuel burns,

land is like the garden of Eden

The garden of Eden was a beautiful place, and the land was beautiful.

Joel 2:4

General Information:

The description continues with the noises of an army of horses.

The army's appearance is like horses

The head of a locust looks like a small horse head. The army is fast, and horses are fast.

horses

A large, strong, fast animal with four legs.

they run like horsemen

Men riding horses move quickly, and the army moves quickly.

Joel 2:5

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jump
A horse jumps or leaps as it runs quickly.
a noise like that of chariots ... like the sound of fiery flames ... like a mighty army ready for battle
These sounds would have been very frightening to Joel's readers. If your readers will not understand what these sound like, you might be able to use a more general phrase: "a noise that frightens everyone"
Joel 2:6
General Information:
Joel continues to describe the locust army of Yahweh.
Joel 2:7
They run like mighty warriors ... climb the walls like soldiers
The army of locusts acts as real soldiers do.
walls
walls around the cities
Joel 2:8
General Information:
The description of the locust army of Yahweh continues.
they break through the defenses
they overcome the soldiers defending the city.
Joel 2:10
The earth shakes in front of them, the heavens tremble
Joel speaks of the earth and heavens as if they were people who are shaking with fear. This can be translated as either a hyperbole, that the army is so frightening that even things that are not alive are afraid, or as metonymy, that the earth and the heavens are metonyms for the beings who live there. Alternate translation: "Everyone on earth and in the heavens is very afraid"
the sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars stop shining
This exaggeration claims that there are so many locusts that people cannot see the sun, moon, or stars.
Joel 2:11
Yahweh raises his voice
"Yahweh speaks loudly" to give commands.
great and very terrible
In this phrase both descriptions mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "greatly terrible"
Who can endure it?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one will be strong enough to endure Yahweh's judgment."
endure
survive
Joel 2:12
Return to me with all your heart
The heart is a metonym for what the person thinks and loves. Alternate translation: "Turn away from your sins and be totally devoted to me"
Joel 2:13
Tear your heart and not only your garments
The heart is a metonym for what the person thinks and loves. Tearing one's clothes is an outward act of shame or repentance. Alternate translation: "Change your way of thinking; do not just tear your garments"
abounding in steadfast love
The abstract noun "love" can be stated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "always showing you that he loves you"
Joel 2:14
Will he perhaps turn ... God?
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Perhaps Yahweh will turn from his anger ... God."
leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering
"leave behind him a blessing—that is, a grain offering and a drink offering." The blessing is that plenty of grain and grapes will ripen, and so the people will be able to offer grain and drink offerings.
Joel 2:16
bridal chambers
rooms, usually in the parents' houses, where brides would wait for their wedding ceremonies
Joel 2:17
do not make your inheritance into an object of scorn
"do not allow your inheritance to become people whom the other nations regard as worthless"
your inheritance
Here the people of Israel are spoken of as God's inheritance. Alternate translation: "your special people"
Why should they say among the nations, 'Where is their God?'
This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Other nations should not be able to say, 'Their God does not help them.'" or "Other nations should not be able to say that the God of Israel has abandoned his people."
Joel 2:18
his land
"the nation of Israel"
his people
"the people of Israel"
Joel 2:19
Look
"Pay attention to what I am about to say"
You will be satisfied with them
"You will have all you need of them"
a disgrace
"unworthy of respect"
Joel 2:20
General Information:
God continues his promise to Israel.
northern ... eastern ... western
These directions are from the perspective of people living in the land of Israel.
the eastern sea
the Dead Sea
the western sea
the Mediterranean Sea
he has done great things
That is, Yahweh has done great things. Another possible meaning is that the writer speaks of the invading army, "it has done very bad things."
Joel 2:21
Do not fear, land
Joel speaks to the people of the land as if he were speaking to the land itself. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid, you people of the land"
Joel 2:22
Do not fear, you wild animals

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Joel speaks to people who own livestock as if he were speaking to the animals themselves. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid, you people who own livestock"

the pastures of the wilderness will sprout

The pastures are a metonym for the plants that grow in the pastures. Alternate translation: "plants good for food will sprout in the pastures in the wilderness"

Joel 2:23

he will ... bring down showers for you

"he will ... cause much rain to fall so that you will live well"

he will give you the autumn rain as vindication

Possible meanings are that Yahweh will give the rain 1) to show that he is faithful to the Israelites or 2) to show that the Israelites were right to trust Yahweh.

autumn rain and the spring rain

the first rains of the rainy season in early December and the last rains in April and May

Joel 2:24

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh begins a long speech to the Israelites.

vats

large containers for liquids

Joel 2:25

the years of crops that the swarming locust has eaten

"the crops that you took care of for years and that the swarming locusts have eaten"

swarming locust ... the great locust, the devouring locust, and the destroying locust

These are, respectively, an adult locust that can fly, a locust too large to fly easily, a locust with wings too young to fly, and a newborn locust that has not yet developed wings. Use names that would be understood in your language. See how you translated this in Joel 1:4.

Joel 2:26

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

praise the name of Yahweh

The name is a metonym for the person, specifically his reputation. Alternate translation: "praise Yahweh" or "praise Yahweh because everyone knows he is good"

the name of Yahweh ... who has done wonders

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to show that he will certainly do as he has said. Alternate translation: "my name ... because I have done wonders"

Joel 2:28

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

It will come about afterward that I

"This is what I will do after that: I"

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh

Yahweh speaks of the Spirit as if he were speaking of water. Alternate translation: "I will give my Spirit generously to all flesh"

all flesh

Here "flesh" represents people. Alternate translation: "all people"

Joel 2:30

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

blood, fire, and pillars of smoke

"blood" is symbolizing the death of people. Alternate translation: "death, fire and pillars of smoke"

Joel 2:31

The sun will turn into darkness

"The sun will no longer give light"

the moon into blood

Here the word "blood" refers to the color red. You can supply the verb for this phrase. Alternate translation: "the moon will turn into blood" or "the moon will become red" or "the moon will become as red as blood"

Joel 2:32

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

It will be that everyone

"This is what will happen: everyone"

everyone who calls on the name of Yahweh will be saved

The name is a metonym for the person. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will save everyone who calls on his name"

on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem

These refer to the same place. Alternate translation: "on Mount Zion in Jerusalem"

among the survivors, those whom Yahweh calls

The phrase "there will be" is understood from earlier in the sentence. It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "among the survivors there will be those whom Yahweh calls"

survivors

people who live through a terrible event like a war or a disaster

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[1] 3 Behold, in those days and at that time,
when I reverse the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

[2] I will gather all the nations,
and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
I will judge them there,
because of my people and my inheritance Israel,
whom they scattered among the nations,
and because they divided up my land.

[3] They cast lots for my people,

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traded a boy for a prostitute,
and sold a girl for wine so they could drink.

4 Now, why are you angry at me,
Tyre, Sidon and all the regions of Philistia?
Will you repay me?
Even if you do repay me,
I will immediately return your repayment on your own head.

5 For you took my silver and my gold,
and you brought my precious treasures into your temples.

6 You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks,
in order to send them far away from their territory.

7 Look, I am about to stir them up,
out of the place where you sold them,
and will return payment on your own head.

8 I will sell your sons and your daughters,
by the hand of the people of Judah.
They will sell them to the Sabeans,
to a nation far off,
for Yahweh has spoken."

9 Proclaim this among the nations:
"Prepare yourselves for war;
rouse the mighty men;
let them come near;
let all the men of battle come up.

10 Beat your plowshares into swords
and your pruning knives into spears.
Let the weak say,
'I am mighty.'

11 Hurry and come,
all you nearby nations;
gather yourselves together there.

Yahweh, bring down your mighty warriors.

12 Let the nations wake themselves up
and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
For there will I sit to judge
all the surrounding nations.

13 Put in the sickle,
for the harvest is ripe.
Come, crush the grapes,
for the winepress is full.
The vats overflow,

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for their wickedness is great."

14 There is a tumult, a tumult
in the Valley of Judgment.
For the day of Yahweh is near
in the Valley of Judgment.

15 The sun and the moon become dark,
the stars keep back their brightness.

16 Yahweh will roar from Zion,
and raise his voice from Jerusalem.
The heavens and earth will shake,
but Yahweh will be a shelter for his people,
and a fortress for the people of Israel.

17 "So you will know that I am Yahweh your God
who lives in Zion, my holy mountain.
Then Jerusalem will be holy,
and foreigners will not pass through her again.

18 It will come about on that day
that the mountains will drip with sweet wine,
the hills will flow with milk,
all the brooks of Judah will flow with water,
and a fountain will come from the house of Yahweh
and water the Valley of Shittim.

19 Egypt will become an abandoned devastation,
and Edom will become an abandoned wilderness,
because of the violence done to the people of Judah,
because they shed innocent blood in their land.

20 But Judah will be inhabited forever,
and Jerusalem will be inhabited from generation to generation.

21 I will avenge their blood that I have not yet avenged,
for Yahweh lives in Zion."

Joel 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

There is a change in focus in this chapter from the people of Israel to her enemies. The events of this chapters also contain many prophecies about the events of the end of this world. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Israel

The mention of Israel in this chapter is probably a reference to the people of Judah and not the northern kingdom of Israel. It is also possible this is a reference to the people of Israel as a whole.

Links:

Joel 3:1 Notes

Joel 3:1
General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

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Behold

"Listen" or "Pay attention"

in those days and at that time

The phrase "at that time" means the same thing as and intensifies the phrase "in those days." Alternate translation: "in those very days" or "at that very time"

when I reverse the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as a verbal clause, and it may be understood as a metaphor for Yahweh making the people prosper in a general sense. Alternate translation: "when I cause Judah and Jerusalem to live well again" or "free Judah and Jerusalem from those who had captured them"

Judah and Jerusalem

The names of the cities are metaphors for the people who lived in the cities. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

Joel 3:2

Valley of Jehoshaphat

Jehoshaphat, whose name means "Yahweh judges," was king of Judah before Joel lived. There is no known place with this name. It would be best to translate this as the name of a valley that people named after the man Jehoshaphat.

my people and my inheritance Israel

These two phrases emphasize how Yahweh views Israel as his own precious people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel, who are my inheritance"

Joel 3:3

traded a boy for a prostitute, and sold a girl for wine so they could drink

These are examples of the kinds of things they did and do not indicate what they did to two particular children. Alternate translation: "and did things like trading a boy for a prostitute and selling a girl for wine, so they could drink"

Joel 3:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

why are you angry at me ... Philistia?

Yahweh is encouraging the people of Judah, who can hear him, by scolding the people of Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia, who cannot hear him, as if they can. The names of the towns are metonyms for the people who live in the towns. These words can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you have no right to be angry at me ... Philistia."

Will you repay me?

"Will you get revenge on me?" God uses this question to make the people think about what they are doing. Alternate translation: "You think you can get revenge on me, but you cannot."

I will immediately return your repayment on your own head

Here the word "head" refers to the person. Yahweh will make them suffer the pain they wanted him to suffer. Alternate translation: "I will cause you to suffer the way you wanted me to suffer when you repaid me"

repayment

This refers to Yahweh harming those who have harmed him, not to him giving them something good because they have done something good for him.

Joel 3:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

Look

"Pay attention" or "Listen"

out of the place where you sold them

The people of Israel will leave the places where they were slaves and come back to the land of Israel.

return payment

"give back what you deserve"

Joel 3:8

I will sell your sons and your daughters, by the hand of the people of Judah

The hand can be a metonym for the power the hand exercises or a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "I will have the people of Judah sell your sons and your daughters"

Sabeans

the people of the land of Sabea

Joel 3:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in [Joel 2:25]

rouse the mighty men

"make the mighty men ready for action"

Joel 3:10

Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning knives into spears

These two phrases share similar meanings. Both of them instruct the people to turn their farming tools into weapons.

plowshares

tools that are used to break up the soil in order to plant crops

pruning knives

knives that are used to cut off small branches

Joel 3:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

Hurry and come ... together there

These words continue the ironic call to battle that begins in [Joel 3:9]

gather yourselves together

The purpose of the gathering is for battle. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "gather yourselves together for battle"

Yahweh, bring down your mighty warriors

Possible meanings are 1) Joel is telling the people of Judah that this is what they are to "proclaim among the nations" (Joel 3:9) or 2) Joel interrupts the words of Yahweh and prays a short prayer.

Joel 3:12

General Information:

Yahweh finishes the speech he began in Joel 2:25, promising good things for the people of Israel.

Let the nations wake themselves ... all the surrounding nations

The words "the nations" and "the surrounding nations" refer to the same nations, those that surround Judah.

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Yahweh will judge them in the Valley of Jehoshaphat for what they have done to Jerusalem.

Valley of Jehoshaphat

Jehoshaphat, whose name means "Yahweh judges," was king of Judah before Joel lived. There is no known place with this name. It would be best to translate this as the name of a valley that people named after the man Jehoshaphat. See how you translated this in Joel 3:2.

Joel 3:13

Put in the sickle ... the winepress is full

Possible meanings are that Yahweh speaks of completely destroying the nations as if 1) he were harvesting all the grapes and all the grain or 2) he were harvesting quickly, while the grain and grapes are ripe.

Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe

Yahweh speaks of making war against the nations as if he were using a sharp tool to harvest a field of ripe crops. If your readers will not understand the word "sickle," you may use the word for any sharp tool that your people use for harvesting.

Put in the sickle

"Swing the sickle to cut the grain." This is a metaphor for a soldier using a sword to kill people, but it is best to use the word for a sharp tool used in harvesting.

sickle

a long curved knife that people use for cutting grain

the harvest is ripe

"the grain is ready to be harvested"

Come, crush the grapes, for the winepress is full

Yahweh speaks of the nations as if they were many grapes in a winepress, ready for people to crush them by stepping on them. Alternate translation: "Come, completely destroy the nations, for they are many, and they are helpless to resist you"

The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great

Yahweh speaks of the nations' wickedness as if it were the juice that flows from the winepress into storage containers, and more juice flows into the vats than they can contain.

Joel 3:14

a tumult, a tumult

A tumult is noise caused by a large crowd. This is repeated to show that the large crowds will make very much noise.

Valley of Judgment ... Valley of Judgment

This phrase is repeated to show that the judgment will certainly happen.

Valley of Judgment

There is no known place with this name. The abstract noun "judgment" can be translated using the verb "judge" or "punish." Alternate translation: "Valley Where Yahweh Judges"

Joel 3:16

General Information:

Yahweh begins speaking in verse 17.

Yahweh will roar from Zion, and raise his voice from Jerusalem

Both phrases mean Yahweh will shout with a loud, clear and powerful voice from Jerusalem. If your language only has one word for speaking very loudly, this can be used as one phrase. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will shout from Jerusalem"

Yahweh will roar

Possible meanings are 1) "Yahweh will roar like a lion" or 2) "Yahweh will roar like thunder."

The heavens and earth will shake

Joel speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were people who are shaking with fear. This can be translated as either a hyperbole, that Yahweh's roar is so frightening that even things that are not alive are afraid, or as metonymy, that the heavens and earth are metonyms for the beings who live there. Alternate translation: "Everyone in the heavens and on the earth is very afraid"

will shake

This word is the past form of the word translated "tremble" in Joel 2:10.

Yahweh will be a shelter for his people, and a fortress for the people of Israel

Both of these phrases mean Yahweh will protect his people. A fortress is a strong shelter used to protect people during war. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will be a strong fortress for his people, the people of Israel"

Joel 3:17

So you will know

"When I do these things, you will know"

foreigners will not pass through her

The city of Jerusalem is spoken of as if it were a woman. Foreign armies invading Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were people from another land coming through the city and doing whatever they wanted to do. Alternate translation: "foreign armies will not invade the city"

Joel 3:18

General Information:

God continues to speak about the day of the Lord.

It will come about on that day that the mountains

"This is what will happen on that day: the mountains" Translate "It will come about" as in Joel 2:28.

the mountains will drip with sweet wine

"sweet wine will drip from the mountains." This is an exaggeration to show that the land is very fertile. Alternate translation: "On the mountains there will be vineyards that produce plenty of sweet wine"

the hills will flow with milk

"milk will flow from the hills." The land being very fertile is spoken of as if the hills would flow with milk. Alternate translation: "on the hills your cattle and goats will produce plenty of milk"

all the brooks of Judah will flow with water

"water will flow through all the brooks of Judah"

water the Valley of Shittim

"will send water to the Valley of Shittim"

Shittim

This is the name of a place on the east side of the Jordan River. It means "Acacia Trees."

Joel 3:19

Egypt will become an abandoned devastation

"Everyone will leave Egypt and no one will live there"

Edom will become an abandoned wilderness

"Everyone will leave Edom and it will look like no people have ever lived there"

because of the violence done to the people of Judah

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"because of the violent things Egypt and Edom did to the people of Judah"

because they shed innocent blood in their land

The word "they" refers to "Edom" and "Egypt" and is a metonym for the people of Egypt and Edom. The words "innocent blood" are a metonym for innocent people whom they have killed. Alternate translation: "because the people of Egypt and the people of Edom killed innocent people in the land of the people of Judah"

Joel 3:20

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak about the day of the Lord.

Judah will be inhabited forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will live in Judah forever"

Jerusalem will be inhabited from generation to generation

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "generation after generation, people will live in Jerusalem"

Joel 3:21

I will avenge their blood that I have not yet avenged

Blood is a metonym for death. Alternate translation: "I will punish the enemies who killed the people of Israel and still have not been punished"

Introduction to Amos

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Amos

Amos introduced (1:1) Yahweh judges the nations (1:2-2:16) The surrounding nations (1:2–2:3) The southern kingdom (2:4–5) The northern kingdom (2:6–16) Amos prophesies against the people of Israel (3:1–6:14) Yahweh shows Amos several visions (7:1-9:10) Israel is to be restored (9:11–15)

What is the Book of Amos about?

The Book of Amos contains the words of Amos, a shepherd of Tekoa. Amos began to prophesy about 760 BC. He spoke Yahweh's messages against God's people behaving wickedly. He spoke messages to both the southern kingdom of Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel. (See: evil)

Yahweh gave Amos prophecies of judgment (Chapters 1-6) to proclaim to the people. Each of them begins with the phrase "This is what Yahweh says" (ULB).

Three visions of Yahweh coming to judge the people are in the last part of the book (7:1-9:10). A final vision promises that Yahweh will restore Israel (9:11-15). He will restore the "tent of David." This means a descendant of David would once again be king over Israel.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Amos" or just "Amos." Translators may also call it the "The Book of the Sayings of Amos."

Who wrote the Book of Amos?

The prophet Amos probably wrote this book. He lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. Amos came from a poor family. They grew sycamore trees (7:14, 15) and were shepherds (Amos 1:1). Though Amos was not trained as a prophet, he knew and understood the law of Moses. Also, Amos skillfully used expressive and meaningful words.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How is justice described in Amos?

Justice is an important theme in the Book of Amos. Justice means people treating others fairly according to the law of Yahweh. People in Israel were oppressing and taking advantage of poor people, orphans, and widows. Amos explained that Yahweh would prefer that the people act justly rather than sacrifice to him. Truly obeying the law of Moses meant being just to other people. (See: justice and lawofmoses)

What is a lawsuit?

Many cultures have a process for resolving disputes through the use of courts. These legal disputes are called lawsuits. Amos uses various legal terms. Part of the book presents events in a courtroom. The people are introduced, the problem is explained, the people are examined, witnesses speak, and a verdict is given.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was a son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. In Amos, "Israel" almost always refers to the northern kingdom of Israel. (See: israel)

Where do the various narratives begin and end?

The structure of the Book of Amos may make it difficult to understand where Amos ends one thought and begins another. It may be helpful to solve these issues with carefully divided lines or paragraphs.

Amos

1 [1]These are the words of Amos, who was among the shepherds from Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days
of Uzziah king of Judah, and also in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

[2]He said,
"Yahweh will roar from Zion;
he will raise his voice from Jerusalem.
The pastures of the shepherds will mourn;
the top of Carmel will wither."

[3]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Damascus,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they threshed Gilead
with sharp threshing sledges of iron.
[4] I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,
and it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad.

[5] I will break the gate bars of Damascus
and cut off the man who rules over the Valley of Aven,
and also the man who holds the scepter in Beth Eden.
The people of Aram will go in captivity to Kir,"
says Yahweh.

[6]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Gaza,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they carried away captive a whole people,
to hand them over to Edom.
[7] I will send fire on the walls of Gaza,
and it will devour her fortresses.

[8] I will cut off the man who lives in Ashdod
and the man who holds the scepter from Ashkelon.
I will turn my hand against Ekron,
and the rest of the Philistines will perish,"
says the Lord Yahweh.

[9]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Tyre,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they had delivered up a whole people to Edom,
and they broke their covenant of brotherhood.
[10] I will send fire on the walls of Tyre,
and it will devour her fortresses."

[11]This is what Yahweh says,
"For three sins of Edom,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because he pursued his brother with the sword
and cast off all pity.
His anger tore them apart continually,
and his wrath lasted forever.
[12] I will send fire on Teman,
and it will devour the palaces of Bozrah."

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[13]This is what Yahweh says,
"For three sins of the people of Ammon,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead,
that they may enlarge their borders.
[14] I will light a fire in the walls of Rabbah,
and it will devour the palaces,
with a shout in the day of battle,
with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.

[15] Their king will go into captivity,
he and his officials together,"
says Yahweh.

Amos 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This book is written in a poetic form. Because it was written by a farmer, it includes many references to agricultural concepts.

"For three sins of Judah, even for four"

The phrase "For three sins of Judah, even for four," is used to begin each oracle. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: and sin)

Links:

Amos 1:1 Notes Amos intro

Amos 1:1

General Information:

God speaks through Amos using poetic language.

the shepherds from Tekoa, ... concerning Israel

Tekoa is the name of a town or village in Judah, but this message is primarily to the northern kingdom of Israel. It seems that Amos was one of a group of shepherds who had left Tekoa to work in Israel, and while he was there at work, God gave him these words

saw

If your language uses a word for "see" only in poetry or mostly to indicate seeing in a vision or dream, you might want to use it here.

in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and also in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel

The words "in the days of" is an idiom and refers to the time when each king reigned. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah was king of Judah, and also when Jeroboam son of Joash was king of Israel"

two years before the earthquake

The assumed knowledge is that the original hearers would be aware of when a large earthquake had affected the area.

Amos 1:2

Yahweh will roar from Zion; he will raise his voice from Jerusalem

These two phrases share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that Yahweh shouts loudly as he prepares to judge the nation.

Yahweh will roar

The author speaks of the voice of Yahweh as if it sounded like the roar of a lion or the roar of thunder.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Amos 1:3

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment.

Damascus

Here "Damascus" represents the people of the city of Damascus. Alternate translation: "the people of Damascus"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. Alternate translation: "I will certainly punish those people"

they threshed Gilead with sharp threshing sledges of iron

Yahweh speaks of how the people of Damascus treated the people of Gilead as if they had threshed grain with sharp iron tools or weapons.

Gilead

Here "Gilead" represents the people of the region of Gilead. Alternate translation: "the people of Gilead"

Amos 1:4

I will send a fire into the house of Hazael

Here Yahweh speaks of his judgment against the house of Hazael as if it were a consuming fire.

the house of Hazael

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The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Hazael's descendants, who were rulers of the country where Damascus was located.

it will devour the fortresses of Ben-Hadad

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Hazael ... Ben-Hadad

These are the names of men.

Amos 1:5

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Damascus.

cut off the man

Here to "cut off" means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the man" or "drive away the man"

Valley of Aven

This is the name of a place that means "valley of wickedness." Possible meanings are 1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or 2) this is a metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: "the valley of wickedness"

the man who holds the scepter in

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: "the ruler of"

Beth Eden

This is the name of a place that means "house of pleasure." Possible meanings are 1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or 2) this is another metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: "the house of pleasure"

Kir

This is the name of a region from which the people of Aram originally came.

Amos 1:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Gaza

Here "Gaza" represents the people of the region of Gaza. Alternate translation: "the people of Gaza"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

hand them over to

"deliver them up to" or "sell them to"

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom"

Amos 1:7

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 1:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Gaza.

cut off the man

Here to "cut off" means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "destroy the man" or "drive away the man"

the man who holds the scepter

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: "the ruler"

I will turn my hand against Ekron

Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power that he would use against Ekron. Alternate translation: "I will strike Ekron" or "I will destroy Ekron"

Ekron

Here "Ekron" represents the people of the city of Ekron. Alternate translation: "the people of Ekron"

Amos 1:9

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Tyre

Here "Tyre" represents the people of the city of Tyre. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

their covenant of brotherhood

"the agreement they made to treat you as brothers"

Amos 1:10

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 1:11

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

he pursued his brother

The assumed knowledge is that Esau, from whom the people of Edom were descended, was the brother of Jacob, from whom the people of Israel were descended. Here "his brother" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "he pursued the people of Israel"

cast off all pity

"showed them no mercy"

His anger tore them apart continually

The abstract noun "anger" can be translated using the adjective "angry." Here it is a metonym for a person who is

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angry and who tears his victims apart. If your language has a word for "tear apart" that implies that the subject is an animal, you might want to use it here. Alternate translation: "He was angry and did great harm to his victims"

his wrath lasted forever

The abstract noun "wrath" can be translated using the adjective "furious." This is an exaggeration that is meant to express the ongoing nature of his wrath. Alternate translation: "he was always furious"

Amos 1:12

Teman ... Bozrah

These are names of places. See:

it will devour the palaces of Bozrah

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces.

Amos 1:13

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

enlarge their borders

"extend their boundaries" or "expand their territory"

Amos 1:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Ammon.

it will devour the palaces

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces.

with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind

The fighting against the people of Ammon is spoken of as if it were a violent storm. Alternate translation: "and the fighting will be like a great storm"

tempest ... whirlwind

These are two kinds of violent storms.

whirlwind

a strong wind that spins very quickly as it moves and can cause damage

Amos 1:15

Their king will go into captivity

The abstract noun "captivity" can be translated as the verb "capture." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their enemies will capture their king and take him away as a prisoner"

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2 [1]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Moab,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because he burned the bones
of the king of Edom to lime.
[2] I will send fire on Moab,
and it will devour the fortresses of Kerioth.
Moab will die in an uproar,
with shouting and the sound of the ram's horn.

[3] I will destroy the judge in her,
and I will kill all the princes with him,"
says Yahweh.

[4]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Judah,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they rejected the law of Yahweh
and did not keep his statutes.
Their lies caused them to go astray,
after which their fathers had also walked.
[5] I will send fire on Judah,
and it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem."

[6]This is what Yahweh says:
"For three sins of Israel,
even for four, I will not turn away punishment,
because they sold the innocent for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals.
[7] They trample on the heads of the poor
as people trample on dust on the ground;

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they push the oppressed away.
A man and his father go to the same girl
and so profane my holy name.

8 They lie down beside every altar
on clothes taken as pledges,
and in the house of their God
they drink the wine of those
who have been forced to pay a fine.

9 Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them,
whose height was like the height of cedars;
he was strong as the oaks.
Yet I destroyed his fruit above
and his roots below.

10 Also, I brought you up out of the land of Egypt
and led you forty years in the wilderness
to possess the land of the Amorites.

11 I raised up prophets from among your sons
and Nazirites from your young men.
Is it not so, people of Israel?—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

12 But you persuaded the Nazirites to drink wine
and commanded the prophets not to prophesy.

13 Look, I will crush you
as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone.

14 Escape will perish from the swift;
the strong will not add to his own strength;
neither will the mighty save himself.

15 The archer will not stand;
the fast runner will not escape;
the horseman will not save himself.

16 Even the bravest warriors
will flee naked in that day—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

Amos 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter consists of oracles against Moab and Judah by using poetic language and imagery. But the UDB translates it using prose. If possible, translate this chapter as poetry, but you may translate as narrative.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

You will notice that the phrase "For three sins of Judah, even for four," is used to begin each of these oracles. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: and sin)

Links:

Amos 2:1 Notes

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Amos 2:1

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Moab

This represents the Moabite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

he burned the bones

The word "he" refers to Moab. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab burned the bones"

to lime

"to ashes"

Amos 2:2

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Moab.

Kerioth

This is the name of a city or town.

Moab will die

Here "Moab" represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "The people of Moab will die"

in an uproar

An uproar is a very loud noise.

Amos 2:3

the judge in her

"the ruler of Moab"

all the princes

"all the officials" or "all the leaders"

Amos 2:4

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Judah

This represents the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he will punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

Their lies

This expression here probably refers to worshiping false gods or idols. Alternate translation: "Their worship of idols"

go astray ... walked

Worshiping false gods is spoken of as if people were walking behind them.

Amos 2:5

it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses.

Amos 2:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not meaan that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many of sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in Amos 1:3.

Israel

This represents the Israelite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3]

the innocent

This refers to innocent people in general. Alternate translation: "innocent people"

the needy

This refers to needy people in general. Alternate translation: "needy people"

Amos 2:7

General Information:

The word "they" in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

They trample on the heads of the poor as people trample on dust on the ground

How the people of Israel treated the poor is compared to how people step heavily on the ground

trample

repeatedly step heavily or roughly

the poor

This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: "poor people"

they push the oppressed away

This idiom means they refused to listen when the oppressed people said they were being treated unfairly

the oppressed

This refers to oppressed people in general. Alternate translation: "oppressed people"

go to the same girl

This is a polite way of talking about having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "have sexual relations with the same girl" or "lie with the same girl"

Amos 2:8

those who have been forced to pay a fine

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom they forced to pay a penalty"

Amos 2:9

General Information:

The words "them" and "you" in these verses both refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

whose height was like the height of cedars; he was strong as the oaks

This is an exaggeration. It describes how tall and strong the Amorite people were and compares them to the tallest and strongest trees in that region. Alternate translation: "who were tall and strong like great trees"

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cedars

cedar trees

oaks

oak trees

Yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below

How Yahweh completely destroyed the Amorites is pictured as a tree being destroyed from top to bottom. Alternate translation: "Yet I destroyed them completely"

Amos 2:11

General Information:

The words "your" and "you" in these verses refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

raised up

"appointed"

Is it not so, people of Israel?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize what he has said. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You people of Israel certainly know that what I have said is true!"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Amos 2:13

General Information:

The word "you" in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

Look

This alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows.

Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will crush you as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone

Yahweh compares his judgment on the people of Israel to crushing them with something very heavy.

Amos 2:14

Escape will perish from the swift

Possible meanings are 1) even people who usually can run fast will be unable to escape, or 2) there will be no safe place to which even fast runners can escape.

the swift ... the strong ... the mighty

These adjectives refer to people in general. Alternate translation: "Swift people ... strong people ... mighty people" or "The strong person ... the strong person ... the mighty person"

Amos 2:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

The archer will not stand

Here "stand" means to keep one's place in battle.

the fast runner will not escape

The implied information is that the fast runner will not escape from his enemies. Alternate translation: "the fast runner will be captured"

Amos 2:16

flee naked

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metonym for "run away without his weapons" or 2) this is meant literally as "run away wearing no clothes"

in that day

"at that time"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]

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3 [1]Hear this word that Yahweh has spoken against you, people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:

[2] "I have chosen only you
from all the families of the earth.
Therefore I will punish you
for all your iniquities."

[3] Will two walk together
unless they have made an appointment?

[4] Will a lion roar in the forest
when he has no prey?
Will a young lion growl from his den
if he has caught nothing?

[5] Can a bird fall in a trap on the ground
when no bait is set for him?
Will a trap spring up from the ground
when it has not caught anything?

[6] If a ram's horn sounds in a city,
will the people not tremble?

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If disaster overtakes a city,
has Yahweh not sent it?

7 Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing
unless he reveals his plan
to his servants the prophets.

8 The lion has roared;
who will not fear?
The Lord Yahweh has spoken;
who will not prophesy?

9 Proclaim this in the fortresses at Ashdod,
and in the fortresses in the land of Egypt;
say, "Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria
and see what great tumults are in her,
and what oppression is in her.

10 For they do not know how to do right—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
They store up violence
and devastation in their fortresses."

11 Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says:
"An enemy will surround the land,
and pull down your strongholds
and plunder your fortresses."

12 This is what Yahweh says:
"As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion
two legs only, or a piece of an ear;
so will the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued;
they will be left with only the corner of a couch
or a piece of a bed."

13 Hear and testify against the house of Jacob— this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts:
14 "For in the day that I punish the sins of Israel,
I will also punish the altars of Bethel.
The horns of the altar will be cut off
and fall to the ground.

15 I will destroy the winter house
with the summer house.
The houses of ivory will perish,
and the large houses will vanish—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

Amos 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Amos continues to use poetic form in this chapter to prophesy the disaster coming to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

This chapter begins with a number of rhetorical questions. The last question provides the reader with some answers: "Yahweh has certainly spoken through his prophets. So listen to them." The answer to these rhetorical questions have the

expected response of "no" because they are things that are not expected to happen. The writer is helping the reader to conclude that God uses the prophets to speak his message.

Links:

Amos 3:1 Notes

Amos 3:1

Hear this word

"Hear this message" or "Listen to this message"

that Yahweh has spoken against you ... against the whole family

"this word that Yahweh has spoken about you ... about the whole family" or "Yahweh's message about you ... about the whole family"

you, people of Israel ... the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. The people God is speaking to are the descendants of those he had taken out of Egypt.

the whole family

Here "the whole family" represents to the whole nation. The people of Israel were all descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "the whole nation" or "the whole clan"

Amos 3:2

I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth

This implies that they should have obeyed him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth, so you should have obeyed me"

all the families of the earth

Here "families" represents nations or people groups. Alternate translation: "all the nations of the earth" or "all the clans on the earth"

Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities

It can be stated clearly that they did not obey God. Alternate translation: "But you did not obey me. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities"

Amos 3:3

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen.

Will two walk together unless they have made an appointment?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what must happen in order for two people to walk together. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Two people will walk together only if they have first agreed to walk together." or "You know that two people will walk together only if they have made an appointment to do that."

Amos 3:4

Will a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to roar. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A lion will roar in the forest only when he has a prey."

Will a young lion growl from his den if he has caught nothing?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to growl. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A young lion will growl from his den only if he has caught something."

Amos 3:5

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen.

Can a bird fall in a trap on the ground when no bait is set for him?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a bird to fall into a trap. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A bird can fall into a trap on the ground only when bait has been set for him."

Will a trap spring up from the ground when it has not caught anything?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a trap to spring up. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "A trap will spring up from the ground only when it has caught something."

Will a trap spring up from the ground

This refers to a trap closing. When an animal steps on a trap, the trap closes and the animal cannot get out of it. Alternate translation: "Will a trap close"

Amos 3:6

If a ram's horn sounds in a city, will the people not tremble?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what happens when a ram's horn sounds. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "When the ram's horn sounds in the city, the people will tremble." or "When the ram's horn sounds in the city, we expect that people will tremble."

If a ram's horn sounds in a city

The purpose of sounding the ram's horn is to warn people that enemies are about to attack the city. Alternate translation: "If someone blows the ram's horn in the city to warn the people about an enemy attack" or "If the warning ram's horn is blown in the city"

tremble

The reason for trembling can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tremble because they are afraid" or "be afraid of the enemy and tremble"

If disaster overtakes a city, has Yahweh not sent it?

Amos uses this question to remind the people of what they should already know about what causes a disaster. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If disaster overtakes a city, Yahweh has sent it." or "If disaster overtakes a city, we know that Yahweh has sent it."

If disaster overtakes a city,

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Something terrible happening to a city is spoken of as if disaster overtakes it.

Amos 3:7

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless ... the prophets

The relationship between this sentence and the rhetorical questions in [Amos 3:3]

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless he reveals ... prophets

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Surely the Lord Yahweh will reveal ... prophets before he does anything"

his plan

"his secret plan"

Amos 3:8

The lion has roared; who will not fear?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what people do when a lion roars. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The lion has roared; so we know that everyone will be afraid." or "The lion has roared; so of course everyone will be afraid."

The Lord Yahweh has spoken; who will not prophesy?

Amos uses this question to emphasize what people should already know about what prophets do when God speaks. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so we know that the prophets will prophesy." or "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so of course the prophets will prophesy."

Amos 3:9

Assemble yourselves

This command is to Israel's enemies in Ashdod and Egypt.

see what great tumults are in her

The word "her" refers to the city of Samaria. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women.

what great tumults are in her

Here "great tumults is in her" refers to people's fear because of the fighting and rioting there. The word "tumults" can be translated with a verbal phrase to make this meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "how the people in Samaria riot" or "how the people in Samaria fight against one another"

what oppression is in her

Here "oppression is in her" refers to leaders in Samaria oppressing the people. The abstract noun "oppress" can be stated as "oppress" or "cause to suffer." Alternate translation: "how the leaders oppress people" or "and how they cause people to suffer"

Amos 3:10

For they do not know how to do right

The word "they" refers to the people of Samaria.

do right

"do what is right"

They store up violence and devastation

Here "violence" and "devastation" represent things they have taken by being violent and destructive. Alternate translation: "They store up things that they have violently stolen from others"

Amos 3:11

Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says

It can be stated clearly who God was saying this to. Alternate translation: "Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says to the people of Israel living in Samaria"

An enemy will surround the land

"An enemy army will surround the land"

plunder your fortresses

"steal all the things in your fortresses"

Amos 3:12

As the shepherd rescues ... so will the people of Israel ... be rescued

The Lord compares the people of Israel being rescued with an unsuccessful attempt to rescue an animal from a lion. They will not be completely rescued.

As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs only, or a piece of an ear

It can be stated clearly that the shepherd tries to rescue the whole animal. Alternate translation: "As the shepherd tries to rescue an animal from the lion's mouth, but is able to save only two legs or a piece of an ear"

As the shepherd ... the lion

Here the phrases "the shepherd" and "the lion" refer to any shepherd or lion. Alternate translation: "As a shepherd ... a lion"

they will be left with only the corner of a couch or a piece of a bed

This phrase shows that they will not be completely rescued. Almost all of their possessions will be stolen. This passage in Hebrew is difficult to understand, and some modern versions interpret it differently.

couch

This is a soft chair big enough to lie down on.

Amos 3:13

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. They were the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Jacob"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase "this is Yahweh's declaration" in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 3:14

in the day that I punish the sins of Israel

"when I punish the sins of Israel"

I will also punish the altars of Bethel

People sinned against God by worshiping false gods at their altars. Here "punish the altars" represents punishing the people by destroying their altars. Alternate translation: "I will also destroy the altars at Bethel"

The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will cut off the horns of the altars, and the horns will fall to the ground"

horns of the altar

People worshiped false gods at their altars. At the top corners of the altars there were pieces of metal shaped like bull horns. These horns were a symbol of the strength of their gods.

Amos 3:15

the winter house with the summer house

Some of the wealthy people had two houses: one that they lived in during the winter and one that they lived in during the summer. This refers to any winter and summer houses.

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Alternate translation: "the houses they live in during the winter and the houses they live in during the summer"

The houses of ivory will perish

God speaks of the houses being destroyed as if they were alive and would die. Alternate translation: "The houses of ivory will be destroyed" or "The houses of ivory will collapse"

The houses of ivory

"the houses that are decorated with ivory." This refers to houses that had decorations made of ivory on the walls and furniture. Ivory was very expensive, so only the wealthy people had things decorated with ivory.

ivory

the teeth and horns of large animals

the large houses will vanish

"the large houses will exist no more." Here "vanish" represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: "the large houses will be destroyed"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]

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1 4 Listen to this word, you cows of Bashan,
you who are in the mountain of Samaria,
you who oppress the poor, you who crush the needy,
you who say to your husbands, "Bring us drinks."

2 The Lord Yahweh has sworn by his holiness,
"Look, the days will come on you
when they will take you away with hooks,
the last of you with fishhooks.

3 You will go out through the breaks in the city wall,
each one of you going straight through it,
and you will be thrown out toward Harmon—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

4 "Go to Bethel and sin,
to Gilgal and multiply transgression,
bring your sacrifices every morning,
your tithes every three days.

5 Offer a thanksgiving sacrifice with bread;
proclaim freewill offerings; announce them,
for this is what you love to do,
you people of Israel—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh.

6 I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities
and lack of bread in all your places.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

7 I also withheld rain from you
when there were still three months to the harvest.
I caused it to rain on one city,
and caused it not to rain on another city.
One piece of land was rained on,
but the piece of land where it did not rain dried up.

8 Two or three cities staggered to another city to drink water,
but were not satisfied.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

9 I afflicted you with blight and mildew.
The multitude of your gardens,
your vineyards, your fig trees, and your olive trees—
the locusts devoured them all.

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Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

10 I sent a plague on you
as on Egypt.
I killed your young men with the sword,
along with the captivity of your horses,
and made the stench of your camp come up
to your nostrils.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

11 I overthrew cities among you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.
You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire.
Yet you have not returned to me—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

12 Therefore I will do something terrible to you, Israel;
and because I will do something terrible to you,
prepare to meet your God, Israel!

13 For, look, he who forms the mountains
also creates the wind,
reveals his thoughts to mankind,
makes the dawn become darkness,
and treads on the high places of the earth.
Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name."

Amos 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and is about the people's refusal to listen to Yahweh even as he tries to point them back to himself.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repetition

This chapter contains a repeated sentence: "Yet you have not returned to me—this is Yahweh's declaration." Please make sure this sentence is translated the same way each time to show the repetition. This repetition produces a list of sins Yahweh is mounting against his people. (See: sin and peopleofgod)

Links:

Amos 4:1 Notes

Amos 4:1

you cows of Bashan, you who are in the mountain of Samaria

Amos speaks to the women of Israel who live in Samaria as if they were well-fed cows. Alternate translation: "you wealthy women who live in the mountains of Samaria, you who are like the well-fed cows of Bashan"

you who oppress the poor

The phrase "the poor" refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "you who oppress poor people"

you who crush the needy

Hear "crush" is a metaphor that represents treating people badly. The phrase "the needy" refers to people who need help. Alternate translation: "you who treat needy people badly" or "you who hurt needy people"

Amos 4:2

The Lord Yahweh has sworn by his holiness

This means that Yahweh promised that he would do something, and he assured people that he would do what he promised because he is holy.

the days will come on you

The word "you" refers to the wealthy women of Israel who lived in Samaria, but also includes men.

the days will come on you when they will take you away with hooks

A time in the future when bad things will happen to the people is spoken of as if those days will attack the people. The word "they" refers to their enemies. Alternate translation: "There will be a time when your enemies will take you away with hooks"

they will take you away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and

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emphasize that the enemy will capture the people like people catch fish. Alternate translation: "they will capture you as people capture animals, and they take you away" or "they will defeat you and cruelly force you to go away with them"

Amos 4:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

breaks in the city wall

places where the enemy had broken down the city wall to enter

you will be thrown out toward Harmon

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will throw you out toward Harmon" or "your enemies will force you to leave the city and go toward Harmon"

Harmon

This is either the name of a place that we do not know, or it refers to Mount Hermon. Some modern versions interpret it in that way.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:4

General Information:

God gives several commands in verse 4, but he does so to show that he is angry

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

Go to Bethel and sin, to Gilgal and multiply transgression

People would go to Bethel and Gilgal to make sacrifices to God, but they kept sinning anyway. God makes these commands to show that he is angry with them for doing these things. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You go to Bethel to worship, but you sin. You go to Gilgal to worship, but you sin even more"

bring your sacrifices ... every three days

God makes these commands in order to show the people that he is angry that even though they do these things, they continue to sin against him in other ways. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You bring your sacrifices ... every three days, but it does you no good."

every three days

Possible meanings are 1) on the third day or 3) every third day. Some versions have "every three years," because the Israelites were supposed to bring their tithes to God once every three years.

Amos 4:5

Offer a thanksgiving sacrifice ... proclaim freewill offerings; announce them, for this is what you love to do

God makes these commands in order to show the people that even though they do these things, he is angry because they continue to sin against him in other ways. Use the form in your language that shows that they will do these things no matter what Yahweh says, but these things will do them no good.

announce them

"boast about them"

for this is what you love to do, you people of Israel

Yahweh rebukes them for being proud about their offerings and sacrifices. They think that God should be pleased with them, but he is not. Alternate translation: "for this is what you love to do, you people of Israel. But it does not please me"

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase "this is Yahweh's declaration" in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:6

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

I gave you cleanness of teeth

Here having clean teeth represents having no food in the mouth to make the teeth dirty. Alternate translation: "I caused you to starve"

lack of bread

Giving them "lack of bread" represents causing them to lack bread, and "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "I caused you not to have enough food"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. Alternate translation: "you have not submitted again to me"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:7

I also withheld rain from you

"I prevented the rain from falling on your crops"

when there were still three months to the harvest

It can be stated clearly that the people needed the rain. Alternate translation: "when there were still three months to the harvest and your crops needed the rain"

One piece of land was rained on

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "One piece of land" represents any piece of land." Alternate translation: "It rained on one piece of land" or "It rained on some pieces of land"

the piece of land where it did not rain

This refers to any piece of land where it did not rain. Alternate translation: "the pieces of land where it did not rain"

Amos 4:8

Two or three cities staggered

Here "cities" represents the people of those cities. Alternate translation: "The people of two or three cities staggered"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:9

I afflicted you with blight and mildew

Here "afflicted you" represents afflicting their crops.

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Alternate translation: "I afflicted your crops with blight and mildew" or "I destroyed your crops with blight and mildew"

blight

This is a disease that dries and kills plants. It is caused by the hot wind from the desert.

mildew

This is another disease that kills plants.

Amos 4:10

I sent a plague on you as on Egypt

"I sent a plague on you as I did on Egypt" or "I sent a plague on you as I sent plagues on Egypt"

I sent a plague on you

"I caused terrible things to happen to you"

I killed your young men with the sword

Here "the sword" represents battle. God killed them by sending enemies to fight against them. Alternate translation: "I made your enemies kill your men in battle"

along with the captivity of your horses

Possible meanings are 1) God also killed the horses that the Israelites had captured from other people, or 2) God also captured the Israelites' horses.

made the stench of your camp come up to your nostrils

A stench is a bad smell. The stench coming up to their nostrils represents them smelling something terrible. It can be stated clearly that the smell was from the dead bodies of those who were killed. Alternate translation: "I made you smell the terrible odor of the dead bodies in your camp"

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Amos 4:11

You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire

God speaks of those who survived the plague and war as if they were a burning stick that someone pulled out of a fire. Alternate translation: "Some of you survived, like a burning stick that someone pulls out of a fire"

Amos 4:12

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

prepare to meet your God

God says this to warn the people of Israel that he will judge them. Alternate translation: "prepare to meet me, your God"

Amos 4:13

he who forms the mountains ... reveals his thoughts ... is his name

It is not clear whether Amos is speaking about God, or God is speaking about himself. If God is speaking about himself, it can be translated with the words "I" and "me." Alternate translation: "I who form the mountains ... reveal my thoughts ... is my name"

makes the dawn become darkness

Possible meanings are 1) God causes the day to be very dark with thick clouds. Alternate translation: "makes the morning dark" or 2) God causes time to pass, so every day becomes night. Alternate translation: "makes morning and evening"

treads on the high places of the earth

God ruling over all the earth is spoken of as if he walks on the highest places of the earth. Alternate translation: "rules over all the earth" or "rules over even the highest places of the earth"

Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name

By declaring his full name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. Your language may have a way for people to do this.

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5 [1]Hear this word that I take up as a lament over you, house of Israel.

[2] The virgin Israel has fallen;
she will rise no more;
she is abandoned on her land;
there is no one to raise her up.

[3]For this is what the Lord Yahweh says:
"The city that went out with a thousand
will have a hundred remaining,
and the one that went out with a hundred
will have ten remaining for the house of Israel."

[4]For this is what Yahweh says to the house of Israel:
"Seek me and live!

[5] Do not seek Bethel;
nor enter Gilgal;
do not journey to Beersheba.
For Gilgal will surely go into captivity,
and Bethel will become nothing.

[6] Seek Yahweh and live,
or he will break out like fire

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in the house of Joseph.
It will devour,
and there will be no one to quench it in Bethel.

7 Those people turn justice into a bitter thing
and throw righteousness down to the ground!"

8 God made the Pleiades and Orion;
he turns deep darkness into the morning;
he makes the day dark with night
and calls for the waters of the sea;
he pours them out on the surface of the earth.
Yahweh is his name!

9 He brings sudden destruction on the strong
so that destruction comes on the fortresses.

10 They hate anyone who reproves them in the city gate,
and they abhor anyone who speaks with integrity.

11 Because you trample down the poor
and seize a tribute of wheat from him—
although you have built houses of worked stone,
you will not live in them.
You have planted delightful vineyards,
but you will not drink their wine.

12 For I know how many are your offenses
and how mighty are your sins.
you who afflict the just, take bribes,
and turn aside the needy in the city gate.

13 Therefore any prudent person is silent at such a time,
for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil,
so that you may live.
So Yahweh, the God of hosts, will really be with you,
as you say he is.

15 Hate evil, love good,
establish justice in the city gate.
Perhaps Yahweh, the God of hosts, will be gracious
to the remnant of Joseph.

16 Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord,
"Wailing will be in all the squares,
and they will say in all the streets,
'Woe! Woe!'
They will call the farmers to mourning
and those who know lamentation to wailing.
17 In all vineyards there will be wailing,
for I will pass through your midst,"
says Yahweh.

18 Woe to you who desire
the day of Yahweh!
Why do you long for the day of Yahweh?

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It will be darkness and not light,

19 as when a man flees from a lion
and a bear meets him,
or he goes in a house and puts his hand on the wall
and a snake bites him.

20 Will not the day of Yahweh be darkness and not light?
Gloom and no brightness?

21 "I hate, I despise your festivals,
I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them,
neither will I look at the fellowship offerings
of your fattened animals.

23 Remove from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the sound of your lutes.

24 Instead, let justice flow like water,
and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream.

25 Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings
in the wilderness for forty years, house of Israel?

26 You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth, your king,
and Kaiwan, your star god,
which you made for yourselves.

27 Therefore I will exile you beyond Damascus,"
says Yahweh, whose name is the God of hosts.

Amos 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in a poetic format and foretells the destruction of the kingdom of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Place Names

This chapter refers to various places in land of Israel

City gate

The "city gate" is mentioned several times. This was a place where people would go with legal and financial issues.

Links:

Amos 5:1 Notes

Amos 5:1

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. Alternate translation: "you people of Israel" or "you Israelite people group"

Amos 5:2

The virgin Israel has fallen ... no one to raise her up

The phrase "The virgin Israel" represents the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel being destroyed and having no other nation to help them become strong again is spoken of as if it were a young woman who has fallen and has no one to raise her up. Alternate translation: "The nation of Israel is like a woman who has fallen ... no one to help her get up"

she is abandoned on her land

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have abandoned her" or "they have left her"

Amos 5:3

The city that went out with a thousand ... the one that went out with a hundred

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These phrases refer to any cities that sent out large numbers of soldiers. Alternate translation: "Cities that went out with a thousand ... cities that went out with a hundred"

The city that went out with a thousand will have a hundred remaining

The phrases "a thousand" and "a hundred" refer to a thousand soldiers and a hundred soldiers.

The city that went out with a thousand

"The city that went out" represents the soldiers of that city going out. It can be stated clearly why they went out. Alternate translation: "The city out of which a thousand soldiers went to fight" or "The city that sent out a thousand soldiers to fight"

will have a hundred remaining

"will have a hundred soldiers who have not been killed" or "will have only a hundred soldiers still alive." Here "remaining" refers to not being killed by the enemy.

for the house of Israel

Possible meanings are 1) "to defend the house of Israel" or 2) "belonging to the house of Israel"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

Amos 5:4

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

Seek me

Here "Seek me" represents asking God for help. Alternate translation: "Ask me for help"

Amos 5:5

Do not seek Bethel

Here "seek Bethel" represents going to Bethel to ask for help. Alternate translation: "Do not go to Bethel to ask for help"

nor enter Gilgal

"and do not enter Gilgal"

For Gilgal will surely go into captivity

Here "Gilgal" represents the people of Gilgal, and going into captivity refers to being captured and taken away. Alternate translation: "For the people of Gilgal will surely be captured and taken away" or "For your enemies will surely capture the people of Gilgal and take them away"

Bethel will become nothing

Here "become nothing" represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: "Bethel will be completely destroyed" or "enemies will completely destroy Bethel"

Amos 5:6

Seek Yahweh

Here "Seek Yahweh" represents asking him for help. Alternate translation: "Ask Yahweh for help" or "Ask me, Yahweh, for help"

he will break out like fire

Here "break out like a fire" represents destroying things as fire destroys things. Alternate translation: "he will become like a fire that breaks out suddenly and destroys everything" or "he will destroy everything like a fire"

the house of Joseph

This phrase is a metonym for the descendants of Joseph. Here it represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph" or "Israel"

It will devour

The word "it" refers to the fire, and "devour" represents destroying everything. God destroying everything is spoken of as if a fire were to destroy everything. Alternate translation: "It will destroy everything" or "He will destroy everything"

there will be no one to quench it

"there will no one to stop it" or "there will be no one to stop him from destroying everything"

Amos 5:7

turn justice into a bitter thing

Here "a bitter thing" represents actions that harm people, and "turn justice into a bitter thing" represents harming people rather than doing for them what is just. Alternate translation: "say that they are doing what is just, but instead they harm people" or "refuse to do what is just and harm people instead"

throw righteousness down to the ground

This represents treating righteousness as if it were worthless. Alternate translation: "treat righteousness as though it were as unimportant as dirt" or "you despise what is righteous"

Amos 5:8

the Pleiades and Orion

People saw patterns in the stars in the sky and gave names to them. These are two of those patterns. Alternate translation: "the stars" or "the groups of stars"

he turns deep darkness into the morning ... day dark with night

"he makes the night become morning, and he makes the day become night." This refers to causing the times of the day.

calls for the waters ... on the surface of the earth

This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. Alternate translation: "he takes the waters of the sea and makes them rain down on the surface of the earth"

Yahweh is his name!

By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things.

Amos 5:9

He brings sudden destruction on the strong

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." The phrase "the strong" refers to strong people, specifically soldiers. Alternate translation: "He suddenly destroys the strong people" or "He suddenly destroys the soldiers"

so that destruction comes on the fortresses

The abstract noun "destruction" can be translated with the verb "destroy." Alternate translation: "so that the fortresses are destroyed" or "and he destroys the fortresses"

Amos 5:10

They hate anyone

"The people of Israel hate anyone"

Amos 5:11

Connecting Statement:

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Amos stops referring to the Israelites

you trample down the poor

This metaphor probably refers to forcing the poor to give money and receive nothing in return so that they cannot become wealthy. Alternate translation: "you keep the poor from becoming wealthy" or "you force the poor to pay high rent"

the poor

"poor people"

seize a tribute of wheat

Here Amos specifies that the Israelites ("the house of Joseph," Amos 5:6) force the poor to give as taxes part of the crops the poor have harvested.

worked stone

"cut stones" or "stones that people have cut"

you will not drink their wine

The word "their" refers to the vineyards. This may imply that no one will make the wine, or even that there will not be enough good grapes to make wine. Alternate translation: "you will not drink the wine that is made from the grapes in your vineyards"

Amos 5:12

afflict the just, take bribes, and turn aside the needy in the city gate

This is a list of some of their sins.

the just

The word "just" is a nominal adjective that refers to just people. Alternate translation: "just people" or "righteous people"

take bribes

"let people pay you to do bad things" or "let people pay you to lie about people"

turn aside the needy in the city gate

Here "turn aside the needy" represents telling the needy people to leave. It can be made clear why the needy were at the city gate. Alternate translation: "do not allow poor people to bring their cases to the judges in the city gate"

the needy

The word "needy" is a nominal adjective that refers to people who are in need. Alternate translation: "people in need"

Amos 5:13

any prudent person is silent

Those who do not want the evil people to harm them will not speak out against the evil deeds. Alternate translation: "wise people do not speak about the evil things people are doing"

for it is an evil time

Here "an evil time" represents a time when people are evil and do evil deeds. Alternate translation: "for it is a time when people are evil" or "for people do evil things"

Amos 5:14

Seek good and not evil

Here "Seek good" represents choosing to do what good. "Good" and "evil" represent good actions and evil actions. Alternate translation: "Choose to do what is good and not what is evil"

Amos 5:15

Hate evil, love good

"Hate evil actions, and love good actions." Here "good" and "evil" represent good actions and evil actions.

establish justice in the city gate

Here "establish justice" represents making sure that justice is done. Alternate translation: "make sure that justice is done in the city gates" or "make sure that the judges make just decisions in the city gates"

in the city gate

City gates were where business transactions occurred and judgments were made, because city walls were thick enough to have gateways that produced cool shade from the hot sun Alternate translation: "in your courts"

the remnant of Joseph

Here "remnant" refers to people who are still living in Israel after the others are killed or taken away as captives. Here "Joseph" represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. See how you translated "house of Joseph" in [Amos 5:6]

Amos 5:16

this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord

"this is what Yahweh, the God of hosts, the Lord says"

Wailing will be in all the squares

"People will wail in all the town squares"

Wailing

long, loud, sad cries

the squares

broad open places in the town where people gather

those who know lamentation to wailing

The phrase "they will call" is understood from the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "they will call those who know lamentation to wailing"

those who know lamentation

"professional mourners" or "those whom people pay to mourn"

to wailing

"to wail"

Amos 5:17

I will pass through your midst

God speaks of punishing the people as if he were to come and punish them while walking through the group of them. Alternate translation: "I will come and punish you" or "I will punish you"

Amos 5:18

Why do you long for the day of Yahweh?

God uses this question to rebuke the people for saying that they want the day of Yahweh to be soon. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You long for the day of Yahweh." or "You should not long for the day of Yahweh!"

It will be darkness and not light

Here "darkness" represents a time when disasters happen, and "light" represents a time when good things happen. Alternate translation: "It will be a time of darkness and disaster, not of light and blessing" or "On that day there will be disasters, not blessings"

Amos 5:20

Will not the day of Yahweh be darkness and not light?

This question emphasizes that bad things will happen then. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "The day of Yahweh will certainly be darkness and not

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light!" or "Bad things, not good things, will certainly happen on the day of Yahweh!"

Gloom and no brightness?

The words "Will not the day of Yahweh be" is understood from the previous sentence. Like the previous question, it emphasizes that terrible things, not good things, will happen on the day of Yahweh. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "It will be a time when terrible things, not good things, happen.

Amos 5:21

I hate, I despise your festivals

The word "despise" is a strong word for "hate." Together the two words emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's hatred for their religious festivals. Alternate translation: "I hate your festivals very much"

I take no delight in your solemn assemblies

"Your solemn assemblies do not please me at all"

Amos 5:23

Remove from me the noise of your songs

This speaks of the noise of songs as if it could be put somewhere else. It represents stopping singing. Alternate translation: "Stop singing your noisy songs"

noise

unpleasant sounds

Amos 5:24

let justice flow like water, and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream

This represents causing there to be much justice and righteous. Alternate translation: "let there be so much justice that it is like flowing water, and let there be so much righteousness that it is like a constantly flowing stream" or "let justice abound like a flood, and let righteousness abound like a stream that never stops"

Amos 5:25

Did you bring me sacrifices ... Israel?

Possible meanings are 1) God uses this question to rebuke them because they did not offer sacrifices. Alternate translation: "You did not bring me sacrifices ... Israel." or 2) God uses this question to remind them that the sacrifices were not the most important part about their relationship. Alternate translation: "You did not have to bring me sacrifices ... Israel."

Did you bring

God speaks as though the Israelites he is speaking to were part of the group that wandered in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "Did your ancestors bring"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated it in Amos 5:1. Alternate translation: "you people of Israel" or "you Israelite people group"

Amos 5:26

You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan

Here "lifted up the images" represents worshiping them. Alternate translation: "You have worshiped the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan"

Sikkuth ... Kaiwan

These are the names of two false gods. The people had made images to represent them.

Kaiwan

Some versions write this as "Kiyyun."

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6 [1] Woe to those who are at ease in Zion,
and to those who are secure in the hill country of Samaria,
the notable men of the most important of the nations,
to whom the house of Israel comes for help!

[2] Your leaders say, "Go to Kalneh and look;
from there go to Hamath, the great city;
then go down to Gath of the Philistines.
Are they better than your two kingdoms?
Is their border larger than your border?"

[3] Woe to those who put off the day of disaster
and make the throne of violence come near.

[4] They lie down on beds of ivory
and lounge on their couches.
They eat lambs from the flock
and calves from the stall.

[5] They sing foolish songs to the music of the lute;
they improvise on instruments as David did.

[6] They drink wine from bowls
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph.

[7] So they will now go into exile with the first exiles,

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and the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away.

8 "I, the Lord Yahweh, have sworn by myself—
this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts,
I detest the pride of Jacob;
I hate his fortresses.
Therefore I will deliver up the city
with all that is in it."

9 It will come about that if ten men remain in one house, they will all die. 10 When his relative or the one who burns him takes up the bones from the house—when he says to the person in the inner room of the house, "Is there anyone with you?" that person will say, "No one." Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention Yahweh's name."
11 For, look, Yahweh will give a command,
and the big house will be smashed to pieces,
and the little house to bits.

12 Do horses run on the rocky cliffs?
Does one plow there with oxen?
Yet you have turned justice into poison
and the fruit of righteousness into bitterness—

13 you who rejoice over Lo Debar,
who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?"

14 "But look, I will raise up against you a nation,
house of Israel—this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts.
They will afflict you
from Lebo Hamath to the brook of the Arabah."

Amos 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in poetic style except for verses 9-10, which are in prose. These two verses contain many interested features.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Verses 9-10 will probably be difficult to translate because the situation is vague and details don't appear to align easily. It is appropriate to translate these verses with some ambiguity remaining. It may be helpful to read many different versions prior to translating these verses.

Links:

Amos 6:1 Notes

Amos 6:1

who are at ease

"who feel safe." The people are comfortable and not concerned that God will judge them.

the notable men of the most important of the nations

"the most important men of this great nation." Yahweh may be using irony to describe how these men think of themselves. Alternate translation: "the men who think they are the most important people in the most important nation"

the house of Israel comes

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. Alternate translation: "the Israelites come" or "the Israelite people group comes"

comes for help

Here "comes" can be stated as "goes." Alternate translation: "goes for help"

Amos 6:2

Kalneh

This is the name of a city.

Are they better than your two kingdoms?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are better than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Your two kingdoms are better than they are."

Is their border larger than your border?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that their kingdoms are larger than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Their border is smaller than yours." or "Those

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countries are smaller than Judah and Samaria."
Amos 6:3
to those who put off the day of disaster
Refusing to believe that Yahweh will cause disaster is spoken of as if the "day of disaster" were an object the people could put far from themselves. Alternate translation: "to those who refuse to believe that I will cause them to experience disaster"
and make the throne of violence come near
Here "throne" is a metonym that represents reign or rule. The people doing evil things, which causes Yahweh to bring disaster on them, is spoken of as if they were causing "violence" to rule them. Alternate translation: "but who are actually causing me to send violent people to destroy you"
Amos 6:4
lie down ... lounge
Israelites at that time usually ate while sitting on a floor cloth or a simple seat.
beds of ivory
"beds decorated with ivory" or "costly beds"
ivory
a white substance made from the teeth and horns of large animals
lounge
lie around like lazy people
couches
soft seats large enough to lie down on
Amos 6:5
they improvise on instruments
Possible meanings: 1) they invent new songs and ways of playing the instruments or 2) they invent new instruments.
Amos 6:6
drink wine from bowls
This implies that they drink a lot of wine because they drink it from a large bowl rather than a regular wine cup.
they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph
Here "Joseph" represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "they do not grieve about the descendants of Joseph whom enemies will soon destroy"
Amos 6:7
they will now go into exile with the first exiles
"they will be among the first ones to go into exile" or "I will send them into exile first"
the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away
"there will be no more feasts for people to lie around at ease"
Amos 6:8
this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]
I detest the pride of Jacob
Here "Jacob" represents his descendants. Alternate translation: "I hate the descendants of Jacob because they have become arrogant"
I hate his fortresses
It is implied that Yahweh hates the fortresses because the people believed the fortresses would keep them safe. Alternate translation: "I hate the people of Israel because they trust in their fortresses, not in me, to protect them"
Amos 6:9
General Information:
In 6:9-10 Amos gives an example of the kinds of things that will happen when Yahweh hands the people of Israel over to their enemies.
if ten men remain in one house, they will all die
This seems to imply that something terrible is happening, and these ten men go into the house to hide. Alternate translation: "if ten men are hiding inside of a house, they will all still die"
Amos 6:10
General Information:
This verse is unclear in the Hebrew and is translated in many different ways.
his relative or the one who burns him
Possible meanings of the "relative" and the "one who burns him" are 1) they are the same person or 2) they are different people.
his relative ... burns him
Possible meanings are 1) "his" and "him" refer to the person who has died, or 2) only "burns him" refers to the person who has died, and "his relative" could be translated as "a relative."
the one who burns
This phrase translates a word that refers to a person whose duty is to burn the bodies of family members who have died and for some reason cannot be buried.
in the inner room
You may need to make specific that the house had one or more inner or back rooms in which people could hide from those in the outer or front room where the dead body was lying.
Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention Yahweh's name."
Possible meanings are 1) the speaker is the one who asked the question, or 2) the speaker is the one hiding in the inner room.
we must not mention Yahweh's name
The speaker was probably afraid that if the hearer mentioned Yahweh's name, both of them would also die.
Amos 6:11
look
"listen" or "pay attention"
the big house will be smashed to pieces, and the little house to bits
These two phrases share similar meanings. The contrast between "the big house" and "the little house" means that this refers to all houses. Alternate translation: "all the houses will be smashed into small pieces"
the big house will be smashed to pieces
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy will smash the big house to pieces"
to pieces ... to bits
You can use the same word for both of these phrases.
the little house to bits
This can be stated with the understood information included and also in active form. Alternate translation: "the little house will be smashed to bits" and "enemies will smash the little house to bits"
Amos 6:12

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General Information:

Amos uses two rhetorical questions to draw attention to the rebuke that follows.

Do horses run on the rocky cliffs?

It is impossible for a horse to run on rocky cliffs without getting hurt. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "Horses do not run on rocky cliffs."

Does one plow there with oxen?

One does not plow on rocky ground. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "A person does not plow with oxen on rocky ground."

Yet you have turned justice into poison

Distorting what is just is spoken of as if the leaders "turned justice into poison." Alternate translation: "Yet you distort what is just" or "But you make laws that hurt innocent people"

the fruit of righteousness into bitterness

This means basically the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Distorting what is right is spoken of as if righteousness were a sweet fruit that the people made bitter tasting. Alternate translation: "you distort what is right" or "you punish those who do what is right"

Amos 6:13

Lo Debar ... Karnaim

These are names of towns.

Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?

The people use a question to emphasize that they believe they captured a city because of their own power. Alternate translation: "We captured Karnaim by our own power!"

Amos 6:14

look

"listen" or "pay attention"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]

from Lebo Hamath to the brook of the Arabah

Here "Lebo Hamath" represents the northern border of Israel, and "brook of the Arabah" represents the southern border. Alternate translation: "from the northern border of your nation to the southern border"

brook

a small river that flows only during the wet season

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7 [1]This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me. Look, he formed a locust swarm when the spring crop began to come up,
and, look, it was the late crop after the king's harvest.[2]When they finished eating the vegetation of the land, then I said,
"Lord Yahweh, please forgive; how will Jacob stand? For he is so small."[3]Yahweh relented concerning this. "It will not
happen," he said.

[4]This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me: Look, the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge. It dried the vast, deep water under the earth and would have devoured the land also.[5]But I said, "Lord Yahweh, please stop; how will Jacob stand? For he is so small."[6]Yahweh relented concerning this, "This also will not happen," said the Lord Yahweh.

[7]This is what he showed me: Look, the Lord stood beside a wall, with a plumb line in his hand.[8]Yahweh said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Look, I will put a plumb line among my people Israel. I will spare them no longer.

[9] The high places of Isaac will be destroyed,
the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

[10]Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent a message to Jeroboam, king of Israel: "Amos has conspired against you in the middle of the house of Israel. The land cannot endure all his words.[11]For this is what Amos said,

'Jeroboam will die by the sword,
and Israel will surely go into exile away from his land.'"

[12]Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee back to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and prophesy.[13]But do not prophesy anymore here at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house."

[14]Then Amos said to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet nor a prophet's son. I am a herdsman, and I take care of sycamore fig trees.[15]But Yahweh took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'
[16]Now hear the word of Yahweh. You say,

'Do not prophesy against Israel,
and do not speak against the house of Isaac.'

[17]Therefore this is what Yahweh says,

'Your wife will be a prostitute in the city;

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your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword;
your land will be measured and divided up;
you will die in an unclean land,
and Israel will surely go into exile from his land.'"

Amos 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is mainly written as a narrative about the prophet Amos interacting with Yahweh. Yahweh presents three different scenarios of judgment before Amos who pleads with God and he does not carry out his judgment. (See: prophet and judge)

Special concepts in this chapter

Reported speech

In the latter part of the chapter, it is important to follow the conversation carefully to understand who is speaking. There are some instances of "reported speech."

Links:

Amos 7:1 Notes

Amos 7:1

Look ... look

The writer is telling the reader that he is about to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

locust

See how you translated this in Amos 4:9.

after the king's harvest

"after the king takes his share from the harvest"

Amos 7:2

please forgive

The words "your people" or "us" are understood. Alternate translation: "please forgive your people" or "please forgive us"

how will Jacob stand? For he is so small.

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants the Israelites. The word "stand" is a metonym for surviving. Alternate translation: "how will we Israelites survive? We are so small and weak!"

Amos 7:4

Look

The writer is telling the reader that something surprising is about to happen. Your language may have a way of doing this.

the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge

"the Lord Yahweh used burning fire to punish the people"

Amos 7:5

how will Jacob stand? For he is so small.

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants the Israelites. See how you translated this in [Amos 7:2]

Amos 7:7

plumb line

thin rope with a weight at one end used in building to make sure walls stand straight up and down

Amos 7:8

what do you see?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: "tell me what you see."

I will put a plumb line among my people Israel

Judging the people and determining they are wicked is spoken of as if the Israelites were a wall, and Yahweh determines the wall is not straight by using a plumb line. Alternate translation: "my people Israel are wicked. They are like a wall that is not straight up and down"

Amos 7:9

The high places of Isaac will be destroyed, the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword

Here "sword" represents an army. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will send an army to attack the house of Jeroboam, and the army will destroy the high places of Isaac and the sanctuaries of Israel"

Isaac ... Israel

Both of these represent the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Isaac ... the people of Israel"

the house of Jeroboam

Here "house" represents "family." Translate "Jeroboam" as you did in Amos 1:1, and see how you translated "house of" in Amos 1:4. Alternate translation: "Jeroboam and his family"

Amos 7:10

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel

Possible meanings: 1) Amaziah was the only priest at Bethel or 2) Amaziah was the leader of the priests at Bethel.

Amaziah

This is the name of a man.

Amos has conspired against you in the middle of the house of Israel

"Amos is right here among the Israelites, and he is planning to do bad things to you"

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

The land cannot endure all his words

Here "land" represents "people." Disrupting the peace is spoken of as if Amos's words were a heavy object that the land could not carry. Alternate translation: "What he is saying disturbs the peace among the people" or "His

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message will cause trouble among the people"
Amos 7:11
Jeroboam will die by the sword
Here "sword" represents the enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill Jeroboam"
Amos 7:12
there eat bread and prophesy
Here "eat bread" is an idiom that means to earn money or make a living for doing something. Alternate translation: "see if you can get the people there to pay you for prophesying" or "prophesy there and let them provide you with food"
Amos 7:13
for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house
Here "king's sanctuary" and "royal house" refer to the same place. Alternate translation: "this is where the national temple is, the place where the king worships"
Amos 7:14
herdsman
This here probably means "one who takes care of sheep" since he is called a "shepherd" in Amos 1:1.
sycamore fig trees
Sycamores are broad trees that grow up to 15 meters tall. Alternate translation: "fig trees"
Amos 7:16
Now
Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
do not speak against the house of Isaac
Here "house" represents the family or descendants of Isaac. Alternate translation: "do not speak against the descendants of Isaac"
Amos 7:17
your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword
Here "sword" represents enemies. Alternate translation: "enemies will kill your sons and daughters"
your land will be measured and divided up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "other people will take your land and divide it up among themselves"
an unclean land
A land full of people that are unacceptable to God is spoken of as if the land were physically unclean. Here it means a land other than Israel. Alternate translation: "a foreign land"

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8 [1]This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me. Look, a basket of summer fruit![2]He said, "What do you see, Amos?" I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then Yahweh said to me,
"The end has come for my people Israel;
I will spare them no longer.
[3] The songs of the temple will become wailings in that day—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
many dead bodies, they are thrown everywhere!
Silence!"

[4] Listen to this, you who trample the needy
and remove the poor of the land.

[5]They say,
"When will the new moon be over,
so we can sell grain again?
When will the Sabbath day be over,
so that we can sell wheat?
We will make the measure small
and increase the price,
as we cheat with deceitful scales.
[6] This is so we can sell bad wheat, buy the poor with silver,
and the needy for a pair of sandals."

[7]Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "Surely I will never forget any of their actions."
[8] Will not the land quake for this,
and everyone who lives in it mourn?
All of it will rise up like the Nile River,
and it will be tossed about and sink again,
like the river of Egypt.

[9] "It will come in that day—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
that I will make the sun set at noon,

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and I will darken the earth at daylight.

10 I will turn your festivals into mourning
and all your songs into lamentation.
I put sackcloth on all loins
and have baldness on every head.
I will make it like mourning for an only son,
and a bitter day to its end.

11 Look, the days are coming—
this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh—
when I will send a famine in the land,
not a famine for bread, nor of thirst for water,
but for hearing the words of Yahweh.

12 They will stagger from sea to sea;
they will run from the north to the east
to seek the word of Yahweh,
but they will not find it.

13 In that day the beautiful virgins and the young men
will faint from thirst.

14 Those who swear by the sin of Samaria[1]
and say, 'As your god lives, Dan,'
and, 'As the way to Beersheba exists,'[2]
they will fall and never rise again."

[1]Instead of the sin of Samaria, some scholars translate the Hebrew as, Ashimah of Samaria. Ashimah was the name of a pagan goddess worshiped in some parts of Syria.
[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have, As the way to Beersheba exists, where this might refer to what people going to worship Beersheba's idols might have said. However, some scholars understand the Hebrew text to read As the loved one of Beersheba lives. Here loved one stands for an idol worshiped in Beersheba.

Amos 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and it shows the way Yahweh's people are sinning and how he is going to respond. (See: peopleofgod and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"This is the declaration of Yahweh"

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. (See: prophet)

Links:

Amos 8:1 Notes

Amos 8:1

Look, a basket of summer fruit!

The word "look" here shows that Amos saw something interesting. Alternate translation: "I saw a basket of summer fruit!"

summer fruit

"ripe fruit"

Amos 8:2

What do you see, Amos?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you see, Amos."

Amos 8:3

in that day

"at that time"

Silence!

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is to telling the people to be silent as they hear about the severity of his punishment or 2) the people will be silent because of their grief after Yahweh's punishment.

Amos 8:4

Listen to this

Amos is speaking to the wealthy merchants who harm those who are poor.

you who trample the needy and remove the poor of the land

This can be restated to remove the nominal adjectives "the needy" and "the poor." Alternate translation: "you who

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trample those who are in need and remove those in the land that are poor"

you who trample

Harming people is spoken of as if it were stomping on people. Alternate translation: "you who harm" or "you who oppress"

Amos 8:5

They say, "When will the new moon be over, so we can sell grain again? When will the Sabbath day be over, so that we can sell wheat?

The merchants use theses question to emphasize that want to start selling their items again. This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "They are always asking when the new moon will be over or when the Sabbath will be over so that can sell their grain and wheat again."

We will make the measure small and increase the price, as we cheat with deceitful scales

The merchants would use false scales that showed that the amount of grain they were giving was greater than it really was and that the weight of the payment was less than it really was.

Amos 8:6

the needy for a pair of sandals

The words "and buy" are understood. Alternate translation: "buy the needy for a pair of sandals"

Amos 8:7

Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob

Here "pride of Jacob" is a title for Yahweh. Also "Jacob" represents his descendants, the Israelites. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has sworn by himself, saying" or "Yahweh, of whom the Israelites are so proud, has sworn"

Amos 8:8

Will not the land quake for this, and everyone who lives in it mourn?

Amos uses a question to emphasize that these things will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the land to shake, and everyone who lives in it will mourn."

All of it will rise up like the Nile River ... like the river of Egypt

Amos compares the rising and sinking of the waters of the Nile River to how Yahweh will cause the land to shake when he judges the people.

river of Egypt

This is another name for the Nile River.

Amos 8:9

It will come in that day

"It will happen at that time"

Amos 8:10

have baldness on every head

A person shaves his head to show that he is grieving. Alternate translation: "cause you all to shave your heads"

like mourning for an only son

It is understood that the only son has died. Alternate translation: "like mourning for an only son who has died"

a bitter day to its end

Terrible and sad things happening during a day is spoken of as if the day had a bitter taste. Alternate translation: "everything that happens at that time will cause you great sorrow"

Amos 8:11

the days are coming

This speaks of a future time as if "days are coming." Alternate translation: "there will be a time" or "in the future"

when I will send a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh

Yahweh refusing to give messages when the people want to hear from him is spoken of as if there would be a famine of his words. Alternate translation: "when I will cause something like a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh"

the words of Yahweh

This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "words from me, Yahweh" or "my messages"

Amos 8:12

They will stagger from sea to sea; they will run from the north to the east to seek the word of Yahweh

Here "sea to sea" and "the north to the east" represent all of the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "They will wander here and there and search all over for the word of Yahweh"

from sea to sea

This implies the Dead Sea in the south and the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

Amos 8:13

In that day

"At that time"

faint

to lose all strength

Amos 8:14

by the sin of Samaria

Here "sin" represents the false god the people worship in Samaria. Alternate translation: "by the false god of Samaria"

As your god lives, Dan

This is a way of making a solemn oath. The people declare that they believe the god of Dan is certainly alive to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

As the way to Beersheba exists

This is probably a reference to the roads that pilgrims would take to Beersheba in order to worship idols there. Again, this is a way of making a solemn oath. They state that the way to Beersheba certainly exists in order to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

they will fall

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they will die"

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9 [1]I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said,
"Strike the tops of the pillars
so that the thresholds will shake.
Break them in pieces on all of their heads,
and I will kill the last of them with the sword.

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Not one of them will get away;
not one of them will escape.
2 Though they dig into Sheol,
there my hand will take them.
Though they climb up to heaven,
there I will bring them down.

3 Though they hide on the top of Carmel,
there I will search and take them.
Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea,
there will I command the serpent, and it will bite them.

4 Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them,
there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them.
I will keep my eyes on them
for harm and not for good."

5 The Lord Yahweh of hosts
touches the land and it melts;
all who live in it mourn;
all of it will rise up like the River,
and sink again like the river of Egypt.

6 It is he who builds his steps in the heavens,
and has established his vault over the earth.
He calls for the waters of the sea,
and pours them out on the surface of the earth,
Yahweh is his name.

7 "Are you not like the people of Cush to me,
people of Israel—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
did I not bring up Israel out of the land of Egypt,
the Philistines from Crete,
and the Arameans from Kir?

8 Look, the eyes of the Lord Yahweh
are on the sinful kingdom,
and I will destroy it
from the face of the earth,
except that I will not totally destroy
the house of Jacob—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

9 Look, I will give a command,
and I will shake the house of Israel
among all the nations,
as one shakes grain in a sieve,
so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground.

10 All the sinners of my people
will die by the sword,
those who say,
'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'

11 In that day
I will raise up the tent of David that has fallen,
and close up its breaches.
I will raise up its ruins,

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and rebuild it as in the days of old,

12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom,
and all the nations that are called by my name—
this is Yahweh's declaration—he does this.

13 Look, the days will come—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
when the plowman will overtake the reaper,
and the treader of grapes will overtake him who plants seed.
The mountains will drip sweet wine,
and all the hills will flow with it.

14 I will bring back from captivity my people Israel.
They will build the ruined cities and inhabit them,
they will plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they will make gardens and eat their fruit.

15 I will plant them upon their land,
and they will never again be uprooted from the land
that I have given them,"
says Yahweh your God.

Amos 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and continues to show the awesome and terrible judgment of Yahweh on his people. In verse 11, the writer writes about the forgiveness and mercy of God on the kingdom of Israel. (See: judge, peopleofgod and forgive and mercy)

Special concepts in this chapter

"The declaration of Yahweh"

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. Try to remain consistent in translating this phrase throughout the book. (See: prophet)

Links:

Amos 9:1 Notes

Amos 9:1

General Information:

Yahweh shows Amos another vision.

Strike the tops ... Break them

It is uncertain to whom Yahweh is speaking these commands.

Strike the tops of the pillars so that the thresholds will shake

It is implied that Yahweh is speaking about the pillars and thresholds of a temple.

tops of the pillars ... thresholds

This merism implies that the whole temple will be destroyed.

Break them in pieces on all of their heads

Here "heads" represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "Break the pillars so that the temple falls on all of the people and kills them"

I will kill the last of them with the sword

Here "sword" represents an army attacking with their weapons. Alternate translation: "I will send an enemy army to kill the rest of them"

Amos 9:2

Though they dig into Sheol, there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down

Yahweh uses an exaggerated image of people fleeing to Sheol or heaven to try to escape being killed. Here "Sheol" and "heaven" are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: "Even if they were to flee to Sheol or to heaven, they would not be able to escape me"

there my hand will take them

Here "hand" represents Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: "I will pull them up from there"

Amos 9:3

Though they hide on the top of Carmel ... Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea

Yahweh gives an exaggerated image of the people fleeing to the top of mount Carmel or to the bottom of the sea to escape being killed. Here "top of Carmel" and "bottom of the sea" are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: "Even if they were to hide on the top of Carmel ... Even if they tried to go the bottom sea, thinking that I could not see them"

serpent

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an unknown fierce sea animal, not the snake in the garden of Eden and not a common snake

Amos 9:4

Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Though enemies capture them and force them to go to a foreign land"

there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "there I will cause their enemies to kill them"

I will keep my eyes on them for harm and not for good

Here "eyes" represents seeing. The phrase "keep my eyes on them" is an idiom that means to watch closely. Alternate translation: "I will watch closely and make sure only bad things happen to them and not good things"

Amos 9:5

all of it will rise up like the River, and sink again like the river of Egypt

Here "the River" and "river of Egypt" both refer to the Nile river. Yahweh causing the land to shake violently is compared to the waters of the Nile river rising and sinking.

Amos 9:6

he who builds his steps in the heavens

These are probably the steps that ancient people imagined led up to God's palace in the heavens. However, some modern versions understand the word translated as "steps" here to mean "upper rooms." In either case, "his steps" or "his upper rooms" is probably a metonym for God's palace.

has established his vault over the earth

Here "vault" refers to the sky which biblical writers described as being a dome over the earth. Alternate translation: "he sets the sky over the earth"

He calls for the waters of the sea ... on the surface of the earth

This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:8]

Yahweh is his name

By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. See how you translated this in Amos 5:8.

Amos 9:7

Are you not like the people of Cush to me, ... Israel—this ... declaration—did I not bring up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the people of Israel are no more special to him than the people of Cush, the Philistines, and the Arameans. Alternate translation: "You people of Israel, you are certainly no more important to me than the people of Cush—this ... declaration—I brought up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir."

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11]

Kir

See how you translated the name of this place in Amos 1:5.

Amos 9:8

the eyes of the Lord Yahweh are on the sinful kingdom

Here "eyes" represents seeing. Also, Yahweh speaks of himself in third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Lord Yahweh, see that the people of this kingdom are very sinful"

I will destroy it from the face of the earth

The idiom "from the face of the earth" means "completely." Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy this kingdom"

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. They were the people of Israel. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13]

Amos 9:9

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:1]

I will shake the house of Israel ... as one shakes grain in a sieve, so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground

The picture here is of grain falling through the sieve and stones being kept out. The idea is that Yahweh will remove all of the sinful people from Israel.

sieve

a surface with many small holes that allow small things to pass through and keep larger things from passing through

Amos 9:10

All the sinners of my people will die by the sword

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill all the sinners of my people"

Disaster will not overtake or meet us

Experiencing disaster is spoken of as disaster could overtake or meet someone. Alternate translation: "We will not experience disaster" or "Bad things will not happen to us"

Amos 9:11

In that day

"At that time"

I will raise up the tent of David that has fallen

Causing the people of Israel to be great again is spoken of as if David's kingdom were a tent that fell down and Yahweh will set it back up. Alternate translation: "David's kingdom will be like tent that has fallen down, but I will raise it back up again"

close up its breaches

"I will repair its walls"

I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old

"I will rebuild its ruins and make it strong like it was long ago"

breaches

parts of a wall that have fallen down

Amos 9:12

the remnant of Edom

"the remaining part of Edom's territory"

all the nations that are called by my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. The idiom "called by my name" means they once belonged to Yahweh. This means that in the past the people had conquered and taken control of these territories. Alternate translation: "all the nations that once belonged to me" or "all the nations that I caused the people of Israel to conquer in the past"

Amos 9:13

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Look
The writer is telling the reader that he is going to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.
the days will come ... when the plowman
A future time is spoken of as if "days will come." Alternate translation: "there will be a time ... when the plowman" or "in the future ... the plowman"
when the plowman ... him who plants seed
These are two images of Yahweh restoring prosperity in Israel. This means grain will grow faster than the people can harvest it, and there will be so many grapes, those crushing the grapes will still be working when farmers start planting more vineyards.
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11]
The mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it
These two lines mean basically the same thing. The huge amount of grapes and wine in Israel is spoken of as if wine flows down the hills and mountains.
Amos 9:15
I will plant them upon their land, and they will never again be uprooted from the land
Bringing the people back to their land and keeping them safe from enemies is spoken of as if Israel were a plant that Yahweh would put in the ground and not let anyone pull the plant up from the ground. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to live in the land forever like a plant that is never uprooted"
they will never again be uprooted from the land
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever again uproot them from the land"
uprooted
for a plant and its roots to be pulled out of the ground

Introduction to Obadiah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Obadiah

Yahweh will judge Edom (1:1-16) Yahweh will destroy Edom (1:1–9) Why Yahweh will destroy Edom (1:10–14) Yahweh will judge the nations (1:15–16) Yahweh will deliver his people (1:17–21)

What is the Book of Obadiah about?

After Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, the Edomites captured fleeing Jews. Then they gave these Jews over to Babylon. The Book of Obadiah is about Yahweh judging the Edomites for harming his people. This book would be comforting to the exiled people of Judah.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book is traditionally titled "The Book of Obadiah" or just "Obadiah." Translators may decide to use a clearer title such as "The Sayings of Obadiah."

Who wrote the Book of Obadiah?

The prophet Obadiah probably wrote this book. We know nothing more about Obadiah. His name in Hebrew means "Servant of Yahweh."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was Edom's relationship to Israel?

Obadiah referred to Edom as Israel's brother. This is because the Edomites descended from Esau, and the Israelites descended from Jacob. Jacob and Esau were brothers. This made Edom betraying Israel much worse.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How do I translate the concept of "pride"?

The Book of Obadiah speaks of the pride of Edom. This meant that the Edomites thought their enemies or Yahweh could not defeat them. (See: proud)

Obadiah

1 [1]The vision of Obadiah. The Lord Yahweh says this concerning Edom: We have heard a report from Yahweh and an ambassador has been sent among the nations, saying, "Rise up! Let us rise up against her for battle!"

[2]Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you will be greatly despised.
[3]The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty home; who say in your heart, "Who will bring me down to the ground?"[4]Though you soar high like the eagle and though your nest is set among the stars, I will bring you down from there—this is Yahweh's declaration.

[5]If thieves came to you, if robbers came by night—how you will be ruined!—would they not steal only as much as they needed? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave the gleanings?[6]How Esau will be ransacked, his hidden treasures looted!

[7]All the men of your alliance will send you on your way to the border. The men who were at peace with you will deceive you and prevail against you. They who eat your bread will set a trap under you. There is no understanding in him.
[8]"'Will I not on that day"—this is Yahweh's declaration—"destroy the wise men from Edom and understanding out of the mountain of Esau?[9]Your mighty men will be dismayed, Teman, so that every man may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.

[10]Because of the violence done to your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever.[11]On the day you stood aloof, on the day strangers carried away his wealth, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.
[12]But do not gloat over your brother's day, in the day of his misfortune, and do not rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their destruction; do not boast in the day of their distress.[13]Do not enter my people's gate in the day of their calamity; do not gloat over their affliction in the day of their disaster, do not loot their wealth in the day of their ruin.[14]Do not stand at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives, and do not deliver up his survivors in the day of distress.

[15]For the day of Yahweh is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you; your deeds will return on your own head.[16]For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so will all the nations drink continually. They will drink and swallow and it will be as though they had never existed.

[17]But in Mount Zion there will be those who escape, and it will be holy, and the house of Jacob will take possession of their possessions.[18]The house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau will be stubble, and they will burn them, and consume them. There will be no survivors to the house of Esau, for Yahweh has spoken it."

[19]People from the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau and the people of the lowlands will possess the land of the Philistines. They will possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead.
[20]The exiles of this army of the people of Israel will possess the land of Canaan as far as Zarephath. The exiles of Jerusalem, who are in Sepharad, will possess the cities of the Negev.[21]Deliverers will go up to Mount Zion to rule over the hill country of Esau, and the kingdom will belong to Yahweh.

Obadiah 1:1

The vision of Obadiah

This is the title of the book. Here "vision" is used in the general sense of a message from Yahweh, rather than to indicate how Obadiah received the message. Alternate translation: "The message of Obadiah" or "The prophesy of Obadiah"

The Lord Yahweh says this concerning Edom

This tells the reader that the entire book is a message about Edom.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

an ambassador has been sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has sent an ambassador"

Rise up

"Stand up." This phrase is used to tell people to get ready.

rise up against her

Here "her" refers to Edom. This is a metonym for the people of Edom, so it could also be translated as "them."

Obadiah 1:2

Behold, I will make you

Beginning in verse 2, Obadiah records the words that Yahweh speaks directly to Edom.

Behold

This alerts the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will make you small among the nations; you will be greatly despised

These two phrases mean similar things and are used to emphasize that Edom will lose its important status.

I will make you small among the nations

Something that is insignificant is spoken of as if it is of small size, and can easily be overlooked. Alternate translation: "I will make you insignificant among the nations"

you will be greatly despised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of other nations will hate you"

Obadiah 1:3

General Information:

Obadiah's vision concerning Edom continues.

The pride of your heart has deceived you

The "heart" was associated with emotions. The Edomites' pride caused them to be deceived about their security. Alternate translation: "Your pride has deceived you" or "Your pride causes you think you are safe"

in the clefts of the rock

"in the cracks in the rock." This here has the sense of a place that is protected because it is surrounded by rocks.

in your lofty home

"in your home that was built in a high place"

say in your heart

Here "in your heart" is an idiom that means "to yourself." Alternate translation: "say to yourselves" or "think"

Who will bring me down to the ground?

This question expresses that the Edomites were proud and felt safe. Alternate translation: "No one can bring me down to the ground." or "I am safe from all attackers."

Obadiah 1:4

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Though you soar high like the eagle and though your nest is set among the stars

Both of these exaggerations say that Edom is built in a very high place by saying it is built much higher than possible. Alternate translation: "And I tell you that even if you had wings and could fly higher than eagles fly, and if you could make your homes among the stars"

I will bring you down from there

Pride is associated with height while humility is associated with being low. To "bring down" is an idiom that means to humble someone. Alternate translation: "I will humble you"

Obadiah 1:5

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Obadiah his message to Edom.

If thieves came to you ... would they not steal only as much as they needed?

This question is used to imply that Yahweh's punishment of Edom would be worse than what thieves would do when they steal. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "If thieves came to you ... they would only steal as much as they needed, but I will take everything from you!"

If thieves came to you, if robbers came by night

These two phrases mean the same thing and are used to emphasize people who steal. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "When thieves break into someone's house during the night"

if robbers came by night

"or if robbers came during the night"

robbers

people who steal things from other people

how you will be ruined!

Yahweh adds this phrase in the middle of another sentence to express that the punishment of Edom is shocking. Alternate translation: "you are completely destroyed!"

If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave the gleanings?

This question is used to imply that Yahweh's punishment of Edom would be more thorough than what grape gatherers would do when they harvest grapes. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "If grape gatherers came to you, they would leave some grapes, but I will take everything from you!"

Obadiah 1:6

How Esau will be ransacked, his hidden treasures looted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Ah, enemies will ransack Esau; they will loot his hidden treasures"

Esau

The people of Edom were the descendants of Esau. Therefore, in this book "Edom" and "Esau" refer to the same group of people.

will be ransacked

This means the enemies will search through Esau's things, take everything valuable, and leave everything else in a mess or damaged.

Obadiah 1:7

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Obadiah his message to Edom.

All the men of your alliance ... The men who were at peace with you ... They who eat your bread

All three of these phrases refer to Edom's allies.

your alliance

The word "your" refers to the nation of Edom.

will send you on your way to the border

"will send you out of their land." The people of Edom will try to take refuge in the land of their allies, but their allies will not let the people of Edom stay in their land.

There is no understanding in him.

Possible meanings are 1) the allies say this about Edom. Alternate translation: "They say, 'Edom does not understand anything.'" or 2) this is a statement about the betrayal of the allies. Alternate translation: "No one can understand why they did this."

Obadiah 1:8

Will I not on that day"—this is Yahweh's declaration—"destroy ... mountain of Esau?

Yahweh uses this question to emphasize the certainty of the destruction of Edom. Alternate translation: "'On that day,'"—this is Yahweh's declaration—'I surely will destroy ... mountain of Esau."

the mountain of Esau

Most of the land of Esau was mountains, so this is one way of referring to the land of Edom.

Obadiah 1:9

Your mighty men will be dismayed

"Your strong warriors will be afraid"

Teman

This is the name of a region in the land of Edom.

so that every man may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that there will be no more people in the mountains of Esau because enemies killed them" or "so that they will slaughter every person in the mountain of Esau"

be cut off

"be destroyed"

Obadiah 1:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Obadiah his message to Edom.

your brother Jacob

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants. Because Jacob was the brother of Esau, the people of Edom are spoken of as if they were the brothers of the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: "your relatives who are the descendants of Jacob"

you will be covered with shame

To be covered with something is an idiom for fully experiencing it. Alternate translation: "you will be completely ashamed"

will be cut off forever

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will never exist again"

Obadiah 1:11

stood aloof

"watched and did nothing to help"

strangers

people from other nations

his wealth

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The word "his" refers to "Jacob," which is another way of referring to the people of Israel.

cast lots for Jerusalem

This phrase means "they cast lots to decide who would get the valuable things that they took from Jerusalem."

you were like one of them

"it was as though you were one of these strangers and foreigners." This implies that they did not help the Israelites. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "you were like one of the enemies and did not help Israel"

Obadiah 1:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues giving Obadiah his message to Edom. Verses 12-14 consist of a series of negative commands that Yahweh gives to tell the people of Edom how not to treat the Israelites.

do not gloat over

"do not be happy because of" or "do not take pleasure in"

your brother's day

Here "your brother" refers to the people of Israel because Jacob and Esau were brothers.

the day of his misfortune

"the time at which bad things happen to him"

the day

Each of the several occurrences of "day" refer to the time when Babylon attacked and destroyed Jerusalem.

in the day of their destruction

"at the time when their enemies destroy them"

in the day of their distress

"at the time when they suffer"

Obadiah 1:13

calamity ... disaster ... ruin

These are all different translations of the same word. If your language has one word that can translate all three of these ideas, you could use it here.

over their affliction

"because of the bad things that happen to them"

do not loot their wealth

"do not take their wealth" "or "do not steal their wealth"

Obadiah 1:14

crossroads

a place where two roads come together

to cut down his fugitives

"to kill the people of Israel who are trying to escape" or "to catch those who were trying to escape"

do not deliver up his survivors

"do not capture those who are still alive and give them to their enemies"

Obadiah 1:15

General Information:

Yahweh concludes his message to Edom in verse 15. In verses 16-21, Yahweh speaks through Obadiah to tell the people of Judah that they will possess the land of Edom.

For the day of Yahweh is near ... will return on your own head

Bible experts are not certain whether verse 15 goes with verse 14 as the end of the previous section, or goes with verse 16 as the beginning of the new section.

For the day of Yahweh is near upon all the nations

"Soon the time will come when Yahweh will show all the nations that he is Lord"

As you have done, it will be done to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will do to you the same things that you did to others"

your deeds will return on your own head

Here "return on your own head" means they will be punished for those things. Alternate translation: "you will suffer the consequences for the things you have done"

Obadiah 1:16

For as you

The word "you" is plural and probably refers to the people of Judah.

as you have drunk

The punishment that Judah received from the enemy nations is spoken of as if a bitter liquid that they drank. Alternate translation: "as you have drunk suffering" or "as I have punished you"

my holy mountain

This was a way of referring to Jerusalem.

so will all the nations drink continually

Yahweh's punishment of the other nations is spoken of as if it was a bitter liquid that he will cause them to drink continually. Alternate translation: "so all the nations will drink in suffering continually" or "so I will punish all of the nations without stopping"

They will drink and swallow and it will be as though they had never existed

Yahweh continues the metaphor of drinking punishment. Here "swallow" expresses that they will fully experience the punishment, with the result that it will destroy them completely. Alternate translation: "They will drink in my punishment fully until they cease to exist" or "I will continue to punish them fully until I completely destroy them"

Obadiah 1:17

General Information:

In verses 16-21, Yahweh speaks through Obadiah to tell the people of Judah that they will possess the land of Edom.

those who escape

These are the people of Jerusalem that are still alive after Yahweh has finished punishing the city. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "some of the Israelites who escape the punishment of Yahweh"

it will be holy

The word "it" refers to "mount Zion."

the house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob"

Obadiah 1:18

The house of Jacob will be a fire ... Joseph a flame

Yahweh speaks of the descendantsof Jacob and Joseph as if they were fire because they will destroy the descendants of Esau like a fire that quickly and completely burns up straw.

The house of Jacob ... the house of Joseph

Often "the house of Jacob" represents Israel, but here it represents only the people in the southern part of Israel. Joseph was one of Jacob's sons. Here "the house of Joseph" represents the people in the northern part of Israel.

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stubble
The dry pieces of plants that are left in the ground after the stalks have been cut.
and they
The word "they" refers to the house of Jacob and the house of Joseph.
will burn them
The word "them" refers to the descendants of Esau, who are the nation of Edom.
There will be no survivors to the house of Esau
"Not one person of the house of Esau will survive"
the house of Esau
The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Esau's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Esau"
for Yahweh has spoken it
This is an oath formula that means it will certainly happen because Yahweh said it.
Obadiah 1:19
General Information:
In verses 16-21, Yahweh speaks through Obadiah to tell the people of Judah that they will possess the land of Edom.
People from the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau
"The Israelites in the Negev will take the land of the Edomites"
the people of the lowlands
This refers to Israelites in the western foothills of Israel who will capture the land of the Philistines in battle.
They will possess
Here "They" appears to refer to the people of Israel in general.
Benjamin will possess
"the tribe of Benjamin will possess" or "the descendants of Benjamin will possess"
Obadiah 1:20
General Information:
In verses 16-21, Yahweh speaks through Obadiah to tell the people of Judah that they will possess the land of Edom.
The exiles of this army of the people of Israel
THe word "exiles" is a metonym for the descendants of those who had been taken into exile. These words could refer to 1) the descendants of the exiles who were taken to Assyria from the northern kingdom of Israel or 2) the descendants of the people of Judah who lived outside of Jerusalem and were taken into exile in Babylon.
The exiles of this army of the people of Israel
Possible meanings are 1) "this army" refers to a real army. Alternate translation: "The descendants of the exiles, who are the army of the people of Israel" or 2) "this army" is a metaphor for a multitude. Alternate translation: "The descendants of the multitude of the people of Israel who were taken into exile"
as far as Zarephath
Zarephath was a Phoenician city north of Israel on the coast of the Mediterranean between Tyre and Sidon. Alternate translation: "as far north as Zarephath"
The exiles of Jerusalem
This group is contrasted with either the descendants of the Israelites from the northern kingdom, or with the descendants of the people of Judah who lived outside of Jerusalem.
Sepharad
This is the name of a place whose location is unknown. Some experts suggest it refers to the city of Sardis in the region of Lydia.
Obadiah 1:21
Deliverers will go up to Mount Zion to rule over the hill country of Esau
"Deliverers will go up to Jerusalem and rule over Edom from there"
Deliverers
It is possible that 1) this refers to various Israelite military leaders whom God will use to defeat the nation of Edom or 2) the text should read "Those who will be delivered" and refers to the returning Jewish exiles.
the kingdom will belong to Yahweh
This phrase emphasizes that Yahweh will personally rule over the kingdom. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will be their king"

Introduction to Jonah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Jonah

Jonah tries to run away from Yahweh
(1:1-2:10) Jonah disobeys Yahweh's first call to go to Nineveh (1:1–3) Jonah and the Gentile sailors (1:4–16) Yahweh provides a large fish to swallow Jonah (1:17) Jonah prays from inside the fish and is rescued (2:1–10)
Jonah in Nineveh
(3:1-4:11) Yahweh again calls Jonah to go to Nineveh, and Jonah proclaims Yahweh's message (3:1–4) Nineveh repents (3:5-9) Yahweh decides not to destroy Nineveh (3:10) Jonah is very angry with Yahweh (4:1–3) Yahweh teaches Jonah about grace and mercy (4:4–11)

What is the Book of Jonah about?

Jonah, son of Amittai, was a prophet from Gath Hepher (2 Kings 14:25). This book tells about what happened to Jonah. It tells how Yahweh shows mercy and grace to Gentiles. It also tells how the Ninevites repented and called out to Yahweh for mercy. (See: mercy, grace and repent)
Yahweh sent Jonah to warn the people of Nineveh that he was ready to punish them. Yahweh said that if they would repent he would not harm them. However, Jonah was an Israelite and he did not want the Ninevites to repent. So Jonah

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tried to sail away in the opposite direction instead of doing what Yahweh told him to do. But Yahweh stopped him by sending a storm and a large fish to swallow him.
Jonah repented and warned the Ninevites. As a result, Yahweh taught him that he is concerned about all people, not just the Israelites.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book is traditionally titled "The Book of Jonah" or just "Jonah." Translators may decide to use a clearer title such as "The Book about Jonah."

Who wrote the Book of Jonah?

Jonah was probably involved in the writing of this book. However, scholars do not know who actually wrote it.
Jonah lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. He prophesied sometime between 800 and 750 B.C. during the reign of King Jeroboam II.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the nation of Assyria?

During the time of Jonah, Assyria was the most powerful kingdom in the ancient Near East. Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria.
Assyria was cruel to its enemies. Eventually, Yahweh punished the Assyrians for the wicked things they did.

Did Assyria convert to Judaism?

Some scholars think that the Assyrians started worshiping Yahweh alone. However, most scholars think they continued to worship other false gods. (See: falsegod)

Jonah

1 [1]Now the word of Yahweh came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying,[2]"Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city, and speak out against it, because their wickedness has risen up before me."[3]But Jonah got up to run away from the presence of Yahweh and go to Tarshish. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and boarded the ship to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of Yahweh.

[4]But Yahweh sent out a great wind on the sea and it became a mighty storm on the sea. Soon it appeared that the ship was going to be broken up.[5]Then the sailors became very afraid and each man cried out to his own god. They threw the ship's cargo into the sea to lighten it. But Jonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship, and he was lying there deeply asleep.

[6]So the captain came to him and said to him, "What are you doing sleeping? Get up! Call upon your god! Maybe your god will notice us and we will not perish."
[7]Each man said to his neighbor, "Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us." So they threw lots, and the lot fell to Jonah.

[8]Then they said to Jonah, "Please tell us who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us. What is your occupation, and where did you come from? What is your country, and from which people are you?"[9]Jonah said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear Yahweh, the God of heaven, who has made the sea and the dry land."[10]Then the men were even more afraid and said to Jonah, "What is this that you have done?" For the men knew that he was running away from the presence of Yahweh, because he had told them.

[11]Then they said to Jonah, "What should we do to you so that the sea will calm down for us?" For the sea became more and more stormy.[12]Jonah said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will be calm for you, for I know that it is because of me that this great storm is happening to you."
[13]Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get themselves back to the land, but they could not do it because the sea was becoming more and more violent against them.

[14]Therefore they cried out to Yahweh and said, "We beg you, Yahweh, we beg you, do not let us perish on account of this man's life, and do not put innocent blood on us, because you, Yahweh, have done just as it pleased you."[15]So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped raging.[16]Then the men feared Yahweh very much. They offered a sacrifice to Yahweh and made vows.

[17]Now Yahweh had appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

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Jonah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The narrative of this chapter starts abruptly. This could cause difficulty for the translator. The translator should not attempt to smooth this introduction unless absolutely necessary.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracle

In verse Jonah 17, there is the mention of "a great fish." It may be difficult to imagine a sea creature big enough to swallow a man whole and who then survives for three days and nights inside. Translators should not try to explain miraculous events in an attempt to make it easier to understand. (See: miracle)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Situational irony

There is an ironic situation in this chapter. Jonah is a prophet of God and should endeavor to do God's will. Instead, he is running away from God. Although the Gentile sailors are not Israelites, they act out of faith and fear of Yahweh when sending Jonah to a "certain death" by throwing him overboard. (See:, prophet and willofgod and faith)

Sea

People in the ancient Near East also saw the sea as chaotic and did not trust it. Some of the gods they worshiped were gods of the sea. Jonah's people, the Hebrews, feared the sea greatly. However, Jonah's fear of Yahweh was not enough to keep him from going into a ship and sailing to get away from Yahweh. His actions are contrasted by the actions of the Gentiles. (See: and fear)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Even though no one knows for sure where Tarshish was, the writer assumes that the reader knows that Jonah had to face away from Nineveh to go there.

Links:

Jonah 1:1 Notes Jonah intro

Jonah 1:1

the word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that means Yahweh spoke. "Yahweh spoke his message"

the word of Yahweh

"the message of Yahweh"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Amittai

This is the name of Jonah's father.

Jonah 1:2

Get up and go to Nineveh, that great city

"Go to the important city of Nineveh"

Get up and go

This is a common expression for traveling to distant places.

speak out against it

God is referring to the people of the city. Alternate translation: "warn the people"

their wickedness has risen up before me

"I know they have been continually sinning"

Jonah 1:3

got up to run away from the presence of Yahweh

"ran away from Yahweh." "got up" is referring to Jonah leaving where he was.

the presence of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is represented by his presence.

go to Tarshish

"and went to Tarshish." Tarshish was in the opposite direction to Nineveh. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "went in the opposite direction, toward Tarshish"

He went down to Joppa

"Jonah went to Joppa"

ship

A "ship" is a very large type of boat that can travel on the sea and carry many passengers or heavy cargo.

So he paid the fare

"There Jonah paid for the trip"

boarded the ship

"got on the ship"

with them

The word "them" refers to the others who were going on the ship.

away from the presence of Yahweh

Here Yahweh is represented by his presence. Alternate translation: "away from Yahweh"

Jonah 1:4

Soon it appeared

It can be made explicit who thought the ship would be broken up. Alternate translation: "The men thought"

to be broken up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to break apart"

Jonah 1:5

the sailors

the men who worked on the ship

his own god

Here "god" refers to false gods and idols that people

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worship.
They threw the ship's cargo
"The men threw the heavy things off the ship." This was done to keep the ship from sinking.
to lighten it
Making the ship lighter would make if float better. Alternate translation: "to help the ship float better"
But Jonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship
Jonah did this before the storm started.
down into the innermost parts of the ship
"inside the ship"
was lying there deeply asleep
"was lying there fast asleep" or "was lying there and sleeping deeply." For this reason, the storm did not wake him up.
Jonah 1:6
So the captain came to him and said to him
"The man in charge of the ship went to Jonah and said"
What are you doing sleeping?
"Why are you sleeping?" He used this rhetorical question to scold Jonah. Alternate translation: "Stop sleeping!"
Get up!
This refers to doing some activity. For Jonah, the Captain is telling him to wake up and pray to his god for safe passage.
Call upon your god!
"Pray to your god!" "Call" refers to getting the attention of someone.
Maybe your god will notice us and we will not perish
The implicit information that Jonah's god might save them could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Maybe your god will hear and save us so that we will not die"
Jonah 1:7
Each man said to his neighbor
"The sailors all said to each other"
Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us
"We should cast lots to know who has caused this trouble." The men believed that the gods would control how the lots fell in order to tell them what they wanted to know. This was a form of divination.
this evil
This refers to the terrible storm.
the lot fell to Jonah
"the lot showed that Jonah was the guilty person"
Jonah 1:8
Then they said to Jonah
"Then the men who were working on the ship said to Jonah"
Please tell us who is the cause of this evil that is happening to us.
"Who caused this bad thing that is happening to us?"
Jonah 1:9
fear Yahweh
The word "fear" refers Jonah having a deep respecting God.
Jonah 1:10
What is this that you have done?
The men on the ship used this rhetorical question to show how angry they were at Jonah. Alternate translation: "You have done a terrible thing."
he was running away from the presence of Yahweh
Here Yahweh is represented by his presence. Jonah was seeking to escape Yahweh as if Yahweh was present only in the land of Israel. Alternate translation: "Jonah was running away from Yahweh"
because he had told them.
What he told them can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because he had said to them, 'I am trying to get away from Yahweh.'"
Jonah 1:11
they said to Jonah
"the men on the ship said to Jonah" or "the sailors said to Jonah"
do to you so that the sea will calm down
"do with you in order to make the sea become calm"
the sea became more and more stormy
This was the reason that the men asked Jonah what they should do. This reason can also be put at the beginning of verse 11, as in the UDB. "Then, because the sea became more and more stormy, they said to Jonah, 'What should we do to you so that the sea will calm down for us?'"
Jonah 1:12
for I know that it is because of me that this great storm is happening to you
"because I know this huge storm is my fault"
Jonah 1:13
Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to get themselves back to the land
The men did not want to throw Jonah into the sea, so they rowed hard as if they were digging into the water to get back to land.
the sea was becoming more and more violent
"the storm became worse, and the waves became bigger"
Jonah 1:14
General Information:
Even though the men knew that Jonah was guilty of sin against Yahweh, they thought they would be guilty of murder if they threw him off the boat.
Therefore
"Because of this" or "Because the sea became more violent"
they cried out to Yahweh
"the men prayed to Yahweh"
do not let us perish on account of this man's life
"Please do not kill us because we caused this man to die" or "We are going to cause this man to die. But please do not kill us"
do not put innocent blood on us
Blood is a metonym for the death of a person, and to put or lay blood on people is to make them responsible for that person's death. Alternate translation: "do not make us responsible for the death of an innocent man"
Jonah 1:15
the sea stopped raging
"the sea stopped moving violently" or "the sea became calm"
Jonah 1:16
feared Yahweh very much
"became greatly awed at Yahweh's power"
Jonah 1:17
General Information:
Some versions number this verse as the first verse of

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chapter 2. You may want to number the verses according to the main version that your language group uses.

Now

This word is used in English to introduce a new part of the story.

three days and three nights

"three days and nights"

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2 [1]Then Jonah prayed to Yahweh his God from the fish's stomach.[2]He said,
"I called out to Yahweh about my distress
and he answered me;
from the belly of Sheol I cried out for help!
You heard my voice.
[3] You had thrown me into the depths,
into the heart of the seas,
and the currents surrounded me;
all your waves and billows
passed over me.

[4] I said, 'I am driven out
from before your eyes;
yet I will again look
toward your holy temple.'

[5] The waters closed around me up to my neck;
the deep was all around me;
seaweed wrapped around my head.

[6] I went down to the bases of the mountains;
the earth with its bars closed upon me forever.
Yet you brought up my life from the pit,
Yahweh, my God!

[7] When my soul fainted within me,
I called Yahweh to mind;
then my prayer came to you
to your holy temple.

[8] They give attention to meaningless gods
while they abandon covenant faithfulness.

[9] But as for me, I will sacrifice to you
with a voice of thanksgiving;
I will fulfill that which I have vowed.
Salvation comes from Yahweh!"

[10]Then Yahweh spoke to the fish, and it vomited up Jonah upon the dry land.

Jonah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with a prayer by Jonah, and many translators have chosen to set it apart by setting its lines farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. Translators can follow this practice, but they are not obligated to.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sea

This chapter contains many terms from the sea.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Poetry

Prayers in Scripture often contain a poetic form. Poetry frequently uses metaphors to communicate something with a special meaning. For example, since Jonah was in a fish in the sea, being trapped is compared to a prison. Jonah is overwhelmed by the depth of the sea and expresses this by speaking about the at the "base of the mountains" and in the

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"belly of Sheol."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Repentance

Scholars are divided over whether Jonah's repentance was genuine or whether he was trying to save his life. In light of his attitude in chapter 4, it is uncertain if he was genuinely repentant. If possible, it is best for translators to avoid making a definitive stance on whether Jonah's repentance was genuine. (See: repent and save)

Links:

Jonah 2:1 Notes

Jonah 2:1

Yahweh his God

This means "Yahweh, the God he worshiped." The word "his" does not mean that Jonah owned God.

Jonah 2:2

He said

"Jonah said"

I called out to Yahweh about my distress

"I prayed to Yahweh about my great trouble." Even though Jonah was praying to Yahweh, he used Yahweh's name here and not "you." Alternate translation: "Yahweh, I called out to you about my distress"

he answered me

"Yahweh responded to me" or "he helped me"

from the belly of Sheol

"from the center of Sheol" or "from the deep part of Sheol." Possible meanings are 1) Jonah was speaking as being in the belly of the whale was being in Sheol or 2) Jonah believed that he was about to die and go to Sheol or 3) He spoke as if he already had died and gone there.

Jonah 2:3

General Information:

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in Jonah 2:2. In verse 4 Jonah spoke of something he had prayed before this prayer.

into the depths, into the heart of the seas

This speaks of the vastness of the ocean Jonah was in.

into the heart of the seas

"to the bottom of the sea"

the currents surrounded me

"the sea water closed in around me"

waves and billows

These are disturbances on the surface of the ocean.

Jonah 2:4

I am driven out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You have driven me away" or "You have sent me away"

from before your eyes

Here Yahweh is represented by his "eyes." Alternate translation: "from you"

yet I will again look toward your holy temple

Jonah has hope that, in spite of all he is going through, he will see the temple.

Jonah 2:5

General Information:

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in Jonah 2:2.

The waters

"The waters" refers to the sea.

my neck

Some versions understand the Hebrew word in this expression to mean "my life." In that interpretation, the waters were about to take away Jonah's life.

the deep was all around me

"the deep water was all around me"

seaweed

grass that grows in the sea

Jonah 2:6

the earth with its bars closed upon me forever

Jonah used a metaphor to compare the earth to a prison. Alternate translation: "the earth was like a prison that was about to lock me in forever"

Yet you brought up my life from the pit

Jonah speaks of the place of the dead as if it were a pit. Alternate translation: "But you saved my life from the place of the dead" or "But you saved me from the place where the dead people are"

Yahweh, my God!

In some languages, it may be more natural to put this at the beginning of the sentence or next to the word "you."

Jonah 2:7

General Information:

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in Jonah 2:2.

I called Yahweh to mind

Since Jonah was praying to Yahweh, it might be more clear in some languages to say "I thought about you, Yahweh" or "Yahweh, I thought about you."

then my prayer came to you, to your holy temple

Jonah speaks as if his prayers could travel to God and his temple. Alternate translation: "then you in your holy temple heard my prayer"

Jonah 2:8

They give attention to meaningless gods

"People pay attention to meaningless gods"

they abandon covenant faithfulness

Possible meanings are 1) "they stop being faithful" or 2) "they reject your mercy"

Jonah 2:9

General Information:

This is a continuation of Jonah's prayer that started in Jonah 2:2.

But as for me, I

This expression in English shows that there is a contrast between the people Jonah had just spoken about and himself. They paid attention to useless gods, but he would worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "But I"

I will sacrifice to you with a voice of thanksgiving

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This means that Jonah would thank God while he offered a sacrifice to him. It is not clear whether Jonah planned to thank God by singing or shouting joyfully.

I will fulfill that which I have vowed

"I will do what I said I would do"

Salvation comes from Yahweh

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "salvation" is expressed as the verb "save." "Yahweh is the one who saves people"

Jonah 2:10

upon the dry land

"upon the ground" or "onto the shore"

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3 [1]The word of Yahweh came to Jonah a second time, saying,[2]"Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I command you to give."[3]So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh, according to the word of Yahweh. Now Nineveh was a very large city, one of three days' journey.
[4]Jonah began to enter the city and after a day's journey he called out and said, "In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown."[5]The people of Nineveh believed God and they proclaimed a fast. They all put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them down to the least of them.
[6]Soon the news reached the king of Nineveh. He rose up from his throne, took off his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.[7]He sent out a proclamation that said, "In Nineveh, by the authority of the king and his nobles: 'Do not let any man or animal, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not eat, nor drink water.
[8]But let both man and animal be covered with sackcloth and let them cry out loudly to God. Let each one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.[9]Who knows? God may relent and change his mind and turn away from his fierce anger so that we do not perish.'"

[10]God saw their deeds, that they turned from their evil ways. So then God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Jonah 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter returns to a narrative of Jonah's life.

Special concepts in this chapter

Animals

According to the king's proclamation, the animals had to participate in the fast he ordered. This most likely reflects their pagan mindset. There was nothing in the law of Moses that instructed the people to have the animals participate in any religious acts. (See: lawofmoses)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Size of Nineveh

When the author talks about the size of Nineveh, the measurements he gives are confusing. The phrase "three days' journey" is ambiguous in Hebrew, as many scholars have remarked. In Jonah's day, cities were not as big as they are today. So although Nineveh was a big city, it was not as big as most modern cities.

God repenting or relenting

The last verse of this chapter says, "So then God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it." This concept of God changing his mind may be troubling for some translators and people may struggle to understand it. God's character is consistent. This whole book is written from a human viewpoint and so it is hard to understand the mind of God.
Yahweh is just and merciful so even though God did not follow through with a judgment in this instance, God's plan is always to punish evil. Later in history this nation did fall and was destroyed. (See: justice, mercy and judge and evil)

Links:

Jonah 3:1 Notes

Jonah 3:1

The word of Yahweh came

This is an idiom that means Yahweh spoke. See how you translated this in [Jonah 1:1]

Jonah 3:2

Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city

"Go to the important city of Nineveh"

Get up

This refers to leaving the place one is at.

proclaim to it the message that I command you to give

"tell the people what I tell you to tell them"

Jonah 3:3

the word of Yahweh

Here "word" represents Yahweh's message. Alternate translation: "the message of Yahweh"

So Jonah got up and went to Nineveh, according to the word of Yahweh

"This time Jonah obeyed Yahweh and went to Nineveh"

Jonah got up

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"Jonah left the beach." The words "got up" refer to preparing to go somewhere.

Now

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to information about Nineveh.

one of three days' journey

"a city of three days' journey." A person had to walk for three days to completely go through it.

Jonah 3:4

after a day's journey he called out

Possible meanings are 1) "after Jonah walked a day's journey he called out" or 2) "while Jonah walked on the first day, he called out."

after a day's journey

"after a day's walk." A day's journey is the distance that people would normally travel in one day. Alternate translation: "after Jonah walked for one day"

he called out and said

"he proclaimed" or "he shouted"

forty days

"40 days"

Jonah 3:5

They all put on sackcloth

Why people put on sackcloth can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "They also put on coarse cloth to show that they were sorry for having sinned"

from the greatest of them down to the least of them

"from the most significant to the least significant people" or "including all the important people and all the unimportant people"

Jonah 3:6

the news

"Jonah's message"

He rose up from his throne

"He got up from his throne" or "He stood up from his throne." The king left his throne to show that he was acting humbly.

throne

A throne is a chair that the king sits on. It shows that he is the king.

Jonah 3:7

He sent out a proclamation that said

"He sent out an official announcement that said" or "He sent his messengers to announce to the people in Nineveh"

nobles

important men who helped the king rule the city

herd nor flock

This refers to two kinds of animals that people care for. Alternate translation: "cattle or sheep"

Let them not eat, nor drink water

"They must not eat nor drink anything." The reason they were not to eat or drink anything can be made explicit by adding "in order to show that they are sorry for their sins."

Jonah 3:8

General Information:

This is a continuation of what the king told the people of Nineveh.

But let both

"Let both"

let both man and animal be covered with sackcloth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let people and animals wear sackcloth" or "let people cover themselves and their animals with sackcloth"

animal

The word "animal" refers to animals that people own.

cry out loudly to God

"pray earnestly to God." What they were to pray for can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "cry out loudly to God and ask for mercy"

the violence that is in his hands

This means "the violent things that he does"

Jonah 3:9

Who knows?

The king used this rhetorical question to get the people to think about something that they might not have thought possible, that if they would stop sinning, God might not kill them. It could be translated as a statement: "We do not know." Or it could be stated as a word and be part of the next sentence: "Perhaps."

God may relent and change his mind

"God may decide to do something different" or "God may not do what he said he will do"

we do not perish

"we do not die." Here perish equates to drowning at sea.

Jonah 3:10

God saw their deeds

"God saw what they did" or "God understood that they had stopped doing evil actions"

they turned from their evil ways

The author speaks of the people stop sinning as if they turned their back to an object.

God changed his mind about the punishment that he had said he would do to them

Here God deciding not to do the punishment he had planned is spoken of is if he changed his mind. Alternate translation: "God changed his thinking about the punishment that he had said he would do to them" or "God decided not to punish them as he had said he would"

he did not do it

What God was to do can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he did not punish them" or "he did not destroy them"

---

4 [1]But this displeased Jonah and he became very angry.[2]So Jonah prayed to Yahweh and said, "Ah, Yahweh, is this not just what I said when I was back in my own country? That is why I acted first and tried to flee to Tarshish—because I knew that you are a gracious God, compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and you hold back from sending disaster.[3]Therefore now, Yahweh, I beg you, take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."
[4]Yahweh said, "Is it good that you are so angry?"[5]Then Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made a shelter and sat under it in the shade so that he could see what might become of the city.

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[6]Yahweh God appointed a plant and made it grow up over Jonah so that it might be a shade over his head to relieve him of his distress. Jonah was very glad because of the plant.[7]But God appointed a worm at sunrise the next morning. It attacked the plant and the plant withered.
[8]It came about that when the sun rose the next morning, God appointed a hot east wind. Also, the sun beat down on Jonah's head and he became faint. Then Jonah wished that he might die. He said to himself, "It is better for me to die than to live."[9]Then God said to Jonah, "Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?" Then Jonah said, "It is good that I am angry, even to death."
[10]Yahweh said, "You have had compassion for the plant, for which you have not labored, nor did you make it grow. It grew up in a night and died in a night.[11]So as for me, should I not have compassion for Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 people who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left hand, and also many animals?"

Jonah 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jonah continues the narrative while bringing the book to what seems like an unusual end. This emphasizes that the book is not really about Jonah. It is about God's desire to be merciful on anyone, whether Jew or pagan. (See: mercy)

Special concepts in this chapter

Jonah's anger

It is important to see the relationship between a prophet and Yahweh. Aprophet was to prophesy for Yahweh, and his words must come true. According to the law of Moses, if that did not happen, the penalty was death. When Jonah told the city of Nineveh that it was going to be destroyed in forty days, he was certain it was going to happen. When it did not happen, Jonah was angry with God because he hated the people of Nineveh. (See: prophet and lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

As in other places, Jonah asks rhetorical questions to show how angry he was at Yahweh.

Parallel to Mount Sinai

In verse 2, Jonah attributes a series of characteristics to God. A Jewish reader of this book would recognize this as a formula Moses used in speaking about God when he was meeting God on Mount Sinai.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

God's grace

When Jonah went outside the city, he got very hot and God graciously provided some relief through the plant. God was trying to teach Jonah through an object lesson. It is important for the reader to see this clearly. (See: grace)

Links:

Jonah 4:1 Notes

Jonah 4:2

Ah, Yahweh

The word "Ah" expresses Jonah's feeling of frustration.

is this not just what I said when I was back in my own country?

Jonah used this rhetorical question to show God how angry he was. Also, what Jonah said when he was back in his own country can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "When I was still in my own country I knew that if I warned the people of Nineveh, they would repent, and you would not destroy them"

because I knew that you are a gracious God ... and you hold back from sending disaster

This was Jonah's reason for going to Tarshish instead of to Nineveh. He did not want to go to Nineveh and preach to the people there, because he did not want them to turn from their sins, and he did not want God to be kind to them.

abounding in steadfast love

The abstract noun "love" can be expressed with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "always willing to love people without ceasing"

you hold back from sending disaster

God sends disaster on sinners to punish them. But if sinners repent from their sin, he forgives them and does not send disaster. This implicit information can be expressed more clearly. Alternate translation: "you forgive people and do not send disaster on them"

Jonah 4:3

take my life from me

Jonah's reason for wanting to die can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "since you will not destroy Nineveh as you said you would, please allow me to die"

for it is better for me to die than to live

"I would prefer to die than live" or "because I want to die. I do not want to live"

Jonah 4:4

Is it good that you are so angry?

God used this rhetorical question to scold Jonah for being angry about something he should not have been angry about. Alternate translation: "Your anger is not good."

Jonah 4:5

went out of the city

"left the city of Nineveh"

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what might become of the city
"what would happen to the city." Jonah wanted to see if God would destroy the city or not destroy it.
Jonah 4:6
over Jonah so that it might be a shade over his head
"over Jonah's head for shade"
to relieve him of his distress
"to keep Jonah from suffering from the heat of the sun"
Jonah 4:7
But God appointed a worm
"God sent a worm"
It attacked the plant
"The worm chewed the plant"
the plant withered
The plant became dry and died. Alternate translation: "the plant died"
Jonah 4:8
God appointed a hot east wind
God caused a hot wind from the east to blow on Jonah. If in your language wind can only mean a cool or cold wind, then you may need to use a different word. Alternate translation: "God sent a very hot warmth from the east to Jonah"
the sun beat down
"the sun was very hot"
on Jonah's head
Jonah may have felt the heat most on his head. Alternate translation: "on Jonah"
he became faint
"he became very weak" or "he lost his strength"
It is better for me to die than to live
"I would prefer to die than live" or "Because I want to die. I do not want to live." See how you translated this in Jonah 4:3.
Jonah 4:9
Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?
God challenges Jonah for being angry that the plant died and yet wanted God to kill the people of Nineveh. Alternate translation: "Your anger about the plant dying is not good."
Is it good that you are so angry about the plant?
implicit information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You should be more concerned about the people in Nineveh dying than about the plant dying."
It is good that I am angry, even to death.
"It is good that I am angry. Now I am angry enough to die!"
Jonah 4:10
Yahweh said
It may be helpful to say that Yahweh was speaking to Jonah. Alternate translation: "Yahweh said to Jonah"
Jonah 4:11
should I not have compassion for Nineveh, that great city ... animals?
God used this question to emphasize his claim that he should have compassion on Nineveh. Alternate translation: "I certainly should have compassion for Nineveh, that important city ... animals."
in which there are more
This can also be the beginning of a new sentence. Alternate translation: "There are more" or "It has more"
who do not know the difference between their right hand and their left hand
This may be a way of saying "they cannot tell the difference between right and wrong."
also many animals
The author is pointing out the depth of Nineveh's repentance to the extent that Yahweh takes note of the animals' participation in the act of repentance.

Introduction to Micah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Micah

God promises to punish the northern and southern kingdoms (1:1–16) Those who take advantage of others are guilty (2:1-3:12) Rich people who oppress poor people (2:1–11) Promise to be delivered and restored (2:12–13) Rulers, priests, and prophets condemned (3:1–12)

Yahweh's victory for all Israel

(4:1-5:15) Yahweh will rule over all the nations (4:1–10) Israel will be destroyed, then will be victorious over its enemies (4:11–13) Messiah will shepherd his flock and devastate the nations who fought against him (5:1–6) Messiah will destroy everything that harmed his people (5:7–15)

Yahweh's case against Israel

(6:1-16) Yahweh reminds Israel when he led them out of slavery in Egypt (6:1–5) Israel punished; true repentance (6:6–16)

Israel miserable and Israel restored

(7:1-20) Israel broken and miserable (7:1–7) Israel will rise again (7:8–13) Yahweh restores and gives grace (7:14–20)

What is the Book of Micah about?

This book contains many of Micah's prophecies. Micah repeated many similar prophecies as found in Isaiah. Micah warned the kingdoms of Israel and Judah that the Assyrians would soon attack them. Micah condemned those who acted unjustly and immorally. He spoke against those who did not work for a living. He also spoke against the false prophets in Israel and Judah. These false prophets were telling the people that Yahweh would never let a foreign kingdom harm or conquer them.

Micah called the people to please Yahweh by living righteous and holy lives. However, the sinful way they lived and the unjust way they treated their fellow countrymen proved that they no longer wanted to obey and honor Yahweh. (See:

prophet, justice, righteous and holy and faith)

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may decide to translate the traditional title "The Book of Micah" or just "Micah" in a way that is clearer to the readers. They may decide to call it "The Sayings of Micah."

Who wrote Micah?

The prophet Micah probably wrote this book. Micah lived at the same time as Isaiah and Hosea. This was sometime between 750 and 700 B.C., during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. He began prophesying when he lived in the northern kingdom of Israel. Then he moved to the kingdom of Judah.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who is the deliverer Micah mentions?

Micah frequently mentioned a king who would deliver the people. It is clear that Micah meant the Messiah, the descendant of David who would rule forever, though he never referred to him as the Messiah. (See: deliverer and christ)

Were the Israelites required to offer sacrifices or live holy lives to please Yahweh?

Many of the Old Testament writers were concerned with offering sacrifices according to the law of Moses. However, Micah explained to the people that Yahweh was pleased only when they offered these sacrifices in faith. Without faith, the sacrifices had no meaning. (See: lawofmoses and justice)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why does Micah 1:10-16 sound unusual?

This passage sounds unusual because of how it is constructed in Hebrew. It includes what is called a play on words. The names of the cities were used to describe how they would be destroyed. For example, in Hebrew "Lachish" sounds like "to the chariots." This is a poetic form that might not be the actual way they would be punished.

What does a translator need to know before translating Micah?

Micah did not often explain how his prophecies were historically situated. This may result in the translator failing to understand implicit information unless they understand Micah's time. It is therefore suggested that translators understand well the history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (See: prophet)

How do I translate passages where the speaker or addressee is not mentioned explicitly?

Micah did not usually say who was speaking or who was being addressed. Reading the verses before and after the quote will often help the reader to understand who is speaking or being addressed. It is acceptable to make this information explicit so the reader can more easily understand it.

How should the text of Micah be formatted?

The ULB uses a poetic language style like the Hebrew text. Many languages can do this but some languages will not be able to do this. The ULB also sets apart the poetic portions of the text by setting the poetic lines farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. With the exception of the first verse, the entire book is indented because the prophecies were written as a series of poems.

Micah

1 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

[2] Listen, all you peoples.
    Listen, earth, and all that is in you.
Let the Lord Yahweh be a witness against you,
    the Lord from his holy temple.

[3] Look, Yahweh comes out of his place;
    he will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.

[4] The mountains will melt under him;
    the valleys will break apart,
like wax before fire,
    like waters that are poured down a steep place.

[5] All this is because of Jacob's transgression,
    and because of the sins of the house of Israel.
What is Jacob's transgression?
    Is it not Samaria?
What is Judah's high place?

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Is it not Jerusalem?

6 "I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field,
a place for planting vineyards,
and I will pour her stones down into the valley
and I will uncover her foundations.

7 All her carved figures will be broken to pieces,
and all her gifts that she received will be burned with fire,
and I will make all her idols desolate.
Since she gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes,
they will become the wages of prostitutes again."

8 For this reason I will lament and wail;
I will go barefoot and naked;
I will wail like the jackals
and mourn like owls.

9 For her wound is incurable,
for it has come to Judah.
It has reached the gate of my people,
to Jerusalem.

10 Do not tell about it in Gath;
do not weep at all.
At Beth Leaphrah
I roll myself in the dust.

11 Pass by, inhabitants of Shaphir,
in nakedness and shame.
The inhabitants of Zaanan
do not come out.
Beth Ezel mourns,
for their protection is taken away.

12 For the inhabitants of Maroth
wait anxiously for good news,
because disaster has come down from Yahweh
to the gates of Jerusalem.

13 Harness the chariot to the team of horses,
inhabitants of Lachish.
You, Lachish, were the beginning of sin for the daughter of Zion,
for the transgressions of Israel were found in you.

14 So you will give parting gifts
to Moresheth Gath;
the houses of Akzib will disappoint
the kings of Israel.

15 I will again bring a conqueror to you,
inhabitants of Mareshah;
the splendor of Israel
will come to Adullam.

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16 Shave your head and cut off your hair
for the children in whom you delight.
Make yourself as bald as eagles,
for your children will go into exile from you.

Micah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Micah is written mainly in a poetic form. Most of the prophets wrote to either the Northern Kingdom or the Southern Kingdom. Micah wrote to both of them at times without clear distinction, as he did in this chapter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

City Names

This passage sounds unusual in English because of its construction in Hebrew. It contains several "puns" or "plays on words." The names of the cities are used to describe their destruction. "Lachish will be lashed" is an example of this type of construction. This poetic element might metaphors describing the actual way they will be punished.

Links:

Micah 1:1 Notes Micah intro

Micah 1:1

General Information:

God speaks through Micah to the people of Israel using poetry.

the word of Yahweh that came

This idiom is used to explain that a God gave a message to someone. Alternate translation: "the message that Yahweh spoke"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Moresheth

This is a town in Judah.

in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah

"when Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah"

which he saw

"which he heard in a vision"

Micah 1:2

General Information:

Micah 1:2-7 is about God's judgment on Samaria.

Listen, all you peoples. Listen, earth, and all that is in you

This begins Micah's prophecy. Micah speaks to the people of Samaria as if all the people of the earth and even the earth itself were able to hear him.

Micah 1:3

he will come down and tread on the high places of the earth

Micah speaks as if Yahweh were a mighty soldier coming down from heaven and beginning to march on top of the mountains.

he will ... tread

"he will ... march"

the high places of the earth

"the high mountains"

Micah 1:4

The mountains will melt under him; the valleys will break apart, like wax before fire, like waters that are poured down a steep place

Micah speaks as if Yahweh were a hot, solid object that melted the earth as it moved. Alternate translation: "He will crush the mountains and the valleys as he marches over them; he will destroy them, and they will completely disappear"

Micah 1:5

because of the sins of the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house, in this case the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "because the people of Israel have sinned against me"

All this is

"The Lord will come and judge"

What is Jacob's transgression?

The name "Jacob" is a metonym for those of his descendants who live in the northern kingdom of Israel.

Is it not Samaria?

Here "Samaria" is a metonym for the evil activities that take place there. Micah uses a question to emphasize that the people know what the truth is. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that it is Samaria."

What is Judah's high place?

Here "high place" is a synecdoche for the entire system of idol worship. "Judah" is a metonym for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "Where do the people of Judah go to worship idols?"

Is it not Jerusalem?

Here "Jerusalem" is a metonym for the evil activities that take place there. Micah uses a question to emphasize that the people know what the truth is. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that it is Jerusalem."

Micah 1:6

I will make

Here "I" refers to Yahweh.

Samaria ... her stones ... her foundations

Yahweh speaks of Samaria as if the city were a woman. Alternate translation: "Samaria ... its stones ... the

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foundations of the buildings in the city"

I will pour her stones

Here "her" refers to the city of Samaria.

Micah 1:7

her carved figures ... her gifts that she received ... her idols

Yahweh speaks of Samaria as if the city were a woman. Alternate translation: "the carved figures in the city ... the gifts that people gave to the temple in the city ... the idols in the city"

All her carved figures will be broken to pieces

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will break all her carved figures to pieces"

all her gifts ... will be burned with fire

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will burn with fire all the gifts that she received"

she received

"people gave her"

I will make all her idols desolate

Making desolate is a metaphor for destroying. Alternate translation: "I will destroy all her idols"

Since she gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes, they will become the wages of prostitutes again

Yahweh speaks of the people giving gifts to idols as if the people were hiring prostitutes. When the Assyrians destroy Samaria, they will take to Assyria the gifts the people of Samaria gave to their idols and give them as gifts to their own idols.

Micah 1:8

General Information:

Micah 1:8-16 is about God's judgment on Judah.

I will lament

Here "I" refers to Micah.

I will lament and wail

"Lament" refers to the inner feeling of sadness, and "wail" refers to the activity of making a loud, sad sound.

I will go barefoot and naked

This is a sign of extreme mourning and distress. Another possible meaning is "I will look like someone has taken off my clothes; I will be naked"

naked

probably wearing only a loincloth

like the jackals ... like owls

Jackals and owls live in wastelands, and their loud cries sound like people wailing or weeping.

Micah 1:9

For her wound is incurable

Here "her" refers to the city of Samaria. This means nothing can stop the enemy army from destroying the people who live there.

for it has come to Judah

Micah uses contagious disease as a metaphor for the army that Yahweh has sent to judge Samaria. Here "it" refers to the "wound," that is, to the army that God will use to punish Samaria.

Micah 1:10

Beth Leaphrah

You may want to make a footnote saying, "The name of this city means 'house of dust.'"

I roll myself in the dust

People under God's judgment are expressing their grief in a strong way. Alternate translation: "I roll myself on the ground" or "I roll myself in the mud"

Micah 1:11

General Information:

The meanings of the names of the villages is important to Micah here. You may want to include the meanings of the names of the places in a footnote.

Shaphir

The name of this city sounds like one meaning "beautiful." It contrasts with "nakedness and shame."

in nakedness and shame

This idiom makes explicit that the people will be totally naked. Alternate translation: "totally naked and ashamed"

Zaanan

The name of this city means "go out." They are too afraid to go out and help.

Beth Ezel

The name of this city means "house of taking away."

for their protection is taken away

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for I have taken away everything that might protect them"

Micah 1:12

Maroth

The name of this city means "bitterness."

disaster has come down from Yahweh

The abstract noun "disaster" is spoken of here as a solid object rolling down a hill. It can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has caused bad things to happen"

Micah 1:13

Lachish

The name "Lachish" sounds like "to the chariots" in Hebrew. The people are hitching their chariots to flee, not fight. Lachish was the most important city after Jerusalem in Judah.

the daughter of Zion

The word "daughter" is a metonym for the people of the city. Alternate translation: "the people of Zion" or "the people who live in Zion"

for the transgressions of Israel were found in you

This idiom can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "for you disobeyed like the people of Israel did"

Micah 1:14

Moresheth Gath

You may want to add a footnote saying "The name 'Moresheth' means 'to depart.' It is also similar in sound to the word for 'fiancée.'" In this metaphor, Moresheth is the bride that Assyria takes, and the "parting gift" is the dowry, the gift her family gives for her to take into the marriage.

houses of Akzib

The word "houses" here is a metonym for the people who live in the houses. Alternate translation: "people of Akzib" or "town of Akzib"

Akzib

You may want to add a footnote saying "This name sounds almost the same as the Hebrew expression for 'deceitful thing.'"

Micah 1:15

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I will again bring
Here "I" refers to Yahweh.
Mareshah
You may want to make a footnote saying, "The name of this village sounds like the Hebrew word for 'conqueror.'"
Adullam
This is the name of a royal city in Philistia.
Micah 1:16
Shave your head and cut off your hair
Israelites who were mourning would shave bald spots on their heads. Possible meanings are 1) "Shave larger spots than usual on your heads" or 2) "Cut off all your hair and shave your heads," stating the events in the order in which they were to occur.
eagles
This word can also be translated "vultures."

2 1 Woe to those who plan iniquity,
to those who plan on their beds to do evil.
In the morning light they do it
because they have power.

2 They desire fields and seize them;
they desire houses and take them.
They oppress a man and his house,
a man and his inheritance.

3 Therefore Yahweh says this,
"Look, I am planning to bring disaster against this clan,
from which you will not remove your necks.
You will not walk arrogantly,
for it will be an evil time.
4 In that day men will sing a taunting song about you,
and lament with a wailing lamentation.
They will sing, 'We Israelites are completely ruined;
Yahweh changes the portion of my people.
How can he remove it from me?
He portions out our fields to traitors!'"

5 Therefore, you rich people will have no descendants
to divide up the territory by lot in the assembly of Yahweh.

6 "Do not prophesy," their prophets say.
"They must not prophesy these things;
disgrace will not overtake us."

7 Should it really be said, house of Jacob,
"Is the Spirit of Yahweh impatient?
Are these really his deeds?"

Do not my words do good
to anyone who walks uprightly?

8 Lately my people have risen up
like an enemy.
You strip the robe, the garment,
from those who pass by unsuspectingly,
as soldiers return from war to what they think is safety.

9 You drive the women belonging to my people
from their pleasant houses;

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you take my splendor
from their young children forever.

10 Get up and leave,
for this is not a place where you can rest,
because of its uncleanness;
it is destroyed with complete destruction.

11 If someone comes to you in a spirit of falsehood and lies and says,
"I will prophesy to you about wine and strong drink,"
he would be considered to be a prophet for this people.

12 I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob.
I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.
I will bring them together like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in the midst of their pasture.
There will be a loud noise
because of the multitude of people.

13 Someone who breaks open their way for them
will go ahead of them.
They break through the gate and go out;
their king will pass on before them.
Yahweh will be at their head.

Micah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues using poetic forms in communicating that people who take advantage of others are guilty of sin and injustice. (See: guilt and sin and justice)

Special concepts in this chapter

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Context

Micah does not frequently explain the historical context of his prophecies. This may result in the translator failing to understand implicit information. Additional research may be needed regarding the time period of Micah's ministry. Therefore, translators have a good understanding of the history of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Links:

Micah 2:1 Notes

Micah 2:1

General Information:

Micah speaks against the leaders in Israel who are taking advantage of the poor and not following God's commands.

Micah 2:2

They oppress a man

"They oppress any man they choose to oppress." This is a generalization. Micah is not speaking of one individual man here.

Micah 2:3

General Information:

Micah begins to quote a long speech by Yahweh.

Look

"Listen carefully" or "Pay attention"

disaster

See how you translated this in Micah 1:12.

this clan

This "clan" refers to the entire community of Israel, whose rich people are oppressing the poor. The sins of the leaders are coming back on the whole nation.

from which you will not remove your necks

Yahweh speaks of punishing the people as if he were putting a yoke around their necks. Alternate translation: "from which you will not be able to escape"

Micah 2:4

General Information:

Micah continues quoting Yahweh's speech to the people.

sing a taunting song about you

"sing a song to make fun of you"

lament with a wailing lamentation

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"they will cry loudly." They are pretending to mourn, as if those they love have died.

We Israelites ... to traitors

This is the song that the enemies will sing to make fun of the Israelites and laugh as the Israelites suffer.

Yahweh changes the portion of my people

This is probably a euphemism that means that Yahweh has given the land to other people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gives away the land that belongs to my people"

How can he remove it from me?

The enemy mocks the surprise the rich leaders of Israel feel because God has taken their land and given it to someone else just as they had taken the land from the poor. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "How wrong he is to take it from me!"

Micah 2:5

General Information:

Micah continues quoting Yahweh's speech to the people.

Therefore, you rich people will have no descendants to divide up the territory by lot in the assembly of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) Micah looks forward to a time after the exile when those who return will divide up the land or 2) he is speaking of a custom of his time when the tribe or clan would divide up their land and give it to individuals.

Micah 2:6

General Information:

Micah continues quoting Yahweh's speech to the people. Here Yahweh speaks to false prophets, as well as to the rich who have abused their power.

Do not prophesy

The speakers are speaking to Micah and others, so this is plural.

They must not prophesy

"The prophets must not prophesy"

disgrace will not overtake us

Disgrace is spoken of as if it were a robber chasing a person. It can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "we will not be disgraced"

Micah 2:7

General Information:

Micah continues quoting Yahweh's speech to the people, specifically to false prophets, as well as to the rich who have abused their power.

Should it really be said, ... "Is the Spirit of Yahweh impatient? Are these really his deeds?"

Micah is using a rhetorical question to scold the Israelites, who themselves are asking rhetorical questions to deny that Yahweh is angry with them. This can be translated as a series of statements, and Micah's question can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Should you really ask, ... 'Is the Spirit of Yahweh impatient? Are these really his deeds?'" or "You should not say, ... 'The Spirit of Yahweh is not impatient. These are not really his deeds'"

house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob"

"Is the Spirit of Yahweh impatient? Are these really his deeds?"

Possible meanings are 1) these are real questions and the people really do not know if they are seeing Yahweh act, or 2) these are rhetorical questions and the people do not believe that Yahweh is really punishing them.

Do not my words do good to anyone who walks uprightly?

Micah uses a question to teach the people. It can bee translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "My message does good to those who walk uprightly."

Micah 2:8

General Information:

Micah continues quoting Yahweh's speech to the people, specifically to false prophets, as well as to the rich who have abused their power.

my people

This refers to either 1) Micah's people or 2) Yahweh's people.

You strip the robe, the garment, from those who pass by unsuspectingly

Possible meanings are 1) the wicked rich people are literally stealing robes from the poor or 2) creditors are keeping the outer garments of the poor who come to borrow money and give the garment as assurance they will repay.

Micah 2:9

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the wicked rich people in Israel.

you take my splendor from their young children forever

The word "splendor" refers, in general, to blessings God has given to his people. It might refer to 1) being landowners in Israel, 2) a promising future or 3) to the children's fathers, farmers who worked hard to establish the nation.

Micah 2:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the wicked rich people in Israel.

it is destroyed with complete destruction

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will completely destroy it"

Micah 2:11

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the wicked rich people in Israel.

comes to you ... will prophesy to you

Micah is speaking to the people of Judah, so both instances of "you" are plural.

he would be considered

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people would consider him" or "you would consider him"

Micah 2:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking. At the end of this chapter, Yahweh shows himself to be a shepherd who protects his people. He may especially be addressing those in Jerusalem who have returned from Assyria.

all of you, Jacob

Micah is speaking to some of the descendants of Jacob, so the word "you" is plural.

Micah 2:13

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General Information:
Yahweh continues speaking. At the end of this chapter, Yahweh shows himself to be a shepherd who protects his people. He may especially be addressing those in Jerusalem who have returned from Assyria.
Someone who breaks open their way ... Yahweh will be at their head.
This is a picture of a king leading his people out of an enclosed city.

3 [1]I said,
"Now listen, you leaders of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel:
Is it not right for you to understand justice?
[2] You who hate good and love evil,
you who tear off their skin,
their flesh from their bones—

[3] you who also eat the flesh of my people,
and tear off their skin,
break their bones,
and chop them in pieces,
just like meat for a pot,
just like meat in a cauldron.

[4] Then you rulers will cry out to Yahweh,
but he will not answer you.
He will hide his face from you at that time,
because you have done evil deeds."

[5]Yahweh says this,
"As for the prophets
who lead my people astray,
if one gives them something to eat,
they proclaim, 'Peace.'
But if he puts nothing in their mouths,
they dedicate themselves to wage war on him.
[6] Therefore, it will be night for you with no vision for you;
it will be dark so that you will do no divination.
The sun will go down on the prophets,
and the day will be dark on them.

[7] The seers will be put to shame,
and the diviners will be embarrassed.
All of them will cover their lips,
for there is no answer from God."

[8] But as for me, I am full of power by the Spirit of Yahweh,
and am full of justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression,
and to Israel his sin.

[9] Now listen to this,
you leaders of the house of Jacob,
and rulers of the house of Israel,
you who detest justice,
and pervert everything that is right.

[10] You build Zion with blood

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and Jerusalem with iniquity.

11 Your leaders judge for a bribe,
and your priests teach for a price,
and your prophets do divination for money.
Yet you rely on Yahweh and say,
"Is not Yahweh with us?
No evil will come on us."

12 Therefore, because of you,
Zion will become a plowed field,
Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble,
and the hill of the temple
will become high places of a thicket.

Micah 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

An unjust society was considered sinful. It was considered to be against the law of Moses. If these kingdoms did not have justice, they were not obedient to Yahweh. (See: justice and sin and lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

There are vivid pictures used in this chapter which show how the leaders of the people were treating the Israelites. These situations are absurd unless taken as a metaphor.

Links:

Micah 3:1 Notes

Micah 3:1

General Information:

Chapter 3 focuses on the corrupt leaders in Israel.

I said

Here "I" refers to Micah.

Is it not right for you to understand justice?

Micah is scolding the leaders. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You act as though you think it is wrong for you to understand justice."

Micah 3:2

Connecting Statement:

Micah begins to compare the leaders of Israel to butchers.

hate good and love evil

These nominal adjectives can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "hate everything that is good and love everything that is evil"

you who tear off their skin, their flesh from their bones

A butcher cutting up animals into meat is a metaphor for the leaders being cruel to the poor.

Micah 3:3

Connecting Statement:

Micah finishes comparing the leaders of Israel to butchers.

just like meat in a cauldron

A butcher cutting up animals into meat is a metaphor for the leaders being cruel to the poor.

Micah 3:4

General Information:

Micah continues speaking.

cry out to Yahweh

"shout to Yahweh for help"

he will not answer you

"he will not do what you ask him to do"

He will hide his face from you

Hiding the face is a metaphor for refusing to listen. Alternate translation: "He will turn his face away from you and cover it" or "You will see that he has no desire to help you"

Micah 3:5

General Information:

Micah continues to speak judgment against false prophets.

who lead my people astray

Walking on a good path is a metaphor for obeying God. Going astray from the path is a metaphor for disobeying God, in this case perhaps without knowing it. Alternate translation: "who lead my people to disobey me"

if one gives them something to eat, they proclaim, 'Peace.'

Micah is using a metaphor to describe a situation that actually happens. The phrase "something to eat" is an ironic way of speaking of a small payment. Alternate translation: "they tell people who pay them even a small amount that things will go well for those people."

if he puts nothing in their mouths, they dedicate themselves to wage war on him

Micah is using a metaphor to describe a situation that actually happens. The phrase "puts nothing in their

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mouths" is an ironic exaggeration for not giving what they want. Alternate translation: "they do all they can to destroy people who pay them too little"

Micah 3:6

it will be night for you ... the day will be dark on them

Darkness is a metaphor for Yahweh not speaking to the prophets.

no vision for you

"you will no longer see visions"

Micah 3:7

The seers will be put to shame, and the diviners will be embarrassed

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will cause the seers to be ashamed, and I will embarrass the diviners"

All of them will cover their lips

Here "lips" represents speaking. Alternate translation: "They shall no longer speak"

there is no answer from God

"God will be silent"

Micah 3:8

But as for me

Here "me" refers to Micah, a true prophet, setting himself apart from the false prophets.

I am full of power by the Spirit of Yahweh, and am full of justice and might

Micah speaks of himself as if he were a container into which Yahweh were pouring a liquid. Alternate translation: "the Spirit of Yahweh has given me power, justice, and might" or "the Spirit of Yahweh has enabled me to be strong, to declare what justice is, and to be mighty"

to declare to Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin

Here "Jacob" and "Israel" are metonyms for Jacob's descendants. Micah uses both names to emphasize that all of his descendants are guilty of sin. The abstract nouns "transgression" and "sin" can be translated using verbs. Alternate translation: "to declare to Jacob's descendants that they have broken Yahweh's law; I am telling the people of Israel that they have all sinned"

Micah 3:9

house of Jacob

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob's descendants. Alternate translation: "descendants of Jacob"

the house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants, who had become the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "descendants of Israel" or "you Israelites"

detest

strongly dislike

Micah 3:10

You build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity

"Blood" here is a metonym for murder, and "Zion" and "Jerusalem" are spoken of as if they were buildings. Micah speaks of the rich murdering people and sinning in other ways as if those activities were the bricks and wood with which people use to build houses. Alternate translation: "You commit murder and other horrible sins as you work to make Zion and Jerusalem great" or "You commit murder as you worship in Zion, and you commit other sins as you get rich in Jerusalem"

Micah 3:11

Is not Yahweh with us?

The leaders strongly believe that Yahweh is with them. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We know that Yahweh is with us!" or "We know that Yahweh will help us do what we want to do!"

evil

See how you translated "disaster" in Micah 1:12.

Micah 3:12

because of you

Here "you" refers to the priests, prophets, and leaders (Micah 3:11).

Zion ... Jerusalem ... hill of the temple

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is speaking, respectively, of the royal palace, the places where the people of Jerusalem lived and did business, and the area where the temple was located or 2) he is referring to Jerusalem as a whole three times by synecdoche.

Zion will become a plowed field

When a farmer plows a field, he turns over all the dirt, uproots and removes all the plants growing there, and leaves it clear so he can plant it. Yahweh will allow the invaders to completely destroy Zion. Alternate translation: "Zion will become like a field that a farmer has cleared so he can plant it" or "Zion will no longer have buildings on it"

Zion

the royal palace in Jerusalem

high places of a thicket

Here the word "thicket" describes the phrase "high place." A thicket is a place with so many bushes that no one can use it for anything. The phrase "high place" is often used for a place for false worship. The hill of the temple had been the most important land in Jerusalem, but now it would become useless even for false worship.

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[1] 4 But in the last days it will come about
that the mountain of the house of Yahweh
will be established as the chief over the other mountains.
It will be exalted above the hills,
and peoples will stream to it.

[2] Many nations will go and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh,
to the house of the God of Jacob.

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He will teach us his ways,
and we will walk in his paths."
For from Zion the law will go out,
and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.
3 He will judge among many peoples
and will decide concerning numerous nations far away.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war any longer.

4 Instead, they will sit every person under his vine
and under his fig tree.
No one will make them afraid,
for the mouth of Yahweh of hosts has spoken.

5 For all the peoples walk,
each one, in the name of their god.
But we will walk in the name of Yahweh our God
forever and ever.

6 "On that day"—this is Yahweh's declaration—
"I will assemble the lame
and gather the outcast,
those whom I have afflicted.

7 I will turn the lame into a remnant,
and the ones driven away into a strong nation,
and I, Yahweh, will reign over them on Mount Zion,
now and forever.

8 As for you, watchtower for the flock,
hill of the daughter of Zion—
to you it will come, your former dominion will be restored,
the kingdom that belongs to the daughter of Jerusalem.

9 Now, why do you shout so loudly?
Is there no king among you?
Has your counselor died?
Is this why pain like a woman in labor seizes you?

10 Be in pain
and labor to give birth, daughter of Zion,
like a woman in labor.
For now you will go out of the city,
live in the field,
and go to Babylon.
There you will be rescued.
There Yahweh will redeem you
from the hand of your enemies.

11 Now many nations
are assembled against you;

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they say, 'Let her be defiled;
let our eyes gloat over Zion.'

12 They do not know Yahweh's thoughts,
neither do they understand his plans,
for he has gathered them like bundles of grain
prepared for the threshing floor.

13 Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion,
for I will make your horn to be iron,
and I will make your hooves to be bronze.
You will crush many peoples
and you will devote their unjust gain to Yahweh,
their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth."

Micah 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the poetic form to communicate that God will one day restore Israel. (See: restore)

Special concepts in this chapter

Remanant

Micah speaks about a future hope and a remnant who will return to their homeland. Verses 1-8 are a vision of the future when God will restore Israel to its former glory. These verses will give hope to those about to be removed from their homeland. (See: remnant)

Links:

Micah 4:1 Notes

Micah 4:1

the mountain ... other mountains

Yahweh making the temple mount higher than all other mountains and hills is a metaphor for making his temple the most important place on earth.

the mountain of the house of Yahweh will be established

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will establish the mountain on which his temple is built" or "Yahweh will make the mountain on which his temple is built great"

over the other mountains

Mount Zion will be the most important of all the mountains. It might also mean that this mountain will become the highest in the world, and not only in the region where it is located.

It will be exalted above the hills

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will exalt it above the hills" or "Yahweh will make it higher than the hills"

peoples will stream to it

A stream flows continually to one place from many directions. Many people come to the temple mount from different directions. Alternate translation: "the people of the nations will flow like a stream to it" or "the people of the nations will go to it"

Micah 4:2

Many nations

The word "nations" is a metonym for the people of the nations. Alternate translation: "The people from many nations"

Come

This is plural.

He will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths

Here "his ways" and "his paths" refer to what God wants the people to do. "Walk" means they will obey what he says.

from Zion the law will go out, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem

The law and the word going out is a metaphor for people hearing it and then being messengers to tell other people about it in other places. Alternate translation: "people will listen to the law in Zion and go out and tell others; they will listen to the word of Yahweh in Jerusalem and go out and tell others"

and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem

The words "will go out" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "and the word of Yahweh will go out from Jerusalem"

Micah 4:3

plowshares

a blade that people use to dig into soil so they can plant seeds

pruning hooks

a metal tool that people use to cut off branches or stems from plants

will not lift up sword

will not threaten to start a war

Micah 4:4

General Information:

Micah continues describing the "last days" when people learn and obey Yahweh's law.

they will sit every person under his vine and under his fig tree

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Both the "vine" and the "fig tree" are symbols of prosperity. This phrase describes actions in which people live prosperously and in peace. If grapevines or fig trees are unknown you can translate this more generally. Alternate translation: "they will sit peacefully in their own gardens and fields"

for the mouth of Yahweh of hosts has spoken

The mouth is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "for Yahweh of hosts has spoken"

Micah 4:5

the peoples walk ... in the name of their god ... we will walk in the name of Yahweh

Walking on a path is a metaphor for living one's life. Walking in the name of someone is a metaphor for worshiping and obeying. Alternate translation: "the peoples ... worship and obey their god ... we will worship and obey Yahweh"

Micah 4:6

the lame

This refers to those who cannot walk well. Being lame is a synecdoche for having any form of disability.

gather the outcast

"gather those whom I drove out of Jerusalem"

Micah 4:7

the ones driven away into a strong nation

The words "I will turn" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated. The phrase "the ones driven away" can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "I will turn the ones I drove away into a strong nation" or "I will make the ones I forcefully sent away into a strong nation"

Micah 4:8

As for you, watchtower for the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion—to you it will come, your former dominion

Micah speaks to the people of Jerusalem by speaking to the temple mount as if it could hear him. You may need to make explicit that Micah is giving his message to the people. Alternate translation: "As for the temple mount, the place from which Yahweh watches over you, his sheep, the place that Jerusalem's people are most proud of—its former dominion will return"

watchtower for the flock

The people of Jerusalem protecting the other people in surrounding areas is spoken of as if they were a shepherd in a watchtower watching over his flock.

daughter of Zion ... daughter of Jerusalem

The people who live in a place are spoken of as if the place is a mother and they are the daughter. Alternate translation: "people who live in Zion ... people who live in Jerusalem"

hill

Some modern versions understand this Hebrew word to mean "fortress" or "stronghold" here.

to you it will come, your former dominion

The abstract noun "dominion" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "you will rule over the nations as you did before" or "I will make you rule over the nations as you did before"

Micah 4:9

Now, why do you shout so loudly?

Micah is mocking the people, trying to make them think about why God is dealing with them in this way. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look at how you are shouting loudly." or "Think carefully about why you are shouting loudly."

Is there no king among you? Has your counselor died? Is this why pain like a woman in labor seizes you?

Micah continues to mock the people. These questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "You have a king, but he is useless to you. All your wise people are still alive, but they have nothing wise to say to you. This is why you are weeping loudly like a woman who is giving birth to a baby."

pain like a woman in labor seizes you

Possible meanings of this simile are 1) Micah is describing the pain itself, that it is as strong as the pain a woman in labor feels or 2) he is describing the manner in which the pain seizes the people, that it seizes them totally and uncontrollably, the way a woman in labor can think only about her pain and delivering her baby.

Micah 4:10

Be in pain ... like a woman in labor

Micah compares the suffering the people will experience when enemies force them away from their cities to the pain a woman experiences when giving birth to a baby.

There you will be rescued

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "There Yahweh will rescue you"

the hand of your enemies

Possible meanings for the word "hand" are 1) it could be a metonym for the power that the hand exercises, Alternate translation: "the power of your enemies" or 2) it could be a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "your enemies"

Micah 4:11

General Information:

Jerusalem will defeat her enemies.

Let her be defiled

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let us defile her"

let our eyes gloat over Zion

The eye is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "let us gloat over Zion" or "let us enjoy watching the invaders destroy Zion"

Micah 4:12

for he has gathered them like bundles of grain prepared for the threshing floor

The writer speaks of Yahweh being ready to destroy the nations as if Yahweh were a farmer who has put his bundles of grain on his threshing floor and is now ready to thresh them.

Micah 4:13

General Information:

Yahweh presents the imagery of the threshing floor (Micah 4:12).

Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion ... your horn ... your hooves ... You will crush

All instances of "your" and "you," as well as the commands,

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refer to the "daughter of Zion" and so are singular and feminine.

Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn to be iron, and I will make your hooves to be bronze

Yahweh speaks of the people of Zion as if they were strong oxen about to thresh wheat and their enemies were the wheat.

I will make your horn to be iron, and I will make your hooves to be bronze

If your reader is not familiar with oxen or iron or bronze, you can remove the metaphor. Alternate translation: "for I will make you able to defeat and destroy every enemy"

their unjust gain

"the wealth they got by acting unjustly" or "the things they stole from other people"

their wealth

The abstract noun "wealth" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the things that they own"

---

5 1 Now come together in battle ranks, daughter of soldiers!
A siege has been set up against us!
With a rod they strike the judge of Israel
on the cheek.[1]

2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
even though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you one will come to me
to rule in Israel,
whose beginning is from ancient times,
from everlasting.

3 Therefore God will give them up,
until the time when she who is in labor bears a child,
and the rest of his brothers return
to the people of Israel.

4 He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of Yahweh,
in the majesty of the name of Yahweh his God.
They will remain,
for then he will be great to the ends of the earth.

5 He will give us peace.

When the Assyrians come into our land,
and when they march against our fortresses,
then we will raise against them seven shepherds
and eight leaders over men.

6 They will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword,
and the land of Nimrod in its entrances.[2]
He will rescue us from the Assyrians,
when they come into our land,
when they march inside our borders.

7 The remnant of Jacob will be
in the midst of many peoples,
like dew from Yahweh,
like showers on the grass,
that do not wait for a man,
and they do not wait for the children of mankind.

8 The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations,
among many peoples,
like a lion among the animals of the forest,
like a young lion among the flocks of sheep.

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When he goes through them,
he will trample over them and tear them to pieces,
and there will be no one to save them.

9 Your hand will be lifted against your enemies,
and it will destroy them.

10 "It will happen in that day"—this is Yahweh's declaration—
"that I will destroy your horses from among you
and will demolish your chariots.

11 I will destroy the cities in your land
and throw down all your strongholds.

12 I will destroy the witchcraft in your hand,
and you will no longer have any diviners.

13 I will destroy your carved figures
and your stone pillars from among you.
You will no longer worship
the workmanship of your hands.

14 I will uproot your Asherah poles from among you,
and I will destroy your cities.

15 I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath
on the nations that have not listened."

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[1]Instead of come together in battle ranks, some modern translations read cut yourselves, referring to the pagan practice of cutting oneself while praying to idols. There are some modern translations that follow an ancient translation of the Hebrew text that reads build up your fortifications.
[2]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have the phrase: in its entrances, that is, in their gates. However, some modern translations suppose that a different Hebrew word was intended: with a drawn sword.

Micah 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

This chapter contains a prophecy explaining that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. This meaning is made clear in the New Testament. (See: Micah 5:2, prophet and christ)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Change in Personal Pronouns

Extra care must be taken in translating pronouns in this chapter. Sometimes "I" is a reference to the author and other times it is a reference to Yahweh. There is also a noticable shift where the author stops speaking about the people as "you" and begins speaking about them as "we" or "us."

Links:

Micah 5:1 Notes

Micah 5:1

daughter of soldiers

The people of a city are spoken of as if they were a woman. The soldiers are attacking the city. Alternate translation: "people of the city, whom soldiers are attacking"

With a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek

The rod is a metonym for a greater man punishing a lesser man with a rod. To strike a man on the cheek was to insult him more than to harm him. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will punish the judge of Israel by having the invaders insult the judge of Israel"

the judge of Israel

This irony describes the king as having lost so much of his power and authority that he is really only a judge.

Micah 5:2

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah

Yahweh speaks to the people of Judah, and especially to the people of Bethlehem, as if he were speaking to the town of

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Bethlehem itself.

Ephrathah

This is either the name of the area in which Bethlehem was situated or it is just another name for Bethlehem or it distinguishes this Bethlehem from another. Bethlehem is about six miles south of Jerusalem. It was the hometown of King David. Translators may add this footnote: "The name 'Ephrathah' means 'to be fruitful.'"

even though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you one will come

"even though other clans in Judah have more people in them, it is one of your people who will come"

will come to me

Here "me" refers to Yahweh.

whose beginning is from ancient times, from everlasting

This refers to the ruler descending from the ancient family of King David. The phrases "from ancient times" and "from everlasting" mean basically the same thing and emphasize how old this family line is.

Micah 5:3

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true" or "Because this ruler will come later"

will give them up

will abandon the people of Israel

until the time when she who is in labor bears a child

This refers to the time when the ruler is born, a limited time.

the rest of his brothers

"the rest of the ruler's fellow Israelites," who are in exile

Micah 5:4

General Information:

These verses continue describing the ruler from Bethlehem.

He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of Yahweh

A shepherd, who feeds and protects his sheep, is a metaphor for the ruler, who will provide for and protect the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will give him the strength to lead his people"

in the majesty of the name of Yahweh his God

The person's name is a metonym for person's authority. Alternate translation: "and people will honor him because Yahweh his God has given him the authority to rule"

They will remain

the people of Israel will remain

remain

"live in safety"

he will be great to the ends of the earth

All people from every nation will give honor to Israel's ruler.

Micah 5:5

seven shepherds and eight leaders over men

Here "shepherds" is a metonym for "rulers," another way of saying "leaders over men." The phrase "seven ... and eight" is an idiom for "more than enough." Alternate translation: "enough, even more than enough, rulers" or "more than enough shepherds and leaders over men"

Micah 5:6

They will shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in its entrances

The sword is a metonym for killing in war. Here the Israelites ruling over the Assyrians is spoken of ironically as if they were killing sheep instead of herding them. The land of Assyria is a metonym for the people who live there. The entrances to cities were where official business took place. Alternate translation: "They will make war against the people of Assyria, and they will rule the cities of the land of Nimrod"

and the land of Nimrod

The words "they will shepherd" are understood from the beginning of the sentence. They can be repeated. Alternate translation: "and they will shepherd the land of Nimrod"

land of Nimrod

This is another name for the land of Assyria. Nimrod was a hunter and early ruler. Translators may add this footnote: "The name 'Nimrod' means 'rebellion.'"

He will rescue

The ruler will rescue

Micah 5:7

like dew from Yahweh, like showers on the grass

Dew and rain showers refresh the land and cause things to grow. The Israelites will cause the people among whom they live to live will.

grass, that do not wait for a man, and they do not wait for the children

"grass. It is not for a man that they wait, nor is it for the children." It is Yahweh alone who causes dew and rain showers.

Micah 5:8

General Information:

Yahweh promises that the Israelites who are alive after Yahweh has punished his people with war will completely defeat and rule over their enemies.

remnant of Jacob

descendants of Jacob who survive the war

among the nations, among many peoples

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the "remnant of Jacob" will live in many different nations.

like a lion among the animals of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep

Lions are able to kill and eat any wild animal of the forest, and they easily kill sheep. Alternate translation: "like the fiercest of wild animals, like a wild animal that kills helpless livestock"

When he goes through them

when the young lion goes through the flocks of sheep

will trample over them and tear

"will jump on them so they fall down, and then he will tear"

Micah 5:9

Your hand ... your enemies

The writer is speaking to Yahweh, so both instances of "your" are masculine singular.

Your hand will be lifted against your enemies

The hand is a metonym for the power that the hand exercises or a synecdoche for the whole person. To lift the hand is to exercise power. Alternate translation: "You will completely defeat your enemies"

it will destroy them

The hand is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate

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translation: "you will destroy them"

Micah 5:10

I will destroy your horses from among you and will demolish your chariots

The people of Israel used horses and chariots only in battle, and they may have traded for them with the godless nations around them. God did not want the people to trust in their weapons of war to protect them more than they trusted in him.

your horses ... among you ... your chariots

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel as if they were one man.

Micah 5:11

your land ... your strongholds

Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel as if they were one man.

Micah 5:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

the witchcraft in your hand

Being in the "hand" represents the actions that the person does. Alternate translation: "the witchcraft that you do"

your hand ... you will

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man.

Micah 5:13

your carved ... your stone ... among you. You will ... your hands

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man.

the workmanship of your hands

The abstract noun "workmanship" can be translated using the verb "make." Alternate translation: "what your hands have made"

Micah 5:14

your Asherah ... among you ... your cities

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel as if they were one man.

will uproot your Asherah poles

Yahweh speaks of Asherah poles as if they were trees that he would pull out of the ground. Alternate translation: "will pull your Asherah poles out of the ground"

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6 [1]Now listen to what Yahweh says,
"Arise and state your case before the mountains;
let the hills hear your voice.
[2] Hear, you mountains, Yahweh's accusation,
you enduring foundations of the earth.
For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people,
and he will fight in court against Israel.

[3] My people, what have I done to you?
How have I wearied you? Answer me!

[4] For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt
and rescued you out of the house of bondage.
I sent Moses, Aaron,
and Miriam to you.

[5] My people, remember what Balak king of Moab devised,
and how Balaam son of Beor answered him
as you went from Shittim to Gilgal,
so you may know the righteous acts of Yahweh."

[6] What should I bring to Yahweh,
as I bow down to God on high?
Should I come to him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

[7] Will Yahweh be pleased with thousands of rams,
or with ten thousand rivers of oil?
Should I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

[8] He has told you, man, what is good,
and what Yahweh requires from you:

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Act justly, love kindness,
and walk humbly with your God.

9 The voice of Yahweh is making a proclamation to the city—
even now wisdom fears your name:
"Listen to the rod, and to the one who has put it in place.[1]

10 There is wealth in the houses of the wicked that is dishonest,
and false measures that are abominable.

11 Should I consider a person to be innocent
if he uses fraudulent scales,
with a bag of deceptive weights?

12 The rich men are full of violence,
the inhabitants have spoken lies,
and their tongue in their mouth is deceitful.

13 Therefore I will make you sick, striking you down,
making you desolate because of your sins.

14 You will eat but not be satisfied;
your emptiness will remain inside you.
You will store goods away but not save,
and what you do save I will give to the sword.[2]

15 You will sow but not reap;
you will tread the olives but not anoint yourselves with oil;
you will press grapes but drink no wine.

16 You have observed the statutes of Omri,
and all the works of the house of Ahab.
You have walked in their counsels,
Therefore I will give you over to ruin
and your inhabitants to derision,
and you will bear the scorn of my people."[3]

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text which were translated here read, Listen to the rod and to the one who has put it in place, but some modern translations have Listen, tribe, and those assembled together in the city.
[2]Parts of this verse are difficult to understand, because in the copies of the ancient Hebrew text there are two Hebrew words in it whose meanings are not known. As a result, various other readings have been proposed by scholars and some modern translations follow those suggestions.
[3]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have you will bear the reproach of my people, but the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew copies reads: you will bear the scorn of the nations and some modern translations are following that reading.

Micah 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written as a court case or lawsuit by Yahweh against his people. (See: peopleofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Names in Lawsuit

Moses, Aaron and Miriam are mentioned as witnesses for Yahweh and against Israel. Ahab and Omri are mentioned as kings who were evil and did not follow Yahweh. Obedience to the law of Moses is contrasted with disobedience to the law. (See: testimony and evil and lawofmoses)

Links:

Micah 6:1 Notes

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Micah 6:1

General Information

It is not clear who is speaking in verses 1 and 2. In verse 1, two possibilities are that Yahweh tells the people of Israel to arise and state their case, or that Micah tells Yahweh to arise and state his case. In verse 2, two possibilities are that Yahweh is speaking to the mountains or that Micah is speaking to the mountains. The ULB has arranged the quote marks in a way that indicates that in verse 1, Yahweh tells his people to state their case, and in verse 2 Yahweh speaks to the mountains.

Now listen

God is speaking to his people.

Arise and state your case before the mountains; let the hills hear your voice

Yahweh says this to the people of Israel. He speaks as if he, his people, and the mountains and the hills were in court and as if the mountains and hills could hear what his people would say.

state your case

Possible meanings are 1) Yahweh is telling his people to say what they think he has done wrong to them, or 2) Yahweh is telling his people to answer the accusation he will make against them.

Micah 6:2

Hear, you mountains, Yahweh's accusation

Yahweh continues to speak as if he is in court and the mountains would hear his accusation against his people.

you mountains ... you enduring foundations of the earth

Possible meanings are 1) these two phrases both refer to the mountains, or 2) the mountains and the foundations of the earth are two different parts of the world.

Micah 6:3

General Information:

Yahweh begins his to accuse the people of Israel as he said he would in (Micah 6:2).

My people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Answer me!

God uses questions to emphasize that he is good and has done nothing to cause the people to stop worshiping him. Alternate translation: "My people, I have been good to you. I have done nothing to make you tired of me. If you think I have done anything wrong, tell me, now."

to you ... wearied you? Answer

Yahweh speaks to the people as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and all the commands are masculine singular.

Micah 6:4

brought you ... rescued you ... Miriam to you

Yahweh speaks to the people as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and all the commands are masculine singular.

house of bondage

A house is a metaphor for a place in which one lives for a long time. The abstract noun "bondage" can be translated as "to be slaves." Alternate translation: "the place where you were slaves for a long time"

Micah 6:5

remember ... you went ... you may know

Yahweh speaks to the people as if they were one man, so all instances of "you" and all the commands are masculine singular.

what Balak ... devised

"the plans Balak ... made to harm you"

how Balaam ... answered him

Balak had told Balaam to curse Israel, but instead, Balaam blessed Israel. Alternate translation: "how Balaam ... responded" or "how Balaam ... said that he would bless you"

Beor

This is the name of Balaam's father.

as you went from Shittim to Gilgal

Shittim was the last place the Israelites camped in before they miraculously crossed the Jordan river. Gilgal was the first place they camped in after they crossed the river. God wanted them to remember what happened there. Alternate translation: "Remember what happened as you went from Shittim to Gilgal"

Shittim

The Hebrew word "shittim" means "acacias." An accacia is a kind of tree, and there was a grove of acacias there. Alternate translation: "Acacia" or "Acacia grove"

so you may know the righteous acts of Yahweh

Yahweh refers to himself by his own name. Alternate translation: "so that you may remember the righteous things that I, Yahweh, have done for you"

Micah 6:6

What should I bring to Yahweh ... God on high? Should I come ... old?

Micah speaks as if he were a person who truly wanted to know what God expects him to do. Possible meanings are 1) he asks questions and then in verse 8 answers the questions he has asked or 2) he is using questions to teach the people. Alternate translation: "I know that I do not need to bring to Yahweh ... God on high or to come ... old."

Micah 6:7

Will Yahweh be pleased ... oil? Should I give ... sin of my soul?

Micah continues to speaks as if he were a person who truly wanted to know what God expects him to do. Possible meanings are 1) he asks questions and then in verse 8 answers the questions he has asked or 2) he is using questions to teach the people. Alternate translation: "I know that Yahweh will not be pleased ... oil or if I give ... sin of my soul."

thousands of rams ... ten thousand rivers of oil

"rams in groups of 1,000 ... 10,000 rivers of oil"

the sin of my soul

The soul is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "my sin"

Micah 6:8

He has told you

"Yahweh has told you"

good, and what Yahweh requires from you: Act ... God

Many modern translations read, "good. And what does Yahweh require from you? He wants you to act ... God." or "good. And what does Yahweh require from you but to act ... God?"

love kindness

The abstract noun "kindness" can be translated using the adjective "kind." Alternate translation: "love being kind to

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people"

Micah 6:9

even now wisdom fears your name

Wisdom is spoken of as a person and is a metonym for the wise person. The word "name" here is a metonym for the person himself, what people think of him, and his authority. Alternate translation: "and the wise person will fear you" or "and the wise person will acknowledge that you are good and will obey you"

Listen to the rod, and to the one who has put it in place

Here "rod" refers to the enemy army with which Yahweh, who "has put it in place," will discipline his people.

Micah 6:10

There is wealth in the houses of the wicked that is dishonest

Dishonest wealth is a metonym for wealth that people have gained by acting dishonestly. The words "the wicked" refer to wicked people. Houses are a synecdoche for everything a person possesses. Alternate translation: "Wicked people have acted dishonestly to gain wealth"

false measures

incorrect weights that people use with scales to increase their wealth by deceiving those with whom they trade

Micah 6:11

Should I consider a person to be innocent ... weights?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I certainly will not consider a person innocent ... weights."

deceptive weights

weights with which sellers deceive buyers

Micah 6:12

The rich men are full of violence

Rich men are spoken of as if they were containers, and people treating each other violently is spoken of as if it were a liquid that could be put into a container. Alternate translation: "The rich men act violently toward everyone" or "The rich men act violently all the time"

their tongue in their mouth is deceitful

The tongue is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "Everything they say is a lie"

Micah 6:13

striking you down, making you desolate

"killing all of you until there is no one left"

Micah 6:14

your emptiness will remain inside you

A person or thing being hungry is spoken of as if it were something that could be put in a container, and the people are spoken of as if they were containers. Alternate translation: "You will be hungry, and you will not be able to eat enough to satisfy yourself"

Micah 6:16

General Information:

Yahweh continues speaking to the people of Israel.

You have observed the statutes of Omri, and all the works of the house of Ahab.

"You have done what Omri commanded and everything that the house of Ahab did.

Omri ... Ahab

Both of these men were kings over the northern kingdom of Israel. God considered both of them to be very wicked.

house of Ahab

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Ahab"

You have walked in their counsels

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Alternate translation: "You do what Omri and Ahab told the people to do"

I will give you over to ruin and your inhabitants to derision

Micah speaks to the people of the city, who can hear him, as if he were speaking to the city itself, which cannot hear him. You may need to make explicit the words that the ellipsis omits. Alternate translation: "I will make your city a ruin, and I will make you inhabitants an object derision" or "I will make you a ruin, and people will despise your inhabitants"

you will bear the scorn of my people

"you will suffer because my people will insult you"

ל 7 Woe is me!
I have become like the gathering of summer fruit,
and like the grapes that have been gleaned;
there is no grape cluster to eat,
no ripe early fig that my soul desires.

2 The faithful ones have vanished from the land;
there is no upright person in all mankind.
They all lie in wait to shed blood;
each one hunts his own brother with a net.

3 Their hands are very good at doing harm:
the ruler asks for money,
the judge is ready for bribes,
and the powerful man is telling others of the desire of his soul.
Thus they plot together.

4 The best of them is like a brier,
the most upright is worse than a thorn hedge.
It is the day foretold by your watchmen,

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the day of your punishment.
Now is the time of their confusion.

5 Do not trust any neighbor;
do not put confidence in any friend.
From even the woman who lies in your embrace
guard the entrance to your mouth.

6 For a son dishonors his father,
a daughter rises up against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.
A man's enemies are the people of his own house.

7 But as for me, I will look to Yahweh.
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
my God will hear me.

8 Do not rejoice over me, my enemy.
After I fall, I will rise.
When I sit in darkness,
Yahweh will be a light for me.
9 Because I sinned against Yahweh,
I will bear his rage
until he pleads my case
and executes judgment for me.
He will bring me to the light,
and I will see his righteousness.

10 Then my enemy will see it,
and shame will cover the one who said to me,
"Where is Yahweh your God?"
My eyes will look at her;
she will be trampled down like the mud in the streets.

11 A day to build your walls will come;
on that day the boundaries will be extended very far.

12 On that day your people will come to you,
from Assyria and the cities in Egypt,
from Egypt to the River,
from sea to sea,
and from mountain to mountain.

13 But the land will be desolate
because of the people who are living there,
because of the fruit of their actions.

14 Shepherd your people with your rod,
the flock of your inheritance.
They dwell alone in a thicket,
in the midst of a pastureland.
Let them graze in Bashan and Gilead
as in the old days.

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15 As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt,
I will show them wonders.

16 The nations will see and be ashamed
of all their power.
They will put their hands on their mouths;
their ears will be deaf.

17 They will lick the dust like a snake,
like creatures that crawl on the earth.
They will come out of their fortresses with fear;
they will come with fear to you, Yahweh our God,
and they will be afraid because of you.

18 Who is a God like you—
who takes away iniquity, who passes over the transgression
of the remnant of his inheritance?
He does not keep his anger forever
because he delights in his covenant faithfulness.

19 You will again have compassion on us;
you will trample our iniquities under your feet.
You will throw all our sins into the depths of the sea.

20 You will give truth to Jacob
and covenant faithfulness to Abraham,
as you swore to our ancestors in ancient days.

Micah 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Last days

This chapter looks forward to the hope of the coming savior for the faithful remnant. This is the future restoration of Israel when true peace will come. (See: savior, faithful and remnant and restore)

Prophet

The prophet was able to speak to God on behalf of the people. Often in this chapter, the prophet speaks in Israel's place and offers repentance to Yahweh. (See: prophet and repent)

Links:

Micah 7:1 Notes

Micah 7:1

I have become like the gathering of summer fruit, and like the grapes that have been gleaned

Micah speaks of looking for faithful people but being unable to find any as if he were a person looking for food after the harvesters have taken it all. The idea of a person wanting to gather fruit can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I have become like someone looking for fruit after the gathering of summer fruit, like a gleaner after the grapes have been gleaned"

no grape cluster ... no ripe early fig

Micah speaks of faithful, upright people as if they were fruit that is good to eat.

Micah 7:2

The faithful ones have vanished ... land; there is no upright person ... They all lie in wait ... blood; each one hunts

These are exaggerations. Alternate translation: "I feel as though faithful people have vanished ... land and there is no upright person ... I feel as though they all lie in wait ... blood, and each one hunts"

to shed blood

Blood is a metaphor for the death of innocent people. Alternate translation: "to kill innocent people"

Micah 7:3

General Information:

Micah continues speaking about the people of Israel.

Their hands are very good

The hand is a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "The people are very good"

telling others of the desire of his soul

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The word "soul" here is a metonym for the whole person, and the abstract noun "desire" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "speaking to others about what he desires"

Micah 7:4

The best of them is like a brier, the most upright is worse than a thorn hedge

Briers and thorns are good for nothing and harm those who touch them. The Israelite rulers and judges did nothing good and harmed people.

the most upright

"those of them who try hardest to do what is good"

It is the day foretold by your watchmen, the day of your punishment

Micah speaks to the people of Israel, so both instances of "your" are plural. The word "watchmen" is a metaphor for prophets. Alternate translation: "Their prophets have told them that Yahweh would punish them"

Now is the time of their confusion

The abstract noun "confusion" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Now is when they do not understand what is happening"

Micah 7:5

General Information:

Micah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

Do not trust any neighbor ... any friend ... even the woman who lies in your embrace

Micah continues to show that there is no longer anyone good, honest, and loyal to God among God's people. Here he emphasizes that they cannot even trust friends or family. These phrases are listed in the order of increasing closeness to the hearers.

the woman who lies in your embrace

"your wife"

guard the entrance to your mouth

"guard your lips" or "do not say anything" or "do not let any words escape"

Micah 7:6

people of his own house

Micah continues to show that there is no longer anyone good, honest, and loyal to God among God's people. Here he emphasizes that they cannot even trust friends or family.

a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law

The words "rises up" are understood from the previous phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "a daughter-in-law rises up against her mother-in-law"

his own house

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. Alternate translation: "his own family"

Micah 7:7

General Information:

In verse 8 Micah begins speaking as if he were one woman speaking to her enemy, another woman. This is perhaps the daughter of Zion

But as for me

Here "me" refers to Micah.

I will wait for the God of my salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will wait for the God who saves me" or "I will wait for God, who saves me"

will hear me

The word "hear" represents hearing and acting. Alternate translation: "will act to help me"

Micah 7:8

fall ... rise

These words are metaphors for suffering from disaster and then recovering.

sit in darkness

These words are a metaphor for suffering from disaster.

Micah 7:9

General Information:

Micah continues the poem that began in [Micah 7:8]

I will bear his rage

Rage is spoken of as if it were a solid object that Yahweh was forcing Micah to carry. Alternate translation: "I will suffer because he is angry with me"

until he pleads my case and executes judgment for me

Yahweh will punish the people of the other nations who harmed the people of Israel.

he pleads my case

Yahweh is spoken of as if he were defending Micah in court. Alternate translation: "he defends me against those who harm me"

executes judgment for me

"brings about justice for me"

He will bring me to the light

Bringing Micah from darkness (Micah 7:8) to light is a metaphor for ending the suffering from disaster and enabling him to live well.

Micah 7:10

General Information:

Micah continues and ends the poem that began in [Micah 7:8]

my enemy ... the one who said ... your God ... My eyes

The words "enemy," "one," "your," and "my" here refer to the women in the poem and so are feminine singular.

Where is Yahweh your God?

The enemy uses a question to mock the people of Israel. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh your God cannot help you"

My eyes

This phrase here refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "I" or "We"

she will be trampled down

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "her enemies will trample her down"

like the mud in the streets

People who walk on mud without thinking they are doing anything bad are compared with those who will destroy Israel's enemies without thinking they are doing anything evil.

Micah 7:11

General Information:

Micah speaks to the people of Israel as if he were speaking to one man.

A day to build your walls will come

Here "walls" refers to the walls around their cities, which provided safety and security from their enemies.

the boundaries will be extended very far

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will greatly extend the boundaries of your land" or "Yahweh will greatly increase the size of your kingdom"

Micah 7:12

the River

You may need to make explicit the name of river. Alternate translation: "the Euphrates River"

from sea to sea

You may need to make explicit the names of the seas. "from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Dead Sea in the east"

from mountain to mountain

"from one mountain to another." Micah does not speak of any particular mountain.

Micah 7:13

the land will be desolate

"the land will be empty" or "no one will live in the land"

because of the fruit of their actions

Fruit is a metaphor for the results of an earlier action. Alternate translation: "because of the results of what they have done"

Micah 7:14

Shepherd your people with your rod, the flock of your inheritance

Micah is praying to Yahweh, asking him to protect his people of Israel again. Here "rod" refers to God's leadership and guidance, as a shepherd uses a stick to guide and protect his sheep.

They dwell alone in a thicket, in the midst of a pastureland

Micah speaks of his people as if they were sheep hiding in bushes instead of grazing in fields with much grass to eat.

a thicket

a place where many small woody plants grow

a pastureland

Some modern translations read, "Carmel," referring to Mount Carmel.

Bashan and Gilead

These regions are known as rich land for growing food.

as in the old days

Bashan and Gilead had been part of Israel long ago, when David was king.

Micah 7:15

As in the days ... them wonders

Yahweh speaks to the people.

Micah 7:16

The nations

The word "nations" is a metonym for the people who live in many nations. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations nearby"

They will put their hands on their mouths

They do this to show that they are ashamed of what they have done.

their ears will be deaf

This is an idiom. Nothing anyone says will have any effect on them.

Micah 7:17

They will lick the dust like a snake

Snakes slither on the ground where dust gets on them, and here the people are being compared to snakes, though it is probably an exaggeration that they will lick the dust. Possible meanings are that these people 1) will literally lie on the ground in shame or 2) will be so ashamed and humbled that it will be as if they were lying on the ground.

their fortresses

Some modern translations read, "their dens," continuing the simile of the nations

Micah 7:18

Who is a God like you—who takes ... inheritance?

Micah is emphasizing that there is no God like Yahweh. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know that there is no God like you, who takes ... inheritance."

takes away iniquity

The phrase "takes away" is a metaphor for "forgives," as if iniquity were a heavy burden that God takes off a person. Alternate translation: "forgives iniquity"

the remnant of his inheritance

"those of his chosen people who have survived his punishment"

you ... of the remnant of his inheritance? He does not keep his anger forever because he delights in his covenant faithfulness.

Here the words "his" and "he" can be stated in second person. Alternate translation: "you ... of the remnant of your inheritance, who do not keep your anger forever because you delight in your covenant faithfulness?" or "you ... of the remnant of your inheritance? You do not keep your anger forever because you delights in your covenant faithfulness."

he delights in his covenant faithfulness

The abstract noun "faithfulness" can be stated as "faithful." Alternate translation: "he delights in being faithful to his covenant" or "he delights in being faithful to his people"

passes over

ignores

does not keep his anger

"does not stay angry"

Micah 7:19

You will

Here "you" refers to Yahweh.

on us

Here "us" refers to Micah and the people, but not to Yahweh.

you will trample our iniquities under your feet. You will throw all our sins into the depths of the sea

Iniquity and sin are spoken of as if they were solid objects. Alternate translation: "You will treat our iniquities and sins as if they were not important"

Micah 7:20

You will give truth to Jacob and covenant faithfulness to Abraham

Here the names of Jacob and Abraham are metonyms for their descendants, the people of Israel to whom Micah was speaking. The abstract nouns "truth" and "faithfulness" can be stated as "trustworthy" and "faithful." Alternate translation: "You will show the descendants of Jacob and Abraham that your are trustworthy and faithful to your covenant"

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Introduction to Nahum

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Nahum

Nahum introduces this book (1:1) Yahweh will destroy his enemies (1:2-15) Nahum describes how Nineveh will fall (2:1–3:19)

What is the Book of Nahum about?

The Book of Nahum contains prophecies about how Yahweh would judge and punish Nineveh.
Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrians had already conquered the northern kingdom of Israel. They were threatening the southern kingdom of Judah. The book gave Judah hope that the Assyrians would be defeated.

How should the title of this book be translated?

"The Book of Nahum" or just "Nahum" is the traditional title of this book. Translators may choose to call it "The Sayings of Nahum."

Who wrote the Book of Nahum?

The prophet Nahum probably wrote this book. He was a prophet from Elkosh, an unknown city probably in Judah.
Nahum wrote before Nineveh fell in about 612 B.C. Nahum also mentions the destruction of Thebes, a city in Egypt, which happened about 663 B.C. Therefore, the Book of Nahum was written sometime between 663 and 612 B.C. (See: prophet)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the importance of the descriptions of locusts in 3:15–17?

Locust attacks occurred often in the ancient Near East. Certain kinds of grasshoppers would come in countless numbers. There would be so many that they would darken the sky like a black cloud that blocked the sunlight. They often came after a long period of no rain. They came down on whatever crops were surviving in the fields and stripped them bare of their leaves. The locusts could not be stopped and caused terrible damage. For this reason, locust attacks served as a powerful image of military attacks in the Old Testament.
The original language of the Old Testament used various names for locusts. It is uncertain whether these names refer to different kinds of locusts or to the same kind of locust in different stages of growth. For this reason, versions of the Bible differ in how they translate these terms.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What emotions were present in the various speakers in the Book of Nahum?

When Nahum spoke to the Israelites, he wanted to comfort them.
When Nahum and Yahweh spoke against the Ninevites, they often mocked them. This manner of speech was similar to speech in the ancient Near East when conquerors laughed at their victims.
It is important for translators to present both emotions of comfort and of mockery when translating this book.

Nahum

1 [1]The declaration about Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite.
[2] Yahweh is a jealous God and avenges;
Yahweh avenges and is full of wrath;
Yahweh takes vengeance on his adversaries,
and he continues his anger for his enemies.

[3] Yahweh is slow to anger and great in power;
he will not acquit the wicked.
Yahweh makes his way in the whirlwind and the storm,
and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

[4] He rebukes the sea and makes it dry;
he dries up all the rivers.
Bashan is weak, and Carmel also;
the flowers of Lebanon have become weak.

[5] The mountains shake in his presence,
and the hills melt;
the earth collapses in his presence, indeed,

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the world and all people who live in it.

6 Who can stand before his rage?
Who can resist the fierceness of his anger?
His wrath is poured out like fire,
and the rocks are broken apart by him.

7 Yahweh is good,
a stronghold in the day of trouble;
and he acknowledges those who take refuge in him.

8 But he will make a full end to his enemies
with an overwhelming flood;
he will pursue them into darkness.

9 What are you people plotting against Yahweh?
He will make a full end to it;
trouble will not rise up a second time.

10 Like tangled thorns
and like the drink of drunkards,
they will be consumed like dry stubble.

11 From you, Nineveh, has come out
someone who plotted evil against Yahweh,
a wicked counselor.

12 This is what Yahweh says,
"Even if they are at their full strength and full numbers,
they will nevertheless be sheared; their people will pass away.
But you, Judah: Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more.
13 Now will I break that people's yoke from off you;
I will break your chains."

14 Yahweh has given a command about you, Nineveh:
"There will be no more descendants bearing your name.
I will cut off the carved images and the cast metal figures
from the houses of your gods.
I will prepare your grave,
for you are contemptible."

15 Look, on the mountains
there are the feet of someone who is bringing good news,
who is announcing peace!
Celebrate your festivals, Judah,
and fulfill your vows,
for the wicked one will invade you no more;

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he is completely cut off.

Nahum 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers and songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of the entire book (except for verse 1 of this chapter) farther to the right on the page than regular text because they are poetic prophecy. (See: prophet)

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book consists of one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh's anger against Nineveh

This prophecy should be read in reference to the book of Jonah. That book described how the people of Niniveh, Assyria's capital city, repented when Jonah warned them that Yahweh was angry at them. The book of Nahum, written a little over one hundred years later than when Jonah was set, indicates that the Ninevites would be punished by God, but only after he had used them for his own purposes. These actions of Yahweh, although described as vengeance or anger, do not have the same sinful quality as they usually do with humans. (See: evil and avenge and sin)

Complete destruction

At that time, Assyria controlled almost the entire Near East. Nahum prophesied that the Assyrians would be so completely destroyed as a nation that they would no longer even be a people group. This prophecy came true very suddenly.

Links:

Nahum 1:1 Notes Nahum intro

Nahum 1:1

General Information:

Nahum describes the destruction of Nineveh in poetry.

The declaration about Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite

These words are an introduction to the entire book. This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "This is the book of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite, which gives a declaration about Nineveh"

Elkoshite

A person from the village of Elkosh

Nahum 1:2

General Information:

Nahum begins to describe Yahweh coming to judge his enemies and to save his people. The vision is full of metaphorical language and uses different kinds of parallelism.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

full of wrath

"very angry" or "most angry"

he continues his anger for

"continues to be angry with"

Nahum 1:3

slow to anger

"slow to become angry"

he will not acquit the wicked

This emphatic negative statement can be translated positively. Alternate translation: "he will always be sure to punish the wicked"

Yahweh makes his way in the whirlwind and the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet

The biblical writers often associated Yahweh's presence with powerful storms. Here the writer speaks of Yahweh as if he were a person walking or marching and kicking up dust as he comes to judge the people.

the dust of his feet

"the dust that his feet kick up"

Nahum 1:4

General Information:

Nahum continues to describe Yahweh coming to judge his enemies and to save his people.

Bashan is weak, and Carmel also; the flowers of Lebanon have become weak

The word translated as "weak" can also mean "withered" or "dried out." Bashan was known for its good pastureland where people tended sheep and cattle, "Carmel" refers to Mount Carmel, which was known for its tree orchards, and the snow from the mountains in Lebanon kept that place fertile. Since Yahweh dries up all the rivers and causes drought, these fertile places will no longer be fertile. Alternate translation: "The fields of Bashan wither, the trees of Mount Carmel die, and the flowers of Lebanon fade"

Nahum 1:5

the hills melt

Possible meanings are 1) the earthquake causing the hills to crumble to pieces is spoken of as if the hills were melting or 2) the water from the storms coursing down the hills and causing them to erode is spoken of as if the hills were melting.

the earth collapses

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Possible meanings are 1) the mountains and hills collapse or 2) the entire ground begins to move with violent motions.

the world and all people who live in it

Here the word "world" refers to the inhabited places on the earth. The verb for this phrase is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "the world shakes and all the people who live in it collapse"

Nahum 1:6

General Information:

Nahum continues to describe Yahweh coming to judge his enemies and to save his people.

Who can stand before his rage? Who can resist the fierceness of his anger?

These two rhetorical questions mean basically the same thing. They can be translated with statements. Alternate translation: "No one can stand before his rage! No one can resist the fierceness of his anger!"

resist the fierceness of his anger

Possible meanings are 1) "rise up and fight against him when he is angry" 2) "keep him from destroying him when he is angry"

fierceness of his anger

"intensity of his anger" or "amount of his anger"

His wrath is poured out like fire

Nahum speaks of Yahweh's anger as if it were a liquid that he pours out and which burns like fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He pours out his wrath like fire" or "He expresses his fierce anger"

the rocks are broken apart by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he breaks apart the rocks" or "he causes the rocks to break apart"

Nahum 1:7

a stronghold ... those who take refuge in him

Nahum speaks of Yahweh as if he were a place where people can be safe from those who wish to harm them, and of those who trust Yahweh to protect them as if they were taking refuge inside that safe place.

in the day of trouble

"in times of trouble" or "when troubles happen." The word "day" here refers to a general period of time.

Nahum 1:8

he will make a full end to his enemies

The idiom "make a full end" refers to causing his enemies to die. Alternate translation: "he will completely destroy his enemies" or "he will kill all his enemies"

with an overwhelming flood

Nahum speaks of Yahweh destroying his enemies in such a way that they will be powerless to avoid death as if Yahweh caused them to drown in a great flood of water.

he will pursue them into darkness

Here the word "darkness" represents the place of the dead, which is characterized as a dark place. Nahum speaks of Yahweh killing his enemies as if he were chasing them into this dark place. Alternate translation: "he will cause all his enemies to die"

Nahum 1:9

General Information:

Nahum tells the people of Nineveh how Yahweh will deal with them.

What are you people plotting against Yahweh?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the futility of making evil plans against Yahweh. Alternate translation: "It is futile for you people to plot against Yahweh"

He will make a full end to it

The idiom "make a full end" refers to causing something to exist no longer. Alternate translation: "He will completely stop what you do" or "He will cause your plotting to fail"

trouble will not rise up a second time

Possible meanings are 1) "trouble" is a metonym for the punishment that Yahweh will inflict upon the people. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not have to punish you a second time" or 2) "trouble" refers to the trouble that the people cause by plotting against Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you will not cause trouble a second time"

Nahum 1:10

General Information:

Nahum uses three metaphors to show that Yahweh will destroy

Like tangled thorns

Possible meanings for this metaphor are that Nahum speaks of 1) the people who plot against Yahweh being unable to free themselves from the trouble that Yahweh will bring upon them as though they were tangled up in thorn bushes and unable to get free or 2) Yahweh quickly destroying those who plot against him as if Yahweh were a person weaving thorn bushes together so they will burn quickly and putting them in a fire.

like the drink of drunkards

Possible meanings for this metaphor are that Nahum speaks of 1) those who plot against Yahweh suffering the consequences of their plans as if they were completely drunk with alcohol or 2) Yahweh destroying those who plot against him as if he were a drunkard drinking a large amount of alcoholic drink.

they will be consumed like dry stubble

Nahum speaks of Yahweh completely destroying those who plot against him as if fire would burn them up like fire burns up dry stubble. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fire will completely devour them like it devours dry stubble"

consumed

Nahum speaks of fire burning something completely as if the fire were devouring that thing. Alternate translation: "burned up by fire"

Nahum 1:11

From you, Nineveh, has come out someone who plotted evil against Yahweh

"Someone who planned evil against Yahweh has come out from you, Nineveh." The words "From you, Nineveh" are at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that the writer is now speaking to Nineveh.

From you, Nineveh, has come out someone

The writer speaks as if the city of Nineveh were one person who could hear him speak. The word "Nineveh" is a personification of the people who live in Nineveh. Alternate translation: "From among the people of Nineveh has come

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out someone" or "From Nineveh have come out people"

a wicked counselor

someone who encouraged people to do wicked things

Nahum 1:12

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to the Israelites about Nineveh.

Even if they are at their full strength and full numbers

This refers to the Assyrians or to the people of Nineveh.

they will nevertheless be sheared

Yahweh speaks of destroying the people of Nineveh as if they were sheep that he will shear. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will nevertheless shear them" or "I will nevertheless destroy them"

pass away

"disappear" or "waste away" or "all die"

Nahum 1:13

Now will I break that people's yoke from off you; I will break your chains

Yahweh speaks of freeing Judah from Assyrian oppression as if he were breaking the yoke and chains that the Assyrians had placed on them. Alternate translation: "Now I will free you from that people and they will no longer oppress you"

Nahum 1:14

Yahweh has given a command about you, Nineveh ... your name ... your gods ... your grave ... you are

The writer speaks as if the city of Nineveh were one person who could hear him speak. The word "Nineveh" is a personification of the people who live in Nineveh. See how you translated "you, Nineveh" in [Nahum 1:11]

I will cut off the carved images and the cast metal figures from the houses of your gods

Yahweh speaks of destroying the Assyrian idols as if he were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. The word "house" is a metonym for the temples in which the people worshiped these idols. Alternate translation: "I will destroy the carved images and the cast metal figures that are in the temples of your gods"

I will prepare your grave

It is implied that Yahweh will also bury them in the graves that he digs for them. Alternate translation: "I will dig your graves and bury you in them"

Nahum 1:15

on the mountains there are the feet of someone who is bringing good news

Here the word "feet" represent the person who is running in order to declare a message. Alternate translation: "on the mountains there is someone who is bringing good news"

wicked one ... he

Nahum refers to the people of Nineveh as though they were one person.

he is completely cut off

Nahum speaks of the people of Nineveh being completely destroyed as if they had been cut off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he is completely destroyed" or "Yahweh has completely destroyed him"

---

1 2 The one who scatters is coming up against you.
Guard the city wall, watch the road,
strengthen your loins, pull together all your strength.

2 For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Jacob
like the majesty of Israel,
although the plunderers devastated them
and destroyed their vine branches.

3 The shields of his mighty men are red,
and the soldiers are clothed in scarlet;
the chariots flash with their metal
on the day that they are made ready,
and the cypress spears are waved in the air.

4 The chariots speed through the streets;
they rush back and forth in the wide streets.
They look like torches,
and they run like lightning.

5 He remembers his nobles;
they stumble over each other in their march;
they hurry to attack the city wall.
The large shield is made ready to protect these attackers.

6 The gates at the rivers are forced open,
and the palace collapses.

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7 Huzzab is stripped
and is taken away;
her female servants moan like doves,
beating on their breasts.

8 Nineveh is like a leaking pool of water,
with its people fleeing away like rushing water.
Others shout, "Stop, stop,"
but no one turns back.

9 Take the silver plunder, take the gold plunder,
for there is no end to the treasure,
to the splendor of all Nineveh's desirable things.

10 Nineveh is empty; empty and devastated.
Everyone's heart melts, everyone's knees strike together,
and anguish is in all loins; their faces are all pale.

11 Where now is the lions' den,
the place where the young lion cubs were fed,
the place where the lion and lioness walked,
with the cubs, where they were afraid of nothing?

12 The lion tore his victims to pieces for his cubs;
he strangled victims for his lionesses,
and filled his cave with victims,
his dens with torn carcasses.

13 "See, I am against you—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.
I will burn your chariots in the smoke,
and the sword will devour your young lions.
I will cut off your prey from your land,
and the voices of your messengers will be heard no more."

Nahum 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers and songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of the entire book (except for verse 1 of chapter 1) farther to the right on the page than regular text because they are poetic prophecy. (See: prophet)

Despite being divided into three chapters, this book contains one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Complete destruction

At that time, Assyria controlled almost the entire Near East. Nahum prophesied that the Assyrians would be so completely destroyed as a nation that they would no longer even be a people group. This prophecy came true and did so very suddenly. At times, this chapter is very violent in describing the destruction of Assyria, and this violence should not be toned down through the use of euphemism.

Links:

Nahum 2:1 Notes

Nahum 2:1

General Information:

Nahum often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism. Here he begins to describe the destruction of Nineveh.

The one who scatters

Nahum speaks of an army or military leader destroying Nineveh as if he were to break Nineveh apart as one would shatter a clay pot and scatter the pieces around. Alternate translation: "The one who will destroy you"

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is coming up against you
The idiom to "come against" means to attack. Alternate translation: "is preparing to attack you"
Guard the city wall, watch the road, strengthen your loins, pull together all your strength
Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh. He tells them to prepare for battle although he knows that the enemy will destroy the city.
watch the road
This refers to having soldiers watch the roads leading to the city so that they can keep track of the enemy's approach.
strengthen your loins
The loins are a synecdoche for the whole body. Alternate translation: "make yourselves strong" or "prepare for battle"
pull together all your strength
This is an idiom that means to prepare oneself for action. Here it applies to military action. Alternate translation: "prepare yourselves for battle"
Nahum 2:2
For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Jacob, like the majesty of Israel
The words "Jacob" and "Israel" are metonyms for the people who are descended from Jacob. Possible meanings are 1) the word "Jacob" refers to the southern kingdom and the word "Israel" refers to the northern kingdom. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of Judah, as he promised to restore the majesty of Israel" or 2) both "Jacob" and "Israel" refer to the nation as a whole, included both northern and southern kingdoms and the two lines are parallel. Alternate translation: "For Yahweh is restoring the majesty of all Israel"
the plunderers
people who steal things by force, usually in war
destroyed their vine branches
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which the Assyrians taking away Israel's possessions by force is spoken of as if Israel were a vine whose branches the Assyrians had stripped bare. Alternate translation: "robbed them of all of their possession, like one would strip bare vine branches" or 2) the words "vine branches" are a synecdoche for the agricultural fields throughout the nation. Alternate translation: "destroyed their fields of crops"
Nahum 2:3
The shields of his mighty men are red
Possible meanings are 1) the shields appear red as the light from the sun reflects upon their metal surfaces or 2) the shields are covered with leather that has been dyed red.
his mighty men
the soldiers of the one "who will dash" Nineveh "to pieces" (Nahum 2:1).
the chariots flash with their metal
This likely refers to the light from the sun reflecting upon the metal chariots.
on the day that they are made ready
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the soldiers have made them ready" or "when the soldiers have prepared them to attack"
the cypress spears are waved in the air
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the soldiers wave their cypress spears in the air"
cypress
a type of tree whose wood is good for weapons
Nahum 2:4
The chariots speed through the streets
"The soldiers drive the chariots wildly through the streets"
They look like torches
Nahum compares the way that the light from the sun reflects upon the chariots with torches whose fire gives light.
they run like lightning
Nahum compares the way that the light from the sun reflects upon the chariots, and the quickness with which the chariots move, with lightning that flashes quickly in the sky.
Nahum 2:5
He remembers his nobles
The word "remembers" is a metonym for what he does after he remembers them: he calls them to action. Alternate translation: "He calls his nobles" or "He summons his nobles"
nobles
military leaders
in their march
The word "march" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "as they march"
The large shield is made ready to protect these attackers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The attackers make ready the large shield to protect themselves"
The large shield
This refers to a large cover that those who besieged a city would set up over themselves and their battering rams to protect themselves against the arrows and other projectiles with which the people in the city would attack them.
Nahum 2:6
The gates at the rivers are forced open
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy forces open the gates at the rivers"
The gates at the rivers
This refers to the gates that controlled the flow and direction of the river.
Nahum 2:7
Huzzab is stripped and is taken away
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The enemy strips Huzzab and takes her away"
Huzzab is stripped and is taken away
The exact meaning of the word "Huzzab" is uncertain. Two possible meanings are 1) it is the name of a queen in Nineveh and the sentence means that the attacking soldiers have stripped her of her clothes in order to humiliate her and then have carried her off into captivity or 2) it is the name of an idol and the sentence means that the attackers have stripped the gold and silver off the idol and have carried it away.
is stripped
If your language has a word for forcibly taking a person's clothes off of that person and leaving him embarrassed and

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with nothing to keep him warm, you should use it here.

her female servants moan like doves

The moaning sounds that the female servants make sound like the sounds that doves make.

her female servants

If the word "Huzzab" refers to a queen, then this phrase refers to the young women who attended her. If the word "Huzzab" refers to an idol, then this phrase refers to the young women who worked as temple prostitutes.

beating on their breasts

Beating one's breast was a gesture used to express great mourning.

Nahum 2:8

Nineveh is like a leaking pool of water, with its people fleeing away like rushing water

Nahum compares the way that the people flee from the city of Nineveh with the way that water gushes from a reservoir of water when the dam has been broken.

Nahum 2:9

Take the silver plunder ... Nineveh's desirable things

It is not clear who is speaking here. This may be an apostrophe in which Nahum gives directions to the attackers, or the attackers may be speaking and giving directions to one another.

Take the silver plunder, take the gold plunder

The word "plunder" means things stolen by force, usually in war. Alternate translation: "Take the silver as plunder, take the gold as plunder" or "Take the silver, take the gold"

there is no end to the treasure, to the splendor

The words "no end" are an exaggeration to express that there is a great amount of something. Alternate translation: "there is a very great amount of treasure, of the splendor"

to the splendor of all Nineveh's desirable things

This phrase refers to the silver, gold, and other treasures in Nineveh. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "there is no end to the splendor of all Nineveh's beautiful treasures"

Nahum 2:10

Everyone's heart melts

Nahum speaks of the people losing courage as if their hearts melt like wax. Alternate translation: "Everyone loses courage"

everyone's knees strike together

This describes a physical response to great fear. The people's legs shake so badly that their knees knock together and they are unable to walk or run.

anguish is in all loins

The loins are either 1) a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "everyone is in anguish" Or 2) a metonym for the internal organs, and you should describe them using your language's words for how a person's stomach feels when he is very frightened. Alternate translation: "everyone's stomachs are churning"

Nahum 2:11

General Information:

In these verses, Nahum speaks of the people of Nineveh as if they were a group of lions, and of the city Nineveh as if it were their den. The metaphor speaks of the way in which the Assyrians would conquer other people and take their possessions as their own as if they were lions hunting prey and bringing the dead animals back to their den.

Where now is the lions' den ... afraid of nothing?

Nahum uses this rhetorical question to mock Nineveh, which has been destroyed. Alternate translation: "The lions' den is nowhere to be found ... afraid of nothing." or "Look at what has become of the lions' den ... afraid of nothing!"

Nahum 2:12

he strangled victims

"he choked victims." This is probably a reference to the way that lions usually kill their prey, by biting its throat. Alternate translation: "he killed his victims"

filled his cave with victims, his dens with torn carcasses

These two phrases are saying the same thing in different ways. The verb may be supplied for the second phrase. Alternate translation: "filled his cave with victims, and filled his dens with torn carcasses"

Nahum 2:13

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you."

the sword will devour your young lions

Here the word "sword" is a metonym for soldiers who attack with swords and is spoken of as if it were a person who eats its victims. Nahum also continues to speak to the people of Nineveh as if they were lions. Alternate translation: "attackers will kill your people with swords"

I will cut off your prey from your land

Yahweh speaks of the people of Nineveh as if they were lions who preyed upon the nations. Possible meanings are 1) the word "prey" is a metonym for the things that they have taken from those upon whom they preyed, and Yahweh speaks of taking those things away from them as if it were cutting off their prey. Alternate translation: "I will take away from your land all the things that you took from others" or 2) Yahweh speaks of the nations whom the people of Nineveh had plundered as if they were Nineveh's prey, and preventing Nineveh from plundering any more nations as if he were cutting off their prey. Alternate translation: "I will stop you from preying upon any other nation"

the voices of your messengers will be heard no more

This likely refers to the messengers that the Assyrians sent out to other nations to demand surrender or payment of tribute. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will ever hear the voices of your messengers again"

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1 3 Woe to the city full of blood!
It is all full of lies and stolen property;
victims are always in her.

2 But now there is the noise of whips

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and the sound of rattling wheels,
prancing horses, and bounding chariots.

3 Horsemen charging,
flashing swords and glittering spears!
Piles of the dead, bodies that could not be counted—
their attackers stumble over the bodies.

4 This is happening because of the lustful actions
of the beautiful prostitute, the expert in witchcraft,
who sells nations through her prostitution,
and peoples through her acts of witchcraft.

5 "See, I am against you—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—
I will raise up your skirt over your face
and show your private parts to the nations,
your shame to the kingdoms.

6 I will throw disgusting filth on you
and make you vile;
I will set you up as a spectacle.

7 It will come about that everyone who looks at you
will flee from you and say,
'Nineveh is destroyed; who will weep for her?'
Where can I go to find anyone to comfort you?"

8 Nineveh, are you better than Thebes,
which was located on the Nile River,
which had water around her,
whose rampart was the sea,
and the sea was its wall?

9 Cush and Egypt were her strength,
and there was no end to it;
Put and Libya were allies to her.

10 Yet Thebes was carried away;
she went into captivity;
her young children were dashed in pieces
at the head of every street;
her enemies threw lots for her honorable men,
and all her great men were bound in chains.

11 You also will become drunk; you will try to hide,
and you also will look for a refuge from your enemy.

12 All your fortresses will be like fig trees
with the earliest ripe figs:
if they are shaken,
they fall into the mouth of the eater.

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13 See, the people among you are women;
the gates of your land have been opened wide to your enemies;
fire has devoured their bars.

14 Go draw water for the siege;
strengthen your fortresses;
go into the clay and tread the mortar;
pick up the molds for the bricks.

15 Fire will devour you there, and the sword will destroy you.
It will devour you as young locusts devour everything.

Make yourselves as many as the young locusts,
as many as the full-grown locusts.

16 You have multiplied your merchants
more than the stars in the heavens;
but they are like young locusts:
they plunder the land and then fly away.

17 Your princes are like locust swarms,
and your commanders are like locusts
that camp in the walls on a cold day.
But when the sun rises they flee,
and the place they go to is not known.

18 King of Assyria, your shepherds are asleep;
your nobles are lying down resting.
Your people are scattered on the mountains,
and there is no one to gather them.

19 No healing is possible for your wounds.
Your wounds are severe.
Everyone who hears the news about you
will clap their hands in joy over you.
On whom has your wickedness
not trodden continually?

Nahum 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations prefer to set apart extended quotations, prayers and songs. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of the entire book (except for verse 1 of chapter 1) farther to the right on the page than regular text because they are poetic prophecy. (See: prophet)
Despite being divided into three chapters, the book contains one long prophecy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Euphemism
This chapter speaks about the evils of the Assyrians in violent ways. It is important to avoiding toning down this language through the use of euphemism, if at all possible. Although there is some hyperbole, the reader should not assume that the author intends this writing to be taken as completely hyperbolic. (See: and evil)

Links:

Nahum 3:1 Notes

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Nahum 3:1

General Information:

Nahum often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism. Here he continues to describe the destruction of Nineveh.

the city full of blood

Here the word "blood" represents bloodshed and refers to the people who have committed murder. Alternate translation: "the city full of murderers"

It is all full of lies

Here the word "lies" is a metonym for those who tell lies. Alternate translation: "It is full of liars"

Nahum 3:2

the noise of whips and the sound of rattling wheels, prancing horses, and bounding chariots

These phrases describe the sound of chariots rushing through the streets as their drivers use their whips on the horses.

Nahum 3:3

Piles of the dead, bodies that could not be counted

There were so many dead bodies that the attackers piled them in heaps.

bodies

bodies of people who have died

their attackers stumble over the bodies

This shows that there were very many dead bodies on the ground.

Nahum 3:4

the lustful actions of the beautiful prostitute

Nahum speaks of Nineveh causing other nations to be subject to her as if the city were a prostitute who seduces men with her beauty.

the expert in witchcraft

Nahum speaks of Nineveh causing other nations to be subject to her as if the city were a witch who casts a spells on others.

who sells nations through her prostitution, and peoples through her acts of witchcraft

Here the word "sells" implies that the people of Nineveh cause other nations and peoples to become slaves. Nineveh uses her beauty, power, and influence to make others her slaves. Alternate translation: "who by her prostitution and witchcraft causes the people of other nations to become her slaves"

Nahum 3:5

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I will raise up your skirt over your face and show your private parts to the nations

This refers to the practice of publicly humiliating prostitutes by stripping them naked in front of the community. This continues the metaphor of Yahweh speaking of the city of Nineveh as if it were a prostitute. Alternate translation: "I will publicly humiliate you, as one would humiliate a prostitute by raising up her skirt over her face and showing her private parts to all the people"

your shame to the kingdoms

This phrase explains the purpose of lifting up Nineveh's skirt. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "I will show your shame to the kingdoms"

Nahum 3:6

I will throw disgusting filth on you

The words "disgusting filth" refer to all kinds of garbage. Throwing garbage at a person was a sign of strong contempt. Alternate translation: "I will show my contempt for you, like a person would throw disgusting filth at another"

Nahum 3:7

who will weep for her?

The people ask this rhetorical question to emphasize the negative answer. Alternate translation: "no one will weep for her."

Where can I go to find anyone to comfort you?

Yahweh uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that there will be no one who will be able to comfort Nineveh. Alternate translation: "There is nowhere I could go to find someone to comfort you." or "There will be no one to comfort you."

Nahum 3:8

General Information:

Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself.

are you better than Thebes ... wall?

Nahum asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the negative answer that it anticipates. Alternate translation: "you are not better than Thebes ... wall."

Thebes

This was the former capital of Egypt, which the Assyrians had conquered.

which was located on the Nile River

"which was built by the Nile River"

whose rampart was the sea, and the sea was its wall

These two phrases share similar meanings. The word "sea" refers to the Nile River, which ran near the city. Nahum speaks of the Nile as if it were the wall that protected the city. Alternate translation: "which had the Nile river as its defense, as some cities have a wall for their defense"

rampart

A rampart is a wall built around a city to keep enemy armies from getting into the city.

Nahum 3:9

Cush and Egypt were her strength

"Ethiopia and Egypt strengthened her" or "Cush and Egypt were her allies"

there was no end to it

The word "it" refers to the "strength" that Cush and Egypt gave to Thebes. That there was no end to it is a hyperbole that expresses the great amount of strength. Alternate translation: "their strength was very great"

Put and Libya

These are the names of places in northern Africa that were close to Thebes.

Nahum 3:10

General Information:

Nahum continues to speak to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself.

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Yet Thebes was carried away
The word "Thebes" represents the people who lived in Thebes. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yet those who attacked Thebes carried the people away"
she went into captivity
The word "she" refers to Thebes and represents the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "they went into captivity"
her young children were dashed in pieces
This is a brutal description of the soldiers killing children. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "enemy soldiers dashed her young children to pieces" or "enemy soldiers beat her young children to death"
at the head of every street
The beginning of a street is spoken of as if it were the head. Also, "every" is a generalization that means many places all over the city. Alternate translation: "on every street corner" or "in the streets all over the city"
all her great men were bound in chains
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they bound all her great men in chains"
Nahum 3:11
You also will become drunk
Here the word "You" refers to Nineveh. Nahum speaks of the people of Nineveh suffering and dying in battle as if they had become drunk from drinking too much wine.
Nahum 3:12
General Information:
Nahum continues to speak to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself.
All your fortresses
Possible meanings for the word "fortresses" are 1) it refers to Nineveh's fortifications, such as the wall that surrounded the city Alternate translation: "All of your fortifications" or "All of your defenses" or 2) it refers to the fortified cities that were situated along Assyria's borders and prevented enemy armies from attacking Nineveh. Alternate translation: "All of your fortified cities"
All your fortresses will be like fig trees with the earliest ripe figs: if they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater
Nahum compares the ease with which the attackers will conquer Nineveh with the ease with which a person can cause ripe figs to fall from a tree. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will destroy your fortresses as easily as a person can shake a fig tree and eat the first ripe figs that fall"
the earliest ripe figs
This refers to the figs that would ripen first on the tree. These figs fell from the tree easily, so that a person only had to shake the tree to make them fall. Figs that ripened later would require a person to climb the tree and pick them by hand.
if they are shaken
"if the trees are shaken." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if a person shakes the trees"
they fall into the mouth of the eater
"the figs fall into the mouth of the eater." This is an exaggeration. By saying that the figs fall from the tree into the mouth of the one who eats it, Nahum emphasizes that the figs are ready to eat immediately. Alternate translation: "a person can eat the fig immediately"
Nahum 3:13
the people among you are women
In this ancient culture, women were not warriors for a number of reasons, including their being generally weaker physically than men. Here Nahum speaks of Nineveh's warriors losing their strength and courage to fight as if the people in the city were all women. Alternate translation: "your people are all like women who are weak and cannot defend themselves"
the gates of your land have been opened wide to your enemies
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the gates of your land are wide open to your enemies" or "someone has opened wide to your enemies the gates of your land"
the gates of your land have been opened wide to your enemies
Possible meanings are 1) if "fortresses" in v. 12 refers to the Nineveh's defenses, then "the gates of your land" refers to the gates in the walls around Nineveh. Alternate translation: "the gates of your city are wide open for your enemies to attack" or 2) if "fortresses" in v. 12 refers to the fortified cities that were situated along Assyria's borders, then "the gates of your land" is a metaphor in which those cities are spoken of as if they were gates that prevented enemy armies from entering the land. Alternate translation: "your land is defenseless before your enemies because they have destroyed the cities that protected your borders"
fire has devoured their bars
Possible meanings are 1) if "fortresses" in v. 12 refers to the Nineveh's defenses, then "their bars" refers to the bars that locked the gates in the walls around Nineveh. Alternate translation: "fire has destroyed the bars that lock your city gates" or 2) if "fortresses" in v. 12 refers to the fortified cities that were situated along Assyria's borders, then "their bars" is a metaphor in which those cities are spoken of as if they were locked gates that prevented enemy armies from entering the land. Alternate translation: "the cities on your borders can no longer protect you, just as gates can no longer protect a city when fire has destroyed their bars"
fire has devoured
Nahum speaks of fire burning up and destroying as if fire were eating. Alternate translation: "fire has destroyed" or "fire has burned up"
Nahum 3:14
General Information:
Nahum continues to speak to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself.
Go draw water for the siege ... pick up the molds for the bricks
Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh. He tells them to prepare for battle and to repair the walls, although he knows that the enemy will destroy the city.
strengthen your fortresses
"repair the fortifications"
go into the clay and tread the mortar; pick up the molds for the bricks
These phrases refer to making mud bricks that they will use to repair the city's wall.

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Nahum 3:15

Fire will devour you there

Nahum speaks of fire burning and destroying as if it were eating. Alternate translation: "Fire will destroy you there" or "Your enemies will burn you with fire there"

the sword will destroy you

Here the word "sword" is a metonym for the enemies who will attack with swords. Alternate translation: "your enemies will kill you with their swords"

It will devour you as young locusts devour everything

The word "It" refers to the "sword," which is personified as eating those whom it kills. The soldiers using their swords to kill everyone in Nineveh is compared with the way that a swarm of locusts eats every plant in its path. Alternate translation: "Your enemies' swords will kill all of you, just as easily as a swarm of locusts devours everything in its path"

Make yourselves as many as the young locusts, as many as the full-grown locusts

These words begin a new paragraph where Nahum compares the number of people in Nineveh with the large number of locusts in a swarm.

Nahum 3:16

General Information:

Nahum speaks to the people of Nineveh as though they were the city itself.

You have multiplied your merchants more than the stars in the heavens

This exaggeration emphasizes the great number of merchants who lived and worked in Nineveh. Alternate translation: "It is as if you have more merchants than there are stars in the sky" or "You have more merchants than anyone could count"

they are like young locusts: they plunder the land and then fly away

Nahum compares the way that these merchants, who have made their profit by selling their goods in Nineveh, will flee from the city when the battle begins with the way that locusts fly away after they have eaten all of the plants in their path.

Nahum 3:17

your commanders are like locusts that camp in the walls on a cold day. But when the sun rises they flee

Nahum compares the way that the officials in Nineveh will flee when the battle starts with the way that locusts will remain still while it is cold, but will fly away when the sun rises and the air becomes warm.

the place they go to is not known

"and no one knows where they have gone"

Nahum 3:18

your shepherds are asleep; your nobles are lying down resting

These two lines share similar meanings. Nahum speaks of the leaders of Assyria as if they were shepherd who are to care for their sheep. He speaks of the shepherds and rulers dying as if they had fallen asleep. Alternate translation: "your leaders who are like shepherds are dead; your rulers are all dead"

Your people are scattered on the mountains

Nahum speaks of the people of Nineveh as if they were sheep that scatter after the shepherds have died. Alternate translation: "Your people are scattered like sheep on the mountains"

Nahum 3:19

No healing is possible for your wounds. Your wounds are severe

Nahum speaks of the certainty of the destruction of Nineveh and the defeat of its king as if the king had suffered an incurable wound.

No healing is possible for your wounds

The word "healing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "No one is able to heal your wounds"

On whom has your wickedness not trodden continually?

The writer either 1) speaks of wickedness as if it were a person who steps on other people while he goes from one place to another or 2) uses "wickedness" as a metonym for the people who commit it and "trodden" as a metaphor for committing wickedness. This rhetorical question emphasizes the negative answer that it anticipates. Alternate translation: "Your wickedness has continually trodden on everyone." or "There is no one to whom you have not continually done wickedness."

Introduction to Habakkuk

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Habakkuk

Habakkuk asks Yahweh questions (1:1–4) Yahweh responds (1:5–11) Habakkuk asks Yahweh more questions (1:12–2:1) Yahweh responds again (2:2–5) Habakkuk gives five taunts against the wicked (2:6-20) Habakkuk prays (3:1–19)

What is the Book of Habakkuk about?

Other prophets spoke against Israel sinning and failing to obey Yahweh. But Habakkuk questioned Yahweh about the things he did. Yahweh said he would punish the people of Judah by sending the Babylonian army. Habakkuk complained because the Babylonians were more wicked than the people of Judah. Yahweh assured Habakkuk that he would also punish the Babylonians. (See: prophet, lawofmoses and evil and justice)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Habakkuk" or just "Habakkuk." Translators may choose to call it "The Sayings of Habakkuk."

Who wrote the Book of Habakkuk?

The prophet Habakkuk wrote this book. Scripture does not mention Habakkuk except in this book.

The Chaldean empire is another name for the Babylonian empire. The Book of Habakkuk mentions it several times. This helps us to date Habakkuk's life. The Chaldean empire had power from about 720 to 538 B.C. Habakkuk probably

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prophesied about the time of Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Nahum during the reigns of Kings Josiah, Jehoahaz, and Jehoiakim in Judah.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why did Yahweh use an evil nation to punish Judah?

Habakkuk wanted to know why Yahweh used an evil nation to punish Judah. Yahweh responded that he will judge the evil nations also. But righteous people will live by being faithful to Yahweh.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How do I identify the speaker?

Habakkuk spoke to Yahweh and Yahweh answered him. The translator should be careful to identify whether the speaker is Habakkuk or Yahweh in each section. The translator may wish to make the identity of the speaker explicit.

What style of writing is the Book of Habakkuk?

In the first two chapters, Habakkuk asks Yahweh questions and Yahweh answers him. The third chapter is a psalm. Habakkuk ends by telling the choirmaster to use stringed instruments.

Does Habakkuk question or challenge Yahweh?

Habakkuk spoke directly to Yahweh and seems to be challenging God. Habakkuk was not questioning the authority of Yahweh. He was telling Yahweh that he does not understand what Yahweh is doing. In some cultures, it may be improper to speak to an authority in this way. It may be necessary to rephrase Habakkuk's questions to emphasize his sincere desire to learn why God is doing what he is doing, without doubting him.

Habakkuk

1 [1]The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet saw.
[2] "Yahweh, how long will I cry for help,
and you will not hear?
I cry out to you, 'Violence!'
but you will not save.

[3] Why do you make me see iniquity
and cause me to look upon wrongdoing?
Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and contention rises up.

[4] Therefore the law is weakened,
and justice does not last for any time.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
therefore twisted justice goes out."

[5] "Look at the nations and observe them;
be amazed and astonished!
For I am surely about to do something in your days
that you will not believe when it is reported to you.

[6] For look! I am about to raise up the Chaldeans—
that fierce and impetuous nation—
they are marching throughout the breadth of the land
to seize homes that were not their own.

[7] They are terrifying and fearsome;
their judgment and splendor proceed from themselves.

[8] Their horses also are swifter than leopards,
quicker than the evening wolves.
So their horses stamp,
and their horsemen come from a great distance—
they fly like an eagle hurrying to eat.

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9 They all come for violence;
their multitudes go like the desert wind
and they gather captives like sand.[1]

10 So they mock kings,
and rulers are only a mockery for them.
They laugh at every stronghold,
for they heap up earth and seize it.

11 Then the wind will rush on;
it will move past—
guilty men, those whose might is their god."

12 "Are you not from ancient times,
Yahweh my God, my Holy One?
We will not die.
Yahweh has ordained them for judgment,
and you, Rock, have established them for correction.

13 Your eyes are too pure to gaze upon evil,
and you are not able to look on wrongdoing with favor.
Why then have you looked favorably on those who betray?
Why are you silent while the wicked devour
those more righteous than they are?

14 You make men like fish in the sea,
like creeping things without a ruler over them.

15 He brings all of them up with a fishhook;
he drags men away in his fishnet;
he gathers them together in his dragnet;
so he rejoices and he is glad.

16 Therefore he sacrifices to his net
and burns incense to his dragnet,
for by his net he lives in luxury,
and his food is the richest kind.

17 Will he therefore keep emptying his net,
and will he continually slaughter the nations without mercy?"

[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text are translated here, their multitudes go like the desert wind; this is a difficult passage to translate, and it is translated in different ways in modern translations.

Habakkuk 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:1-17.

This chapter is arranged in a series of questions and answers between Yahweh and Habakkuk.

Special concepts in this chapter

Injustice

Habakkuk sees great injustice, especially in the defeat of Israel by the Assyrians. He cries out to Yahweh to ask him to put an end to it. He is questioning Yahweh, but he trusts in him. (See: justice and trust)

Chaldeans

Yahweh will raise up the Chaldeans to bring justice to the Hebrew people. They will defeat the Assyrians. At this time, the Chaldeans were an insignificant city and people group. This was probably intended to show the power of Yahweh.

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Links:

Habakkuk 1:1 Notes Habakkuk intro

Habakkuk 1:1

The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet saw

This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "This is the prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet saw."

Habakkuk 1:2

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

how long will I cry for help, and you will not hear?

The reader should understand that Habakkuk has been crying to Yahweh for help for a long time. He asks this question because he is frustrated and wants to know how much longer it will be before Yahweh responds. Alternate translation: "how much longer shall I cry for help before you will respond?"

Habakkuk 1:3

General Information:

Habakkuk continues his prayer to God.

Destruction and violence are before me

The words "destruction" and "violence" can be translated with a verbal phrase. The idiom "before me" means that Habakkuk witnesses these things happening. Alternate translation: "I witness people destroying things and acting violently"

contention rises up

The word "contention" refers to conflict between people and can be translated with a verbal phrase. Habakkuk speaks of there being more contention between people as if contention rises up. Alternate translation: "there is more conflict between people"

Habakkuk 1:4

the law is weakened

Habakkuk speaks of people not obeying or enforcing the law as if they had made the law weak and unable to act. Alternate translation: "no one enforces the law"

the wicked surround the righteous

Habakkuk speaks of wicked people causing righteous people to suffer injustice as if the wicked people surrounded the righteous people.

twisted justice goes out

Habakkuk speaks of judges giving decisions that they say are just but that are not as if "twisted justice" were going out to the people. Alternate translation: "judges make decisions that are not just"

twisted justice

Justice that is "twisted" is injustice, the opposite of "straight justice," which is truly just.

Habakkuk 1:5

General Information:

In 1:5-11 Yahweh responds to Habakkuk.

be amazed and astonished

The words "amazed" and "astonished" share similar meanings. Together they emphasize the strength of the emotion. Alternate translation: "be very amazed"

in your days

This idiom refers to Habakkuk's lifetime. Alternate translation: "during your lifetime"

when it is reported to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone reports it to you" or "when you hear about it"

Habakkuk 1:6

look!

The word "look!" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

impetuous

Possible meanings are 1) "violent" or 2) "hasty."

the breadth of the land

This can mean 1) everywhere in Judah or 2) everywhere in the world. This would be an exaggeration to emphasize how powerful the Chaldean army is.

Habakkuk 1:7

They are terrifying and fearsome

The words "terrifying" and "fearsome" share similar meanings. Together they emphasize the fear that the Chaldeans instilled in other people. Alternate translation: "They cause others to be greatly terrified"

their judgment and splendor proceed from themselves

The word "splendor" represents their pride in how they view themselves. Yahweh speaks of their opinion of themselves as if the qualities of judgment and splendor came from them. Alternate translation: "because they are prideful, they decide for themselves what judgment looks like"

Habakkuk 1:8

Their horses ... their horses

the horses of the Chaldean soldiers

leopards

large, swift cats

the evening wolves

This refers to wolves that hunt their prey at night.

their horsemen

the Chaldean soldiers who ride the horses

they fly like an eagle hurrying to eat

Yahweh speaks of how quickly the Chaldeans move in order to conquer their enemies as if they were flying, like an eagle flies swiftly to capture its prey.

Habakkuk 1:9

They all come for violence

"They are coming because they want to do violence"

their multitudes go like the desert wind

Yahweh speaks of how quickly the Chaldeans move as if they were a strong wind that blows in the desert.

they gather captives like sand

Possible meanings are 1) the Chaldeans take people captive as easily as one would scoop up sand with his hand. Alternate translation: "they gather captives as one gathers sand" or 2) the Chaldeans take a great number of people

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captive, as if those people were as many as the grains of sand in the desert. Alternate translation: "they capture as many people as there are grains of sand"

Habakkuk 1:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to describe the Chaldean soldiers.

So they mock kings, and rulers are only a mockery for them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The word "mockery" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "So they mock kings, and rulers are only something for them to mock" or "So all they do is mock kings and rulers"

Habakkuk 1:11

the wind will rush on

Yahweh speaks of how swiftly the Chaldean army moves from one city to the next as it conquers each one as if it were a wind that blows swiftly along.

guilty men, those whose might is their god

This refers to the Chaldean soldiers.

Habakkuk 1:12

General Information:

Habakkuk speaks to Yahweh about the Chaldeans.

Are you not from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One?

Habakkuk asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the positive answer. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You surely are from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One."

from ancient times

"eternal"

has ordained them for judgment, and you, Rock, have established them for correction

The word "them" refers to the Chaldeans. The words "judgment" and "correction" can be translated with verbs. The reader should understand that the Chaldeans will judge and correct Yahweh's people. Alternate translation: "has ordained them to judge his people, and you, Rock, have established them to correct your people"

Rock

Habakkuk speaks of Yahweh being the one who protects him and keeps him safe as if he were a rock upon which Habakkuk could stand in order to be out of his enemies' reach.

Habakkuk 1:13

General Information:

Habakkuk continues speaking to Yahweh about the Chaldeans.

Your eyes are too pure

Here the word "eyes" represents Yahweh who sees. Alternate translation: "You are too pure"

those who betray

This refers to the Chaldeans. The word "betray" refers to people who have been disloyal or have broken agreements that they have made.

Why are you silent while the wicked devour those more righteous than they are?

Habakkuk speaks of wicked people destroying others as if the wicked were swallowing them. Alternate translation: "Why are you silent while the wicked destroy those more righteous than they are?"

those more righteous than they are

This refers to the Israelites, about whom Habakkuk had been complaining. The reader should understand that these are wicked people, but they are "more righteous than" or not as wicked as the Chaldeans.

Habakkuk 1:14

You make men like fish in the sea

Habakkuk compares the way in which the Chaldeans will kill people without remorse with the way in which people will kill fish without remorse. Alternate translation: "You cause men to become no more important than fish"

like creeping things without a ruler over them

The words "creeping things" refer to insects and other bugs that crawl about. Just as insects have no ruler to organize and defend them, the people are defenseless before the Chaldean army. The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "you make men like creeping things without a ruler over them" or "you make men as defenseless as insects that have no ruler"

Habakkuk 1:15

General Information:

Habakkuk continues speaking to Yahweh about the Chaldeans.

He brings ... he drags ... his fishnet ... he gathers ... his dragnet ... he rejoices ... he is glad

The words "he" and "his" refer to a Babylonian solider who represents all of the Babylonian soldiers. These pronouns can be stated as plural. Alternate translation: "They bring ... they drag ... their fishnets ... they gather ... their dragnet ... they rejoice ... they are glad"

all of them ... drags men away ... gathers them

Here "them" and "men" refer to people in general. This can be stated in first person to include Habakkuk as one of the people. Alternate translation: "all of us ... drags us away ... gathers us"

He brings all of them up with a fishhook ... in his dragnet

Habakkuk speaks of the Chaldeans conquering people easily as if the people were fish that the Chaldeans catch with fishhooks and fishnets.

fishhook ... fishnet ... dragnet

tools used to catch fish

Habakkuk 1:16

he sacrifices ... his net ... his dragnet ... he lives ... his food

Habakkuk speaks of the weapons that the Chaldeans use to conquer people and nations as if the weapons were fishing nets that they use to catch fish. The words "he" and "his" refer to a Babylonian solider who represents all of the Babylonian soldiers. These pronouns can be stated as plural. Alternate translation: "they sacrifice ... their nets ... their dragnets ... they live ... their food"

Habakkuk 1:17

Will he therefore keep emptying his net, and will he continually slaughter the nations without mercy?

Habakkuk asks this question because he is frustrated and wants to know how long Yahweh will allow the Chaldeans to continue to destroy people and nations. Alternate translation: "Will you therefore let them empty their fishing nets and continue to slaughter the nations while they feel no compassion?"

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Will he ... keep emptying his net ... will he continually slaughter
In 1:15-17 the singular pronoun "he" and "his" refer to a Babylonian solider who represents all of the Babylonian soldiers. These pronouns can be stated as plural. Alternate translation: "Will they ... keep emptying their net ... will they continually slaughter"

keep emptying his net
Habakkuk speaks of the Chaldeans preparing to conquer more nations as if they were fishermen who empty their nets so that they can use them to catch more fish.

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1 2 I will stand at my guard post
and station myself on the watchtower,
and I will watch carefully to see what he will say to me
and how I should turn from my complaint.[1]

2 Yahweh answered me and said,
"Record this vision,
and write plainly on the tablets
so that the one reading them might run.
3 For the vision is yet for the appointed time
and will testify and not fail.
Though it delays, wait for it.
For it will surely come and will not tarry.

4 Look! The one whose desires are not right within him
is puffed up.
But the righteous will live by his faith.

5 Indeed, as wine is treacherous,
even so an arrogant man does not stay at home.
He has made his throat as wide as Sheol;
and like death, he is never satisfied.
He has gathered together all the nations,
and he has assembled to himself all the people.

6 Will all these not take up a proverb and mockery, riddles about him, saying,
'Woe to the one increasing
what is not his!
For how long will you increase
the weight of the pledges you have taken?'
7 Will the ones biting at you not rise up suddenly,
and the ones terrifying you awaken?
You will become a victim for them.

8 Because you have plundered many peoples,
all the remnant of the peoples will plunder you.
For you have shed human blood
and acted with violence against the land,
the cities, and all who live in them.

9 'Woe to the one who gets evil gains for his house,
so he can set his nest on high
to deliver himself from the hand of evil.'

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10 You have devised shame for your house
by cutting off many people,
and have sinned against your life.

11 For the stones will cry out from the wall,
and the rafters of timber will answer them,

12 'Woe to the one who builds a city with blood,
and who establishes a town in iniquity.'

13 Is it not from Yahweh of hosts
that peoples labor for fire,
and nations weary themselves in vain?

14 Yet the land will be filled
with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh
as the waters cover the sea.

15 'Woe to the one who forces his neighbors to drink—
you express your anger, and you make them drunk
in order to look at their nakedness.'

16 You will be filled with shame instead of glory.
Now it is your turn!
Drink, and you will expose your uncircumcised foreskin!
The cup in Yahweh's right hand is coming around to you,
and disgrace will cover your glory.

17 The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you
and the devastation of animals will terrify you.
For you have shed the blood of man
and you have acted with violence
against the land, the cities, and all who live in them.

18 What profit is there in a carved image?
For a carver has carved it!
Or a cast metal figure, a teacher of lies?
For the maker trusts in what he has made
when he makes these worthless idols.

19 Woe to the one saying to the wood, 'Wake up!
or to the silent stone, 'Arise!'
Do these things teach?
See, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
but there is no breath at all within it.

20 But Yahweh is in his holy temple!
Be silent before him, all the land."

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[1]Instead of how I should turn from my complaint, which is the reading of the copies of the Hebrew text, some modern translations have how I should answer when he replies to my complaint or how I should answer when he rebukes me.
[2]There is some question about whether the Hebrew should be translated as you express your anger or as you pour from your wineskin.

Habakkuk 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:1-20.

This chapter is arranged in a series of questions and answers between Yahweh and Habakkuk.

Special concepts in this chapter

"The righteous will live by his faith"

This is an important phrase in Scripture. Paul also uses it to explain that man is justified by his faith. (See: righteous and justice and faith)

Links:

Habakkuk 2:1 Notes

Habakkuk 2:1

I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the watchtower

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Possible meanings are 1) Habakkuk went to an actual post in the watchtower or 2) this is a metaphor in which Habakkuk speaks of waiting eagerly for Yahweh's response as if he were a watchman waiting at his post for the arrival of a messenger.

to see what he will say to me

"to see what Yahweh will say to me" or "to hear what Yahweh will say to me"

how I should turn from my complaint

Here the word "turn" refers to returning an answer. Habakkuk considers what answer he will give concerning the things that he has said.

Habakkuk 2:2

General Information:

Yahweh answers Habakkuk.

Record this vision, and write plainly on the tablets

Both of these phrases are saying the same thing in two different ways. Alternate translation: "Write this vision clearly on the tablets"

tablets

These are flat pieces of stone or clay that were used for writing.

so that the one reading them might run

Possible meanings are 1) that the message is easy enough to read that a messenger can read it as he runs from place to place proclaiming the message. Alternate translation: "so that the one reading the tablets might be able to run as he reads" or 2) this is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of reading something very quickly as if the person who reads it is running. Alternate translation: "so that the one reading the tablets might be able to read quickly"

Habakkuk 2:3

the vision ... will testify

Yahweh speaks of the events in the vision happening as if the vision were a person who speaks. Alternate translation: "the vision ... will finally happen" or "the vision ... will finally come true"

will testify

Some translations read, "will reach its goal," and others read, "will finally speak."

Though it delays, wait for it. For it will surely come and will not tarry

Yahweh speaks of the events of the vision taking a long time to happen as if the vision were a person who does not arrive soon at his destination.

will not tarry

Possible meanings are 1) "will not be late" or 2) "will not come slowly"

Habakkuk 2:4

General Information:

Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk. Here he speaks of the Chaldeans as if they were one prideful, drunken man who can never have enough.

Look!

The word "Look!" here adds emphasis to what follows.

is puffed up

Yahweh speaks of the person who is prideful as if the person were "puffed up." Alternate translation: "is very prideful"

Habakkuk 2:5

as wine is treacherous, even so an arrogant man does not stay at home

Yahweh speaks of how drinking too much wine impairs a person's judgment as if the wine itself were a person who is treacherous and deceives the one who drinks it. Yahweh compares the treachery of an arrogant man to the treachery of wine. Alternate translation: "Just as wine harms people, the arrogant man also goes out to harm people"

wine

Some modern translations read, "wealth."

He has made his throat as wide as Sheol; and like death, he is never satisfied

God speaks of the arrogant person being greedy as if the person made his throat extremely wide so he could eat far more than he needed. Because no one can escape death and Sheol, people thought of Sheol and death as being like a hungry person who is never satisfied. Yahweh used this images to show how extremly greedy the the arrogant person is.

He has gathered together all the nations, and he has assembled to

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himself all the people
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh speaks of the arrogant man conquering nations and capturing the people as if he were gathering nations and peoples to himself. Alternate translation: "He conquers for himself the people of every nation"
Habakkuk 2:6
General Information:
Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.
Will all these not take up ... saying, 'Woe ... taken?'
The words "all these" refer to the nations and peoples from [Habakkuk 2:5]
take up a proverb and mockery, riddles
They will use the words later in the verse to mock him.
riddles
This is a question to which the one who asks knows the answer but hides it with figures of speech so that the other person needs to work hard to think of it.
Woe to the one increasing what is not his
It is implicit that he is increasing his possession of things that do not belong to him. Alternate translation: "Woe to the one who claims for himself more and more things that do not belong to him"
For how long will you increase the weight of the pledges you have taken?
The word "pledges" refers to objects that people give to others from whom they have borrowed money as a guarantee that they will repay their debt. As the man collects more and more pledges, the total weight of the pledges that he carries increases.
For how long will you increase the weight of the pledges you have taken?
The Chaldeans robbing the people of the nations of their wealth is spoken of as if the Chaldeans were a person who forces others to give him pledges and to pay him what they do not owe. Alternate translation: "For how long will you make yourself rich by extorting others?"
Habakkuk 2:7
Will the ones biting at you not rise up suddenly, and the ones terrifying you awaken?
This negative rhetorical question emphasizes the positive answer. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The ones biting at you will certainly rise up suddenly, and the ones terrifying you will awaken."
the ones biting at you
The Hebrew word translated here as "the ones biting" can also mean "the ones paying interest" or "debtors." In this context, the word probably has both meanings. The phrase is a metaphor in which those whom the man has oppressed and made debtors by forcing them to give him pledges will now oppress him, which is spoken of as if they were biting him.
the ones terrifying you
This refers to the same debtors. They will terrify the Chaldeans by attacking them in revenge for the pledges that they were forced to give.
rise up ... awaken
The people of the nations beginning to act against the Chaldeans is spoken of as if they were to "rise up" and to "awaken" from sleep.
Habakkuk 2:8
plunder
to rob or take things by force
you have shed human blood
The idiom "to shed blood" means "to murder." Alternate translation: "you have murdered people"
Habakkuk 2:9
General Information:
Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.
the one who gets evil gains for his house
Possible meanings are 1) the word "house" is a metaphor in which the Babylonian empire is spoken of as if it were a house that the man builds by means of profits that he gained through violence. Alternate translation: "the one who builds his house with riches that he gained through violence" or 2) the word "house" is a metonym for "family" and the man has made his family rich through violence. Alternate translation: "the one who makes his family rich by violent means"
so he can set his nest on high to deliver himself from the hand of evil
The person who builds his house is spoken of as if he were a bird that builds its nest in a high place. The man thinks that his house is secure and free from danger, just as predators are unable to reach the nest.
from the hand of evil
Here the word "hand" is a metonym for power, and the word "evil" is a metonym for people who do evil things. Alternate translation: "from the power of evil" or "from people who will harm him"
Habakkuk 2:10
You have devised shame for your house
Here to "devise shame" means that the plans that the man devised have resulted in shame. One possible meaning is that the word "house" is a metaphor in which the Babylonian empire is spoken of as if it were a house that the man has built. Alternate translation: "By your plans, you have brought shame on the house that you have built" Another possibility is that the word "house" is a metonym for "family." Alternate translation: "By your plans, you have brought shame on your family"
cutting off many people
Killing many people is spoken of as if it were cutting those people off, like one would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "killing many people"
have sinned against your life
This idiom means that the person has done things that will result in his own death or destruction. Alternate translation: "have caused your own ruin" or "have brought about your own death"
Habakkuk 2:11
For the stones will cry out from the wall, and the rafters of timber will answer them
Here the materials with which the man has built his house are personified as witnesses of the crimes that he has committed. If your culture uses different materials to build houses, you can consider using those materials here.

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cry out

"cry out against you" or "cry out to accuse you"

will answer them

"will agree with the stones"

Habakkuk 2:12

General Information:

Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.

Woe to the one who builds a city with blood, and who establishes a town in iniquity

These two phrases are saying the same thing in different ways. Alternate translation: "A warning to the Chaldeans who built their cities with what they have stolen from the people they have killed"

the one who builds a city with blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for murder. It is implicit that the person builds a city by means of the goods that he stole from those whom he has killed. Alternate translation: "the one who kills people and steals their goods in order to build a city"

who establishes a town in iniquity

It is implicit that the person builds a city by means of the goods that he stole from those whom he has killed. Here the word "establishes" means "to begin." Alternate translation: "who starts a town by means of the profit that he has acquired through evil behavior"

Habakkuk 2:13

Is it not from Yahweh of hosts that peoples labor for fire, and nations weary themselves in vain?

This negative rhetorical question emphasizes the positive answer that it anticipates. The two clauses share similar meanings that the work that people do will not last. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is the one who has determined that the things that people work hard to build will be destroyed by fire and result in nothing."

peoples labor for fire

This means that the people labor to build things that will go into the fire before the people can use them. Alternate translation: "peoples labor to build things that the fire will burn up"

Habakkuk 2:14

the land will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea

This simile compares the way in which people everywhere will know of Yahweh's glory with how water fills every part of the sea.

the land will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh

The word "knowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people throughout the land will know the glory of Yahweh"

Habakkuk 2:15

General Information:

Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.

the one who forces his neighbors to drink ... you make them drunk

The way that the Chaldeans cruelly treated other nations is spoken of as if they were a man who forces his neighbors to become drunk so that he can humiliate them.

the one who forces his neighbors to drink

It is implied that he makes his neighbor drink wine. Alternate translation: "the one who forces his neighbors to drink wine"

in order to look at their nakedness

"so you can look at them when they are naked." This refers to the practice of publicly humiliating people by stripping them naked in front of others. Alternate translation: "so that you can humiliate them publicly by stripping them naked"

Habakkuk 2:16

You will be filled with shame instead of glory

The Chaldeans passionately pursuing their own glory is spoken of as if they were eating or drinking it greedily and excessively. Instead of attaining glory, they will find only shame. Alternate translation: "You will bring shame upon yourself instead of the glory that you seek"

Drink

Others treating the Chaldeans the way that the Chaldeans had treated others is spoken of as if the Chaldeans were to drink the wine that they had forced others to drink. Alternate translation: "Drink from the cup" or "Drink the wine"

you will expose your uncircumcised foreskin

This phrase is similar to the Chaldeans forcing others to strip naked so that they could look at their nakedness. Here the words "uncircumcised foreskin" indicate that they will be humiliated not just by being naked, but because their uncircumcision proves that they do not belong to Yahweh's people.

The cup in Yahweh's right hand is coming around to you

Yahweh punishing the Chaldeans is spoken of as if he were forcing them to drink wine from a cup that he holds in his hand. Yahweh's right hand represents his power.

The cup in Yahweh's right hand

"The cup that Yahweh holds in his right hand" or "The cup that Yahweh is holding"

is coming around to you

"will come to you as it did to others" or "will pass along to you"

disgrace will cover your glory

The Chaldeans experiencing disgrace instead of glory is spoken of as if disgrace were an object that covers the glory that they thought they had. Alternate translation: "disgrace will replace your glory" or "people will disgrace you instead of honor you"

Habakkuk 2:17

General Information:

Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.

The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you

The Chaldeans being punished for the violence done to Lebanon is spoken of as if their violent actions were a person who will overpower them.

The violence done to Lebanon

Possible meanings for the word "Lebanon" are 1) it represents the forest of Lebanon. Alternate translation: "The violence done to the trees of Lebanon" or 2) it

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represents the people of Lebanon. Alternate translation: "The violence done to the people of Lebanon"

the devastation of animals will terrify you

The Chaldeans being punished for destroying the animals in Lebanon is spoken of as if what they had done were a person who will terrify them.

For you have shed the blood of man ... all who live in them

See how you translated this sentence in Habakkuk 2:8.

you have shed the blood of man

The idiom "to shed blood" means "to murder." Alternate translation: "you have murdered people"

Habakkuk 2:18

General Information:

Yahweh continues to answer Habakkuk and to speak of the Chaldeans as if they were one man.

What profit is there in a carved image?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the negative answer that it anticipates. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The carved figure does no one any good!"

Or a cast metal figure, a teacher of lies?

This rhetorical question continues the idea in the first two sentences. You may need to add the ideas omitted in the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "Or what good is a cast metal figure? It is a teacher of lies" or "And a cast metal figure can does no one any good because it is a teacher of lies"

a teacher of lies

This phrase personifies the cast metal figure as a teacher. People who look at a skillfully made idol falsely believe that it has power. Alternate translation: "a thing about which people believe lies"

worthless idols

or "idols who cannot speak"

Habakkuk 2:19

Or to the silent stone

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "Woe to the one saying to the silent stone"

Do these things teach?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the negative answer that it anticipates. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These things cannot teach." or "Wood and stone cannot teach."

See, it is overlaid

"Look at it. You can see for yourself that it is overlaid"

it is overlaid with gold and silver

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a person overlays the wood or stone with gold and silver"

there is no breath at all within it

The idiom "no breath ... within it" means that it is not alive, but dead. Alternate translation: "it is not alive" or "it is dead"

Habakkuk 2:20

all the land

Here the word "land" is a metonym for the people who live in the land. Alternate translation: "everyone in the land" or "everyone on earth"

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3 [1]The prayer of Habakkuk the prophet:[1]

[2] Yahweh, I have heard your report,
and I am afraid.
Yahweh, revive your work in the midst of these times;
in the midst of these years make it known;
remember to have compassion in your wrath.

[3] God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Selah

His glory covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of his praise.

[4] With brightness like the light,
two-pronged rays flash from his hand;
and there he hid his power.

[5] Deadly disease went before him,
and the plague came out at his feet.

[6] He stood and measured the earth;
he looked and shook the nations.
Even the eternal mountains were shattered,
and the everlasting hills bowed down.
His path is everlasting.

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7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction,
and the fabric of the tents in the land of Midian trembling.

8 Was Yahweh angry at the rivers?
Was your wrath against the rivers,
or your fury against the sea,
when you rode upon your horses
and your victorious chariots?

9 You have brought out your bow without a cover;
you put arrows to your bow!
Selah

You divided the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw you and twisted in pain.
Downpours of water passed over them;
the deep sea raised a shout.
It lifted up its hands.

11 The sun and moon stood still in their high places
at the flash of your arrows as they fly,
at the lightning of your flashing spear.

12 You have marched over the earth with indignation.
In wrath you have threshed the nations.

13 You went out for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed one.
You shatter the head of the house of the wicked
to lay bare from the base up to the neck.
Selah

14 You have pierced the head of his warriors
with his own spears since they came
like a storm to scatter us;
their gloating was like one
who devours the poor in a hiding place.

15 You have trampled on the sea with your horses,
and heaped up the great waters.

16 I heard, and my inner parts trembled!
My lips quivered at the sound.
Decay comes into my bones,
and under myself I tremble
as I wait quietly for the day of distress
to come upon the people who invade us.

17 Though the fig tree does not bud
and there is no produce from the vines;
and though the produce of the olive tree disappoints
and the fields produce no food;

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and though the flock is cut off from the fold
and there are no cattle in the stalls,
this is what I will do.

18 Still, I will rejoice in Yahweh.
I will be joyful because of the God of my salvation.

19 The Lord Yahweh is my strength
and he makes my feet like the deer's.
He makes me go forward on my high places.
—To the music director, on my stringed instruments.

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1 The copies of the ancient Hebrew text add the expression on shigionoth, which may refer to musical directions for singers.

Habakkuk 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:1-19.

Special concepts in this chapter

Poetry

Although this is a prayer, it is in the form of poetry. Habakkuk uses startling imagery to show his fear of Yahweh. (See: and fear)

Links:

Habakkuk 3:1 Notes

Habakkuk 3:1

The prayer of Habakkuk the prophet:

These words introduce the third chapter of this book. This can be stated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "This is the prayer that Habakkuk the prophet prayed to Yahweh."

Habakkuk 3:2

I have heard your report

Possible meanings are 1) "I have heard people talk about what you have done in the past" or 2) "I have heard what you just said."

revive your work

Habakkuk speaks of Yahweh doing again the things that he has done in the past as if Yahweh were to cause his work to live again. Alternate translation: "bring your work back to life" or "what you did before, do again"

in the midst of these years

This idiom refers to the time at which Habakkuk prayed this prayer, as opposed to times when Yahweh had acted in the past to rescue his people. Alternate translation: "in our own times"

make it known

"make your work known" or "cause people to know your work"

Habakkuk 3:3

General Information:

Habakkuk begins to describe his vision of Yahweh coming to judge his enemies and to save his people. The vision continues through Habakkuk 3:15. It is full of metaphorical language and uses different kinds of parallelism.

God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran

Teman and Mount Paran were both located south of Judah. Habakkuk speaks of God coming to Judah from the direction of Mount Sinai.

His glory covered the heavens

"His splendor covered the sky." Here the word "glory" refers to the bright light that biblical writers often associate with God's presence.

covered

Possible meanings are 1) concealed, hid to keep people from seeing, or 2) clothed gloriously, as beautiful clothes add glory to the person who wears them.

the earth was full of his praise

Here the word "praise" is a metonym for God's qualities that cause people to praise him. Alternate translation: "the earth was full of his glory"

Habakkuk 3:4

General Information:

Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.

With brightness like the light

Here the word "brightness" likely refers to the brightness that is often associated with Yahweh's glory. Possible meanings are 1) the brightness of Yahweh's glory was like flashes of lightning or 2) the brightness of Yahweh's glory was like the rising of the sun.

two-pronged rays flash from his hand

Habakkuk speaks of flashes of lightning as if they were two-pronged weapons that Yahweh holds in his hand.

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there he hid his power
The word "there" refers to Yahweh's hand. Possible meanings are 1) the lightning bolts that Habakkuk can see are only a small representation of the full power that he cannot see hidden in Yahweh's hand or 2) Yahweh hides his power in his hand until he is ready to use it.
Habakkuk 3:5
Deadly disease went before him
The writer describes God making people ill with diseases as if that disease were a person who walked in front of God and told them that God was coming. Alternate translation: "God caused people to die from diseases"
the plague came out at his feet
The writer describes God making people ill with the plague as if the plague were a small animal following close behind God's feet. Alternate translation: "he brought a plague on the people" or "God made the people ill with the plague"
Habakkuk 3:6
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.
He stood
This means that Yahweh stopped walking and stood still, not that he stood up from a seated position.
measured the earth
Possible meanings are 1) the word translated as "measured" can be "shook" or 2) he surveyed the earth the way a conqueror would before assigning portions to his governors.
he looked and shook the nations
The nations shook with fear because he looked at them. This is the fear a guilty person has when he is afraid that the person looking at him will punish him.
eternal mountains ... everlasting hills
"mountains that have existed since the beginning of time ... hills that will exist until the end of time." If your language has no different words for "eternal" and "everlasting," you can combine them as the UDB has done.
Even the eternal mountains were shattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Even the eternal mountains crumbled" or "He shattered even the eternal mountains"
the everlasting hills bowed down
The hills being flattened like level ground is spoken of as if they were people who bow down before Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the everlasting hills collapsed"
His path is everlasting
Possible meanings are 1) the words "His path" may be a metaphor that speaks of Yahweh and his actions as a path on which he walks. Alternate translation: "He is everlasting" or 2) Habakkuk speaks of the path upon which Yahweh walks in the vision as being everlasting, indicating that this is the same path that Yahweh had taken in ancient times. Alternate translation: "He walks along an ancient path"
Habakkuk 3:7
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.
I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the fabric of the tents in the land of Midian trembling
Possible meanings are 1) the words "the tents" and "the fabric of the tents" are metonyms for the people who live in those tents. Alternate translation: "I saw the people who live in tents in the land of Cushan in affliction, and the people who live in tents in the land of Midian trembling" or 2) this is a metaphor in which Habakkuk speaks of the tents in Cushan and Midian being blown about by a storm as if the tents were people who were trembling in affliction. Alternate translation: "I saw the tents of Cushan blown about like people in affliction, and the fabric of the tents in the land of Midian trembling as if they were people"
Cushan
This can be 1) the name of a people group otherwise unknown or 2) the same as Cush.
Habakkuk 3:8
you rode upon your horses and your victorious chariots
The phrases "your horses" and "your victorious chariots" both refer to the same thing. This speaks of Yahweh as if he were a warrior riding a horse-drawn chariot into battle. Alternate translation: "you rode your horse-drawn chariots to victory"
Habakkuk 3:9
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.
You have brought out your bow without a cover
This means that Yahweh has removed his bow from its protective case and is prepared to shoot. Alternate translation: "You have prepared to shoot your bow"
You divided the earth with rivers
Possible meanings are 1) "You created rivers that divide the lands through which they run" or 2) "You split open the earth and rivers flowed forth."
Habakkuk 3:10
The mountains saw you and twisted in pain
The effects that Yahweh's presence has on the mountains is spoken of as if the mountains were people who writhe in pain. This may refer either to the mountains shaking from an earthquake or to the water from the storm eroding the sides of the mountains as the streams flow down.
Downpours of water passed over them
Possible meanings are 1) torrential rains fell on the mountains or 2) the rain caused raging streams to flow down the mountains.
the deep sea raised a shout
The loud noises that the sea makes as the wind and storm pass over it are spoken of as if the sea were a person who begins to shout loudly. Alternate translation: "the deep sea became loud"
It lifted up its hands
The waves of the sea are spoken of as if the sea were a person who lifts his hands in praise to God. Alternate translation: "Waves began to form in the sea"
Habakkuk 3:11
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.
The sun and moon stood still
The sun and moon not moving in the sky is spoken of as if they were people who stopped walking and stood still. Alternate translation: "The sun and moon stopped moving"

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in their high places
"in the sky"
at the flash of your arrows ... at the lightning of your flashing spear
These two phrases share similar meanings and tell why the sun and moon have stood still. The lightning flashes in the sky are spoken of as if they were arrows that Yahweh shoots from his bow or a shining spear that he throws through the sky.
the flash of your arrows as they fly
"the flash of your flying arrows"
Habakkuk 3:12
indignation
anger of a person who has suffered injustice
you have threshed the nations
Yahweh punishing the people of the nations is spoken of as if he threshed the nations. Threshing refers to the practice of having an ox or some other animal trample upon grain stalks in order to crush them and remove the grain.
Habakkuk 3:13
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh. The last sentence in this verse is difficult to translate. Read each of the Translation Notes on that sentence below to see different ways to translate it.
You went out for the salvation of your people
The word "salvation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "You went out to save your people"
your anointed one
"the one whom you have anointed." Here this phrase refers to one whom Yahweh has chosen. Possible meanings are 1) "the people you have chosen" or "the nation you have chosen" or 2) "the king you have chosen."
You shatter the head of the house of the wicked to lay bare from the base up to the neck
Possible meanings are 1) killing the leader and destroying the people is spoken of as if someone were destroying a house. Here the leader is the head, that is, the roof of the house; and "base" and "neck" represent other parts of the house. Alternate translation: "You destroy the roof of the wicked house and demolish the rest of the building" or "You kill the leader of the wicked nation and completely destroy the nation" or 2) Killing the leader and removing honor and power from the people is spoken of as if someone were shattering a person's head and stripping off all of his clothes. Here the leader is the "head," and "house" represents the people who are the body. Alternate translation: "The wicked people and their leader are like a man whose head you crush and whose body you strip naked from foot to neck" or "You kill the leader of the wicked people and completely remove all of the people's power"
Habakkuk 3:14
General Information:
Habakkuk continues to describe his vision of Yahweh.
You have pierced the head of his warriors with his own spears
The word "his" refers to the leader of the Chaldeans. Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor in which the warriors are spoken of as if they were a body and the leader were the head. Alternate translation: "You have killed with his own spear the one who leads the warriors" or 2) the word "head" refers to the heads of each of the warriors. Alternate translation: "With the leader's own spear, you have pierced the heads of each of his warriors"
spears
Some modern translations read, "arrows."
they came like a storm
The power and quickness of the Chaldeans as they attacked the people of Israel is compared to the coming of a sudden storm. Alternate translation: "they came quickly like a storm"
their gloating was like one who devours the poor in a hiding place
The word "gloating" here means to rejoice for bad reasons and can be translated with a verb. The warriors treating people cruelly or killing them is spoken of as if the warriors were wild beasts who carry their prey to their hiding places in order to eat it. Alternate translation: "they gloated like a person who secretly abuses poor people" or "they rejoiced when they oppressed the poor, acting as if they would eat them like a beast eats its prey in its den"
Habakkuk 3:15
heaped up the great waters
Yahweh causing the waters to surge is spoken of as if he heaped the water up into piles. Alternate translation: "caused the great waters to surge"
Habakkuk 3:16
General Information:
Habakkuk describes his reaction to his vision of Yahweh.
I heard
You may indicate what it is that Habakkuk heard. Possible meanings are 1) "I heard everything in that vision" or 2) "I heard Yahweh approach like a great storm"
my inner parts trembled
The word translated here as "inner parts" is literally "belly." If your language has a specific internal organ that it uses to express the feeling of great fear, you can consider using it here. Alternate translation: "my heart beat rapidly" or "my stomach turned"
My lips quivered at the sound
Quivering lips is another spontaneous response that comes with great fear.
Decay comes into my bones
Habakkuk speaks of having no strength in his body as if his bones began to decay. You may consider using an idiom from your own language here. Alternate translation: "My body goes limp, as if my bones were rotting"
under myself I tremble
The words "under myself" refer to what is below him. Possible meanings for the idiom are 1) "my legs tremble" or 2) "I tremble where I stand."
Habakkuk 3:17
General Information:
Habakkuk describes his reaction to his vision of Yahweh.
though the produce of the olive tree disappoints
"though the produce of the olive tree fails" or "though the olive tree fails to produce olives"
though the flock is cut off from the fold
The word "flock" may refer to sheep or goats, or both. The word "fold" refers to the fenced-in area where shepherds

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keep their flock. Habakkuk speaks of the flock dying as if someone were to cut off the flock, as a person would cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: "though all the flock dies and the folds are empty"

Habakkuk 3:18

General Information:

Habakkuk continues to describe his reaction to his vision of Yahweh and determines to praise him.

the God of my salvation

The word "salvation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "the God who saves me"

Habakkuk 3:19

he makes my feet like the deer's. He makes me go forward on my high places

Habakkuk speaks of Yahweh keeping him safe and enabling him to survive during difficult times as if Yahweh were to make him as sure-footed as a deer that can climb easily on rugged and dangerous mountain sides.

Introduction to Zephaniah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Zephaniah

Zephaniah introduces this book (1:1) Yahweh will punish Judah and the nations (1:2–18) Yahweh calls Judah to repent (2:1–3) Yahweh will judge the nations (2:4-15) Philistia (2:4–7) Moab and Ammon (2:8–11) Egypt (2:12) Assyria (2:13–15) Yahweh will judge Jerusalem (3:1–8) Yahweh will purify, restore, gather, and bless his people (3:9–20)

What is the Book of Zephaniah about?

Zechariah warned Judah and other nations that Yahweh was about to punish them. He also prophesied about how Yahweh would restore Judah. (See: dayofthelord)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional name of this book is "The Book of Zephaniah" or just "Zephaniah." Translators may decide to call it "The Sayings of Zephaniah."

Who wrote the Book of Zephaniah?

Zephaniah wrote this book. But four different Old Testament people have the name Zephaniah. This Zephaniah was probably the great-grandson of King Hezekiah and a cousin to King Josiah. Zephaniah lived in the city of Jerusalem. He began to prophesy about seventy years after the prophets Isaiah and Micah. Zephaniah spoke Yahweh's messages during the reign of King Josiah (about 640–621 B.C.), and just before Jeremiah began to prophesy.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Were the people of Judah faithful to Yahweh at the time Zephaniah started to prophesy?

Manasseh, the grandfather of Josiah, had been one of the worst kings of Judah. He led the people to worship other gods. After his death, his son Amon ruled for only two years before he was killed. Amon's son Josiah became king when he was eight years old. Josiah learned to worship and honor Yahweh. Zephaniah likely began his work after Josiah had destroyed most of the idols and shrines of false gods in Judah. (See: falsegod)

What country is coming to invade Judah?

Zephaniah often said a foreign nation would invade the kingdom of Judah. Zephaniah probably meant Babylonia. However, the Book of Zephaniah never names this nation.

Zephaniah

1 [1]This is the word of Yahweh that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah.

[2] "I will utterly destroy everything
from off the surface of the earth—
this is Yahweh's declaration.

[3] I will destroy men and animals;
I will destroy the birds of the heavens
and the fish of the sea,
the ruins along with the wicked.

For I will cut off man
from the surface of the earth—

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this is Yahweh's declaration.

4 I will reach out with my hand over Judah
and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
I will cut off every remnant of Baal from this place
and the names of the idolatrous people among the priests,

5 the people who on the housetops
worship the heavenly bodies,
and the people who worship and swear to Yahweh
but who also swear by their king.[1]

6 I will also cut off those who have turned away from following Yahweh,
those who neither seek Yahweh nor ask for his guidance."

7 Be silent before the Lord Yahweh!
For the day of Yahweh is near;
Yahweh has prepared the sacrifice
and set apart his guests.

8 "It will come about on the day of Yahweh's sacrifice,
that I will punish the princes
and the king's sons,
and everyone dressed
in foreign clothes.

9 On that day I will punish
all those who leap over the threshold,
those who fill their master's house
with violence and deceit.

10 So it will be on that day—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
that a cry of distress will come from the Fish Gate,
wailing from the Second District,
and a great crashing sound from the hills.

11 Wail, inhabitants of the Market District,
for all the people of Canaan will be ruined;
all those who weigh out silver will be cut off.

12 It will come about at that time
that I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish the men
who have settled into their wine and say in their heart,
'Yahweh will not do anything,
either good or evil.'

13 Their wealth will become plunder,
and their houses will be an abandoned devastation!
They will build houses but not live in them,
and plant vineyards but not drink their wine.

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14 The great day of Yahweh is near,
near and hurrying quickly!
The sound of the day of Yahweh
will be that of a warrior crying bitterly!

15 That day will be a day of fury,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of storm and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds
and thick darkness.

16 It will be a day of rams' horns and alarms
against the fortified cities
and the high battlements.

17 For I will bring distress upon mankind,
so that they will walk about like blind men
since they have sinned against Yahweh.
Their blood will be poured out like dust,
and their inner parts like dung.

18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to deliver them
on the day of Yahweh's fury.

In the fire of his jealousy
the whole earth will be consumed,
for he will bring a complete,
a terrible end of all the inhabitants of the earth."

[1] The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have by their king, but some modern translations read by Milcom, the name of a pagan god that many people worshiped.

Zephaniah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 1:2-18.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

In this chapter, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the fall of Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time. (See: prophet and christ and dayofthelord)

Links:

Zephaniah 1:1 Notes Zephaniah intro

Zephaniah 1:1

General Information:

Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:2-3 describe Yahweh's final judgment of every sinner in the future.

the word of Yahweh that came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message" or "Yahweh spoke this message"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh

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concerning how to translate this.

son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah

This is a list of Zephaniah's ancestors. These usages of "son of" are the broader sense of "descendant of." Here "Hezekiah" refers to King Hezekiah. These things can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the grandson of Gedaliah, and the great-grandson of Amariah, whose father was King Hezekiah"

Zephaniah 1:2

General Information:

Zephaniah writes in poetry from this verse until the end of the book. Parallelism is common in Hebrew poetry.

I will utterly destroy everything from off the surface of the earth

The words "everything" and "will cut off man" are deliberate exaggerations by Yahweh to express his anger at the people's sin. Yahweh will destroy neither sinners who repent nor all living things.

destroy everything from off the surface of the earth

"destroy everything that is on the entire earth"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Zephaniah 1:3

I will cut off man from the surface of the earth

"I will kill all people." This is a hyperbole, as in Zephaniah 1:2.

men and animals

"people and animals"

the ruins

Possible meanings are 1) the piles of rubble that will remain after the judgment or 2) the idols that Yahweh destroyed.

cut off

Destroying is spoken of as if it were cutting something off from what it was a part of. Alternate translation: "destroy"

Zephaniah 1:4

General Information:

Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.

I will reach out with my hand over Judah

This is an idiom that means God will punish. Alternate translation: "I will punish Judah"

I will cut off every remnant ... the names of the idolatrous people among the priests

The verb "cut off" applies to each of these phrases, but has been used only once to avoid repetition. Alternate translation: "I will cut off every remnant ... I will cut off the names of the idolatrous people among the priests"

cut off

Destroying is spoken of as if it were cutting something off from what it was a part of. See how you translated this in [Zephaniah 1:3]

cut off ... the names of the idolatrous people among the priests

Here "cut off ... the names" is an idiom that means to cause people to forget them. Alternate translation: "cause everyone ... to forget the priests who are idolatrous"

Zephaniah 1:5

the people who on the housetops ... the people who worship and swear

The verb "cut off"

by their king

See the footnote about the possible rendering of this as "by Milcom."

worship the heavenly bodies

"worship the sun, moon, and stars"

Zephaniah 1:6

following Yahweh

"obeying Yahweh"

neither seek Yahweh nor ask for his guidance

Seeking Yahweh represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him. Alternate translation: "do not think about Yahweh or ask him to guide them"

Zephaniah 1:7

General Information:

Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.

Be silent

This is an idiom. Here silence is meant to signal shock and amazement. Alternate translation: "Be shocked"

Yahweh has prepared the sacrifice and set apart his guests

The people of Judah are spoken of as Yahweh's sacrifice, and the enemy nations are spoken of as his guests who would eat the sacrifice. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has prepared the people of Judah as a sacrifice, and invited the enemy nations as his guests"

set apart his guests

Here "set apart" is an idiom that means he has invited them.

Zephaniah 1:8

General Information:

In verses 1:8-13, Yahweh is speaking. He alternates between using first person and speaking about himself in the third person.

It will come about

This phrase is used to mark the point at which Yahweh's judgment of Judah will begin.

everyone dressed in foreign clothes

This phrase suggests that the Israelites wore clothes similar to the foreigners to show sympathy to their customs and to the worship of their foreign gods. Alternate translation: "everyone who worships foreign gods"

Zephaniah 1:9

On that day

"On the day of Yahweh"

all those who leap over the threshold

Possible meanings are 1) this is a reference to people who did not step on thresholds as part of their worship of a god called Dagan or 2) people who leapt up onto platforms to worship pagan idols or 3) royal officials who climbed the steps to the throne.

fill their master's house with violence and deceit

The abstract nouns "violence" and "deceit" can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "those who do violent things and tell lies in the temples of their gods"

Zephaniah 1:10

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General Information:
Zephaniah 1:2-18 refers to Yahweh's judgment. Zephaniah 1:4-16 describes Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah. In Zephaniah 1:8-13, Yahweh is speaking. He alternates between using first person and speaking about himself in the third person.
Fish Gate
The Fish Gate was one of the gates in the Jerusalem city wall.
wailing from the Second District
"Mourn loudly from the Second District." The Second District was a newer part of Jerusalem.
a great crashing sound
This refers to the sound of buildings collapsing. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a loud sound of buildings collapsing"
from the hills
This refers to the hills surrounding Jerusalem.
Zephaniah 1:11
people of Canaan
Because the Canaanites were merchants and the next line speaks of "those who weigh out silver," many modern translations read, "merchants."
those who weigh out silver
This refers to merchants. Before coins were used, people weighed out silver or gold as payment for things they bought.
cut off
Destroying is spoken of as if it were cutting something off from what it was a part of. See how you translated this in [Zephaniah 1:3]
Zephaniah 1:12
General Information:
Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.
It will come about at that time
This phrase is used to mark the time when Jerusalem has been destroyed by the enemies.
I will search Jerusalem with lamps
Yahweh speaks of knowing about all people of Jerusalem as if he had searched for them with lamps.
settled into their wine
They feel safe from trouble.
say in their heart, 'Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil.'
This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "say in their heart that Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil.
say in their heart
This idiom means they think to themselves.
Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil
Here "good and evil" is a merism that includes everything in between. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will not do anything at all"
Zephaniah 1:13
an abandoned devastation
"destroyed and abandoned"
Zephaniah 1:14
General Information:
Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.
near, near and hurrying quickly
The repetition of the word "near," along with the phrase "hurrying quickly," emphasize that the day when Yahweh judges the people will soon happen. Alternate translation: "close and will be here soon"
the day of Yahweh
See how you translated this phrase in Zephaniah 1:7.
a warrior crying bitterly
Possible meanings are 1) a soldier crying in despair or 2) a soldier's battle cry.
Zephaniah 1:15
That day ... a day
These phrases refer back to the "day of Yahweh" in Zephaniah 1:14.
a day of distress and anguish
The words "distress" and "anguish" mean about the same thing and emphasize the intensity of the people's distress. Alternate translation: "a day when people feel terrible distress"
a day of storm and devastation
Here the word "storm" refers to divine judgment. The word "devastation" describes the effects of that judgment. Alternate translation: "a day of devastating storms" or "a day of devastating judgment"
a day of darkness and gloom
The words "darkness" and "gloom" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of darkness. Both words refer to a time of disaster or divine judgment. Alternate translation: "a day that is full of darkness" or "a day of terrible judgment"
a day of clouds and thick darkness
This phrase means the same thing as, and intensifies, the idea of the previous phrase. Like that phrase, both "clouds" and "thick darkness" refer to divine judgment. Alternate translation: "a day full of dark storm clouds"
Zephaniah 1:16
a day of rams' horns and alarms
The words "rams' horns" and "alarms" mean basically the same thing here. Both are means to call soldiers to prepare for battle. Alternate translation: "a day when people sound the alarm for battle"
fortified cities and the high battlements
These two phrases both refer to military strongholds. Alternate translation: "well fortified cities"
Zephaniah 1:17
General Information:
Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:17-18 describe Yahweh's final judgment of every sinner in the future.
they will walk about like blind men
The result of Yahweh's judgment is that people will be so confused and dazed when they walk about that people will think they are blind. Alternate translation: "they will walk around as confused and dazed as blind men"
Their blood will be poured out like dust
Their blood that is shed will be as worthless as dust. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their enemies will pour out their blood and consider it to be

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worthless"

their inner parts like dung

The verb "poured out" is understood here. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies will cut open their bodies and leave them to rot like dung"

Zephaniah 1:18

the fire of his jealousy

Here "fire" refers to the intensity of Yahweh's anger. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "his jealousy is as intense as a fire"

all the inhabitants of the earth

It is understood that this refers to the wicked people. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "all the wicked people who live on the earth"

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2 [1] Rally yourselves together and gather,
unashamed nation—

[2] before the decree takes effect
and that day passes like the chaff,
before the fierce anger of Yahweh's wrath
comes upon you,
before the day of Yahweh's wrath
comes upon you.

[3] Seek Yahweh, all you humble people on earth
who obey his ordinances!
Seek righteousness. Seek humility,
and perhaps you will be protected
in the day of Yahweh's wrath.

[4] For Gaza will be abandoned,
and Ashkelon will turn into a devastation.
They will drive out Ashdod at noon,
and they will uproot Ekron!

[5] Woe to the inhabitants of the seacoast,
the nation of the Kerethites!
Yahweh has spoken against you,
Canaan, land of the Philistines.
I will destroy you
until no inhabitant remains.

[6] So the seacoast will become pastures
for shepherds
and for sheep pens.

[7] The coastal region will belong
to the remnant of the house of Judah,
who will shepherd their flocks there.
Their people will lie down in the evening
in the houses of Ashkelon,
for Yahweh their God will care for them
and reverse their captivity.

[8] "I have heard the taunts of Moab
and the insults of the people of Ammon
when they taunted my people
and violated their borders.

[9] Therefore, as I live—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts,

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God of Israel—
Moab will become like Sodom,
and the people of Ammon like Gomorrah;
a place of nettles and a salt pit,
deserted forever.
But the remnant of my people will plunder them,
and the remainder of my nation will take possession of them."

10 This will happen to Moab and Ammon because of their pride,
since they taunted and became arrogant
against the people of Yahweh of hosts.

11 Then Yahweh will be terrifying to them,
for he will destroy all the gods of the earth.
Everyone will bow down to him,
each from his own place,
from the coastlands of all nations.

12 You Cushites also
will be pierced by my sword,

13 and God's hand will attack the north
and destroy Assyria,
so that Nineveh will become an abandoned devastation,
as dry as the desert.

14 Then herds will lie down there,
every animal of the nations;
both the desert owl and the screech owl
will rest in the top of her columns.
A call will sing out from the windows;
rubble will be in the doorways;
her carved cedar beams will be exposed.

15 This is the joyful city
that lived without fear,
that said in her heart,
"I am, and nothing is my equal."
How she has become a horror,
a place for beasts to lie down in.
Everyone that passes by her
will hiss and shake his fist at her.

Zephaniah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 2:1-9, 12-15.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

In this chapter, because the prophesied destruction is so complete, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the time near the fall of Jerusalem or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time. (See: prophet and christ and dayofthelord)

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Links:

Zephaniah 2:1 Notes

Zephaniah 2:1

General Information:

In 2:1-3, Yahweh continues to speak to Judah, and tells them to repent.

Rally yourselves together and gather

These two phrases mean the same thing. Together they intensify the command for the people to gather together in order to repent of their sins. Alternate translation: "Gather yourselves together"

Zephaniah 2:2

before the decree takes effect

This phrase refers to the punishment that will happen as a result of Yahweh's decree. Alternate translation: "before Yahweh punishes you"

that day

This phrase relates to the "day of Yahweh." Translate as you did similar phrases in Zephaniah 1:9.

that day passes like the chaff

The chaff is the insignificant part of the plant that the wind blows away. In a similar way, the day of judgment will pass quickly. Alternate translation: "that day passes as quickly as chaff blown by the wind"

before the fierce anger of Yahweh's wrath comes upon you, before the day of Yahweh's wrath comes upon you

The prophet repeats the same phrase almost exactly in order to emphasize how terrible Yahweh's judgment will be and the urgency with which the people must repent.

Yahweh's wrath

This stands for God's intent to punish. Alternate translation: "Yahweh's punishment"

Zephaniah 2:3

Seek Yahweh

Seeking Yahweh represents either 1) asking God for help or 2) thinking about God and obeying him.

Seek righteousness. Seek humility

The abstract nouns "righteousness" and "humility" can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "Try to do what is right and to be humble"

you will be protected in the day of Yahweh's wrath

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will protect you in the day of his wrath"

Zephaniah 2:4

General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

Gaza ... Ashkelon ... Ashdod ... Ekron

These were the four major Philistine cities of that day.

will be abandoned ... will turn into a devastation

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize the complete destruction of these cities.

They will drive out Ashdod at noon

Here "They" refers to the enemies of the Philistines. Possible meanings for "at noon" are 1) the enemies will defeat Ashdod before noon or 2) the enemies will attack Ashdod at noon while the people are resting and unaware.

they will uproot Ekron

The defeat of Ekron is spoken of as if it was a tree that was pulled from the ground and thrown away. Alternate translation: "they will take the people of Ekron away as if uprooting a tree"

Zephaniah 2:5

the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of the Kerethites

The first phrase explains where the Kerethites lived.

the seacoast

the coast of the Mediterranean Sea

Canaan, land of the Philistines

The Philistines were one of several people groups who lived in Canaan.

until no inhabitant remains

"until no one is left." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "until every inhabitant is dead"

Zephaniah 2:6

General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

So the seacoast will become pastures for shepherds and for sheep pens

This probably means that the Philistine cities are gone, and only open fields remain. However, the Hebrew meaning is unclear and is sometimes translated differently by modern versions.

the seacoast

the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. See how you translated this in Zephaniah 2:5.

sheep pens

A sheep pen is a small area surrounded by a fence to keep the sheep together.

Zephaniah 2:7

The coastal region

the land near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. See how you translated this in Zephaniah 2:5.

Their people

"The people of Judah"

lie down

"lie down to sleep"

reverse their captivity

This idiom means that Yahweh will give them back what they had before they went into captivity. Alternate translation: "cause them to live well again" or "restore their fortunes"

Zephaniah 2:8

General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

violated their borders

This refers to crossing over into Judah's territory in order to attack them.

Zephaniah 2:9

as I live

"as surely as I am alive." Yahweh uses this expression to show that what he says next is certainly true. This is a way

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of making a solemn promise. Alternate translation: "I solemnly swear"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, have declared"

like Sodom ... like Gomorrah

These two cities were so wicked that God completely destroyed them with fire from heaven. These similes therefore refer to complete destruction. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "completely destroyed like Sodom ... like Gomorrah"

a place of nettles and a salt pit

"a place with thorns and a salt pit." This describes a barren, useless land.

the remnant of my people ... the remainder of my nation

These two phrases mean the same thing and refer to the Israelites that survived Yahweh's punishment.

Zephaniah 2:12

General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

You Cushites also will be pierced by my sword

Here "pieced by my sword" is a metonym for being killed in battle. Alternate translation: "I will kill you people of Cush in battle"

Zephaniah 2:13

God's hand

Here "hand" refers to power. Alternate translation: "God's power"

an abandoned devastation

The abstract noun "devastation" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "ruined and deserted"

as dry as the desert

This means it will be so dry that nothing will grow there.

Zephaniah 2:14

every animal of the nations

"every kind of animal"

the screech owl

This term is uncertain. Some versions translate it as "hedgehog."

in the top of her columns

When buildings were destroyed and fell down, the columns used for decoration and support would often remain standing.

A call will sing out from the windows

"A call will be heard from the windows"

beams

Beams are long and thick pieces of wood that are used to keep a building stable.

Zephaniah 2:15

General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

said in her heart

This idiom means "said to herself" or "she thought." The city is spoken of as if it were a person that could speak. It represents the people who live in that city.

I am, and nothing is my equal

It may be necessary to supply an object for "I am." Alternate translation: "I am the greatest city, and no other city is equal to me"

a horror

"a horrible place to see"

hiss and shake his fist

A hiss is an angry sound. This phrase indicates extreme anger of the people toward Nineveh.

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3 1 Woe to the rebellious city!
The violent city is defiled.

2 She has not listened to the voice of God,
nor accepted correction from Yahweh.
She does not trust in Yahweh
and will not approach her God.

3 Her princes are roaring lions
in her midst.
Her judges are evening wolves
who leave nothing to be gnawed upon in the morning.

4 Her prophets are insolent
and treasonous men.
Her priests have profaned what is holy
and have done violence to the law.

5 Yahweh is righteous in her midst.
He can do no wrong.
Morning by morning he will dispense his justice!
It will not be hidden in the light,

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yet the unjust knows no shame.

6 "I have destroyed nations;
their fortresses are ruined.
I have made their streets ruins,
so that no one passes over them.
Their cities are destroyed
so that there is no man inhabiting them.

7 I said, 'Surely you will fear me.
Accept correction
and do not be cut off from your homes
by all that I have planned to do to you.'
But they were eager to begin each morning
by corrupting all their deeds.

8 Therefore wait for me—
this is Yahweh's declaration—
until the day that I rise up to seize the prey.
For my decision is to assemble the nations,
to gather the kingdoms,
to pour out on them my anger—
all of my burning wrath;
for in the fire of my jealousy
all the earth will be consumed.[1]

9 But then I will purify the lips of the peoples,
that all of them may call upon the name of Yahweh
to serve him shoulder to shoulder.

10 From beyond the river of Cush
my worshipers—my scattered people—
will bring offerings due me.

11 In that day you will not be put to shame
for all your deeds by which you rebelled against me,
since at that time I will remove from among you
those who boasted in your pride,
and because you will no longer act arrogantly
on my holy mountain.

12 But I will leave among you
a lowly and poor people,
and they will find refuge
in the name of Yahweh.

13 The remnant of Israel will no longer
commit injustice or speak lies,
and no deceitful tongue
will be found in their mouth;
so they will graze and lie down,
and no one will make them afraid."

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14 Sing, daughter of Zion!
Shout, Israel.
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
daughter of Jerusalem.

15 Yahweh has taken away your punishment;
he has turned away your enemies!
Yahweh is the king of Israel among you.
You will never again fear evil!

16 In that day
they will say to Jerusalem,
"Do not fear, Zion.
Do not let your hands become weak.

17 Yahweh your God is among you,
a mighty one to save you.
He will celebrate over you with joy;
he will be silent over you in his love;
he will be glad over you with a shout for joy.

18 I will gather those who grieve,
those who cannot attend the appointed feasts,
so you will no longer
bear any shame for it.[2]

19 Behold, I am about to deal
with all your oppressors.
At that time, I will rescue the lame
and gather up the outcast.
I will make them as praise,
and I will change their shame into renown
in all the earth.

20 At that time I will lead you;
at that time I will gather you together.
I will give you renown and praise
among all the peoples of the earth
when I reverse your captivity before your eyes,"
says Yahweh.

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[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have, until the day that I rise up to seize the prey. However, some of the copies of the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew copies, and modern translations that follow those suggestions, read, until the day that I rise up as a witness.
[2]This verse is very difficult to understand, and modern translations translate it in many different ways.

Zephaniah 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 3:1-20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

In this chapter, because the prophesied destruction is so complete, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the time near the fall of Jerusalem or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time. (See: prophet and dayofthelord)

Links:

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Zephaniah 3:1

General Information:

In verses 3:1-5, Zephaniah speaks Yahweh's message of judgment to the sinful people of Jerusalem. The city represents the people who live within it. To make this clear, it may be helpful to replace the singular "she" and "her" with the plural "they" and "their."

the rebellious city

The nature of their rebellion can be stated. Alternate translation: "the people of the city who have rebelled against God"

The violent city is defiled

"The people of the city have committed violence and so I consider them unclean"

Zephaniah 3:2

She has not listened to the voice of God

The voice is a metonym for what the speaker says with the voice, and listening is a metonym for obeying. Alternate translation: "She has not obeyed what God has said to her"

Zephaniah 3:3

General Information:

In verses 3:1-5, Zephaniah speaks Yahweh's message of judgment to the sinful people of Jerusalem. The city represents the people who live within it. To make this clear, it may be helpful to replace the singular "she" and "her" with the plural "they" and "their."

Her princes are roaring lions in her midst

Lions roar to chase other animals away from the prey they have caught. The princes of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were roaring lions who were keeping the prey for themselves. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem's royalty are as greedy as roaring lions"

roaring lions

"Roaring" here is a metonym for "mighty."

Her judges are evening wolves who leave nothing to be gnawed upon in the morning

Wolves are especially hungry before they hunt at night. The judges are spoken of as if they were hungry wolves. Alternate translation: "Her judges are as greedy as hungry wolves that leave nothing for anyone else"

Zephaniah 3:4

Her prophets are insolent and treasonous men

"Her prophets do not listen to anyone and cannot be trusted"

have profaned what is holy

"have treated holy things with disrespect"

have done violence to the law

"have broken the law"

Zephaniah 3:5

General Information:

In verses 3:1-5, Zephaniah speaks Yahweh's message of judgment to the sinful people of Jerusalem.

Yahweh is righteous ... He can do no wrong

These two phrases mean the same thing, and emphasize Yahweh's righteousness even among the wicked people in Jerusalem.

in her midst

"among them"

Morning by morning

This idiom means "Every day" or "Day after day."

he will dispense his justice

Yahweh's just treatment of every person is spoken of as if he was handing out a commodity. Alternate translation: "he will treat people justly"

It will not be hidden in the light

This uses a negative statement to emphasize the positive truth that Yahweh's justice is always visible. Alternate translation: "His justice is clearly shown to all"

the unjust knows no shame

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "unjust people know no shame"

knows no shame

"is not ashamed"

Zephaniah 3:6

General Information:

In verses 3:6-7, Yahweh rebukes the people of Jerusalem because they did not learn from how he judged other sinful cities. It may be helpful to add "Yahweh says this:" to the beginning of verse 6 to make this explicit.

I have made their streets ruins, so that no one passes over them. Their cities are destroyed so that there is no man inhabiting them

These two sentences express the same idea in two different ways in order to emphasize the complete destruction of the cities.

no one passes over them

"no one walks on them"

there is no man inhabiting them

"no one lives there." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "all the people are dead"

Zephaniah 3:7

I said, 'Surely you will fear me ... I have planned to do to you.'

This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "I thought they would surely fear me and accept correction so that they would not be cut off from their homes by all that I have planned to do to them."

and do not be cut off from your homes

Here "cut off" is an idiom that means to be removed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that I will not remove you from your homes"

by corrupting all their deeds

"by doing deeds that were corrupt"

Zephaniah 3:8

General Information:

In verse 3:8, Yahweh warns that he will judge all nations.

wait for me ... until the day

This phrase implies that they are waiting for judgment.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

I rise up to seize the prey

Yahweh's judgment on the nations is spoken of as if he was an hungry animal that attacked a smaller animal. Alternate

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translation: "I will rise up and destroy them as an animal seizes its prey"

to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that Yahweh will judge all of the nations.

my anger—all of my burning wrath

The words "anger" and "burning wrath" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's anger. Alternate translation: "my very fierce wrath"

in the fire of my jealousy all the earth will be consumed

This phrase can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the fire of my jealousy will devour all the land"

in the fire of my jealousy ... consumed

Yahweh's jealousy is here spoken of as if it were fire that could consume something. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "my jealousy will consume all the earth as a fire"

Zephaniah 3:9

General Information:

In verses 3:9-10, Yahweh says that he will renew the Gentiles after the judgment.

I will purify the lips of the peoples

Here "lips" refers to the ability to speak. Alternate translation: "I will cause the peoples to speak what is right"

call upon the name of Yahweh

This is an idiom that means they worship Yahweh. Alternate translation: "worship Yahweh"

serve him shoulder to shoulder

Here "shoulder to shoulder" is an idiom that means "side by side."

Zephaniah 3:10

beyond the river of Cush

This may refer to the area where Sudan is located today.

Zephaniah 3:11

General Information:

In verses 3:11-13, Yahweh encourages the remnant of Israel who survive the judgment.

In that day ... at that time

"When that happens ... at that time." These phrases here refer to the time of peace and restoration that immediately follows the day of Yahweh.

will not be put to shame for all your deeds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will no longer be ashamed of all your deeds"

those who boasted in your pride

"all the people who celebrated the things you were proud of"

Zephaniah 3:12

General Information:

In verses 3:11-13, Yahweh encourages the remnant of Israel who survive the judgment.

they will find refuge in the name of Yahweh

Yahweh's protection of this remnant is spoke of as if he was a refuge or a fortress. Here "name of Yahweh" refers to his person. Alternate translation: "they will come to Yahweh and he will help them"

Zephaniah 3:13

The remnant of Israel

This refers to the "lowly and poor people" of Zephaniah 3:12.

commit injustice

"do unjust things"

no deceitful tongue will be found in their mouth

Here "tongue ... in their mouth" represents the things that the tongue enables the mouth to speak. They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "none of them will speak deceitful things" or "they will not say deceitful things"

they will graze and lie down

Yahweh speaks of his provision for the people of Israel as if they are a flock of sheep that grazes and rests in safety.

Zephaniah 3:14

General Information:

In verses 3:14-20, Zephaniah tells the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment that they should rejoice.

daughter of Zion ... daughter of Jerusalem

Here "daughter" refers to all the people who lived in the city.

Be glad and rejoice

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize how happy they should be. Alternate translation: "Be very happy"

with all your heart

Here "heart" refers to the inner being of a person. Alternate translation: "with all your inner being"

Zephaniah 3:15

Yahweh has taken away your punishment

Here to "take away" punishment is an idiom that means to stop doing it. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has stopped punishing you"

You will never again fear evil

The abstract noun "evil" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "You will no longer be afraid that people will harm you"

Zephaniah 3:16

In that day

"At that time" or "When this happens." This phrase here refers to the time of peace and restoration that immediately follows the day of Yahweh.

say to Jerusalem ... Zion

The names of these cities here refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "say to the people of Jerusalem ... people of Zion"

Do not let your hands become weak

Here the "hands" are a metonym for the whole person and being physically weak is a metaphor for being discouraged. Alternate translation: "Do not allow yourself become weak" or "Do not become discouraged and so stop working"

Zephaniah 3:17

General Information:

In verses 3:14-20, Zephaniah tells the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment that they should rejoice.

a mighty one to save you

"he is mighty and will save you." Yahweh is spoken of as a mighty warrior. Alternate translation: "he is a mighty warrior and will give you victory"

He will celebrate over you with joy ... he will be glad over you with a

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shout for joy

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize Yahweh's joy that the remnant is restored to him.

he will be silent over you in his love

Possible meanings are 1) "he will quiet you by his love for you" or 2) "he will renew you because he loves you."

a shout for joy

Some modern translations read, "a song of joy" or "joyful singing."

Zephaniah 3:18

no longer bear any shame for it

Here shame is spoken of as if it was a heavy thing that a person had to carry. Alternate translation: "no longer be ashamed because of it"

Zephaniah 3:19

General Information:

In verses 3:19-20, Yahweh speaks directly to the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment and tells them that they should rejoice.

Behold

This tells the reader to pay special attention to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look" or "Pay attention"

I am about to deal with all your oppressors

It is understood that "deal with" means to punish the oppressors. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "I will severely punish all those who oppressed you"

I will rescue the lame and gather up the outcast

Here the Israelites who suffered in exile are spoken of as if they were lame and outcast sheep. This can be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "I will rescue and bring together the remnant of Israel who are like lame and outcast sheep"

the lame

This refers to people or animals that cannot walk.

I will make them as praise

The full thought here is, "I will make them to be objects of praise," that is, "I will make them to be praised by others."

I will change their shame into renown

The abstract nouns "shame" and "renown" can be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to no longer be ashamed, but for people to respect them"

Zephaniah 3:20

At that time I will lead you; at that time I will gather you together

These two lines mean basically the same thing and imply that Yahweh will bring the exiled people back to their homeland. Alternate translation: "At that time I will gather you together and lead you home"

reverse your captivity

This idiom means that Yahweh will give them back what they had before they went into captivity. See how you translated similar words in [Zephaniah 2:7]

Introduction to Haggai

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Haggai

The people must finish the temple for Yahweh to bless them again (1:1–15) This temple will be more glorious than the first temple (2:1–9) Yahweh will bless a defiled people (2:10–19) Yahweh will defeat the nations and establish his ruler (2:20–23)

What is the Book of Haggai about?

The people of Israel lacked food and warm clothes. The prophet Haggai told them it was because they were not obeying Yahweh. If they would listen to him and start rebuilding the temple, then Yahweh would send rain and bless them again. The people listened and began to work on the temple. Yahweh encouraged the people, the priests, and the leaders. He told them that he was with them and would bless them.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has been titled "Haggai" or "The Book of Haggai." Translators may decide to call it "The Sayings of Haggai."

Who wrote the Book of Haggai?

The prophet Haggai wrote this book. He wrote it after the exiles returned from Babylon. They returned during the reign of the Persian king Darius I. Haggai probably gave all the prophesies in this book during a four-month period of time. Very little is known about Haggai. He lived at the same time as the prophet Zechariah.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Did Haggai prophesy before Ezra and Nehemiah?

It is likely that Haggai prophesied before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What does "consider your ways" mean?

Yahweh told the people to "consider your ways" several times in this book. This means that he wants them to think carefully about how they have lived and behaved.

Haggai

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1 [1]In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month,the word of Yahweh came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,and to the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, saying,[2]"Yahweh of hosts says this: These people say, 'It is not time for us to come or to build the house of Yahweh.'"

[3]Then the word of Yahweh came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, saying,[4]"Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your finished houses, while this house lies ruined?[5]So now Yahweh of hosts says this: Consider your ways!
[6] You have sown much seed, but bring in little;
you eat but do not have enough;
you drink but cannot get drunk.
You wear clothes but cannot warm yourselves,
and the wage earner earns money
only to put it into a bag full of holes!

[7]Yahweh of hosts says this: "Consider your ways![8]Go up to the mountain, bring timber, and build my house;then I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified!—says Yahweh."[9]"You looked for much, but behold! you have brought little home, for I blew it away!Why?" declares Yahweh of hosts. "Because my house lies in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house.
[10]Because of this the heavens withhold the dew from you, and the earth withholds its produce.[11]I have summoned a drought upon the land and upon the mountains, upon the grainand upon the new wine, upon the oil and upon what the earth sends forth,upon men and upon animals, and upon all the labor of your hands!"

[12]Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak,along with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of Yahweh their Godand the words of Haggai the prophet, because Yahweh their God had sent himand the people feared the face of Yahweh. [13]Then Haggai, the messenger of Yahweh, spoke Yahweh's message to the people and said, "I am with you!—this is Yahweh's declaration!"
[14]So Yahweh stirred up the spirit of the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,and the spirit of the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people,so that they went and worked on the house of Yahweh of hosts, their God[15]in the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

Haggai 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Farming imagery

Scripture frequently uses the imagery of farming in reference to spiritual matters. The statement "You have sown much seed, but bring in little harvest" indicates that they had done a lot but have very little to show for it. (See: spirit and seed)

Links:

Haggai 1:1 Notes Haggai intro

Haggai 1:1

In the second year of Darius the king

"In the second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "After Darius had been king for more than a year"

Darius ... Haggai ... Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak

These are all names of men.

in the sixth month, on the first day of the month

"on the first day of the sixth month." This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of August on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message" or "Yawheh spoke this message"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

by the hand of Haggai

Here the word "hand" refers to Haggai himself. Yahweh used Haggai as the agent to deliver his command. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai 1:2

the house of Yahweh

the temple

Haggai 1:3

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God.

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See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

by the hand of Haggai

Here the word "hand" refers to Haggai himself. Yahweh used Haggai as the agent to deliver his command. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai 1:4

Is it a time for you ... ruined?

Yahweh is rebuking the people. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now is not the time for you ... ruined."

this house

the temple of Yahweh

Haggai 1:5

Consider your ways

"Think carefully about how you are living"

Haggai 1:6

bring in little

"harvest little" or "bring in only a small crop"

but cannot get drunk

There is not enough wine to satisfy the people's thirst and not nearly enough for drunkenness. The reader should understand that the text is not calling drunkenness a good thing.

the wage earner earns money only to put it into a bag full of holes

Not earning enough money to buy necessary goods is spoken of as if the person were losing the money that falls out through holes in the money bag. Alternate translation: "the money the worker earns is gone before he finishes buying everything he needs"

Haggai 1:8

bring timber

This represents only a part of what they needed to build the temple.

Haggai 1:9

behold

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I blew it away

The people not being able to find what they were looking for is spoken of as if Yahweh had blown on dust so it would go away. Alternate translation: "I made sure there was nothing there for you to find"

declares Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

runs to his own house

"is always working to build his own house." The word "runs" emphasizes that the people consider building their own houses the most important thing they can do.

Haggai 1:10

the heavens withhold the dew from you

The dew that appears at night is spoken of as if it formed in the sky and fell like rain. The sky is spoken of as if it were a person who refused to give a present or a parent who refused to feed his child. Alternate translation: "the sky does not allow the dew to fall" or "no dew forms"

the earth withholds its produce

The earth is spoken of as if it were a person who refused to give a present or a parent who refused to feed his child. Alternate translation: "the earth does not allow food you grow" or "no food grows"

Haggai 1:11

I have summoned a drought upon the land

Rain not falling for a long time is spoken of as if Yahweh had told a person to come and make the land dry. Alternate translation: "I have kept the rain from falling on the land"

upon the new wine, upon the oil

"Wine" and "oil" are metonyms for grapes and olives.

what the earth sends forth

"what the earth produces" or "all kinds of food"

all the labor of your hands

The abstract noun "labor" can be translated using the phrase "work hard." The labor that the hands perform is a metonym for the things that the labor produces. The hand is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "everything you have worked hard to make"

Haggai 1:12

Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak ... Haggai

See how you translated these men's names in [Haggai 1:1]

obeyed the voice of Yahweh ... the words of Haggai

The voice and the words are metonyms for the persons. Alternate translation: "obeyed Yahweh and Haggai"

the people feared the face of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) the face could be a synecdoche for the person. Alternate translation: "the people feared Yahweh" or 2) the face could be a metonym for the person's presence. Alternate translation: "the people were afraid to be in Yahweh's presence"

Haggai 1:13

this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

Haggai 1:14

Yahweh stirred up the spirit of the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and the spirit of the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people

Stirring the spirit is a metonym for making someone want to act. Alternate translation: "Yahweh made the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and all the remnant of the people want to act"

remnant

people who were still alive after being captive in Babylon and had returned to Jerusalem

Haggai 1:15

in the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month

This is just 23 days after he received the vision. This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of September on Western calendars.

the second year of Darius the king

"second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "after Darius had been king for more than one year"

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2 [1]In the seventh month on the twenty-first day of the month,the word of Yahweh came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, saying,[2]"Speak to the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,and to the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and to the remnant of the people. Say,
[3]'Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory?How do you see it now? Is it not like nothing in your eyes?
[4]Now, be strong, Zerubbabel!—this is Yahweh's declaration—and be strong, high priest Joshua son of Jozadak; and be strong, all you people in the land!—this is Yahweh's declaration—and work, for I am with you!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.[5]This is the covenant that I established with you when you came out of Egypt,and my Spirit stands among you. Do not fear!

[6]For Yahweh of hosts says this: In a little whileI will once again shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land!
[7]I will shake every nation, and every nation will bring their precious things to me,and I will fill this house with glory, says Yahweh of hosts.
[8]The silver and gold are mine!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.[9]The glory of this house will be greater in the future than at the beginning, says Yahweh of hosts,and I will give peace in this place!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts."

[10]On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius,the word of Yahweh came by Haggai the prophet, saying,[11]"Yahweh of hosts says this: Ask the priests concerning the law, and say,[12]'If a man carries meat that is set apart to Yahweh in the fold of his garment,and the fold touches bread or stew, wine or oil, or any kind of food, does it become holy?'"The priests answered and said, "No."

[13]Then Haggai said, "If someone who is unclean because of death touches any of these things,do they become unclean?" The priests answered and said, "Yes, they become unclean."
[14]So Haggai answered and said, "So it is with this people and this nation before me!—this is Yahweh's declaration—and so it is with the work of their hands. What they offer to me is unclean!

[15]So now, think in your minds about the past leading up to this very day.Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of Yahweh,[16]how was it then? When you came to a heap of twenty measures of grain,there were only ten; and when you came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures,there were only twenty.[17]I afflicted you and all the work of your hands with blight and mildew,but you still did not turn to me—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[18]Consider from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month,from the day that the foundation of the temple of Yahweh was laid. Consider it![19]Is there still seed in the storehouse? The vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate,and the olive tree have not borne! But from this day will I bless you!"

[20]Then the word of Yahweh came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month and said,[21]"Speak to the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel, and say,
'I will shake the heavens and the earth.
[22] For I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms
and destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations!
I will overthrow the chariots and their riders;
the horses and their riders will fall down,
each one because of his brother's sword.

[23]On that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, as my servant—this is Yahweh's declaration.I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts!'"

Haggai 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:3-9, 21-23.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Unclean

Haggai uses an extended metaphor in this chapter related to ritual cleanliness. While the Jews were not unclean by nature as the Gentiles were, their actions made them unclean. (See: and clean)

Links:

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Haggai 2:1

In the seventh month on the twenty-first day of the month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-first day is near the middle of October on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

by the hand of Haggai

Here the word "hand" refers to Haggai himself. Yahweh used Haggai as the agent to deliver his command. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai

See how you translated this man's name in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai 2:2

Speak to the governor

This is a urgent exhortation.

Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak

See how you translated these men's names in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai 2:3

General Information:

Yahweh speaks to the people about the new temple they are building. They are building it on the same place their ancestors built the former temple, which Nebuchadnezzar completely destroyed. This new temple is much smaller than the former temple.

Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory?

Yahweh speaks of the new temple as if it were the same building as the old temple. He is telling those who had seen the former temple to pay attention. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I want those among you who saw this house in its former glory to pay attention."

How do you see it now?

Yahweh is telling them that he knows what they are thinking about the new temple. He speaks of the new temple as if it were the same building as the old temple. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know what you think of this new temple."

Is it not like nothing in your eyes?

Yahweh is telling the people that he understands that they are disappointed because the new temple is so small. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know that you think it is not important at all."

Haggai 2:4

Now, be strong

"From now on, be strong"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

Haggai 2:5

my Spirit stands among you

Possible meanings are 1) "my Spirit lives among you" or "my Spirit will fight against your enemies" as a helper, or 2) "my Spirit is a witness to you," testifying that God is still with them.

Haggai 2:6

I will ... shake the heavens ... the earth ... the sea ... the dry land

The words "I will shake the earth" could be translated as "I will cause an earthquake," and that earthquake would shake "the sea" as well as "the dry land," a merism for the entire earth. Yahweh speaks of the heavens and every nation as if they also were solid objects that he could shake.

shake

Use the verb you usually use for pushing trees back and forth to get fruit or other objects to fall from them.

Haggai 2:7

I will shake every nation

The metaphor that begins with the words "I will ... shake the heavens" in verse 6 ends here. Yahweh speaks of every nation as if they also were solid objects that he could shake.

I will fill this house with glory

Yahweh speaks of glory as if it were a solid or liquid that could be put into a container, the temple. Possible meanings are 1) the temple will become very beautiful. Alternate translation: "I will make this house very beautiful" or 2) the "precious things" that "every nation will bring" include much silver and gold and other forms of wealth. Alternate translation: "I will have people bring many beautiful things into this house"

Haggai 2:8

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

Haggai 2:10

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month

This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of December on Western calendars.

in the second year of Darius

"in the second year of the reign of Darius" or "when Darius had been king for more than one year"

Darius ... Haggai

See how you translated these men's names in [Haggai 1:1]

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai 2:11

Ask the priests

This is an urgent exhortation.

Haggai 2:12

meat that is set apart to Yahweh ... holy

The words "that is set apart to Yahweh" and the word "holy" translate the same Hebrew word. "holy meat ... holy"

Haggai 2:13

because of death

"because he has touched a dead body"

Haggai 2:14

So Haggai answered and said, "So it is ... is unclean

Haggai answers the priests with the words that Yahweh

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told Haggai to tell the priests. Alternate translation: "So Haggai answered and told them Yahweh's words: 'So it is ... is unclean"

So it is with this people and this nation before me

"I look at this people and this nation the same way." Yahweh reminds the priests that a clean thing that touches an unclean thing becomes unclean. He then reminds them that he thinks of them as unclean because they have been worshiping idols, and so everything they touch and make becomes unclean.

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

the work of their hands

The hands are a synecdoche for the people whose hands they are. Alternate translation: "everything they have done" or "everything they make with their hands"

Haggai 2:15

think in your minds

This is an urgent exhortation.

Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Before you laid the first stones for the temple"

Haggai 2:16

twenty measures

"20 measures." A "measure" is an unknown amount.

fifty measures

"50 measures." A "measure" is an unknown amount.

Haggai 2:17

all the work of your hands

"everything you made" or "your crops"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

Haggai 2:18

Consider from this day forward

This is an urgent exhortation.

the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month

This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of December on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [Haggai 2:10]

the day that the foundation of the temple of Yahweh was laid

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the day that you laid the foundation of Yahweh's temple"

Haggai 2:19

Is there still seed in the storehouse?

Yahweh is preparing the people for the promise he is about to give them. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You can see that there is no seed in the storehouse."

The vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree

"Your grape vines, fig trees, pomegranate trees, and olive trees"

the pomegranate

This is a type of sweet fruit. You may need to make explicit that the tree is being spoken of. Alternate translation: "the pomegranate tree"

have not borne

"have not produced fruit"

Haggai 2:20

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

Haggai

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

on the twenty-fourth day of the month

You may need to make explicit which month is spoken of. Alternate translation: "on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month"

Haggai 2:21

Zerubbabel

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:1]

I will shake the heavens and the earth

The words "I will shake the earth" could be translated as "I will cause an earthquake." Yahweh speaks of the heavens as if they also were solid objects that he could shake. See how these ideas are translated in [Haggai 2:6]

shake

Use the verb you usually use for pushing trees back and forth to get fruit or other objects to fall from them. See how you translated this in Haggai 2:6.

the heavens and the earth

This is a merism for "the whole universe" or "everything that exists."

Haggai 2:22

I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms

The throne is a metonym for the person sitting on the throne. Alternate translation: "I will take kings off of their thrones"

the throne of kingdoms

Here "throne" is a metonym for the king who sits on it. Alternate translation: "government ruled by kings"

I will ... destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations

You may need to make explicit that "the nations" are Israel's enemies. Alternate translation: "I will make it so the kingdoms of the nations that are Israel's enemies are no longer strong"

each one because of his brother's sword

The sword here is a metonym for violent death. Alternate translation: "each one because his brother has killed him"

Haggai 2:23

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel

See how you translated these men's names in [Haggai 1:1]

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Haggai 1:9]

I will make you like a signet ring

Kings used a signet ring to seal documents to show that

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they truly had his authority. Zerubbabel would have words.
authority from Yahweh because he would speak Yahweh's

Introduction to Zechariah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Zechariah

Zechariah calls the returning nation of Israel to repent and return to Yahweh (1:1–6) The eight night visions (1:7-6:8) Yahweh sends his messengers throughout the whole earth (1:7–17) Four horns and four craftsmen (1:18–21) The measuring line (2:1–13) The priest in filthy clothes (3:1–10) The golden lampstand olive trees (4:1–14) The flying scroll (5:1–4) The woman in a basket (5:5–11) Four chariots (6:1–8)
A crown for the high priest (6:9–15) Questions about fasting (7:1–8:23) Yahweh judges the nations and saves his people (9:1–11:17) Final message
(12:1-14:21) Yahweh will finally defeat Israel's enemies (12:1-9) Israel mourns for the one they pierced (12:10-14) Yahweh purifies Israel and removes false prophets (13:1-6) Yahweh comes as king (14:1–21)

What is the Book of Zechariah about?

Zechariah wrote to the people of Judah who returned from being exiled in Babylon. The people of Judah continued to sin, as their ancestors did before they went into exile. Zechariah called the people to repent and to obey Yahweh. And he called them to renew the covenant with Yahweh. Zechariah also prophesied about the Messiah and about Israel finally being victorious over her enemies. (See: covenant)

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has been titled "Zechariah" or "The Book of Zechariah." Translators may decide to call it the "The Book About Zechariah" or "The Sayings of Zechariah."

Who wrote the Book of Zechariah?

The prophet Zechariah wrote this book between 520 and 518 B.C.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Did Zechariah prophesy before Ezra, Nehemiah, and Haggai?

Zechariah prophesied before the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. He prophesied at the same time as Haggai and continued after Haggai.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term "Israel"?

The name "Israel" is used in many different ways in the Bible. Jacob was a son of Isaac. God changed Jacob's name to Israel. The descendants of Jacob became a nation also called Israel. Eventually, the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was named Israel. The southern kingdom was named Judah. Zechariah uses the term "Israel" to refer to both the nation of Israel and the northern kingdom of Israel.

What imagery does Zechariah use in reference to the Messiah?

Zechariah presented the Messiah as both a king and a shepherd. Zechariah said that the Messiah would come and deliver his people. However, the Messiah would also be pierced (12:10) and struck with the sword (13:7). (See: christ)

What does the phrase "that day" mean?

Zechariah often spoke of the last days by using the phrase "that day" or "in that day." When referring to a future "day," the translator should be aware that the author may be speaking about the last days. (See: lastday)

Zechariah

1 [1]In the eighth month of the second year of Darius' reign, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah son of Berekiah son of Iddo, the prophet, saying,[2]"Yahweh was exceedingly angry with your fathers![3]Say to them, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: Turn to me!—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts— and I will return to you, says Yahweh of hosts.
[4]Do not be like your fathers to whom the prophets cried out previously, saying, "Yahweh of hosts says this: Turn from your evil ways and wicked practices!" But they would not hear and did not pay attention to me—this is Yahweh's declaration.'[5]Your fathers—where are they? And the prophets—do they live forever?[6]But my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets, have they not overtaken your fathers? So they repented and said, 'Just as Yahweh of hosts planned to do to us what our ways and actions deserved, so he has dealt with us.'"

[7]On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius' reign, the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah son of Berekiah son of Iddo, the prophet, saying,[8]I saw in the night, and, look! A man

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was riding on a red horse, and he was among the myrtle trees that are in the valley; and behind him there were red, reddish-brown, and white horses.[9]I said, "What are these things, Lord?" Then the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what these things are."
[10]Then the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are those Yahweh has sent out to roam throughout the earth."[11]They answered the angel of Yahweh who stood among the myrtle trees; they said to him, "We have been roaming throughout the earth; see, all the earth sits still and is at rest."

[12]Then the angel of Yahweh answered and said, "Yahweh of hosts, how long will you show no compassion to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?"[13]Yahweh answered the angel who had talked with me, with good words, words of comfort.

[14]So the angel who had talked with me said to me, "Call out and say, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy![15]I am very angry with the nations that are at ease. When I was only a little angry with them, they made the disaster worse.
[16]Therefore Yahweh of hosts says this: I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies. My house will be built within her—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—and the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem!'[17]Again call out, saying, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: My cities will once again overflow with goodness, and Yahweh will again comfort Zion, and he will once again choose Jerusalem.'"

[18]Then I lifted up my eyes and saw four horns![19]I spoke to the angel who talked with me, "What are these?" He answered me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."
[20]Then Yahweh showed me four craftsmen.[21]I said, "What are these people coming to do?" He answered, and said, "These are the horns that scattered Judah so that no man would lift up his head. But the blacksmiths have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations that lifted up a horn against the land of Judah to scatter her."

Zechariah 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in prose mainly with imagery used throughout to portray Zechariah's vision given by the Lord. Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set lines 1:3-6, 14-17, which are extended quotations, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Visions

This book contains a number of visions given to Zechariah, so the images are not ones Zechariah actually saw but were given to him in a vision or dream. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Date

Zechariah uses two separate dates in this first chapter. When compared to the book of Haggai, Zechariah's prophecy was proclaimed just a few weeks after Haggai. However, they prophesied in two different places: Haggai was in Jerusalem and Zechariah was somewhere outside of Jerusalem. (See: prophet)

Links:

Zechariah 1:1 Notes Zechariah intro

Zechariah 1:1

In the eighth month

This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

the second year of Darius' reign

"the second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "the second year since Darius became king"

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message" or "Yawheh spoke this message"

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

Berekiah ... Iddo

These are the names of men.

Zechariah 1:2

exceedingly angry with your fathers

"very angry with your forefathers"

Zechariah 1:3

Turn to me ... and I will return to you

Yahweh speaks of having a change of attitude toward

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another person as if it were turning or returning. The people turning to Yahweh means that they will again be devoted to him and worship him, while Yahweh returning to the people means that he will again bless them and help them.

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

Zechariah 1:4

Turn from your evil ways and wicked practices

No longer doing certain actions is spoken of as if it were turning away from those actions. The phrases "evil ways" and "wicked practices" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Stop doing all of your wicked actions"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Zechariah 1:3]

Zechariah 1:5

Your fathers—where are they? And the prophets—do they live forever?

If your language has a way of showing that this verse challenges the readers to think about what happened to the "fathers" (Zechariah 1:4). Alternate translation: "Think about your fathers—where are they now? And as for the prophets, do they live forever?"

Your fathers—where are they?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your fathers—you know where they are." or "As for your fathers, you know that they have all died."

And the prophets—do they live forever?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "And the prophets will not live forever."

do they live forever?

Zechariah is probably implying that the prophets will not always be around to tell his readers that God wants them to repent. You may need to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "will they always be around to speak for God to you?" or "they will not always be around to call you to repent."

Zechariah 1:6

But my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets, have they not overtaken your fathers?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the positive answer that it anticipates. Yahweh speaks of the people's ancestors experiencing the consequences of not obeying Yahweh's commands as if his words and decrees were a person who had chased after and overtaken them. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "But my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets have overtaken your fathers." or "But your fathers have suffered the consequences for disobeying my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets to tell them."

my words and my decrees

These phrases are both ways to refer to Yahweh's message that the prophets had declared to their ancestors.

our ways and actions

The words "ways" and "actions" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "our behavior"

Zechariah 1:7

the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat

"Shebat" is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of February on Western calendars.

in the second year of Darius' reign

"in the second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "in the second year since Darius became king." See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:1]

the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:1]

Berekiah ... Iddo

These are the names of men.

the prophet, saying,

Here the word “saying” introduces what Zechariah was about to say. The word “saying” can be removed if it may make your readers think that Yahweh is about to speak. Alternate translation: “the prophet.”

Zechariah 1:8

I saw in the night

Here the word “I” refers to Zechariah. Alternate translation: “I, Zechariah, saw in the night”

look

The word "look" here shows that Zechariah was surprised by what he saw.

myrtle trees

a kind of small tree with colorful flowers

Zechariah 1:9

I said, "What are these things, Lord?" Then the angel who talked with me

Here Zechariah speaks to an unidentified angel. This is not the same as the "man" who was "riding on a red horse."

What are these things, Lord?

"What are these things, sir?" Here the word "Lord" is a form of polite address.

Zechariah 1:10

the man who stood among the myrtle trees

These phrases refer to the man who "was riding on a red horse" in [Zechariah 1:8]

These are those

The word "these" refers to the red, reddish-brown, and white horses that were behind the man who was among the myrtle trees. Possible meanings are 1) it is implicit that there were other men who were riding the horses, and that these phrases refer to the riders or 2) the horses are personified as being able to speak like people.

to roam throughout the earth

It is implicit that Yahweh sent these out to walk about in order to patrol the earth. This does not suggest that they were wandering or lost.

Zechariah 1:11

the angel of Yahweh who stood among the myrtle trees

This phrase refers to the man who "was riding on a red horse" in [Zechariah 1:8]

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They answered ... they said
The word "they" refers to the red, reddish-brown, and white horses that were behind the man who was among the myrtle trees. Possible meanings are 1) it is implicit that there were other men who were riding the horses, and that these phrases refer to the riders or 2) the horses are personified as being able to speak like people.
all the earth sits still and is at rest
There being peace and quiet in the world is spoken of as if the earth were a person who is still and resting. Possible meanings are 1) this is a good thing that means that there is peace between nations or 2) this is a bad thing that means that there is no war because nations are helpless to fight against a stronger nation that has subdued them.
Zechariah 1:12
to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah
Here the words "Jerusalem" and "cities" refer to the people who live in those cities. Alternate translation: "to the people of Jerusalem and to the people of the cities of Judah"
Zechariah 1:13
with good words, words of comfort
"with good, comforting words"
Zechariah 1:14
I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy
"I have been extremely jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion." Yahweh does not want anyone to harm Jerusalem or try to have Jerusalem love anything more than Yahweh.
jealous
Here this word refers to Yahweh's strong desire to protect his people.
Jerusalem ... Zion
These are a metonyms for the people who live in Jerusalem and Zion. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem ... the people of Zion"
Zechariah 1:15
I am very angry with the nations that are at ease
The phrase "at ease" means that the people thought that they lived in peace and security. Alternate translation: "I am very angry with the nations that enjoy peace and security"
I was only a little angry with them
"I was only a little angry with the people of Jerusalem"
they made the disaster worse
"the nations that are at ease made the disaster worse." This means that although Yahweh used these nations to punish Jerusalem, they did more harm to Jerusalem than what Yahweh had intended for them to do.
Zechariah 1:16
I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies
Possible meanings are 1) although Yahweh had left Jerusalem when the people had gone into exile, he will now return to Jerusalem when they have come back from exile or 2) Yahweh speaks of having a change of attitude towards the people of Jerusalem and again blessing them and helping them as if he were returning to the city. Alternate translation: "I will once again show mercy towards Jerusalem"
My house will be built within her
The word "her" refers to Jerusalem, and the word "house" is a metonym for the temple. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people will build my temple in Jerusalem"
the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem
This refers to builders using their instruments to rebuild the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "builders will stretch out their measuring lines over Jerusalem" or "the people will rebuild Jerusalem"
Zechariah 1:17
Again call out, saying
The angel who was speaking to Zechariah says these words.
My cities will once again overflow with goodness
The phrase "my cities" refers to the cities of Judah and represents the people who live in those cities. Yahweh speaks of the inhabitants of those cities again being prosperous as if goodness were a liquid that overflowed the cities, which are its containers. Alternate translation: "My cities will once again be prosperous" or "The people in the cities of Judah will once again be prosperous"
Yahweh will again comfort Zion
Here the word "Zion" refers to the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will again comfort the people in Zion"
Zechariah 1:18
I lifted up my eyes
The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "I looked up"
Zechariah 1:19
These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem
Horns were often used as a symbol for military power. Here they symbolize the powerful nations that had conquered the kingdoms of Israel. The words "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" represent the people who lived in those places. Alternate translation: "These horns represent the nations that have scattered the people of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem"
Zechariah 1:20
four craftsmen
"blacksmiths" or "metalworkers"
Zechariah 1:21
these people
This refers to the four craftsmen.
These are the horns that scattered Judah
The horns symbolize the powerful nations that had conquered the kingdoms of Israel. The word "Judah" represents the people who lived in Judah. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Zechariah 1:19]
so that no man would lift up his head
The nations oppressing the people of Judah severely is spoken of as if no person in Judah was able to raise his head. Alternate translation: "and caused them to suffer greatly"
to cast down the horns of the nations that lifted up a horn against the land of Judah
Yahweh speaks of the nations using their military power to conquer Judah as if the nations had lifted up their horns. He speaks of these four craftsmen destroying the military power of these nations as if the craftsmen threw those horns to the ground. Alternate translation: "to destroy the

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power of the nations who used their military might against the land of Judah"

to cast down the horns of the nations that lifted up a horn
"to cast down the horns that the nations had lifted up"

2 [1]Next I lifted up my eyes and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand.[2]I said, "Where are you going?" So he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to determine its width and length."
[3]Then the angel who had talked with me went away and another angel went out to meet him.[4]The second angel said to him, "Run and speak to that young man; say, 'Jerusalem will sit in the open country because of the multitudes of men and livestock within her.
[5]For I—this is Yahweh's declaration—will become for her a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.

[6]Up! Up! Flee from the land of the north—this is Yahweh's declaration—for I have scattered you like the four winds of the skies!—This is Yahweh's declaration.
[7]Up! Escape to Zion, you who live with the daughter of Babylon!'"

[8]For after Yahweh of hosts honored me and sent me against the nations that plundered you—for whoever touches you, touches the apple of God's eye!—after Yahweh did this, he said,[9]"I myself will shake my hand over them, and they will be plunder for their slaves." Then you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me.

[10]"Sing for joy and be glad, daughter of Zion, for I myself am about to come and dwell among you!—this is Yahweh's declaration."[11]Then great nations will join themselves to Yahweh in that day. He says, "Then you will become my people; for I will dwell in the midst of you," and you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.

[12]For Yahweh will inherit Judah as his rightful possession in the holy land and will once again choose Jerusalem for himself.[13]Be silent, all flesh, before Yahweh, for he has been roused from out of his holy place!

Zechariah 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is introduced in prose with imagery used in the rest of the chapter to portray Zechariah's third vision about measuring lines given by the Lord.
Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 2:4-13, which are extended quotations, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Visions
This book contains a number of visions given to Zechariah so the images are not ones Zechariah actually saw but were given to him in a vision or dream. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing. Please be careful to translate each of the terms in your language.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"This is Yahweh's declaration"
This phrase is used several times in this chapter. The UDB often translates this as "Yahweh says."

Links:

Zechariah 2:1 Notes

Zechariah 2:1
I lifted up my eyes
The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "I looked up"
measuring line
a rope with a certain length that a person would use to measure buildings or large sections of land
Zechariah 2:2
So he said to me
"So the man with the measuring line said to me"
Zechariah 2:3
another angel went out to meet him
This angel is a new participant who has not appeared before this verse.
Zechariah 2:4
The second angel said to him
"The second angel said to the angel who had talked with me"
Jerusalem will sit in the open country ... livestock within her
The phrase "will sit in the open country" translates a word that refers to a city that has no walls. There will be so many inhabitants in the city that it will be too large to have walls around it. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem will not have walls around it ... livestock within the city"
Zechariah 2:5
I ... will become for her a wall of fire around her

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People built walls around their cities for protection. Here Yahweh speaks of protecting Jerusalem as if he himself were a wall of fire around the city. Alternate translation: "I ... will protect the city, like a wall of fire around it"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

Zechariah 2:6

Up! Up!

These two words express urgency and add emphasis to the following command. The words can be translated with an expression that communicates urgency in your language. Alternate translation: "Run! Run!" or "Hurry! Hurry!"

Zechariah 2:7

you who live with the daughter of Babylon

The phrase "daughter of Babylon" refers to the city of Babylon. Yahweh speaks of the city as if it were a daughter. Alternate translation: "you who live in Babylon"

Zechariah 2:8

General Information:

Zechariah begins to speak and tells how Yahweh is sending him to judge the nations who have plundered Jerusalem.

for whoever touches you

The word "touches" refers to a touch meant to harm. Alternate translation: "for whoever harms you"

Zechariah 2:9

I myself will shake my hand over them

Raising one's hand against another person is a gesture of hostility. Here it is a symbolic action that means that God will attack those who harm Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "I myself will fight against them" or "I myself will attack them"

they will be plunder for their slaves

The word "plunder" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "their slaves will plunder them"

Zechariah 2:10

Sing for joy and be glad, daughter of Zion

"Zion" is the same as "Jerusalem." The prophet speaks of the city as if it is a daughter. Possible meanings are 1) Zechariah personifies the city as a person who can sing. Alternate translation: "Sing for joy and be glad, Zion" or 2) the phrase "daughter of Zion" is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "Sing for joy and be glad, people of Zion"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

Zechariah 2:11

great nations will join themselves to Yahweh

Zechariah speaks of the people of great nations becoming Yahweh's people and worshiping him as if they were joining themselves to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the people of great nations will become the people of Yahweh"

in that day

"at that time"

Zechariah 2:12

Yahweh will inherit Judah as his rightful possession

Zechariah speaks of Yahweh claiming Judah as his own land as if Judah were something that Yahweh inherits as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will claim Judah as his rightful possession"

Zechariah 2:13

all flesh

Here the word "flesh" represents all humanity. Alternate translation: "all people"

he has been roused

Zechariah speaks of Yahweh beginning to act as if someone had roused Yahweh from inactivity. It is implied that this action refers to his returning to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "he is coming"

from out of his holy place

Here "his holy place" refers to heaven, and not to the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "from his holy place in heaven"

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3 [1]Then Yahweh showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh and Satan was standing at his
right hand to accuse him of sin.[2]The angel of Yahweh said to Satan, "May Yahweh rebuke you, Satan; may Yahweh, who
has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is this not a brand pulled from the fire?"[3]Joshua was dressed in filthy garments as he
stood before the angel.
[4]The angel spoke and said to those who stood before him, "Remove the filthy garments from upon him." Then he said to
Joshua, "Look! I have caused your iniquity to pass from you and I will dress you in official robes."[5]Then I said, "Let them
put a clean turban on his head!" So they set a clean turban on Joshua's head and clothed him with clean garments, while
the angel of Yahweh was standing by.

[6]Next the angel of Yahweh solemnly commanded Joshua and said,[7]"Yahweh of hosts says this: If you will walk in my ways,
and if you will keep my commandments, then you will govern my house and guard my courts, for I will allow you to go
and come among these who stand before me.
[8]Listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your companions who live with you! For these men are a sign, for I myself will
bring up my servant the Branch.[9]Now look at the stone that I have set before Joshua. There are seven eyes on this single
stone, and I will engrave an inscription—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts— and I will remove the iniquity from
this land in one day.
[10]In that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—each man will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and
under his fig tree."

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Zechariah 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is introduced in prose and shares the fourth vision, which is the priest in dirty clothes. (See: priest)
Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 3:7-9, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Difficult concepts in this chapter

Visions
It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The high priest
This chapter seems to refer to a particular person, Joshua the high priest. However, little is known about him. (See: highpriest)

Links:

Zechariah 3:1 Notes

Zechariah 3:1
General Information:
Yahweh shows Zechariah a vision of Joshua the priest.
Satan was standing at his right hand to accuse him of sin
"Satan was standing at Joshua's right side, ready to accuse Joshua of sin"
Zechariah 3:2
Is this not a brand pulled from the fire?
The angel of Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the positive answer that it anticipates. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Joshua is a brand pulled from the fire."
a brand pulled from the fire
A brand is a burning piece of wood. The angel of Yahweh speaks of Joshua being rescued from captivity in Babylon as if he were a piece of wood that someone pulls from a fire before the wood is completely burned.
Zechariah 3:3
Joshua was dressed in filthy garments
In this vision "filthy garments" are symbolic of sinfulness.
Zechariah 3:4
those who stood before him
The word "him" refers to the angel. The phrase refers to other angels who were present.
Look
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"
I have caused your iniquity to pass from you
Since Joshua's garments were symbolic of his sinfulness, by removing his garments, the angel removed Joshua's iniquity. Causing iniquity to pass from him is an idiom that means that he had removed Joshua's iniquity. Alternate translation: "I have removed your iniquity from you"
dress you in official robes
Here the phrase "official robes" is a metaphor for righteousness. If your language has a word for clothes that people wear only for special occasions, you might want to use it here.
Zechariah 3:5
Let them put
Here the word "them" refers to the other angels who were present.
turban
a long piece of cloth wrapped around the head
Zechariah 3:6
solemnly commanded Joshua
"commanded Joshua in a very serious manner"
Zechariah 3:7
If you will walk in my ways, and if you will keep my commandments
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh speaks of obeying him as if the person were walking along Yahweh's paths. Alternate translation: "If you will obey me and keep my commandments"
you will govern my house and guard my courts
Here the word "house" is a metonym for the temple, while the word "courts" refers to the courtyards around the temple. Together the phrases mean that Joshua will have authority over the whole temple complex. Alternate translation: "you will have authority over my temple and its courtyards"
to go and come among these who stand before me
The phrase "to go and come among" is an idiom that means that Joshua will be a part of this group and have the same privilege as they do of access to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to come before me as these who stand here do"
Zechariah 3:8
General Information:
The angel of Yahweh continues to speak to Joshua.
your companions who live with you
This phrase refers to other priests who would serve in the temple under the leadership of Joshua. Alternate translation: "the other priests who live with you"
For these men are a sign
Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special meaning to those who see it. Yahweh speaks of the priests serving in the temple as being this sign that shows that Yahweh will bring his servant.
my servant the Branch
The word "Branch" refers to a messianic figure that would serve as king over Yahweh's people. Yahweh speaks of this person as if he were a branch that grows out from a tree.

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Since the word "Branch" is a title, it should be translated with an equivalent word in your language.

Zechariah 3:9

the stone that I have set before Joshua

Here the word "stone" likely refers to a precious stone or jewel.

There are seven eyes on this single stone

The sides or facets of the stone that reflect light are spoken of as if they are eyes. Alternate translation: "There are seven sides on this single stone"

engrave

"carve"

I will remove the iniquity from this land in one day

Here the word "land" is a metonym for the people who live in the land. The word "remove" is a metaphor that means to forgive. Alternate translation: "I will forgive the iniquity of the people who live in this land in one day"

Zechariah 3:10

each man will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree

Both the "vine" and the "fig tree" are symbols of prosperity. This phrase describes actions in which people live prosperously and in peace. Alternate translation: "because they will be at peace, each person will invite his neighbor to come and sit under his vine and his fig tree"

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4 [1]Then the angel who was talking with me turned and roused me like a man roused from his sleep.[2]He said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see a lampstand made entirely of gold, with a bowl on its top. It has seven lamps on it and seven lamp wicks at the top of each lamp.[3]Two olive trees are by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on the left side."
[4]So I spoke again to the angel who was talking with me. I said, "What do these things mean, my master?"[5]The angel who was talking with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these things mean?" I said, "No, my master."
[6]So he said to me, "This is the word of Yahweh to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says Yahweh of hosts.[7]What are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring out the top stone to shouts of 'Grace! Grace to it!'"

[8]The word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[9]"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house and his hands will bring it to completion. Then you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you.
[10]Who has despised the day of small things? These people will rejoice and will see the plumb stone in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven lamps are the eyes of Yahweh that roam over the whole earth."
[11]Then I asked the angel, "What are these two olive trees that stand on the left and the right of the lampstand?"

[12]Once more I asked him, "What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that have golden oil pouring out of them?"[13]Then he said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my master."

[14]So he said, "These are the sons of fresh olive oil who stand before the Lord of all the earth."

Zechariah 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose about the fifth vision, which is about the golden lampstand olive trees.

Special concepts in this chapter

Visions

This chapter shows a conversation between Zechariah and the angel of Yahweh. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

Links:

Zechariah 4:1 Notes

Zechariah 4:1

roused me like a man roused from his sleep

Zechariah compares the way in which the angel interrupted his being in deep thought with the way someone would awaken another person from sleep. Alternate translation: "caused me to become more alert like a man awakened from his sleep"

Zechariah 4:2

lamp wicks

the parts of a lamp that are lit on fire

Zechariah 4:3

the left side

The ellipsis in this phrase may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "the left side of the bowl"

Zechariah 4:5

Do you not know what these things mean?

The angel asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that Zechariah should have known what these things mean. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate

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translation: "Surely you know what these things mean."
Zechariah 4:6
Connecting Statement:
The angel who speaks with Zechariah continues to explain the vision.
Not by might nor by power
Since there is no verb in this phrase, it may be necessary in your language to supply one. Alternate translation: "You will not succeed by might nor by power"
Not by might nor by power
Possible meanings are 1) that the words "might" and "power" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of Zerubbabel's strength or 2) that the word "might" refers to military strength and the word "power" refers to Zerubbabel's physical ability. Alternate translation: "Certainly not by your own strength" or "Not by military strength nor by your own power"
Zechariah 4:7
What are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain
This is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of the obstacles that Zerubbabel will face as if they were a large mountain. He asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that these obstacles pose no threat to Zerubbabel's success. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are nothing, great mountain! Zerubbabel will cause you to become a plain" or "Although obstacles may appear as large as mountains, Zerubbabel will overcome them as easily as one walks upon level ground"
he will bring out the top stone
The top stone is the last stone placed when building something. This refers to the top stone of the temple. Alternate translation: "he will bring out the top stone of the temple" or "he will complete the construction of the temple"
to shouts of 'Grace! Grace to it!'
Possible meanings are 1) the word "grace" refers to God's grace and the people are requesting that God bless the completed temple. Alternate translation: "while people shout, 'May God bless it! May God bless it!'" or 2) the word "grace" refers to beauty and the people are declaring how beautiful the completed temple is. Alternate translation: "while people shout, 'Beautiful! It is beautiful!'"
Zechariah 4:8
Connecting Statement:
The angel who speaks with Zechariah continues to explain the vision.
The word of Yahweh came to me, saying
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to me. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to me"
Zechariah 4:9
The hands of Zerubbabel have laid ... his hands will bring it to completion
Here the word "hands" represents Zerubbabel. Alternate translation: "Zerubbabel has laid ... he will bring it to completion"
the foundation of this house
The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the foundation of this temple"
Zechariah 4:10
Who has despised the day of small things? These people will rejoice
The angel uses this rhetorical question to speak specifically about those who have "despised the day of small things." It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Those who have despised the day of small things will rejoice"
the day of small things
"the time of small things." This phrase refers to the time when the people were building the temple and appeared to be making little progress. Alternate translation: "the time when progress was slow"
plumb stone
This refers to an instrument made with a heavy object attached to the end of a string that builders used to ensure that the walls of buildings were straight.
These seven lamps
This phrase refers to the lamps that Zechariah saw in Zechariah 4:2-3.
These seven lamps are the eyes of Yahweh that roam over the whole earth
The seven lamps symbolize the eyes of Yahweh, but they are not literally the eyes of Yahweh. The angel speaks of Yahweh seeing everything that happens on the earth as if his eyes roamed over the whole earth. Alternate translation: "These seven lamps represent the eyes of Yahweh, who sees everything that happens on the earth"
Zechariah 4:11
these two olive trees
This refers to the olive trees that Zechariah saw in Zechariah 4:2-3.
Zechariah 4:12
What are these two olive branches
Here Zechariah changes his question and asks about branches that are connected to the two olive trees.
the two gold pipes
These pipes were not mentioned in the previous description of Zechariah's vision. It is possible that they are connected to the bowl on top of the lampstand and provide the oil with which the lampstand burns.
golden oil
Here "golden" refers to the color of the oil and does not mean that the oil was made of gold.
Zechariah 4:13
Do you not know what these are?
The angel asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that Zechariah should have known what these things mean. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know what these are."
Zechariah 4:14
These are the sons of fresh olive oil
The branches symbolize these people, but they are not literally the people. Alternate translation: "These two branches represent the sons of fresh olive oil"
the sons of fresh olive oil
This idiom means that these men have been anointed with fresh olive oil. A person who is anointed is one whom Yahweh has chosen or appointed for a special duty.

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Alternate translation: "the anointed men" or "the men whom Yahweh has appointed"

who stand before the Lord

The idiom "stand before" means to be in a person's presence and to serve him. Alternate translation: "who serve the Lord"

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5 [1]Then I turned and lifted my eyes, and I saw, behold, a flying scroll![2]The angel said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide."
[3]Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the surface of the whole land. For every thief will be cut off according to what it says on the one side, and everyone who swears a false oath will be cut off according to what it says on the other side.[4]"I will send it out—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—so it will enter into the house of the thief and into the house of the one that swears falsely by my name. It will remain in his house and consume its timber and stones."

[5]Then the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, "Raise your eyes and see what is coming!"[6]I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is a basket containing an ephah that is coming. This is their iniquity in the whole land."[1][7]Then a lead covering was lifted off the basket and there was a woman under it sitting in it!
[8]The angel said, "This is Wickedness!" He threw her back inside the basket, and he threw the lead cover over its opening.[9]I lifted my eyes and saw two women coming toward me, and wind was in their wings—for they had wings like a stork's wings. They lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.
[10]So I said to the angel who was talking to me, "Where are they taking the basket?"[11]He said to me, "To build a temple in the land of Shinar for it, so that when the temple is ready, the basket will be set there on its prepared base."

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[1]Some ancient translations of the copies of the Hebrew text and most modern translations have their iniquity. The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have their eye, but this is widely thought to be an error.

Zechariah 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter contains the next two visions. One is about a flying scroll and one is about the basket filled with iniquity. (See: iniquity)

Links:

Zechariah 5:1 Notes

Zechariah 5:1

Then I turned

The word "I" refers to Zechariah.

lifted my eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "looked up"

behold

The word "behold" here shows that Zechariah was surprised by what he saw.

Zechariah 5:2

twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide

A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "9.2 meters long and 4.6 meters wide"

Zechariah 5:3

General Information:

The angel continues to speak with Zechariah.

This is the curse

The word "this" refers to the scroll. The scroll is a metonym for what is written on the scroll. Alternate translation: "On this scroll is the curse"

that goes out over the surface of the whole land

The phrase "the surface of the whole land" refers to every place within the land. It is implied that the curse will apply to every person who lives in the land. Alternate translation: "that is upon every person within the whole land"

every thief will be cut off ... everyone who swears a false oath will be cut off

Yahweh removing these people from the land is spoken of as if he were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cut off every thief ... Yahweh will cut off everyone who swears a false oath" or "Yahweh will remove every thief from the land ... Yahweh will remove from the land everyone who swears a false oath"

what it says on the one side ... what it says on the other side

"what the scroll says on one side ... what the scroll says on the other side"

Zechariah 5:4

I will send it out

"I will send out the curse"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

consume its timber and stones

The curse destroying the houses of the thief and of the one who swears falsely is spoken of as if the curse would consume the building materials that people had used to build the houses. Alternate translation: "destroy its wood

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and stones" or "completely destroy it"

Zechariah 5:5

Raise your eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "Look up"

Zechariah 5:6

This is a basket containing an ephah that is coming

An "ephah" is a unit of measurement for dry materials and is equal to 22 liters. Here the word is a metonym for the container that would hold an ephah of dry material. Alternate translation: "This is a measuring basket that is coming" or "This is a large container that is coming"

This is their iniquity in the whole land

The basket symbolizes the people's iniquity, but it is not literally their iniquity. Alternate translation: "This basket represents the iniquity of the people throughout the whole land"

Zechariah 5:7

a lead covering was lifted off the basket

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: someone lifted a lead covering off the basket"

there was a woman under it sitting in it

"there was a woman under the lead covering sitting in the basket"

Zechariah 5:8

This is Wickedness

The woman represents wickedness. Alternate translation: "This woman represents wickedness"

He threw her ... he threw the lead cover

"He thrust her ... he forced the lead cover." The word "threw" indicates the force with which the angel did these things. He did not literally throw the woman or the cover.

Zechariah 5:9

I lifted my eyes

Here the word "eyes" represents the person who sees. Alternate translation: "I looked up"

wind was in their wings

This idiom means that they were flying. Alternate translation: "they were flying"

they had wings like a stork's wings

A stork is a type of large bird that has a wingspan of two to four meters. Zechariah compares the size of the women's wings with the size of the stork's wings.

They lifted up the basket between earth and heaven

The words "earth" and "heaven" form a merism that refer to the sky. It is implicit that the two women flew away with the basket. Alternate translation: "They lifted the basket up into the sky and flew away"

Zechariah 5:11

To build a temple in the land of Shinar for it

The ellipsis can be supplied from the previous verse. Alternate translation: "They are taking the basket to the land of Shinar to build a temple for it"

the basket will be set there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will set the basket there"

on its prepared base

The words "prepared base" refer to a pedestal or other kind of fixture upon which they will place the basket.

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6 [1]Then I turned and lifted my eyes and I saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains; and the two mountains were made of bronze.[2]The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot had black horses,[3]the third chariot had white horses, and the fourth chariot had spotted gray horses.[4]So I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my master?"
[5]The angel answered and said to me, "These are the four winds of heaven that go out from the place where they were standing before the Lord of all the earth.[6]The one with the black horses is going out to the north country; the white horses are going out to the west country; and the spotted gray horses are going out to the south country."
[7]These strong horses went out and sought to go and roam over the earth, so the angel said, "Go and roam over the earth!" and they left for all the earth.[8]Then he called out to me and spoke to me and said, "Look at the ones that are going out to the north country; they will appease my spirit concerning the north country."

[9]So the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,[10]"'Take an offering from the exiles—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah—and go this same day and take it into the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah, who has come from Babylon.[11]Then take the silver and gold, make a crown and set it upon the head of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest.
[12]Speak to him and say, 'Yahweh of hosts says this: This man, his name is Branch! He will grow up where he is and will then build the temple of Yahweh![13]It is he who builds the temple of Yahweh, and he will be clothed with royal splendor, and will sit and rule on his throne. He will be a priest on his throne, and he will bear a counsel of peace between the two.
[14]The crown will given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and for Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of Yahweh.
[15]Then those who are far off will come and build the temple of Yahweh, so you will know that Yahweh of hosts has sent me to you; for this will happen if you truly listen to the voice of Yahweh your God!'"

Zechariah 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose and tells the last vision of the four chariots in the first part of the chapter. Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 6:12-13.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Crown

The second part of the chapter is about a crown made for the high priest. This is an actual person, but the meaning of the word "branch" should be translated as his name. (See: highpriest)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Meaning of the visions

The visions are stated and even when the prophet asked for an explanation, their true meaning is often obscure. This uncertainty should remain in your translation. (See: prophet)

Links:

Zechariah 6:1 Notes

Zechariah 6:1

lifted my eyes

Here the word "eyes" represents the person who sees. Alternate translation: "looked up"

between two mountains; and the two mountains were made of bronze

Since the second phrase describes the mountains in the first phrase, the two phrases may be combined. Alternate translation: "between two bronze mountains"

Zechariah 6:2

The first chariot had red horses

It is implicit that the horses were pulling the chariots. Alternate translation: "The first chariot had red horses pulling it" or "Red horses were pulling the first chariot"

Zechariah 6:5

These are the four winds of heaven

The chariots symbolize the four winds of heaven, but they are not literally the four winds. Alternate translation: "These chariots represent the four winds of heaven"

the four winds of heaven

This phrase refers to the four directions from which the wind blows: north, east, south, and west. However, some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression to mean "four spirits."

standing before the Lord of all the earth

The idiom to "stand before" means to be in a person's presence and to serve him. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 4:14]

Zechariah 6:6

the white horses are going out to the west country

Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew phrase to mean "the white horses are going out after them," that is, following the black horses to the north country.

the white horses are ... the spotted gray horses are

Here the horses represent the chariots that they pull. Alternate translation: "the chariot with the white horses is ... the chariot with the spotted gray horses is"

Zechariah 6:8

he called out to me

"the angel called out to me"

Look at the ones

"Look at the black horses"

they will appease my spirit concerning the north country

The words "my spirit" refer to Yahweh, so many translations change this to read "Yahweh's spirit." Possible meanings are 1) the word "spirit" represents Yahweh's emotions and appeasing his spirit means that the chariots will cause Yahweh no longer to be angry with the north country Alternate translation: "they will calm my anger concerning the north country" or 2) the word "spirit" represents Yahweh's presence and the chariots will cause the Jews who live in the north land to experience Yahweh's blessings. Alternate translation: "they will cause my spirit to rest in the north country"

Zechariah 6:9

the word of Yahweh came to me, saying

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to me. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to me"

Zechariah 6:10

Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah

These are the names of men.

this same day

"today"

Zechariah 6:11

Jozadak

This is the name of a man.

take the silver and gold, make a crown

"make a crown with the silver and gold"

Zechariah 6:12

Speak to him and say

"Speak to Joshua and say"

his name is Branch

The word "Branch" refers to a messianic figure that would serve as king over Yahweh's people. Yahweh speaks of this person as if he were a branch that grows out from a tree. Since the word "Branch" is a title, it should be translated with an equivalent word in your language. See how you translated this name in [Zechariah 3:8]

He will grow up where he is

The phrase "grow up" refers to the growth of a plant, and so continues the metaphor of this person as a "Branch." This likely refers to this person appearing or coming into power as the one who would supervise the rebuilding of the temple.

Zechariah 6:13

He will be a priest on his throne

Possible meanings are 1) the "Branch" will be both priest and king or 2) the "Branch" will be king, and another person will be a priest who will share the royal power. Alternate translation: "There will be a priest upon his throne"

he will bear a counsel of peace between the two

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The words "the two" refer to the roles of king and priest. The meaning of this phrase depends upon the meaning of the previous phrase. Possible meanings are 1) the "Branch" will faithfully carry out his duties as both priest and king and not forsake one in order to fulfill the other or 2) the "Branch" who serves as king and the other person who serves as a priest will each carry out their duties faithfully and they will work together in peace.

Zechariah 6:14

The crown will given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You will give the crown"

Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah ... Hen

These are the names of men. See how you translated these in [Zechariah 6:10]

for Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial

Some modern versions interpret this phrase as "as a memorial to the generosity of the son of Zephaniah" or "as a memorial to the one who is gracious, the son of Zephaniah." Also, some modern versions interpret the name "Hen" as meaning the name "Josiah."

Zechariah 6:15

those who are far off

This refers to the Israelites who remain in Babylon.

so you will know

The word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

truly listen to the voice of Yahweh your God

Here to "listen" means to obey and the word "voice" represents the words that Yahweh speaks. Alternate translation: "truly obey what Yahweh your God says"

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7 [1]When King Darius had been ruler for four years, on the fourth day of Kislev (which was the ninth month), the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah.[2]The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melek and their men to beg before the face of Yahweh.[3]They spoke to the priests who were at the house of Yahweh of hosts and to the prophets; they said, "Should I mourn in the fifth month by means of a fast, as I have done these many years?"

[4]So the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying,[5]"Speak to all the people of the land and to the priests and say, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh month for these seventy years, were you truly fasting for me? [6]When you ate and drank, did you not eat and drink for yourselves?[7]Were these not the same words that Yahweh proclaimed by the hand of the former prophets, when Jerusalem and the surrounding cities were inhabited and prosperous, and the Negev and the lowlands to the west were inhabited?'"
[8]The word of Yahweh came to Zechariah, saying,[9]"'Yahweh of hosts says this, 'Judge with true justice, covenant faithfulness, and mercy. Let each man do this for his brother.[10]About the widow and orphan, the foreigner, and the poor person—do not oppress them, and let none of you plot any harm against another in your heart.'
[11]But they refused to pay attention and set their shoulders stubbornly. They stopped up their ears so they would not hear.
[12]They made their hearts as hard as rock so they would not hear the law or the words of Yahweh of hosts. He had sent these messages to the people by his Spirit in earlier times, by the mouth of the prophets. But the people refused to listen, so Yahweh of hosts was very angry with them.
[13]It happened that when he called, they did not listen. In the same way," said Yahweh of hosts, "they will call out to me, but I will not listen.[14]For I will scatter them with a whirlwind to all the nations that they have not known, and the land will be desolate after them. For no one will pass through the land or return to it since the people have made their delightful land into a wasteland."

Zechariah 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter starts about two years after the previous chapter and is written in prose.
Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 7:4-14, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

Special concepts in this chapter

Fasting

This chapter discusses fasting. People were asking the same questions as those from previous generations. The Israelites were asking these same questions before they were exiled from their land.

Links:

Zechariah 7:1 Notes

Zechariah 7:1

on the fourth day

"on day 4"

Kislev (which was the ninth month)

"Kislev" is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourth day of Kislev is near the end of November on Western calendars.

the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to

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Zechariah" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Zechariah"
Zechariah 7:2
Sharezer and Regem-Melek
These are the names of men.
beg
Here the word "beg" means to plead or ask urgently.
before the face of Yahweh
Here "face" is a metonym for Yahweh's presence. Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"
Zechariah 7:3
They spoke ... they said
The word "they" refers to Sharezer and Regem Melek.
Should I mourn in the fifth month
"Should I mourn in month 5." The assumed knowledge is that the Jewish people fasted during a part of the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. The fifth month is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.
by means of a fast
"by fasting"
Zechariah 7:4
the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts gave me a message. He said" or "Yahweh of hosts spoke this message to me"
Zechariah 7:5
in the fifth and in the seventh month
"in months 5 and 7"
in the fifth
The word "month" can be supplied in translation. Alternate translation: "in the fifth month"
in the seventh month
The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar because in this month the remaining Jews in Jerusalem fled to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon appointed as governor over Judah. The seventh month is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.
for these seventy years
The assumed knowledge is that the people of Israel had been slaves in Babylon for 70 years.
were you truly fasting for me?
This question is asked to make the people think about what their real reason for fasting had been. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you were not really fasting for me."
Zechariah 7:6
When you ate and drank
Possible meanings are 1) when they feasted and drank when celebrating religious festivals or 2) when they ate and drank whenever they were not fasting.
did you not eat and drink for yourselves?
This question is used to make the people think about whether they were honoring Yahweh when they ate and drank. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "it was for yourselves that you ate and drank."
Zechariah 7:7
Were these not the same words ... were inhabited?
Yahweh uses a question to scold the people. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These are the same words ... were inhabited."
by the hand of the former prophets
Here "hand" is a metonym for the words spoken by the mouth. Alternate translation: "by the words of the former prophets" or "through the former prophets"
when Jerusalem and the surrounding cities were inhabited and prosperous
"you still lived in Jerusalem and everyone who lived in the surrounding cities was prosperous"
Zechariah 7:8
The word of Yahweh came to Zechariah, saying
This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Zechariah. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Zechariah"
Zechariah 7:9
Judge with true justice, covenant faithfulness, and mercy
The abstract nouns "justice," "faithfulness," and "mercy" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "When you judge, be just, faithful to the covenant, and merciful"
Let each man do this
The word "this" refers to how a person should judge.
Zechariah 7:10
widow
a woman whose husband has died
orphan
a child whose parents have died
foreigner
someone who travels from his own land to a different land
let none of you plot any harm against another in your heart
Here "heart" represents the thoughts of a person. Alternate translation: "you must not make plans to do evil"
Zechariah 7:11
set their shoulders stubbornly
This is an image of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders. This metaphor represents the people being stubborn. Alternate translation: "became stubborn"
They stopped up their ears so they would not hear
This is an image of people putting something into their ears so they would not hear the message from Yahweh. This metaphor represents the people not being willing to hear and obey. Alternate translation: "They refused to listen"
Zechariah 7:12
They made their hearts as hard as rock so they would not hear the law or the words of Yahweh of hosts
The people refusing to hear and obey Yahweh are compared to their being as unyielding as rock. Here the heart represents the will of a person. Alternate translation: "They stubbornly refused to hear the law or the words of Yahweh of hosts"
in earlier times
"in the past"
by the mouth of the prophets
Here the "mouth of the prophets" is a metonym for the words that the prophets speak. Alternate translation:

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"through the words of the prophets"
Zechariah 7:14
I will scatter them with a whirlwind
Yahweh speaks of how he will scatter the people as if a whirlwind were scattering everything in its path. Alternate translation: "I will scatter them as a whirlwind scatters things"
whirlwind
a strong wind that spins very quickly as it moves and can cause damage
delightful land
"pleasant land" or "fruitful land"

8 [1]The word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying,[2]"Yahweh of hosts says this: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy,
and I am passionate for her with great anger![3]Yahweh of hosts says this: I will return to Zion and will live in the midst
of Jerusalem, for Jerusalem will be called The City of Truth and the mountain of Yahweh of hosts will be called The Holy
Mountain!
[4]Yahweh of hosts says this: Old men and old women will once again be in the streets of Jerusalem, and every person will
need a staff in his hand because he has grown so old.[5]The streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in them.

[6]Yahweh of hosts says this: If something seems impossible in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it
also seem impossible in my eyes?—this is Yahweh's declaration.
[7]Yahweh of hosts says this: Behold, I am about to rescue my people from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the
setting sun![8]For I will bring them back, and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem, so they will again be my people, and I
will be their God in truth and in righteousness!

[9]Yahweh of hosts says this: You who now continue to hear the same words that came from the prophets' mouths when the
foundation of my house was laid—this house of mine, Yahweh of hosts: Strengthen your hands so that the temple can be
built.[10]For before those days no crops were gathered in by anyone, there was no profit for either man or animal, and there
was no peace from enemies for anyone going or coming. I had set every person each against his neighbor.
[11]But now it will not be as in former days, I will be with the remnant of this people— this is the declaration of Yahweh of
hosts.[12]For seeds of peace will be sown; the climbing vine will give its fruit and the earth will give its produce; the skies
will give their dew, for I will make the remnant of this people inherit all these things.
[13]You were an example to the other nations of a curse, house of Judah and house of Israel. So I will rescue you and you
will be a blessing. Do not be afraid; let your hands be strong!
[14]For Yahweh of hosts says this: Just as I planned to do harm to you when your ancestors provoked my anger— says
Yahweh of hosts—and did not relent,[15]so also I will plan in these days to do good again to Jerusalem and the house of
Judah! Do not fear!
[16]These are the things that you must do: Speak truth, every person with his neighbor. Judge with truth, justice, and peace
in your gates.[17]Do not plan to do evil within your heart against one another, and do not love deceptive oaths—for these
are the things I hate!—this is Yahweh's declaration."

[18]Then the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying,[19]"Yahweh of hosts says this: The fasts of the fourth month, the
fifth month, the seventh month, and the tenth month will become times of joy, gladness, and happy festivals for the house
of Judah! Therefore love truth and peace!

[20]Yahweh of hosts says this: People will come again, even those who are living in many different cities.[21]The inhabitants of
one city will go to another city and say, 'Let us quickly go to beg before the face of Yahweh and to seek Yahweh of hosts!
We ourselves are also going.'[22]Many people and mighty nations will come to seek Yahweh of hosts in Jerusalem and beg
for the favor of Yahweh!

[23]Yahweh of hosts says this: In those days ten men from every language and nation will grasp the hem of the robe of a Jew
and say, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you!'"

Zechariah 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a series of sayings from Yahweh of hosts. Each saying is an encouraging note for those returning from the exile to the land of Judah and Jerusalem. (See: yahwehofhosts)

Links:

Zechariah 8:1 Notes

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Zechariah 8:1

The word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 7:4]

Zechariah 8:2

I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy

"I am extremely jealous for Zion." Yahweh does not want anyone to harm Zion or try to have Zion love anything more than Yahweh.

for Zion

Here "Zion" represents the people of Zion. Alternate translation: "for the people of Zion" or "for the people of Jerusalem"

with great anger

You may need to make explicit that this anger is against the enemies of Zion. Alternate translation: "with great anger against her enemies"

Zechariah 8:3

the mountain of Yahweh of hosts

The implied information is that this refers to Mount Zion, the location upon which the city of Jerusalem was built.

Zechariah 8:4

be in the streets of Jerusalem

"be living in Jerusalem"

in his hand because he has grown so old

People having the opportunity to grow old implies the city will be peaceful and prosperous for a long time.

Zechariah 8:5

The streets of the city will be full

The public areas of the city will be full of people in their normal activities.

Zechariah 8:6

If something seems impossible in the eyes of

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "If something does not appear to be possible to"

the remnant of this people

"the people of Judah who survive"

in my eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "to me"

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

Zechariah 8:7

I am about to rescue my people

The implied information is that the people are in exile. "I am about to rescue my people of Judah who went into exile"

from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the setting sun

Possible meanings are 1) this is a poetic way of expressing specific countries to which the people were exiled. Alternate translation: "From the land to the east and from the land to the west" or 2) this is a merism that means from all directions. Alternate translation: "from all lands in every direction"

Zechariah 8:8

I will be their God in truth and in righteousness

This can be rewritten to remove the abstract nouns "truth" and "righteousness." Alternate translation: "I will be their God. I will be faithful to them and act toward them in a just manner"

Zechariah 8:9

Strengthen your hands

This is an idiom that means to be courageous for the work. Alternate translation: "Be strong and courageous"

Zechariah 8:10

For before those days

Here "those days" refers to the time the people of Judah started to rebuild the temple.

no crops were gathered in

"there were no crops to harvest"

there was no profit for either man or animal

It was useless for people and their animals to farm the land because they got no food from it.

for anyone going or coming

This merism refers to all of life's activities everywhere that anyone went.

I had set every person each against his neighbor

"I had turned everyone against each other"

Zechariah 8:11

But now it will not be as in former days, I will be with the remnant of this people

"But I will not treat the remnant of this people now as I did in former days"

in former days

"in the past." The implied information is that this refers to the time when the people started rebuilding the temple.

the remnant of this people

The implied information is that this is the remnant of the people who returned from exile. Alternate translation: "the people who returned from exile"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

Zechariah 8:12

seeds of peace will be sown

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "the people will safely sow seed"

the earth will give its produce; the skies will give their dew

The earth and skies are spoken of as if they were persons giving what is needed.

inherit all these things

"to have all these things"

Zechariah 8:13

You were an example to the other nations of a curse

The implied information is that the way Yahweh had allowed the temple to be destroyed and his people to be exiled had been used by other nations as an example of what it meant to be cursed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "When I punished you, the other nations learned what happens when I curse a people"

house of Judah and house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Alternate translation:

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"people of Judah and Israel"

you will be a blessing

Possible meanings are 1) the implied information is that the people of Judah and Israel would be a blessing to the nations around them. Alternate translation: "you will be a blessing to the surrounding nations" or 2) the implied information is that the nations around them would see what it meant to be blessed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: when I bless you, the other nations will learn what happens when I bless a people" or 3) Yahweh will bless the people of Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: "I will give you many good things"

let your hands be strong

This is an idiom that means to be courageous for the work. Alternate translation: "be strong and courageous"

house of Judah and house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdom of Judah. Alternate translation: "people of Judah"

Zechariah 8:14

do harm to you

"punish you"

provoked my anger

"angered me"

did not relent

"did not decide to punish them less"

Zechariah 8:15

Jerusalem

This is a metonym for the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem"

Zechariah 8:16

that you must do

"You" refers to the people of Judah.

Speak truth, every person with his neighbor

The abstract noun "truth" can be translated using the adjective "true." Alternate translation: "Everyone must say only true things to his neighbor"

his neighbor

Here "neighbor" means any person, not just someone who lives nearby.

Judge with truth, justice, and peace in your gates

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "truth," "justice," and "peace." Alternate translation: "When you are making decisions in your gates, judge in a way that is true and just and causes people to live peacefully with each other"

in your gates

The assumed knowledge is that this refers to the places where judgment took place. Alternate translation: "in your places of judgment"

Zechariah 8:17

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

Zechariah 8:18

the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 7:4]

came to me

Here "me" refers to Zechariah.

Zechariah 8:19

The fasts of the fourth month, the fifth month, the seventh month, and the tenth month

"The fasts of months 4, 5, 7, and 10"

The fasts of the fourth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians broke through the walls of Jerusalem. The fourth month is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.

the fifth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jewish people fasted during a part of the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. The fifth month is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:3.

the seventh month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar because in this month the remaining Jews in Jerusalem fled to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon appointed as governor over Judah. The seventh month is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:5.

the tenth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians began their siege against Jerusalem. The tenth month is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.

times of joy, gladness, and happy festivals

The abstract nouns "joy" and "gladness" can be translated using adjectives. Alternate translation: "joyful and glad times, with happy festivals"

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

love truth and peace

The abstract nouns "truth" and "peace" can be translated using adjectives. Alternate translation: "love what is truthful and peaceful"

Zechariah 8:20

People will come again

The implied information is that Jerusalem is where the people will come. Alternate translation: "People will come again to Jerusalem"

Zechariah 8:21

will go to another city

This is a metonym for the people in the other city. Alternate translation: "will go to the people of another city"

beg

Here the word "beg" means to plead or ask urgently.

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before the face of Yahweh
Here "face" is a metonym for Yahweh's presence. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:2. Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"
seek Yahweh of hosts
Those who want to know Yahweh and please him are spoken of as if they are literally seeking to find Yahweh.
Zechariah 8:22
mighty nations
This is a metonym for the people in the mighty nations. Alternate translation: "people of mighty nations"
Zechariah 8:23
will grasp the hem of the robe of a Jew
The implied information is that the foreigners will grab their robe to get their attention. Alternate translation: "will grasp the hem of the robe of a Jew to get his attention"
Let us go with you
The implied information is that people of God are going to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Let us go to Jerusalem with you"
God is with you
"God is with you people"

9 [1] "This is a declaration of Yahweh's word concerning the land of Hadrak
and Damascus, its resting place;
for the eyes of all humanity and all the tribes of Israel
are toward Yahweh.

[2] This declaration also concerns Hamath, which borders on Damascus,
and it concerns Tyre and Sidon, for they are very wise.

[3] Tyre has built herself a stronghold
and heaped up silver like dust
and refined gold like mud in the streets.

[4] Look! The Lord will dispossess her
and destroy her strength on the sea,
so she will be devoured by fire.

[5] Ashkelon will see and be afraid!
Gaza also will tremble greatly!
Ekron, her hopes will be disappointed!
The king will perish from Gaza,
and Ashkelon will not remain.

[6] Strangers will make their homes in Ashdod,
and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

[7] For I will remove their blood from their mouths
and their abominations from between their teeth.
Then they will become a remnant for our God
like a clan in Judah,
and Ekron will become like the Jebusites.

[8] I will camp around my land against enemy armies,[1]
so no one can pass through or return,
for no oppressor will overrun them,
for now I see with my own eyes!

[9] Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion!
Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold! Your king is coming to you.
He is righteous and victorious.
He is humble and is riding on a donkey,
on the colt of a donkey.

[10] Then I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the horse from Jerusalem,

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and the bow will be cut off from battle;
for he will speak peace to the nations,
and his dominion will be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth!

11 As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the pit where there is no water.

12 Return to the stronghold, prisoners of hope!
Even today I am declaring that I will return double to you,

13 for I have bent Judah as my bow.
I have filled my quiver with Ephraim.
I have roused your sons, Zion,
against your sons, Greece,
and have made you, Zion, like a warrior's sword!"

14 Yahweh will appear to them,
and his arrows will shoot out like lightning!
For my Lord Yahweh will blow the ram's horn
and will advance with the storms from Teman.

15 Yahweh of hosts will defend them,
and they will devour them and defeat the stones of the slings.
Then they will drink and shout like men drunk on wine,
and they will be filled with wine like bowls,
like the corners of the altar.

16 So Yahweh their God will rescue them on that day,
as the flock of his people.
They are the jewels of a crown
that will shine on his land.

17 How good and how beautiful they will be!
The young men will flourish on grain
and the virgins on sweet wine!"

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[1]Most interpreters translate the Hebrew words as against enemy armies and some translate the Hebrew as a guard, and so translate the phrase, I will surround my temple as a guard.

Zechariah 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose about the cities and peoples around where Israel stood as a country until the exile. Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 9:9-10.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecies against other nations

The first two verses show that the prophecy concerns neighboring countries. Hamath, Damscus, Tyre and Sidon are cities in areas that were near Israel. (See: prophet)

Links:

Zechariah 9:1 Notes

Zechariah 9:1

This is a declaration of Yahweh's word concerning

"This is Yahweh's message about"

the land of Hadrak and Damascus

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Here "Hadrak" and "Damascus" refer to the people who live in those places. Alternate translation: "the people of the land of Hadrak and the city Damascus"

Hadrak

The location of Hadrak is unknown today.

its resting place

"the resting place of the people of Hadrak"

for the eyes of all humanity and all the tribes of Israel are toward Yahweh

Some versions translate this as "for Yahweh's eye is on all mankind and on the tribes of Israel."

the eyes of all humanity and all the tribes of Israel are toward Yahweh

Here "eyes" refers to what they look at. Alternate translation: "all humanity and all the tribes of Israel look toward Yahweh"

Zechariah 9:2

Hamath

This refers to the people who live in that land. Alternate translation: "the people of the land of Hamath"

Tyre and Sidon

This refers to the people who live in those cities. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre and Sidon"

for they are very wise

Possible meanings are 1) the people are wise for looking at Yahweh for help or 2) Zechariah did not really mean that the people of Hamath were wise and was using irony. Alternate translation: "though they think they are very wise"

Zechariah 9:3

built herself a stronghold

Here the city of Tyre is pictured as a woman. Alternate translation: "built a strong fortress" or "built a high wall"

heaped up silver like dust and refined gold like mud in the streets

Yahweh exaggerates to emphasize how rich Tyre was. Alternate translation: "accumulated silver and gold as much as soil in the streets"

Zechariah 9:4

Look! The Lord will dispossess her

Here "Look!" tells the reader to pay attention to the important statement that follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention! The Lord will take away Tyre's possessions"

destroy her strength on the sea

Tyre's "strength on the sea" refers to the ships that were used for commerce and conquest. Alternate translation: "destroy Tyre's ships in which men fight on the sea"

so she will be devoured by fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and enemies will burn the city to the ground"

Zechariah 9:5

Ashkelon ... Gaza ... Ekron, her hopes

These cities each refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "The people of Ashkelon ... the people of Gaza ... the hopes of the people of Ekron"

will see

"will see Tyre be destroyed"

Zechariah 9:6

Strangers will make their homes in Ashdod

"Foreigners will take over Ashdod and live there"

I will cut off the pride of the Philistines

Here "cut off" is an idiom that means to stop their pride. Alternate translation: "I will make the Philistines to be proud of themselves no longer"

Zechariah 9:7

I will remove their blood from their mouths and their abominations from between their teeth

Here "blood" is a metonym for meat with blood in it, and "abominations" is a metonym for meat offered to idols. Alternate translation: "I will no longer allow them to eat meat that still has blood in it, and I will forbid them to eat food that they offered to idols"

Zechariah 9:8

I will camp around my land

God is speaking about himself as if he were an army that was protecting his land. Alternate translation: "I will protect my land"

for now

"For at that time"

I see with my own eyes

Here "my own eyes" represent Yahweh's personal attention. Alternate translation: "I will personally watch over my land"

Zechariah 9:9

General Information:

Yahweh appears to be the speaker in verses 9-13.

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!

These two sentences mean the same thing and intensify the command to rejoice. Yahweh is speaking to the people of Jerusalem as if they were present, but they were not there.

Shout

If your language has a word for a shout of victory that is different from a shout to begin a battle, you might want to use it here.

daughter of Zion ... daughter of Jerusalem

"Zion" is the same as "Jerusalem." The prophet speaks of the city as if it is a daughter. See how you translated "daughter of Zion" in Zechariah 2:10.

Behold!

This alerts the reader to pay special attention to the surprising statement that follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention!" or "Here is a surprising fact!"

He is righteous and victorious

Some modern translations read, "He is righteous and is coming to save you."

on a donkey, on the colt of a donkey

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to one animal. The second phrase clarifies that this is a young donkey. Alternate translation: "on a young donkey"

Zechariah 9:10

cut off the chariot from Ephraim

Here "cut off" is an idiom that means to destroy. Alternate translation: "destroy the chariots in Israel that are used for battle"

the horse from Jerusalem

The references to "chariot" and "bow" means that this refers to horses used in battle. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the warhorses in Jerusalem"

the bow will be cut off from battle

Here the bow represents all weapons used in warfare.

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Alternate translation: "all weapons of war will be destroyed"

for he will speak peace to the nations

Here the action of announcing peace represents the action of making peace. Alternate translation: "for your king will bring peace to the nations"

his dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!

The phrases "sea to sea" and "from the River to the ends of the earth" mean the same thing and can be combined. Alternate translation: "his kingdom will be over all the earth!"

the River

This probably refers to the Euphrates River.

Zechariah 9:11

General Information:

Yahweh appears to be the speaker in verses 9-13.

As for you

Here "you" is singular, and continues to refer to the city of Jerusalem, also called "Zion."

the pit where there is no water

This dry pit represents the exile in Babylon.

Zechariah 9:12

Return to the stronghold

Jerusalem is spoken of as a place of safety. Alternate translation: "Come back to your nation where you will be safe"

prisoners of hope

This expression refers to the Israelites in exile who were still trusting in God to rescue them. Alternate translation: "prisoners who still hope in Yahweh"

return double to you

"return to you twice as much as was taken from you"

Zechariah 9:13

Zion

This refers to the city of Jerusalem, also called "Zion."

I have bent Judah as my bow

The people of Judah are referred to as if they were a bow carried by God into battle. Here "Judah" refers to the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "I will cause the people of Judah to be like my bow"

filled my quiver with Ephraim

Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel, the northern kingdom, as if they were arrows that he would shoot at his enemies. A quiver is a bag that holds a soldier's arrows.

I have roused your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece

God is speaking to the people of two different nations at the same time.

Zechariah 9:14

General Information:

In verses 14-16, Zechariah describes how Yahweh will rescue Israel from their enemies.

will appear to them

The word "them" refers to God's people. Alternate translation: "will be seen in the sky by his people" or "will come to his people"

his arrows will shoot out like lightning!

The Israelites sometimes thought of lightning bolts as arrows that God shot.

blow the ram's horn

People blew into rams' horns to give signals in battle and on other occasions. Here the ram's horn is blown as a military signal.

will advance with the storms from Teman

Team was located to the south of Judah. The Israelites sometimes thought of God as traveling on violent storms coming from the south. Alternate translation: "will march from Teman with the storm winds"

Zechariah 9:15

they will devour them

"the people of Judah will devour their enemies"

will devour

To completely defeat enemies is spoken of as devouring them as a wild animal eats its prey. Alternate translation: "will completely defeat"

defeat the stones of the slings

Slings to throw stones were a common weapon in the days of Zechariah. Here the "stones of the slings" represent the soldiers who were using them to attack Israel. Alternate translation: "defeat the enemies who attack them with slings and stones"

Then they will drink and shout like men drunk on wine

The people of Judah will shout and celebrate their victory over their enemies as if they were noisy drunks. Alternate translation: "Then they will shout and celebrate their victory as loudly as if they were drunk"

they will be filled with wine like bowls

This probably refers to the bowls that the priests used to carry animal's blood to the altar. Alternate translation: "they will be as full of wine as the basins with which priests carry blood to the altar"

like the corners of the altar

Altars had projecting corners that were drenched in animal blood. Alternate translation: "they will be drenched as the corners of the altar are covered in blood"

Zechariah 9:16

General Information:

In verses 14-16, Zechariah describes how Yahweh will rescue Israel from their enemies.

God will rescue them ... as the flock of his people

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they are God's sheep that he cares for and protects.

They are the jewels of a crown

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were the expensive jewels in the crown of a king that show how glorious he is. Alternate translation: "They will be like beautiful stones in a crown"

Zechariah 9:17

How good and how beautiful they will be!

This is an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "They will be very good and beautiful!"

The young men will flourish on grain and the virgins on sweet wine!

This sentence uses a parallel structure to express that everyone will have plenty to eat and drink. If your readers might think that only the men ate and only the women drank, you may want to adjust the wording. Alternate translation: "All of the people, both men and women, will have plenty of grain to eat and sweet wine to drink!"

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The young men ... the virgins
These two phrases are parallel and together represent the entire population of Israel.

grain ... sweet wine
These two phrases are parallel and together represent all of the different kinds of the food and drink.

[1]10 Ask for rain from Yahweh in the season of the spring rain—
Yahweh who makes thunderstorms—
and he gives rain showers to everyone
and vegetation in the field.

[2] For household idols speak wickedness;
the diviners envision a lie;
they tell deceitful dreams
and give empty comfort,
so they wander like sheep and suffer
because there is no shepherd.

[3] "My wrath burns against the shepherds;
it is the male goats—the leaders—that I will punish.
Yahweh of hosts will also attend to his flock, the house of Judah,
and make them like his warhorse in battle!

[4] From Judah will come the cornerstone;
from him will come the tent peg;
from him will come the war bow;
from him will come every ruler together.[1]

[5] They will be like warriors
who trample their enemies into the mud of the streets in battle;
they will make war, for Yahweh is with them,
and they will shame those who ride warhorses.

[6] I will strengthen the house of Judah
and save the house of Joseph,
for I will restore them
and have mercy on them.
They will be as though
I had not rejected them,
for I am Yahweh their God,
and I will respond to them.

[7] Then Ephraim will be like a warrior,
and their hearts will rejoice as with wine;
their children will see and rejoice.
Their hearts will rejoice in me!

[8] I will whistle for them
and gather them,
for I will rescue them,
and they will become as great as they previously were!

[9] I sowed them among the peoples,
but they will remember me in distant countries,
so they and their children will live and return.

[10] For I will restore them from the land of Egypt

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and gather them from Assyria.
I will bring them to the land of Gilead and Lebanon
until there is no more room for them.

11 I will pass through the sea of their affliction;
I will strike the waves of that sea and will dry up all the depths of the Nile.
The majesty of Assyria will be brought down,
and the scepter of Egypt will go away from the Egyptians.

12 I will strengthen them in myself,
and they will walk in my name—
this is Yahweh's declaration."

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1 Many modern translations arrange the text by adding together at the start of the next verse.

Zechariah 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose but still uses figurative language as the writer shares a message of redemption and hope for the exiles. (See: redeem)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 10:1-2.

Special concepts in this chapter

Redemption

This book, and especially this chapter, uses the concepts of redemption and remnant to share the relationship that the people of Judah have with their God. So many of the people of Israel perished as their kingdom went into exile. Now they are returning to the land, but the land is no longer theirs. They are living under foreign rule. (See: redeem and remnant)

Links:

Zechariah 10:1 Notes

Zechariah 10:1

General Information:

Zechariah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

vegetation in the field

"causes plants to grow in the field"

Zechariah 10:2

household idols speak wickedness

"household idols say evil things." Zechariah is not suggesting that idols actually speak. He is referring to the messages people say they hear from idols. The UDB makes this explicit.

diviners envision a lie

"diviners see false visions"

they tell deceitful dreams

It is implied that they know these dreams are false. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "diviners lie about their dreams in order to deceive people"

empty comfort

This refers to words that sooth temporarily, but do not provide any longterm help.

they wander like sheep

The people who do not have true prophets who tell the truth are spoken of as sheep who do not have a shepherd to tell them where to go. Alternate translation: "the people who listen to the false prophets are like sheep who do not know which way to go"

they ... suffer because there is no shepherd

The people who do not have true prophets are spoken of as sheep who suffer because they do not have a shepherd to tell them where to go. Alternate translation: "the people who listen to the false prophets ... are suffering like sheep who do not have a shepherd to guide them"

Zechariah 10:3

General Information:

It is unclear whether Yahweh is speaking, or if Zechariah is speaking for Yahweh in verses 3-5.

My wrath burns against the shepherds

Here "the shepherds" represent the leaders of God's people. The intensity of Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it was a blazing fire. Alternate translation: "My anger toward the shepherds of my people is as intense as a fire" or "I am very angry with the leaders of my people"

it is the male goats—the leaders—that I will punish

Male goats are typically more dominant than female goats. Here "male goats" represents the oppressive leaders of God's people.

Yahweh of hosts will also attend to his flock, the house of Judah

Here Yahweh's care for his people is spoken of as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts will take care of the house of Judah as a shepherd cares for his sheep"

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people of Judah,

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which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the people of Judah"

make them like his warhorse in battle

Yahweh changes the metaphor for his people from defenseless sheep to a mighty war horse. He speaks of his people as if they were a strong horse in battle. Alternate translation: "will cause them to be strong like war horses in battle"

Zechariah 10:4

General Information:

It is unclear whether Yahweh is speaking, or if Zechariah is speaking for Yahweh in verses 3-5.

From Judah will come the cornerstone

"The cornerstone will come from Judah." The most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the main foundation stone of a building. Alternate translation: "One of the descendants of Judah will become the most important ruler"

the cornerstone ... the tent peg ... the war bow

Possible meanings for these three things are 1) they may be symbolic language that refers to the Messiah who will come from the tribe of Judah or 2) they may refer to different leaders who will come from Judah.

from him will come the tent peg

"the tent peg will come from him." The tent pegs held the ropes that supported tents in which people lived. Here the most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the main peg that holds a tent in place. Alternate translation: "the leader who will hold the nation together will come from Judah"

from him will come the war bow

"the war bow will come from him." Here the most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the a war bow that was used in battle. Alternate translation: "the military leader will come from Judah"

from him will come every ruler together

"every ruler will come from Judah"

Zechariah 10:5

They will be like warriors ... streets in battle

The rulers from Judah are spoken of as if they were victorious warriors. Alternate translation: "They will be mighty in battle, trampling their enemies into the mud of the streets"

who trample their enemies into the mud of the streets in battle

To trample them into the mud is an idiom that means to completely defeat them. Alternate translation: "who defeat their enemies completely"

Yahweh is with them

Here "with them" is an idiom that means he is present to help them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will help them"

they will shame those who ride warhorses

Here shame accompanies and represents defeat. Alternate translation: "they will defeat their enemies who ride warhorses"

Zechariah 10:6

General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the kingdom of Judah" or "the people of Judah"

the house of Joseph

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of Israel"

Zechariah 10:7

Ephraim will be like a warrior

"Ephraim" refers here to the northern kingdom of Israel. Warriors are strong. Alternate translation: "Ephraim will be very strong"

their hearts will rejoice as with wine

Here "hearts" refers to the whole person. They will have the same joy as a person who is enjoying drinking wine. Alternate translation: "and they will be very happy"

their children will see and rejoice. Their hearts will rejoice in me!

"their children will see what has taken place and will be happy because of what Yahweh has done for them!"

Zechariah 10:8

General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

I will whistle

To whistle is to produce a high, shrill sound with air through narrowed lips. It is often done to give a signal to other people, as here.

Zechariah 10:9

I sowed them among the peoples

The exile of the people is spoken of as if they were seed that Yahweh had planted in a distant land.

Zechariah 10:10

until there is no more room for them

The people will continue to go back to Judah and it will become crowded with no room for any more people to live there. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "and they will completely fill the land"

Zechariah 10:11

General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

I will pass through the sea of their affliction

Scripture often refers to the sea as an image of many troubles and hardships. Here Yahweh speaks of himself accompanying the people to help them go through these afflictions. Alternate translation: "I will go with them and help them as they go through their many afflictions"

I will strike the waves of that sea

Here to "strike" the waves is an idiom that means he will stop the waves from forming. Stopping the afflictions of his people is spoken of as calming the waves of that sea. Alternate translation: "I will cause the waves of that sea of affliction to stop"

will dry up all the depths of the Nile

"I will cause the Nile River to lose all its water"

The majesty of Assyria will be brought down

Here "the majesty of Assyria" probably refers to the Assyrian army. Alternate translation: "I will destroy Assyria's proud army"

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the scepter of Egypt will go away from the Egyptians
Here "the scepter of Egypt" refers to the political power of Egypt. Alternate translation: "the power of Egypt to rule other nations will end"
Zechariah 10:12
I will strengthen them in myself
"I will cause them to be strong and to believe in me"
this is Yahweh's declaration
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

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[1] 11 Open your doors, Lebanon,
that fire may devour your cedars!

[2] Wail, cypress trees, for the cedar trees have fallen!
What was glorious has been devastated!
Wail, you oaks of Bashan,
for the impenetrable forest has gone down.

[3] There is the sound of the shepherds' howl,
for their glory has been destroyed!
There is the voice of the young lions' roar,
for the pride of the Jordan River has been devastated!

[4]This is what Yahweh my God says, "Like a shepherd, watch over the flock set aside for slaughter![5](Those who buy them slaughter them and are not guilty, and those who sell them say, 'Blessed be Yahweh! I have become rich!' for the shepherds working for the flocks' owners have no pity on them.)[6]For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land!—this is Yahweh's declaration. See! I myself am about to turn over every person into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king, and they will destroy the land and none of them will I deliver them from their hand."

[7]So I became the shepherd of the flock marked for slaughter for those who dealt in sheep. I took two staffs; one staff I called "Favor" and the other I called "Unity." In this way I shepherded the flock.[8]In one month I destroyed the three shepherds. I became impatient with them, and they also hated me.[9]Then I said to the owners, "I will not work as a shepherd for you any longer. The sheep that are dying—let them die; the sheep that are being destroyed—let them be destroyed. Let the sheep that remain each eat the flesh of its neighbor."
[10]So I took my staff "Favor" and broke it to break the covenant that I had made with all the peoples.[11]On that day the covenant was broken, and those who dealt in sheep and who were watching me knew that Yahweh had spoken.[12]I said to them, "If it seems good to you, pay me my wages. But if not, do not do it." So they weighed out my wages—thirty pieces of silver.
[13]Then Yahweh said to me, "Deposit the silver in the treasury, the excellent price at which they valued you!" So I took the thirty pieces of silver and deposited them in the treasury in the house of Yahweh.[14]Then I broke my second staff, "Unity," to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

[15]Yahweh said to me, "Again, take the equipment of a foolish shepherd for yourself,[16]for see, I am about to set in place a shepherd in the land. He will not care for the perishing sheep. He will not seek out the sheep gone missing, nor heal the crippled sheep. He will not feed the sheep that are healthy, but will eat the flesh of the fattened sheep and will tear off their hooves.

[17] Woe to the worthless shepherd
who abandons the flock!
May the sword come against his arm and his right eye!
May his arm wither away
and may his right eye become blind!"

Zechariah 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter unlike the previous one is a warning against the leaders amongst the exiles.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with

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the poetic song in 11:1-3, 17.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of sheep and shepherds to represent Yahweh's dismay at the leaders during the exiles.

Symbolism

The writer uses symbolism. Zechariah is told to become a shepherd. He uses two staffs and names them "Unity" and "Favor." He does this very purposefully. In order to preserve this symbolism, it is important to pay attention to the specific words used. (See: favor)

Links:

Zechariah 11:1 Notes

Zechariah 11:1

Open your doors, Lebanon, that fire may devour

Not resisting what is about to happen is spoken of as if Lebanon were opening its doors. Here "Lebanon" is a metonym that represents the people of Lebanon. Alternate translation: "People of Lebanon, get ready, because fire will devour" or "People of Lebanon, do not try to stop the fire that will devour"

fire may devour your cedars

Fire completely burning up the cedars is spoken of as if the fire would devour the cedars. Alternate translation: "fire may completely destroy your cedars" or "fire may completely burn up your cedars"

Zechariah 11:2

Wail, cypress trees, for the cedar trees have fallen

Cypress trees are spoken of as if they could grieve like a human. Alternate translation: "If the trees were people, they would cry out in sorrow. The cypress trees stand alone because the cedars have burned and fallen"

What was glorious has been devastated

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The glorious cedar trees are no more" or "The cedar trees were once glorious, but now they are ruined"

Wail, you oaks of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest has gone down.

The oaks of Bash are spoken of as if they could grieve like a human. Alternate translation: "If the oak trees in Bashan were people, they would wail, for their impenetrable forests are gone"

impenetrable forest

a forest in which plants grow so close together that people cannot pass between them

Zechariah 11:3

the shepherds' howl

"The loud cry of the shepherds"

for their glory has been destroyed

Here "their glory" probably represents the rich pastures that the shepherds led their sheep to. Alternate translation: "for their rich pastures are ruined"

for the pride of the Jordan River has been devastated

Here "the pride" probably represents the forests that grew near the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "because the trees and shrubbery where they lived by the Jordan River are ruined"

Zechariah 11:4

General Information:

In 11:4-17 is a story about two shepherds. Possible meanings are 1) Zechariah actually became a shepherd over a flock as a symbolic act showing how Yahweh will treat his people or 2) Zechariah tells a parable that teaches how Yahweh will treat his people. Since it is uncertain which of these meanings is correct, it would be best not to specify either option in the translation.

watch over the flock set aside for slaughter

"take care of a flock of sheep that the owners plan to slaughter"

Zechariah 11:5

Those who buy them ... them and are not guilty

The inhabitants of the land do not consider "those who buy them" guilty, but Yahweh does and uses irony to say so. Alternate translation: "Those who buy them ... them, but no one believes they are guilty for doing so"

guilty

You may need to make explicit that Yahweh considers them guilty of murder.

Zechariah 11:6

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

See!

"Listen!" or "Pay attention!"

I myself

The word "myself" is used to emphasize that it is Yahweh who will do these things.

turn over every person into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "allow the people to harm each other and the king will oppress them"

none of them will I deliver them from their hand

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "I will not save them from those who are harming them" or "I will not rescue them"

Zechariah 11:7

for those who dealt in sheep

"for those who bought and sold sheep"

Favor

Other versions of the Bible translate this word as "grace," "beauty," or "pleasant."

Zechariah 11:8

I became impatient with them,

Possible meanings are 1) "them" refers to the three

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shepherds or 2) "them" refers to the sheep owners.
Zechariah 11:9
the sheep that are being destroyed—let them be destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sheep that are perishing—let them perish" or "the sheep that are to wander and get lost—let them get lost"
Zechariah 11:10
all the peoples
"all the nations." Some modern translations read "all the people," referring to the people of Israel.
Zechariah 11:11
the covenant was broken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the covenant ended"
knew that Yahweh had spoken
It is implied that those watching knew Yahweh was giving them a message through the breaking of the staff. Alternate translation: "knew that Yahweh had given them a message"
Zechariah 11:12
thirty pieces of silver
It is implied that this was very little pay for the shepherd. Alternate translation: "only thirty pieces of silver"
thirty pieces
"30 pieces"
Zechariah 11:13
General Information:
The parable about shepherds and sheep continues.
treasury
This is the place in the temple of Yahweh where the priests kept the money. Many versions of the Bible translate this as "potter." This is the person who would melt metal to make vessels out of it. Here Yahweh would mean that the payment is so small that the shepherd should have the silver melted to show how insulted he was.
the excellent price
Yahweh uses irony to say that this price was very small for a shepherd doing Yahweh's work. Alternate translation: "the ridiculously small amount of money"
Zechariah 11:14
between Judah and Israel
Here "Judah" represents the people of the southern kingdom and "Israel" represents the people of the northern kingdom. Alternate translation: "between the people of Judah and the people of Israel"
Zechariah 11:15
General Information:
This continues the story about two shepherds that began in [Zechariah 11:4]
Zechariah 11:16
I am about to set in place a shepherd in the land
Here "set in place" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "I am about to appoint a shepherd in the land" or "I am about to put a shepherd in charge in the land"
the fattened sheep
"the fattest sheep" or "the best sheep"
will tear off their hooves
This was probably done as an act of cruelty.
Zechariah 11:17
May the sword
Here "sword" represents enemies who will attack the shepherd. Alternate translation: "May enemies"
come against his arm and his right eye
Here "come against" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "strike and wound his right arm and pierce his right eye"
his arm
Here "arm" represents the power to fight.
his right eye
A soldier would use his right eye to look around the shield that he held with his left hand. If his right eye was wounded, he would not be able to see to fight in war.
his arm wither away
"his arm waste away" or "his arm become completely useless"

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12 [1]This is a declaration of Yahweh's word concerning Israel—a declaration of Yahweh, who stretched out the skies and
laid the foundation of the earth, who fashions the spirit of mankind within man,[2]"See, I am about to make Jerusalem
into a cup causing all the peoples surrounding her to stagger about. It will also be like that for Judah during the siege
against Jerusalem.[3]On that day, I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples. Anyone trying to carry that
stone will hurt himself very much, and all the nations of the earth will gather against that city.
[4]On that day—this is Yahweh's declaration—I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. Over the
house of Judah I will open my eyes, but every horse of the peoples I will strike with blindness.[5]Then the chiefs of Judah
will say in their hearts, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are our strength because of Yahweh of hosts, their God.'
[6]On that day I will make the chiefs of Judah like firepots among wood and like a flaming torch among standing grain, for
they will consume all the surrounding peoples on their right and on their left. Jerusalem will again live in her own place.

[7]" Yahweh will save the tents of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and the honor of those who live in
Jerusalem may not be greater than the rest of Judah.[8]On that day Yahweh will be the defender of the inhabitants of
Jerusalem, and on that day those who are weak among them will be like David, while the house of David will be like God,
like the angel of Yahweh in front of them.[9]"On that day I will begin to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

[10]"But I will pour out a spirit of compassion and pleading on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so they
will look on me, the one they have pierced. They will mourn for me, as one mourns for an only son; they will bitterly
lament for him like those who lament the death of a firstborn son.[11]On that day the wailing in Jerusalem will be like the
wailing at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

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[12]The land will mourn, each clan separate from other clans. The clan of the house of David will be separate and their wives will be separate from the men. The clan of the house of Nathan will be separate and their wives will be separate from the men.[13]The clan of the house of Levi will be separate and their wives will be separate from the men. The clan of the Shimeites will be separate and their wives will be separate from the men.[14]Every clan of the remaining clans—each clan will be separate and the wives will be separate from the men."

Zechariah 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Similar to chapter 11, this chapter is written mainly in prose and is talking about Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

Verses 10-11 are quoted in the New Testament and apply to Jesus's death on the cross. (See: cross)

Links:

Zechariah 12:1 Notes

Zechariah 12:1

General Information:

These verses begin a section that tells about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

who stretched out the skies

This is a metaphor that speaks of the sky as if it were like a scroll that is rolled up and needs to be stretched out. Alternate translation: "the one who created the sky"

laid the foundation of the earth

This is a metaphor that speaks of the earth as if it were a building with a foundation. Alternate translation: "put all the earth into place"

fashions the spirit of mankind within man

This is a metaphor that speaks of the spirit as if it were like clay that a potter shapes. Alternate translation: "creates the human spirit"

Zechariah 12:2

I am about to make Jerusalem into a cup ... to stagger about

Yahweh using Jerusalem to punish the surrounding peoples is spoken of as if Yahweh would make Jerusalem a cup full of an alcoholic drink that will cause the surrounding peoples to get drunk and stagger. Alternate translation: "Soon it will be like I make Jerusalem into a cup ... to stagger about"

into a cup

Here "cup" represents the cup and the contents within the cup. Alternate translation: "into a cup full of wine" or "into a cup full of an alcoholic drink"

surrounding her

Here "her" refers to the city of Jerusalem. It was common in Hebrew to speak of a city or country as if it were a woman.

Zechariah 12:3

I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples

Yahweh using Jerusalem to punish the surrounding peoples is spoken of as if he would make Jerusalem a very heavy stone. Alternate translation: "It will be like I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all the peoples"

burdensome stone ... carry

Some modern translations read, "stone that cannot be moved ... move."

Zechariah 12:4

General Information:

These verses continue telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

Over the house of Judah I will open my eyes

Opening eyes over someone here is a metaphor for wanting to do good things for that person. Alternate translation: "I will do good things for the house of Judah" or "I will protect the house of Judah"

the house of Judah

Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

Zechariah 12:5

say in their hearts

Here "hearts" represents a person's mind. Alternate translation: "think to themselves" or "say to themselves"

are our strength

The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "strong" or "encourage." Alternate translation: "make us strong" or "encourage us"

Yahweh of hosts, their God

"Yahweh of hosts, the God they worship"

Zechariah 12:6

General Information:

This verse continues telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

like firepots among wood ... standing grain

This simile means Yahweh will enable the leaders of Judah to be strong and able to lead the people to defeat their enemies. Alternate translation: "like firepots among stacked firewood ... unharvested stalks of grain standing in a field"

firepots

clay pots in which ancient people often carried burning coals

flaming torch

a wooden stick that is burning at one end which gives light as one travels or carries fire somewhere

will consume all the surrounding peoples

Completely destroying the peoples is spoken of as if the people of Judah will "devour" them. Alternate translation: "will destroy the surrounding peoples"

on their right and on their left

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Here "right" and "left" represent every direction. Alternate translation: "in every direction"

Jerusalem will again live in her own place

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem will again live in their own city"

Zechariah 12:7

General Information:

These verses continue telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

the tents of Judah

Here "tents" represents homes, and homes represent the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

the house of David

Possible meanings are 1) the descendants of David or 2) the ruling class of people.

Zechariah 12:8

those who are weak among them will be like David

This simile means those who are weak will be strong. Alternate translation: "those who are weak will be strong like David"

the angel of Yahweh

This is an angel sent by Yahweh to protect the people.

Zechariah 12:10

I will pour out a spirit of compassion and pleading on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

Causing the people to be compassionate and to plead is spoken of as if the spirit were a liquid that Yahweh would pour on them. Alternate translation: "I will cause the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem to have mercy on others and to pray to me for mercy"

a spirit of compassion and pleading

Here this means to have a characteristic of compassion and pleading.

the house of David

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of David"

the one they have pierced

"the one whom they stabbed to death"

for an only son

It is understood that the "son" has died. Alternate translation: "for an only son who has died"

Zechariah 12:11

the wailing in Jerusalem will be like the wailing at Hadad Rimmon

Hadad Rimmon may have been the place where the good King Josiah died of battle wounds after the Battle of Megiddo. It appears that the custom arose to hold periodic mourning there for his death. Some people, however, think that Hadad Rimmon was the name of a false god who was believed to die every year, an event for which his worshipers would go into mourning.

Megiddo

This is the name of a plain in Israel.

Zechariah 12:12

The land will mourn

This represents all the people living in the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "All the people in the land of Judah will mourn"

The clan of the house of David ... The clan of the house of Nathan

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of David ... The descendants of Nathan"

Zechariah 12:13

The clan of the house of Levi

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Levi"

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13 [1]"On that day a spring will be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for their sin and impurity.[2]On that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts—I will cut off the names of the idols from the land and they will no longer be remembered. I will remove the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the land.
[3]If any man continues to prophesy, his father and mother who bore him will tell him, 'You will not live, for you speak lies in the name of Yahweh!' Then the father and mother who bore him will pierce him when he prophesies.
[4]On that day each prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he is about to prophesy. These prophets will no longer wear a hairy cloak, in order to deceive the people.[5]For each will say, 'I am not a prophet! I am a man who works the soil, for the land became my work while I was still a young man!'[6]But someone will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' and he will answer, 'I was wounded with those in my friends' house.'

7 "Sword! Rouse yourself against my shepherd,
the man who stands close to me—
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts.
Strike the shepherd,
and the flock will scatter!
For I will turn my hand against the lowly ones.

8 Then it will come about that throughout all the land—this is Yahweh's declaration—
that two-thirds of it will be cut off! Those people will perish;
only one-third will remain there.

9 I will bring that third through the fire
and refine them as silver is refined;
I will test them as gold is tested.
They will call on my name,

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and I will answer them and say,
'This is my people!'
and they will say, 'Yahweh is my God!'"

Zechariah 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written partly in prose and partly in poetry.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 13:7-9.

Special concepts in this chapter

Zechariah often speaks of the last days by using the phrase "that day" or "in that day." When referencing a future "day," the translator should be aware that it is possible that the author is speaking about the last days. (See: lastday)

Links:

Zechariah 13:1 Notes

Zechariah 13:1
a spring will be opened ... for their sin and impurity
Forgiving the people's sins is spoken of as if a spring of water will wash away their sins. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will be like a spring opens ... to cleanse their sin and impurity"
a spring
a place where water flows naturally out of the ground
the house of David
Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of David"
Zechariah 13:2
this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts
Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]
I will cut off the names of the idols from the land
Causing the people to no longer mention the names of idols is spoken of as if Yahweh would "cut off the names of the idols from the land." Alternate translation: "I will cause the people to no longer mention the names of the idols"
they will no longer be remembered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they no longer think about the idols"
I will remove the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the land
The prophets may refer to "false prophets." The spirit of impurity is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "I will also remove from the land the false prophets and their evil spirits"
spirit of uncleanness
Some modern translations read, "unclean spirit," taking the phrase "of uncleanness" as a description of the word "spirit."
Zechariah 13:3
to prophesy
It is implied that these are false prophecies. Alternate translation: "to prophesy falsely"
his father and mother who bore him
The phrase "who bore him" describes "his father and mother" in order to express surprise that someone's own parents would treat him in this way. Alternate translation: "his own father and mother"
You will not live
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "You must die"
you speak lies in the name of Yahweh
Speaking in the name of someone means speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative. Alternate translation: "you claim to speak for Yahweh but you speak lies"
will pierce
"will stab and kill him"
Zechariah 13:4
each prophet
This implies false prophets. Alternate translation: "every false prophet"
no longer wear a hairy cloak
Prophets often wore heavy outer garments made of animal hair.
Zechariah 13:5
I am a man who works the soil
"I am a farmer"
the land became my work while I was still a young man
"I became a farmer when I was young." Some versions of the Bible translate this as "a man sold me as a slave when I was young."
Zechariah 13:6
What are these wounds between your arms?
"How did you get those cuts on your chest?" This refers to the apparent custom of false prophets wounding themselves in their ceremonies.
he will answer
It is implied that his answer is a lie. Alternate translation: "he will lie to him saying"
Zechariah 13:7
General Information:
Zechariah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism. Here Yahweh begins speaking.
Sword! Rouse yourself against my shepherd

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"You, sword! Go and attack my shepherd." Here Yahweh speaks to a sword as if it were a person. Here it represents enemies. Alternate translation: "You, enemies! Go and attack my shepherd"

my shepherd

This speaks of a servant of Yahweh as if he were a shepherd. Alternate translation: "my servant who is like a shepherd"

this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

the flock will scatter

The people of God are spoken of as if they were sheep. Alternate translation: "my people will run away like sheep"

I will turn my hand against the lowly ones

The idiom "turn my hand against" means to act hostile towards someone. Alternate translation: "I will attack the lowly ones"

the lowly ones

This probably refers to all the Israelites who are weak and defenseless.

Zechariah 13:8

that two-thirds of it will be cut off! Those people will perish; only one-third will remain there

People being killed is spoken of as if they are cut off like cloth is cut from a garment or a branch is cut from a plant. Alternate translation: "that two out of every three people will die! Only one person out of three will remain in the land"

Zechariah 13:9

I will bring that third through the fire

Metal is passed through fire in order to purify or harden it. This expression serves here as a metaphor for exposing the people to suffering in order that they may become more faithful to God.

refine them as silver is refined; I will test them as gold is tested

Refining refers to making precious metals such as silver more pure. Metals such as silver and gold are tested in order to discover how pure or strong they are. Both refining and testing are here metaphors for making the people more faithful to God.

They will call on my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "They will call out to me"

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14 [1]Behold! A day for Yahweh is coming when your plunder will be divided in your midst.[2]For I will gather every nation against Jerusalem for battle and the city will be captured. The houses will be plundered and the women raped. Half of the city will go out into captivity, but the remainder of the people will not be cut off from the city.
[3]But Yahweh will go out and make war against those nations as when he makes war on the day of battle.[4]On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is beside Jerusalem to the east. The Mount of Olives will be split in half between the east and the west by a very great valley and half of the mountain will go back toward the north and half toward the south.
[5]Then you will flee down the valley between Yahweh's mountains, for the valley between those mountains will reach to Azel. You will flee just as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Then Yahweh my God will come and all the holy ones will be with him.
[6]On that day there will be no light, but no cold or frost either.[7]On that day, a day known only to Yahweh, there will no longer be day or night, for the evening will be a time of light.[8]On that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem. Half of them will flow to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter.

[9]Yahweh will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be Yahweh, the one God, and his name alone.[10]All the land will be like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will continue to be raised up and remain in its own place, from the Benjamin Gate to the place where the first gate was, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.[11]The people will live in Jerusalem and there will be no more complete destruction from God against them. Jerusalem will live in safety.

[12]This will be the plague with which Yahweh will attack all the peoples that waged war against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot away even as they are standing on their feet. Their eyes will rot in their sockets and their tongues will rot in their mouths.[13]On that day that great panic from Yahweh will come among them. Each one will seize the hand of another, and the hand of one will be raised up against the hand of another.
[14]Judah will also make war against Jerusalem. They will gather the wealth of all the surrounding nations—gold, silver, and fine clothes in great abundance.[15]A plague will also be on the horses and the mules, the camels and the donkeys, and on every animal in those camps will also suffer that same plague.

[16]Then it will happen that all who remain in those nations that came against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, and to keep the Festival of Shelters.[17]It will happen that if anyone from all the nations of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, Yahweh of hosts, then Yahweh will not bring rain on them.
[18]If the nation of Egypt does not go up, then they will not receive rain. A plague from Yahweh will attack the nations that do not go up to keep the Festival of Shelters.
[19]This will be the punishment for Egypt and the punishment for every nation that does not go up to keep the Festival of Shelters.

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[20]But on that day, the bells of the horses will say, "Set apart to Yahweh," and the basins in the house of Yahweh will be like the bowls before the altar.[21]For every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be set apart to Yahweh of hosts and everyone who brings a sacrifice will eat from them and boil in them. On that day traders will no longer be in the house of Yahweh of hosts.

Zechariah 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in prose about Jerusalem during the last days. (See: lastday)

Special concepts in this chapter

Last days

Zechariah often speaks of the last days by using the phrase "that day" or "in that day." When referencing a future "day," the translator should be aware that it is possible that the author is speaking about the last days.

Links:

Zechariah 14:1 Notes

Zechariah 14:1

General Information:

This chapter describes the final war for the city of Jerusalem and how God will save it.

A day for Yahweh is coming when your plunder will be divided in your midst

A future time is spoken of as if "a day is coming." The phrase "will be divided" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Soon Yahweh will judge you, and he will allow your enemies to take all of your possessions and divide if for themselves while you watch"

Zechariah 14:2

I will gather every nation against Jerusalem for battle

Here "every nation" is a generalization that means "many nations." Alternate translation: "I will cause many nations to attack Jerusalem"

the city will be captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will capture the city"

The houses will be plundered and the women raped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemies will plunder the houses and rape the women"

the remainder of the people will not be cut off from the city

Not removing people from the city is spoken of as if the people will not be "cut off." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will allow the remaining people to stay in the city"

Zechariah 14:3

General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save it. In this prophecy, Yahweh is described as a warrior who will come and fight in battle.

as when he makes war on the day of battle

"just as he fought battles in the past"

Zechariah 14:4

On that day

"At that time"

his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives

Here "feet" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he will stand on the Mount of Olives"

The Mount of Olives will be split ... by a very great valley

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The presences of Yahweh will split the Mount of Olives ... causing there to be a very great valley"

Zechariah 14:5

General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

you will flee

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Jerusalem.

between Yahweh's mountains

This refers to the mountains created after the Mount of Olives split in half.

Azel

This is the name of a town or village east of Jerusalem.

You will flee just as you fled

Here "You will" refers to the people of Jerusalem. But, "you fled" refers to their ancestors since this describes an event that happened many years earlier. Alternate translation: "You will flee just as your ancestors fled"

in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah

Here "in the days" is an idiom that refers to the time when Uzziah was king. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah was king of Judah"

the holy ones

This probably refers to God's angels.

Zechariah 14:6

General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

On that day

"At that time"

there will be no light

It is implied that there will be no light from the sun. Alternate translation: "there will be no light from the sun"

Zechariah 14:7

a day known only to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "only Yahweh knows when that day will begin" or "only Yahweh knows when that time will begin"

Zechariah 14:8

living waters

This normally means running or flowing water, rather than still or stagnant water.

the eastern sea

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This refers to the Dead Sea, which is east of Jerusalem.
the western sea
This refers to the Mediterranean Sea.
Zechariah 14:9
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
there will be Yahweh, the one God, and his name alone
Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation or character. Alternate translation: "people will know that Yahweh is the only true God" or "people will only worship Yahweh, the one true God"
Zechariah 14:10
All the land
It is implied that this is the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "All the land of Judah"
Arabah
This is the name of a plain in the Jordan River Valley.
Geba
This is the name of a town on the northern border of Judah.
Rimmon
This is the name of a town south of Jerusalem.
Jerusalem will continue to be raised up
This contrasts Jerusalem, which will remain at a higher elevation, to the surrounding area, which is lower in elevation. The contrast can be indicated by adding the word "but." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But, Jerusalem will remain high up"
the Benjamin Gate ... the first gate ... the Corner Gate
These are names of gates in the northeast part of city wall of Jerusalem. Possible meanings are 1) "the first gate" and "the Corner Gate" refer to the same gate or 2) "the first gate" and "the Corner gate" are separate gates.
the Tower of Hananel
This refers to a strong point in the city defenses on the northern wall. It was probably built by a man named Hananel.
the king's winepresses
This probably refers to the place where wine was made for the royal family. It was located in the southwest part of Jerusalem.
Zechariah 14:11
Jerusalem will live in safety
Here "Jerusalem" represents the people. Alternate translation: "The people will live safely in Jerusalem"
Zechariah 14:12
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
even as they are standing on their feet
"while they are still standing up." This emphasizes how quickly their flesh will rot away. They will not even have time to lie down.
Zechariah 14:13
that great panic from Yahweh will come among them
The abstract noun "panic" can be stated as "terrified." Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the people to be very terrified"
Each one will seize the hand of another, and the hand of one will be raised up against the hand of another
These are idioms that refer to being hostile towards another person. Alternate translation: "Each person will grab someone, and they will fight each other"
Zechariah 14:14
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
Judah will also make war against Jerusalem
Here "Judah" and "Jerusalem" represent the people that live there. Alternate translation: "Even the other people in Judah will make war against the people of Jerusalem"
Judah will also make war against Jerusalem
Some versions of the Bible read, "Judah will also make war at Jerusalem."
They will gather the wealth
"They will capture all the valuable possessions"
in great abundance
"in great quantities"
Zechariah 14:16
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
that came against Jerusalem
Here "came against" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "that attacked Jerusalem"
will go up from year to year
"will go to Jerusalem every year"
the Festival of Shelters
"the Festival of Tabernacles" or "the Festival of Booths" or "the Festival of Tents"
Zechariah 14:18
A plague from Yahweh will attack the nations
Causing people to suffer from a plague is spoken of as if the plague would attack the people like an army. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause a plague among the people of the nations"
Zechariah 14:19
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
Zechariah 14:20
General Information:
These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.
the bells of the horses will say
"the inscription on the bells of the horses will say"
the basins in the house of Yahweh
These basins were used for boiling meat in the courtyard of the temple. Alternate translation: "the cooking pots in the courtyard of the temple"
will be like the bowls before the altar
It is implied that the basins will be sacred like the bowls used for catching the blood of the sacrifices. Alternate translation: "will be as sacred as the bowls used at the altar"
Zechariah 14:21
every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be set apart to Yahweh of hosts
Various types of pots and utensils were made especially to

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be used in the temple for the worship of Yahweh and for the sacrifices. These were considered special, not to be used for anything else.

traders will no longer be in the house of Yahweh

It was the custom for traders to sell the people things they needed in order to make proper sacrifices to Yahweh in the temple. Alternate translation: "people will no longer buy or sell things in the courtyard of the temple of Yahweh"

traders

Some versions of the Bible translate "traders" as "Canaanites."

Introduction to Malachi

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Malachi

The word of Yahweh comes to Israel (1:1) Yahweh loves Israel and rejects Esau (Edom) (1:2–5) A message against the priests (1:6–2:9) A message against Judah: they have broken faith by divorcing and intermarrying (2:10–16) A message about the day of refining (2:17–3:6) A message about tithing (3:7–12) A message about those who others treated shamefully, but who were faithful to Yahweh (3:13–18) Yahweh will punish the wicked and send Elijah before the "great and terrible day of Yahweh" (4:5–6)

What is the Book of Malachi about?

The Book of Malachi is about the prophecies that Malachi spoke to the Jews who had returned from Babylon to Judah. At that time, the Jews were discouraged even though they had finished building a new temple. The wonderful things that previous prophets had promised for Judah had not yet happened. And the Persian Empire still ruled over them. As a result, they no longer were concerned about the law or worshiping Yahweh. Malachi rebuked them for not trusting in Yahweh. But he also promised them that Yahweh would do everything that he promised to do.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has been titled "Malachi" or "The Book of Malachi." Translators may decide to call it "The Book about Malachi" or "The Sayings of Malachi."

Who wrote the Book of Malachi?

The prophet Malachi wrote these messages from Yahweh to the Jews. However, since "Malachi" means "my messenger," it is possible that this was a title for this prophet. If so, we do not know his real name.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was meant by the day of Yahweh?

Malachi spoke about "the day" several times. This is the same as "the day of Yahweh." In the Book of Malachi, this is the time when Yahweh would judge his people. He would remove those who wickedly sin and bless those who trust in him. (See: dayofthelord and sin)

Malachi

1

[1]The burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi.

[2]"I have loved you," says Yahweh. But you say, "How have you loved us?" "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares Yahweh. "Yet I have loved Jacob,[3]but Esau I have hated. I have made his mountains an abandoned devastation, and I have made his inheritance a place for the jackals of the wilderness."
[4]If Edom says, "We are beaten down, but we will return and rebuild the ruins," Yahweh of hosts will say, "They may rebuild, but I will throw down again. Others will call them 'The country of wickedness' and 'The people with whom Yahweh is angry forever.'[5]Your own eyes will see this, and you will say, 'Yahweh is great beyond the borders of Israel.'

[6]"A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. If I, then, am a Father, where is my honor? If I am a master, where is the reverence for me?" says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. "But you say, 'How have we despised your name?'[7]By offering polluted bread upon my altar. But you say, 'How have we polluted you?' By saying that Yahweh's table is contemptible.
[8]When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not evil? When you offer the lame and sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor! Will he accept you or will he lift up your face?" says Yahweh of hosts.[9]Now you keep asking the face of God, that he may be gracious to us. But Yahweh of hosts says that with such an offering in your hand, would he lift up any of your faces?
[10]"Oh, if only there were one of you who would shut the temple gates, so that you might not light fires on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you," says Yahweh of hosts, "and I will not accept any offering from your hand.[11]For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations and in every place incense and pure grain offerings will

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be offered in my name. For my name will be great among the nations," says Yahweh of hosts.[12]"But you are profaning it when you say the Lord's table is polluted, and that its fruit, its food, is to be despised.
[13]You also say, 'How tiresome this is,' and you snort at it," says Yahweh of hosts. "You bring what has been torn or is lame or sick; and this you bring as your offering. Should I accept this from your hand?" says Yahweh.[14]"May the deceiver be cursed who has a male animal in his flock and vows to give it to me, and yet sacrifices to me, the Lord, what is flawed! For I am a great king," says Yahweh of hosts, "and my name will be honored among the nations."

Malachi 1 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh of hosts

This is an important title used in this chapter. It reminds the reader of the great power Yahweh has to punish the nations. (See: yahwehofhosts)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

There are many rhetorical questions in this chapter. They all have a rather dramatic effect. They increase the emotional connotations of what is being said.

Links:

Malachi 1:1 Notes Malachi intro

Malachi 1:1

The burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi

This can be expressed as a statement. "This is the burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi"

burden

This is a metaphor for a serious message.

Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

by the hand of Malachi

The phrase "by the hand of" is an idiom that means that Yahweh used Malachi to deliver his message. Alternate translation: "through Malachi" or "spoken to them by Malachi"

Malachi 1:2

How have you loved us?

This question indicates that the people doubt the truth of what God says. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You have not shown that you love us."

Was not Esau Jacob's brother?

This question, a reply of Yahweh reminding the people of their nation's history, may also be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that Esau was Jacob's brother."

declares Yahweh

"Yahweh has solemnly said this"

I have loved Jacob

Here "loved" implies a relationship of loyalty between Yahweh and Jacob, in which a covenant existed between them. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "as you know, I obligated myself with a covenant to love Jacob"

I have loved Jacob

This name "Jacob" refers here not only to Jacob, but also to all his descendants.

Malachi 1:3

Esau I have hated

Here "hated" implies that there was no covenant between Yahweh and Esau. However, it does not imply that Yahweh was emotionally against Esau.

Esau I have hated

This name "Esau" refers here not only to Esau, but also to all his descendants.

his mountains

This refers to the hill country of Edom.

I have made his inheritance a place for the jackals of the wilderness

In the Old Testament, the presence of wild animals such as jackals was a frequent description of land deserted by the people who once lived there.

his inheritance

Here "inheritance" stands for the region that Esau's descendants, the nation of Edom, occupied.

Malachi 1:4

If Edom says

Here "Edom" stands for the people of Edom. Alternate translation: "If the people of Edom say"

I will throw down

Here "throw down" stands for "destroy." Alternate translation: "I will destroy"

country of wickedness

Here "wickedness" stands either for wicked people or for wicked actions. Alternate translation: "country of wicked people"

Malachi 1:5

Your own eyes will see this

Here "your own eyes" stands for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "You yourselves will see this"

Malachi 1:6

General Information:

Yahweh rebukes the priests using an imaginary conversation in which the priests protest that they are doing right and Yahweh tells them what they are doing wrong.

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despise my name
Here "my name" stands for Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "treat me as though you hate me"
How have we despised your name?
Here the priests are asking a question in order to state that they have not really despised Yahweh. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have not really despised your name." or "Tell us how we have despised your name, because we do not think that we have done so."
Malachi 1:7
polluted bread
Here "polluted" describes anything that is not suitable to sacrifice to God.
How have we polluted you?
Here the priests are asking a question in order to state that they have not really polluted Yahweh. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have not polluted you." or "Tell us how we have polluted you, because we do not think that we have done so."
polluted you
This expression refers to insulting God by giving him unsuitable sacrifices.
table
This refers to an altar.
By saying that Yahweh's table is contemptible.
This is the answer that Yahweh gives to the priests, but the full answer is only implied. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You have polluted my altar by saying, 'Yahweh's table is contemptible.'"
contemptible
something people should regard as bad, worse than worthless
Malachi 1:8
When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not evil?
Here Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "You know very well that it is evil for you to offer blind animals for sacrifice!"
When you offer the lame and sick, is that not evil?
Here Yahweh uses a question to rebuke the people. Alternate translation: "And you know very well that it is evil for you to offer lame and sick animals!"
Present that to your governor! Will he accept you or will he lift up your face?
Here the imperative functions as a condition. Alternate translation: "If you present that to your governor, will he accept you or will he lift up your face?"
Present that to your governor! Will he accept you or will he lift up your face?
Here Yahweh asks this question in order to remind the people that their governor would never accept defective animals from them. Alternate translation: "If you present that to your governor, you know that the he will not accept you. He will not lift up your face."
will he lift up your face
Lifting up someone's face refers to accepting him with favor. Alternate translation: "will he accept you with favor" or "will he agree to help you"
Present
give as a gift to show respect
Malachi 1:9
Now you keep asking the face of God, that he may be gracious to us
Malachi is no longer speaking for God. He is talking directly to the Israelites; he is criticizing them for daring to think that God will have mercy on them.
keep asking the face of God, that he may be gracious
They were speaking nicely to God hoping to convince him to stop being angry with them. Alternate translation: "keep begging God to be gracious"
with such an offering in your hand, would he lift up any of your faces?
Here Yahweh is asking a question in order to make a statement of rebuke. Alternate translation: "if you offer unacceptable offerings, he will certainly not lift up your faces."
with such an offering in your hand
This difficult phrase in Hebrew is interpreted in many different ways by modern versions.
in your hand
Here "hand" stands for the people bringing the offering. Alternate translation: "brought by you"
would he lift up any of your faces
Lifting up someone's face refers to accepting him with favor. Alternate translation: "would he accept any of you with favor" or "would he agree to help any of you"
Malachi 1:10
Oh, if only
This expresses great desire.
so that you might not light fires on my altar in vain
Here "light fires on my altar" stands for offering sacrifices on Yahweh's altar. Alternate translation: "so that you might not make fires to burn offerings that I will not accept"
from your hand
Here "your hand" stands for "you." Alternate translation: "from you"
Malachi 1:11
from the rising of the sun to its setting
This double expression means "everywhere." It is parallel to "among the nations" and "in every place"
my name will be great among the nations
Here "my name" stands for Yahweh's reputation and honor. Alternate translation: "I will be honored in other nations"
in every place incense and pure grain offerings will be offered in my name
This may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "in these nations people will worship me by offering incense and pure grain offerings to me"
in my name
Here "name" stands for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to me"
Malachi 1:12
its fruit, its food
Possible meanings are 1) "the meat sacrificed on the altar from animals whose other parts the priests should eat" or 2) "the meat sacrificed on the altar."
Malachi 1:13
snort at it
show great disrespect by making noises through the nose
what has been torn

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Possible meanings are 1) "what you have stolen from others" or 2) "what a wild animal has killed."

Should I accept this from your hand?

Here Yahweh is asking a question in order to make a statement of rebuke. Alternate translation: "I should certainly not accept this from you!"

from your hand

Here "your hand" stands for "you." Alternate translation: "from you"

Malachi 1:14

my name will be honored among the nations

This may be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "people in the other nations honor my name"

my name will be honored

Here "my name" stands for Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I will be honored"

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2 [1]Now you priests, this command is for you.[2]"If you will not listen, and if you will not lay it on your heart to give honor to my name," says Yahweh of hosts, "then I will send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Indeed, I have cursed them, because you are not laying my command on your heart.
[3]See, I am about to rebuke your descendants,[1] and I will spread dung on your faces, the dung from your festivals, and he will take you away with it.[2][4]You will know that I have sent this command to you, and that my covenant may continue to be with Levi," says Yahweh of hosts.
[5]"My covenant with him was life and peace, and I gave them to him; I gave him fear, and he feared me, and he stood in awe of my name.[6]True instruction was in his mouth, and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness and he turned many away from iniquity.[7]For a priest's lips should keep knowledge and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is a messenger of Yahweh of hosts.
[8]But you have turned away from the true path. You have caused many to stumble with respect to the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says Yahweh of hosts.[9]"So, I have made you contemptible and lowly before all the people, because you have not kept my ways, but have instead shown partiality in matters of the law."

[10]Is there not one Father for us all? Has not one God created us? Why are we faithless each man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?[11]Judah has been faithless. A disgusting thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the holy place of Yahweh which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god.[12]May Yahweh cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does this, the one who is awake and the one who answers, even if he is bringing an offering to Yahweh of hosts.[3]
[13]You also do this: You cover the altar of Yahweh with tears, with weeping and sighing, because he still does not turn toward the offering or accept it with favor from your hand.
[14]But you say, "Why does he not?" Because Yahweh was a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have been faithless, even though she was your companion and your wife by covenant.[15]Did he not make them one, with a portion of his spirit? Then why did he make you one? Because he was seeking an offspring from God. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.[16]"For I hate divorce," says Yahweh, the God of Israel, "and the one who covers his garment with violence," says Yahweh of hosts. "So guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless."

[17]You have wearied Yahweh with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in the eyes of Yahweh, and he delights in them," or "Where is the God of justice?"

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[1]Instead of rebuke your descendants, which is in the copies of the ancient Hebrew text, some ancient translations have cut off your shoulder or throw the arm to you. Some other modern translations have corrupt your descendants.
[2]Instead of he will take you away with it, which is in the ancient copies of the Hebrew text, some ancient translations have I will take you away from beside me, that is, from my presence.
[3]Instead of the one who answers, which follows the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew copies, some scholars have translated the ancient Hebrew copies as the one who studies.

Malachi 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Levites

The priests are given a strong warning in this chapter. They have not followed the law of Moses and have led the people in the wrong direction. Yahweh has not accepted their sacrifices. (See: priest and lawofmoses)

Marital unfaithfulness

Because the Jews lived under a covenantal arrangement with Yahweh, their relationship is described using the imagery of a marriage. Marital unfaithfulness indicates a person's unfaithfulness to Yahweh.

Links:

Malachi 2:1 Notes

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Malachi 2:2
lay it on your heart
This refers to considering something to be very important. Alternate translation: "consider it to be very important"
give honor to my name
The abstract noun "honor" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "honor my name"
my name
Here this expression refers to God.
I will send a curse on you
The abstract noun "curse" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I will curse you"
you are not laying my command on your heart
This refers to considering God's command to be very important. Alternate translation: "you are not considering my command to be very important"
Malachi 2:3
I will spread dung on your faces
Here "dung on your faces" stands for disgrace. Alternate translation: "I will most certainly put you in deep disgrace; it will be as bad as if I had spread dung on your faces"
the dung from your festivals
Here "festivals" stands for the animals that the priests offered in sacrifice at the Israelite festivals. "The dung" probably refers both to the dung that was produced by the animals just before they were slaughtered for sacrifice, and to the dung that was found inside the animals when their bodies were cut apart before being sacrificed. Temple workers had to transport this dung to a place outside of the temple, and probably outside of Jerusalem.
he will take you away with it
This difficult expression can be translated as "God will take you away with it," that is, with the dung. This expression continues the same metaphor of slaughtering animals for sacrifice, and it can be put in active form. Alternate translation: "they will throw you on the dung pile; God will make sure that they take you away when they remove all the dung"
he will take you away with it
Possible meanings of this expression are 1) God will punish the unfaithful priests by killing them and causing their bodies to be carried away on the piles of animal dung, or 2) God will punish the unfaithful priests in such a horrible way that it will be as if their bodies had been carried away with the animal dung.
Malachi 2:4
Levi
Here Levi represents his descendants, the tribe of Levi. Alternate translation: "so that my covenant may be with you, the descendants of Levi"
Malachi 2:5
General Information:
Yahweh speaks of the tribe of Levi as though they are Levi.
My covenant with him was life and peace
Here the intended results of the covenant are spoken of as if they were the covenant itself. Alternate translation: "The purpose of my covenant with Levi was for the priests to live in prosperity and peace"
fear, and he feared me
This expression continues the same metaphor, but leaves out an idea that is implied in the text. This can begin a new sentence. Alternate translation: "My covenant with him was also fear, and he feared me" or "In my covenant with him, I required him to fear me, and he did fear me"
in awe of my name
Here "my name" stands for God himself.
Malachi 2:6
nothing false was found
Here finding something stands for that thing existing. Alternate translation: "there was no falsehood"
on his lips
Here "lips" stands for a person's ability to speak.
He walked with me
Here walking stands for living, conducting one's life in a certain way.
in peace and uprightness
Here the idea of location stands for the manner in which Levi lived. Alternate translation: "peacefully and uprightly"
he turned many away from iniquity
Here persuading people to stop sinning is spoken of as if it were turning them away from sin. Alternate translation: "he persuaded many people to stop sinning"
lips
Here "lips" stands for a person's ability to speak.
Malachi 2:7
For a priest's lips should keep knowledge
Here knowledge is spoken of as if it were an object that a priest could keep. In this passage, the idea of "keep knowledge" implies communicating true knowledge about God.
seek instruction
Here instruction is spoken of as if it were an object that people could look for. This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "instruction." Alternate translation: "want to be instructed" or "want a priest to teach them truly"
from his mouth
Here "mouth" stands for what a person says.
Malachi 2:8
you have turned away from the true path
The right way to behave is spoken of as if it were the right path to follow, and abandoning right conduct is spoken of as if it were turning away from that path.
You have caused many to stumble
Disobeying God is spoken of as if it were stumbling.
You have caused many to stumble with respect to the law
The expression "with respect to the law" gives the context for the "stumbling." Alternate translation: "You have caused many to disobey the law"
corrupted the covenant of Levi
"broken the covenant I made with the Levites."
Malachi 2:9
before all the people
This spatial idea stands for the people's awareness of the priests' evil behavior.
kept my ways
Here "ways" stands for "desires" and "behavior." These ways are spoken of as if they were things that could be kept by people. Alternate translation: "followed my desires in

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how you should live"

shown partiality in matters of the law

"set easy standards of behavior for people you like and difficult standards of behavior for people you do not like"

shown partiality

Here the habit of favoring some people more than others is spoken of as if it were a thing that could be shown to others. Alternate translation: "made people aware that you favor some people more than others

Malachi 2:10

General Information:

Here the prophet Malachi begins to speak to his fellow Israelites.

Is there not one Father for us all? Has not one God created us?

Malachi asks these questions in order to remind his fellow Israelites about what they already know. Alternate translation: "You know that we all have one Father, that our God has created a nation out of us." or "You all know that God is the Father of all us Israelites, because he is the one who made our nation."

Has not one God created us?

This question is meant to express a statement. Alternate translation: "Certainly it is the same God who has created us."

created us

This probably refers to God forming the Hebrews into a nation.

Why are we faithless each man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

Malachi asks this question in order to rebuke his fellow Israelites. This question may be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We should certainly not mistreat our brothers and disrespect God's covenant by disobeying his commands, as you have been doing."

Malachi 2:11

Judah has been faithless

Here "Judah" stands for the people in the region of Judah, and the fact that they have been faithless to Yahweh is spoken of as if they were one man named "Judah." Alternate translation: "The people of Judah have been faithless"

A disgusting thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "People have done disgusting things in Israel and in Jerusalem"

For Judah has profaned the holy place of Yahweh

Here "Judah" refers again to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "For the people of Judah have profaned the holy place of Yahweh"

has married the daughter of a foreign god

The people of Judah are again referred to as if they were one man named "Judah." Alternate translation: "have married women from other nations, women who worship idols"

Malachi 2:12

May Yahweh cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who

Destroying something is often spoken of as it were cutting it off from something else. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh destroy anyone in the tents of Jacob who" or "May Yahweh kill anyone in the community of Israel who"

the tents of Jacob

Here "tents of Jacob" stands for the community of Israel.

Jacob

Here "Jacob" stands for all the Israelites, because Jacob was one of the patriarchs from whom the Israelites were descended.

the one who is awake and the one who answers

This expression seems to mean "absolutely everyone."

Malachi 2:13

General Information:

Malachi continues to speak to his fellow Israelites.

You cover the altar of Yahweh with tears

This sarcastically exaggerates the amount of tears the people cry to show that Yahweh knows that the people do not really feel sad.

with weeping and sighing

The words "weeping" and "sighing" share similar meanings and intensify the idea of weeping. Alternate translation: "with great weeping"

does not turn toward the offering

Here turning toward a gift stands for receiving it and showing favor to the giver.

does not turn toward the offering

This implies that those who are weeping at Yahweh's altar have offered sacrifices to him.

from your hand

Here "hand" stands for the person giving the offering. Alternate translation: "from you"

Malachi 2:14

Why does he not?

The full thought, as in [Malachi 2:13]

the wife of your youth

"the woman you married when you were young"

Yahweh was a witness between you and the wife of your youth

This statement assumes that this woman is still living.

a witness between you and the wife of your youth

Here a witness to an agreement between two people is thought of as standing between them in order to testify about what they agreed to, in case a dispute arises between the two people. This sentence also was meant to remind the people that Yahweh would punish any Israelite who broke the covenant of marriage.

she was your companion and your wife by covenant

This statement implies that many of the Israelites had divorced their wives.

by covenant

"by the covenant of marriage that you agreed to"

Malachi 2:15

Did he not make them one, with a portion of his spirit?

This question may be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "He certainly made husband and wife one, with a portion of his spirit."

make them one

This expression implies making husband and wife one flesh. Alternate translation: "make husband and wife one flesh"

an offspring from God

Children who would honor and obey God.

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Malachi 2:16

I hate divorce

Here "divorce" stands for the act of divorce, when a man sends away his wife, so as to end his marriage to her. Alternate translation: "I hate it when a man divorces his wife"

the one who covers his garment with violence

This phrase probably means any man who is violent toward his wife.

So guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless

"So be careful to be loyal to your wife"

Malachi 2:17

You have wearied Yahweh

Yahweh is spoken of as if human behavior could make him tired, but God cannot grow weary in a physical or emotional sense. This statement probably means that the people have repeatedly offended Yahweh. Alternate translation: "You have offended Yahweh"

How have we wearied him?

This question is meant to deny that the people have done any wrong. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have certainly not wearied him."

By saying

The complete idea here is, "You have wearied him by saying." This is the prophet's answer to the rhetorical question.

in the eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in the opinion" or "in the judgment"

Where is the God of justice?

The priests ask this question in order to claim either that Yahweh does not care whether people do evil or not, or that he never punishes evildoers. Alternate translation: "God certainly does not punish evil people!"

the God of justice

the God who punishes evildoers justly

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3 [1]"See, I am about to send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. Then the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, see, he will come," says Yahweh of hosts.

[2]But who will be able to endure the day of his coming? Who will be able to stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire and like laundry soap.[3]He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi. He will refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings of righteousness to Yahweh.
[4]Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to Yahweh, as in the days of old, and as in ancient years.[5]"Then I will approach you for judgment. I will quickly become a witness against the sorcerers, the adulterers, those who swear to deception, and against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, those who oppress the widow and the orphan, against those who turn away the foreigner, and against those who do not honor me," says Yahweh of hosts.
[6]"For I, Yahweh, have not changed; therefore you descendants of Jacob have not been consumed.
[7]From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says Yahweh of hosts. "But you say, 'How will we return?'
[8]Would a person rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In tithes and offerings.[9]You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation.
[10]Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and test me now in this," says Yahweh of hosts, "if I do not open to you the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing on you, until there is no more room for it all.[11]I will rebuke those who destroy your crops, so that they do not destroy the harvest of your land. Your vines in the fields will not lose their fruit," says Yahweh of hosts.[12]"All the nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight," says Yahweh of hosts.

[13]"Your words against me have been strong," says Yahweh. "But you say, 'What have we said among ourselves against you?'[14]You have said, 'It is useless to serve God. What profit is it that we have kept his requirements or walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts?[15]So now we call those who do evil blessed. Evildoers not only prosper, but they even test God and escape.'"

[16]Then those who feared Yahweh spoke with one another. Yahweh paid attention and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him about those who feared Yahweh and honored his name.
[17]"They will be mine," says Yahweh of hosts, "my own treasured possession, on the day that I act. I will pity them, as a man pities his own son who serves him.[18]Then once again you will distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who worships God and one who does not worship him.

Malachi 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Messiah

There are several prophecies in this chapter concerning the Messiah and the one who comes before the Messiah. At times,

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this chapter switches between prophesying about the first coming of the Messiah and the second coming of the Messiah without formal divisions between them. (See: prophet and christ)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Several rhetorical questions are used in this chapter to convince the reader of the truth of what he is saying and of their sin. (See: sin)

Links:

Malachi 3:1 Notes

Malachi 3:1

General Information:

Yahweh begins speaking again to the people of Israel in verse 1, but the prophet Malachi begins speaking in verse 2.

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

he will prepare the way before me

Here getting people ready to welcome Yahweh is spoken of as if a road were being cleared for Yahweh to travel on.

Then the Lord, whom you seek ... The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight

Some modern versions translate this in a way that implies that these two expressions refer to the same person. Other modern versions leave this matter ambiguous. We recommend that translations leave this matter ambiguous, as the ULB does.

The messenger of the covenant

Almost all versions leave ambiguous the sense of this expression. But translators may need to make explicit the relationship between "messenger" and "the covenant." The UDB presents "the messenger" as one promised by the covenant that Yahweh had with Israel. Another choice is to present the messenger as a person who will either confirm that covenant or announce a new covenant.

Malachi 3:2

But who will be able to endure the day of his coming? Who will be able to stand when he appears?

These rhetorical questions imply that no one will be able to resist Yahweh when he comes. They can be combined into one statement. Alternate translation: "However, no one will be able to resist Yahweh when he comes to judge them."

the day of his coming

Here "day" stands for "time." Alternate translation: "the time when he comes"

be able to stand

Here standing represents resisting someone's attack or accusations.

For he will be like a refiner's fire and like laundry soap

This sentence gives the reason why no one will be able to resist God when he comes. God's power to judge the people and to stop them from sinning is spoken of as if it were the power of strong soap to clean clothes, or the power of fire to melt an object. These are ways of saying that God's power to do these things cannot be stopped.

Malachi 3:3

he will purify the sons of Levi

Forgiving the sons of Levi and persuading them not to sin any longer is spoken of as if it were purifying metal.

Alternate translation: "he will correct the sons of Levi and forgive them for having sinned"

the sons of Levi

Here "sons" refers to descendants. The male descendants of Levi were the priests and workers in the temple.

He will sit

Here sitting implies the action of a metalworker, who sits down in order to purify small amounts of gold or silver. It also implies the action of a king, who sits down to judge people and give decrees.

He will refine them like gold and silver

Here persuading people not to sin any longer is spoken of as if a metalworker were making gold and silver more pure.

they will bring offerings of righteousness to Yahweh

Here "of righteousness" means "motivated by righteous desires to worship God." Alternate translation: "they will bring acceptable offerings to Yahweh in order to worship Yahweh"

Malachi 3:4

General Information:

Malachi continues speaking in verse 4, but Yahweh begins speaking again in verse 5.

the offering of Judah and Jerusalem

Here "Judah" and "Jerusalem" stand for the people in those places. Alternate translation: "the offerings brought by the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

as in the days of old, and as in ancient years

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the offering was once pleasing to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "as it was in the distant past" or "as it was a long time ago"

Malachi 3:5

Then I will approach you for judgment

Here "judgment" refers to the act of judging. Alternate translation: "Then I will approach you in order to judge you"

oppress the hired worker in his wages

"cause the hired worker to suffer by not paying him for his work"

turn away the foreigner

That is, turning away the foreigner from gaining his rights. Depriving people of their rights is spoken of as if it were physically turning them away from oneself. Perhaps the idea is turning away someone who comes for a wrong to be set right. Alternate translation: "deny foreigners living in Israel the rights that they should have"

Malachi 3:6

General Information:

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Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.

you descendants of Jacob have not been consumed

This can be translated in active form. The word "consumed" is a metaphor for "destroyed." Alternate translation: "I have not consumed you descendants of Jacob" or "you descendants of Jacob have not perished"

Malachi 3:7

From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them

Disobeying God's statutes is spoken of as if it were turning away from them. Alternate translation: "You have disobeyed my statutes ever since the days of your ancestors"

Return to me, and I will return to you

Here loving each other and being faithful to each other is spoken of as if it were returning to each other. Alternate translation: "Love me and honor me, and I will always help you"

How will we return?

The people ask this question in order to claim that they have never stopped obeying God. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have never gone away from you, so we cannot return to you." or "We have never gone away from you, so it makes no sense to speak of us as returning to you."

Malachi 3:8

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.

Would a person rob God?

This question implies that the idea of robbing God is very wicked. This can be expressed as a statement. God speaks of himself in the third person Alternate translation: "A man should certainly not rob God." or "No one should ever rob me."

How have we robbed you?

This question implies that the people do not think they have robbed God. Alternate translation: "We have certainly not robbed you."

In tithes and offerings

This reply from Yahweh implies a fuller answer. Alternate translation: "You have robbed me by withholding from me your tithes and offerings"

Malachi 3:9

You are cursed with a curse

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have certainly cursed you"

you are robbing me, the whole nation

Here "nation" stands for the people to whom Yahweh is speaking. Alternate translation: "all of you in the whole nation are robbing me"

Malachi 3:10

General Information:

Yahweh continues to speak to the people of Israel.

the full tithe

"all the tithes"

my house

Here "house" stands for the temple. Alternate translation: "my temple"

and test me now in this ... if I do not open to you the windows of heaven

Here the command "test me" stands for something that the people can do and should do: "if you test me." This can be divided into two sentences also. Alternate translation: "And if you test me ... I will open up the windows of heaven" or "And you should test me ... If you do, I will open up the windows of heaven"

Malachi 3:12

All the nations will call you blessed

Here to be called blessed stands for being blessed. Alternate translation: "All the nations will know that you have been blessed"

All the nations

This expression stands for the people in all the nations. Alternate translation: "The people in all the nations"

a land of delight

Here "delight" stands for the condition in which the inhabitants of a land take delight in their land.

Malachi 3:13

General Information:

These verses begin a new section in the book. Here Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

Your words against me have been strong

Here "strong" stands for "harsh" or "terrible." And "Your words" stands for "What you have said." Alternate translation: "What you have said about me is terrible"

What have we said among ourselves against you?

The people ask this question in order to claim that they have said nothing against God. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We have not said anything among ourselves against you."

Malachi 3:14

What profit is it that we have kept his requirements or walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts?

The people ask this question among themselves in order to make a statement. Alternate translation: "It is useless that we have kept his requirements and walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts."

walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts

Here "walk mournfully" stands for "behave in a sorrowful manner," probably in order to indicate sorrow over their sins.

before Yahweh of hosts

Here this expression refers to God being aware of what the people were doing.

Malachi 3:15

we call those who do evil blessed

Here to "call ... blessed" stands for being blessed. This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we say that God has blessed those who do evil" or "we say that those who do evil are well off"

escape

That is, "they escape God's punishment."

Malachi 3:16

General Information:

The event described here may have taken place after the godly people in Israel repented of their sins.

a book of remembrance was written before him about those who feared Yahweh

This can mean 1) the Israelites wrote a book so they would

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remember what they had promised and listed the names of people who feared Yahweh or 2) Yahweh caused someone in heaven to write a book with the names of people who feared him.

book of remembrance

This expression refers to any book that helps people remember important things, such as events or people who lived in the past.

honored his name

Here "his name" stands for God himself.

Malachi 3:17

They will be mine

"They will be my people"

my own treasured possession

Here "possession" refers to one's personal property. This idea can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "they will belong completely to me"

I act

the time when Yahweh will judge and punish the rebellious Israelites, giving victory to the faithful Israelites

Malachi 3:18

distinguish between

"see a difference between" or "treat differently"

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4 [1]For see, the day is coming, burning like a furnace, when all the arrogant and all the evildoers will become stubble. The day that is coming will burn them up," says Yahweh of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.[2]But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. You will go out, and you will leap like calves from the stall.[3]On that day you will trample down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I act," says Yahweh of hosts.

[4]"Remember the law of my servant Moses that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel, the statutes and the rulings.[5]See, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and fearful day of Yahweh.[6]He will turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, so that I do not come and attack the land with complete destruction."

Malachi 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Last days

Although the Jews may have hoped these prophecies referenced a time in the near future to them, the prophecies of this chapter exclusively relate to the last days. (See: prophet and lastday)

Links:

Malachi 4:1 Notes

Malachi 4:1

see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

the day is coming, burning like a furnace

The disaster occurring at this time is spoken of as if the day itself were burning. God's judgment is often spoken of as if it were a fire.

arrogant ... evildoers

See how you translated these wordsd in Malachi 3:15.

all the arrogant and all the evildoers will become stubble

These people are spoken of as if they will become dried-up plants fit only for being burned. It is common for the Bible to speak of people as if they were plants or trees. Alternate translation: "all the arrogant and all the evildoers will burn up like dry plants"

The day that is coming will burn them up

Here "the day" stands for the events that will occur on that day. Alternate translation: "On that day I will burn them up"

it will leave them neither root nor branch

This expression continues to speak of people as if they were plants or trees. So being deprived of all roots and branches stands for being completely killed off. Alternate translation: "nothing will be left"

Malachi 4:2

you who fear my name

Here "my name" stands for Yahweh himself.

the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings

This can mean 1) Yahweh, who always acts righteously, will come and heal his people on that day or 2) on that day Yahweh will reveal the people's righteousness and heal them.

healing in its wings

Possible meanings are 1) the act of healing someone is spoken of as if it were an object that the sun carried to people by means of its wings or 2) the healing takes place under the wings, that is, in the security God gives his people.

wings

It was common in the Ancient Near East to speak of the sun as if it had wings, with which it moved across the sky. Possible meanings are 1) the sun's life-giving rays of light are spoken of as if they were its wings or 2) the wings are said to cover God's people so as to give them peace and safey.

You will go out, and you will leap like calves from the stall

Here the redeemed people of Yahweh are spoken of as if they were young bulls released from their stalls, allowed to go out into their pasture.

Malachi 4:3

you will trample down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the

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soles of your feet

Here the victory of God's people is spoken of as if they were walking over the burned bodies of their enemies.

they will be ashes

The Israelites' enemies are spoken of as having been burned to ashes (Malachi 4:1).

Malachi 4:4

Remember

Here "Remember" stands for "Think about" and, at the same time, "Obey."

Horeb

This is another name for Sinai.

all Israel

Here "all Israel" is a reference to all the people in the nation of Israel.

the statutes

These are the laws that God gave Israel for all time.

the rulings

These are legal decisions meant to make clear how the general statutes apply to everyday life.

Malachi 4:5

the coming of the great and fearful day of Yahweh

Here the occurrence of this day is spoken of as if it were coming. Alternate translation: "before the great and fearful day of Yahweh happens"

the great and fearful day of Yahweh

This expression refers to any time in which Yahweh acts decisively.

Malachi 4:6

He will turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers

Here changing how people think is spoken of as if it were turning their hearts.

Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Matthew

The birth of Jesus Christ and the beginning of his ministry (1:1–4:25) Jesus's Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:28) Jesus illustrates the kingdom of God through acts of healing (8:1–9:34) Jesus's teaching about mission and the kingdom (9:35–10:42) Jesus's teaching about the gospel of the kingdom of God. The beginning of opposition to Jesus. (11:1–12:50) Jesus's parables about the kingdom of God (13:1–52) Further opposition to Jesus and misunderstanding of the kingdom of God (13:53–17:57) Jesus's teaching about life in the kingdom of God (18:1–35) Jesus ministers in Judea (19:1–22:46) Jesus's teaching about the final judgment and salvation (23:1–25:46) The crucifixion of Jesus, his death and resurrection (26:1–28:19)

What is the book of Matthew about?

The Gospel of Matthew is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life of Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. Matthew showed that Jesus was the Messiah and that God would save Israel through him. Matthew often explained that Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. This may indicate that he expected most of his first readers to be Jewish. (See: christ)

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Gospel of Matthew" or "The Gospel according to Matthew." Or they may choose a title that may be clearer, such as "The Good News about Jesus that Matthew wrote."

Who wrote the Book of Matthew?

The book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times most Christians have thought that the author was the Apostle Matthew.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the "kingdom of heaven?"

Matthew spoke of the kingdom of heaven in the same way that other gospel writers spoke of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven represents God ruling over all people and all creation everywhere. Those whom God accepts into his kingdom will be blessed. They will live with God forever.

What were Jesus's teaching methods?

The people regarded Jesus as a rabbi. A rabbi is a teacher of God's law. Jesus taught in ways similar to other religious teachers in Israel. He had students who followed him wherever he went. These students were called disciples. He often told parables. Parables are stories that teach moral lessons. (See: lawofmoses and disciple and parable)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are the Synoptic Gospels?

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because they have many similar passages. The word "synoptic" means to "see together."

The texts are considered "parallel" when they are the same or almost the same among two or three gospels. When translating parallel passages, translators should use the same wording and make them as similar as possible.

Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "Son of Man"?

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In the gospels, Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man." It is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In this passage there is a person described as a "son of man." That means the person was someone who looked like a human being. God gave authority to the son of man to rule over the nations forever. And all the people will worship him forever.
Jews of Jesus's time did not use "Son of Man" as a title for anyone. Therefore, Jesus used it for himself to help them understand who he truly was. (See: sonofman)
Translating the title "Son of Man" can be difficult in many languages. Readers may misunderstand a literal translation. Translators can consider alternatives, such as "The Human One." It may also be helpful to include a footnote to explain the title.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Matthew?

The following verses are found in older versions of the Bible but are not included in most modern versions:

"Bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you" (5:44) "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (6:13) "But this kind of demon does not go out except with prayer and fasting" (17:21) "For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost" (18:11) "Many are called, but few are chosen" (20:16) "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses, while you make a show of long prayers. You will therefore receive greater condemnation." (23:14)
Translators are advised not to include these passages. However, if in the translators' region there are older versions of the Bible that include one or more of these passages, the translators can include them. If they are included, they should be put inside square brackets

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Matthew

1

[1]The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.

[2]Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers.
[3]Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram.

[4]Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon.
[5]Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse.
[6]Jesse was the father of David the king.David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah.

[7]Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa.
[8]Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram an ancestor of Uzziah.

[9]Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, Ahaz the father of Hezekiah.
[10]Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah.
[11]Josiah was an ancestor of Jechoniah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

[12]After the deportation to Babylon, Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel was an ancestor of Zerubbabel.
[13]Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor.
[14]Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud.

[15]Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob.
[16]Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.
[17]All the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

[18]The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way. His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit.[19]But Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to publicly disgrace her, so he intended to divorce her quietly.
[20]As he thought about these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, because the one who is conceived in her is conceived by the Holy Spirit.[21]She will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."
[22]Now all this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,[23]"Behold, the virgin will become pregnant and will bear a son, and they will call his name Immanuel"—which being translated is "God with us."
[24]Joseph got up from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and he took her as his wife.[25]But he did not know her until she gave birth to a son. Then he called his name Jesus.

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Matthew 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set a quotation from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this for the quoted material in 1:23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogy

A genealogy is a list that records a person's ancestors or descendants. Jews used genealogies to choose the right man to become king. They did this because only a son of a king could become king. Most important people had records of their genealogies.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Use of the passive voice

Matthew uses the passive voice very purposefully in this chapter to indicate that Mary did not have a sexual relationship with anyone. She became pregnant with Jesus because the Holy Spirit performed a miracle. Many languages do not have a passive voice, so translators in those languages must find other ways to present the same truths.

Links:

Matthew 1:1 Matthew intro

Matthew 1:1

General Information:

The author begins with Jesus's genealogy in order to show that he is a descendant of King David and of Abraham. The genealogy continues through Matthew 1:16.

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ

You could translate this as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "This is the list of the ancestors of Jesus Christ"

Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham

There were many generations between Jesus, David, and Abraham. Here "son" means "descendant." Alternate translation: "Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was a descendant of Abraham"

son of David

Sometimes the phrase "son of David" is used as a title, but here it seems to be used only to identify Jesus's ancestry.

Matthew 1:2

Abraham was the father of Isaac

"Abraham became the father of Isaac" or "Abraham had a son Isaac" or "Abraham had a son named Isaac." There are different ways you could translate this. Whichever way you translate it here, it would be best to translate it the same way throughout the list of Jesus's ancestors.

Isaac the father ... Jacob the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Isaac was the father ... Jacob was the father"

Matthew 1:3

Perez ... Zerah ... Hezron ... Ram

These are names of men.

Perez the father ... Hezron the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Perez was the father ... Hezron was the father"

Matthew 1:4

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Amminadab the father ... Nahshon the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Amminadab was the father ... Nahshon was the father"

Matthew 1:5

Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab

"Salmon was the father of Boaz, and Boaz's mother was Rahab" or "Salmon and Rahab were the parents of Boaz"

Boaz the father ... Obed the father

Here the word "was" is understood. Alternate translation: "Boaz was the father ... Obed was the father"

Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth

"Boaz was the father of Obed, and Obed's mother was Ruth" or "Boaz and Ruth were the parents of Obed"

Matthew 1:6

David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah

"David was the father of Solomon, and Solomon's mother was Uriah's wife" or "David and the wife of Uriah were the parents of Solomon"

the wife of Uriah

"the widow of Uriah." Solomon was born after Uriah died.

Matthew 1:7

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Rehoboam the father of Abijah, Abijah the father of Asa

The word "was" is understood in both of these phrases. Alternate translation: "Rehoboam was the father of Abijah, and Abijah was the father of Asa"

Matthew 1:8

Joram

This man was called both Joram and Jehoram in the Old Testament.

Matthew 1:9

Connecting Statement:

This continues the genealogy of Jesus.

Matthew 1:10

Amon

Sometimes this is translated "Amos."

Matthew 1:11

Josiah was an ancestor of Jechoniah

A more specific term for "ancestor" can also be used, particularly if the word "ancestor" would only be used for someone who lived before one's grandparents. Alternate translation: "Josiah was a grandfather of Jechoniah"

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at the time of the deportation to Babylon
"when they were forced to move to Babylon" or "when the Babylonians conquered them and made them go live in Babylon." If your language needs to specify who went to Babylon, you could say "the Israelites" or "the Israelites who lived in Judah."
Babylon
Here this means the country of Babylon, not just the city of Babylon.
Matthew 1:12
Connecting Statement:
This continues the genealogy of Jesus.
After the deportation to Babylon
Use the same wording you used in Matthew 1:11.
Shealtiel was an ancestor of Zerubbabel
Shealtiel was Zerubbabel's grandfather.
Matthew 1:15
Connecting Statement:
This continues the genealogy of Jesus.
Matthew 1:16
Connecting Statement:
The author concludes Jesus's genealogy, which began in Matthew 1:1.
Mary, by whom Jesus was born
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mary, who gave birth to Jesus"
who is called Christ
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom people call Christ"
Matthew 1:17
fourteen
"14"
deportation to Babylon
Use the same wording you used in Matthew 1:11.
Matthew 1:18
General Information:
This begins a new part of the story in which the author describes the events leading up to the birth of Jesus.
His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph
"His mother, Mary, was going to marry Joseph." Parents normally arranged the marriages of their children. Alternate translation: "The parents of Mary, the mother of Jesus, had promised her in marriage to Joseph"
His mother, Mary, was engaged
Translate in a way that makes it clear that Jesus was not already born when Mary was engaged to Joseph. Alternate translation: "Mary, who would be the mother of Jesus, was engaged"
before they came together
"before they got married." This may refer to Mary and Joseph sleeping together. Alternate translation: "before they had slept together"
she was found to be pregnant
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they realized that she was pregnant" or "it happened that she was pregnant"
to be pregnant
"to be carrying a child"
by the Holy Spirit
The power of the Holy Spirit had enabled Mary to have a baby before she had slept with a man.
Matthew 1:19
Joseph, her husband
Joseph had not married Mary yet, but when a man and woman promised to marry each other, Jews considered them husband and wife though they did not live together. Alternate translation: "Joseph, who was supposed to marry Mary"
to divorce her quietly
"to quietly cancel their plans to get married"
Matthew 1:20
As he thought
"As Joseph thought"
appeared to him in a dream
"came to him while Joseph was dreaming"
son of David
Here "son" means "descendant."
the one who is conceived in her is conceived by the Holy Spirit
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant with this child"
Matthew 1:21
She will bear a son
Because God sent the angel, the angel knew the baby was a boy.
you will call his name
"you must name him" or "you must give him the name." This is a command.
for he will save
Translator may add a footnote that says "The name 'Jesus' means 'the Lord saves.'"
his people
This refers to the Jews.
Matthew 1:22
General Information:
The author quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's birth was according to scripture.
all this happened
The angel is no longer speaking. Matthew is now explaining the importance of what the angel said.
what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord told the prophet to write long ago"
the prophet
There were many prophets. Matthew was speaking of Isaiah. Alternate translation: "the prophet Isaiah"
Matthew 1:23
Behold ... Immanuel
Here Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah.
Behold, the virgin
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: the virgin"
Immanuel
This is a male name.
Immanuel"—which being translated is "God with us."
This is not in the book of Isaiah. Matthew is explaining the meaning of the name "Immanuel." You could translate it as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Immanuel."

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This name means 'God with us.'"
Matthew 1:24
Connecting Statement:
The author concludes his description of the events leading up to the birth of Jesus.
as the angel of the Lord commanded
The angel had told Joseph to take Mary as his wife and to name the child Jesus.
he took her as his wife
"he married Mary"
Matthew 1:25
he did not know her
This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "he did not have sexual relations with her"
to a son
"to a male baby" or "to her son." Make sure it is clear that Joseph is not portrayed as the actual father.
Then he called his name Jesus
"Joseph named the child Jesus"

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2 [1]After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying,[2]"Where is he who was born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."[3]When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
[4]Herod brought together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, and he asked them, "Where is the Christ to be born?"[5]They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what was written by the prophet:
[6] 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are not the least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you will come one who rules,
who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

[7]Then Herod secretly called the learned men to ask them exactly what time the star had appeared.[8]He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the young child. When you have found him, bring me a report so that I also may come and worship him."
[9]After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star that they had seen in the east went before them until it came and stood still over where the young child was.[10]When they saw the star, they rejoiced with very great joy.
[11]They went into the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother. They fell down and worshiped him. They opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.[12]God warned them in a dream not to return to Herod, so they departed to their own country by another way.

[13]After they had departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the young child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Remain there until I tell you, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."[14]That night Joseph rose and took the young child and his mother and departed into Egypt.[15]He remained there until the death of Herod. This fulfilled what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I have called my Son."

[16]Then Herod, when he saw that he had been mocked by the learned men, was very angry. He sent and killed all the male children that were in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old and under, according to the time that he had determined exactly from the learned men.
[17]Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
[18] "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
and she refused to be comforted,
because they were no more."

[19]When Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,[20]"Get up and take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead."[21]Joseph rose, took the child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.
[22]But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. After God warned him in a dream, he left for the region of Galilee[23]and went and lived in a city called Nazareth. This fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Matthew 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with

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the poetry in verses 6 and 18, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

"His star"

These words probably refer to a star that the learned men believed to be the sign of a new king of Israel. (See: sign)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Learned men"

English translations use many different words to translate this phrase. These words include "magi" and "wise men." These men could have been scientists or astrologers. If you can, you should translate this with the general words "learned men."

Links:

Matthew 2:1 Notes

Matthew 2:1

General Information:

A new part of the story begins here and continues through the end of the chapter. Matthew tells about Herod's attempt to kill the new King of the Jews.

Bethlehem of Judea

"the town of Bethlehem in the province of Judea"

in the days of Herod the king

"when Herod was king there"

Herod

This refers to Herod the Great.

learned men from the east

"men from the east who studied the stars"

from the east

"from a country far east of Judea"

Matthew 2:2

Where is he who was born King of the Jews?

The men knew from studying the stars that the one who would become king had been born. They were trying to learn where he was. Alternate translation: "A baby who will become the king of the Jews has been born. Where is he?"

his star

They were not saying that the baby was the rightful owner of the star. Alternate translation: "the star that tells about him" or "the star that is associated with his birth"

in the east

"as it came up in the east" or "while we were in our country"

worship

Possible meanings are 1) they intended to worship the baby as divine, or 2) they wanted to honor him as a human king. If your language has a word that includes both meanings, you should consider using it here.

Matthew 2:3

he was troubled

"he was worried." Herod was worried that this baby would replace him as king.

all Jerusalem

Here "Jerusalem" refers to the people. Also, "all" means "many." Matthew is exaggerating to emphasize how many people were worried. Alternate translation: "many of the people in Jerusalem"

Matthew 2:5

In Bethlehem of Judea

"In the town of Bethlehem in the province of Judea"

this is what was written by the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what the prophet wrote long ago"

Matthew 2:6

General Information:

The chief priests and scribes of the people quote the prophet Micah to show that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

you, Bethlehem, ... are not the least among the rulers of Judah

Micah was speaking to the people of Bethlehem as if they were with him but they were not. Also, "are not the least" can be translated with a positive phrase. Alternate translation: "you, people of Bethlehem, ... your town is among the most important towns in Judah"

who will shepherd my people Israel

Micah speaks of this ruler as a shepherd. This means he will lead and care for the people. Alternate translation: "who will lead my people Israel as a shepherd leads his sheep"

Matthew 2:7

Herod secretly called the learned men

This means that Herod talked to the learned men without other people knowing.

men to ask them exactly what time the star had appeared.

This can be translated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "men, and he asked them, 'When exactly did this star appear?'"

what time the star had appeared

It is implied that the learned men told him when the star appeared. Alternate translation: "what time the star had appeared. The learned men told Herod when the star first appeared"

Matthew 2:8

young child

This refers to Jesus.

bring me a report

"report back to me" or "let me know"

worship him

See how you translated this in Matthew 2:2.

Matthew 2:9

After they

"After the learned men"

they had seen in the east

"they had seen come up in the east" or "they had seen in their country"

went before them

"guided them" or "led them"

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stood still over
"stopped over"
where the young child was
"the place where the young child was staying"
Matthew 2:11
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to the house where Mary, Joseph, and the young Jesus were living.
They went
"The learned men went"
They fell down and worshiped him
"They knelt down and put their faces close to the ground." They did this to honor Jesus.
their treasures
Here "treasures" refers to the boxes or bags they used to carry their treasures. Alternate translation: "the containers that held their treasures"
Matthew 2:12
God warned them
"Afterwards, God warned the learned men." God knew that Herod wanted to harm the child.
dream not to return to Herod, so
This can be translated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "dream, saying, 'Do not go back to King Herod,' so"
Matthew 2:13
they had departed
"the learned men had departed"
appeared to Joseph in a dream
"came to Joseph while he was dreaming"
Get up, take ... flee ... Remain ... you
God is speaking to Joseph, so these should all be singular forms.
until I tell you
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "until I tell you it is safe to come back"
I tell you
Here "I" refers to God. The angel is speaking for God.
Matthew 2:15
General Information:
Matthew quotes the prophet Hosea to show that the Christ would spend time in Egypt.
He remained
It is implied that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus remained in Egypt. Alternate translation: "They remained"
until the death of Herod
Herod does not die until Matthew 2:19. This statement describes the length of their stay in Egypt, and it does not say that Herod died at this time.
what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord had said through the prophet; he had said" or "what the Lord had told the prophet to tell the people; he had said"
Out of Egypt I have called my Son
"I have called my Son out of Egypt"
my Son
In Hosea this refers to the people of Israel. Matthew quoted it to say that this was true of God's Son, Jesus. Translate it using a word for son that could refer to the only son or the first son.
Matthew 2:16
General Information:
These events happen before Herod's death, which Matthew mentioned in [Matthew 2:15]
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts back to Herod and tells what he did when he learned that the learned men had deceived him.
he had been mocked by the learned men
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the learned men had embarrassed him by tricking him"
He sent and killed all the male children
Herod did not kill the children himself. Alternate translation: "He gave orders for his soldiers to kill all the boys" or "He sent soldiers there to kill all the boy babies"
two years old and under
"2 years old and younger"
according to the time
"based on the time"
Matthew 2:17
General Information:
Matthew quotes the prophet Jeremiah to show that the death of all of the male children in the region of Bethlehem was according to scripture.
Then was fulfilled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled" or "Herod's actions fulfilled"
what had been spoken through Jeremiah the prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophet Jeremiah"
Matthew 2:18
A voice was heard ... they were no more
Matthew is quoting the prophet Jeremiah.
A voice was heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People heard a voice" or "There was a loud sound"
Rachel weeping for her children
Rachel lived many years before this time. This prophecy shows Rachel, who has died, weeping for her descendants.
she refused to be comforted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one could comfort her"
because they were no more
"because the children were gone and would never return." Here "were no more" is a mild way of saying they are dead. Alternate translation: "because they were dead"
Matthew 2:19
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to Egypt, where Joseph, Mary, and the young Jesus are living.
behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.
Matthew 2:20
those who sought the child's life

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Here "sought the child's life" is a way of saying they wanted to kill the child. "Alternate translation: "those who were looking for the child in order to kill him"

those who sought

This refers to King Herod and his advisors.

Matthew 2:22

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 2:1 about Herod's attempt to kill the new King of the Jews.

But when he heard

"But when Joseph heard"

Archelaus

This is the name of Herod's son.

he was afraid

"Joseph was afraid"

Matthew 2:23

what had been spoken through the prophets

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the Lord spoke long ago through the prophets"

he would be called a Nazarene

Here "he" refers to Jesus. The prophets before the time of Jesus would have referred to him as the Messiah or the Christ. Alternate translation: "people would say that the Christ is a Nazarene"

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3 [1]In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying,[2]"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."[3]For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying,

"The voice of one calling out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.'"

[4]Now John wore clothing of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.[5]Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan River went out to him.[6]They were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.
[7]But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him for baptism, he said to them, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming?[8]Bear fruit worthy of repentance.[9]Do not think of saying among yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham even out of these stones.
[10]Already the ax has been placed against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire.[11]I baptize you with water for repentance. But he who comes after me is mightier than I, and I am not worthy even to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.[12]His winnowing fork is in his hand to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor and to gather his wheat into the storehouse. But he will burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out."

[13]Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptized by John.[14]But John kept trying to stop him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"[15]Jesus responded and said to him, "Permit it now, for it is right for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then John permitted him.
[16]After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him. He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting upon him.[17]Behold, a voice came out of the heavens saying, "This is my beloved Son. I am very pleased with him."

Matthew 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in verse 3.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Bear fruit worthy of repentance"

Fruit is a common picture word in the scriptures. Writers use it to describe the results of either good or bad behavior. In this chapter, good fruit is the result of living as God commands. (See: fruit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of heaven is near"

No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when John spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Links:

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Matthew 3:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of the ministry of John the Baptist.

In those days

This is many years after Joseph and his family left Egypt and went to Nazareth. This is probably near the time that Jesus begins his ministry. Alternate translation: "Some time later" or "Some years later"

Matthew 3:2

Repent

This is plural in form. John is speaking to the crowds.

the kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use the word "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "our God in heaven will soon show himself to be king"

Matthew 3:3

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that John the Baptist was God's appointed messenger to prepare for Jesus's ministry.

For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Isaiah the prophet was speaking of John the Baptist when he said"

The voice of one calling out in the wilderness

This can be expressed as a sentence. Alternate translation: "The voice of one calling out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone calling out in the wilderness"

Make ready the way of the Lord ... make his paths straight

These two phrases mean the same thing.

Make ready the way of the Lord

"Get the road ready for the Lord." Doing this represents being prepared to hear the Lord's message when he comes. People do this by repenting of their sins. Alternate translation: "Prepare to hear the Lord's message when he comes" or "Repent and be ready for the Lord to come"

Matthew 3:4

Now ... wild honey

The word "Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells background information about John the Baptist.

wore clothing of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist

This clothing symbolizes that John is a prophet like the prophets from long ago, especially the prophet Elijah.

Matthew 3:5

Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region

The words "Jerusalem," "Judea," and "the region" are metonyms for the people from those areas. The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize that very many people went out. Alternate translation: Then very may people from Jerusalem, Judea, and that region"

Matthew 3:6

They were baptized by him ... River, confessing their sins

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John baptized them ... River after they confessed their sins"

They

This refers to the people coming from Jerusalem, Judea, and the region around the Jordan River.

Matthew 3:7

General Information:

John the Baptist begins to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees.

You offspring of vipers, who

This is a metaphor. Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are a kind of dangerous snakes and represent evil. This can be stated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "You evil poisonous snakes! Who" or "You are evil like poisonous snakes! Who"

who warned you to flee from the wrath that is coming?

John uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees because they were asking him to baptize them so that God would not punish them, but they did not want to stop sinning. Alternate translation: "you cannot flee from God's wrath like this." or "do not think that you can flee from God's wrath just because I baptize you."

flee from the wrath that is coming

The word "wrath" is being used to refer to God's punishment because his wrath precedes it. Alternate translation: "run away from the punishment that is coming" or "escape because God is about to punish you"

Matthew 3:8

Bear fruit worthy of repentance

The phrase "bear fruit" is a metaphor referring to a person's actions. Alternate translation: "Let your actions show that you have truly repented"

Matthew 3:9

We have Abraham for our father

"Abraham is our ancestor" or "We are descendants of Abraham." The Jewish leaders thought that God would not punish them since they were descendants of Abraham.

For I say to you

This adds emphasis to what John is about to say.

God is able to raise up children for Abraham even out of these stones

"God is able to make physical descendants out of even these stones and give them to Abraham"

Matthew 3:10

Connecting Statement:

John the Baptist continues to rebuke the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Already the ax has been placed against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire

This metaphor means God is ready to punish sinners. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has his axe and he is ready to cut down and burn any tree that grows bad fruit" or "As a person gets his axe ready to cut down and burn a tree that grows bad fruit, God is ready to punish you for your sins"

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Matthew 3:11

for repentance

"to show that you have repented"

But he who comes after me

Jesus is the person who comes after John.

is mightier than I

"is more important than I am"

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

This metaphor compares John's baptism with water to the future baptism with fire. This means John's baptism only symbolically cleanses people of their sins. The baptism by Holy Spirit and fire will truly cleanse people of their sins. If possible, use the word "baptize" in your translation to keep the comparison to John's baptism.

Matthew 3:12

His winnowing fork is in his hand

This metaphor compares the way Christ will separate the righteous people from the unrighteous people to the way a man separates wheat grain from chaff. Alternate translation: "Christ is like a man whose winnowing fork is in his hand"

His winnowing fork is in his hand

Here "in his hand" means the person is ready to act. Alternate translation: "Christ is holding a winnowing fork because he is ready"

winnowing fork

This is a tool for tossing wheat up into the air to separate the wheat grain from the chaff. The heavier grain falls back down and the unwanted chaff is blown away by the wind. It is similar in shape to a pitchfork but with wide tines made of wood.

his threshing floor

"his ground" or "the ground where he separates the grain from the chaff"

gather his wheat into the storehouse ... burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out

This is a metaphor showing how God will separate righteous people from evil people. The righteous will go to heaven like wheat into a farmer's storehouse, and God will burn the people who are like chaff with a fire that will never be put out.

can never be put out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will never burn out"

Matthew 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time when John the Baptist baptizes Jesus.

to be baptized by John

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so John could baptize him"

Matthew 3:14

I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?

John uses a question to show his surprise at Jesus's request. Alternate translation: "You are more important than I am. I should not baptize you. You should baptize me."

Matthew 3:15

for us

Here "us" refers to Jesus and John.

John permitted him

You may need to make explicit that John permitted Jesus to be baptized by John. Alternate translation: "John allowed Jesus to be baptized" or "John agreed to baptize Jesus"

Matthew 3:16

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about John the Baptist. It describes what happened after he baptized Jesus.

After he was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After John baptized Jesus"

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

the heavens were opened to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus saw the sky open" or "God opened the heavens to Jesus"

coming down like a dove

Possible meanings are 1) this is simply a statement that the Spirit was in the form of a dove or 2) this is a simile that compares the Spirit coming down upon Jesus gently, the way a dove would.

Matthew 3:17

a voice came out of the heavens saying

"Jesus heard a voice from heaven." Here "voice" refers to God speaking. Alternate translation: "God spoke from heaven"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

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4 [1]Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.[2]When he had fasted forty days and
forty nights, he was hungry.[3]The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to
become bread."

[4]But Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes out of
the mouth of God.'"

[5]Then the devil took him into the holy city and set him on the highest point of the temple building,[6]and said to him, "If you
are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels to take care of you,'
and
'They will carry you in their hands,

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so that you will not hit your foot against a stone.'"

[7]Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You must not test the Lord your God.'"
[8]Again, the devil took him up to a very high hill and showed him all the kingdoms of the world along with all their glory.
[9]He said to him, "All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me."

[10]Then Jesus said to him, "Go away from here, Satan! For it is written, 'You will worship the Lord your God, and you will serve only him.'"
[11]Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and served him.

[12]Now when Jesus heard that John had been handed over, he withdrew into Galilee.[13]He left Nazareth and went and lived in Capernaum, which is by the Sea of Galilee in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali.
[14]This happened to fulfill what was said by Isaiah the prophet:
[15] "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
toward the sea, beyond the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles!

[16] The people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and to those who sat in the region and shadow of death,
upon them has a light arisen."

[17]From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."
[18]As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.[19]Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."[20]Immediately they left the nets and followed him.
[21]As Jesus was going on from there he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and John his brother. They were in the boat with Zebedee their father mending their nets. He called them,[22]and they immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

[23]Jesus went about in all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people.[24]The news about him went out into all of Syria, and the people brought to him all those who suffered from various diseases and pains, those who were possessed by demons, the epileptics, and the paralytics. Jesus healed them.[25]Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Matthew 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 6, 15 and 16, which is from the Old Testament.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"the kingdom of heaven has come near"
No one knows for use whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when Jesus spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phase "is coming near" and "has come near."
"If you are the Son of God"
The reader should not understand these words in verses 3 and 6 to mean that Satan did not know whether Jesus was the Son of God. God had already said that Jesus was his Son (Matthew 3:17), so Satan knew who Jesus was. He also knew that Jesus could make stones become bread and could throw himself off of high places and not be hurt. He was trying to make Jesus do these things and so disobey God and obey Satan. These words can be translated as "Show me your power if you are the Son of God" (See: satan and sonofgod)

Links:

Matthew 4:1 Notes

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Matthew 4:1

General Information:

Here Matthew begins a new part of the story in which Satan tempts Jesus in the wilderness after Jesus has been there for 40 days.

Jesus was led up by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Spirit led Jesus"

to be tempted by the devil

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so the devil could tempt Jesus"

Matthew 4:2

he had fasted ... he was hungry

These refer to Jesus.

forty days and forty nights

"40 days and 40 nights." This refers to 24-hour periods. Alternate translation: "40 days"

Matthew 4:3

The tempter

These words refer to the same being as "the devil" (verse 1). You may have to use the same word to translate both.

If you are the Son of God, command

It is best to assume that Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. Possible meanings are 1) this is a temptation to do miracles for Jesus's own benefit. Alternate translation: "You are the Son of God, so you can command" or 2) this is a challenge or accusation. Alternate translation: "Prove that you are the Son of God by commanding"

the Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

command these stones to become bread.

You could translate this with a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "say to these stones, 'Become bread.'"

bread

Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

Matthew 4:4

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with a quotation from Deuteronomy.

It is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote this in the scriptures long ago"

Man does not live on bread alone

This implies that there is something more important to life than food.

but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God

Here "word" and "mouth" refer to what God says. Alternate translation: "but by listening to everything that God says"

Matthew 4:6

General Information:

Satan quotes from the Psalms in order to tempt Jesus.

If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down

It is best to assume that Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God. Possible meanings are 1) this is a temptation to do a miracle for Jesus's own benefit. Alternate translation: "Since you are truly the Son of God, you can throw yourself down" or 2) this is a challenge or accusation. Alternate translation: "Prove that you are truly the Son of God by throwing yourself down"

the Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

throw yourself down

"let yourself fall to the ground" or "jump down"

for it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the writer wrote in the scriptures" or "for it says in the scriptures"

'He will command his angels to take care of you,' and

This can be translated with a direct quotation, and you can specify that it is God who will command. Alternate translation: "'God will say to his angels, "Take care of him,"' and" or "'God will command his angels to take care of you,' and"

They will carry you

"The angels will hold you"

Matthew 4:7

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with another quotation from Deuteronomy.

Again it is written

It is understood that Jesus is quoting scripture again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Again, I will tell you what Moses wrote in the scriptures"

You must not test

Here "you" refers to anyone. Alternate translation: "One should not test" or "No person should test"

Matthew 4:8

Again, the devil

"Next, the devil"

Matthew 4:9

He said to him

"The devil said to Jesus"

All these things I will give you

"I will give you all these things." The tempter is emphasizing here that he will give "all these things," not just some of them.

fall down

"put your face near the ground." This was a common action to show that a person was worshiping.

Matthew 4:10

General Information:

Jesus rebukes Satan with another quotation from Deuteronomy.

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about how Satan tempted Jesus.

For it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Moses also wrote in the scriptures"

You will worship ... you will serve

Both instances of "you" are singular, a command to everyone who hears it.

Matthew 4:11

behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the important new information that follows.

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Matthew 4:12

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story in which Matthew describes the beginning of Jesus's ministry in Galilee. These verses explain how Jesus came to be in Galilee.

Now

This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Matthew starts to tell a new part of the story.

John had been handed over

This can be stated in active form and the information omitted from the euphemism can be stated. Alternate translation: "the king had handed John over to the prison" or "the king had arrested John"

Matthew 4:13

in the territories of Zebulun and Naphtali

"Zebulun" and "Naphtali" are the names of the tribes that lived in these territories many years earlier before foreigners took control of the land of Israel.

Matthew 4:14

This happened

This refers to Jesus's going to live in Capernaum.

what was said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God said"

Matthew 4:15

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's ministry in Galilee was a fulfillment of prophecy.

The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali ... Galilee of the Gentiles!

These are two descriptions of the same territory.

toward the sea

This is the Sea of Galilee.

Matthew 4:16

General Information:

Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's ministry in Galilee was a fulfillment of prophecy.

The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light

Here "darkness" is a metaphor for not knowing the truth about God. And "light" is a metaphor for God's true message that saves people from their sin.

The people who sat

These words can be combined with the sentence beginning with "The land of Zebulun" (verse 15). Alternate translation: "In the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali ... where many Gentiles live, the people who sat"

who sat ... who sat

"who were living ... who were living." The word "sat" is an idiom for having lived for a long time in one place, not to sitting on the ground or a piece of furniture.

to those who sat in the region and shadow of death, upon them has a light arisen

This basically has the same meaning as the first part of the sentence. Here "those who sat in the region and shadow of death" is a metaphor. It represents those who did not know God. These people were in danger of dying and being separated from God forever.

Matthew 4:17

the kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "the kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, include a word that means "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 3:2]

Matthew 4:18

General Information:

This begins a new scene within the part of the story about Jesus's ministry in Galilee. Here he begins to gather men to be his disciples.

casting a net into the sea

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "throwing a net into the water to catch fish"

Matthew 4:19

Come, follow me

Jesus invites Simon and Andrew to follow him, live with him, and become his disciples. Alternate translation: "Be my disciples"

I will make you fishers of men

This metaphor means Simon and Andrew will teach people God's true message, so others will also follow Jesus. Alternate translation: "I will teach you to gather men to me like you used to gather fish"

Matthew 4:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus calls more men to be his disciples.

He called them

"Jesus called John and James." This phrase also means that Jesus invited them to follow him, live with him, and become his disciples.

Matthew 4:22

they immediately left

"at that moment they left"

left the boat ... and followed him

It should be clear that they immediately put their nets down and left that place with Jesus. If your language requires you to tell whether they were leaving for the rest of the day or for a long time or for the rest of their lives, you should probably translate as they were leaving for the rest of their lives. It would be good to have a note saying that the Greek does not specify how long they would be gone.

Matthew 4:23

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about the beginning of Jesus's ministry in Galilee. The rest of this chapter summarizes what he did and how the people responded.

teaching in their synagogues

"teaching in the synagogues of the Galileans" or "teaching in the synagogues of those people"

preaching the gospel of the kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God's reign as king. Alternate translation: "preaching the good news that God will show himself as king"

every kind of disease and sickness

The words "disease" and "sickness" are closely related but should be translated as two different words if possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be sick. "Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that results from having

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a disease.
Matthew 4:24
those who were possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom demons controlled"
the epileptics
The word "epileptic" refers to people who have epilepsy and so sometimes become unconscious and move uncontrollably.
Matthew 4:25
the Decapolis
This name means "the Ten Towns." This is the name of a region to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee.

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5 [1]When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain. When he had sat down, his disciples came to him.[2]He opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

[3] "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[4] Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

[5] Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

[6] Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

[7] Blessed are the merciful,
for they will obtain mercy.

[8] Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

[9] Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.

[10] Blessed are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[11]"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely for my sake.[12]Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For in this way people persecuted the prophets who lived before you.

[13]"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again? It is never again good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.[14]You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.
[15]Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but rather on the lampstand, and it shines for everyone in the house.[16]Let your light shine before people in such a way that they see your good deeds and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

[17]"Do not think that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have come not to destroy them, but to fulfill them.
[18]For truly I say to you that until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will in any way pass away from the law, until all things have been accomplished.
[19]Therefore whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever keeps them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.[20]For I say to you that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven.

[21]"You have heard that it was said to them in ancient times, 'Do not murder,' and 'Whoever murders will be subject to judgment.'[22]But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment; and whoever says to

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his brother, 'You worthless person!' will be subject to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be subject to the fire of hell.
[23]Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has anything against you,
[24]leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go on your way. First be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.
[25]Agree with your adversary quickly while you are with him on the way to court, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.[26]Truly I say to you, you will never come out from there until you have paid the last penny you owe.

[27]"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'[28]But I say to you that everyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.
[29]If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. For it is better for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should be thrown into hell.[30]If your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. For it is better for you that one of your members should perish than that your whole body should go into hell.
[31]It was also said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'[32]But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on account of sexual immorality, makes her an adulteress. Whoever marries her after she has been divorced commits adultery.

[33]"Again, you have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, 'Do not swear a false oath, but carry out your oaths to the Lord.'[34]But I say to you, swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God;[35]nor by the earth, for it is the footstool for his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.
[36]Neither swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.[37]But let your speech be 'Yes, yes,' or 'No, no.' Anything that is more than this is from the evil one.

[38]"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'[39]But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. Instead, whoever strikes you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.
[40]If anyone wishes to bring a lawsuit against you and takes away your tunic, let that person also have your cloak.
[41]Whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.[42]Give to anyone who asks you, and do not turn away from anyone who wishes to borrow from you.

[43]"You have heard that it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'[44]But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,[1][45]so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.
[46]For if you love those who love you, what reward do you get? Do not even the tax collectors do the same thing?[47]If you greet only your brothers, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same thing?[48]Therefore you must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

[1]The best ancient copies do not have Bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you.

Matthew 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Many people call the words in Matthew 5-7 the Sermon on the Mount. This is one long lesson that Jesus taught. Bibles divide this lesson into three chapters, but this can sometimes confuse the reader. If your translation divides the text into sections, be sure that the reader understands that the whole sermon is one large section.
Matthew 5:3-10, known as The Beatitudes or as The Blessings, has been set apart by being set farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text, with each line beginning with the word "blessed." This way of placing the words on the page highlights the poetic form of this teaching.
Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Special concepts in this chapter

"His disciples"
It is possible to refer to anyone who followed Jesus as a follower or disciple. Jesus selected twelve of his followers to become his closest disciples, "the twelve disciples." They would later become known as the apostles.

Links:

Matthew 5:1 Notes

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Matthew 5:1

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story in which Jesus begins to teach his disciples. This part continues through the end of chapter 7 and is frequently called the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:2

He opened his mouth

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "Jesus began to speak"

taught them

The word "them" refers to his disciples.

Matthew 5:3

General Information:

Here, Jesus begins to describe the characteristics of people who are blessed.

the poor in spirit

This means people who are humble. Alternate translation: "those who know they need God"

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "for God in heaven will be their king"

Matthew 5:4

those who mourn

Possible reasons they are sad are 1) the sinfulness of the world or 2) their own sins or 3) the death of someone. Do not specify the reason for mourning unless your language requires it.

they will be comforted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will comfort them"

Matthew 5:5

the meek

"the gentle" or "those who do not rely on their own power"

they will inherit the earth

"God will give them the entire earth"

Matthew 5:6

those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

This metaphor describes people who strongly desire to do what is right. Alternate translation: "those who desire to live right as much as they desire food and drink"

they will be filled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will fill them" or "God will satisfy them"

Matthew 5:8

the pure in heart

"people whose hearts are pure." Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being or intentions. Alternate translation: "those who only want to serve God"

they will see God

This means they will be able to live in God's presence. Alternate translation: "God will allow them to live with him"

Matthew 5:9

the peacemakers

These are the people who help others to have peace with one another.

for they will be called sons of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God will call them his children" or "they will be children of God"

sons of God

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human son or child.

Matthew 5:10

those who have been persecuted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those people whom others treat unfairly"

for righteousness' sake

"because they do what God wants them to do"

theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:3]

Matthew 5:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes describing the characteristics of people who are blessed.

Blessed are you

The word "you" is plural.

say all kinds of evil things against you falsely

"say all kinds of evil lies about you" or "say bad things about you that are not true"

for my sake

"because you follow me" or because you believe in me"

Matthew 5:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about how his disciples are like salt and light.

You are the salt of the earth

Possible meanings are 1) just as salt makes food good, disciples of Jesus influence the people of the world so that they will be good. Alternate translation: "You are like salt for the people of the world" or 2) just as salt preserves food, disciples of Jesus keep people from becoming totally corrupt. Alternate translation: "As salt is for food, you are for the world"

if the salt has lost its taste

Possible meanings are 1) "if the salt has lost its power to do things that salt does" or 2) "if the salt has lost its flavor."

how can it be made salty again?

"how can it be made useful again?" Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "there is no way for it to become useful again."

except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "except for people to throw it out into the road and walk on it"

Matthew 5:14

You are the light of the world

This means Jesus's followers bring the message of God's truth to all the people who do not know God. Alternate translation: "You are like a light for the people of the world"

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden

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At night when it is dark, people can see the city lights shining. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "During the night, no one can hide the lights that shine from a city on a hill" or "Everyone sees the lights of a city on a hill"
Matthew 5:15
Neither do people light a lamp
"People do not light a lamp"
put it under a basket
"place the lamp under a basket." This is saying it is foolish to create light only to hide it so people do not see the light of the lamp.
Matthew 5:16
Let your light shine before people
This means a disciple of Jesus should live in such a way that others can learn about God's truth. Alternate translation: "Let your lives be like a light that shines before people"
your Father who is in heaven
It is best to translate "Father" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human father.
Matthew 5:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law.
the prophets
This refers to what the prophets wrote in the scriptures.
Matthew 5:18
truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
until heaven and earth pass away
Here "heaven" and "earth" refer to the entire universe. Alternate translation: "as long as the universe lasts"
all things have been accomplished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all things have happened" or "God causes all things to happen"
all things
The phrase "all things" refers to everything in the law. Alternate translation: "everything in the law" or "all that is written in the law"
Matthew 5:19
whoever breaks
Possible meanings are 1) "whoever disobeys" or 2) "whoever ignores."
the least one of these commandments and teaches
"any of these commandments, even the least important one, and teaches"
whoever ... teaches others to do so will be called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if anyone ... teaches others to do so, God will call that person"
least in the kingdom of heaven
The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in Matthew. If possible use "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "the least important in his heavenly kingdom" or "the least important under the rule of our God in heaven"
keeps them and teaches them
"obeys all these commandments and teaches others to do the same"
great
most important
Matthew 5:20
For I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
you ... your ... you
These are plural.
that unless your righteousness exceeds ... Pharisees, you will in no way enter
This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "that your righteousness must exceed ... Pharisees in order to enter"
Matthew 5:21
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The understood "you" is singular in "Do not murder," but in some languages it may need to be translated as plural.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about murder and anger.
it was said to them in ancient times
This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God said to those who lived long ago" or "Moses said to your ancestors long ago"
will be subject to judgment
Possible meanings are 1) "will have to go to the judge" or 2) "will be in danger of punishment."
Matthew 5:22
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "I say to you."
But I say
Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis.
brother
This refers to a fellow believer, not to a literal brother or a neighbor.
worthless person ... fool
Both of these insults represent a person who cannot think correctly. "Worthless person" is close to "brainless," where "fool" adds the idea of disobedience to God.
council
This was likely a local council, not the main Sanhedrin in Jerusalem.
Matthew 5:23
you
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.
offering your gift
"giving your gift" or "bringing your gift"

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at the altar
It is implied that this is God's altar at the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "to God at the altar in the temple"
there remember
"while you are standing at the altar you remember"
your brother has anything against you
"another person is angry with you because of something you did"
Matthew 5:24
First be reconciled with your brother
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "First make peace with the person"
Matthew 5:25
Agree with your
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.
your adversary
This is a person who takes someone to court for doing something wrong to accuse him before a judge.
may hand you over to the judge
Here "hand you over" means to give someone into the control of someone else. Alternate translation: "will let the judge deal with you"
the judge may hand you over to the officer
Here "hand you over" means to give someone into the control of someone else. Alternate translation: "the judge will give you over to the officer"
officer
a person who has authority to carry out the decisions of a judge
you may be thrown into prison
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the officer might put you in prison"
Matthew 5:26
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
from there
"from prison"
Matthew 5:27
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The understood "you" is singular in "Do not commit adultery," but in some languages it may need to be translated as plural.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about adultery and lust.
that it was said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God said" or "that Moses said"
commit
This word means to act out or do something.
Matthew 5:28
But I say
Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.
everyone who looks on a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart
This metaphor indicates that a man who lusts after a woman is as guilty of adultery as a man who actually commits the act of adultery.
to lust after her
"and lusts after her" or "and desires to sleep with her"
in his heart
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "in his mind" or "in his thoughts"
Matthew 5:29
If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you
The irony here is that people use their eyes in part to keep from stumbling. Here "eye" is a metonym for what a person chooses to look at or learn about, "stumble" is a metaphor for "sin," and "pluck it out and throw it away from you" is a hyperbolic metaphor for doing everything possible to avoid sinning. Alternate translation: "if what you are interested in causes you to want to sin, do everything you can to stay away from it"
If your
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are singular, but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.
right eye
This refers to the eye on the right-hand side of the face. The Jews thought of the right hand as more important than the left, so the phrase "right eye" was a metaphor for the most important eye. You may need to translate "right" as "better" or "stronger."
pluck it out
This is an exaggerated command for a person to do whatever he needs to do to stop sinning. It means "forcefully remove it" or "destroy it." If the right eye is not specifically mentioned, you may need to translate this "destroy your eyes." If eyes have been mentioned, you may need to translate this "destroy them."
throw it away from you
"get rid of it"
one of your members should perish
"you should lose one part of your body"
than that your whole body should be thrown into hell
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than for God to throw your whole body into hell"
Matthew 5:30
If your right hand causes
In this metonymy, the hand stands for the actions of the whole person.
right hand
This means the most important hand, as opposed to the left

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hand. You may need to translate "right" as "better" or "stronger."

cut it off

This is an exaggerated command for a person to do whatever he needs to do to stop sinning.

Matthew 5:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about divorce.

It was also said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also said" or "Moses also said"

sends his wife away

This is a euphemism for "divorces his wife."

let him give

"he must give"

Matthew 5:32

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

makes her an adulteress

It is the man who divorces the woman improperly who "causes her to commit adultery." In many cultures it would be normal for her to remarry, but if the divorce is improper, such a remarriage is adultery.

her after she has been divorced

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "her after her husband has divorced her" or "the divorced woman"

Matthew 5:33

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" is plural in "you have heard." The "you" and "your" are singular in "Do not swear" and "carry out your oaths," but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about swearing oaths.

Again, you

"Also, you" or "Here is another example. You"

it was said to those in ancient times

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God said to those who lived long ago" or "Moses said to your ancestors long ago"

Do not swear a false oath, but carry out your oaths to the Lord.

"Do not swear that you will do something and then not do it. Instead do whatever you have sworn to the Lord that you will do"

Matthew 5:34

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is equally important to the original commands from God. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

swear not at all

"do not swear at all" or "do not swear by anything"

it is the throne of God

Because God reigns from heaven, Jesus speaks of heaven as if it were a throne. Alternate translation: "it is from here that God rules"

Matthew 5:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes his words from verse 34, telling the people not to swear.

nor by the earth ... city of the great King

Here Jesus means that when people make a promise or when they say that something is true, they must not swear by anything. Some people were teaching that if a person swears by God that he will do something, then he must do it, but if he swears by something else, such as by heaven or earth, then it is less offensive if he does not do what he swore to do. Jesus says that swearing by heaven or earth or Jerusalem is just as serious as swearing by God because those things all belong to God.

it is the footstool for his feet

This metaphor means the earth also belongs to God. Alternate translation: "it is like a footstool where a king rests his feet"

for it is the city of the great King

"for it is the city that belongs to God, the great King"

Matthew 5:36

General Information:

Previously Jesus told his hearers that God's throne, footstool, and earthly home are not theirs to swear by. Here he says that they may not swear even by their own heads.

your ... you

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of these words are singular, but you may have to translate them as plural.

swear

This refers to taking an oath. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:34.

Matthew 5:37

let your speech be 'Yes, yes,' or 'No, no.'

"if you mean 'yes,' say 'yes,' and if you mean 'no,' say 'no.'"

Matthew 5:38

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "you have heard" is plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about retaliating against an enemy.

that it was said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:27]

eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth

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The law of Moses allowed a person to harm a person in the same way he had harmed him, but he could not harm him worse.

Matthew 5:39

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "I say to you" is plural. The "you" in "whoever strikes you" and the understood "you" in "turn to him" are both singular, but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis.

one who is evil

"an evil person" or "someone who harms you"

strikes ... your right cheek

To strike the side of a man's face was an insult in Jesus's culture. As with the eye and the hand, the right cheek is the more important one, and striking that cheek was a terrible insult.

strikes

hits with the back of an open hand

turn to him the other also

"let him hit your other cheek also"

Matthew 5:40

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular. In some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

tunic ... cloak

The "tunic" was worn close to the body, like a heavy shirt or a sweater. The "cloak," the more valuable of the two, was worn over the "tunic" for warmth and also used as a blanket for warmth at night.

let that person also have

"give also to that person"

Matthew 5:41

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The word "you" is singular, as is the understood "you" in the command "go." In some languages these may need to be translated as plural.

Whoever

"Anyone who." The context implies that he is speaking about a Roman soldier.

one mile

This is one thousand paces, which is the distance a Roman soldier could legally force someone to carry something for him. If "mile" is confusing, it can be translated as "one kilometer" or "a distance."

with him

This refers to the one who compels you to go.

go with him two

"go the mile he forces you to go, and then go another mile." If "mile" is confusing, you can translate it as "two kilometers" or "twice as far."

Matthew 5:42

do not turn away from

"do not refuse to lend to." This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "lend to"

Matthew 5:43

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The "you" in "you have heard" is plural. The "you" and "your" are singular in "You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy," but in some languages they may need to be translated as plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. Here he begins to speak about loving enemies.

that it was said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Matthew 5:27]

your neighbor

Here the word "neighbor" does not refer to a specific neighbor, but to any members of one's community or people group. These are people whom one usually desires to treat kindly or at least believes he ought to treat kindly. Alternate translation: "your countrymen" or "those who belong to your people group"

Matthew 5:44

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

But I say

Jesus agrees with God and his word, but he does not agree with the way the religious leaders have applied God's word. The "I" is emphatic. This indicates that what Jesus says is just as important as the original commands. Try to translate this phrase in a way that shows that emphasis. See how you translated this in Matthew 5:22.

I say to you ... your enemies ... pray ... persecute you

All instances of "you" and "your," as well as the command to pray, are plural.

Matthew 5:45

you may be sons of your Father

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to human sons or children.

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 5:46

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching about how he has come to fulfill the Old Testament law. This section began in Matthew 5:17.

what reward do you get?

Jesus uses this question to teach the people that loving

those who love them is not something special that God will reward them for. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will get no reward."

Do not even the tax collectors do the same thing?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Even the tax collectors do the same thing."

Matthew 5:47

what do you do more than others?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you do nothing more than others."

greet

This is a general term for showing a desire for the well-being of the hearer.

Do not even the Gentiles do the same thing?

This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Even the Gentiles do the same thing."

Matthew 5:48

Father

This is an important title for God.

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6 [1]"Watch out that you do not do your acts of righteousness before people to be seen by them, or else you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.[2]So when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before yourself as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full.
[3]But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing[4]so that your alms may be given in secret. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[5]"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward.[6]But you, when you pray, enter your inner chamber. Shut the door and pray to your Father, who is in secret. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you.[7]When you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the pagans do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.
[8]Therefore, do not be like them, for your Father knows what things you need before you ask him.
[9]Therefore pray like this:

'Our Father in heaven,
may your name be honored as holy.
[10] May your kingdom come.
May your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

[11] Give us today our daily bread.
[12] Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

[13] Do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.'[1]

[14]For if you forgive people their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.[15]But if you do not forgive their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

[16]"When you fast, do not have a sad face as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to people to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full.[17]But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face[18]so that you may not appear to people to be fasting, but only to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[19]"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.[20]Instead, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in and steal.[21]For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
[22]The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light.[23]But if your eye is bad, your whole body is full of darkness. Therefore, if the light that is in you is actually darkness, how great is that darkness!
[24]No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.
[25]Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. For is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?[26]Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not more valuable than they are?

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[27]Which one of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his lifespan?[28]Why are you anxious about clothing? Think about the lilies in the fields, how they grow. They do not labor, and they do not spin cloth.[29]Yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.
[30]If God so clothes the grass in the fields, which exists today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, you of little faith?[31]Therefore do not be anxious and say, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What clothes will we wear?'
[32]For the Gentiles search for these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.[33]But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you.[34]Therefore, do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Each day has enough evil of its own.

[1]The best ancient copies do not have For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Matthew 6 continues Jesus's extended teaching known as "The Sermon on the Mount."
You may wish to set apart the prayer in 6:9-11 by placing it farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.
Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Links:

Matthew 6:1 Notes

Matthew 6:1

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3. In this section, Jesus addresses the "acts of righteousness" of alms, prayer, and fasting.

Watch out

This is a way to warn people to be careful. Alternate translation: "Be careful" or "Beware"

before people to be seen by them

It is implied that those who see the person will honor him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in front of people just so that they can see you and give you honor for what you have done"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 6:2

do not sound a trumpet before yourself

This metaphor means to do something that purposefully gets people's attention. Alternate translation: "do not draw attention to yourself like someone who plays a loud trumpet in a crowd"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 6:3

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples about alms.

do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing

This is a metaphor for total secrecy. Just as hands usually work together and each can be said to "know" what the other is doing at all times, you should not let even those closest to you know when you are giving to the poor.

Matthew 6:4

your alms may be given in secret

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can give to the poor without other people knowing"

Matthew 6:5

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7 are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about prayer.

so that they may be seen by people

It is implied that those who see them will give them honor. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that people will see them and give them honor"

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 6:6

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7 are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

enter your inner chamber. Shut the door

"go to a private place" or "go where you can be alone"

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Father, who is in secret
Possible meanings are 1) no one can see God. Alternate translation: "Father, who is invisible" or 2) God is in that private place with the praying person. Alternate translation: "Father, who is with you in private"
Father
This is an important title for God.
your Father who sees in secret
"your Father will see what you do in private and"
Matthew 6:7
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" in verses 5 and 7 are plural; in verse 6 they are singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.
do not make useless repetitions
Possible meanings are 1) the repetitions are useless. Alternate translation: "do not keep uselessly saying things over and over again" or 2) the words or sentences are meaningless. Alternate translation: "do not keeping repeating meaningless words"
they will be heard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their false gods will hear them"
Matthew 6:8
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about how they as individuals should pray. The words "you" and "your" are plural in the first sentence. Within the prayer, the words "you" and "your" are singular and refer to God, "Our Father in heaven."
Father
This is an important title for God.
you ask him
See how you translated "ask" in Matthew 5:42.
Matthew 6:9
Our Father in heaven
This is the beginning of the prayer and how Jesus teaches the people to address God.
may your name be honored as holy
Here "your name" refers to God himself. This can also be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "may people honor you as holy" or "may people honor you because you are holy"
may your name be honored as holy
By saying this, people show that they want to honor God as holy. Alternate translation: "help us to honor your name as holy" or "we want to honor you as holy"
Matthew 6:10
May your kingdom come
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "May you rule over everyone and everything completely"
May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May everything on earth happen in accordance with your will, just as everything in heaven does"
Matthew 6:11
General Information:
This is part of a prayer that Jesus was teaching the people. All instances of "we," "us," and "our" refer only to those who would pray this prayer. Those words do not also refer to God, to whom they would be praying.
daily bread
Here "bread" refers to food in general.
Matthew 6:12
debts
A debt is what one person owes another. This is a metaphor for sins.
our debtors
A debtor is a person who owes a debt to another person. This is a metaphor for those who have sinned against us.
Matthew 6:13
Do not bring us into temptation
The word "temptation," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "Do not let anything tempt us" or "Do not let anything cause us to desire to sin"
Matthew 6:14
General Information:
All instances of "you" and "your" are plural. However, Jesus is telling his hearers what will happen to them as individuals if each person does not forgive others.
their trespasses
The abstract noun "trespasses" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "when they trespass against you"
Father
This is an important title for God.
Matthew 6:15
their trespasses ... your trespasses
The abstract noun "trespasses" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "them when they trespass against you ... you when you trespass against God" or "them when they do things that harm you ... you when you do things that make your Father angry"
Matthew 6:16
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurences of "you" are plural.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to teach about fasting.
they disfigure their faces
The hypocrites would not wash their faces and would not comb their hair. They did this purposely to draw attention to themselves so that people would see them and give them honor for fasting.
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
Matthew 6:17
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated as plural.
anoint your head
"put oil in your hair" or "groom your hair." To "anoint" the

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head here is to take normal care of one's hair. It has nothing to do with "Christ" meaning "anointed one." Jesus means that people should look the same whether they are fasting or not.

Matthew 6:18

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated as plural.

Father who is in secret

Possible meanings are 1) no one can see God. Alternate translation: "Father, who is invisible" or 2) God is with that person who fasts secretly. Alternate translation: "Father, who is with you in private" See how you translated this in Matthew 6:6.

Father

This is an important title for God.

who sees in secret

"who sees what you do in private." See how you translated this in Matthew 6:6.

Matthew 6:19

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All occurrences of "you" and "your" are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about money and possessions.

treasures

riches, the things to which a person gives the most value

where moth and rust destroy

"where moth and rust ruin treasures"

moth

a small, flying insect that destroys cloth

rust

a brown substance that forms on metals

Matthew 6:20

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do.

store up for yourselves treasures in heaven

This is a metaphor that means do good things on earth so God will reward you in heaven.

Matthew 6:21

General Information:

All occurrences of "your" are singular, though in some languages they may also need to be translated in plural.

there will your heart be also

Here "heart" means a person's thoughts and interests.

Matthew 6:22

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.

The eye is the lamp of the body

This is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) the eye is like a lamp because it enables a person to see things, or 2) the eye is like a lamp shining on a person's body because it shows what the person is really like. Alternate translation: "A person's eyes are like a lamp for his body"

if your eye is good, your whole body is filled with light

Possible meanings are 1) "if your eye is good, it fills your body with light" or 2) "if your eye is good, it shows that your body is filled with light."

if your eye is good

Possible meanings are "if your eye is noble" or "if your eye sees clearly." Jesus speaks of the eye to talk about what a person thinks about and wants. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "if you are generous" or 2) "if you look at and want at what is good"

your whole body is filled with light

Possible meanings are 1) "you are full of righteousness" or 2) "you understand what is truly good"

eye is

You may have to translate this as plural, "eyes are."

Matthew 6:23

if your eye is bad, your whole body is full of darkness

Possible meanings are 1) "if your eye is bad, it fills your body with darkness" or 2) "if your eye is bad, it shows that your body is full of darkness."

if your eye is bad

Possible meanings are "if your eye is evil" or "if your eye does not see clearly." Jesus speaks of the eye to talk about what a person thinks about and wants. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "if you are greedy," or 2) "if you do not look at and want what is right."

if your eye is bad

This does not refer to magic. Jewish people often used this as a metaphor for someone who is greedy.

your whole body is full of darkness

Possible meanings are "you are full of evil" or 2) "you will understand nothing about what is right."

if the light that is in you is actually darkness, how great is that darkness!

"if that which is supposed to cause light in your body causes darkness, then your body is in complete darkness"

Matthew 6:24

for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that a person cannot love and be devoted both to God and money at the same time.

You cannot serve God and wealth

"You cannot love God and money at the same time"

Matthew 6:25

General Information:

Here the instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

to you

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do.

is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "obviously life is more than what you eat, and your body is more than what you wear." or "clearly there are things in life that are more imortant than food, and

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there are things concerning the body that are more important than clothes."
Matthew 6:26
barns
places to store crops
Father
This is an important title for God.
Are you not more valuable than they are?
Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "Obviously you are more valuable than birds."
Matthew 6:27
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. All instances of "you" and "your" are plural.
Which one of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his lifespan?
Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Here to "add one cubit to his lifespan" is a metaphor for adding time to how long a person will live. Alternate translation: "None of you can, just by worrying, add years to your life. You cannot add even one minute to your life! So you should not worry about things you need."
one cubit
A cubit, a measure of a little less than half a meter, is used here as a metaphor for a short period of time.
Matthew 6:28
Why are you anxious about clothing?
Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "You should not be worried about what you will wear."
Think about
"Consider"
lilies ... They do not labor, and they do not spin cloth
Jesus speaks about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.
lilies
A lily is a kind of wild flower.
Matthew 6:29
even Solomon ... was not clothed like one of these
Jesus speaks about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
was not clothed like one of these
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did not wear clothes that are as beautiful as these lilies"
Matthew 6:30
so clothes the grass in the fields
Jesus continues to speak about the lilies as if they were people who wore clothes. The lilies being clothed is a metaphor for the plants having beautiful and colorful flowers.
grass
If your language has a general word that can refer both to "grass" and to the word you used for "lilies" in the previous verse, you can use it here.
is thrown into the oven
The Jews at that time used grass in their fires to cook their food. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone throws it into a fire" or "someone burns it"
how much more will he clothe you ... faith?
Jesus uses this question to teach the people that God will provide what they need. Alternate translation: "he will certainly clothe you ... faith."
you of little faith
"you who have such little faith." Jesus addresses the people this way because their anxiety about clothing shows they have little faith in God.
Matthew 6:31
Therefore
"Because of all of this,"
What clothes will we wear
In this sentence, "clothes" is a synecdoche for material possessions. Alternate translation: "What possessions will we have"
Matthew 6:32
For the Gentiles search for these things
"For the Gentiles are concerned about what they will eat, drink, and wear"
your heavenly Father knows that you need them
Jesus is implying that God will make sure their basic needs are met.
Father
This is an important title for God.
Matthew 6:33
seek first his kingdom and his righteousness
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "concern yourselves first with serving God, who is your king, and doing what is right"
all these things will be given to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will provide all these things for you"
Matthew 6:34
Therefore
"Because of all this"
tomorrow will be anxious for itself
Jesus speaks of "tomorrow" as if it were a person who could worry. Jesus means that a person will have enough to worry about when the next day comes.

7 [1]"Do not judge, and you will not be judged.[2]For with the judgment you judge, you will be judged, and with the measure that you measure, it will be measured out to you.
[3]Why do you look at the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye, but you do not take notice of the log that is in your own eye?[4]How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take out the piece of straw that is in your eye,' while the log is in your own eye?[5]You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the piece of straw that is in your brother's eye.

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[6]Do not give what is holy to the dogs, and do not throw your pearls in front of the pigs. Otherwise they may trample them underfoot, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

[7]"Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you.[8]For everyone who asks, receives; everyone who seeks, finds; and to the person who knocks, it will be opened.[9]Or which one of you, if his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone?[10]Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?
[11]Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him?[12]Therefore, whatever things you want people to do to you, you should also do to them, for this is the law and the prophets.

[13]"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many people who go through it.[14]But the gate is narrow and the way is difficult that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

[15]"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but are truly ravenous wolves.[16]By their fruits you will know them. Do people gather grapes from a thornbush or figs from thistles?[17]In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but the bad tree produces bad fruit.
[18]A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.[19]Every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire.[20]So then, you will recognize them by their fruits.
[21]Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven.[22]Many people will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, in your name drive out demons, and in your name do many miracles?'[23]Then will I openly declare to them, 'I never knew you! Get away from me, you who practice lawlessness!'

[24]"Therefore, everyone who hears my words and obeys them will be like a wise man who built his house upon a rock.[25]The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall down, for it was founded on the rock.
[26]But everyone who hears my words and does not obey them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand.
[27]The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and struck that house, and it fell, and its destruction was complete."

[28]It came about that when Jesus finished speaking these words, the crowds were astonished by his teaching,[29]for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Matthew 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus spoke about many different subjects in this sermon, so you may wish to help the reader by putting an empty line into the text whenever Jesus changed the subject.

Special concepts in this chapter

Matthew 5-7

Many people call the words in Matthew 5-7 the Sermon on the Mount. This is one long lesson that Jesus taught. Bibles divide this lesson into three chapters, but this can sometimes confuse the reader. If your translation divides the text into sections, be sure that the reader understands that the whole sermon is one large section.

"By their fruits you will know them"

Fruit is a common image in the scriptures. It is used to describe the results of either good or bad actions. In this chapter, good fruit is the result of living as God commands. (See: fruit)

Links:

Matthew 7:1 Notes

Matthew 7:1

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should and should not do. The instances of "you" and the commands are plural.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3.

Do not judge

It is implied here that "judge" has the strong meaning of "condemn harshly" or "declare guilty." Alternate translation: "Do not condemn people harshly"

you will not be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not condemn you harshly"

Matthew 7:2

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For
Be sure the reader understands the statement in 7:2 is based on what Jesus said in 7:1.
with the judgment you judge, you will be judged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will condemn you in the same way you condemn others"
measure
Possible meanings are 1) this is the amount of punishment given or 2) this is the standard used for judgment.
it will be measured out to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will measure it out to you"
Matthew 7:3
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all singular, but in some languages they may need to be plural.
Why do you look ... brother's eye, but you do not take notice of the log that is in your own eye?
Jesus uses this question to rebuke the people for paying attention to other people's sins and ignoring their own. Alternate translation: "You look ... brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye." or "Do not look ... brother's eye and ignore the log that is in your own eye."
the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye
This is a metaphor that refers to the less important faults of a fellow believer.
tiny piece of straw
"speck" or "splinter" or "bit of dust." Use a word for the smallest thing that commonly falls into a person's eyes.
brother
All occurrences of "brother" in 7:3-5 refer to a fellow believer, not to a literal brother or a neighbor.
the log that is in your own eye
This is a metaphor for a person's most important faults. A log could not literally go into a person's eye. Jesus is exaggerating to emphasize that a person should pay attention to his own more important faults before he deals with another person's less important faults.
log
the largest part of a tree that someone has cut down
Matthew 7:4
How can you say ... your own eye?
Jesus asks this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "You should not say ... your own eye."
Matthew 7:6
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.
dogs ... pigs
Jews considered these animals dirty, and God told the Jews not to eat them. They are metaphors for wicked people who do not value holy things. It would be best to translate these words literally.
pearls
These are similar to round, valuable stones or beads. They are a metaphor for the knowledge of God or precious things in general.
they may trample
"the pigs may trample"
then turn and tear
"the dogs will then turn and tear"
Matthew 7:7
General Information:
Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are all plural.
Ask ... Seek ... Knock
These are metaphors for praying to God. The verb form shows that we are to keep praying until he answers. If your language has a form for continuing to do something over and over, use it here.
Ask
request things from someone, in this case God. See how you translated this word in Matthew 5:42.
it will be given to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give you what you need"
Seek
look for someone, in this case God
Knock
To knock on a door was a polite way to request that the person inside the house or room open the door. If knocking on a door is impolite or not done in your culture, use the word that describes how people politely ask for doors to be opened. Alternate translation: "Tell God you want him to open the door"
it will be opened to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will open it for you"
Matthew 7:8
who ... asks
See how you translated "ask" in Matthew 5:42.
Matthew 7:9
Or which one of you ... a stone?
Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "There is not one person among you ... a stone."
son asks
See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.
a loaf of bread
This refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "some food"
stone
This noun should be translated literally.
Matthew 7:10
Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?
Jesus asks another question to teach the people. It is understood that Jesus is still referring to a man and his son. Alternate translation: "And there is not one person among you, if his son asks for a fish, will give him a snake."
he asks
See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.
fish ... snake

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These nouns should be translated literally.

Matthew 7:11

General Information:

Jesus is talking to a group of people about what they as individuals should or should not do. The instances of "you" and "your" are plural.

how much more will your Father in heaven give ... him?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "then your Father in heaven will most certainly give ... him."

Father

This is an important title for God.

ask him

See how you translated "asks" in Matthew 5:42.

Matthew 7:12

whatever things you want people to do to you

"whatever way you want others to act toward you"

for this is the law and the prophets

Here "law" and "prophets" refer to what Moses and the prophets wrote. Alternate translation: "for this is what Moses and the prophets teach in the scriptures"

Matthew 7:13

General Information:

This image of walking through a wide gate to destruction or a narrow gate to life represents how people live and the results of how they live. When you translate, use appropriate words for "wide" and "broad" that are as different as possible from "narrow" in order to emphasize the differences between the two sets of gates and ways.

Enter through the narrow gate ... many people who go through it

This is an image of people traveling on a road and going through a gate into a kingdom. One kingdom is easy to enter; the other is hard to enter.

Enter through the narrow gate

You may need to move this to the end of verse 14: "Therefore, enter through the narrow gate."

the gate ... the way

Possible meanings are 1) "the way" refers to the road that leads to the gate of a kingdom, or 2) the "the gate" and "the way" both refer to the entrance to the kingdom.

to destruction

This abstract noun can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "to the place where people die"

Matthew 7:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak of people choosing how they are going to live as if they are choosing whether to go on one path or another.

to life

The abstract noun "life" can be translated using the verb "live." Alternate translation: "to the place where people live"

Matthew 7:15

Beware of

"Be on guard against"

who come to you in sheep's clothing but are truly ravenous wolves

This metaphor means that false prophets will pretend they they are good and want to help people, but they are really evil and will do people harm.

ravenous wolves

wolves that are extremely hungry and that consume or destroy everything they touch

Matthew 7:16

By their fruits you will know them

This metaphor refers to a person's actions. Alternate translation: "Just as you know a tree by the fruit that grows on it, you will know false prophets by how they act"

Do people gather ... thistles?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. The people would have known that the answer is no. Alternate translation: "People do not gather ... thistles."

Matthew 7:17

every good tree produces good fruit

Jesus continues to use the metaphor of fruit to refer to good prophets who produce good works or words.

the bad tree produces bad fruit

Jesus continues to use the metaphor of fruit to refer to bad prophets who produce evil works.

Matthew 7:19

Every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire

Jesus continues to use fruit trees as a metaphor to refer to false prophets. Here, he only states what will happen to the bad trees. It is implied that the same thing will happen to the false prophets.

is chopped down and thrown into the fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people chop down and burn"

chopped down

See how you translated this in Matthew 3:10

Matthew 7:20

you will recognize them by their fruits

The word "their" can refer to either the prophets or the trees. This metaphor implies that the fruit of trees and the deeds of prophets both reveal whether they are good or bad. If possible, translate this in a way so that it can refer to both trees and prophets.

Matthew 7:21

will enter into the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "will live with God in heaven when he shows himself to be king"

those who do the will of my Father who is in heaven

"whoever does what my Father in heaven desires"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 7:22

in that day

Jesus said "that day" knowing his hearers would understand he was referring to the day of judgment. You should include "the day of judgment" only if your readers would not understand otherwise.

did we not prophesy ... drive out demons ... do many miracles?

The people use a question to emphasize that they did these things. Alternate translation: "we prophesied ... we drove out demons ... we did many miracles."

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we
This "we" does not include Jesus.
in your name
Possible meanings are 1) "by your authority" or "by your power" or 2) "because we were doing what you wanted us to do" or 3) "because we asked you for the power to do it"
Matthew 7:23
I never knew you
This means the person does not belong to Jesus. Alternate translation: "You are not my follower" or "I have nothing to do with you"
Matthew 7:24
Therefore
"For that reason"
my words
Here "words" refers to what Jesus says.
like a wise man who built his house upon a rock
Jesus compares those who obey his words to a person who builds his house where nothing can harm it.
rock
This is the bedrock below the topsoil and clay, not a large stone or boulder above the ground.
Matthew 7:25
it was founded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he put its foundation"
Matthew 7:26
like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand
Jesus continues the simile from the previous verse. He compares those who do not obey his words to foolish house-builders. Only a fool would build a house on a sandy place where rain, floods, and wind can sweep the sand away.
Matthew 7:27
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, which began in Matthew 5:3.
fell
Use the general word in your language that describes what happens when a house falls down.
its destruction was complete
The rain, floods, and wind completely destroyed the house.
Matthew 7:28
General Information:
These verses describe how the people in the crowds reacted to Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.
It came about that when
This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "When" or "After"
were astonished by his teaching
It is clear in 7:29 that they were amazed not just at what Jesus taught but also the way he taught it. Alternate translation: "were amazed by the way he taught"

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8 [1]When Jesus had come down from the hill, large crowds followed him.[2]Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

[3]Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean." Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.
[4]Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to any man. Go on your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

[5]When he was coming into Capernaum, a centurion came to him, begging him[6]and saying, "Lord, my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible agony."
[7]Then Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

[8]The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Only say the word and my servant will be healed.[9]For I also am a man under authority, and I have soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another one, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."
[10]When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those who were following him, "Truly I say to you, I have not found anyone with such faith in Israel.
[11]I tell you, many will come from the east and the west, and they will recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.[12]But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."[13]Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! As you have believed, so may it be done for you." And the servant was healed at that very hour.

[14]When Jesus had come into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying sick with a fever.[15]Jesus touched her hand, and the fever left her. Then she got up and started serving him.
[16]When evening had come, the people brought to Jesus many who were possessed by demons. He drove out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.[17]This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

"He took our illnesses
and bore our diseases."

[18]Now when Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave instructions to leave for the other side of the Sea of Galilee.[19]Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

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[20]Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

[21]Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father."
[22]But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

[23]When Jesus had entered a boat, his disciples followed him into it.[24]Behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But Jesus was asleep.[25]The disciples came to him and woke him up, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!"

[26]Jesus said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea. Then there was a great calm.
[27]The men marveled and said, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

[28]When Jesus had come to the other side and to the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were possessed by demons met him. They were coming out of the tombs and were very violent, so that no traveler could pass that way.[29]Behold, they cried out and said, "What do we have to do with you, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the set time?"

[30]Now a herd of many pigs was there feeding, not too far away from them.[31]The demons kept pleading with Jesus and saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into that herd of pigs."
[32]Jesus said to them, "Go!" The demons came out and went into the pigs; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep hill into the sea and they died in the water.
[33]Those who had been tending the pigs ran away and they went into the city and reported everything, especially what had happened to the men who had been possessed by demons.[34]Behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus. When they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

Matthew 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a new section.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracles

Jesus performed miracles to show that he could control things that no other people could control. He also showed that it is proper to worship him because he performed miracles. (See: authority)

Links:

Matthew 8:1 Notes

Matthew 8:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that contains several accounts of Jesus healing people. This theme continues through Matthew 9:35.

When Jesus had come down from the hill, large crowds followed him

"After Jesus came down from the hill, a large crowd followed him." The crowd may have included both people who had been with him on the mountain and people who had not been with him.

Matthew 8:2

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

a leper

"a man who had leprosy" or "a man who had a skin disease"

bowed before him

This is a sign of humble respect before Jesus.

if you are willing

"if you want to" or "if you desire." The leper knew that Jesus had the power to heal him, but he did not know if Jesus would want to touch him.

you can make me clean

Here "clean" means to be healed and to be able to live in the community again. Alternate translation: "you can heal me" or "please heal me"

Matthew 8:3

Be clean

By saying this, Jesus healed the man.

Immediately he was cleansed

"At that moment he was cleansed"

he was cleansed of his leprosy

The result of Jesus saying "Be clean" was that the man was healed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he was well" or "the leprosy left him" or "the leprosy ended"

Matthew 8:4

to him

This refers to the man that Jesus just healed.

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say nothing to any man
"do not say anything to anyone" or "do not tell anyone I healed you"
show yourself to the priest
Jewish law required that the person show his healed skin to the priest, who would then allow him or her to return to the community, to be with other people.
offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony to them
The law of Moses required that someone healed of leprosy give a thanksgiving offering to the priest. When the priest accepted the gift, people would know that the man had been healed. Lepers were ostracized, banned from the community, until they had proof of their healing.
to them
This can possibly refer to 1) the priests or 2) all the people or 3) the critics of Jesus. If possible, use a pronoun that could refer to any of these groups.
Matthew 8:5
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to a different time and place and tells about Jesus healing another person.
When he was coming into Capernaum
"When Jesus was coming into Capernaum"
Matthew 8:6
paralyzed
unable to move because of disease or stroke
Matthew 8:7
Jesus said to him
"Jesus said to the centurion"
I will come and heal him
"I will come to your house and make your servant well"
Matthew 8:8
under my roof
This is an idiom that refers to inside the house. Alternate translation: "into my house"
say the word
Here "word" represents a command. Alternate translation: "give the command"
will be healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will become well"
Matthew 8:9
under authority ... under me
To be "under" someone means to be less important and to obey the commands of someone more important.
Matthew 8:10
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
I have not found anyone with such faith in Israel
Jesus's hearers would have thought that the Jews in Israel, who claim to be children of God, would have greater faith than anyone. Jesus is saying they are wrong and that the centurion's faith was greater.
Matthew 8:11
you
Here "you" is plural and refers to "those who were following him" in [Matthew 8:10]
from the east and the west
Using the opposites "east" and "west" is a way of saying "everywhere." Alternate translation: "from everywhere" or "from far away in every direction"
recline at the table
People in that culture would lie down beside the table while eating. This phrase indicates that all those at the table are family and close friends. The joy in the kingdom of God is frequently spoken of as if the people there were feasting. Alternate translation: "live as family and friends"
in the kingdom of heaven
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "when our God in heaven shows that he is king"
Matthew 8:12
sons of the kingdom will be cast out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will cast the sons of the kingdom out"
the sons of the kingdom
The phrase "the sons of the kingdom" is a metonym, referring to the unbelieving Jews of the kingdom of Judea. There is also irony here because the "sons" will be thrown out while the strangers will be welcomed. Alternate translation: "those who should have allowed God to rule over them"
the outer darkness
Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. Alternate translation: "the dark place away from God"
weeping and grinding of teeth
"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. Alternate translation: "weeping and showing their extreme suffering"
Matthew 8:13
so may it be done for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so I will do it for you"
the servant was healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed the servant"
at that very hour
"at the exact time Jesus said he would heal the servant"
Matthew 8:14
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to a different time and place and tells of Jesus healing another person.
Jesus had come
The disciples were probably with Jesus, but the focus of the story is on what Jesus said and did, so introduce the disciples only if needed to avoid wrong meaning.
Peter's mother-in-law
"the mother of Peter's wife"
Matthew 8:15
the fever left her
If your language would understand this personification to mean that the fever could think and act on its own, this can be translated as "she became better" or "Jesus healed her."

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got up
"got out of bed"
Matthew 8:16
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to later that evening and tells of Jesus healing more people and casting out demons.
When evening had come
Because Jews did not work or travel on the Sabbath, "evening" may imply after the Sabbath. They waited until evening to bring people to Jesus. You do not need to mention the Sabbath unless you need to avoid wrong meaning.
many who were possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many people whom demons possessed" or "many people whom demons controlled"
He drove out the spirits with a word
Here "word" stands for a command. Alternate translation: "He commanded the spirits to leave"
Matthew 8:17
This was to fulfill
"Jesus did this to fulfill"
what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Isaiah the prophet had spoken"
He took our illnesses and bore our diseases
Matthew is quoting the prophet Isaiah to show that when Jesus healed people, he fulfilled what Isaiah had said would happen. These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that Jesus truly did this. Alternate translation: "Truly he took our illnesses"
Matthew 8:18
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts and tells about Jesus's response to some people who wanted to follow him.
Now
This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Matthew starts to tell a new part of the story.
he gave instructions
"he told his disciples"
Matthew 8:19
Then
This means after Jesus "gave instructions" but before he could get into the boat.
wherever
to any place
Matthew 8:20
Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests
Jesus answers with this proverb. This means even wild animals have somewhere to rest.
Foxes
Foxes are animals like dogs. They eat nesting birds and other small animals. If foxes are unknown in your area, use a general term for dog-like creatures or other furry animals.
holes
Foxes make holes in the ground to live in. Use the appropriate word for the place where the animal you use for "foxes" lives.
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.
nowhere to lay his head
This refers to a place to sleep. Alternate translation: "no place of his own to sleep"
Matthew 8:21
allow me first to go and bury my father
It is unclear whether the man's father has died and he will bury him immediately, or if the man wants to stay for a longer amount of time until his father dies so he can bury him then. The main point is that the man wants to do something else first before he follows Jesus.
Matthew 8:22
leave the dead to bury their own dead
Jesus does not mean literally that dead people will bury other dead people. Possible meanings of "the dead": 1) it is a metaphor for those who will soon die, or 2) it is a metaphor for those who do not follow Jesus and are spiritually dead. The main point is that a disciple must not let anything delay him from following Jesus.
Matthew 8:23
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to the account of Jesus calming a storm as he and his disciples cross the Sea of Galilee.
entered a boat
"got onto a boat"
his disciples followed him
Try to use the same words for "disciple" and "follow" that you used in (Matthew 8:21-22).
Matthew 8:24
Behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of showing this. Alternate translation: "Suddenly" or "Without warning"
there arose a great storm on the sea
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a powerful storm arose on the sea"
so that the boat was covered with the waves
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the waves covered the boat"
Matthew 8:25
General Information:
Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's healing ministry was a fulfillment of prophecy.
woke him up, saying, "Save us
Possible meanings are 1) they first woke Jesus and then they said, "Save us" or 2) as they were waking Jesus up, they were saying "Save us."
us ... we
If you need to translate these words as inclusive or exclusive, then inclusive is best. The disciples probably meant they wanted Jesus to save the disciples and himself from drowning.
we are perishing
"we are going to die very soon." The word "perishing" is a strong word for "dying."
Matthew 8:26
to them
"to the disciples"

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Why are you afraid ... faith?
Jesus was rebuking the disciples with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "You should not be afraid ... faith!" or "There is nothing for you to be afraid of ... faith!"
you of little faith
"you who have such little faith." Jesus addresses his disciples this way because their anxiety about the storm shows they have little faith in him to control it. See how you translated this in Matthew 6:30.
Matthew 8:27
What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?
"Even the winds and the sea obey him! What sort of man is this?" This rhetorical question shows that the disciples were surprised. Alternate translation: "This man is unlike any man we have ever seen! Even the wind and the waves obey him!"
even the winds and the sea obey him
For people or animals to obey or disobey is not surprising, but for wind and water to obey is very surprising. This personification describes the natural elements as being able to hear and respond like people.
Matthew 8:28
Connecting Statement:
Here the author returns to the theme of Jesus healing people. This begins an account of Jesus healing two demon-possessed men.
to the other side
"to the other side of the Sea of Galilee"
the Gadarenes
This name refers to theo people who lived in the town of Gadara.
two men who were possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "two men whom demons possessed" or "two men whom demons were controlling"
They ... were very violent, so that no traveler could pass that way
The demons that were controlling these two men were so dangerous that no one could go through that area.
Matthew 8:29
Behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. Your language may have a way of showing this.
What do we have to do with you, Son of God?
The demons use a question but they are being hostile toward Jesus. Alternate translation: "Do not bother us, Son of God!"
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus, which describes his relationship to God.
Have you come here to torment us before the set time?
Again, the demons use a question in a hostile way. Alternate translation: "You should not disobey God by punishing us before the specific time God has set when he will punish us!"
Matthew 8:30
Now
This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells background information about a herd of pigs that had been there before Jesus arrived.
Matthew 8:31
If you cast us out
It is implied that the demons knew that Jesus was going to cast them out. Alternate translation: "Because you are going to cast us out"
us
This is exclusive, meaning the demons only.
Matthew 8:32
to them
This refers to the demons inside the men.
The demons came out and went into the pigs
"The demons left the men and entered the pigs"
behold
This alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
rushed down the steep hill
"ran quickly down the steep slope"
they died in the water
"they fell into the water and drowned"
Matthew 8:33
Connecting Statement:
This concludes the account of Jesus healing two demon-possessed men.
tending the pigs
"taking care of the pigs"
what had happened to the men who had been possessed by demons
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Jesus did to help the men whom demons had controlled"
Matthew 8:34
Behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of showing this.
all the city
The word "city" is a metonym for the people of the city. The word "all" is probably an exaggeration to emphasize how very many people came out. Not necessarily every person came out.
their region
"their area"

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9 [1]Jesus entered a boat, crossed over, and came into his own city.[2]Behold, they brought to him a paralyzed man lying on a mat. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Son, be encouraged. Your sins have been forgiven."

[3]Behold, some of the scribes said among themselves, "This man is blaspheming."[4]Jesus knew their thoughts and said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?[5]For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?[6]But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, ... " he said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your mat, and go to your house."

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[7]Then the man got up and went away to his house.[8]When the crowds saw this, they were afraid and glorified God, who had given such authority to people.[9]As Jesus passed by from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's tent. He said to him, "Follow me." He got up and followed him.

[10]As Jesus sat down to eat in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and dined with Jesus and his disciples.[11]When the Pharisees saw it, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

[12]When Jesus heard this, he said, "People who are strong in body do not need a physician; only those who are sick do.[13]You should go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous to repent, but sinners."

[14]Then the disciples of John came to him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees often fast, but your disciples do not fast?"
[15]Jesus said to them, "Can the sons of the wedding hall mourn while the bridegroom is still with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
[16]No man puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment, for the patch will tear away from the garment, and a worse tear will be made.
[17]Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed. Instead, they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both will be preserved."

[18]While Jesus was saying these things to them, behold, an official came and bowed down to him. He said, "My daughter has just now died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."[19]Then Jesus got up and followed him, and so did his disciples.

[20]Behold, a woman who suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his garment.[21]For she had said to herself, "If only I touch his clothes, I will be made well."
[22]But Jesus turned and saw her, and said, "Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed from that hour.
[23]When Jesus came into the official's house, he saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion.[24]He said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead, but she is asleep." But they laughed at him in mockery.
[25]When the crowd had been put outside, he entered the room and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.[26]The news about this spread into all that region.

[27]As Jesus passed by from there, two blind men followed him. They kept shouting and saying, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"
[28]When Jesus had come into the house, the blind men came to him. Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"They said to him, "Yes, Lord."

[29]Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "Let it be done to you according to your faith,"[30]and their eyes were opened. Then Jesus strictly commanded them and said, "See that no one knows about this."[31]But the two men went out and spread the news about this throughout that region.

[32]As those two men were going away, behold, a mute man possessed by a demon was brought to Jesus.[33]When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!"
[34]But the Pharisees were saying, "By the ruler of the demons, he drives out demons."

[35]Jesus went about all the cities and the villages. He continued teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness.[36]When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged. They were like sheep without a shepherd.
[37]He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.[38]Therefore urgently pray to the Lord of the harvest, so that he may send out laborers into his harvest."

Matthew 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Sinners"

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When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. When Jesus said that he came to call "sinners," he meant that only people who believe that they are sinners can be his followers. This is true even if they are not what most people think of as "sinners." (See: sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice

Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. You may have to translate the sentence so that it tells the reader who performed the action.

Rhetorical questions

Speakers in this chapter asked questions to which they already knew the answer. They asked the questions to show that they were not happy with the hearers or to teach them or to get them to think. Your language may have another way of doing this.

Proverbs

Proverbs are very short sentences that use words that are easy to remember. They teach about something that is generally true. People who understand proverbs usually have to know much about the language and culture of the speaker. When you translate the proverbs in this chapter, you may have to use many more words than the speakers used so that your readers can understand things that the original audiences understood.

Links:

Matthew 9:1 Notes

Matthew 9:1

Connecting Statement:

Matthew returns to the theme, which he began in Matthew 8:1, of Jesus healing people. This begins an account of Jesus healing a paralyzed man.

Jesus entered a boat

It is implied that the disciples were with Jesus.

a boat

This is probably the same boat as in Matthew 8:23. You only need to specify this if needed to avoid confusion.

into his own city

"to the town where he lived." This refers to Capernaum.

Matthew 9:2

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of showing this.

they brought

"some men from the city brought"

their faith

This refers to the faith of the men and may also include the faith of the paralyzed man.

Son

The man was not Jesus's real son. Jesus was speaking to him politely. If this is confusing, it can also be translated "My friend" or "Young man" or even omitted.

Your sins have been forgiven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:3

Behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

among themselves

Possible meanings are 1) each one was thinking to himself, or 2) they were speaking among themselves.

blaspheming

Jesus was claiming to be able to do things the scribes thought only God can do.

Matthew 9:4

knew their thoughts

Jesus knew what they were thinking either supernaturally or because he could see them talking to each other.

Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?

Jesus used this question to rebuke the scribes. Here "hearts" refers to their minds or their thoughts. Alternate translation: "Do not think evil thoughts."

evil

This is moral evil or wickedness, not simply error in fact.

Matthew 9:5

For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

Jesus uses this question to make the scribes think about what might prove whether or not he could really forgive sins. Alternate translation: "I just said 'Your sins are forgiven.' You may think that it is harder to say 'Get up and walk,' because the proof of whether or not I can heal the man will be shown by whether or not he gets up and walks." or "You may think that it is easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up and walk.'"

which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

The quotes can be translated as indirect quotes. Alternate translation: "which is easier, to tell someone that his sins are forgiven, or to tell him to get up and walk?" or "you may think that it is easier to tell someone that his sins are forgiven than to tell him to get up and walk."

Your sins are forgiven

Here "your" is singular. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forgiven your sins"

Matthew 9:6

that you may know

"I will prove to you." The "you" is plural.

your mat ... your house

Here "you" is singular.

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go to your house
Jesus is not forbidding the man to go elsewhere. He is giving the man the opportunity to go home.
Matthew 9:8
they were afraid
Possible meanings are 1) they were afraid, or 2) they were in awe. "Awe" is a feeling of wonder a person has when they see or experience something great or powerful.
who had given
"because he had given"
such authority
This refers to the authority to declare sins forgiven.
Matthew 9:9
Connecting Statement:
This concludes the account of Jesus healing a paralyzed man. Jesus then calls a tax collector to be one of his disciples.
As Jesus passed by from there
This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
passed by
"was leaving" or "was going"
Matthew ... him ... He
Church tradition says that this Matthew is the author of this Gospel, but the text gives no reason to change the pronouns from "him" and "He" to "me" and "I."
He said to him
"Jesus said to Matthew"
He got up and followed him
"Matthew got up and followed Jesus." This means Matthew became Jesus's disciple.
Matthew 9:10
the house
This is probably Matthew's house, but it could also be Jesus's house. Specify only if needed to avoid confusion.
behold
This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.
sinners
people who did not obey the law of Moses but committed what others thought were very bad sins
Matthew 9:11
When the Pharisees saw it
"When the Pharisees saw that Jesus was eating with the tax collectors and sinful people"
Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?
The Pharisees use this question to criticize what Jesus is doing. Alternate translation: "Your teacher should not eat with tax collectors and sinner."
Matthew 9:12
When Jesus heard this
Here "this" refers to the question the Pharisees asked about Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners.
People who are strong in body do not need a physician, only those who are sick do
Jesus answers with a proverb. He means that he eats with these kinds of people because he has come to help sinners.
People who are strong in body
"People who are healthy"
physician
doctor
only those who are sick do
The phrase "need a physician" is understood. Alternate translation: "only people who are sick need a physician"
Matthew 9:13
You should go and learn what this means
Jesus is about to quote the scriptures. Alternate translation: "You should learn the meaning of what God said in the scriptures"
You should go
Here "you" is plural and refers to the Pharisees.
I desire mercy and not sacrifice
Jesus is quoting what the prophet Hosea wrote in the scriptures. Here, "I" refers to God.
For I came
Here "I" refers to Jesus.
the righteous
Jesus is using irony. He does not think there are any people who are righteous and do not need to repent. Alternate translation: "those who think they are righteous"
Matthew 9:14
Connecting Statement:
The disciples of John the Baptist question the fact that Jesus's disciples do not fast.
do not fast
"continue to eat regularly"
Matthew 9:15
Can the sons of the wedding hall mourn while the bridegroom is still with them?
Jesus uses a question to answer John's disciples. They all knew that people do not mourn and fast at a wedding celebration. Jesus uses this proverb to show that his disciples do not mourn because he is still there with them. Alternate translation: "The sons of the wedding hall never mourn while the bridegroom is still with them."
sons of the wedding hall
This is an idiom that refers to the men who serve a bridegroom during a wedding. Alternate translation: "bridegroom's attendants"
the days will come when
This is a way of referring to some time in the future. Alternate translation: "the time will come when" or "someday"
the bridegroom will be taken away from them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bridegroom will not be able to be with them any longer" or "someone will take the bridegroom away from them"
will be taken away
Jesus is probably referring to his own death, but this should not be made explicit here in the translation. To maintain the imagery of a wedding, it is best to just state that the bridegroom will not be there any longer.
Matthew 9:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to answer the question that the disciples of John had asked. He did this by giving two examples of old

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things and new things that people do not put together.
No man puts a piece of new cloth on an old garment
"No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment" or "People do not sew a piece of new cloth as a patch an old garment"
an old garment ... the garment
"old clothing ... the clothing"
the patch will tear away from the garment
If someone were to wash the garment, the patch of new cloth would shrink, but the old garment would not shrink. This would tear the patch off the garment and leave a bigger hole.
the patch
"the piece of new cloth." This is the piece of cloth used to cover a hole in the old garment.
a worse tear will be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this will make the tear worse"
Matthew 9:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to answer the question that disciples of John had asked.
Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins
Jesus uses another proverb to answer John's disciples. This means the same as the proverb in Matthew 9:16.
Neither do people put
"Neither does anyone pour" or "People never put"
new wine
This refers to wine that has not fermented yet. If grapes are unknown in your area, use the general term for fruit. Alternate translation: "grape juice"
old wineskins
This refers to wineskins that have stretched and dried out because they were already used for fermenting wine.
wineskins
"wine bags" or "skin bags." These were bags made out of animal skins.
the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and this will ruin the wineskins and spill the wine"
the skins will burst
When the new wine ferments and expands, the skins tear open because they can no longer stretch out.
fresh wineskins
"new wineskins" or "new wine bags." This refers to wineskins that no one has used.
both will be preserved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this will keep safe both the wineskins and the wine"
Matthew 9:18
Connecting Statement:
This begins an account of Jesus bringing to life the daughter of a Jewish official after she had died.
these things
This refers to the answer Jesus gave John's disciples about fasting.
behold
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
bowed down to him
This is a way someone would show respect in Jewish culture.
come and lay your hand on her, and she will live
This shows that the Jewish official believed Jesus had the power to bring his daughter back to life.
Matthew 9:19
his disciples
"Jesus's disciples"
Matthew 9:20
Connecting Statement:
This describes how Jesus healed another woman while he was on the way to the Jewish official's house.
Behold
The word "Behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
who suffered from a discharge of blood
"who had been bleeding" or "who frequently had a flow of blood." She was probably bleeding from her womb even when it was not the normal time for it. Some cultures may have a polite way of referring to this condition.
twelve years
"12 years"
his garment
"his robe" or "what he was wearing"
Matthew 9:21
For she had said to herself, "If only I touch his clothes, I will be made well."
She said this to herself before she touched Jesus's garment. This tells why she touched Jesus's garment.
If only I touch his clothes
According to Jewish law, because she was bleeding she was not supposed to touch anyone. She touches his clothes so that Jesus's power would heal her and yet
Matthew 9:22
But Jesus
"The woman was hoping she could touch him secretly, but Jesus"
Daughter
The woman was not Jesus's real daughter. Jesus was speaking to her politely. If this is confusing, it can also be translated "Young woman" or even omitted.
your faith has made you well
"because you believed in me, I will heal you"
the woman was healed from that hour
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed her at that moment"
Matthew 9:23
Connecting Statement:
This returns to the account of Jesus bringing the daughter of the Jewish official back to life.
the flute players and the crowd making a commotion
This was a common way to mourn for someone who has died.
flute players
"people who play flutes"
and the crowd making a commotion
The phrase "making a commotion" applies only to "the crowd" and does not include the flute players. Alternation

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translation: "and the crowd making a lot of noise" or "and the noisy crowd"
Matthew 9:24
Go away
Jesus was speaking to many people, so use the plural command form if your language has one.
the girl is not dead, but she is asleep
Jesus is using a play on words. It was common in Jesus's day to refer to a dead person as one who "sleeps." But here the dead girl will get up, as though she had only been sleeping.
Matthew 9:25
When the crowd had been put outside
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After Jesus had sent the crowd outside" or "After the family had sent the people outside"
got up
"got out of bed." This is the same meaning as in Matthew 8:15.
Matthew 9:26
General Information:
This is a summary statement that describes the result of Jesus raising this girl from the dead.
Connecting Statement:
This completes the account of Jesus bringing the daughter of the Jewish official back to life.
The news about this spread into all that region
"The people of that whole region heard about it" or "The people who saw that the girl was alive started telling everyone in the whole area about it"
Matthew 9:27
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus healing two blind men.
As Jesus passed by from there
As Jesus was leaving the region
passed by
"was leaving" or "was going"
followed him
This means they were walking behind Jesus, not necessarily that they had become his disciples.
Have mercy on us
It is implied that they wanted Jesus to heal them.
Son of David
Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the men were probably calling Jesus by this title.
Matthew 9:28
When Jesus had come into the house
This could be either Jesus's own house or the house in Matthew 9:10.
Yes, Lord
The full content of their answer is not stated, but it is understood. Alternate translation: "Yes, Lord, we believe you can heal us"
Matthew 9:29
touched their eyes and said
It is not clear whether he touched both men's eyes at the same time or used only his right hand to touch one then the other. As the left hand was customarily used for unclean purposes, it is most likely that he used only his right hand. It is also not clear whether he spoke as he was touching them or touched them first and then spoke to them.
Let it be done to you according to your faith
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will do as you have believed" or "Because you believe, I will heal you"
Matthew 9:30
their eyes were opened
This means they were able to see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God healed their eyes" or "the two blind men were able to see"
See that no one knows about this
Here "See" means "be sure." Alternate translation: "Be sure no one finds out about this" or "Do not tell anyone that I healed you"
Matthew 9:31
But the two men
"The two men did not do what Jesus told them to do. They"
spread the news
"told many people what had happened to them"
Matthew 9:32
Connecting Statement:
This is the account of Jesus healing a demon-possessed man who could not speak, and how people responded.
behold
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
a mute man ... was brought to Jesus
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought a mute man ... to Jesus"
mute
not able to talk
possessed by a demon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom a demon had possessed" or "whom a demon was controlling"
Matthew 9:33
When the demon had been driven out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After Jesus had forced the demon out" or "After Jesus had commanded the demon to leave"
the mute man spoke
"the mute man began to speak" or "the man who had been mute spoke" or "the man, who was no longer mute, spoke"
The crowds were astonished
"The people were amazed"
This has never been seen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This has never happened before" or "No one has ever done anything like this before"
Matthew 9:34
he drives out demons
"he forces demons to leave"
he drives
The pronoun "he" refers to Jesus.
Matthew 9:35
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story that began in

[Matthew 8:1]

all the cities

The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize how very many cities Jesus went to. He did not necessarily go to every one of them. Alternate translation: "many of the cities"

cities ... villages

"large villages ... small villages" or "large towns ... small towns"

the gospel of the kingdom

Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. See how you translated this in [Matthew 4:23]

all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness

"every disease and every sickness." The words "disease" and "sickness" are closely related but should be translated as two different words if possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be sick. "Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that results from having a disease.

Matthew 9:36

General Information:

This begins a new part of the story where Jesus teaches his disciples and sends them to preach and heal as he has done.

They were like sheep without a shepherd

This simile means they did not have a leader to take care of them. Alternate translation: "The people did not have a leader"

Matthew 9:37

General Information:

Jesus uses a proverb about harvesting to tell his disciples how they should respond to the needs of the crowds mentioned in the previous section.

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few

Jesus uses a proverb to respond to what he is seeing. Jesus means there are a lot of people who are ready to believe God but only few people to teach them God's truth.

The harvest is plentiful

"There is plenty of ripe food for someone to collect"

laborers

"workers"

Matthew 9:38

pray to the Lord of the harvest

"pray to God, because he is in charge of the harvest"

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10 [1]Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out, and to heal all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness.
[2]Now the names of the twelve apostles were these. The first, Simon (whom he also called Peter), and Andrew his brother; James son of Zebedee, and John his brother;[3]Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;[4]Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who would betray him.

[5]These twelve Jesus sent out. He instructed them and said, "Do not go to any place where Gentiles live, and do not enter any town of the Samaritans.[6]Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;[7]and as you go, preach and say, 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'
[8]Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.[9]Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper in your belts.[10]Do not take a traveling bag for your journey, or an extra tunic, or sandals, or a staff, for a laborer deserves his food.
[11]Whatever city or village you enter, find who is worthy in it, and stay there until you leave.[12]As you enter into the house, greet it.[13]If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.
[14]As for those who do not receive you or listen to your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.[15]Truly I say to you, it will be more bearable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

[16]"See, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves.[17]Watch out for people! They will deliver you up to councils, and they will whip you in their synagogues.[18]Then you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.
[19]When they deliver you up, do not be anxious about how or what you will speak, for what to say will be given to you at that time.[20]For it is not you who will speak, but the Spirit of your Father who will speak in you.
[21]Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death.[22]You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But whoever endures to the end, that person will be saved.[23]When they persecute you in this city, flee to the next, for truly I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man has come.

[24]"A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant above his master.[25]It is enough for the disciple that he should be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much worse will be the names they call the members of his household!
[26]Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known.[27]What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight, and what you hear softly in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops.
[28]Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul. Instead, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.[29]Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin? Yet not one of them falls to the ground without your

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Father's knowledge.[30]But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.[31]Do not fear. You are more valuable than many sparrows.
[32]Therefore everyone who confesses me before men, I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven.[33]But he who denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven.

[34]"Do not think that I came to bring peace upon the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.[35]For I came to set

a man against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

[36]A man's enemies will be those of his own household.
[37]He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.[38]He who does not pick up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.[39]He who finds his life will lose it. But he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

[40]"He who welcomes you welcomes me, and he who welcomes me also welcomes him who sent me.[41]He who welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and he who welcomes a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.
[42]Whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple, truly I say to you, he will in no way lose his reward."

Matthew 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The sending of the twelve disciples

Many verses in this chapter describe how Jesus sent the twelve disciples out. He sent them to tell his message about the kingdom of heaven. They were to tell his message only in Israel and not to share it with the Gentiles.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

"The kingdom of heaven has come near"

No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when Jesus spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Links:

Matthew 10:1 Notes

Matthew 10:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus sending out his twelve disciples to do his work.

called his twelve disciples together

"summoned his 12 disciples"

gave them authority

Be sure that the text clearly communicates that this authority was 1) to drive out unclean spirits and 2) to heal disease and sickness.

to drive them out

"to make the unclean spirits leave"

all kinds of disease and all kinds of sickness

"every disease and every sickness." The words "disease"

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and "sickness" are closely related but should be translated as two different words if possible. "Disease" is what causes a person to be sick. "Sickness" is the physical weakness or affliction that results from having a disease.

Matthew 10:2

General Information:

Here the author provides the names of the twelve apostles as background information.

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew tells the names of the twelve apostles.

twelve apostles

This is the same group as the "twelve disciples" in Matthew 10:1.

first

This is first in order, not in rank.

Matthew 10:3

Matthew the tax collector

"Matthew, who was a tax collector"

Matthew 10:4

the Zealot

Possible meanings are 1) "the Zealot" is a title that shows that he was part of the group of people who wanted to free the Jewish people from Roman rule. Alternate translation: "the patriot" or "the nationalist" or 2) "the Zealot" is a description that shows that he was zealous for God to be honored. Alternate translation: "the zealous one" or "the passionate one"

who would betray him

"who would betray Jesus"

Matthew 10:5

General Information:

Although verse 5 begins by saying that he sent out the twelve, Jesus gave these instructions before he sent them out.

Connecting Statement:

Here Jesus begins to give instructions to his disciples about what they should do and expect when they go to preach.

These twelve Jesus sent out

"Jesus sent out these twelve men" or "It was these twelve men whom Jesus sent out"

sent out

Jesus sent them out for a particular purpose.

He instructed them

"He told them what they needed to do" or "He commanded them"

Matthew 10:6

lost sheep of the house of Israel

This is a metaphor comparing the entire nation of Israel to sheep who have strayed from their shepherd.

house of Israel

This refers to the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "people of Israel" or "descendants of Israel"

Matthew 10:7

as you go

Here "you" is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

The kingdom of heaven is near

The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God ruling as king. This phrase is only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use the word "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 3:2]

Matthew 10:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go to preach.

Heal ... raise ... cleanse ... cast out ... you have received ... give

These verbs and pronouns are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

raise the dead

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cause the dead to live again"

Freely you have received, freely give

Jesus did not state what the disciples had received or were to give. Some languages may require this information in the sentence. Here "freely" means that there was no payment. Alternate translation: "Freely you have received these things, freely give them to others" or "You received these things without paying, so give them to others without making them pay"

Freely you have received, freely give

Here "received" is a metaphor that represents being made able to do things, and "give" is a metaphor that represents doing things for others. Alternate translation: "Freely you have received the ability to do these things, freely do them for others" or "Freely I have made you able to do these things, freely do them for others"

Matthew 10:9

your

This refers to the twelve apostles and so is plural.

gold, silver, or copper

These are metals out of which coins were made. This list is a metonym for money, so if the metals are unknown in your area, translate the list as "money."

belts

"money belts." A belt is a long strip of cloth or leather worn around the waist. It was often wide enough that it could be folded and used to carry money. Alternate translation: "purses" or "pouches"

Matthew 10:10

traveling bag

This could either be any bag used to carry things on a journey, or a bag used by someone to collect food or money.

an extra tunic

Use the same word you used for "tunic" in Matthew 5:40.

laborer

worker

his food

Here "food" refers to anything a person needs. Alternate translation: "what he needs"

Matthew 10:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go out to preach.

Whatever city or village you enter

"Whenever you enter a city or village" or "When you go into any city or village"

city ... village

"large village ... small village" or "large town ... small town."

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See how you translated this in Matthew 9:35.

you

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

worthy

A "worthy" person is a person who is willing to welcome the disciples.

stay there until you leave

The full meaning of the statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "stay in that person's house until you leave the town or village"

Matthew 10:12

As you enter into the house, greet it

The phrase "greet it" means greet the house. A common greeting in those days was "Peace be to this house!" Here "house" represents the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "As you enter the house, greet the people who live in it"

you

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

Matthew 10:13

your ... your

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

the house is worthy ... not worthy

Here "the house" represents those who live in the house. A "worthy" person is a person who is willing to welcome the disciples. Jesus compares this person to one who is "not worthy," a person who does not welcome the disciples. Alternate translation: "the people who live in that house receive you well" or "the people who live in that house treat you well"

let your peace come upon it

The word "it" refers to the house, which represents the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "let them receive your peace" or "let them receive the peace that you greeted them with"

if it is not worthy

The word "it" means the house. Here "house" refers to the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "if they do not receive you well" or "if they do not treat you well"

let your peace return to you

Possible meanings are 1) if the household was not worthy, then God would hold back peace or blessings from that household or 2) if the household was not worthy, then the apostles were supposed to do something, such as asking God not to honor their greeting of peace. If your language has a similar meaning of taking back a greeting or its effects, that should be used here.

Matthew 10:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about what they should do when they go to preach.

As for those who do not receive you or listen

"If no people in that house or city will receive you or listen"

you ... your

This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles.

listen to your words

Here "words" refers to what the disciples say. Alternate translation: "listen to your message" or "listen to what you have to say"

city

You should translate this the same way you did in Matthew 10:11.

shake off the dust from your feet

"shake the dust off your feet as you leave." This is a sign that God has rejected the people of that house or city.

Matthew 10:15

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

it will be more bearable

"the suffering will be less"

the land of Sodom and Gomorrah

This refers to the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah. Alternate translation: "the people who lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

that city

This refers to the people in the city that does not receive the apostles or listen to their message. Alternate translation: "the people of the city that does not receive you"

Matthew 10:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples. Here he begins to tell them about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

See, I send

The word "See" here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Look, I send" or "Listen, I send" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you. I send"

I send you out

Jesus is sending them out for a particular purpose.

as sheep in the midst of wolves

Sheep are defenseless animals that wolves often attack. Jesus is stating that people may harm the disciples. Alternate translation: "as sheep among people who are like dangerous wolves" or "as sheep among people who act the way dangerous animals act"

be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves

Jesus is telling the disciples they must be cautious and harmless among the people. If comparing the disciples to serpents or doves is confusing, it might be better not to state the similes. Alternate translation: "act with understanding and caution, as well as with innocence and virtue"

Matthew 10:17

Watch out for people! They will

You can translate with "because" to show how these two statements relate. Alternate translation: "Watch out for people because they will"

will deliver you up to

"will put you under the control of"

councils

local religious leaders or elders who together keep peace in the community

whip you

"beat you with a whip"

Matthew 10:18

you will be brought

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"they will bring you" or "they will drag you"

for my sake

"because you belong to me" or "because you follow me"

to them and to the Gentiles

The pronoun "them" refers either to the "governors and kings" or to the Jewish accusers.

Matthew 10:19

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

When they deliver you up

"When people take you to the councils." The "people" here are the same "people" as in Matthew 10:17.

you ... you

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

do not be anxious

"do not worry"

how or what you will speak

"how you are to speak or what you are to say." The two ideas may be combined: "what you are to say"

for what to say will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the Holy Spirit will tell you what to say"

at that time

"right then" or "at that time"

Matthew 10:20

you ... your

These are plural and refer to the twelve apostles.

the Spirit of your Father

If necessary, this can be translated as "the Spirit of God your heavenly Father" or a footnote can be added to make it clear that this refers to God the Holy Spirit and not to the spirit of an earthly father.

Father

This is an important title for God.

in you

"through you"

Matthew 10:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

Brother will deliver up brother to death

"One brother will deliver up his brother to death" or "Brothers will deliver up their brothers to death." Jesus speaks of something that will happen many times.

deliver up brother to death

The abstract noun "death" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "hand brother over to authorties who will execute him"

a father his child

These words can be translated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "fathers will deliver up their children to death"

rise up against

"rebel against" or "turn against"

cause them to be put to death

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "have them put to death" or "have the authorities execute them"

Matthew 10:22

You will be hated by everyone

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will hate you" or "All people will hate you"

You

This is plural and refers to the twelve disciples.

because of my name

Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you trust in me"

whoever endures

"whoever stays faithful"

to the end

It is not clear whether the "end" means when a person dies, when the persecution ends, or the end of the age when God shows himself to be king. The main point is that they endure as long as necessary.

that person will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will deliver that person"

Matthew 10:23

in this city

Here "this" does not refer to a specific city. Alternate translation: "in one city"

flee to the next

"flee to the next city"

truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

before the Son of Man has

Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "before I, the Son of Man, have"

has come

"arrives"

Matthew 10:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

A disciple is not greater than his teacher, nor a servant above his master

Jesus is using a proverb to teach his disciples a general truth. Jesus is emphasizing that the disciples should not expect people to treat them any better than the people treat Jesus.

A disciple is not greater than his teacher

"A disciple is always less important than his teacher" or "A teacher is always more important than his disciple"

nor a servant above his master

"and a servant is always less important than his master" or "and a master is always more important than his servant"

Matthew 10:25

It is enough for the disciple that he should be like his teacher

"The disciple should be satisfied to become like his teacher"

be like his teacher

If necessary, you can make explicit how the disciple becomes like the teacher. Alternate translation: "know as much as his teacher knows"

the servant like his master

If necessary, you can make explicit how the servant becomes like the master. Alternate translation: "the servant

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should be satisfied to become only as important as his master"

If they have called the master ... how much worse ... they call ... the members of his household

Again Jesus is emphasizing that since people have mistreated him, his disciples should expect people to treat them the same or worse.

how much worse will be the names they call the members of his household

"the names that they call the members of his household will certainly be much worse" or "they will certainly call the members of his household much worse names"

If they have called

"Since people have called"

the master of the house

Jesus is using this as a metaphor for himself.

Beelzebul

This name can either be 1) transcribed directly as "Beelzebul" or 2) translated with its original, intended meaning of "Satan."

his household

This is a metaphor for Jesus's disciples.

Matthew 10:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go out to preach.

do not fear them

Here "them" refers to the people who mistreat followers of Jesus.

there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Being concealed or hidden represents being kept secret, and being revealed represents being made known. Jesus is emphasizing that God will make all things known. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will reveal the things that people hide"

Matthew 10:27

What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight, and what you hear softly in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that the disciples should tell everyone what he tells the disciples in private. Alternate translation: "Tell people in the daylight what I tell you in the darkness, and proclaim upon the housetops what you hear softly in your ear"

What I tell you in the darkness, say in the daylight

Here "darkness" is a metonym for "night" which is a metonym for "private." Here "daylight" is a metonym for "public." Alternate translation: "What I tell you privately at night, say in public in the daylight"

what you hear softly in your ear

This is a way of referring to whispering. Alternate translation: "what I whisper to you"

proclaim upon the housetops

Housetops where Jesus lived were flat, and people far away could hear anyone speaking with a loud voice from one. Here "housetops" refers to any place where all people can hear. Alternate translation: "speak loudly in a public place for all to hear"

Matthew 10:28

General Information:

Here Jesus also begins to give reasons why his disciples should not be afraid of the persecution they might experience.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the persecution they will endure when they go to preach.

Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul

This is not distinguishing between people who cannot kill the soul and people who can kill the soul. No person can kill the soul. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid of people. They can kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul"

kill the body

This means to cause physical death. If these words are awkward, they can be translated as "kill you" or "kill other people."

body

the part of a person that can be touched, as opposed to the soul or spirit

kill the soul

This means to harm people after they have physically died.

soul

the part of a person that cannot be touched and that lives on after the physical body dies

fear him who is able

You can add "because" to clarify why people should fear God. Alternate translation: "fear God because he is able"

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a small coin?

Jesus states this proverb as a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "Think about the sparrows. They have so little value that you can buy two of them for only one small coin."

sparrows

These are very small, seed-eating birds. Alternate translation: "small birds"

a small coin

This is often translated as the least valuable coin available in your country. It refers to a copper coin worth about one-sixteenth of a day's wage for a laborer. Alternate translation: "very little money"

not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's knowledge

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "your Father knows when every one of them falls to the ground"

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 10:30

even the hairs of your head are all numbered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows even how many hairs are on your head"

numbered

"counted"

Matthew 10:31

You are more valuable than many sparrows

"God values you more than many sparrows"

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Matthew 10:32
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.
everyone who confesses me ... I will also confess before my Father
"whoever confesses me ... I will also confess before my Father" or "if anyone confesses me ... I will also confess him before my Father"
confesses me before men
"tells others that he is my disciple" or "acknowledges before other people that he is loyal to me"
I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven
You can make explicit the information that is understood. Alternate translation: "I will also acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven that that person belongs to me"
my Father who is in heaven
"my heavenly Father"
Father
This is an important title for God.
Matthew 10:33
he who denies me ... I will also deny before my Father
"whoever denies me ... I will also deny before my Father" or "if anyone denies me ... I will also deny him before my Father"
denies me before men
"denies to other people that he is loyal to me" or "refuses to acknowledge to others that he is my disciple"
I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven
You can make explicit the information that is understood. Alternate translation: "I will deny before my Father who is in heaven that this person belongs to me"
Matthew 10:34
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.
Do not think
"Do not suppose" or "You must not think"
upon the earth
This refers to the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: "to the people of the earth" or "to people"
a sword
This refers to division, fighting, and killing among people.
Matthew 10:35
to set ... against
"to cause ... to fight against"
a man against his father
"a son against his father"
Matthew 10:36
A man's enemies
"A person's enemies" or "A person's worst enemies"
those of his own household
"members of his own family"
Matthew 10:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.
He who loves ... is not worthy
Here "he" means any person in general. Alternate translation: "Those who love ... are not worthy" or "If you love ... you are not worthy"
loves
The word for "love" here refers to "brotherly love" or "love from a friend." Alternate translation: "cares for" or "is devoted to" or "is fond of"
worthy of me
"deserve to belong to me" or "worthy to be my disciple"
Matthew 10:38
pick up his cross and follow after me
"carry his cross and follow me." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"
pick up
"take up" or "pick up and carry"
Matthew 10:39
He who finds his life will lose it. But he who loses ... will find it
Jesus uses a proverb to teach his disciples. This should be translated with as few words as possible. Alternate translation: "Those who find their lives will lose them. But those who lose their lives ... will find them" or "If you find your life you will lose it. But if you lose your life ... you will find it"
finds
This is a metaphor for "keeps" or "saves." Alternate translation: "tries to keep" or "tries to save"
will lose it
This does not mean the person will die. It is a metaphor that means the person will not experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will not have true life"
who loses his life
This does not mean to die. It is a metaphor that means a person considers obeying Jesus more important than his own life. Alternate translation: "who denies himself"
for my sake
"because he trusts me" or "on my account" or "because of me." This is the same idea as "for my sake" in Matthew 10:18.
will find it
This metaphor means the person will experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will find true life"
Matthew 10:40
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to instruct his disciples about the reasons why they should not be afraid of the persecution that they might experience.
He who welcomes
This means he receives someone as a guest.
He who
The word "He" refers to anyone in general. Alternate translation: "Whoever" or "Anyone who" or "The one who"
you
This is plural and refers to the twelve apostles to whom Jesus is speaking.
He who welcomes you welcomes me
Jesus means that when someone welcomes you, it is like

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welcoming him. Alternate translation: "When someone welcomes you, it is like he is welcoming me" or "If someone welcomes you, it is as if he were welcoming me"

he who welcomes me also welcomes him who sent me

This means that when someone welcomes Jesus, it is like welcoming God. Alternate translation: "When someone welcomes me, it is like he is welcoming God the Father who sent me" or "If someone welcomes me, it is as if he were welcoming God the Father who sent me"

Matthew 10:41

in the name of a prophet

"because that prophet is a prophet" or "because he knows that that person is a prophet." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a prophet.

a prophet's reward

This refers to the reward that God gives the prophet, not to the reward that a prophet gives to another person.

in the name of a righteous man

"because that righteous man is a righteous man" or "because he knows that that person is righteous." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a righteous man.

a righteous man's reward

This refers to the reward God gives to a righteous person, not a reward that a righteous person gives to another person.

Matthew 10:42

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes instructing his disciples about what they should do and expect when they go to preach.

Whoever gives

"Anyone who gives"

one of these little ones

"one of these lowly ones" or "the least important of these." The phrase "one of these" here refers to one of Jesus's disciples.

in the name of a disciple

"because that disciple" or "because he knows that that person is a disciple." That is, the one who welcomes will receive the reward because he knew that the person he was welcoming was a disciple.

truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

he will ... his reward

Here "he" and "his" refer to the one who is giving.

he will in no way lose

"God will not deny him." This has nothing to do with having a possession taken away. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly give him"

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11 [1]It came about that when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.[2]Now when John heard in the prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent a message by his disciples[3]and said to him, "Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?"

[4]Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you see and hear.[5]The blind are receiving sight, the lame are walking, lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing again, the dead are being raised back to life, and the gospel is being preached to the poor.[6]Blessed is anyone who does not stumble because of me."

[7]As these men went on their way, Jesus began to say to the crowds about John, "What did you go out in the desert to see—a reed being shaken by the wind?[8]But what did you go out to see—a man dressed in soft clothing? Really, those who wear soft clothing live in kings' houses.
[9]But what did you go out to see—a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and much more than a prophet.[10]This is he of whom it was written,

'See, I am sending my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.'

[11]Truly I say to you that among those born of women, there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist. Yet the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is.[12]From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force.
[13]For all the prophets and the law have been prophesying until John;[14]and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who was to come.[15]He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
[16]To what should I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces calling out to the others,[17]saying:

'We played a flute for you,
and you did not dance.
We mourned,
and you did not weep.'

[18]For John came not eating bread or drinking wine, and they say, 'He has a demon.'[19]The Son of Man came eating and drinking and they say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her deeds."

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[20]Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles were done, because they had not repented.[21]"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.[22]But I tell you it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you.
[23]You, Capernaum, do you think you will be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. For if in Sodom there had been done the miracles that were done in you, it would still have remained until today.[24]But I say to you that it will be easier for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

[25]At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to little children.[26]Yes, Father, for this was pleasing in your sight.[27]All things have been entrusted to me from my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
[28]Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest.[29]Take my yoke on you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.[30]For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 11:10.
Some scholars believe that Matthew 11:20 begins a new stage in the ministry of Christ because of Israel's rejection of him.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hidden revelation
After Matthew 11:20 Jesus begins to reveal information about himself and about the plans of God the Father, while hiding this information from those who reject him (Matthew 11:25).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of heaven is near"
No one knows for sure whether the "kingdom of heaven" was present or still coming when John spoke these words. English translations often use the phrase "at hand," but these words can be difficult to translate. Other versions use the phrases "is coming near" and "has come near."

Links:

Matthew 11:1 Notes

Matthew 11:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of how Jesus responded to disciples of John the Baptist.
It came about that when
This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "Then when" or "After"
had finished instructing
"had finished teaching" or "had finished commanding."
his twelve disciples
This refers to the twelve chosen apostles of Jesus.
in their cities
Here "their" refers to all the Jews in general.
Matthew 11:2
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
when John heard in the prison about
This is the first mention of John being in prison. Some languages may need to state that he had been put in prison or that he was in prison. Alternate translation: "Now John had been put in prison. When he heard about" or "When John, who was in prison, heard about"
he sent a message by his disciples
John the Baptist sent his own disciples with a message to Jesus.
Matthew 11:3
said to him
The pronoun "him" refers to Jesus.
Are you the one who is coming
"Are you the one whom we are expecting to come." This is another way to refer to the Messiah or Christ.
should we look for another
"should we be expecting someone else." The pronoun "we" refers to all Jews, not only John's disciples.
Matthew 11:4
report to John
"tell John"
Matthew 11:5
lepers are being cleansed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am healing lepers"
the dead are being raised back to life

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Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people who have died are being caused to live again" or "I am causing those who have died to become alive again" and

the gospel is being preached to the poor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am preaching good news to the poor"

the poor

This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Matthew 11:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

What did you go out in the desert to see—a reed ... wind?

Jesus uses a question to cause the people to think about what kind of person John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "Surely you did not go out to the desert to see a reed ... wind!"

a reed being shaken by the wind

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus mean the literal plants by the Jordan River or 2) Jesus is using a metaphor to mean a kind of person. Alternate translation: "a man who easily changes his mind and is like a reed blowing back and forth in the wind"

being shaken by the wind

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "swaying in the wind" or "blowing in the wind"

Matthew 11:8

But what did you go out to see—a man ... clothing?

Jesus uses a question to cause the people to think about what kind of person John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "And surely you did not go out to the desert to see a man ... clothing!"

dressed in soft clothing

"wearing expensive clothing." Rich people wore this kind of clothing.

Really

This word adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: "Indeed"

kings' houses

"kings' palaces"

Matthew 11:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

But what did you go out to see—a prophet?

Jesus uses a question to make the people think about what kind of man John the Baptist is. Alternate translation: "But surely you went out to the desert to see a prophet!"

Yes, I say to you,

"I say to you yes,"

much more than a prophet

This can be translated as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "the person you saw was much more than a prophet"

much more than

much more important than

Matthew 11:10

General Information:

Here, Jesus quotes the prophet Malachi to show that the life and ministry of John the Baptist fulfilled prophecy.

This is he of whom it was written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what the prophet Malachi wrote long ago about John the Baptist"

I am sending my messenger

The pronouns "I" and "my" refer to God. Malachi is quoting what God said.

before your face

Here "your" is singular, because God was speaking to the Messiah in the quotation. Also, "face" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "in front of you" or "to go ahead of you"

prepare your way before you

This is a metaphor that means the messenger will prepare the people to receive the Messiah's message.

Matthew 11:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

among those born of women, there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist

The word "arisen" is a metaphor for being active, referring here to John's activity as a prophet. Alternate translation: "no one born of women has been a greater prophet than John the Baptist"

among those born of women

Even though Adam and Eve were not born of a woman, this is a way of referring to all humans. Alternate translation: "out of all people who have ever lived"

the least important person in the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, try to keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "the least important person under the rule of our God in heaven"

is greater than he is

"is more important than John is"

Matthew 11:12

From the days of John the Baptist

"From the time John began preaching his message." The word "days" probably refers here to a period of months or even years.

the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force

There are various possible interpretations of this verse. The UDB assumes that it means that some people want to use God's kingdom for their own selfish purposes and that they are willing to use force against other people to accomplish this. Other versions assume a positive interpretation, that the call to enter the kingdom of God has become so urgent that people must act in an extreme manner in order to answer that call and to resist the temptation to sin further. A third interpretation is that violent people are harming God's people and trying to stop God from ruling.

Matthew 11:13

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Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.
all the prophets and the law have been prophesying until John
Here "prophets and the law" refer to the things that the prophets and Moses wrote in scripture. Alternate translation: "these are the things that the prophets and Moses have prophesied through the scriptures until the time of John the Baptist"
Matthew 11:14
if you
Here "you" is plural and refers to the crowd.
he is Elijah who was to come
The word "he" refers to John the Baptist. This does not mean John the Baptist is literally Elijah. Jesus means John the Baptist fulfills the prophecy about "Elijah, who is to come" or the next Elijah. Alternate translation: "when the prophet Malachi said that Elijah would return, he was speaking about John the Baptist"
Matthew 11:15
He who has ears to hear, let him hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"
He who has ... let him hear
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "You who have ... listen"
Matthew 11:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to talk to the crowds about John the Baptist.
To what should I compare this generation?
Jesus uses a question to introduce a comparison between the people of that day and what children might say in the marketplace. Alternate translation: "This is what this generation is like"
this generation
"the people living now" or "these people" or "you people of this generation"
marketplaces
large, open-air areas where people buy and sell items
Matthew 11:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues the parable that begins with the words "It is like" in verse 16.
saying ... and you did not weep
Jesus uses a parable to describe the people who were alive at that time. He compares them to a group of children who are trying to get the other children to play with them. However, no matter what they do, the other children will not join them. Jesus means that it does not matter if God sends someone like John the Baptist, who lives in the desert and fasts, or someone like Jesus, who celebrates with sinners and does not fast. The people, most specifically the Pharisees and religious leaders, still remain stubborn and refuse to accept God's truth.
We played a flute for you
"We" refers to the children sitting in the marketplace. Here "you" is plural and refers to the other group of children.
and you did not dance
"but you did not dance to the happy music"
We mourned
This means they sang sad songs like women did at funerals.
and you did not weep
"but you did not cry with us"
Matthew 11:18
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes talking to the crowds about John the Baptist.
not eating bread or drinking wine
Here "bread" refers to food. It does not mean that John never ate food. It means he fasted often, and when he ate, he did not eat good, expensive food. Alternate translation: "frequently fasting and not drinking alcohol" or "not eating fancy food and not drinking wine"
they say, 'He has a demon.'
This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "they say that he has a demon." or "they accuse him of having a demon."
they say
All occurrences of "they" refer to the people of that generation, and most specifically to the Pharisees and religious leaders.
Matthew 11:19
The Son of Man came
Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"
came eating and drinking
This is the opposite of John's behavior. This means more than just consuming the normal amount of food and drink. It means Jesus celebrated and enjoyed good food and drink like other people did.
they say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners!'
This can be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "they say that he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners." or "they accuse him of eating and drinking too much and of being ... sinners." If you translated "The Son of Man" as "I, the Son of man," you can state this as an indirect statement and use the first person. Alternate translation: "they say that I am a gluttonous man and a drunkard ... sinners."
he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard
"he is a greedy eater and a drunk" or "he continually eats too much food and drinks too much alcohol"
But wisdom is justified by her deeds
This is a proverb that Jesus applies to this situation, because the people who rejected both him and John were not being wise. Jesus and John the Baptist are the wise ones, and the results of their deeds prove it.
wisdom is justified by her deeds
Here "wisdom" is described as a woman who is proven to be right by what she does. Jesus means that the results of a wise person's actions prove that he is truly wise. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the results of a wise person's deeds prove that he is wise"

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Matthew 11:20

General Information:

Jesus begins to denounce the people of the cities where he previously did miracles.

denounce the cities

Here "the cities" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "rebuked the people of the cities" or "accuse the people of the cities of doing wrong"

cities

"towns"

in which most of his miracles were done

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in which he did most of his miracles"

miracles

"mighty works" or "works of power"

Matthew 11:21

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!

Jesus speaks as if the people of the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida were there listening to him, but they were not.

Woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you." Here "you" is singular and refers to the city. If it is more natural to refer to the people instead of a city, you could translate with a plural "you."

Chorazin ... Bethsaida ... Tyre ... Sidon

The names of these cities are used as metonyms for the people living in these cities.

If the miracles ... in sackcloth and ashes

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past, but it did not.

If the miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you

This can be translated with active forms. Alternate translation: "If I had done the miracles among the people of Tyre and Sidon that I have done among you"

which were done in you

Here the "you" is plural and refers to Chorazin and Bethsaida. If it is more natural for your language, you could use a dual "you" to refer to the two cities, or a plural "you" to refer to the people of the cities.

they would have repented long ago

The pronoun "they" refers to the people of Tyre and Sidon.

would have repented

"would have shown they were sorry for their sins"

Matthew 11:22

it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you

Here "Tyre and Sidon" refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: "God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely at the day of judgment than the people of Tyre and Sidon"

than for you

Here the "you" is plural and refers to Chorazin and Bethsaida. If it is more natural for your language, you could use a dual "you" to refer to the two cities, or a plural "you" to refer to the people of the cities. The implied information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "than for you, because you did not repent and believe in me, even though you saw me do miracles"

Matthew 11:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the people of the cities where he previously did miracles.

You, Capernaum

Jesus now speaks to the people in the city of Capernaum as if they were listening to him, but they were not. The pronoun "you" is singular and refers to Capernaum throughout these two verses.

You

All occurrences of "you" are singular. If it is more natural to refer to the people of the city, you could translate with a plural "you."

Capernaum ... Sodom

The names of these cities refer to the people living in Capernaum and in Sodom.

do you think you will be exalted to heaven?

"do you think you will be raised up to heaven?" Jesus uses a rhetorical question to rebuke the people of Capernaum for their pride. It can be stated in active form: Alternate translation: "you cannot raise yourself up to heaven!" or "the praise of other people will not raise you up to heaven!" or "God will not bring you up to heaven like you think he will!"

you will be brought down to Hades

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will send you down to Hades"

For if in Sodom ... it would still have remained until today

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past, but it did not.

if in Sodom there had been done the miracles that were done in you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if I had done the miracles among the people of Sodom that I have done among you"

miracles

"mighty works" or "works of power"

it would still have remained

The pronoun "it" refers to the city of Sodom.

Matthew 11:24

I say to you

This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

it will be easier for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you

Here "land of Sodom" refer to the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom in the day of judgment than to you" or "God will punish you more severely in the day of judgment than the people of Sodom"

than for you

The implicit information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "than for you, because you did not repent and believe in me, even though you saw me do miracles"

Matthew 11:25

General Information:

Here, Jesus prays to his heavenly Father while still in the presence of the crowd.

Father

This is an important title for God.

Lord of heaven and earth

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"Lord who rules over heaven and earth." The phrase "heaven and earth" is a merism that refers to all people and things in the universe. Alternate translation: "Lord who rules over the whole universe"

you concealed these things ... and revealed them

It is not clear what is meant by "these things." If your language needs to specify what is meant, an alternative translation might be best. Alternate translation: "you concealed these truths ... and revealed them"

you concealed these things from

"you hid these things from" or "you have not made these things known to." This verb is the opposite of "revealed."

from the wise and understanding

These nominal adjectives can be translated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "from people who are wise and understanding"

the wise and understanding

Jesus is using irony. He does not think these people are really wise. Alternate translation: "people who think they are wise and understanding"

revealed them

"made them known." The pronoun "them" refers to "these things" earlier in this verse.

to little children

Jesus compares ignorant people to little children. Jesus is emphasizing that many of those who believe him either are not well educated or do not think of themselves as wise.

Matthew 11:26

General Information:

Here, Jesus continues praying to his heavenly Father while still in the presence of the crowd.

for this was pleasing in your sight

The phrase "in your sight" is a metonym that stands for how a person considers something. Alternate translation: "for you considered it good to do this"

Matthew 11:27

General Information:

Here, Jesus begins to address the people again.

All things have been entrusted to me from my Father

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has entrusted all things to me" or "My Father has given everything over to me"

All things

Possible meanings are 1) God the Father has revealed everything about himself and his kingdom to Jesus or 2) God has given all authority to Jesus.

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

no one knows the Son except the Father

This double negative emphasizes that the Father is the only one who knows the Son. Alternate translation: "the only one who knows the Son is the Father"

no one knows

The word "knows" here means more than just being acquainted with someone. It means knowing someone intimately because of having a special relationship with him.

the Son

Jesus was referring to himself in the third person.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

no one knows the Father except the Son

"only the Son knows the Father"

Matthew 11:28

all you

All occurrences of "you" are plural.

who labor and are heavy burdened

Jesus speaks of people being discouraged in their attempts to obey all the laws as if those laws were heavy burdens and the people were laboring to carry them. Alternate translation: "who are discouraged from trying so hard" or "Who are discouraged from trying so hard to obey the laws perfectly"

I will give you rest

"I will allow you to rest from your labor and burden"

Matthew 11:29

Take my yoke on you

Jesus continues the metaphor. Jesus is inviting the people to become his disciples and follow him.

I am meek and lowly in heart

Here "meek" and "lowly in heart" mean basically the same thing. Jesus combines them to emphasize that he will be much kinder than the religious leaders. Alternate translation: "I am gentle and humble" or "I am very gentle"

lowly in heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "lowly in heart" is an idiom that means "humble." Alternate translation: "humble"

you will find rest for your souls

Here "soul" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "you will find rest for yourselves" or "you will be able to rest"

Matthew 11:30

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light

Both of these phrases mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that it is easier to obey him than it is the Jewish law. Alternate translation: "For what I place on you, you will be able to carry because it is light"

my burden is light

The word "light" here is the opposite of heavy, not the opposite of dark.

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12 [1]At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. His disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them.[2]But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to Jesus, "See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath."

[3]But Jesus said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?[4]He

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went into the house of God and ate the bread of the presence, which was unlawful for him to eat and unlawful for those who were with him, but lawful only for the priests.
[5]Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath but are guiltless?[6]But I say to you that one greater than the temple is here.
[7]If you had known what this meant, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.[8]For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

[9]Then Jesus left from there and went into their synagogue.[10]Behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. The Pharisees asked Jesus, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" so that they might accuse him of sinning.

[11]Jesus said to them, "What man would there be among you, who, if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a pit on the Sabbath, would not take hold of it and raise it out?[12]How much more valuable, then, is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."
[13]Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored to health, just like the other hand.[14]But the Pharisees went out and plotted against him. They were seeking how they might destroy him.

[15]Jesus, knowing this, withdrew from there. Many people followed him, and he healed them all.[16]He commanded them not to make him known to others,[17]that it might be fulfilled, what had been said through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

[18] "See, my servant whom I have chosen;
my beloved one, in whom my soul is well pleased.
I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

[19] He will not strive nor cry aloud;
neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

[20] He will not break any bruised reed;
he will not quench any smoking flax,
until he leads justice to victory,

[21] and in his name the Gentiles will have hope."

[22]Then someone blind and mute, possessed by a demon, was brought to Jesus. He healed him, with the result that the mute man spoke and saw.[23]All the crowds were amazed and said, "Can this man be the Son of David?"

[24]But when the Pharisees heard of this miracle, they said, "This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons."
[25]But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.
[26]If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?[27]And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason they will be your judges.
[28]But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.[29]How can anyone enter the house of the strong man and take away his belongings without tying up the strong man first? Then he will steal his belongings from his house.[30]The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters.
[31]Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.[32]Whoever speaks any word against the Son of Man, that will be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, that will not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.
[33]Make a tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.[34]You offspring of vipers, since you are evil, how can you say good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.[35]The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil.
[36]I say to you that in the day of judgment people will give an account for every idle word they will have said.[37]For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

[38]Then certain scribes and Pharisees answered Jesus and said, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."
[39]But Jesus answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign. But no sign will be given to it

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except the sign of Jonah the prophet.[40]For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of the big fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.
[41]The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation of people and will condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and see, someone greater than Jonah is here.
[42]The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them. She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see, someone greater than Solomon is here.
[43]When an unclean spirit has gone away from a man, it passes through waterless places and looks for rest, but does not find it.[44]Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' Having returned, it finds the house empty—it had been swept clean and put in order.[45]Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they all come in to live there. Then the final condition of that man becomes worse than the first. It will be just like that with this evil generation."

[46]While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, seeking to speak to him.
[47]Someone said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers stand outside, seeking to speak to you."

[48]But Jesus answered and said to him who told him, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?"[49]Then he stretched out his hand toward his disciples and said, "See, here are my mother and my brothers![50]For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, that person is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Matthew 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:18-21, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Sabbath

This chapter has much to say about how God's people are to obey the Sabbath. Jesus said that the rules that the Pharisees made up did not help people obey the Sabbath the way God wanted them to. (See: sabbath)

"Blasphemy against the Spirit"

No one knows for sure what actions people perform or what words they say when they commit this sin. However, they probably insult the Holy Spirit and his work. Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to make people understand that they are sinners and that they need to have God forgive them. Therefore, anyone who does not try to stop sinning is probably committing blasphemy against the Spirit. (See: blasphemy and holyspirit)

Links:

Matthew 12:1 Notes

Matthew 12:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Matthew tells of growing opposition to Jesus's ministry. Here, the Pharisees criticize his disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath.

At that time

This marks a new part of the story. Alternate translation: "A little later"

grainfields

This is a place to plant grain. If wheat is unknown and "grain" is too general, then you can use "fields of the plant they made bread from."

pluck heads of grain and eat them

Picking grain in others' fields and eating it was not considered stealing. The question was whether one could do this otherwise lawful activity on the Sabbath.

to pluck heads of grain and eat them

"to pick some of the wheat and eat it" or "to pick some of the grain and eat it"

heads of grain

The heads of grain are the topmost part of the wheat plant. It holds the mature grain or seeds of the plant.

Matthew 12:2

do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath

Picking grain in others' fields and eating it was not considered stealing. The question was whether one could do this otherwise lawful activity on the Sabbath.

the Pharisees

This does not mean all of the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "some Pharisees"

See, your disciples

"Look, your disciples." The Pharisees use this word to draw attention to what the disciples are doing.

Matthew 12:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' criticism.

to them

"to the Pharisees"

Have you never read ... with him?

Jesus uses a question to respond to the criticism of the Pharisees. Jesus is challenging them to think about the

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meaning of the scriptures they have read. Alternate translation: "I know you have read about ... with him"

when he was hungry, and the men who were with him

The phrase "were hungry" is understood from the phrase "was hungry." Alternate translation: "when he was hungry and the men who were with him were hungry" or "when he and those with him were hungry"

Matthew 12:4

the house of God

During the time of David there was no temple yet. Alternate translation: "the tabernacle" or "the place for worshiping God"

bread of the presence

This is sacred bread that priests placed before God in the tabernacle. Alternate translation: "bread that the priest placed before God" or "sacred bread"

those who were with him

"the men who were with David"

but lawful only for the priests

"but, according to the law, only the priests could eat it"

Matthew 12:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

Have you not read in the law that ... but are guiltless?

Jesus uses a question to respond to the criticism of the Pharisees. Jesus is challenging them to think about the meaning of what they have read in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "Surely you have read in the law of Moses that ... but are guiltless." or "You should know that the law teaches that ... but are guiltless."

profane the Sabbath

"do on the Sabbath what the law forbids them to do on that day"

are guiltless

"God will not punish them" or "God does not consider them guilty"

Matthew 12:6

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

one greater than the temple

"someone who is more important than the temple." Jesus was referring to himself as the one greater.

Matthew 12:7

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea to rebuke the Pharisees.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

If you had known what this meant, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless

Here Jesus quotes scripture. Alternate translation: "The prophet Hosea wrote this long ago: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' If you had understood what this meant, you would not have condemned the guiltless"

I desire mercy and not sacrifice

In the law of Moses, God did command the Israelites to offer sacrifices. This means God considers mercy more important than the sacrifices.

I desire

The pronoun "I" refers to God.

the guiltless

This can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "those who are not guilty"

Matthew 12:8

the Son of Man is

Jesus was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am"

is Lord of the Sabbath

"rules over the Sabbath" or "makes the laws about what people can do on the Sabbath"

Matthew 12:9

General Information:

Here the scene shifts to a later time when the Pharisees criticize Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath.

Then Jesus left from there

"Jesus left the grainfields" or "Then Jesus left"

their synagogue

Possible meanings are 1) the word "their" refers to the Jews of that town. Alternate translation: "the synogogue" or 2) the word "their" refers to the Pharisees that Jesus had just spoken to, and this was the synagogue that they and other Jews in that town attended. The word "their" does not mean that the Pharisees owned the synagogue. Alternate translation: "the synagogue that they attended"

Matthew 12:10

Behold

The word "Behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

a man who had a withered hand

"a man who had a paralyzed hand" or "a man with a crippled hand"

The Pharisees asked Jesus, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

so that they might accuse him of sinning.

"The Pharisees wanted to accuse Jesus of sinning, so they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'"

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath

"According to the law of Moses, may a person heal another person on the Sabbath"

so that they might accuse him of sinning

They did not just want to accuse Jesus in front of the people. The Pharisees wanted Jesus to give an answer that contradicted the law of Moses so they could take him before a judge and legally charge him with breaking the law.

Matthew 12:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' criticism.

What man would there be among you, who, if he had just one sheep ... would not take hold of it and raise it out?

Jesus uses a question to respond to the Pharisees. He is challenging them to think about what kind of work they do on the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "Every one of you, if you only had one sheep ... would grab the sheep and raise it out."

raise

lift

Matthew 12:12

How much more valuable, then, is a man than a sheep!

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The phrase "how much more" adds emphasis to the statement. Alternate translation: "Obviously, a man is much more valuable than a sheep!" or "Just think about how much more important a man is than a sheep"
it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath
"those who do good on the Sabbath are obeying the law"
Matthew 12:13
Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."
This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Then Jesus commanded the man to stretch out his hand."
to the man
"to the man with the paralyzed hand" or "to the man with the crippled hand"
Stretch out your hand
"Hold out your hand" or "Extend your hand"
He stretched
"The man stretched"
it was restored to health
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it was healthy again" or "it became well again"
Matthew 12:14
plotted against him
"planned to harm Jesus"
were seeking how they might destroy him
"were discussing how they might kill Jesus"
Matthew 12:15
General Information:
This account explains how the actions of Jesus fulfilled one of the prophecies of Isaiah.
Jesus, knowing this, withdrew
"Jesus was aware of what the Pharisees were planning, so he withdrew"
withdrew from
"departed from" or "left"
Matthew 12:16
not to make him known to others
"not to tell anyone else about him"
Matthew 12:17
that it might be fulfilled, what
The phrase "that it might be fulfilled" can be translated as the beginning of a new sentence. If so, the previous verse should end with a period. Alternate translation: "This was to fulfill what"
what had been said through Isaiah the prophet, saying,
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God had said long ago through the prophet Isaiah:"
Matthew 12:18
Connecting Statement:
Here Matthew quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that Jesus's ministry fulfilled scripture.
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
my ... I
All occurrences of these words refer to God. Isaiah is quoting what God said to him.
my beloved one, in whom my soul is well pleased
"he is my beloved one, and I am very pleased with him"
in whom my soul is well pleased
Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "with whom I am very pleased"
he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles
The means that God's servant will tell the Gentiles that there will be justice. It can be stated clearly that God is the one who will bring about justice, and the abstract noun "justice" can be expressed as "what is right." Alternate translation: "he will announce to the nations that God will do for them what is right"
Matthew 12:19
Connecting Statement:
Matthew continues to quote the prophet Isaiah.
neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets
Here people not hearing his voice represents him not speaking loudly. And, "in the street" is an idiom that means "publicly." Alternate translation: "he will not he shout in the cities and towns"
He ... his
All occurrences of these words refer to God's chosen servant.
Matthew 12:20
He
All occurrences of "he" refer to God's chosen servant.
He will not break any bruised reed; he will not quench any smoking flax
Both of these statements mean the same thing. They are metaphors emphasizing that God's servant will be gentle and kind. Both "bruised reed" and "smoking flax" represent weak and hurting people. If the metaphor is confusing, you could translate the literal meaning. Alternate translation: "He will be kind to weak people, and he will be gentle to those who are hurting"
bruised reed
"damaged plant"
he will not quench any smoking flax
"he will not put out any smoking flax" or "he will not stop any smoking flax from burning"
smoking flax
This refers to a lamp wick after the flame has gone out and when it is only smoking.
flax, until
This can be translated with a new sentence: "flax. This is what he will do until"
he leads justice to victory
Leading someone to victory represents causing him to be victorious. Causing justice to be victorious represents making things right that had been wrong. Alternate translation: "he makes everything right"
Matthew 12:21
in his name the Gentiles will have hope
The Gentiles will trust him to fulfill his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait" or "confidently expect." Alternate translation: "the Gentiles will trust in his name" or "the Gentiles will confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises"
in his name
The word "his" refers to God's servant who was spoken of

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in [Matthew 12:18]
Matthew 12:22
General Information:
Here the scene shifts to a later time when the Pharisees accuse Jesus of healing a man by the power of Satan.
Then someone blind and mute, possessed by a demon, was brought to Jesus
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone brought to Jesus a man who was blind and mute because a demon was controlling him"
someone blind and mute
"someone who could not see and could not talk"
Matthew 12:23
All the crowds were amazed
"All the people who had seen Jesus heal the man were greatly surprised"
the Son of David
This is a title for the Christ or Messiah.
Son of
Here this means "descendant of."
Matthew 12:24
this miracle
This refers to the miracle of the healing of a blind, deaf, and demon-possessed man.
This man does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul ... demons
This double negative emphasizes that they think that the power of Beelzebul is the only thing that makes it possible for Jesus casts out demons. Alternate translation: "This man is only able to cast out demons because he is a servant of Beelzebul"
This man
The Pharisees avoid calling Jesus by name to show they reject him.
the prince of the demons
"the chief of the demons"
Matthew 12:25
General Information:
Here Jesus begins to respond to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.
Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand
Jesus uses a proverb to respond to the Pharisees. Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize that it would not make sense for Beelzebul to use his power to fight other demons.
Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate
Here "kingdom" refers to those who live in the kingdom. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "A kingdom will not last when its people fight among themselves"
every city or house divided against itself will not stand
Here "city" refers to the people who live there, and "house" refers to a family. Being "divided against itself" represents its people fighting each other. Alternate translation: "it ruins a city or a family when the people fight each other"
Matthew 12:26
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.
If Satan drives out Satan
The second use of Satan refers to the demons that serve Satan. Alternate translation: "If Satan works against his own demons"
How then will his kingdom stand?
Jesus uses this question to show the Pharisees that what they were saying was illogical. Alternate translation: "His kingdom would not be able to stand!" or "His kingdom would not last!"
Matthew 12:27
Beelzebul
This name refers to the same person as "Satan" (verse 26).
by whom do your sons drive them out?
Jesus uses another question to challenge the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "then you must say your followers also drive out demons by the power of Beelzebul. But you know this is not true."
your sons
Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees. The phrase "your sons" refers to their followers. This was a common way of referring to those who follow teachers or leaders. Alternate translation: "your followers"
For this reason they will be your judges
"Because your followers cast out demons by the power of God, they prove that you are wrong about me."
Matthew 12:28
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.
But if I
Here "if" does not mean Jesus is questioning how he drives out demons. Here Jesus uses the word to introduce a true statement. Alternate translation: "But because I"
then the kingdom of God has come upon you
"then the kingdom of God has arrived among you." Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "this means God is establishing his rule among you"
come upon you
Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
Matthew 12:29
How can anyone enter the house ... belongings from his house
Jesus uses a parable to continue his response to the Pharisees. Jesus means he can drive out demons because he is more powerful than Satan.
How can anyone enter ... without tying up the strong man first?
Jesus uses a question to teach the Pharisees and the crowd. Alternate translation: "No one can enter ... without tying up the strong man first." or "If a person wants to enter ... he must first tie up the strong man."
without tying up the strong man first
"without taking control of the strong man first"
Then he will steal
"The he can steal" or "Then he will be able to steal"
Matthew 12:30
who is not with me
"who does not support me" or "who does not work with me"
is against me
"opposes me" or "works against me"

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the one who does not gather with me scatters
Jesus is using a metaphor that refers to a person either gathering the flock of sheep to a shepherd or making them scatter away from the shepherd. Jesus means that a person is either helping to make people become disciples of Jesus or he is making people reject Jesus.
Matthew 12:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
say to you
Here "you" is plural. Jesus is speaking directly to the Pharisees, but he is also teaching the crowd.
every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive every sin that people commit and every evil thing they say" or "God will forgive every person who sins or says evil things"
blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive the person who speaks evil things about the Holy Spirit"
Matthew 12:32
Whoever speaks any word against the Son of Man
Here "word" refers to what someone says. Alternate translation: "If a person says anything bad about the Son of Man"
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.
that will be forgiven him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive a person for that"
that will not be forgiven him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive that person"
neither in this world, nor in that which is to come
Here "this world" and "that which is to come" refer to the present life and the next life. Alternate translation: "in this life or in the next life" or "now or ever"
Matthew 12:33
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.
Make a tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad
Possible meanings are 1) "If you make a tree good, its fruit will be good, and if you make the tree bad, its fruit will be bad" or 2) "If a tree is good, it will have good fruit, and if a tree is bad, it will have bad fruit." This was a proverb. People were to apply its truth to how they can know whether a person is good or bad.
good ... bad
"healthy ... diseased"
a tree is recognized by its fruit
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people recognize a tree by its fruit" or "people know whether a tree is good or bad by looking at its fruit"
Matthew 12:34
You offspring of vipers
Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are poisonous snakes that are dangerous and represent evil. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 3:7]
You ... you
These are plural and refer to the Pharisees.
how can you say good things?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "you cannot say good things." or "you can only say evil things."
out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks
Here "heart" is a metonym for the thoughts in a person's mind. Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that represents a person as a whole. Alternate translation: "what a person says with his mouth reveals what is in his mind"
Matthew 12:35
The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil
Jesus speaks about the "heart" as if it were a container that a person fills with good or evil things. This is a metaphor that means what a person says reveals what the person is truly like. If you want to keep this imagery, see the UDB. You can also translate the literal meaning. Alternate translation: "A man who is truly good will speak good things, and the man who is truly evil will speak evil things"
Matthew 12:36
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes his response to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed the man by the power of Satan.
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
people will give an account for
"God will ask people about" or "people will have to explain to God"
every idle word they will have said
Here "word" refers to something that someone says. This refers to statements that do no good. This is a metonym for statements made by people who are lazy or otherwise not doing anything good. Alternate translation: "every idle thing they will said"
idle
empty, useless, careless
Matthew 12:37
you will be justified ... you will be condemned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will justify you ... God will condemn you"
Matthew 12:38
Connecting Statement:
The dialogue in these verses happens immediately after Jesus responded to the Pharisees' accusation that he healed a man by the power of Satan.
we wish
"we want"
to see a sign from you
You can make explicit why they want to see a sign. Alternate translation: "to see a sign from you that proves what you say is true"
Matthew 12:39

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General Information:
Here Jesus begins to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.
An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign ... given to it
Jesus is speaking to the Jews of his generation. Alternate translation: "You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you"
adulterous generation
Here "adulterous" is a metaphor for people who are not faithful to God. Alternate translation: "unfaithful generation" or "godless generation"
no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah
This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"
no sign will be given to it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"
the sign of Jonah
"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah"
Matthew 12:40
three days and three nights
This means complete 24-hour periods. Alternate translation: "three complete days"
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.
in the heart of the earth
This means inside a physical grave.
Matthew 12:41
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.
The men of Nineveh
"The citizens of Nineveh"
at the judgment
"on judgment day" or "when God judges people"
this generation of people
This refers to the Jews living during the time Jesus was preaching.
and will condemn it
Possible meanings are 1) "condemn" here represents accusing. Alternate translation: "and will accuse this generation of people" or 2) God will condemn this generation of people because they did not repent as the people of Nineveh had. Alternate translation: "and God will condemn this generation"
and see
"and look." This emphasizes what Jesus says next.
someone greater
"someone more important"
someone
Jesus is speaking about himself.
than Jonah is here
You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "than Jonah is here, yet you still have not repented, which is why God will condemn you"
Matthew 12:42
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.
Queen of the South
This refers to the Queen of Sheba. Sheba was a land south of Israel.
will rise up at the judgment
"will stand up at the judgment"
at the judgment
"on judgment day" or "when God judges people." See how you translated this in Matthew 12:41.
this generation
This refers to the Jews living during the time Jesus was preaching.
and condemn them
See how you translated a similar statement in [Matthew 12:41]
She came from the ends of the earth
Here "ends of the earth" is an idiom that means "far away." Alternate translation: "She came from very far away"
She came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon
This statement explains why the Queen of the South will condemn the people of Jesus's generation. Alternate translation: "For she came"
and see
"and look." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
someone greater
"someone more important"
someone
Jesus is speaking about himself.
than Solomon is here
You can make explicit the implicit meaning of Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "than Solomon is here, yet you do not listen. That is why God will condemn you"
Matthew 12:43
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees. He begins to tell a parable.
waterless places
"dry places" or "places where no people live"
does not find it
Here "it" refers to rest.
Matthew 12:44
Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'
This can be translated as a statement rather than a quotation. Alternate translation: "So, the unclean spirit decides to return to the house from which it came."
to my house from which I came
This is a metaphor for the person in whom the unclean spirit was living. Alternate translation: "to the place I left"
it finds the house empty
Again, "house" is a metaphor for the person in whom the unclean spirit was living. Here, "empty" suggests that no one is living in the house. There is no other spirit living in the person.
it had been swept clean and put in order.
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had swept the house clean and has put everything in the house where it belongs"
Matthew 12:45
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes the parable that he began with the words

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"When an unclean spirit" in verse 43.

It will be just like that with this evil generation

This means that if the people of Jesus's generation do not believe him and become his disciples, they will be in a worse situation than they were before he came.

Matthew 12:46

General Information:

The arrival of Jesus's mother and brothers becomes an opportunity for him to describe his spiritual family.

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new people in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

his mother

This is Mary, Jesus's human mother.

his brothers

These are probably other children born to Mary, but it is is possible that the word "brothers" here refers to Jesus's cousins.

seeking to speak

"wanting to speak"

Matthew 12:47

Someone said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers stand outside, seeking to speak to you."

This can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Someone told Jesus that his mother and brothers were outside and wanted to speak to him."

Matthew 12:48

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 12:1, where Matthew tells of growing opposition to Jesus's ministry.

who told him

The details of the message the person told Jesus are understood and not repeated here. Alternate translation: "who told him that his mother and brothers wanted to speak to him"

Who is my mother and who are my brothers?

Jesus uses these questions to teach the people. Alternate translation: "I will tell you who are really my mother and brothers"

Matthew 12:49

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

here are my mother and my brothers

This is a metaphor that means Jesus's disciples belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family.

Matthew 12:50

whoever does

"anyone who does"

Father

This is an important title for God.

that person is my brother, and sister, and mother

This is a metaphor meaning that those who obey God belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family.

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13 [1]On that day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.[2]A very large crowd gathered around him, so he got into a boat and sat in it while the whole crowd stood on the beach.
[3]Then Jesus said many things to them in parables. He said, "Behold, a farmer went out to sow seed.[4]As he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured them.[5]Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil. Immediately they sprang up because the soil had no depth.[6]But when the sun had risen, they were scorched because they had no root, and they withered away.
[7]Other seeds fell among the thorn plants. The thorn plants grew up and choked them.[8]Other seeds fell on good soil and produced a crop, some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty.[9]He who has ears, let him hear."

[10]The disciples came and said to Jesus, "Why do you talk to the crowd in parables?"
[11]Jesus answered and said to them, "You have been given the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.[12]For whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.
[13]This is why I talk to them in parables:

Though they are seeing,
they do not see;
and though they are hearing,
they do not hear, or understand.

[14]To them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, that which says,

'Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will never know.
[15] For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,

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and understand with their heart and turn again,
and I would heal them.'

[16]But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.[17]Truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that you see and did not see them. They desired to hear the things that you hear and did not hear them.
[18]Listen then to the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed.[19]When anyone hears the word of the kingdom but does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the seed that was sown beside the road.
[20]What was sown on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,[21]yet he has no root in himself and he endures for a while. When tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he quickly falls away.
[22]What was sown among the thorn plants, this is the person who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.[23]The seed that was sown on the good soil, this is the person who hears the word and understands it. He bears fruit and produces a crop, yielding in one case a hundred, in another sixty, and in another thirty times as much as was planted."

[24]Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.[25]But while people slept, his enemy came and also sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away.[26]When the blades sprouted and then produced their crop, then the weeds appeared also.
[27]The servants of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How does it now have weeds?'
[28]"He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'"The servants said to him, 'So do you want us to go and pull them out?'

[29]"The landowner said, 'No. Because while you are pulling out the weeds, you might uproot the wheat with them.[30]Let both grow together until the harvest. At the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First pull out the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

[31]Then Jesus presented another parable to them. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field.[32]This seed is indeed the smallest of all seeds. But when it has grown, it is greater than the garden plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches."
[33]Jesus then told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the dough had risen."

[34]All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; and he said nothing to them without a parable.[35]This was in order that what had been said through the prophet might be fulfilled, when he said,

"I will open my mouth in parables.
I will say things that were hidden from the foundation of the world."

[36]Then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."
[37]Jesus answered and said, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.[38]The field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,[39]and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.
[40]Therefore, as the weeds are gathered up and consumed by fire, so will it be at the end of the age.[41]The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness.
[42]They will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.[43]Then will the righteous people shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

[44]"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. A man found it and hid it. In his joy he goes, sells everything he possesses, and buys that field.[45]Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a man who is a merchant looking for valuable pearls.[46]When he found one very valuable pearl, he went and sold everything that he possessed and bought it.

[47]"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea, and that gathered all kinds of fish.[48]When it was filled, the fishermen drew it up on the beach. Then they sat down and gathered the good ones into containers, but the bad ones they threw away.
[49]It will be this way at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from among the righteous.[50]They will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

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[51]"Have you understood all these things?"The disciples said to him, "Yes."

[52]Then Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like a man who is the owner of a house, who draws out old and new things from his treasure."[53]Then it came about that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed from that place.

[54]Then Jesus entered his own region and taught the people in their synagogue. The result was that they were astonished and said, "Where does this man get his wisdom and these miraculous powers from?[55]Is not this man the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?[56]Are not all his sisters with us? Where did he get all these things?"
[57]They were offended by him.But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own family."
[58]He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

Matthew 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 13:14-15, which is from the Old Testament.
This chapter begins a new section. It contains some of Jesus's parables about the kingdom of heaven.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy
Jesus often says the word "heaven" when he wants his hearers to think of God, who lives in heaven (Matthew 13:11).
Implicit information
Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When Matthew wrote that Jesus "sat beside the sea"
Metaphor
Speakers often use words for things that can be touched to speak of things that cannot be touched. Jesus spoke of a bird eating a seed to describe how Satan kept people from understanding Jesus's message (Matthew 13:19).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice
Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. For example, "they were scorched"
Parables
The parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people would easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. He also told the stories so that those who did not want to believe in him would not understand the truth (Matthew 13:11-13).

Links:

Matthew 13:1 Notes

Matthew 13:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of a new part of the story where Jesus begins to teach the crowds, using parables, about the kingdom of heaven.
On that day
These events happened on the same day as those in the previous chapter.
out of the house
It is not mentioned at whose house Jesus was staying.
sat beside the sea
It is implied that he sat down to teach the people.
Matthew 13:2
so he got into a boat
It is implied that Jesus got into a boat because it would make it easier to teach the people.
a boat
This was probably an open, wooden fishing boat with a sail.
Matthew 13:3
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sows seeds.
Jesus said many things to them in parables
"Jesus told them many things in parables"
to them
"to the people in the crowd"
Behold
"Look" or "Listen." This word calls attention to what is to be said next. Alternate translation: "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

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a farmer went out to sow seed
"a farmer went out to scatter seeds in a field"
Matthew 13:4
As he sowed
"As the farmer scattered the seed"
beside the road
This refers to a "path" next to the field. The ground there would have been hard from people walking on it.
devoured them
"ate all the seeds"
Matthew 13:5
rocky ground
This is ground full of rocks with just a thin layer of soil on top of the rocks.
Immediately they sprang up
"The seeds quickly sprouted and grew"
Matthew 13:6
they were scorched
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sun scorched the plants, and they became too hot"
they withered away
"the plants became dry and died"
Matthew 13:7
fell among the thorn plants
"fell where plants with thorns grew"
choked them
"choked the new sprouts." Use your word for the way weeds prevent other plants from growing well.
Matthew 13:8
produced a crop
"grew more seeds" or "gave fruit"
some one hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty
The words "seeds," "produced," and "crop" are understood from the previous phrase. These can be expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "some seeds produced one hundred times as much crop, some seeds produced sixty times as much crop, and some seeds produced thirty times as much crop"
one hundred ... sixty ... thirty
"100 ... 60 ... 30"
Matthew 13:9
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling a parable about a person who sows seeds.
He who has ears, let him hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has ears" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]
He who ... let him
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]
Matthew 13:11
General Information:
Jesus explains to his disciples why he teaches with parables.
You have been given the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given
This can be translated with the active form and with implied information expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "God has given you the privilege of understanding mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but God has not given it to these people" or "God has made you able to understand mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but he has not enabled these people to understand"
You have been given the privilege
The word "You" is plural here and refers to the disciples.
mysteries of the kingdom of heaven
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" occurs only in the book of Matthew. If possible, try to keep it in your translation. Alternate translation: "the secrets about our God in heaven and his rule"
Matthew 13:12
has will be given more
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "has understanding, God will give him more understanding"
whoever does not have
"whoever does not have understanding" or "whoever does not receive what I teach"
even what he has will be taken away from him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take away even what he has"
Matthew 13:13
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to explain to his disciples why he teaches in parables.
to them ... they
All occurrences of "them" and "they" refer to the people in the crowd.
Though they are seeing, they do not see; and though they are hearing, they do not hear, or understand.
Jesus uses this parallelism to tell and emphasize to the disciples that the crowd refuses to understand God's truth.
Though they are seeing
These words could refer to 1) them seeing what Jesus does. Alternate translation: "Though they see what I do" or 2) their ability to see with their eyes. Alternate translation: "Though they are able to see"
they do not see
Here "see" represents understanding. Alternate translation: "they do not understand"
though they are hearing
These words could refer to 1) them hearing what Jesus teaches. Alternate translation: "Though they hear what I say" or 2) their ability to hear with their ears. Alternate translation: "Though they are able to hear"
they do not hear
Here "hear" represents listening well. Alternate translation: "they do not listen well" or "they do not pay attention"
Matthew 13:14
General Information:
Here Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that the people's failure to understand Jesus's teaching is a fulfillment of prophecy.

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To them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, that which says
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They are fulfilling what God said long ago through the prophet Isaiah"
Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand; seeing, you will see, but you will never know
This begins a quote from the prophet Isaiah about the unbelieving people of Isaiah's day. Jesus uses this quote to describe the very crowd that was listening to him. These statements are again parallel and emphasize that the people refused to understand God's truth.
Listening, you will hear, but you will never understand
"You will hear things, but you will not understand them." You can make explicit what the people will hear. Alternate translation: "You will hear what God says through the prophets, but you will not understand its true meaning"
seeing, you will see, but you will never know
You can make explicit what the people will see. Alternate translation: "you will see what God does through the prophets, but you will not understand it"
Matthew 13:15
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes quoting the prophet Isaiah.
For the heart of this people ... I would heal them
God describes the people of Israel as if they had physical diseases that cause them to be unable to learn, to see, and to hear. God wants them to come to him so he will heal them. This is all a metaphor describing the people's spiritual condition. It means the people are stubborn and refuse to receive and understand God's truth. If they would, then they would repent and God would forgive them and welcome them back as his people. If the meaning is clear, keep the metaphor in your translation.
the heart of this people has become dull
Here "heart" refers to the mind. Alternate translation: "these people's minds are slow to learn" or "these people can no longer learn"
with their ears they hardly hear
They are not physically deaf. Here "hardly hear" means they refuse to listen and learn God's truth. Alternate translation: "they refuse to use their ears to listen"
they have shut their eyes
This means they refuse to understand, not that they have literally closed their eyes. Alternate translation: "they refuse to use their eyes to see"
understand with their heart
The word "heart" here is a metonym for people's innermost being. You may need to use the word in your language for the source of people's thinking and feelings. Alternate translation: "understand with their minds"
turn again
"turn back to me" or "repent"
I would heal them
"have me heal them." This means God would heal them spiritually by forgiving their sins and receiving them again as his people. Alternate translation: "have me receive them again"
Matthew 13:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes explaining to his disciples why he teaches with parables.
But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear
Both of these statements mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that they have pleased God because they have believed what Jesus has said and done.
But blessed are your eyes, for they see
Here "eyes" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "You are blessed because your eyes are able to see"
your ... you
All occurrences of these words are plural and refer to the disciples.
your ears, for they hear
Here "ears" refer to the whole person. You can also make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "blessed are your ears, for they hear" "you are blessed because your ears are able to hear"
Matthew 13:17
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
you
All occurrences of this word are plural and refer to the disciples.
the things that you see
You can make explicit what they have seen. Alternate translation: "the things you have seen me do"
the things that you hear
You can make explicit what they have heard. Alternate translation: "the things you have heard me say"
Matthew 13:18
Connecting Statement:
Here Jesus begins to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds, which he began in Matthew 13:3.
Matthew 13:19
the word of the kingdom
"the message about God's rule as king"
the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart
Jesus speaks of Satan causing the person to forget what he has heard as if Satan were a bird snatching the seed from the ground. Alternate translation: "The evil one causes him to forget the message that he has heard just as a bird snatches away seed from the ground"
the evil one
This refers to Satan.
snatches away
Try to use a word that means to grab something away from someone who is the rightful owner.
what has been sown in his heart
This can be translated in active form: Alternate translation: "the message that God sowed in his heart" or "the message that he heard"
in his heart
Here "heart" refers to the mind of the hearer.
This is the seed that was sown beside the road
"This is the meaning of the seed that was sown beside the road" or "The road where seed was sown represents this

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person"
beside the road
See how you translated this in Matthew 13:4.
Matthew 13:20
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds.
What was sown on rocky ground
The phrase "what was sown" refers to seed that fell. Alternate translation: "The seed that fell on rocky ground"
What was sown on rocky ground is
"The rocky ground where seed was sown represents" or "The rocky ground where seed fell represents"
the person who hears the word
In the parable, the seed represents the word.
the word
This represents God's message. Alternate translation: "the message" or "God's teaching"
receives it with joy
Believing the word is spoken of as receiving it. Alternate translation: "joyfully believes it"
Matthew 13:21
yet he has no root in himself and he endures for a while
"yet he has shallow roots and only lasts for a little while." The root represents what makes a person continue to believe God's message. Alternate translation: "But like a plant that does not grow deep roots, he only endures for a little while"
he quickly falls away
Here "falls away" means stops believing. Alternate translation: "immediately he falls away" or "he quickly stops believing the message"
Matthew 13:22
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to explain to his disciples the parable about a person who sows seeds.
What was sown
This refers to seed that was sown or that fell. Alternate translation: "The seed that was sown" or "The seed that fell"
What was sown among the thorn plants
"The ground with the thorn plants where seed was sown"
this is the person
"this represents the person"
the word
"the message" or "God's teaching"
the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word
Jesus speaks about the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches distracting a person from obeying God's word as if they were weeds that could wind around a plant and keep it from growing. Alternate translation: "as weeds prevent good plants from growing, the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches keep this person from listening to God's word"
cares of the world
"the things in this world that people worry about"
the deceitfulness of riches
Jesus describes "riches" as if it were a person who could deceive someone. This means people think having more money will make them happy, but it will not. Alternate translation: "the love of money"
he becomes unfruitful
The person is spoken of as if he were a plant. Being unfruitful represents being unproductive. Alternate translation: "he becomes unproductive" or "he does not do what God wants"
Matthew 13:23
The seed that was sown on the good soil
You may have to consider "the seed" as a metonym for the soil on which the seed was sown. Alternate translation: "The good soil where seeds were sown"
He bears fruit and produces a crop
The person is spoken of as if he were a plant. Alternate translation: "Like a healthy plant that bears a crop of fruit, he is productive"
a crop, yielding in one case a hundred, in another sixty, and in another thirty times as much as was planted
See how you translated similar phrases in [Matthew 13:8]
a hundred ... sixty ... thirty
100 ... 60 ... 30
Matthew 13:24
Connecting Statement:
Here Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.
Jesus presented another parable
This metaphor speaks of Jesus telling the people the parable as if he were putting a tangible object in front of them so they could examine it. Alternate translation: "Jesus told them another parable"
The kingdom of heaven is like a man
The translation should not equate the kingdom of heaven to a man, but rather the kingdom of heaven is like the situation described in the parable.
The kingdom of heaven is like
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "When our God in heaven shows himself to be king, it will be like"
good seed
"good food seeds" or "good grain seeds." The audience probably thought that Jesus was talking about wheat.
Matthew 13:25
his enemy came
"his enemy came to the field"
weeds
These weeds look like food plants when they are young, but their grain is poison. Alternate translation: "bad seed" or "weed seeds"
Matthew 13:26
When the blades sprouted
"When the wheat seeds sprouted" or "When the plants came up"
produced their crop
"produced grain" or "produced the wheat crop"
then the weeds appeared also
"then people could see there were weeds in the field also"
Matthew 13:27

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Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to tell a parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.
the landowner
This is the same person who sowed good seed in his field.
did you not sow good seed in your field?
The servants used a question to emphasize their surprise. Alternate translation: "you sowed good seed in your field!"
did you not sow
The landowner probably had his servants plant the seeds. Alternate translation: "did we not sow"
Matthew 13:28
He said to them
"The landowner said to the servants"
So do you want us
The word "us" refers to the servants.
Matthew 13:29
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes the parable about a field with both wheat and weeds growing in it.
The landowner said
"The landowner said to his servants"
Matthew 13:30
I will say to the reapers, "First pull out the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."
You can translate this as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "I will tell the reapers to first gather up the weeds and tie them in bundles to burn them, and then gather the wheat into my barn."
barn
a farm building that can be used for storing grain
Matthew 13:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a very small seed that grows into a very big plant.
The kingdom of heaven is like
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]
mustard seed
a very small seed that grows into a large plant
Matthew 13:32
This seed is indeed the smallest of all seeds
Mustard seeds were the smallest seeds known to the original hearers.
But when it has grown
"But when the plant has grown"
it is greater than
"it is larger than"
becomes a tree
A mustard plant can grow about 2 to 4 meters tall.
birds of the sky
"birds"
Matthew 13:33
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about the effect that yeast has on flour.
The kingdom of heaven is like yeast
The kingdom is not like the yeast, but the spread of the kingdom is like the spreading of the yeast.
The kingdom of heaven is like
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]
three measures of flour
Say "a large amount of flour" or use a term that your culture uses for measuring large amounts of flour.
until all the dough had risen
The implied information is that the yeast and the three measures of flour were made into dough for baking.
Matthew 13:34
All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; and he said nothing to them without a parable
Both sentences mean the same thing. They are combined to emphasize that Jesus taught the crowds only with parables.
All these things
This refers to what Jesus taught beginning at Matthew 13:1.
he said nothing to them without a parable
"he taught them nothing except by parables." The double negative can be expressed in a positive way. Alternate translation: "everything he taught them he said in parables"
Matthew 13:35
General Information:
Here the author quotes from the Psalms to show that Jesus's teaching in parables fulfilled prophecy.
what had been said through the prophet might be fulfilled, when he said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God told one of the prophets to write long ago might come true"
when he said
"when the prophet said"
I will open my mouth
This is an idiom that means to speak. Alternate translation: "I will speak"
things that were hidden
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "things that God has kept hidden"
from the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the beginning of the world" or "since God created the world"
Matthew 13:36
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to the house where Jesus and his disciples were staying. Jesus begins to explain to them the parable of the field that had both wheat and weeds, which he told beginning in Matthew 13:24.
went into the house
"went indoors" or "went into the house where he was staying"
Matthew 13:37
He who sows the good seed
"The one who sows the good seed" or "The sower of the good seed"
the Son of Man

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Jesus is referring to himself.
Matthew 13:38
the sons of the kingdom
The idiom "sons of" refers to those who belong to or to have the same character as someone or something. Alternate translation: "the people who belong to the kingdom"
of the kingdom
Here "kingdom" refers to God the king. Alternate translation: "of God"
the sons of the evil one
The idiom "sons of" refers those who belong to or to have the same character as someone or something. Alternate translation: "the people who belong to the evil one"
Matthew 13:39
the enemy who sowed them
"the enemy who sowed the weeds"
Matthew 13:40
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes explaining to his disciples the parable of the field with both wheat and weeds.
Therefore, as the weeds are gathered up and consumed by fire
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore, as people gather up weeds and burn them in the fire"
Matthew 13:41
The Son of Man will send out his angels
Here Jesus is speaking of himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will send out my angels"
all stumbling blocks
everything that causes people to sin
those who commit lawlessness
"those who are lawless" or "evil people"
Matthew 13:42
furnace of fire
This is a metaphor for the fires of hell. If the term "furnace" is not known, "oven" can be used. Alternate translation: "fiery furnace"
weeping and grinding of teeth
"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]
Matthew 13:43
shine like the sun
If this simile is not understandable in your language, you can use: "be as easy to see as the sun."
Father
This is an important title for God.
He who has ears, let him hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has ears" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Matthew 11:15]
He who has ... let him hear
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this in [Matthew 11:15]
Matthew 13:44
General Information:
In this parable, Jesus uses a simile to teach his disciples what the kingdom of heaven is like.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sold his possessions to purchase something of great value.
The kingdom of heaven is like
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]
like a treasure hidden in a field
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a treasure that someone had hidden in a field"
treasure
a very valuable and precious thing or collection of things
hid it
"covered it up"
sells everything he possesses, and buys that field
The implied information is that the person buys the field to take possession of the hidden treasure.
Matthew 13:45
General Information:
In this parable, Jesus uses a simile to teach his disciples what the kingdom of heaven is like.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who sold his possessions to purchase something of great value.
like a man who is a merchant looking for valuable pearls
The implied information is that the man was looking for valuable pearls that he could buy.
a merchant
a trader or wholesale dealer who often obtains merchandise from distant places
valuable pearls
A "pearl" is a smooth, hard, shiny, white or light-colored bead formed inside mollusks in the sea and highly prized as a gem or to make into valuable jewelry. Alternate translation: "fine pearls" or "beautiful pearls"
Matthew 13:47
Connecting Statement:
Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about fishermen who use a large net to catch fish.
the kingdom of heaven is like a net
The kingdom is not like the net, but the kingdom draws all kinds of people like a net catches all kinds of fish.
the kingdom of heaven is like
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]
like a net that was cast into the sea
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "like a net that some fishermen cast into the sea"
was cast into the sea
"was thrown into the sea"
Matthew 13:48
drew it up on the beach

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"pulled the net up onto the beach" or "pulled the net ashore"

the good ones

Sometimes other creatures go into nets, but fishermen usually cast nets to catch fish, so most modern translations read, "the good fish."

the bad ones

Sometimes other creatures go into nets, but fishermen usually cast nets to catch fish, so most modern translations read, "the bad fish."

threw away

"did not keep"

Matthew 13:49

Connecting Statement:

Jesus explains the parable about fishermen who use a large net to catch fish.

will come

"will come out" or "will go out" or "will come from heaven"

the wicked from among the righteous

These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "the wicked people from the righteous people"

Matthew 13:50

They will throw them

"The angels will throw the wicked people"

furnace of fire

This is a metaphor for the fires of hell. If the term "furnace" is not known, "oven" can be used. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:42]

weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 13:51

Connecting Statement:

Jesus describes the kingdom of heaven by telling a parable about a person who manages a household. This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus teaching the crowds about the kingdom of heaven through using parables.

Have you understood all these things?" The disciples said to him, "Yes."

If necessary, both direct quotations can be translated as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "Jesus asked them if they had understood all this, and they said that they did understand."

Matthew 13:52

has become a disciple to the kingdom of heaven

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "has learned the truth about our God in heaven, who is king" or "has submitted himself to God's rule"

is like a man who is the owner of a house, who draws out old and new things from his treasure

Jesus speaks another parable. He compares scribes, who know very well the scriptures that Moses and the prophets wrote, and who also now accept Jesus's teachings, to a house owner who uses both old and new treasures.

treasure

A treasure is a very valuable and precious thing or a collection of things. Here it may refer to the place where these things are stored, the "treasury" or "storeroom."

Matthew 13:53

Then it came about that when

This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "Then when" or "After"

Matthew 13:54

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through Matthew 17:27, where Matthew tells of continued opposition to Jesus's ministry and teaching about the kingdom of heaven. Here, the people of Jesus's home town reject him.

his own region

"his hometown." This refers to the town of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up.

in their synagogue

The pronoun "their" is referring to the people of the region.

they were astonished

"they were amazed"

Where does this man get his wisdom and these miraculous powers from?

The people believed that Jesus was just an ordinary man. They use this question to express their amazement that he was so wise and was able to do miracles. Alternate translation: "How can an ordinary man like this be so wise and do such great miracles?" or "It is strange that he is able to speak with such wisdom and do these miracles!"

Matthew 13:55

Is not this man the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Are not his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

The crowd uses these questions to express their belief that they know who Jesus is and that he is just an ordinary man. Alternate translation: "He is just the son of a carpenter. We know his mother Mary, and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas."

the carpenter's son

A carpenter is someone who makes things with wood or stone. If "carpenter" is not known, "builder" can be used.

Matthew 13:56

Are not all his sisters with us?

The crowd uses these questions to express their belief that they know who Jesus is and that he is just an ordinary man. Alternate translation: "And all his sisters are with us, too."

Where did he get all these things?

The crowd uses this question to show their understanding that Jesus must have gotten his abilities from somewhere. They were probably expressing their doubt that he got his abilities from God. Alternate translation: "He must have gotten his ability to do these things from somewhere!" or "We do not know where he got these abilities!"

all these things

This refers to Jesus's wisdom and ability to do miracles.

Matthew 13:57

They were offended by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people of Jesus's hometown took offense at him" or

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"The people rejected Jesus"
A prophet is not without honor
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "A prophet receives honor everywhere" or "People everywhere honor a prophet"
his own country
"his own region" or "his own hometown"
in his own family
"in his own home"
Matthew 13:58
He did not do many miracles there
"Jesus did not do many miracles in his own hometown"

14 [1]About that time, Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Jesus.[2]He said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead. Therefore these powers are at work in him."

[3]For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.[4]For John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her as your wife."[5]Herod would have killed him, but he feared the people, because they regarded him as a prophet.

[6]But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst and pleased Herod.[7]In response, he promised with an oath to give her whatever she should ask.
[8]After being instructed by her mother, she said, "Give me here, on a platter, the head of John the Baptist."[9]The king was grieved by her request, but because of his oath and because of all those at dinner with him, he ordered that it should be done.
[10]He sent and beheaded John in the prison.[11]Then his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she took it to her mother.[12]Then his disciples came, took up the corpse, and buried it. After this, they went and told Jesus.

[13]Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place. When the crowds heard of it, they followed him on foot from the cities.[14]Then Jesus came before them and saw the large crowd. He had compassion on them and healed their sick.
[15]When the evening had come, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour has already passed. Dismiss the crowds, so that they can go into the villages and buy food for themselves."

[16]But Jesus said to them, "They have no need to go away. You give them something to eat."
[17]They said to him, "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish."
[18]Jesus said, "Bring them to me."
[19]Then Jesus ordered the crowd to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish. Looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowd.[20]They all ate and were filled. Then they took up what remained of the broken pieces of food—twelve baskets full.[21]Those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

[22]Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he sent away the crowds.
[23]After he had sent away the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone.[24]But the boat was now a long way from land, being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was blowing against them.
[25]In the fourth watch of the night Jesus approached them, walking on the sea.[26]When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said, "It is a ghost," and they cried out in fear.
[27]But Jesus spoke to them right away and said, "Be brave! It is I! Do not be afraid."

[28]Peter answered him and said, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."
[29]Jesus said, "Come."So Peter got out from the boat and walked on the water to go to Jesus.
[30]But when Peter saw the strong wind, he became afraid. As he began to sink, he cried out and said, "Lord, save me!"

[31]Jesus immediately stretched out his hand, took hold of Peter, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"
[32]Then when Jesus and Peter went into the boat, the wind ceased blowing.[33]Then the disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus and said, "Truly you are the Son of God."

[34]When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.[35]When the men in that place recognized Jesus, they sent messages everywhere into the surrounding area, and they brought to him everyone who was sick.[36]They begged him that they might just touch the edge of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed.

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Matthew 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verses 1 and 2 continue the account from chapter 13. Verses 3-12 stop the account and speak of things that happened earlier, possibly soon after Satan tempted Jesus

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Passive voice

Many sentences in this chapter tell that a person had something happen to him without saying who caused that something to happen. For example, the writer does not tell who brought John's head to Herodias's daughter

Links:

Matthew 14:1 Notes

Matthew 14:1

General Information:

These verses explain Herod's reaction when he heard about Jesus. This event happens some time after the events that follow in the narrative.

About that time

"In those days" or "While Jesus was ministering in Galilee"

heard the news about Jesus

"heard reports about Jesus" or "heard about the fame of Jesus"

Matthew 14:2

He said

"Herod said"

has risen from the dead

The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from the dead speaks of coming alive again.

Therefore these powers are at work in him

Some Jews at that time believed if a person came back from the dead he would have powers to do mighty things.

Matthew 14:3

General Information:

Matthew recounts the story of John the Baptist's death in order to show why Herod reacted the way he did when he heard about Jesus.

Connecting Statement:

Here the author begins to tell about how Herod had executed John the Baptist. These events occur some time before the event in the previous verses.

Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison

It says that Herod did these things although he actually ordered others to do them for him. Alternate translation: "Herod ordered his soldiers to arrest and bind John the Baptist and put him in prison"

Philip's wife

Philip was Herod's brother. Herod had taken Philip's wife to be his own wife.

Matthew 14:4

For John ... as your wife

If needed, you can present the events of 14:3-4 in the order that they happened, as in the UDB.

For John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her as your wife."

This can be expressed as an indirect quote, if needed. Alternate translation: "For John had said to Herod that it was not lawful for Herod to have Herodias as his wife."

For John had said to him

"For John had kept saying to Herod"

It is not lawful

Philip was still alive when Herod married Herodias.

Matthew 14:5

would have killed him

"wanted to kill John"

he feared

"Herod feared"

they regarded him

"they regarded John"

Matthew 14:6

in the midst

You can make explicit the implicit information. Alternate translation: "in the midst of the guests attending the birthday celebration"

Matthew 14:8

After being instructed by her mother

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After her mother instructed her"

instructed

"coached" or "told"

she said

"the daughter of Herodias said to Herod"

platter

a very large plate

Matthew 14:9

The king was grieved by her request

The abstract noun "request" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "The king was grieved because she had asked him to kill John"

The king

"King Herod"

grieved

sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies

he ordered that it should be done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he ordered his men to do what she said"

Matthew 14:10

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the account of how Herod executed John the Baptist.

Matthew 14:11

his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl"
platter
a very large plate
girl
Use the word for a young, unmarried girl.
Matthew 14:12
his disciples
"the disciples of John"
the corpse
"the dead body"
they went and told Jesus
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the disciples of John went and told Jesus what had happened to John the Baptist"
Matthew 14:13
Now
This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Matthew returns to telling about Jesus.
heard this
"heard what happened to John" or "heard the news about John"
he withdrew
"he left" or "he went away"
from there
"from that place"
When the crowds heard of it
"When the crowds heard where Jesus had gone" or "When the crowds heard that he had left"
the crowds
"the crowds of people" or "the huge group of people" or "the people"
on foot
This means that the people in the crowd were walking.
Matthew 14:14
Then Jesus came before them and saw the large crowd
"When Jesus came ashore, he saw a large crowd"
Matthew 14:15
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus feeding five thousand people with only five small loaves of bread and two small fish.
the disciples came to him
"Jesus's disciples came to him"
the hour has already passed
Possible meanings of the words "the hour" are 1) they refer to the time for teaching. Alternate translation: "there is no more time for you to teach" Or 2) they refer to the day. Alternate translation: "the day is already over."
Matthew 14:16
They have no need
"The people in the crowd have no need"
You give them
The word "You" is plural, referring to the disciples.
Matthew 14:17
They said to him
"The disciples said to Jesus"
five loaves of bread
Loaves of bread are lumps of dough that have been shaped and baked.
Matthew 14:18
Bring them to me
"Bring the loaves and fish to me"
Matthew 14:19
Connecting Statement:
This concludes the account of Jesus feeding five thousand people.
sit down
"lie down." Use the verb for the position people in your culture usually are in when they eat.
He took
"He held in his hands." He did not steal them.
broke the loaves
"tore the loaves"
loaves
"loaves of bread" or "whole breads"
Looking up
Possible meanings are 1) "While looking up" or 2) "After looking up"
Matthew 14:20
and were filled
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "until they were full" or "until they were no longer hungry"
they took up
"the disciples gathered up" or "some people gathered up"
twelve baskets full
"12 baskets full"
Matthew 14:21
Those who ate
"Those who ate the bread and the fish"
five thousand men
"5,000 men"
Matthew 14:22
Connecting Statement:
The following verses describe events that happened right after Jesus fed the five thousand people.
Immediately he
"As soon as Jesus had finished feeding all the people, he"
Matthew 14:23
When evening came
"Late in the evening" or "When it became dark"
Matthew 14:24
being tossed about by the waves
"and the disciples could not control the boat because of the large waves"
Matthew 14:25
In the fourth watch of the night
The fourth watch is between 3 a.m. and sunrise. Alternate translation: "Just before dawn"
walking on the sea
"walking on top of the water"
Matthew 14:26
they were troubled
"they were very afraid"
ghost
a spirit that has left the body of a person who has died
Matthew 14:28

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Peter answered him
"Peter answered Jesus"
Matthew 14:30
when Peter saw the strong wind
Here "saw the strong wind" means he became aware of the wind. Alternate translation: "when Peter saw that the wind was tossing the waves back and forth" or "when he realized how strong the wind was"
Matthew 14:31
You of little faith, why
"You who have such little faith, why." Jesus addressed Peter this way because Peter became afraid. It can also be translated as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have so little faith! Why"
why did you doubt?
Jesus uses a question to tell Peter than he should not have doubted. You can make explicit what Peter should not have doubted. Alternate translation: "you should not have doubted that I could keep you from sinking."
Matthew 14:33
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Matthew 14:34
Connecting Statement:
Matthew describes in 14:34-36 what happened after Jesus walked on the water. He summarizes how the people were responding to Jesus's ministry.
When they had crossed over
"When Jesus and his disciples had crossed over the lake"
Gennesaret
This is a small town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.
Matthew 14:35
they sent messages
"the men of that area sent messages"
Matthew 14:36
They begged him
"The sick people begged him"
his garment
"his robe" or "what he was wearing"
were healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "became well"

15 [1]Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem. They said,[2]"Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

[3]He answered and said to them, "Then why do you violate the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions?
[4]For God said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and 'He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely die.'[5]But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever help you would have received from me is now a gift given to God,"[6]that person does not need to honor his father.' In this way you have made void the word of God[1] for the sake of your traditions.
[7]You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you when he said,

[8] 'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.

[9] They worship me in vain
because they teach as their doctrines the commandments of people.'"

[10]Then he called the crowd to himself and said to them, "Listen and understand—[11]Nothing that enters into the mouth defiles a person. Instead, what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person."

[12]Then the disciples came and said to Jesus, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?"
[13]Jesus answered and said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up.[14]Let them alone; they are blind guides. If a blind person guides another blind person, both will fall into a pit."

[15]Peter responded and said to Jesus, "Explain this parable to us."
[16]Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding?[17]Do you not understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and then goes out into the latrine?
[18]But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart. They are the things that defile a person.[19]For from the heart proceed evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, and slander.[20]These are the things that defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a person."

[21]Then Jesus went away from there and withdrew toward the regions of the cities of Tyre and Sidon.[22]Behold, a Canaanite woman came out from that region. She shouted out and said, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."

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[23]But Jesus answered her not a word. His disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is shouting after us."

[24]But Jesus answered and said, "I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
[25]But she came and bowed down before him, saying, "Lord, help me."
[26]He answered and said, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

[27]She said, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables."
[28]Then Jesus answered and said to her, "Woman, great is your faith; let it be done for you just as you wish." Her daughter was healed from that hour.

[29]Jesus left that place and went near to the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up a hill and sat there.[30]Large crowds came to him. They brought with them lame, blind, mute, and crippled people, and many others who were sick. They presented them at Jesus' feet, and he healed them.[31]So the crowd marveled when they saw the mute persons speak, the crippled made well, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. They glorified the God of Israel.

[32]Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd because they have stayed with me for three days already and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away without eating, or they may faint on the way."
[33]The disciples said to him, "Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy so large a crowd?"
[34]Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?"They said, "Seven, and a few small fish."
[35]Then Jesus commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground.
[36]He took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks, he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples. The disciples gave them to the crowd.[37]The people all ate and were satisfied. Then they gathered up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over.[38]Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.[39]Then Jesus sent the crowds away and got into the boat and went into the region of Magadan.

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[1]The best ancient copies have the word of God; some other ancient copies have the commandment. It is difficult to choose the better reading.

Matthew 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 15:8-9, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The "traditions of the elders"

The "traditions of the elders" were oral laws that the Jewish religious leaders developed because they wanted to make sure that everyone obeyed the law of Moses. However, they often worked harder to obey these rules than to obey the law of Moses itself. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders for this, and they became angry as a result. (See: lawofmoses)

Jews and Gentiles

The Jews of Jesus's time thought that only Jews could please God by the way they lived. Jesus healed a Canaanite Gentile woman's daughter to show his followers that he would accept both Jews and Gentiles as his people.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Sheep

The Bible often speaks of people as if they were sheep because sheep need someone to take care of them. This is because they do not see well and they often go to where other animals can kill them easily.

Links:

Matthew 15:1 Notes

Matthew 15:1

General Information:

The scene shifts to events that occur some time after events of the previous chapter. Here Jesus responds to the criticisms of the Pharisees.

Matthew 15:2

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders?

The Pharisees and scribes use this question to criticize Jesus and his disciples. Alternate translation: "Your disciples do not respect the rules that our ancestors have given us."

traditions of the elders

This is not the same as the law of Moses. This refers to later teachings and interpretations of the law given by religious leaders after Moses.

they do not wash their hands

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This washing is not only to clean hands. This refers to a ceremonial washing according to the tradition of the elders. Alternate translation: "they do not wash their hands properly"

when they eat bread

The word "bread" here is a synecdoche for any kind of food, and the word "when" refers to what people generally do before eating meals. Alternate translation: "before they eat"

Matthew 15:3

Then why do you violate the commandment of God for the sake of your traditions?

Jesus answers with a question to criticize what the religious leaders do. Alternate translation: "And I see that you refuse to obey God's commands just so that you can follow what your ancestors taught you!"

Matthew 15:4

General Information:

Jesus quotes twice from Exodus to show how God expects people to treat their parents.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to respond to the Pharisees.

He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely die

"The people should execute anyone who speaks evil of his father or mother"

Matthew 15:5

But you say

Here "you" is plural and refers to the Pharisees and scribes.

Matthew 15:6

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the Pharisees.

that person does not need to honor his father

The words beginning with "But you say"

does not need to honor his father

It is implied that "his father" means "his parents." This means the religious leaders taught that a person does not need to show respect to his parents by taking care of them.

you have made void the word of God

Here "the word of God" refers specifically to God's commands. Alternate translation: "you have treated the word of God as if it were invalid" or "you have ignored God's commands"

for the sake of your traditions

"because you want to follow your traditions"

Matthew 15:7

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the Pharisees and scribes.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his response to the Pharisees and scribes.

Well did Isaiah prophesy about you

"Isaiah told the truth in this prophecy about you"

when he said

It is implied that Isaiah is speaking what God told him. Alternate translation: "when he told what God said"

Matthew 15:8

General Information:

Jesus continues to quote the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the Pharisees and scribes.

This people honors me with their lips

Here "lips" refers to speaking. Alternate translation: "These people say all the right things to me"

me

All occurrences of this word refer to God.

but their heart is far from me

Here "heart" refers to a person's thoughts or emotions. This phrase is a way of saying the people are not truly devoted to God. Alternate translation: "but they do not really love me"

Matthew 15:9

They worship me in vain

"Their worship means nothing to me" or "They only pretend to worship me"

the commandments of people

"the rules that people make up"

Matthew 15:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach the crowd and his disciples about what defiles a person and why the Pharisees and scribes were wrong to criticize him.

Matthew 15:11

enters into the mouth ... comes out of the mouth

Jesus is contrasting what a person eats to what a person says. Jesus means that God is concerned with what a person says rather than what a person eats.

Matthew 15:12

the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this statement made the Pharisees angry" or "this statement offended the Pharisees"

Matthew 15:13

Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up

This is a metaphor. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not actually belong to God, so God will remove them.

my heavenly Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

will be rooted up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my Father will uproot" or "he will take out of the ground" or "he will remove"

Matthew 15:14

Let them alone

The word "them" refers to the Pharisees.

blind guides ... both will fall into a pit

Jesus uses another metaphor to describe the Pharisees. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not understand God's commands or how to please him. Therefore, they cannot teach others how to please God.

Matthew 15:15

Connecting Statement:

Peter wants Jesus to explain the parable that Jesus told in Matthew 15:13-14.

to us

"to us disciples"

Matthew 15:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus explains the parable that he told in Matthew 15:13-14.

Are you also still without understanding?

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Jesus uses a question to rebuke the disciples for not understanding the parable. Also, the word "you" is emphasized. Jesus cannot believe his own disciples do not understand. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you, my disciples, still do not understand what I teach!"
Matthew 15:17
Do you not understand ... into the latrine?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the disciples for not understanding the parable. Alternate translation: "Surely you understand ... into the latrine."
passes into the stomach
"goes into the stomach"
latrine
This a polite term for the place where people bury body waste.
Matthew 15:18
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to explain the parable that he told in Matthew 15:13-14.
things that come out of the mouth
This refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: "words that a person says"
from the heart
Here "heart" refers to a person's mind or innermost being. Alternate translation: "from inside the person" or "from a person's mind"
Matthew 15:19
murder
the act of killing innocent people
Matthew 15:20
to eat with unwashed hands
This refers to eating without first ceremonially washing one's hands according to the traditions of the elders. Alternate translation: "eating without first washing one's hands"
Matthew 15:21
General Information:
This begins an account of Jesus healing the daughter of a Canaanite woman.
Jesus went away
It is implied that the disciples went with Jesus. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his disciples went away"
Matthew 15:22
Behold, a Canaanite woman came
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a Canaanite woman who came"
a Canaanite woman came out from that region
"a woman who was from that region and who belonged to the group of people called Canaanites came." The country of Canaan no longer existed by this time. She was a part of a people group that lived near the cities of Tyre and Sidon.
Have mercy on me
This phrase implies that she is requesting that Jesus heal her daughter. Alternate translation: "Have mercy and heal my daughter"
Son of David
Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the woman may have been calling Jesus by this title.
My daughter is severely demon-possessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A demon is controlling my daughter terribly" or "A demon is tormenting my daughter severely"
Matthew 15:23
answered her not a word
Here "word" refers to what a person says. Alternate translation: "said nothing to her"
Matthew 15:24
I was not sent to anyone except to the lost sheep ... Israel
This double negative emphasizes that the lost sheep are the only ones to whom Jesus was sent. Alternate translation: "I was sent only to the lost sheep ... Israel"
I was not sent to anyone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not send me to anyone"
to the lost sheep of the house of Israel
This is a metaphor comparing the entire nation of Israel to sheep who have gone away from their shepherd. See how you translated this in [Matthew 10:6]
Matthew 15:25
she came
"the Canaanite woman came"
bowed down before him
This shows that the woman humbled herself before Jesus.
Matthew 15:26
It is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs
Jesus responds to the woman with a proverb. The basic meaning is that it is not right to take what is supposed to belong to Jews and give it to non-Jews.
the children's bread
Here "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "the children's food"
the little dogs
The Jews considered dogs to be unclean animals. Here they are used as an image for non-Jews.
Matthew 15:27
even the little dogs eat some of the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables
The woman responds by using the same imagery as Jesus used in the proverb he just spoke. She means non-Jews should be able to have a small amount of the good things Jews are throwing away.
little dogs
Use words here for dogs of any size that people keep as pets. See how you translated this in Matthew 15:26.
Matthew 15:28
let it be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will do"
Her daughter was healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed her daughter" or "Her daughter became well"
from that hour
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "at exactly the same time" or "immediately"

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Matthew 15:30
lame, blind, mute, and crippled people
"those who could not walk, those who could not see, those who could not talk, and those whose arms or legs did not function"
They presented them at Jesus' feet
Apparently some of these sick or crippled people were unable to stand up, so when their friends brought them to Jesus, they placed them on the ground in front of him. Alternate translation: "The crowds placed the sick people on the ground in front of Jesus"
Matthew 15:31
the crippled made well
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the crippled become well"
the crippled ... the lame ... the blind
These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "the crippled persons ... the lame persons ... the blind persons"
Matthew 15:32
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus feeding four thousand people with seven loaves of bread and a few small fish.
without eating, or they may faint on the way
"without eating because they might faint on the way"
Matthew 15:33
Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy so large a crowd?
The disciples use a question to state that there is nowhere to get food for the crowd. Alternate translation: "There is nowhere nearby that we can get enough bread for such a large crowd."
Matthew 15:34
Seven, and a few small fish
The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "We have seven loaves of bread, and we also have a few small fish"
Matthew 15:35
sit down on the ground
Use your language's word for how people customarily eat when there is no table, whether sitting or lying down.
Matthew 15:36
He took the seven loaves and the fish
"Jesus held the seven loaves and the fish in his hands"
he broke the loaves
"he tore the loaves"
gave them
"gave the bread and the fish"
Matthew 15:37
they gathered
"the disciples gathered" or "some people gathered"
Matthew 15:38
Those who ate
"The people who ate"
four thousand men
"4,000 men"
Matthew 15:39
the region
"the area"
Magadan
This region is sometimes called "Magdala."

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16 [1]The Pharisees and Sadducees came and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from the sky.[2]But he answered and said to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.'
[3]When it is morning, you say, 'It will be foul weather, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.[4]An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then Jesus left them and went away.

[5]When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.[6]Jesus said to them, "Watch out and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."
[7]The disciples reasoned among themselves and said, "It is because we took no bread."
[8]Jesus was aware of this and said, "You of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves and say that it is because you have taken no bread?
[9]Do you not understand? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered up?[10]Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you took up?
[11]How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? Watch out and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."[12]Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of yeast in bread, but to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

[13]Now when Jesus came to the regions near Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
[14]They said, "Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."
[15]He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
[16]Answering, Simon Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

[17]Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.[18]I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. The gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

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[19]I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."[20]Then Jesus commanded the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

[21]From that time Jesus started to tell his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, be killed, and be raised back to life on the third day.
[22]Then Peter took him aside and rebuked him, saying, "May this be far from you, Lord! May this never happen to you!"
[23]But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you do not think about the things of God, but about the things of people."
[24]Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.
[25]For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.[26]For what does it profit a person if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life? What can a person give in exchange for his life?
[27]For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with his angels. Then he will reward every person according to his deeds.[28]Truly I say to you, there are some of you standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Matthew 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yeast

Jesus spoke of the way people thought about God as if it were bread, and he spoke of what people taught about God as if it were the yeast that makes bread dough become larger and the baked bread taste good. He did not want his followers to listen to what the Pharisees and Sadducees taught. This was because if they did listen, they would not understand who God is and how he wants his people to live.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Jesus told his people to obey his commands. He did this by telling them to "follow" him. It is as if he were walking on a path and they were walking after him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Background information

Matthew continues his account from chapter 15 in verses 1-20. The account stops in verse 21 so Matthew can tell the reader that Jesus told his disciples again and again that people would kill him after he arrived in Jerusalem. Then the account continues in verses 22-27 with what happened the first time Jesus told the disciples that he would die.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus uses a paradox when he says, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25).

Links:

Matthew 16:1 Notes

Matthew 16:1

General Information:

This begins an encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees and Sadducees.

tested him

Here "tested" is used in a negative sense. Alternate translation: "challenged him" or "wanted to trap him"

Matthew 16:2

When it is evening

The situation can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "If the sky is red in the evening" or "If the sky is red when the sun is setting"

When it is evening

"When the sun is setting"

fair weather

This means clear, calm, and pleasant weather.

for the sky is red

As the sun is setting, Jews knew that if the color of the sky changes to red, it is a sign the next day will be clear and calm.

Matthew 16:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues his response to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

When it is morning

The situation can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "If the sky is red in the morning" or "If the sky is red when the sun is rising"

foul weather

"cloudy, stormy weather"

red and overcast

"red and cloudy"

You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky

"You know how to look at the sky and understand what

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kind of weather you will have"

but you cannot interpret the signs of the times

"but you do not know how to look at what is happening right now and understand what it means"

Matthew 16:4

An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign ... given to it

Jesus is speaking to his present generation. Alternate translation: "You are an evil and adulterous generation who demands signs from me ... given to you" See how you translated this in [Matthew 12:39]

An evil and adulterous generation

Here "adulterous" is a metaphor for people who are not faithful to God. See how you translated this in [Matthew 12:39]

no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah

This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"

no sign will be given to it

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"

the sign of Jonah

"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah." See how you translated this in Matthew 12:39.

Matthew 16:5

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time. Jesus uses an opportunity to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

the other side

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "the other side of the lake" or "the other side of the Sea of Galilee"

Matthew 16:6

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Here "yeast" is a metaphor that refers to evil ideas and wrong teaching. Translate as "yeast" here and do not explain its meaning in your translation. This meaning will be made clear in 16:12.

Matthew 16:7

reasoned among themselves

"discussed this with each other" or "thought about this"

Matthew 16:8

You of little faith

"You who have such little faith." Jesus addresses his disciples this way because their concern about not bringing bread shows they have little faith in Jesus to provide for them. See how you translated this in Matthew 6:30.

why do you reason ... taken no bread?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke his disciples for not understanding what he just said. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you think it was because you forgot to bring bread that I talked about the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Matthew 16:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Do you not understand? Do you not remember ... you gathered up?

Jesus use questions to rebuke the disciples. Alternate translation: "Surely you understand and remember ... you gathered up!" or "You should understand. You should remember ... you gathered up."

five thousand

"5,000"

Matthew 16:10

four thousand

"4,000"

Or the seven loaves ... you took up?

"Do you also not remember the seven loaves ... you took up?" Jesus uses a question to rebuke his disciples. Alternate translation: "Surely you also remember the seven loaves ... you took up!"

Matthew 16:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to warn his disciples about the Pharisees and Sadducees.

How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread?

Jesus uses this question to rebuke the disciples. Alternate translation: "You should have understood that I was not really speaking about bread."

the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Here "yeast" represents evil ideas and wrong teaching. Translate as "yeast" and do not explain the meaning in your translation. In 16:12 the disciples will understand the meaning.

Matthew 16:12

they ... them

These refer to the disciples.

Matthew 16:13

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts to a later time. Jesus asks his disciples if they understand who he is.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself.

Matthew 16:16

the Son of the living God

This is an important title for Jesus that shows his relationship to God.

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act.

Matthew 16:17

flesh and blood have not revealed

Here "flesh and blood" refers to a human being. Alternate translation: "a human did not reveal"

this to you

Here "this" refers to Peter's statement that Jesus is the Christ and the Son of the Living God.

but my Father who is in heaven

The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but it was my Father in heaven who revealed this to you"

my Father

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This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 16:18
I also say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
you are Peter
The name Peter means "rock."
upon this rock I will build my church
Here "build my church" is a metaphor for uniting the people who believe in Jesus into a community. Possible meanings are 1) "this rock" represents Peter, or 2) "this rock" represents the truth that Peter had just said in [Matthew 16:16]
The gates of Hades will not prevail against it
Here "Hades" is spoken of as if it were a city surrounded by walls with gates that keep dead people in and other people out. Here "Hades" represents death, and its "gates" represent its power. Possible meanings are 1) "the powers of death will not overcome my church" or 2) "my church will break down the power of death the way an army breaks into a city."
Matthew 16:19
I will give to you
Here "you" is singular and refers to Peter.
the keys of the kingdom of heaven
Keys are objects that are used to lock or unlock doors. Here they represent authority.
the kingdom of heaven
This refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation.
Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven
Here "bind" is a metaphor meaning to forbid something, and "loose" is a metaphor meaning to allow something. Also, "in heaven" is a metonym that represents God himself. Alternate translation: "God in heaven will approve whenever you forbid or allow something on earth"
Matthew 16:21
Connecting Statement:
Jesus tells his disciples for the first time that he will die soon.
suffer many things at the hands of the elders ... scribes
Here "hands" represents power. Alternate translation: "suffer many things because of the elders ... scribes"
scribes, be killed, and be raised back to life on the third day
Here to raise back to life is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. The elders and chief priests would accuse Jesus so that others would kill him. Alternate translation: "scribes. People will then kill him, and on the third day God will make him become alive again"
third day
"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."
Matthew 16:22
Then Peter took him aside
Jesus tells them for the first time that he will die soon
Peter took him aside
"Peter spoke to Jesus when no one else could hear them"
May this be far from you
This is an idiom that means "may this never happen." Alternate translation: "No" or "Never" or "May God forbid this"
Matthew 16:23
Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me
Jesus means that Peter is acting like Satan because Peter is trying to prevent Jesus from accomplishing what God sent him to do. Alternate translation: "Get behind me, because you are acting like Satan! You are a stumbling block to me" or "Get behind me, Satan! I call you Satan because you are a stumbling block to me"
Get behind me
"Get away from me"
you do not think about the things of God, but about the things of people
"you do not think about what God thinks is important; instead, you only thing about the things that people think are important"
Matthew 16:24
to follow me
Following Jesus here represents being one of his disciples. Alternate translation: "to be my disciple" or "to be one of my disciples"
must deny himself
"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"
take up his cross, and follow me
"carry his cross, and follow me." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "and obey me even to the point of suffering and dying" or "and he must obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"
and follow me
Following Jesus here represents obeying him. Alternate translation: "and obey me"
Matthew 16:25
For whoever wants
"For anyone who wants"
will lose it
This does not mean the person must necessarily die. It is a metaphor that means the person will consider obeying Jesus as being more important than his own life.
for my sake
"because he trusts me" or "on my account" or "because of me"
will find it
This metaphor means the person will experience spiritual life with God. Alternate translation: "will find true life"
Matthew 16:26
For what does it profit a person ... his life?
Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "It does not profit a person ... his life."
if he gains the whole world
The words "the whole world" are an exaggeration for great riches. Alternate translation: "if he gains everything he desires"
but forfeits his life
"but he loses his life"
What can a person give in exchange for his life?

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Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that a person can give to regain his life."

Matthew 16:27

the Son of Man ... his Father ... Then he

Here Jesus refers to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of man ... my Father ... Then I"

will come in the glory of his Father

"will come, having the same glory as his Father." This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: "will come, having the same glory as my Father"

with his angels

Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "with his Father's angels" or "with my Father's angels" or 2) Alternate translation: "with the Son of Man's angels" or "with my angels." You do not have to specify in your translations to whom the angels belong. Alternate translation: "and the angels will be with him" or "and the angels will be with me"

his Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and the Son of Man, Jesus.

according to his deeds

"according to what that person has done"

Matthew 16:28

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

you

All occurrences of this word are plural and refer to the disciples.

will not taste death

Here "taste" means to experience. Alternate translation: "will not experience death" or" will not die"

until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom

Here "his kingdom" represents him being King. Alternate translation: "until they see the Son of Man coming as King" or "until they see the evidence that the Son of Man is King"

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17 [1]Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up a high mountain by themselves.[2]He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his garments became as brilliant as the light.
[3]Behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him.[4]Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you desire, I will make here three shelters—one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

[5]While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, there was a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him."
[6]When the disciples heard it, they fell facedown and were very afraid.[7]Then Jesus came and touched them and said, "Get up and do not be afraid."[8]Then they looked up but saw no one except Jesus only.

[9]As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Report this vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."
[10]His disciples asked him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

[11]Jesus answered and said, "Elijah will indeed come and restore all things.[12]But I tell you, Elijah has already come, but they did not recognize him. Instead, they did whatever they wanted to him. In the same way, the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands."[13]Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

[14]When they had come to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, and said,[15]"Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic and suffers severely. For he often falls into the fire or the water.[16]I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him."

[17]Jesus answered and said, "Unbelieving and perverse generation, how long will I have to stay with you? How long must I bear with you? Bring him here to me."[18]Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed from that hour.

[19]Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?"
[20]Jesus said to them, "Because of your small faith. For I truly say to you, if you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."[21] [1]

[22]While they stayed in Galilee, Jesus said to his disciples, "The Son of Man will be given over into the hands of people,[23]and they will kill him, and the third day he will be raised up." The disciples were deeply grieved.

[24]When they had come to Capernaum, the men who collected the two-drachma tax came to Peter and said, "Does not your teacher pay the two-drachma tax?"
[25]He said, "Yes."When Peter came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first and said, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tolls or taxes? From their sons or from others?"

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[26]"From others," Peter answered."Then the sons are free," Jesus said.
[27]"But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to stumble, go to the sea, throw in a hook, and draw in the fish that comes up first. When you have opened its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take it and give it to the tax collectors for me and you."

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have v. 21, But this kind of demon does not go out except with prayer and fasting.

Matthew 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Elijah

The Old Testament prophet Malachi lived many years before Jesus was born. Malachi had said that before the Messiah came a prophet named Elijah would return. Jesus explained that Malachi had been talking about John the Baptist. Jesus said this because John the Baptist had done what Malachi had said that Elijah would do. (See: prophet and christ)

"transfigured"

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. Matthew says in this chapter that Jesus's body shone with this glorious light so that his followers could see that Jesus truly was God's Son. At the same time, God told them that Jesus was his Son. (See: glory and fear)

Links:

Matthew 17:1 Notes

Matthew 17:1

General Information:

This begins the account of Jesus's transfiguration.

Peter, James, and John his brother

"Peter, James, and James's brother John"

Matthew 17:2

He was transfigured before them

When they looked at him, his appearance was different from what it had been.

He was transfigured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "His appearance had changed" or "He appeared very different"

before them

"in front of them" or "so they could clearly him"

His face shone like the sun, and his garments became as brilliant as the light

These are similes that emphasize how bright Jesus's appearance became.

his garments

"what he was wearing"

Matthew 17:3

Behold

This word alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

to them

This refers to Peter, James, and John.

with him

"with Jesus"

Matthew 17:4

answered and said

"said." Peter is not responding to a question.

it is good for us to be here

It is not clear whether "us" refers only to Peter, James, and John, or if it refers to everyone there, including Jesus, Elijah, and Moses. If you can translate so that both options are possible, do so.

Matthew 17:5

behold

This alerts the reader to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

overshadowed them

"came over them"

there was a voice out of the cloud

Here "voice" refers to God speaking. Alternate translation: "God spoke to them from out of the cloud"

Matthew 17:6

the disciples heard it

"the disciples heard God speak"

Matthew 17:8

they ... saw no one except Jesus only

This double negative emphasizes that Jesus was the only thing that they saw. Alternate translation: "they ... saw only Jesus"

Matthew 17:9

Connecting Statement:

The following events happen immediately after the three disciples witness Jesus's transfiguration.

As they

"As Jesus and the disciples"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

Matthew 17:10

Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

The disciples are referring to the belief that Elijah will come back to life and return to the people of Israel before the Messiah comes.

Matthew 17:11

restore all things

"put things in order" or "get the people ready to receive the Messiah"

Matthew 17:12

But I tell you

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This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

they ... their

All occurrences of these words may mean either 1) the Jewish leaders or 2) all the Jewish people.

the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands

Here "hands" refers to power. Alternate translation: "they will make the Son of Man suffer"

the Son of Man will

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"

Matthew 17:14

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of Jesus healing a boy who had an evil spirit. These events happen immediately after Jesus and his disciples descend from the mountain.

Matthew 17:15

have mercy on my son

It is implied that the man wants Jesus to heal his son. Alternate translation: "have mercy on my son and heal him"

is epileptic

This means that he sometimes had seizures. He would become unconscious and move uncontrollably. Alternate translation: "has seizures"

Matthew 17:17

Unbelieving and perverse generation, how

"This generation does not believe in God and loves to do evil rather than good. How"

how long will I have to stay with you? How long must I bear with you?

These questions show Jesus is unhappy with the people. Alternate translation: "I am tired of being with you! I am tired of your unbelief and corruption!"

Matthew 17:18

the boy was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the boy became well"

from that hour

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "immediately" or "at that moment"

Matthew 17:19

we

Here "we" refers to the disciples and does not include Jesus.

Why could we not cast it out?

"Why could we not make the demon come out of the boy?"

Matthew 17:20

For I truly say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

if you have faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed

Jesus compares the size of a mustard seed to the amount of faith needed to do a miracle. A mustard seed is very small, but it grows into a large plant. Jesus means it only takes a small amount of faith to do a great miracle.

nothing will be impossible for you

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "you will be able to do anything"

Matthew 17:22

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts momentarily, and Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a second time.

they stayed

"Jesus and his disciples stayed"

The Son of Man will be given over

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone will deliver the Son of Man"

given over into the hands of people

The word "hands" here is a metonym for the power that people use hands to exercise. Alternate translation: "taken and put under the power of people" or "taken and given to people who will control him"

The Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

into the hands of people

Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "to the control of the people" or "to the people"

Matthew 17:23

him ... he

Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.

third day

"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."

he will be raised up

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will raise him up" or "God will cause him to become alive again"

deeply grieved

very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies. See how you translated "grieved" in Matthew 14:9.

Matthew 17:24

Connecting Statement:

Here the scene shifts again to a later time when Jesus teaches Peter about paying the temple tax.

When they

"When Jesus and his disciples"

the two-drachma tax

This was a tax that Jewish men paid to support the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the temple tax"

Matthew 17:25

the house

"the place where Jesus was staying"

What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tolls or taxes? From their sons or from others?

Jesus asks these questions to teach Simon, not to gain information for himself. Alternate translation: ""Listen, Simon. When kings collect taxes, they collect it from people who are not members of their own family. Do you agree that this is true?"

their sons

Possible meanings are that this word 1) is a synecdoche that refers to any members of the kings' family or 2) is a metaphor for the people of the kings' own country. Alternate translation: "their own family" or "the people of their own country"

Matthew 17:26

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 13:54, where Matthew tells of continued opposition to Jesus's ministry and teaching about the

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kingdom of heaven.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to teach Peter about paying the temple tax.

"From others," Peter answered

If you translated Jesus's questions as statements in [Matthew 17:25]

From others

"From people who are not members of their own family." See how you translated these words in Matthew 17:25.

the sons

Possible meanings are that this word 1) is a synecdoche that refers to any members of the kings' family or 2) is a metaphor for the people of the kings' own country. See how you translated these words in [Matthew 17:25]

Matthew 17:27

But so that we do not cause the tax collectors to stumble, go

Causing people to stumble is a metaphor for offending them. Possible meanings are 1) Jesus was concerned that the tax collectors would think he had done something very wrong. Alternate translation: "so that we do not cause the tax collectors to think that we do something that is very bad" or 2) Jesus was concerned that the tax collectors might think that he was a sinner and so could not be the Messiah. Alternate translation: "so that we do not cause the tax collectors to reject me"

throw in a hook

Fishermen tied hooks to the end of a line, then threw it in the water to catch fish.

its mouth

"the fish's mouth"

a shekel

a silver coin worth four days' wages

Take it

"Take the shekel"

for me and you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Peter. Each man had to pay a half shekel tax. So one shekel would be enough for Jesus and Peter to pay their taxes.

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18 [1]At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

[2]Jesus called to himself a little child, set him among them,[3]and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you turn and become like little children, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven.
[4]Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.[5]Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name receives me.[6]But whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to stumble, it would be better for him that a large millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should be sunk into the depths of the sea.

[7]"Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! For it is necessary that those stumbling blocks come, but woe to the person through whom those stumbling blocks come![8]If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to be thrown into the eternal fire having two hands or two feet.
[9]If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than to be thrown into the fiery hell having both eyes.
[10]See that you do not despise any of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven.[11] [1]
[12]What do you think? If anyone has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go off seeking the one that went astray?[13]If he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray.[14]In the same way, it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

[15]"If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you will have gained your brother.[16]But if he does not listen to you, take one or two others along with you so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be confirmed.
[17]And if he refuses to listen to them, tell the matter to the church. If he also refuses to listen to the church, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector.
[18]I tell you truly, whatever things you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.[19]Again I tell you truly, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven.[20]For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst."

[21]Then Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?"
[22]Jesus said to him, "I do not tell you seven times, but until seventy times seven.
[23]Therefore the kingdom of heaven is similar to a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.[24]As he began the settling, one servant was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.[25]But since he did not have the means to repay, his master commanded him to be sold, together with his wife and children and everything that he had, and payment to be made.

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[26]So the servant fell down, bowed down before him, and said, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'[27]So the master of that servant, since he was moved with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt.
[28]But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, who owed him one hundred denarii. He took hold of him, began to choke him, and said, 'Pay me what you owe.'
[29]"But his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you.'
[30]But the first servant refused. Instead, he went and threw him into prison until he should pay him what he owed.[31]When his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved. They came and told their master everything that had happened.

[32]"Then that servant's master called him and said to him, 'You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.[33]Should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant, even as I had mercy on you?'
[34]His master was angry and handed him over to the torturers until he would pay all that was owed.[35]So also my heavenly Father will do to you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

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[1]The best ancient Greek copies do not have the sentence that some translations include, For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.

Matthew 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

What should Jesus's followers do when other followers sin against them?
Jesus taught that his followers must treat each other well and not be angry with each other. They should forgive anyone who is sorry for his sin, even if he has committed the same sin before. If he is not sorry for his sin, Jesus's followers should speak with him alone or in a small group. If he is still not sorry after that, then Jesus's followers can treat him as guilty. (See: repent and sin)

Links:

Matthew 18:1 Notes

Matthew 18:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through Matthew 18:35, where Jesus teaches about life in the kingdom of heaven. Here, Jesus uses a little child to teach the disciples.
At that time
Very soon after the events described in the previous verse.
Who is greatest
"Who is the most important" or "Who among us will be the most important"
in the kingdom of heaven
The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"
Matthew 18:3
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
unless you turn ... children, you will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you will enter the kingdom of heaven only if you turn ... children"
become like little children
Jesus uses a simile to teach the disciples that they should not be concerned with who is most important. They should be concerned with becoming humble like a child.
enter the kingdom of heaven
The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "enter God's kingdom" or "belong to our God in heaven when he establishes his rule on earth"
Matthew 18:4
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching the disciples that they need to be humble like a child if they want to be important in God's kingdom.
is the greatest
"is the most important" or "will be the most important"
in the kingdom of heaven
The phrase "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is used only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "in God's kingdom" or "when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth"
Matthew 18:5
in my name
Here "my name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because he is my disciple"
Whoever ... in my name receives me
Jesus means that it is the same as welcoming him. Alternate translation: "When someone ... in my name, it is like he is welcoming me" or "When someone ... in my name, it is as if he were welcoming me"
Matthew 18:6
that a large millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should

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be sunk into the depths of the sea
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if someone put a large millstone around his neck and threw him into the deep sea"
millstone
This is a large, heavy, circular stone used for grinding wheat grain into flour. Alternate translation: "a heavy stone"
Matthew 18:7
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to use a little child to teach the disciples and warns against the terrible consequences of causing children to sin.
to the world
Here "world" refers to people. Alternate translation: "to the people of the world"
stumbling blocks ... those stumbling blocks come ... the person through whom those stumbling blocks come
Here "stumbling" is a metaphor for sin. Alternate translation: "things that cause people to sin ... things come that cause people to sin ... any person who causes others to sin"
Matthew 18:8
If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you
Jesus exaggerates here to emphasize that people must do anything necessary to remove from their lives what causes them to sin.
your ... you
All occurrences of these words are singular. Jesus is speaking to all people in general. It may be more natural for your language to translate with a plural "you."
into life
"into eternal life"
than to be thrown into the eternal fire having two hands or two feet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than to have both hands and feet when God throws you into the eternal fire"
Matthew 18:9
If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you
The command to destroy the eye, perhaps the most important part of the body, is probably an exaggeration for his hearers to do anything necessary to remove from their lives anything that causes them to sin.
causes you to stumble
Here "stumble" is a metaphor for sin. Alternate translation: "causes you to sin"
your ... you
All occurrences of these words are singular. Jesus is speaking to all people in general. It may be more natural for your language to translate with a plural "you."
into life
"into eternal life"
than to be thrown into the fiery hell having both eyes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "than to have both eyes when God throws you into the fiery hell"
the fiery hell
"hell, which is full of fire" or "the fire of hell"
Matthew 18:10
See that
"Be careful that" or "Be sure that"
you do not despise any of these little ones
"you do not think of these little ones as being unimportant." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you show respect to these little ones"
For I say to you
This add emphasis to what Jesus says next.
that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven
Jewish teachers taught that only the most important angels could be in God's presence. Jesus means that the most important angels speak to God about these little ones.
always look on the face of my Father
This is an idiom that means they are in God's presence. Alternate translation: "are always close to my Father" or "are always in the presence of my Father"
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 18:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to use a little child to teach the disciples and tells a parable to explain God's care for people.
What do you think?
Jesus uses this question to get people's attention. Alternate translation: "Think about how people act." or "Think about this."
you
This word is plural.
a hundred ... ninety-nine
"100 ... 99"
does he not leave ... astray?
Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "he will always leave ... astray."
Matthew 18:13
If he finds it ... that did not go astray
This is the end of the parable that begins with the words "If anyone" in verse 12.
truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next. The word "you" is plural.
Matthew 18:14
it is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish
"your Father in heaven does not want any of these little ones to die" or "your Father in heaven does not want even one of these little ones to die"
your
This word is plural.
Father
This is an important title for God.
Matthew 18:15
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to teach his disciples about forgiveness and reconciliation.
your brother

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This refers to a fellow believer in God, not a physical brother. Alternate translation: "your fellow believer"
you will have gained your brother
"you will have made your relationship with your brother good again"
Matthew 18:16
so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be confirmed
Here "mouth" and "word" refer to what a person says. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that two or three witnesses may say that what you say about your brother is true"
Matthew 18:17
if he refuses to listen to them
"if your fellow believer refuses to listen to the witnesses who came with you"
to the church
"to the whole community of believers"
let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector
"treat him as you would treat a pagan or tax collector." This implies that they should remove him from the community of believers.
Matthew 18:18
I tell you truly
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
you
All occurrences of this word are plural.
whatever things you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven
Here "bind" is a metaphor meaning to forbid something, and "loose" is a metaphor meaning to allow something. Also, "in heaven" is a metonym that represents God himself. See how you translated similar phrases in [Matthew 16:19]
Matthew 18:19
if two of you
It is implied that Jesus means "if at least two of you" or "if two or more of you."
they ... them
These refer to the "two of you." Alternate translation: "you ... you"
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 18:20
two or three
It is implied that Jesus means "two or more" or "at least two."
are gathered
"meet"
in my name
Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because they are my disciples"
Matthew 18:21
seven times
"7 times"
Matthew 18:22
seventy times seven
Possible meanings are 1) "70 times 7" or 2) "77 times." If using a number would be confusing, you can translate it as "more times than you can count" or "you must always forgive him."
Matthew 18:23
Connecting Statement:
Jesus uses a parable to teach about forgiveness and reconciliation.
the kingdom of heaven is similar
This introduces a parable. See how you translated a similar parable introduction in [Matthew 13:24]
to settle accounts with his servants
"his servants to pay him what they owed him" or "to have his servants tell him what they had done with the goods he had entrusted to them"
Matthew 18:24
the settling
This abstract noun can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "to settle accounts"
one servant was brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone brought one of the king's servants"
ten thousand talents
"10,000 talents" or "more money than the servant could ever repay"
Matthew 18:25
his master commanded him to be sold ... and payment to be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the king commanded his servants to sell the man ... and to pay the debt with the money from the sale"
Matthew 18:26
fell down, bowed down
This shows that the servant approached the king in the most humble way possible.
before him
"before the king"
Matthew 18:27
he was moved with compassion
"he felt compassion for the servant"
released him
"let him go"
Matthew 18:28
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciples.
one hundred denarii
"100 denarii" or "one hundred days' wages"
He took hold of him
"The first servant took hold of his fellow servant"
Matthew 18:29
fell down
This shows that the fellow servant approached the first servant in the most humble way possible. See how you translated this in [Matthew 18:26]
and pleaded with him
"and begged him"
Matthew 18:30
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciples.
he went and threw him into prison

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"the first servant went and threw his fellow servant into prison"
Matthew 18:31
his fellow servants
"other servants"
told their master
"told the king"
deeply grieved
very sad and upset, as when a friend or family member dies. See how you translated this phrase in Matthew 17:23.
Matthew 18:32
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable to his disciple.
Then that servant's master called him
"Then the king called the first servant"
you pleaded with me
"you begged me"
Matthew 18:33
Should you not have ... you?
The king uses a question to scold the first servant. Alternate translation: "You should have ... you!"
Matthew 18:34
General Information:
This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 18:1, where Jesus teaches about life in the kingdom of heaven.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes his parable about forgiveness and reconciliation.
His master
"The king"
handed him over
"gave him over." Most likely the king himself did not take the first servant to the torturers. Alternate translation: "he ordered his servants to give him over"
to the torturers
"to those who would torture him"
that was owed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the first servant owed the king"
Matthew 18:35
my heavenly Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
you ... your
All occurrences of these words are plural. Jesus is speaking to his disciples, but this parable teaches a general truth that applies to all believers.
from your heart
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "from your heart" is an idiom that means "sincerely." Alternate translation: "sincerely" or "completely"

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19 [1]It came about that when Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee and came to the region of Judea
that is beyond the Jordan River.[2]Great crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

[3]Pharisees came to him, testing him, saying to him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?"
[4]Jesus answered and said, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female?
[5]He who made them also said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and join to his wife, and the two
will become one flesh.'[6]So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one tear
apart."

[7]They said to him, "Why then did Moses command us to give a certificate of divorce and then to send her away?"
[8]He said to them, "For your hardness of heart, Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not
that way.[9]I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery."[1]

[10]The disciples said to Jesus, "If that is the case of a man with his wife, it is not good to marry."
[11]But Jesus said to them, "Not everyone can accept this saying, but only those to whom it is given.[12]For there are eunuchs
who were born that way from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there
are eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this teaching,
let him accept it."

[13]Then some little children were brought to him so that he would lay his hands on them and pray, but the disciples
rebuked them.[14]But Jesus said, "Permit the little children, and do not forbid them to come to me, for the kingdom of
heaven belongs to such ones."[15]He placed his hands on the children, and then he went away from there.

[16]Behold, a man came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what good thing must I do that I may have eternal life?"
[17]Jesus said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? Only one is good, but if you want to enter into life, keep the
commandments."

[18]The man said to him, "Which commandments?"Jesus said, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not
bear false witness,
[19]honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbor as yourself."

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[20]The young man said to him, "All these things I have obeyed. What do I still need?"
[21]Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."[22]But when the young man heard what Jesus said, he went away sorrowful, for he had many possessions.

[23]Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.[24]Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

[25]When the disciples heard it, they were very astonished and said, "Who then can be saved?"
[26]Jesus looked at them and said, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
[27]Then Peter answered and said to him, "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?"

[28]Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, in the new age when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
[29]Every one who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or land for my name's sake will receive one hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.[30]But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have and the man who marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Matthew 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Divorce

Jesus taught about divorce because the Pharisees wanted people to think Jesus's teachings about divorce were wrong (Matthew 19:3-12). Jesus talked about what God had first said about marriage when he created it.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metonymy

Jesus often says the word "heaven" when he wants his hearers to think of God, who lives in heaven (Matthew 19:12).

Links:

Matthew 19:1 Notes

Matthew 19:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that runs through [Matthew 22:46]

It came about that when

This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next. Alternate translation: "When" or "After"

had finished these words

Here "words" refers to what Jesus taught starting in [Matthew 18:1]

departed from

"walked away from" or "left"

Matthew 19:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach about marriage and divorce.

came to him

"came to Jesus"

testing him, saying to him

Here "tested" is used in a negative sense. Alternate translation: "and challenged him by asking him" or "and wanted to trap him by asking him"

Matthew 19:4

Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female?

Jesus uses this question to remind the Pharisees of what the scripture says about men, women, and marriage. Alternate translation: "Surely you have read that in the beginning when God created people he made them male and female."

Matthew 19:5

General Information:

Jesus quotes from Genesis to show that a husband and wife should not divorce.

He who made them also said, 'For this reason ... flesh.'

This is part of what Jesus expected the Pharisees to have understood from the scripture. The direct quotation can be expressed as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "And surely you know that God also said that for this reason ... flesh."

For this reason

This is a part of the quotation from Genesis story about Adam and Eve. In that context the reason a man will leave his father and mother is because God created a woman to be the man's companion.

join to his wife

"stay close to his wife" or "live with his wife"

the two will become one flesh

This is a metaphor that emphasizes the unity of a husband and a wife. Alternate translation: "they will become like one person"

Matthew 19:6

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So they are no longer two, but one flesh
This is a metaphor that emphasizes the unity of a husband and a wife. Alternate translation: "So a husband and wife are no longer like two persons, but they are like one person"
Matthew 19:7
They said to him
"The Pharisees said to Jesus"
command us
"command us Jews"
certificate of divorce
This is a document that legally ends the marriage.
Matthew 19:8
For your hardness of heart
The phrase "hardness of heart" is a metaphor that means "stubbornness." Alternate translation: "Because of your stubbornness" or "Because you are stubborn"
your hardness ... allowed you ... your wives
Here "you" and "your" are plural. Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees, but Moses gave this command many years earlier to their ancestors. Moses's command applied to all Jewish men in general.
from the beginning
Here "beginning" refers to when God first created man and woman.
Matthew 19:9
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
marries another
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "marries another woman"
Matthew 19:11
to whom it is given
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom God gives it" or "whom God enables to follow it"
Matthew 19:12
there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there are men whom other men have made eunuchs"
eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs
Possible meanings are 1) "men who have made themselves eunuchs by removing their private parts" or 2) "men who choose to remain unmarried and sexually pure."
for the sake of the kingdom of heaven
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "so they can better serve our God in heaven"
Matthew 19:13
Connecting Statement:
Jesus receives and blesses little children.
some little children were brought to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some people brought little children to Jesus"
Matthew 19:14
Permit
allow
do not forbid them to come to me
"do not stop them from coming to me"
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such ones
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "for when our God in heaven establishes his rule on earth, he will be king over such as these" or "for God will allow such as these into his kingdom"
belongs to such ones
"belongs to those who are like children." This is a simile that means those who are humble like children will enter God's kingdom.
Matthew 19:16
Connecting Statement:
Here the scene shifts to a different time when Jesus explains to a rich man what it will cost to follow him.
Behold
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
good thing
This means a thing that pleases God.
Matthew 19:17
Why do you ask me about what is good?
Jesus uses this rhetorical question to encourage the man to think about his reason for asking Jesus about what is good. Alternate translation: "You ask me about what is good" or "Think about why you ask me about what is good."
Only one is good
"God alone is completely good"
to enter into life
"to receive eternal life"
Matthew 19:19
love your neighbor as yourself
The Jewish people believed that their neighbors were only other Jews. Jesus is extending that definition to include all people. Alternate translation: "love every other person as much as you love yourself"
Matthew 19:21
If you wish
"If you want"
to the poor
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to those who are poor"
you will have treasure in heaven
The phrase "treasure in heaven" is a metaphor that refers to a reward from God. Alternate translation: "God will reward you in heaven"
Matthew 19:23
Connecting Statement:
Jesus explains to his disciples the rewards of giving up material possessions and relationships to follow him.
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
to enter the kingdom of heaven
Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. This phrase is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, keep "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "to accept our God in heaven as their king" or "to enter God's kingdom"

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Matthew 19:24

it is easier ... kingdom of God

Jesus uses an exaggeration to illustrate how very difficult it is for rich people to enter the kingdom of God.

the eye of a needle

the hole near one end of a needle, through which thread is passed

Matthew 19:25

they were very astonished

"the disciples were amazed." It is implied that they were astonished because they believed having riches was proof that God approved of someone.

Who then can be saved?

The disciples use a question to emphasize their surprise. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then there is no one whom God will save!" or "Then there is no one who will receive eternal life!"

Matthew 19:27

we have left everything

"we have left all our wealth" or "we have given up all our possessions"

What then will we have?

"What good thing will God give us?"

Matthew 19:28

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

in the new age

"in the new time." This refers to when God restores all things. Alternate translation: "at the time when God makes all things new"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself.

sits on his glorious throne

Sitting on his throne represents ruling as a king. His throne being glorious represents his rule being glorious. Alternate translation: "sits as king on his glorious throne" or "rules gloriously as king"

sit upon twelve thrones

Here sitting on thrones refers to ruling as kings. The disciples will not be equal to Jesus who is also on a throne. They will receive authority from him. Alternate translation: "sit as kings on 12 thrones"

the twelve tribes of Israel

Here "tribes" refers to people from those tribes. Alternate translation: "the people of the 12 tribes of Israel"

Matthew 19:29

for my name's sake

Here "name" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because he believes in me"

receive one hundred times as much

"receive from God 100 times as many good things as they gave up"

will inherit eternal life

This is an idiom that means "God will bless them with eternal life" or "God will cause them to live forever."

Matthew 19:30

But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first

Here "first" and "last" refer to people's status or importance. Jesus is contrasting people's status now with their status in the kingdom of heaven. Alternate translation: "But many who seem to be important now will be the least important, and many who seem to be unimportant now will be very important"

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20 [1]"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard.
[2]After he had agreed with the laborers for one denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.
[3]He went out again about the third hour and saw other laborers standing idle in the marketplace.[4]To them he said, 'You also, go into the vineyard, and I will give you what is right.' So they went to work.
[5]Again he went out about the sixth hour and again the ninth hour, and did the same.[6]Once more about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle. He said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all the day long?'
[7]"They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.'"He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'
[8]When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning from the last to the first.'
[9]"When the laborers who had been hired at the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius.[10]When the first laborers came, they thought that they would receive more, but they also received one denarius each.
[11]When they received their wages, they complained about the landowner.[12]They said, 'These last laborers have spent only one hour in work, but you have made them equal to us, we who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.'

[13]"But the owner answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I do you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for one denarius?[14]Take what belongs to you and go your way. I choose to give to these last hired laborers just the same as to you.
[15]Is it not lawful for me to do as I want with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am good?'[16]So the last will be first, and the first last."[1]

[17]As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and on the way he said to them,[18]"See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and scribes. They will condemn him to death[19]and will deliver him to the Gentiles for them to mock, to flog, and to crucify him. But on the third day he will be raised up."

[20]Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons. She bowed down before him and asked for

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something from him.
[21]Jesus said to her, "What do you wish?"She said to him, "Command that these my two sons may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left hand, in your kingdom."

[22]But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?"They said to him, "We are able."

[23]He said to them, "My cup you will indeed drink. But to sit at my right hand and at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."[24]When the other ten disciples heard this, they were very angry with the two brothers.
[25]But Jesus called them to himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their important men exercise authority over them.[26]But it must not be this way among you. Instead, whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,[27]and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your servant,[28]just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

[29]As they went out from Jericho, a great crowd followed him.[30]There were two blind men sitting by the road. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us."[31]The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be quiet, but they cried out even more loudly, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us."

[32]Then Jesus stood still and called to them and said, "What do you wish me to do for you?"
[33]They said to him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."[34]Then Jesus, being moved with compassion, touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.

¡The best ancient copies do not have Many are called, but few are chosen.

Matthew 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The parable of the landowner and his vineyard
Jesus tells this parable (Matthew 20:1-16) to teach his disciples that what God says is right is different from what people say is right.

Links:

Matthew 20:1 Notes

Matthew 20:1
Connecting Statement:
Jesus tells a parable about a landowner who hires workers, to illustrate how God will reward those who belong to the kingdom of heaven.
For the kingdom of heaven is like
This is the beginning of a parable. See how you translated the introduction to the parable in [Matthew 13:24]
Matthew 20:2
After he had agreed
"After the landowner had agreed"
one denarius
This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"
he sent them into his vineyard
"he sent them to work in his vineyard"
Matthew 20:3
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
He went out again
"The landowner went out again"
the third hour
The third hour is around nine in the morning.
standing idle in the marketplace
"standing in the marketplace not doing anything" or "standing in the marketplace with no work to do"
marketplace
a large, open-air area where people buy and sell food and other items
Matthew 20:5
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
Again he went out
"Again the landowner went out"
the sixth hour and again the ninth hour
The sixth hour is around noon. The ninth hour is around three in the afternoon.
did the same
This means the landowner went to the marketplace and hired workers.
Matthew 20:6
the eleventh hour
This is about five in the afternoon.
standing idle
"not doing anything" or "not having any work"
Matthew 20:8

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Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
beginning from the last to the first
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "beginning with the workers who started working last, then the workers who started working earlier, and finally the workers who started working first" or "first paying the workers I hired last, then paying the workers I hired earlier in the day, and finally paying the workers I hired first"
Matthew 20:9
who had been hired
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the landowner hired"
Matthew 20:10
one denarius
This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"
Matthew 20:11
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
When they received
"When the workers who had worked the longest received"
the landowner
"the vineyard owner"
Matthew 20:12
you have made them equal to us
"you have paid them the same amount of money as you paid us"
we who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat
The phrase "borne the burden of the day" is an idiom that means "worked the entire day." Alternate translation: "we who have worked the entire day, even during the hottest part"
Matthew 20:13
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
one of them
"one of the workers who had worked the longest"
Friend
Use a word that one man would use to address another man whom he is politely rebuking.
Did you not agree with me for one denarius?
The landowner uses a question to rebuke the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "We already agreed that I would give you one denarius."
one denarius
This was the daily wage at that time. Alternate translation: "one day's wages"
Matthew 20:15
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes his parable about a landowner who hires workers.
Is it not lawful for me to do as I want with what belongs to me?
The landowner uses a question to correct the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "It is lawful for me do what I want with my own possessions."
Is it not lawful for me
"Do I not have the right" or "Is it not proper." The landowner is reminding the laborers that everyone allows people to do what they wish with their own property. He is not asking if there is a law against what he is doing.
Or are you envious because I am good?
The landowner uses a question to rebuke the workers who were complaining. Alternate translation: "You should not be envious because I am good."
I am good
In the context here, the reader should understand the landowner being "good" as "generous," the opposite of the laborers being "evil," which is "envious."
Matthew 20:16
So the last will be first, and the first last
Here "first" and "last" refer to people's status or importance. Jesus is contrasting people's status now with their status in the kingdom of heaven. See how you translated a similar statement in Matthew 19:30. Alternate translation: "So those who seem to be unimportant now will be the most important, and those who seem to be the most important now will be the least important"
So the last will be first
Here the parable has ended and Jesus is speaking. Alternate translation: "Then Jesus said, 'So the last will be first'"
Matthew 20:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus foretells his death and resurrection a third time as he and his disciples travel to Jerusalem.
going up to Jerusalem
Jerusalem was on top of a hill, so people had to travel up to get there.
Matthew 20:18
See, we are going
Jesus uses the word "See" to tell the disciples the must pay attention to what he is about to tell them.
we are going
Here "we" refers to Jesus and the disciples.
the Son of Man will be given over
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will give the Son of Man over"
Son of Man ... him
Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate these in the first person.
They will condemn
The chief priests and scribes will condemn Jesus.
Matthew 20:19
and will deliver him to the Gentiles for them to mock
The chief priests and scribes will deliver Jesus to the Gentiles, and the Gentiles will mock him.
to flog
"to whip him" or "to beat him with whips"
third day
"Third" is the ordinal form of "three."
him ... him ... he
Jesus is referring to himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate these in the first person.
he will be raised up
The words "be raised up" are an idiom for "be made alive again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will raise him up" or "God will make him

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alive again"
Matthew 20:20
Connecting Statement:
In response to the question that the mother of two of the disciples asks, Jesus teaches his disciples about authority and serving others in the kingdom of heaven.
the sons of Zebedee
This refers to James and John.
Matthew 20:21
at your right hand ... at your left hand
These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor.
in your kingdom
Here "kingdom" refers to Jesus ruling as king. Alternate translation: "when you are king"
Matthew 20:22
You do not know
Here "you" is plural and refers to the mother and the sons.
Are you able
Here "you" is plural, but Jesus is only talking to the two sons.
drink the cup that I am about to drink
To "drink the cup" or "drink from the cup" is an idiom that means to experience suffering. Alternate translation: "suffer what I am about to suffer"
They said
"The sons of Zebedee said" or "James and John said"
Matthew 20:23
My cup you will indeed drink
To "drink a cup" or "drink from a cup" is an idiom that means to experience suffering. Alternate translation: "You will indeed suffer as I will suffer"
right hand ... left hand
These refer to having positions of power, authority, and honor. See how you translated this in [Matthew 20:21]
but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for my Father has prepared those places, and he will give them to whom he chooses"
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 20:24
heard this
"heard what James and John had asked Jesus"
they were very angry with the two brothers
If necessary, you can make explicit why the ten disciples were angry. Alternate translation: "they were very angry with the two brothers because each of them also wanted to sit in a place of honor next to Jesus"
Matthew 20:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes teaching his disciples about authority and serving others.
called them
"called the twelve disciples"
the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them
"the Gentile kings forcefully rule over their people"
their important men
"the important men among the Gentiles"
exercise authority over them
"have control over the people"
Matthew 20:26
whoever wishes
"whoever wants" or "whoever desires"
Matthew 20:27
to be first
"to be important"
Matthew 20:28
the Son of Man ... his life
Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. If necessary, you can translate this in the first person.
did not come to be served
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did not come so that other people would serve him" or "did not come so that other people would serve me"
but to serve
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "but to serve other people"
to give his life as a ransom for many
Jesus's life being a "ransom" is a metaphor for his being punished in order to set people free from being punished for their own sins. Alternate translation: "to give his life as a substitute for many" or "to give his life as a substitute to set many free"
to give his life
To give one's live is an idiom meaning to die voluntarily, usually in order to help others. Alternate translation: "to die"
for many
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "for many people"
Matthew 20:29
Connecting Statement:
This begins an account of Jesus healing two blind men.
As they went
This refers to the disciples and Jesus.
followed him
"followed Jesus"
Matthew 20:30
There were two blind men sitting
This is sometimes translated as "Behold, there were two blind men sitting." Matthew is alerting us to a new people in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
When they heard
"When the two blind men heard"
was passing by
"was walking by them"
Son of David
Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "Descendant of King David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the men were probably calling Jesus by this title.
Matthew 20:32
called to them
"called to the blind men"
do you wish
"do you want"

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Matthew 20:33
that our eyes may be opened
The men speak of becoming able to see as if there eyes were to be opened. Because of Jesus's previous question, we understand that they were expressing their desire.

Alternate translation: "we want you to open our eyes" or "we want to be able to see"

Matthew 20:34
being moved with compassion
"having compassion" or "feeling compassion for them"

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21 [1]As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,[2]saying to them, "Go into the next village, and you will immediately find a donkey tied up there, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.[3]If anyone says anything to you about that, you will say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and that person will immediately send them with you."

[4]Now all this happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, saying,

[5] "Tell the daughter of Zion,
'See, your King is coming to you,
Humble and riding on a donkey—
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

[6]Then the disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them.[7]They brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat upon the cloaks.[8]Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches off the trees and spread them in the road.
[9]Then the crowds that went before Jesus and those that followed him were shouting,

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

[10]When Jesus had come into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred and said, "Who is this?"
[11]The crowds answered, "This is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

[12]Then Jesus entered the temple. He cast out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and turned over the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.[13]He said to them, "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."
[14]Then the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.
[15]But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the marvelous things that he did, and when they heard the children shouting in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became very angry.
[16]They said to him, "Do you hear what they are saying?"Jesus said to them, "Yes! But have you never read,

'Out of the mouths of little children and nursing infants
you have prepared praise'?"

[17]Then Jesus left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

[18]Now in the morning as he returned to the city, he was hungry.[19]Seeing a fig tree along the roadside, he went to it and found nothing on it except leaves. He said to it, "May there be no fruit from you ever again," and immediately the fig tree withered.

[20]When the disciples saw it, they marveled and said, "How did the fig tree immediately wither away?"
[21]Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to this fig tree, but you will even say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and it will be done.
[22]Whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you will receive."

[23]When Jesus had come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority do you do these things, and who gave you this authority?"

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[24]Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one question. If you tell me, I will tell you by what authority I do these things.
[25]The baptism of John—from where did it come? From heaven or from men?"They discussed among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'
[26]But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the crowd, because they all view John as a prophet."[27]Then they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.
[28]But what do you think? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go labor today in the vineyard.'
[29]"The son answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went.
[30]"Then the man went to the second son and said the same thing. He answered and said, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go.
[31]Which of the two sons did his father's will?"They said, "The first one."
Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God before you do.
[32]For John came to you in the way of righteousness, but you did not believe him. But the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. But you, even when you saw this, you did not repent afterward and believe him.

[33]"Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner. He planted a vineyard, set a hedge about it, dug a winepress in it, built a watchtower, and rented it out to vine growers. Then he went into another country.[34]When the time of the fruit harvest approached, he sent some servants to the vine growers to collect his fruit.
[35]But the vine growers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned still another.[36]Again, the owner sent other servants, more than the first, but the vine growers treated them in the same way.[37]After that, the owner sent his own son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

[38]"But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and take over the inheritance.'[39]So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.
[40]Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine growers?"
[41]They said to him, "He will violently destroy those wicked people, and he will then rent out the vineyard to other vine growers, men who will give him his share of crops at the harvest time."

[42]Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the scriptures,

'The stone which the builders rejected
has been made the cornerstone.
This was from the Lord,
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?
[43]Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that produces its fruits.[44]Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces. But anyone on whom it falls will be crushed."
[45]When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they understood he was speaking about them.[46]Seeking to arrest him, they were afraid of the crowd, because the people regarded him as a prophet.

Matthew 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 21:5,16 and 42, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey had a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

Hosanna

This is what the people shouted to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. This word means "save us," but people used it to praise God.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The kingdom of God will be taken away from you"

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No one knows for sure what this phrase means. No one knows if Jesus meant that God would someday give the kingdom back or not.

Links:

Matthew 21:1 Notes

Matthew 21:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. Here he gives his disciples instructions about what they are to do.

Bethphage

This is a village near Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:2

a donkey tied up

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "a donkey that someone has tied up"

tied up there

You can make explicit how the donkey is tied. Alternate translation: "tied up there to a post" or "tied up there to a tree"

colt

young male donkey

Matthew 21:4

General Information:

Here the author quotes the prophet Zechariah to show that Jesus fulfilled prophecy by riding a donkey into Jerusalem.

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus's actions fulfilled scripture.

all this happened to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this happened so that Jesus would fulfill what God spoke through the prophet long ago"

through the prophet

There were many prophets. Matthew was speaking of Zechariah. Alternate translation: "the prophet Zechariah"

Matthew 21:5

the daughter of Zion

The "daughter" of a city means the people of the city. Alternate translation: "the people of Zion" or "the people who live in Zion"

Zion

This is another name for Jerusalem.

on a donkey—on a colt, the foal of a donkey

The phrase "on a colt, the foal of a donkey" is explaining that the donkey is a young animal. Alternate translation: "on a young, male donkey"

Matthew 21:7

cloaks

These were outer clothing or long coats.

Matthew 21:8

crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches off the trees and spread them in the road

These are ways to show honor to Jesus as he was entering Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:9

Hosanna

This word means "save us," but it can also mean "praise God!"

the son of David

Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "descendant of king David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the crowd was probably calling Jesus by this title.

in the name of the Lord

Here "in the name" means "in the power" or "as a representative." Alternate translation: "in the power of the Lord" or "as the representative of the Lord"

Hosanna in the highest

Here "highest" refers to God who rules from the highest heaven. Alternate translation: "Praise God, who is in the highest heaven" or "Praise be to God"

Matthew 21:10

all the city was stirred

Here "city" refers to the people living there. Alternate translation: "many people from all over the city were stirred"

stirred

"excited"

Matthew 21:12

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus entering into the temple.

Jesus entered the temple

Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.

who bought and sold

Merchants were selling animals and other items that travelers bought to offer the proper sacrifices at the temple.

Matthew 21:13

General Information:

Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to rebuke the vendors and money changers.

He said to them

"Jesus said to those who were changing money and buying and selling things"

It is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The prophets wrote long ago" or "God said long ago"

My house will be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My house will be"

My house

Here "My" refers to God and "house" refers to the temple.

a house of prayer

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "a place where people pray"

a den of robbers

Jesus uses a metaphor to scold the people for buying and selling items in the temple. Alternate translation: "like a place where robbers hide"

Matthew 21:14

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the blind and the lame
These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "those who were blind and those who were lame"
lame
those who have an injured foot or leg that makes walking difficult
Matthew 21:15
the marvelous things
"the wonderful things" or "the miracles." This refers to Jesus healing the blind and lame people in Matthew 21:14.
Hosanna
This word means "save us" but can also mean "praise God!" See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.
the Son of David
Jesus was not David's literal son, so this may be translated as "descendant of king David." However, "Son of David" is also a title for the Messiah, and the children were probably calling Jesus by this title. See how you translated this in Matthew 21:9.
they became very angry
It is implied that they were angry because they did not believe Jesus was the Christ and they did not want other people praising him. Alternate translation: "they became very angry because people were praising him"
Matthew 21:16
General Information:
Jesus quotes from the Psalms to justify how the people had responded to him.
Do you hear what they are saying?
The chief priests and scribes ask this question to rebuke Jesus because they are angry with him. Alternate translation: "You should not allow them to say these things about you!"
But have you never read ... praise'?
Jesus asks this question to remind the chief priests and scribes of what they have studied in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "Yes, I hear them, but you should remember what you read in the scriptures ... praise.'"
Out of the mouths of little children and nursing infants you have prepared praise
The phrase "out of the mouths" refers to speaking, and "prepared praise" is a metonym for preparing the children and infants to praise. Alternate translation: "You prepared little children and nursing infants to give praise to God"
Matthew 21:17
Jesus left them
"Jesus left the chief priests and scribes"
Matthew 21:18
Connecting Statement:
In verses 18 through 22, Jesus uses a fig tree to teach his disciples about faith and prayer.
Now
This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here Matthew explains that Jesus is hungry and that is why he stops at the fig tree.
Matthew 21:19
he ... found nothing on it except leaves
This double negative emphasizes that leaves were the only things that he found. Alternate translation: "he ... found only leaves on it"
withered
died and dried up
Matthew 21:20
How did the fig tree immediately wither away?
The disciples use a question to emphasize how surprised they are. Alternate translation: "We are astonished that the fig tree has dried up so quickly!"
wither away
"dry up and die"
Matthew 21:21
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
if you have faith and do not doubt
Jesus expresses the same idea both positively and negatively to emphasize that this faith must be genuine. Alternate translation: "if you truly believe"
you will even say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,'
You can translate this direct quotation as an indirect quotation. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will even be able to tell this mountain to get up and throw itself into the sea,"
it will be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will happen"
Matthew 21:23
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of the religious leaders questioning Jesus's authority.
had come into the temple
It is implied that Jesus did not enter the actual temple. He entered the courtyard around the temple.
these things
This refers to Jesus teaching and healing in the temple. It probably also refers to Jesus driving out the buyers and sellers the previous day.
Matthew 21:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to respond to the religious leaders.
from where did it come?
"where did he get the authority to do that?"
If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'
This has quotes within a quote. You could translate the direct quotations as an indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "If we say that we believe John received his authority from heaven, then Jesus will ask us why we did not believe John."
From heaven
Here "heaven" refers to God. Alternate translation: "from God in heaven"
Why then did you not believe him?
The religious leaders know that Jesus could scold them with this rhetorical question. Alternate translation: "Then you should have believed John the Baptist"
Matthew 21:26

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But if we say, 'From men,'
This is a quote within a quote. You could translate the direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "But if we say that we believe John received his authority from men,"
we fear the crowd
"we fear what the crowd would think or even do to us"
they all view John as a prophet
"they believe John is a prophet"
Matthew 21:28
Connecting Statement:
Jesus tells a parable about two sons to rebuke the religious leaders and to illustrate their unbelief.
But what do you think?
Jesus uses a question to challenge the religious leaders to think deeply about the parable he will tell them. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you think about what I am about to tell you."
Matthew 21:29
he changed his mind
This refers to the son reconsidering his thoughts and deciding to act differently from how he had said he would act.
Matthew 21:31
They said
"The chief priests and elders said"
Jesus said to them
"Jesus said to the chief priests and elders"
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
the tax collectors and the prostitutes will enter the kingdom of God before you do
Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "when God establishes his rule on earth, he will agree to bless the tax collectors and prostitutes by ruling over them before he agrees to do that for you"
before you do
Possible meanings are 1) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes sooner than he will accept the Jewish religious leaders, or 2) God will accept the tax collectors and prostitutes instead of the Jewish religious leaders.
Matthew 21:32
John came to you
Here "you" is plural and refers to all the people of Israel, not just the religious leaders. Alternate translation: "John came to the people of Israel"
in the way of righteousness
This is an idiom that means John showed the people the right way to live. Alternate translation: "and told you the way God wants you to live"
you did not believe him
Here "you" is plural and refers to the religious leaders.
Matthew 21:33
Connecting Statement:
To rebuke the religious leaders and illustrate their unbelief, Jesus tells a parable about rebellious servants.
a landowner
"a person who owned a piece of property"
a hedge
"a wall" or "a fence"
dug a winepress in it
"dug a hole in the vineyard in which to press the grapes"
rented it out to vine growers
The owner still owned the vineyard, but he allowed the vine growers to take care of it. When the grapes became ripe, they were to give some of them to the owner and keep the rest.
vine growers
These were people who knew how to take care of vines and grapes.
Matthew 21:34
to collect his fruit
The landowner expected the vine growers pay him for allowing them to use the vineyard by giving him some of the fruit they had grown.
Matthew 21:35
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
his servants
"the landowner's servants"
Matthew 21:38
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
Matthew 21:40
Now
The word "now" does not mean "at this moment," but it is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
Matthew 21:41
They said to him
Matthew does not make clear who answered Jesus. If you need to specify an audience you can translate as "The people said to Jesus."
He will violently destroy those wicked people
"He will bring those wicked people to a miserable end" or "He will make those evil people die in misery"
Matthew 21:42
General Information:
Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah to show that God will honor the one whom the religious leaders reject.
Connecting Statement:
Here Jesus begins to explain the parable of the rebellious servants.
Jesus said to them
It is unclear to whom Jesus asks the following question. If you need to make "them" specific, use the same audience as you did in Matthew 21:41.
Did you never read ... eyes'?
Jesus uses a question to make his audience think deeply about what this scripture means. Alternate translation: "Think about what you have read ... eyes.'"
The stone which the builders rejected has been made the cornerstone
Jesus is quoting from the Psalms. This is a metaphor that means the religious leaders, like builders, will reject Jesus, but God will make him the most important in his kingdom, like the cornerstone in a building.
has been made the cornerstone

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has become the cornerstone"

This was from the Lord

"The Lord has caused this great change"

it is marvelous in our eyes

Here "in our eyes" refers to seeing. Alternate translation: "it is wonderful to see"

Matthew 21:43

I say to you

This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

to you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders who had rejected him.

the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and will be given to a nation that produces its fruits

Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take his kingdom away from you and will give it to a nation that produces the kingdom's fruits" or "God will reject you, and he will be king over people from other nations that produce the kingdom's fruits"

that produces its fruits

"Fruits" here is a metaphor for "results" or outcome." Alternate translation: "that produces good results"

Matthew 21:44

Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces

Here, "this stone" is the same stone as in [Matthew 21:42]

But anyone on whom it falls will be crushed

This means basically the same thing as the previous sentence. It is a metaphor that means the Christ will have the final judgment and will destroy everyone who rebels against him.

Matthew 21:45

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders react to the parable that Jesus told.

his parables

"Jesus's parables"

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22 [1]Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying,[2]"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who prepared a marriage feast for his son.[3]He sent out his servants to call those who had been invited to come to the marriage feast, but they would not come.
[4]Again the king sent other servants, saying, 'Tell them who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner. My oxen and fattened cattle have been killed, and all things are ready. Come to the marriage feast."'
[5]But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, another to his business.[6]The others seized the king's servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.[7]The king was angry, and he sent his soldiers and they destroyed those murderers and burned their city.
[8]Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.[9]Therefore go to the highway crossings and invite as many people to the marriage feast as you can find.'[10]The servants went out to the highways and gathered together all the people they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.
[11]But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.[12]The king said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?' But the man was speechless.
[13]Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind this man hand and foot, and throw him out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and the grinding of teeth.'[14]For many people are called, but few are chosen."

[15]Then the Pharisees went and planned how they might entrap Jesus in his own talk.[16]Then they sent to him their disciples, together with the Herodians. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that you are truthful, and that you teach God's way in truth. You care for no one's opinion, and you do not show partiality between people.[17]So tell us, what do you think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

[18]But Jesus understood their wickedness and said, "Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?[19]Show me the coin for the tax." Then they brought a denarius to him.
[20]Jesus said to them, "Whose image and name are these?"
[21]They said to him, "Caesar's."Then Jesus said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."
[22]When they heard it, they marveled. Then they left him and went away.

[23]On that day some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him. They asked him,[24]saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies, having no children, his brother must marry his wife and raise children for his brother.'
[25]There were seven brothers. The first married and then died. Having left no children, he left his wife to his brother.[26]Then the second brother did the same thing, then the third, all the way to the seventh brother.[27]After them all, the woman died.
[28]Now in the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven brothers? For they all had married her."

[29]But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God.
[30]For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage. Instead, they are like angels in heaven.
[31]But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,[32]'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."[33]When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

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[34]But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.[35]One of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question, testing him—[36]"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?"

[37]Jesus said to him, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'[38]This is the great and first commandment.
[39]And a second commandment is like it—'Love your neighbor as yourself.'[40]On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets."

[41]Now while the Pharisees were still gathered together, Jesus asked them a question.[42]He said, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?"They said to him, "The son of David."

[43]Jesus said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying,

[44] 'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I make your enemies your footstool'"?

[45]If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?"[46]No one was able to answer him a word, and no man dared ask him any more questions from that day on.

Matthew 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 44, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wedding Feast

In the parable of the wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14), Jesus taught that when God offers to save a person, that person needs to accept the offer. Jesus spoke of life with God as a feast that a king prepares for his son, who has just gotten married. In addition, Jesus emphasized that not everyone whom God invites will properly prepare themselves to come to the feast. God will throw these people out from the feast.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When the king in the parable said, "My oxen and fattened calves have been killed" (Matthew 22:4), he assumed that the hearers would understand that those who had killed the animals had also cooked them.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. To the Jews, the ancestors were the masters of the descendants, but in one psalm David calls one of his descendants "Lord." Jesus tells the Jewish leaders that this is a paradox, saying, "If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?" (Matthew 22:45).

Links:

Matthew 22:1 Notes

Matthew 22:1

Connecting Statement:

To rebuke the religious leaders and to illustrate their unbelief, Jesus tells a parable about a marriage feast.

to them

"to the people"

Matthew 22:2

The kingdom of heaven is like

This is the beginning of a parable. See how you translated this in Matthew 13:24.

Matthew 22:3

those who had been invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people the king had invited"

Matthew 22:4

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

servants, saying, 'Tell them who are invited, "See ... feast."'

This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Also, this can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "servants, ordering them to tell those whom he invited, 'See ... feast.'"

See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to

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tell you"

My oxen and fattened cattle have been killed

It is implied that the animals are cooked and ready to eat. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My servants have killed and cooked my oxen and my fattened cattle"

My oxen and fattened cattle

"My best oxen and calves for eating"

Matthew 22:5

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

But they paid no attention

"But the guests the king invited ignored the invitation"

Matthew 22:7

they destroyed those murderers

"they killed those murderers." If your language has a strong word for "killed," you might want to use it here.

Matthew 22:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

those who were invited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom I invited"

Matthew 22:9

the highway crossings

"where the main roads of the city cross." The king is sending the servants to the place where they are most likely to find people.

Matthew 22:10

both bad and good

"both the good people and the bad people"

So the wedding hall was filled with guests

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the guests filled the wedding hall"

hall

a large room

Matthew 22:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable.

Matthew 22:12

how did you come in here without wedding clothes?

The king uses a question to scold the guest. Alternate translation: "you are not wearing proper clothes for a wedding. You should not be here."

the man was speechless

"the man was silent"

Matthew 22:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his parable about a marriage feast.

Bind this man hand and foot

"Tie him up so that he cannot move his hands or feet"

the outer darkness

Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

weeping and the grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" is symbolic action, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 22:14

For many people are called, but few are chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God invites many people, but he only chooses a few"

For

This marks a transition. Jesus has ended the parable and now explains the point of the parable.

Matthew 22:15

Connecting Statement:

This begins an account of the religious leaders trying to trap Jesus with several difficult questions. Here the Pharisees ask him about paying taxes to Caesar.

how they might entrap Jesus in his own talk

"how they could cause Jesus to say something wrong so they could arrest him"

Matthew 22:16

their disciples ... Herodians

The disciples of the Pharisees supported paying taxes only to Jewish authorities. The Herodians supported paying taxes to the Roman authorities. It is implied that the Pharisees believed that no matter what Jesus said, he would offend one of these groups.

Herodians

These were officials and followers of the Jewish king Herod. He was friends with Roman authorities.

you do not show partiality between people

"you do not show special honor to anyone" or "you do not consider anyone more important than anyone else"

Matthew 22:17

to pay taxes to Caesar

People did not pay taxes directly to Caesar but to one of his tax collectors. Alternate translation: "to pay the taxes that Caesar requires"

Matthew 22:18

Why are you testing me, you hypocrites?

Jesus uses a question to scold those who were trying to trap him. Alternate translation: "Do not test me, you hypocrites!" or "I know that you hypocrites are only trying to test me!"

Matthew 22:19

denarius

This was a Roman coin worth one day's wages.

Matthew 22:20

to them

Here "them" refers to the Herodians and the disciples of the Pharisees.

Whose image and name are these?

Jesus uses a question to get the people to think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "Tell me whose image and name you see on this coin."

Matthew 22:21

Caesar's

You can make clear the understood information in their response. Alternate translation: "The coin has Caesar's image and name on it"

things that are Caesar's

"things that belong to Caesar"

things that are God's

"things that belong to God"

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Matthew 22:23
Connecting Statement:
The Sadducees try to trap Jesus by asking him a difficult question about marriage and the resurrection of the dead.
Matthew 22:24
Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies ... brother.'
The religious leaders were asking Jesus about what Moses had written in the scriptures. If your language does not allow quotes within quotes, this could be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies ...brother."
his brother ... his wife ... his brother
Here "his" refers to the dead man.
Matthew 22:25
Connecting Statement:
The Sadducees continue asking Jesus a question.
The first
"The oldest"
Matthew 22:26
the second ... the third ... the seventh
"the next oldest ... the next oldest ... the youngest" or "his oldest younger brother ... that brother's oldest younger brother ... the youngest"
Matthew 22:27
After them all
"After every brother had died"
Matthew 22:28
Now
Here the Sadducees shift from the story about the seven brothers to their actual question.
in the resurrection
"when dead people come back to life"
Matthew 22:29
You are mistaken
It is implied that Jesus means that they are mistaken about what they think about the resurrection. Alternate translation: "You are mistaken about the resurrection"
the power of God
"what God is able to do"
Matthew 22:30
in the resurrection
"when dead people rise back to life"
they neither marry
"people will not marry"
nor are given in marriage
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "nor will people give their children in marriage"
Matthew 22:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins asking a question to show that people who have died will live again. He is scolding the Sadducees by asking this question. He is not looking for an answer.
have you not read
This is the beginning of a question that end with the words "the God of Jacob" in verse 32. Jesus asks this question to remind the religious leaders of what they know from scripture. If this rhetorical question is translated as a statement, the question mark in verse 32 would be changed to a period. Alternate translation: "you have read"
what was spoken to you by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God spoke to you"
Matthew 22:32
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes asking the question he began in verse 31.
the God of Jacob'?
This question begins in verse 31 and ends in verse 32. Jesus uses this question to remind the Sadducees of what is in the scripture and to rebuke them for not understanding it. If you translated the rhetorical question as a statement in verse 31, then the question mark here would be changed to a period. Alternate translation: "the God of Jacob.'"
'I am the God of ... Jacob'
You can translate the direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "that he is the God of ... Jacob"
of the dead, but of the living
These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "of dead people, but he is the God of living people"
Matthew 22:35
Connecting Statement:
A Pharisee who was an expert in the law tries to trap Jesus by asking him a difficult question about the greatest commandment.
Matthew 22:37
General Information:
Jesus quotes a verse from Deuteronomy as the greatest commandment.
with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind
These three phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly." Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being.
Matthew 22:38
the great and first commandment
Here "great" and "first" mean the same thing. They emphasize that this is the most important commandment.
Matthew 22:39
General Information:
Jesus quotes a verse from Leviticus as the second greatest commandment.
your neighbor
Here "neighbor" means more than just those who live nearby. Jesus means a person must love all people.
Matthew 22:40
On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets
Here the phrase "the whole law and the prophets" refers to all of scripture. Alternate translation: "Everything that Moses and the prophets wrote in the scriptures is based on these two commandments"
Matthew 22:41
Connecting Statement:
Jesus asks the Pharisees a difficult question in order to stop their attempts to trap him.
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story in which Jesus asks the religious leaders a question.
Matthew 22:42

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son ... son of David
In both of these "son" means "descendant."
Matthew 22:43
General Information:
Jesus quotes from the Psalms to show that the Christ is more than just "the son of David."
How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord
Jesus uses a question to make the religious leaders think deeply about the Psalm he is about to quote. Alternate translation: "Then, tell me why David in the Spirit calls him Lord"
David in the Spirit
"David, whom the Holy Spirit is inspiring." This means the Holy Spirit is influencing what David says.
call him
Here "him" refers to the Christ, who is also the descendant of David.
Matthew 22:44
The Lord said
Here "Lord" refers to God the Father.
to my Lord
Here "Lord" refers to the Christ. Also, "my" refers to David. This means the Christ is superior to David.
Sit at my right hand
To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"
until I make your enemies your footstool
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "until I conquer your enemies" or "until I make your enemies bow down before you"
Matthew 22:45
General Information:
This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 19:1, that tells of Jesus ministering in Judea.
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the account of the religious leaders trying to trap Jesus with several difficult questions.
If David then calls the Christ 'Lord,' how is he David's son?
Jesus uses a question to make the religious leaders think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "David calls him 'Lord,' so the Christ has to be more than just a descendant of David."
If David then calls the Christ
David referred to Jesus as "Lord" because Jesus was not only a descendant of David, but he was also superior to him.
Matthew 22:46
to answer him a word
Here "word" refers to what people say. Alternate translation: "to answer him anything" or "to answer him"
any more questions
It is implied that no one asked him the kind of questions that were intended to make him say something wrong so the religious leaders could arrest him.

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23 [1]Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples.[2]He said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.
[3]Therefore whatever they command you to do, do these things and observe them. But do not imitate their deeds, for they say things but then do not do them.
[4]Yes, they bind heavy burdens that are difficult to carry, and then they put them on people's shoulders. But they themselves will not move a finger to carry them.[5]They do all their deeds to be seen by people. For they make their phylacteries wide, and they enlarge the edges of their garments.
[6]They love the places of honor at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues,[7]and special greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi' by people.
[8]But you must not be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are brothers.[9]And call no man on earth your father, for you have only one Father, and he is in heaven.[10]Neither must you be called 'teacher,' for you have only one teacher, the Christ.
[11]But he who is greatest among you will be your servant.[12]Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

[13]"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven against people. For you do not enter it yourselves, and neither do you allow those about to enter to do so.[14] [15]Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you go over sea and land to make one convert, and when he has become one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you.

[16]"Woe to you, you blind guides, you who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing. But whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound to his oath.'[17]You blind fools! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy?
[18]And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing. But whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is bound to his oath.'[19]You blind people! Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy?
[20]Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it.[21]The one who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who lives in it.[22]And the one who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits on it.

[23]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, but you have left undone the

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weightier matters of the law—justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you ought to have done and not to have left the other undone.[24]You blind guides, you who strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

[25]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence.[26]You blind Pharisee! Clean first the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may become clean also.

[27]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean.[28]In the same way, you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

[29]"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the tombs of the righteous.[30]You say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.'[31]Therefore you testify against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
[32]You also fill up the measure of your fathers.[33]You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of hell?
[34]Therefore, see, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some you will whip in your synagogues and chase from city to city.[35]The result is that upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.[36]Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

[37]"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you! How often did I long to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing![38]See, your house is left to you desolate.[39]For I say to you, you will not see me from now on until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

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[a]The best ancient copies do not have verse 14 (some copies add the verse after verse 12). Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, while you make a show of long prayers. You will therefore receive greater condemnation.

Matthew 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Hypocrites

Jesus calls the Pharisees hypocrites many times (Matthew 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29) and carefully tells what he means by doing that. The Pharisees made rules that no one could actually obey, and then they persuaded the ordinary people that they were guilty because they could not obey the rules. Also, the Pharisees obeyed their own rules instead of obeying God's original commands in the law of Moses.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Name calling

In most cultures, it is wrong to insult people. The Pharisees took many of the words in this chapter as insults. Jesus called them "hypocrites," "blind guides," "fools," and "serpents" (Matthew 23:16-17). Jesus uses these words to say that God would surely punish them because they were doing wrong.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus uses a paradox when he says, "He who is greatest among you will be your servant" (Matthew 23:11-12).

Links:

Matthew 23:1 Notes

Matthew 23:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story, in which Jesus teaches about salvation and the final judgment. Here he begins to warn the people about the scribes and Pharisees.

Matthew 23:2

sit in Moses' seat

Here "seat" represents the authority to rule and make judgments. Alternate translation: "have authority as Moses had" or "have authority to say what the law of Moses means"

Matthew 23:3

whatever ... do these things and observe them

"all the things ... do them and observe them" or "everything ... do it and observe it"

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Matthew 23:4

they bind heavy burdens that are difficult to carry, and then they put them on people's shoulders. But they themselves will not move a finger to carry them

Here "bind heavy burdens ... put them on people's shoulders" is a metaphor for the religious leaders making many difficult rules and making the people obey them. And "will not move a finger" is an idiom that means the religious leaders will not help the people. Alternate translation: "they make you obey many rules that are difficult to follow. But they do nothing at all to help you follow the rules"

Matthew 23:5

They do all their deeds to be seen by people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They do all their deeds so that people can see what they do"

For they make their phylacteries wide, and they enlarge the edges of their garments

Both of these are things the Pharisees do to appear as if they honor God more than other people.

phylacteries

small leather boxes containing paper with scripture written on it

they enlarge the edges of their garments

The Pharisees made the tassels on the bottom of their robes especially long to show their devotion to God.

Matthew 23:6

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the crowds and disciples about the Pharisees.

places of honor ... chief seats

Both of these are the places where the most important people sit.

Matthew 23:7

marketplaces

large, open-air areas where people buy and sell items

to be called 'Rabbi' by people.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for people to call them 'Rabbi.'"

Matthew 23:8

But you must not be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But you must not let anyone call you"

you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to all of Jesus's followers.

all of you are brothers

Here "brothers" means "fellow believers."

Matthew 23:9

call no man on earth your father

Jesus is using hyperbole to tell his hearers that they must not allow even the most important people to be more important to them than God is. Alternate translation: "do not call any man on earth your father" or "do not say that any man on earth is your father"

you have only one Father

"Father" here is an important title for God.

Matthew 23:10

Neither must you be called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Also, do not let anyone call you"

you have only one teacher, the Christ

When Jesus said "the Christ," he was speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Christ, am your only teacher"

Matthew 23:11

he who is greatest among you

"the person who is most important among you"

among you

Here "you" is plural and refers to Jesus's followers.

Matthew 23:12

exalts himself

"makes himself important"

will be humbled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"

will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make important" or "God will honor"

Matthew 23:13

General Information:

Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven as if it were a house, the door into which the Pharisees have shut from the outside so that neither they nor anyone else can enter the house. If you do not keep the metaphor of the house, be sure to change all instances of "shut" and "enter." Also, since the words "kingdom of heaven," which refer to God, who lives in heaven, occur only in Matthew, try to use your language's word for "heaven" in your translation.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to rebuke the religious leaders because of their hypocrisy.

But woe to you

"How terrible it will be for you!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.

You shut the kingdom of heaven against people ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so

Jesus is speaking of the kingdom of heaven, which is God ruling over his people, as if it were a house, the door into which the Pharisees have shut from the outside so that neither they nor anyone else can enter the house. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is found only in the book of Matthew. If possible, use your language's word for "heaven" in your translation. Alternate translation: "You make it impossible for people to enter the kingdom of heaven ... you do not enter it ... neither do you allow those about to enter to do so" or "You prevent people from accepting God, who lives in heaven, as king ... you do not accept him as king ... and you make it impossible for those about to accept him as king to do so"

Matthew 23:15

you go over sea and land

This is an idiom that means they go to distant places. Alternate translation: "you travel great distances"

to make one convert

"to make one person accept your religion"

son of hell

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Here "son of" is an idiom that means "one belonging to." Alternate translation: "person who belongs in hell" or "person who should go to hell"
Matthew 23:16
blind guides
The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth. See how you translated "blind guides" in [Matthew 15:14]
by the temple, it is nothing
"by the temple does not have to keep his oath"
is bound to his oath
"is tied to his oath." The phrase "bound to his oath" is a metaphor for being required to do what one has said he would do in an oath. Alternate translation: "must do what he promised to do"
Matthew 23:17
blind fools
The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.
Which is greater, the gold or the temple that makes the gold holy?
Jesus uses this question to rebuke the Pharisees because they treated the gold as if it were more important than the temple. Alternate translation: "The temple that has dedicated the gold to God is more important than the gold!"
the temple that makes the gold holy
"the temple that makes the gold belong to God alone"
Matthew 23:18
And
The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "And you also say"
it is nothing
"he does not have to do what he has sworn to do" or "he does not have to keep his oath"
the gift
This is an animal or grain that a person would bring to God by putting it on God's altar.
is bound to his oath
"is tied to his oath." Being required to do what one has said he would do in an oath is spoken of as if he is tied to the oath. Alternate translation: "must do what he promised to do"
Matthew 23:19
blind people
The Jewish leaders were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.
Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy?
Jesus uses this question to rebuke the Pharisees for treating the gift as if it were more important than the altar. Alternate translation: "The altar that makes the gift holy is greater than the gift!"
the altar that makes the gift holy
"the altar that makes the gift special to God"
Matthew 23:20
by everything on it
"by all the gifts that people have placed on it"
Matthew 23:21
the one who lives in it
God the Father
Matthew 23:22
him who sits on it
God the Father
Matthew 23:23
Woe to you ... hypocrites!
"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.
mint and dill and cumin
These are various leaves and seeds people used to make food taste good.
you have left undone
"you have not obeyed"
the weightier matters
"the more important matters"
But these you ought to have done
"You ought to have obeyed these more important laws"
and not to have left the other undone
This can be stated in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "and to make sure the other is done" or "and to make sure to do the other"
Matthew 23:24
You blind guides
Jesus uses this metaphor to describe the Pharisees. Jesus means that the Pharisees do not understand God's commands or how to please him. Therefore, they cannot teach others how to please God. See how you translated this metaphor in [Matthew 15:14]
you who strain out a gnat but swallow a camel
Being careful to follow the less important laws and ignoring the more important laws is as foolish as being careful not to swallow the smallest unclean animal but eating the meat of the largest unclean animal. Alternate translation: "you are as foolish as a person who strains out a gnat that falls into his drink but swallows a camel"
strain out a gnat
This means to pour a liquid through a cloth to remove a gnat from a drink.
gnat
a small flying insect
Matthew 23:25
Woe to you ... hypocrites!
"How terrible it will be for you ... hypocrites!" See how you translated this in Matthew 11:21.
For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence
This is a metaphor that means the scribes and Pharisees appear pure on the outside to others, but on the inside they are wicked.
they are full of robbery and self-indulgence
"they take what belongs to others, and they do almost everything to benefit themselves"
Matthew 23:26
You blind Pharisee
The Pharisees were spiritually blind. Although they thought of themselves as teachers, they were unable to understand God's truth.
Clean first the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may

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become clean also
This is a metaphor that means that if they would become pure in their inner being, then the result is that they would be pure on the outside as well.
Matthew 23:27
you are like whitewashed tombs ... unclean
This is a simile that means the scribes and Pharisees may appear to be pure on the outside, but they are wicked on the inside.
whitewashed tombs
"tombs that someone has painted white." The Jews would paint tombs white so that people would easily see them and avoid touching them. Touching a tomb would make a person ceremonially unclean.
Matthew 23:29
of the righteous
This nominal adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "of the righteous people"
Matthew 23:30
in the days of our fathers
"during the time of our forefathers"
we would not have been partners with them
"we would not have joined with them"
shedding the blood of
Here "blood" refers to life. To shed blood means to kill. Alternate translation: "killing" or "murdering"
Matthew 23:31
sons of those who murdered the prophets
Possible meanings are 1) the word "sons" is a metonym for "descendants." Alternate translation: "descendants of those who murdered the prophets" or 2) the word "sons" is a metaphor for people who are like others. Alternate translation: "just like those who murdered the prophets."
Matthew 23:32
You also fill up the measure of your fathers
Jesus uses this as a metaphor meaning the Pharisees will complete the wicked behavior that their forefathers started when they killed the prophets. Alternate translation: "You also finish the sins your ancestors began"
Matthew 23:33
You serpents, you offspring of vipers
Serpents are snakes, and vipers are poisonous snakes. They are dangerous and often symbols of evil. Alternate translation: "You who are as evil and dangerous as poisonous snakes"
offspring of vipers
Here "offspring" means "having the characteristic of." See how you translated a similar phrase in Matthew 3:7.
how will you escape the judgment of hell?
Jesus uses this question as a rebuke. Alternate translation: "there is no way for you to escape the judgment of hell!"
Matthew 23:34
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to rebuke the religious leaders because of their hypocrisy.
I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes
Sometimes the present tense is used to show that someone will do something very soon. Alternate translation: "I will send prophets, wise men, and scribes to you"
chase from city to city
You may need to make explicit that the purpose of chasing is to persecute. Alternate translation: "chase from city to city and persecute them" or "persecute them in city after city"
Matthew 23:35
upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on the earth ... blood ... blood
The phrase "upon you will come" is an idiom that means to receive punishment. To shed blood is a metonym meaning to kill people, so "righteous blood that has been shed on the earth" represents righteous people who have been killed. Alternate translation: "God will punish you for the murders of all the righteous people ... murder .. murder"
Abel ... Zechariah
Abel was the first righteous victim of murder, and Zechariah, who was murdered by Jews in the temple, was probably thought to be the last. These two men represent all the righteous people who have been murdered.
Zechariah
This Zechariah is unknown. He was not the father of John the Baptist.
whom you murdered
Jesus does not mean the people to whom he is speaking actually murdered Zechariah. He means their ancestors did.
Matthew 23:36
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
Matthew 23:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus mourns over the people of Jerusalem because they reject every messenger that God sends to them.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem
Jesus speaks to the people of Jerusalem as though they were the city itself.
those who are sent to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God sends to you"
your children
Jesus is speaking to Jerusalem as if it is a woman and the people are her children. Alternate translation: "your people" or "your inhabitants"
just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings
This is a simile that emphasizes Jesus's love for the people and how he wanted to take care of them.
hen
a female chicken. You can translate with any bird that protects her children under her wing.
Matthew 23:38
your house is left to you desolate
"God will leave your house, and it will be empty"
your house
Possible meanings are 1) "the city of Jerusalem" or 2) "the temple."
Matthew 23:39
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

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Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
Here "in the name" means "in the power" or "as a representative." See how you translated this in [Matthew 21:9]

24 [1]Jesus went out from the temple and was going on his way. His disciples came to him to point out to him the buildings of the temple.[2]But he answered and said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone will be left on another that will not be torn down."

[3]As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"
[4]Jesus answered and said to them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray.[5]For many will come in my name. They will say, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray.
[6]You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled, for these things must happen; but the end is not yet.[7]For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.[8]But all these things are only the beginning of birth pains.
[9]Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you. You will be hated by all the nations for my name's sake.[10]Then many will stumble, and betray one another and hate one another.[11]Many false prophets will rise up and lead many astray.
[12]Because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold.[13]But the one who endures to the end will be saved.
[14]This good news of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations. Then the end will come.

[15]"Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (let the reader understand),[16]"let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains,[17]let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house,[18]and let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak.
[19]But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days![20]Pray that your flight will not occur in the winter or on a Sabbath.[21]For there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be again.[22]Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.
[23]Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There is the Christ!' do not believe it.[24]For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.[25]See, I have told you ahead of time.
[26]Therefore, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out to the wilderness. Or, 'See, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.[27]For as the lightning shines out from the east and flashes all the way to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.[28]Wherever a dead animal is, there the vultures will gather.

[29]"But immediately after the tribulation of those days

the sun will be darkened,
the moon will not give its light,
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

[30]Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.[31]He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

[32]"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as the branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.[33]So also, when you see all these things, you should know that he is near, at the very gates.
[34]Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all of these things will have happened.[35]Heaven and the earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.
[36]But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
[37]As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.[38]For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark,[39]and they knew nothing until the flood came and took them all away—so will be the coming of the Son of Man.
[40]Then two men will be in a field—one will be taken, and one will be left.[41]Two women will be grinding with a mill—one will be taken, and one will be left.[42]Therefore be on your guard, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come.
[43]But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what time of night the thief was coming, he would have been on guard and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.[44]Therefore you must also be ready, for the Son of Man will come at an hour that you do not expect.

[45]"So who is the faithful and wise servant whom his master has set over his household in order to give them their food at

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the right time?[46]Blessed is that servant whom his master will find doing that when he comes.[47]Truly I say to you that the master will set him over all his possessions.
[48]But if an evil servant says in his heart, 'My master has been delayed,'[49]and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with drunkards,[50]then the master of that servant will come on a day that the servant does not expect and at an hour that he does not know.[51]His master will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

Matthew 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Jesus begins to prophesy about the future from that time until he returns as king of everything. (See: prophet)

Special concepts in this chapter

"The end of the age"

In this chapter, Jesus gives an answer to his disciples when they ask how they will know when he will come again.

The example of Noah

In the time of Noah, God sent a great flood to punish people for their sins. He warned them many times about this coming flood, but it actually began suddenly. In this chapter, Jesus draws a comparison between that flood and the last days. (See: sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Let"

The ULB uses this word to begin several commands of Jesus, such as "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (24:16), "let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house" (24:17), and "let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak" (24:18). There are many different ways to form a command. Translators must select the most natural ways in their own languages. Note that this word does not mean "permit."

Links:

Matthew 24:1 Notes

Matthew 24:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to describe events that will happen before he comes again during the end times.

from the temple

It is implied that Jesus was not in the temple itself. He was in the courtyard around the temple.

Matthew 24:2

Do you not see all these things?

Jesus uses a question to make the disciples think deeply about what he will tell them. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you something about all these buildings."

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

not one stone will be left on another that will not be torn down

It is implied that enemy soldiers will tear down the stones. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the enemy soldiers come, they will tear down every stone in these buildings"

Matthew 24:3

What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age

Here "your coming" refers to when Jesus will come in power, establishing God's reign on earth and bringing this age to an end. Alternate translation: "What will be the sign that you are about to come and that the world is about to end"

Matthew 24:4

Be careful that no one leads you astray

Here "leads you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "Be careful that no one deceives you"

Matthew 24:5

many will come in my name

The name here is the name of Messiah or Christ, not of Jesus and seems to be a metonym for the authority of the Christ. Alternate translation: "many will claim to have my authority as Christ"

will lead many astray

Here "leads you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "will deceive many people"

Matthew 24:6

See that you are not troubled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let these things trouble you"

Matthew 24:7

For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom

Both of these mean the same thing. Jesus is emphasizing that people everywhere will fight each other.

Matthew 24:8

the beginning of birth pains

This refers to the pains a woman feels before giving birth to a child. This metaphor means these wars, famines, and earthquakes are just the beginning of the events that will lead to the end of the age.

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Matthew 24:9
they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you
"people will give you over to the authorities, who will make you suffer and will kill you."
You will be hated by all the nations
Here "nations" is a metonym, referring to the people of nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People from every nation will hate you"
for my name's sake
Here "name" refers to the complete person. Alternate translation: "because you believe in me"
Matthew 24:11
will rise up
"Rise" here is an idiom for "become established." Alternate translation: "will come"
and lead many astray
Here "lead ... astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "and deceive many people"
Matthew 24:12
lawlessness will increase
The abstract noun "lawlessness" can be translated with the phrase "disobeying the law." Alternate translation: "disobeying the law will increase" or "people will disobey God's law more and more"
the love of many will grow cold
Possible meanings are 1) "many people will no longer love other people" or 2) "many people will no longer love God."
Matthew 24:13
the one who endures to the end will be saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will save the person who endures to the end"
the one who endures
"the person who stays faithful"
to the end
It is not clear whether the word "end" refers to when a person dies or when the persecution ends or the end of the age when God shows himself to be king. The main point is that they endure as long as necessary.
the end
"the end of the world" or "the end of the age"
Matthew 24:14
This good news of the kingdom will be preached
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People will tell the good news that God will rule"
all the nations
Here, "nations" stands for people. Alternate translation: "all people in all places"
Matthew 24:15
the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the shameful one who defiles the things of God, about whom Daniel the prophet wrote"
let the reader understand
This is not Jesus speaking. Matthew added this to alert the reader that Jesus was using words that they would need to think about and interpret.
Matthew 24:17
let him who is on the housetop
Housetops where Jesus lived were flat, and people could stand on them.
Matthew 24:19
in those days
"at that time"
Matthew 24:20
that your flight will not occur
"that you will not have to flee" or "that you will not have to run away"
the winter
"the cold season"
Matthew 24:22
Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would be saved
This can be stated in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "If God had not shortened the time of suffering, everyone would have died" or "Because God shortened those days, some people lived"
no flesh
"nobody" or "no one." Here, "flesh" is poetic way of referring to people.
those days will be shortened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will shorten the time of suffering"
Matthew 24:23
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.
do not believe it
"do not believe the false thing they have said to you"
Matthew 24:24
so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect
Here "lead astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. This can be translated as two sentences. Alternate translation: "so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect" or "so as to deceive people. If possible, they would even deceive the elect"
Matthew 24:26
if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do
This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "if someone tells you that the Christ is in the wilderness, do"
Or, 'See, he is in the inner rooms,'
This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Or, if someone tells you that the Christ is in the inner room,"
in the inner rooms
"in a secret room" or "in secret places"
Matthew 24:27
as the lightning shines ... so will be the coming
This means that the Son of Man will come very quickly and will be easy to see.
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.
Matthew 24:28
Wherever a dead animal is, there the vultures will gather
This is probably a proverb that the people of Jesus's time understood. Possible meanings are 1) when the Son of Man comes, everyone will see him and know that he has come,

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or 2) wherever spiritually dead people are, false prophets will be there to tell them lies.

vultures

birds that eat the bodies of dead or dying creatures

Matthew 24:29

immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun

"as soon as the tribulation of those days has finished, the sun"

the tribulation of those days

"that time of suffering"

the sun will be darkened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make the sun dark"

the powers of the heavens will be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will shake things in the sky and above the sky"

Matthew 24:30

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

all the tribes

Here "tribes" refers to people. Alternate translation: "all the people of the tribes" or "all the people"

Matthew 24:31

He will send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet

"He will have a trumpet sounded and send his angels" or "He will have an angel blow a trumpet, and he will send his angels"

He ... his

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

they will gather

"his angels will gather"

his elect

These are the people whom the Son of Man has chosen.

from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other

Both of these mean the same thing. They are idioms that mean "from everywhere." Alternate translation: "from all over the world"

Matthew 24:33

he is near, at the very gates

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person and using the imagery of a king or important official getting close to the gates of a walled city. This metaphor means the time for Jesus to come is soon. Alternate translation: "I am near and will soon appear"

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

this generation will not pass away

Here "pass away" is a polite way of saying "die." Alternate translation: "the people of this generation will not all die"

this generation

Possible interpretations are 1) "all people alive today," referring to the people alive when Jesus was speaking, or 2) "all people alive when these things I have just told you about happen." Try to translate so that both interpretations are possible.

until all of these things will have happened

"until God causes all these things to happen"

Matthew 24:35

Heaven and the earth will pass away

The words "heaven" and "earth" are a synecdoche that includes everything that God has created, especially those things that seem permanent. Jesus is saying that his word, unlike these things, is permanent. Alternate translation: "Even heaven and the earth will pass away"

my words will never pass away

Here "words" refers to what Jesus has said. Alternate translation: "what I say will always be true"

Matthew 24:36

that day and hour

Here "day" and "hour" refer to the exact time that the Son of Man will return.

nor the Son

"not even the Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Father

This is an important title for God.

Matthew 24:37

As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man

"At the time when the Son of Man comes, it will be like the time of Noah."

so will be the coming of the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "so will it be when I, the Son of Man, come"

Matthew 24:39

away—so will be the coming of the Son of Man

This can be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "away. This is how it will be when the Son of Man comes"

Matthew 24:40

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell his disciples to be ready for his return.

Then

This is when the Son of Man comes.

one will be taken, and one will be left

Possible meanings are 1) the Son of Man will take one away to heaven and will leave the other on earth for punishment or 2) the angels will take one away for punishment and leave the other for blessing.

Matthew 24:42

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true"

be on your guard

"pay attention"

Matthew 24:43

that if the master of the house ... broken into

Jesus uses a parable of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

the thief

Jesus is saying he will come when people are not expecting him, not that he will come to steal.

he would have been on guard

"he would have guarded his house"

would not have allowed his house to be broken into

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"would not have allowed anyone to get into his house to steal things"

Matthew 24:44

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 24:45

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues his proverb of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

So who is the faithful and wise servant whom his master ... time?

Jesus uses this question to make his disciples think. Alternate translation: "So who is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master ... time." or "Be like the faithful and wise servant, whom his master ... time."

give them their food

"give the people in the master's home their food"

Matthew 24:47

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 24:48

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes his proverb of a master and servants to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

says in his heart

Here "heart" refers to the mind. Alternate translation: "thinks in his mind"

My master has been delayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My master is slow to return" or "My master will not return for a long time"

Matthew 24:50

on a day that the servant does not expect and at an hour that he does not know

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize that the master will come when the servant is not expecting him.

Matthew 24:51

cut him in pieces

This is an idiom that means to make the person suffer terribly.

assign him a place with the hypocrites

"put him with the hypocrites" or "send him to the place where hypocrites are sent"

there will be weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" here is a symbolic act, representing extreme suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

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25 [1]"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.[2]Five of them were foolish and five were wise.[3]For when the foolish virgins took their lamps, they did not take any oil with them.[4]But the wise virgins took containers of oil along with their lamps.
[5]Now while the bridegroom was delayed, they all got sleepy and slept.[6]But at midnight there was a cry, 'Look, the bridegroom! Go out and meet him.'

[7]Then all those virgins rose up and trimmed their lamps.[8]The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.'
[9]"But the wise answered and said, 'Since there will not be enough for us and you, go instead to those who sell and buy some for yourselves.'
[10]While they went away to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.
[11]"Afterward the other virgins also came and said, 'Master, master, open for us.'
[12]"But he answered and said, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'[13]Watch therefore, for you do not know the day or the hour.

[14]"For it is like when a man was about to go into another country. He called his own servants and entrusted his possessions to them.[15]To one of them he gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to yet another he gave one talent. Each one received an amount according to his own ability, and that man went on his journey.[16]The one who received the five talents went at once and worked with them and gained another five talents.
[17]In the same way, the one who had received two talents gained another two.[18]But the servant who had received one talent went away, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.
[19]Now after a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them.[20]The servant who had received the five talents came and brought another five talents. He said, 'Master, you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five talents more.'
[21]"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things. I will put you in charge over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.'

[22]"The servant who had received two talents came and said, 'Master, you gave me two talents. See, I have gained two more talents.'
[23]"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful over a few things. I will put you in charge over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.'

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[24]"Then the servant who had received one talent came and said, 'Master, I know that you are a hard man. You reap where you did not sow, and you harvest where you did not scatter.[25]I was afraid, so I went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have here what belongs to you.'

[26]"But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sowed and harvest where I have not scattered.[27]Therefore you should have given my money to the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.
[28]Therefore take away the talent from him and give it to the servant who has ten talents.[29]For to everyone who possesses more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from anyone who does not possess anything, even what he does have will be taken away.[30]Throw the worthless servant out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.'

[31]"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.[32]Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate the people one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.[33]He will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.
[34]Then the King will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.[35]For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you took me in;[36]I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you cared for me; I was in prison and you came to me.'

[37]"Then the righteous will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you a drink?[38]When did we see you a stranger and take you in? Or naked and clothe you?[39]When did we see you sick or in prison and come to you?'
[40]"Then the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, what you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.'
[41]Then he will say to those on his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire that has been prepared for the devil and his angels,[42]because I was hungry, but you did not give me food; I was thirsty, but you did not give me a drink;[43]I was a stranger, but you did not take me in; naked, but you did not clothe me; sick and in prison, but you did not care for me.'

[44]"Then they will also answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not serve you?'
[45]"Then he will answer them and say, 'Truly I say to you, what you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'[46]These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the teaching of the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

The parable of the ten virgins

Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13) to tell his followers to be ready for him to return. His hearers could understand the parable because they knew Jewish wedding customs.
When the Jews arranged marriages, they would plan for the wedding to take place weeks or months later. At the proper time, the young man would go to his bride's house, where she would be waiting for him. The wedding ceremony would take place, and then the man and his bride would travel to his home, where there would be a feast.

Links:

Matthew 25:1 Notes

Matthew 25:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable about wise and foolish virgins to illustrate that his disciples should be prepared for his return.

the kingdom of heaven will be like

Here "kingdom of heaven" refers to God's rule as king. The phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used only in Matthew. If possible, use "heaven" in your translation. See how you translated this in [Matthew 13:24]

lamps

These could have been 1) lamps or 2) torches made by putting cloth around the end of a stick and wetting the cloth with oil.

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Matthew 25:2
Five of them
"Five of the virgins"
Matthew 25:3
did not take any oil with them
"had with them only the oil in their lamps"
Matthew 25:5
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
while the bridegroom was delayed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "while the bridegroom was taking a long time to arrive"
they all got sleepy
"all ten virgins got sleepy"
Matthew 25:6
there was a cry
"someone shouted"
Matthew 25:7
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable.
trimmed their lamps
"adjusted their lamps so they would burn brightly"
Matthew 25:8
The foolish said to the wise
These nominal adjectives can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "The foolish virgins said to the wise virgins"
our lamps are going out
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the fire in our lamps is about to burn out"
Matthew 25:10
they went away
"the five foolish virgins went away"
to buy
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to buy more oil"
those who were ready
These are the virgins who had extra oil.
the door was shut
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the servants shut the door"
Matthew 25:11
open for us
This implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "open the door for us so we can come inside"
Matthew 25:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus concludes the parable about the ten virgins.
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what the master says next.
I do not know you
"I do not know who you are." This is the end of the parable.
Matthew 25:13
you do not know the day or the hour
Here "day" and "hour" refer to an exact time. The implied information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "you do not know the exact time when the Son of Man will return"
Matthew 25:14
Connecting Statement:
Jesus tells a parable about faithful and unfaithful servants to illustrate that his disciples should remain faithful during his absence and be prepared for his return.
it is like
The word "it" here refers to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:24).
was about to go
"was ready to go" or "was to go soon"
entrusted his possessions to them
"put them in charge of his possessions"
his possessions
"what he owned"
Matthew 25:15
five talents
"five talents of gold." Avoid translating this into modern money. A "talent" of gold was worth twenty years' wages. The parable is contrasting the relative amounts of five, two, and one, as well as the large amount of wealth involved. Alternate translation: "five bags of gold" or "five bags of gold, each worth 20 years' wages"
to another he gave two ... gave one talent
The word "talents" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "to another he gave two talents of gold ... gave one talent of gold" or "to another he gave two bags of gold ... gave one bag of gold"
according to his own ability
The implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "according to each servant's skill in managing wealth"
Matthew 25:16
worked with them
"invested the talents" or "used them in business" or "traded with them"
gained another five talents
"out of his investments he earned another five talents"
Matthew 25:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling a parable about the servants and the talents.
gained another two
"earned another two talents"
Matthew 25:19
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
Matthew 25:20
I have gained five talents more
"I have earned five more talents"
talents
A "talent" was worth twenty years' wages. Avoid translating this into modern money. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:15]
Matthew 25:21
Well done
"You have done well" or "You have done right." Your culture

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might have an expression that a master (or someone in authority) would use to show that he approves of what his servant (or someone under him) has done.

Enter into the joy of your master

The phrase "Enter into the joy" is an idiom. Also, the master is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Come and be happy with me"

Matthew 25:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.

I have gained two more talents

"I have earned two more talents"

Matthew 25:23

Well done

"You have done well" or "You have done right." Your culture might have an expression that a master (or someone in authority) would use to show that he approves of what his servant (or someone under him) has done. See how you translated this in Matthew 25:21.

Enter into the joy of your master

The phrase "Enter into the joy" is an idiom. Also, the master is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Come and be happy with me" See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:21]

Matthew 25:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling the parable about the servants and the talents.

a hard man

Possible meanings are 1) a man who demands much from other people or 2) a man who does not treat others well.

You reap where you did not sow, and you harvest where you did not scatter

The words "reap where you did not sow" and "harvest where you did not scatter" mean the same thing. They refer to a farmer who gathers crops that other people have planted. The servant uses this metaphor to accuse the master of taking what rightfully belongs to others.

scatter

"scatter seed." This refers to sowing seed by gently throwing handfuls of it onto the soil.

Matthew 25:25

See, you have here what belongs to you

"Look, here is what is yours"

Matthew 25:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues telling a parable about the servants and the talents.

You wicked and lazy servant, you knew

"You are a wicked servant who does not want to work. You knew"

I reap where I have not sowed and harvest where I have not scattered

The words "reap where I have not sowed" and "harvest where I have not scattered" mean the same thing. They refer to a farmer who gathers crops that people who work for him have planted. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:24]

Matthew 25:27

received back my own

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "received back my own money"

interest

payment from the banker for the temporary use of the master's money

Matthew 25:28

Connecting Statement:

Jesus concludes the parable about the servants and the talents.

take away the talent

The master is speaking to other servants.

talent

A "talent" was worth twenty years' wages. Avoid translating this into modern money. See how you translated this in [Matthew 25:15]

Matthew 25:29

who possesses

It is implied that the person who possesses something also uses it wisely. Alternate translation: "who uses well what he has"

he will have an abundance

"he will have much more"

from anyone who does not possess anything

It is implied that the person does possess something but he does not use it wisely. Alternate translation: "from anyone does not use well what he has"

will be taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take away" or "I will take away"

Matthew 25:30

the outer darkness

Here "outer darkness" is a metonym for the place where God sends those who reject them. This is a place that is completely separated from God forever. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

weeping and grinding of teeth

"Grinding of teeth" is symbolic action, representing extreme sadness and suffering. See how you translated this in [Matthew 8:12]

Matthew 25:31

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell his disciples how he will judge people when he returns at the end time.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 25:32

Before him will be gathered all the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will gather all the nations before him"

Before him

"In front of him"

all the nations

Here "nations" refers to people. Alternate translation: "all people from every country"

as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats

Jesus uses a simile to describe how he will separate the people.

Matthew 25:33

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He will place the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left
This is a metaphor that means the Son of Man will separate all people. He will put the righteous people at his right side, and he will put the sinners at his left side.
Matthew 25:34
the King ... his right hand
Here, "the King" is another title for the Son of Man. Jesus was referring to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the King, ... my right hand"
Come, you who have been blessed by my Father
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Come, you whom my Father has blessed"
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
inherit the kingdom prepared for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "inherit the kingdom that God has made ready for you"
inherit the kingdom prepared for you
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "receive the blessings of God's rule that he has planned to give you"
from the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since he first created the world"
Matthew 25:37
the righteous
This can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"
Or thirsty
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Or when did we see you thirsty"
Matthew 25:38
Or naked
This is the end of a series of questions that begins in verse 37. The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Or when did we see you naked"
Matthew 25:40
the King
This is another title for the Son of Man. Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.
say to them
"say to those at his right hand"
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This emphasizes what the King says next.
one of the least
"one of the least important"
these brothers of mine
Here "brothers" refers to anyone, male or female, who obeys the King. Alternate translation: "my brothers and sisters here" or "these who are like my brothers and sisters"
you did it for me
"I consider that you did it for me"
Matthew 25:41
Then he will
"Then the King will." Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.
you cursed
"you people whom God has cursed"
the eternal fire that has been prepared
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the eternal fire that God has prepared"
his angels
the devil's helpers
Matthew 25:43
naked, but you did not clothe me
The words "I was" preceding "naked" are understood. Alternate translation: "I was naked, but you did not give me clothes"
sick and in prison
The words "I was" preceding "sick" are understood. Alternate translation: "I was sick and in prison"
Matthew 25:44
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling his disciples how he will judge people when he returns at the end time.
they will also answer
"those on his left will also answer"
Matthew 25:45
for one of the least of these
"for any of the least important ones of my people"
you did not do for me
"I consider that you did not do it for me" or "I was really the one whom you did not help"
Matthew 25:46
General Information:
This is the end of the part of the story that began in Matthew 23:1, where Jesus teaches about salvation and the final judgment.
These will go away into eternal punishment
"The King will send these to a place where they will receive punishment that never ends"
but the righteous into eternal life
The understood information can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but the King will send the righteous to the place where they will live forever with God"
the righteous
This nominative adjective can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "the righteous people"

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26 [1]It came about that when Jesus had finished all these words, he said to his disciples,[2]"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified."

[3]Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the palace of the high priest, who was named Caiaphas.[4]They plotted together to arrest Jesus stealthily and kill him.[5]For they were saying, "Not during the festival, so that a riot does not arise among the people."

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[6]Now while Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[7]as he was reclining at table, a woman came to him having an alabaster jar of very expensive ointment, and she poured it upon his head.[8]But when his disciples saw it, they became angry and said, "What is the reason for this waste?[9]This could have been sold for a large amount and given to the poor."

[10]But Jesus, knowing this, said to them, "Why are you causing trouble for this woman? For she has done a beautiful thing for me.[11]You always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.
[12]For when she poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.[13]Truly I say to you, wherever this good news is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

[14]Then one of the twelve, who was named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests[15]and said, "What are you willing to give me to turn him over to you?" They weighed out thirty pieces of silver for him.[16]From that moment he sought an opportunity to turn him over to them.

[17]Now on the first day of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover meal?"
[18]He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."'"[19]The disciples did as Jesus directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

[20]When evening came, he sat down to eat with the twelve disciples.[21]As they were eating, he said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray me."
[22]They were very sorrowful, and each one began to ask him, "Surely not I, Lord?"

[23]He answered, "The one who dips his hand with me in the dish is the one who will betray me.[24]The Son of Man will go, just as it is written about him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born."
[25]Judas, who would betray him said, "Is it I, Rabbi?"He said to him, "You have said it yourself."

[26]As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke it. He gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat. This is my body."
[27]He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them and said, "Drink it, all of you.[28]For this is my blood of the covenant that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.[29]But I say to you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

[30]When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.[31]Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will fall away tonight because of me, for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd
and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'
[32]But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

[33]But Peter said to him, "Even if all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."
[34]Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times."
[35]Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you." All the other disciples said the same thing.

[36]Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane and said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."[37]He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with him and began to become sorrowful and troubled.[38]Then he said to them, "My soul is deeply sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch with me."
[39]He went a little farther, fell on his face, and prayed. He said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will."[40]He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "What, could you not watch with me for one hour?[41]Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
[42]He went away a second time and prayed. He said, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, your will be done."[43]He came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.[44]So leaving them again, he went away and prayed a third time, saying the same words.
[45]Then Jesus came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Look, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.[46]Arise, let us go. Look, the one who is betraying me is near."

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[47]While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came. A large crowd came with him from the chief priests and elders of the people. They came with swords and clubs.[48]Now the man who was going to betray Jesus had given them a signal, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him."
[49]Immediately he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and he kissed him.
[50]Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come to do." Then they came, laid hands on Jesus, and seized him.
[51]Behold, one of those who was with Jesus stretched out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.[52]Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place, for all those who take up the sword will perish by the sword.[53]Do you think that I could not call upon my Father, and he would send me more than twelve legions of angels?[54]But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, that this must happen?"
[55]At that time Jesus said to the crowd, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to seize me like a robber? Every day I sat teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest me.[56]But all this has happened so that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples abandoned him and fled.

[57]Those who had seized Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered together.[58]But Peter followed him from a distance to the courtyard of the high priest. He went inside and sat down with the officers to see the outcome.
[59]Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death.[60]They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later two came forward[61]and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

[62]The high priest stood up and said to him, "Do you have no answer? What is it that they are testifying against you?"[63]But Jesus was silent. The high priest said to him, "I command you by the living God, tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God."
[64]Jesus replied to him, "You have said it yourself. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

[65]Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we still need witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.[66]What do you think?"They answered and said, "He is deserving of death."
[67]Then they spit in his face and beat him with their fists, while some slapped him[68]and said, "Prophesy to us, you Christ. Who is it that struck you?"

[69]Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him and said, "You were also with Jesus of Galilee."
[70]But he denied it in front of them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about."

[71]When he went out to the gateway, another servant girl saw him and said to those there, "This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth."
[72]He again denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man!"

[73]After a little while those who were standing by came and said to Peter, "Surely you are also one of them, for the way you speak gives you away."
[74]Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man," and immediately a rooster crowed.
[75]Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said, "Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times." Then he went outside and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 26:31, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sheep

Sheep are a common image used in Scripture to refer to the people of Israel. In Matthew 26:31, however, Jesus used the words "the sheep" to refer to his disciples and to say that they would run away when he was arrested.

Passover

The Passover festival was when the Jews would celebrate the day God killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians but "passed over" the Israelites and let them live.

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The eating of the body and blood

Matthew 26:26-28 describes Jesus's last meal with his followers. At this time, Jesus told them that what they were eating and drinking were his body and his blood. Nearly all Christian churches celebrate "the Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist", or "Holy Communion" to remember this meal.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Judas's kiss for Jesus

Matthew 26:49 describes how Judas kissed Jesus so the soldiers would know whom to arrest. The Jews would kiss each other when they greeted each other.

"I am able to destroy the temple of God"

Two men accused Jesus of saying that he could destroy the temple in Jerusalem and then rebuild it "in three days" (Matthew 26:61). They were accusing him of insulting God by claiming that God had given him the authority to destroy the temple and the power to rebuild it. What Jesus actually said was that if the Jewish authorities were to destroy this temple, he would certainly raise it up in three days (John 2:19).

Links:

Matthew 26:1 Notes

Matthew 26:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story that tells of Jesus's crucifixion, death, and resurrection. Here he tells his disciples how he will suffer and die.

It came about that when

"After" or "Then, after." This phrase shifts the story from Jesus's teachings to what happened next.

all these words

This refers to all that Jesus taught starting in Matthew 24:3.

Matthew 26:2

the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some men will give the Son of Man to other people who will crucify him"

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

Matthew 26:3

Connecting Statement:

These verses give background information about the Jewish leaders' plot to arrest and kill Jesus.

were gathered together

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "came together" or "met together"

Matthew 26:4

Jesus stealthily

"Jesus secretly"

Matthew 26:5

Not during the festival

What the leaders did not want to do during the festival can be made clearer. Alternate translation: "We should not kill Jesus during the festival"

the festival

This is the yearly Passover festival.

Matthew 26:6

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of a woman pouring expensive oil on Jesus before his death.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

Simon the leper

It is implied that this is a man whom Jesus had healed from leprosy.

Matthew 26:7

he was reclining

"Jesus was lying on his side." You can use your language's word for the position people usually are in when they eat.

a woman came to him

"a woman came to Jesus"

alabaster jar

This is a costly container made of soft stone.

ointment

oil that has a pleasing smell

she poured it upon his head

The woman did this to honor Jesus.

Matthew 26:8

What is the reason for this waste?

The disciples ask this question out of their anger over the woman's actions. Alternate translation: "This woman has done a bad thing by wasting this ointment!"

Matthew 26:9

This could have been sold for a large amount and given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "She could have sold this for a large amount of money and given the money"

to the poor

Here "the poor" can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "to poor people"

Matthew 26:10

Why are you causing trouble for this woman?

Jesus asks this question as a rebuke of his disciples. Alternate translation: "You should not be causing trouble for this woman!"

Why are you

All occurrences of "you" are plural and refer to the disciples.

Matthew 26:11

the poor

This can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Matthew 26:12

ointment

This is oil that has a pleasing smell. See how you translated this in Matthew 26:7.

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Matthew 26:13

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

wherever this good news is preached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "wherever people preach this good news"

what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her" or "people will remember what this woman has done and will tell others about her"

Matthew 26:14

Connecting Statement:

Judas Iscariot agrees to help the Jewish leaders arrest and kill Jesus.

Matthew 26:15

to turn him over to you

"to bring Jesus to you"

thirty pieces of silver

Since these words are the same as those in an Old Testament prophecy, keep this form instead of changing it to modern money.

thirty pieces

"30 pieces"

Matthew 26:16

to turn him over to them

"to enable them to seize him"

Matthew 26:17

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus celebrating the Passover with his disciples.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

Matthew 26:18

He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples."'"

This has quotations within quotations. You can state some of the direct quotations as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and tell him that the Teacher says to him, 'My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" or "He told his disciples to go into the city to a certain man and say to him that the Teacher's time is at hand and he will keep the Passover with his disciples at that man's house."

My time

Possible meanings are 1) "The time that I told you about" or 2) "The time God has set for me."

is at hand

Possible meanings are 1) "is near" or 2) "has come."

keep the Passover

"eat the Passover meal" or "celebrate the Passover by eating the special meal"

Matthew 26:20

he sat down to eat

Use the word for the position people in your culture usually are in when they eat.

Matthew 26:21

Truly I say to you

"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 26:22

Surely not I, Lord?

"I am surely not the one, am I, Lord?" Possible meanings are 1) this is a rhetorical question since the apostles were sure they would not betray Jesus. Alternate translation: "Lord, I would never betray you!" or 2) this was a sincere question since Jesus's statement probably troubled and confused them.

Matthew 26:24

The Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.

will go

Here "go" is a polite way to refer to dying. Alternate translation: "will go to his death" or "will die"

just as it is written about him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as the prophets wrote about him in the scriptures"

that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man who betrays the Son of Man"

Matthew 26:25

Is it I, Rabbi?

"Rabbi, am I the one who will betray you?" Judas may be using a rhetorical question to deny that he is the one who will betray Jesus. Alternate translation: "Rabbi, surely I am not the one who will betray you."

You have said it yourself

This is an idiom that Jesus uses to mean "yes" without being completely clear about what he means. Alternate translation: "You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"

Matthew 26:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper as he celebrates the Passover with his disciples.

took ... blessed ... broke

See how you translated these words in Matthew 14:19.

Matthew 26:27

He took

Translate "took" as you did in Matthew 14:19.

a cup

Here "cup" refers to the cup and the wine in it.

gave it to them

"gave it to the disciples"

Drink it

"Drink the wine from this cup"

Matthew 26:28

For this is my blood

"For this wine is my blood"

blood of the covenant

"blood that shows that the covenant is in effect" or "blood that makes the covenant possible"

is poured out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will soon flow out of my body" or "will flow out of my wounds when I die"

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Matthew 26:29
I say to you
This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
fruit of the vine
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "wine"
in my Father's kingdom
Here "kingdom" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "when my Father establishes his rule on earth"
my Father's
Father is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 26:30
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach his disciples as they walk to the Mount of Olives.
hymn
a song of praise to God
Matthew 26:31
General Information:
Jesus quotes the prophet Zechariah to show that in order to fulfill prophecy, all of his disciples will leave him.
fall away
"leave me"
for it is written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the prophet Zechariah wrote long ago in the scriptures"
I will strike
Here "I" refers to God. It is implied that God will cause or allow people to harm and kill Jesus.
the shepherd ... sheep of the flock
These are metaphors that refer to Jesus and the disciples.
the sheep of the flock will be scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will scatter all the sheep of the flock" or "the sheep of the flock will run off in all directions"
Matthew 26:32
after I am raised up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after God raises me up" or "after God brings me back to life"
Matthew 26:33
fall away
See how you translated this in Matthew 26:31.
Matthew 26:34
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
before the rooster crows
Roosters often crow about the time the sun comes up, so the hearers might have understood these words as a metonym for the sun coming up. However, the actual crowing of a rooster is an important part of the story later on, so keep the word "rooster" in the translation.
rooster
a male chicken, a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up
crows
This is the common English word for what a rooster does to make his loud call.
you will deny me three times
"you will say three times that you are not my follower"
Matthew 26:36
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus praying in Gethsemane.
Matthew 26:37
began to become sorrowful
"he became very sad"
Matthew 26:38
My soul is deeply sorrowful
Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "I am very sad"
even to death
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "and I feel as if I could even die"
Matthew 26:39
fell on his face
He purposely lay face down on the ground to pray.
My Father
This is an important title for God that shows the relationship between God and Jesus.
let this cup pass from me
Jesus speaks of the work that he must do, including dying on the cross, as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink from a cup. The word "cup" is an important word in the New Testament, so try to use an equivalent for that in your translation.
this cup
Here "cup" is a metonym that stands for the cup and the contents within it. The contents in the cup are a metaphor for the suffering that Jesus will have to endure. Jesus is asking the Father if it is possible for him not to have to experience the death and suffering that Jesus knows will soon happen.
Yet, not as I will, but as you will
This can be expressed as a full sentence. Alternate translation: "But do not do what I want; instead, do what you want"
Matthew 26:40
he said to Peter, "What, could you not watch
Jesus is speaking to Peter, but the "you" is plural, referring to Peter, James, and John.
What, could you not watch with me for one hour?
Jesus uses a question to scold Peter, James, and John. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you could not stay awake with me for one hour!"
Matthew 26:41
you do not enter into temptation
Here the abstract noun "temptation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "no one tempts you to sin"
The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak
Here "spirit" is a metonym that stands for a person's desires to do good. "Flesh" stands for the needs and desires of a person's body. Jesus means that the disciples may have the desire to do what God wants, but as humans they are weak and often fail.
Matthew 26:42
He went away

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"Jesus went away"
a second time
The first time is described in [Matthew 26:39]
My Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
if this cannot pass away unless I drink it
"if the only way this can pass away is if I drink it." Jesus speaks of the work that he must do as if it were a bitter liquid that God has commanded him to drink.
if this
Here "this" refers to the cup and the contents within it, a metaphor for suffering, as in Matthew 26:39).
unless I drink it
"unless I drink from it" or "unless I drink from this cup of suffering." Here "it" refers to the cup and the contents within it, a metaphor for suffering, as in Matthew 26:39).
your will be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "may what you want happen" or "do what you want to do"
Matthew 26:43
their eyes were heavy
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "they were very sleepy"
Matthew 26:44
third time
The first time is described in [Matthew 26:39]
Matthew 26:45
Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?
Jesus uses a question to scold the disciples for going to sleep. Alternate translation: "I am disappointed that you are still sleeping and resting!"
the hour is at hand
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "the time has come"
the Son of Man is being betrayed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone is betraying the Son of Man"
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.
betrayed into the hands of sinners
Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "betrayed into the power of sinners" or "betrayed so that sinners will have power over him"
Look
"Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Matthew 26:47
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of when Judas betrayed Jesus and the religious leaders arrested him.
While he was still speaking
"While Jesus was still speaking"
clubs
large pieces of hard wood for hitting people
Matthew 26:48
Now ... Seize him
Here "Now" is used to mark a pause in the main story. Here Matthew tells background information about Judas and the signal he planned to use to betray Jesus.
saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him."
This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "saying that the one he kissed was the one they should seize."
kiss
This was a respectful way to greet one's teacher.
Matthew 26:49
he came up to Jesus
"Judas came up to Jesus"
kissed him
"met him with a kiss." Good friends would kiss each other on the cheek, but a disciple would probably kiss his master on the hand to show respect. No one knows for sure how Judas kissed Jesus.
Matthew 26:50
Then they came
Here "they" refers to the people with clubs and swords that came with Judas and the religious leaders.
laid hands on Jesus, and seized him
"grabbed Jesus, and arrested him"
Matthew 26:51
Behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
Matthew 26:52
who take up the sword
The word "sword" is a metonym for the act of killing someone with a sword. The implied information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "who pick up a sword to kill others" or "who want to kill other people"
sword will perish by the sword
"sword will die by means of the sword" or "sword—it is with the sword that someone will kill them"
Matthew 26:53
Do you think that I could not call ... angels?
Jesus uses a question to remind the person with the sword that Jesus could stop those who are arresting him. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that I could call ... angels."
Do you think
Here "you" is singular and refers to the person with the sword.
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
more than twelve legions of angels
The word "legion" is a military term that refers to a group of about 6,000 soldiers. Jesus means God would send enough angels to easily stop those who are arresting Jesus. The exact number of angels is not important. Alternate translation: "more than 12 really large groups of angels"
Matthew 26:54
But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, that this must happen?
Jesus uses a question to explain why he is letting these people arrest him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if I did that, I would not be able to fulfill what God said in the scriptures must happen"
Matthew 26:55
Have you come out with swords and clubs to seize me like a robber?
Jesus is using this question to point out the wrong actions of those arresting him. Alternate translation: "You know that I

am not a robber, so it is wrong for you to come out to me bringing swords and clubs"

clubs

large pieces of hard wood for hitting people

in the temple

It is implied that Jesus was not in the actual temple. He was in the courtyard around the temple.

Matthew 26:56

the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I would fulfill all that the prophets wrote in the scriptures"

abandoned him

"left him." If your language has a word that means they left him when they should have stayed with him, use it here.

Matthew 26:57

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's trial before the council of Jewish religious leaders.

Matthew 26:58

Peter followed him

"Peter followed Jesus"

courtyard of the high priest

an open area near the high priest's house

He went inside

"Peter went inside"

the officers

These were probably the servants of the "scribes and elders" (Matthew 26:57).

Matthew 26:59

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

so that they

Here "they" refers to the chief priests and the members of the council.

might put him to death

"might have a reason to execute him"

Matthew 26:60

two came forward

"two men came forward" or "two witnesses came forward"

Matthew 26:61

This man said, 'I am able to destroy ... days.'

If your language does not allow quotes within quotes you can rewrite it as a single quote. Alternate translation: "This man said that he is able to destroy ... days."

This man said

"This man Jesus said"

in three days

"within three days," before the sun goes down three times, not "after three days," after the sun has gone down the third time

Matthew 26:62

What is it that they are testifying against you?

The chief priest is not asking Jesus for information about what the witnesses said. He is asking Jesus to prove what the witnesses said is wrong. Alternate translation: "What is your response to what the witnesses are testifying against you?"

Matthew 26:63

Son of God

This is an important title that describes the relationship between the Christ and God.

the living God

Here "living" contrasts the God of Israel to all the false gods and idols that people worshiped. Only the God of Israel is alive and has power to act. See how you translated this in Matthew 16:16.

Matthew 26:64

You have said it yourself

This is an idiom that Jesus uses to mean "yes" without being completely clear about what he means. Alternate translation: "You are saying it" or "You are admitting it"

But I tell you, from now on you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus is speaking to the high priest and to the other persons there.

from now on you will see the Son of Man

Possible meanings are 1) the phrase "from now on" is an idiom that means they will see the Son of Man in his power at some time in the future or 2) the phrase "from now on" means that from the time of Jesus's trial and onward, Jesus is showing himself to be the Messiah who is powerful and victorious.

the Son of Man

Jesus is speaking about himself in third person.

sitting at the right hand of Power

Here "Power" is metonym that represents God. To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "sitting in the place of honor beside the all-powerful God"

coming on the clouds of heaven

"riding to earth on the clouds of heaven"

Matthew 26:65

the high priest tore his clothes

Tearing clothing was a sign of anger and sadness.

He has spoken blasphemy

The reason the high priest called Jesus's statement blasphemy is probably that he understood Jesus's words in [Matthew 26:64]

Why do we still need witnesses?

The high priest uses this question to emphasize that he and the members of the council do not need to hear from any more witnesses. Alternate translation: "We do not need to hear from any more witnesses!"

now you have heard

Here "you" is plural and refers to the members of the council.

Matthew 26:67

Then they

Possible meanings are 1) "Then some of the men" or 2) "Then the soldiers."

spit in his face

This was done as an insult.

slapped him

hit him in the face with the palms of their hands

Matthew 26:68

Prophesy to us

Here "Prophesy to us" means to tell by means of God's power. It does not mean to tell what will happen in the future.

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you Christ
Those hitting Jesus do not really think he is the Christ. They call him this to mock him.
Matthew 26:69
General Information:
These events happen at the same time as Jesus's trial before the religious leaders.
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of how Peter denies three times that he knows Jesus, as Jesus said he would do.
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
Matthew 26:70
I do not know what you are talking about
Peter was able to understand what the servant girl was saying. He used these words to deny that he had been with Jesus.
Matthew 26:71
When he went out
"When Peter went out"
gateway
opening in the wall around a courtyard
said to those there
"said to the people who were sitting there"
Matthew 26:72
He again denied it with an oath
"He denied it again by swearing"
Matthew 26:73
one of them
"one of those who were with Jesus"
one of them, for the way you speak gives you away
This can be translated with a new sentence. "one of them. We can tell you are from Galilee because you speak like a Galilean"
Matthew 26:74
to curse
"to call down a curse on himself"
rooster crowed
A rooster is a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up. A rooster that has called out is said to have "crowed." See how you translated this in Matthew 26:34.
Matthew 26:75
Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said, "Before the rooster crows you will deny me three times."
This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Peter remembered that Jesus told him that before the rooster crowed, he would deny Jesus three times."

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27 [1]Now when morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put him to death.
[2]They bound him, led him away, and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

[3]Then when Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he repented and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,[4]and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood."But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself."
[5]Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went out and hanged himself.
[6]The chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put this into the treasury because it is the price of blood."[7]They discussed the matter together, and they bought with the money the potter's field in which to bury strangers.
[8]For this reason that field has been called, "The Field of Blood" to this day.
[9]Then that which had been spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying, "They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price set on him by the sons of Israel,[10]and they gave it for the potter's field, as the Lord had directed me."

[11]Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"Jesus answered him, "You say so."

[12]But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.[13]Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they accuse you of?"[14]But he did not answer even one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed.
[15]Now at the festival it was the custom of the governor to set free one prisoner chosen by the crowd.[16]At that time they had a notorious prisoner named Jesus Barabbas.[1]
[17]So when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Who do you want me to set free for you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?"[18]He knew that they had handed Jesus over to him because of envy.
[19]While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him and said, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man. For I have suffered much today because of a dream I had about him."

[20]Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.[21]The governor asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to set free for you?"They said, "Barabbas."

[22]Pilate said to them, "What should I do with Jesus who is called Christ?"They all answered, "Crucify him."

[23]Then he said, "Why, what evil has he done?"But they cried out even louder, "Crucify him."

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[24]So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but instead a riot was starting, he took water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this man. You see to it."

[25]All the people said, "May his blood be on us and our children."[26]Then he set Barabbas free for them, but he scourged Jesus and handed him over to be crucified.

[27]Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the government headquarters and they gathered the whole company of soldiers.[28]They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him.[29]They made a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and placed a staff in his right hand. They knelt down before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
[30]They spat on him, and they took the staff and struck him on the head again and again.[31]When they had mocked him, they took the robe off him and put his own garments on him, and led him away to crucify him.

[32]As they came out, they found a man from Cyrene named Simon, whom they forced to go with them so that he might carry his cross.[33]They came to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of a Skull."[34]They gave him wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he tasted it, he would not drink.
[35]When they had crucified him, they divided up his garments by casting lots,[36]and they sat and kept guard over him.
[37]Above his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the king of the Jews."
[38]Two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right of him and one on the left.[39]Those who passed by insulted him, shaking their heads[40]and saying, "You who were going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!"

[41]In the same way the chief priests were mocking him, along with the scribes and elders, and said,[42]"He saved others, but he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel. Let him come down off the cross, and then we will believe in him.
[43]He trusts in God, let God rescue him now, if God consents to release him. For he even said, 'I am the Son of God.'"[44]In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him also insulted him.

[45]Now from the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.[46]About the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice and said, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"
[47]When some of those who were standing there heard it, they said, "He is calling for Elijah."

[48]Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a reed staff, and gave it to him to drink.[49]The rest of them said, "Leave him alone. Let us see whether Elijah comes to save him."[50]Then Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit.

[51]Behold, the curtain of the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom, and the earth shook, and the rocks split apart.[52]The tombs were opened, and the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised.[53]They came out of the tombs after his resurrection, entered the holy city, and appeared to many.
[54]Now when the centurion and those who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they became very afraid and said, "Truly this was the Son of God."[55]Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee to attend to his needs were there watching from a distance.[56]Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

[57]When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus.[58]He approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him.
[59]Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,[60]and laid it in his own new tomb that he had cut into the rock. Then he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb and went away.[61]Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

[62]The next day, which was the day after the Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together with Pilate.[63]They said, "Sir, we remember that when that deceiver was alive, he said, 'After three days will I rise again.'[64]Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, otherwise his disciples may come and steal him and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first."

[65]Pilate said to them, "Take a guard. Go and make it as secure as you know how."[66]So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and placing the guard.

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1 Many ancient copies do not have Jesus.

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Matthew 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Delivered him to Pilate the governor"

The Jewish leaders needed to get permission from Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, before they could kill Jesus. This was because Roman law did not allow them to kill Jesus themselves. Pilate was going to set one prisoner free, and he wanted to set Jesus free, but they wanted him to free a very bad prisoner named Barabbas instead.

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Matthew 27:60) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Sarcasm

The soldiers said, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

Links:

Matthew 27:1 Notes

Matthew 27:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's trial before Pilate.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

plotted against Jesus to put him to death

The Jewish leaders were planning how they could convince the Roman leaders to kill Jesus.

Matthew 27:3

General Information:

This event happened after Jesus's trial in front of the council of Jewish religious leaders, but we do not know if it happened before or during Jesus's trial before Pilate.

Connecting Statement:

The author has stopped telling the story of Jesus's trial so he can tell the story of how Judas killed himself.

Then when Judas

If your language has a way of showing that a new story is starting, you may want to use that here.

that Jesus had been condemned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus"

the thirty pieces of silver

This was the money that the chief priests had given Judas to betray Jesus. See how you translated it in Matthew 26:15.

Matthew 27:4

innocent blood

This is an idiom that refers to the death of an innocent person. Alternate translation: "a person who does not deserve to die"

What is that to us?

The Jewish leaders use this question to emphasize that they do not care about what Judas said. Alternate translation: "That is not our problem!" or "That is your problem!"

Matthew 27:5

threw down the pieces of silver in the temple

Possible meanings are 1) he threw the pieces of silver while in the temple courtyard, or 2) he was standing in the temple courtyard, and he threw the pieces of silver into the temple.

Matthew 27:6

It is not lawful to put this

"Our laws do not allow us to put this"

put this

"put this silver"

the treasury

This is the place they kept the money they used to provide for things needed for the temple and the priests.

price of blood

This is an idiom that means money paid to a person who helped kill someone. Alternate translation: "money paid for a man to die"

Matthew 27:7

potter's field

This was a field that was bought to bury strangers who died in Jerusalem.

Matthew 27:8

that field has been called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people call that field"

to this day

This means to the time that Matthew is writing this book.

Matthew 27:9

General Information:

The author quotes Old Testament scripture to show that Judas's suicide was a fulfillment of prophecy.

Then that which had been spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled what the prophet Jeremiah spoke"

the price set on him by the sons of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the price the sons of Israel set on him"

the sons of Israel

This refers to those among the people of Israel who paid to kill Jesus and speaks of them as though they were doing what all the people of Israel wanted them to do. Alternate translation: "some of the descendants of Israel" or "the leaders of Israel"

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Matthew 27:10
directed me
Here "me" refers to Jeremiah.
Matthew 27:11
Connecting Statement:
This continues the story of Jesus's trial before Pilate, which began in Matthew 27:2.
Now
The word "Now" is used here to mark a return to the main events of the story.
the governor
"Pilate"
You say so
Possible meanings are 1) by saying this, Jesus implied that he is the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said" or 2) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "You yourself have said so"
Matthew 27:12
But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But when the chief priests and elders accused him"
Matthew 27:13
Do you not hear how many things they accuse you of?
Pilate asks this question because he is surprised that Jesus remains silent. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you do not answer these people who accuse you of doing so many bad things!"
how many things they accuse you of
"how many things they testify against you about"
Matthew 27:14
did not answer even one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed
"did not say even one word; this greatly amazed the governor." This is an emphatic way of saying that Jesus was completely silent.
Matthew 27:15
Now
This word is used here to mark a pause in the story so Matthew can give information to help the reader understand what happens beginning in [Matthew 27:17]
the festival
This is the Passover celebration.
prisoner chosen by the crowd
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "prisoner whom the crowd would choose"
Matthew 27:16
they had a notorious prisoner
"there was a notorious prisoner"
notorious
well known for doing something bad
Matthew 27:17
they were gathered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the crowd gathered"
Jesus who is called Christ
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom some people call the Christ"
Matthew 27:18
they had handed Jesus over to him
"the Jewish leaders had brought Jesus to him." They had done this so that Pilate would judge Jesus.
Matthew 27:19
While he was sitting
"While Pilate was sitting"
sitting on the judgment seat
"sitting on the judge's seat." This is where a judge would sit while making a decision.
sent word
"sent a message"
I have suffered much today
"I have been very upset today"
Matthew 27:20
Now ... destroy Jesus
Here "Now" is used to mark a pause in the story. Matthew tells background information about why the crowd chose Barabbas.
they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus
The phrase "ask for Barabbas" is an ellipsis for "ask Pilate to release Barabbas." The phrase "destroy Jesus" here is a euphemism for "kill Jesus," and because the people in the crowd would not kill Jesus themselves, it is a metonym or ellipsis for the crowd telling Pilate to have his soldiers kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "they should ask Pilate to release Jesus and tell him to have his soldiers kill Jesus"
Matthew 27:21
asked them
"asked the crowd"
Matthew 27:22
who is called Christ
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom some people call the Christ"
Matthew 27:23
has he done
"has Jesus done"
they cried out
"the crowd cried out"
Matthew 27:24
he was gaining nothing
"he was doing no good" or "he was unable to convince the people"
washed his hands in front of the crowd
Pilate does this as a sign that he is not responsible for Jesus's death.
the blood
Here "blood" refers to a person's death. Alternate translation: "the death"
You see to it
This is an idiom that means "This is your responsibility."
Matthew 27:25
May his blood be on us and our children
Here "blood" is a metonym that stands for a person's death. The phrase "be on us and our children" is an idiom that means they accept the responsibility of what is happening. Alternate translation: "Yes! We and our descendants will be responsible for executing him"
Matthew 27:26

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Then he set Barabbas free for them
Possible meanings are 1) Pilate set Barabbas free because the crowd had asked him to or 2) Pilate released Barabbas and put him under the control of the crowd.
he scourged Jesus and handed him over to be crucified
It is implied that Pilate ordered his soldiers to scourge Jesus. Handing Jesus over to be crucified is a metaphor for ordering his soldiers to crucify Jesus. Alternate translation: "he ordered his soldiers to scourge Jesus and to crucify him" (See: and)
scourged Jesus
"beat Jesus with a whip" or "whipped Jesus"
Matthew 27:27
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus's crucifixion and death.
company of soldiers
"group of soldiers"
Matthew 27:28
stripped him
"pulled off his clothes"
scarlet
bright red
Matthew 27:29
a crown of thorns
"a crown from thorny branches" or "a crown from branches with thorns on them"
a staff in his right hand
They gave Jesus a stick to hold to represent a scepter that a king holds. They did this to mock Jesus.
Hail, King of the Jews
They were saying this to mock Jesus. They were calling Jesus "King of the Jews," but they did not really believe he was a king. And yet what they were saying was true.
Hail
"We honor you" or "May you live a long time"
Matthew 27:30
They spat on him
The past tense of the verb "spit" can be either "spit" or "spat."
Matthew 27:32
As they came out
This means Jesus and the soldiers came out of the city. Alternate translation: "As they came out of Jerusalem"
they found a man
"the soldiers saw a man"
whom they forced to go with them so that he might carry his cross
"whom the soldiers forced to go with them so that he could carry Jesus's cross"
Matthew 27:33
place called Golgotha
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "place that people called Golgotha"
Matthew 27:34
him wine to drink mixed with gall
Wine alone might have reduced the pain of crucifixion. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "him wine, which they had mixed with gall"
gall
Gall is the bitter yellow liquid that bodies use in digestion. The people were mocking Jesus by mixing it with the wine and so making the wine undrinkable.
Matthew 27:35
his garments
These were the clothes Jesus had been wearing.
Matthew 27:37
the charge against him
"a written explanation of why he was being crucified"
Matthew 27:38
Two robbers were crucified with him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers crucified two robbers with Jesus"
Matthew 27:39
shaking their heads
They did this to make fun of Jesus.
Matthew 27:40
If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross
They did not believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so they wanted him to prove it if it was true. Alternate translation: "If you are the Son of God, prove it by coming down from the cross"
the Son of God
This is an important title for the Christ that describes his relationship to God.
Matthew 27:42
He saved others, but he cannot save himself
Possible meanings are 1) the Jewish leaders do not believe that Jesus saved others or that he can save himself, or 2) they believe he did save others but are laughing at him because now he cannot save himself.
He is the King of Israel
The leaders are mocking Jesus. They call him "King of Israel," but they do not really believe he is king. Alternate translation: "He says that he is the King of Israel"
Matthew 27:43
Connecting Statement:
The Jewish leaders continue mocking Jesus.
For he even said, 'I am the Son of God.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "For Jesus even said that he is the Son of God."
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Matthew 27:44
the robbers who were crucified with him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the robbers that the soldiers crucified with Jesus"
Matthew 27:45
Now
This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.
from the sixth hour ... until the ninth hour
"from about noon ... for three hours" or "from about twelve o'clock midday ... until about three o'clock in the afternoon"
darkness came over the whole land
The word "darkness" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "it became dark over the whole land"
Matthew 27:46
Jesus cried

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"Jesus called out" or "Jesus shouted"

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani

These words are what Jesus cried out in his own language. Translators usually leave these words as they are.

Matthew 27:48

one of them

Possible meanings are 1) one of the soldiers or 2) one of those who stood by and watched.

sponge

This is a sea animal that is harvested and used to take up and hold liquids. These liquids can later be pushed out.

gave it to him

"gave it to Jesus"

Matthew 27:50

gave up his spirit

Here "spirit" refers to that which gives life to a person. This phrase is a way of saying that Jesus died. Alternate translation: "he died, giving his spirit over to God" or "he breathed his last breath"

Matthew 27:51

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the events that happened when Jesus died.

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

the curtain of the temple was split in two

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the curtain of the temple tore in two" or "God caused the curtain of the temple to tear in two"

Matthew 27:52

The tombs were opened, and the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God opened the tombs and made many godly people who had died become alive again"

the bodies of the holy people who had fallen asleep were raised

Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God put life back into to the dead bodies of many godly people who had fallen asleep"

fallen asleep

This is a polite way of referring to dying. Alternate translation: "died"

Matthew 27:53

They came out ... appeared to many

The order of the events that Matthew describes (beginning with the words "The tombs were opened" in verse 52) is unclear. After the earthquake when Jesus died and the tombs were opened 1) the holy people came back to life, and then, after Jesus came back to life, the holy people entered Jerusalem, where many people saw them, or 2) Jesus came back to life, and then the holy ones came back to life and entered the city, where many people saw them.

Matthew 27:54

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

those who were watching Jesus

"those who were guarding Jesus." This refers to the other soldiers who were guarding Jesus with the centurion. Alternate translation: "the other soldiers with him who were guarding Jesus"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

Matthew 27:56

the mother of the sons of Zebedee

"the mother of James and John" or "the wife of Zebedee"

Matthew 27:57

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of Jesus's burial.

Arimathea

This is the name of a city in Israel.

Matthew 27:58

Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then Pilate ordered the soldiers to give the body of Jesus to Joseph"

Matthew 27:59

linen

a fine, costly cloth

Matthew 27:60

that he had cut into the rock

It is implied that Joseph had workers who cut the tomb into the rock.

Then he rolled a large stone

Most likely Joseph had other people there to help him roll the stone.

Matthew 27:61

opposite the tomb

"across from the tomb"

Matthew 27:62

the Preparation

This is the day that people got everything ready for the Sabbath.

were gathered together with Pilate

"met with Pilate"

Matthew 27:63

when that deceiver was alive

"when Jesus, the deceiver, was alive"

he said, 'After three days will I rise again.'

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "he said that after three days he will rise again." or "he said that after three day he would rise again."

Matthew 27:64

command that the tomb be made secure

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "command your soldiers to guard the tomb"

the third day

"day number three." This refers to the day after two nights have passed.

his disciples may come and steal him

"his disciples may come and steal his body"

his disciples may ... say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and

This has a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "his disciples may ... tell the people that he has risen from the dead, and"

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from the dead
From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.
and the last deception will be worse than the first
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and if they deceive people by saying that, it will be worse than the way he deceived people before when he said that he was the Christ"
Matthew 27:65
a guard
This consisted of four to sixteen Roman soldiers.
Matthew 27:66
sealing the stone
Possible meanings are 1) they put a cord around the stone and attached it with seals to the rock wall on either side of the entrance to the tomb or 2) they put seals between the stone and the wall.
placing the guard
"telling the soldiers to stand where they could keep people from tampering with the tomb"

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28 [1]Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary
came to see the tomb.[2]Behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came
and rolled away the stone, and sat on it.
[3]His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.[4]The guards shook with fear and became like dead
men.
[5]The angel addressed the women and said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus, who has been
crucified.[6]He is not here, but is risen, just as he said. Come see the place where the Lord was lying.[7]Go quickly and tell his
disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. See, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.' See, I have told
you."

[8]The women quickly left the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.[9]Behold, Jesus met them and said,
"Greetings!" The women came, took hold of his feet and worshiped him.[10]Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go
tell my brothers to leave for Galilee. There they will see me."

[11]Now while the women were going, behold, some of the guards went into the city and told the chief priests all the things
that had happened.[12]When the priests had met with the elders and discussed the matter with them, they gave a large
amount of money to the soldiers[13]and told them, "Say to others, 'The disciples of Jesus came by night and stole his body
while we were sleeping.'
[14]If this report reaches the governor, we will persuade him and take any worries away from you."[15]So the soldiers took the
money and did as they had been instructed. This report spread widely among the Jews and continues even today.

[16]But the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.[17]When they saw him, they
worshiped him, but some doubted.
[18]Jesus came to them and spoke to them and said, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.[19]Go
therefore and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit.
[20]Teach them to obey all the things that I have commanded you. See, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb
The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Matthew 28:1) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.
"Make disciples"
The last two verses (Matthew 28:19-20) are commonly known as "The Great Commission" because they contain a very important command given to all Christians. Christians are to "make disciples" by going to people, sharing the gospel with them and training them to live as Christians.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

An angel of the Lord
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels looked human. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

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Links:

Matthew 28:1 Notes

Matthew 28:1

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week

"After the Sabbath, as the sun began to come up Sunday morning"

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

the other Mary

"the other woman named Mary." This is Mary the mother of James and Joseph (Matthew 27:56).

Matthew 28:2

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Your language may have a way of doing this.

there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended ... and rolled away the stone

Possible meanings are 1) the earthquake happened because the angel came down and rolled away the stone or 2) all these events happened at the same time .

earthquake

a sudden and violent shaking of the ground

Matthew 28:3

His appearance

"The angel's appearance"

was like lightning

This is a simile that emphasizes how bright in appearance the angel was. Alternate translation: "was bright like lightning"

his clothing as white as snow

This is a simile that emphasizes how bright and white the angel's clothes were. The verb "was" from the previous phrase can be repeated. Alternate translation: "his clothing was very white, like snow"

Matthew 28:4

became like dead men

This is a simile that means the soldiers fell down and did not move. Alternate translation: "fell to the ground and lay there like dead men"

Matthew 28:5

the women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

who has been crucified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the people and the soldiers crucified" or "whom they crucified"

Matthew 28:6

was lying

This means that Jesus's body was lying on the flat surface inside the tomb, not that Jesus was saying things that were not true.

Matthew 28:7

tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. See, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.'

This is a quotation within a quotation. It can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead and that Jesus has gone ahead of you to Galilee, where you will see him."

He has risen

"He has come back to life"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

going ahead of you ... you will see him

Here "you" is plural. It refers to the women and the disciples.

I have told you

Here "you" is plural and refers to the women.

Matthew 28:8

The women

"Mary Magdalene and the other woman named Mary"

Matthew 28:9

Behold

The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Greetings

This is an ordinary greeting, much like "Hello" in English.

took hold of his feet

"got down on their knees and held onto his feet"

Matthew 28:10

my brothers

This refers to Jesus's disciples.

Matthew 28:11

Connecting Statement:

This begins the account of the reaction of the Jewish religious leaders when they heard of Jesus's resurrection.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story.

the women

Here this refers to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.

behold

This marks the beginning of another event in the larger story. It may involve different people than the previous events. Your language may have a way of doing this.

Matthew 28:12

discussed the matter with them

"decided on a plan among themselves." The priests and elders decided to give the money to the soldiers.

Matthew 28:13

Say to others, 'The disciples of Jesus came ... while we were sleeping.'

If your language does not allow quotations within quotations you may translate this as a single quote. Alternate translation: "Tell others that Jesus' disciples came ... while you were sleeping."

Matthew 28:14

If this report reaches the governor

"If the governor hears that you were asleep when Jesus's

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disciples took his body"
the governor
"Pilate" (Matthew 27:2)
we will persuade him and take any worries away from you
"do not worry. We will talk to him so that he does not punish you."
Matthew 28:15
did as they had been instructed
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "did what the priests had told them to do"
This report spread widely among the Jews and continues even today
"Many Jews heard this report and continue to tell others about it even today"
even today
This refers to the time Matthew wrote the book.
Matthew 28:16
Connecting Statement:
This begins the account of Jesus meeting with his disciples after his resurrection.
Matthew 28:17
they worshiped him, but some doubted
Possible meanings are 1) they all worshiped Jesus even though some of them doubted, or 2) some of them worshiped Jesus, but others did not worship him because they doubted.
but some doubted
It can be stated explicitly what the disciples doubted. Alternate translation: "some doubted that he was really Jesus and that he had become alive again"
Matthew 28:18
All authority has been given to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has given me all authority"
in heaven and on earth
Here "heaven" and "earth" are used together to mean everyone and everything in heaven and earth. The words "in heaven and on earth" can be translated as "over everyone and everything in heaven and on earth."
Matthew 28:19
of all the nations
Here "nations" refers to the people, and the saying is probably a hyperbole. Alternate translation: "of the people in every nation"
into the name
Here "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "by the authority"
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
Matthew 28:20
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
even to the end of the age
"until the end of this age" or "until the end of the world"

Introduction to the Gospel of Mark

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Mark

Introduction (1:1–13) The ministry of Jesus in Galilee Early ministry (1:14–3:6) Jesus becomes more popular among the people (3:7–5:43) Moving away from Galilee and then returning (6:1–8:26)

Progress toward Jerusalem, repeated times when Jesus predicts his own death, the disciples misunderstand, and Jesus teaches them how difficult it will be to follow him (8:27–10:52) Last days of ministry and preparation for final conflict in Jerusalem (11:1–13:37) The death of Christ and the empty tomb (14:1–16:8)

What is the Book of Mark about?

The Gospel of Mark is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life of Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. Mark wrote much about how Jesus suffered and died on the cross. He did this to encourage his readers who were being persecuted. Mark also explained Jewish customs and some Aramaic words. This may indicate that Mark expected most of his first readers to be Gentiles.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Gospel of Mark" or "The Gospel according to Mark." They may also choose a title that may be clearer, such as "The Good News about Jesus that Mark wrote."

Who wrote the Book of Mark?

The book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought that the author was Mark. Mark was also known as John Mark. He was a close friend of Peter. Mark may not have witnessed what Jesus said and did. But many scholars think that Mark wrote in his gospel what Peter told him about Jesus.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What were Jesus's teaching methods?

The people regarded Jesus as a rabbi. A rabbi is a teacher of God's law. Jesus taught in ways similar to those of other religious teachers in Israel. He had students who followed him wherever he went. These students were called disciples. He often told parables. Parables are stories that teach moral lessons. (See: lawofmoses and disciple and parable)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are the Synoptic Gospels?

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because they have many similar passages. The word "synoptic" means to "see together."

The texts are considered "parallel" when they are the same or almost the same among two or three gospels. When translating parallel passages, translators should use the same wording and make them as similar as possible.

Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "Son of Man"?

In the gospels, Jesus calls himself the "Son of Man." It is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In this passage there is a person described as a "son of man." That means the person was someone who looked like a human being. God gave authority to the son of man to rule over the nations forever. And all the people will worship him forever.

Jews of Jesus's time did not use "Son of Man" as a title for anyone. Therefore, Jesus used it for himself to help them understand who he truly was. (See: sonofman)

Translating the title "Son of Man" can be difficult in many languages. Readers may misunderstand a literal translation. Translators can consider alternatives, such as "The Human One." It may also be helpful to include a footnote to explain the title.

Why does Mark frequently use terms indicating short periods of time?

The Gospel of Mark uses the word "immediately" forty-two times. Mark does this to make the events more exciting and vivid. It moves the reader quickly from one event to the next.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Mark?

The following verses are found in older versions of the Bible but are not included in most modern versions. Translators are advised not to include these verses. However, if in the translators' region there are older versions of the Bible that include one or more of these verses, the translators can include them. If they are included, they should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that they were probably not original to Mark's Gospel.

"If any man has ears to hear, let him hear." (7:16) "where their worm never dies and the fire is not put out" (9:44) "where their worm never dies and the fire is not put out" (9:46) "And the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'He was counted with the lawless ones'" (15:28)

The following passage in not found in the earliest manuscripts. Most Bibles include this passage, but modern Bibles put it in brackets ([]) or indicate in some way that this passage may not have been original to Mark's Gospel. Translators are advised to do something similar to what is done in the modern versions of the Bible.

"Early on the first day of the week, after he arose, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. She went and told those who were with him, while they were mourning and weeping. They heard that he was alive and that he had been seen by her, but they did not believe. After these things he appeared in a different form to two of them, as they were walking out into the country. They went and told the rest of the disciples, but they did not believe them. Jesus later appeared to the eleven as they were reclining at the table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw him after he rose from the dead. He said to them, 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the entire creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, and he who does not believe will be condemned. These signs will go with those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons. They will speak in new languages. They will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well.' After the Lord had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. The disciples left and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word by the signs that went with them." (16:9-20)

Mark

1

[1]This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

[2]As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,
"Look, I am sending my messenger before your face,
the one who will prepare your way.
[3] The voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'"

[4]John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.[5]The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.[6]John wore a coat of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

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[7]He was preaching, saying, "One will come after me who is more powerful than I; the strap of his sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.[8]I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

[9]It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and he was baptized by John in the Jordan River.[10]As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens split open and the Spirit coming down on him like a dove.[11]A voice came out of the heavens: "You are my beloved Son. I am very pleased with you."

[12]Then the Spirit compelled him to go out into the wilderness.[13]He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels served him.

[14]Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God.[15]He said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the gospel."

[16]When he was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea, for they were fishermen.[17]Jesus said to them, "Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."[18]Then immediately they left the nets and followed him.
[19]As Jesus was walking on a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and John his brother; they were in the boat mending the nets.[20]He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and they followed him.

[21]Then they came into Capernaum, and on the Sabbath, Jesus went into the synagogue and taught.[22]They were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as someone who has authority and not as the scribes.
[23]Just then a man in their synagogue who had an unclean spirit cried out,[24]saying, "What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are. You are the Holy One of God!"
[25]Jesus rebuked the demon and said, "Be quiet and come out of him!"[26]The unclean spirit threw him into convulsions and went out from him while crying out with a loud voice.
[27]All the people were amazed, so they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him!"[28]The news about him went out everywhere into the whole region of Galilee.

[29]After coming out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, along with James and John.[30]Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever, and they told Jesus about her.[31]So he came, took her by the hand, and raised her up; the fever left her, and she started serving them.

[32]That evening after the sun had set, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed by demons.[33]The whole city gathered together at the door.[34]He healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, but he did not allow the demons to speak because they knew him.

[35]He got up very early, while it was still dark; he left and went out into a solitary place and there he prayed.[36]Simon and those who were with him searched for him.[37]They found him and they said to him, "Everyone is looking for you."

[38]He said, "Let us go elsewhere, out into the surrounding towns, so that I may preach there also. That is why I came out here."[39]He went throughout all of Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

[40]A leper came to him. He was begging him; he knelt down and said to him, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."
[41]Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying to him, "I am willing. Be clean."[42]Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.
[43]Jesus strictly warned him and sent him away.[44]He said to him, "Be sure to say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."
[45]But he went out and began to declare it freely and spread the word, so much so that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but he stayed out in remote places. Yet people were still coming to him from everywhere.

Mark 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:2-3, which is a quotation from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

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"You can make me clean"
Leprosy was a disease of the skin that made a person unclean and unable to properly worship God. Jesus is capable of making people physically "clean" or healthy as well as spiritually "clean" or right with God. (See: clean)
Prophecy
Mark begins this book about Jesus Christ with the words that the prophet Isaiah wrote long before that time. Then he tells how John the Baptist and Jesus Christ fulfilled that prophecy.
Repentance
Repent means stop sinning. John the Baptist taught people to repent so that God would forgive their sins. Jesus taught people to repent and to believe the good news about the kingdom of God.
The work of Jesus
Jesus went around preaching the good news of God, casting demons out of people, and healing people who were sick.

Links:

Mark 1:1 Notes Mark intro

Mark 1:1
General Information:
The author of this book is Mark, also called John Mark. He was the son of one of the women named Mary mentioned in the four Gospels. He was also the nephew of Barnabas. This whole book is about Jesus Christ.
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
Mark 1:2
General Information:
Mark begins this book with the words that the prophet Isaiah wrote long ago about a messenger who would come and tell the people to get ready for the Lord's coming. Verses 4-15 show how this prophecy was fulfilled by John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.
before your face
This is an idiom that means "ahead of you."
your face ... your way
Here the word "your" refers to the Lord and is singular.
the one
This refers to the messenger.
will prepare your way
Doing this represents preparing the people for the Lord's arrival. Alternate translation: "will prepare the people for your arrival"
Mark 1:3
Connecting Statement:
This verse tells how the messenger in verse 2 would prepare the Lord's way.
The voice of one crying out in the wilderness
This phrase can be expressed as a sentence. Alternate translation: "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone crying out in the wilderness"
Make ready the way of the Lord ... make his paths straight
These two phrases mean the same thing.
Make ready the way of the Lord
"Get the road ready for the Lord." Doing this represents being prepared to hear the Lord's message when he comes. Alternate translation: "Prepare yourselves for the Lord to come" or "Be ready for the Lord when he comes"
Mark 1:4
General Information
The events in Mark 1:4-15 are a fulfillment of what Isaiah had prophesied. John was the "messenger" of verse 2 and "the one calling out in the wilderness" of verse 3.
John came
Translators can make it explicit that John's coming was a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Alternate translation: "So John came" or "In fulfillment of that prophecy, John came"
Mark 1:5
The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem
The words "The whole country" are a metonym for the people who live in the country and a generalization that refers to a great number of people, not to every single person. Alternate translation: "Many people from Judea and Jerusalem"
They were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins
They did these things at the same time. The people were baptized because they repented of their sins. Alternate translation: "When they repented of their sins, John baptized them in the Jordan River"
Mark 1:6
he ate locusts and wild honey
Locusts and wild honey were foods that John could find in the wilderness. Wild honey is honey that wild bees make.
Mark 1:7
He was preaching
"John was preaching"
the strap of his sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie
John was comparing himself to a servant to show how great the one to come would be. Alternate translation: "I am not even worthy to do the lowly task of removing his shoes"
the strap of his sandals
People often wore sandals that were made of leather and were tied to their feet with leather straps.
stoop down
"bend down"
Mark 1:8
but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit
John was contrasting how he was purifying people with water with how the one to come would purify people with the Holy Spirit. To baptize with the Holy Spirit is a metaphor meaning that that person would send the Holy Spirit to purify people. The Holy Spirit would then live in them and empower them to stop sinning and to obey God. If possible, use the same word for "baptize" here as you used for John's baptism.

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Mark 1:9
It happened in those days
This marks the beginning of a new event in the story.
he was baptized by John
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John baptized him"
Mark 1:10
the Spirit coming down on him like a dove
Possible meanings are 1) this is a simile, and the Spirit descended upon Jesus as a bird descends from the sky toward the ground or 2) the Spirit literally looked like a dove as he descended upon Jesus.
Mark 1:11
A voice came out of the heavens
This represents God speaking. Sometimes people avoid referring directly to God because they respect him. Alternate translation: "God spoke from the heavens"
beloved Son
This is an important title for Jesus. The Father calls Jesus his "beloved Son" because of his eternal love for him.
Mark 1:12
Connecting Statement:
After Jesus's baptism, he is in the wilderness for 40 days and then goes to Galilee to teach and call his disciples.
compelled him to go out
"forced Jesus to go out"
Mark 1:13
He was in the wilderness
"He stayed in the wilderness"
forty days
"40 days"
He was with
"He was among"
Mark 1:14
after John was arrested
"after John was placed in prison." Mark is referring to when King Herod had John arrested. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after King Herod had John arrested" or "after soldiers arrested John"
proclaiming the gospel
"telling many people about the good news"
Mark 1:15
The time is fulfilled
"It is now time"
the kingdom of God is near
Possible meanings are 1) God was beginning to rule. Alternate translation: "God is beginning to rule over all" or 2) God would soon rule over all. Alternate translation: "God is about to rule over all"
Mark 1:16
he saw Simon and Andrew
"Jesus saw Simon and Andrew"
casting a net in the sea
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "throwing a net into the water to catch fish"
Mark 1:17
Come, follow me
"Follow me" or "Come with me"
I will make you fishers of men
This metaphor means Simon and Andrew will teach people God's true message, so others will also follow Jesus. Alternate translation: "I will teach you to gather men to me like you gather fish"
men
human beings, persons, people, not specifically males
Mark 1:19
in the boat
This was probably James and John's boat.
mending the nets
"repairing the nets"
Mark 1:20
called them
It may be helpful to state clearly why Jesus called to James and John. Alternate translation: "called them to come with him"
hired servants
"servants who worked for them"
they followed him
James and John went with Jesus.
Mark 1:21
Connecting Statement:
Jesus teaches in the synagogue of the town of Capernaum on the Sabbath. By sending a demon out of a man he amazes the people in all the nearby area around Galilee.
came into Capernaum
"arrived at Capernaum"
Mark 1:22
for he was teaching them as someone who has authority and not as the scribes
The idea of "teach" can be stated clearly when talking about "someone who has authority" and "the scribes." Alternate translation: "for he was teaching them as someone who has authority teaches and not as the scribes teach"
Mark 1:24
What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth?
The demon asked this rhetorical question meaning that there was no reason for Jesus to interfere with him or any other demon. Alternate translation: "Jesus of Nazareth, leave us alone! There is no reason for you to interfere with us."
we ... us
These pronouns are exclusive. They refer to the demon inside the man and all other demons, but do not include the listener.
Have you come to destroy us?
The demon asked this rhetorical question to urge Jesus not to harm him or any other demon. Alternate translation: "Do not destroy us!"
Mark 1:26
threw him down
Here the word "him" refers to the demon-possessed man.
and went out from him while crying out with a loud voice
"and cried out with a loud voice as it went out from him"
Mark 1:27
so they asked each other, "What is this? ... they obey him!"
The people used a question to show how amazed they were. It can be expressed as an exclamation. Alternate

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translation: "so they said to each other, 'This is amazing! ... they obey him!'"

A new teaching with authority!

The people used this exclamation to express their amazement at Jesus' teaching. It can also be expressed as a full sentence. Alternate translation: "He gives a new teaching, and he speaks with authority!" or "He teaches something new, and he has authority!"

He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him!

This was evidence of Jesus' authority.

Mark 1:30

Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever

The word "Now" marks a pause in the story. In this sentence, Mark introduces Simon's mother-in-law to the story and gives background information about her.

Mark 1:31

raised her up

"caused her to stand" or "made her able to get out of bed"

the fever left her

You may want to make explicit who healed her. Alternate translation: "Jesus healed her of the fever"

she started serving them

You may want to make explicit that she served food. Alternate translation: "she provided them with food and drinks"

Mark 1:32

they brought to him

"the people brought to Jesus"

all who were sick or possessed by demons

The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize the great number of people who came. Alternate translation: "many who were sick or possessed by demons"

Mark 1:33

The whole city gathered together at the door

The word "city" is a metonym for the people who lived in the city. Here the word "whole" is probably a generalization to emphasize that most people from the city gathered. Alternate translation: "Many people from that city gathered outside the door"

Mark 1:34

He healed

"Jesus healed"

Mark 1:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus takes time to pray in the midst of his time of healing people. He then goes to towns throughout Galilee to preach, heal, and cast out demons.

He got up

"Jesus got up"

a solitary place

"a place where he could be alone"

Mark 1:36

Simon and those who were with him

Here "him" refers to Simon. Also, those with him include Andrew, James, John, and possibly other people.

Mark 1:37

Everyone is looking for you

The word "Everyone" is an exaggeration to emphasize that many people were looking for Jesus. Alternate translation: "Many people are looking for you"

Mark 1:38

General Information:

Here the words "he" and "I" refer to Jesus.

Let us go elsewhere

"We need to go to some other place." Here Jesus uses the word "us" to refer to himself, along with Simon, Andrew, James, and John.

Mark 1:39

He went throughout all of Galilee

The words "throughout all" are an exaggeration used to emphasize that Jesus went to many locations during his ministry. Alternate translation: "He went to many places in Galilee"

Mark 1:40

A leper came to him. He was begging him; he knelt down and said to him

"A leper came to Jesus. He knelt down and was begging Jesus and said"

If you are willing, you can make me clean

In the first phrase, the words "to make me clean" are understood because of the second phrase. Alternate translation: "If you are willing to make me clean, then you can make me clean"

are willing

"want" or "desire"

you can make me clean

In biblical times, a person who had any of certain skin diseases was considered unclean until his skin had healed enough that he was no longer contagious. Alternate translation: "you can heal me"

Mark 1:41

Moved with compassion, Jesus

Here the word "moved" is an idiom meaning to feel emotion about another's need. Alternate translation: "Having compassion for him, Jesus" or "Jesus felt compassion for the man, so he"

I am willing

It may be helpful to state what Jesus is willing to do. Alternate translation: "I am willing to make you clean"

Mark 1:43

General Information:

The word "him" used here refers to the leper whom Jesus healed.

Mark 1:44

Be sure to say nothing to anyone

"Be sure to not say anything to anyone"

show yourself to the priest

Jesus told the man to show himself to the priest so that the priest could look at his skin to see if his leprosy was really gone. The law of Moses required people to present themselves to the priest if they had been unclean but were no longer unclean.

show yourself

The word "yourself" here represents the skin of the leper. Alternate translation: "show your skin"

a testimony to them

It is best to use the pronoun "them," if possible, in your language. Possible meanings are 1) "a testimony to the

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priests" or 2) "a testimony to the people."

Mark 1:45

But he went out

The word "he" refers to the man Jesus healed.

began to declare it freely

Here "declare it freely" is a metaphor for telling people in many places about what had happened. Alternate translation: "began to tell people in many places about what Jesus had done"

so much so that

The man spread the news so much that

that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly

This was the result of the man spreading the news so much. Here "openly" is a metaphor for "publicly." Jesus could not enter the towns because many people would crowd around him. Alternate translation: "that Jesus could no longer enter a town publicly" or "that Jesus could no longer enter the towns in a way that many people would see him"

remote places

"lonely places" or "places where no one lived"

from everywhere

The word "everywhere" is a hyperbole used to emphasize how very many places the people came from. Alternate translation: "from all over the region"

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2 [1]When Jesus came back to Capernaum after a few days, it was heard that he was at home.[2]So many gathered there that there was no more space, not even at the door, and he spoke the word to them.
[3]Then some men came to him who were bringing a paralyzed man; four people were carrying him.[4]When they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof that was above Jesus, and after they made an opening, they lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on.
[5]Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."
[6]Now some of the scribes were sitting there, and they reasoned in their hearts,[7]"How can this man speak this way? He blasphemes! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

[8]Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit what they were thinking within themselves. He said to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts?[9]Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take up your mat and walk'?
[10]But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he said to the paralytic,[11]"I say to you, get up, take up your mat, and go to your house."
[12]He got up and immediately took up the mat, and went out of the house in front of everyone, so that they were all amazed and they gave glory to God, and they said, "We never saw anything like this."

[13]He went out again by the lake, and all the crowd came to him, and he taught them.[14]As he passed by, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's tent and he said to him, "Follow me." He got up and followed him.

[15]Jesus was having a meal in Levi's house and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with him and his disciples, for there were many and they followed him.[16]When the scribes, who were Pharisees, saw that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

[17]When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "People who are strong in body do not need a physician; only people who are sick need one. I did not come to call righteous people, but sinners."

[18]Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"
[19]Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding attendants fast while the bridegroom is still with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.
[20]But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and in those days, they will fast.[21]No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment. Otherwise the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and there is a worse tear.
[22]No one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the wine will burst the skins and both the wine and the wineskins are lost. Instead, new wine is put into fresh wineskins."

[23]On the Sabbath day Jesus went through some grainfields, and his disciples began picking heads of grain as they made their way.[24]The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful on the Sabbath day?"

[25]He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry—he and the men who were with him—[26]how he went into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the presence, which is unlawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he even gave some to those who were with him?"
[27]Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for mankind, not mankind for the Sabbath.[28]Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath."

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Mark 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Sinners"

When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. When Jesus said that he came to call "sinners," he meant that only people who believe that they are sinners can be his followers. This is true even if they are not what most people think of as "sinners." (See: sin)

Fasting and Feasting

People would fast, or not eat food for a long time, when they were sad or were showing God that they were sorry for their sins. When they were happy, like during weddings, they would have feasts, or meals where they would eat much food. (See: fast)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The Jewish leaders used rhetorical questions to show that they were angry because of what Jesus said and did and that they did not believe that he was God's Son

Links:

Mark 2:1 Notes

Mark 2:1

Connecting Statement:

After preaching and healing people throughout Galilee, Jesus returns to Capernaum, where he heals and forgives the sin of a paralyzed man.

it was heard that he was at home

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people there heard that he was staying at his home"

Mark 2:2

So many gathered there

The word "there" refers to the house that Jesus stayed at in Capernaum. Alternate translation: "So many people gathered there" or "So many people came to the house"

there was no more space

This refers to there being no space inside the house. Alternate translation: "there was no more room for them inside"

he spoke the word to them

"Jesus spoke his message to them"

Mark 2:3

four people were carrying him

"four of them were carrying him." It is likely that there were more than four people within the group that brought the man to Jesus.

were bringing a paralyzed man

"were bringing a man who was unable to walk or use his arms"

Mark 2:4

could not get near him

"could not get close to where Jesus was"

they removed the roof that was above Jesus, and after they made an opening, they lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on

Houses where Jesus lived had flat roofs made of clay and covered with tiles. Alternate translation: "they removed the tiles from the part of the roof above where Jesus was. And when they had dug through the clay roof, they lowered the mat the paralzyed man was lying on" or "they made a hole in the roof above Jesus, and then they lowered the paralyzed man on the mat"

Mark 2:5

Seeing their faith

"Seeing the men's faith." Possible meanings are 1) that only the men who carried the paralyzed man had faith or 2) that the paralyzed man and the men who brought him to Jesus all had faith.

Son

The word "Son" here shows Jesus cared for the man as a father cares for a son. Alternate translation: "My son"

your sins are forgiven

Jesus did not clearly say who was forgiving the man's sins. Alternate translation: "your sins are gone" or "you do not have to pay for your sins" or "your sins do not count against you"

Mark 2:6

reasoned in their hearts

Here "their hearts" is a metonym for the people's thoughts. Alternate translation: "were thinking to themselves"

Mark 2:7

How can this man speak this way?

The scribes used this question to show their anger that Jesus said "Your sins are forgiven." Alternate translation: "This man should not speak this way!"

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

The scribes used this question to say that since only God can forgive sins, then Jesus should not say "Your sins are forgiven." Alternate translation: "Only God can forgive sins!"

Mark 2:8

in his spirit

"in his inner being" or "in himself"

they were thinking within themselves

Each of the scribes was thinking to himself; they were not talking to each other.

Why are you thinking this in your hearts?

Jesus uses this question to tell the scribes that what they are thinking is wrong. Alternate translation: "What you are

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thinking is wrong." or "Do not think that I am blaspheming."

this in your hearts

The word "hearts" is a metonym for their inner thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: "this inside yourselves" or "these things"

Mark 2:9

Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, ... take up your mat and walk'?

Jesus uses this question to make the scribes think about what might prove whether or not he could really forgive sins. Alternate translation: "I just said to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven.' You may think that it is harder to say 'Get up, take up your mat and walk,' because the proof of whether or not I can heal him will be shown by whether or not he gets up and walks." or "You may think that it is easier to say to the paralyzed man 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up, take up your mat and walk.'"

Mark 2:10

But in order that you may know

"But so that you may know." The word "you" refers to the scribes and the crowd.

that the Son of Man has authority

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man." Alternate translation: "that I am the Son of Man and I have authority"

Mark 2:12

in front of everyone

"while all the people there were watching"

Mark 2:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus is teaching the crowd beside the Sea of Galilee, and he calls Levi to follow him.

the lake

This is the Sea of Galilee, which is also known as the Lake of Gennesaret.

the crowd came to him

"the people went where he was"

Mark 2:14

Levi son of Alphaeus

Alpheus was Levi's father.

the tax collector's tent

We do not know what kind of a structure this was or what it was made of. It may have been a tent or booth. It probably included a table and some kind of protection from sun and rain.

Mark 2:15

Connecting Statement:

It is now later in the day, and Jesus is at Levi's house for a meal.

Levi's house

"the home of Levi"

sinners

In this verse, the word "sinners" refers to people who did not obey the law of Moses but committed what others thought were very bad sins

for there were many and they followed him

Possible meanings are 1) "for there were many tax collectors and sinful people who followed Jesus" or 2) "for Jesus had many disciples and they followed him."

Mark 2:16

Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?

The scribes and Pharisees asked this question to show they disapproved of Jesus's hospitality. This can be worded as a statement. Alternate translation: "He should not eat with tax collectors and sinners!"

Mark 2:17

Connecting Statement:

Jesus responds to what the scribes had said to his disciples about his eating with tax collectors and sinful people.

he said to them

"he said to the scribes"

People who are strong in body do not need a physician; only people who are sick need one

Jesus used this proverb about sick people and doctors to teach them that only people who know that they are sinful realize that they need Jesus.

strong in body

"healthy"

I did not come to call righteous people, but sinners

Jesus expects his hearers to understand he came for those who want help. Alternate translation: "I came for people who understand they are sinful, not for people who believe they are righteous"

but sinners

The words "I came to call" are understood from the phrase before this. Alternate translation: "but I came to call sinners"

Mark 2:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells parables to show why his disciples should not fast while he is with them.

the Pharisees were fasting ... the disciples of the Pharisees

These two phrases refer to the same group of people, but the second is more specific. Both refer to the followers of the Pharisee sect, but they do not focus on the leaders of the Pharisees. Alternate translation: "the disciples of the Pharisees were fasting ... the disciples of the Pharisees"

Some people

"Some men." It is best to translate this phrase without specifying exactly who these men are. If in your language you have to be more specific, the possible meanings are 1) these men were not among John's disciples or the disciples of the Pharisees or 2) these men were among John's disciples.

came and said to him

"came and said to Jesus"

Mark 2:19

Can the wedding attendants fast while the bridegroom is still with them?

Jesus uses this question to remind the people of something they already know and to encourage them to apply it to him and his disciples. Alternate translation: "Wedding attendants do not fast while the bridegroom is with them. Rather they celebrate and feast."

Mark 2:20

the bridegroom will be taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the bridegroom will go away"

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away from them ... they will fast
The words "them" and "they" refer to the wedding attendants.
Mark 2:21
No one sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment
Sewing a piece of new cloth on an old garment will make the hole on an old garment worse if the piece of new cloth has not yet shrunk. Both the new cloth and old garment will be ruined.
Mark 2:22
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to tell another parable. This one is about putting new wine into old wineskins rather than into new wineskins.
new wine
"grape juice." This refers to wine that has not fermented yet. If grapes are unknown in your area, use the general term for fruit juice.
old wineskins
This refers to wineskins that have been used many times.
wineskins
These were bags made out of animal skins. They could also be called "wine bags" or "skin bags."
the wine will burst the skins
New wine expands as it ferments. If it is put in new wineskins, the wineskins will stretch. But old wineskins are brittle and cannot stretch. If new wine is poured into old wineskins, the wineskins will tear open.
are lost
"will be ruined"
fresh wineskins
"new wineskins" or "new wine bags." This refers to wineskins that have never been used.
Mark 2:23
Connecting Statement:
Jesus gives the Pharisees an example from scripture to show why the disciples were not wrong to pick grain on the Sabbath.
began picking heads of grain
The disciples were picking heads of grain to eat the kernels, or seeds, in them while they were walking. They were not harvesting the grain to take it home. Plucking grain in others' fields and eating it was not considered stealing. The question was whether it was lawful to do this on the Sabbath.
heads of grain
The "heads" are the topmost part of the wheat plant, which is a kind of tall grass. The heads hold the mature grain or seeds of the plant.
as they made their way
"as they walked along"
Mark 2:24
Connecting Statement:
The Pharisees ask a question about what the disciples were doing (verse 23).
doing something that is not lawful on the Sabbath day
Plucking grain in others' fields and eating it (verse 23) was not considered stealing. The question was whether it was lawful to do this on the Sabbath.
Look, why are they doing something that is not lawful on the Sabbath day?
The Pharisees ask Jesus a question to condemn him. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look! They are breaking the Jewish law concerning the Sabbath."
Look
"Look at this" or "Listen." This is a word used to get the attention of someone to show them something. If there is a word in your language that is used to draw a person's attention to something, you could use that here.
Mark 2:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to scold the Pharisees by asking them a question.
He said to them
"Jesus said to the Pharisees"
Have you never read what David did
This question ends in 2:26. Jesus is reminding the scribes and Pharisees of something David did on the Sabbath. If this rhetorical question is translated as a statement or a command, then the question mark in 2:26 should become a period. Alternate translation: "You have read what David did" or "Remember what you read about what David did"
read what David did
Jesus refers to reading about David in the Old Testament. This can be translated showing the implicit information. Alternate translation: "read in the scriptures what David did"
Mark 2:26
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes asking the question he began in verse 25.
how he went into the house of God ... to those who were with him?
This question began in 2:25. If you translated the rhetorical question as a statement or command in verse 25, then the question mark here should become a period. Alternate translation: "how he went into the house of God ... to those who were with him."
how he went into the house of God ... to those who were with him
This can be expressed as a statement separate from verse 25. If so, verse 25 should end with a period instead of a dash. Alternate translation: "He went into the house of God ... to those who were with him"
how he went
The word "he" refers to David.
the bread of the presence
This refers to the twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God.
Mark 2:27
The Sabbath was made for mankind
Jesus makes clear why God established the Sabbath. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God made the Sabbath for mankind"
mankind
"man" or "people" or "the needs of people." This word refers to both men and women.
not mankind for the Sabbath
The words "was made" are understood from the previous

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phrase. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "mankind was not made for the Sabbath" or "God did not make mankind for the Sabbath"

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3 [1]Again Jesus walked into the synagogue, and there was a man with a withered hand.[2]Some people watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath so that they could accuse him.
[3]Jesus said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and stand here in the middle of everyone."[4]Then he said to the people, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day or to do harm; to save a life or to kill?" But they were silent.
[5]He looked around at them with anger, and he was grieved by their hardness of heart, and he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.[6]The Pharisees went out and immediately began to plot with the Herodians as to how they might put him to death.

[7]Then Jesus, with his disciples, went to the sea, and a great crowd of people followed from Galilee and from Judea[8]and from Jerusalem and from Idumea and beyond the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. When they heard about the things he was doing, a great crowd came to him.
[9]He told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not press against him.
[10]For he healed many, so that everyone who had afflictions eagerly approached him in order to touch him.
[11]Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, and they said, "You are the Son of God."[12]He strictly ordered them not to make him known.

[13]He went up on the mountain, and he called for those he wanted, and they came to him.[14]He appointed the twelve (whom he named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them to proclaim the message,[15]and to have authority to cast out demons.[16]He appointed the twelve: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter;
[17]James son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder";
[18]and Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot,[19]and Judas Iscariot, who would betray him.

[20]Then he went home, and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat bread.[21]When his family heard about it, they went out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."
[22]The scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul" and "By the ruler of the demons he drives out demons."

[23]Jesus called them to himself and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?[24]If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.[25]If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.
[26]If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he is not able to stand, but has come to an end.[27]But no one can enter into the house of a strong man and steal his belongings without tying up the strong man first, and then he will plunder his house.
[28]Truly I say to you, all sins of the sons of men will be forgiven, even all the blasphemies which they utter,[29]but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."
[30]Jesus said this because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

[31]Then his mother and his brothers came and stood outside. They sent for him, summoning him.[32]A crowd was sitting around him and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside, and they are looking for you."

[33]He answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"[34]He looked around at those who were sitting in a circle around him and said, "See, here are my mother and my brothers![35]For whoever does the will of God, that person is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Mark 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sabbath

It was against the law of Moses to do work on the Sabbath. The Pharisees believed healing a sick person on the Sabbath was "work," so they said that Jesus did wrong when he healed a person on the Sabbath. (See: lawofmoses)

"Blasphemy against the Spirit"

No one knows for sure what actions people perform or what words they say when they commit this sin. However, they probably insult the Holy Spirit and his work. Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to make people understand that they are sinners and that they need to have God forgive them. Therefore, anyone who does not try to stop sinning is probably

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committing blasphemy against the Spirit. (See: blasphemy and holyspirit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

Links:

Mark 3:1 Notes

Mark 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath in the synagogue and shows how he feels about what the Pharisees had done with the Sabbath rules. The Pharisees and Herodians begin planning to put Jesus to death.

a man with a withered hand

"a man with a crippled hand"

Mark 3:2

Some people watched him closely to see if he would heal him

"Some people watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal the man with the withered hand"

Some people

"Some of the Pharisees." Later, in Mark 3:6, these people are identified as Pharisees.

so that they could accuse him

If Jesus were to heal the man that day, the Pharisees would accuse him of breaking the law by working on the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "so that they could accuse him of wrongdoing" or "so that they could accuse him of breaking the law"

Mark 3:3

in the middle of everyone

"in the middle of this crowd"

Mark 3:4

Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath ... or to kill?

Jesus said this to challenge them. He wanted them to acknowledge that it is lawful to heal people on the Sabbath.

to do good on the Sabbath day or to do harm ... to save a life or to kill

These two phrases are similar in meaning, except that the second is more extreme.

to save a life or to kill

It may be helpful to repeat "is it lawful," as that is the question Jesus is asking again in another way. Alternate translation: "is it lawful to save a life or to kill"

to save a life

"to save someone's life" or "to save someone from dying"

But they were silent

"But they refused to answer him"

Mark 3:5

He looked around

"Jesus looked around"

was grieved

"was deeply saddened"

by their hardness of heart

This metaphor describes how the Pharisees were unwilling to have compassion on the man with the withered hand. Alternate translation: "because they were unwilling to have compassion on the man"

Stretch out your hand

"Reach out with your hand"

his hand was restored

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus restored his hand" or "Jesus made his hand the way it was before"

Mark 3:6

began to plot

"began to make a plan"

the Herodians

This is the name of an informal political party that supported Herod Antipas.

how they might put him to death

"how they might kill Jesus"

Mark 3:7

Connecting Statement:

A great crowd of people follows Jesus, and he heals many people.

the sea

This refers to the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 3:8

Idumea

This is the region, previously known as Edom, which covered the southern half of the province of Judea.

the things he was doing

This refers to the miracles Jesus was performing. Alternate translation: "the great miracles that Jesus was performing"

came to him

"came to where Jesus was"

Mark 3:9

General Information:

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Verse 9 tells what Jesus asked his disciples to do because of the large crowd of people around him. Verse 10 tells why such a large crowd was around Jesus. The information in these verses can be reordered to present the events in the order they happened, as in the UDB.

He told his disciples to have a small boat ... not press against him

As the large crowd was pushing forward toward Jesus, he was in danger of being crushed by them. They would not crush him intentionally. It was just that there were so many people.

Mark 3:10

For he healed many, so that everyone ... to touch him

This tells why so many people were crowding around Jesus that he thought they might crush him. Alternate translation: "For, because Jesus had healed many people, everyone ... to touch him"

For he healed many

The word "many" refers to the large number of people Jesus had already healed. Alternate translation: "For he healed many people"

everyone who had afflictions eagerly approached him in order to touch him

They did this because they believed that touching Jesus would make them well. This can be expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "all the sick people pushed forward eagerly trying to touch him so that they might be healed"

Mark 3:11

saw him

"saw Jesus"

they fell down ... cried out, and they said

Here "they" refers to the unclean spirits. It is they who are causing the people they possess to do things. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they caused the people they were possessing to fall down before him and to cry out to him"

they fell down before him

The unclean spirits did not fall down before Jesus because they loved him or wanted to worship him. They fell down before him because they were afraid of him.

You are the Son of God

Jesus has power over unclean spirits because he is the "Son of God."

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Mark 3:12

He strictly ordered them

"Jesus strictly ordered the unclean spirits"

not to make him known

"not to reveal who he was"

Mark 3:13

General Information:

Jesus chooses the men he wants to be his apostles.

Mark 3:14

so that they might be with him and he might send them to proclaim the message

"so that they would be with him and he could send them to proclaim the message"

Mark 3:16

Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter

The author begins to list the names of the twelve apostles. Simon is the first man listed.

Mark 3:17

to whom he gave

The phrase "to whom" refers to both James son of Zebedee and his brother John.

the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder

Jesus called them this because they were like thunder. Alternate translation: "the name Boanerges, which means men who are like thunder" or "the name Boanerges, which means Thunder Men"

Mark 3:18

Thaddaeus

This is the name of a man.

Mark 3:19

who would betray him

"who would betray Jesus" The word "who" refers to Judas Iscariot.

Mark 3:20

Then he went home

"Then Jesus went to the house where he was staying."

they could not even eat bread

The word "bread" represents food. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his disciples could not eat at all" or "they could not eat anything"

Mark 3:21

they went out to seize him

Members of his family went to the house so that they could take hold of him and force him to go home with them.

for they said

Possible meanings for the word "they" are 1) his relatives or 2) some people in the crowd.

out of his mind

This idiom describes how they thought he was acting. Alternate translation: "crazy" or "insane"

Mark 3:22

By the ruler of the demons he drives out demons

"By the power of Beelzebul, who is the ruler of the demons, Jesus drives out demons"

Mark 3:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus explains with a parable why it is foolish for people to think that Jesus is controlled by Satan.

Jesus called them to himself

"Jesus called the people to come to him"

How can Satan cast out Satan?

Jesus asked this rhetorical question in response to the scribes saying that he cast out demons by Beelzebul. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Satan cannot cast out himself!" or "Satan does not go against his own evil spirits!"

Mark 3:24

If a kingdom is divided against itself

The word "kingdom" is a metonym for the people who live in the kingdom. Alternate translation: "If the people who live in a kingdom are divided against each other"

cannot stand

Here "stand" is a metaphor that means endure, or continue to exist. Alternate translation: "cannot endure" or "will end"

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Mark 3:25

house

This is a metonym for the people who live in a house. Alternate translation: "family" or "household"

Mark 3:26

If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided

The word "himself" is a reflexive pronoun that refers back to Satan, and it is also a metonym for his evil spirits. Alternate translation: "If Satan and his evil spirits were fighting one another" or "If Satan and his evil spirits have risen up against each other and are divided"

is not able to stand

Here "stand" is a metaphor that means endure, or stay strong. Alternate translation: "cannot endure" or "cannot stay strong"

Mark 3:27

plunder

to steal a person's valuables and possessions

Mark 3:28

Truly I say to you

This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important.

the sons of men

"those who have been born of man." This expression is used to emphasize peoples' humanity. Alternate translation: "people"

utter

speak

Mark 3:29

will never have forgiveness

The idea in the noun forgiveness can be expressed with a phrase. Alternate translation: "will never be forgiven"

is guilty of an eternal sin

"Eternal sin" is a metonym for "a sin that will be eternally punished." Alternate translation: "is guilty of a sin that will be punished eternally"

Mark 3:30

they were saying

"the people were saying"

has an unclean spirit

This is an idiom that means to be possessed by an unclean spirit. Alternate translation: "is possessed by an unclean spirit"

Mark 3:31

Then his mother and his brothers came

"Then Jesus's mother and brothers came"

They sent for him, summoning him

"They sent someone inside to tell him that they were outside and to have him come out to them"

Mark 3:32

are looking for you

"are asking for you"

Mark 3:33

Who are my mother and my brothers?

Jesus uses this question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "I will tell you who are really my mother and brothers."

Mark 3:34

here are my mother and my brothers

This is a metaphor that means Jesus's disciples belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family.

Mark 3:35

whoever does ... that person is

"those who do ... they are"

that person is my brother, and sister, and mother

This is a metaphor that means Jesus's disciples belong to Jesus's spiritual family. This is more important than belonging to his physical family. Alternate translation: "that person is like a brother, sister, or mother to me"

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4 [1]Again he began to teach beside the sea, and a large crowd gathered around him. He stepped into a boat that was on the sea, and he sat down in it. The whole crowd was on the shore beside the sea.[2]He taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching, this is what he said to them.

[3]"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed.[4]As he sowed, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and devoured it.[5]Other seed fell on the rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. Immediately it sprang up, because it did not have deep soil.

[6]But when the sun rose, the plants were scorched, and because they had no root, they dried up.[7]Other seed fell among the thorn plants. The thorn plants grew up and choked it, and it did not produce a crop.

[8]Other seed fell into good soil, and it produced a crop growing up and increasing and yielding thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times."[9]Then he said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear!"

[10]When Jesus was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.[11]He said to them, "To you is given the mystery of the kingdom of God. But to those outside everything is in parables,

[12] so that when they look,
yes they look,
but do not see,
and so that when they hear,
yes they hear,
but do not understand,
or else they would turn
and God would forgive them."

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[13]He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?[14]The sower sows the word.[15]These are the ones beside the road, where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them.
[16]And these are the seed sown on the rocky ground; who, when they hear the word immediately receive it with joy.[17]But they do not have root in themselves, but they endure for a while. Afterward when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, they immediately fall away.
[18]Still others are the ones sown among the thorns. They are those who hear the word,[19]but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, and it is unproductive.[20]Those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word, accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much."

[21]Jesus said to them, "Do you bring a lamp inside the house to put it under a basket or under the bed? You bring it in and you put it on a lampstand.[22]For nothing is hidden that will not be known, and nothing is secret that will not come out into the open.[23]If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!"
[24]He said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear, for the measure you use will be measured to you, and more will be added to you.[25]Because whoever has, to him will be given more, and whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken."

[26]He also said, "The kingdom of God is like a man who sows his seed on the ground.[27]He sleeps at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how.[28]The earth bears grain by itself: First the blade, then the ear, then the mature grain in the ear.[29]When the crop is ripe, he immediately sends in the sickle because the harvest has come."

[30]Again he said, "To what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use to explain it?[31]It is like a mustard seed, which, when it is sown, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth.[32]Yet, when it is sown, it grows and becomes greater than all the garden plants, and it forms large branches, so that the birds of heaven can make their nests in its shade."

[33]With many parables like this he spoke the word to them, as much as they were able to understand,[34]and he did not speak to them without a parable. But when he was alone, he explained everything to his own disciples.

[35]On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go over to the other side."[36]So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There were other boats going along with him.[37]Just then a violent windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was almost full of water.
[38]But Jesus himself was in the stern, asleep on a cushion. They woke him up, saying, "Teacher, do you not care that we are about to die?"
[39]He got up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.
[40]Then he said to them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still not have faith?"
[41]They were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, because even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Mark 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Mark 4:3-10 forms one parable. The parable is explained in 4:14-23.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:12, which is a quotation from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Parables
The parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people would easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. He also told the stories so that those who did not want to believe in him would not understand the truth.

Links:

Mark 4:1 Notes

Mark 4:1
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus teaches from a boat at the seaside, he tells them the parable of the soils.
the sea
This is the Sea of Galilee.

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Mark 4:3

Listen!

"Pay attention!

A farmer went out to sow his seed

This means that he tossed seeds onto the ground so they could grow.

Mark 4:4

some seed ... devoured it

"some seeds ... devoured them"

Mark 4:5

Other seed ... it did not have ... it sprang ... it did not have

"Other seeds ... they did not have ... they sprang ... they did not have"

it sprang up

"the seed that landed on the rocky ground began to grow quickly"

soil

This refers to the loose dirt on the ground in which you can plant seeds.

Mark 4:6

the plants were scorched

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it scorched the young plants"

because they had no root, they dried up

"because the young plants had no roots, they dried up"

Mark 4:7

Other seed ... choked it ... it did not produce

"Other seeds ... choked them ... they did not produce"

Mark 4:8

yielding thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times

The amount of grain produced by each plant is being compared to the single seed from which it grew. Ellipsis is used here to shorten the phrases but they can be written out. Alternate translation: "Some plants bore thirty times as much as the seed that the man had planted, some produced sixty times as much grain, and some produced a hundred times as much grain"

thirty ... sixty ... a hundred

"30 ... 60 ... 100." These may be written as numerals.

Mark 4:9

Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has ears" is a metonym for being willing to understand and obey. Alternate translation: "Whoever is willing to listen, listen" or "Whoever is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"

Whoever has ... let him hear

Since Jesus wanted his audience to pay attention, this can also be expressed with the word "you." Alternate translation: "If you have ears to hear, then hear" or "If you are willing to understand, then understand and obey"

Mark 4:10

When Jesus was alone

This does not mean that Jesus was completely alone; rather, it means that the crowds were gone and Jesus was only with the twelve and some of his other close followers.

Mark 4:11

To you is given

This can be stated in active form. "God has given you" or "I have given you"

to those outside

"to those outside our group" or "to those who are not among us." This refers to all the other people who were not among the twelve or Jesus's other close followers.

everything is in parables

It can be stated that Jesus gives the parables to the people. Alternate translation: "I have spoken everything in parables"

Mark 4:12

when they look ... when they hear

It is assumed that Jesus is speaking about the people looking at what he shows them and hearing what he tells them. Alternate translation: "when they look at what I am doing ... when they hear what I am saying"

they look, but do not see

Possible meanings are 1) the word "look" here refers to making an effort to see and "see" refers to actually being able to see what they have looked for and is a metaphor for "understand." Alternate translation: "they look, but they do not understand" Or 2) here the word translated "look" refers to seeing what one is looking at and the word translated "see" refers to understanding what they are seeing.

they would turn

"they would turn to God." Here "turn" is a metaphor for "repent." Alternate translation: "they would repent"

Mark 4:13

He said to them

"Then Jesus said to his disciples"

Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?

Jesus used these questions to show how sad he was that his disciples could not understand his parable. Alternate translation: "If you cannot understand this parable, think about how hard it will be for you to understand all the other parables."

Mark 4:14

General Information:

Jesus begins to explain the parable he told in [Mark 4:3-8]

The sower

"The farmer who sows his seed"

sows the word

Sowing God's word represents teaching it. Alternate translation: "teaches people God's word" or "represents one who teaches God's word"

the word

The phrase "the word" represents God's message. Alternate translation: "God's message"

Mark 4:15

These are the ones beside the road

Here Jesus speaks about people. Alternate translation: "These people are the seeds that fall beside the road" or "These people are like seeds that fall beside a road"

When they hear

"When they hear the word"

Mark 4:16

these are the seed sown on the rocky ground

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"These people are the seeds that fall on the rocky ground" or "These people are like seeds that fall on the rocky ground"

Mark 4:17

they do not have root in themselves

Having no root represents not fully understanding or believing God's word. Alternate translation: "they are like young plants that have no roots"

endure

In this parable, "endure" means "continue to believe." Alternate translation: "continue in their belief"

tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word

The phrase "on account of the word" means "because they believe God's message. Alternate translation: "tribulation or persecution comes because they believe God's message"

they immediately fall away

In this parable, "fall away" means "stop believing God's message"

Mark 4:18

Still others are the ones sown among the thorns

"Still other people are the seeds that fall among the thorns" or "And other people are like seeds that fall among the thorns"

Mark 4:19

the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word

The words "cares," "deceitfulness," and "desires" are spoken of as if they were weeds that wrap around plants and keep them from growing. Alternate translation: "the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke God's message in their lives like thorns that choke young plants"

the cares of the world

"the worries in this life" or "the concerns about this present life"

the deceitfulness of wealth

"the lie that wealth will make them happy" or "the lie that having many possessions will make them happy"

it is unproductive

"the word does not produce a crop in them." The word being unproductive means that it does not have an effect on the person's life.

Mark 4:20

Those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word, accept it and bear fruit

"The seeds that fall on the good soil represent people who hear the word, accept it and bear fruit"

and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much

Fruit represents the results or effect of God's word in a person's life. The numbers tell how much fruit there might be, or how great the results might be. Alternate translation: "and produce good results, like plants that bear thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much fruit as what was sown"

Mark 4:21

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to the crowd"

Do you bring a lamp inside the house to put it under a basket or under the bed?

This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You certainly do not bring a lamp inside the house to put it under a basket, or under a bed!"

Mark 4:22

For nothing is hidden that will not be known ... come out into the open

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "For everything that is hidden will be made known, and everything that is secret will come out into to open"

nothing is hidden ... nothing is secret

"there is nothing that is hidden ... there is nothing that is secret" Both of the phrases have the same meaning. Jesus is emphasizing that everything that is secret will be made known.

Mark 4:23

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Mark 4:9]

If anyone ... let him hear

Since Jesus wanted his audience to pay attention, this can also be expressed with the word "you." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Mark 4:9]

Mark 4:24

He said to them

"Jesus said to the crowd"

for the measure you use

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is talking about a literal measure and giving generously to others or 2) this is a metaphor in which Jesus speaks of "understanding" as if it were "measuring."

will be measured to you, and more will be added to you.

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will measure that amount for you, and he will add it to you"

Mark 4:25

to him will be given more ... even what he has will be taken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to him God will give more ... from him God will take away" or "God will give more to him ... God will take away from him"

Mark 4:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells the people parables to teach them about the kingdom of God. Later he explains the parables to his disciples.

like a man who sows his seed

When someone sows seed, he plants the seed by scattering it on the ground. Alternate translation: "like a farmer who plants his seed" or "like a farmer who scatters his seed"

Mark 4:27

He sleeps at night and gets up by day

This is something that the man habitually does. Alternate translation: "He sleeps each night and gets up each day" or "He sleeps each night and gets up the next day"

gets up by day

"is up during the day" or "is active during the day"

though he does not know how

"though the man does not know how the seed sprouts and grows"

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Mark 4:28
the blade
the stalk or sprout
the ear
the head on the stalk or the part of the plant that holds the fruit
Mark 4:29
he immediately sends in the sickle
Here "the sickle" is a metonym that stands for the farmer or the people whom the farmer sends out to harvest the grain. Alternate translation: "he immediately goes into the field with a sickle to harvest the grain" or "he immediately sends people with sickles into the field to harvest the grain"
sickle
a curved blade or a sharp hook used to cut grain
because the harvest has come
Here the words "has come" are part of an idiom that means it is time for something. Alternative translation: "because it is time for harvesting the grain" or "because the grain is ready to be gathered"
Mark 4:30
To what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use to explain it?
Jesus asked this question to cause his hearers to think about what the kingdom of God is like. Alternate translation: "With this parable I can explain what the kingdom of God is like."
Mark 4:31
when it is sown
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone sows it" or "when someone plants it"
Mark 4:32
it forms large branches
The mustard tree is described as causing its branches to grow large. Alternate translation: "it has large branches"
Mark 4:33
he spoke the word to them
"Word" here is a synecdoche for "the message of God." The word "them" refers to the crowds. Alternate translation: "he taught them the message of God"
as much as they were able to understand
"and if they were able to understand some, he kept telling them more"
Mark 4:34
when he was alone
This means that he was away from the crowds, but his disciples were still with him.
he explained everything
Here "everything" refers to all his parables. Alternate translation: "he explained all his parables"
Mark 4:35
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus and his disciples take a boat to escape the crowds of people, a great storm arises. His disciples are afraid when they see that even the wind and the sea obey Jesus.
he said to them
"Jesus said to his disciples"
the other side
"the other side of the Sea of Galilee" or "the other side of the sea"
Mark 4:37
a violent windstorm arose
Here "arose" is an idiom for "began." Alternate translation: "a violent windstorm began"
the boat was almost full of water
It may be helpful to state that the boat was filling up with water. Alternate translation: "the boat was in danger of being filled with water"
Mark 4:38
the stern
The stern is the back part of the boat.
They woke him up
The word "they" refers to the disciples.
do you not care that we are about to die?
The disciples asked this question to show that they were in great danger and that they were upset that Jesus was not helping them. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you need to pay attention to what is happening; we are all about to die!"
we are about to die
The word "we" includes the disciples and Jesus.
Mark 4:39
Peace! Be still!
These two phrases are similar and used to emphasize what Jesus wanted the wind and the sea to do.
a great calm
"a great stillness over the sea" or "a great calm over the sea"
Mark 4:40
Then he said to them
"And Jesus said to his disciples"
Why are you afraid? Do you still not have faith?
Jesus asks these questions to make his disciples consider why they are afraid when he is with them. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You should not be afraid. You need to have more faith."
Mark 4:41
Who then is this, because even the wind and the sea obey him?
The disciples ask this question in amazement at what Jesus did. This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This man is not like ordinary men; even the wind and the sea obey him!"

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5 [1]They came to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gerasenes.[2]When Jesus was getting out of the boat, a man with an unclean spirit came up to him out of the tombs.
[3]The man lived in the tombs. No one could restrain him anymore, not even with a chain.[4]He had been bound many times with shackles and with chains. He tore the chains apart and his shackles were shattered. No one had the strength to subdue him.
[5]Every night and day in the tombs and in the mountains, he cried out and cut himself with sharp stones.[6]When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran to him and bowed down before him.

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[7]He cried out with a loud voice, "What do I have to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you by God himself, do not torment me."[8]For he had been saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit."

[9]He asked him, "What is your name?"He answered him, "My name is Legion, for we are many."
[10]He begged him again and again not to send them out of the region.
[11]Now a great herd of pigs was there feeding on the hill,[12]and they begged him, saying, "Send us into the pigs; let us enter into them."[13]So he allowed them; the unclean spirits came out and entered into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep hill into the sea, and about two thousand pigs drowned in the sea.
[14]Then those who were feeding the pigs ran away and reported what had happened in the city and in the countryside, and so people went out to see what had happened.[15]Then they came to Jesus and they saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.
[16]Those who had seen what happened to the demon-possessed man told them about it in detail, and they also told them about the pigs.[17]Then they started to beg him to leave their region.

[18]When he was getting into the boat, the demon-possessed man begged him that he might be with him.[19]But Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go to your house and to your people and tell them what the Lord has done for you, and how he has shown you mercy."[20]So he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis the great things that Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

[21]Now when Jesus had crossed over again to the other side in the boat, a great crowd gathered around him, as he was beside the sea.[22]Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came, and when he saw him, fell at his feet.[23]He begged again and again, saying, "My little daughter is near death. I beg you, come and lay your hands on her that she may be made well and live."[24]So he went with him, and a great crowd followed him and pressed close around him.

[25]Now a woman was there who had a flow of blood for twelve years.[26]She had suffered much from many doctors and had spent everything that she had, but instead of getting better she grew worse.[27]When she had heard the reports about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.
[28]For she said, "If I touch just his clothes, I will be healed."[29]When she touched him, the bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed from her affliction.

[30]Jesus immediately realized in himself that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"
[31]His disciples said to him, "You see this crowd pressed around you, and you say, 'Who touched me?'"
[32]But Jesus looked around to see who had done it.
[33]The woman, knowing what had happened to her, feared and trembled. She came and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.[34]He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed from your affliction."

[35]While he was speaking, some people came from the synagogue leader's house, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any longer?"

[36]But when Jesus overheard the message that was spoken, he said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid. Just believe."[37]He did not permit anyone to accompany him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.[38]They came to the house of the leader of the synagogue and he saw there people making a lot of noise; they were weeping and wailing loudly.
[39]When he entered the house, he said to them, "Why are you upset and why do you weep? The child is not dead but sleeps."[40]They began to mock him. But he put them all outside and took the father of the child and the mother and those who were with him, and he went in where the child was.
[41]He took the hand of the child and said to her, "Talitha, koum!" which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, get up."[42]Immediately the child got up and walked (for she was twelve years of age). They were immediately astonished with overwhelming amazement.[43]He strictly ordered them that no one should know about this. Then he told them to give her something to eat.

Mark 5 General Notes

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Talitha, koum"
The words "Talitha, koum"

Links:

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Mark 5:1

Connecting Statement:

After Jesus calms the great storm, he heals a man who has many demons, but the local people in Gerasa are not glad about his healing, and they beg Jesus to leave.

They came

The word "They" refers to Jesus and his disciples.

the sea

This refers to the Sea of Galilee.

Gerasenes

This name refers to the people who live in Gerasa.

Mark 5:2

with an unclean spirit

This is an idiom meaning that the man is "controlled" or "possessed" by the unclean spirit. Alternate translation: "controlled by an unclean spirit" or "that an unclean spirit possessed"

Mark 5:4

He had been bound many times

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "People had bound him many times"

his shackles were shattered

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "he shattered his shackles"

shackles

pieces of metal that people wrap around the arms and legs of prisoners and attach with chains to objects that do not move so the prisoners cannot move

No one had the strength to subdue him

The man was so strong that no one could subdue him. Alternate translation: "He was so strong that no one was strong enough to subdue him"

subdue him

"control him"

Mark 5:5

cut himself with sharp stones

Often when a person is possessed by a demon, the demon will cause the person to do self-destructive things, such as cutting himself.

Mark 5:6

When he saw Jesus from a distance

When the man first saw Jesus, Jesus would have been getting out of the boat.

bowed down

This means that he knelt down before Jesus out of reverence and respect, not out of worship.

Mark 5:7

General Information:

The information in verses 7 and 8 may be reordered to present the events in the order that they happened, as in the UDB.

He cried out

"The unclean spirit cried out"

What do I have to do with you, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?

The unclean spirit asks this question out of fear. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Leave me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God! There is no reason for you to interfere with me."

Jesus ... do not torment me

Jesus has the power to torment unclean spirits.

Son of the Most High God

This is an important title for Jesus.

I beg you by God himself

Here the unclean spirit is swearing by God as he makes a request of Jesus. Consider how this type of request is made in your language. Alternate translation: "I beg you before God" or "I swear by God himself and beg you"

Mark 5:9

He asked him

"And Jesus asked the unclean spirit"

He answered him, "My name is Legion, for we are many."

One spirit was speaking for many here. He spoke of them as if they were a legion, a Roman army unit of about 6,000 soldiers. Alternate translation: "And the spirit said to him, 'Call us an army, for many of us are inside the man.'"

Mark 5:10

He begged him

"The unclean spirit begged Jesus"

not to send them

"not to send him and the other unclean spirits"

Mark 5:12

they begged him

"the unclean spirits begged Jesus"

Mark 5:13

he allowed them

It may be helpful to state clearly what Jesus allowed them to do. Alternate translation: "Jesus allowed the unclean spirits to do what they asked permission to do"

into the sea, and about two thousand pigs drowned in the sea

You can make the words after the comma a separate sentence: "into the sea. There were about two thousand pigs, and they drowned in the sea"

about two thousand pigs

"about 2,000 pigs"

Mark 5:14

reported what had happened in the city and in the countryside

"told people in the city and in the countryside what had happened"

Mark 5:15

Legion

This was the name of the many demons that had been in the man. See how you translated this in Mark 5:9.

in his right mind

This is an idiom meaning that he is thinking clearly. Alternate translation: "of a normal mind" or "thinking clearly"

they were afraid

The word "they" refers to the group of people who went out to see what had happened.

Mark 5:16

Those who had seen what happened

"The people who had witnessed what had happened"

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Mark 5:18
the demon-possessed man
Though the man is no longer demon-possessed, he is still described in this way. Alternate translation: "the man who had been demon-possessed"
Mark 5:19
But Jesus did not permit him
What Jesus did not allow the man to do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "But he did not allow the man to come with them"
Mark 5:20
Decapolis
This is the name of a region that means Ten Cities. It is located to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee.
everyone was amazed
It may be helpful to state why the people were amazed. Alternate translation: "all the people who heard what the man said were amazed"
Mark 5:21
Connecting Statement:
After healing the demon-possessed man in region of the Gerasenes, Jesus and his disciples return across the lake to Capernaum where one of the leaders of the synagogue asks Jesus to heal his daughter.
the other side
This refers to the other side of the sea
beside the sea
"on the seashore" or "on the shore"
the sea
This is the Sea of Galilee.
Mark 5:22
Jairus
This is the name of a man.
Mark 5:23
lay your hands
"Laying on hands" refers to a prophet or teacher placing his hand on someone and imparting either healing or a blessing. In this case, Jarius is asking Jesus to heal his daughter.
that she may be made well and live
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and heal her and make her live"
Mark 5:24
So he went with him
"So Jesus went with Jairus." Jesus's disciples also went with him. Alternate translation: "So Jesus and the disciples went with Jairus"
pressed close around him
This means they crowded around Jesus and pressed themselves together to be closer to Jesus.
Mark 5:25
Connecting Statement:
While Jesus is on his way to heal the man's little 12-year-old girl, a woman who has been sick for 12 years interrupts by touching Jesus for her healing.
Now a woman was there
The word "Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here the author starts to tell a new part of the story with a new person. Consider how new people are introduced into a story in your language.
who had a flow of blood for twelve years
The woman did not have an open wound; rather, her monthly flow of blood would not stop. Your language may have a polite way to refer to this condition.
for twelve years
"for 12 years"
Mark 5:26
she grew worse
"her sickness got worse" or "her bleeding increased"
Mark 5:27
the reports about Jesus
She had heard reports about Jesus of how he healed people. Alternate translation: "that Jesus healed people"
cloak
outer garment or coat
Mark 5:28
I will be healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it will heal me" or "his power will heal me"
Mark 5:29
she was healed from her affliction
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sickness left her" or "she was no longer sick"
Mark 5:30
that power had gone out from him
When the woman touched Jesus, Jesus felt his power healing her. Jesus himself did not lose any of his power to heal people when he healed her. Alternate translation: "that his healing power had healed someone"
Mark 5:31
this crowd pressed around you
This means they crowded around Jesus and pressed themselves together to be closer to Jesus. See how you translated this in Mark 5:24.
Mark 5:33
fell down before him
"knelt down before him." She knelt down before Jesus as an act of honor and submission.
told him the whole truth
The phrase "the whole truth" refers to how she had touched him and had became well. Alternate translation: "told him the whole truth about how she had touched him"
Mark 5:34
Daughter
Jesus called the woman "Daughter." This was a kind way for a teacher to speak to a woman. Jesus showed that he cared about her.
your faith
"your faith in me"
Mark 5:35
While he was speaking
"While Jesus was speaking"
the synagogue leader
This refers to Jairus (Mark 5:22).
Why trouble the teacher any longer?
This question can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is useless to bother the teacher any longer" or "There is no need to bother the teacher any longer."

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the teacher
This refers to Jesus.
Mark 5:36
the message that was spoken
This can be stated as in active form. Alternate translation: "the message that they told Jairus"
Just believe
If necessary, you can state what Jesus is commanding Jairus to believe. Alternate translation: "Just believe I can make you daughter live"
Mark 5:37
General Information:
In verses 37 and 38, the author gives background information about the Pharisees' washing traditions in order to show why the Pharisees were bothered that Jesus's disciples did not wash their hands before eating. If you need to reorder the events in these verses, it may be helpful to use a verse bridge, as in the UDB.
He did not permit anyone to accompany him except Peter ... James
This double negative emphasizes that Peter and the others were the only ones whom he permitted to accompany him. Alternate translation: "He only permitted Peter ... James to accompany him"
He did not permit
Jesus did not permit
to accompany him
"to come with him." It may be helpful to state where they were going. Alternate translation: "to accompany him to Jairus' house"
Mark 5:38
General Information:
In verses 37 and 38, the author gives background information about the Pharisees' washing traditions in order to show why the Pharisees were bothered that Jesus's disciples did not wash their hands before eating. If you need to reorder the events in these verses, it may be helpful to use a verse bridge, as in the UDB.
he saw
Jesus saw
Mark 5:39
he said to them
"Jesus said to the people who were weeping"
Why are you upset and why do you weep?
Jesus asked this question to help them see their lack of faith. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is not a time to be upset and crying."
The child is not dead but sleeps
Jesus uses the common word for sleep, and so should the translation.
Mark 5:40
They began to mock him
Jesus used the common word for sleep (verse 39). The reader should understand that the people who hear Jesus speak are laughing at him because they truly do know the difference between a dead person and a sleeping person and they think he does not.
put them all outside
"sent all the other people outside the house"
those who were with him
This refers to Peter, James, and John.
went in where the child was
It may be helpful to state where the child is. Alternate translation: "went into the room where the child was lying"
Mark 5:41
Talitha, koum
This is an Aramaic sentence that Jesus spoke to the little girl in her language. Write these words as they sound, using your alphabet.
Mark 5:42
she was twelve years of age
"she was 12 years old"
Mark 5:43
He strictly ordered them that no one should know about this. Then
This can be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "He ordered them strictly, 'No one should know about this!' Then" or "He ordered them strictly, 'Do not tell anyone about what I have done!' Then"
He strictly ordered them
"He strongly commanded them"
Then he told them to give her something to eat.
This can be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "And he told them, 'Give her something to eat.'"

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6 [1]He went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.[2]When the Sabbath came, he taught in the synagogue. Many people heard him and they were amazed. They said, "Where did he get these teachings?" "What is this wisdom that has been given to him?" "What are these miracles that he does with his hands?"[3]"Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are his sisters not here with us?" They were offended by Jesus.[1]

[4]Then Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household."[5]He could not do any mighty work, except to lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.[6]He was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went around the villages teaching.

[7]Then he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits, [8]and instructed them to take nothing for their journey, except a staff—no bread, no bag, and no money in their belts—[9]but to wear sandals, and not to wear two tunics.
[10]He said to them, "Whenever you enter a house, remain until you go away from there.[11]If any town will not receive you or listen to you, when you leave that place, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony to them."
[12]They went out and proclaimed that people should repent.[13]They cast out many demons, and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

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[14]King Herod heard this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in him."[15]Some others said, "He is Elijah." Still others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets in ancient times."

[16]But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."
[17]For Herod sent to have John arrested and he had him bound in prison on account of Herodias (his brother Philip's wife), because he had married her.
[18]For John told Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."[19]But Herodias held on to anger against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not,[20]for Herod feared John; he knew that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. Listening to him made him greatly perplexed, yet he heard him gladly.

[21]Then an opportunity came when Herod had his birthday and he made a dinner for his officials and for the commanders and leaders of Galilee.[22]The daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced for them, and she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want and I will give it to you."
[23]He swore to her saying, "Whatever you ask of me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."
[24]She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask him for?"She said, "The head of John the Baptist."

[25]She immediately hurried back to the king, and she asked, saying, "I want you to give me, right now, the head of John the Baptist on a wooden platter."
[26]Though this deeply grieved the king, he could not refuse her request because of the oath he had made and because of his dinner guests.[27]So the king sent a soldier from his guard and commanded him to bring him John's head. The guard went and beheaded him in the prison.[28]He brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother.[29]When his disciples heard of this, they came and took his body and placed it in a tomb.

[30]The apostles came together with Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught.[31]Then he said to them, "Come away by yourselves into a deserted place and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.[32]So they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.
[33]But they saw them leaving and many recognized them, and they ran there together on foot from all the towns, and they arrived there before them.[34]When they came ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things.

[35]When the hour was late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late.[36]Send them away so that they may go into the nearby countryside and villages to buy something to eat for themselves."

[37]But he answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat."They said to him, "Can we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?"

[38]He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see."When they found out, they said, "Five loaves and two fish."
[39]He commanded all the people to sit down in groups upon the green grass.[40]They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.[41]He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven he blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.
[42]They all ate until they were satisfied.[43]They took up broken pieces of bread, twelve baskets full, and also pieces of the fish.[44]There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

[45]Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he sent the crowd away.[46]After taking leave of them, he went up the mountain to pray.[47]Evening came, and the boat was now in the middle of the sea, and he was alone on land.
[48]He saw that they were straining against the oars, for the wind was against them. About the fourth watch of the night, he came to them, walking on the sea, and he wanted to pass by them.[49]But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought he was a ghost and cried out,[50]because they saw him and were troubled. Immediately he spoke to them and said to them, "Be courageous! It is I! Do not be afraid!"
[51]He got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased blowing. They were completely amazed.[52]For they had not understood what the loaves meant. Instead, their hearts were hardened.

[53]When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and anchored the boat.[54]When they came out of the boat, the people recognized him immediately,[55]and they ran throughout the whole region and began to bring the sick on their mats to wherever they heard he was.

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[56]Wherever he entered into villages, or cities, or into the country, they would put the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch the edge of his garment, and as many as touched him were healed.

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[1]The man called Joses here is called Joseph in Matthew 27:56. The name Joseph represents how the name was spelled in Hebrew, and the name Joses represents how his name was spelled in Greek.

Mark 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Anointed with oil"

In the ancient Near East, people would try to heal sick people by putting olive oil on them.

Links:

Mark 6:1 Notes

Mark 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus returns to his hometown, where he is not accepted.

his hometown

This refers to the town of Nazareth, where Jesus grew up and where his family lived. This does not mean that he owned land there.

Mark 6:2

What is this wisdom that has been given to him?

This question can be asked in active form. Alternate translation: "What is this wisdom that he has gained?"

that he does with his hands

This phrase emphasizes that Jesus himself does the miracles. Alternate translation: "that he himself works"

Mark 6:3

Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are his sisters not here with us?

These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "He is just an ordinary carpenter! We know him and his family. We know Mary his mother. We know his younger brothers James, Joses, Judas and Simon. And his younger sisters also live here with us."

Mark 6:4

to them

"to the crowd"

A prophet is not without honor, except

This sentence uses a double negative to emphasize the positive. Alternate translation: "A prophet is always honored, except" or "People always honor prophets, except those"

Mark 6:5

to lay his hands on a few sick people

Prophets and teachers would put their hands on people in order to heal them or bless them. In this case, Jesus was healing people.

Mark 6:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus sends his disciples out in sets of two to preach and to heal.

he called the twelve

Here the word "called" means that he summoned the twelve to come to him.

two by two

"2 by 2" or "in pairs"

Mark 6:8

General Information:

Jesus's instructions in verses 8 and 9 can be reordered to separate what he told the disciples to do from what he told them not to do, as in the UDB.

to take nothing for their journey, except a staff

This double negative emphasizes that a staff is the only thing that they were to take. Alternate translation: "to take only a staff for their journey"

no bread

Here "bread" is a synecdoche for food in general. Alternate translation: "no food"

Mark 6:10

He said to them

"Jesus said to the twelve"

remain until you go away from there

Here "remain" represents daily going back to that house to eat and sleep there. Alternate translation: "eat and sleep in that house until you leave that area"

Mark 6:11

as a testimony to them

"as a testimony against them." The testimony can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "as a testimony that they did not welcome you" or "to show them that they did wrong when they did not welcome you"

Mark 6:12

They went out

The word "They" refers to the twelve and does not include Jesus. Also, it may be helpful to state that they went out to various towns. Alternate translation: "They went out to various towns"

repent

"stop sinning"

Mark 6:13

They cast out many demons

It may be helpful to state that they cast the demons out of people. Alternate translation: "They cast many demons out of people"

Mark 6:14

Connecting Statement:

Before this time, Herod commanded that John the Baptist be killed. When Herod hears about Jesus's miracles, he

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worries, thinking that someone has raised John the Baptist from the dead.

King Herod heard this

The word "this" refers to everything that Jesus and his disciples had been doing in various towns, including casting out demons and healing people.

Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised

Some people thought that Jesus was John the Baptist. This can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "Some people were saying, 'He is John the Baptist, who has been raised"

John the Baptist has been raised from the dead

"Raised from the dead" is an idiom that means "caused to live again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has raised John the Baptist from the dead" or "John the Baptist has become alive again"

Mark 6:15

Some others said, "He is Elijah."

It may be helpful to state why some people thought he was Elijah. Alternate translation: "Some others said, 'He is Elijah, whom God promised to send back again.'"

Mark 6:16

whom I beheaded

Herod said "I beheaded" because he had commanded his soldier to behead John. Alternate translation: "whom I commanded my soldier to behead"

has been raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has risen" or "has become alive again"

Mark 6:17

General Information:

Here the author begins to give background information about Herod and why he beheaded John the Baptist.

Herod sent to have John arrested and he had him bound in prison

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Herod sent his soldiers to arrest John and to bind him in prison"

on account of Herodias

"because of Herodias"

his brother Philip's wife

"the wife of his brother Philip." Herod's brother Philip is not the same Philip who was an evangelist in the book of Acts or the Philip who was one of Jesus's twelve disciples.

because he had married her

"because Herod had married her"

Mark 6:19

Herodias held on to anger against him

"Herodias continued to be angry at John"

and wanted to kill him

Herodias wanted someone to kill John. Alternate translation: "and she wanted someone to kill him"

but she could not

What she could not do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "but she could not kill him" or "but she could not have him killed"

Mark 6:20

for Herod feared John; he knew

These two clauses can be linked differently to show more clearly why Herod feared John. Alternate translation: "for Herod feared John because he knew"

he knew that he was a righteous

"Herod knew that John was a righteous"

Listening to him

"Listening to John"

Mark 6:21

Connecting Statement:

The author continues to give background information about Herod and the beheading of John the Baptist.

an opportunity came

"a convenient day" or "there was an opportune time." This was a time when Herodias could finally do something so that John the Baptist would be killed.

he made a dinner for his officials ... of Galilee

This means that he invited those people to a special dinner to celebrate his birthday with him. Alternate translation: "he had a banquet for his officials ... of Galilee" or "he invited his officials ... of Galilee to eat and celebrate with him"

a dinner

a formal meal or banquet

Mark 6:22

Herodias herself

The word "herself" is a reflexive pronoun used to emphasize that it was significant that it was Herodias's own daughter who danced at the dinner.

came in

"came into the room"

Mark 6:23

Whatever you ask ... my kingdom

"I will give you whatever you ask me to give to you, even half of what I own and rule, if you ask for that"

Mark 6:24

went out

"went out of the room"

Mark 6:25

on a wooden platter

"on a board" or "on a large wooden dish"

Mark 6:26

because of the oath he had made

The oath was what Herod swore to the girl in verse 23. Alternate translation: "because of what he had sworn to the girl" or "because he had sworn to give the girl whatever she asked for"

and because of his dinner guests

This can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "and because his dinner guests had heard his oath"

Mark 6:28

on a platter

"on a tray"

Mark 6:29

When his disciples

"When John's disciples"

Mark 6:30

Connecting Statement:

After the disciples return from preaching and healing, they go somewhere to be alone, but there are many people who come to hear Jesus teach. When it becomes late, he feeds the people and then sends everyone away while he prays

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alone.
Mark 6:31
a deserted place
a place where there are no people
many were coming and going
This means that people were continually coming to the apostles and then going away from them.
they did not even
The word "they" refers to the apostles.
Mark 6:32
So they went away
Here the word "they" includes both the apostles and Jesus.
Mark 6:33
they saw them leaving and many recognized them, and they ran there together on foot from all the towns, and they arrived there before them
The people saw Jesus and the apostles leaving, and many of the people recognized Jesus and the apostles, and the people ran there together on foot from all the towns, and the people arrived there before Jesus and the apostles did.
on foot
The people are going on foot by land, which contrasts with how the disciples went by boat.
Mark 6:34
When they came ... on them because they were like ... to teach them
When Jesus and the disciples came ... on the people in the crowd because the people in the crowd were like ... to teach the people in the crowd
they were like sheep without a shepherd
Jesus compares the people to sheep who are confused when they do not have their shepherd to lead them.
Mark 6:35
When the hour was late
This means it was late in the day. Alternate translation: "When it was getting late" or "Late in the afternoon"
a deserted place
This refers to a place where there are no people. See how you translated this in Mark 6:31.
Mark 6:37
But he answered and said to them
"But Jesus answered and said to his disciples"
Can we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?
The disciples ask this question to say that there is no way they could afford to buy enough food for this crowd. Alternate translation: "We could not buy enough bread to feed this crowd, even if we had two hundred denarii!"
two hundred denarii
"200 denarii." The singular form of the word "denarii" is "denarius." A denarius was a Roman silver coin worth one day's wages.
Mark 6:38
loaves
lumps of bread dough that have been shaped and baked
Mark 6:39
green grass
Describe the grass with the color word used in your language for healthy grass, which may or may not be the color green.
Mark 6:40
in groups of hundreds and fifties
This refers to the number of people in each of the groups. Alternate translation: "with about fifty people in some groups and about a hundred people in other groups"
Mark 6:41
looking up to heaven
This means that he looked up toward the sky, which is associated with the place where God lives.
he blessed
"he spoke a blessing" or "he gave thanks"
He also divided the two fish among them all
"he divided the two fish so that everyone could have some"
Mark 6:43
They took up
Possible meaning are 1) "The disciples took up" or 2) "The people took up."
broken pieces of bread, twelve baskets full
"twelve baskets full of broken pieces of bread"
twelve baskets
"12 baskets"
Mark 6:44
There were five thousand men who ate the loaves
Telling the number of men in the crowd hints at how large the crowd was. The women and children also ate. Alternate translation: "So many people ate the loaves of bread; the number of just the men was five thousand"
five thousand men
"5,000 men"
Mark 6:45
to the other side
This refers to the Sea of Galilee. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to the other side of the Sea of Galilee"
Bethsaida
This is a town on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.
Mark 6:46
After taking leave of them
"After saying goodbye to them" or "After they had left." Use the common words your language uses for a time when friends leave each other and expect to see each other after a few hours or days.
Mark 6:48
Connecting Statement:
A storm arises while the disciples are trying to cross the lake. Seeing Jesus walking on the water terrifies them. They do not understand how Jesus can calm the storm.
fourth watch
This is the time between 3 a.m. and sunrise.
Mark 6:49
a ghost
the spirit of a dead person or some other kind of spirit
Mark 6:51
They were completely amazed
If you need to be more specific, it can stated what they were amazed by. Alternate translation: "They were completely amazed at what he had done"
Mark 6:52
what the loaves meant
Here the phrase "the loaves" refers to when Jesus

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multiplied the loaves of bread. Alternate translation: "what it meant when Jesus multiplied the loaves of bread" or "what it meant when Jesus caused the few loaves to become many"

their hearts were hardened

Having a hard heart represents being too stubborn to understand. Alternate translation: "they were too stubborn to understand"

Mark 6:53

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus and his disciples arrive at Gennesaret in their boat, people see him and bring people for him to heal. This happens wherever they go.

Gennesaret

This is the name of the region to the northwest of the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 6:55

they ran throughout the whole region

It may be helpful to state why they ran through the region. Alternate translation: "they ran throughout the whole district in order to tell others that Jesus was there"

they ran ... they heard

The word "they" refers to the people who recognized Jesus, not to the disciples.

the sick

This phrase refers to people. Alternate translation: "the sick people"

Mark 6:56

Wherever he entered

"Wherever Jesus entered"

they would put

Here "they" refers to the people. It does not refer to Jesus's disciples.

the sick

This phrase refers to people. Alternate translation: "the sick people"

They begged him

Possible meanings are 1) "The sick begged him" or 2) "The people begged him."

let them touch

The word "them" refers to the sick.

the edge of his garment

"the hem of his robe" or "the edge of his clothes"

as many as

"all those who"

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7 [1]The Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him.
[2]They saw that some of his disciples ate bread with hands that were unclean, that is, unwashed.[3](For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands carefully, because they hold to the tradition of the elders.[4]When the Pharisees come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they bathe themselves, and they hold to many other things they have received, such as the washing of cups, pots, copper vessels, and the couches upon which they eat.)
[5]The Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, "Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with unclean hands?"

[6]But he said to them, "Isaiah prophesied well about you hypocrites. As it is written,
'This people honors me with their lips,
but their heart is far from me.
7 In vain they worship me,
teaching the commands of men as their doctrines.'

[8]You abandon the commandment of God and hold on to the tradition of men."[9]He also said to them, "How well you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition![10]For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely be put to death.'
[11]But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever help you would have received from me is Corban"' (that is to say, 'a Gift'),[12]then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother.[13]You are making the word of God void by your tradition which you have handed down. And many similar things you do."
[14]He called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand.[15]There is nothing from outside of a person that can defile him when it enters into him. It is what comes out of the person that defiles him."[16][1]
[17]Now when Jesus left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable.[18]Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not know that whatever enters into a person from outside cannot defile him,
[19]because it cannot go into his heart, but it goes into his stomach and then passes out into the latrine?" With this statement Jesus declared all foods clean.
[20]He said, "It is that which comes out of the person that defiles him.[21]For from within a person, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder,[22]adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, folly.[23]All these evils come from within, and they are what defile a person."

[24]He got up from there and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. There he went into a house, and he wanted no one to know where he was, yet he could not be hidden.[25]But immediately[2] a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard about him and came and fell down at his feet.[26]Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by descent. She begged him to cast out the demon from her daughter.

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[27]He said to her, "Let the children first be fed. For it is not proper to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."
[28]But she answered and said to him, "Yes, Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

[29]He said to her, "Because of what you have said, you are free to go. The demon has gone out of your daughter."[30]She went back to her house and found the child lying on the bed, and the demon was gone.

[31]Then he went out again from the region of Tyre, and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee up into the region of the Decapolis.[32]They brought to him someone who was deaf and had difficulty speaking, and they begged him to lay his hand on him.
[33]Then taking him aside away from the crowd privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and then he spit and touched his tongue.[34]Then he looked up to heaven, sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is to say, "Open!"[35]At once his ears were opened, the bond of his tongue was released, and he began to speak plainly.

[36]Jesus ordered them to tell no one. But the more he ordered them, the more abundantly they proclaimed it.[37]They were extremely astonished, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have verse 16. If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.
[2]Some ancient copies do not have the words, But immediately.

Mark 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:6-7, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hand washing

The Pharisees washed many things that were not dirty because they were trying to make God think that they were good. They washed their hands before they ate, even when their hands were not dirty, though the law of Moses did not say that they had to do it. Jesus told them that they were wrong and that people make God happy by thinking and doing the right things. (See: lawofmoses and clean)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Ephphatha"

This is an Aramaic word. Mark wrote it the way it sounds using Greek letters and then explained what it means.

Links:

Mark 7:1 Notes

Mark 7:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and scribes.

gathered around him

"gathered around Jesus"

Mark 7:2

They saw

"The Pharisees and the scribes saw"

that is, unwashed

The word "unwashed" explains why the disciples' hands were defiled. It can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "that is, with hands that they had not washed" or "that is, they had not washed their hands"

Mark 7:3

General Information:

In verses 3 and 4, the author gives background information about the Pharisees' washing traditions in order to show why the Pharisees were bothered that Jesus's disciples did not wash their hands before eating. If you need to reorder the events in these verses, it may be helpful to use a verse bridge, as in the UDB.

For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they wash their hands carefully

The words "do not" and "unless" are a double negative. This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "For the Pharisees and all the Jews eat only after they wash their hands carefully"

unless they wash their hands carefully

This kind of hand washing was an important ceremonial or religious act, not just an act of making ones hands clean physically. The Jews washed their hands carefully to obey all religious traditions and rules about cleanness. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "unless they make their hands ceremonially clean"

elders

Jewish elders were leaders in their communities and were also judges for the people.

Mark 7:4

they hold to many other things they have received

The words "things they have received" refers to traditions that they learned from their elders. Alternate translation: "they follow many other traditions" or "they do many other

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things that they were taught to do"

copper vessels

"copper kettles" or "metal containers"

the couches upon which they eat

"benches" or "beds." At that time, the Jews would recline when eating.

Mark 7:5

Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with unclean hands?

Here "walk according to" is a metaphor for "obey." The Pharisees and scribes asked this question to challenge Jesus's authority. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your disciples should not disobey the traditions of our elders by eating their bread with unclean hands."

unclean

The hands were ritually unclean because the disciples had not performed the ceremonial washing. The Pharisees were not accusing them of eating with physical dirt on their hands.

bread

This is a synecdoche, representing food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

Mark 7:6

General Information:

Here Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah, who had written scripture many years earlier.

with their lips

Here "lips" is a metonym for speaking. Alternate translation: "by what they say"

but their heart is far from me

Here "heart" refers to a person's thoughts or emotions. This is a way of saying the people are not truly devoted to God. Alternate translation: "but they do not really love me"

Mark 7:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to rebuke the scribes and Pharisees.

You abandon the commandment of God

"You refuse to obey the commandment of God"

hold on to

This phrase is a metaphor for strictly obeying. Alternate translation: "strictly obey"

Mark 7:9

How well you reject the commandment ... keep your tradition

Jesus uses this ironic statement to rebuke his listeners for forsaking God's commandment. Alternate translation: "You think you have done well in how you have rejected the commandment of God so you may keep your own traditions, but what you have done is not good at all"

How well you reject

"How skillfully you reject"

Mark 7:10

He who speaks evil of his father or mother will surely be put to death

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The authorities must execute a person who speaks evil about his father or mother"

who speaks evil of

"who curses"

Mark 7:11

General Information:

In verses 11 and 12, Jesus shows how the Pharisees teach people that they do not have to obey God's commandment to honor their parents. In verse 11 Jesus tells what the Pharisees allow people to say about their possessions, and in verse 12 he tells how that affects what people do for their parents.

is Corban

"Corban" is a Hebrew word that refers to things that people promise to give to God. Translators normally transliterate it using the target language alphabet. Some translators translate its meaning, and then leave out Mark's explanation of the meaning that follows. Alternate translation: "is a gift to God" or "belongs to God"

Whatever help you would have received from me is Corban

A person might say this so that he would not have to give anything to help his parents. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I will not help you, because whatever help you would have received from me is Corban"

a Gift

This phrase explains the meaning of the Hebrew word "Corban." Mark explained the meaning so that his non-Jewish readers could understand what Jesus said. This seems to have been the proper name of a sacrifice. You may need to make explicit who the gift was given to. Alternate translation: "a Gift to God"

Mark 7:12

then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother

Possible meanings are that by telling people that they could say that their possessions are Corban, 1) the Pharisees did not allow people to help their parents, or 2) the Pharisees allowed people to refuse to help their parents. Alternate translation: "then you permit him to do nothing for his father or his mother"

then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother

Here "do anything" refers to helping his parents by giving to them. This can be translated as "then you no longer permit him to give anything to his father or his mother" or "then you permit him to give nothing to his father or his mother"

Mark 7:13

the word of God

Jesus is speaking specifically of the command to love father and mother. Alternate translation: "God's command"

void

canceled or done away with

many similar things you do

"you are doing many other things similar to this"

Mark 7:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus tells a parable to the crowd to help them understand what he has been saying to the scribes and Pharisees.

He called

"Jesus called"

Listen to me, all of you, and understand

The words "Listen" and "understand" are related. Jesus uses

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them together to emphasize that his hearers should pay close attention to what he is saying.

understand

It may be helpful to state what Jesus is telling them to understand. Alternate translation: "try to understand what I am about to tell you"

Mark 7:15

nothing from outside of a person

Jesus is speaking about what a person eats. This is in contrast to "what comes out of the person." Alternate translation: "nothing from outside a person that he can eat"

It is what comes out of the person

This refers to the things a person does or says. This is in contrast to what is "outside a person that ... enters into him." Alternate translation: "It is what comes out of a person that he says or does"

Mark 7:17

Connecting Statement:

The disciples still do not understand what Jesus has just said to the scribes, Pharisees, and crowds. Jesus explains his meaning more thoroughly to them.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story. Jesus is now away from the crowd, in a house with his disciples.

Mark 7:18

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to teach his disciples by asking a question.

Are you also still without understanding?

Jesus uses this question to express his disappointment that they do not understand. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "After all I have said and done, I would expect you to understand."

Mark 7:19

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes asking the question he is using to teach his disciples.

because ... latrine?

This is the end of the question that begins with the words "Do you not see" in verse 18. Jesus uses this question to teach his disciples something they should already know. It can be expressed as a statement. "You should already understand that whatever enters into a person from outside cannot defile him, because it cannot go into his heart, but it goes into his stomach and then passes out into the latrine."

it cannot go into his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being or mind. Here Jesus means that food does not affect a person's character. Alternate translation: "it cannot go into his inner being" or "it cannot go into his mind"

because it

Here "it" refers to what goes into a person; that is, what a person eats.

all foods clean

It may be helpful to explain clearly what this phrase means. Alternate translation: "all foods clean, meaning that people can eat any food without God considering the eater defiled"

Mark 7:20

He said

"Jesus said"

It is that which comes out of the person that defiles him

"What defiles a person is what comes out of him"

Mark 7:21

out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being or mind. Alternate translation: "out of the inner being, come evil thoughts" or "out of the mind, come evil thoughts"

Mark 7:22

sensuality

not controlling one's lustful desires

slander

or blasphemy

Mark 7:23

come from within

Here the word "within" describes a person's heart. Alternate translation: "come from within a person's heart" or "come from within a person's thoughts"

Mark 7:24

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus goes away to Tyre, he heals the daughter of a Gentile woman who has extraordinary faith.

Mark 7:25

had an unclean spirit

This is an idiom meaning that she was possessed by the unclean spirit. Alternate translation: "was possessed by an unclean spirit"

fell down

"knelt." This is an act of honor and submission.

Mark 7:26

Now the woman was a Greek, a Syrophoenician by descent

The word "Now" is used here to mark a pause in the story, as the author gives us background information about the woman.

Syrophoenician

This is the name of the woman's nationality. She was born in the Phoenician region in Syria.

Mark 7:27

Let the children first be fed. For it is not proper ... throw it to the dogs

Here Jesus speaks about the Jews as if they are children and the Gentiles as if they are dogs. Alternate translation: "Let the children of Israel first be fed. For it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the Gentiles, who are like dogs"

Let the children first be fed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We must first feed the children of Israel"

proper

morally right

bread

This refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food"

dogs

This refers to small dogs kept as pets.

Mark 7:29

you are free to go

Jesus was implying that she no longer needed to stay to ask him to help her daughter. He would do it. Alternate translation: "you may go now" or "you may go home in

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peace"

The demon has gone out of your daughter

Jesus has caused the unclean spirit to leave the woman's daughter. This can be expressed clearly. Alternate translation: "I have caused the evil spirit to leave your daughter"

Mark 7:31

Connecting Statement:

After healing people in Tyre, Jesus goes to the Sea of Galilee. There he heals a deaf man, which amazes the people.

went out again from the region of Tyre

"left the region of Tyre"

up into the region

Possible meanings are 1) "in the region" as Jesus is at the sea in the region of the Decapolis or 2) "through the region" as Jesus went through the region of the Decapolis to get to the sea.

Decapolis

This is the name of a region that means Ten Cities. It is located to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee. See how you translated this in [Mark 5:20]

Mark 7:32

They brought

"And people brought"

who was deaf

"who was not able to hear"

they begged him to lay his hand on him

Prophets and teachers would put their hands on people in order to heal them or bless them. In this case, people are begging Jesus to heal a man. Alternate translation: "they begged Jesus to put his hand on the man to heal him"

Mark 7:33

Then taking him ... privately, he

"Then Jesus took the man ... privately, and he"

he put his fingers into his ears

Jesus is putting his own fingers in the man's ears.

then he spit and touched his tongue

It may be helpful to state that Jesus spit on his fingers. Alternate translation: "then he spit on his fingers and touched the man's tongue with them"

Mark 7:34

looked up to heaven

This means that he looked up toward the sky, which is associated with the place where God lives.

sighed

This means that Jesus groaned or that he let out a long deep breath that could be heard.

said to him

"said to the man"

Ephphatha

This is an Aramaic word. It should be copied into your language using your alphabet.

Mark 7:35

his ears were opened

This means he was able to hear. Alternate translation: "his ears were opened and he was able to hear" or "he was able to hear"

the bond of his tongue was released

This metaphor speaks of the man's tongue as if it were bound by a rope or chain that kept the man from speaking and that Jesus broke or loosened so the man could speak. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus released the bond of his tongue" or "Jesus set his tongue free" or "Jesus enabled the man to speak"

Mark 7:36

But the more he ordered them, the more abundantly they proclaimed it

The refers to him ordering them not to tell anyone about what he had done. Alternate translation: "But though he continually ordered them not to tell anyone, they continually proclaimed it"

the more abundantly

"the more widely" or "the more"

Mark 7:37

were extremely astonished

"were utterly amazed" or "were exceedingly astonished" or "were astonished beyond all measure"

the deaf hear and the mute speak

These refer to people. Alternate translation: "the deaf people hear and the mute people speak" or "people who cannot hear, hear, and people who cannot speak, speak"

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8 [1]In those days, there was again a great crowd, and they had nothing to eat. Jesus called his disciples and said to them,[2]"I have compassion on the crowd because they continue to be with me already for three days and have nothing to eat.[3]If I send them away to their home without eating, they may faint on the way. Some of them have come a long way."

[4]His disciples answered him, "Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy these people?"

[5]He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?"They said, "Seven."
[6]He commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground. He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, and broke them. He gave them to his disciples to set before them, and they set them before the crowd.
[7]They also had a few small fish, and after he gave thanks for them, he commanded the disciples to serve these as well.
[8]They ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the remaining broken pieces, seven large baskets.[9]There were about four thousand people. Then he sent them away.[10]Immediately he got into the boat with his disciples, and they went into the region of Dalmanutha.

[11]Then the Pharisees came out and began to argue with him. They sought from him a sign from heaven, to test him.[12]He sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation."[13]Then he left them, got into a boat again, and went away to the other side.

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[14]Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread with them. They had no more than one loaf of bread in the boat.[15]He instructed them, saying, "Keep watch and be on guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod."

[16]The disciples were arguing with one another about having no bread.
[17]When he understood this, he asked them, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Do you have hardened hearts?
[18]You have eyes; do you not see? You have ears; do you not hear? Do you not remember?[19]When I broke the five loaves among the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces of bread did you take up?"They said to him, "Twelve."

[20]"When I broke the seven loaves among the four thousand, how many basketfuls of broken pieces of bread did you take up?"They said to him, "Seven."

[21]He said, "Do you not yet understand?"

[22]They came to Bethsaida. The people there brought to him a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.[23]Jesus took hold of the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. When he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?"

[24]He looked up, and said, "I see men who look like walking trees."
[25]Then he again laid his hands upon his eyes, and the man opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw all things clearly.[26]Jesus sent him away to his home and said, "Do not enter the village."

[27]Jesus went out with his disciples into the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do the people say that I am?"
[28]They answered him and said, "John the Baptist. Others say, 'Elijah,' and others, 'One of the prophets.'"

[29]He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"Peter said to him, "You are the Christ."
[30]Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

[31]He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and would be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and would be killed, and after three days rise up.[32]He spoke that message openly. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.
[33]But Jesus turned and looked at his disciples and then he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of people."[34]Then he called the crowd and his disciples together, and he said to them, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.
[35]For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake and for the gospel will save it.
[36]What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and then forfeit his life?[37]What can a person give in exchange for his life?
[38]Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Bread

When Jesus worked a miracle and provided bread for a large crowd of people, they probably thought about when God miraculously provided food for the people of Israel when they were in the wilderness.
Yeast is the ingredient that causes bread to become larger before it is baked. In this chapter, Jesus uses yeast as a metaphor for things that change the way people think, speak, and act.

"Adulterous generation"

When Jesus called the people an "adulterous generation," he was telling them that they were not faithful to God. (See: faithful and peopleofgod)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Jesus used many rhetorical questions as a way of both teaching the disciples

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

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A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus uses a paradox when he says, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Mark 8:35-37).

Links:

Mark 8:1 Notes

Mark 8:1

Connecting Statement:

A great, hungry crowd is with Jesus. He feeds them using only seven loaves and a few fish before Jesus and his disciples get in a boat to go to another place.

In those days

This phrase is used to introduce a new event in the story.

Mark 8:2

they continue to be with me already for three days and have nothing to eat

"this is this third day these people have been with me, and they have nothing to eat"

Mark 8:3

they may faint

Possible meanings are 1) literal, "they may lose consciousness temporarily" or 2) hyperbolic exaggeration, "they may become weak."

Mark 8:4

Where can we get enough loaves of bread in such a deserted place to satisfy these people?

The disciples are expressing surprise that Jesus would expect them to be able to find enough food. Alternate translation: "This place is so deserted that there is no place here for us to get enough loaves of bread to satisfy these people!"

loaves of bread

Loaves of bread are lumps of dough that have been shaped and baked.

Mark 8:5

He asked them

"Jesus asked his disciples"

Mark 8:6

He commanded the crowd to sit down on the ground.

This can be written as a direct quote. "Jesus commanded the crowd, 'Sit down on the ground.'"

sit down

Use your language's word for how people customarily eat when there is no table, whether sitting or lying down.

Mark 8:7

They also had

Here the word "they" is used to refer to Jesus and his disciples.

he gave thanks for them

"Jesus gave thanks for the fish"

Mark 8:8

They ate

"The people ate"

they picked up

"the disciples picked up"

the remaining broken pieces, seven large baskets

This refers to the broken pieces of fish and bread that were left over after the people ate. Alternate translation: "the remaining broken pieces of bread and fish, which filled seven large baskets"

Mark 8:9

Then he sent them away

It may be helpful to clarify when he sent them away. Alternate translation: "After they ate, Jesus sent them away"

Mark 8:10

they went into the region of Dalmanutha

It may be helpful to clarify how they got to Dalmanutha. Alternate translation: "they sailed around the Sea of Galilee to the region of Dalmanutha"

Dalmanutha

This is the name of a place on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Mark 8:11

Connecting Statement:

In Dalmanutha, Jesus refuses to give the Pharisees a sign before he and his disciples get in a boat and leave.

They sought from him

"They asked him for"

a sign from heaven

They wanted a sign that would prove that Jesus's power and authority were from God. Possible meanings are 1) The word "heaven" is a metonym for God. Alternate translation: "a sign from God" or 2) the word "heaven" refers to the sky. Alternate translation: "a sign from the sky"

to test him

The Pharisees tried to test Jesus to make him prove that he was from God. Some information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "to prove that God had sent him"

Mark 8:12

He sighed deeply in his spirit

This means that he groaned or that he let out a long deep breath that could be heard. It probably shows Jesus's deep sadness that the Pharisees refused to believe him. See how you translated this in Mark 7:34.

in his spirit

"in himself"

Why does this generation seek for a sign?

Jesus is scolding them. This question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This generation should not seek a sign."

this generation

When Jesus speaks of "this generation," he is referring to the people who lived at that time. The Pharisees are included in this group. Alternate translation: "you and the people of this generation"

no sign will be given

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not give a sign"

Mark 8:13

he left them, got into a boat again

Jesus's disciples went with him. Some information can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "he left them, got into

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a boat again with his disciples"

to the other side

This describes the Sea of Galilee, which can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to the other side of the sea"

Mark 8:14

Connecting Statement:

While Jesus and his disciples are in a boat, they have a discussion about the lack of understanding among the Pharisees and Herod, though they had seen many signs.

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the story. Here the author tells background information about the disciples forgetting to bring bread.

no more than one loaf

The negative phrase "no more" is used to emphasize how small an amount of bread they had. Alternate translation: "only one loaf"

Mark 8:15

Keep watch and be on guard

These two terms have a common meaning and are repeated here for emphasis. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "Keep watch"

the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod

Here Jesus is speaking to his disciples in a metaphor they do not understand. Jesus is comparing the Pharisees' and Herod's teachings to yeast, but you should not explain this when you translate it because the disciples themselves did not understand it.

Mark 8:16

no bread

The word "no" is an exaggeration. The disciples did have one loaf of bread

Mark 8:17

Why are you arguing about having no bread?

Here Jesus is mildly rebuking his disciples because they should have understood what he had been talking about. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be thinking that I am talking about actual bread."

Do you still not see or understand?

These questions have the same meaning and are used together to emphasize that they do not understand. This can be written as one question or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Do you not yet understand?" or "You should perceive and understand by now the things I say and do."

Do you have hardened hearts?

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind and "hardened" is a metaphor for not being able or willing to understand something. Jesus uses a question to scold the disciples. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are so slow to understand what I mean!" or "You are unwilling to understand what I mean!"

Mark 8:18

You have eyes; do you not see? You have ears; do you not hear? Do you not remember?

Jesus continues to mildly rebuke his disciples. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "You have eyes, but you do not understand what you see. You have ears, but you do not understand what you hear. You should remember."

Mark 8:19

the five thousand

This refers to the 5,000 people Jesus fed. Alternate translation: "the 5,000 people"

how many baskets full of broken pieces of bread did you take up

It may be helpful to state when they collected the baskets of pieces. Alternate translation: "how many baskets full of broken pieces of bread did you collect after everyone finished eating"

Mark 8:20

the four thousand

This refers to the 4,000 people Jesus fed. Alternate translation: "the 4,000 people"

how many basketfuls of broken pieces of bread did you take up

It may be helpful to state when they collected these. Alternate translation: "how many baskets full of broken pieces of bread did you collect after everyone finished eating"

Mark 8:21

Do you not yet understand?

Jesus is mildly rebuking his disciples for not understanding. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should understand by now the things I say and do."

Mark 8:22

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus and his disciples get out of their boat at Bethsaida, Jesus heals a blind man.

Bethsaida

This is a town on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. See how you translated the name of this town in [Mark 6:45]

to touch him

It may be helpful to state why they wanted Jesus to touch the man. Alternate translation: "to touch him in order to heal him"

Mark 8:23

When he had spit on his eyes ... he asked him

"When Jesus had spit on the man's eyes ... Jesus asked the man"

Mark 8:24

He looked up

"The man looked up"

I see men who look like walking trees

The man sees men walking around, yet they are not clear to him, so he compares them to trees. Alternate translation: "Yes, I see people! They are walking around, but I cannot see them clearly. They look like trees"

Mark 8:25

Then he again

"Then Jesus again"

and the man opened his eyes, his sight was restored

The phrase "his sight was restored" can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "restoring the man's sight, and then the man opened his eyes"

Mark 8:27

Connecting Statement:

Jesus and his disciples talk on their way to the villages of Caesarea Philippi about who Jesus is and what will happen

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to him.
Mark 8:28
They answered him and said
"They answered him, saying,"
John the Baptist
The disciples answer that this was who some people said Jesus was. This can be shown more clearly. Alternate translation: "Some people say that you are John the Baptist"
Others say ... others
The word "others" refers to other people. This refers to their responses to Jesus's question. Alternate translation: "Other people say you are ... other people say you are"
Mark 8:29
He asked them
"Jesus asked his disciples"
Mark 8:30
Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.
Jesus did not want them to tell anyone that he was the Christ. This can be made more explicit. This can also be written as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "Jesus warned them not to tell anyone that he is the Christ." or "Jesus warned them, 'Do not tell anyone that I am the Christ.'"
Mark 8:31
Son of Man
This is an important title for Jesus.
would be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and would be killed, and after three days rise up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the elders and the chief priests and the scribes would reject him, and that men would kill him, and that after three days he would rise up"
Mark 8:32
He spoke that message openly
Possible meanings are 1) "He said this so that people could hear him" or 2) "He said this in a way that was easy to understand."
began to rebuke him
Peter rebuked Jesus for saying the things he said would happen to the Son of Man. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "began to rebuke him for saying these things"
Mark 8:33
Connecting Statement:
After rebuking Peter for his not wanting Jesus to die and rise, Jesus tells both his disciples and the crowd how to follow him.
Get behind me, Satan
Jesus means that Peter is acting like Satan because Peter is trying to prevent Jesus from accomplishing what God sent him to do. Alternate translation: "Get behind me, because you are acting like Satan"
Get behind me
"Get away from me"
Mark 8:34
follow me
Following Jesus here represents being one of his disciples. Alternate translation: "be my disciple" or "be one of my disciples"
must deny himself
"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"
take up his cross, and follow me
"carry his cross and follow me." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "must obey me even to the point of suffering and dying"
follow me
Following Jesus here represents obeying him. Alternate translation: "obey me"
Mark 8:35
For whoever wants
"For anyone who wants"
life
This refers to both physical life and spiritual life.
for my sake and for the gospel
"because of me and because of the gospel." Jesus is talking about people who lose their lives because they follow Jesus and the gospel. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because he follows me and tells others the gospel"
Mark 8:36
What does it profit a person to gain the whole world and then forfeit his life?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Even if a person gains the whole world, it will not benefit him if he forfeits his life."
to gain the whole world and then forfeit his life
This can also be expressed as a condition starting with the word "if." Alternate translation: "if he gains the whole world and then forfeits his life"
to gain the whole world
The words "the whole world" are an exaggeration for great riches. Alternate translation: "to gain everything he ever wanted"
forfeit
To forfeit something is to lose it or to have another person take it away.
Mark 8:37
What can a person give in exchange for his life?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "There is nothing a person can give in exchange for his life." or "No one can give anything in exchange for his life."
What can a person give
If in your language "giving" requires someone to receive what is given, "God" can be stated as the receiver. Alternate translation: "What can a person give to God"
Mark 8:38
ashamed of me and my words
"ashamed of me and my message"
in this adulterous and sinful generation
Jesus speaks of this generation as "adulterous," meaning that they are unfaithful in their relationship with God. Alternate translation: "in this generation of people who have committed adultery against God and are very sinful" or "in this generation of people who are unfaithful to God and are very sinful"
the Son of Man will be ashamed

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Jesus speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will be ashamed"

when he comes

"when he comes back"

in the glory of his Father

When Jesus returns he will have the same glory as his Father.

with the holy angels

"accompanied by the holy angels"

---

9 [1]He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there are some of you who are standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."

[2]Six days later, Jesus took Peter and James and John with him up a high mountain, alone by themselves. Then he was transfigured before them.[3]His garments became radiantly brilliant, extremely white, whiter than any bleacher on earth could bleach them.
[4]Then Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were talking with Jesus.[5]Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here, and so let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."[6](For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.)

[7]A cloud came and overshadowed them. Then a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him."[8]Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them, but only Jesus.

[9]As they were coming down the mountain, he commanded them to tell no one what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.[10]So they kept the matter to themselves, but they discussed among themselves what "rising from the dead" could mean.
[11]They asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"
[12]He said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be despised?[13]But I say to you that Elijah has come, and they did whatever they wanted to him, just as it is written about him."

[14]When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and scribes were arguing with them.[15]As soon as they saw Jesus, the whole crowd was amazed, and as they ran up to him, they greeted him.[16]He asked his disciples, "What are you arguing with them about?"

[17]Someone in the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought my son to you. He has a spirit that makes him unable to speak.
[18]It seizes him and it throws him down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive it out of him, but they could not."
[19]He answered them, "Unbelieving generation, how long will I have to stay with you? How long will I bear with you? Bring him to me."
[20]They brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw him into a convulsion. The boy fell on the ground and foamed at the mouth.[21]Jesus asked his father, "For how much time has he been like this?"The father said, "Since childhood.
[22]It has often thrown him into the fire or into the waters and tried to destroy him. If you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us."

[23]Jesus said to him, "'If you are able'? All things are possible for the one who believes."
[24]Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe! Help my unbelief!"
[25]When Jesus saw the crowd running to them, he rebuked the unclean spirit and said, "You mute and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter into him again."

[26]It cried out and convulsed the boy greatly and then came out. The boy looked like one who was dead, so that many said, "He is dead."[27]But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and the boy stood up.

[28]When Jesus came into the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"
[29]He said to them, "This kind cannot be cast out except by prayer."

[30]They went out from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know where they were,[31]for he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, "The Son of Man will be given over into the hands of men, and they will put him to death. When he has been put to death, after three days he will rise again."[32]But they did not understand this statement, and they were afraid to ask him.

[33]Then they came to Capernaum. After he entered the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?"[34]But

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they were silent. For they had been arguing with one another on the way about who was the greatest.[35]Sitting down, he called the twelve together and he said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."
[36]He took a little child and placed him in their midst. He took him in his arms and said to them,[37]"Whoever receives such a child in my name receives me; whoever receives me does not receive me but the one who sent me."

[38]John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we stopped him, because he does not follow us."
[39]But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for there is no one who will do a mighty work in my name and can soon afterwards say anything bad about me.
[40]Whoever is not against us is for us.[41]Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in my name because you belong to Christ, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward.
[42]Whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be thrown into the sea.[43]If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than to have two hands and to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire.[44][1]
[45]If your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life lame than to have your two feet and be thrown into hell.[46][2]
[47]If your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out. It is better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,[48]where their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out.
[49]For everyone will be salted with fire.[50]Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have this phrase, and verse 44 is not included in the ULB, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out. This phrase does appear in verse 48.
[2]The best ancient copies do not have this phrase, and verse 46 is not included in the ULB, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not put out. This phrase does appear in verse 48.

Mark 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"transfigured"
Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. Mark says in this chapter that Jesus's clothing shone with this glorious light so that his followers could see that Jesus truly was God's Son. At the same time, God told them that Jesus was his Son. (See: glory and fear)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Hyperbole
Jesus said things that he did not expect his followers to understand literally. When he said, "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off" (Mark 9:43), he was exaggerating so they would know that they should stay away from anything that caused them to sin, even if it was something they loved or thought they needed.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Elijah and Moses
Elijah and Moses suddenly appeared to Jesus, James, John, and Peter, and then they disappeared. All four of them saw Elijah and Moses, and because Elijah and Moses spoke with Jesus, the reader should understand that Elijah and Moses appeared physically.
"Son of Man"
Jesus referred to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter
Paradox
A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus used a paradox when he said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

Links:

Mark 9:1 Notes

Mark 9:1

He said to them
"Jesus said to his disciples"
the kingdom of God come with power
The kingdom of God coming represents God showing himself as king. Alternate translation: "God show himself with great power as king"

Mark 9:2

alone by themselves
The author uses the reflexive pronoun "themselves" here to emphasize that they were alone and that only Jesus, Peter, James, and John went up the mountain.
he was transfigured
"Transfigure" means for a person's outward appearance to

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change. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his appearance had changed" or "he appeared very different"

before them

"in front of them"

Mark 9:3

radiantly brilliant

"shining" or "glowing." Jesus's garments were so white they were emitting or giving off light.

extremely

"very"

whiter than any bleacher on earth could bleach them

Bleaching describes the process of making natural white wool even whiter by using chemicals like bleach or ammonia. Alternate translation: "whiter than any person on earth could whiten them"

Mark 9:4

Elijah with Moses appeared

It may be helpful to state who these men are. Alternate translation: "two prophets who had lived long ago, Elijah and Moses, appeared"

they were talking

The word "they" refers to Elijah and Moses.

Mark 9:5

Peter answered and said to Jesus

"Peter said to Jesus." Here the word "answered" is used to introduce Peter into the conversation. Peter was not answering a question.

it is good for us to be here

It is not clear whether "us" refers only to Peter, James, and John, or if it refers to everyone there, including Jesus, Elijah, and Moses. If you can translate so that both options are possible, do so.

shelters

simple, temporary places in which to sit or sleep

Mark 9:6

For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified

This parenthetical sentence tells background information about Peter, James, and John.

they were terrified

"they were very frightened" or "they were very afraid"

Mark 9:7

came and overshadowed

"appeared and covered"

Then a voice came out of the cloud

Here "a voice came out" is a metonym for someone speaking. It can also be stated clearly who spoke. Alternate translation: "Then someone spoke from the cloud" or "Then God spoke from the cloud"

This is my beloved Son. Listen to him

God the Father expresses his love for his "beloved Son," the Son of God.

beloved Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Mark 9:8

when they looked

Here "they" refers to Peter, James, and John.

Mark 9:9

he commanded them to tell no one ... until the Son of Man had risen

This implies that he was permitting them to tell people about what they had seen after he rose from being dead.

risen from the dead

"risen from among the dead." This speaks of becoming alive again. The phrase "the dead" refers to "dead people" and is a metonym for death. Alternate translation: "risen from death"

Mark 9:10

rising from the dead

"to rise from among the dead." This speaks of becoming alive again. The phrase "the dead" refers to "dead people" and is a metonym for death. Alternate translation: "rising from death"

So they kept the matter to themselves

Here "kept the matter to themselves" is an idiom that means they did not tell anyone about what they had seen. Alternate translation: "So they did not tell anyone about what they had seen"

Mark 9:11

Connecting Statement:

Though Peter, James, and John wondered what Jesus might mean by "rising from the dead," they asked him instead about Elijah's coming.

They asked him

The word "they" refers to Peter, James, and John.

Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?

Prophecy foretold that Elijah would come again from heaven. Then the Messiah, who is the Son of Man, would come to rule and reign. The disciples are confused about how the Son of Man could die and rise again. Alternate translation: "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come before the Messiah comes?"

Mark 9:12

Elijah does come first to restore all things

By saying this, Jesus affirms that Elijah would come first.

Why then is it written ... be despised?

Jesus uses this question to remind his disciples that the scriptures also teach that the Son of Man must suffer and be despised. This may be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "But I also want you to consider what is written about the Son of Man. The scriptures say that he must suffer many things and be hated."

be despised

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people would hate him"

Mark 9:13

they did whatever they wanted to him

It may be helpful to state what people did to Elijah. Alternate translation: "our leaders treated him very badly, just as they wanted to do"

Mark 9:14

Connecting Statement:

When Peter, James, John, and Jesus came down from the mountain, they found the scribes arguing with the other disciples.

When they came to the disciples

Jesus, Peter, James, and John returned to the other disciples who had not gone with them up the mountain.

they saw a great crowd around them

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"Jesus and those three disciples saw a great crowd around the other disciples"

scribes were arguing with them

The scribes were arguing with the disciples who had not gone with Jesus.

Mark 9:15

was amazed

It may be helpful to state why they were amazed. Alternate translation: "was amazed that Jesus had come"

Mark 9:17

He has a spirit

This means the boy is possessed by an unclean spirit. "He has an unclean spirit" or "He is possessed by an unclean spirit"

Mark 9:18

down, and he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, and becomes

A convulsion, or seizure, can cause a person to have trouble breathing or swallowing. This causes white foam to come out of the mouth. If your language has a way to describe that, you could use it. Alternate translation: "down, and bubbles come out of his mouth, and he grinds his teeth and becomes"

becomes rigid

"becomes stiff" or "his body becomes rigid"

they could not

This refers to the disciples not being about to drive the spirit out of the boy. Alternate translation: "they could not drive it out of him"

Mark 9:19

He answered them

Though it was the boy's father who made a request of Jesus, Jesus responds to the whole crowd. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Jesus responded to the crowd"

Unbelieving generation

"You unbelieving generation." Jesus calls the crowd this as he begins to respond to them.

how long will I have to stay with you? How long will I bear with you?

Jesus uses these questions to express his frustration. Both questions have the same meaning. They can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "Your unbelief tires me! I wonder how long I must bear with you."

bear with you

"endure you" or "put up with you"

Bring him to me

"Bring the boy to me"

Mark 9:20

spirit

This refers to the unclean spirit. See how you translated this in Mark 9:17.

convulsion

This is the violent shaking of a person's body that can occur when that person has no control over his body.

Mark 9:21

For how much time

"How long"

Since childhood

"Since he was a small child." It may be helpful to state this as a full sentence. Alternate translation: "He has been like this since he was a small child"

Mark 9:22

have pity

"have compassion"

Mark 9:23

'If you are able'?

Jesus repeated what the man had said to him. Alternate translation: "Do you say to me 'If you are able'?" or "Why do you say 'If you are able'?"

'If you are able'?

Jesus used this question to rebuke the man's doubt. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not say to me, 'If you are able.'" or "You ask me if I am able. Of course I am able."

All things are possible for the one who believes

"God can do anything for people who believe in him"

for the one

"for the person" or "for anyone"

believes

This refers to belief in God. Alternate translation: "believes in God"

Mark 9:24

Help my unbelief

The man is asking Jesus to help him overcome his unbelief and increase his faith. Alternate translation: "Help me when I do not believe" or "Help me have more faith"

Mark 9:25

the crowd running to them

This means that more people were running toward where Jesus was and that the crowd there was growing larger.

You mute and deaf spirit

The words "mute" and "deaf" can be explained. Alternate translation: "You unclean spirit, you who are causing the boy to be unable to speak and unable to hear"

Mark 9:26

It cried out

"The unclean spirit cried out"

convulsed the boy greatly

"shook the boy violently"

came out

It is implied that the spirit came out of the boy. Alternate translation: "came out of the boy"

The boy looked like one who was dead

The boy's appearance is compared to that of a dead person. Alternate translation: "The boy appeared dead" or "The boy looked like a dead person"

so that many

"so that many people"

Mark 9:27

took him by the hand

This means that Jesus grasped the boy's hand with his own hand. Alternate translation: "grasped the boy by the hand"

lifted him up

"helped him get up"

Mark 9:28

privately

This means they were alone.

cast it out

"cast the unclean spirit out." This refers to casting the spirit out of the boy. Alternate translation: "cast the unclean spirit

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out of the boy"
Mark 9:29
This kind cannot be cast out except by prayer
The words "cannot" and "except" are both negative words. In some languages it is more natural to use a positive statement. Alternate translation: "This kind can be cast out only by prayer"
This kind
This describes unclean spirits. Alternate translation: "This kind of unclean spirit"
Mark 9:30
Connecting Statement:
After he heals the demon-possessed boy, Jesus and his disciples leave the house where they are staying. He takes time to teach his disciples alone.
They went out from there
"Jesus and his disciples left that region"
passed through
"traveled through" or "passed by"
Mark 9:31
for he was teaching his disciples
Jesus was teaching his disciples privately, away from the crowd. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "for he was teaching his disciples privately"
The Son of Man will be given over
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone will give the Son of Man over"
The Son of Man
Here Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man. This is an important title for Jesus. "I, the Son of Man,"
into the hands of men
Here "hands" is a metonym for control. Alternate translation: "into the control of men" or "so that men will be able to control him"
When he has been put to death, after three days he
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After they have put him to death and three days have passed, he"
Mark 9:32
they were afraid to ask him
They were afraid to ask Jesus what his statement meant. Alternate translation: "they were afraid to ask him what it meant"
Mark 9:33
Connecting Statement:
When they come to Capernaum, Jesus teaches his disciples about being humble servants.
they came to
"they arrived at." The word "they" refers to Jesus and his disciples.
were you discussing
"were you discussing with one another"
Mark 9:34
they were silent
They were silent because they were ashamed to tell Jesus what they had been discussing. Alternate translation: "they were silent because they were ashamed"
who was the greatest
Here "the greatest" refers to "the greatest" among the disciples. Alternate translation: "who was the greatest among them"
Mark 9:35
If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all
Here the words "first" and "last" are opposites of one another. Jesus speaks of being the "most important" as being "first" and of being the "least important" as being "last." Alternate translation: "If anyone wants God to consider him to be the most important person of all, he must consider himself to be the least important of all"
of all ... of all
"of all people ... of all people"
Mark 9:36
in their midst
"among them." The word "their" refers to the crowd.
He took him in his arms
This means that he hugged the child or picked him up and placed him on his lap.
Mark 9:37
such a child
"a child like this"
in my name
This means to do something because of love for Jesus. Alternate translation: "because he loves me" or "for my sake"
the one who sent me
This refers to God, who has sent him to earth. Alternate translation: "God, who has sent me"
Mark 9:38
John said to him
"John said to Jesus"
driving out demons
"sending away demons." This refers to casting demons out of people. Alternate translation: "driving demons out of people"
in your name
Here "name" is associated with Jesus's authority and power. Alternate translation: "by the authority of your name" or "by the power of your name"
he does not follow us
This means that he is not among their group of disciples. Alternate translation: "he is not one of us" or "he does not walk with us"
Mark 9:40
is not against us
"is not opposing us"
is for us
It can be explained clearly what this means. Alternate translation: "is trying to achieve the same goals that we are"
Mark 9:41
gives you a cup of water to drink in my name because you belong to Christ
Jesus speaks about giving someone a cup of water as an example of how one person may help another. This is a metaphor for helping someone in any way.
not lose
This negative sentence emphasizes the positive meaning. In some languages, it is more natural to use a positive statement. Alternate translation: "definitely receive"

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Mark 9:42

millstone

a large, round stone used for grinding grain into flour

Mark 9:43

If your hand causes you to stumble

Here "hand" is a metonym for desiring to do something sinful that you would do with your hand. Alternate translation: "If you want to do something sinful with one of your hands"

to enter into life maimed

"to be maimed and then to enter into life" or "to be maimed before entering into life"

to enter into life

Dying and then beginning to live eternally is spoken of as entering into life. Alternate translation: "to enter into eternal life" or "to die and begin to live forever"

maimed

missing a body part as a result of having it removed or being injured. Here it refers to missing a hand. Alternate translation: "without a hand" or "missing a hand"

into the unquenchable fire

"where the fire cannot be put out"

Mark 9:45

If your foot causes you to stumble

Here the word "foot" is a metonym for desiring to do something sinful that you would do with your feet, such as going to a place you should not go to. Alternate translation: "If you want to do something sinful with one of your feet"

to enter into life lame

"to be lame and then to enter into life" or "to be lame before entering into life"

to enter into life

Dying and then beginning to live eternally is spoken of as entering into life. Alternate translation: "to enter into eternal life" or "to die and begin to live forever"

lame

"unable to walk easily." Here it refers not being able to walk well because of missing a foot. Alternate translation: "without a foot" or "missing a foot"

be thrown into hell

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God to throw you into hell"

Mark 9:47

If your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out

Here the word "eye" is a metonym for either 1) desiring to sin by looking at something. Alternate translation: "If you want to do something sinful by looking at something, tear your eye out" or 2) Desiring to sin because of what you have looked at. Alternate translation: "If you want to do something sinful because of what you look at, tear your eye out"

to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes

This refers to the state of a person's physical body when he dies. A person does not take his physical body with him into eternity. Alternate translation: "to enter into the kingdom of God after having lived on earth with only one eye than to have lived on earth with two eyes"

to be thrown into hell

This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "for God to throw you into hell"

Mark 9:48

where their worm does not die

The meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "where worms that eat people there do not die"

Mark 9:49

everyone will be salted with fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will salt everyone with fire" or "Just as salt purifies a sacrifice, God will purify everyone by allowing them to suffer"

will be salted with fire

Here "fire" is a metaphor for suffering, and putting salt on people is a metaphor for purifying them. So "will be salted with fire" is a metaphor for being purified through suffering. Alternate translation: "will be made pure in the fire of suffering" or "will suffer in order to be purified as a sacrifice is purified with salt"

Mark 9:50

its saltiness

"its salty taste"

how can you make it salty again?

This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you cannot make it salty again."

salty again

"taste salty again"

Have salt among yourselves

Jesus speaks of doing good things for one another as if good things were salt that people possess. Alternate translation: "Do good to each other, like salt adds flavor to food"

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10 [1]Jesus left that place and went to the region of Judea and to the area beyond the Jordan River, and the crowds came to him again. He was teaching them again, as he was accustomed to do.[2]Then Pharisees came to him to test him and asked, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?"

[3]He answered, "What did Moses command you?"
[4]They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce and then to send her away."

[5]"It was because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law," Jesus said to them.[6]"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.'
[7] 'For this reason
a man will leave his father and mother
and be united to his wife,

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[8] and the two will become one flesh.'
So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

[9]Therefore what God has joined together, let no man tear apart."

[10]When they were in the house, the disciples asked him again about this.[11]He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her.[12]If she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery."

[13]Then they brought their little children to him so that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them.[14]But when Jesus noticed it, he was angry and said to them, "Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like them.
[15]Truly I say to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will definitely not enter it."[16]Then he took the children into his arms and blessed them as he placed his hands on them.

[17]When he began his journey, a man ran up to him and knelt before him and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
[18]Jesus said, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.[19]You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not testify falsely, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'"

[20]The man said, "Teacher, all these things I have obeyed from the time I was a youth."
[21]Jesus looked at him and loved him. He said to him, "One thing you lack. You must sell all that you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."[22]But because of this statement he looked very sad and he went away sorrowful, because he had many possessions.

[23]Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How difficult it is for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God!"[24]The disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God![25]It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

[26]They were greatly astonished and said to each other, "Then who can be saved?"
[27]Jesus looked at them and said, "With people it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God."
[28]Peter began to speak to him: "Look, we have left everything and have followed you."

[29]Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the gospel[30]who will not receive a hundred times as much now in this age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life.[31]But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

[32]They were on the road going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going ahead of them. The disciples were amazed, and those who were following behind were afraid. Then Jesus took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what would soon happen to him.[33]"See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be given over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and give him over to the Gentiles.[34]They will mock him, spit on him, whip him, and put him to death. But after three days he will rise."

[35]James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask you."
[36]He said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?"
[37]They said, "Allow us to sit with you in your glory, one at your right hand and the other at your left."

[38]But Jesus replied to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I will drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I will be baptized?"
[39]They said to him, "We are able."Jesus said to them, "The cup that I will drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you also will be baptized.
[40]But who is to sit at my right hand or at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."
[41]When the other ten disciples heard about this, they began to be very angry with James and John.[42]Jesus called them to himself and said, "You know those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.

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[43]But it is not this way among you. Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant,[44]and whoever wishes to be first among you must be the slave of all.[45]For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

[46]They came to Jericho. As he left Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, sat by the road.[47]When he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to shout and to say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"
[48]Many rebuked the blind man, telling him to be quiet. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

[49]Jesus stopped and commanded him to be called. They called the blind man, saying, "Be brave! Get up! He is calling for you."[50]He threw aside his coat, sprang up, and came to Jesus.

[51]Jesus answered him and said, "What do you want me to do for you?"The blind man said, "Rabboni, I want to receive my sight."

[52]Then Jesus said to him, "Go. Your faith has healed you." Immediately he could see again, and he followed him on the road.

Mark 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 10:7-8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jesus's teaching about divorce

The Pharisees wanted to find a way to make Jesus say that it is good to break the law of Moses, so they asked him about divorce. Jesus tells how God originally designed marriage to show that the Pharisees taught wrongly about divorce.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Metaphors are pictures of visible objects that speakers use to explain invisible truths. When Jesus spoke of "the cup which I will drink," he was speaking of the pain he would suffer on the cross as if it were a bitter, poisonous liquid in a cup.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Jesus used a paradox when he said, "Whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:43).

Links:

Mark 10:1 Notes

Mark 10:1

Connecting Statement:

After Jesus and his disciples leave Capernaum, Jesus reminds the Pharisees, as well as his disciples, what God really expects in marriage and divorce.

Jesus left that place

Jesus's disciples were traveling with him. They were leaving Capernaum. Alternate translation: "Jesus and his disciples left Capernaum"

and to the area beyond the Jordan River

"and to the land on the other side of the Jordan River" or "and to the area east of the Jordan River"

He was teaching them again

The word "them" refers to the crowds.

he was accustomed to do

"was his custom" or "he usually did"

Mark 10:3

What did Moses command you

Moses gave the law to their ancestors, which they now were also supposed to follow. Alternate translation: "What did Moses command your ancestors about this"

Mark 10:4

a certificate of divorce

This was a paper saying that the woman was no longer his wife.

Mark 10:5

"It was because ... this law," Jesus said to them.

In some languages speakers do not interrupt a quote to say who is speaking. Rather they say who is speaking at the beginning or end of the complete quote. Alternate translation: "Jesus said to them, 'It was because ... this law.'"

because of your hard hearts that he wrote you this law

Long before this time, Moses wrote this law for the Jews and their descendants because they had hard hearts. The Jews of Jesus's time also had hard hearts, so Jesus included them by using the words "your" and "you." Alternate

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translation: "because your ancestors had hard hearts like yours that he wrote this law"
your hard hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's inner being or mind. The phrase "hard hearts" is a metaphor for "stubbornness." Alternate translation: "your stubbornness"
Mark 10:6
God made them
"God made people"
Mark 10:7
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to quote what God said in the book of Genesis.
For this reason
"Therefore" or "Because of this"
be united to his wife
"join with his wife"
Mark 10:8
and the two ... one flesh
Jesus finishes quoting what God said in the book of Genesis.
they are no longer two, but one flesh
This is a metaphor to illustrate their close union as husband and wife. Alternate translation: "the two people are like one person" or "they are no longer two, but together they are one body"
Mark 10:9
Therefore what God has joined together, let no man tear apart
The phrase "what God has joined together" refers to any married couple. Alternate translation: "Therefore since God has joined together husband and wife, let no one tear them apart"
Mark 10:10
When they were
"When Jesus and his disciples were"
were in the house
Jesus's disciples were speaking to him privately. Alternate translation: were alone in the house"
asked him again about this
The word "this" refers to the conversation that Jesus had just had with the Pharisees about divorce.
Mark 10:11
Whoever
"Anyone who"
commits adultery against her
Here "her" refers to the first woman he was married to.
Mark 10:12
she commits adultery
In this situation she commits adultery again her previous husband. Alternate translation: "she commits adultery against him" or "she commits adultery against the first man"
Mark 10:13
Connecting Statement:
When the disciples rebuke the people for bringing their little children to Jesus, he blesses the children and reminds the disciples that people must be as humble as a child to enter the kingdom of God.
Then they brought
"Now people were bringing." This is the next event in the story.
he might touch them
This means that Jesus would touch them with his hands and bless them. Alternate translation: "he might touch them with his hands and bless them" or "he might lay his hands on them and bless them"
rebuked them
"rebuked the people"
Mark 10:14
Jesus noticed it
The word "it" refers to the disciples rebuking the people who were bringing the children to Jesus.
was angry
Jesus was angry with the disciples.
Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them
These two clauses have similar meanings, repeated for emphasis. In some languages it is more natural to emphasize this in another way. Alternate translation: "Be sure to allow the little children to come to me"
do not forbid
"allow"
for the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like them
The kingdom belonging to people represents the kingdom including them. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God includes people who are like them" or "because only people like them are members of the kingdom of God"
Mark 10:15
whoever will not receive ... child will definitely not enter it
"if anyone will not recieve ... child, he will definitely not enter it"
as a little child
Jesus is comparing how people must receive the kingdom of God to how little children would receive it. Alternate translation: "in the same manner as a little child would"
will not receive the kingdom of God
"will not accept God as their king"
definitely not enter it
The word "it" refers to the kingdom of God.
Mark 10:16
he took the children into his arms
"he hugged the children"
Mark 10:17
to inherit eternal life
Here the man speaks of "receiving" as if it were "inheriting." This metaphor is used to emphasize the importance of receiving. Also, "inherit" here does not mean that someone has to die first. Alternate translation: to receive eternal life"
Mark 10:18
Why do you call me good?
Jesus asks this question to remind the man that no man is good the way God is good. Alternate translation: "You do not understand what you are saying when you call me good."
No one is good except God alone
This double negative emphasizes that God is the only one who is good. Alternate translation: "The only one who is good is God"
Mark 10:19

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do not testify falsely
"do not testify falsely against anyone" or "do not lie about someone in court"
Mark 10:21
One thing you lack
"There is one thing you are missing." Here "lack" is a metaphor for needing to do something. Alternate translation: "One thing you need to do" or "There is one thing you have not yet done" or
give it to the poor
Here the word "it" refers to the things he sells and is a metonym for the money he receives when he sells them. Alternate translation: "give the money to the poor"
the poor
This refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "poor people"
treasure
wealth, valuable things
Mark 10:22
had many possessions
"owned many things"
Mark 10:23
How difficult it is
"It is very difficult"
Mark 10:24
Jesus said to them again
"Jesus said to his disciples again"
Children, how
"My children, how." Jesus is teaching them as a father would teach his children. Alternate translation: "My friends, how"
how hard it is
"it is very hard"
Mark 10:25
It is easier for a camel ... kingdom of God
It is impossible for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. Jesus uses an exaggeration to emphasize how very difficult it is for rich people to get into the kingdom of God.
It is easier for a camel
This speaks of an impossible situation. If you cannot state this in this way in your language, you can use the word "would." Alternate translation: "It would be easier for a camel"
the eye of a needle
Here "the eye" refers to the small hole in one end of a sewing needle. The thread goes through this hole and ties to the needle. Alternate translation: "the hole of a needle"
Mark 10:26
They were
"The disciples were"
Then who can be saved?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "If that is so, then no one will be saved!"
Mark 10:27
With people it is impossible, but not with God
The understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "It is impossible for people to save themselves, but God can save them"
Mark 10:28
Look, we have left everything and have followed you
Here the word "Look" is used to draw attention to the words that come next. Similar emphasis can be expressed in other ways. Alternate translation: "We have left everything and have followed you"
have left everything
"have left everything behind"
Mark 10:29
Truly I say to you, there is no one
This sentence ends in verse 30. It can be stated in positive form. If so, in verse 30, "who will not receive" would become "will receive." Alternate translation: "Truly I say to you, everyone"
or lands
"or plots of ground" or "or the land that he owns"
for my sake
"for my cause" or "for me"
for the gospel
"to proclaim the gospel"
Mark 10:30
who will not receive
This sentence began in verse 29. If you the sentence was stated in positive form in verse 29, verse 30 would be changed to positive form also. Alternate translation: "will receive"
this age
"the world as you know it" or "this present age"
brothers and sisters and mothers and children
Like the list in verse 29, this describes the family in general. The word "fathers" is missing in verse 30, but it does not significantly change the meaning.
with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life
This can be reworded so that the ideas in the abstract noun "persecution" are expressed with the verb "persecute." Because the sentence is so long and complicated, "will receive" can be repeated. Alternate translation: "and even though people persecute them, in the world to come, they will receive eternal life"
in the world to come
"in the future world" or "in the future
Mark 10:31
are first will be last, and the last first
Here the words "first" and "last" are opposites of one another. Jesus speaks of being the "important" as being "first" and of being the "unimportant" as being "last." Alternate translation: "are important will be unimportant, and those who are unimportant will be important"
the last first
The phrase "the last" refers to people who are "last." Also, the understood verb in this clause may be supplied. Alternate translation: "those who are last will be first"
Mark 10:32
They were on the road ... and Jesus was going ahead of them
"Jesus and his disciples were walking on the road ... and Jesus was in front of his disciples"
those who were following behind
"those who were following behind them." Some people were walking behind Jesus and his disciples.
Mark 10:33

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See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
the Son of Man will
Jesus is speaking about himself. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"
the Son of Man will be given over to
The words "given over" mean "betrayed" or "put into the power of." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will hand the Son of Man to" or "they will hand the Son of Man over to"
They will condemn
The word "They" refers to the chief priests and the scribes.
give him over to the Gentiles
"betray him to the Gentiles" or "put him under the control of the Gentiles"
Mark 10:34
They will mock
"People will mock"
put him to death
"kill him"
he will rise
This refers to rising from the dead. Alternate translation: "he will rise from being dead"
Mark 10:35
we ... us
These words refer only to James and John.
Mark 10:37
in your glory
"when you are glorified." The phrase "in your glory" refers to when Jesus is glorified and rules over his kingdom. Alternate translation: "when you rule in your kingdom"
Mark 10:38
You do not know
"You do not understand"
drink the cup which I will drink
Here "cup" refers to what Jesus must suffer. Suffering is often referred to as drinking from a cup. Alternate translation: "drink the cup of suffering that I will drink" or "drink from the cup of suffering that I will drink from"
be baptized with the baptism with which I will be baptized
Here "baptism" and being baptized represent suffering. Just as water covers a person during baptism, suffering will overwhelm Jesus. Alternate translation: "endure the baptism of suffering which I will suffer"
Mark 10:39
We are able
They respond this way, meaning that they are able to drink the same cup and endure the same baptism.
you will drink
"you will drink as well"
Mark 10:40
But who is to sit at my right hand or at my left hand is not mine to give
"But I am not the one who allows people to sit at my right hand or my left hand"
but it is for those for whom it has been prepared
"but those places are for those for whom they have been prepared." The word "it" refers to the places to his right hand and to his left hand.
it has been prepared
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has prepared it" or "God has prepared them"
Mark 10:41
heard about this
The word "this" refers to James and John asking to sit at Jesus's right and left hands.
Mark 10:42
Jesus called them
"Jesus called his disciples"
those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) people in general consider these people the rulers of the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "those whom people consider to be the rulers of the Gentiles" or 2) the Gentiles consider these people their rulers. Alternate translation: "those whom the Gentiles think of as their rulers"
dominate
have control or power over
exercise authority
"flaunt their authority." This means that they show or use their authority in an overbearing way.
Mark 10:43
But it is not this way among you
This refers back to the previous verse about the Gentile rulers. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "But do not be like them"
become great
"be highly respected"
Mark 10:44
to be first
This is a metaphor for being the most important. Alternate translation: "to be the most important"
Mark 10:45
For the Son of Man did not come to be served
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the Son of Man did not come to have people serve him"
to be served, but to serve
"to be served by people, but to serve people"
for many
"for many people"
Mark 10:46
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus and his disciples continue walking toward Jerusalem, Jesus heals blind Bartimaeus, who then walks with them.
the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar
"a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus." Bartimaeus is the name of a man. Timaeus is his father's name.
Mark 10:47
When he heard that it was Jesus
Bartimaeus heard people saying that it was Jesus. Alternate translation: "When he heard people saying that it was Jesus"
Son of David
Jesus is called the Son of David because he is a descendant of King David. Alternate translation: "You who are the Messiah descended from King David"

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Mark 10:48
Many rebuked
"Many people rebuked"
all the more
"even more"
Mark 10:49
commanded him to be called.
This can be translated in active form or as as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "commanded others to call him." or "commanded them, 'Call him to come over here.'"
They called
The word "They" refers to the crowd.
Be brave
"Have courage" or "Do not be afraid"
He is calling for you
"Jesus is calling for you"
Mark 10:50
sprang up
"jumped up"
Mark 10:51
answered him
"answered the blind man"
to receive my sight
"to be able to see"
Mark 10:52
Your faith has healed you
This phrase is written this way to place emphasis on the man's faith. Jesus heals the man because he believes that Jesus can heal him. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I am healing you because you have believed in me"
he followed him
"he followed Jesus"

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11 [1]Now as they came to Jerusalem, they were close to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, and Jesus sent out
two of his disciples[2]and said to them, "Go into the village opposite us. As soon as you enter it, you will find a colt that
has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me.[3]If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' you should say, 'The
Lord has need of it and will immediately send it back here.'"

[4]They went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it.[5]Some people were standing there
and said to them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?"[6]They spoke to them as Jesus told them, and the people let them
go their way.
[7]They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it.[8]Many people spread their garments on the
road, and others spread branches they had cut from the fields.[9]Those who went before him and those who followed
shouted,
"Hosanna! Blessed is the one
who comes in the name of the Lord.
[10] Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!
Hosanna in the highest!"

[11]Then Jesus entered into Jerusalem and went into the temple and looked around at everything. Now the time being late,
he went out to Bethany with the twelve.[12]The next day while they were going out from Bethany, he was hungry.
[13]Seeing from far away a fig tree that had leaves, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it, and when he came to it, he
found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.[14]He said to it, "No one will ever eat fruit from you again." And
his disciples heard it.

[15]They came to Jerusalem, and he entered the temple and began to cast out the sellers and the buyers in the temple. He
turned over the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.[16]He did not allow anyone to carry
anything through the temple that could be sold.
[17]He taught them and said, "Is it not written,
'My house will be called
a house of prayer for all the nations'?
But you have made it a den of robbers."

[18]The chief priests and the scribes heard what he had said, and they looked for a way to destroy him. For they feared him
because the entire crowd was amazed at his teaching.[19]When evening came, they left the city.

[20]As they walked by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots.[21]Peter remembered and said, "Rabbi,
look! The fig tree you cursed has withered away."

[22]Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God.[23]Truly I say to you that if anyone says to this mountain, 'Get up and cast
yourself into the sea,' and if he does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he said will happen, that is what God
will do.

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[24]Therefore I say to you: Everything you pray and ask for, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.[25]When you stand and pray, you must forgive whatever you have against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your trespasses."[26] [1]

[27]They came to Jerusalem again. As Jesus was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him.[28]They said to him, "By what authority do you do these things, and who gave you the authority to do them?"

[29]Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question. Tell me and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.[30]The baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men? Answer me."
[31]They discussed between themselves and argued and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'[32]But if we say, 'From men,' ... ." They were afraid of the people, for everyone was convinced that John was a prophet.[33]Then they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know."Then Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

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[1]The best ancient copies of Mark do not have this sentence: But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Mark 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 11:9-10, 17, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on a donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey had a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

Links:

Mark 11:1 Notes

Mark 11:1

Now as they came to Jerusalem, they were close to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives

"When Jesus and his disciples came near to Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives"
They have come to Bethphage and Bethany in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

Bethphage

This is the name of a village.

Mark 11:2

opposite us

"ahead of us"

a colt

This refers to a young donkey that is large enough to carry a man.

that has never been ridden

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one has ever ridden"

Mark 11:3

Why are you doing this

It can be written clearly what the word "this" refers to. Alternate translation: "Why are you untying and taking the colt"

has need of it

"needs it"

will immediately send it back here

Jesus will send it back promptly when he is finished using it. Alternate translation: "will immediately send it back when he no longer needs it"

Mark 11:4

They went

"The two disciples went"

colt

This refers to a young donkey that is large enough to carry a man. See how you translated this in Mark 11:2.

Mark 11:5

What are you doing, untying that colt?

The people wanted to know why the two men were untying the colt. They may have been concerned that the two men were doing something they should not have been doing. Alternate translation: "Why are you untying that colt?"

Mark 11:6

They spoke

"They responded"

as Jesus told them

"as Jesus had told them to respond." This refers to how

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Jesus had told them to respond to people's questions about taking the colt.

let them go their way

This means that they allowed them to continue doing what they were doing. Alternate translation: "let them take the donkey with them"

Mark 11:7

They brought the colt to Jesus

The word "They" refers to the two disciples.

threw their cloaks on it, and he sat on it

"laid their cloaks on its back and Jesus sat on it." It is easier to ride a colt or a horse when there is a blanket or something similar on its back. In this case, the disciples put their cloaks on it.

cloaks

"coats" or "robes"

Mark 11:8

Many people spread their garments on the road

It was a tradition to lay garments on the road in front of important people to honor them. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Many people spread their garments on the road to honor him"

others spread branches they had cut from the fields

It was a tradition to lay palm branches on the road in front of important people to honor them. Alternate translation: "others spread on the road branches that they had cut from the fields to honor him"

Mark 11:9

who followed

"who followed him"

Hosanna

This word means "save us," but people also shouted it joyfully when they wanted to praise God. You can translate it according to how it was used, or you can write "Hosanna" using your language's way of spelling that word. Alternate translation: "Praise God"

Blessed is the one

This is referring to Jesus. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Blessed are you, the one"

in the name of the Lord

This is a metonym for the Lord's authority. Alternate translation: "with the authority of the Lord"

Blessed is

"May God bless"

Mark 11:10

Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David

"Blessed is our father David's coming kingdom." This refers to Jesus coming and ruling as king. The word "blessed" can be translated as an active verb. Alternate translation: "Blessed be the coming of your kingdom" or "May God bless you as you rule your coming kingdom"

of our father David

Here David's descendant who will rule is referred to as David himself. Alternate translation: "of the greatest descendant of our father David" or "that David's greatest descendant will rule"

Hosanna in the highest

Possible meanings are 1) "Praise God who is in heaven" or 2) "Let those who are in heaven shout 'Hosanna'."

the highest

Here heaven is spoken of as "the highest." Alternate translation: "the highest heaven" or "heaven"

Mark 11:11

the time being late

"because it was late in the day"

he went out to Bethany with the twelve

"he and his twelve disciples left Jerusalem and went to Bethany"

Mark 11:12

he was hungry

"Jesus was hungry"

Mark 11:13

Connecting Statement:

This happens while Jesus and his disciples are walking to Jerusalem.

if he could find any fruit on it

"if there was any fruit on it"

he found nothing but leaves

This means that he did not find any figs. Alternate translation: "he found only leaves and no figs on the tree"

the season

"the time of year"

Mark 11:14

He said to it, "No one will ever eat fruit from you again

Jesus speaks to the fig tree and curses it. He speaks to it so that his disciples hear him.

his disciples heard it

The word "it" refers to what Jesus said.

Mark 11:15

They came

"Jesus and his disciples came"

began to cast out the sellers and the buyers in the temple

Jesus is driving these people out of the temple. This can be written clearly. Alternate translation: "began to drive the sellers and buyers out of the temple"

the sellers and the buyers

"the people who were buying and selling"

Mark 11:16

to carry anything through the temple that could be sold

"to carry anything that could be sold through the temple"

Mark 11:17

General Information:

God had said earlier in his word, through the prophet Isaiah, that his temple would be a house of prayer for all the nations.

Is it not written, 'My house will be called ... the nations'?

Jesus is rebuking the Jewish leaders for their misuse of the temple. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is written in the scriptures that God said, 'I want my house to be called a house where people from all nations may pray.'"

But you have made it a den of robbers

Jesus compares the people to robbers and the temple to a robbers' den. Alternate translation: "But you are like robbers who have made my house into a robbers' den"

a den of robbers

"a cave where robbers hide"

Mark 11:18

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they looked for a way
"they sought a way" or "they tried to find a way"
to destroy him
"to kill him"
Mark 11:19
When evening came
"In the evening"
they left the city
"Jesus and his disciples left the city"
Mark 11:20
Connecting Statement:
Jesus uses the example of the fig tree to remind the disciples to have faith in God.
walked by
"were walking along the road"
they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots
Translate this statement to clarify that the tree died. Alternate translation: "they saw that the fig tree had withered away down to its roots and died"
withered away
"dried up"
Mark 11:21
Peter remembered
It may be helpful to state what Peter remembered. Alternate translation: "Peter remembered what Jesus had said to the fig tree"
Mark 11:22
Jesus answered them
"Jesus replied to his disciples"
Mark 11:23
Truly I say to you
"I tell you the truth." This phrase adds emphasis to what Jesus says next.
if he does not doubt in his heart but believes
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "if he truly believes in his heart" or "if he does not doubt but believes"
God will do
"God will make happen"
Mark 11:24
Therefore I say to you
"So I tell you"
it will be yours
It is understood that this will happen because God will provide what you ask for. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "God will give it to you"
Mark 11:25
When you stand and pray
It is common in Hebrew culture to stand when praying to God. Alternate translation: "When you pray"
whatever you have against anyone
"whatever grudge you have against anyone." Here the word "whatever" refers to any grudge you hold against someone for sinning against you or any anger you have against someone.
Mark 11:27
Connecting Statement:
The next day when Jesus returns to temple, he gives the chief priests, scribes, and elders an answer to their question about his casting the money changers out of the temple area, by asking them a question that they were not willing to answer.
They came to
"Jesus and his disciples came to"
Jesus was walking in the temple
This means that Jesus was walking around inside of the temple; he was not walking into the temple.
Mark 11:28
They said to him
The word "They" refers to the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.
By what authority do you do these things, and who gave you the authority to do them?
Possible meanings: 1) Both of these questions have the same meaning and are asked together to strongly question Jesus's authority and so can be combined. Alternate translation: "Who gave you authority to do these things?" 2) They are two separate questions, the first asking about the nature of the authority and the second about who gave it to him.
you do these things
The words "these things" refer to Jesus turning over the sellers' tables in the temple and speaking against what the chief priests and scribes taught. Alternate translation: "things like those you did here yesterday"
Mark 11:29
Tell me
"Answer me"
Mark 11:30
The baptism of John
"The baptism that John performed"
was it from heaven or from men
"was it authorized by heaven or by men"
from heaven
Here "heaven" refers to God. Alternate translation: "from God"
from men
"from people"
Mark 11:31
If we say, 'From heaven,'
This refers to the source of the baptism of John. Alternate translation: "If we say, 'It was from heaven,'"
From heaven
Here "heaven" refers to God. See how you translated this in [Mark 11:30]
not believe him
The word "him" refers to John the Baptist.
Mark 11:32
But if we say, 'From men,'
The religious leaders imply that they will suffer from the people if they give this answer. This refers to the source of the baptism of John. Alternate translation: "But if we say, 'The baptism of John was from men,'" or "But if we say, 'From men,' that would not be good." or "But we do not want to say that it was from men."
From men
"It came from a person"
They were afraid of the people

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The author, Mark, explains why the religious leaders did not want to say that John's baptism was from men. This can be stated clearly. "They said this to each other because they were afraid of the people" or "They did not want to say that John's baptism was from men because they were afraid of the people"

Mark 11:33

We do not know

This refers to the baptism of John. This understood information may be supplied. Alternate translation: "We do not know where the baptism of John came from"

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12 [1]Then Jesus began to teach them in parables. He said, "A man planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, and dug a pit for a winepress. He built a watchtower and then leased the vineyard to vine growers. Then he went away on a journey.[2]At the right time, he sent a servant to the vine growers to receive from them some of the fruit of the vineyard.
[3]But they took him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed.
[4]Again he sent to them another servant, and they wounded him in the head and treated him shamefully.[5]He sent yet another, and this one they killed. They treated many others in the same way, beating some and killing others.
[6]He had still one more person to send, a beloved son. He was the last one he sent to them. He said, 'They will respect my son.'
[7]"But the vine growers said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'
[8]They seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.[9]Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vine growers and will give the vineyard to others.
[10]Have you not read this scripture?

'The stone which the builders rejected
has been made the cornerstone.
[11] This was from the Lord,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.'"

[12]After this the Jewish leaders sought a way to arrest Jesus because they understood that he spoke the parable against them. But they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him and went away.

[13]Then they sent some of the Pharisees and the Herodians to him to trap him with words.[14]When they came, they said to him, "Teacher, what people think is not a concern to you because you do not show partiality to anyone. You truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay or not?"
[15]But Jesus knew their hypocrisy and said to them, "Why do you test me? Bring me a denarius so I can look at it."
[16]They brought one to Jesus. He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"They said, "Caesar's."

[17]Jesus said, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." They marveled at him.

[18]Then Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him. They asked him, saying,[19]"Teacher, Moses wrote for us, 'If a man's brother dies and leaves a wife behind him, but had no child, the man should take the brother's wife, and raise up children for his brother.'
[20]There were seven brothers; the first took a wife and then died, having no children.[21]Then the second took her and died, leaving no child, and the third in the same way.[22]The seven left no children. Last of all, the woman also died.[23]In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be? For all seven brothers had her as their wife."

[24]Jesus said, "Is this not the reason you are mistaken, because you do not know the scriptures nor the power of God?[25]For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but they are like angels in heaven.
[26]But concerning the dead that are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account about the bush, how God spoke to him and said, 'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'?[27]He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite mistaken."

[28]One of the scribes came and heard their discussion; he saw that Jesus answered them well. He asked him, "What commandment is the most important of all?"
[29]Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.[30]You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'[31]The second commandment is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other greater commandment than these."

[32]The scribe said, "Good, Teacher! You have truly said that God is one, and that there is no other besides him.[33]To love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself is even more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

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[34]When Jesus saw that he had given a wise answer, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

[35]While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he said, "How is it that the scribes say the Christ is the son of David?
[36]David himself, in the Holy Spirit, said,
'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand
until I put your enemies under your feet."'
[37]David himself calls him 'Lord,' so how can the Christ be David's son?" The large crowd gladly listened to him.

[38]In his teaching Jesus said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk in long robes and be greeted in the marketplaces,[39]and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts.[40]They also devour widows' houses, and they pray long prayers for people to see. These men will receive greater condemnation."

[41]Then Jesus sat down across from an offering box in the temple area; he was watching people as they dropped their money into the box. Many rich people put in large amounts of money.[42]Then a poor widow came and put in two mites, worth about a penny.
[43]He called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them who contributed to the offering box.[44]For all of them gave out of their abundance. But this widow, out of her poverty, put in all of the money which she had to live on."

Mark 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:10-11, 36, which is from the Old Testament.

Links:

Mark 12:1 Notes

Mark 12:1
Connecting Statement:
Jesus speaks this parable against the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.
Then Jesus began to teach them
The word "them" here refers to the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders to whom Jesus had been talking in the previous chapter.
put a hedge around it
He put a barrier around the vineyard. It could have been a row of shrubs, a fence, or a stone wall.
dug a pit for a winepress
This means that he carved a pit on the rock, which would be the bottom part of the winepress used for collecting the squeezed grape juice. Alternate translation: "carved a pit into rock for the winepress" or "he made a vat to collect the juice from the winepress"
leased the vineyard to vine growers
The owner still owned the vineyard, but he allowed the vine growers to take care of it. When the grapes became ripe, they were to give some of them to the owner and keep the rest.
Mark 12:2
At the right time
This refers to the time of harvest. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "When the time came to harvest the grapes"
Mark 12:3
But they took him
"But the vine growers took the servant"
empty-handed
This means that they did not give him any of the fruit. Alternate translation: "without any grapes"
Mark 12:4
he sent to them
"the owner of the vineyard sent to the vine growers"
they wounded him in the head
This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "they beat that one on the head, and they hurt him terribly"
Mark 12:5
yet another ... many others
These phrases refer to other servants. Alternate translation: "yet another servant ... many other servants"
They treated many others in the same way
This refers to servants that the owner sent. The phrase "in the same way" refers to them being mistreated. This can be written clearly. Alternate translation: "They also mistreated many other servants whom he sent"
Mark 12:6
a beloved son
It is implied that this is the owner's son. Alternate translation: "his beloved son"
Mark 12:7
the heir
This is the owner's heir, who would inherit the vineyard after his father died. Alternate translation: "the owner's

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heir"

the inheritance

The tenants are referring to the vineyard as "the inheritance." Alternate translation: "this vineyard"

Mark 12:8

They seized him

"The vine growers seized the son"

Mark 12:9

Therefore, what will the owner of the vineyard do?

Jesus asks a question and then gives the answer to teach the people. The question may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "So I will tell you what the owner of the vineyard will do."

Therefore

Jesus has finished telling the parable and is now asking the people what they think will happen next.

destroy

kill

will give the vineyard to others

The word "others" refers to other vine growers who will care for the vineyard. Alternate translation: "he will give the vineyard to vine growers to care for it"

Mark 12:10

General Information:

This scripture was written long before in God's word.

Have you not read this scripture?

Jesus reminds the people of a scripture passage. He uses a rhetorical question here to rebuke them. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you have read this scripture." or "You should remember this scripture."

has been made the cornerstone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord made into the cornerstone"

Mark 12:11

This was from the Lord

"The Lord has done this"

it is marvelous in our eyes

Here "in our eyes" stands for seeing, which is a metaphor for the people's opinion. Alternate translation: "we have seen it and think that it is marvelous" or "we think that it is wonderful"

Mark 12:12

sought a way

"wanted to find a way"

they were afraid of the crowd

They were afraid of what the crowd would do to them if they arrested Jesus. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "but they feared what the crowd would do if they arrested him"

against them

"to accuse them"

Mark 12:13

Connecting Statement:

In an effort to trap Jesus, some of the Pharisees and Herodians, and then the Sadducees, come to Jesus with questions.

Then they sent

"Then the Jewish leaders sent"

the Herodians

This was the name of an informal political party that supported Herod Antipas.

to trap him

Here the author describes tricking Jesus as trying to "trap him." Alternate translation: "to trick him"

Mark 12:14

When they came, they said

Here "they" refers to those sent from among the Pharisees and the Herodians.

what people think is not a concern to you

The abstract noun "concern" may be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "you are not concerned about what people think of you" or "you do not try to win people's favor"

you do not show partiality to anyone

"you do not judge people by how they look" or "you judge people by what is in their hearts"

Mark 12:15

Jesus knew their hypocrisy

They were acting hypocritically. This can be explained more clearly. Alternate translation: "Jesus knew that they did not really want to know what God wanted them to do"

Why do you test me?

Jesus rebukes the Jewish leaders because they were trying to trick him. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "I know you are trying to make me say something wrong so you can accuse me."

denarius

This coin was worth a day's wages.

Mark 12:16

They brought one

"The Pharisees and the Herodians brought a denarius"

likeness and inscription

"picture and name"

They said, "Caesar's

Here "Caesar's" refers to his likeness and inscription. Alternate translation: "They said, 'They are Caesar's likeness and inscription"

Mark 12:17

Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's

Jesus is teaching that his people must respect the government by paying taxes. This figure of speech can be clarified by changing Caesar to Roman government. Alternate translation: "Give to the Roman government the things that belong to the Roman government"

and to God

The understood verb may be supplied. Alternate translation: "and give to God"

They marveled at him

They were amazed at what Jesus had said. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "They marveled at him and at what he had said"

Mark 12:18

who say there is no resurrection

This phrase explains who the Sadducees were. This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "who say there is no resurrection from the dead"

Mark 12:19

Moses wrote for us, 'If a man's brother dies ... brother.'
The Sadducees are quoting what Moses had written in the law. Moses's quote can be expressed as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies ... brother."
wrote for us
"wrote for us Jews." The Sadducees were a group of Jews. Here they use the word "us" to refer to themselves and all Jews.
the man should take the brother's wife
"the man should marry his brother's wife"
raise up children for his brother
"have a son for his brother." The man's first son would be considered to be the dead brother's son, and the son's descendants would be considered to be the dead brother's descendants. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "have a son who will be considered to be the dead brother's son"
Mark 12:20
There were seven brothers
The Sadducees tell Jesus a story because they want to ask him a question about it to test him. The story is not about things that really happened. Alternate translation: "Suppose there were seven brothers"
the first
the first brother
the first took a wife
"the first brother married a woman." Here marrying a woman is spoken of as "taking" her.
Mark 12:21
the second ... the third
These numbers refer to each of the brothers and can be expressed as such. Alternate translation: "the second brother ... the third brother"
the second took her
"the second married her." Here marrying a woman is spoken of as "taking" her.
the third in the same way
"the third brother married her as his other bothers had done, and he also died leaving no children"
Mark 12:22
The seven
This refers to all the brothers. Alternate translation: "The seven brothers"
The seven left no children
Each of the brothers married the woman and then died before he had any children with her. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Eventually all seven brothers married that woman one by one, but none of them had any children with her, and one by one they died"
Mark 12:23
In the resurrection, when they rise again, whose wife will she be?
The Sadducees are testing Jesus by asking this question. If your readers can only understand this as a request for information, this can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now tell us whose wife she will be in the resurrection, when they all rise again."
Mark 12:24
Is this not the reason you are mistaken, because ... power of God?
Jesus rebukes the Sadducees because they are mistaken about God's law. This may be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are mistaken because ... power of God."
you do not know the scriptures
This means that they do not understand what is written in the Old Testament scriptures.
the power of God
"how powerful God is"
Mark 12:25
For when they rise
Here the word "they" refers to the brothers and the woman from the example.
rise
Waking and getting up from sleep is a metaphor for becoming alive after having been dead.
from the dead
The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again. Alternate translation: "from among all those who have died"
they neither marry nor are given in marriage
"they do not marry, and they are not given in marriage"
nor are given in marriage
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and no one gives them in marriage"
heaven
This refers to the place where God lives.
Mark 12:26
that are raised
This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "who rise" or "who rise to live again"
the book of Moses
"the book that Moses wrote"
the account about the bush
This refers to the part of the book of Moses that tells about when God spoke to Moses out of a bush that was burning but that did not burn up. Alternate translation: "the passage about the burning bush" or "the words about the fiery bush"
the bush
This refers to a shrub, a woody plant that is smaller than a tree.
how God spoke to him
"about when God spoke to Moses"
I am the God of Abraham ... Isaac ... Jacob
This means that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worship God. These men have died physically, but they are still alive spiritually and still worship God.
Mark 12:27
not the God of the dead, but of the living
Here "the dead" refers to people who are dead, and "the living" refers to people who are alive. Also, the words "the God" can be stated clearly in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "not the God of dead people, but the God of living people"
the living
This includes people who are alive physically and spiritually.

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You are quite mistaken
It may be helpful to state what they are mistaken about. Alternate translation: "When you say that dead people do not rise again, you are quite mistaken"
quite mistaken
"completely mistaken" or "very wrong"
Mark 12:28
He asked him
"The scribe asked Jesus"
Mark 12:29
The most important is
"The most important" refers to the most important commandment. Alternate translation: "The most important commandment is"
Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one
"Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord"
Mark 12:30
with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength
Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These four phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly."
Mark 12:31
love your neighbor as yourself
Jesus uses this simile to compare how people are to love each other with the same love as they love themselves. Alternate translation: "love your neighbor as much as you love yourself"
than these
Here the word "these" refers to the two commandments that Jesus had just told the people.
Mark 12:32
Good, Teacher
"Good answer, Teacher" or "Well said, Teacher"
God is one
This means that there is only one God. Alternate translation: "there is only one God"
that there is no other
The word "God" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "that there is no other God"
Mark 12:33
with all the heart ... all the understanding ... all the strength
Here "heart" is a metonym for person's thoughts, feelings, or inner being. These three phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly."
to love one's neighbor as oneself
This simile compares how people are to love each other with the same love that they love themselves. Alternate translation: "to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself"
is even more than
This idiom means that something is more important than something else. In this case, these two commandments are more pleasing to God that burnt offering and sacrifices. This may be written clearly. Alternate translation: "is even more important than" or "is even more pleasing to God than"
Mark 12:34
You are not far from the kingdom of God
This can be stated in positive form. Here Jesus speaks of the man being ready to submit to God as king as being physically close to the kingdom of God, as if it where a physical place. Alternate translation: "You are close to submitting to God as king"
no one dared
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "everyone was afraid"
Mark 12:35
While Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, he said
Some time has passed and Jesus is now in the temple. This is not part of the previous conversation. Alternate translation: "Later, while Jesus was teaching in the temple area, he said to the people"
How is it that the scribes say the Christ is the son of David?
Jesus uses this question to get the people to think deeply about the Psalm he is about to quote. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Consider why the scribes say the Christ is the son of David."
the son of David
"a descendant of David"
Mark 12:36
David himself
This word "himself" refers to David and is used to place emphasis on him and what he said. Alternate translation: "It was David who"
in the Holy Spirit
This means that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit directed David in what he said. Alternate translation: "inspired by the Holy Spirit"
said, 'The Lord said to my Lord
Here David calls God "The Lord" and calls the Christ "my Lord." This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "said about the Christ, 'The Lord God said to my Lord"
Sit at my right hand
Jesus is quoting a psalm. Here God is speaking to the Christ. To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"
until I put your enemies under your feet
In this quote, God speaks of defeating enemies as putting them under the feet of the victor. Alternate translation: "until I completely defeat your enemies"
Mark 12:37
calls him 'Lord,'
Here the word "him" refers to the Christ.
so how can the Christ be David's son?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "so consider how the Christ can be a descendant of David"
Mark 12:38
be greeted in the marketplaces
This can be expressed with an active form. These greetings showed that the people respected the scribes. Alternate translation: "to have people greet them respectfully in the marketplaces"
Mark 12:39
the most important seats ... the places of honor
You may want to make explicit that the scribes liked to sit

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in these places. Alternate translation: "to sit in the most important seats ... to have people seat them in the places of honor"

Mark 12:40

They also devour widows' houses

Here Jesus describes the scribes' cheating of widows and stealing of their houses as "devouring" their houses. Alternate translation: "They also cheat widows in order to steal their houses from them"

widows' houses

The words "widows" and "houses" are synecdoches for helpless people and all of a person's important possessions, respectively. Alternate translation: "everything from helpless people"

These men will receive greater condemnation

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly punish them with greater condemnation" or "God will certainly punish them severely"

will receive greater condemnation

The word "greater" implies a comparison. Here the comparison is to other men who are punished. Alternate translation: "will receive greater condemnation than other people"

Mark 12:41

Connecting Statement:

Still in the temple area, Jesus comments on the value of the widow's offering.

an offering box

This box, which everyone could use, held temple offerings.

Mark 12:42

two mites

"two small copper coins." These were the least valuable coins available.

worth about a penny

"worth very little." A penny is worth very little. Translate "penny" with the name of the smallest coin in your language if you have one that is worth very little.

Mark 12:43

General Information:

In verse 43 Jesus says that the widow put more money in the offering than the rich people put in, and in verse 44 he tells his reason for saying that. The information can be reordered so that Jesus tells his reason first and then says that the widow put in more, as in the UDB.

He called

"Jesus called"

Truly I say to you

This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.

all of them who contributed to

"all the other people who put money into"

Mark 12:44

abundance

much wealth, many valuable things

her poverty

"lack" or "the little she had"

to live on

"to survive on"

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13 [1]As Jesus was walking away from the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, look at the wonderful stones and wonderful buildings!"

[2]Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down."

[3]As he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately,[4]"Tell us, when will these things happen? What will be the sign when all these things are about to happen?"

[5]Jesus began to say to them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray.[6]Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he,' and they will lead many astray.
[7]When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be frightened; these things must happen, but the end is not yet.[8]For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in many places, and famines. These are the beginnings of birth pains.

[9]"Be on your guard. They will give you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues. You will stand before both governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them.[10]But the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations.
[11]When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry about what you should say. For in that hour, what you should say will be given to you; it will not be you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.[12]Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death.[13]You will be hated by everyone because of my name. But whoever endures to the end, that person will be saved.

[14]"When you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be standing" (let the reader understand), "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains,[15]let him who is on the housetop not go down into the house or take anything out of it,[16]and let him who is in the field not return to take his cloak.
[17]But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days![18]Pray that it might not occur in the winter.[19]For those will be days of great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of creation, which God created, until now, no, nor ever will be again.[20]Unless the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those whom he chose, he cut short the days.

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[21]Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it.[22]For false Christs and false prophets will appear and will give signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect.[23]Be on guard! I have told you all these things ahead of time.

[24]"But after the tribulation of those days,
'the sun will be darkened,
the moon will not give its light,
[25] the stars will fall from the sky,
and the powers that are in the heavens
will be shaken.'

[26]Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.[27]Then he will send his angels and he will gather together his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the sky.

[28]"Learn a lesson from the fig tree. As soon as the branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.[29]So also, when you see these things happening, recognize that he is near, close to the gates.
[30]Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all of these things occur.[31]Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.[32]But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father.

[33]"Be alert! Watch, because you do not know what time it is.[1][34]It is like a man who goes on a journey—he leaves his house and puts his servants in charge of the house, each one with his work, and he commands the doorkeeper to stay alert.
[35]Therefore stay alert because you do not know when the master of the house will come home; it could be in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or in the morning.[36]If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.[37]What I say to you I say to everyone: Watch!"

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[1]Some ancient copies of the Greek text read: Be alert! Watch and pray.

Mark 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 13:24-25, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The return of Christ

Jesus said much about what would happen before he returned (Mark 13:6-37). He told his followers that bad things would happen to the world and bad things would happen to them before he returned, but they needed to be ready for him to return at any time.

Links:

Mark 13:1 Notes

Mark 13:1

General Information:

As they leave the temple area, Jesus tells his disciples what will happen to the wonderful temple that Herod the Great has built.

the wonderful stones and wonderful buildings

The "stones" refer to the stones that the buildings were built with. Alternate translation: "the wonderful buildings and the wonderful stones that they are made of"

Mark 13:2

Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone

This question is used to draw attention to the buildings. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Look at these great buildings! Not one stone" or "You see these great buildings now, but not one stone"

Not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down

It is implied that enemy soldiers will tear down the stones. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Not one stone will remain on top of another, for enemy soldiers will come and destroy these buildings"

Mark 13:3

Connecting Statement:

In answer to the disciples' questions about the temple's destruction and what is going to happen, Jesus tells them what was going to take place in the future.

As he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter

It can be expressed clearly that Jesus and his disciples had walked to the Mount of Olives. Alternate translation: "After arriving at the Mount of Olives, which is opposite the temple, Jesus sat down. Then Peter"

privately

when they were alone

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Mark 13:4

these things happen ... are about to happen

This refers to what Jesus had just said will happen to the stones of the temple. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "these things happen to the buildings of the temple ... are about to happen to the temple buildings"

when all these things

"that all these things"

Mark 13:5

to them

"to his disciples"

leads you astray

Here "leads you astray" is a metaphor for "persuades you to believe what is not true." Alternate translation: "deceives you"

Mark 13:6

lead many astray

Here "lead many astray" is a metaphor "persuades many to believe what is not true." Alternate translation: "deceive many people"

in my name

This is metonym. Possible meanings are 1) Alternate translation: "claiming my authority" or 2) Alternate translation: "claiming that God sent them."

I am he

"I am the Christ"

Mark 13:7

hear of wars and rumors of wars

"hear of wars and reports about wars." Possible meanings are 1) "hear the sounds of wars close by and news of wars far away" or 2) "hear of wars that have started and reports about wars that are about to start"

but the end is not yet

"but it is not yet the end" or "but the end will not happen until later" or "but the end will be later"

the end

This probably refers to the end of the world.

Mark 13:8

will rise against

This idiom means to fight against one another. Alternate translation: "will fight against"

kingdom against kingdom

The words "will rise" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "kingdom will rise against kingdom" or "the people of one kingdom will fight against the people of another kingdom"

These are the beginnings of birth pains

Jesus speaks of these disasters as the beginnings of birth pains because more severe things will happen after them. Alternate translation: "These events will be like the first pains a woman suffers when she is about to bear a child"

Mark 13:9

Be on your guard

"Be ready for what people will do to you"

will give you over to councils

"take you and put you under the control of councils"

you will be beaten

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will beat you"

You will stand before

This means to be put on trial and judged. Alternate translation: "You will be put on trial before" or "You will be brought to trial and judged by"

for my sake

"because of me" or "on account of me"

as a testimony to them

This means they will testify about Jesus. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "and testify to them about me" or "and you will tell them about me"

Mark 13:10

But the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations

Jesus is still speaking about things that must happen before the end comes. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "But the gospel must first be proclaimed to all the nations before the end will come"

Mark 13:11

hand you over

Here this means to put people under the control of the authorities. Alternate translation: "give you over to the authorities"

but the Holy Spirit

The words "who will speak" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "but the Holy Spirit, who will speak through you"

Mark 13:12

Brother will deliver up brother to death

"One brother will put another brother under the control of people who will kill him" or "Brothers will put their brothers under the control of people who will kill them." This will happen many times to many different people. Jesus is not speaking of just one person and his brother.

Brother ... brother

This refers to both brothers and sisters. Alternate translation: "People ... their siblings"

a father his child

The words "will deliver up to death" are understood from the previous phrase. This means that some fathers will betray their children, and this betrayal will cause their children to be killed. Alternate translation: "fathers will deliver up their children to death" or "fathers will betray their children, handing them over to be killed"

Children will rise up against their parents

This means that children will oppose their parents and betray them. Alternate translation: "Children will oppose their parents"

cause them to be put to death

This means that the authorities will sentence the parents to be put to death. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "cause the authorities to sentence the parents to die" or "the authorities will kill the parents"

Mark 13:13

You will be hated by everyone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone will hate you"

because of my name

Jesus uses the metonym "my name" to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you believe in me"

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whoever endures to the end, that person will be saved
This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whoever endures to the end, God will save that person" or "God will save whoever endures to the end"
whoever endures to the end
Here "endures" represents continuing to be faithful to God even while suffering. Alternate translation: "whoever suffers and stays faithful to God to the end"
to the end
Possible meanings are 1) "to the end of his life" or 2) "to the end of that time of trouble"
Mark 13:14
the abomination of desolation
This phrase is from the book of Daniel. Jesus's audience would have been familiar with this passage and the prophecy about the abomination entering the temple and defiling it. Alternate translation: "the shameful thing that defiles the things of God"
standing where it should not be standing
Jesus's audience would have known that this refers to the temple. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "standing in the temple, where it should not be standing"
let the reader understand
Mark added this to get the readers' attention, so that they would think about what Jesus meant when he spoke about the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be standing. Alternate translation: "may everyone who reads this understand what it means"
Mark 13:15
on the housetop
Housetops where Jesus lived were flat, and people could stand on them.
Mark 13:16
not return
This refers to returning to his house. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "not return to his house"
to take his cloak
"to get his cloak"
Mark 13:17
those who are nursing infants
women who give babies breast milk
Mark 13:18
Pray that it
"Pray that these times" or "Pray that these things"
the winter
"the cold season" or "the cold, rainy season." This refers to the time of year when it is cold and unpleasant and difficult to travel.
Mark 13:19
such as has not been from the beginning
"greater than there has ever been since the beginning of the world." This describes how great and terrible the tribulation will be. There has never been a tribulation as terrible as this one will be.
the beginning of creation, which God created
the beginning of creation, when God created the world
no, nor ever will be again
"and greater than there will ever be again" or "and after that tribulation, there will never again be a tribulation like it"
Mark 13:20
Unless the Lord had shortened the days
The writer uses past tense to describe a future event. Alternate translation: "If the Lord had not decided that he would shorten those days"
had shortened the days
"had shortened the time." It may be helpful to specify which "days" are referred to. Alternate translation: "had reduced the days of suffering" or "had shortened the time of suffering"
no flesh would be saved
The word "flesh" refers to people, and "saved" refers to physical salvation. Alternate translation: "no one would be saved" or "everyone would die"
for the sake of the elect
"in order to help the elect"
the elect, those whom he chose
The phrase "those whom he chose" means the same thing as "the elect." Together, they emphasize that God chose these people.
Mark 13:21
General Information:
In verse 21 Jesus gives a command, and in 22 he tells the reason for the command. This can be reordered with the reason first, and the command second, as in the UDB.
Mark 13:22
false Christs
"people who claim they are Christ"
so as to deceive
"in order to deceive" or "hoping to deceive" or "trying to deceive"
so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect
The phrase "even the elect" implies that the false Christs and false prophets will expect to deceive some people, but they will not know if they will be able to deceive the elect. Alternate translation: "in order to deceive people, and even deceive the elect, if that is possible"
the elect
"the people whom God has chosen"
Mark 13:23
Be on guard
"Be watchful" or "Be alert"
I have told you all these things ahead of time
Jesus told them these things to warn them. Alternate translation: "I have told you all these things ahead of time to warn you"
Mark 13:24
the sun will be darkened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sun will become dark"
the moon will not give its light
Here the moon is spoken of as if it were alive and able to give something to someone else. Alternate translation: "the moon will not shine" or "the moon will be dark"
Mark 13:25
the stars will fall from the sky
This does not mean that they will fall to earth but that they will fall from where the are now. Alternate translation: "the

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stars will fall from their places in the sky"
the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the powers in the heavens will shake" or "God will shake the powers that are in the heavens"
the powers that are in the heavens
"the powerful things in the heavens." These words could refer to 1) the sun, moon, and stars or 2) powerful spiritual beings
in the heavens
"in the sky"
Mark 13:26
Then they will see
"Then people will see"
with great power and glory
"powerfully and gloriously"
Mark 13:27
he will gather
The word "he" refers to God and is a metonym for his angels, as they are the ones who will gather the elect. Alternate translation: "they will gather" or "his angels will gather"
the four winds
The whole earth is spoken of as "the four winds," which refer to the four directions: north, south, east, and west. Alternate translation: "the north, south, east, and west" or "all parts of the earth"
from the ends of the earth to the ends of the sky
These two extremes are given to emphasize that the elect will be gathered from the entire earth. Alternate translation: "from every place on earth"
Mark 13:28
Connecting Statement:
Jesus gives two short parables here to remind people to be aware when the things that he has been explaining happen.
the branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves
The phrase "the branch" refers to the branches of the fig tree. Alternate translation: "its branches become tender and put out their leaves"
tender
"green and soft"
puts out its leaves
Here the fig tree is spoken of as if it were alive and able to willingly cause its leaves to grow. Alternate translation: "its leaves begin to sprout"
summer
the warm part of the year or the growing season
Mark 13:29
these things
This refers to the days of tribulation. Alternate translation: "these things I have just described"
recognize that he is near
Many modern translations read, "you recognize" or "you know." It is not clear whether Jesus is stating a fact or issuing a command.
he is near
"the Son of Man is near"
close to the gates
This idiom means that he is very near and has almost arrived, referring to a traveler being close to arriving at the city gates. Alternate translation: "and is almost here"
Mark 13:30
Truly I say to you
This indicates that the statement that follows is especially important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.
will not pass away
"Pass away" is a polite way of saying "die." Alternate translation: "will not die" or "will not end"
until all of these things
The phrase "these things" refers to the days of tribulation.
Mark 13:31
Heaven and earth
The two extremes are given to refer to all of the sky, including the sun, moon, stars, and planets, and all of the earth. Alternate translation: "The sky, the earth, and everything in them"
will pass away
"will cease to exist." Here this phrase refers to the world ending.
my words will never pass away
Jesus speaks of words not losing their power as if they were something that will never physically die. Alternate translation: "my words will never lose their power"
Mark 13:32
that day or that hour
This refers to the time that the Son of Man will return. Alternate translation: "that day or that hour that the Son of Man will return" or "the day or the hour that I will return"
no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father
These words specify some of those who do not know when the Son of Man will return, different from the Father, who does know. Alternate translation: "no one knows—neither the angels in heaven nor the Son know—but the Father" or "neither the angels in heaven nor the Son know; no one knows but the Father"
the angels in heaven
Here "heaven" refers to the place where God lives.
but the Father
It is best to translate "Father" with the same word that your language naturally uses to refer to a human father. Also, this is an ellipsis, stating that the Father knows when the Son will return. Alternate translation: "but only the Father knows"
Mark 13:33
what time it is
It can be stated clearly what "time" refers to here. Alternate translation: "when all these events will happen"
Mark 13:34
each one with his work
"telling each one what work he should do"
Mark 13:35
it could be in the evening
"he could return in the evening"
rooster crows
The rooster is a bird that "crows" very early in the morning by making a loud call.
Mark 13:36

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find you sleeping

Alternate translation: "find you not ready for his return"

Here Jesus speaks of not being ready as "sleeping."

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14 [1]It was now two days before the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking ways to stealthily arrest Jesus and then kill him.[2]For they were saying, "Not during the festival, so that a riot does not arise among the people."

[3]While Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the table, a woman came to him having an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which was pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the nard on his head.[4]But there were some who were angry. They spoke among themselves and said, "What is the reason for the waste of this perfume?[5]This perfume could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and given to the poor." Then they scolded her.

[6]But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why are you troubling her? She has done a beautiful thing for me.[7]You always have the poor with you, and whenever you desire you can do good to them, but you will not always have me.[8]She has done what she could. She has anointed my body for burial.[9]Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be spoken of, in memory of her."

[10]Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went away to the chief priests so that he might give him over to them.[11]When the chief priests heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. He began looking for an opportunity to give him over to them.

[12]On the first day of unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go to prepare, so you may eat the Passover meal?"
[13]He sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him.[14]Where he enters a house, follow him in and say to the owner of that house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room where I will eat the Passover with my disciples?"'
[15]He will show you a large furnished upper room that is ready. Make the preparations for us there."[16]The disciples left and went to the city. They found everything as he had said to them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

[17]When it was evening, he came with the twelve.[18]As they were lying down at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, one of you eating with me will betray me."
[19]They were all very sorrowful, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?"

[20]Jesus answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, the one now dipping bread with me in the bowl.[21]For the Son of Man will go as it is written about him. But woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for him if he had not been born."

[22]As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and broke it. He gave it to them and said, "Take this. This is my body."[23]He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it.[24]He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, the blood that is poured out for many.[25]Truly I say to you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

[26]When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.[27]Jesus said to them, "All of you will fall away, for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd
and the sheep will be scattered.'

[28]But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."
[29]Peter said to him, "Even if all fall away, I will not."

[30]Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today—yes, this very night—before the rooster crows twice you will deny me three times."
[31]But Peter said emphatically, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." They all made the same promise.

[32]They came to the place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."[33]He took Peter, James, and John with him and began to be distressed and deeply troubled.[34]He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to the point of death. Remain here and watch."
[35]Going a little farther, Jesus fell to the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass from him.[36]He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible with you. Remove this cup from me. But not my will, but yours."

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[37]He came back and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch for one hour?
[38]Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."[39]Again he went away and prayed, and he used the same words.
[40]When he came back again, he found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.[41]He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come. Look! The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.[42]Get up; let us go. Look, the one who is betraying me is near."

[43]While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived, and a large crowd was with him with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders.[44]Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard."[45]When Judas arrived, immediately he came up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi," and he kissed him.[46]Then they laid hands on him and seized him.
[47]But one of them who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.
[48]Jesus said to them, "Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to arrest me?[49]When I was daily with you and I was teaching in the temple, you did not arrest me. But this was done that the scriptures might be fulfilled."[50]All those with Jesus left him and ran away.

[51]A young man, wearing only a linen garment that was wrapped around him, was following Jesus. When the men seized him,[52]he left the linen garment and ran away naked.

[53]They led Jesus to the high priest. There were gathered with him all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes.[54]Now Peter followed him from a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest. He sat among the officers, warming himself near the fire.
[55]Now the chief priests and the entire Jewish council were seeking testimony against Jesus so they might put him to death. But they did not find any.[56]For many brought false testimony against him, but even their testimony did not agree.
[57]Some stood up and brought false testimony against him; they said,[58]"'We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'"[59]Yet even their testimony did not agree.

[60]The high priest stood up among them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it these men testify against you?"[61]But he was silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest questioned him and said, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?"
[62]Jesus said, "I am;
and you will see the Son of Man
when he sits at the right hand of power
and comes with the clouds of heaven."

[63]The high priest tore his garments and said, "Do we still need witnesses?[64]You have heard the blasphemy. What is your decision?" They all condemned him as one who deserved death.
[65]Some began to spit on him and to cover his face and strike him with their fists and say to him, "Prophesy!" The officers took him and beat him.

[66]While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came to him.[67]She saw Peter warming himself, and she looked closely at him and said, "You were also with the Nazarene, Jesus."
[68]But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." Then he went out into the gateway. And the rooster crowed.[1]

[69]But the servant girl saw him and began to say again to those who stood there, "This man is one of them!"
[70]But he denied it again. After a little while, those who stood there were saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you also are a Galilean."

[71]But he began to put himself under curses and to swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about."
[72]The rooster immediately crowed a second time. Then Peter remembered the words that Jesus had said to him: "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times," and he broke down and wept.

[1]Some ancient copies do not have, And the rooster crowed.

Mark 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 14:27, 62, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The eating of the body and blood

Mark 14:22-25 describes Jesus's last meal with his followers. At this time, Jesus told them that what they were eating and drinking were his body and his blood. Nearly all Christian churches celebrate "the Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist," or "Holy Communion" to remember this meal.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Abba, Father

"Abba" is an Aramaic word that the Jews used to speak to their fathers. Mark writes it as it sounds and then translates it.

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Mark 14:1 Notes

Mark 14:1

Connecting Statement:

Just two days before the Passover, the chief priests and scribes are secretly plotting to kill Jesus.

stealthily

without people noticing

Mark 14:2

For they were saying

The word "they" refers to the chief priests and the scribes.

Not during the festival

This refers to them not arresting Jesus during the festival. Alternate translation: "We must not do it during the festival"

Mark 14:3

Connecting Statement:

Though some were angry that the oil was used to anoint Jesus, Jesus says that the woman has anointed his body for burial before he will die.

Simon the leper

This man previously had leprosy but was no longer ill. This is a different man than Simon Peter and Simon the Zealot.

he was reclining at the table

In Jesus's culture, when people gathered to eat, they reclined on their sides, propping themselves up on pillows beside a low table.

alabaster jar

This is a jar made from alabaster. Alabaster is a very expensive yellow-white stone. Alternate translation: "beautiful white stone jar"

of very expensive perfume, which was pure nard

"that contained expensive, fragrant perfume called nard." Nard is a very expensive, sweet-smelling oil used to make perfume.

on his head

"on Jesus's head"

Mark 14:4

What is the reason for the waste of this perfume?

They asked this question to show that they disapproved of the woman pouring the perfume on Jesus. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is terrible that she wasted that perfume!"

Mark 14:5

This perfume could have been sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We could have sold this perfume" or "She could have sold this perfume"

three hundred denarii

"300 denarii." Denarius is the singular form of denarii. A denarius is a roman silver coin and it is worth one day's wage.

given to the poor

The phrase "the poor" refers to poor people. This refers to giving the money from the sale of the perfume to the poor. Alternate translation: "the money given to poor people"

Mark 14:6

Why are you troubling her?

Jesus rebukes the guests for questioning this woman's action. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not trouble her!"

Mark 14:7

the poor

This refers to poor people. Alternate translation: "poor people"

Mark 14:9

Truly I say to you

This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.

wherever the gospel is preached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "wherever my followers preach the gospel"

what this woman has done will be spoken of

"what this woman has done will also be spoken of"

Mark 14:10

Connecting Statement:

After the woman anoints Jesus with perfume, Judas promises to deliver Jesus to the chief priests.

so that he might give him over to them

Judas did not deliver Jesus over to them yet, rather he went to make arrangements with them. Alternate translation: "in order to arrange with them that he would give Jesus over to them"

give him over

"bring him to them so they could capture him" or "put him

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in their power" or "betray him"
Mark 14:11
When the chief priests heard it
It may be helpful to state clearly what the chief priests heard. Alternate translation: "When the chief priests heard what he was willing to do for them"
to give him money
"to give him silver coins"
give him over to them
"put them in their power" or "betray him to them"
Mark 14:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus sends two of the disciples to prepare the Passover meal.
when they sacrificed the Passover lamb
At the beginning of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, it was customary to sacrifice a lamb. Alternate translation: "when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb"
eat the Passover
Here the "Passover" refers to the Passover meal. Alternate translation: "eat the Passover meal"
Mark 14:13
bearing a pitcher of water
"carrying a large jar full of water"
Mark 14:14
The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room ... with my disciples?"
This can be written as an indirect quote. Translate this so that it is a polite request. Alternate translation: "Our Teacher would like to know where the guest room is where he may eat the Passover with his disciples."
guest room
a room for visitors
Mark 14:15
Make the preparations for us there
They were to prepare the meal for Jesus and his disciples to eat. Alternate translation: "Prepare the meal for us there"
Mark 14:16
The disciples left
"The two disciples left"
as he had said
"as Jesus had said"
Mark 14:17
Connecting Statement:
That evening as Jesus and the disciples eat the Passover meal, Jesus tells them that one of them will betray him.
he came with the twelve
It may be helpful to state where they came to. Alternate translation: "he came with the twelve to the house"
Mark 14:18
lying down at the table
In Jesus's culture, when people gathered to eat, they lay down on their sides, propping themselves up on pillows beside a low table.
Truly I say to you
This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.
Mark 14:19
one by one
This means that "one at a time" each disciple asked him.
Surely not I?
Possible meanings are 1) this was a question for which the disciples expected the answer to be no or 2) this was a rhetorical question that did not require a response. Alternate translation: "Surely I am not the one who will betray you!"
Mark 14:20
It is one of the twelve, the one now
"He is one of the twelve of you, the one now"
dipping bread with me in the bowl
In Jesus's culture, people would often eat bread, dipping it in a shared bowl of sauce or of oil mixed with herbs.
Mark 14:21
For the Son of Man will go as it is written about him
Here Jesus refers to the scriptures prophesying about his death. If you have a polite way to talk about death in your language, use it here. Alternate translation: "For the Son of Man will die in the way that the scriptures say"
it is written
"the scripture says" or "as they wrote in the scripture"
through whom the Son of Man is betrayed
This can be stated more directly. Alternate translation: "who betrays the Son of Man"
Mark 14:22
bread
This was a flat loaf of unleavened bread, which was eaten as part of the Passover meal.
broke it
This means that he broke the bread into pieces for the people to eat. Alternate translation: "broke it into pieces"
Take this. This is my body
"Take this bread. It is my body." Though most understand this to mean that the bread is a symbol of Jesus's body and that it is not actual flesh, it is best to translate this statement literally.
Mark 14:23
He took a cup
Here "cup" is a metonym for wine. Alternate translation: "He took the cup of wine"
Mark 14:24
This is my blood of the covenant, the blood that is poured out for many
The covenant is for the forgiveness of sins. This can be written more explicitly. Alternate translation: "This is my blood that confirms the covenant, the blood that is poured out so that many may receive the forgiveness of sins"
This is my blood
"This wine is my blood." Though most understand this to mean that the wine is a symbol of Jesus's blood and that it is not actual blood, it is best to translate this statement literally.
Mark 14:25
Truly I say to you
This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.
fruit of the vine
"wine." This is a descriptive way to refer to wine.
new

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Possible meanings are 1) "again" or 2) "in a new way"
Mark 14:26
hymn
A hymn is a type of song. It was traditional for them to sing an Old Testament psalm.
Mark 14:27
Jesus said to them
"Jesus said to his disciples"
will fall away
This is an idiom that means leave. Alternate translation: "will leave me"
I will strike
"kill." Here "I" refers to God.
the sheep will be scattered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will scatter the sheep"
Mark 14:28
I am raised up
This idiom means that God will cause Jesus to become alive again after he has died. This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "God raises me from the dead" or "God makes me alive again"
I will go ahead of you
"I will go before you"
Mark 14:29
all fall away
"everyone else falls away" or "everyone else leaves you"
Mark 14:30
Truly I say to you
This indicates that the statement that follows is especially true and important. See how you translated this in Mark 3:28.
rooster crows
The rooster is a male bird that calls out loudly very early in the morning. When he makes that sound he "crows."
twice
two times
you will deny me
"you will say that you do not know me"
Mark 14:31
said emphatically
"said insistently" or "said strongly"
If I must die
"Even if I must die"
They all made the same promise
This means that all of the disciples said the same thing that Peter said.
Mark 14:32
Connecting Statement:
When they go to Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives, Jesus encourages three of his disciples to stay awake while he prays. Twice he awakens them, and the third time he tells them to wake up because it is time for the betrayal.
They came to the place
The word "they" refers to Jesus and his disciples.
Mark 14:33
distressed
overwhelmed with sorrow
deeply troubled
The word "deeply" refers to Jesus being greatly troubled in his soul. Alternate translation: "extremely troubled"
Mark 14:34
My soul is
Jesus speaks of himself as his "soul." Alternate translation: "I am"
even to the point of death
Jesus is exaggerating because he feels so much distress and sorrow that he feels like he is about to die, though he knows he will not die until after the sun rises.
watch
The disciples were to stay alert while Jesus prayed. This does not mean that they were supposed to watch Jesus pray.
Mark 14:35
if it were possible
This means that if God would allow it to happen. Alternate translation: "if God would allow it"
the hour might pass
Here "this hour" refers to Jesus's time of suffering, both now in the garden and later. Alternate translation: "that he would not have to go through this time of suffering"
Mark 14:36
Abba
a term used by Jewish children to address their father. Since it is followed by "Father," it is best to transliterate this word.
Father
This is an important title for God.
Remove this cup from me
Jesus speaks of the suffering that he must endure as if it were a cup.
But not my will, but yours
Jesus is asking God to do what he wants to be done and not what Jesus wants. Alternate translation: "But do not do what I want, do what you want"
Mark 14:37
found them sleeping
The word "them" refers to Peter, James, and John.
Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch for one hour?
Jesus rebukes Simon Peter for sleeping. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Simon, you are asleep when I told you to stay awake. You could not even stay awake for one hour."
Mark 14:38
that you do not enter into temptation
Jesus speaks of being tempted as if it were entering into a physical place. Alternate translation: "that you are not tempted"
The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak
Jesus warns Simon Peter that he is not strong enough to do what he wants to do in his own strength. Alternate translation: "You are willing in your spirit, but you are too weak to do what you want to do" or "You want to do what I say, but you are weak"
The spirit ... the flesh
These refer to two different aspects of Peter. "The spirit" is his inmost desires. "The flesh" is his human ability and strength.
Mark 14:39

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used the same words
"prayed again what he prayed before"
Mark 14:40
found them sleeping
The word "them" refers to Peter, James, and John.
for their eyes were heavy
Here the author speaks of a sleepy person having a hard time keeping his eyes open as having "heavy eyes." Alternate translation: "for they were so sleepy they were having a hard time keeping their eyes open"
Mark 14:41
He came the third time
Jesus had gone and prayed again. Then he returned to them a third time. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Then he went and prayed again. He returned the third time"
Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?
Jesus rebukes his disciples for not staying awake and praying. You can translate this rhetorical question as a statement if needed. Alternate translation: "You are still sleeping and resting!"
The hour has come
The time of Jesus's suffering and betrayal is about to begin.
Look!
"Listen!"
The Son of Man is being betrayed
Jesus warns his disciples that his betrayer is approaching them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am being betrayed"
Mark 14:43
one of the twelve
"one of the twelve disciples"
Mark 14:44
General Information:
Here Mark gives background information about how Judas had arranged with the Jewish leaders to betray Jesus.
his betrayer
This refers to Judas.
The one I kiss is the man
Here "the man" refers to the man that Judas was going to identify. Alternate translation: "The man I kiss is the one you want"
Mark 14:45
he kissed him
"Judas kissed him"
Mark 14:46
laid hands on him and seized him
These two phrases have the same meaning to emphasize that they seized Jesus. Alternate translation: "grabbed Jesus and seized him" or "seized him"
Mark 14:47
who stood by
"who was standing nearby"
Mark 14:48
Jesus said to them
"Jesus said to the crowd"
Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs, to arrest me?
Jesus is rebuking the crowd. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is ridiculous that you come here to seize me with swords and clubs, as if I were a robber!"
Mark 14:49
But this was done that
"But this has happened so that"
Mark 14:50
All those with Jesus
This refers to the disciples.
Mark 14:51
linen
cloth made from the fibers of a flax plant
that was wrapped around him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that he had wrapped around himself"
When the men seized him
"When the men seized that man"
Mark 14:52
he left the linen garment
Because the man was trying to run away, the others would have grabbed at his clothing, trying to stop him.
Mark 14:53
Connecting Statement:
After the crowd of the chief priests, scribes, and elders lead Jesus to the high priest, Peter watches nearby while some stand to give false testimony against Jesus.
There were gathered with him all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes
This can be reordered so that it is easier to understand. "All of the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes had gathered there together"
Mark 14:54
Now
This word is used here to mark a change in the story as the author tells us about Peter.
as far as the courtyard of the high priest
As Peter followed Jesus, he stopped at the high priest's courtyard. This can be written clearly. Alternate translation: "and he went as far as the courtyard of the high priest"
He sat among the officers
Peter sat with the officers who were working at the courtyard. Alternate translation: "He sat in the courtyard among the officers"
the officers
These were probably the servants of the "the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes" (Mark 14:54).
Mark 14:55
Now
This word is used here to mark a change in the story as the author returns to telling us about Jesus being put on trial.
they might put him to death
They were not the ones who would execute Jesus; rather, they would order someone else to do it. Alternate translation: "they might have Jesus executed" or "they might have someone execute Jesus"
But they did not find any
They did not find testimony against Jesus with which they could convict him and have him put to death. Alternate

translation: "But they did not find any testimony with which to convict him"
Mark 14:56
brought false testimony against him
Here speaking false testimony is described as if it were a physical object that someone can carry. Alternate translation: "accused him by speaking false testimony against him"
their testimony did not agree
"they contradicted each other"
Mark 14:57
brought false testimony against him
Here speaking false testimony is described as if it were a physical object that someone can carry. Alternate translation: "accused him by speaking false testimony against him"
Mark 14:58
We heard him say
"We heard Jesus say." The word "we" refers to the people who brought false testimony against Jesus and does not include the people to whom they are speaking.
made with hands ... made without hands
Here "hands" refers to men. Alternate translation: "made by men ... without man's help" or "built by men ... without man's help"
in three days
"within three days." This means that the temple would be built within a three-day period.
will build another
The word "temple" is understood from the previous phrase. It may be repeated. Alternate translation: "will build another temple"
Mark 14:59
their testimony did not agree
"these witnesses contradicted each other"
Mark 14:60
Connecting Statement:
When Jesus answers that he is the Christ, the high priest and all of the leaders there condemn him as one who deserves to die.
stood up among them
Jesus stands up in the middle of the angry crowd to speak to them. Translate this to show who was present when Jesus stood up to speak. Alternate translation: "stood up among the chief priests, scribes, and elders"
Have you no answer? What is it these men testify against you?
The chief priest is not asking Jesus for information about what the witnesses said. He is asking Jesus to prove what the witnesses said is wrong. Alternate translation: "Are you not going to reply? What do you say in response to the testimony these men are speaking against you?"
Mark 14:61
the Son of the Blessed One
Here God is called "the Blessed One." It is best to translate "Son" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a "son" of a human father. Alternate translation: "the Son of God"
Mark 14:62
I am
This likely has a double meaning: 1) to respond to the high priest's question and 2) to call himself "I Am," which is what God called himself in the Old Testament.
he sits at the right hand of power
Here "power" is a metonym that represents God. To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "he sits in the place of honor beside the all-powerful God"
comes with the clouds of heaven
Here the clouds are described as accompanying Jesus when he returns. Alternate translation: "when he comes down through the clouds in the sky"
Mark 14:63
tore his garments
The high priest tore his clothes purposefully to show his outrage and horror at what Jesus has said. Alternate translation: "tore his garments in outrage"
Do we still need witnesses?
This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We certainly do not need any more people who will testify against this man!"
Mark 14:64
You have heard the blasphemy
This refers to what Jesus said, which the high priest called blasphemy. Alternate translation: "You have heard the blasphemy he has spoken"
They all
all the people in the room
Mark 14:65
Some began to
some of the people in the room
to cover his face
They covered his face with a cloth or blindfold, so he could not see. Alternate translation: "to cover his face with a blindfold"
Prophesy
They mocked him, asking him to prophesy who was hitting him. Alternate translation: "Prophesy who hit you"
officers
men who guarded the governor's house
Mark 14:66
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus had predicted, Peter denies Jesus three times before the rooster crows.
below in the courtyard
"outside in the courtyard"
one of the servant girls of the high priest
The servant girls worked for the high priest. Alternate translation: "one of the servant girls who worked for the high priest"
Mark 14:68
denied
This means to claim that something is not true. In this case, Peter was saying that what the servant girl said about him was not true.
neither know nor understand what you are talking about
Both "know" and "understand" have the same meaning here. The meaning is repeated to add emphasis to what Peter is saying. Alternate translation: "I really do not

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understand what you are talking about"
Mark 14:69
the servant girl
This is the same servant girl who identified Peter previously.
one of them
The people were identifying Peter as one of Jesus's disciples. This can be made clearer. Alternate translation: "one of Jesus's disciples" or "one of those who have been with that man they arrested"
Mark 14:71
to put himself under curses
If in your language you have to name the person who curses someone, state God. Alternate translation: "to say for God to curse him"
Mark 14:72
rooster immediately crowed
The rooster is a male bird that calls out loudly very early in the morning. If he has made that sound he has "crowed."
a second time
"Second" here is an ordinal number.
he broke down
This idiom means that he was overwhelmed with grief and lost control of his emotions. Alternate translation: "he was overwhelmed with grief" or "he lost control of his emotions"

15 [1]Early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders and scribes and the entire Jewish council, consulted together. Then they bound Jesus and led him away. They handed him over to Pilate.[2]Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"
He answered him, "You say so."
[3]The chief priests were accusing him of many things.

[4]Pilate again asked him, "Do you give no answer? See how many things they are accusing you of!"[5]But Jesus no longer answered Pilate, and that amazed him.

[6]Now at the time of the festival, Pilate usually released to them one prisoner, a prisoner they requested.[7]There was a man called Barabbas in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the rebellion.[8]The crowd came to Pilate and began to ask him to do for them as he had done in the past.
[9]Pilate answered them and said, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"[10]For he knew that it was because of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him.[11]But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to cry out that Barabbas should be released instead.
[12]Pilate answered them again and said, "What then should I do with the King of the Jews?"
[13]They shouted again, "Crucify him!"

[14]Pilate said to them, "What evil has he done?"But they shouted more and more, "Crucify him."
[15]Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, so he released Barabbas to them. He scourged Jesus and then handed him over to be crucified.

[16]The soldiers led him inside the courtyard (which is the government headquarters), and they called together the whole company of soldiers.[17]They put a purple robe on Jesus, and they twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on him.
[18]They began to salute him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!"
[19]They were striking his head with a reed staff and spitting on him. They went to their knees and they bowed down before him.[20]When they had mocked him, they took off of him the purple robe and put his own garments on him, and then led him out to crucify him.[21]A certain man, Simon of Cyrene, was coming in from the country (he was the father of Alexander and Rufus), and they forced him to carry his cross.

[22]The soldiers brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which is translated "Place of a Skull").[23]They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not drink it.[24]They crucified him and divided up his garments by casting lots to determine what piece each soldier would take.
[25]It was the third hour when they crucified him.[26]On a sign they wrote the charge against him, "The king of the Jews."[27]With him they crucified two robbers, one on the right of him and one on his left.[28] [1]
[29]Those who passed by insulted him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,[30]save yourself and come down from the cross!"

[31]In the same way the chief priests were mocking him with each other, along with the scribes, and said, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself.[32]Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also insulted him.

[33]At the sixth hour, darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.[34]At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is interpreted, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?"[35]Some of those standing by heard his words and said, "Look, he is calling for Elijah."

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[36]Someone ran, put sour wine on a sponge, put it on a reed staff, and gave it to him to drink. The man said, "Let us see if Elijah comes to take him down."[37]Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice and died.
[38]The curtain of the temple was split in two from the top to the bottom.
[39]When the centurion who stood and faced Jesus saw that he had died in this way, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God."[40]There were also women who looked on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary (the mother of James the younger and of Joses),[2] and Salome.[41]When he was in Galilee, they followed him and served him. Many other women also came up with him to Jerusalem.

[42]When evening had come, because it was the Day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,[43]Joseph of Arimathea came there. He was a respected member of the council who was waiting for the kingdom of God. He boldly went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.[44]Pilate was amazed that Jesus was already dead; he called the centurion and asked him if Jesus was dead.
[45]When Pilate learned from the centurion that Jesus was dead, he gave the body to Joseph.[46]Joseph had bought a linen cloth. He took him down from the cross, wrapped him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of a rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.[47]Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw the place where Jesus was buried.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have Mark 15:28, The scripture was fulfilled that says, 'He was counted with the lawless ones.'
[2]The man called Joses here is called Joseph in Mark 6:3. The name Joseph represents how the name was spelled in Hebrew, and the name Joses represents how his name was spelled in Greek.

Mark 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The curtain of the temple was split in two"

The curtain in the temple was an important symbol that showed that people needed to have someone speak to God for them. They could not speak to God directly because all people are sinful and God hates sin. God split the curtain to show that Jesus's people can now speak to God directly because Jesus has paid for their sins.

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Mark 15:46) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Sarcasm

Both by pretending to worship Jesus (Mark 15:19) and by pretending to speak to a king (Mark 15:18), the soldiers and the Jews showed that they hated Jesus and did not believe that he was the Son of God. (See: and mock)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

This is a phrase in Aramaic. Mark transliterates its sounds by writing them using Greek letters. He then explains its meaning.

Links:

Mark 15:1 Notes

Mark 15:1

Connecting Statement:

When the chief priests, the elders, the scribes, and the council give Jesus over to Pilate, they accuse Jesus of doing many bad things. When Pilate asks if what they had said is true, Jesus does not answer him.

they bound Jesus and led him away

They commanded for Jesus to be bound, but it would have been the guards who actually bound him and led him away. Alternate translation: "they commanded for Jesus to be bound and then he was led away" or "they commanded the guards to bind Jesus and then they led him away"

They handed him over to Pilate

They had Jesus led to Pilate and transferred control of Jesus over to him.

Mark 15:2

You say so

Possible meanings are 1) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "You yourself have said so" or 2) by saying this, Jesus implied that he is the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said"

Mark 15:3

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were accusing him of many things
"were saying that Jesus had done many bad things"
Mark 15:4
Pilate again asked him
"Pilate asked Jesus again"
Do you give no answer
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Do you have an answer"
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
Mark 15:5
that amazed him
It surprised Pilate that Jesus did not reply and defend himself.
Mark 15:6
Connecting Statement:
Pilate, hoping the crowd will choose Jesus, offers to release a prisoner, but the crowd asks for Barabbas instead.
Now
This word is used here to mark a pause in the story as the author tells background information about Pilate's tradition of releasing a prisoner at feasts and about Barabbas.
Mark 15:7
General Information:
The writer continues giving background information that will enable the reader to understand the part of the story that follows.
the rebels who had committed murder during the rebellion
The writer writes as though he believes that the readers know which rebels and which rebellion he is talking about, not as though he is introducing new participants to the story.
Mark 15:8
to do for them as he had done in the past
This refers to Pilate releasing a prisoner at feasts. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "to release a prisoner to them as he had done in the past"
Mark 15:10
For he knew that it was because of envy ... Jesus over to him
This is background information about why Jesus was handed over to Pilate.
it was because of envy that the chief priests
They envied Jesus, probably because so many people were following him and becoming his disciples. Alternate translation: "the chief priests were envious of Jesus. This is why they" or "the chief priests were envious of Jesus's popularity among the people. This is why they"
Mark 15:11
stirred up the crowd
The author speaks of the chief priests rousing or urging the crowd as if the crowd were a bowl of something that they were stirring. Alternate translation: "roused the crowd" or "urged the crowd"
released instead
They requested Barabbas to be released instead of Jesus. Alternate translation: "released instead of Jesus"
Mark 15:12
Connecting Statement:
The crowd asks for Jesus's death, so Pilate turns him over to the soldiers, who mock him, crown him with thorns, strike him, and lead him out to crucify him.
What then should I do with the King of the Jews
Pilate asks what he should do with Jesus if he releases Barabbas to them. This can be written clearly. Alternate translation: "If I release Barabbas, what then should I do with the King of the Jews"
Mark 15:14
Pilate said to them
"Pilate said to the crowd"
Mark 15:15
to satisfy the crowd
"make the crowd happy by doing what they wanted him to do"
He scourged Jesus
Pilate did not actually scourge Jesus but rather his soldiers did.
scourged
"flogged." To "scourge" is to beat with an especially painful whip.
then handed him over to be crucified
Pilate told his soliders to take Jesus away to crucify him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "told his soldiers to take him away and crucify him"
Mark 15:16
the courtyard (which is the government headquarters)
This was where the Roman soldiers in Jerusalem lived, and where the governor stayed when he was in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "the courtyard of the soldiers' barracks" or "the courtyard of the governor's residence"
the whole company of soldiers
"the whole unit of soldiers" "the whole cohort of soldiers"
Mark 15:17
They put a purple robe on Jesus
Purple was a color worn by royalty. The soldiers did not believe that Jesus was king. They clothed him this way to mock him because others said that he was the King of the Jews.
a crown of thorns
"a crown made of thorny branches"
Mark 15:18
began to salute him
The reader should understsnd that they were mocking Jesus by pretending to salute him.
Hail, King of the Jews
The greeting "Hail" with a raised hand was only used to greet the Roman emperor. The soldiers did not believe that Jesus was the king of the Jews. Rather they said this to mock him.
Mark 15:19
a reed
"a stick" or "a staff"
went to their knees
"kneeled" or "knelt" or "got on their knees"
Mark 15:21
Simon ... Alexander ... Rufus
These are names of men.

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Cyrene
This is the name of a place.
from the country
"from outside the city"
he was the father of Alexander and Rufus
This is background information about the man whom the soldiers forced to carry Jesus's cross.
they forced him to carry his cross
According to Roman law, a solider could force a man he came upon along the road to carry a load. In this case, they forced Simon to carry Jesus's cross.
Mark 15:22
Connecting Statement:
The soldiers bring Jesus to Golgotha, where they crucify him with two others. Many people mock him.
Place of a Skull
"Skull Place" or "Place of the Skull." This the name of a place. It does not mean that there are lots of skulls there.
Skull
A skull is the head bones, or a head without any flesh on it.
Mark 15:23
wine mixed with myrrh
It may be helpful to explain that myrrh is a pain-relieving medicine. Alternate translation: "wine mixed with a medicine called myrrh" or "wine mixed with a pain-relieving medicine called myrrh"
Mark 15:25
the third hour
"Third" here is a ordinal number. This refers to nine o'clock in the morning. Alternate translation: "nine o'clock in the morning"
Mark 15:26
On a sign
The soldiers attached this sign to the cross above Jesus. Alternate translation: "They attached to the cross above Jesus's head a sign on which"
the charge against him
"the crime they were accusing him of doing"
Mark 15:27
one on the right of him and one on his left
This can be written more clearly. Alternate translation: "one on a cross on the right side of him and one on a cross on the left side of him"
Mark 15:29
shaking their heads
This action showed that the people disapproved of Jesus.
Aha!
This is a exclamation of mockery. Use the appropriate exclamation in your language.
You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days
The people refer to Jesus by what he earlier prophesied that he would do. Alternate translation: "You who said you would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days"
Mark 15:31
In the same way
This refers to the way that the people who were walking by Jesus were mocking him.
were mocking him with each other
"were saying mocking things about Jesus among themselves"
Mark 15:32
Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down
The leaders did not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the King of Israel. Alternate translation: "He calls himself the Christ and the King of Israel. So let him come down" or "If he is really the Christ and the King of Israel, he should come down"
believe
The means to believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: "believe in him"
insulted
mocked, slandered
Mark 15:33
the sixth hour
This refers to noon or 12 p.m.
darkness came over the whole land
Here the author describes it becoming dark outside as if the darkness were a wave that moved over the land. Alternate translation: "the whole land became dark"
Mark 15:34
At the ninth hour
This refers to three o'clock in the afternoon. Alternate translation: "At three o'clock in the afternoon" or "In the middle of the afternoon"
Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani
These are Aramaic words that should be copied as is into your language with similar sounds.
is interpreted
"means"
Mark 15:35
Some of those standing by heard his words and said
It can be stated clearly that they misunderstood what Jesus said. Alternate translation: "When some of those standing there heard his words, they misunderstood and said"
Mark 15:36
sour wine
"vinegar"
reed staff
"stick." This was a staff made from a reed.
gave it to him
"gave it to Jesus." The man held up the staff so that Jesus could drink wine from the sponge. Alternate translation: "held it up to Jesus"
Mark 15:38
The curtain of the temple was split in two
Mark is showing that God himself split the temple curtain. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God split the curtain of the temple in two"
Mark 15:39
the centurion
This is the centurion who supervised the soldiers who crucified Jesus.
who stood and faced Jesus
Here "faced" is an idiom that means to look towards someone. Alternate translation: "who stood in front of Jesus"
that he had died in this way
"how Jesus had died" or "the way Jesus had died"

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Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Mark 15:40

looked on from a distance

"watched from far away"

(the mother of James ... and of Joses)

"who was the mother of James ... and of Joses." This can be written without the parentheses.

James the younger

"the younger James." This man was referred to as "the younger" probably to distinguish him from another man named James.

Joses

This Joses was not that same person as the younger brother of Jesus. See how you translated the same name in [Mark 6:3]

Salome

Salome is the name of a woman.

Mark 15:41

When he was in Galilee, they followed him ... with him to Jerusalem

"When Jesus was in Galilee, these women followed him ... with him to Jerusalem." This is background information about the women who watched the crucifixion from a distance.

came up with him to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for people to speak of going up to Jerusalem and going down from it.

Mark 15:42

Connecting Statement:

Joseph of Arimathea asks Pilate for the body of Jesus, which he wraps in linen and puts in a tomb.

evening had come

Here evening is spoken of as if it were something that is able to "come" from one place to another. Alternate translation: "it had become evening" or "it was evening"

Mark 15:43

Joseph of Arimathea came there. He was a respected

The phrase "came there" refers to Joseph coming to Pilate, which is also described after the background information is given, but his coming is referenced before for emphasis and to help introduce him to the story. There may be a different way to do this in your language. Alternate translation: "Joseph of Arimathea was a respected"

Joseph of Arimathea

"Joseph from Arimathea." Joseph is the name of a man, and Arimathea is the name of the place his is from.

He was a respected member of the council ... for the kingdom of God

This is background information about Joseph.

went in to Pilate

"went to Pilate" or "went in to where Pilate was"

asked for the body of Jesus

It can be stated clearly that he wanted to get the body so that he could bury it. Alternate translation: "asked for permission to get the body of Jesus in order to bury it"

Mark 15:44

Pilate was amazed that Jesus was already dead; he called the centurion

When Pilate heard that Jesus was dead, he was surprised, so he asked the centurion if it was true. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Pilate was amazed when he heard that Jesus was already dead, so he called the centurion"

Mark 15:45

he gave the body to Joseph

"he permitted Joseph to take Jesus's body"

Mark 15:46

linen

Linen is cloth made from the fibers of a flax plant. See how you translated this in Mark 14:51.

He took him down ... Then he rolled a stone

You may need to make explicit that Joseph probably had help from other people when he took Jesus's body down from the cross, prepared it for the tomb, and closed the tomb. Alternate translation: "He and others took him down ... Then they rolled a stone"

a tomb that had been cut out of a rock

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a tomb that someone had previously cut out of solid rock"

a stone against

"a huge flat stone in front of"

Mark 15:47

Joses

This Joses was not that same person as the younger brother of Jesus. See how you translated the same name in [Mark 6:3]

the place where Jesus was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place where Joseph and the others buried Jesus's body"

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16 [1]When the Sabbath day was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices that they might come and anoint Jesus' body.[2]Very early on the first day of the week, they went to the tomb when the sun had come up.
[3]They were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"[4]When they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away, for it was very large.
[5]They entered the tomb and saw a young man dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.
[6]He said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. Look at the place where they had laid him.[7]But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

[8]They went out and ran from the tomb; they were trembling and amazed. They said nothing to anyone because they were so afraid.

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[9][1] [Early on the first day of the week, after he arose, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons.[10]She went and told those who were with him, while they were mourning and weeping.[11]They heard that he was alive and that he had been seen by her, but they did not believe.

[12]After these things he appeared in a different form to two of them as they were walking out into the country.[13]They went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

[14]Jesus later appeared to the eleven as they were reclining at the table, and he rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw him after he rose from the dead.[15]He said to them, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to the entire creation.[16]He who believes and is baptized will be saved, and he who does not believe will be condemned.
[17]These signs will go with those who believe: In my name they will cast out demons. They will speak in new languages.
[18]They will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

[19]After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.[20]The disciples left and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the word by the signs that went with them.][2]

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have Mark 16:9-20.
[2]See the note on Mark 16:9.

Mark 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Mark 15:46) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

A young man dressed in a white robe

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels were in human form. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

Links:

Mark 16:1 Notes

Mark 16:1

Connecting Statement:

On the first day of the week, women come early because they expect to use spices to anoint Jesus's body. They are surprised to see a young man who tells them Jesus is alive, but they are afraid and do not tell anyone.

When the Sabbath day was over

That is, after the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, had ended and the first day of the week had begun.

Mark 16:4

the stone had been rolled away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had rolled away the stone"

Mark 16:6

He is risen!

The angel is emphatically stating that Jesus has risen from the dead. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "He arose!" or "God raised him from the dead!" or "He raised himself from the dead!"

Mark 16:9

Connecting Statement:

Jesus appears first to Mary Magdalene, who tells the disciples, then he appears to two others as they walk in the country, and later he appears to the eleven disciples.

on the first day of the week

"on Sunday"

Mark 16:11

They heard

"They heard Mary Magdalene say"

he had been seen by her

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mary Magdalene had seen him" or "she had seen him"

Mark 16:12

he appeared in a different form to two of them

The "two of them" saw Jesus, but he looked different from how he had looked previously.

two of them

"two of his disciples"

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Mark 16:13

they did not believe them

The rest of the disciples did not believe what the two who had been walking in the country said.

Mark 16:14

Connecting Statement:

When Jesus meets with the eleven, he rebukes them for their unbelief and tells them to go out into all the world to preach the gospel.

the eleven

These are the eleven apostles who remain after Judas has left them.

they were reclining at the table

This is a metonym for eating, which was the usual way people in that day ate meals. Alternate translation: "they were eating a meal"

reclining

In Jesus's culture, when people gathered to eat, they lay down on their sides, propping themselves up on pillows beside a low table.

hardness of heart

Jesus is rebuking his disciples because they would not believe in him. Translate this idiom so it is understood that the disciples were not believing Jesus. Alternate translation: "refusal to believe"

Mark 16:15

Go into all the world

Here "the world" is a metonym for the people in the world. Alternate translation: "Go everywhere there are people"

the entire creation

This is an exaggeration and a metonym for people everywhere. Alternate translation: "absolutely everybody"

Mark 16:16

He who believes and is baptized will be saved

The word "He" refers to anyone. This sentence can be made active. Alternate translation: "God will save all people who believe and allow you to baptize them"

he who does not believe will be condemned

The word "he" refers to anyone. This clause can be made active. Alternate translation: "God will condemn all people who do not believe"

Mark 16:17

These signs will go with those who believe

Mark speaks of miracles as though they were people going along with the believers. Alternate translation: "People watching those who believe will see these things happen and know that I am with the believers"

In my name they

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is giving a general list: "In my name they will do things like these: They" or 2) Jesus is giving an exact list: "These are the things they will do in my name: They."

In my name

Here "name" is associated with Jesus's authority and power. See how "in your name" is translated in [Mark 9:38]

Mark 16:19

he was taken up into heaven and sat

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God took him up into heaven, and he sat"

sat down at the right hand of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "sat in the place of honor beside God"

Mark 16:20

worked with them

worked together with them, helped them as they worked

confirmed the word

This idiom means they proved that their message was true. Alternate translation: "showed that his message, which they were speaking, was true"

by the signs that went with them

"by enabling them wherever they went to do miracles that showed that they truly were his disciples"

Introduction to the Gospel of Luke

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Luke

Introduction and purpose for writing (1:1-4) Birth of Jesus and his preparation for his ministry (1:5-4:13) Jesus's ministry in Galilee (4:14-9:50) Jesus's journey to Jerusalem Discipleship (9:51-11:13) Conflict and Jesus's grief (11:14-14:35) Parables about things that are lost and found. Parables about honesty and dishonesty (15:1-16:31) Kingdom of God (17:1-19:27) Jesus's entry into Jerusalem (19:28-44) Jesus in Jerusalem (19:45-21:4) Jesus's teaching about his second coming (21:5-36) Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection (22:1-24:53)

What is the Gospel of Luke about?

The Gospel of Luke is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life of Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. Luke wrote his gospel for a person named Theophilus. Luke wrote an accurate description of the life of Jesus so that Theophilus would be certain of what is true. However, Luke expected the gospel to encourage all believers, not just Theophilus.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Gospel of Luke" or "The Gospel according to Luke." Or they may choose a title that may be clearer, for example, "The Good News about Jesus that Luke wrote."

Who wrote the Book of Luke?

This book does not give the name of the author. The same person who wrote this book also wrote the Book of Acts. In

parts of the Book of Acts, the author uses the word "we." This indicates that the author traveled with Paul. Most scholars think that Luke was this person traveling with Paul. Therefore, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought Luke was the author of both the Book of Luke and the Book of Acts.
Luke was a medical doctor. His way of writing shows that he was an educated man. He was probably a Gentile. Luke himself probably did not witness what Jesus said and did. But he said that he talked to many people who did.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What are the roles of women in the Gospel of Luke?

Luke described women in a very positive way in his gospel. For example, he often showed women being more faithful to God than most men. (See: faithful)

Why does Luke write so much about the final week of Jesus's life?

Luke wrote much about Jesus's final week. He wanted his readers to think deeply about Jesus's final week and his death on the cross. He wanted people to understand that Jesus willingly died on the cross so that God could forgive them for sinning against him. (See: sin)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are the Synoptic Gospels?

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because they have many similar passages. The word "synoptic" means to "see together."
The texts are considered "parallel" when they are the same or almost the same among two or three gospels. When translating parallel passages, translators should use the same wording and make them as similar as possible.

Why does Jesus refer to himself as the "Son of Man"?

In the gospels, Jesus called himself the "Son of Man." It is a reference to Daniel 7:13-14. In this passage there is a person described as a "son of man." That means the person was someone who looked like a human being. God gave authority to the son of man to rule over the nations forever. And all the people will worship him forever.
Jews of Jesus's time did not use "Son of Man" as a title for anyone. Therefore, Jesus used it for himself to help them understand who he truly was. (See: sonofman)
Translating the title "Son of Man" can be difficult in many languages. Readers may misunderstand a literal translation. Translators can consider alternatives, such as "The Human One." It may also be helpful to include a footnote to explain the title.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Luke?

The following verses are not in the earliest manuscripts. The ULB and UDB include these verses, but some other versions do not.

"Then an angel from heaven appeared to him, strengthening him. Being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." (22:43–44) "Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (23:34)

The following verse is not included in many modern versions. Some versions put it into square brackets. Translators are advised not to translate this verse. However, if in the translators' region there are older versions of the Bible that include this verse, the translators can include it. If they are translated, it should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that it was probably not original to Luke's Gospel.

"For he was required to release one prisoner during the feast" (23:17)

Luke

1 [1]Many have taken on the work of putting together an account of the things that have been accomplished among us,[2]just as they were passed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.[3]So it seemed good to me also, because I have accurately investigated everything from the beginning, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,[4]so that you might know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

[5]In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zechariah from the division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.[6]They were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.[7]But they had no child because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in their days.

[8]Now it came about that Zechariah was in God's presence, carrying out the priestly duties in the order of his division.
[9]According to the customary way of choosing which priest would serve, he had been chosen by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense.[10]The whole crowd of people was praying outside at the hour when the incense was burned.

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[11]Now an angel of the Lord appeared to him and stood at the right side of the incense altar.[12]When Zechariah saw him, he
was troubled, and fear fell on him.[13]But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been
heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You will call his name John.
[14]You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.[15]For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must
never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb.
[16]Many of the descendants of Israel will be turned to the Lord their God.[17]He will go before the face of the Lord in the spirit
and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—
to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him."

[18]Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days."[19]The angel
answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you, to bring you this
good news.[20]Behold! You will be silent, unable to speak, until the day these things take place. This is because you did not
believe my words, which will be fulfilled at the right time."
[21]Now the people were waiting for Zechariah. They were surprised that he was spending so much time in the temple.[22]But
when he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple. He
kept on making signs to them and remained silent.[23]It came about that when the days of his service were over, he went to
his house.

[24]After these days, his wife Elizabeth conceived and for five months she kept herself hidden. She said,[25]"This is what the
Lord has done for me when he looked at me with favor in order to take away my shame before people."

[26]In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth,[27]to a virgin engaged to a
man whose name was Joseph, who was a descendant of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.[28]He came to her and said,
"Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."[29]But she was very confused by his words, and she
wondered what kind of greeting this could be.
[30]The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.[31]See, you will conceive in your womb
and bear a son. You will call his name 'Jesus.'[32]He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God
will give him the throne of his ancestor David.[33]He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end to
his kingdom."

[34]Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen, since I have not known any man?"
[35]The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will overshadow you, and the power of the Most High will
overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.
[36]See, your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age. This is the sixth month for her, she who was called
barren.[37]For nothing will be impossible for God."
[38]Mary said, "See, I am the female servant of the Lord. Let it be for me according to your message." Then the angel left her.

[39]Then Mary arose in those days and quickly went into the hill country, to a city in Judea.[40]She went into the house of
Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.[41]Now it happened that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb
jumped, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.
[42]She cried out with a loud shout and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.[43]Why
has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?[44]For see, when the sound of your greeting came to
my ears, the baby in my womb jumped for joy.[45]Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of the things
that were told her from the Lord."

[46]Mary said,
"My soul praises the Lord,
[47] and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

[48] For he has looked
at the low condition of his female servant.
For see, from now on all generations will call me blessed.

[49] For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and his name is holy.

[50] His mercy lasts from generation to generation
for those who fear him.

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51 He has displayed strength with his arm;
he has scattered those who were proud
about the thoughts of their hearts.

52 He has thrown down princes from their thrones
and he has raised up those of low condition.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things,
but the rich he has sent away empty-handed.

54 He has given help to Israel his servant,
so as to remember to show mercy

55 (as he said to our fathers)
to Abraham and his descendants forever."

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her house.
57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to deliver her baby and she gave birth to a son. 58 Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

59 Now it happened on the eighth day that they came to circumcise the child. They would have called him "Zechariah," after the name of his father. 60 But his mother answered and said, "No. He will be called John." 61 They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name."
62 They made signs to his father as to how he wanted him to be named. 63 His father asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." They all were astonished at this.
64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed. He spoke and praised God. 65 Fear came on all who lived around them. All these matters were spread throughout all the hill country of Judea. 66 All who heard them stored them in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child become?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,
68 "Praised be the Lord, the God of Israel,
for he has come to help
and he has accomplished redemption for his people.

69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David

70 (as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago),
71 salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us.

72 He will do this to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,

73 the oath that he swore
to Abraham our father.

74 He swore to grant to us that we,
having been delivered out of the hand of our enemies,
would serve him without fear

75 in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.

76 Yes, and you, child,
will be called a prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the face of the Lord
to prepare his paths,

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to prepare people for his coming,

77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.

78 This will happen because
of the tender mercy of our God,
because of which the sunrise
from on high will come to help us,

79 to shine on those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death.
He will do this to guide our feet
into the path of peace."

80 Now the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:46-55, 68-79.

Special concepts in this chapter

"He will be called John"

Most people in the ancient Near East would give a child the same name as someone in their family. People were surprised that Elizabeth and Zechariah named their son John, because there was no one else in their family with that name.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Luke's language is simple and straightforward. He does not use many figures of speech.

Links:

Luke 1:1 Notes Luke intro

Luke 1:1

General Information:

Luke explains why he writes to Theophilus.

of the things that have been accomplished among us

"about those things that have happened among us" or "about those events that have happened among us"

among us

No one knows for sure who Theophilus was. If he was a Christian, the word "us" here would include him and so be inclusive, and if not, it would be exclusive.

Luke 1:2

were eyewitnesses and servants of the word

An "eyewitness" is a person who saw something happen, and a servant of the word is a person who serves God by telling people God's message. You may need to make it clear how they were servants of the word. Alternate translation: "saw what had happened and served God by telling people his message"

servants of the word

The word "word" is a synecdoche for a message made up of many words. Alternate translation: "servants of the message" or "servants of God's message"

Luke 1:3

accurately investigated

"carefully researched." Luke was careful to find out exactly what happened. He probably talked to the different people who saw what happened to make sure that what he wrote down about these events was correct.

most excellent Theophilus

Luke said this to show honor and respect for Theophilus. This may mean that Theophilus was an important government official. This section should use the style that your culture uses to address people of high status. Some people may prefer to also put this greeting at the beginning and say, "To most excellent Theophilus" or "Dear most excellent Theophilus."

most excellent

"honorable" or "noble"

Theophilus

This name means "friend of God." It may describe this man's character or it may have been his actual name. Most translations have it as a name.

Luke 1:5

General Information:

Zechariah and Elizabeth are introduced. Verses 5-7 give background information about them.

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Connecting Statement:
The angel prophesies the birth of John.
In the days of Herod, king of Judea
The phrase "In the days of" is used to indicate a new event. Alternate translation: "During the time that King Herod ruled over Judea"
there was a certain
"there was a particular" or "there was a." This is a way of introducing a new character in a story. Consider how your language does this.
division
It is understood that this refers to the priests. Alternate translation: "division of priests" or "group of priests"
of Abijah
"who descended from Abijah." Abijah was an ancestor of this group of priests and all of them were descended from Aaron, who was the first Israelite priest.
Luke 1:6
before God
"in God's sight" or "in God's opinion"
all the commandments and statutes of the Lord
"all that the Lord had commanded and required"
Luke 1:7
But
This contrast word shows that what follows here is the opposite of what is expected. People expected that if they did what was right, God would allow them to have children. Although this couple did what was right, they did not have any children.
they were both advanced in their days
This is a euphemism that says that they were very old. Alternate translation: "they had both lived many days" or "they had both lived many years" or "they were both very old"
Luke 1:8
Now it came about
This phrase is used to mark a shift in the story from the background information to the participants.
Zechariah was in God's presence, carrying out the priestly duties
It is implied that Zechariah was in God's temple and that these priestly duties were part of worshiping God.
in the order of his division
"when it was his group's turn" or "when the time came for his group to serve"
Luke 1:9
According to the customary way of choosing which priest would ... burn incense
This sentence gives us information about priestly duties.
the customary way
"the traditional method" or "the usual way"
chosen by lot
A lot was a marked stone that was thrown or rolled on the ground in order to decide something. The priests believed that God guided the lot to show them which priest he wanted them to choose.
to burn incense
The priests were to burn sweet-smelling incense as an offering to God each morning and evening on a special altar inside the temple.
Luke 1:10
The whole crowd of people
"A large number of people" or "Many people"
outside
The courtyard was the enclosed area surrounding the temple. Alternate translation: "outside the temple building" or "in the courtyard outside the temple"
at the hour
"at the set time." It is unclear if this was the morning or evening time for the incense offering.
Luke 1:11
Connecting Statement:
While Zechariah does his duty in the temple, an angel comes from God to give him a message.
Now
This word marks the beginning of the action in the story.
appeared to him
"suddenly came to him" or "was suddenly there with Zechariah." This expresses that the angel was present with Zechariah, and not simply a vision.
Luke 1:12
Zechariah ... was troubled ... fear fell on him
These two phrases mean the same thing, and emphasize how afraid Zechariah was.
When Zechariah saw him
"When Zechariah saw the angel." Zechariah was afraid because the appearance of the angel was frightening. He had not done anything wrong, so he was not afraid that the angel would punish him.
fear fell on him
Fear is described as if it was something that attacked or overpowered Zechariah.
Luke 1:13
Do not be afraid
"Stop being afraid of me" or "You do not need to be afraid of me"
your prayer has been heard
This can be stated in active form. It is implied that God will give Zechariah what he has asked for. Alternate translation: "God has heard your prayer and will give you what you have asked for"
bear you a son
"have a son for you" or "give birth to your son"
Luke 1:14
You will have joy and gladness
The words "joy" and "gladness" mean the same thing and are used to emphasize how great the joy will be. Alternate translation: "you will have great joy" or "you will be very glad"
at his birth
"because of his birth"
Luke 1:15
For he will be great
"This is because he will be great." Zechariah and the "many" will rejoice because John will be "great in the sight of the Lord." The rest of verse 15 tells how God wants John to live.
he will be great in the sight of the Lord
"he will be a very important person for the Lord" or "God

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will consider him to be very important"

he will be filled with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit will empower him" or "the Holy Spirit will guide him" Make sure it does not sound similar to what an evil spirit might do to a person.

from his mother's womb

"even while he is in his mother's womb" or "even before he is born"

Luke 1:16

Many of the descendants of Israel will be turned to the Lord their God

Here "be turned" is a metaphor for a person repenting and worshiping the Lord. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He will cause many of the people of Israel to repent and worship the Lord their God"

Luke 1:17

will go before the face of the Lord

Before the Lord comes, he will go and announce to the people that the Lord will come to them.

the face of the Lord

Here "the face of" someone can be an idiom that refers to the that person's presence. It is sometimes omitted in translation. Alternate translation: "the Lord"

in the spirit and power of Elijah

"with the same spirit and power that Elijah had." The word "spirit" either refers to God's Holy Spirit or to Elijah's attitude or way of thinking. Make sure that the word "spirit" does not mean ghost or evil spirit.

turn the hearts of the fathers to the children

"persuade fathers to care about their children again" or "cause fathers to restore their relationships with their children"

turn the hearts

The heart is spoken of as if it were something that could be turned to go in a different direction. This refers to changing someone's attitude toward something.

the disobedient

Here this refers to people who do not obey the Lord.

make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him

What the people will be prepared to do can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "make ready for the Lord a people who are prepared to believe his message"

Luke 1:18

How can I know this?

"How can I know for sure that what you said will happen?" Here, "know" means to learn by experience, suggesting Zechariah was asking for a sign as proof. Alternate translation: "What can you do to prove to me that this will happen?"

my wife is advanced in her days

This is a euphemism that says that she was very old. See how you translated similar words in [Luke 1:7]

Luke 1:19

I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God

This is stated as a rebuke to Zechariah. The presence of Gabriel, coming directly from God, should be enough proof for Zechariah.

who stands

"who serves"

I was sent to speak to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God sent me to speak to you"

Luke 1:20

Behold

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

silent, unable to speak

These mean the same thing, and are repeated to emphasize the completeness of his silence. Alternate translation: "completely unable to speak" or "not able to speak at all"

not believe my words

"not believe what I said"

at the right time

"at the appointed time"

Luke 1:21

Now

This marks a shift in the story from what happened inside the temple to what happened outside. Alternate translation: "While that was happening" or "While the angel and Zechariah were talking"

Luke 1:22

They realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple. He kept on making signs to them and remained silent

These things probably happened at the same time, and Zechariah's signs helped the people understand that he had had a vision. It might be helpful to your audience to change the order to show that. Alternate translation: "He kept on making signs to them and remained silent. So they realized that he had seen a vision while he was in the temple"

a vision

The earlier description indicated that Gabriel actually came to Zechariah in the temple. The people, not knowing that, assumed Zechariah saw a vision.

Luke 1:23

It came about

This phrase moves the story ahead to when Zechariah's service was ended.

he went to his house

Zechariah did not live in Jerusalem, where the temple was located. He traveled to his home town.

Luke 1:24

After these days

The phrase "these days" refers to the time Zechariah was serving in the temple. It is possible to state more clearly what this refers to. Alternate translation: "After Zechariah's time of serving at the temple"

his wife

"Zechariah's wife"

kept herself hidden

"did not leave her house"

Luke 1:25

This is what the Lord has done for me

This phrase refers to the fact that the Lord allowed her to become pregnant.

This is what

This is a positive exclamation. She is very happy with what the Lord has done for her.

looked at me with favor

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"to look at" here is an idiom that means "to treat" or "to deal with." Alternate translation: "regarded me kindly" or "had pity on me"

my shame

This refers to the shame she felt when she was not able to have children.

Luke 1:26

In the sixth month

"in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy." It may be necessary to state this clearly if it would be confused with the sixth month of the year.

the angel Gabriel was sent from God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God told the angel Gabriel to go"

Luke 1:27

a virgin engaged to ... Joseph

Mary's parents had agreed that Mary would marry Joseph. Though they had not had sexual relations, Joseph would have thought and spoken of her as his wife.

who was a descendant of David

"he belonged to the same tribe as King David"

the virgin's name was Mary

This introduces Mary as a new character in the story.

Luke 1:28

He came to her

"The angel came to Mary"

Greetings

This was a common greeting. It means: "Rejoice" or "Be glad."

you who are highly favored!

"you who have received great grace!" or "you who have received special kindness!"

The Lord is with you

"with you" here is an idiom that implies support and acceptance. Alternate translation: "The Lord is pleased with you"

Luke 1:29

she was very confused by his words, and she wondered what kind of greeting this could be

Mary understood the meaning of the individual words, but she did not understand why the angel said this amazing greeting to her.

Luke 1:30

Do not be afraid, Mary

The angel does not want Mary to be afraid of his appearance, because God sent him with a positive message.

you have found favor with God

The idiom "to find favor" means to be positively received by someone. The sentence can be altered to show God as the actor. Alternate translation: "God has decided to give you his grace" or "God is showing you his kindness"

Luke 1:31

you will conceive in your womb and bear a son ... Jesus

Mary will bear "a son" who will be called "the Son of the Most High." Jesus is therefore a human son born of a human mother, and he is also the Son of God. These terms should be translated very carefully.

Luke 1:32

the Son of the Most High

Mary will bear "a son" who will be called "the Son of the Most High." Jesus is therefore a human son born of a human mother, and he is also the Son of God. These terms should be translated very carefully.

will be called

Possible meanings are 1) "people will call him" or 2) "God will call him"

Son of the Most High

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

give him the throne of his ancestor David

The throne represents the king's authority to rule. Alternate translation: "give him authority to rule as king as his ancestor David did"

Luke 1:33

there will be no end to his kingdom

The negative phrase "no end" emphasizes that it continues forever. It could also be stated with a positive phrase. Alternate translation: "his kingdom will never end"

Luke 1:34

How will this happen

Though Mary did not understand how it could happen, she did not doubt that it would happen.

I have not known any man

Mary used this polite expression to say that she had not engaged in sexual activity. Alternate translation: "I am a virgin"

Luke 1:35

The Holy Spirit will overshadow you

The process of Mary's conception would begin with the Holy Spirit coming to her.

the power of the Most High

It was God's "power" that would supernaturally cause Mary to become pregnant even while she still remained a virgin. Make sure this does not imply any physical or sexual union —this was a miracle.

will overshadow you

"will cover you like a shadow"

So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the holy one who will be born they will call the Son of God" or "So the baby that will be born will be holy, and people will call him the Son of God"

the holy one

"the holy child" or "the holy baby"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

Luke 1:36

See, your relative

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: your relative"

your relative Elizabeth

If you need to state a specific relationship, Elizabeth was probably Mary's aunt or great-aunt.

has also conceived a son in her old age

"Elizabeth has also become pregnant with a son even though she is already very old" or "Elizabeth, even though she is old, has also become pregnant and will bear a son." Make sure it does not sound as though both Mary and Elizabeth were old when they conceived.

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the sixth month for her
"the sixth month of her pregnancy"
Luke 1:37
For nothing
"Because nothing" or "This shows that nothing"
nothing will be impossible for God
Elizabeth's pregnancy was proof that God was able to do anything—even enable Mary to become pregnant without her sleeping with a man. The double negatives in this statement can be stated with positive terms. Alternate translation: "everything will be possible for God" or "God can do anything"
Luke 1:38
See, I am the female servant
"Here I am, the female servant" or "I am glad to be the female servant." She is responding humbly and willingly.
I am the female servant of the Lord
Choose an expression that shows her humility and obedience to the Lord. She was not boasting about being the Lord's servant.
Let it be for me
"Let this happen to me." Mary was expressing her willingness for the things to happen that the angel had told her were about to happen.
Luke 1:39
Connecting Statement:
Mary goes to visit her relative Elizabeth, who is going to give birth to John.
arose
This idiom means she not only stood up, but also "got ready." Alternate translation: "started out" or "got ready"
the hill country
"the hilly area" or "the mountainous part of Israel"
Luke 1:40
She went
It is implied that Mary finished her journey before she went in to Zechariah's house. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "When she arrived, she went"
Luke 1:41
Now it happened
The phrase is used to mark a new event in this part of the story.
in her womb
"in Elizabeth's womb"
jumped
moved suddenly
Luke 1:42
cried out with a loud shout and said
The phrases "cried out" and "loud shout" mean the same thing and are used to emphasize how excited Elizabeth was. You may want to combine them into one phrase. Alternate translation: "exclaimed loudly"
Blessed are you among women
The idiom "among women" means "more than any other woman"
the fruit of your womb
Mary's baby is spoken of as if it is the fruit that a plant produces. Alternate translation: "the baby in your womb" or "the baby you will bear"
Luke 1:43
Why has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
Elizabeth is not asking for information. She was showing how surprised and happy she was that the mother of the Lord had come to her. Alternate translation: "How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!"
the mother of my Lord
It can be made clear that Elizabeth was calling Mary "the mother of my Lord" by adding the word "you." Alternate translation: "you, the mother of my Lord"
Luke 1:44
For see
This phrase alerts Mary to pay attention to Elizabeth's surprising statement that follows.
when the sound of your greeting came to my ears
Hearing a sound is spoken of as if the sound came to the ears. Alternate translation: "when I heard the sound of your greeting"
jumped for joy
"moved suddenly with joy" or "turned forcefully because he was so happy"
Luke 1:45
Blessed is she who believed ... that were told her from the Lord
Elizabeth is talking about Mary to Mary. Alternate translation: "Blessed are you who believed ... that were told you from the Lord"
Blessed is she who believed
The passive verb can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless her because she believed"
there would be a fulfillment of the things
"the things would actually happen" or "the things would come true"
the things that were told her from the Lord
The word "from" is used here instead of "by" because it was the angel Gabriel whom Mary actually heard speak
Luke 1:46
General Information:
Mary begins a song of praise to the Lord her Savior.
My soul praises
The word "soul" refers to the spiritual part of a person. Mary is saying that her worship comes from deep inside her. Alternate translation: "My inner being praises" or "I praise"
Luke 1:47
my spirit has rejoiced
Both "soul" and "spirit" refer to the spiritual part of a person. Mary is saying that her worship comes from deep inside her. Alternate translation: "my heart has rejoiced" or "I rejoice"
has rejoiced in
"has felt very joyful about" or "was very happy about"
God my Savior
"God, the One who saves me" or "God, who saves me"
Luke 1:48
For he
"This is because he"
looked at

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"looked at with concern" or "cared about"
low condition
"poverty." Mary's family was not rich.
For see
This phrase calls attention to the statement that follows.
from now on
"now and in the future"
all generations
"the people in all generations"
Luke 1:49
the Mighty One has
"God, the Powerful One, has"
his name
Here "name" refers to the entire person of God. Alternate translation: "he"
Luke 1:50
His mercy
"God's mercy"
from generation to generation
"from one generation to the next generation" or "throughout every generation" or "to people in every time period"
Luke 1:51
displayed strength with his arm
Here "his arm" is a metonym that stands for God's power. Alternate translation: "shown that he is very powerful"
has scattered those ... hearts
"has caused those ... hearts to run away in different directions"
who were proud about the thoughts of their hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's inner beings. Alternate translation: "who were proud in their thoughts" or "who were proud"
Luke 1:52
He has thrown down princes from their thrones
A throne is a chair that a ruler sits on, and it is a symbol of his authority. If a prince is brought down from his throne, it means he no longer has the authority to reign. Alternate translation: "He has taken away the authority of princes" or "He has made rulers stop ruling"
raised up those of low condition
In this word picture, people who are important are higher than people who are less important. Alternate translation: "has has made humble people important" or "has given honor to people whom others have not honored"
of low condition
"in poverty." See how you translated this in Luke 1:48.
Luke 1:53
He has filled the hungry ... the rich he has sent away empty
The contrast between these two opposite actions should be made clear in the translation if possible.
filled the hungry with good things
Possible meanings are 1) "given the hungry good food to eat" or 2) "given the needy good things."
Luke 1:54
General Information:
The information in verses 54 and 55 can be rearranged, as in the UDB, to make the meaning clearer.
He has given help to
"The Lord has helped"
Israel his servant
If readers confuse this with the man named Israel, it could be translated as "his servant, the nation of Israel" or "Israel, his servants."
so as to
"in order to"
to remember
God cannot forget. When God "remembers," it is an idiom that means God acts upon his earlier promise.
Luke 1:55
General Information:
The information in verses 54 and 55 can be rearranged, as in the UDB, to make the meaning clearer.
as he said to our fathers
"just as he promised our ancestors he would do." This phrase supplies background information about God's promise to Abraham. Alternate translation: "because he promised our ancestors he would be merciful"
his descendants
"Abraham's descendants"
Luke 1:56
returned to her house
"Mary returned to her (Mary's) house" or "Mary returned to her own house"
Luke 1:57
Now
This word marks the beginning of the next event in the story.
deliver her baby
"give birth to her baby"
Luke 1:58
Her neighbors and her relatives
"Elizabeth's neighbors and relatives"
shown his great mercy to her
"been very kind to her"
Luke 1:59
Now it happened
This phrase is used here to mark a change in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.
on the eighth day
Here "eighth day" refers to the time after the birth of the baby, counted from the first day, which was the day he was born. Alternate translation: "on the eighth day of the baby's life"
they came to circumcise the child
This was often a ceremony where one person circumcised the baby and friends were there to celebrate with the family. Alternate translation: "they came for the baby's circumcision ceremony"
They would have called him
"They were going to name him" or "They wanted to give him the name"
after the name of his father
"his father's name"
Luke 1:61
by this name
"by that name" or "by the same name"
Luke 1:62

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They
This refers to the people who were there for the circumcision ceremony.
made signs
"motioned." Either Zechariah was unable to hear, as well as unable to speak, or the people assumed that he could not hear.
to his father
"to the baby's father"
how he wanted him to be named
"what name Zechariah wanted to give the baby"
Luke 1:63
His father asked for a writing tablet
Since he could not speak, it may be helpful to state this differently. Alternate translation: "His father indicated that he wanted them to give him a writing tablet" or "His father showed that he wanted a writing tablets"
a writing tablet
"something on which to write"
astonished
greatly surprised or amazed
Luke 1:64
his mouth was opened ... his tongue was freed
These two phrases are word pictures that together emphasize that Zechariah was suddenly able to speak.
his mouth was opened and his tongue was freed
These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God opened his mouth and freed his tongue"
Luke 1:65
Fear came on all who lived around them
"All who lived around Zechariah and Elizabeth were afraid." It may be helpful to state clearly why they were afraid. Alternate translation: "All who lived around them were in awe of God because he had done this to Zechariah"
all who lived around them
The word "all" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "those who lived around them" or "many who lived in that area"
All these matters were spread throughout all the hill country of Judea
The phrase "these matters were spread" is a metaphor for people talking about them. The passive verb here can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "All these matters were talked about by people throughout all the hill country of Judea" or "People throughout the hill country of Judea talked about all these matters"
Luke 1:66
All who heard them
"All who heard about these matters"
stored them in their hearts
People carefully remembering things so that they can think about them later is spoken of as if they were putting those things safely in their hearts. Alternate translation: "kept them in mind" or "thought carefully about these matters" or "thought a lot about these events"
hearts, saying
"hearts. They asked"
What then will this child become?
"What kind of great person will this baby grow up to be?" It is also possible that this question was meant to be a statement of their surprise at what they had heard about the baby. Alternate translation: "What a great man this child will be!"
the hand of the Lord was with him
The phrase "the hand of the Lord" refers to the Lord's power. Alternate translation: "the Lord's power was with him" or "the Lord was working in him powerfully"
Luke 1:67
Connecting Statement:
Zechariah tells what will happen with his son John.
His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit filled his father Zechariah, and Zachariah prophesied"
His father
John's father
prophesied, saying
Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotes in your language. Alternate translation: "prophesied and said" or "prophesied, and this is what he said"
Luke 1:68
the God of Israel
"Israel" here refers to the nation of Israel. The relationship between God and Israel could be stated more directly. Alternate translation: "the God who reigns over Israel" or "the God whom Israel worships"
his people
"God's people"
Luke 1:69
He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David
The horn of an animal is a symbol of its power to defend itself. To raise up here is to bring into existence or to enable to act. The Messiah is spoken of as if he were a horn with the power to save Israel. Alternate translation: "He has brought to us someone who is in the house of his servant David with the power to save us"
in the house of his servant David
David's "house" here represents his family, specifically, his descendants. Alternate translation: "in the family of his servant David" or "who is a descendant of his servant David"
Luke 1:70
as he spoke
"just as God said"
he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from long ago
God speaking by the prophets' mouths represents God causing his prophets to say what he wanted them to say. Alternate translation: "he caused his holy prophets who lived long ago to say"
Luke 1:71
salvation from our enemies
The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verbs "save" or "rescue." Alternate translation: "who will save us from our enemies"
our enemies ... all who hate us
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are repeated to emphasize how strongly their enemies are against them.

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hand
The hand is a metonym for the power that the person uses the hand to exercise. Alternate translation: "power" or "control"
Luke 1:72
to show mercy to
"to be merciful to" or "to act according to his mercy toward"
remember
Here the word "remember" means to keep a commitment or fulfill something.
Luke 1:73
the oath that he swore
These words refer to "his holy covenant" (Luke 1:72).
Luke 1:74
to grant to us
"to make it possible for us"
that we, having been delivered out of the hand of our enemies, would serve him without fear
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that after he rescued us from the hand of our enemies we would serve him without fear"
out of the hand of our enemies
Here "hand" refers to the control or power a person. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "from the control of our enemies"
without fear
This refers back to the fear of their enemies. Alternate translation: "without being afraid of our enemies"
Luke 1:75
in holiness and righteousness
This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "holiness" and "righteousness." Possible meanings are 1) we would serve God in holy and righteous ways. Alternate translation: "doing what is holy and righteous" or 2) we would be holy and righteous. Alternate translation: "being holy and righteous"
before him
This is an idiom which means "in his presence"
Luke 1:76
Yes, and you
Zechariah uses this phrase to begin his direct address to his son. You may have a similar way to direct speech in your language.
you, child, will be called a prophet
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as for you, child, people will know that you are a prophet"
of the Most High
These words are a euphemism for God. Alternate translation: "who serves the Most High" or "who speaks for God Most High"
will go before the face of the Lord
Before the Lord comes, he will go and announce to the people that the Lord will come to them. See how you translated this in Luke 1:17.
the face of the Lord
"the face of" someone can be an idiom that refers to the that person's presence. It is sometimes omitted in translation. Alternate translation: "the Lord" See how you translated this in [Luke 1:17]
to prepare his paths
This is a metaphor that means that John will prepare the people to listen to and believe the Lord's message.
Luke 1:77
to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins
The phrase "give knowledge" is a metaphor for teaching. The abstract nouns "salvation" and "forgiveness" can be expressed with the verbs "save" and "forgive." Alternate translation: "to teach his people salvation through the forgiveness of their sins" or "to teach his people how God saves people by forgiving their sins"
Luke 1:78
because of the tender mercy of our God
It might be helpful to state that God's mercy helps people. Alternate translation: "because God is compassionate and merciful to us"
the sunrise from on high
Light is often a metaphor for truth. Here, the Savior giving spiritual truth to people is spoken of as if he were a sunrise that shines light on the earth. Alternate translation: "the Savior, who is like a sunrise, will come from on high"
from on high
"from heaven"
Luke 1:79
to shine
Light is often a metaphor for truth. Here, the spiritual truth that the Savior will provide is spoken of as if it is a sunrise that lights up the earth
shine on
"give knowledge to" or "give spiritual light to"
those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death
Darkness is here a metaphor for the absence of spiritual truth. Here, people who lack spiritual truth are spoken of as if they are sitting in darkness. Also "shadow of death" represents the threat of death. Alternate translation: "those who do not know the truth and are in spiritual darkness and fear dying"
guide our feet into the path of peace
Here "guide" is a metaphor for teaching, and "path of peace" is a metaphor for living at peace with God. The phrase "our feet" is a synecdoche that represents the whole person. Alternate translation: "teach us how to live at peace with God"
Luke 1:80
General Information:
This tells briefly about John's growing years.
Now
This word is used here to mark a change in the main story. Luke quickly moves from the birth of John to the beginning of his ministry as an adult.
became strong in spirit
"became spiritually mature" or "strengthened his relationship with God"
was in the wilderness
"lived in the wilderness." Luke does not say at what age John began to live in the wilderness.
until
This does not necessarily mark a stopping point. John

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continued to live out in the desert even after he started preaching publicly.

the day of his public appearance
"when he began to preach in public"

the day
This is used here in the general sense of "the time" or "the occasion."

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2 [1]Now in those days, it came about that Caesar Augustus sent out a decree ordering that a census be taken of all the
people living in the world.[2]This was the first census made while Quirinius was governor of Syria.[3]So everyone went to
his own city to be registered for the census.
[4]Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem,
because he was of the house and family line of David.[5]He went there to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him
and was pregnant.
[6]Now it came about that while they were there, the time came for her to deliver her baby.[7]She gave birth to a son, her
firstborn child, and she wrapped him in long strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for
them in the inn.

[8]There were shepherds in that region who were staying in the fields, guarding their flock at night.[9]An angel of the Lord
appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.
[10]Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, because I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all the people.
[11]Today a Savior was born for you in the city of David! He is Christ the Lord![12]This is the sign that will be given to you: You
will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."
[13]Suddenly there was together with the angel a great multitude from heaven, praising God and saying,

[14]"Glory to God in the highest,
and may there be peace on earth
among people with whom he is pleased."[1]

[15]It came about that when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let us now
go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."[16]They hurried there and
found Mary, Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in a manger.
[17]After they had seen him, they made known what had been said to them about this child.[18]All who heard it were amazed
at what was spoken to them by the shepherds.[19]But Mary kept thinking about all the things she had heard, treasuring
them in her heart.[20]The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for everything that they had heard and seen, just
as it had been spoken to them.

[21]When it was the end of the eighth day, when he was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name he had been given by
the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

[22]When the required number of days for their purification had passed, according to the law of Moses, they brought him
up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.[23]As it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens
the womb will be set apart to the Lord."[24]So they offered a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord, "a
pair of doves or two young pigeons."
[25]Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout. He was waiting
for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.[26]It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he
would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.
[27]Led by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple. When the parents brought in the infant Jesus, to do for him according to
the custom of the law,[28]he took him into his arms and praised God, and he said,

[29]"Now let your servant depart in peace, Lord,
according to your word.
[30] For my eyes have seen your salvation,
[31] which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:
[32] A light for revelation to the Gentiles
and glory to your people Israel."

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[33]His father and mother[2] were amazed at what was said about him.[34]Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
"Behold, this child is appointed for the downfall and rising up of many people in Israel and for a sign that is rejected—
[35]and a sword will pierce your own soul—so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

[36]A prophetess named Anna was there. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in her days. She had lived with her husband for seven years after her virginity,[37]and was a widow for eighty-four years. She never left the temple but was serving with fastings and prayers, night and day.[38]At that very hour she came near to them and began giving thanks to God, and she spoke about the child to everyone who had been waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

[39]When they had finished everything they were required to do according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.[40]The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

[41]His parents went every year to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover.[42]When he was twelve years old, they again went up at the customary time for the festival.[43]After they had stayed the full number of days for the feast, they began to return home. But the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem and his parents did not know it.[44]They assumed that he was with the group that was traveling with them, so they traveled a day's journey. Then they started to search carefully for him among their relatives and friends.
[45]When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem and started to search carefully for him there.[46]It came about that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the middle of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.[47]All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.
[48]When they saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us this way? Look, your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."[49]He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I had to be about my Father's business?"[3][50]But they did not understand what he meant by those words.
[51]Then he went back home with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.
[52]But Jesus continued to grow in wisdom and stature, and increased in favor with God and people.

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[1]Some ancient Greek copies have different spellings that suggest two possible meanings of the last phrase of verse 14, the second being preferred. The suggestions are: good will toward people or among people with whom he (God) is pleased.
[2]Some copies of the ancient Greek text have his father's name, Joseph.
[3]Some scholars translate "about my Father's business" as in my Father's house.

Luke 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:14, 29-32.

Links:

Luke 2:1 Notes

Luke 2:1

General Information:

This gives background to show why Mary and Joseph have to move at the time of Jesus's birth.

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

it came about that

This phrase is used to show that this is the beginning of an account. If your language has a way of showing the start of an account, you may use that. Some versions do not include this phrase.

Caesar Augustus

"King Augustus" or "Emperor Augustus." Augustus was the first emperor of the Roman Empire.

sent out a decree ordering

This command was probably carried by messengers throughout the empire. Alternate translation: "sent messengers with a decree ordering"

that a census be taken of all the people living in the world

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they register all the people living in the world" or "that they count all the people in the world and write down their names"

the world

Here the word "world" represents only the part of the world that Caesar August ruled. Alternate translation: "the Empire" or "the Roman world"

Luke 2:2

Quirinius

Quirinius was appointed to be the governor of Syria.

Luke 2:3

everyone went

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"everyone started off" or "everyone was going"
his own city
This refers to the cities where people's ancestors lived. People may have lived in a different city. Alternate translation: "the city in which his ancestors lived"
to be registered for the census
"to have his name written in the register" or "to be included in the official count"
Luke 2:4
General Information:
The UDB rearranges verses 4 and 5 into a verse bridge in order to make it easier to shorten the sentences.
Joseph also
This introduces Joseph as a new participant in the story.
to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem
The phrase "the city of David" was a name for Bethlehem that tells why Bethlehem was important. Although it was a small town, King David was born there, and there was a prophecy that the Messiah would be born there. Alternate translation: "to Bethlehem, the city of King David" or "to Bethlehem, the town where King David was born"
because he was of the house and family line of David
"because Joseph was a descendant of David"
Luke 2:5
to register
This means to report to the officials there so they could include him in the count. Use a term for an official government count if possible.
along with Mary
Mary traveled with Joseph from Nazareth. It is likely that women were also taxed, so Mary would have needed to travel and be registered as well.
who was engaged to him
"his fiancee" or "who was promised to him." An engaged couple was considered legally married, but there would not have been physical intimacy between them.
Luke 2:6
General Information:
The UDB rearranges verses 6 and 7 into a verse bridge in order to keep together the details about the place they stayed.
Now it came about
This phrase marks the beginning of the next event in the story.
while they were there
"while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem"
the time came for her to deliver her baby
"it was time to give birth to her baby"
Luke 2:7
wrapped him in long strips of cloth
In some cultures mothers comfort their babies by wrapping them tightly in cloth or a blanket. Alternate translation: "wrapped cloths firmly around him" or "wrapped him tightly in a blanket"
laid him in a manger
This was some kind of box or frame that people put hay or other food in for animals to eat. It was most likely clean and may have had something soft and dry like hay in it as a cushion for the baby. Animals were often kept near the home to keep them secure and to feed them easily. Mary and Joseph stayed in a room that was used for animals.
there was no room for them in the inn
"there was no space for them to stay in the guest room." This was probably because so many people went to Bethlehem to register. Luke adds this as background information.
Luke 2:9
An angel of the Lord
"An angel from the Lord" or "An angel who served the Lord"
appeared to them
"came to the shepherds"
the glory of the Lord
The source of the bright light was the glory of the Lord, which appeared at the same time as the angel.
Luke 2:10
Do not be afraid
"Stop being afraid"
that will bring great joy to all the people
"that will make all the people very happy"
all the people
Some understand this to refer to the Jewish people. Others understand it to refer to all people.
Luke 2:11
the city of David
This refers to Bethlehem.
Luke 2:12
This is the sign that will be given to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give you this sign" or "You will see this sign from God"
the sign
"the proof." This could either be a sign to prove that what the angel was saying was true, or it could be a sign that would help the shepherds recognize the baby.
wrapped in strips of cloth
This was the normal way that mothers protected and cared for their babies in that culture. See how you translated this in [Luke 2:7]
lying in a manger
This was some kind of box or frame that people put hay or other food in for animals to eat. See how you translated this in Luke 2:7.
Luke 2:13
a great multitude from heaven
These words could refer to a literal army of angels, or it could be a metaphor for an organized group of angels. Alternate translation: "a large group of angels from heaven"
praising God
"giving praise to God"
Luke 2:14
Glory to God in the highest
Possible meanings are 1) "Give honor to God in the highest place" or 2) "Give the highest honor to God."
may there be peace on earth among people with whom he is pleased
"may those people on earth with whom God is pleased have peace"
Luke 2:15
It came about

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This phrase is used to mark a shift in the story to what the shepherds did after the angels left.

from them

"from the shepherds"

to each other

"to one another"

Let us ... to us

Since the shepherds were speaking to one another, languages that have inclusive forms for "we" and "us" should use the inclusive form here.

Let us

"We should"

this thing that has happened

This refers to the birth of the baby, and not to the appearance of the angels.

Luke 2:16

lying in a manger

A manger is a box or frame that people put hay or other food in for animals to eat. See how you translated this in Luke 2:7.

Luke 2:17

what had been said to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the angels had told the shepherds"

this child

"the baby"

Luke 2:18

what was spoken to them by the shepherds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what the shepherds told them"

Luke 2:19

treasuring them in her heart

A person who thinks is something is very valuable or precious is "treasuring" it. Mary considered the things she was told about her son to be very precious. Alternate translation: "carefully remembering them" or "joyfully remembering them"

Luke 2:20

shepherds returned

"shepherds went back to the sheep"

glorifying and praising God

These are very similar and emphasize how excited they were about what God had done. Alternate translation: "talking about and praising God's greatness"

Luke 2:21

General Information:

The laws God gave the Jewish believers told them when to circumcise a boy baby and what sacrifice the parents had to bring.

When it was the end of the eighth day

This phrase shows the passing of time before this new event.

the end of the eighth day

"the end of the eighth day of his life." The day he was born was counted as the first day.

he was named

Joseph and Mary gave him his name.

the name he had been given by the angel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the name the angel had called him"

Luke 2:22

When the required number ... had passed

This shows the passing of time before this new event.

the required number of days

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the number of days that God required"

for their purification

"for them to become ceremonially clean." You can also state God's role. Alternate translation: "for God to consider them clean again"

they brought him up to the temple

"Mary and Joseph brought the baby up to the temple"

to present him to the Lord

"to bring him to the Lord" or "to bring him into the Lord's presence." This was a ceremony acknowledging God's claim on the firstborn children who were male.

Luke 2:23

As it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As Moses wrote" or "They did this because Moses wrote"

Every male who opens the womb

This is an idiom meaning the first male born into a family. This referred to both animals and people. Alternate translation: "The first male that a mother gives birth to" or "Every firstborn male"

Luke 2:24

what was said in the law of the Lord

"that which the law of the Lord also says." This is a different place in the law. It refers to all males, whether firstborn or not.

Luke 2:25

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

was righteous and devout

These abstract terms can be expressed as actions. Alternate translation: "did what was right and feared God" or "obeyed God's laws and feared God"

consolation of Israel

The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people of Israel. To "console" someone is to give them comfort, or "consolation." The words "consolation of Israel" are a metonym for the Christ or Messiah who would comfort or bring consolation to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "the one who would comfort the people of Israel"

the Holy Spirit was upon him

"the Holy Spirit was with him." God was with him in a special way and gave him wisdom and direction in his life.

Luke 2:26

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit had shown him" or "The Holy Spirit had told him"

he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ

"he would see the Lord's Messiah before he died"

Luke 2:27

Led by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As

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the Holy Spirit directed him"
came
Some languages may say "went."
into the temple
"into the temple courtyard." Only priests could enter the temple building.
the parents
"Jesus's parents"
the custom of the law
"the custom of the law of God"
Luke 2:28
he took him into his arms
"Simeon took the infant Jesus into his arms" or "Simeon held Jesus in his arms"
Luke 2:29
Now let your servant depart in peace
"I am your servant; let me depart in peace." Simeon was referring to himself.
depart
This is a euphemism meaning "die"
according to your word
"Word" here is a metonym for "promise." Alternate translation: "as you have promised"
Luke 2:30
my eyes have seen
This expression means, "I have personally seen" or "I, myself, have seen"
your salvation
This expression refers to the person who would bring salvation—the infant Jesus—whom Simeon was holding. Alternate translation: "the savior whom you sent" or "the one whom you sent to save"
Luke 2:31
which you
Depending on how you translate the previous phrase, this may need to be changed to "whom you."
have prepared
"have planned" or "caused to happen"
Luke 2:32
A light for revelation to the Gentiles
This metaphor means that the child will help people to understand God's will. The Gentiles understanding God's will is spoken of as if they were people using physical light to see a solid object. You may need to make explicit what it is that the Gentiles will see. Alternate translation: "This child will enable the Gentiles to understand God's will as light allows people to see clearly"
for revelation
It may be necessary to state what is to be revealed. Alternate translation: "that will reveal God's truth"
glory to your people Israel
"he will be the reason that glory will come to your people Israel"
Luke 2:33
what was said about him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Simeon said about him"
Luke 2:34
said to Mary his mother
"said to the child's mother, Mary." Make sure it does not sound like Mary is the mother of Simeon.
Behold
Simeon used this expression to tell Mary that what he is about to say is extremely important to her.
this child is appointed for the downfall and rising up of many people in Israel
The words "downfall" and "rising up" express turning away from God and drawing closer to God. Alternate translation: "this child will cause many people in Israel to fall away from God or to rise closer to God"
Luke 2:35
a sword will pierce your own soul
This metaphor describes the deep sadness that Mary would feel. Alternate translation: "your sadness will be painful as though a sword pierced your soul"
the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's inner beings. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he may reveal the thoughts of many people" or "he may reveal what many people secretly think"
Luke 2:36
A prophetess named Anna was there
This introduces a new participant into the story.
Phanuel
This is a man's name.
She was advanced in her days
This is a euphemism that says that she was very old. See how you translated similar words in [Luk 2:7]
seven years
"7 years"
after her virginity
"after she married him"
Luke 2:37
a widow for eighty-four years
Possible meanings are 1) she had been a widow for 84 years or 2) she was a widow and was now 84 years old.
never left the temple
This is probably an exaggeration meaning that she spent so much time in the temple that it seemed as though she never left it. Alternate translation: "was always at the temple" or "was often at the temple"
with fastings and prayers
"by abstaining from food on many occasions and by offering many prayers"
Luke 2:38
came near to them
"approached them" or "went to Mary and Joseph"
the redemption of Jerusalem
Here the word "redemption" is used to refer to the person who would do it. Alternate translation: "the one who would redeem Jerusalem" or "the person who would bring God's blessings and favor back to Jerusalem"
Luke 2:39
Connecting Statement:
Mary, Joseph, and Jesus leave the town of Bethlehem and return to the city of Nazareth for his childhood.
they were required to do according to the law of the Lord
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"that the law of the Lord required them to do"

their own town of Nazareth

This phrase means they lived in Nazareth. Make sure it does not sound like they owned the town. Alternate translation: "the town of Nazareth, where they lived"

Luke 2:40

full of wisdom

"becoming wiser" or "learning what was wise"

the grace of God was upon him

"God blessed him" or "God was with him in a special way"

Luke 2:41

His parents went ... Festival of the Passover

This is background information.

His parents

"Jesus's parents"

Luke 2:42

they again went up

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

at the customary time

"at the normal time" or "as they did every year"

the festival

The Festival of the Passover, which involved eating a ceremonial meal.

Luke 2:43

After they had stayed the full number of days for the feast

"When the entire time for celebrating the feast was over" or "After celebrating the feast for the required number of days"

Luke 2:44

They assumed

"They thought"

they traveled a day's journey

"they traveled one day" or "they went as far as people walk in one day"

Luke 2:46

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

in the temple

This refers to the courtyard around the temple. Only the priests were allowed in the temple. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

in the middle of

This does not mean the exact center. Rather, it means "among" or "together with" or "surrounded by."

the teachers

"the religious teachers" or "those who taught people about God"

Luke 2:47

All who heard him were amazed

They could not understand how a twelve-year-old boy with no religious education could answer so well.

at his understanding

"at how much he understood" or "that he understood so much about God"

his answers

"at how well he answered them" or "that he answered their questions so well"

Luke 2:48

When they saw him

"When Mary and Joseph found Jesus"

why have you treated us this way?

This was an indirect rebuke because he had not gone with them on the way back home. This caused them to worry about him. Alternate translation: "you should not have done this to us!"

Look

This word is often used to show the beginning of a new or important event. It also can be used to show where the action begins. If your language has a phrase that is used in this way, consider whether it would be natural to use it here.

Luke 2:49

Why were you searching for me?

Jesus uses two questions to mildly rebuke his parents, and to begin to tell them that he had a purpose from his heavenly Father that they did not understand. Alternate translation: "You did not need to be concerned about me."

Did you not know ... business?

Jesus uses this second question to try to say that his parents should have known about the purpose for which his Father sent him. Alternate translation: "You should have known ... business."

about my Father's business

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus meant these words literally, to indicate that he was doing the work that his Father had given him, or 2) these words are an idiom that indicate where Jesus was, "in my Father's house." Since the next verse says that his parents did not understand what he was telling them, it would be best not to explain it more.

my Father's business

At age 12, Jesus, the Son of God, understood that God was his real Father

Luke 2:51

he went back home with them

"Jesus went back home with Mary and Joseph"

was obedient to them

"obeyed them" or "was always obeying them"

treasured all these things in her heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "carefully remembered all these things"

Luke 2:52

grow in wisdom and stature

"become wiser and stronger." These refer to mental and physical growth.

increased in favor with God and people

This refers to spiritual and social growth. These could be stated separately. Alternate translation: "God blessed him more and more, and people liked him more and more"

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3 [1]In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of
Galilee, his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene,
[2]during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.
[3]He went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
[4]As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,
"A voice of one crying out in the wilderness,
'Make ready the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
[5] Every valley will be filled,
and every mountain and hill will be made low,
and the crooked roads will be made straight,
and the uneven places will be built into roads,

[6] and all flesh will see the salvation of God.'"

[7]So John said to the crowds who were coming out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers! Who warned you to run
away from the wrath that is coming?
[8]Therefore, produce fruits that are worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham
for our father,' for I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones.
[9]Even now the ax is set against the root of the trees. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and
thrown into the fire."

[10]Then the crowds kept asking him, saying, "What then are we to do?"
[11]He answered and said to them, "If someone has two tunics, he should share with a person who has none, and the one
having food should do the same."

[12]Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what must we do?"
[13]He said to them, "Do not collect more money than you have been ordered to collect."

[14]Some soldiers also asked him, saying, "What about us? What must we do?"He said to them, "Do not take money from
anyone by force, and do not accuse anyone falsely. Be content with your wages."

[15]Now as the people were eagerly expecting the Christ to come, everyone was wondering in their hearts concerning John,
whether he might be the Christ.[16]John answered by saying to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water, but someone
is coming who is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy even to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you
with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
[17]His winnowing fork is in his hand to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse.
But he will burn up the chaff with fire that can never be put out."

[18]With many other exhortations also, John was announcing the good news to the people.[19]When Herod the tetrarch had
been reproved for marrying his brother's wife Herodias, and for all the other evil things that Herod had done,[20]he added
this to them all, that he locked John up in prison.

[21]Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized, and while he was praying, the heavens
opened,[22]and the Holy Spirit in bodily form came down on him like a dove, and a voice came from heaven: "You are my
beloved Son. I am pleased with you."

[23]When Jesus began his ministry, he was about thirty years of age. He was the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, the son of
Heli,[24]the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph.

[25]Joseph was the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai,[26]the son of
Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda.

[27]Joda was the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, the son of Neri,[28]the son of
Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er,
[29]the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi.

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[30]Levi was the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim,
[31]the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David,[32]the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon.

[33]Nahshon was the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,[34]the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor,
[35]the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah.
[36]Shelah was the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech,
[37]the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan,[38]the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Luke 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:4-6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Justice

John's instructions to the soldiers and tax collectors in this chapter are not complicated. They are things that should have been obvious to them. He instructed them to live justly. (See: justice and Luke 3:12-15)

Genealogy

A genealogy is a list which records a person's ancestors or descendants. Such lists were very important in determining who had the right be king, because the king's authority was usually passed down or inherited from his father. It was also common for other important people to have a recorded genealogy.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Prophecy often involves the use of metaphors to express its meaning. Spiritual discernment is needed for proper interpretation of the prophecy. The prophecy of Isaiah is an extended metaphor describing the ministry of John the Baptist

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"(Herod) had John locked up in prison"

This event can cause confusion because the author says John was imprisoned and then says he was baptizing Jesus. The author probably uses this phrase in anticipation of Herod's imprisonment of John. This would mean that this statement is still in the future at the time of the narrative.

Links:

Luke 3:1 Notes

Luke 3:1

General Information:

Verses 1-3 give background information to tell what is happening when Jesus's cousin John begins his ministry.

Connecting Statement:

As the prophet Isaiah had foretold, John begins to preach good news to the people.

Philip ... Lysanias

These are the names of men.

Iturea and Trachonitis ... Abilene

These are names of territories.

Luke 3:2

during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas

"while Annas and Caiaphas were serving together as the high priest." Annas was the high priest, and the Jews continued to recognize him as such even after the Romans appointed his son-in-law, Caiaphas, to replace him as high priest.

the word of God came

The writer speaks of God's message as though it were a person who moved toward those who heard it. Alternate translation: "God spoke his message"

Luke 3:3

preaching a baptism of repentance

The terms "baptism" and "repentance" could be stated as actions. Alternate translation: "and he preached that people should be baptized to show that they were repenting"

for the forgiveness of sins

They would repent so that God would forgive their sins. The term "forgiveness" can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "so that their sins would be forgiven" or "so that God would forgive their sins"

Luke 3:4

General Information:

The author, Luke, quotes a passage from Isaiah the prophet concerning John the Baptist.

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

These words introduce a quotation from the prophet Isaiah.

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They can be stated in active form, and the missing words can be supplied. Alternate translation: "This happened as Isaiah the prophet had written in the book that contains his words:" or "John fulfilled the message that the prophet Isaiah had written in his book:"

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness

This can be expressed as a sentence. Alternate translation: "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness is heard" or "They hear the sound of someone crying out in the wilderness"

Make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight

The second command explains or adds more detail to the first.

Make ready the way of the Lord

"Get the road ready for the Lord." Doing this represents preparing to hear the Lord's message when he comes. Alternate translation: "Prepare yourselves for the Lord to come" or "Be ready for the Lord when he comes"

the way

"the path" or "the road"

Luke 3:5

Every valley will be filled ... every mountain and hill will be made low

When people prepare the road for an important person who is coming, they cut down the high places and fill in the low places so that the road will be level. This is part of the metaphor started in the previous verse.

Every valley will be filled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will fill in every low place in the road"

every mountain and hill will be made low

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will level every mountain and hill" or "they will remove every high place in the road"

Luke 3:6

see the salvation of God

This can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "learn how God saves people from sin"

Luke 3:7

to be baptized by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for John to baptize them"

You offspring of vipers

This is a metaphor. Here "offspring of" means "having the characteristic of." Vipers are poisonous snakes that are dangerous and represent evil. Alternate translation: "You evil poisonous snakes" or "You are evil, like poisonous snakes

Who warned you ... coming?

He was not really expecting them to answer. John was rebuking the people because they were asking him to baptize them so that God would not punish them, but they did not want to stop sinning. Alternate translation: "You cannot flee from God's wrath like this!" or "You cannot escape from God's wrath just by being baptized!"

from the wrath that is coming

The word "wrath" is used here to refer to God's punishment because his wrath precedes it. Alternate translation: "from the punishment that God is sending" or "from God's wrath on which he is about to act"

Luke 3:8

produce fruits that are worthy of repentance

In this metaphor, a person's behavior is compared to fruit. Just as a plant is expected to produce fruit that is appropriate for that kind of plant, a person who says that he has repented is expected to live righteously. Alternate translation: "produce the kind of fruit that shows that you have repented" or "do the good things that show that you have turned away from your sin"

to say within yourselves

"saying to yourselves" or "thinking"

We have Abraham for our father

"Abraham is our ancestor" or "We are Abraham's descendants." If it is unclear why they would say this, you may also add the implied information: "so God will not punish us."

raise up children for Abraham

"create children for Abraham"

from these stones

John was probably referring to the actual stones along the Jordan River.

Luke 3:9

the ax is set against the root of the trees

The ax that is in position so it can cut the roots of a tree is a metaphor for the punishment that is about to begin. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is like the man who has placed his ax against the root of the trees"

every tree ... is chopped down and thrown into the fire

"fire" here is a metaphor for punishment. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he chops down every tree ... and throws it into the fire"

Luke 3:10

asking him, saying

"asking him and said" or "asking John"

Luke 3:11

Connecting Statement:

John begins to respond to questions that people in the crowd ask him.

answered and said to them

"answered them, saying" or "answered them" or "said"

do the same

This refers back to giving to someone what he needs. Alternate translation: "give food to someone who does not have any" or "share extra food just as you shared the extra tunic"

Luke 3:12

to be baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for John to baptize them"

Luke 3:13

Do not collect more money

"Do not ask for more money" or "Do not demand more money." Tax collectors had been collecting more money than they should have been collecting. John tells them to stop doing that.

than you have been ordered to collect

This is passive to show that the tax collector's authority comes from Rome. Alternate translation: "than what the Romans have authorized you to take"

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Luke 3:14

What about us? What must we do?

"How about us soldiers, what must we do?" John is not included in the words "us" and "we." The soldiers have implied that John had told the crowd and the tax collector what they must do and want to know what they as soldiers are to do.

do not accuse anyone falsely

It seems that the soldiers were making false charges against people in order to get money. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "in the same way, do not accuse anyone falsely in order to get money from them" or "do not say that an innocent person has done something illegal"

Be content with your wages

"Be satisfied with your pay"

Luke 3:15

as the people

"because the people." This refers to the same people who came to John.

everyone was wondering in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ.

"everyone was unsure what to think about John; they asked themselves, 'Could he be the Christ?'" or "no one was sure what to think about John because they were wondering whether he might be the Christ."

Luke 3:16

John answered by saying to them all

John's answer about a greater person coming clearly implies that John is not the Christ. It may be helpful to state this clearly for your audience. Alternate translation: "John clarified that he was not the Christ by saying to them all"

I baptize you with water

"I baptize using water" or "I baptize by means of water"

not worthy even to untie the strap of his sandals

"not important enough even to loosen the straps of his sandals." Untying the straps of sandals was a duty of a slave. John was saying that the one who would come is so great that John was not even worthy enough to be his slave.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire

This metaphor compares literal baptism that brings a person into contact with water to a spiritual baptism that brings them into contact with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

fire

Here the word "fire" may refer to 1) judgment or 2) purification. It is preferred to leave it as "fire"

Luke 3:17

His winnowing fork is in his hand

"He is holding a winnowing fork because he is ready." John speaks of the Christ coming to judge people as if he were a farmer who is ready to separate wheat grain from chaff. Alternate translation: "He is ready to judge people like a farmer who is ready"

winnowing fork

This is a tool for tossing wheat into the air to separate the wheat grain from the chaff. The heavier grain falls back down and the unwanted chaff is blown away by the wind. It is similar to a pitchfork.

to thoroughly clear off his threshing floor

The threshing floor was the place where wheat was stacked in preparation for threshing. To "clear off" the floor is to finish threshing the grain. Alternate translation: "to finish threshing his grain"

to gather the wheat

The wheat is the acceptable harvest that is kept and stored.

will burn up the chaff

The chaff is not useful for anything, so people burn it up.

Luke 3:18

With many other exhortations

"With many other strong urgings"

Luke 3:19

General Information:

Verses 19 and 20 tell what is going to happen to John but has not happened at this time.

Herod the tetrarch

Herod was a tetrarch, not a king. He had only limited rule over the region of Galilee.

When Herod the tetrarch had been reproved

It is implied that John reproved Herod. This can also be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "When Herod the tetrarch had been reproved by John" or "When John reproved Herod the tetrarch")

for marrying his brother's wife Herodias

"because Herod married Herodias, his own brother's wife." This was evil because Herod's brother was still alive. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "because he married his brother's wife, Herodias, while his brother was still alive"

Luke 3:20

he locked John up in prison

Because Herod was tetrarch, he probably locked John up by ordering his soldiers to lock John up. Alternate translation: "he had his soldiers lock John up in prison" or "he told his soldiers to put John in prison"

Luke 3:21

General Information:

The previous verse says that Herod put John in prison. It might be helpful to make it clear that the account starting in verse 21 happened before John was arrested. The UDB does this by starting verse 21 with "But before John was put in prison."

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins his ministry with his baptism.

Now it came about

This phrase marks the beginning of a new event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when all the people were baptized

"while John baptized all the people." The phrase "all the people" refers to the people present with John.

Jesus also was baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John baptized Jesus also"

the heavens opened

"the sky opened" or "the sky became open." This is more than a simple clearing of clouds, but it's not clear what it means. It possibly means that a hole appeared in the sky.

Luke 3:22

the Holy Spirit in bodily form came down on him like a dove

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"in physical form the Holy Spirit came down like a dove onto Jesus"

a voice came from heaven

Here "a voice came from heaven" represents people on earth hearing God in heaven speaking. It can be made clear that God spoke to Jesus. Alternate translation: "a voice from heaven said" or "God spoke to Jesus from heaven, saying"

my beloved Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Luke 3:23

General Information:

Luke lists the ancestors of Jesus through the line of his supposed father, Joseph.

When

This word is used here to mark a change from the story to background information about Jesus's age and ancestors.

thirty years of age

"30 years old"

He was the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph

"It was thought that he was the son of Joseph" or "People assumed that he was the son of Joseph"

Luke 3:24

the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph

This continues the list that begins with the words "He was the son ... of Joseph, the son of Heli" in verse 24. Consider how people normally list ancestors in your language. You should use the same wording throughout the whole list. Possible formats are 1) "He was the son ... of Joseph, the son of Heli, who was the son of Matthat, who was the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph" or 2) "He was the son ... of Joseph. Joseph was the son of Heli. Heli was the son of Matthat. Matthat was the son of Levi. Levi was the son of Melchi. Melchi was the son of Jannai. Jannai was the son of Joseph" or 3) "His father ... was Joseph. Joseph's father was Heli. Heli's father was Matthat. Matthat's father was Levi. Levi's father was Melchi. Melchi's father was Jannai. Jannai's father was Joseph"

Luke 3:25

the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos ... Naggai

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:26

the son of Maath ... Joda

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:27

Joda was the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa ... Neri

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that begins in [Luke 3:23]

the son of Salathiel

The name Salathiel may be a different spelling of the name Shealtiel (as some versions have it), but identification is difficult.

Luke 3:28

the son of Melchi ... Er

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:29

the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer ... Levi

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:30

the son of Simeon, the son of Judah ... Eliakim

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:31

the son of Melea ... David

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:32

the son of Jesse ... the son of Nahshon

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:33

the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin ... Judah

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:34

the son of Jacob ... Nahor

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:35

the son of Serug ... Shelah

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:36

the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad ... Lamech

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:37

the son of Methuselah ... Cainan

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Luke 3:38

the son of Enos ... Adam

This is a continuation of the list of Jesus's ancestors that began in [Luke 3:23]

Adam, the son of God

"Adam, created by God" or "Adam, who was from God" or "Adam, the son, we could say, of God"

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4 [1]Then Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness,
[2]where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of that time he was hungry.
[3]The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread."
[4]Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

[5]Then the devil led Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant of time.[6]The devil said to him, "I

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will give to you all this authority and all their glory, for they have been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want.[7]So then, if you will bow down and worship me, it will be yours."

[8]But Jesus answered and said to him, "It is written, 'You will worship the Lord your God, and you will serve only him.'"

[9]Then the devil led Jesus to Jerusalem and put him on the very highest point of the temple building, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here.[10]For it is written,
'He will give orders to his angels regarding you,
to protect you,'
[11] and, 'They will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

[12]Answering him, Jesus said, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
[13]When the devil had finished tempting Jesus, he went away and left him until another time.

[14]Then Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread throughout the entire surrounding region.[15]Then he began to teach in their synagogues and he was praised by all.

[16]He came into Nazareth, where he had been raised, and, as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and he stood up to read aloud.[17]The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. He opened the scroll and found the place where it was written,
[18] "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he anointed me
to announce good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free those who are oppressed,

[19] to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

[20]Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.[21]He began to speak to them: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."
[22]Everyone there spoke well of him and they were amazed at the gracious words which were coming out of his mouth, and they asked, "Is this not the son of Joseph?"

[23]He said to them, "Surely you will say this proverb to me, 'Doctor, heal yourself. Whatever we heard that you did in Capernaum, do the same in your hometown.'"[24]But he said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is received in his own hometown.
[25]But in truth I tell you that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months and a great famine came upon all the land.[26]But Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath in Sidon, to a widow living there.[27]There were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet, but none of them were cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."
[28]All the people in the synagogue were filled with rage when they heard these things.[29]They got up, forced him out of the town, and led him to the cliff of the hill on which their town was built, so they might throw him off the cliff.[30]But he passed through the middle of them and he went to another place.

[31]Then he went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and he began to teach them on the Sabbath.[32]They were astonished at his teaching, because he spoke with authority.
[33]Now in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice,
[34]"Ah! What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

[35]Jesus rebuked the demon, saying, "Do not speak! Come out of him!" When the demon had thrown the man down in the middle of them, he came out of him, and did not harm him in any way.
[36]All the people were very amazed, and they kept talking about it with one another. They said, "What kind of words are these? He commands the unclean spirits with authority and power and they come out."[37]So news about him began to spread into every part of the surrounding region.

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[38]Then Jesus left the synagogue and entered into the house of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering with a high fever, and they pleaded with him on her behalf.[39]So he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and started serving them.

[40]When the sun was setting, people brought to Jesus everyone who was sick with various kinds of diseases. He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.[41]Demons also came out from many of them, crying out and saying, "You are the Son of God!" Jesus rebuked the demons and would not let them speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

[42]When daybreak came, he went out into a solitary place. Crowds of people were looking for him and came to the place where he was. They tried to keep him from going away from them.[43]But he said to them, "I must also preach the gospel about the kingdom of God to many other cities, because this is the reason I was sent here."
[44]Then he continued to preach in the synagogues throughout Judea.

Luke 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:10-11, 18-19, which is from the Old Testament.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Jesus was tempted by the devil

While it is true that the devil sincerely believed that he could persuade Jesus to obey him, it is important not to imply that Jesus actually ever really wanted to obey him.

Links:

Luke 4:1 Notes

Luke 4:1

Then Jesus

After John had baptized Jesus.

was led by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Spirit led him"

Luke 4:2

Connecting Statement:

Jesus fasts for 40 days, and the devil meets him to try to persuade him to sin.

for forty days he was tempted

Most versions say that the temptation was throughout the forty days. The UDB states "While he was there, the devil kept tempting him" to make this clear.

forty days

"40 days"

he was tempted by the devil

This can be stated in active form, and you can make explicit what it was the devil tempted him to do. Alternate translation: "the devil tried to persuade him to disobey God"

He ate nothing

The word "he" refers to Jesus.

Luke 4:3

If you are the Son of God

The devil challenges Jesus to prove that he is the Son of God.

this stone

The devil either holds a stone in his hand or points to a nearby stone.

Luke 4:4

Jesus answered him, "It is written ... alone.'"

Jesus's rejection of the devil's challenge is clearly implied in his answer. It may be helpful to state this clearly for your audience, as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "Jesus replied, 'No, I will not do that because it is written ... alone.'"'

It is written

The quotation is from Moses's writings in the Old Testament. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has written in the scriptures"

Man does not live on bread alone

The word "bread" refers to food in general. Food as compared to God, by itself, is not enough to sustain a person. Jesus quotes the scripture to say why he would not turn the stone into bread. Alternate translation: "People cannot live on just bread" or "It is not just food that makes a person live" or "God says there are more important things than food"

Luke 4:5

Then the devil led Jesus up ... world

"Then the devil led Jesus up to a very high place ... world." It is uncertain where the devil led Jesus and how he showed all the kingdoms of the world to him.

in an instant of time

"in an instant" or "instantly"

Luke 4:6

they have been given to me

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are that "them" refers to 1) the authority and splendor of the kingdoms or 2) the kingdoms. Alternate translation: "God has given them to me"

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Luke 4:7
if you will bow down ... worship me
These two phrases are very similar. They can be combined. Alternate translation: "if you will bow down in worship to me"
it will be yours
"I will give you all these kingdoms, with their splendor"
Luke 4:8
It is written
Jesus refused to do what the devil asked. It may be helpful to state this clearly. Alternate translation: "No, I will not worship you, because it is written"
answered and said to him
"responded to him" or "replied to him"
It is written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has written in the scriptures"
You will worship the Lord your God
Jesus was quoting a command from the scriptures to say why he would not worship the devil.
You
This refers to the people in the Old Testament who received God's Law. You could use the singular form of 'you' because each person was to obey it, or you could use the plural form of 'you' because all of the people were to obey it.
him
The word "him" refers to the Lord God.
Luke 4:9
the very highest point
This was the corner of the temple roof. If someone fell from there, they would be seriously injured or die.
If you are the Son of God
The devil is challenging Jesus to prove that he is the Son of God.
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
throw yourself down
"jump down to the ground"
Luke 4:10
For it is written
The devil implies that his quote from the Psalms means Jesus will not be hurt if he is the Son of God. This can be stated clearly, as the UDB does. Alternate translation: "You will not be hurt, because it is written"
it is written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the writer has written"
He will give orders
"He" refers to God. The devil partially quoted from the Psalms in an effort to persuade Jesus to jump off the building.
Luke 4:12
It is said
Jesus tells the devil why he will not do what the devil told him to do. His refusal to do it can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "No, I will not do that, because it is said"
It is said
Jesus quotes from the writings of Moses in Deuteronomy. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses has said" or "Moses has said in the scriptures"
Do not put the Lord your God to the test
Possible meanings are 1) Jesus should not test God by jumping off the temple, or 2) the devil should not test Jesus to see if he is the Son of God. It is best to translate the verse as stated rather than to try to explain the meaning.
Luke 4:13
until another time
"until another occasion"
had finished tempting Jesus
This does not imply that the devil was successful in his temptation—Jesus resisted every attempt. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "had finished trying to persuade Jesus to sin"
Luke 4:14
Connecting Statement:
Jesus returns to Galilee, teaches in the synagogue (4:15), and tells the people there that he is fulfilling scripture of Isaiah the prophet (4:17-21).
Then Jesus returned
This begins a new event in the story.
in the power of the Spirit
"and the Spirit was giving him power." God was with Jesus in a special way, enabling him to do things that humans usually could not.
news about him spread
"people spread the news about Jesus" or "people told other people about Jesus" or "knowledge about him was passed on from person to person." Those who heard Jesus told other people about him, and then those other people told even more people about him.
throughout the entire surrounding region
This refers to the areas or places around Galilee.
Luke 4:15
he was praised by all
"everyone said great things about him" or "all the people spoke about him in a good way"
Luke 4:16
where he had been raised
"where his parents had raised him" or "where he lived when he was a child" or "where he grew up"
as was his custom
"as he did each Sabbath." It was his usual practice to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath day.
Luke 4:17
The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah"
scroll of the prophet Isaiah
This refers to the book of Isaiah written on a scroll. Isaiah had written the words many years before, and someone else had copied them onto a scroll.
the place where it was written
"the place in the scroll with these words." This sentence continues on into the next verse.
Luke 4:18
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
"The Holy Spirit is with me in a special way." When

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someone says this, he is claiming to speak the words of God.
he anointed me
In the Old Testament, ceremonial oil was poured on a person when they were given power and authority to do a special task. Jesus uses this metaphor to refer to the Holy Spirit being on him to prepare him for this work. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit is upon me to empower me" or "the Holy Spirit gave me power and authority"
the poor
"the poor people"
proclaim freedom to the captives
"tell people who are being held captive that they can go free" or "set free the prisoners of war"
recovery of sight to the blind
"give sight to the blind" or "make the blind be able to see again"
set free those who are oppressed
"set free those who are treated harshly"
Luke 4:19
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
"tell everyone that the Lord is ready to bless his people" or "announce that this is the year that the Lord will show his kindness"
Luke 4:20
rolled up the scroll
A scroll was closed by rolling it like a tube to protect the writing inside it.
attendant
This refers to a synagogue worker who brought out and put away with proper care and reverence the scrolls containing the scriptures.
sat down
It was customary for teachers to be seated while teaching.
were fixed on him
This idiom means "were focused on him" or "were looking intently at him"
Luke 4:21
this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing
Jesus was saying that he was fulfilling that prophecy by his actions and speech at that very time. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am fulfilling what this scripture says right now as you are listening to me"
in your hearing
This idiom means "while you are listening to me"
Luke 4:22
amazed at the gracious words which were coming out of his mouth
"surprised about the gracious things that he was saying." Here "gracious" may refer to 1) how well or how persuasively Jesus spoke, or 2) that Jesus spoke words about God's grace.
Is this not the son of Joseph?
People thought that Joseph was Jesus's father. Joseph was not a religious leader, so they were surprised that his son would preach what he did. Alternate translation: "This is just Joseph's son!" or "His father is only Joseph!"
Luke 4:23
Surely
"Certainly" or "There is no doubt that"
Doctor, heal yourself
If someone claims to be able to heal diseases that he himself has, there is no reason to believe he is really a doctor. People will speak this proverb to Jesus to say that they will only believe he is a prophet if they see him do what they have heard that he did in other places.
Whatever we heard ... do the same in your hometown
The people of Nazareth do not believe Jesus is a prophet because of his low status as Joseph's son. They will not believe unless they personally see him do miracles.
Luke 4:24
Truly I say to you
"It is certainly true." This is an emphatic statement about what follows.
no prophet is received in his own hometown
Jesus makes this general statement in order to rebuke the people. He means that they are refusing to believe the reports of his miracles in Capernaum. They think they already know all about him.
own hometown
"homeland" or "native city" or "country where he grew up"
Luke 4:25
General Information:
Jesus reminds the people who are listening to him in the synagogue about Elijah and Elisha
But in truth I tell you
"I tell you truthfully." Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance, truth, and accuracy of the statement that follows.
widows
Widows are women whose husbands have died and who have not married again.
during the time of Elijah
The people to whom Jesus was speaking would have known that Elijah was one of God's prophets. If your readers would not know that, you can make this implicit information explicit as in the UDB. Alternate translation: "when Elijah was prophesying in Israel"
when the sky was shut up
This is a metaphor. The sky is pictured as a ceiling that was closed, and so no rain would fall from it. Alternate translation: "when no rain fell down from the sky" or "when there was no rain at all"
a great famine
"a serious lack of food." A famine occurs when the crops do not produce enough food for the people for a long period of time.
Luke 4:26
to Zarephath in Sidon, to a widow living there
The people living in the town of Zarephath were Gentiles, not Jews. The people listening to Jesus would have understood that the people of Zarephath were Gentiles. Alternate translation: "to a Gentile widow living in Zarephath in Sidon"
Luke 4:27
none of them were cleansed except Naaman the Syrian
This double negative emphasizes that Naaman was the only one who was cleansed. This can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "the only one of them who was cleansed was Naaman" or "the only one of them whom God

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cleansed was Naaman"
were cleansed
People who had leprosy were considered to be unclean. When they were healed from leprosy, they were clean. Alternate translation: "were healed"
Naaman the Syrian
A Syrian is a person from the country of Syria. The people of Syria were Gentiles, not Jews. Alternate translation: "the Gentile Naaman from Syria"
Luke 4:28
All the people in the synagogue were filled with rage when they heard these things
The people of Nazareth were deeply offended that Jesus had cited scriptures where God had helped Gentiles instead of Jews.
Luke 4:29
forced him out of the town
"forced him to leave the town" or "shoved him out of the city"
cliff of the hill
"edge of the cliff"
Luke 4:30
through the middle of them
"through the middle of the crowd" or "between the people who were trying to kill him."
he went to another place
"he went away" or "he went on his way" Jesus went where he had planned to go instead of where the people were trying to force him to go.
Luke 4:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus then goes to Capernaum, teaches the people in the synagogue there, and commands a demon to leave a man (4:35).
Then he
"Then Jesus." This indicates a new event.
went down to Capernaum
The phrase "went down" is used here because Capernaum is lower in elevation than Nazareth.
Capernaum, a city in Galilee
"Capernaum, another city in Galilee"
Luke 4:32
astonished
greatly surprised, greatly amazed
he spoke with authority
"he spoke as one with authority" or "his words had great power"
Luke 4:33
Now ... there was a man
This phrase is used to mark the introduction of a new character into the story; in this case, a demon-possessed man.
who had the spirit of an unclean demon
"who was possessed by an unclean demon" or "who was controlled by an evil spirit"
he cried out with a loud voice
"he shouted loudly"
Luke 4:34
What do we have to do with you
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "What do we have in common" or "What right do you have to bother us"
What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth?
This question could be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "What do you, Jesus of Nazareth, have to do with us!" or We have nothing to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth!" or "You have no right to bother us, Jesus of Nazareth!"
Luke 4:35
Jesus rebuked the demon, saying
"Jesus scolded the demon, saying" or "Jesus sternly said to the demon"
Come out of him
He commanded the demon to stop controlling the man. Alternate translation: "Leave him alone" or "Do not live in this man any longer"
Luke 4:36
What kind of words are these?
The people were expressing how amazed they were that Jesus had the authority to command demons to leave a person. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "These are amazing words!" or "His words are amazing!"
He commands the unclean spirits with authority and power
"He has authority and power to command the unclean spirits"
Luke 4:37
So news about him began to spread ... the surrounding region
This is a comment about what happened after the story. The spread of the news was caused by the events within the story itself.
news about him began to spread
"reports about Jesus began to spread" or "people began to spread the news about Jesus"
Luke 4:38
Connecting Statement:
Jesus is still in Capernaum, but he is now at the house of Simon.
Then Jesus left
This introduces a new event.
Simon's mother-in-law
"the mother of Simon's wife"
was suffering with
This is an idiom that means "was very sick with"
a high fever
"very hot skin"
pleaded with him on her behalf
This means they asked Jesus to heal her from the fever. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "asked Jesus to heal her from the fever" or "asked Jesus to cure her fever"
Luke 4:39
So he stood
The word "So" makes it clear that he did this because the people pleaded with him on behalf of Simon's mother-in-law.
stood over her
"went to her and leaned over her"
rebuked the fever, and it left her
"spoke sternly to the fever, and it left her" or "commanded

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the fever to leave her, and it did." It may be helpful to state clearly what he told the fever to do. Alternate translation: "commanded that her skin should become cool, and it did" or "commanded the sickness to leave her, and it did"

rebuked the fever

"rebuked the hotness"

started serving them

Here this means she began to prepare food for Jesus and the other people in the house.

Luke 4:40

laid his hands on

"placed his hands on" or "touched"

Luke 4:41

Demons also came out

It is implied that Jesus made the demons leave the demon-possessed people. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Jesus also forced demons to come out"

crying out and saying

These mean about the same thing, and probably refer to cries of fear or anger. Some translations use only one term. Alternate translation: "screaming" or "shouting"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

rebuked the demons

"spoke sternly to the demons"

would not let them

"did not allow them to"

Luke 4:42

Connecting Statement:

Though the people want Jesus to stay in Capernaum, he goes to preach in other Judean synagogues.

When daybreak came

"At sunrise" or "At dawn"

a solitary place

"a deserted place" or "a place where there were no people"

Luke 4:43

to many other cities

"to the people in many other cities"

this is the reason I was sent here

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is the reason God sent me here"

Luke 4:44

throughout Judea

Since Jesus had been in Galilee, the term "Judea" here probably refers to the entire region where the Jews lived at that time. Alternate translation: "where the Jews lived"

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5 [1]Now it happened while the people were crowding around Jesus and listening to the word of God, that he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret.[2]He saw two boats pulled up by the edge of the lake. The fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets.[3]Jesus got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put it out in the water a short distance from the land. Then he sat down and taught the people out of the boat.
[4]When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Take the boat out into the deeper water and let down your nets for a catch."
[5]Simon answered and said, "Master, we have labored all night and caught nothing, but at your word, I will let down the nets."[6]When they had done this, they gathered a very large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.[7]So they motioned to their partners in the other boat that they should come and help them. They came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.
[8]But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord."[9]For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish which they had taken. [10]And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid, because from now on you will catch men."
[11]When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

[12]It came about that while he was in one of the cities, a man full of leprosy was there. When he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, saying, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."
[13]Then Jesus reached out his hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing. Be clean." Immediately the leprosy left him.

[14]He instructed him to tell no one but told him, "Go on your way, and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."
[15]But the report about him spread even farther, and large crowds of people came together to hear him teach and to be healed of their sicknesses.[16]But he often withdrew into the deserted places and prayed.

[17]It came about on one of those days that he was teaching, and there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was with him to heal.
[18]Now some men came carrying on a mat a man who was paralyzed, and they looked for a way to bring him inside in order to lay him down in front of Jesus.[19]They could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, so they went up to the housetop and let the man down through the tiles, on his mat, into the midst of the people, right in front of Jesus.
[20]Seeing their faith, Jesus said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."
[21]The scribes and the Pharisees began to question this, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

[22]But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking, answered and said to them, "Why are you questioning this in your hearts?

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[23]Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?[24]But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"—he said to the paralyzed man—"I tell you, get up, pick up your mat and go to your house."
[25]Immediately he got up in front of them and picked up the mat on which he was lying. Then he went away to his house, glorifying God.
[26]Everyone was amazed and they glorified God. They were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

[27]After these things happened, Jesus went out from there and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax collector's tent. He said to him, "Follow me."[28]So Levi got up and followed him, leaving everything behind.

[29]Then Levi gave a big banquet in his house for Jesus. There were many tax collectors there and other people who were reclining at the table and eating with them.[30]But the Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"
[31]Jesus answered them, "People who are well do not need a physician; only those who are sick.[32]I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

[33]They said to him, "The disciples of John often fast and pray, and the disciples of the Pharisees do the same. But your disciples eat and drink."
[34]Jesus said to them, "Can anyone make the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is still with them?[35]But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, then in those days they will fast."
[36]Then Jesus also spoke a parable to them. "No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and uses it to mend an old garment. If he does that, he will tear the new garment, and the piece of cloth from the new garment will not fit with the cloth of the old garment.
[37]No one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does that, the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be destroyed.[38]But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins.[39]No one after drinking old wine wants the new, for he says, 'The old is better.'"

Luke 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"You will catch men"
Peter, James, and John were fishermen. When Jesus told them that they would catch men, he was using a metaphor to tell them he wanted them to help people believe the good news about him.
Sinners
When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. When Jesus said that he came to call "sinners," he meant that only people who believe that they are sinners can be his followers. This is true even if they are not what most people think of as "sinners." (See: sin)
Fasting and Feasting
People would fast, or not eat food for a long time, when they were sad or were showing God that they were sorry for their sins. When they were happy, like during weddings, they would have feasts, or meals where they would eat much food. (See: fast)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Irony
Jesus uses irony to condemn the Pharisees. This passage includes "people in good health" and "righteous people." This does not mean that there are people who do not need Jesus. There are no "righteous people." Everybody needs Jesus. (See: and Luke 5:31-32)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information
In several parts of this chapter the author left out some implicit information that his original readers would have understood and thought about. Modern readers might not know some of those things, so they might have trouble understanding all that the author was communicating. The UDB often shows how that information can be presented so that modern readers will be able to understand those passages.
Past Events
Parts of this chapter are sequences of events that have already happened. In a given passage, Luke sometimes writes as if the events have already happened while other events are still in progress (even though they are complete at the time he writes). This can cause difficulty in translation by creating an illogical order of events. It may be necessary to make these

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consistent by writing as if all the events have already happened.
"Son of Man"
Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 5:1 Notes

Luke 5:1
Connecting Statement:
Jesus preaches from Simon Peter's boat at the lake of Gennesaret.
Now it happened
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
listening to the word of God
Possible meanings are 1) "listening to the message God wanted them to hear" or 2) "listening to Jesus's message about God"
the lake of Gennesaret
These words refer to the Sea of Galilee. Galilee was on the west side of the lake, and the land of Gennesaret was on the east side, so it was called by both names. Some English versions translate this as the proper name of the body of water, "the Lake of Gennesaret."
Luke 5:2
washing their nets
They were cleaning their fishing nets in order to use them again to catch fish.
Luke 5:3
one of the boats, which was Simon's, and
"the boat belonging to Simon and"
asked him to put it out in the water
"asked Simon to move the boat"
he sat down and taught the people
Sitting was the normal position for a teacher.
taught the people out of the boat
"taught the people while he sat in the boat." Jesus was in the boat a short distance from the shore and he was speaking to the people who were on the shore.
Luke 5:4
When he had finished speaking
"When Jesus had finished teaching the people"
Luke 5:5
at your word
"because you have told me to do this"
Luke 5:7
motioned
They were too far from shore to call, so they made gestures, probably by waving their arms.
they began to sink
"the boats began to sink." The reason could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the boats began to sink because the catch of fish was so heavy" or "the boats began to sink because there were so many fish"
Luke 5:8
fell down at Jesus' knees
Possible meanings are 1) "knelt down before Jesus" or 2) "bowed down at Jesus' feet" or 3) "lay down on the ground at Jesus' feet." Peter did not fall accidentally. He did this as a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.
sinful man
The word here for "man" means "adult male" and not the more general "human being."
Luke 5:9
the catch of fish
"the large number of fish"
Luke 5:10
partners with Simon
"Simon's partners in his fishing business"
you will catch men
The image of catching fish is being used as a metaphor for gathering people to follow Christ. Alternate translation: "you will fish for people" or "you will gather people for me" or "you will bring people to be my disciples"
Luke 5:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus heals a leper in a different city that is not named.
It came about
This phrase marks a new event in the story.
a man full of leprosy
"a man who was covered with leprosy." This introduces a new character in the story.
he fell on his face
Here "fell on his face" is an idiom that means to bow down. Alternate translation: "he knelt and touched the ground with his face" or "he bowed down to the ground"
if you are willing
"if you want to"
you can make me clean
It is understood that he was asking Jesus to heal him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "please make me clean, because you are able"
make me clean
This refers to ceremonial cleanness, but it is understood that he is unclean because of the leprosy. He is really asking Jesus to heal him of his disease. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "heal me from leprosy so I will be clean"
Luke 5:13
Be clean
This refers to ceremonial cleanness, but it is understood that he is unclean because of the leprosy. He is really asking Jesus to heal him of his disease. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Be healed"
the leprosy left him
"he no longer had leprosy"
Luke 5:14
He instructed him to tell no one but told him, "Go on your way
Jesus's instruction can be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "He said, 'Do not tell anyone, but go on your

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way"

to tell no one

The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "to not tell anyone that he had been healed"

sacrifice for your cleansing

The law required a person to make a specific sacrifice after they were healed. This allowed the person to be ceremonially clean, and able to again participate in religious rituals.

for a testimony

"as proof of your healing"

to them

Possible meanings are 1) "to the priests" or 2) "to all the people."

Luke 5:15

the report about him

"the news about Jesus." This could mean either "the report about Jesus's healing the man with leprosy" or "the report about Jesus's healing people."

the report about him spread even farther

"the report about him went out even farther." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people kept telling the news about him in other places"

Luke 5:16

the deserted places

"lonely places" or "places where there were no other people"

Luke 5:17

Connecting Statement:

One day when Jesus was teaching in a building, some men brought a paralyzed man for Jesus to heal.

It came about

This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

Luke 5:18

Now some men came

These are new people in the story. Your language may have a way of showing that these are new people.

mat

sleeping pad or bed or stretcher

was paralyzed

"could not move himself"

Luke 5:19

They could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, so

In some languages it might be more natural to reorder this. Alternate translation: "But because of the crowd of people, they could not find a way to bring the man inside. So"

because of the crowd

It is clear that the reason they could not enter was that the crowd was so large that there was no room for them.

they went up to the housetop

Houses had flat roofs, and some houses had a ladder or staircase outside to make it easy to go up there. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "they went up to the flat roof of the house"

right in front of Jesus

"directly in front of Jesus" or "immediately in front of Jesus"

Luke 5:20

Seeing their faith, Jesus said

It is understood that they believe Jesus can heal the paralyzed man. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "When Jesus perceived that they believed that he could heal the man, he said to him"

Man

This is a general word that people used when speaking to a man whose name they did not know. It was not rude, but it also did not show special respect. Some languages might use a word like "friend" or "sir."

your sins are forgiven you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are forgiven" or "I forgive your sins"

Luke 5:21

question this

"discuss this" or "reason about this." What they questioned can be stated. Alternate translation: "discuss whether or not Jesus had authority to forgive sins"

Who is this who speaks blasphemies?

This question shows how shocked and angry they were at what Jesus said. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This man is blaspheming God!" or "He blasphemes God by saying that!"

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

The implied information is that if a person claims to forgive sins he says he is God. This can be written as a clear statement. Alternate translation: "No one can forgive sins but God alone!" or "God is the only one who can forgive sins!"

Luke 5:22

Why are you questioning this in your hearts?

This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not argue about this in your hearts." or "You should not doubt that I have the authority to forgive sins."

in your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds or inner beings.

Luke 5:23

Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

Jesus uses this question to make the scribes think about what might prove whether or not he could really forgive sins. Alternate translation: "You may think that it is easier to say 'Your sins are forgiven' than it is to say 'Get up and walk.'"

easier to say

The unspoken implication is that one thing is easier to say because no one will know what has happened, but the other thing is harder to say because everyone will know what has happened. People could not see if the man's sins were forgiven, but they would all know he was healed if he got up and walked.

Luke 5:24

you may know

Jesus was speaking to the scribes and Pharisees. The word "you" is plural.

the Son of Man

Jesus was referring to himself.

I tell you

Jesus was saying this to the paralyzed man. The word "you" is singular.

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Luke 5:25
Immediately he got up
"At once he got up" or "Right away he got up"
he got up
It may be helpful to clearly say that he was healed.
Alternate translation: "the man was healed! He got up"
Luke 5:26
filled with fear
"very afraid" or "filled with awe"
extraordinary things
"amazing things" or "strange things"
Luke 5:27
Connecting Statement:
When Jesus leaves the house, he calls Levi, the Jewish tax collector, to follow him.
After these things happened
The phrase "these things" refers to what happened in the previous verses. This signals a new event.
saw a tax collector
"looked at a tax collector with attention" or "looked carefully at a tax collector"
Follow me
To "follow" someone is to become that person's disciple.
Alternate translation: "Be my disciple" or "Come, follow me as your teacher"
Luke 5:28
followed him, leaving everything behind
"followed him and left his work as a tax collector"
Luke 5:29
in his house
"in Levi's house"
reclining at the table
It was customary to lie on a couch while eating at a feast and to prop oneself up with the left arm on some pillows.
Alternate translation: "eating together" or "eating at the table"
Luke 5:30
to his disciples
"to Jesus's disciples"
Why do you eat ... sinners?
The Pharisees and scribes ask this question to express their disapproval that Jesus's disciples are eating with sinners.
Alternate translation: "You should not eat ... sinners!"
sinners
people who did not obey the law of Moses but committed what others thought were very bad sins
you eat and drink with ... sinners
The Pharisees and scribes believed that religious people should separate themselves from people they consider to be sinners. The word "you" is plural.
Luke 5:31
Connecting Statement:
At the meal, Jesus speaks with the Pharisees and scribes.
People who are well ... sick
Jesus uses this proverb to begin to tell them that he calls sinners to repentance the way a physician calls sick people to be healed.
physician
"doctor"
only those who are sick
You may need to supply the words that have been omitted.
Alternate translation: "only those who are sick need a physician"
Luke 5:32
I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance
Jesus uses irony to condemn the Phraisees because they think of themselves as righteous. Anyone who wants to follow Jesus has to think of himself as a sinner, not as righteous. Jesus does not mean that he thinks there are righteous people who do not need to repent.
the righteous
This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase.
Alternate translation: "righteous people"
Luke 5:33
They said to him
"The religious leaders said to Jesus"
Luke 5:34
Can anyone make the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is still with them?
Jesus uses this question to cause the people to think about a situation that they already know. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one tells the wedding attendants of the bridegroom to fast while he is still with them."
wedding attendants
"guests" or "friends." These are friends who celebrate with a man who is getting married.
the wedding attendants of the bridegroom fast
Fasting is a sign of sadness. The religious leaders understood that the wedding attendants would not fast while the bridegroom was with them.
Luke 5:35
the days will come when
"soon" or "some day"
the bridegroom will be taken away from them
Jesus is comparing himself to the bridegroom, and the disciples to the wedding attendants. He does not explain the metaphor, so the translation should explain it only if necessary.
Luke 5:36
General Information:
Jesus tells a story to the scribes and pharisees who were at Levi's house.
No one tears ... uses it ... he ... he
"No one rips ... uses it ... he ... he" or "People never tear ... use it ... they ... they"
mend
repair
will not fit with
"will not match" or "will not be the same as"
Luke 5:37
new wine
"grape juice." This refers to wine that has not yet fermented.
wineskins
These were bags made out of animal skins. They could also be called "wine bags" or "bags made of skin."
the new wine will burst the skins

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When the new wine would ferment and expand, it would break the old skins because they could no longer stretch out. Jesus's audience would have understood how wine expands when it ferments.

the wine will be spilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the wine will spill out of the bags"

Luke 5:38

fresh wineskins

"new wineskins" or "new wine bags." This refers to new wineskins, unused.

Luke 5:39

drinking old wine ... wants the new

This metaphor contrasts the old teaching of the religious leaders against the new teaching of Jesus. The point is that people who are used to the old teaching are not willing to listen to the new things that Jesus is teaching.

for he says, 'The old is better.'

It may be helpful to add the implicit information. Alternate translation: "for he says, 'The old is better,' and he is therefore not willing to try the new wine."

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6 [1]Now it happened on a Sabbath that Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating the grain.[2]But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing something that is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?"

[3]Answering them, Jesus said, "Have you not even read what David did when he was hungry, he and the men who were with him?[4]He went into the house of God and took the bread of the presence and ate some of it, and also gave some to the men who were with him to eat, even though it was only lawful for the priests to eat it."[5]Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

[6]It happened on another Sabbath that he went into the synagogue and taught the people there. A man was there whose right hand was withered.[7]The scribes and the Pharisees were watching him closely to see whether he would heal someone on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him.[8]But he knew what they were thinking and he said to the man whose hand was withered, "Get up and stand here in the middle of everyone." So the man got up and stood there.
[9]Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?"[10]Then he looked around at them all and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored.[11]But they were filled with senseless rage, and they talked to each other about what they might do to Jesus.

[12]It happened in those days that he went out to the mountain to pray. He continued all night in prayer to God.[13]When it was day, he called his disciples to him, and he chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles.
[14]The names of the apostles were Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,[15]Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot,[16]Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.
[17]Then Jesus came down the mountain with them and stood on a level place with a large crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon.[18]They had come to listen to him and to be healed of their diseases. People who were troubled with unclean spirits were also healed.[19]Everyone in the crowd kept trying to touch him because power to heal was coming out from him, and he healed them all.

[20]Then he looked at his disciples and said,
"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.
[21] Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be filled.
Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

[22] Blessed are you when people hate you,
and when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

[23]Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because you will surely have a great reward in heaven, for their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.
[24] But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

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[25] Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry later.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep later.

[26] Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

[27]"But I say to you who are listening, love your enemies and do good to those who hate you.[28]Bless those who curse you and pray for those who mistreat you.
[29]To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer him also the other. If someone takes away your coat, do not withhold your tunic either.[30]Give to everyone who asks you. If someone takes away something that belongs to you, do not ask him to give it back to you.
[31]As you want people to do to you, you should do the same to them.[32]If you only love people who love you, what reward is there for you? For even sinners love those who love them.[33]If you do good only to people who do good to you, what reward is there for you? For even sinners do the same.[34]If you only lend to people from whom you hope to be repaid, what reward is there for you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive back the same amount.
[35]But love your enemies and do good to them. Lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind toward unthankful and evil people.[36]Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.
[37]Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.
[38]Give, and it will be given to you. A good amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over—will pour into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."

[39]Then he also told them a parable. "Can a blind person guide another blind person? If he did, they would both fall into a pit, would they not?[40]A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.
[41]Why do you look at the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye?[42]How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the piece of straw that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not even see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite! First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the piece of straw that is in your brother's eye.
[43]For there is no good tree that produces rotten fruit, nor is there a rotten tree that produces good fruit.[44]For each tree is known by the kind of fruit it produces. For people do not gather figs from a thornbush, nor do they gather grapes from a briar bush.
[45]The good man from the good treasure of his heart produces what is good, and the evil man from the evil treasure of his heart produces what is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

[46]"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and yet you do not obey the things that I say?[47]Every person who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them, I will tell you what he is like.[48]He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep in the ground and built the house's foundation on solid rock. When a flood came, the torrent of water flowed against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.
[49]But the person who hears my words and does not obey them, he is like a man who built a house on top of the ground without a foundation. When the torrent of water flowed against that house, it immediately collapsed, and the ruin of that house was complete."

Luke 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Luke 6:20-49 contains many blessings and woes that appear to correspond to Matthew 5-7. This part of Matthew has traditionally been called the "Sermon on the Mount." In Luke, they are not as connected to a teaching on the kingdom of God as they are in Matthew's gospel. (See: kingdomofgod)

Special concepts in this chapter

"Eating the grain"

When the disciples plucked and ate the grain in a field they were walking through on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1), the Pharisees said that they were breaking the law of Moses. The Pharisees said that the disciples were doing work by picking the grain and so disobeying God's command to rest and not work on the Sabbath.

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The Pharisees did not think the disciples were stealing. That is because the law of Moses required farmers to allow travelers to pluck and eat small amounts of grain from plants in fields they traveled through or near. (See: lawofmoses and works and sabbath)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Metaphors are pictures of visible objects that speakers use to explain invisible truths. Jesus used a metaphor of a generous grain merchant to teach his people to be generous

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are questions to which the speaker already knows the answer. The Pharisees scolded Jesus by asking him a rhetorical question when they thought he was breaking the Sabbath

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Implicit information

Speakers usually do not say things that they think their hearers already understand. When Luke wrote that the disciples were rubbing the heads of grain between their hands, he expected his reader to know that they were separating the part they would eat from what they would throw away

The twelve disciples

The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:

In Matthew:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

In Mark:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

In Luke:

Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.

Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.

Links:

Luke 6:1 Notes

Luke 6:1

Connecting Statement:

While Jesus and his disciples are walking through grainfields, some Pharisees begin to question the disciples about what they are doing on the Sabbath, which, in God's law, has been set aside for God.

Now it happened

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you can consider using it here.

grainfields

These are large sections of land where people had scattered wheat seed to grow wheat.

heads of grain

These are the topmost parts of the grain plant, which is a kind of large grass. It holds the mature, edible seeds of the plant.

grain, rubbing them between their hands, and eating

They did this to separate the grain seeds. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "grain. They rubbed them in their hands to separate the grains from the husks and ate"

Luke 6:2

General Information:

The word "you" here is plural, and refers to the disciples.

Why are you doing something that is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?

They asked this question to accuse the disciples of breaking the law. It can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Picking grain on the Sabbath is against God's law!"

doing something

The Pharisees considered even the small action of rubbing a handful of grain to be unlawful work. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "doing work"

Luke 6:3

Have you not even read ... him?

Jesus is rebuking the Pharisees for not learning from the scriptures. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should learn from what you have read ... him!" or "Certainly you have read ... him!"

Luke 6:4

the bread of the presence

This is the sacred bread that priests placed before God in the tabernacle. It represented God's presence. Alternate translation: "the bread of Yahweh's presence" or "the bread that the priest placed before God" or "the sacred bread"

Luke 6:5

The Son of Man is

Jesus was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am"

is Lord of the Sabbath

The title "Lord" here emphasizes his authority over the

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Sabbath. Alternate translation: "has the authority to determine what is right for people to do on the Sabbath!"
Luke 6:6
General Information:
It is now another Sabbath day and Jesus is in the synagogue.
Connecting Statement:
The scribes and Pharisees watch as Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath.
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event in the story.
A man was there
This introduces a new character in the story.
hand was withered
The man's hand was damaged in such a way that he could not stretch it. It was probably almost bent into a fist, making it look small and wrinkled.
Luke 6:7
were watching him closely
"were watching Jesus carefully"
so that they might find
"because they wanted to find"
Luke 6:8
in the middle of everyone
"in front of everyone." Jesus wanted the man to stand where everyone there could see him.
Luke 6:9
to them
"to the Pharisees"
I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to destroy it?
Jesus asks this question to force the Pharisees to admit that he was right to heal on the Sabbath. The intent of the question is thus rhetorical: to get them to admit what they all know is true rather than to obtain information. However, Jesus says, "I ask you," so this question is not like other rhetorical questions that might need to be translated as statements. This should be translated as a question.
to do good or to do harm
"to help someone or to harm someone"
Luke 6:10
Stretch out your hand
"Hold out your hand" or "Extend your hand"
restored
healed
Luke 6:12
General Information:
Jesus chooses twelve apostles after he prays all night.
It happened in those days
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.
in those days
"around that time" or "not long after" or "one day around then"
he went out
"Jesus went out"
Luke 6:13
When it was day
"When it was morning" or "The next day"
he chose twelve of them
"he chose twelve of the disciples"
whom he also named apostles
"whom he also made apostles" or "and he appointed them to be apostles"
Luke 6:14
The names of the apostles were
Luke wrote a list of the names of the apostles. The ULB uses these words to introduce the list.
his brother Andrew
"Simon's brother, Andrew"
Luke 6:15
the Zealot
Possible meanings are 1) "the Zealot" is a title that indicates he was part of the group of people who wanted to free the Jewish people from Roman rule. Alternate translation: "the patriot" or "the nationalist" or 2) "the Zealot" is a description that indicates he was zealous for God to be honored. Alternate translation: "the passionate one"
Luke 6:16
became a traitor
It may be necessary to explain what "traitor" means in this context. Alternate translation: "betrayed his friend" or "turned his friend over to enemies"
Luke 6:17
Connecting Statement:
Though Jesus especially addresses his disciples, there are many people around who listen.
with them
"with the twelve he had chosen" or "with his twelve apostles"
Luke 6:18
to be healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Jesus to heal them"
People who were troubled with unclean spirits were also healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus also healed people who were troubled with unclean spirits"
troubled with unclean spirits
"bothered by unclean spirits" or "controlled by evil spirits"
Luke 6:19
power to heal was coming out from him
"he had power to heal people" or "he was using his power to heal people"
Luke 6:20
Blessed are you
Jesus speaks this phrase three times. Each time, it indicates that God gives favor to certain people or that their situation is positive or good.
Blessed are you who are poor
"You who are poor receive God's favor" or "You who are poor benefit"
for yours is the kingdom of God
Languages that do not have a word for kingdom might say, "for God is your king" or "because God is your ruler."
yours is the kingdom of God
"the kingdom of God belongs to you." This could mean 1)

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"you belong to God's kingdom" or 2) "you will have authority in God's kingdom."
Luke 6:21
you will laugh
"you will laugh with joy" or "you will be joyful"
Luke 6:22
Blessed are you
"You receive God's favor" or "You benefit" or "How good it is for you"
exclude you
"reject you"
because of the Son of Man
"because you associate with the Son of Man" or "because they reject the Son of Man"
Luke 6:23
in that day
"when they do those things" or "when that happens"
leap for joy
This idiom means "be extremely joyful"
a great reward
"a large payment" or "good gifts"
Luke 6:24
woe to you
"how terrible it is for you." Jesus speaks this phrase three times. It is the opposite of "blessed are you." Each time, it indicates that God's anger is directed at the people, or that something negative or bad awaits them.
woe to you who are rich
"how terrible it is for you who are rich" or "trouble will come to you who are rich"
your comfort
"what comforts you" or "what satisfies you" or "what makes you happy"
Luke 6:25
who are full now
"whose stomachs are full now" or "who eat much now"
who laugh now
"who are happy now"
Luke 6:26
Woe to you
"How terrible it is for you" or "How sad you should be"
when all men speak
Here "men" is used in the generic sense the includes all people. Alternate translation: "when all people speak" or "when everyone speaks"
that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets
"their ancestors also spoke well of the false prophets"
Luke 6:27
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to speak to his disciples and the crowd who is listening to him as well.
to you who are listening
Jesus now begins to speak to the entire crowd, rather than just to his disciples.
love ... do good
Each of these commands is to be followed continually, not just a single time.
love your enemies and
This does not mean those listening were to only love their enemies and not their friends. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "love your enemies, not only your friends, and"
Luke 6:28
Bless ... pray
Each of these commands is to be followed continually, not just a single time.
Bless those
God is the one who blesses. This can made explicit. Alternate translation: "Ask God to bless those"
those who curse you
"those who habitually curse you"
those who mistreat you
"those who habitually mistreat you"
Luke 6:29
To him who strikes you
"If anyone hits you"
on the one cheek
"on one side of your face"
offer him also the other
It may be helpful to state what the attacker will do to the person. Alternate translation: "turn your face so that he can strike the other cheek also"
do not withhold
"do not prevent him from taking"
Luke 6:30
Give to everyone who asks you
"If anyone asks you for something, give it to him"
do not ask him to give
"do not require him to give" or "do not demand that he give"
Luke 6:31
As you want people to do to you, you should do the same to them
In some languages it may be more natural to reverse the order. Alternate translation: "You should do to people the same as what you want them to do to you" or "Treat people they way you want them to treat you"
Luke 6:32
what reward is there for you?
"what reward will you receive?" or "what praise will you receive for doing that?" This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "you will not receive any reward for that." or "God will not reward you for that."
Luke 6:34
people from whom you hope to be repaid
Here the word "hope" means to confidently expect that what one desires will happen. The person who hopes in this way believes that what he desires will happen. The verb "to be repaid" can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "people whom you expect will repay you" or "people whom you believe will repay you"
to receive back the same amount
The law of Moses commanded the Jews not to receive interest on money they loaned to other Jews.
Luke 6:35
expecting nothing in return
"not expecting the person to return what you have given him" or "not expecting the person to give you anything"
your reward will be great

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"you will receive a great reward" or "you will receive good payment" or "you will get good gifts because of it"

you will be sons of the Most High

It is best to translate "sons" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human son or child.

sons of the Most High

Make sure that the word "sons" is plural so it is not confused with Jesus's title "The Son of the Most High."

unthankful and evil people

"people who do not thank him and who are evil"

Luke 6:36

your Father

This refers to God. It is best to translate "Father" with the same word your language would naturally use to refer to a human father.

Luke 6:37

Do not judge

"Do not judge people" or "Do not harshly criticize people"

and you

"and as a result you"

you will not be judged

Jesus does not say who will not judge. Possible meanings are 1) "God will not judge you" or 2) "no one will judge you"

Do not condemn

"Do not condemn people"

you will not be condemned

Jesus does not say who will not condemn. Possible meanings are 1) "God will not condemn you" or 2) "no one will condemn you"

you will be forgiven

Jesus does not say who will forgive. Possible meanings are 1) "God will forgive you" or 2) "people will forgive you"

Luke 6:38

it will be given to you

Jesus does not say exactly who will give. Possible meanings are 1) "someone will give it to you" or 2) "God will give it to you"

A good amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over—will pour into your lap

Jesus speaks either of God or of people giving generously as if he were speaking of a generous grain merchant. Alternate translation: "God will pour into your lap a generous amount—pressed down, shaken together and spilling over" or "Like a generous grain merchant who presses down the grain and shakes it together and pours in so much grain that it spills over, they will give generously to you"

A good amount

"A generous amount" or "A large amount"

it will be measured back to you

Jesus does not say exactly who will measure. Possible meanings are 1) "they will measure things back to you" or 2) "God will measure things back to you"

Luke 6:39

Connecting Statement:

Jesus includes some examples to make his point.

Can a blind person guide another blind person?

Jesus used this question to get the people to think about something that they already know. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "We all know that a blind person cannot guide another blind person."

blind person

The person who is "blind" is a metaphor for a person who has not been taught as a disciple.

If he did

Some languages might prefer, "if one did."

they would both fall into a pit, would they not?

This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "both of them would fall into a hole."

Luke 6:40

A disciple is not greater than his teacher

"A disciple does not surpass his teacher." Possible meanings are 1) "A disciple does not have more knowledge than his teacher" or 2) "A disciple does not have more authority than his teacher."

everyone when he is fully trained

"every disciple who has been trained well" or "every disciple whose teacher has fully taught him"

Luke 6:41

Why do you look ... brother's eye, but you do not notice the log that is in your own eye?

Jesus uses this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "Do not look ... brothers eye while you ignore the log that is in your own eye."

the tiny piece of straw that is in your brother's eye

This is a metaphor that refers to the less important faults of a fellow believer.

tiny piece of straw

"speck" or "splinter" or "bit of dust." Use a word for the smallest thing that commonly falls into a person's eyes.

brother

Here "brother" refers to a fellow Jew or a fellow believer in Jesus.

do not notice the log that is in your own eye

"do not notice that you have a log in your own eye"

the log that is in your own eye

This is a metaphor for a person's most important faults. A log could not literally go into a person's eye. Jesus exaggerates to emphasize that a person should pay attention to his own more important faults before he deals with another person's less important faults.

log

"beam" or "plank"

Luke 6:42

How can you say ... eye?

Jesus asks this question to challenge the people to pay attention to their own sins before they pay attention to another person's sins. Alternate translation: "You should not say ... eye."

Luke 6:43

General Information:

People can tell if a tree is good or bad, and what type of tree it is, by the fruit it produces. Jesus uses this as an unexplained metaphor—we know what kind of person someone is when we see his actions.

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For there is
"This is because there is." This indicates that what follows is the reason why we should not judge our brother.
good tree
"healthy tree"
rotten fruit
fruit that is decaying or bad or worthless
Luke 6:44
each tree is known
People recognize the kind of tree by the fruit it bears. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people know the type of a tree" or "people recognize a tree"
thornbush
a plant or shrub that has thorns
briar bush
a vine or shrub that has thorns
Luke 6:45
General Information:
Jesus compares the thoughts of a person to his good or evil treasure. When a good person has good thoughts, he engages in good actions. When an evil person thinks evil thoughts, he engages in evil actions.
The good man
The word "good" here means righteous or moral.
good man
The word "man" here refers to a person, male or female. Alternate translation: "good person"
the good treasure of his heart
Here the good thoughts of a person are spoken of as if they were treasures stored in the heart of that person, and "his heart" is a metonym for the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "the good things he keeps deep inside himself" or "the good things he values very intensely"
produces what is good
Producing what is good is a metaphor for doing what is good. Alternate translation: "does what is good"
the evil treasure of his heart
Here the evil thoughts of a person are spoken of as if they were evil things stored in the heart of that person, and "his heart" is a metonym the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "the evil things he keeps deep inside himself" or "the evil things he values very intensely"
out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks
Here "heart" represents the person's mind or inner being. The phrase "his mouth" represents the person as a whole. Alternate translation: "what he thinks in his heart affects what he says with his mouth" or "a person will speak aloud what truly values inside of himself"
Luke 6:46
Lord, Lord
Here the repetition of these words is used as an exclamation. People repeat a name or title in this way when trying to find someone or to get someone's attention.
Luke 6:47
General Information:
In verse 47-48 Jesus compares the person who obeys his teaching to a man who builds a house on rock where it will be safe from floods.
Every person who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them, I will tell you what he is like
It may be clearer to change the order of this sentence. Alternate translation: "I will tell you what every person is like who comes to me and hears my words and obeys them"
Luke 6:48
dug down deep in the ground and built the house's foundation on solid rock
"dug down deep into the ground until he found a large, solid rock. Then he built his house on that rock so that it would be strong and stable." Some cultures may not be familiar with this process of building a house and may need to use another image for a stable foundation.
torrent of water
"fast-moving water" or "river"
flowed against
"crashed against"
shake it
Possible meanings are 1) "cause it to shake" or 2) "destroy it."
because it had been well built
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the man had built it well"
Luke 6:49
General Information:
Jesus compares the person who hears but does not obey his teaching to a man who builds a house that has no foundation and so will collapse when the flood comes.
But the person
"But" shows a strong contrast to the previous person who built with a foundation.
on top of the ground without a foundation
Some cultures may not know that a house with a foundation is stronger. Additional information may be helpful. Alternate translation: "but he did not dig down and build first a foundation"
torrent of water
"fast-moving water" or "river"
flowed against
"crashed against"
collapsed
fell down or came apart
the ruin of that house was complete
"that house was completely destroyed"

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7 [1]After Jesus had finished everything he was saying in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum.

[2]Now a centurion had a slave who was highly regarded by him, and he was sick and about to die.[3]When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant.[4]When they had come to Jesus, they asked him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him,[5]because he loves our nation, and he is the one who built the synagogue for us."

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[6]So Jesus continued on his way with them. But when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, because I am not worthy for you to come under my roof.[7]For this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you, but just say a word and my servant will be healed.[8]For I also am a man who is under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another one, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

[9]When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him said, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."[10]When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant was healthy.

[11]Soon after that, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him.[12]As he came near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a rather large crowd from the town was with her.[13]When the Lord saw her, he was deeply moved with compassion for her and said to her, "Do not cry."[14]Then he went up and touched the wooden frame on which they carried the body, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."[15]The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

[16]Then fear overcame all of them, and they kept praising God, saying, "A great prophet has been raised among us" and "God has looked upon his people."[17]This news about Jesus spread throughout the whole of Judea and all the neighboring regions.

[18]John's disciples told him about all these things. Then John called two of his disciples[19]and sent them to the Lord to say, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"
[20]When they had come near to Jesus, the men said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to say, 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?'"

[21]In that hour he healed many people from sicknesses and afflictions and from evil spirits, and to many blind people he gave sight.[22]Jesus answered and said to them, "After you have gone on your way, report to John what you have seen and heard. Blind people are receiving sight, lame people are walking, lepers are being cleansed, deaf people are hearing, people who have died are being raised back to life, and the poor are being told good news.[23]The person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions is blessed."

[24]After John's messengers had gone away, Jesus began to say to the crowds about John, "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?[25]But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes? Look, those who wear splendid clothing and who live in luxury are in kings' palaces.[26]But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.
[27]This is he of whom it is written,
'See, I am sending my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.'
[28]I say to you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he is."
[29](When all the people heard this, including the tax collectors, they declared that God is righteous, because they had been baptized with the baptism of John.[30]But the Pharisees and the experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)
[31]"To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like?[32]They are like children playing in the marketplace, who sit and call to one another and say,
'We played a flute for you,
and you did not dance.
We sang a funeral song,
and you did not cry.'
[33]For John the Baptist came eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.'[34]The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'[35]But wisdom is justified by all her children."

[36]Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. So after Jesus entered into the Pharisee's house, he reclined at the table to eat.[37]Behold, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner. When she found out that he was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfumed oil.[38]As she stood behind him near his feet,

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weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and she wiped them with her hair and kissed them and anointed them with perfumed oil.
[39]When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he thought to himself, saying, "If this man were a prophet, then he would know who and what type of woman is touching him, that she is a sinner."
[40]Jesus responded and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."He said, "Say it, Teacher!"

[41]Jesus said, "A certain moneylender had two debtors. The one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.[42]When they could not pay him, he forgave them both. Therefore, which of them will love him more?"
[43]Simon answered him and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave the most."Jesus said to him, "You have judged correctly."
[44]Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon, "You see this woman. I have entered into your house. You gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.[45]You did not give me a kiss, but from the time I came in she did not stop kissing my feet.
[46]You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with perfumed oil.[47]For this reason I say to you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven—for she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little."
[48]Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."
[49]Those reclining together began to say among themselves, "Who is this that even forgives sins?"
[50]Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Luke 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 7:27.
Several times in this chapter Luke changes his topic without marking the change. You should not try to make these rough changes smooth.

Special concepts in this chapter

Centurion
The centurion who asked Jesus to heal his slave (Luke 7:2 was doing many unusual things. A Roman soldier would almost never go to a Jew for anything, and most wealthy people did not love or care for their slaves. (See: centurion and faith)
John's Baptism
John baptized people to show that those he was baptizing knew they were sinners and were sorry for their sin. (See: repent and sin)
"Sinners"
Luke refers to a group of people as "sinners." The Jewish leaders considered these people to be hopelessly ignorant of the law of Moses, and so called them "sinners." In reality, the leaders were sinful. This situation can be taken as irony.
"Feet"
The feet of the people in the ancient Near East were very dirty because they wore sandals and the roads and trails were dusty and muddy. Only slaves washed other people's feet. The woman who washed Jesus's feet was showing him great honor.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"
Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 7:1 Notes

Luke 7:1
General Information:
Jesus enters Capernaum, where he heals a centurion's servant.
in the hearing of the people
The idiom "in the hearing" emphasizes that he wanted them to hear what he said. Alternate translation: "to the people who were listening to him" or "to the people who were present" or "for the people to hear"
he entered Capernaum
This begins a new event in the story.
Luke 7:2
who was highly regarded by him
"whom the centurion valued" or "whom he respected"
Luke 7:4
asked him earnestly
"pleaded with him" or "begged him"
He is worthy
"The centurion is worthy"
Luke 7:5

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our nation
"our people." This refers to the Jewish people.
Luke 7:6
continued on his way
"went along"
not far from the house
"near the house"
do not trouble yourself
The centurion was speaking politely to Jesus. Alternate translation: "do not trouble yourself by coming to my house" or "I do not wish to bother you"
come under my roof
This phrase is an idiom that means "come into my house." If your language has an idiom that means "come into my house," think about whether it would be good to use here.
Luke 7:7
just say a word
The servant understood that Jesus could heal the servant just by speaking. Here "word" refers to a command. Alternate translation: "just give the order"
my servant will be healed
The word that is translated here as "servant" is normally translated as "boy." It may indicate that the servant was very young or show the centurion's affection for him.
Luke 7:8
I also am a man who is under authority
"I also have someone over me that I must obey"
under me
"under my authority"
to my servant
The word that is translated here as "servant" is the typical word for a servant.
Luke 7:9
he was amazed at him
"he was amazed at the centurion"
I say to you
Jesus said this to emphasize the surprising thing that he was about to tell them.
not even in Israel have I found such faith.
The implication is that Jesus expected Jewish people to have this kind of faith, but they did not. He did not expect Gentiles to have this kind of faith, yet this man did. You may need to add this implied information. Alternate translation: "I have not found any Israelite who trusts me as much as this Gentile does!"
Luke 7:10
those who had been sent
It is understood that these were the people the centurion sent. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "the people whom the Roman officer had sent to Jesus"
Luke 7:11
Connecting Statement:
Jesus goes to the city of Nain, where he heals a man who had died.
Nain
This is the name of a city.
Luke 7:12
behold, a man who had died
The word "behold" alerts us to the introduction of the dead man into the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "there was a dead man who"
a man who had died was being carried out
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were carrying out of the city a man who had died"
carried out, the only son of his mother (who was a widow), and a rather large crowd
"carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A rather large crowd." This is background information about the dead man and his mother.
widow
a woman whose husband has died and who has not remarried
Luke 7:13
was deeply moved with compassion for her
"felt very sorry for her"
Luke 7:14
he went up
"he went forward" or "he approached the dead man"
the wooden frame on which they carried the body
This was a stretcher or bed used to move the body to the burial place. It did not have to be something in which the body was buried. Other translations may have the less common "bier" or "funeral couch."
I say to you, arise
Jesus says this to emphasize that the young man needs to obey him. "Listen to me! Arise"
Luke 7:15
The dead man
The man was not still dead; he was now alive. It may be necessary to state this clearly. Alternate translation: "The man who had been dead"
Luke 7:16
Connecting Statement:
This tells what happens as a result of Jesus healing the man who had died.
fear overcame all of them
"fear filled all of them." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they all became very afraid"
A great prophet has been raised among us
They were referring to Jesus, not to some unidentified prophet. "Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to become." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has caused one of us to become a great prophet"
looked upon
This idiom means "cared for"
Luke 7:17
This news about Jesus spread
"This news" refers to the things people were saying in verse 16. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People spread this report about Jesus" or "People told others this report about Jesus"
This news
"This report" or "This message"
Luke 7:18
John's disciples told him about all these things
This introduces a new event in the story.
told him
"told John"

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all these things
"all the things Jesus was doing"
Luke 7:19
Connecting Statement:
John sends two of his disciples to question Jesus.
Luke 7:20
the men said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to say, 'Are you ... or should we look for another?'"
This sentence can be rewritten so that it only has one direct quote. Alternate translation: "the men said that John the Baptist had sent them to him to ask, 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we look for another?'" or "the men said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask if you are the one who is coming, or if we should look for another.'"
Luke 7:21
In that hour
"At that time"
from evil spirits
It may be helpful to restate the healing. Alternate translation: "he healed them from evil spirits" or "he set people free from evil spirits"
Luke 7:22
said to them
"said to John's messengers" or "said to the messengers that John sent"
report to John
"tell John"
people who have died are being raised back to life
"dead people are being caused to live again"
the poor
This nominal adjective can be translated as a noun phrase. Alternate translation: "poor people"
Luke 7:23
The person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions is blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless the person who does not stop believing in me because of my actions"
The person who does not ... is blessed
"People who do not ... are blessed" or "Anyone who does not ... is blessed" or "Whoever does not ... is blessed." This is not a specific person.
does not stop believing in me because of
"continues to believe in me despite"
believing in me
"trusting me completely"
Luke 7:24
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to speak to the crowd about John the Baptist. He asks rhetorical questions to lead them to think about what John the Baptist is really like.
What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?
This expects a negative answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a reed shaken by the wind? Of course not!" or "Surely you did not go out to see a reed being shaken by the wind!"
A reed shaken by the wind
Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) a person who easily changes his mind, as reeds are easily moved by the wind, or 2) a person who talks a lot but does not say anything important, as reeds rattle when the wind blows.
Luke 7:25
But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothes?
This expects a negative answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a man dressed in soft clothes? Of course not!" or "You certainly did not go out to see a man dressed in soft clothes!"
dressed in soft clothes
This refers to expensive clothing. Normal clothing was rough. Alternate translation: "wearing expensive clothing"
kings' palaces
A palace is a large, expensive house that a king lives in.
Luke 7:26
But what did you go out to see? A prophet?
This expects a positive answer. These questions can be written as a question with an answer or as a statement. Alternate translation: "Did you go out to see a prophet? Of course you did!" or "But you actually went out to see a prophet!"
Yes, I say to you
Jesus says this to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.
more than a prophet
This phrase means that John was indeed a prophet, but that he was even greater than a typical prophet. Alternate translation: "not just an ordinary prophet" or "much more important than a normal prophet"
Luke 7:27
This is he of whom it is written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John is the one the prophets wrote about long ago"
See, I am sending
In this verse, Jesus is quoting the prophet Malachi and saying that John is the messenger of which Malachi spoke.
before your face
This idiom means "in front of you" or "to go ahead of you"
your
The word "your" is singular because God was speaking to the Messiah in the quotation.
Luke 7:28
I say to you
Jesus is speaking to the crowd, so "you" is plural. Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the truth of the surprising thing he is about to say next.
among those born of women
"among those to whom a woman has given birth." This is a metaphor that refers to all people. Alternate translation: "of all the people who have ever lived"
none is greater than John
"John is the greatest"
the one who is least in the kingdom of God
This refers to anyone who is part of the kingdom that God will establish.
is greater than he is
The spiritual state of people in the kingdom of God will be higher than that of the people before the kingdom was

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established. Alternate translation: "has higher spiritual status than John"
Luke 7:29
General Information:
Luke, the author of this book, comments on how people responds to John and Jesus.
When all the people heard this, including the tax collectors, they declared that God is righteous, because they had been baptized with the baptism of John
This verse could be reordered to be more clear. Alternate translation: "When all the people who had been baptized by John, including the tax collectors, heard this, they declared that God is righteous"
they declared that God is righteous
"they said that God had shown himself to be righteous" or "they declared that God had acted righteously"
because they had been baptized with the baptism of John
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because they had let John baptize them" or "because John had baptized them"
Luke 7:30
rejected God's purpose for themselves
"rejected what God wanted them to do" or "chose to disobey what God told them"
they had not been baptized by John
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they did not let John baptize them" or "they rejected John's baptism"
Luke 7:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the people about John the Baptist.
To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like?
Jesus uses these questions to introduce a comparison. They can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is what I compare this generation to. This is what they are like."
I compare ... What are they like
These are two ways of saying that this is a comparison.
the people of this generation
The people living when Jesus spoke.
Luke 7:32
They are like
These words are the beginning of Jesus's comparison. Jesus is saying that the people are like children who are never satisfied with the way other children act.
marketplace
a large, open-air area where people come to sell their goods
and you did not dance
"but you did not dance to the music"
and you did not cry
"but you did not cry with us"
Luke 7:33
eating no bread
Possible meanings are 1) "frequently fasting" or 2) "not eating normal food."
you say, 'He has a demon.'
Jesus was quoting what people were saying about John. This can be stated without the direct quote. Alternate translation: "you say that he has a demon." or "you accuse him of having a demon."
Luke 7:34
The Son of Man came
Jesus expected the people to understand that he was referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"
you say, 'Look, he is a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'
This can be translated as an indirect quote. If you translated "The Son of Man" as "I, the Son of man," you can state this as an indirect statement and use the first person. Alternate translation: "you accuse him of eating and drinking too much and of being a friend of tax collectors and sinners." or "you say that I am a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors sinners."
he is a gluttonous man
"he is a greedy eater" or "he continually eats too much food"
a drunkard
"a drunk" or "he continually drinks too much alcohol"
Luke 7:35
wisdom is justified by all her children
This appears to be a proverb that Jesus applied to this situation, probably to teach that wise people would understand that the people should not have rejected Jesus and John.
Luke 7:36
General Information:
It was a custom in that time for onlookers to attend dinners without eating.
Connecting Statement:
A Pharisee invites Jesus to eat at his house.
Now one of the Pharisees
The marks the beginning of a new part of the story and introduces the Pharisee into the story.
reclined at the table to eat
"sat down at the table for the meal." It was the custom at a relaxed meal such as this dinner for men to eat while lying down comfortably around the table.
Luke 7:37
Behold, there was a woman
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.
who was a sinner
"who lived a sinful lifestyle" or "who had a reputation for living a sinful life." She may have been a prostitute.
an alabaster jar
"a jar made of soft stone." Alabaster is a soft, white rock. People stored precious things in alabaster jars.
of perfumed oil
"with perfume in it." The oil had something in it that made it smell nice. People rubbed it on themselves or sprinkled their clothing with it in order to smell nice.
Luke 7:38
anointed them with perfumed oil
"poured perfume on them"
Luke 7:39

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he thought to himself, saying
"he said to himself"
If this man were a prophet, then he would know who and what type of woman is touching him, that she is a sinner
The Pharisee thought that Jesus was not a prophet because he allowed the sinful woman to touch him. Alternate translation: "Apparently Jesus is not a prophet, because a prophet would know that this woman who is touching him is a sinner"
that she is a sinner
Simon assumed that a prophet would never allow a sinner to touch him. This part of his assumption can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "that she is a sinner, and he would not allow her to touch him"
Luke 7:40
Simon
This was the name of the Pharisee who invited Jesus into his home. This was not Simon Peter.
Luke 7:41
General Information:
To emphasize what he is going to tell Simon the Pharisee, Jesus tells him a story.
A certain moneylender had two debtors
"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender"
five hundred denarii ... fifty
"500 days' wages ... 50." "Denarii" is the plural of "denarius." A "denarius" was a silver coin.
the other fifty
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the other debtor owed fifty denarii" or "the other debtor owed 50 days' wages"
Luke 7:42
he forgave them both
"he forgave their debts" or "he canceled their debts"
Luke 7:43
I suppose
Simon was cautious about his answer. Alternate translation: "Probably"
You have judged correctly
"You are right"
Luke 7:44
Jesus turned to the woman
Jesus directed Simon's attention to the woman by turning to her.
You gave me no water for my feet
It was a basic responsibility of a host to provide water and a towel for guests to wash and dry their feet after walking on dusty roads.
You ... but she
Jesus twice uses these phrases to contrast Simon's lack of courtesy with the woman's extreme actions of gratitude.
she has wet my feet with her tears
The woman used her tears in place of the missing water.
wiped them with her hair
The woman used her hair in place of the missing towel.
Luke 7:45
You did not give me a kiss
A good host in that culture would greet his guest with a kiss on the cheek. Simon did not do this.
did not stop kissing my feet
"has continued to kiss my feet"
kissing my feet
The woman kissed the feet of Jesus rather than his cheek as a sign of extreme repentance and humility.
Luke 7:46
You did not ... but she
Jesus continues to contrast Simon's poor hospitality with the actions of the woman.
anoint my head with oil
"put oil on my head." This was the custom to welcome an honored guest. Alternate translation: "welcome me by anointing my head with oil"
anointed my feet
The woman greatly honored Jesus by doing this. She demonstrated humility by anointing his feet instead of his head.
Luke 7:47
I say to you
This emphasizes the importance of the statement that follows.
her sins, which were many, have been forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has forgiven her many sins"
for she loved much
Her love was the evidence that her sins were forgiven. Some languages require that the object of "love" be stated. Alternate translation: "for she greatly loves the one who forgave her" or "for she loves God very much"
the one who is forgiven little
"anyone who is forgiven only a few things." In this sentence Jesus states a general principle. However, he expected Simon to understand that he showed very little love for Jesus.
Luke 7:48
Then he said to her
"Then he said to the woman"
Your sins are forgiven
"You are forgiven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I forgive your sins"
Luke 7:49
reclining together
"reclining together around the table" or "eating together"
Who is this that even forgives sins?
The religious leaders knew that only God could forgive sins and did not believe that Jesus was God. This question was probably intended to be an accusation. Alternate translation: "Who does this man think he is? Only God can forgive sins!" or "Why is this man pretending to be God, who alone can forgive sins?"
Luke 7:50
Your faith has saved you
"Because of your faith, you are saved." The abstract noun "faith" could be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "Because you believe, you are saved"
Go in peace
This is a way of saying good-bye while giving a blessing at the same time. Alternate translation: "As you go, do not worry anymore" or "May God give you peace as you go"

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8 [1]It happened soon afterward that Jesus began traveling around to different cities and villages, preaching and proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him,[2]as well as certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had been driven out;
[3]Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's manager; Susanna; and many others, who, out of their possessions, provided for their needs.

[4]While a large crowd of people was gathering, and people were coming to him from town after town, he told a parable:[5]"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some fell beside the road and it was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the sky devoured it.[6]Some fell on the rock, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.
[7]Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up together with the seed and choked it.[8]But some fell on good soil and produced a crop that was a hundred times greater." After Jesus had said these things, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear."

[9]His disciples asked him what this parable meant.[10]He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but for others I speak in parables, so that
'seeing they may not see,
and hearing they may not understand.'
[11]Now this is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.[12]The ones along the road are those who have heard, but then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts so they may not believe and be saved.[13]The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But they have no root; they believe for a while, and in a time of testing they fall away.
[14]The seeds that fell among the thorns are people who hear the word, but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and their fruit does not mature.[15]But the seed that fell on the good soil, these are the ones who, hearing the word with an honest and good heart, hold it securely and bear fruit with patient endurance.

[16]"No one lights a lamp and covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Rather, he puts it on a lampstand so that everyone who enters may see the light.[17]For nothing is hidden that will not be made known, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come into the light.[18]So listen carefully, for to the one who has, more will be given to him, but the one who does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him."

[19]Then his mother and brothers came to him, but they could not get near him because of the crowd.[20]He was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you."[21]But Jesus answered and said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

[22]Now one day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." They set sail.[23]But as they sailed he fell asleep. A terrible windstorm came down on the lake, and their boat was filling with water, and they were in danger.
[24]Then Jesus' disciples came over to him and woke him up, saying, "Master! Master! We are about to die!"He awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water, and they ceased, and there was a calm.
[25]Then he said to them, "Where is your faith?"But they were afraid and amazed, and they asked one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?"

[26]They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee.[27]When Jesus stepped on the land, he was met by a certain man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but among the tombs.
[28]When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and he said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me."[29]For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For many times it had seized him, and though he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and he would be driven by the demon into the wilderness.

[30]Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"He said, "Legion," for many demons had entered into him.
[31]They kept begging him not to command them to go away into the abyss.
[32]Now a large herd of pigs was there feeding on the hillside. The demons begged him to let them go into them, and he gave them permission.[33]So the demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep slope into the lake and was drowned.
[34]When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and told about it in the city and countryside.[35]So the people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out. He was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.

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[36]Then those who had seen it told them how the man who had been possessed by demons had been healed.[37]Then all the people of the region of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to depart from them, for they were overwhelmed with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned.

[38]The man from whom the demons had gone out begged him to let him go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying,
[39]"Return to your home and give a full account of what God has done for you." The man went on his way, proclaiming throughout the whole city what Jesus had done for him.

[40]Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him.[41]Behold, a man named Jairus, who was one of the leaders of the synagogue, came and fell down at Jesus' feet, and he begged him to come to his house[42]because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve years of age, was dying. As Jesus was on his way, the crowds of people pressed together around him.

[43]Now a woman was there who had been bleeding for twelve years[1] and could not be healed by anyone.[44]She came behind Jesus and touched the edge of his coat, and immediately her bleeding stopped.
[45]Jesus said, "Who was it who touched me?"When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds of people are all around you and they are pressing in against you."

[46]But Jesus said, "Someone did touch me, for I know that power has gone out from me."
[47]When the woman saw that she could not escape notice, she came trembling and fell down before him. In the presence of all the people she declared why she had touched him and how she had been immediately healed.[48]Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

[49]While he was still speaking, someone came from the synagogue leader's house, saying, "Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher any longer."
[50]But when Jesus heard this, he answered Jairus, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be healed."
[51]When he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father of the child and her mother.[52]Now all were mourning and wailing for her, but he said, "Do not weep; she is not dead but asleep."[53]But they began to mock him, knowing that she was dead.
[54]But he took her by the hand and called out, saying, "Child, get up!"[55]Her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately. He ordered them to get her something to eat.[56]Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

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[1]Scholars are divided whether the phrase and had spent all her money on physicians should be included here.

Luke 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Several times in this chapter Luke changes his topic without marking the change. You should not try to make these rough changes smooth.

Special concepts in this chapter

Miracles

Jesus made a storm stop by speaking to it, he made a dead girl alive by speaking to her, and he made evil spirits leave a man by speaking to them. (See: miracle)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Parables

The parables were short stories that Jesus told so that people would easily understand the lesson he was trying to teach them. He also told the stories so that those who did not want to believe in him would not understand the truth (Luke 8:4-15).

Links:

Luke 8:1 Notes

Luke 8:1
General Information:
These verses give background information about Jesus's preaching while traveling.
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark a new part of the story.
Luke 8:2
who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Jesus had set free from evil spirits and healed of

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diseases"

Mary

One of the "certain women."

Mary who was called Magdalene ... seven demons had been driven out

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Mary, whom people called Magdalene ... Jesus had driven out seven demons"

Luke 8:3

Joanna ... Susanna

Two of the "certain women"

Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's manager

Joanna was Chuza's wife, and Chuza was Herod's manager. "Joanna, the wife of Herod's manager, Chuza"

provided for their needs

"financially supported Jesus and his twelve disciples"

Luke 8:4

General Information:

Jesus tells the parable of the soils to the crowd. He explains its meaning to his disciples in 8:11:15.

coming to him

"coming to Jesus"

Luke 8:5

A farmer went out to sow his seed

"A farmer went out to scatter some seed in a field" or "A farmer went out to scatter some seeds in a field"

some fell

"some of the seed fell" or "some of the seeds fell"

it was trampled underfoot

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people walked on it" or "people walked on them"

birds of the sky

This idiom can be translated simply as "birds" or as "birds flew down and" to keep the sense of "sky."

devoured it

"ate it all" or "ate them all"

Luke 8:6

it withered away

"each plant became dry and shriveled up" or "the plants became dry and shriveled up"

it had no moisture

"it was too dry" or "they were too dry." The cause can also be stated. Alternate translation: "the ground was too dry"

Luke 8:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling the parable to the crowd.

choked it

The thorn plants took all the nutrients, water, and sunlight, so the farmer's plants could not grow well.

Luke 8:8

produced a crop

"grew a harvest" or "grew more seeds"

a hundred times greater

This means a hundred times more than the seeds that were sown.

Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey" or "If you are willing to listen, listen" or "If you are willing to understand, then understand and obey"

Luke 8:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to speak to his disciples.

The knowledge of ... God has been given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has given to you the knowledge of ... God" or "God has made you able to understand ... God"

the secrets of the kingdom of God

These are truths that have been hidden, but that Jesus is now revealing them.

for others

"for other people." This refers to the people who rejected the teaching of Jesus and did not follow him.

seeing they may not see

"though they see, they will not perceive." This is a quote from the prophet Isaiah. Some languages may need to state the object of the verbs. Alternate translation: "though they see things, they will not understand them" or "though they see things happen, they will not understand what they mean"

hearing they may not understand

"though they hear, they will not understand." This is a quote from the prophet Isaiah. Some languages may need to state the object of the verbs. Alternate translation: "though they hear instruction, they will not understand the truth"

Luke 8:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to explain the meaning of the parable that he told in Luke 8:5-8.

The seed is the word of God

"The seed is the message from God"

Luke 8:12

The ones along the road are those

"The seeds that fell along the path are those." Jesus tells what happens to the seeds as it relates to people. Alternate translation: "The seeds that fell along the road represent people" or "In the parable, the seeds that fell along the road represent people"

are those who

Jesus speaks of the seeds showing something about people as if the seeds were the people. Alternate translation: "show what happens to people who"

the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds or inner beings. Alternate translation: "the devil comes and takes away the message of God from their inner thoughts"

takes away

In the parable this was a metaphor of a bird snatching away the seeds. Try to use words in your language that keep that image.

hearts so they may not believe and be saved.

This is the devil's purpose. Alternate translation: "hearts

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because the devil thinks, 'They must not believe and they must not be saved.'" or "hearts so it will not be that they believe and God saves them."

Luke 8:14

The seeds that fell among the thorns are people

"The seeds that fell among the thorns represent people" or "In the parable the seeds that fell among the thorns represent people"

they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the cares and riches and pleasures of this life choke them"

cares

things that people worry about

pleasures of this life

"the things in this life that people enjoy"

they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and their fruit does not mature

This metaphor refers to the way weeds cut off light and nutrients from plants and keep them from growing. Alternate translation: "as weeds prevent good plants from growing, the cares, riches, and pleasures of this life keep these people from becoming mature"

their fruit does not mature

"they do not bear ripe fruit." Mature fruit is a metaphor for good works. Alternate translation: "so like a plant that does not produce mature fruit, they do not produce good works"

Luke 8:15

the seed that fell on the good soil, these are the ones

"the seed that fell on the good soil represents the people" or "in the parable the seed that fell on the good soil represents the people"

hearing the word

"hearing the message"

with an honest and good heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or intentions. Alternate translation: "with an honest and good desire"

bear fruit with patient endurance

"produce fruit by enduring patiently" or "produce fruit by continued effort." Fruit is a metaphor for good works. Alternate translation: "like healthy plants that produce good fruit, they produce good works by persevering"

Luke 8:16

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues with another parable.

No one

This marks the beginning of another parable.

Luke 8:17

nothing is hidden that will not be made known

This double negative can be written as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "everything that is hidden will be made known"

nor is anything secret that will not be known and come into the light

This double negative can be written as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "and everything that is secret will be made known and will come into the light"

Luke 8:18

to the one who has, more will be given to him

It is clear from the context that Jesus is talking about understanding and believing. This can be stated clearly and changed to active form. Alternate translation: "whoever has understanding will be given more understanding" or "God will enable those who believe the truth to understand even more"

the one who does not have, even what he thinks he has will be taken away from him

It is clear from the context that Jesus is talking about understanding and believing. This can be stated clearly and changed to active form. Alternate translation: "whoever does not have understanding will lose even what understanding he thinks he has" or "God will cause those who do not believe the truth not to understand even the little that they think they have understood"

Luke 8:19

brothers

These were Jesus's younger brothers—the sons of Mary and Joseph who were born after Jesus. Since the Father of Jesus was God, and their father was Joseph, they were technically his half-brothers. This detail is not normally translated.

Luke 8:20

He was told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People told him" or "Someone told him"

wanting to see you

"and they want to see you"

Luke 8:21

My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it

This metaphor expresses that the people who were coming to listen to Jesus were as important to him as his own family was. Alternate translation: "Those who hear the word of God and obey it are like a mother and brothers to me"

the word of God

"the message God has spoken"

Luke 8:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus and his disciples use a boat to cross Lake Genneseret. The disciples learn more about Jesus's power through the storm that arises.

the lake

This is the lake of Genneseret, which is also called the Sea of Galilee.

They set sail

This expression means they began to travel across the lake in their sailboat.

Luke 8:23

as they sailed

"as they went"

fell asleep

"began to sleep"

A terrible windstorm came down

"A storm of very strong winds began" or "Very strong winds suddenly began to blow"

their boat was filling with water

The strong winds caused high waves which pushed water over the sides of the boat. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the winds caused high waves that

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started to fill up their boat with water"
Luke 8:24
rebuked
spoke sharply to
the raging of the water
"the violent waves"
they ceased
"the wind and the waves stopped" or "they became still"
Luke 8:25
Where is your faith?
Jesus rebukes them mildly because they do not trust him to take care of them. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have faith!" or "You should trust me!"
Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?
This question expresses shock and confusion over how Jesus is able to control the storm. Alternate translation: "What kind of man is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him!"
Luke 8:26
Connecting Statement:
Jesus and his disciples come ashore at Gerasa, where Jesus removes many demons from a man.
the region of the Gerasenes
Gerasenes were people from the city called Gerasa.
across the lake from Galilee
"on the other side of the lake from Galilee"
Luke 8:27
a certain man from the city
"a man from the city of Gerasa"
a certain man from the city who had demons
The man had demons; it was not the city that had demons. Alternate translation: "a certain man from the city, and this man had demons"
who had demons
"who was controlled by demons" or "whom demons controlled"
For a long time he had worn no clothes ... but among the tombs
This is background information about the man who had demons.
he had worn no clothes
"he had not worn clothes"
tombs
These are places where people put dead bodies, possibly caves or small buildings that the man could use for shelter.
Luke 8:28
When he saw Jesus
"When the man who had the demon saw Jesus"
he cried out
"he screamed" or "he shrieked"
fell down before him
"lay down on the ground before Jesus." He did not fall accidentally.
he said with a loud voice
"he said loudly" or "he shouted out"
What have you to do with me
This idiom means "Why are you bothering me?"
Son of the Most High God
This is an important title for Jesus.
Luke 8:29
many times it had seized him
"many times it had taken control of the man" or "many times it had gone into him." This tells about what the demon had done many times before Jesus met the man.
though he was bound ... and kept under guard
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "though the people had bound him ... and guarded him"
he would be driven by the demon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the demon would make him go"
Luke 8:30
Legion
Translate this with a word that refers to a large number of soldiers or people. Some other translations say "Army." Alternate translation: "Battalion" or "Brigade"
Luke 8:31
kept begging him
"kept begging Jesus"
Luke 8:32
Now a large herd of pigs was there feeding on the hillside
This is supplied as background information to introduce the pigs.
was there feeding on the hillside
"was nearby eating grass on a hill"
Luke 8:33
So the demons came out
The word "so" is used here to explain that the reason the demons came of out the man was because Jesus had told them that they could go into the pigs.
rushed
ran very fast
the herd ... was drowned
"the herd ... drowned." No one caused the pigs to drown once they were in the water.
Luke 8:35
found the man from whom the demons had gone out
"saw the man whom the demons had left"
in his right mind
"sane" or "behaving normally"
sitting at the feet of Jesus
"sitting at the feet" here is an idiom that means "sitting humbly nearby" or "sitting in front of." Alternate translation: "sitting on the ground in front of Jesus"
they were afraid
It may be helpful to state explicitly that they were afraid of Jesus. Alternate translation: "they were afraid of Jesus"
Luke 8:36
those who had seen it
"those who had seen what had happened"
the man who had been possessed by demons had been healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus had healed the man whom demons had possessed" or "Jesus had healed the man whom demons had controlled"
Luke 8:37
the region of the Gerasenes
"that area of the Gerasenes" or "the area where the

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Gerasene people lived." See how you translated this in 8:26
Luke 8:26
they were overwhelmed with great fear
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were very afraid"
and returned
This is not the last thing that Jesus did in that place, so this can also be stated as "in order to return" or "to go back."
returned
The destination can be stated. Alternate translation: "returned across the lake"
Luke 8:38
The man
The events in these verses happened before Jesus left in the boat. It may be helpful to state this clearly at the beginning. Alternate translation: "Before Jesus and his disciples left, the man" or "Before Jesus and his disciples set sail, the man"
Luke 8:39
your home
"your household" or "your family"
give a full account of what God has done for you
"tell them everything about what God has done for you"
Luke 8:40
Connecting Statement:
When Jesus and his disciples return to Galilee on the other side of the lake, he heals the 12-year-old daughter of the ruler of the synagogue as well as a woman who has been bleeding for 12 years (8:43-48).
the crowd welcomed him
"the crowd joyfully greeted him"
Luke 8:41
one of the leaders of the synagogue
"one of the leaders at the local synagogue" or "a leader of the people who met at the synagogue in that city"
fell down at Jesus' feet
Possible meanings are 1) "bowed down at Jesus' feet" or 2) "lay down on the ground at Jesus' feet." Jairus did not fall accidentally. He did this as a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.
Luke 8:42
was dying
"was about to die"
As Jesus was on his way
Some translators may need to first say that Jesus had agreed to go with Jairus. Alternate translation: "So Jesus agreed to go with him. As he was on his way"
the crowds of people pressed together around him
"the people were crowding tightly around Jesus"
Luke 8:43
a woman was there
This introduces a new character in the story.
had been bleeding
"had a flow of blood." She was probably bleeding from her womb even when it was not the normal time for it. Some cultures may have a polite way of referring to this condition.
and could not be healed by anyone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but no one could heal her"
Luke 8:44
touched the edge of his coat
"touched the fringe of his robe." Jewish men wore tassels on the edges of their robes as a part of their ceremonial dress as commanded in God's Law. This is likely what she touched.
Luke 8:45
the crowds of people are all around you and they are pressing in against you
By saying this, Peter was implying that anyone could have touched Jesus. This implicit information can be made explicit if necessary. Alternate translation: "there are many people crowding around you and pressing in against you, so any one of them might have touched you"
Luke 8:46
Someone did touch me
It may be helpful to distinguish this intentional "touch" from the accidental touches of the crowd. Alternate translation: "Someone deliberately touched me"
I know that power has gone out from me
Jesus did not lose power or become weak, but his power healed the woman. Alternate translation: "I know that healing power went out from me" or "I felt my power heal someone"
Luke 8:47
that she could not escape notice
"that she could not keep secret what she had done." It may be helpful to state what she did. Alternate translation: "that she could not keep it a secret that she was the one who had touched Jesus"
she came trembling
"she came trembling with fear"
fell down before him
Possible meanings are 1) "bowed down in front of Jesus" or 2) "lay down on the ground at Jesus's feet." She did not fall accidentally. This was a sign of humility and respect for Jesus.
In the presence of all the people
"In the sight of all the people"
Luke 8:48
Daughter
This was a kind way of speaking to a woman. Your language may have another way of showing this kindness.
your faith has made you well
"because of your faith, you have become well." The abstract noun "faith" could be stated as an action. Alternate translation: "because you believe, you are healed"
Go in peace
This idiom is a way of saying, "Goodbye" and giving a blessing at the same time. Alternate translation: "As you go, do not worry anymore" or "May God give you peace as you go"
Luke 8:49
While he was still speaking
"While Jesus was still speaking to the woman"
synagogue leader
This refers to Jairus (Luke 8:41).
Do not trouble the teacher

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This statement implies that Jesus will not be able to do anything to help now that the girl is dead.

the teacher

This refers to Jesus.

Luke 8:50

she will be healed

"she will be well" or "she will live again"

Luke 8:51

When he came to the house

"When they came to the house." Jesus went there with Jairus. Some of Jesus's disciples also went with them.

he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter ... mother

This double negative emphasizes that Peter and the others were the only ones whom Jesus allowed to enter. This could be stated positively. Alternate translation: "he allowed only Peter ... mother to enter with him"

the father of the child

This refers to Jairus.

Luke 8:52

all were mourning and wailing for her

This was the normal way of showing grief in that culture. Alternate translation: "all the people there were showing how sad they were and crying loudly because the girl had died"

Luke 8:53

began to mock him, knowing that she

"laughed at him because they knew the girl"

Luke 8:54

he took her by the hand

"Jesus took hold of the girl's hand"

Luke 8:55

Her spirit returned

"Her spirit returned to her body." The Jews understood that life was the result of the spirit coming into a person. Alternate translation: "She started breathing again" or "She came back to life" or "She became alive again"

Luke 8:56

to tell no one

This could be stated differently. Alternate translation: "not to tell anyone"

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9 [1]He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases.[2]He sent
them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.
[3]He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey—no staff, no wallet, no bread, no money, and no extra tunic.[4]Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave.
[5]Wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them."[6]Then they departed and went through the villages, proclaiming the gospel and healing everywhere.

[7]Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead,[8]and others said that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen.[9]Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who is this about whom I hear such things?" And so he tried to see him.

[10]When the apostles returned, they told him everything they had done. Then he took them with him, and they went away privately to a town called Bethsaida.[11]But when the crowds heard about this, they followed him. He welcomed them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and he cured those who needed healing.
[12]Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food, because we are here in an isolated place."
[13]But he said to them, "You give them something to eat."They said, "We have no more than five loaves of bread and two fish—unless we go and buy food for all these people."

[14](There were about five thousand men.) He said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."
[15]So they did this, and made the people sit down.[16]Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, he blessed them and broke them into pieces, and he gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd.[17]They all ate and were satisfied, and what was left over was picked up—twelve baskets of broken pieces.

[18]It came about while Jesus was praying by himself, the disciples were with him. He questioned them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"
[19]They answered, "John the Baptist. But others say Elijah, and others say that one of the prophets from long ago has risen."

[20]Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

[21]But he warned and instructed them to tell this to no one,[22]saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and he will be killed and on the third day be raised."
[23]Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.[24]Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.[25]What profit is there for a person to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself?
[26]Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his own glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.[27]But truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

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[28]Now about eight days after Jesus said these words, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.[29]As he was praying, the form of his face was changed, and his clothes became brilliant white.
[30]Behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah,[31]who appeared in glory, talking with him about his departure, which he was about to bring to completion in Jerusalem.
[32]Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who were standing with him.[33]As they were going away from Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.)
[34]As he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered into the cloud.[35]A voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, the one who is chosen; listen to him."[36]When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

[37]Now on the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him.[38]Behold, a man from the crowd cried out, saying, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child.[39]You see, a spirit takes control over him and he suddenly screams; it causes him to have convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It hardly ever leaves him and it bruises him badly.[40]I begged your disciples to force it out, but they could not."

[41]Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverse generation, how long must I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."[42]While the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and shook him with convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.
[43]Then they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While they all were marveling at everything he was doing, he said to his disciples,[44]"Let these words go deeply into your ears: The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men."[45]But they did not understand this statement. It was hidden from them, so they could not know its meaning, and yet they were afraid to ask about this statement.

[46]Then an argument started among them about which of them would be the greatest.[47]But Jesus, knowing the reasoning in their hearts, took a little child and put him by his side[48]and said to them, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For whoever is least among you all is the one who is great."

[49]John answered, "Master, we saw someone forcing out demons in your name and we prevented him, because he does not follow along with us."[50]"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "because whoever is not against you is for you."

[51]When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.[52]He sent messengers on ahead of him, and they went and entered into a Samaritan village to prepare everything for him.[53]But the people there did not welcome him because he had set his face to go to Jerusalem.
[54]When the disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them?"[55]But he turned and rebuked them,[56]and they went on to another village.

[57]As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."
[58]Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."
[59]Then he said to another, "Follow me."But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

[60]But he said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim far and wide the kingdom of God."

[61]Then someone else said, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to those in my home."
[62]Jesus replied to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"To preach the kingdom of God"
No one knows for sure what the words "kingdom of God" here refer to. Some say it refers to the reign of God on earth, and others say it refers to the gospel message that Jesus died to pay for his people's sins. It is best to translate this as "to preach about the kingdom of God" or "to teach them about how God was going to show himself as king."
Elijah

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God had promised the Jews that the prophet Elijah would return before the Messiah came, so some people who saw Jesus do miracles thought Jesus was Elijah (Luke 9:9, Luke 9:19). However, Elijah did come to earth to speak with Jesus (Luke 9:30). (See: prophet and christ and elijah)

"Kingdom of God"

The term "kingdom of God" is used in this chapter to refer to a kingdom that was still in the future when the words were spoken. (See: kingdomofgod)

Glory

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. Luke says in this chapter that Jesus's clothing shone with this glorious light so that his followers could see that Jesus truly was God's Son. At the same time, God told them that Jesus was his Son. (See: glory and fear)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. An example in this chapter is: "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it." (Luke 9:24).

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

"Receiving"

This word appears several times in this chapter and means different things. When Jesus says, "If someone receives a little child like this in my name, he also is receiving me, and if someone receives me, he is also receiving the one who sent me" (Luke 9:48), he is speaking of people serving the child. When Luke says, "the people there did not receive him" (Luke 9:53), he means that the people did not believe in or accept Jesus. (See: believe)

Links:

Luke 9:1 Notes

Luke 9:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus reminds his disciples not to depend on money and their things, gives them power, and then sends them out to various places.

power and authority

These two terms are used together to show that the twelve had both the ability and the right to heal people. Translate this phrase with a combination of words that include both of these ideas.

all demons

Possible meanings are 1) "every demon" or 2) "every kind of demon."

diseases

sicknesses

Luke 9:2

sent them out

"sent them to various places" or "told them to go"

Luke 9:3

He said to them

"Jesus said to the twelve." It may be helpful to state that this happened before they went out. Alternate translation: "Before they left, Jesus said to them"

Take nothing

"Do not take anything with you" or "Do not bring anything with you"

staff

large stick that people use for balance when climbing or walking on uneven ground, as well as for defense against attackers

wallet

a bag a traveler uses for carrying what he needs on a journey

bread

This is here used as a general reference to "food."

Luke 9:4

Whatever house you enter

"Any house you enter"

stay there

"remain there" or "temporarily live in that house as a guest"

until you leave

"until you leave that town" or "until you leave that place"

Luke 9:5

Wherever they do not receive you, when you leave

"Here is what you should do in any town where people do not receive you: When you leave"

shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them

To "shake off the dust from your feet" was an expression of strong rejection in that culture. It showed they did not want even the dust of that town to remain on them.

Luke 9:6

they departed

"they left the place were Jesus was"

healing everywhere

"healing wherever they went"

Luke 9:7

General Information:

Verses 7-9 interrupt the story to give information about Herod.

Now Herod

The word "Now" marks a pause in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about Herod.

Herod the tetrarch

This refers to Herod Antipas, who was the ruler of one-fourth of Israel.

perplexed

unable to understand, confused

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it was said by some
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some people said"
Luke 9:8
still others that one of the prophets of long ago had risen
The word "said" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "still others said that one of the prophets of long ago had risen"
Luke 9:9
I beheaded John. Who is this
Herod assumes that it is impossible for John to rise from the dead. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "It cannot be John because I had his head cut off. So who is this man"
I beheaded John
Herod's soldiers would have carried out executions. Alternate translation: "I commanded my soldiers to cut off John's head"
Luke 9:10
Connecting Statement:
Though the disciples return to Jesus and they go to Bethsaida to spend time together, the crowds follow Jesus for healing and to listen to his teaching. He performs a miracle to provide bread and fish to the crowds as they return home.
apostles returned
"apostles came back to where Jesus was"
everything they had done
This refers to the teaching and healing that they did when they went to the other cities.
Bethsaida
This is the name of a city.
Luke 9:12
the day was about to come to an end
"the day was about to end" or "it was near the end of the day." The end of the day was at sunset. Alternate translation: "it was almost sunset"
an isolated place
This was a place far away from where people lived. Alternate translation: "a remote place" or "a place where no one lives"
Luke 9:13
five loaves of bread
A loaf of bread is a lump of dough that is shaped and baked.
two fish—unless we go and buy food for all these people
If "unless" is difficult to understand in your language, you could make a new sentence. "two fish. In order to feed all these people, we would have to go and buy food"
Luke 9:14
about five thousand men
"about 5,000 men." This number does not include the women and children who might have been present.
Have them sit down
"Tell them to sit down"
fifty each
"50 each"
Luke 9:15
So they did this
"This" refers to what Jesus told them to do Luke 9:14. They told the people to sit down in groups of about fifty people.
Luke 9:16
Taking the five loaves
"Jesus took the five loaves of bread"
up to heaven
This refers to looking up, toward the sky. The Jews believed that heaven was located above the sky.
he blessed them
This refers to the loaves of bread and the fish.
to set before
"to pass out to" or "to give to"
Luke 9:17
were satisfied
This idiom means they ate enough food so they were not hungry. Alternate translation: "they had as much as they wanted to eat"
Luke 9:18
Connecting Statement:
Jesus is praying, with only his disciples near him, and they begin to talk about who Jesus is. Jesus tells them that he will soon die and resurrect and urges them to follow him even if it becomes very hard to do that.
It came about
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event.
praying by himself
"praying alone." The disciples were with Jesus, but he was praying personally and privately by himself.
Luke 9:19
John the Baptist
It may be helpful to restate part of the question here. Alternate translation: "The crowds say you are John the Baptist"
that one of the prophets from long ago has risen
It may be helpful to clarify how this answer relates to Jesus's question. Alternate translation: "that you are one of the prophets from long ago and have risen"
has risen
"has come back to life"
Luke 9:20
Then he said to them
"Then Jesus said to his disciples"
Luke 9:21
he warned and instructed them
The combination of "warned" and "instructed" is a hendiadys that means "strongly warned" or "strictly instructed." Alternate translation: "he strongly warned them" or he strictly instructed them"
them to tell this to no one.
"not to tell anyone." or "that they should not tell anyone." This could be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "them, 'Do not tell anyone.'"
Luke 9:22
The Son of Man must suffer many things
"People will cause the Son of Man to suffer greatly"
The Son of Man ... and he will
Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man ... and I will"
be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the elders, chief priests, and scribes will reject him"

he will be killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will kill him"

on the third day

"three days after he dies" or "on the third day after his death"

be raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make him alive again" or "he will live again"

Luke 9:23

he said

"Jesus said"

to them all

This refers to the disciples who were with Jesus.

come after me

Coming after Jesus represents being one of his disciples. Alternate translation: "be my disciple" or "be one of my disciples"

must deny himself

"must not give in to his own desires" or "must forsake his own desires"

take up his cross daily and follow me

"carry his cross and follow me every day." The cross represents suffering and death. Taking up the cross represents being willing to suffer and die. To follow Jesus represents obeying him. Alternate translation: "must obey me every day even to the point of suffering and dying"

Luke 9:25

What profit is there for a person to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself?

The implied answer to this question is that it is not good. Alternate translation: "It will not benefit someone at all to gain the whole world and yet lose or forfeit himself."

to gain the whole world

"to get everything in the world"

lose or forfeit himself

"ruin himself or give up his life"

Luke 9:26

my words

"what I say" or "what I teach"

of him will the Son of Man be ashamed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him"

the Son of Man ... when he comes in his own glory

Jesus was speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man ... when I come in my own glory"

the Father

This is an important title for God.

Luke 9:27

But truly I say to you

Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.

there are some standing here who will not taste death

"some of you who are standing here will not taste death"

before they see

Jesus was speaking to the people he was talking about. Alternate translation: "before you see"

will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God

"Taste death" is an idiom that means "die." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will see the kingdom of God before they die" or "will see the kingdom of God before you die"

Luke 9:28

Connecting Statement:

Eight days after Jesus tells his disciples that some would not die before they saw the kingdom of God, Jesus goes up the mountain to pray with Peter, James, and John, who all fall asleep while Jesus is changed to a dazzling appearance.

these words

This refers to what Jesus said to his disciples in the preceding verses.

Luke 9:30

Behold

The word "Behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows. Alternate translation: "Suddenly"

Luke 9:31

who appeared in glory

This phrase gives information about how Moses and Elijah looked. Some languages would translate it as a separate clause. Alternate translation: "and they appeared in glorious splendor" or "and they were shining brightly"

his departure

"his leaving" or "how Jesus would leave this world." This was a polite way of talking about his death. Alternate translation: "his death"

Luke 9:32

Now

This word is used here to mark a pause in the main story. Here Luke tells about Peter, James, and John.

heavy with sleep

This idiom means "very sleepy."

they saw his glory

This refers to the brilliant light that surrounded them. Alternate translation: "they saw brilliant light coming from Jesus" or "they saw very bright light coming out of Jesus"

the two men who were standing with him

This refers to Moses and Elijah.

Luke 9:33

As they were going away

"As Moses and Elijah were going away"

shelters

simple, temporary places in which to sit or sleep

Luke 9:34

As he was saying this

"While Peter was saying these things"

they were afraid

These adult disciples were not afraid of clouds. This phrase indicates that some kind of unusual fear came over them with the cloud. Alternate translation: "they were terrified"

they entered into the cloud

This can be expressed in terms of what the cloud did. Alternate translation: "the cloud surrounded them"

Luke 9:35

A voice came out of the cloud

It is understood that the voice could only have belonged to

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God. Alternate translation: "God spoke to them from the cloud"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

the one who is chosen

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "the one I have chosen" or "I have chosen him"

Luke 9:36

They kept silent ... what they had seen

This is information that tells what happened after the story as a result of the events in the story itself.

kept silent ... told no one

The first phrase refers to their immediate response, and the second refers to what they did in the following days.

Luke 9:37

Connecting Statement:

The next day after Jesus's dazzling appearance, Jesus heals a demon-possessed boy that the disciples were unable to make better.

Luke 9:38

Behold, a man from the crowd

The word "behold" alerts us to the new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. English uses "There was a man in the crowd who"

Luke 9:39

You see, a spirit

The phrase "You see" introduces us to the evil spirit in the man's story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There is an evil spirit that"

he foams at the mouth

"foam comes out of his mouth." When a person has a seizure, he can have trouble breathing or swallowing. This causes white foam to form around his mouth.

Luke 9:41

Jesus answered and said

"Jesus answered by saying"

You unbelieving and perverse generation

Jesus says this to the crowd that has gathered, and not to his disciples.

perverse generation

"corrupt generation"

how long must I be with you and put up with you?

Here "you" is plural. Jesus uses these questions to express his sadness that the people do not believe. They can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "I have been with you so long, yet you do not believe. I wonder how long I must put up with you."

Bring your son here

Here "your" is singular. Jesus is speaking directly to the father who addressed him.

Luke 9:43

they were all amazed at the greatness of God

Jesus performed the miracle, but the crowd recognized that God was the power behind the healing.

everything he was doing

"everything Jesus was doing"

Luke 9:44

Let these words go deeply into your ears

This is an idiom that means they should pay attention. Alternate translation: "Listen carefully and remember" or "Do not forget this"

The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men

This can be stated with an active clause. Here "hands" refers to power or control. Alternate translation: "Someone will betray the Son of Man and put him under the control of men"

The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. The word "hands" is a synecdoche for the people whose hands they are or a metonym for the power that uses those hands. You may need to make explicit who these men are. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men" or "The Son of Man will be betrayed into the power of his enemies" or "I, the Son of Man will be betrayed to my enemies"

Luke 9:45

It was hidden from them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God hid the meaning from them"

Luke 9:46

General Information:

The disciples begin to argue about who will be the most powerful among them.

among them

"among the disciples"

Luke 9:47

knowing the reasoning in their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for their minds. Alternate translation: "knowing the reasoning in their minds" or "knowing what they were thinking"

Luke 9:48

in my name

This refers to a person doing something as a representative of Jesus. Alternate translation: "because of me"

in my name welcomes me

This metaphor could also be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "in my name, it is like he is welcoming me"

the one who sent me

"God, who sent me"

the one who is great

"the one whom God considers to be most important"

Luke 9:49

John answered

"In reply, John said" or "John replied to Jesus." John was responding to what Jesus had said about being the greatest. He was not answering a question.

we saw

John speaks of himself but not Jesus, so "we" here is exclusive.

in your name

This means the person was speaking with the power and authority of Jesus.

Luke 9:50

Do not stop him

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Allow him to continue"

whoever is not against you is for you

Some modern languages have sayings that mean the same

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thing. Alternate translation: "if a person does not keep you from working, it is as if he were helping you" or "if someone is not working against you, he is working with you"

Luke 9:51

General Information:

It is now obvious that Jesus has decided to go to Jerusalem.

When the days drew near for him to be taken up

Here "be taken up" implies that Jesus will be taken up to heaven. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the time was coming for him to go up heaven" or "When it was almost time for him to leave this world"

set his face

This idiom means he "firmly decided." Alternate translation: "made up his mind" or "decided"

Luke 9:52

to prepare everything for him

This means to make arrangements for his arrival there, possibly including a place to speak, a place to stay, and food.

Luke 9:53

did not welcome him

"did not want him to stay"

because he had set his face to go to Jerusalem

The Samaritans and the Jews hated each other. Therefore the Samaritans would not help Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem, the Jewish capital.

Luke 9:54

saw this

"saw that the Samaritans did not receive Jesus"

command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them

James and John suggested this method of judgment because they knew that this was how the prophets such as Elijah had judged people who rejected God.

Luke 9:55

he turned and rebuked them

"Jesus turned and rebuked James and John." Jesus did not condemn the Samaritans as the disciples expected.

Luke 9:57

someone

This was not one of the disciples.

Luke 9:58

Foxes have holes ... nowhere to lay his head

Jesus responds with a proverb to teach the man about being Jesus's disciple. Jesus implies that if the man were to follow him, that man too might not have a home. Alternate translation: "Foxes have holes ... nowhere to lay his head. So do not expect that you will have a home"

Foxes

These are land animals similar to small dogs. They sleep in a den or a burrow in the ground.

birds in the sky

"birds that fly in the air"

the Son of Man has ... his head

Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, have ... my head"

nowhere to lay his head

"nowhere to rest my head" or "nowhere to sleep." Jesus exaggerates to emphasize that he has no permanent home and that people did not often invite him to stay with them.

Luke 9:59

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to talk with the people along the road.

Follow me

By saying this Jesus is asking the person to become his disciple and to go with him.

first let me go and bury my father

It is unclear whether the man's father has died and he will bury him immediately, or if the man wants to stay for a longer amount of time until his father dies so he can bury him then. The main point is the man wants to do something else first before he follows Jesus.

first let me go

"before I do that, let me go"

Luke 9:60

Leave the dead to bury their own dead

Jesus does not mean literally that dead people will bury other dead people. Possible meanings of "the dead" are 1) it is a metaphor for those who will soon die, or 2) it is a metaphor for those who do not follow Jesus and are spiritually dead. The main point is that a disciple must not let anything delay him from following Jesus.

the dead

This refers to dead people in general. Alternate translation: "the dead people"

Luke 9:61

I will follow you

"I will join you as a disciple" or "I am ready to follow you"

first let me say goodbye to those in my home

"before I do that, let me tell my people at my home that I am leaving"

Luke 9:62

No one ... fit for the kingdom of God

Jesus responds with a proverb to teach the man about being his disciple. Jesus means that a person is not suitable for the kingdom to God if he focuses on people in his past instead of following Jesus.

No one who puts his hand to the plow

Here "puts his hand to" something is an idiom that means the person starts to do something. Alternate translation: "No one who starts to plow his field"

looks back

Anyone who is looking back while plowing cannot guide the plow where it needs to go. That person must focus on looking forward in order to plow well.

fit for the kingdom of God

"useful for the kingdom of God" or "suitable for the kingdom of God"

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10 [1]Now after these things, the Lord appointed seventy[1] others, and sent them out two by two ahead of him to every
town and place where he himself was about to go.[2]He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.
Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

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[3]Go on your way. See, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.[4]Do not carry a money bag, or a traveler's bag, or sandals, and greet no one on the road.
[5]Whatever house you enter, first say, 'May peace be on this house!'[6]If a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him, but if not, it will return to you.[7]Remain in that same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not move around from house to house.
[8]Whatever town you enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you[9]and heal the sick that are there. Say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come close to you.'
[10]Whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say,[11]'Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you! But know this: The kingdom of God is near.'[12]I say to you that on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.
[13]Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.[14]But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.[15]You, Capernaum, do you think you will be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades.
[16]The one who listens to you listens to me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

[17]The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons submitted to us in your name."
[18]Jesus said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven as lightning.[19]See, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will in any way hurt you.[20]Nevertheless do not rejoice only in this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice even more that your names are engraved in heaven."

[21]At that same hour he rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you concealed these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to those who are untaught, like little children. Yes, Father, for so it was well pleasing in your sight.
[22]"All things have been entrusted to me from my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."
[23]Then he turned around to the disciples and said privately, "Blessed are those who see the things that you see.[24]I say to you, many prophets and kings desired to see the things you see, and they did not see them, and to hear the things that you hear, and they did not hear them."

[25]Behold, an expert in the law stood up so that he might test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
[26]Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"
[27]He gave an answer and he said, "You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."
[28]Jesus said to him, "You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live."
[29]But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"
[30]Jesus answered him and said, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He fell among robbers, who stripped him of his belongings, and beat him, and left him half dead.
[31]By chance a certain priest was going down that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.[32]In the same way, a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.
[33]But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was. When he saw him, he was moved with compassion.[34]He approached him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He set him on his own animal, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.[35]The next day he took out two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said, 'Take care of him, and whatever extra you spend, when I return, I will repay you.'
[36]Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?"
[37]He said, "The one who showed mercy to him."Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

[38]Now as they were traveling along, he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.[39]She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and heard his word.
[40]But Martha was overly busy with preparing to serve a meal. She came up to Jesus and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."
[41]But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things,[42]but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen what is best, which will not be taken away from her."

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[1]Many of the best ancient copies read seventy but some read seventy-two.

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Luke 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Harvest

Harvest is when people go out to get the food they have planted so they can bring it to their houses and eat it. Harvest can also refer to the food that is gathered. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about Jesus so those people can be part of God's kingdom. (See: harvest and faith)

Neighbor

A neighbor is anyone who lives nearby. The Jews helped their Jewish neighbors who needed help, and they expected their Jewish neighbors to help them. Jesus wanted them to understand that people who were not Jews were also their neighbors, so he told them a parable

Links:

Luke 10:1 Notes

Luke 10:1

General Information:

Jesus sends out 70 more people ahead of him.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new event in the story.

seventy

"70." Some versions say "seventy-two" or "72." You may want to include a footnote that says that.

sent them out two by two

"sent them out in groups of two" or "sent them out with two people in each group"

Luke 10:2

He said to them

This was before the men actually went out. Alternate translation: "He had said to them" or "Before they went out he told them"

The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few

"There is a big crop, but not enough workers to bring it in." Jesus means there are many people ready to enter God's kingdom, but there are not enough disciples to go teach and help the people.

Luke 10:3

Go on your way

"Go to the cities" or "Go to the people"

I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves

Wolves attack and kill sheep. This metaphor therefore means that there are people who would attempt to harm the disciples that Jesus is sending out. The names of other animals could be substituted. Alternate translation: "when I send you out, people will want to harm you, as wolves attack sheep"

Luke 10:4

Do not carry a money bag, or a traveler's bag, or sandals

"Do not take with you a bag, a traveler's bag, or sandals"

greet no one on the road

"do not greet anyone on the road." Jesus was emphasizing that they should go quickly to the towns and do this work. He was not telling them to be rude.

Luke 10:5

May peace be on this house

This was both a greeting and a blessing. Here "house" refers to those who live in the house. Alternate translation: "May the people in this household receive peace"

Luke 10:6

a son of peace

The phrase "son of peace" here is a metaphor for a person who wants peace with God and with people. Alternate translation: "a peaceful person"

your peace will rest upon him

Here "peace" is described as a living thing that can choose where to stay. Alternate translation: "he will have the peace you blessed him with"

if not

It may be helpful to restate the entire phrase. Alternate translation: "if there is no person of peace there" or "if the owner of the house is not a peaceful person"

it will return to you

Here "peace" is described as a living thing that can choose to leave. Alternate translation: "you will have that peace" or "he will not receive the peace you blessed him with"

Luke 10:7

Remain in that same house

Jesus was not saying that they should stay in the house all day, but that they should sleep at the same house every night they were there. Alternate translation: "Continue to sleep at that house"

for the laborer is worthy of his wages

This is a general principle that Jesus was applying to the men he was sending out. Since they would be teaching and healing the people, the people should provide them with a place to stay and with food.

Do not move around from house to house

Moving around from house to house means going to different houses. It can be made clear that he was talking about staying overnight at different houses. "Do not go sleep at a different house each night"

Luke 10:8

and they receive you

"if they welcome you"

eat what is set before you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "eat whatever food they give you"

Luke 10:9

the sick

This refers to sick people in general. Alternate translation: "the sick people"

The kingdom of God has come close to you

The abstract noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the

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verbs "reign" or "rule." Possible meanings are 1) the kingdom of God will begin soon. Alternate translation: "God will soon rule everywhere as king" or 2) the activities of kingdom of God are happening all around you. Alternate translation: "The proof that God is reigning is all around you"

Luke 10:10

and they do not receive you

"and the people of the city reject you"

Luke 10:11

Even the dust from your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you

This is a symbolic action to show that they reject the people of the city. Alternate translation: "Just as you rejected us, we thoroughly reject you. We even reject the dust from your town that clings to our feet"

we wipe off

Since Jesus was sending these people out in groups of two, it would be two people saying this. So languages that have a dual form of "we" would use it.

But know this: The kingdom of God is near

The phrase "But know this" emphasizes the importance of what is said next. Alternate translation: "But be aware that the kingdom of God is near" or "But be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near"

The kingdom of God is near

The abstract noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the verbs "reign" or "rule." See how you translated a similar sentence in [Luke 10:8]

Luke 10:12

I say to you

Jesus was saying this to the 70 people he was sending out. He said this to show that he was about to say something very important.

that day

The disciples would have understood that this refers to the time of final judgment of sinners. Alternate translation: "judgment day"

it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town

"God will not judge Sodom as severely as he will judge that town." Alternate translation: "God will judge the people of that town more severely than he will judge the people of Sodom"

Luke 10:13

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!

Jesus speaks as if the people of the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida are there listening to him, but they are not.

If the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon

Jesus is describing a situation that could have happened in the past but did not. Alternate translation: "If someone had performed the miracles for the people of Tyre and Sidon that I performed for you"

they would have repented long ago, sitting

"the wicked people who lived there would have shown that they were sorry for their sins by sitting"

sitting in sackcloth and ashes

"wearing sackcloth and sitting in ashes"

Luke 10:14

But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you

It may be helpful to clearly state the reason for their judgment. Alternate translation: "But because you did not repent and believe in me even though you saw me do miracles, God will judge you more severely than he will judge the people of Tyre and Sidon"

at the judgment

"on that final day when God judges everyone"

Luke 10:15

You, Capernaum

Jesus now speaks to the people in the city of Capernaum as if they are listening to him, but they are not.

do you think you will be exalted to heaven?

Jesus uses a question to rebuke the people of Capernaum for their pride. The expression "exalted to heaven" means "greatly exalted" or "honored." Alternate translation: "you will certainly not go up to heaven!" or "God will not honor you!"

you will be brought down to Hades

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will go down to Hades" or "God will send you to Hades"

Luke 10:16

The one who listens to you listens to me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "When someone listens to you, it is as if they were listening to me"

the one who rejects you rejects me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "when someone rejects you, it is as if they were rejecting me"

the one who rejects me rejects the one who sent me

The comparison can be clearly stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "when someone rejects me, it is as if they were rejecting the one who sent me"

the one who sent me

This refers to God the Father, who appointed Jesus for this special task. Alternate translation: "God, who sent me"

Luke 10:17

The seventy returned

Some languages will need to say that the seventy actually went out first, as the UDB does. This is implicit information that can be made explicit.

seventy

You may want to add a footnote: "Some versions have '72' instead of '70.'"

in your name

Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority.

Luke 10:18

I was watching Satan fall from heaven as lightning

Jesus used a simile to compare how God was defeating Satan when his 70 disciples were preaching in the towns to the way lightning strikes.

fall from heaven as lightning

Possible meanings are 1) fall as quickly as lighting strikes, or 2) fall down from heaven as lightning strikes downward. Since both meaning are possible, it may be best to keep the image.

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Luke 10:19
authority to tread on serpents and scorpions
"authority to trample on snakes and crush scorpions." Possible meanings are 1) snakes and scorpions are a metaphor for evil spirits. Alternate translation: "the right to defeat evil spirits" or 2) this refers to actual snakes and scorpions.
tread on serpents and scorpions
This implies that they would do this and not be injured. Alternate translation: "walk on snakes and scorpions, which will not hurt you,"
scorpions
Scorpions are small animals with two claws and a poisonous stinger on their tail.
over all the power of the enemy
"I have given you authority to crush the power of the enemy" or "I have given you authority to defeat the enemy." The enemy is Satan.
Luke 10:20
do not rejoice only in this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice even more that your names are engraved in heaven
"do not rejoice only because the spirits submit to you" can also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "rejoice that your names are written in heaven even more than you rejoice that the spirits submit to you"
your names are engraved in heaven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has written your names in heaven" or "your names are on the list of people who are citizens of heaven"
Luke 10:21
that same hour
"that same time"
Father
This is an important title for God.
Lord of heaven and earth
The phrase "heaven" and earth" represents everything that exists. Alternate translation: "Master over everyone and everything in heaven and earth"
these things
This refers to Jesus's previous teaching about the authority of the disciples. It may be best to simply say "these things" and let the reader determine the meaning.
the wise and understanding
The words "wise" and "understanding" are nominal adjectives that refer to people with these qualities. Because God had concealed truth from them, these people were not actually wise and understanding, even though they thought they were. Alternate translation: "from people who think they are wise and have understanding"
those who are untaught, like little children
This refers to those who may not have much education but who are willing to accept Jesus's teachings in the same way that little children willingly listen to those they trust. Alternate translation: "people who may have little education, but who listen to God as little children do"
for so it was well pleasing in your sight
"for it pleased you to do this"
Luke 10:22
All things have been entrusted to me from my Father
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "My Father has handed everything over to me"
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
no one knows who the Son is except the Father
This double negative emphasizes that the Father is the only one who knows. Alternate translation: "The only one who knows who the Son is, is the Father"
knows ... knows
The word that is translated as "knows" means to know from personal experience. God the Father knows Jesus in this way.
the Son
Jesus is referring to himself in the third person.
no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those ... him
This double negative emphasizes that the Son is the only one who knows. Alternate translation: "The only one who knows who the Father is, is the Son"
those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him
"whoever the Son desires to show the Father to"
Luke 10:23
Then he turned around to the disciples and said privately
The word "privately" indicates that he was alone with his disciples. Alternate translation: "Later, when he was alone with his disciples, he turned to them and said"
Blessed are those who see the things that you see
This probably refers to the good works and miracles that Jesus was doing. Alternate translation: "How good it is for those who see the things that you see me doing"
Luke 10:24
and they did not see them
This implies that Jesus was not yet doing those things. Alternate translation: "but they could not see them because I was not doing them yet"
the things that you hear
This probably refers to the teaching of Jesus. Alternate translation: "the things that you have heard me say"
and they did not hear them
This implies that Jesus was not yet teaching. Alternate translation: "but they could not hear them because I had not yet started to teach"
Luke 10:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus replies with a story to a Jewish teacher who wants to test Jesus.
Behold, an expert in the law
This alerts us to a new event and a new person in the story.
stood up
This is an idiom that probably here means "began to act." Your language may have a different way of showing that the expert in the law had been present, listening to Jesus, and was now beginning to act. He was not necessarily sitting before he "stood up" and began to speak.
test him
"challenge Jesus"
Luke 10:26
What is written in the law? How do you read it?
Jesus is not seeking information. He uses these questions to

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test the Jewish teacher's knowledge. Alternate translation: "Tell me what Moses wrote in the law and what you think it means."

What is written in the law?

This can be asked in active form. Alternate translation: "What did Moses write in the law?"

How do you read it?

"What have you read in it?" or "What do you understand it to say?"

Luke 10:27

You will love ... neighbor as yourself

The man is quoting what Moses wrote in the law.

with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind

Here "heart" and "soul" are metonyms for a person's inner being. These four phrases are used together to mean "completely" or "earnestly."

your neighbor as yourself

This simile can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "love your neighbor as much as you love yourself"

Luke 10:29

But he, desiring to justify himself, said

"But the expert in the law wanted to find a way to justify himself, so he said" or "But wanting to appear righteous, the expert in the law said"

Who is my neighbor?

The man wanted to know whom he was required to love. Alternate translation: "Whom should I consider to be my neighbor and love as I love myself?" or "Which people are my neighbors that I should love?"

Luke 10:30

Jesus answered him and said

Jesus answers the man by telling a parable. Alternate translation: "In response, Jesus told him this story"

A certain man

This introduces a new character in the parable.

He fell among robbers, who

"He was surrounded by robbers, who" or "Some robbers attacked him. They"

stripped him of his belongings

"took everything he had" or "stole all his things"

half dead

This idiom means "almost dead."

Luke 10:31

By chance

This was not something that any person had planned.

a certain priest

This expression introduces a new person in the story, but does not identify him by name.

and when he saw him

"and when the priest saw the injured man." A priest is a very religious person, so the audience would assume that he would help the injured man. Since he did not, this phrase could be stated as "but when he saw him" to call attention to this unexpected result.

he passed by on the other side

It is implied that he did not help the man. Alternate translation: "he did not help the injured man but instead walked past him on the other side of the road"

Luke 10:32

a Levite ... the other side

The Levite served in the temple. He would be expected to help his fellow Jewish man. Since he did not, it may are helpful to state that. Alternate translation: "a Levite ... the other side and did not help him"

Luke 10:33

But a certain Samaritan

This introduces a new person in the story without giving his name. We know only that he was from Samaria.

a certain Samaritan

The Jews despised the Samaritans and would have assumed that he would not help the injured Jewish man.

When he saw him

"When the Samaritan saw the injured man"

he was moved with compassion

"he felt sorry for him"

Luke 10:34

bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them

He would have put the oil and wine on the wounds first. Alternate translation: "he put wine and oil on the wounds and wrapped them with cloth"

pouring oil and wine on them

Wine was used to clean the wound, and oil was probably used to prevent infection. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "pouring oil and wine on them to help heal them"

his own animal

"his own pack animal." This was an animal that he used to carry heavy loads. It was probably a donkey.

Luke 10:35

two denarii

"two day's wages." "Denarii" is the plural of "denarius."

the host

"the innkeeper" or "the person who took care of the inn"

whatever extra you spend, when I return, I will repay you

This could be reordered. Alternate translation: "when I return, I will repay you whatever extra amount you spend"

Luke 10:36

Which of these three do you think ... robbers?

This could be written as two questions. Alternate translation: "What do you think? Which of these three men ... robbers?"

was a neighbor

"showed himself to be a true neighbor"

to him who fell among the robbers

"to the man whom the robbers attacked"

Luke 10:37

He said, "The one who showed mercy to him."

"The expert in the law said, 'The one who showed mercy to him.'"

Go and do the same

Here "do the same" refers to showing mercy to others. Alternate translation: "In the same way, go and show mercy to anyone else who needs help" or "In the same way, go and help everyone you can"

Luke 10:38

General Information:

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Jesus comes to Martha's house, where her sister Mary listens to Jesus with great attention.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new event.

as they were traveling along

"as Jesus and his disciples were traveling along"

a certain village

This introduces the village as a new location, but does not name it.

a certain woman named Martha

This introduces Martha as a new character. Your language may have a way of introducing new people.

Luke 10:39

sat at the Lord's feet

This was the normal and respectful position for a learner at that time. Alternate translation: "sat on the floor near Jesus"

heard his word

This refers to everything that Jesus taught while at Martha's house. Alternate translation: "listened to the Lord teach"

Luke 10:40

overly busy

"very busy" or "too busy"

do you not care ... alone?

Martha is complaining that the Lord is allowing Mary to sit listening to him when there is so much work to do. She respects the Lord, so she uses a rhetorical question to make her complaint more polite. Alternate translation: "it seems like you do not care ... alone."

Luke 10:41

Martha, Martha

Jesus repeats Martha's name for emphasis. Alternate translation: "Dear Martha" or "You, Martha"

Luke 10:42

only one thing is necessary

Jesus is contrasting what Mary is doing with what Martha is doing. It may be helpful to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "the only thing that is really necessary is to listen to my teaching" or "listening to my teaching is more necessary than preparing a meal"

which will not be taken away from her

Possible meanings are 1) "and I will not take this opportunity away from her" or 2) "and she will not lose what she has gained as she was listening to me"

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11 [1]It happened one day that Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he had finished, one of his disciples said to him,
"Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

[2]Jesus said to them, "When you pray say,
'Father, may your name be honored as holy.
May your kingdom come.
[3] Give us our daily bread each day.
[4] Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive everyone who is in debt to us.
Do not lead us into temptation.'"

[5]Jesus said to them, "Which of you will have a friend, and will go to him at midnight, and say to him, 'Friend, lend to me three loaves of bread,[6]since a friend of mine just came in from the road, and I do not have anything to set before him'?
[7]Then the one inside who answered him may say, 'Do not bother me. The door is already shut, and my children, along with me, are in bed. I am not able to get up and give bread to you.'[8]I say to you, even if he does not get up and give bread to you because you are his friend, yet because of your shameless persistence, he will get up and give you as many loaves of bread as you need.
[9]I also say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.[10]For every asking person receives; and the seeking person finds; and to the person who knocks, it will be opened.
[11]Which father among you, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead of a fish?[12]Or if he asks for an egg, will you give a scorpion to him?[13]Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

[14]Now Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed.[15]But some of the people said, "By Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he is driving out demons."
[16]Others tested him and sought from him a sign from heaven.
[17]But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate, and a house divided against itself falls.
[18]If Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say I cast out demons by Beelzebul.[19]If I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your followers drive them out? Because of this, they will be your judges.[20]But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.
[21]When a strong man who is fully armed guards his own palace, his possessions are safe,[22]but when a stronger man overcomes him, the stronger man takes away the armor in which the man trusted and plunders the man's possessions.
[23]The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters.

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[24]When an unclean spirit has gone away from a man, it passes through waterless places and looks for rest. Finding none, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.'[25]Having returned, it finds the house had been swept clean and put in order.[26]Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more evil than itself and they all come in to live there. Then the final condition of that man becomes worse than the first."

[27]It happened that, as he said these things, a certain woman raised her voice above the crowd and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you."
[28]But he said, "Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it."

[29]As the crowds were increasing, Jesus began to say, "This generation is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, though no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.[30]For just as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so too the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation.
[31]The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see, someone greater than Solomon is here.
[32]The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation of people and will condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and see, someone greater than Jonah is here.

[33]No one, after lighting a lamp, puts it in a hidden place or under a basket, but on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light.[34]Your eye is the lamp of the body. When your eye is good, the whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is bad, your body is full of darkness.[35]Therefore, watch out that the light in you is not darkness.[36]If then your whole body is full of light, not having any member in darkness, then your whole body will be like when a lamp shines its brightness on you."

[37]When he had finished speaking, a Pharisee asked him to eat with him at his house, so Jesus went in and reclined.[38]The Pharisee was surprised that Jesus did not first wash before dinner.
[39]But the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of cups and bowls, but the inside of you is filled with robbery and evil.[40]You senseless men! Did not the one who made the outside also make the inside?[41]Give what is inside as alms, and then all things will be clean for you.

[42]"But woe to you Pharisees, because you tithe mint and rue and every other garden herb, but you neglect justice and the love of God. It is necessary to act justly and love God, without failing to do the other things also.
[43]Woe to you Pharisees, for you love the front seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces.[44]Woe to you, for you are like unmarked graves that people walk over without knowing it."

[45]One of the experts in the law said to him, "Teacher, what you say insults us too."[46]Jesus said, "Woe to you, teachers of the law! For you put people under burdens that are hard to carry, but you do not touch the burdens with one of your own fingers.
[47]Woe to you, because you build tombs for the prophets, and it was your ancestors who killed them.[48]So you are witnesses and you consent to the works of your ancestors, for they indeed killed them and you build their tombs.
[49]For this reason also, God's wisdom said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and they will persecute and kill some of them.'[50]As a result, this generation will be charged for all the blood of the prophets shed since the foundation of the world,[51]from Abel's blood to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, this generation will be held responsible.
[52]Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering."

[53]After Jesus left there, the scribes and the Pharisees opposed him and argued with him about many things,[54]lying in wait to catch him in something he might say.

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[1]The best ancient copies have the shorter reading. Some ancient copies have a longer reading, which also is found in Matthew 7:9: Which father among you, if your son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? Or a fish, will give him a snake?

Luke 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the lines in 11:2-4 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are a special prayer.

Special concepts in this chapter

The Lord's Prayer

When Jesus's followers asked him to teach them how to pray, he taught them this prayer. He did not expect them to use

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the same words every time they prayed, but he did want them to know what God wanted them to pray about.
Jonah
Jonah was an Old Testament prophet who was sent to the Gentile city of Nineveh to tell them to repent. When he told them to repent, they repented. (See: prophet and sin and repent)
Light and darkness
The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)
Washing
The Pharisees would wash themselves and the things they ate with. They would even wash things that were not dirty. The law of Moses did not tell them to wash these things, but they would wash them anyway. This was because they thought that if they obeyed both the rules that God had made and some rules that God had not made, God would think that they were better people. (See: lawofmoses and clean)

Links:

Luke 11:1 Notes

Luke 11:1
General Information:
The is the beginning of the next part of the story. Jesus teaches his disciples to pray.
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Luke 11:2
Jesus said to them
"Jesus said to his disciples"
Father
Jesus is commanding the disciples to honor the name of God the Father by addressing him as "Father" when praying to him. This is an important title for God.
may your name be honored as holy
"cause everyone to honor your name." "Name" often refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "may all people honor you"
May your kingdom come
The action of God ruling over everyone is spoken of as if it were God himself. Alternate translation: "May you come and rule over everyone"
Luke 11:3
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach his disciples how to pray.
Give us
This is an imperative, but it should be translated as a request, rather than as a command. It may be helpful to add something such as "please" to it to make this clear. Alternate translation: "Please give us"
our daily bread
Bread was an inexpensive food that people ate every day. It is used here to refer to food in general. Alternate translation: "the food we need each day"
Luke 11:4
Forgive us ... Do not lead us
These are imperatives, but they should be translated as requests, rather than as commands. It may be helpful to add something such as "please" to them to make this clear. Alternate translation: "Please forgive us ... Please do not lead us"
Forgive us our sins
"Forgive us for sinning against you" or "Forgive our sins"
as we forgive
"since we also forgive"
who is in debt to us
"who has sinned against us" or "who has done wrong things to us"
Do not lead us into temptation
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Lead us away from temptation"
Luke 11:5
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach his disciples about prayer.
lend to me three loaves of bread
"let me borrow three loaves of bread" or "give me three loaves of bread and I will pay you later." The host does not have any food ready to give to his guest.
three loaves of bread
Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "some food"
Luke 11:6
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes asking a question that begins in verse 5.
since a friend ... to set before him'?
Jesus finishes asking the question that begins with the words "Which of you will have a friend" in verse 5. The whole question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Suppose you have a friend and will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend to me three loaves of bread, since a friend ... to set before him.'"
just came in from the road
It is implied that the visitor has come far from his home. Alternate translation: "was traveling and just came to my house"
anything to set before him
"any food ready to give him"
Luke 11:7
I am not able to get up
"It is not convenient for me to get up"
give bread to you

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Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "give you some food"

Luke 11:8

I say to you

Jesus was speaking to the disciples. The word "you" is plural.

give bread to you ... give you as many loaves of bread

Bread is a food that people in Israel commonly ate. If people in your community do not know what bread is, you may translate it with a more general expression for food. Alternate translation: "give you some food ... give you as much food"

give bread to you because you are ... your ... you ... you need

Jesus addresses the disciples as if they were the ones asking for bread. Alternate translation: "give bread to him because he is ... his ... him ... he needs"

because of your shameless persistence

The phrase can be reworded to eliminate the abstract noun "persistence." Alternate translation: "because you persist shamelessly" or "because you boldly continue to ask him"

Luke 11:9

ask ... seek, and you will find ... knock

Jesus gives these commands to encourage his disciples to pray continually. Some languages may also require more information with these verbs. Use the form of "you" that would be most appropriate in this context. Alternate translation: "keep asking for what you need ... keep seeking what you need from God, and you will find it ... keep knocking on the door"

it will be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will give it to you" or "you will receive it"

knock

To knock at a door is to hit it a few times to let a person inside the house know you are standing outside. It can also be translated using the way people in your culture show that they have arrived, such as "call out" or "cough" or "clap." Here, it means a person should keep praying to God until he answers.

it will be opened to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will open the door for you" or "God will welcome you inside"

Luke 11:11

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching his disciples about prayer.

Which father among you ... will ... a fish?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. It could also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "None of you fathers ... would ... a fish."

Luke 11:12

Or ... egg, will you give a scorpion to him?

Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. It could also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "And you would never give him a scorpion ... egg."

scorpion

A scorpion is similar to a spider, but it has a tail with a poisonous sting. If scorpions are not known where you are, you could translate this as "poisonous spider" or "spider that stings"

Luke 11:13

if you who are evil know

"since you who are evil know" or "even though you are sinful, you know"

how much more will ... give ... him?

Jesus again uses a question to teach his disciples. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you can be sure that ... will give ... him."

Luke 11:14

Now

The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.

Jesus was driving out a demon

It may be helpful to add extra information. Alternate translation: "Jesus was driving a demon out of a person" or "Jesus was making a demon leave a person"

demon that was mute

The demon has power to prevent people from speaking. Alternate translation: "demon that caused the man to be unable to speak"

Now

This word is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here. When the demon comes out of the man, some of the people criticize Jesus, and that leads to Jesus teaching about evil spirits.

When the demon had gone out

It may be helpful to add extra information. Alternate translation: "When the demon had gone out of the man" or "When the demon left the man"

the man who had been mute spoke

"the man who had been unable to speak now spoke"

Luke 11:15

General Information:

Jesus is accused of using Satan's power to drive a demon out of a mute man.

By Beelzebul, the ruler of demons, he is driving out demons

"He is driving out demons by the power of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons"

Beelzebul

another name for Satan

Luke 11:16

Others tested him

"Other people tested Jesus." They wanted him to prove that his authority was from God.

and sought from him a sign from heaven

"and asked him to give a sign from heaven" or "by demanding that he give a sign from heaven." This was how they wanted him to prove that his authority was from God.

Luke 11:17

General Information:

Jesus begins to respond to the crowd.

Every kingdom divided against itself is made desolate

"kingdom" here refers to the people in it. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If people of a kingdom fight among themselves, they will destroy their

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kingdom"

a house divided against itself falls

Here "house" refers to a family. Alternate translation: "if family members fight each other, they will ruin their family"

falls

"crashes down and is destroyed." This image of the house collapsing refers to the destruction of a family when the members fight each other.

Luke 11:18

If Satan is divided against himself

"Satan" here is referring to the demons who follow Satan as well as to Satan himself. Alternate translation: "If Satan and members of his kingdom are fighting among themselves"

If Satan ... how will his kingdom stand?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If Satan ... his kingdom will not last." or "If Satan ... his kingdom will fall apart."

For you say I cast out demons by Beelzebul

"For you say that it is by the power of Beelzebul that I make demons leave people." The next part of his argument can be stated explicitly: Alternate translation: "For you say that it is by the power of Beelzebul that I make demons leave people. That would mean that Satan is divided against himself"

Luke 11:19

If I ... by whom do your followers drive them out?

"If I ... by whose power do your followers force demons to leave people?" Jesus uses a question to teach the people. The meaning of Jesus's question can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If I ... then we must agree that your followers also drive out demons by Beelzebul's power. But you do not believe that it is true."

they will be your judges

"your followers who cast out demons by God's power will judge you for saying that I cast out demons by Beelzebul's power"

Luke 11:20

by the finger of God

The "finger of God" refers to God's power.

then the kingdom of God has come to you

"this shows that God's kingdom has come to you"

Luke 11:21

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins a parable about a strong man who is defeated by a stronger man.

When a strong man ... are safe

The "strong man" here is a metaphor for Satan.

his own palace

Possible meanings of the word "palace" are 1) the entire premises of the "strong man" or 2) it refers to the courtyard of a palace and is a synecdoche for the palace. If you have a word for the house and other areas close to it that the strong man can constantly guard, you may want to use it here.

his possessions are safe

"no one can steal his things"

Luke 11:22

a stronger man

The stronger man in the parable is a metaphor for Jesus, who is stronger than Satan.

takes away the armor

"removes the weapons and protection"

plunders the man's possessions

"steals his possessions" or "takes away anything that he wants"

Luke 11:23

The one who is not with me is against me, and the one who does not gather with me scatters

This refers to any person or any group of people. "Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not gather with me scatters" or "Those who are not with me are against me, and those who do not gather with me scatter"

one who is not with me

"one who does not support me" or "one who does not work with me"

is against me

"works against me"

the one who does not gather with me scatters

Jesus is referring to gathering disciples who follow him. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "anyone who does not cause people to come and follow me causes them to go away from me"

Luke 11:24

waterless places

This refers to "desolate places" where the evil spirits wander.

Finding none

"If the spirit does not find any rest there"

my house from which I came

This refers to the person in which he used to live. Alternate translation: "the person in whom I used to live"

Luke 11:25

finds the house had been swept clean and put in order

This metaphor speaks about the person as if he were a house that is swept clean, with things put in their places. It is implied that the house is still empty. This can be stated in active form with that information made explicit. Alternate translation: "finds that the person is like a house that someone has swept clean and organized by putting everything where it belongs, but has left empty" or "finds that the person is like a house that is clean and organized, but empty"

Luke 11:26

worse than the first

The word "first" refers to the condition of the man while he had the unclean spirit before it left him. Alternate translation: "worse than his condition was before the spirit left"

Luke 11:27

General Information:

This is a break in Jesus's teachings. A woman speaks a blessing and Jesus responds.

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

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raised her voice above the crowd
This idiom means "spoke loudly above the noise of the crowd"
Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you
The parts of a woman's body are used to refer to the whole woman. Alternate translation: "How good it is for the woman who bore you and nursed you at her breasts" or "How happy the woman who bore you and nursed you at her breasts must be"
Luke 11:28
Rather, blessed are they
"It is even better for those"
hear the word of God
"hear the message God has spoken"
and keep it
"and obey it"
Luke 11:29
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching the crowd.
As the crowds were increasing
"As more people were joining the crowd" or "As the crowd was growing larger"
This generation is an evil generation. It seeks ... to it
Here "generation" refers to the people in it. Alternate translation: "The people living at this time are evil people. They seek ... to them" or "You people living at this time are evil people. You seek ... to you"
It seeks a sign
The information about what kind of sign it seeks can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "It wants me to perform a miracle as proof that I have come from God"
no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah
This double negative emphasizes that the sign of Jonah is the only sign that will be given. Alternate translation: "The only sign that will be given to it is the sign of Jonah"
no sign will be given to it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not give it a sign"
the sign of Jonah
"what happened to Jonah" or "the miracle that God did for Jonah"
Luke 11:30
For just as Jonah became a sign ... so too ... this generation
This means that Jesus will serve as a sign from God for the Jews of that day in exactly the same way as Jonah served as a sign from God to the people of Nineveh.
Son of Man will
Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"
this generation
"the people living today"
Luke 11:31
Queen of the South
This refers to the Queen of Sheba. Sheba was a kingdom south of Israel.
will rise up
"will appear"
she came from the ends of the earth
This idiom means that she came from very far away. Alternate translation: "she came a very great distance" or "she came from a place very far away"
someone greater than Solomon is here
Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, who am greater than Solomon, am here"
Luke 11:32
The men of Nineveh
It may be helpful to state explicitly that this refers to the ancient city of Nineveh. Alternate translation: "The men who lived in the ancient city of Nineveh"
The men
This includes both men and woman. Alternate translation: "The people"
this generation of people
"the people of this time"
for they repented
"for the people of Nineveh repented"
someone greater than Jonah is here
Jesus is speaking about himself. It may be helpful to explicitly state that they have not listened to him. Alternate translation: "even though I am greater than Jonah, you still have not repented"
Luke 11:33
General Information:
Jesus begins a parable in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others.
puts it in a hidden place or under a basket
"hides it or puts in under a basket"
but on a lampstand
The understood subject and verb in this clause may be supplied. Alternate translation: "but a person places it on a lampstand" or "but a person puts it on a table"
Luke 11:34
General Information:
Jesus continues his parable, in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.
Your eye is the lamp of the body
In this part of the metaphor, the things they saw Jesus do provided understanding just as an eye provides light for the body. Alternate translation: "Your eye is like the lamp of the body"
Your eye
The eye is a metonym for vision.
the body
The body is a synecdoche for a person's life.
When your eye is good
Here "eye" here is a metonym for vision. Alternate translation: "When your vision is good" or "when you see well"
the whole body is filled with light
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the light will fill your whole body" or "you will be able to see everything clearly"
when your eye is bad
Here "eye" is a metonym for vision. Alternate translation: "When your vision is bad" or "when you see poorly"

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your body is full of darkness
"you will not be able to see anything"
Luke 11:35
General Information:
Jesus continues his parable, in which he speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.
watch out that the light in you is not darkness
"look carefully to make sure that what you think is light is not actually darkness"
Luke 11:36
General Information:
Jesus ends his parable.
If then your whole body is full of light, not having any member in darkness
Jesus speaks of his teaching as light that he wants his disciples to obey and share with others. He speaks of people who do not know or accept his teaching as being in darkness.
not having any member in darkness
"with none of its parts in darkness"
then your whole body will be like when a lamp shines its brightness on you
Jesus states the same truth he has just presented as a metaphor, but this time he uses a simile. He speaks of people who are full of truth as if they are a lamp that shines brightly.
Luke 11:37
General Information:
Jesus finishes teaching the crowd, and a Pharisee invites Jesus to eat at his house.
When he had finished speaking
The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.
at his house
This refers to the Pharisee's house.
reclined
It was the custom at a relaxed meal such as this dinner for men to eat while lying down comfortably around the table. You might want to translate using the word your language uses for the way people's bodies are when they eat. Alternate translation: "sat down at the table"
Luke 11:38
wash
The Pharisees had a rule that people must wash their hands in order to be ceremonially clean before God. Alternate translation: "wash his hands" or "wash his hands in order to be ritually clean"
Luke 11:39
General Information:
Jesus begins to speak to the Pharisee using a metaphor. He compares the way they clean cups and bowls to how they clean themselves.
the outside of cups and bowls
Washing of the outside of containers was a part of the ritual practices of the Pharisees.
but the inside of you is filled with robbery and evil
This part of the metaphor contrasts the careful way they clean the outside of the dishes with the way they ignore their own internal condition.
Luke 11:40
You senseless men
This expression can refer to men or women, even though all of the Pharisees to whom Jesus was speaking to here were men.
Did not the one who made the outside also make the inside?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the Pharisees for not understanding that what is in their hearts matters to God. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "The one who made the outside also made the inside!"
Luke 11:41
Give what is inside as alms
This refers to what they should be doing with their cups and bowls. Alternate translation: "Give what is inside your cups and bowls as alms" or "Be generous to the poor"
all things will be clean for you
"you will be completely clean" or "you will be clean both inside and outside"
Luke 11:42
you tithe mint and rue and every other garden herb
"you give God one tenth of your mint and rue and other herbs from your garden." Jesus was giving an example of how extreme the Pharisees were in giving a tenth of their income.
mint and rue
These are herbs. People put just a little bit of these leaves into their food to give it flavor. If people do not know what mint and rue are, you can use the name of herbs they know or a general expression such as "herbs."
every other garden herb
Possible meanings are 1) "every other vegetable" 2) "every other garden herb" or 3) "every other garden plant."
the love of God
"to love God" or "love for God." God is the one who is loved.
without failing to do the other things also
"without failing" emphasizes that this should always be done. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "and to always do the other good things as well"
Luke 11:43
the front seats
"the best seats"
respectful greetings
"you like people to greet you with special honor"
Luke 11:44
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes speaking to the Pharisees.
you are like unmarked graves that people walk over without knowing it
The Pharisees are like unmarked graves because they look ceremonially clean, but they cause people around them to become unclean.
unmarked graves
These graves were holes dug in the ground where a dead body was buried. They did not have the white stones that people normally place over graves so that others would see them.
without knowing it

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When the Jews walked over a grave, they would become ceremonially unclean. These unmarked graves caused them to accidentally do that. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "without realizing it and become ceremonially unclean"

Luke 11:45

General Information:

Jesus begins to respond to a Jewish teacher.

One of the experts in the law

This introduces a new character into the story.

what you say insults us too

Jesus's comments about the Pharisees also seemed to apply to the teachers of the Jewish laws.

Luke 11:46

Woe to you, teachers of the law!

Jesus makes it clear that he intended to condemn the actions of the teachers of the law along with the Pharisees.

you put people under burdens that are hard to carry

"you put burdens on people that are too heavy and they cannot carry them." Jesus speaks about someone giving people many rules as if the person were giving them heavy things to carry. Alternate translation: "you burden people by giving them too many rules to follow"

touch the burdens with one of your own fingers

Possible meanings are 1) "do anything at all to help people carry those burdens" or 2) "make any effort to carry those burdens yourselves."

Luke 11:48

So you are witnesses and you consent

Jesus is rebuking the Pharisees and teachers of the law. They know about the murder of the prophets, but do not condemn their ancestors for killing them. Alternate translation: "So, rather than denouncing them, you confirm and agree"

Luke 11:49

For this reason

This refers back to the previous statement that the teachers of the law burdened people with rules.

God's wisdom said

"wisdom" is treated as if it was able to speak for God. Alternate translation: "God in his wisdom said" or "God wisely said"

I will send to them prophets and apostles

"I will send prophets and apostles to my people." God had declared beforehand that he would send prophets and apostles to the ancestors of the Jewish audience to whom Jesus was speaking.

they will persecute and kill some of them

"my people will persecute and kill some of the prophets and apostles." God had declared beforehand that the ancestors of the Jewish audience to whom Jesus was speaking would persecute and kill the prophets and apostles.

Luke 11:50

this generation will be charged for all the blood of the prophets shed since the foundation of the world

God will hold the people to whom Jesus is speaking responsible for the murder of the prophets by their ancestors. Alternate translation: "God will hold this generation responsible for the deaths of all the prophets whom people have killed since the foundation of the world"

for all the blood of the prophets shed

The "blood ... shed" refers to the blood that was spilled when the prophets were killed. Alternate translation: "for all the murders of the prophets"

since the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"

Luke 11:51

Zechariah

This was probably the priest in the Old Testament who rebuked the people of Israel for idolatry. This was not the Father of John the Baptist.

who was killed

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the people killed"

Luke 11:52

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes responding to the Jewish teacher.

you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering

Jesus speaks about life in God's kingdom as if it were in a house that the teachers will neither enter nor allow others to enter. This means the teachers do not truly know God, and they prevent others from knowing him as well by teaching about scripture things that are not true. Alternate translation: "you have made it impossible for people to know how to live in God's kingdom; you do not want to live in it yourselves, and you keep others from knowing"

the key of knowledge

Possible meanings are 1) "the key that opens the door to knowledge," in which case "knowledge" is what is behind the door, or 2) "the key, which is the knowledge of how to open the door," in which case Jesus is not telling what is behind the door.

you do not enter in yourselves

"you yourselves do not go in to get knowledge"

Luke 11:53

General Information:

This is the end of the part of the story where Jesus eats at the Pharisee's house.

After Jesus left there

"After Jesus left the Pharisee's house"

argued with him about many things

The scribes and Pharisees did not argue in order to defend their views, but to try to trap Jesus so they could accuse him of breaking the law of God.

Luke 11:54

lying in wait to catch him in something he might say

The scribes and Pharisees hoped Jesus would say something wrong so that they could accuse him of breaking God's law. They did not want to learn from him.

lying in wait to catch him

The writer speaks of the Pharisees as if they were thieves hiding by the side of a road waiting for someone to come by whom they could overpower and rob. In this case, they were waiting for Jesus to say something for which they could accuse him. Alternate translation: "waiting and

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hoping to accuse him"

12 [1]In the meantime, when many thousands of the people were gathered together so much that they trampled on each other, he began to say to his disciples first of all, "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.
[2]But there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not be known.[3]So whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.
[4]I say to you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that they have no more that they can do.
[5]But I will warn you about whom to fear. Fear the one who, after he has killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I say to you, fear him.
[6]Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins? Yet not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God.[7]But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear. You are more valuable than many sparrows.
[8]I say to you, everyone who confesses me before men, the Son of Man will also confess before the angels of God,[9]but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God.[10]Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven.
[11]When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you will speak in your defense, or what you will say,[12]for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that hour what you should say."

[13]Then someone from the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."
[14]Jesus said to him, "Man, who appointed me a judge or a mediator over you?"[15]He said to them, "Watch that you keep yourselves from all greedy desires, because a person's life does not consist of the abundance of his possessions."
[16]Then Jesus told them a parable, saying, "The field of a rich man yielded abundantly,[17]and he reasoned with himself, saying, 'What will I do, because I do not have a place to store my crops?'[18]He said, 'This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all of my grain and other goods.[19]I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods stored up for many years. Rest easy, eat, drink, be merry."'
[20]But God said to him, 'Foolish man, tonight your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'[21]That is what someone is like who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

[22]Jesus said to his disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear.[23]For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothes.
[24]Think about the ravens, that they do not sow or reap. They have no storeroom or barn, but God feeds them. How much more valuable you are than the birds![25]Which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his lifespan?[26]If then you are not able to do such a very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?
[27]Think about the lilies—how they grow. They do not labor, neither do they spin. Yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.[28]If God so clothes the grass in the field, which exists today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!
[29]Do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not be anxious.[30]For all the nations of the world seek these things, and your Father knows that you need them.
[31]But seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.[32]Do not fear, little flock, because your Father is very pleased to give you the kingdom.
[33]Sell your possessions and give alms. Make for yourselves purses which will not wear out—treasure in the heavens that does not run out, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys.[34]For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

[35]"Keep your loins girded and your lamps lit,[36]and be like people waiting expectantly for their master when he returns from the marriage feast, so that when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open the door for him.
[37]Blessed are those servants whom the master will find watching when he comes. Truly I say to you, he will gird himself to serve and have them sit down at the table, and he will come and serve them.[38]If the master comes in the second watch of the night, or if even in the third watch, and finds them ready, blessed are those servants.
[39]But understand this, that if the master of the house had known the hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.[40]You also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect."

[41]Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable only to us, or also to everyone?"
[42]The Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager whom his lord will set over his other servants to give them their portion of food at the right time?[43]Blessed is that servant whom his lord finds doing that when he comes.[44]Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his property.
[45]But if that servant says in his heart, 'My lord delays his return,' and begins to beat the male servants and female servants and to eat and drink and to become drunk,[46]the lord of that servant will come in a day when he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know and will cut him in pieces and appoint a place for him with the unfaithful.

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[47]That servant, having known his lord's will and not having prepared or done according to his will, will be beaten with many blows.[48]But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating, he will be beaten with a few blows. But everyone who has been given much, from them much will be required, and from the one who has been entrusted with much, even more will be asked.

[49]"I came to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled.[50]But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am distressed until it is completed!
[51]Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.[52]For from now on there will be five in one house divided—three people against two, and two people against three.[53]They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

[54]Jesus was saying to the crowds also, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it happens.[55]When a south wind is blowing, you say, 'There will be a scorching heat,' and it happens.[56]Hypocrites, you know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the heavens, but how is it that you do not know how to interpret the present time?
[57]Why do you not judge what is right for yourselves?[58]For when you go with your adversary before the magistrate, on the way make an effort to be reconciled with him so that he does not drag you to the judge, and so that the judge does not deliver you to the officer, and the officer does not throw you into prison.[59]I say to you, you will never come out from there until you have paid the very last bit of money."

Luke 12 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Blasphemy against the Spirit"
No one knows for sure what actions people perform or what words they say when they commit this sin. However, they probably insult the Holy Spirit and his work. Part of the Holy Spirit's work is to make people understand that they are sinners and that they need to have God forgive them. Therefore, anyone who does not try to stop sinning is probably committing blasphemy against the Spirit. (See: blasphemy and holyspirit)
Servants
God expects his people to remember that everything in the world belongs to God. God gives his people things so they can serve him. He wants them to please him by doing what he wants them to do with everything he has given them. One day Jesus will ask his servants what they have done with everything he gave them to use. He will give a reward to those who have done what he wanted them to do, and he will punish those who have not.
Division
Jesus knew that those who did not choose to follow him would hate those who did choose to follow him. He also knew that most people love their families more than they love anyone else. So he wanted his followers to understand that following and pleasing him had to be more important to them than having their family love them (Luke 12:51-56).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"
Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 12:1 Notes

Luke 12:1
General Information:
Jesus begins to teach his disciples in front of thousands of people.
In the meantime
This is probably while the scribes and Pharisees were looking for a way to trap him. The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.
when many thousands of the people ... they trampled on each other
This is background information that tells the setting of the story.
many thousands of the people
"a very great crowd"
they trampled on each other
This is probably an exaggeration to emphasize that so many people were crowded close together that they would step on each other. Alternate translation: "they were stepping on each other" or "they were stepping on one another's feet"
he began to say to his disciples first of all
"Jesus first started speaking to his disciples, and said to them"
Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy
Just as yeast spreads through a whole lump of bread dough, their hypocrisy was spreading through the whole community. Alternate translation: "Guard yourself against

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the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, which is like yeast" or "Be careful that you do not become hypocrites like the Pharisees. Their evil behavior influences everyone just as yeast affects a lump of dough"

Luke 12:2

But there is

The word "But" connects this verse to the previous verse about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed

"everything that is hidden will be shown." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will find out about everything that people do secretly"

nothing hidden that will not be known

This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence in order to emphasize its truth. It can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will learn about everything that others try to hide"

Luke 12:3

whatever you have said in the darkness will be heard in the light

Here "darkness" is a metonym for "night" which is a metonym for "private. And "light" is a metonym for "day" which is a metonym for "public. The phrase "will be heard" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whatever you have said privately at night, people will hear it in the daylight"

spoken in the ear

whispered

in the inner rooms

"in a closed room." This refers to private speech. Alternate translation: "in privacy" or "secretly"

will be proclaimed

"will be shouted loudly." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will proclaim"

upon the housetops

Houses in Israel had flat roofs, so people could go up and stand on top of them. If readers would be distracted trying to imagine how people would get up on the house tops, this could also be translated with a more general expression, such as "from a high place so that everyone will be able to hear."

Luke 12:4

I say to you, my friends

Jesus readdresses his disciples to mark a shift in his speech to a new topic, in this case, to speak about not being afraid.

they have no more that they can do

"they cannot cause any more harm"

Luke 12:5

Fear the one who, after ... has authority

The phrase "the one" refers to God. This could be reworded. Alternate translation: "Fear God who, after ... has authority" or "Fear God, because after ... he has authority"

after he has killed

"after he kills you"

has authority to throw you into hell

This is a general statement about God's authority to judge people. It does not mean this will happen to the disciples. Alternate translation: "has authority to throw people into hell"

Luke 12:6

Are not five sparrows sold for two small coins?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "You know that five sparrows are sold for only two small coins."

sparrows

very small, seed-eating birds

not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God

This could be stated in active form and in positive form. Alternate translation: "God never forgets any of them" or "God indeed remembers every sparrow"

Luke 12:7

even the hairs of your head are all numbered

This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows even how many hairs are on your head"

Do not fear

The reason for the fear is not stated. Possible meanings are 1) "Do not be afraid of what will happen to you" or 2) "So do not be afraid of people who could hurt you."

You are more valuable than many sparrows

"You are worth more to God than many sparrows"

Luke 12:8

I say to you

Jesus readdresses his audience to mark a shift in his speech to a new topic, in this case, to speak about confession.

everyone who confesses me before men

What is confessed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "whoever tells others that he is my disciple" or "anyone who acknowledges before others that he is loyal to me"

the Son of Man

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man"

Luke 12:9

he who denies me before men will be denied

"I will deny before the angels of God that I know anyone who denies me" or "I, the Son of Man will deny before the angels of God that I know anyone who denies me"

denies me

"claims that he does not know me" or "claims that he is not my disciple"

before men

where people can hear

will be denied

"will be treated as though I do not know him" or "will be treated as if he is not my disciple"

Luke 12:10

Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man

"Everyone who says something bad about the Son of Man"

it will be forgiven him

"he will be forgiven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive him for that"

blasphemes against the Holy Spirit

"speaks evil against the Holy Spirit"

but to him ... it will not be forgiven

This can be expressed with an active verb. Alternate translation: "but he ... God will not forgive him" or "but he ... God will consider him guilty forever"

Luke 12:11

When they bring you

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It is not stated who brings them into judgment.
before the synagogues
"into the synagogues to question you before the religious leaders"
rulers ... authorities
It may be necessary to combine these into one statement. Alternate translation: "other people who have power in the country"
Luke 12:12
in that hour
"at that time" or "then"
Luke 12:13
General Information:
This is a break in Jesus's teachings. A man asks Jesus to do something and Jesus responds to him.
divide the inheritance with me
In that culture, inheritances came from the father, usually after the father had died. You may need to make explicit that the speaker's father had probably died. Alternate translation: "share my father's property with me now that our father is dead"
Luke 12:14
Man
Possible meanings are 1) this is simply a way to address a stranger or 2) Jesus is rebuking the man. Your language might have a way of addressing people in either of these ways. Some people do not translate this word at all.
who appointed me a judge or a mediator over you?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the man. Alternate translation: "no one appointed me a judge or mediator over you." or "I am not your judge or mediator."
you
This word refers to the man and his brother and so is plural.
Luke 12:15
He said to them
The word "them" here probably refers to the whole crowd of people. Alternate translation: "And Jesus said to the crowd"
keep yourselves from all greedy desires
"guard yourself from every form of greed." Alternate translation: "do not allow yourself to love having things" or "do not let the urge to have more things control you"
a person's life
This is a general statement of fact. It does not refer to any specific person. Some languages have a way of expressing that.
the abundance of his possessions
"how many things he owns" or "how much wealth he has"
Luke 12:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues his teaching by telling a parable.
Then Jesus told them
Jesus was probably still speaking to the entire crowd.
yielded abundantly
"grew a very good harvest"
Luke 12:17
What will I do, because I do not have a place to store my crops?
This question reflects what the man was thinking to himself. Alternate translation: "I do not know what to do, because I do not have any place big enough to store all my crops!"
Luke 12:18
barns
buildings where farmers store the crops they have harvested
all of my grain and other goods
"all of my grain and the other good things that I own"
Luke 12:19
I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ... years. Rest ... merry."
"I will say to myself, 'I have ... years. Rest ... merry.'" or "I will tell myself that I have ... years, so I can rest ... merry."
many goods
"many good things" or "many possessions"
Luke 12:20
Connecting Statement:
Jesus quotes how God responds to the rich man, as he finishes telling his parable.
tonight your soul is required of you
The "soul" refers to the life of a person. Alternate translation: "you will die tonight" or "I will take your life from you tonight"
the things you have prepared, whose will they be?
"who will own what you have stored up?" or "who will have what you prepared?" God uses a question to make the man realize that he would no longer possess those things. Alternate translation: "the things that you have prepared will belong to someone else!"
Luke 12:21
stores up treasure
"saves up valuable things"
is not rich toward God
has not used his time and possessions for the things that are important to God
Luke 12:22
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching his disciples in front of the crowd.
Therefore
"For that reason" or "Because of what this story teaches"
I say to you
"I want to tell you something important" or "you need to listen carefully to this"
about your body, what you will wear
"about your body and what you will wear" or "about having enough clothes to put on your body"
Luke 12:23
life is more than food
This is a general statement of value. Alternate translation: "life is more important than the food you eat"
the body is more than clothes
"your body is more important than the clothes you wear"
Luke 12:24
ravens
This refers either to 1) crows, a kind of bird that eats mostly grain, or 2) ravens, a kind of bird that eats the flesh of dead animals. Jesus's audience would have considered the ravens worthless since the Jewish people could not eat these types of birds.

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storeroom ... barn
These are places where food is stored.
How much more valuable you are than the birds!
This is an exclamation, not a question. Jesus emphasizes the fact that people are much more valuable to God then birds.
Luke 12:25
Which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his lifespan?
Jesus uses a question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "None of you can make your life any longer by being anxious!"
add a cubit to his lifespan
This is a metaphor because a cubit is a measure of length rather than of time. The image is of a person's life stretched out as if it were a board, a rope, or some other physical object.
cubit
the length from a man's elbow to the end of his fingers
Luke 12:26
If then you are not able to do such a very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?
Jesus uses another question to teach his disciples. Alternate translation: "Since you cannot do even this small thing, you should not worry about the other things."
Luke 12:27
Think about the lilies—how they grow
"Think about how the lilies grow."
lilies
Lilies are beautiful flowers that grow wild in the fields. If your language does not have a word for lily, you can use the name of another flower like that or translate it as "flowers"
neither do they spin
The process of making thread or yard for cloth is called "spinning." It may be helpful to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "neither do they make thread in order to make cloth" or "and they do not make yarn"
Solomon in all his glory was
"Solomon, who had great wealth, was" or "Solomon, who wore beautiful clothes, was"
Luke 12:28
If God so clothes the grass in the field, which
"If God clothes the grass in the field like that, and it" or "If God gives the grass in the field such beautiful clothing, and it." God making the grass beautiful is spoken of as if God were putting beautiful clothes on the grass. Alternate translation: "If God makes the grass in the field beautiful like this, and it"
is thrown into the oven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone throws it into a fire"
how much more will he clothe you
This is an exclamation, not a question. Jesus emphasizes that he will certainly take care of people even better than he does the grass. This could be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he will certainly clothe you even better"
Luke 12:29
Do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink
"Do not focus on what you will eat and drink" or "Do not greatly desire more to eat and drink"
Luke 12:30
all the nations of the world
Here "nations" refers to "unbelievers." Alternate translation: "all people of other nations" or "all the unbelievers in the world"
your Father
This is an important title for God.
Luke 12:31
seek his kingdom
"focus on God's kingdom" or "greatly desire God's kingdom"
these things will be added to you
"these things also will be given to you." "These things" refers to food and clothing. This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will also give you these things"
Luke 12:32
little flock
Jesus is calling his disciples a flock. A flock is a group of sheep or goats that a shepherd cares for. As a shepherd cares for his sheep, God cares for Jesus's disciples. Alternate translation: "small group" or "dear group"
your Father
This is an important title for God.
Luke 12:33
give alms
It may be helpful to state what they receive. Alternate translation: "give alms from the money you earn from the sales"
Make for yourselves purses ... treasure in the heavens
The purses and treasure in the heavens are the same thing. They both represent God's blessing in heaven.
Make for yourselves
This is the result of giving to the poor. Alternate translation: "In this way you will make for yourselves"
purses which will not wear out
"money bags that will not get holes in them"
does not run out
"does not diminish" or "does not become less"
no thief comes near
"thieves do not come near"
no moth destroys
"moths do not destroy"
moth
A "moth" is a small insect that eats holes in fabric. You may need to use a different insect, such as an ant or termite.
Luke 12:34
where your treasure is, there your heart will be also
"your heart will be focused on where you store your treasure"
your heart
Here "heart" refers to a person's thoughts.
Luke 12:35
General Information:
Jesus begins to tell a parable.
Keep your loins girded
These words are a metaphor for being ready to do hard work. People in Jesus's culture wore long flowing robes. They would tuck these robes into their belts to keep them out of the way while they worked. Alternate translation:

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"Always be ready to serve" or "Be dressed and ready to serve"

and your lamps lit

This is a metaphor or metonym for staying awake at night and another metaphor for always being ready to work, even when it would otherwise be time to rest. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "keep your lamps burning"

Luke 12:36

be like people waiting expectantly for their master

Jesus commands the disciples to be ready for him to return the same way servants should be ready for their master to return.

waiting expectantly

If your language has a word for one person waiting and looking for someone he expects will come soon, you may want to use it here.

returns from the marriage feast

"returns home from a marriage feast"

open the door for him

This refers to the door of the master's house. It was the responsibility of his servants to open it for him.

Luke 12:37

Blessed are

"How good it is for"

whom the master will find watching when he comes

"whose master finds them waiting for him when he returns" or "who are ready when the master returns"

he will gird himself to serve and have them sit down

Because the servants have been faithful and ready to serve their master, the master will now reward them by serving them.

he will gird himself to serve

"he will tuck in his robe to serve." If people are not familiar with robes, this can also be translated in a more general way. Alternate translation: "he will dress himself to serve"

Luke 12:38

in the second watch of the night

The second watch was between 9:00 p.m. and midnight. Alternate translation: "late at night" or "just before midnight"

or if even in the third watch

The third watch was from midnight to 3:00 a.m. Alternate translation: "or if he comes very late at night"

Luke 12:39

had known the hour

"had known when"

he would not have let his house be broken into

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he would not have let the thief break into his house"

Luke 12:40

because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect

The similarity between a thief (Luke 12:39) and the Son of Man is that people do not know when either one will come, so they need to be ready. Jesus is not saying that he himself is a thief.

the Son of Man is coming

Jesus is talking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am coming"

Luke 12:41

General Information:

Here there is a stop in the story as Peter asks Jesus a question about the previous parable.

Luke 12:42

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell another parable.

Who then is ... right time?

Jesus uses a question to answer Peter's question indirectly. He expected those who wanted to be faithful managers to understand that the parable was about them. Alternate translation: "I said it for everyone who is ... right time."

the faithful and wise manager

Jesus tells another parable about how servants should be faithful while they wait for their master to return.

whom his lord will set over his other servants

"whom his lord puts in charge of his other servants"

Luke 12:43

Blessed is that servant

"How good it is for that servant"

whom his lord finds doing that when he comes

"if his lord finds him doing that work when he comes back"

Luke 12:44

Truly I say to you

This expression means they should pay special attention to what he is about to say.

will set him over all his property

"will put him in charge of all his property"

Luke 12:45

that servant

This refers to the servant whose lord has put him in charge of the other servants.

says in his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "thinks to himself"

My lord delays his return

"My master will not return soon"

male servants and female servants

The words that are translated here as "male servants and female servants" are normally translated as "boys" and "girls." They may indicate that the servants were young or that they were dear to their master. If your language can shorten this phrase to "male and female servants," you may want to do so here.

Luke 12:46

in a day when he does not expect and in an hour that he does not know

The words "day" and "hour" form a merism of time that refers to any time, and the words "expect" and "know" have similar meanings, so the two phrases here are parallel to emphasize that the coming of the lord will be a total surprise to the servant. However, the phrases should not be combined unless your language has no different words for "know" and "expect" or "day" and "hour." Alternate translation: "at a time when the servant is not expecting him"

cut him in pieces and appoint a place for him with the unfaithful

Possible meanings are 1) this is an exaggeration for the master dealing out harsh punishment toward the slave, or 2) this describes the manner in which the servant will be

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executed and buried as punishment.
Luke 12:47
That servant, having known his lord's will and not having prepared or done according to his will, will be beaten with many blows
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "But as for the servant who knows his lord's will does not prepare or do according to it, the master will beat him with many blows"
his lord's will ... according to his will
"what his master wanted him to do ... it"
Luke 12:48
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling the parable.
But the one ... few blows
Both the servant who knows the master's will and the servant who does not know it are punished, but the words that begin with "That servant" (verse 47) show the servant who intentionally disobeyed his master was punished more severely than the other servant.
But everyone who has been given much, from them much will be required
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "They will require more of anyone who has received much" or "The master will require more of everyone he has given much to"
from the one ... much, even more will be asked
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the master will ask even more of the one ... much" or "the master will require even more of the one ... much"
the one who has been entrusted with much
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one to whom the master has given much property to take care of" or "the one to whom the master has given much responsibility"
Luke 12:49
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to teach his disciples.
I came to cast fire upon the earth
"I came to throw fire on the earth" or "I came to set the earth on fire." Possible meanings are 1) Jesus has come to judge people or 2) Jesus has come to purify believers or 3) Jesus has come to cause division among people.
how I wish that it were already kindled
This exclamation emphasizes how much he wants this to happen. Alternate translation: "I wish very much that it was already lit" or "how I wish that it had already begun"
Luke 12:50
I have a baptism to be baptized with
Here "baptism" refers to what Jesus must suffer. Just as water covers a person during baptism, suffering will overwhelm Jesus. Alternate translation: "I must go through a baptism of terrible suffering" or "I must be overwhelmed by suffering as a person being baptized is covered by water"
But
The word "but" is used to show that he cannot cast the fire on the earth until after he goes through his baptism.
how I am distressed until it is completed
This exclamation emphasizes how distressed he was. Alternate translation: "I am terribly distressed and will be so until I complete this baptism of suffering"
Luke 12:51
Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division
Jesus asks a question to let them know that he is going to correct their wrong understanding. You may need to supply the words "I came" that are omitted in the second sentence. Alternate translation: "You think that I came to bring peace on the earth, but I tell you I did not. Instead, I came to bring division"
division
"hostility" or "discord"
Luke 12:52
there will be five in one house
It may be helpful to state that this refers to people. Alternate translation: "there will be five people in one house"
against ... against
"will oppose ... will oppose"
Luke 12:53
against
"will oppose"
Luke 12:54
General Information:
Jesus begins to speak to the crowd.
When you see a cloud rising ... happens
This condition normally meant rain was coming in Israel.
A shower is coming
"Rain is coming" or "It is going to rain"
Luke 12:55
When a south wind is blowing
This condition normally meant hot weather was coming in Israel.
Luke 12:56
the earth and the heavens
"the earth and the sky"
how is it that you do not know how to interpret the present time?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the crowd. Jesus uses this question to convict them. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you should know how to interpret the present time."
Luke 12:57
Why do you not judge what is right for yourselves?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke the crowd. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You yourselves should discern what is right."
for yourselves
"on your own initiative"
Luke 12:58
For when you go ... prison
Jesus presents a situation here that continues through verse 59. This may be a parable to teach Jesus's hearers that they need to repent of their sins before God condemns them on the day of judgment. Alternate translation: "If when you go ... prison"
when you go
Though Jesus is talking to a crowd, the situation he is presenting is something that a person would go through

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alone. So in some languages the word "you" would be singular.

be reconciled with him

"be reconciled with your adversary"

the judge

This refers to the magistrate, but the term here is more specific and threatening.

does not deliver you

"does not take you"

Luke 12:59

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the situations that begins in verse 58.

the very last bit of money

"the entire amount of money that your adversary demands"

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13 [1]At that time, some people there told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices.
[2]Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you think that these Galileans were more sinful than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way?[3]No, I tell you. But if you do not repent, all of you will perish in the same way.
[4]Or those eighteen people in Siloam on whom a tower fell and killed them, do you think they were worse sinners than other men in Jerusalem?[5]No, I say. But if you do not repent, all of you will also perish."

[6]Jesus told this parable, "Someone had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came and looked for fruit on it but found none.[7]The man said to the gardener, 'Look, for three years I have come and tried to find fruit on this fig tree and found none. Cut it down. Why let it waste the ground?'

[8]"'The gardener answered and said, 'Sir, leave it alone this year while I dig around it and put manure on it.[9]If it bears fruit next year, good; but if it does not, cut it down!'"

[10]Now Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues during the Sabbath.[11]Behold, a woman was there who for eighteen years had a spirit of weakness. She was bent over and was not able to straighten up completely.
[12]When Jesus saw her, he called to her and said, "Woman, you are freed from your weakness."[13]He placed his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight again and glorified God.
[14]But the synagogue ruler was indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. So the ruler answered and said to the crowd, "There are six days in which it is necessary to labor. Come and be healed then, not on the Sabbath day."

[15]The Lord answered him and said, "Hypocrites! Does not each of you untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it to drink on the Sabbath?[16]So too this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, should her bonds not be untied on the Sabbath day?"
[17]As he said these things, all those who opposed him were ashamed, but the whole crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things he did.

[18]Then Jesus said, "What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?[19]It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden, and it grew into a big tree, and the birds of heaven built their nests in its branches."

[20]Again he said, "To what can I compare the kingdom of God?[21]It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of flour until all the flour was leavened."

[22]Then Jesus traveled through the towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem.[23]Someone said to him, "Lord, are only a few people to be saved?"So he said to them,
[24]"Struggle to enter through the narrow door, because, I say to you, many will try to enter, but will not be able to enter.
[25]Once the owner of the house gets up and locks the door, then you will stand outside and pound the door and say, 'Lord, Lord, let us in.'"He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you or where you are from.'

[26]"Then you will say, 'We ate and drank in front of you and you taught in our streets.'
[27]"But he will reply, 'I say to you, I do not know where you are from. Get away from me, all you workers of unrighteousness!'
[28]There will be crying and the grinding of teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in God's kingdom, but you are thrown out.[29]They will come from the east, west, north, and south, and be seated at a table in the kingdom of God.[30]Know this, those who are least important will be first, and those who are most important will be last."

[31]In that same hour, some Pharisees came and said to him, "Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you."
[32]Jesus said, "Go and tell that fox, 'Look, I cast out demons and perform healings today and tomorrow, and the third day I will reach my goal.'[33]In any case, it is necessary for me to continue on today, tomorrow, and the following day, since it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem.

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[34]Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. How often I desired to gather your children the way a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you did not desire this.[35]See, your house is abandoned. I say to you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Luke 13 General Notes

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Unknown events

The people and Jesus speak about two events that they knew about but about which no one today knows anything except what Luke has written (Luke 13:1-5). Your translation should tell only what Luke tells.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "those who are least important will be first, and those who are most important will be last" (Luke 13:30).

Links:

Luke 13:1 Notes

Luke 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus is still speaking in front of the crowd. Some people in the crowd ask him a question and he begins to respond. This continues the story that begins in Luke 12:1.

At that time

This phrase connects this event to the end of chapter 12, when Jesus was teaching a crowd of people.

whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices

Here "blood" refers to the death of the Galileans. They were probably killed while they were offering their sacrifices. This could be stated explicitly as in the UDB.

whose blood Pilate mixed with their own sacrifices

Pilate probably ordered his soldiers to kill people rather than doing it himself. Alternate translation: "whom Pilate's soldiers killed as they were sacrificing animals"

Luke 13:2

Do you think that these Galileans were more sinful ... way?

"Were these Galileans more sinful ... way?" or "Does this prove that these Galileans were more sinful ... way?" Jesus uses this question to challenge the understanding of the people. He answers the question in verse 3.

Luke 13:3

No, I tell you. But if you do not repent ... same way

Jesus answers the question he asked in 13:2. Jesus explains that the Galileans who were killed were not more sinful than other Galileans.

No, I tell you

Here "I tell you" emphasizes "no." Alternate translation: "They certainly were not more sinful" or "You are wrong to think that their suffering proves that they were more sinful"

all of you will perish in the same way

"all of you also will die." The phrase "in the same way" means they will experience the same result, not that they will die by the same method.

perish

die

Luke 13:4

Or those

This is Jesus's second example of people who suffered.

Alternate translation: "Or consider those" or "Think about those"

eighteen people

"18 people"

Siloam

This is the name of an area in Jerusalem.

do you think they were worse sinners ... Jerusalem?

Jesus uses this question to challenge the understanding of the people. He answers the question in 13:4. Alternate translation: "does this prove that they were more sinful ... Jerusalem?"

they were worse sinners

The crowd assumed that they died in this terrible way because they were especially sinful. This could be explicitly stated. Alternate translation: "they died because they were worse sinners"

other men

"other people." The word here is the general term for a person.

Luke 13:5

No, I say

Jesus answers the question he asked in 13:4. Alternate translation: "They certainly did not die because they were more sinful"

perish

die

Luke 13:6

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell the crowd a parable to explain his last statement, "But if you do not repent, all of you will also perish."

Someone had a fig tree planted in his vineyard

The owner of a vineyard had another person plant a fig tree in the vineyard.

vineyard

Possible meanings are 1) this was a garden where grapes were grown, or 2) this was a garden where fruit trees were grown. Alternate translation: "garden" or "orchard"

Luke 13:7

Why let it waste the ground?

The man uses a question to emphasize that the tree is

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useless and the gardener should cut it down. Alternate translation: "Do not let it waste the ground."
Luke 13:8
leave it alone
"do not do anything to the tree" or "do not cut it down"
put manure on it
"put manure in the soil." Manure is animal dung. People put it in the ground to make the soil good for plants and trees. Alternate translation: "put fertilizer on it"
Luke 13:9
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling his parable. This is the end of the story that began in Luke 12:1.
If it bears fruit next year, good
It may be helpful to state what will happen. Alternate translation: "If it has figs on it next year, good; we can allow it to keep growing"
cut it down
The servant was making a suggestion; he was not giving a command to the owner. Alternate translation: "tell me to cut it down" or "I will cut it down"
Luke 13:10
General Information:
Verses 10-11 give background information about the setting of this part of the story and about a crippled woman who is introduced into the story.
Now
The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.
during the Sabbath
"on a Sabbath day." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.
Luke 13:11
Behold, a woman was there
The word "behold" here alerts us to a new person in the story.
eighteen years
"18 years"
a spirit of weakness
"an evil spirit that made her weak"
Luke 13:12
Woman, you are freed from your weakness
"Woman, you are healed from your disease." This can be expressed with an active verb: Alternate translation: "Woman, I have set you free from your weakness"
Woman, you are freed from your weakness
By saying this, Jesus healed her. This can be expressed with a sentence that shows that he was causing it to happen, or by a command. Alternate translation: "Woman, I now free you from your weakness" or "Woman, be freed from your weakness"
Luke 13:13
He placed his hands on her
"He touched her"
she was made straight again
This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she was able to stand up straight again"
Luke 13:14
was indignant
"was very angry"
answered and said
"said" or "responded"
be healed then
This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let someone heal you during those six days"
on the Sabbath day
"on a Sabbath day." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.
Luke 13:15
The Lord answered him
"The Lord responded to the synagogue ruler"
Hypocrites
Jesus speaks directly to the synagogue ruler, but the plural form includes the other religious rulers also. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "You and your fellow religious leaders are hypocrites"
Does not each of you untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it to drink on the Sabbath?
Jesus uses a question to get them to think about something they already knew. Alternate translation: "Every one of you unties his ox or his donkey from the stall and leads it to drink on the Sabbath."
ox ... donkey
These are animals that people care for by giving them water.
on the Sabbath
"on a Sabbath." Some languages would say "a Sabbath" because we do not know which particular Sabbath day it was.
Luke 13:16
daughter of Abraham
This is an idiom that means, "descendant of Abraham"
whom Satan bound
Jesus compares people tying animals to the way Satan restricted the woman with this disease. Alternate translation: "whom Satan kept crippled by her illness" or "whom Satan bound with this disease"
eighteen long years
"18 long years." The word "long" here emphasizes that eighteen years was a very long time for the woman to suffer. Other languages may have other ways of emphasizing this.
should her bonds not be untied ... day?
Jesus uses a question to tell the synagogue rulers that they are wrong. Jesus speaks about the women's disease as if it were ropes that bound her. This can be translated as an active statement. Alternate translation: "it is right to release her from the bonds of this illness ... day."
Luke 13:17
As he said these things
"When Jesus said these things"
the glorious things he did
"the glorious things Jesus was doing"
Luke 13:18
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to tell a parable to the people in the synagogue.

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What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?
Jesus uses two questions to introduce what he is about to teach. Alternate translation: "I will tell you what the kingdom of God is like and what I can compare it to."
what can I compare it to?
This is basically the same as the previous question. Some languages can use both questions, and some would use only one.
Luke 13:19
It is like a mustard seed
Jesus compares the kingdom to a mustard seed. Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed"
a mustard seed
A mustard seed is a very small seed that grows into a large plant. If this seed is not known, the phrase can be translated with the name of another seed like it or simply as "a small seed."
threw into his garden
"planted in his garden." People planted some kinds of seeds by throwing them so that they scattered in the garden.
a big tree
The word "big" is an exaggeration that contrasts the tree with the tiny seed. Alternate translation: "a very large shrub"
birds of heaven
"birds of the sky." Alternate translation: "birds that fly in the sky" or "birds"
Luke 13:20
To what can I compare the kingdom of God?
Jesus uses another question to introduce what he is about to teach. Alternate translation: "I will tell you another thing to which I can compare to the kingdom of God."
Luke 13:21
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes speaking to the people in the synagogue. This is the end of this part of the story.
It is like yeast
Jesus compares the kingdom of God to yeast in bread dough. Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God is like yeast"
like yeast
Only a little bit of yeast is needed to make a lot of dough rise. This can be made clear, as it is in the UDB.
three measures of flour
This is a large amount of flour, since each measure was about 13 liters. You may need to use a term that your culture uses to measure flour. Alternate translation: "a large amount of flour"
Luke 13:23
are only a few people to be saved?
This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will God save only a few people?"
Luke 13:24
General Information:
Jesus responds to a question by using a metaphor about entering God's kingdom.
Struggle to enter through the narrow door
"Work hard to go through the narrow doorway." Jesus is speaking about the entrance to God's kingdom as if it were a small doorway to a house. Since Jesus is talking to a group, the "you" implied in this command is plural.
the narrow door
The fact that the door is narrow implies that it is difficult to go through it. Translate it in a way to keep this restrictive meaning.
many will try to enter, but will not be able to enter
It is implied that they will not be able to enter because of the difficulty of entering. The next verse explains the difficulty.
Luke 13:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to talk about entering into God's kingdom.
Once the owner
"After the owner"
the owner of the house
This refers to the owner of the house with the narrow door in the previous verses. This is a metaphor for God as the ruler of the kingdom.
you will stand outside
Jesus was talking to a crowd. The form of "you" is plural. He is addressing them as if they will not enter through the narrow door into the kingdom.
pound the door
"hit on the door." This is an attempt to gain the owner's attention.
Luke 13:27
Get away from me
"Go away from me"
Luke 13:28
crying and the grinding of teeth
These actions are symbolic acts, indicating great regret and sadness. Alternate translation: "crying and grinding of teeth because of your great regret"
when you see
Jesus continues to speak to the crowd as if they will not enter into the kingdom of heaven.
but you are thrown out
"but you yourselves will have been thrown outside." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God will have forced you outside"
Luke 13:29
from the east, west, north, and south
This means "from every direction."
be seated at a table in the kingdom of God
It was common to speak of the joy in God's kingdom as a feast. Alternate translation: "they will feast in the kingdom of God"
Luke 13:30
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to talk about entering into God's kingdom. This is the end of this conversation.
will be first ... will be last
Being first represents being important or honored. Alternate translation: "will be the most important ... will be the least important" or "God will honor ... God will shame"
Luke 13:31
Connecting Statement:
This is the next event in this part of the story. Jesus is still

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on his way towards Jerusalem when some Pharisees speak to him about Herod.

In that same hour

"Right at that time" or "Soon after Jesus finished speaking"

Go and leave here because Herod wants to kill you

Translate this as a warning to Jesus. They were advising him to go somewhere else and be safe.

Herod wants to kill you

Herod would order people to kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "Herod wants to send his men to kill you"

Luke 13:32

that fox

Jesus was calling Herod a fox. A fox is a small wild dog. Possible meanings are 1) Herod was not much of a threat at all 2) Herod was deceptive.

Luke 13:33

In any case

"Nevertheless" or "However" or "Whatever happens"

it is not acceptable for a prophet to be destroyed outside of Jerusalem

The Jewish leaders claimed to serve God and that Jerusalem was their holy city, but it was in Jerusalem that their ancestors had killed many of God's prophets, and Jesus knew that they would kill him there also. This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "it is only in Jerusalem that it is acceptable for prophets to be destroyed" or "even though you think you are serving God and Jerusalem is your holy city, you disobey God by killing his prophets, and in doing so you defile Jerusalem"

to be destroyed

"to be killed"

Luke 13:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes responding to the Pharisees. This is the end of this part of the story.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem

Jesus speaks as if the people of Jerusalem are there listening to him. Jesus says this twice to show how sad he is for them.

who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you

If it would be strange to address the city, you can make it clear that Jesus was really addressing the people in the city: "you people who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you"

those sent to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those God has sent to you"

How often I desired

"I so often desired." This is an exclamation and not a question.

to gather your children

The people of Jerusalem are described as her "children." Alternate translation: "to gather your people" or "to gather the people of Jerusalem"

the way a hen gathers her brood under her wings

This describes how a hen protects her young from harm by covering them with her wings.

Luke 13:35

your house is abandoned

This is a prophecy about something that would happen soon. It means that God has stopped protecting the people of Jerusalem, so enemies can attack them and drive them away. Possible meanings are 1) God will abandon them. Alternate translation: "God will abandon you" or 2) their city will be empty. Alternate translation: "your house will be abandoned"

you will not see me until you say

"you will not see me until the time comes when you will say" or "the next time you see me, you will say"

the name of the Lord

Here "name" refers to the Lord's power and authority.

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14 [1]It happened one Sabbath, when he went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees to eat bread, that they were watching him closely.[2]Behold, there in front of him was a man who was suffering from edema.[3]Jesus asked the experts in the Jewish law and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"
[4]But they kept silent. So Jesus took hold of him, healed him, and sent him away.[5]He said to them, "Which of you who has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day will not immediately pull him out?"[6]They were not able to give an answer to these things.

[7]When Jesus noticed how those who were invited chose the seats of honor, he spoke a parable, saying to them,[8]"When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the place of honor, because someone may have been invited who is more honored than you.[9]When the person who invited both of you arrives, he will say to you, 'Give this other person your place,' and then in shame you will proceed to take the lowest place.
[10]But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you.[11]For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

[12]Jesus also said to the man who had invited him, "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors, as they may also invite you in return, and you will be repaid.
[13]But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind,[14]and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the just."

[15]When one of them who sat at the table with Jesus heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is he who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

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[16]But Jesus said to him, "A certain man prepared a large dinner and invited many.[17]At the dinner hour, he sent his servant to say to those who were invited, 'Come, because everything is now ready.'

[18]"They all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please excuse me.'
[19]"Another said, 'I have bought five pairs of oxen, and I am going to try them out. Please excuse me.'
[20]"Then another man said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.'

[21]"The servant came and told his master these things. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in here the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.'
[22]"The servant said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and yet there is still room.'

[23]"The master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.[24]For I say to you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.'"

[25]Now large crowds were going with him, and he turned and said to them,[26]"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.[27]Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.
[28]For which of you who desires to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost to calculate if he has what he needs to complete it?[29]Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to mock him,[30]saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'
[31]Or what king, as he goes to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take advice about whether he is able with ten thousand men to fight the other king who comes against him with twenty thousand men?[32]If not, while the other army is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for conditions of peace.[33]So therefore, any one of you who does not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple.
[34]Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be made salty again?[35]It is of no use for the soil or even for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Luke 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verse 3 says, "Jesus asked the experts in the Jewish law and the Pharisees, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?'" Many times, the Pharisees got angry with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. In this passage, Jesus dumbfounds the Pharisees. It was normally the Pharisees who tried to trap Jesus.

Changes of subject

Many times in this chapter Luke changes from one subject to another without marking the changes.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Parable

Jesus told the parable in Luke 14:15-24 to teach that the kingdom of God will be something that everyone can enjoy. But people will refuse to be part of it. (See: and kingdomofgod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 14:11).

Links:

Luke 14:1 Notes

Luke 14:1

General Information:

It is the Sabbath, and Jesus is at a Pharisee's house. Verse 1 gives background information for the event that follows.

It happened one Sabbath

This indicates a new event.

to eat bread

"to eat" or "for a meal." Bread was an important part of a meal and is used in this sentence to refer to a meal.

watching him closely

They wanted to see if they could accuse him of doing anything wrong.

Luke 14:2

Behold, there in front of him was a man

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. English uses "There in front of him was a man"

was suffering from edema

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Edema is swelling caused by water building up in parts of the body. Some languages may have a name for this condition. Alternate translation: "was suffering because parts of his body were swollen with water"
Luke 14:3
Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not
"Does the law permit us to heal on the Sabbath, or does it forbid it"
Luke 14:4
But they kept silent
The religious leaders refused to answer Jesus's question.
So Jesus took hold of him
"So Jesus took hold of the man who suffered from edema"
Luke 14:5
Which of you who has a son or an ox ... will not immediately pull him out?
Jesus uses a question because he wanted them to admit that they would help their son or ox, even on the Sabbath. Therefore, it was right for him to heal people even on the Sabbath. Alternate translation: "If one of you has a son or an ox ... you would surely pull him out immediately."
Luke 14:6
They were not able to give an answer
They knew the answer and that Jesus was right, but they did not want to admit that he was correct. Alternate translation: "They had nothing to say"
Luke 14:7
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to speak to the guests at the house of the Pharisee who had invited him to a meal.
those who were invited
It may be helpful to identify these people, and to state this in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the leader of the Pharisees had invited to the meal"
the seats of honor
"the seats for honored people" or "the seats for important people"
Luke 14:8
When you are invited by someone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When someone invites you"
When you ... than you
These occurrences of "you" are singular. Jesus is speaking to the group as if to each individual person.
because someone may have been invited who is more honored than you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the host may have invited a person who is more important than you are"
Luke 14:9
say to you ... your place ... you will proceed
These occurrences of "you" and "your" are singular. Jesus is speaking to the group as if to each individual person.
both of you
This occurrence of "you" refers to the two people who want the same seat of honor.
in shame
"you will feel ashamed and"
the lowest place
"the least important place" or "the place for the least important person"
Luke 14:10
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the people at the Pharisee's house.
when you are invited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when someone invites you"
the lowest place
"the seat meant for the least important person"
go up higher
"move to a seat for a more important person"
Then you will be honored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then the one who invited you will honor you"
Luke 14:11
who exalts himself
"who tries to look important" or "who takes an important position"
will be humbled
"will be shown to be unimportant" or "will be given an unimportant position." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"
humbles himself
"who chooses to look unimportant" or "who takes an unimportant position"
will be exalted
"will be shown to be important" or "will be given an important position." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will exalt"
Luke 14:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking at the Pharisee's house, but addresses his host directly.
the man who had invited him
"the Pharisee who had invited him to his house for a meal"
When you give
"you" is singular because Jesus is speaking directly to the Pharisee that invited him.
do not invite
This probably does not mean they can never invite these people. More likely it means they should invite others as well. Alternate translation: "do not only invite" or "do not always invite"
as they may
"because they might"
invite you in return
"invite you to their dinner or banquet"
you will be repaid
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in this way they will repay you"
Luke 14:13
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Pharisee who had invited him to his home.
invite the poor
It may be helpful to add "also" since this statement is probably not exclusive. Alternate translation: "also invite

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the poor"
Luke 14:14
you will be blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless you"
they cannot repay you
"they cannot invite you to a banquet in return"
you will be repaid
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will repay you"
in the resurrection of the just
This refers to the final judgment. Alternate translation: "when God brings the righteous people back to life"
Luke 14:15
General Information:
One of the men at the table speaks to Jesus and Jesus responds to him by telling a parable.
one of them who sat at the table
This introduces a new person.
Blessed is he
The man was not talking about a specific person. Alternate translation: "Blessed is anyone" or "How good it is for everyone"
he who will eat bread
The word "bread" is used to refer to the whole meal. Alternate translation: "he who will eat at the meal"
Luke 14:16
But Jesus said to him
Jesus begins telling a parable.
A certain man prepared a large dinner and invited many
The reader should be able to infer that the man probably had his servants prepare the meal and invite the guests.
A certain man
This phrase is a way of referring to the man without giving any specific information about his identity.
invited many
"invited many people" or "invited many guests"
Luke 14:17
At the dinner hour
"At the time for the dinner" or "When the dinner was about to begin"
those who were invited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those he had invited"
Luke 14:18
General Information:
All of the people who were invited gave the servant excuses about why they could not come to the banquet.
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues telling his parable.
to make excuses
"to say why they could not come to the dinner"
The first said to him
The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out
Please excuse me
"Please forgive me" or "Please accept my apology"
Luke 14:19
Another said
The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out
five pairs of oxen
Oxen were used in pairs to pull farming tools. Alternate translation: "10 oxen to work in my fields"
I am going to try them out
He wanted to use the oxen and see how well they worked together pulling farm tools.
Luke 14:20
another man said
The reader should be able to infer that these people spoke directly to the servant whom the master had sent out
married a wife
Use an expression that is natural in your language. Some languages may say "gotten married" or "taken a wife."
Luke 14:21
became angry
"became angry with the people he had invited"
bring in here
"invite in here to eat the dinner"
Luke 14:22
The servant said
It may be necessary to state clearly the implied information that the servant did what the master commanded him. Alternate translation: "After the servant went out and did that, he came back and said"
what you commanded has been done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have done what you commanded"
Luke 14:23
the highways and hedges
This refers to roads and paths outside of the city. Alternate translation: "the main roads and paths outside of the city"
compel them to come in
"demand that they come in"
compel them
The word "them" refers to anyone the servants find. "compel anyone you find to come in"
that my house may be filled
"so that people may fill my house"
Luke 14:24
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes his parable.
For I say to you
The word "you" is plural, so it is unclear to whom it is addressed.
those men
The word here for "men" means "male adults" and not just people in general.
who were invited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom I invited"
will taste my dinner
"will enjoy the dinner I have prepared"
Luke 14:25
General Information:
Jesus begins to teach the crowds that were traveling with him.
Luke 14:26

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If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father ... he cannot be my disciple

Here, "hate" is an exaggeration for the lesser love people are to show to people other than Jesus. Alternate translation: "If anyone comes to me and does not love me more than he loves his father ... he cannot be my disciple" or "Only if a person loves me more than he loves his own father ... can he be my disciple"

Luke 14:27

Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple

This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Only he who carries his own cross and comes after me can be my disciple" or "If anyone wants to be my disciple, he must carry his own cross and follow me"

carry his own cross

Jesus does not mean every Christian must be crucified. The Romans often made people carry their own crosses before they crucified them as a sign of their submission to Rome. This metaphor means they must submit to God and be willing to suffer in any way to be Jesus's disciples.

Luke 14:28

General Information:

Jesus continues to explain to the crowd that it is important to count the cost of being a disciple.

For which of you who desires to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost to calculate if he has what he needs to complete it?

Jesus uses this question to prove that people count the cost of a project before they begin it. Alternate translation: "If a person wanted to build a tower, he would certainly first sit down and determine if he had enough money to complete it."

tower

This may have been a watchtower. "a tall building" or "a high lookout platform"

Luke 14:29

Otherwise

It may be helpful to give more information. Alternate translation: "If he does not first count the cost"

when he has laid a foundation

"when he has built a base" or "when he has completed the first part of the building"

is not able to finish

It is understood that he was not able to finish because he did not have enough money. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "does not have enough money to be able to finish"

Luke 14:31

General Information:

Jesus continues to explain to the crowd that it is important to count the cost of being a disciple.

Or

Jesus used this word to introduce another situation where people count the cost before making a decision.

what king ... will not sit down first and take advice ... men?

Jesus uses another question to teach the crowd about counting the cost. Alternate translation: "you know that a king ... would sit down first and take counsel ... men."

take advice

Possible meanings are 1) "think carefully " or 2) "listen to his advisors."

ten thousand ... twenty thousand

"10,000 ... 20,000"

Luke 14:32

If not

It may be helpful to restate the information given in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "If he realizes that he will not be able to defeat the other king"

conditions of peace

"terms to end the war" or "what the other king wants him to do in order to end the war"

Luke 14:33

any one of you who does not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple

This can be stated with positive verbs. Alternate translation: "only those of you who give up all your possessions can be my disciples"

give up all his possessions

"leave behind all that he has"

Luke 14:34

Salt is good

"Salt is useful." Jesus is teaching a lesson about those who want to be his disciple.

how can it be made salty again?

Jesus uses a question to teach the crowd. Alternate translation: "it cannot be made salty again." or "no one can make it salty again."

Luke 14:35

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching the crowd.

manure pile

People use manure to fertilize gardens and fields. Salt without taste is so useless it is not even worth mixing with manure. Alternate translation: "compost heap" or "fertilizer"

It is thrown away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone just throws it away"

He who has ears to hear, let him hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "ears to hear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 8:8]

He who ... let him

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 8:8]

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15 [1]Now all the tax collectors and other sinners were coming to Jesus to listen to him.[2]Both the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled to each other, saying, "This man welcomes sinners, and even eats with them."

[3]Jesus spoke this parable to them, saying,[4]"Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep and then loses one of them, will

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not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the lost one until he finds it?[5]Then when he has found it, he lays it across his shoulders and rejoices.
[6]When he comes to the house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.'[7]I say to you that even so, there will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

[8]"Or what woman who has ten silver coins, if she were to lose one coin, would not light a lamp, sweep the house, and seek diligently until she has found it?[9]When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost.'[10]Even so, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

[11]Then Jesus said, "A certain man had two sons,[12]and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of the wealth that falls to me.' So he divided his property between them.
[13]Not many days later, the younger son gathered together all he owned and went to a country far away, and there he wasted all his wealth by living recklessly.[14]Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine spread through that country, and he began to be in need.
[15]He went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs.[16]He was longing to eat the carob pods that the pigs ate because no one gave him anything.
[17]But when the young son came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, and I am here, perishing from hunger![18]I will get up and leave here and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.[19]I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants."'
[20]So the young son got up and left and came toward his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and embraced him and kissed him.[21]The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

[22]"The father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet.[23]Then bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let us feast and be merry![24]For my son was dead, and now he is alive. He was lost, and now he is found.' Then they began to be merry.

[25]"Now his older son was out in the field. As he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.[26]He called to one of the servants and asked what these things might be.[27]The servant said to him, 'Your brother has come home and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him in good health.'

[28]"The older son was angry and would not go in, and his father came out and pleaded with him.[29]But the older son answered and said to his father, 'Look, these many years I slaved for you, and I never neglected a command of yours, and yet you never gave me a young goat that I might be merry with my friends,[30]but when your son came, who has devoured your living with prostitutes, you killed for him the fattened calf.'

[31]"The father said to him, 'Child, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.[32]But it was proper for us to be merry and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead, and is now alive; he was lost, and has now been found.'"

Luke 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The parable of the prodigal son
[Luke 15:11-32]

Special concepts in this chapter

Sinners
When the people of Jesus's time spoke of "sinners," they were talking about people who did not obey the law of Moses and instead committed sins like stealing or sexual sins. But Jesus told three parables

Links:

Luke 15:1 Notes

Luke 15:1
General Information:
We do not know where this takes place; it simply occurs one day when Jesus is teaching.
Now
This marks the beginning of a new event.

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all the tax collectors
This is an exaggeration to stress that there were very many of them. Alternate translation: "many tax collectors"
Luke 15:2
This man welcomes sinners
"This man lets sinners into his presence" or "This man associates with sinners"
This man
They were talking about Jesus.
even eats with them
The word "even" shows that they thought it was bad enough that Jesus allowed sinners to come to him, but it was worse that he would eat with them.
Luke 15:3
General Information:
Jesus begins to tell several parables. These parables are situations about things that anyone could experience. They are not about particular people. The first parable is about what a person would do if one of his sheep was lost.
to them
Here "them" refers to the religious leaders.
Luke 15:4
Which one of you ... will not leave ... until he finds it?
Jesus uses a question to remind the people that if any of them lost one of their sheep, they would certainly go looking for it. Alternate translation: "Each of you ... would certainly leave ... until he finds it."
Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep ... loses ... he finds it
Since the parable starts with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "Which one of you, if you have a hundred sheep ... lose ... you find it"
hundred ... ninety-nine
"100 ... 99"
Luke 15:5
Then when he has found it, he lays ... rejoices
Since the parable starts in the previous verse with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "Then when you have found it you will lay ... rejoice"
lays it across his shoulders
This is the way a shepherd carries a sheep. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "lays it across his shoulders to carry it home"
Luke 15:6
When he comes to the house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors
Since the parable starts in the verse 4 with "Which one of you," some languages would continue the parable in the second person. Alternate translation: "When you come home you will call together your friends and your neighbors"
When he comes to the house
"When the owner of the sheep comes home" or "When you come home." Refer to the owner of the sheep as you did in the previous verse.
Luke 15:7
even so
"in the same way" or "as the shepherd and his friends and neighbors would rejoice"
there will be joy in heaven
"everyone in heaven will rejoice"
ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent
Jesus uses sarcasm to say that the Pharisees were wrong to think that they did not need to repent. Your language may have a different way to express this idea. Alternate translation: "ninety-nine persons like you, who think they are righteous and do not need to repent"
ninety-nine
"99"
Luke 15:8
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a woman with 10 sliver coins.
Or what woman ... would not light a lamp ... and seek diligently until she has found it?
Jesus uses a question to remind the people that if they lost a silver coin, they would certainly look for it diligently. Alternate translation: "Any woman ... would certainly light a lamp ... and seek diligently until she has found it."
Luke 15:10
Even so
"In the same way" or "Just as people would rejoice with the woman"
over one sinner who repents
"when one sinner repents"
Luke 15:11
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a young man who asks his father for his part of the inheritance.
A certain man
This introduces a new character in the parable. Some languages might say "There was a man who"
Luke 15:12
give me
The son wanted his father to give it to him immediately. Languages that have a command form that means that they want it done immediately should use that form.
the portion of the wealth that falls to me
"the part of your wealth that you plan for me to receive when you die"
between them
"between his two sons"
Luke 15:13
gathered together all he owned
"packed his things" or "put his things in his bag"
living recklessly
"living without thinking about the consequences of his actions" or "living wildly"
Luke 15:14
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Jesus explains how the younger son went from having plenty to being in need.
a severe famine spread through that country
"a drought occurred there and the entire country did not have enough food"
to be in need

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"to lack what he needed" or "to not have enough"
Luke 15:15
He went
The word "he" refers to the younger son.
hired himself out to
"took a job with" or "began to work for"
one of the citizens of that country
"a man of that country"
to feed pigs
"to give food to the man's pigs"
Luke 15:16
was longing to eat
"wished very much that he could eat." It is understood that this is because he was very hungry. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "he was so hungry that he would have happily eaten"
carob pods
These are the husks of beans that grow on the carob tree. Alternate translation: "carob bean pods" or "bean husks"
Luke 15:17
came to himself
This idiom means he realized what the truth was, that he had made a terrible mistake. Alternate translation: "clearly understood his situation"
How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread
This is part of an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "All my father's hired servants have more than enough bread to eat"
bread
This is a synecdoche for any kind and all kinds of food. Alternate translation: "food"
perishing from hunger
This is probably not an exaggeration. Jesus may have meant that the young man in his parable was actually starving then.
perishing
"dying" or "being destroyed"
Luke 15:18
I will get up
This is an idiom that means he will begin to act. It does not mean that he was sitting or lying down when he said these words.
I have sinned against heaven
Jewish people sometimes avoided saying the word "God" and used the word "heaven" instead. Alternate translation: "I have sinned against God"
Luke 15:19
I am no longer worthy to be called your son
"I was once worthy to be called your son, but not now." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You called me son in the past, but now I am not worthy for you to call me son"
make me as one of your hired servants
"hire me as an employee" or "hire me and I will become one of your servants." This is a request, not a command. It may be helpful to add "please" as the UDB does.
Luke 15:20
So the young son got up and left and came toward his father
"So he left that country and started going back to his father." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, the young man was in need and had decided to go home.
got up
This is an idiom that means he began to act. It does not mean that he had been sitting or lying down. See how you translated similar words in [Luke 15:18]
While he was still far away
"While he was still far away from his home" or "While he was still far away from his father's house"
was moved with compassion
"had pity on him" or "loved him deeply from his heart"
embraced him and kissed him
The father did this to show his son that he loved him and was glad that the son was coming home. If people think that it is strange or wrong for a man to embrace or hug and kiss his son, you can substitute a way that men in your culture show affection to their sons. Alternate translation: "welcomed him affectionately"
Luke 15:21
sinned against heaven
Jewish people sometimes avoided saying the word "God" and used the word "heaven" instead. See how you translated this in [Luke 15:18]
I am no longer worthy to be called your son
This can be stated in active form. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Luke 15:18]
Luke 15:22
best robe
"the best robe in the house." Alternate translation: "the best coat" or "the best garment"
put a ring on his hand
A ring was a sign of authority that men wore on one of their fingers.
sandals
Wealthy people of that time wore sandals. However, in many cultures the modern equivalent would be "shoes."
Luke 15:23
fattened calf
A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. Alternate translation: "the best calf" or "the young animal we have been making fat"
kill it
The implied information that they were to cook the meat can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "kill it and cook it"
Luke 15:24
my son was dead, and now he is alive
This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he were dead. Alternate translation: "it is as if my son were dead and became alive again" or "I felt like my son had died, but he is now alive"
He was lost, and now he is found
This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he had been lost. Alternate translation: "It is as if I had lost my son and now I have found him" or "My son went to where I could not bring him back, but now he has returned home"

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Luke 15:25

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Jesus starts to tell about the older son in a new part of the story.

out in the field

It is implied that he was out in the field because he was working there.

Luke 15:26

one of the servants

The word that is translated here as "servant" is normally translated as "boy." It may indicate that the servant was very young.

what these things might be

"what was happening"

Luke 15:27

the fattened calf

A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:23]

he has received him in good health

"your father has received your brother, and your brother is healthy" or "your brother is well and has returned to your father"

Luke 15:29

these many years

"for many years"

I slaved for you

"I worked extremely hard for you" or "I worked as hard as a slave for you"

never neglected a command of yours

"never disobeyed any of your commands" or "always obeyed everything you told me to do"

a young goat

A young goat was smaller and less expensive than a fatted calf. Alternate translation: "even a young goat"

Luke 15:30

your son

"that son of yours." The older son refers to his brother this way in order to show how angry he is.

devoured your living

Food is a metaphor for money. After one eats food, the food is no longer there and there is nothing to eat. The money that the brother had received was no longer there and there was no more to spend. Alternate translation: "wasted all your wealth" or "thrown away all your money"

with prostitutes

Possible meanings are 1) he assumed this is how his brother spent the money or 2) he speaks of prostitutes to exaggerate the sinfulness of his brother's actions in the "country far away"

fattened calf

A calf is a young cow. People would give one of their calves special food so that it would grow well, and then when they wanted to have a special feast, they would eat that calf. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:23]

Luke 15:31

The father said to him

The word "him" refers to the older son.

Child

"My dear child" or "My dear son." The father was addressing his son tenderly.

Luke 15:32

this brother of yours

The father was reminding the older son that the one who just came home was his brother.

this brother of yours was dead, and is now alive

This metaphor speaks of the brother being gone as if he were dead. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:24]

he was lost, and has now been found

This metaphor speaks of the son being gone as if he had been lost. See how you translated this phrase in [Luke 15:24]

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16 [1]Jesus also said to the disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a manager, and it was reported to him that this manager was wasting his possessions.[2]So the rich man called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give an account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'

[3]"'The manager said to himself, 'What should I do, since my master is taking away my management job? I do not have strength to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.[4]I know what I will do, so that when I am removed from my management job, people will welcome me into their houses.'

[5]"'Then the manager called for each one of his master's debtors, and he asked the first one, 'How much do you owe to my master?'[6]He said, 'A hundred baths of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.'
[7]"'Then the manager said to another, 'How much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred cors of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

[8]"'The master then commended the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own people than are the sons of light.[9]I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal dwellings.

[10]"'He who is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and he who is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much.[11]If you have not been faithful in using unrighteous wealth, who will trust you with true wealth?[12]If you have not been faithful in using other people's property, who will give you money of your own?

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[13]"No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

[14]Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.[15]He said to them, "You justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts. That which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God.
[16]The law and the prophets were in effect until John came. From that time on, the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone tries to force their way into it.[17]But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to become invalid.

[18]"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

[19]"Now there was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and was enjoying every day his great wealth.[20]A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores,[21]and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.
[22]It came about that the beggar died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried,[23]and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus at his side.
[24]So he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'

[25]"But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things. But now he is comforted here, and you are in agony.[26]Besides all this, a great chasm has been put in place, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot, and no one can cross over from there to us.'

[27]"The rich man said, 'I beg you, Father Abraham, that you would send him to my father's house—[28]for I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that it may not be that they come into this place of torment.'

[29]"But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them listen to them.'
[30]"The rich man replied, 'No, Father Abraham, but if someone would go to them from the dead, they will repent.'
[31]"But Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

Luke 16 General Notes

Links:

Luke 16:1 Notes

Luke 16:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins telling another parable. It is about a master and the manager of his debtors. This is still the same part of the story and the same day that began in [Luke 15:3]

Jesus also said to the disciples

The last section was directed at Pharisees and scribes, though Jesus's disciples may have been part of the crowd listening.

There was a certain rich man

This introduces a new character in the parable.

it was reported to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people reported to the rich man"

wasting his possessions

"foolishly managing the rich man's wealth"

Luke 16:2

What is this that I hear about you?

The rich man uses a question to scold the manager. Alternate translation: "I have heard what you are doing."

Give an account of your management

"Set your records in order to pass on to someone else" or "Prepare the records you have written about my money"

Luke 16:3

What should I do ... job?

The manager asks this question of himself, as a means of reviewing his options. Alternate translation: "I need to think about what I should do ... job."

my master

This refers to the wealthy man. The manager was not a slave. Alternate translation: "my employer"

I do not have strength to dig

"I am not strong enough to dig the ground" or "I am not able to dig"

Luke 16:4

when I am removed from my management job

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when I lose my management job" or "when my master takes away my management job"

people will welcome me into their houses

This implies that those people will provide a job, or other things that he needs to live.

Luke 16:5

his master's debtors

"the people who were in debt to his master" or "the people who owed things to his master." In this story the debtors owed olive oil and wheat.

Luke 16:6

He said ... He said to him

"The debtor said ... The manager said to the debtor"

A hundred baths of olive oil ... fifty

A bath is about 22 liters. Alternate translation: "I owe 2,200 liters of olive oil ... 1,100 liters"

hundred ... fifty

"100 ... 50"

Take your bill

A "bill" is a piece of paper that tells how much someone owes.

Luke 16:7

the manager said to another ... He said ... He said to him

"the manager said to another debtor ... The debtor said ... The manager said to the debtor"

A hundred cors of wheat

A cor is about 220 liters. You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "I owe 22,000 liters of wheat" or "I owe one hundred large baskets of wheat"

write eighty

"write eighty cors of wheat." You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "write 17,600 liters of wheat" or "write eighty large baskets of wheat"

eighty

"80"

Luke 16:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling the parable about the master and the manager of his debtors. In verse 9, Jesus continues to teach his disciples.

The master then commended

The text does not say how the master learned of the manager's action.

commended

"praised" or "spoke well of" or "approved of"

he had acted shrewdly

"he had acted cleverly" or "he had done a sensible thing"

the sons of this world

This refers to those who, like the unrighteous manager, do not know or care about God. Alternate translation: "the people of this world" or "worldly people"

the sons of light

Here "light" is a metaphor for everything godly. Alternate translation: "the people of God" or "godly people"

Luke 16:9

I say to you

"I" refers to Jesus. The phrase "I say to you" marks the end of the story and now Jesus tells the people how to apply the story to their lives.

make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth

The focus here is on using the money to help other people. Alternate translation: "make people your friends by helping them with worldly wealth"

by means of unrighteous wealth

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus uses hyperbole when he calls money "unrighteous" because it has no eternal value. Alternate translation: "by using money, which has no eternal value" or "by using worldly money" or 2) Jesus uses metonymy when he calls money "unrighteous" because people sometimes earn it or use it in unrighteous ways. Alternate translation: "by using even money that you earned dishonestly"

they may welcome

Possible meanings are 1) "the friends you helped with your money may welcome" or 2) "God and his angels may welcome"

eternal dwellings

This refers to heaven, where God lives.

Luke 16:10

He who is faithful ... is also faithful ... he who is unrighteous ... is also unrighteous

"People who are faithful ... are also faithful ... people who are unrighteous ... are also unrighteous." This would include women.

faithful in very little

"faithful even with small things." Make sure this does not sound like they are not very faithful.

unrighteous in very little

"unrighteous even in small things." Make sure this does not sound like they are not often unrighteous.

Luke 16:11

unrighteous wealth

See how you translated this in [Luke 16:9]

who will trust you with true wealth?

Jesus uses a question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "no one will trust you with true wealth." or "no one will give you true wealth to manage."

true wealth

This refers to wealth that is more genuine, real, or lasting than money.

Luke 16:12

who will give you money of your own?

Jesus uses this question to teach the people. Alternate translation: "no one will give you wealth for yourself."

Luke 16:13

No servant can

"A servant cannot"

serve two masters

It is implied that he cannot "serve two different masters at the same time"

for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other

These two clauses are essentially the same. The only significant difference is that the first master is hated in the first case, but the second master is hated in the second case.

he will hate

"the servant will hate"

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be devoted to one
"love one very strongly"
despise the other
"hold the other in contempt" or "hate the other"
despise
This means essentially the same as "hate" in the previous clause.
You cannot serve
Jesus was talking to a group of people, so languages that have a plural form of "you" would use that.
Luke 16:14
General Information:
This is a break in Jesus teachings, as verse 14 tells us background information about how the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus. In verse 15, Jesus continues teaching and responds to the Pharisees.
Now
This word marks a shift to the background information.
who were lovers of money
"who loved having money" or "who where very greedy for money"
they ridiculed him
"the Pharisees ridiculed Jesus"
Luke 16:15
He said to them
"And Jesus said to the Pharisees"
You justify yourselves in the sight of men
"You make yourselves look good to other people"
God knows your hearts
Here "hearts" refers to the desires of people. Alternate translation: "God understands your true desires" or "God knows your motives"
That which is exalted among men is detestable in the sight of God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those things that men think are very important are things that God hates"
Luke 16:16
The law and the prophets
This refers to all of God's word that had been written up to that time.
were in effect
"had authority" or "were what people needed to obey"
John came
This refers to John the Baptist. Alternate translation: "John the Baptist came"
the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am teaching people about the good news of the kingdom of God"
everyone tries to force their way into it
This refers to the people who were listening to and accepting the teaching of Jesus. Alternate translation: "many people are doing everything they can to enter it"
Luke 16:17
it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to become invalid
This contrast could be stated in the reverse order. Alternate translation: "even the smallest stroke of the letter of the law will last longer than heaven and earth will exist"
than for one stroke of a letter
A "stroke" is the smallest part of a letter. It refers to something in the law that may seem to be insignificant. Alternate translation: "than for even the smallest detail of the law"
become invalid
"disappear" or "cease to exist"
Luke 16:18
Everyone who divorces his wife
"Anyone who divorces his wife" or "Any man who divorces his wife"
commits adultery
"is guilty of adultery"
he who marries one
"any man who marries a woman"
Luke 16:19
General Information:
These verses give background information about the story Jesus begins to tell about the rich man and Lazarus.
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus continues teaching the people he begins to tell a story. It is about a rich man and Lazarus.
Now
This marks a shift in Jesus's speech as he begins to tell a story that will help people understand what he was teaching them.
a certain rich man
This phrase introduces a person in Jesus's story. It is not clear if this is a real person or if it is simply a person in a story that Jesus tells in order to make a point.
who was clothed in purple and fine linen
"who wore clothing made with fine linen and purple dye" or "who wore very expensive clothes." Purple dye and fine linen cloth were very expensive.
was enjoying every day his great wealth
"enjoyed eating expensive food every day" or "continued to spend much money, buying whatever he desired"
Luke 16:20
A certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People had laid a certain beggar named Lazarus at his gate"
A certain beggar named Lazarus
This phrase introduces another person in Jesus's story. It is not clear if this is a real person or simply a person in a story that Jesus tells in order to make a point.
at his gate
"at the gate to the rich man's house" or "at the entrance to the rich man's property"
covered with sores
"with sores all over his body"
Luke 16:21
longing to eat what fell
"wishing he could eat the scraps of food that fell"
Even the dogs came
The word "Even" here shows that what follows is worse than what has already been told about Lazarus. Alternate translation: "In addition to that, the dogs came" or "Worse yet, the dogs came"

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dogs
The Jews considered dogs to be unclean animals. Lazarus was too sick and weak to stop the dogs from licking his wounds.
Luke 16:22
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark an event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
was carried away by the angels
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angels carried him away"
to Abraham's side
This implies that Abraham and Lazarus were reclining next to each other at a feast, which was a customary style of feasting. The joy in heaven is often represented in the scriptures by the idea of a feast.
was buried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people buried him"
Luke 16:23
at his side
This implies that Abraham and Lazarus were reclining next to each other at a feast, which was the customary style of feasting. The joy in heaven is often represented in the scriptures by the idea of a feast.
in Hades, being in torment
"he went to Hades, where, suffering in terrible pain"
he lifted up his eyes
This idiom means "he looked up"
Luke 16:24
he cried out and said
"the rich man called out to say" or "he shouted out to Abraham"
Father Abraham
Abraham was the ancestor of all the Jews, including the rich man.
have mercy on me
"please have pity on me" or "please be merciful to me"
and send Lazarus
"by sending Lazarus" or "and tell Lazarus to come to me"
he may dip the tip of his finger
This indicates the smallness of the amount requested. Alternate translation: "he may wet the tip of his finger"
I am in anguish in this flame
"I am in terrible pain in this flame" or "I am suffering terribly in this fire"
Luke 16:25
Child
The rich man was one of Abraham's descendants.
good things
"fine things" or "pleasant things"
in like manner evil things
"in like manner received evil things" or "in like manner received things that caused him to suffer"
in like manner
This refers the fact that they both received something while they lived on earth. It is not saying that what they received was the same. Alternate translation: "while he was living
received"
he is comforted here
"he is comfortable here" or "he is happy here"
in agony
"suffering"
Luke 16:26
Besides all this
"In addition to this reason"
a great chasm has been put in place
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has placed a huge ravine between you and us"
a great chasm
"a steep, deep and wide valley" or "a big separation" or "a huge ravine"
those who want to cross over ... cannot
"those people who want to cross over the chasm ... cannot" or "if anyone wants to cross over ... he cannot"
Luke 16:28
in order that he may warn them
"so that Lazarus may warn them"
this place of torment
"this place where we suffer torment" or "this place where we suffer terrible pain"
Luke 16:29
They have Moses and the prophets
It is implied that Abraham refused to send Lazarus to the rich man's brothers. This could be stated. Alternate translation: "No, I will not do that, because your brothers have what Moses and the prophets wrote long ago"
Moses and the prophets
This refers to their writings. Alternate translation: "what Moses and the prophets wrote"
let them listen to them
"your brothers should pay attention to Moses and the prophets"
Luke 16:30
if someone would go to them from the dead
The rich man would like this to happen. Alternate translation: "if a person who has died would go to them" or "if someone who has died would go and warn them"
from the dead
The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. Alternate translation: "from among all those who have died"
Luke 16:31
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling the story about the rich man and Lazarus.
If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets
Here "Moses and the prophets" represent the things that they wrote. Alternate translation: "If they do not pay attention to what Moses and the prophets wrote"
neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "neither will a person who comes back from the dead be able to convince them" or "they will not believe even if a person comes back from the dead"
rises from the dead
The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in

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the underworld. To rise from among them is to become
alive again.

17 [1]Jesus said to his disciples, "It is certain there will be stumbling blocks, but woe to that person through whom they
come![2]It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that
he should cause one of these little ones to stumble.
[3]Watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.[4]If he sins against you seven times in
the day, and seven times returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him!"

[5]The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."
[6]The Lord said, "If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted, and be planted in
the sea,' and it would obey you.
[7]But which of you, who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come
immediately and sit down to eat'?[8]Will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and put a belt around your
clothes and serve me until I have finished eating and drinking. Then afterward you will eat and drink'?
[9]He does not thank the servant because he did the things that were commanded, does he?[10]Even so you also, when you
have done everything that you are commanded, should say, 'We are unworthy servants. We have only done what we
ought to do.'"

[11]It came about that as he traveled to Jerusalem, he went along the border between Samaria and Galilee.[12]As he entered
into a certain village, there he was met by ten men who were lepers. They stood far away from him[13]and they lifted up
their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

[14]When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." As they went away they were cleansed.
[15]When one of them saw that he was healed, he turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God.[16]He fell on his face at Jesus'
feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.
[17]Then Jesus said, "Were not the ten cleansed? Where are the nine?[18]Were there no others who returned to give glory to
God, except this foreigner?"[19]He said to him, "Arise, and go. Your faith has made you well."

[20]Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus answered them and said, "The kingdom of
God does not come with careful observing.[21]Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For look, the kingdom of
God is within you."

[22]He said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will
not see it.[23]Then they will say to you, 'Look, there! Look, here!' But do not go out or run after them,[24]for as the lightning
shines brightly when it flashes from one part of the sky to another part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in his day.
[25]But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.[26]As it happened in the days of Noah, even so will
it also happen in the days of the Son of Man.[27]They ate, they drank, they married, and they were given in marriage until
the day that Noah entered into the ark—and the flood came and destroyed them all.
[28]In the same way, even as it happened in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and
building.[29]But in the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed them all.
[30]After the same manner it will be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed.[31]In that day let him who is on the housetop
not go down to get his goods out of the house, and in the same way let him who is in the field not return.
[32]Remember Lot's wife.[33]Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it.
[34]I tell you, in that night there will be two people in one bed. One will be taken, and the other will be left.[35]There will be
two women grinding grain together. One will be taken, and the other will be left."[36] [1]

[37]They asked him, "Where, Lord?"He said to them, "Where there is a body, there will the vultures also be gathered
together."

[1]Luke 17:36 the best ancient copies do not have verse 36, There will be two in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

Luke 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Old Testament Examples

Jesus used the lives of Noah and of Lot to teach his followers. Noah was ready for the flood when it came, and they needed to be ready for him to return, because he would not warn them when he came. Lot's wife loved the evil city she

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had been living in so much that God also punished her when he destroyed it, and they needed to love Jesus more than anything else,
Those who read your translation may need help so they can understand what Jesus was teaching here.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Jesus asked his disciples three questions (Luke 17:7-9) to teach them that even those who serve him well are righteous only because of his grace. (See: and grace and righteous)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in this chapter: "Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it" (Luke 17:33).

Links:

Luke 17:1 Notes

Luke 17:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues teaching, but he directs his attention back to his disciples. This is still the same part of the story and the same day that began in Luke 15:3.

It is certain there will be stumbling blocks

"Things that tempt people to sin will certainly happen"

to that person through whom they come

"to anyone who causes the temptations to come" or "to any person who causes people to be tempted"

Luke 17:2

It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble

You may need to make explicit that Jesus is comparing the punishment for causing people to sin to being thrown into the sea. Alternate translation: "It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than that he should suffer the more severe punishment for causing one of these little ones to stumble" or "He would suffer less if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than if he should cause one of these little ones to stumble"

if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea

This was a terrible punishment. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if they were to put a millstone around his neck and throw him into the sea" or "if someone were to put a heavy stone around his neck and push him into the sea"

for him ... his neck ... he were ... he should

The words "him," "his," and "he" refer to "that person" through whom things that cause people to sin come.

a millstone

This is a very large, heavy circular stone used for grinding wheat grain into flour. Alternate translation: "a heavy stone"

these little ones

This here refers to people whose faith is still weak. Alternate translation: "these people whose faith is small"

to stumble

This was a way of referring to unintentional sin. Alternate translation: "to sin"

Luke 17:3

If your brother sins

This is a conditional statement that talks about an event that will probably happen in the future.

your brother

"brother" is here used in the sense of someone with the same belief. Alternate translation: "a fellow believer"

rebuke him

"tell him strongly that what he did was wrong" or "correct him"

Luke 17:4

seven times in the day, and seven times

The number seven in the Bible is a symbol for completeness. Alternate translation: "many times in a day, and each time"

Luke 17:5

General Information:

There is a brief break in Jesus's teachings as the disciples speak to him. Then Jesus continues teaching.

Increase our faith

"Please give us more faith" or "Please add more faith to our faith"

Luke 17:6

If you had faith like a mustard seed, you

A mustard seed is a very small seed. Jesus implies that they do not have even a small amount of faith. Alternate translation: "If you had faith that was even as small as a mustard seed, you" or "Your faith is not as big as a mustard seed—but if it were, you"

mulberry tree

If this type of tree is not familiar, it may be helpful to substitute another type of tree. Alternate translation: "fig tree" or "tree"

Be uprooted, and be planted in the sea

These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Uproot yourself and plant yourself in the sea" or "Take your roots out of the ground, and put your roots down into the ocean"

it would obey you

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"the tree would obey you." This result is conditional. It would happen only if they had faith.
Luke 17:7
But which of you, who ... sheep, will say ... sit down to eat'?
Jesus asks his disciples a question to help them think about the role of a servant. This could be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "But none of you who ... sheep would say ... sit down to eat.'"
a servant plowing or keeping sheep
"a servant that plows your field or takes care of your sheep"
Luke 17:8
Will he not say to him ... eat and drink'?
Jesus uses a second question explain how the disciples would actually treat a servant. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He would certainly say to him ... eat and drink'"
put a belt around your clothes and serve me
"tie your clothes at your waist and serve me" or "dress up properly and take care of me." People would tie their clothes closely around their waist so that their clothes would not get in their way while they worked.
Then afterward
"Then after you serve me"
Luke 17:9
He does not thank the servant ... commanded, does he?
Jesus uses this question to show how people treat servants. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He would not thank the servant ... commanded."
the things that were commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things you commanded him to do"
does he?
"right?" or "is this not true?"
Luke 17:10
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes teaching. This is the end of this part of the story.
you also
Jesus was speaking to his disciples, so languages that have a plural form of "you" would use it.
that you are commanded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has commanded you"
We are unworthy servants
This is an exaggeration to express that they did not do anything worthy of praise. Alternate translation: "We are ordinary slaves" or "We servants do not deserve your praise"
Luke 17:11
General Information:
This begins the story of Jesus healing 10 men of leprosy.
It came about that
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
as he traveled to Jerusalem
"as Jesus and the disciples were traveling to Jerusalem"
Luke 17:12
General Information:
This is the beginning of the background information and the setting of the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers.
a certain village
This phrase does not identify the village.
there he was met by ten men who were lepers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "ten men who were lepers met him" or "ten men who had leprosy met him"
They stood far away from him
This was a respectful gesture, because lepers were not allowed to approach other people.
Luke 17:13
General Information:
This is the end of the background information and the setting of the story of Jesus healing the ten lepers.
they lifted up their voices
The idiom "to lift up one's voice" means to speak loudly. Alternate translation: "they called with loud voices" or "they called aloud"
have mercy on us
They were specifically asking to be healed. Alternate translation: "please show us mercy by healing us"
Luke 17:14
show yourselves to the priests
Lepers were required to have the priests verify that their leprosy was healed. Alternate translation: "show yourselves to the priests so they can examine you"
they were cleansed
When people were healed, they were no longer ceremonially unclean. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they were healed of their leprosy and so became clean" or "they were cured of their leprosy"
Luke 17:15
saw that he was healed
"realized that he was healed" or "realized that Jesus had healed him"
he turned back
"he went back to Jesus"
with a loud voice glorifying God
"and glorified God loudly"
Luke 17:16
He fell on his face at Jesus' feet
"he knelt down and put his face close to Jesus' feet." He did this to honor Jesus.
Now he was a Samaritan
The word "now" is used to mark a break in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about the man who returned to Jesus.
Luke 17:17
Then Jesus said
Jesus responded to what the man did, but he was speaking to the group of people around him. Alternate translation: "So Jesus said to the crowd"
Were not the ten cleansed?
This is the first of three rhetorical questions. Jesus used them to show the people around him how surprised and disappointed he was that only one of the ten men came back to glorify God. Alternate translation: "Ten men were healed." or "God healed ten men."

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Where are the nine?
"Why did not the other nine come back?" This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "The other nine men should have come back, too."
Luke 17:18
Were there no others who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?
This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "There were no others who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner!" or "God healed ten men, yet only this foreigner came back to give glory to God!"
this foreigner
Samaritans had non-Jewish ancestors and they did not worship God in the same way that the Jews did.
Luke 17:19
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus healing the 10 lepers.
Your faith has made you well
"Because of your faith you have become well." The idea of "faith" can be expressed with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "Because you believe, you are well again"
Luke 17:20
General Information:
We do not know where this event takes place; it simply happens one day when Jesus is talking with the Pharisees.
Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come,
This is the beginning of a new event. Some translations start it with "One day" or "Once." It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "One day the Pharisees asked Jesus, 'When will the kingdom of God come?'"
The kingdom of God does not come with careful observing
People thought that they would be able to see signs of the kingdom coming. The idea of signs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "The kingdom of God does not come with signs that people can observe"
Luke 17:21
the kingdom of God is within you
The idea of the noun "kingdom" can be expressed with the verb "rules." Alternate translation: "God rules within you"
the kingdom of God is within you
Jesus was speaking to the religious leaders who were hostile to him. Possible meanings are 1) the word "you" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God is within people" or 2) the word translated "within" means "among." Alternate translation: "the kingdom of God is among you"
Luke 17:22
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to teach his disciples.
The days are coming when
The idea of days days coming represents something being soon. Alternate translation: "A time is coming when" or "Soon"
you will desire to see
"you will want very much to see" or "you will wish to experience"
one of the days of the Son of Man
This refers to the kingdom of God. Alternate translation: "one of the days when the Son of Man will rule as king"
the Son of Man
Jesus is speaking about himself.
but you will not see it
"you will not experience it"
Luke 17:23
Look, there! Look, here!
This refers to seeking the Messiah. Alternate translation: "Look, the Messiah is over there! He is over here!"
do not go out or run after them
The purpose of going out can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "do not go with them to look"
Luke 17:24
as the lightning shines brightly ... so will the Son of Man be
When lightning flashes, people can see it clearly. This is a metaphor for the way the Son of Man will appear: when he does, everyone will see him clearly. Alternate translation: "as the people can see lightning clearly when it flashes ... so they will clearly see the Son of Man"
so will the Son of Man be in his day
This refers to the future kingdom of God. Alternate translation: "it will be like that on the day when the Son of Man comes to reign"
so will the Son of Man be
Jesus speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "so will I, the Son of Man, be"
Luke 17:25
But first he must suffer
"But first the Son of Man must suffer." Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person.
be rejected by this generation
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people of this generation must reject him"
Luke 17:26
As it happened ... even so will it also happen
"As people were doing things ... even so people will be doing the same things"
in the days of Noah
The "days of Noah" refers to the time during Noah's life just before God punished the people of the world. Alternate translation: "when Noah was living"
in the days of the Son of Man
The "days of the Son of Man" refers to the period just before the Son of Man will come. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man is about to come"
Luke 17:27
They ate, they drank, they married, and they were given in marriage
People were doing ordinary things. They did not know or care that God was about to judge them.
they were given in marriage
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "parents were allowing their daughters to marry men"
the ark
"the ship" or "the barge"
destroyed them all
This does not include Noah and his family who were in the ark. Alternate translation: "destroyed all those who were not in the boat"
Luke 17:28

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they were eating and drinking
"the people of Sodom were eating and drinking"
Luke 17:29
it rained fire and sulfur from heaven
"fire and burning sulfur fell from the sky like rain"
destroyed them all
This does not include Lot and his family. Alternate translation: "destroyed all those who stayed in the city"
Luke 17:30
After the same manner it will be
"It will be like that." Alternate translation: "In the same way people will not be ready"
in the day that the Son of Man is revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man appears" or "when the Son of man comes"
the Son of Man is revealed
Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, am revealed"
Luke 17:31
let him who is on the housetop not go down
"whoever is on the housetop must not go down" or "if anyone is on his housetop, he must not go down." This is a statement of what people should not do, not a command to the hearers.
on the housetop
Their housetops were flat and people could walk or sit on them.
his goods
"his possessions" or "his things"
return
They are not to go back to the house to get anything. They are to flee quickly.
Luke 17:32
Remember Lot's wife
"Remember what happened to Lot's wife" This is a warning. She looked back toward Sodom and God punished her along with the people of Sodom. Alternate translation: "Do not do what Lot's wife did"
Luke 17:33
Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it
"People who try save their lives will lose them" or "Whoever tries to save his old way of life will lose his life"
but whoever loses his life will save it
"but people who lose their lives will save them" or "but whoever abandons his old way of life will save his life"
Luke 17:34
I tell you
As Jesus continues to address his disciples, he emphasizes the importance of what he is telling them.
in that night
This refers to what will happen if he, the Son of Man, comes during the night.
there will be two people in one bed
The emphasis is not on these two people, but on the fact that some people will be taken away and the others will be left.
bed
"couch" or "cot"
One will be taken, and the other will be left
"One person will be taken and the other person will be left behind." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will take one person and leave the other" or "Angels will take one and leave behind the other"
Luke 17:35
There will be two women grinding grain together
The emphasis is not on these two women or their activity, but on the fact that some people will be taken away and the others will be left.
grinding grain together
"grinding grain together"
Luke 17:37
General Information:
The disciples ask Jesus a question about his teaching and he answers them.
Where, Lord?
"Lord, where will this happen?"
Where there is a body, there will the vultures also be gathered together
Apparently this is a proverb that means "It will be obvious" or "You will know it when it happens." Alternate translation: "As vultures gathering shows that there is a dead body, so these things show that the Son of Man is coming"
vultures
Vultures are large birds that fly together and eat the flesh of dead animals that they find. You could describe these birds this way or use the word for local birds that do this.

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18 [1]Then he spoke a parable to them about how they should always pray and not become discouraged,[2]saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect people.
[3]Now there was a widow in that city, and she came often to him, saying, 'Help me get justice against my opponent.'
[4]For a long time he was not willing to help her, but after a while he said to himself, 'Though I do not fear God or respect man,[5]yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will help her get justice, so that she does not wear me out by her constant coming.'"
[6]Then the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says.[7]Now will not God also bring justice to his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?[8]I say to you that he will bring justice to them speedily. Even so, when the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find faith on the earth?"

[9]Then he also spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and who despised other people:[10]"Two men went up into the temple to pray—the one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.
[11]The Pharisee stood and prayed these things about himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, unrighteous people, adulterers—or even like this tax collector.[12]I fast two times every week. I give tithes of all that I get.'

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[13]But the tax collector, standing at a distance, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but hit his breast, saying, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'[14]I say to you, this man went back down to his house justified rather than the other, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but everyone who humbles himself will be exalted."

[15]The people were also bringing to him their infants so that he might touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.[16]But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them. For the kingdom of God belongs to such ones.[17]Truly I say to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will definitely not enter it."

[18]A certain ruler asked him, saying, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
[19]Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good, except God alone.[20]You know the commandments—do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not testify falsely, honor your father and mother."
[21]The ruler said, "All these things I have obeyed from the time I was a youth."

[22]When Jesus heard that, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. You must sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven—and come, follow me."
[23]But when the ruler heard these things, he became extremely sad, for he was very rich.
[24]Then Jesus, seeing him,[1] said, "How difficult it is for those who are rich to enter the kingdom of God![25]For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

[26]Those hearing it said, "Then who can be saved?"
[27]Jesus answered, "The things which are impossible with people are possible with God."

[28]Peter said, "Well, we have left everything that is our own and have followed you."
[29]Jesus then said to them, "Truly, I say to you that there is no one who has left house, or wife, or brothers, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,[30]who will not receive much more in this time, and in the age to come, eternal life."

[31]After he gathered the twelve to himself, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things that have been written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished.[32]For he will be given over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon.[33]After whipping him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again."
[34]They understood none of these things, and this word was hidden from them, and they did not understand the things that were said.

[35]It came about that, as Jesus approached Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting by the road begging,[36]and hearing a crowd going by, he asked what was happening.[37]They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by.
[38]So the blind man cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."[39]The ones who were walking ahead rebuked the blind man, telling him to be quiet. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me."

[40]Jesus stood still and commanded that the man be brought to him. Then when the blind man was near, Jesus asked him,
[41]"What do you want me to do for you?"He said, "Lord, I want to receive my sight."

[42]Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight. Your faith has healed you."[43]Immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. All the people, when they saw this, gave praise to God.

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[1]Some ancient Greek copies have the phrase: seeing that he had become sad.

Luke 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus told two parables (Luke 18:1-8 and Luke 18:9-14) and then taught that his followers were to be humble (Luke 18:15-17), to use everything they owned to help the poor (Luke 18:18-30), and to expect him to die soon (Luke 18:31-34). Then they all began to walk to Jerusalem, and Jesus healed a blind man (Luke 18:35-43).

Special concepts in this chapter

Judges

People expected judges always to do what God said was right and to make sure that other people did what was right. But

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some judges did not care about doing right or making sure others did right. Jesus called this kind of judge unjust. (See: justice)

Pharisees and tax collectors

The Pharisees thought that they themselves were the best examples of righteous good people, and they thought that tax collectors were the most unrighteous sinners. (See: righteous and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 18:1 Notes

Luke 18:1

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to tell a parable as he continues to teach his disciples. This is the same part of the story that began in [Luke 17:20]

Then he

"Then Jesus"

Luke 18:2

saying

A new sentence could begin here (if the comma at the end of the previous verse is changed to a period): "He said"

a certain city

Here "certain city" is a way to let the listener know that the narrative that follows takes place in a city, but the name of the city itself is not important.

did not respect people

"did not care about other people"

Luke 18:3

Now there was a widow

Jesus uses this phrase to introduce a new character to the story.

widow

A widow is a woman whose husband has died and who has not remarried. Jesus's hearers would have thought of her as a person who had no one to protect her from those who wanted to harm her.

she came often to him

The word "him" refers to the judge.

Help me get justice against

"Give me a just ruling against"

my opponent

"my enemy" or "the person who is trying to harm me." This is an opponent in a lawsuit. It is not clear whether the widow is suing the opponent or the opponent is suing the widow.

Luke 18:4

man

This refers here to "people" in general.

Luke 18:5

causes me trouble

"bothers me"

wear me out

"exhaust me"

by her constant coming

"by continually coming to me"

Luke 18:6

General Information:

Jesus has finished telling his parable and is now commenting about it to his disciples.

Listen to what the unjust judge says

"Think about what the unjust judge just said." Translate this in a way that people will understand that Jesus has already told what the judge said.

Luke 18:7

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of an explanation of the parable in Luke 18:1-5.

Now

This word indicates that Jesus has ended the parable and has started explaining its meaning.

will not God also bring ... night?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "God will also certainly bring ... night!"

his chosen ones

"the people he has chosen"

Will he delay long over them?

Jesus uses a question to teach the disciples. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "He will certainly not delay long over them!"

Luke 18:8

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the explanation of the parable in Luke 18:1-5 that began in Luke 18:7.

when the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find faith on the earth?

Jesus asks this question so that his hearers will stop thinking that God is slow to help those who call to him for justice and will understand that the real problem is that they do not truly have faith in God. Alternate translation: "when the Son of Man comes, you need to be sure that he will find that you truly have faith in him." or "when the Son of Man comes, he will find few on earth who believe."

the Son of Man comes, will he indeed find

Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man come, will I indeed find"

Luke 18:9

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell another parable to some other people who were persuaded that they themselves were righteous.

Then he

"Then Jesus"

to some

"to some people"

who trusted in themselves that they were righteous

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"who had convinced themselves that they were righteous" or "who thought they were righteous"

despised

strongly disliked or hated

Luke 18:10

into the temple

"into the temple courtyard"

Luke 18:11

The Pharisee stood and prayed these things about himself

The meaning of the Greek text of this phrase is not clear. Possible meanings are 1) "The Pharisee stood and prayed about himself in this way" or 2) "The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed."

robbers

Robbers are people who steal from other people by forcing the other people to give things to them, or by threatening to harm them if they refuse to give what the robbers ask for.

or even like this tax collector

The Pharisees believed that tax collectors were as sinful as robbers, unrighteous people, and adulterers. This could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and I am certainly not like this sinful tax collector, who cheats people"

Luke 18:12

all that I get

"everything I earn"

Luke 18:13

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes telling his parable.

standing at a distance

"stood away from the Pharisee." This was a sign of humility. He did not feel worthy to be near the Pharisee.

lift up his eyes to heaven

To "lift up his eyes" means to look at something. Alternate translation: "look toward heaven" or "look upward"

hit his breast

This is a physical expression of great sorrow, and shows this man's repentance and humility. Alternate translation: "hit his breast to show his sorrow"

God, have mercy on me, a sinner

"God, please be merciful to me. I am a sinner" or "God, please have mercy on me even though I have committed many sins"

Luke 18:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus comments on what the parable teaches.

this man went back down to his house justified

He was justified because God forgave his sin. Alternate translation: "God forgave the tax collector"

rather than the other

"rather than the other man" or "and not the other man." Alternate translation: "but God did not forgive the Pharisee"

because everyone who exalts himself

With this phrase, Jesus switches from the story to state the general principle that the story illustrates.

will be humbled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will humble"

will be exalted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will greatly honor"

Luke 18:15

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the part of the story which began in Luke 17:20. Jesus welcomes the children and talks about them.

touch them, but

This could also be translated as separate sentences: "touch them. But"

they rebuked them

"the disciples tried to stop the parents from bringing their children to Jesus"

Luke 18:16

Jesus called them to him

"Jesus told the people to bring their infants to him"

Permit the little children to come to me, and do not forbid them

These two sentences have similar meaning and they are combined for emphasis. Some languages emphasize in a different way. Alternate translation: "You must certainly allow the children to come to me"

belongs to such ones

This could be stated as a simile. Alternate translation: "belongs to people who are like these little children"

Luke 18:17

Truly I say to you

"Surely I say to you." Jesus used this expression to emphasize the importance of what he was about to say.

whoever will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will definitely not enter it

God requires people to accept his rule over them with trust and humility. Alternate translation: "whoever wants to enter God's kingdom must receive it with trust and humility like a child"

Luke 18:18

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in the part of the story which began in Luke 17:20. Jesus begins to talk with a ruler about entering the kingdom of heaven.

A certain ruler

This introduces a new character in the story. It only identifies him by his position.

what must I do

"what do I need to do" or "what is required of me"

inherit eternal life

"receive life that does not end." The term "inherit" usually refers to the property that a man left to his children when he dies. Therefore, this metaphor may mean he understood himself to be a child of God and desired for God to give him eternal life.

Luke 18:19

Why do you call me good? No one is good, except God alone

Jesus asks the question because he knows that the ruler will not like Jesus's answer to the ruler's question in verse 18. Jesus does not expect the ruler to answer Jesus's question. Jesus wants the ruler to understand that Jesus's answer to the ruler's question comes from God, who alone is good. Alternate translation: "You know that no one is good, except God alone, so to call me good is to compare me with God"

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No one is good, except God alone
This double negative emphasizes that God is the only one who is good. Alternate translation: "The only one who is good is God"
Luke 18:21
All these things
"All of these commandments"
Luke 18:22
When Jesus heard that
"When Jesus heard the man say that"
he said to him
"he answered him"
One thing you still lack
"You still need to do one more thing" or "There is one thing that you have not yet done"
sell all that you have
"sell all your possessions" or "sell everything that you own"
distribute it to the poor
"give away the money to the poor people"
come, follow me
"come with me as my disciple"
Luke 18:24
How difficult it is ... kingdom of God!
This is an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "It is so very hard ... kingdom of God!"
Luke 18:25
a camel to go through a needle's eye
It is impossible for a camel to fit through the eye of a needle. Jesus was probably using hyperbole to mean it is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter God's kingdom.
needle's eye
The needle's eye is the hole in a sewing needle through which the thread is passed.
Luke 18:26
Those hearing it said
"The people who listening to Jesus said"
Then who can be saved?
It is possible that they were asking for an answer. But it is more likely that they used the question to emphasize their surprise at what Jesus said. Alternate translation: "Then no one can be saved from sin!" or in active form: "Then God will not save anyone!"
Luke 18:27
are impossible with people are possible with God
"people cannot do are possible for God to do" or "people cannot do, God can do"
Luke 18:28
Well, we
This phrase refers only to the disciples, and contrasts them with the rich ruler.
we have left
"we have given up" or "we have left behind"
everything that is our own
"all our wealth" or "all our possessions"
Luke 18:29
Truly, I say to you
Jesus uses this expression to stress the importance of what he is about to say.
there is no one who
This expression is intended to include not only the disciples, but also everyone else who has made the same sacrifices.
Luke 18:30
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the conversation about entering the kingdom of heaven.
who will not receive
This could be stated in positive form. First the words "there is not one who" in the previous verse
in this time
"in this present world"
in the age to come, eternal life
"he will also receive eternal life in the age to come"
Luke 18:31
Connecting Statement:
This is the next event in this part of the story that began in Luke 17:20. Jesus is talking to his disciples alone.
gathered the twelve to himself
Jesus took the twelve disciples to a place away from other people where they could be alone.
See, we are going up to Jerusalem
This indicates a significant change in the ministry of Jesus as he goes to Jerusalem for the final time.
that have been written by the prophets
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the prophets have written"
the prophets
This refers to the Old Testament prophets.
Son of Man
Jesus speaks of himself as "the Son of Man." Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man,"
will be accomplished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will happen" or "will occur"
Luke 18:32
For he will be given over to the Gentiles
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the Jewish leaders will give him over to the Gentiles"
he
Jesus speaks of himself. Alternate translation: "I"
will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will mock him, treat him shamefully, and spit on him"
Luke 18:33
him ... him ... he
Jesus speaks of himself. Alternate translation: "me ... me ... I"
on the third day
This refers to the third day after his death. However, the disciples did not yet understand this, so it is best not to add this explanation when translating this verse.
Luke 18:34
General Information:
This verse is not part of the main story, but rather a comment about this part of the story.
They understood none of these things
"They did not understand any of these things"
these things

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This refers to Jesus's description of how he would suffer and die in Jerusalem, and that he would rise from the dead.

this word was hidden from them

This can be stated in active form, but it is not clear whether it is God or Jesus who hid the word from them. Alternate translation: "Jesus hid his message from them" or "God prevented them from understanding the meaning of what Jesus was telling them"

the things that were said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Jesus said"

Luke 18:35

General Information:

Jesus heals a blind man as he approaches Jericho. These verses give background information and information about the setting of the story.

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

a certain blind man was sitting

"there was a blind man sitting." Here "certain" means only that the man is an important new participant in the story. Luke does not mention his name.

Luke 18:36

and hearing

and hearing

It may be helpful to start a new sentence here after changing the comma at the end of the previous verse (verse 35) to a period. Alternate translation: "When he heard"

Luke 18:37

They told him

"People in the crowd told the blind man"

Jesus of Nazareth

Jesus came from the town of Nazareth, which was located in Galilee.

was passing by

"was walking past him"

Luke 18:38

So

This word marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, the crowd had told the blind man that Jesus was walking by.

cried out

"called out" or "shouted"

Son of David

Jesus was a descendant of David, Israel's most important king.

have mercy on me

"show me pity" or "show me compassion"

Luke 18:39

The ones who were walking ahead

"The people who were walking at the front of the crowd"

to be quiet

"to be silent" or "not to shout"

cried out all the more

This could mean that he cried out louder or that he cried out more persistently.

Luke 18:40

that the man be brought to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people to bring the blind man to him"

Luke 18:41

to receive my sight

"to be able to see"

Luke 18:42

Receive your sight

This is a command, but Jesus is not commanding the man to do anything. Jesus is healing the man by commanding him to be healed. Alternate translation: "You will now receive your sight"

Your faith has healed you

These words are a metonym. It was because of the man's faith that Jesus healed the man. Alternate translation: "I have healed you because you have believed in me"

Luke 18:43

glorifying God

"giving glory to God" or "praising God"

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19 [1]Jesus entered and was passing through Jericho.[2]Behold, there was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.
[3]He was trying to see who Jesus was, but could not see over the crowd, because he was small in height.[4]So he ran on ahead of the people and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, because Jesus was about to pass that way.
[5]When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house."[6]So he hurried and came down and welcomed him joyfully.[7]When everyone saw this, they all complained, saying, "He has gone in to visit a man who is a sinner."
[8]Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, the half of my possessions I give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I will restore four times the amount."
[9]Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.[10]For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the people who are lost."

[11]As they heard these things, he continued speaking and told a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and they thought that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately.[12]He said therefore, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then to return.
[13]He called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Conduct business until I come back.'
[14]"But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man reign over us.'[15]It happened when he returned, having received the kingdom, he commanded the servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what profit they had made by doing business.

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[16]"The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.'
[17]"The nobleman said to him, 'Well done, good servant. Because you were faithful in very little, you will have authority over ten cities.'

[18]"The second came, saying, 'Your mina, lord, has made five minas.'
[19]"The nobleman said to him, 'You take charge over five cities.'

[20]"Another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept safely in a cloth,[21]for I was afraid of you, because you are a demanding person. You take up what you did not put in, and you reap what you did not sow.'

[22]"The nobleman said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I am a demanding person, taking up what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow.[23]Then why did you not put my money in the bank, so that when I returned I would have collected it with interest?'
[24]The nobleman said to them that stood by, 'Take away from him the mina, and give it to him that has the ten minas.'
[25]"They said to him, 'Lord, he has ten minas.'

[26]"'I say to you, that everyone who has will be given more, but from him that has not, even that which he has will be taken away.[27]But these enemies of mine, those who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and kill them before me.'"

[28]When he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

[29]It came about that when he came near to Bethphage and Bethany, to the mountain that is called Olives, he sent two of the disciples,[30]saying, "Go into the next village. As you enter, you will find a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me.[31]If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord has need of it.'"
[32]Those who were sent went and found the colt just as Jesus had told them.
[33]As they were untying the colt, the owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?"
[34]They said, "The Lord has need of it."[35]They brought it to Jesus, and they threw their cloaks upon the colt and set Jesus on it.[36]As he went, they spread their cloaks on the road.

[37]As he was now approaching the place where the Mount of Olives descends, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, saying,
[38] "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

[39]Some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples."
[40]Jesus answered and said, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would cry out."

[41]When Jesus approached the city, he wept over it,[42]saying, "If only you had known in this day, even you, the things which bring you peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.
[43]For the days will come upon you when your enemies will build a barricade around you and surround you and press in on you from every side.[44]They will strike you down to the ground, and your children with you. They will not leave one stone upon another because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

[45]Jesus entered the temple and began to cast out those who were selling,[46]saying to them, "It is written, 'My house will be a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of robbers."

[47]So Jesus was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes were seeking to destroy him, as were the leaders of the people,[48]but they could not find a way to do it because all the people were listening to him intently.

Luke 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

After Jesus helped a man named Zacchaeus repent of his sins

Special concepts in this chapter

"Sinner"

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The Pharisees referred to a group of people as "sinners." The Jewish leaders thought these people were sinful, but in reality the leaders were also sinful. This can be taken as irony.

Servants

God expects his people to remember that everything in the world belongs to God. God gives his people things so they can serve him. He wants them to please him by doing what he wants them to do with everything he has given them. One day Jesus will ask his servants what they have done with everything he gave them to use. He will give a reward to those who have done what he wanted them to do, and he will punish those who have not.

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on a donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey had a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

Spreading garments and branches

When a king would enter one of the cities he ruled, people would cut branches from trees and would take off the clothes that they wore to stay warm in cold weather and spread them all on the road so the king would ride over them. They did this to honor the king and show that they loved him.

The merchants in the temple

Jesus forced the people who were selling animals in the temple to leave. He did this to show everyone that he had authority over the temple and that only those who were righteous, who did what God said was good, could be in it. (See: righteous)

Links:

Luke 19:1 Notes

Luke 19:1

General Information:

Verses 1-2 begin to give background information for the events that follow.

Luke 19:2

Behold, there was a man there

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a man who was"

He was a chief tax collector and was rich

This is background information about Zacchaeus.

Luke 19:3

General Information:

This verse completes the background information begun in [Luke 19:1-2]

He was trying

"Zacchaeus was trying"

because he was small in height

"because he was short"

Luke 19:4

So he ran

The author has finished giving the background to the event and now begins to describe the event itself.

a sycamore tree

"a sycamore fig tree." It produces small round fruit about 2.5 centimeters across. Alternate translation: "a fig tree" or "a tree"

Luke 19:5

the place

"the tree" or "where Zacchaeus was"

Luke 19:6

So he hurried

"So Zacchaeus hurried"

Luke 19:7

they all complained

The Jews hated the tax collectors and did not think any good person should associate with them.

He has gone in to visit a man who is a sinner

"Jesus has gone into the house of a sinner to visit him"

a sinner

"an obvious sinner" or "a real sinner"

Luke 19:8

the Lord

This refers to Jesus.

restore four times the amount

"return to them four times as much as I took from them"

Luke 19:9

salvation has come to this house

It was understood that salvation comes from God. Alternate translation: "God has saved this household"

this house

The word "house" here refers to the people living in the house or the family.

he too

"this man too" or "Zacchaeus also"

son of Abraham

Possible meanings are 1) "descendant of Abraham" and 2) "person who has faith as Abraham did."

Luke 19:10

the Son of Man came

Jesus is speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, came"

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the people who are lost
"the people who have wandered away from God" or "those who by sinning have wandered away from God"
Luke 19:11
General Information:
Jesus begins to tell a parable to the crowd. This verse gives background information about why Jesus tells the parable.
that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately
The Jews believed that the Messiah would establish the kingdom as soon as he came to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "that Jesus would immediately begin to rule over God's kingdom"
Luke 19:12
A certain nobleman
"A certain man who was a member of the ruling class" or "A certain man from an important family"
to receive for himself a kingdom
This is the image of a lesser king going to a greater king. The greater king would give the lesser king the right and authority to rule over his own country.
Luke 19:13
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.
He called
"The nobleman called." It may be helpful to state that the man did this before he left to receive his kingdom. Alternate translation: "Before he left, he called"
gave them ten minas
"gave each of them one mina"
ten minas
A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work, so ten minas would have been about three years' wages. Alternate translation: "ten valuable coins" or "a large amount of money"
Conduct business
"Trade with this money" or "Use this money in order to earn more"
Luke 19:14
his citizens
"the people of his country"
a delegation
"a group of people to represent them" or "several messengers"
Luke 19:15
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
having received the kingdom
"after he had become king"
to be called to him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to come to him"
what profit they had made
"how much money they had earned"
Luke 19:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.
The first
"The first servant"
came before him
"came before the nobleman"
your mina has made ten minas more
It is implied that the servant was the one who caused the profit. Alternate translation: "I used your mina to make a profit of ten more minas"
mina
A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]
Luke 19:17
Well done
"You have done well." Your language may have a phrase that an employer would use to show approval, such as "Good job."
very little
This refers to the one mina, which the nobleman apparently did not consider to be a lot of money.
Luke 19:18
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.
The second
"The second servant"
Your mina, lord, has made five minas
It is implied that the servant was the one who caused the profit. Alternate translation: "Lord, I used your mina to make a profit of five more minas"
mina
A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]
Luke 19:19
You take charge over five cities
"You will have authority over five cities"
Luke 19:20
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.
Another came
"Another servant came"
mina
A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]
kept safely in a cloth
"wrapped in a cloth and stored away"
Luke 19:21
a demanding person
"a stern man" or "a man who expects a lot from his servants"
You take up what you did not put in
This was probably a proverb. A person who takes out of storage or out of a bank things that he did not put in is a metaphor for someone who benefits from other people's hard work. Alternate translation: "You take out what you

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did not put in" or "You are like a person who takes out what other people put in"

you reap what you did not sow

This was probably a proverb. A person who harvests food that someone else has planted is a metaphor for someone who benefits from other people's hard work. Alternate translation: "you are like a person who reaps the fruit of what other people sowed"

Luke 19:22

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

By your own words

His "words" refer to all that he had said. Alternate translation: "Based on what you have said"

You knew that I am a demanding person

The nobleman was repeating what the servant had said about him. He was not saying that it was true. Alternate translation: "You say that I am a demanding person"

Luke 19:23

why did you not put my money ... interest?

The nobleman uses a question to rebuke the wicked servant. Alternate translation: "you should have put my money ... interest."

put my money in the bank

"lent my money to a bank." Cultures that do not have banks might translate it as "let someone borrow my money."

bank

A bank is a business that safely holds money for people. A bank lends that money to others for a profit. Therefore it pays an extra amount, or interest, to the people who keep their money in the bank.

I would have collected it with interest

"I could have collected that amount plus the interest it would have earned" or "I would have gained a profit from it"

interest

Interest is money that a bank pays people who put their money in the bank.

Luke 19:24

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

The nobleman

The nobleman had become king. See how you translated this in Luke 19:12.

them that stood by

"the people who were standing near them"

mina

A mina was 600 grams, probably of silver. Each mina was equal to 100 days' wages, what people would be paid for about four months' work. See how you translated this in [Luke 19:13]

Luke 19:25

he has ten minas.

"he already has ten minas!"

Luke 19:26

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to tell the parable he began in Luke 19:11.

I say to you

It can be stated clearly that the nobleman is speaking. Alternate translation: "And the nobleman replied, 'I say to you" or "But the nobleman said 'I tell you this"

everyone who has will be given more

It is implied that what he has is the money he earned by using his mina faithfully. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone who uses well what he has been given, I will give him more" or "to everyone who uses well what I have given him I will give more"

from him that has not

It is implied that the reason he does not have money is because he did not use his mina faithfully. Alternate translation: "from the person who does not use well what I have given him"

will be taken away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will take away from him"

Luke 19:27

these enemies of mine

Since the enemies were not right there, some languages would say "those enemies of mine."

Luke 19:28

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about the nobleman and his servants. This verse tells us what Jesus does after this part of the story.

When he had said these things

"When Jesus had said these things"

going up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than Jericho, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

Luke 19:29

General Information:

Jesus approaches Jerusalem.

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new event. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

when he came near

The word "he" refers to Jesus. His disciples were also traveling with him.

Bethphage

Bethphage is a village on the Mount of Olives, which is across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem.

the mountain that is called Olives

"the hill that is called the Mount of Olives" or "the hill that is called 'Olive Tree Mountain'"

Luke 19:30

a colt

"a young donkey" or "a young riding animal"

that has never been ridden

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no one has ever ridden"

Luke 19:31

If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say

The inner quote can also be translated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "If any one asks you why you are untying it, say"

Luke 19:32

Those who were sent

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The two disciples that Jesus sent"
Luke 19:33
the owners
"the owners of the colt"
Luke 19:35
threw their cloaks upon the colt
"put their robes on the young donkey." Cloaks are outer robes.
set Jesus on it
"helped Jesus get up on and ride on the colt"
Luke 19:36
they spread their cloaks
"people spread their cloaks." This is a sign of giving honor to someone.
Luke 19:37
As he was now approaching
"As Jesus was going near." Jesus's disciples were traveling with him.
where the Mount of Olives descends
"where the road goes down from the Mount of Olives"
mighty works which they had seen
"great things they had seen Jesus do"
Luke 19:38
Blessed is the king
They were saying this about Jesus.
in the name of the Lord
Here "name" refers to power and authority. Also, "Lord" refers to God.
Peace in heaven
"May there be peace in heaven" or "We want to see peace in heaven"
glory in the highest
"may there be glory in the highest" or "we want to see glory in the highest." The words "the highest" refer to heaven, which is a metonym for God, who lives in heaven. Alternate translation: "Let everyone give glory to God in the highest heaven"
Luke 19:39
in the multitude
"in the large crowd"
rebuke your disciples
"tell your disciples to stop doing these things"
Luke 19:40
I tell you
Jesus said this to emphasize what he would say next.
if these were silent
Jesus is describing something that could have happened but did not. Some translators may need to make it clear what Jesus was implying when he said this. Alternate translation: "I will not rebuke them, for if these people were to be silent"
the stones would cry out
"the stones would call out praises"
Luke 19:41
the city
This refers to Jerusalem.
he wept over it
To weep over something means to weep because of something. The word "it" refers to the city of Jerusalem, but it represents the people who lived in that city. Alternate translation: "he cried about the people of Jerusalem"
Luke 19:42
If only you had known ... bring you peace
Jesus expresses his sadness that the people of Jerusalem had missed the opportunity to be at peace with God.
you
The word "you" is singular because Jesus is speaking to the city. But if this would be unnatural in your language, you could use a plural form of "you" to refer to the people of the city.
they are hidden from your eyes
"your eyes" refer to the ability to see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can no longer see them"
Luke 19:43
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking.
For
What follows is the reason for Jesus's sadness.
the days will come upon you when your enemies
This indicates that they will experience difficult times. Some languages do not talk about time "coming." Alternate translation: "in the future these things will happen to you: Your enemies" or "soon you will endure troublesome times. Your enemies"
you ... your
The word "you" is singular because Jesus is speaking to the city as he would to a woman. But if this would be unnatural in your language, you could use a plural form of "you" to refer to the people of the city.
barricade
This refers to a wall to keep the people from getting out of the city.
Luke 19:44
They will strike you down to the ground, and your children with you
Jesus is speaking to the people of the city as if he were speaking to the city itself as he would speak to a woman. He speaks of the people who live in the city as if they are the woman's children, and thus the city's children. To strike down a city is to destroy its walls and buildings, and to strike down its children is to kill those who live in it. Alternate translation: "They will completely destroy you and kill all who live in you" or "They will completely destroy your city and kill all of you"
They will not leave one stone upon another
"They will not leave any of the stones in place." Jesus uses hyperbole here to emphasize the extent of the devastation that enemies will cause in Jerusalem. The enemies will completely destroy the city, which is built of stones. Alternate translation: "They will destroy Jerusalem"
you did not recognize
"you were not aware of" or "you were not grateful during"
the time of your visitation
The abstract noun "visitation" can be translated as a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "the time when God visited you" or "the time during which God was with you."
visitation

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This is a "visit" by an overseer to make sure that things are going well with those over whom he is in charge, not a casual social visit.

Luke 19:45

Connecting Statement:

This is the next event in this part of the story. Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem.

Jesus entered the temple

You may need to make explicit that he first entered Jerusalem, where the temple was located. Alternate translation: "Jesus entered Jerusalem and then went to the temple courtyard"

entered the temple

Only priests were allowed to enter the temple building. Alternate translation: "went into the temple courtyard"

cast out

"throw out" or "force out"

Luke 19:46

It is written

This is a quotation from Isaiah. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The scriptures say" or "A prophet wrote these words in the scriptures"

My house

The word "My" refers to God and "house" refers to the temple.

house of prayer

"a place where people pray to me"

a den of robbers

Jesus speaks of the temple as if it were a place where thieves come together. Alternate translation: "a place where thieves hide"

Luke 19:47

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of this part of the story. Verses 47-48 tell about ongoing action that continues after the main part of the story ends.

in the temple

"in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

destroy him

This hyperbole refers to killing Jesus. Alternate translation: "kill him"

Luke 19:48

were listening to him intently

"were paying close attention to what Jesus was saying"

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20 [1]It came about one day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel that the chief priests and the scribes came to him with the elders.[2]They spoke, saying to him, "Tell us by what authority you do these things, or who it is who gave you this authority."

[3]He answered and said to them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell me.[4]The baptism of John: Was it from heaven or from men?"

[5]They reasoned with themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Then why did you not believe him?'[6]But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet."
[7]So they answered that they did not know where it came from.
[8]Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

[9]He told the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it out to vine growers, and went into another country for a long time.[10]At the appointed time he sent a servant to the vine growers, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vine growers beat him, and sent him away empty-handed.
[11]He then sent yet another servant and they also beat him, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed.[12]He also sent yet a third and they also wounded him, and threw him out.
[13]So the lord of the vineyard said, 'What will I do? I will send my beloved son. Maybe they will respect him.'
[14]"But when the vine growers saw him, they discussed among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.'
[15]They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the lord of the vineyard do to them?[16]He will come and destroy these vine growers, and will give the vineyard to others."When they heard it, they said, "May it never be!"

[17]But Jesus looked at them, and said, "What is the meaning of that which is written:
'The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone'?
[18]Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, and the one on whom it falls will be crushed."

[19]So the scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him in that very hour, for they knew that he had spoken this parable against them. But they were afraid of the people.[20]Watching him carefully, they sent out spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might find fault with his speech, so as to deliver him up to the rule and to the authority of the governor.
[21]They asked him, saying, "Teacher, we know that you say and teach rightly, and are not partial to anyone, but you teach the truth about the way of God.[22]Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

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[23]But Jesus understood their craftiness, and said to them,[24]"Show me a denarius. Whose image and name is on it?"They said, "Caesar's."

[25]He said to them, "Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."[26]They were not able to find fault with what he had said in front of the people, but marveling at his answer, they were silent.

[27]When some of the Sadducees came to him, the ones who say that there is no resurrection,[28]they asked him, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote to us that if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and being childless, the man should take the brother's wife, and raise up children for his brother.
[29]There were seven brothers and the first took a wife, and died childless,[30]and the second as well.[31]The third took her, and in the same way the seven also left no children and died.[32]Afterward the woman also died.[33]In the resurrection, then, whose wife will she be? For the seven had her as their wife."

[34]Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage.[35]But those who are regarded as worthy in that age to receive the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage.[36]Neither can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.
[37]But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the place concerning the bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.[38]Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, because all live to him."

[39]Some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have answered well."[40]For they did not dare ask him any more questions.

[41]Jesus said to them, "How do they say that the Christ is David's son?[42]For David himself says in the Book of Psalms,
The Lord said to my Lord,
'Sit at my right hand,
[43] until I make your enemies
your footstool.'

[44]David therefore calls the Christ 'Lord,' so how is he David's son?"

[45]In the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples,[46]"Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk in long robes and love special greetings in the marketplaces and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at feasts.[47]They also devour widows' houses, and for a show they make long prayers. Men like this will receive greater condemnation."

Luke 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 20:17, 42-43, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Using questions to trap people

When Jesus asked the Pharisees who gave John the authority to baptize (Luke 20:4), they could not answer because any answer they gave would give someone a reason to say that they were wrong (Luke 20:5-6). They thought that they would be able to say that Jesus was wrong when they asked him if people should pay taxes to Caesar (Luke 20:22), but Jesus gave them an answer that they had not thought of.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. In this chapter, Jesus quotes a psalm that records David calling his son "Lord," that is, "master." However, to the Jews, ancestors were greater than their descendants. In this passage, Jesus is trying to lead his hearers to the true understanding that the Messiah will himself be divine, and that he himself is the Messiah. (Luke 20:41-44).

Links:

Luke 20:1 Notes

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Luke 20:1

Connecting Statement:

The chief priests, scribes, and elders question Jesus in the temple.

It came about

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story.

in the temple

"in the temple courtyard" or "at the temple"

Luke 20:3

General Information:

Jesus responds to the chief priests, scribes, and elders.

He answered and said to them

"Jesus replied"

I will also ask you a question, and you tell me

The words "I will ... ask you a question" are a statement. The words "you tell me" are a command.

Luke 20:4

Was it from heaven or from men

Jesus knows that John's authority comes from heaven, so he is not asking for information. He asks the question so the Jewish leaders will have to tell what they think to all who are listening. This question is rhetorical, but you will probably have to translate it as a question. Alternate translation: "Do you think John's authority to baptize people came from heaven or from men" or "Was it God who told John to baptize people, or did people tell him to do it"

from heaven

"from God." Jewish people avoided referring to God by his name "Yahweh." Often they used the word "heaven" to refer to him.

Luke 20:5

They reasoned

"They discussed" or "They considered their answer"

with themselves

"among themselves" or "with each other"

If we say, 'From heaven,' he

Some languages might prefer an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "If we say that John's authority is from heaven, he"

From heaven

"From God." Jewish people avoided referring to God by his name "Yahweh." Often they used the word "heaven" to refer to him. See how these words are translated in [Luke 20:4]

he will say

"Jesus will say"

Luke 20:6

if we say, 'From men,'

Some languages might prefer an indirect quote. Alternate translation: "if we say that John's authority is from men,"

stone us

"kill us by throwing stones on us." God's Law commanded that his people stone those of his people who mocked him or his prophets.

Luke 20:7

So they answered

"So the chief priests, scribes and elders answered." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, they had reasoned with themselves (Luke 20:5-6), and they did not have an answer they wanted to say.

they answered that they did not know where it came from.

This could be stated as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "they said, 'We do not know where it came from.'"

where it came from

"where John's baptism came from." Alternate translation: "where John's authority to baptize came from" or "who authorized John to baptize people"

Luke 20:8

Neither will I tell you

"And I will not tell you." Jesus knew they were not willing to tell him the answer, so he responded in the same manner. Alternate translation: "Just as you will not tell me, I will not tell you"

Luke 20:9

General Information:

Jesus begins to tell a parable to the people in the temple courtyard.

rented it out to vine growers

"allowed some vine growers to use it in exchange for payment" or "allowed some vine growers to use it and pay him later." Payment might be in the form of money or a portion of the harvest.

vine growers

These are people who tend grape vines and grow grapes. Alternate translation: "grape farmers"

Luke 20:10

the appointed time

"the time they had agreed to pay him." This would have been at the harvest time.

of the fruit of the vineyard

"some of the grapes" or "some of what they produced in the vineyard." It could also refer to the things they made from grapes or the money they earned by selling the grapes.

sent him away empty-handed

An empty hand is a metaphor for "nothing." Alternate translation: "sent him away without paying him" or "sent him away without the grapes"

Luke 20:11

beat him

"beat that servant"

treated him shamefully

"humiliated him"

sent him away empty-handed

Having an empty hand is a metaphor for having nothing. Alternate translation: "sent him away without paying him" or "sent him away without any grapes"

Luke 20:12

yet a third

"even a third servant" or "yet another servant." The word "yet" hints at the fact that the landowner should not have had to send the second servant, but he went beyond that and sent a third servant.

wounded him

"injured that servant"

threw him out

"threw him out of the vineyard"

Luke 20:13

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What will I do?
This question emphasizes that the vineyard owner thought carefully about what he was going to do. Alternate translation: "Here is what I will do:"
Luke 20:14
when the vine growers saw him
"when the farmers saw the owner's son"
Let us kill him
They were not asking permission. The said this to encourage each other to kill the heir.
Luke 20:15
They threw him out of the vineyard
"The vine growers forced the son out of the vineyard"
What then will the lord of the vineyard do to them?
Jesus uses a question to get his listeners to pay attention to what the owner of the vineyard will do. Alternate translation: "So now, listen to what the lord of the vineyard will do to them."
Luke 20:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes telling his parable to the crowd.
May it never be
"May it never happen"
Luke 20:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching the crowd.
But Jesus looked at them
"But Jesus stared at them" or "But he looked straight at them." He did this to hold them accountable to understand what he was saying.
What is the meaning of that which is written: 'The stone ... cornerstone'?
Jesus uses a question to teach the crowd. Alternate translation: "You should be able to understand that which is written: 'The stone ... cornerstone.'"
that which is written
"this scripture"
The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone
This is the first of three metaphors in a prophecy from the book of Psalms. This one refers to the Messiah as if he were a stone that builders chose not to use, but that God made the most important stone.
The stone that the builders rejected
"The stone that the builders said was not good enough to use for building." In those days people used stones to build the walls of houses and other buildings.
the builders
This refers to the religious rulers who are rejecting Jesus as Messiah.
the cornerstone
"the chief stone of the building" or "the most important stone of the building"
Luke 20:18
Everyone who falls ... broken to pieces
This second metaphor speaks of people who reject the Messiah as if they fall over a stone and are injured.
will be broken to pieces
This is a result of falling onto the stone. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will break up into pieces"
the one on whom it falls
"the one that stone falls on." This third metaphor speaks about the Messiah judging those who reject him as if he were a large stone that would crush them.
Luke 20:19
sought to lay hands on him
In this verse, to "lay hands on" someone is to arrest that person. Alternate translation: "looked for a way to arrest Jesus"
in that very hour
"immediately"
they were afraid of the people
This is the reason that they did not arrest Jesus right away. The people respected Jesus, and the religious leaders were afraid of what the people might do if they arrested him. Alternate translation: "they did not arrest him because they were afraid of the people"
Luke 20:20
they sent out spies
"the scribes and chief priests sent spies to watch Jesus"
that they might find fault with his speech
"because they wanted to accuse Jesus of saying something bad"
to the rule and to the authority of the governor
"Rule" and "authority" are two ways of saying that they wanted the governor to judge Jesus. It can be translated with one or both expressions. Alternate translation: "so that the governor would punish Jesus"
Luke 20:21
Connecting Statement:
This is the beginning of the next event in the story. Some time has passed since Jesus was questioned in the temple by the chief priests. The spies are now questioning Jesus.
They asked him
"The spies asked Jesus"
Teacher, we know ... way of God
The spies were trying to deceive Jesus. They did not believe these things about Jesus.
we know
"we" refers only to the spies.
are not partial to anyone
Possible meanings are 1) "you tell the truth even if important people do not like it" or 2) "you do not favor one person over another"
but you teach the truth about the way of God
This is part of what the spies were saying that they knew about Jesus.
Luke 20:22
Is it lawful ... or not?
They hoped that Jesus would say either "yes" or "no." If he said "yes," then the Jewish people would be angry with him for telling them to pay taxes to a foreign government. If he said "no," then the religious leaders could tell the Romans that Jesus was teaching the people to break the Roman laws.
Is it lawful
They were asking about God's law, not about Caesar's law. Alternate translation: "Does our law permit us"
Caesar

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Because Caesar was the ruler of the Roman government, they could refer to the Roman government by Caesar's name.

Luke 20:23

But Jesus understood their craftiness

"But Jesus understood how tricky they were" or "But Jesus saw that they were trying to trap him." The word "their" refers to the spies.

Luke 20:24

a denarius

This is a Roman silver coin worth a day's wages.

Whose image and name is on it?

Jesus uses a question to respond to those who were trying to trick him. Alternate translation: "Tell me, whose image and name do you see on it?"

image and name

"picture and name"

Luke 20:25

He said to them

"Then Jesus said to them"

Caesar

Here "Caesar" refers to the Roman government.

and to God

The word "give" is understood from the previous phrase. It can be repeated here. Alternate translation: "and give to God"

Luke 20:26

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of this event about the spies and the part of the story which began in Luke 20:1.

They were not able to find fault with what he had said

"The spies could not find anything wrong with what he said"

but marveling at his answer, they were silent

"but they were amazed at his answer and did not say anything"

Luke 20:27

General Information:

We do not know where this takes place, though it possibly takes place in the temple courtyard. Jesus is talking with some Sadducees.

the ones who say that there is no resurrection

This phrase identifies the Sadducees as being the group of Jews that say that no one would rise from the dead. It does not imply that some Sadducees believed that there is a resurrection and some did not.

Luke 20:28

if a man's brother dies, having a wife, and being childless

"if a man's brother dies when he has a wife but does not have children"

the man should take the brother's wife

"the man should marry his dead brother's widow"

raise up children for his brother

The Jews considered the first son born to a woman who married her dead husband's brother as if he were the son of the woman's first husband. This son inherited the property of his mother's first husband and carried on his name.

Luke 20:29

General Information:

The Sadducees tell Jesus a short story in verses 29-32. This is a story they made up as an example. In verse 33, they ask Jesus a question about the story they told.

There were seven brothers

This may have happened, but it is probably a story that they made up to test Jesus.

the first

"brother number one" or "the oldest"

died childless

"died without having any children" or "died, but did not have any children"

Luke 20:30

the second as well

The Sadducees kept the story short by not repeating many of the details. Alternate translation: "the second married her and the same thing happened" or "the second brother married her and died without having any children"

the second

"brother number two" or "the oldest brother who was still alive"

Luke 20:31

The third took her

"The third married her"

The third

"Brother number three" or "The oldest brother who was still alive"

and in the same way the seven also left no children and died

The speakers kept the story short by omitting details. Alternate translation: "in the same way the rest of the seven brothers married her and died without having any children"

the seven

"all seven of the brothers" or "each of the seven brothers"

Luke 20:33

Connecting Statement:

The Sadducees finish asking Jesus their question.

In the resurrection

"When people are raised from the dead" or "When dead people become alive again." Some languages have a way of showing that the Sadducees did not believe that there would be a resurrection, such as "In the supposed resurrection" or "When dead people are supposedly raised from the dead."

Luke 20:34

Connecting Statement:

Jesus begins to answer the Sadducees.

The sons of this age

"The people of this world" or "The people of this time." This is in contrast with those in heaven or the people who live after the resurrection.

marry and are given in marriage

In that culture they spoke of men marrying women and women being given in marriage to their husband. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "get married"

Luke 20:35

those who are regarded as worthy in that age

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the

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people in that age whom God will consider to be worthy"

to receive the resurrection from the dead

"to be raised from the dead" or "to rise from death"

from the dead

From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To receive resurrection from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

will neither marry nor be given in marriage

In that culture they spoke of men marrying women and women being given in marriage to their husband. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not marry" or "will not get married." This is after the resurrection.

Luke 20:36

Neither can they die anymore

This is after the resurrection. Alternate translation: "They will not be able to die anymore"

are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection

"are children of God because he has brought them back from the dead"

Luke 20:37

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes answering the Sadducees.

But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed

The word "even" is here because the Sadducees might not have been surprised that some scriptures say that the dead are raised, but they did not expect Moses to have written something like that. Alternate translation: "But even Moses showed that dead people rise from the dead"

the dead are raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God causes the dead to live again"

in the place concerning the bush, where he calls the Lord

The implied information can be supplied. Alternate translation: "in the scripture about the burning bush, where he wrote about the Lord being"

the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob

"the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." They all worshiped the same God.

Luke 20:38

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Jesus explains how this story proves that people rise from the dead.

he is not the God of the dead, but of the living

These two phrases have similar meaning. They are used together for emphasis. Some languages have different ways of showing emphasis. Alternate translation: "the Lord is the God of living people only"

but of the living

"but the God of living people." Since these people died physically, they must still be alive spiritually. Alternate translation: "but the God of people whose spirits are alive, even though their bodies may have died"

because all live to him

"because in God's sight they all are still alive" or "because their spirits are alive in God's presence"

Luke 20:39

Some of the scribes answered

"Some of the scribes said to Jesus." There were scribes present when the Sadducees were questioning Jesus.

Luke 20:40

For they

It is unclear if this refers to the scribes, or the Sadducees, or both. It is best to keep the statement general.

they did not dare ask him any more questions

"they were afraid to ask him any more questions" or "they did not risk asking him any more questions." They understood that they did not know as much as Jesus did, but they did not want to say that. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "they did not ask him any more tricky questions because they feared that his wise answers would make them appear foolish again"

Luke 20:41

General Information:

Jesus asks the scribes a question.

How do they say ... son?

"Why do they say ... son?" Jesus uses a question to make the scribes think about who the Messiah is. Alternate translation: "Let's think about them saying ... son." or "I will talk about them saying ... son."

they say

The prophets, the religious rulers, and the Jewish people in general knew that the Messiah was the son of David. Alternate translation: "everyone says" or "people say"

David's son

"King David's descendant." The word "son" is used here to refer to a descendant. In this case it refers to the one who would reign over God's kingdom.

Luke 20:42

The Lord said to my Lord

This is a quotation from the book of Psalms which says "Yahweh said to my Lord." But the Jews stopped saying "Yahweh" and often said "Lord" instead. Alternate translation: "The Lord God said to my Lord" or "God said to my Lord"

my Lord

David was referring to the Christ as "my Lord."

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

Luke 20:43

until I make your enemies your footstool

The Messiah's enemies are spoken of as if they were furniture on which he would rest his feet. This was an image of submission. Alternate translation: "until I make your enemies like a footstool for you" or "until I conquer your enemies for you"

Luke 20:44

David therefore calls the Christ 'Lord,'

In the culture of that time, a father was more respected than a son. David's us of the title 'Lord' for the Christ implies that he was greater than David.

so how is he David's son?

"so how can the Christ be David's son?" This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "and this shows that the

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Christ is not merely David's descendant"

Luke 20:45

Connecting Statement:

Jesus now directs his attention to his disciples and speaks mainly to them.

Luke 20:46

Beware of

"Be on guard against"

who desire to walk in long robes

Long robes would show that they were important. Alternate translation: "who like to walk around wearing their important robes"

Luke 20:47

They also devour widows' houses

"They also eat up widows' houses." The scribes are spoken of as if they were hungry animals that eat up the widows' houses. The word "houses" is a synecdoche for both where the widow lives and all the possessions she puts in her home. Alternate translation: "They also take away from widows all their possessions"

for a show they make long prayers

"they pretend to be righteous and make long prayers" or "they make long prayers so that people will see them"

Men like this will receive greater condemnation

"They will receive a more severe judgment." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will certainly punish them very severely"

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21 [1]Jesus looked up and saw the rich men who were putting their gifts into the treasury.[2]He saw a certain poor widow putting in two mites.[3]So he said, "Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them.[4]All of these gave gifts out of their abundance. But this widow, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on."

[5]As some spoke of the temple, how it was decorated with beautiful stones and offerings, he said,[6]"As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down."
[7]So they asked him, saying, "Teacher, when will these things happen? What will be the sign when these things are about to happen?"[8]Jesus answered, "Be careful that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.[9]When you hear of wars and riots, do not be terrified, for these things must happen first, but the end will not happen immediately."

[10]Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.[11]There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues. There will be terrifying events and great signs from heaven.
[12]But before all of these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you over to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors because of my name.[13]It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.
[14]Therefore resolve in your hearts not to prepare your defense ahead of time,[15]for I will give you words and wisdom that all your adversaries will not be able to resist or contradict.
[16]But you will be given over also by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death.[17]You will be hated by everyone because of my name.[18]But not a hair from your head will perish.[19]In your endurance you will gain your lives.

[20]"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that its desolation is near.[21]Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the city leave it, and those who are out in the country must not enter the city.[22]For these are days of vengeance, so that all the things that are written will be fulfilled.
[23]Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing in those days! For there will be great distress upon the land, and wrath to this people.[24]They will fall by the edge of the sword, and they will be led captive into all the nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

[25]"There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and on the earth. The nations will be in distress, anxious because of the roar of the sea and waves.[26]There will be men fainting from fear and from expectation of the things which are coming upon the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
[27]Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.[28]But when these things begin to happen, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is coming near."

[29]Jesus told them a parable, "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.[30]When they sprout buds, you see for yourselves and know that summer is already near.[31]So also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.
[32]Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.[33]Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

[34]"But pay attention to yourselves, so that your hearts are not burdened with excessive drinking and drunkenness and the

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worries of life, and that day does not close on you suddenly[35]like a trap. For it will come upon everyone living on the face of the whole earth.
[36]But be alert at all times, praying that you may be strong enough to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

[37]So during the days he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out and stayed on the mountain that is called Olives.[38]All of the people came early in the morning to hear him in the temple.

Luke 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Jesus told his disciples much about what would happen before he returned.

Special concepts in this chapter

"For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,'"
Jesus taught that before he returned many people would falsely claim to be him returning. It will also be a time when many people will hate Jesus's followers and even want to kill them.
"Until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"
The Jews spoke of the time between when the Babylonians forced their ancestors to go to Babylon and the time when the Messiah would come as "the times of the Gentiles," the time when the Gentiles would rule over the Jews.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"
Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 21:1 Notes

Luke 21:1
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins teaching his disciples, but it is uncertain whether this occurs on the same day that the Sadducees question Jesus
gifts
You may need to make explicit what the gifts are. Alternate translation: "gifts of money"
treasury
The "treasury" means the boxes in the temple courtyard where people put money as a gift to God.
Luke 21:2
a certain poor widow
This is a way of introducing a new character to the story.
two mites
"two small coins" or "two tiny copper coins." These were the least valuable of the coins people used then. Alternate translation: "two pennies" or "two small coins of little value"
Luke 21:3
Truly I say to you
This means that what Jesus was about to say was very important.
I say to you
Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural.
this poor widow put in more than all of them
God considers her gift, a small amount of money, more significant than the large amounts of money the men gave. Alternate translation: "the small gift of this widow is more valuable than the larger gifts of the rich men"
Luke 21:4
gave gifts out of their abundance
"have a lot of money but only gave a small portion of it"
out of her poverty
"who has very little money"
Luke 21:5
Connecting Statement:
Jesus switches from talking about the widow to teaching about the temple.
offerings
things people had given to God
Luke 21:6
these things that you see
This refers to the beautiful temple and its decorations.
the days will come when
"there will be a time when" or "someday"
when not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down
Jesus uses hyperbole here to emphasize the extent of the devastation that enemies will cause to the temple. The enemies will completely destroy the temple, which is built of stones. Alternate translation: "when all these things will be destroyed" or "when enemies will destroy all of these things"
not one stone will be left on another which will not be torn down
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "every stone will be removed from its place and torn down"
left on another which will not be torn down
A new sentence can be started here, and it can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "left on another. They will all be torn down" or "left on another. Enemies will tear down every stone"
Luke 21:7

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they asked him
"the disciples asked Jesus" or "Jesus's disciples asked him"
these things
This refers to what Jesus has just said about enemies destroying the temple.
Luke 21:8
that you are not deceived
Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural. Alternate translation: "that you do not believe lies" or "that no one deceives you"
in my name
People coming in his name claim to represent him. Alternate translation: "claiming to be me" or "claiming to have my authority"
I am he
"I am the Christ" or "I am the Messiah"
Do not go after them
"Do not believe them" or "Do not become their disciples"
Luke 21:9
wars and riots
Here "wars" probably refers to fighting between countries, and "riots" probably refers to people fighting against their own leaders or against others in their country. Alternate translation: "wars and rebellions" or "wars and revolutions"
do not be terrified
"do not let these things terrify you" or "do not be afraid"
the end
Possible meanings are: (1) The end of the era in which the disciples to whom Jesus spoke were in at the time. Alternate translation: "the end of the age" or (2) The end of the heavens and earth as we know them. Alternate translation: "the end of the world"
will not happen immediately
Implied word can be supplied here. Alternate translation: "will not happen immediately after the wars and riots" or "will not happen immediately after those things happen"
Luke 21:10
Then he said to them
"Then Jesus said to his disciples." Since this is a continuation of Jesus speaking from the previous verse, some languages may prefer not to say "Then he said to them."
Nation will rise against nation
Here "nation" is a metonym for the people of the nation, and "rise against" is a metonym for attack. The word "nation" represents nations in general, not one particular nation. Alternate translation: "The people of one nation will attack the people of other nations" or "The people of some nations will attack the people of other nations"
Nation
This refers to ethnic groups of people rather than to countries.
kingdom against kingdom
The words "will rise" are understood from the previous phrase and mean attack. Alternate translation: "kingdom will rise against kingdom" or "the people of some kingdoms will attack the people of other kingdoms"
Luke 21:11
in various places famines and plagues
The words "there will be" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "there will be famines and plagues in many places" or "there will be times of hunger and diseases in different places"
terrifying events
"events that terrify people" or "events that cause people to be very afraid"
Luke 21:12
these things
This refers to the terrible things that Jesus has said will happen.
they will lay their hands on you
"they will grab you." This expression refers to people exercising authority over the disciples. Alternate translation: "they will arrest you"
they will
"people will" or "enemies will"
you
Jesus was talking to his disciples. The word "you" is plural.
delivering you over to the synagogues
The word "synagogues" is a metonym for the people in the synagogues, specifically the leaders. Alternate translation: "giving you over to the leaders of the synagogues" or "taking you to the synagogues so that the people there can do to you whatever they want to do"
and prisons
"and delivering you over to the prisons" or "and putting you in prisons"
because of my name
The word "name" is here used to refer to Jesus himself. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you follow me"
Luke 21:13
for your testimony
"for you to tell them your testimony about me"
Luke 21:14
Therefore
"Because of this," referring to everything Jesus has said, beginning in [Luke 21:10]
resolve in your hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds. Alternate translation: "make up your mind" or "decide firmly"
not to prepare your defense ahead of time
"not to figure out ahead of time what you will say in order to defend yourself against their accusations"
Luke 21:15
wisdom that all your adversaries will not be able to resist or contradict
"wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict"
I will give you words and wisdom
"I will tell you what wise things to say"
words and wisdom
These can be combined into one phrase. Alternate translation: "words of wisdom" or "wise words"
contradict
show to be false
Luke 21:16
you will be given over also by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "even your parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will give you over to the authorities"

they will put some of you to death

"they will kill some of you." Possible meanings are 1) "the authorities will kill some of you" or 2) "those who deliver you up will kill some of you." The first meaning is more likely.

Luke 21:17

You will be hated by everyone

This can be translated in active form. The word "everyone" emphasizes how many people will hate the disciples, either through 1) exaggeration Alternate translation: "It will seem like you are hated by everyone" or "It will seem like everyone hates you" or 2) a generalization. Alternate translation: "You will be hated by most people" or "Most people will hate you"

because of my name

"my name" here refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you follow me"

Luke 21:18

But not a hair from your head will perish

Jesus speaks of one of the smallest parts of a person. He is emphasizing that the whole person will not perish. Jesus had already said that some of them would be put to death, so some understand this to mean that they would not be harmed spiritually. Alternate translation: "But these things cannot really harm you" or "Even every hair on your head will be safe"

Luke 21:19

In your endurance

"By holding firm." This can be stated in the opposite way. Alternate translation: "If you do not quit"

you will gain your lives

"you will save yourselves"

Luke 21:20

Jerusalem surrounded by armies

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "armies surrounding Jerusalem"

that its desolation is near

The word "desolation," which describes a place that is empty, is a metonym for Jerusalem after it has been destroyed and the Jews can no longer live there. Alternate translation: "that it will soon be destroyed" or "that they will soon destroy it"

Luke 21:21

flee

run away from danger

in the country

This refers to the rural areas outside Jerusalem, and not to the nation. Alternate translation: "outside the city"

enter the city

"enter Jerusalem"

Luke 21:22

these are days of vengeance

"these are days of punishment" or "this will be the time when God will punish this city"

all the things that are written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the things that the prophets wrote in the scriptures long ago"

will be fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will happen"

Luke 21:23

to those who are nursing

"to mothers who are nursing their babies"

there will be great distress upon the land

Possible meanings are 1) the people of the land will be distressed or 2) there will be physical disasters in the land.

wrath to this people

"there will be wrath to the people at that time." God will bring this wrath. Alternate translation: "this people will experience God's anger" or "God will be very angry and will punish this people"

Luke 21:24

They will fall by the edge of the sword

"They will be killed by the edge of the sword." Here "fall by the edge of the sword" represents being killed by enemy soldiers. Alternate translation: "Enemy soldiers will kill them"

they will be led captive into all the nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "their enemies will capture them and take them to other countries"

into all the nations

The word "all" is an exaggeration to emphasize that they will be led into many countries. Alternate translation: "into many other countries"

Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles

Possible meanings are 1) the Gentiles will conquer Jerusalem and occupy it or 2) the Gentiles will destroy the city of Jerusalem or 3) the Gentiles will destroy the people of Jerusalem.

trampled by the Gentiles

This metaphor speaks of Jerusalem as if the people of other nations was walking on it and crushing it down with their feet. This refers to domination. Alternate translation: "conquered by the Gentiles" or "destroyed by the other nations"

the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the period of the Gentiles has come to an end"

Luke 21:25

The nations will be in distress

Here "the nations" refers to the people in them. Alternate translation: "The people of the nations will be distressed"

distress, anxious because of the roar of the sea and waves

"distress because they will be anxious about the roar of the sea and its waves" or "distress, and the loud noise of the sea and its rough movements will frighten them." This seems to refer to unusual storms or disasters involving the seas.

Luke 21:26

the things which are coming upon the world

"the things that will happen in the world" or "the things that will happen to the world"

the powers of the heavens will be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1)

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"God will shake the sun, moon, and stars so they will not move in their normal ways" or 2) "God will trouble the powerful spirits in the heavens." The first is recommended.
Luke 21:27
Son of Man coming
Jesus is referring to himself. Alternate translation: "me, the Son Man, coming"
coming in a cloud
"coming down in a cloud"
with power and great glory
Here "power" probably refers to his authority to judge the world. Here "glory" may refer to a bright light. God sometimes shows his greatness with a very bright light. Alternate translation: "powerfully and gloriously" or "and he will be powerful and very glorious"
Luke 21:28
stand up
Sometimes when people are afraid, they crouch down in order to avoid being seen or hurt. When they are no longer afraid, they get up. Alternate translation: "stand up with confidence"
lift up your heads
Lifting the head is a metonym for looking up. When they lift their heads up, they will be able to see their rescuer coming to them. Alternate translation: "look up"
because your redemption is coming near
God, who redeems, is spoken of as if he were the redemption that he causes. The word "redemption" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because God will soon redeem you"
redemption
God rescuing his people from those who want to harm them is spoken of as if he were buying back people who had become slaves because they could not pay their debts. Alternate translation: "rescue" or "salvation"
Luke 21:29
Connecting Statement:
As Jesus continues teaching his disciples, he tells them a parable.
Luke 21:30
When they sprout buds
"When new leaves start to grow"
summer is already near
"summer is about to start." Summer in Israel follows the sprouting of fig tree leaves and is the time when the figs ripen. Alternate translation: "harvest time is ready to start"
Luke 21:31
So also, when you see these things happening
The appearance of the signs that Jesus just described signal the arrival of the kingdom of God just as appearance of the leaves of the fig tree signal the arrival of summer.
the kingdom of God is near
"God will soon establish his kingdom." Alternate translation: "God will soon rule as king"
Luke 21:32
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching his disciples.
Truly I say to you
This expression emphasizes the importance of what Jesus is about to say.
this generation
Possible meanings are 1) the generation that will see the first of the signs Jesus speaks of or 2) the generation Jesus is speaking to. The first is more likely.
will not pass away until
This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will still be alive when"
Luke 21:33
Heaven and earth will pass away
"Heaven and earth will cease to exist." The word "heaven" here refers to the sky and the universe beyond it.
my words will never pass away
"my words will never cease to exist" or "my words will never fail." Jesus uses "words" here to refer to everything he says.
will never pass away
This could be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "will remain forever"
Luke 21:34
so that your hearts are not burdened
The "heart" here refers to the mind and thoughts of the person. Alternate translation: "so that you are not occupied"
are not burdened
Jesus here speaks of the following sins as if they were a physical weight that a person had to carry.
excessive drinking ... drunkenness
"drinking too much wine and becoming drunk." Excessive drinking is the action, and intoxication is the effect of that action.
the worries of life
"the things you worry about as you live every day"
that day does not close on you suddenly
The rest of this sentence, "like a trap," is in verse 35. Just as a trap closes on an animal when the animal does not expect it, that day will happen when people do not expect it. Alternate translation: "that day does not happen when you are not expecting it, as when a trap closes suddenly on an animal" or "that day does not surprise you like a trap"
that day
This refers to the day when the Messiah returns. Alternate translation: "the day when the Son of Man comes"
Luke 21:35
like a trap
The first part of this statement, “that day does not close on you suddenly,” is in verse 34. Just as a trap closes on an animal when the animal does not expect it, that day will happen when people do not expect it. Alternate translation: “that day does not happen when you are not expecting it, as when a trap closes suddenly on an animal” or “that day does not surprise you like a trap”
it will come upon everyone
"it will affect everyone" or "the events of that day will affect everyone"
on the face of the whole earth
The surface of the earth is spoken of as if it were the outward part of the face of a person. Alternate translation: "on the surface of the whole earth" or "on the entire earth"

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Luke 21:36

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes teaching his disciples.

be alert

"be ready for my coming"

strong enough to escape all these things

Possible meanings are 1) "strong enough to endure these things" or 2) "able to avoid these things."

these things that will take place

"these things that will happen." Jesus has just told them about terrible things that will happen, such as persecution, war, and captivity.

to stand before the Son of Man

"to stand with confidence before the Son of Man." This probably refers to when the Son of Man judges everyone. A person who is not ready will be afraid of the Son of Man and will not stand with confidence.

Luke 21:37

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story that begins in [Luke 20:1]

during the days he was teaching

"during the daytime he would teach" or "he would teach each day." The following verses tell about things that Jesus and the people did each day during the week before he died.

in the temple

Only priests were allowed in the temple. Alternate translation: "at the temple" or "in the temple courtyard"

at night he went out

"at night he would go out of the city" or "he went out each night"

Luke 21:38

All of the people

The word "all" is probably an exaggeration to emphasize that the crowd was very large. Alternate translation: "A very large number of people in the city" or "Almost everyone in the city"

came early in the morning

"would come early each morning"

to hear him in the temple

"to hear him teach in the temple courtyard"

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22 [1]Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread was approaching, which is called the Passover.[2]The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they could put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

[3]Then Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve.[4]Judas went to the chief priests and captains and discussed with them how he would betray Jesus to them.
[5]They were glad and agreed to give him money.[6]He consented and looked for an opportunity to give him over to them away from the crowd.

[7]Then came the day of unleavened bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.[8]So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare for us the Passover meal, so that we may eat it."
[9]They said to him, "Where do you want us to make preparations?"

[10]He answered them, "Look, when you have entered the city, a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he goes into.[11]Then say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room, where I will eat the Passover with my disciples?"'
[12]He will show you a large furnished upper room. Make the preparations there."[13]So they went, and found everything as he had said to them. Then they prepared the Passover meal.

[14]When the hour came, he sat down with the apostles.[15]Then he said to them, "I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.[16]For I say to you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."
[17]Then Jesus took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, "Take this, and share it among yourselves.[18]For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine again until the kingdom of God comes."
[19]Then he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."[20]He took the cup in the same way after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.
[21]But pay attention. The hand of the one who betrays me is with me at the table.[22]For the Son of Man indeed goes as it has been determined. But woe to that man through whom he is betrayed!"[23]They began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who would do this.

[24]Then there arose also a quarrel among them about which of them was considered to be greatest.[25]He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles are lords over them, and the ones who have authority over them are called doers of good deeds.
[26]But it must not be like this with you. Instead, let the greatest among you become like the youngest and the one who leads like the one who serves.[27]For who is greater, the one who sits at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as one who serves.
[28]But you are the ones who have continued with me in my trials.[29]I set you over a kingdom, even as my Father has set me over a kingdom,[30]that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

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[31]"Simon, Simon, be aware, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat.[32]But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail. After you have turned back again, strengthen your brothers."

[33]Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."
[34]Jesus replied, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you deny three times that you know me."

[35]Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out without a purse, a bag of provisions, or sandals, did you lack anything?"They answered, "Nothing."

[36]Then he said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse, let him take it, and likewise a bag of provisions. The one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak and buy one.
[37]For I say to you, what is written about me must be fulfilled, 'He was counted with the lawless ones.' For what is predicted about me is being fulfilled."
[38]Then they said, "Lord, look! Here are two swords."He said to them, "It is enough."

[39]Jesus went, as he often did, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him.[40]When they arrived, he said to them, "Pray that you do not enter into temptation."
[41]He went away from them about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and prayed,[42]saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless not my will, but yours be done."
[43]Then an angel from heaven appeared to him, strengthening him.[44]Being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.
[45]When he rose up from his prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of their sorrow[46]and asked them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray, that you may not enter into temptation."

[47]While he was still speaking, behold, a crowd appeared, with Judas, one of the twelve, leading them. He came near to Jesus to kiss him,[48]but Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

[49]When those who were around Jesus saw what was happening, they said, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?"[50]Then one of them struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.
[51]Jesus said, "That is enough!" He touched his ear, and healed him.
[52]Jesus said to the chief priests, to the captains of the temple, and to elders who came against him, "Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?[53]When I was daily with you in the temple, you did not lay your hands on me. But this is your hour, and the authority of darkness."

[54]Seizing him, they led him away and brought him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed from a distance.[55]After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat in the midst of them.
[56]A certain female servant saw him as he sat in the light of the fire and looked straight at him and said, "This man also was with him."
[57]But Peter denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him."
[58]After a little while someone else saw him, and said, "You are also one of them."But Peter said, "Man, I am not."

[59]After about an hour another man insisted and said, "Truly this man also was with him, for he is a Galilean."
[60]But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." Immediately, while he was speaking, a rooster crowed.
[61]Turning, the Lord looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, when he said to him, "Before a rooster crows today you will deny me three times."[62]Peter went outside and wept bitterly.

[63]Then the men holding Jesus in custody mocked and beat him.[64]They put a cover over him and asked him, saying, "Prophesy! Who is the one who hit you?"[65]They spoke many other things against Jesus, blaspheming him.

[66]As soon as it was day, the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. They led him into the Council[67]and said, "If you are the Christ, tell us."But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe,

[68]and if I ask you, you will not answer.
[69]But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."
[70]They all said, "Then you are the Son of God?"Jesus said to them, "You say that I am."

[71]They said, "Why do we still need a witness? For we ourselves have heard from his own mouth."

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Luke 22 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The eating of the body and blood

Luke 22:19-20 describes Jesus's last meal with his followers. At that time, Jesus told them that what they were eating and drinking were his body and his blood. Nearly all Christian churches celebrate "the Lord's Supper," the "Eucharist," or "Holy Communion" to remember this meal.

The new covenant

Some people think that Jesus established the new covenant during the supper. Others think he established it after he went up to heaven. Others think it will not be established until Jesus comes again. Your translation should say no more about this than the ULB does. (See: covenant)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

Luke 22:1 Notes

Luke 22:1

General Information:

Judas agrees to betray Jesus. These verses give background information about this event.

Now

This word is used here to introduce a new event.

Festival of Unleavened Bread

The festival was called by this name because during the festival the Jews did not eat bread that was made with yeast. Alternate translation: "festival when they would eat unleavened bread"

was approaching

"was almost ready to begin"

Luke 22:2

seeking how

"looking for an opportunity" or "thinking of ways in which"

they could put Jesus to death

The priests and scribes did not have the authority to kill Jesus themselves, but they hoped to get others to kill him. Alternate translation: "they could get someone to put Jesus to death" or "they could get someone to kill Jesus"

afraid of the people

Possible meanings are 1) "scared of what the people might do" or 2) "scared that the people would make Jesus king."

Luke 22:3

General Information:

This is the beginning of the action in this part of the story.

Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot

What happened might have been similar to demon possession, but other demon-possessed people are obviously unable to control any of their own actions. Here Judas Iscariot seems to do everything he desires, but Satan was somehow at work in a special way. Whatever the intended meaning, Satan "entering" Judas Iscariot is a metaphor for Satan taking control of Judas Iscariot. Alternate translation: "Satan took control of Judas, the one called Iscariot"

Luke 22:4

chief priests

"the leaders of the priests"

captains

officers of the temple guards

how he would betray Jesus to them

"how he would help them arrest Jesus"

Luke 22:5

They were glad

"The chief priests and captains were glad"

to give him money

"to give Judas money"

Luke 22:6

He consented

"He agreed"

looked for an opportunity to give him over to them away from the crowd

This is an ongoing action that continues after this part of the story ends.

away from the crowd

"privately" or "when there was no crowd around him"

Luke 22:7

General Information:

Jesus sends Peter and John to prepare for the Passover meal. This verse gives background information about the event.

the day of unleavened bread

"the day of bread without yeast." This was the day the Jews would take all bread made with yeast out of their homes. Then they would celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days.

the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed

Each family or group of people would kill a lamb and eat it together, so many lambs were killed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people had to kill a lamb for their Passover meal"

Luke 22:8

prepare

This is a general word meaning "make ready." Jesus was not necessarily telling Peter and John to do all the cooking.

so that we may eat it

Jesus was including Peter and John when he said "we." Peter and John would be part of the group of the disciples

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that would eat the meal.
Luke 22:9
you want us to make preparations
The word "us" does not include Jesus. Jesus would not be part of the group that would prepare the meal.
make preparations
"make preparations for the meal" or "prepare the meal"
Luke 22:10
He answered them
"Jesus answered Peter and John"
Look
Jesus used this word to tell them to pay close attention and to do exactly what he tells them.
a man bearing a pitcher of water will meet you
"you will see a man carrying a pitcher of water"
bearing a pitcher of water
"carrying a jar with water in it." He probably would be carrying the jar on his shoulder.
Follow him into the house
"Follow him, and go into the house"
Luke 22:11
The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room, where I ... my disciples?"
The quote beginning with "Where is the guest room" is a direct quote of what Jesus, the teacher, wants to say to the master of his house. It can be translated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "Our teacher asks where the guest room is in which he ... his disciples." or "Our teacher says to show us the guest room where he ... us and the rest of his disciples."
The Teacher
This refers to Jesus.
eat the Passover
"eat the Passover meal"
Luke 22:12
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues giving instructions to Peter and John.
He will show you
"The owner of the house will show you"
upper room
"room upstairs." If your community does not have houses with rooms above other rooms, you may need to consider how to describe buildings in the city.
Luke 22:13
So they went
"So Peter and John went"
Luke 22:14
Connecting Statement:
This is the next event in the part of the story about the Passover. Jesus and his disciples are sitting to eat the Passover meal.
When the hour came
"When it was time to eat the meal"
he sat down
"Jesus sat down"
Luke 22:15
I have greatly desired
"I have wanted very much"
before I suffer
Jesus is referring ahead to his death. The word for "suffer" here means to go through an unusually difficult or painful experience.
Luke 22:16
For I say to you
Jesus uses this phrase to emphasize the importance of what he will say next.
until it is fulfilled
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) until the purpose of the Passover Festival is accomplished. Alternate translation: "until God fulfills it" or "until God completes the purpose of the Passover Festival" or 2) "until we celebrate the final Passover Festival"
Luke 22:17
took a cup
"picked up a cup of wine"
when he had given thanks
"when he had given thanks to God"
he said
"he said to his apostles"
share it among yourselves
They were to share the contents of the cup, and not the cup itself. Alternate translation: "share the wine in the cup among yourselves" or "each of you drink some of the wine from the cup"
Luke 22:18
For I say to you
This phrase is used to emphasize the importance of what Jesus will say next.
fruit of the vine
This refers to the juice that is squeezed from the grapes that grow on grapevines. Wine is made from fermented grape juice.
until the kingdom of God comes
"until God establishes his kingdom" or "until God rules in his kingdom"
Luke 22:19
bread
This bread did not have yeast in it, so it was flat.
he broke it
"he ripped it" or "he tore it." He may have divided it into many pieces or he may have divided it into two pieces and given them to the apostles to divide among themselves. If possible, use an expression that would apply to either situation.
This is my body
Possible meanings are 1) "This bread is my body" and 2) "This bread represents my body."
my body, which is given for you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "my body, which I will give for you" or "my body, which I will sacrifice for you"
Do this
"Eat this bread"
in remembrance of me
"in order to remember me"
Luke 22:20
This cup
The word "cup" refers to the wine in the cup. Alternate

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translation: "The wine in this cup" or "This cup of wine"
the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you
Here "blood, which is poured out" represents death. Jesus's death will establish the new covenant that God will make with his people. Alternate translation: "the new covenant that God will put into effect because I have shed my blood for you"
Luke 22:21
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his apostles.
The hand of the one who betrays me
The hand here is a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Jesus speaks of Judas betraying him as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "The person who is about to betray me" or "The man who is ready to betray me"
Luke 22:22
For the Son of Man indeed goes
"For, indeed, the Son of Man will go" or "For the Son of Man will die"
the Son of Man indeed goes
Jesus is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, indeed go"
as it has been determined
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as God has determined" or "as God has planned"
But woe to that man through whom he is betrayed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But woe to the man who betrays the Son of Man" or "But how terrible it will be for that man who betrays the Son of Man"
Luke 22:24
Then there arose also a quarrel among them
"Then the apostles began to argue among themselves"
was considered to be greatest
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "was the most important" or "the people thought was most important"
Luke 22:25
He said to them
"Jesus said to the apostles"
are lords over them
"rule forcefully over the Gentiles"
are called
Their people probably did not think that those rulers did good to them. Alternate translation: "like to be called" or "call themselves"
Luke 22:26
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues teaching his apostles.
it must not be like this with you
"you should not act like that"
the youngest
Older people were respected in that culture. The leaders were usually older people and were called "elders." The youngest person would be the least likely to lead, and the least important. Alternate translation: "the least important"
and the one who leads like the one who serves
Words from the phrase before this apply to this phrase. Alternate translation: "and let the one who leads become like the one who serves"
the one who serves
"a servant"
Luke 22:27
For
This connects Jesus's commands in verse 26 with this whole verse. It means that the most important person should serve because Jesus is a servant.
For who is greater ... serves?
"For who is more important ... serves?" Jesus uses this question to begin to explain to the apostles who is truly great. Alternate translation: "I want you to think about who is greater ... serves."
the one who sits at the table
"the one who is dining"
Is it not the one who sits at the table?
Jesus uses another question to teach the disciples. Alternate translation: "Of course the one who sits at the table is more important than the servant!"
Yet I am among you as one who serves
"But I am with you to be a servant" or "But I am with you to show you how a servant acts." The word "yet" is here because there is a contrast between what people would expect Jesus to be like and what he really was like.
Luke 22:28
have continued with me in my trials
"have stayed with me as I have struggled" or "have stayed with me while Satan has tempted me"
Luke 22:29
I set you over a kingdom, even as my Father has set me over a kingdom
Some languages may need to change the order. Alternate translation: "Just as my father has given a kingdom to me, I give a kingdom to you"
I set you over a kingdom
"I make you rulers in God's kingdom" or "I give you authority to rule in the kingdom" or "I will make you kings"
even as my Father has set me over a kingdom
"just as my Father has given me authority to rule as king in his kingdom"
Luke 22:30
you will sit on thrones
Kings sit on thrones. Sitting on a throne is a symbol of ruling. Alternate translation: "you will work as kings" or "you will do the work of kings"
Luke 22:31
General Information:
Jesus speaks directly to Simon.
Simon, Simon
Jesus said his name twice to show that what he was about to say to him was very important.
to have you, that he might sift you
The word "you" refers to all of the apostles. Languages that have different forms of "you" should use the plural form.
sift you as wheat
This means that Satan wanted to test the disciples to find something wrong. Alternate translation: "test you like someone passes grain through a sieve"
Luke 22:32

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But I have prayed for you
The word "you" here refers specifically to Simon. Languages that have different forms of "you" should use the singular form.
that your faith may not fail
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "that you will continue to have faith" or "that you will continue to trust me"
After you have turned back again
Here "turned back again" is a metaphor for starting to believe in someone again. Alternate translation: "After you start believing in me again" or "After you start serving me again"
strengthen your brothers
"encourage your brothers to be strong in their faith" or "help your brothers believe in me"
your brothers
This refers to the other disciples. Alternate translation: "your fellow believers" or "the other disciples"
Luke 22:34
the rooster will not crow this day before you deny three times that you know me
The order of the parts of the verse can be reversed. Alternate translation: "you will deny three times that you know me before the rooster crows this day"
the rooster will not crow this day before you deny
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "the rooster will crow this day only after you deny" or "before the rooster crows today, you will deny"
the rooster will not crow
Here, the crowing of the rooster refers to a certain time of day. Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. Therefore, this refers to dawn.
rooster
a bird that calls out loudly around the time the sun comes up
this day
The Jewish day begins at sunset. Jesus was speaking after the sun had set. The rooster would crow just before morning. The morning was part of "this day." Alternate translation: "tonight" or "in the morning"
Luke 22:35
Connecting Statement:
Jesus turns his attention back to speaking to all of his disciples.
Jesus said to them, "When ... did you lack anything?" They answered, "Nothing."
Jesus uses a question to help the apostles remember how well the people provided for them as they traveled. Though this is a rhetorical question and Jesus is not asking for information, you should translate it as a question unless only a statement would cause the disciples to reply that they had lacked nothing.
When I sent you out
Jesus is talking to his apostles, so the word "you" is plural.
purse
A purse is a bag for holding money. Here it is used to refer to "money."
a bag of provisions
"travelers' bag" or "bag of food"
Nothing
It may be helpful to some audiences to include more about the conversation. Alternate translation: "We did not lack anything" or "We had everything we needed"
Luke 22:36
and likewise a bag of provisions
"and let him also take a bag of provisions" or "and also a bag of provisions"
The one who does not have a sword should sell his cloak
Jesus was not referring to a specific person who did not have a sword. Alternate translation: "If anyone does not have a sword, he should sell his cloak"
cloak
"coat" or "outer garment"
Luke 22:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes speaking with his disciples.
what is written about me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what a prophet wrote about me in the scriptures"
must be fulfilled
The apostles would have understood that God would cause everything written in the scriptures to happen. Alternate translation: "God will fulfill" or "God will cause to happen"
He was counted with the lawless ones
Here Jesus is quoting the scriptures. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People counted him as a member of the group of lawless men"
the lawless ones
"those who break the law" or "the criminals"
For what is predicted about me is being fulfilled
Possible meanings are 1) "For what the prophet predicted about me is about to happen" or 2) "For my life is coming to an end"
Luke 22:38
they said
This refers to at least two of Jesus's apostles.
It is enough
Possible meanings are 1) they have enough swords. "We now have enough swords." or 2) Jesus wants them to stop talking about having swords. "No more of this talk about swords."
Luke 22:39
General Information:
Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives to pray.
Luke 22:40
that you do not enter into temptation
"that you are not tempted" or "that nothing tempts you and causes you to sin"
Luke 22:41
about a stone's throw
"about the distance that someone can throw a stone." Alternate translation: "a short distance" or with an estimated measurement like "about thirty meters"
Luke 22:42
Father, if you are willing
Jesus will bear the guilt of every person's sin on the cross. He prays to his Father, asking if there is another way.

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Father
This is an important title for God.
remove this cup from me
Jesus refers to what he will soon experience as if it were a cup of bitter liquid that he would have to drink. Alternate translation: "allow me to not drink from this cup" or "allow me to not experience what is about to happen"
Nevertheless not my will, but yours be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "However, do what is according to your will rather than what is according to my will"
Luke 22:43
appeared to him
"appeared to Jesus"
strengthening him
"encouraging him"
Luke 22:44
Being in agony, he prayed
"He was suffering greatly, and so he prayed"
he prayed more earnestly
"he prayed more intensely"
his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground
"his sweat was falling to the ground like large drops of blood"
Luke 22:45
When he rose up from his prayer, he
"When Jesus got up after praying, he" or "After praying, Jesus got up and he"
found them sleeping because of their sorrow
"saw that they were sleeping because they were tired from their sadness"
Luke 22:46
Why are you sleeping?
Possible meanings are 1) "I am surprised that you are sleeping now." or 2) "You should not be sleeping now!"
that you may not enter into temptation
"so that you may not be tempted" or "so that nothing tempts you and causes you to sin"
Luke 22:47
behold, a crowd appeared
The word "behold" alerts us to a new group in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "there was a crowd that appeared"
leading them
Judas was showing the people where Jesus was. He was not telling the crowd what to do. Alternate translation: "leading them to Jesus"
to kiss him
"to greet him with a kiss" or "to greet him by kissing him." When men greeted other men who were family or friends, they would kiss them on one cheek or both cheeks. If your readers would find it embarrassing to say that a man would kiss another man, you could translate it in a more general way: "to give him a friendly greeting."
Luke 22:48
are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?
Jesus uses a question to rebuke Judas for betraying him with a kiss. Normally a kiss is a sign of love. Alternate translation: "it is a kiss you are using to betray the Son of Man!"
the Son of Man with
Jesus is using this term to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "me, the Son of Man, with"
Luke 22:49
those who were around Jesus
This refers to Jesus's disciples.
what was happening
This refers to the priests and soldiers coming to arrest Jesus.
strike with the sword
The question is about the type of fight they should engage in
Luke 22:50
one of them
"one of the disciples"
struck the servant of the high priest
"struck the servant of the high priest with a sword"
Luke 22:51
That is enough
"Do not do any more of that"
touched his ear
"touched the servant where his ear had been cut off"
Luke 22:52
Do you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs?
"Do you come out with swords and clubs because you think I am a robber?" Jesus uses this question to scold the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "You know that I am not a robber, yet you come out to me bringing swords and clubs."
Luke 22:53
I was daily with you
"I was among you every day"
in the temple
Only priests entered the temple. Alternate translation: "in the temple courts" or "at the temple"
lay your hands on me
In this verse, to lay hands on someone is to arrest that person. Alternate translation: "arrest me"
this is your hour
"this is the time for you to do whatever you want"
the authority of darkness
It may be helpful to repeat the reference to time. "Darkness" is a metonym for Satan. Alternate translation: "the time of the authority of darkness" or "the time when God is allowing Satan to do whatever he wants"
Luke 22:54
led him away
"led Jesus away from the garden where they had arrested him"
into the high priest's house
"into the courtyard of the high priest's house"
Luke 22:55
they had kindled a fire
"some people had made a fire." The fire was to keep the people warm during the cool night. Alternate translation: "some people started a fire to keep warm"
the middle of the courtyard
This was the courtyard at the high priest's house. It had

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walls around it, but no roof.
in the midst of them
"together with them"
Luke 22:56
he sat in the light of the fire
He sat near the fire and its line shone on him.
and looked straight at him and said
"and she looked straight at Peter and said to the other people in the courtyard"
This man also was with him
The woman was telling the people about Peter being with Jesus. She probably did not know Peter's name.
Luke 22:57
But Peter denied it
"But Peter said that it was not true"
Woman, I do not know him
Peter did not know the woman's name. He was not insulting her by calling her "woman." If people would think he was insulting her, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a woman he does not know, or you could leave out the word.
Luke 22:58
You are also one of them
"You are also one of those who were with Jesus"
Man, I am not
Peter did not know the man's name. He was not insulting him by calling him "Man." If people would think he was insulting him, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a man he does not know, or you could leave out the word.
Luke 22:59
insisted and said
"said insistently" or "said loudly"
Truly this man
Here "this man" refers to Peter. The speaker probably did not know Peter's name.
he is a Galilean
The man could probably tell Peter was from Galilee from the way he talked.
Luke 22:60
Man
Peter did not know the man's name. He was not insulting him by calling him "Man." If people would think he was insulting him, you could use a culturally acceptable way for a man to address a man he does not know, or you could leave out the word. See how you translated this in Luke 22:58.
I do not know what you are saying
"I do not know what you are talking about." This expression means that Peter completely disagrees with the man. Alternate translation: "what you said is not true at all" or "what you said is completely false"
while he was speaking
"while Peter was speaking"
a rooster crowed
Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. See how you translated a similar phrase in Luke 22:34.
Luke 22:61
Turning, the Lord looked at Peter
"The Lord turned and looked at Peter"
the word of the Lord
"what Jesus had said" when Jesus had said that Peter would betray Jesus
a rooster crows
Roosters often crow just before the sun appears in the morning. See how you translated a similar phrase in Luke 22:34.
today
The Jewish day started at sundown and continued to the next evening. Jesus had spoken the previous evening about what would happen shortly before dawn or at dawn. Alternate translation: "tonight"
deny me three times
"deny three times that you know me"
Luke 22:62
Peter went outside
"Peter went out of the courtyard"
Luke 22:64
They put a cover over him
"They covered his eyes so that he could not see"
Prophesy! Who is the one who hit you?
The guards did not believe that Jesus was a prophet. Rather, they believed that a real prophet would know who hit him even if he could not see. They called Jesus a prophet, but they were teasing him and showing him why they did not think that he was a prophet. Alternate translation: "Prove that you are a prophet. Tell us who hit you!" or "Hey prophet, who hit you?"
Prophesy!
"Speak words from God!" The implied information is that God would have to tell Jesus who struck him since Jesus was blindfolded and could not see.
Luke 22:66
General Information:
It is now the next day and Jesus is brought before the council.
As soon as it was day
"At dawn the next morning"
They led him into the Council
Possible meanings are 1) "The elders had Jesus brought into the Council" or 2) "The guards led Jesus into the council of the elders." Some languages may avoid saying who led him by using the pronoun "they" or by using a passive verb: "Jesus was led into the council"
Luke 22:67
and said
A new sentence can be started here if a period is put at the end of the previous verse. Alternate translation: "The elders said to Jesus"
If you are the Christ, tell us
"Tell us if you are the Christ"
If I tell you, you will not believe
This was a way for Jesus to respond without giving them a reason to say that he was guilty of blasphemy. Alternate translation: "If I tell you, you will not believe me"
Luke 22:68
if I ask you, you will not answer

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This was a way for Jesus to rebuke them without giving them a reason to convict him. These words, along with "If I tell you, you will not believe" (verse 67), show that Jesus did not believe that the council really wanted to know the truth.

Luke 22:69

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the council.

from now on

"from this day" or "starting from today"

the Son of Man will

Jesus uses this phrase to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "I, the Son of Man, will"

seated at the right hand of the power of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "seated in the place of honor beside the power of God"

the power of God

"the all-powerful God." Here "power" refers to his supreme authority.

Luke 22:70

Then you are the Son of God?

The council asked this question because they wanted Jesus to explicitly confirm their understanding that he was saying he was the Son of God. Alternate translation: "So when you said that, did you mean that you are the Son of God?"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

You say that I am

"Yes, it is just like you say"

Luke 22:71

Why do we still need a witness?

They use a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "We have no further need for witnesses!"

heard from his own mouth

The phrase "his own mouth" refers to his speech. Alternate translation: "heard him say himself that he was the Son of God"

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23 [1]The whole company of them rose up and brought Jesus before Pilate.[2]They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man misleading our nation, forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king."

[3]Pilate asked him, saying, "Are you the King of the Jews?"Jesus answered him and said, "You say so."

[4]Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, "I find no guilt in this man."
[5]But they were insisting, saying, "He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee even to this place."
[6]So when Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.[7]When he learned that he was under Herod's authority, he sent Jesus to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem in those days.

[8]When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, because he had wanted to see him for a long time. He had heard about him and he hoped to see some sign done by him.[9]Herod questioned Jesus in many words, but Jesus answered him nothing.[10]The chief priests and the scribes stood, vigorously accusing him.
[11]Herod with his soldiers showed Jesus contempt and they mocked him. Then they dressed him in splendid clothes and sent him back to Pilate.[12]For Herod and Pilate had become friends with each other that very day, for before this they had been enemies with each other.

[13]Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people[14]and said to them, "You brought to me this man like a man who is misleading the people. And see, I, having questioned him before you, find no guilt in this man concerning those things of which you accuse him.
[15]No, nor does Herod, for he sent him back to us, and see, nothing worthy of death has been done by him.[16]I will therefore punish him and release him."[17] [1]
[18]But they cried out all together, saying, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas!"[19]Barabbas was a man who had been put into prison for a certain rebellion in the city and for murder.
[20]Pilate addressed them again, desiring to release Jesus.[21]But they shouted, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him."[22]He said to them a third time, "Why, what evil has this man done? I have found no guilt deserving death in him. Therefore after punishing him, I will release him."
[23]But they were insistent with loud voices, demanding for him to be crucified. Their voices convinced Pilate.[24]So Pilate decided to grant their demand.[25]He released the one they asked for who had been put in prison for rebellion and murder. But he delivered up Jesus to their will.

[26]As they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him to carry, following Jesus.

[27]A great crowd of the people, and of women who grieved and mourned for him, were following him.[28]But turning to them, Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.

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[29]For see, the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that did not bear, and the breasts that did not nurse.'
[30] Then they will begin to say to the mountains,
'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us.'

[31]For if they do these things while the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

[32]Other men, two criminals, were led away with him to be put to death.

[33]When they came to the place that is called "The Skull," there they crucified him and the criminals—one on his right and one on his left.[34]Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Then they cast lots, dividing up his garments.

[35]The people stood watching while the rulers also were mocking him, saying, "He saved others. Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, the chosen one."

[36]The soldiers also ridiculed him, approaching him, offering him vinegar,[37]and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself."[38]There was also a sign over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

[39]One of the criminals who was hanging there insulted him by saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us."
[40]But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?[41]We indeed are here justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds. But this man did nothing wrong."
[42]Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."
[43]Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise."

[44]It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour[45]as the sun turned dark. Then the curtain of the temple was split in two.
[46]Crying with a loud voice, Jesus said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." Having said this, he died.
[47]When the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, "Surely this was a righteous man."
[48]When all the multitudes who came together to witness this sight saw the things that were done, they returned beating their breasts.[49]But all those who knew him, and the women who followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

[50]Behold, there was a man named Joseph, who was a member of the Council. He was a good and righteous man.[51]This man had not agreed with their plan and action. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, and he was looking for the kingdom of God.
[52]This man, approaching Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus.[53]He took it down, wrapped it in fine linen, and placed it in a tomb that was cut in stone, where no one had ever been laid.
[54]It was the Day of the Preparation, and the Sabbath was about to begin.[55]The women who had come with Jesus out of Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid.[56]They returned and prepared spices and ointments.Then on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have Luke 23:17, Now Pilate was obligated to release to the Jews one prisoner at the feast.

Luke 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULB sets the last line of this chapter apart because it is more connected with chapter 24 than with chapter 23.

Special concepts in this chapter

Accuse

The chief priests and scribes accused Jesus of doing evil because they wanted Pilate to kill Jesus. But they were accusing him falsely, because Jesus had never done what they accused him of doing.

"The curtain of the temple was split in two"

The curtain in the temple was an important symbol that showed that people needed to have someone speak to God for them. They could not speak to God directly because all people are sinful and God hates sin. God split the curtain to show that Jesus's people can now speak to God directly because Jesus has paid for their sins.

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Luke 23:53) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their

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dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"I find no fault in this man"

Pilate was saying that he did not know of any reason why he should punish Jesus: Jesus had not broken any laws. Pilate was not saying that Jesus was perfect.

Links:

Luke 23:1 Notes

Luke 23:1

General Information:

Jesus is brought before Pilate.

The whole company of them

"All of the Jewish leaders" or "All the members of the Council"

rose up

This is an idiom that means that they began to act decisively.

before Pilate

To appear before someone means to enter into their authority. Alternate translation: "to be judged by Pilate"

Luke 23:2

We found

"We" refers only the Council members, and not to Pilate of any other people nearby.

misleading our nation

"causing our people to do things that are not right" or "causing trouble by telling lies to our people"

forbidding to give tribute

"telling them not to pay taxes"

to Caesar

Caesar represents the Emperor of Rome. Alternate translation: "to the Emperor"

Luke 23:3

Pilate asked him

"Pilate asked Jesus"

You say so

Possible meanings are 1) by saying this, Jesus implied that he is the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "Yes, as you said, I am" or "Yes. It is as you said" or 2) by saying this, Jesus was saying that Pilate, not Jesus, was the one calling him the King of the Jews. Alternate translation: "You yourself have said so"

Luke 23:4

multitudes

large groups of people

I find no guilt in this man

"I do not find this man guilty of anything"

Luke 23:5

stirs up

"causes trouble among"

all Judea, beginning from Galilee even to this place

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "all Judea. He began causing trouble in Galilee and now is causing trouble here"

Luke 23:6

heard this

"heard that Jesus began to teach in Galilee"

he asked whether the man was a Galilean

Pilate wanted to know from which area Jesus came because he wanted to have a lower-ranking government official judge Jesus. If Jesus were from Galilee, Pilate could have Herod judge Jesus because Herod had authority over Galilee.

the man

This refers to Jesus.

Luke 23:7

he learned

"Pilate found out"

he was under Herod's authority

The passage does not state the implied fact that Herod was the ruler of Galilee. Alternate translation: "Jesus was under the authority of Herod because Herod ruled over Galilee"

he sent

"Pilate sent"

who himself

This refers to Herod.

in those days

"at that time"

Luke 23:8

he was very glad

"Herod was very glad"

he had wanted to see him

"Herod had wanted to see Jesus"

He had heard about him

"Herod had heard about Jesus"

he hoped to see some sign done by him

Here the word "hope" means to expect that something one desires might happen. Alternate translation: "Herod expected that he might see some sign done by him"

to see some sign done by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to see him do some kind of sign" or "that he might see Jesus do some sign"

sign

a miracle that would show that Jesus was more than a mere man

Luke 23:9

Herod questioned Jesus in many words

"Herod asked Jesus a lot of questions"

answered him nothing

"did not reply" or "did not give Herod an answer"

Luke 23:10

the scribes stood

"the scribes were standing there"

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vigorously accusing him
They were showing great anger and using strong words and accusing him of many things.
Luke 23:11
Herod with his soldiers
"Herod and his soldiers"
dressed him in splendid clothes
"put beautiful clothes on him." The translation should not imply that this was done to honor or care for Jesus. They did it to mock Jesus and to make fun of him.
Luke 23:12
Herod and Pilate had become friends with each other that very day
The implied information is that they became friends because Herod appreciated Pilate allowing him to judge Jesus. Alternate translation: "Herod and Pilate became friends with each other that very day because Pilate had sent Jesus to Herod for judgment"
before this they had been enemies with each other
This information is enclosed in parentheses to show that it is background information. Use a format that your audience would understand.
Luke 23:13
called together the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people
"called the chief priests and the rulers and the crowd of people to come meet together"
the crowd of people
It is not likely that Pilate asked a crowd to come. The crowd was probably still there waiting to see what would happen to Jesus. Alternate translation: "the crowd that was still there"
Luke 23:14
this man
This refers to Jesus.
like a man who
"saying that he"
misleading the people
"urging the people to act badly" or "trying to get the people to rebel against the government"
I, having questioned him before you,
"I have questioned Jesus in your presence and." It is implied that they were witnesses to the proceedings. Alternate translation: "I have questioned Jesus with you here as witnesses, and I"
find no guilt in this man
"do not think that he is guilty"
Luke 23:15
Connecting Statement:
Pilate continues speaking to the Jewish leaders and to the crowd.
No, nor does Herod
We can understand what Herod did not do from what Pilate said about himself in verse 14. Alternate translation: "Nor does Herod find guilt in this man" or "Even Herod thinks he is innocent"
nor does Herod, for
"nor does Herod, because" or "nor does Herod. We know this because"
he sent him back to us
"Herod sent Jesus to return to us." The word "us" refers to Pilate, his soldiers, and the priests and scribes, but not those who were listening to Pilate.
nothing worthy of death has been done by him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he has not done anything to deserve a death sentence"
Luke 23:16
I will therefore punish him
Because Pilate had found no fault in Jesus he should have released him without punishment. It is not necessary to try to make this statement fit logically into the translation. Pilate punished Jesus, whom he knew to be innocent, only because he was afraid of the crowd.
Luke 23:18
General Information:
Verse 19 tells us background information about who Barabbas is.
they cried out all together
"all the people in the crowd shouted"
Away with this man, and release
"Take this man away! Release." They are asking him to have his soldiers kill Jesus. Alternate translation: "Take this man away and execute him! Release"
release to us
"us" refers to the crowd only, and not to Pilate and his soldiers.
Luke 23:19
Barabbas was a man ... for murder
This is background information that Luke gives about who Barabbas was.
who had been put into prison
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Romans had put in prison"
a certain rebellion in the city
"trying to persuade the people of the city to rebel against the Roman government"
Luke 23:20
addressed them again
"spoke to them again" or "spoke again to the people in the crowd and to the religious rulers"
desiring to release Jesus
"because he wanted to set Jesus free"
Luke 23:22
He said to them a third time
"Pilate said to the crowd again, for the third time"
what evil has this man done?
Pilate uses this question to cause the crowd to understand that Jesus is innocent. Alternate translation: "this man has not done anything wrong!"
I have found no guilt deserving death in him
"I have not learned of anything he has done for which I should put him to death"
after punishing him, I will release him
As in Luke 23:16, Pilate should have released Jesus without punishment because he was innocent. However, he offered to punish Jesus to appease the crowd.
I will release him
"I will set him free"
Luke 23:23
they were insistent

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"the crowd insisted"
with loud voices
"with shouting"
for him to be crucified
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Pilate to have his soldiers crucify Jesus"
Their voices convinced Pilate
"The crowd kept shouting until they convinced Pilate"
Luke 23:24
to grant their demand
"to do what the crowd requested"
Luke 23:25
He released the one they asked for
Pilate released Barrabas from prison. Alternate translation: "Pilate freed Barabbas, whom the crowd had asked be released"
who had been put in prison ... murder
This is background information about where Barrabas was at that time. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Romans had put in prison ... murder"
he delivered up Jesus to their will
"Pilate commanded the soldiers to bring Jesus to them to do whatever the crowd wanted to do"
Luke 23:26
As they led him away
"While the soldiers led Jesus away from where Pilate was"
seized
The Roman soldiers had the authority to compel people to carry their loads. Do not translate this in a way that indicates that Simon was arrested or had done anything wrong.
one Simon of Cyrene
"a man named Simon, from the city of Cyrene"
coming from the country
"who was coming into Jerusalem from the countryside"
laid the cross on him
"put the cross on his shoulders"
following Jesus
"and he followed behind Jesus"
Luke 23:27
A great crowd
"A large crowd"
great crowd of the people, and of women
The woman were part of the large crowd, and not a separate crowd.
mourned for him
"mourned for Jesus"
were following him
This does not mean that they were Jesus's disciples. It simply means they were walking along behind him.
Luke 23:28
turning to them
This indicates that Jesus turned to face the women and address them directly.
Daughters of Jerusalem
The "daughter" of a city means the women of the city. This was not rude. It was a normal form of address to a group of women from one location. Alternate translation: "You women who are from Jerusalem"
do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children
The person is a metonym for what happens to the person. Alternate translation: "do not weep about the bad things that will happen to me. Instead, weep because worse things will happen to you and to your children" or "you are weeping because bad things are happening to me, but you will weep even more when worse things happen to you and your children"
Luke 23:29
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.
For see
This introduces the reason why the women of Jerusalem should weep for themselves.
the days are coming
"there will soon be a time"
in which they will say
"when people will say"
the barren
"women who have not given birth to children"
the wombs that did not bear ... the breasts that did not nurse
These clauses are used to more fully describe "the barren." Those women neither gave birth nor nursed children. It may be helpful to combine these together with "the barren." Alternate translation: "the women who have never given birth to children or nursed babies"
they
This can refer to either the Romans or the Jewish leaders, or to people in general.
Luke 23:30
Then
at that time
to the hills
Words are left out to keep the phrase short. Alternate translation: "they will say to the hills"
Luke 23:31
For if they do these things while the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?
Jesus uses a question to help the crowd understand that people are doing bad things now in good times, so certainly they will do worse things in the bad times in the future. Alternate translation: "You can see that they are doing these bad things while the tree is green, so you can be sure that they will do worse things when the tree is dry."
the tree is green
The green tree is a metaphor for something that is good. If your language has a similar metaphor, you should use it here.
it is dry
The dry wood is a metaphor for something that will be useful only to burn.
Luke 23:32
Other men, two criminals, were led away with him to be put to death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The soldiers led away with Jesus two criminals to execute them also"
Other men, two criminals
"Two other men who were criminals" or "Two criminals."

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Luke avoids saying "other criminals" because Jesus was innocent, even though he was treated as a criminal. Luke calls the other two men criminals, but not Jesus.

Luke 23:33

When they came

The word "they" includes the soldiers, the criminals, and Jesus.

they crucified him

"the Roman soldiers crucified Jesus"

one on his right and one on his left

"they crucified one criminal on Jesus's right side and the other criminal on Jesus's left side"

Luke 23:34

Father, forgive them

The word "them" refers to those who were crucifying Jesus. Jesus speaks to his Father with compassion toward the men crucifying him.

Father

This is an important title for God.

for they do not know what they are doing

"because they do not understand what they are doing." The Roman soldiers did not understand that they were crucifying the Son of God. Alternate translation: "for they do not really know whom they are crucifying"

they cast lots

The soldiers participated in a type of gambling. Alternate translation: "they gambled"

cast lots, dividing up his garments

"cast lots to decide who among the soldiers would take home each piece of Jesus's clothing"

Luke 23:35

The people stood

"The people were standing there"

him

This refers to Jesus.

He saved others. Let him save himself

Luke records the ironic words of the rulers. The only way Jesus could save others was by dying instead of saving himself.

Let him save himself

"Jesus should be able to save himself." They said this to mock Jesus. They did not believe he could save himself. Alternate translation: "We would like to see him prove who he is by saving himself from the cross"

the chosen one

"the one that God has chosen"

Luke 23:36

him

Jesus

approaching him

"coming close to Jesus"

offering him vinegar

"offering Jesus vinegar to drink." Vinegar is a cheap drink that common people drink. The soldiers were mocking Jesus by giving a cheap drink to someone who claims to be a king.

Luke 23:37

If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself

The soldiers were mocking Jesus. Alternate translation: "We do not believe you are the King of the Jews, but if you are, prove us wrong by saving yourself"

Luke 23:38

a sign over him

"a placard at the top of Jesus's cross that stated"

This is the King of the Jews

The people who put this sign above Jesus were mocking him. They did not really think he was a king.

Luke 23:39

insulted him

"reviled Jesus"

Are you not the Christ? Save yourself

The criminal uses a question to mock Jesus. Alternate translation: "You claim to be the Christ. Save yourself" or "If you really were the Christ, you would save yourself"

Save yourself and us

The criminal did not really think that Jesus could rescue them from the cross.

Luke 23:40

the other rebuked him

"the other criminal rebuked him"

Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

The criminal uses a question to scold the other criminal. Alternate translation: "You should fear God, because you are under the same sentence of condemnation."

you are under the same sentence of condemnation

"the government has condemned you to be punished in the same way"

Luke 23:41

We indeed ... for we ... we deserve

These usages of "we" refer only to the two criminals, and not to Jesus or the other people.

We indeed are here justly

"Truly we deserve this punishment"

this man

This refers to Jesus.

Luke 23:42

Then he said

"The criminal also said"

remember me

"think about me and treat me well"

come into your kingdom

To "come into" a kingdom means to begin to rule. Alternate translation: "begin to rule as king"

Luke 23:43

Truly I say to you, today

"Truly" adds emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "I want you to know that today"

paradise

This is the place that righteous people go to when they die. Jesus was assuring the man that he would be with God and God would accept him. Alternate translation: "the place where the righteous people live" or "the place where people live well"

Luke 23:44

about the sixth hour

"about noon." This reflects the custom at the time of counting hours beginning with daybreak at 6 a.m.

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darkness came over the whole land
"the entire land became dark"
until the ninth hour
"until 3 p.m." This reflects the custom at the time of counting hours beginning with daybreak at 6 a.m.
Luke 23:45
as the sun turned dark
This does not refer to sundown. Rather, the light of the sun turned dark during the middle of the day. Use a term to describe the sun becoming dark rather than the sun going down.
the curtain of the temple
"the curtain inside the temple." This was the curtain that separated the most holy place from the rest of the temple.
the curtain of the temple was split in two
"the curtain of the temple was torn into two pieces." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God tore the temple curtain into two pieces"
Luke 23:46
Crying with a loud voice
"Shouting loudly." It may be helpful to show how this is related to the events of the previous verses. Alternate translation: "When that happened, Jesus shouted loudly"
Father
This is an important title for God.
into your hands I commit my spirit
"The phrase "into your hands" refers to God's care. Alternate translation: "I entrust my spirit to your care" or "I give my spirit to you, knowing you will care for it"
Having said this
"After Jesus said this"
he died
"Jesus died"
Luke 23:47
the centurion
This was the title for the Roman officer who was in charge of the other Roman soldiers. He supervised the crucifixion.
what was done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the things that had happened"
this was a righteous man
"this man did nothing wrong" or "this man did not do anything wrong"
Luke 23:48
multitudes
large groups of people
who came together
"who gathered together"
witness this sight
"see this event" or "observe what was happening"
the things that were done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what had happened"
returned beating
"returned to their homes beating"
beating their breasts
This was a symbol of sorrow and regret. Alternate translation: "hitting their own chests to show that they were sorrowful"
Luke 23:49
followed him
"traveled with Jesus"
at a distance
"some distance away from Jesus"
these things
"what happened"
Luke 23:50
General Information:
The author begins to give background information about the man who buried Jesus's body.
Behold, there was a man
The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this. Alternate translation: "There was a man who was"
the Council
"the Jewish Council"
Luke 23:51
General Information:
The author finishes giving background information about the man who buried Jesus's body. It may be helpful to reorder some of the information in this verse and the previous verse with a verse bridge, as the UDB does.
with their plan and action
What the decision was can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "with either the Council's decision to kill Jesus or with their action in killing him"
a city of the Jews
"a city in which most people were Jews"
Luke 23:52
This man, approaching Pilate, asked for the body of Jesus
"This man went to Pilate and requested the body of Jesus, to bury it."
Luke 23:53
He took it down
"Joseph took Jesus's body from the cross." He probably had help, so this may be a synecdoche. Alternate translation: "Joseph and some helpers took it down"
wrapped it in fine linen
"wrapped the body in a fine linen cloth." This was the normal burial custom at that time.
that was cut in stone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which someone had cut in a rock cliff"
where no one had ever been laid
This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "No one had ever before put a body in that tomb"
Luke 23:54
the Day of the Preparation
"the day when people got ready for the Jewish day of rest called the Sabbath"
the Sabbath was about to begin
For the Jews, the day began at sunset. Alternate translation: "it was soon going to be sunset, the start of the Sabbath"
Luke 23:55
who had come with Jesus out of Galilee
"who had traveled with Jesus from the region of Galilee"
followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid

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This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "walked along behind Joseph and the men who were with him; the women saw the tomb and how the men laid Jesus's body inside the tomb"

Luke 23:56

They returned

"The women went to the houses where the women were staying"

prepared spices and ointments

Because they had had no time to honor Jesus by putting fragrant spices and ointments on his body on the day he died, they were going to do it on the morning of the first day of the week. Alternate translation: "prepared spices and ointments to put on Jesus's body"

they rested

"the women did no work"

according to the commandment

"according to the Jewish law" or "as the Jewish law required." According to the law, they were not allowed to prepare his body on the Sabbath.

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24 [1]Very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared.[2]They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.[3]They entered in, but did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.
[4]It happened that, while they were confused about this, suddenly, two men stood by them in bright shining garments.[5]As the women were terrified and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said to the women, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?
[6]He is not here, but has been raised! Remember how he spoke to you when he was still in Galilee,[7]saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and on the third day rise again."
[8]The women remembered his words[9]and returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and all the rest.
[10]Now Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them reported these things to the apostles.
[11]But this message seemed like idle talk to the apostles, and they did not believe the women.[12]Yet Peter rose up and ran to the tomb, and, stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves. Peter then departed to his home, wondering what had happened.

[13]Behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was sixty stadia from Jerusalem.[14]They discussed with each other about all the things that had happened.
[15]It happened that, while they discussed and questioned together, Jesus himself approached and went with them.[16]But their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.
[17]Jesus said to them, "What are these matters you two are discussing as you walk?" They stood there looking sad.
[18]One of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only person in Jerusalem who does not know the things which have happened there these days?"

[19]Jesus said to them, "What things?"They answered him, "The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

[20]and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him.
[21]But we hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. Yes, and what is more, it is now the third day since all these things happened.
[22]But also, some women of our company amazed us, having been at the tomb early in the morning.[23]When they did not find his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.[24]Some men who were with us went to the tomb, and found it just as the women had said. But they did not see him."

[25]Jesus said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken![26]Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?"[27]Then beginning from Moses and through all the prophets, Jesus interpreted to them the things concerning himself in all the scriptures.

[28]As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as though he were going further.[29]But they compelled him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is almost over." So Jesus went in to stay with them.
[30]It happened that, when he had sat down with them to eat, he took the bread, blessed it, and breaking it, he gave it to them.[31]Then their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight.[32]They said one to another, "Was not our heart burning within us, while he spoke to us on the way, while he opened to us the scriptures?"
[33]They rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them,[34]saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon."[35]So they told the things that happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them in the breaking of the bread.

[36]As they spoke these things, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace be to you."[37]But they were terrified and filled with fear and thought that they were seeing a spirit.

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[38]Jesus said to them, "Why are you troubled? Why do questions arise in your heart?[39]See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see me having."[40]When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.
[41]They still could not believe it because of joy, and they were amazed. Jesus said to them, "Do you have anything to eat?"[42]They gave him a piece of a broiled fish,[43]and he took it and ate it before them.

[44]He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you when I was with you, that all that was written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
[45]Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures.[46]He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day.[47]Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.
[48]You are witnesses of these things.[49]See, I am sending you what my Father promised. But remain in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

[50]Then Jesus led them out until they were near Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them.[51]It happened that, while he was blessing them, he left them and was carried up into heaven.
[52]So they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.[53]They were continually in the temple, blessing God.

Luke 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (Luke 24:1) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

The faith of the women

Most of Luke's original readers would have thought of women as less important than men, but Luke carefully shows that some women loved Jesus very much and had more faith than the twelve disciples had.

Resurrection

Luke wants his readers to understand that Jesus came alive again in a physical body (Luke 24:38-43).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

"On the third day"

Jesus told his followers that he would become alive again "on the third day" (Luke 18:33). He died on a Friday afternoon (before sunset) and became alive again on a Sunday, so he became alive again "on the third day" because the Jews said that the day began and ended at sunset, and they counted any part of the day as a day. Friday was the first day, Saturday was the second day, and Sunday was the third day.

Two men in bright shining robes

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels were in human form. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

Links:

Luke 24:1 Notes

Luke 24:1

General Information:

The women (Luke 23:55) return to the tomb with spices to put on Jesus's body.

Very early on the first day of the week

"Before dawn on Sunday"

they came to the tomb

"the women arrived at the tomb." These were the women spoken of in Luke 23:55.

the tomb

This tomb was cut in the rock of a cliff.

bringing the spices

These were the same spices they prepared in Luke 23:56.

Luke 24:2

They found the stone

"They saw that the stone was"

the stone rolled away

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone had rolled the stone"

the stone

This was a large, cut, round stone big enough to completely block the doorway to the tomb. It required several men to

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roll it.
Luke 24:3
did not find the body of the Lord Jesus
You can state explicitly that they did not find it because it was not there. Alternate translation: "the body of the Lord Jesus was not there"
Luke 24:4
General Information:
Two angels appear and begin speaking to the women.
It happened
This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
Luke 24:5
were terrified
"became very afraid"
bowed down their faces to the earth
"bowed low to the ground." This action expresses their humility and submission to the men.
Why do you seek the living among the dead?
The men use a question to mildly criticize the women for looking in a tomb for a living person. Alternate translation: "You are looking for a living person among dead people!" or "You should not be looking for someone who is alive in a place where they bury dead people!"
Why do you seek
Here "you" is plural, referring to the women who came.
Luke 24:6
but has been raised
"but he has been made alive again." "Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because God has made him alive again"
Remember how
"Remember what"
to you
The word "you" is plural. It refers to the women and possibly the other disciples in addition.
Luke 24:7
Connecting Statement:
The angels finish speaking to the women.
that the Son of Man
This is the beginning of an indirect quote. It can also be translated with a direct quote, as in the UDB.
the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men and be crucified
The phrase "must be" means this is something that would certainly happen because God had already decided that it would happen. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "it was necessary that they hand the Son of Man over to sinful men who would crucify him"
into the hands
Here "hands" refers to power or control.
third day
The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day.
Luke 24:8
remembered his words
Here "words" refers to the statement that Jesus made. Alternate translation: "remembered what Jesus said"
Luke 24:9
Connecting Statement:
The women go to tell the apostles about what they found at the tomb.
the eleven and all the rest
"the eleven apostles and all the rest of the disciples who were with them"
the eleven
This is Luke's first reference to the "eleven" because there had always been twelve before. But Judas left the twelve and betrayed Jesus.
Luke 24:10
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke gives the names of some of the women who came from the tomb and told the apostles what had happened there.
Luke 24:11
But this message seemed like idle talk to the apostles
"But the apostles thought that what the women said was foolish talk"
Luke 24:12
Yet Peter
This phrase contrasts Peter to the other apostles. He did not dismiss what the women said, but ran to the tomb to see for himself.
rose up
This is an idiom that means "began to act." Whether Peter was sitting or standing when he decided to act is not important. Alternate translation: "started out"
stooping
Peter had to bend over in order to see inside the tomb because tombs cut in solid rock were very low. Alternate translation: "bending himself at the waist"
the linen cloths by themselves
"only the linen cloths." This refers to the cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus's body when he was buried in [Luke 23:53]
departed to his home
"went away to his home"
Luke 24:13
General Information:
Two of the disciples are on their way to Emmaus.
Behold
The author uses this word to mark the beginning of a new event.
two of them
"two of the disciples"
that very day
"that same day." This refers to the day when the women found the tomb to be empty.
Emmaus
This is the name of a town.
sixty stadia
"eleven kilometers." A "stadium" was 185 meters.
Luke 24:15
It happened that

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This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. It starts with Jesus approaching them. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Jesus himself

The word "himself" emphasizes the fact that the very Jesus they were talking about actually appeared to them. So far the women had seen the angels, but no one had seen Jesus.

Luke 24:16

their eyes were prevented from recognizing him

"their eyes were kept from recognizing Jesus." The men's ability to recognize Jesus is spoken of as their eyes' ability to recognize him. This can be stated in active form. It is most likely that it was God who prevented them from recognizing Jesus. Alternate translation: "something happened to them so they could not recognize him" or "God prevented them from recognizing him"

Luke 24:17

Jesus said to them

"Jesus said to the two men"

Luke 24:18

Cleopas

This is the name of a man.

Are you the only person ... days?

Cleopas uses this question to show his surprise that this man appears not to know about the things that have happened in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "You must be the only person ... days."

Are you

Here "you" is singular.

Luke 24:19

What things

"What things have happened" or "What things have taken place"

a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people

This means that God caused Jesus to be mighty and that the people saw that he was mighty. Alternate translation: "a prophet to whom God gave power to do and teach great things that were amazing to all the people"

Luke 24:20

delivered him up

"gave him over"

to be condemned to death and crucified him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in order for the governor to put Jesus to death by crucifying him"

Luke 24:21

Connecting Statement:

The two men continue responding to Jesus.

But we hoped that he was the one

Here the word "hope" means "expect" or "think" that something might be true. By saying "we hoped" the two men show that they no longer think that Jesus is the one who will redeem Israel. Alternate translation: "But we thought that he might be the one"

who was going to redeem Israel

The Romans ruled over the Jews. Alternate translation: "who would free the Israelites from our Roman enemies"

Yes, and what is more,

This introduces another reason why they believed Jesus would not free Israel. Alternate translation: "Now that does not seem possible because"

the third day

The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day. See how you translated this in [Luke 24:7]

since all these things happened

"since all the many actions that led up to the death of Jesus have taken place"

Luke 24:22

But also

This introduces another reason why it the men did not understand what was happening concerning Jesus.

of our company

"in our group"

having been at the tomb

The women were the ones who were at the tomb.

Luke 24:23

a vision of angels

"angels in a vision"

Luke 24:24

Connecting Statement:

The two men finish responding to Jesus.

they did not see him

"they did not see Jesus"

Luke 24:25

Jesus said to them

Jesus is speaking to the two disciples.

slow of heart to believe

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind. Alternate translation: "your minds are slow to believe" or "you are slow to believe"

Luke 24:26

Was it not necessary ... glory?

Jesus uses a question to remind the disciples about what the prophets said. Alternate translation: "It was necessary ... glory."

to enter into his glory

This refers to Jesus beginning to rule and to receive honor and glory.

Luke 24:27

beginning from Moses

Moses wrote the first books of the Bible. Alternate translation: "beginning with the writings of Moses"

Jesus interpreted to them

"Jesus explained to them"

Luke 24:28

Jesus acted as though he were going further

The two men understood from his actions that he was going on to another destination. Perhaps he kept walking on the road when they turned off to enter the gate into the village. There is no indication that Jesus deceived them with words.

Luke 24:29

they compelled him

You may need to make explicit what they compelled him to do. This is probably an exaggeration to show that they needed to speak with him for a long time before they could change his mind. The word "compel" means to use physical

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force, but it seems that they persuaded him using only words. Alternate translation: "they were able to persuade him to stay"

it is toward evening and the day is almost over

The Jewish day ended at sundown.

Jesus went in

"Jesus entered the house"

stay with them

"stay with the two disciples"

Luke 24:30

It happened

This phrase is used here to mark an important event in the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

the bread

This refers to bread made without yeast. It does not refer to food in general.

blessed it

"gave thanks for it" or "thanked God for it"

Luke 24:31

Then their eyes were opened

Their "eyes" represent their understanding. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then they understood" or "Then they realized"

they knew him

"they recognized him." These disciples had known him before his death.

he vanished out of their sight

This means that suddenly he was no longer there. It does not mean that he became invisible.

Luke 24:32

Was not our heart burning ... scriptures?

They use a question to emphasize how amazed they were about their encounter with Jesus. The intense feelings they had while talking to Jesus are spoken of as if they were a fire burning inside them. Alternate translation: "Our hearts were burning ... scriptures."

within us

The two men were speaking to each other. The word "us" is dual inclusive for languages that make these distinctions.

while he opened to us the scriptures

Jesus did not open a book or scroll. "opened" refers to their understanding. Alternate translation: "while he explained the scriptures to us" or "while he enabled us to understand the scriptures"

Luke 24:33

Connecting Statement:

The two men go to Jerusalem to the eleven disciples to tell them about Jesus.

They rose up

"They" refers to the two men.

rose up

"got up" or "stood up"

the eleven

This refers to Jesus's apostles. Judas was no longer included with them.

Luke 24:34

saying

"and those people told the two men"

Luke 24:35

So they told

"So the two men told them"

the things that happened on the way

This refers to Jesus appearing to them while they were on their way to the village of Emmaus.

how Jesus was recognized by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "how they recognized Jesus"

in the breaking of the bread

"when Jesus broke the bread" or "when Jesus tore the bread"

Luke 24:36

General Information:

Jesus appears to the disciples. When the two men previously arrived at the house where the Eleven were, Jesus was not with them.

Jesus himself

The word "himself" focuses on Jesus and the surprise of Jesus actually appearing to them. Most of them had not seen him after his resurrection.

in the midst of them

"among them"

Peace be to you

"May you have peace" or "May God give you peace!" The word "you" is plural.

Luke 24:37

But they were terrified

"But" indicates a strong contrast. Jesus told them to be at peace, but they were very afraid instead.

terrified and filled with fear

"startled and afraid." These two phrases mean about the same thing, and are used together to emphasize their fear.

a spirit

Here it refers to the spirit of a dead person.

Luke 24:38

Why are you troubled?

Jesus uses a question to comfort them. Alternate translation: "Do not be frightened."

Why do questions arise in your heart?

Jesus uses a question to mildly rebuke them. Jesus was telling them not to doubt that he was alive. The word "heart" is a metonym for a persons' mind. Alternate translation: "Do not doubt in your minds!" or "Stop doubting!"

Luke 24:39

Touch me and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see me having

Jesus asks them to confirm by touch that he is not a ghost. It may be helpful to combine and reorder these two sentences. Alternate translation: "Touch me and feel that I have flesh and bones that a ghost would not have"

flesh and bones

This is a way of referring to the physical body.

Luke 24:40

his hands and his feet

It is understood that his hands and feet contained the nail marks from his crucifixion that would prove it was really Jesus. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the

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wounds in his hands and his feet"
Luke 24:41
They still could not believe it because of joy
"They were so full of joy that they still could not believe it was really true"
Luke 24:43
ate it before them
Jesus does this to prove that he has a physical body. Spirits would not be able to eat food.
before them
"in front of them" or "while they were watching"
Luke 24:44
when I was with you
"when I was with you before"
all that was written ... Psalms must be fulfilled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God would fulfill all that was written ... Psalms" or "God would cause all that was written ... Psalms to happen"
all that was written in the law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms
The words "law of Moses," "the Prophets," and "the Psalms" are proper names for parts of the Hebrew Bible. This can be stated in active form and using common nouns. Alternate translation: "all that Moses wrote in the law, all that the prophets wrote, and all that the writers of the Psalms wrote about me"
Luke 24:45
Then he opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures
To "open the mind" is an idiom that means to enable someone to understand. Alternate translation: "Then he enabled them to understand the scriptures"
Luke 24:46
Thus it is written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what people long ago wrote"
rise again from the dead
In this verse the words "rise again" mean "come alive again." The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld.
the third day
The Jews counted any portion of a day as a day. Therefore, the day Jesus was raised was the "third day" because it followed the day of his burial and the Sabbath day. See how you translated this in [Luke 24:7]
Luke 24:47
Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Followers of the Christ should preach to people in all the nations that they need to repent and that they need God to forgive their sins through Jesus"
in his name
His "name" here refers to his authority. Alternate translation: "by the Christ's authority"
all the nations
"all the ethnic communities" or "all the people groups"
beginning from Jerusalem
"starting in Jerusalem"
Luke 24:48
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the disciples.
You are witnesses
"You are to tell others that what you saw about me is true." The disciples had observed Jesus's life, death, and resurrection and could describe to other people what he did.
Luke 24:49
I am sending you what my Father promised
"I will give you what my Father promised to give you." God had promised to give the Holy Spirit. The UDB makes this explicit.
Father
This is an important title for God.
you are clothed with power
God's power will cover them in the same way that clothes cover a person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you receive power"
from on high
"from above" or "from God"
Luke 24:50
Jesus led them out
"Jesus led the disciples outside the city"
He lifted up his hands
This was the action that priests performed when they blessed the people.
Luke 24:51
It happened
"It came about." This introduces a new event in the story.
while he was blessing them
"while Jesus was asking God to do good to them"
was carried
Since Luke does not specify who carried Jesus up, we do not know if it was God himself or one or more angels. If your language would have to specify who did the carrying, it would be better to use "went" instead, as the UDB does.
Luke 24:52
General Information:
These verses tell us about the ongoing actions of the disciples as the story ends.
they worshiped him
"the disciples worshiped Jesus"
and returned
"and then returned"
Luke 24:53
continually in the temple
This is an exaggeration to express that they went into the temple courtyard every day.
in the temple
Only priests were allowed into the temple building. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"
blessing God
"praising God"

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Introduction to the Gospel of John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Gospel of John

Introduction about who Jesus is (1:1-18) Jesus is baptized, and he chooses twelve disciples (1:19-51) Jesus preaches, teaches, and heals people (2-11) The seven days before Jesus's death
(12-19) Mary anoints the feet of Jesus (12:1-11) Jesus rides a donkey into Jerusalem (12:12-19) Some Greek men want to see Jesus (12:20-36) The Jewish leaders reject Jesus (12:37-50) Jesus teaches his disciples (13-17) Jesus is arrested and undergoes trial (18:1-19:15) Jesus is crucified and buried (19:16-42)
Jesus rises from the dead (20:1-29) John says why he wrote his gospel (20:30-31) Jesus meets with the disciples (21)

What is the Gospel of John about?

The Gospel of John is one of four books in the New Testament that describe some of the life of Jesus Christ. The authors of the gospels wrote about different aspects of who Jesus was and what he did. John said that he wrote his gospel "so that people might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God" (20:31).
John's Gospel is very different from the other three Gospels. John does not include some of the teachings and events that the other writers included in their gospels. Also, John wrote about some teachings and events that are not in the other gospels.
John wrote much about the signs Jesus did to prove that what Jesus said about himself was true. (See: sign)

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Gospel of John" or "The Gospel According to John." Or they may choose a title that may be clearer, such as, "The Good News About Jesus That John Wrote."

Who wrote the Gospel of John?

This book does not give the name of the author. However, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought that the Apostle John was the author.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why does John write so much about the final week of Jesus's life?

John wrote much about Jesus's final week. He wanted his readers to think deeply about Jesus's final week and his death on the cross. He wanted people to understand that Jesus willingly died on the cross so that God could forgive them for sinning against him. (See: sin)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What do the words "remain," "reside," and "abide" mean in the Gospel of John?

John often used the words "remain," "reside", and "abide" as metaphors. John spoke of a believer becoming more faithful to Jesus and knowing Jesus better as if Jesus's word "remained" in the believer. Also, John spoke of someone being spiritually joined to someone else as if the person "remained" in the other person. Christians are said to "remain" in Christ and in God. The Father is said to "remain" in the Son, and the Son is said to "remain" in the Father. The Son is said to "remain" in believers. The Holy Spirit is also said to "remain" in the believers.
Many translators will find it impossible to represent these ideas in their languages in exactly the same way. For example, Jesus intended to express the idea of the Christian being spiritually together with him when he said, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" (John 6:56). The UDB uses the idea of "will be joined to me, and I will be joined to him." But translators may have to find other ways of expressing the idea.
In the passage, "If my words remain in you" (John 15:7), the UDB expresses this idea as, "If you live by my message." Translators may find it possible to use this translation as a model.

What are the major issues in the text of the Gospel of John?

The following verses are found in older versions of the Bible but are not included in most modern versions. Translators are advised not to translate these verses. However, if the translators work in regions where there are older versions of the Bible that include these verses, the translators can include them. If they are translated, they should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that they were probably not original to John's Gospel.

"waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel of the Lord occasionally went down into the pool and stirred the water and whoever went first after the stirring of the water, was made well from the disease they had." (5:3-4) "going through the midst of them, and so passed by" (8:59)
The following passage is included in most older and modern versions of the Bible. But it is not in the earliest copies of the Bible. Translators are advised to translate this passage. It should be put inside of square brackets ([]) to indicate that it may not have been original to John's Gospel.

The story of the adulterous woman (7:53–8:11)

John

1 [1]In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.[2]This one was in the beginning
with God.[3]All things were made through him, and without him there was not one thing made that has been made.
[4]In him was life, and the life was the light of men.[5]The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

[6]There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John.[7]He came as a witness to testify about the light, that all might believe through him.[8]John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light.

[9]The true light, which gives light to all men, was coming into the world.
[10]He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him.[11]He came to his own, and his own did not receive him.
[12]But to as many as received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.[13]These were not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

[14]The Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, glory as of the one and only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.[15]John testified about him and cried out, saying, "This was the one of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is greater than I am, for he was before me.'"
[16]For from his fullness we have all received grace after grace.[17]For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.[18]No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made God known.

[19]This is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites to him from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"[20]He confessed—he did not deny, but confessed—"I am not the Christ."[21]So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." They said, "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No."
[22]Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"[23]He said, "I am a voice, crying in the wilderness: 'Make the way of the Lord straight,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

[24]Now some from the Pharisees were sent,[25]and they asked him and said to him, "Why do you baptize, then, if you are not the Christ nor Elijah nor the prophet?"
[26]John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water. But among you stands someone you do not know.[27]He is the one who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."[28]These things were done in Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

[29]The next day John saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Look, there is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world![30]This is the one of whom I said, 'The one who comes after me is more than me, for he was before me.'[31]I did not know him, but it was so that he could be revealed to Israel that I came baptizing with water."
[32]John testified, saying, "I saw the Spirit coming down like a dove from heaven, and it stayed upon him.[33]I did not recognize him, but he who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'[34]I have both seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

[35]Again, the next day, as John was standing with two of his disciples,[36]they saw Jesus walking by, and John said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"
[37]His two disciples heard him say this and they followed Jesus.[38]Then Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" They replied, "Rabbi" (which is translated "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"[39]He said to them, "Come and see." Then they came and saw where he was staying; they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

[40]One of the two who heard John speak and then followed Jesus was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter.[41]He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated "Christ").[42]He brought him to Jesus, and Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which is translated "Peter").

[43]The next day, when Jesus wanted to leave to go to Galilee, he found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."[44]Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.[45]Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, "He of whom Moses wrote in the law, and the prophets, we have found him: Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth."
[46]Nathaniel said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."[47]Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him and said about him, "See, a true Israelite, in whom is no deceit!"[48]Nathaniel said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."
[49]Nathaniel replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"[50]Jesus replied and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you underneath the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than this."[51]Then he said,

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"Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

John 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:23, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

"The Word"

John uses the phrase "the Word" to refer to Jesus (John 1:1, 14). John is saying that God's most important message to all people is actually Jesus, a person with a physical body. (See: wordofgod)

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

"Children of God"

When people believe in Jesus, they go from being "children of wrath" to "children of God." They are adopted into the "family of God." This is an important image that is used many times in the New Testament. (See: believe and adoption)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

John uses the metaphors of light and darkness and of the Word to tell the reader that he will be writing more about good and evil and about what God wants to tell people through Jesus.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"In the beginning"

Some languages and cultures speak of the world as if it has always existed, as if it had no beginning. But "very long ago" is different from "in the beginning," and you need to be sure that your translation communicates correctly.

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 1:1 Notes John intro

John 1:1

In the beginning

This refers to the very earliest time before God created the heavens and the earth.

the Word

This refers to Jesus. Translate as "the Word" if possible. If "Word" is feminine in your language, it could be translated as "the one who is called the Word."

John 1:3

All things were made through him

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God made all things through him"

without him there was not one thing made that has been made

This can be translated with an active verb. If your language does not permit double negatives, these words should communicate that the opposite of "all things were made through him" is false. Alternate translation: "God did not make anything without him" or "with him there was every thing made that has been made" or "God made with him every thing that God has made"

John 1:4

In him was life, and the life was the light of men

"In him was life" is a metonym for causing everything to live. And, "light" here is a metaphor for "truth." Alternate translation: "He is the one who caused everything to live. And he revealed to people what is true about God"

In him

Here "him" refers to the one who is called the Word.

life

Here use a general term for "life." If you must be more specific, translate as "spiritual life."

John 1:5

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it

Here "light" is a metaphor for what is true and good. Here "darkness" is a metaphor what is false and evil. Alternate translation: "The truth is like a light shining into a dark place, and no one in the dark place could put out the light"

John 1:7

testify about the light

Here "light" is a metaphor for the revelation of God in Jesus. Alternate translation: "show how Jesus is like the true light of God"

John 1:9

The true light

Here light is a metaphor that represents Jesus as the one who both reveals the truth about God and is himself that truth.

John 1:10

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He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him
"Even though he was in this world, and God created everything through him, people still did not recognize him"
the world did not know him
The "world" is a metonym that stands for all the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people did not know who he really was"
John 1:11
He came to his own, and his own did not receive him
"He came to his own fellow countrymen, and his own fellow countrymen did not accept him either"
receive him
"accept him." To receive someone is to welcome him and treat him with honor in hopes of building a relationship with him.
John 1:12
believed in his name
The word "name" is a metonym that stands for Jesus's identity and everything about him. Alternate translation: "believed in him"
he gave the right
"he gave them the authority" or "he made it possible for them"
children of God
The word "children" is a metaphor that represents our relationship to God, which is like children to a father.
John 1:14
The Word
This refers to Jesus. Translate as "the Word" if possible. If "Word" is feminine in your language, it could be translated as "the one who is called the Word." See how you translated this in John 1:1.
became flesh
Here "flesh" represents "a person" or "a human being." Alternate translation: "became human" or "became a human being"
the one and only who came from the Father
The phrase "the one and only" means that he is unique, that no one else is like him. The phrase "who came from the Father" means that he is the Father's child. Alternate translation: "the unique Son of the Father" or "the only Son of the Father"
Father
This is an important title for God.
full of grace
"full of kind acts towards us, acts we do not deserve"
John 1:15
He who comes after me
John is speaking about Jesus. The phrase "comes after me" means that John's ministry has already started and Jesus's ministry will start later.
is greater than I am
"is more important than I am" or "has more authority than I have"
for he was before me
Be careful not to translate this in a way that suggests that Jesus is more important because he is older than John in human years. Jesus is greater and more important than John because he is God the Son, who has always been alive.
John 1:16
fullness
This word refers to God's grace that has no end.
grace after grace
"blessing after blessing"
John 1:18
the only God
This phrase refers to God the Son. Alternate translation: "the only Son, who is himself God"
the only God
The Greek word that is translated here as "only" is translated by some as "only begotten." This means the only one that comes or procedes from God. The phrases "Son" and "procedes from" can be used to express some of the meaning of the word "begotten." Alternate translation: "the only begotten God" or "the only begotten Son, who is himself God" or "the only Son who proceeds from God and is himself God"
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 1:19
the Jews sent
The word "Jews" here represents the "Jewish leaders." Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders sent"
John 1:20
He confessed—he did not deny, but confessed
The phrase "he did not deny" says in negative terms the same thing that "He confessed" says in positive terms. This emphasizes that John was telling the truth and was strongly stating that he was not the Christ. Your language may have a different way of doing this.
John 1:21
What are you then?
"What then is the case, if you are not the Messiah?" or "What then is going on?" or "What then are you doing?"
John 1:22
Connecting Statement:
John continues to speak with the priests and Levites.
they said to him
"the priests and Levites said to John"
we ... us
the priests and Levites, not John
John 1:23
He said
"John said"
I am a voice, crying in the wilderness
John is saying that Isaiah's prophecy is about himself. The word "voice" here refers to the person who is crying out in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "I am the one calling out in the wilderness"
Make the way of the Lord straight
Here the word "way" is used as a metaphor. Alternate translation: "Prepare yourselves for the Lord's arrival the same way that people prepare the road for an important person to use"
John 1:24
Now some from the Pharisees
This is background information about the people who

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questioned John.
John 1:26
General Information:
Verse 28 tells us background information about the setting of the story.
John 1:27
who comes after me
John is speaking about Jesus. The phrase "comes after me" means that John's ministry has already started and Jesus's ministry will start later.
me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie
Untying sandals was the work of a slave or servant. These words are a metaphor for the most unpleasant work of a servant. Alternate translation: "me, whom I am not worthy to serve in even the most unpleasant way" or "me. I am not even worthy to untie the strap of his sandal"
John 1:29
Lamb of God
This is a metaphor that represents God's perfect sacrifice. Jesus is called the "Lamb of God" because he was sacrificed to pay for people's sins.
world
The word "world" is a metonym and refers to all the people in the world.
John 1:30
The one who comes after me is more than me, for he was before me
See how you translated this in John 1:15.
John 1:32
like a dove
Possible meanings: 1) the Spirit descended in the form of a dove or 2) the Spirit descended in the way a dove descends.
heaven
The word "heaven" refers to the "sky."
John 1:33
The one on whom
"The one upon whom"
he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit
"he is the one who will baptize in the Holy Spirit"
John 1:34
the Son of God
Some copies of this text say "Son of God"; others say "chosen one of God."
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
John 1:35
Again, the next day
This is another day. It is the second day that John sees Jesus.
John 1:36
Lamb of God
This is a metaphor that represents God's perfect sacrifice. Jesus is called the "Lamb of God" because he was sacrificed to pay for people's sins. See how you translated this same phrase in [John 1:29]
John 1:39
tenth hour
"hour 10." This phrase indicates a time in the afternoon, before dark, at which it would be too late to start traveling to another town, possibly around 4 p.m.
John 1:40
General Information:
These verses give us information about Andrew and how he brought his brother Peter to Jesus. This happened before they went and saw where Jesus was staying in John 1:39.
John 1:42
son of John
This is not John the Baptist. "John" was a very common name.
John 1:44
Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter
This is background information about Philip.
John 1:46
Nathaniel said to him
"Nathaniel said to Philip"
Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?
This remark appears in the form of a question in order to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "No good thing can come out of Nazareth!"
John 1:47
in whom is no deceit
This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "a completely truthful man"
John 1:49
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
John 1:50
Because I said to you, 'I ... tree,' do you believe?
This remark appears in the form of a question to provide emphasis. Alternate translation: "You believe only because I said, 'I ... tree'!"
John 1:51
Truly, truly
Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true.

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2 [1]Three days later, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.[2]Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding.
[3]When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."[4]Jesus said to her, "Woman, why do you come to me? My time has not yet come."[5]His mother said to the servants, "Whatever he says to you, do it."

[6]Now there were six stone water pots there used for the Jewish ceremonial washing, each containing two to three metretes.[7]Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.[8]Then he told the servants, "Take some out now and take it to the head waiter." So they did.

[9]The head waiter tasted the water that had become wine, but he did not know where it came from (but the servants who

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had drawn the water knew). Then he called the bridegroom[10]and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first and then the cheaper wine when they are drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now."
[11]This first sign Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.
[12]After this Jesus, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples went down to Capernaum and they stayed there for a few days.

[13]Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.[14]He found sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons in the temple, and the money changers were sitting there.
[15]So he made a whip of cords and drove all of them out from the temple, including both the sheep and the cattle. He scattered the coins of the money changers and turned their tables over.[16]To the pigeon sellers he said, "Take these things away from here. Stop making the house of my Father a marketplace."
[17]His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."
[18]Then the Jewish authorities responded and said to him, "What sign will you show us, since you are doing these things?"[19]Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."
[20]Then the Jewish authorities said, "This temple was built in forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?"[21]However, he was speaking about the temple of his body.[22]After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this, and they believed the scripture and this statement that Jesus had spoken.

[23]Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover festival, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he did.
[24]But Jesus did not trust in them because he knew them all,[25]because he did not need anyone to testify to him about man, for he knew what was in man.

John 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Wine
The Jews drank wine at many meals and especially when they were celebrating special events. They did not believe that it was a sin to drink wine.
Driving out the money changers
When Jesus drove the money changers out of the temple, he showed that he had authority over the temple and over all of Israel.
"He knew what was in man"
Jesus knew what other people were thinking only because he was and is the Son of Man and the Son of God.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"His disciples remembered"
John used this phrase to stop telling the main history and to tell about something that happened much later. It was right after he scolded the pigeon sellers (John 2:16) that the Jewish authorities spoke to him. It was after Jesus became alive again that his disciples remembered what the prophet had written long before and that Jesus had talkid about the temple of his body (John 2:17 and John 2:22).

Links:

John 2:1 Notes

John 2:1
General Information:
Jesus and his disciples are invited to a wedding. These verse give background information about the setting of the story.
Three days later
Most interpreters read this as on the third day after Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel to follow him. The first day occurs in John 1:35 and the second in John 1:43.
John 2:2
Jesus and his disciples were invited to the wedding
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "Someone invited Jesus and his disciples to the wedding"
John 2:4
Woman
This refers to Mary. If it is impolite for a son to call his mother "woman" in your language, use another word that is polite, or leave it out.
why do you come to me?
This question is asked to provide emphasis. Alternate translation: "this has nothing to do with me." or "you should not tell me what to do."
My time has not yet come
The word "time" is a metonym that represents the right occasion for Jesus to show that he is the Messiah by working miracles. Alternate translation: "It is not yet the right time for me to perform a mighty act"
John 2:6
two to three metretes
You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "75 to 115 liters"

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John 2:7
to the brim
This means "to the very top" or "completely full."
John 2:8
the head waiter
This refers to the person in charge of the food and drink.
John 2:9
but the servants who had drawn the water knew
This is background information.
John 2:10
drunk
unable to tell the difference between cheap wine and expensive wine because of drinking too much alcohol
John 2:11
Connecting Statement:
This verse is not part of the main story, but rather it gives a comment about the story.
Cana
This is a place name.
revealed his glory
Here "his glory" refers to the mighty power of Jesus. Alternate translation: "showed his power"
John 2:12
went down
This indicates that they went from a higher place to a lower place. Capernaum is northeast of Cana and is at a lower elevation.
his brothers
The word "brothers" includes both brothers and sisters. All Jesus's brothers and sisters were younger than he was.
John 2:13
General Information:
Jesus and his disciples go up to Jerusalem to the temple.
went up to Jerusalem
This indicates that he went from a lower place to a higher place. Jerusalem is built on a hill.
John 2:14
were sitting there
The next verse makes it clear that these people are in the temple courtyard. That area was intended for worship and not for commerce.
sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons
People are buying animals in the temple courtyard to sacrifice them to God.
money changers
Jewish authorities required people who wanted to buy animals for sacrifices to exchange their money for special money from the "money changers."
John 2:15
So
This word marks an event that happens because of something else that has happened first. In this case, Jesus has seen the money changers sitting in the temple.
John 2:16
Stop making the house of my Father a marketplace
"Stop buying and selling things in my Father's house"
the house of my Father
This is a phrase Jesus uses to refer to the temple.
my Father
This is an important title that Jesus uses for God.
John 2:17
it was written
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "someone had written"
your house
This term refers to the temple, God's house.
consume
The word "consume" points to the metaphor of "fire." Jesus's love for the temple is like a fire that burns within him.
John 2:18
sign
This refers to an event that proves something is true.
these things
This refers to Jesus's actions against the money changers in the temple.
John 2:19
Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up
Jesus dared them to destroy the temple so that he could raise it up in three days. That would be the sign that he had authority to drive the sellers and animals out of the temple area. Jesus knew that they would not destroy the temple building. You can translate the words "destroy" and "raise" using the usual words for tearing down and rebuilding a building. If a command form in your language would indicate that Jesus truly intended for them to destroy the temple, it can be translated as a condition with the word "if" instead. Alternate translation: "If you destroy this temple, I will rebuild it in three days"
raise it up
"cause it to stand"
John 2:20
forty-six years ... three days
"46 years ... 3 days"
you will raise it up in three days?
The Jewish authorities misunderstood Jesus's words and thought that Jesus wanted to tear down the literal temple and build it again in three days. "Raise" is an idiom for "rebuild." Alternate translation: "you will rebuild it in three days?" or "you cannot possibly rebuild it in three days!"
John 2:21
General Information:
This is the beginning of a comment on the story. It tells about something that happens later.
John 2:22
General Information:
This is the end of a comment on the story. It tells about something that happens later.
believed
Here "believe" means to accept something or trust that it is true.
this statement
This refers back to Jesus's statement in John 2:19.
John 2:23
Now when he was in Jerusalem
The word "now" introduces us to a new event in the story.
believed in his name
Here "name" is a metonym that represents the person of

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Jesus. Alternate translation: "believed in him" or "trusted in him"

the signs that he did

Miracles can also be called "signs" because they are used as evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.

John 2:25

about man, for he knew what was in man

Here the word "man" represents people in general. Alternate translation: "about people, for he knew what was in people"

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3 [1]Now there was a Pharisee whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader.[2]This man came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher that came from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him."
[3]Jesus replied to him, "Truly, truly, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
[4]Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"
[5]Jesus replied, "Truly, truly, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.[6]That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
[7]Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'[8]The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

[9]Nicodemus replied and said to him, "How can these things be?"[10]Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?[11]Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen. Yet you do not accept our testimony.
[12]If I told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?[13]No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven—the Son of Man.
[14]Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,[15]so that all who believe in him may have eternal life.

[16]"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.
[17]For God did not send the Son into the world in order to condemn the world, but in order to save the world through him.
[18]He who believes in him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is already condemned because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.
[19]This is the reason for the judgment: The light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.[20]For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that his deeds will not be exposed.[21]However, he who practices the truth comes to the light so that it may be plainly seen that his deeds have been done in God."

[22]After this, Jesus and his disciples went into the land of Judea. There he spent some time with them and baptized.[23]Now John was also baptizing in Aenon near to Salim because there was much water there. People were coming to him and were being baptized,[24]for John had not yet been thrown in prison.

[25]Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and a Jew about ceremonial washing.[26]They went to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you on the other side of the Jordan River, about whom you have testified, look, he is baptizing, and they are all going to him."

[27]John replied, "A man cannot receive anything unless it has been given to him from heaven.[28]You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but instead, 'I have been sent before him.'
[29]The bride belongs to the bridegroom. Now the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom. This, then, is my joy made complete.[30]He must increase, but I must decrease.

[31]"He who comes from above is above all. He who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks about the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.[32]He testifies about what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.[33]He who has received his testimony has confirmed that God is true.
[34]For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God. For he does not give the Spirit by measure.[35]The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.[36]He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God stays on him."

John 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 3:1 Notes

John 3:1

General Information:

Nicodemus comes to see Jesus.

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the story and to introduce Nicodemus.

John 3:2

we know

Here "we" is exclusive, referring only to Nicodemus and the other members of the Jewish council.

John 3:3

Connecting Statement:

Jesus and Nicodemus continue talking.

Truly, truly

See how you translated this in John 1:51.

born again

"born from above" or "born of God"

he cannot see the kingdom of God

Possible meanings of seeing the kingdom of God are 1) seeing the place God rules over or 2) knowing what God's kingdom is like or 3) belonging to the kingdom of God.

John 3:4

How can a man be born when he is old?

Nicodemus uses this question to emphasize that this cannot happen. Alternate translation: "A man certainly cannot be born again when he is old!"

He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?

Nicodemus also uses this question to emphasize his belief that a second birth is impossible. "Certainly, he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb!

a second time

"again" or "twice"

womb

the part of a woman's body where a baby grows

John 3:5

Truly, truly

You can translate this in the same way you did in John 3:3.

born of water and the Spirit

There are two possible meanings: 1) "baptized in water and in the Spirit" or 2) "born physically and spiritually"

he cannot enter into the kingdom of God

Entering God's kingdom means that the people belong to God, God rules over them, and they will live with him forever. AT: "he cannot belong to the kingdom of God"

John 3:7

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to Nicodemus.

You must be born again

"You must be born from above"

John 3:8

The wind blows wherever it wishes

In the source language, wind and Spirit are the same word. The speaker here refers to the wind as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit is like a wind that blows wherever it wants"

John 3:9

How can these things be?

This question adds emphasis to the statement. Alternate translation: "This cannot be!" or "This is not able to happen!"

John 3:10

Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

Jesus knows that Nicodemus is a teacher. He is not looking for information. Alternate translation: "You are a teacher of Israel, so I am surprised you do not understand these things!" or "You are a teacher of Israel, so you should understand these things!"

Are you a teacher ... yet you do not understand

The word "you" is singular and refers to Nicodemus.

John 3:11

you do not accept

The word "you" is plural and refers either the Pharisees [John 3:1]

Truly, truly

Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated this in John 1:51.

we speak

When Jesus said "we," he was not including Nicodemus.

John 3:12

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues responding to Nicodemus.

I told you ... you do not believe ... how will you believe if I tell you

In all three places "you" is plural and refers to Jews in general.

how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

This question emphasizes the disbelief of Nicodemus and the Jews. Alternate translation: "you certainly will not believe if I tell you about heavenly things!"

heavenly things

spiritual things

John 3:13

No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven

This double negative emphasizes that he who descended

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from heaven is the only one who has ascended into heaven. Alternate translation: "The only one who has ascended into heaven is he who descended from heaven"
John 3:14
Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up
This figure of speech is called a simile. Some people will "lift up" Jesus just as Moses "lifted up" the bronze serpent in the wilderness.
in the wilderness
The wilderness is a dry, desert place, but here it refers specifically to the place where Moses and the Israelites walked around for forty years.
John 3:16
God so loved the world
Here "world" is a metonym that refers to everyone in the world.
loved
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
John 3:17
For God did not send the Son into the world in order to condemn the world, but in order to save the world through him
These two clauses mean nearly the same thing, said twice for emphasis, first in the negative and then in the positive. Some languages may indicate emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: God""s real reason for sending his Son into the world was to save it"
to condemn
"to punish." Usually "punish" implies that the person who has been punished is then accepted by God. When a person is condemned, he is punished but never accepted by God.
John 3:18
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
John 3:19
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes responding to Nicodemus.
The light has come into the world
The word "light" is a metaphor for God's truth that is revealed in Jesus. Jesus speaks of himself in the third person. If your language does not allow people to speak of themselves in the third person, you may need to specify who the light is. The "world" is a metonym for all of the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "The one who is like a light has revealed God's truth to all people" or "I, who am like a light, have come into the world"
men loved the darkness
Here "darkness" is a metaphor for evil.
John 3:20
so that his deeds will not be exposed
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that the light will not show the things he does" or "so that the light does not make clear his deeds"
John 3:21
plainly seen that his deeds
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "people may clearly see his deeds" or "everyone may clearly see the things he does"
John 3:22
After this
This refers to after Jesus had spoken with Nicodemus. See how you translated this in John 2:12.
John 3:23
Aenon
This word means "springs," as of water.
Salim
a village or town next to the Jordan River
because there was much water there
"because there were many springs in that place"
were being baptized
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "John was baptizing them" or "he was baptizing them"
John 3:25
Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and a Jew
This can be stated in an active form for clarity. Alternate translation: "Then John's disciples and a Jew began to argue"
a dispute
a fight using words
John 3:26
you have testified, look, he is baptizing,
In this phrase, "look" is a command meaning "pay attention!" Alternate translation: "you have testified, 'Look! He is baptizing,'" or "you have testified. 'Look at that! He is baptizing,'"
John 3:27
A man cannot receive anything unless
"Nobody has any power unless"
it has been given to him from heaven
Here "heaven" is used as a metonym to refer to God. This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has given it to him"
John 3:28
You yourselves
This "You" is plural and refers to all the people John is talking to. Alternate translation: "You all" or "All of you"
I have been sent before him
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "God sent me to arrive before him"
John 3:29
Connecting Statement:
John the Baptist continues speaking.
The bride belongs to the bridegroom
Here the "bride" and "bridegroom" are metaphors. Jesus is like the "bridegroom" and John is like the friend of the "bridegroom."
This, then, is my joy made complete
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So then I rejoice greatly" or "So I rejoice much"
my joy
The word "my" refers to John the Baptist, the one who is speaking.
John 3:30

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He must increase
"He" refers to the bridegroom, Jesus, who will continue to grow in importance.
John 3:31
He who comes from above is above all
"He who comes from heaven is more important than anyone else"
He who is from the earth is from the earth and speaks about the earth
John means that Jesus is greater than he is since Jesus is from heaven, and John was born on the earth. Alternate translation: "He who is born in this world is like everyone else who lives in the world and he speaks about what happens in this world"
He who comes from heaven is above all
This means the same thing as the first sentence. John repeats this for emphasis.
John 3:32
He testifies about what he has seen and heard
John is speaking about Jesus. Alternate translation: "The one from heaven tells about what he has seen and heard in heaven"
no one accepts his testimony
Here John exaggerates to emphasize that only a few people believe Jesus. Alternate translation: "very few people believe him"
John 3:33
He who has received his testimony
"Anyone who believes what Jesus says"
has confirmed
"proves" or "agrees"
John 3:34
Connecting Statement:
John the Baptist finishes speaking.
For the one whom God has sent speaks
"This Jesus, whom God has sent to represent him, speaks"
For he does not give the Spirit by measure
"For he is the one to whom God gave all the power of his Spirit"
John 3:35
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
given ... into his hand
This means to be put in his power or control.
John 3:36
He who believes
"A person who believes" or "Anyone who believes"
the wrath of God stays on him
The abstract noun "wrath" can be translated with the verb "punish." Alternate translation: "God will continue to punish him"

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4 [1]Now when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than
John[2](although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were),[3]he left Judea and went back again to Galilee.
[4]But it was necessary for him to go through Samaria.[5]So he came to a town of Samaria, called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.
[6]The well of Jacob was there. Jesus was tired from his journey and sat by the well. It was about the sixth hour.
[7]A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink."[8]For his disciples had gone away into the town to buy food.

[9]Then the Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, being a Jew, are asking me, being a Samaritan woman, for something to drink?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.
[10]Jesus answered and said to her, "If you had known the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

[11]The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not have a bucket and the well is deep. Where then do you have the living water?
[12]You are not greater, are you, than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock?"

[13]Jesus replied and said to her, "Everyone who drinks from this water will be thirsty again,[14]but whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will not ever be thirsty again. Instead, the water that I will give him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up to eternal life."

[15]The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I may not become thirsty and not have to come here to draw water."
[16]Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back here."

[17]The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband." Jesus replied, "You have said correctly, 'I have no husband,'
[18]for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

[19]The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet.[20]Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that Jerusalem is the place where people have to worship."

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[21]Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, that an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.[22]You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.
[23]However, the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to be his worshipers.[24]God is Spirit, and the people who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

[25]The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming (the one called Christ). When he comes, he will explain everything to us."
[26]Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one speaking to you."

[27]At that moment his disciples returned. Now they were wondering why he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you speaking with her?"

[28]So the woman left her water pot, went back to the town, and said to the people,[29]"Come, see a man who told me everything that I have ever done. This could not be the Christ, could it?"[30]They left the town and came to him.

[31]In the meantime, the disciples were urging him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."[32]But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about."[33]So the disciples said to each other, "No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?"

[34]Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.[35]Do you not say, 'There are four more months and then the harvest comes'? I am saying to you, look up and see the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest![36]He who is harvesting receives wages and gathers fruit for everlasting life, so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.
[37]For in this the saying, 'One sows, and another reaps,' is true.[38]I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

[39]Many of the Samaritans in that city believed in him because of the report of the woman who was testifying, "He told me everything that I have done."[40]So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days.
[41]Many more believed because of his word.[42]They said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard, and we know that this one is indeed the Savior of the world."

[43]After those two days, he departed from there for Galilee.[44]For Jesus himself declared that a prophet has no honor in his own country.[45]When he came into Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him. They had seen all the things that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival, for they had also gone to the festival.

[46]Now he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. There was a certain royal official whose son in Capernaum was ill.[47]When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to Jesus and asked him to come down and heal his son, who was about to die.
[48]Jesus then said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe."[49]The royal official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies."[50]Jesus said to him, "Go. Your son lives." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went away.
[51]While he was going down, his servants met him, saying that his son was living.[52]So he asked them the hour when he began to improve. They replied to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."
[53]Then the father realized that it was at that hour that Jesus had said to him, "Your son lives." So he himself and his whole household believed.[54]This was the second sign that Jesus did when he came out of Judea to Galilee.

John 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

John 4:4-38 forms one story centered on the teaching of Jesus as the "living water," the one who gives eternal life to all who believe in him. (See: believe)

Special concepts in this chapter

"It was necessary for him to pass through Samaria"
Jews avoided traveling through the region of Samaria because the Samaritans were descendants of ungodly people. So Jesus had to do what most Jews did not want to do. (See: godly and kingdomofisrael)

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"The hour is coming"
Jesus used these words to begin prophecies about times that could be shorter or longer than sixty minutes. "The hour" in which true worshipers will worship in spirit and truth is longer than sixty minutes.
The proper place of worship
Long before Jesus lived, the Samaritan people had broken the law of Moses by setting up a false temple in their land (John 4:20). Jesus explained to the woman that it was no longer important where people worshiped (John 4:21-24).
Harvest
Harvest is when people go out to get the food they have planted so they can bring it to their houses and eat it. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about Jesus so those people can be part of God's kingdom. (See: faith)
"The Samaritan woman"
John probably told this story to show the difference between the Samaritan woman, who believed, and the Jews, who did not believe and later killed Jesus. (See: believe)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"In spirit and truth"
The people who truly know who God is and enjoy worshiping him and love him for who he is are the ones who truly please him. Where they worship is not important.

Links:

John 4:1 Notes

John 4:1
General Information:
John 4:1-6 gives the background to the next event, Jesus's conversation with a Samaritan woman.
Connecting Statement:
A long sentence begins here.
Now when Jesus knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was making and baptizing more disciples than John
"Now Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John. When he knew that the Pharisees had heard that he was doing this"
Now when Jesus knew
The word "now" is used here to mark a break in the main events. Here John starts to tell a new part of the narrative.
John 4:2
Jesus himself was not baptizing
The reflexive pronoun "himself" adds emphasis that it was not Jesus who was baptizing, but his disciples.
John 4:3
he left Judea and went back again to Galilee
You may need to rearrange the entire sentence that begins with the words "Now when Jesus" in verse 1. "Now Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were). The Pharisees heard that Jesus was doing this. When Jesus knew that the Pharisees learned what he was doing, he left Judea and went back again to Galilee"
John 4:7
Give me some water
This is a polite request, not a command.
John 4:8
For his disciples had gone
He did not ask his disciples to draw water for him because they had gone.
John 4:9
Then the Samaritan woman said to him
The word "him" refers to Jesus.
How is it that you, being a Jew, are asking me, being a Samaritan woman, for something to drink?
This remark appears in the form of a question to express the Samaritan woman's surprise that Jesus asked her for a drink. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe that you, being a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink!"
have no dealings with
"do not associate with"
John 4:10
living water
Jesus uses the metaphor "living water" to refer to the Holy Spirit, who works in a person to transform and bring new life.
John 4:12
You are not greater, are you, than our father Jacob ... livestock?
This remark occurs in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "You are not greater than our father Jacob ... livestock!"
our father Jacob
"our ancestor Jacob"
drank from it
"drank water that came from it"
John 4:13
will be thirsty again
"will need to drink water again"
John 4:14
the water that I will give him will become a fountain of water in him
Here the word "fountain" is a metaphor for life-giving spring of water. Alternate translation: "the water that I will give him will become like a spring of water in him"
eternal life
Here "life" refers to the "spiritual life" that only God can give.
John 4:15
Sir
In this context, the Samaritan woman is addressing Jesus as "Sir," which is a term of respect or politeness.
draw water

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"get water" or "pull water up from the well" using a container and rope

John 4:17

You have said correctly

"You spoke well when you said" or "You chose your words skillfully when you said." Jesus is acknowledging that what she had said was strictly true but was hiding a fact about her that she expected Jesus to disapprove of. He was saying neither that it was a good thing that she had no husband nor that her answer showed that she was morally good.

John 4:18

What you have said is true

Jesus said this to emphasize the words "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'" in verse 17. He wanted the woman to know that he knew she was telling the truth.

John 4:19

Sir

In this context the Samaritan woman is addressesing Jesus as "sir," which is a term of respect or politeness.

I see that you are a prophet

"I can understand that you are a prophet"

John 4:20

Our fathers

"Our forefathers" or "Our ancestors"

John 4:21

Believe me

To believe someone is to acknowledge what the person has said is true.

you will worship the Father

Eternal salvation from sin comes from God the Father, who is Yahweh, the God of the Jews.

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 4:22

You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know

Jesus means that God revealed himself and his commands to the Jewish people, not to the Samaritans. Through the Scriptures the Jewish people know who God is better than the Samaritans.

for salvation is from the Jews

This means that God has chosen the Jews as his special people who will tell all other people about his salvation. It also means that the Christ, the one who will save the world, will be a Jew. It does not mean the Jewish people will save others from their sins. Alternate translation: "for all people will know about God's salvation because of the Jews"

salvation is from the Jews

Eternal salvation from sin comes from God the Father, who is Yahweh, the God of the Jews.

John 4:23

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the Samaritan woman.

However, the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will

"However, it is now the right time for true worshipers to"

the Father

This is an important title for God.

in spirit and truth

Possible meanings are the "spirit" here is 1) the inner person, the mind and heart, what a person thinks and what he loves, different from where he goes to worship and what ceremonies he performs, or 2) the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "in the Spirit and in truth" or "with the Spirit's help and in truth"

in ... truth

thinking correctly of what is true about God

John 4:25

I know that the Messiah ... Christ

Both of these words mean "God's promised king."

he will explain everything to us

This statement implies that he will tell them everything they need to know. Alternate translation: "he will tell us everything we need to know"

John 4:27

At that moment his disciples returned

"Just as Jesus was saying this, his disciples returned from town"

Now they were wondering why he was speaking with a woman

It was very unusual for a Jew to speak with a woman he did not know, especially if that woman was a Samaritan.

no one said, "What ... looking for?" or "Why ... her?"

Possible meanings are 1) "no one asked Jesus, 'What ... looking for?' or 'Why ... her?'" or 2) "no one asked the woman, 'What ... looking for?' or asked Jesus, 'Why ... her?'"

John 4:29

Come, see a man who told me everything that I have ever done

The Samaritan woman exaggerates to show that she is impressed by how much Jesus knows about her. Alternate translation: "Come see a man who knows very much about me, even though I have never met him before"

This could not be the Christ, could it?

The woman is not sure that Jesus is the Christ, so she asks a question that expects "no" for an answer, but she also asks a question instead of making a statement because she wants the people to decide for themselves.

John 4:31

In the meantime

"While the woman was going into town"

the disciples were urging him

"the disciples were telling Jesus" or "the disciples were encouraging Jesus"

John 4:32

I have food to eat that you do not know about

Here Jesus is not talking about literal "food," but is preparing his disciples for a spiritual lesson in John 4:34.

John 4:33

No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?

The disciples think Jesus is talking about literal "food." They begin asking each other this question, expecting a "no" response. Alternate translation: "Surely no one brought him any food while we were in town!"

John 4:34

My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work

Here "food" is a metaphor that represents "obeying God's will." Alternate translation: "Just as food satisfies a hungry person, obeying God's will is what satisfies me"

John 4:35

Do you not say

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"Is this not one of your popular sayings"
look up and see the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest
The words "fields" and "ripe for harvest" are metaphors. The "fields" represent people. The words "ripe for harvest" mean that people are ready to receive the message of Jesus, like fields that are ready to be harvested. Alternate translation: "look up and see the the people! They are ready to believe my message, like crops in the fields that are ready for people to harvest them"
John 4:36
and gathers fruit for everlasting life
Here "fruit for everlasting life" is a metaphor that represents people who believe Christ's message and receive eternal life. Alternate translation: "and the people who believe the message and receive eternal life are like the fruit that a harvester gathers"
John 4:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.
One sows, and another reaps
The words "sows" and "reaps" are metaphors. The one who "sows" shares the message of Jesus. The one who "reaps" helps the people to receive the message of Jesus. Alternate translation: "One person plants the seeds, and another person reaps the crops"
John 4:38
you have entered into their labor
"you are now joining in their work"
John 4:39
believed in him
To "believe in" someone means to "trust in" that person. Here this also means that they believed he was the Son of God.
He told me everything that I have done
This is an exaggeration. The woman was impressed by how much Jesus knew about her. Alternate translation: "He told me many things about my life"
John 4:41
his word
Here "word" is a metonym that stands for the message that Jesus proclaimed. Alternate translation: "his message"
John 4:42
world
The "world" is a metonym for all the believers throughout the world. Alternate translation: "all the believers in the world"
John 4:43
General Information:
Jesus goes down to Galilee and heals a boy. Verse 44 gives us background information about something Jesus had said previously.
from there
from Judea
John 4:44
For Jesus himself declared
The reflexive pronoun "himself" is added to emphasize that Jesus had "declared" or said this.. You can translate this in your language in a way that will give emphasis to a person.
a prophet has no honor in his own country
"people do not show respect or honor to a prophet of their own country" or "a prophet is not respected by the people in his own community"
John 4:45
at the festival
Here the festival is the Passover.
John 4:46
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here the author starts a new part of the story. If you have a way of doing this in your language, you may consider using it.
royal official
someone who is in the service of the king
John 4:48
Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe
"Unless ... not believe" here is a double negative. In some languages it is more natural to translate this statement in a positive form. Alternate translation: "You will believe only if you see a signs and wonders"
John 4:50
believed the word
Here "word" is a metonym that refers to the message that Jesus spoke. Alternate translation: "believed the message"
John 4:51
While
This word is used to mark two events that are happening at the same time. As the official was going home, his servants were coming to meet him on the road.
John 4:53
So he himself and his whole household believed
The reflexive pronoun "himself" is used here to emphasize the word "he." If you have a way of doing this in your language, you may consider using it.
John 4:54
sign
Miracles can also be called "signs" because they are used as indicators or evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.

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5 [1]After this there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.[2]Now in Jerusalem by the sheep gate there is a pool, which in the Aramaic language is called Bethesda, and it has five roofed porches.[3]A large number of people who were sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed were lying there.[1][4][2]
[5]A certain man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years.[6]When Jesus saw him lying there, and after he realized that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healthy?"
[7]The sick man replied, "Sir, I do not have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. When I come, another steps down before me."[8]Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk."
[9]Immediately the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.Now that day was a Sabbath.

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[10]So the Jews said to him who was healed, "It is the Sabbath and you are not permitted to carry your mat."[11]He replied, "He who made me healthy said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"
[12]They asked him, "Who is the man that said to you, 'Pick it up and walk'?"[13]However, the one who was healed did not know who it was because Jesus had gone away secretly, for there was a crowd in the place.

[14]Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have become healthy! Do not sin anymore, so that something worse will not happen to you."[15]The man went away and reported to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him healthy.

[16]Now because of these things the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath.[17]Jesus replied to them, "My Father is working even now, and I, too, am working."[18]Because of this, the Jews sought even more to kill him because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

[19]Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, the Son can do nothing of himself, except only what he sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father is doing, the Son does in the same way.[20]For the Father loves the Son and he shows him everything that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed.
[21]For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to anyone he wishes.[22]For the Father judges no one, but he has given all judgment to the Son[23]so that everyone will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.
[24]Truly, truly, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned, but he has passed from death to life.

[25]"Truly, truly, I tell you the time is coming, and is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.
[26]For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has also given to the Son so that he has life in himself,[27]and the Father has given the Son authority to carry out judgment because he is the Son of Man.
[28]Do not be amazed at this, for there is a time coming in which everyone who is in the tombs will hear his voice[29]and will come out: those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

[30]"I can do nothing from myself. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is righteous because I am not seeking my own will but the will of him who sent me.[31]If I should testify about myself, my testimony would not be true.[32]There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony that he gives about me is true.
[33]You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.[34]But the testimony that I receive is not from man. I say these things that you might be saved.[35]John was a lamp that was burning and shining, and you were willing to rejoice in his light for a while.
[36]Yet the testimony that I have is greater than that of John, for the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, testify about me that the Father has sent me.[37]The Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You have neither heard his voice nor seen his form at any time.[38]You do not have his word remaining in you, for you are not believing in the one whom he has sent.
[39]You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and these same scriptures testify about me,[40]and you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life.
[41]I do not receive glory from men,[42]but I know that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.
[43]I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another should come in his own name, you would receive him.[44]How can you believe, you who accept glory from one another but are not seeking the glory that comes from the only God?
[45]Do not think that I myself will accuse you before the Father. The one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have hoped.[46]If you believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me.[47]If you do not believe his writings, how are you going to believe my words?"

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have the phrase, waiting for the moving of the water .
[2]The best ancient copies do not have verse 4, For an angel of the Lord went down and stirred up the water at certain times and whoever stepped in while the water was stirring was healed from whatever disease he suffered from .

John 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Healing water

Many of the Jews believed that God would heal people who got into some of the pools in Jerusalem when the waters were

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"stirred up."
Testimony
Testimony is what one person says about another person. What a person says about himself is not as important as what other people say about that person. Jesus told the Jews that God had told them who Jesus was, so he did not need to tell them who he was. This was because God had told the writers of the Old Testament what his Messiah would do, and Jesus had done everything they had written that he would do.
The resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment
God will make some people alive again and because he gives them his grace, they will live with him forever. But he will make some people alive again and because he will treat them justly, they will live apart from him forever.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The Son, the Son of God, and the Son of Man
Jesus refers to himself in this chapter as the "Son"

Links:

John 5:1 Notes

John 5:1
General Information:
This is the next event in the story, in which Jesus goes up to Jerusalem and heals a man. These verses give background information about the setting of the story.
After this
This refers to after Jesus healed the official's son. See how you translated this in John 3:22.
there was a Jewish festival
"the Jews were celebrating a festival"
went up to Jerusalem
Jerusalem is located on the top of a hill. Roads to Jerusalem went up and down smaller hills. If your language has a different word for going up a hill than for walking on level ground, you may use it here.
John 5:2
pool
This was a hole in the ground that people filled with water. Sometimes they lined the pools with tiles or other stonework.
Bethesda
a place name
roofed porches
roofed structures with at least one wall missing and attached to buildings
John 5:3
A large number of people
"Many people"
John 5:5
General Information:
Verse 5 introduces the man lying beside the pool to the story.
was there
"was at the Bethesda pool" (John 5:1)
thirty-eight years
"38 years"
John 5:6
he realized
"he understood" or "he found out"
he said to him
"Jesus said to the paralyzed man"
John 5:7
Sir, I do not have
Here the word "sir" is a polite form of address.
when the water is stirred up
This can be translated in an active form. Alternate translation: "when the angel moves the water"
into the pool
This was a hole in the ground that people filled with water. Sometimes they lined the pools with tiles or other stonework. See how you translated "pool" in John 5:2.
another steps down before me
"someone else always goes down the steps into the water before me"
John 5:8
Get up
"Stand up"
take up your bed, and walk
"pick up your sleeping mat, and walk"
John 5:9
the man was healed
"the man became healthy again"
Now that day
The writer uses the word "now" to show that the words that follow are background information.
John 5:10
So the Jews said to him
The Jews (especially the leaders of the Jews) became angry when they saw the man carrying his mat on the Sabbath.
It is the Sabbath
"It is God's Day of Rest"
John 5:11
He who made me healthy
"The man who made me well"
John 5:12
They asked him
"The Jewish leaders asked the man who was healed"
John 5:14
Jesus found him
"Jesus found the man he had healed"
See
The word "See" is used here to draw attention to the words that follow.
John 5:16
Now
The writer uses the word "now" to show that the words that

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follow are background information.
the Jews
Here "the Jews" is a synecdoche which represent the "Jewish leaders." Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
John 5:17
is working
This refers to doing labor, including anything that is done to serve other people.
My Father
This is an important title for God.
John 5:18
making himself equal to God
"saying that he was like God" or "saying that he had as much authority as God"
John 5:19
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Jewish leaders.
Truly, truly
Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated this in John 1:51.
whatever the Father is doing, the Son does in the same way
Jesus, as the Son of God, followed and obeyed his Father's leadership on earth, because Jesus knew the Father loved him.
Son ... Father
These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God.
John 5:20
you will be amazed
"you will be surprised" or "you will be shocked"
For the Father loves the Son
Jesus, as the Son of God, followed and obeyed his Father's leadership on earth, because Jesus knew the Father loved him.
loves
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
John 5:21
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
life
This refers to "spiritual life."
John 5:22
For the Father judges no one, but he has given all judgment to the Son
The word "for" marks a comparison. The Son of God carries out judgment for God the Father.
John 5:23
honor the Son just as ... the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father
God the Son must be honored and worshiped just like God the Father. If we fail to honor God the Son, then we also fail to honor God the Father.
John 5:24
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
he who hears my word
Here "word" is a metonym that represents the message of Jesus. Alternate translation: "anyone who hears my message"
will not be condemned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he will not receive condemnation" or "God will not condemn him"
John 5:25
Truly, truly
Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated this in John 1:51.
the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live
The voice of Jesus, the Son of God, will raise dead people from the grave.
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
John 5:26
For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has also given to the Son so that he has life in himself
The word "For" marks a comparison. The Son of God has the power to give life, just as the Father does.
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
life
This means spiritual life.
John 5:27
Father ... Son of Man
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
the Father has given the Son authority to carry out judgment
The Son of God has the authority of God the Father to judge.
John 5:28
Do not be amazed at this
"This" refers to the fact that Jesus, as the Son of Man, has the power to give eternal life and to carry out judgment.
hear his voice
"hear my voice"
John 5:29
to the resurrection of life
This tells what will happen to those who have done good. Alternate translation: "will rise to live" or "will rise and live"
to the resurrection of judgment
This tells what will happen to those who have done evil. Alternate translation: "will rise to be judged" or "will rise and be judged"
John 5:30
the will of him who sent me
The word "him" refers to God the Father.
John 5:32
There is another who testifies about me
"There is someone else who tells people about me"
another
This refers to God.
the testimony that he gives about me is true

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"what he tells people about me is true"
John 5:34
the testimony that I receive is not from man
"I do not need people's testimony"
that you might be saved
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so God can save you"
John 5:35
John was a lamp that was burning and shining, and you were willing to rejoice in his light for a while
Here "lamp" and "light" are metaphors. John taught the people about God and this was like a lamp shining its light into the dark. Alternate translation: "John taught you about God and this was like a lamp shining its light. And for a while what John said made you happy"
John 5:36
the works that the Father has given me to accomplish ... that the Father has sent me
God the Father has sent God the Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus completes what the Father gives him to do.
Father
This is an important title for God.
the very works that I do, testify about me that the Father has sent me
Here Jesus says that the miracles "testify" or "tell the people" about him. Alternate translation: "what I do, shows the people that God has sent me"
John 5:37
The Father who sent me has himself testified
The reflexive pronoun "himself" emphasizes that it is the Father, not someone less important, who has testified.
John 5:38
You do not have his word remaining in you, for you are not believing in the one whom he has sent
"You do not believe in the one he has sent. That is how I know that you do not have his word remaining in you"
You do not have his word remaining in you
Jesus speaks of people living according to God's word as if they were houses and God's word were a person that lived in houses. Alternate translation: "You do not live according to his word" or "You do not obey his word"
his word
"the message he spoke to you"
John 5:39
in them you have eternal life
"you will find eternal life if you read them" or "the scriptures will tell you how you can have eternal life"
John 5:40
you are not willing to come to me
"you refuse to believe my message"
John 5:41
receive glory
The word "glory" here is a metonym for the praise that people give to a person who has glory or is glorious. Alternate translation: "receive praise"
receive
accept
John 5:42
you do not have the love of God in yourselves
This can mean 1) "you really do not love God" or 2) "you have really not received God's love."
John 5:43
in my Father's name
Here the word "name" is a metonym that represents God's power and authority. Alternate translation: "with my Father's authority"
Father
This is an important title for God.
receive
welcome as a friend
If another should come in his own name
The word "name" is a metonym that represents authority. Alternate translation: "If another should come in his own authority"
John 5:44
How can you believe, you who accept glory ... God?
This remark appears in the form of a question in order to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "There is no way you can believe because you accept glory ... God!"
believe
This means to trust in Jesus.
accept glory ... seeking the glory
The word "glory" here is a metonym for the praise that people give to a person who has glory or is glorious. Alternate translation: "accept praise ... seeking the praise"
John 5:45
in whom you have hoped
Here the word "hope" means "expect" or "trust," and the person who hopes in this way believes that he will receive what he hopes for. It can be stated clearly what they hoped for in Moses. Alternate translation: "whom you expect to help you" or "whom you trust to defend you before the Father you"
John 5:47
If you do not believe his writings, how are you going to believe my words?
This remark appears in the form of a question to provide emphasis. Alternate translation: "You do not believe his writings, so you will never believe my words!"
my words
"what I say"

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6 [1]After these things, Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.[2]A great crowd was following him because they saw the signs that he was doing on those who were sick.[3]Jesus went up the mountain and there he sat down with his disciples.
[4](Now the Passover, the Jewish festival, was near.)[5]When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where are we going to buy bread so that these may eat?"[6](But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do.)

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[7]Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be sufficient for each one to have even a
little."[8]One of the disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to Jesus,[9]"There is a boy here who has five loaves of
barley bread and two fish, but what are these among so many?"
[10]Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five
thousand in number.[11]Then Jesus took the loaves and after giving thanks, he gave it to those who were sitting. He did the
same with the fish, as much as they wanted.[12]When the people were filled, he said to his disciples, "Gather up the broken
pieces which remain, so that nothing will be lost."
[13]So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves left over by those who
had eaten.[14]Then, when the people saw this sign that he did, they said, "This truly is the prophet who is to come into the
world."[15]When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again
up the mountain by himself.

[16]When it became evening, his disciples went down to the sea.[17]They got into a boat, and were going over the sea to
Capernaum. It was dark by this time, and Jesus had not yet come to them.[18]A strong wind was blowing, and the sea was
getting rough.
[19]When they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty stadia, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat,
and they were afraid.[20]But he said to them, "It is I! Do not be afraid."[21]Then they were willing to receive him into the boat,
and immediately the boat reached the land where they were going.

[22]The next day, the crowd that had been standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there
except the one, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples but that his disciples had gone away alone.[23]However,
there were some boats that came from Tiberias close to the place where they had eaten the bread loaves after the Lord
had given thanks.
[24]When the crowd discovered that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went
to Capernaum seeking Jesus.[25]After they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you
come here?"
[26]Jesus replied to them, saying, "Truly, truly, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate some of the
bread loaves and were filled.[27]Do not labor for the food that perishes, but labor for the food that endures to eternal life
which the Son of Man will give you, for God the Father has set his seal on him."
[28]Then they said to him, "What must we do, so that we may do the works of God?"[29]Jesus replied and said to them, "This is
the work of God: That you believe in the one whom he has sent."
[30]So they said to him, "What sign then will you do, so that we may see and believe you? What will you do?[31]Our fathers ate
the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"
[32]Then Jesus replied to them, "Truly, truly, it was not Moses who gave you the bread out of heaven, but it is my Father who
is giving you the true bread from heaven.[33]For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to
the world."[34]So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."
[35]Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me will not be hungry, and he who believes in me will never
be thirsty.[36]But I told you that indeed you have seen me, and you do not believe.[37]Everyone whom the Father gives me will
come to me, and he who comes to me I will certainly not throw out.
[38]For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.[39]This is the will of him who
sent me, that I would lose not one of all those whom he has given me, but will raise them up on the last day.[40]For this is the
will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him will have eternal life and I will raise him up on the
last day."

[41]Then the Jews grumbled about him because he had said, "I am the bread that has come down from heaven."[42]They said,
"Is not this Jesus son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then does he now say, 'I have come down from
heaven'?"
[43]Jesus replied and said to them, "Stop grumbling among yourselves.[44]No one can come to me unless the Father who sent
me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.[45]It is written in the prophets, 'Everyone will be taught by God.'
Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.
[46]Not that anyone has seen the Father, except he who is from God—he has seen the Father.[47]Truly, truly, he who believes
has eternal life.
[48]I am the bread of life.[49]Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.
[50]This is the bread which comes down from heaven, so that a person may eat some of it and not die.[51]I am the living bread
that came down from heaven. If anyone eats some of this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give is my flesh
for the life of the world."

[52]The Jews became angry among themselves and began to argue, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"[53]Then

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Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves.
[54]Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.[55]For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.[56]He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.
[57]As the living Father sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he will also live because of me.[58]This is the bread that has come down from heaven, not as the fathers ate and died. He who eats this bread will live forever."[59]But Jesus said these things in the synagogue while he was teaching in Capernaum.

[60]Then many of his disciples who heard this said, "This is a difficult saying; who can hear it?"[61]Jesus, because he knew in himself that his disciples were grumbling at this, said to them, "Does this offend you?
[62]Then what if you should see the Son of Man going up to where he was before?[63]It is the Spirit who makes alive; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and they are life.
[64]Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones that would not believe and who it was who would betray him.[65]He said, "It is because of this that I said to you that no one can come to me unless it is granted to him by the Father."

[66]Because of this, many of his disciples went away and no longer walked with him.[67]Then Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?"[68]Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have words of eternal life,[69]and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God."[1]
[70]Jesus said to them, "Did not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"[71]Now he spoke of Judas son of Simon Iscariot, for it was he, one of the twelve, who would betray Jesus.

[1]The phrase the Holy One of God is in the best ancient copies. Some later copies add an additional description and they read: the Christ, the Holy One of God.

John 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

King

The king of any nation was the richest and most powerful person in that nation. The people wanted Jesus to be their king because he gave them food and so they thought he would make the Jews into the richest and most powerful nation in the world. They did not understand that Jesus came to die so God could forgive his people's sins and that the world would persecute his people.

Important metaphors in this chapter

Bread

Bread was the most common and important food in Jesus's day, and so the word "bread" was their general word for "food." It is often difficult to translate the word "bread" into the languages of people who do not eat bread because the general word for food in some languages refers to food that did not exist in Jesus's culture. Jesus used the word "bread" to refer to himself. He wanted them to understand that they need him so they can have eternal life.

Eating the flesh and drinking the blood

When Jesus said, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in yourselves," he knew that before he died he would tell his followers to do this by eating bread and drinking wine. In the event this chapter describes, he expected that his hearers would understand that he was using a metaphor but would not understand what the metaphor referred to. (See: flesh and blood)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Parenthetical Ideas

Several times in this passage, John explains something or gives the reader some context to better understand the story. These explanation are intended to give the reader some additional knowledge without interrupting the flow of the narrative. The information is placed inside parentheses.

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 6:1 Notes

John 6:1

General Information:

Jesus has traveled from Jerusalem to Galilee. A crowd has followed him up a mountainside. These verses tell the setting of this part of the story.

After these things

The phrase "these things" refers to the events in John 5:1-46 and introduces the event that follows.

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Jesus went away
It is implied in the text that Jesus traveled by boat and took his disciples with him. Alternate translation: "Jesus traveled by boat with his disciples"
John 6:2
A great crowd
"A large number of people"
signs
This refers to the miracles that are used as evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over everything.
John 6:4
Now the Passover, the Jewish festival, was near
John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about when the events happened.
John 6:5
General Information:
The action in the story begins in verse 5.
John 6:6
But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do
John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to explain why Jesus asked Philip where to buy bread.
for he himself knew
The reflexive pronoun "himself" makes it clear that the word "he" refers to Jesus. Jesus knew what he would do.
John 6:7
Two hundred denarii worth of bread
The word "denarii" is the plural of "denarius." Alternate translation: "The amount of bread that costs two hundred days' wages"
John 6:9
loaves
Loaves of bread are lumps of dough that are shaped and baked. These were probably small dense, round loaves.
what are these among so many?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that they do not have enough food to feed everyone. Alternate translation: "these few loaves and fishes are not enough to feed so many people!"
John 6:10
sit down
"lie down"
Now there was much grass in the place
John briefly stops telling about the events in the story in order to give background information about the place where this event happens.
So the men sat down, about five thousand in number
While the crowd probably included women and children (John 6:4-5), here John is counting only the men.
John 6:11
giving thanks
Jesus prayed to God the Father and thanked him for the fish and the loaves.
he gave it
"he" here represents "Jesus and his disciples." Alternate translation: "Jesus and his disciples gave it"
John 6:13
General Information:
Jesus withdraws from the crowd. This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus feeding the crowd on the mountain.
they gathered
"the disciples gathered"
left over
the food that no one had eaten
John 6:14
this sign
Jesus feeding the 5,000 people with five barley loaves and two fish
the prophet
the special prophet who Moses said would come into the world
John 6:16
Connecting Statement:
This is the next event in the story. Jesus's disciples go out onto the lake in a boat.
John 6:17
It was dark by this time, and Jesus had not yet come to them
Use your language's way of showing that this is background information.
John 6:19
they had rowed
Boats usually had two, four, or six people rowing with rowers on each side working together. Your culture may have different ways of making a boat go across a large body of water.
about twenty-five or thirty stadia
A "stadium" is 185 meters. Alternate translation: "about five or six kilometers"
John 6:20
Do not be afraid
"Stop being afraid!"
John 6:21
they were willing to receive him into the boat
It is implied that Jesus gets into the boat. Alternate translation: "they gladly received him into the boat"
John 6:22
the sea
"the Sea of Galilee"
there was no other boat there except the one
This double negative emphasizes that the one boat is the only one that was there. Alternate translation: "there was only that one boat there"
John 6:23
However, there were ... the Lord had given thanks
Use your language's way of showing that this is background information.
boats that came from Tiberias
Here, John provides more background information. The next day, after Jesus fed the people, some boats with people from Tiberius came to see Jesus. However, Jesus and his disciples had left the night before.
John 6:24
General Information:
The people go to Capernaum to find Jesus. When they see him, they start asking him questions.

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John 6:26
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
John 6:27
eternal life which the Son of Man will give you, for God the Father has set his seal on him
God the Father has given his approval to Jesus, the Son of Man, to give eternal life to those who believe in him.
Son of Man ... God the Father
These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God.
has set his seal on him
To "set a seal" on something means to place a mark on it to show to whom it belongs. This means that the Son belongs to the Father and that the Father approves of him in every way.
John 6:31
Our fathers
"Our forefathers" or "Our ancestors"
heaven
This refers to the place where God lives.
John 6:32
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
it is my Father who is giving you the true bread from heaven
The "true bread" is a metaphor for Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Father gives to you the Son as the true bread from heaven"
my Father
This is an important title for God.
John 6:33
gives life to the world
"gives spiritual life to the world"
the world
Here the "world" is a metonym for all of the people in the world who trust in Jesus.
John 6:35
I am the bread of life
Through metaphor, Jesus compares himself with bread. Just as bread is necessary for our physical life, Jesus is necessary for our spiritual life. Alternate translation: "Just as food keeps you alive physically, I can give you spiritual life"
believes in
This means to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, to trust him as Savior, and to live in a way that honors him.
John 6:37
Everyone whom the Father gives me will come to me
God the Father and God the Son will save forever those who believe in Jesus.
Father
This is an important title for God.
he who comes to me I will certainly not throw out
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will keep everyone who comes to me"
John 6:38
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the crowd.
him who sent me
"my Father, who sent me"
John 6:39
I would lose not one of all those
Here litotes is used to emphasize that Jesus will keep everyone that God gives to him. Alternate translation: "I should keep all of them"
will raise them up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "will cause them to live again"
John 6:41
Connecting Statement:
The Jewish leaders interrupt Jesus as he is speaking to the crowd.
grumbled
talked unhappily
I am the bread
Just as bread is necessary for our physical life, Jesus is necessary for our spiritual life. See how you translated this in [John 6:35]
John 6:42
Is not this Jesus son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders believe that Jesus is no one special. Alternate translation: "This is just Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know!
How then does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders do not believe that Jesus came from heaven. Alternate translation: "He is lying when he says that he came from heaven!"
John 6:43
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the crowd and now also to the Jewish leaders.
John 6:44
raise him up
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "cause him to live again"
draws
This can mean 1) "pulls" or 2) "attracts."
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 6:45
It is written in the prophets
This is a passive statement that can be translated in an active form. Alternate translation: "The prophets wrote"
Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me
The Jews thought Jesus was the "son of Joseph" (John 6:42), but he is the Son of God because his Father is God, not Joseph. Those who truly learn from God the Father believe in Jesus, who is God the Son.
John 6:46
Connecting Statement:
Jesus now continues speaking to the crowd and the Jewish leaders.
Not that anyone has seen the Father, except he who is from God—he has seen the Father
"I am not saying that anyone has seen the Father. Only he

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who is from God-he has seen the Father"
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 6:47
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
he who believes has eternal life
God gives "eternal life" to those who trust in Jesus, the Son of God.
John 6:48
I am the bread of life
Just as bread is necessary for our physical life, Jesus is necessary for our spiritual life. See how you translated this in [John 6:35]
John 6:49
Your fathers
"Your forefathers" or "Your ancestors"
died
This refers to physical death.
John 6:50
This is the bread
Here "bread" is a metaphor that points to Jesus who is the one who gives spiritual life just as bread sustains physical life. Alternate translation: "I am like the true bread"
not die
"live forever." Here the word "die" refers to spiritual death.
John 6:51
living bread
This means "the bread that causes people to live" (John 6:35).
for the life of the world
Here "the world" is a metonym that represents the lives of all the people in the world. Alternate translation: "that will give life to all the people in the world"
John 6:52
Connecting Statement:
Some Jews who are present begin to argue among themselves and Jesus responds to their question.
How can this man give us his flesh to eat?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders are reacting negatively to what Jesus has said about "his flesh." Alternate translation: "There is no way that this man can give us his flesh to eat!"
John 6:53
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood
Here the phrases "eat the flesh" and "drink his blood" are a metaphor that shows how trusting in Jesus, the Son of Man, is like receiving spiritual food and drink. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor clearer than Jesus did.
you will not have life in yourselves
"you will not receive eternal life"
John 6:54
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to all those listening to him.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life
The phrases "eats my flesh" and "drinks my blood" are a metaphor for trusting Jesus. Just as people need food and drink in order to live, people need to trust Jesus in order to have eternal life. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor more clear than Jesus did.
raise him up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "cause him to live again"
at the last day
"on the day when God judges everyone"
John 6:55
my flesh is true food ... my blood is true drink
The phrases "true food" and "true drink" are a metaphor that means Jesus gives life to those who trust in him. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor clearer than Jesus did.
John 6:56
remains in me, and I in him
"has a close relationship with me"
John 6:57
so he who eats me
The phrase "eats me" is a metaphor for trusting Jesus. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor clearer than Jesus did.
living Father
Possible meanings are 1) "the Father who gives life" or 2) "the Father who is alive."
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 6:58
This is the bread that has come down from heaven
Jesus was speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "I am the bread that has come down from heaven"
This is the bread that has come down from heaven
The bread is a metaphor for what gives life. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor clearer than Jesus did.
He who eats this bread will live forever
Jesus spoke about himself as "this bread." Alternate translation: "He who eats me, the bread, will live forever"
He who eats this bread
Here "eats this bread" is a metaphor for trusting Jesus. However, the Jews did not understand this. Do not make the meaning of this metaphor clearer than Jesus did.
the fathers
"the forefathers" or "the ancestors"
John 6:59
Jesus said these things in the synagogue ... in Capernaum
Here John gives background information about when this event happened.
John 6:60
Connecting Statement:
Some of the disciples ask a question and Jesus responds, as he continues speaking to the crowd.
who can hear it?
The disciples use this question to emphasize that they cannot do this. Alternate translation: "no one can hear it!"

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or "it is too hard to hear!"

hear it

Possible meanings are 1) "hear it" is a synecdoche for "understand it" or 2) "hear it" is a synecdoche for "agree with it"

John 6:61

Does this offend you?

"Does this shock you?" or "Does this upset you?"

John 6:62

Then what if you should see the Son of Man going up to where he was before?

Jesus offers this remark in the form of a question to emphasize that his disciples will see other things that are also hard to understand. Alternate translation: "Then you will not know what to think when you see me, the Son of Man, going up into heaven!"

John 6:63

profits

The word "profit" means to cause good things to happen.

words

Possible meanings are 1) Jesus's words in [John 6:32-58]

The words that I have spoken to you

"What I have told you"

are spirit, and they are life

Possible meanings are 1) "are about the Spirit and eternal life" or 2) "are from the Spirit and give eternal life" or 3) "are about spiritual things and life."

John 6:64

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones ... who it was who would betray him

Here John gives background information about what Jesus knew would happen.

John 6:65

no one can come to me unless it is granted to him by the Father

Whoever wants to believe must come to God through the Son. Only God the Father allows people to come to Jesus.

Father

This is an important title for God.

come to me

"follow me and receive eternal life"

John 6:66

no longer walked with him

Jesus went from one place to another by walking, so it is literally true that they did not walk where and when he walked, but the reader should also be able to understand that this metaphor indicates that they no longer wanted to hear what he had to say.

his disciples

Here "his disciples" refers to the general group of people who followed Jesus.

John 6:67

the twelve

This is an ellipsis for "the twelve disciples," a specific group of twelve men who followed Jesus for his entire ministry. Alternate translation: "the twelve disciples"

John 6:68

Lord, to whom would we go?

Simon Peter gives this remark in the form of a question to emphasize that he desires to follow only Jesus. Alternate translation: "Lord, we could never follow anyone but you!"

John 6:70

Did not I choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Jesus gives this remark in the form of a question to draw attention to the fact that one of the disciples will betray him. Alternate translation: "I chose you all myself, yet one of you is a servant of Satan!"

John 6:71

General Information:

Verse 71 is not part of the main story. Here John comments on what Jesus said.

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7 [1]After these things Jesus traveled about in Galilee, for he did not want to go into Judea because the Jews were seeking to
kill him.[2]Now the Jewish Festival of Shelters was near.
[3]His brothers therefore said to him, "Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples also may see the works that
you do.[4]No one does anything in secret if he himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the
world."
[5]For even his brothers did not believe in him.[6]Jesus therefore said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is
always ready.[7]The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil.
[8]You go up to the festival; I am not going to this festival because my time has not yet been fulfilled."[9]After he said these
things to them, he stayed in Galilee.

[10]But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not publicly but in secret.[11]The Jews were
looking for him at the festival and said, "Where is he?"
[12]There was much discussion among the crowds about him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others said, "No, he leads the
crowds astray."[13]Yet no one spoke openly about him for fear of the Jews.

[14]When the festival was already half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach.[15]Then the Jews marveled,
saying, "How does this man know so much? He has never been educated."[16]Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is
not mine, but is of him who sent me.
[17]If anyone wishes to do his will, he will know about this teaching, whether it comes from God, or whether I speak from
myself.[18]Whoever speaks from himself seeks his own glory, but whoever seeks the glory of him who sent him, that person
is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

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[19]Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?"[20]The crowd answered, "You have a demon. Who seeks to kill you?"
[21]Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel because of it.[22]Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the ancestors), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man.
[23]If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses is not broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath?[24]Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteously."

[25]Some of them from Jerusalem said, "Is not this the one they seek to kill?[26]See, he speaks openly, and they say nothing to him. It cannot be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ, can it?[27]Yet we know where this one is from. But when the Christ comes, no one will know where he is from."
[28]Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know me and know where I come from. I have not come of myself, but he who sent me is true, and you do not know him.[29]I know him because I come from him and he sent me."
[30]They were trying to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not yet come.[31]But many in the crowd believed in him, and they said, "When the Christ comes, will he do more signs than what this one has done?"[32]The Pharisees heard the crowds whispering these things about Jesus, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.
[33]Jesus then said, "I am still with you for a short amount of time, and then I go to him who sent me.[34]You will seek me but you will not find me; where I go, you will not be able to come."
[35]The Jews therefore said among themselves, "Where will this man go that we will not be able to find him? Will he go to the dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?[36]What is this word that he said, 'You will seek me but will not find me; where I go, you will not be able to come'?"

[37]Now on the last, great day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.[38]He who believes in me, just as the scripture says, rivers of living water will flow from his belly."
[39]But he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him would receive; the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified.
[40]Some of the crowd, when they heard these words, said, "This is indeed the prophet."[41]Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Does the Christ come from Galilee?[42]Have the scriptures not said that the Christ will come from the descendants of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"
[43]So there arose a division in the crowds because of him.[44]Some of them would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him.

[45]Then the officers came back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?"[46]The officers answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this."
[47]So the Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived?[48]Have any of the rulers believed in him, or any of the Pharisees?[49]But this crowd that does not know the law, they are cursed."
[50]Nicodemus (one of the Pharisees, who came to him earlier) said to them,[51]"Does our law judge a man before hearing from him and knowing what he does?"[52]They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and see that no prophet comes from Galilee."

[53] [1] [Then everyone went to his own house.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have John 7:53-8:11.

John 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This whole chapter concerns the concept of believing Jesus to be the Messiah. Some people believed this to be true while others rejected it. Some were willing to recognize his power and even the possibility that he was a prophet, but most were unwilling to believe that he was the Messiah. (See: christ and prophet)
Translators may wish to include a note at verse 53 to explain to the reader why they have chosen or chosen not to translate verses 7:53-8:11.

Special concepts in this chapter

"My time has not yet come"
This phrase and "his hour had not yet come" are used in this chapter to indicate that Jesus is in control of the events unfolding in his life.
"Living water"

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This is an important image used in the New Testament. It is a metaphor. Because this metaphor is given in a desert environment, it probably emphasizes that Jesus is able to give life sustaining nourishment.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Prophecy

Jesus gives a prophecy about his life without an explicit statement in John 7:33-34.

Irony

Nicodemus explains to the other Pharisees that the Law requires him to hear directly from a person before making a judgment about them. The Pharisees in turn made a judgment about Jesus without speaking to Jesus.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Did not believe in him"

Jesus's brothers did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. (See: believe)

"The Jews"

This term is used in two different ways in this passage. It is used specifically in reference to the Jewish leaders who were trying to kill him (John 7:1). It is also used in reference to the people of Judea in general who had a positive opinion of Jesus (John 7:13). The translator may wish to use the terms "Jewish leaders" and "Jewish people" or "Jews (leaders)" and "Jews (in general)."

Links:

John 7:1 Notes

John 7:1

General Information:

Jesus is in Galilee speaking to his brothers. These verses tell about when this event occurred.

After these things

These words tell the reader that the writer will begin talking about a new event. "After he finished speaking with the disciples" (John 6:66-71) or "Some time later"

traveled

The reader should understand that Jesus is probably walking rather than riding on an animal or in a vehicle.

the Jews were seeking to kill him

Here "the Jews" is a synecdoche for "the Jewish leaders." Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders were making plans to kill him"

John 7:2

Now the Jewish Festival of Shelters was near

"Now the time for the festival of the Jews was near" or "Now it was almost time for the Jewish festival of Shelters"

John 7:3

brothers

This refers to the actual younger brothers of Jesus, the sons of Mary and Joseph.

the works that you do

The word "works" refers to the miracles that Jesus had performed.

John 7:4

he himself

The word "himself" is a reflexive pronoun that emphasizes the word "he."

the world

Here "the world" is a metonym for all of the people in the world. Alternate translation: "all people" or "everyone"

John 7:5

For even his brothers did not believe in him

This sentence is a stop from the main story. Here John gives background information about the brothers of Jesus.

his brothers

All of Jesus's brothers were younger than he was. This can be made explicit in the translation as long as it does not suggest that Jesus also had older brothers. Alternate translation: "his younger brothers"

John 7:6

My time has not yet come

The word "time" is a metonym. Jesus is implying that it is not the right time for him to bring his ministry to a close. Alternate translation: "It is not the right time for me to end my work"

your time is always ready

"any time is good for you"

John 7:7

The world cannot hate you

Here the "world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "The people in the world cannot hate you"

I testify about it that its works are evil

"I tell them that what they are doing is evil"

John 7:8

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his brothers.

my time has not yet been fulfilled

Here Jesus is implying that if he goes to Jerusalem, he will bring his work to an end. Alternate translation: "It is not the right time for me to go to Jerusalem"

John 7:10

General Information:

The setting of the story has changed. Jesus and his brothers are now at the festival.

when his brothers

All of Jesus's brothers were younger than he was. This can be made explicit in the translation as long as it does not suggest that Jesus also had older brothers. Alternate translation: "when his younger brothers"

he also went up

Jerusalem is at a higher elevation than Galilee where Jesus and his brothers were previously.

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not publicly but in secret
These two phrases mean the same thing. The idea is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "very secretly"
John 7:11
The Jews were looking for him
Here the word "Jews"is a synecdoche for "the Jewish leaders." The word "him" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders were looking for Jesus"
John 7:12
he leads the crowds astray
Here "leads ... astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "he deceives the people"
John 7:13
fear
This refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to himself or others.
the Jews
The word "Jews" is a synecdoche for the leaders of the Jews who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
John 7:14
General Information:
Jesus is now teaching the Jews in the temple.
John 7:15
How does this man know so much?
The remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize the Jewish leaders' surprise that Jesus has so much knowledge. Alternate translation: "It is amazing how much he knows about the scriptures!"
John 7:16
but is of him who sent me
"but comes from God, the one who sent me"
John 7:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Jews.
John 7:18
but whoever seeks the glory of him who sent him, that person is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him
"when a person only seeks to honor the one who sent him, that person is speaking the truth. He does not lie"
John 7:19
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Jews.
Did not Moses give you the law?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "It was Moses who gave you the law"
keeps the law
"obeys the law"
Why do you seek to kill me?
Jesus questions the motives of the Jewish leaders who want to kill him for breaking the law of Moses. He implies that the leaders themselves do not keep that same Law. Alternate translation: "You break the Law yourselves and yet you want to kill me!"
John 7:20
You have a demon
"This shows that you are crazy, or maybe a demon is controlling you!"
Who seeks to kill you?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "No one is trying to kill you!"
John 7:21
one work
"one miracle" or "one sign"
you all marvel
"you all are shocked"
John 7:22
not that it is from Moses, but from the ancestors
Here John provides additional information about circumcision.
on the Sabbath you circumcise a man
Jesus implies that the act of circumcision also involves work. Alternate translation: "you circumcise a male baby on the Sabbath. That is working too"
on the Sabbath
"on the Jewish Day of Rest"
John 7:23
If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses is not broken
"If you circumcise a male baby on the Sabbath so that you do not break the law of Moses"
why are you angry with me because I made a man completely healthy on the Sabbath?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "you should not be angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath!"
on the Sabbath
"on the Jewish Day of Rest"
John 7:24
Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteously
Jesus implies that the people should not decide what is right, based only on what they can see. Behind the action is a motive that cannot be seen. Alternate translation: "Stop judging people according to what you see! Be more concerned with what is right according to God"
John 7:25
Is not this the one they seek to kill?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "This is Jesus whom they are seeking to kill!"
John 7:26
they say nothing to him
This implies that the Jewish leaders are not opposing Jesus. Alternate translation: "they say nothing to oppose him"
It cannot be that the rulers indeed know that this is the Christ, can it?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "Maybe they have decided that he is truly the Messiah!"
John 7:28
cried out
"spoke in a loud voice"
in the temple
Jesus and the people were actually in the courtyard of the

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temple. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"

You both know me and know where I come from

John uses irony in this statement. The people believe that Jesus is from Nazareth. They do not know that God sent him from heaven and that he was born in Bethlehem. Alternate translation: "You all know me and you think you know where I come from"

of myself

"on my own authority." See how you translated "of himself" in John 5:19.

he who sent me is true

"God is the one who sent me and he is true"

John 7:30

his hour had not yet come

The word "hour" is a metonym that represents the right time for Jesus to be arrested, according to God's plan. Alternate translation: "it was not the right time to arrest him"

John 7:31

When the Christ comes, will he do more signs than what this one has done?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "When the Christ comes, surely he will not be able to do more signs than this man has done!"

signs

This refers to the miracles that prove that Jesus is the Christ.

John 7:33

I am still with you for a short amount of time

"I will remain with you for only a short period of time"

then I go to him who sent me

Here Jesus refers to God the Father, who sent him.

John 7:34

where I go, you will not be able to come

"you will not be able to come to the place where I am"

John 7:35

The Jews therefore said among themselves

The "Jews" is a synecdoche that represents the leaders of the Jews who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders said among themselves"

the dispersion

This refers to the Jews that were spread all across the Greek world, outside of Palestine.

John 7:36

What is this word that he said

This "word" is a metonym which stands for the meaning of the message that Jesus had shared, which the Jewish leaders had failed to understand. Alternate translation: "What is he talking about when he said"

John 7:37

General Information:

Some time has passed. It is now the last day of the festival and Jesus speaks to the crowd.

great day

It is "great" because it is the last, or most important, day of the festival.

If anyone is thirsty

Here the word "thirsty" is a metaphor that means one's great desire for the things of God, just as one "thirsts" for water. Alternate translation: "Anyone who desires the things of God like a thirsty man desires water"

let him come to me and drink

The word "drink" is a metaphor that means to receive the spiritual life that Jesus provides. Alternate translation: "let him come to me and quench his spiritual thirst"

John 7:38

He who believes in me, just as the scripture says

"As the scripture says about anyone who believes in me"

rivers of living water will flow

The "rivers of living water" is a metaphor that represents the life that Jesus provides for those who are spiritually "thirsty." Alternate translation: "spiritual life will flow like rivers of water"

living water

Possible meanings are 1) "water that gives life" or 2) "water that causes people to live."

from his belly

Here the belly represents the inside of a person, specifically the non-physical part of a person. Alternate translation: "from inside of him" or "from his heart"

John 7:39

General Information:

In this verse the author gives information to clarify what Jesus is talking about.

But he

Here "he" refers to Jesus.

the Spirit had not yet been given

John implies that the Spirit would later come to live in those who trusted Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Spirit had not yet come to live in the believers"

because Jesus was not yet glorified

Here the word "glorified" refers to the time when God would honor the Son after his death and resurrection.

John 7:40

This is indeed the prophet

By saying this, the people are indicating that they believe Jesus is the prophet like Moses that God had promised to send. Alternate translation: "This is indeed the prophet who is like Moses that we have been waiting for"

John 7:41

Does the Christ come from Galilee?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "The Christ cannot come from Galilee!"

John 7:42

Have the scriptures not said that the Christ will come from the descendants of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "The scriptures teach that Christ will come from the line of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was!"

Have the scriptures not said ... was?

The scriptures are referred to as if they were actually speaking as a person speaks. Alternate translation: "Did the prophets not write in the scriptures ... was?" or "The prophets wrote in the scriptures ... was."

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where David was
"where David lived"
John 7:43
So there arose a division in the crowds because of him
The crowds could not agree about who or what Jesus was.
John 7:44
but no one laid hands on him
To lay hands on someone is an idiom which means to grab him or to hold onto him. Alternate translation: "but no one grabbed him to arrest him"
John 7:45
the officers
"the temple guards"
John 7:46
Never has anyone spoken like this
The officers exaggerate to show how impressed they are by what Jesus said. You may need to make explicit that the officers were not claiming to know everything that every person in all times and places had ever said. Alternate translation: "We have never heard anyone say such amazing things as this man!"
John 7:47
So the Pharisees
"Because they said that, the Pharisees"
answered them
"answered the officers"
Have you also been deceived?
The remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. The Pharisees are shocked at the response of the officers. Alternate translation: "You have been deceived too!"
John 7:48
Have any of the rulers believed in him, or any of the Pharisees?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "None of the rulers or Pharisees have believed in him!"
John 7:49
the law
This is a reference to the law of the Pharisees and not the law of Moses.
But this crowd that does not know the law, they are cursed
"As for this crowd that does not know the law, God will cause them to perish!"
John 7:50
one of the Pharisees, who came to him earlier
John provides this information to remind us of who Nicodemus is. Your language may have a special way to mark background information.
John 7:51
Does our law judge a man ... what he does?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Our Jewish law does not allow us to judge a man ... what he does!"
Does our law judge a man ... does?
Here Nicodemus speaks of the law as if it were a person. If this is not natural in your language, you may translate it with a personal subject. Alternate translation: "Do we judge a man ... does?" or "We do not judge a man ... does."
John 7:52
Are you also from Galilee?
The Jewish leaders know that Nicodemus is not from Galilee. They ask this question as a way of scoffing at him. Alternate translation: "You must also be one of those inferior persons from Galilee!"
Search and see
This is an ellipsis. You may wish to include the information that does not appear. Alternate translation: "Search carefully and read what is written in the Scriptures"
no prophet comes from Galilee
This probably refers to the belief that Jesus was born in Galilee.
John 7:53
General Information:
The best early texts do not have 7:53-8:11. The ULB has set them apart in square brackets

8 [1][1] Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.[2]Early in the morning he came to the temple again, and all the people came; he sat down and taught them.[3]The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in the act of adultery. They placed her in the middle.
[4]Then they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery.[5]Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such people; what do you say about her?"[6]They said this in order to trap him so that they might have something to accuse him about, but Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground with his finger.
[7]When they continued asking him questions, he stood up and said to them, "The one among you who has no sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."[8]Again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground with his finger.
[9]When they heard it, they left one by one, beginning with the oldest. Finally Jesus was left alone, with the woman who had been in the middle.[10]Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are your accusers? Did no one condemn you?"[11]She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."][2]

[12]Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."[13]The Pharisees said to him, "You testify about yourself; your testimony is not true."
[14]Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true. I know where I came from and where I am going, but you do not know where I came from or where I am going.[15]You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.[16]Yet if I judge, my judgment is true because I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent me.
[17]Yes, and in your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true.[18]I am he who testifies about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me."

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[19]They said to him, "Where is your father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father; if you had known me, you would have known my Father also."[20]He said these words in the treasury as he taught in the temple, and no one arrested him because his hour had not yet come.

[21]So again he said to them, "I am going away; you will seek me and will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."[22]The Jews said, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I am going you cannot come'?"
[23]Jesus said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.[24]Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For unless you believe that I AM, you will die in your sins."
[25]They said therefore to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "What I have said to you from the beginning.[26]I have many things to speak and to judge about you. However, he who sent me is true; and the things that I heard from him, these things I say to the world."[27]They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father.
[28]Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM, and that I do nothing of myself. As the Father taught me, I speak these things.[29]He who sent me is with me, and he has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him."[30]As Jesus was saying these things, many believed in him.

[31]Jesus said to those Jews who had believed him, "If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples;[32]and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."[33]They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves of anyone; how can you say, 'You will be set free'?"
[34]Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.[35]The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.[36]Therefore, if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free.
[37]I know that you are Abraham's descendants; you seek to kill me because my word has no place in you.[38]I say what I have seen with my Father, and you also do what you heard from your father."
[39]They answered and said to him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.[40]Yet, now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.[41]You do the works of your father." They said to him, "We were not born in sexual immorality; we have one Father: God."
[42]Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and am here; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me.[43]Why do you not understand my words? It is because you cannot hear my words.[44]You are of your father, the devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature because he is a liar and the father of lies.
[45]Yet, because I speak the truth, you do not believe me.[46]Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe me?[47]He who is of God hears the words of God; you do not hear them because you are not of God."
[48]The Jews answered and said to him, "Do we not truly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"[49]Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.
[50]I do not seek my glory; there is one seeking and judging.[51]Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."
[52]The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died; but you say, 'If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.'[53]You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are you? The prophets also died. Who do you make yourself out to be?"
[54]Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing; it is my Father who glorifies me—about whom you say that he is your God.[55]You have not known him, but I know him. If I would say, 'I do not know him,' I would be like you, a liar. However, I know him and keep his word.[56]Your father Abraham rejoiced at seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."
[57]The Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?"[58]Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."[59]Then they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

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[1]See the note on John 7:53.
[2]See the note on John 7:53.

John 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Translators may wish to include a note at verse 1 to explain to the reader why they have chosen to translate or to not translate verses 8:1-11.

Special concepts in this chapter

A light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they

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are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: light and darkness and righteous)

I AM

John records Jesus as saying these words four times in this book, three times in this chapter. They stand alone as a complete sentence, and they literally translate the Hebrew word for "I AM," by which Yahweh identified himself to Moses. For these reasons, many people believe that when Jesus said these words he was claiming to be Yahweh. (See: yahweh).

The Scribes and Pharisees' trap

The Scribes and Pharisees wanted to trick Jesus. They wanted him to say either that they should keep the law of Moses by killing a woman whom they had found committing adultery or that they should disobey the law of Moses and forgive her sin. Jesus knew that they were trying to trick him and that they did not really want to keep the law of Moses. He knew this because the law said that both the woman and the man should die, but they did not bring the man to Jesus. (See: adultery)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 8:1 Notes

John 8:1

General Information:

While some texts have 7:53-8:11, the best and earliest texts do not include them.

Connecting Statement:

Verse 1 tells us where Jesus went at the end of the previous chapter.

John 8:2

all the people

This is a general way of speaking. It means "many people."

John 8:3

The scribes and the Pharisees brought

Here the phrase "the scribes and the Pharisees" is a synecdoche that represents some of the members of these two groups. Alternate translation: "Some scribes and Pharisees brought" or "Some men who taught the Jewish laws and some who were Pharisees brought"

a woman caught in the act of adultery

This is a passive statement. You may translate it in an active form. Alternate translation: "a woman whom they had found committing adultery"

John 8:4

General Information:

While some texts have 7:53-8:11, the best and earliest texts do not include them.

John 8:5

such people

"people like that" or "people who do that"

what do you say about her?

"so you tell us. What should we do about her?"

John 8:6

to trap him

This means to use a trick question.

so that they might have something to accuse him about

What they would accuse him of can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "so that they could accuse him of saying something wrong" or "so that they could accuse him of not obeying the law of Moses or the Roman law"

John 8:7

General Information:

While some texts have 7:53-8:11, the best and earliest texts do not include them.

When they continued

The word "they" refers to the scribes and Pharisees.

The one among you who has no sin

The abstract noun "sin" can be expressed with the verb sin. Alternate translation: "The one among you is has never sinned" or "If any one of you has never sinned"

let him

"let that person"

John 8:8

he stooped down

"he bent down"

John 8:9

General Information:

While some texts have 7:53-8:11, the best and earliest texts do not include them.

one by one

"one after another"

John 8:10

Woman, where are your accusers

When Jesus called her "woman," he was not trying to make her feel insignificant. If people in your language group would think that he was doing that, this can be translated without the word "Woman."

John 8:12

General Information:

Jesus is speaking to a crowd near the treasury in the temple after either the events of [John 7:1-52]

I am the light of the world

Here the "light" is a metaphor for the revelation that comes from God. Alternate translation: "I am the one who gives light to the world"

the world

This is a metonym for the people. Alternate translation: "the people of the world"

he who follows me

This is an idiom that means "everyone who does what I teach" or "everyone who obeys me"

will not walk in the darkness

To "walk in darkness" is a metaphor for living a sinful life. Alternate translation: "will not live as if he were in the darkness of sin"

light of life

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The "light of life" is a metaphor for the truth from God that gives spiritual life. Alternate translation: "truth that brings eternal life"
John 8:13
You testify about yourself
"You are just saying these things about yourself"
your testimony is not true
The Pharisees are implying that the witness of only one person is not true because it cannot be verified. Alternate translation: "you cannot be your own witness" or "what you say about yourself may not be true"
John 8:14
Even if I testify about myself
"Even if I say these things about myself"
John 8:15
the flesh
"human standards and the laws of men"
I judge no one
Possible meanings are 1) "I do not judge anyone yet" or 2) "I am not judging anyone now."
John 8:16
if I judge
Possible meanings are 1) "if I judge people" or 2) "whenever I judge people"
my judgment is true
Possible meanings are 1) "my judgment will be right" or 2) "my judgment is right."
I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent me
Jesus, the Son of God, has authority because of his special relationship with his Father.
I am not alone
The implied information is that Jesus is not alone in his judgment. Alternate translation: "I am not alone in how I judge" or "I do not judge alone"
I am with the Father who sent me
The Father and the Son judge together. Alternate translation: "the Father who sent me also judges with me" or "the Father who sent me judges as I do"
the Father
This is an important title for God. If your language must state whose Father this is, you could say "my Father" since Jesus switches to that in the following verses.
John 8:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Pharisees and other people about himself.
Yes, and in your law
The word "Yes" shows that Jesus is adding to what he was saying before.
it is written
This is a passive phrase. You may translate it in an active form with a personal subject. Alternate translation: "Moses wrote"
the testimony of two men is true
The logic implied here is that one person can verify the words of another. Alternate translation: "if two men say the same thing, then people know it is true"
John 8:18
I am he who testifies about myself
Jesus testifies about himself. Alternate translation: "I give evidence to you about myself"
the Father who sent me testifies about me
The Father also testifies about Jesus. You could make it explicit that this means Jesus's testimony is true. Alternate translation: "my Father who sent me also brings evidence about me. So you should believe that what we tell you is true"
the Father
This is an important title for God. If your language must state whose Father this is, you could say "my Father" since Jesus switches to that in the following verses.
John 8:19
You know neither me nor my Father; if you had known me, you would have known my Father also
Jesus indicates that to know him is to also know the Father. Both Father and Son are God. "Father" is an important title for God.
my Father
This is an important title for God.
John 8:20
General Information:
Here there is a break in Jesus's speaking where the author give us background information regarding where Jesus had been teaching. Some languages may require the information about the setting to be placed at the beginning of this part of the story in [John 8:12]
his hour had not yet come
The word "hour" is a metonym for the time for Jesus to die. Alternate translation: "it was not yet the right time for Jesus to die"
John 8:21
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the crowd.
die in your sin
Here the word "die" refers to spiritual death. Alternate translation: "die while you are still sinful" or "you will die while you are sinning"
you cannot come
"you are not able to come"
John 8:22
The Jews said
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for "the Jewish leaders." Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders said" or "The Jewish authorities said"
John 8:23
You are from below
"You were born in this world"
I am from above
"I came from heaven"
You are of this world
"You belong to this world"
I am not of this world
"I do not belong to this world"
John 8:24
you will die in your sins
"you will die without God's forgiving your sins"
that I AM
Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is identifying himself as

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Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as "I AM," or 2) Jesus expects the people to understand that he is referring to what he already has already said about himself: "I am from above."
John 8:25
They said
The word "They" refers to the Jewish leaders (John 8:22).
John 8:26
these things I say to the world
Here the "world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "these things I say to all the people"
John 8:27
the Father
This is a special title for God. Some languages may require the use of a possessive before the noun. Alternate translation: "his Father"
John 8:28
When you have lifted up
This refers to placing Jesus on the cross to kill him.
lifted up the Son of Man
Jesus used the title "Son of Man" to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "lifted me, the Son of Man, up"
I AM
Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as "I AM," or 2) Jesus is saying, "I am the one I claim to be."
As the Father taught me, I speak these things
"I am only saying what my Father taught me to say." The word "Father" is an important title for God.
John 8:29
He who sent me
The word "He" refers to God.
John 8:30
As Jesus was saying these things
"As Jesus spoke these words"
many believed in him
"many people trusted him"
John 8:31
remain in my word
This is an idiom that means "to obey Jesus." Alternate translation: "obey what I have said"
my disciples
"my followers"
John 8:32
the truth will set you free
This is personification. Jesus speaks of "the truth" as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "if you obey the truth, God will set you free"
the truth
This refers to what Jesus reveals about God. Alternate translation: "what is true about God"
John 8:33
how can you say, 'You will be set free'?
This remark appears in the form of a question to express the Jewish leaders' shock at what Jesus has said. Alternate translation: "We do not need to be set free!"
John 8:34
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
is the slave of sin
Here the word "slave" is a metaphor. This implies that "sin" is like a master for the one who sins. Alternate translation: "is like a slave to sin"
John 8:35
in the house forever
Here "house" is a metonym for "family." Alternate translation: "as a permanent member of a family"
the son remains forever
This is an ellipsis. You may translate it by including the implied words. Alternate translation: "the son is a member of the family forever"
John 8:36
if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free
It is implied that Jesus is talking about freedom from sin, which is a metaphor for being able not to sin. Alternate translation: "if the Son sets you free, you will truly be able to refrain from sin"
if the Son sets you free
"Son" is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus was speaking about himself. Alternate translation: "If I, the Son, set you free"
John 8:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Jews.
my word has no place in you
Here "word" is a metonym for the "teachings" or "message" of Jesus, which the Jewish leaders do not accept. Alternate translation: "you do not accept my teachings" or "you do not allow my message to change your life"
John 8:38
I say what I have seen with my Father
"I am telling you about the things I saw when I was with my Father"
you also do what you heard from your father
The Jewish leaders do not understand that by "your father" Jesus is referring to the devil. Alternate translation: "you also continue doing what your father has told you to do"
John 8:39
father
forefather
John 8:40
Abraham did not do this
"Abraham never tried to kill anyone who told him the true revelation from God"
John 8:41
You do the works of your father
Jesus implies that their father is the devil. Alternate translation: "No! You are doing the things that your real father did"
We were not born in sexual immorality
Here the Jewish leaders imply that Jesus does not know who his real father is. Alternate translation: "We do not know about you, but we are not illegitimate children" or "We were all born from proper marriages"
we have one Father: God
Here the Jewish leaders claim God as their spiritual Father. This is an important title for God.

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John 8:42
love
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.
John 8:43
Why do you not understand my words?
Jesus is using this question mainly to rebuke the Jewish leaders for not listening to him. Alternate translation: "I will tell you why you do not understand what I say!"
It is because you cannot hear my words
Here "words" is a metonym for the "teachings" of Jesus. Alternate translation: "It is because you will not accept my teachings.
John 8:44
You are of your father, the devil
"You belong to your father, Satan"
the father of lies
Here "father" is a metaphor for the one who originates all lies. Alternate translation: "he is the one who created all lies in the beginning"
John 8:45
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to the Jews.
because I speak the truth
"because I tell you true things about God"
John 8:46
Which one of you convicts me of sin?
Jesus uses this question to emphasize that he has never sinned. Alternate translation: "None of you can show that I have ever sinned!"
If I speak the truth
"If I say things that are true"
why do you not believe me?
Jesus uses this question to scold the Jewish leaders for their unbelief. Alternate translation: "you have no reason for not believing in me!"
John 8:47
the words of God
Here "words" is a metonym for the "message" of God. Alternate translation: "the message of God" or "the truth that comes from God"
John 8:48
The Jews
The "Jews" is a synecdoche that represents the "Jewish leaders" who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders"
Do we not truly say that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?
The Jewish leaders use this question to accuse Jesus and to dishonor him. Alternate translation: "We are certainly right in saying that you are a Samaritan and that a demon lives in you!"
John 8:50
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues answering the Jews.
there is one seeking and judging
This refers to God.
John 8:51
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
keeps my word
Here "word" is a metonym for the "teachings" of Jesus. Alternate translation: "obeys my teachings" or "does what I say"
see death
This is an idiom that means to experience death. Here Jesus is referring to spiritual death. Alternate translation: "die spiritually"
John 8:52
Jews
Here "Jews" is a metonym for the "Jewish leaders" who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Jewish leaders"
If anyone keeps my word
"If anyone obeys my teaching"
taste death
This is an idiom that means to experience death. The Jewish leaders mistakenly assume that Jesus is speaking only about physical death. Alternate translation: "die"
John 8:53
You are not greater than our father Abraham who died, are you?
The Jewish leaders use this question to emphasize that Jesus is not greater than Abraham. Alternate translation: "You are certainly not greater than our father Abraham who indeed died!"
father
forefather
Who do you make yourself out to be?
The Jews use this question to rebuke Jesus for thinking that he is more important than Abraham. Alternate translation: "You should not think that you are so important!"
John 8:54
it is my Father who glorifies me—about whom you say that he is your God
The word "Father" is an important title for God. No one knows God the Father like Jesus, the Son of God. Alternate translation: "it is my Father who honors me, and you say that he is your God"
John 8:55
keep his word
Here "word" is a metonym for what God says. Alternate translation: "I obey what he says to do"
John 8:56
my day
This is a metonym for what Jesus would accomplish during his life. Alternate translation: "what I would do during my life"
he saw it and was glad
"he foresaw my coming through God's revelation and he rejoiced"
John 8:57
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Jesus speaking with the Jews in the temple, which began in John 8:12.
The Jews said to him
Here the "Jews" is a synecdoche for the "Jewish leaders" who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders said to him"
You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?

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The Jewish leaders use this question to express their shock that Jesus claims to have seen Abraham. Alternate translation: "You are less than fifty years old. You could not have seen Abraham!"
John 8:58
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
I AM
Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as "I AM," or 2) Jesus is saying, "before Abraham existed, I existed."
John 8:59
Then they picked up stones to throw at him
The Jewish leaders are outraged at what Jesus has said. Here it is implied that they wanted to kill him because he had made himself equal to God. Alternate translation: "Then they picked up stones to kill him because he claimed to be equal with God"

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9 [1]Now as Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.[2]His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, so that he was born blind?"
[3]Jesus answered, "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents, but so that the works of God would be revealed in him.[4]We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no one will be able to work.[5]While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."
[6]After Jesus said these things, he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and smeared the mud on his eyes.[7]He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated "Sent"). So the man went away, washed, and came back seeing.
[8]Then the man's neighbors and those who had seen him previously as a beggar were saying, "Is not this the man that used to sit and beg?"[9]Some said, "It is he." Others said, "No, but he is like him." But he said, "I am the one."
[10]They said to him, "Then how were your eyes opened?"[11]He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made mud and smeared it on my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received my sight."[12]They said to him, "Where is he?" He replied, "I do not know."

[13]They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees.[14]Now it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.[15]Then again the Pharisees asked him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes, I washed, and I now can see."
[16]Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God because he does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" So there was a division among them.[17]So they asked the blind man again, "What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?" The blind man said, "He is a prophet."[18]Now the Jews still did not believe about him that he was blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.
[19]They asked the parents, "Is this your son whom you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"[20]So his parents answered them, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.[21]How he now sees, we do not know, and who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him, he is an adult. He can speak for himself."
[22]His parents said these things, because they were afraid of the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed that if anyone would confess him to be the Christ, he would be thrown out of the synagogue.[23]Because of this, his parents said, "He is an adult, ask him."
[24]So for a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner."[25]Then that man replied, "I do not know if he is a sinner. One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see."
[26]Then they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"[27]He answered, "I have told you already, and you did not listen! Why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become his disciples too, do you?"
[28]They insulted him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.[29]We know that God has spoken to Moses, but we do not know where this one is from."
[30]The man answered and said to them, "This is remarkable, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes.[31]We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if someone worships God and does his will, he listens to him.
[32]Since the world began it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind.[33]If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."[34]They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and you are teaching us?" Then they threw him out.

[35]Jesus heard that they had cast him out of the synagogue. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"[36]He replied and said, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?"[37]Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is the one who is speaking with you."[38]The man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.
[39]Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world so that those who do not see may see and so that those who see may become blind."[40]Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and asked him, "Are we also blind?"[41]Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin, but now you say, 'We see,' so your sin remains."

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John 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Who sinned?"

Many of the Jews of Jesus's time believed that if a person was blind or deaf or crippled, it was because he or his parents or someone in his family had sinned. This was not the teaching of the law of Moses. (See: sin and lawofmoses)

"He does not keep the Sabbath"

The Pharisees thought that Jesus was working, and so breaking the Sabbath, by making mud. (See: sabbath)

Important metaphors in this chapter

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Seeing and being blind

Jesus calls the Pharisees blind because they see that Jesus is able to heal blind people but they still do not believe that God sent him

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 9:1 Notes

John 9:1

General Information:

As Jesus and his disciples are walking along, they come across a blind man.

Now

This word shows that the author is about to describe a new event.

as Jesus passed by

Here "Jesus" is a synecdoche for Jesus and the disciples. Alternate translation: "as Jesus and his disciples passed by"

John 9:2

who sinned, this man or his parents, so that he was born blind?

This question reflects the ancient Jewish belief that sin caused all illnesses and other deformities. The rabbis also taught that it was possible for a baby to sin while still in the womb. Alternate translation: "Teacher, we know that sin causes a person to be blind. Whose sin caused this man to be born blind? Did this man himself sin, or was it his parents who sinned?"

John 9:4

We

This "We" includes both Jesus and the disciples he is talking to.

day ... Night

Here "day" and "night" are metaphors. Jesus is comparing the time when people can do God's work to daytime, the time when people normally work, and nighttime to when they cannot do God's work.

John 9:5

in the world

Here the "world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "living among the people of this world"

the light of the world

Here "light" is a metaphor for the true revelation of God. Alternate translation: "the one who shows what is true, just as light allows people to see what is in the darkness"

John 9:6

made mud with the saliva

Jesus used his fingers to mix the dirt and saliva. Alternate translation: "and used his fingers to mix the dirt and saliva to make mud"

smeared the mud on his eyes

"smeared the mud on the man's eyes"

John 9:7

wash ... washed

You may need to make explicit that Jesus wanted him to wash the mud off of his eyes in the pool and that that is what the man did.

which is translated "Sent"

A brief stop occurs here in the story. Here John explains to his readers what "Siloam" means. Alternate translation: "which means 'Sent'"

John 9:8

Is not this the man that used to sit and beg?

This remark appears in the form of a question to express the surprise of the people. Alternate translation: "This man is the one who used to sit and beg!"

John 9:10

Connecting Statement:

The neighbors of the man who had been blind continue to speak to him.

Then how were your eyes opened?

"Then what caused you to be able to see?" or "How is it that you can see now?"

John 9:11

smeared it on my eyes

"used his fingers to cover my eyes with mud." See how you translated a similar phrase in John 9:6.

John 9:13

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They brought the man who used to be blind to the Pharisees
The people insisted that the man go with them to the Pharisees. They did not physically force him to go.
John 9:14
General Information:
This verse tells background information about when Jesus healed the man.
Sabbath day
"Jewish Day of Rest"
John 9:15
Then again the Pharisees asked him
"So the Pharisees also asked him"
John 9:16
he does not keep the Sabbath
This means Jesus does not obey the law about doing no work on the Jewish Day of Rest.
How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that Jesus's signs prove he is not a sinner. Alternate translation: "A sinner can not do such signs!"
signs
This is another word for miracles. "Signs" give evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.
John 9:17
He is a prophet
"I think he is a prophet"
John 9:18
General Information:
Here John stops the main story. Here here provides background information about the Jews' disbelief.
Now the Jews still did not believe
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the "Jewish leaders" who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Now the Jewish leaders still did not believe"
John 9:19
They asked the parents
"They" refers to the Jewish leaders.
John 9:21
he is an adult
"he is a man" or "he is no longer a child"
John 9:22
General Information:
In this verse there is a stop from the main story. Here John provides background information about the man's parents being afraid of the Jews.
they were afraid of the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the "Jewish leaders" who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "they were afraid of what the Jewish leaders might do to them"
afraid
This refers to the unpleasant feeling a person has when there is a threat of harm to oneself or others.
would confess him to be the Christ
"would say that Jesus is the Christ"
he would be thrown out of the synagogue
Here "be thrown out of the synagogue" is a metaphor for no longer being allowed to go into the synagogue and no longer belonging to the group of people who attend services at the synagogue. Alternate translation: "he would not be allowed to go into the synagogue" or "he would no longer belong to the synagogue"
John 9:23
He is an adult
"he is a man" or "he is no longer a child." See how you translated this in John 9:21.
John 9:24
they called the man
Here, "they" refers to the Jews. (John 9:18)
Give glory to God
This is an idiom that people used when taking an oath. Alternate translation: "In the presence of God, tell the truth" or "Speak the truth before God"
this man
This refers to Jesus.
John 9:25
that man
This refers to the man who had been blind.
John 9:26
Connecting Statement:
The Jews continue to speak to the man who had been blind.
John 9:27
Why do you want to hear it again?
This remark appears in the form of a question to express the man's amazement that the Jewish leaders have asked him to tell them again what happened. Alternate translation: "I am surprised that you want to hear again what happened to me!"
You do not want to become his disciples too, do you?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add irony to the man's statement. He knows that the Jewish leaders do not want to follow Jesus. Here he ridicules them. Alternate translation: "It sounds like you also want to become his disciples!"
John 9:28
You are his disciple
"You are following Jesus!"
but we are disciples of Moses
The pronoun "we" is exclusive. The Jewish leaders are speaking only of themselves. Alternate translation: "but we are following Moses"
John 9:29
We know that God has spoken to Moses
"We are sure that God has spoken to Moses"
we do not know where this one is from
Here the Jewish leaders are referring to Jesus. They imply that he has no authority to call disciples. Alternate translation: "we do not know where he comes from or where he gets his authority"
John 9:30
that you do not know where he is from
The man is surprised that the Jewish leaders question Jesus's authority when they know he has the power to heal. Alternate translation: "that you do not know where he gets his authority"
John 9:31
does not listen to sinners ... he listens to him
"does not answer the prayers of sinners ... God answers his

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prayers"
John 9:32
Connecting Statement:
The man who had been blind continues speaking to the Jews.
Since the world began
"Since the beginning of time" or "As far back as anyone can remember"
it has never been heard that anyone opened
This is a passive statement. You can translate it in an active form. Alternate translation: "no one has ever heard of anyone who healed a man who was blind from birth"
John 9:33
If this man were not from God, he could do nothing
This sentence uses a double negative pattern. Alternate translation: "Only a man from God could do something like that"
John 9:34
You were completely born in sins, and you are teaching us?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. It also implies that the man was born blind because of the sins of his parents. Alternate translation: "You were born as a result of your parents' sins. You are not qualified to teach us!"
they threw him out
"they threw him out of the synagogue"
John 9:35
General Information:
Jesus finds the man whom he healed (John 9:1-7) and begins to speak to him and the crowd.
believe in the Son of Man
This means to "believe in Jesus," to believe that he is the Son of God, to trust him as Savior, and live in a way that honors him.
the Son of Man
Here the reader needs to understand that Jesus was speaking as if "the Son of Man" were another person. The man who had been born blind did not realize that Jesus was speaking of himself when he spoke of "the Son of Man." You should translate so that the man does not learn that Jesus is the Son of Man until verse 37.
John 9:39
came into this world
The "world" is a metonym for "the people who live in the world." Alternate translation: "came to live among the people of this world"
so that those who do not see may see
Here "seeing" is a metaphor for being able to understand spiritual things. Alternate translation: "so that those who do not see spiritually may see spiritually"
so that those who see
When Jesus speaks here of those that see, he is speaking of those who think that they understand spiritual things. Alternate translation: "so that those who think that they see spiritually"
may become blind
Here "blind" is a metaphor for not being able to understand spiritual things. Alternate translation: "may never see spiritually"
John 9:40
and asked him, "Are we also blind?"
Here "blind" is a metaphor for not understanding spiritual things. The Pharisees do not believe that they are spiritually blind, but they realize that Jesus might saying that they are spiritually blind, so they use this question to challenge him. Alternate translation: "and said to him, 'Are you saying that we are blind?'" or "and said to him, 'You seem to be saying that we, too, are blind.'"
John 9:41
If you were blind, you would have no sin
Blindness is a metaphor for not understanding spiritual things, and having sin is a metonym for being guilty of sin. Alternate translation: "If you truly were spiritually blind, you would not be guilty of your sin"
but now you say, 'We see,' so your sin remains
Here "seeing" is a metaphor for understanding spiritual things, and "sin remaining" is a metonym for continuing to be guilty of one's sin. Alternate translation: "but since you think that you understand spiritual truth, you remain guilty of your sin"

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10 [1]"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter through the gate into the sheep pen, but climbs up some other way,
that man is a thief and a robber.[2]He who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep.
[3]The gatekeeper opens for him. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.[4]When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
[5]They will not follow a stranger but instead they will avoid him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."[6]Jesus spoke this parable to them, but they did not understand what these things were that he was saying to them.

[7]Then Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the gate of the sheep.[8]Everyone who came before me is a thief and a robber, but the sheep did not listen to them.
[9]I am the gate. If anyone enters in through me, he will be saved; he will go in and out and will find pasture.[10]The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they will have life and have it abundantly.
[11]I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.[12]The hired servant is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep. He sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and escapes, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.[13]He runs away because he is a hired servant and does not care for the sheep.
[14]I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me.[15]The Father knows me, and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.[16]I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also, and they will hear my voice so that there will be one flock and one shepherd.

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[17]This is why the Father loves me: I lay down my life so that I may take it again.[18]No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

[19]A division again occurred among the Jews because of these words.[20]Many of them said, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to him?"[21]Others said, "These are not the words of a demon-possessed man. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

[22]Then it was time for the Festival of the Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter,[23]and Jesus was walking in the temple in the porch of Solomon.[24]Then the Jews surrounded him and said to him, "How long will you hold us doubting? If you are the Christ, tell us openly."
[25]Jesus replied to them, "I told you, but you do not believe. The works that I do in the name of my Father, these testify concerning me.[26]Yet you do not believe because you are not my sheep.
[27]My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me.[28]I give them eternal life; they will never die, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.
[29]My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all others, and no one is able to snatch them out of the hand of the Father.[30]I and the Father are one."[31]Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.
[32]Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of those works are you stoning me?"[33]The Jews answered him, "We are not stoning you for any good work, but for blasphemy, because you, a man, are making yourself God."
[34]Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"'?[35]If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken),[36]do you say to him whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?
[37]If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me.[38]But if I am doing them, even if you do not believe me, believe in the works so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and that I am in the Father."[39]They tried to seize him again, but he went away out of their hand.

[40]He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John had first been baptizing, and he stayed there.[41]Many people came to him and they said, "John indeed did no signs, but all the things that John has said about this man are true."[42]Many people believed in him there.

John 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Blasphemy

When a person claims that he is God or that God has told him to speak when God has not told him to speak, this is called blasphemy. The law of Moses commanded the Israelites to kill blasphemers by stoning them to death. When Jesus said, "I and the Father are one," the Jews thought he was blaspheming, so they took up stones to kill him. (See: blasphemy and lawofmoses)

Important metaphors in this chapter

Sheep

Jesus spoke of people as sheep because sheep do not see well, they do not think well, they often walk away from those who care for them, and they cannot defend themselves when other animals attack them. God's people also rebel against him and do not know when they are doing wrong.

Sheep pen

A sheep pen was a space with a stone wall around it in which shepherds would keep their sheep. Once they were inside the sheep pen, the sheep could not run away, and animals and thieves could not easily get inside to kill or steal them.

Laying down and taking up life

Jesus speaks of his life as if it were a physical object that he could lay down on the ground, a metaphor for dying, or pick up again, a metaphor for becoming alive again.

Links:

John 10:1 Notes

John 10:1

General Information:

Jesus begins to speak in parables.

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to the Pharisees. This is the same part of the story which began in John 9:35.

Truly, truly

See how you translated this in John 1:51.

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sheep pen
This is a fenced area where a shepherd keeps his sheep.
a thief and a robber
This is the use of two words with similar meanings to add emphasis.
John 10:3
The gatekeeper opens for him
"The gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd"
The gatekeeper
This is a hired man who watches the gate of the sheep pen at night while the shepherd is away.
The sheep hear his voice
"The sheep hear the shepherd's voice"
John 10:4
he goes ahead of them
"he walks in front of them"
for they know his voice
"because they recognize his voice"
John 10:6
they did not understand
Possible meanings: 1) "the disciples did not understand" or 2) "the crowd did not understand."
this parable
This is an illustration from the work of shepherds, using metaphors. The "shepherd" is a metaphor for Jesus. The "sheep" represent those who follow Jesus, and the "strangers" are the Jewish leaders, including the Pharisees, who try to deceive the people.
John 10:7
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to explain the meaning of the parables he had spoken.
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
I am the gate of the sheep
Here "gate" is a metaphor that means Jesus provides access into the sheepfold where God's people dwell in his presence. Alternate translation: "I am like the gate that the sheep use to enter into the sheepfold"
John 10:8
Everyone who came before me
This refers to other teachers who have taught the people, including the Pharisees and other Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "All of the teachers who came without my authority"
a thief and a robber
These words are metaphors. Jesus calls those teachers "a thief and a robber" because their teachings were false, and they were trying to lead God's people while not understanding the truth. As a result, they deceived the people.
John 10:9
I am the gate
Here "gate" is a metaphor. By referring to himself as "the gate," Jesus is showing that he offers a true way to enter the kingdom of God. Alternate translation: "I myself am like that gate"
pasture
The word "pasture" means a grassy area where sheep eat.
John 10:10
does not come except to steal and kill and destroy
In some languages it is more natural to use a positive statement. Alternate translation: "comes only to steal, kill, and destroy"
steal and kill and destroy
Here the implied metaphor is "sheep," which represents God's people. Alternate translation: "steal and kill and destroy the sheep"
so that they will have life
The word "they" refers to the sheep. "Life" refers to eternal life. Alternate translation: "so that they will really live, lacking nothing"
John 10:11
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues his parable about the good shepherd.
I am the good shepherd
Here "good shepherd" is a metaphor that represents Jesus. Alternate translation: "I am like a good shepherd"
lays down his life
To lay down something means to give up control of it. To lay down one's life is a mild way to refer to dying. Alternate translation: "dies"
John 10:12
The hired servant
The "hired servant" is a metaphor that represents the Jewish leaders and teachers. Alternate translation: "The one who is like a hired servant"
abandons the sheep
Here the word "sheep" is a metaphor that represents God's people. Like a hired servant who abandons the sheep, Jesus says that the Jewish leaders and teachers do not care for God's people.
John 10:13
does not care for the sheep
Here the word "sheep" is a metaphor that represents God's people. Jesus says that the Jewish leaders and teachers are like a hired servant who abandons the sheep, and they do not care for God's people.
John 10:14
I am the good shepherd
Here the "good shepherd" is a metaphor for Jesus. Alternate translation: "I am like a good shepherd"
John 10:15
The Father knows me, and I know the Father
God the Father and God the Son know each other unlike anyone else knows them. "Father" is an important title for God.
I lay down my life for the sheep
This is a mild way for Jesus to say that he will die to protect his sheep. Alternate translation: "I die for the sheep"
John 10:16
I have other sheep
Here "other sheep" is a metaphor for followers of Jesus who are not Jews.
one flock and one shepherd
Here "flock" and "shepherd" are metaphors. All of Jesus's followers, Jews and non-Jews, will be like one flock of sheep. He will be like a shepherd who cares for all of them.

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John 10:17
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes speaking to the crowd.
This is why the Father loves me: I lay down my life
God's eternal plan was for God the Son to give his life to pay for the sins of humanity. Jesus's death on the cross reveals the intense love of the Son for the Father and of the Father for the Son.
Father
This is an important title for God.
loves
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.
I lay down my life so that I may take it again
This is a mild way for Jesus to say he will die and then will become alive again. Alternate translation: "I allow myself to die in order that I may bring myself back to life"
John 10:18
I lay it down of myself
The reflexive pronoun "myself" is used here to emphasize that Jesus lays down his own life. No one takes it from him. Alternate translation: "I myself lay it down"
I have received this command from my Father
"This is what my Father has commanded me to do." The word "Father" is an important title for God.
John 10:19
Connecting Statement:
These verses tell how the Jews responded to what Jesus had said.
John 10:20
Why do you listen to him?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize the point that the people should not listen to Jesus. Alternate translation: "Do not listen to him!"
John 10:21
Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "Certainly a demon cannot cause a blind man to see!" or "Certainly a demon cannot give sight to blind people!"
John 10:22
General Information:
During the Festival of Dedication, some Jews begin to question Jesus. Verses 22 and 23 give background information about the setting of the story.
It was winter
Winter is the coldest time of the year. You may use your language's term for the coldest season if your reader understands that in Israel this was in December, not in June.
Festival of the Dedication
This is an eight-day winter holiday Jews use to remember a miracle where God made a small amount of oil remain lit in a lampstand for eight days. They lit the lampstand to dedicate the Jewish temple to God. To dedicate something is to promise to use it for a special purpose.
John 10:23
Jesus was walking in the temple
The area where Jesus was walking was actually a courtyard that was outside the temple building. Alternate translation: "Jesus was walking in the temple courtyard"
porch
This is a structure attached to the entrance of a building; it has a roof and it may or may not have walls.
John 10:24
Then the Jews surrounded him
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Then the Jewish leaders surrounded him"
hold us doubting
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "keep us wondering" or "keep us from knowing for sure"
John 10:25
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to respond to the Jews.
in the name of my Father
Here "name" is a metonym for the power of God. Here "Father" is an important title for God. Jesus performed miracles through his Father's power and authority. Alternate translation: "through my Father's power" or "with my Father's power"
these testify concerning me
His miracles offer proof about him like a person who testifies would offer proof in a court of law. Alternate translation: "these offer proof concerning me"
John 10:26
not my sheep
The word "sheep" is a metaphor for the followers of Jesus. Alternate translation: "not my followers" or "not my disciples"
John 10:27
My sheep hear my voice
The word "sheep" is a metaphor for the followers of Jesus. The metaphor of Jesus as the "shepherd" is also implied. Alternate translation: "Just as sheep obey the voice of their true shepherd, my followers heed my voice"
John 10:28
no one will snatch them out of my hand
Here the word "hand" is a metonym that represents the protective care of Jesus. Alternate translation: "no one will steal them away from me" or "they will remain secure forever in my care"
John 10:29
My Father, who has given them to me
The word "Father" is an important title for God.
snatch them out of the hand of the Father
The word "hand" is a metonym that represents God's possession and protective care. Alternate translation: "steal them from my Father"
John 10:30
I and the Father are one
Here "are one" means they are completely united and alike. It does not mean they are the same person. Alternate translation: "I and the Father are completely united" or "I and the Father are exactly alike"
Father

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The word "Father" is an important title for God.
John 10:31
Then the Jews took up stones again
The word "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Then the Jewish leaders started picking up stones again"
John 10:32
Jesus answered them, "I have shown you many good works from the Father
Jesus performed the miracles by the power of God. The word "Father" is an important title for God.
For which of those works are you stoning me?
This question uses irony. Jesus knows the Jewish leaders do not want to stone him because he has done good works.
John 10:33
The Jews answered him
The word "Jews" is a synecdoche that represents the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish opponents replied" or "The Jewish leaders answered him"
making yourself God
"claiming to be God"
John 10:34
Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"'?
Jesus uses a question to emphasize that the Jewish leaders should know that this is written in scripture. Alternate translation: "You should already know that it is written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods."'"
You are gods
Here Jesus quotes a scripture where God calls his followers "gods," perhaps because he has chosen them to represent him on earth.
John 10:35
the word of God came
Jesus speaks of God's message as though it were a person who moved toward those who heard it. Alternate translation: "God spoke his message"
the scripture cannot be broken
Possible meanings are 1) "no one can change the scripture" or 2) "the scripture will always be true."
John 10:36
do you say to him whom the Father set apart and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?
Jesus used this question to rebuke his opponents for saying that he was blaspheming when he called himself "the Son of God." Alternate translation: "you should not say to the very one whom the Father set apart to send into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' when I say that I am the Son of God!"
You are blaspheming
"You are insulting God." Jesus's opponents understood that when said that he is the Son of God, he was implying that he is equal with God.
Father ... Son of God
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
John 10:37
Connecting Statement:
Jesus finishes responding to the Jews.
Father
This is an important title for God.
believe me
Here the word "believe" means to accept or trust what Jesus said is true.
John 10:38
believe in the works
Here "believe in" is to acknowledge that the works Jesus does are from the Father.
the Father is in me and that I am in the Father
These are idioms that express the close personal relationship between God and Jesus. Alternate translation: "my Father and I are completely joined together as one"
John 10:39
went away out of their hand
The word "hand" is a metonym that represents the custody or possession of the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "got away from them again"
John 10:40
beyond the Jordan
Jesus had been on the west side of the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "to the east side of the Jordan River"
he stayed there
Jesus remained on the east side of Jordan for a short period of time. Alternate translation: "Jesus stayed there for several days"
John 10:41
John indeed did no signs, but all the things that John has said about this man are true
"It is true that John did no signs, but he certainly did speak the truth about this man, who does signs."
signs
These are miracles that prove that something is true or that give someone credibility.
John 10:42
believed in
Here "believed in" means accepted or trusted what Jesus said was true.

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11 [1]Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.[2]It was
Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.
[3]The sisters then sent for Jesus, saying, "Lord, see, he whom you love is sick."[4]When Jesus heard it, he said, "This sickness is not to death, but instead it is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it."
[5]Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.[6]So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, Jesus stayed two more days in the place where he was.[7]Then after this, he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."
[8]The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, right now the Jews are trying to stone you, and you are going back there again?"[9]Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of light in a day? If someone walks in the daytime, he will not stumble, because he sees by the light of this world.

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[10]However, if he walks at night, he will stumble because the light is not in him."[11]He said these things, and after these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going so that I may wake him out of sleep."
[12]The disciples therefore said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."[13]Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he was speaking about the sleep of resting.[14]Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.
[15]I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there so that you may believe. Let us go to him."[16]Thomas, who was called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go so that we may die with Jesus."

[17]When Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.[18]Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia away.[19]Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them about their brother.[20]Then Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet him, but Mary was sitting in the house.
[21]Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.[22]Even now, I know that whatever you ask from God, he will give to you."[23]Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."
[24]Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."[25]Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, even if he dies, will live;[26]and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"
[27]She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."[28]When she had said this, she went away and called her sister Mary privately. She said, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."[29]When she heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.
[30]Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him.[31]So when the Jews, who were with her in the house and who were comforting her, saw Mary getting up quickly and going out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.[32]When Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."
[33]When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and was troubled;[34]he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."[35]Jesus wept.
[36]Then the Jews said, "See how much he loved Lazarus!"[37]But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of a blind man, also have made this man not die?"
[38]Then Jesus again, being deeply moved in himself, went to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.[39]Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of Lazarus, the one who had died, said to Jesus, "Lord, by this time the body will be decaying, for he has been dead for four days."[40]Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that, if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"
[41]So they took away the stone. Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you listened to me.[42]I knew that you always listen to me, but it is because of the crowd that is standing around me that I said this, so that they may believe that you have sent me."
[43]After he had said this, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"[44]The dead man came out; his feet and hands were bound with cloths, and his face was bound about with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

[45]Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what Jesus did, believed in him.[46]But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things that Jesus had done.

[47]Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council together and said, "What will we do? This man does many signs.[48]If we leave him alone like this, all will believe in him; the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."
[49]However, a certain man among them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing.[50]You do not consider that it is better for you that one man dies for the people than that the whole nation perishes."
[51]Now this he said not from himself. Instead, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation;[52]and not only for the nation, but so that the children of God who are scattered would be gathered together into one.[53]So from that day onward they planned how to put Jesus to death.

[54]No longer did Jesus walk openly among the Jews, but he departed from there into the country near to the wilderness into a town called Ephraim. There he stayed with the disciples.[55]Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify themselves.
[56]They were looking for Jesus and speaking one with another as they stood in the temple: "What do you think? That he will not come to the festival?"[57]Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given an order that if anyone knew where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might seize him.

John 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

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Light and darkness
The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)
Passover
After Jesus made Lazarus become alive again, the Jewish leaders were trying hard to kill him, so he started traveling from place to place in secret. Now the Pharisees knew that he would probably come to Jerusalem for the Passover because God had commanded all Jewish men to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, so they planned to catch him and kill him then. (See: passover)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"One man dies for the people"
The law of Moses commanded the priests to kill animals so that God would forgive the people's sins. The high priest Caiaphas said, "It is better for you that one man dies for the people than that the whole nation perishes" (John 11:50). He said this because he loved his "place" and "nation" (John 11:48) more than he loved the God who had made Lazarus become alive again. He wanted Jesus to die so that the Romans would not destroy the temple and Jerusalem, but God wanted Jesus to die so that he could forgive all of his people's sins.
Condition that is contrary to fact
When Martha said, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died," she was speaking of a situation that could have happened but did not happen. Jesus had not come sooner, and her brother died.

Links:

John 11:1 Notes

John 11:1
General Information:
These verses introduce the story of Lazarus and give background information about him and his sister Mary.
John 11:2
It was Mary who anointed the Lord ... her hair
As John introduces Mary, the sister of Martha, he also shares information concerning what would later happen in the story.
John 11:3
sent for Jesus
"asked Jesus to come"
love
Here "love" refers to brotherly love, a natural, human love between friends or relatives.
John 11:4
This sickness is not to death
Jesus implies that he knows what will happen related to Lazarus and his sickness. Alternate translation: "Death will not be the final result of this sickness"
death
This refers to physical death.
but instead it is for the glory of God so that the Son of God may be glorified by it
Jesus implies that he knows what the outcome will be. Alternate translation: "but the purpose is that the people might see how great God is because of what his power will allow me to do"
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
John 11:5
Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus
This is background information.
John 11:8
Rabbi, right now the Jews are trying to stone you, and you are going back there again?
This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize that the disciples do not want Jesus to go to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Teacher, you surely do not want to go back there! The Jews were trying to stone you the last time you were there!"
the Jews
This is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
John 11:9
Are there not twelve hours of light in a day?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "You know that the day has twelve hours of light!"
If someone walks in the daytime, he will not stumble, because he sees by the light of this world
People who walk in the light of the day can see well and do not stumble. "Light" is a metaphor for "truth." Jesus is implying that people who live according to truth will be able to successfully do the things that God wants them to do.
John 11:10
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.
if he walks at night
Here "night" is a metaphor that refers to one's walking without God's light.
the light is not in him
Possible meanings are 1) "he cannot see" or "he does not have God's light."
John 11:11
Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep
"Has fallen asleep" is an idiom that means "has begun to sleep" or "is sleeping." Jesus meant that Lazarus had died, but the disciples did not understand this. So it is important to keep the idea of sleeping in the translation.
but I am going so that I may wake him out of sleep

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"Wake him out of sleep" is an idiom that means "cause someoen who is sleeping to wake up." Jesus meant that he was going to bring Lazurus back to life. But his disciples did not understand this. So it is important to keep the idea of waking him up in the translation. Alternate translation: "but I am going there to wake him up"

John 11:12

if he has fallen asleep

The disciples misunderstand Jesus to mean that Lazarus is resting and will recover.

John 11:13

General Information:

In this verse there is a stop in the story. Here John comments on the disciples' misunderstanding about what Jesus meant when he said Lazarus was asleep.

John 11:14

Then Jesus said to them plainly

"So Jesus told them in words that they could understand"

John 11:15

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.

for your sakes

"for your benefit"

that I was not there so that you may believe

"that I was not there. Because of this you will learn to trust me more"

John 11:16

who was called Didymus

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom they called Didymus"

Didymus

This is a male name that means "twin."

John 11:17

General Information:

Jesus is now in Bethany. These verses give background information about the setting and about what has happened before Jesus arrived.

he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he learned that people had put Lazarus in a tomb four days before"

John 11:18

fifteen stadia away

"about three kilometers away." A "stadium" is 185 meters.

John 11:19

about their brother

Lazarus was their younger brother. Alternate translation: "about their younger brother"

John 11:21

my brother would not have died

Lazarus was the younger brother. Alternate translation: "my younger brother would still be alive"

John 11:23

Your brother will rise again

Lazarus was the younger brother. Alternate translation: "Your younger brother will become alive again"

John 11:24

he will rise again

"he will become alive again"

John 11:25

I am the resurrection and the life

The abstract nouns "resurrection" and "life" can be stated as verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "I am the one who raises those who die and causes them to live again"

he who believes in me, even if he dies, will live

"even a person who dies will live forever, if he believes in me"

John 11:26

whoever lives and believes in me will never die

"those who live and trust in me will never be separated eternally from God" or "those who live and trust in me will be spiritually alive with God forever"

will never die

Here "die" refers to spiritual death.

John 11:27

She said to him

"Martha said to Jesus"

Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God ... coming into the world

Martha believes that Jesus is Lord, the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God.

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

John 11:28

she went away and called her sister Mary

Mary is the younger sister of Martha. Alternate translation: "she went away and called her younger sister Mary"

Teacher

This is a title referring to Jesus.

is calling for you

"is asking that you come"

John 11:30

Now Jesus had not yet come into the village

Here John provides a brief break in the story to give background information regarding the location of Jesus.

John 11:32

fell down at his feet

Mary lay down or knelt at the feet of Jesus to show respect.

my brother would not have died

Lazarus was Mary's younger brother. See how you translated this in [John 11:21]

John 11:33

he was deeply moved in his spirit and was troubled

John combines these phrases that have similar meanings to express the intense emotional distress and possible anger that Jesus experienced. Alternate translation: "he was greatly upset"

John 11:34

Where have you laid him

This is a milder way of asking, "Where have you buried him?"

John 11:35

Jesus wept

"Jesus began to cry" or "Jesus started crying"

John 11:36

loved

This refers to brotherly love or human love for a friend or family member.

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John 11:37

Could not this man, who opened the eyes of a blind man, also have made this man not die?

This remark appears in the form of a question to express the Jews' surprise that Jesus did not heal Lazarus. Alternate translation: "He could heal a man who was blind, so he should have been able to heal this man so he would not have died!" or "Since he did not keep this man from dying, maybe he did not really heal the man who was born blind, as they say he did!"

opened the eyes

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "healed the eyes"

John 11:38

Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it

John pauses the story briefly to describe the tomb where the people had buried Lazarus.

John 11:39

Martha, the sister of Lazarus

Martha and Mary were older sisters of Lazarus. Alternate translation: "Martha, the older sister of Lazarus"

by this time the body will be decaying

"by this time there will be a bad smell" or "the body is already stinking"

John 11:40

Did I not say to you that, if you believed, you would see the glory of God?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to the point that God is about to do something wonderful. Alternate translation: "I told you that if you trusted me, you would see what God can do!"

John 11:41

Jesus lifted up his eyes

This is an idiom that means to look up. Alternate translation: "Jesus looked up toward heaven"

Father, I thank you that you listened to me

Jesus prays directly to the Father so that others around him will hear his prayer. Alternate translation: "Father, I thank you that you have heard me" or "Father, I thank you that you have heard my prayer"

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 11:42

that you have sent me

Jesus had authority to teach the people because God the Father had sent him to do that. Also where the Father sent Jesus can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "that I am here because you have sent me to them"

John 11:43

After he had said this

"After Jesus had prayed"

he cried out with a loud voice

"he shouted"

John 11:44

his feet and hands were bound with cloths, and his face was bound about with a cloth

A burial custom of this time was to wrap the dead body with long strips of linen cloth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had wrapped strips of cloth around his hands and feet. They had also tied a cloth around his face"

Jesus said to them

The word "them" refers to the people who were there and saw the miracle.

John 11:45

General Information:

These verses tell us what happened after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

John 11:47

General Information:

Because so many people have told them that Lazarus is alive again, the chief priests and Pharisees gather the Jewish council for a meeting.

Then the chief priests

"Then the leaders among the priests"

Then

The author uses this word to tell the reader that the events that begin in this verse are a result of the events of John 11:45-46.

What will we do?

It is implied here that the council members are talking about Jesus. Alternate translation: "What are we going to do about Jesus?"

John 11:48

all will believe in him

The Jewish leaders were afraid that the people would try to make Jesus their king. Alternate translation: "everyone will trust in him and rebel against Rome"

the Romans will come

This is a synecdoche for the Roman army. Alternate translation: "the Roman army will come"

take away both our place and our nation

"destroy both our temple and our nation"

John 11:49

a certain man among them

This is a way to introduce a new character to the story. If you have a way to do this in your language, you can use it here.

You know nothing

This is an exaggeration that Caiaphas uses to insult his hearers. Alternate translation: "You do not understand what is happening" or "You speak as though you know nothing"

John 11:50

than that the whole nation perishes

Caiaphas implies that the Roman army would kill all of the people of the Jewish nation if Jesus is allowed to live and cause a rebellion. The word "nation" here is a synecdoche that represents all of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "than that the Romans kill all the people of our nation"

John 11:51

General Information:

In verses 51 and 52 John explains that Caiaphus was prophesying even though he did not realize it at the time. This is background information.

die for the nation

The word "nation" is a synecdoche and refers to the people of the nation of Israel.

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John 11:52

and not only for the nation

The words "that he should die" are understood from the previous clause. Alternate translation: "and that he should die not only for the nation"

would be gathered together into one

This is an ellipsis. The word "people" is implied by the context. Alternate translation: "would be gathered into one people"

children of God

This refers to people who belong to God through faith in Jesus and are spiritually God's children.

John 11:54

General Information:

Jesus leaves Bethany and goes to Ephraim.

walk openly among the Jews

Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders and "walk openly" is a metaphor for "live where everyone could see him." Alternate translation: "live where all the Jews could see him" or "walk openly among the Jewish leaders who opposed him"

the country

the rural area outside cities where fewer people live

There he stayed with the disciples

Jesus and his disciples stayed in Ephraim for a while. Alternate translation: "There he stayed with his disciples for a short period of time"

John 11:55

General Information:

Here the story shifts to telling about what many of the Jews are doing now that Passover is near.

went up to Jerusalem

The phrase "went up" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than the surrounding areas.

John 11:56

General Information:

The content of verse 57 occurs before that of verse 56. If this order might confuse your readers, you can combine these verses and put the text of verse 57 before the text of verse 56.

They were looking for Jesus

The word "they" refers to the Jewish people who had traveled to Jerusalem.

What do you think? That he will not come to the festival?

The speakers were sure that if Jesus came to the festival the Jewish leaders would arrest him. The meaning of these rhetorical questions is not clear. Possible meanings are 1) the speakers were not sure that he would come. Alternate translation: "Do you think that he will come to the festival?" or "I do not know what to think. He might come to the festival, or he might not." 2) The speakers were sure that Jesus would not come. Alternate translation: "We can be sure that he will not come to the festival."

John 11:57

Now the chief priests

This is background information that explains why the Jewish worshipers were wondering if Jesus would come to the festival or not. If your language has a way to mark background information, use it here.

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12 [1]Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.[2]So they made him a dinner there, and Martha was serving, but Lazarus was one of those who were lying down at the table with Jesus.[3]Then Mary took a litra of perfume made of very precious pure nard, anointed the feet of Jesus with it, and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.
[4]Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, the one who would betray him, said,[5]"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"[6]Now he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief. He had the moneybag and would steal from what was put in it.
[7]Jesus said, "Allow her to keep what she has for the day of my burial.[8]You will always have the poor with you. But you will not always have me."

[9]Now a large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, and they came, not only for Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.[10]The chief priests conspired together so that they might also put Lazarus to death;
[11]for it was because of him that many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

[12]On the next day a great crowd came to the festival. When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,[13]they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet him and cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel."

[14]Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it was written,
[15] "Do not fear, daughter of Zion;
see, your King is coming,
sitting on the colt of a donkey."

[16]His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, they remembered that these things had been written about him and that they had done these things to him.

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[17]Now the crowd testified that they had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him up from the dead.[18]It was also for this reason that the crowd went out to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign.
[19]The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "Look, you can do nothing good; see, the world has gone after him."

[20]Now certain Greeks were among those who were going up to worship at the festival.[21]These went to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we want to see Jesus."[22]Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip, and they told Jesus.
[23]Jesus answered them and said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.[24]Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it will bear much fruit.
[25]He who loves his life will lose it; but he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.[26]If anyone serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there will my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.
[27]Now my soul is troubled and what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this reason I came to this hour.
[28]Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven and said, "I have glorified it and I will glorify it again."[29]Then the crowd that stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."
[30]Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for me, but for you.[31]Now is the judgment of this world: Now will the ruler of this world be thrown out.
[32]When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."[33]He said this to indicate what kind of death he would die.
[34]The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ will stay forever. How can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"[35]Jesus then said to them, "The light will still be with you for a short amount of time. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness does not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.[36]While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may be sons of light."Jesus said these things and then departed and hid from them.
[37]Although Jesus had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him[38]so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled, in which he said:

"Lord, who has believed our report,
and to whom has the arm
of the Lord been revealed?"

[39]For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah had also said,
[40] "He has blinded their eyes,
and he has hardened their heart,
otherwise they would see with their eyes
and understand with their hearts,
and turn, and I would heal them."

[41]Isaiah said these things because he saw the glory of Jesus and spoke of him.[42]But despite that, many of the rulers believed in Jesus; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess it so that they would not be banned from the synagogue.[43]They loved the glory that comes from people more than the glory that comes from God.

[44]Jesus cried out and said, "The one who believes in me believes not only in me but also in him who sent me,[45]and the one who sees me sees him who sent me.
[46]I have come as a light into the world, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in the darkness.[47]If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world.
[48]The one who rejects me and who does not receive my words has one who judges him. The word I have spoken will judge him on the last day.[49]For I did not speak for myself, but it is the Father who sent me, who has given me the command about what to say and what to speak.[50]I know that his command is eternal life, so that is what I say—just as the Father has spoken to me, so I speak."

John 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:38 and 40, which is from the Old Testament.
Verse 16 is a commentary on these events. It is possible to put this entire verse in parentheses in order to set it apart from the narrative of the story.

Special concepts in this chapter

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Mary anointed Jesus's feet

The Jews would put oil on a person's head to make that person feel welcome and comfortable. They would also put oil on a person's body after the person had died but before they buried the body. But they would never think to put oil on a person's feet, because they thought that feet were dirty.

The donkey and the colt

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an animal. In this way he was like a king who came into a city after he had won an important battle. Also, the kings of Israel in the Old Testament rode on a donkeys. Other kings rode on horses. So Jesus was showing that he was the king of Israel and that he was not like other kings.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about this event. Matthew and Mark wrote that the disciples brought Jesus a donkey. John wrote that Jesus found a donkey. Luke wrote that they brought him a colt. Only Matthew wrote that there were both a donkey had a colt. No one knows for sure whether Jesus rode the donkey or the colt. It is best to translate each of these accounts as it appears in the ULB without trying to make them all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 21:1-7 and Mark 11:1-7 and Luke 19:29-36 and John 12:14-15)

Glory

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. In this chapter John says that the glory of Jesus is his resurrection (John 12:16).

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The metaphors of light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: and righteous)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in 12:25: "He who loves his life will lose it; but he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." But in 12:26 Jesus explains what it means to keep one's life for eternal life. (John 12:25-26).

Links:

John 12:1 Notes

John 12:1

General Information:

Jesus is at dinner in Bethany when Mary anoints his feet with oil.

Six days before the Passover

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.

had raised from the dead

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "had made alive again"

John 12:3

a litra

You may convert this to a the measure system used in your area. The word "litra" was used for measures of about 300 milliliters of liquids or about 300 grams of solids. Because the perfume was a liquid, the word here probably refers to the liquid measure as guessed by those who saw the size of the container.

perfume

This is a good-smelling liquid made by using the oils of pleasant smelling plants and flowers.

nard

This is a perfume made from a pink, bell-shaped flower in the mountains of Nepal, China, and India.

The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume

This can be translated in an active form. Alternate translation: "The scent of her perfume filled the house"

John 12:4

the one who would betray him

"the one who later enabled Jesus's enemies to seize him"

John 12:5

Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?

This is a rhetorical question. You can translate it as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "This perfume could have been sold for three hundred denarii and the money could have been given to the poor!"

three hundred denarii

You can translate this as a numeral. Alternate translation: "300 denarii"

denarii

A denarius was the amount of silver that a common laborer could earn in one day of work.

John 12:6

Now he said this ... would steal from what was put in it

John explains why Judas asked the question about the poor. If your language has a way of indicating background information, you can use it here.

he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief

"he said this because he was a thief. He did not care about the poor"

John 12:7

Allow her to keep what she has for the day of my burial

Jesus implies that the woman's actions can be understood as anticipating his death and burial. Alternate translation:

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"Allow her to show how much she appreciates me! In this way she has prepared my body for burial"
John 12:8
You will always have the poor with you
Jesus implies that there will always be opportunities to help the poor people. Alternate translation: "There will always be poor people among you, and you can help them whenever you want"
But you will not always have me
In this way, Jesus implies that he will die. Alternate translation: "But I will not always be here with you"
John 12:9
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here John tells about a new group of people that has come to Bethany from Jerusalem.
the dead
All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld.
John 12:11
because of him
The fact that Lazarus was alive again caused many Jews to believe in Jesus.
believed in Jesus
This implies that many of the Jewish people were trusting in Jesus as the Son of God. Alternate translation: "were putting their trust in Jesus"
John 12:12
General Information:
Jesus enters Jerusalem and the people honor him as a king.
On the next day
The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.
a great crowd
"a great crowd of people"
John 12:13
Hosanna
This means "May God save us now!"
Blessed
This expresses a desire for God to cause good things to happen to a person.
comes in the name of the Lord
Here the word "name" is a metonym for the person's authority and power. Alternate translation: "comes as the representative of the Lord" or "comes in the power of the Lord"
John 12:14
Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it
Here John gives background information that Jesus secures a donkey. He implies that Jesus will ride the donkey into Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "he found a young donkey and sat on it, riding into the city"
as it was written
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "as the prophets wrote in the Scripture"
John 12:15
daughter of Zion
"Daughter of Zion" here is a metonym that refers to the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "you people of Jerusalem"
John 12:16
General Information:
John, the writer, interrupts here to give the reader some background information about what the disciples later understood.
His disciples did not understand these things
Here the words "these things" refer to the words that the prophet had written about Jesus.
when Jesus was glorified
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "when God glorified Jesus"
they had done these things to him
The words "these things" refer to what the people did when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (praising him and waving the palm branches).
John 12:17
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in the main narrative. Here John explains that many of the people came to meet Jesus because they heard others say that he had raised Lazarus from the dead.
John 12:18
they heard that he had done this sign
"they heard others say that he had done this sign"
this sign
A "sign" is an event or occurrence that proves something is true. In this case, the "sign" of raising Lazarus proves that Jesus is the Messiah.
John 12:19
Look, you can do nothing good
The Pharisees imply here that it might be impossible to stop Jesus. Alternate translation: "It seems like we can do nothing to stop him"
see, the world has gone after him
The Pharisees use this exaggeration to express their shock that so many people have come out to meet Jesus. Alternate translation: "It looks like everyone is becoming his disciple"
the world
Here "the world" is a metonym that represents
John 12:20
Now certain Greeks
The phrase "now certain" marks the introduction of new characters to the story.
Greeks ... to worship at the festival
John implies that these "Greeks" were going to worship God during the Passover. Alternate translation: "Greeks ... to worship God at the Passover festival"
John 12:21
Bethsaida
This was a town in the province of Galilee.
John 12:22
they told Jesus
Philip and Andrew tell Jesus about the Greeks' request to see him. You can translate this by adding the implied words. Alternate translation: "they told Jesus what the Greeks had said"
John 12:23
General Information:

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Jesus begins to respond to Philip and Andrew.

The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified

Jesus implies that it is now the right time for God to honor the Son of Man through his upcoming suffering, death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "God will soon honor me when I die and rise again"

John 12:24

Truly, truly, I say to you

Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated "Truly, truly" in John 1:51.

unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies ... it will bear much fruit

Here "a grain of wheat" or "seed" is a metaphor for Jesus's death, burial and resurrection. Just as a seed is planted and grows again into a plant that will bear much fruit, so will many people trust in Jesus after he is killed, buried, and raised back to life.

John 12:25

He who loves his life will lose it

Here "loves his life" means to consider one's own physical life to be more valuable than the lives of others. Alternate translation: "Whoever values his own life more than the lives of others will not receive eternal life"

he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life

Here the one who "hates his life" refers to one who loves his own life less than he loves the lives of others. Alternate translation: "whoever considers the lives of others as more important than his own life will live with God forever"

John 12:26

where I am, there will my servant also be

Jesus implies that those who serve him will be with him in heaven. Alternate translation: "when I am in heaven, my servant will also be there with me"

the Father will honor him

Here "Father" is an important title for God.

John 12:27

what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'?

This remark appears in the form of a rhetorical question. Although Jesus desires to avoid crucifixion, he chooses to be obedient to God and to be killed. Alternate translation: "I will not pray, 'Father, save me from this hour!'"

Father

This is an important title for God.

this hour

Here "this hour" is a metonym that represents when Jesus would suffer and die on the cross.

John 12:28

glorify your name

Here the word "name" is a metonym that refers to God. Alternate translation: "make your glory known" or "reveal your glory"

a voice came from heaven

This represents God speaking. Sometimes people avoid referring directly to God because they respect him. Alternate translation: "God spoke from the heavens"

John 12:30

General Information:

Jesus explains why the voice spoke from heaven.

John 12:31

Now is the judgment of this world

Here "this world" is a metonym that refers to all the people in the world. Alternate translation: "Now is the time for God to judge all of the people"

Now will the ruler of this world be thrown out

Here "ruler" refers to Satan. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now is the time when I will destroy the power of Satan, who rules this world"

John 12:32

When I am lifted up from the earth

Here Jesus refers to his crucifixion. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "When people raise me high on a cross"

will draw everyone to myself

Through his crucifixion, Jesus will provide a way for everyone to trust in him.

John 12:33

General Information:

Here John tells us background information about what Jesus said about being "lifted up."

He said this to indicate what kind of death he would die

John interprets Jesus's words to mean that people will crucify him. Alternate translation: "He said this to let the people know how he would die"

John 12:34

The Son of Man must be lifted up

The phrase "lifted up" means crucified. You may translate this in a way that includes the implied words "on a cross." Alternate translation: "The Son of Man must be lifted up on a cross"

Who is this Son of Man?

Possible meanings are 1) "What is the identity of this Son of Man? or 2) "What kind of Son of Man are you talking about?"

John 12:35

The light will still be with you for a short amount of time. Walk while you have the light, so that darkness does not overtake you. He who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going

Here "light" is a metaphor for Jesus's teachings which reveal the truth of God. To "walk in darkness" is a metaphor that means to live without God's truth. Alternate translation: "My words are like a light to you, to help you understand how to live as God wants you to. I will not be with you much longer. You need to follow my instructions while I am still with you. If you reject my words, it will be like walking in darkness and you cannot see where you are going"

John 12:36

While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may be sons of light

The "light" is a metaphor for the teachings of Jesus which reveal the truth of God. "sons of light" is a metaphor for those who accept the message of Jesus and live according to God's truth. Alternate translation: "While I am with you, believe what I teach so that God's truth will be in you"

John 12:37

General Information:

This is a stop in the main story. Here John begins to explain

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about the fulfillment of prophesies that had been spoken by the prophet Isaiah.

John 12:38

so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in order to fulfill the message of Isaiah the prophet"

Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

This appears in the form of two rhetorical questions to express the prophet's dismay that the people do not believe his message.They may be stated as a single rhetorical question, Alternate translation: "Lord, hardly anyone has believed our message, even though they have seen that you are powerfully able to save them!"

the arm of the Lord

This is a metonym that refers to the Lord's ability to rescue with power.

John 12:40

he has hardened their heart ... understand with their heart

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "hardened their heart" is a metaphor for making someone become stubborn. Also, to "understand with their heart" means to "truly understand." Alternate translation: "he has made them stubborn ... truly understand"

and turn

Here "turn" is a metaphor for "repent." Alternate translation: "and they would repent"

John 12:42

so that they would not be banned from the synagogue

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so people would not stop them from going to the synagogue"

John 12:43

They loved the glory that comes from people more than the glory that comes from God

The word "glory" here is a metonym for the praise that people give others who are glorious. Alternate translation: "They wanted people to praise them more than they wanted God to praise them"

John 12:44

General Information:

Here John returns to the main story. This is another time when Jesus begins to speak to the crowd.

Jesus cried out and said

Here John implies that a crowd of people had gathered to hear Jesus speak. Alternate translation: "Jesus shouted out to the crowd that had gathered"

John 12:45

the one who sees me sees him who sent me

Here the word "him" refers to God. Alternate translation: "the one who sees me sees God, who sent me"

John 12:46

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to the crowd.

I have come as a light into the world

Here the "light" is a metaphor for the revelation that comes from God. Also, "world" is a metonym for "people." See how you translated a similar phrase in [John 8:12]

may not remain in the darkness

Here "darkness" is a metaphor for living in ignorance of God's truth. Alternate translation: "may not continue to be spiritually blind"

the world

Here "the world" is a metonym that represents all of the people in the world.

John 12:47

If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world

Here "to judge the world" implies condemnation. Jesus did not come to condemn people. Alternate translation: "If anyone hears my teaching and rejects it, I do not condemn him. I have not come to condemn people. Instead, I have come to save those who trust in me"

John 12:48

on the last day

"at the time when God judges people's sins"

John 12:49

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 12:50

I know that his command is eternal life

"I know that the words that he commanded me to speak are the words that give life forever"

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13 [1]Now it was before the Festival of the Passover. Jesus knew that his hour had come to go out of this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.[2]Now the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot son of Simon to betray Jesus. So during dinner,
[3]Jesus—who knew that the Father had given everything over into his hands and that he had come from God and was going back to God—[4]got up from dinner and took off his outer clothing. Then he took a towel and wrapped it around himself.[5]Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and dry them with the towel that he had put around himself.
[6]He came to Simon Peter, and Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"[7]Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will understand this later."[8]Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."[9]Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, do not only wash my feet, but also my hands and my head."
[10]Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet, but he is completely clean; you are clean, but not everyone."[11](For Jesus knew who would betray him; that is why he said, "Not all of you are clean.")

[12]So when Jesus had washed their feet and taken his garments and sat down again, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done for you?[13]You call me 'teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are speaking correctly, because so I am.[14]If I then, the

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Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash the feet of one another.[15]For I have given you an example so that you should also do just as I did for you.
[16]Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is a messenger greater than he who sent him.[17]If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.[18]I am not speaking about all of you; I know those whom I have chosen—but this is so that the scripture will be fulfilled: 'He who eats my bread lifted up his heel against me.'
[19]I tell you this now before it happens so that when it happens, you may believe that I AM.[20]Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

[21]When Jesus said this, he was troubled in spirit. He testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you that one of you will betray me."[22]The disciples looked at each other, wondering of whom he was speaking.
[23]One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was lying down at the table against Jesus' side.[24]Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, "Ask him who he is speaking about."[25]So he leaned back against the side of Jesus and said to him, "Lord, who is it?"
[26]Then Jesus answered, "It is the one for whom I will dip the piece of bread and give it him." So when he had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot.[27]Then after the bread, Satan entered into him, so Jesus said to him, "What you are doing, do it quickly."
[28]Now no one who was lying down at the table knew why he said this to him.[29]Some thought that, since Judas had the moneybag, Jesus said to him, "Buy what we need to have for the festival," or that he should give something to the poor.
[30]After Judas received the bread, he went out immediately. It was night.

[31]When Judas was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him.[32]If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify the Son in himself, and he will glorify him at once.[33]Little children, I am with you for still a short amount of time. You will seek me, and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' Now I also say this to you.
[34]I am giving you a new commandment, that you should love one another; as I have loved you, so also you should love one another.[35]By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another."

[36]Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now, but you will follow later."[37]Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."[38]Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow before you have denied me three times."

John 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The events of this chapter are commonly referred to as the last supper or the Lord's supper. This Passover feast in many ways parallels Jesus's sacrifice as the lamb of God. (See: passover)

Special concepts in this chapter

The washing of feet

People in the ancient Near East thought that feet were very dirty. Only servants would wash people's feet. The disciples did not want Jesus to wash their feet because they considered him their master and themselves his servants, but he wanted to show them that they needed to serve each other.

I AM

John records Jesus as saying these words four times in this book, once in this chapter. They stand alone as a complete sentence, and they literally translate the Hebrew word for "I AM," by which Yahweh identified himself to Moses. For these reasons, many people believe that when Jesus said these words he was claiming to be Yahweh. (See: yahweh).

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Son of Man"

Jesus refers to himself as the "Son of Man" in this chapter

Links:

John 13:1 Notes

John 13:1

General Information:

It is not yet Passover and Jesus is together with his disciples for supper. These verses explain the setting of the story and give background information about Jesus and Judas.

Father

This is an important title for God.

loved

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The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

John 13:2

Connecting Statement:

John begins to give background information for a part of the story that begins in verse 4.

Now

This word shows that the author has stopped describing the action and is about to give background information before continuing the story. You should translate using the way your language introduces background information.

the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot son of Simon to betray Jesus

The phrase "put it into the heart" is an idiom that means to cause someone to think about something. Alternate translation: "the devil had already caused Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to think about betraying Jesus"

John 13:3

Connecting Statement:

John continues to tell us background information about what Jesus knew. The action in the story begins in verse 4.

Father

This is an important title for God.

had given everything over into his hands

Here "his hands" is a metonym for power and authority. Alternate translation: "had given him complete power and authority over everything"

he had come from God and was going back to God

Jesus had always been with the Father, and would return there after his work on earth was finished.

John 13:4

Connecting Statement:

John has finished giving the background to this part of the story John 13:2-3 and tells what Jesus did next.

got up from dinner and took off his outer clothing

Because the region was very dusty, it was customary for the host of a dinner to provide a servant to wash the feet of the guests. Jesus took off his outer clothing so he would look like a servant.

John 13:5

began to wash the feet of the disciples

Because the region was very dusty, it was customary for the host of a dinner to provide a servant to wash the feet of the guests. Jesus did the work of the servant by washing the disciples' feet.

John 13:6

Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

Peter's question shows that he is not willing for Jesus to wash his feet. Alternate translation: "Lord, it is not right for you to wash the feet of me, a sinner!"

John 13:8

If I do not wash you, you have no share with me

Here Jesus begins to speak about "washing" to mean making someone spiritually clean or pure. Since Jesus said in 13:7 that the disciples would not fully understand what was happening, translations should keep the "washing" imagery and not try to explain it in the text.

If I do not wash you

It can be stated explicitly that Jesus is talking about washing feet. Alternate translation: "If I do not wash your feet" (

you have no share with me

The word "share" means a part of an inheritance. Here it is a metaphor meaning that Peter would not have fellowship or anything in common with Jesus. Alternate translation: "you will not be my disciple" or "you will not belong to me"

John 13:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues to speak to Simon Peter.

He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet, but he is completely clean; you are clean, but not everyone

Here Jesus speaks about "bathed" and "wash" and "clean" to mean making someone spiritually clean or pure. Since Jesus said in 13:7 that the disciples would not fully understand what was happening, translations should keep the "washing" imagery and not try to explain it in the text.

He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet, but he is completely clean

The word "but" shows the contrast between a person needing to be cleaned and a person already being being clean. In some languages "but" would not be used. Alternate translation: "He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet, because he is completely clean" or "He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet; he is completely clean"

He who is bathed has no need, except to wash his feet

This double negative emphasizes that to wash the feet is the only thing that he who is bathed needs. Alternate translation: "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet" or "The only thing a person who has bathed needs is to wash his feet"

has no need

It is implied that this need concerns washing the whole body. Alternate translation: "has no need to be fully bathed" or "does not need me to wash his whole body"

John 13:11

Not all of you are clean

Here "clean" means spiritually clean or pure. Since Jesus said in 13:7 that the disciples would not fully understand what was happening, translations should keep the "clean" imagery and not try to explain it in the text.

John 13:12

Do you understand what I have done for you?

This remark appears in the form of a question so Jesus can emphasize the importance of what he is teaching his disciples. Alternate translation: "You need to understand what I have done for you!"

John 13:13

You call me 'teacher' and 'Lord,'

Here Jesus implies that his disciples have great respect for him. Alternate translation: "You show me great respect when you call me 'teacher' and 'Lord.'"

John 13:15

you should also do just as I did for you

Jesus implies that his disciples should be willing to follow his example and serve one another. Alternate translation:

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"you should also humbly serve each other"
John 13:16
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues to speak to his disciples.
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
greater
"more important"
John 13:17
you are blessed
Here "bless" means to cause good, beneficial things to happen to a person. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless you"
John 13:18
this is so that the scripture will be fulfilled
With this sentence, Jesus introduces something he will tell them in verse 21 that fulfills what the scripture says. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "this is in order to fulfill the scripture"
the scripture
"this scripture"
He who eats my bread lifted up his heel against me
Jesus quoted the scripture that will be fulfilled. Here the phrase "eats my bread" is an idiom for someone who pretends to be a friend. The phrase "lifted up his heel" is also an idiom, which means someone who has become an enemy. If you have idioms in your language that have these meanings, you can use them here. Alternate translation: "The one who has pretended to be my friend has turned out to be an enemy"
John 13:19
I tell you this now before it happens
"I am telling you now what is going to happen before it happens"
I AM
Possible meanings are 1) Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh, who identified himself to Moses as "I AM," or 2) Jesus is saying, "I am the one I claim to be."
John 13:20
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
John 13:21
troubled
concerned, upset
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
John 13:22
The disciples looked at each other, wondering of whom he was speaking.
"The disciples looked at each other and wondered: 'Who will betray Jesus?'"
John 13:23
One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved
This refers to John.
lying down at the table
During the time of Christ, Jews would often dine together in the Greek style, in which they lay on their sides on low couches.
Jesus' side
Lying with one's head against the side of another diner in the Greek style was considered to be the place of greatest friendship with him.
loved
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.
John 13:26
Iscariot
This indicates that Judas was from the village of Kerioth.
John 13:27
Then after the bread
The words "Judas took" are understood from the context. Alternate translation: "Then after Judas took the bread"
Satan entered into him
This is an idiom that means Satan took complete control of Judas. Alternate translation: "Satan took control of him" or "Satan started to command him"
so Jesus said to him
Here Jesus is speaking to Judas.
What you are doing, do it quickly
"Do quickly what you are planning to do"
John 13:29
that he should give something to the poor
You can translate this as a direct quote. Alternate translation: "'Go and give some money to the poor'"
John 13:30
he went out immediately. It was night
John seems to draw attention here to the fact that Judas will do his evil or "dark" deed in the darkness of the night. Alternate translation: "he went out immediately into the dark night"
John 13:31
Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now people are about to see how the Son of Man will receive honor and how God will receive honor through what the Son of Man is doing"
John 13:32
God will also glorify the Son in himself, and he will glorify him at once
The word "him" refers to the Son of Man. The word "himself" is a reflexive pronoun that refers to God. Alternate translation: "God himself will immediately give honor to the Son of Man"
John 13:33
Little children
Jesus uses the term "Little children" to communicate that he loves the disciples as though they were his children.
as I said to the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "as I said to the Jewish leaders"
John 13:34
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.
love
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares

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for others, no matter what they do.

John 13:35

everyone

You may need to make explicit that this exaggeration refers only to those people who see how the disciples love each other.

John 13:37

lay down my life

"give up my life" or "die"

John 13:38

Will you lay down your life for me?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "You say that you will die for me, but the truth is that you will not!"

the rooster will not crow before you have denied me three times

"you will say that you do not know me three times before the rooster crows"

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14 [1]"Do not let your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.[2]In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, for I am going to prepare a place for you.[3]If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, so that where I am you will also be.
[4]You know the way to where I am going."[5]Thomas said to Jesus, "Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?"[6]Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me.[7]If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you know him and have seen him."
[8]Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us."[9]Jesus said to him, "I have been with you for such a long time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?
[10]Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from my own authority, but the Father living in me is doing his work.[11]Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe because of the works themselves.
[12]Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will do the works that I do, and he will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father.[13]Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it so that the Father will be glorified in the Son.
[14]If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.
[15]If you love me, you will keep my commandments,[16]and I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Comforter so that he will be with you forever—[17]the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive him because it does not see him or know him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.
[18]I will not leave you as orphans; I will come back to you.[19]Yet a short amount of time and the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I live, you will also live.[20]On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, and that I am in you.
[21]He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and I will show myself to him."[22]Judas (not Iscariot) said to Jesus, "Lord, why is it that you will show yourself to us and not to the world?"
[23]Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and we will make our home with him.[24]He who does not love me does not keep my words. The word that you hear is not from me but from the Father who sent me.

[25]I have said these things to you, while I am staying with you.[26]However, the Comforter—the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and he will remind you of everything that I said to you.[27]I leave you peace; I give you my peace. I do not give it as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not be afraid.
[28]You heard that I said to you, 'I am going away, and I will come back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I am.[29]Now I have told you before it happens so that, when it happens, you will believe.
[30]I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me,[31]but in order that the world will know that I love the Father, I do just as the Father commanded me. Let us get up and go from here."

John 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"My Father's house"

Jesus used these words to speak of heaven, where God lives, not of the temple. (See: heaven)

The Holy Spirit

Jesus told his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (John 14:16) who is always with God's people to help them and to speak to God for them. He is also the Spirit of truth (John 14:17) who tells God's people what is true about God so they know him better and serve him well. (See: holyspirit)

Links:

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John 14:1

Connecting Statement:

The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.

Do not let your heart be troubled

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "Stop being so anxious and worried"

John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms

"There are many places to live in my Father's house"

In my Father's house

This refers to heaven, where God lives.

Father

This is an important title for God.

many rooms

The word "room" can refer to a single room, or to a larger dwelling.

I am going to prepare a place for you

Jesus will prepare a place in heaven for every person who trusts in him. The "you" is plural and refers to all his disciples.

John 14:4

the way

Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) "the way to God" or 2) "the one who takes people to God."

John 14:5

how can we know the way?

"how can we know how to get there?"

John 14:6

the truth

Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) "the true person" or 2) "the one who speaks true words about God."

the life

This is a metaphor that means Jesus can give life to people. Alternate translation: "the one who can make people alive"

no one comes to the Father except through me

This double negative emphasizes that through Jesus is the only way that anyone can come to the Father. Alternate translation: "everyone comes to the Father only through me" or "the only way anyone comes to the Father is through me"

comes to the Father

You may need to make explicit that "comes" includes the idea of living with the Father forever. Alternate translation: "No one can come to the Father and live with him unless he comes through me"

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 14:8

Lord, show us the Father

The "Father" is an important title for God.

John 14:9

I have been with you for such a long time and you still do not know me, Philip?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus's words. Alternate translation: "Philip, I have been with you disciples already for a very long time. You should know me by now!"

Whoever has seen me has seen the Father

To see Jesus, who is God the Son, is to see God the Father. The "Father" is an important title for God.

How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize Jesus's words to Philip. Alternate translation: "So you really should not be saying, 'Show us the Father!'"

John 14:10

Connecting Statement:

Jesus asks Philip a question and then he continues to speak to all of his disciples.

Do you not believe ... in me?

This remark appears in the form of a question to emphasize Jesus's words to Philip. Alternate translation: "You really should believe ... in me."

Father

This is an important title for God.

The words that I say to you I do not speak from my own authority

"What I am telling you is not from me" or "The words I tell you are not from me"

The words that I say to you

Here "you" is plural. Jesus is now speaking to all of his disciples.

John 14:11

I am in the Father, and the Father is in me

This is an idiom that means God the Father and Jesus have a unique relationship. Alternate translation: "I am one with the Father, and the Father is one with me" or "my Father and I are just as though we were one"

John 14:12

Truly, truly

See how you translated this in John 1:51.

believes in me

This means to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

Father

This is an important title that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

John 14:13

Whatever you ask in my name

Here "name" is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "Whatever you ask, using my authority"

so that the Father will be glorified in the Son

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so I can show everyone how great my Father is"

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

John 14:14

If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it

Here "name" is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "If you ask me anything as one

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of my followers, I will do it" or "Whatever you ask of me, I will do it because you belong to me"
John 14:16
another Comforter
This refers to the Holy Spirit.
John 14:17
Spirit of truth
This refers to the Holy Spirit who teaches people what is true about God.
The world cannot receive him because it does not
Here the "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "The unbelieving people in this world will never welcome him because they do not" or "Those who oppose God will not accept him because they do not"
John 14:18
leave you as orphans
Here Jesus implies that he will not leave his disciples with no one to care for them. Alternate translation: "leave you with no one to care for you"
John 14:19
the world
Here the "world" is a metonym that represents the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: "the unbelievers"
John 14:20
you will know that I am in my Father
God the Father and Jesus live as one person. Alternate translation: "you will know that my Father and I are just like one person"
my Father
This is an important title for God.
you are in me, and that I am in you
"you and I are just like one person"
John 14:21
loves
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.
he who loves me will be loved by my Father
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "my Father will love anyone who loves me"
my Father
This is an important title for God.
John 14:22
Judas (not Iscariot)
This refers to another disciple whose name was Judas, not to the disciple who was from the village of Kerioth who betrayed Jesus.
why is it that you will show yourself to us
Here the word "show" refers to revealing how wonderful Jesus is. Alternate translation: "why will you reveal yourself only to us" or "why will you only let us see how wonderful you are"
not to the world
Here "world" is a metonym that represents the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "not to those who do not belong to God"
John 14:23
Connecting Statement:
Jesus responds to Judas (not Iscariot).
If anyone loves me, he will keep my word
"The one who loves me will do what I have told him to do"
loves
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.
My Father
This is an important title for God.
we will come to him and we will make our home with him
The Father and the Son will share life with those who obey what Jesus commands. Alternate translation: "we will come to live with him, and will have a personal relationship with him"
John 14:24
The word that you hear is not from me but from the Father who sent me
"The things I have told you are not things that I have decided to say on my own"
The word
"The message"
that you hear
Here when Jesus says "you" he is speaking to all of his disciples.
John 14:26
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 14:27
world
The "world" is a metonym that represents those people who do not love God.
Do not let your heart be troubled, and do not be afraid
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "So stop being anxious, and do not be afraid"
John 14:28
loved
This kind of love comes from God and desires the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.
I am going to the Father
Here Jesus implies that he will return to his Father. Alternate translation: "I am going back to the Father"
the Father is greater than I
Here Jesus implies that the Father has greater authority than the Son while the Son is on the earth. Alternate translation: "the Father has greater authority than I have here"
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 14:30
the ruler of this world is
Here "ruler" refers to Satan. See how you translated this in John 12:31. Alternate translation: "Satan, who rules this world, is"
the ruler ... is coming

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Here Jesus implies that Satan is coming to attack him. Alternate translation: "Satan is coming to attack me"
John 14:31
in order that the world will know
Here the "world" is a metonym for the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: "in order that the ones who do not belong to God may know"
the Father
This is an important title for God.

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15 [1]"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.[2]He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and
he prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit.
[3]You are already clean because of the message that I have spoken to you.[4]Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch
cannot bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me.
[5]I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for without me you can do
nothing.[6]If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown away like a branch and dries up, and they gather the branches
and throw them into the fire, and they are burned up.[7]If you remain in me, and if my words remain in you, ask whatever
you wish, and it will be done for you.
[8]My Father is glorified in this, that you bear much fruit and so prove that you are my disciples.[9]As the Father has loved
me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love.
[10]If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, as I have kept the commandments of my Father and remain
in his love.[11]I have spoken these things to you so that my joy will be in you and so that your joy will be made full.
[12]This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.[13]No one has greater love than this—that one
lays down his life for his friends.
[14]You are my friends if you do the things that I command you.[15]No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not
know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, for everything that I heard from my Father I have made known
to you.
[16]You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit
should remain. This is so that whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.[17]These things I command
you, so that you love one another.
[18]If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.[19]If you were of the world, the world would love
you as its own. But because you are not of the world and because I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates
you.
[20]Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also
persecute you; if they kept my word, they will also keep yours.[21]They will do all these things to you because of my name,
because they do not know him who sent me.[22]If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now
they have no excuse for their sin.
[23]He who hates me also hates my Father.[24]If I had not done the works that no one else did among them, they would have
no sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.[25]But this is in order to fulfill the word that is written in
their law, 'They hated me without a cause.'
[26]When the Comforter comes—whom I will send to you from the Father, that is, the Spirit of truth, who goes out from the
Father—he will testify about me.[27]You also must testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Special concepts in this chapter

Vine

Jesus used the vine as a metaphor for himself. This is because the vine of the grape plant is what takes water and minerals from the ground to the leaves and grapes. Without the vine, the grapes and leaves die. He wanted his followers to know that unless they loved and obeyed him, they would be unable to do anything that pleased God.

Links:

John 15:1 Notes

John 15:1
Connecting Statement:
The part of the story from the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.
I am the true vine
Here the "true vine" is a metaphor. Jesus compares himself to a vine or a vine stem. He is the source of life that causes people to live in a way that pleases God. Alternate translation: "I am like a vine that produces good fruit"
my Father is the gardener
The "gardener" is a metaphor. A "gardener" is a person who

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takes care of the vine to ensure it is as fruitful as possible. Alternate translation: "my Father is like a gardener"
my Father
This is an important title for God.
John 15:2
He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit
Here "every branch" represents people, and "bear fruit" represents living in a way that pleases God.
takes away
"cuts off and takes away"
prunes every branch
"trims every branch"
John 15:3
You are already clean because of the message that I have spoken to you
The implied metaphor here is the "clean branches" that have already been "pruned." Alternate translation: "It is as if you have already been pruned and are clean branches because you have obeyed what I have taught you"
you
The word "you" throughout this passage is plural and refers to the disciples of Jesus.
John 15:4
Remain in me, and I in you
"If you remain joined to me, I will remain joined to you" or "Remain joined to me, and I will remain joined to you"
unless you remain in me
By remaining in Christ, those who belong to him depend on him for everything. Alternate translation: "unless you stay joined to me and depend upon me for everything"
John 15:5
I am the vine, you are the branches
The "vine" is a metaphor that represents Jesus. The "branches" is a metaphor that represent those who trust in Jesus and belong to him. Alternate translation: "I am like a vine, and you are like branches that are attached to the vine"
He who remains in me and I in him
"He who stays joined to me and I stay joined to him"
he bears much fruit
The implied metaphor here is the fruitful branch that represents the believer who pleases God. Just as a branch that is attached to the vine will bear much fruit, those who stay joined to Jesus will do many things that please God. Alternate translation: "you will bear much fruit"
John 15:6
he is thrown away like a branch and dries up
Here the implied metaphor is the unfruitful branch that represents those who do not stay joined to Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the vinedresser throws him away like a branch and it dries up"
they are burned up
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the fire burns them"
John 15:7
ask whatever you wish
Jesus implies that believers must ask God to answer their prayers. Alternate translation: "ask God whatever you wish"
it will be done for you
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he will do it for you"
John 15:8
My Father is glorified in this, that
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "It causes people to honor my Father when"
My Father
This is an important title for God.
in this, that you bear much fruit
Here "fruit" is a metaphor for living to please God. Alternate translation: "when you live in a way that pleases him"
prove that you are my disciples
"show you are my disciples" or "demonstrate you are my disciples"
John 15:9
As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you
Jesus shares the love that God the Father has for him with those who trust in him. Here "Father" is an important title for God.
Remain in my love
"Continue to accept my love"
John 15:10
If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, as I have kept the commandments of my Father and remain in his love
When Jesus's followers obey him, they show their love for him. Alternate translation: "When you do the things I have told you to do, you are living in my love, just as I obey my Father and live in his love"
my Father
Here "Father" is an important title for God.
John 15:11
I have spoken these things to you so that my joy will be in you
"I have told you these things so that you will have the same kind of joy that I have"
so that your joy will be made full
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that you will be completely joyful" or "so that your joy may have nothing missing"
John 15:13
life
This refers to physical life.
John 15:15
everything that I heard from my Father I have made known to you
"I have told you everything my Father told me"
my Father
Here "Father" is an important title for God.
John 15:16
You did not choose me
Jesus implies that his followers did not decide on their own to become his disciples. Alternate translation: "You did not decide to become my disciples"
go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain
Here "fruit" is a metaphor that represents a life that is pleasing to God. Alternate translation: "live lives that please God so that the results of what you do last forever"
whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you
Here "name" is a metonym that represents the authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "Because you belong to me,

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whatever you ask of the Father, he will give it to you"
the Father
This is an important title for God.
John 15:18
the world
the people who do not belong to God and are opposed to him
John 15:19
the world
the people who do not belong to God and are opposed to him
love
This refers to human, brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.
John 15:20
Remember the word that I said to you
Here "word" is a metonym for the message of Jesus. Alternate translation: "Remember the message that I spoke to you"
John 15:21
because of my name
Here "my name" is a metonym that represents Jesus. People will make his followers suffer because they belong to him. Alternate translation: "because you belong to me"
John 15:22
If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin
Jesus implies here that he has shared God's message with those who do not trust him. Alternate translation: "Because I have come and told them God's message, they have no excuse when God judges them for their sins"
they would not have sin
"they would not be guilty of sin"
John 15:23
He who hates me also hates my Father
To hate God the Son is to hate God the Father.
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 15:24
If I had not done the works ... they would have no sin, but
You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Because I have done the works ... they have sin, and"
they would have no sin
"they would not be guilty of sin." See how you translated "they would not have sin" in John 15:22.
they have seen and hated both me and my Father
To hate God the Son is to hate God the Father.
John 15:25
to fulfill the word that is written in their law
You can translate this in an active form. "Word" here is a metonym for the entire message of God. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the prophecy in their law"
law
This refers generally to the entire Old Testament, which contained all of God's instructions for his people.
John 15:26
will send ... from the Father ... the Spirit of truth ... he will testify about me
God the Father would soon send God the Spirit to show the world that Jesus is God the Son.
Father
This is an important title for God.
the Spirit of truth
This is a title for the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "the Spirit who tells the truth about God and me"
John 15:27
You also must testify
Here "testify" means to tell others about Jesus. Alternate translation: "You also must tell everyone what you know about me"
You also must
Some English versions of the Bible translate "must" as "will." Alternate translation: "You also will"
the beginning
Here the "beginning" is a metonym that means the first days of Jesus's ministry. Alternate translation: "from the very first days when I began teaching the people and doing miracles"

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16 [1]"I have spoken these things to you so that you will not fall away.[2]They will throw you out of the synagogues. But the hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think that he is offering a service to God.
[3]They will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me.[4]I have spoken these things to you so that when their hour comes, you will remember that I told you about them. I did not tell you about these things in the beginning, because I was with you.
[5]But now I go to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'[6]But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.[7]But truly I tell you, it is better for you that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you.
[8]When he comes, the Comforter will prove the world to be wrong about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment—
[9]about sin, because they do not believe in me;[10]about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, and you will no longer see me;[11]and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
[12]I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.[13]But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak from himself. But he will say whatever he hears, and he will tell you things that are to come.[14]He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you.
[15]Everything that the Father has is mine. Therefore, I said that the Spirit will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you.[16]In a short amount of time you will no longer see me, and after another short amount of time you will see me."

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[17]Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A short amount of time you will no longer see me and after another short amount of time you will see me,' and, 'Because I go to the Father'?"[18]Therefore they said, "What is this that he says, 'A short amount of time'? We do not know what he is talking about."
[19]Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him, and he said to them, "Is this what you are asking each other, what I meant by saying, 'In a short amount of time and you will no longer see me, and again in a short amount of time and you will see me'?[20]Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will be glad. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.[21]When a woman gives birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers her tribulation because of her joy that a man has been born into the world.
[22]So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your heart will be glad, and no one will be able to take away your joy from you.[23]On that day you will not ask me anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.[24]Until now you have not asked anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy will be fulfilled.

[25]"I have said these things to you in figures of speech, but the hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but instead I will tell you plainly about the Father.
[26]On that day you will ask in my name and I do not say to you that I will pray to the Father for you,[27]for the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and because you have believed that I came from God.[28]I came from the Father, and I have come into the world. Again, I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father."
[29]His disciples said, "See, now you are speaking plainly and you are not using figures of speech.[30]Now we know that you know all things, and you do not need anyone to ask you questions. Because of this, we believe that you have come from God."[31]Jesus answered them, "Do you believe now?
[32]See, the hour is coming, yes, and has indeed come, when you will be scattered, everyone to his own home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me.[33]I have spoken these things to you so that you will have peace in me. In the world you have tribulation. But have courage! I have conquered the world."

John 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The Holy Spirit

Jesus told his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to them. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (John 16:7) who is always with God's people to help them and to speak to God for them. He is also the Spirit of truth (John 16:13) who tells God's people what is true about God so they know him better and serve him well. (See: holyspirit)

"The hour is coming"

Jesus used these words to begin prophecies about times that could be shorter or longer than sixty minutes. "The hour" in which people would persecute his followers (John 16:2) was days, weeks, and years long, but "the hour" in which his disciples would scatter and leave him alone (John 16:32) was less than sixty minutes long. (See: prophet)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

Jesus said that just as a woman is in pain as she gives birth to a baby and his followers would be sad when he died. But the woman is glad after the baby is born, and his followers would be happy when he became alive again.

Links:

John 16:1 Notes

John 16:1

Connecting Statement:

The story that began in the previous chapter continues. Jesus reclines at the table with his disciples and continues to speak to them.

you will not fall away

The phrase "fall away" means "stop trusting" or "stop believing." You may need to specify the the trusting or believing is "in me" or the reason for which the hearers might "fall away." Alternate translation: "you will not stop trusting" or "you will not stop believing in me because of the difficulties you must face"

John 16:2

the hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think that he is offering a service to God

"it will someday happen that people who kill you will think they are doing something good for God."

John 16:3

They will do these things because they have not known the Father nor me

They will kill some believers because they do not know God the Father or Jesus.

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 16:4

when their hour comes

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Here "hour" is a metonym that refers to the time when people will persecute Jesus's followers. Alternate translation: "when they cause you to suffer"

in the beginning

This is a metonym that refers to the first days of Jesus's ministry. Alternate translation: "when you first started following me"

John 16:6

sorrow has filled your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "you are now very sad"

John 16:7

if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you

You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "the Comforter will come to you only if I go away"

Comforter

This is a title for the Holy Spirit, who will be with the disciples after Jesus goes away. See how you translated this in John 14:26.

John 16:8

the Comforter will prove the world to be wrong about sin

When the Holy Spirit came, he began to show people that they were sinners.

Comforter

This refers to the Holy Spirit. See how you translated this in John 14:16.

world

This is a metonym that refers to the people in the world.

John 16:9

about sin, because they do not believe in me

"they are guilty of sin because they do not trust in me"

John 16:10

about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, and you will no longer see me

"when I return to God, and they see me no more, they will know that I did the right things"

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 16:11

about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged

"God will hold them accountable and will punish them for their sins, just as he will punish Satan, the one who rules this world"

because the ruler of this world has

Here "ruler" refers to Satan. See how you translated this in John 12:31. Alternate translation: "because Satan, who rules this world, has"

John 16:12

things to say to you

"messages for you" or "words for you"

you cannot bear them

The word "bear" or carry here is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) being able to understand the words. Alternate translation: "you cannot understand them" Or 2) being able to obey the words. Alternate translation: "you cannot obey them"

John 16:13

the Spirit of truth

This is the Holy Spirit, who will tell the people the truth about God.

he will guide you into all the truth

The "truth" refers to spiritual truth. Alternate translation: "he will teach you all the spiritual truth you need to know"

he will say whatever he hears

Jesus implies that God the Father will speak to the Spirit. Alternate translation: "he will say whatever God tells him to say"

John 16:14

he will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you

Here "things of mine" refers to Jesus's teaching and mighty works. Alternate translation: "he will reveal to you that what I have said and done are indeed true"

John 16:15

Father

This is an important title for God.

the Spirit will take from what is mine and he will tell it to you

The Holy Spirit will tell people that the words and works of Jesus are true. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit will tell everyone that my words and works are true"

John 16:16

In a short amount of time

"Soon" or "Before much time passes"

after another short amount of time

"again, before much time passes"

John 16:17

General Information:

There is a break in Jesus's speaking as his disciples ask each other about what Jesus meant.

A short amount of time you will no longer see me

The disciples did not understand that this refers to Jesus's death on the cross.

after another short amount of time you will see me

Possible meanings are 1) This could refer to Jesus's resurrection or 2) This could refer to Jesus's coming at the end of time.

the Father

This is an important title for God.

John 16:19

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.

Is this what you are asking each other, what I meant by saying, ... see me'?

Jesus uses this question so his disciples will focus on what he has just told them, so he can explain further. Alternate translation: "You are asking each other what I meant when I said, ... see me.'"

John 16:20

Truly, truly, I say to you

Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated this in John 1:51.

but the world will be glad

Here the "world" is a metonym for the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "but the people who oppose God will be glad"

but your sorrow will be turned into joy

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate

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translation: "but your sadness will become joy" or "but afterwards instead of being sad you will be very happy"
John 16:22
your heart will be glad
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's inner being. Alternate translation: "you will be very happy" or "you will be very joyful"
John 16:23
Truly, truly, I say to you
Translate this the way your language emphasizes that what follows is important and true. See how you translated this in John 1:51.
if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you
Here the word "name" is a metonym that refers to the person and authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "if you ask anything of the Father, he will give it to you because you belong to me"
Father
This is an important title for God.
in my name
Here "name" is a metonym that refers to the person and authority of Jesus. The Father will honor the requests of the believers because of their relationship with Jesus. Alternate translation: "because you are my followers" or "on my authority"
John 16:24
your joy will be fulfilled
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "you will become very joyful"
John 16:25
in figures of speech
"in language that is not clear"
the hour is coming
"it will soon happen"
tell you plainly about the Father
"tell you about the Father in a way that you will clearly understand"
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 16:26
you will ask in my name
Here "name" is a metonym for the person and authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "you will ask because you belong to me"
Father
This is an important title for God.
John 16:27
the Father himself loves you because you have loved me
When a person loves Jesus, the Son, they also love the Father, because the Father and the Son are one.
John 16:28
I came from the Father ... I am leaving the world and I am going to the Father
After his death and resurrection, Jesus would return to God the Father.
I came from the Father ... going to the Father
Here "Father" is an important title for God.
world
The "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who live in the world.
John 16:29
Connecting Statement:
The disciples respond to Jesus.
John 16:31
Do you believe now?
This remarks appears in the form of a question to show that Jesus is puzzled that his disciples are only now ready to trust him. Alternate translation: "So, now you finally place your trust in me!
John 16:32
Connecting Statement:
Jesus continues speaking to his disciples.
you will be scattered
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "others will scatter you"
the Father is with me
This is an important title for God.
John 16:33
so that you will have peace in me
Here "peace" refers to inner peace. Alternate translation: "so that you may have inner peace because of your relationship with me"
I have conquered the world
Here "the world" refers to the troubles and persecution that believers will endure from those who oppose God. Alternate translation: "I have conquered the troubles of this world"

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17 [1]After Jesus said these things, he lifted up his eyes to the heavens and said, "Father, the hour has come, glorify your
Son so that the Son will glorify you—[2]just as you gave him authority over all flesh so that he would give eternal life to
everyone whom you have given him.
[3]This is eternal life: That they know you, the only true God, and him whom you sent, Jesus Christ.[4]I glorified you on the
earth. I have finished the work that you have given me to do.[5]Now, Father, glorify me along with yourself with the glory
that I had with you before the world was made.
[6]I revealed your name to the people whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and
they have kept your word.[7]Now they know that everything that you have given me comes from you,[8]for I have given them
all the words that you gave me. They received them and truly knew that I came from you, and they believed that you sent
me.
[9]I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.[10]Everything that is
mine is yours, and yours is mine, and I am glorified in them.[11]I am no longer in the world, but these people are in the
world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me so that they will be one, just
as we are one.

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[12]While I was with them, I kept them safe in your name, which you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was destroyed, except for the son of destruction, so that the scriptures would be fulfilled.[13]Now I am coming to you, but I am saying these things in the world so that they will have my joy fulfilled in themselves.[14]I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.
[15]I do not ask for you to take them away from the world, but for you to keep them safe from the evil one.[16]They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.[17]Set them apart by the truth. Your word is truth.
[18]Just as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.[19]For their sakes I have set myself apart, so that they themselves may also be set apart in truth.
[20]I pray not only for these, but also for those who will believe in me through their word[21]so that they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world will believe that you have sent me.
[22]The glory that you gave me, I have given to them, so that they will be one, just as we are one:[23]I in them, and you in me—that they may be brought to complete unity, so that the world will know that you sent me, and that you have loved them just as you loved me.
[24]Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you gave me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.
[25]Righteous Father, the world did not know you, but I know you; and these know that you sent me.[26]I made your name known to them, and I will make it known so that the love with which you have loved me will be in them, and I will be in them."

John 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter forms one long prayer.

Special concepts in this chapter

Glory

Scripture often speaks of God's glory as a great, brilliant light. When people see this light, they are afraid. In this chapter Jesus asks God to show his followers his true glory (John 17:1).

Jesus is eternal

Jesus existed before God created the world (John 17:5). John wrote about this in John 1:1.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Prayer

Jesus is God's one and only Son (John 3:16), so he could pray differently from the way other people pray. He used many words that sounded like commands. Your translation should make Jesus sound like a son speaking with love and respect to his father and telling him what the father needs to do so that the father will be happy.

Links:

John 17:1 Notes

John 17:1

Connecting Statement:

The story that began in the previous chapter continues. Jesus had been speaking to his disciples, but now he begins to pray to God.

he lifted up his eyes to the heavens

This is an idiom that means to look upward. Alternate translation: "he looked up to the sky"

heavens

This refers to the sky.

Father ... glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you

Jesus asks God the Father to honor him so that he can give honor to God.

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

the hour has come

Here the word "hour" is a metonym that refers to the time for Jesus to suffer and die. Alternate translation: "it is time for me to suffer and die"

John 17:2

all flesh

This refers to all people.

John 17:3

This is eternal life ... know you, the only true God, and ... Jesus Christ

Eternal life is to know the only true God, God the Father, and also God the Son.

John 17:4

the work that you have given me to do

Here "work" is a metonym that refers to Jesus's entire earthly ministry.

John 17:5

Father, glorify me along with yourself with the glory that I had with you before the world was made

Jesus had glory with God the Father "before the world was made" because Jesus is God the Son. Alternate translation: "Father, give me honor by bringing me into your presence as as I was before we made the world"

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Father
This is an important title for God.
John 17:6
Connecting Statement:
Jesus begins to pray for his disciples.
I revealed your name
Here "name" is a metonym that refers to the person of God. Alternate translation: "I taught who you really are and what you are like"
from the world
Here "world" is a metonym that refers to the people of the world that oppose God. This means that God has separated the believers spiritually from the people who do not believe in him.
kept your word
This is an idiom that means to obey. Alternate translation: "obeyed your teaching"
John 17:9
I do not pray for the world
Here the word "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "I am not praying for those who do not belong to you"
John 17:11
in the world
This is a metonym that refers to being on earth and being among the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "among the people who do not belong to you"
Holy Father, keep them ... that they will be one ... as we are one
Jesus asks the Father to keep those who trust in him so they can have a close relationship with God.
Father
This is an important title for God.
keep them in your name that you have given me
Here the word "name" is a metonym for God's power and authority. Alternate translation: "keep them safe by your power and authority, which you have given me"
John 17:12
I kept them safe in your name
Here "name" is a metonym that refers to the power and protection of God. Alternate translation: "I kept them safe with your protection"
not one of them was destroyed, except for the son of destruction
This double negative emphasizes that the son of destruction was the only one who was destroyed. Alternate translation: "the only one among them who was destroyed was the son of destruction"
the son of destruction
This refers to Judas, who betrayed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the one whom you long ago decided you would destroy"
so that the scriptures would be fulfilled
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the prophecy about him in the scriptures"
John 17:13
the world
These words are a metonym for the people who live in the world.
so that they will have my joy fulfilled in themselves
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that you might give them great joy"
John 17:14
I have given them your word
"I have spoken your message to them"
the world ... because they are not of the world ... I am not of the world
Here "the "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who oppose God. Alternate translation: "the people who oppose you ... because they do not belong to those who do not believe ... I do not belong to them"
John 17:15
the world
In this passage, "the world" is a metonym for the people who oppose God.
keep them safe from the evil one
This refers to Satan. Alternate translation: "protect them from Satan, the evil one"
John 17:17
Set them apart by the truth
The purpose for setting them apart can be stated clearly. The phrase "by the truth" here represents by teaching the truth. Alternate translation: "Make them your own people by teaching them the truth"
Your word is truth
"Your message is true" or "What you say is true"
John 17:18
into the world
Here into "the world" is a metonym that means to the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "to the people of the world"
John 17:19
so that they themselves may also be set apart in truth
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that they may also truly set themselves apart to you"
John 17:20
those who will believe in me through their word
"those who will believe in me because these teach about me"
John 17:21
they will all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us
Those who trust in Jesus become united with the Father and the Son when they believe.
Father
This is an important title for God.
the world
Here the "the world" is a metonym that refers to the people who do not yet know God. Alternate translation: "the people who do not know God"
John 17:22
The glory that you gave me, I have given to them
"I have honored my followers just as you have honored me"
so that they will be one, just as we are one
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that you can unite them just as you have united us"
John 17:23
that they may be brought to complete unity

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"that they may be completely united"

that the world will know

Here "the world" is a metonym that refers to the people who do not know God. Alternate translation: "that all the people will know"

loved

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.

John 17:24

Father

This is an important title for God.

where I am

Here "where I am" refers to heaven. Alternate translation: "with me in heaven"

to see my glory

"to see my greatness"

before the foundation of the world

Here Jesus refers to the time before creation. Alternate translation: "before the world was created" or "before you created the world"

John 17:25

Connecting Statement:

Jesus finishes his prayer.

Righteous Father

Here "Father" is an important title for God.

the world did not know you

The "world" is a metonym for the people who do not belong to God. Alternate translation: "those who do not belong to you do not know what you are like"

John 17:26

I made your name known to them, and I will make it known

The word "name" refers to God. Alternate translation: "I revealed to them what you are like, and I will continue to do that"

love ... loved

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.

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18 [1]After Jesus spoke these words, he went out with his disciples to the other side of the Kidron Brook, where there was a garden into which he and his disciples entered.[2]Now Judas, who was going to betray him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with his disciples.[3]Then Judas, leading a company of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.
[4]Then Jesus, having known all the things that would happen to him, went forward and asked them, "Who are you looking for?"[5]They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am." Judas, who betrayed him, was also standing with the soldiers.
[6]So when he said to them, "I am," they went backward and fell to the ground.[7]Then again he asked them, "Who are you looking for?" Again they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."
[8]Jesus answered, "I told you that I am. So if you are looking for me, let these go."[9]This was in order to fulfill the word that he said: "Of those whom you have given me, I lost no one."
[10]Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. Now the name of the servant was Malchus.[11]Jesus said to Peter, "Put the sword back into its sheath. Should I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

[12]So a company of soldiers and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, seized Jesus and tied him up.[13]They led him first to Annas, for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.[14]Now Caiaphas was the one who had given the advice to the Jews that it would be better that one man die for the people.

[15]Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest;[16]but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and he brought Peter in.
[17]Then the female servant, the doorkeeper, said to Peter, "Are you not also one of the disciples of this man?" He said, "I am not."[18]Now the servants and the officers were standing there, and they had made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves. Peter was also with them, standing there and warming himself.

[19]The high priest then asked Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.[20]Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I was always teaching in synagogues and in the temple where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret.
[21]Why did you ask me? Ask those who have heard me about what I said. Look, these people know what I said."
[22]When Jesus had said this, one of the officers standing there struck Jesus and said, "Is that how you answer the high priest?"[23]Jesus answered him, "If I spoke wrongly, testify about the wrong, but if rightly, why do you hit me?"[24]Then Annas sent him tied up to Caiaphas the high priest.

[25]Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. The people then said to him, "Are you not also one of his disciples?" He denied it and said, "I am not."[26]One of the servants of the high priest, who was a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"[27]Then Peter denied it again; and immediately the rooster crowed.

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[28]Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the government headquarters. It was early in the morning, and they did not enter the government headquarters so that they would not be defiled but would be able to eat the Passover.[29]So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation are you bringing against this man?"[30]They answered and said to him, "If this man was not an evildoer, we would not have given him over to you."
[31]Pilate therefore said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death."[32]They said this so that the word of Jesus would be fulfilled which he had spoken to indicate by what kind of death he would die.

[33]Then Pilate entered the government headquarters again and called Jesus, and he said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"[34]Jesus answered, "Do you speak from yourself, or did others speak to you about me?"[35]Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own people and the chief priests gave you over to me. What did you do?"
[36]Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, then my servants would fight so that I would not be given over to the Jews. But now my kingdom is not from here."[37]Pilate then said to him, "Are you a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I have been born, and for this purpose I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."
[38]Pilate said to him, "What is truth?" When he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in this man.[39]But you have the custom that I release one person to you at the Passover. So do you want me to release the King of the Jews to you?"[40]Then they cried out again and said, "Not this man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.

John 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verse 14 says, "Now Caiaphas was the one who had given the advice to the Jews that it would be better that one man die for the people." The author says this to help the reader understand why it was to Caiaphas that they took Jesus. You might want to put these words in parentheses.

Special concepts in this chapter

"It is not lawful for us to put any man to death"

The Roman government did not allow the Jews to kill criminals, so the Jews needed to ask Pilate, the governor, to kill him (John 18:31).

Jesus's kingdom

No one knows for sure what Jesus meant when he told Pilate that his kingdom was not "of this world" (John 18:36). Some people think that Jesus means that his kingdom is only spiritual and that he has no visible kingdom on this earth, Other people think that Jesus meant that he would not build and rule his kingdom by force, the way other kings build theirs. It is possible to translate the words "is not of this world" as "is not from this place" or "comes from another place."

King of the Jews

Pilate asked Jesus if he were the King of the Jews

Links:

John 18:1 Notes

John 18:1

General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information for the events that follow. Verse 1 tells where they took place, and verse 2 gives background information about Judas.

After Jesus spoke these words

The author uses these words to mark the beginning of a new event.

the Kidron Brook

This was a low place in Jerusalem separating the Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives. It has a small stream in it only after heavy rains. Many modern English translations read, "the Kidron Valley"

where there was a garden

This was a grove of olive trees. Alternate translation: "where there was a grove of olive trees"

John 18:4

General Information:

Jesus begins to speak with the soldiers, officers, and Pharisees.

Then Jesus, who knew all the things that were happening to him

"Then Jesus, who knew everything that was about to happen to him"

John 18:5

Jesus of Nazareth

"Jesus, the man from Nazareth"

I am

The word "he" is implied in the text. Alternate translation: "I am he"

who betrayed him

"who handed him over"

John 18:6

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I am

Here the word "he" is not present in the original text, but it is implied. Alternate translation: "I am he"

fell to the ground

The men fell to the ground because of Jesus's power. Alternate translation: "fell down because of Jesus's power"

John 18:7

Jesus of Nazareth

"Jesus, the man from Nazareth"

John 18:8

I am

Here the word "he" is not present in the original text, but it is implied. Alternate translation: "I am he"

John 18:9

General Information:

In this verse there is a stop in the main story. Here John gives background information about Jesus fulfilling Scripture.

This was in order to fulfill the word that he said

Here "the word" refers to the words Jesus had prayed. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This happened in order to fulfill the words that he had said when he was praying to his Father"

John 18:10

Malchus

a male servant of the high priest

John 18:11

sheath

the cover for a knife or sword that keeps the knife or sword from cutting the owner

Should I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to Jesus's statement. Alternate translation: "I must surely drink the cup that the Father has given to me!"

the cup

Here "cup" is a metaphor that refers to the suffering that Jesus must endure.

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 18:12

the Jews

Here "the Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

seized Jesus and tied him up

The soldiers tied Jesus's hands to prevent him from escaping. Alternate translation: "captured Jesus and tied him up to prevent him from escaping"

John 18:14

General Information:

Verse 14 tells us background information about Caiaphas.

John 18:15

Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and he entered with Jesus

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now the high priest knew that disciple so he was able to enter with Jesus"

John 18:16

So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "So the other disciple, whom the high priest knew"

the doorkeeper

The doorkeeper was a woman.

and he brought Peter in

The word "he" refers to the other disciple.

John 18:17

Are you not also one of the disciples of this man?

This appears in the form of a question to enable the servant to express her remark somewhat cautiously. Alternate translation: "You are also one of the arrested man's disciples! Are you not?"

John 18:18

Now the servants and the officers were standing there, and they had made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves

These were the high priest's servants and the temple guards. Alternate translation: "It was cold, so the high priest's servants and temple guards made a charcoal fire and were standing and warming themselves around it"

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here John adds information about the people who were warming themselves around the fire.

John 18:19

General Information:

Here the story is about Jesus again.

The high priest

This was Caiphas (John 18:13).

about his disciples and his teaching

Here "his teaching" refers to what Jesus had been teaching the people. Alternate translation: "about his disciples and what he had been teaching the people"

John 18:20

I have spoken openly to the world

You may need to make explicit that the word "world" is a metonym for those people who had heard Jesus teach. Here the exaggeration "the world" emphasizes that Jesus has spoken openly.

where all the Jews come together

Here "all the Jews" is an exaggeration that emphasizes that Jesus spoke where anyone who wanted to hear him could hear him.

John 18:21

Why did you ask me?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "You should not be asking me these questions!"

John 18:22

Is that how you answer the high priest?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "That is not how you should answer the high priest!"

John 18:23

wrongly ... wrong

These words refer to moral wrong, like blasphemy, not to mere mistakes about facts.

testify about the wrong

"tell me what I said that was wrong"

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if rightly, why do you hit me?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis to what Jesus is saying. Alternate translation: "if I said only what was right, you should not be hitting me!"
John 18:25
General Information:
Here the story is about Peter again.
Now
This word is used to mark a stop in the story. Here John tells more information about Peter.
Are you not also one of his disciples?
The speaker uses a questions to somewhat cautiously make a comment. Alternate translation: "You are also one of the arrested man's disciples, are you not?"
John 18:26
Did I not see you in the garden with him?
This appears in the form of a question to enable the servant to express his remark somewhat cautiously. Alternate translation: "I saw you in the garden with him, did I not?"
John 18:27
Then Peter denied it again
Peter again denied knowing and being with Jesus. Alternate translation: "Peter denied him again"
immediately the rooster crowed
Here the writer assumes that the reader will remember that Jesus had said Peter would deny him before the rooster crowed. Alternate translation: "immediately the rooster crowed, just as Jesus had said would happen"
John 18:28
General Information:
Here the story is about Jesus again. The soldiers and Jesus's accusers bring him to Caiaphas. This verse gives background information about why they did not enter the Praetorium.
Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas
Here it is implied that they led Jesus from Caiaphas' house. Alternate translation: "Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas' house"
they did not enter the government headquarters so that they would not be defiled
Pilate was not a Jew, so if the Jewish leaders entered his headquarters, they would be defiled. This would have prevented them from celebrating the Passover. "they themselves remained outside Pilate's headquarters because Pilate was a Gentile. They did not want to become defiled"
John 18:30
If this man was not an evildoer, we would not have given him over to you
You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "This man is an evildoer, and we had to given him over to you"
given him over
This phrase here means to hand over to an enemy.
John 18:31
The Jews said to him
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus and arrested him. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders said to him"
It is not lawful for us to put any man to death
According to Roman law, the Jews could not put a man to death. Alternate translation: "According to Roman law, we cannot put a person to death"
John 18:32
General Information:
In this verse there is a stop in the main story. Here John tells how what was said in verse 31 fulfills Scripture about Jesus.
so that the word of Jesus would be fulfilled which he had spoken
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in order to fulfill what Jesus had said earlier"
to indicate by what kind of death he would die
"regarding how he would die"
John 18:35
I am not a Jew, am I?
This remark appears in the form of a question so Pilate can emphasize his complete lack of interest in the cultural affairs of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "Well I am certainly not a Jew, and I have no interest in these matters!"
Your own people
"Your fellow Jews"
John 18:36
My kingdom is not of this world
Here "world" is a metonym for the people who oppose Jesus. Possible meanings are 1) "My kingdom is not part of this world" or 2) "I do not need this world's permission to rule as their king" or "It is not from this world that I have authority to be king."
so that I would not be given over to the Jews
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "and would prevent the Jewish leaders from arresting me"
the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus.
John 18:37
Are you a king then?
“So, you are a king?" Pilate asked this question to confirm that Jesus is calling himself a king, since Jesus said in the previous verse that he has a kingdom. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “So, you are a king.”
testify to the truth
Here "the truth" refers to the truth about God. Alternate translation: "tell people the truth about God"
who belongs to the truth
This is an idiom that refers to anyone who loves the truth about God.
my voice
Here "voice" is a synecdoche that refers to words Jesus says. Alternate translation: "the things I say" or "me"
John 18:38
What is truth?
This remark appears in the form of a question to reflect Pilate's belief that no one really knows what truth is. Alternate translation: "No one can know what is true!"
the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish

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leaders who opposed Jesus.

John 18:40

Not this man, but Barabbas

This is an ellipsis. You can add the implied words. Alternate translation: "No! Do not release this man! Release Barabbas instead"

Now Barabbas was a revolutionary

Here John provides background information about Barabbas.

revolutionary

person who wants to take over the government

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19 [1]Then Pilate took Jesus and whipped him.[2]The soldiers wove a crown of thorns. They put it on the head of Jesus and dressed him with a purple garment.[3]They came to him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they struck him.

[4]Then Pilate went outside again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him outside to you so that you will know that I find no guilt in him."[5]So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. Pilate said to them, "Look, here is the man!"
[6]When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw Jesus, they cried out and said, "Crucify him, crucify him!"Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him."
[7]The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he has to die because he claimed to be the Son of God."[8]When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid,[9]and he entered the government headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where do you come from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.
[10]Then Pilate said to him, "Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and authority to crucify you?"[11]Jesus answered him, "You do not have any authority over me except for what has been given to you from above. Therefore, he who gave me over to you has a greater sin."
[12]At this answer, Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Everyone who makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."
[13]When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place called "The Pavement," but in the Aramaic language, "Gabbatha."
[14]Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover, at about the sixth hour. Pilate said to the Jews, "See, here is your king!"
[15]They cried out, "Away with him, away with him; crucify him!"Pilate said to them, "Should I crucify your King?"
The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."
[16]Then Pilate gave Jesus over to them to be crucified.

[17]Then they took Jesus, and he went out, carrying the cross for himself, to the place called "The Place of a Skull," which in the Aramaic language is called "Golgotha."[18]They crucified Jesus there, and with him two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle.
[19]Pilate also wrote a sign and put it on the cross. There it was written: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.
[20]Many of the Jews read this sign because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. The sign was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.
[21]Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This one said, "I am King of the Jews."'"
[22]Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

[23]When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, divided them into four shares, one for each of them; and also the tunic. Now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top.[24]Then they said to each other, "Let us not tear it, but instead let us cast lots for it to decide whose it will be." This happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled which said,

> "They divided my garments among themselves
> and cast lots for my clothing."

This is what the soldiers did.

[25]Now standing beside Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
[26]When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, see, your son!"[27]Then he said to the disciple, "See, your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

[28]After this, knowing that everything was now accomplished and so that the scriptures would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."[29]A container full of sour wine was placed there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop staff and lifted it up to his mouth.[30]When Jesus had taken the sour wine, he said, "It is finished." He bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

[31]Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross during the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was especially important), asked Pilate to break their legs and to remove them.[32]Then the

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soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the second man who had been crucified with Jesus.[33]When they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they did not break his legs.
[34]However, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.[35]The one who saw this has testified, and his testimony is true. He knows that what he said is true so that you may also believe.
[36]For these things happened in order to fulfill scripture, "Not one of his bones will be broken."[37]Again, another scripture says, "They will look at him whom they pierced."

[38]After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, since he was a disciple of Jesus (but secretly for fear of the Jews), asked Pilate if he could take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission. So Joseph came and took away his body.[39]Nicodemus also came—he who at first had come to Jesus by night. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about one hundred litras.
[40]So they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, as was the custom of the Jews to bury bodies.[41]Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden was a new tomb in which no person had yet been buried.[42]Because it was the day of preparation for the Jews and because the tomb was close by, they laid Jesus in it.

John 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 19:24, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Purple garment"

Purple is a color like red or blue. The people were mocking Jesus, so they put him in a purple garment. This was because kings wore purple garments. They spoke and acted like they were giving honor to a king, but everyone knew that they were doing it because they hated Jesus.

"You are not Caesar's friend"

Pilate knew that Jesus was not a criminal, so he did not want to have his soldiers kill him. But the Jews told him that Jesus was claiming to be a king, and anyone who did that was breaking Caesar's laws (John 19:12).

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (John 19:41) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they placed the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they rolled a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Sarcasm

The soldiers were insulting Jesus when they said, "Hail, King of the Jews." Pilate was insulting the Jews when he asked, "Should I crucify your king?" He was probably also insulting both Jesus and the Jews when he wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Gabbatha, Golgotha

These are two Hebrew words. After translating the meanings of these words ("The Pavement" and "The Place of a Skull"), the author transliterates their sounds by writing them with Greek letters.

Links:

John 19:1 Notes

John 19:1

Connecting Statement:

The story that began in the previous chapter continues. Jesus is standing before Pilate as he is being accused by the Jews.

Then Pilate took Jesus and whipped him

Pilate himself did not whip Jesus. Here "Pilate" is a metonym for the soldiers whom Pilate ordered to whip Jesus. Alternate translation: "Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus out of the room and whipped him"

John 19:3

Hail, King of the Jews

The greeting "Hail" with a raised hand was only used to greet Caesar. As the soldiers use the crown of thorns and the purple robe to mock Jesus, it is ironic that they do not recognize that he is indeed a king.

John 19:4

I find no guilt in him

Pilate states this twice to say he does not believe Jesus is guilty of any crime. He does not want to punish him.

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Alternate translation: "I see no reason to punish him"
John 19:5
crown of thorns ... purple garment
The crown and the purple robe are things only kings wear. The soldiers dressed Jesus in this manner to mock him. See John 19:2.
John 19:7
The Jews answered him
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "The Jewish leaders answered Pilate"
he has to die because he claimed to be the Son of God
Jesus was condemned to death by crucifixion because he claimed he was "the Son of God."
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
John 19:10
Are you not speaking to me?
This remark appears in the form of a question. Here Pilate expresses his surprise that Jesus does not take the opportunity to defend himself. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe you are refusing to speak to me!" or "Answer me!"
Do you not know that I have authority to release you, and authority to crucify you?
This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "You should know that I have authority to release you or to order my soldiers to crucify you!"
John 19:11
You do not have any authority over me except for what has been given to you from above
This double negative emphasizes that what has been given from above is the only thing that allows Pilate to have power. Alternate translation: "The authority you have over me is only what has been given to you from above"
what has been given to you from above
The words "from above" are a euphemism for "by God. This can be stated in active form and the one who has given can be specified. Alternate translation: "what God has given you"
from above
This is a respectful way of referring to something coming from God.
gave me over
"handed me over"
John 19:12
At this answer
Here "this answer" refers to Jesus's answer. Alternate translation: "When Pilate heard Jesus's answer"
Pilate tried to release him
The form of "tried" in the original indicates that Pilate tried "hard" or "repeatedly" to release Jesus. Alternate translation: "he tried hard to release Jesus" or "he tried again and again to release Jesus"
but the Jews cried out
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders that opposed Jesus. In the original, the form of "cried out" indicates that they cried out or shouted repeatedly. Alternate translation: "but the Jewish leaders kept shouting"
you are not a friend of Caesar
"you are opposing Caesar" or "you are opposing the emperor"
makes himself a king
"claims that he is a king"
John 19:13
he brought Jesus out
Here "he" refers to Pilate and is a metonym for the soldiers whom he ordered to bring Jesus out. Alternate translation: "Pilate ordered the soldiers to bring Jesus out"
sat down
Important people like Pilate sat down when they performed an official duty, while people who were not so important stood up.
in the judgment seat
This is the special chair that an important person like Pilate sat in when he was making an official judgment. If your language has a special way to describe this action, you can use it here.
in a place called "The Pavement," but
This is a special stone platform where only the important people were allowed to go. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in a place the people called The Pavement, but"
Aramaic
This was the language that the Jews in Judea spoke among themselves. Some translations say "Hebrew," following the form of the Greek word.
John 19:14
Connecting Statement:
Some time has passed and it is now the sixth hour, as Pilate orders his soldiers to crucify Jesus.
Now
This word marks a stop in the story. Here John provides information about the upcoming Passover and the time of day.
the sixth hour
"noontime"
Pilate said to the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche that refers to the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "Pilate said to the Jewish leaders"
John 19:15
Should I crucify your King?
Here "I" is a synecdoche that refers to Pilate's soldiers who will actually perform the crucifixion. Alternate translation: "Do you really want me to tell my soldiers to nail your king to a cross?"
John 19:16
Then Pilate gave Jesus over to them to be crucified
Though it was Roman soldiers who actually crucified Jesus, word "them" here refers to "the Jews" [John 19:14]
John 19:17
to the place called "The Place of a Skull,"
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to the place that the people called 'The Place of a Skull,'"

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which in the Aramaic language is called "Golgotha."
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "which in the Aramaic language they call 'Golgotha.'"
Aramaic
This was the language that the Jews in Judea spoke among themselves. Some translations say "Hebrew," following the form of the Greek word.
John 19:18
with him two other men
This is an ellipsis. You can translate this, adding the implied words. Alternate translation: "they also nailed two other criminals to their crosses"
John 19:19
Pilate also wrote a sign and put it on the cross
Here "Pilate" is a synecdoche for the person who wrote on the sign. Here "on the cross" refers to Jesus's cross. Alternate translation: "Pilate also commanded someone to write on a sign and to attach it to Jesus's cross"
There it was written: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The sign said,'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews'"
John 19:20
the place where Jesus was crucified
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the place where the soldiers crucified Jesus"
The sign was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The one who prepared the sign wrote the words in 3 languages: Aramaic, Latin, and Greek"
Aramaic
This was the language that the Jews in Judea spoke among themselves. Some translations say "Hebrew," following the form of the Greek word.
Latin
This was the language of the Roman government.
John 19:21
Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate
The chief priests had to go back to Pilate's headquarters to protest to him about the words on the sign. Alternate translation: "The chief priests went back to Pilate and said"
John 19:22
What I have written I have written
Pilate implies that he will not change the words on the sign. Alternate translation: "I have written what I wanted to write, and I will not change it"
John 19:23
also the tunic
"and they also took his tunic." The soldiers kept the tunic separate and did not divide it. Alternate translation: "they kept his tunic separate"
John 19:24
General Information:
At the end of this verse there is a break stop in the main story. John tells the reader how this event fulfills Scripture.
let us cast lots for it to decide whose it will be
The soldiers will gamble and the winner will receive the shirt. Alternate translation: "let us gamble for the tunic and the winner will get to keep it"
This happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled which said
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled the scripture that said" or "This happened to make the scripture come true which said"
cast lots
This was how the soldiers divided Jesus's clothing among themselves. Alternate translation: "gamble"
John 19:26
the disciple whom he loved
This is John, the writer of this Gospel.
Woman, see, your son
Here the word "son" is a metaphor. Jesus wants his disciple, John, to be like a son to his mother. Alternate translation: "Woman, here is the man who will act like a son to you"
John 19:27
See, your mother
Here the word "mother" is a metaphor. Jesus wants his mother to be like a mother to his disciple, John. Alternate translation: "Think of this woman as if she were your own mother"
From that hour
"From that very moment"
John 19:28
knowing that everything was now accomplished
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "knowing that he had completed everything" or "he knew that he had done everything that God had sent him to do"
John 19:29
A container full of sour wine was placed there
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had placed there a full container of sour wine"
sour wine
"bitter wine"
they put
Here "they" refers to the Roman guards.
a sponge
a small object that can soak up and hold much liquid
on a hyssop staff
"on a branch of a plant called hyssop"
John 19:30
He bowed his head and gave up his spirit
John implies here that Jesus gave his spirit back to God. Alternate translation: "He bowed his head and gave God his spirit" or "He bowed his head and died"
John 19:31
the Jews
Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
day of preparation
This is the time before the Passover when people prepared food for the Passover.
to break their legs and to remove them
Breaking the victims' legs caused them to die almost immediately so that the soldiers could take the dead bodies off the crosses. You may need to add this information. Alternate translation: "to break their legs so they would die

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and to have the soldiers remove them"

John 19:32

who had been crucified with Jesus

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom they had crucified near Jesus"

John 19:35

The one who saw this

This sentence gives background information to the story. John is telling readers that he was there and that we can trust what he has written.

has testified, and his testimony is true

To "testify" means to tell about something that one has seen. Alternate translation: "has told the truth about what he has seen"

so that you would also believe

Here "believe" means to put one's trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "so that you will also put your trust in Jesus"

John 19:36

General Information:

In this verse and the next there is a stop in the main story. John tells us about how these events fulfill what was said in Scripture.

in order to fulfill scripture

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to fulfill the words that someone wrote in the scripture"

Not one of his bones will be broken

This is a quotation from Psalm 34. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "No one will break any of his bones"

John 19:37

They will look at him whom they pierced

This is a quotation from Zechariah 12.

John 19:38

Joseph of Arimathea

Arimathea was a small town. Alternate translation: "Joseph from the town of Arimathea"

for fear of the Jews

Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus. Alternate translation: "for fear of the Jewish leaders"

if he could take away the body of Jesus

John implies that Joseph of Arimathea wanted to bury the body of Jesus. Alternate translation: "for permission to take the body of Jesus down from the cross for burial"

John 19:39

Nicodemus

Nicodemus was one of the Pharisees who believed in Jesus. See how you translated this name in John 3:1.

myrrh and aloes

These are plant substances that smell nice and that people used to prepare a body for burial.

about one hundred litras

You may convert this to a the measure system used in your area. The word "litra" was used for measures of about 300 grams of solids or about 300 milliliters of liquids. Because myrrh and aloes were more like solids than liquids, the measurement here is probably of weight, about 30 kilograms, rather than of volume, about 30 liters.

John 19:41

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden ... had yet been buried

Here John marks a pause in the story. Here he provides background information about the location of the tomb where they would bury Jesus.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Now in the place where they crucified Jesus, there was a garden"

in which no person had yet been buried

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "in which people had buried no one"

John 19:42

Because it was the day of preparation for the Jews

According to Jewish law, no one could work after sundown on Friday. It was the beginning of the Sabbath and Passover. Alternate translation: "Because the Passover was about to begin that evening"

---

20 [1]Now early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb, and she saw the stone rolled away from the tomb.[2]So she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and she said to them, "They took away the Lord out from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him."

[3]Then Peter and the other disciple went out, and they were going to the tomb.[4]They both ran together, and the other disciple quickly ran ahead of Peter and arrived at the tomb first.[5]Then stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go inside.
[6]Simon Peter then arrived after him and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there[7]and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place by itself.
[8]Then the other disciple, the one who first arrived at the tomb, also went in, and he saw and believed.[9]For until that time they still did not know the scripture that he should rise from the dead.[10]So the disciples went back home again.

[11]But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping. As she wept, she stooped down into the tomb.[12]She saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the foot of where the body of Jesus had lain.[13]They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"She said to them, "Because they took away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him."
[14]When she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.
[15]Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?"She thought that he was the gardener, so she said to him, "Sir, if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him away."

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[16]Jesus said to her, "Mary."She turned and said to him in Aramaic, "Rabboni" (which is to say "Teacher").

[17]Jesus said to her, "Do not touch me, for I have not yet gone up to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to them that I will go up to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God."
[18]Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that he had said these things to her.

[19]On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the middle of them and said to them, "Peace to you."[20]After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.
[21]Jesus then said to them again, "Peace to you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."[22]When Jesus had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.[23]Whoever's sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whoever's sins you keep back, they are kept back."

[24]Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.[25]The other disciples later said to him, "We have seen the Lord."He said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

[26]After eight days his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came while the doors were closed, and stood among them, and said, "Peace to you."[27]Then he said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger and see my hands. Reach here with your hand and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believe."

[28]Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God."
[29]Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen, and believed."

[30]Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, signs that have not been written in this book,[31]but these have been written so that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and so that believing, you would have life in his name.

John 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The tomb

The tomb in which Jesus was buried (John 20:1) was the kind of tomb in which wealthy Jewish families buried their dead. It was an actual room cut into a rock. It had a flat place on one side where they could place the body after they had put oil and spices on it and wrapped it in cloth. Then they would roll a large rock in front of the tomb so no one could see inside or enter.

"Receive the Holy Spirit"

If your language uses the same word for "breath" and "spirit," be sure that the reader understands that Jesus was performing a symbolic action by breathing, and that what the disciples received was the Holy Spirit, not Jesus's breath. (See: and holyspirit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Rabboni

John used Greek letters to describe the sound of the word, and then he explained that it means "Teacher." You should do the same, using the letters of your language.

Jesus's resurrection body

No one is sure what Jesus's body looked like after he became alive again. His disciples knew it was Jesus because they could see his face and touch the places where the soldiers had put the nails through his hands and feet, But he could also walk through solid walls and doors. It is best not to try to say more than what the ULB says.

Two angels in white

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all wrote about angels in white clothing with the women at Jesus's tomb. Two of the authors called them men, but that is only because the angels were in human form. Two of the authors wrote about two angels, but the other two authors wrote about only one of them. It is best to translate each of these passages as it appears in the ULB without trying to make the passages all say exactly the same thing. (See: Matthew 28:1-2 and Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:4 and John 20:12)

Links:

John 20:1 Notes

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John 20:1

General Information:

This is the third day after Jesus was buried.

first day of the week

"Sunday"

she saw the stone rolled away

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "she saw that someone had rolled away the stone"

John 20:2

disciple whom Jesus loved

This phrase appears to be the way that John refers to himself throughout his book. Here the word "love" refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.

They took away

The author uses the word "they" here to show that Mary Magdalene did not know who took the Lord away. She was probably thinking of the Jews or Romans, but it would be best to translate using your language's way of leaving the actor or actors unknown.

the Lord ... laid him

These words are metonyms for Jesus's dead body. Alternate translation: "the Lord's dead body ... laid it"

John 20:3

the other disciple

John apparently shows his humility by referring to himself here as "the other disciple," rather than including his name.

John 20:5

linen cloths

These were the burial cloths that people had used to wrap the body of Jesus.

John 20:6

linen cloths

These were the burial cloths that people had used to wrap the body of Jesus. See how you translated this in John 20:5.

John 20:7

cloth that had been on his head

Here "his head" refers to "Jesus's head." You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "cloth that someone had used to cover Jesus's face"

but was folded up in a place by itself

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but someone had folded it and put it aside, separate from the linen cloths"

John 20:8

the other disciple

John apparently expresses his humility by referring to himself as "the other disciple," rather than including his name in this book.

he saw and believed

Until he saw that the tomb was empty, he did not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead, but when he saw that the tomb was empty, he did believe. Alternate translation: "he saw these things and now believed that Jesus had risen from the dead"

John 20:9

they still did not know the scripture

These words refer to the disciples. Possible meanings are 1) they did not know that that scripture exists or 2) they did not understand that that scripture said that Jesus would come alive again.

rise

become alive again

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld.

John 20:10

went back home again

The disciples continued to stay in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "went back to where they were staying in Jerusalem"

John 20:12

She saw two angels in white

The angels were wearing white clothing. Alternate translation: "She saw two angels dressed in white clothing"

John 20:13

They said to her

"They asked her"

Because they took away my Lord, and I do not know where they have put him

The words "my Lord" here are a metonym for the Lord's body. Alternate translation: "Because they took away the body of my Lord, and I do not know where they have put it"

John 20:15

Jesus said to her

"Jesus asked her"

if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him away

Here the word "him" is a metonym that refers to Jesus's dead body. Alternate translation: "if you have taken his dead body away, tell me where you have put it, and I will take it away"

John 20:16

Rabboni

The word "Rabboni" means "teacher" in Aramaic.

Aramaic

This was the language that the Jews in Judea spoke among themselves. Some translations say "Hebrew," following the form of the Greek word.

John 20:17

brothers

Jesus used the word "brothers" to refer to his disciples.

I will go up to my Father and your Father, and my God and your God

Jesus rose from the dead and then predicted he would go up into heaven, back to his Father, who is God. Alternate translation: "I am about to return to heaven to be with my Father and your Father, to the one who is my God and your God"

my Father and your Father

These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God, and between believers and God.

John 20:18

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples

Mary Magdalene went to where the disciples were staying

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and told them what she had seen and heard. Alternate translation: "Mary Magdalene went to where the disciples were and told them"

John 20:19

General Information:

It is now evening and Jesus appears to the disciples.

that day, the first day of the week

This refers to Sunday.

the doors being locked where the disciples were

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the disciples had locked the doors where they were"

for fear of the Jews

Here "Jews" is a synecdoche for the Jewish leaders who might arrest the disciples. Alternate translation: "because they were afraid that the Jewish leaders might arrest them"

Peace to you

This is a common greeting that means "May God give you peace" .

John 20:20

he showed them his hands and his side

Jesus showed the disciples his wounds. Alternate translation: "he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side"

John 20:21

Peace to you

This is a common greeting that means "May God give you peace."

Father

This is an important title for God.

John 20:23

they are forgiven

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive them"

whoever's sins you keep back

"If you do not forgive another's sins"

they are kept back

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will not forgive them"

John 20:24

Didymus

This is a male name that means "twin." See how this name is translated in [John 11:15]

John 20:25

disciples later said to him

The word "him" refers to Thomas.

Unless I see ... his side, I will not believe

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I will believe only if I see ... his side"

in his hands ... into his side

The word "his" refers to Jesus.

John 20:26

his disciples

The word "his" refers to Jesus.

while the doors were closed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "when they had locked the doors"

Peace to you

This is a common greeting that means "May God give you peace" .

John 20:27

Do not be unbelieving, but believe

Jesus uses the double negative "Do not be unbelieving" to emphasize the words that follow, "but believe." If your language does not allow double negatives or the reader would not understand that Jesus is emphasizing the words that follow, you can leave these words untranslated. Alternate translation: "This is what is most important for you to do: you must believe"

believe

Here "believe" means to trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "put your trust in me"

John 20:29

you have believed

Thomas believes that Jesus is alive because he has seen him. Alternate translation: "you have believed that I am alive"

Blessed are those

This means "God gives great happiness to those."

who have not seen

This means those who have not seen Jesus. Alternate translation: "who have not seen me alive"

John 20:30

General Information:

As the story is nearing the end, the author comments about the many things Jesus did.

signs

The word "signs" refers to miracles that show that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.

signs that have not been written in this book

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "signs that the author did not write about in this book"

John 20:31

but these have been written

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but the author wrote about these signs"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

life in his name

Here "life" is a metonym that means Jesus gives life. Alternate translation: "you may have life because of Jesus"

life

This refers to spiritual life.

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21 [1]After these things Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. This is how he revealed himself: [2]Simon Peter was together with Thomas called Didymus, Nathaniel from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples of Jesus.[3]Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We, too, will come with you." They went and got into a boat, but they caught nothing during the whole night.

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[4]Now, when it was already early in the morning, Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples did not know it was Jesus.[5]So Jesus said to them, "Young men, do you have anything to eat?"They answered him, "No."

[6]He said to them, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw their net and were not able to draw it in because of the large number of fish.

[7]Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he tied up his outer garment (for he was undressed), and threw himself into the sea.[8]The other disciples came in the boat (for they were not far from the land, about two hundred cubits off), and they were pulling the net full of fish.[9]When they got out upon the land, they saw a charcoal fire there and fish laid on it, with bread.

[10]Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."[11]Simon Peter then went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, 153 of them, but even with so many, the net was not torn.
[12]Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord.[13]Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and the fish also.[14]This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to the disciples after he had risen from the dead.

[15]After they ate breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"Peter said to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you."
Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."

[16]He said to him again a second time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"Peter said to him, "Yes Lord, you know that I love you."
Jesus said to him, "Shepherd my sheep."

[17]He said to him a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"Peter was sorrowful because Jesus had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" He said to him, "Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you."
Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.
[18]Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you become old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you and carry you where you will not want to go."

[19]Now Jesus said this in order to indicate with what kind of death Peter would glorify God. After he had said this, he said to Peter, "Follow me."

[20]Peter turned around and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who had also leaned back against the side of Jesus at the dinner and who had said, "Lord, who is the one who will betray you?"[21]Peter saw him and then said to Jesus, "Lord, what will this man do?"

[22]Jesus said to him, "If I want him to stay until I come, what is that to you? Follow me."
[23]So this statement spread among the brothers, that that disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to Peter that the other disciple would not die, but, "If I want him to stay until I come, what is that to you?"

[24]This is the disciple who testifies about these things, and who wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.
[25]There are also many other things that Jesus did. If each one were written down, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

John 21 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The metaphor of sheep
Before Jesus died, he spoke of himself taking care of his people as if he were a good shepherd taking care of sheep

Links:

John 21:1 Notes

John 21:1
General Information:
Jesus shows himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Verses 2 and 3 tell us what happens in the story before Jesus appears.
After these things

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"Some time later"
John 21:2
with Thomas called Didymus
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "with Thomas whom we called Didymus"
Didymus
This is a male name that means "twin." See how this name is translated in [John 11:15]
John 21:5
Young men
This is a term of endearment that means "My dear friends."
John 21:6
you will find some
Here "some" refers to fish. Alternate translation: "you will catch some fish in your net"
draw it in
"pull the net in"
John 21:7
loved
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.
he tied up his outer garment
"he secured his outer garment around him" or "he put on his tunic"
for he was undressed
This is background information. Peter had taken off some of his clothes to make it easier to work, but now that he was about to greet the Lord, he wanted to wear more clothing. Alternate translation: "for he had taken off some of his clothes"
threw himself into the sea
Peter jumped into the water and swam to shore. Alternate translation: "jumped into the sea and swam to shore"
threw himself
This is a idiom that means Peter jumped into the water very quickly.
John 21:8
for they were not far from the land, about two hundred cubits off
This is background information.
two hundred cubits
"90 meters." A cubit was a little less than half a meter.
John 21:11
Simon Peter then went up
Here "went up" means Simon Peter had to go back to the boat. Alternate translation: "So Simon Peter went back to the boat"
drew the net to land
"pulled the net to the shore"
the net was not torn
You can translate this as an active form. Alternate translation: "the net did not break"
full of large fish, 153
"full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three." There were 153 large fish.
John 21:12
breakfast
the morning meal
John 21:14
the third time
You can translate this ordinal term as "time number 3."
John 21:15
General Information:
Jesus begins to have a conversation with Simon Peter.
do you love me
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.
you know that I love you
When Peter answers, he uses the word for "love" that refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.
Feed my lambs
Here "lambs" is a metaphor for those persons who love Jesus and follow him. Alternate translation: "Feed the people I care for"
John 21:16
do you love me
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.
Shepherd my sheep
"Take care of my sheep." Here "sheep" is a metaphor for those who love and follow Jesus. Alternate translation: "Care for the people I care for"
John 21:17
He said to him a third time
The pronoun "he" refers to Jesus. Here "a third time" means "time number 3." Alternate translation: "Jesus said to him a third time"
do you love me
This time when Jesus asks this question he uses the word for "love" that refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member.
Feed my sheep
Here "sheep" is a metaphor that represents those who belong to Jesus and follow him. Alternate translation: "Care for the people I care for"
John 21:18
Truly, truly
See how you translated this in John 1:51.
you used to gird yourself ... someone else will gird you
Here girding is a metonym for dressing and being ready for action. Alternate translation: "you used to dress yourself ... someone else will dress you"
John 21:19
Now
John uses this word to show he is giving background information before he continues the story.
to indicate with what kind of death Peter would glorify God
Here John implies that Peter would die on a cross. Alternate translation: "to indicate that Peter would die on a cross to honor God"
Follow me
Here the word "follow" means "to be a disciple." Alternate translation: "Keep on being my disciple"
John 21:20
the disciple whom Jesus loved

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John refers to himself in this way throughout the book, rather than mentioning his name.

loved

This is the kind of love that comes from God and always desires the good of others, even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do.

at the dinner

This is a reference to the Last Supper (John 13).

John 21:21

Peter saw him

Here "him" refers to "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

Lord, what will this man do?

Peter wants to know what will happen to John. Alternate translation: "Lord, what will happen to this man?"

John 21:22

Jesus said to him

"Jesus said to Peter"

If I want him to stay

Here "him" refers to the "disciple whom Jesus loved" in John 21:20.

I come

This refers to Jesus's second coming, his return to earth from heaven.

what is that to you?

This remark appears in the form of a question to express a mild rebuke. Alternate translation: "that is not your concern." or "you should not be concerned about that."

John 21:23

among the brothers

Here "the brothers" refers to all the followers of Jesus.

John 21:24

General Information:

This is the end of the Gospel of John. Here the author, the Apostle John, gives a closing comment about himself and what he has written in this book.

the disciple

"the disciple John"

who testifies about these things

Here "testifies" means that he personally sees something. Alternate translation: "who has seen all these things"

we know

Here "we" refers to those who trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "we who trust in Jesus know"

John 21:25

If each one were written down

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "If someone wrote down all of them"

even the world itself could not contain the books

John exaggerates to emphasize that Jesus did many more miracles than what people could write about in many books.

the books that would be written

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the books that people could write about what he did"

Introduction to Acts

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Acts

The beginning of the church and its mission (1:1–2:41) The early church in Jerusalem (2:42–6:7) Increasing opposition and the martyrdom of Steven (6:8–7:60) The persecution of the church and Philip's ministry (8:1–40) Paul becomes an apostle (9:1–31) The ministry of Peter and the first Gentile converts (9:32–12:24) The ministry of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles (12:25–14:28) The debate about the Jewish law and the council of church leaders at Jerusalem (15:1-35) The ministry of Paul and Silas to the Gentiles (15:36–16:5) The expansion of the church into the middle Mediterranean area and Asia Minor (16:6–19:20) Paul travels to Jerusalem and becomes a prisoner in Rome (19:21–28:31)

What is the Book of Acts about?

The Book of Acts tells the story of the early church as more and more people became believers. It shows the power of the the Holy Spirit helping the early Christians. The events in this book began when Jesus went back to heaven and ended about thirty years later.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "The Acts of the Apostles." Or translators may choose a title that may be clearer, for example, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles."

Who wrote the Book of Acts?

This book does not give the name of the author. However, it is addressed to Theophilus, the same person to whom the Gospel of Luke is addressed. Also, in parts of the book, the author uses the word "we." This indicates that the author traveled with Paul. Most scholars think that Luke was this person traveling with Paul. Therefore, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought Luke is the author of the Book of Acts as well as the Gospel of Luke.

Luke was a medical doctor. His way of writing shows that he was an educated man. He was probably a Gentile. He saw many of the events described in the Book of Acts.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the Church?

The Church is the group of people who believe in Christ. The Church includes both Jewish and Gentile believers. The events in this book show God helping the Church. He empowered believers to live righteous lives through his Holy Spirit.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Acts?

These are the most significant textual issues in Acts:
The following verses are found in older versions of the Bible, but they are not in the best ancient copies of the Bible. Some modern versions put the verses in square brackets ([]). The ULB puts them in footnotes.

"Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized.' The Ethiopian answered, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God'" (Acts 8:37). "But it seemed good to Silas to remain there." (Acts 15:34) "And we wanted to judge him according to our law. But Lysias, the officer, came and forcibly took him out of our hands, sending him to you." (Acts 24:6b-8a) "When he had said these things, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves." (Acts 28:29)
In the following verses, it is uncertain what the original text said. Translators will need to choose which reading to translate. The ULB has the first readings but includes the second readings in footnotes.

"They returned from Jerusalem" (Acts 12:25). Some translations read, "They returned to Jerusalem (or to there)." "he put up with them" (Acts 13:18). Some translations read, "he cared for them." "This is what the Lord says, who has done these things that have been known from ancient times." (Acts 15:17-18). Some older translations read, "This is what the Lord says, to whom are known all his deeds from ancient times."

Acts

1 [1]The former account I wrote, Theophilus, told all that Jesus began to do and to teach,[2]until the day that he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.[3]After his suffering, he presented himself alive to them with many convincing proofs. For forty days he appeared to them, and he spoke about the kingdom of God.
[4]When he was meeting together with them, he commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, about which he said, "You heard from me[5]that John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit in a few days."

[6]When they were assembled together they asked him, "Lord, is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"[7]He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has determined by his own authority.
[8]But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
[9]When the Lord Jesus had said these things, as they were looking up, he was raised up, and a cloud hid him from their eyes.[10]While they were looking intensely to heaven as he went, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing.[11]They said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return in the same manner as you saw him going into heaven."

[12]Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mountain that is called Olives, which is near to Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.[13]When they arrived, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying. They were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.
[14]They all were devoted with one purpose to prayer, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

[15]In those days Peter stood up in the midst of the brothers, about 120 names, and said,[16]"Brothers, it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled, that the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who guided the ones who arrested Jesus.
[17]For he was one of us and received a share of this ministry."[18](Now this man bought a field with the earnings he received for his wickedness, and there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines poured out.[19]All those living in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language "Akeldama," that is, "Field of Blood.")
[20]"For it is written in the Book of Psalms,
'Let his field be made desolate,
and do not let even one person live there';
'Let someone else take his position of leadership.'

[21]It is necessary, therefore, that one of the men who accompanied us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
[22]beginning from the baptism of John to the day that he was taken up from us, become a witness with us of his resurrection."[23]They put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias.

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[24]They prayed and said, "You, Lord, know the hearts of all people, so reveal which of these two is the one whom you have chosen[25]to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned away to go to his own place."[26]They cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Acts 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter records an event, commonly known as the "Ascension," when Jesus returned to heaven after he became alive again. He will not come back until he returns at his "second coming." (See: heaven and resurrection)
The UDB has set the words "Dear Theophilus" apart from the other words. This is because English speakers often start letters this way. You might want to start this book the way people start letters in your culture.
Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the two quotes from Psalms in 1:20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Baptize
The word "baptize" has two meanings in this chapter. It refers to the water baptism of John and to the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). (See: baptize)
"He spoke about the kingdom of God"
Some scholars believe that when Jesus "spoke about the kingdom of God," he explained to the disciples why the kingdom of God did not come before he died. Others believe that the kingdom of God did begin while Jesus was alive and that here Jesus was explaining that it was beginning in a new form.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The twelve disciples
The following are the lists of the twelve disciples:
In Matthew:
Simon (Peter), Andrew, James son of Zebedee, John son of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.
In Mark:
Simon (Peter), Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and John the son of Zebedee (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder), Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.
In Luke:
Simon (Peter), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon (who was called the Zealot), Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot.
Thaddaeus is probably the same person as Jude, the son of James.
Akeldama
This is a phrase in Hebrew or Aramaic. Luke used Greek letters so his readers would know how it sounded, and then he told what it means. You should probably spell it the way it sounds in your language and then explain the meaning.

Links:

Acts 1:1 Notes Acts intro

Acts 1:1
The former account I wrote
The "former account" is the Gospel of Luke.
Theophilus
Luke wrote this book to a man named Theophilus. Some translations follow their own culture's way of addressing a letter and write "Dear Theophilus" at the beginning of the sentence. Theophilus means "friend of God"
Acts 1:2
until the day that he was taken up
This refers to Jesus's ascension into heaven. Alternate translation: "until the day on which God took him up to heaven" or "until the day that he ascended into heaven"
he had given commands through the Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit had led Jesus to instruct his apostles on certain things.
Acts 1:3
After his suffering
This refers to Jesus's suffering and death on the cross.
he presented himself alive to them
Jesus appeared to his apostles and to many other disciples.
Acts 1:4
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to Jesus. Except where otherwise noted, the word "you" in the book of Acts is plural.
Connecting Statement:
This event happened during the 40 days that Jesus appeared to his followers after he had risen from the dead.
When he was meeting together with them
"When Jesus was meeting together with his apostles"

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the promise of the Father, about which he said
This is a reference to the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father promised to send, about whom Jesus said"
Acts 1:5
John indeed baptized with water ... baptized with the Holy Spirit
Jesus contrasts how John baptized people in water with how God would baptize believers in the Holy Spirit.
John indeed baptized with water
"John indeed baptized people with water"
you will be baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will baptize you"
Acts 1:6
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the apostles.
is this the time you will restore the kingdom to Israel
"will you now make Israel a great kingdom again"
Acts 1:7
the times or the seasons
Possible meanings are 1) the words "times" and "seasons" refer to different kinds of time. Alternate translation: "the general period of time or the specific date" or 2) the two words are basically synonymous. Alternate translation: "the exact time"
Acts 1:8
you will receive power ... and you will be my witnesses
The apostles will receive power that will enable them to be witnesses for Jesus. Alternate translation: "God will empower you ... to be my witnesses"
to the ends of the earth
Possible meanings are 1) "all over the world" or 2) "to the places on earth that are farthest away"
Acts 1:9
as they were looking up
"as they watched." The apostles "were looking" at Jesus because Jesus rose into the sky. Alternate translation: "as they were looking up at the sky"
he was raised up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he rose up into the sky" or "God raised him up into the sky"
a cloud hid him from their eyes
"a cloud blocked their view so that they could no longer see him"
Acts 1:10
looking intensely to heaven
"staring at the sky" or "gazing at the sky"
Acts 1:11
of Galilee
"from Galilee"
will return in the same manner
Jesus ascended into the sky, through the clouds, and the clouds hid him Acts 1:9. He will return from the sky, through (or on) the clouds, and people will be able to see him.
Acts 1:12
Then they returned
"The apostles returned"
a Sabbath day's journey
This refers to the distance which, according to Rabbinical tradition, a person was allowed to walk on a Sabbath day. Alternate translation: "about one kilometer away"
Acts 1:13
When they arrived
"When they reached their destination." Verse 12 says they were returning to Jerusalem.
the upper chamber
"the room on the upper level of the house"
Acts 1:14
They all were devoted ... to prayer
They all spent much time ... praying
with one purpose
The phrase "with one purpose" translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
Acts 1:15
Connecting Statement:
This event happened during the time that Peter and the other believers were staying together in the upper room.
In those days
These words mark the beginning of a new part of the story. They refer to the period of time after Jesus ascended. On many days after Jesus ascended, the disciples met in the upper chamber. Alternate translation: "During that time"
120 names
"one hundred and twenty names"
names
The word "names" is a metonym for the people whose names they were. Alternate translation: "people"
in the midst of the brothers
Here the word "brothers" refers to fellow believers and includes both men and women.
Acts 1:16
it was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that we read about in scripture had to take place"
by the mouth of David
The word "mouth" refers to the words that David wrote. Alternate translation: "through the words of David"
Acts 1:17
General Information:
Although Peter is addressing the entire group of people, here the word "us" refers only to the apostles.
Connecting Statement:
In verse 17 Peter continues his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.
Acts 1:18
General Information:
The author begins to tell the reader background information about how Judas died and what people called the field where he died. This is not part of Peter's speech.
Now this man
The words "this man" refers to Judas Iscariot.
the earnings he received for his wickedness
"the money that he earned from the evil thing that he did." The words "his wickedness" refer to Judas Iscariot's betraying Jesus to the people who killed him.
there he fell headfirst, and his body burst open, and all his intestines

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poured out

This suggests that Judas fell from a high place, rather than just falling down. The fall was severe enough to cause his body to burst open. Other passages of scripture mention that he hanged himself.

Acts 1:19

General Information:

The author finishes telling the reader background information about how Judas died and what people called the field where he died. This is not part of Peter's speech.

Field of Blood

When the people living in Jerusalem heard of the way in which Judas died, they renamed the field.

Acts 1:20

General Information:

Based on the situation with Judas that Peter just recounted, he recalls two Psalms of David that relate to the incident. The quote ends at the end of this verse.

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.

For it is written in the Book of Psalms

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For David wrote in the Book of Psalms"

Let his field be made desolate, and do not let even one person live there

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words.

Let his field be made desolate

Possible meanings are 1) that the word "field" refers to the field where Judas died or 2) that the word "field" refers to Judas's dwelling place and is a metaphor for his family line.

be made desolate

"become empty"

Acts 1:21

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the apostles and does not include the audience to whom Peter is speaking.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech to the believers that he began in Acts 1:16.

It is necessary, therefore

Based on the scriptures that he quoted and on what Judas had done, Peter tells the group what they must do.

the Lord Jesus went in and out among us

Going in and out among a group of people is a metaphor for openly being part of that group. Alternate translation: "the Lord Jesus lived among us"

Acts 1:22

beginning from the baptism of John ... become a witness with us of his resurrection

The qualification for the new apostle that began with the words "It is necessary ... that one of the men who accompanied us" in verse 21 ends here. The subject of the verb "become" is thus "one of the men." Here is a reduced form of the sentence: "It is necessary ... that one of the men who accompanied us ... beginning from the baptism of John ... must become a witness with us."

beginning from the baptism of John

The noun "baptism" can be translated as a verb. Possible meanings: 1) "beginning from when John baptized Jesus" or 2) "beginning from when John baptized people"

to the day that he was taken up from us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until the day when Jesus left us and rose up to heaven" or "until the day that God took him up from us"

become a witness with us of his resurrection

"must begin to testify with us about his resurrection"

Acts 1:23

They put forward two men

Here the word "They" refers to all of the believers who were present. Alternate translation: "They proposed two men who fulfilled the requirements that Peter listed"

Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus

This can be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "Joseph, whom people also called Barsabbas and Justus"

Acts 1:24

They prayed and said

Here the word "They" refers to all of the believers, but it was probably one of the apostles who spoke these words. Alternate translation: "The believers prayed together and one of the apostles said"

You, Lord, know the hearts of all people

Here the word "hearts" refers to the thoughts and motives. Alternate translation: "You, Lord, know the thoughts and motives of everyone"

Acts 1:25

to take the place in this ministry and apostleship

Here the word "apostleship" defines what kind of "ministry" this is. Alternate translation: "to take Judas's place in this apostolic ministry" or "to take Judas's place in serving as an apostle"

from which Judas turned away

Here the expression "turned away" means that Judas stopped performing this ministry. Alternate translation: "which Judas stopped fulfilling"

to go to his own place

This phrase refers to Judas's death and likely to his judgment after death. Alternate translation: "to go where he belongs"

Acts 1:26

They cast lots for them

The apostles cast lots to decide between Joseph and Matthias.

the lot fell to Matthias

The lot indicated that Matthias was the one to replace Judas.

he was numbered with the eleven apostles

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the believers considered him to be an apostle with the other eleven"

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2 [1]When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in the same place.[2]Suddenly a sound like the rush of a violent wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.[3]There appeared to them tongues like

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fire that were distributed, and they sat upon each one of them.[4]They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them the ability.

[5]Now there were Jews who were living in Jerusalem, godly men, from every nation under heaven.[6]When this sound was heard, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speaking in his own language.[7]They were amazed and marveled; they said, "Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
[8]Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born?[9]Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia,[10]Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and visitors from Rome,[11]Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our languages about the mighty works of God."
[12]They were all amazed and perplexed; they said to one another, "What does this mean?"[13]But others mocked and said, "They are full of new wine."

[14]But Peter stood with the eleven, raised his voice, and declared to them, "Men of Judea and all of you who live at Jerusalem, let this be known to you; pay attention to my words.[15]For these people are not drunk as you assume, for it is only the third hour of the day.
[16]But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:
[17] 'It will be in the last days,' God says,
    'I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.
  Your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
    your young men will see visions,
    and your old men will dream dreams.

[18] Surely on my servants
    and my female servants in those days
  I will pour out my Spirit, and they will prophesy.

[19] I will show wonders in the sky above
  and signs on the earth below,
    blood, fire, and vapor of smoke.

[20] The sun will be turned to darkness
    and the moon to blood
    before the great and remarkable
    day of the Lord comes.

[21] It will be that everyone who calls
    on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

[22]Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited to you by God with the mighty deeds and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.[23]This man was handed over by God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge; and you, by the hand of lawless men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross.[24]But God raised him up, freeing him from the agonies of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it.
[25]For David says about him,
  'I saw the Lord always before my face,
    for he is beside my right hand
    so that I should not be moved.
[26] Therefore my heart was glad
    and my tongue rejoiced.
  Also, my flesh will live in hope.

[27] For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
  neither will you allow
    your Holy One to see decay.

[28] You have made known to me the ways of life;
    you will make me full of gladness with your face.'

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[29]Brothers, it is proper for me to speak to you confidently about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.[30]Therefore, he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of the fruit of his loins on his throne.[31]He saw what was to happen in the future and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay.
[32]This Jesus—God raised him up, of which we all are witnesses.[33]Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out what you see and hear.
[34]For David did not ascend to the heaven, but he says,
'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand
[35] until I make your enemies
the footstool for your feet."'

[36]Therefore, let all the house of Israel certainly know that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

[37]Now when they heard this, they were pierced in their hearts, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what must we do?"
[38]Then Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.[39]For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far off, as many people as the Lord our God will call."
[40]With many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."[41]Then they received his word and were baptized, and there were added in that day about three thousand souls.[42]They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers.

[43]Fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.[44]All who believed were together and had all things in common,[45]and they sold their property and possessions and distributed them to all, according to the needs anyone had.
[46]So day after day they devoted themselves with one purpose in the temple. They also broke bread in homes, and they shared food together with glad and generous hearts,[47]praising God and having favor with all the people, and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 2:17-21, 25-28, and 34-35.
Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 2:31.
The events described in this chapter are commonly called "Pentecost." Many people believe that the church began to exist when the Holy Spirit came to live inside believers at Pentecost.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tongues
The word "tongues" has two meanings in this chapter. Luke describes what came down from heaven (Acts 2:3](../../act/02/03.md)) as tongues that looked like fire. This is different from "a tongue of flame," which is a fire that looks like a tongue. Luke also uses the word "tongues" to describe the languages that the people spoke after the Holy Spirit filled them ([Acts 2:4).
Last days
No one knows for sure when the "last days" (Acts 2:17) began. Your translation should not say more than the ULB does about this. (See: lastday)
Baptize
The word "baptize" in this chapter refers to Christian baptism (Acts 2:38-41). Though the event described in Acts 2:1-11 is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised in Acts 1:5, the word "baptize" here does not refer to that event. (See: baptize)
The prophecy of Joel
Many of the things that Joel said would happen did happen on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18), but some things Joel

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spoke of have not happened yet (Acts 2:19-20). (See: prophet)
Wonders and signs
These words refer to things that only God could do, things that showed that Jesus was who the disciples said he was.

Links:

Acts 2:1 Notes

Acts 2:1
General Information:
This is a new event; it is now the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Passover. Here the word "they" refers to the apostles and the other 120 believers that Luke mentions in Acts 1:15.
Acts 2:2
Suddenly
This word explains that no one expected to hear the sound or to have it fill the house.
a sound like the rush of a violent wind came from heaven
Possible meanings are 1) "heaven" refers to the place where God lives. Alternate translation: "a sound came from heaven" or 2) "heaven" refers to the sky. Alternate translation: "a sound came from the sky"
the whole house
This may have been a house or a larger building.
Acts 2:3
There appeared to them tongues like fire
These might have been something that looked like tongues or like fire, not actual tongues or fire. Possible meanings are 1) tongues that looked like they were made of fire or 2) small flames of fire that looked like tongues. When fire burns in a small space, such as on a lamp, the flame can be shaped like a tongue.
that were distributed, and they sat upon each one of them
This means that the "tongues like fire" spread out so that there was one on each person.
Acts 2:4
They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit filled all of those who were there and they"
speak in other tongues
They were speaking in languages that they did not already know.
as the Spirit gave them the ability
The Holy Spirit gave them the ability to speak; they were dependent on the Spirit to speak in different languages.
Acts 2:5
General Information:
Here the word "them" refers to the believers; the word "his" refers to each person in the multitude. Verse 5 gives background information about the large number of Jews who were living in Jerusalem, many of whom were present during this event.
godly men
Here "godly men" refers to people who were devout in their worship of God and tried to obey all of the Jewish laws.
every nation under heaven
"every nation in the world." The word "every" is an exaggeration that emphasizes that the people came from many different nations. Alternate translation: "many different nations"
Acts 2:6
When this sound was heard
This refers to the sound that was similar to a strong wind. Alternate translation: "When they heard this sound"
the multitude
"the large crowd of people"
Acts 2:7
They were amazed and marveled
These two words share similar meanings. Together they emphasize the intensity of amazement. Alternate translation: "They were greatly amazed"
Really, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
The people ask this question to express their amazement. The question could be changed to an exclamation. Alternate translation: "All of these Galileans could not possibly know our languages!"
Acts 2:8
Why is it that we are hearing them, each in our own language in which we were born?
Possible meanings are 1) this is a rhetorical question that expresses how amazed they were or 2) this is a real question for which the people wanted an answer.
in our own language in which we were born
"in our own languages that we have learned from birth"
Acts 2:9
Parthians ... Medes ... Elamites
These are names of people groups.
Mesopotamia ... Judea ... Cappadocia ... Pontus ... Asia
These are names of large areas of land.
Acts 2:10
Phrygia ... Pamphylia ... Egypt ... Libya ... Cyrene
These are names of large areas of land.
Acts 2:11
Cretans ... Arabians
These are names of people groups.
proselytes
converts to the Jewish religion
Acts 2:12
amazed and perplexed
These two words share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that the people could not understand what was happening. Alternate translation: "surprised and confused"
Acts 2:13
They are full of new wine
Some people accuse the believers of having drunk too much wine. Alternate translation: "They are drunk"
new wine
This refers to wine that is in the process of fermentation.
Acts 2:14
Connecting Statement:
Peter begins his speech to the Jews who were there on the Day of Pentecost.

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stood with the eleven
All the apostles stood up in support of Peter's statement.
raised his voice
This is an idiom for "spoke loudly."
declared to them
Made a formal, important speech to them. See how you translated "make declarations" in Acts 2:4.
let this be known to you
This means that Peter is about to explain the meaning of what the people had witnessed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "know this" or "let me explain this to you"
pay attention to my words
Peter was referring to what he was saying. Alternate translation: "listen carefully to what I am saying"
Acts 2:15
it is only the third hour of the day
"It is only nine o'clock in the morning." Peter expected his audience to know that people do not get drunk that early in the day.
Acts 2:16
General Information:
Here Peter tells them a passage about which the prophet Joel wrote in the Old Testament that relates to what is happening with the languages in which the believers spoke. This is written in the form of poetry as well as being a quotation.
this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "this is what God told the prophet Joel to write" or "this is that which the prophet Joel spoke"
Acts 2:17
It will be
"This is what will happen" or "This is what I will do"
I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh
Here the words "pour out" mean to give generously and abundantly. Alternate translation: "I will give my Spirit abundantly to all flesh"
all flesh
This is a hyperbolic metonym that refers to all people by speaking of them as all living creatures, who have flesh. Alternate translation: "all people"
Acts 2:18
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues to quote the prophet Joel.
my servants and my female servants
"both my male and my female servants." These words emphasize that God will pour out his Spirit on all of his servants, both men and women.
I will pour out my Spirit
Here the words "pour out" mean to give generously and abundantly. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:17]
Acts 2:19
vapor of smoke
"thick smoke" or "clouds of smoke"
Acts 2:20
Connecting Statement:
Peter finishes quoting the prophet Joel.
The sun will be turned to darkness
This means that the sun will appear to be dark instead of light. Alternate translation: "The sun will become dark"
the moon to blood
This means that the moon will appear to be red like blood. Alternate translation: "the moon will be turned to blood" or "the moon will appear to be red"
the great and remarkable day
The words "great" and "remarkable" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of greatness. Alternate translation: "the very great day"
remarkable
great and beautiful
Acts 2:21
everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord will save everyone who calls on him"
Acts 2:22
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 1:16.
hear these words
"listen to what I am about to say"
accredited to you by God with the mighty deeds and wonders and signs
This means that God proved that he had appointed Jesus for his mission, and proved who he was by his many miracles.
Acts 2:23
by God's predetermined plan and foreknowledge
The nouns "plan" and "foreknowledge" can be translated as verbs. This means that God planned out and knew beforehand what would happen to Jesus. Alternate translation: "because God planned out and knew beforehand everything that would happen"
This man was handed over
Possible meanings: 1) "you handed Jesus over into the hands of his enemies" or 2) "Judas betrayed Jesus to you."
you, by the hand of lawless men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross
Although "lawless men" actually crucified Jesus, Peter accuses the crowd of having killed him because they demanded his death.
by the hand of lawless men
Here "hand" refers to the actions of the lawless men. Alternate translation: "through the actions of lawless men" or "by what lawless men did"
lawless men
Possible meanings are 1) the unbelieving Jews who accused Jesus of crimes or 2) the Roman soldiers who performed the execution of Jesus.
Acts 2:24
But God raised him up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "But God caused him to live again"
freeing him from the agonies of death
He speaks of the agonies of dying as if God were freeing Christ from ropes that were binding Jesus. Alternate translation: "ending the pains of death"
for him to be held by it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for

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death to hold him"

for him to be held by it

Peter speaks of Christ remaining dead as if death were a person who held him captive. Alternate translation: "for him to remain dead"

Acts 2:25

General Information:

Here Peter quotes a passage that David wrote in a Psalm which relates to Jesus's crucifixion and resurrection. Since Peter says that David said these words about Jesus, the words "I" and "my" refer to Jesus and the words "Lord" and "he" refer to God.

For David says about him, 'I saw

The context makes it plain that this is an elliptical way of saying that David was speaking as if David were the Messiah. Alternate translation: "For David spoke these words as if he were the Christ: 'I saw"

before my face

"in front of me." Alternate translation: "in my presence" or "with me"

beside my right hand

To be at someone's "right hand" often means to be in a position to help and sustain. Alternate translation: "right beside me" or "with me to help me"

I should not be moved

Here the word "moved" means to be troubled. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will not be able to cause me trouble" or "nothing will trouble me"

Acts 2:26

my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced

People consider the "heart" the center of emotions and the "tongue" voices those emotions. Alternate translation: "I was glad and rejoiced"

my flesh will live in hope

Possible meanings of the phrase "my flesh" are 1) it indicates that the writer is a mortal who will die. Alternate translation: "even though I am only mortal, I will live in hope" or 2) it is a synecdoche for the writer's entire person. Alternate translation: "I will live in hope"

will live in hope

Here the word "hope" refers to a person's confidence that what he desires will happen. Since the speaker hoped that God would rescue him, "in hope" could be translated as "in confidence in God." The phrase "live in hope" can also be translated with the phrases "confidently expect," "confidently wait," or "trust." Alternate translation: "will live with confidence in God" or "will confidently wait for God to rescue me"

Acts 2:27

General Information:

Since Peter says that David said these words about Jesus, the words "my," "Holy One," and "me" refer to Jesus and the words "you" and "your" refer to God.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes quoting David.

neither will you allow your Holy One to see decay

The Messiah, Jesus, refers to himself with the words "your Holy One." Alternate translation: "neither will you allow me, your Holy One, to see decay"

to see decay

Here the word "see" means to experience something. The word "decay" refers to the decomposition of his body after death. Alternate translation: "to decay"

Acts 2:28

the ways of life

"the ways that lead to life"

full of gladness with your face

Here the word "face" refers to the presence of God. Alternate translation: "very glad when I see you" or "very glad when I am in your presence"

gladness

joy, happiness

Acts 2:29

General Information:

The words "he" and "his" refer to David.

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues the speech to the Jews that surround him and the other believers in Jerusalem, which he began in Acts 1:16.

Brothers, it

"My fellow Jews, it"

it is proper for me to speak

Or "it is possible." He is able to speak because it is proper for him to do so.

he both died and was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he died and people buried him"

Acts 2:30

he would set one of the fruit of his loins on his throne

"God would set one of David's fruit upon David's throne." Alternate translation: "God would appoint one of David's fruit to be king in David's place"

one of the fruit of his loins

This is a metaphor for a child or other descendant. Alternate translation: "one of his children" or "one of his descendants"

Acts 2:31

he was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see decay

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Neither did God abandon him to Hades nor did his flesh see decay" or "God did not abandon him to Hades, and his flesh did not see decay"

did his flesh see decay

Here the word "see" means to experience something. The word "decay" refers to the decomposition of his body after death. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:27]

Acts 2:32

This Jesus—God raised him up

Peter talks again about Jesus. Alternate Translation: "It is this Jesus whom God raised up" or "God raised up this Jesus"

God raised him up

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "God caused him to live again"

Acts 2:33

having been exalted to the right hand of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because God has exalted Jesus up to his right hand"

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having been exalted to the right hand of God
"Right hand of God" here is an idiom that means that Christ will rule as God, with God's authority. Alternate translation: "Christ is in the position of God"
he has poured out what
Here the words "poured out" mean that Jesus, who is God, made these events to happen. It is implicit that he did this by giving the Holy Spirit to the believers. Alternate translation: "he has caused to happen these things that"
has poured out
"has given generously and abundantly." See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 2:17. Alternate translation: "given abundantly"
Acts 2:34
General Information:
Peter again quotes one of David's Psalms. David is not speaking of himself in this Psalm. "The Lord" and "my" refer to God; "my Lord" and "your" refer to Jesus the Messiah.
Connecting Statement:
Peter finishes his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 1:16.
Sit at my right hand
To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"
Acts 2:35
until I make your enemies the footstool for your feet
This means that God will completely defeat the Messiah's enemies and make them subject to him. Alternate translation: "until I make you victorious over all of your enemies"
Acts 2:36
all the house of Israel
This refers to the entire nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "every Israelite"
Acts 2:37
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the people in the crowd to whom Peter spoke.
Connecting Statement:
The Jews respond to Peter's speech and Peter answers them.
when they heard this
"when the people heard what Peter had said"
they were pierced in their hearts, and said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said"
pierced in their hearts
This means that the people felt guilty and became very sad. Alternate translation: "deeply troubled"
Acts 2:38
be baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "allow us to baptize you"
in the name of Jesus Christ
"In the name of" here is a metonym for "by the authority of" Alternate translation: "by the authority of Jesus Christ"
Acts 2:39
all who are far off
This means either 1) "all people who live far away" or 2) "all people who are far from God."
Acts 2:40
he testified and exhorted them
"he seriously told them." Here the word "testified" and "begged" share similar meanings and emphasize that Peter urged them strongly to respond to what he was saying. Alternate translation: "he strongly urged them"
exhorted
or "pleaded with"
Be saved from this perverse generation
The implication is that God will punish "this perverse generation." Alternate translation: "Be saved from the punishment that these wicked people will suffer"
Be saved
Possible meanings are 1) Peter was urging people to let God save them. Alternate translation: "Let God save you," or 2) Peter was simply urging them in a general way to avoid being punished. Alternate translation: "Save yourselves" or "Flee" or "Escape"
Acts 2:41
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story that happened on the Day of Pentecost.
they received his word
Here the word "received" means that they accepted what Peter said to be true. Alternate translation: "they believed what Peter said"
were baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people baptized them"
there were added in that day about three thousand souls
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about three thousand souls joined the believers on that day"
about three thousand souls
Here the word "souls" refers to people. Alternate translation: "about 3,000 people"
Acts 2:42
Connecting Statement:
This section explains how the believers continued to live after the Day of Pentecost.
the breaking of bread
Bread was part of their meals. These words could refer to 1) any meals they might eat together. Alternate translation: "eating meals together" or 2) meals they would eat together in order to remember Christ's death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "eating the Lord's Supper together"
Acts 2:43
Fear came upon every soul
Here the word "Fear" refers to deep respect and awe for God. The word "soul" refers to the entire person. Alternate translation: "Each person felt a deep respect and awe for God"
many wonders and signs were done through the apostles
Possible meanings are 1) "the apostles performed many wonders and signs" or 2) "God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles"

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wonders and signs
"miraculous deeds and supernatural events." See how you translated this in Acts 2:22.
Acts 2:44
All who believed were together
Possible meanings are 1) "All of them believed the same thing" or 2) "All who believed were together in the same place."
had all things in common
"shared their belongings with one another"
Acts 2:45
property and possessions
"land and things they owned"
distributed them to all
Here the word "them" refers to the profit that they made from selling their property and possessions. Alternate translation: "distributed the proceeds to all"
according to the needs anyone had
They distributed the proceeds that they earned from selling their property and possessions to any believer who had a need.
Acts 2:46
they devoted themselves with one purpose in the temple
You may need to supply the words that have been omitted in this ellipse. What they devoted themselves to doing is stated in verse 42. Alternate translation: "they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching with one purpose in the temple"
with one purpose
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
They also broke bread in homes
Bread was part of their meals. Alternate translation: "They also ate meals together in their homes"
Acts 2:47
praising God and having favor with all the people
"praising God. All the people approved of them"
those who were being saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the Lord saved"

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3 [1]Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.[2]Now a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful. They would place him there every day so he could ask those who were going into the temple for alms.[3]When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked them for alms.
[4]Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, "Look at us."[5]The lame man looked at them, expecting to receive something from them.[6]But Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have, I will give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."
[7]Taking him by the right hand, Peter raised him up, and immediately the man's feet and ankles were made strong.
[8]Leaping up, the lame man stood and began to walk; and he entered with Peter and John into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God.
[9]All the people saw him walking and praising God.[10]They noticed that it was the man who had been asking people for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement because of what had happened to him.

[11]As he was holding on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly marveling.[12]When Peter saw this, he answered the people, "You Israelite men, why do you marvel? Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness?
[13]The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. He is the one whom you handed over and rejected before the face of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.[14]You rejected the Holy and Righteous One, and you asked instead for a murderer to be given to you.
[15]You killed the Founder of life, whom God raised from the dead—and we are witnesses of this.[16]On the basis of faith in his name, his name made this man, whom you see and know, strong. The faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.
[17]Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.[18]But the things which God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he has now fulfilled.
[19]Repent, therefore, and turn, so that your sins may be blotted out,[20]so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who has been appointed for you, Jesus.
[21]He is the One heaven must receive until the time of the restoration of all things, about which God spoke from ancient times by the mouth of his holy prophets.[22]Moses indeed said, 'The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers. You must listen to everything he tells you.[23]It will happen that every person who does not listen to that prophet will be completely destroyed from among the people.'
[24]Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those who came after him, they spoke out and announced these days.[25]You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors, as he said to Abraham, 'In your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.'[26]After God raised up his servant, he sent him to you first, in order to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

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Acts 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The covenant God made with Abraham

This chapter explains that Jesus came to the Jews because God was fulfilling part of the covenant he had made with Abraham. Peter thought that the Jews were the ones who were truly guilty of killing Jesus, but he wanted them to understand that Jesus, by living and dying, had fulfilled God's promise to Abraham and that if they repented, God would forgive them.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You delivered up"

The Romans were the ones who killed Jesus, but they killed him because the Jews captured him, brought him to the Romans, and told the Romans to kill him. For this reason Peter thought that they were the ones who were truly guilty of killing Jesus. But he tells them that they are also the first ones to whom God has sent Jesus's followers to invite them to repent (Acts 3:26). (See: repent)

Links:

Acts 3:1 Notes

Acts 3:1

Connecting Statement:

One day Peter and John go to the temple.

into the temple

They did not go into the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "to the temple courtyard" or "into the temple area"

Acts 3:2

a man who was lame from his mother's womb was being carried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people were carrying a man who was lame from from his mother's womb"

from his mother's womb

"ever since he was born"

the temple gate called Beautiful

This was one of the gates in the high, strong wall that surrounded the temple. People sometimes gathered near the gate.

lame

unable to walk

Acts 3:4

Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said

Both Peter and John looked at the man, but only Peter spoke.

fastening his eyes upon him

Possible meanings are 1) "looking directly at him" or 2) "looking intently at him"

Acts 3:5

The lame man looked at them

Here the word "looked" means to pay attention to something. Alternate translation: "The lame man paid close attention to them"

Acts 3:6

Silver and gold I do not have

"I do not own any silver or gold"

Silver and gold

These words refer to money.

what I do have

It is understood that Peter has the ability to heal the man.

In the name of Jesus Christ

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "With the authority of Jesus Christ"

Acts 3:7

Peter raised him up

"Peter caused him to stand"

Acts 3:8

he entered ... into the temple

He did not go inside the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "he entered ... the temple area" or "he entered ... into the temple courtyard"

Acts 3:10

noticed that it was the man

"realized that it was the man" or "recognized him as the man"

the Beautiful Gate

This was the name of one of the entrances to the temple area. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 3:2.

they were filled with wonder and amazement

Here the words "wonder" and "amazement" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of the people's amazement. Alternate translation: "they were extremely amazed"

Acts 3:11

General Information:

The phrase "in the porch that is called Solomon's" makes it clear that they were not inside the temple where only the priests were allowed to enter. Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Peter and John but not to the crowd to whom Peter is talking.

Connecting Statement:

After healing the man who could not walk, Peter talks to the people.

the porch that is called Solomon's

"Solomon's Porch." This was a covered walkway that consisted of rows of pillars that supported a roof, and which people named after king Solomon. It was in the temple courtyard.

greatly marveling

"extremely surprised"

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Acts 3:12

When Peter saw this

Here the word "this" refers to the amazement of the people.

You Israelite men

"Fellow Israelites." Peter was addressing the crowd.

why do you marvel?

Peter asks this question to emphasize that they should not be surprised by what had happened. Alternate translation: "you should not be surprised."

Why do you fix your eyes on us, as if we made him walk by our own power or godliness?

Peter asks this question to emphasize that the people should not think that he and John had healed the man by their own abilities. This could be written as two statements. Alternate translation: "Do not fix your eyes on us. We did not make him walk by our own power or godliness."

fix your eyes on us

This means that they looked intently at them without stopping. Alternate translation: "stare at us" or "look at us"

Acts 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 3:12.

rejected before the face of Pilate

Here the phrase "before the face of" means "in the presence of." Alternate translation: "rejected in Pilate's presence"

when he had decided to release him

"when Pilate had decided to release Jesus"

Acts 3:14

for a murderer to be given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for Pilate to release a murderer to you"

Acts 3:15

General Information:

Here the word "we" includes just Peter and John.

the Founder of life

This refers to Jesus. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who gives people eternal life" or 2) "the ruler of life" or 3) "the one who leads people to life"

Acts 3:16

On the basis of faith in his name

Possible meanings are 1) this is the reason the man was made strong. Alternate translation: "Because of faith in his name" or 2) this is how the man was made strong. Alternate translation: "By faith in his name"

On the basis of faith in his name

The word "his" refers to the Founder of life, Jesus. The abstract noun "faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Possible meanings are 1) the lame man had faith in Jesus. Alternate translation: "Because he believed in Jesus name" or 2) Peter and John, and perhaps the lame man, had faith in Jesus. Alternate translation: "Because we believed in Jesus's name"

his name

The phrase "his name" is a metonym either for Jesus or for Jesus's power.

made this man ... strong

"made this man ... well"

The faith that is through Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) this is the faith that Jesus enables people to have. Alternate translation: "The faith that comes from Jesus" or 2) this is faith in Jesus.

Acts 3:17

Now

Here Peter shifts the audience's attention from the lame man and continues to talk to them directly.

you acted in ignorance

Possible meanings are 1) that the people did not know that Jesus was the Messiah or 2) that the people did not understand the significance of what they were doing.

Acts 3:18

God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets

When the prophets spoke, it was as though God himself was speaking because he told them what to say. Alternate translation: "God foretold by telling all of the prophets what to speak"

God foretold

"God spoke about ahead of time" or "God told about before they happened"

the mouth of all the prophets

Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that the prophets spoke and wrote down. Alternate translation: "the words of all the prophets"

Acts 3:19

and turn

"and turn to the Lord." Here "turn" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "and start obeying the Lord"

so that your sins may be blotted out

Here "blotted out" is a metaphor for forgiving. Sins are spoken of as if they are written in a book and God erases them from the book when he forgives them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God will forgive you for sinning against him"

Acts 3:20

times of refreshing

Possible meanings are 1) "times when God will strengthen your spirits" or 2) "times when God will revive you"

from the presence of the Lord

Here the words "presence of the Lord" is a metonym for the Lord himself. Alternate translation: "from the Lord"

that he may send the Christ

"that he may again send the Christ." This refers to Christ's coming again.

who has been appointed for you

This may be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom he has appointed for you"

Acts 3:21

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues the speech that he began in Acts 3:12 to the Jews who stood in the temple area.

He is the One heaven must receive

"He is the One heaven must welcome." Peter speaks of heaven as if it were a person who welcomes Jesus into his home.

heaven must receive until

This means that it is necessary for Jesus to remain in heaven because that is what God has planned.

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until the time of the restoration of all things
Possible meanings are 1) "until the time when God will restore all things" or 2) "until the time when God will fulfill everything that he foretold."
about which God spoke from ancient times by the mouth of his holy prophets
When the prophets spoke long ago, it was as if God himself was speaking because he told them what to say. Alternate translation: "about which things God spoke long ago by telling his holy prophets to speak about them"
the mouth of his holy prophets
Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that the prophets spoke and wrote down. Alternate translation: "the words of his holy prophets"
Acts 3:22
General Information:
Peter begins to quote something Moses told the Israelites before the Messiah came.
will raise up a prophet like me from among your brothers
"will cause one of your brothers to become a true prophet, and everyone will know about him"
your brothers
"your nation"
Acts 3:23
that prophet will be completely destroyed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that prophet, God will completely destroy"
Acts 3:24
Connecting Statement:
Peter finishes his speech to the Jews that he began in Acts 3:12.
Yes, and all the prophets
"In fact, all the prophets." Here the word "Yes" adds emphasis to what follows.
from Samuel and those who came after him
"beginning with Samuel and continuing with the prophets who lived after he did"
these days
"these times" or "the things that are happening now"
Acts 3:25
You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant
Here the word "sons" refers to heirs who will receive what the prophets and the covenant promised. Alternate translation: "You are the heirs of the prophets and heirs of the covenant"
In your seed
"Because of your offspring"
all the families of the earth will be blessed
Here the word "families" refers to people groups or nations. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will bless all the people groups in the world"
Acts 3:26
After God raised up his servant
"After God caused Jesus to become his servant and made him famous"
his servant
This refers to the Messiah, Jesus.
turning every one of you from your wickedness
Here "turning ... from" is a metaphor for causing someone stop doing something. Alternate translation: "causing every one of you to stop doing wicked things" or "causing every one of you to repent from your wickedness"

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4 [1]As Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them.[2]They were deeply troubled because Peter and John were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.[3]They laid hands on them and put them in custody until the next morning, since it was now evening.[4]But many of the people who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men who believed was about five thousand.

[5]It came about on the next day that their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem.[6]Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and all who were relatives of the high priest.[7]When they had set Peter and John in their midst, they asked them, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?"
[8]Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "You rulers of the people, and elders,[9]if we are on trial today concerning a good deed done to a sick man, and by what means this man was healed,[10]let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that this man stands before you healthy in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead.
[11]Jesus Christ is the stone which you builders rejected but which has been made the cornerstone.[12]There is no salvation in any other person, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

[13]Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men, they were surprised, becoming aware that Peter and John had been with Jesus.[14]Because they saw the man who was healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against this.
[15]But after they had commanded the apostles to leave the council meeting, they talked among themselves.[16]They said, "What should we do with these men? For a remarkable sign has been done through them, and this is evident to everyone who lives in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.[17]But in order that it spreads no further among the people, let us warn them not to speak anymore to anyone in this name."[18]Then they called them in and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.
[19]But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is proper in the sight of God to obey you rather than him, you judge.[20]We are not able to stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."

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[21]After further warning Peter and John, they let them go. They were unable to find any excuse to punish them, because all of the people were glorifying God for what had been done.[22]The man who had experienced this sign of healing was more than forty years old.

[23]After they were set free, Peter and John came to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.[24]When they heard it, they raised their voices with one purpose to God and said, "Lord, you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them.[25]You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David,

'Why did the Gentile nations rage,
and the peoples imagine useless things?'
[26] You said,
'The kings of the earth set themselves together,
and the rulers gathered together
against the Lord, and against his Christ.'

[27]Indeed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed.[28]They gathered together to do all that your hand and your plan had decided in advance would happen.
[29]Now, Lord, look upon their warnings and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness.[30]Stretch out your hand to heal and to give signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."[31]After they had prayed, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

[32]The great number of those who believed were of one heart and soul. No one said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common.[33]With great power the apostles were proclaiming their testimony about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.
[34]There was no person among them who lacked anything, for all who owned title to lands or houses sold them and brought the money from the things that were sold[35]and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each one according to their need.

[36]Joseph, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite, a man from Cyprus,
[37]sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 4:25-26.

Special concepts in this chapter

Unity

The first Christians wanted very much to be united. They wanted to believe the same things and share everything they owned and help those who needed help.

"Signs and wonders"

This phrase refers to things that only God can do. The Christians wanted God to do what only he can do so that people would believe that what they said about Jesus was true.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Cornerstone

The cornerstone was the first piece of stone that people put down when they were building a building. This is a metaphor for the most important part of something, the part on which everything depends. To say that Jesus is the cornerstone of the church is to say that nothing in the church is more important than Jesus and that everything about the church depends on Jesus. (See: and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Name

"There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). With these words Peter was saying that no other person who has ever been on the earth or will ever be on earth can save people.

Links:

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Acts 4:1

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders arrest Peter and John after Peter's having healed the man who was born lame.

came upon them

"approached them" or "came to them"

Acts 4:2

They were deeply troubled

"They were very angry." The Sadducees, in particular, would have been angry about what Peter and John were saying because they did not believe in resurrection.

proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead

Peter and John were saying that God would raise people from the dead in the same way as he had raised Jesus from among the dead. Translate this in a way that allows "the resurrection" to refer to both Jesus's resurrection and the general resurrection of other people.

from the dead

From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

Acts 4:3

They laid hands on them

"The priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees arrested Peter and John"

since it was now evening

It was common practice not to question people at night.

Acts 4:4

the number of the men who believed

This refers only to men and does not include how many women or children believed.

was about five thousand

"grew to about five thousand"

Acts 4:5

General Information:

Here the word "their" refers to the Jewish people as a whole.

Connecting Statement:

The rulers question Peter and John, who answer without fear.

It came about ... that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

their rulers, elders, and scribes

This is a reference to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling court, which consisted of these three groups of people.

Acts 4:6

John, and Alexander

These two men were members of the high priest's family. This is not the same John as the apostle.

Acts 4:7

By what power

"Who gave you power"

in what name

Here the word "name" refers to authority. Alternate translation: "by whose authority"

Acts 4:8

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in [Acts 2:4]

Acts 4:9

we are on trial today

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are questioning us today"

by what means this man was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by what means we have made this man well"

Acts 4:10

let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May all of you and all of the people of Israel know this"

to you all and to all the people of Israel

"to you who are questioning us and to all the other people of Israel"

in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "by the power of Jesus Christ of Nazareth"

whom God raised from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "whom God caused to live again"

Acts 4:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter completes his speech to the Jewish religious rulers that he began in Acts 4:8.

Jesus Christ is the stone ... which has been made the cornerstone

Peter is quoting from the Psalms. This is a metaphor that means the religious leaders, like builders, rejected Jesus, but God will made him the most important in his kingdom, as a cornerstone in a building is important.

you builders rejected

"you builders thought was worth nothing"

Acts 4:12

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Peter as well as those to whom he is speaking.

There is no salvation in any other person

The noun "salvation" can be translated as a verb. This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "He is the only person who is able to save"

no other name under heaven given among men

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no other name under heaven that God has given among men"

no other name ... given among men by which

The phrase "name ... given among men" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "no other person under heaven, who is given among men, by whom"

under heaven

This is a way of referring to everywhere in the world.

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Alternate translation: "in the world"

by which we must be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which can save us" or "who can save us"

Acts 4:13

General Information:

Here the second instance of "they" refers to Peter and John. All other occurrences of the word "they" in this section refer to the Jewish leaders.

the boldness of Peter and John

Here the abstract noun "boldness" refers to the way in which Peter and John responded to the Jewish leaders, and can be translated with an adverb or an adjective. Alternate translation: "how boldly Peter and John had spoken" or "how bold Peter and John were"

boldness

bravery, courage, lack of fear. A person with boldness is not afraid.

realized that they were ordinary, uneducated men

The Jewish leaders "realized" this because of the way Peter and John spoke.

and realized

"and understood"

ordinary, uneducated men

The words "ordinary" and "uneducated" share similar meanings. They emphasize that Peter and John had received no formal training in Jewish law.

Acts 4:14

the man who was healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the man whom Peter and John had healed"

nothing to say against this

"nothing to say against Peter and John's healing of the man." Here the word "this" refers to what Peter and John had done.

Acts 4:15

the apostles

This refers to Peter and John.

Acts 4:16

What should we do with these men?

The Jewish leaders ask this question out of frustration because they could not think of what to do with Peter and John. Alternate translation: "There is nothing that we can do with these men!"

For a remarkable sign has been done through them, and this is evident to everyone who lives in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God has done a remarkable sign through them, and everyone who lives in Jerusalem has seen it" or "For everyone who lives in Jerusalem knows that they have done a remarkable sign"

sign

The miracle of healing was a sign that Peter and John were obeying God, who did the healing.

everyone who lives in Jerusalem

This is a generalization. It may also be an exaggeration to show that the leaders think that this is a very big problem. Alternate translation: "many of the people who live in Jerusalem" or "people who live throughout Jerusalem"

Acts 4:17

in order that it spreads no further

Here the word "it" refers to any miracles or teaching Peter and John might continue to do. Alternate translation: "in order that news of this miracle spreads no further" or "in order that no more people hear about this miracle"

not to speak anymore to anyone in this name

Here the word "name" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "not to speak anymore to anyone about this person, Jesus"

Acts 4:19

Whether it is proper in the sight of God

Here the phrase "in the sight of God" refers to God's opinion. Alternate translation: "Whether God thinks it is right"

Acts 4:20

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Peter and John but not to those whom they are addressing.

Acts 4:21

After further warning

The Jewish leaders again threatened to punish Peter and John.

They were unable to find any excuse to punish them

Although the Jewish leaders threatened Peter and John, they could not find a reason to punish them without causing the people to riot.

for what had been done

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for what Peter and John had done"

Acts 4:22

General Information:

This verse gives background information about the age of the lame man who was healed.

The man who had experienced this sign of healing

"The man whom Peter and John had miraculously healed"

this sign

The miracle of healing was a sign that Peter and John were obeying God, who did the healing.

Acts 4:23

came to their own people

The phrase "their own people" refers to the rest of the believers. Alternate translation: "went to the other believers"

Acts 4:24

General Information:

Speaking together, the people quote a Psalm of David from the Old Testament. Here the word "they" refers to the rest of the believers, but not to Peter and John.

they raised their voices with one purpose to God

To raise the voice is an idiom for speaking. "they began speaking with one purpose to God"

with one purpose

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

Acts 4:25

You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David

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This means that the Holy Spirit caused David to speak or write down what God said.

through the mouth of your servant, our father David

Here the word "mouth" refers to the words that David spoke or wrote down. Alternate translation: "by the words of your servant, our father David"

our father David

Here the word "father" refers to an ancestor.

Why did the Gentile nations rage, and the peoples imagine useless things?

This is a rhetorical question that emphasizes the futility of opposing God. Alternate translation: "The Gentile nations should not have raged, and the peoples should not have imagined useless things."

the peoples imagine useless things

These "useless things" consist of plans to oppose God. Alternate translation: "the peoples imagine useless things against God"

peoples

people groups

Acts 4:26

Connecting Statement:

The believers complete their quotation from King David in the Psalms that they began in Acts 4:25.

The kings of the earth set themselves together, and the rulers gathered together against the Lord

These two lines mean basically the same thing. The two lines emphasize the combined effort of the earth's rulers to oppose God.

set themselves together ... gathered together

These two phrases mean that they joined their armies together to fight a battle. Alternate translation: "set their armies together ... gathered their troops together"

against the Lord, and against his Christ

Here the word "Lord" refers to God. In the Psalms, the word "Christ" refers to the Messiah or God's anointed one.

Acts 4:27

Connecting Statement:

The believers continue praying.

in this city

"this city" refers to Jerusalem.

your holy servant Jesus

"Jesus, who serves you faithfully"

Acts 4:28

to do all that your hand and your plan had decided

Here the word "hand" is used to mean God's power. Additionally, the phrase "your hand and your desire decided" shows God's power and plan. Alternate translation: "to do all that you in your power had decided and planned they would do"

Acts 4:29

look upon their warnings

Here the words "look upon" are a request for God to take notice of the way in which the Jewish leaders threatened the believers. Alternate translation: "notice how they threaten to punish us"

speak your word with all boldness

The word "word" here is a metonym for God's message. The abstract noun "boldness" can be translated as an adverb. Alternate translation: "speak your message boldly" or "be bold when we speak your message"

Acts 4:30

Connecting Statement:

The believers complete the prayer that they began in Acts 4:24.

Stretch out your hand to heal and to give

Here the word "hand" refers to God's power. This is a request for God to show how powerful he is. Alternate translation: "Show your power by healing people and by giving"

through the name of your holy servant Jesus

Here the word "name" refers to power and authority. Alternate translation: "through the power of your holy servant Jesus"

your holy servant Jesus

"Jesus, who serves you faithfully." See how you translated this in Acts 4:27.

Acts 4:31

the place ... was shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place ... shook"

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. See how you translated this in Acts 2:4. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit had filled them all" or "God had filled them all with the Holy Spirit"

Acts 4:32

were of one heart and soul

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and the word "soul" refers to the emotions. Together they refer to the total person. Alternate translation: "thought the same way and wanted the same things"

they had everything in common

"they shared their belongings with one another." See how you translated this in Acts 2:44.

Acts 4:33

great grace was upon them all

Possible meanings are: 1) that God was greatly blessing the believers or 2) that the people in Jerusalem held the believers in very high esteem.

Acts 4:34

all who owned title to lands or houses

The word "all" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Many people who owned title to lands or houses" or "People who owned title to lands or houses"

owned title to lands or houses

"owned land or houses"

the money from the things that were sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the money that they received from the things that they sold"

Acts 4:35

laid it at the apostles' feet

This means that they presented the money to the apostles. Alternate translation: "presented it to the apostles" or "gave it to the apostles"

it was distributed to each one according to their need

The noun "need" can be translated with a verb. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they

distributed the money to each believer who needed it"

Acts 4:36

General Information:

Luke introduces Barnabas into the story.

Son of Encouragement

The apostles used this name to show that Joseph was a person who encouraged others. "Son of" is an idiom used to describe a person's behavior or character. Alternate translation: "Encourager" or "one who encourages"

Acts 4:37

laid it at the apostles' feet

This means that they presented to money to the apostles. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:35]

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5 [1]Now a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property,[2]and he kept back part of the sale
money (his wife also knew it), and brought the other part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet.
[3]But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price of the land?[4]While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own, and after it was sold, was it not under your authority? Why did you put it in your heart to do this? You have not lied to men, but to God."[5]Hearing these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last, and great fear came upon all who heard it.[6]The young men arose and wrapped him up, and they carried him out and buried him.

[7]After about three hours, his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.[8]Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." She said, "Yes, for so much."
[9]Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."[10]She immediately fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in, they found her dead, and carried her out and buried her beside her husband.[11]Great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard these things.

[12]Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles. They were all together in Solomon's Porch.[13]But none of the rest had the courage to join them; however, they were held in high esteem by the people.
[14]Still more believers were being added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women,[15]so that they even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, so that as Peter came by, his shadow might fall on some of them.[16]There also came together a great number of people from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

[17]But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees); and they were filled with jealousy[18]and laid hands on the apostles, and held them in custody in the common prison.
[19]Yet during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison and led them out, and said,[20]"'Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."[21]When they heard this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and taught. But the high priest came, and those who were with him, and called the council together, all the elders of the people of Israel, and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought.
[22]But the officers that went did not find them in the prison, and they returned and reported,[23]"We found the prison securely shut and the guards standing at the door, but when we had opened it, we found no one inside."
[24]Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much perplexed concerning them as to what would come of it.[25]Then someone came and told them, "The men whom you put in the prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people."
[26]So the captain went with the officers and brought them back, but without violence, for they feared the people, that they might be stoned.[27]When they had brought them, they set them before the council. The high priest interrogated them,
[28]saying, "We ordered you with a command not to teach in this name, and yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and desire to bring this man's blood upon us."
[29]But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men.[30]The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.[31]God exalted him to his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.[32]We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

[33]When the council members heard this, they were furious and they wanted to kill the apostles.[34]But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people, stood up in the council and gave a command to take the men outside for a little while.
[35]Then he said to them, "Men of Israel, pay close attention to what you propose to do with these people.[36]For before these days, Theudas rose up claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was killed, and all who had been obeying him were scattered and came to nothing.[37]After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census and drew away some people after him. He also perished, and all who had been obeying him were scattered.

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[38]Now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or work is of men, it will be overthrown.
[39]But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; you may even find that you are fighting against God." So they were persuaded.
[40]Then they called the apostles in and beat them and commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.
[41]They went away from before the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.
[42]Thereafter every day, in the temple and from house to house, they were continuously teaching and proclaiming the good news that the Christ is Jesus.

Acts 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit"

No one knows for sure if Ananias and Sapphira were truly Christians when they decided to lie about the land that they sold (Acts 5:1-10), because Luke does not say. However, Peter knew that they lied to the believers, and he knew that they had listened to and obeyed Satan.

When they lied to the believers, they also lied to the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit lives inside believers.

Links:

Acts 5:1 Notes

Acts 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Continuing the story of how the new Christians shared their belongings with other believers, Luke tells about two believers, Ananias and Sapphria.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story to tell a new part of the story.

Acts 5:2

his wife also knew it

"his wife also knew that he kept back part of the sale money"

laid it at the apostles' feet

This means that they presented to money to the apostles. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:35]

Acts 5:3

General Information:

If your language does not use rhetorical questions, you may reword these as statements.

why has Satan filled your heart to lie ... land?

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "you should not have let Satan fill your heart to lie ... land."

Satan filled your heart

Here the word "heart" is a metonym for the will and emotions. The phrase "Satan filled your heart" is a metaphor. Possible meanings of the metaphor are 1) "Satan completely controlled you" or 2) "Satan convinced you"

to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the price

This implies that Ananias had told the apostles that he was giving the entire amount that he had received from selling his land.

Acts 5:4

While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own ... authority?

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "While it remained unsold, it was your own ... authority."

While it remained unsold

"Before you sold it"

after it was sold, was it not under your authority?

Peter uses this question to rebuke Ananias. Alternate translation: "after it was sold, you had control over the money that you received."

after it was sold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you sold it"

Why did you put it in your heart to do this?

Peter used this question to rebuke Ananias. Here the word "heart" refers to the will and emotions. Alternate translation: "You should not have thought of doing this thing." or "It is Satan who has put this activity in your heart."

Acts 5:5

fell down and breathed his last

Here "breathed his last" means "breathed his final breath" and is a polite way of saying that he died. Ananias fell down because he died; he did not die because he fell down. Alternate translation: "died and fell to the ground"

Acts 5:6

The young men arose

This means that they began to act. This does not necessarily mean that they had been sitting or that Peter and Ananias had been at the front of the room or a meeting hall. If your language has a phrase that speaks of people responding to something by beginning to act, you may use it.

Acts 5:7

his wife came in

"Ananias' wife came in" or "Sapphira came in"

what had happened

"that her husband had died"

Acts 5:8

for so much

"for this much money." This refers to the amount of money that Ananias had given to the apostles.

Acts 5:9

General Information:

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Here the word "you" is plural and refers to both Ananias and Sapphira.

How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord?

Peter asks this question to rebuke Sapphira. Alternate translation: "You should not have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord!"

you have agreed together

"the two of you have agreed together"

to test the Spirit of the Lord

Here the word "test" means to challenge or to prove. They were trying to see if they could get away with lying to God without receiving punishment.

Look, the feet of the men

The word "Look" is an idiom for "Pay attention!" Peter is probably telling Sapphira to pay attention to the sound of the men's footsteps, which indicate that they are about to enter the building, not to look at their feet. Here the phrase "the feet" can be either a synecdoche for the men whose feet they are or a metonym for the sound that they make. Alternate translation: "Pay attention! The men" or "Listen! The footsteps of the men"

they will carry

"the men will carry"

Acts 5:10

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Ananias and Sapphira.

fell down at his feet

This means that when she died, she fell on the floor in front of Peter. This expression should not be confused with falling down at a person's feet as a sign of humility.

breathed her last

Here "breathed his last" means "breathed her final breath" and is a polite way of saying "she died." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Acts 5:5]

Acts 5:12

General Information:

It is not clear whether here the word "They" refers to the believers or only to the apostles.

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues to tell what happens in the early days of the church.

Many signs and wonders were taking place among the people through the hands of the apostles

"Many signs and wonders took place among the people through the hands of the apostles." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people"

signs and wonders

"supernatural events and miraculous deeds." See how you translated these terms in Acts 2:22

through the hands of the apostles

Here the word "hands" refers to the apostles. Alternate translation: "through the apostles"

all together

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose. The people were more than just in the same place at the same time.

Solomon's Porch

This was a covered walkway that consisted of rows of pillars that supported a roof, and which people named after king Solomon. See how you translated "the porch that is called Solomon's" in Acts 3:11.

Acts 5:13

General Information:

The words "them" and "they" refer to the apostles.

none of the rest

Possible meanings are 1) the apostles were in Solomon's Porch, but the rest of the believers were afraid to join them there, or 2) all the believers were in Solomon's Porch, and the word "none" is a hyperbole that means that most of the people who were not believers were afraid to join them.

they were held in high esteem by the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the people held the believers in high esteem"

Acts 5:14

more believers were being added to the Lord

This could be stated in active form. See how you translated "were added" in [Acts 2:41]

Acts 5:15

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the people who lived in Jerusalem.

his shadow might fall on some of them

It is implied that God would heal them if Peter's shadow touched them.

Acts 5:16

those afflicted with unclean spirits

"those whom unclean spirits had afflicted"

they were all healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God healed them all" or "the apostles healed them all"

Acts 5:17

Connecting Statement:

The religious leaders began to persecute the believers.

But

This begins a contrasting story. You may translate this in the way that your language introduces a contrasting narrative.

the high priest rose up

Here the phrase "rose up" means that the high priest decided to take action, not that he stood up from a seated position. Alternate translation: "the high priest took action"

they were filled with jealousy

The abstract noun "jealousy" can be translated as an adjective. This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they became very jealous"

Acts 5:18

laid hands on

This means they had the believers arrested. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:3]

Acts 5:19

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to the apostles.

Acts 5:20

in the temple

This phrase here refers to the temple courtyard, not to the

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temple building, where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"

all the words of this life

The word "words" here is a metonym for the message that the apostles had already proclaimed. Possible meanings are 1) "all this message of eternal life" or 2) "the whole message of this new way of living"

Acts 5:21

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the apostles.

into the temple

They went into the temple courtyard, not into the temple building, where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "into the temple courtyard"

about daybreak

"as it began to be light." Although the angel led them out of the jail during the night, the sun was rising by the time the apostles reached the temple courtyard.

sent to the prison to have the apostles brought

This implies someone went to the jail. Alternate translation: "sent someone to the jail to bring the apostles"

Acts 5:23

we found no one inside

Possible meanings are 1) they found no one inside the apostles' cell Alternate translation: "we did not find them inside" or 2) the apostles had been the only prisoners and now there were no prisoners at all in the jail.

Acts 5:24

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the captain of the temple and the chief priests.

they were much perplexed

"they were very puzzled" or "they were very confused"

concerning them

"concerning the words they had just heard" or "concerning these things"

as to what would come of it

"and what would happen as a result" or "what would happen next"

Acts 5:25

General Information:

Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the captain of the temple and the chief priests.

standing in the temple

They did not go into the part of the temple building where only the priests were allowed. Alternate translation: "standing in the temple courtyard"

Acts 5:26

Connecting Statement:

The captain and the officers bring the apostles before the Jewish religious council.

brought them back

"brought the apostles back"

they feared the people, that they might be stoned

This can be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "they feared that the people might stone them"

Acts 5:27

they had brought them, they set them ... interrogated them

"the captain and officers had brought the apostles, the captain and the officers set the apostles ... interrogated the apostles"

interrogated

questioned to find out what was true

Acts 5:28

We ... us

The speakers were referring to themselves, but not to the apostles, so these words are exclusive.

you ... your

These words refer to the apostles and so are plural.

in this name

Here the word "name" refers to the person of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:17]

you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching

Teaching many people in a city is spoken of as if they were filling the city with a teaching. Alternate translation: "you have taught many people in Jerusalem about him" or "you have taught about him throughout the Jerusalem"

desire to bring this man's blood upon us

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for death, and to bring someone's blood on people is a metaphor for saying that they are guilty of that person's death. Alternate translation: "desire to make us responsible for this man's death"

Acts 5:29

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers to the apostles, and not to the audience.

Peter and the apostles answered

Peter spoke on behalf of all of the apostles when he said the following words.

Acts 5:30

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus

Here "raised up" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "The God of our fathers caused Jesus to live again"

by hanging him on a tree

Here Peter uses the word "tree" to refer to the cross, which was made of wood. Alternate translation: "by hanging him on a cross"

Acts 5:31

God exalted him to his right hand

To be at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "God exalted him to the place of honor beside him"

give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins

The words "repentance" and "forgiveness" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "give the people of Israel an opportunity to repent and have God forgive their sins"

Israel

The word "Israel" refers to the Jewish people.

Acts 5:32

those who obey him

"those who submit to God's authority"

Acts 5:34

Connecting Statement:

Gamaliel addresses the council members.

Gamaliel, a teacher of the law who was honored by all the people

Luke introduces Gamaliel and provides background

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information about him.

who was honored by all the people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom all the people honored"

to take the men outside

The words "the men" refers to the apostles.

Acts 5:35

pay close attention to

"think carefully about" or "be cautious about." Gamaliel was warning them not to do something that they would later regret.

Acts 5:36

Theudas rose up

Possible meanings are 1) "Theudas rebelled" or 2) "Theudas appeared."

claiming to be somebody

"claiming to be somebody important"

He was killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People killed him"

all who had been obeying him were scattered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the people scattered who had been obeying him" or "all who had been obeying him went in different directions"

came to nothing

This means that they did not do what they had planned to do.

Acts 5:37

After this man

"After Theudas"

in the days of the census

"during the time of the census"

drew away some people after him

This means that he persuaded some people to rebel with him against the Roman government. Alternate translation: "caused many people to follow him" or "caused many people to join him in rebellion"

Acts 5:38

keep away from these men and let them alone

Gamaliel is telling the Jewish leaders not to punish the apostles any more and not to put them back in jail.

if this plan or work is of men

"if men have devised this plan or are doing this work"

it will be overthrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone will overthrow it"

Acts 5:39

Connecting Statement:

Gamaliel finishes addressing the council members.

if it is of God

Here the word "it" refers to "this plan or work." Alternate translation: "if God has devised this plan or commanded these men to do this work"

So they were persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So Gamaliel persuaded them"

Acts 5:40

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the council members and all instances of "them" refer to the apostles.

they called the apostles in and beat them

The council members would have ordered the temple guards to do these things.

to speak in the name of Jesus

Here "name" refers to the authority of Jesus. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 4:18. Alternate translation: "to speak anymore in the authority of Jesus"

Acts 5:41

General Information:

All instances of "they" refer to the apostles.

they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name

The apostles rejoiced because God had honored them by letting the Jewish leaders dishonor them. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God had counted them worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name"

for the Name

Here "the Name" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "for Jesus"

Acts 5:42

General Information:

The word "they" refers to the apostles.

Thereafter every day

"After that day, every day." This phrase marks what the apostles did every day through the following days.

in the temple and from house to house

They did not go into the temple building where only the priests went. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard and in different people's houses"

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6 [1]Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint by the Grecian Jews began against the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of help.
[2]The twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said, "It is not right for us to give up the word of God in order to serve tables.[3]You should therefore choose, brothers, seven men from among yourselves, men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.[4]As for us, we will always continue in prayer and in the ministry of the word."
[5]Their speech pleased the whole multitude. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte from Antioch.[6]The believers brought these men before the apostles, who prayed and then placed their hands upon them.

[7]So the word of God continued to spread, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large number of the priests became obedient to the faith.

[8]Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.[9]But there arose some

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people who belonged to the synagogue called the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia. These people were debating with Stephen.
[10]But they were not able to stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke.[11]Then they bribed some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."
[12]They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes, and they approached Stephen and seized him and brought him before the council.[13]They brought false witnesses, who said, "This man does not stop speaking words against this holy place and the law.[14]For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us."[15]Everyone who sat in the council fixed their eyes on him and saw his face was like the face of an angel.

Acts 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The distribution to the widows

The believers in Jerusalem gave help—probably money but possibly food—every day to women whose husbands had died. All of these widows had been raised as Jews, but some of them had lived in Judea and spoke Hebrew. Others had lived in Gentile areas and spoke Greek. Those who gave out the money or food gave it to the Hebrew-speaking widows but not to the Greek-speaking widows. To please God, the church leaders appointed Greek-speaking men to make sure the Greek-speaking widows received their share of help. One of these Greek-speaking men was Stephen.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"His face was like the face of an angel"

No one knows for sure what it was about Stephen's face that was like the face of an angel, because Luke does not tell us. It is best for the translation to say only what the ULB says about this.

Links:

Acts 6:1 Notes

Acts 6:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story. Luke gives important background information to understand the story.

Now in these days

Consider how new parts of a story are introduced in your language.

was multiplying

"was greatly increasing"

Grecian Jews ... Hebrews

These were both groups of Jews who had become believers. The writer assumes that the reader understands that these people were all believers because at this point all believers had grown up as Jews.

Grecian Jews

These were believers who had grown up as Jews or become converts living somewhere in the Roman Empire outside of Israel and speaking Greek. Their language and culture were somewhat different from those who had grown up in Israel.

the Hebrews

These were believers who had grown up as Jews or become converts in Israel speaking Hebrew or Aramaic.

widows

A widow is a woman who has not remarried since her husband died.

their widows were being overlooked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Hebrew believers were overlooking the Grecian widows"

being overlooked

"being ignored" or "being forgotten." There were so many who needed help that some were missed.

daily distribution of help

The disciples were able to help the widows because believers were giving money to the apostles Acts 4:34-35. Possible meanings are 1) the disciples used the money to buy food, which they would give to the widows, or 2) the disciples gave the money directly to the widows.

Acts 6:2

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the 12 apostles and not to their hearers, so it is exclusive.

The twelve

This refers to the eleven apostles plus Matthias, who was selected in Acts 1:26.

the multitude of the disciples

"all of the disciples" or "all the believers"

give up the word of God

This is an exaggeration in order to emphasize the importance of their task of teaching the word of God. Alternate translation: "stop preaching and teaching the word of God"

serve tables

This is a phrase meaning to serve food to the people.

Acts 6:3

General Information:

Here the word "you" refers to the believers and so is plural.

men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom

Possible meanings are 1) the men have three qualities—a good reputation, being full of the Spirit, and being full of wisdom or 2) the men have a reputation for two qualities—being full of the Spirit, and being full of wisdom .

men of good reputation

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"men that people know are good" or "men whom people trust"

over this business

"to be responsible to do this task"

Acts 6:4

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the 12 apostles and not to their hearers, so it is exclusive.

the ministry of the word

"the ministry of teaching and preaching the message"

Acts 6:5

Their speech pleased the whole multitude

"All the disciples liked their suggestion"

Stephen ... Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus

These are Greek names, so it seems that all of the men elected were from the Grecian Jewish group of believers.

proselyte

a Gentile who converted to the Jewish religion

Acts 6:6

placed their hands upon them

This represented giving a blessing and imparting responsibility and authority for the work to the seven.

Acts 6:7

General Information:

This verse gives an update on the church's growth.

the word of God continued to spread

The writer speaks of the growing number of people who believed the word as if the word of God itself were covering a larger area. Alternate translation: "the number of people who believed the word of God increased" or "the number of people who believed the message from God increased"

became obedient to the faith

"followed the teaching of the new belief"

the faith

Possible meanings are 1) the gospel message of trust in Jesus or 2) the teaching of the church or 3) the Christian teaching.

Acts 6:8

General Information:

The writer begins to give background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of a new part of the story.

Now Stephen

This introduces Stephen as the main character in this part of the story.

Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing

The words "grace" and "power" here refer to power from God. This could be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "God was giving Stephen power to do"

Acts 6:9

General Information:

The writer continues giving background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

there arose some people ... Asia. These people were debating with Stephen

The word "arose" is an idiom that represents beginning to act. These people did not begin to rise into the air, nor did they necessarily get up from a sitting position. Alternate translation: "some people ... Asia, began to debate against Stephen"

the synagogue of the Freedmen, of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia

Possible meanings are 1) the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians and those from Cilicia and Asia were all members of the synagogue of the Freedmen; 2) the Cyrenians and the Alexandrians were members of the synagogue of the Freedmen, but those from Cilicia and Asia were not; or 3) there were three separate groups of people: those from the synagogue, those from Cyrene and Alexandria, and those from Cilicia and Asia.

synagogue of the Freedmen

"Freedmen" were probably ex-slaves from these different locations. It is unclear if the other people listed were part of the synagogue or just participated in the debate with Stephen.

the Cyrenians and Alexandrians

"people from Cyrene and Alexandria." Cyrene and Alexandria were cities in Northern Africa. They were south of the Mediterranean Sea.

some from Cilicia and Asia

Cilicia was a city and Asia was a Roman province, both north of the Mediterranean Sea.

debating with Stephen

"arguing with Stephen"

Acts 6:10

Connecting Statement:

The writer finishes giving background information about Stephen and other people that is important to understanding the story.

not able to stand against

This phrase means they could not prove false what he said. Alternate translation: "could not argue against"

Spirit

this refers to the Holy Spirit

Acts 6:11

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers only to the men they persuaded to lie. The word "they" refers back to the people from the synagogue of the freemen

some men to say

They were given money to give false testimony. Alternate translation: "some men to lie and say"

blasphemous words against

"bad things about"

Acts 6:12

General Information:

The word "they" most likely refers back to the people from the synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9). They were responsible for the false witnesses and for inciting the council, the elders, the scribes, and the other people.

stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes

"caused the people, the elders, and the scribes to be very angry at Stephen"

seized him

"grabbed him and held him so he could not get away"

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Acts 6:13

General Information:

The word "they" most likely refers back to the people from the synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9).

does not stop speaking

"continually speaks"

Acts 6:14

General Information:

The words "we" and "us" refer only to the speakers, not to the hearers, and so is exclusive.

handed down to us

The phrase "handed down" means "passed on." Alternate translation: "taught our ancestors"

Acts 6:15

fixed their eyes on him

This is an idiom that means they looked intently at him. Here "eyes" is a metonym for sight. Alternate translation: "looked intently at him" or "stared at him"

was like the face of an angel

This phrase compares his face to that of an angel but does not say specifically what they have in common.

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7 [1]The high priest said, "Are these things true?"[2]Stephen said,
"Brothers and fathers, listen to me: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran;
[3]he said to him, 'Leave your land and your relatives, and go into the land that I will show you.'

[4]"'Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran; from there, after his father died, God brought him into this land, where you live now.[5]He gave none of it as an inheritance to him, no, not even enough to set a foot on. But he promised—even though Abraham had no child yet—that he would give the land as a possession to him and to his descendants after him.
[6]God was speaking to him like this, that his descendants would live for a while in a foreign land, and that the inhabitants there would bring them into slavery and mistreat them for four hundred years.[7]'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they will come out and worship me in this place.'[8]Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, so Abraham became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of the twelve patriarchs.

[9]"'Because the patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, they sold him into Egypt; but God was with him[10]and rescued him from all his tribulation. He gave Joseph favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over Egypt and over all his household.

[11]"'Now a famine and great tribulation came over all Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers could find no food.[12]But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers on their first trip.[13]On their second trip Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh.
[14]Joseph sent his brothers back to invite Jacob his father to come to Egypt, along with all his relatives, seventy-five persons in all.[15]So Jacob went down into Egypt, and he died, he and our fathers.[16]They were carried over to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a price in silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

[17]"'As the time of the promise approached, the promise that God had made to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt,[18]until there arose another king over Egypt, a king who did not know about Joseph.[19]He deceived our people and mistreated our fathers, forcing them to expose their newborn infants so they would not be kept alive.

[20]"'At that time Moses was born; he was very beautiful before God and was nourished for three months in his father's house.[21]When he was placed outside, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and raised him as her own son.
[22]Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words and works.
[23]"'But when he was about forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the descendants of Israel.[24]Seeing an Israelite being mistreated, Moses defended him and avenged him who was oppressed by striking the Egyptian:[25]he thought that his brothers would understand that God, by his hand, was giving them salvation, but they did not understand.
[26]On the next day he appeared to them when they were fighting, and he tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you wronging one another?'
[27]"'But the one who had wronged his neighbor pushed him away, and said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?[28]Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?'
[29]Moses ran away after hearing this statement; he became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.
[30]"'When forty years were past, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush.
[31]When Moses saw the fire, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look at it, the voice of the Lord came, saying,[32]'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob.' Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

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[33]"The Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.[34]I have certainly seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them; now come, I will send you to Egypt.'

[35]"This Moses whom they rejected, when they said, 'Who appointed you a ruler and a judge?'—he was the one whom God sent as both a ruler and deliverer. God sent him by the hand of the angel who appeared to Moses in the bush.[36]Moses led them out of Egypt, after doing miracles and signs in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds, and in the wilderness during forty years.
[37]"It is the same Moses who said to the people of Israel, 'God will raise up a prophet for you from among your brothers, a prophet like me.'
[38]This is the man who was in the assembly in the wilderness with the angel who had spoken to him on Mount Sinai, who was with our fathers, and who received living words to give to us.
[39]"But our fathers refused to obey him; they pushed him away from themselves, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt.[40]At that time they said to Aaron, 'Make us gods who will lead us. As for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.'
[41]So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol, and rejoiced because of the work of their hands.
[42]But God turned and gave them up to worship the stars in the sky, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'Did you bring me offerings and sacrifices
during the forty years in the wilderness, house of Israel?

[43] You accepted the tabernacle of Molech
and the star of the god Rephan,
and the images that you made to worship them:
and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

[44]"Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as God commanded when he spoke to Moses, that he should make it like the pattern that he had seen.[45]Later, our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them when they took possession of the land. God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers. The tabernacle remained in the land until the time of David,[46]who found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob[1]
[47]But it was Solomon who built the house for God.
[48]"However, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands, as the prophet says,

[49] 'Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is the footstool for my feet.
What kind of house can you build for me? says the Lord,
or what is the place for my rest?

[50] Did my hand not make all these things?'

[51]"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit; you act just as your fathers acted.[52]Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed the prophets who appeared in advance of the coming of the Righteous One; and you have now become the betrayers and murderers of him also,[53]you people who received the law that angels had ordained, but you did not keep it."

[54]Now when the council members heard these things, they were furious in their hearts and they ground their teeth at Stephen.[55]But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up intently into heaven and saw the glory of God; and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God.[56]Stephen said, "Look, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

[57]At this the council members covered their ears, and shouting out with a loud voice, they rushed at him with one purpose.[58]They forced him out of the city and began to stone him. The witnesses laid down their outer clothing at the feet of a young man named Saul.

[59]As they were stoning Stephen, he was calling out to the Lord and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."[60]He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

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[1] The phrase: the house of Jacob, is found in many ancient copies. Other ancient texts have the phrase: the God of Jacob.

Acts 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 7:42-43 and 49-50.

It appears that 8:1 is part of the narrative of this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Stephen said"

Stephen told the history of Israel very briefly. He paid special attention to the times that the Israelites had rejected the people God had chosen to lead them. At the end of the story, he said that the Jewish leaders he was talking to had rejected Jesus just as the evil Israelites had always rejected the leaders God had appointed for them.

"Full of the Holy Spirit"

The Holy Spirit completely controlled Stephen so that he said only and all of what God wanted him to say.

Foreshadowing

When an author speaks of something that is not important at that time but will be important later in the story, this is called foreshadowing. Luke mentions Saul, also known as Paul, here, even though he is not an important person in this part of the story. This is because Paul is an important person in the rest of the Book of Acts.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Implied information

Stephen was talking to Jews who knew the law of Moses well, so he did not explain things that his hearers already knew. But you may need to explain some of these things so that your readers will be able to understand what Stephen was saying. For example, you may need to make explicit that when Joseph's brothers "sold him into Egypt"

Metonymy

Stephen spoke of Joseph ruling "over Egypt" and over all of Pharaoh's household. By this he meant that Joseph ruled over the people of Egypt and of the people and possessions in Pharaoh's household.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Background knowledge

The Jewish leaders to whom Stephen spoke already knew much about the events he was telling them about. They knew what Moses had written in the Book of Genesis. If the Book of Genesis has not been translated into your language, it may be difficult for your readers to understand what Stephen said.

Links:

Acts 7:1 Notes

Acts 7:1

Connecting Statement:

The part of the story about Stephen, which began in Acts 6:8, continues. Stephen begins his response to the high priest and the council by talking about things that happened in Israel's history. Most of this history comes from Moses's writings.

Acts 7:2

General Information:

The word "our" includes both Steven, the Jewish council to whom he spoke, and the entire audience.

Brothers and fathers, listen to me

Stephen was being very respectful to the council in greeting them as extended family.

Acts 7:3

General Information:

The word "your" refers to Abraham and so is singular.

Acts 7:4

General Information:

In verse 4 the words "he," "his," and "him" refer to Abraham. In verse 5 the words "He" and "he" refer to God, but the word "him" refers to Abraham. Here the word "you" refers to the Jewish council and audience.

Acts 7:5

He gave none of it

"He did not give any of it"

enough to set a foot on

Possible meanings for this phrase are 1) enough ground to stand on or 2) enough ground to take a step. Alternate translation: "a very tiny piece of ground"

as a possession to him and to his descendants after him

"for Abraham to own and to give to his descendants"

Acts 7:6

God was speaking to him like this

It may be helpful to state that this occurred later than the statement in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "Later God told Abraham"

four hundred years

"400 years"

Acts 7:7

I will judge the nation

"nation" refers to the people in it. Alternate translation: "I will judge the people of the nation"

the nation that they serve

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"the nation that they will serve"
Acts 7:8
gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision
The Jews would have understood that this covenant required Abraham to circumcise the males of his family. Alternate translation: "made a covenant with Abraham to circumcise the males of his family"
so Abraham became the father of Isaac
The story transitions to Abraham's descendants.
Jacob the father
"Jacob became the father." Stephen shortened this.
Acts 7:9
the patriarchs
"the founders of our tribes" or "our ancestors." A patriarch is a man who rules a family.
sold him into Egypt
The Jews knew their ancestors sold Joseph to be a slave in Egypt. Alternate translation: "sold him as a slave in Egypt"
was with him
This is an idiom for helping someone. Alternate translation: "helped him"
Acts 7:10
over Egypt
This refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "over all the people of Egypt"
all his household
This refers to all his possessions. Alternate translation: "everything he owned"
Acts 7:11
Now a famine and great tribulation came
"a famine came." The ground stopped producing food and this caused a terrible suffering.
our fathers
This refers Jacob and his sons, who were the ancestors of the Jewish people.
Acts 7:12
grain
Grain was the most common food at that time.
our fathers
Here this phrase refers to Joseph's older brothers, who were Jacob's sons.
Acts 7:13
On their second trip
"On their next trip"
made himself known
Joseph revealed to his brothers his identity as their brother.
Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Pharaoh learned that they were Joseph's family"
Acts 7:14
sent his brothers back
"sent his brothers back to Canaan" or "sent his brothers back home"
Acts 7:15
he died
Make sure it does not sound as though he died as soon as he arrived in Egypt. Alternate translation: "eventually Jacob died"
he and our fathers
"Jacob and his sons, who became our ancestors"
Acts 7:16
They were carried over ... and laid
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Jacob's descendants carried Jacob's body and his son's bodies over ... and buried them"
for a price in silver
"with money"
Acts 7:17
As the time of the promise ... the people grew and multiplied
In some languages it may be helpful to say that the people increased in number before saying that the time of the promise arrived.
time of the promise approached
It was close to the time that God would fulfill his promise to Abraham.
Acts 7:18
there arose another king
"another king began to rule"
over Egypt
"Egypt" refers to the people of Egypt. Alternate translation: "over the people of Egypt"
who did not know about Joseph
"Joseph" refers to the reputation of Joseph. Alternate translation: "who did not know that Joseph had helped Egypt"
Acts 7:19
General Information:
The word "our" includes Stephen and his audience.
Acts 7:20
At that time Moses was born
This introduces Moses into the story.
very beautiful before God
This phrase is an idiom that means Moses was very beautiful.
was nourished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his parents nourished him" or "his parents cared for him"
Acts 7:21
When he was placed outside
Moses was "placed outside" because of Pharaoh's command. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When his parents placed him outside" or "When they abandoned him"
Pharaoh's daughter ... raised him as her own son
She did for him every good thing a mother would do for her own son. Use your language's normal word for what a mother does to make sure her son becomes a healthy adult.
adopted him
If your language has a word for an informal procedure, not a formal legal procedure, in which one family takes a child in and raises him, you may want to use that here. Pharaoh's daughter did do for Moses what any mother would do for her child, but this involved no formal legal procedure.
as her own son
"as if he were her own son"
Acts 7:22
Moses was educated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"The Egyptians educated Moses"

all the wisdom of the Egyptians

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that he was trained in the best schools in Egypt.

mighty in his words and works

"effective in his speech and actions" or "influential in what he said and did"

Acts 7:23

it came into his heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for "mind." The phrase "it came into his heart" is an idiom that means to decide something. Alternate translation: "it came into his mind" or "he decided"

visit his brothers, the descendants of Israel

This refers to his people, and not just to his family. Alternate translation: "see how his own people, the children of Israel, were doing"

Acts 7:24

Seeing an Israelite being mistreated ... the Egyptian

This can be stated in active form by rearranging the order. Alternate translation: "Seeing an Egyptian mistreating an Israelite, Moses defended and avenged the Israelite by striking the Egyptian who was oppressing him"

striking the Egyptian

Moses hit the Egyptian so hard that he died.

Acts 7:25

he thought

"he imagined"

by his hand, was giving them salvation

Here "hand" refers to the actions of Moses. Alternate translation: "was giving them salvation through what he, Moses, was doing"

was giving them salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated using the verb "save." Alternate translation: "was saving them" or "was rescuing them"

Acts 7:26

when they were fighting

Some translations make it clear that two men were fighting. Alternate translation: "when two men of Israel were fighting"

make peace between them

"make them stop fighting"

Men, you are brothers

Moses was addressing the Israelites who were fighting.

why are you wronging one another?

Moses asked this question to encourage them to stop fighting. Alternate translation: "you should not do wrong to each other!"

Acts 7:27

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the Israelites but does not include Moses.

Who appointed you a ruler and a judge over us?

The man used this question to rebuke Moses. Alternate translation: "No one appointed you ruler or judge over us." or "You have no authority over us!"

Acts 7:28

Would you like to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?

The man used this question to warn Moses that he and probably others knew Moses had killed the Egyptian.

Acts 7:29

General Information:

Stephen's audience already knew that Moses had married a Midianite woman when he fled Egypt.

after hearing this

The implied information is that Moses understood that the Israelites knew that he had killed an Egyptian the day before (Acts 7:28).

Acts 7:30

When forty years were past

"After 40 years passed." This was the amount of time Moses had been in Midian. Alternate translation: "Forty years after Moses fled from Egypt"

an angel appeared

Stephen's audience knew that God spoke through the angel.

Acts 7:31

he marveled at the sight

Moses was surprised that the bush was not burning up in the fire. This was previously known by Stephen's audience. Alternate translation: "because the bush was not burning up"

as he approached to look at it

This may mean Moses initially drew close to the bush to investigate.

Acts 7:32

I am the God of your fathers

"I am the God whom your ancestors worshiped"

Moses trembled and did not dare to look

This may mean Moses drew back in fear when he heard the voice.

Moses trembled

Moses shook from fear. This can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Moses trembled with fear"

Acts 7:33

Take off the sandals

God told Moses this so he would honor God.

for the place where you are standing is holy ground

The implied information is that where God is present, the immediate area around God is considered holy or is made holy by God.

Acts 7:34

certainly seen

"seen for sure." The word "certainly" adds emphasis to "seen."

the oppression of my people

The abstract noun "oppression" can be translated using the verb "oppress." Alternate translation: "the way the Egyptians are oppressing my people"

my people

The word "my" emphasizes that these people belonged to God. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"

I have come down to rescue them

"will personally cause their release"

now come

"get ready." God uses an order here.

Acts 7:35

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General Information:
Verses 35-38 contain a series of connected phrases referring to Moses. Each phrase begins with statements such as "This Moses" or "This same Moses" or "This is the man" or "It is the same Moses." If possible, use similar statements to emphasize Moses. After the Israelites left Egypt, they spent 40 years wandering around the wilderness before God led them into the land he had promised them.
This Moses whom they rejected
This refers back to the events recorded in Acts 7:27-28.
deliverer
"rescuer"
by the hand of the angel ... bush
The hand is a metonym for the action performed by the person. In this case, the angel had commanded Moses to return to Egypt. Stephen speaks as if the angel had a physical hand. You may need to make explicit what action the angel did. Alternate translation: "by the action of the angel" or "by having the angel ... bush command him to return to Egypt"
Acts 7:36
during forty years
Stephen's audience knew about the forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "during the 40 years that the Israelite people lived in the wilderness"
Acts 7:37
raise up a prophet
"cause a man to be a prophet"
from among your brothers
"from among your own people"
Acts 7:38
This is the man who was in the assembly
"This is the man Moses who was among the Israelites"
This is the man
The phrase "This is the man" throughout this passage refers to Moses.
who received living words to give to us
God was the one who gave those words. Alternate translation: "to whom God spoke living words to give to us"
living words
Possible meanings are 1) "a message that endures" or 2) "words that give life."
Acts 7:39
pushed him away from themselves
This metaphor emphasizes their rejection of Moses. Alternate translation: "they rejected him as their leader"
in their hearts they turned back
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's thoughts. To do something in the heart means to desire do to something. Alternate translation: "they desired to turn back"
Acts 7:40
General Information:
The quotation in this verse is from the writings of Moses.
At that time
"When they decided to return to Egypt"
Acts 7:41
they made a calf
Stephen's audience knew the calf they made was a statue. Alternate translation: "they made a statue that looked like a calf"
a calf ... the idol ... the work of their hands
These phrases all refer to the same statue of the calf.
Acts 7:42
General Information:
Stephen's quotation here is from the prophet Amos.
God turned
"God turned away." This action expresses that God was not pleased with the people and no longer helped them. Alternate translation: "God stopped correcting them"
gave them up
"abandoned them"
the stars in the sky
Possible meanings for the original phrase are 1) the stars only or 2) the sun, moon, and stars.
the book of the prophets
This was apparently a collection of the writings of several of the Old Testament prophets into one scroll. It would also have included the writings of Amos.
Did you bring me offerings and sacrifices ... Israel?
God asked this question to show Israel they did not worship him with their sacrifices. Alternate translation: "You did not honor me when brought offerings and sacrifices ... Israel."
house of Israel
This refers to the whole nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "all you Israelites"
Acts 7:43
General Information:
The quotation from the prophet Amos continues here.
Connecting Statement:
Stephen continues his response to the high priest and the council which he began in Acts 7:2.
You accepted
It is implied that they took these idols with them as they traveled in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "you carried with you from place to place"
tabernacle of Molech
the tent that housed the false god Molech
the star of the god Rephan
the star that is identified with the false god Rephan
the images that you made
They made statues or images of the gods Molech and Rephan in order to worship them.
I will carry you away beyond Babylon
"I will remove you to places even farther than Babylon." This would be God's act of judgment.
Acts 7:44
the tabernacle of the testimony
The tent that housed the ark (a box) with the 10 commandments carved in stone inside it
Acts 7:45
our fathers, under Joshua, received the tabernacle and brought it with them
The phrase "under Joshua" means that their ancestors did these things in obedience to Joshua's direction. Alternate translation: "our fathers, in accordance with Joshua's instructions, received the tabernacle and brought it with them"

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God took the land from the nations and drove them out before the face of our fathers
This sentence tells why the ancestors were able to take possession of the land. Alternate translation: "God forced the nations to leave the land before the face of our fathers"
God ... drove them out before the face of our fathers
Here "the face of our fathers" refers to the presence of their ancestors. Possible meanings are 1) "As our ancestors watched, God ... drove them out" or 2) "When our ancestors came, God ... drove them out"
the nations
This refers to the people who lived in the land before Israel. Alternate translation: "the people who previously lived here"
drove them out
"forced them to leave the land"
Acts 7:46
he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob
Here "house" is probably a metonym for the ark of the covenant. David wanted to build a place for the ark, which represented God's presence, so people could go there to worship God. Alternate translation: "he might build a place where people could worship the God of Jacob"
the house of Jacob
Many versions read, "the God of Jacob."
Acts 7:48
made with hands
The hand is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "made by people"
Acts 7:49
General Information:
In verses 49 and 50, Stephen quotes from the prophet Isaiah. In the quotation, God is speaking about himself.
Heaven is my throne ... the earth is the footstool for my feet
The prophet is comparing the greatness of God's presence to how impossible it is for man to build a place for God to rest on earth since the whole earth is nothing but a place for God to rest his feet.
What kind of house can you build for me?
God asks this question to show how useless man's efforts are to take care of God. Alternate translation: "You can not build a house adequate enough for me!"
what is the place for my rest?
God asks this question to show man that he cannot provide God any rest. Alternate translation: "There is no place of rest good enough for me!"
Acts 7:50
General Information:
In verses 49 and 50, Stephen quotes from the prophet Isaiah. In the quotation, God is speaking about himself.
Did my hand not make all these things?
God asks this question to show that man did not create anything. Alternate translation: "My hand made all these things!"
Acts 7:51
Connecting Statement:
With a sharp rebuke, Stephen finishes his response to the high priest and the council, which he began in Acts 7:2.
You stiff-necked people
Stephen shifts from identifying with the Jewish leaders to rebuking them.
uncircumcised in heart and ears
The Jews regarded uncircumcised people as disobedient to God. Stephen uses "hearts and ears" to represent to the Jewish leaders who acted the way Gentiles act when they do not obey or listen to God. Alternate translation: "you refuse to obey and hear"
Acts 7:52
Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?
Stephen asked this question to show them that they learned nothing from the errors of their forefathers. Alternate translation: "Your forefathers persecuted every prophet!"
Righteous One
This refers to the Christ, the Messiah.
you have now become the betrayers and murderers of him also
"you have also betrayed and murdered him"
murderers of him
"murderers of the Righteous One" or "murderers of the Christ"
Acts 7:53
the law that angels had ordained
"the laws that God caused angels to give to our ancestors"
Acts 7:54
Connecting Statement:
The council reacts to Stephen's words.
Now when the council members heard these things
This is the turning point; the sermon ends and the council members react.
they were furious in their hearts
This means that they were extremely angry.
ground their teeth at Stephen
This action expressed their strong anger at Stephen or hatred of Stephen. Alternate translation: "they became so angry that they ground their teeth together" or "moved their teeth back and forth as they looked at Stephen"
Acts 7:55
looked up intently into heaven
"stared up into heaven." It appears that only Stephen saw this vision and not anyone else in the crowd.
saw the glory of God
People normally experienced the glory of God as a bright light. Alternate translation: "saw a bright light from God"
and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God
To stand at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor and authority beside God"
Acts 7:56
Son of Man
Stephen refers to Jesus by the title "Son of Man."
Acts 7:57
covered their ears
"put their hands on their ears." They did this to show that they did not want to hear any more of what Stephen said.
with one purpose
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

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Acts 7:58

They forced him out of the city

"They seized Stephen and forcefully took him out of the city"

outer clothing

These are cloaks or robes they would wear outside to stay warm, similar in function to a jacket or coat.

at the feet

"in front of." They were placed there so Saul could watch them.

a young man

Saul was probably around 30 years old at the time.

Acts 7:59

receive my spirit

"take my spirit." It may be helpful to add "please" to show that this was a request. Alternate translation: "please receive my spirit"

Acts 7:60

Connecting Statement:

This ends the story of Stephen.

He knelt down

This is an act of submission to God.

do not hold this sin against them

This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "forgive them for this sin"

fell asleep

Here to fall asleep is a euphemism for dying. Alternate translation: "died"

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8 [1]Saul was in agreement with his death.
So there began on that day a great persecution against the church that was in Jerusalem; and the believers were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
[2]Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him.[3]But Saul tried to destroy the church. He would enter house after house, drag off both men and women, and put them in prison.

[4]Yet the believers who had been scattered went about preaching the word.[5]Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ.
[6]Crowds of people were giving close attention to what was being said by Philip; with one mind they heard him, and they saw the signs he did.[7]Unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying out with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.[8]So there was much joy in that city.

[9]But there was a certain man in the city named Simon, who had earlier been practicing sorcery; he used to astonish the people of Samaria while claiming that he was an important person.[10]All the Samaritans, from the least to the greatest, paid attention to him; they said, "This man is that power of God which is called Great."[11]They listened to him because he had astonished them for a long time with his sorceries.
[12]But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the gospel about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.[13]Even Simon himself believed, and after he was baptized he stayed with Philip constantly. When he saw signs and mighty works taking place, he was amazed.

[14]Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John.
[15]When they had come down, they prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit.[16]For until that time, the Holy Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.[17]Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
[18]Now when Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money.[19]He said, "Give me this authority, too, that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit."

[20]But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish along with you, because you thought to obtain the gift of God with money.
[21]You have no part or allotted portion in this matter, because your heart is not right with God.[22]Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord, so that he might perhaps forgive you for the intention of your heart.[23]For I see that you are in the poison of bitterness and in the bonds of unrighteousness."

[24]Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, so that nothing you have said may happen to me."

[25]When they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

[26]Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, "Arise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This road is in a desert.)[27]He arose and went. Behold, there was a man from Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship.[28]He was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah.

[29]The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to this chariot."

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[30]So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"
[31]Then he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" He invited Philip to come up into the chariot and sit with him.

[32]Now the passage of the scripture which the Ethiopian was reading was this,
"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and like a lamb before his shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

[33] In his humiliation
justice was taken away from him.
Who can give a full account of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth."

[34]So the eunuch asked Philip, and said, "I beg you, tell me who is the prophet speaking about, himself, or someone else?"[35]Philip began to speak, and beginning with this scripture he proclaimed the gospel about Jesus to him.
[36]As they went on the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, there is water here. What prevents me from being baptized?"[37] [1][38]So the Ethiopian commanded the chariot to stop. They went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him.
[39]When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing.[40]But Philip appeared at Azotus and he went through that region, proclaiming the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have Acts 8:37, Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may be baptized." The Ethiopian answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God".

Acts 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 8:32-33.
The first sentence of verse 1 ends the description of the events in chapter 7. Luke begins a new part of his history with the words "So there began."

Special concepts in this chapter

Receiving the Holy Spirit

In this chapter for the first time Luke speaks of people receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15-19). The Holy Spirit had already enabled the believers to speak in tongues, to heal the sick, and to live as a community, and he had filled Stephen. But when the Jews started putting believers in prison, those believers who could leave Jerusalem did leave, and as they went, they told people about Jesus. When the people who heard about Jesus received the Holy Spirit, the church leaders knew that those people had truly become believers.

Proclaimed

This chapter more than any other in the Book of Acts speaks of the believers proclaiming the word, proclaiming the good news, and proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ. The word "proclaim" translates a Greek word that means to tell good news about something.

Links:

Acts 8:1 Notes

Acts 8:1

General Information:

It may be helpful to your audience to move these parts of the story about Stephen together by using a verse bridge as the UDB does.

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts from Stephen to Saul in these verses.

So there began ... except the apostles

This part of verse 1 is background information about the persecution that began after Stephen's death. This explains why Saul was persecuting the believers in verse 3.

that day

This refers to the day that Stephen died (Acts 7:59-60).

the believers were all scattered

The word "all" is a generalization to express that a large number of the believers left Jerusalem because of the persecution.

except the apostles

This statement implies that the apostles remained in Jerusalem even though they also experienced this great

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persecution.
Acts 8:2
Devout men
"God-fearing men" or "Men who feared God"
made great lamentation over him
"greatly mourned his death"
Acts 8:3
house after house
"houses one by one"
drag off both men and women
"took away both men and women by force." Saul forcefully took Jewish believers out of their homes and put them into prison.
men and women
This refers to men and women who believed in Jesus.
Acts 8:4
who had been scattered
The cause for the scattering, the persecution, was stated previously. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who had fled the great persecution"
the word
This is a metonym for "the message." You may need to make explicit that the message was about Jesus. Alternate translation: "the message about Jesus"
Acts 8:5
Connecting Statement:
This begins the story of Philip, whom the people had chosen as a deacon.
went down to the city of Samaria
The phrase "went down" is used here because Samaria is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.
the city of Samaria
Possible meanings are 1) Luke expected the readers to know which city he was writing about. Alternate translation: "the main city in Samaria" or 2) Luke did not expect his readers to know which city he was writing about. Alternate translation: "a city in Samaria"
proclaimed to them the Christ
The title "Christ" refers to Jesus, the Messiah. Alternate translation: "told them about Jesus Christ" or "told them about Jesus the Messiah"
Acts 8:6
Crowds of people
"Many people in the city of Samaria." The location was specified in Acts 8:5.
were giving close attention
The reason people paid attention was because of all the healing Philip did.
with one mind
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
Acts 8:7
who were possessed
"who had them" or "who were controlled by them"
Acts 8:8
So there was much joy in that city
The phrase "that city" refers to the people who were rejoicing. Alternate translation: "So the people of the city were rejoicing"
Acts 8:9
General Information:
Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse gives the beginning of the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.
But there was a certain man ... named Simon
This is a way of introducing a new person into the story. Your language may use different wording to introduce a new person into the story.
the city
"the city in Samaria" (Acts 8:5)
Acts 8:10
General Information:
Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse continues to give the beginning of the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.
All the Samaritans
The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Many of the Samaritans" or "The Samaritans in the city"
from the least to the greatest
These two phrases refer to everyone from one extreme to the other. Alternate translation: "no matter how important they were"
This man is that power of God which is called Great
People were saying that Simon was the divine power known as "The Great Power."
that power of God which is called Great
Possible meanings are 1) the powerful representative of God or 2) God or 3) the most powerful man or 4) an angel. Since the term is unclear, it may be best to simply translate it as "the Great power of God."
Acts 8:11
General Information:
Simon is introduced to the story of Philip. This verse ends the background information about Simon and who he was among the Samaritans.
Acts 8:12
Connecting Statement:
Verses 12 and 13 give more information about Simon and some of the Samaritans coming to believe in Jesus.
they were baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip baptized them" or "Philip baptized the new believers"
Acts 8:13
Connecting Statement:
Verses 12 and 13 give more information about Simon and some of the Samaritans coming to believe in Jesus.
Simon himself believed
The word "himself" is here used to emphasize that Simon believed. Alternate translation: "Simon was also one of those who believed"
he was baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip baptized Simon"
Acts 8:14
Connecting Statement:

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Luke continues the news of what was happening in Samaria.

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard

This marks the beginning of a new part of the story of the Samaritans.

Samaria

This refers to the many people who had become believers throughout the district of Samaria.

had received

"had believed" or "had accepted"

Acts 8:15

When they had come down

"when Peter and John had come down"

come down

This phrase is used here because Samaria is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.

they prayed for them

"Peter and John prayed for the Samaritan believers"

that they might receive the Holy Spirit

"that the Samaritan believers might receive the Holy Spirit"

Acts 8:16

they had only been baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Philip had only baptized the Samaritan believers"

they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus

Here "name" represents authority, and being baptized into his name represents being baptized in order to be under his authority. Alternate translation: "they had only been baptized to become disciples of the Lord Jesus"

Acts 8:17

Peter and John placed their hands on them

The word "them" refers to the Samaritan people who believed Stephen's message of the gospel.

placed their hands on them

This symbolic action shows that Peter and John wanted God to give the Holy Spirit to the believers.

Acts 8:18

the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the apostles gave the Holy Spirit by laying their hands on people"

Acts 8:19

that whoever I place my hands on might receive the Holy Spirit

"that I can give the Holy Spirit to anyone on whom I place my hands"

Acts 8:20

General Information:

Here the words him, your, you, and yours all refer to Simon.

May your silver perish along with you

"May you and your money be destroyed"

the gift of God

Here this refers to the ability of a person to give the Holy Spirit by laying his hands on someone.

Acts 8:21

You have no part or allotted portion in this matter

The words "part" and "allotted portion" mean the same thing and are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You may not participate in this work"

your heart is not right

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or motives. Alternate translation: "you are not right in your heart" or "the motives of your mind are not right"

Acts 8:22

this wickedness

"these evil thoughts"

he might perhaps forgive

"he may be willing to forgive"

for the intention of your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts. Alternate translation: "for what you intended to do" or "for what you were thinking of doing"

Acts 8:23

in the poison of bitterness

Here "in the poison of bitterness" is a metaphor for being very envious. It speaks of envy as if it tastes bitter and poisons the person who is envious. Alternate translation: "very envious"

in the bonds of unrighteousness

The phrase "bonds of unrighteousness" is spoken as if unrighteousness could make Simon a prisoner. It is metaphor that means Simon is not able to stop himself from sinning. Alternate translation: "because you continue sinning you are like a prisoner" or "sin has made you its prisoner"

Acts 8:24

General Information:

Here the word "you" refers to Peter and John.

so that nothing you have said may happen to me

This refers to Peter's rebuke about Simon's silver perishing along with him.

nothing you have said may happen to me

This can be stated another way. Alternate translation: "the things you have said may not happen to me"

Acts 8:25

Connecting Statement:

This is concludes the part of the story about Simon and the Samaritans.

testified

Peter and John told what they personally knew about Jesus to the Samaritans.

spoken the word of the Lord

Here "word" is a metonym for "message." Peter and John explained the message about Jesus to the Samaritans.

to many villages of the Samaritans

Here "villages" refers to the people in them. Alternate translation: "to the people in many Samaritan villages"

Acts 8:26

Connecting Statement:

This begins the part of the story about Philip and the man from Ethiopia.

Now

This marks a transition in the story.

Arise and go

These verbs work together to emphasize that he should get ready to start a long journey that will take some time. Alternate translation: "Get ready to travel"

goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza

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The phrase "goes down" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Gaza.

This road is in a desert

Most scholars believe Luke added this comment to describe the area through which Philip would travel.

Acts 8:27

General Information:

This verse gives background information about the man from Ethiopia.

Behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

eunuch

The emphasis of "eunuch" here is about the Ethiopian's being a high government official, not so much his physical state of being castrated.

Candace

This was a title for the queens of Ethiopia. It is similar to the way the word Pharaoh was used for the kings of Egypt.

He had come to Jerusalem to worship

This implies that he was a Gentile who believed in God and had come to worship at the Jewish temple. Alternate translation: "He had come to worship God at the temple in Jerusalem"

Acts 8:28

chariot

Possibly "wagon" or "carriage" is more fitting in this context. Chariots are normally mentioned as a vehicle for war, not as a vehicle for long-distance travel. Also, people stood to ride in chariots.

reading the prophet Isaiah

This is the Old Testament book Isaiah. Alternate translation: "reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah"

Acts 8:29

stay close to this chariot

Philip understood that this meant he was to stay close to the person riding in the chariot. Alternate translation: "accompany the man in this chariot"

Acts 8:30

reading Isaiah the prophet

This is the Old Testament book Isaiah. Alternate translation: "reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah"

Do you understand what you are reading?

The Ethiopian was intelligent and could read, but he lacked spiritual discernment. Alternate translation: "Do you understand the meaning of what you are reading?"

Acts 8:31

How can I, unless someone guides me?

This question was asked to state emphatically that he could not understand without help. Alternate translation: "I cannot understand unless someone guides me."

He invited Philip to ... sit with him

It is implied here that Philip agreed to travel down the road with him to explain the scriptures.

He invited

Possible meanings are that 1) he offered a sincere invitation or 2) he made a sincere request.

Acts 8:32

General Information:

This a passage from the book of Isaiah. Here the word "he" refers to the Messiah.

like a lamb before his shearer is silent

A shearer is a person who cuts the wool off the sheep so that it may be used.

Acts 8:33

General Information:

This verse continues quoting a passage from the book of Isaiah. Here the words "his" and "him" refer to the Messiah.

In his humiliation justice was taken away from him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He was humiliated and they did not judge him fairly" or "He allowed himself to be humbled before his accusers and he suffered injustice"

Who can give a full account of his descendants?

This question was used to emphasize that he will not have descendants. Alternate translation: "No one will be able to speak about his descendants, for there will not be any."

his life was taken from the earth

This referred to his death. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "men killed him" or "men took his life from the earth"

Acts 8:34

I beg you

"Please tell me"

Acts 8:35

this scripture

This refers to Isaiah's writings in the Old Testament. Alternate translation: "the writings of Isaiah"

Acts 8:36

they went on the road

"they continued to travel along the road"

What prevents me from being baptized?

The eunuch uses this question as a way of asking Philip for permission to be baptized. Alternate translation: "Please allow me to be baptized."

Acts 8:38

commanded the chariot to stop

"told the driver of the chariot to stop"

Acts 8:39

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the part of the story about Philip and the man from Ethiopia. The story of Philip ends at Caesarea.

the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away

The words "took Philip away" imply that the Spirit took forceful, physical action, perhaps a miracle that moved Philip in an instant. The angel probably did not just suggest or even command that Philip leave the eunuch and go elsewhere.

the eunuch saw him no more

"the eunuch did not see Philip again"

Acts 8:40

Philip appeared at Azotus

There was no indication of Philip's traveling between where he baptized the Ethiopian and Azotus. He just suddenly disappeared along the road to Gaza and reappeared at the town of Azotus.

that region

This refers to the area around the town of Azotus.

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to all the cities
"to all the cities in that region"

9 [1]But Saul, still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest[2]and asked him for letters for the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.
[3]As he was traveling, it happened that as he came near to Damascus, suddenly there shone all around him a light out of heaven;[4]and he fell upon the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"
[5]Saul replied, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting;[6]but rise, enter into the city, and it will be told you what you must do."[7]The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one.
[8]Saul arose from the ground, and when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.[9]For three days he was without sight, and he neither ate nor drank.

[10]Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias!" He said, "See, I am here, Lord."
[11]The Lord said to him, "Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying.[12]He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might see again."

[13]But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem.[14]He has authority from the chief priests to put in bonds everyone here who calls upon your name."
[15]But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel;[16]for I will show him how much he must suffer for the cause of my name."

[17]So Ananias departed, and entered into the house. Laying his hands on him, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road when you were coming, has sent me so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."[18]Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he received his sight; he arose and was baptized;[19]and he ate and was strengthened.He stayed with the disciples in Damascus for several days.
[20]Right away he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying that he is the Son of God.[21]All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name? He has come here to take them bound to the chief priests."[22]But Saul became more and more powerful, and he was causing distress among the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

[23]After many days, the Jews planned together to kill him.[24]But their plan became known to Saul. They watched the gates day and night in order to kill him.[25]But his disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

[26]When he had come to Jerusalem, Saul attempted to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.[27]But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and he told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how at Damascus Saul had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.
[28]He was with them, going in and out around Jerusalem. He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus[29]and debated with the Grecian Jews; but they kept trying to kill him.[30]When the brothers learned of this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

[31]So then, the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, the church grew in numbers.[32]Now it came about that, as Peter went throughout the whole region, he came down also to God's holy people who lived in the town of Lydda.
[33]There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been in his bed for eight years, for he was paralyzed.[34]Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed," and right away he got up.[35]So everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon saw the man and they turned to the Lord.

[36]Now there was in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha (which is translated "Dorcas"). This woman was full of good works and merciful deeds that she did for the poor.[37]It came about in those days that she fell sick and died; when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.
[38]Since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, pleading with him, "Come to us without delay."[39]Peter arose and went with them. When he had arrived, they brought him to the upper room, and all the widows stood by him weeping, showing him the tunics and garments that Dorcas had made while she had been with them.

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[40]Peter put them all out of the room, knelt down, and prayed; then, turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.[41]Peter then gave her his hand and raised her up; and when he called God's holy people and the widows, he presented her alive to them.[42]This matter became known throughout all Joppa, and many people believed on the Lord.[43]It happened that Peter stayed for many days in Joppa with a man named Simon, a tanner.

Acts 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The Way"

No one knows for sure who first started calling believers "followers of the Way." This is probably what the believers called themselves, because the Bible often speaks of a person living his life as if that person were walking on a path or "way." If this is true, the believers were "following the way of the Lord" by living in a way that pleased God.

"Letters for the synagogues in Damascus"

The "letters" Paul asked for were probably legal papers that permitted him to put Christians in prison. The synagogue leaders in Damascus would have obeyed the letter because it was written by the high priest. If the Romans had seen the letter, they also would have allowed Saul to persecute the Christians, because they permitted the Jews to do as they desired to people who broke their religious laws.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

What Saul saw when he met Jesus

It is clear that Saul saw a light and that it was because of this light that he "fell upon the ground." Some people think that Saul knew that it was the Lord speaking to him without seeing a human form, because the Bible often speaks of God as being light and living in light. Other people think that later in his life he was able to say, "I have seen the Lord Jesus" because it was a human form that he saw here.

Links:

Acts 9:1 Notes

Acts 9:1

General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information telling us what Saul has been doing since the stoning of Stephen.

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts back to Saul and his salvation.

still speaking threats even of murder against the disciples

The noun "murder" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "still speaking threats, even to murder the disciples"

Acts 9:2

General Information:

Verses 1-2 give background information telling us what Saul has been doing since the stoning of Stephen. Here the word "him" refers to the high priest and "he" refers to Saul.

for the synagogues

This refers to the people in the synagogues. Alternate translation: "for the people in the synagogues" or "for the leaders in the synagogues"

if he found any

"when he found people" or "if he found people"

who belonged to the Way

"who followed the teachings of Jesus Christ"

the Way

This term appears to have been a title for Christianity at that time.

he might bring them bound to Jerusalem

"he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem." Paul's purpose can be made clear by adding "so that the Jewish leaders could judge and punish them"

Acts 9:3

Connecting Statement:

After the high priest gave Saul the letters, Saul left for Damascus.

As he was traveling

Saul left Jerusalem and now travels to Damascus.

it happened that

This is an expression that marks a change in the story to show something different is about to happen.

there shone all around him a light out of heaven

"a light from heaven shone all around him"

out of heaven

Possible meanings are 1) out of heaven, where God lives or 2) out of the sky. The first meaning is preferable. Use that meaning if your language has a separate word for it.

Acts 9:4

he fell upon the ground and heard

Possible meanings are that 1) "Saul threw himself to the ground and heard" or 2) "the light caused Saul to fall to the ground, and he heard" or 3) "Saul fell to the ground the way one who faints falls, and he heard"

why are you persecuting me?

This rhetorical question communicates a rebuke to Saul. Alternate translation: "You are persecuting me!" or "Stop persecuting me!"

Acts 9:5

General Information:

Every occurrence of the word "you" here is singular.

Who are you, Lord?

Saul was not acknowledging that Jesus is the Lord. He uses that title because he understood that he spoke to someone of supernatural power.

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Acts 9:6
but rise, enter into the city
"get up and go into the city Damascus"
it will be told you
This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "someone will tell you"
Acts 9:7
stood speechless, hearing the voice, but seeing no one
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "stood speechless. They heard the voice, but they did not see anyone"
but seeing no one
"but they saw no one" or "but they did not see anyone." Apparently only Saul experienced the light.
Acts 9:8
when he opened his eyes
This implies that he had closed his eyes because the light was too bright.
he could see nothing
"he could not see anything." Saul was blind.
Acts 9:9
was without sight
"was blind" or "could not see anything"
he neither ate nor drank
It is not stated whether he chose not to eat or drink as a form of worship, or if he had no appetite because he was too distressed from his situation. It is preferable not to specify the reason.
Acts 9:10
General Information:
The story of Saul continues, and Luke introduces another man named Ananias. This is not the same Ananias who died earlier in Acts [Acts 5:3]
Now there was
This introduces Ananias as a new character.
He said
"Ananias said"
Acts 9:11
go to the street which is called Straight
"go to Straight Street"
house of Judas
This Judas was not the disciple who had betrayed Jesus. This Judas was owner of a house in Damascus where Saul was staying.
a man from Tarsus named Saul
"a man from the city of Tarsus named Saul" or "Saul of Tarsus"
Acts 9:12
laying his hands on him
This was a symbol of giving a spiritual blessing to Saul.
he might see again
"he might regain his ability to see"
Acts 9:13
your holy people in Jerusalem
Here "holy people" refers to Christians. Alternate translation: "the people in Jerusalem who believe in you"
Acts 9:14
authority ... to put in bonds everyone here
It is implied that the extent of the power and authority granted Saul was limited to the Jewish people at this point in time.
put in bonds
Putting someone in bonds is a metonym for arresting that person. Alternate translation: "arrest"
calls upon your name
Here "your name" refers to Jesus.
Acts 9:15
he is a chosen instrument of mine
"chosen instrument" refers to something that is set apart for service. Alternate translation: "I have chosen him to serve me"
to carry my name
This is an expression for identifying or speaking out for Jesus. Alternate translation: "in order that he might speak about me"
Acts 9:16
for the cause of my name
This is an expression meaning "for telling people about me."
Acts 9:17
General Information:
The word "you" here is singular and refers to Saul.
Connecting Statement:
Ananias goes to the house where Saul is staying. After Saul is healed, the story shifts from Ananias back to Saul.
So Ananias departed, and entered into the house
It may be helpful to state that Ananias went to the house before he entered into it. Alternate translation: "So Ananias went, and after he found the house where Saul was, he entered it"
Laying his hands on him
Ananias put his hands on Saul. This was a symbol of giving a blessing to Saul.
so that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you might see again and that the Holy Spirit might fill you"
Acts 9:18
something like scales fell
"something that appeared like fish scales fell"
he received his sight
"he was able to see again"
he arose and was baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he got up and Ananias baptized him"
Acts 9:20
General Information:
Here the first "he" refers to Saul. The second "he" refers to Jesus, the Son of God.
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
Acts 9:21
General Information:
Here "him" and "He" refer to Saul.
All who heard him
The word "All" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "Those who heard him" or "Many who heard him"
Is not this the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this

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name?
This is a rhetorical and negative question that emphasizes that Saul was indeed the man who had persecuted the believers. Alternate translation: "This is the man who destroyed those in Jerusalem who called on this name Jesus!"
this name
Here "name" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "the name of Jesus"
Acts 9:22
causing distress among the Jews
They were distressed in the sense that they could not find a way to refute Saul's arguments that Jesus was the Christ.
Acts 9:23
General Information:
The word "him" in this section refers to Saul.
the Jews
This refers to the leaders of the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
Acts 9:24
But their plan became known to Saul
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But someone told their plan to Saul" or "But Saul learned about their plan"
They watched the gates
This city had a wall surrounding it. People could normally only enter and exit the city through the gates.
Acts 9:25
his disciples
people who believed Saul's message about Jesus and were following his teaching
let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket
"used ropes to lower him in a large basket through an opening in the wall"
Acts 9:26
General Information:
Here the words "he" and "him" refer to Saul.
but they were all afraid of him
Here "they were all" is a generalization, but it is possible that it refers to every person. Alternate translation: "but they were afraid of him"
Acts 9:27
General Information:
Here "him" refers to Saul and "he" refers to Barnabas.
had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus
This is a way of saying he preached or taught the gospel message of Jesus Christ without fear. Alternate translation: "had openly preached the message about Jesus"
Acts 9:28
He was with them, going in and out around Jerusalem
Here the word "He" refers to Saul, and the word "them" probably refers to the apostles and other disciples in Jerusalem. This is an idiom meaning that Paul was able to associate freely with the believers in Jerusalem.
in the name of the Lord Jesus
Possible meanings are 1) this simply refers to the Lord Jesus and tells who Paul spoke about. Alternate translation: "about the Lord Jesus" or 2) "name" is a metonym for authority. Alternate translation: "under the authority of the Lord Jesus" or "with the authority that the Lord Jesus gave him"
Acts 9:29
debated with the Grecian Jews
Saul tried to reason with the Jews who spoke Greek.
Acts 9:30
the brothers
Here the words "the brothers" refer to the believers in Jerusalem.
brought him down to Caesarea
The phrase "brought him down" is used here because Caesarea is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.
sent him away to Tarsus
Caesarea was a seaport. They brothers probably sent Saul to Tarsus by ship.
Acts 9:31
General Information:
Verse 31 is a statement that gives an update on the church's growth.
the church throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria
This is the first use of the singular "church" to refer to more than one local congregation. Here it refers to all the believers in all the groups throughout Israel.
had peace
"lived peacefully." This means the persecution that started with the murder of Stephen was finished.
was built up
The agent was either God or the Holy Spirit. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God helped them grow" or "the Holy Spirit built them up"
walking in the fear of the Lord
"Walking" here is a metaphor for "living." Alternate translation: "living in obedience to the Lord" or "continuing to honor the Lord"
in the comfort of the Holy Spirit
"with the Holy Spirit strengthening and encouraging them"
Acts 9:32
Connecting Statement:
Here the story shifts from Saul to a new part of the story about Peter.
Now it came about
This phrase is used to mark a new part of the story.
throughout the whole region
This is an generalization for Peter's visiting the believers in many places in the region of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.
he came down
The phrase "came down" is used here because Lydda is lower in elevation than the other places where he was traveling.
Lydda
Lydda is a city located about 18 kilometers southeast of Joppa. This city is called Lod in the Old Testament and in modern Israel.
Acts 9:33
There he found a certain man
Peter was not intentionally searching for a paralyzed person, but happened upon him. Alternate translation: "There Peter met a man"
a certain man named Aeneas

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This introduces Aeneas as a new character in the story.

who had been in his bed ... was paralyzed

This is background information about Aeneas.

paralyzed

This means he was unable to walk. He probably was unable to move any part of his body below his waist.

Acts 9:34

make your bed

"roll up your mat"

Acts 9:35

everyone who lived in Lydda and in Sharon

This is a generalization referring to many of the people there. Alternate translation: "those who lived in Lydda and in Sharon" or "many people who lived in Lydda and Sharon"

in Lydda and in Sharon

The city of Lydda was located in the Plain of Sharon.

saw the man

It may be helpful to state that they saw that he was healed. Alternate translation: "saw the man whom Peter had healed"

and they turned to the Lord

Here "turned to the Lord" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "and they repented of their sins and started obeying the Lord"

Acts 9:36

General Information:

Verses 36 and 37 give background information about the woman named Tabitha.

Connecting Statement:

Luke continues the story with a new event about Peter.

Now there was

This introduces a new part in the story.

Tabitha (which is translated "Dorcas"). This woman

Tabitha is her name in the Aramaic language, and Dorcas is her name in the Greek language. Both names mean "gazelle." Alternate translation: "Tabitha, which in the Greek language was Dorcas. This woman"

was full of good works and merciful deeds

"doing many good things and performed merciful deeds"

Acts 9:37

General Information:

Verses 36 and 37 give background information about the woman named Tabitha.

It came about in those days

This refers to the time when Peter was in Joppa. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "It came about while Peter was nearby"

washed her

This was washing to prepare for her burial.

they laid her in an upper room

This was a temporary display of the body during the funeral process.

Acts 9:38

they sent two men to him

"the disciples sent two men to Peter"

Acts 9:39

to the upper room

"to the upstairs room where Dorcas' body was lying"

all the widows

It is possible that all the widows of the town were there since it was not a large town.

widows

women whose husbands had died and therefore needed help

while she had been with them

"while she was still alive with the disciples"

Acts 9:40

put them all out of the room

"told them all to leave the room." Peter had everyone leave so he could be alone to pray for Tabitha.

Acts 9:41

gave her his hand and raised her up

Peter took hold of her hand and helped her to sit up in the bed and then stand up on the floor.

God's holy people and the widows

The widows were possibly also believers but are mentioned specifically because Tabitha was so important to them.

Acts 9:42

Connecting Statement:

The story of Tabitha ends in verse 42. Verse 43 tells us what happens to Peter after the story ends.

This matter became known throughout all Joppa

This refers to the miracle of Peter's raising Tabitha from the dead. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People throughout all Joppa heard about this matter"

believed on the Lord

"believed in the gospel of the Lord Jesus"

Acts 9:43

Connecting Statement:

The story of Tabitha ends in verse 42. Verse 43 tells us what happens to Peter after the story ends.

It happened that

"It came about that." This introduces the beginning of the next event in the story.

Simon, a tanner

"a man named Simon who made leather from animal skins"

---

10 [1]Now there was a certain man in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian
Company of Soldiers.[2]He was a devout man, one who feared God with all his household, gave many alms to the
people, and prayed to God constantly.
[3]About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God coming to him. The angel said to him,
"Cornelius!"[4]Cornelius stared at the angel and was very afraid and said, "What is it, sir?"The angel said to him, "Your
prayers and your alms have gone up as a memorial offering into God's presence.
[5]Now send men to the city of Joppa to bring a man named Simon who is called Peter.[6]He is staying with a tanner named
Simon, whose house is by the seaside."

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[7]When the angel who spoke to him had left, Cornelius called two of his house servants, and a devout soldier from among those who served him.[8]Cornelius told them all that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

[9]Now on the next day at about the sixth hour, as they were on their journey and were approaching the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray.[10]He then became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while the people were cooking some food, a trance came on him,[11]and he saw the sky open and a certain container descending, something like a large sheet coming down to the earth, let down by its four corners.[12]In it were all kinds of four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky.
[13]Then a voice spoke to him: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat."
[14]But Peter said, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean."
[15]But the voice came to him again a second time: "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled."[16]This happened three times; then the container was immediately taken back up into the sky.

[17]Now while Peter was very confused about what the vision that he had seen could mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius stood before the gate, after they had asked their way to the house.[18]They called out and asked whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.

[19]While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you.[1][20]Arise and go down and go with them. Do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them."
[21]So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am he whom you are seeking. Why have you come?"

[22]They said, "A centurion named Cornelius, a righteous man and one who fears God, and is well spoken of by all the nation of the Jews, was instructed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house, so he could listen to a message from you."[23]So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him.On the next morning he got up and went with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.
[24]On the following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them; he had called together his relatives and his close friends.
[25]It came about that when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet to worship him.[26]But Peter helped him up, saying, "Stand up! I too am a man."

[27]While Peter was talking with him, he went in and found many people gathered together.[28]He said to them, "You yourselves know that it is not lawful for a Jewish man to associate with or to visit a foreigner. But God has shown me that I should not call any man defiled or unclean.[29]That is why I came without arguing, when I was sent for. So I ask you why you sent for me."

[30]Cornelius said, "Four days ago at this very hour, I was praying at the ninth hour in my house; and see, a man stood before me in bright clothing.[31]He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard by God, and your alms have reminded God about you.[32]So send someone to Joppa, and call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying in the house of a tanner named Simon, by the seaside.'[2][33]So at once I sent for you. You are kind to have come. Now then, we are all here present in the sight of God to hear everything that you have been instructed by the Lord to say."[3]

[34]Then Peter opened his mouth and said, "Truly I understand that God is not partial.[35]Instead, in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.
[36]You know the message that he sent to the people of Israel, when he announced the good news about peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all—[37]you yourselves know the events that took place, which occurred throughout all Judea, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John announced;[38]the events concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.
[39]We are witnesses of all the things Jesus did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree,[40]but God raised him up on the third day and caused him to be seen,[41]not by all the people, but to the witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.
[42]He commanded us to proclaim to the people and to testify that this is the one who has been chosen by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead.[43]About him all the prophets testify, that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

[44]While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all of those who were listening to his message.[45]The people who belonged to the circumcision group of believers—all of those who came with Peter—were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also on the Gentiles.

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[46]For they heard these Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered,[47]"Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?"[48]Then he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for several days.

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[1]Some ancient copies have, two men are looking for you or some men are looking for you .
[2]Some ancient copies add: When he comes, he will speak to you.
[3]Instead of instructed by the Lord to say, some ancient copies have, instructed by God to say.

Acts 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Unclean

The Jews believed that they could become unclean in God's sight if they visited or ate food with a Gentile. This was because the Pharisees had made a law against it because they wanted to keep people from eating foods that the law of Moses said were unclean. The law of Moses did say that some foods were unclean, but it did not say that God's people could not visit or eat with Gentiles. (See: clean and lawofmoses)

Baptism and the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit "fell on" those who were listening to Peter. This showed the Jewish believers that Gentiles could receive the word of God and receive the Holy Spirit just as the Jewish believers had. After that, the Gentiles were baptized.

Links:

Acts 10:1 Notes

Acts 10:1

General Information:

The writer begins to give background information about Cornelius.

Connecting Statement:

This is the beginning of the part of the story about Cornelius.

Now there was a certain man

This was a way of introducing a new person to this part of the historical account.

in the city of Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Company of Soldiers

"from Caesarea whose name was Cornelius. He was an officer in charge of 60 soldiers from the Italian Company of Soldiers, in the Roman army"

Acts 10:2

General Information:

The writer finishes giving background information about Cornelius.

a devout man

a man who wanted to do what God expected of him

feared God

worshiped God with deep respect and awe

prayed to God constantly

The word "constantly" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "prayed to God often" or "he prayed to God regularly"

Acts 10:3

the ninth hour

"three o'clock in the afternoon." This was the normal afternoon prayer time for Jews.

he clearly saw

"Cornelius clearly saw"

Acts 10:4

Your prayers and your alms have gone up ... into God's presence

It is implied that his gifts and prayers had been accepted by God. Alternate translation: "God is pleased by your prayers and alms. They have gone up ... to him"

Acts 10:6

a tanner

a person who makes leather from animal skins

Acts 10:7

When the angel who spoke to him had left

"When Cornelius' vision of the angel had ended."

a devout soldier

a soldier who wanted to do what God expected of him. See how you translated "devout" in Acts 10:2.

Acts 10:8

told them all that had happened

Cornelius explained his vision to his two servants and to one of his soldiers.

sent them to Joppa

"sent two of his two servants and the one soldier to Joppa."

Acts 10:9

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Cornelius' two servants and the soldier under Cornelius' command (Acts 10:7).

Connecting Statement:

The story shifts away from Cornelius to tell us what God is doing with to Peter.

about the sixth hour

"around noon"

up upon the housetop

The roofs of the houses were flat, and people often did many different activities on them.

Acts 10:10

while the people were cooking some food

"before the people finished cooking the food"

a trance came on him

This metaphor means that Peter went into the trance without expecting it or desiring it. Alternate translation: "he went into a trance"

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trance
Peter saw things in his mind, not with his physical eyes.
Acts 10:11
he saw the sky open
This was the beginning of Peter's vision. It can be a new sentence.
something like a large sheet ... four corners
The container holding the animals had the appearance of a large square piece of cloth.
let down by its four corners
"with its four corners suspended" or "with its four corners higher than the rest of it"
Acts 10:12
things that crawled on the earth
snakes and insects, as opposed to "four-footed animals"
Acts 10:13
a voice spoke to him
The person speaking is not specified. The "voice" was probably God, although it could possibly have been an angel from God.
Acts 10:14
Not so
"I will not do that"
I have never eaten anything that was defiled and unclean
It is implied that some of the "four-footed animals and things that crawled on the earth, and birds of the sky"
Acts 10:15
What God has made clean, you must not call defiled
This refers to the animals in the sheet.
What God has made clean
If God is the speaker, he is referring to himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "What I, God, have made clean"
Acts 10:16
This happened three times
Possible meanings are 1) Peter heard the words "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled" three times or 2) a total of three times the sheet came down from heaven and Peter heard and responded to the voice. It would be best to translate without adding information here.
Acts 10:17
Peter was very confused
This means that Peter was having difficulty understanding what the vision meant.
behold
The word "behold" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows, in this case, the two men standing at the gate.
stood before the gate
"stood before the gate to the house." It is implied that this house had a wall with a gate one would use to enter the property.
after they had asked their way to the house
This happened before they arrived at the house. This could be stated earlier in the verse, as the UDB does.
Acts 10:18
They called out
Cornelius' men remained outside the gate while asking about Peter.
Acts 10:19
thinking about the vision
"wondering about the meaning of the vision"
the Spirit
"the Holy Spirit"
Behold, three
"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: three"
three men are looking for you
Some ancient texts have a different number of men.
Acts 10:20
go down
"go down from the roof of the house"
Do not hesitate to go with them
It would be natural for Peter not to want to go with them, because they were strangers and they were Gentiles.
Acts 10:21
I am he whom you are seeking
"I am the man you are looking for"
Acts 10:22
General Information:
The word "They" here refer to the two servants and the soldier from Cornelius (Acts 10:7).
A centurion named Cornelius ... listen to a message from you
This can be divided into several sentences and stated in active form as the UDB does.
fears God
worships God with deep respect and awe
all the nation of the Jews
This number of people is exaggerated with the word "all" to emphasize how widely this was known among the Jews.
Acts 10:23
General Information:
The word "them" here refer to the two servants and the soldier from Cornelius (Acts 10:7).
So Peter invited them to come in and stay with him
The journey to Caesarea was too long for them to begin that afternoon.
stay with him
"be his guests"
some of the brothers from Joppa
This refers to believers who lived in Joppa.
Acts 10:24
On the following day
This was the next day after they left Joppa. The journey to Caesarea took longer than one day.
Cornelius was waiting for them
"Cornelius expected them"
Acts 10:25
when Peter entered
"when Peter entered the house"
fell down at his feet to worship him
"he knelt down and put his face close to Peter's feet." He did this to honor Peter.
fell down
He purposely did this to show that he was worshiping.
Acts 10:26
Stand up! I too am a man
Peter was rebuking Cornelius mildly for worshiping Peter.

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Alternate translation: "Do not worship me! I am only a man, as you are"
Acts 10:27
General Information:
The word "him" here refers to Cornelius, and "he" refers to Peter.
Connecting Statement:
Peter addresses the people who are gathered in Cornelius' house.
many people gathered together
"many Gentile people gathered together." It is implied that these people Cornelius had invited were Gentiles.
Acts 10:28
General Information:
Here the words "You" and "yourselves" include Cornelius as well as the Gentiles who were present and so are plural.
it is not lawful for a Jewish man
"it is forbidden for a Jewish man." This refers to the Jewish religious law.
a foreigner
people who are not Jews
Acts 10:29
General Information:
Here both instances of "you" include Cornelius as well as the Gentiles who were present and so are plural.
Acts 10:30
General Information:
In verses 31 and 32 Cornelius quotes what the angel had said to him when he appeared to him at the ninth hour. The words "you" and "your" are all singular. The word "we" here does not include Peter.
Connecting Statement:
Cornelius responds to Peter's question.
Four days ago
Cornelius is referring to the day before the third night before he is speaking to Peter. Biblical culture counts the current day, so the day before three nights ago is "four days ago." Current Western culture does not count the current day, so many Western translations read, "three days ago."
praying
Some ancient authorities say "fasting and praying" instead of simply "praying."
at the ninth hour
The normal afternoon time that the Jews pray to God.
Acts 10:31
your prayer has been heard by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has heard your prayer"
reminded God about you
"brought you to God's attention." This does not imply that God had forgotten.
Acts 10:32
call to you a man named Simon who is called Peter
"tell Simon who is also called Peter to come to you"
Acts 10:33
at once
"right away"
You are kind to have come
This expression is a polite way of thanking Peter for coming. Alternate translation: "I certainly thank you for coming"
we are all here
This refers to Cornelius and his family but not to Peter, so this is exclusive.
present in the sight of God
"present with God"
that you have been instructed by the Lord to say
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the Lord has told you to say"
Acts 10:34
Connecting Statement:
Peter begins speaking to everyone in the house of Cornelius.
opened his mouth
"began to speak"
Truly
This means that what he is about to say is especially important to know.
God is not partial
"God does not favor certain people"
Acts 10:35
anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him
"he accepts anyone who fears him and does what is right"
to him
to God
fears
worships with deep respect and awe
Acts 10:36
General Information:
All instances of "he" here refers to God.
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues to talk to Cornelius and his guests.
who is Lord of all
Here "all" means "all people."
Acts 10:37
throughout all Judea
The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "throughout Judea" or "in many places in Judea"
after the baptism that John announced
"after John preached to the people to repent and then baptized them"
Acts 10:38
the events ... and with power
This long sentence, which begins in verse 36, can be shortened into several sentences as in the UDB.
God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power
The Holy Spirit and God's power are spoken of as if they are something that can be poured out onto a person.
all who were oppressed by the devil
The word "all" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "those who were oppressed by the devil" or "many people who were oppressed by the devil"
God was with him
The idiom "was with him" means "was helping him."
Acts 10:39
General Information:
The word "We" refer to Peter and the apostles and believers who were with Jesus when he was on earth, not to his

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hearers. The word "him" here refers to Jesus.
in the country of the Jews
This refers mainly to Judea at that time.
hanging him on a tree
This is another expression that refers to crucifixion. Alternate translation: "nailing him to a wooden cross"
Acts 10:40
General Information:
Both instances of "him" refer to Jesus.
God raised him up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "God caused him to live again"
the third day
"the third day after he died"
caused him to be seen
"permitted many people to see him after he was raised from the dead"
Acts 10:41
General Information:
The word "us" refers to Peter and the apostles and believers who were with Jesus when he was on earth, not to his hearers. The words "him" and "he" here refers to Jesus.
from the dead
From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld.
Acts 10:42
General Information:
Here the word "us" includes Peter and believers. It excludes his audience.
that this is the one who has been chosen by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God chose this Jesus"
the living and the dead
This refers to people who are still living and people who have died. Alternate translation: "the people who are alive and the people who are dead"
Acts 10:43
Connecting Statement:
Peter finishes his speech to everyone in the house of Cornelius, which he began in Acts 10:34.
About him all the prophets testify
"All the prophets testify about Jesus"
everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins
This could be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will forgive the sins of everyone who believes in Jesus because of what Jesus has done"
through his name
Here "his name" refers to the actions of Jesus. His name means God who saves. Alternate translation: "through what Jesus has done for them"
Acts 10:44
the Holy Spirit fell
Here the word "fell" indicates that the event happened suddenly. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit suddenly came"
all of those who were listening
Here "all" refers to all the Gentiles at the house who were listening to Peter.
Acts 10:45
the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out also
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also poured out the Holy Spirit"
the gift of the Holy Spirit
That is, the Holy Spirit himself was the gift.
poured out
The Holy Spirit is spoken of as if he were something that could be poured out upon people. It implies a generous amount. Alternate translation: "generously given"
the gift
"the free gift"
also on the Gentiles
Here "also" refers to the fact that the Holy Spirit had already been given to the Jewish believers.
Acts 10:46
Gentiles speaking in tongues and exalting God
These were known spoken languages that caused the Jews to acknowledge that the Gentiles were indeed praising God.
speaking in tongues
Here "tongues" is a metonym for languages. Alternate translation: "speaking in other languages"
Acts 10:47
Can anyone keep water from these people so they should not be baptized, these people who have received ... we?
Peter uses this question to convince the Jewish Christians that the Gentile believers should be baptized. Alternate translation: "No one should keep water from these people! We should baptize them because they have received ... we!"
Acts 10:48
General Information:
The words "he" and "him" refer to Peter.
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Cornelius.
he commanded them to be baptized
It is implied that the Jewish Christians were the ones who would baptize them. Alternate translation: "Peter commanded the Gentile believers to allow the Jewish Christians to baptize them" or "Peter commanded the Jewish Christians to baptize them"
be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ
Here "in the name of Jesus Christ" expresses that the reason for their baptism was that they believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: "be baptized as believers in Jesus Christ"

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11 [1]Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.
[2]When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, they who belonged to the circumcision group criticized him;[3]they said, "You associated with uncircumcised men and ate with them!"
[4]But Peter started to explain the matter to them in detail, saying,[5]"I was praying in the city of Joppa, and in a trance I saw a vision of a container coming down, like a large sheet let down from heaven by its four corners. It descended to me.[6]I

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gazed at it and I thought about it. I saw the four-legged animals of earth, wild beasts, things that crawled, and birds of the sky.
[7]Then I heard a voice say to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat!'
[8]I said, 'Not so, Lord; for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.'
[9]But the voice answered again from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call defiled.'[10]This happened three times, and then everything was taken back up into heaven again.

[11]"Behold, right away there were three men standing in front of the house where we were; they had been sent from Caesarea to me.[12]The Spirit commanded me to go with them, and that I should make no distinction regarding them. These six brothers went with me, and we went into the man's house.[13]He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send men to Joppa and bring back Simon who is called Peter.[14]He will speak to you a message by which you will be saved—you and all your household.'
[15]As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning.[16]I remembered the words of the Lord, how he said, 'John indeed baptized with water; but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'
[17]Then if God gave to them the same gift as he gave to us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could oppose God?"
[18]When they heard these things, they said nothing in response, but they glorified God and said, "Then God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also."

[19]Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word only to Jews.[20]But some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, came to Antioch and spoke also to Greeks, proclaiming to them the gospel about the Lord Jesus.[21]The hand of the Lord was with them; a great number believed and turned to the Lord.
[22]News about them came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas as far as Antioch.[23]When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad and he encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.
[24]For he was a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and many people were added to the Lord.
[25]Barnabas then went out to Tarsus to search carefully for Saul.[26]When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. It came about that for an entire year they gathered together with the church and taught many people. The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

[27]Now in these days some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.[28]One of them, Agabus by name, stood up and indicated by the Spirit that a great famine would occur over all the world. This happened in the days of Claudius.
[29]So the disciples, as each one was able, determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brothers in Judea.[30]They did this; they sent money to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The Gentiles also had received the word of God"

Almost all of the first believers were Jewish. Luke writes in this chapter that many Gentiles started to believe in Jesus. They believed that the message about Jesus was true and so began to "receive the word of God." Some of the believers in Jerusalem did not believe that Gentiles could truly follow Jesus, so Peter went to them and told them what had happened to him and how he had seen the Gentiles receive the Word of God and receive the Holy Spirit.

Links:

Acts 11:1 Notes

Acts 11:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new event in the story.

Now

This marks a new part of the story.

the brothers

The phrase "brothers" here refers to the believers in Judea.

who were in Judea

"who were in the province of Judea"

had received the word of God

This expression refers to the fact that the Gentiles believed the gospel message about Jesus. Alternate translation: "believed the message of God about Jesus"

Acts 11:2

Connecting Statement:

Peter arrives in Jerusalem and begins talking to the Jews there.

had come up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of coming up to Jerusalem and going down from it.

they who belonged to the circumcision group

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This is a reference to some of the Jews who believed that every believer must be circumcised. Alternate translation: "some Jewish believers in Jerusalem who wanted all followers of Christ to be circumcised"

Acts 11:3

uncircumcised men

The phrase "uncircumcised men" refers to Gentiles.

ate with them

It was against Jewish tradition for Jews to eat with Gentiles.

Acts 11:4

Connecting Statement:

Peter responds to the Jews by telling them about his vision and about what had happened at Cornelius' house.

Peter started to explain

Peter did not criticize the Jewish believers but reacted in a friendly, explanatory manner.

in detail

"exactly what happened"

Acts 11:5

in a trance I saw

Peter saw something that was only in his mind. It was not physical. His mind was not working in its usual way. See how you translated similar words in Acts 10:10.

like a large sheet

The container holding the animals had the appearance of a large square piece of cloth. See how you translated this in Acts 10:11.

by its four corners

"with its four corners suspended" or "with its four corners higher than the rest of it." See how you translated this in Acts 10:11.

Acts 11:6

four-legged animals of earth

From Peter's response, it can be implied that the law of Moses commanded the Jews not to eat some of them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Acts 10:12]

wild beasts

This probably refer to the animals people do not or cannot tame or control.

things that crawled

snakes and insects, as opposed to "four-footed animals." See how you translated this in Acts 10:12.

Acts 11:7

I heard a voice

The person speaking is not specified. The "voice" was probably God, although it could possibly have been an angel from God. See how you translated "a voice" in [Acts 10:13]

Acts 11:8

Not so

"I will not do that." See how you translated this in Acts 10:14.

nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth

Apparently the animals in the sheet were animals which the Jewish law in the Old Testament forbade the Jews to eat. This can be said in a positive way. Alternate translation: "I have eaten only meat from holy and clean animals"

unclean

In the Old Testament Jewish law, a person became ritually "unclean" in various ways, such as eating certain forbidden animals.

Acts 11:9

What God has made clean, you must not call defiled

This refers to the animals in the sheet.

Acts 11:10

This happened three times

Possible meanings are 1) Peter heard the words "What God has made clean, you must not call defiled" three times or 2) a total of three times the sheet came down from heaven and Peter heard and responded to the voice. It would be best to translate without adding information here. See how you translated "This happened three times" in Acts 10:16.

Acts 11:11

General Information:

Here "we" refers to Peter and the believers in Joppa. It does not include his current audience in Jerusalem.

Behold

This word alerts us to the new people in the story. Your language may have a way of doing this.

right away

"immediately" or "at that exact moment"

they had been sent

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had sent them"

Acts 11:12

that I should make no distinction regarding them

"that I should not be concerned that they were Gentiles"

These six brothers went with me

"These six brothers went with me to Caesarea"

These six brothers

"These six Jewish believers"

into the man's house

This refers to the house of Cornelius.

Acts 11:13

Simon who is called Peter

"Simon who is also called Peter." See how you translated the same phrase in Acts 10:32.

Acts 11:14

all your household

This refers to all the people in the household. Alternate translation: "everyone who lives in your house"

Acts 11:15

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to Peter, the other apostles, and all of the Jewish believers who had received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

As I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit came on them

This implies that Peter had not finished speaking but had intended to say more.

the Holy Spirit came on them, just as on us in the beginning

Peter leaves out some things to keep the story short. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit came on the Gentile believers, just as he came on the Jewish believers at Pentecost"

in the beginning

Peter is referring to the day of Pentecost.

Acts 11:16

you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will baptize you with the Holy Spirit"

Acts 11:17

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Cornelius and his Gentile guests and household. The word "us" refers to the speaker and his hearers and so is inclusive.

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes his speech (which he began in Acts 11:4) to the Jews about his vision and about what had happened at the house of Cornelius.

Then if God gave to them ... who was I, that I could oppose God?

Peter uses this question to emphasize that he was only obeying God. Alternate translation: "Since God gave to them ... I decided that I could not oppose God!"

the same gift

Peter refers to the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 11:18

General Information:

The word "they" refers to the Jewish believers to whom Peter spoke.

they said nothing in response

"they did not argue with Peter"

God has given repentance for life to the Gentiles also

"God has given repentance that leads to life to the Gentiles also." Here "life" refers to eternal life. The abstract nouns "repentance" and "life" can be translated as the verbs "repent" and "live." Alternate translation: "God has also given the Gentiles the ability to repent and then live eternally" or "God has allowed the Gentiles also to repent and live eternally"

Acts 11:19

Connecting Statement:

Luke tells about what happened to the believers who fled after the stoning of Stephen.

Now

This introduces the new part of the story.

those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread

The Jews began persecuting Jesus's followers because Stephen had said and done things that the Jews did not like. Because of this persecution, many of Jesus's followers left Jerusalem and went to many different places.

spread

"went in many different directions"

who had been scattered by the persecution that arose over Stephen spread

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Jews had been persecuting because of Stephen, and so had left Jerusalem, spread"

the persecution that arose over Stephen

the persecution that happened because of what Stephen had said and done

only to Jews

The believers thought God's message was for the Jewish people, and not for the Gentiles.

Acts 11:20

spoke also to Greeks

These Greek-speaking people were Gentiles, not Jews. Alternate translation: "also spoke to Gentiles who spoke Greek"

Acts 11:21

The hand of the Lord was with them

God's hand signifies his powerful help. Alternate translation: "God was powerfully enabling those believers to preach effectively"

turned to the Lord

Here "turned to the Lord" is a metaphor for starting to obey the Lord. Alternate translation: "they repented of their sins and began to obey the Lord"

Acts 11:22

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas. The word "they" refers to the believers of the church at Jerusalem.

ears of the church

Here "ears" refers to the believers' hearing about the event. Alternate translation: "the believers in the church"

Acts 11:23

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas. The word "them" refers to the believers he met on his way to Antioch.

saw the grace of God

"saw how God acted kindly toward the believers"

he encouraged them

"he kept on encouraging them"

to remain with the Lord

"to remain faithful to the Lord" or "to continue to trust in the Lord"

with purpose of heart

Here the "heart" refers to a person's will and desire. Alternate translation: "with all their will" or "with complete commitment"

Acts 11:24

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas.

full of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit controlled Barnabas as he obeyed the Holy Spirit.

many people were added to the Lord

Here "added" means they came to believe the same thing as the others. Alternate translation: "many more people also believed in the Lord"

Acts 11:25

out to Tarsus

"out to the city of Tarsus"

Acts 11:26

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Barnabas and "him" to Saul.

When he found him

It probably took some time and effort for Barnabas to locate Saul.

It came about

This begins a new event in the story.

they gathered together with the church

"Barnabas and Saul gathered together with the church"

The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch

This implies that it was other people who called the believers Christians. This can be stated in active form.

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Alternate translation: "People in Antioch were the fist to call the disciples Christians"

Acts 11:27

General Information:

Here Luke tells background information about a prophecy in Antioch.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story-line.

came down from Jerusalem to Antioch

Jerusalem was higher in elevation than Antioch, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem or going down from it.

Acts 11:28

Agabus by name

"whose name was Agabus"

indicated by the Spirit

"the Holy Spirit enabled him to prophesy"

a great famine would occur

"a great shortage of food would happen"

over all the world

This was a generalization referring to the part of the world that they were interested in. Alternate translation: "all over the inhabited world" or "throughout the Roman Empire"

in the days of Claudius

Luke's audience would know that Claudius was the emperor of Rome at that time. Alternate translation: "when Claudius was the Roman emperor"

Acts 11:29

So

This word means marks an event that happened because of something else that happened first. In this case, they sent money because of Agabus' prophesy or the famine.

as each one was able

The richer people sent more; the poorer people sent less.

the brothers in Judea

"the believers in Judea"

Acts 11:30

General Information:

The words "They" and "they" refer to the believers in the church in Antioch (Acts 11:27).

by the hand of Barnabas and Saul

The hand is a synecdoche for the action of the whole person. Alternate translation: "by having Barnabas and Saul take it to them"

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12 [1]Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some who belonged to the church so that he might mistreat them.
[2]He killed James the brother of John with the sword.
[3]After he saw that this pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. That was during the days of unleavened bread.
[4]After arresting him, he put him in prison, assigning him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him; he was intending to bring him to the people after the Passover.
[5]So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church.[6]On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison.
[7]Behold, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared by him, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him and said, "Get up quickly," and his chains fell off his hands.[8]The angel said to him, "Gird yourself and put on your sandals." Peter did so. The angel said to him, "Put on your outer garment and follow me."
[9]So Peter followed the angel and went out. He did not know that what was done by the angel was real. He thought he was seeing a vision.[10]After they had passed by the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that led into the city; it opened for them by itself. They went out and went down a street, and the angel left him right away.
[11]When Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that the Lord has sent his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting."[12]When he realized this, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying.
[13]When he knocked at the door of the gate, a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.[14]When she recognized Peter's voice, out of joy she failed to open the gate; instead, she came running into the room; she reported that Peter was standing at the gate.[15]So they said to her, "You are insane." But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel."
[16]But Peter continued knocking, and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed.[17]Peter motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and he told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison. He said, "Report these things to James and the brothers." Then he left and went to another place.
[18]Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter.[19]After Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death.Then Herod went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.
[20]Now Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. They went to him with one purpose, and after persuading Blastus, the king's assistant, to help them, they asked for peace because their country received its food from the king's country.[21]On a set day Herod dressed himself in royal clothing and sat on a throne; he made a speech to them.
[22]The people shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man!"[23]Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give God the glory; he was eaten by worms and died.

[24]But the word of God increased and multiplied.
[25]So when Barnabas and Saul had completed their mission, they returned from Jerusalem,[1] bringing with them John, also called Mark.

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[1]Some ancient copies read, they returned to Jerusalem.

Acts 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapter 12 tells what happened to King Herod while Barnabas was bringing Saul back from Tarsus and they were delivering money from Antioch Jerusalem (11:25-30). He killed many of the leaders of the church, and he put Peter in prison. After God helped Peter escape the prison, Herod killed the prison guards, and then God killed Herod. In the last verse of the chapter, Luke tells how Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Personification

The "word of God" is spoken of as if it were a living thing that could grow and become many.

Links:

Acts 12:1 Notes

Acts 12:1

General Information:

This is background information about Herod's killing James.

Connecting Statement:

This begins the new persecution, first of James's death and then of Peter's imprisonment and then release.

Now

This begins a new part of the story.

about that time

This refers to the time of the famine.

laid hands on

This means Herod had the believers arrested. See how you translated this in [Acts 4:3]

some who belonged to the church

Only James and Peter are specified, which implies that these were leaders of the church in Jerusalem.

so that he might mistreat them

"in order to cause the believers to suffer"

Acts 12:2

He killed James ... with the sword

This tells the manner in which James was killed.

He killed James

Possible meanings are 1) Herod himself killed James or 2) Herod ordered someone to kill James. Alternate translation: "Herod gave the order and they killed James"

Acts 12:3

General Information:

Here the word "he" refers to Herod (Acts 12:1).

After he saw that this pleased the Jews

"When Herod realized that putting James to death pleased the Jewish leaders"

pleased the Jews

"made the Jewish leaders happy"

That was

"Herod did this" or "This happened"

the days of unleavened bread

This refers to the Jewish religious feast time during the Passover season. Alternate translation: "the festival when the Jewish people ate bread without yeast"

Acts 12:4

four squads of soldiers

"four groups of soldiers." Each squad had four soldiers that guarded Peter, one group at a time. The groups divided the 24 hour day into four shifts. Each time two soldiers would have been at his side and the other two soldiers by the entrance.

he was intending to bring him to the people

"Herod planned to judge Peter in the presence of the people" or "Herod planned to judge Peter before the Jewish people"

Acts 12:5

So Peter was kept in the prison

This implies that the soldiers continually guarded Peter in prison. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "So the soldiers guarded Peter in the prison"

prayer was made earnestly to God for him by those in the church

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the group of believers in Jerusalem earnestly prayed to God for him"

earnestly

continuously and with dedication

Acts 12:6

On the night before Herod was going to bring him out for trial

That Herod planned to execute him can be clarified. Alternate translation: "The happened on the day before Herod was going to bring Peter out from prison to put him on trial and then to execute him"

bound with two chains

"tied with two chains" or "fastened with two chains." Each chain would have been attached to one of the two guards who stayed beside Peter.

were keeping watch over the prison

"were guarding the prison doors"

Acts 12:7

General Information:

The words "him" and "his" refer to Peter.

Behold

This word alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

by him

"next to him" or "beside him"

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in the prison cell
"in the prison room"
He struck Peter
"The angel tapped Peter" or "The angel poked Peter." Peter was evidently sleeping deeply enough that this was required to wake him.
his chains fell off his hands
The angel caused the chains to fall from Peter without touching them.
Acts 12:8
Gird yourself and put on your sandals
Peter had probably loosened his belt and taken off his sandals so he could go to sleep. The angel was telling Peter to get ready to leave the cell.
Peter did so
"Peter did what the angel told him to do" or "Peter obeyed"
Acts 12:9
General Information:
Here the word "He" refers to Peter. The words "they" and "They" refer to Peter and the angel.
He did not know
"He did not understand"
what was done by the angel was real
This could be changed to active form. Alternate translation: "the actions of the angel were real" or "what the angel did truly happened"
Acts 12:10
After they had passed by the first guard and the second
It is implied that the soldiers were not able to see Peter and the angel as they walked by. Alternate translation: "The first and second guards did not see them as they passed by, and then"
had passed by
"had walked by"
and the second
The word "guard" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and the second guard"
they came to the iron gate
"Peter and the angel arrived at the iron gate"
that led into the city
"that opened to the city" or "that went from the prison to the city"
it opened for them by itself
Here "by itself" means neither Peter nor the angel opened it. Alternate translation: "the gate swung open for them" or "the gate opened itself for them"
went down a street
"walked along a street"
left him right away
"left Peter suddenly" or "suddenly disappeared"
Acts 12:11
When Peter came to himself
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "When Peter became fully awake and alert" or "When Peter became aware that what had happened was real"
delivered me out of the hand of Herod
Here "the hand of Herod" refers to "Herod's hold" or "Herod's plans." Alternate translation: "brought me from the harm Herod had planned for me"
delivered me
"rescued me"
everything the Jewish people were expecting
Here "the people of the Jews" probably referred mainly to the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "all that the Jewish leaders thought would happen to me"
Acts 12:12
realized this
He became aware that God had rescued him.
John, also called Mark
John was also called Mark. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "John, whom people also called Mark"
Acts 12:13
he knocked
"Peter knocked." Tapping on the door was a normal Jewish custom to let others know you wish to visit them. You may need to change this to fit your culture.
at the door of the gate
"at the outer door" or "at the door of the entrance from the street to the courtyard"
came to answer
"came to the gate to ask who was knocking"
Acts 12:14
General Information:
Here all instances of "she" refer to the servant girl Rhoda (Acts 12:13).
out of joy
"because she was so joyful" or "being overly excited"
failed to open the gate
"did not open the gate" or "forgot to open the gate"
came running into the room
You may prefer to say "went running into the room in the house"
she reported
"she told them" or "she said"
Acts 12:15
General Information:
Here the words "she" and "her" both refer to the servant girl Rhoda (Acts 10:13), and the words "they" and "They" refer to the people who were inside praying (Acts 10:12).
You are insane
The people not only did not believe her, but rebuked her by saying she was crazy. Alternate translation: "You are crazy"
she insisted that it was so
"she insisted that what she said was true"
They said
"They answered"
It is his angel
"What you have seen is Peter's angel." Some Jews believed in guardian angels and may have thought that Peter's angel had come to them.
Acts 12:16
General Information:
Here both instances of "they" refer to the people in the house. The word "him" refers to Peter.
But Peter continued knocking
The word "continued" means that Peter kept knocking the entire time those inside were talking.

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Acts 12:17
General Information:
Here both instances of "them" refer to the people who were inside praying (Acts 12:12).
Report these things
"Tell these things"
the brothers
"the other believers"
Acts 12:18
Now
This word is used to mark a break in the story-line. Time has passed; it is now the next day.
when it became day
"in the morning"
there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter
This phrase is used to emphasize what really happened. This could be said in a positive way. Alternate translation: "there was a great disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter"
there was no small disturbance among the soldiers over what had happened to Peter
The abstract noun "disturbance" can be expressed with the words "disturbed" or "upset." Alternate translation: "the soldiers were very disturbed about what had happened to Peter"
Acts 12:19
General Information:
The word "him" here refers to Peter, and both instances of "he" refers to Herod.
After Herod had searched for him and could not find him
"After Herod searched for Peter and could not find him"
After Herod had searched for him
Possible meanings are that 1) "Herod" here is a metonym for his soldiers, that is, when Herod heard Peter was missing, he sent other soldiers to search the prison, or 2) when Herod heard Peter was missing, he went himself to search the prison.
he questioned the guards and ordered them to be put to death
It was the normal punishment for the Roman government to kill the guards if their prisoner escaped.
Then Herod went down
The phrase "went down" is used here because Caesarea is lower in elevation than Judea.
Acts 12:20
Connecting Statement:
Luke continues with another event in Herod's life.
Now
This word is used here to mark the next event in the story.
very angry
This phrase translates a word that speaks of a person being so angry that he is ready to kill other people.
They went to him with one purpose
Here the word "They" is a generalization. It is unlikely that all the people of Tyre and Sidon went to Herod. Alternate translation: "Men representing the people of Tyre and Sidon went with one purpose to talk with Herod"
with one purpose
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
after persuading Blastus
"after these men persuaded Blastus"
Blastus
a man's name
the king's assistant
This phrase refers to a person who assists the king in his personal life, not necessarily his work as ruler.
they asked for peace
"these men requested peace"
their country received its food from the king's country
They probably purchased this food. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre and Sidon bought all their food from the people that Herod ruled"
received its food
It is implied that Herod restricted this supply of food because he was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon.
Acts 12:21
On a set day
This was probably the day on which Herod agreed to meet with the representatives. Alternate translation: "On the day when Herod agreed to meet them"
royal clothing
expensive clothing that would demonstrate he was the king
sat on a throne
This was where Herod formally addressed people who came to see him.
Acts 12:23
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Herod.
Immediately an angel
"Right away an angel" or "While the people were praising Herod, an angel"
struck him
"afflicted Herod" or "caused Herod to become very ill"
he did not give God the glory
Herod let those people worship him instead of telling them to worship God.
he was eaten by worms and died
Here "worms" refers to worms inside the body, probably intestinal worms. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "worms ate Herod's insides and he died"
Acts 12:24
the word of God increased and multiplied
The word of God is spoken of as if it were a living plant able to grow and reproduce. Alternate translation: "the message of God spread to more places and more people believed in him"
the word of God
"the message God sent about Jesus"
Acts 12:25
Connecting Statement:
This verse continues the history from [11:30]
completed their mission
This refers back to when they brought money from the believers at Antioch in [Acts 11:29-30]
they returned from Jerusalem

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They went back to Antioch from Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch"

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13 [1]Now in the church in Antioch, there were some prophets and teachers. They were Barnabas, Simeon (who is called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch), and Saul.[2]While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, to do the work to which I have called them."[3]After they had fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on these men, they sent them off.

[4]So Barnabas and Saul, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; from there they sailed away to Cyprus.[5]While they were in the city of Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John for an assistant.
[6]When they had gone through the whole island to Paphos, they found a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus.[7]This magician associated with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. This man summoned Barnabas and Saul, because he sought to hear the word of God.[8]But Elymas "the magician" (that is how his name is translated) opposed them; he tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith.
[9]But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, stared at him intensely[10]and said, "You son of the devil, you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness. You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness. You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you?
[11]Now look, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will become blind. You will not see the sun for a while." Immediately there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness; he started going around seeking people to lead him by the hand.
[12]After the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, because he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

[13]Now Paul and his friends set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. But John left them and returned to Jerusalem.[14]Paul and his friends traveled from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. There they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down.[15]After the reading of the law and the prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, "Brothers, if you have any message of encouragement for the people here, say it."
[16]So Paul stood up and motioned with his hand; he said, "Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen.[17]The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people when they stayed in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm he led them out of it.[18]For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness.[1]
[19]After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave our people their land for an inheritance.[20]All these events took place over 450 years. After all these things, God gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.
[21]Then the people asked for a king, and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man from the tribe of Benjamin, to be king for forty years.[22]After God removed him from the kingship, he raised up David to be their king. It was about David that God testified, saying, 'I have found David son of Jesse to be a man after my heart, who does all I want him to do.'
[23]From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised to do.[24]Before the arrival of Jesus, John proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.[25]As John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the one. But listen, one is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'
[26]Brothers, children of the offspring of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, it is to us that the message about this salvation has been sent.[27]For they who live in Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize him, and they fulfilled the voices of the prophets that are read every Sabbath by condemning him.
[28]Even though they found no reason for the death penalty, they called on Pilate to kill him.[29]When they had completed all the things that were written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.
[30]But God raised him from the dead.[31]He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. These people are now his witnesses to the people.
[32]So we tell you the good news: The promise that came to our fathers[33]God has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm:

'You are my Son,
today I have become your Father.'

[34]As to his raising him from the dead, never to return to decay, he has spoken in this way:

'I will give you the holy and sure blessings
promised to David.'

[35]This is why he also says in another Psalm,

'You will not allow your Holy One
to see decay.'

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[36]For when David had served the purpose of God in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was laid with his fathers and his body experienced decay.[37]But he whom God raised up experienced no decay.
[38]So let it be known to you, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. The law of Moses could not make you righteous.[39]But by this man God makes righteous everyone who believes.
[40]So then be careful that the thing the prophets spoke about does not happen to you:
[41] 'Look, you despisers,
and be astonished and then perish;
For I am doing a work in your days,
a work that you would never believe,
even if someone announces it to you.'"

[42]As Paul and Barnabas left, the people begged them that they might speak these same words again the next Sabbath.
[43]When the synagogue meeting ended, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who were speaking to them and persuading them to continue in the grace of God.

[44]On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of the Lord.[45]When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with envy and spoke against the things that were said by Paul and insulted him.
[46]But Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing you push it away from yourselves and consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life, see, we will turn to the Gentiles.[47]For so has the Lord commanded us, saying,
'I have appointed you as a light for the Gentiles,
that you should bring salvation
to the uttermost parts of the earth.'"

[48]As the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. As many as were appointed to eternal life believed.[49]The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region.
[50]But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and threw them out of their region.[51]But Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust from their feet against them. Then they went to the city of Iconium.[52]And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

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[1]Some ancient copies read, For about forty years he cared for them in the wilderness.

Acts 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 13:33-35 and 13:41.
This chapter is where the second half of the Book of Acts begins. Luke writes more about Paul than about Peter. Luke also writes about the believers preaching to the Gentiles rather than to the Jews.

Special concepts in this chapter

A light for the Gentiles
The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. The Jews considered all Gentiles as walking in darkness, but Paul and Barnabas spoke of telling the Gentiles about Jesus as if they were going to bring them physical light. (See: and righteous)

Links:

Acts 13:1 Notes

Acts 13:1
General Information:
Verse 1 gives background information about the people in the church at Antioch.
Connecting Statement:
Luke begins to tell about the mission trips on which the church at Antioch send Barnabas and Saul.
Now in the church in Antioch
"At that time in the church at Antioch"
Simeon ... Niger ... Lucius ... Manaen
These are men's names.
foster brother of Herod the tetrarch

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Manaen was probably Herod's playmate or close friend while they were growing up.
Acts 13:2
General Information:
The words "they" refers to the other three leaders (Acts 13:1), not including Barnabas and Saul, and it could include other believers.
Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul
"Appoint Barnabas and Saul to serve me"
I have called them
The verb here means that God chose them to do this work.
Acts 13:3
General Information:
The words "they" and "their" refer to the other three leaders (Acts 13:1), not including Barnabas and Saul, and they could include other believers.
laid their hands on these men
"laid their hands on these men whom God had set apart for his service." This act showed that the leaders agreed that the Holy Spirit had called Barnabas and Saul to do this work.
sent them off
"sent those men off" or "sent those men off to do the work the Holy Spirit told them to do"
Acts 13:4
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to Barnabas and Saul.
So
This word marks an event that happened because of a previous event. In this case, the previous event is Barnabas and Saul being set apart by the Holy Spirit.
went down
The phrase "went down" is used here because Seleucia is lower in elevation than Antioch.
Seleucia
a city by the sea
Acts 13:5
General Information:
Here the words "They" and "their" refer to Barnabas and Saul.
city of Salamis
The city of Salamis was on Cyprus Island.
proclaimed the word of God
"Word of God" here is a synecdoche for "message of God." Alternate translation: "proclaimed the message of God"
synagogues of the Jews
Possible meanings are that 1) there were multiple Jewish synagogues in the city of Salamis where Barnabas and Saul preached or 2) Barnabas and Saul started at the synagogue at Salamis and continued to preach in all the synagogues they found while they traveled around the Island of Cyprus.
They also had John for an assistant
"John went with them and was helping them"
John
John Mark
assistant
"helper"
Acts 13:6
General Information:
Here both instances of "they" refers to Paul, Silas, and John Mark.
the whole island
They crossed from one side of the island to the other and shared the gospel message in each town they passed through.
Paphos
a major city on Cyprus island where the proconsul lived
they found
Here "found" means they came upon him without looking for him. Alternate translation: "they met" or "they came upon"
a certain magician
"a particular person who practiced witchcraft" or "a person who practiced supernatural magic arts"
whose name was Bar-Jesus
"Bar-Jesus" means "Son of Jesus." There is no relation between this man and Jesus Christ. "Jesus" was a common name at that time.
Acts 13:7
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to Sergius Paulus, the proconsul.
associated with
"was often with" or "was often in the company of"
proconsul
This was a governor in charge of a Roman province. Alternate translation: "governor"
who was an intelligent man
This is background information about Sergius Paulus.
This man summoned
The phrase "this man" refers to Sergius Paulus.
he sought to hear the word of God
"he wanted to hear the word of God"
Acts 13:8
General Information:
Here the word "them" refers to Paul, Silas, and John Mark, and "he" refers to Elymas.
Elymas "the magician"
This was Bar Jesus, who was also called "the magician"
that is how his name is translated
"that was what he was called in Greek"
opposed them; he tried to turn
"resisted them by trying to turn" or "attempted to stop them by trying to turn"
tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith
Here "to turn ... away from" is a metaphor for convincing someone to not do something. Alternate translation: "attempted to persuade the governor not to believe the gospel message"
Acts 13:9
General Information:
The word "him" refers to the magician Elymas, who is also called Bar Jesus (Acts 13:6-8).
Connecting Statement:
While on the island of Paphos, Paul begins to talk to Elymas.
Saul, who is also called Paul
"Saul" was his Jewish name, and "Paul" was his Roman name. Since he was speaking to a Roman official, he used

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his Roman name. Alternate translation: "Saul, who now called himself Paul"

stared at him intensely

"looked at him intensely"

Acts 13:10

You son of the devil

Paul is saying the man is acting like the devil. Alternate translation: "You are like the devil" or "You act like the devil"

you are full of all kinds of deceit and wickedness

"you are always intent in causing others to believe what is not true using falsehood and are always doing what is wrong"

wickedness

The word in this context means laziness and lack of diligence in following God's law.

You are an enemy of every kind of righteousness

Paul is grouping Elymas with the devil. Just as the devil is an enemy of God and is against righteousness, so also was Elymas.

You will never stop twisting the straight paths of the Lord, will you?

Paul uses this question to rebuke Elymas for opposing God. Alternate translation: "You are always saying that the truth about the Lord God is false!"

the straight paths of the Lord

Here "straight paths" refer to the ways that are true. Alternate translation: "the true ways of the Lord"

Acts 13:11

General Information:

The words "you," "he," and "him" refer to Elymas the magician.

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to Elymas.

the hand of the Lord is upon you

Here "hand' represents the power of God and "upon you" implies punishment. Alternate translation: "The Lord will punish you"

you will become blind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will make you blind"

You will not see the sun

Elymas will be so completely blind that he not even be able to see the sun. Alternate translation: "You will not even see the sun"

for a while

"for a period of time" or "until the time appointed by God"

there fell on Elymas a mist and darkness

"the eyes of Elymas became blurry and then dark" or "Elymas started seeing unclearly and then he could not see anything"

he started going around

"Elymas wandered around" or "Elymas started feeling around and"

Acts 13:12

General Information:

Both instances of "he" refer to the proconsul.

the proconsul

A proconsul was a governor in charge of a Roman province. Alternate translation: "the governor"

he believed

"he believed in Jesus"

he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the teaching about the Lord amazed him"

Acts 13:13

General Information:

Verse 13 gives background information about this part of the story. "Paul and his friends" were Barnabas and John Mark

Connecting Statement:

This is a new part of the story about Paul in Antioch in Pisidia.

Now

This marks the beginning of a new part of the story.

set sail from Paphos

"traveled by sailboat from Paphos"

came to Perga in Pamphylia

"arrived in Perga, which is in Pamphylia"

But John left them

"But John Mark left Paul and Barnabas"

Acts 13:14

General Information:

Verse 14 continues to give background information about this part of the story. The word "they" refers to Paul and his friends Barnabas and John Mark

Antioch of Pisidia

"the city of Antioch in the district of Pisidia." This is different from the city of Antioch that Paul and Barnabas left at the beginning of the chapter.

Acts 13:15

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Paul and his friends Barnabas and John Mark.

After the reading of the law and the prophets

The "law and the prophets" refer to parts of the Jewish scriptures which were read. Alternate translation: "After someone read from the books of the law and the writings of the prophets"

sent them a message, saying

"told someone to say to them" or "asked someone to say to them"

Brothers

The term "brothers" is here used by the people in the synagogue to refer to Paul and Barnabas as fellow Jews.

if you have any message of encouragement

"if you want to say anything to encourage us"

encouragement

or "exhortation"

say it

"please speak it" or "please tell it to us"

Acts 13:16

General Information:

The words "he" and "his" refer to Paul. The word "you" is plural.

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins his speech to those in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch. He begins by talking about things that happened in Israel's history.

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motioned with his hand
This could refer to moving his hands as a signal that he was ready to speak. Alternate translation: "moved his hands to show that he was about to speak"
you who fear God
This refers to Gentiles who had converted to Judaism. "you who are not Israelites but who worship God"
God, listen
"God, listen to me" or "God, listen to what I am about to say"
Acts 13:17
General Information:
The word "our" includes the speaker and the hears and so is plural. The words "they" and "them" refer to "the people." The word "he" refers to God.
The God of this people Israel
"The God the people of Israel worship"
our fathers
"our ancestors"
exalted the people
"caused the people to become very numerous"
with an uplifted arm
This refers to God's mighty power. Alternate translation: "with great power"
out of it
"out from the land of Egypt"
Acts 13:18
he put up with them
"God tolerated the people of Israel." This means "he tolerated them." Some versions have have a different word that means "he took care of them." Alternate translation: "God endured their disobedience" or "God took care of them"
Acts 13:19
General Information:
Here both instances of "he" refer to God. The word "our" refers to Paul and his audience.
nations
Here the word "nations" refers to different people groups and not to lands with geographical boundaries.
Acts 13:20
General Information:
The word "them" refers to the people of Israel.
took place over 450 years
"took more than 450 years to accomplish"
until Samuel the prophet
"until the time of the prophet Samuel"
Acts 13:21
king for forty years
"their king for forty years" or "king, and he reigned over them for forty years"
Acts 13:22
General Information:
The quotation here is from Old Testament.
removed him from the kingship
This expression means God caused Saul to stop being king. Alternate translation: "rejected Saul from being king"
he raised up David to be their king
"God chose David to be their king"
their king
"the king of Israel" or "the king over the Israelites"
It was about David that God testified, saying,
"God gave this testimony about David:"
I have found David ... to be
"I have observed that David ... is"
a man after my heart
This expression means "a man who wants what I want."
Acts 13:23
From this man's descendants
"From David's descendants." This is placed at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that the savior had to be one of David's descendants (Acts 13:22).
has brought to Israel
This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "gave to the people of Israel"
as he promised to do
"just as God promised he would do"
Acts 13:24
a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel
You can translate the word "repentance" as the verb "repent." Alternate translation: "that all the people of Israel who wanted to repent of their sin needed to have him baptize them"
Acts 13:25
Who do you think I am?
John asked this question to compel the people to think about who he was. Alternate translation: "Think about who I am."
I am not the one
John was referring to the Messiah, whom they were expecting to come. Alternate translation: "I am not the Messiah"
But listen
This emphasizes the importance of what he will say next.
one is coming after me
This also refers to the Messiah. Alternate translation: "The Messiah will soon come"
the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie
"I am not worthy even to untie his sandals." The Messiah is so much greater than John that he did not even feel worthy do the lowest job for him.
Acts 13:26
General Information:
Here the word "us" includes Paul and his entire audience in the synagogue.
Brothers, children of the offspring of Abraham, and those among you who fear God
Possible meanings are 1) this is a list with three items, and Paul is addressing three groups of people together, or 2) the phrases "children of the offspring of Abraham" and "those among you who fear God" refer to the two groups of people whom Paul addresses as "brothers."
those among you who fear God
These words refer specifically to Gentiles who worshiped in the synagogue and obeyed much of the law of Moses but had not been circumcised.
the message about this salvation has been sent
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has sent the message about this salvation"

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about this salvation
The word "salvation" can be translated with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "that God will save people"
Acts 13:27
General Information:
The word "they" and "their" refers to the Jews who lived in Jerusalem.
did not recognize him
"did not realize that this man Jesus was the one whom God had sent to save them"
the voices of the prophets
Here the word "voices" is a metonym for the message that the voices spoke. Alternate translation: "the writings of the prophets" or "the messages of the prophets"
that are read
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which someone reads"
Acts 13:28
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the Jewish people and their religious leaders in Jerusalem. The word him" here refers to Jesus.
they found no reason for the death penalty
It is implied that they found no legal reason for Jesus to be put to death. Alternate translation: "they found no legal reason for Jesus to be killed" or "they found no legal reason to kill Jesus"
Acts 13:29
When they had completed all the things that were written about him
"When they did to Jesus all the things that the prophets said would happen to him"
they took him down from the tree
It may be helpful to explicitly say Jesus died before this happened. Alternate translation: "they killed Jesus and then took him down from the cross after he died"
from the tree
"from the cross." This was another way people at that time referred to the cross.
Acts 13:30
But God raised him
"But" indicates a strong contrast between what the people did and what God did.
raised him from the dead
"raised him from among those who were dead." To be with "the dead" means to be dead. To raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "caused him to live again"
from the dead
From among all those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To raise someone from among them speaks of making that person alive again.
Acts 13:31
He was seen for many days by those who had come up with him ... Jerusalem
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The disciples who traveled with Jesus ... Jeruaslem saw him for many days"
many days
We know from other writings that this period was 40 days. Translate "many days" with a term that would be appropriate for that length of time.
are now his witnesses to the people
"are now testifying to the people about Jesus" or "are now telling the people about Jesus"
Acts 13:32
So
This word marks an event that happened because of previous event. In this case, the previous event is God's raising Jesus from the dead.
our fathers
"our ancestors." Paul is still speaking to the Jews and Gentile converts in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. These were the physical ancestors of the Jews, and the spiritual ancestors of the converts.
Acts 13:33
God has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus
You may need to rearrange the parts of this sentence, which begins in verse 32. "God has fulfilled for us, their children, the promise that he made to our fathers, by raising up Jesus"
for us, their children
"for us, who are the children of our ancestors." Paul is still speaking to the Jews and Gentile converts in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. These ancestors were the physical ancestors of the Jews and the spiritual ancestors of the converts.
by raising up Jesus
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "by making Jesus alive again"
As it is written in the second Psalm
"This is what was written in the second Psalm"
the second Psalm
"Psalm 2"
Son ... Father
These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God.
Acts 13:34
General Information:
The quotation is from the prophet Isaiah.
As to his raising him from the dead, never to return to decay, he has spoken in this way:
"God has spoken in this way that he raised him up from the dead never to return to decay" "God used these words to say that he raised him up from the dead, and so he would never die again"
the dead
All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.
never to return to decay
"and he will never die again"
he has spoken in this way
God has said using these words
sure blessings
"certain blessings"
Acts 13:35

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This is why he also says in another Psalm
Paul's audience would have understood that this Psalm refers to the Messiah. Alternate translation: "In another Psalm of David, he also says about the Messiah"
he also says
"David also says." David is the author of Psalm 16, from which this quotation is taken.
You will not allow your Holy One to see decay
The phrase "see decay" is a metonym for "decay." Alternate translation: "You will not allow the body of your Holy One to rot"
You will not allow
David is speaking to God here.
Acts 13:36
in his own generation
"during his lifetime"
served the purpose of God
"did what God wanted him to do" or "did what pleased God"
he fell asleep
This was a polite way to refer to death. Alternate translation: "he died"
was laid with his fathers
"was buried with his ancestors who had died"
his body experienced decay
The phrase "his body experienced decay" is a less direct way of saying "his body decayed" or "his body rotted."
Acts 13:37
he whom God raised up experienced
"Jesus, whom God raised up, experienced"
God raised up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "God caused to live again"
experienced no decay
The phrase "experienced no decay" is a way to say "his body did not decay." Alternate translation: "did not rot"
Acts 13:38
let it be known to you
"know this" or "this is important for you to know"
brothers
Paul uses this term because they are his fellow Jews and followers of Judaism. They are not Christian believers at this point. Alternate translation: "my fellow Israelites and other friends"
that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that we proclaim to you that your sins can be forgiven through Jesus"
forgiveness of sins
The abstract noun "forgiveness" can be translated with the verb "to forgive." Alternate translation: "that God can forgive your sins"
Acts 13:39
But by this man God makes righteous everyone who believes
"But God makes righteous everyone who believes in this man"
by this man
Here "this man" refers to Jesus Christ.
Acts 13:40
be careful
It is implied that the thing they should be careful about is Paul's message. Alternate translation: "give close attention to the things I have said"
that the thing the prophets spoke about
"so that what the prophets spoke about"
Acts 13:41
General Information:
In his message to the people in the synagogue, Paul quotes the prophet Habakkuk. Here the word "I" refers to God.
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes his speech in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, which he began in Acts 13:16.
you despisers
"you who feel contempt" or "you who ridicule"
be astonished
"be amazed" or "be shocked"
then perish
"then die"
am doing a work
"am doing something" or "am doing a great deed"
in your days
"during your lifetime"
days, a work that
"days. I am doing something that"
even if someone announces it to you
"even if someone tells you about it"
Acts 13:42
As Paul and Barnabas left
"When Paul and Barnabas were leaving"
begged them that they might
"begged them to"
these same words
Here "words" refers to the message that Paul had spoken. Alternate translation: "this same message"
Acts 13:43
When the synagogue meeting ended
Possible meanings are 1) this restates "As Paul and Barnabas left" in verse 42 or 2) Paul and Barnabas left the meeting before it ended and this occurs later.
proselytes
These were non-Jewish people who converted to Judaism.
who were speaking to them and persuading them
"and Paul and Barnabas were speaking to those people and persuading them"
to continue in the grace of God
It is implied that they believed Paul's message that Jesus was the Messiah. Alternate translation: "to continue to trust that God kindly forgives people's sins because of what Jesus did"
Acts 13:44
almost the whole city was
The "city" represents the people in the city. This phrase is used to show the great response to the Lord's word. Alternate translation: "almost all the people of the city were"
to hear the word of the Lord
It is implied that Paul and Barnabas were the ones who spoke the word of the Lord. Alternate translation: "to hear

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Paul and Barnabas speak about the Lord Jesus"

Acts 13:45

General Information:

Here the word "him" refers to Paul.

the Jews

Here "Jews" represents Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

were filled with envy

Here envy is spoken of as if it were something that could fill up a person. Alternate translation: "became very envious"

spoke against

"contradicted" or "opposed"

the things that were said by Paul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that Paul said"

Acts 13:46

General Information:

Both instances of the word "you" and the word "yourselves" refer to the Jews to whom Paul is speaking and so are plural. The word "we" refers to Paul and Barnabas but not the crowd that was present.

It was necessary

This implies that God had commanded this be done. Alternate translation: "God commanded"

that the word of God should first be spoken to you

This can be stated in active form. "Word of God" here is a synecdoche for "message from God." Alternate translation: "that we speak the message from God to you first" or "that we speak the word of God to you first"

Seeing you push it away from yourselves

Their rejection of the word of God is spoken of as if it were something they pushed away. Alternate translation: "Since you reject the word of God"

consider yourselves unworthy of eternal life

"have shown that you are not worthy of eternal life" or "act as though you are not worthy of eternal life"

we will turn to the Gentiles

"we will go to the Gentiles." Paul and Barnabas were implying that they would preach to the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "we will leave you and start preaching to the Gentiles"

Acts 13:47

General Information:

The word "us" refers to Paul and Barnabas but not the crowd that was present, so it is exclusive.

commanded us ... 'I have appointed you as a light ... you should bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth.'

Both instances of "you" here are singular, but when Paul said, "... the Lord commanded us," Paul was applying those singular words to both himself and Barnabas. The words in the quotation were originally spoken by God through Isaiah the prophet to God's servant. By quoting Isaiah's prophecy, Paul was saying that he and Barnabas were doing what God commanded his servant to do. Paul was not saying that God had spoken directly to him.

as a light

Here the truth about Jesus that Paul was preaching is spoken of as if it were a light that allowed people to see.

bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth

The abstract word "salvation" can be translated with the verb "to save." The phrase "uttermost parts" refers to everywhere. Alternate translation: "tell people everywhere in the world that I want to save them"

Acts 13:48

glorified the word of the Lord

Here "word" refers to the message about Jesus that they had believed. Alternate translation: "glorified God for the message about the Lord Jesus" or "glorified the Lord for his word"

As many as were appointed to eternal life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As many as God appointed to eternal life" or "All the people whom God had chosen to receive eternal life"

Acts 13:49

The word of the Lord was spread out through the whole region

Here "word" refers to the message about Jesus. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Those who believed spread the word of the Lord through the whole region" or "Those who believed went everywhere in the region and told others about the message of Jesus"

Acts 13:50

the Jews

This probably refers to the leaders of the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

incited ... women ... and ... men

This means that they spoke to the women and men and caused them to be angry and act violently. Alternate translation: "stirred up ... women ... and ... men"

the devout women of high standing

The word "devout" means that these women feared God. The phrase "of high standing" means that people respected these women.

the leading men

"the most important men"

They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas

The word "they" here probably refers to the devout women and the leading men. They listened to the Jews and then convinced the rest of the people in the city to persecute the apostles and throw them out.

threw them out of their region

"made Paul and Barnabas leave their land"

region

Here this word refers to the area that the people of the city considered their own, not to land within an official government border.

Acts 13:51

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas end their time in Antioch of Pisidia and go to Iconium.

shook off the dust from their feet against them

This was a symbolic act to indicate to the unbelieving people that God had rejected them and would punish them.

Acts 13:52

the disciples

This probably refers to the new believers in the Antioch of Pisidia that Paul and Silas just left.

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14 [1]It came about in Iconium that Paul and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue of the Jews and spoke in such
a way that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed.[2]But the Jews who were disobedient stirred up the
minds of the Gentiles and made them bitter against the brothers.
[3]So they stayed there for a long time, speaking boldly with the Lord's power, while he gave evidence about the message of
his grace. He did this by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas.[4]But the people of the
city were divided; some sided with the Jews, others with the apostles.
[5]Both Gentiles and Jews (together with their leaders) made an attempt to mistreat them and to stone them,[6]but as soon as
they learned about this, they fled to the Lycaonian cities of Lystra and Derbe and the surrounding region,[7]where they
continued to proclaim the gospel.

[8]At Lystra a certain man sat, powerless in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.[9]This man
heard Paul speaking. Paul fixed his eyes on him and saw that he had faith to be made well.[10]So he said to him in a loud
voice, "Stand up on your feet." Then the man jumped up and walked around.

[11]When the multitude saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the dialect of Lycaonia, "The gods have
become like men and come down to us."[12]They called Barnabas "Zeus," and Paul "Hermes," because he was the main
speaker.[13]The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and wreaths to the gates; he and the
multitudes wanted to offer sacrifice.
[14]But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their clothing and quickly went out into the crowd,
crying out,[15]"Men, why are you doing these things? We also are human beings, with the same nature as you. We are telling
you good news that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heavens, the earth, the sea,
and everything that is in them.[16]In the past ages, he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways.
[17]But still, he did not leave himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you the rains from heaven and fruitful
seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."[18]Even with these words, Paul and Barnabas barely kept the
multitudes from sacrificing to them.

[19]But some Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and persuaded the crowds. They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the
city, thinking that he was dead.[20]Yet as the disciples were standing around him, he got up and entered the city. The next
day, he went to Derbe with Barnabas.
[21]After they had proclaimed the gospel in that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to
Antioch.[22]They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith, saying, "We
must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations."
[23]When they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they entrusted them to the
Lord, in whom they had believed.[24]Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia.[25]When they had spoken the
word in Perga, they went down to Attalia.[26]From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been committed to the
grace of God for the work which they had now completed.
[27]When they arrived in Antioch and gathered the church together, they reported all the things that God had done with
them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles.[28]They stayed for a long time with the disciples.

Acts 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"The message of his grace"
The message of Jesus is the message that God will show grace to those who believe in Jesus. (See: grace and believe)
Zeus and Hermes
The Gentiles in the Roman Empire worshiped many different false gods who do not really exist. Paul and Barnabas told them to believe in the "living God." (See: falsegod)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"We must enter into the kingdom of God through many sufferings."
Jesus told his followers before he died that everyone who followed him would suffer persecution. Paul is saying the same thing using different words.

Links:

Acts 14:1

Acts 14:1
General Information:
The story of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium continues.

It came about in Iconium that
Possible meanings here are 1) "It happened in Iconium that" or 2) "In Iconium, as usual,"

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spoke in such a way
"spoke so powerfully." It may be helpful to state that they spoke the message about Jesus. Alternate translation: "spoke the message about Jesus so powerfully"
Acts 14:2
the Jews who were disobedient
This refers to the portion of the Jews who did not believe the message about Jesus.
stirred up the minds of the Gentiles
Causing the Gentiles to become angry is spoken of as if calm waters were disturbed.
the minds of the Gentiles
Here the word "minds" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "the Gentiles"
the brothers
Here "brothers" refers to Paul and Barnabas and the new believers.
Acts 14:3
General Information:
Here the words "he," "his," and "He" refer to the Lord.
So they stayed there
"Nevertheless they stayed there." Paul and Barnabas stayed in Iconium to help the many people who had believed in Acts 14:1. "So" could be omitted if it adds confusion to the text.
gave evidence about the message of his grace
"demonstrated that the message about his grace was true"
about the message of his grace
"about the message of the Lord's grace"
by granting signs and wonders to be done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by enabling Paul and Barnabas to perform signs and wonders"
by the hands of Paul and Barnabas
Here "hands" refers to the will and effort of these two men as guided by the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "by the ministry of Paul and Barnabas"
Acts 14:4
the people of the city were divided
"the people of the city disagreed with each other"
sided with the Jews
"supported the Jews" or "agreed with the Jews." The first group mentioned did not agree with the message about grace.
with the apostles
The second group mentioned agreed with the message about grace. It may be helpful to restate the verb. Alternate translation: "sided with the apostles"
the apostles
Luke refers to Paul and Barnabas. Here "apostle" might be used in the general sense of "ones sent out."
Acts 14:5
made an attempt to mistreat them
Here the words "made an attempt" implies that they were not able to mistreat Paul and Barnabas before Paul and Barnabas left the city.
to mistreat them and to stone
"to beat Paul and Barnabas and to kill them by throwing stones at them"
Acts 14:6
Lycaonia
A district in Asia Minor
Lystra
A city in Asia Minor south of Iconium and north of Derbe
Derbe
A city in Asia Minor south of Iconium and Lystra
Acts 14:7
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.
where they continued to proclaim the gospel
"where Paul and Barnabas continued to proclaim the good news"
Acts 14:8
Connecting Statement:
Paul and Barnabas are now in Lystra.
a certain man sat
This introduces a new person in the story.
powerless in his feet
"unable to move his legs" or "unable to walk on his feet"
a cripple from his mother's womb
"having been born as a cripple"
cripple
person who cannot walk
Acts 14:9
General Information:
The words "him" and "he" refer to the crippled man.
Paul fixed his eyes on him
"Paul looked straight at him"
had faith to be made well
The abstract noun "faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "believed that Jesus could heal him" or "believed that Jesus could make him well"
Acts 14:10
he said to him
"Paul said to the crippled man"
jumped up
"leaped in the air." This implies that his legs were completely healed.
Acts 14:11
what Paul had done
This refers to Paul's healing the crippled man.
they raised their voice
To raise the voice is to speak loudly. Alternate translation: "they spoke loudly"
in the dialect of Lycaonia
"in their own Lycaonian language." The people of Lystra spoke Lycaonian and also Greek.
The gods have become like men and come down to us
These people believed that the gods needed to change their appearance in order to look like men. A large number of people believed Paul and Barnabas were their pagan gods who had come down from heaven. Alternate translation: "The gods have come down from heaven to us in the form of men"
Acts 14:12
Zeus
The people of Iconium probably considered Zeus to be the king over all the other pagan gods.

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Hermes

The people of Iconium probably considered Hermes to be the pagan god who brought messages to people from Zeus and the other gods.

Acts 14:13

The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought

It may be helpful to include additional information about the priest. Alternate translation: "There was a temple just outside the city where the people worshiped Zeus. When the priest who served in the temple heard what Paul and Barnabas had done, he brought"

oxen and wreaths

The oxen were to be sacrificed. The wreaths were either to crown Paul and Barnabas, or put on the oxen for sacrifice.

to the gates

The gates of the cities were often used as a meeting place for the people of the city.

wanted to offer sacrifice

"wanted to offer sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas as the gods Zeus and Hermes"

Acts 14:14

the apostles, Barnabas and Paul

Luke is here probably using "apostle" in the general sense of "one sent out."

they tore their clothing

This was a symbolic action to show that they were deeply distressed and upset that the crowd wanted to sacrifice to them.

Acts 14:15

Men, why are you doing these things?

Barnabas and Paul are rebuking the people for trying to sacrifice to them. Alternate translation: "Men, you must not do these things!"

doing these things

"worshiping us"

We also are human beings, with the same nature as you

By this statement, Barnabas and Paul are saying that they are not gods. Alternate translation: "We are just human beings like you. We are not gods"

with the same nature as you

"like you in every way"

telling you good news that you should turn

"telling you good news: you can turn" or "giving you good advice to turn." That is, the good news is that they can and should turn.

turn from these useless things to the living God

Here "turn from ... to" is a metaphor meaning to stop doing one thing and start doing something else. Alternate translation: "stop worshiping these false gods that cannot help you, and instead begin to worship the living God"

the living God

"the God who truly exists" or "the God who lives"

Acts 14:16

In the past ages

"In previous times" or "Until now"

to walk in their own ways

Walking in a way, or walking on a path, is a metaphor for living one's life. Alternate translation: "to live their lives the way they wanted to" or "to do whatever they wanted to do"

Acts 14:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas continue speaking to the crowd outside the city of Lystra (Acts 14:8).

he did not leave himself without witness

This could also be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God has certainly left a witness" or "God has indeed testified"

in that

"as shown by the fact that"

filling your hearts with food and gladness

Here "your hearts" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "giving you enough to eat and things about which to be happy"

Acts 14:18

Paul and Barnabas barely kept the multitudes from sacrificing to them

Paul and Barnabas stopped the multitude from sacrificing to them, but it was difficult to do so.

barely kept

"had difficulty preventing"

Acts 14:19

General Information:

Here the words "he" and "him" refer to Paul.

persuaded the crowds

It my be helpful to explicitly state what they persuaded the crowd to do. Alternate translation: "persuaded the people not to believe Paul and Barnabas, and to turn against them"

the crowds

This may not be the same group as the "multitude" in the previous verse. Some time had passed, and this might be a different group that gathered together.

thinking that he was dead

"because they thought that he was already dead"

Acts 14:20

the disciples

These were new believers in the city of Lystra.

entered the city

"Paul re-entered Lystra with the believers"

he went to Derbe with Barnabas

"Paul and Barnabas went to the city of Derbe"

Acts 14:21

General Information:

Here both instances of "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas.

that city

"Derbe" (Acts 14:20)

Acts 14:22

General Information:

Here the words "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas, and the word "We" includes Paul, Barnabas, and the disciples. The word "them" refers to the disciples.

They kept strengthening the souls of the disciples

Here "souls" refers to the disciples. This emphasizes their inner thoughts and beliefs. Alternate translation: "Paul and Barnabas urged the believers to continue to believe the message about Jesus" or "Paul and Barnabas urged the believers to continue to grow strong in their relationship with Jesus

encouraging them to continue in the faith

"encouraging the believers to keep trusting in Jesus"

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saying, "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations."
Some version translate this as an indirect quote, "saying that we must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations." The word "we" here includes Luke and the readers.
We must enter
Paul includes his hearers, so the word "we" is inclusive.
Acts 14:23
they had appointed for them
"Paul and Barnabas had appointed for the believers"
they entrusted them ... they had believed
Possible meanings are 1) "Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders they had appointed ... the elders had believed" or 2) "Paul and Barnabas entrusted the elders they had appointed and the other disciples ... the elders and other disciples had believed"
Acts 14:24
General Information:
The word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas.
Acts 14:25
General Information:
Both instances of "they" refer to Paul and Barnabas.
had spoken the word
"Word" here is a metonym for "message of God." Alternate translation: "had spoken the message of God"
went down to Attalia
The phrase "went down" is used here because Attalia is lower in elevation than Perga.
Acts 14:26
where they had been committed to the grace of God
This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "where believers and leaders in Antioch had committed Paul and Barnabas to the grace of God" or "where the people of Antioch prayed that God would care for and protect Paul and Barnabas"
Acts 14:27
General Information:
Here the words "they," "them," and "They" refer to Paul and Barnabas. The word "he" refers to God.
gathered the church together
"called the local believers to meet together"
he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles
God's enabling the Gentiles to believe is spoken of as if he had opened a door that had prevented them from entering into faith. Alternate translation: "God had made it possible for the Gentiles to believe"

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15 [1]Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and taught the brothers, saying, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."[2]This brought Paul and Barnabas into a sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas, along with some others from among them, were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders about this question.
[3]They therefore, being sent by the church, passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria and announced the conversion of the Gentiles. They brought great joy to all the brothers.[4]When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all the things that God had done with them.
[5]But certain men who believed, who belonged to the group of Pharisees, stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses."[6]So the apostles and the elders gathered together to consider this matter.

[7]After much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that a good while ago God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.[8]God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us.[9]He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.
[10]Now therefore why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?[11]But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were."

[12]All the multitude kept silent while they listened to Barnabas and Paul report the signs and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles through them.
[13]After they stopped speaking, James answered, saying,"Brothers, listen to me.
[14]Simon has told how God first graciously helped the Gentiles in order to take from them a people for his name.
[15]The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,
[16] 'After these things I will return,
and I will build again the tabernacle of David,
which has fallen down;
I will set up and restore its ruins again,

[17] so that the remnant of men may seek the Lord,
including all the Gentiles called by my name.'

[18] This is what the Lord says,
who has done these things
that have been known from ancient times.[1]

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[19]Therefore, I have decided that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God.[20]But we will write to them that they must keep away from the pollution of idols, from sexual immorality, and from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood.[21]For Moses has been proclaimed in every city from ancient generations and he is preached in the synagogues every Sabbath."

[22]Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, who were leaders of the brothers, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.
[23]They wrote this with their hands,
[24]Because we have heard that certain men have gone out from us, with no orders from us, and have disturbed you with words that upset your souls,[25]it seemed good to us, who have come to one mind, to choose men and to send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,[26]men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[27]Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who will report to you the same things in their own words.[28]For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:[29]that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you avoid these things, you will do well.

[30]So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; after they gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter.[31]When they had read it, they rejoiced because of the encouragement.[32]Judas and Silas, also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many words and strengthened them.
[33]After they had spent some time there, they were sent away in peace from the brothers to those who had sent them.
[34][2][35]But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching (along with many others) the word of the Lord.

[36]After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return now and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."[37]Barnabas wanted to also take with them John, who was called Mark.[38]But Paul thought it was not good to take Mark, who had left them in Pamphylia and did not go further with them in the work.
[39]Then there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.[40]But Paul chose Silas and left, after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.[41]Then he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

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[1]There are some copies of the ancient Greek text that have a slightly different meaning, This is what the Lord says, to whom are known all his deeds from ancient times.
[2]The best ancient copies do not have verse 34 (See: Acts 15:40), But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.

Acts 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 15:16-17.
The meeting that Luke describes in this chapter is commonly called the "Jerusalem Council." This was a time when many church leaders got together to decide if believers needed to obey the whole law of Moses.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers
In this chapter Luke begins to use the word "brothers" to refer to fellow Christians instead of fellow Jews.
Obeying the law of Moses
Some believers wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised because God had told Abraham and Moses that everyone who wanted to belong to him had to be circumcised and that this was "an everlasting covenant." But Paul and Barnabas had seen God give uncircumcised Gentiles the gift of the Holy Spirit, so they did not want the Gentiles to be circumcised. Both groups went to Jerusalem to have the church leaders decide what they should do.
"Abstain from things sacrificed to idols, blood, things strangled, and from sexual immorality"
It is possible that the church leaders decided on these laws so that Jews and Gentiles could not only live together but eat the same foods together.

Links:

Acts 15:1 Notes

Acts 15:1
Connecting Statement:

Paul and Barnabas are still in Antioch when there is a dispute about the Gentiles and circumcision.

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Some men
"Some men." You can make explicit that these men were Jews who believed in Christ.
came down from Judea
The phrase "came down" is used here because Judea is higher in elevation than Antioch.
taught the brothers
Here "brothers" stands for believers in Christ. It is implied that they were in Antioch. Alternate translation: "taught the believers at Antioch" or "were teaching the believers at Antioch"
Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Unless someone circumcises you according to the custom of Moses, God cannot save you" or "God will not save you from your sins unless you receive circumcision according to the law of Moses"
Acts 15:2
This brought ... into a sharp dispute and debate with them
The abstract nouns "sharp dispute" and "debate" can be stated as verbs and where the men came from can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "... had confronted and debated with the men from Judea"
go up to Jerusalem
Jerusalem was higher than almost any other place in Israel, so it was normal for Israelites to speak of going up to Jerusalem.
this question
"this issue"
Acts 15:3
General Information:
Both instances of "They" here refer to Paul, Barnabas, and certain others (Acts 15:2).
They therefore, being sent by the church
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore the community of believers sent them from Antioch to Jerusalem"
passed through ... announced
The words "passed through" and "announced" indicate they spent some time in different places sharing in detail what God was doing.
announced the conversion of the Gentiles
The abstract noun "conversion" means the Gentiles were rejecting their false gods and believing in God. Alternate translation: "announced to the community of believers in those places that Gentiles were believing in God"
They brought great joy to all the brothers
Their message causing the brothers to be joyful is spoken of as if "joy" were an object that they brought to the brothers. Alternate translation: "What they said caused their fellow believers to rejoice"
the brothers
Here "brothers" refers to fellow believers.
Acts 15:4
General Information:
All instances of "they" and "them" here refer to Paul, Barnabas, and certain others (Acts 15:2).
they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the apostles, the elders, and the rest of the community of believers welcomed them"
with them
"through them"
Acts 15:5
General Information:
Here the word "them" refers to non-Jewish believers who were not circumcised and did not keep the Old Testament laws of God.
Connecting Statement:
Paul and Barnabas are now in Jerusalem to meet with the apostles and elders there.
But certain men
Here Luke contrasts those who believe that salvation is only in Jesus to others who believe salvation is by Jesus but also believe that circumcision is required for salvation.
to keep the law of Moses
"to obey the law of Moses"
Acts 15:6
to consider this matter
The church leaders decided to discuss whether or not Gentiles needed to be circumcised and obey the law of Moses in order for God to save them from their sins.
Acts 15:7
General Information:
The word "them" refers to apostles and elders
Connecting Statement:
Peter begins to speak to the apostles and elders who met to discuss whether Gentiles had to receive circumcision and keep the law (Acts 15:5-6).
Brothers
Peter is addressing all of the believers who are present.
by my mouth
Here "mouth" refers to Peter. Alternate translation: "from me" or "by me"
the Gentiles should hear
"the Gentiles would hear"
the word of the gospel
Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about Jesus"
Acts 15:8
General Information:
The word "them" refers to the Gentiles, and both instances of "you" are plural.
who knows the heart
Here "heart" refers to the "minds" or "inner beings." Alternate translation: "who knows the people's minds" or "who knows what people think"
has testified to them
"has testified to the Gentiles"
giving them the Holy Spirit
"causing the Holy Spirit to come upon them"
Acts 15:9
General Information:
The word "he" refers to God, the word "us" refers to the speaker and the hearers, and the word "them" refers to the Gentiles.
made no distinction

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God did not treat Jewish believers differently from Gentile believers.

having cleansed their hearts by faith

God's forgiving the Gentile believers' sins is spoken of as though he cleaned their hearts. Here "heart" stands for the person's inner being. Alternate translation: "forgiving their sins because they believe in Jesus"

Acts 15:10

General Information:

Peter includes his audience by his use of "our" and "we."

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

why do you test God, that you should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Peter uses a question with a word picture to tell the Jewish believers they should not require the non-Jewish believers to perform circumcision to be saved. Alternate translation: "Do not test God by putting a burden on the non-Jewish believers which we Jews were not able to bear!"

our fathers

This refers to their Jewish ancestors.

Acts 15:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes speaking to the apostles and elders.

But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they were

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But we believe the Lord Jesus will save us by his grace, just as he saved the non-Jewish believers"

Acts 15:12

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

All the multitude

"Everyone" or "The whole group" (Acts 15:6)

God had worked

"God had done" or "God had caused"

Acts 15:13

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:12).

Connecting Statement:

James begins to speak to the apostles and elders (Acts 15:6).

Brothers, listen

"Fellow believers, listen." James was probably speaking only to men.

Acts 15:14

in order to take from them a people

"so that he might choose from among them a people"

for his name

"for God's name." Here "name" refers to God. Alternate translation: "for himself"

Acts 15:15

Connecting Statement:

James quotes the prophet Amos from the Old Testament.

The words of the prophets agree

Here "words" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "What the prophets said agrees" or "The prophets agree"

agree with this

"confirm this truth"

as it is written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as they wrote" or "as the prophet Amos wrote long ago"

Acts 15:16

General Information:

Here "I" refers to God, who spoke through the words of his prophet.

I will build again the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down ... its ruins again

This speaks of God's again choosing one of David's descendants to rule over his people as though he were setting up a tent again after it fell down.

tabernacle

Here the word "tabernacle," a dwelling place, stands for David's family. The same word is used for the tent that Yahweh told Moses to construct.

Acts 15:17

the remnant of men may seek the Lord

This speaks about people wanting to obey God and learn more about him as if they were literally looking for him.

remnant of men

Here "men" includes males and females. Alternate translation: "remnant of people"

may seek the Lord

God is speaking about himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "may seek me, the Lord"

including all the Gentiles called by my name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "including all the Gentiles who belong to me"

my name

Here "my name" stands for God.

Acts 15:18

that have been known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that people have known"

Acts 15:19

General Information:

Here "we" includes James, the apostles, and the elders.

we should not trouble those of the Gentiles

You can make explicit in what way James does not want to trouble the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "we should not require the Gentiles to become circumcised and obey the laws of Moses"

who turn to God

A person who starts obeying God is spoken of as if the person is physically turning towards God.

Acts 15:20

they must keep away from the pollution of idols ... sexual immorality ... strangled ... blood

Sexual immorality, strangling animals, and consuming blood were often part of ceremonies to worship idols and false gods.

pollution of idols

This possibly refers to eating the meat of an animal that someone has sacrificed to an idol or to anything to do with idol worship.

from the meat of strangled animals, and from blood

God did not allow Jews to eat meat that still had the blood

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in it. Also, even earlier in Moses's writings in Genesis, God had forbidden the drinking of blood. Therefore, they could not eat an animal that someone strangled because the blood was not properly drained from the body of the animal.

Acts 15:21

Connecting Statement:

James finishes speaking to the apostles and elders. (See: Acts 15:2 and Acts 15:13)

Moses has been proclaimed in every city ... and he is preached in the synagogues every Sabbath

James is implying that Gentiles know how important these rules are because Jews preach them in every city where there is a synagogue. It also implies the Gentiles can go to the teachers from the synagogues to learn more about these rules.

Moses has been proclaimed ... he is preached

Here "Moses" represents the law of Moses, and so does "he." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The law of Moses has been proclaimed ... the law is read" or "Jews have taught the law of Moses ... they read the law"

in every city

The word "every" here is a generalization. Alternate translation: "in many cities"

Acts 15:22

General Information:

Here the word "them" refers to Judas and Silas.

Judas called Barsabbas

This is the name of a man. "Barsabbas" is a second name that people called him.

leaders of the brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to the people there who believed in Jesus. Alternate translation: "leaders of the believers" or "leaders of the church"

Acts 15:23

They wrote this with their hands

One or more of the apostles and elders wrote the letter and gave it to Judas and Silas so Judas and Silas could give it to the Gentile brothers.

From the apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings!

This is the introduction of the letter. Your language may have a way of introducing the author of the letter and to whom it is written. Alternate translation: "This letter is from your brothers, the apostles and elders. We are writing to you Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings to you" or "To our Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Greetings from the apostles and elders, your brothers"

your brothers ... the Gentile brothers

Here the word "brothers" refers to fellow believers. By using these words, the apostles and elders assure the Gentile believers that they accept them as fellow believers.

Cilicia

This is the name of a province on the coast in Asia Minor north of the Island of Cyprus.

Acts 15:24

General Information:

Here all instances of "we" and "us" refer to the writers but not the readers

that certain men

"that some men"

with no orders from us

"even though we gave no orders for them to go"

disturbed you with words that upset your souls

Here "souls" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "taught things that have troubled you"

Acts 15:25

General Information:

Here the words "us" and "our" refer to the writers but not the readers

who have come to one mind

"who are now agree completely"

one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

to choose men

The men they sent were Judas, who was called Barsabbas, and Silas (Acts 15:22).

Acts 15:26

men who have risked their lives

These words refer to Barnabas and Paul, not to Judas and Silas.

for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Here "name" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "because they believe in our Lord Jesus Christ" or "because they serve our Lord Jesus Christ"

Acts 15:27

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writers of the letter [Acts 15:22]

who will report to you the same things in their own words

This phrase emphasizes that Judas and Silas will say the same things that the apostles and elders had written. Alternate translation: "who themselves will tell you the same things about which we have written"

Acts 15:28

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to the writers of the letter [Acts 15:22]

to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things

This speaks about laws that people need to obey as if they were objects that people carry on their shoulders.

Acts 15:29

Connecting Statement:

This concludes the letter from the Jerusalem church to the Gentile believers in Antioch.

from things sacrificed to idols

This means they are not allowed to eat the meat of an animal that someone sacrifices to an idol.

blood

This refers to drinking blood or eating meat from which the blood has not been drained.

things strangled

A strangled animal was killed but its blood was not drained.

Farewell

This announces the end of the letter. Alternate translation:

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"Goodbye"
Acts 15:30
Connecting Statement:
Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas leave for Antioch.
So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch
The word "they" refers to Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas. Alternate translation: "So when the four men were dismissed, they came down to Antioch"
when they were dismissed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the apostles and elders dismissed the four men" or "when the believers in Jerusalem sent them"
came down to Antioch
The phrase "came down" is used here because Antioch is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.
Acts 15:31
they rejoiced
"the believers in Antioch rejoiced"
because of the encouragement
The abstract noun "encouragement" can be expressed with the verb "encourage." Alternate translation: "because what the apostles and elders wrote encouraged them"
Acts 15:32
also prophets
Prophets were teachers authorized by God to speak for him. Alternate translation: "because they were prophets" or "who were also prophets"
the brothers
"the fellow believers"
strengthened them
Judas and Silas' helping them to depend even more on Jesus is spoken of as if they were making them physically stronger.
Acts 15:33
Connecting Statement:
Judas and Silas return to Jerusalem while Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch.
After they had spent some time there
This speaks about time as if it were a commodity that a person could spend. The word "they" refers to Judas and Silas. Alternate translation: "After they stayed there for a while"
they were sent away in peace from the brothers
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the brothers sent Judas and Silas back in peace"
the brothers
This refers to the believers in Antioch.
to those who had sent them
"to the believers in Jerusalem who sent Judas and Silas" (Acts 15:22)
Acts 15:35
the word of the Lord
Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"
Acts 15:36
Let us return now
"I suggest we now return"
visit the brothers
"care for the brothers" or "offer to help the believers"
the word of the Lord
Here "word" stands for the message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"
see how they are
"learn how they are doing." They want to learn about the current condition of the brothers and how they are holding on to God's truth.
Acts 15:37
to also take with them John, who was called Mark
"to take John, who was also called Mark"
Acts 15:38
Paul thought it was not good to take Mark
The words "not good" are used to say the opposite of good. Alternate translation: "Paul thought that taking Mark would be bad"
Pamphylia
This was a province in Asia Minor. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.
did not go further with them in the work
"did not continue to work with them then" or "did not continue to serve with them"
Acts 15:39
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to Barnabas and Paul.
Then there arose a sharp disagreement
The abstract noun "disagreement" can be stated as the verb "disagree." Alternate translation: "They strongly disagreed with each other"
Acts 15:40
after he was entrusted by the brothers to the grace of the Lord
To entrust to someone means to place the care and responsibility for someone or something to another person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after the believers in Antioch entrusted Paul to the grace of the Lord" or "after the believers in Antioch prayed for the Lord to take care of Paul and show kindness to him"
Acts 15:41
he went
The previous sentence implies that Silas was with Paul. Alternate translation: "they went" or "Paul and Silas went" or "Paul took Silas and went"
went through Syria and Cilicia
These are provinces or areas in Asia Minor, near the island of Cyprus.
strengthening the churches
Encouraging the believers in the churches is spoken of as though Paul and Silas were making the believers physically stronger. The word "churches" refers to the groups of believers in Syria and Cilicia. Alternate translation: "encouraging the believers in the churches" or "helping the community of believers to depend even more in Jesus"

16 [1]Paul also came to Derbe and to Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple named Timothy was there, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.[2]He was well spoken of by the brothers who were at Lystra

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and Iconium.[3]Paul wanted him to travel with him, so he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.
[4]As they were going along through the cities, they were passing along the decrees to obey that were decided on by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. [5]So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.

[6]Paul and his companions went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, since they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the word in the province of Asia.[7]When they came near Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus prevented them.[8]So passing by Mysia, they came down to the city of Troas.
[9]A vision appeared to Paul in the night: A man of Macedonia was standing there, begging him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."[10]When Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

[11]Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day we came to Neapolis.[12]From there we went to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the most important city in the district and a Roman colony, and we stayed in this city for several days.
[13]On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.
[14]A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, listened to us. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.[15]When she and her house were baptized, she pleaded with us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay in my house." And she persuaded us.

[16]It came about that, as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave girl who had a spirit of divination encountered us. She brought her masters much gain by fortunetelling.[17]This woman followed after Paul and us and shouted, saying, "These men are servants of the Most High God. They proclaim to you the way of salvation."[18]She did this for many days. But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out at that same hour.

[19]When her masters saw that their hope of profit was now gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities.[20]When they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are causing trouble in our city. They are Jews.[21]They proclaim customs that are not lawful for Romans to accept or practice."

[22]Then the crowd rose up together against Paul and Silas; the magistrates tore their garments off them and commanded them to be beaten with rods.[23]When they had laid many blows upon them, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to guard them securely.[24]After he got this command, the jailer threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

[25]Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.
[26]Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains were unfastened.
[27]The jailer was awakened from sleep and saw the open prison doors; he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, because he thought that the prisoners had escaped.
[28]But Paul shouted with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, because we are all here."

[29]The jailer called for lights and rushed in and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas,[30]and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"
[31]They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
[32]They spoke the word of the Lord to him, together with everyone in his house.[33]Then the jailer took them at the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately.[34]Then as he brought Paul and Silas up into his house and he set food before them, he rejoiced greatly with those of his house, that he had believed in God.

[35]Now when it was day, the magistrates sent word to the guards, saying, "Let those men go."
[36]The jailer reported the words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent word to me to let you go. Now therefore come out, and go in peace."

[37]But Paul said to them, "They have publicly beaten us without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens—and they threw us into prison. Do they now want to send us away secretly? No! Let them come themselves and lead us out."

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[38]The guards reported these words to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid.[39]The magistrates came and apologized to them and brought them out, asking them to go away from the city.
[40]So Paul and Silas went out of the prison and came to the house of Lydia. When Paul and Silas saw the brothers, they encouraged them and then departed from the city.

Acts 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Timothy's circumcision

Paul circumcised Timothy because they were telling the message of Jesus to Jews and Gentiles. Paul wanted the Jews to know that he respected the law of Moses even though the church leaders in Jerusalem had decided that Christians did not need to be circumcised.

The woman who had a spirit of divination

Most people want very much to know the future, but the law of Moses said that speaking with the spirits of dead people to learn about the future is a sin. This woman seems to have been able to tell the future very well. She was a slave, and her masters made much money from her work. Paul wanted her to stop sinning, so he told the spirit to leave her. Luke does not say that she began to follow Jesus or tell us anything more about her.

Links:

Acts 16:1 Notes

Acts 16:1

Connecting Statement:

This continues the missionary journeys of Paul with Silas. Timothy is introduced into the story and joins Paul and Silas. Verses 1 and 2 give background information about Timothy.

Paul also came

Here "came" can be translated as "went."

Derbe

This is the name of a city in Asia Minor. See how you translated it in Acts 14:6.

behold

The word "behold" alerts us to a new person in the narrative. Your language may have a way of doing this.

who was a believer

The words "in Christ" are understood. Alternate translation: "who was a believer in Christ" or "who believed in Christ"

Acts 16:2

He was well spoken of by the brothers

This can be stated in active from. Alternate translation: "The brothers spoke well of him" or "Timothy had a good reputation among the brothers" or "The brothers said good things about him"

by the brothers

Here "brothers" refers to believers. Alternate translation: "by the believers"

Acts 16:3

wanted him ... took him ... circumcised him ... his father

"wanted Timothy ... took Timothy ... circumcised Timothy ... Timothy's father"

with him ... he took

"with Paul ... Paul took"

circumcised him

It is possible that Paul himself circumcised Timothy, but it is more likely that he had someone else circumcise Timothy.

because of the Jews that were in those places

"because of the Jews living in the areas where Paul and Timothy would be traveling"

for they all knew that his father was a Greek

Since Greek men did not have their sons circumcised, the Jews would have known Timothy was not circumcised, and they would have rejected Paul and Timothy before hearing their message about Christ.

Acts 16:4

General Information:

The word "they" here refers to Paul, Silas (Acts 15:40), and Timothy (Acts 16:3).

the decrees to obey

"the decrees for the church members to obey" or "teh decrees for the believers to obey"

that were decided on by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had decided on"

Acts 16:5

the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the believers became stronger in their faith, and there were more and more people becoming believers every day"

the churches were strengthened in the faith

This speaks of helping someone to believe more confidently as if it were making them physically stronger.

Acts 16:6

Phrygia

This is a region in Asia. See how you translated this name in Acts 2:10.

they had been forbidden by the Holy Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit had forbidden them" or "the Holy Spirit did not permit them"

the word

Here "word" stands for "message." Alternate translation: "the message about Christ"

Acts 16:7

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When they came
Here "came" can be translated as "went" or "arrived."
Mysia ... Bithynia
These are two more regions in Asia.
the Spirit of Jesus
"the Holy Spirit"
Acts 16:8
they came down to the city of Troas
The phrase "came down" is used here because Troas is lower in elevation than Mysia.
they came down
Here "came" can be translated as "went."
Acts 16:9
A vision appeared to Paul
"Paul saw a vision from God" or "Paul had a vision from God"
begging him
Or "inviting him."
Come over into Macedonia
The phrase "Come over" is used because Macedonia is across the sea from Troas.
Acts 16:10
we sought to go to Macedonia ... God had called us
Here the words "we" and "us" refer to Paul and his companions, including Luke, the author of Acts.
we sought to go to Macedonia
"we looked for a way to go to Macedonia" or "we prepared to go to Macedonia"
Acts 16:11
Samothrace ... Neapolis
These are coastal cities near Phillipi in Macedonia.
we came to Neapolis
Here "came to" can be translated as "went to" or "arrived at."
Acts 16:12
a Roman colony
This is a city outside of Italy where many people who came from Rome lived. The people there had the same rights and freedoms as people who lived in cities in Italy. They could govern themselves and they did not have to pay taxes.
Acts 16:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul and his companions are now in Philippi on their missionary trip. The story of Lydia begins here. This short story happens during Paul's travels.
Acts 16:14
A certain woman named Lydia
Here "A certain woman" introduces a new person in the story. Alternate translation: "There was a woman named Lydia"
a seller of purple
Here "cloth" is understood. Alternate translation: "a merchant who sold purple cloth"
Thyatira
This is the name of a city.
worshiped God
A worshiper of God is a Gentile who gives praise to God and follows him, but does not obey all of the Jewish laws.
The Lord opened her heart to pay attention
For the Lord to cause someone to pay attention and believe a message is spoken of as if he were opening a person's heart. Alternate translation: "The Lord caused her to listen well and to believe"
opened her heart
Here "heart" stands for a person's mind. Also, the author speaks about the "heart" or "mind" as if it were a box that a person could open so it is ready for someone to fill it.
what was said by Paul
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what Paul said"
Acts 16:15
Connecting Statement:
The story of Lydia ends here.
When she and her house were baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When they baptized Lydia and members of her household"
her house
Here "house" represents the people who live in her house. Alternate translation: "the members of her household" or "her family and household servants"
Acts 16:16
General Information:
Background information is given here to explain that this young fortune teller brought much financial gain to her masters by guessing people's futures.
Connecting Statement:
This begins the first event in another short story during Paul's travels; it is about a young fortune teller.
It came about that
This phrase marks the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
a certain slave girl ... encountered
The phrase "a certain" introduces a new person to the story. Alternate translation: "there was a slave girl ... who encountered"
a spirit of divination
An evil spirit spoke to her often about the immediate future of people.
Acts 16:17
the way of salvation
How a person can be saved is spoken of here as if it were a way or path that a person walks on. Alternate translation: "how God can save you"
Acts 16:18
But Paul, being greatly annoyed by her, turned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But she greatly annoyed Paul, so he turned around"
in the name of Jesus Christ
Here "name" stands for speaking with the authority or as the representative of Jesus Christ.
it came out at that same hour
"the spirit came out immediately"
Acts 16:19
her masters
"the owners of the slave girl"
their hope of profit was now gone
Here the word "hope" is the reason for which a person can

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expect that what he desires will happen. Now that the spirit was gone, the girl's masters could not expect to earn money from the spirit's telling people things. Alternate translation: "their opportunity to make money was now gone" or "they could no longer expect to make money"

their hope of profit was now gone

It can be stated clearly why they no longer expected to make money. Alternate translation: "she could no longer earn money for them by telling fortunes"

into the marketplace

"into the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services takes place.

before the authorities

"into the presence of the authorities" or "so that the authorities could judge them"

Acts 16:20

When they had brought them to the magistrates

"When they had brought them to the judges"

magistrates

rulers, judges

These men are causing trouble in our city

Here the word "our" refers to the people of the city and includes the magistrates who ruled it.

Acts 16:21

to accept or practice

"to believe or to obey" or "to accept or to do"

Acts 16:22

General Information:

Here the words "their" and "them" refer to Paul and Silas.

commanded them to be beaten with rods

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "commanded the soldiers to beat them with rods"

Acts 16:23

they had ... upon them, they threw them ... guard them

"the magistrates had ... upon Paul and Silas, the magistrates threw Paul and Silas ... keep Paul and Silas"

had laid many blows upon them

"had hit them many times with rods"

commanded the jailer to guard them securely

"told the jailer to make sure they did not get out"

jailer

a person responsible for all the people held in the jail or prison

Acts 16:24

he got this command

"he heard this command"

fastened their feet in the stocks

"securely locked their feet in the stocks"

stocks

a piece of wood with holes for preventing a person's feet from moving

Acts 16:25

General Information:

The word "them" refers to Paul and Silas.

Connecting Statement:

This continues Paul and Silas' time in Philippi in prison and tells what happens to their jailer.

Acts 16:26

earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "earthquake which shook the foundations of the prison"

the foundations of the prison

When the foundations shook, this caused the entire prison to shake.

all the doors were opened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all the doors opened"

everyone's chains were unfastened

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone's chains came loose"

Acts 16:27

The jailer was awakened from sleep

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The jailer woke up"

was about to kill himself

"was ready to kill himself." The jailer preferred to commit suicide rather than suffer the consequences of letting the prisoners escape.

Acts 16:28

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Paul, Silas, and all of the other prisoners but excludes the jailer.

Acts 16:29

called for lights

The reason why the jailer needed light can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "called for someone to bring light so he could see who was still in the prison"

for lights

The word "lights" stands for something that makes light. Alternate translation: "for torches" or "for lamps"

rushed in

"quickly entered the jail"

fell down before Paul and Silas

The jailer humbled himself by bowing down at the feet of Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:30

brought them out

"led them outside the jail"

what must I do to be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what must I do for God to save me from my sins"

Acts 16:31

you will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will save you" or "God will save you from your sins"

your house

Here "house" stands for the people who live in the house. Alternate translation: "all the members of your household" or "your family"

Acts 16:32

General Information:

The word "They" refers to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25), and the word "him" refers to the jailer.

They spoke the word of the Lord to him

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "They told him the message about the Lord Jesus"

Acts 16:33

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General Information:
The words "them" and "their" refer to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25), and the words "he" and "his" refer to the jailer.
he and those in his entire house were baptized immediately
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul and Silas immediately baptized the jailer and all the members of his household"
Acts 16:34
General Information:
All instances of "he" and "his" refer to the jailer.
Acts 16:35
General Information:
This is the last event in the story of Paul and Silas in Philippi (Acts 16:12).
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells the last event in the story that started in Acts 16:16.
sent word to the guards
Here "word" stands for "message" or "command." Alternate translation: "sent a message to the guards" or "sent a command to the guards"
sent word
Here "sent" means the magistrates told someone to go tell the guards their message.
Let those men go
"Release those men" or "Allow those men to leave"
Acts 16:36
come out
"come outside of the jail"
Acts 16:37
General Information:
The word "they" refers to the magistrates. All instances of "we" and "us" refer only to Paul and Silas and so are exclusive.
said to them
Probably Paul is speaking to the jailer, but he intends for the jailer to tell the magistrates what he says. Alternate translation: "said to the jailer"
They have publicly beaten us
Here "They" refers to the magistrates who commanded their soldiers to beat them. Alternate translation: "The magistrates ordered their soldiers to beat us in public"
without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens—and they threw us into prison
"men who are Roman citizens, and they had their soldiers put us in jail though they had not proven in court that we were guilty"
Do they now want to send us away secretly? No!
Paul uses a question to emphasize that he will not allow the magistrates to send them out the city in secret after they had mistreated Paul and Silas. Alternate translation: "I will certainly not let them send us out of the city in secret!"
Let them come themselves
Here "themselves" is used for emphasis.
Acts 16:38
when they heard that Paul and Silas were Romans, they were afraid
To be a Roman meant to be a legal citizen of the Empire. Citizenship provided freedom from torture and the right to a fair trial. The city leaders were afraid that more important Roman authorities might learn how the city leaders had mistreated Paul and Silas.
they heard ... they were afraid
"the magistrates heard ... the magistrates were afraid"
Acts 16:39
General Information:
All instances of "them" refer to Paul and Silas.
Acts 16:40
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to Paul and Silas. The word "them" refers to the believers in Philippi.
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of Paul and Silas' time in Philippi.
came to the house
Here "came" can be translated as "went."
the house of Lydia
"the home of Lydia"
saw the brothers
Here "brothers" refers to believers, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "saw the believers"

17 [1]Now when they had passed through the cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to the city of Thessalonica,
where there was a synagogue of the Jews.[2]Paul, as his custom was, went to them, and for three Sabbath days
reasoned with them from the scriptures.
[3]He was opening the scriptures and explaining that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead. He said, "This Jesus whom I proclaim to you is the Christ."[4]Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, including a large number of devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women.
[5]But the unbelieving Jews, being moved with jealousy, took certain wicked men from the marketplace, gathered a crowd together, and set the city in an uproar. Assaulting the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring Paul and Silas out to the people.[6]But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain other brothers before the officials of the city, crying, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also.[7]These men whom Jason has welcomed act against the decrees of Caesar; they say that there is another king—Jesus."
[8]They troubled the crowd and the officials of the city who heard these things.[9]But after they took security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

[10]That night the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.
[11]Now these people were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.[12]Therefore many of them believed, including some influential Greek women and many men.

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[13]But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that Paul was also proclaiming the word of God at Berea, they went there and stirred up and troubled the crowds.[14]Then immediately, the brothers sent Paul to go to the sea, but Silas and Timothy stayed there.[15]Those who were leading Paul took him as far as the city of Athens. As they left Paul there, they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible.

[16]Now while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols.[17]So he reasoned every day in the synagogue with the Jews and others who worshiped God, as well as in the marketplace with those who happened to be there.
[18]But also some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. Some said, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others said, "He seems to be one who calls people to follow strange gods," because he was proclaiming the gospel about Jesus and the resurrection.
[19]They took Paul and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know this new teaching which you were speaking?
[20]For you bring some strange things to our ears. Therefore, we want to know what these things mean."[21](Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening about something new.)

[22]So Paul stood in the middle of the Areopagus and said,"You men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way.
[23]For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I announce to you.

[24]The God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples built with hands.[25]Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives people life and breath and everything else.
[26]From one man he made every nation of people to live on the surface of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas,[27]so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us.
[28]For in him we live and move and have our being, just as one of your own poets has said: 'For we also are his offspring.'
[29]"Therefore, since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the qualities of deity are like gold, or silver, or stone —images created by the art and imagination of man.
[30]Therefore God overlooked the times of ignorance, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent.[31]This is because he has set a day when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed. God has given proof of this man to everyone by raising him from the dead."

[32]Now when the men of Athens heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked Paul; but others said, "We will listen to you again about this matter."[33]After that, Paul left them.[34]But certain men joined him and believed, including Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Acts 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Misunderstandings about the Messiah

The Jews expected the Christ or Messiah to be a powerful king because the Old Testament says so many times. But it also says many times that the Messiah would suffer, and that was what Paul was telling the Jews. (See: christ)

The religion of Athens

Paul said that the Athenians were "religious," but they did not worship the true God. They worshiped many different false gods. In the past they had conquered other peoples and begun to worship the gods of the people they had conquered. (See: falsegod)

In this chapter Luke describes for the first time how Paul told the message of Christ to people who knew nothing of the Old Testament.

Links:

Acts 17:1 Notes

Acts 17:1

General Information:

Both instances of "they" refers to Paul and Silas (Acts 16:40).

Connecting Statement:

This continues the story of Paul, Silas, and Timothy's missionary trip. They arrive in Thessalonica, apparently without Luke, since he says "they" and not "we."

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke, the author, starts to tell a new part of the story.

passed through

"traveled through"

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cities of Amphipolis and Apollonia
These are coastal cities in Macedonia.
they came to the city
Here "came to" can be translated as "went to" or "arrived at." Alternate translation: "they went to the city" or "they arrived at the city"
Acts 17:2
went to them ... reasoned with them
"went to the Jews ... reasoned with the Jews"
as his custom was
"as his habit was" or "as his common practice was." Paul usually went to the synagogue on the Sabbath when Jews would be present.
for three Sabbath days
"on each Sabbath day for three weeks"
reasoned with them from the scriptures
"gave them reasons to believe from the scriptures" or "debated with them about the scriptures" or "discussed the scriptures with them." Paul explained what the scriptures mean in order to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah.
Acts 17:3
General Information:
Here the word "He" refers to Paul (Acts 17:2).
He was opening the scriptures
Possible meanings are 1) to explain the scriptures in a way that people can understand is spoken of as if Paul were opening something so people can see what is inside of it) or 2) Paul was literally opening a book or scroll and reading from it.
it was necessary
"it was part of God's plan"
to rise again
"to come back to life"
from the dead
From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.
Acts 17:4
the Jews were persuaded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Jews believed" or "the Jews understood"
joined Paul
"became associated with Paul"
devout Greeks
This refers to Greeks who worshiped God but had not converted to Judaism through circumcision.
not a few of the leading women
This is an understatement to emphasize that many leading women joined them. Alternate translation: "many leading women"
Acts 17:5
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the unbelieving Jews and wicked men from the marketplace.
being moved with jealousy
The feeling of jealousy is spoken of as if jealousy were actually moving the person. Alternate translation: "feeling very jealous" or "feeling very angry"
with jealousy
It can be stated explicitly that these Jews were jealous because some of the Jews and Greeks believed Paul's message.
took certain wicked men
Here "took" does not mean the Jews took these people by force. It means the Jews persuaded these wicked men to help them.
certain wicked men
"some evil men." The word "men" here refers specifically to males.
from the marketplace
"from the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services take place.
set the city in an uproar
Here "the city" stands for the people in the city. Alternate translation: "caused the people of the city to be in an uproar" or "caused the people of the city to riot"
Assaulting the house
"Violently attacking the house." This probably means the people were throwing rocks at the house and trying to break down the door of the house.
Jason
This is the name of a man.
they were seeking to bring Paul ... out
The word "seeking" here means that the people wanted to bring Paul out and were trying to bring him out.
out to the people
Possible meanings or "people" are 1) a governmental or legal group of citizens gathered to make a decision or 2) a mob.
Acts 17:6
certain other brothers
Here "brothers" refers to believers. Alternate translation: "some other believers"
before the officials
"into the presence of the officials"
These men who have
The Jewish leaders were speaking, and the phrase "These men" refers to Paul and Silas.
turned the world upside down
This phrase is another way of saying Paul and Silas were causing trouble everywhere they went. The Jewish leaders were exaggerating the influence Paul and Silas were having with their teaching. Alternate translation: "caused trouble everywhere in the world" or "caused trouble everywhere they have gone"
Acts 17:7
Jason has welcomed
This phrase signals that Jason was in agreement with the apostles' troubling message.
Acts 17:8
They troubled the crowd
"They caused the people in the city to be afraid"
Acts 17:9
the rest
The words "the rest" refers to other believers that the Jews

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brought before the officials.

they took security ... they let them go

"the officials took security ... they let Jason and the other believers go"

took security

Jason and the others gave the money to the officials to show that they would not cause any more trouble. This was not a fine or a punishment, so they might have expected the officials to give the money back later.

Acts 17:10

General Information:

Paul and Silas travel on to the town of Berea.

the brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "the believers"

Acts 17:11

Now

The word "now" is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about the people in Berea and how they were willing to listen to Paul and examine what he said.

more noble

These "well-born" people were willing to think more objectively about new ideas than other people. Alternate translation: "more open minded" or "more willing to listen"

received the word

Here "word" refers to a teaching. Alternate translation: "listened to the teaching"

with all readiness of mind

These Bereans were prepared to examine earnestly Paul's teachings about the scripture.

examining the scriptures daily

"carefully reading and evaluating the scriptures every day"

these things were so

"the things Paul said were true"

Acts 17:13

General Information:

Athens was south of Berea. Both were on the coast of Macedonia. Athens was one of the most important cities in Greece.

went there and stirred up

This speaks about their agitating people as though it were a person stirring a liquid and causing the things at the bottom of the liquid to rise to the surface. Alternate translation: "went there and agitated" or "went there and disturbed"

troubled the crowds

"worried the crowds" or "caused dread and fear among the people"

Acts 17:14

brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "believers"

to go to the sea

"to go to the coast." From here Paul would probably sail to another city.

Acts 17:15

who were leading Paul

"who were accompanying Paul" or "who were going along with Paul"

they received from him instructions for Silas and Timothy

"he told them to instruct Silas and Timothy." This can also be stated as a direct quotation as in the UDB.

Acts 17:16

General Information:

This is another part of the story of Paul and Silas' travels. Paul is now in Athens where he is waiting for Silas and Timothy to join him.

Now

This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.

his spirit was provoked within him as he saw the city full of idols

Here "spirit" stands for Paul himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he became upset because he saw that there were idols everywhere in the city" or "seeing the idols everywhere in the city upset him"

Acts 17:17

he reasoned

"he debated" or "he discussed." This means that his listeners also spoke and asked him questions. He was not the only speaker.

others who worshiped God

This refers to Gentiles who gave praise to God and followed him but did not obey all of the Jewish laws.

in the marketplace

"in the public square." This is a public place of business, where buying and selling of goods, cattle, or services take place.

Acts 17:18

General Information:

Here the words "him," "He, "and "he" refer to Paul.

Epicurean and Stoic philosophers

Philosophers are people who think about the world and try to understand how people should live. The Epicureans and the Stoics were two groups of philosophers. They believed that a god or gods existed, but they did not trust in or obey any god. Alternate translation: "thinkers called Epicureans and Stoics"

encountered him

"happened upon him"

Some said

"Some of the philosophers said"

What is this babbler

The word "babbler" was used to refer to birds picking up seeds as food. It refers negatively to a person who only knows a little bit of information. The philosophers said Paul had bits of information which were not worth listening to. Alternate translation: "What is this uneducated person"

Others said

"Other philosophers said"

He seems to be one who calls people to follow

"He seems to be a proclaimer" or "He seems to be on a mission to add people to his philosophy"

strange gods

This is not in the sense of "odd," but in the sense of "foreign," that is, gods that Greeks and Romans do not worship or know about.

Acts 17:19

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They took ... brought him
This does not mean they arrested Paul. The philosophers invited Paul to speak formally to their leaders.
to the Areopagus
The "Areopagus" was the place where the leaders met. Alternate translation: "to the leaders that met on the Areopagus"
the Areopagus, saying
Here the leaders on the Areopagus are speaking. This can stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "the Areopagus. The leaders said to Paul"
Areopagus
This is a prominent rock outcropping or hill in Athens upon which the supreme court of Athens may have met.
Acts 17:20
For you bring some strange things to our ears
Paul's teachings about Jesus and the resurrection are spoken of as an object that a person can bring to another person. Here "ears" refers to what they hear. Alternate translation: "For you are teaching some things that we have never heard before"
Acts 17:21
Now all the Athenians and the strangers living there
The word "all" is a generalization referring to many. Alternate translation: "Now many of the Athenians and the strangers living there"
all the Athenians
"Athenians" are people from Athens, a city near the coast below Macedonia
the strangers
"the foreigners"
spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening
Here "time" is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could spend. Alternate translation: "used their time doing nothing but either telling or listening" or "were always doing nothing but telling or listening"
spent their time in nothing but either telling or listening
The phrase "spent their time in nothing" is an exaggeration. Alternate translation: "did not do much but tell or listen" or "spent much of their time telling or listening"
telling or listening about something new
"discussing new philosophical ideas" or "talking about what was new to them"
Acts 17:22
General Information:
Paul begins his speech to the philosophers on the Areopagus.
very religious in every way
Paul is referring to the Athenians' public display of honoring the gods through prayers, building altars, and offering sacrifices.
Acts 17:23
as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship
"as I walked among the objects of your worship and observed them" or "as I walked around in the city, I observed the objects of your worship"
To an Unknown God
Possible meanings are 1) "to a certain unknown god" or 2) "to a god not known." This was a specific writing or inscription on that altar.
Acts 17:24
the world
In the most general sense, the "world" refers to the heavens and the earth and everything in them.
since he is Lord
"because he is the Lord." Here "he" is referring to the unknown god mentioned in Acts 17:23 that Paul is explaining is the Lord God.
of heaven and earth
The words "heaven" and "earth" are used together to mean all beings and things in heaven and earth.
built with hands
Here "hands" stands for people. Alternate translation: "built by the hands of people" or "that people built"
Acts 17:25
Neither is he served by men's hands
Here "served" has the sense of a doctor treating a patient to make the patient well again. Alternate translation: "Neither do men's hands take care of him"
by men's hands
Here "hands" stands for the whole person. Alternate translation: "by humans"
since he himself
"because he himself." The word "himself" is added for emphasis.
Acts 17:26
General Information:
Here the word "he" refer to God, the creator, and both instances of "their" refer to every nation of people living on the surface of the earth.
one man
This means Adam, the first person God created. This can be stated to include Eve. It was through Adam and Eve that God made all other people. Alternate translation: "one couple"
having determined their appointed seasons and the boundaries of their living areas
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "and he determined when and where they would live"
Acts 17:27
General Information:
All instances of "they" and "their" refer to the people who live on earth, all instances of "him" and "he" refer to God, and the word "us" includes the speaker, the hearers, and the people who live on earth.
so that they should search for God and perhaps they may feel their way toward him and find him
Here "search for God" represents desiring to know him, and "feel their way toward him and find him" represents praying and having a relationship with him. Alternate translation: "so that they should want to know God and perhaps pray to him and become one of his people"
Yet he is not far from each one of us
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Yet he is very near to every one of us"
Acts 17:28
General Information:
Here the words "him" and "his" refer to God

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For in him
"Because of him"
Acts 17:29
General Information:
Both instances of "we" include the speaker, the hearers, and other people.
are God's offspring
Because God created everyone, all people are spoken of as if they were God's literal children.
the qualities of deity are like
Here "deity" refers to God's nature or attributes. Alternate translation: "God is like"
images created by the art and imagination of man
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which a man then uses his skill to make it into something that he has designed" or "images that people make by using their art and imagination"
Acts 17:30
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to God.
Therefore
"Because what I have just said is true"
God overlooked the times of ignorance
"God decided not to punish people during the time of ignorance"
times of ignorance
This refers to the time before God fully revealed himself through Jesus Christ and before people truly knew how to obey God.
all men
This means all people, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all people"
Acts 17:31
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes his speech to the philosophers in the Areopagus, which he began in Acts 17:22.
when he will judge the world in righteousness by the man he has appointed
"when the man he has chosen will judge the world in righteousness"
he will judge the world
Here "world" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "he will judge all people"
in righteousness
"justly" or "fairly"
God has given proof of this man
"God has demonstrated his choice of this man"
from the dead
From among all those who have died. The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.
Acts 17:32
General Information:
Here the word "We" refers to the men of Athens but not to Paul, so this is exclusive. Though some of them probably did want to hear Paul again, they may only have been being polite.
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Paul in Athens.
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke changes from Paul's teachings to the reaction of the people of Athens.
the men of Athens
These are the people who were present at the Areopagus and were listening to Paul.
some mocked Paul
"some ridiculed Paul" or "some laughed at Paul." These did not believe it was possible for someone to die and then return to life.
Acts 17:34
Dionysius the Areopagite
Dionysius is a man's name. Areopagite implies that Dionysius was one of the judges at the council of Areopagus.
Damaris
This is the name of a woman.

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18 [1]After these things Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.[2]There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to them,[3]and because he worked at the same trade, he stayed with them and labored, for they were tentmakers by trade.
[4]So Paul reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks.[5]Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.
[6]But when the Jews opposed and insulted him, Paul shook out his garment at them and said to them, "May your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."
[7]Then he left from there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a man who worshiped God. His house was next to the synagogue.[8]Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians who heard about it believed and were baptized.
[9]The Lord said to Paul in the night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent.[10]For I am with you, and no one will try to harm you, for I have many people in this city."[11]Paul lived there for a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

[12]But when Gallio became governor of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one mind against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat;[13]they said, "This man persuades people to worship God contrary to the law."

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[14]Yet when Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "You Jews, if indeed it were a matter of wrong or a wicked crime, it would be reasonable to put up with you.[15]But since these are questions about words and names and your own law, settle it yourselves. I do not wish to be a judge of these matters."
[16]Gallio made them leave the judgment seat.[17]So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat. But Gallio did not care what they did.

[18]Paul, after staying there for many more days, left the brothers and sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila. Before he left the seaport, Cenchreae, he had his hair cut off because of a vow he had taken.[19]When they came to Ephesus, Paul left Priscilla and Aquila there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.
[20]When they asked Paul to stay a longer time, he declined.[21]But taking his leave of them, he said, "I will return again to you if it is God's will." He then set sail from Ephesus.

[22]When Paul had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the Jerusalem church and then went down to Antioch.[23]After having spent some time there, Paul departed and went through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

[24]Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, came to Ephesus. He was eloquent in speech and mighty in the scriptures.[25]Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord. Being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John.[26]Apollos began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.
[27]When he desired to pass over into Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples in Achaia to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who believed by grace.[28]Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The baptism of John

Some Jews who lived far away from Jerusalem and Judea had heard of John the Baptist and followed his teachings. They had not yet heard about Jesus. One of these Jews was Apollos. He followed John the Baptist, but he did not know that the Messiah had come. John had baptized people to show that they were sorry for their sins, but this baptism was different from Christian baptism. (See: faithful and christ and repent)

Links:

Acts 18:1

Acts 18:1
Connecting Statement:
This is another part of the story of Paul's travels as he goes to Corinth.
After these things
"After these events took place in Athens"
Athens
Athens was one of the most important cities in Greece. See how you translated this in Acts 17:15.
Acts 18:2
General Information:
The writer begins to give background information about Aquila and Priscilla.
There he met
Possible meanings are that 1) Paul happened to find by chance or 2) Paul intentionally found.
a Jew named Aquila
Here the phrase "a certain" indicates this is introducing new person in the story.
a native of Pontus
Pontus was a province on the southern coast of the Black Sea.
had recently come
This is probably sometime in the past year.
Italy
This is the name of land. Rome is the capital city of Italy.
Claudius had commanded
Claudius was the current Roman emperor. See how you translated this in Acts 11:28.
Acts 18:3
General Information:
The writer finishes giving background information about Aquila and Priscilla.
he worked at the same trade
"he did the same kind of work that they did"
Acts 18:4
So Paul reasoned
"So Paul debated" or "So Paul discussed." He gave reasons. This means that rather than just preaching, Paul talked and interacted with the people.
trying to persuade both Jews and Greeks
Possible meanings are 1) "and he caused both Jews and

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Greeks to believe" or 2) "and he kept trying to persuade the Jews and the Greeks."
Acts 18:5
General Information:
Silas and Timothy rejoin Paul.
Acts 18:6
shook out his garment
This is a symbolic action to indicate that Paul will no longer try to teach the Jews there about Jesus. He is leaving them to God's judgment.
May your blood be upon your own heads
Here "blood" stands for the guilt of their actions. Here "heads" refers to the whole person. Paul tells the Jews they are solely responsible for the judgment they will face for their stubbornness if they refuse to repent. Alternate translation: "You alone bear the responsibility for your punishment for sin"
I am clean
The word "clean" here is a metaphor for Paul being innocent of wrong against either the people or God. Alternate translation: "I am innocent" or "God will not punish me when he punishes you"
Acts 18:7
he left ... His house
"Paul left ... Titius' Justus's house"
Titius Justus
This is the name of a man.
worshiped God
A worshiper of God is a Gentile who gives praise to God and follows him but does not necessarily obey all of the Jewish laws.
Acts 18:8
Crispus
This is the name of a man.
leader of the synagogue
a layperson who sponsored and administered the synagogue, not necessarily the teacher
all his household
Here "his household" refers to the people who lived together in his house. Alternate translation: "the people who lived with him in his house"
his household
Crispus's household
were baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "received baptism"
Acts 18:9
Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent
The Lord is giving one command in two different ways to emphasize that Paul should certainly continue preaching. Alternate translation: "You must not be afraid; instead, you should continue to speak and not become silent"
speak and do not be silent
The Lord gives the same command in two different ways to strongly command Paul to speak. Alternate translation: "you must certainly continue to speak"
do not be silent
It can be stated explicitly what the Lord wants Paul to speak. Alternate translation: "do not stop speaking about the gospel"
Acts 18:10
I have many people in this city
"there are many people in this city who have put their faith in me" or "many people in this city will put their faith in me"
Acts 18:11
Paul lived there ... teaching the word of God among them
This is a concluding statement for this part of the story. "Word of God" here is a synecdoche for the entire scriptures. Alternate translation: "Paul lived there ... teaching the scriptures among them"
Acts 18:12
General Information:
Achaia was the Roman province in which Corinth was located. Corinth was the largest city in southern Greece and the capital of the province.
Connecting Statement:
The unbelieving Jews bring Paul to the judgment seat before Gallio.
Gallio
This is the name of a man.
the Jews
This stands for the Jewish leaders that did not believe in Jesus.
rose up
This phrase means that the Jews began to act, not that they rose into the air or rose to stand from a sitting position. If your language has a different idiom for beginning to act, you may use it here.
with one mind
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
brought him before the judgment seat
The Jews took Paul by force to bring Paul before the court. Here "judgment seat" refers to the place where Gallio sat when he made legal decisions in court. Alternate translation: "took him so that the governor could judge him at the judgment seat"
Acts 18:14
Gallio said
Gallio was the Roman governor of the Province.
Acts 18:15
your own law
Here "law" can refer to either the law of Moses or the Jewish customs of Paul's time. Gallio is simply telling the Jews that they are to do what they think right and that he is not interested in being the judge.
I do not wish to be a judge of these matters
"I refuse to make a judgment about these matters"
Acts 18:16
Gallio made them leave the judgment seat
"Gallio dismissed the Jews from the judgment seat." Here "judgment seat" refers to the place where Gallio sits to make legal decisions in court. Alternate translation: "Gallio made them leave his presence in the court" or "Gallio made them leave the court"
Acts 18:17

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General Information:
It is not clear what events this verse describes. The Jews had been accusing Paul, but it appears that they ended up beating Sosthenes and not Paul.
So they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the judgment seat
Possible meanings are 1) the Gentiles beat Sosthenes in the court in front of the judgment seat because he was the Jewish leader or 2) Sosthenes was a believer in Christ, so even though he was "the ruler of the synagogue," the Jews beat him in front of the court.
they all seized
This may be an exaggeration to emphasize the strong feelings the people had. Alternate translation: "many people seized" or "many of them grabbed"
Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue
Sosthenes was "the ruler of the synagogue" at Corinth.
beat him
"repeatedly hit him" or "repeatedly punched him."
Acts 18:18
General Information:
Here both instances of "he" refer to Paul.
left the brothers
The word "brothers" refers to men and women believers. Alternate translation: "left the fellow believers"
sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila
Paul got on a ship that sailed for Syria. Priscilla and Aquila went with him.
Cenchreae
This was a town near Corinth in Greece. It was on the coast, and Paul probably got on the ship there.
he had his hair cut off
This is a symbolic action that indicates that he had done something he had vowed to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he had someone cut off the hair on his head"
Acts 18:19
Connecting Statement:
This continues Paul's missionary journey as Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila leave Corinth. This seems to indicate that Silas and Timothy remain, since it says "he" here and not "they." The word "they" refers to Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila.
reasoned with the Jews
"gave the Jews reasons to believe" or "debated with the Jews about the scriptures" or "discussed the scriptures with the Jews." Paul explained what the scriptures mean in order to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. See how you translated "reasoned with" in [Acts 17:2]
Acts 18:20
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the Jews in Ephesus.
Acts 18:21
General Information:
Here the word "them" refers to the Jews in Ephesus. The word "you" is plural.
taking his leave of them
"saying good-bye to them"
Acts 18:22
General Information:
Phrygia is a province in Asia which is now modern day Turkey. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues his missionary journey.
landed at Caesarea
"arrived at Caesarea." The word "landed" is used to show that he arrived by ship.
he went up
He traveled to the city of Jerusalem. The phrase "went up" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Caesarea.
greeted the Jerusalem church
Here "church" refers to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "greeted the members of the church of Jerusalem"
then went down
The phrase "went down" is used here because Antioch is lower in elevation than Jerusalem.
Acts 18:23
Paul departed
"Paul went away" or "Paul left"
After having spent some time there
This speaks about "time" as if it were a commodity that a person could spend. Alternate translation: After staying there for a while"
Acts 18:24
General Information:
Apollos is introduced to the story. Verses 24 and 25 give background information about him.
Connecting Statement:
Luke tells what happens in Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila.
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story.
a certain Jew named Apollos
The phrase "a certain" indicates that Luke is introducing a new person in the story.
an Alexandrian by birth
"a man who was born in the city of Alexandria." This was a city in Egypt on the north coast of Africa.
eloquent in speech
"a good speaker"
mighty in the scriptures
"he knew the scriptures thoroughly." He understood the Old Testament writings well.
Acts 18:25
Apollos had been instructed in the teachings of the Lord
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Other believers had taught Apollos how the Lord Jesus wanted people to live"
Being fervent in spirit
Here "spirit" refers to the entire person of Apollos. Alternate translation: "Being very enthusiastic"
the baptism of John
"the baptism that John performed." John's baptism was with water, but Jesus's baptism is with the Holy Spirit.
Acts 18:26
the way of God
How God wants people to live is spoken of as if it were a

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road that a person travels.
more accurately
"correctly" or "more fully"
Acts 18:27
General Information:
Here the he words "he" and "him" refer to Apollos (Acts 18:24).
to pass over into Achaia
"to go to the region of Achaia." The phrase "pass over" is used here because Apollos had to cross the Aegean Sea to get to Achaia from Ephesus.
Achaia
Achaia was a Roman Province in the southern section of Greece. See how you translated this in Acts 18:12.
brothers
The word "brothers" here refers to men and women believers. You can make explicit that these are believers in Ephesus. Alternate translation: "fellow believers in Ephesus"
wrote to the disciples
"wrote a letter to the Christians in Achaia"
those who believed by grace
"those who had believed in salvation by grace" or "those who by God's grace believed in Jesus"
Acts 18:28
Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public debate
"In public debate Apollos powerfully showed that the Jews were wrong"
showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ
"as he showed them by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ"

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19 [1]It came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to the city of
Ephesus, and found certain disciples there.[2]Paul said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"
They said to him, "No, we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit."

[3]Paul said, "Into what then were you baptized?"They said, "Into John's baptism."

[4]So Paul replied, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance. He told the people that they should believe in the one
who would come after him, that is, in Jesus."
[5]When the people heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.[6]Then when Paul had laid his hands on
them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.[7]In all they were about twelve men.

[8]Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of
God.[9]But when some Jews were hardened and disobedient, they began to speak evil of the Way before the crowd. So Paul
left them and took the disciples with him, reasoning with them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.[10]This continued
for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.
[11]God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,[12]so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched
him were taken to the sick and their illnesses left them and the evil spirits came out of them.

[13]But there were Jewish exorcists traveling through the area. They called on the name of the Lord Jesus so they could have
power over evil spirits when they said, "By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims, I command you to come out."[14]The Jewish
high priest, whose name was Sceva, had seven sons who were doing this.

[15]An evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"[16]The evil spirit in the man leaped on the
exorcists and subdued them and beat them up. Then they fled out of that house naked and wounded.[17]This became known
to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived at Ephesus. They became very afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was
honored.
[18]Also, many of the believers came and confessed and gave a full account of the evil things they had done.[19]Many who
practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. When they counted the value of
them, it was fifty thousand pieces of silver.[20]So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways.

[21]Now after these things were completed, Paul decided in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia on his way to
Jerusalem; he said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."[22]Paul sent to Macedonia two of those who served him,
Timothy and Erastus. But he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

[23]At about that time there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way.[24]A certain silversmith named
Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in much business for the craftsmen.[25]So he gathered together the
workmen of that occupation and said, "Men, you know that in this business we make much money.
[26]You see and hear that, not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away
many people. He is saying that gods made by hands are not gods.[27]Not only is there danger that our trade will be
discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be regarded as worthless, and her greatness
would be brought to nothing, she whom all Asia and the world worship."

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[28]When they heard this, they were filled with anger and cried out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians."[29]The whole city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed with one mind into the theater. They had seized Paul's travel companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, who came from Macedonia.
[30]Paul wanted to enter in among the crowd of people, but the disciples prevented him.[31]Also, some of the officials of the province of Asia who were his friends sent him a message pleading with him not to enter the theater.[32]Some people were shouting one thing, and some another, for the crowd was in confusion. Most of them did not even know why they had come together.
[33]Some of the crowd advised Alexander, whom the Jews were pushing forward. So Alexander motioned with his hand, wanting to give a defense to the assembly.[34]But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all cried out for about two hours with one voice, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians."
[35]When the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from heaven?[36]Seeing then that these things are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.[37]For you have brought these men to this court who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess.
[38]Therefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have an accusation against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them accuse one another.[39]But if you are seeking anything more, it should be resolved in the regular assembly.[40]For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today, and there is no cause we can give to justify this uproar." When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.[1]

[1]Some Greek copies number this last sentence as verse 41.

Acts 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Baptism

John baptized people to show that they were sorry for their sins. Jesus's followers baptized people who wanted to follow Jesus.

Temple of Diana

The temple of Diana was an important place in the city of Ephesus. Many people came to Ephesus to see this temple, and they bought statues of the goddess Diana while they were there. The people who sold statues of Diana were afraid that if people did not believe Diana was a real goddess, they would stop giving the sellers money for statues.

Links:

Acts 19:1 Notes

Acts 19:1

General Information:

The "upper country" was an area of Asia which today is part of modern-day Turkey to the north of Ephesus. Paul must have traveled by land around the top of the Aegean Sea in order to come to Ephesus (also in Turkey today), which is directly east of Corinth by sea.

Connecting Statement:

Paul travels to Ephesus.

It came about that

This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

passed through

"traveled through"

Acts 19:2

receive the Holy Spirit

This means to have the Holy Spirit come upon them.

we did not even hear about the Holy Spirit

"we have not even heard about the Holy Spirit"

Acts 19:3

General Information:

The word "They" refers to the disciples (Acts 19:1). The word "you" is plural.

Into what then were you baptized?

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What kind of baptism did you receive?"

Into John's baptism

You can translate this as a complete sentence. Alternate translation: "We were baptized into John's baptism" or "We received the kind of baptism about which John taught"

Acts 19:4

the baptism of repentance

You can translate the abstract noun "repentance" as the verb "repent." Alternate translation: "the baptism that people requested when they wanted to repent"

the one who would come

Here "the one" refers to Jesus.

come after him

This means to come after John the Baptist in time and not following after him physically.

Acts 19:5

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues staying in Ephesus.

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When the people
Here "people" refers to the disciples in Ephesus who were talking with Paul (Acts 19:1),
they were baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received baptism"
in the name of the Lord Jesus
Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority. Alternate translation: "as believers in the Lord Jesus"
Acts 19:6
General Information:
All instances of "them" and "they" refer to "the people" (Acts 19:5)
laid his hands on them
"placed his hands on them." He probably placed his hands on their shoulders or heads. Alternate translation: "placed his hands on their heads as he prayed"
they spoke in tongues and prophesied
Unlike in Acts 2:3-4, there are no details of who understood their messages.
Acts 19:7
General Information:
All instances of "them" and "they" refer to "the people" (Acts 19:5)
In all they were about twelve men
This tells how many men were baptized.
twelve men
"12 men"
Acts 19:8
Paul went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months
"Paul regularly attended the synagogue meetings for three months and spoke there boldly"
reasoning and persuading them
Probable meanings are 1) the words "reasoning" and "persuading" are a hendiadys that means "arguing persuasively" or 2) the words describe two separate activities, "giving them reasons to believe" and "convincing them"
about the kingdom of God
Here "kingdom" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "about God's rule as king" or "about how God would show himself as king"
Acts 19:9
some Jews were hardened and disobedient
People who were stubbornly refusing to believe are spoken of as though they were becoming hard and unable to move. Alternate translation: "some Jews were stubborn and did not believe" or "some Jews stubbornly refused to accept and obey the message"
to speak evil of the Way before the crowd
What Christ wants people to believe is spoken of as though it were a road that a person travels. The phrase, "the Way," seems to have been a title for Christianity at the time. Alternate translation: "to speak evil about Christianity to the crowd" or "to speak to the crowd evil things about those who follow Christ and who obey his teaching about God" (See: and Acts 9:2)
to speak evil of
"to speak bad things about"
in the lecture hall of Tyrannus
"in the large room where Tyrannus had taught people"
Tyrannus
This is the name of a man.
Acts 19:10
all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord
Here "all" is a generalization that means very many people throughout Asia heard the gospel.
the word of the Lord
Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the message about the Lord"
Acts 19:11
God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul
Here "hands" stands for Paul's whole person. Alternate translation: "God was causing Paul to do extraordinary miracles" or "God was doing extraordinary miracles through Paul"
Acts 19:12
General Information:
Here the words "them" and "their" refer to those who were sick.
even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick and
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when they took to sick people even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul"
even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him
Possible meanings are 1) these were cloth items that Paul had touched or 2) these were cloth items that Paul had worn or used.
handkerchiefs
cloths worn around the head
aprons
clothing worn on the front of the body to protect the clothes of people
the sick
This refers to sick people. Alternate translation: "sick people" or "those who were sick"
their illnesses left them
"those who were sick became healthy"
Acts 19:13
General Information:
This is the beginning of another event that happened while Paul was in Ephesus. It is about Jewish exorcists.
exorcists
people who send evil spirits away from people or places
the name of the Lord Jesus
Here "name" refers to Jesus's power and authority.
By the Jesus whom Paul proclaims
"Jesus" was a common name at the time, so these exorcists wanted people to know of whom they spoke.
By the Jesus
This stands for the power and authority of Jesus. Alternate translation: "by the authority of Jesus" or "by the power of Jesus"
Acts 19:14
Sceva
This is the name of a man.
Acts 19:15

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Jesus I know, and Paul I know
"I know Jesus and Paul" or "I know Jesus, and I know Paul"
but who are you?
The spirit asked this question to emphasize that the exorcists had no authority over evil spirits. Alternate translation: "but I do not know you!" or "but you have no authority over me!"
Acts 19:16
The evil spirit in the man leaped
This means that the evil spirit caused the man whom it was controlling to leap on the exorcists.
exorcists
This refers to people who send evil spirits from people or places. See how you translated this in Acts 19:13.
they fled ... naked
The exorcists fled with their clothes ripped off them.
Acts 19:17
the name of the Lord Jesus was honored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they honored the name of the Lord Jesus" or "they considered the name of the Lord Jesus to be great"
the name
This stands for the power and authority of Jesus.
Acts 19:18
Connecting Statement:
This ends the story about the Jewish exorcists.
Acts 19:19
brought their books
"collected their books." The word "books" refers to scrolls on which magical incantations and formulas were written.
in the sight of everyone
"in front of everyone"
the value of them
"the value of the books" or "the value of the scrolls"
fifty thousand
"50,000"
pieces of silver
A "piece of silver" was the approximate daily wage for a common laborer.
Acts 19:20
So the word of the Lord spread very widely in powerful ways
"So because of these powerful deeds, more and more people heard the message about the Lord Jesus"
Acts 19:21
Connecting Statement:
Paul talks about going Jerusalem but does not leave Ephesus yet.
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke starts to tell a new part of the story.
these things were completed
"Paul completed the work that God had for him to do in Ephesus"
Paul decided in the Spirit
Possible meanings are 1) Paul decided with the help of the Holy Spirit or 2) Paul decided within his own spirit, which means he made up his mind.
Achaia
Achaia was the Roman province in which Corinth was located. It was the largest city in southern Greece and the capital of the province. See how you translated this in Acts 18:12.
I must also see Rome
"I must also travel to Rome"
Acts 19:22
Erastus
This is the name of a man.
But he himself stayed in Asia for a while
It is made explicit in the next few verses that Paul remains in Ephesus.
he himself
This is repeated for emphasis.
Acts 19:23
Connecting Statement:
Luke tells about a riot that broke out while Paul was in Ephesus.
there was no small disturbance in Ephesus concerning the Way
This is a summary opening statement.
there was no small disturbance
"the people became very upset" See how you translated this in Acts 12:18
the Way
This was a term used to refer to Christianity. See how you translated this title in Acts 9:1.
Acts 19:24
General Information:
The writer introduces Demetrius to the story and gives background information about him. Ephesus had a large temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis, sometimes translated as "Diana." She was a false goddess of fertility.
A certain silversmith named Demetrius
The use of the words "a certain" introduces a new person in the story.
silversmith
a craftsman who works with silver metal to make statues and jewelry
named Demetrius
This is the name of a man. Demetrius was a silversmith in Ephesus who was against Paul and the local church.
brought in much business for the craftsmen
"enabled those who made the idols to make much money"
shrines of Artemis
These were probably carved or molten images of the temple of Artemis or of the part of the temple in which the statue of Artemis stood.
Acts 19:25
the workmen of that occupation
An occupation is a profession or job. Alternate translation: "others who did that kind of work"
Acts 19:26
Connecting Statement:
Demetrius continues to speak to the craftsmen.
You see and hear that
"You have come to know and understand that"
persuaded and turned away many people
Paul's stopping people from worshiping idols is spoken of as though Paul were turning the people in a different direction. Alternate translation: "persuaded many people

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and caused them to stop worshiping the local gods"

He is saying that gods made by hands are not gods

Here the word "hands" can refer to the whole person. Alternate translation: "He is saying that the idols that people make are not real gods"

Acts 19:27

that our trade will be discredited

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that what Paul is saying will discredit our trade" or "that people will think that our trade is false"

our trade

This refers to their business of making and selling idols.

the temple of the great goddess Artemis might be regarded as worthless

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people will think that the temple of the great goddess Artemis is worthless" or "people will think there is no benefit in going to the temple to worship the great goddess Artemis"

her greatness would be brought to nothing

"Her greatness" is a metonym for her reputation of being great. Being "brought to nothing" is a metaphor for becoming nothing or no longer existing. Alternate translation: "People would no longer recognize how great she is" or "She will lose her reputation of being great"

whom all Asia and the world worship

This was an exaggeration to show how popular the goddess Artemis was. Here the words "Asia" and "the world" refer to the people in the province of Asia and the known world. Alternate translation: "whom many people in Asia and in other parts of the world worship"

Acts 19:28

General Information:

Here "they" refers to the craftsmen who made the idols (Acts 19:24-25).

they were filled with anger

This speaks of the craftsmen as though they were containers. Here "anger" is spoken of as if it were the contents that fill a container. Alternate translation: "they became very angry"

cried out

"shouted aloud" or "shouted loudly"

Acts 19:29

The whole city was filled with confusion

Here "city" refers to the people. The city is spoken of as if it were a container. And, "confusion" is spoken of as if it were the contents that filled the container. Alternate translation: "Then people all over the city became upset and started shouting"

the people rushed with one mind

This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.

into the theater

The Ephesus theater was used for public meetings and for entertainment such as plays and music. It was an outdoor semi-circular area with bench seats that could hold thousands of people.

Paul's travel companions

The men who had been with Paul.

Gaius and Aristarchus

These are names of men. Gaius and Aristarchus came from Macedonia but were working with Paul in Ephesus at this time.

Acts 19:31

officials of the province of Asia

Ephesus was in the Roman Empire's province of Asia.

enter the theater

The Ephesus theater was used for public meetings and for entertainment such as plays and music. It was an outdoor semi-circular area with bench seats that could hold thousands of people. See how you translated "theater" in Acts 19:29.

Acts 19:33

Alexander

This is the name of a man.

motioned with his hand

You can make explicit that Alexander was showing the crowd that he wanted them to be quiet. Alternate translation: "gestured to the crowd to be quiet"

to give a defense

It is not clear whom or what Alexander wanted to defend. If your language requires this information, it might be best to use a general phrase like "to explain what was going on."

Acts 19:34

with one voice

The shouting together of the people at the same time is spoken of as though they were speaking with one voice. Alternate translation: "in unison" or "together"

Acts 19:35

Connecting Statement:

The clerk of Ephesus speaks to quiet the crowd.

the town clerk

This refers to the town "writer" or "secretary."

what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper ... heaven?

The clerk asked this question to assure the crowd they were right and to comfort them. Alternate translation: "every man knows that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper ... heaven."

who does not know

The town clerk uses "not" to emphasize that all of the people knew this.

temple keeper

The Ephesian people maintained and guarded the temple of Artemis.

the image which fell down from heaven

Within the temple of Artemis was an image of the goddess. It had been fashioned from a meteorite which fell from the sky. People thought that this rock had come directly from Zeus, the ruler of the Greek gods (idols).

Acts 19:36

General Information:

The word "you" is plural.

Seeing then that these things are undeniable

"Since you know these things"

do nothing rash

"do not do anything before you have had time to think about it"

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rash
without careful thought
Acts 19:37
General Information:
The word "you" is plural.
these men
The words "these men" refer to Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions (Acts 19:29).
Acts 19:38
Therefore
"Because what I have just said is true." The town clerk had said in Acts 19:37 that Gaius and Aristarchus were not robbers or blasphemers.
have an accusation against anyone
The word "accusation" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "want to accuse someone"
proconsuls
the Roman governor's representatives who made legal decisions in court
Let them accuse one another
This does not mean Demetrius and those with him will accuse each other. It means this is a place where people in general can speak their accusation. Alternate translation: "There people can accuse one another"
Acts 19:39
Connecting Statement:
The town clerk finishes speaking to the crowd.
But if you are seeking anything more
"But if you want to ask about anything more" or "But if you have something to discuss about other matters"
it should be resolved in the regular assembly
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let us settle it in the regular assembly"
the regular assembly
This refers to a regular public gathering of citizens over which the county clerk presided.
Acts 19:40
For we are in danger of being accused of rioting today
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in danger of the Roman authorities accusing us of starting this riot today"

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20 [1]After the uproar was over, Paul sent for the disciples and after he encouraged them, he said farewell and left to go into Macedonia.[2]When he had gone through those regions and had spoken many words of encouragement to them, he came to Greece.[3]After he had spent three months there, a plot was formed against him by the Jews as he was about to sail for Syria, so he decided to return through Macedonia.
[4]Accompanying him as far as Asia were Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea; Aristarchus and Secundus, both from the Thessalonian believers; Gaius of Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia.[5]But these men had gone before us and were waiting for us at Troas.[6]We sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and in five days we came to them in Troas. There we stayed for seven days.

[7]On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul spoke to the believers. He was planning to leave the next day, so he prolonged his message until midnight.[8]There were many lamps in the upper room where we had come together.
[9]In the window was sitting a young man named Eutychus, who fell into a deep sleep. As Paul spoke even longer, this young man, still sleeping, fell down from the third story and was picked up dead.[10]But Paul went down, stretched himself out on him, and embraced him. Then he said, "Do not be upset any more, for he is alive."
[11]Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking with them much longer until dawn, he left.[12]They brought back the boy alive and were greatly comforted.

[13]We ourselves went ahead of Paul by ship and sailed away to Assos, where we planned to take Paul on board. This is what he himself desired to do, because he planned to go by land.[14]When he met us at Assos, we took him onto the ship and went to Mitylene.
[15]Then we sailed from there and arrived the next day opposite the island of Chios. The following day we touched at the island of Samos, and the day after we came to the city of Miletus.[16]For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not spend any time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost, if it were at all possible for him to do so.

[17]From Miletus he sent men to Ephesus and called to himself the elders of the church.[18]When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I always spent my time with you.[19]I kept serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind and with tears, and in trials that happened to me because of the plots of the Jews.[20]You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you anything that was useful, and how I taught you in public and from house to house,[21]testifying to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus.
[22]Now look, I am going to Jerusalem, compelled by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there,[23]except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that chains and afflictions await me.[24]But I do not consider my life valuable to myself, if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

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[25]Now look, I know that you all, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will see my face no more.
[26]Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of any man.[27]For I did not hold back from declaring to you the whole will of God.
[28]Therefore be careful about yourselves, and about all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.[1][29]I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.[30]Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth to draw away the disciples after them.
[31]So be on guard. Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each one of you night and day with tears.[32]Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are being sanctified.
[33]I coveted no man's silver, gold, or clothing.[34]You yourselves know that these hands served my own needs and the needs of those who were with me.[35]In all things I gave you an example of how you should help the weak by laboring, and of how you should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, words that he himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

[36]After he had spoken in this way, he knelt down and prayed with them all.[37]There was a lot of crying and they embraced Paul and kissed him.[38]They were in anguish most of all because of what he had said, that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

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[1]Instead of with his own blood, some ancient copies read, with the blood of his own Son.

Acts 20 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter Luke describes Paul's last visits to believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Asia before he went to Jerusalem.

Special concepts in this chapter

Race

Paul spoke of living for Jesus as if he were running in a race. By this he meant that he needed to keep working hard even when things were difficult and he wanted to quit. (See: and discipline)

"Compelled by the Spirit"

Paul thought that the Holy Spirit wanted him to go to Jerusalem even if Paul did not want to go there. The same Holy Spirit told other people that when Paul arrived in Jerusalem, people would try to harm him.

Links:

Acts 20:1

Acts 20:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul leaves Ephesus and continues his travels.

After the uproar

"After the riot" or "Following the riot"

he said farewell

"he said goodbye"

Acts 20:2

had spoken many words of encouragement to them

"had greatly encouraged the believers" or "had said many things to encourage the believers"

Acts 20:3

After he had spent three months there

"After he had stayed there three months." This speaks about time as if it were something a person could spend.

a plot was formed against him by the Jews

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Jews formed a plot against him" or "the Jews formed a secret plan to harm him"

by the Jews

This means only some of the Jews. Alternate translation: "by some of the Jews"

as he was about to sail for Syria

"as he was ready to sail for Syria"

Acts 20:4

Accompanying him

"Traveling with him." Here the word "him" refers to Paul (Acts 20:1).

Sopater ... Pyrrhus ... Secundus ... Tychicus ... Trophimus

These are names of men.

Berea ... Derbe

These are names of places.

Aristarchus ... Gaius

These are names of men. See how you translated these names in Acts 19:29.

Acts 20:5

these men had gone before us

"these men had traveled ahead of us"

before us ... for us

Here "us" refers to the writer and Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Troas

This is the name of a place.

Acts 20:6

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General Information:
All instances of "we" refer to the writer and Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
the days of unleavened bread
This refers to the Jewish religious feast time during the Passover season. See how you translated this in Acts 12:3.
Acts 20:7
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader. (See: and Acts 20:4-6)
Connecting Statement:
Luke tells about Paul's preaching in Troas and about what happened to Eutychus.
the next day
"when the sun came up again." If the writer was using the Jewish system of determining days, Paul was planning to travel after sunrise on "the first day of the week." If the writer was using the Greek system, Paul was planning to travel on the second day of the week.
to break bread
Bread was part of their meals. Possible meanings are 1) this refers simply to eating a meal together. Alternate translation: "to eat a meal" or 2) this refers to the meal they would eat together in order to remember Christ's death and resurrection. Alternate translation: "to eat the Lord's Supper"
he prolonged his message
"he continued to speak"
Acts 20:8
upper room
This may have been on the third floor of the house.
Acts 20:9
In the window
This was an opening in the wall with a ledge that was wide enough on which a person could sit.
Eutychus
This is the name of a man.
who fell into a deep sleep
This speaks about sleep as if it were a deep hole into which a person could fall. Alternate translation: "who slept soundly" or "who became more and more tired until finally he was sleeping soundly"
third story and was picked up dead
When they went down to check his condition, they saw he was dead. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "third story; and when they went to pick him up, they found that he was dead"
third story
This means two floors above the ground floor. If your culture does not count the ground floor, you may state this as the "second story."
Acts 20:10
on him ... embraced him ... he is alive
Here "him" and "he" refers to the young man, Eutychus.
he said
Here "he" refers to Paul.
Acts 20:11
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to Paul.
Connecting Statement:
This is the end of the part of the story about Paul's preaching at Troas and about Eutychus.
broke bread
Bread was a common food during meals. Here "broke bread" probably means that they shared a meal with more kinds of food than just bread.
he left
"he went away"
Acts 20:12
the boy
This refers to Eutychus (Acts 20:9). Possible meanings are 1) he was a young man over 14 years old or 2) he was a boy between 9 and 14 years old or 3) the word "boy" implies that he was a servant or a slave.
Acts 20:13
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to the writer and those traveling with him, but not to the reader.
Connecting Statement:
The writer Luke, Paul, and his other companions continue their travels; however, Paul goes separately for part of the trip.
We ourselves went
The word "ourselves" adds emphasis and separates Luke and his traveling companions from Paul, who did not travel by boat.
sailed away to Assos
Assos is a town located directly below present day Behram in Turkey on the coast of the Aegean sea.
he himself desired
Here "he himself" refers to Paul. "Himself" is used to emphasize that this is what Paul wanted.
to go by land
"to travel on land"
Acts 20:14
he met ... took him
Here "he" and "him" refer to Paul.
met us ... we took
Here the words "we" and "us" refer to the writer and those traveling with him, but not to the reader.
went to Mitylene
Mitylene is a town located in present day Mitilini in Turkey on the coast of the Aegean sea.
Acts 20:15
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Paul, the writer, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
opposite the island
"near the island" or "across from the island"
the island of Chios
Chios is an island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the Aegean Sea.
we touched at the island of Samos
"we arrived at the island of Samos"
island of Samos
Samos is an island south of Chios in the Aegean Sea off the coast of modern day Turkey.

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the city of Miletus
Miletus was a port city in western Asia Minor near the mouth of the Meander River.
Acts 20:16
For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus
Paul sailed south past the port city of Ephesus, further south in order to land at Miletus.
so that he would not spend any time
This speaks about "time" as if it were a commodity that a person could spend or use up. Alternate translation: "so that he would not have to remain for a time" or "so that he would not have a delay"
Acts 20:17
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to Paul.
Connecting Statement:
Paul calls the elders of the church of Ephesus and begins to speak to them.
Miletus
Miletus was a port city in western Asia Minor near the mouth of the Meander River. See how you translated this in [Acts 20:15]
Acts 20:18
You yourselves
Here "yourselves" is used for emphasis.
I set foot in Asia
Here "foot" stands for the entire person. Alternate translation: "I entered Asia"
how I always spent my time with you
This speaks about time as if it were something that a person could spend. Alternate translation: "how I always conducted myself when I was with you"
Acts 20:19
lowliness of mind
This speaks about something humble as if it were low to the ground. The word "mind" stands for a person's inner attitude. Alternate translation: "humility" or "humbleness"
with tears
Here "tears" stands for feeling sad and crying. Alternate translation: "with crying as I served the Lord"
in trials that happened to me
"Trials" is an abstract noun. The meaning can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "while God was testing me"
of the Jews
This does not mean every Jew. This lets us know who plotted. Alternate translation: "of some of the Jews"
Acts 20:20
You know how I did not keep back from declaring to you
"You know how I was never silent, but I always declared to you"
from house to house
"I also taught when I was in your homes"
Acts 20:21
about repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus
The abstract nouns "repentance" and "faith" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "that they need to repent before God and believe in our Lord Jesus Christ"
our Lord Jesus
The word "our" refers to Paul and the elders to whom he is speaking.
Acts 20:22
General Information:
Here the word "I" refers to Paul.
compelled by the Spirit
They can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the Spirit compels me to go there"
not knowing what will happen to me there
"and I do not know what will happen to me there"
Acts 20:23
chains and afflictions await me
Here "chains" refers to Paul's being arrested and put in prison. Alternate translation: "people will put me in prison and cause me to suffer"
Acts 20:24
if only I may finish the race and complete the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus
This speaks about Paul's "race" and "ministry" as if they are objects that Jesus gives and Paul receives. Here "race" and "ministry" mean basically the same thing. Paul repeats this for emphasis. Alternate translation: "so that I may complete the work that the Lord Jesus has commanded me to do"
finish the race
Paul speaks about completing the work that Jesus has commanded him to do as if he were running a race.
to testify to the gospel of the grace of God
"to tell people the good news about God's grace." This is the ministry that Paul received from Jesus.
Acts 20:25
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues to talk to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17).
Now look, I know
"Now, pay careful attention, because I know"
I know that you all
"I know that all of you"
among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom
Here "kingdom" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "to whom I preached the message about God's reign as king" or "to whom I preached about how God will show himself as king"
will see my face no more
The word "face" here represents Paul's physical body. Alternate translation: "will not see me anymore on this earth"
Acts 20:26
I am innocent of the blood of any man
Here "blood" stands for a person's death, which, in this case, is not physical death but spiritual death when God declares a person guilty of sin. Paul had told them God's truth. Alternate translation: "I am not responsible for anyone whom God judges guilty of sin because they did not trust in Jesus"
any man
Here this means any person whether male or female. Alternate translation: "any person"
Acts 20:27
For I did not hold back from declaring to you
"For I did not keep silent and not tell you." This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "For I

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certainly declared to you"

Acts 20:28

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true," referring to all that Paul has said so far in his speech about his leaving them.

the flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers. Be careful to shepherd the church of God

Believers are likened to a "flock" of sheep here. Church leaders are entrusted by God with the care of the community of believers just as a shepherd would care for his flock of sheep and protect them from wolves. Alternate translation: "the group of believers the Holy spirit has entrusted to you. Be sure to take care of the church of God"

the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood

The shedding of the blood of Christ here is likened to a payment to God for our sins. Alternate translation: "the people Christ saved from their sins by shedding his blood on the cross"

his own blood

Here "blood" stands for Christ's death.

Acts 20:29

vicious wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock

This is a picture of people who teach false doctrine and who harm the community of believers as though they were wolves that eat the sheep of the flock. Alternate translation: "many enemies will come among you and try to harm the community of believers"

Acts 20:30

to draw away the disciples after them

A false teacher convincing believers to start believing his false teaching is spoken of as if he were leading sheep away from the flock to follow him. Alternate translation: "in order to convince people who are disciples of Christ to become his disciples instead"

Acts 20:31

be on guard. Remember

"be on guard and remember" or "be on guard as you remember"

be on guard

"be awake and alert" or "watch out." Christian leaders being alert about anyone that may harm the community of believers is spoken of as if they were guards in an army watching out for the enemy army.

Remember that

"Continue to remember that" or "Do not forget that"

for three years I never stopped warning ... night and day

Paul taught them over the space of three years, but not necessarily every day for three years.

I never stopped warning ... you

This does not mean that the only words he spoke were words of warning. Rather, Paul is using hyperbole to remind them that he had told them often that evil men would try to deceive them. Alternate translation: "I warned ... you as often as I could"

with tears

Here "tears" refers to Paul's crying because of the strong emotion of concern he felt while he was warning the people.

Acts 20:32

I commit you to God and to the word of his grace

Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "I ask God to take care of you and to help you to keep believing the message I spoke to you about his grace"

which is able to build you up

A person's faith becoming stronger is spoken of as if the person were a wall and someone were building him higher and stronger. Alternate translation: "which is able to make become stronger and stronger in your faith"

to give you the inheritance

This speaks about the "word of his grace" as if the word itself would give the inheritance to believers. Alternate translation: "God will give you the inheritance"

the inheritance

The blessings that God gives believers are spoken of as if they were money or property that a child inherits from his father.

Acts 20:33

I coveted no man's silver

"I did not desire someone's silver" or "I did not want for myself anyone's silver"

man's silver, gold, or clothing

Clothing was considered a treasure; the more you had, the richer you were.

Acts 20:34

You yourselves

The word "yourselves" is used here to add emphasis.

these hands served my own needs

The word "hands" here represents the entire person. Alternate translation: "I worked to earn money and pay for my own expenses"

Acts 20:35

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to the elders of the church of Ephesus; he began to speak them in Acts 20:18.

you should help the weak by laboring

"you should work so as to have money to help people who cannot earn it for themselves"

the weak

You can state this nominal adjective as an adjective. Alternate translation: "weak persons" or "those who are weak"

weak

"sick"

the words of the Lord Jesus

Here "words" refers to what Jesus has said.

It is more blessed to give than to receive

This means a person receives the favor of God and experiences more joy when he gives to other people rather than always receiving from other people.

Acts 20:36

Connecting Statement:

Paul ends his time with the elders of the church of Ephesus by praying with them.

he knelt down and prayed

It was a common custom to kneel down while praying. It was a sign of humility before God.

Acts 20:37

embraced Paul

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"hugged him closely" or "put their arms around him"
kissed him
Kissing someone on the cheek is an expression of brotherly or friendly love in the Middle East.
Acts 20:38

they would never see his face again
The word "face" here represents Paul's physical body.
Alternate translation: "they would not see him anymore on this earth"

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21 [1]When we had gone away from them and set sail, we took a straight course to the city of Cos, and the next day to the city of Rhodes, and from there to the city of Patara.[2]When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.
[3]After sighting Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat, we sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre, where the ship was to unload its cargo.[4]After we found the disciples, we stayed there seven days. Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem.
[5]When our days there were over, we left and went on our way, and they all, with their wives and children, accompanied us out of the city. Then we knelt down on the beach, prayed,[6]and said farewell to each other. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

[7]When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais. There we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for one day.[8]On the next day we left and went to Caesarea. We entered the house of Philip, the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and we stayed with him.[9]Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

[10]As we stayed there for some days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.[11]He came to us and took Paul's belt. With it he tied his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up the man who owns this belt, and they will hand him over into the hands of the Gentiles.'"
[12]When we heard these things, both we and the people who lived in that place pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.
[13]Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready, not only to be tied up, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."
[14]Since Paul would not be persuaded, we remained silent and then we said, "May the will of the Lord be done."

[15]After these days, we picked up our bags and went up to Jerusalem.[16]There also went with us some of the disciples from Caesarea. They brought with them a man named Mnason, a man from Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we would stay.

[17]When we had arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us gladly.[18]The next day Paul went with us to James, and all the elders were present.[19]When he had greeted them, he reported one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.
[20]When they heard it, they glorified God, and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands have believed among the Jews. They are all zealous to keep the law.[21]They have been told about you, that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children, and not to walk according to the traditional ways.
[22]What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come.[23]So do what we say to you. We have four men who made a vow.[24]Take these men and purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses for them, so that they may shave their heads. So everyone will know that the things they have been told about you are false. They will learn that you also live correctly, obeying the law.
[25]But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote about our decision that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled, and from sexual immorality."[26]Then Paul took the men, and the next day he purified himself along with them. Then they went into the temple, giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and the offering would be presented for each of them.

[27]When the seven days were almost finished, some Jews from Asia, seeing Paul in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him.[28]They were shouting, "Men of Israel, help us. This is the man who teaches all men everywhere things that are against the people, the law, and this place. Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."[29]For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they thought that Paul had brought him into the temple.
[30]All the city was excited, and the people ran together and laid hold of Paul. They dragged him out of the temple, and the doors were immediately shut.[31]As they were trying to kill him, news came up to the chief captain of the company of soldiers, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

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[32]Right away he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to the crowd. When the people saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.[33]Then the chief captain approached and laid hold of Paul, and commanded him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done.
[34]Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and others another. Since the captain could not learn the truth because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.[35]When he came to the steps, he was carried by the soldiers because of the crowd's violence.[36]For the crowd of people followed after and kept shouting out, "Away with him!"

[37]As Paul was about to be brought into the fortress, he said to the chief captain, "Is it permitted for me to say something to you?"The captain said, "Do you know Greek?
[38]Are you not then the Egyptian who some time ago started a rebellion and led the four thousand men of the 'Assassins' out into the wilderness?"

[39]Paul said, "I am a Jew, from the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I am a citizen of no unimportant city. I beg you, allow me to speak to the people."
[40]When the captain had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned with the hand to the people. When there was a deep silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language. He said,

Acts 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Acts 21:1-19 describes Paul's journey to Jerusalem. After he arrived in Jerusalem, the believers there told him that the Jews wanted to harm him and what he should do so they would not harm him (verses 20-26). Even though Paul did what the believers told him to do, the Jews tried to kill him. The Romans rescued him and gave him a chance to speak to the Jews.
The last verse of the chapter ends with an incomplete sentence. Most translations leave the sentence incomplete, as the ULB does.

Special concepts in this chapter

"They are all determined to keep the law"
The Jews in Jerusalem were following the law of Moses. Even those who were following Jesus still kept the law. Both groups thought that Paul had been telling Jews in Greece not to keep the law. But it was only the Gentiles to whom Paul was saying that.
Nazarite vow
The vow that Paul and his three friends made was probably a Nazarite vow, because they shaved their heads (Acts 21:23).
Gentiles in the temple
The Jews accused Paul of bringing a Gentile man into a part of the temple into which God only allowed Jews to go. They thought that God wanted them to punish Paul by killing him. (See: holy)
Roman citizenship
The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens.

Links:

Acts 21:1 Notes

Acts 21:1
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
Connecting Statement:
The writer Luke, Paul, and his companions continue their travels.
we took a straight course to the city of Cos
"we went straight to the city of Cos" or "we went directly to the city of Cos"
city of Cos
Cos is a Greek island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the South Aegean Sea region.
city of Rhodes
Rhodes is a Greek island off the coast of modern day Turkey in the South Aegean Sea region south of Cos and northeast of Crete.
city of Patara
Patara is a city on the southwest coast of modern day Turkey south of the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean Sea.
Acts 21:2
When we found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia
Here "a ship crossing over" stands for the crew that would sail the ship. Alternate translation: "When we found a ship with a crew sailing over to Phoenicia"
a ship crossing over
Here "crossing" does not mean it was presently crossing but that it would be crossing to Phoenicia soon. Alternate

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translation: "a ship that would be going across the water" or "a ship that would be going"
Acts 21:3
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
Cyprus, leaving it on the left side of the boat
The left is the "port" side of a boat. Here this means they sailed south of Cyprus. Alternate translation: "Cyprus, sailing south of it"
where the ship was to unload its cargo
Here "ship" stands for the crew that was sailing the ship. Alternate translation: "the crew would unload the cargo from the ship"
Acts 21:4
Through the Spirit they kept urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem
"The Spirit caused them to urge Paul again and again not to go to Jerusalem." The Spirit may have revealed to them that Paul would suffer in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Because the Spirit had told them that Paul would suffer in Jerusalem, they urged him again and again not to go there"
Acts 21:5
General Information:
Here the word "They" refers to the believers from Tyre.
When our days there were over
"When the seven days were over" or "When it was time to leave"
knelt down on the beach, prayed
It was a common custom to kneel down while praying. This was a sign of humility before God.
Acts 21:6
said farewell to each other
"said goodbye to one another"
Acts 21:7
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
we arrived at Ptolemais
Ptolemais was a city south of Tyre, Lebanon. Ptolemais is modern day Acre, Israel.
the brothers
"fellow believers"
Acts 21:8
Connecting Statement:
This begins Paul's time in Caesarea.
one of the seven
The "seven" refers to the men chosen to distribute food and aid to the widows in Acts 6:5.
evangelist
a person who tells people good news
Acts 21:9
this man
"Philip" from verse 8.
Now
This word is used here to mark a stop in the main story. Here Luke tells background information about Philip and his daughters.
four virgin daughters who prophesied
"four virgin daughters who regularly received and passed along messages from God"
Acts 21:10
General Information:
Here the words "we" and "us" refers to Luke, Paul, and those with them, but not to the reader.
a certain prophet named Agabus
This introduces a new person in the story.
named Agabus
Agabus was a man from Judea.
Acts 21:11
Connecting Statement:
This tells about a prophecy made about Paul in Caesarea by the prophet Agabus.
took Paul's belt
"removed Paul's belt from Paul's waist"
Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up ... of the Gentiles.'
This is a quotation within a quotation. The inner quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "The Holy Spirit says that this will be how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie up ... of the Gentiles."
the Jews
This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders" or "some of the Jews"
hand him over
"deliver him"
into the hands of the Gentiles
The word "hands" here represents control. Alternate translation: "into the legal custody of the Gentiles" or "to the Gentiles"
the Gentiles
This stands for the authorities among the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "the Gentile authorities"
Acts 21:12
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Luke and the other believers but does not include the reader.
Acts 21:13
What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart?
Paul asks this question to show the believers they should stop trying to persuade him. Alternate translation: "Stop what you are doing. Your weeping is breaking my heart."
breaking my heart
This is a metaphor for making someone sad or discouraging them. Here "heart" stands for a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "discouraging me" or "making me very sad"
not only to be tied up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not only for them to tie me up"
for the name of the Lord Jesus
Here "name" refers to the person of Jesus. Alternate translation: "for the sake of the Lord Jesus" or "because I believe in the Lord Jesus"
Acts 21:14
Paul would not be persuaded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul would not allow us to to persuade him" or "we were unable to persuade Paul"

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persuaded
You may need to make explicit what they could not persuade Paul not to do. Alternate translation: "persuaded not to go up to Jerusalem"
May the will of the Lord be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May everything happen as the Lord has planned it"
Acts 21:15
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, and not to the reader.
Connecting Statement:
This ends Paul's time in Caesarea.
Acts 21:16
They brought with them a man
"Among them was a man"
Mnason, a man from Cyprus
Mnason was a man from the island of Cyprus.
an early disciple
This means Mnason was one of the first to believe in Jesus.
Acts 21:17
General Information:
Here the words "we" and "us" refer to Luke, Paul, and those traveling with them, and not to the reader.
Connecting Statement:
Paul and his companions arrive in Jerusalem.
the brothers welcomed us
Here "brothers" refers to the believers in Jerusalem, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "the fellow believers welcomed us"
Acts 21:19
General Information:
Here the words "he" and "his" refer to Paul. The word "them" refers to the elders.
he reported one by one
"he gave a detailed account of all"
Acts 21:20
Connecting Statement:
The elders in Jerusalem begin their response to Paul.
they heard ... they glorified ... they said to him
Here the word "they" refers to James and the elders. The word "him" refers to Paul.
brother
Here "brother" means "fellow believer."
They are
The word "they" refers to Jewish believers who wanted all believing Jews to keep the Jewish laws and customs.
the law
this phrase here refers to the law of Moses
Acts 21:21
They have been told
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have told the Jewish believers"
to abandon Moses
Here "Moses" stands for the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "to stop obeying the laws that Moses gave us"
not to walk according to the traditional ways
A person who obeys the traditions and customs is spoken of as if he were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "not to obey the old customs" or "not to practice the old customs"
the traditional ways
"the usual Jewish customs"
Acts 21:22
we do
Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders
They will
The word "They" refers to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem who wanted to teach Jewish believers that they could still follow the laws of Moses (Acts 21:20-21).
you have come
The word "you" refers to Paul.
Acts 21:23
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders
four men who made a vow
"four men who made a promise to God." This was the kind of vow where a person would not drink alcohol or cut his hair until the end of a set period of time.
Acts 21:24
Connecting Statement:
James and the elders continue speaking to Paul.
Take these men and purify yourself with them
They had to make themselves ritually pure so they could worship in the temple.
pay their expenses for them
"pay for what they will need." The expenses would go toward buying a male and female lamb, a ram, and grain and drink offerings.
they may shave their heads
This was a sign that the person had completed what they promised God they would do.
the things they have been told about you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that people are saying about you"
Acts 21:25
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to James and the elders.
Connecting Statement:
James and the elders in Jerusalem finish their request to Paul (Acts 21:18).
they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, from blood, from what is strangled
All of these are rules about what they can eat. They are forbidden to eat meat of animals sacrificed to an idol, meat with blood still in it, and meat from a strangled animal because it would still have blood in the meat. See how you translated similar phrases in [Acts 15:20]
they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they stay away from the meat of an animal that someone sacrificed to an idol"
from what is strangled
This can be stated in active form. You can also state explicitly the assumed information about strangled animals. Alternate translation: "from animals that a person has strangled" or "from animals that a person killed for food but did not drain its blood"

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Acts 21:26
took the men
These are the 4 men who made a vow.
he purified himself along with them
Before entering the temple area the Jews were required to be ceremonially or ritually clean. This cleansing had to do with Jews having contact with Gentiles.
went into the temple
They did not go into the temple itself where only the high priest was allowed to enter. They entered the temple courtyard. Alternate translation: "went into the temple courtyard"
the days of purification
This is a separate purification process from the purification process which they were required to fulfill in order to enter the temple area.
the offering would be presented
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they presented the animals for an offering"
Acts 21:27
Connecting Statement:
This begins the story of Paul's arrest.
the seven days
These are the seven days for purification.
in the temple
Paul was not in the temple itself. He was in the temple courtyard. Alternate translation: "in the temple courtyard"
stirred up the whole crowd
People who incited a crowd to become very angry at Paul are spoken of as if they stirred up the crowd's emotions. Alternate translation: "caused a large number of people to be very angry at Paul"
laid hands on him
Here "laid hands on" means to "seized" or to "grabbed." See how you translated "laid hands on" in [Acts 5:18]
Acts 21:28
the people, the law, and this place
"the people of Israel, the law of Moses, and the temple"
Besides, he has also brought Greeks into the temple
Only Jewish males were allowed in certain areas of the courtyard of the Jerusalem temple.
Acts 21:29
General Information:
Verse 29 gives background information about the Jews from Asia.
For they had previously ... into the temple
This is background information. Luke is explaining why the Jews from Asia thought Paul brought a Greek into the temple.
Trophimus
This was a Greek man that they accused Paul of having brought into the inner temple area that was only for Jews. See how you translated his name in Acts 20:4.
Acts 21:30
All the city was excited
The word "All" here is an exaggeration for emphasis. The word "city" represents the people in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Many people in the city became angry at Paul"
laid hold of Paul
"seized Paul" or "grabbed Paul"
the doors were immediately shut
They shut the doors so that there would not be rioting in the temple area. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some of the Jews immediately shut the temple doors" or "the temple guards immediately shut the doors"
Acts 21:31
news came up to the chief captain of the company of soldiers
Here "news" refers to the messenger who went to speak the news. Alternate translation: "someone gave news to the chief captain of the cohort"
news came up to the chief captain
The phrase "came up to" is used because the chief captain was in a fortress connected to the temple that was higher in elevation than the temple courtyard.
the chief captain
This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers.
the company of soldiers
A company is a group of about 1,000 soldiers.
all Jerusalem was in an uproar
The word "Jerusalem" here represents the people of Jerusalem. The word "all" is an exaggeration to show a large crowd was upset. Alternate translation: "all the people in Jerusalem were in an uproar" or "the large crowd in Jerusalem was in an uproar" (See: and)
Acts 21:32
General Information:
The first word "he" refers to the chief captain of the guard mentioned in Acts 21:31.
ran down
From the fortress, there are stairs going down into the court.
Acts 21:33
laid hold of Paul
"took hold of Paul" or "arrested Paul"
commanded him to be bound
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "commanded his soldiers to bind him"
with two chains
This means they bound Paul to two Roman soldiers, one on each side of him.
he asked who he was and what he had done.
This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "he asked, 'Who is this man? What has he done?'"
he asked who he was
The chief captain is speaking to the crowd, not to Paul.
Acts 21:34
and others another
The words "were shouting" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and others were shouting another" or "and others in the crowd were shouting something else"
he ordered that Paul be brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he ordered his soldiers to bring Paul"
into the fortress
This fortress was connected to the outer temple court.
Acts 21:35

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When he came to the steps, he was carried
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Paul came to the steps of the fortress, the soldiers carried him"
Acts 21:36
Away with him
The crowd is using somewhat milder and less exact language to ask for Paul's death. Alternate translation: "Put him to death" or "Kill him"
Acts 21:37
As Paul was about to be brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "As the soldiers were ready to bring Paul"
the fortress
This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.
The captain said, "Do you know Greek?
The chief captain uses this questions to express surprise that Paul is not who he thought he was. Alternate translation: "So you know Greek." or "I didn't know you knew Greek."
know Greek
know how to speak and understand the Greek language
Acts 21:38
Are you not then the Egyptian ... wilderness?
The chief captain uses this question and the question "Do you speak Greek?"
Are you not then the Egyptian
Shortly before Paul's visit, an unnamed man from Egypt had launched a revolt against Rome in Jerusalem. Later he escaped into the wilderness and the commander wonders if Paul might be the same man.
started a rebellion
This word "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "caused people to rebel against the Roman government"
the four thousand men
"the 4,000 terrorists"
Assassins
This refers to a group of Jewish rebels who killed Romans and anyone who supported the Roman government.
Acts 21:39
Connecting Statement:
Paul is correcting the chief captain's wrong idea about who Paul is.
Tarsus in Cilicia
Cilicia was a Roman province across the Mediterranean Sea from Egypt, and Tarsus was a large, well-known city.
I am a citizen of no unimportant city
Paul uses the double negative in the phrase "no unimportant city" to emphasize that the chief captain should have known that Tarsus was an important city. Alternate translation: "I am a citizen of an important city"
I beg you
Or "I plead with you."
allow me
"please allow me" or please permit me"
Acts 21:40
the captain had given him permission
The word "permission" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "the captain permitted Paul to speak" or "the captain allowed Paul to speak"
Paul stood on the steps
The word "steps" here refers to the steps on the stairway to the fortress.
motioned with the hand to the people
It can be stated explicitly why Paul motioned with the hand. Alternate translation: "motioned with his hand for the people to be quiet"
When there was a deep silence
"When the people were completely silent"

---

22 [1]"Brothers and fathers, listen to my defense which I will now make to you."

[2]When the crowd heard Paul speak to them in the Hebrew language, they became quiet. He said,

[3]"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel. I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers. I am zealous for God, just as all of you are today.[4]I persecuted this Way to the death, binding up and delivering to prison both men and women,[5]as the high priest and all the elders can testify. I received letters from them for the brothers in Damascus, and I went there to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.
[6]It happened that when I was traveling and nearing Damascus, about noon suddenly a great light from heaven began to shine around me.[7]I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'
[8]I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?'He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

[9]Those who were with me saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me.[10]I said, 'What should I do, Lord?'The Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus. There you will be told everything that has been appointed for you to do.'
[11]I could not see because of that light's brightness, and being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.
[12]There I met a man named Ananias, a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there.[13]He came to me, stood by me, and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' In that very hour I saw him.

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[14]Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the voice coming from his own mouth.[15]For you will be a witness for him to all men about what you have seen and heard.[16]Now why are you waiting? Arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.'
[17]After I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple, a trance came on me.[18]I saw him say to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.'
[19]I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you in every synagogue.[20]When the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled, I also was standing by and agreeing, and I was guarding the cloaks of those who killed him.'[21]But he said to me, 'Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

[22]They listened to him until that statement. Then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not right that he should live."[23]As they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air,[24]the chief captain commanded Paul to be brought into the fortress. He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging, so that he himself might know why they were shouting against him like that.
[25]When they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?"
[26]When the centurion heard this, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."
[27]The chief captain came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"Paul said, "Yes."

[28]The chief captain answered, "It was only with a large amount of money that I acquired citizenship."But Paul said, "I was born a Roman citizen."
[29]Then the men who were going to question him left him immediately. The chief captain also was afraid, when he learned that Paul was a Roman citizen, because he had tied him up.

[30]On the next day, the chief captain wanted to know for certain about the Jews' accusations against Paul. So he untied his bonds and ordered the chief priests and all the council to meet. Then he brought Paul down and placed him in their midst.

Acts 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the second account of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts. Because this is such an important event in the early church, there are three accounts of Paul's conversion. (See: Acts 9 and Acts 26)

Special concepts in this chapter

"In the Hebrew language"

Most Jews at this time spoke Aramaic and Greek. Most of the people who spoke Hebrew were educated Jewish scholars. This is why the people paid attention when Paul started speaking in Hebrew.

"The Way"

No one knows for sure who first started calling believers "followers of the Way." This is probably what the believers called themselves, because the Bible often speaks of a person living his life as if that person were walking on a path or "way." If this is true, the believers were "following the way of the Lord" by living in a way that pleased God.

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. The "chief captain" could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way he would treat a non-citizen.

Links:

Acts 22:1 Notes

Acts 22:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul speaks to the Jewish crowd in Jerusalem.

Brothers and fathers

This is a polite way of addressing men who are Paul's age as well as the older men in the audience.

I will now make to you

"I will now explain to you" or "I will now present to you"

Acts 22:2

the Hebrew language

The Hebrew language was the language of the Jews.

Acts 22:3

but educated in this city at the feet of Gamaliel

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but I was a student of Gamaliel here in Jerusalem"

at the feet of Gamaliel

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Here "feet" stands for the place where a student would sit while learning from a teacher. Alternate translation: "by Gamaliel"

Gamaliel

Gamaliel was one of the most prominent teachers of the Jewish law. See how you translated this name in Acts 5:34.

I was instructed according to the strict ways of the law of our fathers

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He instructed me how to carefully obey every law of our forefathers" or "The instruction I received followed the exact details of the law of our forefathers"

law of our fathers

"law of our ancestors." This refers to the law that God gave to the people of Israel through Moses.

I am zealous for God

"I am completely dedicated to obeying God" or "I am passionate about my service to God"

just as all of you are today

"in the same way all of you are today." Paul compares himself with the crowd.

Acts 22:4

I persecuted this Way to the death

Here "this Way" represents the people who belonged to the group called "the Way." The word "death" can be translated with the verb "kill." Alternate translation: "I persecuted the people who belonged to this Way and I looked for ways to kill them"

this Way

This was a term used to refer to Christianity. See how you translated "the Way" in Acts 9:2.

binding up and delivering to prison both men and women

"tying up both men and women and taking them to prison"

Acts 22:5

I received letters from them

"The high priests and elders gave me letters"

for the brothers in Damascus

Here "brothers" refers to "fellow Jews."

to bring them back in bonds to Jerusalem

"to bind those of the Way with chains and bring them back to Jerusalem"

to be punished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they would receive punishment" or "so that the Jewish authorities could punish them"

Acts 22:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul describes his encounter with Jesus.

It happened that

This phrase is used here to mark where the action starts. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.

Acts 22:7

heard a voice say to me

Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "I heard someone say to me"

Acts 22:9

they did not understand the voice of him who spoke to me

Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "they did not understand what the one who spoke to me was saying"

Acts 22:10

There you will be told

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "There someone will tell you" or "There you will learn"

Acts 22:11

I could not see because of that light's brightness

"I was left blind because of that light's brightness"

being led by the hands of those who were with me, I came into Damascus

Here "hands" stands for those leading Paul. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those with me guided me into Damascus"

Acts 22:12

Ananias

Though this is not the same Ananias who died earlier in [Acts 5:3]

devout man according to the law

Ananias was very serious about following God's law.

law and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there

This can be stated in active form in a new sentence. Alternate translation: "law. All the Jews who lived there spoke well of him"

Acts 22:13

General Information:

The words "He" and "him" refer to Ananias.

Brother Saul

Here "Brother" is a polite way to address someone. Alternate translation: "My friend Saul"

receive your sight

The word "sight" can be translated with the verb "see." Alternate translation: "see again"

In that very hour

This was a customary way of saying something happened immediately. Alternate translation: "At that instant" or "Instantly" or "Immediately"

Acts 22:14

General Information:

The word "he" refers to Ananias (Acts 22:12).

his will

"what God is planning and will cause to happen"

to hear the voice coming from his own mouth

Both "voice" and "mouth" refer to the one speaking. Alternate translation: "to hear him speak directly to you"

Acts 22:15

to all men

Here "men" means all people whether male or female. Alternate translation: "to all people"

Acts 22:16

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes telling what had happened to him in Damascus. He quotes what Ananias said to him. This is still part of his speech to the crowd in Jerusalem.

Now

Here "now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

why are you waiting?

This question was asked to exhort Paul to be baptized. Alternate translation: "do not wait!" or "do not delay!"

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be baptized
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "let me baptize you" or "receive baptism"
wash away your sins
As washing one's body removes dirt, calling on the name of Jesus for forgiveness cleanses one's inner being from sin. Alternate translation: "ask forgiveness for your sins"
calling on his name
Here "name" refers to the Lord. Alternate translation: "calling on the Lord" or "trusting in the Lord"
Acts 22:17
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins to tell the crowd about his vision of Jesus.
a trance came on me
This metaphor means that Paul went into the trance without expecting it or desiring it. See how you translated similar words in [Acts 10:10]
Acts 22:18
I saw him say to me
"I saw Jesus as he said to me"
they will not accept your testimony about me
"those who live in Jerusalem will not believe what you tell them about me"
Acts 22:19
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the non-believing Jews in Jerusalem.
they themselves know
The word "themselves" is used for emphasis.
in every synagogue
Paul went to synagogues to find Jews who believed in Jesus.
Acts 22:20
the blood of Stephen your witness was spilled
Here "blood" stands for Stephen's life. To spill blood means to kill. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they killed Stephen, who testified about you"
Acts 22:21
Connecting Statement:
This ends what Paul was able to say to the crowd of Jewish people by the fortress.
Acts 22:22
General Information:
Here the words "him" and "he" refer to Paul.
until that statement
"until Paul said that"
Away with such a fellow from the earth
The phrase "from the earth" adds emphasis to "Away with such a fellow." Alternate translation: "Kill him"
Acts 22:23
As they were
"While they were." The phrase "As they were" is used to mark two events that are happening at the same time.
throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air
These actions show that the Jews there are outraged because they feel Paul has spoken against God.
Acts 22:24
chief captain
This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.
commanded Paul to be brought
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "ordered his soldiers to bring Paul"
the fortress
This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.
He ordered that he should be questioned with scourging
The commander wants soldiers to torture Paul by whipping him to ensure he tells the truth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "He ordered his soldiers to whip Paul to force him to tell the truth"
He ordered that he
The first "he" refers to chief captain. The second "he" refers to Paul.
that he himself
The word "himself" is used for emphasis.
Acts 22:25
General Information:
Here the word "they" refers to the soldiers.
the thongs
These were strips of leather or animal hide.
Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and who has not been put on trial?
Paul uses this question to make the centurion check the validity of having his soldiers whip Paul. Alternate translation: "It is not lawful for you to whip a man who is a Roman and who was not given his legal right to a trial!"
Acts 22:26
What are you about to do?
This question is used to urge the commander to reconsider his plan to whip Paul. Alternate translation: "You should not do this!"
Acts 22:27
General Information:
Here the word "him" refers to Paul.
The chief captain came
Here "came" can be translated as "went."
Acts 22:28
It was only with a large amount of money
"It was only after I paid a lot of money to the Roman authorities." The captain makes this statement because he knows how hard it is to become a Roman citizen, and he suspects Paul is not telling truth.
I acquired citizenship
"I got citizenship." The word "citizenship" is an abstract noun. Alternate translation: "I became a citizen"
I was born a Roman citizen
If a man was a Roman citizen, then his children become Roman citizens automatically when they were born.
Acts 22:29
the men who were going to question
"the men who planned to question" or "the men who were preparing to question"
Acts 22:30
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to the chief captain.
So he untied his bonds
Possibly the "chief captain" stands for the chief captain's soldiers. Alternate translation: "So the chief captain

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ordered his soldiers to untie Paul's bonds"
he brought Paul down

There was a stairway going down from the fortress to the temple courts.

23 [1]Paul looked directly at the council members and said, "Brothers, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day."[2]The high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

[3]Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall. Are you sitting to judge me by the law, yet order me to be struck, against the law?"

[4]Those who stood by said, "Is this how you insult God's high priest?"
[5]Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was high priest. For it is written, 'You must not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

[6]When Paul saw that the one part of the council were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he spoke loudly in the council: "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is because I have the hope of the resurrection of the dead that I am being judged."[7]When he said this, an argument began between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the crowd was divided.[8]For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, no angels, and no spirits, but the Pharisees acknowledge all of them.

[9]So a large uproar occurred, and some of the scribes belonging to the Pharisees stood up and argued, saying, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?"[10]When there arose a great argument, the chief captain feared that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, so he commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among the council members, and bring him into the fortress.

[11]The following night the Lord stood beside him and said, "Have courage, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

[12]When it became day, some Jews formed a conspiracy and put themselves under an oath, saying that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul.[13]There were more than forty men who formed this conspiracy.
[14]They went to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have sworn a great oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul.[15]Now, therefore, let the council formally request the chief captain to bring him down to you, as if you would decide his case more precisely. As for us, we are ready to kill him before he comes here."

[16]But Paul's sister's son heard that they were lying in wait, so he went and entered the fortress and told Paul.
[17]Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to report to him."

[18]So the centurion took the young man and brought him to the chief captain and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him, and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you."
[19]The chief captain took him by the hand to a private place and asked him, "What is it that you have to report to me?"

[20]The young man said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring down Paul tomorrow to the council, as if they were going to ask more precisely about his case.[21]But do not be persuaded by them, because there are more than forty men who are lying in wait for him. They have put themselves under oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him. Even now they are ready, waiting for your approval."

[22]So the chief captain let the young man go, after instructing him, "Tell no one that you have reported these things to me."
[23]Then he called to him two of the centurions and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go as far as Caesarea, and seventy horsemen also, and two hundred spearmen. You will leave at the third hour of the night."[24]He also ordered them to provide animals which Paul could ride and to take him safely to Felix the governor.

[25]Then he wrote a letter like this:[26]"Claudius Lysias,[27]This man was arrested by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, since I learned that he was a Roman citizen.
[28]I wanted to know why they accused him, so I took him down to their council.[29]I learned that he was being accused about questions concerning their own law, but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment.
[30]Then it was reported to me that there was a plot against the man, so I immediately sent him to you and instructed his accusers also to bring their charges against him in your presence.

[31]So the soldiers obeyed their orders. They took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris.[32]On the next day, most of the

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soldiers left the horsemen to go with him and they themselves returned to the fortress.[33]When the horsemen reached Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him.
[34]When the governor read the letter, he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia,
[35]he said, "I will hear you fully when your accusers come here." Then he commanded him to be kept in Herod's government headquarters.

Acts 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted material in 23:5.

Special concepts in this chapter

Resurrection of the dead

The Pharisees believed that after people died, they would become alive again and God would either reward them or punish them. The Sadducees believed that once people died, they stayed dead and would never become alive again. (See: raise and reward)

"Called a curse"

Some Jews promised God that they would not eat or drink until they killed Paul, and they asked God to punish them if they did not do what they had promised to do.

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. The "chief captain" could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way he would treat a non-citizen.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Whitewashed

This is a metaphor in scripture describing someone who appears to be good or clean or righteous when that person is evil or unclean or unrighteous.

Links:

Acts 23:1

Acts 23:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul stands before the chief priests and the council members (Acts 22:30).

Brothers

Here this means "Fellow Jews."

I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day

"I know that even to this day I have done what God has wanted me to do"

Acts 23:2

Ananias

This is the name of a man. Although he has the same name, the Ananias here is neither the Ananias mentioned in [Acts 5:1]

Acts 23:3

whitewashed wall

This refers to a wall that was painted white to make it look clean. Paul told Ananias that just as a wall can be painted to look clean so Ananias appeared to look morally clean, but he was really full of evil intent. Alternate translation: "white-painted wall" or "wall painted white"

Are you sitting to judge ... against the law?

Paul uses a question to point out Ananias' hypocrisy. Some modern translations read this as a statement, "You are sitting to judge ... against the law." Alternate translation: "You are wrong to sit there to judge ... against the law."

order me to be struck

This can be stated in active form. You can use the same word for "strike" as you did in the phrase "God will strike you." Alternate translation: "command people to strike me"

Acts 23:4

Is this how you insult God's high priest?

The men use this question to scold Paul for what he has said in [Acts 23:3]

Acts 23:5

For it is written

Paul is about to quote what Moses wrote in the law. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For Moses wrote in the law"

Acts 23:6

Brothers

Here "Brothers" means "Fellow Jews"

a son of Pharisees

Here "son" means he is the literal son of a Pharisee and also the descendant of Pharisees. Alternate translation: "and my father and forefathers were Pharisees"

I have the hope of the resurrection of the dead

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently

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expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." The abstract noun "resurrection" can be expressed with the verb phrase "become alive again." Alternate translation: "I confidently expect the resurrection of the dead" or "I trust that the dead will become alive again"

the dead

The phrase "the dead" can be expressed as "those who have died."

I am being judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are judging me"

Acts 23:7

the crowd was divided

"the people in the crowd strongly disagreed with one another"

Acts 23:8

For the Sadducees ... but the Pharisees

This is background information about the Sadducees and Pharisees.

Acts 23:9

So a large uproar occurred

"So they began shouting loudly at one another." The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened previously. In this case, the previous event is Paul's stating his belief in the resurrection.

What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?

The Pharisees use this question to suggest that Paul may have gotten his teaching from an angel or a spirit. They may be rebuking the Sadducees for not believing that spirits and angels exist and can speak to people. Alternate translation: "Maybe a spirit or an angel has spoken with him!"

Acts 23:10

When there arose a great argument

The words "a great argument" can be re-stated as "argue violently." Alternate translation: "When they began to argue violently"

chief captain

This is a Roman military leader of about 1,000 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.

Paul would be torn to pieces by them

This can be stated in active form. The phrase "be torn to pieces" might be an exaggeration of how the people might harm Paul. Alternate translation: "they might tear Paul to pieces" or "they would cause Paul great physical harm"

take him by force

"use physical force to take him away"

into the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

Acts 23:11

The following night

This means the night after the day Paul went before the council. Alternate translation: "That night"

testify in Rome

The words "about me" are understood. Alternate translation: "testify about me in Rome"

Acts 23:12

Connecting Statement:

While Paul is in the prison at the fortress, the disbelieving religious Jews vow to kill him.

formed a conspiracy

"organized a group with a shared purpose." The purpose for organizing this group was to kill Paul.

put themselves under an oath

The noun "oath" is an abstract noun that refers to a promise that the men made to God to kill Paul. It can also be made explicit what would happen to the men if they did not do what they had promised to do. Alternate translation: "asked God to curse them if they did not do what they promised"

Acts 23:13

forty men

"40 men"

who formed this conspiracy

"who made this plan" or "who planned to kill Paul"

Acts 23:14

General Information:

Here the word "They" refers to the forty Jews in Acts 23:13.

We have sworn a great oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul

"We have sworn to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. We asked God to curse us if we do not do what we promised to do"

Acts 23:15

General Information:

Here "you" is plural and refers to the chief priests and elders. Both "us" and "we" refer to the forty Jews who planned to kill Paul.

Now, therefore

"Because what we have just said is true" or "Because we have put ourselves under this curse"

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

bring him down to you

"bring Paul from the fortress to meet with you"

as if you would decide his case more precisely

"as though you want to learn more about what Paul has done"

Acts 23:16

Paul's sister's son

"the son of Paul's sister" or "Paul's nephew"

they were lying in wait

"they were ready to ambush Paul" or "they were waiting to kill Paul"

the fortress

This fortress was connected to the outer temple court. See how you translated this in Acts 21:34.

Acts 23:18

Paul the prisoner called me to him

"Paul the prisoner asked me to come talk with him"

this young man

Since the chief captain calls him a young man, this suggests Paul's nephew may have been 12 to 15 years old.

Acts 23:19

chief captain took him by the hand

Since the chief captain took the young man by the hand and calls him a young man (verse 18), this suggests Paul's nephew may have been 12 to 15 years old.

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Acts 23:20
The Jews have agreed
This does not mean all Jews, but all of the group that was there. Alternate translation: "Some of the Jews have agreed"
to bring down Paul
"to bring Paul down from the fortress"
they were going to ask more precisely about his case
"they wanted to learn more about what Paul has done"
Acts 23:21
forty men
"40 men"
lying in wait for him
"ready to ambush Paul" or "ready to kill Paul"
They have put themselves under oath neither to eat nor to drink until they have killed him
"They have sworn to eat and drink nothing until they have killed Paul. And they asked God to curse them if they do not do what they promised to do"
for your approval
"for you to agree to do what they have asked you to do"
Acts 23:23
he called to him
"he called to himself." Both "he" and "him" refer to the chief captain.
two of the centurions
"2 of the centurions"
seventy horsemen
"70 horsemen"
two hundred spearmen
"200 soldiers that are armed with spears"
third hour of the night
This was about 9:00 p.m. at night.
Acts 23:24
Felix the governor
Felix, who resided at Caesarea, was the roman governor of the area.
Acts 23:25
General Information:
Here "he" refers to the chief captain.
Acts 23:26
General Information:
Claudius Lysias was the name of the chief captain. Governor Felix was the Roman governor over the whole region.
Claudius Lysias to the most excellent Governor Felix, greetings
This is a formal introduction to the letter. The chief captain begins by referring to himself. You can translate it in the first person. The words "am writing" are understood. Alternate translation: "I, Claudius Lysias, am writing to you, the most excellent Governor Felix, and I greet you"
to the most excellent Governor Felix
"to Governor Felix, you who deserve the greatest honors"
Acts 23:27
This man was arrested by the Jews
Here "Jews" means "some of the Jews." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Some of the Jews arrested this man"
was about to be killed by them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they were ready to kill him"
I came upon them with soldiers
"I with my soldiers arrived at the place where Paul and these Jews were"
Acts 23:28
General Information:
Here the word "I" refers to Claudius Lysias, the chief captain. The word "they" refers to the Jews who accused Paul. The word "him" refers to Paul.
Acts 23:29
that he was being accused about questions concerning
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that they were accusing him of questions about"
but that there was no accusation against him that deserved death or imprisonment
The abstract nouns "accusation," "death," and "imprisonment" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "but nobody accused him of anything that should cause Roman authorities to kill him or to send him to prison"
Acts 23:30
Connecting Statement:
The chief captain ends his letter to Governor Felix.
Then it was reported to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone told me" or "Then I learned"
sent him to you
Here "you" refers to Governor Felix.
Acts 23:31
Connecting Statement:
This ends Paul's time under arrest in Jerusalem and begins his time of arrest in Caesarea with Governor Felix.
So the soldiers obeyed their orders
The word "so" marks an event that happened because of something else that happened previously. In this case, the previous event is the chief captain's commanding the soldiers to escort Paul.
They took Paul and brought him by night
Here "brought" can be translated as "took." Alternate translation: "They got Paul and took him at night"
Antipatris
Antipatris was a city built by Herod in honor of his father, Antipater. It stood at a site located today in central Israel.
Acts 23:32
to go with him
Here "him" refers to Paul.
Acts 23:34
he asked what province Paul was from. When he learned that he was from Cilicia
This can be stated with direct quotations. Alternate translation: "he asked Paul, 'What province are you from?' Paul said, 'I am from Cilicia.' When the governor learned this"
When he learned that he
"When the governor learned that Paul"
Acts 23:35
he said
"the governor said"
I will hear you fully

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"I will listen to all you have to say"

he commanded him to be kept

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he commanded soldiers to keep him" or "commanded soldiers to restrain him"

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24 [1]After five days, Ananias the high priest, certain elders, and an orator named Tertullus went there. These men brought charges against Paul before the governor.[2]When Paul stood before the governor, Tertullus began to accuse him and said to the governor, "Because of you we have great peace, and your foresight brings good reform to our nation;
[3]so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do, most excellent Felix.
[4]So that I detain you no more, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly.[5]For we have found this man to be a pest and one who causes all the Jews throughout the world to rebel. He is a leader of the Nazarene sect.[6]He even tried to desecrate the temple, so we arrested him.[1]
[7 2][8]When you examine Paul about all these matters, you will be able to learn about all the things of which we are accusing him."[9]The Jews also joined in the accusation, affirming that these charges were true.

[10]But when the governor motioned for Paul to speak, Paul answered, "I understand that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, and so I gladly explain myself to you.
[11]You can learn for yourself that it has not been more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem.[12]When they found me in the temple, I did not argue with anyone, and I did not stir up a crowd, either in the synagogues, or in the city.[13]They cannot prove to you the accusations they are now making against me.
[14]But I confess this to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I serve the God of our fathers, believing all things that are according to the law and that has been written in the prophets.[15]I have a hope in God, which these men also have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.[16]So I always strive to have a blameless conscience before God and human beings.
[17]Now after many years I came to give alms to my nation and present sacrifices.[18]When I did this, certain Jews from Asia found me in a purification ceremony in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar.[19]These men ought to be before you now and accuse me, if they have anything.
[20]Or else, these same men should say what wrong they found in me when I stood before the Jewish council,[21]unless it is about this one thing that I shouted out when I stood among them, 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'"

[22]Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, postponed the hearing. He said, "When Lysias the commander comes down from Jerusalem, I will decide your case."[23]Then he commanded the centurion that Paul should be kept in custody, but to have some freedom so that none of his friends would be prevented from attending to his needs.

[24]After some days, Felix returned with Drusilla his wife, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and he heard from him about faith in Christ Jesus.[25]But when Paul reasoned with him about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for now. But when I have time later on, I will send for you."
[26]At the same time he hoped that Paul would give money to him, so he often sent for him and spoke with him.[27]But when two years passed, Porcius Festus became the governor after Felix, but Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul bound.

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[1]Some ancient copies add, We wanted to judge him according to our law.
[2]Some ancient copies have for verse 7 and the beginning of verse 8, 7 But Lysias, the officer, came and took him by force out of our hands, 8 commanding his accusers to come to you.

Acts 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul told the governor that he had not done what the Jews were accusing him of doing and that the governor should not punish him for what he did do.

Special concepts in this chapter

Respect

Both the Jewish leaders (Acts 24:2-4) and Paul (Acts 24:10) began their speeches with words that show respect to the governor.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Governmental leaders

The words "governor," "commander," and "centurion" may be difficult to translate into some languages.

Links:

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Acts 24:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul is on trial in Caesarea. Tertullus presents Governor Felix with the charges against Paul.

After five days

"Five days after the Roman soldiers took Paul to Caesarea"

Ananias

This is the name of a man. He is not the same Ananias as in [Acts 5:1]

an orator

"a lawyer." Tertullus was an expert in Roman law who was there to accuse Paul in court.

Tertullus

This is the name of a man.

went there

"went to Caesarea where Paul was"

before the governor

"in the presence of the governor, who was judge in the court"

brought charges against Paul

"began to argue the case before the governor that Paul had broken the law."

Acts 24:2

Because of you

Here the word "you" refers to Felix, the governor.

we have great peace

Here "we" refers to the citizens under Felix. Alternate translation: "we, the people that you govern, have great peace"

and your foresight brings good reform to our nation

"and your planning has greatly improved our nation"

Acts 24:3

so with all thankfulness we welcome everything that you do

The word "thankfulness" is an abstract noun. It can be stated as an adjective or verb. Alternate translation: "so we are very thankful and we welcome everything that you do" or "so we thank you very much and welcome everything that you do"

most excellent Felix

"Governor Felix, who deserves greatest honor." Felix was the roman governor over the whole region. See how you translated a similar phrase in Acts 23:25.

Acts 24:4

So that I detain you no more

Possible meanings are 1) "so that I will not take up too much of your time" or 2) "so that I will not tire you"

in your kindness to hear us briefly

"to be kind and listen to the short speech I am giving to state these men's case"

Acts 24:5

General Information:

The word "we" refers to Ananias, certain elders, and Tertullus.

this man to be a pest

Here "pest" is a metaphor for a person who causes trouble. Alternate translation: "this man to be a trouble maker"

all the Jews throughout the world

The word "all" here is probably an exaggeration used to strengthen their accusation against Paul.

He is a leader of the Nazarene sect

The phrase "Nazarene sect" is another name for the Christians. Alternate translation: "He also leads the entire group whom people call the followers of the Nazarene"

sect

This is a smaller group of people within a larger group group. Tertullus considers the Christians to be a small group within Judaism.

Acts 24:7

General Information:

Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Governor Felix.

Acts 24:8

Connecting Statement:

Tertullus finishes presenting the charges against Paul before Governor Felix.

to learn about all the things of which we are accusing him

"to learn whether or not these charges that we bring against him are true" or "to learn whether or not he is guilty of the things we accuse him of"

Acts 24:9

The Jews

This refers to the Jewish leaders who were there at Paul's trial.

Acts 24:10

Connecting Statement:

Paul responds to Governor Felix about the charges brought against him.

the governor motioned

"the governor gestured"

a judge to this nation

Here "nation" refers to the people of the Jewish nation. Alternate translation: "a judge for the people of the Jewish nation"

explain myself

"explain my situation"

Acts 24:11

twelve days since

"12 days since"

Acts 24:12

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jews who were accusing Paul.

I did not stir up a crowd

"Stir up" here is a metaphor for agitating people into unrest, just as stirring a liquid agitates it. Alternate translation: "I did not cause a crowd to riot"

Acts 24:13

the accusations

"the blames for wrongdoings" or "the charges for crimes"

Acts 24:14

I confess this to you

"I acknowledge this to you"

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that according to the Way
The phrase "the Way" was a title used for Christianity during Paul's time.
a sect
This is a smaller group of people within a larger group. Christianity was originally considered to be a small group within Judaism. See how you translated "sect" in Acts 24:5.
the law
Paul is referring to the law of Moses.
Acts 24:15
I have a hope in God, which these men also have, that there will be a resurrection
Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "Just as these men, I trust in God that there will be a resurrection"
these men
the Jews who are accusing Paul in court
that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked
The abstract noun "resurrection" can be stated with the verb "resurrect." Alternate translation: "that God will resurrect all who have died, both the righteous and the unrighteous"
the righteous and the wicked
These nominal adjectives refer to righteous people and wicked people. Alternate translation: "righteous people and wicked people" or "those who have done what is right and those who have done what is evil"
Acts 24:16
I always strive
"I always work hard" or "I do my best"
to have a blameless conscience
Here "conscience" refers to a person's inner morality that chooses between right and wrong. Alternate translation: "to be blameless" or "to always do what is right"
before God
"in the presence of God"
Acts 24:17
Now
This word marks a shift in Paul's argument. Here he explains the situation in Jerusalem when some of the Jews arrested him.
after many years
"after many years away from Jerusalem"
I came to give alms to my nation and present sacrifices
Here "I came" can be translated as "I went." Alternate translation: "I went to help my people by bringing them money as a gift; I also went to present sacrifices"
Acts 24:18
in a purification ceremony in the temple
"in the temple after I had finished a ceremony to purify myself"
in the temple, not with a crowd or an uproar
This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "in the temple. I had not gathered a crowd nor was I trying to start a riot"
Acts 24:19
These men
"The Jews from Asia"
if they have anything
"if they have anything to say"
Acts 24:20
these same men
This refers to the members of the council who were present in Jerusalem at Paul's trial.
should say what wrong they found in me
"should say the wrong thing I did that they were able to prove"
Acts 24:21
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes responding to Governor Felix about the charges brought against him.
It is concerning the resurrection of the dead
The abstract noun "resurrection" can be stated as "God brings back to life." Alternate translation: "It is because I believe that God will bring back to life those who have died"
I am on trial before you today
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you are judging me today"
Acts 24:22
General Information:
Felix is the Roman governor of the area who resides at Caesarea. See how you translated this name in [Acts 23:24]
the Way
This is a title for Christianity. See how you translated this in Acts 9:2.
When Lysias the commander comes down
"when Lysias the commander comes down" or "at the time Lysias the commander comes down"
Lysias
This is the name of the chief captain. See how you translated this name in Acts 23:26.
comes down from Jerusalem
Jerusalem was higher than Caesarea so it was normal to speak of coming down from Jerusalem.
I will decide your case
"I will make a decision concerning these accusations against you" or "I will judge whether you are guilty"
Acts 24:23
to have some freedom
"to have some freedom not otherwise granted to prisoners"
Acts 24:24
After some days
"After several days"
Drusilla his wife
Drusilla is a woman's name.
Acts 24:25
Felix became frightened
Felix may have felt conviction of his sins.
for now
"for the present time"
Acts 24:26
he hoped that Paul would give money to him
Here the word "hope" means think that what one desires might happen. Sometimes prisoners gave money to

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government officials so that the officials would free them from prison early, and Felix hoped that Paul would do that. Alternate translation: "he thought that Paul might give money to him"

so he often sent for him and spoke with him

"so Felix often sent for Paul and spoke with Paul"

Acts 24:27

Porcius Festus

This was the Roman Governor who replaced Felix.

wanted to gain favor with the Jews

Here "the Jews" refers to the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "wanted the Jewish leaders to like him"

he left Paul bound

"he left Paul in prison"

25 [1]Now, Festus entered the province, and after three days, he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem.[2]The chief priests and the prominent Jews brought their charges against Paul, and they asked Festus earnestly—[3]asking him to do them a favor against Paul—to summon him to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.
[4]Festus answered that Paul was being held in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there soon.[5]"Therefore, those who can," he said, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

[6]Festus stayed not more than eight or ten days and then he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he sat on the judgment seat and commanded Paul to be brought to him.[7]When he arrived, the Jews from Jerusalem stood nearby, and they brought many serious charges which they could not prove.
[8]Paul defended himself and said, "I have committed no sin against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

[9]But Festus wanted to gain the favor of the Jews, and so he answered Paul and said, "Do you want to go up to Jerusalem and to be judged by me about these things there?"[10]Paul said, "I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged. I have wronged no Jews, just as you also very well know.
[11]Though if I have done wrong and if I have done what is worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if their accusations are nothing, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."[12]After Festus talked with the council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

[13]Now after some days, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay an official visit to Festus.[14]After they had been there for many days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king; he said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner.[15]When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against this man to me, and they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him.[16]I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had faced his accusers and received an opportunity to defend himself against the charges.
[17]Therefore, when they came together here, I did not wait, but the next day I sat in the judgment seat and I ordered the man to be brought in.[18]When the accusers stood up, they charged him with nothing that I considered wickedness.
[19]Instead, they had certain disputes with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who was dead, whom Paul claims to be alive.[20]I was perplexed about how to investigate this matter, and so I asked him if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial there about these charges.
[21]But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held in custody until I could send him to Caesar."[22]Agrippa spoke to Festus: "I would also like to listen to this man." "Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

[23]So on the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with much ceremony; they came into the hall with the military officers and with the prominent men of the city. When Festus spoke the command, Paul was brought to them.[24]Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you men who are here with us, you see this man; all the multitude of Jews appealed to me in Jerusalem and here also, and they shouted to me that he should no longer live.
[25]I found he had done nothing worthy of death; but because he appealed to the emperor, I decided to send him to Rome.
[26]But I do not have anything certain to write to my lord. For this reason, I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa, so that I might have something more to write about the case.[27]For it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state the charges against him."

Acts 25 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Favor

This word is used in two different ways in this chapter. When the Jewish leaders asked Festus for a favor, they were asking him to do something special for them on that day. They wanted him to do for them something that he would not usually do. When Festus "wanted to gain the favor of the Jews," he wanted them to like him and be willing to obey him in

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the months and years to come. (See: favor)

Roman citizenship

The Romans thought that they needed to treat only Roman citizens justly. They could do as they desired with people who were not Roman citizens, but they had to obey the law with other Romans. Some people were born Roman citizens, and others gave money to the Roman government so they could become Roman citizens. Roman officials could have been punished for treating a Roman citizen the same way they would treat a non-citizen.

Links:

Acts 25:1 Notes

Acts 25:1

General Information:

Festus becomes the governor of Caesarea. See how you translated this name in Acts 24:27.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to be a prisoner in Caesarea.

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new event in the story.

Festus entered the province

Possible meanings are 1) Festus arrived in the area to begin his rule or 2) Festus simply arrived in the area.

he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem

The phrase "went up" is used here because Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Caesarea.

Acts 25:2

The chief priests and the prominent Jews brought their charges against Paul

This speaks about accusations as if they were an object that a person could bring to someone else. Alternate translation: "The chief priests and the important Jews accused Paul to Festus"

Acts 25:3

to summon him to Jerusalem

Some versions translate this as "to have him summoned to Jerusalem." The word "him" refers to Paul. The Jews wanted Festus to have his soldiers take Paul to Jerusalem.

for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way

They were going to hide along the road and kill Paul as he was passing by, but Festus was not aware of this part of their plan.

Acts 25:4

Festus answered that Paul was being held in custody at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there soon.

This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "But Festus said, 'Paul is being held in custody in Caesarea, and I myself will soon return there.'"

Acts 25:5

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to Festus and the Romans traveling with him, but not to his audience.

"Therefore, those who can," he said, "should go there with us

The phrase "he said" can be moved to the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "Then he said, 'Therefore, those who are able to go to Caesarea should go there with us"

If there is something wrong with the man

"If Paul has done something wrong"

you should accuse him

"you should accuse him of violating laws" or "you should bring charges against him"

Acts 25:6

down to Caesarea

Jerusalem is higher geographically than Caesarea. It was common to speak of coming down from Jerusalem.

sat on the judgment seat

Here "judgment seat" refers to Festus' ruling as judge over Paul's trial. Alternate translation: "sat upon the seat where he acted as judge" or "sat down as judge"

Paul to be brought to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his soldiers bring Paul to him"

Acts 25:7

When he arrived

"When Paul came and stood before Festus"

they brought many serious charges

Charging a person with a crime is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could bring to court. Alternate translation: "they spoke against Paul many serious things"

Acts 25:8

against the temple

Paul says he did not break any rules about who could enter the Jerusalem temple. Alternate translation: "against the entry rules of the temple"

Acts 25:9

wanted to gain the favor of the Jews

Here "the Jews" means the Jewish leaders. Alternate translation: "wanted to please the Jewish leaders"

to go up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem was higher geographically than Caesarea. It was common to speak of going up to Jerusalem.

and to be judged by me about these things there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where I will judge you with regard to these charges"

Acts 25:10

I stand before the judgment seat of Caesar where I must be judged

The "judgment seat" refers to Caesar's authority to judge Paul. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ask to go before Caesar, so he can judge me"

Acts 25:11

Though if I have done wrong ... I do not refuse to die

Paul does not believe that he has done wrong, but he shows that he will submit to the law and will not refuse to be punished if he really has done wrong.

if I have done what is worthy of death

"if I have done some wrong that deserves the death penalty"

if their accusations are nothing

"if the charges against me are not true"

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no one can hand me over to them

Possible meanings are 1) Festus does not have the legal authority to hand Paul over to these false accusers or 2) the governor should not give in to the request of the Jews.

I appeal to Caesar

"I ask to go before Caesar so he can judge me"

Acts 25:12

with the council

This is not the Sanhedrin that is referred to as "council" throughout Acts. This is a political council in the Roman government. Alternate translation: "with his own government advisors"

Acts 25:13

General Information:

King Agrippa and Bernice are new people in the story. Though he ruled over only a few territories, King Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine. Bernice was Agrippa's sister.

Now

This word marks the beginning of a new event in the story.

to pay an official visit to Festus

"to visit Festus concerning official matters"

Acts 25:14

After they

"After King Agrippa and Bernice"

A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Felix left office, he left a man in prison here"

Felix

Felix was the Roman governor of the area and resided in Caesarea. See how you translated this name in Acts 23:24.

Acts 25:15

brought charges against this man to me

This is a metaphor that means to accuse someone in court. Alternate translation: "spoke to me against this man"

they asked for a sentence of condemnation against him

The abstract nouns "sentence" and "condemnation" can be expressed as verbs. The phrase "a sentence of condemnation" implies that they were requesting that Paul be executed. Alternate translation: "they asked me to sentence him to death" or "they asked me to condemn him to death"

Acts 25:16

to hand over anyone

Here "hand over" represents sending someone to people who will punish or kill him. Alternate translation: "let someone punish anyone" or "to condemn anyone to death"

before the accused had faced his accusers

Here "faced his accusers" is an idiom that means to meet with the people who accuse him. Alternate translation: "before the person whom others have accused of a crime had met directly with those who accused him"

Acts 25:17

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true." Festus has just said that an accused man should be able to face his accusers and make his defense.

when they came together here

"when the Jewish leaders came to meet with me here"

I sat in the judgment seat

Here "judgment seat" refers to Festus ruling over Paul's trial as judge. Alternate translation: "I sat upon the seat to act as judge" or "I sat down as judge"

I ordered the man to be brought in

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ordered the soldiers to bring Paul before me"

Acts 25:19

their own religion

Here "religion" means the belief system people have toward life and the supernatural.

Acts 25:20

to stand trial there about these charges

To "stand trial" is an idiom meaning to speak to a judge so the judge can decide if a person is right or wrong. Alternate translation: "to go to trial about these charges" or "for a judge to decide if these charges against him are true or not"

Acts 25:21

Connecting Statement:

Festus finishes explaining Paul's case to King Agrippa.

But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody while awaiting the decision of the emperor

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But when Paul insisted that he stay under Roman guard until the time when the emperor could decide his case"

I ordered him to be held in custody

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I ordered the soldiers to keep him in custody" or "I told the soldiers to guard him"

Acts 25:22

"Tomorrow," Festus said, "you will hear him."

The phrase "Festus said" can be moved to the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "Festus said, 'I will arrange for you to listen to Paul tomorrow.'"

Acts 25:23

General Information:

Though he ruled over only a few territories, Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine. Bernice was his sister. See how you translated these names in Acts 25:13.

with much ceremony

"with a great ceremony to honor them"

the hall

This was a large room where people gathered for ceremonies, trials, and other events.

Paul was brought to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the soldiers brought Paul to appear before them"

Acts 25:24

Connecting Statement:

Festus again gives information about Paul's case to King Agrippa.

all the multitude of Jews

The word "all" is an exaggeration used to emphasize that a great number of Jews wanted Paul to die. Alternate translation: "a great number of the Jews" or "many of the Jewish leaders"

they shouted to me

"they spoke very strongly to me"

he should no longer live

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This statement is made in the negative to emphasize the positive equivalent. Alternate translation: "he should die immediately"

Acts 25:25

because he appealed to the emperor

"because he said that he wanted the emperor to judge him"

the emperor

The emperor was the ruler of the Roman empire. He ruled over many countries and provinces.

Acts 25:26

to write to my lord

Festus used the word "lord" to refer to the emperor. Alternate translation: "to write to the emperor"

I have brought him to you, especially to you, King Agrippa

Here the first "you" is plural and refers to all the men to whom Festus is speaking. The second "you" is singular and refers to King Agrippa. Alternate translation: "I have brought Paul to all of you, but especially to you, King Agrippa"

so that I might have something more to write

"so that I will have something else to write" or "so that I will know what I should write"

Acts 25:27

it seems unreasonable for me to send a prisoner and to not also state

The negative words "unreasonable" and "to not ... state" can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "it seems reasonable to me to send a prisoner and to also state"

the charges against him

Possible meanings are 1) the accusations that the Jewish leaders have brought against him or 2) the charges under Roman law that apply to Paul's case.

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26 [1]So Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense.

[2]"I consider myself happy, King Agrippa, to make my case before you today against all the accusations of the Jews,
[3]especially because you are an expert in all the Jewish customs and questions. So I beg you to hear me patiently.
[4]Truly, all the Jews know how I lived from my youth in my own nation and at Jerusalem.[5]They have known about me from the beginning, if they are willing to admit it, that I lived as a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion.
[6]Now I stand here to be judged because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers.[7]It is this promise that our twelve tribes hope to receive as they worship God earnestly night and day, and it is for this hope, king, that the Jews are accusing me.[8]Why should any of you judge it to be incredible that God raises the dead?
[9]Now indeed, I myself thought that I should do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth.[10]I did these in Jerusalem. I locked up in prison many of God's holy people by the authority I received from the chief priests; and when they were killed, I cast my vote against them.[11]I punished them many times in all the synagogues, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was furiously enraged against them, and I persecuted them even to foreign cities.
[12]While I was doing this, I went to Damascus with authority and orders from the chief priests;[13]and on the way there, in the middle of the day, king, I saw a light from heaven that was brighter than the sun, and it shone around both me and the men who were traveling with me.[14]When we all fell to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me that said in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick a goad.'
[15]Then I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord replied, 'I am Jesus whom you persecute.[16]Now get up and stand on your feet; because for this purpose I appeared to you, to appoint you to be a servant and a witness concerning the things that you know about me now and the things that I will show to you later;[17]and I will rescue you from the people and from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you,[18]to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, so that they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance that I give to them who are sanctified by faith in me.'
[19]Therefore, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the heavenly vision;[20]but, to those in Damascus first, and then at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, I gave them the message that that they should repent and turn to God, doing deeds worthy of repentance.[21]For this cause the Jews arrested me in the temple and tried to kill me.
[22]Therefore I have received the help that comes from God until this very day, and I stand and testify to both small and great about nothing more than what the prophets and Moses said would happen—[23]that Christ must suffer, and by being the first to rise from the dead he would proclaim light to our own people and to the Gentiles."

[24]As Paul completed his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are insane; your great learning makes you insane."[25]But Paul said, "I am not insane, most excellent Festus, but I am declaring words of truth and sound judgment.
[26]For the king knows about these things; and so I speak boldly to him, for I am persuaded that none of this is hidden from him; for this has not been done in a corner.
[27]Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe."[28]Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?"
[29]Paul said, "I pray to God, that whether in a short or long time, not you only, but also all that hear me today, would be like me, but without these prison chains."

[30]Then the king stood up, and the governor, and Bernice also, and those who were sitting with them;[31]when they left the

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hall, they talked to one another and said, "This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds."
[32]Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been freed if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Acts 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the third account of Paul's conversion in the book of Acts. Because this is such an important event in the early church, there are three accounts of Paul's conversion. (See: Acts 9 and Acts 22)
Paul told the King Agrippa why he had done what he had done and that the governor should not punish him for that.

Special concepts in this chapter

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Links:

Acts 26:1 Notes

Acts 26:1

Connecting Statement:

Festus has brought Paul before King Agrippa.

Agrippa

Agrippa was the current reigning king in Palestine, though he ruled over only a few territories. See how you translated this name in Acts 25:13.

stretched out his hand

"held out his hand" or "gestured with his hand"

made his defense

The abstract noun "defense" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "began to defend himself against those who were accusing him"

Acts 26:2

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives his defense to King Agrippa.

I consider myself happy

Paul was happy because he considered his appearance before Agrippa to be an opportunity to speak about the gospel.

to make my case

This phrase means to describe one's situation, so that those in court can discuss and make a decision about it. Alternate translation: "to defend myself"

against all the accusations of the Jews

The abstract noun "accusations" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Alternate translation: "against all the Jews who are accusing me"

the Jews

This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

Acts 26:3

questions

You can make explicit what kinds of questions this means. Alternate translation: "questions about religious matters"

Acts 26:4

all the Jews

This is a generalization. Possible meanings are 1) Jews in general who knew about Paul. Alternate translation: "the Jews" or 2) Pharisees who knew Paul. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"

in my own nation

Possible meanings are 1) among his own people, not necessarily in the geographical land of Israel or 2) in the land of Israel.

Acts 26:5

the strictest party of our religion

"a group within Judaism that lives by very strict rules"

Acts 26:6

Now

This word marks a shift from Paul discussing his past to talking about himself in the present.

I stand here to be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am here, where they are putting me on trial"

because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait." Alternate translation: "because I trust in the promise made by God to our fathers

because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers

Hope in a promise is the expectation that the promise will be fulfilled. Alternate translation "because of my hope that God will do what he promised our forefathers he would do" or "because I confidently wait for God to do what he promised our forefather he would do"

Acts 26:7

this promise that our twelve tribes hope to receive

This speaks about a promise being fulfilled as if it were an object that is received. Alternate translation: "the promise that our twelve tribes confidently wait for God to fulfill"

our twelve tribes

The phrase "our twelve tribes" stands for the people in those tribes. Alternate translation: "our fellow Jews in the twelve tribes"

worship God earnestly night and day

The extremes "night" and "day" are used together to mean consistently mean Alternate translation: "continually worship God earnestly"

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king
Paul is addressing King Agrippa by his title, not by his name. Your language may require that you add another word or part of a word, as in older English "O King," or that you add the king's name, as in "King Agrippa," or that you use another expression such as "Your Majesty."
that the Jews
This does not mean all the Jews. Alternate translation: "that the leaders of the Jews"
Acts 26:8
General Information:
Here "you" is plural and refers to the people who were listening to Paul.
Why should any of you judge it to be incredible that God raises the dead?
Paul uses a question to challenge the Jews there. They believe that God can raise the dead, but they do not believe that God brought Jesus back to life. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not judge it to be unbelievable that God raises the dead" Or "You should not say that it is impossible to believe that God raises the dead."
raises the dead
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "makes dead people come alive again"
Acts 26:9
Now indeed
Paul uses this phrase to mark another shift in his defense. He is now beginning to describe how he formerly persecuted Jesus's people.
against the name of Jesus
The word "name" here stands for the teaching about the person. Alternate translation: "to stop people from teaching about Jesus"
Acts 26:10
when they were killed, I cast my vote against them
The phrase "were killed" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I voted in agreement with the other Jewish leaders to condemn believers to die"
Acts 26:11
I punished them many times
Possible meanings are 1) Paul punished some believers many times or 2) Paul punished many different believers.
Acts 26:12
Connecting Statement:
While talking to King Agrippa, Paul tells about when the Lord spoke with him.
While I was doing this
Paul uses this phrase to mark another shift in his defense. He is now telling about when he saw Jesus and became his disciple.
While
This word is used to mark two events that are happening at the same time. In this case, Paul went to Damascus during the time when he persecuted Christians.
with authority and orders
Paul had letters from the Jewish leaders granting him authority to persecute the Jewish believers.
Acts 26:14
I heard a voice speaking to me that said
Here "voice" stands for the person speaking. Alternate translation: "I heard someone speaking to me who said"
Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?
This is a rhetorical question. The speaker is alerting Saul to what Saul is doing to him, and implying that Saul should not do that. Alternate translation: "Saul, Saul, you are persecuting me." or "Saul, Saul, stop persecuting me."
It is hard for you to kick a goad
For Paul to resist Jesus and to persecute believers is spoken of as if he were an ox kicking at the sharp stick that a person uses to prod
Acts 26:15
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.
Acts 26:16
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.
Acts 26:17
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.
Acts 26:18
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues giving his defense to King Agrippa, quoting his conversation with the Lord.
to open their eyes
Paul helping people to understand the truth is spoken of as if he were helping them to open their physical eyes. Alternate translation: "to make them able to understand the truth"
to turn them from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God
Paul convincing people to stop obeying Satan and doing evil things and to start obeying God and doing good things is spoken of as if Paul were taking them out of a dark place where Satan controlled them and into a place where there was light and God controlled them. Alternate translation: "to help them stop doing what is evil, stop obeying Satan, and start trusting and obeying God"
they may receive from God the forgiveness of sins
The abstract noun "forgiveness" can be stated as the verb "forgive." Alternate translation: "God may forgive their sins and they may receive"
the inheritance that I give
The abstract noun "inheritance" may be stated as the verb "inherit." Alternate translation: "they may inherit that which I give"
the inheritance
The blessings that Jesus gives to those who believe in him are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that children receive from their father.
sanctified by faith in me
Jesus choosing some people to belong to him is spoken of as if he literally set them apart from other people.
by faith in me

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"because they believe in me." Here Paul finishes quoting the Lord.

Acts 26:19

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true." Paul had just explained what the Lord had commanded him in his vision.

I did not disobey

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I obeyed"

the heavenly vision

This refers to what the person in the vision told Paul. Alternate translation: "what the person from heaven told me in the vision"

Acts 26:20

turn to God

To start trusting God is spoken of as if a person turns to start walking toward God. Alternate translation: "trust in God"

doing deeds worthy of repentance

The abstract noun "repentance" can be stated as the verb "repented." Alternate translation: "and start doing good deeds to show they truly have repented"

Acts 26:21

the Jews

This does not mean all of the Jews. Alternate translation: "some Jews"

Acts 26:22

to both small and great about nothing

Here "small" and "great" refer to people who are unimportant and important, respectively, and are used together to mean "all people." Alternate translation: "to all people, whether unimportant or important, about nothing"

about nothing more than what

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "about the exact thing that"

what the prophets

Paul is referring to the collective writings of the Old Testament prophets.

Acts 26:23

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes giving his defense to King Agrippa.

that Christ must suffer

You can make explicit that Christ must also die. Alternate translation: "that Christ must suffer and die"

from the dead

The phrase "the dead" refers to the spirits of people who have died. To rise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

he would proclaim light

"he would proclaim the message about the light." To tell people about how God saves people is spoken of as if a person were speaking about the light. Alternate translation: "he would proclaim the message about how God saves people"

Acts 26:24

Connecting Statement:

Paul and King Agrippa continue to talk together.

you are insane

"you are speaking nonsense" or "you are crazy"

your great learning makes you insane

"you have learned so much that you are now crazy"

Acts 26:25

I am not insane ... but

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I am sane ... and" or "I am able to think well ... and"

most excellent Festus

"Festus, who deserves highest honors"

Acts 26:26

For the king ... to him ... from him

Paul is still speaking to King Agrippa, but he is referring to him in the third person. Alternate translation: "For you ... to you ... from you"

I am persuaded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am sure"

that none of this is hidden from him

This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "that he is aware of this" or "that you are aware of this"

has not been done in a corner

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has not happened in a corner"

in a corner

This means doing something in secret as if a person went and did something in the corner of a room where no one can see him. Alternate translation: "in a dark place" or "in secret"

Acts 26:27

Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa?

Paul asks this question to remind Agrippa that Agrippa already believes what the prophets said about Jesus. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You already believe what the Jewish prophets said, King Agrippa."

Acts 26:28

In a short time would you persuade me and make me a Christian?

Agrippa asks this question to show Paul that he cannot convince Agrippa so easily without more proof. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not think you can convince me so easily to believe in Jesus!"

Acts 26:29

but without these prison chains

Here "prison chains" stands for being a prisoner. Alternate translation: "but, of course, I do not want you to be a prisoner, as I am"

Acts 26:30

General Information:

Bernice was the sister of King Agrippa (Acts 25:13).

Connecting Statement:

This ends Paul's time before King Agrippa.

Then the king stood up, and the governor

"Then King Agrippa stood up, and Governor Festus"

Acts 26:31

the hall

This was a large room for ceremonies, trials, and other events.

This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds

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The abstract noun "death" can be stated as the verb "die." Here "bonds" stands for being in prison. Alternate translation: "This man does not deserve to die or to be in prison"
Acts 26:32

This man could have been freed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This man could have gone free" or "I could have freed this man"

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27 [1]When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan company of soldiers.[2]We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail along the coast of Asia. So we went to sea. Aristarchus from Thessalonica in Macedonia went with us.
[3]The next day we landed at the city of Sidon, where Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to go to his friends to receive their care.[4]From there we went to sea and sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island, because the winds were against us.[5]When we had sailed across the sea past Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia.[6]There, the centurion found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy. He put us on it.
[7]When we had sailed slowly for many days and had finally arrived with difficulty near Cnidus and the wind no longer allowed us to go that way, we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete, opposite Salmone.[8]We sailed along the coast with difficulty, until we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, which is near the city of Lasea.

[9]We had now taken much time, the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail. So Paul warned them,[10]and said, "Men, I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."[11]But the centurion was more persuaded by the master and by the owner of the ship than by those things that were spoken by Paul.
[12]Because the harbor was not easy to spend the winter in, most of the sailors advised to sail from there, and if by any means we could reach the city of Phoenix, to spend the winter there. Phoenix is a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.[13]When a south wind began to blow gently, the sailors thought that they had what they needed. So they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore.
[14]But after a short time a wind of hurricane force, called the northeaster, began to beat down from the island.[15]When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind, we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind.[16]We sailed along the lee of a small island called Cauda, and with difficulty we were able to secure the lifeboat.
[17]When they had hoisted the lifeboat up, they used its ropes to bind the hull of the ship. They were afraid that they should run upon the sandbars of Syrtis, so they lowered the sea anchor and were driven along.[18]We took such a violent battering by the storm that the next day they began throwing the cargo overboard.
[19]On the third day the sailors threw overboard the ship's equipment with their own hands.[20]When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days, and the great storm still beat upon us, any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned.
[21]When they had gone long without food, then Paul stood up among the sailors and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have set sail from Crete, so as to get this injury and loss.[22]Now I urge you to take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship.
[23]For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong, whom also I worship—his angel stood beside me[24]and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand before Caesar, and see, God in his kindness has given to you all those who are sailing with you.'[25]Therefore have courage, men! For I trust God that it will happen just as it was told to me.[26]But we must run aground upon some island."

[27]When the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven this way and that in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors thought that they were approaching some land.[28]They took soundings and found twenty fathoms; after a little while, they took more soundings and found fifteen fathoms.[29]They were afraid that we might crash on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the stern and prayed that morning would come soon.
[30]The sailors were looking for a way to abandon the ship and had lowered the lifeboat into the sea, and pretended that they would throw down the anchors from the bow.[31]But Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."[32]Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and let it drift away.
[33]When daylight was coming on, Paul encouraged them all to take some food. He said, "This day is the fourteenth day that you have been on constant guard and have gone without food—you have not eaten anything.[34]So I urge you to share some food, for this is necessary for you to survive. For not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." [35]When he had said this, he took bread and he thanked God in the sight of everyone. Then he broke the bread and began to eat.
[36]Then they were all encouraged and they also took food.[37]We were 276 souls on the ship.[38]When they had eaten enough, they made the ship lighter by throwing out the wheat into the sea.
[39]When it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a beach, and they discussed whether they could drive the ship onto it.[40]So they cut loose the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosed the ropes

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of the rudders and raised the foresail to the wind; and so they headed to the beach.[41]But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow was stuck there and remained unmovable, and the stern was broken up by the force of the waves.
[42]The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners so that none of them could swim away and escape.[43]But the centurion wanted to save Paul, so he stopped their plan; and he ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.
[44]Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to land.

Acts 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sailing

People who lived near the sea traveled by boat powered by the wind. During some months of the year, the wind would blow in the wrong direction or so hard that sailing was impossible.

Trust

Paul trusted God to bring him safely to land. He told the sailers and soldiers to trust that God would also keep them alive. (See: trust)

Paul breaks bread

Luke uses almost the same words here to describe Paul taking bread, thanking God, breaking it, and eating it that he used to describe the last supper Jesus ate with his disciples. However, your translation should not make your reader think that Paul was leading a religious celebration here.

Links:

Acts 27:1 Notes

Acts 27:1

General Information:

Adramyttium was a city possibly located on the west coast of modern-day Turkey. The word "we" includes the author of Acts, Paul, and the others traveling with Paul, but not the reader.

Connecting Statement:

Paul, as a prisoner, begins his journey to Rome.

When it was decided

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When the king and the governor decided"

sail for Italy

Italy is the name of the province Rome was in. See how you translated "Italy" in Acts 18:2.

they committed Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Augustan company of soldiers.

"they put a centurion named Julius, of the Imperial Regiment, in charge of Paul and some other prisoners"

they committed

Possible meanings are that 1) "they" refers to the governor and the king or 2) "they" refers to other Roman officials.

a centurion named Julius

Julius is a man's name.

the Augustan company of soldiers

Some versions translate the word Augustan as "Imperial" or "emperor's."

company of soldiers

This was a group of about 1,00 soldiers. See how you translated this in Acts 21:31.

Acts 27:2

We boarded a ship from Adramyttium which was about to sail along the coast of Asia

If your language requires a person to act here, you can add human actors: "We boarded a ship that people had brought from Adramyttium; they were about to sail it along."

a ship from Adramyttium

Possible meanings are 1) a ship that had come from Adramyttium or 2) a ship that was registered or licensed in Adramyttium.

about to sail

"soon going to sail" or "would depart soon"

went to sea

"began our journey on the sea"

Aristarchus

Aristarchus came from Macedonia but had been working with Paul in Ephesus. See how you translated his name in Acts 19:29.

Acts 27:3

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Julius treated Paul kindly

"Julius treated Paul with a friendly concern." See how you translated "Julius" in Acts 27:1.

go to his friends to receive their care

The abstract noun "care" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "go to his friends so they could care for him" or "go to his friends so they could help him with whatever he needed"

Acts 27:4

we went to sea and sailed

"we started sailing and went"

sailed under the lee of Cyprus, close to the island

"the lee of Cyprus" is the side of that island that blocks the strong wind, so sailing vessels are not forced off their course.

Acts 27:5

Pamphylia

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This was a province in Asia Minor. See how you translated this in Acts 2:10.

we landed at Myra, a city of Lycia

You can make explicit that they got off of the ship in Myra. Alternate translation: "came to Myra, a city of Lycia, where we got off the ship"

a city of Lycia

Lycia was a Roman province, located on the southwestern coast of modern-day Turkey.

Acts 27:6

found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail to Italy

It is implied that a crew would sail the ship to Italy. Alternate translation: "found a ship that a crew had sailed from Alexandria and was about to sail to Italy"

Alexandria

This is the name of a city.

Acts 27:7

When we had sailed slowly ... finally arrived with difficulty

You can make explicit that the reason they were sailing slowly and with difficulty was because the wind was blowing against them.

near Cnidus

This is an ancient settlement located in modern-day Turkey.

the wind no longer allowed us to go that way

"we could no longer go that way because of the strong wind"

we sailed along the sheltered side of Crete

"we sailed along the side of Crete where there was less wind"

opposite Salmone

This is a coastal city in Crete.

Acts 27:8

We sailed along the coast with difficulty

You can make explicit that even though the winds were not as strong as before, they were still strong enough to make sailing difficult.

Fair Havens

This was a port near Lasea, located on the south coast of Crete.

near the city of Lasea

This is a coastal city in Crete.

Acts 27:9

We had now taken much time

Because of the direction the wind was blowing, the journey from Caesarea to Fair Havens had taken more time than planned.

We had now taken

The writer includes himself, Paul, and those who were traveling with them, but not the reader.

the time of the Jewish fast also had passed, and it had now become dangerous to sail

This fast took place on the Day of Atonement, which was usually either in the last part of September or the first part of October according to Western calendars. After this time, there was a higher risk of seasonal storms.

Acts 27:10

I see that the voyage we are about to take will be with injury and much loss

"if we travel now, we will suffer much injury and loss"

with injury

If your language has a word for "injury" that results from wrongdoing, you may want to use it here.

we are about to take ... our lives

Paul includes himself and his hearers, so this is inclusive.

loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives

Here "loss" means destruction when referring to things and death when referring to people.

not only of the cargo and the ship

Cargo is something that a person transports from one place to another by boat. Alternate translation: "not only the ship and the goods on the ship"

Acts 27:11

that were spoken by Paul

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that Paul said"

Acts 27:12

harbor was not easy to spend the winter in

You can make explicit why it was not easy to stay in the harbor. Alternate translation: "harbor did not sufficiently protect docked ships during winter storms"

harbor

a place near land that is usually safe for ships

city of Phoenix

Phoenix was a port city on the south coast of Crete.

to spend the winter there

This speaks about the season of winter as if it were a commodity that someone can spend. Alternate translation: "to stay there for the cold season"

facing both southwest and northwest

Here "faces northwest and southwest" means the opening of the harbor was toward those directions. Alternate translation: "it opened to the northwest and southwest"

southwest and northwest

These directions are based on what one sees as one faces the setting sun. Northwest is a little to the right of the setting sun, and southwest is a little to the left of the setting sun.

Acts 27:13

weighed anchor

Here "weighed" means "pulled out of the water." An anchor is a heavy object attached to a rope that is secured to the boat. The anchor is tossed into the water and sinks to the bottom of the sea to keep the ship from drifting about.

Acts 27:14

Connecting Statement:

Paul and those traveling on the boat encounter a fierce storm.

after a short time

"after a little while"

a wind of hurricane force

"a very strong, dangerous wind"

called the northeaster

"called 'a strong wind from the northeast.'" The word for "the northeaster" in the original language is "Euroclydon." You can transliterate this word for your language.

began to beat down from the island

"came in from the island of Crete, and it blew strongly against our ship"

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Acts 27:15

When the ship was caught by the storm and could no longer head into the wind

"When the wind blew so strongly against the front of the ship that we could not sail against it"

we had to give way to the storm and were driven along by the wind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we stopped trying to sail forward, and we let the wind push us whichever way it blew"

Acts 27:16

We sailed along the lee of a small island

"We sailed on the side of the island where the wind was not so strong"

a small island called Cauda

This island was located on the south coast of Crete.

lifeboat

This was a smaller boat towed behind or secured onto a ship, used to take people and goods across water too shallow for the ship and also to escape from the ship if it sank. At this point the lifeboat was in the water being towed by the ship.

Acts 27:17

they had hoisted the lifeboat up

"they had lifted up the lifeboat" or "they had pulled the lifeboat aboard the ship"

they used its ropes to bind the hull of the ship

The "hull" is the body of the ship. They tied ropes around it so that the ship would not come apart during the storm.

sandbars of Syrtis

Sandbars are very shallow areas in the sea where ships can get stuck in the sand. Syrtis is located on the coast of Libya, northern Africa.

they lowered the sea anchor

A sea anchor is something that is towed in the water behind a ship to slow the ship down and make it more stable. It may be a large cloth or a stiff board. Alternate translation: "they let the floating anchor down into the water"

were driven along

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "had to go in whatever direction the wind blew us"

Acts 27:18

We took such a violent battering by the storm

"The wind blew us so roughly back and forth that all of us were badly battered and bruised by the storm"

they began throwing the cargo overboard

The word "they" refers to the sailors. This is done to lighten the weight of the ship in an effort to prevent the ship from sinking.

cargo

Cargo is something that a person transports from one place to another by boat. See how you translated this in Acts 27:10. Alternate translation: "goods on the ship"

Acts 27:19

the sailors threw overboard the ship's equipment with their own hands

Here "equipment" refers to the sailors' equipment needed to sail the ship: tackle, hoists, beams of wood, block and tackle, ropes, lines, sails, and the like. This indicates how desperate the situation was.

Acts 27:20

When the sun and stars did not shine on us for many days

They could not see the sun and stars because of the dark storm clouds. Sailors needed to see the sun and stars in order to know where they were and what direction they were headed.

the great storm still beat upon us

"the terrible storm still blew us roughly back and forth"

any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone abandoned hope that we would be saved"

any more hope that we should be saved was abandoned

Here the word "hope" is a person's thought that what he desires might happen. Here the men on the boat had no reason to believe that they would be rescued, so they quit hoping. Alternate translation: "we quit thinking that we might be saved"

be saved

"be rescued." Since there is no mention of the people praying for God to save them, this might simply have the sense of "survive."

Acts 27:21

Connecting Statement:

Paul speaks to the sailors on the ship.

When they had gone long without food

Here "they" refers to the sailors. It is implied that Luke, Paul, and those with them had not eaten either. Alternate translation: "When we had gone a long time without food"

among the sailors

"among the men"

so as to get this injury and loss

"and as a result suffer this harm and loss"

Acts 27:22

there will be no loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship

Paul is speaking to the sailors. It is implied that Paul also means that he and those with him will not die either. Alternate translation: "none of us will die: the storm will destroy only the ship"

Acts 27:24

You must stand before Caesar

The phrase "stand before Caesar" refers to Paul's going to court and letting Caesar judge him. Alternate translation: "You must stand before Caesar so he can judge you"

has given to you all those who are sailing with you

"has decided to allow all those who are sailing with you to live"

Acts 27:25

just as it was told to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "just as the angel told me"

Acts 27:26

we must run aground upon some island

"we must steer our boat so that it wrecks on some island"

Acts 27:27

Connecting Statement:

The fierce storm continues.

When the fourteenth night had come

The ordinal number "fourteenth" can be translated as "fourteen" or "14." Alternate translation: "After 14 days since the storm started, that night"

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as we were driven this way and that
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as the wind blew us back and forth"
the Adriatic Sea
This is the sea between Italy and Greece.
Acts 27:28
They took soundings
"They measured the depth of the sea water." They measured the depth of water by dropping a line with a weight tied to the end of it into the water.
found twenty fathoms
"found 20 fathoms." A "fathom" is a unit of measurement for measuring the depth of water. One fathom is about two meters. Alternate translation: "found 40 meters"
found fifteen fathoms
"found 15 fathoms." A "fathom" is a unit of measurement for measuring the depth of water. One fathom is about two meters. Alternate translation: "found 30 meters"
Acts 27:29
anchors
An anchor is a heavy object attached to a rope that is secured to the boat. The anchor is tossed into the water and sinks to the bottom of the sea, keeping the ship from drifting about. See how you translated this in Acts 27:13.
from the stern
"from the back of the ship"
Acts 27:30
the lifeboat
This was a smaller boat towed behind or secured onto a ship, used to take people and goods across water too shallow for the ship and also to escape from the ship if it sank. See how you translated this in Acts 27:16.
from the bow
"from the front of the ship"
Acts 27:31
General Information:
Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the centurion and the Roman soldiers.
Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved
Paul meant that if those men left the ship, then no one on the ship would be saved. This can be stated positively, and the passive phrase "be saved" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You can be saved only if these men stay in the ship" or "Only if these men stay in the ship will you survive"
Acts 27:33
When daylight was coming on
"When it was almost sunrise"
This day is the fourteenth day that
The ordinal number "fourteenth" can be stated as "fourteen." Alternate translation: "For 14 days"
Acts 27:34
not one of you will lose a single hair from his head
This was a customary way of saying no harm would come upon them. Alternate translation: "every one of you will survive this disaster unharmed"
Acts 27:35
broke the bread
"tore the bread" or "tore off a piece from the loaf of bread"
Acts 27:36
Then they were all encouraged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This encouraged all of them"
Acts 27:37
We were 276 souls on the ship
"There were two hundred and seventy-six of us in the ship." This is background information.
souls
This is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "people"
Acts 27:39
bay
a large area of water partly surrounded by land
did not recognize the land
"saw land but could not recognize it as any place they knew"
Acts 27:40
cut loose the anchors and left them
"cut the ropes and left the anchors behind"
rudders
large oars or pieces of wood at the back of the ship used for steering
the foresail
"the sail at the front of the ship." The sail was a large piece of cloth that caught the wind to move the ship.
they headed to the beach
"they steered the ship toward the beach"
Acts 27:41
a sandbar
an underwater pile of sand that made the water suddenly shallow
The bow
the front end of the ship
the stern
"the back end of the ship"
Acts 27:42
The soldiers' plan was
"The soldiers were planning"
Acts 27:43
so he stopped their plan
"so he stopped them from doing what they planned to do"
jump overboard
"jump off the ship into the water"
Acts 27:44
some on planks
"some on wooden boards"

28 [1]When we were brought safely through, we learned that the island was called Malta.[2]The native people offered to us
not just ordinary kindness, but they lit a fire and welcomed us all because of the constant rain and cold.
[3]But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and placed them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and
fastened onto his hand.[4]When the native people saw the animal hanging from his hand, they said one to another, "This
man certainly is a murderer who has been saved from the sea; Justice does not permit him to live."

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[5]But then he shook the animal into the fire and suffered no harm.[6]They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they watched him for a long time and saw that nothing was wrong with him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

[7]Now in a nearby place there were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, a man named Publius. He welcomed us and kindly provided for us for three days.[8]It happened that the father of Publius was lying afflicted with a fever and dysentery. When Paul went to him, he prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him.[9]After this happened, the rest of the people on the island who were sick also came and were healed.[10]The people also honored us with many honors. When we were preparing to sail, they gave us what we needed.

[11]After three months we set sail in a ship that had spent the winter at the island, a ship of Alexandria, with "the twin gods" as its figurehead.[12]After we landed at the city of Syracuse, we stayed there three days.
[13]From there we sailed and arrived at the city of Rhegium. After one day a south wind sprang up, and in two days we came to the city of Puteoli.[14]There we found some brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. In this way we came to Rome.[15]From there the brothers, after they heard about us, came to meet us as far as the Market of Appius and the Three Taverns. When Paul saw the brothers, he thanked God and took courage.

[16]When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself with the soldier who was guarding him.
[17]Then it came about that after three days Paul called together those men who were the leaders among the Jews. When they had come together, he said to them, "Brothers, although I have done nothing wrong against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.[18]After they questioned me, they wished to set me free, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case.
[19]But when the Jews spoke against their desire, I was forced to appeal to Caesar, although it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation.[20]For this reason, therefore, I called upon you that I might see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am now wearing this chain."

[21]Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea about you, nor did any of the brothers come and report or say anything bad about you.[22]But we want to hear from you what you think about this sect, because it is known by us that it is spoken against everywhere."

[23]When they had appointed a day for him, more people came to him at his dwelling place. He presented the matter to them, and testified about the kingdom of God. He tried to persuade them about Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning until evening.[24]Some were convinced about the things which were said, while others did not believe.
[25]When they did not agree with one another, they left after Paul had spoken this one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.
[26] He said, 'Go to this people and say,
"Hearing you will hear, but you will never understand;
seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

[27] For the heart of this people has become dull,
and with their ears they hardly hear,
and they have shut their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn again,
and I would heal them.'"

[28]Therefore, you should know that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen."[29][1]

[30]Paul lived for two whole years in his own rented house, and he welcomed all who came to him.[31]He was proclaiming the kingdom of God and was teaching the things about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness without being hindered.

[1] Acts 28:29—Some ancient copies have verse 29: When he had said these things, the Jews went away. They were having a great dispute among themselves.

Acts 28 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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No one knows for sure why Luke ends his history without telling what happened to Paul after he had been in Rome for two years.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Letters" and "brothers"

The Jewish leaders were surprised that Paul wanted to speak with them, because they had received no letters from the high priest in Jerusalem telling them that Paul was coming.

When the Jewish leaders spoke of "brothers," they were referring to fellow Jews, not to Christians.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"He was a god"

The native people believed that Paul was a god, but they did not believe that he was the one true God. We do not know why Paul did not tell the native people that he was not a god.

Links:

Acts 28:1 Notes

Acts 28:1

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Paul, the writer, and those who traveled with them, but not to the reader.

Connecting Statement:

After the shipwreck, people on the island of Malta helped Paul and everyone on the ship. They stay there for 3 months.

When we were brought safely through

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When we arrived safely"

we learned

Paul and Luke learned the name of the island. Alternate translation: "we learned from the people" or "we found out from the residents"

the island was called Malta

Malta is an island located south of the modern-day island of Sicily.

Acts 28:2

The native people

"The local people"

offered to us not just ordinary kindness

Being kind to someone is spoken of as if it were an object that someone offers. Alternate translation: "were not only very kind to us"

not just ordinary kindness

This phrase is used to emphasize the opposite of what is said. Alternate translation: "a great deal of kindness"

they lit a fire

"they put together twigs and branches and burned them"

welcomed us all

Possible meanings are 1) "welcomed all of the people from the ship" or 2) "welcomed Paul and all his companions."

Acts 28:3

a viper came out

"a poisonous snake came out of the bundle of sticks"

fastened onto his hand

"bit Paul's hand and did not let go"

Acts 28:4

This man certainly is a murderer

"For sure, this man is a murderer" or "This man is truly a murderer"

Justice

"Justice" was the name of a goddess that the people on the island worshiped. Alternate translation: "the goddess called Justice"

Acts 28:5

shook the animal into the fire

"shook his hand so that the snake fell from his hand into the fire"

suffered no harm

"Paul was not hurt at all"

Acts 28:6

waiting for him to swell up

They they that his body would swell because of the snake venom.

nothing was wrong with him

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "everything about him was as it should be"

they changed their minds

To think differently about a situation is spoken of as if a person is changing his mind. Alternate translation: "they thought again"

said that he was a god.

Perhaps the people believed that someone who lived after a poisonous snake bite was divine or a god. This can be stated as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "said, 'This man must be a god.'"

Acts 28:7

General Information:

Here the words "us" and we" refer to Paul, Luke, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.

Now in a nearby place

"Now" is used to introduce a new person or event in the account.

chief man of the island

Possible meanings are 1) the main leader of the people or 2) someone who was the most important person on the island, perhaps because of his wealth.

Acts 28:8

It happened that the father of Publius ... fever and dysentery

This is background information about Publius' father that is important to understanding the story.

was lying afflicted

"was in bed, ill"

afflicted with a fever and dysentery

Dysentery is an infectious disease of the intestines.

placed his hands on him

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"touched him with his hands"
Acts 28:9
were healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he healed them too"
Acts 28:10
honored us with many honors
Probably they honored Paul and those with him by giving them gifts.
Acts 28:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul's journey to Rome continues.
that had spent the winter at the island
"that the crew left at the island for the cold season"
a ship of Alexandria
Possible meanings are this refers to 1) a ship that came from Alexandria, or 2) a ship that was registered or licensed in Alexandria.
the twin gods
On the bow of the ship, there was a carving of the two idols called "the twin gods." Their names were Castor and Pollux.
Acts 28:12
city of Syracuse
Syracuse is a city on the southeast coast of the modern-day island of Sicily, just southwest of Italy.
Acts 28:13
city of Rhegium
This is the port city located at the southwestern tip of Italy.
a south wind sprang up
"the wind began to blow from the south"
city of Puteoli
Puteoli is located in modern-day Naples on the west coast of Italy.
Acts 28:14
There we found
"There we met"
brothers
These were followers of Jesus, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"
were invited
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they invited us"
In this way we came to Rome
Once Paul reached Puteoli, the rest of the journey to Rome was on land. Alternate translation: "And after we stayed seven days with them, we went to Rome"
Acts 28:15
General Information:
The Market of Appius was a popular market village about 60 kilometers south of the city of Rome on a road called the Appian Way. The Three Taverns was another village about 50 kilometers south of Rome.
after they heard about us
"after they heard we were coming"
he thanked God and took courage
Courage is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could take. Alternate translation: "this encouraged him, and he thanked God"
Acts 28:16
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to the writer, Paul, and those traveling with them, but not to the reader.
Connecting Statement:
Paul arrives in Rome as a prisoner but with the freedom to stay in his own place. He calls the local Jews together to explain what has happened to him.
When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After we had arrived in Rome, the Roman authorities gave Paul permission to"
Acts 28:17
Then it came about that
This phrase is used here to mark the beginning of a new part of the story. If your language has a way for doing this, you could consider using it here.
the leaders among the Jews
These are the Jewish civil or religious leaders present in Rome.
Brothers
Here this means "Fellow Jews."
against the people
"against our people" or "against the Jews"
I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some of the Jews arrested me in Jerusalem and placed me in the custody of the Roman authorities"
into the hands of the Romans
Here "hands" stands for power or control.
Acts 28:18
there was no reason for the death penalty in my case
"there was no reason for them to execute me" or "I had done nothing to cause them to kill me"
Acts 28:19
the Jews
This does not mean all of the Jews. Alternate translation: "the Jewish leaders"
spoke against their desire
"complained about what the Roman authorities wanted to do"
I was forced to appeal to Caesar
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I had to ask for Caesar to judge me"
although it is not as if I were bringing any accusation against my nation
The abstract noun "accusation" can be stated as the verb "accuse." Here "nation" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "but it was not because I wanted to accuse the people of my nation before Caesar"
Acts 28:20
the hope of Israel
Here the word "hope" is what a person desires to happen and is confident will happen. In this case it is what the people of Israel hope for. Alternate translation: "what Israel joyfully waits for" or "what the people of Israel confidently expect"
the hope of Israel
Paul did not state clearly what Israel hoped for. He may have been referring 1) to their hope that the Messiah would

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come or 2) to their hope that God would cause those who have died to live again.

Israel

Here "Israel" stands for the people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" or "the Jews"

that I am now wearing this chain

Here "wearing this chain" stands for being a prisoner. Alternate translation: "that I am a prisoner"

Acts 28:21

General Information:

Here the word "We" refers to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

Connecting Statement:

The Jewish leaders respond to Paul.

nor did any of the brothers

Here "brothers" stands for fellow Jews. Alternate translation: "nor did any of our fellow Jews"

Acts 28:22

General Information:

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

you think about this sect

A sect is a smaller group within a larger group. Here it refers to those who believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: "you think about this group to which you belong"

because it is known by us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because we know"

it is spoken against everywhere

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "many Jews all over the Roman Empire are saying bad things about it"

Acts 28:23

General Information:

Here all instances of "they" and "them" refer to the Jewish leaders in Rome. All instances of "him," "his," and "He" refer to Paul (Acts 28:17).

had appointed a day for him

"had chosen a time for him to speak to them"

testified about the kingdom of God

Here "kingdom of God" stands for God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "told them about God's rule as king" or "told them how God would show himself as king"

from the prophets

Here "the prophets" refers to what they wrote. Alternate translation: "from what the prophets wrote"

Acts 28:24

Some were convinced about the things which were said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Paul was able to convince some of them"

Acts 28:25

General Information:

Here the word "they" refers to the Jewish leaders in Rome (Acts 28:17). The word "your" refers to the people to whom Paul had been speaking.

Connecting Statement:

As the Jewish leaders were ready to leave, Paul quoted the Old Testament scriptures that were appropriate for this time.

after Paul had spoken this one word

Here "word" stands for a message or statement. Alternate translation: "after Paul had said one more thing" or "after Paul had made this statement"

The Holy Spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.

This sentence contains quotations within quotations.

Acts 28:26

General Information:

Paul begins to quote the book that the prophet Isaiah wrote.

He said, 'Go to this people and say, "Hearing you will hear, but you will never understand; seeing, you will see, but you will never know.

This is the end of the sentence that begins with the words "The Holy Spirit spoke" in verse 25 and that contains quotations within quotations. You can translate one of the inner quotations as an indirect quotation, or you can translate two of the inner quotations as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: "The Spirit told Isaiah to go tell them that they will hear but will not understand and they will see but they will not know"

Hearing you will hear ... seeing, you will see

The words "hear" and "see" are repeated for emphasis. "You will listen carefully ... you will look intently"

but you will never understand ... but you will never know

Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. They emphasize that the Jewish people will not understand God's plan.

Acts 28:27

General Information:

Translate Paul's quotation of Isaiah as a direct quotation or an indirect quotation according to how you translated it in Acts 28:25-26.

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes quoting Isaiah the prophet.

For the heart of this people has become dull

People who stubbornly refuse to understand what God is saying or doing are spoken of as if their heart is dull. Here "heart" is a metonym for the mind.

with their ears they hardly hear, and they have shut their eyes

People who stubbornly refuse to understand what God is saying or doing are spoken of as if they are unable to hear and are shutting their eyes so that they will not see.

understand with their heart

Here "heart" stands for the mind.

turn again

To start obeying God is spoken of as though the person were physically turning toward God.

I would heal them

This does not mean God would only heal them physically. He would also heal them spiritually by forgiving their sins.

Acts 28:28

Connecting Statement:

Paul finishes speaking to the Jewish leaders in Rome.

this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles

God's message about how he saves people is spoken of as if it were an object that is sent. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is sending his messengers to the Gentiles to tell them about how he will save them"

they will listen

"some of them will listen." This response of the Gentiles is in contrast to the way the Jews of that time responded.

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Acts 28:31 Connecting Statement: Luke ends the story of Paul in the book of Acts. He was proclaiming the kingdom of God	Here "kingdom of God" refers to God's rule as king. Alternate translation: "He was preaching about God's rule as king" or "He was preaching about how God will show himself as king"

Introduction to Romans

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Romans

Introduction (1:1-15) Righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ (1:16-17) All mankind is condemned because of sin (1:18-3:20) Righteousness through Jesus Christ by faith in him (3:21-4:25) The fruits of the Spirit (5:1-11) Adam and Christ compared (5:12-21) Becoming like Christ in this life (6:1-8:39) God's plan for Israel (9:1-11:36) Practical advice for living as Christians (12:1-15:13) Conclusion and greetings (15:14-16:27)

Who wrote the Book of Romans?

The Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul probably wrote this letter while he was staying in the city of Corinth during his third trip through the Roman Empire.

What is the Book of Romans about?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Rome. Paul wanted to get them ready to receive him when he visited them. He said his purpose was to "bring about the obedience of faith" (16:26).

In this letter Paul most fully described the gospel of Jesus Christ. He explained that both Jews and non-Jews have sinned, and God will forgive them and declare them righteous only if they believe in Jesus (chapters 1-11). Then he gave them practical advice for how believers should live (chapters 12-16),

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Romans." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to the Church in Rome," or "A Letter to the Christians in Rome."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What are the titles used to refer to Jesus?

In Romans, Paul described Jesus Christ by many titles and descriptions: Jesus Christ (1:1), the Seed of David (1:3), the Son of God (1:4), the Lord Jesus Christ (1:7), Christ Jesus (3:24), Propitiation (3:25), Jesus (3:26), Jesus our Lord (4:24), Lord of Hosts (9:29), a Stumbling Stone and Rock of Offence (9:33), the End of the Law (10:4), the Deliverer (11:26), Lord of the Dead and the Living (14:9), and the Root of Jesse (15:12).

How should theological terms in Romans be translated?

Paul used many theological terms that are not used in the four gospels. As early Christians learned more about the meaning of Jesus Christ and his message, they needed words and expressions for new ideas. Some examples of these words are "justification" (5:1), "works of the law" (3:20), "reconcile" (5:10), "propitiation" (3:25), "sanctification" (6:19), and "the old man" (6:6).

The "key terms" dictionary can help translators understand many of these terms.

Terms such as those given above are difficult to explain. It is often hard or impossible for translators to find equivalent terms in their own languages. It can help to know that word equivalents of these terms are not necessary. Instead, translators can develop short expressions to communicate these ideas. For example, the term "gospel" can be translated as "the good news about Jesus Christ."

Translators should also remember that some of these terms have more than one meaning. The meaning will depend on how the author is using the word in that particular passage. For example, "righteousness" sometimes means that a person obeys God's law. At other times, "righteousness" means that Jesus Christ has perfectly obeyed God's law for us.

What did Paul mean by "a remnant" of Israel (11:5)?

The idea of a "remnant" is important both in the Old Testament and for Paul. Most of the Israelites were either killed or scattered among other people when the Assyrians and then the Babylonians conquered their land. Only a relatively few Jews survived. They were known as "the remnant."

In 11:1-9, Paul spoke of another remnant, the Jews whom God saved because they believed in Jesus. (See: remnant)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What did Paul mean by the expressions “in Christ,” “in the Lord,” and others like them?

The phrase "in Christ" and similar phrases occur in 3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:1,2,39; 9:1; 12:5,17; 15:17; and 16:3,7,9,10. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ.

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Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.
These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” For example, in 3:24 ("the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"), Paul referred to our being redeemed "because" of Jesus Christ. In 8:9 ("you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit"), Paul spoke of believers submitting "to" the Holy Spirit. In 9:1 ("I tell the truth in Christ"), Paul meant that he is telling the truth that "is in agreement with" Jesus Christ. The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

How are the ideas of "holy," "saints" or "holy ones," and "sanctify" represented in Romans in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God considers Christians to be sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact is that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless and faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULB uses "holy," "holy God," "holy ones" or "holy people." (See: 1:7) Sometimes the meaning in a passage indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In cases where some other English versions have "saints" or "holy ones," the ULB uses "believers." (See: 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15) Sometimes the meaning in a passage indicates the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "set apart," "dedicated to," "consecrated," or "reserved for." (See: 15:16)
The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Romans?

For the following verses, modern version of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB includes the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote.

"he [God] works all things together for good" (8:28). Some older translations read, "All things work together for good." "But if it is by grace, it is no longer by works. Otherwise grace would no longer be grace" (11:6). Some older translations read: "But if it is by works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."
The following verse is not in the best ancient copies of the Bible. Translators are advised not to include this verse. However, if in the translators' region there are older Bible versions that have this verse, the translators can include it. If it is translated, it should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that it is probably not original to the Book of Romans.

"May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (16:24).

Romans

1 [1]Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God,[2]which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures,[3]concerning his Son who was a descendant of David according to the flesh.
[4]Through the Spirit of holiness he was declared with power to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.[5]Through him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the nations, for the sake of his name.[6]Among these nations, you also have been called to belong to Jesus Christ.

[7]To all in Rome who are beloved of God and called to be his holy people: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[8]First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.
[9]For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, of how continually I make mention of you.[10]I always request in my prayers that by any means I may at last be successful now by the will of God in coming to you.
[11]For I desire to see you, that I may give you some spiritual gift, in order to strengthen you.[12]That is, I long to be mutually encouraged among you, through each other's faith, yours and mine.
[13]Now I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, that I often intended to come to you (but I was hindered until now), in order to have some fruit among you also, just as I have had among the rest of the Gentiles.[14]I am a debtor both to Greeks and to foreigners, both to the wise and to the foolish.[15]So, as for me, I am ready to proclaim the gospel also to you who are in Rome.

[16]For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and for the Greek.[17]For in it God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, as it has been written, "The righteous will live by faith."

[18]For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who through

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unrighteousness hold back the truth.[19]This is because that which is known about God is visible to them. For God has enlightened them.
[20]For ever since the creation of the world, his invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, having been discerned in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.[21]This is because, although they knew about God, they did not glorify him as God, nor did they give him thanks. Instead, they became foolish in their thoughts, and their senseless hearts were darkened.
[22]They claimed to be wise, but they became foolish.[23]They exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man, of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.

[24]Therefore God delivered them over to the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness, for their bodies to be dishonored among themselves.[25]It is they who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and who worshiped and served the creation instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

[26]Because of this, God delivered them over to dishonorable lusts, for their women exchanged natural relations for those that were unnatural.[27]In the same way, the men also left their natural relations with women and burned in their lust for one another. These were men who committed shameless acts with men and received in themselves the penalty they deserved for their error.

[28]And just as they did not approve of having God in their awareness, he gave them up to a corrupted mind, for them to do those things that are not proper.
[29]They have been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, and malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and evil intentions. They are gossips,[30]slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventing ways of doing evil; they are disobedient to parents.[31]They are senseless, faithless, heartless, and unmerciful.
[32]They understand the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death. But not only do they do these things, they also approve of others who do them.

Romans 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first verse is a type of introduction. People in the ancient Mediterranean region often started their letters this way. Sometimes this is called a "salutation."

Special concepts in this chapter

The gospel

When Paul writes of "the gospel" in this chapter (verses 1, 2, 9, 15, 16, 17), he is referring to the message about God's salvation for people through Jesus's sacrifice on the cross.

Harvest

This chapter uses the image of a harvest (1:13) to speak of the Roman Christians doing good works because they believe what Paul has told them about Jesus. (See: fruit and faith and righteous)

Universal Condemnation and the Wrath of God

This chapter explains that everyone is without excuse. We all know about the true God, Yahweh, from his creation all around us. Because of our sin and our sinful nature, every person justly deserves the wrath of God. This wrath was satisfied by Jesus dying on a cross for those who believe in him. (See: believe and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"God gave them over"

Many scholars view the phrases "God gave them over" and "God gave them up" as theologically significant. In both cases, it means that God had stopped trying to teach the people the right way and had allowed them to do whatever they want, even though everything they wanted to do was evil.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Difficult phrases and concepts

This chapter has many difficult ideas in it. The way Paul writes makes many of the phrases in this chapter difficult to translate. The translator may need to use the UDB to understand the meaning of the phrases and then translate them in a way that is easy for people to understand. Some of the difficult phrases include: "obedience of faith," "whom I serve in my spirit," "from faith to faith" and "exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of perishable man."

Links:

Romans 1:1 Notes Romans intro

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Romans 1:1

Paul

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. You may also need to tell in this same verse who the people are to whom Paul wrote the letter

Christ, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Christ. God called me to be an apostle and chose me to tell people about the gospel"

called

appointed or chosen by God to be his child, to be his servant and proclaimer of his message of salvation through Jesus

Romans 1:2

which he promised beforehand by his prophets in the holy scriptures

God promised his people that he would set up his kingdom. He told the prophets to write these promises in the Scriptures.

Romans 1:3

concerning his Son

This refers to "the gospel of God," the good news that God promised to send his Son into the world.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

who was a descendant of David according to the flesh

Here the word "flesh" refers to the physical body. Alternate translation: "who is a descendant of David according to the physical nature" or "who was born into the family of David"

Romans 1:4

he was declared with power to be the Son of God

The word "he" refers to Jesus Christ. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God declared him with power to be the Son of God"

by the resurrection from the dead

"by raising him from among the people who are dead." This expression speaks of all dead people together in the underworld, and coming alive again is spoken of as resurrection from among them.

Spirit of holiness

This refers to the Holy Spirit.

Romans 1:5

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks here about his obligation to preach.

we have received grace and apostleship

God has given Paul the gift of being an apostle. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God caused me to be an apostle. This is a special privilege"

for obedience of faith among all the nations, for the sake of his name

Paul uses the word "name" as a metonym to refer to Jesus. Alternate translation: "in order to teach all nations to obey because of their faith in him"

Romans 1:7

To all in Rome who are beloved of God and called to be his holy people

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I am writing this letter to all of you in Rome whom God loves and has chosen to become his people"

Grace to you and peace

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "May God give you grace and peace" or "May God bless you and give you inner peace"

God our Father

The word "Father" is an important title for God.

Romans 1:8

the whole world

the world Paul and his readers knew and could travel in, which was the Roman Empire

Romans 1:9

For God is my witness

Paul emphasizes that he earnestly prays for them and that God has seen him praying. The word "for" is often left untranslated.

in my spirit

A person's spirit is the part of him that can know God and believe in him.

the gospel of his Son

The good news (gospel) of the Bible is that the Son of God has given himself as the Savior of the world.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

I make mention of you

"I talk to God about you"

Romans 1:10

I always request in my prayers that ... I may at last be successful ... in coming to you

"Every time I pray, I ask God that ... I may succeed ... in coming to visit you"

by any means

"in whatever way God allows"

at last

"eventually" or "finally"

now by the will of God

"now, because God desires it,"

Romans 1:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues his opening statements to the people in Rome by stating his desire to see them in person.

For I desire to see you

"Because I really want to see you"

some spiritual gift, in order to strengthen you

Paul wants to strengthen the Roman Christians spiritually. Alternate translation: "some gift that will help you to grow spiritually"

Romans 1:12

That is, I long to be mutually encouraged among you, through each other's faith, yours and mine

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I mean that I want us to encourage each other by sharing our experiences of faith in Jesus"

Romans 1:13

I do not want you to be uninformed

Paul is emphasizing that he wanted them to have this information. You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I want you to know"

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

I was hindered until now

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate

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translation: "something has always prevented me"

in order to have some fruit among you

The word "fruit" is a metaphor that represents people in Rome whom Paul wants to believe the gospel. Alternate translation: "that more people among you might trust in Jesus"

the rest of the Gentiles

the Gentiles in the other regions where he had gone

Romans 1:14

I am a debtor both to

Using the metaphor "debtor," Paul speaks of his duty to serve God as if he owed God a financial debt. Alternate translation: "I must take the gospel to"

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel

You can translate this in a positive form. Possible meanings are that 1) Paul is not ashamed of believing the gospel because he knows it is true. Alternate translation: "I am confident in the gospel" 2) Paul is not ashamed of preaching the gospel because he knows that is true. Alternate translation: "I confidently preach the gospel"

it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes

Here "believes" means that one puts his trust in Christ. Alternate translation: "it is through the gospel that God powerfully saves those who put their trust in Christ"

for the Jew first and for the Greek

"for Jewish people and also for Greek people"

first

Here "first" means coming before all others in order of time.

Romans 1:17

For in it

Here "it" refers to the gospel. Paul explains why he completely trusts in the gospel.

God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith

Paul speaks about the gospel message as if it were an object that God could physically show to people. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has told us that it is by faith from beginning to end that people become righteous"

as it has been written

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "as someone has written in the Scriptures"

The righteous will live by faith

Possible meanings are 1) the words "by faith" describe "righteous," and those who by faith are righteous will live, or 2) the words "by faith" describe "will live," and those who are righteous will live by faith.

The righteous

The word "righteous" can be written as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Righteous people" or "A person who is righteous"

Romans 1:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul reveals God's great anger against sinful man.

For the wrath of God is revealed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God shows how angry he is"

For

Paul uses the word "for" to show he is about to tell why people know that what he has said in Romans 1:17 is true.

the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people

The words "ungodliness" and "unrighteousness" are abstract nouns that can be expressed using the adjectives "ungodly," which describes the people, and "unrighteous," which describes their deeds. These nouns are metonyms for the people with whom God is angry. You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "God reveals from heaven how angry he is with people because they are ungodly and do unrighteous deeds"

hold back the truth

Here "truth" refers to true information about God. Alternate translation: "hide the true information about God"

Romans 1:19

that which is known about God is visible to them

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "they can know about God because of what they can plainly see"

For God has enlightened them

Here "enlightened them" means God has shown them the truth about him. Alternate translation: "Because God has shown everyone what he is like"

Romans 1:20

world

This refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.

his invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen

Paul speaks of people understanding God's invisible qualities as if people have seen those qualities. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people have clearly understood God's invisible qualities, namely his eternal power and divine nature"

divine nature

"all the qualities and characteristics of God" or "the things about God that make him God"

having been discerned

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "because people have discerned them" or "because people have understood them"

in the things that have been made

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "in the things that God has made"

they are without excuse

"people do not have an excuse" or "these people can never say that they did not know"

Romans 1:21

became foolish in their thoughts

"began to think foolish things"

their senseless hearts were darkened

Here "darkness" is a metaphor that represents the people's lack of understanding. Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "they became unable to understand what God wanted them to know"

Romans 1:22

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They claimed to be wise, but they became foolish
"While they were claiming that they were wise, they became foolish"
They ... they
the people in Romans 1:18
Romans 1:23
exchanged the glory of the imperishable God
"traded the truth that God is glorious and will never die"
exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for the likenesses of an image of
"stopped loving the glory of the God who never dies and instead chose to worship idols that looked like"
perishable man
"human beings, who will die"
of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things
"or that looked like birds, four-footed beasts, or creeping things"
Romans 1:24
Therefore
"Because what I have just said is true"
God delivered them over to
"God allowed them to indulge in"
them ... their ... themselves
These words refer to the "people" of Romans 1:18.
the lusts of their hearts for uncleanness
Here "lusts of their hearts" is a synecdoche that represents the evil things they wanted to do. Alternate translation: "the morally impure things they desired greatly"
for their bodies to be dishonored among themselves
This is a euphemism that means they committed immoral sexual acts. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "and they committed sexually immoral and degrading acts"
Romans 1:25
they
This word refers to the "people" of Romans 1:18.
who worshiped and served the creation
Here "creation" refers to what God created. Alternate translation: "They worshiped things that God created"
instead of
"rather than"
Romans 1:26
Because of this
"Because of idolatry and sexual sin"
God delivered them over to dishonorable lusts
"God allowed them to do all the dishonorable things they very much wanted to do"
dishonorable lusts
"shameful sexual desires"
lusts, for their women
"lusts. For example, their women"
exchanged natural relations for those that were unnatural
The idea of relations "that were unnatural" is a euphemism for immoral sexuality. Alternate translation: "started practicing sexuality in a way God did not design"
Romans 1:27
men also left their natural relations with women
Here "natural relations" is a euphemism for sexual relationships. Alternate translation: "many men stopped having natural sexual desire for women"
burned in their lust for one another
"experienced strong sexual desire for other men"
committed shameless acts with men and
"committed acts with men for which they should have been ashamed. But they were not ashamed, and they"
men and received in themselves the penalty they deserved for their error
"men, and God has punished them justly for the error they committed"
error
moral wrong, not a mistake about facts
Romans 1:28
And just as they did not approve of having God in their awareness
"They did not think it was necessary to know God"
And just as
Possible meanings are 1) God "gave them up to a corrupted mind ... proper" (see the words in this verse) because they not only "exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and ... worshiped and served the creation" (Romans 1:25), but they also "did not approve ... awareness," or 2) God "gave them up ... proper" because "they did not approve ... awareness," in which case "And just as" should be translated "Because."
they ... their ... them
These words refer to the "people" of Romans 1:18.
he gave them up to a corrupted mind
Here "a corrupted mind" means a mind that thinks only about immoral things. Alternate translation: "God allowed their minds, which they had filled with worthless and immoral thoughts, to completely control them"
not proper
"disgraceful" or "sinful"
Romans 1:29
They have been filled with all
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "They have in them a strong desire for all" or "They strongly desire to do deeds of"
They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and evil intentions
"Many are constantly envying other people ... Many constantly desire to murder people ... to cause arguments and quarrels among people ... to deceive others ... to speak hatefully about others"
Romans 1:30
slanderers
A slanderer says false things about another person in order to damage that person's reputation.
inventing ways of doing evil
"thinking of new ways to do evil things to others"
Romans 1:32
They understand the ordinance of God, that
"They know how God wants them to live and that"
that those who practice such things
Here "practice" refers to continually or habitually doing things that are evil. Alternate translation: "that those who keep on doing wicked things"
are deserving of death
"deserve to die"
these things
"these kinds of evil things"

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who do them | evil. Alternate translation: "who keep on doing evil things"
Here the verb "do" refers to continuing to do things that are

2 [1]Therefore you are without excuse, you person, you who judge, for in things for which you judge the other person, you condemn yourself. For you who judge practice the same things.[2]But we know that God's judgment is according to truth when it falls on those who practice such things.
[3]But consider this, you person, you who judge those who practice such things although you do the same things. Will you escape from the judgment of God?[4]Or do you think so little of the riches of his kindness, his delayed punishment, and his patience? Do you not know that his kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
[5]But it is to the extent of your hardness and unrepentant heart that you are storing up for yourself wrath on the day of wrath, that is, the day of the revelation of God's righteous judgment.[6]He will pay back to every person according to his actions:[7]to those who according to the perseverance of good deeds have sought glory, honor, and incorruptibility, he will give eternal life.
[8]But to those who are self-seeking, who disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness, wrath and fierce anger will come.
[9]God will bring tribulation and distress on every human soul that has practiced evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
[10]But glory, honor, and peace will come to everyone who practices good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.[11]For there is no partiality with God.[12]For as many as have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and as many as have sinned with respect to the law will be judged by the law.
[13]For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but it is the doers of the law who will be justified.[14]For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature the things of the law, they are a law to themselves, although they do not have the law.
[15]By this they show that the actions required by the law are written in their hearts. Their conscience also bears witness to them, and their own thoughts either accuse or defend them[16]on the day when God will judge the secrets of all people, according to my gospel, through Jesus Christ.

[17]But if you say that you are a Jew and rest upon the law and boast in God,[18]and know his will and approve of what is excellent because you have been instructed from the law;[19]and if you are convinced that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,[20]an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, and that you have in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth, then how does this affect the way you live your life?
[21]You who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal?[22]You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who hate idols, do you rob temples?
[23]You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by transgressing the law?[24]For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," just as it has been written.
[25]For circumcision is profitable to you if you obey the law, but if you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision.[26]If, then, the uncircumcised person keeps the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision?[27]And will not the one who is naturally uncircumcised condemn you if he fulfills the law? This is because you have the written law and circumcision, yet you are a transgressor of the law!
[28]For he is not a Jew who is merely one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is merely outward in the flesh.[29]But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter. The praise of such a person comes not from people but from God.

Romans 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter shifts its audience from Roman Christians to those who "judge" other people and do not believe in Jesus. (See: judge and believe)
"Therefore you are without excuse"
This phrase looks back at Chapter 1. In some ways, it actually concludes what Chapter 1 teaches. This phrase explains why everyone in the world must worship the true God.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Doers of the Law"
Those who try to obey the law will not be justified by trying to obey it. Those who are justified by believing in Jesus show that their faith is real by obeying God's commands. (See: justice and lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions
Paul uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See:, guilt and sin and faith)

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Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You who judge"

At times, this could be translated in a simpler way. But it is translated in this relatively awkward way because when Paul refers to "people who judge" he is also saying that everyone judges. It is possible to translate this as "those who judge (and everyone judges)."

Links:

Romans 2:1 Notes

Romans 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul has stated that all people are sinners and continues to remind his readers that all people are wicked.

Therefore you are without excuse

The word "therefore" marks a new section of the letter. It also makes a concluding statement based on what Paul has said in [Romans 1:1-32]

you are

Paul is writing here as if he were addressing a Jewish person who is arguing with him. Paul is doing this to teach his audience that God will punish everyone who continually sins, whether Jew or Gentile.

you

Here the pronoun "you" is singular.

excuse, you person, you who judge, for in things for which you judge the other person, you condemn yourself

"excuse. You are just a human being, yet you judge others and say they deserve God's punishment. But you are only judging yourself because you do the same wicked deeds that they do"

you person

Another possible meaning is "whoever you are."

Romans 2:2

But we know

Here the pronoun "we" may include Christian believers and also Jews who are not Christians.

God's judgment is according to truth when it falls on those

Here Paul speaks of "God's judgment" as if it were alive and could "fall" on people. Alternate translation: "God will judge those people truly and fairly"

those who practice such things

"the people who do those wicked deeds"

Romans 2:3

But consider this

"So consider this" or "Therefore, consider this"

consider this

"think about what I am going to tell you"

you person

Use the phrase "you, whoever you are" or use "you," (with the comma), followed by a general word for a human being.

you who judge those who practice such things although you do the same things

"you who say someone deserves God's punishment while you do the same wicked deeds"

Will you escape from the judgment of God?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this question as a strong negative statement. Alternate translation: "You will certainly not escape God's judgment!"

Romans 2:4

Or do you think so little of the riches of his kindness, his delayed punishment, and his patience ... repentance?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You should not act like it does not matter that God is good and that he patiently waits a long time before he punishes people so that his goodness will cause them to repent!"

think so little of the riches ... patience

"consider the riches ... patience unimportant" or "consider ... patience not good"

Do you not know that his kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

This remark appears in the form of a question to add emphasis. You can also translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You must know that God shows you he is good so that you might repent!"

Romans 2:5

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the people that all people are wicked.

But it is to the extent of your hardness and unrepentant heart

Paul uses a metaphor to compare a person who refuses to obey God to something hard, like a stone. He also uses the metonym "heart" to represent the person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "It is because you refuse to listen and repent"

hardness and unrepentant heart

This is a doublet that you can combine as "unrepentant heart."

you are storing up for yourself wrath

The phrase "storing up" implies a metaphor that usually refers to a person gathering his treasures and putting them in a safe place. Paul says, instead of treasures, that the person is gathering God's punishment. The longer they go without repenting, the more severe the punishment. Alternate translation: "you are making your punishment worse"

on the day of wrath ... the day of the revelation of God's righteous judgment

Both of these phrases refer to the same day. Alternate translation: "when God will show everyone that he is angry and that he judges all people fairly"

Romans 2:6

pay back

"give a fair reward or punishment"

to every person according to his actions

"each person according to what that person has done"

Romans 2:7

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who according to the perseverance of good deeds have
who, by persevering and doing good deeds, have
have sought
have tried to get
glory, honor, and incorruptibility
They want God to praise and honor them, and they want to never die.
incorruptibility
This refers to physical, not moral, decay.
Romans 2:8
self-seeking
"selfish" or "only concerned with what makes themselves happy"
disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second intensifies the first.
wrath and fierce anger will come
The words "wrath" and "fierce anger" mean basically the same thing and emphasize God's anger. Alternate translation: "God will show his terrible anger"
wrath
Here the word "wrath" is a metonym that refers to God's severe punishment of wicked people.
Romans 2:9
Connecting Statement:
Though this section is speaking to the non-religious wicked person, Paul sums it up by stating both non-Jews and Jews are wicked before God.
tribulation and distress on
The words "tribulation" and "distress" mean basically the same thing here and emphasize how bad God's punishment will be. Alternate translation: "awful punishments to"
on every human soul
Here, Paul uses the word "soul" as a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "upon every person"
has practiced evil
"has continually done evil things"
evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek
"evil. He will judge the Jewish people first, and then those people who are not Jewish"
first
Possible meanings are 1) "first in order of time" or 2) "most certainly"
Romans 2:10
But glory, honor, and peace will come
"But God will praise, honor, and give peace"
practices good
"continually does what is good"
good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek
"good. God will reward the Jewish people first, and then those people who are not Jewish"
first
You should translate this the same way you did in Romans 2:9.
Romans 2:11
For there is no partiality with God
You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "For God treats all people the same"
Romans 2:12
For as many as have sinned
"For all those who have sinned"
without the law will also perish without the law
Paul repeats "without the law" to emphasize that it does not matter if people do not know the law of Moses. If they sin, God will judge them. Alternate translation: "without knowing the law of Moses will certainly still die spiritually"
as many as have sinned
"all those who have sinned"
with respect to the law will be judged by the law
God will judge sinful people according to his law. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "and who do know the law of Moses, God will judge them according to that law"
Romans 2:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues to let the reader know that perfect obedience to God's law is required even for those who never had God's law.
it is not the hearers of the law
Here "the law" refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "it is not those who only hear the law of Moses"
who are righteous before God
"whom God considers righteous"
but it is the doers of the law
"but it is those who obey the law of Moses"
who will be justified
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God will accept"
Romans 2:14
For
This verse is the beginning of an interruption of Paul's main argument, in which he gives the reader extra information. If you have a way to mark an interruption like this in your language, you can use it here.
a law to themselves ... do not have the law
This is an idiom that means that these people naturally obey God's laws. Alternate translation: "have God's laws already inside them ... actually do not have the law"
they do not have the law
Here "the law" refers to the law of Moses." Alternate translation: "they do not actually have the laws that God gave to Moses"
Romans 2:15
General Information:
This verse is the end of an interruption of Paul's main argument, in which he gives the reader extra information. If you have a way to mark an interruption like this in your language, you can use it here.
By this they show
"By naturally obeying the law they show"
that the actions required by the law are written in their hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for the person's thoughts or inner person. The phrase "written in their hearts" is a metaphor for knowing something in their mind. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that God has written on their hearts what the law requires them to do" or "that they know the actions that God wants them

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to do according to his law"

bears witness to them

Here "bears witness" refers to the knowledge they gain from the law that God has written in their hearts. Alternate translation: "tells them if they are disobeying or obeying God's law"

Romans 2:16

when God will judge

This finishes Paul's thought from Romans 2:13. You can put a period at the end of 2:15 and start a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "This will happen when God judges"

Romans 2:17

Connecting Statement:

Here begins Paul's discussion that the law the Jews possess actually condemns them because they do not obey it.

if you say that you are a Jew

"since you call yourself a Jew" or "if you want people to think of you as a Jew"

rest upon the law

The phrase "rest upon the law" represents believing that they can become righteous by obeying the law. Alternate translation: "rely on the law of Moses"

Romans 2:18

know his will

"and know God's will"

because you have been instructed from the law

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because people have taught you what is right from the law" or "because you have learned from the law"

Romans 2:19

that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness

Here "the blind" and "those who walk in darkness" represent people who do not understand the law. Alternate translation: "that because you teach the law, you yourself are like a guide to blind people, and you are like a light to people who are lost in the dark"

Romans 2:20

an instructor of the foolish

"you correct those who do wrong"

a teacher of little children

Here Paul compares those who do not know anything about the law to very small children. Alternate translation: "you teach those who do not know the law"

and that you have in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth

The knowledge of the truth that is in the law comes from God. Alternate translation: "and you are sure you understand the truth that God has given in the law"

Romans 2:21

You who teach others, do you not teach yourself?

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You teach others, but you do not teach yourself!" or "You teach others, but you do not do what you teach!"

You who preach against stealing, do you steal?

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You tell people not to steal, but you steal!"

Romans 2:22

You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?

Paul is using a question to scold his listeners. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You tell people not to commit adultery, but you commit adultery!"

You who hate idols, do you rob temples?

Paul is using a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You say you hate idols, but you rob temples!"

do you rob temples

Possible meanings are 1) "do you steal items from local pagan temples to sell and make a profit" or 2) "do you keep back from the Jerusalem temple all the money that is due to God"

Romans 2:23

You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by transgressing the law?

Paul uses a question to scold his listener. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "It is wicked that you claim to be proud of the law while at the same time you disobey it and bring shame to God!"

Romans 2:24

the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "many Gentiles blaspheme the name of God"

name of God

The word "name" is a metonym that refers to the entirety of God, not just his name.

Romans 2:25

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to show that God, by his law, condemns even the Jews who have God's law.

For circumcision is profitable to you

"I say all of this because it is good for you to be circumcised"

if you are a transgressor of the law

"if you do not obey the commandments found in the law"

your circumcision becomes uncircumcision

"it is as though you were no longer circumcised"

Romans 2:26

the uncircumcised person

"the person who is not circumcised"

keeps the requirements of the law

"obeys what God commands in the law"

will not his uncircumcision be considered as circumcision?

This is the first of two questions Paul asks here to emphasize that circumcision is not what makes one right before God. You can translate this question as a statement in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will consider him as circumcised."

Romans 2:27

And will not the one who is naturally uncircumcised condemn you ... the law?

This is the second of two questions that Paul asks here

Romans 2:28

outwardly

This refers to Jewish rituals, such as circumcision, which people can see.

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merely outward in the flesh
This refers to the physical change to a man's body when someone circumcises him.
flesh
This is a synecdoche for the whole body. Alternate translation: "body"
Romans 2:29
he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart
These two phrases have similar meanings. The first phrase, "he is a Jew who is one inwardly," explains the second phrase, "circumcision is that of the heart."
inwardly
This refers to the values and motivations of the person whom God has transformed.
of the heart
Here "heart" is a metonym for the inner person.
in the Spirit, not in the letter
Here "letter" is a synecdoche that refers to written Scripture. Alternate translation: "through the work of the Holy Spirit, not because you know the Scriptures"
in the Spirit
This refers to the internal, spiritual part of a person that the Holy Spirit changes.

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3 [1]Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?[2]It is great in every way. First of all, the Jews were entrusted with revelation from God.

[3]For what if some Jews were without faith? Will their unbelief nullify God's faithfulness?[4]May it never be. Instead, let God be found to be true, even though every man is a liar. As it has been written,

"That you might be shown to be righteous in your words,
and that you might prevail when you come into judgment."

[5]But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what can we say? Can we say that God is unrighteous to bring his wrath upon us? (I am using a human argument.)[6]May it never be! For then how would God judge the world?
[7]But if through my lie the truth of God increases his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?[8]Why not say, as we are slandered as saying, and as some affirm that we say, "Let us do evil, so that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.

[9]What then? Are we excusing ourselves? Not at all. For we have already accused both Jews and Greeks, all of them, of being under sin.
[10]This is as it is written:

“No one is righteous, not one;
[11] there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

[12] They have all turned away;
together they have become useless.
There is no one who does good, no,
not even one.”

[13] "Their throat is an open grave.
Their tongues have deceived.
The poison of snakes is under their lips.”

[14] "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

[15] "Their feet are swift to pour out blood.
[16] Destruction and suffering are in their paths.
[17] These people have not known a way of peace."
[18] "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

[19]Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to the ones who are under the law, so that every mouth may be shut, and the whole world held accountable to God.[20]For no flesh will be justified by the works of the law in his sight. For through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

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[21]But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been revealed, to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness—[22]the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe. For there is no distinction,
[23]for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,[24]and they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
[25]For God provided Christ Jesus as an atoning sacrifice through faith in his blood. He offered Christ as proof of his justice, because of his disregard of previous sins[26]in his patience. This was to show his righteousness at this present time, so he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

[27]Where then is boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through a law of faith.[28]We conclude then that a person is justified by faith without works of the law.
[29]Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not also the God of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also.[30]If, indeed, God is one, he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.

[31]Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be! Instead, we uphold the law.

Romans 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 4 and 10-18 of this chapter, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Chapter 3 answers the question, "What advantage does being a Jew have over being a Gentile?" (See: lawofmoses and save)

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"

Because God is holy, anyone with him in heaven must be perfect. Any sin at all will condemn a person. (See: heaven and condemn)

The purpose of the law of Moses

Obeying the law cannot make a person right with God. Obeying God's law is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: justice and faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Paul frequently uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt)

Links:

Romans 3:1 Notes

Romans 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul proclaims the advantage that Jews have because God gave them his law.

Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?

Paul presents ideas that people might have after they hear what he wrote in chapter 2. He does this in order to respond to them in verse 2. Alternate translation: "Some people might say, 'Then what advantage does the Jew have? And what is the benefit of circumcision?'" or "Some people might say, 'If that is true, then the Jews do not have any advantage, and there is no benefit in being circumcised.'"

Romans 3:2

It is great in every way

Paul now responds to the concerns brought up in verse 1. Here "It" refers to being a member of the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "But there is great advantage to being a Jew"

First of all

Possible meanings are 1) "First in order of time" or 2) "Most certainly" or 3) "Most importantly."

the Jews were entrusted with revelation from God

Here "revelation" refers to God's words and promises. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God gave his words that contain his promises to the Jews"

Romans 3:3

For what if some Jews were without faith? Will their unbelief nullify God's faithfulness?

Paul uses these questions to make people think. Alternate translation: "Some Jews have not been faithful to God. We should not conclude from this that God will not fulfill his promise."

Romans 3:4

May it never be

This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have an expression in your language that you could use here. "That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!"

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Instead, let
"We should say this instead, let"
let God be found to be true
God will always be true and will keep his promises. Alternate translation: "God always does what he has promised"
even though every man is a liar
The words "every" and "liar" are exaggerations here to add emphasis that God alone is always true to his promises. Alternate translation: "even if every man were a liar"
As it has been written
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The Scriptures themselves agree with what I am saying"
That you might be shown to be righteous in your words, and that you might prevail when you come into judgment
These two phrases have very similar meanings. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone must acknowledge that what you say is true, and you will always win your case when anyone accuses you"
Romans 3:5
But if our unrighteousness shows the righteousness of God, what can we say? Can we say that God is unrighteous to bring his wrath upon us?
Paul uses these questions to present what some people were arguing and to get his readers to think about whether or not this argument is true. Alternate translation: "Some people say that since our unrighteousness shows God's righteousness, then God is unrighteous when he punishes us."
to bring his wrath upon us
Here "wrath" is a metonym for punishment. Alternate translation: "to bring his punishment upon us" or "to punish us"
I am using a human argument
"I am saying here what some people say" or "This is what some people say"
Romans 3:6
May it never be
"We must never say that God is unrighteous"
For then how would God judge the world?
Paul uses this question to show that the arguments against the gospel are not valid, since the Jews believe that God will judge all people. Alternate translation: "We all know that God will in fact judge the world!"
the world
The "world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people who live in the world"
Romans 3:7
But if through my lie the truth of God increases his glory, why am I still being judged as a sinner?
Here Paul imagines someone continuing to reject the Christian gospel. That adversary argues that his sin shows that God is righteous, so God should not declare that person guilty of sin on judgment day.
increases his glory
"causes people to praise God for his glory"
Romans 3:8
Why not say ... come"?
Here Paul raises a question of his own, to show how ridiculous the argument of his imaginary adversary is. Alternate translation: "I might as well be saying ... come!'"
as we are slandered as saying
"as some lie to others, claiming that this what we are saying"
evil ... good
These Greek words are plural: "evil deeds ... good things"
good may come
You may need to make explicit that the speakers expect to receive good things. Alternate translation: "good things may come to us" or "we may receive good things"
Their condemnation is just
God will be acting justly when he condemns these enemies of Paul for telling lies about what Paul has been teaching.
Romans 3:9
Connecting Statement:
Paul sums up that all are guilty of sin, none are righteous, and no one seeks God.
What then? Are we excusing ourselves?
Paul asks these questions to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "We Jews should not try to imagine we are going to escape God's judgment, just because we are Jewish!"
Not at all
These words are stronger than a simple "no," but not as strong as "absolutely not!"
Romans 3:10
This is as it is written
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "This is as the prophets have written in the Scriptures"
Romans 3:11
there is no one who understands
There is no one who understands what is right. Alternate translation: "no one really understands what is right"
there is no one who seeks God
Here the phrase "seeks after God" means tries to have a relationship with God. Alternate translation: "no one sincerely tries to have a right relationship with God"
Romans 3:12
They have all turned away
This is an idiom that means the people do not even want to think about God. They want to avoid him. Alternate translation: "They have all turned away from God"
together they have become useless
Since no one does what is good, they are useless to God. Alternate translation: "Everyone has become useless to God"
Romans 3:13
Their ... Their
The word "their" refers to the "Jews and Greeks" of Romans 3:9.
Their throat is an open grave
The word "throat" is a metonym for everything that people say. Here "open grave" is a metaphor that refers to the stench of dead bodies, a metaphor for the evil words of the people.
Their tongues have deceived

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The word "tongues" is a metonym for the false words that people speak. Alternate translation: "People speak lies"

The poison of snakes is under their lips

Here "poison of snakes" is a metaphor that is used to represent the great harm of the evil words that the people speak. The word "lips" refers to the words of the people. Alternate translation: "Their evil words injure people just like the poison of a venomous snake"

Romans 3:14

Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness

Here "mouths" is a metonym that represents the evil words of the people. The word "full" exaggerates how often people speak bitterly and curse. Alternate translation: "They often speak curses and cruel words"

Romans 3:15

Their feet are swift to pour out blood

Here "feet" is a synecdoche that represents the people themselves. The word "blood" is a metaphor that refers to killing people. Alternate translation: "They are in a hurry to harm and murder people"

Their feet

The word "their" refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

Romans 3:16

their paths

The word "their" refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

Destruction and suffering are in their paths

Here "destruction and suffering" are metonyms that represent the harm that these people cause others to suffer. Alternate translation: "They try to destroy others and cause them to suffer"

Romans 3:17

These people

These words refer to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

a way of peace

"how to live at peace with others." A "way" is a road or path.

Romans 3:18

their

This word refers to the Jews and Greeks in Romans 3:9.

There is no fear of God before their eyes

Here "fear" is a metonym that represents respect for God and willingness to honor him. Alternate translation: "They refuse to give God the respect he deserves"

Romans 3:19

whatever the law says, it speaks to

Paul speaks of the law here as if it were alive and had its own voice. Alternate translation: "everything that the law says people should do is for" or "all the commands that Moses wrote in the law are for"

the ones who are under the law

"those who must obey the law"

so that every mouth may be shut

Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that means the words people speak. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that no people will be able to say anything valid to defend themselves"

the whole world held accountable to God

Here "world" is a synecdoche that represents all the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "that God can declare everyone in the world guilty"

Romans 3:20

flesh

Here "flesh" refers to all human beings.

For through the law

Possible meanings are 1) "Therefore, through the law" or 2) "This is because through the law"

through the law comes the knowledge of sin

"when someone knows God's law, he realizes that he has sinned"

Romans 3:21

Connecting Statement:

The word "but" here shows Paul has completed his introduction and is now beginning to make his main point.

now

The word "now" refers to the time since Jesus came to the earth.

apart from the law the righteousness of God has been revealed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has made known a way to be right with him without obeying the law"

to which the Law and the Prophets bear witness

The words "the Law and the Prophets" refer to the parts of scripture that Moses and the prophets wrote. Paul describes them here as if they were people testifying in court. Alternate translation: "What Moses and the prophets wrote confirms this"

Romans 3:22

the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ

Here "righteousness" means being right with God. Alternate translation: "being right with God through trusting Jesus Christ"

For there is no distinction

Paul implies that God accepts all people in the same way. Alternate translation: "There is no difference at all between the Jews and the Gentiles"

Romans 3:23

come short of the glory of God

Here the "glory of God" is a metonym that refers to the image of God and his nature. Alternate translation: "have failed to be like God"

Romans 3:24

they are freely justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

Here "justified" refers to being made right with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God makes them right with himself as a free gift, because Christ Jesus sets them free"

they are freely justified

This means that they are justified without having to earn or merit being justified. God freely justifies them. Alternate translation: "they are made right with God without earning it"

Romans 3:25

in his blood

This is a metonym for the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for sins. Alternate translation: "in his death as a sacrifice for

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sins"

his disregard

Possible meanings are 1) his ignoring or 2) his forgiving.

Romans 3:26

This was to show his righteousness at this present time

"God did this to show at this present time that he is righteous"

so he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus

"By this he shows that he is both just and the the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"

the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus

"the one who declares everyone righteous who has faith in Jesus"

Romans 3:27

Where then is boasting? It is excluded

Paul asks this question to show that there is no reason for people to boast about obeying the law. Alternate translation: "So there is no way that we can boast that God favors us because we obeyed those laws. Boasting is excluded"

It is excluded

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "God does not allow it"

Through what kind of law? Of works? No, but through a law of faith

You may need to fill in the words omitted in the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "Through what kind of law is boasting excluded? Is it excluded through a law of works? No, it is excluded through a law of faith" You can also translate using active forms. Alternate translation: "On what grounds does God exclude boasting? Does he exclude it through a law of works? No, he excludes it through a law of faith" or "Why does God exclude boasting? Is it because of something that we have done? No, it is because we have believed"

Through what kind of law? ... through a law of

"On what grounds? ... on the grounds of"

Through what kind of law? Of works?

Paul asks these questions to get his readers ready to receive the point he is making. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you what kind of law he excludes it through. It is not through a law of works."

Romans 3:28

a person is justified by faith

This can be translated in active form. Here the words "by faith" refers to either 1) the means by which God justifies a person. Alternate translation: "God justifies a person through that person's faith" Or 2) the reason for which God justifies a person. Alternate translation: "God justifies a person because he has faith" Faith is not the actor that justifies a person.

without works of the law

"even if he has done no works of the law"

Romans 3:29

Or is God the God of Jews only?

Paul asks this question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "You who are Jews certainly should not think that you are the only ones whom God will accept!"

Is he not also the God of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also

Paul asks this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "He will also accept non-Jews, that is, Gentiles"

Romans 3:30

he will justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith

Here "circumcision" is a metonym that refers to Jews and "uncircumcision" is a metonym that refers to non-Jews. Alternate translation: "God will make both Jews and non-Jews right with himself through their faith in Christ"

Romans 3:31

Connecting Statement:

Paul confirms the law though faith.

Do we then nullify the law through faith?

Paul asks a question that one of his readers might have. Alternate translation: "Someone might say that we can ignore the law because we have faith."

May it never be

This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar express in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "This is certainly not true" or "Certainly not"

we uphold the law

"we obey the law"

we

This pronoun refers to Paul, other believers, and the readers.

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4 [1]What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, found?[2]For if Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had a reason to boast, but not before God.[3]For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."

[4]Now for him who labors, his wage is not counted as a gift, but as what is owed.[5]But for him who does not work but instead believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.
[6]David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness without works.
[7]He says,

"Blessed are those
whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered.

[8] Blessed is the man

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against whom the Lord will not count sin."

[9]Then is this blessing pronounced only on those of the circumcision, or also on those of the uncircumcision? For we say, "Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness."[10]How was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before!
[11]Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them.[12]He is also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

[13]For the promise to Abraham and to his descendants that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.[14]For if those who live by the law are to be the heirs, faith is made empty, and the promise does nothing.[15]For the law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there is no transgression.
[16]For this reason it is by faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all of Abraham's descendants—not only to those who are under the law, but also to those who share the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all,[17]as it is written, "I have appointed you the father of many nations." Abraham was in the presence of him whom he trusted, that is, God, who gives life to the dead and calls the things that do not exist into existence.
[18]In hope he believed against hope, that he would become the father of many nations, according to what he had been told, "So will your descendants be."[19]Without becoming weak in faith, he considered his own body as dead (because he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.
[20]But because of God's promise, Abraham did not hesitate in unbelief. Instead, he was strengthened in faith and gave glory to God.[21]He was fully convinced that what God had promised, he was also able to accomplish.[22]Therefore this was also "counted to him as righteousness."
[23]But the words "it was counted to him" were not written for his sake alone.[24]They were written also for us, and it will be counted to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.[25]This is the one who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Romans 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 7-8 of this chapter, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

The purpose of the law of Moses

Paul builds upon material from chapter 3. He explains how Abraham, the father of Israel, was justified. Even Abraham could not be justified by what he did. Obeying the law of Moses does not make a person right with God. Obeying God's commands is a way a person shows they believe in God. People have always been justified only by faith. (See: justice and lawofmoses and faith)

Circumcision

Circumcision was important to the Israelites. It identified a male as a descendant of Abraham. It was also a sign of the covenant between Abraham and Yahweh. However, no person was justified only by being circumcised. (See: circumcise and covenant)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt and sin)

Links:

Romans 4:1 Notes

Romans 4:1

What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, found?

Paul uses the question to catch the attention of the reader and to start talking about something new. Alternate translation: "This is what Abraham our physical ancestor found."

Romans 4:3

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For what does the scripture say?
Paul uses this question to call attention to what he is about to say, not to receive an answer. He speaks of the Scriptures as if they were alive and could talk. Alternate translation: "For this is what is in the scripture:"
it was counted to him as righteousness
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he believed"
Romans 4:4
his wage is not counted as a gift
"no one counts what his employer pays him as a gift from his employer"
but as what is owed
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but as what his employer owes him"
Romans 4:5
in the one who justifies
"in God, who justifies"
his faith is counted as righteousness
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considers that person's faith as righteousness" or "God considers that person righteous because of his faith"
Romans 4:6
David also pronounces blessing on the man to whom God counts righteousness without works
"David also wrote about how God blesses the man whom God makes righteous without works"
Romans 4:7
whose lawless deeds are forgiven ... whose sins are covered
The same concept is stated in two different ways. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "who have broken the law, but the Lord has forgiven ... whose sins the Lord has covered"
Romans 4:9
Then is this blessing pronounced only on those of the circumcision, or also on those of the uncircumcision?
This remark appears in the form of a question to show that Paul is beginning a discussion about the relationship between blessing and circumcision. Alternate translation: "I want to show you how it is that God blesses not only those who are circumcised, but also those who are not circumcised"
those of the circumcision
This is a metonym that refers to the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "the Jews"
those of the uncircumcision
This is a metonym that refers to the people who are not Jews. Alternate translation: "the Gentiles"
For we say
Paul is going to show that because God counted Abraham as righteous by faith, we can infer that it is people who have faith that God counts righteous.
Faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God considered the faith of Abraham as righteousness"
Romans 4:10
How was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before!
Paul asks two questions to introduce the third sentence. If your language does not allow speakers to use questions to introduce what they are talking about, you may need to translate these all as statements. Alternate translation: "This is when righteousness was counted to him: it was not after he had been circumcised, but before!"
How was it counted to him?
Paul is asking in a general way about the circumstances in which God considered Abraham righteous. He is not asking what procedure God followed to consider Abraham righteous. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "How did God consider Abraham to be righteous?"
It was not after, but before
This can be stated with the words that have been omitted in the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "It happened before he was circumcised, not after he was circumcised"
Romans 4:11
a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised
Here "righteousness that he had by faith" means that God considered him to be righteous because he had faith. Alternate translation: "a visible sign that God considered him righteous because he had believed in God before he was circumcised"
so that righteousness would be counted to them
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "so that God would consider them righteous"
Romans 4:12
General Information:
Paul is saying that circumcision alone does not make a man a descendant of Abraham, that is, a true Jew. A true Jew is one who has been circumcised and who lives by faith the way Abraham did.
He is also the father of the circumcised
Here "the circumcision" refers to Jews.
who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had
Here "walk in the footsteps of the faith" is an idiom that means to follow someone's example. Alternate translation: "who follow our father Abraham's example in the faith that he had" or "who have faith as our father Abraham did"
Romans 4:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul confirms that even in the past believers were made right with God by faith and not by the law.
law but through the righteousness of faith
The words "the promise came" are understood from the first phrase. You can translate this by adding these implied words. Alternate translation: "law, but the promise came through faith, which God considers as righteousness"
Romans 4:14
heirs
The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member.
if those who live by the law are to be the heirs
Here "live by the law" refers to obeying the law. Alternate

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translation: "if those who obey the law are the ones who will inherit the earth"

faith is made empty, and the promise does nothing

"faith has no value, and the promise is meaningless"

Romans 4:15

there is no transgression

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "transgression." Alternate translation: "no one has disobeyed the law" or "it is impossible to disobey the law"

Romans 4:16

For this reason

"So"

it is by faith

The word "it" refers to receiving what God had promised. Alternate translation: "it is by faith that we receive the promise" or "we receive the promise by faith"

in order that the promise may rest on grace

Here "the promise may rest on grace" represents God giving what he promised because of his grace. Alternate translation: "so that what he promised might be a free gift" or "so that his promise would be because of his grace"

those who are under the law

This refers to the Jewish people, who were obligated to obey the law of Moses.

those who share the faith of Abraham

This refers to those who have faith as Abraham did before he was circumcised. Alternate translation: "those who believe as Abraham did"

father of us all

Here the word "us" refers to Paul and includes all Jewish and non-Jewish believers in Christ. Abraham is the physical ancestor of the Jewish people, but he is also the spiritual father of those who have faith.

Romans 4:17

as it is written

Where it is written can be made explicit. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "as someone has written in the Scriptures"

I have appointed you

Here the word "you" is singular and refers to Abraham.

Abraham was in the presence of him whom he trusted, that is, God, who gives life to the dead

Here "of him whom he trusted" refers to God. Alternate translation: "Abraham was in the presence of God whom he trusted, who gives life to those who have died"

calls the things that do not exist into existence

"creates everything from nothing"

Romans 4:18

In hope he believed against hope

This idiom means that Abraham hoped and believed even though what he hoped for seemed to be impossible. That is, Abraham trusted God to give him many descendants, even though it seemed to be impossible for him to have children. Alternate translation: "Even though it seemed that there was no reason to hope, Abraham hoped and believed" or "Even though it seemed to be impossible for him to have descendants, Abraham believed God and confidently expected"

according to what he had been told

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as God said to Abraham"

So will your descendants be

The full promise God gave to Abraham can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "You will have more descendants than you can count"

Romans 4:20

did not hesitate in unbelief. Instead, he

You can translate this double negative in a positive form. Alternate translation: "kept on acting in faith. He"

he was strengthened in faith

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he became stronger in his faith"

Romans 4:21

He was fully convinced

"Abraham was completely sure"

he was also able to accomplish

"God was able to do"

Romans 4:22

Therefore this was also "counted to him as righteousness."

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Therefore God counted Abraham's belief as righteousness" or "Therefore God considered Abraham righteous because Abraham believed him"

also "counted to him as righteousness."

"also, as the scripture says, 'counted to him as righteousness.'"

Romans 4:23

for his sake alone

"for Abraham only"

it was counted to him

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God counted righteousness to him" or "God considered him righteous"

Romans 4:24

for us

The word "us" refers to Paul and includes all believers in Christ.

They were written also for us

You can translate this without the passive form "written." Alternate translation: "Those words were also for us"

it will be counted to us who believe in him

The word "it" refers to righteousness. You can translate this with an active form. Alternate translation: "God will count righteousness to us who believe in him" or "God will consider us righteous if we believe in him"

him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead

"Raised ... from the dead" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." Alternate translation: "him who caused Jesus our Lord to live again"

Romans 4:25

who was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom God gave over to enemies for our trespasses and whom God brought back to life so he could make us right with him"

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5 [1]Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.[2]Through him we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God.
[3]Not only this, but we also boast in our tribulations. We know that tribulation brings about perseverance.[4]Perseverance produces character, and character produces hope,[5]and hope does not make ashamed because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who was given to us.
[6]For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.[7]For one will hardly die for a righteous person, though perhaps someone would dare to die for a good person.
[8]But God proves his own love toward us, because while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.[9]Much more, then, now that we are justified by his blood, we will be saved by him from the wrath of God.
[10]For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, after having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.[11]Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we now have received this reconciliation.

[12]So then, as through one man sin entered into the world, in this way death entered through sin. And death spread to all people, because all sinned.[13]For until the law, sin was in the world, but there is no accounting for sin when there is no law.
[14]Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who did not sin like Adam's disobedience, who is a pattern of him who was to come.
[15]But the gift is not like the trespass. For if by the trespass of one the many died, how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many!
[16]For the gift is not like the outcome of that one man's sin. The judgment followed one trespass and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.[17]For if, by the trespass of the one, death ruled through the one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.
[18]So then, as one trespass led to condemnation for all people, so also through the one act of righteousness came justification and life for all people.[19]For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one will the many be made righteous.
[20]But the law came in to increase the trespass. But where sin abounded, grace abounded even more.[21]This happened so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness for everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Many scholars view verses 12-17 as some of the most important, but difficult, verses in Scripture to understand. Some of their richness and meaning has likely been lost while being translated from how the original Greek was constructed.

Special concepts in this chapter

Results of justification

How Paul explains the results of our being justified is an important part of this chapter. These results include having peace with God, having access to God, being confident about our future, being able to rejoice when suffering, being eternally saved, and being reconciled with God. (See: justice)

"All sinned"

Scholars are divided over what Paul meant in verse 12: "And death spread to all people, because all sinned." Some believe that all of mankind was present in the "seed of Adam." So, as Adam is the father of all mankind, all of mankind was present when Adam sinned. Others believe that Adam served as a representative head for mankind. So when he sinned, all of mankind "fell" as a result. Whether people today played an active or passive role in Adam's original sin is one way these views differ. Other passages will help one decide.

The second Adam

Adam was the first man and the first "son" of God. He was created by God. He brought sin and death into the world by eating the forbidden fruit. Paul describes Jesus as the "second Adam" in this chapter and the true son of God. He brings life and overcame sin and death by dying on the cross. (See: sonofgod and death)

Links:

Romans 5:1 Notes

Romans 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to tell many different things that happen when God makes believers right with him.

Since we are justified

"Because we are justified"

we ... our

All occurrences of "we" and "our" refer to all believers and

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should be inclusive.

through our Lord Jesus Christ

"because of our Lord Jesus Christ"

Lord

Here "Lord" means that Jesus is God.

Romans 5:2

Through him we also have our access by faith into this grace in which we stand

Here "by faith" refers to our trust in Jesus, which allows us to stand before God. Alternate translation: "Because we trust in Jesus, God allows us to come into his presence"

we boast in the hope of the glory of God

Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "we rejoice because we confidently expect to share in the glory of God"

Romans 5:3

Not only this

The word "this" refers to the ideas described in Romans 5:1-2.

we ... our ... We

These words refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

tribulation brings about perseverance

"suffering helps us learn to endure"

Romans 5:4

Perseverance produces character

Perseverance is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Here it is a metonym for the person who endures. You may need to make explicit what it is that a person endures. Alternate translation: "We develop character when we endure hardship"

character

the desire and ability to do what is right

character produces hope

"having characer helps us to hope." Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen, and it refers to the confident expectation that God will fulfill all his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "wait confidently" or "trust". Alternate translation: "character helps us to wait confidently" or "character helps us to trust God"

Romans 5:5

our ... us

These words refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

hope does not make ashamed

Paul uses personification here as he speaks of "hope" as if it were alive. "Hope" is an abstract noun that can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "we are very confident that we will receive the things that we wait for"

make ashamed

"make us ashamed"

because the love of God has been poured into our hearts

Here "hearts" represents a person's thoughts, feelings, or inner person. The phrase "the love of God has been poured into our hearts" is a metaphor for God showing love to his people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because he has loved us greatly" or "because God has shown us how much he loves us"

Romans 5:6

we

The word "we" here refers to all believers and so should be inclusive.

Romans 5:7

For one will hardly die for a righteous person

"It is hard to find someone who is willing to die, even for a righteous person"

though perhaps someone would dare to die for a good person

"but you might find someone who is willing to die for such a good person"

Romans 5:8

proves

You can translate this verb in past tense using "demonstrated" or "showed."

us ... we

All occurrences of "us" and "we" refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

Romans 5:9

Much more, then, now that we are justified by his blood, we will be saved

Paul is saying that because we are justified by Christ's blood, we can be much more certain that Christ will save us. Alternate translation: "Now that we are justified by his blood, we will more certainly be saved"

now that we are justified by his blood

Here "justified" means that God puts us in a right relationship with himself. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "now that God has made us right with himself because of Christ's death"

blood

This is a metonym for the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross.

saved

God forgives us and rescues us from being punished in hell for our sin.

the wrath of God

Here "wrath" is a metonym that refers to God's punishment of those who have sinned against him. Alternate translation: "God's punishment"

Romans 5:10

we were

All occurrences of "we" refer to all believers and should be inclusive.

his Son ... his life

"God's Son ... the life of God's Son"

we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son

The death of the Son of the God has provided eternal forgiveness and made all who believe in Jesus friends with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed us to have a peaceful relationship with him because his Son died for us"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

after having been reconciled

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "now that God has made us his friends again"

Romans 5:12

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Connecting Statement:

Paul explains why death happened even before God gave the law to Moses.

through one man sin entered ... death entered through sin

Paul describes sin as a dangerous thing that came into the world through the actions of "one man," Adam. This sin then became an opening through which death, pictured here as another dangerous thing, also came into the world.

Romans 5:13

For until the law, sin was in the world

This means that the people sinned before God gave the law. Alternate translation: "People in the world sinned before God gave his law to Moses"

but there is no accounting for sin when there is no law

This means that God did not charge the people with sinning before he gave the law. Alternate translation: "but God recorded no sin against the law before he gave the law"

Romans 5:14

Nevertheless, death

"Even though what I have just said is true, death" or "There was no written law from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, but death" (Romans 5:13).

death reigned from Adam until Moses

Paul is speaking of death as if it were a king who ruled. Alternate translation: "people continued to die from the time of Adam until the time of Moses as a consequence of their sin"

Moses, even over those who did not sin like Adam's disobedience, who is

"Moses. Even people whose sins were different from Adam's continued to die, Adam being"

who is a pattern of him who was to come

Adam was a pattern of Christ, who appeared much later. He had much in common with him.

Romans 5:15

how much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound for the many

Here "grace" refers to God's free gift that he made available to everyone through Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "even more through the man Jesus Christ, who died for us all, did God kindly offer us this gift of everlasting life, although we do not deserve it"

Romans 5:16

For the gift is not like the outcome of that one man's sin

Here "the gift" refers to God's freely erasing the record of our sins. Alternate translation: "The gift is not like the result of Adam's sin"

The judgment followed one trespass and brought condemnation

The abstract nouns "judgment," "trespass," and "condemnation," can be expressed with verbs. Alternate translation: "After one man trespassed, God judged all people and condemned them to be punished" or "God declared that all people deserved to have him punish them because one man committed one sin"

but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification

The abstract nouns "gift," "trespass," and "justification" can be expressed as verbs. It is implied that God's gift of justification is greater than his judgement. Alternate translation: "but after people trespassed many times, God gave the gift and justified them" or "but the gift is greater because he gave it after many people had committed many sins, and by giving the gift he justified them"

Romans 5:17

trespass of the one

This refers to the sin of Adam.

death ruled

Here Paul speaks of "death" as a king who ruled. The "rule" of death causes everyone to die. Alternate translation: "everyone died"

Romans 5:18

as one trespass led to condemnation for all people

The abstract nouns "trespass" and "condemnation" can be expressed with the verbs "sin" and "condemn." Alternate translation: "as one trespass caused all people to be condemned" or "as all people are condemned because one person sinned against God"

one trespass

This refers to Adam's sin.

condemnation for all people

Here "condemnation" refers to God's punishment. Alternate translation: "all people deserve God's punishment for sin"

through the one act of righteousness came justification and life for all people

The abstract nouns "justification" and "life" can be expressed with the verbs "justify" and "live." Alternate translation: "one act of righteousness allows all people to be justified and live" or "all people can be justified and live because one person did that one righteous act"

the one act of righteousness

This refers to Jesus's obedience to God in dying for our sins.

Romans 5:19

one man's disobedience

the disobedience of Adam

the many were made sinners

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "many people sinned"

the obedience of the one

the obedience of Jesus

of the one will the many be made righteous

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "of the one, God will make many people right with him"

Romans 5:20

the law came in

Here Paul speaks of the law as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "God gave his law to Moses"

sin abounded

"sin increased"

grace abounded even more

Here "grace" refers to God's undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: "God continued to act even more kindly toward them, in a way that they did not deserve"

Romans 5:21

sin reigned in death ... grace might reign through righteousness for everlasting life

Here Paul speaks of sin as if it were a king who ruled over people and made them unable to obey God and ultimately killing them, and he speaks of grace as if it were a king who

might rule over people and enable them to be right with God. Alternate translation: "as people obeyed their desire to sin and therefore had to die ... God might show grace to people and allow them to be right with him, resulting in everlasting life"

our Lord

Paul includes himself, his readers, and all believers.

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6 [1]What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound?[2]May it never be. We who died to sin, how can we still live in it?[3]Do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
[4]We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death. This happened in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.[5]For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we will also be united with his resurrection.
[6]We know this, that our old man was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be destroyed. This happened so that we should no longer be enslaved to sin.[7]He who has died is declared righteous with respect to sin.
[8]But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live together with him.[9]We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer rules over him.
[10]For in regard to the death that he died to sin, he died once for all. However, the life that he lives, he lives for God.[11]In the same way, you also must consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

[12]Therefore do not let sin rule in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts.[13]Do not present the members of your bodies to sin, to be tools used for unrighteousness. But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present the members of your bodies to God as tools to be used for righteousness.[14]Do not allow sin to rule over you. For you are not under law, but under grace.

[15]What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be.[16]Do you not know that if you present yourselves as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey? You are either slaves to sin, which leads to death, or slaves to obedience, which leads to righteousness.
[17]But thanks be to God! For you were slaves of sin, but you have obeyed from the heart the pattern of teaching that you were given.[18]You have been made free from sin, and you have been made slaves of righteousness.
[19]I speak like a man because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented the members of your bodies as slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness, resulting in more lawlessness, in the same way, now present the members of your bodies as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.[20]For when you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness.
[21]At that time, what fruit then did you have of the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.
[22]But now that you have been made free from sin and are enslaved to God, you have your fruit for sanctification. The result is eternal life.[23]For the wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul begins this chapter by answering how someone might object to what he taught in Chapter 5.

Special concepts in this chapter

Against the Law

In this chapter, Paul refutes the teaching that Christians can live however they want after they are saved. Scholars call this "antinomianism" or being "against the law." To motivate godly living, Paul recalls the great price Jesus paid for a Christian to be saved. (See: save and godly)

Servants of sin

Before they believe in Jesus, people are servants of sin, that is, they are unable to resist their desire to sin. God frees Christians from serving sin. They are able to choose to serve Christ in their lives. Paul explains that when Christians choose to sin, they willingly choose to sin. (See: faith and sin)

Fruit

This chapter uses the imagery of fruit. The image of fruit usually refers to a person's faith producing good works in their life. (See: fruit and righteous)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. It appears the intent of these rhetorical questions is to make the readers see their sin so they will trust in Jesus. (See: and guilt and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Death

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Paul uses "death" to refer to many different things in this chapter: physical death, spiritual death, sin reigning in the heart of man, and the end of something. He contrasts sin and death with the new life provided by Christ and the new way Christians are supposed to live after they are saved. (See: death)

Links:

Romans 6:1 Notes

Romans 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Under grace, Paul tells those who believe in Jesus to live a new life as though dead to sin and alive to God.

What then will we say? Should we continue in sin so that grace may abound?

Paul asks these rhetorical questions to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "So, what should we say about all of this? We certainly should not keep on sinning so that God will give us more and more grace!

we say

The pronoun "we" refers to Paul, his readers, and other people.

Romans 6:2

We who died to sin, how can we still live in it?

Here "We who died to sin" refers to those who follow Jesus, who are now like dead people who cannot be affected by sin. Paul uses this rhetorical question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "We are now like dead people on whom sin has no effect! So we certainly should not keep on sinning!"

Romans 6:3

Do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Paul uses this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "Remember, when someone baptized us to show that we have a relationship with Christ, this also shows that we died with Christ on the cross!

Romans 6:4

We were buried, then, with him through baptism into death

Here Paul speaks of a believer's baptism in water as if it were a death and burial. Alternate translation: "When someone baptized us, it is just like that person buried us with Christ in the tomb"

just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life

To raise from the dead is an idiom for causing a person to live again. This compares a believer's new spiritual life to Jesus coming back to life physically. The believer's new spiritual life enables that person to obey God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as the Father brought Jesus back to life after he died, we might have new spiritual life and obey God"

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

Romans 6:5

become united with him in the likeness of his death ... be united with his resurrection

Paul compares our union with Christ to death. Those who are joined with Christ in death will share in his resurrection. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "died with him ... come back to life with him"

Romans 6:6

our old man was crucified with him

The "old man" is a metaphor that refers to the person before he believes in Jesus. Paul describes our old sinful person as dying on the cross with Jesus when we believe in Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "our sinful person died on the cross with Jesus"

old man

This means the person who once was, but who does not exist now.

the body of sin

This is a metonym that refers to the whole sinful person. Alternate translation: "our sinful nature"

might be destroyed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "might die"

we should no longer be enslaved to sin

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "sin should no longer enslave us" or "we should no longer be slaves to sin"

we should no longer be enslaved to sin

Slavery to sin is a metaphor meaning having such a strong desire to sin that one is unable to stop himself from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: "we should no longer be controlled by sin"

Romans 6:7

He who has died is declared righteous with respect to sin

Here "righteous" refers to being right with God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "When God declares a person right with him, that person is no longer controlled by sin"

Romans 6:8

we have died with Christ

Here "died" refers to the fact that believers are no longer controlled by sin.

Romans 6:9

We know that since Christ has been raised from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "We know since God brought Christ back to life after he died"

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them is to become alive again.

death no longer rules over him

Here "death" is described as if it were a king or ruler that has power over people. Alternate translation: "He cannot ever die again"

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Romans 6:10

he died once for all

Possible meanings are 1) he died once, and he will not die again, nor will anyone else need to die, or 2) it is true now and will be true for all time that he died.

Romans 6:11

In the same way, you also must consider

"For this reason consider"

consider yourselves to be

"think of yourselves as" or "see yourselves as"

dead to sin

Just as one cannot force a corpse to do anything, sin has no power to force believers to dishonor God. Alternate translation: "as if you were dead to the power of sin"

dead to sin, but alive to God

"dead to the power of sin, but living to honor God"

alive to God in Christ Jesus

"living to honor God through the power Christ Jesus gives you"

Romans 6:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds us that grace rules over us, not the law; we are not sin's slaves, but God's slaves.

do not let sin rule in your mortal body

Paul speaks of people sinning as if sin were their master or king that controlled them. Alternate translation: "Do not let sinful desires control you"

your mortal body

This phrase refers to the physical part of a person, which will die. Alternate translation: "you"

so that you obey its lusts

Obeying the mortal body's lusts would be the result of letting sin rule in the body. That is why Paul commands people not to let sin rule in their mortal body—so they they do not obey its lusts. Paul speaks of people doing the evil things they desire as if the body had evil desires and commanded people to do what it desires.

Romans 6:13

Do not present the members of your bodies to sin, to be tools used for unrighteousness

The picture is of the sinner offering his "members," the parts of his body to his master or king. One's "members" are a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "Do not offer yourselves to sin so that you do what is not right"

But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life

Here the words "brought ... to life" refer to the believer's new spiritual life. Alternate translation: "But offer yourselves to God because he has given you new spiritual life" or "But offer yourselves to God as those who had died and are now alive"

present the members of your bodies to God as tools to be used for righteousness

Here "members" is a synecdoche that refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "let God use you for what is pleasing to him"

Romans 6:14

Do not allow sin to rule over you

Paul speaks of "sin" here as if it were a king who rules over people. Alternate translation: "Do not let sinful desires control what you do" or "Do not allow yourselves to do the sinful things you want to do"

For you are not under law

To be "under law" means to be subject to its limitations and weaknesses. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "For you are no longer bound to the law of Moses, which could not give you the power to stop sinning"

but under grace

To be "under grace" means that God's free gift provides the power to keep from sinning. You can make the full meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "but you are bound to God's grace, which does give you the power to stop sinning"

Romans 6:15

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law, but under grace? May it never be

Paul is using a question to emphasize that living under grace is not a reason to sin. Alternate translation: "However, just because we are bound to grace instead of the law of Moses certainly does not mean we are allowed to sin"

May it never be

"We would never want that to happen!" or "May God help me not to do that!" This expression shows an extremely strong desire that this does not take place. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated it in Romans 3:31.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that if you present yourselves as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey?

Paul uses a question to scold anyone who may think God's grace is a reason to keep sinning. You can translate this as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You should know that if you present yourselves as slaves to anyone, you are slaves to whomever you obey!"

which leads to death ... which leads to righteousness

"which results in death ... which results in righteousness"

Romans 6:17

But thanks be to God!

"But I thank God!"

For you were slaves of sin

Being "slaves of sin" is a metaphor meaning they have such a strong desire to sin that they are unable to keep from sinning. It is as if sin controls the person. Alternate translation: "you were like slaves of sin" or "you were unable to keep from sinning"

but you have obeyed from the heart

Here the word "heart" refers to having sincere or honest motives for doing something. Alternate translation: "but you truly obeyed"

the pattern of teaching that you were given

Here "pattern" refers to the way of living that leads to righteousness. The believers change their old way of living to match this new way of living that Christian leaders teach to them. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the teaching that Christian leaders gave you"

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Romans 6:18

You have been made free from sin

Here "free from sin" is a metaphor for them no longer having a strong desire to sin and therefore being able to stop themselves from sinning. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has freed you from sin" or "Your strong desire to sin has been taken away" or "You have been made free from sin's control over you" (See: and)

you have been made slaves of righteousness

Slavery of righteousness is a metaphor meaning having a strong desire to do what is right. It is as if righteousness controls the person. Alternate translation: "you have been made like slaves of righteousness" or "you are now controlled by righteousness"

you have been made slaves of righteousness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has made you slaves of righteousness" or "Christ has changed you so that now you are controlled by righteousness"

Romans 6:19

I speak like a man

Paul may have expected his readers to wonder why he was speaking of slavery and freedom. Here he is saying that he is using these ideas from their everyday experience to help them understand that people are controlled either by sin or by righteousness. Alternate translation: "I am speaking about this in human terms" or "I am using examples from everyday life"

because of the weakness of your flesh

Often Paul uses the word "flesh" as the opposite of "spirit." Alternate translation: "because you do not fully understand spiritual things"

presented the members of your bodies as slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness

Here, the word "members" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offered yourselves as slaves to everything that is evil and not pleasing to God"

present the members of your bodies as slaves to righteousness for sanctification

Here the word "members" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "offer yourselves as slaves to what is right before God so that he might set you apart and give you the power to serve him"

Romans 6:20

you were free from righteousness

Here "free from righteousness" is a metaphor for not having to do what is righteous. The people were living as though they thought that they did not have to do what was right. Alternate translation: "it was as though you were free from righteousness" or "you behaved as though you did not have to do what was right" or

Romans 6:21

At that time, what fruit then did you have of the things of which you are now ashamed?

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Paul is using a question to emphasize that sinning results in nothing good. Alternate translation: "Nothing good came from those things that now cause you shame." or "You gained nothing by doing those things that now cause you shame."

Romans 6:22

But now that you have been made free from sin and are enslaved to God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But now that you have become free from sin and have become God's slaves" or "But now that God has freed you from sin and made you his slaves"

But now that you have been made free from sin

Being "free from sin" is a metaphor for being able not to sin. Alternate translation: "But now that God has made you able not to sin"

and are enslaved to God

Being "enslaved" to God is a metaphor for being able to serve and obey God. Alternate translation: "and God has made you able to serve him"

you have your fruit for sanctification

Here "fruit" is a metaphor for "result" or "benefit." Alternate translation: "the benefit is your sanctification" or "the benefit is that you live in a holy way"

The result is eternal life

"The result of all of this is that you will live forever with God"

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin are death

The word "wages" refers to a payment given to someone for their work. "For if you serve sin, you will receive spiritual death as payment" or "For if you continue sinning, God will punish you with spiritual death"

but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

"but God gives eternal life to those who belong to Christ Jesus our Lord"

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7 [1]Or do you not know, brothers (for I am speaking to people who know about law), that the law rules over a person for whatever time he lives?
[2]For the married woman is bound by law to the husband while he lives, but if the husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.[3]So then, while her husband is living, if she lives with another man, she will be called an adulteress. But if the husband dies, she is free from the law, so she is not an adulteress if she lives with another man.
[4]Therefore, my brothers, you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ. This is so that you could be joined to another, that is, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might produce fruit for God.[5]For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in the members of our bodies to bear fruit for death.
[6]But now we have been released from the law. We have died to that by which we were bound. This is so that we might serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

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[7]What will we say then? Is the law itself sin? May it never be. However, I would never have known sin, if it were not through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law said, "You must not covet."[8]But sin took the opportunity through the commandment and produced every kind of coveting in me. For apart from the law, sin was dead.
[9]At one time I was alive without the law, but when the commandment came, sin regained life[10]and I died. The commandment that was to bring life turned out to be death for me.
[11]For sin took the opportunity through the commandment and deceived me. Through the commandment it killed me.[12]So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

[13]So did what is good become death to me? May it never be. But sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin, brought about death in me through what was good, and through the commandment sin might become sinful beyond measure.
[14]For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh. I have been sold under slavery to sin.
[15]For what I do, I do not really understand. For what I want to do, I do not do, and what I hate, I do.[16]But if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law that the law is good.
[17]But now it is no longer I who do it, but the sin that lives in me.[18]For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) lives no good thing. For the desire for good is with me, but I cannot do it.
[19]For the good that I want, I do not do, but the evil that I do not want, that I do.[20]Now if I do what I do not want to do, then it is no longer I who am acting, but rather sin that lives in me.[21]So, I find this law: When I want to do good, evil is present with me.
[22]For I rejoice in the law of God with my inner person.[23]But I see a different law in the members of my body. It fights against that new law in my mind. It takes me captive by the law of sin that is in the members of my body.
[24]I am a miserable man! Who will deliver me from this body of death?[25]But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. However, with the flesh I serve the law of sin.

Romans 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"Or do you not know"

Paul uses this phrase to discuss a new topic and connects what follows with the previous teaching.

Special concepts in this chapter

"We have been released from the law"

Paul explains that the law of Moses is no longer in effect. While this is true, the timeless principles behind the law reflect the character of God. (See: lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Marriage

Scripture commonly uses marriage as a metaphor. Here Paul uses it to describe how the church relates to the law of Moses and now to Christ.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh and sin)

Links:

Romans 7:1 Notes

Romans 7:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how the law controls those who want to live under the law.

Or do you not know, brothers ... that the law rules over a person for whatever time he lives?

Paul asks this question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: "So you certainly know brothers ... that people have to obey laws only while they are alive"

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

Romans 7:2

Connecting Statement:

This verse begins a description of what Paul means by "the law controls a person for as long as he lives" (Romans 7:1).

the married woman is bound by law to the husband

Here "bound by law to the husband" is a metaphor for a woman being united to her husband according to the law of marriage. Alternate translation: "according to the law, the married woman is united to the husband"

the married woman

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This refers to any woman who is married.
Romans 7:3
Connecting Statement:
This verse ends a description of what Paul means by "the law controls a person for as long as he lives" (Romans 7:1).
she will be called an adulteress
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will consider her an adulteress" or "people will call her an adulteress"
she is free from the law
Here being free from the law means not having to obey the law. In this case, the woman does not have to obey the law that says that a married woman cannot marry another man. Alternate translation: "she does not have to obey that law"
Romans 7:4
Therefore, my brothers
This relates back to Romans 7:1.
brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
you were also made dead to the law through the body of Christ
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "you also died to the law when through Christ you died on the cross"
to him who was raised from the dead
"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "to him who was caused to live again" or "to him whom God raised from the dead" or "to him whom God caused to live again"
we might produce fruit for God
Here "fruit" is a metaphor for actions that please God. Alternate translation: "we might be able to do things pleasing to God"
Romans 7:5
to bear fruit for death
Here "fruit" is a metaphor for a "result of one's actions" or "outcome of one's actions." Alternate translation: "which resulted in spiritual death" or "the outcome of which was our own spiritual death"
Romans 7:6
Connecting Statement:
Paul reminds us that God does not make us holy by the law.
we have been released from the law
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has released us from the law"
we
This pronoun refers to Paul and the believers.
to that by which we were bound
This refers to the law. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "to the law, which bound us"
the letter
This refers to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "the law of Moses"
Romans 7:7
What will we say then?
Paul is introducing a new topic.
May it never be
"Of course that is not true!" This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.
I would never have known sin, if it were not through the law
Paul is speaking of sin as if it were a person who can act.
sin
"my desire to sin"
Romans 7:8
But sin took the opportunity ... produced every kind of coveting
Paul continues comparing sin to a person who can act.
coveting
This word includes both the desire to have what belongs to other people and wrong sexual desire.
apart from the law, sin was dead
"if there were no law, there would be no breaking of the law, so there would be no sin"
Romans 7:9
sin regained life
This can mean 1) "I realized that I was sinning" or 2) "I strongly desired to sin"
Romans 7:10
The commandment that was to bring life turned out to be death for me
Paul speaks of God's condemnation as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: "God gave me the commandment so I would live, but it killed me instead"
Romans 7:11
For sin took the opportunity through the commandment and deceived me. Through the commandment it killed me
As in [Romans 7:7-8]
sin
"my desire to sin"
took the opportunity through the commandment
Paul is comparing sin to a person who can act. See how you translated this in [Romans 7:8]
it killed me
Paul speaks of God's condemnation on sinners as if it resulted primarily in physical death. Alternate translation: "it separated me from God"
Romans 7:12
the law is holy
Possible meanings are that it is holy because 1) it comes from God or 2) it reveals God's true nature.
Romans 7:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between sin in his inner man and his mind with the law of God—between sin and good.
So
Paul is introducing a new topic.
did what is good become death to me?
Paul uses this question to add emphasis.
what is good
This refers to God's law.
become death to me
"cause me to die"
May it never be

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This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. Alternate translation: "Of course that is not true"

sin ... brought about death in me

Paul speaks of sin as though it were a person who could act.

brought about death in me

Paul speaks of being separated from God as if he were literally dead. Alternate translation: "separated me from God"

through the commandment

"because I disobeyed the commandment"

Romans 7:15

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks about the struggle inside his inner man between his flesh and the law of God—between sin and good.

For what I do, I do not really understand

"I am not sure why I do some of the things that I do"

For what I do

"Because what I do"

what I want to do, I do not do

The words "I do not do" are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does not do what he wants to do as often as he would like or that he does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: "I do not always do what I want to do"

what I hate, I do

The words "I do," which implies that he always does what he hates to do, are an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul does what he does not want to do too often. Alternate translation: "the things that I know are not good are the things that I sometimes do"

Romans 7:16

But if I do

"However, if I do"

I agree with the law that the law is good

To agree with the law here is to agree with God about the law. Alternate translation: "I agree with God that the law is good"

Romans 7:17

the sin that lives in me

Paul describes sin as a living being that has the power to influence him.

Romans 7:18

my flesh

Here "flesh" is a metonym for the sinful nature. Alternate translation: "my sinful nature"

Romans 7:19

the good

"the good deeds" or "the good actions"

the evil

"the evil deeds" or "the evil actions"

Romans 7:20

rather sin that lives in me

Paul speaks of "sin" as if it were alive and living inside him.

Romans 7:21

this law: When I want to do good, evil is present with me

The words "this law" refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

evil is present with me

Paul speaks of evil here as if it were alive and living with him.

Romans 7:22

with my inner person

Here the phrase "inner person" refers to the personality, heart, or soul. Alternate translation: "with my heart" or "with my soul"

Romans 7:23

a different law in the members of my body ... fights against that new law in my mind

Paul has a desire to obey God, but at times he also has a desire to do things that God hates. He writes of the two desires he has as if they were two men fighting each other.

a different law

These words refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

in the members of my body

The phrase "the members of my body" is another way of saying "my flesh"

that new law in my mind

These words refer to the law of Moses, which was God's commands in written form (Romans 7:22).

the law of sin that is in the members of my body

This "law of sin" is the same as the "different law," the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

Romans 7:24

Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Paul uses this question to express great emotion. If your language has a way of showing great emotion through an exclamation or a question, use it here. Alternate translation: "I want someone to set me free from the control of what my body desires!"

deliver me

"rescue me"

this body of death

This is a metaphor that means a body that will experience physical death.

Romans 7:25

But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord

This is the answer to the question in 7:24.

So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. However, with the flesh I serve the law of sin

The law of God and the law of sin are spoken of as if they were masters whom Paul serves as a slave. With the mind or intellect Paul chooses to please and obey God, and with the flesh or physical nature he chooses to disobey God and to sin. Alternate translation: "My mind chooses to please God by obeying the law of Moses, but my flesh chooses to disobey God and sin"

the law of God

These words refer to the law of Moses, which was God's

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commands in written form.

the law of sin

These words refer to the natural human desire to rebel against God and disobey him. Paul calls this a law because he has observed that this is the way people live. It is not a collection of written commands.

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8 [1]There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.[2]For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.
[3]For what the law was unable to do because it was weak through the flesh, God did. He sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be an offering for sin, and he condemned sin in the flesh.[4]He did this in order that the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, we who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.[5]Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
[6]For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.[7]The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit to God's law, nor is it able to do so.[8]Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
[9]However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed God's Spirit lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.[10]If Christ is in you, the body is dead with respect to sin, but the spirit is alive with respect to righteousness.
[11]If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

[12]So then, brothers, we are debtors, but not to the flesh to live according to the flesh.[13]For if you live according to the flesh, you are about to die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the body's actions, you will live.
[14]For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.[15]You did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you live in fear again; but you received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, "Abba, Father!"
[16]The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.[17]If we are children, then we are also heirs—heirs of God. And we are joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

[18]For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed to us.[19]For the eager expectation of the creation waits for the revealing of the sons of God.
[20]For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it, in hope[21]that the creation itself will be delivered from slavery to decay, and that it will be brought into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.[22]For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together even now.
[23]Not only that, but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly, as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our body.[24]For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he can see?[25]But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

[26]In the same way, the Spirit also helps in our weakness. For we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groans.[27]He who searches out the hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes on behalf of God's holy people according to the will of God.
[28]We know that for those who love God, he works all things together for good,[1] for those who are called according to his purpose.[29]Because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.[30]Those whom he predestined, these he also called. Those whom he called, these he also justified. Those whom he justified, these he also glorified.

[31]What, therefore, can we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?[32]He who did not spare his own Son but delivered him up on behalf of us all, how will he not also with him freely give us all things?
[33]Who will bring any accusation against God's chosen ones? God is the one who justifies.[34]Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us.
[35]Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?[36]Just as it is written,

> "For your benefit we are killed all day long.
> We were considered as sheep for the slaughter."

[37]In all these things we are more than conquerors through the one who loved us.[38]For I have been convinced that neither

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death, nor life, nor angels, nor governments, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,[39]nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[1]Instead of he works all things together for good, some Greek copies read, all things work together for good.

Romans 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first verse of this chapter is a transitional sentence. Paul concludes his teaching of Chapter 7 and leads into the words of Chapter 8.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with verse 36. Paul quotes these words from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Indwelling of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is said to live inside a person or inside their heart. If the Spirit is present, this signifies that a person is saved. (See: save)

"These are sons of God"

Jesus is the Son of God in a unique way. God also adopts Christians to be his children. (See: sonofgod and adoption)

Predestination

Twice in verses 29-30 Paul uses the word "predestined." Some take this to indicate that God has, from before the foundation of the world, chosen his own people to be eternally saved. Christians have different views on what the Bible teaches on this subject. So translators need to take extra care when translating this chapter, especially with regards to elements of causation. (See: predestine and save)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Paul poetically presents his teaching in verses 38 and 39 in the form of an extended metaphor. He explains that nothing can separate a person from the love of God in Jesus.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

No condemnation

This phrase must be translated carefully to avoid doctrinal confusion. People are still guilty of their sin. God disapproves of sinful acts, even those that believers in Jesus commit. God still punishes the sins of believers, but Jesus has paid the punishment for their sin. This is what Paul expresses here. The word "condemn" has several possible meanings. Here Paul emphasizes that people who believe in Jesus are no longer punished eternally for their sin by being "condemned to hell." (See: guilt and faith and condemn)

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh)

Links:

Romans 8:1 Notes

Romans 8:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives the answer to the struggle he has with sin and good.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

Here "condemnation" refers to the punishment of people. Alternate translation: "God will not condemn and punish those who are joined to Christ Jesus"

There is therefore now

"For that reason, there is now" or "Because what I have just told you is true, there is now"

Romans 8:2

the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus

This refers to God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "God's Spirit in Christ Jesus"

has set you free from the law of sin and death

Being free from the law of sin and death is a metaphor for not being controlled by the law of sin and death. Alternate translation: "has caused the law of sin and death to no longer control you"

the law of sin and death

Possible meanings are that this refers to 1) the written law, which provokes people to sin, which in turn causes them to die. Alternate translation: "the law which causes sin and death" or 2) the "different law" (see Romans 7:23) that people sin and die.

Romans 8:3

For what the law was unable to do because it was weak through the flesh, God did

Here the law is described as a person who could not break the power of sin. Alternate translation: "For the law did not

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have the power to stop us from sinning, because the power of sin within us was too strong. But God did stop us from sinning"

through the flesh

"because of people's sinful nature"

He ... sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh ... an offering for sin ... he condemned sin

The Son of God forever satisfied God's holy anger against our sin by giving his own body and human life as the eternal sacrifice for sin.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

in the likeness of sinful flesh

"who looked like a sinful human being"

to be an offering for sin

"so that he could die as a sacrifice for our sins"

he condemned sin in the flesh

Possible meanings are 1) "flesh" refers to our human nature or lives. Alternate translation: "he destroyed sin in our human nature" or 2) "flesh" refers to Christ's body, and "in the flesh" refers to Christ's death. Alternate translation: "in Christ's flesh God condemned sin" or "by Christ's death God condemned sin."

he condemned sin

In this verse, "condemned" is a metonym for "destroyed." Alternate translation: "he destroyed sin" or "he broke the power of the sin"

Romans 8:4

the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "we might fulfill what the law requires"

we who walk not according to the flesh

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. The flesh is an idiom for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: "we who do not obey our sinful desires"

but according to the Spirit

"but who obey the Holy Spirit"

Romans 8:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to contrast the flesh with the Spirit we now have.

the mind set on the flesh ... the mind set on the Spirit

Here Paul speaks of both the "flesh" and the "spirit" as if they were living persons. Alternate translation: "the way sinful people think ... the way people who listen to the Holy Spirit think"

death

Here this means the separation of a person from God.

Romans 8:8

Those who are in the flesh

This refers to people who do what their sinful nature tells them to do.

Romans 8:9

in the flesh

"acting according to your sinful natures." See how "the flesh" was translated in Romans 8:5.

in the Spirit

"acting according to the Holy Spirit"

Spirit ... God's Spirit ... Spirit of Christ

These all refer to the Holy Spirit.

if indeed

This phrase does not mean Paul doubts that some of them have God's Spirit. Paul wants them to realize that they all have God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "since" or "because"

Romans 8:10

If Christ is in you

How Christ lives in a person could be made explicit. Alternate translation: "If Christ lives in you through the Holy Spirit"

the body is dead with respect to sin

Possible meanings are 1) a person is spiritually dead to the power of sin or 2) the physical body will still die because of sin.

the spirit is alive with respect to righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) a person is spiritually alive because God has given him power to do what is right or 2) God will bring the person back to life after he dies because God is righteous and gives believers eternal life.

Romans 8:11

If the Spirit ... lives in you

Paul assumes that the Holy Spirit lives in his readers. Alternate translation: "Since the Spirit ... lives in you"

of him who raised ... from the dead lives

"of God, who raised ... from the dead, lives"

raised Jesus

Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "caused Jesus to live again"

mortal bodies through his Spirit

"physical bodies through his Spirit" or "bodies, which will die someday, through his Spirit"

Romans 8:12

So then

"Because what I have just told you is true"

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

we are debtors, but not to

Paul is speaking of obedience as if it were paying back a debt. Alternate translation: "we need to obey, but not"

but not to the flesh to live according to the flesh

Again Paul speaks of obedience as if it were paying back a debt. You can include the implied word "debtors." Alternate translation: "but we are not debtors to the flesh, and we do not have to obey our sinful desires"

Romans 8:13

For if you live according to the flesh

"Because if you live only to please your sinful desires"

you are about to die

"you will certainly be separated from God"

but if by the Spirit you put to death the body's actions

Paul speaks of the "old man," crucified with Christ, as the person who is responsible for his sinful desires. Alternate translation: "but if by the power of the Holy Spirit you stop obeying your sinful desires"

Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God

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You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For all the people whom the Spirit of God leads"

sons of God

Here this means all believers in Jesus and is often translated as "children of God."

Romans 8:15

by which we cry

"who causes us to cry out"

Abba, Father

"Abba" is "Father" in the Aramaic language.

Romans 8:17

heirs of God

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "and we also will one day receive what God has promised us"

we are joint heirs with Christ

Paul speaks of the Christian believers as if they will inherit property and wealth from a family member. God will give to us what he gives to Christ. Alternate translation: "we will also receive what God has promised us and Christ together"

that we may also be glorified with him

God will honor Christian believers when he honors Christ. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that God may glorify us along with him"

Romans 8:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

For

This emphasizes "I consider." It does not mean "because."

I consider that ... are not worthy to be compared with

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I cannot compare ... with"

will be revealed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will reveal" or "God will make known"

Romans 8:19

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

the eager expectation of the creation waits for

Paul describes everything that God created as a person who eagerly waits for something.

for the revealing of the sons of God

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for the time when God will reveal his children"

sons of God

Here this means all believers in Jesus. You can also translate this as "children of God."

Romans 8:20

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

For the creation was subjected to futility

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For God caused what he had created to be unable to achieve what he intended"

not of its own will, but because of him who subjected it

Here Paul describes "creation" as a person who can desire. Alternate translation: "not because this is what the created things wanted, but because it is what God wanted"

in hope

Here the word "hope" is confident expectation that what one desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait." God could be absolutely sure that what he intended would happen. Alternate translation: "confidently expecting" or "confidently waiting"

Romans 8:21

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

the creation itself will be delivered

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save creation"

from slavery to decay

Here being in slavery to decay is a metaphor for being certain to decay. Alternate translation: "from being like a slave to decay"

that it will be brought into the freedom of the glory of the children of God

"Freedom" here is in contrast with slavery to decay. It is a metaphor meaning that the creation will not decay. Alternate translation: "that it will become gloriously free from decay like the children of God"

Romans 8:22

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together even now

The creation is compared to a woman groaning while giving birth to a baby. Alternate translation: "For we know that everything that God created wants to be free and groans for it the way a woman giving birth groans for her baby to be born"

Romans 8:23

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

as we wait eagerly for our adoption, the redemption of our body

The abstract nouns "adoption" and "redemption" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "as we wait eagerly for God to adopt us and redeem our bodies"

Romans 8:24

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.

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For in this hope we were saved
This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "For God saved us so that we might have this hope" 2) "For God saved us because we have this hope"
in this hope we were saved
Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "it was so that we might confidently wait for this that we were saved" or "we were saved that we might trust God to do this"
this hope
The phrase "this hope" refers to the hope of our adoption, the redemption of our bodies (8:23).
Now hope that is seen is not hope
"Hope that is seen" is hope that has already been fulfilled. Alternate translation: "If we already have what we hope for, that is not hope" or "If we have what we want, we would not say that we hope for it"
For who hopes for what he can see?
Paul uses a question to help his audience understand what "hope" is. Alternate translation: "No one hopes for what he already has." or "No one waits for what has already happened."
Romans 8:25
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes reminding the believers in Rome that sometime in the future, God will change their bodies in a glorious way.
if we hope for what we do not see
Here the word "hope" means confidently expect that what one desires will happen. The person who hopes in this way believes that what he desires will happen. Alternate translation: "If we confidently expect to receive what we do not see" or "if we trust God for what we do not see"
what we do not see
Not seeing what we hope for represents not yet having it or experiencing it. Alternate translation: "what we do not yet have" or "what has not yet happened"
we wait for it with patience
"we wait for it patiently"
Romans 8:26
Connecting Statement:
Though Paul has been emphasizing that there is a struggle in believers between the flesh and the Spirit, he affirms that the Spirit is aiding us.
inexpressible groans
"groanings that we cannot express in words"
Romans 8:27
He who searches out the hearts knows
Here "He" refers to God. Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's thoughts and emotions. The phrase "searches out the hearts" is a metaphor for examining thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "God, who knows what all our thoughts and feelings are, knows"
Romans 8:28
Connecting Statement:
Paul reminds the believers that nothing can separate them from God's love.
for those who are called
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "for those whom God chose"
Romans 8:29
those whom he foreknew
"those whom he knew before he even created them"
he also predestined to be conformed
"he also planned in advance that they would be conformed"
to be conformed to the image of his Son
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that he would change them to be like his Son"
Son
This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
that he might be the firstborn
"so that his Son would be the firstborn"
among many brothers
Here "brothers" refers to all believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: "among many brothers and sisters who belong to the family of God"
Romans 8:30
Those whom he predestined
"Those whom God made plans for in advance"
these he also justified
Here "justified" is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "these he also put right with himself"
these he also glorified
The word "glorified" is in the past tense to emphasize that this will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "these he will also glorify"
Romans 8:31
What, therefore, can we say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?
Paul uses questions to emphasize the main point of what he said previously. Alternate translation: "This is what we should know from all of this: since God is helping us, no one can defeat us."
Romans 8:32
He who did not spare his own Son
God the Father sent the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to the cross as the holy, infinite sacrifice necessary to satisfy God's infinite, holy nature against the sin of humanity. Here "Son" is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
but delivered him up
"but put him under the control of his enemies"
how will he not also with him freely give us all things?
Paul is using a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "he will certainly and freely give us all things!"
freely give us all things
"kindly give us all things"
Romans 8:33
Who will bring any accusation against God's chosen ones? God is the one who justifies
Paul uses a question for emphasis. Alternate translation: "No one can accuse us before God because he is the one who makes us right with him"
Romans 8:34
Who is the one who condemns?

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Paul uses a question for emphasis. He does not expect an answer. Alternate translation: "No one will condemn us!"

who is at the right hand of God

To be at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "who is at the place of honor beside God"

Romans 8:35

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?

Paul uses this question to teach that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: "No one will ever separate us from the love of Christ!" or "Nothing will ever separate us from the love of Christ!"

Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

The words "shall separate us from the love of Christ" are understood from the previous question. Alternate translation: "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword separate us from the love of Christ?"

Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that even these things cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Alternate translation: "Even tribulation, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, danger, and sword cannot separate us from the love of Christ."

Tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

The abstract nouns can be expressed with verb phrases. Here "sword" is a metonym that represents being killed violently. Alternate translation: "Even if people cause us trouble, hurt us, take away our clothes and food, or kill us, they cannot separate us from the love of Christ."

Tribulation, or distress

These words both mean the same thing.

Romans 8:36

For your benefit

Here "your" is singular and refers to God. Alternate translation: "For you"

we are killed all day long

Here "we" refers to the writer and to other people, but not his audience, who was God. The phrase "all day long" is an exaggeration to emphasize how much danger they are in. Paul uses this part of Scripture to show that all who belong to God should expect difficult times. This can be translated in an active form. Alternate translation: "our enemies continually seek to kill us"

We were considered as sheep for the slaughter

Here Paul compares to livestock those whom people kill because they are loyal to God. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Our lives have no more value to them than the sheep they kill"

Romans 8:37

we are more than conquerors

"we have complete victory"

through the one who loved us

You can make explicit the kind of love that Jesus showed. Alternate translation: "because of Jesus, who loved us so much he was willing to die for us"

Romans 8:38

I have been convinced

"I am convinced" or "I am confident"

governments

Possible meanings are 1) demons or 2) human kings and rulers.

nor powers

Possible meanings are 1) spiritual beings with power or 2) human beings with power.

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9 [1]I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie, and my conscience bears witness with me in the Holy Spirit[2]that for me there is great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart.
[3]For I could wish that I myself would be cursed and set apart from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.[4]They are Israelites. They have adoption, the glory, the covenants, the gift of the law, the ministry in the temple, and the promises.[5]Theirs are the patriarchs from whom Christ has come with respect to the flesh—he who is God over all. May he be praised forever. Amen.

[6]But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For it is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel.[7]Neither are all Abraham's descendants truly his children. But "It is through Isaac that your descendants will be called."
[8]That is, the children of the flesh are not the children of God. But the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.
[9]For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and a son will be given to Sarah."
[10]Not only this, but after Rebekah also had conceived by one man, our father Isaac—[11]for the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad, so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand,[12]not because of actions, but because of him who calls—it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger."[13]It is just as had been written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

[14]What then will we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? May it never be.[15]For he says to Moses,

> "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,
> and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

[16]So then, it is not because of him who wills, nor because of him who runs, but because of God, who shows mercy.

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[17]For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, so that I might demonstrate my power in you, and so that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."[18]So then, God has mercy on whom he wishes, and whom he wishes, he makes stubborn.

[19]You will say then to me, "Why does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will?"[20]On the contrary, man, who are you who answers against God? Will what has been molded say to the one who molds it, "Why did you make me this way?"[21]Does the potter not have the right over the clay to make from the same lump a container for honorable use, and another container for dishonorable use?
[22]What if God, who is willing to show his wrath and to make his power known, endured with much patience containers of wrath prepared for destruction?[23]What if he did this in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon containers of mercy, which he had previously prepared for glory?[24]What if he did this also for us, whom he also called, not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Gentiles?
[25]As he says also in Hosea:

"I will call them 'my people' who were not my people,
and her 'beloved' who was not beloved.
[26] Then it will be that where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,'
there they will be called 'sons of the living God.'"

[27]Isaiah cries out concerning Israel,

"Though the number of the sons of Israel were as the sand of the sea,
it will be a remnant that will be saved,
[28] for the Lord will execute his word
on the earth completely and without delay."

[29]As Isaiah had said previously,

"If the Lord of hosts
had not left us descendants,
we would be like Sodom,
and we would have become like Gomorrah."

[30]What will we say then? That the Gentiles, who were not pursuing righteousness, laid hold of righteousness, the righteousness by faith.[31]But Israel, who did pursue a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law.
[32]Why not? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if by works. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling,[33]as it has been written,

"Look, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling
and a rock of offense.
He who believes in it will not be ashamed."

Romans 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul changes what he is teaching about. In Chapters 9-11, he focuses on the nation of Israel.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 25-29 and 33 of this chapter. Paul quotes all of these words from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Flesh
Paul uses the word "flesh" in this chapter only to refer to Israelites, people physically descending from Abraham through Jacob, whom God named Israel. (See: flesh)
In other chapters, Paul uses the word "brother" to mean fellow Christians. However, in this chapter, he uses "my

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brothers" to mean his kinsmen the Israelites.
Paul refers to those who believe in Jesus as "children of God" and "children of the promise."
Important figures of speech in this chapter
Stone of stumbling
Paul explains that while some Gentiles accepted Jesus as their savior by believing in him, most Jews were trying to earn their salvation and so rejected Jesus. Paul, quoting the Old Testament, describes Jesus as a stone that the Jews stumble over when walking. This "stone of stumbling" causes them to "fall."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"It is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel"
Paul uses the word "Israel" in this verse with two different meanings. The first "Israel" means the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob. The second "Israel" means those who are God's people through faith. The UDB reflects this.

Links:

Romans 9:1 Notes

Romans 9:1
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells of his personal desire that the people of the nation of Israel will be saved. Then he emphasizes the different ways in which God has prepared them to believe.
I tell the truth in Christ. I do not lie
These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them to emphasize that he is telling the truth.
my conscience bears witness with me in the Holy Spirit
"the Holy Spirit controls my conscience and confirms what I say"
Romans 9:2
that for me there is great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart
Here "unceasing pain in my heart" is an idiom that Paul uses to share his emotional distress. Alternate translation: "that I grieve very greatly and deeply"
great sorrow and unceasing pain
These two expressions mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how great his emotions are.
Romans 9:3
For I could wish that I myself would be cursed and set apart from Christ
for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I personally would be willing to let God curse me and keep me apart from Christ forever if that would help my fellow Israelites, my own people group, to believe in Christ"
Romans 9:4
They are Israelites
"They, like me, are Israelites. God chose them to be Jacob's descendants"
They have adoption, the glory
Here Paul uses the metaphor of "adoption" to indicate that the Israelites are like God's children. Alternate translation: "They have God as their father, and they have the glory"
Romans 9:6
Connecting Statement:
Paul emphasizes that those who are born in the family of Israel can really only be a true part of Israel through faith.
But it is not as though the word of God has failed
The word "word" is a metonym for the promise that God used the words to make. Alternate translation: "But we should not think that God has failed to keep his promises"
or "We should know that God has kept his promises"
For it is not everyone in Israel who truly belongs to Israel
God did not make his promises to all the physical descendants of Israel (or Jacob), but to his spiritual descendants, that is, those who trust in Jesus.
Romans 9:7
Neither are all Abraham's descendants truly his children
"Nor are they all children of God just because they are Abraham's descendants"
Romans 9:8
the children of the flesh are not
Here "children of the flesh" is a metonym that refers to the physical descendants of Abraham. Alternate translation: "not all of Abraham's descendants are"
children of God
This is a metaphor that refers to people who are spiritual descendants, those who have faith in Jesus.
children of the promise
This refers to people who will inherit the promises that God gave to Abraham.
Romans 9:9
this is the word of promise
"these are the words God used when he made the promise"
a son will be given to Sarah
You can translate this in an active form to express that God will give a son to Sarah. Alternate translation: "I will give Sarah a son"
Romans 9:10
our father
Paul refers to Isaac as "our father" because Isaac was the ancestor of Paul and of the Jewish believers in Rome.
had conceived
"had become pregnant"
Romans 9:11
for the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad
"before the children were born and before they had done anything, whether good or bad"
so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand
"so that what God wants to happen according to His choice will happen"
for the children were not yet born
"before the children were born"
Romans 9:12

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Connecting Statement:

It may be necessary in your language to place this verse between verse 10 and verse 11: "... our father Isaac, it was said to her, 'The older will serve the younger.' For the children were not yet born and had not yet done anything good or bad, but so that the purpose of God according to choice might stand—not because of actions, but because of him who calls. It is just...."

because of him

because of God

it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger."

"God said to Rebekah, 'The older son will serve the younger son'"

Romans 9:13

Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated

The word "hated" is an exaggeration. God loved Jacob much more than he loved Esau. He did not literally hate Esau.

Romans 9:14

What then will we say?

Paul is using the question to get the attention of his readers.

Is there unrighteousness with God?

"Is God unrighteous?" or "Is God unjust?"

May it never be

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here.

Romans 9:15

For he says to Moses

Paul speaks about God's talking with Moses as if it is being done in the present time. Alternate translation: "For God said to Moses"

Romans 9:16

it is not because of him who wills, nor because of him who runs

"it is not because of what people want or because they try hard"

nor because of him who runs

Paul speaks of a person who does good things in order to gain God's favor as if that person were running a race.

Romans 9:17

For the scripture says

Here the scripture is personified as if God were talking to Pharaoh. Alternate translation: "The scripture records that God said"

I ... my

God is referring to himself.

you

The word "you" in this verse is singular.

I raised you up

"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused something to be what it is." Alternate translation: "I made you the powerful man that you are"

so that my name might be proclaimed

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that people might proclaim my name"

my name

This metonym refers either 1) to God in all of his being. Alternate translation: "who I am" or 2) To his reputation. Alternate translation: "how great I am"

in all the earth

"wherever there are people"

Romans 9:18

whom he wishes, he makes stubborn

God makes stubborn whomever he wishes to make stubborn.

Romans 9:19

You will say then to me

Paul is talking to the critics of his teaching as though he were only talking to one person. You may need to use the plural here.

Why does he still find fault? For who has ever withstood his will?

These rhetorical questions are complaints against God. You can translate them as strong statements. Alternate translation: "He should not find fault with us. No one has ever been able to withstand his will."

he ... his

The words "he" and "his" here refer to God.

has ... withstood his will

"has ... stopped him from doing what he wanted to do"

Romans 9:20

Will what has been molded say to the one who molds it, "Why ... way?"

Paul uses the potter's right to make any kind of container he wants from the clay as a metaphor for the creator's right to do whatever he wants with his creation. Paul asks questions to emphasize his point. This can be translated as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "What a person has molded should never say to the one who molds it, 'Why ... way?'"

Why did you make me this way?

This question is a rebuke and can be translated as a strong statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have made me this way!"

Romans 9:21

Does the potter not have the right ... for dishonorable use?

This rhetorical question is a rebuke. Alternate translation: "The potter certainlly has the right ... for dishonorable use."

honorable use ... dishonorable use

Some modern translations read, "special use ... daily use."

Romans 9:22

containers of wrath prepared for destruction

Paul speaks of people as if they were containers. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "people to whom he would show wrath and whom he will certainly destroy"

Romans 9:23

he ... his

The words "he" and "his" here refer to God.

containers of mercy, which

Paul speaks of people as if they were containers. Alternate translation: "those to whom he would show mercy, whom"

the riches of his glory upon

Paul compares God's wonderful actions here to great "riches." Alternate translation: "his glory, which is of great value, upon"

which he had previously prepared for glory

Here "glory" refers to life in heaven with God. Alternate translation: "whom he prepared ahead of time in order that they might live with him"

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Romans 9:24

also for us

The word "us" here refers to Paul and fellow believers.

called

Here "called" means God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.

Romans 9:25

Connecting Statement:

In this section Paul explains how Israel's unbelief as a nation was told ahead of time by the prophet Hosea.

As he says also in Hosea

Here "he" refers to God. Alternate translation: "As God says also in the book that Hosea wrote"

Hosea

Hosea was a prophet.

I will call them 'my people' who were not my people

"I will choose those who were not my people to be my people"

her 'beloved' who was not beloved

Here "her" refers to Hosea's wife, Gomer, who represents the nation of Israel. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "I will choose her whom I did not love to be one whom I love"

Romans 9:26

sons of the living God

The word "living" may refer to the fact that God is the only true God, and not like the false idols. Alternate translation: "children of the true God"

Romans 9:27

cries out

"calls out"

as the sand of the sea

Here Paul compares the number of the people of Israel to the number of grains of sand in the sea. Alternate translation: "too many to count"

will be saved

Paul uses the word "saved" in a spiritual sense. If God saves a person, it means that through believing in Jesus's death on the cross, God has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished for his sin. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save"

Romans 9:28

the Lord will execute his word on the earth

"the Lord will punish people on the earth as he has said he will"

Romans 9:29

us ... we

Here the words "us" and "we" refer to Isaiah and those to whom he spoke.

we would be like Sodom, and we would have become like Gomorrah

God killed all of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sin. Alternate translation: "we all would have been destroyed like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah" or "God would have destroyed all of us as he destroyed the people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah"

Romans 9:30

What will we say then?

Paul uses this question to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "So this is what we must say."

That the Gentiles

"We will say that the Gentiles"

who were not pursuing righteousness

"who were not trying to get righteousness" or "who were not trying to be righteous"

righteousness, the righteousness by faith

Here "by faith" refers to placing one's trust in Christ. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "righteousness because God made them right with him when they trusted in Christ"

Romans 9:31

who did pursue a law of righteousness

"who tried to obey a law in order to get righteousness" or "who tried to be righteous by obeying a law"

did not arrive at that law

"could not keep that law" or "did not succeed at keeping that law"

Romans 9:32

Why not? Because they

You can translate this rhetorical question as a statement and include the words from the ellipsis in your translation. Paul asks this question to get the attention of his readers. Alternate translation: "Why could they not attain righteousness? Because they" or "This is why they could not attain righteousness: they"

by works

This refers to things that people do to try to please God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "by trying to do things that would please God" or "by keeping the Law"

Romans 9:33

as it has been written

You can indicate that Isaiah wrote this. You can also translate it in an active form. Alternate translation: "as Isaiah the prophet wrote"

in Zion

Here Zion is a metonym that represents Israel. Alternate translation: "in Israel"

stone of stumbling and a rock of offense

These phrases mean basically the same thing and are metaphors that refer to Jesus and his death on the cross. It was as if the people stumbled over a stone because they were disgusted when they considered Jesus's death on the cross.

believes in it

Because the words "stone" and "rock" are a metaphors for a person, you may need to translate this as "believes in him."

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10 [1]Brothers, my heart's desire and my plea to God is for them, for their salvation.[2]For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.[3]For, failing to understand the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's righteousness.

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[4]For Christ is the fulfillment of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes.[5]For Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the law: "The man who does these things will live by them."
[6]But the righteousness that comes from faith says this: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down);[7]"and do not say, 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
[8]But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart." That is the word of faith, which we proclaim.[9]For if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.[10]For with the heart one believes and has righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.
[11]For scripture says, "Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame."[12]For there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord is Lord of all, and he is rich to all who call upon him.[13]For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
[14]How then can they call on him in whom they have not believed? How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? How can they hear without a preacher?[15]Then how can they preach, unless they are sent?—As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news!"

[16]But not all of them obeyed the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"[17]So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
[18]But I say, "Did they not hear?" Yes, most certainly.

> "Their sound has gone out into all the earth,
> and their words to the ends of the world."

[19]Moreover, I say, "Did Israel not know?" First Moses says,

> "I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation.
> By means of a nation without understanding, I will stir you up to anger."

[20]Then Isaiah was very bold when he says,

> "I was found by those who did not seek me.
> I appeared to those who did not ask for me."

[21]But to Israel he says,

> "All the day long I reached out my hands
> to a disobedient and stubborn people."

Romans 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 18-20 of this chapter. These lines of poetry are from the Old Testament.
Some translations also set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's righteousness
Paul teaches here that while many Jews earnestly tried to be righteous, they did not succeed. We cannot earn God's righteousness. God gives us Jesus's righteousness when we believe in him. (See: righteous and faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions
Paul uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. He does this to convince his readers that God does not save only the Hebrew people, so Christians must be ready to go and share the gospel with the whole world. (See: and save)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"I will provoke you to jealousy by what is not a nation"
Paul uses this prophecy to explain that God will use the church to make the Hebrew people jealous. This is so they will seek God and believe the gospel.

Links:

Romans 10:1 Notes

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Romans 10:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues stating his desire for Israel to believe but emphasizes that both those who are Jews and those who are not can only be saved by faith in Jesus.

Brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

my heart's desire

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions or inner being. Alternate translation: "my greatest desire"

is for them, for their salvation

"is that God will save the Jews"

Romans 10:2

I testify about them

"I declare truthfully about them"

Romans 10:3

For, failing to understand the righteousness that comes from God

Here "righteousness refers to the way God puts people right with himself. You can make this explicit in the translation. Alternate translation: "For because they did not know how God puts people right with himself"

they did not submit to God's righteousness.

"they did not accept God's way of putting people right with himself"

Romans 10:4

For Christ is the fulfillment of the law

"For Christ completely fulfilled the law"

law for righteousness for everyone who believes

Here "believes" means "trusts." Alternate translation: "law, and he makes everyone who trusts in him right before God"

Romans 10:5

the righteousness that comes from the law

Paul speaks of "righteousness" as if it were alive and able to move. Alternate translation: "how the law makes a person right before God"

"The man who does these things will live by them."

In order to be made right with God through the law, a person would have to keep the law perfectly, which is not possible. Alternate translation: "The person who perfectly obeys the law will live because the law will make him right before God"

will live

The words "will live" can refer to 1) eternal life or 2) mortal life in fellowship with God.

Romans 10:6

But the righteousness that comes from faith says this

Here "righteousness" is described as a person who can speak. Alternate translation: "But Moses writes this about how faith makes a person right before God"

Do not say in your heart

Moses was addressing the people as if he were speaking to only one person. Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner being. Alternate translation: "Do not say to yourself"

Who will ascend into heaven?

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one is able to go up to heaven"

that is, to bring Christ down

"in order that they might have Christ come down to earth"

Romans 10:7

Who will descend into the abyss?

Moses uses a question to teach his audience. His previous instruction of, "Do not say" requires a negative answer to this question. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "No person can go down and enter the place where the spirits of dead persons are."

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To be brought up from among them is to become alive again.

dead

This word speaks of physical death.

Romans 10:8

But what does it say?

The word "it" refers to the scripture. Alternate translation: "But this is what Moses says"

The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart

Paul speaks of God's message as if it were a person who can move. The word "mouth" is a metonym that refers to what a person says. The phrase "in your heart" is metonym that refers to what a person thinks and believes. Alternate translation: "You have heard the message. You know how to speak it, and you know what it means"

the word of faith

"God's message that tells us that we must believe in him"

Romans 10:9

if with your mouth you confess Jesus as Lord

"if you confess that Jesus is Lord"

believe in your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or inner person. Alternate translation: "believe in your mind" or "truly believe"

raised him from the dead

"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." Alternate translation: "caused him to live again"

you will be saved

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will save you"

Romans 10:10

For with the heart one believes and has righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved

Here "heart" is a metonym that represents the mind or will. Alternate translation: "For it is with the mind that a person trusts and is right before God, and it is with the mouth that a person confesses so that God saves him"

with the mouth

Here "mouth" is a synecdoche that represents a person's capacity to speak.

Romans 10:11

For scripture says

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Paul speaks of the scripture as if it were alive and had a voice. You can make explicit who wrote the scripture that Paul uses here. Alternate translation: "For Isaiah wrote in the scripture"

Everyone who believes on him will not be put to shame

This is equivalent to: "If a person believes, then that person will not be shamed." The negative is used here for emphasis. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will honor everyone who believes in him" or "God will shame only those who do not believe in Jesus"

Romans 10:12

For there is no difference between Jew and Greek

Paul implies that God will treat all people the same. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "In this way, God treats the Jews and the non-Jews the same"

he is rich to all who call upon him

Here "he is rich" means that God blesses richly. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "he richly blesses all who trust in him"

Romans 10:13

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved

Here the word "name" is a metonym for Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord will save everyone who trusts in him"

Romans 10:14

How then can they call on him in whom they have not believed?

Paul uses a question to emphasize the importance of taking the good news of Christ to those who have not heard. The word "they" refers to those who do not yet belong to God. Alternate translation: "Those who do not believe in God cannot call on him!"

How can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: "And they cannot believe in him if they have not heard his message!" or "And they cannot believe in him if they have not heard the message about him!"

believe in

trust and desire to obey

How can they hear without a preacher?

Paul uses another question for the same reason. Alternate translation: "And they cannot hear the message if someone does not tell them!"

Romans 10:15

How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news

Paul uses "feet" to represent those who travel and take the message to those who have not heard it. The feet were considered a dirty and ugly part of the body, so the idea of beautiful feet would have seemed odd to Paul's readers. Alternate translation: "How beautiful are even the feet of those who proclaim good news" or "It is wonderful when messengers go and tell others the good news"

Romans 10:16

not all of them obeyed

Here "they" refers to the Jews. "not all of the Jews obeyed"

Lord, who has believed our report?

Paul is using this question, which Isaiah prophesied in the Scriptures, to emphasize that many Jews would not believe in Jesus. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "Lord, so many of them do not believe our message!"

our report

Here, "our" refers to God and Isaiah and so is inclusive.

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing

The abstract noun "faith" can be stated as the verb "believes." There are also words that Paul left out, but they are understood. Alternate translation: "So a person believes in Christ by hearing the message about Christ

and hearing by the word of Christ

Here "word" is a metonym that means "message." There are also words that Paul left out, but they are understood. Alternate translation: "and a person hears the message by someone preaching the message about Christ"

Romans 10:18

But I say, "Did they not hear?" Yes, most certainly

Paul uses a question for emphasis. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "But, I say the Jews certainly have heard the message about Christ"

Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

Both of these statements mean basically the same thing and Paul uses them for emphasis. The word "their" refers to the sun, moon, and stars. Here they are described as human messengers that tell people about God. This refers to how their existence shows God's power and glory. You can make explicit that Paul is quoting Scripture here. Alternate translation: "As the Scriptures record, 'The sun, moon, and the stars are proof of God's power and glory, and everyone in the world sees them and knows the truth about God.'"

Romans 10:19

Moreover, I say, "Did Israel not know?"

Paul uses a question for emphasis. The word "Israel" is a metonym for the people who lived in the nation of Israel. Alternate translation: "Again I tell you the people of Israel did know the message."

First Moses says, "I will provoke you ... I will stir you up

This means that Moses wrote down what God said. "I" refers to God, and "you" refers to the Israelites. Alternate translation: "First Moses says that God will provoke you ... God will stir you up"

by what is not a nation

"by those you do not consider to be a real nation" or "by people who do not belong to any nation"

By means of a nation without understanding

Here "without understanding" means that the people do not know God. Alternate translation: "By a nation with people who do not know me or my commands"

I will stir you up to anger

"I will make you angry" or "I will cause you to become angry"

you

This refers to the nation of Israel.

Romans 10:20

General Information:

Here the words "I" and "me" refer to God.

Then Isaiah was very bold when he says

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This means the prophet Isaiah wrote what God had said.

I was found by those who did not seek me

Prophets often speak of things in the future as if they have already happened. This emphasizes that the prophecy will certainly come true. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Even though the Gentile people will not look for me, they will find me"

I appeared

"I made myself known"

he says

"He" refers to God, who is speaking through Isaiah.

Romans 10:21

General Information:

Here the word "my" refers to God.

All the day long I

This phrase is used to emphasize God's continual effort. "I continually"

I reached out my hands to a disobedient and stubborn people

"I tried to welcome you and to help you, but you refused my help and continued to disobey"

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11 [1]I say then, did God reject his people? May it never be. For I also am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.[2]God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel?[3]"Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have broken down your altars. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life."
[4]But what does God's answer say to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand men who have not bent the knee to Baal."[5]Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant because of the choice of grace.
[6]But if it is by grace, it is no longer based on works. Otherwise grace would no longer be grace.[1]
[7]What then? The thing that Israel was seeking, it did not obtain, but the chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened.[8]It is just as it is written:

"God has given them a spirit of dullness,
eyes so that they should not see,
and ears so that they should not hear,
to this very day."

[9]Then David says,

"Let their table become a snare and a trap,
a stumbling block and a retribution for them.
[10] Let their eyes be darkened so that they may not see,
and bend their backs continually."

[11]I say then, "Did they stumble so as to fall?" May it never be. Instead, by their trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them to jealousy.[12]Now if their trespass is the riches of the world, and if their loss is the riches of the Gentiles, how much greater will their fulfillment be?
[13]But now I am speaking to you Gentiles, and as long as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry.
[14]Perhaps I will provoke to jealousy those who are of my own flesh. Perhaps we will save some of them.
[15]For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?[16]If the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump of dough. If the root is holy, so are the branches.
[17]But if some of the branches were broken off, if you, a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them, and if you shared with them in the rich root of the olive tree,[18]do not boast over the branches. But if you do boast, it is not you who supports the root, but the root that supports you.
[19]You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."[20]That is true. Because of their unbelief they were broken off, but you stand firm because of your faith. Do not be arrogant in your thoughts, but fear.[21]For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.
[22]Look at, then, the kind actions and the severity of God: severity came on the Jews who fell, but God's kindness comes on you, if you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.
[23]And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again.[24]For if you were cut out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?

[25]For I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, of this mystery, so that you may not be wise in your own thinking: A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the full number of the Gentiles comes in.
[26]Thus all Israel will be saved, just as it is written:

"Out of Zion will come the Deliverer.
He will remove ungodliness from Jacob,
[27] and this will be my covenant with them,

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when I will take away their sins."

[28]As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake. But as far as election is concerned, they are beloved because of the patriarchs.[29]For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable.
[30]For just as you were formerly disobedient to God, now you have received mercy because of their disobedience.[31]In the same way, now these Jews have been disobedient. The result was that by the mercy shown to you they may also now receive mercy.[32]For God has shut up all into disobedience in order that he might show mercy on all.

[33] Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments,
and his ways beyond discovering!

[34] "For who has known the mind of the Lord
or who has become his advisor?

[35] Or who has first given anything to God,
that God must repay him?"

[36]For from him and through him and to him are all things.
To him be the glory forever. Amen.

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[a]Some old copies read But if it is by works, then it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

Romans 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 9-10, 26-27, and 34-35, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Grafting

Paul uses the image of "grafting" to refer to the place of the Gentiles and Jews in the plans of God. Making one plant to be permanently part of another plant is called "grafting." Paul uses the picture of God grafting the Gentiles as a wild branch into his saving plans. But God has not forgotten about the Jews, who are spoken of as the natural plant. God will also save Jews who believe in Jesus.

Links:

Romans 11:1 Notes

Romans 11:1

Connecting Statement:

Though Israel as a nation has rejected God, God wants them to understand salvation comes by grace without works.

I say then

"I, Paul, say then"

did God reject his people?

Paul asks this question so that he can answer the questions of other Jews who are upset that God has included the Gentiles among his people, while the hearts of the Jewish people have been hardened.

May it never be.

"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.

tribe of Benjamin

This refers to the tribe descended from Benjamin, one of the 12 tribes into which God divided the people of Israel.

Romans 11:2

whom he foreknew

"whom he knew ahead of time"

Do you not know what the scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel?

You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know what the Scriptures record about when Elijah pleaded with God against Israel."

what the scripture says

Paul is referring to the scripture as if they were able to speak.

Romans 11:3

they have killed

"They" refers to the people of Israel.

I alone am left

The pronoun "I" here refers to Elijah.

seeking my life

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"desiring to kill me"
Romans 11:4
But what does God's answer say to him?
Paul is using this question to bring the reader to his next point. Alternate translation: "But this is God's answer to him:"
him
The pronoun "him" refers to Elijah.
seven thousand men
"7,000 men"
Romans 11:5
remnant
Here this means a small part of people whom God chose to receive his grace.
Romans 11:6
But if it is by grace
Paul continues to explain how God's mercy works. Alternate translation: "But since God's mercy works by grace"
Romans 11:7
What then?
"What should we conclude?" Paul asks this question to move his reader to his next point. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "This is what we need to remember" or "So"
Romans 11:8
God has given them a spirit of dullness, eyes so that they should not see, and ears so that they should not hear
This is a metaphor about the fact that the people are spiritually dull. They are not able to hear or receive spiritual truth.
spirit of
Here this means "having the characteristics of," such as the "spirit of wisdom."
eyes so that they should not see
The concept of seeing with one's eyes was considered to be equivalent to gaining understanding.
ears so that they should not hear
The concept of hearing with the ears was considered to be equivalent to obedience.
Romans 11:9
Let their table become a snare and a trap
"Table" here is a metonym that represents feasting, and "snare" and "trap" are metaphors that represent punishment. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Please, God, make their feasts like a trap that catches them"
a stumbling block
A "stumbling block" is anything that causes a person to trip so that he falls down. Here it represents something that tempts a person to sin. Alternate translation: "something that tempts them to sin"
a retribution for them
"something that allows you to take revenge on them"
Romans 11:10
bend their backs continually
Here "bend their backs" is a metonym for forcing slaves to carry heavy loads on their backs. This is a metaphor for making them suffer. Alternate translation: "make them suffer like people carrying heavy loads"
Romans 11:11
Connecting Statement:
With Israel as a nation rejecting God, Paul warns the Gentiles to be careful they do not make the same mistake.
Did they stumble so as to fall?
Paul uses this question to add introduce the next thing he wants to say. If your language uses a different way to introduce new topics, you can use it here. Here the words "stumble" and "fall" are metaphors for sinning and having God reject the sinner. Alternate translation: "Has God rejected them forever because they sinned?"
May it never be.
"That is not possible!" or "Certainly not!" This expression strongly denies that this could happen. You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here. See how you translated this in Romans 9:14.
provoke ... to jealousy
See how you translated this phrase in Romans 10:19.
Romans 11:12
if their trespass is the riches of the world, and if their loss is the riches of the Gentiles
Both of these phrases mean basically the same thing. If you need to, you can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: "when the Jews trespassed, the result was that God abundantly blessed the non-Jews"
the riches of the world
Because the Jews rejected Christ, God richly blessed the Gentiles by giving them the opportunity to receive Christ.
the world
Here the "world" is a metonym that refers to the people who live in the world, especially the Gentiles.
how much greater will their fulfillment be?
This can be translated as a statement. The words "their fulfillment" refer to either 1) the time when God blesses the Jews 2) when the Jews believe in Jesus. Alternate translation: "their fulfillment will be much greater." or "how much better will it be for the non-Jews when all the Jews believe in Jesus?" or "how much better will it be for the non-Jews when God fully blesses the Jews?"
Romans 11:14
provoke to jealousy
See how you translated this phrase in Romans 10:19.
those who are of my own flesh
This refers to "my fellow Jews."
Perhaps we will save some of them
God will save those who believe. Alternate translation: "Perhaps some will believe and therefore God will save them"
Romans 11:15
For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world
"For if because God rejected them, he will reconcile the rest of the world to himself"
their rejection
The pronoun "their" refers to Jewish unbelievers.
the world
Here "the world" is a metonym for the people who live in the world. Alternate translation: "the people in the world"
what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

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Paul asks this question to emphasize that when God accepts the Jews, it will be a wonderful thing. The abstract noun "acceptance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "how will it be when God accepts them? It will be like they have come back to life from among the dead!" or "then when God accepts them, it will be like they have died and become alive again!"

the dead

These words speak of all dead people together in the underworld.

Romans 11:16

If the firstfruits are holy, so is the lump of dough

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the first grain or "firstfruits" to be harvested. He is also speaking of the Israelites who are descendants of those men as if they were a "lump of dough" made from the grain. Alternate translation: "If Abraham is counted as the first of what has been offered to God, all of our ancestors who followed should also be counted as God's possession"

firstfruits

The people always dedicated to God the first crops that they harvested. Here "firstfruits" stands for the first people to believe in Christ.

If the root is holy, so are the branches

Paul is speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Israelites' ancestors, as if they were the root of a tree, and the Israelites, who are descendants of those men, as if they were the tree's "branches."

Romans 11:17

But if some of the branches were broken off

Here Paul refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus as "broken branches." You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "But if someone broke off some of the branches"

if you, a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them

Here Paul speaks of the Gentile Christians as if they were "grafted branches." You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "if God grafted you, a wild olive branch, among them"

if you, a wild olive branch

The pronoun "you" is singular. Here "you" and the phrase "a wild olive branch," refer to a Gentile person, in general, who has accepted salvation through Jesus.

the rich root of the olive tree

Here "the rich root" is a metaphor that refers to the promises of God.

Romans 11:18

do not boast over the branches

Here "the branches" is a metaphor that stands for the Jewish people. Alternate translation: "do not say you are better than the Jewish people God has rejected"

it is not you who supports the root, but the root that supports you

Again Paul implies that the Gentile believers are branches. God saves them only because of the covenant promises that he made to the Jews.

Romans 11:19

Branches were broken off

Here "branches" refers to the Jews who rejected Jesus and whom God has now rejected. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God broke branches off"

I might be grafted in

Paul uses this phrase to refer to the Gentile believers whom God has accepted. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "he might attach me in"

Romans 11:20

their ... they

The pronouns "their" and "they" refer to the Jewish people who did not believe.

but you stand firm because of your faith

Paul speaks of the Gentile believers remaining faithful as if they were standing firm and no one could move them. Alternate translation: "but you remain because of your faith"

be arrogant in your thoughts

"think that you are better than you are" or "be proud"

Romans 11:21

For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you

Here the "natural branches" refers to the Jewish people who rejected Jesus. Alternate translation: "Since God did not spare those unbelieving Jews, who grew up like a tree's natural branches that came from the root, then know that if you do not believe, he will not spare you either"

Romans 11:22

the kind actions and the severity of God

Paul is reminding the Gentile believers that although God may act very kindly toward them, he will not hesitate to judge and punish them.

severity came on the Jews who fell ... God's kindness comes on you

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "severity" and "kindness." Alternate translation: "God dealt harshly with the Jews who fell ... God acts kindly toward you"

the Jews who fell

Here "fell" is a metaphor that means to have done something wrong. Alternate translation: "the Jews who have done wrong" or "the Jews who have refused to trust in Christ"

if you continue in his kindness

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "kindness." Alternate translation: "if you continue doing what is right so that he continues being kind to you"

Otherwise you also will be cut off

Paul again uses the metaphor of a branch, which God can "cut off" if he needs to. Here "cut off" is a metaphor for rejecting someone. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Otherwise God will also cut you off" or "Otherwise God will also reject you"

Romans 11:23

if they do not continue in their unbelief

The phrase "do not continue in their unbelief" is a double negative. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "if they start believing"

will be grafted in

Paul speaks of the Jews as if they were branches that could be grafted back into a tree if they start to believe in Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will graft back in"

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graft

This is a common process in which the end of a live branch of one tree is inserted into another tree so that the new branch will continue to grow in that tree.

they ... them

All occurrences of "they" or "them" refer to the Jews.

Romans 11:24

For if you were cut out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a good olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?

Paul continues speaking of the Gentile believers and Jews as if they were branches of a tree. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For if God had cut you out of what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature had grafted you into a good olive tree, how much more will he graft these Jews, who are the natural branches, into their own olive tree?"

how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree?

This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "then these Jews, who are the natural branches, will certainly be grafted back into their own olive tree."

branches

Paul is speaking of the Jews and Gentiles as if they were branches. The "natural branches" represent the Jews, and the "grafted branches" represent the Gentile believers.

Romans 11:25

I do not want you to be uninformed

Here Paul uses a double negative to emphasize the positive. You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "I very much want you to be informed"

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

I

The pronoun "I" refers to Paul.

you ... you ... your

The pronouns "you" and "your" refer to the Gentile believers.

so that you may not be wise in your own thinking

Paul does not want the Gentile believers to think they are wiser than the Jewish unbelievers. Alternate translation: "so that you will not think you are wiser than you are"

A partial hardening has come upon Israel

This is the mystery that Paul referred to earlier in the sentence. This can be made a explicit. "A partial hardening" is a metaphor for many of the people remaining stubborn. Paul said this because some of the Jews stubbornly refused to trust Jesus. Alternate translation: "This mystery is that a partial hardening has come upon Israel" or "Many people of Israel remain stubborn"

until the full number of the Gentiles

Here "full number" means the amount determined by God. It does not mean all Gentiles. Alternate translation: "until the number of Gentiles determined by God"

comes in

This is a metaphor meaning to be saved or to become a Christian. Alternate translation: "is saved" or "believes in Christ"

Romans 11:26

Connecting Statement:

Paul says that, to the glory of God, a deliverer will come out of Israel.

Thus all Israel will be saved

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Thus God will save all Israel"

just as it is written

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "just as the scriptures record"

Out of Zion

Here "Zion" is used as a metonym for the place where God dwells. Alternate translation: "From where God is among the Jews"

the Deliverer

"the one who brings his people to safety"

He will remove ungodliness

Paul speaks of ungodliness as if it were an object that someone could remove, such as a garment..

from Jacob

Here "Jacob" is used as a metonym for Israel. Alternate translation: "from the Israelite people"

Romans 11:27

I will take away their sins

Here Paul speaks of sins as if they were objects that someone could take away. Alternate translation: "I will remove the burden of their sins"

Romans 11:28

As far as the gospel is concerned

You can make explicit why Paul mentions the gospel. Alternate translation: "Because the Jews rejected the gospel"

they are enemies for your sake

You can make explicit whose enemies they are, and how this was for the Gentiles' sake. Alternate translation: "they are God's enemies for your sake" or "God has treated them as enemies in order that you also might hear the gospel"

as far as election is concerned

You can make explicit why Paul mentions election. Alternate translation: "because God has elected the Jews" or "because God has chosen the Jews"

they are beloved because of the patriarchs

You can make explicit who loves the Jews and why Paul mentions their forefathers. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God still loves them because of what he promised to do for their ancestors"

Romans 11:29

For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable

Paul speaks of the spiritual and material blessings that God promised to give his people as if they were gifts. The call of God refers to the fact that God called the Jews to be his people. Alternate translation: "For God will never change his mind about what he has promised to give them, and about how he has called them to be his people" or "God will never take back his gifts or his call"

are irrevocable

"can never be taken back"

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Romans 11:30
you were formerly disobedient to God
"you did not obey God in the past"
you have received mercy because of their disobedience
Here mercy means God's undeserved blessings. Alternate translation: "because the Jews have rejected Jesus, you have received blessings that you did not deserve"
you
This refers to Gentile believers, and is plural.
Romans 11:32
God has shut up all into disobedience
God has treated people who disobey him like prisoners who are unable to escape from prison. Alternate translation: "God has made prisoners of those who disobey him. Now they cannot stop disobeying God"
Romans 11:33
Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God
Here "wisdom" and "knowledge" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "How amazing are the many benefits of both God's wisdom and knowledge"
How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering
"We are completely unable to understand the things that he has decided and to find out the ways in which he acts toward us"
Romans 11:34
For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has become his advisor?
Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one is as wise as the Lord. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one has ever known the mind of the Lord, and no one has become his advisor."
the mind of the Lord
Here "mind" is a metonym for knowing things or thinking about things. Alternate translation: "all that the Lord knows" or "what the Lord thinks about"
Romans 11:35
Or who has first given anything to God, that God must repay him?"
Paul uses this question to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "No one has ever given anything to God that he did not first receive from God"
Romans 11:36
For from him ... through him ... to him
Here, all occurrences of "him" refers to God.
To him be the glory forever
This expresses Paul's desire for all people to honor God. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "May all people honor him forever"

12 [1]I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. This is your reasonable service.[2]Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Do this so that you can test and approve what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

[3]For by the grace that was given to me I say to everyone among you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather, think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has given you.
[4]For we have many members in one body, but not all the members have the same function.[5]In the same way, we who are many are one body in Christ, and are individually members of each other.
[6]We have different gifts according to the grace that was given to us. If one's gift is prophecy, let it be done according to the proportion of his faith.[7]If one's gift is service, let him serve. If one has the gift of teaching, let him teach.[8]If one's gift is encouragement, let him encourage. If one's gift is giving, let him do it generously. If one's gift is leading, let it be done with diligence. If one's gift is in showing mercy, let it be done with cheerfulness.

[9]Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; hold on to that which is good.[10]Concerning love of the brothers, be affectionate to one another. Concerning honor, respect one another.
[11]Concerning diligence, do not be hesitant. Concerning the spirit, be eager. Concerning the Lord, serve him.[12]Rejoice in hope, endure tribulation, be faithful in prayer.[13]Share in the needs of God's holy people. Find many ways to show hospitality.
[14]Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.[15]Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.[16]Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not think in proud ways, but accept lowly people. Do not be wise in your own thoughts.
[17]Repay no one evil for evil. Do good things in the sight of all people.[18]If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people.
[19]Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give way to the wrath of God. For it is written, "'Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay,' says the Lord."

[20] But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him.
If he is thirsty, give him a drink.
For if you do this, you will heap coals of fire on his head."

[21]Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

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Romans 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 20, which is from the Old Testament.

Many scholars believe Paul uses the word "therefore" in Romans 12:1 to refer back to all of Chapters 1-11. Having carefully explained the Christian gospel, Paul now explains how Christians should live in light of these great truths. Chapters 12-16 focus on living out one's Christian faith. Paul uses many different commands in these chapters to give these practical instructions. (See: faith)

Special concepts in this chapter

Christian living

Under the law of Moses, people were required to offer temple sacrifices of animals or grain. Now Christians are required to live their lives as a type of sacrifice to God. Physical sacrifices are no longer required. (See: lawofmoses)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Body of Christ

The body of Christ is an important metaphor or image used in Scripture to refer to the church. Each church member has a unique and important function. Christians need each other.

Links:

Romans 12:1 Notes

Romans 12:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells what the life of a believer should be and how believers should serve.

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present

Here "brothers" refers to fellow believers, both male and female. Alternate translation: "Fellow believers, because of the great mercy that God has given you I very much want you to present"

to present your bodies a living sacrifice

Here Paul uses the word "bodies" to refer to the entire beings of all those he is addressing. Paul is comparing a believer in Christ who completely obeys God to the animals that the Jews killed and then offered to God. Alternate translation: "to offer yourselves completely to God while you are alive as if you were a dead sacrifice on a temple altar"

holy, acceptable to God

Possible meanings are 1) "a sacrifice that you give to God alone and that pleases him" or 2) "acceptable to God because it is morally pure"

This is your reasonable service

"This is the right way to worship God"

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not behave as this world behaves" or "Do not do what this world does"

this world

This refers to unbelievers who live in the world.

but be transformed by the renewal of your mind

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "but let God change the way you think and behave"

Romans 12:3

by the grace that was given to me I say

Here "grace" refers to God's choosing Paul to be an apostle and leader of the church. You can make this explicit in your translation. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God freely chose me to be an apostle, I can say"

Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought

"Do not think you are better than other people"

rather, think with sober judgment

"instead, you should be wise in how you think about yourselves"

each according to the measure of faith that God has given you

Paul implies here that believers have different abilities that correspond to their faith in God. Alternate translation: "since God has given each of you different abilities because of your trust in him"

Romans 12:4

For

Paul uses this word to show that he will now explain why some Christians should not think they are better than others.

we have many members in one body

Paul refers to all the believers in Christ as if they were different parts of the human body. He does this to illustrate that although believers may serve Christ in different ways, each person belongs to Christ and serves in an important way.

members

Such parts of the body as eyes, ears, and hands.

Romans 12:5

are individually members of each other

Paul speaks of the believers as if God had physically joined them together like the parts of the human body. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God has joined each believer together with all other believers"

Romans 12:6

We have different gifts according to the grace that was given to us

Paul speaks of believers' different abilities as being free gifts from God. You can translate this in an active form.

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Alternate translation: "God has freely given each of us different abilities to do things for him"

let it be done according to the proportion of his faith

Possible meanings are 1) "let him speak prophecies that do not go beyond the amount of faith God has given us" or 2) "let him speak prophecies that agree with the teachings of our faith."

Romans 12:8

If one's gift is giving, let him do it

Here "giving" refers to giving money and other things to people. You can make this meaning explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "If one has the gift of giving money or other goods to people in need, let him give"

Romans 12:9

Let love be without hypocrisy

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "You must love people sincerely and truly"

love

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.

Romans 12:10

Concerning love of the brothers, be affectionate

Here Paul begins a list of nine items, each of the form "Concerning ... be" to tell the believers what kind of people they should be. You may need to translate some of the items as "Concerning ... do." The list continues to Romans 12:13.

Concerning love of the brothers

"As for how you love your fellow believers"

love

In the original language a different word is used for "love" here than is used in 12:9. This word means brotherly love or love for a friend or family member. This is natural human love between friends or relatives.

be affectionate

"show affection"

Concerning honor, respect one another

"Honor and respect one another" or "Honor your fellow believers by respecting them"

Romans 12:11

Concerning diligence, do not be hesitant. Concerning the spirit, be eager. Concerning the Lord, serve him

"Do not be lazy in your duty, but be eager to follow the Spirit and to serve the Lord"

Romans 12:12

Rejoice in hope

"Rejoice because of your hope" or "Rejoice as you hope." Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "Rejoice because of what you confidently wait for" or "Rejoice as you confidently wait"

endure tribulation

"be patient when you suffer" or "wait patiently whenever you have troubles"

be faithful in prayer

"pray faithfully"

Romans 12:13

General Information:

This is the last item in the list that began in Romans 12:9.

Share in the needs of God's holy people

"When fellow Christians are in trouble, help them with what they need"

Find many ways to show hospitality

"Always welcome Christians into your home when they need a place to stay"

Romans 12:16

Be of the same mind toward one another

This is an idiom that means to live in unity. Alternate translation: "Agree with one another" or "Live in unity with each other"

Do not think in proud ways

"Do not think that you are more important than others"

accept lowly people

"welcome people who do not seem important"

Do not be wise in your own thoughts

"Do not think of yourselves as having more wisdom than everyone else"

Romans 12:17

Repay no one evil for evil

"Do not do evil things to anyone who has done evil things to you"

Do good things in the sight of all people

"Do things that everyone considers to be good"

Romans 12:18

as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all people

"do whatever you can to live in peace with everyone"

Romans 12:19

give way to the wrath of God

Here "wrath" is a metonym for God's punishment. Alternate translation: "allow God to punish those who harm you"

For it is written

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has written"

Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that God will avenge his people. Alternate translation: "I will certainly avenge you"

Romans 12:20

your enemy ... feed him ... give him a drink ... if you do this, you will heap

All forms of "you" and "your" are addressed as to one person.

But "if your enemy is hungry ... his head."

Paul quotes another part of scripture. Alternate translation: "But the scripture also says, 'If your enemy is hungry ... his head.'"

feed him

"give him some food"

you will heap coals of fire on his head

Paul speaks of the blessings that the enemies will receive as if someone were pouring hot coals on their heads. Possible meanings are 1) "you will make the person who harmed you feel ashamed about how he has mistreated you" or 2) "you will give God a reason to judge your enemy more harshly"

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Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good

Paul describes "evil" as though it were a person. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let those who are evil defeat you, but defeat those who are evil by doing what is good"

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil

These verbs are addressed as to one person and so are singular.

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13 [1]Let every soul be subject to higher authorities, for there is no authority unless it comes from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God.[2]Therefore he who rebels against that authority opposes the command of God; and those who oppose it will receive judgment on themselves.
[3]For rulers are not a terror to those who do good deeds, but to those who do evil deeds. Do you desire to have no fear of the one in authority? Do what is good, and you will receive his praise.[4]For he is a servant of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for he does not carry the sword for no reason. For he is a servant of God, an avenger for wrath on the one who does evil.[5]Therefore you must be subject, not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience.
[6]Because of this you pay taxes also. For authorities are servants of God, who attend to this very thing continually.[7]Pay to everyone what is owed to them: tax to whom tax is due, toll to whom toll is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due.

[8]Owe no one anything, except to love one another. For he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.[9]The commandments, "Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not covet," and if there is any other commandment it is summed up in this, "Love your neighbor as yourself."[10]Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

[11]Because of this, you know the time, that it is already the hour for you to awake out of sleep. For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.[12]The night has advanced, and the day is near. Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.
[13]Let us walk appropriately, as in the day, not in drunken celebrations or drunkenness; and let us not walk in sexual immorality or in uncontrolled lust, and not in strife or jealousy.[14]But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts.

Romans 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In the first part of this chapter, Paul teaches Christians to obey rulers who govern them. At that time, ungodly Roman rulers governed the land. (See: godly)

Special concepts in this chapter

Ungodly rulers

Some readers will find it difficult to understand what Paul teaches about obeying rulers, especially if they are in places where rulers persecute the church. Christians must obey their rulers as well as obey God, unless the rulers do not allow Christians to do something God explicitly commands them to do. There are times when a believer must submit to these rulers and suffer at their hands. Christians understand that this world is temporary and they will ultimately be with God forever. (See: eternity)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh and sin)

Links:

Romans 13:1 Notes

Romans 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells believers how to live under their rulers.

Let every soul be subject to

Here "soul" is a synecdoche for the whole person. "Every Christian should obey" or "Everyone should obey"

higher authorities

"government officials"

for

because

there is no authority unless it comes from God

"all authority comes from God"

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The authorities that exist have been appointed by God
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "And the people who are in authority are there because God put them there"
Romans 13:2
that authority
"that government authority" or "the authority that God placed in power"
those who oppose it will receive judgment on themselves
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will judge those who oppose government authority"
Romans 13:3
For
Paul uses this word to begin his explanation of Romans 13:2 and to tell about what will result if the government condemns a person.
rulers are not a terror to those who do good deeds, but to those who do evil deeds
"rulers do not cause terror for those who do good deeds, but for those who do evil deeds"
Do you desire to have no fear of the one in authority?
Paul uses this question to get people to think about what they need to do in order not to be afraid of rulers. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you how you can be unafraid of the ruler."
you will receive his praise
"the one in authority will say good things about you"
Romans 13:4
he does not carry the sword for no reason
You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "he carries the sword for a very good reason" or "he has the power to punish people, and he will punish people"
carry the sword
Roman governors carried a short sword as a symbol of their authority.
an avenger for wrath on the one who does evil
Here "wrath" represents the punishment people receive when they do evil deeds. Alternate translation: "a person who punishes, on God's behalf, those who do evil"
Romans 13:5
not only because of the wrath, but also because of conscience
"not only so the government will not punish you, but also so you will have a clear conscience before God"
Romans 13:6
Because of this
"Because the government punishes evildoers"
you pay
Paul is addressing the believers here, so this is plural.
For authorities
"This is why you should pay taxes: authorities"
attend to
"administer" or "work on"
Romans 13:7
Pay to everyone
Paul is addressing the believers here, so this is plural.
tax to whom tax is due, toll to whom toll is due, fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due
The word "pay" is understood from the previous phrase in the general sense of "give." Alternate translation: "pay tax to whom tax is due, pay toll to whom toll is due, pay fear to whom fear is due, and pay honor to him to whom honor is due"
fear to whom fear is due, honor to whom honor is due
Here paying fear and honor is a metaphor for fearing and honoring those who deserve to be feared and honored. Alternate translation: "fear those who deserve to be feared, and honor those who deserved to be honored" or "respect those whom you ought to respect, and honor those whom you ought to honor"
toll
This is a kind of tax.
Romans 13:8
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells believers how to act toward neighbors.
Owe no one anything, except to love one another
This is a double negative. You can translate it in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Pay all you owe to everyone, and love one another"
Owe
This verb is plural and applies to all the Roman Christians.
anything, except to love one another
This elliptical command includes the idea of "owe" from earlier in the sentence. Owing things or service to other people is a metaphor for the duty Christians have, in this case to love one another. Alternate translation: "anything, but remember that God has given you the duty to love one another"
love
The kind of love that comes from God is focused on having good things happen to others even when those good things do not happen to the one who loves.
Romans 13:9
covet
To covet is to desire to have or possess something that another person possesses.
Romans 13:10
Love does no harm to a neighbor
This phrase portrays love as a person who is being kind to other people. Alternate translation: "People who love their neighbors do not harm them"
Romans 13:11
you know the time, that it is already the hour for you to awake out of sleep
Paul speaks of the need for the Roman believers to change their behavior as if they needed to wake up from being asleep.
hour
"time"
Romans 13:12
The night has advanced
Paul speaks of the time when people do evil deeds as night. Alternate translation: "The sinful time is almost over" or "It is as though the night is almost finished"
the day is near
Paul speaks of the time when people do what is right as the day. Alternate translation: "the time of righteousness will

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begin soon" or "it is as though it will soon be day"

Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness

Paul speaks of of "works of darkness" as if they are clothing that a person puts aside. Here to "put aside" means to stop doing something. Here "darkness" is a metaphor for evil. Alternate translation: "Let us therefore stop doing the evil things that people do in the dark"

let us put on the armor of light

Here "light" is a metaphor for what is good and right. Paul speaks of people who are doing what is right as if they were putting on armor to protect themselves. Alternate translation: "let us start doing what is right. Doing this will protect us from what is evil, like armor protects a solider"

Romans 13:13

Let us

Paul includes his readers and other believers with himself.

Let us walk appropriately, as in the day

Paul speaks of people living as true believers as if they were walking while it is day. Alternate translation: "Let us walk in a visible way knowing, that everyone can see us"

sexual immorality or in uncontrolled lust

These concepts mean basically the same thing. You can combine them in your translation. Alternate translation: "sexually immoral acts"

strife

This refers to plotting against and arguing with other people.

jealousy

This refers to negative feelings against another person's success or advantage over others.

Romans 13:14

put on the Lord Jesus Christ

Paul speaks of accepting the moral nature of Christ as if he were our outer clothing that people can see.

put on

If your language has a plural form for commands, use it here.

make no provision for the flesh

Here the "flesh" refers to the self-directed nature of people who oppose God. This is the sinful nature of human beings. Alternate translation: "do not allow your old evil heart any opportunity at all for doing wicked things"

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14 [1]Receive anyone who is weak in faith, without giving judgment about arguments.[2]One person has faith to eat
anything, another who is weak eats only vegetables.
[3]May the one who eats everything not despise the one who does not; and may the one who does not eat everything not judge the other who eats everything. For God has accepted him.[4]Who are you, you who judge a servant belonging to someone else? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.
[5]One person values one day above another. Another has concluded that every day is equal. Let each person be convinced in his own mind.[6]He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord; and he who eats, eats for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God. He who does not eat, refrains from eating for the Lord; he also gives thanks to God.
[7]For none of us lives for himself, and none dies for himself.[8]For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Then whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.[9]For to this purpose Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and those who are living.
[10]But you, why do you judge your brother? And you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.[11]For it is written,

"As I live," says the Lord,
"to me every knee will bend,
and every tongue will confess to God."

[12]So then, each one of us will give an account of himself to God.
[13]Therefore, let us no longer judge one another, but instead decide this, that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for his brother.
[14]I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean by itself. Only for him who considers anything to be unclean, for him it is unclean.[15]If because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food one for whom Christ died.
[16]So do not allow what you consider to be good to be spoken of as evil.[17]For the kingdom of God is not about food and drink, but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.
[18]For the one who serves Christ in this way is acceptable to God and approved by people.[19]So then, let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another.
[20]Do not destroy the work of God on account of food. All things are clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone to stumble.[21]It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything over which your brother stumbles.
[22]The faith you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves.[23]He who doubts is condemned if he eats, because it is not from faith. And whatever is not from faith is sin.

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Romans 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 11 of this chapter, which Paul quotes from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Weak in faith

Paul teaches that Christians can have real faith and at the same time be "weak in faith" in a given situation. This describes Christians whose faith is immature, not strong, or misunderstood. (See: faith)

Dietary restrictions

Many religions in the ancient Near East restricted what was eaten. Christians have freedom to eat what they want. But they need to use this freedom wisely, in a way that honors the Lord and does not cause others to sin. (See: sin)

The judgment seat of God

The judgment seat of God or Christ represents a time when all people, including Christians, will be held accountable for the way they lived their lives.

Links:

Romans 14:1 Notes

Romans 14:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages believers to remember that they are answerable to God.

weak in faith

This refers to those who felt guilty over eating and drinking certain things.

without giving judgment about arguments

"and do not condemn them for their opinions"

Romans 14:2

One person has faith to eat anything

Here "faith" refers to doing what a person believes God is telling him to do.

another who is weak eats only vegetables

This describes a person who believes God does not want him to eat meat.

Romans 14:4

Who are you, you who judge a servant belonging to someone else?

Paul is using a question to scold those who are judging others. You can translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are not God, and you are not allowed to judge one of his servants!"

you, you

The form of "you" here is singular.

It is before his own master that he stands or falls

Paul speaks of God as if he were a master who owned servants. Alternate translation: "Only the master can decide if he will accept the servant or not"

But he will be made to stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand

Paul speaks of the servant who is acceptable to God as if he were being "made to stand" instead of falling. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "But the Lord will accept him because he is able to make the servant acceptable"

Romans 14:5

One person values one day above another. Another has concluded that every day is equal

"One person thinks one day is more important than some of the others, but another person thinks that all days are the same"

Let each person be convinced in his own mind

You can make the full meaning explicit. You can also translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Let each person be sure what he is doing is to honor the Lord"

Romans 14:6

He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord

Here "observes the day" refers to considering a day as a special day on which to worship the Lord. Alternate translation: "Whoever treats a day as special does so to honor the Lord" or "The person who worships on a certain day does it to honor the Lord"

he who eats

The word "everything" is understood from [Romans 14:3]

eats for the Lord

"eats to honor the Lord" or "eats that way in order to honor the Lord"

He who does not eat

The word "everything" is understood from [Romans 14:3]

refrains from eating for the Lord

His purpose in refraining from eating certain foods is to honor the Lord. Alternate translation: "refrains from eating certain foods in order to honor the Lord"

Romans 14:7

For none of us lives for himself

Here "lives for himself" means to live only to please oneself. Alternate translation: "None of us should live merely to please himself"

none of us

Paul is including his readers, so this is inclusive.

none dies for himself

Here "dies for himself" means to die only to please oneself. Alternate translation: "None of us should die merely to please himself"

Romans 14:8

General Information:

Paul is speaking of both himself and his readers, so all instances of "we" are inclusive.

Romans 14:10

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why do you judge your brother? And you, why do you despise your brother?
By using these questions, Paul is demonstrating how he might need to scold individuals among his readers. Alternate translation: "it is wrong for you to judge your brother, and it is wrong for you to despise your brother!" or "stop judging and despising your brother!"
brother
Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.
For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God
The "judgment seat" refers to God's authority to judge. Alternate translation: "For God will judge us all"
Romans 14:11
For it is written, "As
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For someone has written in the Scriptures: 'As"
As I live
This phrase is used to start an oath or solemn promise. Alternate translation: "You can be certain that this is true"
to me every knee will bend, and every tongue will confess to God
Paul uses the words "knee" and "tongue" to refer to the whole person. Also, the Lord uses the word "God" to refer to himself. Alternate translation: "every person will bow and give praise to me"
Romans 14:12
will give an account of himself to God
"will have to explain his actions to God"
Romans 14:13
but instead decide this, that no one will place a stumbling block or a snare for his brother
Here "stumbling block" and "snare" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "but instead make it your goal not to do or say anything that might cause a fellow believer to sin"
brother
Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.
Romans 14:14
I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus
Here the words "know" and "am persuaded" mean basically the same thing; Paul uses them to emphasize his certainty. Alternate translation: "I am certain because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus"
nothing is unclean by itself
You can translate this in a positive form. Alternate translation: "everything by itself is clean"
by itself
"by its nature" or "because of what it is"
Only for him who considers anything to be unclean, for him it is unclean
Paul implies here that a person should stay away from anything that he thinks is unclean. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "But if a person thinks something is unclean, then for that person it is unclean and he should stay away from it"
Romans 14:15
If because of food your brother is hurt
"If you hurt your fellow believer's faith over the matter of food." Here the word "your" refers to those who are strong in faith and "brother" refers to one who is weak in faith.
brother
Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.
you are no longer walking in love
Paul speaks of the behavior of believers as if it were a walk. Alternate translation: "then you are no longer showing love"
Romans 14:16
So do not allow what you consider to be good to be spoken of as evil
"If someone thinks that something is evil, do not do it, even if you consider it to be good"
Romans 14:17
For the kingdom of God is not about food and drink, but about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit
Paul argues that God set up his kingdom so he could give us a right relationship with himself, and could provide peace and joy. Alternate translation: "For God did not set up his kingdom so that he could rule over what we eat and drink. He set up his kingdom so we could have a right relationship with him, and so he could give us peace and joy"
Romans 14:18
approved by people
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "people will approve of him" or "people will respect him"
Romans 14:19
let us pursue the things of peace and the things that build up one another
Here "build up one another" refers to helping each other grow in faith. Alternate translation: "let us seek to live peacefully together and help one another grow stronger in faith"
Romans 14:20
Do not destroy the work of God on account of food
You can make explicit the full meaning of this sentence. Alternate translation: "Do not undo what God has done for a fellow believer just because you want to eat a certain kind of food"
but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone to stumble
Here anything that "causes someone to stumble" means it causes a weaker brother to do something that is against his conscience. Alternate translation: "but it would be a sin for someone to eat food that another brother thinks is wrong to eat, if by eating this causes the weaker brother to do something that is against his conscience"
Romans 14:21
It is good not to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything over which your brother stumbles
"It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that might cause your brother to sin"
brother
Here this means a fellow Christian, male or female.
your
This refers to the strong in faith and "brother" refers to the weak in faith.
Romans 14:22
The faith you have
This refers back to the beliefs about food and drink.
you ... yourself

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singular. Because Paul is addressing the believers, you may have to translate this using plural.

Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves

"Blessed are those who do not feel guilty for what they decide to do"

Romans 14:23

He who doubts is condemned if he eats

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "God will say that a person does wrong if he is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but he eats it anyway" or "A person who is not sure if it is right to eat a certain food, but then eats it anyway, will have a troubled conscience"

because it is not from faith

Anything that is "not from faith" is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: "and God will say that he is wrong because he is eating something he believes God does not want him to eat"

whatever is not from faith is sin

Anything that is "not from faith" is something that God does not want you to do. You can make explicit the full meaning here. Alternate translation: "you are sinning if you do something that you do not believe God wants you to do"

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15 [1]Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and ought not to please ourselves.[2]Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, in order to build him up.
[3]For even Christ did not please himself. Instead, it was just as it is written, "The insults of those who insulted you fell on me."[4]For whatever was previously written was written for our instruction in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures we would have hope.
[5]Now may the God of patience and of encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with each other according to Christ Jesus.[6]May he do this in order that with one mind you may glorify with one mouth the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[7]Therefore receive one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God.
[8]For I say that Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision on behalf of God's truth, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,[9]and for the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

> "Therefore I will give praise to you among the Gentiles
> and sing praise to your name."

[10]Again it says,

> "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

[11]And again,

> "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
> let all the peoples praise him."

[12]Again, Isaiah says,

> "The root of Jesse will come,
> the one who rises to rule over the Gentiles;
> in him the Gentiles will have hope."

[13]Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

[14]I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers. I am convinced that also you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge. I am convinced that you are also able to instruct one another.
[15]But I am writing more boldly to you about some things in order to remind you again, because of the grace given me by God.[16]This grace was that I should be a servant of Christ Jesus sent to the Gentiles, to offer as a priest the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
[17]In Christ Jesus I have reason to boast of my service for God.[18]For I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me for the obedience of the Gentiles. These are things done by word and action,[19]by the power of signs and wonders, and by the power of the Spirit of God. This was so that from Jerusalem, and round about as far as Illyricum, I might fully carry out the gospel of Christ.
[20]In this way, my desire has been to proclaim the gospel, but not where Christ is known by name, in order that I might not build upon another man's foundation.[21]It is as it is written:

> "Those to whom no report of him came will see him,

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and those who have not heard will understand."

[22]Therefore I was also hindered many times from coming to you.[23]But now, I no longer have any place in these regions, and I have been longing for many years to come to you.
[24]I hope to see you when I pass through there on my way to Spain, and to be helped by you on my journey there, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.[25]But now I am going to Jerusalem, serving God's holy people.
[26]For it was the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution to the poor among God's holy people who are in Jerusalem.[27]Yes, it was their good pleasure, and they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they owe it to the Jews to minister to them with their material things.
[28]Therefore, when I have completed this task and have made sure that they receive all that was collected, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way.[29]I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

[30]Now I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me.[31]Pray that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's holy people.[32]Pray that I may come to you in joy through the will of God, and that I may, together with you, find rest.
[33]May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Romans 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 9-11 and 21 of this chapter. These lines of poetry are from the Old Testament.
Some translations also set prose quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 12.
In Romans 15:14, Paul begins to speak more personally. He shifts from teaching to telling of his personal plans.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Strong/Weak
These terms are used to refer to people who are mature and immature in their faith. Paul teaches that those who are strong in faith need to help those who are weak in faith. (See: faith)

Links:

Romans 15:1 Notes

Romans 15:1

Connecting Statement:
Paul concludes this section about believers' living for others by reminding them how Christ lived.
Now
Translate this using the words your language uses to introduce a new idea into an argument.
we who are strong
Here "strong" refers to the people who are strong in their faith. They believe that God allows them to eat any kind of food. Alternate translation: "we who are strong in faith"
we
This refers to Paul, his readers, and other believers.
the weak
Here "the weak" refers to the people who are weak in their faith. They believe that God does not allow them to eat some kinds of food. Alternate translation: "those who are weak in faith"

Romans 15:2

to build him up
By this, Paul means to strengthen someone's faith. Alternate translation: "to strengthen his faith"

Romans 15:3

it was just as it is written
Here Paul refers to a scripture where Christ
The insults of those who insulted you fell on me
Those who blasphemed God insulted Christ. This is an indirect way of saying that those who slandered Christ were blaspheming God.

Romans 15:4

For whatever was previously written was written for our instruction
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "For in times past, the prophets wrote everything in the Scriptures to teach us"
our ... we
Paul includes his readers and other believers.
in order that through patience and through encouragement of the scriptures
The meanings in the abstract nouns "patience" and "encouragement" can be expressed with the verbs "endure" and "encourage." Alternate translation "in order that by enduring and by being encouraged by the scriptures" or "in order that as we endure and as the scriptures encourage us"

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we would have hope
Here the word "hope" is a person's confident expectation that what he desires really will happen. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." What the hope is about can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "we would confidently wait for God" or "we would confidently expect that God will do what he has promised"
Romans 15:5
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul starts to tell a new part of the teaching.
may ... God ... grant
"I pray that ... God ... will grant"
to be of the same mind with each other
Here to be of the "same mind" is a metonym that means to be in agreement with each other. Alternate translation: "to be in agreement with each other" or "to be united"
Romans 15:6
with one mind you may glorify with one mouth
The phrases "one mind" and "one mouth" both represent people being united together. Alternate translation: "you may be united when you praise"
with one mind
This phrase translates a word that speaks of people who agree with each other and who work together to accomplish a common purpose.
Romans 15:7
receive one another ... received you
"accept one another ... accepted you"
Romans 15:8
For I say
The word "I" refers to Paul.
Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision
Here "the circumcision" is a metonym that refers to the Jews. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "Jesus Christ has become a servant of the Jews"
in order to confirm the promises
This is one of the two purposes for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision.
the promises given to the patriarchs
Here "the fathers" refers to the ancestors of the Jewish people. You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "the promises that God gave to the ancestors of the Jews"
Romans 15:9
and for the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy
This is the second reason for which Christ became a servant of the circumcision. Alternate translation: "and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy"
As it is written
You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "As someone has written in the Scriptures"
sing praise to your name
Here "your name" is a metonym that refers to God. Alternate translation: "sing praise to you"
Romans 15:10
Again it says
"Again the scripture says"
with his people
This refers to God's people. You can make this explicit in your translation. Alternate translation: "with the people of God"
Romans 15:11
praise him
"praise the Lord"
Romans 15:12
root of Jesse
Jesse was the physical father of King David. Alternate translation: "descendant of Jesse"
in him the Gentiles will have hope
Here "him" refers to the descendant of Jesse and King David, the Messiah. The Gentiles will trust him to fulfill his promises. The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "trust" or "confidently wait" or confidently expect." Alternate translation: "the Gentiles will trust in him" or "the Gentiles will confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises"
Romans 15:13
the God of hope
"the God who gives hope" or "the God who causes us to hope." The abstract noun "hope" can be translated here with the verbs "confidently expect" or "confidently wait" or "trust." Alternate translation: "the God who causes us to confidently wait for him to fulfill his promises" or "the God who helps us to trust in him"
fill you with all joy and peace
Here "fill you" is a metaphor for "cause you to have." Alternate translation: "cause you to have great joy and peace" or "give you great joy and peace"
in believing
"as you believe in him"
Romans 15:14
Connecting Statement:
Paul reminds the believers in Rome that God chose him to reach the Gentiles.
I myself am also convinced about you, my brothers
Paul is quite sure that the believers in Rome are honoring each other in their behavior. Alternate translation: "I myself am completely sure that you yourselves have acted toward others in a completely good way"
brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
filled with all knowledge
Paul exaggerates here to emphasize his point. Alternate translation: "filled with sufficient knowledge to follow God"
Romans 15:15
the grace given me by God
Paul speaks of grace as if it were a physical gift that God had given him. God had appointed Paul an apostle even though he had persecuted believers before he decided to follow Jesus. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "the grace that God gave me"
Romans 15:16
the offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable
Paul speaks of the Gentiles as if they were an offering brought to God. Alternate translation: "the Gentiles might

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be like an offering that pleases God"

sanctified by the Holy Spirit

"having been made holy by the Holy Spirit." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which the Holy Spirit made holy" or "which the Holy Spirit dedicated to God"

Romans 15:18

I will not dare to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished

This double negative emphasizes that what Christ has accomplished is the only thing that Paul wants to speak about. Alternate translation: "I will dare to speak only of what Christ has accomplished"

for the obedience of the Gentiles

"so that the Gentiles will obey God"

These are things done by word and action

This can be translated in active form: Alternate translation: Alternate translation: "These are things that Christ has accomplished through what I have said and done"

Romans 15:19

signs and wonders

These two words mean basically the same thing and refer to various kinds of miracles.

so that from Jerusalem, and round about as far as Illyricum

This is from the city of Jerusalem as far as the province of Illyricum, a region close to Italy.

Romans 15:20

In this way, my desire has been to proclaim the gospel, but not where Christ is known by name

Paul only wants to preach to people who have never heard of Christ. Alternate translation: "And so, my desire has been to preach the good news in places where people have never heard of Christ"

in order that I might not build upon another man's foundation

Paul speaks of his ministry work as if he were building a house on a foundation. Alternate translation: "in order that I might not be simply continuing the work that someone else already started. I do not want to be like a man who builds a house on someone else's foundation"

Romans 15:21

It is as it is written

Here Paul refers to what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures. You can translate this in an active form and make the meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "What is happening is like what Isaiah wrote in the scriptures"

Those to whom no report of him came

Here Paul speaks of the "report" or message about Christ as if it were alive and able to move by itself. Alternate translation: "Those whom no one had told the news about him"

Romans 15:22

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the believers in Rome about his personal plans to visit them and asks the believers to pray.

I was also hindered

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "they also hindered me" or "people also hindered me"

Romans 15:23

I no longer have any place in these regions

Paul implies that the reason he no longer has any place is because the Gospel had been preached in all these regions. Alternate translation: "there are no more places in these regions where people have not heard about Christ"

Romans 15:24

I hope to see you

Paul wanted to see the believers in Rome. He did not know if he actually would be able to see them. Alternate translation: "I want to see you" or "I plan to see you"

Spain

This is a roman province west of Rome that Paul desired to visit.

to be helped by you on my journey

Here Paul implies that he wants the Roman believers to provide some financial assistance to him for his journey to Spain. You may have to translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "that you will help me on my journey"

have enjoyed your company

"have enjoyed spending some time with you" or "have enjoyed visiting you"

Romans 15:25

serving God's holy people

You may need to make explicit how Paul was serving the people. Alternate translation: "bringing aid to God's holy people")

Romans 15:26

it was the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia

Here the words "Macedonia" and "Achaia" are synecdoches for the people who live in those areas. Alternate translation: "the believers in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia were happy"

Romans 15:27

Yes, it was their good pleasure

"The believers in Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to do it"

and they owe it to them

"and the people of Macedonia and Achaia owe it to God's people in Jerusalem" or "and they are obligated to help them"

if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things

"since the Gentiles have shared in the spiritual things of the Jerusalem believers

minister to them

The word "minister" here means to serve in a formal way as part of their service to God, much like the priests offered sacrifices in the temple.

with their material things

"by giving them material things"

Romans 15:28

and have made sure that they receive all that was collected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and have safely delivered this offering to them"

Romans 15:29

I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ

This phrase means that Christ will bless Paul and the Roman believers. Alternate translation: "And I know that

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when I visit you, Christ will abundantly bless us"
Romans 15:30
Now
If your language has a way to show that Paul has stopped talking about the good things he is confident of (Romans 15:29) and is now starting to talk about the dangers he faces, use it here.
I urge you
"I encourage you"
brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
you strive
"you work hard" or "you struggle"
Romans 15:31
I may be rescued from those who are disobedient
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God may rescue me from those who are disobedient" or "God may keep those who are disobedient from harming me"
that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's holy people
Here Paul expresses his desire that the believers in Jerusalem will gladly accept the money from the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. Alternate translation: "pray that the believers in Jerusalem will be glad to receive the money that I am bringing them"
Romans 15:33
May the God of peace
The "God of peace" means the God who causes believers to have inner peace. Alternate translation: "I pray that God, who causes all of us to have inner peace, will"

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16 [1]I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is in Cenchreae,[2]in order that you may receive her in the Lord. Do this in a manner worthy of God's holy people, and provide her with whatever help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many and to myself as well.

[3]Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,[4]who for my life risked their own lives. I give thanks to them, and not only I, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.
[5]Greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus my beloved, who is the firstfruit of Asia to Christ.

[6]Greet Mary, who has labored hard for you.
[7]Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and fellow prisoners. They are well known among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.
[8]Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

[9]Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.
[10]Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.
[11]Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

[12]Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, laborers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has labored much in the Lord.
[13]Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.
[14]Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.

[15]Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all God's holy people who are with them.
[16]Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

[17]Now I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned. Turn away from them.[18]For people such as these do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach. By their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent.
[19]For your example of obedience reaches everyone. I rejoice, therefore, over you, but I want you to be wise as to that which is good, and innocent to that which is evil.[20]The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

[21]Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen.[22]I, Tertius, who write this epistle down, greet you in the Lord.
[23]Gaius, the host for me and for the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, with Quartus the brother.[24]1

[25] Now to him who is able to make you strong according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,
according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages

[26] but now has been revealed and made known through the prophetic writings to all nations,
by the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

[27] to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be glory forever. Amen.

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[1]The best ancient copies do not have this phrase: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. So verese 24 is not included in the ULB.

Romans 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul gives personal greetings to some of the Christians in Rome. It was common to end a letter in the ancient Near East with this type of personal greeting.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Because of the personal nature of this chapter, much of the context is unknown. This will make translation more difficult.

Links:

Romans 16:1 Notes

Romans 16:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul now greets many of the believers in Rome by name.

I commend to you Phoebe

"I want you to respect Phoebe"

Phoebe

This is a woman's name.

our sister

The word "our" refers to Paul and all believers. Alternate translation: "our sister in Christ"

Cenchreae

This was a town in Greece.

Romans 16:2

receive her in the Lord

Paul encourages the Roman believers to welcome Phoebe as a fellow believer. Alternate translation: "welcome her because we all belong to the Lord"

in a manner worthy of God's holy people

"in the way that believers should welcome other believers"

provide her with whatever help she may need from you

"help her by giving her whatever she needs"

has been a great help to many and to myself as well

"has supported many people, and she has also supported me"

Romans 16:3

Priscilla and Aquila

Priscilla was the wife of Aquila.

my fellow workers in Christ Jesus

Paul's "fellow workers" are people who also tell others about Jesus. Alternate translation: "who work with me to tell people about Christ Jesus"

Romans 16:5

Greet the church that is in their house

"Greet the believers who meet in their house to worship"

Epaenetus

This is the name of a man.

firstfruit of Asia to Christ

Paul speaks of Epaenetus as if he were a fruit that he harvested. Alternate translation: "first person in Asia to believe in Jesus"

Romans 16:6

Mary

This is a woman's name.

Romans 16:7

Andronicus

This is a man's name.

Junia

"Junia" is a woman's name. Some versions have "Junias," which would be a man's name.

They are well known among the apostles

You can translate this in an active form. "The apostles Alternate translations: "The apostles know them very well"

Romans 16:8

Ampliatus

This is a man's name.

my beloved in the Lord

"my dear friend and fellow believer"

Romans 16:9

Urbanus ... Stachys

These are the names of men.

Romans 16:10

Apelles ... Aristobulus

These are the names of men.

the approved in Christ

The word "approved" refers to someone who has been tested and proved to be genuine. Alternate translation: "whom Christ has approved"

Romans 16:11

Herodion ... Narcissus

These are the names of men.

who are in the Lord

This refers to those who trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "who are believers" or "who belong to the Lord"

Romans 16:12

Tryphaena ... Tryphosa ... Persis

These are women's names.

Romans 16:13

Rufus

This is a man's name.

chosen in the Lord

You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Lord has chosen"

his mother and mine

Paul speaks of the mother of Rufus as if she were his own mother. Alternate translation: "his mother, whom I also think of as my mother"

Romans 16:14

Asyncritus ... Phlegon ... Hermes ... Patrobas ... Hermas

These are men's names.

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brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
Romans 16:15
Philologus ... Nereus ... Olympas
These are men's names.
Julia
The name of a woman. Julia was probably the wife of Philologus.
Romans 16:16
a holy kiss
an expression of affection for fellow believers
All the churches of Christ greet you
Here Paul speaks in a general manner concerning the churches of Christ. Alternate translation: "The believers in all the churches in this area send their greetings to you"
Romans 16:17
Connecting Statement:
Paul gives one last warning to the believers about unity and living for God.
brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
who cause divisions and stumbling
This refers to those who argue and cause others to stop trusting in Jesus. Alternate translation: "who cause believers to argue with one another and to stop having faith in God"
contrary to the teaching that you have learned
"teaching things that do not agree with the truth you have already learned"
Turn away from them
"Turn away" here is an metaphor for "refuse to listen." Alternate translation: "Do not listen to them"
Romans 16:18
Christ, but their own stomach
The words "they serve" are understood from the previous phrase. This can be expressed as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Christ. Rather, they serve their own stomach"
but their own stomach
Here "stomach" is a metonym that refers to physical desires. Serving there stomach represents satisfying their desires. Alternate translation: "but they only want to satisfy their own selfish desires"
By their smooth and flattering speech
The words "smooth" and "flattering" mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing how these people are deceiving believers. Alternate translation: "By saying things that seem to be good and true"
they deceive the hearts of the innocent
Here "hearts" is a metonym for the minds and inner beings of people. Alternate translation: "they deceive the innocent believers"
innocent
This refers to those who are simple, inexperienced, and naive. Alternate translation: "those who innocently trust them" or "those who do not know these teachers are fooling them"
Romans 16:19
For your example of obedience reaches everyone
Here Paul speaks of the Roman believers' obedience as if it were a person who could go to people. Alternate translation: "For everyone has heard how you obey Jesus"
innocent to that which is evil
"not involved in doing evil things"
Romans 16:20
The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet
To say that a person will crush their enemy under their feet means that the person will have complete victory over their enemy. Here Paul speaks of the victory over Satan as if the Roman believers were trampling an enemy under their feet. Alternate translation: "Soon God will give you peace and complete victory over Satan"
Romans 16:21
Connecting Statement:
Paul gives greetings from the believers who are with him.
Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater
These are men's names.
Romans 16:22
Tertius, who write this epistle down
Tertius is the man who wrote down what Paul spoke.
greet you in the Lord
"greet you as a fellow believer"
Romans 16:23
Gaius ... Erastus ... Quartus
These are men's names.
the host
This refers to Gaius, the person in whose house Paul and his fellow believers gathered for worship.
the treasurer
This is a person who takes care of the money for a group.
Romans 16:25
Connecting Statement:
Paul closes with a prayer of blessing.
Now
Here the word "now" marks the closing section of the letter. If you have a way of doing this in your language, you can use it here.
to make you strong
"to make your faith strong"
according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ
"by the good news that I have preached about Jesus Christ"
according to the revelation of the mystery that had been kept secret for long ages
Paul says that God has revealed previously hidden truths to the believers. He speaks of these truths as if they were a secret. You can translate this in an active form. Alternate translation: "because God has revealed to us believers the secret that he was keeping for long ages"
for long ages
since the beginning of time
Romans 16:26
but now has been revealed and made known through the prophetic writings to all nations, by the command of the eternal God
The verbs "revealed" and "made known" mean basically the same thing. Paul uses both of them to emphasize his point. You can combine these words and translate this in an active

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form. Alternate translation: "but the eternal God has now made known to all the nations through the prophetic writings"

to bring about the obedience of faith

Here "obedience" and "faith" are abstract nouns. You can use the verbs "obey" and "trust" in your translation. You may need to make explicit who will obey and trust. Alternate translation: "so that all nations will obey God because they trust in him"

Romans 16:27

to the only wise God ... be glory forever. Amen

Here "through Jesus Christ" refers to what Jesus did. To give "glory" means to praise God. Alternate translation: "Because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we will praise forever the one who alone is God and who alone is wise. Amen"

Introduction to 1 Corinthians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 1 Corinthians

Divisions in the church (1:10-4:21) Moral sins and irregularities (5:1-13) Christians taking other Christians to court (6:1-20) Marriage and related matters (7:1-40) Misuse of Christian liberty; food sacrificed to idols; fleeing idolatry; women's head coverings (8:1-13; 10:1-11:16) Paul's rights as an apostle (9:1-27) The Lord's Supper (11:17-34) The gifts of the Holy Spirit (12:1-31) Love (13:1-13) The gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy and languages (14:1-40) The resurrection of believers and the resurrection of Christ (15:1-58) Closing: the contribution for Christians in Jerusalem, requests, and personal greetings (16:1-24)

Who wrote the Book of 1 Corinthians?

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul started the church that met in Corinth. He was staying in the city of Ephesus when he wrote this letter.

What is the Book of 1 Corinthians about?

1 Corinthians is a letter that Paul wrote to the believers who were in the city of Corinth. Paul had heard that there were problems among the believers there. They were arguing with each other. Some of them did not understand some of the Christian teachings. And some of them were behaving badly. In this letter, Paul responded to them and encouraged them to live in a way that pleased God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "First Corinthians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the city of Corinth like?

Corinth was a major city located in ancient Greece. Because it was near the Mediterranean Sea, many travelers and traders came to buy and sell goods there. This resulted in the city having people from many different cultures. The city was famous for having people who lived in immoral ways. The people worshipped Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. As part of the ceremonies honoring Aphrodite, her worshipers had sexual intercourse with temple prostitutes.

What was the problem with meat sacrificed to idols?

Many animals were slaughtered and sacrificed to the false gods in Corinth. Priests and worshipers kept some of the meat. Much of the meat was sold in markets. Many Christians disagreed with each other over whether it was right for them to eat this meat, because it had been dedicated to a false god. Paul writes about this problem in 1 Corinthians.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in 1 Corinthians in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, 1 Corinthians ULB uses the following principles:

Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God considers Christians to be sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact is that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless, faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULB uses "holy," "holy God," "holy ones," or "holy people." (See: 1:2; 3:17) Sometimes the meaning in a passage indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 6:1, 2; 14:33; 16:1, 15) Sometimes the meaning in the passage implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "set apart," "dedicated to," "reserved for," or "sanctified." (See: 1:2; 6:11; 7:14, 34)

The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What is the meaning of "flesh?"

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Paul frequently used the terms "flesh" or "fleshly" to refer to Christians who did sinful things. However, it is not the physical world that is evil. Paul also described Christians who lived in a righteous way as "spiritual." This is because they did what the Holy Spirit taught them to do. (See: flesh and righteous and spirit)

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:2, 30, 31; 3:1; 4:10, 15, 17; 6:11, 19; 7:22; 9:1, 2; 11:11, 25; 12:3, 9, 13, 18, 25; 14:16; 15:18, 19, 22, 31, 58; 16:19, 24. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God. These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 Corinthians?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. Translators are advised to follow the modern versions of the Bible. However, if in the translators' region there are Bibles that read according to older versions of the Bible, the translators can follow those. If so, these verses should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that they were probably not original to 1 Corinthians.

"Therefore glorify God with your body." Some older translations read "Therefore glorify God with your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (6:20) "I did this even though I myself was not under the law" (9:20). Some older versions leave this passage out. "for the sake of conscience—the conscience of the other man." Some older translations read "for the sake of conscience: for the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord: the conscience of the other man." (10:28) "and that I give my body to be burned" (13:3). Some older translations read, "and that I give my body so that I might boast." "But if anyone does not recognize this, let him not be recognized" (14:38). Some older translations read, "But if anyone is ignorant of this, let him be ignorant."

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1 Corinthians

1

[1]Paul, called by Christ Jesus to be an apostle by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

[2]to the church of God at Corinth, those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy people, together with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is their Lord and ours:
[3]May grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4]I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace of God that Christ Jesus gave to you.[5]He has made you rich in every way, in all speech and with all knowledge,[6]just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed as true among you.
[7]Therefore you lack no spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.[8]He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.[9]God is faithful, who called you into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

[10]Now I urge you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and that there be no divisions among you. I urge that you be joined together with the same mind and by the same purpose.[11]For I have been informed concerning you, my brothers, by Chloe's people that there are factions among you.
[12]I mean this: Each one of you says, "I am with Paul," or "I am with Apollos," or "I am with Cephas," or "I am with Christ."[13]Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?
[14]I thank God that I baptized none of you, except Crispus and Gaius.[15]This was so that no one would say that you were baptized into my name.[16](I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know if I baptized any others.)
[17]For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel—not with clever speech, in order that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power.

[18]For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. But among those who are being saved, it is the power of God.[19]For it is written,

> "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.
> I will set aside the understanding of the intelligent."

[20]Where is the wise person? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this world? Has not God turned the wisdom of

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the world into foolishness?[21]Since the world in its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of preaching.
[22]For Jews ask for miraculous signs and Greeks seek wisdom.[23]But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.
[24]But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, we preach Christ as the power and the wisdom of God.[25]For the foolishness of God is wiser than people, and the weakness of God is stronger than people.

[26]Look at your calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise according to the flesh. Not many of you were powerful. Not many of you were of noble birth.[27]But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame what is strong.
[28]God chose what is low and despised in the world. He even chose things that are regarded as nothing, to bring to nothing things that are held as valuable.[29]He did this so that no flesh would have a reason to boast before him.
[30]Because of what God did, now you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God. He became our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.[31]As a result, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

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1 Corinthians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first three verses are a greeting. In the ancient Near East, this was a common way of starting a letter.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 19, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Disunity
In this chapter, Paul scolds the church for being divided and for following different apostles. (See: apostle)
Spiritual gifts
Spiritual gifts are specific supernatural abilities to help the church. The Holy Spirit gives these gifts to Christians after they come to believe in Jesus. Paul lists spiritual gifts in Chapter 12. Some scholars believe the Holy Spirit gave some of these gifts only in the early church to help establish the developing church. Other scholars believe all the gifts of the Spirit are still available to help all Christians throughout the church history. (See: faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idioms
In this chapter, Paul refers to the return of Christ using two different phrases: "the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Rhetorical questions
Paul uses rhetorical questions to scold the Corinthians for dividing into factions and for relying on human wisdom.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Stumbling block
A stumbling block is a rock people stumble over. Here it represents the difficulty Jews have in believing that God allowed his Messiah to be crucified.

Links:

1 Corinthians 1:1 Notes 1 Corinthians intro

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1 Corinthians 1:1
Paul
Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. Alternate translation: "I, Paul"
Sosthenes our brother
This indicates that both Paul and the Corinthians knew Sosthenes. Alternate translation: "Sosthenes, the brother you and I know"
1 Corinthians 1:2
to the church of God at Corinth
Your language may have a particular way of introducing the intended audience. Alternate translation: "am writing this letter to you in Corinth who believe in God"
those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus
Here "sanctified" refers to people who have been set apart as God's people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to those whom Christ Jesus has set apart for God" or "to those whom God has set apart for himself because they belong to Christ Jesus"
called to be holy people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has called to be holy people"
together with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
Possible meanings are 1) this phrase tells who else is called to be holy, or 2) this phrase tells who else this letter is written to.
who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

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The word "name" here is a metonym for person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "who call on the Lord Jesus Christ"

their Lord and ours

The word "ours" includes Paul's audience. Jesus is the Lord of Paul and the Corinthians and all the churches.

1 Corinthians 1:3

General Information:

Paul and Sosthenes wrote this letter to the Christians who belonged to the church in Corinth. Unless otherwise noted, such words as "you" and "your" refer to Paul's audience and so are plural.

1 Corinthians 1:4

Connecting Statement:

Paul describes the believers' position and fellowship in Christ as they wait for his coming.

because of the grace of God that Christ Jesus gave to you

Paul speaks of grace as though it were a physical object that Jesus gives Christians as a gift. Alternate translation: "because Christ Jesus has made it possible for God to be kind to you"

1 Corinthians 1:5

He has made you rich

Possible meanings are 1) "Christ has made you rich" or 2) "God has made you rich."

made you rich in every way

Paul is speaking in general terms. Alternate translation: "made you rich with all kinds of spiritual blessings"

in all speech

God has enabled you to tell others about God's message in many ways.

all knowledge

God has enabled you to understand God's message in many ways.

1 Corinthians 1:6

the testimony about Christ has been confirmed as true among you

Possible meanings are 1) "you saw for yourselves that what we had said about Christ was true" or 2) "other people learned from seeing how you now live that what we and you say about Christ is true."

1 Corinthians 1:7

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true,"

you lack no spiritual gift

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "you have every spiritual gift"

the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ

Possible meanings are 1) "the time when God will reveal the Lord Jesus Christ" or 2) "the time when our Lord Jesus Christ will reveal himself."

1 Corinthians 1:8

you will be blameless

There will be no reason for God to condemn you.

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, who called ... our Lord

"God, who called ... our Lord, will do everything he has said he will do"

his Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

1 Corinthians 1:10

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Corinthian believers that they are to live in unity with each other and that the message of the cross of Christ, not baptism by people, is what saves.

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

"Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "by means of our Lord Jesus Christ"

that you all agree

"that you live in harmony with one another"

that there be no divisions among you

"that you do not divide into separate groups among yourselves"

be joined together with the same mind and by the same purpose

"live in unity, agree with other, and work together to accomplish the same things"

1 Corinthians 1:11

Chloe's people

This refers to family members, servants, and others who are part of the household of which Chloe, a woman, is the head.

there are factions among you

"you are in groups that quarrel one with another"

1 Corinthians 1:12

Each one of you says

Paul is expressing a general attitude of division.

1 Corinthians 1:13

Is Christ divided?

Paul used a question to emphasize that there is only Christ, so it does not make sense for Christians to be divided among themselves. Alternate translation: "Christ is certainly not divided!" or "There is only one Christ!"

Was Paul crucified for you?

Paul used a question to emphasize that it was Christ, not Paul or Apollos, who was crucified. This can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "It certainly was not Paul whom they put to death on the cross for your salvation!"

Were you baptized into the name of Paul?

Paul used a question to emphasize that we all are baptized into the name of Christ. This can also be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "It was not into the name of Paul that people baptized you!"

into the name of Paul

"In the name of" here is a metonym for "by the authority of." Alternate translation: "by Paul's authority"

1 Corinthians 1:14

I baptized none of you, except

"among you I baptized only"

Crispus

He was a synagogue ruler who became a Christian.

Gaius

He traveled with the Apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 1:15

This was so that no one would say that you were baptized into my name

Here "name" represents "authority." This means Paul did

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not baptize others because they may claim that they became Paul's disciples. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For some of you might have claimed that I baptized you to make you my disciples"
1 Corinthians 1:16
the household of Stephanas
This refers to the family members and slaves in the house where Stephanas, a man, was the head.
1 Corinthians 1:17
Christ did not send me to baptize
This means that baptism was not the primary goal of Paul's ministry.
not with clever speech, in order that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power
The phrase "in order ... would not" can be stated in positive form, and "be emptied" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not with clever speech, because clever speech would empty the cross of its power" or "not with clever speech, because this would cause the cross of Christ to lose its power"
in order that the cross of Christ would not be emptied of its power
Paul speaks of God's power to save people who trust in Christ as if the cross on which Christ died had power. The cross being emptied of its power represents people not recognizing God's power to save them through Christ's death. If Paul were to use clever speech, people might pay more attention to his clever speech than to Christ's death. Alternate translation: "in order that people might recognize God's power to save them through Jesus's death on the cross" or "because clever speech would distract people from God's power as shown in the cross"
1 Corinthians 1:18
Connecting Statement:
Paul emphasizes God's wisdom rather than man's wisdom.
the message about the cross
"the preaching about the crucifixion" or "the message of Christ's dying on the cross"
is foolishness
"is senseless" or "is silly"
to those who are perishing
"dying." This refers to dying in rebellion against God.
it is the power of God
"it is God working powerfully in us"
1 Corinthians 1:19
I will set aside the understanding of the intelligent
"I will confuse intelligent people" or "I will make the plans that intelligent people make completely fail"
1 Corinthians 1:20
Where is the wise person? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this world?
Paul emphasizes that truly wise people are nowhere to be found. Alternate translation: "Compared with the wisdom of the gospel, there are no wise people, no scholars, no debaters!"
the scholar
a person who is recognized as someone who has studied a great deal
the debater
a person who argues about what he knows or who is skilled in such arguments
Has not God turned the wisdom of the world into foolishness?
Paul uses this question to emphasize what God has done to the wisdom of this world. Alternate translation: "God has shown that everything they call wisdom is really foolishness"
1 Corinthians 1:21
those who believe
Possible meanings are 1) "all who believe the message" or 2) "all who believe in Christ."
1 Corinthians 1:23
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to Paul and other Bible teachers.
Christ crucified
"about Christ, who died on a cross"
a stumbling block
Just as a person can stumble over a block on a road, so the message of salvation through the crucifixion of the Christ keeps Jews from believing in Jesus. Alternate translation: "not acceptable" or "very offensive"
1 Corinthians 1:24
to those whom God has called
"to the people God calls"
we preach Christ
"we teach about Christ" or "we tell all people about Christ"
we preach Christ as the power and the wisdom of God
Possible meanings are 1) "we preach that God acted powerfully and wisely by sending Christ to die for us" or "we preach that through Christ God has shown how strong and wise he is."
the power ... of God
Another possible meaning is that Christ is powerful and it is through Christ that God saves us.
the wisdom of God
Another possible meaning is that God shows the content of his wisdom through Christ.
1 Corinthians 1:25
the foolishness of God is wiser than people, and the weakness of God is stronger than people
Possible meanings are 1) Paul is speaking ironically about God's foolishness and weakness. Paul knows God is not foolish or weak. Alternate translation: "what seems to be the foolishness of God is wiser than people's wisdom, and what seems to be the weakness of God is stronger than the people's strength" or 2) Paul is speaking from the point of view of the Greek people who may think God is foolish or weak. Alternate translation: "what people call God's foolishness is really wiser than what people call wisdom, and what people call God's weakness is really stronger than people's strength"
1 Corinthians 1:26
Connecting Statement:
Paul emphasizes the believer's position before God.
Not many of you
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Very few of you"
wise according to the flesh
"wise according to human standards" or "what most people would call wise"

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of noble birth
"special because your family is important"
1 Corinthians 1:27
God chose ... wise. God chose ... strong
Paul repeats many of the same words in two sentences that mean almost the same thing to emphasize the difference between God's way of doing things and how people think God should do them.
God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise
"God chose to use the things that the world thinks are foolish to shame those whom the world thinks are wise"
God chose what is weak in the world to shame what is strong
"God chose to use things that the world thinks are weak to shame the things that the world thinks are strong"
1 Corinthians 1:28
what is low and despised
"the things that are humble and hated"
things that are regarded as nothing
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that which people usually regard as without value"
nothing, to bring to nothing things that are held as valuable
"nothing. He did this so he could show that the things that are held as valuable are really worthless"
things that are held as valuable
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "things that people think are worth money" or "things that people think are worth respect"
1 Corinthians 1:29
He did this
"God did this"
no flesh
The word "flesh" here is a metonym for people, who are made of flesh. Alternate translation: "no people"
1 Corinthians 1:30
Because of what God did
This refers to the work of Christ on the cross.
us ... our
These words refer to Paul, those with him, and the Corinthians.
Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God
Possible meanings are 1) "Christ Jesus, who has made clear to us how wise God is" or 2) "Christ Jesus, who has given us God's wisdom."
1 Corinthians 1:31
Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord
"If a person boasts, he should boast about how great the Lord is"

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2 [1]When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence of speech or wisdom as I proclaimed hidden truths about God.[1][2]For I decided to know nothing when I was among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
[3]And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.[4]And my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power,[5]so that your faith might not be in the wisdom of humans, but in the power of God.

[6]Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this world, or of the rulers of this age, who are passing away.[7]Instead, we speak God's wisdom in hidden truth, the hidden wisdom that God predestined before the ages for our glory.
[8]None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
[9]But as it is written,

"No eye has seen,
    no ear has heard,
no human heart has imagined
    what God has prepared for those who love him"—

[10]For God has revealed these things to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything out, even the deep things of God.[2][11]For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of the person in him? So also, no one knows the deep things of God except the Spirit of God.
[12]But we did not receive the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, so that we might know the things freely given to us by God.[13]We speak about these things in words not taught by human wisdom but by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people.
[14]The unspiritual person does not receive the things that belong to the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. He cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.[15]The one who is spiritual judges all things, but he is not judged by others.

[16] "For who can know the mind of the Lord,
    that he can instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

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[1]A few important and ancient Greek copies read, as I proclaimed the testimony about God.
[2]Some ancient Greek copies say But God. Howevever, following our Greek source, it reads,For God.

1 Corinthians 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 9 and 16. These poetic lines are from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Wisdom

Paul continues the discussion from the first chapter that contrasts human wisdom and God's wisdom. For Paul, human wisdom can be foolish. He says the wisdom from the Holy Spirit is the only true wisdom. Paul uses the phrase "hidden wisdom" when he refers to previously unknown truths. (See: wise and foolish)

Links:

1 Corinthians 2:1 Notes

1 Corinthians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul contrasts human wisdom and God's wisdom. He emphasizes that spiritual wisdom comes from God.

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

1 Corinthians 2:2

I decided to know nothing ... except Jesus Christ

When Paul said that he "decided to know nothing" he exaggerated to emphasize that he decided to focus on and teach about nothing other than Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "I decided to teach nothing ... except Jesus Christ" or "I decided not to teach anything ... except Jesus Christ"

to know nothing when I was among you except Jesus Christ

The double negative here emphasizes that Jesus Christ was the only thing Paul wanted to think about. Alternate translation: "when I was among you to know only Jesus Christ"

1 Corinthians 2:3

I was with you

"I was visiting with you"

in weakness

Possible meanings are: 1) "physically weak" or 2) "feeling like I could not do what I needed to do."

1 Corinthians 2:4

my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom

The ideas in the nouns "message" and "proclamation" can be expressed with the verbs "speak" and "preach." Alternate translation: "I did not speak and preach with persuasive words of wisdom"

persuasive words of wisdom

These are words that sound wise and with which the speaker hopes to cause people to do or believe something. Alternate translation: "wise and pursuasive words"

1 Corinthians 2:5

so that your faith might not be in the wisdom of humans

"so that you will not trust in human wisdom"

but in the power of God

"but your faith will be in the power of God" or "but you will trust in the power of God"

1 Corinthians 2:6

General Information:

Paul interrupts his main argument to explain what he means by "wisdom" and to whom he desires to speak.

Now we do speak

The word "Now" is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Paul begins to explain that true wisdom is God's wisdom.

speak wisdom

The abstract noun "wisdom" can be stated as the adjective "wise." Alternate translation: "speak wise words" or "speak a wise message"

the mature

"mature believers"

1 Corinthians 2:7

before the ages

"before God created anything"

for our glory

"in order to ensure our future glory"

1 Corinthians 2:8

the Lord of glory

"Jesus, the glorious Lord"

1 Corinthians 2:9

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human heart has imagined

This is a triplet referring to all parts of a person to emphasize that no man has ever been aware of the things that God has prepared.

what God has prepared for those who love him

The Lord has created in heaven wonderful surprises for those who love him.

1 Corinthians 2:10

these things

the truths about Jesus and his death on the cross

the Spirit searches everything out

"the Spirit studies everthing accurately" or "the Spirit

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investigates everything." This implies that the Spirit knows everything.

1 Corinthians 2:11

For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of the person in him?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one knows what a person is thinking except the person himself. Alternate translation: "No one knows what a person is thinking except that person's spirit"

spirit of the person

This refers to a person's inner being, his own spiritual nature.

no one knows the deep things of God except the Spirit of God

"only the Spirit of God knows the deep things of God"

1 Corinthians 2:12

General Information:

Here the word "we" includes both Paul and his audience.

freely given to us by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God freely gave to us" or "that God has kindly given us"

1 Corinthians 2:13

interpreting spiritual things to spiritual people

The meaning of the original language here is uncertain. Other translations of the Bible translate this as "interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words."

to spiritual people

Here "spiritual people" refers to those who are led by the Holy Spirit to obey God.

1 Corinthians 2:14

General Information:

Here the word "we" includes both Paul and his audience.

unspiritual person

the non-Christian person, who has not received the Holy Spirit

because they are spiritually discerned

"because understanding these things requires the aid of the Spirit"

1 Corinthians 2:15

The one who is spiritual

"The believer who has received the Spirit"

he is not judged by others

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "others cannot judge him" or "no one can judge him"

1 Corinthians 2:16

For who can know the mind of the Lord, that he can instruct him?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that no one knows the mind of the Lord. No one is as wise as the Lord. Alternate translation: "No one can know the mind of the Lord, so no one can teach him anything he does not already know"

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3 [1]And I, brothers, could not speak to you as to spiritual people, but instead as to fleshly people, as to little children in Christ.[2]I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it; and even now you are not yet ready.
[3]For you are still fleshly. For where jealousy and strife exist among you, are you not living according to the flesh, and are you not walking by human standards?[4]For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another says, "I follow Apollos," are you not merely human beings?[5]Who then is Apollos? Who is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, just as the Lord gave tasks to each.
[6]I planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.[7]So then, neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything. But it is God who gives the growth.
[8]Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his own wages according to his own labor.[9]For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's garden, God's building.

[10]According to the grace of God that was given to me as a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation and another is building on it. But let each man be careful how he builds on it.[11]For no one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid, that is, Jesus Christ.
[12]Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw,[13]his work will be revealed, for the day will reveal it. For it will be revealed in fire. The fire will test the quality of what each one has done.
[14]If anyone's work remains, he will receive a reward;[15]but if anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, as though escaping through fire.

[16]Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you?[17]If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and so are you.

[18]Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a "fool" that he may become wise.[19]For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written,

> "He catches the wise in their craftiness."

[20]And again,

> "The Lord knows that the reasoning of the wise is futile."

[21]For this reason, let no one boast in men. All things are yours,[22]whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. All things are yours,[23]and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

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1 Corinthians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULB does this with the quoted words of verses 19 and 20.

Special concepts in this chapter

Fleshly people

The Corinthian believers were immature because of their unrighteous actions. He calls them "fleshly," meaning acting as nonbelievers. This term is used in opposition to those who are "spiritual." Christians following their "flesh" are acting foolishly. They are following the wisdom of the world. (See: righteous, flesh, spirit and foolish and wise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

There are many metaphors in this chapter. Paul uses "little children" and "milk" to illustrate spiritual immaturity. He uses the metaphors of planting and watering to describe the roles he and Apollos played in growing the church in Corinth. Paul uses other metaphors to help teach spiritual truths to the Corinthians and to help them to understand his teachings.

Links:

1 Corinthians 3:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 3:1

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

spiritual people

people who obey the Spirit

fleshly people

people who follow their own desires

as to little children in Christ

The Corinthians are compared to children very young in age and understanding. Alternate translation: "as to very young believers in Christ"

1 Corinthians 3:2

I fed you milk, not solid food

Babies can only drink milk because they have not grown enough to eat solid food. Paul uses this image as a metaphor to mean that the Corinthians can only understand easy truths. They are not mature enough to understand greater truths.

you are not yet ready

It is implied that they are not ready to understand more difficult teachings. Alternate translation: "you still are not ready to understand the harder teachings about following Christ"

1 Corinthians 3:3

still fleshly

still behaving according to sinful or worldly desires

are you not living according to the flesh, and are you not walking by human standards?

Paul uses questions to rebuke the Corinthians for their sinful behavior. Here "walking" is a metaphor for how a person lives or behaves. Alternate translation: "you should be ashamed because you are behaving according to your sinful desires and you are living according to human standards!"

1 Corinthians 3:4

are you not merely human beings?

Paul uses a question to rebuke the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "you should be ashamed because you are living the same way that people who do not have the Spirit live."

1 Corinthians 3:5

Who then is Apollos? Who is Paul?

Paul is emphasizing that he and Apollos are not the original source of the gospel, and therefore the Corinthians should not follow them. Alternate translation: "It is wrong to form groups to follow Apollos or Paul!" or

Who is Paul?

Paul is speaking of himself as though he were speaking of someone else. Alternate translation: "I am not important!" or "Who am I?"

Servants through whom you believed

Paul answers his own question by saying that he and Apollos are God's servants. Alternate translation: "Paul and Apollos are servants of Christ, and you believed in Christ because we served him"

Servants through whom you believed, just as the Lord gave tasks to each

This can be stated with the understood information. Alternate translation: "We are servants through whom you believed, and to each of us the Lord gave different tasks"

1 Corinthians 3:6

I planted

The knowledge of God is compared to a seed which must be planted in order to grow. Alternate translation: "When I preached God's word to you, I was like one who plants seeds in a garden"

Apollos watered

As seeds need water, faith needs further teaching in order for it to grow. Alternate translation: "and when Apollos continued to teach you God's word, he was like one who waters a garden"

but God gave the growth

As plants grow and develop, so faith and knowledge in God also grow and become deeper and stronger. Alternate translation: "but God caused you to grow" or "but just as God causes plants to grow, he caused you to grow spiritually"

1 Corinthians 3:7

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neither he who plants ... is anything. But it is God who gives the growth
Paul stresses that neither he nor Apollos is responsible for the believers' spiritual growth, but it is God's doing.
it is God who gives the growth
Here to give growth means to cause growth. The abstract noun "growth" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "it is God who causes you to grow"
1 Corinthians 3:8
he who plants and he who waters are one
Paul speaks of telling people the good news and teaching those who have accepted it as if they were planting and watering plants.
are one
Possible meanings are "one" are 1) "united in purpose" or 2) "equal in importance."
wages
an amount of money that a worker receives for his work
1 Corinthians 3:9
we
This refers to Paul and Apollos but not the Corinthian church.
God's fellow workers
Paul considers himself and Apollos as working together.
You are God's garden
Possible meanings are 1) being God's garden represents belonging to God. Alternate translation: "You are like a garden that belongs to God" or 2) being God's garden represents God causing us to grow. Alternate translation: "You are like a garden that God makes grow"
God's building
Possible meanings are 1) being God's building represents belonging to God. Alternate translation: "and you are like a building that belongs to God" or 2) being God's building represents God causing us to become what he wants. Alternate translation: "and you are like a building that God is constructing"
1 Corinthians 3:10
According to the grace of God that was given to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "According to the task that God freely gave me to do"
I laid a foundation
Paul equates his teaching of faith and salvation in Jesus Christ to laying a foundation for a building.
another is building on it
Paul is referring to the person or people who are teaching the Corinthians at that time as if they are carpenters who are constructing the building above the foundation.
let each man
This refers to God's workers in general. Alternate translation: "let each person who serves God"
1 Corinthians 3:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues his metaphor about a foundation.
no one can lay a foundation other than the one that has been laid
The phrase "has been laid" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can lay a foundation other than the one and only foundation"
1 Corinthians 3:12
General Information:
Paul speaks of what builders usually do when constructing a building to describe what the teachers in Corinth are actually doing. Builders usually only use gold, silver, or precious stones as decorations on buildings.
Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw
The building materials used to build a new building are being compared to the spiritual values used to build a person's behavior and activities during his lifetime. Alternate translation: "Whether a person builds with valuable materials that will last or with cheap materials that burn easily"
precious stones
"expensive stones"
1 Corinthians 3:13
his work will be revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will show everyone what the builder has done"
for the day will reveal it
The "day" refers to the time when God will judge everyone. When God shows everyone what these teachers have done, it will be like the sun has come up to reveal what happened during the night.
For it will be revealed in fire. The fire will test the quality of what each one has done
Just as fire will reveal the strengths or destroy the weaknesses of a building, God's fire will judge man's efforts and activities. Alternate translation: "God will use fire to show the quality of his work"
1 Corinthians 3:14
work remains
"work lasts" or "work survives"
1 Corinthians 3:15
if anyone's work is burned up
This is a metaphor for a person's work being shown to have no value. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if the fire destroys anyone's work" or "if the judgement shows that a person's work has no value"
he will suffer loss
The abstract noun "loss" can be expressed with the verb "lose." Alternate translation: "he will lose his reward"
but he himself will be saved, as though escaping through fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but God will save him as though through fire"
as though escaping through fire
This is a simile showing the danger that such a person is in if his works have no value. (See:
1 Corinthians 3:16
Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you?
Paul uses a question to rebuke the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "You act as though you do not know that you are God's temple and the Spirit of God lives in you!"
Do you ... you are ... in you
All instances of "you" in this verse are plural.
1 Corinthians 3:18
Let no one deceive himself
Nobody should believe the lie that he himself is wise in this world.

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in this age

according to the way people who do not believe decide what is wise

let him become a "fool"

"that person should be willing to have people who do not believe call him a fool"

1 Corinthians 3:19

He catches the wise in their craftiness

God traps the people who think they are clever and uses their own schemes to trap them.

1 Corinthians 3:20

The Lord knows that the reasoning of the wise is futile

"The Lord knows that what people who think they are wise plan to do is futile"

futile

useless

1 Corinthians 3:23

you are Christ's, and Christ is God's

"you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God"

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4 [1]This is how a person should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the hidden truths of God.[2]Now what is required of stewards is that they are found to be trustworthy.
[3]But for me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. For I do not even judge myself.[4]I am not aware of any charge being made against me, but that does not justify me. The one who judges me is the Lord.
[5]Therefore do not pronounce judgment about anything before the time, before the Lord comes. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his praise from God.

[6]Now, brothers, I applied these principles to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that from us you might learn the meaning of the saying,
"Do not go beyond what is written."
This is so that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against the other.
[7]For who sees any difference between you and others? What do you have that you did not receive? If you have received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?
[8]Already you have all you could want! Already you have become rich! You began to reign—and that quite apart from us! Indeed, I wish you did reign, so that we could reign with you.[9]For I think God has put us apostles on display as the last in line, in a procession and like men sentenced to death. We have become a spectacle to the world—to angels, and to human beings.
[10]We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we are held in dishonor.[11]Up to this present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed, we are beaten, and we are homeless.
[12]We labor hard, working with our own hands. When we are slandered, we bless. When we are persecuted, we endure.
[13]When we are slandered, we speak with kindness. We have become as the refuse of the world and the filthiest of all things, even till now.

[14]I do not write these things to shame you, but to warn you as my beloved children.[15]For even if you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.[16]So I urge you to be imitators of me.
[17]That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of my ways in Christ, just as I teach them everywhere and in every church.[18]Now some of you have become puffed up, acting as though I were not coming to you.
[19]But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills. Then I will know not merely the words of these who are so puffed up, but I will see their power.[20]For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.[21]What do you want? Should I come to you with a rod or with love and in a spirit of gentleness?

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1 Corinthians 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Pride

Paul contrasts the Corinthians' pride with the apostles' humility. The Corinthian believers had no reason to be proud. All that they had, and all they were, was a gift from God. (See: apostle)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Paul uses many metaphors in this chapter. He describes the apostles as servants. Paul speaks of a victory parade where the apostles are the prisoners who will be killed. He uses a rod to stand for punishment. He calls himself their father because he is their "spiritual father." (See: and spirit)

Irony

Paul uses irony to shame the Corinthians for being proud. The Corinthian believers are reigning but the apostles are

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suffering.
Rhetorical questions
Paul uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to emphasize important points as he teaches the Corinthians.

Links:

1 Corinthians 4:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 4:1
Connecting Statement:
Having just reminded the people not to be proud concerning who had taught them about the Lord and who had baptized them, Paul reminds the Corinthian believers that all believers are to be humble servants.
1 Corinthians 4:2
of stewards is that they
Paul is speaking of himself as if he were speaking about other people. Alternate translation: "of us stewards is that we"
1 Corinthians 4:3
it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you
Paul is comparing the difference between human judgment and God's judgment. Man's judgment is not important compared to God's true judgment upon man.
1 Corinthians 4:4
I am not aware of any charge being made against me
"I have not heard anyone accuse me of doing wrong"
that does not justify me
It would still be possible for Paul to be guilty even if there were no charge against him. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that does not mean that God has declared me innocent"
The one who judges me is the Lord
"It is the Lord who will decide if I am innocent or guilty"
1 Corinthians 4:5
Therefore
"Because what I have just said is true,"
He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the purposes of the heart
Here "bring to light the hidden things of darkness" is a metaphor for making known to everyone things that were done in secret. Here "heart" is a metonym for people's thoughts and intentions. Alternate translation: "Like a light that shines on things in darkness, God will show what people have secretly done and what they secretly planned"
1 Corinthians 4:6
brothers
Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.
for your sakes
"for your welfare"
1 Corinthians 4:7
between you ... do you have that you did not receive ... you have received ... do you boast ... you did not
Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so all instances of "you" here are singular.
For who sees any difference between you and others?
Paul is rebuking the Corinthians who think they are better than those who heard the gospel from someone else. Alternate translation: "For there is no difference between you and others." or "For you are not superior to other people."
What do you have that you did not receive?
Paul uses this question to emphasize that they did not earn the things they have. Alternate translation: "Everything that you have is what you have received." or "God gave to you everything that you have!"
why do you boast as if you did not receive it?
Paul was rebuking them for boasting in what they had. Alternate translation: "you should not boast as if you had not received it." or "you have no right to boast!"
1 Corinthians 4:8
General Information:
Paul uses irony here to shame the Corinthians and make them realize that they are sinning when they are proud of themselves and their teachers.
1 Corinthians 4:9
God has put us apostles on display
Paul expresses two ways that God has put his apostles on display for the world to see.
has put us apostles on display
God has displayed the apostles just like prisoners who are at the end of a Roman military parade and who are humiliated before their execution.
like men sentenced to death
God put the apostles on display like men who are about to be executed.
to the world—to angels, and to human beings
Possible meanings are 1) "the world" consists of both supernatural
1 Corinthians 4:10
We are fools ... in dishonor
Paul uses irony to shame the Corinthians so they will think about what he is saying.
You are held in honor
"People treat you Corinthians as though you were important people"
we are held in dishonor
"people shame us apostles"
1 Corinthians 4:11
Up to this present hour
"Until now" or "Up to now"
we are beaten
This refers to hitting with the hand, not with whips or clubs. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people beat us"
we are homeless
Paul means that they have to move around from place to place. Although they have places to stay, they have no permanent home.

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1 Corinthians 4:12

When we are slandered, we bless

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When people slander us, we bless them" or "When people scorn us, we bless them"

When we are persecuted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When people persecute us"

1 Corinthians 4:13

When we are slandered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When people slander us"

We have become as the refuse of the world

"People began to consider us—and they still consider us—to be the garbage of the world"

the refuse of the world

"the worst kind of garbage in the world"

1 Corinthians 4:14

I do not write these things to shame you, but to warn you

"I do not intend to shame you, but I want to correct you"

my beloved children

Because Paul had led the Corinthians to Christ, they are like his spiritual children.

1 Corinthians 4:15

ten thousand guardians

This is an exaggeration of the number of people guiding them, to emphasize the importance of the one spiritual father. Alternate translation: "very many guardians" or "a large crowd of guardians"

I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel

Paul is emphasizing firstly that his relationship with the Corinthians is most importantly "in Christ," secondly that it came because he told them the good news, and thirdly that he is the one who is like a father to them. Alternate translation: "it was because God joined you to Christ when I told you the good news that I was the one who became your father"

I became your father

Because Paul had led the Corinthians to Christ, he is like a father to them.

1 Corinthians 4:17

my beloved and faithful child in the Lord

"whom I love and whom I teach about the Lord as if he were my own child"

1 Corinthians 4:18

Now

This word indicates that Paul is shifting his topic. Here he begins to rebuke the arrogant behavior of the Corinthian believers.

1 Corinthians 4:19

I will come to you

"I will visit you"

1 Corinthians 4:21

What do you want?

Paul was making a last appeal to the Corinthians, as he has been rebuking them for the errors they had made. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you want to happen now."

Should I come to you with a rod or with love and in a spirit of gentleness?

Paul is offering the Corinthians two opposing attitudes he could use when approaching them. Alternate translation: "If you want, I can come to punish you, or I can come to show you how much I love you by being gentle with you."

of gentleness

"of kindness" or "of tenderness"

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5 [1]We heard a report that there is sexual immorality among you, a kind of immorality that is not even permitted among
the pagans: A man has his father's wife.[2]You are puffed up! Should you not mourn instead, so that the one who did this
deed might be removed from among you?
[3]For even though I am absent in body, I am present in spirit. I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just
as though I were there.[4]When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power
of our Lord Jesus is present,[5]deliver this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved
on the day of the Lord.
[6]Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole loaf?[7]Cleanse yourselves of the old yeast
so that you may be a new batch of dough, unleavened, just as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been
sacrificed.[8]So let us then celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of bad behavior and wickedness. Instead,
let us celebrate with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

[9]I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.[10]In no way did I mean the immoral people of
this world, or the greedy, or swindlers, or idolaters, since to stay away from them you would need to go out of the world.
[11]But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother but who is living in sexual immorality,
or who is greedy, or is an idolater, or is verbally abusive, or is a drunkard, or a swindler. Do not even eat a meal with such
a person.[12]For how am I involved with judging those who are outside the church? Instead, are you not to judge those who
are inside the church?[13]But God judges those who are on the outside.
"Remove the evil person from among you."

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1 Corinthians 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The

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ULB does this with the quoted words of verse 13.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Euphemisms

Paul uses euphemisms to describe sensitive topics. This chapter deals with sexual immorality of one church member. (See: and fornication)

Metaphor

Paul uses an extended comparison that contains many metaphors. Yeast represents evil. The loaf probably represents the whole congregation. The unleavened bread represents living purely. So the whole passage means: Don't you know that a little evil will affect the whole congregation? So get rid of the evil so you can live purely. Christ has been sacrificed for us. So let us be sincere and truthful and not wicked and behaving badly. (See:, evil, unleavenedbread, purify, and passover)

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to emphasize important points as he teaches the Corinthians.

Links:

1 Corinthians 5:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul now specifically states about what sin of theirs he has heard, and how the Corinthian believers are proud of their acceptance of that man and his sin.

that is not even permitted among the pagans

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that not even the Gentiles permit"

A man has his father's wife

"A man among you is commiting adultery with his father's wife"

father's wife

the wife of his father, but probably not his own mother

1 Corinthians 5:2

Should you not mourn instead ... among you?

This rhetorical question is used to scold the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "You should mourn over this instead ... among you!"

the one who did this deed might be removed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you can remove from among you the one who did this deed"

1 Corinthians 5:3

I am present in spirit

"I am with you in spirit." Being with them in spirit represents caring about them or wanting to be with them. Alternate translation: "I care about you" or "I want to be with you"

I have already passed judgment on the one who did this

Possible meanings are 1) "I have decided what you should do with the one who did this" or 2) "I have found the person who did this guilty"

1 Corinthians 5:4

When you are assembled

"When you are together" or "When you meet together"

in the name of our Lord Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) the name of the Lord Jesus is a metonym that represents his authority. Alternate translation: "with the authority of our Lord Jesus" or 2) being assembled in the Lord's name implies meeting together to worship him. Alternate translation: "to worship our Lord Jesus"

1 Corinthians 5:5

deliver this man over to Satan

This means make the man leave the Christian community so that he will no longer be protected from Satan. Alternate translation: “hand this man over to Satan by sending him away from the Christian community”

for the destruction of the flesh

Possible meanings are 1) "flesh" refers to his physical body. Alternate translation: "so that Satan may harm his body" or 2) "flesh" is a metaphor for the sinful nature. Alternate translation: "so that his sinful nature will be destroyed" or "so that he will not continue to live according to his sinful nature"

so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God may save his spirit on the day of the Lord"

1 Corinthians 5:6

Your boasting is not good

"Your boasting is bad"

Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole loaf?

Paul uses this proverb to mean that a small part of something affects the whole thing. In this case, one person who is sinning can harm the entire Christian community.

Do you not know that a little yeast ... loaf?

Here Paul uses a rhetorical question to teach his audience. Alternate translation: "You know that a little yeast ... loaf." or "A little yeast ... loaf."

1 Corinthians 5:7

Cleanse yourselves of the old yeast so that you may be a new batch of dough, unleavened

Paul uses the proverb from 5:6 to teach his audience. Here "old yeast" is a metaphor for the sins that the people were committing. "Unleavened dough" is the type of bread that God told the Israelites was acceptable to eat when celebrating Passover. Paul is telling his audience to stop sinning so that they may be acceptable to God.

Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed

As the Passover lamb covered the sins of Israel by faith each year, so did Christ's death cover the sins of all who trust in Christ by faith for eternity. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord has sacrificed Christ, our Passover lamb"

1 Corinthians 5:8

not with the old yeast, the yeast of bad behavior and wickedness ... the

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unleavened bread of sincerity and truth
Paul continues using the proverb from 5:6 to teach his audience. Here "yeast" is a metaphor for sin, and "unleavened bread" is metaphor for behaviors acceptable to God.
1 Corinthians 5:10
the immoral people of this world
This means unbelievers who have chosen to live immoral lives.
the greedy
"those who are greedy" or "those who are willing to be dishonest to get what others have"
swindlers
This means people who cheat to get others' property.
you would need to go out of the world
"you would need to avoid all people"
1 Corinthians 5:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells them how to treat believers in the church who refuse to be corrected for their involvement in sexual immorality or other obvious sins.
anyone who is called
"anyone who calls himself"
brother
Here this means a fellow Christian, either a man or a woman.
1 Corinthians 5:12
how am I involved with judging those who are outside the church?
Paul uses a question to emphasize that he is not the one to judge people outside the church. This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I am not the one who should judge people who do not belong to the church."
are you not to judge those who are inside the church?
Paul is using a question to scold the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "you should know that you are the ones who should judge those who are inside the church."

6 [1]When one of you has a dispute against another, does he dare to bring a lawsuit before the unrighteous rather than
before God's holy people?[2]Do you not know that God's holy people will judge the world? If then you will judge the
world, are you not able to settle matters of little importance?[3]Do you not know that we will judge the angels? How much
more, then, can we judge matters of this life?
[4]If then you have to make judgments that pertain to daily life, why do you lay such cases as these before those who have
no standing in the church?[5]I say this to your shame. Is there no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between
brothers?[6]But one brother brings a lawsuit against another brother—and this before unbelievers!
[7]The fact that you have lawsuits with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather suffer the wrong? Why not
rather allow yourselves to be cheated?[8]But you yourselves do wrong and you cheat, and you do this to your own brothers!
[9]Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually
immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to homosexual acts, nor men who perform homosexual acts,
[10]nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor slanderers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.[11]That is what
some of you were like. But you have been cleansed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of the
Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

[12]"Everything is lawful for me," but not everything is profitable. "Everything is lawful for me," but I will not be mastered
by any of them.[13]"Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," but God will do away with both of them. The body
is not intended for sexual immorality. Instead, the body is for the Lord, and the Lord will provide for the body.
[14]God both raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.[15]Do you not know that your bodies are members of
Christ? Should I then take the members of Christ and join them to a prostitute? May it not be!
[16]Do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? As scripture says, "The two will
become one flesh."[17]But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.
[18]Run away from sexual immorality! Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral
person sins against his own body.
[19]Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives within you, whom you have from God? Do you
not know that you are not your own?[20]For you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God with your body and in
your spirit, which belong to God.

1 Corinthians 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Lawsuits
Paul teaches that a Christian should not take another Christian to court before a non-Christian judge. It is better to be cheated. Christians will judge the angels. So they should be able to solve problems among themselves. (See: judge)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor
The temple of the Holy Spirit is an important metaphor. It refers to the place where the Holy Spirit stays and is worshiped.
Rhetorical questions

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Paul uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to emphasize important points as he teaches the Corinthians.

Links:

1 Corinthians 6:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how believers are to settle disagreements with other believers.

dispute

in this case a legal complaint, argument, or disagreement

does he dare ... holy people?

Paul is angry because the Corinthians are doing a great wrong by taking their disputes with each other to the civil court. Alternate translation: "it is wrong for him to dare ... holy people." or "he should fear God and not ... God's holy people."

to bring a lawsuit before the unrighteous rather than before God's holy people

to ask unrighteous people, rather than God's holy people, to judge who is right and who is wrong

1 Corinthians 6:2

Do you not know that God's holy people will judge the world?

Paul uses a question to shame the Corinthians for their behavior. Alternate translation: "You act like you do not know that God's holy people will judge the world."

If then you will judge the world, are you not able to settle matters of little importance?

Because they will be given greater responsibility later, they should be responsible for lesser things now. Alternate translation: "You will judge the world in the future, so you should be able to settle this small matter now."

1 Corinthians 6:3

judge matters of this life

"stop arguments about things that have to do with this life"

Do you not know that we will judge the angels?

Paul is surprised that they do not seem to know. Alternate translation: "You know that we will judge the angels."

we

Paul includes himself and the Corinthians.

How much more, then, can we judge matters of this life?

Because they will be given greater responsibility later, they should be responsible for lesser things now. Alternate translation: "Because we know we will judge the angels, we can also be sure that God will enable us to judge matters in this life."

1 Corinthians 6:4

If then you have to make judgments that pertain to daily life

"If you are called upon to make decisions about daily life" or "If you must settle matters that are important in this life"

do you lay such cases as these before those who have no standing in the church?

Possible meanings are that 1) this is a rhetorical question and Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for laying their cases before people of no standing in the church. Alternate translation: "you should not lay such cases as these before those who have no standing in the church." or 2) this is a command to lay their cases before even people of no standing in the church, rather than to people outside of the church. Alternate translation: "lay cases such as these even before people in the church who have no standing, not before people outside of the church."

1 Corinthians 6:5

to your shame

"to your dishonor" or "to show how you have failed in this matter"

Is there no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between brothers?

Paul is shaming the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "You should be ashamed that you cannot find a wise believer to settle arguments between brothers"

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

dispute

argument or disagreement

1 Corinthians 6:6

But one brother brings a lawsuit against another brother—and this before unbelievers

"But brothers who have disputes with each other ask judges who do not believe in Christ to make decisions for them" or "It is bad that brothers have such bad disputes with each other that they go to court; it is even worse that those courts are run by unbelievers"

brother brings a lawsuit against another brother

Here "brother" means fellow Christian, including both men and women.

brings a lawsuit

asks the civil court to judge the matter

and this before unbelievers

Possible meanings are 1) "and the brothers have unbelieving judges make decisions for them" or 2) "and unbelievers in the community see brothers disputing with one another"

1 Corinthians 6:7

is already a defeat

"is already a failure"

Why not rather suffer the wrong? Why not rather allow yourselves to be cheated?

Paul continues to shame the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "It would be better to let others wrong you and cheat you than to take them to court."

1 Corinthians 6:8

your own brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

1 Corinthians 6:9

Do you not know that ... kingdom of God?

Paul emphasizes that they should already know this truth. Alternate translation: "You already know that ... kingdom of God."

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inherit

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

inherit the kingdom of God

God will not judge them as righteous at the judgment, and they will not enter eternal life.

nor men who submit to homosexual acts, nor men who perform homosexual acts

Both of these phrases refer to men who have sex with other men.

1 Corinthians 6:10

thieves

people who steal from others

the greedy

people who are willing to use evil means to take others' property

1 Corinthians 6:11

you have been cleansed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has cleansed you"

you have been sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has set you apart for himself"

you have been justified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has made you right with him"

in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ

"Name" here is a metonym for the power and authority of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "by the power and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Corinthians 6:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Corinthian believers that God wants them pure because Christ has bought them with his death. Their bodies are now God's temple. He does so by saying what the Corinthians might say and then correcting them.

"Everything is lawful for me," but

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is saying what some Corinthians might be thinking. Alternate translation: "People say, 'I am allowed to do anything,' but" or 2) Paul is saying what he thinks is true. Alternate translation: "I am allowed to do anything, but"

but not everything is profitable

Paul is answering whoever says, "Everything is lawful for me." Alternate translation: "but not everything is good for me"

I will not be mastered by any of them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will not allow these things to rule over me like a master"

1 Corinthians 6:13

"Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," but God will do away with both of them

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is correcting what some Corinthians might be thinking, "food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," by answering that God will do away with both the stomach and food or 2) Paul actually agrees that "food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food," but he is adding that God will do away with both of them.

Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food

One possible meanings is that the speaker is speaking indirectly of the body and sex, but you should translate this literally as "stomach" and "food."

do away with

"destroy"

1 Corinthians 6:14

raised the Lord

"caused the Lord to live again"

1 Corinthians 6:15

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?

The word translated as "members" refers to parts of a body. Our belonging to Christ is spoken of as if we were parts of his body. We belong to him so much that even our bodies belong to him. Paul uses this question to remind the people of something they should already know. Alternate translation: "You should know that your bodies belong to Christ."

Should I then take the members of Christ and join them to a prostitute?

May it not be!

Paul uses this question to emphasize how wrong it is for someone who belongs to Christ to go to a prostitute. Alternate translation: "I am part of Christ. I will not take my body and join myself to a prostitute!" or "We are parts of Christ's body. We must not take our bodies and join ourselves to prostitutes!"

May it not be!

"That should never happen!" or "We must never do that!"

1 Corinthians 6:16

Do you not know that ... her?

Paul begins to teach the Corinthians by emphasizing a truth that they already know. "I want to remind you that ... her."

he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her

This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when a man joins his body to the body of a prostitute, it is as if their bodies become one body"

1 Corinthians 6:17

he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him

This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the Lord joins his spirit to the spirit of a person, it is as if their spirits become one spirit"

1 Corinthians 6:18

Run away from

Paul speaks of a person rejecting sexual sin as if that person were running away from danger. Alternate translation: "Get away from"

immorality! Every other sin that a person commits is outside the body, but

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is showing that sexual sin is especially bad because it is not only against others but against the sinner's own body or 2) Paul is quoting what some Corinthians were thinking. Alternate translation: "immorality! Some of you are saying, 'Every sin that a person commits is outside the body,' but I say that"

sin that a person commits

"evil deed that a person does"

1 Corinthians 6:19

Do you not know ... God? Do you not know that you are not your own?

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Paul is continuing to teach the Corinthians by emphasizing what they already know. Alternate translation: "I want to remind you ... God and that you are not your own."

your body

the body of each individual Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit

temple of the Holy Spirit

A temple is dedicated to divine beings, and it is also where they dwell. In the same way, the bodies of believers are like temples because the Holy Spirit lives within them.

1 Corinthians 6:20

For you were bought with a price

God paid for the freedom of the Corinthians from the slavery of sin. This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "God paid for your freedom"

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true,"

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7 [1]Now concerning the issues you wrote about: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman."[2]But because of temptations for many immoral acts, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband.
[3]The husband should fulfill his duty to have sexual relations with his wife, and in the same way the wife to her husband.
[4]It is not the wife who has authority over her own body, it is the husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.
[5]Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement and for a specific period of time. Do this so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then you should come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
[6]But I say these things to you as a concession and not as a command.[7]I wish that everyone were as I am. But each one has his own gift from God. One has this kind of gift, and another that kind.
[8]To the unmarried and to widows I say that it is good for them if they remain unmarried, as I am.[9]But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better for them to marry than to burn with passion.
[10]Now to the married I give this command—not I, but the Lord—the wife should not separate from her husband[11](but if she does separate from her husband, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and the husband should not divorce his wife.
[12]But to the rest I say—I, not the Lord—that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and if she is content to live with him, he should not divorce her.[13]If a woman has an unbelieving husband, and if he is content to live with her, she should not divorce him.[14]For the unbelieving husband is set apart because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is set apart because of the brother. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but actually they are set apart.
[15]But if the unbeliever departs, let him go. In such cases, the brother or sister is not bound to their vows. God has called us to live in peace.[16]For how do you know, woman, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, man, whether you will save your wife?
[17]However, as the Lord has given each one his portion, let each one walk as God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches.[18]Was anyone circumcised when he was called to believe? He should not try to appear uncircumcised. Was anyone uncircumcised when he was called to faith? He should not be circumcised.[19]For it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that matters. What matters is obeying the commandments of God.
[20]Each one should remain in the calling he was in when God called him to believe.[21]Were you a slave when God called you? Do not be concerned about it. But if you can become free, take advantage of it.[22]For someone who is called by the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freeman. In the same way, the one who was free when he was called to believe is Christ's slave.[23]You have been bought with a price, so do not become slaves of men.[24]Brothers, in whatever situation he was in when he was called, let each one remain with God in that.

[25]Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord. But I give my opinion as one who, by the Lord's mercy, is trustworthy.[26]Therefore, I think that because of the disaster that is coming, it is good for a man to remain as he is.
[27]Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek a divorce. If you are free of a wife, do not seek a wife.[28]But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. But those who do will have many kinds of fleshly trouble, and I want to spare you from this.
[29]But this I say, brothers: The time is short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none.[30]Those who weep should act as though they were not weeping, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they did not possess anything,[31]and those who use the world should not act as though they are using it to the full. For the world in its present form is coming to an end.
[32]I would like you to be free from worries. The unmarried man is concerned about the things of the Lord, how to please him.[33]But the married man is concerned about the things of the world, how to please his wife—[34]he is divided. The unmarried woman or the virgin is concerned about the things of the Lord, how to be set apart in body and in spirit. But the married woman is concerned about the things of the world, how to please her husband.
[35]I say this for your own benefit, and not to put any constraint on you. I say this for what is right, so that you may be devoted to the Lord without any distraction.
[36]But if anyone thinks that he is not treating his virgin with respect—if she is beyond the age of marriage and it must be so—he should do what he wants. He is not sinning. They should marry.[37]But if he is standing firm in his heart, if he is not

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under pressure but can control his own will, and if he has decided in his own heart to do this, to keep his own a virgin, he will do well.[38]So the one who marries his virgin does well, and the one who chooses not to marry will do even better.
[39]A woman is bound to her husband while he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but only in the Lord.[40]Yet in my judgment she would be happier if she lives as she is. And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul begins to answer a series of questions that the Corinthians may have asked him. The first question is about marriage. The second question is about a slave trying to become free, a Gentile becoming a Jew, or a Jew becoming a Gentile.

Special concepts in this chapter

Divorce

Paul says married Christians should not divorce. A Christian married to an unbeliever should not leave their husband or wife. If the unbelieving husband or wife leaves, this is not a sin. Paul advises that, because of the difficult times and because it is near to the time that Jesus will return, it is good to remain unmarried. (See: believe and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Euphemisms

Paul uses many euphemisms to discreetly refer to sexual relations. This is often a sensitive topic. Many cultures do not wish to speak openly about these matters.

Links:

1 Corinthians 7:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 7:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives the believers some specific instructions on marriage.

Now

Paul is introducing a new topic in his teaching.

the issues you wrote about

The Corinthians had written a letter to Paul to ask for answers to certain questions.

"It is good for a man not to touch a woman."

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is quoting what the Corinthians had written. Alternate translation: "you wrote, 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman.'" or 2) Paul is saying what he really thinks. Alternate translation: "my answer is that yes, it is good for a man not to touch a woman."

It is good

"It is most helpful"

for a man

Possible meanings are 1) "a man" refers to a married man. Alternate translation: "a husband" or 2) "a man" refers to any man.

not to touch a woman

Possible meanings are 1) "touch a woman" is a euphemism for having sexual relations. Alternate translation: "not to have sexual relations with his wife for a while" or 2) "touch a woman" is a metonym for marry. Alternate translation: "not to marry"

1 Corinthians 7:2

But because

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is responding to what the Corinthians had written. Alternate translation: "That is true, but because" or 2) Paul is saying what he really thinks.

But because of temptations for many immoral acts, each

"But because Satan tempts people to commit sexual sin, each" or "But we desire to commit sexual sin because of our sinful nature, so each"

1 Corinthians 7:3

fulfill his duty to have sexual relations with his wife

Husbands should regularly have sexual relations with their wives. Alternate translation: "should give to his wife her sexual rights"

in the same way the wife to her husband

The words "should fulfill" and "duty to have sexual relations" are understood from the previous phrase, as is the meaning of the euphemism. Alternate translation: "in the same way, the wife should fulfill her duty to have sexual relations with her husband" or "in the same way, the wife should give to her husband his sexual rights"

1 Corinthians 7:5

Do not deprive each other, except by mutual agreement and for

This double negative emphasizes that mutual agreement is necessary. Alternate translation: "Only if you both agree to deprive each other should you do so, and even then only do so for"

Do not deprive each other

The word "deprive" means to keep from someone something that the other person has the right to receive, in this case marital relations. "Do not refuse to have marital relations with your spouse"

so that you may devote yourselves to prayer

in order to have a period of especially deep prayer

devote yourselves

"commit yourselves"

come together again

"sleep together again"

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because of your lack of self-control
"because after some days, your sexual desires will be harder to keep under control"
1 Corinthians 7:6
I say these things to you as a concession and not as a command
Possible meanings are Paul is telling the Corinthians that he is allowing them, but not commanding them, 1) to marry and sleep together or 2) to stop sleeping together for a time.
1 Corinthians 7:7
were as I am
Either Paul had never married or his wife had died. It is unlikely that he had been through a divorce.
But each one has his own gift from God. One has this kind of gift, and another that kind
"But God enables people to do different things. He enables one person to do one thing and another person to do something different"
1 Corinthians 7:8
the unmarried
"those who are not married"
to widows
"to women whose husbands have died"
it is good
See how you translated this in 1 Corinthians 7:1.
1 Corinthians 7:9
to burn with passion
"to live with the constant desire to sleep with someone"
1 Corinthians 7:10
should not separate from
Paul's readers knew no difference between separating and divorcing. To stop living with someone was to end the marriage. Alternate translation: "should not divorce"
1 Corinthians 7:11
be reconciled to her husband
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "she should make peace with her husband and return to him"
should not divorce
Paul's readers knew no difference between divorcing and simply separating. To do either was to end the marriage. Alternate translation: "should not separate from"
1 Corinthians 7:12
content
willing or satisfied
1 Corinthians 7:14
For the unbelieving husband is set apart because of his wife
Possible meanings are 1) "For God has set apart the unbelieving husband for himself because of his believing wife" or 2) "God treats the unbelieving husband as he would treat a son for the sake of his believing wife"
the unbelieving wife is set apart because of the brother
Possible meanings are 1) "God has set apart the unbelieving wife for himself because of her husband who believes" or 2) "God treats the unbelieving wife as he would treat a daughter for the sake of her husband who believes"
the brother
the believing man or husband
they are set apart
Possible meanings are 1) "God has set them apart for himself" or 2) "God treats them as he would treat his own children"
1 Corinthians 7:15
In such cases, the brother or sister is not bound to their vows
Here "brother" and "sister" refers to a Christian husband or wife. Here "not bound to their vows" is a metaphor that mean the person is not obligated to do what they vowed to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "In such cases, God does not require the believing spouse to continue to obey the marriage vow"
1 Corinthians 7:16
do you know, woman ... you will save your husband ... do you know, man ... you will save your wife
Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so all instances of "you" and "your" here are singular.
how do you know, woman, whether you will save your husband?
Paul uses a question to cause women to think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "you cannot know if you will save your unbelieving husband."
how do you know, man, whether you will save your wife?
Paul uses a question to cause men to think deeply about what he is saying. Alternate translation: "you cannot know if you will save your unbelieving wife."
1 Corinthians 7:17
However
No matter what is true for the people in any of the situations Paul has just been discussing, he addresses the following words to everyone.
as the Lord has given each one his portion
God giving people skills and work to do and guiding the events of their lives is spoken of as if he were dividing physical objects and giving parts out to them. Alternate translation: "as the Lord has assigned each one his life"
each one
"each believer"
let each one walk as God has called him
The word "walk" is a metaphor for "live." Possible meanings of the word "called" are 1) it refers to people responding to the gospel. Alternate translation: "each one should live as he was when he became a Christian." Or 2) it is a metaphor for "commanded" or "instructed." Alternate translation: "each one should live as God has instructed him to" or "each one should follow God's commands as he lives his life"
This is my rule in all the churches
Paul was teaching believers in all the churches to act in this manner.
1 Corinthians 7:18
Was anyone circumcised when he was called to believe? He
Paul was addressing the circumcised ones
Was anyone uncircumcised when he was called to faith? He
Paul was now addressing the uncircumcised ones. Alternate translation: "If someone was uncircumcised when God called him to believe, he"
1 Corinthians 7:20
remain in the calling
Here "calling" refers to the work or social position in which you were involved. Alternate translation: "live and work as you did"

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1 Corinthians 7:21

Were you ... called you? Do not be ... you can become

Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so all instances of "you" and the command "be" here are singular.

Were you a slave when God called you? Do not be concerned

This can be stated as a statement. Alternate translation: "To anyone who was a slave when God called you to believe, I say this: do not be concerned"

1 Corinthians 7:22

the Lord's freeman

This freeman is forgiven by God and therefore free from Satan and sin.

1 Corinthians 7:23

You have been bought with a price

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ bought you by dying for you"

1 Corinthians 7:24

Brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

whatever situation he was in when he was called

"whether he was married or unmarried, slave or free, when he was called"

he was called

You may need to make explicit who called and use an active verb. Alternate translation: "God called him"

called

called to believe in Christians

let each one remain

"each one should remain." That is, each one should remain slave, free, married, or unmarried, as he was when he first believed in Christ.

with God

"as a person responsible to God"

1 Corinthians 7:25

Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord

Paul knows no teaching of Jesus that speaks about this situation. Alternate translation: "The Lord has not commanded me to say anything to people who have never married"

virgins

This is probably a synecdoche for anyone who has never married. Alternate translation: "people who have never married"

I give my opinion

"I tell you what I think"

as one who, by the Lord's mercy, is trustworthy

"because, by the Lord's mercy, I am trustworthy"

1 Corinthians 7:27

General Information:

Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if he were speaking to each person, so all these instances of "you" and the command "do not seek" here are singular.

Are you bound to a wife? Do not ...

Paul uses this question to introduce a possible condition. The question can be translated as a phrase with "if." Alternate translation: "If you are bound to a wife, do not"

bound

married

Do not seek a divorce

"Do not try to divorce her" or "Do try to separate from her"

do not seek a wife

"do not try to get married"

1 Corinthians 7:28

fleshly trouble

The word "fleshly" is a metonym for mortal life. Alternate translation: "trouble in this life"

I want to spare you from this

The word "this" refers to the kinds of worldly trouble that married people might have. Alternate translation: "I want to help you not to have worldly trouble"

virgin

This is probably a synecdoche for anyone who has never married. See how you translated "virgins" in [1 Corinthians 7:25]

1 Corinthians 7:29

The time is short

"There is little time" or "Time is almost gone"

1 Corinthians 7:30

weep

cry or grieve with tears

1 Corinthians 7:31

those who use the world

"those who deal every day with unbelievers"

should not act as though they are using it to the full

"should show by their actions that they have their hope in God"

1 Corinthians 7:32

free from worries

Being "free from" something is an idiom which means having the ability to live without it." Alternate translation: "without needing to worry"

concerned about

"focused on"

1 Corinthians 7:34

he is divided

"he is trying to please God and please his wife at the same time"

The unmarried woman or the virgin

Possible meanings are 1) "virgin" refers only to virgins, while "unmarried woman" could be a divorcée or any other unmarried non-virgin, and 2) "unmarried woman" explains what Paul means by "virgin."

1 Corinthians 7:35

constraint

restriction

may be devoted to

"can concentrate on"

1 Corinthians 7:36

not treating his virgin with respect

"not being kind to his virgin" or "not honoring his virgin"

his virgin

Possible meanings are 1) "the woman whom he promised to marry" or "his fiancée" or 2) "his virgin daughter."

They should marry

Possible meanings are 1) "He should marry his fiancée" or 2) "He should let his daughter get married."

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1 Corinthians 7:37

But if he is standing firm in his heart

Here "standing firm" is a metaphor for deciding something with certainty. Here "heart" is metonym for a person's mind or thoughts. Alternate translation: "But if he has decided firmly in his own mind"

1 Corinthians 7:38

So the one who marries his virgin does well, and the one who chooses not to marry will do even better

Or "So the one who allows his virgin daughter to marry does well, and the one who chooses not to have her marry will do even better." See how you translated "virgin" and "He should marry" in 1 Corinthians 7:36.

1 Corinthians 7:39

A woman is bound to her husband

Here "bound" is a metaphor for a close relationship between people in which they support each other emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Here it means the union of marriage. Alternate translation: "A woman is married to her husband" or "A woman is united with her husband"

while he lives

"for as long as he lives" or "until he dies"

in the Lord

"if the new husband is a believer"

1 Corinthians 7:40

my judgment

"my understanding of God's word"

happier

more contented, more joyful

lives as she is

"remains unmarried"

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8 [1]Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.
[2]If anyone thinks he knows something, that person does not yet know as he should know.[3]But if anyone loves God, that person is known by him.
[4]Therefore, concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol in this world is nothing and that there is no God but one.[5]For even if there were so-called gods, either in heaven or on earth (just as there are many "gods" and many "lords"),[6]yet for us there is only one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things exist, and through whom we exist.

[7]However, this knowledge is not in everyone. Instead, some previously practiced idol worship, and they eat this food as if it were something sacrificed to an idol. Their conscience is thereby defiled because it is weak.
[8]But food will not present us to God. We are not worse if we do not eat, nor better if we do eat it.[9]But take care that your freedom does not become a reason for someone who is weak in faith to stumble.[10]For suppose that someone sees you, who have knowledge, eating a meal in an idol's temple. Is not his weak conscience emboldened to eat what is offered to idols?
[11]So because of your understanding about the true nature of idols, the weaker one, the brother for whom Christ died, is destroyed.[12]Thus, when you sin against your brothers and wound their weak consciences, you sin against Christ.
[13]Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause my brother to fall.

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1 Corinthians 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In Chapters 8-10, Paul answers the question: "Is it acceptable to eat meat that has been sacrificed to an idol?"

Special concepts in this chapter

Meat sacrificed to idols

Paul answers the question about eating meat sacrificed to idols by saying that idols are supposed to be gods but that those gods do not really exist. Therefore nothing is wrong with the meat. Christians are free to eat it. However, someone who does not understand this may see a Christian eating it. They may then be encouraged to eat the meat as an act of worship to the idol.

Links:

1 Corinthians 8:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 8:1

General Information:

"We" means Paul and, though specifically writing to the Corinthian believers, includes all believers.

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers that though idols have no power, believers must be careful not to affect the weaker believers who might think that the believers care about idols if the believers eat food that was sacrificed to idols. He tells believers to be careful with the freedom that they have in Christ.

Now concerning

Paul uses this phrase to move on to the next question the Corinthians had asked him.

food sacrificed to idols

Gentile worshipers would offer grain, fish, fowl, or meat to

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their gods. The priest would burn a portion of it on the altar. Paul is speaking of the portion the priest would give back for the worshiper to eat or sell in the market.

Knowledge puffs up

"Knowledge puffs people up." Here "puffs up" is a metaphor for making someone proud. The abstract noun "knowledge" can be expressed with the verb "know." Alternate translation: "Knowledge makes people proud" or "People who think that they know a lot become proud"

but love builds up

The abstract noun "love" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "but when we love people, we build them up"

love builds up

Building people up represents helping them become mature and strong in their faith. Alternate translation: "love strengthens people" or "when we love people, we strengthen them"

1 Corinthians 8:2

thinks he knows something

"believes he knows everything about something"

1 Corinthians 8:3

that person is known by him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows that person"

1 Corinthians 8:4

General Information:

"We" here refers to all believers and include Paul's audience.

We know that an idol in this world is nothing and that there is no God but one

Paul is probably quoting phrases that some Corinthians used. Being "nothing" represents having no power. Alternate translation: "We all know, as you yourselves like to say, that an idol in this world has no power and that there is no God but one"

1 Corinthians 8:5

so-called gods

"things that people call gods"

many "gods" and many "lords"

Paul does not believe that many gods and many lords exist, but he recognizes that the pagans believe they do.

1 Corinthians 8:6

General Information:

"Us" and "we" here refer to all believers and include Paul's audience.

yet for us there is only one God

"yet we know that there is only one God"

1 Corinthians 8:7

General Information:

Paul is speaking here of "weak" brothers, people who cannot separate food sacrificed to idols from the worship of those idols. If a Christian eats food that has been sacrificed to an idol, weak brothers might think that God will allow them to worship the idol by eating the food. Even if the eater has not worshiped the idol and is simply eating the food, he has still corrupted his weak brothers' conscience.

everyone ... some

"all people ... some people who are now Christians"

defiled

ruined or harmed, especially as regards the person's relationship with God

1 Corinthians 8:8

food will not present us to God

Paul speaks of food as though it were a person who could make God welcome us. Alternate translation: "food does not give us favor with God" or "the food we eat does not make God pleased with us"

We are not worse if we do not eat, nor better if we do eat it

"Some people might think that if we do not eat some things, God will love us less. But they are wrong. Those who think that God will love us more if we do eat those things are also wrong"

1 Corinthians 8:9

someone who is weak

believers not strong in their faith

1 Corinthians 8:10

sees you, who have

Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so these words are singular.

his ... conscience

what he understands to be right and wrong

emboldened to eat

"encouraged to eat"

1 Corinthians 8:11

your understanding

Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so the word "your" here is singular.

the weaker one ... is destroyed

The brother or sister who is not strong in his or her faith will sin or lose his or her faith.

1 Corinthians 8:13

Therefore

"Because what I have just said is true"

if food causes

"Food" here is a metonym for the eating of food. Alternate translation: "if by eating I cause" or "if I, because of what I eat, cause"

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9 [1]Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?[2]If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.
[3]This is my defense to those who examine me:[4]Do we not have the right to eat and drink?[5]Do we not have the right to take along a wife who is a believer, as do the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?[6]Or do only I and Barnabas not have the right to not work at a trade?
[7]Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink milk from it?[8]Do I say these things based on human authority? Does not the law also say this?
[9]For it is written in the law of Moses, "Do not put a muzzle on an ox when it is threshing the grain." Is it really the oxen that God cares about?[10]Is he not speaking about us? It was written for us, because the one who plows should plow in hope,

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and the one who threshes should thresh in the hope of sharing in the harvest.[11]If we sowed spiritual things among you, is it too much for us to reap physical things from you?
[12]If others exercised this right from you, do we not have even more? But we did not claim this right. Instead we endured everything rather than be a hindrance to the gospel of Christ.[13]Do you not know that those who perform sacred duties get their food from the temple? Do you not know that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar?[14]In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living from the gospel.
[15]But I have not claimed any of these rights. And I do not write this so something might be done for me. It would be better for me to die than—No one will make my boast empty![16]For if I preach the gospel, I have no reason for boasting, because I must do this. And woe be to me if I do not preach the gospel!
[17]For if I do this willingly, I have a reward. But if not willingly, I still have a stewardship that was entrusted to me.[18]What then is my reward? That when I preach, I may offer the gospel without charge and so not take full use of my right in the gospel.
[19]For though I am free from all, I became a servant to all, in order that I might win more.[20]To the Jews I became like a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law, I became like one under the law in order to win those under the law. I did this even though I myself was not under the law.[1]
[21]To those outside the law, I became like one outside the law, although I was not outside the law of God myself, but under the law of Christ. I did this so that I may win those outside the law.[22]To the weak I became weak, so that I may win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some.[23]I do all things for the gospel's sake, so that I may participate in its blessings.
[24]Do you not know that in a race all the runners run the race, but that only one receives the prize? So run to win the prize.
[25]Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a wreath that is perishable, but we do it to receive one that is imperishable.[26]Therefore this is how I run, as not without purpose; this is how I box, not as one beating the air.
[27]But I subdue my body and make it a slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself may not be disqualified.

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[1]The ULB has: I did this even though I myself was not under the law. A few important and ancient Greek copies, with other ancient translations, leave this sentence out.

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1 Corinthians 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul defends himself in this chapter. Some people claimed that he was trying to gain financially from the church.

Special concepts in this chapter

Earning money from the church

People accused Paul of just wanting money from the church. Paul answered that he rightfully could get money from the church. The Old Testament taught that those who worked should get their living from their work. He and Barnabas purposefully never used this right and earned their own living.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Paul uses many metaphors in this chapter. These metaphors teach complex truths.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Contextualization

This passage is important because Paul "contextualizes" ministering the gospel to different audiences. This means that Paul makes himself and the gospel understandable without his actions hindering the gospel being received. The translator should take extra care to preserve aspects of this "contextualization" if possible. (See: goodnews)

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to emphasize various points as he teaches the Corinthians.

Links:

1 Corinthians 9:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 9:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how he uses the liberty he has in Christ.

Am I not free?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of the rights he has. Alternate translation: "I am a free person."

Am I not an apostle?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of who he is and the rights he has. Alternate translation: "I am an apostle."

Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of who he is. Alternate translation: "I have seen Jesus our

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Lord."

Are you not my work in the Lord?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of their relationship to him. Alternate translation: "You believe in Christ because I have worked the way the Lord wants me to."

my work

"the result of the work that I have done"

1 Corinthians 9:2

you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord

The word "seal" here is a metaphor for the evidence needed to prove something. Alternate translation: "you are evidence I can use to prove that the Lord has chosen me to be an apostle"

1 Corinthians 9:3

This is my defense ... me:

Possible meanings are 1) the words that follow are Paul's defense or 2) the words in 1 Corinthians 9:1-2 are Paul's defense. Alternate translation: "This is my defense ... me."

1 Corinthians 9:4

Do we not have the right to eat and drink?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to challenge what some people think about him and Barnabas. Alternate translation: "We have the right to receive food and drink from the churches."

we

Here "we" refers to Paul and Barnabas.

1 Corinthians 9:5

Do we not have the right ... Cephas?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to challenge what some people think about him and Barnabas. Alternate translation: "We certainly have the right ... Cephas."

a wife who is a believer

"a believing wife" or "a Christian wife"

1 Corinthians 9:6

Or do only I and Barnabas not have the right to not work at a trade?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to challenge what some people think about him and Barnabas. Alternate translation: "You seem to think that Barnabas and I are the only apostles who have no authority to not work at a trade"

not have the right to not work at a trade

If this double negative causes confusion in your language, you can state it as a simple positive. Alternate translation: "have to work at a trade" or "have to have another job"

1 Corinthians 9:7

Who serves as a soldier at his own expense?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "We all know that no soldier has to buy his own supplies." or "We all know that every soldier receives his supplies from the government."

Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "We all know that the one who plants a vineyard will be allowed to eat its fruit." or "No one expects that someone who plants a vineyard will be forbidden to eat its fruit."

Or who shepherds a flock and does not drink milk from it?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "We all know that those who shepherd flocks may drink milk from the flocks"

1 Corinthians 9:8

Do I say these things based on human authority? Does not the law also say this?

Paul uses these rhetorical questions as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "I am not saying these things based on human authority. The law also says this."

1 Corinthians 9:9

Do not put

Moses was speaking to the Israelites as if they were one person, so this command is singular.

Is it really the oxen that God cares about?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "God does not only care about the oxen."

1 Corinthians 9:10

Is he not speaking about us?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "Instead, God was certainly speaking about us."

should plow in hope

"should plow, expecting to receive something for his work" or "should plow, expecting to share in the harvest"

should thresh in the hope of sharing in the harvest

"should thresh, expecting to share in the harvest"

sharing in the harvest

"receiving some of the crop that is collected"

1 Corinthians 9:11

If we sowed spiritual things among you, is it too much for us to reap physical things from you?

Here "sowed spiritual things" and "reap physical things" are metaphors meaning Paul and Barnabas taught the Corinthians about Christ and spiritual things, so they deserve for the church to support them for their work. Alternate translation: "If we taught you about Christ and spiritual truths, is it too much for us to receive money from you for our work?

is it too much for us to reap physical things from you?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "then it should not be too much for us to reap physical things from you."

1 Corinthians 9:12

If others exercised ... you, do we not have even more?

Paul uses this rhetorical question as a part of his argument to show that he and Barnabas have the right to be supported by the church for their work. Alternate translation: "If others exercised ... you, then we have that

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right even more."

If others exercised this right

Paul and the Corinthians both know that others exercised the right. Alternate translation: "Since others exercised this right"

others

other workers of the gospel

this right

the right to have the believers at Corinth provide for the living expenses of those who told them the good news

be a hindrance to

"be a burden to" or "stop the spread of"

1 Corinthians 9:13

Do you not know that those who perform sacred duties get their food from the temple?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of what they know so he can add new information. Alternate translation: "I want to remind you that those who perform sacred duties get their food from the temple."

perform sacred duties

"perform sacred duties in the temple" or "work in the temple"

Do you not know that those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to remind the Corinthians of what they know so he can add new information. Alternate translation: "I want to remind you that those who serve at the altar get some of the foods and meat that people offer on the altar."

1 Corinthians 9:14

get their living from the gospel

The words "the gospel" here are a metonym for 1) the people to whom they tell the gospel, "receive their food and other things they need from those to whom they teach the good news," or 2) the result of working to tell the gospel, "receive their food and other things they need because they work to tell the good news."

1 Corinthians 9:15

these rights

"these things that I deserve"

so something might be done for me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so you will do something for me"

It would be better for me to die than—No one will make my boast empty!

Paul seems to have started a new sentence before finishing the first one. Some modern translations read, "It would be better for me to die than to have someone deprive me of this boast."

It would be better for me to

"I would rather." Paul is speaking of what he desires, not necessarily of what God thinks is best.

make my boast empty

"take away this opportunity I have to boast" or "make it so I have nothing to boast about"

1 Corinthians 9:16

I must do this

"I must preach the gospel"

woe be to me if

"may I suffer misfortune if"

1 Corinthians 9:17

if I do this willingly

"if I preach willingly" or "if I preach because I want to"

But if not willingly

The words "I do this" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "But if I do this unwillingly" or "But if I do this even though I do not want to" or "But if I do this because I was forced to do it"

I still have a stewardship that was entrusted to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I still must complete this work that God entrusted to me" or "I still must do this work that God gave me to complete"

1 Corinthians 9:18

What then is my reward?

Paul is preparing them for the new information he is going to give them. Alternate translation: "This is my reward."

That when I preach, I may offer the gospel without charge

"My reward for preaching is that I can preach without receiving payment"

offer the gospel

"preach the gospel"

so not take full use of my right in the gospel

"so not ask people to support me as I travel and preach"

1 Corinthians 9:19

I am free from all

Paul uses the image of freedom from slavery to talk about not being obligated to others. Alternate translation: "I am free of obligation to all" or "Though I am not obligated to anyone"

I became a servant to all

Paul uses the image of slavery to talk about his willingness to meet others' needs. Alternate translation: "I became like a servant to all" or "I became willing to serve all"

win more

"persuade others to believe" or "help others trust in Christ"

1 Corinthians 9:20

I became like a Jew

"I acted like a Jew" or "I practiced Jewish customs"

I became like one under the law

"I became like one committed to following the demands of the Jewish leadership, accepting their understanding of the Jewish scriptures"

1 Corinthians 9:21

To those outside the law, I became like one outside the law

To be "outside the law" is a metaphor that means not to be obligated to obey the law. "The "law" refers to the law of Moses, and "those outside the law" refers to the Gentiles. Alternate translation: "To Gentiles, who are not obligated to follow the law of Moses, I became like them"

although I was not outside the law of God myself, but under the law of Christ

The phrases "not outside the law" and "under the law" are metaphors that mean to be obligated to obey the law. Alternate translation: "although I was not one of those who is not obligated to obey the law of God, but I was obligated to obey the law of Christ"

1 Corinthians 9:24

Connecting Statement:

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Paul explains that he uses the liberty he has in Christ to discipline himself.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run the race, but that only one receives the prize?

Paul is reminding the Corinthians of what they know so he can add new information. Alternate translation: "Let me remind you that although all runners run the race, only one runner receives the prize."

run the race

Paul compares living the Christian life and working for God to running a race and being an athlete. As in a race, the Christian life and work require strict discipline on the part of the runner, and, as in a race, the Christian has a specific goal.

run to win the prize

Paul is speaking of the reward God will give his faithful people as if it were a prize given for an athletic contest.

1 Corinthians 9:25

a wreath that is perishable ... one that is imperishable

A wreath is a bunch of leaves twisted together. Wreaths were given as prizes to athletes who won games and races. Paul speaks of eternal life as if it were a wreath that would never dry up.

1 Corinthians 9:26

run ... box

These are both metaphors for living the Christian life and serving God by working as hard as one can to succeed and so gain something good and to avoid failing and so losing something good.

run

This is running in a race to win a prize.

run, as not without purpose

If this double negative would confuse the reader in your language, you can state it as a simple positive. Alternate translation: "run: with purpose"

box

to beat another person with the fists in a sporting contest

1 Corinthians 9:27

I myself may not be disqualified

This passive sentence can be rephrased to an active form. The judge of a race or competition is a metaphor for God. Alternate translation: "the judge will not disqualify me" or "God will not say that I have failed to obey the rules"

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10 [1]I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea.[2]All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,[3]and all ate the same spiritual food.[4]All drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.
[5]But God was not well pleased with most of them, and their corpses were scattered about in the wilderness.[6]Now these things were examples for us, so we would not be those who lust for evil things as they lusted.
[7]Do not be idolaters, as some of them were. This is as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."[8]Let us not commit sexual immorality, as many of them did. In one day, twenty-three thousand people died because of it.
[9]Neither let us put Christ to the test, as many of them tested him and were destroyed by snakes.[10]Also do not grumble, as many of them did and were destroyed by an angel of death.
[11]Now these things happened to them as examples for us. They were written for our instruction—for us on whom the end of the ages has come.[12]Therefore let anyone who thinks he stands be careful that he does not fall.[13]No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to all humanity. Instead, God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability. With the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, so that you may be able to endure it.

[14]Therefore, my beloved ones, run away from idolatry.[15]I speak to you as people who have understanding, so you may judge what I say.[16]The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?[17]Because there is one loaf of bread, we who are many are one body. We all take of one loaf of bread together.
[18]Look at the Israel that is according to the flesh. Are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?[19]What am I saying then? That an idol is anything? Or that food sacrificed to an idol is anything?
[20]But I say about the things they sacrifice, that they offer these things to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons![21]You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot participate at the table of the Lord and the table of demons.[22]Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he is?

[23]"Everything is lawful," but not everything is profitable. "Everything is lawful," but not everything builds people up.[24]No one should seek his own good. Instead, each one should seek the good of his neighbor.
[25]Eat everything sold in the market without asking questions of conscience.[26]For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness of it."[27]If an unbeliever invites you to eat a meal, and you wish to go, eat whatever is set before you without asking questions of conscience.
[28]But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience—[1][29]the conscience of the other man, I mean, and not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience?[30]If I partake of the meal with gratitude, why am I being insulted for that for which I gave thanks?

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[31]Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.[32]Be blameless both to Jews and to Greeks, and to the church of God.[33]In the same way I try to please all people in all things. I do not seek my benefit, but that of the many. I do this so that they may be saved.

[a]Some ancient copies of the Greek text add, For the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord. But the best ancient copies of the Greek text do not have this. Many scholars see this addition as a duplication of verse 26.

1 Corinthians 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 8-10 together answer the question: "Is it acceptable to eat meat that has been sacrificed to an idol?"
In this chapter, Paul uses the exodus to warn people not to sin. Then he returns to discussing meat offered to idols. He uses the Lord's Supper as an example. (See: sin)

Special concepts in this chapter

Exodus

Paul uses the experiences of Israel leaving Egypt and roaming the desert as a warning to the believers. Although the Israelites all followed Moses, God did not allow most of them to enter the Promised Land. Some worshiped an idol, some tested God, and some grumbled. Paul warns Christians not to sin. We can resist temptation because God provides a way of escape. (See: promisedland)

Eating meat sacrificed to idol

Paul discusses meat offered to idols. Christians are allowed to eat, but doing so may hurt others. So when buying meat or eating meat with a friend, do not ask if it has been offered to idols. But if someone tells you it has been offered to idols, don't eat it for the sake of that person. Do not offend anyone. Seek to save them instead. (See: save)

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses many rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to emphasize important points as he teaches the Corinthians.

Links:

1 Corinthians 10:1 Notes

1 Corinthians 10:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Corinthians of the example of their ancient Jewish fathers' experiences with immorality and idolatry.

our fathers

Paul is referring to the time of Moses in the book of Exodus when Israel fled through the Red Sea as the Egyptian army pursued them. Here "our" refers to Paul and includes the Corinthians. The Corinthians were not acutal descendants of the Israelites who escaped Egypt. Paul means that all Christians are spiritual descendants of Israel. Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

were all under the cloud

When the Israelites left Egypt, God traveled with them in a pillar of cloud. Alternate translation: "were all led by God who was in the cloud"

passed through the sea

This sea is known by two names, the Red Sea and the Sea of Reeds.

passed through

"walked through" or "traveled through"

1 Corinthians 10:2

All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea

To be "baptized into Moses" means to become united with or to become a follower of Moses through baptism. The Israelites were not baptized in the way that Christians were baptized in the New Testament. Paul is comparing Christian being baptized as followers of Christ with the Israelites, who became followers of Moses as they walked across the Red Sea with God leading them in the cloud. Alternate translation: "It was like all of them were baptized when they followed Moses across the sea as God led them in the cloud"

All were baptized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All received baptism"

1 Corinthians 10:3

all ate the same spiritual food

Here "spiritual food" refers to the manna that God supernaturally supplied to the Israelites while they traveled in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "All ate the same food that God supernaturally provided from heaven"

1 Corinthians 10:4

drank the same spiritual drink ... spiritual rock

Here "spiritual drink" refers to the water that God supernaturally caused to flow out of a rock. Alternate translation: "drank the same water that God supernaturally caused to come out of the rock ... supernatural rock"

that rock was Christ

The "rock" was a literal, physical rock, so it would be best to translate this literally. If your language cannot say that a rock "was" a person's name, treat the word "rock" as a metonym for the power of Christ that worked through the rock. Alternate translation: "it was Christ who worked through that rock"

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1 Corinthians 10:5
not well pleased
"displeased" or "angry"
most of them
"most of the Israelite fathers" or "most of our ancestors"
their corpses were scattered about
"God scattered their dead bodies around" or "God killed them and scattered their bodies"
in the wilderness
the desert land between Egypt and Israel through which the Israelites wandered for 40 years
1 Corinthians 10:7
idolaters
people who worship idols
sat down to eat and drink
"sat down to eat a meal"
play
Paul is quoting the Jewish scriptures. His readers would have understood from this one word that the people were worshiping an idol by singing and dancing and engaging in sexual activities, not simply enjoying innocent fun.
1 Corinthians 10:8
In one day, twenty-three thousand people died
"God killed 23,000 people in one day"
because of it
"because they committed those unlawful sexual acts"
1 Corinthians 10:9
as many of them tested him
or "as many of them did"
tested him and were destroyed by snakes
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "tested him. As a result, snakes destroyed them"
1 Corinthians 10:10
grumble
"complain"
did and were destroyed by an angel of death
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did. As a result, an angel of death destroyed them"
1 Corinthians 10:11
these things happened to them
"God punished our ancestors"
examples for us
Here "us" refers to all believers.
the end of the ages
"the last days"
1 Corinthians 10:12
does not fall
does not sin or reject God
1 Corinthians 10:13
No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to all humanity
This can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "Every temptation that has overtaken you is common to all humanity" or "The temptations that affect you are temptations that all people experience"
He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability
"He will only allow you to be tempted in ways that you are strong enough to resist"
will not let you be tempted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not allow anyone to tempt you"
1 Corinthians 10:14
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues to remind them to be pure and to stay away from idolatry and immorality as he talks about communion, which represents the blood and body of Christ.
run away from idolatry
Paul is speaking of the practice of worshiping idols as if it were a physical thing like a dangerous animal. Alternate translation: "do all you can to get away from worshiping idols"
1 Corinthians 10:16
The cup of blessing
Paul is speaking of God's blessing as though it were the wine in the cup used in the ritual of the Lord's Supper.
that we bless
"for which we thank God"
is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?
Paul is reminding the Corinthians of what they already know, that the cup of wine that we share represents us sharing in the blood of Christ. Alternate translation: "we share in the blood of Christ."
The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?
Paul is reminding the Corinthians of what they already know. Alternate translation: "We share in the body of Christ when we share bread."
a sharing in
"taking part in" or "equally participating with others in"
1 Corinthians 10:17
loaf of bread
a single unit of baked bread that is sliced or broken into pieces before it is eaten
1 Corinthians 10:18
the Israel that is according to the flesh
This refers to people who belonged to Israel because they were descendants of Israel. Alternate translation: "the natural Israel" or "the physical Israel" or "the people of Israel"
Are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?
Paul uses a question to remind the Corinthians of what they already know so that he can give them new information. Alternate translation: "Those who eat the sacrifices share in the activities and the blessings of the altar."
1 Corinthians 10:19
What am I saying then? That an idol is anything? Or that food sacrificed to an idol is anything?
Paul uses these rhetorical questions to clear up any confusion the Corinthians might have about what he meant. The second and third questions are elliptical, and the understood words can be provided. Alternate translation: "I am not saying that an idol is anything or that food sacrificed to an idol is anything." or "I am not saying that an idol is a real god or that food that has been sacrificed to idols has any power." or "What am I saying then? Am I saying that an idol is anything? Or am I saying that food sacrificed to an idol is anything?"
1 Corinthians 10:20
the things they sacrifice

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You may need to make explicit that the word "they" refers to Gentile pagans. Alternate translation: "the things that the Gentile pagans sacrifice"

1 Corinthians 10:21

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons

Drinking from the cup of the Lord is a symbol of being united to the Lord, and drinking from the cup of demons is a symbol of being united to demons. It is impossible to be united to both the Lord and demons. Alternate translation: "You cannot be united to the Lord by drinking from his cup and also be united to demons by drinking from their cup

You cannot drink the cup

Here "cup" is a metonym for the wine in the cup. Alternate translation: "You cannot drink from the cup" or "You cannot drink the wine from the cup"

the cup of the Lord

This refers to the cup of wine that people drink from when celebrating the Lord's supper.

the cup of demons

This refers to anything people might drink during a meal dedicated to demons.

You cannot participate at the table of the Lord and the table of demons

Here "participate at the table" refers to eating a meal together. The "table of the Lord" refers to a meal that people eat to honor the Lord. Alternate translation: "You cannot eat together at the table of the Lord and at the table of demons" or "You cannot join in eating to honor the Lord and join in eating to honor demons"

1 Corinthians 10:22

Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to remind the people of what they already know. Alternate translation: "Surely you do not want to provoke the Lord to jealousy."

provoke

to anger or irritate

Are we stronger than he is?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to remind the people of what they already know. Alternate translation: "You are not stronger than he is."

1 Corinthians 10:23

Connecting Statement:

In the rest of this chapter, Paul reminds the Corinthians that though they are free, they must care about others and not do things that could lead others to sin.

Everything is lawful

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is saying what some Corinthians might be thinking. Alternate translation: "People say, 'I am allowed to do anything'" or 2) Paul is saying what he thinks is true. Alternate translation: "I am allowed to do anything." This should be translated as in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

not everything is profitable

"some things are not profitable" or "some things do not help people"

not everything builds people up

Building people up represents helping them become mature and strong in their faith. See how you translated "builds up" in [1 Corinthians 8:1]

1 Corinthians 10:25

Eat everything sold in the market

Or "You may eat anything sold in the market." Paul is granting permission, not issuing a command.

without asking questions of conscience

Questions of conscience are questions that a person asks because he wants to know if something is sinful or not. In this case, a person might ask if the food at the market was offered to idols; if he thinks that it is sinful to eat food sacrificed to idols, he would feel guilty about eating it. Paul is saying that the person does not need to ask if the food has been sacrificed to an idol or not. Alternate translation: "without asking questions that could make the conscience feel guilty" or "without asking questions about whether it is sinful to eat it"

1 Corinthians 10:26

General Information:

This quotation is from the Psalms in the Old Testament.

and the fullness of it

"and everything in it." This means that everything on the earth belongs to the Lord. By saying this, Paul shows that even meat at the market that was offered to idols belongs to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:27

without asking questions of conscience

See how you translated a similar phrase in 1 Corinthians 10:25.

1 Corinthians 10:28

General Information

Some translations put verse 28 and the first part of verse 29 in parentheses because the second part of verse 29 appears to give a reason for what Paul taught in verses 25-27 about not asking questions of conscience.

This has been offered in sacrifice

Here being offered in sacrifice means that it was offered to idols. This was the part of the meat that the worshiper was allowed to bring home after killing an animal as a sacrifice to an idol.

for the sake of the one who informed you

This is the first reason not to eat the meat. Alternate translation: "for the good of the one who informed you"

and for the sake of conscience

This is the second reason not to eat the meat. Alternate translation: "and because of conscience" or "and in order not to cause concerns about whether or not it is sinful"

1 Corinthians 10:29

General Information

Some translations put verse 28 and the first part of verse 29 in parentheses because the second part of verse 29 appears to give a reason for what Paul taught in verses 25-27 about not asking questions of conscience.

the conscience of the other man, I mean, and not yours

Here Paul explains whose conscience he was writing about in verse 28.

For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience?

This is a rhetorical question, and it can be expressed as a statement. The verb "be judged" can be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "For another person's conscience should not judge my freedom."

my freedom

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The abstract noun "freedom" can be expressed with the adjective "free." Alternate translation: "my being free" or "what I do because I am free"

1 Corinthians 10:30

If I partake of the meal with gratitude

The meaning of the abstract noun "gratitude" can be expressed with the phrase "give thanks." It can be made explicit that the thanksgiving is to God. Alternate translation: "If I give thanks to God for the food when I share in the meal"

why am I being insulted for that for which I gave thanks?

This is a rhetorical question, and it can be expressed as a statement. The verb "be insulted" can be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "I should not be insulted for that for which I gave thanks." or "People should not be insult me for eating food that I have thanked God for." (See: and)

1 Corinthians 10:32

Be blameless both to Jews and to Greeks, and to the church of God

"Be blameless in the opinion of both Jews and Greeks, and of the church of God" or "Make sure that neither Jews nor Greeks nor the church of God can accuse you of doing wrong"

1 Corinthians 10:33

please all people

"make all people glad"

I do not seek my benefit, but that of the many

"I do not do things I desire for myself, but things that help as many people as possible"

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11 [1]Be imitators of me, just as I am an imitator of Christ.
[2]Now I praise you because you remember me in everything. I praise you because you hold firmly to the traditions just as I delivered them to you.[3]Now I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, that a man is the head of a woman, and that God is the head of Christ.[4]Any man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.
[5]But any woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head. For it is the same thing as if her head were shaved.[6]For if a woman will not cover her head, she should cut her hair short. If it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or for her to shave her head, let her cover her head.
[7]For a man should not have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man.[8]For man was not made from woman. Instead, woman was made from man.
[9]For neither was man created for woman. Instead, woman was created for man.[10]This is why the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.
[11]Nevertheless, in the Lord, the woman is not independent from the man, nor is the man independent from the woman.
[12]For as the woman comes from the man, so does the man come from the woman. And all things come from God.
[13]Judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?[14]Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor for him?[15]Does not nature teach you that if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair has been given to her as a covering.[16]But if anyone wants to argue about this, we do not have any other practice, nor do the churches of God.

[17]But in the following instructions, I do not praise you. For when you come together, it is not for the better but for the worse.[18]For in the first place, I hear that when you come together in the church, there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.[19]For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.
[20]For when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat.[21]When you eat, each one eats his own food before the others have their meal. One is hungry, and another becomes drunk.[22]Do you not have houses to eat and to drink in? Do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I will not praise you for this!
[23]For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread.[24]After he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this to remember me."
[25]In the same way he took the cup after supper, and he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it, to remember me."[26]For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
[27]Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.[28]Let a person examine himself first, and in this way let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.
[29]For he who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment to himself.[30]That is why many among you are weak and ill, and some of you have fallen asleep.
[31]But if we examine ourselves, we will not be judged.[32]But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned along with the world.
[33]Therefore, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.[34]If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. And about the other things you wrote, I will give instructions when I come.

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1 Corinthians 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This is the beginning of a new section of the letter (Chapters 11-14). Paul now talks about proper church services. In this chapter, he deals with two different problems: women in the church services (verses 1-16) and the Lord's Supper (verses 17-34).

Special concepts in this chapter

Proper conduct in a church service

Disorderly women

Paul's instructions here are debated among scholars. There may have been women who were abusing their Christian freedom and causing disorder in the church by going against established cultural customs. The disorder that their actions created would have caused him to be concerned.

The Lord's Supper

There were problems in how the Corinthians were handling the Lord's Supper. They did not act in a unified manner. During the feast celebrated along with the Lord's Supper, some of them ate their own food without sharing. Some of them got drunk while the poor people remained hungry. Paul taught that the believers dishonored Christ's death if they participated in the Lord's Supper while they were sinning or while they were in broken relationships with each other. (See: sin and reconcile)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses rhetorical questions to scold the people for their unwillingness to follow the rules for worship he has suggested.

The head

Paul uses "head" as a metonym for authority in verse 3 and also to refer to a person's actual head in verse 4 and following. Since the verses are so close together, it is likely that Paul intentionally used "head" in this way. This would show that the ideas in these verses are connected.

Links:

1 Corinthians 11:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 11:1

Connecting Statement:

After reminding them to follow him in the same way that he follows Christ, Paul gives some specific instructions about how women and men are to live as believers.

1 Corinthians 11:2

you remember me in everything

"you think of me at all times" or "you always try act as I would want you to act" The Corinthians had not forgotten who Paul was or what he had taught them.

you hold firmly

Paul speaks of the Corinthians believing what he taught them and obeying his commands as if he had given them a solid object that they were holding on to while someone tried to take it away. Alternate translation: "you believe and practice"

1 Corinthians 11:3

Now I want

Possible meanings are 1) "Because of this, I want" or 2) "However, I want."

is the head of

has authority over

a man is the head of a woman

Possible meanings are 1) "men are to have authority over women" or 2) "the husband is to have authority over the wife"

1 Corinthians 11:4

with his head covered

This means to have some kind of garment on his head that covers his hair.

dishonors his head

Possible meanings are 1) "brings disgrace on himself" or 2) "brings disgrace on Christ, who is his head."

1 Corinthians 11:5

woman who prays ... dishonors her head

Possible meanings are 1) "woman who prays ... brings disgrace on herself" or 2) "wife who prays ... brings disgrace on her husband."

with her head uncovered

That is, without the cloth that was worn on the top of the head and that covered the hair and shoulders.

as if her head were shaved

as if she had removed all the hair on her head with a razor

1 Corinthians 11:6

If it is disgraceful for a woman

It was a mark of disgrace or humiliation for a woman to have her hair shaved off or cut short.

cover her head

place on her head the cloth that was worn on the top of the head and that covered the hair and shoulders

1 Corinthians 11:7

should not have his head covered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "must not cover his head" or 2) "does not need to cover his head"

glory of the man

Just as man reflects God's greatness, the woman reflects the man's character.

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1 Corinthians 11:8
For man was not made from woman. Instead, woman was made from man
God made the woman by taking a bone from the man and making the woman from that bone. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not make the man from the woman. Instead, he made the woman from the man"
1 Corinthians 11:9
For neither ... for man
These words and all of 1 Corinthians 11:8 could be put in parentheses so that the reader can see that the word "this" in "this is why ... the angels" clearly refers back to the words "the woman is the glory of the man" in 1 Corinthians 11:7.
1 Corinthians 11:10
have a symbol of authority on her head
Possible meanings are 1) "to symbolize that she has man as her head" or 2) "to symbolize that she has the authority to pray or prophesy."
1 Corinthians 11:11
Nevertheless, in the Lord
"While what I have just said is all true, the most important thing is this: in the Lord"
in the Lord
Possible meanings are 1) "among Christians, who belong to the Lord" or 2) "in the world as created by God."
the woman is not independent from the man, nor is the man independent from the woman
This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "the woman depends on the man, and the man depends on the woman"
1 Corinthians 11:12
For as the woman comes from the man, so does the man come from the woman
This means that the first woman, Eve, was made from the rib of the first man, Adam, and since then all men have been born by women.
all things come from God
"God created everyone and everything" or "God created all"
1 Corinthians 11:13
Judge for yourselves
"Judge this issue according to the local customs and church practices you know"
Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?
Paul expects the Corinthians to agree with him. This can be stated in active form. "To honor God as she prays to him, a woman should have a covering on her head."
1 Corinthians 11:14
Does not even nature itself teach you ... for him?
Paul expects the Corinthians to agree with him. Alternate translation: "Nature itself even teaches you ... for him."
Does not even nature itself teach you ... for him?
He is speaking of the way people in society normally act as if it were a person who teaches. Alternate translation: "You know just from looking at the way people normally act ... for him."
1 Corinthians 11:15
For her hair has been given to her
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God created woman with hair"
1 Corinthians 11:17
Connecting Statement:
As Paul talks about communion, the Lord's supper, he reminds them to have right attitudes as well as unity. He reminds them that if they fail in those things when taking communion, they will become sick and die, as has already happened to some of them.
in the following instructions, I do not praise you. For when
Another possible meaning is "as I give you these instructions, there is something for which I cannot praise you: when"
the following instructions
"the instructions I am about to talk about"
come together
"gather together" or "meet"
it is not for the better but for the worse
"you do not help each other; instead, you harm each other"
1 Corinthians 11:18
in the church
"as believers." Paul is not talking about being inside a building.
there are divisions among you
"you divide yourselves into opposing groups"
1 Corinthians 11:19
For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you
Possible meanings 1) Paul is being ironic to shame the Corinthians for dividing the people they thought were more important from those they thought were less important. Alternate translation: "For you seem to want to have factions among you so that everyone will know whom you consider to be most important" or 2) Paul means factions are necessary so that God can show those whom he approves. Alternate translation: "For it is necessary for there to be factions among you so that you will know which people God has approved"
factions
opposing groups of people
1 Corinthians 11:20
come together
"gather together"
it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat
"you may believe you are eating the Lord's Supper, but you are not, because you do not treat it with respect"
1 Corinthians 11:22
to eat and to drink in
"in which to gather for a meal"
despise
hate or treat with dishonor and disrespect
humiliate
embarrass or cause to feel shame
What should I say to you? Should I praise you?
Paul is rebuking the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "I can say nothing good about this. I cannot praise you."
1 Corinthians 11:23
For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord
"For it was from the Lord that I heard what I told you, and

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it was this: the Lord"

on the night when he was betrayed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on the night that Judas Iscariot betrayed him"

1 Corinthians 11:24

he broke it

"he pulled pieces from it"

This is my body

"The bread I am holding is my body"

1 Corinthians 11:25

the cup

It is best to translate this literally. The Corinthians knew which cup he took, so it is not simply "a cup" or "some cup" or "any cup." Possible meanings are that it was 1) the cup of wine that one would expect him to use or 2) the third or fourth of the four cups of wine that the Jews drank at the Passover meal.

Do this as often as you drink it, to remember me

"Drink from this cup, and as often as you drink from it, remember me"

1 Corinthians 11:26

proclaim the Lord's death

teach about the crucifixion and resurrection

until he comes

Where Jesus comes to can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "until Jesus comes back to the earth"

1 Corinthians 11:27

eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord

"eats the bread of the Lord or drinks the cup of the Lord"

1 Corinthians 11:28

examine

Paul speaks of a person looking at his relationship to God and how he has been living his life as if that person is looking over something he wants to buy. See how "test the quality" is translated in [1 Corinthians 3:13]

1 Corinthians 11:29

without discerning the body

Possible meanings are 1) "and does not recognize that the church is the body of the Lord" or 2) "and does not consider that he is handling the Lord's body."

1 Corinthians 11:30

weak and ill

These words mean almost the same thing and can be combined, as in UDB.

and some of you have fallen asleep

"Sleep" here is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "and some of you have died" .

some of you

If this would sound like Paul is talking to those who have died, you may need to make explicit that he is not. Alternate translation: "some of the members of your group"

1 Corinthians 11:31

examine

Paul speaks of a person looking at his relationship to God and how he has been living his life as if that person is looking over something he wants to buy. See how this is translated in [1 Corinthians 11:28]

we will not be judged

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will not judge us"

1 Corinthians 11:32

we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Lord judges us, he disciplines us, so that he will not condemn us"

1 Corinthians 11:33

wait for one another

"allow the others to arrive before beginning the meal"

1 Corinthians 11:34

let him eat at home

"let him eat before attending this gathering"

it will not be for judgment

"it will not be an occasion for God to discipline you"

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12 [1]About spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.[2]You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to idols who could not speak, in whatever ways you were led by them.[3]Therefore I want you to know that no one who speaks by the Spirit of God can say, "Jesus is accursed." No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

[4]Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit.[5]There are different ministries, but the same Lord;[6]and there are different kinds of work, but it is the same God who works all in all.
[7]Now to each one is given the outward display of the Spirit for the benefit of all.[8]For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.
[9]To another is given faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit.[10]To another is given miraculous works, and to another prophecy. To another is given the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.[11]All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, giving the gifts to each one individually, as he chooses.

[12]For as the body is one and has many members and all are members of the same body, so it is with Christ.[13]For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free, and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
[14]For the body is not a single member, but many.[15]If the foot says, "Since I am not the hand, I am not part of the body," it is not any less a part of the body.[16]And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not part of the body," it is not any less a part of the body.[17]If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

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[18]But God has appointed each member, each one of them, into the body as he has desired.[19]If they were all the same member, where would the body be?[20]So now they are many members, but only one body.
[21]The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." Nor does the head say to the feet, "I have no need of you."[22]But the members of the body that appear to be weaker are essential,[23]and the parts of the body that we think are less honorable, we give them greater honor, and our unpresentable members have more dignity.[24]Now our presentable members have no such need. Rather, God has composed the body, giving greater honor to those members that lack it.
[25]He did this so there may be no division within the body, but that the members should care for one another with the same affection.[26]So when one member suffers, all the members suffer together; or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice together.[27]Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
[28]And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then those who do miracles, then gifts of healing, those who provide helps, those who do the work of administration, and those who have various kinds of tongues.[29]Are all of them apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles?
[30]Do all of them have gifts of healing? Do all of them speak with tongues? Do all of them interpret tongues?[31]Zealously seek the greater gifts. And now I will show you a more excellent way.

1 Corinthians 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

This chapter begins a new section. Chapters 12-14 discuss spiritual gifts within the church.

Special concepts in this chapter

The church, the body of Christ

This is an important metaphor in Scripture. The church has many different parts. Each part has different functions. They combine to make one church. All of the different parts are necessary. Each part is to be concerned for all the other parts, even those that seem less important.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."

In reading the Old Testament, the Jews would have substituted the word "Lord" for the word "Yahweh." This sentence probably means that no one can say that Jesus is Yahweh, God in the flesh, without the Holy Spirit's influence drawing them to accept this truth. If this statement is translated poorly, it can have unintended theological consequences.

Links:

1 Corinthians 12:1 Notes

1 Corinthians 12:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul lets the Corinthians know that God has given special gifts to believers. These gifts are to help the body of believers.

I do not want you to be uninformed

This can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "I want you to be informed"

1 Corinthians 12:2

you were led astray to idols who could not speak, in whatever ways you were led by them

Here "led astray" is a metaphor for being persuaded to do something wrong. Being led astray to idols represents being wrongly persuaded to worship idols. The phrases "were led astray" and "you were led by them" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you were persuaded in some way to worship idols who cannot speak" or "you believed lies somehow and so you worshiped idols who cannot speak"

1 Corinthians 12:3

no one who speaks by the Spirit of God can say

Possible meanings are 1) "no Christian who has the Spirit of God in him can say" or 2) "no one who is prophesying by the power of the Spirit of God can say."

Jesus is accursed

"God will punish Jesus" or "God will make Jesus suffer"

No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit

This double negative emphasizes that "by the Holy Spirit" is what makes it possible for one to say, "Jesus is Lord." Alternate translation: "One can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' only by the Holy Spirit"

by the Holy Spirit

"with the help of the Holy Spirit" or "by the power that the Holy Spirit gives him"

1 Corinthians 12:6

works all in all

Possible meanings are 1) "makes active all the gifts in everyone who has received them" or 2) "works all things in all people."

1 Corinthians 12:7

to each one is given

This can be stated in active form. God is the one who does the giving

1 Corinthians 12:8

to one is given by the Spirit the word

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by

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means of the Spirit God gives to one person the word"
the word
"the message"
by the Spirit
God gives the gifts through the work of the Spirit.
wisdom ... knowledge
The difference between these two words is not as important here as the fact that God gives them both by the same Spirit.
the word of wisdom
Paul is communicating one idea through two words. Alternate translation: "wise words"
the word of knowledge
Paul is communicating one idea through two words. Alternate translation: "words that show knowledge"
1 Corinthians 12:9
is given
This can be stated in active form. See how this is translated in [1 Corinthians 12:8]
to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit
The words "are given" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit are given"
1 Corinthians 12:10
to another prophecy
The phrase "is given by the same Spirit" is understood from the previous phrases. Alternate translation: "to another prophecy is given by the same Spirit"
to another various kinds of tongues
The phrase "are given by the same Spirit" is understood from the previous phrases. Alternate translation: "to another various kinds of tongues are given by the same Spirit"
various kinds of tongues
Here "tongues" represents languages. Alternate translation: "the ability to speak different languages"
to another the interpretation of tongues
The phrase "is given by the same Spirit" is understood from the previous phrases. Alternate translation: "to another the interpretation of tongues is given by the same Spirit"
the interpretation of tongues
This is the ability to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying. Alternate translation: "the ability to interpret what is said in other languages"
1 Corinthians 12:11
one and the same Spirit
God gives the gifts through the work of the one and only Holy Spirit. See how this is translated in 1 Corinthians 12:8.
1 Corinthians 12:12
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues to talk of the variety of gifts God gives believers. God gives different gifts to different believers, but Paul wants them to know that all believers are made into one body, which is called the body of Christ. For this reason believers should have unity.
1 Corinthians 12:13
For by one Spirit we were all baptized
Possible meanings are 1) the Holy Spirit is the one who baptizes us, "For one Spirit baptized us" or 2) that the Spirit, like the water of baptism, is the medium through which we are baptized into the body, "For in one Spirit we were all baptized"
all were made to drink of one Spirit
This is a metaphor meaning everyone received and share in the same Spirit. The phrase "all were made" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave us all the same Spirit, which we share as people might share a drink"
1 Corinthians 12:17
where would the sense of hearing be? ... where would the sense of smell be?
This can be made a statement. Alternate translation: "you could not hear anything. ... you could not smell anything."
1 Corinthians 12:19
the same member
The word "member" is a general word for the parts of the body, like the head, arm, or knee. Alternate translation: "the same part of the body"
where would the body be?
This can be made a statement. Alternate translation: "there would be no body."
1 Corinthians 12:21
I have no need of you
"I do not need you"
1 Corinthians 12:23
less honorable
"less important"
our unpresentable members
This probably refers to the private parts of the body, which people keep covered.
1 Corinthians 12:25
there may be no division within the body, but
"the body may be unified, and"
1 Corinthians 12:26
one member is honored
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone gives honor to one member"
1 Corinthians 12:27
Now you are
Here the word "now" is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.
1 Corinthians 12:28
first apostles
Possible meanings for "first" are 1) the first in the list or 2) the most important in the list.
those who provide helps
"those who provide help to other believers"
those who do the work of administration
"those who govern the church"
those who have various kinds of tongues
Here "tongues" represents languages. Alternate translation: "those who have the ability to speak different languages"
1 Corinthians 12:29
General Information:
Paul is reminding his readers of what they already know.
Are all of them apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles?
The answer Paul expects to all of these rhetorical questions

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is no. You may need to translate them as statements. Alternate translation: "Not all of them are apostles, are they? Not all are prophets, are they? Not all are teachers, are they? Not all do miracles, do they?" or "You and I all know that not all of them are apostles, not all are prophets, not all are teachers, and not all do powerful deeds."

1 Corinthians 12:30

Do all of them have gifts of healing?

This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "Not all of them have gifts of healing."

Do all of them speak with tongues?

This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "Not all of them speak with tongues."

speak with tongues

Here "tongues" represents languages. Alternate translation: "speak different languages"

Do all of them interpret tongues?

This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "Not all of them interpret tongues."

interpret tongues

Here "tongues" represents languages. To "interpret tongues" means to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying. Alternate translation: "interpret what is said in other languages"

1 Corinthians 12:31

Zealously seek the greater gifts.

Possible meanings are 1) "You must eagerly seek from God the gifts that best help the church." or 2) "You are eagerly looking for gifts that you think are greater because you think they are more exciting to have."

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13 [1]Suppose that I speak with the tongues of men and of angels. But if I do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or
a clanging cymbal.[2]Suppose that I have the gift of prophecy and understand all hidden truths and knowledge, and
that I have all faith so as to remove mountains. But if I do not have love, I am nothing.[3]Suppose that I give all my
possessions to feed the poor, and that I give my body to be burned. But if I do not have love, I gain nothing.[1]
[4]Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous and does not boast. It is not puffed up[5]or rude. It does not seek its own. It is
not provoked, nor does it keep a count of wrongs.[6]It does not rejoice in unrighteousness. Instead, it rejoices in the truth.
[7]Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.
[8]Love never ends. If there are prophecies, they will pass away. If there are tongues, they will cease. If there is knowledge,
it will pass away.[9]For we know in part and we prophesy in part.[10]But when the perfect comes, that which is incomplete
will pass away.
[11]When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put away
childish things.[12]For now we see indirectly in a mirror, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will know
fully just as I have been fully known.[13]But now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

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[1]Most important and ancient Greek copies, as well as ancient translations read, I give my body to be burned. There are a few important and ancient Greek copies, as well as ancient translations, that read, I give my body so that I might boast.

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1 Corinthians 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul seems to interrupt his teaching about spiritual gifts to speak about love.

Special concepts in this chapter

Love

Love is the most important characteristic of the believer. This chapter fully describes love. Paul tells why love is more important than the gifts of the Spirit. (See: love)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Paul uses many different metaphors in this chapter. He uses these metaphors to instruct the Corinthians, especially on difficult topics. Readers often need spiritual discernment to understand these teachings.

Links:

1 Corinthians 13:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Having just talked about the gifts that God gives to believers, Paul emphasizes what is more important.

the tongues of ... angels

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is exaggerating for the sake of effect and does not believe that people speak the language that angels use or 2) Paul thinks that some who speak in tongues actually speak the language that angels use.

I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal

I have become like instruments that make loud, annoying sounds

gong

a large, thin, round metal plate that is hit with a padded stick to make a loud, low-pitched sound

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a clanging cymbal
a thin, round metal plate that is hit with a padded stick to make a loud, high-pitched sound
1 Corinthians 13:3
I give my body to be burned
The phrase "to be burned" can be made active. Alternate translation: "I allow those who persecute me to burn me to death"
1 Corinthians 13:4
Love is ... Love is not ... It is not
Paul describes the characteristics of love by speaking about love as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "Whoever loves is ... He is not ... He is not"
1 Corinthians 13:5
It does not ... It is not ... does it keep
Paul continues to describe the characteristics of love by speaking about love as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "He does not ... He does not ... does he keep"
seek its own
The word "seek" here means to desire and work for something. The person who loves wants and works for what is good for others as much as or more than what is good for himself.
It is not provoked
"It does not become angry easily." The person who loves controls his anger.
nor does it keep a count of wrongs
The person who loves others does not keep a record of the wrongs that people have done to him.
1 Corinthians 13:6
It does not ... it rejoices
Paul continues to describe the characteristics of love by speaking about love as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "He does not ... he rejoices"
does not rejoice in unrighteousness. Instead, it rejoices in the truth
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "rejoices only in righteousness and truth"
1 Corinthians 13:7
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues speaking about love as if it were a person.
bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things
The phrase "all things" here appears to be an idiom meaning "always". Alternate translation: "always perseveres, always believes, always hopes, and always endures"
hopes all things
This means that whoever loves others always expects that what is good will happen.
1 Corinthians 13:12
For now we see indirectly in a mirror
Mirrors in Paul's day were made of polished metal rather than glass and provided a dim, vague reflection.
now we see
Possible meanings are 1) "now we see Christ" or 2) "now we see God."
but then face to face
The understood words "we will see" can be supplied. Seeing face to face is a metaphor or synecdoche for being physically present with the one we will see. Alternate translation: "but then we will see face to face"
I will know fully
The word "Christ" is understood. Alternate translation: "I will know Christ fully"
just as I have been fully known
This can be stated as active. Alternate translation: "just as Christ has known me fully"
1 Corinthians 13:13
faith, hope, and love
These abstract nouns can be expressed in phrases with verbs. Alternate translation: "we must trust the Lord, be confident that he will do what he has promised, and love him and others"

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14 [1]Pursue love and be zealous for spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.[2]For the one who speaks in a tongue
does not speak to people but to God. For no one understands him because he speaks mysteries in the Spirit.[3]But the
one who prophesies speaks to people to build them up, to exhort them, and to comfort them.[4]The one who speaks in a
tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.
[5]Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues. But even more than that, I wish that you would prophesy. The one who
prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues (unless someone interprets so that the church may receive
edification).[6]But now, brothers, if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you? I cannot, unless I speak to you
with revelation, or knowledge, or prophecy, or teaching.
[7]In the same way, when lifeless instruments are producing sounds—like the flute or the harp—if they do not produce
different tones, how will anyone know what tune the flute or harp is playing?[8]For if the trumpet is played with an
uncertain sound, how will anyone know when it is time to prepare for battle?[9]It is the same way for you with the tongue.
If you utter speech that is not clear, how will what is said be understood? You will be speaking into the air.
[10]There are doubtless many kinds of languages in the world, and none is without meaning.[11]But if I do not know the
meaning of a language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker, and the speaker will be a foreigner to me.
[12]So it is with you. Since you are eager for the manifestations of the Spirit, seek for the edification of the church so that
you might abound.[13]So the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret.[14]For if I pray in a tongue, my
spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.
[15]What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing with my spirit, and I will also
sing with my mind.[16]Otherwise, if you bless God with the spirit, how will the outsider say "Amen" when you are giving
thanks if he does not know what you are saying?

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[17]For you certainly give thanks well enough, but the other person is not built up.[18]I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.[19]But in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding so that I might instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

[20]Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Rather, in regard to evil, be like infants. But in your thinking be mature.
[21]In the law it is written,

"By men of strange tongues
and by the lips of strangers
I will speak to this people.
Even then they will not hear me,"
says the Lord.

[22]So then, tongues are a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers. But prophecy is for a sign, not for unbelievers, but for believers.[23]If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders and unbelievers come in, would they not say that you are insane?
[24]But if you all were prophesying and an unbeliever or an outsider came in, he would be convicted by all he hears. He would be judged by all that is said.[25]The secrets of his heart would be revealed. As a result, he would fall on his face and worship God. He would declare that God is really among you.

[26]What is next then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Do everything so that you build up the church.[27]If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at most three, and each one in turn, and then someone should interpret what is said.[28]But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in the church. Let each one speak to himself alone and to God.
[29]Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others listen with discernment to what is said.[30]But if there is a revelation to one who is sitting, let the first be silent.
[31]For each of you can prophesy one by one so that each one may learn and all may be exhorted.[32]For the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.[33]For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.
This is the rule in all the churches of God's holy people.
[34]The women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak. Instead, they should be in submission, as also the law says.[35]If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.[36]Did the word of God come from you? Are you the only ones it has reached?

[37]If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I write to you are a command of the Lord.[38]But if anyone does not recognize this, let him not be recognized.

[39]So then, brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid anyone from speaking in tongues.[40]But let all things be done properly and in order.

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1 Corinthians 14 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul returns to discussing spiritual gifts.
Some translations set what is quoted from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the words of verse 21.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tongues
Scholars disagree on the exact meaning of the gift of tongues. Paul describes the gift of tongues as a sign for unbelievers. It does not serve the whole church, unless someone interprets what is spoken. It is very important that the church uses this gift properly.
Prophecy
Scholars disagree on the exact meaning of prophecy as a spiritual gift. Paul says prophets can build up the entire church. He describes prophecy as a gift for believers. (See: prophet)

Links:

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1 Corinthians 14:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul wants the Corinthians to know that though teaching is more important because it instructs people, it must be done with love.

Pursue love

Paul speaks of love as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "Follow after love" or "Work hard to love people"

especially that you may prophesy

"and work especially hard to be able to prophesy"

1 Corinthians 14:2

in the Spirit

Possible meanings are 1) the person speaks by the power of the Holy Spirit or 2) he speaks in his own spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:3

to build them up

Building people up represents helping them become mature and strong in their faith. See how you translated "builds up" in [1 Corinthians 8:1]

to exhort them

or "to encourage them"

1 Corinthians 14:4

builds up

Building people up represents helping them become mature and strong in their faith. See how you translated "builds up" in [1 Corinthians 8:1]

1 Corinthians 14:5

spoke in tongues

Here "tongues" represents languages. Alternate translation: "had the ability to speak different languages"

The one who prophesies is greater

Paul is emphasizing that the gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of speaking in tongues. Alternate translation: "The one who prophesies has a greater gift"

interprets

This means to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying.

the church may receive edification

The abstract noun "edification" can be translated using the verb "edify," which means to build something up. This is a metonym for the words through which the people in the church learn God's word and love God more, and the word "church" here is a metonym for the people who make up the church. Alternate translation: "the people in the church may become stronger" or "the one who prophesies may help the people know and love God better"

1 Corinthians 14:6

how will I benefit you?

This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "I will not benefit you." or "I will not have done anything that helps you."

1 Corinthians 14:7

they do not produce different tones

This refers to sounds of different pitch that make up the melody, not to the difference between a flute sound and a harp sound.

how will anyone know what tune the flute or harp is playing?

Paul wants the Corinthians to answer this themselves. Alternate translation: "no one will know what tune the flute or harp is playing."

tune

melody or song

1 Corinthians 14:8

how will anyone know when it is time to prepare for battle?

Paul wants the Corinthians to answer this themselves. Alternate translation: "no one would know when it is time to prepare for battle."

1 Corinthians 14:9

you with the tongue. If you utter speech

or "you. If with the tongue you utter speech"

with the tongue

The word "tongue" here is a synecdoche for all the parts of the body which a person uses in order to speak.

If you utter speech that is not clear

Clear speech is language that people can understand. Paul was talking about people speaking in other languages during church services. Alternate translation: "If you speak in a language that people do not know"

how will what is said be understood

These passive clauses can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "how will anyone understand what you have said"

1 Corinthians 14:10

none is without meaning

This can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "they all have meaning"

1 Corinthians 14:12

General Information:

All instances of "you" and the imperatives are plural.

for the manifestations of the Spirit

"to do things that show that the Spirit controls you"

seek for the edification of the church so that you might abound

Some modern translations read, "seek that you might abound in those things that edify the church." Paul speaks of the church as if it were a house that one could build. Alternate translation: "try to succeed greatly in making God's people more able to serve God so that things will go well with you"

1 Corinthians 14:13

interpret

This means to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying.

1 Corinthians 14:14

my mind is unfruitful

The mind not understanding what is being prayed and, therefore, receiving no benefit from the prayer is spoken of as if the "mind is unfruitful." Alternate translation: "I do not understand it in my mind" or "my mind does not benefit from the prayer, because I do not understand the words I

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am saying"
1 Corinthians 14:15
What am I to do?
Paul is introducing his conclusion. Alternate translation: "This is what I will do."
pray with my spirit ... pray with my mind ... sing with my spirit ... sing with my mind
Prayers and songs must be in a language that the people present can understand.
with my mind
"with words that I understand"
1 Corinthians 14:16
you bless God ... you are giving thanks ... you are saying
Though "you" is singular here, Paul is addressing everyone who prays only in the spirit, but not with the mind.
how will the outsider say "Amen" ... saying?
This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "the outsider will never be able to say 'Amen' ... saying."
the outsider
Possible meanings are 1) "another person" or 2) "people who are new to your group."
say "Amen"
"agree"
1 Corinthians 14:17
you certainly give
Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so the word "you" here is singular.
the other person is not built up
Building people up represents helping them become mature and strong in their faith. This can be stated in active form. See how you translated "builds up" in [1 Corinthians 8:1]
1 Corinthians 14:18
I speak in tongues
Here "tongues" represents languages. Alternate translation: "I speak different languages"
1 Corinthians 14:19
than ten thousand words in a tongue
Paul was not counting words, but used exaggeration to emphasize that a few understandable words are far more valuable than even a great number of words in a language that people cannot understand. Also, here "tongue" represents a language. Alternate translation: "10,000 words in a different language" or "a great many words in a different language"
1 Corinthians 14:20
General Information:
Paul tells the Corinthians that people being able to speak in different languages was told ahead of time by the prophet Isaiah, many years before such speaking happened at the start of Christ's church.
do not be children in your thinking
Here "children" is a metaphor for being spiritually immature. Alternate translation: "do not think like children"
1 Corinthians 14:21
In the law it is written,
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The prophet wrote these words in the law:"
By men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are used together for emphasis.
1 Corinthians 14:22
Connecting Statement:
Paul gives specific instructions about an orderly way to use gifts in the church.
sign, not for unbelievers, but for believers
"sign only for believers"
1 Corinthians 14:23
would they not say that you are insane?
This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "they would say that you are insane."
1 Corinthians 14:24
he would be convicted by all he hears. He would be judged by all that is said
Paul says basically the same thing twice for emphasis. Alternate translation: "he would realize that he is guilty of sin because he hears what you are saying"
1 Corinthians 14:25
The secrets of his heart would be revealed
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God would reveal to him the secrets of his heart" or "He would recognize his own private inner thoughts"
he would fall on his face and worship God
"Fall on his face" here is an idiom, meaning to bow down. Alternate translation: "He would bow down and worship God"
1 Corinthians 14:26
What is next then, brothers?
Paul uses a question to introduce the next part of his message. Alternate translation: "Because everything I have just told you is true, this is what you need to do, my fellow believers."
interpretation
This is the ability to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying.
1 Corinthians 14:27
speaks in a tongue
Here "tongue" represents a language. Alternate translation: "speaks in a different languages"
and each one in turn
"and they should speak one after another" or "and they should speak one at a time"
interpret what is said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "interpret what they said"
interpret
This means to listen to what someone says in one language and use another language to tell people what that person is saying.
1 Corinthians 14:29
Let two or three prophets speak
Possible meanings are 1) only two or three prophets speak at any one meeting or 2) only two or three prophets take turns speaking at any one time.
to what is said

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to what they say"

1 Corinthians 14:30

there is a revelation

"God reveals something" or "God speaks"

to one who is sitting

"to one of the people sitting there listening to the prophets"

the first

the person who has been speaking

1 Corinthians 14:31

prophesy one by one

Only one person should prophesy at a time.

all may be exhorted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you may exhort all"

1 Corinthians 14:33

God is not a God of confusion

God does not create confusing situations by making people all speak at the same time.

1 Corinthians 14:34

keep silent

Possible meanings are 1) stop speaking, 2) stop speaking when someone is prophesying, or 3) be absolutely silent during the church service.

1 Corinthians 14:36

Did the word of God come from you? Are you the only ones it has reached?

Paul emphasizes that the Corinthians are not the only ones who understand what God wants Christians to do. Alternate translation: "The word of God did not come from you in Corinth; you are not the only people who understand God's will."

the word of God

"Word of God" here is a metonym for the message from God. Alternate translation: "God's message"

1 Corinthians 14:37

he should acknowledge

A true prophet or truly spiritual person will accept Paul's writings as coming from the Lord.

1 Corinthians 14:38

if anyone does not recognize this, let him not be recognized

"if anyone ignores this, let him be ignored"

let him not be recognized

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you should not recognize him"

1 Corinthians 14:39

do not forbid anyone from speaking in tongues

Paul makes it clear that speaking in tongues at a church gathering is permissible and acceptable.

1 Corinthians 14:40

But let all things be done properly and in order

Paul is stressing that church gatherings should be held in an orderly manner. Alternate translation: "But do all things properly and in order" or "But do everything in an orderly, appropriate way"

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15 [1]Now I want to make known to you, brothers, the gospel I proclaimed to you, which you received and on which you stand,[2]and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.
[3]For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,
[4]that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures.
[5]Christ appeared to Cephas, and then to the twelve;[6]then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once. Most of them are still alive, but some have fallen asleep.[7]Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.
[8]Last of all, he appeared to me, as if to one born prematurely.[9]For I am the least of the apostles. I am unworthy to be called an apostle because I persecuted the church of God.
[10]But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace in me was not in vain. Instead, I labored harder than all of them. Yet it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.[11]Therefore whether it is I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

[12]Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?[13]But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised;[14]and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith also is in vain.
[15]Also, we are found to be false witnesses about God, because we testified that God raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him, if indeed the dead are not raised.[16]For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;[17]and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is in vain and you are still in your sins.
[18]Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ have also perished.[19]If only in this life we hope in Christ, of all people we are most to be pitied.

[20]But now Christ has been raised from the dead as the firstfruits of those who sleep.[21]For since death came by a man, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.
[22]For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.[23]But each in his own order: Christ, who is the firstfruits, and then those who belong to Christ will be made alive at his coming.
[24]Then will be the end, when he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father, when he will abolish all rule and all authority and power.[25]For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.[26]The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

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[27]For "he has put everything under his feet." But when it says, "he has put everything," it is clear that this does not include the one who put everything in subjection under him.[28]When all things are subjected under him, then the Son himself will be subjected under the one who put all things into subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

[29]Or else what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are they baptized for them?[30]Why then are we in danger every hour?
[31]I die every day! This is as sure as my boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord.[32]What do I gain, from a human point of view, if I fought with beasts at Ephesus, if the dead are not raised?

"Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die."

[33]Be not deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."[34]Sober up! Live righteously! Do not keep sinning. For some of you have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

[35]But someone will say, "How are the dead raised, and with what kind of body will they come?"[36]You fool! What you sow will not come to life unless it dies.
[37]What you sow is not the body that will be, but a bare grain. It may become wheat or something else.[38]But God will give it a body as he chooses, and to each seed its own body.[39]Not all flesh is the same. Instead, there is one flesh for human beings, and another flesh for animals, and another flesh for birds, and another for fish.
[40]There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the glory of the heavenly body is one kind and the glory of the earthly is another.[41]There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. For one star differs from another star in glory.
[42]So also is the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, and what is raised is imperishable.[43]It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.[44]It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.
[45]So also it is written, "The first man Adam became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.[46]But the spiritual did not come first but the natural, and then the spiritual.
[47]The first man is of the earth, made of dust. The second man is from heaven.[48]Just as the one made from dust is, so also are those who are made of the dust, and as the man of heaven is, so also are those who are of heaven.[49]Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

[50]Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Neither does what is perishable inherit what is imperishable.[51]Look! I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.
[52]We will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.[53]For this perishable body must put on what is imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.
[54]But when this perishable body has put on what is imperishable, and when this mortal body has put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

[55] "Death, where is your victory?
Death, where is your sting?"

[56]The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.[57]But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!
[58]Therefore, my dear brothers, be steadfast and immovable. Always abound in the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Resurrection

This chapter includes a very important teaching about the resurrection of Jesus. The Greek people did not believe that

people could live after they died. Paul defends the resurrection of Jesus. He teaches why it is important to all believers. (See: resurrection and believe)

Special concepts in this chapter

Resurrection

Paul presents the resurrection as the ultimate proof that Jesus is God. Christ is the first of many whom God will raise to life. The resurrection is central to the gospel. Few doctrines are as important as this one. (See: goodnews and raise)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Paul uses many different figures of speech in this chapter. He uses them to express difficult theological teachings in a way that people can understand.

Links:

1 Corinthians 15:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 15:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Corinthians that it is the gospel that saves them and he tells them again what the gospel is. Then he gives them a short history lesson which ends with what will yet happen.

make known to you, brothers, the gospel

Possible meanings are 1) Paul wants to remind them by making the gospel known again, "help you remember, brothers, the gospel" or 2) he wants to make sure they understand the gospel, "make clear to you, brothers, the gospel."

on which you stand

Paul is speaking of the Corinthians as if they were a house and the gospel as if it were the foundation on which the house was standing.

1 Corinthians 15:2

you are being saved

This can be stated in active form. "God will save you"

the word I preached to you

"the message I preached to you"

1 Corinthians 15:3

as of first importance

Possible meanings are 1) as the most important of many things or 2) as the first in time of important things.

for our sins

"to pay for our sins" or "so that God could forgive our sins"

according to the scriptures

"just as the propets predicted in the scriptures." Here "scriptures" means the Old Testament.

1 Corinthians 15:4

he was buried

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they buried him"

he was raised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God raised him"

was raised

"was caused to live again"

1 Corinthians 15:5

appeared to

"showed himself to"

and then to the twelve

The information that is understood here can be included. Alternate translation: "and then he appeared to the twelve disciples"

to the twelve

Paul used the term "the twelve" to mean the original disciples, known as apostles, that followed Jesus. Although, when Jesus appeared to the apostles, Judas had already died, Paul still refers to the groups as "twelve." Alternate translation: "to the rest of the apostles"

1 Corinthians 15:6

five hundred

500

some have fallen asleep

"Sleep" here is a common euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "some have died"

1 Corinthians 15:8

Last of all

"Finally, after he had appeared to the others"

Last of all, he appeared to me, as if to one born prematurely

This is a simile, but its meaning is unclear. These words could refer to 1) a baby that is born unexpectedly early, in which case Paul means that he was unexpectedly called to be an apostle, or 2) a baby who is born early and is very small, in which case Paul means that he had not learned from Christ and grown spiritually as the other apostles had, or 3) a baby who is born dead, in which case Paul means that Christ appeared to him when he was spiritually dead.

one born prematurely

"a baby born too early"

1 Corinthians 15:10

the grace of God I am what I am

God's grace or kindness has made Paul as he is now.

his grace in me was not in vain

Paul is emphasizing through litotes that God worked through Paul. Alternate translation: "because he was kind to me, I was able to do much good work"

the grace of God that is with me

Paul speaks of the work he was able to do because God was kind to him as if grace were actually doing the work. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) this is literally true, and God actually did the work and kindly used Paul as a tool or 2) Paul is using a metaphor and saying that God was kind to let Paul do the work and to make Paul's work have good results.

1 Corinthians 15:12

how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?

Paul is using this question to begin a new topic. Alternate

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translation: "you should not be saying that there is no resurrection of the dead!"
raised
made alive again
1 Corinthians 15:13
if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised
Paul uses this statement to argue that there is a resurrection of the dead. He knows that Christ has been raised and so infers that all who die will be resurrected. To say that there is no resurrection is to say that Christ has not been raised, but this is false because Paul has seen the resurrected Christ
not even Christ has been raised
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has not raised even Christ"
1 Corinthians 15:15
Connecting Statement:
Paul wants to assure the Corinthians that Christ rose from the dead.
we are found to be false witnesses about God
Paul is arguing that if Christ did not rise from the dead, then they are bearing false witness or lying about Christ's coming alive again.
we are found to be
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everyone will realize that we are"
1 Corinthians 15:17
your faith is in vain and you are still in your sins
Their faith is based on Christ having risen from the dead, so if that did not happen, their faith will do them no good.
1 Corinthians 15:19
If only in this life we hope in Christ
Here to hope in Christ is to confidently expect good from him. Alternate translation: "If only in this life we can confidently expect Christ to help us" or "If we can trust in Christ to save us only in this life"
of all people we are most to be pitied
"people should feel sorry for us more than they do for anyone else"
1 Corinthians 15:20
now Christ
"as it is, Christ" or "this is the truth: Christ"
Christ has been raised from the dead
"Raised" here is an idiom for "caused to live again." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has raised Christ from the dead"
dead as the firstfruits
Here "firstfruits" is a metaphor, comparing Christ to the first of the harvest, which would be followed by the rest of the harvest. Christ was the first to be raised from the dead, and all who believe in him will also be raised from the dead. Alternate translation: "dead, like the first part of the harvest" or "dead; he is like the first part of the harvest"
those who sleep
Sleep here is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "those who have died"
1 Corinthians 15:21
death came by a man
The abstract noun "death" can be expressed with the verb "die." Alternate translation: "people die because of what one man did"
by a man also came the resurrection of the dead
The abstract noun "resurrection" can be expressed with the verb "raise." Alternate translation: "people are raised from the dead because of another man" or "people will become alive again because of what one man did"
1 Corinthians 15:23
who is the firstfruits
Here "firstfruits" is a metaphor, comparing Christ to the first of the harvest, which would be followed by the rest of the harvest. Christ was the first to be raised from the dead. Alternate translation: "who is like the first part of the harvest"
1 Corinthians 15:24
General Information:
Here the word "he" refers to Christ.
he will abolish all rule and all authority and power
"he will stop those people who rule, who have authority, and who have power, from doing what they are doing"
1 Corinthians 15:25
For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet
Possible meanings are 1) all occurrences of "he" and "his" refer to Christ or 2) "For Christ must reign until God the Father has put all Christ's enemies under Christ's feet"
until he has put all his enemies under his feet
Kings who won wars would put their feet on the necks of those whom they had defeated to their power over their enemies. Alternate translation: "until he has put all his enemies under his power"
1 Corinthians 15:26
The last enemy to be destroyed is death
Paul speaks of death here as if it were a person who will be killed. The passive verb can be stated as active. Possible meanings are 1) Christ will destroy death or 2) God the Father will destroy death. Alternate translation: "The final enemy that he will destroy is death itself"
1 Corinthians 15:27
he has put everything under his feet
Possible meanings are 1) "God the Father has put everything under Christ's feet" or 2) "Christ has put everything under his own feet"
put everything under his feet
Kings who won wars would put their feet on the necks of those whom they had defeated to show they have power over their enemies. See how "put ... under his feet" is translated in [1 Corinthians 15:25]
this does not include the one who put everything in subjection under him
"this does not include God the Father, who put everything in subjection under the Son"
1 Corinthians 15:28
all things are subjected under him
This can stated as active. Alternate translation: "God the Father has made all things subject to the Son"
the Son himself will be subjected
This can stated as active. Alternate translation: "the Son himself will become subject"

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the Son himself
In the previous verses he was referred to as "Christ." Alternate translation: "Christ, that is, the Son himself,"
Son
This is an important title that describes the relationship between Jesus and God.
1 Corinthians 15:29
Or else what will those do who are baptized for the dead?
Paul uses this question to teach the Corinthians. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Otherwise it would be useless for Christians to receive baptism for the dead."
If the dead are not raised at all, why are they baptized for them?
Paul uses this question to argue that the dead are raised. Apparently some people, probably some members of the church in Corinth, were being baptized for the dead. Paul infers that those people did so because they believed that the dead would be raised.
If the dead are not raised at all
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "If God does not raise the dead at all"
are not raised
"are not caused to live again"
why are they baptized for them?
Paul uses this question to teach the Corinthians. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "there would be no reason for them to have people baptize them on behalf of dead people."
1 Corinthians 15:30
Why then are we in danger every hour?
Paul uses this question to teach the Corinthians. The reason he and others were in danger is that some people were angry that they taught that Jesus will raise people from death. Alternate translation: "If people will not rise from the dead, we gain nothing by being in danger every hour for teaching that people will rise."
1 Corinthians 15:31
I die every day!
This exaggeration means he was in danger of dying. He knew that some people wanted to kill him because they did not like what he was teaching. Alternate translation: "Every day I am in danger of dying" or "Every day I risk my life!"
This is as sure as my boasting in you
Paul uses this statement as evidence that he faces death every day. Alternate translation: "You can know that this is true, because you know about my boasting in you" or "You can know that this is true, because you know about how much I boast in you"
my boasting in you, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord
Paul boasted in them because of what Christ Jesus had done for them. Alternate translation: "my boasting in you, which I do because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done for you"
my boasting in you
"the way I tell other people how good you are"
1 Corinthians 15:32
What do I gain ... if I fought with beasts at Ephesus ... not raised?
Paul wants the Corinthians to understand without him having to tell them. This can be a statement. Alternate translation: "I gained nothing ... by fighting with beasts at Ephesus ... not raised."
I fought with beasts at Ephesus
Paul is referring to something that he actually did. Possible meanings are 1) Paul was speaking figuratively about his arguments with learned pagans or other conflicts with people who wanted to kill him or 2) he was actually put into the arena to fight against dangerous animals.
Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die
Paul concludes that if there is no further life after death, it is better for us to enjoy this life as we can, for tomorrow our life will end without any further hope.
1 Corinthians 15:33
Bad company corrupts good morals
If you live with bad people, you will act like them. Paul is quoting a common saying.
1 Corinthians 15:34
Sober up
"You must think seriously about this"
1 Corinthians 15:35
Connecting Statement:
Paul gives some specifics about how the resurrection of the believers' bodies will take place. He gives a picture of natural and spiritual bodies (15:36-44) and compares the first man Adam with the last Adam, Christ (15:45-49).
But someone will say, "How are the dead raised, and with what kind of body will they come?"
Possible meanings are 1) The person is asking sincerely or 2) the person is using the question to mock the idea of a resurrection. Alternate translation: "But some will say that they cannot imagine how God will raise the dead, and what kind of body God would give them in the resurrection."
someone will say
"someone will ask"
with what kind of body will they come
That is, will it be a physical body or a spiritual body? What shape will the body have? What will the body be made of? Translate using the most general question that someone who wants to know the answers to these questions would ask.
1 Corinthians 15:36
You fool! What you sow
Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so both instances of "you" here are singular.
fool
"unthinking person." Paul is accusing them of not thinking carefully, He is not accusing them of moral error.
What you sow will not come to life unless it dies
A seed will not grow unless it is first buried underground. In the same way, a person has to die before God can resurrect him.
1 Corinthians 15:37
What you sow is not the body that will be
Paul uses the metaphor of the seed again to say that God will resurrect the dead body of the believer, but that body will not appear as it was.
What you sow
Paul is speaking to the Corinthians as if they were one person, so the word "you" here is singular.

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1 Corinthians 15:38
God will give it a body as he chooses
"God will decide what kind of body it will have"
1 Corinthians 15:39
Not all flesh is the same ... there is one flesh ... another flesh
"Not all kinds of bodies are the same ... there is one kind of body ... another kind of body"
1 Corinthians 15:40
heavenly bodies
"bodies in the sky"
earthly bodies
"bodies on the earth." This refers to the kinds of bodies mentioned in 15:41.
the glory of the heavenly body is one kind and the glory of the earthly is another
"the glory that the bodies in the sky have is different from the glory that the bodies on the earth have"
glory
Possible meanings are 1) "brightness" or "radiance" or 2) "beauty" or "splendor"
1 Corinthians 15:42
What is sown ... what is raised
The writer speaks of a person's body being buried as if it were a seed that is planted in the ground. And he speaks of a person's body being raised from the dead as if it were a plant growing from the seed. The passive verbs can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "What goes into the ground ... what comes out of the ground" or "What people bury ... what God raises"
is raised
"is caused to live again"
is perishable ... is imperishable
"can rot ... cannot rot"
1 Corinthians 15:43
It is sown ... it is raised
The writer speaks of a person's body being buried as if it were a seed that is planted in the ground. And he speaks of a person's body being raised from the dead as if it were a plant growing from the seed. The passive verbs can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It goes into the ground ... it comes out of the ground" or "People bury it ... God raises it"
1 Corinthians 15:44
It is sown ... it is raised
The writer speaks of a person's body being buried as if it were a seed that is planted in the ground. And he speaks of a person's body being raised from the dead as if it were a plant growing from the seed. The passive verbs can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It goes into the ground ... it comes out of the ground" or "People bury it ... God raises it"
1 Corinthians 15:46
But the spiritual did not come first but the natural, and then the spiritual
"The natural being came first. The spiritual being is from God and came later."
natural
created by earthly processes, not yet connected to God
1 Corinthians 15:47
The first man is of the earth, made of dust
God made the first man, Adam, from the dust of the earth.
dust
dirt
1 Corinthians 15:48
the man of heaven
Jesus Christ
those who are of heaven
"those who belong to God"
1 Corinthians 15:49
we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven
"we have been just like the man of dust, we will also be just like the man of heaven"
1 Corinthians 15:50
Connecting Statement:
Paul wants the Corinthians to realize that some believers will not die physically but will still get a resurrected body through Christ's victory.
flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Neither does what is perishable inherit what is imperishable
Possible meanings are 1) the two sentences mean the same thing. Alternate translation: "human beings who will surely die cannot inherit the permanent kingdom of God" or 2) the second sentence finishes the thought begun by the first. Alternate translation: "weak human beings cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Neither can those who will certainly die inherit a kingdom that will last forever"
flesh and blood
Those who inhabit a body that is doomed to die.
inherit
Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if property and wealth were being inherited from a family member.
is perishable ... is imperishable
"can rot ... cannot rot." See how these words are translated in 1 Corinthians 15:42.
1 Corinthians 15:51
We will not all sleep
Sleep here is a euphemism for death. Alternate translation: "We will not all die"
we will all be changed
This can be stated as active. Alternate translation: "God will change us all"
1 Corinthians 15:52
We will be changed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will change us"
in the twinkling of an eye
It will happen as fast as it takes for a person to blink his or her eye.
at the last trumpet
"when the last trumpet sounds"
the dead will be raised
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will raise the dead"
raised
"caused to live again"
imperishable

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"in a form that cannot rot." See how a similar phrase is translated in 1 Corinthians 15:42.

1 Corinthians 15:53

this perishable body ... is imperishable

"this body that can rot ... cannot rot." See how similar phrases are translated in 1 Corinthians 15:42.

must put on

Paul is speaking of God making our bodies so they will never die again as if God were putting new clothes on us.

1 Corinthians 15:54

when this perishable body has put on what is imperishable

Here the body is spoken of as if it were a person, and becoming imperishable is spoken of as if being imperishable were clothing that a body would wear. Alternate translation: "when this perishable body has become imperishable" or "when this body that can rot can no longer rot"

when this mortal body has put on immortality

Here the body is spoken of as if it were a person, and becoming immortal is spoken of as if being immortal was clothing that a body would wear. Alternate translation: "when this mortal body has become immortal" or "when this body that can die can no longer die"

1 Corinthians 15:55

Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?

Paul speaks as if death were a person, and he uses this question to mock the power of death, which Christ has defeated. Alternate translation: "Death has no victory. Death has no sting."

your ... your

These are singular.

1 Corinthians 15:56

The sting of death is sin

It is through sin that we are destined to face death, that is, to die.

the power of sin is the law

God's law that was passed down by Moses defines sin and shows us how we sin before God.

1 Corinthians 15:57

gives us the victory

"has defeated death for us"

1 Corinthians 15:58

Connecting Statement:

Paul wants believers, while they work for the Lord, to remember the changed, resurrected bodies that God is going to give them.

be steadfast and immovable

Paul speaks of someone who lets nothing stop him from doing what he has decided to do as if he could not be physically moved. Alternate translation: "be determined"

Always abound in the work of the Lord

Paul speaks of efforts made in working for the Lord as if they were objects that a person could acquire more of. Alternate translation: "Always work for the Lord faithfully"

16 [1]Now concerning the collection for God's holy people: as I instructed the churches of Galatia, so you are to do.[2]On the first day of the week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper. Do this so that there will be no collections when I come.
[3]When I arrive, to whomever you approve, I will give letters of introduction to them and will send them with your gift to Jerusalem.[4]If it is appropriate for me to go also, they will go with me.
[5]But I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia. For I will pass through Macedonia.[6]Perhaps I may stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may help me on my way, wherever I go.
[7]For I do not wish to see you now for only a passing visit. For I hope to spend more time with you, if the Lord permits.[8]But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost,[9]for a wide door has opened for me, and there are many adversaries.

[10]Now when Timothy comes, see that he is with you unafraid, for he is laboring at the work of the Lord, as I am doing.[11]Let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me. For I am expecting him to come along with the brothers.[12]Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly encouraged him to visit you with the brothers. But it was not at all his will that he come now. However, he will come when the time is right.

[13]Be watchful, stand fast in the faith, act like men, be strong.[14]Let all that you do be done in love.

[15]You know the household of Stephanas, that they were the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of God's holy people. Now I urge you, brothers,[16]to be in submission to such people and to everyone who helps in the work and labors with us.
[17]I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus. They have made up for your absence.[18]For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. So then, acknowledge people like them.

[19]The churches of Asia send greetings to you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you in the Lord, with the church that is in their home.[20]All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

[21]I, Paul, write this with my own hand.[22]If anyone does not love the Lord, may he be accursed. Our Lord, come![23]The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.[24]My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.[1]

[1]A few important and ancient Greek copies and some ancient translations have Amen at the end of verse 24. But many important ancient Greek copies, as well as many ancient translations, do not have Amen at the end.

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1 Corinthians 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul briefly covers many topics in this chapter. It was common in the ancient Near East for the last part of letters to have personal greetings.

Special concepts in this chapter

Preparation for his coming

Paul gives practical instructions to help prepare the Corinthian church for his visit. He tells them to start collecting money every Sunday for the believers in Jerusalem. He hopes to come and spend the winter with them. He tells them to help Timothy when he comes. He had hopes Apollos would go to them, but Apollos did not think it was the right time. Paul also tells them to obey Stephanus. Finally, he sends his greetings to everyone.

Links:

1 Corinthians 16:1 Notes

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1 Corinthians 16:1

Connecting Statement:

In his closing notes, Paul reminds the Corinthian believers to collect money for the needy believers in Jerusalem.

for God's holy people

Paul was collecting money from his churches for the poor Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and Judea.

1 Corinthians 16:2

store it up

Possible meanings are: 1) "keep it at home" or 2) "leave it with the church"

as he may prosper

"according to how he prospers" or "according to how much he earns"

so that there will be no collections when I come

"so that you will not have to collect more money while I am with you"

1 Corinthians 16:3

to whomever you approve, I will give letters of introduction to them and will send them

Some modern translations read, "to whomever you have approved by letter of introduction, I will send"

1 Corinthians 16:6

you may help me on my way

This means they might give Paul money or other things he needs so that he and his ministry team could continue to travel.

1 Corinthians 16:7

I hope to spend more time with you, if the Lord permits

Paul wanted to see the believers in Corinth, but he did not know if he actually would be able to do that. Alternate translation: "I expect to spend more time with you, if the Lord permits" or "I plan to spend more time with you, if the Lord permits"

1 Corinthians 16:8

Pentecost

Paul would stay in Ephesus until this festival, which comes in May or June, 50 days after Passover. He would then travel through Macedonia, and later try to arrive in Corinth before winter started.

1 Corinthians 16:9

a wide door has opened

Paul speaks of the opportunity God has given him to win people to the gospel as if it were a door that God had opened so he could walk through it.

1 Corinthians 16:10

Now

"Now" here marks a change in topic. Here Paul begins to talk about Timothy's visit to Corinth.

see that he is with you unafraid

"see that he has no cause to fear being with you"

1 Corinthians 16:11

Let no one despise him

Because Timothy was much younger than Paul, sometimes he was not shown the respect he deserved as a minister of the gospel.

1 Corinthians 16:12

our brother Apollos

Here the word "our" refers to Paul and his readers, so it is inclusive.

1 Corinthians 16:13

Be watchful, stand fast in the faith, act like men, be strong

Paul is describing what he wants the Corinthians to do as if he were giving four commands to soldiers in war. These four commands mean almost the same thing and are used for emphasis.

Be watchful

Paul speaks of people being aware of what is happening as if they were guards keeping watch over a city or vineyard. This can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "Be careful whom you trust" or "Watch out for danger"

stand fast in the faith

Paul speaks of people continuing to believe in Christ according to his teaching as if they were soldiers refusing to retreat when the enemy attacks. Possible meanings are 1) "keep strongly believing what we have taught you" or 2) "keep strongly trusting in Christ"

act like men

In the society in which Paul and his audience lived, men usually provided for families by doing the heavy work and fighting against invaders. This can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "be responsible"

1 Corinthians 16:14

Let all that you do be done in love

"Everything you do should show people that you love them"

1 Corinthians 16:15

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to close his letter and sends greetings from

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other churches, as well as from Prisca, Aquila, and Paul himself.

household of Stephanas

Stephanas was one of the first believers in the church at Corinth.

the firstfruits of Achaia

"the first people in Achaia to believe in Christ"

Achaia

This is the name of a province in Greece.

1 Corinthians 16:17

Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus

These men were either some of the first Corinthian believers or church elders who were co-workers with Paul.

Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus

These are men's names.

They have made up for your absence

"They made up for the fact that you were not here."

1 Corinthians 16:18

For they have refreshed my spirit

Paul is saying he was encouraged by their visit.

acknowledge people like them

The word "acknowledge" here might be an understatement. Paul wants the Corinthians to honor Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus

1 Corinthians 16:21

I, Paul, write this with my own hand

Paul was making it clear that the instructions in this letter are from him, even though one of his co-laborers wrote what Paul was saying in the rest of the letter. Paul wrote this last part with his own hand.

1 Corinthians 16:22

may he be accursed

"may God curse him." See how "accursed" was translated in 1 Corinthians 12:3.

Introduction to 2 Corinthians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 Corinthians

Paul thanks God for the Corinthian Christians (1:1-11) Paul explains his conduct and his ministry (1:12-7:16) Paul speaks about contributing money for the Jerusalem church (8:1-9:15) Paul defends his authority as an apostle (10:1-13:10) Paul gives final greetings and encouragement (13:11-14)

Who wrote the Book of 2 Corinthians?

Paul was the author. He was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul started the church in Corinth. He was staying in the city of Ephesus when he wrote this letter.

What is the Book of 2 Corinthians about?

In 2 Corinthians, Paul continued to write about the conflicts among the Christians in the city of Corinth. It is clear in this letter that the Corinthians had obeyed his previous instructions to them. In 2 Corinthians, Paul encouraged them to live in a way that would please God.

Paul also wrote to assure them that Jesus Christ sent him as an apostle to preach the Gospel. Paul wanted them to understand this because a group of Jewish Christians opposed what he was doing. They claimed Paul was not sent by God and that he was teaching a false message. This group of Jewish Christians wanted Gentile Christians to obey the law of Moses.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Second Corinthians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Second Letter to the Church in Corinth."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the city of Corinth like?

Corinth was a major city located in ancient Greece. Because it was near the Mediterranean Sea, many travelers and traders came to buy and sell goods there. This resulted in the city having people from many different cultures. The city was famous for having people who lived in immoral ways. The people worshipped Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love. As part of the ceremonies honoring Aphrodite, her worshipers had sexual intercourse with temple prostitutes.

What did Paul mean by "false apostles" (11:13)?

These were Jewish Christians. They taught that Gentile Christians had to obey the law of Moses in order to follow Christ. Christian leaders had met in Jerusalem and decided on the matter (See: Acts 15). However, it is clear that there were still some groups that disagreed with what the leaders in Jerusalem decided.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. Also, the word "you" is almost always plural and refers to the believers in Corinth. There are two exceptions to this: 6:2 and 12:9.

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in 2 Corinthians in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God considers Christians to be sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact is that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless, faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULB uses "holy," "holy God," "holy ones," or "holy people."

The meaning in most passages in 2 Corinthians is a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:13)

Sometimes the meaning in the passage implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "set apart," "dedicated to," "reserved for," or "sanctified."

The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:19, 20; 2:12, 17; 3:14; 5:17, 19, 21; 10:17; 12:2, 19; and 13:4. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” See, for example, "A door was opened for me in the Lord," (2:12) where Paul specifically meant that a door was opened for Paul by the Lord. The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What does it mean to be a "new creation" in Christ (5:17)?

Paul's message was that God makes Christians part of a "new world" when a person believes in Christ. God gives a new world of holiness, peace, and joy. In this new world, believers have a new nature that has been given them by the Holy Spirit. Translators should try to express this idea.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 2 Corinthians?

"and in your love for us" (8:7). Many versions, including the ULB and UDB, read this way. However, many other translations read, "and in our love for you." There is strong evidence that each reading is original. Translators should probably follow the reading preferred by other versions in their region.

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2 Corinthians

1 [1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is in Corinth, and to all God's holy people in the entire region of Achaia:

[2]May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3]May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised. He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.[4]God comforts us in all our tribulation, so that we can comfort those who are in any tribulation. We comfort others with the same comfort that God used to comfort us.
[5]For just as the sufferings of Christ abound for our sake, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.[6]But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort. Your comfort is working effectively in your endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer.[7]Our hope concerning you is unshaken, for we know that as you share the sufferings, you also share our comfort.
[8]For we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the tribulation we had in Asia. We were utterly burdened beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life.[9]Indeed, we had the sentence of death on us. But that was to make us not put our trust in ourselves, but instead in God, who raises the dead.[10]He rescued us from such a deadly peril, and he will rescue us. On him we have set our hope that he will rescue us.
[11]He will do this as you also help us by your prayer. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the favor given to us through the prayers of many.

[12]Our boast is this: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world with integrity and godly sincerity, not relying on fleshly wisdom but on the grace of God.[13]We write to you nothing that you cannot read and understand, and I hope that you will fully understand[14]as you have understood us in part, that you can boast of us on the day of our Lord Jesus, just as we will boast of you.

[15]Because I was confident about this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might receive a second favor.[16]I was

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planning to visit you on my way to Macedonia. Then I wanted to visit you again on my trip from Macedonia, and then for you to send me on my way to Judea.
[17]When I was thinking this way, was I hesitating? Do I plan things according to the flesh, so that I say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time?[18]But just as God is faithful, our word to you is not "Yes" and "No."
[19]For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom Silvanus, Timothy, and I proclaimed among you, is not "Yes" and "No." Instead, he is always "Yes."[20]For all the promises of God are "Yes" in him. So also through him we say "Amen" to the glory of God.
[21]Now it is God who confirms us with you in Christ, and he anointed us,[22]he set his seal on us, and he gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee of what is to come.

[23]But I call God as witness to my soul that the reason I did not come to Corinth was so that I might spare you.[24]This is not because we want to be lords over your faith. Instead, we are fellow laborers with you for your joy, as you stand firm in your faith.

2 Corinthians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The first paragraph reflects a common way to begin a letter in the ancient Near East.

Special Concepts

Paul's integrity

People were criticizing Paul and saying he was not sincere. He refutes them by explaining his motives for what he was doing.

Comfort

Comfort is a major theme of this chapter. The Holy Spirit comforts Christians. The Corinthians probably were afflicted and needed to be comforted.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical question

Paul uses two rhetorical questions to defend himself against a charge of not being sincere.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul uses the pronoun "we". This likely represents at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Guarantee

Paul says the Holy Spirit is the guarantee, which means pledge or down payment, of a Christian's eternal life. Christians are securely saved. But they will not experience all of God's given promises until after they die. The Holy Spirit is a personal guarantee that this will happen. This idea comes from a business term. A person gives some valuable item to another person as a "guarantee" that they will repay money. (See: eternity and save)

Links:

2 Corinthians 1:1 Notes 2 Corinthians intro

2 Corinthians 1:1

Paul ... to the church of God that is in Corinth

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter and its intended audience. Alternate translation: "I, Paul ... wrote this letter to you, the church of God that is in Corinth"

Timothy our brother

This indicates that both Paul and the Corinthians knew Timothy and considered him to be their spiritual brother.

Achaia

This is the name of a Roman province in the southern part of modern-day Greece.

2 Corinthians 1:2

General Information:

The word "you" throughout this letter refers to the people of the church in Corinth and to the rest of the Christians in that area.

May grace be to you and peace

This is a common greeting that Paul uses in his letters.

2 Corinthians 1:3

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May we always praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"

the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort

These two phrases express the same idea in two different ways. Both phrases refer to God.

the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort

Possible meanings are 1) that the words "mercies" and "all comfort" describe the character of "Father" and "God" or 2) that the words "Father" and "God" refer to one who is the source of "mercies" and "all comfort."

2 Corinthians 1:4

comforts us in all our tribulation

Here "us" and "our" include the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 1:5

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For just as the sufferings of Christ abound for our sake
Paul speaks of Christ's sufferings as if they were objects that could increase in number. Alternate translation: "For just as Christ suffered greatly for our sake"
the sufferings of Christ
Possible meanings are 1) that this refers to the suffering that Paul and Timothy experience because they preach the message about Christ or 2) that this refers to the suffering that Christ experienced on their behalf.
our comfort abounds
Paul speaks of comfort as if it were an object that could increase in size.
2 Corinthians 1:6
But if we are afflicted
Here the word "we" refers to Paul and Timothy, but not to the Corinthians. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But if people afflict us"
if we are comforted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if God comforts us"
Your comfort is working effectively
"You experience effective comfort"
2 Corinthians 1:7
Our hope concerning you is unshaken
Hope is spoken of here as if it were a building that could be shaken and destroyed. Paul means that his hope for the Corinthians is strong and he continues to have hope for them. Alternate translation: "Our hope concerning you is strong" or "We have not stopped having hope for you"
Our hope concerning you is unshaken
Paul was probably hoping that the Corinthian Christians would continue to have faith in God, even though they were suffering, and that they would be comforted. Alternate translation: "We continue to be confident concerning you" or "We continue to confidently expect good for you"
2 Corinthians 1:8
we do not want you to be uninformed
This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "we want you to know"
We were utterly burdened beyond our strength
The word "burdened" is a metaphor for feeling stressed or overwhelmed. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We felt so overwhelmed beyond our strength" or "The troubles we had caused us so much more stress than we could handle"
we despaired even of life
"we could not see any way we could stay alive" or "we were sure we would die"
2 Corinthians 1:9
we had the sentence of death on us
Paul and Timothy are comparing their feeling of despair to that of someone condemned to die. Alternate translation: "we were in despair like someone who is condemned to die"
but instead in God
The words "put our trust" are left out of this phrase. Alternate translation: "but instead to put our trust in God"
who raises the dead
Here to raise is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "who causes the dead to live again"
2 Corinthians 1:10
He rescued us from such a deadly peril
"He saved us from such a dangerous situation where we could have died"
On him we have set our hope that he will rescue us
Paul and those with him hoped firmly in God. Alternate translation: "We trust in him to rescue us" or "We confidently expect that he will rescue us"
2 Corinthians 1:11
He will do this as you also help us
"God will rescue us from danger as you, the people of the church of Corinth, also help us"
the favor given to us
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the favor that God has given to us"
2 Corinthians 1:12
General Information:
In this verse Paul uses the words "we," "our," and "ourselves" to refer to himself and Timothy and possibly others who served with them. These words do not include the people he was writing to.
Our boast is this
Paul uses the word "boast" ironically here. Boasting is usually a bad thing, but Paul is confident that he has lived "with integrity and godly sincerity," and he is telling the Corinthians so.
Our conscience testifies
Paul speaks of not being guilty as if his conscience were a person that could speak. Alternate translation: "We know by our conscience"
not relying on fleshly wisdom but on the grace of God
Here "fleshly" represents human. Alternate translation: "not relying on human wisdom but on the grace of God"
2 Corinthians 1:13
We write to you nothing that you cannot read and understand
The double negative here emphasizes the positive. This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "Everything we write to you is something you can read and understand" or "You can read and understand everything we write to you"
I hope that you will fully understand
Paul wanted them to understand, and he expected that they should be able to understand, but he didn't know for sure if they would. Alternate translation: "I expect that you will fully understand" or "I trust you will fully understand"
2 Corinthians 1:14
General Information:
In this vers Paul uses the word "us" to refer to himself and Timothy and possibly others who served with them. This word does not include the people he was writing to.
you can boast
The word "boast" here is used in the positive sense of feeling great satisfaction and joy in something.
2 Corinthians 1:15
Connecting Statement:
Paul explains his sincere expectation with pure motives to

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come see the believers in Corinth after his first letter.

Because I was confident about this

The word "this" refers to Paul's previous comments about the Corinthians.

so that you might receive a second favor

Paul hoped to visit the Corinthians two times. Each visit would be a favor to the people. Alternate translation: "so that you might benefit from me visiting you twice"

2 Corinthians 1:16

send me on my way to Judea

"assist me on my way to Judea"

2 Corinthians 1:17

was I hesitating?

Paul uses this question to emphasize he was sure about his decision to visit the Corinthians. The expected answer to the question is no. Alternate translation: "I was not hesitating." or "I was confident in my decision."

Do I plan things according to the flesh ... at the same time?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that his plans to visit the Corinthians were sincere. Alternate translation: "I do not plan things according to the flesh ... at the same time"

the flesh

This phrase is a metonym for the way mortal people do things. Alternate translation: "human standards" or "the way most people act"

Do I plan things ... so that I say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time?

This means that Paul did not say both that he would visit and that he would not visit at the same time. The words "yes" and "no" are repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "I do not plan things ... so that I say 'Yes, I will certainly visit' and 'No, I will definitely not visit' at the same time!"

2 Corinthians 1:18

our word to you

"what we say to you"

2 Corinthians 1:19

For the Son of God ... is not "Yes" and "No." Instead, he is always "Yes."

Jesus says "Yes" concerning the promises of God, which means that he guarantees that they are true. Alternate translation: "For the Son of God ... does not say 'Yes' and 'No' concerning God's promises. Instead, he always says 'Yes.'"

the Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

2 Corinthians 1:20

all the promises of God are "Yes" in him

This means that Jesus guarantees all of God's promises. Alternate translation: "all the promises of God are guaranteed in Jesus Christ"

"Yes" in him ... through him we say

The word "him" refers to Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:21

God who confirms us with you

Possible meanings are 1) "God who confirms our relationship with each other because we are in Christ" or 2) "God who confirms both our and your relationship with Christ."

he anointed us

Possible meanings are 1) "he sent us to preach the gospel" or 2) "he chose us to be his people."

2 Corinthians 1:22

he set his seal on us

Paul speaks of God showing that we belong to him as if God had put a mark on us as a sign that we belong to him. Alternate translation: "he has put his mark of ownership on us" or "he has shown that we belong to him"

gave us the Spirit in our hearts

The word "heart" is often used to refer to the innermost part of a person. Alternate translation: "gave us the Spirit to live within each of us"

the Spirit ... as a guarantee

The Spirit is spoken of as if he were a partial downpayment toward eternal life.

2 Corinthians 1:23

as witness to my soul

The word "soul" here is a metonym for the whole person. Alternate translation: "as witness for me" or "to testify for me"

so that I might spare you

"so that I might not cause you more suffering"

2 Corinthians 1:24

be lords over your faith

"control what your faith should be" or "control what you believe"

we are fellow laborers with you for your joy

"we are working with you so that you may have joy"

stand firm in your faith

The word "stand" can refer to not changing. Alternate translation: "remain firm in your faith"

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2 [1]So I decided for my own part that I would not again come to you in sorrow.[2]If I caused you sorrow, who could make
me glad but the very one who was made sorrowful by me?
[3]I wrote as I did in order that, when I came to you, I might not be hurt by those who should have made me rejoice. I have confidence about all of you that my joy is the same joy you all have.[4]For I wrote to you from great tribulation, with anguish of heart, and with many tears. I did not write you so that you would be made sorrowful. Instead, I wanted you to know the depth of the love that I have for you.

[5]If anyone has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow not only to me, but in some measure—not to burden you—to all of you.[6]This punishment of that person by the majority is enough.[7]So now rather than punish him, you should forgive and comfort him. Do this so that he is not overwhelmed by too much sorrow.
[8]So I exhort you to confirm your love for him.[9]This was the reason I wrote, so that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.

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[10]If you forgive anyone, I forgive that person as well. What I have forgiven—if I have forgiven anything—it is forgiven for your sake in the presence of Christ.[11]This is so that Satan will not trick us. For we are not ignorant of his schemes.

[12]A door was opened to me by the Lord when I came to the city of Troas to preach the gospel of Christ there.[13]I had no relief in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I left them and went on to Macedonia.

[14]But may thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph. Through us he reveals the sweet aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.[15]For we are to God the sweet aroma of Christ, both among those who are saved and among those who are perishing.
[16]To the people who are perishing, it is an aroma from death to death. To the ones being saved, it is an aroma from life to life. Who is worthy of these things?[17]For we are not like so many people who sell the word of God for profit. Instead, with purity of motives, we speak in Christ, as we are sent from God, in the sight of God.

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2 Corinthians 2 General Notes

Special Concepts

Harsh writing

In this chapter, Paul refers to a letter he previously wrote to the Corinthians. Some scholars believe this refers to the letter known as First Corinthians. Other scholars believe this refers to a letter Paul wrote after the letter known as First Corinthians and before this letter. In either case, Paul had told the church to rebuke an erring member. Paul is now encouraging them to be gracious to that person.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Aroma

A sweet aroma is a pleasing smell. Scripture often describes things that are pleasing to God as having a pleasing aroma.

Links:

2 Corinthians 2:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Because of his great love for them, Paul makes it clear that his rebuke in a previous letter to them caused him pain as well as pain to the church people in Corinth and the immoral man.

I decided for my own part

"I made the decision"

in sorrow

Possible meanings are 1) this is a metonym that refers to causing the Corinthians sorrow. Alternate translation: "in a way that would cause you sorrow" or 2) this refers to Paul's own sorrow. Alternate translation: "while I am sorrowful"

sorrow

great sadness

2 Corinthians 2:2

If I caused you sorrow, who could make me glad but the very one who was made sorrowful by me?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to emphasize that neither he nor they would benefit if his coming to them would cause them pain. Alternate translation: "If I caused you sorrow, the only ones who could make me glad would be the very ones whom I had made sorrowful."

sorrow ... sorrowful

See how you translated "sorrow" in 2 Corinthians 2:1.

the very one who was made sorrowful by me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the very one whom I had hurt"

2 Corinthians 2:3

I wrote as I did

Paul is referring to a letter he wrote previously to the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "I wrote as I did in my previous letter"

I might not be hurt by those who should have made me rejoice

Paul is speaking about the behavior of certain Corinthian believers who caused him emotional pain. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those who should have made me rejoice might not hurt me"

my joy is the same joy you all have

"what gives me joy is what gives you joy, too"

2 Corinthians 2:4

from great tribulation

Here the word "tribulation" refers to emotional pain.

with anguish of heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the location of the emotions. Alternate translation: "with extreme sorrow"

with many tears

"with much crying"

2 Corinthians 2:5

not to burden you

The "burden" here is the message. Possible meanings are 1) Paul does not want to say words that will make the Corinthians sad. Alternate translation: "not to say this too harshly" Or 2) Paul does not want to say more than is true. Alternate translation: "not to exaggerate"

2 Corinthians 2:6

This punishment of that person by the majority is enough

This can be stated in active form. The word "punishment" can be translated using a verb. Alternate translation: "The way that the majority has punished that person is enough"

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is enough
"is sufficient"
2 Corinthians 2:7
he is not overwhelmed by too much sorrow
This means to have a strong emotional response of too much sorrow. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "too much sorrow does not overwhelm him"
2 Corinthians 2:8
Connecting Statement:
Paul encourages the church in Corinth to show love and to forgive the person they have punished. He writes that he, also, has forgiven him.
confirm your love for him
"show him that you truly love him"
2 Corinthians 2:9
you are obedient in everything
Possible meanings are 1) "you are obedient to God in everything" or 2) "you are obedient in everything that I have taught you"
2 Corinthians 2:10
it is forgiven for your sake
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I have forgiven it for your sake"
forgiven for your sake
Possible meanings are 1) "forgiven out of my love for you" or 2) "forgiven for your benefit."
2 Corinthians 2:11
For we are not ignorant of his schemes
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "For we know his schemes well"
2 Corinthians 2:12
Connecting Statement:
Paul encourages the believers in Corinth by telling them of the opportunities he has had to preach the gospel in Troas and Macedonia.
A door was opened to me by the Lord ... to preach the gospel
Paul speaks of his opportunity to preach the gospel as if it were a door through which he was allowed to walk. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord opened a door to me ... to preach the gospel" or "The Lord gave me the opportunity ... to preach the gospel"
2 Corinthians 2:13
I had no relief in my spirit
"My mind was troubled" or "I was worried"
my brother Titus
Paul speaks of Titus as his spiritual brother.
So I left them
"So I left the people of Troas"
2 Corinthians 2:14
God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph
Paul speaks of God as if he were a victorious general leading a victory parade, and of himself and his coworkers as those who take part in that parade. Possible meanings are 1) Paul and his coworkers are being led as prisoners in the parade. Alternate translation: "God, who leads us as prisoners in Christ's victory parade" or 2) Paul and his coworkers are led as victorious soldiers in the parade. Alternate translation: "God, who leads us as victorious soldiers in Christ's triumphal parade"
Through us he reveals the sweet aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere
Paul speaks of people learning about Christ from Paul and his companions as if they were smoke from incense that has a pleasing smell spreading around so people could smell it. He mixes his metaphor by saying that God "reveals" that pleasing smell. Alternate translation: "He causes the knowledge of Christ to spread to everyone who hears us, just as the sweet smell of burning incense spreads to everyone near it"
everywhere
"everywhere we go"
2 Corinthians 2:15
we are to God the sweet aroma of Christ
Paul speaks of his ministry as if it were an offering or incense that was being burned, creating a pleasant smell to God.
the sweet aroma of Christ
Possible meanings are 1) "the sweet aroma which is the knowledge of Christ" or 2) "the sweet aroma that Christ offers."
those who are saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God has saved"
2 Corinthians 2:16
it is an aroma
"the knowledge of Christ is an aroma." This refers back to [2 Corinthians 2:14]
an aroma from death to death
Possible meanings are 1) that the word "death" is repeated for emphasis and the phrase means "an aroma that causes death" or 2) "an aroma of death that causes people to die"
the ones being saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the ones whom God is saving"
aroma from life to life
Possible meanings are 1) that the word "life" is repeated for emphasis and the phrase means "an aroma that gives life" or 2) "an aroma of life that gives people life"
Who is worthy of these things?
"Who is qualified to do these things?" The phrase "these things" refers to preaching God's message about Christ. Paul uses a rhetorical question to express amazement that anyone could be worthy of doing this. Alternate translation: 'Who is worthy to spread the knowledge of Christ?" or "It is amazing that anyone is worthy of these things!"
2 Corinthians 2:17
who sell the word of God
"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "who sell God's message"
purity of motives
"pure motives"
we speak in Christ
"we speak as people who are joined to Christ" or "we speak with the authority of Christ"
as we are sent from God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as people whom God has sent"
in the sight of God

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This represents the presence of God. Paul and his coworkers preach the gospel with the awareness that God is watching them. Alternate translation: "speaking in the presence of God"

3 [1]Are we beginning to praise ourselves again? We do not need letters of recommendation to you or from you, like some people, do we?[2]You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, known and read by all people.
[3]You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry. It was written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God. It was not written on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.
[4]And this is the confidence that we have through Christ before God.[5]We are not competent in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us. Rather, our competence is from God.[6]It is God who made us able to be servants of a new covenant. This is a covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
[7]Now the ministry of death—engraved in letters on stones—came in such glory that the sons of Israel could not look directly at Moses' face. This is because of the glory of his face, a glory that was fading.[8]How much more glorious will the ministry of the Spirit be?
[9]For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory![10]For indeed, that which was once made glorious is no longer glorious in this respect, because of the glory that exceeds it.[11]For if that which was passing away had glory, how much more will what is permanent have glory!

[12]Since we have such a hope, we are very bold.[13]We are not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel were not able to look directly at the ending of a glory that was passing away.
[14]But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.[15]But even today, whenever Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.[16]But when a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
[17]Now the Lord is the Spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.[18]Now all of us, with unveiled faces, see the glory of the Lord. We are being transformed into the same glorious likeness from one degree of glory into another, just as from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues his defense. Paul views the Corinthian Christians as the proof of his work.

Special concepts in this chapter

Law of Moses

Paul alludes to God giving the Ten Commandments on stone tablets. This represents the law of Moses. The law was good because it came from God. But God punished the Israelites because they disobeyed it. This chapter may be difficult for translators to understand if the Old Testament has not yet been translated. (See: lawofmoses and covenant and reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Paul uses many metaphors in this chapter to explain complex spiritual truths. It is unclear whether this makes Paul's teachings easier or more difficult to understand.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"This is a covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit."

Paul contrasts the old and new covenants. The new covenant is not a system of rules and regulations. Here "Spirit" probably refers to the Holy Spirit. It may also refer to the new covenant being "spiritual" in nature. (See: spirit)

Links:

2 Corinthians 3:1 Notes

2 Corinthians 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Corinthians that he is not boasting as he tells them about what he has done through Christ.

Are we beginning to praise ourselves again?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that they are not bragging about themselves. Alternate translation: "We are not beginning to praise ourselves again."

We do not need letters of recommendation to you or from you, like some people, do we?

Paul says this to express that the Corinthians already know about Paul and Timothy's good reputation. The question prompts a negative answer. Alternate translation: "We certainly do not need letters of recommendation to you or from you, like some people do."

letters of recommendation

This is a letter that a person writes to introduce and give their approval of someone else.

2 Corinthians 3:2

General Information:

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Paul begins an extended metaphor that speaks of the way that the Corinthians have been obeying Christ as if it were a letter that Christ had written first to Paul and his companions and then to all the people in the world.

You yourselves are our letter of recommendation

Paul speaks of the Corinthians as if they are a letter of recommendation. That they have become believers serves to validate Paul's ministry to others. Alternate translation: "You yourselves are like our letter of recommendation"

written on our hearts

Here the word "hearts" refers to their thoughts and emotions. Possible meanings are 1) Paul and his coworkers are sure about the Corinthians being their letter of recommendation or 2) Paul and his coworkers care very deeply for the Corinthians.

written on our hearts

This can be stated in active form with "Christ" as the implied subject. Alternate translation: "which Christ has written on our hearts"

known and read by all people

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that all people can know and read"

2 Corinthians 3:3

General Information:

Paul continues the extended metaphor that he began in [2 Corinthians 3:2]

you are a letter from Christ

Paul clarifies that Christ is the one who has written the letter. Alternate translation: "you are a letter that Christ has written"

the result of our ministry

Because of the work Paul and his companions had done, the world could look at the Corinthians and see how Christ blesses people in this life. Some modern translations read, "delivered by us."

It was written not with ink ... on tablets of human hearts

Paul clarifies that the Corinthians are like a spiritual letter, not like a letter that humans write with physical objects.

It was written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It was written not with ink but it was written by the Spirit of the living God" or "It is not a letter that people wrote with ink but a letter that the Spirit of the living God wrote"

It was not written on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is not a letter that people engraved on stone tablets but a letter that the Spirit of the living God wrote on tablets of human hearts"

tablets of human hearts

Paul speaks of their hearts as if they are flat pieces of stone or clay upon which people engraved letters.

2 Corinthians 3:4

this is the confidence

This refers to what Paul has just said. His confidence comes from knowing that the Corinthians are the validation of his ministry before God.

2 Corinthians 3:5

competent in ourselves

"qualified in ourselves" or "sufficient in ourselves"

to claim anything as coming from us

Here the word "anything" refers to anything pertaining to Paul's apostolic ministry. Alternate translation: "to claim that anything we have done in ministry comes from our own efforts"

our competence is from God

"God gives us our sufficiency"

2 Corinthians 3:6

a covenant not of the letter

Here the word "letter" means letters of the alphabet and refers to words that people write down. The phrase alludes to the Old Testament law. Alternate translation: "a covenant not based on commands that men have written"

but of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the one who establishes God's covenant with people. Alternate translation: "but a covenant of the Spirit" or "but a covenant based on what the Spirit does"

the letter kills

Paul speaks of the Old Testament law as a person who kills. Following that law leads to spiritual death. Alternate translation: "the written law leads to death"

2 Corinthians 3:7

Connecting Statement:

Paul contrasts the fading glory of the old covenant with the superiority and freedom of the new covenant. He contrasts the veil of Moses with the clarity of present revelation. During the time of Moses there was a less clear picture of what is now revealed.

Now the ministry of death ... came in such glory

Paul emphasizes that although the law leads to death, it was still very glorious.

the ministry of death

This refers to the Old Testament law that God gave through Moses. Alternate translation: "the ministry that causes people to die because it is based on the law"

engraved in letters on stones

"carved in letters on stone." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God carved in letters on stone"

in such glory

"in so much glory"

This is because

"They could not look because"

2 Corinthians 3:8

How much more glorious will the ministry of the Spirit be?

Paul uses this question to emphasize that "the service that the ministry of the Spirit" must be more glorious than "the ministry of death" [2 Corinthians 3:7]

the ministry of the Spirit

This refers to the new covenant, of which Paul is a minister. Alternate translation: "the ministry that gives life because it is based on the Spirit"

2 Corinthians 3:9

the ministry of condemnation

"the ministry of condemnation." This refers to the Old Testament law. Alternate translation: "the ministry that condemns people because it is based on the law"

how much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory!

Here the word "how" marks this phrase as an exclamation,

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not as a question. Alternate translation: "then the ministry of righteousness must abound in so much more glory!"

the ministry of righteousness abound in glory

Paul speaks of "the ministry of righteousness" as if it were an object that could produce or multiply another object. He means that "the ministry of righteousness" is far more glorious than the law, which also had glory.

the ministry of righteousness

This refers to the new covenant, of which Paul is a minister. Alternate translation: "the ministry that makes people righteous because it is based on the Spirit"

2 Corinthians 3:10

that which was once made glorious is no longer glorious ... because of the glory that exceeds it

The Old Testament law no longer appears glorious when compared with the new covenant, which is much more glorious.

that which was once made glorious

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the law which God once made glorious"

in this respect

"in this way"

2 Corinthians 3:11

that which was passing away

This refers to "the service of condemnation," which Paul speaks of as if it were an object capable of disappearing. Alternate translation: "that which was becoming useless"

2 Corinthians 3:12

Since we have such a hope

This hope is a confident hope. It refers to what Paul has just said. His hope comes from knowing that the new covenant leads to an eternal glory. Alternate translation: "Since we confidently expect this" or "Since we confidently wait to receive this glory"

such a hope

"such confidence"

2 Corinthians 3:13

the ending of a glory that was passing away

The refers to the glory that shined on Moses's face. Alternate translation: "the glory on Moses's face as it faded away completely"

2 Corinthians 3:14

But their minds were hardened

Paul speaks of the minds of the Israelite people as objects that could be made hard. This expression means that they were unable to understand what they saw. Alternate translation: "But the Israelites could not understand what they saw"

For to this day

to the time at which Paul was writing to the Corinthians

when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains

Just as the Israelites could not see the glory on Moses's face because he covered his face with a veil, there is a spiritual veil that prevents people from understanding when they read the old covenant.

when they read the old covenant

"when they hear someone read the old covenant"

It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away

Here both occurrences of the word "it" refer to "the same veil." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one removes the veil, because only in Christ does God remove it"

2 Corinthians 3:15

But even today

This phrase refers to the time at which Paul was writing to the Corinthians.

whenever Moses is read

Here the word "Moses" refers to the Old Testament law. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whenever someone reads the Mosaic law"

a veil covers their hearts

Here the word "hearts" represents what people think, and the people being unable to understand the old covenant is spoken of as if they have a veil that covers their hearts the way a physical veil would cover their eyes. Alternate translation: "they are unable to understand what they are hearing"

2 Corinthians 3:16

when a person turns to the Lord

Here "turns to" is a metaphor that means to become loyal to someone. Alternate translation: "when a person starts to worship the Lord" or "when a person starts to trust in the Lord"

the veil is taken away

God gives them the ability to understand. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God lifts the veil away" or "God gives them the ability to understand"

2 Corinthians 3:18

Now all of us

Here the word "us" refers to all believers, including Paul and the Corinthians.

with unveiled faces, see the glory of the Lord

Unlike the Israelites who could not see God's glory reflected on Moses's face because he had covered it with a veil, there is nothing to prevent believers from seeing and understanding God's glory.

We are being transformed into the same glorious likeness

The Spirit is changing believers to be glorious like him. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Lord is transforming us into his same glorious likeness"

from one degree of glory into another

"from one amount of glory to another amount of glory." This means that the Spirit is constantly increasing the glory of believers.

just as from the Lord

"just as this comes from the Lord"

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4 [1]Therefore, because we have this ministry, and just as we have received mercy, we do not become discouraged.[2]Instead, we have rejected secret and shameful ways. We do not walk in craftiness, and we do not mishandle the word of God, but by presenting the truth, we recommend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.

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[3]But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing.[4]In their case, the god of this world has blinded their unbelieving minds. As a result, they are not able to see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
[5]For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.[6]For God is the one who said, "Light will shine out of darkness." He has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the presence of Jesus Christ.

[7]But we have this treasure in jars of clay, so that it is clear that the exceedingly great power belongs to God and not to us.
[8]We are afflicted in every way, but not overwhelmed. We are perplexed but not filled with despair.[9]We are persecuted but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed;[10]always carrying around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.
[11]For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh.[12]So death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.
[13]But we have the same spirit of faith according to that which was written: "I believed, and so I spoke." We also believe, and so we also speak,[14]because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.[15]For everything is for your sake, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.

[16]So we do not become discouraged. Even though outwardly we are wasting away, inwardly we are being renewed day by day.[17]For this momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal burden of glory that exceeds all measurement.[18]For we are not watching for things that are seen, but for things that are unseen. The things that we can see are temporary, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

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2 Corinthians 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins with the word "therefore." This connects it to what the previous chapter teaches. How these chapters are divided may be confusing to the reader.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ministry

Paul ministers to people by telling them about Christ. He does not try to trick people into believing. If they do not understand the gospel, it is because the problem is ultimately spiritual. (See: spirit)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Life and death

Paul does not refer here to physical life and death. Life represents the new life a Christian has in Jesus. Death represents the old way of living before believing in Jesus. (See: life and death and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Hope

Paul uses a repeated pattern in a purposeful way. He makes a statement. Then he denies a seemingly opposite or contradictory statement or gives an exception. Together these give the reader hope in difficult circumstances. (See: hope)

Links:

2 Corinthians 4:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul writes that he is honest in his ministry by preaching Christ, not praising himself. He shows the death and the life of Jesus in how he lives so that life can work in the Corinthian believers.

we have this ministry

Here the word "we" refers to Paul and his coworker, but not to the Corinthians.

and just as we have received mercy

This phrase explains how Paul and his coworkers "have this ministry." It is a gift that God has given to them through his mercy. Alternate translation: "because God has shown us mercy"

2 Corinthians 4:2

we have rejected secret and shameful ways

This means that Paul and his coworkers refuse to do "secret and shameful" things. It does not mean that they had done

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these things in the past.

secret and shameful ways

The word "secret" describes the things that people do secretly. Things that are shameful should cause people who do them to feel ashamed. Alternate translation: "the things that people do secretly because they cause shame"

walk in craftiness

The word "walk" is a metaphor for the way a person lives his life. Alternate translation: "live by deceiving people"

we do not mishandle the word of God

The phrase "word of God" here is a metonym for the message from God. The words "we do not mishandle" use two negative thoughts to express a positive thought. Alternate translation: "we handle God's message correctly" or "we use the word of God properly"

we recommend ourselves to everyone's conscience

This means that they provide enough evidence for each person who hears them to decide whether they are right or wrong.

in the sight of God

This refers to God's presence. God's understanding and approval of Paul's truthfulness is referred to as God being able to see them. Alternate translation: "before God" or "with God as witness"

2 Corinthians 4:3

But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing

This refers back to what Paul said starting in [2 Corinthians 3:14]

if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if a veil covers our gospel, that veil covers it"

our gospel

"the gospel that we preach"

2 Corinthians 4:4

the god of this world has blinded their unbelieving minds

Paul speaks of their minds as if they had eyes, and their inability to understand as their minds being unable to see. Alternate translation: "the god of this world has prevented unbelievers from understanding"

the god of this world

"the god who rules this world." This phrase refers to Satan.

they are not able to see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ

As the Israelites could not see God's glory that shined on Moses's face because he covered it with a veil (2 Corinthians 3:13), unbelievers are not able to see Christ's glory that shines in the gospel. This means that they are unable to understand "the gospel of the glory of Christ"

the light of the gospel

"the light that comes from the gospel"

the gospel of the glory of Christ

"the gospel about Christ's glory"

2 Corinthians 4:5

but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants

You can supply the verb for these phrases. Alternate translation: "but we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and we proclaim ourselves as your servants"

for Jesus' sake

"because of Jesus"

2 Corinthians 4:6

Light will shine out of darkness

With this sentence, Paul refers to God creating light, as described in the book of Genesis.

He has shone ... to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

Here the word "light" refers to the ability to understand. Just as God created light, he also creates understanding for believers. Alternate translation: "He has shone ... to enable us to understand the glory of God"

in our hearts

Here the word "hearts" refers to the mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "in our minds"

the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the presence

"the light, which is the knowledge of the glory of God, in the presence"

the glory of God in the presence of Jesus Christ

"the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Just as God's glory shone upon Moses's face (2 Corinthians 3:7), it also shines upon Jesus's face. This means that when Paul preaches the gospel, people are able to see and understand the message about God's glory.

2 Corinthians 4:7

But we have

Here the word "we" refers to Paul and his coworkers, but not to the Corinthians.

we have this treasure in jars of clay

Paul speaks of the gospel as if it were a treasure and their bodies as if they were breakable jars made out of clay. This emphasizes that they are of little value compared to the worth of the gospel that they preach.

so that it is clear

"so that it is clear to people" or "so that people clearly know"

2 Corinthians 4:8

We are afflicted in every way

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People afflict us in every way"

2 Corinthians 4:9

We are persecuted but not abandoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People persecute us, but God does not abandon us" or "People persecute us, but God does not stop caring for us"

abandoned; struck down but not destroyed

This can be stated in active form and as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "abandoned. People strike us down but do not destroy us"

struck down

"hurt badly"

2 Corinthians 4:10

always carrying around in our body the death of Jesus

Paul speaks of his sufferings as if they are an experience of the death of Jesus. Alternate translation: "often in danger of dying, as Jesus died" or "always suffering in such a way that we experience the death of Jesus"

the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "people can see that we will live in bodies again because Jesus is alive" or 2) "we can show other people in our bodies the spiritual life that Jesus gives."

2 Corinthians 4:11

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we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake
Carrying the death of Jesus represents being in danger of dying because of being loyal to Jesus. Alternate translation: "God is always leading those of us who are alive to face death because we are joined to Jesus" or "People are always causing us who are alive to be in danger of dying because we are joined to Jesus"
so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God may reveal the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh"
the life of Jesus may be revealed
Possible meanings are 1) Paul is referring to the life that Jesus lives. Alternate translation: "God may reveal that Jesus is alive" 2) Paul is referring to the life that Jesus gives to his people. Alternate translation: "God may reveal the life that Jesus gives to his people"
our mortal flesh
Paul is referring to our physical bodies, which will die someday.
2 Corinthians 4:12
death is at work in us, but life is at work in you
Paul speaks of death and life as if they are persons who can work. This means that they are always in danger of physical death so that the Corinthians can have spiritual life.
2 Corinthians 4:13
the same spirit of faith
"the same attitude of faith." Here the word "spirit" refers a person's attitude and temperament.
according to that which was written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as the one who wrote these words"
I believed, and so I spoke
This is a quote from the Psalms.
2 Corinthians 4:14
that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "that the one who caused the Lord Jesus to live again will" or "God, who raised the Lord Jesus, will"
2 Corinthians 4:15
For everything is for your sake
Here the word "everything" refers to all of the sufferings that Paul has described in previous verses.
the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God
Paul speaks of more and more people experiencing God's grace as if grace were "reaching" people. And, Paul speaks of more and ore people giving thanks to God as if thanksgiving were an object that could become larger by itself. Alternate translation: "God may show his grace to many people, causing more and more people to give thanks, to the glory of God"
2 Corinthians 4:16
Connecting Statement:
Paul writes that the Corinthian difficulties are minor and do not last long when compared to the unseen eternal things.
So we do not become discouraged
This can be stated as a positive. Alternate translation: "So we remain confident"
outwardly we are wasting away
This refers to their physical bodies decaying and dying. Alternate translation: "our physical bodies are getting weak and dying"
inwardly we are being renewed day by day
This refers to their inward, spiritual lives getting stronger. Alternate translation: "our spiritual beings are being strengthened day by day"
inwardly we are being renewed day by day
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is renewing our inward being more each day"
2 Corinthians 4:17
this momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal burden of glory
Paul speaks of his sufferings and the glory that God will give him as if they were objects that can be weighed. He uses irony to call affliction, which people usually think of as if it were a heavy burden, a light burden and glory, which people usually think of as relief from suffering, as if it were a heavy burden. Through this metaphor he is saying that the glory to come will be much greater than the affliction.
that exceeds all measurement
The glory that Paul will experience is so great that no one can measure it. The abstract noun "measurement" can be translated as the verb "measure." Alternate translation: "that no one can measure"
2 Corinthians 4:18
things that are seen ... things that are unseen ... things that are unseen
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "things that we can see ... things that we cannot see ... things that we cannot see"
but for things that are unseen
You can supply the verb for this phrase. Alternate translation: "but we are watching for things that are unseen"

5 [1]We know that if our earthly house—the tent—is destroyed, we have a building from God. It is a house not made by human hands, but an eternal house, in heaven.[2]For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly residence.[3]We long for this because by putting it on we will not be found to be naked.
[4]For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened. We do not want to be unclothed. Instead, we want to be clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.[5]The one who prepared us for this very thing is God, who gave us the Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come.
[6]Therefore always be confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord.[7]For we walk by faith, not by sight.[8]So we have confidence. We would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.
[9]So we make it our goal, whether we are at home or away, to please him.[10]For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for the things done in the body, whether for good or for bad.

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[11]Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade people. What we are is clearly seen by God, and I hope that it is also clear to your conscience.[12]We are not commending ourselves to you again, but we are giving you a reason to be proud of us, so you may have an answer for those who boast about appearances but not about what is in the heart.
[13]For if we are out of our minds, it is for God; and if we are in our right minds, it is for your sake.[14]For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: That one person died for all, and that therefore all have died.[15]He died for all, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
[16]For this reason, from now on we do not regard anyone according to the flesh, even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh. But now we no longer regard him that way.[17]Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. See, they have become new.
[18]All these things are from God. He reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.
[19]That is, in Christ God is reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them. He is entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

[20]So we are appointed as representatives of Christ, as though God were making his appeal through us. We plead with you, for the sake of Christ: "Be reconciled to God!"[21]He made him who knew no sin to become sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

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2 Corinthians 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

New bodies in heaven

Paul knows that when he dies he will receive a much better body. Because of this, he is not afraid of being killed for preaching the gospel. So he tells others that they too can be reconciled to God. Christ will take away their sin and give them his righteousness. (See: goodnews, reconcile, sin, and righteous)

New creation

The old and new creation probably refer to how Paul illustrates the old and new self. These concepts are also the same as the old and new man. The term "old" probably does not refer to the sinful nature with which a person is born. It refers to the old way of living or the Christian formerly being bound to sin. The "new creation" is the new nature or new life that God gives a person after they come to believe in Christ. (See: faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Home

The Christian's home is no longer in the world. A Christian's real home is in heaven. By using this metaphor, Paul emphasizes that the Christian's circumstances in this world are temporary. It gives hope to those who are suffering. (See: heaven and and hope)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The message of reconciliation"

This refers to the gospel. Paul calls for people who are hostile to God to repent and be reconciled to him. (See: repent and reconcile)

Links:

2 Corinthians 5:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues by contrasting believers' earthly bodies to the heavenly ones God will give.

if our earthly house—the tent—is destroyed, we have a building from God

Here a temporary "house" or "tent" is a metaphor for a person's physical body and a permanent "building from God" is a metaphor for the new body that God will give believers after they die.

if our earthly house—the tent—is destroyed, we have

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "if people destroy our earthly house—the tent—we have" or "if people kill our bodies, we have"

if our earthly house—the tent—is destroyed

"if the tent that is our home on earth is destroyed"

It is a house not made by human hands

Here "house" means the same thing as "building from God." Here "hands" is a synecdoche that represents the human as a whole. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is a house that humans did not make"

2 Corinthians 5:2

in this tent we groan

Here "this tent" means the same thing as "the earthly dwelling that we live in." A groan is a sound that a person makes when they eagerly desire to have something that is good.

longing to be clothed with our heavenly residence

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The words "our heavenly residence" means the same thing as "the place God will give us to live in." Paul speaks of the new body that believers receive after they die as if it were both a house to live in and a piece of clothing that a person can put on.

2 Corinthians 5:3

by putting it on

"by putting on our heavenly dwelling"

we will not be found to be naked

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we will not be naked" or "God will not find us naked"

2 Corinthians 5:4

while we are in this tent

Paul speaks of the physical body as if it were a "tent."

in this tent, we groan

The word "tent" refers to "the earthly dwelling that we live in." The word groan is a sound that a person makes when they eagerly desire to have something that is good. See how you translated this in 2 Corinthians 5:2.

being burdened

Paul refers to the difficulties that the physical body experiences as if they were heavy objects that are difficult to carry.

We do not want to be unclothed ... we want to be clothed

Paul speaks of the body as if it were clothing. Here "to be unclothed" refers to the death of the physical body; "to be clothed" refers to having the resurrection body that God will give.

to be unclothed

"to be without clothes" or "to be naked"

so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life

Paul speaks of life as if it were an animal that eats "what is mortal." The physical body that will die will be replaced by a resurrection body that will live forever.

so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that life may swallow up what is mortal"

2 Corinthians 5:5

who gave us the Spirit as a guarantee of what is to come

The Spirit is spoken of as if he were a down payment toward eternal life. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Corinthians 1:22]

2 Corinthians 5:6

Connecting Statement:

Because believers will have a new body and have the Holy Spirit as a pledge, Paul reminds them to live by faith so that they may please the Lord.

while we are at home in the body

Paul speaks of the physical body as if it were a place where a person dwells. Alternate translation: "while we are living in this earthly body"

we are away from the Lord

"we are not at home with the Lord" or "we are not in heaven with the Lord"

2 Corinthians 5:7

we walk by faith, not by sight

Here "walk" is a metaphor for "live" or "behave." Alternate translation: "we live according to faith, not according to what we see"

2 Corinthians 5:8

We would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord

You may need to make explicit that they do not prefer to remain alive in this present world. Alternate translation: "We would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord than to remain in the body and away from the Lord"

We would prefer to be away from the body

Here the word "body" refers to the physical body.

at home with the Lord

"at home with the Lord in heaven"

2 Corinthians 5:9

whether we are at home or away

Possible meanings are 1) "whether we are at home in the body or away from it" or 2) "whether we are at home with the Lord or away from him." Either way, Paul means that, whether in this life or in the next life, believers should try to please the Lord.

to please him

"to please the Lord"

2 Corinthians 5:10

we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ

Here "judgment seat of Christ" represents Christ himself, who will judge all people. Alternate translation: "we all must stand in the presence of Christ to be judged" or "Christ will judge all of us"

appear

"go" or "be present" or "stand"

each one may receive what is due

"each person may receive what he deserves"

the things done in the body

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things he has done in the physical body"

whether for good or for bad

"whether those things were good or bad"

2 Corinthians 5:11

knowing the fear of the Lord

"knowing what it means to fear the Lord"

we persuade people

Possible meanings are 1) "we persuade people of the truth of the gospel" or 2) "we persuade people that we are legitimate apostles."

What we are is clearly seen by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God clearly sees what kind of people we are"

I hope that it is also clear to your conscience

Paul wanted the the Corinthians to know what kind of people he and those with him were. "I expect that it is also clear to your conscience" or "I trust that it is also clear to your conscience"

that it is also clear to your conscience

"that you are also convinced of it"

2 Corinthians 5:12

We are not commending ourselves to you again

"We are not recommending ourselves to you again" or "We are not trying to show you again that we are worthy"

so you may have an answer for those

"so you may have something to say to those"

those who boast about appearances but not about what is in the heart

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Here the word "appearances" refers to outward expressions of things like ability and status. The word "heart" refers to the inward character of a person. Alternate translation: "those who praise their own actions, but do not care about what they really are in their inner being"

2 Corinthians 5:13

if we are out of our minds ... if we are in our right minds

Paul is speaking about the way others think of him and his coworkers. Alternate translation: "if people think we are crazy ... if people think we are sane"

2 Corinthians 5:14

the love of Christ

Possible meanings are 1) "our love for Christ" or 2) "Christ's love for us."

died for all

"died for all people"

2 Corinthians 5:15

him who for their sake died and was raised

"him who for their sake died and whom God caused to live again" or "Christ, who died for their sake and whom God raised"

for their sake

Possible meanings are 1) these words refer only to "died" or 2) these words refer to both "died" and "was raised."

2 Corinthians 5:16

Connecting Statement:

Because of Christ's love and death, we are not to judge by human standards. We are appointed to teach others how to be united with and have peace with God through Christ's death and to receive God's righteousness through Christ.

For this reason

This refers to what Paul has just said about living for Christ instead of living for self.

regard anyone

"judge anyone" or "think about anyone"

the flesh

This phrase is a metonym for the way mortal people do things. See how you translated it in [2 Corinthians 1:17]

2 Corinthians 5:17

he is a new creation

Paul speaks of the person who believes in Christ as if that person were a new person that God had created. Alternate translation: "he is a new person"

The old things have passed away

Here "the old things" refers to the things that characterized a person before he trusted in Christ.

See

The word "See" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

2 Corinthians 5:18

All these things are from God

"God has done all these things." This refers to what Paul has just said in the previous verse about new things replacing old things.

the ministry of reconciliation

This can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "the ministry of reconciling people to him"

2 Corinthians 5:19

That is, in Christ

"This means that in Christ"

in Christ God is reconciling the world to himself

Here the word "world" refers to people in the world. Alternate translation: "in Christ, God is reconciling mankind to himself"

He is entrusting to us the message of reconciliation

God has given Paul the responsibility to spread the message that God is reconciling people to himself.

the message of reconciliation

"the message about reconciliation"

2 Corinthians 5:20

we are appointed as representatives of Christ

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has appointed us as Christ's representatives"

representatives of Christ

"those who speak for Christ"

Be reconciled to God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Let God reconcile you to himself"

2 Corinthians 5:21

General Information:

The words "us" and "we" refer to Paul and his readers and so are inclusive.

He made him who knew no sin to become sin for us

"Christ new no sin, but God made him to become sin for us"

knew no sin

"never sinned"

to become sin for us

The word "sin" is a metonym for the sacrifice that is offered so that God will forgive sin. Alternate translation: "to become the sacrifice for which God will forgive our sins"

us, so that

"us. He did this so that"

so that we might become the righteousness of God in him

The phrase "the righteousness of God" refers to the righteousness that God requires and that comes from God. Alternate translation: "so that through Christ we might have the righteousness that God requires"

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6 [1]Working together with him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain.[2]For he says,

"In a favorable time I paid attention to you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you."

Look, now is the favorable time. Look, now is the day of salvation.
[3]We do not place a stumbling block in front of anyone, for we do not wish our ministry to be discredited.

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[4]Instead, in every way we commend ourselves as God's servants in much endurance, in affliction, in distress, in hardship,
[5]in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in hard labor, in sleepless nights, in hunger,[6]in purity, in knowledge, in patience,
in kindness, in the Holy Spirit, in sincere love,[7]in the word of truth, in the power of God; with the armor of righteousness
for the right hand and the left.
[8]We are God's servants in glory and dishonor, in slander and praise; regarded as deceivers and yet truthful;[9]as unknown,
yet well known; as dying, yet, look—we live; as being disciplined, yet not killed;[10]as sorrowful, yet rejoicing; as poor, yet
many are enriched; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.

[11]We have spoken the whole truth to you, Corinthians, and our heart is wide open.[12]You are not restrained by us, but you
are restrained in your own hearts.[13]Now in fair exchange—I speak as to children—open yourselves wide also.
[14]Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what association does righteousness have with lawlessness? For what
fellowship does light have with darkness?[15]What agreement can Christ have with Belial? Or what share does a believer
have together with an unbeliever?[16]And what agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the
temple of the living God, just as God said:

"I will dwell among them
and walk among them.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people."

[17]Therefore,

"Come out from among them,
and be set apart," says the Lord.
"Touch no unclean thing,
and I will welcome you.
[18] I will be a Father to you,
and you will be my sons and daughters,"
says the Lord Almighty.

2 Corinthians 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 2 and 16-18, which are words from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Servants

Paul refers to Christians as servants of God. God calls Christians to serve him in all circumstances. Paul describes some of the difficult circumstances in which he and his companions served God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Contrasts

Paul uses four pairs of contrasts: righteousness versus lawlessness, light versus darkness, Christ versus Satan, and the temple of God versus idols. These contrasts show a difference between Christians and non-Christians. (See: righteous and light and darkness)

Light and darkness

The Bible often speaks of unrighteous people, people who do not do what pleases God, as if they were walking around in darkness. It speaks of light as if it were what enables those sinful people to become righteous, to understand what they are doing wrong and begin to obey God. (See: righteous)

Rhetorical questions

Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions to teach his readers. All of these questions make essentially the same point: Christians should not intimately fellowship with those who live in sin. Paul repeats these questions for emphasis. (See: and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun "we" to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

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Links:

2 Corinthians 6:1

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2 Corinthians 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul summarizes how working together for God is supposed to be.

Working together with him

Paul is implying that he and Timothy are working with God. Alternate translation: "Working together with God"

we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain

"we beg you to make use of the grace that you have received from God"

2 Corinthians 6:2

General Information:

In this verse, Paul quotes a portion from the prophet Isaiah.

For he says

"For God says." This introduces a quotation from the prophet Isaiah. Alternate translation: "For God says in scripture"

Look

The word "Look" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

2 Corinthians 6:3

We do not place a stumbling block in front of anyone

Paul speaks of anything that would prevent a person from trusting in Christ as if it were a physical object over which that person trips and falls. Alternate translation: "We do not want to do anything that will prevent people from believing our message"

we do not wish our ministry to be discredited

The word "discredited" refers to people speaking badly about Paul's ministry, and working against the message he proclaims. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we do not want anyone to be able to speak badly about our ministry"

2 Corinthians 6:4

General Information:

When Paul uses "we" here, he is referring to himself and Timothy.

in every way we commend ourselves as God's servants

Possible meanings are 1) "Because we are God's servants we recommend ourselves to you in every way" or 2) "in every way we show that we are God's servants"

in every way

This tells how they commend themselves. Alternate translation: "in everything we do"

in much endurance, in affliction, in distress, in hardship

Paul mentions various difficult situations in which they commend themselves as God's servants.

2 Corinthians 6:5

in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in hard labor, in sleepless nights, in hunger

Paul continues to mention various difficult situations in which they commend themselves as God's servants.

2 Corinthians 6:6

in purity ... in sincere love

Paul lists several moral virtues that they maintained in difficult situations, commending themselves as God's servants.

2 Corinthians 6:7

in the word of truth

"by speaking God's message about truth" or "by speaking God's true message"

in the power of God

"by showing God's power to people"

with the armor of righteousness for the right hand and the left

Paul speaks of their righteousness as if it were weapons that they use to fight spiritual battles.

the armor of righteousness

"righteousness as our armor" or "righteousness as our weapons"

for the right hand and the left

Possible meanings are 1) that there is a weapon in one hand and a shield in the other or 2) that they are completely equipped for battle, able to fend off attacks from any direction.

2 Corinthians 6:8

regarded as deceivers

"people regard us as deceivers" or "people say that we are liars"

and yet truthful

You may need to fill in the words left out of the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "but we are truthful"

2 Corinthians 6:9

as if we were unknown, yet we are well known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if people did not know us, and yet people know us well"

as if we were being punished for our actions, yet we are not killed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if people were punishing us for our actions, yet they have not killed us"

2 Corinthians 6:11

spoken the whole truth to you

"spoken honestly to you"

our heart is wide open

Paul speaks of his great affection for the Corinthians as having a heart that is open. Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "we love you very much"

2 Corinthians 6:12

You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own hearts

Paul speaks of the Corinthians' lack of love for him as if their hearts were squeezed into a tight space. Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions.

You are not restrained by us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "We have not restrained you" or "We have not given you any reason to stop loving us"

you are restrained in your own hearts

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your own hearts are restraining you" or "you have stopped loving us for your own reasons"

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2 Corinthians 6:13

open yourselves wide also

Paul urges the Corinthians to love him as he has loved them. Alternate translation: "love us back" or "love us much as we have loved you"

2 Corinthians 6:14

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the believers at Corinth to be separated from idols and live clean lives for God.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers

This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "Only be yoked together with believers"

be yoked together with unbelievers

Paul speaks of working together toward a common purpose as if it were two animals tied together to pull a plow or cart. Alternate translation: "team up with" or "have a close relationship with"

For what association does righteousness have with lawlessness?

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: "For righteousness can have no association with lawlessness."

For what fellowship does light have with darkness?

Paul asks this question to emphasize that light and darkness cannot coexist since light dispels darkness. The words "light" and "darkness" refer to the moral and spiritual qualities of believers and unbelievers. Alternate translation: "Light can have no fellowship with darkness."

2 Corinthians 6:15

What agreement can Christ have with Belial?

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: "There is no agreement between Christ and Belial."

Belial

This is another name for the devil.

Or what share does a believer have together with an unbeliever?

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: "A believer shares nothing in common with an unbeliever."

2 Corinthians 6:16

General Information:

Paul paraphrases portions from several Old Testament prophets: Moses, Zechariah, Amos, and possibly others.

And what agreement is there between the temple of God and idols?

This is a rhetorical question that anticipates a negative answer. Alternate translation: "There is no agreement between the temple of God and idols."

we are the temple of the living God

Paul refers to all Christians as forming a temple for God to dwell in. Alternate translation: "we are like a temple where the living God dwells"

I will dwell among them and walk among them.

This is an Old Testament quotation that speaks of God being with the people in two different ways. The words "dwell among" speak of living where others live, while the words "walk among" speak of being with them as they go about their lives. Alternate translation: "I will be with them and help them"

2 Corinthians 6:17

General Information:

Paul quotes portions from the Old Testament prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel.

be set apart

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "set yourselves apart" or "allow me to set you apart"

Touch no unclean thing

This can be stated in positive terms. Alternate translation: "Touch only things that are clean" or "Stay away from things that are unclean"

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7 [1]Beloved, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit. Let us perfect holiness in the fear of God.

[2]Make room for us! We have not wronged anyone. We have not corrupted anyone or taken advantage of anyone.[3]It is not to condemn you that I say this. For I have already said that you are in our hearts, for us to die together and to live together.[4]I have great confidence in you, and great is my boast about you. I am filled with comfort. I overflow with joy even in all our tribulation.

[5]When we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest. Instead, we were troubled in every way by conflicts on the outside and fears on the inside.[6]But God, who comforts the lowly, comforted us by the arrival of Titus.[7]It was not only by his arrival that God comforted us. It was also by the comfort that Titus had received from you. He told us of your great affection, your sorrow, and your zeal for me. So I rejoiced even more.
[8]Even though my letter made you sorrowful, I do not regret it. But I did regret it when I saw that my letter made you sorrowful, though only for a little while.[9]Now I rejoice, not because you were sorrowful, but because your sorrow brought you to repentance. You experienced a godly sorrow, so you suffered no loss because of us.[10]For godly sorrow brings about repentance that accomplishes salvation without regret. Worldly sorrow, however, brings about death.
[11]See what great diligence this godly sorrow produced in you. How great was the determination in you to prove you were innocent. How great was your indignation, your fear, your longing, your zeal, and your desire to see that justice should be done! In everything you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.[12]Although I wrote to you, I did not write for the sake of the wrongdoer, nor for the one who suffered the wrong, but so that your earnestness toward us should be made known to you in the sight of God.
[13]It is by this that we are encouraged.In addition to our own comfort, we also rejoiced even more because of Titus' joy, because his spirit was refreshed by all of you.

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[14]For if I boasted to him about you, I was not put to shame. On the contrary, just as everything we said to you was true, our boasting about you to Titus proved to be true.
[15]His affection for you is even greater as he remembers the obedience of all of you, how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.[16]I rejoice because I have complete confidence in you.

2 Corinthians 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In verses 2-4, Paul finishes his defense. He then writes about Titus's return and the comfort it brought.

Special concepts in this chapter

Clean and unclean

Christians are "clean" in the sense that God has cleansed them from sin. They do not need to be concerned with being clean according to the law of Moses. Ungodly living can still make a Christian unclean. (See: clean and lawofmoses)

Sadness and sorrow

The words "sad" and "sorrow" in this chapter indicate that the Corinthians were upset to the point of repenting. (See: repent)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun "we" to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Original situation

This chapter discusses in detail a previous situation. We can figure out some aspects of this situation from the information in this chapter. But it is best not to include this type of implicit information in a translation.

Links:

2 Corinthians 7:1 Notes

2 Corinthians 7:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the Corinthians to be separated from sin and to seek holiness purposefully.

Beloved

"You whom I love" or "Dear friends"

let us cleanse ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit

Here Paul is saying to stay away from any form of sin that would affect one's relationship with God.

of all defilement of flesh and spirit

"of all things that defile our body and spirit" or "of all things in our body and spirit that make us unacceptable to God"

Let us perfect holiness

"Let us do all we can to be perfectly holy"

in the fear of God

"out of deep respect for God" or "because we fear God"

2 Corinthians 7:2

Connecting Statement:

Having already warned the people of Corinth about other leaders who were striving to get these Corinthian believers to follow them, Paul reminds the people of the way he feels about them.

Make room for us

This refers back to what Paul said starting in [2 Corinthians 6:11]

2 Corinthians 7:3

It is not to condemn you that I say this

"I do not say this to accuse you of having done wrong." The word "this" refers to what Paul just said about not having wronged anyone.

you are in our hearts

Paul speaks of his and his associates' great love for the Corinthians as if they held them in their hearts. Alternate translation: "you are very dear to us"

for us to die together and to live together

This means that Paul and his associates will continue to love the Corinthians no matter what happens. Alternate translation: "whether we live or whether we die"

for us to die

"us" includes the Corinthian believers.

2 Corinthians 7:4

great is my boast about you

"I boast much about you" or "I am very proud of you"

I am filled with comfort

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "You fill me with comfort"

I overflow with joy

Paul speaks of joy as if it is a liquid that fills him until he overflows. Alternate translation: "I am extremely joyful"

even in all our tribulation

"even though we suffer greatly"

2 Corinthians 7:5

When we came to Macedonia

Here the word "we" refers to Paul and Timothy but not to the Corinthians or Titus.

our bodies had no rest

The word "body" often refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "we had no rest" or "we were very tired"

we were troubled in every way

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we experienced trouble in every way"

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by conflicts on the outside and fears on the inside
Possible meanings for "outside" are 1) "outside of our bodies" or 2) "outside of the church." The word "inside" refers to their inward emotions. Alternate translation: "by conflicts with other people and by fears within ourselves"
2 Corinthians 7:7
by the comfort that Titus had received from you
Paul received comfort from knowing that the Corinthians had comforted Titus. Alternate translation: "by learning about the comfort that Titus had received from you"
2 Corinthians 7:8
General Information:
This refers to Paul's previous letter to these Corinthian believers where he rebuked them for their acceptance of a believer's sexual immorality with his father's wife.
Connecting Statement:
Paul praises them for their godly sorrow, their zeal to do right, and the joy that it brought him and Titus.
when I saw that my letter
"when I learned that my letter"
2 Corinthians 7:9
not because you were sorrowful
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not because what I said in my letter made you sorrowful"
sorrowful ... sorrow ... sorrow
or "distressed ... distress ... distress"
so you suffered no loss because of us
"so you suffered no loss because we rebuked you." This means that although the letter caused them sorrow, they eventually benefited from the letter because it led them to repentance. Alternate translation: "so that we did not harm you in any way"
2 Corinthians 7:10
For godly sorrow brings about repentance that accomplishes salvation
The word "repentance" may be repeated to clarify its relationship to what precedes it and what follows it. "For godly sorrow produces repentance, and repentance leads to salvation"
without regret
Possible meanings are 1) Paul has no regret that he caused them sorrow because that sorrow led to their repentance and salvation or 2) the Corinthians will not regret experiencing sorrow because it led to their repentance and salvation.
Worldly sorrow, however, brings about death
This kind of sorrow leads to death instead of salvation because it does not produce repentance. Alternate translation: "Worldly sorrow, however, leads to spiritual death"
2 Corinthians 7:11
See what great diligence
"Look and see for yourselves what great diligence"
How great was the determination in you to prove you were innocent.
Here the word "How" makes this statement an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Your determination to prove you were innocent was very great!"
your indignation
"your anger"
that justice should be done
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that someone should carry out justice"
2 Corinthians 7:12
the wrongdoer
"the one who did wrong"
your earnestness toward us should be made known to you in the sight of God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that you would know in the sight of God your earnestness toward us"
earnestness
sincere, serious desire for what is good
in the sight of God
This represents God's presence. See how you translated this in [2 Corinthians 4:2]
2 Corinthians 7:13
It is by this that we are encouraged
Here the word "this" refers to the way the Corinthians responded to Paul's previous letter, as he described in the previous verse. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is what encourages us"
his spirit was refreshed by all of you
Here the word "spirit" refers to a person's temperament and disposition. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "all of you refreshed his spirit" or "all of you made him stop worrying"
2 Corinthians 7:14
For if I boasted to him about you
"For although I boasted to him about you"
I was not put to shame
"you did not disappoint me"
our boasting about you to Titus proved to be true
"you proved that our boasting about you to Titus was true"
2 Corinthians 7:15
the obedience of all of you
This noun "obedience" can be stated with a verb, "obey." Alternate translation: "how all of you obeyed"
you welcomed him with fear and trembling
Here "fear" and "trembling" share similar meanings and emphasize the intensity of fear. Alternate translation: "you welcomed him with great reverence"
with fear and trembling
Possible meanings are 1) "with great reverence for God" or 2) "with great reverence for Titus."

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8 [1]We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia.[2]During a great test of tribulation, the abundance of their joy and the extremity of their poverty have produced great riches of generosity.
[3]For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond what they were able, and of their own free will[4]they begged us with much earnestness for the privilege of sharing in this service to God's holy people.[5]This did not happen as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and then to us by the will of God.

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[6]So we urged Titus, who had already begun this task, to complete among you this act of grace.[7]But you abound in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us. So also make sure that you excel in this act of grace.[1]
[8]I say this not as a command but to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it to the eagerness of other people.[9]For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich.
[10]In this matter I will give you advice that will help you. One year ago, you not only started to do something, but you desired to do it.[11]Now finish it. Just as there was an eagerness and desire to do it then, may you also bring it to completion, as much as you can.[12]For if you are eager to do this deed, it is a good and acceptable thing. It must be based on what a person has, not on what he does not have.
[13]For this is not to cause relief for others and tribulation for you, but for fairness.[14]Your abundance at the present time will supply what they need. This is also so that their abundance may supply your need, and so that there may be fairness.[15]It is as it is written:

> "The one with much did not have anything left over,
> and the one who had little did not have any lack."

[16]But thanks be to God, who put into Titus' heart the same earnest care that I have for you.[17]For he not only accepted our appeal, but he was also very earnest about it. He came to you of his own free will.
[18]We have sent with him the brother who is praised among all of the churches for his work in proclaiming the gospel.[19]Not only this, but he also was chosen by the churches to be our traveling companion with this act of grace, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord himself and our good will.
[20]We are avoiding the possibility that anyone should complain about this act of generosity that we are carrying out.[21]We take care to do what is good, not only before the Lord, but also before people.
[22]We are also sending another brother with them. We have tested him in many ways and found him diligent for many tasks. He is even more eager now because of the great confidence he has in you.[23]As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for you. As for our brothers, they are messengers from the churches. They are a glory to Christ.[24]So show them the proof of your love, and show to the churches the reason for our boasting about you.

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[1]There is evidence that corrections were made to verse 7 by later copyists who were referring to other ancient texts. Most modern translations follow those corrections, and they now read, and in your love for us. But there are some important and ancient Greek copies that read, and in our love for you.

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2 Corinthians 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 8 and 9 begin a new section. Paul writes about how churches in Greece helped needy believers in Jerusalem. Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words of verse 15.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gift to the church in Jerusalem

The church in Corinth started preparing to give money to the poor believers in Jerusalem. The churches in Macedonia also had given generously. Paul sends Titus and two other believers to Corinth to encourage the Corinthians to give generously. Paul and the others will carry the money to Jerusalem. They want people to know it is being done honestly.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

We

Paul likely uses the pronoun "we" to represent at least Timothy and himself. It may also include other people.

Paradox

A "paradox" is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. These words in verse 2 are a paradox: "the abundance of their joy and the extremity of their poverty have produced great riches of generosity." In verse 3 Paul explains how their poverty produced riches. Paul also uses riches and poverty in other paradoxes. (2 Corinthians 8:2)

Links:

2 Corinthians 8:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 8:1

Connecting Statement:

Having explained his changed plans and his ministry direction, Paul talks about giving.

the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the grace that God has given to the churches of Macedonia"

2 Corinthians 8:2

the abundance of their joy and the extremity of their poverty have produced great riches of generosity

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Paul speaks of "joy" and "poverty" as if they were living things that can produce generosity. Alternate translation: "because of the people's great joy and extreme poverty, they have become very generous"

the abundance of their joy

Paul speaks of joy as if it were a physical object that could increase in size or quantity.

extremity of their poverty ... riches of generosity

Though the churches of Macedonia have suffered testings of affliction and poverty, by God's grace they have been able to collect money for the believers in Jerusalem.

great riches of generosity

"a very great generosity." The words "great riches" emphasize the greatness of their generosity.

2 Corinthians 8:3

they gave

This refers to the churches in Macedonia.

of their own free will

"voluntarily"

2 Corinthians 8:4

this service to God's holy people

Paul is referring to providing money to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "this ministry of providing for the believers in Jerusalem"

2 Corinthians 8:5

This did not happen as we had hoped

The Macedonians did even more than Paul and those with him had hoped for. Alternate translation: "This did not happen merely as we had thought it might" or "But even more than we had expected"

2 Corinthians 8:6

who had already begun this task

Paul is referring to the collection of money from the Corinthians for the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "who had encouraged your giving in the first place"

to complete among you this act of grace

Titus was to help the Corinthians to complete the collection of money. Alternate translation: "to encourage you to finish collecting and giving your generous gift"

2 Corinthians 8:7

make sure that you excel in this act of grace

Here "this act of grace" refers the gift that the Corinthians were to give. Alternate translation: "make sure that you are very generous in your giving"

2 Corinthians 8:8

by comparing it to the eagerness of other people

Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to give generously by comparing their generosity with the generosity of the Macedonian churches.

2 Corinthians 8:9

the grace of our Lord

In this context, the word "grace" emphasizes the generosity with which Jesus had blessed the Corinthians.

Even though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor

Paul speaks of Jesus before his incarnation as being rich, and of his becoming human as becoming poor.

through his poverty you might become rich

Paul speaks of the Corinthians becoming spiritually rich as a result of Jesus becoming human.

2 Corinthians 8:10

In this matter

This refers to their collecting money to give to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "With regard to the collection"

2 Corinthians 8:11

there was an eagerness and desire to do it

This can be stated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "you were eager and desired to do it"

bring it to completion

"complete it" or "finish it"

2 Corinthians 8:12

a good and acceptable thing

Here the words "good" and "acceptable" share similar meanings and emphasize the goodness of the thing. Alternate translation: "a very good thing"

It must be based on what a person has

"Giving must be based on what a person has"

2 Corinthians 8:13

For this is not to cause relief for others and tribulation for you

The word "this" refers to collecting money for the believers in Jerusalem. The abstract nouns "relief" and "tribulation" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "We are not asking you to give money to relieve others and make yourselves suffer"

but for fairness

"but so that there should be equality" or "but so that there might be equality between others and you." Paul is explaining why he is asking the Corinthians to give money to the believers in Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 8:14

This is also so that their abundance may supply your need

Since the Corinthians are acting in the present time, it is implied that the believers in Jerusalem will also help them at some time in the future. Alternate translation: "This is also so that in the future their abundance may supply your need"

2 Corinthians 8:15

as it is written

Here Paul quotes from Exodus. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as Moses wrote"

did not have any lack

"had all he needed"

2 Corinthians 8:16

who put into Titus' heart the same earnest care that I have for you

Here the word "heart" refers to the emotions. This means that God caused Titus to love them. Alternate translation: "who made Titus care for you as much as I do"

same earnest care

"the same enthusiasm" or "same deep concern"

2 Corinthians 8:17

For he not only accepted our appeal

Paul is referring to his asking Titus to return to Corinth and complete the collection. Alternate translation: "For he not only agreed to our request that he help you with the collection"

2 Corinthians 8:18

with him

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"with Titus"

the brother who is praised among all of the churches

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the brother whom believers among all of the churches praise"

2 Corinthians 8:19

Not only this

"Not only do believers among all of the churches praise him"

he also was chosen by the churches

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the churches also chose him"

our traveling companion with this act of grace

"to travel with us as we carry out this act of generosity."

This refers to taking the offering to Jerusalem.

which is being administered by us

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "which we are taking care of"

for the glory of the Lord himself and our good will

You may need to fill in the ideas missing in the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "so that people will praise the Lord and so that they will see how eager we are to help"

2 Corinthians 8:20

about this act of generosity that we are carrying out

This refers to taking the offering to Jerusalem. The abstract noun "generosity" can be translated with an adjective.

Alternate translation: "concerning the way we are handling this generous gift"

2 Corinthians 8:21

We take care to do what is good, not only before the Lord, but also before people.

"We are careful to do not only what the Lord thinks is good but also what people think is good"

before the Lord ... before people

"in the Lord's opinion ... in people's opinion"

2 Corinthians 8:22

with them

The word "them" refers to Titus and the previously mentioned brother.

2 Corinthians 8:23

he is my partner and fellow worker for you

"he is my partner, who works with me to help you"

As for our brothers

This refers to the two other men who will accompany Titus.

they are messengers from the churches

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the churches have sent them as their messengers"

They are a glory to Christ

This can be stated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "They will cause people to see Christ's glory" or "They will cause people to honor Christ"

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9 [1]Concerning the service for God's holy people, it is not necessary for me to write to you.[2]I know about your desire,
which I boasted about to the people of Macedonia. I told them that Achaia has been getting ready since last year. Your eagerness has motivated most of them to action.
[3]Now I have sent the brothers so that our boasting about you may not be futile, and so that you would be ready, as I said you would be.[4]Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we would be ashamed—I say nothing about you—for being so confident in you.[5]So I thought it was necessary to urge the brothers to come to you and to make arrangements in advance for the gift you have promised. This is so that it might be ready as a blessing, and not as something extorted.

[6]The point is this: The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows for the purpose of a blessing will also reap a blessing.[7]Let each one give as he has planned in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
[8]And God is able to make all grace overflow for you, so that always, in all things, you may have all you need. This will be so that you may multiply every good deed.[9]It is as it is written:

> "He has distributed his riches and given them to the poor.
> His righteousness lasts forever."

[10]He who supplies seed to the farmer who sows and bread for food will also supply and multiply your seed for sowing. He will increase the harvest of your righteousness.[11]You will be enriched in every way so you can be generous. This will bring about thanksgiving to God through us.
[12]For carrying out this service not only meets the needs of God's holy people, but it also is overflowing into many acts of thanksgiving to God.[13]Because of your being tested and proved by this service, you will also glorify God by obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ. You will also glorify God by the generosity of your contribution to them and to everyone.[14]They long for you, and they are praying for you. They do this because of the very great grace of God that is on you.[15]May thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

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2 Corinthians 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 9, which is quoted from the Old Testament.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Paul uses three agricultural metaphors. He uses them to teach about giving to needy believers. The metaphors help Paul explain that God will reward those who give generously. Paul does not say how or when God will reward them. (See: and reward)

Links:

2 Corinthians 9:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 9:1

General Information:

When Paul refers to Achaia, he is talking about a Roman province located in southern Greece where Corinth is located.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues on the subject of giving. He wants to make sure that the collection of their offering for the needy believers in Jerusalem takes place before he comes so that it does not seem as though he takes advantage of them. He talks about how giving blesses the giver and glorifies God.

the service for God's holy people

This refers to the collection of money to give to the believers in Jerusalem. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the ministry for the believers in Jerusalem"

2 Corinthians 9:2

Achaia has been getting ready

Here the word "Achaia" refers to the people who live in this province, and specifically to the people of the church in Corinth. Alternate translation: "the people of Achaia have been preparing"

2 Corinthians 9:3

the brothers

This refers to Titus and the two men who accompany him.

our boasting about you may not be futile

Paul does not want others to think that the things that he had boasted about the Corinthians were false.

2 Corinthians 9:4

find you unprepared

"find you unprepared to give"

2 Corinthians 9:5

the brothers to come to you

From Paul's perspective, the brothers are going. Alternate translation: "the brothers to go to you"

not as something extorted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not as something that we have extorted from you" or "not as something that you gave us because we forced you to give it to us"

2 Corinthians 9:6

the one who sows ... reap a blessing

Paul uses the image of a farmer sowing seeds to describe the results of giving. As a farmer's harvest is based on how much he sows, so will God's blessings be little or much, based on how generously the Corinthians give.

2 Corinthians 9:7

give as he has planned in his heart

Here the word "heart" refers to the thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "give as he has determined"

not reluctantly or under compulsion

This can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "not because he feels guilty or because someone is forcing him to give"

for God loves a cheerful giver

God wants people to give gladly to help provide for fellow believers.

2 Corinthians 9:8

God is able to make all grace overflow for you

Grace is spoken of as if it were a physical object of which a person can have more than he can use. As a person gives financially to other believers, God also gives to the giver everything he needs. Alternate translation: "God is able to give you many things" or "God is able to give you very much"

grace

This refers here to the physical things a Christian needs, not to the need for God to save him from his sins.

so that you may multiply every good deed

"so that you may be able to do more and more good deeds"

2 Corinthians 9:9

It is as it is written

"This is just as it is written." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is just as the writer wrote"

2 Corinthians 9:10

He who supplies

"God who supplies"

bread for food

Here the word "bread" refers to food in general. Alternate translation: "food to eat"

will also supply and multiply your seed for sowing

Paul speaks of the Corinthians' possessions as if they were seeds and of giving to others as if they were sowing seeds. Alternate translation: "will also supply and multiply your possessions so that you can sow them by giving them to others"

He will increase the harvest of your righteousness

Paul compares the benefits that the Corinthians will receive from their generosity to that of a harvest. Alternate translation: "God will bless you even more for your righteousness"

the harvest of your righteousness

"the harvest that comes from your righteous actions." Here the word "righteousness" refers to the righteous actions of the Corinthians in giving their resources to the believers in

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Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 9:11

You will be enriched

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will enrich you"

This will bring about thanksgiving to God through us

The word this refers to the Corinthian's generosity. Alternate translation: "Because of your generosity, those who receive the gifts we bring them will thank God" or "When we give your gifts to those who need them, they will give thanks to God"

2 Corinthians 9:12

For carrying out this service

Here the word "service" refers to Paul and his companions bringing the contribution to the believers in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "For our carrying out this service for the believers in Jerusalem"

but it also is overflowing into many acts of thanksgiving to God

Paul speaks of the Corinthian believers' act of service as if it were a liquid of which there is more than a container can hold. Alternate translation: "It also causes people to do many deeds for which people will thank God"

2 Corinthians 9:13

Because of your being tested and proved by this service

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Because this service has tested and proven you"

you will also glorify God by obedience ... by the generosity of your contribution to them and to everyone

Paul says that the Corinthians will glorify God both by being faithful to Jesus and by giving generously to other believers who have need.

the generosity of your contribution

The abstract nouns "generosity" and "contribution" can be stated respectively as an adverb and a verb. Alternate translation: "what you have contributed generously" (

contribution

This word refers here to a gift that is part of a larger gift that many people are giving.

2 Corinthians 9:15

for his inexpressible gift

"for his gift, which words cannot describe." Possible meanings are 1) that this gift refers to "the very great grace" that God has given to the Corinthians, which has led them to be so generous or 2) that this gift refers to Jesus Christ, whom God gave to all believers.

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10 [1]I, Paul, myself urge you, by the humility and gentleness of Christ. I am meek when I am in your presence, but I am bold toward you when I am away.[2]I beg of you that, when I am present with you, I will not need to be bold with the confidence that I think I will need to be bold when I oppose those who think that we are walking according to the flesh.
[3]For even though we walk in the flesh, we do not make war according to the flesh.[4]For the weapons we fight with are not fleshly. Rather, they have divine power to destroy strongholds. They bring misleading arguments to nothing.
[5]We also destroy every high thing that rises up against the knowledge of God. We take every thought captive into obedience to Christ.[6]And we are getting ready to punish every act of disobedience, as soon as your obedience is complete.
[7]Look at what is clearly in front of you. If anyone is convinced that he is Christ's, let him remind himself that just as he is Christ's, so also are we.[8]For even if I boast a little too much about our authority, which the Lord gave for us to build you up and not to destroy you, I will not be ashamed.
[9]I do not want it to appear that I am terrifying you by my letters.[10]For some people say, "His letters are serious and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak. His words are not worth listening to."
[11]Let such people be aware that what we are in the words of our letters when we are absent is what we will be in our actions when we are there.[12]We are not so bold as to group ourselves or compare ourselves with those who praise themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with each other, they have no insight.
[13]We, however, will not boast beyond limits. Instead, we will do so only within the limits of what God has assigned to us, limits that reach even as far as you.[14]For we are not overextending ourselves as though we did not reach you. We were the first to reach as far as you with the gospel of Christ.
[15]We have not boasted beyond limits about the labors of others. Rather, our hope is that as your faith continues to grow, our work among you will greatly expand,[16]so that we may preach the gospel even in regions beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area.
[17] "But let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

[18]For it is not the one who recommends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord recommends.

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2 Corinthians 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words of verse 17.

In this chapter, Paul returns to defending his authority. He also compares the way he speaks and the way he writes.

Special concepts in this chapter

Boasting

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"Boasting" is often thought of as bragging, which is not good. But in this letter "boasting" means confidently exulting or rejoicing.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

In verses 3-6, Paul uses many metaphors from war. He probably uses them as part of a larger metaphor about Christians being spiritually at war.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

"Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for a person's sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that our physical bodies are sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that as long as Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. (See: flesh)

Links:

2 Corinthians 10:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 10:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul shifts the subject from giving to affirming his authority to teach as he does.

by the humility and gentleness of Christ

The word "humility" and "gentleness" are abstract nouns, and can be expressed in another way. Alternate translation: "by Christ, who is humble and gentle"

2 Corinthians 10:2

we are walking

The word "walking" is a metaphor for the way a person lives his life. "we are acting"

according to the flesh

The word "flesh" is a metonym for the mortal body, which in turn is a metaphor for the person himself. See how you translated it in [2 Corinthians 1:17]

2 Corinthians 10:3

we walk in the flesh

Here "walk" is an metaphor for "live" and "flesh" is a metonym for physical life. Alternate translation: "we live our lives in physical bodies"

the flesh

This phrase is a metonym for the way mortal people do things. See how you translated it in [2 Corinthians 1:17]

we do not make war

Paul speaks of his trying to persuade the Corinthians to believe him and not the false teachers as if he were fighting a physical war. These words should be translated literally.

make war according to the flesh

Possible meanings are 1) the word "flesh" is a metonym for physical life. Alternate translation: "fight against our enemies using physical weapons" or 2) the word "flesh" is a metonym for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: "make war in sinful ways"

2 Corinthians 10:4

the weapons we fight with ... bring misleading arguments to nothing

Paul speaks of godly wisdom that shows human wisdom to be false as if it were a weapon with which he is destroying an enemy stronghold. Alternate translation: "the weapons we fight with ... show people that what our enemies say is completely wrong"

we fight

Paul speaks of his trying to persuade the Corinthians to believe him and not the false teachers as if he were fighting a physical war. These words should be translated literally.

are not fleshly

Possible meanings are 1) the word "fleshly" is a metonym for merely physical. Alternate translation: "are not physical" or 2) the word "fleshly" is a metonym for sinful human nature. Alternate translation: "are not sinful" or "do not enable us to do wrong"

2 Corinthians 10:5

every high thing that rises up

Paul is still speaking with the metaphor of a war, as if "the knowledge of God" were an army and "every high thing" were a wall that people had made to keep the army out. Alternate translation: "every false argument that proud people think of to protect themselves"

every high thing

"everything that proud people do"

rises up against the knowledge of God

Paul speaks of arguments as if they were a wall standing high against an army. The words "rises up" mean "stands tall," not that the "high thing" is floating up into the air. Alternate translation: "people use so they will not have to know who God is"

We take every thought captive into obedience to Christ

Paul speaks of people's thoughts as if they were enemy soldiers whom he captures in battle. Alternate translation: "We show how all the false ideas those people have are wrong and teach the people to obey Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:6

punish every act of disobedience

The words "act of disobedience" are a metonym for the people who commit those acts. Alternate translation: "punish every one of you who disobeys us"

2 Corinthians 10:7

Look at what is clearly in front of you.

Possible meanings are 1) this is a command or 2) this is a statement, "You are looking only at what you can see with your eyes." Some think this is a rhetorical question that may also be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "Are you looking at what is clearly in front of you?" or "You seem unable to see what is clearly in front of you."

let him remind himself

"he needs to remember"

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that just as he is Christ's, so also are we
"that we belong to Christ just as much as he does"
2 Corinthians 10:8
to build you up and not to destroy you
Paul speaks of helping the Corinthians to know Christ better as if he were constructing a building. Alternate translation: "to help you become better followers of Christ and not to discourage you so you stop following him"
2 Corinthians 10:9
I am terrifying you
"I am trying to frighten you"
2 Corinthians 10:10
serious and powerful
"demanding and forceful"
his bodily presence is weak
"when he is here physically, he is not impressive"
2 Corinthians 10:11
Let such people be aware
"I want such people to be aware"
what we are in the words of our letters when we are absent is what we will be in our actions when we are there
"we will do the same things when we are there with you that we have written about in our letters while we have been away from you"
we ... our
All instances of these words refer to Paul's ministry team but not the Corinthians.
2 Corinthians 10:12
We are not so bold as to group ourselves ... praise themselves
"Bold people would group themselves ... praise themselves, but we are not that bold, so we do not." Paul is using irony here: most people think of boldness as a good thing, but Paul is saying that those who have the boldness to praise themselves are doing wrong.
to group ourselves or compare ourselves with those
"to say we are as good as those"
they measure themselves by one another and compare themselves with each other
Paul is saying much the same thing twice.
they measure themselves by one another
Paul is speaking of goodness as though it were something whose length people could measure. Alternate translation: "they look at each other and try to see who is better"
have no insight
"show everyone that they do not know anything"
2 Corinthians 10:13
General Information:
Paul speaks of the authority he has as if it were a land over which he rules, those things over which he has authority as being within the borders or "limits" of his land, and those things not under his authority as being beyond the "limits."
will not boast beyond limits. Instead
This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "will not boast about things over which we have no authority. Instead" or "will boast only about things over which we have authority. And"
within the limits of what God
"about things under the authority that God"
limits that reach even as far as you
Paul speaks of the authority he has as if it were a land over which he rules. Alternate translation: "and you are within the border of our authority"
2 Corinthians 10:14
we are not overextending ourselves
"we are not doing more than we should." Possible meanings are 1) "we are not boasting more than we should" or 2) "we are not claiming to have more authority than we do."
2 Corinthians 10:15
We have not boasted beyond limits about the labors of others
This is an idiom. See how similar words were translated in [2 Corinthians 10:13]
our hope is that
"we hope that" or "we desire that" or "we trust that"
2 Corinthians 10:16
another's area
"an area God has assigned to someone else"
2 Corinthians 10:17
boast in the Lord
"boast about what the Lord has done"
2 Corinthians 10:18
recommends himself
This means that he provides enough evidence for each person who hears him to decide whether he is right or wrong. See how "recommend ourselves" is translated in 2 Corinthians 4:2.
who is approved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the Lord approves"
but the one whom the Lord recommends
You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "but it is the one whom the Lord recommends who is approved"

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11 [1]I wish that you could put up with me in some foolishness. But you are indeed putting up with me![2]For I am jealous about you. I have a godly jealousy for you, since I promised you in marriage to one husband. I promised to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
[3]But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts might be led astray, away from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.[4]For suppose that someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we preached. Or suppose that you receive a different spirit than what you received. Or suppose that you receive a different gospel than the one you received. You put up with these things well enough!
[5]For I think that I am not in the least inferior to those so-called super-apostles.[6]But even if I am untrained in speech, I am not untrained in knowledge. In every way and in all things we have made this known to you.
[7]Did I sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted? For I freely preached the gospel of God to you.[8]I robbed other churches by accepting support from them so that I could serve you.[9]When I was with you and I was in need, I did not

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burden anyone. For my needs were met by the brothers who came from Macedonia. In everything I have kept myself from being a burden to you, and I will continue to do that.
[10]As the truth of Christ is in me, this boasting of mine will not be silenced in the parts of Achaia.[11]Why? Because I do not love you? God knows.
[12]And what I do I will keep doing, so that I may cut off the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be found to be like us in the things they boast about.[13]For such people are false apostles and deceitful workers. They disguise themselves as apostles of Christ.
[14]And this is no surprise, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.[15]It is no great surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their fate will be what their deeds deserve.

[16]I say again: Let no one think I am a fool. But if you do, receive me as a fool so I may boast a little.[17]What I am saying with this boastful confidence—I am not talking the way the Lord would—I am saying as a fool.[18]Since many people boast according to the flesh, I will also boast.
[19]For you gladly put up with fools. You are wise yourselves![20]For you put up with someone if he enslaves you, if he devours you, if he takes advantage of you, if he exalts himself, or if he slaps you in the face.[21]I will say to our shame that we were too weak to do that. Yet if anyone is bold—I am speaking like a fool—I too will be bold.
[22]Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.[23]Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as though I were insane.) I am more: in harder labor, in more prisons, in beatings beyond measure, in facing many deadly dangers.
[24]From Jews I received five times the "forty lashes minus one."[25]Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day on the open sea.[26]I have been on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own people, in danger from the Gentiles, in danger in the city, in danger in the wilderness, in danger at sea, in danger from false brothers.
[27]I have served in labor and toil, in many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often in fasting, in cold and nakedness.
[28]Apart from everything else, there is the daily pressure of my concern for all the churches.[29]Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn?
[30]If I must boast, I will boast about what shows my weaknesses.[31]The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, the one who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying!

[32]At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus to arrest me.[33]But I was lowered in a basket through a window in the wall, and I escaped from his hands.

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2 Corinthians 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul continues defending his authority.

Special concepts in this chapter

False teaching

The Corinthians were quick to accept false teachers who taught things about Jesus and the gospel that were different from what Paul taught and that were not true. Unlike these false teachers, Paul sacrificially served the Corinthians. (See: goodnews)

Light

Light is commonly used in the New Testament as a metaphor. Paul here uses light to indicate the revealing of God and his righteousness. Darkness describes sin. Sin seeks to remain hidden from God. (See: light, righteous and darkness and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Paul begins this chapter with an extended metaphor. He compares himself to a father who is giving his daughter, a pure virgin, as a bride to her bridegroom. Wedding practices change depending on the cultural background. But the idea of helping to present someone as a grown and holy child is explicitly pictured in this passage.

Irony

This chapter is full of irony. Paul is hoping to shame the Corinthian believers with his irony.
"You tolerate these things well enough!" Paul thinks that they should not tolerate the way the false apostles treated them. Paul does not think they are really apostles at all.
The statement, "For you gladly put up with fools. You are wise yourselves!" means that the Corinthian believers think they were very wise but Paul does not agree.
"I will say to our shame that we were too weak to do that." Paul is speaking about behavior he thinks is very wrong in order to avoid it. He is speaking as if he thinks he is wrong for not doing it. He uses a rhetorical question also as irony.
"Did I sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted?"

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Rhetorical questions

In refuting the false apostles, who claim to be superior, Paul uses a series of rhetorical questions. Each question is coupled with an answer: "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as though I were out of my mind.) I am more."

He also uses a series of rhetorical questions to empathize with his converts: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn?"

"Are they servants of Christ?"

This is sarcasm, a special type of irony used to mock or insult. Paul does not believe these false teachers actually serve Christ, only that they pretend to do so.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A "paradox" is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in verse 30 is a paradox: "If I must boast, I will boast about what shows my weaknesses." Paul does not explain why he would boast in his weakness until 2 Corinthians 12:9. (2 Corinthians 11:30)

Links:

2 Corinthians 11:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 11:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to affirm his apostleship.

put up with me in some foolishness

"allow me to act like a fool"

2 Corinthians 11:2

jealous ... jealousy

These words speak of a good, strong desire that the Corinthians be faithful to Christ, and that no one should persuade them to leave him.

I promised you in marriage to one husband. I promised to present you as a pure virgin to Christ

Paul speaks of his care for the Corinthian believers as if he had promised another man that he would prepare his daughter to marry him and he is most concerned that he be able to keep his promise to the man. Alternate translation: "I was like a father who promised to present his daughter to one husband. I promised to keep you as a pure virgin so I could give you to Christ"

2 Corinthians 11:3

But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts might be led astray, away from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ

"But I am afraid that somehow your thoughts might be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ just as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness"

your thoughts might be led astray, away from

Paul speaks of thoughts as if they were animals that people could lead along the wrong path. Alternate translation: "someone might cause you to believe lies and not keep"

2 Corinthians 11:4

For suppose that ... preached. Or suppose that ... received. Or suppose that ... received. You put

Paul lists three situations that are likely to happen or may have actually happened. These sentences can be combined into one sentence. Alternate translation: "For when ... preached, or when ... received, or when ... received, you put"

a different spirit than what you received. Or suppose that you receive a different gospel than the one you received

"a different spirit than the Holy Spirit, or a different gospel than you received from us"

put up with these things

"deal with these things." See how these words were translated in 2 Corinthians 11:1.

2 Corinthians 11:5

those so-called super-apostles

Paul uses irony here to show that those teachers are less important then people say there are. Alternate translation: "those teachers whom some think are better than anyone else"

2 Corinthians 11:6

I am not untrained in knowledge

This negative phrase emphasizes the positive truth that he is trained in knowledge. The abstract noun "knowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "I am certainly trained in knowledge" or "I am trained to know what they know"

2 Corinthians 11:7

Did I sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted?

Paul is beginning to claim that he treated the Corinthians well. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement, if necessary. Alternate translation: "I think we agree that I did not sin by humbling myself so you might be exalted"

freely preached the gospel of God to you

"preached the gospel of God to you without expecting anything from you in return"

2 Corinthians 11:8

I robbed other churches

This is an exaggeration to emphasize that Paul received money from churches who were not obligated to give to him. Alternate translation: "In a way, I robbed other churches" or "It was as if I robbed other churches"

I could serve you

The full meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I could serve you at no cost"

2 Corinthians 11:9

In everything I have kept myself from being a burden to you

"I have never in any way been a financial burden to you."

Paul speaks of someone for whom one has to spend money as if they were heavy items that people have to carry. The

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full meaning of this can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I have done all I can to make sure you do not have to spend money so that I can be with you"

the brothers who came

These "brothers" were probably all male.

I will continue to do that

"I never will be a burden to you"

2 Corinthians 11:10

As the truth of Christ is in me, this

Paul is emphasizing that because his readers know that he tells the truth about Christ, they can know that he is telling the truth here. "As surely as you know that I truly know and proclaim the truth about Christ, you can know that what I am about to say is true. This"

this boasting of mine will not be silenced

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one will be able to make me stop boasting and stay silent"

this boasting of mine

This refers to what Paul spoke about starting in (2 Corinthians 11:7).

parts of Achaia

"regions of Achaia." The word "parts" speaks of areas of land, not political divisions.

2 Corinthians 11:11

Why? Because I do not love you?

Paul uses rhetorical questions to emphasize love for the Corinthians. These questions can be combined or made into a statement. Alternate translation: "Is it because I do not love you that I do not want to be a burden to you?" or "I will continue to keep you from paying for my needs because this shows others that I love you"

God knows

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "God knows I love you"

2 Corinthians 11:12

Connecting Statement:

As Paul continues to affirm his apostleship, he talks about false apostles.

so that I may cut off the opportunity of those who want an opportunity to be found to be like us in the things they boast about

Paul speaks of a false claim that his enemies state as if it were something that he can cut off. Alternate translation: "so that they have no reason to boast that they are doing the same work that we are doing"

to be found to be like us

"to appear to be like us" or "to appear to be doing the same work we are doing"

us in the things they boast about

"us, as they are boasting that they are"

2 Corinthians 11:13

For such people

"I do what I do because people like them"

deceitful workers

"dishonest workers"

disguise themselves as apostles

"are not apostles, but they try to make themselves look like apostles"

2 Corinthians 11:14

this is no surprise

By stating this in a negative form Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians should expect to meet many "false apostles"

Satan disguises himself as an angel of light

"Satan is not an angel of light, but he tries to make himself look like an angel of light"

an angel of light

Here "light" is a metaphor for righteousness. Alternate translation: "an angel of righteousness"

2 Corinthians 11:15

It is no great surprise if

By stating this in a negative form Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians should expect to meet many "false apostles"

his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness

"his servants are not servants of righteousness, but they try to make themselves look like servants of righteousness"

2 Corinthians 11:16

receive me as a fool so I may boast a little

"receive me as you would receive a fool: let me talk, and consider my boasting the words of a fool"

2 Corinthians 11:18

many people boast according to the flesh

These people "boast" in the bad sense of claiming to be better people than they really are.

according to the flesh

Here the metonym "flesh" refers to man in his sinful nature and his achievements. Alternate translation: "about their own human achievements"

I will also boast

Paul uses the word "boast" ironically. See how you translated "boasting" in [2 Corinthians 1:12]

2 Corinthians 11:19

put up with fools

"accept fools." See how a similar phrase was translated in 2 Corinthians 11:1.

You are wise yourselves!

Paul is shaming the Corinthians by using irony. Alternate translation: "You think you are wise, but you are not!"

2 Corinthians 11:20

enslaves you

Paul uses exaggeration when he speaks of someone forcing others to obey rules as if he were forcing them to be slaves. Alternate translation: "makes you follow rules he has thought of"

he devours you

Paul speaks of the super-apostles' taking people's material resources as if they were eating the people themselves. Alternate translation: "he takes all your property"

takes advantage of you

A person takes advantage of another person by knowing things that the other person does not and using that knowledge to help himself and harm the other person.

2 Corinthians 11:21

I will say to our shame that we were too weak to do that

"I shamefully admit that we were not bold enough to treat you like that." Paul is using irony to tell the Corinthians that it was not because he was weak that he treated them well. Alternate translation: "I am not ashamed to say that we had the power to harm you, but we treated you well"

Yet if anyone is bold ... I too will be bold

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"Whatever anyone boasts about ... I will dare to boast about it also." Paul's boldness here is the boldness to boast.

2 Corinthians 11:22

Are they Hebrews? ... Are they Israelites? ... Are they descendants of Abraham?

Paul is asking questions the Corinthians might be asking and then answering them to emphasize that he is as much a Jew as the super-apostles are. You should keep the question-and-answer form if possible. Alternate translation: "They want you to think they are important and to believe what they say because they are Hebrews and Israelites and descendants of Abraham. Well, so am I."

2 Corinthians 11:23

Connecting Statement:

As Paul continues to confirm his apostleship, he states specific things that have happened to him since he became a believer.

Are they servants of Christ? (I speak as though I were insane.) I am more

Paul is asking questions the Corinthians might be asking and then answering them to emphasize that he is as much a Jew as the super-apostles are. You should keep the question-and-answer form if possible. Alternate translation: "They say they are servants of Christ—I speak as though I were insane—but I am more"

as though I were insane

"as though I were unable to think well"

I am more

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "I am more a servant of Christ than they are"

in harder labor

"I have worked harder than they have"

in more prisons

"I have been in prison more often"

in beatings beyond measure, in facing

This is an idiom, and is exaggerated to emphasize that he had been beaten many, many times. Alternate translation: "I have been beaten very many times, and I have faced" or "I have been beaten too many times to bother counting, and I have faced"

in facing many deadly dangers

"and I have almost died many times"

2 Corinthians 11:24

forty lashes minus one

This was a common expression for being whipped 39 times. In Jewish law the most they were allowed to whip a person at one time was forty lashes. So they commonly whipped a person thirty-nine times so that they would not be guilty of whipping someone too many times if they accidentally counted wrong.

2 Corinthians 11:25

I was beaten with rods

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people beat me with wooden rods"

I was stoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people threw stones at me until they thought I was dead"

I have spent a night and a day on the open sea

Paul was referring to floating in the water after the ship he was on sank.

2 Corinthians 11:26

in danger from false brothers

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "and in danger from people who claimed to be brothers in Christ, but who betrayed us"

2 Corinthians 11:27

I have served in labor

The words "I have served" have been added to shorten the sentence that begins in 2 Corinthians 11:24. You can end 2 Corinthians 11:26 with a comma and begin this verse with the words "in labor."

labor and toil

This hendiadys emphasizes how hard Paul worked. Alternate translation: "extremely hard work"

nakedness

Here Paul exaggerates to show his need of clothing. Alternate translation: "without enough clothing to keep me warm"

2 Corinthians 11:28

there is the daily pressure of my concern for all the churches

Here Paul's concern for the churches is spoken of as if it were a heavy object weighing him down. Alternate translation: "I am so concerned everyday for all the churches that I feel like I have a heavy object weighing me down"

2 Corinthians 11:29

Who is weak, and I am not weak?

The word "weak" may refer to a spiritual condition or to a physical condition. No one is sure what Paul is speaking of, so it is best to use the same word here. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Whenever anyone is weak, I feel that weakness also." or "I am weak whenever anyone else is weak."

Who has been caused to stumble, and I do not burn?

Paul uses this question to express his anger when a fellow believer is caused to sin. Here his anger is spoken of as a burning inside him. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Whenever anyone causes a brother to sin, I am angry."

has been caused to stumble

Paul speaks of sin as if it were tripping over something and then falling. Alternate translation: "has been led to sin" or "has thought that God would permit him to sin because of something that someone else did"

I do not burn

Paul speaks of being angry about sin as if he had a fire inside his body. Alternate translation: "I am not angry about it"

2 Corinthians 11:30

what shows my weaknesses

"what shows how weak I am"

2 Corinthians 11:31

I am not lying

Paul is using litotes to emphasize that he is telling the truth. Alternate translation: "I am telling the absolute truth"

2 Corinthians 11:32

the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city

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"the governor whom King Aretas had appointed had told men to guard the city"

to arrest me

"so that they might catch and arrest me"

2 Corinthians 11:33

I was lowered in a basket

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "some people put me in a basket and lowered me to the ground"

from his hands

Paul uses the governor's hands as metonymy for the governor. Alternate translation: "from the governor"

12 [1]I must boast, even if it is unprofitable. But I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.[2]I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—was caught up into the third heaven.
[3]And I know that this man—whether in the body, or out of the body, I do not know, God knows—[4]was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible words that people are not permitted to speak.[5]On behalf of such a person I will boast. But on behalf of myself I will not boast, except about my weaknesses.
[6]If I should choose to boast, I will not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I will keep from boasting, so that no one will think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me.[7]To keep me from exalting myself because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger from Satan to afflict me—so I would not exalt myself.
[8]Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, for him to take it away from me.[9]But he said to me, "My grace is enough for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So I would much rather boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ might reside on me.[10]Therefore I am content for Christ's sake in weaknesses, in insults, in troubles, in persecutions and distressing situations. For whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

[11]I have become a fool! You forced me to this, for I should have been praised by you. For I was not at all inferior to the so-called super-apostles, even though I am nothing.[12]The true signs of an apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, signs and wonders and miracles.[13]For how were you less important than the rest of the churches, except that I was not a burden to you? Forgive me for this wrong!

[14]Look! I am ready to come to you a third time. I will not be a burden to you, for I do not seek what is yours. I want you. For children should not save up for the parents. Instead, the parents should save up for the children.[15]I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?
[16]But as it is, I did not burden you. But since I am so crafty, I am the one who caught you by deceit.[17]Did I take advantage of you by anyone I sent to you?[18]I urged Titus to go to you, and I sent the other brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?

[19]Do you think all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we speak in Christ, and all for your strengthening, beloved.
[20]For I fear that when I come, I may not find you as I wish. I fear that you might not find me as you wish. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder.[21]I fear that when I come back, my God might humble me before you. I fear that I might be grieved by many of those who have sinned before now and who did not repent of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and lustful indulgence that they practiced.

2 Corinthians 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues defending his authority in this chapter.
When Paul was with the Corinthians, he proved himself to be an apostle by his powerful deeds. He had not ever taken anything from them. Now that he is coming for the third time, he will still not take anything. He hopes that when he visits, he will not need to be harsh with them. (See: apostle)

Special concepts in this chapter

Paul's vision

Paul now defends his authority by telling about a wonderful vision of heaven. Although he speaks in the third person in verses 2-5, verse 7 indicates that he was the person who experienced the vision. It was so great a vision that God gave him a physical handicap to keep him humble. (See: heaven)

Third heaven

Many scholars believe the "third" heaven is the dwelling place of God. This is because Scripture also uses "heaven" to refer to the sky (the "first" heaven) and the universe (the "second" heaven).

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions

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Paul uses many rhetorical questions as he defends himself against his enemies who accused him: "For how were you less important than the rest of the churches, except that I was not a burden to you?" "Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same way? Did we not walk in the same steps?" and "Do you think all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you?"

Sarcasm

Paul uses sarcasm, a special type of irony, when he reminds them how he had helped them at no cost. He says, "Forgive me for this wrong!" He also uses regular irony when he says: "But, since I am so crafty, I am the one who caught you by deceit." He uses it to introduce his defense against this accusation by showing how impossible it was to be true.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A "paradox" is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in verse 5 is a paradox: "I will not boast, except about my weaknesses." Most people do not boast about being weak. This sentence in verse 10 is also a paradox: "For whenever I am weak, then I am strong." In verse 9, Paul explains why both of these statements are true. (2 Corinthians 12:5)

Links:

2 Corinthians 12:1 Notes

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2 Corinthians 12:1

Connecting Statement:

In defending the apostleship that God gave him, Paul continues to state specific things that have happened to him since he became a believer.

even if it is unprofitable

"even if boasting is does not do any good"

I will go on to

"I will continue talking, but now about"

visions and revelations from the Lord

Possible meanings are 1) Paul uses the words "visions" and "revelations" to mean the same thing in hendiadys for emphasis. Alternate translation: "things that the Lord has allowed only me to see" or 2) Paul is speaking of two different things. Alternate translation: "secret things that the Lord has let me see with my eyes and other secrets that he has told me about"

2 Corinthians 12:2

I know a man in Christ

Paul is actually speaking of himself as if he were speaking of someone else, but this should be translated literally if possible.

whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know

Paul continues to describe himself as if this happened to another person. "I do not know if this man was in his physical body or in his spiritual body"

the third heaven

This refers to the dwelling place of God rather than the sky or outer space (the planets, stars, and the universe).

2 Corinthians 12:3

General Information:

Paul continues to speak of himself as though he were speaking of someone else.

2 Corinthians 12:4

was caught up into paradise and heard inexpressible words

This continues Paul's account of what happened to "this man"

caught up

suddenly and forcefully held and taken

paradise

Possible meanings are 1) heaven or 2) the third heaven or 3) a special place in heaven.

inexpressible words

Possible meanings of "inexpressible" are that 1) Paul means something other than "it is unlawful for people to speak" these words, and so people are unable to communicate the ideas expressed in the words or 2) Paul means the same thing as "it is unlawful for people to speak" these words, emphasizing that God does not permit people to speak the words.

2 Corinthians 12:5

of such a person

"of that person"

I will not boast, except about my weaknesses

This double negative emphasizes that Paul will boast only about his weaknesses. It can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "I will boast only of my weaknesses"

2 Corinthians 12:6

no one will think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me

"no one will give me more credit than what he sees in me or hears from me"

2 Corinthians 12:7

General Information:

This verse reveals that Paul was speaking about himself beginning in 2 Corinthians 12:2.

Connecting Statement:

As Paul defends his apostleship, he tells of the weakness that God gave him to keep him humble.

because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations

"because those revelations were so much greater than anything anyone else had ever seen"

a thorn in the flesh was given to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave me a thorn in the flesh" or "God allowed me to have a thorn in the flesh"

a thorn in the flesh

Here Paul's physical problems are compared to a thorn piercing his flesh. Alternate translation: "an affliction" or "a physical problem"

a messenger from Satan

"a servant of Satan"

2 Corinthians 12:8

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Three times
Paul put these words at the beginning of the sentence to emphasize that he had prayed many times about his "thorn" (2 Corinthians 12:7).
Lord about this
"Lord about this thorn in the flesh," or "Lord about this affliction"
2 Corinthians 12:9
My grace is enough for you
"I will be kind to you, and that is all you need"
for power is made perfect in weakness
"for my power works best when you are weak"
the power of Christ might reside on me
Paul speaks of Christ's power as if it were a tent built over him. Possible meanings are 1) "people might see that I have the power of Christ" or 2) "I might truly have the power of Christ."
2 Corinthians 12:10
I am content for Christ's sake in weaknesses ... situations
Possible meanings are 1) "I am content in weakness ... situations if these things come because I belong to Christ" or 2) "I am content in weakness ... if these things cause more people to know Christ."
in weaknesses
"when I am weak"
in insults
"when people try to make me angry by saying that I am a bad person"
in troubles
"when I am suffering"
distressing situations
"when there is trouble"
For whenever I am weak, then I am strong
Paul is saying that when he is no longer strong enough to do what needs to be done, Christ, who is more powerful than Paul could ever be, will work through Paul to do what needs to be done. However, it would be best to translate these words literally, if your language allows.
2 Corinthians 12:11
Connecting Statement:
To strengthen them, Paul reminds the believers in Corinth of the true signs of an apostle and of his humility while before them.
I have become a fool
"I am acting like a fool"
You forced me to this
"You forced me to talk this way"
I should have been praised by you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it is praise that you should have given me"
praised
"commended"
For I was not at all inferior to
By using the negative form, Paul is saying strongly that those Corinthians who think that he is inferior are wrong. Alternate translation: "For I am just as good as"
super-apostles
Paul uses irony here to show that those teachers are less important then people say they are. See how this is translated in [2 Corinthians 11:5]
2 Corinthians 12:12
The true signs of an apostle were performed
This can be stated in active form, with emphasis on the "signs." Alternate translation: "It is the true signs of an apostle that I performed"
signs ... signs
Use the same word both times.
with all perseverance
"with as much perseverance as we had" or "with great perseverance"
signs and wonders and miracles
These are the "true signs of an apostle" that Paul performed "with complete perseverance."
2 Corinthians 12:13
how were you less important than the rest of the churches, except that ... you?
Paul is emphasizing that the Corinthians are wrong to accuse him of wanting to do them harm. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I treated you the same way I treated all the other churches, except that ... you."
I was not a burden to you
"I did not ask you for money or other things I needed"
Forgive me for this wrong!
Paul is being ironic to shame the Corinthians. Both he and they know that he has done them no wrong, but they have been treating him as though he has wronged them.
this wrong
not asking them for money and other things he needed
2 Corinthians 12:14
I want you
The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "What I want is that you love and accept me"
children should not save up for the parents
Young children are not responsible for saving money or other goods to give to their healthy parents.
2 Corinthians 12:15
I will most gladly spend and be spent
Paul speaks of his work and his physical life as if they were money that he or God could spend. Alternate translation: "I will gladly do any work and gladly allow God to permit people to kill me"
for your souls
The word "souls" is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "for you" or "so you will live well"
If I love you more, am I to be loved less?
This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If I love you so much, you should not love me so little." or "If I love you so much, you should love me more than you do."
more
It is not clear what it is that Paul's love is "more" than. It is probably best to use "very much" or a "so much" that can be compared to "so little" later in the sentence.
2 Corinthians 12:16
But since I am so crafty, I am the one who caught you by deceit
Paul uses irony to shame the Corinthians who think he lied

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to them even if he did not ask them for money. Alternate translation: "But others think I was deceptive and used trickery"

2 Corinthians 12:17

Did I take advantage of you by anyone I sent to you?

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer is no. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one that I sent to you has taken advantage of you!"

2 Corinthians 12:18

Did Titus take advantage of you?

Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer is no. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Titus did not take advantage of you."

Did we not walk in the same spirit?

Paul speaks of living as if it were walking on a road. Possible meanings of "spirit" are 1) Paul and his companions acted rightly with the Corinthians, as had Titus. Alternate translation: "We all had the same attitude and acted the same way" Or 2) Paul, his companions, and Titus all obeyed the Holy Spirit as they served the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "We all lived in obedience to the same Spirit" This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement.

Did we not walk in the same steps?

Paul speaks of living as if it were walking on a road. Both Paul and the Corinthians know the answer to the question is yes. This rhetorical question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "We all did things the same way."

2 Corinthians 12:19

Do you think all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you?

Paul uses this question to acknowledge something that the people may have been thinking. He does this so that he can assure them that it is not true. Alternate translation: "Perhaps you think that all of this time we have been defending ourselves to you."

in the sight of God

This represents the presence of God. Paul and his coworkers are aware that God is watching them while they teach the Corinthians. Alternate translation: "before God" or "with God as witness" or "in the presence of God"

and all for your strengthening

The reason Paul and his coworkers speak in Christ is so that the Corinthians might be strenthened. Paul speaks of knowing how to obey God and desiring to obey him as if it were physical growth. Alternate translation: "and we do all this in order to strengthen you" or "and we do all this so that you may know God and obey him better"

2 Corinthians 12:20

I may not find you as I wish

"I may not like what I find" or "I may not like what I see you doing"

you might not find me as you wish

"you might not like what you see in me"

there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder

The abstract nouns "quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalries, slander, gossip, arrogance, and disorder" can be translated using verbs. Possible meanings are 1) "some of you will be arguing with us, jealous of us, suddenly becoming very angry with us, trying to take our places as leaders, speaking falsely about us, telling about our private lives, being proud, and opposing us as we try to lead you" or 2) "some of you will be arguing with each other, jealous of each other, suddenly becoming very angry with each other, quarreling with each other over who will be the leader, speaking falsely about each other, telling about each other's private lives, being proud, and opposing those whom God has chosen to lead you"

2 Corinthians 12:21

I might be grieved by many of those who have sinned before now and who did not repent ... that they practiced

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I will grieve because many of you have sinned before now and have not repented ... that you have practiced"

did not repent of the uncleanness and sexual immorality and lustful indulgence

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is saying almost the same thing three times for emphasis. Alternate translation: "did not stop commiting the sexual sins that they practiced" or 2) Paul is speaking of three different sins.

of the uncleanness

The abstract noun uncleanness can be translated as "things that do not please God." Alternate translation: "of secretly thinking about and desiring things that do not please God"

of the ... sexual immorality

The abstract noun "immorality" can be translated as "immoral deeds." Alternate translation: "of doing sexually immoral deeds"

of the ... lustful indulgence

The abstract noun "indulgence" can be translated using a verb phrase. Alternate translation: "of ... doing things that satisfy immoral sexual desire"

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13 [1]This is the third time that I am coming to you. "Every matter must be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses."[2]I have already said to those who sinned before and to all the rest when I was there the second time, and I say it again: When I come again, I will not spare them.

[3]I tell you this because you are looking for proof that Christ is speaking through me. He is not weak toward you. Rather, he is powerful in you.[4]For he was crucified in weakness, but he is alive by God's power. For we also are weak in him, but we will live with him by the power of God among you.

[5]Examine yourselves, to see if you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless, of course, you have failed the test.[6]And I hope that you will recognize that we have not failed the test.

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[7]Now we pray to God that you may not do any wrong. I do not pray this so that we may appear to have passed the test. Rather, I pray that you may do what is proper, although we may seem to have failed the test.[8]For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.
[9]For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. We also pray that you may be made complete.[10]I write these things while I am away from you so, that when I am with you I do not have to deal harshly with you in the use of my authority—which the Lord gave to me so that I may build you up, and not tear you down.

[11]Finally, brothers, rejoice! Work for restoration, be encouraged, think alike, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.[12]Greet each other with a holy kiss. All God's holy people greet you.[1]

[13]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.[2]

[1]Some copies number this sentence as verse 13.
[2]Some translations number this sentence as verse 14.

2 Corinthians 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, Paul finishes defending his authority. He then concludes the letter with a final greeting and blessing.

Special concepts in this chapter

Preparation

Paul instructs the Corinthians as he prepares to visit them. He is hoping to avoid needing to discipline anyone in the church so he can visit them joyfully. (See: disciple)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Power and weakness

Paul repeatedly uses the contrasting words "power" and "weakness" in this chapter. The translator should use words that are understood to be opposites of each other.

"Examine yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Test yourselves."

Scholars are divided over what these sentences mean. Some scholars say that Christians are to test themselves to see whether their actions align with their Christian faith. The context favors this understanding. Others say these sentences mean that Christians should look at their actions and question whether they are genuinely saved. (See: faith and save)

Links:

2 Corinthians 13:1 Notes

2 Corinthians 13:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul establishes that Christ is speaking through him and that Paul is wanting to restore them, encourage them, and unify them.

Every matter must be established by the mouth of two or three witnesses

Here a "matter" is an accusation and "mouth" is a metonym for the testimony a person gives through his mouth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Believe that someone has done something wrong only after two or three people have given the same testimony"

2 Corinthians 13:2

all the rest

"all you other people"

2 Corinthians 13:4

he was crucified

This can be made active. Alternate translation: "they crucified him"

but we will live with him by the power of God

God gives us the power and ability to live life in and with him.

2 Corinthians 13:5

in you

Possible meanings are 1) living inside each individual or 2) "among you," part of and the most important member of the group.

you have failed the test

"you have examined and tested yourself and found that you are not in the faith and Jesus Christ is not in you"

2 Corinthians 13:6

I hope that

"I desire that" or "I trust that"

2 Corinthians 13:7

that you may not do any wrong

"that you will not sin at all" or "that you will not refuse to listen to us when we correct you." Paul is emphasizing the opposite with his statement. Alternate translation: "that you will do everything right"

to have passed the test

"to be great teachers and live the truth"

2 Corinthians 13:8

we are not able to do anything against the truth

"we are not able to keep people from learning the truth"

truth, but only for the truth

"truth; everything we do will enable people to learn the truth"

2 Corinthians 13:9

may be made complete

"may become spiritually mature"

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2 Corinthians 13:10

so that I may build you up, and not tear you down

Paul speaks of helping the Corinthians to know Christ better as if he were constructing a building. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2 Corinthians 10:8]

2 Corinthians 13:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul closes his letter to the Corinthian believers.

Work for restoration

"Work toward maturity"

think alike

"agree with one another" or "live in harmony with one another"

2 Corinthians 13:12

with a holy kiss

"with Christian love"

God's holy people

"those whom God has set apart for himself"

Introduction to Galatians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Galatians

Paul declares his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ; he says that he is surprised by the false teachings that the Christians in Galatia have accepted from other people (1:1-10). Paul says that people are saved by trusting in Christ alone, not by keeping the law (1:11-2:21). God puts people right with himself only when they trust in Christ; the example of Abraham; the curse which the law brings (and not a means of salvation); slavery and freedom compared and illustrated by Hagar and Sarah (3:1-4:31). When people are joined to Christ, they become free from having to keep the law of Moses. They are also free to live as the Holy Spirit guides them. They are free to refuse the demands of sin. They are free to bear each other's burdens (5:1-6:10). Paul warns the Christians not to trust in being circumcised and in keeping the law of Moses. Instead, they must trust in Christ (6:11-18).

Who wrote the Book of Galatians?

Paul from the city of Tarsus was the author. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he began to trust in Jesus Christ, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

It is uncertain when Paul wrote this letter and where he was when he wrote it. Some scholars think Paul was in the city of Ephesus and wrote this letter after the second time he traveled to tell people about Jesus. Other scholars think Paul was in the city of Antioch in Syria and wrote the letter soon after the first time he traveled.

What is the Book of Galatians about?

Paul wrote this letter to both Jewish and non-Jewish Christians in the region of Galatia. He wanted to write against the false teachers who said that Christians need to follow the law of Moses. Paul defended the gospel by explaining that a person is saved by believing in Jesus Christ. People are saved as result of God being kind and not as a result of people doing good works. No person can perfectly obey the law. Any attempt to please God by obeying the law of Moses will only result in God condemning them. (See: goodnews, save, faith and lawofmoses and works)

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Galatians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to the Church in Galatia."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What does it mean to "live like Jews" (2:14)?

To "live like Jews" means to obey the law of Moses, even though one trusts in Christ. The people among the early Christians who taught that this was necessary were called "Judaizers."

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How did Paul use the terms "law" and "grace" in the Book of Galatians?

These terms are used in a unique way in Galatians. There is an important teaching in Galatians about Christian living. Under the law of Moses, righteous or holy living required a person to obey a set of rules and regulations. As Christians, holy living is now motivated by grace. This means that Christians have freedom in Christ and are not required to obey a specific set of rules. Instead, Christians are to live a holy life because they are thankful that God has been so kind to them. This is called "the law of Christ." (See: righteous and holy)

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:22; 2:4, 17; 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6, 10. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” See, for example, "when we seek for God to justify us in Christ" (2:17), where Paul spoke of being

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justified by means of Christ. The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Galatians?

"Foolish Galatians! Who has put a spell on you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly displayed as crucified"

Galatians

1 [1]Paul, an apostle—not an apostle from men nor by human agency, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—[2]and all the brothers with me, to the churches of Galatia:

[3]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,[4]who gave himself for our sins so that he might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father:[5]to him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[6]I am amazed that you are turning away so quickly from him who called you by the grace of Christ. I am amazed that you are turning to a different gospel,[7]not that there is another gospel, but there are some men who cause you trouble and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
[8]But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel other than the one we proclaimed to you, let him be cursed.[9]As we have said before, so now I say again, "If someone proclaims to you a gospel other than the one you received, let him be cursed."[10]For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? Am I seeking to please men? If I am still trying to please men, I am not a servant of Christ.

[11]For I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I proclaimed is not man's gospel.[12]I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it. Instead, it was by revelation of Jesus Christ to me.
[13]You have heard about my former life in Judaism, how I was persecuting the church of God beyond measure and that I was trying to destroy it.[14]I advanced in Judaism beyond many of those who were my own age, from out of my own people. That is how extremely zealous I was for the traditions of my fathers.
[15]But when God, who had set me apart from my mother's womb, and who called me through his grace, was pleased[16]to reveal his Son in me, so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.[17]I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. Instead, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus.

[18]Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to get to know Cephas and I stayed with him fifteen days.[19]But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.[20]In what I write to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.
[21]Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia.[22]I was still not known by face to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.
[23]They only heard it being said, "The man who once persecuted us is now proclaiming as good news the faith he once tried to destroy."[24]So they glorified God because of me.

Galatians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul started this letter differently than his other letters. He adds that he was "not an apostle from men nor by human agency, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead ones." Paul probably included these words because false teachers were opposing him and trying to undermine his authority.

Special concepts in this chapter

Heresy

God eternally saves people only through the true, biblical gospel. God condemns any other version of the gospel. Paul asks God to curse those who teach a false gospel. They might not be saved. They should be treated as non-Christians. (See: save, eternity, goodnews and condemn and curse)

Paul's qualifications

Some people in the early church were teaching that Gentiles needed to obey the law of Moses. To refute this teaching, in verses 13-16 Paul explains how he was formerly a zealous Jew. But God still needed to save him and show him the true gospel. As a Jew, and the apostle to Gentile people, Paul was uniquely qualified to address this issue. (See: lawofmoses)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You are turning so quickly to a different gospel"

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The Book of Galatians is one of Paul's earliest letters in Scripture. It shows that heresies troubled even the early church.

Links:

Galatians 1:1 Notes Galatians intro

Galatians 1:1

General Information:

Paul, an apostle, writes this letter to the churches in the area of Galatia. Unless noted otherwise, all instances of "you" and "your" in this letter refer to the Galatians and are plural.

who raised him

"who caused him to live again"

Galatians 1:2

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women, since all believers in Christ are members of one spiritual family, with God as their heavenly Father. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"

Galatians 1:4

for our sins

"Sins" is a metonym the punishment for sin. Alternate translation: "to take the punishment we deserved because of our sins"

that he might deliver us from this present evil age

Here "this ... age" represents the powers at work in the age. Alternate translation: "that he might bring us to a place of safety from the evil powers at work in the world today"

our God and Father

This refers to "God our Father." He is our God and our Father.

Galatians 1:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives his reason for writing this letter: he reminds them to continue to understand the gospel.

I am amazed

"I am surprised" or "I am shocked." Paul was disappointed that they were doing this.

you are turning away so quickly from him

Here "turning away ... from him" is a metaphor for started to doubt or no longer trust God. Alternate translation: "you are so quickly starting to doubt him"

him who called you

"God, who called you"

called

Here this means God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to serve him, and to proclaim his message of salvation through Jesus.

by the grace of Christ

"because of Christ's grace" or "because of Christ's gracious sacrifice"

you are turning to a different gospel

Here "turning to" is a metaphor that means to start to believe something. Alternate translation: "you are instead starting to believe a different gospel"

Galatians 1:7

some men

"some people"

Galatians 1:8

But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim ... let him be cursed

Paul said this to show how strongly he felt about anyone who might proclaim a gospel other than the one he had proclaimed. If anyone would do that, that person should be cursed. Alternate translation: "But even if we or an angel from heaven were to proclaim ... let him be cursed"

But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim

The word "even" shows that Paul did not believe that they or an angel from heaven would ever proclaim a different gospel. But he includes himself and angels in his statement to emphasize how wrong it would be for anyone to proclaim a different gospel.

other than the one

"different from the gospel" or "different from the message"

let him be cursed

"God should punish that person forever." If your language has a common way of calling a curse down on someone, you should use that.

Galatians 1:10

For am I now seeking the favor of men or of God? Am I seeking to please men?

These rhetorical questions expect the answer "no." Alternate translation: "I do not seek the favor of men, but instead I seek the favor of God. I am not seeking to please men."

If I am still trying to please men, I am not a servant of Christ

Both the "if" phrase and the "then" phrase are contrary to fact. "I am not still trying to please men; I am a servant of Christ" or "If I were still trying to please men, then I would not be a servant of Christ"

Galatians 1:11

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains that he did not learn the gospel from others; he learned it from Jesus Christ.

brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

is not man's gospel

By using this phrase, Paul was not trying to say that Jesus Christ is not himself human. Because Christ is both man and God, however, he is not a sinful human being. Paul is writing about where the gospel came from; it did not come from sinful human beings, but it came from Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:12

it was by revelation of Jesus Christ to me

Possible meanings are 1) "Jesus Christ himself revealed the gospel to me" or 2) "God made me know the gospel when he showed me who Jesus Christ was."

Galatians 1:13

former life

"behavior at one time" or "prior life" or "earlier life"

Galatians 1:14

I advanced

This metaphor pictures Paul as being ahead of other Jews

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his age in their goal to be perfect Jews.

those who were my own age

"the Jewish people who are the same age as I am"

my fathers

"my ancestors"

Galatians 1:15

and who called me through his grace

Possible meanings of "through his grace" are 1) this tells why God called Paul. Alternate translation: "and who called me to serve him because he is gracious" or 2) this tells how God called Paul. Alternate translation: "and who called me by means of his grace."

Galatians 1:16

to reveal his Son in me

Possible meanings are 1) "to allow me to know his Son" or 2) "to show the world through me that Jesus is God's Son."

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

preach him

"proclaim that he is God's Son" or "preach the good news about God's Son"

consult with flesh and blood

This is an expression that means talking with other people. Alternate translation: "ask people to help me understand the message"

Galatians 1:17

go up to Jerusalem

"go to Jerusalem." Jerusalem was in a region of high hills, making it necessary to climb many hills in order to get there, and so it was common to describe travel to Jerusalem as "going up to Jerusalem."

Galatians 1:19

I saw none of the other apostles except James

This double negative emphasizes that James was the only apostle whom Paul saw. Alternate translation: "I saw only one of the other apostles, and that was James" or "the only other apostle I saw was James"

Galatians 1:20

before God

Paul wants the Galatians to understand that Paul is completely serious and that he knows that God hears what he says and will judge him if he does not tell the truth.

In what I write to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying

Paul uses litotes to emphasize that he is telling the truth. Alternate translation: "I am not lying to you in the messages I write to you" or "in the things I write to you I am telling you the truth"

Galatians 1:21

the regions of Syria and Cilicia

"the parts of the world called Syria and Cilicia"

Galatians 1:22

I was still not known by face to the churches of Judea that are in Christ

"No one in the churches of Judea that are in Christ knew what I looked like" or "None of the people in the churches of Judea that are in Christ had ever met me"

Galatians 1:23

They only heard it being said

"They only knew what they heard others saying about me"

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2 [1]Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me.[2]I went up because of a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I spoke privately to those who seemed to be important, in order to make sure that I was not running—or had not run—in vain.
[3]But not even Titus, who was with me and who was a Greek, was forced to be circumcised.[4]The false brothers came in secretly to spy on the liberty we have in Christ Jesus. They desired to enslave us,[5]but we did not yield in submission to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you.
[6]But those who seemed to be important (whatever they were does not matter to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed important added nothing to me.[7]On the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to those who are uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to those who are circumcised.[8]For God, who worked in Peter for the apostleship to those who are circumcised, also worked in me to the Gentiles.
[9]When James, Cephas, and John, who had a reputation as pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles and they should go to the circumcised.[10]They requested only that we remember the poor, the very thing that I was eager to do.

[11]But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he stood condemned.[12]Before certain men came from James, Cephas was eating with the Gentiles. But when these men came, he stopped and kept away from the Gentiles. He was afraid of those who were demanding circumcision.
[13]Also the rest of the Jews joined in this hypocrisy. Even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy.[14]But when I saw that their behavior was not following the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of all of them, "If you are a Jew but are living like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"
[15]We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners;[16]yet we know that no person is justified by the works of the law but through faith in Christ Jesus. So we also have believed in Christ Jesus so that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law. For by the works of the law no flesh will be justified.
[17]But if, while we seek to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? Absolutely not![18]For if I rebuild those things I once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.[19]For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ.[1]
[20]It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.[21]I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, then Christ died for nothing!

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[1]Some translations include this sentence with verse 20.

Galatians 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues to defend the true gospel. This began in Galatians 1:11.

Special concepts in this chapter

Circumcised and uncircumcised

The law of Moses required Jewish males to be circumcised. The Jews called Gentiles "the uncircumcised."

Slavery and freedom

Paul introduces these ideas in Galatians 2:4. He uses the metaphor of slavery for people who are obligated to obey the law of Moses. He uses the metaphor of freedom, or liberty, for people who are not obligated to obey the law of Moses because they trust in Jesus Christ to make them righteous.

The false brothers

When Paul says that false brothers wanted to make the believers slaves, he is referring to Jews who claimed to be Christians and who wanted to convince Gentile Christians to obey the law of Moses.

The hypocrisy of Cephas

Jews normally did not eat with Gentiles because Gentiles did not obey the law of Moses. Cephas knew that Gentile Christians are not obligated to obey the law of Moses, and because of this, he knew that it was permissible to eat with them. However, when some men came saying that Gentile Christians are obligated to obey the law, Cephas stopped eating with the Gentiles Christians, as if he, too, believed that they need to obey the law of Moses. Paul rebuked Cephas for treating the Gentile Christians like that.

Links:

Galatians 2:1 Notes

Galatians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to give the history of how he learned the gospel from God, not the apostles.

went up

"traveled." Jerusalem is located in hilly country. The Jews also viewed Jerusalem as the place on earth that is closest to heaven, so Paul may have been speaking figuratively, or it may be that it was reflecting the difficult, uphill, journey to get to Jerusalem.

Galatians 2:2

those who seemed to be important

"the most important leaders among the believers"

I was not running—or had not run—in vain

Paul uses running as a metaphor for work. Alternate translation: "I was doing, or had done, profitable work"

in vain

"for no benefit" or "for nothing"

Galatians 2:3

to be circumcised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to have someone circumcise him"

Galatians 2:4

The false brothers came in secretly

"People who pretended to be Christians came into the church," or "People who pretended to be Christians came among us"

spy on the liberty

secretly watch people to see how they live in liberty

liberty

freedom

They desired

"These spies desired" or "These false brothers wanted"

to enslave us

"to make us slaves to the law." Paul is speaking about being forced to follow the Jewish rituals that the law commanded. He is speaking about this as if it were slavery. The most important ritual was circumcision. Alternate translation: "to force us to obey the law"

Galatians 2:5

yield in submission

"submit" or "listen"

Galatians 2:6

added nothing to me

The word "me" here represents what Paul was teaching. Alternate translation: "added nothing to what I teach" or "did not tell me to add anything to what I teach"

Galatians 2:7

On the contrary

"Instead" or "Rather"

I had been entrusted ... Peter had been entrusted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God trusted me ... God trusted Peter"

had been entrusted with the gospel to those

"had been given the responsibility of preaching the gospel to those"

Galatians 2:9

who had a reputation as pillars

A pillar is a post that supports a building. This is a metaphor meaning important leaders. Alternate translation: "who were known to be important leaders" or "who were known to be important leaders of the church"

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recognized the grace that had been given to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "recognized the grace that God had given to me"
the grace that had been given to me
The abstract noun "grace" can be translated with the phrase "be kind." Alternate translation: "that God had been kind to me"
gave ... the right hand of fellowship
Grasping and shaking the right hand was a symbol of fellowship. Alternate translation: "welcomed ... as fellow workers" or "welcomed ... with honor"
Galatians 2:10
remember the poor
You may need to make explicit what about the poor he was to remember. Alternate translation: "remember to take care of the needs of the poor"
Galatians 2:11
I opposed him to his face
The words "to his face" are a metonym for "where he could see and hear me." Alternate translation: "I confronted him in person" or "I challenged his actions in person"
Galatians 2:12
Before
in relation to time
he stopped
"he stopped eating with them"
He was afraid of those who were demanding circumcision
The reason Cephas was afraid can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "He was afraid that these men who required circumcision would judge that he was doing something wrong" or "He was afraid that these men who required circumcision would blame him for doing something wrong"
those who were demanding circumcision
Jews who had become Christians, but who demanded that those who believe in Christ live according to Jewish customs
kept away from
"stayed away from" or "avoided"
Galatians 2:13
this hypocrisy
Paul calls Peter's staying away from the Gentiles "this hypocrisy" because Peter was pretending to be like those Jews who say that Gentile Christians have to be circumcised.
Even Barnabas was led astray with them by their hypocrisy
Here to be "led astray" is a metaphor for being persuaded to do something wrong. Alternate translation: "Even Barnabas was persuaded to be a hypocrite because of them"
Galatians 2:14
their behavior was not following the truth of the gospel
"they were not living according to the truth of the gospel"
how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?
This rhetorical question is a rebuke and can be translated as a statement. The word "you" is singular and refers to Peter. Alternate translation: "you are wrong to force the Gentiles to live like Jews."
force
Possible meanings are 1) force by using words or 2) persuade.
Galatians 2:15
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells the believers that Jews who know the law, as well as Gentiles who do not know the law, are saved only by faith in Christ and not by keeping the law.
not Gentile sinners
"not those whom the Jews call Gentile sinners"
Galatians 2:16
we
This probably refers to Paul and others but not to the Galatians, who were primarily Gentiles.
no flesh
The word "flesh" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Alternate translation: "no person"
Galatians 2:17
while we seek to be justified in Christ
The phrase "justified in Christ" means justified because we are united with Christ and justified by means of Christ.
we too were found to be sinners
The words "were found to be" are an idiom that emphasizes that "we are" certainly sinners. Alternate translation: "we see that we also certainly are sinners"
Absolutely not!
"Of course, that is not true!" This expression gives the strongest possible negative answer to the preceding rhetorical question "Does Christ become a servant of sin?" You may have a similar expression in your language that you could use here.
Galatians 2:20
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
Galatians 2:21
I do not set aside the grace of God
"I do not reject the grace of God" or "I do not consider God's grace to be worthless"
the grace of God
Paul is speaking of God's kindness to us. Christ died for us so that we can be justified.
if righteousness could be gained through the law, then Christ died for nothing
Paul uses this statement to argue that righteousness cannot be gained through the law. If it could be then there was no need for Christ to die to give us righteousness, because we could gain it ourselves by obeying the law.
if righteousness could be gained through the law
"if people could become righteous by obeying the law"
then Christ died for nothing
"then Christ would have accomplished nothing by dying"

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3 [1]Foolish Galatians! Who has put a spell on you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly displayed as crucified.[2]This is the only thing I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?[3]Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now going to be perfected by the flesh?

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[4]Have you suffered so many things for nothing—if indeed it was for nothing?[5]Does he who gives the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?
[6]Just as Abraham "believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness,"[7]in the same way, understand, then, that those of faith are the children of Abraham.[8]The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you all the nations will be blessed."[9]So then, those of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.
[10]All who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; and so it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things written in the book of the law, and do them."[11]Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because "the righteous will live by faith."[12]But the law is not of faith; rather, "The person who does the works of the law must live by them."
[13]Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"—[14]so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

[15]Brothers, let me speak in human terms. Once a man-made contract is established by law, no one can set it aside or add to it.[16]Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his descendant. It does not say, "to descendants," referring to many, but instead to only one, "and to your descendant," who is Christ.
[17]Now what I am saying is this: The law, which came 430 years afterward, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God, to nullify the promise.[18]For if the inheritance comes by the law, then it no longer comes by promise. But God freely gave it to Abraham by a promise.
[19]What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the descendant of Abraham would come to whom the promise had been made. The law was ordained through angels by the hand of an intermediary.[20]Now an intermediary implies more than one person. But God is one.
[21]So is the law against the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.[22]But the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

[23]Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until faith should be revealed.[24]So then the law became our guardian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith.[25]But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.[26]For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
[27]For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.[28]There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.[29]Then if you are Christ's, you are Abraham's descendants, and heirs according to promise.

Galatians 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Equality in Christ

All Christians are equally united to Christ. Ancestry, gender, and status do not matter. All are equal with each other. All are equal in the eyes of God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Paul uses many different rhetorical questions in this chapter. He uses them to convince the Galatians of their sin. (See: and sin)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that the physical part of man is sinful. "Flesh" is used in this chapter to contrast with that which is spiritual. (See: flesh)

"Those of faith are children of Abraham"

Scholars are divided on what this means. Some believe Christians inherit the promises that God gave to Abraham, so Christians replace the physical descendants of Israel. Others believe Christians spiritually follow Abraham, but they do not inherit the promises that God gave to Abraham. In light of Paul's other teachings and the context here, Paul is probably writing about the Jewish and Gentile Christians sharing the same faith as Abraham did.

Links:

Galatians 3:1 Notes

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Galatians 3:1

General Information:

Paul is rebuking the Galatians by asking rhetorical questions.

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers in Galatia that God gave them his Spirit when they believed the gospel, not because they obeyed his law.

Who has put a spell on you?

Paul is using irony and a rhetorical question to say that the Galatians are acting as though someone has put a spell on them. He does not really believe that someone has put a spell on them. Alternate translation: "You behave as if someone has put a spell on you!"

put a spell on you

"done magic on you" or "done witchcraft on you"

It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly displayed as crucified

Paul speaks of his clear teaching of Jesus being crucified as if he had put on public display a picture of Jesus being crucified. And he speaks of the Galatians having heard his teaching as if they had seen the picture. Alternate translation: "You yourselves heard the clear teaching about Jesus being crucified"

Galatians 3:2

This is the only thing I want to learn from you

This continues the irony from verse 1. Paul knows the answers to the rhetorical questions he is about to ask.

Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

Translate this rhetorical question as a question if you can, because the reader will be expecting a question here. Also, be sure that the reader knows that the answer to the question is "by the hearing of faith," not "by doing what the law says." Alternate translation: "You received the Spirit, not by doing what the law says, but by the hearing of faith."

the hearing of faith

"believing what you heard"

Galatians 3:3

Are you so foolish?

This rhetorical question shows that Paul is surprised and even angry that the Galatians are foolish. Alternate translation: "You are very foolish!"

by the flesh

The word "flesh" is a metonym for effort. Alternate translation: "by your own effort" or "by your own work"

Galatians 3:4

Have you suffered so many things for nothing—if indeed it was for nothing?

Paul uses this question to rebuke the Galatians for behaving as though their faith in Christ and their suffering for it were for nothing. Alternate translation: "You have suffered so many things: Do not let it be for nothing!" or "You suffered so many things from those who opposed your faith in Christ. If you now think that righteousness comes by obeying the law, then your suffering was for nothing!"

Have you suffered so many things

The Galatians had believed that God makes people righteous because they trust in Jesus Christ, not because they obey the law. Because of this, they suffered many things from those who opposed their faith in Christ.

for nothing

"uselessly" or "without benefit to you"

Galatians 3:5

Does he ... do so by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

Paul asks another rhetorical question to remind the Galatians how people receive the Spirit. Alternate translation: "He ... does not do it by the works of the law; he does it by hearing with faith."

by the works of the law

This represents people doing the works that the law requires. Alternate translation: "because you do what the law tells us to do"

by the hearing of faith

Your language may require that what the people heard and whom they trusted be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "because you heard the message and had faith in Jesus" or "because you listened to the message and trusted in Jesus"

Galatians 3:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Galatian believers that even Abraham received righteousness by faith and not by the law.

it was credited to him as righteousness

God saw Abraham's faith in God, so then God considered Abraham righteous.

Galatians 3:7

those of faith

"those who have faith." The meaning of the noun "faith" can be expressed with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "those who believe"

the children of Abraham

This represents people whom God views as he viewed Abraham. Alternate translation: "righteous in the same way that Abraham was righteous"

Galatians 3:8

The scripture, foreseeing ... faith, preached the gospel

Because God's promise to Abraham was written in the scripture before Christ fulfilled the promise, the scripture is like someone who knows the future before it happens and who preaches the gospel. Alternate translation: "In the scripture, God showed before it happened ... faith, and he presented the gospel"

In you

The word "you" refers to Abraham. Ultimately God would bless the nations through one of Abraham's descendants. Alternate translation: "Because of you" or "Through you"

all the nations

"all the people-groups in the world." God was showing that his plan of salvation was not only for the Jewish people, but for both Jews and non-Jews.

Galatians 3:9

the man of faith

Possible meanings are 1) Abraham was the man who believed and trusted in God or 2) Abraham was faithful to God.

Galatians 3:10

All who rely on ... the law are under a curse

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Being under a curse represents being cursed. Here it refers to being eternally punished. "Those who rely on ... the law are cursed" or "God will eternally punish those who rely on ... the law"

the works of the law

"what the law says we must do"

Galatians 3:11

Now it is clear

What is clear can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "The scriptures are clear" or "The scriptures teach clearly"

no one is justified before God by the law

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God justifies no one by the law"

no one is justified before God by the law

Paul is correcting their belief that if they obeyed the law, God would justify them. Alternate translation: "no one is justified before God by obeying the law" or "God does not justify anyone for their obedience to the law"

the righteous will live by faith

The nominal adjective "righteous" refers to righteous people. Alternate translation: "righteous people will live by faith"

Galatians 3:12

must live by them

Possible meanings are 1) "must obey them all" or 2) "will be judged by his ability to do what the law demands."

Galatians 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds these believers again that keeping the law could not save a person and that the law did not add a new condition to the promise by faith given to Abraham.

from the curse of the law

The noun "curse" can be expressed with the verb "curse." Alternate translation: "from being cursed because of the law" or "from being cursed for not obeying the law"

from the curse of the law ... becoming a curse for us ... Cursed is everyone

The word "curse" here is a metonym for God condemning the person whom he has cursed. Alternate translation: "from us having God condemn us because we broke the law ... having God condemn him instead of us ... God condemns everyone"

hangs on a tree

Paul expected his audience to understand that he was referring to Jesus hanging on the cross.

Galatians 3:14

so that the blessing of Abraham might come

"and because Christ became a curse for us, the blessing of Abraham will come"

so that by faith we might receive

Possible meanings are 1) this is because Christ became a curse for us. Alternate translation: "and because Christ became a curse for us, we will receive by faith" or 2) this is because the blessing in Abraham came in Christ Jesus. Alternate translation: "and because the blessing in Abraham came in Christ Jesus, we will receive by faith"

we might receive the promise

The word "we" includes the people who would read the letter and so is inclusive.

Galatians 3:15

Brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

in human terms

"as a person" or "of things most people understand"

Galatians 3:16

Now

This word shows that Paul has stated a general principle and is now beginning to introduce a specific case.

referring to many

"referring to many descendants"

to your descendant

The word "your" is singular and refers to a specific person, who is a particular descendant of Abraham

Galatians 3:17

The law, which came 430 years afterward, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God

In some languages it might be strange to speak of a law coming or setting aside a covenant. It might be clearer to make explicit who gave the law. Alternate translation: "When God gave the law 430 years later, he did not set aside the covenant that he had previously established"

set aside

"cancel"

430 years

"four hundred and thirty years"

God, to nullify the promise

"God; that is, it does not nullify the promise"

nullify the promise

"to make the promise worthless" or "to make things as if the promise had never been made"

Galatians 3:18

For if the inheritance comes by the law, then it no longer comes by promise

Paul uses this argument to show that the inheritance does not come by obeying the law but by believing God's promise. Alternate translation: "If people could receive the inheritance by obeying the law, then it would no longer be true that people receive the inheritance by believing God's promise"

the inheritance

Paul speaks of what God has promised to give to believers as if it were an inheritance of property and wealth from a family member. Aternate translation: "the gift"

Galatians 3:19

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the believers in Galatia why God gave the law.

What, then, was the purpose of the law?

Paul uses a rhetorical question to introduce the next topic he wants to discuss. It can also be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I will tell you what the purpose of the law is." or "Let me tell you why God gave the law."

It was added

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God added it" or "God added the law"

The law was ordained through angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God ordained the law through angels" or "God gave the law through angels"

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by the hand of an intermediary
The words "by the hand of" are a metonym for the intermediary himself. An intermediary represents one person to another. Paul was probably talking about Moses, who represented God to the people of Israel. Alternate translation "by an intermediary" or "by his representative, Moses"
Galatians 3:20
Now an intermediary implies more than one person
An intermediary represents one person to another. Alternate translation: “Now if we say that there was an intermediary, that means that there must have been more than one person.”
intermediary
representative
But God is one
Paul uses this statement to contrast the law and the promise. Paul seems to be saying that the promise is superior to the law since God used an intermediary to give the law, but he did not use an intermediary when he made the promise. “God is one” is an important statement from the Old Testament, so it would be best to translate it as Paul wrote it. If this does not make sense in your language, you could translate it as "God is one God."
Galatians 3:21
against the promises
"opposed to the promises" or "in conflict with the promises"
if a law had been given that could give life
This can be stated in active form, and the abstract noun "life" can be translated with the verb "live." Alternate translation: "if God had given a law that enabled those who kept it to live"
righteousness would certainly have come by the law
"we could have become righteous by obeying that law"
Galatians 3:22
the scripture imprisoned everything under sin
The idea of being imprisoned under sin represents being controlled by sin. Possible meanings are 1) “the scripture caused everyone to be controlled by sin” or 2) “the scripture says that everyone is controlled by sin.”
the promise by faith in Jesus Christ
The word “promise” represents what God promised. Alternate translation: “what God promised to those who have faith in Christ”
Galatians 3:23
Connecting Statement:
Paul reminds those in Galatia that believers are free in God's family, not slaves under the law.
we were held captive under the law, imprisoned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the law held us captive and we were in prison" or "the law held us captive in prison"
we were held captive under the law, imprisoned
The way the law controlled us is spoken of as if the law were a prison guard holding us as captives. Alternate translation: "the law controlled us like a prison guard"
until faith should be revealed
This can be stated in active form, and who this faith is in can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "until God would reveal that he justifies those who have faith in Christ" or "until God would reveal that he justifies those who trust in Christ"
Galatians 3:24
guardian
More than simply "one who gives oversight to a child," this was usually a slave who was responsible for enforcing rules and behaviors given by the parent and would report to the parent on the child's actions.
until Christ came
"until the time when Christ came"
so that we might be justified
Before Christ came, God had planned to justify us. When Christ came, he carried out his plan to justify us. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God would declare us to be righteous"
Galatians 3:27
For as many of you who were baptized into Christ
"For all of you who were baptized into Christ"
have clothed yourselves with Christ
Possible meanings are 1) this is a metaphor meaning that they have been united to Christ. Alternate translation: "have become united with Christ" or "belong to Christ" or 2) this is a metaphor meaning that they have become like Christ. Alternate translation: "have become like Christ"
Galatians 3:28
There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female
"God sees no difference between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female"
Galatians 3:29
heirs
The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member.

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4 [1]I am saying that the heir, for whatever time he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is owner of the entire
estate.[2]But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.
[3]So also, when we were children, we were enslaved to the elemental principles of the world.[4]But when the fullness of time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law[5]so that he might redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
[6]And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who cries out, "Abba, Father."[7]So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then you are also an heir through God.

[8]But at that time, when you did not know God, you were made to be slaves to those who are, by their natural powers, not gods at all.[9]But now that you have come to know God, or rather that you are known by God, how is it that you are turning back to the weak and worthless elemental principles? Do you want to be enslaved all over again?

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[10]You observe days and new moons and seasons and years![11]I am afraid for you that somehow my labor with you may have been for nothing.

[12]I beg you, brothers, become like me, for I also have become like you. You did me no wrong.[13]But you know that it was because of a disease of the flesh that I proclaimed the gospel to you the first time,[14]and though my physical condition put you to the test, you did not despise or reject me. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself.
[15]Where then is your blessing now? For I testify to you that, if it were possible, you would have torn out your own eyes and given them to me.[16]So then, have I become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?
[17]They are zealous to win you over, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out so you may be zealous for them.
[18]It is always good to be zealous for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you.
[19]My little children, again I am suffering the pains of childbirth for you until Christ is formed in you.[20]I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you.

[21]Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?[22]For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and one by the free woman.[23]One was born by the slave girl according to the flesh, but the other was born by the free woman through promise.
[24]These things may be interpreted as an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One of them is from Mount Sinai and she bears children into slavery. This is Hagar.[25]Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia; and she represents the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.
[26]But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.[27]For it is written,

> "Rejoice, you barren one who does not give birth;
> cry out and shout for joy,
> you who are not suffering the pains of childbirth;
> because the children of the desolate woman are more numerous
> than those of the woman who has a husband."

[28]But you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.[29]At that time the one who was born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the Spirit. It is the same now.
[30]But what does the scripture say? "Send away the slave girl and her son. For the son of the slave girl will not share in the inheritance with the son of the free woman."[31]Therefore, brothers, we are not children of a slave girl, but of the free woman.

Galatians 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 27, which is quoted from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sonship

Sonship is a complex issue. Scholars have many views on Israel's sonship. Paul uses sonship to teach how being under the law differs from being free in Christ. Not all of Abraham's physical descendants inherited God's promises to him. Only his descendants through Isaac and Jacob inherited the promises. And God only adopts into his family those who follow Abraham spiritually through faith. They are children of God with an inheritance. Paul calls them "children of promise." (See: inherit, promise, spirit and faith and adoption)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Abba, Father

"Abba" is an Aramaic word. In ancient Israel, people used it to informally refer to their fathers. Paul "transliterates" its sounds by writing them with Greek letters.

Links:

- Galatians 4:1

Galatians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind the Galatian believers that Christ came to redeem those who were under the law, and that he changed them from being slaves into being sons.

no different from

"the same as"

Galatians 4:2

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

guardians

people with legal responsibility for children

managers

people whom others trust to control what is valuable, in this case children

Galatians 4:3

General Information:

The word "we" here refers to all Christians, including Paul's readers.

when we were children

Here "children" is a metaphor for being spiritually immature. Alternate translation: "when we were like children"

we were enslaved to the elemental principles of the world

Here "enslaved" is a metaphor for being unable to stop one's self from doing something. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the elemental principles of the world controlled us" or "we had to obey the elemental principles of the world as if we were slaves"

the elemental principles of the world

These words could refer to 1) the laws or moral principles of the world, or 2) spiritual powers that some people thought control what happens on earth.

Galatians 4:4

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Galatians 4:5

redeem

Paul uses the metaphor of a person buying back lost property or buying the freedom of a slave as a picture of Jesus paying for his people's sins by dying on the cross.

Galatians 4:6

you are sons

Paul uses the word for male children here because the subject is inheritance. In his culture and that of his readers, inheritance passed most commonly, but not always, to male children. He was neither specifying nor excluding female children here.

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who cries out, "Abba, Father."

By crying out "Abba, Father" the Spirit assures us that we are God's children and he loves us.

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts

The heart is metonym for the part of a person that thinks and feels. Alternate translation: "God has sent his Son's Spirit to show us how to think and act"

his Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

who cries

The Spirit is the one who cries.

Abba, Father

This is the way a young child would address his father in Paul's home language, but not in the language of the Galatian readers. To keep the sense of a foreign language, translate this as a word that sounds as much like "Abba" as your language allows.

Galatians 4:7

you are no longer a slave, but a son

Paul uses the word for male child here because the subject is inheritance. In his culture and that of his readers, inheritance passed most commonly, but not always, to male children. He was neither specifying nor excluding female children here.

you are no longer a slave ... you are also an heir

Paul is addressing his readers as though they are one person, so "you" here is singular.

heir

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member.

Galatians 4:8

General Information:

Paul continues to rebuke the Galatians by asking rhetorical questions.

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Galatian believers that they are again trying to live under God's laws rather than living by faith.

those who are

"those things that are" or "those spirits who are"

Galatians 4:9

you are known by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knows you"

how is it that you are turning back to ... principles?

Here "turning back to" is a metaphor for starting to pay attention to something again. This is the first of two rhetorical questions. Alternate translation: "you should not start paying attention to ... principles." or "you should not be concerned with ... principles."

elemental principles

See how you translated this phrase in Galatians 4:3.

Do you want to be enslaved all over again?

Paul uses this question to rebuke the people for behaving in a way that would make them like slaves. Alternate translation: "It seems that you want to be slaves again." or "You behave as though you wanted to be like slaves again."

Do you want to be enslaved all over again?

Here being "enslaved" is a metaphor for being obligated to obey certain rules or customs. Alternate translation: "Do you want to have to obey rules again like a slave has to obey his master?" or "It seems that you want to be controlled all over again!"

Galatians 4:10

You observe days and new moons and seasons and years

Paul is speaking of their being careful to celebrate certain times, thinking that doing that will make them right with God. Alternate translation: "You carefully celebrate days and new moons and seasons and years"

Galatians 4:11

may have been for nothing

"may have been useless" or "has not had any effect"

Galatians 4:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the Galatian believers how kindly they treated him when he was with them, and he encourages them to continue to trust him while he is not there with them.

beg

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Here this means to ask or urge strongly. This is not the word used to ask for money or food or physical objects.
brothers
See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.
You did me no wrong
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "You treated me well" or "You treated me as you should have"
Galatians 4:13
disease of the flesh
"physical disease" or "disease of the body"
Galatians 4:14
and though my physical condition put you to the test
"and though it was difficult for you to see me so physically ill"
my physical condition
Paul was speaking about a health problem that he had. We do not know what the problem was.
despise
hate very much
Galatians 4:17
to win you over
"to convince you to join them"
to shut you out
"to shut you out from us" or "to make you stop being loyal to us"
zealous for them
"zealous to do what they tell you to do"
Galatians 4:19
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells believers that grace and law cannot work together.
My little children
This is a metaphor for disciples or followers. Alternate translation: "You who are disciples because of me"
I am suffering the pains of childbirth for you until Christ is formed in you
Paul uses childbirth as a metaphor for his concern about the Galatians. Alternate translation: "I am in pain as though I were a woman having to give birth to you, and I will continue to be in pain until Christ truly controls you"
Galatians 4:20
change my tone
Paul wishes he could sound happy instead of sounding angry or confused. Alternate Translation: "change the way I sound" or "change the way I am speaking to you" or "speak to you differently"
Galatians 4:21
Tell me, you ... law, do you not listen to the law?
Paul is introducing what he will say next. Alternate translation: "I want to tell you something, you ... law; you need to learn what the law really says." or "Let me tell you who ... law what the law really says."
Galatians 4:24
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins a story to illustrate a truth—that law and grace cannot exist together.
These things may be interpreted as an allegory
"This story of the two sons is like a picture of what I will tell you now"
as an allegory
An "allegory" is a story in which the people and things in it represent other things. In Paul's allegory, the two women referred to in Galatians 4:22 represent two covenants.
women represent
"women are a picture of"
Mount Sinai
"Mount Sinai" here is a synecdoche for the law that Moses gave to the Israelites there. Alternate translation: "Mount Sinai, where Moses gave the law to Israel"
she bears children into slavery
Paul treats the law as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "the people under this covenant are like slaves who have to obey the law"
Galatians 4:25
she represents
"she is a picture of"
she is in slavery with her children
Hagar is a slave and her children are slaves with her. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem, like Hagar, is a slave, and her children are slaves with her"
Galatians 4:26
is free
"is not bound" or "is not a slave"
Galatians 4:27
Rejoice
be happy
you barren one ... you who are not suffering
Here "you" refers to the barren woman and is singular.
Galatians 4:28
brothers
See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.
children of promise
Possible meanings are that the Galatians have become God's children 1) by believing God's promise or 2) because God worked miracles to fulfill his promises to Abraham, first by giving Abraham a son and then by making the Galatians children of Abraham and thus sons of God.
Galatians 4:29
according to the flesh
This refers to Abraham's becoming Ishmael's father by taking Hagar as a wife. Alternate translation: "by means of human action" or "because of what people did"
according to the Spirit
"because of something the Spirit did"
Galatians 4:31
brothers
See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.
of a slave girl, but of the free woman
The words "we are children" are understood from the previous phrase. This can be translated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "of a slave girl. Rather, we are children of the free woman"

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5 [1]For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not again be subject to a yoke of slavery.

[2]Look, I, Paul, say to you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will not benefit you in any way.
[3]I testify again to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.[4]You are cut off from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you no longer experience grace.
[5]For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.[6]In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has value, but only faith working through love.[7]You were running well. Who prevented you from obeying the truth?[8]This persuasion does not come from him who calls you!
[9]A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough.[10]I have confidence in the Lord that you will think nothing different. The one who is troubling you will suffer the judgment, whoever he is.
[11]Brothers, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the stumbling block of the cross has been removed.[12]As for those who are disturbing you, I wish they would cut themselves off!

[13]For you were called to freedom, brothers. But do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh; rather, through love serve one another.[14]For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You must love your neighbor as yourself."[15]But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

[16]But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh.[17]For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these oppose each other, so that you cannot do the things you want.[18]But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
[19]Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,[20]idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, rivalry, dissension, divisions,[21]envy, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
[22]But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith,[23]gentleness, and self-control; against such things there is no law.[24]Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

[25]If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.[26]Let us not become boastful, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul continues writing about the law of Moses as if it were something that traps or enslaves a person. (See: lawofmoses)

Special concepts in this chapter

Fruit of the Spirit

The phrase "the fruit of the Spirit" is not plural, even though it begins a list of several things. Translators should keep the singular form if possible. (See: fruit)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Illustrations

Paul uses several metaphors in this chapter to illustrate his points and help explain complicated issues.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"You are cut off from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you no longer experience grace."
Some scholars think Paul teaches that being circumcised causes a person to lose their salvation. Other scholars think Paul means that obeying the law to try to get right with God will keep a person from being saved by grace. (See: grace)

Links:

Galatians 5:1 Notes

Galatians 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul applies the allegory in the previous chapter by reminding the believers to use their liberty in Christ because all the law is fulfilled in loving neighbors as ourselves.

For freedom Christ has set us free

"It is so that we can be free that Christ has set us free." It is implied that Christ sets believers free from the old covenant. Here freedom from the old covenant is a metaphor for not being obligated to obey it. Alternate translation: "Christ has set us free from the old covenant so that we might be free" or "Christ has set us free so that we might live as free poeple"

Stand firm

Standing firm here represents being determined not to change. How they are not to change can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "Do not give in to the arguments of

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people who teach something else" or "Be determined to stay free"

do not again be subject to a yoke of slavery

Here being under control of a yoke of slavery represents being obligated to obey the law. Alternate translation: "do not live like one who is under the control of a yoke of slavery to the law"

Galatians 5:2

if you let yourselves be circumcised

Paul is using circumcision as a metonym for Judaism. Alternate translation: "if you turn to the Jewish religion"

Galatians 5:3

I testify

"I declare" or "I serve as a witness"

to every man who lets himself be circumcised

Paul is using circumcision as a metonym for being Jewish. Alternate translation: "to every person who has become a Jew"

he is obligated to obey

"he must obey"

Galatians 5:4

You are cut off from Christ

Here "cut off" is a metaphor for separation from Christ. Alternate translation: "You have ended your relationship with Christ" or "You are no longer united with Christ"

you who would be justified by the law

Paul is speaking ironically here. He actually teaches that no one can be justified by trying to do the deeds required by the law. Alternate translation: "all you who think you can be justified by doing the deeds required by the law" or "you who want to be justified by the law"

you no longer experience grace

Who that grace comes from can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "God will not be gracious to you"

Galatians 5:5

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to Paul and those who oppose the circumcision of Christians. He is probably including the Galatians.

For through the Spirit

"This is because through the Spirit"

by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) "we are waiting by faith for the hope of righteousness" or 2) "we are waiting for the hope of righteousness that comes by faith."

we eagerly wait

"We wait with excitement" or "we wait with great desire"

for the hope of righteousness

They confidently expect that God will make them righteous. Alternate translation: "for the righteousness that we hope for" or "for the righteousness that we confidently expect to receive"

Galatians 5:6

neither circumcision nor uncircumcision

These are metonymy for being a Jew or a non-Jew. Alternate translation: "neither being a Jew nor not being a Jew"

neither ... has value, but only faith working through love

"neither ... has value; rather, God is concerned with our faith in him, which we show by loving others"

has value

"has meaning" or "gives value to a person" or "makes God think a person is important"

Galatians 5:7

You were running

"You were practicing what Jesus taught"

Galatians 5:8

This persuasion does not come from him who calls you

"The one who persuades you to do that is not God, the one who calls you"

him who calls you

What he calls them to can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "the one who calls you to be his people"

persuasion

To persuade someone is to get that person to change what he believes and so to act differently.

Galatians 5:9

A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough

Paul uses this proverb to mean that a small part of something affects the whole thing. In this case, one person who is teaching something false can harm the entire Christian community.

Galatians 5:10

you will think nothing different

"you will not believe anything different from what I am telling you"

The one who is troubling you will suffer the judgment

"God will punish the one who is troubling you"

is troubling you

"is causing you to be uncertain about what is truth" or "stirs up trouble among you"

whoever he is

Possible meanings are 1) Paul does not know the names of the people who are telling the Galatians that they need to obey the law of Moses or 2) Paul does not want the Galatians to care about whether those who "confuse" them are rich or poor or great or small or religious or not religious.

Galatians 5:11

Brothers, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?

Paul uses this rhetorical question to show the evidence that he is not proclaiming circumcision. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Brothers, you can see that I am not proclaiming circumcision because I am still being persecuted."

Brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

if I still proclaim circumcision

"if I still proclaim that men have to be circumcised"

why am I still being persecuted?

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "why are the Jews still persecuting me?" (See:

In that case the stumbling block of the cross has been removed

Paul is describing a situation that has not happened as evidence that he does not preach circumcision. Since the stumbling block of the cross has not been removed, that is evidence that Paul does not preach circumcision.

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In that case the stumbling block of the cross has been removed

Paul had just said that he was still being persecuted. Here he implies that if the offense of the cross were removed, the Jews would have no reason to persecute him. The relationship between the two sentences can be made clearer by making this implied information explicit. Alternate translation: "If I am still preaching circumcision, then the stumbling block of the cross has been removed, and there is no reason for the Jews to persecute me"

In that case

"If I were still proclaiming circumcision" or "If I were still saying that people need to be circumcised"

the stumbling block of the cross has been removed

This can be expressed without the passive form. Alternate translation: "the cross would no longer be a stumbling block" or "the cross would no longer cause people to stumble"

the stumbling block of the cross

Here the words "stumbling block" are a metaphor for something that angers or offends some people and leads them to reject the truth. In this case, teaching that people are saved by "the cross" offends those who believe a person is saved by obeying the law. These people "stumble" when they reject the teaching about the cross.

the cross

Here "the cross" is a metonym for the teaching that because Jesus Christ died on the cross and is alive again, God saves people who believe in Christ. People do not have to be circumcised or become Jews. Alternate translation: "the message about the cross"

Galatians 5:12

cut themselves off

Possible meanings are 1) literal, to cut off their male organs so as to become eunuchs or 2) metaphorical, completely withdraw from the Christian community.

Galatians 5:13

For

Paul is giving the reason for his words in Galatians 5:12.

you were called to freedom

This can be expressed in an active form. Alternate translation: "Christ has called you to freedom"

you were called to freedom

It is implied that Christ has set believers free from the old covenant. Here freedom from the old covenant is a metaphor for not being obligated to obey it. Alternate translation: "You were called to freedom from the old covenant" or "Christ has chosen you to not be obligated to the old covenant"

brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

an opportunity for the flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for people's sinful nature. The relationship between the opportunity and the sinful nature can be stated more clearly. Alternate translation: "an opportunity for you to behave according to your sinful nature"

Galatians 5:14

the whole law is fulfilled in one word

The word "word" here is a metonym for a commandment. Possible meanings are 1) "you can state the whole law in just one commandment, which is this" or 2) "by obeying one commandment, you obey all the commandments, and that one commandment is this."

You must love your neighbor as yourself

The words "you," "your," and "yourself" are all singular.

Galatians 5:16

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how the Spirit gives control over sin.

walk by the Spirit

Walking is a metaphor for living. Alternate translation: "conduct your life in the power of the Holy Spirit" or "live your life in dependence on the Spirit"

you will not carry out the desires of the flesh

"you will not do what your sinful nature desires" or "you will not do the sinful things that you, a sinner, want to do"

the desires of the flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the sinful nature and is spoken of as if it were a person and wanted to sin. Alternate translation: "what you want to do because of your sinful nature" or "the things you want to do because you are sinful"

Galatians 5:18

not under the law

"not obligated to obey the law of Moses"

Galatians 5:19

the works of the flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the sinful nature. The sinful nature is spoken of as if it were a person who does things. The abstract noun "works" can be translated with the verb "does." Alternate translation: "the things the sinful nature does" or "the things people do because of their sinful nature" or "the things people do because they are sinful"

Galatians 5:21

inherit

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

Galatians 5:22

the fruit of the Spirit is love ... faith

Here "fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "what the Spirit produces is love ... faith" or "the Spirit produces in God's people love ... faith"

Galatians 5:23

gentleness ... self-control

The list of characteristics described as "the fruit of the Spirit," which begins in the previous verse with the words "love, joy, peace," ends here. The word "fruit" is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome."

Galatians 5:24

have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires

Paul speaks of the sinful nature of Christians who have refused to live by it as if it were a person and they have killed it on a cross. Alternate translation: "refuse to live according the sinful nature with its passions and desires, as if they killed it on a cross"

the flesh with its passions and desires

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the sinful nature.

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The sinful nature is spoken of as if it were a person that had passions and desires. Alternate translation: "their sinful nature and the things they strongly want to do because of it"

passions and desires

If your language does not have different words for "passions" and "desires," you can treat this as a hendiadys or doublet that simply emphasizes the idea of desires that are wrong, that harm the one who desires and if fulfilled would harm other people.

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit

"Since God's Spirit has caused us to be alive"

walk by the Spirit

"Walk" here is a metaphor for living every day. Alternate translation: "allow the Holy Spirit to guide us so we do things that please and honor God"

Galatians 5:26

Let us

"We should"

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6 [1]Brothers, if someone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Be concerned about yourself, so you also may not be tempted.[2]Carry one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.
[3]For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.[4]Each one should examine his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in someone else.[5]For each one will carry his own burden.

[6]The one who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches.[7]Do not be deceived. God is not mocked, for whatever a man plants, that he will also reap.[8]For he who plants seed to his own flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction. The one who plants seed to the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.
[9]Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the right time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up.[10]So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the household of faith.

[11]See what large letters I write to you with my own hand.[12]Those who want to make a good impression in the flesh are trying to compel you to be circumcised. They do this only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.[13]For not even those who circumcised themselves keep the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh.
[14]But may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.[15]For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision, but what counts is a new creation.
[16]To all who walk according to this standard, peace and mercy be upon them, even upon the Israel of God.

[17]From now on let no one trouble me, for I carry on my body the marks of Jesus.
[18]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Galatians 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter concludes Paul's letter. His final words address some issues that do not seem to be connected to the rest of his letter.

Brothers

Paul writes the words in this chapter to Christians. He calls them "brothers." This refers to Paul's Christian brothers and not his Jewish brothers.

Special concepts in this chapter

New Creation

People who are born again are a new creation in Christ. Christians have been given new life in Christ. They have a new nature in them after they come to faith in Christ. To Paul, this is more significant than a person's ancestry. (See: bornagain and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is contrasted with "spirit." In this chapter, flesh is also used to refer to the physical body. (See: flesh and sin and spirit)

Links:

Galatians 6:1 Notes

Galatians 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul teaches believers how they should treat other believers and how God rewards.

Brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

if someone

"if anyone among you"

if someone is caught in any trespass

Possible meanings are 1) someone else found that person in

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the act. Alternate translation: "if someone is discovered in an act of sin" or 2) that person committed the sin without intending to do evil. Alternate translation: "if someone gave in and sinned"

you who are spiritual

"those of you who are guided by the Spirit" or "you who are living in the guidance of the Spirit"

restore him

"correct the person who sinned" or "exhort the person who sinned to return to a correct relationship with God"

in a spirit of gentleness

Possible meanings are 1) that the Spirit is directing the one who is offering correction or 2) "with an attitude of gentleness" or "in a kind way."

Be concerned about yourself, ... tempted.

These words treat the Galatians as though they are all one person to emphasize that he is talking to each of them. Alternate translation: "Be concerned about yourselves ... tempted." or "I say to each one of you, 'Be concerned about yourself, ... tempted.'"

so you also may not be tempted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that nothing will tempt you also to sin"

Galatians 6:3

For if

"Because if." The words that follow tell why the Galatians should 1) "carry one other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2) or 2) be careful that they themselves are not tempted (Galatians 6:1) or 3) "not become conceited" (Galatians 5:26).

he is something

"he is someone important" or "he is better than others"

he is nothing

"he is not important" or "he is not better than others"

Galatians 6:4

Each one should

"Each person must"

Galatians 6:5

each one will carry his own burden

"each person will be judged by his own work only" or "each person will be responsible for his own work only"

each one will

"each person will"

Galatians 6:6

The one

"The person"

the word

"the message," everything God has said or commanded

Galatians 6:7

for whatever a man plants, that he will also reap

Planting represents doing things that end in some kind of result, and gathering in represents experiencing the results of what one has done. Alternate translation: "for just as a farmer gathers in the fruit of whatever kind of seeds he plants, so everyone experiences the results of whatever he does"

whatever a man plants

Paul is not specifying males here. Alternate translation: "whatever a person plants" or "whatever someone plants"

Galatians 6:8

plants seed to his own flesh

Planting seeds is a metaphor for doing deeds that will have consequences later. In this case, the person is doing sinful actions because of his sinful nature. Alternate translation: "plants seed according to what he wants because of his sinful nature" or "does the things he wants to do because of his sinful nature"

will reap destruction

God punishing the person is spoken of as if the person were harvesting a crop. Alternate translation: "will receive punishment for what he did"

plants seed to the Spirit

Planting seeds is a metaphor for doing deeds that will have consequences later. In this case, the person is doing good actions because he is listening to God's Spirit. Alternate translation: "does the things God's Spirit loves"

from the Spirit will reap eternal life

"will receive eternal life as a reward from God's Spirit"

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good

"We should continue to do good"

doing good

doing good to others for their well-being

for at the right time

"for in due time" or "because at the time God has chosen"

Galatians 6:10

So then

"As a result of this" or "Because of this"

especially to those

"most of all to those" or "in particular to those"

those who belong to the household of faith

"those who are members of God's family through faith in Christ"

Galatians 6:11

Connecting Statement:

As Paul closes this letter, he gives one more reminder that the law does not save and that the Galatians should remember the cross of Christ.

large letters

This can mean that Paul wants to emphasize 1) the statements that follow or 2) that this letter came from him.

with my own hand

Possible meanings are 1) Paul probably had a helper who wrote most of this letter as Paul told him what to write, but Paul himself wrote this last part of the letter or 2) Paul wrote the whole letter himself.

Galatians 6:12

make a good impression

"cause others to think well of them" or "cause others to think that they are good people"

in the flesh

"with visible evidence" or "by their own efforts"

to compel

"to force" or "to strongly influence"

only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ

"so that the Jews will not persecute them for claiming that the cross of Christ alone is what saves people"

the cross of Christ

These words are a metonym for faith that Christ died on the

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cross so God would forgive his people's sins. Alternate translation: "believing that God forgives his people's sins because Jesus died on the cross"

Galatians 6:13

so that they may boast about your flesh

"so that they may be proud that they have added you to the people who try to keep the law"

Galatians 6:14

But may I never boast except in the cross

"I do not ever want to boast in anything other than the cross" or "May I boast only in the cross"

the world has been crucified to me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I think of the world as already dead" or "I treat the world like a criminal God has killed on a cross"

I to the world

The words "have been crucified" are understood from the phrase before this. Alternate translation: "and I have been crucified to the world"

I to the world

Possible meanings are 1) "the world thinks of me as already dead" or 2) "the world treats me like a criminal that God has killed on the cross"

the world

Possible meanings are 1) the people of the world, those who care nothing for God or 2) the things that those who care nothing for God think are important.

Galatians 6:15

neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision

"neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is important to God"

a new creation

Possible meanings are 1) a new believer in Jesus Christ or 2) the new life of a believer.

Galatians 6:16

walk according to this standard

The word "walk" here is a metaphor for living life, and a standard is something against which people measure other things. Alternate translation: "live this way"

peace and mercy be upon them, even upon the Israel of God

Possible meanings are 1) that believers in general are the Israel of God or 2) "may peace and mercy be upon Gentile believers and upon the Israel of God" or 3) "may peace be upon those who follow the rule, and may mercy be upon even the Israel of God."

Galatians 6:17

From now on

This can also mean "Lastly" or "As I end this letter."

let no one trouble me

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is commanding the Galatians not to trouble him, "I am commanding you this: do not trouble me," or 2) Paul is telling the Galatians that he is commanding all people not to trouble him, "I am commanding everyone this: do not trouble me," or 3) Paul is expressing a desire, "I do not want anyone to trouble me."

trouble me

Possible meanings are 1) "speak of these matters to me" or 2) "cause me hardship" or "give me hard work."

for I carry on my body the marks of Jesus

These marks were scars from people who beat and whipped Paul because they did not like him teaching about Jesus. Alternate translation: "for the scars on my body show that I serve Jesus"

Galatians 6:18

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit

The word "your" here refers to the Galatians and so is plural. The words "your spirit" are a synecdoche and represent the people themselves. Alternate translation: "May our Lord Jesus Christ be kind to you"

brothers

See how you translated this in Galatians 1:2.

Introduction to Ephesians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ephesians

Greeting and prayer for the spiritual blessings in Christ (1:1-23) Sin and salvation (2:1-10) Unity and peace (2:11-22) Mystery of Christ in you, made known (3:1-13) Prayer for riches of his glory to make them strong (3:14-21) Unity of the Spirit, building up the Body of Christ (4:1-16) New life (4:17-32) Imitators of God (5:1-21) Wives and husbands; children and parents; slaves and masters (5:22-6:9) Armor of God (6:10-20) Final greeting (6:21-24)

Who wrote the Book of Ephesians?

Paul wrote Ephesians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

The Apostle Paul helped start the church in Ephesus on one of his trips. He also lived in Ephesus for a year and a half and helped the believers there. Paul probably wrote this letter while he was in prison in Rome.

What is the Book of Ephesians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the Christians in Ephesus to explain God's love for them in Christ Jesus. He described the blessings that God was giving them because they were now united with Christ. He explained that all believers are united together, whether Jew or Gentile. Paul also wanted to encourage them to live in a way that pleases God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Ephesians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus" or "A Letter to the Christians in Ephesus."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the "hidden truth" in the Book of Ephesians?

The expression translated in the ULB as "hidden truth" or "hidden" occurs six times. By it Paul always meant something that God had to reveal to human beings because they could not know it on their own. It always referred to something about how God planned to save mankind. Sometimes it was about his plan to cause peace between himself and mankind. Sometimes it was about his plan to unite Jews and Gentiles through Christ. Gentiles are now able to benefit from the promises of Christ as equals with the Jews.

What did Paul say about salvation and righteous living?

Paul said much about salvation and righteous living in this letter and in many of his letters. He said that God has been very kind and saved Christians because they believe in Jesus. Therefore, after they become Christians, they should live in a righteous way to show that they have faith in Christ. (See: righteous)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. The word "you" is almost always plural and refers to the believers who may read this letter. The three exceptions to this are: 5:14, 6:2, and 6:3.

What did Paul mean by the "new self" or the "new man"?

When Paul spoke of the "new self" or the "new man," he meant the new nature that a believer receives from the Holy Spirit. This new nature was created in God's image (See: 4:24). The phrase "new man" is also used for God causing peace between Jews and Gentiles. God brought them together as one people that belong to him (See: 2:15).

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20; 2:6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22; 3:5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 21; 4:1, 17, 21, 32; 5:8, 18, 19; 6:1, 10, 18, 21. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Ephesians?

"in Ephesus" (1:1). Some early manuscripts do not include this expression, but it is probably in the original letter. The ULB, UDB, and many modern versions include it. "because we are members of his body" (5:30). Most modern versions, including the ULB, read in this way. Some older translations read, "because we are members of his body and of his bones." Translators might decide to choose the second reading if other versions in their area have it that way. If translators choose the second reading, they should put the additional words inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that they are probably not original to the Book of Ephesians.

Ephesians

1 [1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to God's holy people in Ephesus, who are faithful in Christ Jesus:[1]

[2]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3]May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.[4]God chose us in him from the foundation of the world, that we may be holy and blameless in his sight in love.
[5]God predestined us[2] for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.[6]Our adoption results in the praise of his glorious grace that he has freely given us in the One he loves.
[7]In Jesus Christ we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.[8]He multiplied this grace to us with all wisdom and understanding.
[9]God made known to us the mystery of his will, according to what pleased him, and which he demonstrated in Christ,
[10]with a view to a plan for the fullness of time, to bring all things together—all things in heaven and on earth—under one head, even Christ.
[11]In Christ we were given an inheritance, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything according to the purpose of his will.[12]God appointed us as heirs so that we, who are the first to hope in Christ, would be for the praise of his glory.

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[13]In Christ, you also—when you had heard the word of truth—the gospel of your salvation, believed in him and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,[14]who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

[15]For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's holy people,[16]I have not stopped thanking God for you as I mention you in my prayers.
[17]I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.[18]I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, that you may know the hope to which he has called you and the riches of his glorious inheritance among all God's holy people.
[19]In my prayers I ask that you may know the incomparable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of the strength of his might.[20]This is the same power that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.[21]He seated Christ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named. Christ will rule, not only in this age, but also in the age to come.
[22]God subjected all things under Christ's feet and gave him to the church as head over all things.[23]The church is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies do not have in Ephesus, but this letter may have been circulated throughout this region to several churches, not just to the church in Ephesus.
[2]Some interpreters place the last phrase of Ephesians 1:4. in love, with verse 5 so that it reads, In love God predestined us.

Ephesians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"I pray"

Paul structures part of this chapter like a prayer of praise to God. But Paul is not just talking to God. He is teaching the church in Ephesus. He also tells the Ephesians how he is praying for them.

Special concepts in this chapter

Predestination

Many scholars believe this chapter teaches on a subject known as "predestination." This is related to the biblical concept of "predestine." Some scholars take this to indicate that God has, from before the foundation of the world, chosen some people to eternally save. Christians have different views on what the Bible teaches on this subject. So translators need to take extra care when translating this chapter. (See: predestine)

Links:

Ephesians 1:1 Notes Ephesians intro

Ephesians 1:1

General Information:

Paul names himself as the writer of this letter to the believers at the church at Ephesus. Except where noted, all instances of "you" and "your" refers to the Ephesian believers as well as all believers and so are plural.

Paul, an apostle ... to God's holy people in Ephesus

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter and its intended audience. Alternate translation: "I, Paul, an apostle ... write this letter to you, God's holy people Ephesus"

who are faithful in Christ Jesus

"In Christ Jesus" and similar expressions are metaphors that frequently occur in the New Testament letters. They express the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.

Ephesians 1:2

Grace to you and peace

This is a common greeting and blessing that Paul often uses in his letters.

Ephesians 1:3

General Information:

In this book, unless otherwise stated, the words "us" and "we" refer to Paul and the believers in Ephesus, as well as all believers.

Connecting Statement:

Paul opens his letter by talking about the believers' position and their safety before God.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised

This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "Let us praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"

who has blessed us

"for God has blessed us"

every spiritual blessing

"every blessing coming from the Spirit of God"

in the heavenly places

"in the supernatural world." The word "heavenly" refers to the place where God is.

in Christ

Possible meanings 1) the phrase "in Christ" refers to what Christ has done. Alternate translation: "through Christ" or "through what Christ has done" or 2) "in Christ" is a metaphor referring to our close relationship with Christ. Alternate translation: "by uniting us with Christ" or

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"because we are united with Christ"
Ephesians 1:4
from the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "from the time he created the world"
holy and blameless
Paul uses two similar words to emphasize moral goodness.
Ephesians 1:5
God predestined us for adoption
The word "us" refers to Paul, the Ephesian church, and all believers in Christ. Alternate translation: "God planned long ago to adopt us"
God predestined us
"God chose us ahead of time" or "God chose us long ago"
for adoption as sons
Here "adoption" refers to becoming part of God's family. Here the word "sons" refers to males and females. Alternate translation: "to be adopted as his children"
through Jesus Christ
God brought believers into his family by the work of Jesus Christ.
his will
"God's will"
Ephesians 1:6
General Information:
The words "his" and "he" refer to God.
he has freely given us in the One he loves
"he has kindly given to us by means of the One he loves"
the One he loves
"the One he loves, Jesus Christ" or "his Son, whom he loves"
Ephesians 1:7
riches of his grace
Paul speaks of God's grace as if it were material wealth. Alternate translation: "greatness of God's grace" or "abundance of God's grace"
Ephesians 1:8
He multiplied this grace to us
"He gave us this great amount of grace" or "He was extremely kind to us"
with all wisdom and understanding
Possible meanings are 1) "because he has all wisdom and understanding" 2) "so that we might have great wisdom and understanding"
Ephesians 1:9
according to what pleased him
Possible meanings are 1) "because he wanted to make it known to us" or 2) "which was what he wanted."
which he demonstrated in Christ
"he demonstrated this purpose in Christ"
in Christ
"by means of Christ"
Ephesians 1:10
with a view to a plan
A new sentence can be started here. If you start a new sentence here, you will need to end 1:9 with a period instead of a comma. Alternate translation: "He did this with a view to a plan" or "He did this, thinking about a plan"
for the fullness of time
"for when the time is right" or "for the time that he has appointed"
Ephesians 1:11
we were given an inheritance, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave us an inheritance, having predestined us according to his plan. For he works"
Ephesians 1:12
so that we, who are the first to hope in Christ
The pronoun "we" refer to Paul and the other Jewish believers, not to the Ephesian believers.
the first to hope in Christ
"the first people to hope in Christ." They confidently expected that Christ would fulfill God's promises. Alternate translation: "the first to trust in Christ"
so that we, ... Christ, would be for the praise of his glory.
Possible meanings are 1) other people would praise God because of the grace he had shown the believers (Ephesians 1:6). Alternate translation: "we, ... Christ, would live in a way that brings glory to God." or "people would praise God because of the glorious grace he showed us who ... Christ." Or 2) believers would praise God for his glory. Alternate translation: "so that we, ... Christ, would praise him for his glory as long as we live."
Ephesians 1:13
General Information:
Paul has been speaking in the previous two verses about himself and the other Jewish believers, but now he begins speaking about the Ephesian believers.
the word of truth
Possible meanings are 1) "the message about the truth" or 2) "the true message."
were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit
Wax was placed on a letter and stamped with a symbol representing the person who wrote the letter. Paul uses this custom as a picture to show how God has used the Holy Spirit to assure us that we belong to him. Alternate translation: "God has sealed you with the Holy Spirit that he promised"
Ephesians 1:14
the guarantee of our inheritance
What God has promised and will provide is spoken of as though it were property or wealth that one would inherit from a family member. Alternate translation: "the guarantee that we will receive what God has promised"
the redemption of the possession
The abstract nouns "redemption" and "possession" can be translated using the verbs "redeem" and "possess," respectively. Possible meanings of "possession" are 1) God possesses. Alternate translation: "God redeems us as his own people" Or 2) Christians possess. Alternate translation: "we take possession of our inheritance"
Ephesians 1:15
Connecting Statement:
Paul prays for the Ephesian believers and praises God for the power that believers have through Christ.
Ephesians 1:16
I have not stopped thanking God

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Paul uses "not stopped" to emphasize that he continues to thank God. Alternate translation: "I continue to thank God"
Ephesians 1:17
a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him
"spiritual wisdom to understand his revelation"
Ephesians 1:18
that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "eyes of your heart" is a metaphor for one's ability to gain understanding. Alternate translation: "that you may gain understanding and be enlightened"
that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened
This may be stated in the active tense. Alternate translation: that God may enlighten your heart" or "that God may enlighten your understanding"
may be enlightened
"may be made to see"
the hope to which he has called you
Here "the hope" refers to what God wants us to confidently expect. Alternate translation: "what he has called you to confidently expect" or "what he has called you to confidently wait for"
to which he has called you
to which he has invited you
the riches of his glorious inheritance among all God's holy people
What God has promised and will provide is spoken of as though it were property or wealth that one would inherit from a family member. Alternate translation: "the riches of all the glorious things he has promised to give to all God's holy people"
all God's holy people
"all those whom he has set apart for himself" or "all those who belong completely to him"
Ephesians 1:19
the incomparable greatness of his power
God's power is far beyond all other power.
toward us who believe
"for us who believe"
the working of the strength of his might
"the strength of his might that is at work for us"
the strength of his might
"his mighty strength" or "his very great strength"
Ephesians 1:20
raised him
"made him alive again"
when he raised him from the dead
Here "the dead" is a nominal adjective that means all dead people together in the underworld. To be raised from among them means to become alive again. Alternate translation: "when he brought him back to life" or " when he caused him to be alive again"
seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places
The person who sits "at the right hand" of a king sits at his right side and rules with all the authority of the king at whose right hand or side he sits. This is a metonym of location that represents the authority that the person in that location possesses. Alternate translation: "gave him all authority to rule from heaven"
seated him at his right hand
To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "seated him in the place of honor and authority beside him"
in the heavenly places
"in the supernatural world." The word "heavenly" refers to the place where God is. See how you translated this in Ephesians 1:3.
Ephesians 1:21
far above all rule and authority and power and dominion
Rulers, authorities, dominions, and powers are different terms for the ranks of supernatural beings, both angelic and demonic. Alternate translation: "far above all types of supernatural beings"
every name that is named
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "every name that man gives" or 2) "every name that God gives"
name
Possible meanings are 1) title or 2) position of authority.
in this age
"at this time"
in the age to come
"in the future"
Ephesians 1:22
subjected all things under Christ's feet
Here "feet" represents Christ's lordship, authority, and power. Alternate translation: "put all things under Christ's power" or "made all things subject to Christ"
head over all things
Here "head" refers to the leader or the one who is in charge. Alternate translation: "ruler over all things"
Ephesians 1:23
The church is his body
Just as with a human body, the head
his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all
Possible meanings are 1) the body is the fullness of Christ. This means Christ fills or gives to the church everything that he has to give, and Christ also fills all things in every way or 2) "the fullness" refers back to "him," that is, Christ in 1:22, and "him" in 1:23 refers to God the Father. This means the full deity of the Father dwells within Christ, and the Father fills all things in every way or 3) the body is the completion of Christ. This means that Christ as the "head" is completed by the church, which is "his body," and Christ fills all things in every way.

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2 [1]And as for you, you were dead in your trespasses and sins,[2]in which you once walked, according to the ways of this world. You were living according to the ruler of the authorities of the air, the spirit that is working in the sons of disobedience.[3]Once we all lived among these people, fulfilling the evil desires of our flesh, and carrying out the desires of the flesh and of the mind. We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of humanity.

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[4]But God is rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us.[5]While we were dead in trespasses, he made us alive together in Christ—by grace you have been saved.[6]God raised us up together with Christ, and God made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,[7]so that in the ages to come he might show to us the immeasurably great riches of his grace expressed in his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
[8]For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this did not come from you; it is the gift of God,[9]not from works, so that no one may boast.[10]For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good deeds that God planned long ago for us, so that we would walk in them.

[11]Therefore, remember that once you were Gentiles in the flesh. You are called "uncircumcision" by what is called the "circumcision" in the flesh made by human hands.[12]For at that time you were separated from Christ, foreigners to citizenship in Israel, strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
[13]But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away from God have been brought near by the blood of Christ.[14]For he himself is our peace, because he made us both one. By his flesh he broke down the dividing wall of hostility.[15]He set aside the law with its commands and ordinances so that he might create in himself one new man out of two, so making peace.
[16]Christ reconciles both peoples into one body to God through the cross, putting to death the hostility.
[17]Jesus came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.[18]For through Jesus we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.
[19]So then, now you Gentiles are no longer foreigners and strangers. Rather, you are fellow citizens with God's holy people and members of the household of God.[20]You have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone.[21]In him the whole building fits together and grows as a holy temple in the Lord.[22]It is in him that you also are being built together as a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

Ephesians 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter focuses on a Christian's life before coming to believe in Jesus. Paul then uses this information to explain how a person's former way of living is distinct from a Christian's new identity "in Christ." (See: faith)

Special concepts in this chapter

One body

Paul teaches about the church in this chapter. The church is made of two different groups of people (Jews and Gentiles). They are now one group or "body." The church is also known as the body of Christ. Jews and Gentiles are united in Christ.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"Dead in trespasses and sins"

Paul teaches that those who are not Christians are "dead" in their sin. Sin binds or enslaves them. This makes them spiritually "dead." Paul writes that God makes Christians alive in Christ.

Descriptions of worldly living

Paul uses many different ways to describe how non-Christians act. They "lived according to the ways of this world" and are "living according to the ruler of the authorities of the air," "fulfilling the evil desires of our sinful nature," and "carrying out the desires of the body and of the mind."

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"It is the gift of God"

Some scholars believe "it" here refers to being saved. Other scholars believe that it is faith that is the gift of God. Because of how the Greek tenses agree, "it" here more likely refers to all of being saved by God's grace through faith.

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for a person's sinful nature. The phrase "Gentiles in the flesh" indicates the Ephesians once lived without any concern for God. "Flesh" is also used in this verse to refer to the physical part of man. (See: flesh)

Links:

Ephesians 2:1 Notes

Ephesians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds the believers of their past and the way they now are before God.

you were dead in your trespasses and sins

This speaks of sinful people being unable to obey God as if they were people who were physically dead.

in your trespasses and sins

The words "trespasses" and "sins" have similar meanings. Paul uses them together to emphasize the greatness of the people's sin. They can also be translated using the verbs "trespass" and "sin," respectively. Alternate translation:

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"because you had trespassed and sinned"
Ephesians 2:2
in which you once walked
The word "walked" is a metaphor for the way they lived their lives. To say that they "walked in" their trespasses and sins [Ephesians 2:1]
according to the ways of this world
The apostles also used "world" to refer to the selfish behaviors and corrupt values of the people living in this world. Alternate translation: "according to the values of people living in the world" or "following the principles of this present world"
according to the ruler of the authorities of the air
"doing what the ruler of the authorities of the air wants them to do." These words expand upon "according to the age of this world." The "ruler of the authorities of the air" is the devil or Satan.
the spirit that is working in the sons of disobedience
These words expand upon "the ruler of the authorities of the air." This is another way of speaking of the devil or Satan.
the sons of disobedience
Ephesians 2:3
the desires of the flesh and of the mind
The words "flesh" and "mind" represent the entire person.
flesh
This word is a metonym for the body, which is made of flesh. Alternate translation: "body"
children of wrath
people with whom God is angry
Ephesians 2:4
God is rich in mercy
"God is abundant in mercy" or "God is very kind to us"
because of his great love with which he loved us
"because of his great love for us" or "because he loves us very much"
Ephesians 2:5
by grace you have been saved
This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "God saved us because of his great kindness toward us"
Ephesians 2:6
God raised us up together with Christ
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Possible meanings are 1) because God has caused Christ to come alive again, God has already given Paul and the believers in Ephesus new spiritual life. Alternate translation: "God has given us new life because we belong to Christ" or 2) because God has caused Christ to come alive again, the believers in Ephesus can know that after they die they will live with Christ, and Paul can speak of the believers living again as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "We can be sure that God will give us life as he has caused Christ to come alive again"
in the heavenly places
"in the supernatural world." The word "heavenly" refers to the place where God is. See how this is translated in Ephesians 1:3.
in Christ Jesus
"In Christ Jesus" and similar expressions are metaphors that frequently occur in the New Testament letters. They express the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.
Ephesians 2:7
in the ages to come
"in the future"
Ephesians 2:8
For by grace you have been saved through faith
God's kindness to us is the reason he made it possible for us to be saved from judgment if we simply trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: "God saved you by grace because of your faith in him"
this did not
The word "this" refers back to "by grace you have been saved by faith."
Ephesians 2:9
not from works, so that no one may boast
You may want to start a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Salvation does not come from works, so that no one may boast" or "God does not save a person because of what that person does, so no one can boast and say that he earned his salvation"
Ephesians 2:10
in Christ Jesus
"In Christ Jesus" and similar expressions are metaphors that frequently occur in the New Testament letters. They express the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.
we would walk in them
Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Here "in them" refers to the "good deeds." Alternate translation: "we would always and continually do those good deeds"
Ephesians 2:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul reminds these believers that God has now made Gentiles and Jews into one body through Christ and his cross.
Gentiles in the flesh
This refers to people who were not born Jewish.
uncircumcision
Non-Jewish people were not circumcised as babies and thus the Jews considered them people who do not follow any of God's laws. Alternate translation: "uncircumcised pagans"
circumcision
This was another term for Jewish people because all male infants were circumcised. Alternate translation: "circumcised people"
what is called the "circumcision" in the flesh made by human hands
Possible meanings are 1) "Jews, who are circumcised by humans" or 2) "Jews, who circumcise the physical body."
by what is called
This can be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "by what people call" or "by those whom people call"
Ephesians 2:12
separated from Christ
"not knowing Christ" or "not belonging to Christ"

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foreigners to citizenship in Israel

"foreigners, not citizens of Israel"

strangers to the covenants of the promise

Paul speaks to the Gentile believers as if they had been foreigners, kept out of the land of God's covenant and promise. Alternate translation: "not belonging to those with whom God made the covenants of the promise"

having no hope

They had no reason to confidently expect anything good to happen. Specifically, they had no hope that God would save them and give them eternal life with him. Alternate translation: "not hoping in God" or "not confidently waiting for eternal life with God"

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus

Paul is marking a contrast between the Ephesians before they believed in Christ and after they believed in Christ.

you who once were far away from God have been brought near by the blood of Christ

Not belonging to God due to sin is spoken of as being far away from God. Belonging to God because of the blood of Christ is spoken of as being brought near to God. Alternate translation: "you who once did not belong to God now belong to God because of the blood of Christ"

by the blood of Christ

The blood of Christ is a metonym for his death. Alternate translation: "by Christ's death" or "when Christ died for us"

Ephesians 2:14

he himself is our peace

The word "himself" here emphasizes that Jesus alone is the reason that Jews and Gentiles can worship God as one peaceful community. Alternate translation: "he is the one who enables us to live in peace with each other"

our peace

The word "our" refers to Paul and his readers and so is inclusive.

he made us both one

"he made the Jews and Gentiles one"

By his flesh

The words "his flesh," his physical body, are a metonym for his body dying. Alternate translation: "By the death of his body on the cross" or "By dying on the cross" or "By his actions as a mortal man"

he broke down the dividing wall of hostility

Paul is speaking of Jews and Gentiles being hostile to each other and unable to worship God together as if they were on different sides of a wall. Because Jesus died, Gentiles as well as Jews can now worship God. Alternate translation: "he made it possible for Jews and Gentiles not to be hostile to each other anymore"

Ephesians 2:15

He set aside the law with its commands and ordinances

Jesus's blood satisfied the law of Moses so that both the Jews and Gentiles can live at peace in God.

one new man

a single new people, the people of redeemed humanity

in himself

It is union with Christ that makes reconciliation possible between Jews and Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:16

Christ reconciles both peoples

"Christ brings the Jews and the Gentiles together in peace"

through the cross

The cross here represents Christ's death on the cross. Alternate translation: "by means of Christ's death on the cross"

putting to death the hostility

Stopping their hostility is spoken of as if he killed their hostility. By dying on the cross Jesus eliminated the reason for Jews and Gentiles to be hostile toward each other. Neither are now required to live according to the law of Moses. Alternate translation: "stopping them from hating one another"

Ephesians 2:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the Ephesian believers that present Gentile believers are also now made one with the Jewish apostles and prophets; they are a temple for God in the Spirit.

proclaimed the good news of peace

"proclaimed the good news that tells that God and people can be at peace with each other" or "proclaimed the good news that is itself the way that people can be at peace with each other"

you who were far away

This refers to the Gentiles or non-Jews.

those who were near

This refers to the Jews.

Ephesians 2:18

For through Jesus we both have access

Here "we both" refers the believing Jews

in one Spirit

All believers, both Jewish and Gentile, are given the right to enter into the presence of God the Father by the same Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19

you Gentiles ... the household of God

Paul is using a metaphor to tell his Gentile readers that though God formerly did not consider them part of his people, God now considers them part of his people.

foreigners and strangers ... fellow citizens ... and members of the household

The words "foreigners" and "strangers" mean almost the same thing, so "strangers and foreigners" may be a doublet. However, Paul is contrasting "foreigners and strangers" with "fellow citizens ... and members." The word "citizens" refers to having political rights, so here "foreigners" probably refers to people living in a country not their own and having no political rights. The word "members" refers to being part of a family, so "strangers" probably refers to people who are not part of a family.

Ephesians 2:20

You have been built on the foundation

Paul speaks of God's people as if they were a building. Christ is the cornerstone, the apostles are the foundation, and the believers are the structure.

You have been built

This can be stated in the active tense. Alternate translation: "God has built you"

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Ephesians 2:21
the whole building fits together and grows as a holy temple
Paul continues to speak of Christ's family as if it were a building. In the same way a builder fits stones together while building, so Christ is fitting us together.
In him ... in the Lord
"In Christ ... in the Lord Jesus" These metaphors express the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.
Ephesians 2:22
in him
"in Christ" This metaphor expresses the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.
you also are being built together as a dwelling place for God in the Spirit
This describes how believers are being put together to become a place where God will permanently live through the power of the Holy Spirit.
you also are being built together
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is also building you together"

3 [1]For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—[2]I assume that you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God that was given to me for you.
[3]The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.[4]When you read about this, you will be able to understand my insight into this mystery about Christ.[5]In other generations this mystery was not made known to the sons of men. But now it has been revealed by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets.
[6]This hidden truth is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and they share the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.
[7]For I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given to me through the working of his power.
[8]To me—although I am the least of all God's holy people—this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ[9]and to bring to light for everyone the plan—the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things.
[10]This plan was made known through the church so the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places would come to know the many-sided nature of the wisdom of God.[11]This happened according to the eternal plan that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.
[12]For in Christ we have boldness and access with confidence because of our faith in him.[13]Therefore, I ask you not to be discouraged because of my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

[14]For this reason I bend my knees to the Father,[15]from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.[16]I pray that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit, who is in your inner person.
[17]I pray that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and that you may be rooted and founded in his love,[18]in order that you might be able to understand, along with all God's holy people, what is the width, the length, the height, and the depth,[19]and to know the love of Christ, which goes beyond knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

[20]Now to him who is able to do far beyond all that we ask or think, according to his power that works in us,[21]to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"I pray"
Paul structures part of this chapter as a prayer to God. But Paul is not just talking to God. He is both praying for and instructing the church in Ephesus.

Special concepts in this chapter

Mystery
Paul refers to the church as a "mystery." The role of the church in the plans of God was once not known. But God has now revealed it. Part of this mystery involves the Gentiles having equal standing with the Jews in the plans of God.

Links:

Ephesians 3:1 Notes

Ephesians 3:1
For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—
Paul started a sentence, but he did not finish it.
For this reason
This refers to what Paul was speaking about in chapter 2. Alternate translation: "Because of God's grace to you Gentiles" or "Because God has made you Gentiles members of his household"

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the prisoner of Christ Jesus
Paul was in prison because people did not like him preaching about Christ Jesus. Alternate translation: "the prisoner for Christ Jesus" or "the prisoner for preaching about Christ Jesus"
Ephesians 3:2
the stewardship of the grace of God that was given to me for you
"the responsibility that God gave me to bring his grace to you"
Ephesians 3:3
The mystery was made known to me by revelation
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I learned about the mystery by revelation" or "God revealed the mystery to me"
The mystery
The mystery is God's plan, which God had not clearly told people about earlier. Alternate translation: "God's secret plan" or "The hidden truth"
as I have written briefly
Paul refers to another letter he had written to these people.
Ephesians 3:5
In other generations this mystery was not made known to the sons of men
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not make this truth known to people in the past"
But now it has been revealed by the Spirit
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But now the Spirit has revealed it" or "But now the Spirit has made it known"
his holy apostles and prophets
"the apostles and prophets whom God set apart to do this work"
Ephesians 3:6
the Gentiles are fellow heirs ... through the gospel
This is the hidden truth Paul began to explain in the previous verse. The Gentiles who receive Christ also receive the same things as the Jewish believers.
fellow members of the body
The church is often referred to as the body of Christ.
in Christ Jesus
"In Christ Jesus" and similar expressions are metaphors that frequently occur in the New Testament letters. They express the strongest kind of relationship possible between Christ and those who believe in him.
through the gospel
Possible meanings are 1) because of the gospel the Gentiles are fellow sharers in the promise or 2) because of the gospel the Gentiles are fellow heirs and members of the body and fellow sharers in the promise.
Ephesians 3:8
unsearchable
unable to be completely known
riches of Christ
Paul speaks of the truth about Christ and the blessings he brings as if they were material wealth.
Ephesians 3:9
the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things
This can be stated in active form. "God, who created all things, kept this plan hidden for long ages in the past"
Ephesians 3:10
This plan was made known through the church
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God made this plan known by means of the church"
rulers and authorities
These words share similar meanings. Paul uses them together to emphasize that every spiritual being will know God's wisdom. See how you translated similar words in [Ephesians 1:21]
in the heavenly places
"in the supernatural world." The word "heavenly" refers to the place where God is. See how this is translated in Ephesians 1:3.
the many-sided nature of the wisdom of God
God's great and complex wisdom is spoken of as if it were an object with many sides. Alternate translation: "the great and complex wisdom of God"
Ephesians 3:11
according to the eternal plan
"in keeping with the eternal plan" or "consistent with the eternal plan"
Ephesians 3:12
Connecting Statement:
Paul praises God in his sufferings and prays for these Ephesian believers.
we have boldness
"we are without fear" or "we have courage"
access with confidence
It may be helpful to state explicitly that this access is into God's presence. Alternate translation: "access into God's presence with confidence" or "freedom to enter into God's presence with confidence"
confidence
"certainty" or "assurance"
Ephesians 3:13
for you, which is your glory
Here "your glory" is a metonym for the pride they should feel or will feel in the future kingdom. The Christians in Ephesus should be proud of what Paul is suffering in prison. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "for you. This is for your benefit" or "for you. You should be proud of this"
Ephesians 3:14
For this reason
You may need to make explicit what the reason is. Alternate translation: "Because God has done all this for you"
I bend my knees to the Father
Bowed knees are a picture of the whole person in an attitude of prayer. Alternate translation: "I bow down in prayer to the Father" or "I humbly pray to the Father"
Ephesians 3:15
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named
The act of naming here probably also represents the act of creating. Alternate translation: "who created and named every family in heaven and on earth"
Ephesians 3:16
I pray that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power
"I pray that God, because he is so great and powerful,

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would allow you to become strong with his power." This is the first item for which Paul bends his knees and prays.

would grant

"would give" or "would cause"

in your inner person

Here the phrase "inner person" refers to the personality, heart, or soul. Alternate translation: "in your heart" or "in your soul"

Ephesians 3:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues the prayer he began in Ephesians 3:14.

I pray that Christ may live in your hearts through faith and that you may be rooted and founded in his love

This is the second item which Paul prays that God will "grant" the Ephesians "according to the riches of his glory." The first is that they would "be strengthened" (Ephesians 3:16).

that Christ may live in your hearts through faith

Here "heart" represents a person's inner being, and "through" expresses the means by which Christ lives within the believer. Christ lives in the hearts of believers because God graciously allows them to have faith. Alternate translation: "that Christ may live within you because you trust in him"

you may be rooted and founded in his love

Paul speaks of their faith as if it were a tree that has deep roots or a house built on a solid foundation. Alternate translation: "that you will be like a firmly rooted tree and a building built on stone because of his love"

Ephesians 3:18

that you might be able to understand

This is the first item which Paul says will be the result of the Christians being rooted and grounded in Christ's love (Ephesians 3:17).

all God's holy people

"all believers in Christ" or "all the saints"

the width, the length, the height, and the depth

Possible meanings are 1) these words describe the greatness of God's wisdom, Alternate translation: "how very wise God is" or 2) these word describe the intensity of Christ's love for us. Alternate translation: "how much Christ loves us"

Ephesians 3:19

to know the love of Christ, which goes beyond knowledge

This is the second item which Paul says will be the result of the Christians being rooted and grounded in Christ's love (Ephesians 3:17).

that you may be filled with all the fullness of God

This is the third item for which Paul bends his knees and prays (Ephesians 3:14). The first is that they would "be strengthened" (Ephesians 3:16), and the second is that they "can understand" (Ephesians 3:18).

Ephesians 3:20

General Information:

The words "we" and "us" in this book continue to include Paul and all believers.

Connecting Statement:

Paul concludes his prayer with a blessing.

Now to him who

"Now to God, who"

to do far beyond all that we ask or think

"to do much more than all that we ask or think" or "to do things that are much greater than all that we ask him for or think about"

---

4 [1]I, therefore, as the prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk worthily of the calling by which you were called.[2]I urge you to live with great humility and gentleness and patience, bearing with one another in love.[3]Do your best to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
[4]There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling.[5]And there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,[6]and one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
[7]To each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.[8]It is as scripture says:

> "When he ascended on high,
> he led the captives into captivity,
> and he gave gifts to the people."

[9]What is the meaning of "he ascended," except that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth?[10]He who descended is the same person who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.
[11]Christ gave some to be apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers[12]to equip God's holy people for the work of service, for the building up of the body of Christ,[13]until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, so that we become mature and reach the measure of the fullness of Christ.
[14]Christ builds us up so that we should no longer be children who are tossed back and forth by the waves, carried away by every wind of doctrine and by the trickery of people in their deceitful schemes.[15]Instead, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, that is, Christ.[16]Christ builds the whole body, and it is joined and held together by every supporting ligament, and when each part works together, that makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

[17]Therefore, I say and insist on this in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds.[18]They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts.[19]They have become shameless and have committed themselves to sensuality, and they practice every kind of uncleanness with greed.

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[20]But that is not how you learned about Christ.[21]I assume that you have heard about him, and that you were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus.[22]You were taught to put off what belongs to your former manner of life, to put off the old man. It is the old man that is corrupt because of its deceitful desires.
[23]You were taught to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,[24]and to put on the new man that is created in the image of God—in true righteousness and holiness.

[25]Therefore, get rid of lies, and let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, because we are members of one another.
[26]Be angry and do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger.[27]Do not give an opportunity to the devil.
[28]The one who had been stealing must steal no longer. Instead, he must labor, working at what is good with his hands, so that he may have something to share with those who are in need.[29]Do not let any harmful talk come out of your mouth. Use only words that are good for the edification of those who need it, so that your words give grace to the hearers.[30]And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, for it is by him that you were sealed for the day of redemption.
[31]Put away all bitterness, rage, anger, quarreling, and insults, along with every kind of evil.[32]Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 8, which is quoted from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Spiritual gifts

Spiritual gifts are specific supernatural abilities that the Holy Spirit gives to Christians after they come to believe in Jesus. These spiritual gifts were foundational to developing the church. Paul lists here only some of the spiritual gifts. (See: faith)

Unity

Paul considers it very important that the church is united. This is a major theme of this chapter.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Old man and new man

The term "old man" probably refers to the sinful nature with which a person is born. The "new man" is the new nature or new life that God gives a person after they come to believe in Christ.

Links:

Ephesians 4:1 Notes

Ephesians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Because of what Paul has been writing to the Ephesians, he tells them how they should live their lives as believers and again emphasizes that believers are to agree with each other.

as the prisoner for the Lord

"as someone who is in prison because of his choice to serve the Lord"

walk worthily of the calling

Walking is a common way to express the idea of living one's life.

Ephesians 4:2

to live with great humility and gentleness and patience

"to always be very humble, gentle, and patient"

Ephesians 4:3

to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

Here Paul speaks of "peace" as if it were a bond that ties people together. This is a metaphor for being united with other people by living peacefully with them. Alternate translation: "to live peacefully with one another and remain united, as the Spirit made possible"

Ephesians 4:4

one body

The church is often referred to as the body of Christ.

one Spirit

"one Holy Spirit"

you were called in one hope of your calling

Here the word "call" means "invite" or "choose." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God invited you to one hope when he invited you" or "God chose you to hope for one thing when he chose you"

one hope

Here the word "hope" refers to the thing to hope for. Alternate translation: "one thing to hope for" or "one thing to confidently wait for"

Ephesians 4:6

Father of all ... over all ... through all ... and in all

The word "all" here means "everything."

Ephesians 4:7

Connecting Statement:

Paul reminds believers of the gifts that Christ gives believers to use in the church, which is the whole body of believers.

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To each one of us grace has been given
This can be stated using an active form. Alternate translation: "God has given grace to each one of us" or "God gave a spiritual gift to each believer"
grace has been given
Here grace refers to a spiritual gift or ability. Alternate translation: "a spiritual gift has been given" or "ability has been given"
according to the measure of the gift of Christ
Here "the gift of Christ" refers to a gift that Christ has given. Alternate translation: "according to the amount that Christ has given us"
Ephesians 4:8
General Information:
The quotation here is from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. King David wrote this psalm.
When he ascended on high
"When he went up to the very high place"
Ephesians 4:9
he ascended
"he went up"
he also descended
"he also came down"
into the lower regions of the earth
Possible meanings are 1) the lower regions are a part of the earth. Alternate translation: "into the lowest place on earth" or 2) "the lower regions" is another way of referring to the earth. Alternate translation: "into the lower regions, the earth"
Ephesians 4:10
that he might fill all things
"so that he might be present everywhere in his power"
fill
"complete" or "satisfy"
Ephesians 4:12
to equip God's holy people
"to prepare the people he has set apart" or "to provide the believers with what they need"
for the work of service
"so they can serve others"
for the building up of the body of Christ
Paul is speaking of people who grow spiritually as if they were doing exercises to increase the strength of their physical bodies.
building up
"improvement" or "strengthening"
body of Christ
The "body of Christ" refers to all of the individual members of Christ's Church.
Ephesians 4:13
reach the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God
The believers need to know Jesus as the Son of God if they are to be united in faith and mature as believers.
reach the unity of faith
"become equally strong in faith" or "become united together in faith"
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
become mature
"become mature believers"
mature
"fully developed" or "grown up" or "complete"
Ephesians 4:14
be children
Paul refers to believers who have not grown spiritually as if they were children who have had very little experience in life. Alternate translation: "be like children"
tossed back and forth ... carried away by every wind of doctrine
This speaks of a believer who has not become mature and follows wrong teaching as if that believer were a boat that the wind is blowing in different directions on the water.
by the trickery of people in their deceitful schemes
"by crafty people who trick believers with clever lies"
Ephesians 4:15
into him who is the head
Paul uses the human body to describe how Christ causes believers to work together in harmony as the head of a body causes the body parts to work together to grow healthy.
Ephesians 4:16
Christ builds the whole body ... makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love
Paul uses the human body to describe how Christ causes believers to work together in harmony as the head of a body causes the body parts to work together to grow healthy.
by every supporting ligament
A "ligament" is a strong band that connects bones or holds organs in place in the body.
Ephesians 4:17
Connecting Statement:
Paul tells the Ephesians what they should no longer do now that they as believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit of God.
Therefore, I say and insist on this in the Lord
"Because what I have just said, I will say something more to strongly encourage you because we all belong to the Lord"
that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their minds
The word "walk" here is a metaphor for the way a person lives his life, especially whether he does right or does wrong. Alternate translation: "stop living the way the Gentiles live, with their worthless thoughts"
Ephesians 4:18
They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God
Here "darkened in their understanding" is a metaphor that means not to be able to understand the truth. And "alienated from the life of God" is a metaphor that means to not have the life that God gives. Alternate translation: "They do not understand what is true, and they do not have the life that God gives to people"
because of the ignorance that is in them
"because they refuse to learn what is true"
because of the hardness of their hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds. The phrase "hardness of their hearts" is a metaphor that means "stubbornness." Alternate translation: "because they are stubborn" or "because they refuse to listen to God"

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Ephesians 4:19
have committed themselves to sensuality
Paul speaks of these people as if they were objects that they themselves were giving to other people, and he speaks of the way they want to satisfy their physical desires as if it were the person to whom they give themselves. Alternate translation: "only want to satisfy their physical desires"
they practice every kind of uncleanness with greed
"they are continually practicing every kind of uncleanness"
uncleanness
This word for ritual uncleanness is a metaphor for the guilt that comes from sinful acts. It can be translated using the word "unclean." Alternate translation: "sinful act"
Ephesians 4:20
But that is not how you learned about Christ
The word "that" refers to the way the Gentiles live, as described in Ephesians 4:17-19. This emphasizes that what the believers learned about Christ was the opposite of that. Alternate translation: "But what you learned about Christ was not like that"
Ephesians 4:21
I assume that you have heard ... and that you were taught
Paul knows that the Ephesians have heard and been taught.
you were taught in him
Possible meanings are 1) "Jesus's people have taught you" or 2) "someone has taught you because you are Jesus's people."
as the truth is in Jesus
"as everything about Jesus is true"
Ephesians 4:22
to put off what belongs to your former manner of life
Paul is speaking of moral qualities as if they were pieces of clothing. Alternate translation: "to stop living according to your former manner of life"
to put off the old man
Paul is speaking of moral qualities as if they were pieces of clothing. Alternate translation: "to stop living as your former self did"
old man
The "old man" refers to the "old nature" or "former self."
that is corrupt because of its deceitful desires
Paul speaks of the sinful human nature as if it were a dead body falling apart in its grave.
Ephesians 4:23
to be renewed in the spirit of your minds
This may be translated with an active form. Alternate translation: "to allow God to change your attitudes and thoughts" or "to allow God to give you new attitudes and thoughts"
Ephesians 4:24
in true righteousness and holiness
"truly righteous and holy"
Ephesians 4:25
get rid of lies
"stop telling lies"
we are members of one another
"we belong to one another" or "we are members of God's family"
Ephesians 4:26
Be angry and do not sin
"You may get angry, but do not sin" or "If you become angry, do not sin"
Do not let the sun go down on your anger
The sun going down represents nightfall or the end of the day. Alternate translation: "You must stop being angry before night comes" or "Do not let the sun set while you are still angry with someone"
Ephesians 4:27
Do not give an opportunity to the devil
"Do not give the devil an opportunity to lead you into sin"
Ephesians 4:29
harmful talk
This refers to speech that is cruel or rude.
for the edification of those
"for encouraging those" or "for strengthening those"
give grace to the hearers
"help those who hear you"
Ephesians 4:30
do not grieve
"do not distress" or "do not upset"
for it is by him that you were sealed for the day of redemption
The Holy Spirit assures believers that God will redeem them. Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as if he were a mark that God puts on believers to show that he owns them. Alternate translation: "for he is the seal that assures you that God will redeem you on the day of redemption" or "for he is the one who assures you that God will redeem you on the day of redemption" or
the day of redemption
Here redemption is a metaphor for causing people to no longer be affected by sin. The idea in the noun "redemption" can be expressed with a phrase. Alternate translation: "the day when God will redeem his people" or "the day when God will free his people from sin"
Ephesians 4:31
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes his instructions on what believers should not do and ends with what they must do.
Put away all bitterness, rage, anger
"Put away" here is a metaphor for not continuing to have certain attitudes or behaviors. Alternate translation: "You must not allow these things to be part of your life: bitterness, rage, anger"
rage
intense anger
Ephesians 4:32
Be kind
"Instead, be kind"
tenderhearted
"gentle and compassionate towards others"

5 [1]Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children.[2]And walk in love, as also Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

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[3]But sexual immorality or any kind of uncleanness or of greed must not even be named among you, for these are improper for God's holy people.[4]Let there be no filthiness, no foolish talk, and no crude jokes—all of which are improper. Instead, there should be thanksgiving.
[5]For you know and are certain that no sexually immoral, impure, or greedy person—that is, an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.[6]Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.[7]Therefore, do not join in with them.
[8]For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light[9](for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),[10]and test and approve what is pleasing to the Lord.[11]Do not associate with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.[12]For it is disgraceful even to mention the things they do in secret.
[13]But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.[14]For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

> "Awake, you sleeper,
> and arise from the dead,
> and Christ will shine on you."

[15]Look carefully how you walk—not as unwise but as wise.[16]Redeem the time because the days are evil.[17]Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
[18]And do not get drunk with wine, for that leads to reckless behavior. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit,[19]speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart,[20]always giving thanks for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father,[21]being subject to one another in reverence for Christ.

[22]Wives, submit to your husbands, as to the Lord.[23]For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, himself the Savior of the body.[24]But as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives to their husbands in everything.
[25]Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her[26]so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,[27]so that he might present the church to himself as glorious, without stain or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless.
[28]In the same way husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself.
[29]For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and treats it with care, just as Christ nourishes and treats the church with care,[30]because we are members of his body.
[31]"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."[32]This hidden truth is great—but I am speaking about Christ and the church.[33]Nevertheless, each of you also must love his own wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Ephesians 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 14.

Special concepts in this chapter

Darkness and Light

In this chapter Paul teaches how God's people should live. He uses the image of darkness to represent sin and the image of light to represent righteousness.

Christ and his church as a model for marriage

Paul teaches husbands and wives to relate to each other as Christ and the church relate to each other.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wives, submit to your husbands

Scholars are divided over how to understand this passage in its historical and cultural context. Some scholars believe men and women are perfectly equal in all things. Other scholars believe God created men and women to serve in distinctly different roles in marriage and the church. Translators should be careful not to let how they understand this issue affect how they translate this passage.

Links:

Ephesians 5:1 Notes

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Ephesians 5:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to tell the believers how they should and should not live as God's children.

Therefore be imitators of God

"Therefore you should do what God does." Therefore refers back to Ephesians 4:32 which tells why believers should imitate God, because Christ forgave believers.

as beloved children

God desires us to imitate or follow him since we are his children. Alternate translation: "as dearly loved children imitate their fathers" or "because you are his children and he loves you dearly"

Ephesians 5:2

walk in love

Walking is a common way to express the idea of living one's life. Alternate translation: "live a life of love" or "always love each other"

a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God

"like a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice to God"

Ephesians 5:3

But sexual immorality or any kind of uncleanness or of greed must not even be named among you

"Do not do anything that would let anyone think that you are are guilty of sexual immorality or any kind of uncleanness or greed"

any kind of uncleanness

"any moral uncleanness"

uncleanness

This word for ritual uncleanness is a metaphor for the guilt that comes from sinful acts. It can be translated using the word "unclean." Alternate translation: "sinful act"

Ephesians 5:4

Instead there should be thanksgiving

"Instead you should thank God"

Ephesians 5:5

inheritance

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

Ephesians 5:6

empty words

words that have no truth to them

Ephesians 5:8

For you were once darkness

Just as one cannot see in the dark, so people who love to sin lack spiritual understanding.

but now you are light in the Lord

Just as one can see in the light, so people whom God has saved understand how to please God.

Walk as children of light

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Alternate translation: "Live as people who understand what the Lord wants them to do"

Ephesians 5:9

the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "the result of living in the light is good work, right living, and truthful behavior"

Ephesians 5:11

Do not associate with the unfruitful works of darkness

Paul speaks of the useless, sinful things that unbelievers do as if they are evil deeds people do in the dark so no one will see them. Alternate translation: "Do not do useless, sinful things with unbelievers"

unfruitful works

actions that do nothing good, useful, or profitable. Paul is comparing evil actions to an unhealthy tree that produces nothing good.

expose them

Speaking against the works of darkness is spoken of as bringing them out into the light so that people can see them. Alternate translation: "bring them out into the light" or "uncover them" or "show and tell people how wrong these actions are"

Ephesians 5:13

when anything is exposed by the light

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when the light shines on something"

Ephesians 5:14

General Information:

It is unknown if this quotation is a combination of quotations from the prophet Isaiah or a quotation from a hymn sung by the believers.

anything that becomes visible is light

"people can clearly see everything that comes into the light." Paul makes this general statement in order to imply that God's Word shows people's actions to be good or bad. The Bible often speaks of God's truth as if it were light that could reveal the character of something.

Awake, you sleeper, and arise from the dead

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is addressing unbelievers who need to wake up from being dead spiritually just as a person who has died must come alive again in order to respond, or 2) Paul is addressing the Ephesian believers and using death as a metaphor for their spiritual weakness.

the dead

All those who have died. This expression describes all dead people together in the underworld. To arise from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

you sleeper ... shine on you

These instances of "you" refer to the "sleeper" and are singular.

Christ will shine on you

Christ will enable an unbeliever to understand how evil his deeds are and how Christ will forgive him and give him new life, just as light shows what actually is there that darkness hid.

Ephesians 5:15

Look carefully how you walk—not as unwise but as wise

Wise people can identify sin, so they guard themselves from it and flee from it. Alternate translation: "Therefore you must be careful to live as a wise person rather than a foolish person"

Ephesians 5:16

Redeem the time

Using time wisely is spoken of as if it were redeeming the time. Alternate translation: "Do the best things you can with

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your time" or "Use time wisely" or "Put time to its best use"

because the days are evil

The word "days" is a metonym for what people do during those days. Alternate translation: "because the people around you are doing all kinds of evil things"

Ephesians 5:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul ends his instructions on how all believers should live.

And do not get drunk with wine

"You should not get drunk from drinking wine"

Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit

"Instead, you should be controlled with the Holy Spirit"

Ephesians 5:19

psalms and hymns and spiritual songs

Possible meanings are that 1) Paul is using these words as a merism for "all sorts of songs to praise God" or 2) Paul is listing specific forms of music.

psalms

These are probably songs from the Old Testament book of Psalms that Christians sang.

hymns

These are songs of praise and worship that may have been written specifically for Christians to sing.

spiritual songs

Possible meanings are 1) these are songs that Holy Spirit inspires a person to sing right at that moment or 2) "spiritual songs" and "hymns" are doublets and mean basically the same thing.

with all your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or inner being. The phrase "with all your heart" means to do something with enthusiasm. Alternate translation: "with all of your being" or "enthusiastically"

Ephesians 5:20

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

"because you belong to our Lord Jesus Christ" or "as people who belong to our Lord Jesus Christ"

Ephesians 5:22

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to explain how Christians are to submit themselves to one another (Ephesians 5:21). He starts with instructions to wives and husbands on how they should act toward each other.

Ephesians 5:23

the head of the wife ... the head of the church

The word "head" represents the leader.

Ephesians 5:24

Christ, so also wives to their husbands

"Christ, so also must wives be subject to their husbands" or "Christ. In the same way, wives also must be subject to their husbands"

Ephesians 5:25

love your wives

"unselfishly serve your wives"

gave himself up

"allowed people to kill him"

for her

Paul speaks of the assembly of believers as though it were a woman whom Jesus will marry. Alternate translation: "for us"

Ephesians 5:26

sanctify her ... cleansed her

Paul speaks of the assembly of believers as though it were a woman whom Jesus will marry. Alternate translation: "sanctified us ... cleansed us"

having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is referring to God making Christ's people clean by God's word and through water baptism in Christ or 2) Paul speaks of God making us spiritually clean from our sins by the message as if God were making our bodies clean by washing them with water.

Ephesians 5:27

without stain or wrinkle

Paul speaks of the church as though it were a garment that is clean and in good condition. He uses the same idea in two ways to emphasize the church's purity.

holy and blameless

The word "blameless" means basically the same thing as "holy." Paul uses the two together to emphasize the church's purity.

Ephesians 5:28

as their own bodies

That people love their own bodies may be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "as husbands love their own bodies"

Ephesians 5:29

his own flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the body that is made of flesh. Alternate translation: "his own body"

but nourishes

"but feeds"

Ephesians 5:30

we are members of his body

Here Paul speaks of the close union of believers with Christ as if they were part of his own body, for which he would naturally care.

Ephesians 5:31

General Information:

The quotation is from the writings of Moses in the Old Testament. The words "his" and "himself" refer to a male believer who marries.

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6 [1]Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is proper.[2]"Honor your father and mother" (which is the first commandment with promise),[3]"so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."
[4]Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger. Instead, raise them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

[5]Slaves, be obedient to your masters according to the flesh with deep respect and trembling, in the honesty of your heart. Be obedient to them as you would be obedient to Christ.[6]Be obedient not only when your masters are watching, in order to please them. Instead, be obedient as slaves of Christ, who do the will of God from your heart.[7]Serve with all your heart,

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as though you were serving the Lord and not people,[8]because we know that for whatever good deed each person does, he will receive a reward from the Lord, whether he is slave or free.

[9]Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them. You know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.

[10]Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.[11]Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the scheming plans of the devil.
[12]For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.[13]Therefore put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and after you have done everything, to stand firm.
[14]Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
[15]and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.[16]In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, by which you will be able to put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one.
[17]And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.[18]With every prayer and request, pray at all times in the Spirit. To this end, always be watching with all perseverance as you offer prayers for all God's holy people.
[19]And pray for me, that a message might be given to me when I open my mouth. Pray that I might make known with boldness the hidden truth about the gospel.[20]It is for the gospel that I am an ambassador who is kept in chains, so that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

[21]Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make everything known to you, so that you may know how I am doing.[22]I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are, and so that he may encourage your hearts.

[23]Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.[24]Grace be to all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an incorruptible love.

Ephesians 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Slavery

Paul does not write in this chapter about whether slavery is good or bad. Paul teaches about working to please God whether as a slave or as a master. What Paul teaches here about slavery would have been surprising. In his time, masters were not expected to treat their slaves with respect and not threaten them.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Armor of God

This extended metaphor describes how Christians can protect themselves when spiritually attacked.

Links:

Ephesians 6:1 Notes

Ephesians 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to explain how Christians are to submit themselves to each other. He gives instructions to children, fathers, workers, and masters.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord

"Children, as followers of the Lord, obey your parents" or "Children, it is your duty as Christians to obey your parents"

Ephesians 6:2

General Information:

Here Paul quotes Moses. Moses was talking to the people of Israel as though they were one person, so "your" is singular. You may need to translate it as plural.

Ephesians 6:3

General Information:

Here Paul continues quoting Moses. Moses was talking to the people of Israel as though they were one person, so "you" is singular. You may need to translate it as plural.

Ephesians 6:4

do not provoke your children to anger

"do not make your children angry" or "do not cause your children to be angry"

raise them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord

The abstract nouns "discipline" and "instruction" can be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "teach them to become adults by making sure that they know and do what the Lord wants them to do"

Ephesians 6:5

be obedient to

"obey." This is a command.

your masters according to the flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the physical world. Alternate translation: "your human masters" or "your masters in this world"

deep respect and trembling

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The phrase "deep respect and trembling" uses two similar ideas to emphasize the importance of slaves honoring their masters.

and trembling

Here "trembling" is an exaggeration used to emphasize how important it is that slaves obey their masters. Alternate translation: "and fear" or "as though you were shaking with fear"

in the honesty of your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or intentions. Alternate translation: "with honesty" or "with sincerity"

Ephesians 6:6

as slaves of Christ

Serve your earthly master as though your earthly master were Christ himself.

from your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for "thoughts" or "intentions." Alternate translation: "with sincerity" or "enthusiastically"

Ephesians 6:7

Serve with all your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for "thoughts" or "inner being." Alternate translation: "Serve with all of your being" or "Be completely dedicated when you serve"

Ephesians 6:9

treat your slaves in the same way

"you also must treat your slaves well" or "just as slaves must do good to their masters, you also must do good to your slaves" (Ephesians 6:5)

You know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven

"You know that Christ is the Master of both slaves and their masters, and that he is in heaven"

there is no partiality with him

"he judges everyone the same way"

Ephesians 6:10

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives instructions to make believers strong in this battle we live for God.

the strength of his might

"his great power." See how "the strength of his power" is translated near the end of Ephesians 1:21.

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the scheming plans of the devil

Christians should use all the resources God gives to stand firmly against the devil just as a soldier puts on armor to protect himself from enemy attacks.

the scheming plans

"the tricky plans"

Ephesians 6:12

flesh and blood

This expression refers to people, not spirits who do not have human bodies.

against the powers over this present darkness

Here it is implied that "the powers" refers to powerful spiritual beings. Here "darkness" is a metaphor for things that are evil. Alternate translation: "against the powerful spiritual beings that rule over people during this present evil time"

Ephesians 6:13

Therefore put on the whole armor of God

Christians should use the protective resources God gives them in fighting the devil in the same way a soldier puts on armor to protect himself against his enemies.

so that you may be able to stand ... to stand firm

The words "stand" and "stand firm" represent successfully resisting or fighting something. Alternate translation: "so that you may be able to resist evil ... to remain strong"

in the evil day

Here the word "day" can refer to any short period of time, even a period longer than a day. Alternate translation: "at the evil time" or "when people do evil deeds"

Ephesians 6:14

Stand firm

Successfully resist or fight against something. You may need to make explicit what it is that the readers are to resist. See how you translated these words in [Ephesians 6:13]

the belt of truth

Truth holds everything together for a believer just as a belt holds the clothing of a soldier together.

truth ... righteousness

We are to know the truth and act in ways that please God.

the breastplate of righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) the gift of righteousness covers a believer's heart just as a breastplate protects the chest of a soldier or 2) our living as God wants us gives us a clear conscience that protects our hearts the way a breastplate protects a soldier's chest.

Ephesians 6:15

and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace

Just as a soldier wears shoes to give him solid footing, the believer must have solid knowledge of the gospel of peace in order to be ready to proclaim it.

Ephesians 6:16

In all circumstances take up the shield of faith

The believer must use the faith that God gives for protection when the devil attacks just as a soldier uses a shield to protect him from enemy attacks.

the flaming arrows of the evil one

The attacks of the devil against a believer are like flaming arrows shot at a soldier by an enemy.

Ephesians 6:17

take the helmet of salvation

Salvation given by God protects the believer's mind just as a helmet protects the head of a soldier.

the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

The writer speaks of God's instructions to his people as if they were a sword that his people could use to fight an enemy,

Ephesians 6:18

With every prayer and request, pray at all times in the Spirit

"Pray at all times in the Spirit as you pray and make specific requests"

To this end

"For this reason" or "Keeping this in mind." This refers to the attitude of taking God's armor.

be watching with all perseverance as you offer prayers for all God's

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holy people
"be watching, and even when it is difficult, keep praying for all the believers "
Ephesians 6:19
Connecting Statement:
In his closing, Paul asks them to pray for his boldness in telling the gospel while he is in prison and says he is sending Tychicus to comfort the Corinthians (6:21).
that a message might be given to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God might give me the word" or "God might give me the message"
when I open my mouth. Pray that I might make known with boldness
"when I speak. Pray that I boldly explain"
open my mouth
This is a metonym for speaking. Alternate translation: "speak"
Ephesians 6:20
It is for the gospel that I am an ambassador who is kept in chains
The words "in chains" are a metonym for being in prison. Alternate translation: "I am now in prison because I am a representative of the gospel"
so that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak
The word "pray" is understood from verse 19. Alternate translation: "so pray that whenever I teach the gospel, I will speak it as boldly as I should" or "pray that I may speak the gospel as boldly as I should"
Ephesians 6:21
Tychicus
Tychicus was one of several men who served with Paul.
the beloved brother
"my beloved brother"
make everything known
"will tell you everything about me"
Ephesians 6:22
so that he may encourage your hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's inner beings. Alternate translation: "so that he may encourage you"
Ephesians 6:23
Connecting Statement:
Paul closes his letter to the Ephesian believers with a blessing of peace and grace on all believers who love Christ.

Introduction to Philippians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of the Philippians

Greeting, thanksgiving and prayer (1:1-11) Paul's report on his ministry (1:12-26)
Instructions To be steadfast (1:27-30) To be united (2:1-2) To be humble (2:3-11) To work out our salvation with God working in you (2:12-13) To be innocent and light (2:14-18)
Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30) Warning about false teachers (3:1-4:1) Personal instruction (4:2-5) Rejoice and do not be anxious (4:4-6) Final remarks Values (4:8-9) Contentment (4:10-20) Final Greetings (4:21-23)

Who wrote the Book Philippians?

Paul wrote Philippians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.
Paul wrote this letter while in prison in Rome.

What is the Book of Philippians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the believers in Philippi, a city in Macedonia. He wrote it to thank the Philippians for the gift they had sent him. He wanted to tell them about how he was doing in prison and to encourage them to rejoice even if they are suffering. He also wrote to them about a man named Epaphroditus. He was the one who brought the gift to Paul. While visiting Paul, Epaphroditus became ill. So, Paul decided to send him back to Philippi. Paul encouraged the believers in Philippi to welcome and to be kind to Epaphroditus when he returns.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Philippians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to the Church in Philippi," or "A Letter to the Christians in Philippi."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What was the city of Philippi like?

Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, founded Philippi in the region of Macedonia. This meant that the citizens of Philippi were also considered citizens of Rome. The people of Philippi were proud of being citizens of Rome. But Paul told the believers that they are citizens of heaven (3:20).

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. The word "you" is almost always plural and refers to the believers in Philippi. The exception to this is 4:3.

Who were the "enemies of the cross of Christ" (3:18) in this letter?

The "enemies of the cross of Christ" were probably people who called themselves believers but did not obey God's commands. They thought that freedom in Christ meant that believers could do whatever they desired and God would not punish them (3:19).

Why were the words "joy" and "rejoice" frequently used in this letter?

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter

What does Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

This kind of expression occurs in 1:1, 8, 13, 14, 26, 27; 2:1, 5, 19, 24, 29; 3:1, 3, 9, 14; 4:1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 13, 19, 21. Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Philippians?

Some versions have "Amen" at the end of the final verse in the letter (4:23). The ULB, UDB, and other many modern versions do not. If "Amen" is included, it should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that it is probably not original to the Book of Philippians.

Philippians

1 [1]Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all God's holy people in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

[2]May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3]I thank my God every time I remember you,[4]always, in every prayer of mine for all of you, making my prayer with joy[5]because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.[6]I am confident of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.
[7]It is proper for me to feel this way about all of you because I have you in my heart. You all have been my partners in grace both in my imprisonment and in my defense and confirmation of the gospel.[8]For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.
[9]So this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and all understanding[10]so that you may approve what is excellent, and so you may be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ,[11]filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

[12]Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.[13]As a result, my chains in Christ came to light throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else.[14]Most of the brothers have far more confidence in the Lord because of my chains, and they have courage to fearlessly speak the word.
[15]Some indeed even proclaim Christ out of envy and strife, and also others out of good will.[16]The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.[17]But the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely. They think they will cause me distress while I am in chains.
[18]What then? Only that in every way—whether from false motives or from true—Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,[19]for I know that this will result in my deliverance through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
[20]It is my eager expectation and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but with all boldness, now as always, Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.[21]For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.
[22]But if I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which to choose? I do not know.[23]For I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better,[24]yet to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.
[25]Being convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,[26]so that in me you may have increasing reasons to boast in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.[27]Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or am absent, I may hear about you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.
[28]Do not be frightened in any respect by those who are your opponents. This is a sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation—and this from God.[29]For it has been freely given to you for the sake of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for his sake,[30]having the same conflict which you saw in me, and now you hear in me.

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Philippians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul includes a prayer in the beginning of this letter. At that time, religious leaders sometimes began informal letters with a prayer.

Special concepts in this chapter

The day of Christ

This probably refers to the day when Christ returns. Paul often connected the return of Christ with motivating godly living. (See: godly)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This statement in verse 21 is a paradox: "to die is gain." In verse 23 Paul explains why this is true. (Philippians 1:21)

Links:

Philippians 1:1 Notes Philippians intro

Philippians 1:1

General Information:

Paul and Timothy wrote this letter to the church at Philippi. Because Paul writes later in the letter saying "I," it is generally assumed that he is the author and that Timothy, who is with him, writes as Paul speaks. All instances of "you" and "your" in the letter refer to the believers in the Philippian church and are plural. The word "our" probably refers to all believers in Christ, including Paul, Timothy, and the Philippian believers.

Paul and Timothy ... and deacons

If your language has a particular way of introducing the authors of a letter, use it here.

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus

"Paul and Timothy, who are servants of Christ Jesus"

all God's holy people in Christ Jesus

This refers to those whom God chose to belong to him by being united to Christ. Alternate translation: "all God's people in Christ Jesus" or "all those who belong to God because they are united with Christ"

the overseers and deacons

"the leaders of the church"

Philippians 1:3

every time I remember you

Here "remember you" means when Paul thinks about the Philippians while he is praying. Alternate translation: "every time I think of you"

Philippians 1:5

because of your partnership in the gospel

Paul is expressing thanks to God that the Philippians have joined him in teaching people the gospel. He may have been referring to them praying for him and sending money so that he could travel and tell others. Alternate translation: "because you are helping me proclaim the gospel"

Philippians 1:6

I am confident

"I am sure"

he who began ... you

"God, who began ... you,"

Philippians 1:7

It is proper for me

"It is right for me" or "It is good for me"

I have you in my heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions. This idiom expresses strong affection. Alternate translation: "I love you very much"

have been my partners in grace

"have been partakers of grace with me" or "have shared in grace with me"

Philippians 1:8

God is my witness,

"God knows" or "God understands"

with the compassion of Christ Jesus

The abstract noun "compassion" can be translated with the verb "love." Alternate translation: "and I love you as Christ Jesus dearly loves us all"

Philippians 1:9

Connecting Statement:

Paul prays for the believers in Philippi and talks about the joy there is in suffering for the Lord.

may abound

Paul speaks of love as if it were objects that people could obtain more of. Alternate translation: "may increase"

in knowledge and all understanding

Here "understanding" refers to understanding about God. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "as you learn and understand more about what pleases God"

Philippians 1:10

approve

This refers to examining things and taking only those that are good. Alternate translation: "test and choose"

what is excellent

"what is most pleasing to God"

sincere and blameless

The words "sincere" and "blameless" mean basically the same thing. Paul combines them to emphasize moral purity. Alternate translation: "completely blameless"

Philippians 1:11

filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ

Being filled with something is a metaphor that represents being characterized by it or by habitually doing it. Possible meanings of "fruit of righteousness" are that 1) it is a

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metaphor that represents righteous behavior. Alternate translation: "habitually doing what is righteous because Jesus Christ enables you" or 2) it is a metaphor that represents good deeds as a result of being righteous. Alternate translation: "habitually doing good works because Jesus makes you righteous"

to the glory and praise of God

Possible meanings are 1) "Then other people will see how you honor God" or 2) "Then people will praise and give honor to God because of the good things they see you do." These alternate translations would require a new sentence.

Philippians 1:12

General Information:

Paul says that two things have happened because of "the progress of the gospel": many people inside and outside the palace have found out why he is in prison, and other Christians are no longer afraid to proclaim the good news.

Now I want

Here the word "Now" is used to mark a new part of the letter.

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women, because all believers in Christ are members of one spiritual family, with God as their heavenly Father.

what has happened to me

Paul is talking about his time in prison. Alternate translation: "what I suffered because I was put into prison for preaching about Jesus"

has really served to advance the gospel

"has caused more people to hear the gospel"

Philippians 1:13

my chains in Christ came to light

"Chains in Christ" here is a metonym for being in prison for the sake of Christ. "Came to light" is a metaphor for "became known." Alternate translation: "It became known that I am in prison for the sake of Christ"

my chains in Christ came to light throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the palace guards and many other people in Rome know that I am in chains for the sake of Christ"

my chains in Christ

Here Paul uses the preposition "in" to mean "for the sake of." Alternate translation: "my chains for the sake of Christ" or "my chains because I teach people about Christ"

my chains

Here the word "chains" is a metonym for imprisonment. Alternate translation: "my imprisonment"

palace guard

This was a group of soldiers that helped protect the Roman emperor.

Philippians 1:14

Most of the brothers have far more confidence in the Lord

Some modern translations read, "Most of the brothers in the Lord have far more confidence."

fearlessly speak the word

"fearlessly speak God's message"

Philippians 1:15

Some indeed even proclaim Christ

"Some people preach the good news about Christ"

out of envy and strife

"because they do not want people listening to me, and they want to cause trouble"

and also others out of good will

"but other people do it because they are kind and they want to help"

Philippians 1:16

The latter

"Those who proclaim Christ out of good will"

I am put here for the defense of the gospel

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God chose me to defend the gospel" or 2) "I am in prison because I defend the gospel."

for the defense of the gospel

"to teach everyone that the message of Jesus is true"

Philippians 1:17

But the former

"But the others" or "But the ones who proclaim Christ out of envy and strife"

while I am in chains

Here the phrase "in chains" is a metonym for imprisonment. Alternate translation: "while I am imprisoned" or "while I am in prison"

Philippians 1:18

What then?

Paul uses this question to tell how he feels about the situation he wrote about in [Philippians 15-17]

Only that in every way—whether from false motives or from true—Christ is proclaimed

"As long as people preach about Christ, it does not matter if they do it for good reasons or for bad reasons"

in this I rejoice

"I am happy because people are preaching about Jesus"

I will rejoice

"I will celebrate" or "I will be glad"

Philippians 1:19

this will result in my deliverance

"because people proclaim Christ, God will deliver me"

in my deliverance

"Deliverance" here is an abstract noun that refers to one person bringing another person to a safe place. You may have to specify that it is God whom Paul expects to deliver him. Alternate translation: "in my being brought to a safe place" or "in God bringing me to a safe place"

through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ

"because you are praying and the Spirit of Jesus Christ is helping me"

Spirit of Jesus Christ

"Holy Spirit"

Philippians 1:20

It is my eager expectation and hope

Here the word "expectation" and the phrase "hope" mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how strong his expectation is. Alternate translation: "I eagerly and confidently hope"

with all boldness

You may need to state explicitly the missing clause in this elliptical sentence, that Paul will act boldly. You may also

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need to translate the abstract noun "boldness" as a clause. Alternate translation: "because I act with all boldness" or "after I have acted boldly"

Christ will be exalted in my body

The phrase "in my body" is a metonym for what happens to Paul's body. This includes what he does if he lives and what others may do to him, even if they kill him. This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "I will honor Christ no matter what happens to my body" or 2) "people will praise Christ no matter what I do or what others do to me"

whether by life or by death

"whether I live or die" or "if I go on living or if I die"

Philippians 1:21

For to me

These words are emphatic. They indicate that this is Paul's personal experience.

to live is Christ

Here pleasing and serving Christ is spoken of as Paul's only purpose for living. Alternate translation: "to go on living is an opportunity to please Christ"

to die is gain

Here death is spoken of as "gain." Possible meanings for "gain" are 1) Paul's death will help spread the message of the gospel or 2) Paul will be in a better situation.

Philippians 1:22

But if I am to live in the flesh

The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the body, and "living in the flesh" is a metonym for being alive. Alternate translation: "But if I am to remain alive in my body" or "But if I continue to live"

that means fruitful labor for me

The words "fruitful labor" here refer to work that has good results. Alternate translation: "that means I will be able to do work that produces good results"

Yet which to choose?

"But which should I choose?"

Philippians 1:23

For I am hard pressed between the two

Paul speaks of how hard it is for him to choose between living and dying as if two heavy objects, like rocks or logs, were pushing on him from opposite sides at the same time. Your language might prefer the objects to pull rather than push. Alternate translation: "I am under tension. I do not know if I should choose to live or to die"

My desire is to depart and be with Christ

Paul uses a euphemism here to show that he is not afraid of dying. Alternate translation: "I would like to die because I would go to be with Christ"

Philippians 1:25

Being convinced of this

"Since I am sure that it is better for you that I stay alive"

I know that I will remain

"I know that I will continue to live" or "I know that I will keep on living"

Philippians 1:26

so that in me

"so that because of me" or "so that because of what I do"

Philippians 1:27

that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel

The phrases "standing firm in one spirit" and "with one mind striving together" share similar meanings and emphasize the importance of unity.

with one mind striving together

"striving together with one mind." Agreeing with one another is spoken of as having one mind. Alternate translation: "agreeing with one another and striving together"

striving together

"working hard together"

for the faith of the gospel

Possible meanings are 1) "to spread the faith that is based on the gospel" or 2) "to believe and live as the gospel teaches us"

Philippians 1:28

Do not be frightened in any respect

This is a command to the Philippian believers. If your language has a plural command form, use it here.

This is a sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation—and this from God

"Your courage will show them that God will destroy them. It will also show you that God will save you"

and this from God

"and this is from God." Possible meanings are the word "this" refers to 1) the believers' courage or 2) the sign or 3) destruction and salvation.

Philippians 1:30

having the same conflict which you saw in me, and now you hear in me

"suffering in the same way that you saw me suffer, and that you hear I am still suffering"

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2 [1]If there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any comfort provided by love, if there is any fellowship in the Spirit,
if there are any tender mercies and compassions,[2]then make my joy full by being of the same mind, having the same
love, being united in spirit, and having one purpose.
[3]Do nothing out of ambition or empty conceit. Instead, with humility consider others better than yourselves.[4]Let each of
you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
[5]Have this mind in yourselves which also was in Christ Jesus,

[6] who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not consider his equality with God as something to hold on to.

[7] Rather, he emptied himself,
taking the form of a servant,

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and he was born in the likeness of men.
And being found in the form of a man,

8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death,
even death on a cross!

9 Therefore also God highly exalted him
and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

12So then, my beloved, as you always obey, not only in my presence but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.13For it is God who is working in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
14Do all things without complaining or arguing15so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without blemish in the middle of a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine as lights in the world.16Hold on to the word of life so that on the day of Christ I may boast that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.
17But even if I am being poured out as an offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.18In the same manner, you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

19But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may also be encouraged when I know the things about you.20For I have no one else like him, who is truly concerned for you.21For they all seek their own interests, not the things of Jesus Christ.
22But you know his proven worth, because as a son with his father, so he served with me in the gospel.23So I hope to send him as soon as I see how things will go with me.24But I am confident in the Lord that I myself will also come soon.
25But I think it is necessary to send Epaphroditus back to you. He is my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and servant for my needs.26For he was very distressed, and he longed to be with you all, because you heard that he was sick.27For indeed he was so sick that he almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but also on me, so that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow.
28So it is all the more eagerly that I am sending him, so that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I can have less sorrow.29Therefore, welcome him in the Lord with all joy. Honor people like him.30For it was for the work of Christ that he came near death. He risked his life so that he could bring to completion what was lacking in your service to me.

Philippians 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations, like the ULB, set apart the lines of verses 6-11. These verses describe the example of Christ. They teach important truths about the person of Jesus.

Special concepts in this chapter

Practical instructions

In this chapter Paul gives many practical instructions to the church in Philippi.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"If there is any"

This appears to be a type of statement that expresses something that may or may not be true. However, in this chapter it expresses something that is true. The translator may also translate this phrase as "Since there is."

Links:

Philippians 2:1 Notes

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Philippians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul advises the believers to have unity and humility and reminds them of Christ's example.

If there is any encouragement in Christ

"If Christ has encouraged you" or "If you are encouraged because of Christ"

if there is any comfort provided by love

The phrase "by love" probably refers to Christ's love for the Philippians. Alternate translation: "if his love has given you any comfort" or "if his love for you has comforted you in any way"

if there is any fellowship in the Spirit

"if you have fellowship with the Spirit"

if there are any tender mercies and compassions

"if you have experienced many of God's acts of tender mercy and compassion"

Philippians 2:2

make my joy full

Paul speaks here of joy as if it were a container that can be filled. Alternate translation: "cause me to rejoice greatly"

Philippians 2:3

Do nothing out of ambition or empty conceit

"Do not serve yourselves or think of yourselves as better than others"

ambition

"selfish ambition"

Philippians 2:4

Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others

"Do not care only about what you need and desire, but also about what others need and desire"

Philippians 2:5

Have this mind in yourselves which also was in Christ Jesus

"Have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had" or "Think about one another the way Christ Jesus thought of people"

Philippians 2:6

he existed in the form of God

"everything that is true of God was true of him"

did not consider his equality with God as something to hold on to

Here "equality" refers to "equal status" or "equal honor." Holding onto equality with God represents demanding that he continue to be honored as God is honored. Christ did not do that. Though he did not cease to be God, he ceased to act as God. Alternate translation: "did not think that he had to have the same status as God"

Philippians 2:7

he emptied himself

Paul speaks of Christ as if he were a container in order to say that Christ refused to act with his divine powers during his ministry on earth.

he was born in the likeness of men

"he was born a human being" or "he became a human being"

Philippians 2:8

became obedient to the point of death

Paul speaks of death here in a figurative way. The translator can understand "to the point of death" either as a metaphor of location

death, even death on a cross

“death, that is, death on a cross” or “death—more specifically, death on a cross”

Philippians 2:9

the name that is above every name

Here "name" is a metonym that refers to rank or honor. Alternate translation: "the rank that is above any other rank" or "the honor that is above any other honor"

above every name

The name is more important, more to be praised than any other name.

Philippians 2:10

at the name of Jesus every knee should bow

Here "knee" is a synecdoche for the whole person. Bowing, or kneeling, is a symbolic act of worship. Alternate translation: "at the name of Jesus everyone will bow to worship him")

under the earth

Possible meanings are 1) the place where people go when they die or 2) the place where demons dwell.

Philippians 2:11

every tongue

Here "tongue" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "every person" or "every being"

to the glory of God the Father

Here the word "to" expresses result: "with the result that they will praise God the Father"

Philippians 2:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages the Philippian believers and shows them how to live the Christian life before others and reminds them of his example.

my beloved

"my dear fellow believers"

in my presence

"when I am there with you"

in my absence

"when I am not there with you"

work out your own salvation

To "work out" one's salvation means to work in a way that is appropriate to one's salvation or to work in a way that shows one's salvation. The abstract noun "salvation" can be expressed with a phrase about God saving people. Alternate translation: "work in a way that is appropriate because you have been saved" or "work hard to do the good things that show that God has saved you"

salvation with fear and trembling

Paul uses the words "fear" and "trembling" together to show the attitude of reverence that people should have for God. Alternate translation: "salvation, trembling with fear" or "salvation with deep reverence"

Philippians 2:13

both to will and to work for his good pleasure

"so that you will want to do what pleases him and will be able to do what pleases him"

Philippians 2:15

blameless and pure

The words "blameless" and "pure" are very similar in meaning and are used together to strenghten the idea.

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Alternate translation: "completely innocent"

in the middle of a crooked and depraved generation

The words "crooked" and "depraved" are used together to emphasize that the people are very sinful. Alternate translation: "among very sinful people"

in which you shine as lights in the world

Shining as lights in the world represents living in a good and righteous way so that people in the world can see that God is good and true. Alternate translation: "among whom your righteous lives are like lights in the world"

Philippians 2:16

Hold on to the word of life

"Hold on to" here means "firmly believe." Alternate translation: "Continue to firmly believe the word of life"

the word of life

"the message that brings life" or "the message that shows how to live the way God wants you to"

on the day of Christ

This refers to when Jesus comes back to set up his kingdom and rule over the earth. Alternate translation: "when Christ returns"

I did not run in vain or labor in vain

The phrases "run in vain" and "labor in vain" here mean the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how hard he has worked to help people believe in Christ. Alternate translation: "I did not work so hard for nothing"

run

The scriptures often use the image of walking to represent conducting one's life. Running is living life intensely.

Philippians 2:17

But even if I am being poured out as an offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all

Paul speaks of his death as if he were a drink offering which is poured upon the animal sacrifice to honor God. What Paul means is that he would gladly die for the Philippians if that would make them more pleasing to God. Alternate translation: "But, even if the Romans kill me and it is as if my blood pours out as an offering, I will be glad and rejoice with you all if my death will make your faith and obedience more pleasing to God"

Philippians 2:19

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the Philippian believers about his plan to send Timothy soon and that they should treat Epaphroditus as special.

But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon

Paul wanted to send Timothy to them, but he would do so only if the Lord Jesus wanted him to do that. Alternate translation: "But I plan to send Timothy to you soon, as long as that is what the Lord Jesus wants me to" or "But if it is the will of the Lord Jesus, I expect to send Timothy to you soon"

Philippians 2:20

For I have no one else like him, who

"No one else here loves you as much as he does: he"

Philippians 2:21

For they all

Here the word "they" refers to a group of people Paul does not feel he can trust to send to Philippi. Paul is expressing his displeasure with those who should have been able to go but are not going because Paul does not trust them to fulfill their mission.

Philippians 2:22

as a son with his father, so he served with me

Fathers and sons love each other and work together. Timothy was not really Paul's son, but he worked with Paul as a son works with his father.

in the gospel

Here "the gospel" stands for the activity of telling people about Jesus. Alternate translation: "in telling people about the gospel"

Philippians 2:23

I hope to send him as soon as I see how things will go with me

Paul wanted to send Timothy soon, but he would wait until he saw how things would go with himself. He would send Timothy immediately after that. Alternate translation: "I hope to send him immediately after I see how things will go with me"

I hope to send him

"I plan to send him" or "I expect to send him"

I see how things will go with me

"I find out what happens concerning me" or "I learn what will happen to me"

Philippians 2:24

I am confident in the Lord that I myself will also come soon

"I am sure, if it is the Lord's will, that I will also come soon"

Philippians 2:25

Epaphroditus

This is the name of a man sent by the Philippian church to minister to Paul in prison.

fellow worker and fellow soldier

Here Paul is speaking of Epaphroditus as if he were a soldier. He means that Epaphroditus is trained and is dedicated to serving God, no matter how great the hardship he must suffer. Alternate translation: "fellow believer who works and struggles along with us"

your messenger and servant for my needs

"who brings your messages to me and helps me when I am in need"

Philippians 2:26

he was very distressed, and he longed to be with you all

"he was very worried and wanted to be with you all"

Philippians 2:27

sorrow upon sorrow

The cause of the sorrow can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the sorrow of losing him added to the sorrow I already have from being in prison"

Philippians 2:28

I can have less sorrow

"I will not be as sad as I have been"

Philippians 2:29

welcome him

The word "him" refers to Epaphroditus. Alternate translation: "gladly receive Epaphroditus"

in the Lord with all joy

"as a fellow believer in the Lord with all joy" or "with the great joy we have because the Lord Jesus loves us"

Philippians 2:30

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he came near death
"he almost died." Paul speaks of dying as if death were a place that people could go to.
so that he could bring to completion what was lacking in your service to me
The meanings of the abstract nouns "completion" and "service" can be expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "so that he could complete what you could not do in serving me"

3 [1]Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write these same things again to you is no trouble for me, and it keeps you safe.[2]Watch out for the dogs. Watch out for those evil workers. Watch out for the mutilation.[3]For it is we who are the circumcision—the ones who worship by the Spirit of God, and take pride in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.
[4]Even so, I myself could have confidence in the flesh. If anyone thinks he has confidence in the flesh, I could have even more.[5]I was circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with regard to the law, a Pharisee.
[6]As for zeal, I persecuted the church; as for righteousness under the law, I was blameless.[7]But whatever things were a profit for me, I have considered them as loss because of Christ.
[8]In fact, now I count all things to be loss because of the surpassing value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. For him I have given up all things—and I consider them rubbish—so that I may gain Christ[9]and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness from God that is by faith.[10]So now I want to know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,[11]so somehow I may experience the resurrection from the dead.
[12]Not that I have already obtained these things, or am already perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which I was taken hold of by Christ Jesus.[13]Brothers, I do not think that I myself have yet taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining forward to what is ahead,[14]I press on toward the goal with a view to the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
[15]All of us who are mature, let us think this way; and if you think differently about anything, God will also reveal that to you.[16]Nevertheless, let us live up to what we have already attained.

[17]Be imitators of me, brothers. Closely watch those who are walking by the example that you have in us.[18]Many are walking—those about whom I have often told you, and now I am telling you with tears—as enemies of the cross of Christ.
[19]Their end is destruction. For their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. They think about earthly things.
[20]But our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.[21]He will transform our lowly bodies into bodies formed like his glorious body, formed by the might of his power to subject all things to himself.

Philippians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In verses 4-8, Paul lists how he qualifies for being considered a righteous Jew. In every way, Paul was an exemplary Jew. But he contrasts this with the greatness of knowing Jesus. (See: righteous)

Special concepts in this chapter

Dogs

The people of the ancient Near East used dogs as an image to refer to people in a negative way. Not all cultures use the term "dogs" in this way.

Resurrected Bodies

We know very little about what people will be like in heaven. Paul teaches here that Christians will have some kind of glorious body and will be free from sin. (See: heaven and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Prize

Paul uses an extended illustration to describe the Christian life. The goal of the Christian life is attempting to grow to be like Christ until a person dies. We can never achieve this goal perfectly, but we must strive for it.

Links:

Philippians 3:1 Notes

Philippians 3:1

Connecting Statement:

In order to warn his fellow believers about Jews who would try to get them to follow the old laws, Paul gives his own testimony about when he persecuted believers.

Finally, my brothers

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"Now moving along, my brothers" or "Concerning other matters, my brothers"

brothers

See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.

rejoice in the Lord

"be happy because of all the Lord has done"

For me to write these same things again to you is no trouble for me

"It is no trouble for me to write these things again to you"

and it keeps you safe

Here "it" refers to Paul's writing the same things twice. Alternate translation: "doing this keeps you safe because these teachings will protect you from those who teach what is not true"

Philippians 3:2

General Information:

Paul begins to warn the Philippians against people who say that Christians have to obey the Jewish ceremonial law. Obedience to this law is symbolized by the synecdoche of circumcision.

Watch out for

"Beware of" or "Be on guard against"

the dogs ... those evil workers ... the mutilation

These are three different ways of describing the same group of false teachers. Paul is using strong expressions to show how he feel about these Jewish teachers who claim to be Christians.

dogs

The word "dogs" was used by the Jews to refer to those who were not Jews. They were considered unclean. Paul speaks of the false teachers as though they were dogs, to insult them. If you have a different animal in your culture that is considered unclean or whose name is used as an insult, you could use this animal instead.

the mutilation

This exaggeration plays on the idea of circumcision. Paul speaks of those who wanted to trim off the foreskin as if they were totally mutilating the body. The action of mutilation is a metonym for the people who would perform the action. Alternate translation: "those who mutilate the body"

Philippians 3:3

General Information:

Paul continues warning the Philippians against people who say that Christians have to obey the Jewish ceremonial law. Obedience to this law is symbolized by the synecdoche of circumcision.

For it is we who are

Paul uses "we" to refer to himself and all true believers in Christ, including the Philippian believers.

the circumcision

Paul uses this phrase to refer to believers in Christ who are not physically circumcised but are spiritually circumcised, which means they have received the Holy Spirit through faith. Alternate translation: "the truly circumcised ones" or "truly God's people"

have no confidence in the flesh

Here "flesh" is a metonym for anything concerning one's body, such as his ancestry, whether or not he has been circumcised, and what he does. To have no confidence in the flesh means to understand that those things cannot make a person right with God. Alternate translation: "do not trust in anything about ourselves to make us right with God"

Philippians 3:4

Even so, I myself could have confidence in the flesh. If anyone thinks he has confidence in the flesh, I could have even more

Here Paul describes a situation that could be true but is not. Here "flesh" is a metonym for anything concerning one's body, such as one's ancestry, whether or not one has been circumcised, and what one does. To have confidence in the flesh means to believe that those things can make a person right with God. See how you translated a similar phrase in 3:3. Alternate translation: "However, I could trust in something about myself to make me right with God. If anyone thinks he can trust in anything about himself, I could trust in myself even more"

I myself

Paul uses "myself" for emphasis. Alternate translation: "certainly I"

Philippians 3:5

I was circumcised

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A priest circumcised me"

on the eighth day

"seven days after I was born"

a Hebrew of Hebrews

Possible meanings are 1) "a Hebrew son with Hebrew parents" or 2) "the purest Hebrew."

with regard to the law, a Pharisee

The Pharisees were committed to obeying all of the law. Being a Pharisee showed that Paul was committed to obeying all of the law. Alternate translation: "as a Pharisee, I was committed to obeying all of the law"

Philippians 3:6

As for zeal, I persecuted the church

Paul's zeal was his enthusiasm for honoring God. He believed that by persecuting the church he proved how zealous he was for God. Alternate translation: "I had so much zeal for God that I persecuted the church" or "Because I wanted so much to honor God, I persecuted the church"

I persecuted the church

"I attacked Christians"

as for righteousness under the law, I was blameless

"Righteousness under the law" refers to being righteous by obeying the law. Paul obeyed the law so carefully that he believed that no one could find any part of it that he disobeyed. Alternate translation: "I was so righteous by obeying the law that I was blameless"

Philippians 3:7

whatever things were a profit for me

Paul is referring here to the praise he received for being an eager Pharisee. He speaks of this praise as if he had viewed it in the past as a businessman's profit. Alternate translation: "anything that other Jews praised me for"

profit ... loss

These are common business terms. If many people in your culture do not understand formal business terms, you

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could translate these terms as "things that made my life better" and "things that made my life worse."

I have considered them as loss

Paul speaks of that praise as if he were now viewing it as a business loss instead of a profit. In other words, Paul says that all his religious acts of righteousness are worthless before Christ.

Philippians 3:8

In fact

"Really" or "Truly"

now I count

The word "now" emphasizes how Paul has changed since he quit being a Pharisee and became a believer in Christ. Alternate translation: "now that I have trusted in Christ, I count"

I count all things to be loss

Paul is continuing the business metaphor from [Philippians 3:7]

because of the surpassing value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord

"because knowing Christ Jesus my Lord is worth so much more"

so that I may gain Christ

"so that I may have only Christ"

Philippians 3:9

be found in him

The phrase "be found" is an idiom that emphasizes the idea of "be." Alternate translation: "be truly united with Christ"

not having a righteousness of my own from the law

Paul knows that he cannot become righteous by obeying the law.

but that which is through faith in Christ

The word "that" refers to righteousness. Paul knows that he can become righteous only by believing in Christ. Alternate translation: "but having the righteousness that comes by believing in Christ"

Philippians 3:10

the power of his resurrection

"his power that gives us life"

the fellowship of his sufferings

"what it is like to suffer as he suffered" or "what it is like to participate in suffering with him"

becoming like him in his death

Possible meanings are 1) Paul wants to be like Christ by dying as Christ died or 2) Paul wants his desire to sin to become as dead as Jesus was before he was raised.

Philippians 3:11

so somehow I may experience the resurrection from the dead

The word "somehow" means Paul does not know what is going to happen to him in this life, but whatever happens, it will result in eternal life. Alternate translation: "so that no matter what happens to me now, I will come back to life after I die"

Philippians 3:12

Connecting Statement:

Paul urges the believers at Philippi to follow his present example because of heaven and the new bodies that wait for believers. He speaks of how he works as hard as he can to be like Christ, knowing that God will allow him to live forever in heaven, as if he were a runner racing for the finish line.

obtained these things

These include knowing Christ, knowing the power of his resurrection, sharing in Christ's suffering, and being united with Christ in his death and resurrection (Philippians 3:8-11).

or am already perfect

"so I am not yet perfect" or "so I am not yet mature"

but I press on

"but I keep trying"

to take hold of that for which I was taken hold of by Christ Jesus

Receiving spiritual things from Christ is spoken of as if Paul could grasp them with his hands, and Jesus choosing Paul to belong to him is spoken of as if Jesus grasped Paul with his hands. This can be stated in an active form. Alternate translation: "to receive these things for which Jesus claimed me as his own"

Philippians 3:13

Brothers

See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.

I myself have yet taken hold of it

Receiving spiritual things from Christ is spoken of as if Paul could grasp them with his hands. Alternate translation: "all these things belong to me yet"

Forgetting what is behind and straining forward to what is ahead,

Like a runner in a race is no longer concerned about the part of the race that is completed but only focuses on what is ahead, Paul speaks of setting aside his religious works of righteousness and only focusing on the race of life that Christ has set before him to complete. Alternate translation: "I do not care what I have done in the past; I only work as hard as I can on what is ahead."

Philippians 3:14

I press on toward the goal with a view to the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of the way he does all he can to serve Christ and live in obedience to him as if he were a racer running as fast as he can to win a race. Alternate translation: "I do all I can to be like Christ, like a runner racing to the finish line, so that I may belong to him, and God may call me to himself after I die"

the upward call

Possible meanings are that Paul speaks of living eternally with God as if God were to call Paul to ascend 1) to heaven as Jesus did or 2) the steps to the podium where winners of races received prizes, as a metaphor for meeting God face to face and receiving eternal life.

Philippians 3:15

All of us who are mature, let us think this way

Paul wants his fellow believers to have the same desires he listed in Philippians 3:8-11. Alternate translation: "I encourage all of us believers who are strong in the faith to think the same way"

God will also reveal that to you

"God will also make it clear to you" or "God will make sure you know it"

Philippians 3:16

General Information:

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Paul uses "we" to include the Philippian believers.

Nevertheless, let us live up to what we have already attained.

"However, let us keep living by the same standard we have achieved."

Nevertheless

"No matter what else is true"

Philippians 3:17

Be imitators of me

"Do what I do" or "Live as I live"

brothers

See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.

those who are walking by the example that you have in us

"those who already are living as we live" or "those who already are doing what we do"

Philippians 3:18

Many are walking ... as enemies of the cross of Christ

These words are Paul's main thought for this verse.

Many are walking

A person's behavior is spoken of as if that person were walking along a path. Alternate translation: "Many are living" or "Many are conducting their lives"

those about whom I have often told you, and now I am telling you with tears

Paul interrupts his main thought with these words that describe the "many." You can move them to the beginning or end of the verse if you need to.

I have often told you

"I have told you many times"

am telling you with tears

"am telling you with great sadness"

as enemies of the cross of Christ

Here "the cross of Christ" refers to Christ's suffering and death. The enemies are those who say they believe in Jesus but are not willing to suffer or die like Jesus did. Alternate translation: "in a way that shows they are actually against Jesus, who was willing to suffer and die on a cross"

Philippians 3:19

Their end is destruction

"Someday God will destroy them." The last thing that happens to them is that God will destroy them.

their god is their stomach

Here "stomach" refers to a person's desires for physical pleasure. Calling it their god means that they want these pleasures more than they want to obey God. Alternate translation: "they desire food and other physical pleasures more than they desire to obey God"

their glory is in their shame

Here "shame" stands for the actions that the people should be ashamed about but are not. Alternate translation: "they are proud of the things that should cause them shame"

They think about earthly things

Here "earthly" refers to everything that gives physical pleasure and does not honor God. Alternate translation: "All they think about is what will please themselves rather than what will please God"

Philippians 3:20

General Information:

By Paul's use of "our" and "we" here, he includes himself and the believers in Philippi.

our citizenship is in heaven

Possible meanings are 1) "we are citizens of heaven" or 2) "our homeland is heaven" or 3) "our true home is heaven."

Philippians 3:21

He will transform our lowly bodies

"He will change our weak, earthly bodies"

into bodies formed like his glorious body

"into bodies like his glorious body"

body, formed by the might of his power to subject all things to himself

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "body. He will change our bodies with the same power he uses to control all things"

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4 [1]Therefore, my beloved brothers whom I long for, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, beloved friends.

[2]I am pleading with Euodia, and I am pleading with Syntyche, be of the same mind in the Lord.[3]Yes, I ask you, my true companion, to help these women who labored with me in spreading the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

[4]Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice.[5]Let your gentleness be known to all people. The Lord is near.[6]Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in everything by prayer and earnest appeal with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God,[7]and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

[8]Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is anything excellent, if there is anything to be praised, think about these things.[9]The things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

[10]I greatly rejoice in the Lord because now at last you have renewed your concern for me. You had indeed been concerned for me before, but there was no opportunity for you to help.[11]I am not saying this because I am in need. For I have learned to be content in all circumstances.[12]I know what it is to be poor, and I also know what it is to have plenty. In every way and in all things I have learned the secret of how to be well fed or to be hungry, and how to have an abundance or to be in need.[13]I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

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[14]However, you did well to share with me in my difficulties.[15]You Philippians know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church supported me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone.[16]Even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent help for my needs more than once.[17]It is not that I seek the gift. Instead, I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.
[18]I have received everything in full, and even more. I have been well supplied now that I have received from Epaphroditus the things you sent. They are a sweet-smelling aroma, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.[19]My God will meet all your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.[20]Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[21]Greet all God's holy people in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.[22]All God's holy people who are here greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
[23]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.[1]

[1]Some ancient and important Greek copies add Amen, and there are some ancient Greek copies that have that word at the end of every New Testament book. There are also many important and ancient Greek copies that do not have the final Amen .

Philippians 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"My joy and my crown"

Paul had helped the Philippians become spiritually mature. As a result, Paul rejoiced and God honored him and his work. He considered discipling other Christians and encouraging them to grow spiritually as important to Christian living. (See: spirit and disciple)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Euodia and Syntyche

Apparently these two women disagreed with each other. Paul was encouraging them to agree.

Links:

Philippians 4:1 Notes

Philippians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues with some specific instructions to the believers in Philippi on unity and then gives instructions to help them live for the Lord.

Therefore, my beloved brothers whom I long for

"So, my fellow believers whom I love and greatly desire to see"

brothers

See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.

my joy and crown

Paul uses the word "joy" to mean that the Philippian church is the cause of his happiness. A "crown" was made of leaves, and a man wore it on his head as a sign of honor after he won an important game. Here the word "crown" means the Philippian church brought honor to Paul before God. Alternate translation: "You give me joy because you have believed in Jesus, and you are my reward and honor for my work"

in this way stand firm in the Lord, beloved friends

"continue living for the Lord in the way that I have taught you, dear friends"

Philippians 4:2

I am pleading with Euodia, and I am pleading with Syntyche

These are women who were believers and helped Paul in the church at Philippi. Alternate translation: "I beg Euodia, and I beg Syntyche"

be of the same mind in the Lord

The phrase "be of the same mind" means to have the same attitude or opinion. Alternate translation: "agree with each other because you both believe in the same Lord"

Philippians 4:3

General Information:

When Paul says, "my true companion," the word "you" is singular. Paul does not say the name of the person. He calls him that to show he worked with Paul to spread the gospel.

Yes, I ask you, my true companion

Here "you" refers to the "true fellow worker" and is singular.

true companion

This metaphor is from farming, where two animals would be bound to the same yoke, and so they work together. Alternate translation: "fellow worker"

along with Clement

Clement was a man who was a believer and worker in the church at Philippi.

whose names are in the Book of Life

"whose names God has written in the Book of Life"

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord

"Be happy because of all the Lord has done." See how you translated this in Philippians 3:1.

Philippians 4:5

The Lord is near

Possible meanings are 1) The Lord Jesus is near to the believers in spirit or 2) the day the Lord Jesus will return to the earth is near.

Philippians 4:6

in everything by prayer and earnest appeal with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God

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"whatever happens to you, ask God for everything you need with prayer and thanks"
Philippians 4:7
the peace of God
"the peace that God gives"
which surpasses all understanding
"which is more than we can understand"
will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ
This presents God's peace as a soldier who protects our hearts and thoughts from worrying. Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's emotions. Alternate translation: "will be like a soldier and guard your emotions and thoughts in Christ" or "will protect you in Christ and will keep you from worrying about the troubles of this life"
your thoughts
The word translated "thoughts" can also be translated "minds," referring to the part of the person that thinks.
Philippians 4:8
Finally
As Paul ends his letter, he gives a summary of how believers should live to have peace with God.
brothers
See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.
whatever things are lovely
"whatever things are pleasing"
whatever things are of good report
"whatever thing people admire" or "whatever things people respect"
if there is anything excellent
"if they are morally good"
if there is anything to be praised
"and if they are things that people praise"
Philippians 4:9
that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me
"that I have taught and shown you"
Philippians 4:10
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins to thank the Philippians for a gift that they have sent him.
Philippians 4:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul begins to explain that he is thanking them for this gift simply because he is grateful, not because he needs them to give him anything more.
to be content
"to be satisfied" or "to be happy"
in all circumstances
"no matter what my situation is"
Philippians 4:12
I know what it is to be poor ... to have plenty
Paul knows how to live happily having either no possessions or many possessions.
how to be well fed or to be hungry, and how to have an abundance or to be in need
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them to emphasize that he has learned how to be content in any situation.
Philippians 4:13
I can do all things through him who strengthens me
"I can do all things because Christ gives me strength"
Philippians 4:14
in my difficulties
Paul speaks of his hardships as if they were a place that he is in. Alternate translation: "when things became difficult"
Philippians 4:15
the beginning of the gospel
Paul uses the word "gospel" here to mean his preaching of the gospel. Alternate translation: "as I began to preach the gospel"
no church supported me in the matter of giving and receiving except you alone
This double negative emphasizes that the Philippians were unique. Alternate translation: "the only church that supported me in the matter of giving and receiving was you" or "you were the only church that sent me money or helped me"
Philippians 4:17
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues explaining that he is thanking the Philippians for their gift to him simply because he is grateful, not because he needs them to give him anything more (see Philippians 3:11).
It is not that I seek the gift
Paul is explaining that his reason for writing about gifts is not that he hopes that they will give him more gifts. Alternate translation: "My reason for writing this is not that I want you to give me more"
I seek the fruit that increases to your credit
Paul explains his reason for writing about gifts. Here "fruit that increases to you credit" is a metaphor for either 1) more good deeds that can be recorded for the Philippians. Alternate translation: "Rather I want God to recognize the increasing good deeds that you do" or 2) more blessings for the good things that the Philippians do. Alternate translation: "Rather I want God to bless you more because of the good deeds that you do"
Philippians 4:18
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes thanking the Philippians for their gift (see Philippians 3:11) and assures them that God will take care of them.
I have received everything in full
Possible meanings are 1) Paul has received everything that the Philippians sent or 2) Paul is using humor to continue the business metaphor from Philippians 3:8 and saying that this part of the letter is a receipt for commercial goods that Epaphroditus delivered.
even more
"even more than necessary"
They are a sweet-smelling aroma, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God
Paul speaks of the gift from the Philippian church as if it were a sacrifice offered to God on an altar. Paul implies that the church's gift is very pleasing to God, like the sacrifices that the priests burned, which had a smell that pleased God. Alternate translation: "I assure you these gifts are very pleasing to God, like an acceptable sacrifice"
Philippians 4:19

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will meet all your needs
This phrase translates the same word that is translated "have been well supplied" in verse 18. It is an idiom meaning "will provide everything you need"
according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus
"from his glorious riches that he gives through Christ Jesus"
Philippians 4:20
Now to our God
The word "Now" marks the closing prayer and the end of this section of the letter.
Philippians 4:21
The brothers
This refers to those people who were either ministering with or to Paul.
brothers
See how you translated this in Philippians 1:12.
all God's holy people
Some versions translate this as "every holy person" or "every saint."
Philippians 4:22
All God's holy people
Some versions translate this as "All the believers" or "All of the saints."
especially those of Caesar's household
This refers to servants who worked in Caesar's palace.
"especially the fellow believers who work in the palace of Caesar"
Philippians 4:23
with your spirit
Paul refers to the believers by using the word "spirit," which is the part of a person that can relate to God.
Alternate translation: "with you"

Introduction to Colossians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Colossians

Greeting, thanksgiving, and prayer (1:1-12) The person and work of Christ Deliverance and redemption (1:13-14) Christ: the Image of the invisible God, and the One who is over all creation (1:15-17) Christ is the Head of the Church, and the Church trusts in him (1:18-2:7)
Tests of faithfulness Warnings against false teachers (2:8-19) True godliness is not rigid rules and unbending traditions (2:20-23)
Teaching and living Life in Christ (3:1-4) Old and new life (3:5-17) Christian family (3:18-4:1)
Christian behavior (4:2-6) Closing and greetings Paul thanks Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9) Paul sends greetings from his associates (4:10-14) Paul gives directions to Archippus and the Christians in Laodicea (4:15-17) Paul's personal greeting (4:18)

Who wrote the Book of Colossians?

Paul wrote the Book of Colossians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.
Paul wrote this letter while in prison in Rome.

What is the Book of Colossians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the believers in the Asia Minor city of Colossae. The main purpose of this letter was to defend the gospel against false teachers. He did this by praising Jesus as the image of God, sustainer of all things, and head of the church. Paul wanted them to understand that only Christ is needed for God to accept them.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Colossians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to the Church in Colossae," or "A Letter to the Christians in Colossae."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What were the religious issues that the church in Colossae struggled with?

In the church in Colossae, there were false teachers. Their exact teaching is unknown. But they probably taught their followers to worship angels and to obey strict rules about religious ceremonies. They probably also taught that a male must be circumcised and that believers should eat only certain types of food. Paul said these false teachings came from the minds of men and not from God.

How did Paul use the imagery of heaven and earth?

In this letter, Paul twice speaks of things in heaven as "things above." He distinguishes it from the earth, which other parts of Scripture speak of as being "below." The purpose of this imagery was to teach Christians to live in a way that honors God, who lives in heaven above. Paul is not teaching that the earth or the physical world is evil. (See: evil)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in Colossians in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to

represent them well in their versions. In Colossians, these words usually indicate a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. So Colossians in the ULB uses "believers" or "those who believe in him." (See: 1:2, 12, 26)

Was Jesus created or is he eternal?

Jesus was not a created being but has always existed as God. Jesus also became a human being. There is potential for confusion in Colossians 1:15 where it says Jesus "is the firstborn of all creation." This statement means that Jesus is dominant over all of creation. It does not mean that he was the first thing God created. Translators should be careful not to imply that Jesus is a created being.

What does Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Colossians?

For the following verses, some modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"May grace be to you, and peace from God our Father" (1:2). Some older versions have a longer reading: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf" (1:7). Some older translations read "for you": "Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, a faithful servant of Christ for you." "the Father, who has made you able to have a share in the inheritance of the believers in light" (1:12). Some older translations read, "the Father, who has qualified us for a share in the inheritance in light." "In his Son we have redemption" (1:14). Some older translations read, "In his Son we have redemption through his blood." "and forgave us all of our trespasses" (2:13). Some older translations read: "and forgave you all of your trespasses." "When Christ appears, who is your life" (3:4). Some older translations read, "When Christ appears, who is our life." "It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience" (3:6). The ULB and many other modern translations read this way. However, some modern and older translations read, "It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming." "I sent him to you for this, that you might know the matters about us" (4:8). Some older translations read, "I sent him to you for this, that he might know the matters about you."

Colossians

1

[1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

[2]to God's holy people and faithful brothers in Christ who are at Colossae: May grace be to you, and peace from God our Father.[1]
[3]We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we always pray for you.
[4]We have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all God's holy people,[5]because of the hope reserved for you in heaven, which you heard about in the word of truth, the gospel [6]which has come to you. In the same way, this gospel is bearing fruit and is growing in all the world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth.
[7]This is the gospel as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf.[2] [8]Epaphras has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

[9]Because of this love, from the day we heard this we have not stopped praying for you. We pray that you will be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding,[10]so that you will walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord and that pleases him in every way: by bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God;
[11]by being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, so that you may have great endurance and patience; and by joyfully[12]giving thanks to the Father, who made you able[3] to have a share in the inheritance of God's holy people in light.
[13]He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,[14]in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.[4]
[15]He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.[16]For in him all things were created: those in the heavens and those on the earth, the visible and the invisible things. Whether thrones or dominions or governments or authorities, all things were created through him and for him.[17]He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

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[18]He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, so he has first place among all things.[19]For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in the Son,[20]and through the Son to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, whether things on earth or things in heaven.
[21]At one time you also were alienated and hostile in mind and in evil deeds.[22]But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through death to present you holy, blameless, and above accusation before him,[23]if indeed you continue in the faith, established and firm, not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which was proclaimed to every person created under heaven. This is the gospel of which I, Paul, became a servant.

[24]Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ for the sake of his body, which is the church.[25]It is of this church that I am a servant, according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God.[26]This is the mystery that was hidden for ages and for generations but now has been revealed to God's holy people.[27]It is to them that God wanted to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
[28]We proclaim him, warning every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person mature in Christ.[29]For this I labor and strive according to his energy that is at work in me in power.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies add and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[2]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, on your behalf.
[3]Some ancient Greek copies read who made us able.
[4]Some ancient Greek copies read, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins; it may be a reference to Ephesians 1:7.

Colossians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

As in a typical letter, Paul begins his letter in verses 1-2 by introducing Timothy and himself to the Christians in Colossae. Paul writes much of this chapter around two subjects: who Christ is, and what Christ has done for the Christian.

Special concepts in this chapter

Secret truth

Paul refers to a "secret truth" in this chapter. The role of the church in the plans of God was once unknown. But God has now revealed it. Part of this involves the Gentiles having equal standing with the Jews in the plans of God. (See: reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Images for Christian living

Paul uses many different images to describe Christian living. In this chapter, he uses the images of "walking" and "bearing fruit." (See: fruit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Verse 24 is a paradox: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you." People do not usually rejoice when they suffer. But in verses 25-29 Paul explains why his suffering is good. (Colossians 1:24)

Links:

Colossians 1:1 Notes Colossians intro

Colossians 1:1

General Information:

Though this letter is from Paul and Timothy to the Colossian believers, later in the letter Paul makes it clear that he is the writer. Most likely Timothy was with him and wrote the words down as Paul spoke. Throughout this letter the words "we," "our," and "ours" include the Colossians unless noted otherwise. The words "you," "your," and "yours" refer to the Colossian believers and so are plural unless noted otherwise.

an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God

"whom God chose to be an apostle of Christ Jesus"

Colossians 1:3

We give ... our Lord ... we always

These words do not include the Colossians.

Colossians 1:4

We have heard

Paul is excluding his audience.

your faith in Christ Jesus

"your belief in Christ Jesus"

Colossians 1:5

because of the hope reserved for you in heaven

Here "hope" stands for what the believer can confidently expect, that is, the things that God has promised to do for all believers. These things are spoken of as if they were physical objects that God was keeping in heaven for the believers to possess later. Alternate translation: "because of what you hope for that is reserved for you in heaven" or "because you are confident that God, who is in heaven, will do the many good things that he has promised you"

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the word of truth, the gospel
Possible meanings are 1) "the message about the truth, the gospel" or 2) "the true message, the gospel."
Colossians 1:6
this gospel is bearing fruit and is growing
"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "This gospel is having good results, more and more" or "This gospel is having increasing results"
in all the world
This is a generalization referring to the part of the world that they knew about. Alternate translation: "throughout the world"
the grace of God in truth
"the true grace of God"
Colossians 1:7
our beloved ... our behalf
The word "our" does not include the Colossians.
gospel as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who
"gospel. It is exactly what you learned from Epaphras, who is our beloved fellow servant and who" or "gospel. It is exactly what Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, taught you. He"
Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf
Here "on our behalf" means that Epaphras was doing work for Christ that Paul himself would have done if he were not in prison.
Epaphras
the man who preached the gospel to the people in Colossae
Colossians 1:8
to us
The word "us" does not include the Colossians.
your love in the Spirit
Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit as if he were a place in which the believers were located. Alternate translation: "how the Holy Spirit has enabled you to love believers"
Colossians 1:9
Connecting Statement:
Because the Spirit has enabled them to love others, Paul prays for them and tells them here how he prays for them.
Because of this love
"Because the Holy Spirit has enabled you to love other believers"
we heard ... we have not stopped ... We pray
The word "we" does not include the Colossians.
from the day we heard this
"from the day Epaphras told us these things"
that you will be filled with the knowledge of his will
Paul speaks of the Colossian believers as though they were containers. Alternate translation: "that God will fill you with what you need to know so that you can do his will"
in all wisdom and spiritual understanding
"so that the Holy Spirit will make you wise and able to understand what God wants you to do"
Colossians 1:10
that you will walk in a manner that is worthy of the Lord and that pleases him
Walking here signifies behavior in life. Alternate translation: "that you will live as God expects you to and so please him"
by bearing fruit in every good work and growing
Paul is speaking of the Colossian believers as if they were trees or plants that grow and bear fruit. Alternate translation: "by making sure that all of your good works please God and people and growing"
growing in the knowledge of God
"always getting to know God better" or "always learning more about God"
Colossians 1:12
made you able to have a share
"allowed you to share"
made you able
Here Paul is focusing on his readers as receivers of God's blessings. But he does not mean that he himself has no share in those blessings.
inheritance
Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.
in light
This idea is opposite to the idea of the dominion of darkness in the next verse. Alternate translation: "in the glory of his presence"
Colossians 1:13
Connecting Statement:
Paul talks about the ways in which Christ is excellent.
He has rescued us
"God has rescued us"
the dominion of darkness
"Darkness" here is a metaphor for evil. Alternate translation: "the evil forces that controlled us"
his beloved Son
"Son" is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
Colossians 1:15
He is the image of the invisible God
"His Son is the image of the invisible God." Here "image" does not mean a representation of something that is visible. Instead, "image" here means that by knowing the Son, we learn what God the Father is like.
the firstborn of all creation
The expression "firstborn" does not refer to when Jesus was born. Instead, it refers to his position as the eternal Son of God the Father. In this sense, "firstborn" is a metaphor meaning "most important." Jesus is the most important and the unique Son of God. Alternate translation: "God's Son, the most important one over all creation"
of all creation
The noun "creation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "over all that God created"
Colossians 1:16
For in him all things were created
Here "him" refers to the Son. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For in him God created all things"
all things were created through him and for him
Here "him" refers to the Son. This can be stated in active

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form. Alternate translation: "God created all things through him and for him"
Colossians 1:17
He himself is before all things
"It is he who existed before all things"
in him all things hold together
Paul is speaking here of the Son controlling all things as if he were physically holding them together. "he holds everything together"
Colossians 1:18
He is the head
"Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the head"
He is the head of the body, the church
Paul speaks of Jesus's position over the church as if he were the head on the human body. As the head rules the body, so does Jesus rule the church.
the beginning
"the originating authority." He is the first chief or founder.
firstborn from among the dead
Jesus is the first person to die and come back to life, never to die again.
Colossians 1:20
the Son
This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
through the blood of his cross
"by means of the blood Jesus shed on the cross"
the blood of his cross
Here "blood" stands for the death of Christ on the cross.
whether things on earth or things in heaven
This phrase explains what "all things" means. Some languages might prefer to put it closer to "all things."
Colossians 1:21
Connecting Statement:
Paul makes it clear that God has now revealed that Christ exchanges the sin of Gentile believers for his holiness.
At one time you also
"There was a time when you Colossian believers also"
were alienated
were no longer living in loving relationship with God
Colossians 1:22
blameless, and above accusation
Paul uses two concepts, "blameless" and "above accusation," that mean almost the same thing to emphasize the idea of perfection. Alternate translation: "holy and perfect"
before him
This expression of location stands for "in God's view" or "in God's mind"
Colossians 1:23
not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you heard
To be moved away from the hope of the gospel is a metaphor meaning to stop hoping in what God promised in the gospel. Alternate translation: "continuing in the hope of the gospel that you heard" or "continuing to hope in the promises of God that you heard about in the gospel"
not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you heard
The hope of the gospel is the confident expectation that God will do what the gospel teaches he will do. Alternate translation: "continuing to confidently expect what is promised in the gospel"
which was proclaimed
This can be translated with an active phrase. Alternate translation: "which believers proclaimed"
to every person created under heaven
God created everyone. The phrase "under heaven" is a metonym for in the world. Alternate translation: "to every person in the world"
the gospel of which I, Paul, became a servant
Paul was a servant of God. Alternate translation: "the gospel that I, Paul, serve God by proclaiming"
Colossians 1:24
I fill up in my flesh what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ
Paul speaks about the suffering that he continues to experience. He may be acknowledging here that there is much suffering that he and all other Christians must endure before Christ comes again, and that Christ in a spiritual sense joins with them in experiencing these hardships. Paul certainly does not mean that Christ's sufferings alone were not enough to provide salvation for the believers.
I fill up in my flesh
Paul speaks of his body as if it were a container that could hold suffering.
for the sake of his body, which is the church
Paul often speaks of the church, the group of all Christian believers, as if it were Christ's body.
Colossians 1:25
to fulfill the word of God
This means to bring about the purpose of God's gospel message, which is that it be preached and believed. "Word of God" here is a metonym for the message from God. Alternate translation: "to be obedient to what God has instructed"
Colossians 1:26
This is the mystery that was hidden
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is the mystery that God had hidden"
for ages and for generations
The words "ages" and "generations" refer to the time period from the creation of the world until the time when the gospel was preached.
now has been revealed to God's holy people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "now God has revealed it to his holy people"
Colossians 1:27
the riches of the glory of this mystery
Paul speaks of the value of this mystery about God as if it were a treasure of material wealth. Alternate translation: "the greatness of the glory of this mystery"
which is Christ in you
The mystery that God has made known is "Christ in you." Paul speaks of believers as if they were containers in which Christ is present. This is one of his ways of expressing the union of the believers with Christ. Alternate translation: "which is that Christ is in you" or "which is that Christ is united to you"
the hope of glory
The fact that Christ is in believers gives believers hope that

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they will share in God's glory. Alternate translation: "so you can confidently expect to share in God's glory" or "so you can confidently wait for God's glory"

Colossians 1:28

We proclaim ... we may present

These instances of "we" include Paul and his companions but do not include the Colossians.

so that we may present every person

You may need to make explicit to whom they will present every person. Alternate translation: "so that we may present to God every person"

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2 [1]For I want you to know how great a struggle I have had for you, for those at Laodicea, and for as many as have not
seen my face in the flesh.[2]I work so that their hearts may be encouraged by being brought together in love and into all
the riches of full assurance of understanding, into the knowledge of the mystery of God, that is, Christ.[3]In him all the
treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.
[4]I say this so that no one may trick you with persuasive speech.[5]Although I am not with you in the flesh, yet I am with you
in spirit. I rejoice to see your good order and the strength of your faith in Christ.

[6]As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him.[7]Be rooted in him, be built on him, be established in faith just as you
were taught, and abound in thanksgiving.

[8]See that no one captures you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, conforming to the
elemental spirits of the world, and not conforming to Christ.[9]For in him all the fullness of God lives in bodily form.
[10]You have been filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority.[11]In him you were also circumcised with a
circumcision not done by humans in the removal of the body of flesh, but in the circumcision of Christ.[12]You were buried
with him in baptism, and in him you were raised up through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.
[13]When you were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him
and forgave us all of our trespasses.[1][14]He blotted out the written record of debts that was hostile to us with its regulations.
He took it away by nailing it to the cross.[15]He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public spectacle of them,
triumphing over them by the cross.

[16]So then, let no one judge you in eating or in drinking, or about a festival or a new moon, or about Sabbath days.[17]These
are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance is Christ.
[18]Let no one who wants humility and the worship of angels judge you out of your prize. Such a person enters into the
things he has seen and becomes puffed up for no reason by his fleshly thinking.[19]He does not hold on to the head. It is
from the head that the whole body throughout its joints and ligaments is supplied and held together; it grows with the
growth given by God.

[20]If you died together with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world, why do you live as obligated to the world:[21]"Do not
handle, nor taste, nor touch"?[22]All these things will perish with use, according to the commandments and teachings of
men.[23]These rules have the appearance of wisdom, with their self-made religion and humility and severe treatment of the
body. But they have no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

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[1]Some ancient Greek copies read, and forgave you all of your trespasses.

Colossians 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Circumcision and baptism

In verses 11-12, Paul uses both the old covenant sign of circumcision and the new covenant sign of baptism to show how Christians are united with Christ and freed from sin.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Flesh

This is a complex issue. "Flesh" is possibly a metaphor for our sinful nature. Paul is not teaching that the physical part of man is sinful. Paul appears to be teaching that, while Christians are alive ("in the flesh"), we will continue to sin. But our new nature will be fighting against our old nature. Paul also uses "flesh" in this chapter to refer to the physical body.

Implicit information

Paul mentions several issues in this chapter that imply information about the context of the church in Colossae. It is best to allow the text to remain uncertain over the actual details.

Links:

Colossians 2:1 Notes

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Colossians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to encourage the believers in Colossae and Laodicea to understand that Christ is God and that he lives in believers, so they should live in the same way they received him.

how great a struggle I have had for you

Paul has exerted much effort in developing their purity and their understanding of the gospel.

Laodicea

This was a city very close to Colossae where there was another church for which Paul was praying.

as many as have not seen my face in the flesh

Here "face in the flesh" represents the person as a whole. Alternate translation: "all those who have never seen me personally" or "all those whom I have never met face to face"

Colossians 2:2

so that their hearts

Paul includes the Colossians even though he uses a different pronoun. Alternate translation: "so that their hearts and yours"

brought together

This means brought together in a close relationship.

all the riches of full assurance of understanding

Paul speaks of a person who is completely sure that the good news is true as though that person were rich in physical things.

the mystery of God

This is knowledge that can be revealed only by God.

that is, Christ

Jesus Christ is the mystery revealed by God.

Colossians 2:3

In him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden

Only Christ can reveal God's true wisdom and knowledge. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ"

the treasures of wisdom and knowledge

Paul speaks of God's wisdom and knowledge as if they were material wealth. Alternate translation: "the very precious wisdom and knowledge"

wisdom and knowledge

These words mean basically the same thing here. Paul uses them together to emphasize that all spiritual understanding comes from Christ.

Colossians 2:4

trick

This means to cause someone to believe something that is not true, so he acts on that belief, and suffers harm as a result.

persuasive speech

speech that will make people change what they believe

Colossians 2:5

not with you in the flesh

The person's flesh, or physical body, is a metonym for the person. Alternate translation: "not physically present with you"

I am with you in spirit

Being with someone in spirit is a metaphor for thinking continually about that person. Alternate translation: "I continually think about you"

good order

the proper way of doing things

the strength of your faith

"how nothing and no one can cause you to stop believing"

Colossians 2:6

walk in him

Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. The words "in him" refer to being in close relationship with Christ and so doing what pleases him. Alternate translation: "live your lives the way he wants you to" or "live so that people can see that you belong to him"

Colossians 2:7

Be rooted ... be built ... be established ... abound

These words explain what it means to "walk in him."

Be rooted in him

Paul speaks of a person with true faith in Christ as if that person were a tree growing in solid ground with deep roots.

be built on him

Paul speaks of a person with true faith in Christ as if that person were a building that has a strong foundation.

be established in faith

"trust in Jesus for everything"

just as you were taught

This is best stated without naming or otherwise calling attention to the teacher, who was Epaphras (Colossians 1:7). Alternate translation: "just as you learned" or "just as they taught you" or "just as he taught you"

abound in thanksgiving

Paul speaks of thanksgiving as if it were objects that a person could obtain more of. Alternate translation: "be very thankful to God"

Colossians 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul urges the believers to be careful not to turn to the words and rules of others because nothing can add to the fullness of God that believers have in Christ.

See that

"Make sure that"

captures you

Paul speaks of the way a person can believe false teachings

philosophy

religious doctrines and beliefs that are not from God's word but are based on man's thoughts about God and life

empty deceit

Paul speaks of false ideas that produce nothing and so are without value as though they are containers with nothing in them.

the tradition of men ... the elemental spirits of the world

The "tradition of men" may refer to Jewish traditions, while "the elemental spirits of the world" refers to pagan (Gentile) belief systems. Both of these are worthless.

the elemental spirits of the world

Possible meanings are 1) spiritual powers that some people thought control what happens on earth, or 2) the laws or moral principles of the world.

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Colossians 2:9
in him all the fullness of God lives in bodily form
"God's total nature lives in physical form in Christ"
Colossians 2:10
You have been filled in him
Paul speaks of people as though they were containers into which God has placed Christ. Alternate translation: "You are made complete in Christ"
who is the head over every ruler and authority
Christ is the ruler over every other ruler
Colossians 2:11
In him you were also circumcised
Paul is speaking of those who belong to Christ as if they were inside Christ's body. This can also be made active. Alternate translation: "When you joined the church in baptism, God circumcised you"
a circumcision not done by humans
With this metaphor, Paul says that God has made Christian believers acceptable to himself in a way that reminded him of circumcision, the ceremony through which Hebrew male babies were added to the community of Israel.
Colossians 2:12
You were buried with him in baptism
Paul speaks of being baptized and joining the assembly of believers as if it were being buried with Christ. This can be made active. Alternate translation: "God buried you with Christ when you joined the church in baptism"
in him you were raised up
With this metaphor, Paul speaks of the new spiritual life of believers that God made possible by making Christ come alive again. This can be made active. Alternate translation: "because you have joined yourself to Christ, God raised you up" or "in him God caused you to live again"
you were raised up
Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God raised you up" or "God caused you to live again"
Colossians 2:13
When you were dead
Paul speaks of unresponsiveness to God as if it were death. Alternate translation: "When you Colossian believers were unable to respond to God"
you were dead ... he made you alive
With this metaphor Paul speaks of coming into new spiritual life as if it were coming back to life physically.
dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh
You were dead on two accounts: 1) you were spiritually dead, living a life of sin against Christ and 2) you were not circumcised according to the law of Moses.
forgave us all of our trespasses
"he forgave us, both us Jews and you Gentiles, of all our trespasses"
Colossians 2:14
He blotted out the written record of debts that was hostile to us
Paul speaks of God forgiving our sins as if God were forgiving a debt that we owe him.
blotted out the written record
When someone blots out words, they cover the words with ink so that no one can read them.
that was hostile to us
"that was opposed to us"
Colossians 2:15
made a public spectacle of them
In Roman times, it was common practice for the Roman armies to have a victory parade when they returned home, displaying all the prisoners they had captured and goods they had obtained. God was victorious over the evil powers and authorities.
by the cross
Here "the cross" stands for Christ's death on the cross.
Colossians 2:16
in eating or in drinking
The law of Moses included what one could eat and drink. "for what you eat or what you drink"
about a festival or a new moon, or about Sabbath days
The law of Moses specified the days to celebrate, to worship, and to offer sacrifice. "for the way you celebrate festivals or new moons or the Sabbath"
Colossians 2:17
These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance is Christ
A shadow shows the shape of an object, but it is not the object itself. In a similar way, the festivals, celebrations, and Sabbaths show us something about how God would save people, but those things do not save people. The savior is Christ. Alternate translation: "These are like a shadow of what would happen, but the reality is Christ" or "These are like a shadow of the savior who would come, but the savior is Christ"
Colossians 2:18
Let no one ... judge you out of your prize
Here Paul refers to false teachers as if they were corrupt judges at an athletic contest who would unjustly disqualify the believers from winning the prizes they deserve, and he speaks of Christ saving a person as if Christ were giving a prize to the winner of such a contest. Alternate translation: "Let no one ... disqualify you from winning a prize"
who wants humility
The word "humility" is a metonym for actions one does to make others think that one is humble. Alternate translation: "who wants you to do things to show that you are humble"
enters into the things he has seen
Here Paul speaks about people who claim to have dreams and visions from God and who talk proudly about them.
becomes puffed up for no reason by his fleshly thinking
Here Paul says that sinful ways of thinking make a person arrogant. Alternate translation: "puffs himself up for no reason by means of his fleshly thinking"
puffed up
Here a person who boasts is spoken of as if he were an object into which someone had blown air to make it larger than it should be.
his fleshly thinking
Here the idea of flesh stands for the sinful human nature. "the sinful thoughts he naturally thinks"
Colossians 2:19
He does not hold on to the head

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A person not trusting in Christ is spoken of has if they do not hold firmly to the head. Christ is spoken of as if he were the head of a body. Alternate translation: "He does not firmly grasp Christ, who is like the head of a body" or "He does not cling to Christ, who is like the head of a body"

It is from the head that the whole body throughout its joints and ligaments is supplied and held together

Paul speaks of the church, which is ruled and empowered by Christ, as if it were a human body. Alternate translation: "It is from the head that God supplies the whole body throughout its joints and ligaments and holds it together"

Colossians 2:20

If you died together with Christ to the elemental spirits of the world

A believer is spiritually united with Christ. As Christ died, the believer has died to the elemntal spirits of the world. This is a metaphor for no longer responding to the elemenatry spirits of the world. The believer is no longer controlled by them.

the elemental spirits of the world

Possible meanings are 1) spiritual powers that some people thought control what happens on earth, or 2) the laws or moral principles of the world. See how you translated this in Colossians 2:8.

live as obligated to the world

"think you must obey the desires of the world"

the world

the thoughts, desires, and assumptions of the sinful majority of the world's people

Colossians 2:21

"Do ... touch"?

The rhetorical question that begins with the words "why do you live as obligated to the world" in verse 20 ends here. Paul uses this question to rebuke the Colossians for following the false beliefs of the world. "you should not live as obligated to the world: 'Do ... touch'!"

"Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch"

Paul is quoting what other people have been telling the Colossians and using a rhetorical question to challenge them. Alternate translation: "why do you believe them when they say, 'Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch'?" or "you should not obey them when they say, 'Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch'"

Colossians 2:23

These rules have the appearance of wisdom, with their self-made religion and humility and severe treatment of the body

"These rules seem wise to unbelieving people because they allow those who follow them to appear humble because they hurt their own bodies"

have no value against the indulgence of the flesh

"do not help you stop following your human desires"

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3 [1]If then God has raised you with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.[2]Think about the things above, not about the things on earth.[3]For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
[4]When Christ appears, who is your life, then you will also appear with him in glory.[1]

[5]Put to death, then, the members that are on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.[6]It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience.[2][7]It is in these things that you also once walked when you lived in them.[8]But now you must get rid of all these things—wrath, anger, evil intentions, slander, and obscene speech from your mouth.
[9]Do not lie to one another, since you have taken off the old man with its practices,[10]and you have put on the new man that is being made new in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it,[11]where there is no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all, and is in all.

[12]Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, put on a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.
[13]Bear with one another. Be gracious to each other. If someone has a complaint against someone else, forgive in the same way that the Lord has forgiven you.[14]Above all these things, have love, which is the bond of perfection.
[15]Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. It was for this peace that you were called in one body. And be thankful.[16]Let the word of Christ live in you richly, teaching and instructing one another with all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.[17]Whatever you do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through him.

[18]Wives, submit to your husbands, as it is appropriate in the Lord.[19]Husbands, love your wives, and do not be bitter against them.[20]Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is pleasing in the Lord.[21]Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they will not be discouraged.
[22]Slaves, obey your masters according to the flesh in all things, not with eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with a sincere heart. Fear the Lord.[23]Whatever you do, work from the soul as to the Lord and not as to people.[24]You know that you will receive from the Lord the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.[25]For anyone who does unrighteousness will receive the penalty for the unrighteousness that he did, and there is no partiality.

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[1]Some ancient Greek copies and some ancient translations read, When Christ appears, who is our life, then you will also appear with him in glory.
[2]Some ancient Greek copies read, It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming.

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Colossians 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The second part of this chapter parallels Ephesians 5 and 6.

Special concepts in this chapter

Old and new self

The old and new self mean the same as the old and new man. The term "old man" probably refers to the sinful nature with which a person is born. The "new man" is the new nature or new life that God gives a person after they come to believe in Christ. (See: sin and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Character

Many of the things Paul encourages his readers to pursue or avoid are not actions but character qualities. Because of this, they may be difficult to translate.

"The things above"

Where God dwells is often pictured as being located "above." Paul says to "seek the things above" and to "think about the things above." He is implying Christians should seek and think about heavenly and godly things.

Links:

Colossians 3:1 Notes

Colossians 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul warns the believers that because they are one with Christ, they ought not do certain things.

If then

This is an idiom that means "because."

God has raised you with Christ

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Possible meanings are 1) because God has caused Christ to come alive again, God has already given the believers in Colossae new spiritual life. Alternate translation: "God has given you new life because you belong to Christ" or 2) because God has caused Christ to come alive again, the believers in Colossae can know that after they die they will live with Christ, and Paul can speak of the believers living again as if it has already happened. Alternate translation: "you can be sure that God will give you life as he has caused Christ to come alive again"

things above

"things in heaven"

where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "where Christ is sitting in the place of honor beside God" or "where Christ is sitting in the place of honor at God's right side"

Colossians 3:3

For you have died

As Christ actually died, so God counts the Colossian believers as having died with Christ.

your life is hidden with Christ in God

Paul speaks of people's lives as if they were objects that can be hidden in containers and speaks of God as if he were a container. Alternate translation: Possible meanings are 1) "it is as though God has taken your life and concealed it with Christ in God's presence" or 2) "only God knows what your true life really is, and he will reveal it when he reveals Christ"

Colossians 3:4

Christ appears ... you will also appear

Another possible meaning is "Christ is revealed ... you will also be revealed," which can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "God reveals Christ ... he will also reveal you"

who is your life

Christ is the one who gives spiritual life to the believer.

Colossians 3:5

the members that are on earth

The word "members" here refers to parts of a person's nature. Being "on earth" or being worldly is a metaphor for being sinful. The rest of the verse is a list of sinful "members" or behaviors. Alternate translation: "the earthly parts of your nature" or "the parts of your nature that are worldly"

uncleanness

"impure behavior"

passion

"lust" or "extremely strong desires"

greed, which is idolatry

"greed, which is the same thing as idolatry" or "do not be greedy because that is the same as worshiping idols"

Colossians 3:6

wrath of God

God's anger against those who do evil as shown by what he does to punish them.

the sons of disobedience

This is an idiom that means they were characterized by disobedience. The abstract noun "disobedience" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "disobedient people" or "people who disobey him"

Colossians 3:7

It is in these things that you also once walked

Paul speaks of the way a person behaves as if it were a road or path a person walks on. Alternate translation: "These are the things you used to do"

when you lived in them

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Possible meanings are 1) "when you practiced these things" or 2) "when you lived among the people who disobey God"
Colossians 3:8
evil intentions
"desire to do wicked deeds"
slander
speech used to hurt others by saying untrue things about them
obscene speech
words that do not belong in polite conversation
from your mouth
Here "mouth" is a metonym for talk. "in your talk"
Colossians 3:9
Connecting Statement:
Paul continues to tell the believers how to live and reminds them that Christians should treat everyone according to the same standard.
you have taken off the old man with its practices
Here Paul is speaking of a Christian's rejecting his old sinful life as if it were an old garment that he takes off in order to put on a new garment. It was very common for Israelites such as Paul to speak of moral qualities as if they were pieces of clothing.
Colossians 3:10
and you have put on the new man
Here Paul is speaking of a Christian's rejecting his old sinful life as if it were an old garment that he takes off
the image
This refers to Jesus Christ.
Colossians 3:11
there is no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman
These terms are examples of the categories of people that Paul says do not matter for God. God sees every person alike, not by race, religion, nationality, or social status. Alternate translation: "race, religion, culture, and social status do not matter"
barbarian
a foreigner who does not know local customs
Scythian
This is someone from the land of Scythia, which was outside the Roman Empire. Greeks and Romans used this word for someone who grew up in a place where everyone did wicked things all the time.
Christ is all, and is in all
Nothing is excluded or left out of the rule of Christ. Alternate translation: "Christ is all important and lives in all his people"
Colossians 3:12
as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved
This can be made active. Alternate translation: "as those whom God has chosen for himself, whom he desires to see live for him alone, and whom he loves"
put on a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience
The "heart" is a metaphor for feelings and attitudes. Here it is spoken of as if it had certain feelings and attitudes, and as if it were clothing to wear. Alternate translation: "have a merciful, kind, humble, gentle, and patient heart" or "be merciful, kind, humble, gentle, and patient"
Colossians 3:13
Bear with one another
"Be patient with one another" or "Accept each other even when you disappoint each other"
Be gracious to each other
"Treat others better than they deserve to have you to treat them"
has a complaint against
The abstract noun "complaint" can be stated as "complain." Alternate translation: "has a reason to complain against"
Colossians 3:14
have love, which is the bond of perfection
Here "bond of perfection" is a metaphor for something that causes perfect unity among people. Alternate translation: "love one another because doing so will unite you perfectly together.
Colossians 3:15
Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts
Paul speaks of the peace that Christ gives as if it were a ruler. Possible meanings are 1) "Do everything so that you can have peaceful relationships with each other" or 2) "Allow God to give you peace in your heart"
in your hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for a people's minds or inner beings. Alternate translation: "in your minds" or "inside of you"
Colossians 3:16
Let the word of Christ live in you richly
Paul speaks of Christ's word as if it were a person capable of living inside other people. "Word of Christ" here is a metonym for the teachings of Christ. Alternate translation: "Be obedient to the instructions of Christ" or "Always trust Christ's promises"
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs
"singing all sorts of songs to praise God." Some interpreters believe that "psalms," "hymns," and "spiritual songs" all refer to different psalms in the book of Psalms.
psalms
These are probably songs from the Old Testament book of Psalms that Christians sang.
with thankfulness in your hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds or inner beings. Alternate translation: "with thankfulness in your minds" or "being thankful"
Colossians 3:17
in word or in deed
"in speaking or in acting"
in the name of the Lord Jesus
Acting in the name of a person here is a metonym for acting to help other people think well of that person. Alternate translation: "to honor the Lord Jesus" or "so that others will know you belong to the Lord Jesus and will think well of him" or "as if the Lord Jesus himself were doing it"
through him
Possible meanings are 1) because he has done great deeds or 2) because he has made it possible for people to speak to God and so give him thanks.
Colossians 3:18
Connecting Statement:

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Paul begins to give special instructions to wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves, and masters.

Wives, submit to

"Wives, obey"

it is appropriate

"it is proper" or "it is right"

Colossians 3:19

do not be bitter against

"do not be harsh with" or "do not be angry at"

Colossians 3:21

do not provoke your children

"do not needlessly make your children angry"

Colossians 3:22

obey your masters according to the flesh

"obey your human masters"

things, not with eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with a sincere heart

"things. Do not obey only when your master is watching, as though you need only to please people, but be sincere"

with a sincere heart

"Heart" here is a metonym for a person's thoughts or intentions. Alternate translation: "with all honest intentions" or "with sincerity"

Colossians 3:23

as to the Lord

"as you would work for the Lord"

Colossians 3:24

the reward of the inheritance

"the inheritance as your reward"

inheritance

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

Colossians 3:25

anyone who does unrighteousness will receive the penalty

The phrase "receive the penalty" means to be punished. Alternate translation: "anyone who does unrighteousness will be punished" or "God will punish anyone who does what is unrighteous"

who does unrighteousness

who actively does wrong of any kind

there is no partiality

The abstract noun "partiality" can be expressed with the verb "favor." To favor some people is to judge them by different standards so the result is better for them than for others who do the same actions. Alternate translation: "God does not favor anyone" or "God judges everyone by the same standard"

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4 [1]Masters, give to slaves what is right and fair, knowing you also have a Master in heaven.

[2]Continue steadfastly in prayer, staying alert in it in thanksgiving,[3]praying together for us also, that God would open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which also I have been in chains.[4]Pray that I may make it clear, as I ought to speak.
[5]Walk in wisdom toward those outside, and redeem the time.[6]Let your words always be with grace. Let them be seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

[7]As for all the things concerning me, Tychicus will make them known to you. He is a beloved brother, faithful servant, and fellow slave in the Lord.[8]I have sent him to you for this, that you might know the matters about us, and so that he may encourage your hearts.[1][9]I have sent him together with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you everything that has happened here.

[10]Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, as well as Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received orders; if he comes to you, receive him),[11]and also Jesus who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcision are my fellow workers for the kingdom of God. They have been a comfort to me.
[12]Epaphras greets you. He is one of you and a slave of Christ Jesus. He always strives for you in prayer, so that you may stand complete and fully assured in all the will of God.[13]For I can testify that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis.[14]Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.
[15]Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nympha, and the church that is in her house.[16]When this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.[17]Say to Archippus, "Look to the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you should fulfill it."

[18]This greeting is with my own hand—Paul. Remember my chains. May grace be with you.

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[1]There are some important and ancient Greek copies, along with some ancient translations of the Greek, that read, I sent him to you for this, that he might know the matters about you, and that he may encourage your hearts.

Colossians 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Colossians 4:1 appears to belong with the topics of Chapter 3 instead of Chapter 4.

Special concepts in this chapter

"In my own hand"

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

It was common in the ancient Near East for the author to speak and someone else to write down the words. Many of the New Testament letters were written this way. Paul wrote the final greeting himself.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Secret truth

Paul refers to a "secret truth" in this chapter. The role of the church in the plans of God was once unknown. But God has now revealed it. Part of this involves the Gentiles having equal standing with the Jews in the plans of God. (See: reveal)

Links:

Colossians 4:1 Notes

Colossians 4:1

Connecting Statement:

After speaking to masters, Paul ends his special instructions to the different kinds of believers in the church at Colossae.

right and fair

These words mean almost the same thing and are used to emphasize the things that are morally correct.

you also have a Master in heaven

Paul implies that God, as the Master in heaven, will give his servants what is right and fair. This could be blessing for the earthly master who treats his servants kindly or punishment for the earthly master who treats his servants unkindly. Alternate translation: "you also have a Master, who is God in heaven"

Colossians 4:2

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to give instructions to believers on how to live and speak.

Continue steadfastly in prayer

"Keep praying faithfully" or "Keep praying consistently"

Colossians 4:3

General Information:

Here the word "us" refers to Paul and Timothy but not the Colossians.

God would open a door to us

Opening a door for someone is a metaphor for giving that person the opportunity to do something. Alternate translation: "God would provide opportunities for us"

open a door to us for the word

"make an opportunity for us to preach his message"

the mystery of Christ

This refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ, which was not understood before Christ came.

for which also I have been in chains

Here "in chains" is a metonym for being in prison, though Paul probably also was physically attached to a chain. Paul was in chains because he told people about the mystery of Christ. Alternate translation: "It is for proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ that I am now in prison"

Colossians 4:4

Pray that I may make it clear

"Pray that I might be able to speak the message of Jesus Christ clearly"

Colossians 4:5

Walk in wisdom toward those outside

The idea of walking is often used for the idea of conducting one's life. Alternate translation: "Live in such a way that those who are not believers will see that you are wise"

redeem the time

To "redeem" something means to restore it to its rightful owner. Here time is spoken of as something that can be restored and used to serve God. Alternate translation: "do the best things you can with your time" or "put the time to its best use"

Colossians 4:6

Let your words always be with grace. Let them be seasoned with salt

Food with salt is a metaphor for words that teach others and that others enjoy hearing. Alternate translation: "Let your conversation always be gracious and attractive"

so that you may know how you should answer

"so that you may know how to answer questions from anyone about Jesus Christ" or "so that you may be able to treat every person well"

Colossians 4:7

Connecting Statement:

Paul closes with special instructions about certain people as well as greetings to and from individual believers.

all the things concerning me

"everything that has been happening to me"

fellow slave

"fellow servant." Though Paul is a free man, he sees himself as a servant of Christ and sees Tychicus as a fellow servant.

Colossians 4:8

about us

These words do not include the Colossians.

may encourage your hearts

The heart was thought to be the center of many emotions. Alternate translation: "may encourage you"

Colossians 4:9

General Information:

Onesimus was a slave of Philemon in Colossae. He had stolen money from Philemon and run away to Rome where he became a Christian through the ministry of Paul. Now Tychicus and Onesimus are the ones bringing Paul's letter to Colossae along with a letter from Paul to Philemon asking him to send Onesimus back to Paul.

the faithful and beloved brother

Paul calls Onesimus a fellow Christian and servant of Christ.

They will make known

"Tychicus and Onesimus will make known"

everything that has happened here

All that is taking place where Paul is currently living. Tradition says Paul was in Rome under house arrest or in prison at this time.

Colossians 4:10

Aristarchus

He was in prison with Paul in Ephesus when Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians.

if he comes

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

"if Mark comes"

Colossians 4:11

Jesus who is called Justus

This is a man who also worked with Paul.

These alone of the circumcision are my fellow workers for the kingdom of God

Paul uses "circumcision" here to refer to Jews because, under the Old Testament law, all male Jews had to be circumcised. Alternate translation: "These three men are the only Jewish believers working with me to proclaim God as king through Christ Jesus"

These alone of the circumcision

"These men—Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus—alone of the circumcision"

Colossians 4:12

Epaphras

Epaphras was the man who had preached the good news to the people in Colossae (Colossians 1:7).

one of you

"from your city" or "your fellow townsman"

a slave of Christ Jesus

"a committed disciple of Christ Jesus"

always strives for you in prayer

"earnestly prays for you"

you may stand complete and fully assured

"you may stand mature and confident"

Colossians 4:13

General Information:

Laodicea and Hierapolis were towns close to Colossae.

Colossians 4:14

Demas

This man was one of Paul's co-workers.

Colossians 4:15

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

in Laodicea

a city very close to Colossae where there was also a church

Nympha, and the church that is in her house

A woman named Nympha hosted a house church. Alternate translation: "Nympha and the group of believers that meets in her house"

Colossians 4:17

Say to Archippus, "Look to the ministry that you have received in the Lord, that you should fulfill it

Paul reminds Archippus of the task God had given him and that he, Archippus, was under obligation to the Lord to fulfill it. The words "Look," "you have received," and "you should fulfill" all refer to Archippus and should be singular.

Colossians 4:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul closes his letter with a greeting written in his own handwriting.

Remember my chains

The word "chains" is a metaphor that Paul uses to indicate that he is in prison, but it is also likely that he was literally attached to a chain. Alternate translation: "Remember me and pray for me while I am in prison"

May grace be with you

Here "grace" stands for God, who shows grace or acts kindly to believers. Alternate translation: "I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ would continue to act graciously toward you all"

Introduction to 1 Thessalonians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 1 Thessalonians

Greeting (1:1) Prayer of thanksgiving for the Thessalonian Christians (1:2-10) Paul's ministry in Thessalonica (2:1-16) Paul's concerns for their spiritual growth Like a mother (2:7) Like a father (2:11) Paul sends Timothy to the Thessalonians and Timothy reports back to Paul (3:1-13) Practical instructions Live to please God (4:1-12) Comfort regarding those who have died (4:12-18) Christ's return is a motive for godly living (5:1-11)

Closing blessings, thanks, and prayers (5:12-28)

Who wrote 1 Thessalonians?

Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul wrote this letter while staying in the city of Corinth. Of all Paul's letters that are in the Bible, many scholars think 1 Thessalonians was the first letter Paul wrote.

What is the Book of 1 Thessalonians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the believers in the city of Thessalonica. He wrote it after the Jews in the city forced him to leave. In this letter he said he considered his visit to them a success, even though he was forced to leave.

Paul responded to the news from Timothy about the Thessalonian believers. The believers there were being persecuted. He encouraged them to continue living in a way that pleased God. He also comforted them by explaining what happens to those who die before Christ returns.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "1 Thessalonians" or "First Thessalonians." They may instead prefer to choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's First Letter to the Church in Thessalonica," or "The First Letter to

the Christians in Thessalonica."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the "second coming" of Jesus?

Paul wrote much in this letter about Jesus's eventual return to Earth. When Jesus returns, he will judge all mankind. He will also rule over creation, and there will be peace everywhere.

What happens to those who die before the return of Christ?

Paul made clear that those who die before Christ's return will come back to life and be with Jesus. They will not remain dead forever. Paul wrote this to encourage the Thessalonians. For some of them worried that those who died would miss the great day when Jesus returns.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 Thessalonians?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"May grace and peace be to you" (1:1). Some older translations read: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." "Instead, we were as gentle among you as a mother comforting her own children." (2:7) Other modern versions and older translations read, "Instead, we were like babies among you, as when a mother comforts her own children." "Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God" (3:2). Some other translations read: "Timothy, our brother and servant of God."

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1 Thessalonians

1 [1]Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: May grace and peace be to you.[1]

[2]We always give thanks to God for all of you as we mention you continually in our prayers.[3]We remember before our God and Father your work of faith, labor of love, and patient endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
[4]Brothers loved by God, we know he has chosen you,[5]because our gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance. In the same way, you also know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.
[6]You became imitators of us and of the Lord when you received the word in much tribulation with joy from the Holy Spirit.[7]As a result, you became an example to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe.
[8]For from you the word of the Lord has rung out, and not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone out everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it.[9]For they themselves report concerning us what kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from the idols to serve the living and true God,[10]and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, May grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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1 Thessalonians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verse 1 formally introduces this letter. Letters in the ancient Near East commonly had introductions of this type.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hardship

Other people persecuted the Christians in Thessalonica. But the Christians there handled it well.

Links:

1 Thessalonians 1:1 Notes 1 Thessalonians intro

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1 Thessalonians 1:1

General Information:

Paul identifies himself as the writer of the letter and greets the church at Thessalonica.

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy to the church

The UDB makes clear that it was Paul who wrote this letter.

May grace and peace be to you

The terms "grace" and "peace" are metonyms for the person who acts toward people in a kindly and peaceful manner. Alternate translation: "May God be kind to you and give you peace"

peace be to you

The word "you" refers to the Thessalonian believers.

1 Thessalonians 1:2

General Information:

In this letter the words "we" and "us" refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Also, the word "you" is plural and refers to the believers at the church of Thessalonica.

We always give thanks to God

Here "always" suggests that when Paul prays to God, he consistently presents the Thessalonians to God in his prayers.

we mention you continually in our prayers

"we continually pray for you"

1 Thessalonians 1:3

your work of faith, labor of love, and patient endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ

"what you have done because you have faith in God, the hard work you have done because you love others, and how you always continued to hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"

patient endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ

The Thessalonians confidently expected that Jesus would do all that he promised to do. Alternate translation: "firmness of your trust in our Lord Jesus Christ" or "continual trust in our Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Thessalonians 1:4

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to give thanks for the believers at Thessalonica and praises them for their faith in God.

Brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

we know

The word "we" refers to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy but not the Thessalonian believers.

1 Thessalonians 1:5

not in word only

"not only in what we said"

but also in power, in the Holy Spirit

Possible meanings are 1) the Holy Spirit gave Paul and his companions the ability to preach the gospel powerfully or 2) the Holy Spirit made the preaching of the gospel have a powerful effect among the Thessalonian believers or 3) the Holy Spirit demonstrated the truth of the gospel preaching by means of miracles, signs, and wonders.

power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance

The abstract noun "assurance" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "power and in the Holy Spirit, and God made you sure that it was true"

what kind of men

"how we conducted ourselves when"

1 Thessalonians 1:6

You became imitators

To "imitate" means to act like or to copy the behavior of another.

received the word

"welcomed the message" or "accepted what we had to say"

in much tribulation

"during a time of great suffering" or "in much persecution"

1 Thessalonians 1:7

Achaia

This is an ancient district in what is present-day Greece.

1 Thessalonians 1:8

the word of the Lord has rung out

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "the Lord's teachings have rung out"

has rung out

Here Paul speaks of the Christian witness produced by the Thessalonian believers as if it were a bell that was rung or a musical instrument that was being played.

1 Thessalonians 1:9

For they themselves

Paul is referring to the churches that already existed in the surrounding regions, who have heard about the Thessalonian believers.

they themselves

Here "themselves" is used to emphasize those people who had heard about the Thessalonian believers.

what kind of reception we had among you

The abstract noun "reception" can be expressed as the verb "receive" or "welcome." Alternate translation: "how warmly you received us" or "how warmly you welcomed us"

you turned to God from the idols to serve the living and true God

Here "turned to ... from" is a metaphor that means to start being loyal to one person and stop being loyal to someone else. Alternate translation: "you stopped worshiping idols and started serving the living and true God"

1 Thessalonians 1:10

his Son

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

whom he raised from the dead

"whom God caused to live again so that he was no longer dead." The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again.

who rescues us

Here Paul includes the Thessalonian believers.

[1]For you yourselves know, brothers, that our coming to you was not useless.[2]Rather, as you know, though we previously suffered and were shamefully treated at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggling.
[3]For our exhortation was not from error, nor from uncleanness, nor from deceit.[4]Instead, just as we have been approved by God to be trusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but God. He is the one who examines our hearts.
[5]For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext to cover up greed—God is our witness.[6]Nor did we seek glory from people, either from you or from others.
[7]We could have claimed privileges as apostles of Christ.[1] Instead, we were as gentle among you as a mother comforting her own children.[2][8]In this way we had affection for you. We were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives. For you had become very dear to us.[9]For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil. Night and day we were working so that we might not be a burden to any of you as we preached to you the gospel of God.
[10]You are witnesses, and God also, how holy, righteous, and blameless was our behavior toward you who believe.[11]In the same way you know how we were with each one of you, as a father with his own children,[12]exhorting you and comforting you and urging you to walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

[13]For this reason we also thank God constantly, that when you received God's message that you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of man, but just as it truly is, the word of God, which is also at work in you who believe.
[14]For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God that are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, as they did from the Jews[15]who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and who drove us out. They do not please God. Instead, they are hostile to all people.[16]They forbid us to speak to the Gentiles for them to be saved. The result is that they always fill up their sins to the limit. But wrath will overtake them in the end.

[17]But we, brothers, were separated from you for a short time, in person not in heart. We were especially eager, with great desire, to see your faces.[18]For we wished to come to you—indeed I, Paul, once and again—but Satan stopped us.[19]For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?[20]For you are our glory and joy.

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[1]Many copies include this sentence in verse 6.
[2]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Instead, we were like babies among you, as when a mother comforts her own children.

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1 Thessalonians 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Christian witness

Paul values his "Christian witness" as evidence that the gospel is true. Paul says that being godly or holy bears witness to the non-Christian. Paul defends his character so that his witness is not affected. (See: testimony and godly and holy)

Links:

1 Thessalonians 2:1 Notes

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1 Thessalonians 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to remind the Thessalonians of how he behaved when he was with them.

you yourselves

The words "you" and "yourselves" refer to the Thessalonian believers.

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

our coming

The word "our" refers to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy but not the Thessalonian believers.

was not useless

This can be expressed in a positive manner. Alternate translation: "was very worthwhile"

1 Thessalonians 2:2

previously suffered and were shamefully treated

"were mistreated and insulted"

in much struggling

"while struggling under great opposition"

1 Thessalonians 2:3

was not from error, nor from uncleanness, nor from deceit

"was truthful, pure, and honest"

uncleanness

Ritual uncleanness here is a metaphor for guilt from having committed sin.

1 Thessalonians 2:4

approved by God to be trusted

Paul was tested and proven trustworthy by God.

we speak

Paul is referring to preaching the gospel message.

who examines our hearts

The word "hearts" is a metonym for a person's desires and thoughts. Alternate translation: "who knows our desires and thoughts"

1 Thessalonians 2:5

General Information:

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Paul tells the Thessalonian believers that his conduct was not based in flattery, greed, or self glory.

we never came with words of flattery

"we never spoke to you with false praise"

1 Thessalonians 2:6

Nor did we seek glory from people

"And we did not try to make people praise us"

1 Thessalonians 2:7

as a mother comforting her own children

Just as a mother gently comforts her children, so Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy spoke gently to the Thessalonian believers.

1 Thessalonians 2:8

In this way we had affection for you

"This is how we demonstrated our affection for you"

we had affection for you

"we loved you"

We were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives

Paul speaks of the gospel message and his life and the lives of those with him as if they were a physical object that one could share with others. Alternate translation: "We were pleased not only to tell you the gospel of God but also to spend time with you and to help you"

you had become very dear to us

"we cared for you deeply"

1 Thessalonians 2:9

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

our labor and toil

The words "labor" and "toil" mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them to emphasize how hard they worked. Alternate translation: "how hard we worked"

Night and day we were working so that we might not be a burden to any of you

"We worked hard to make our own living so you would not need to support us"

1 Thessalonians 2:10

holy, righteous, and blameless

Paul uses three words that describe their good behavior toward the Thessalonian believers.

1 Thessalonians 2:11

as a father with his own children

Paul compares how he encouraged the Thessalonians to a father gently teaching his children how to behave.

1 Thessalonians 2:12

exhorting you and comforting you and urging you

The words "exhorting," "comforting," and "urging" are used together to express how passionately Paul's group exhorted the Thessalonians. Alternate translation: "strongly exhorted you"

into his own kingdom and glory

The word "glory" describes the word "kingdom." Alternate translation: "into his own glorious kingdom"

to walk in a manner that is worthy of God

"Walk" here is an metaphor for "live." Alternate translation: "to live so that people will think well of God"

1 Thessalonians 2:13

General Information:

Paul continues to use "we" to refer to himself and his traveling companions and "you" to the Thessalonian believers.

we also thank God constantly

Paul often thanks God for their acceptance of the gospel message he shared with them.

not as the word of man

"Word of man" here is a synecdoche for "a message that comes simply from a man." Alternate translation: "not a message that is made up by a man"

the word of God

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "the message that comes from God"

which is also at work in you who believe

Paul speaks of God's gospel message as if it were a person who was doing work. Alternate translation: "which those of you who believe are listening to and beginning to obey"

1 Thessalonians 2:14

brothers

Here this means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

became imitators of the churches

"became like the churches." The Thessalonian believers endured persecutions similar to those of the Judean believers.

from your own countrymen

"from other Thessalonians"

1 Thessalonians 2:16

They forbid us to speak

"They try to make us stop speaking"

they always fill up their sins

Paul speaks as though someone can fill a container with his sins as with liquid.

wrath will overtake them in the end

This refers to God finally judging and punishing people for their sins.

1 Thessalonians 2:17

brothers

This means fellow Christians, including both men and women.

in person not in heart

Here "heart" represents thoughts and emotions. Though Paul and those traveling with him were not present physically in Thessalonica, they continued to care and think about the believers there. Alternate translation: "in person, but we continued to think about you"

to see your faces

Here "face" represents the entire person. Alternate translation: "to see you" or "to be with you"

1 Thessalonians 2:19

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

Paul uses rhetorical questions to emphasize the reasons he wants to come see the Thessalonian believers. Alternate translation: "For you are our hope, our joy, and our crown of pride in front our Lord Jesus at his coming."

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

generated on Thu Mar 19 12:25:15 2026

The Thessalonians are the reason that Paul and his fellow workers have hope and joy. Here "hope" means "certain expectation." Paul is certain that his work among them will be succesful and that they will be with him at Christ's return. Alternate translation: "For what is the reason that we can be hopeful or joyful? What is our crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?" or "For you are the reason that we are hopeful and joyful. You are our crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming."

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of pride in front of our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

Here "crown" refers to a laurel wreath awarded to victorious athletes. Here it is a metaphor meaning that the Thessalonians are the the symbol that Paul's work was successful. Paul will be proud of them when they stand before Christ. Alternate translation: "For what is the reason we are hopeful and joyful. What is the reason that we can be proud of what we accomplished when we stand before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?" or "For you are the reason that we are hopeful and joyful. You are our reason for being proud of what we accomplished when we stand before our Lord Jesus at his coming."

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3 [1]Therefore, when we could no longer bear it, we thought it was good to be left behind at Athens alone.[2]We sent
Timothy, our brother and fellow worker for God in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and comfort you regarding your faith,[1][3]so that no one would be shaken by these tribulations. For you yourselves know that for this we have been appointed.
[4]Truly, when we were with you, we told you in advance that we were about to suffer affliction, and it happened just so, as you know.[5]For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent that I might know about your faith. Perhaps the tempter had somehow tempted you, and our labor was in vain.
[6]But Timothy came to us from you and brought us the good news of your faith and love. He told us that you always have good memories of us, and that you long to see us just as we also long to see you.[7]Because of this, brothers, we were comforted by you because of your faith, in all our distress and affliction.
[8]For now we live, if you stand firm in the Lord.[9]For what thanks can we give to God for you, for all the joy that we have before our God over you?[10]Night and day we pray very hard that we may see your face and provide what is lacking in your faith.

[11]May our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you.[12]May the Lord make you increase and abound in love one for another and toward all people, as we also do for you.[13]May he strengthen your hearts so that they will be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy people.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, We sent Timothy, our brother and God's servant in the gospel of Christ.

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1 Thessalonians 3:1

we could no longer bear it

"we could no longer endure worrying about you"

good to be left behind at Athens alone

"good for Silvanus and me to stay behind in Athens"

it was good

"it was proper" or "it was reasonable"

Athens

Athens was a city in the the Roman province of Achaia [1 Thessalonians 1:7-8]

1 Thessalonians 3:2

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells the believers he has sent Timothy to strengthen their faith.

our brother and fellow worker

These two expressions both describe Timothy.

1 Thessalonians 3:3

no one would be shaken

To be shaken is an idiom for being afraid. Alternate translation: "no one would be frightened away from trusting in Christ"

we have been appointed

Paul assumes that everyone knows that it was God who appointed them. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "God has appointed us"

1 Thessalonians 3:4

Truly

This word marks that there is more to the truth than what has just been said. Alternate translation: "Moreover"

to suffer affliction

"to be mistreated by others"

1 Thessalonians 3:5

I could no longer endure it

Paul is describing his own emotions by using an idiom. Alternate translation: "I could not continue to wait patiently"

I sent

It is implied that Paul sent Timothy. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I sent Timothy"

our labor

"our hard work among you" or "our teaching among you"

in vain

"useless"

1 Thessalonians 3:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells his readers what Timothy reported when he returned from visiting them.

came to us

The word "us" refers to Paul and Silvanus.

the good news of your faith

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It is understood that this refers to faith in Christ. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "a good report of your faith"

you always have good memories

When they think of Paul, they always have good thoughts about him.

you long to see us

"you desire to see us"

1 Thessalonians 3:7

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

because of your faith

This refers to faith in Christ. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "because of your faith in Christ"

in all our distress and affliction

The word "affliction" explains why they are in "distress." Alternate translation: "in all our distress caused by our afflictions"

1 Thessalonians 3:8

we live

This is an idiom that expresses living a satisfied life. Alternate translation: "we are very encouraged"

if you stand firm in the Lord

To "stand firm" is an idiom meaning to continue being faithful. Alternate translation: "if you continue to trust in the Lord"

1 Thessalonians 3:9

For what thanks can we give to God for you, for all the joy that we have before our God over you?

This rhetorical question can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "We cannot thank God enough for what he has done for you! We greatly rejoice over you when we pray to our God!"

before our God

Paul speaks as if he and his companions were physically in God's presence. He is probably referring to the activity of praying.

1 Thessalonians 3:10

very hard

"fervently"

see your face

The word "face" refers to their whole person. Alternate translation: "visit you"

1 Thessalonians 3:11

May our God ... our Lord Jesus

Paul includes the Thessalonian believers with his ministry team.

May our God

"We pray that our God"

direct our way to you

Paul speaks as if he wants God to show him and his companions the route to take to visit the Thessalonian Christians. He means that he wants God to make it possible for them to do so.

direct our way to you

The word "our" refers to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy but not the Thessalonian believers.

Father himself

Here "himself" refers back to "Father" for emphasis.

1 Thessalonians 3:12

increase and abound in love

Paul speaks of love as an object that one could obtain more of.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

strengthen your hearts so that they will be

Here "heart" is a metonym for one's beliefs and convictions. Alternate translation: "strenghten you so that you will be"

at the coming of our Lord Jesus

"when Jesus comes back to earth"

with all his holy people

"with all those who belong to him"

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4 [1]Finally, brothers, we earnestly appeal to you and exhort you in the Lord Jesus. As you received instructions from us about how you must walk and please God, also in this way walk, so that you do so even more.[2]For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.
[3]For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you avoid sexual immorality,[4]that each of you knows how to possess his own vessel in holiness and honor,[5]not in the passion of lust (as the Gentiles who do not know God).[6]Let no man transgress and wrong his brother in this matter. For the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we forewarned you and testified.
[7]For God did not call us to uncleanness, but to holiness.[8]Therefore, he who rejects this rejects not people, but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

[9]Regarding brotherly love, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.[10]Indeed, you do this for all the brothers who are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brothers, to do this even more.[11]We also exhort you to aspire to live quietly, take care of your own responsibilities, and labor with your hands, just as we commanded you,[12]so that you may walk properly before outsiders and not be in any need.

[13]We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who sleep, so that you do not grieve like the rest, who do not have hope.[14]For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.[15]For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left at the coming of the Lord, will surely not go before those who have fallen asleep.
[16]For the Lord himself will descend from heaven. He will come with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.[17]Then we who are alive, who are left, will together with them be

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caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. In this way we will always be with the Lord.[18]Therefore, comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sexual immorality

Different cultures have different standards of sexual morality. These different cultural standards may make translating this passage difficult. Translators must also be aware of cultural taboos. These are topics considered improper to discuss.

Dying before the return of Christ

In the early church, people apparently wondered what would happen if a believer died before Christ returned. They may have worried whether those dying before Christ returned would be part of the kingdom of God. Paul answers that concern.

"Caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"

This passage refers to a time when Jesus calls to himself those who have believed in him. Scholars differ on whether or not this refers to Christ's final glorious return. (See: believe)

Links:

1 Thessalonians 4:1 Notes

1 Thessalonians 4:1

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

we earnestly appeal to you and exhort you

Paul uses "earnestly appeal to" and "exhort" to emphasize how strongly they exhort the believers. Alternate translation: "we strongly exhort you"

you received instructions from us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we taught you"

you must walk

Here "walk" is an expression for the way one is to live. Alternate translation: "you ought to live"

1 Thessalonians 4:2

through the Lord Jesus

Paul speaks of his instructions as if they were given by Jesus himself.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

you avoid sexual immorality

"you stay away from sexually immoral acts"

1 Thessalonians 4:4

knows how to possess his own vessel

Possible meanings are 1) "know how to live with his own wife" or 2) "know how to control his own body"

1 Thessalonians 4:5

in the passion of lust

"with wrongful sexual desire"

1 Thessalonians 4:6

no man

Here "man" refers to a man or a woman. "no one" or "no person"

transgress and wrong his brother

Possible meanings: 1) The words "transgress" and "wrong" are a doublet that emphasizes the idea of harming the brother. Alternate translation: "do very wrong things to his brother" 2) The word "transgress" refers to sinning against God, and "wrong his brother" refers to harming the brother. Alternate translation: "do what God had forbidden and wrong his brother"

the Lord is an avenger

This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the Lord will punish the one who transgressed and will defend the one who was wronged"

forewarned you and testified

"told you beforehand and strongly warned against"

1 Thessalonians 4:7

God did not call us to uncleanness, but to holiness

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God called us to cleanness and holiness"

God did not call us

The word "us" refers to all believers.

1 Thessalonians 4:8

he who rejects this

"whoever disregards this teaching" or "whoever ignores this teaching"

rejects not people, but God

Paul stresses that this teaching is not from man, but from God.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

brotherly love

"love for fellow believers"

1 Thessalonians 4:10

you do this for all the brothers who are in all Macedonia

"you show love to the believers throughout Macedonia"

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

1 Thessalonians 4:11

to aspire

"to try to"

live quietly

Paul uses the word "quietly" as a metaphor to describe living at peace in one's community and not causing strife. Alternate translation: "live in a calm and orderly way"

take care of your own responsibilities

"do your own work" or "take care of the things that you are responsible for" or "do the things that you are responsible

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to do." This may also imply that we should not gossip and interfere in other people's concerns.

labor with your hands

This is a metaphor for living a productive life. Alternate translation: "work at your own jobs to earn what you need to live"

1 Thessalonians 4:12

walk properly

Here "walk" is a metaphor for "live" or "behave." Alternate translation: "behave properly"

properly

in a way that shows respect to others and earns their respect

before outsiders

Paul speaks of those who do not believe in Christ as if they are outside, in a place away from the believers. Alternate translation: "in the sight of those who do not believe in Christ"

1 Thessalonians 4:13

General Information:

Paul talks about believers who have died, those who are now alive, and those who will be alive when Christ returns.

We do not want you to be uninformed

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "We want you to be informed" or "We want you to know"

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

those who sleep

Here "sleep" is a euphemism for being dead. Alternate translation: "those who have died"

so that you do not grieve like the rest

"because we do not want you grieve like the rest"

grieve

mourn, be sad about something

like the rest, who do not have hope

Here "hope" means a certainty about the future. What those people do not have confidence about can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "like people who do not have confidence in the future promise" or "like the people who are not sure that they will rise from the dead"

1 Thessalonians 4:14

if we believe

Here "we" refers to Paul and his audience.

rose again

"rose to live again"

those who have fallen asleep in him

Here "fallen asleep" is a polite way to refer to having died.

1 Thessalonians 4:15

by the word of the Lord

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "by means of understanding the teachings of the Lord"

at the coming of the Lord

"when the Lord returns"

1 Thessalonians 4:16

the Lord himself will descend

"the Lord himself will come down"

the archangel

"the chief angel"

the dead in Christ will rise first

The "dead in Christ" are those believers who have passed away. Alternate translation: "those who believe in Jesus Christ, but who have already died, will rise first"

1 Thessalonians 4:17

we who are alive

Here "we" refers to all believers who have not died.

with them

The word "them" refers to the dead believers who were made alive again.

be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air

"meet the Lord Jesus in the sky"

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5 [1]Now concerning the times and seasons, brothers, you have no need that anything be written to you.[2]For you yourselves know perfectly well that the day of the Lord is coming like a thief in the night.[3]When they say, "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction will come on them. It will be like birth pains in a pregnant woman. They will in no way escape.
[4]But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that the day would overtake you like a thief.[5]For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We are not sons of the night or the darkness.[6]So then, let us not sleep as the rest do. Instead, let us keep watch and be sober.[7]For those who sleep do so at night, and those who get drunk do so at night.
[8]But since we belong to the day, we must stay sober and put on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation for our helmet.[9]For God did not appoint us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,[10]who died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.[11]Therefore comfort one another and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

[12]We earnestly appeal to you, brothers, to acknowledge those who labor among you and who rule over you in the Lord and who instruct you,[13]and to esteem them highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.[14]We exhort you, brothers: Warn those who are lazy, encourage the discouraged, help the weak, and be patient toward all.
[15]See that no one pays back evil for evil to anyone. Instead, pursue what is good for one another and for all.[16]Rejoice always.[17]Pray without ceasing.[18]In everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
[19]Do not quench the Spirit.[20]Do not despise prophecies.[21]Test all things. Hold firmly to what is good.[22]Keep away from every kind of evil.

[23]May the God of peace sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.[24]Faithful is he who calls you, the one who will also do it.

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[25]Brothers, pray also for us.
[26]Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.[27]I command you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.
[28]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

1 Thessalonians 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul concludes his letter in a way that was typical of letters in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Day of the Lord

The exact time of the coming day of the Lord will be a surprise to the world. This is what the simile "like a thief in the night" means. Because of this, Christians are to live prepared for the coming of the Lord.

Quench the Spirit

To quench the Spirit is to ignore or work against the Holy Spirit's guidance and work.

Links:

1 Thessalonians 5:1 Notes

1 Thessalonians 5:1

General Information:

In this chapter the words "we" and "us" refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Also, the word "you" is plural and refers to the believers at the church of Thessalonica.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues talking about the day Jesus will come back.

concerning the times and seasons

This is a figurative expression which states the same idea twice. It refers to the time when the Lord Jesus will return. Alternate Translation: "the exact time that the Lord will return."

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

perfectly well

"very well" or "accurately"

like a thief in the night

Just as one does not know which night a thief may come, we do not know when the day of the Lord will come. Alternate translation: "unexpectedly"

1 Thessalonians 5:3

When they say

"When the people say"

then sudden destruction

"then unexpected destruction"

like birth pains in a pregnant woman

Just as a pregnant woman's birth pains come suddenly and do not stop until the birth is complete, the destruction will come, and people will not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:4

you, brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

are not in darkness

Paul speaks of evil and ignorance about God as if they were darkness. Alternate translation: "you are not unknowing, like people who live in the dark"

so that the day would overtake you like a thief

The Lord will come on a day when believers will not expect him to come, but that day will not "overtake" them—God will not destroy them on that day—because they will be ready for Jesus to return.

1 Thessalonians 5:5

For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day

Paul speaks of the truth as if it were light and day. Alternate translation: "For you know the truth, like people who live in the light, like people during the day"

We are not sons of the night or the darkness

Paul speaks of evil and ignorance about God as if they were darkness. Alternate translation: We are not unknowing, like people who live in the darkness, like people at night"

1 Thessalonians 5:6

let us not sleep as the rest do

Paul speaks of spiritual unawareness as if it were sleep. Alternate translation: "let us not be like others who are not aware that Jesus is coming back"

let us

The word "us" refers to all believers.

keep watch and be sober

Paul describes spiritual awareness as the opposite of sleep and drunkenness.

1 Thessalonians 5:7

For those who sleep do so at night

Just as when people sleep and do not know what is happening, so the people of this world do not know that Christ will return.

those who get drunk do so at night

Paul is stating that it is at night when people become drunk, so when people are unaware of Christ's return they do not live a self-controlled life.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

General Information:

In verses 8-10 the word "we" refers to all believers.

we belong to the day

Paul speaks of knowing the truth about God as belonging to the day. Alternate translation: "we know the truth" or "we have received the light of truth"

we must stay sober

Paul compares being sober to exercising self-control. Alternate translation: "let us exercise self-control"

put on faith and love as a breastplate

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As a soldier would put on a breastplate to protect his body, a believer who lives by faith and love will find protection. Alternate translation: "protect ourselves with faith and love" or "protect ourselves by trusting Christ and loving him"

the hope of salvation for our helmet

Here "hope of salvation" means a certainty that Jesus will save his people. Here "helmet" is a metaphor. As a helmet protects a soldier's head, assurance of salvation protects the believer. Alternate translation: "protect ourselves by being certain that Christ will save us"

1 Thessalonians 5:10

whether we are awake or asleep

These are polite ways of saying alive or dead. Alternate translation: "whether we are alive or dead"

1 Thessalonians 5:11

build each other up

Here "build" is a metaphor that means encourage. Alternate translation: "encourage each other"

1 Thessalonians 5:12

General Information:

Paul begins to give his final instructions to the church in Thessalonica.

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow believers.

to acknowledge those who labor

"to esteem and appreciate those who are involved in leading"

who rule over you in the Lord

This refers to people God appointed to serve as leaders of the local group of believers.

1 Thessalonians 5:13

esteem them highly in love because of their work

Paul exhorts the believers to respect and love their church leaders.

1 Thessalonians 5:16

Rejoice always

Paul is exhorting the believers to maintain a spiritual attitude of rejoicing in all things.

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Pray without ceasing

Paul is exhorting the believers to be vigilant in prayer.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

In everything give thanks

Paul is exhorting the believers to express thankfulness in all things.

In everything

In all circumstances

For this is the will of God

Paul is referring to the behavior he just mentioned as being God's will for the believers.

1 Thessalonians 5:19

Do not quench the Spirit

"Do not stop the Holy Spirit from working among you"

1 Thessalonians 5:20

Do not despise prophecies

"Do not have contempt for prophecies" or "Do not hate anything the Holy Spirit tells someone"

1 Thessalonians 5:21

Test all things

"Make sure that all messages that seem to come from God truly come from him"

Hold firmly to what is good

Paul speaks of messages from the Holy Spirit as if they were objects that one could grasp in his hands.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

sanctify you completely

This refers to God making a person sinless and perfect in his sight.

May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless

Here the phrase "spirit, soul, and body" represents the whole person. If your language does not have three words for these parts you can state it as "your whole life" or "you." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God make your whole life without sin" or "May God keep you completely blameless"

1 Thessalonians 5:24

Faithful is he who calls you

"He is faithful who calls you"

the one who will also do it

"he will be helping you"

1 Thessalonians 5:25

General Information:

Paul gives his closing statements.

1 Thessalonians 5:26

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians.

1 Thessalonians 5:27

I command you by the Lord to have this letter read

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I urge you, as if the Lord were speaking to you, to have people read this letter" or "With the authority of the Lord, I direct you to read this letter"

Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 Thessalonians

Greetings and thanksgiving (1:1-3) Christians suffering from persecution They are worthy of the kingdom of God and of his promise of relief from trials (1:4-7) God will judge those who persecute Christians (1:8-12)

Some believers' misunderstanding about the second coming of Christ Christ's return has not yet happened (2:1-2)

Instruction about the events that will precede the return of Christ (2:3-12)

Paul's confidence that God will save the Thessalonian Christians His call to "stand firm" (2:13-15) His prayer that God will comfort them (2:16-17)

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Paul requests that the Thessalonian believers pray for him (3:1-5) Paul give commands about idle believers (3:6-15) Closing (3:16-17)

Who wrote 2 Thessalonians?

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians. He was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

Paul wrote this letter while staying in the city of Corinth.

What is the Book of 2 Thessalonians about?

Paul wrote this letter to the believers in the city of Thessalonica. He encouraged the believers because they were being persecuted. He told them to continue living in a way that pleased God. And he wanted to teach them again about Christ's return.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "2 Thessalonians" or "Second Thessalonians." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Second Letter to the Church in Thessalonica," or "The Second Letter to the Christians in Thessalonica."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the "second coming" of Jesus?

Paul wrote much in this letter about Jesus's eventual return to Earth. When Jesus returns, he will judge all mankind. He will also rule over creation. And he will cause there to be peace everywhere. Paul also explained that a "man of lawlessness" will come before Christ's return. This person will obey Satan and cause many people to oppose God. But Jesus will destroy this person when he returns.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 2 Thessalonians?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"and the man of lawlessness is revealed" (2:3). The ULB and most modern translations read this way. Older versions have, "and the man of sin is revealed." "For God chose you as the firstfruits for salvation" (2:13) The ULB and some other translations read this way. Other versions have, "For God chose you from the first for salvation."

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2 Thessalonians

1 [1]Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

[2]Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3]We should always give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is appropriate, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love each of you has for one another increases.[4]So we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions, and in the tribulations that you are enduring.[5]This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering.
[6]For indeed, it is righteous for God to return affliction to those who afflict you,[7]and relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels[8]in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.
[9]They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.[10]He will do this when he comes on that day to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at by all those who believed, because our testimony to you was believed.
[11]Because of this we also pray continually for you, that our God may consider you worthy of your calling and with his power he may fulfill every good purpose and every work of faith.[12]We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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2 Thessalonians 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Verses 1-2 formally introduce this letter. Letters in the ancient Near East commonly had introductions of this type.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. A paradox occurs in verses 4-5: "We talk about your patience and faith in all your persecutions. We talk about the afflictions that you endure. This is a sign of God's righteous judgment." People would not normally think that believing in God while being persecuted is a sign of God's righteous judgment. But in verses 5-10, Paul explains how God will reward those who believe in him and how he will judge those who afflict them. (2 Thessalonians 1:4-5)

Links:

2 Thessalonians 1:1 Notes

2 Thessalonians intro](../front/intro.md) | [>>

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2 Thessalonians 1:1

General Information:

Paul is the author of this letter, but he includes Silvanus and Timothy as senders of the letter. He begins by greeting the church at Thessalonica. The words "we" and "us" refer to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, unless otherwise noted. Also, the word "you" is plural and refers to the believers at the church of Thessalonica.

Silvanus

This is the Latin form of "Silas." He is the same person listed in the book of Acts as Paul's fellow traveler.

2 Thessalonians 1:2

Grace to you

Paul commonly uses this greeting in his letters.

2 Thessalonians 1:3

General Information:

Paul gives thanks for the believers in Thessalonica.

We should always give thanks to God

Paul uses "always" as a generalization meaning "often" or "regularly. The sentence emphasizes the greatness of what God is doing in the lives of the Thessalonian believers. Alternate translation: "We should often give thanks to God"

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"

the love each of you has for one another increases

"you sincerely love one another"

one another

Here "one another" means fellow Christians.

2 Thessalonians 1:4

we ourselves

Here "ourselves" is used to emphasize Paul's boasting.

2 Thessalonians 1:5

you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will consider you worthy to be part of his kingdom"

2 Thessalonians 1:6

Connecting Statement:

As Paul continues, he talks about God being just.

it is righteous for God

"God is right" or "God is just"

for God to return affliction to those who afflict you

Here "to return" is a metaphor that means to cause someone to experience the same thing they did to someone else. Alternate translation: "for God to afflict those who afflict you"

2 Thessalonians 1:7

and relief to you

These words continue the description of what God is right "to return" to people

relief to you

"for God to provide relief to you"

2 Thessalonians 1:8

in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who

"punishing with blazing fire those who do not know God and those who"

2 Thessalonians 1:10

when he comes on that day

Here "that day" is the day when Jesus will return to the world.

to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at by all those who believed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that his holy people will glorify him and all those who believed will marvel at him" or "so that his people will glorify him and all those who believed will stand in awe of him"

2 Thessalonians 1:11

we also pray continually for you

Paul is emphasizing how often he prays for them. Alternate translation: "we also pray regularly for you" or "we continue to pray for you"

calling

Here "calling" refers to God appointing or choosing people to be his children and servants and to proclaim his message of salvation through Jesus.

fulfill every good purpose

"make you able to do good in every way that you desire"

2 Thessalonians 1:12

that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that you may glorify the name of our Lord Jesus"

and you in him

You may need to make explicit who will glorify the readers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and Jesus will glorify you"

according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ

"because God and the Lord Jesus Christ have given grace to you"

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2 [1]Now about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to be with him, we earnestly appeal to
you, brothers,[2]that you not be easily disturbed or troubled, either by a spirit or by a message, or by a letter that seems
to be coming from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has already come.
[3]Let no one deceive you in any way. For it will not come until after the falling away comes and the man of lawlessness is
revealed, the son of destruction.[1][4]This is he who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is
worshiped. As a result, he sits in the temple of God and exhibits himself as God.
[5]Do you not remember that when I was with you I told you these things?[6]Now you know what restrains him, so that he
will be revealed only at the right time.[7]For the mystery of lawlessness is already working, only there is someone who
restrains him now until he is taken out of the way.
[8]Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring him to
nothing by the revelation of his coming.[9]The coming of the lawless one will be due to the work of Satan with all power,
signs, and false wonders,[10]and with every kind of evil that deceives those who are perishing, because they refused to love
the truth and so be saved.
[11]For this reason God is sending them a powerful delusion so that they will believe a lie[12]and so that they all may be
condemned who did not believe the truth but instead took pleasure in unrighteousness.

[13]But we should always give thanks to God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to
be saved through the sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.[2][14]He called you to this through our gospel, so that
you might obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.[15]So then, brothers, stand firm and hold tightly to the traditions that
you were taught, whether by word or by our letter.

[16]Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope
through grace,[17]comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, and the man of sin is revealed.
[2]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, For God chose you from the first for salvation.

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2 Thessalonians 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

"Being gathered together to be with him"

This passage refers to a time when Jesus calls to himself those who have believed in him. Scholars differ on whether or not this refers to Christ's final glorious return. (See: believe)

Man of lawlessness

This is the same as "son of destruction" and "lawless one" in this chapter. Paul associates him with Satan, who is actively working in the world. (See: antichrist)

Sits in the temple of God

Paul could be referring to the Jerusalem temple that the Romans destroyed several years after he wrote this letter. Or he could be referring to a future physical temple, or to the church as the spiritual temple of God.

Links:

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Notes

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2 Thessalonians 2:1

General Information:

Paul exhorts believers not to be deceived about the day Jesus will come back.

Now

The word "Now" marks a change of topic in Paul's instructions.

brothers

Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"

2 Thessalonians 2:2

that you not be easily disturbed or troubled, either by a spirit or by a message

This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "that no spirit or person easily disturb or trouble you, either by a message"

by a message, or by a letter that seems to be coming from us

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"by spoken word or by written letter that pretends to be coming from us"
to the effect that
"saying that"
the day of the Lord
This refers to the time when Jesus will come back to the earth for all believers.
2 Thessalonians 2:3
General Information:
Paul teaches about the man of lawlessness.
it will not come
"the day of the Lord will not come"
the falling away
This refers to a future time when many people will turn away from God.
the man of lawlessness is revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God reveals the man of lawlessness"
the son of destruction
Paul speaks of destruction as a person who bore a son whose goal is to totally destroy everything. Alternate translation: "the one who destroys everything he can"
2 Thessalonians 2:4
all that is called God or that is worshiped
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that people consider to be God or everything that people worship"
exhibits himself as God
"shows himself as God"
2 Thessalonians 2:5
Do you not remember ... these things?
Paul uses a rhetorical question to remind them of his teaching when he was with them previously. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am sure you remember ... these things."
these things
This refers to the return of Jesus, the day of the Lord, and the man of lawlessness.
2 Thessalonians 2:6
what restrains him
"what holds him back" or "what keeps him from doing what he wants to do"
he will be revealed only at the right time
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will reveal the man of lawlessness when the time is right"
2 Thessalonians 2:7
mystery of lawlessness
This refers to a sacred secret that only God knows.
who restrains him
To restrain someone is to hold him back or to keep him from doing what he wants to do.
2 Thessalonians 2:8
Then the lawless one will be revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then God will allow the lawless one to show himself"
with the breath of his mouth
Here "breath" represents the power of God. Alternate translation: "by the power of his spoken word"
bring him to nothing by the revelation of his coming
When Jesus returns to earth and shows himself, he will defeat the lawless one.
2 Thessalonians 2:9
with all power, signs, and false wonders
"with all kinds of power, signs, and false wonders"
2 Thessalonians 2:10
with every kind of evil that deceives those who are perishing
This man who is given power by Satan will deceive everyone who does not believe in Jesus.
who are perishing
Here "perishing" has the concept of everlasting or eternal destruction.
they refused to love the truth
This metaphor speaks of these people as if someone had offered them a physical object, like good food, and they had refused to accept or receive it. The abstract noun "love" can be translated as a verb.
2 Thessalonians 2:11
For this reason
"Because the people do not love the truth"
God is sending them a powerful delusion so that they will believe a lie
The powerful delusion is a metonym for the person who will delude the people. Alternate translation: "God is sending the man of lawlessness to delude them"
a powerful delusion
a lie that sounds so true that many people believe it
2 Thessalonians 2:12
they all may be condemned
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will judge all of them"
who did not believe the truth but instead took pleasure in unrighteousness
"who took pleasure in unrighteousness because they did not believe the truth" or "who enjoyed doing evil deeds because they did not believe the truth"
2 Thessalonians 2:13
General Information:
Paul gives thanks to God for the believers and encourages them.
Connecting Statement:
Paul now changes topics.
But
Paul uses this word here to mark a change in topic.
we should always give thanks
The word "always" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "we should continually give thanks"
we should
Here "we" refers to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy.
brothers loved by the Lord
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the Lord loves you, brothers"
brothers
Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"
as the firstfruits to be saved through the sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth
Being among the first people to be saved is spoken of as if

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the Thessalonian believers were "firstfruits." This can also be stated to remove the abstract nouns "salvation," "sanctification," "belief," and "truth." Alternate translation: "to be among the first people who believe what is true, whom God has saved and set apart for himself by his Spirit"
2 Thessalonians 2:15
So then, brothers, stand firm
Paul exhorts the believers to hold fast to their faith in Jesus.
hold tightly to the traditions
Here "traditions" refers to the truths of Christ that Paul and the other apostles taught. Paul speaks of them as if his readers could hold on to them with their hands. Alternate translation: "remember the traditions" or "believe the truths"
you were taught
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we have taught you"
whether by word or by our letter
"By word" here is a synecdoche for "by instructions" or "by teachings." You can make clear the implicit information. Alternate translation: "whether by what we taught you in person or by what we wrote to you in a letter"
2 Thessalonians 2:16
Connecting Statement:
Paul ends with a blessing from God.
Now
Paul uses this word here to mark a change in topic.
Lord Jesus Christ himself
Here "himself" gives additional emphasis to the phrase "Lord Jesus Christ."
may our Lord ... who loved us and gave us
The words "our" and "us" refer to all believers.
gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace
"caused us to have eternal comfort and good hope through grace"
eternal comfort
"comfort that never ends" or "unceasing encouragement"
good hope
Here "hope" means a "certain expectation." Alternate translation: "certainty that we will receive good things from him" or "confidence that we will good things from him"
through grace
"because of his kindness"
2 Thessalonians 2:17
comfort and strengthen your hearts in
Here "hearts" represents the seat of emotions. Alternate translation: "comfort you and strengthen you for"
every good work and word
"every good thing you do and say"

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3 [1]Now, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may rush and be glorified, as it also is with you,[2]and that we may be delivered from unrighteous and evil people, for not all have faith.[3]But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.
[4]We have confidence in the Lord about you, that you both do and will continue to do the things that we command.[5]May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the endurance of Christ.

[6]Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you avoid every brother who is idle and does not live according to the traditions you received from us.[7]For you yourselves know it is proper for you to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you. [8]We did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but we worked night and day in labor and toil, so we might not be a burden to any of you.[9]We did this not because we have no authority, but we did this in order to be an example to you, so that you may imitate us.
[10]For when we were with you, we commanded you, "The one who is unwilling to labor must not eat."[11]For we hear that some among you are idle, not busy at labor, but busybodies.[12]Now such ones we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they should labor with quietness and eat their own bread.
[13]But you, brothers, do not become tired of doing well.[14]And if anyone does not obey our word in this letter, take note of him and have no association with him, so that he may be ashamed.[15]Yet do not consider him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

[16]Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with you all.[17]I, Paul, write this with my own hand, which is the mark on every letter I write.[18]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

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2 Thessalonians 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Idle and lazy persons
In Thessalonica, there apparently was a problem with people in the church who were able to work but refused to do so.
What should you do if your brother sins?
In this chapter, Paul teaches that Christians need to live in a way that honors God. Christians should also encourage one another and hold each other accountable for what they do. The church is also responsible for encouraging believers to repent if they sin. (See: repent and sin)

Links:

2 Thessalonians 3:1 Notes

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2 Thessalonians 3:1
General Information:
Paul asks the believers to pray for him and his companions.
Now
Paul uses the word "now" to mark a change in topic.
brothers
Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"
that the word of the Lord may rush and be glorified, as it also is with you
Paul speaks of God's word spreading as if it were running from place to place. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that more and more people will soon hear our message about our Lord Jesus and honor it, as happened with you"
2 Thessalonians 3:2
that we may be delivered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God may save us" or "that God may rescue us"
for not all have faith
"for many people do not believe in Jesus"
2 Thessalonians 3:3
the evil one
"Satan"
2 Thessalonians 3:4
We have confidence
"We have faith" or "We trust"
2 Thessalonians 3:5
direct your hearts to
Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or mind. Alternate translation: "cause you to understand"
the love of God and to the endurance of Christ
Paul speaks of God's love and Christ's endurance as if they were destinations on a path. Alternate translation: "how much God loves you and how much Christ has endured for you"
2 Thessalonians 3:6
General Information:
Paul gives the believers some final instructions about working and not being idle.
Now
Paul uses this word to mark a change in topic.
brothers
Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
"Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "as if our Lord Jesus Christ himself were speaking"
our Lord
Here "our" refers to all believers.
is idle
This person is not working hard, but is lazy. Alternate translation: "does not do what is right"
2 Thessalonians 3:7
to imitate us
"to act the way that my fellow workers and I act"
we were not idle
"we lived disciplined lives"
2 Thessalonians 3:8
anyone's bread
Bread here is a synecdoche for any kind of food. Alternate translation: "anyone's food"
we worked night and day
"we worked during the night and during the day." Here "night" and "day" are a merism and they mean "all the time." Alternate translation: "we worked all the time"
in labor and toil
Paul emphasizes how hard his circumstances were. The words "difficult labor" imply that Paul and his companions did work that requires great effort. The word "hardship" implies they endured pain and suffering. Alternate translation: "in very difficult circumstances"
2 Thessalonians 3:9
We did this not because we have no authority, but we did this
Paul uses a double negative to correct a misunderstanding that his readers may have had. It can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Even though we have authority, we did this"
2 Thessalonians 3:10
The one who is unwilling to labor must not eat
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Only the one who is willing to work should eat" or "Only people who are willing to work should eat"
2 Thessalonians 3:11
you are idle
"live a lazy life"
but busybodies
Busybodies are people who interfere in the affairs of others without being asked to help.
2 Thessalonians 3:12
with quietness
"in a quiet, peaceful, and mild manner." Paul exhorts the meddlers to stop getting involved in other people's affairs.
eat their own bread
Bread here is a synecdoche for any kind of food. See how "bread" is translated in [2 Thessalonians 3:8]
2 Thessalonians 3:13
But
Paul uses this word to contrast the lazy believers with the hardworking believers.
you, brothers
The word "you" refers to all the Thessalonian believers.
brothers
Here "brothers" means fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters"
2 Thessalonians 3:14
if anyone does not obey our word
"if anyone does not obey our instructions"
take note of him
Notice who he is. Alternate translation: "publicly identify that person"
2 Thessalonians 3:16
General Information:
Paul makes closing remarks to the believers at

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Thessalonica.

may the Lord of peace himself give you

You can make explicit that this is Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians. Alternate translation: "I pray that the Lord of peace himself gives you"

the Lord of peace himself

Here "himself" emphasizes that the Lord will personally give peace to believers.

2 Thessalonians 3:17

I, Paul, write this with my own hand

Paul makes it clear that this letter is from him and is not a forgery.

Introduction to 1 Timothy

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 1 Timothy

Greetings (1:1,2) Paul and Timothy Warning about false teachers (1:3-11) Paul thankful for what Christ has done in his ministry (1:12-17) He calls Timothy to fight in this spiritual battle (1:18-20)

Prayer for all (2:1-8) Roles and responsibilities in the church (2:9-6:2)

Warnings Second warning about false teachers (6:3-5) Money (6:6-10)

Description of a man of God (6:11-16) Note to the wealthy people (6:17-19) Closing words to Timothy (6:20,21)

Who wrote the Book of 1 Timothy?

Paul wrote 1 Timothy. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

This book is the first letter Paul wrote to Timothy. Timothy was his disciple and close friend. Paul probably wrote it near the end of his life.

What is the Book of 1 Timothy about?

Paul had left Timothy in the city of Ephesus to help the believers there. Paul wrote this letter to instruct Timothy about various matters. The topics he addressed included church worship, qualifications for church leaders, and warnings against false teachers. This letter shows how Paul was training Timothy to be a leader among the churches.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "1 Timothy" or "First Timothy." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's First Letter to Timothy."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is discipleship?

Discipleship is the process of encouraging people to live the way Jesus wants them to live, to be more like Christ. This letter gives many instructions about how a leader should train a less mature Christian. (See: disciple)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. Also, the word "you" is almost always singular and refers to Timothy. The exception to this is 6:21.

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major textual issues in the text of the Book of 1 Timothy?

For the following verse, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"godliness is a way to get more money." Some older versions of the Bible read this way, "godliness is a way to get more money: withdraw from such things." (6:5)

1 Timothy

1

[1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope,

[2]to Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

[3]As I urged you to do when I was leaving for Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you can command certain people not to teach a different doctrine.[4]Neither should they pay attention to stories and endless genealogies. These promote arguments rather than the plan of God, which is by faith.
[5]Now the goal of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith.[6]Some people have gone astray from these things and have turned to worthless talk.[7]They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or what they so confidently affirm.[8]But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully.
[9]We know this: that law is not set in place for a righteous man, but for lawless and rebellious people, for ungodly people and sinners, and for those who are unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers and mothers, for murderers,[10]for sexually immoral people, for those who practice homosexuality, for those who kidnap people for slaves, for liars, for false witnesses, and for whatever else is opposed to truthful teaching.[11]This instruction is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.

[12]I thank Christ Jesus our Lord. He strengthened me, for he considered me faithful, and he appointed me to service.[13]I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man. But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief.[14]And the grace of our Lord overflowed with the faith and the love that is in Christ Jesus.
[15]This message is reliable and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.[16]But for this reason I was given mercy, so that in me, the chief, Christ Jesus might demonstrate all patience. He did this as an example for those who would believe in him for eternal life.[17]Now to the king of the ages, the immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

[18]I am placing this command before you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that you might fight the good fight,[19]holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have shipwrecked their faith.[20]Such are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered over to Satan so that they may be taught not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Spiritual children

In this chapter, Paul calls Timothy a "son" and his "child." Paul discipled Timothy as a Christian and a church leader. Paul may also have led him to believe in Christ. Therefore, Paul called Timothy his "son in the faith."

Genealogies

Genealogies are lists that record a person's ancestors or descendants. Jews used genealogies to choose the right man to become king. They did this because only a son of a king could normally become king. They also showed from what tribe and family they came. For example, priests came from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron. Most important people had records of their genealogies.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Play on words

The phrase "the law is good if one uses it lawfully" (1 Timothy 1:8) is a play on words. The English words "law" and "lawfully" come from the same root, and they translate words that come from the same root in the original language, so it would be well to translate the clause so as to preserve this word play.

Links:

1 Timothy 1:1 Notes 1 Timothy intro

1 Timothy 1:1

General Information:

In this book, unless otherwise noted, the word "our" refers to Paul and Timothy

Paul, an apostle

"I, Paul, wrote this letter. I am an apostle." Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. Immediately after introducing the writer, you may want to indicate to whom the letter was written, as in the UDB.

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according to the commandment of
"by the command of" or "by the authority of"
God our Savior
"God who saves us"
Christ Jesus our hope
Here "our hope" refers to the person in whom we have confidence. Alternate translation: "Christ Jesus, who is the one in whom we have confidence" or "Christ Jesus, whom we trust"
1 Timothy 1:2
true son in the faith
Paul speaks of his close relationship to Timothy as though they were father and son. This shows Paul's sincere love and approval of Timothy. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considers him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is truly like a son to me"
Grace, mercy, and peace
"May grace, mercy, and peace be yours," or "May you experience kindness, mercy, and peace"
God the Father and
"God, who is our Father, and." Here "Father" is an important title for God.
Christ Jesus our Lord
"Christ Jesus, who is our Lord"
1 Timothy 1:3
General Information:
The word "you" in this letter is singular and refers to Timothy.
Connecting Statement:
Paul encourages Timothy to reject the wrong use of the law and instead to use good teaching from God.
As I urged you
"As I pleaded with you" or "As I asked you very strongly"
remain in Ephesus
"wait for me there in the city of Ephesus"
a different doctrine
The implied information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a different doctrine from what we teach"
1 Timothy 1:4
Neither should they pay attention
"And I also want you to command them not to pay attention"
to stories
These may have been stories about their ancestors.
endless genealogies
With the word "endless" Paul uses exaggeration to emphasize that the genealogies are very long.
genealogies
the written or verbal record of a person's parents and ancestors
These promote arguments
"These make people angrily disagree." The people debated about stories and genealogies about which no one could know the truth for certain.
rather than the plan of God, which is by faith
Possible meanings are 1) "rather than helping people to understand God's plan to save us, which we learn by faith" or 2) "rather than helping us to do God's work, which we do by faith."
1 Timothy 1:5
Now
This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul explains the purpose of what he is commanding Timothy.
the commandment
Here this does not mean the Old Testament or the Ten Commandments but rather the instructions that Paul gives in 1 Timothy 1:3 and 1 Timothy 1:4.
is love
Possible meanings are 1) "is to love God" or 2) "is to love people."
from a pure heart
Here "pure" means the person does not have hidden motives to do wrong. Here "heart" refers to a person's mind and thoughts. Alternate translation: "from a mind that is honest"
good conscience
"a conscience that chooses right instead wrong"
sincere faith
"genuine faith" or "a faith without hypocrisy"
1 Timothy 1:6
have gone astray from these things
Paul speaks of people who no longer try to "love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith"
turned to worthless talk
"begun to have useless discussions"
1 Timothy 1:7
teachers of the law
Here "law" refers to the law of Moses.
but they do not understand
"even though they do not understand" or "and yet they do not understand"
what they so confidently affirm
"what they so confidently state is true"
1 Timothy 1:8
we know that the law is good
"we understand that the law is useful" or "we understand that the law is beneficial"
if one uses it lawfully
"if a person uses it correctly" or "if a person uses it the way God intended"
1 Timothy 1:9
We know this
"Because we realize this" or "We also know this"
that law is not set in place for a righteous man
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God did not set the law in place for the righteous man"
a righteous man
Here "man" includes both male and female. Alternate translation: "a righteous person" or "a good person"
1 Timothy 1:10
sexually immoral people
This refers to anyone who sleeps with someone to whom they are not married.
homosexuality
"sexual activity with other members of the same sex." The

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Greek word specifies males, but it probably is intended here to includes females as well.

those who kidnap people for slaves

"those who kidnap people to sell as slaves" or "those who take people to sell as slaves"

whatever else is opposed to truthful teaching

The Greek has "healthy" but that term is a figure for "truthful" here. It is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "whatever other things people do that we teach is wrong"

1 Timothy 1:11

the glorious gospel of the blessed God

"the gospel about the glory that belongs to the blessed God" or "the gospel of the glorious and blessed God"

with which I have been entrusted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which God has given me and made me responsible for"

1 Timothy 1:12

he considered me faithful

"he considered me trustworthy" or "he regarded me as reliable"

he appointed me to service

"he assigned me to serve him" or "he appointed me as his servant"

1 Timothy 1:13

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to tell how he acted in the past.

I was a blasphemer

"I was a person who spoke evil against Christ." Paul is referring to his character before he was a Christian.

a persecutor

"a person who persecuted those who believed in Christ"

a violent man

"a person who was cruel to other people" or "a person who believed I had the right to hurt others"

But I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief

"But because I did not believe in Jesus, and I did not know what I was doing, I received mercy from Jesus"

I received mercy

"Jesus showed me mercy" or "Jesus had mercy on me"

1 Timothy 1:14

the grace of our Lord overflowed

Paul speaks of God's grace as if it were a liquid that could fill a container and spill out of the top when the container is full. Alternate translation: "God showed me much grace"

overflowed with the faith and the love that is in Christ Jesus

This is the result of God showing much grace to Paul. Alternate translation: "overflowed, which caused me to trust in Christ Jesus and love him"

that is in Christ Jesus

This speaks about Jesus as if he were a container that holds a liquid. Here "in Christ Jesus" refers to having a relationship with Jesus. Alternate translation: "that Christ Jesus enables me to give to God because I am united to him"

1 Timothy 1:15

This message is reliable

"This statement is true"

worthy of all acceptance

"we should receive it without any doubt" or "deserves for us to accept it with full confidence"

sinners, of whom I am chief

"sinners, of whom I am the chief sinner" or "sinners, of whom I am the worst." Paul is saying that he has sinned more than any other sinner, not that he has been the leader of a group of sinners.

1 Timothy 1:16

I was given mercy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God showed me mercy" or "I obtained mercy from God"

the chief

"the chief sinner" or "the worst sinner." Paul is saying that he has sinned more than any other sinner, not that he has been the leader of a group of sinners. See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 1:15.

1 Timothy 1:17

Now ... Amen

The word "Now" is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul praises God.

the king of the ages

"the eternal king" or "the chief ruler forever"

Now to the king of the ages, the immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever

The abstract nouns "honor" and "glory" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "Now may people forever honor and glorify the king of the ages, who is immortal, invisible, and the only God"

1 Timothy 1:18

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins to encourage Timothy to trust God.

I am placing this command before you

Paul speaks of his instructions as if he could physically put them in front of Timothy. Alternate translation: "I am entrusting you with this command" or "This is what I am commanding you"

my child

Paul speaks of his close relationship to Timothy as though Paul is the father and Timothy is the child. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is truly like my child"

in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "in agreement with what other believers prophesied about you"

fight the good fight

Paul speaks about Timothy working for the Lord as if he were a soldier fighting a battle. Alternate translation: "continue to work hard for the Lord"

1 Timothy 1:19

a good conscience

"a conscience that chooses right instead wrong." See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 1:5.

some have shipwrecked their faith

Paul speaks of these people's faith as if it were a ship that could be wrecked at sea. He means that they have ruined their faith and no longer believe in Jesus. You should use this or a similar metaphor if it will be understood in the project language.

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1 Timothy 1:20
Hymenaeus ... Alexander
These are names of men.
whom I delivered over to Satan
Paul has cast the men out of the community, so Satan now has power over them and can harm them.
they may be taught
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God may teach them"

2 [1]Therefore, first of all, I urge that humble requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,[2]for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.[3]This is good and acceptable before God our Savior.[4]He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
[5]For there is one God, and there is one mediator for God and man, the man Christ Jesus.[6]He gave himself as a ransom for all, as the testimony at the right time.[7]For this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

[8]Therefore, I want men in every place to pray and to lift up holy hands without anger or arguing.[9]In the same way, the women are to dress with proper clothing, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothing,[10]but with what is proper for women who proclaim godliness through good works.
[11]A woman should learn in silence and with all submission.[12]I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man, but to live in quietness.
[13]For Adam was formed first, then Eve.[14]Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.
[15]However, she will be saved through bearing children, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-control.

1 Timothy 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Peace
Paul encourages Christians to pray for everyone. They should pray for rulers so that Christians can live peacefully, in a godly and dignified way.
Women in the church
Scholars are divided over how to understand this passage in its historical and cultural context. Some scholars believe men and women are perfectly equal in all things. Other scholars believe God created men and women to serve in distinctly different roles in marriage and the church. Translators should be careful not to let how they understand this issue affect how they translate this passage.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings"
These terms overlap each other in what they mean. It is not necessary to view them as distinct categories.

Links:

1 Timothy 2:1 Notes

1 Timothy 2:1
Connecting Statement:
Paul encourages Timothy to pray for all people.
first of all
"most importantly" or "before anything else"
I urge that humble requests, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I urge all believers to make requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving to God"
I urge
"I plead" or "I ask"
1 Timothy 2:2
a peaceful and quiet life
Here "peaceful" and "quiet" mean the same thing. Paul wants all believers to be able to live calm lives without trouble from the authorities.
in all godliness and dignity
"that honors God and that other people will respect"
1 Timothy 2:4
He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God desires to save all people and for them to come to the knowledge of the truth"
to come to the knowledge of the truth
Paul speaks of learning the truth about God as if it were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "to know and accept what is true"
1 Timothy 2:5
one mediator for God and man
A mediator is a person who helps negotiate a peaceful settlement between two parties who disagree with each other. Here Jesus helps sinners enter into a peaceful

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relationship with God.
1 Timothy 2:6
gave himself
"died willingly"
as a ransom
"as a price of freedom" or "as a payment to obtain freedom"
as the testimony at the right time
It can be made explicit that this was the testimony that God wants to save all people. Alternate translation: "as the proof at the right time that God wants to save all people"
at the right time
This means that this was the time that God had chosen.
1 Timothy 2:7
For this purpose
"For this" or "For this reason"
I was appointed a herald and an apostle
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ appointed me to be a herald and an apostle" or "Christ made me a preacher and an apostle"
a herald
"an official messenger." A herald is an official messenger who is sent to bring news.
I am telling the truth, I am not lying
With these two comments Paul emphasizes that he is telling the truth when he says that he was appointed to be a herald, an apostle, and a teacher. Some translators may prefer to put these comments at the end of the verse.
in faith and truth
This probably refers to what Paul was to teach about. He may be using "faith" and truth" to express one idea. Alternate translation: "about the message of faith and truth" or "about the true faith"
1 Timothy 2:8
Connecting Statement:
Paul finishes his instructions on prayer and then gives some special instructions for women.
I want men in every place to pray and to lift up holy hands
Here "holy hands" is a metonym for a holy person. Alternate translation: "I want holy men in every place to lift up their hands and pray"
men in every place
"the males in all places" or "the males everywhere." Here the word "men" refers specifically to males.
lift up holy hands
It was a normal posture for people to raise their hands while praying.
1 Timothy 2:9
with modesty and self-control
Both of these words mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing that women should wear clothes that are appropriate and do not attract improper attention from men.
not with braided hair
During Paul's time, many Roman women braided their hair to make themselves attractive. Braiding is only one way a woman can give undue attention to her hair. If braided hair is unknown, it can be stated in a more general way. Alternate translation: "not having fancy hairstyles" or "not having elaborate hairstyles that attract attention"
pearls
These are beautiful and valuable white balls that people use as jewelry. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean.
1 Timothy 2:10
General Information:
Possible meanings of this verse are 1) the words "through good works" tell how the women Paul is talking about "proclaim godliness" or 2) those words tell how women are to "dress," a metaphor that refers to what people are to see and think about when they look at the women to whom Paul is writing. Alternate translation: "but with good works, as is proper for women who proclaim godliness"
who proclaim godliness through good works
"who want to show that they honor God by doing good deeds"
1 Timothy 2:11
in silence
"in quietness"
and with all submission
"and submit to what is taught"
1 Timothy 2:12
I do not permit a woman
"I do not allow a woman"
1 Timothy 2:13
Adam was formed first
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Adam is the one God formed first" or "God created Adam first"
then Eve
The understood information can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "and then God formed Eve" or "and then God created Eve"
1 Timothy 2:14
Adam was not deceived
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "And Adam was not the one whom the serpent deceived"
but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but it was the woman who disobeyed God when the serpent deceived her"
1 Timothy 2:15
she will be saved through bearing children
Here "she" refers to women in general. Possible meanings are 1) God will keep women physically safe as they give birth to children, or 2) God will save women from their sins through their role as child bearers.
she will be saved
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will save her" or "God will save women"
if they continue
"if they remain" or "if they continue living." Here "they" refers to women.
in faith and love and sanctification
The abstract nouns here can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "in trusting Jesus and loving others and living a holy life"
with self-control
Other possible meanings are 1) "with good judgment" or 2)

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"with modesty."

3 [1]This saying is trustworthy: If someone desires to be an overseer, he desires a good work.[2]Therefore the overseer must
have a good reputation. He must be a husband of one wife. He must be moderate, sensible, orderly, and hospitable. He
must be able to teach.[3]He must not be addicted to wine, not a brawler but instead gentle, peaceful. He must not be a lover
of money.
[4]He should manage his own household well, and he should make sure his children obey and respect him in every way.[5]For
if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for a church of God?
[6]He should not be a new convert, so that he does not swell with pride and fall into condemnation as the devil.[7]He must
also have a good reputation with those outside, so that he does not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil.
[8]In the same way, deacons should be dignified, not double-talkers. They should not drink too much wine or be greedy.
[9]They should keep the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience.[10]They should also be approved first, and then they
should serve because they are blameless.
[11]In the same way, their wives should be dignified, not slanderers, but sober and faithful in all things.[12]Deacons must be
husbands of one wife. They must manage well their children and household.[13]For those who have served well acquire for
themselves a good standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

[14]As I write these things to you, I hope to come to you soon.[15]But if I delay, I am writing so that you may know how to
conduct yourself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.
[16]We all agree that the mystery of godliness is great:

"He was revealed in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was proclaimed among nations,
was believed on in the world,
and was taken up in glory."

1 Timothy 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Timothy 3:16 was probably a song, poem, or creed the early church used to list important doctrines that believers all shared.

Special concepts in this chapter

Overseers and deacons

The church has used different titles for church leaders. Some titles include elder, pastor, and bishop. The word "overseer" reflects the meaning of the original language in verses 1-2. Paul writes about "deacons" in verses 8 and 12 as another kind of church leader.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Character qualities

This chapter lists several qualities that a man must have if he is to be an overseer or deacon in the church.

Links:

1 Timothy 3:1 Notes

1 Timothy 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some special instructions on how the overseers of the church should act and be.

a good work

"an honorable task"

1 Timothy 3:2

husband of one wife

An overseer must have only one wife. It is unclear if this excludes men who have been previously widowed or divorced, or never married.

He must be moderate, sensible, orderly, and hospitable

"He must not do anything to excess, must be reasonable and behave well, and must be friendly to strangers"

1 Timothy 3:3

He must not be addicted to wine, not a brawler but instead gentle, peaceful

"He must neither drink too much alcohol nor like to fight and argue, but instead he must be gentle and peaceful"

a lover of money

"greedy for money"

1 Timothy 3:4

He should manage

"He should lead" or "He should take care of"

he should make sure his children obey and respect him in every way

Possible meanings are 1) the overseer's children should

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obey and show respect to their father or 2) the overseer's children should show respect to everyone or 3) the overseer should show respect to those in his household as he leads them.

1 Timothy 3:5

For if a man does not know how to manage

"For when a man cannot manage"

how will he care for a church of God?

Paul uses a question to teach Timothy. Alternate translation: "he cannot take care of a church of God." or "he will not be able to lead a church of God."

a church of God

Here "church" refers to a local group of God's people. Alternate translation: "a group of God's people" or "the believers over whom he is in charge"

1 Timothy 3:6

He should not be a new convert

"He should not be a new believer" or "He must be a mature believer"

fall into condemnation as the devil

Paul speaks of a person being condemned for having done wrong as if he were falling into a hole. Alternate translation: "have God condemn him as he condemned the devil"

1 Timothy 3:7

those outside

"those outside of the church." Paul speaks of the church as though it were a place, and of unbelievers as though they were physically outside of it. Alternate translation: "those who are not Christians"

he does not fall into disgrace and the trap of the devil

Paul speaks of disgrace and the devil causing someone to sin as if they were a hole or a trap into which a person falls. Here "fall into" means to experience. Alternate translation: "nothing causes him shame before the unbelievers and so that the devil does not cause him to sin"

1 Timothy 3:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some special instructions on how the deacons of the church and their wives should act and be.

In the same way, deacons

"Deacons, like overseers,"

should be dignified, not double-talkers

Paul speaks about some people as if they were "double-talkers" who could say two things at once. He is talking about people who say one thing but mean something else. Alternate translation: "should act properly and mean what they say"

1 Timothy 3:9

They should keep the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience

"They must continue to believe, with a clean conscience, the true message God has revealed to us." This refers to a truth that had existed for some time but that God was showing to them at that moment. Paul speaks of true teaching about God as if it were an object that a person could keep with himself.

the mystery of the faith

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the truth of the faith that God revealed"

faith with a clean conscience

Paul speaks of a person's knowledge that he has done no wrong as if that knowledge or conscience were clean. Alternate translation: "faith, knowing they have tried their hardest to do what is right"

1 Timothy 3:10

They should also be approved first

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Other believers should approve of them first" or "They should prove themselves first"

be approved

This means other believers should evaluate those who want to be a deacon and determine if they are fit to serve in the church.

1 Timothy 3:11

In the same way, their wives

Possible meanings of "their wives" are 1) the wives of deacons or 2) female deacons or 3) women in general.

be dignified

"act properly" or "be worthy of respect"

should be dignified, not slanderers, but sober and faithful

"should be dignified; they should not speak evil about other people, and they should not do anything to excess; rather, they should be faithful"

sober

"moderate." See how you translated "moderate" in 1 Timothy 3:2.

1 Timothy 3:12

husbands of one wife

A man must have only one wife. It is unclear if this excludes men who have been previously widowed, divorced, or never married. See how you translated this in 1 Timothy 3:2.

manage well their children and household

"properly take care of and lead their children and others who live in their homes"

1 Timothy 3:13

For those

"For those deacons" or "For these church leaders"

acquire for themselves

"receive for themselves" or "gain for themselves"

a good standing

The implied meaning may be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "a good reputation among other believers"

great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus

Possible meanings are 1) they will trust in Jesus with even more confidence or 2) they will speak confidently to other people about their faith in Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:14

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells Timothy the reason he wrote to him and then describes Christ's godliness.

I hope to come to you soon

Paul expected that his desire to visit them soon would happen. Alternate translation: "I expect to come to you soon"

1 Timothy 3:15

But if I delay

"But in case I cannot go there soon" or "But if something

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prevents me for being there soon"

so that you may know how to conduct yourself in the household of God

Paul speaks of the group of believers as if they were a family. Possible meanings are 1) Paul is referring only to Timothy's behavior in the church. Or 2) Paul is referring to believers in general. Alternate translation: "so that you all may know how to conduct yourselves as members of God's family"

household of God, which is the church of the living God

This phrase gives us information about "the household of God" rather than making a distinction between a household of God which is the church and one that is not the church. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "household of God. Those who belong to the family of God are the community of believers in the living God"

which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth

Paul speaks of the believers bearing witness to the truth about Christ as if they were a pillar and a base supporting a building. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "which is the church of the living God. And, by keeping and teaching God's truth, these members of the church support the truth just as a pillar and base support a building"

the living God

Here this expression may be speaking of God as the one who gives life to all, as in the UDB.

1 Timothy 3:16

We all agree

"No one can deny"

that the mystery of godliness is great

"that the truth that God has revealed is great"

He was revealed ... up in glory

This is most likely a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

He was revealed

Some modern translations read, "God was revealed" or "God appeared." If Paul is quoting a song or poem, the word "he" refers to Jesus Christ. If he is not quoting, the word "he" could refer to either God or Jesus Christ.

in the flesh

Paul uses "flesh" here to mean a human being. Alternate translation: "as a true human being"

was vindicated by the Spirit

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit confirmed that he was who he said he was"

was seen by angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angels saw him"

was proclaimed among nations

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people in many nations told others about him"

was believed on in the world

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "people in many parts of the world believed in him"

was taken up in glory

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God the Father took him up to heaven in glory"

in glory

This means he received power from God the Father and he is worthy of honor.

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4 [1]Now the Spirit clearly says that in later times some people will leave the faith and pay attention to deceitful spirits and
the teachings of demons[2]by the hypocrisy of liars, their own consciences having been seared.
[3]They will forbid people to marry and require them to abstain from foods that God created to be received with
thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.[4]For every creation of God is good, and nothing received with
thanksgiving is to be rejected.[5]For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

[6]If you place these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ. For you are being nourished by
the words of faith and by the good teaching that you have followed.[7]But reject profane stories loved by old women.
Instead, train yourself in godliness.[8]For bodily training is a little useful, but godliness is useful for all things. It holds
promise for this life now and the life to come.
[9]This message is trustworthy and worthy of full acceptance.[10]For it is for this that we labor and struggle. For we hope in
the living God, who is the Savior of all people, but especially of believers.
[11]Instruct the people and teach these things.[12]Let no one despise your youth, but be an example for the believers in speech,
conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity.[13]Until I come, attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching.
[14]Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the
elders.[15]Care for these things. Be in them, so that your progress may be evident to all people.[16]Give careful attention to
yourself and to the teaching. Continue in these things. For by doing so, you will save yourself and those who listen to you.

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1 Timothy 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

1 Timothy 4:1 is a prophecy. (See: prophet)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Later times

This is another way of referring to the last days. (See: lastday)

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Links:

[1 Timothy 4:1 Notes]

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1 Timothy 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul tells Timothy what the Spirit says will happen and encourages him in what he should teach.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Paul starts to tell a new part of the teaching.

in later times

These words could refer to 1) a time after Paul dies or 2) a later time in Paul's own life.

leave the faith

Paul speaks of people ceasing to trust in Christ as if they were physically leaving a place or an object. Alternate translation: "stop trusting in Jesus"

and pay attention

"and give attention" or "because they are paying attention"

deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons

"spirits who trick people and the things that demons teach"

1 Timothy 4:2

by the hypocrisy of liars

This can be stated as a separate sentence if verse 1 is ended with a period. Alternate translation: "They will learn these things by the hypocrisy of liars" or "They will learn these things from hypocrital liars"

their own consciences having been seared

Possible meanings are 1) Paul is speaking of people who can no longer tell that they are doing wrong as if their minds were ruined. He speaks of their minds being ruined as if their minds were skin that someone had burned with a hot iron. Or 2) Paul is speaking of these people as if Satan had put a mark on them with a hot iron to indicate that they belong to him.

seared

touched with a hot object until it burns brown or black

1 Timothy 4:3

They will

"These people will"

forbid people to marry

It is implied that they will forbid believers to marry. Alternate translation: "forbid believers to marry"

require them to abstain from foods

It is implied that they will forbid only certain foods. Alternate translation: "they will not allow people to eat certain foods"

1 Timothy 4:4

For every creation of God is good

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "everything that God has created is good"

nothing received with thanksgiving is to be rejected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we should not refuse anything for which we give thanks to God" or "everything that we eat with thanksgiving is acceptable"

1 Timothy 4:5

it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer

Here "word of God" and "prayer" are used together to express one idea. The prayer is in agreement with the truth that God has revealed. Alternate translation: "it is dedicated for God's use by praying in agreement with his word"

it is sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we sanctify it" or "we have set it apart"

word of God

Here "word" refers to God's message or what he has revealed.

1 Timothy 4:6

If you place these things before the brothers

Paul speaks of his instructions as if they were objects that could be physically presented to the believers. Here, to place before means to instruct or to remind. Alternate translation: "If you help the believers remember these things"

these things

This refers to the teaching that started in 1 Timothy 3:16.

the brothers

This refers to all believers whether male or female.

you are being nourished by the words of faith and by the good teaching that you have followed

Paul speaks of God's word and its teaching as if it could physically feed Timothy and make him strong. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the words of faith and the good teaching that you have followed are causing you to trust more strongly in Christ"

words of faith

"words that cause people to believe"

1 Timothy 4:7

profane stories loved by old women

"ungodly stories and old wives' tales." "Profane" here refers to stories that purposely dishonor God. Translate "stories" as you did in 1 Timothy 1:4.

loved by old women

This is probably an expression that means "silly" or "absurd." Paul is not purposely insulting women in his reference to "old women." Instead, he and his audience knew that men die younger than women, so there are more women than men whose minds have become feeble due to old age.

train yourself in godliness

"train yourself to honor God" or "train yourself to act in ways that please God"

1 Timothy 4:8

bodily training

"physical exercise"

holds promise for this life

"is beneficial to this life"

1 Timothy 4:9

worthy of full acceptance

"worthy of your complete belief" or "worthy of your full trust"

1 Timothy 4:10

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For it is for this
"This is the reason"
labor and struggle
The word "labor" here refers to working very hard, and "struggle" is a metaphor for dealing with difficulties and dangers.
For we hope in the living God ... believers
Paul and his fellow workers confidently expect that God will do all that he has promised to do. Alternate translation: "For we confidently expect that the living God... believers, will do what he promised to do" or "For we fully trust in the living God ... believers"
the living God
Possible meanings are 1) "the God who is alive," as opposed to idols, who are not alive, or 2) "God, who acts," as opposed to idols that do nothing, or 3) "God, who gives life to all living beings."
but especially of believers
The ellipsis can be filled in. Alternate translation: "but he is especially the Savior of those people who believe"
1 Timothy 4:11
Instruct the people and teach these things
"Command and teach these things" or "Instruct and teach these things I just mentioned"
1 Timothy 4:12
Let no one despise your youth
"Do not let anyone consider you less important because you are young"
in speech, conduct, love, faithfulness, and purity
Paul wanted Timothy to be an example in these things. Alternate translation: "by speaking and doing what is right, by loving others, and by being faithful and pure"
1 Timothy 4:13
attend to the reading, to the exhortation, and to the teaching
The words "reading," "exhortation," and "teaching" can be translated with verbal phrases. The implied information can also be supplied in translation Alternate translation: "continue reading the scripture to the people, exhorting the people, and teaching the people"
1 Timothy 4:14
Do not neglect the gift that is in you
Paul speaks of Timothy as if he were a container that could hold God's gifts. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Do not neglect your spiritual gift"
Do not neglect
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be sure to use"
which was given to you through prophecy
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which you received when leaders of the church spoke God's word"
laying on of the hands of the elders
This was a ceremony in which the church leaders put their hands on Timothy and prayed that God would enable him to do the work he had commanded him to do.
1 Timothy 4:15
Care for these things. Be in them
Paul speaks of God's gifts to Timothy as if he could physically be in them. Alternate translation: "Do all these things and live according to them"
so that your progress may be evident to all people
Paul speaks of Timothy's increasing ability to serve God as if it were a physical object that others could look at. Alternate translation: "so other people will know that you are serving God better and better"
1 Timothy 4:16
Give careful attention to yourself and to the teaching
"Conduct yourself carefully and give attention to the teaching" or "Control your own behavior and give attention to the teaching"
Continue in these things
"Continue to do these things"
you will save yourself and those who listen to you
Possible meanings are 1) Timothy will save himself and those who hear him from God's judgment or 2) Timothy will save himself and those who hear him from the influence of false teachers.

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5 [1]Do not rebuke an older man. Instead, exhort him as if he were a father. Exhort younger men as brothers,[2]older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, in all purity.
[3]Honor widows, the real widows.[4]But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show honor in their own household. Let them repay their parents, because this is pleasing to God.
[5]But she who is a real widow, who is left all alone, has set her hope in God and continues in offering earnest appeals and prayers night and day,[6]but the woman who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.
[7]Instruct them in these things as well, so that they may be blameless.[8]But if someone does not provide for his own relatives, especially for those of his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
[9]Let a woman be enrolled as a widow who is not younger than sixty years old, a wife of one husband.[10]She must have a reputation for doing good deeds, whether it is that she has cared for children, or has been hospitable to strangers, or has washed the feet of God's holy people, or has relieved the afflicted, or has been devoted to every good work.
[11]But as for younger widows, refuse to enroll them in the list. For when they give in to bodily desires against Christ, they want to marry.[12]In this way they incur condemnation because they set aside their first commitment.[13]At the same time, they also learn to be lazy and they go around from house to house. They not only become lazy, but they also talk nonsense and are busybodies, saying things they should not say.
[14]I therefore want younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage the household, and to give no opportunity for the enemy to slander us.[15]For some have already turned aside after Satan.[16]If any believing woman has widows, let her help them, so that the church will not be burdened, so that it might help the real widows.

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[17]Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor with the word and in teaching.[18]For the scripture says, "You must not put a muzzle on an ox while it threshes the grain" and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."
[19]Do not receive an accusation against an elder unless there are two or three witnesses.[20]Correct sinners before all so that the rest may be afraid.
[21]I solemnly command you, before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels, to keep these commands without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.[22]Place hands hastily on no one. Do not share in the sins of another person. You should keep yourself pure.
[23]You should no longer drink water. Instead, you should take a little wine for the stomach and your frequent sicknesses.
[24]The sins of some people are openly known, and they go before them into judgment. But some sins follow later.[25]In the same way, some good works are openly known, but even the others cannot be hidden.

1 Timothy 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Honor and respect

Paul encourages younger Christians to honor and respect older Christians. Cultures honor and respect older people in different ways.

Widows

In the ancient Near East, it was important to care for widows, because they could not provide for themselves.

Links:

1 Timothy 5:1 Notes

1 Timothy 5:1

General Information:

Paul was giving these commands to one person, Timothy. Languages that have different forms of "you" or different forms for commands would use the singular form here.

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to tell Timothy how to treat the men, women, widows, and younger women in the church.

Do not rebuke an older man

"Do not speak harshly to an older man"

Instead, exhort him

"Instead, encourage him"

as if he were a father ... as brothers

Paul uses these similes to tell Timothy that he should treat fellow believers with sincere love and respect.

1 Timothy 5:2

older women ... younger women

You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "exhort older women ... exhort younger women" or "encourage older women ... encourage younger women"

in all purity

"with pure thoughts and actions" or "in a holy way"

1 Timothy 5:3

Honor widows

"Respect and provide for widows"

the real widows

"widows with no one to provide for them"

1 Timothy 5:4

let them first learn

"first of all they should learn" or "let them make it a priority to learn"

in their own household

"to their own family" or "to those living in their homes"

Let them repay their parents

"Let them do good to their parents in return for the good things their parents have given them"

1 Timothy 5:5

But she who is a real widow, who is left all alone

"But one who is truly a widow, who has no family"

has set her hope in God

The widow confidently expected that God would do what he promised to do. Alternate translation: "confidently expects that God will do what he promised to do" or "fully trusts in God"

continues in offering earnest appeals and prayers

"continues to make requests and prayers"

offering earnest appeals and prayers

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Paul uses them together to emphasize how much these widows pray.

night and day

The words "night" and "day" are used together to mean "at all times." Alternate translation: "all the time"

1 Timothy 5:6

is dead

Paul speaks about people who do not seek to please God as if they were dead. Alternate translation: "is like a dead person; she does not respond to God"

she lives

This refers to physical life.

1 Timothy 5:7

Instruct them in these things

"Teach them these things, too" or "Command them to do these things, too"

so that they may be blameless

"so that no one can find fault with them." Possible

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meanings of "they" are 1) "these widows and their families" or 2) "the believers." It might be best to leave the subject as "they."

1 Timothy 5:8

does not provide for his own relatives, especially for those of his own household

"does not help with his relatives' needs, especially for those family members living in his home"

he has denied the faith

"he has acted contrary to the truth we believe"

is worse than an unbeliever

"is worse than those who do not believe in Jesus." Paul means this person is worse than an unbeliever because even unbelievers take care of their relatives. Therefore, a believer should certainly take care of his relatives.

1 Timothy 5:9

be enrolled as a widow

There seems to have been a list, written or not, of widows. The church members met these women's needs for shelter, clothing, and food, and these women were expected to devote their lives to serving the Christian community.

who is not younger than sixty

As Paul will explain in 5:11-16, widows who were younger than 60 years old might get married again. Therefore the Christian community was to care only for widows who were older than 60.

a wife of one husband

Possible meanings are 1) she was always faithful to her husband or 2) she had not divorced her husband and then married another man.

1 Timothy 5:10

She must have a reputation for doing good deeds

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People must be able to tell others about her good deeds"

has been hospitable to strangers

"has welcomed strangers into her home"

has washed the feet of God's holy people

Washing the dirty feet of people who have been walking in the dirt and mud is one way of meeting other people's needs and making life more enjoyable for them. This probably means she did humble work in general. Alternate translation: "has done common work to help other believers"

God's holy people

Some versions translate this word as "the believers" or "saints." The essential idea is to refer to Christian believers.

has relieved the afflicted

Here "the afflicted" is a nominal adjective that can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "has helped those who are suffering"

has been devoted to every good work

"has given herself to doing all kinds of good deeds"

1 Timothy 5:11

But as for younger widows, refuse to enroll them in the list

"But do not include younger widows in the list." The list was of widows aged 60 years and older whom the Christian community would help.

For when they give in to bodily desires against Christ, they want to marry

"For when they prefer to fulfill their sensual desires and get married, they go against their promise to serve Christ as widows"

1 Timothy 5:12

set aside their first commitment

"do not keep their prior commitment" or "do not do what they promised before to do"

commitment

The commitment of the widows was their agreement to serve the Christian community for the rest of their lives if the community would supply the widows' needs.

1 Timothy 5:13

learn to be lazy

"get into the habit of doing nothing"

talk nonsense and are busybodies, saying things they should not say

These three phrases are probably three ways of speaking of the same activity. These people should not be looking into other people's private lives and telling about them to others who are no better off after hearing.

nonsense

words that do not help those who hear them

busybodies

people who look into other people's private lives for their own good and not for the good of the other people

1 Timothy 5:14

to manage the household

"to take care of everyone in her house"

the enemy

These words could refer to 1) Satan or 2) unbelievers who are hostile to Christians.

to slander us

Here "us" refers to the entire Christian community, including Timothy.

1 Timothy 5:15

turned aside after Satan

Paul speaks of living in faithfulness to Christ as if it were a path to be followed. This means the women stopped obeying Jesus and started obeying Satan. Alternate translation: "left the path of Christ to follow Satan" or "decided to obey Satan instead of Christ"

1 Timothy 5:16

any believing woman

"any Christian woman" or "any woman who believes in Christ"

has widows

"has widows among her relatives"

so that the church will not be burdened

Paul speaks of the community having to help more people than they are able as if they were carrying too much weight on their backs. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that the church will not have more work to do than they can" or "so that the Christian community will not have to help widows whose families could provide for them"

real widows

"those women who have no one to provide for them"

1 Timothy 5:17

Connecting Statement:

Paul again talks of how elders (overseers) should be treated

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and then gives Timothy some personal instructions.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All believers should think of the elders who are good leaders as worthy"

double honor

Possible meanings are 1) "respect and payment" or 2) "more respect than others receive"

those who labor with the word and in teaching

Paul speaks about the word as if it is an object that a person can work with. Alternate translation: "those who work hard preaching and those who teach God's word"

1 Timothy 5:18

For the scripture says

This is personification that means that this is what someone has written in the scriptures. Alternate translation: "For we read in the scriptures that"

You must not put a muzzle on an ox while it threshes the grain

Paul is using this quotation as a metaphor meaning that church leaders deserve to receive payment from the Christian community for their work.

muzzle

place a sleeve over an animal's snout and mouth to prevent it from eating

threshes the grain

An ox "threshes the grain" when it walks on or pulls a heavy object over the cut grain to separate the grain from the stalks. The ox was allowed to eat some of the grain as it worked.

is worthy of

"deserves"

1 Timothy 5:19

Do not receive an accusation

Paul speaks of accusations as if they were objects that could be physically accepted by people. Alternate translation: "Do not accept as true any accusation that someone speaks"

two or three

"at least two" or "two or more"

1 Timothy 5:20

sinners

This refers to anyone doing anything that disobeys or displeases God, even things that other people do not know about.

before all

"where everyone can see"

so that the rest may be afraid

"so that others will be afraid to sin"

1 Timothy 5:21

the chosen angels

This means the angels whom God and Jesus have chosen to serve them in a special way.

to keep these commands without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism

The words "partiality" and "favoritism" mean basically the same thing. Paul is emphasizing that Timothy must judge honestly and be fair to everyone. Alternate translation: "to keep these rules without being partial or showing favor to anyone"

these commands

The phrase "these commands" could refer to 1) the rules Paul just told Timothy or 2) the rules Paul is about to tell Timothy.

1 Timothy 5:22

Place hands

The placing of hands was a ceremony in which one or more church leaders would place their hands on people and pray that God would enable those people to serve the church in a way that would please God. Timothy was to wait until the person had shown good character for a long time before officially setting that person apart to serve the Christian community.

Do not share in the sins of another person

Paul speaks of someone's sin as if it were an object that could be shared with others. Alternate translation: "do not join in another person's sin" or "do not participate when another person sins"

Do not share in the sins of another person

Possible meanings are 1) if Timothy chose someone who was guilty of sin to be a church worker, God would hold Timothy responsible for that person's sin or 2) Timothy should not commit sins he saw others committing.

1 Timothy 5:23

You should no longer drink water

It is implied that Timothy should not drink only water. Paul is telling Timothy to use wine as medicine. The water in that area often caused sickness.

for the stomach and your frequent sicknesses

"because of your stomach and your frequent sicknesses" or "to help your stomach and to stop your frequent illnesses"

1 Timothy 5:24

The sins of some people are openly known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The sins of some people are very obvious"

they go before them into judgment

"their sins go before those people into judgment." Paul speaks of sins as if they were moving. Possible meanings are 1) Their sins are so obvious that everyone will know they are guilty even before anyone testifies against them or 2) Their sins are evident, and God judges them now.

But some sins follow later

"But some sins follow people later." Paul speaks of sins as if they were moving. Possible meanings are 1) Timothy and the Christian community will not know about certain sins until later or 2) God will not judge some sins until the final judgment.

1 Timothy 5:25

some good works are openly known

"some good works are obvious"

good works

The works are considered "good" because they fit with God's character, purposes, and will.

but even the others cannot be hidden

Paul speaks of good works as if they were objects that someone cannot hide. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but people will later find out about even the good deeds that are not obvious"

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6 [1]Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor. They should do this so that
the name of God and the teaching might not be blasphemed.[2]The slaves who have believing masters should not show
them disrespect because they are brothers. Instead, they should serve them all the more. For those who receive the
benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and declare these things.

[3]If anyone teaches false doctrine and does not agree with the truthful words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with godly
teaching,[4]he is proud and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments about
words that result in envy, strife, insults, evil suspicions,[5]and constant conflict between people who have morally corrupt
minds. They have lost the truth and they think that godliness is a way to get more money.[1]
[6]Now godliness with contentment is great gain,[7]for we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.
[8]Instead, let us be satisfied with food and clothing.
[9]Now those who desire to become wealthy fall into temptation, into a trap. They fall into many foolish and harmful
desires, and into whatever else sinks people into ruin and destruction.[10]For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.
Some people who desire it have been misled away from the faith and have pierced themselves with much grief.

[11]But you, man of God, flee from these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and
gentleness.[12]Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the everlasting life to which you were called, and about which you
gave the good confession before many witnesses.
[13]I give these orders to you before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius
Pilate and made the good confession,[14]to keep the command without spot or blame until the appearance of our Lord Jesus
Christ.
[15]God will reveal Christ's appearing at the right time—God, the blessed and only Sovereign, the King who reigns and the
Lord who rules.[16]Only he has immortality and dwells in inapproachable light. No man sees him or is able to view him. To
him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

[17]Instruct the rich in this world not to be proud and not to hope in riches, which are uncertain. Instead, they should hope
in God. He offers to us all the true riches to enjoy.[18]Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and
willing to share.[19]In that way they will store up for themselves a good foundation for what is to come, so that they will
take hold of real life.

[20]Timothy, protect what was given to you. Avoid the profane and empty talk and the conflicting ideas of what is falsely
called knowledge.[21]Some men proclaim these things and so they have gone astray from the faith. May grace be with you.

[1]Some old copies add the exhortation, Stay away from such things. But the best ancient copies do not.

1 Timothy 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Slavery

Paul does not write in this chapter about whether slavery is good or bad. Paul teaches about honoring, respecting, and diligently serving masters. Paul teaches all believers to be godly and content in every situation.

Links:

1 Timothy 6:1 Notes

1 Timothy 6:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives some specific instructions to slaves and masters and then continues with instructions on living in a godly way.

Let all who are under the yoke as slaves

Paul speaks of people working as slaves as if they are oxen carrying a yoke. Alternate translation: "Let all who are working as slaves"

Let all who are

It is implied that Paul is speaking about believers. Alternate translation: "Let all who are believers"

the name of God and the teaching might not be blasphemed

This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "the unbelievers might always speak respectfully about the name of God and the teaching"

the name of God

Here "name" refers to God's nature or character. Alternate translation: "the character of God" or "God"

the teaching

"the faith" or "the gospel"

1 Timothy 6:2

The slaves who have believing masters should not show them disrespect because they are brothers

Possible meanings are 1) it is because the believing masters are brothers that their slaves should not show them disrespect or 2) slaves should not think that because their masters are believers they can therefore show them disrespect.

they are brothers

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Here "brothers" means "fellow believers."

those who receive the benefit

You may need to add the words omitted by the ellipsis. Alternate translation: "the masters whom the slaves help with their good work"

and beloved

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "and the slaves should love them" or 2) "whom God loves"

1 Timothy 6:3

the truthful words of our Lord Jesus Christ

The word "truthful" is a figure of speech from the Greek word for "healthy."

truthful words

The word translated as "truthful" comes from the term "healthy" here, and it is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. See how you translated the word "healthy" in [1 Timothy 1:10]

1 Timothy 6:4

he is proud ... He has an unhealthy interest

Here "he" refers to anyone in general that teaches what is not correct. To make this clear, you can translate "he" as "they."

understands nothing

"understands nothing about God's truth"

He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments

Paul speaks of people who feel compelled to engage in useless arguments as if they were ill. Such people greatly desire to argue, and they do not really want to find a way to agree. Alternate translation: "All he wants to do is argue" or "He craves arguments"

controversies and arguments about words that result in envy

"controversies and arguments about words, and these controversies and arguments result in envy"

about words

"about the meanings of words"

strife

arguments, fights

insults

bad things that people falsely say about each other

evil suspicions

evil beliefs that innocent people have done something wrong or are planning on doing something wrong

1 Timothy 6:5

morally corrupt minds

"wicked minds"

They have lost the truth

Here the word "They" refers to anyone who teaches anything that does not agree with the teaching of Jesus. The phrase "have lost the truth" represents ignoring it or forgetting it. Alternate translation: "They have ignored the truth" or "They have forgotten the truth"

1 Timothy 6:6

Now

This marks a break in the teaching. Here Paul begins to contrast the kind of riches the wicked people seek through godliness (1 Timothy 6:5) and the true kind of gain people receive through godliness. Alternate translation: "Of course"

godliness with contentment is great gain

The words "godliness" and "contentment" are abstract nouns. Alternate translation: "it is great gain for people to do what is godly and to be content with what they have"

is great gain

"provides great benefits" or "does many good things for us"

1 Timothy 6:7

we brought nothing into the world

"we brought nothing into the world when we were born"

we can take nothing out of it

"we can take nothing out of the world when we die"

1 Timothy 6:8

let us

"we should"

1 Timothy 6:9

Now

This word marks a break in the teaching. Here Paul returns to the topic about those who think being godly will make them wealthy (1 Timothy 6:5).

to become wealthy fall into temptation, into a trap

Paul speaks about those who let the temptation of money cause them to sin as if they were animals that fall into holes that hunters use as traps. Alternate translation: "to become wealthy will encounter more temptation than they can resist, and they will be like an animal in a trap"

They fall into many foolish and harmful desires, and into whatever else sinks

Paul continues the trap metaphor and speaks of people who give in to their foolish and harmful desires and do evil as if they were animals who fall into a trap. Alternate translation: "They desire many foolish and harmful things and then do things that sink"

harmful desires

These are probably desires to do things that will harm those who do them as much as or more than they will harm other people.

into whatever else sinks people into ruin and destruction

Paul speaks about people who suffer because of their sins as if sin were a person who had put them under water or in mud. Alternate translation: "into other kinds of evil that ruin and destroy people"

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil

Paul speaks of the love of money as if it were the root of a plant whose fruit is all kinds of evil. Alternate translation: "This happens because loving money is a cause of all kinds of evil"

who desire it

"who desire money"

have been misled away from the faith

Paul speaks of wrong desires as if they were evil guides who intentionally guide people down the wrong path. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "have let their desires lead them away from the truth" or "have stopped believing the truth"

have pierced themselves with much grief

Paul speaks about grief as if it were swords that people have used to stab themselves. Alternate translation: "have caused themselves to be very sorrowful"

1 Timothy 6:11

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But you

Here "you" is singular and refers to Timothy.

man of God

"servant of God" or "person who belongs to God"

flee from these things

Paul speaks of these temptations and sins as if they were things that a person could physically run away from. Alternate translation: "completely avoid these things"

these things

Possible meanings of "these things" are 1) the "love of money" or 2) the different teachings, pride, arguments, and the love of money.

Pursue righteousness

"Run after righteousness" or "Chase righteousness." Paul speaks of righteousness and other good qualities as if they were things that a person could run after. This metaphor is the opposite of "flee from." It means to try your best to obtain something. Alternate translation: "Seek to gain" or "Do your best to act in"

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith

Here Paul speaks about a person continuing in faith as if he were an athlete fighting to win a contest or a warrior fighting a battle. Alternate translation: "Try your hardest to obey Christ's teachings with as much energy as an athlete uses in a contest"

Take hold of the everlasting life

This continues the metaphor. Paul speaks about a person receiving eternal life as if he were a victorious athlete or warrior taking their prize. Alternate translation: "Take eternal life as your reward as a victorious athlete takes his prize"

to which you were called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to which God has called you"

you gave the good confession

"you confessed what is good" or "you confessed the truth"

before many witnesses

Paul expresses the idea of location in order to signal the idea of the people to whom Timothy was speaking. Alternate translation: "to many witnesses"

1 Timothy 6:13

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks of Christ's coming, gives specific instructions to the rich, and lastly closes with a special message to Timothy.

I give these orders to you

"This is what I command you"

before God, who gives life to all things

"in the presence of God, who causes all things to live." It is implied that Paul as asking God to be his witness. Alternate translation: "with God, who causes all things to live, as my witness"

and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate

"in the presence of Christ Jesus, who spoke ... Pilate." It is implied that Paul is asking Jesus to be his witness. Alternate translation: "with Christ Jesus, who spoke ... Pilate, as my witness"

1 Timothy 6:14

without spot or blame

The phrase "without spot" is a metaphor for being without moral fault. Possible meanings are 1) Jesus will not find fault with Timothy or blame him for doing wrong or 2) other people will not find fault with Timothy or blame him for doing wrong.

until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ

"until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again"

1 Timothy 6:15

God will reveal Christ's appearing

It is implied that God will reveal Jesus. Alternate translation: "God will reveal Jesus"

the blessed and only Sovereign

"the One worthy of praise who rules over the world"

1 Timothy 6:16

Only he has immortality

"Only he has the power to live forever"

dwells in inapproachable light

"dwells in a light so bright that no one can approach him"

1 Timothy 6:17

Instruct the rich in this world

Here "rich" is a nominal adjective. It can be stated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "Solemnly charge those who are rich in this world"

not to hope in riches, which are uncertain

Paul tells rich people not to confidently expect that their wealth will always provide what they need. Alternate translation: "not to confidently expect that they will always have what they need, because it is uncertain how long they may have their many possession"

they should hope in God

Paul tells rich people that they should confidently expect God to do what he has promised to do. Alternate translation: "they should confidently expect that God will do what he has promised to do" or "they should fully trust in God"

all the true riches

"all the things that will make us truly happy." The reference here may include physical objects, but it more likely refers to states like love, joy, and peace that people try to obtain by means of physical objects.

1 Timothy 6:18

be rich in good works

Paul speaks of spiritual blessings as if they were earthly wealth. Alternate translation: "serve and help others in many ways"

1 Timothy 6:19

they will store up for themselves a good foundation for what is to come

Here Paul speaks about the blessings that God gives in heaven as if they were riches that a person is storing away for later use. Also, the certainty of these blessings that people will never lose is spoken of as if it were the foundation of a building. Alternate translation: "it will be as though they were storing up for themselves many things that God will give them"

take hold of real life

This recalls the sports metaphor of 1 Timothy 6:12, where the prize is something that the winner can actually hold in his hands. Here the "prize" is "real" life.

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1 Timothy 6:20

protect what was given to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "faithfully proclaim the true message that Jesus has given to you"

Avoid the profane and empty talk

"Do not pay attention to the ungodly and useless talk"

of what is falsely called knowledge

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "of what some people falsely call knowledge"

1 Timothy 6:21

they have gone astray from the faith

Paul speaks of those who stop obeying Christ as if they were children or animals who have gone away from where they belong and are safe. Alternate translation: "they have stopped believing the truth"

May grace be with you

"May God give grace to all of you." The "you" is plural and refers to the whole Christian community.

Introduction to 2 Timothy

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 Timothy

Paul greets Timothy and encourages him to endure hardship as he serves God (1:1-2:13). Paul gives general instructions to Timothy (2:14–26). Paul warns Timothy about future events and instructs him about how to carry out his service to God (3:1-4:8). Paul makes personal remarks (4:9-24).

Who wrote the Book of 2 Timothy?

Paul wrote 2 Timothy. He was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

This book is the second letter Paul wrote Timothy. Timothy was his disciple and close friend. Paul wrote this letter while in prison in Rome. Paul would die soon after writing this letter.

What is the Book of 2 Timothy about?

Paul had left Timothy in the city of Ephesus to help the believers there. Paul wrote this letter to instruct Timothy about various matter. The topics he addressed include warnings about false teachers and enduring difficult situations. This letter also shows how Paul was training Timothy to be a leader among the churches.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "2 Timothy" or "Second Timothy." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Second Letter to Timothy" or "The Second Letter to Timothy."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is the soldier imagery in 2 Timothy?

As Paul waited in prison, knowing he would die soon, he often spoke of himself as a soldier of Jesus Christ. Soldiers answer to their leaders. In the same way, Christians answer to Jesus. As "soldiers" of Christ, believers are to obey his commands, even if they die as a result.

What does it mean that God inspired Scripture?

God is the true author of Scripture. He inspired the human authors who wrote the books. That means God in some way caused the people to write what they wrote. This is why it is also referred to as God's word. This implies several things about the Bible. First, the Bible is free from error and can be trusted. Second, we can rely on God to protect the scripture from those who want to distort it or destroy it. Third, God's word should be translated into all the world's languages.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. Here the word "you" is almost always singular and refers to Timothy. The exception to this is 4:22.

What did Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.

These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

What are the major textual issues in the text of the Book of 2 Timothy?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should

consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"Because of this, I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher" (1:11). Some older translations read, "Because of this, I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher to the Gentiles." "Warn them before God" (2:14). Some older translations read, "Warn them before the Lord."

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2 Timothy

1 [1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

[2]to Timothy, beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

[3]I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers, with a clean conscience, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day.[4]As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.[5]I have been reminded of your genuine faith, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it lives in you also.
[6]This is the reason I am reminding you to rekindle the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.[7]For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline.
[8]So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me, Paul, his prisoner. Instead, share in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,[9]who saved us and called us with a holy calling. He did this, not according to our works, but according to his own plan and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before times ever began.[10]But now God's salvation has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who put an end to death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.[11]Because of this, I was appointed a herald, an apostle, and a teacher.[1]
[12]For this cause I also suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed. I am convinced that he is able to keep that which I have entrusted to him until that day.[13]Keep the example of the truthful words that you heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.[14]The good thing that God committed to you, guard it through the Holy Spirit, who lives in us.

[15]You know this, that all who live in Asia turned away from me. In this group are Phygelus and Hermogenes.[16]May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain.[17]Instead, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and he found me.[18]May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from him on that day. All the ways he served me in Ephesus you know very well.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies add to the Gentiles.

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2 Timothy 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Spiritual children

Paul discipled Timothy as a Christian and a church leader. Paul may also have led him to believe in Christ. Therefore, Paul calls Timothy "beloved child." (See: disciple and spirit)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Persecution

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. Paul encourages Timothy to be willing to suffer for the gospel.

Links:

2 Timothy 1:1 Notes 2 Timothy intro

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2 Timothy 1:1

General Information:

In this book, unless otherwise noted, the word "our" refers to Paul and Timothy

Paul

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the author of a letter. Also, immediately after introducing the author, you may need to tell to whom the letter is written, as in the UDB.

through the will of God

"because of God's will" or "because God wanted it." Paul became an apostle because God wanted him to be an apostle and not because a human being chose him.

according to

Possible meanings are 1) "for the purpose of." This means that God appointed Paul to tell others about God's promise of life in Jesus or 2) "in keeping with." This means that just as God promises that Jesus gives life, he has made Paul an

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apostle.

of the life that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of "the life" as if it were an object inside of Jesus. This refers to the life people receive as a result of belonging to Christ Jesus. Alternate translation: "of the life that we receive as a result of belonging to Christ Jesus"

2 Timothy 1:2

to Timothy

Your language may have a particular way of introducing the person who receives a letter. Also, immediately after introducing the author, you may need to tell to whom the letter is written.

beloved child

"dear child" or "child whom I love."" Here "child" is a term of great love and approval. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is like my beloved child"

Grace, mercy, and peace from

"May grace, mercy, and peace be yours from" or "May you experience kindness, mercy, and peace within from"

God the Father and

"God, who is our Father, and." This is an important title for God.

Christ Jesus our Lord

"Christ Jesus, who is our Lord"

2 Timothy 1:3

whom I serve from my forefathers

"whom I serve as my ancestors did"

with a clean conscience

Paul speaks of his conscience as if it could be physically clean. This means that a person does not feel guilty because he has always tried to do what was right. Alternate translation: "knowing I have tried my hardest to do what is right"

as I constantly remember you

"when I remember you continually" or "while I remember you all the time"

night and day

Here "night and day" are used together to mean "always." Alternate translation: "always" or "constantly"

2 Timothy 1:4

I long to see you

"I want very much to see you"

I may be filled with joy

Paul speaks of himself as if he were a container that someone could fill. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I may be full of joy" or "I may have complete joy"

I remember your tears

Here "tears" represents crying. Alternate translation: "I remember how you cried for me"

2 Timothy 1:5

I have been reminded of your

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I also remember your" or "I also recall your"

your genuine faith

"your faith that is real" or "your faith that is sincere"

faith, which lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced that it lives in you also

Paul is speaking of their faith as if it were something that is alive and lives in them. Paul means they have the same sort of faith. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "faith. Lois, your grandmother, and Eunice, your mother, first had genuine faith, and I am confident that you have genuine faith as well"

Lois ... Eunice

These are names of women.

2 Timothy 1:6

Connecting Statement:

Paul encourages Timothy to live in power, love, and discipline and not to be ashamed because of Paul's suffering in prison because of his (Paul's) faith in Christ.

This is the reason I am

"For this reason I am" or "Because of your sincere faith in Jesus, I am"

to rekindle the gift

Paul speaks about Timothy's need to start using his gift again as if he were restarting a fire. Alternate translation: "to start using again the gift"

the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands

"the gift of God that you received when I laid my hands on you." This refers to a ceremony in which Paul placed his hands on Timothy and prayed that God would enable him to do the work he had commanded him to do.

2 Timothy 1:7

God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline

Possible meanings are 1) "spirit" refers to the "Holy Spirit." Alternate translation: "God's Holy Spirit does not cause us to be afraid. He causes us to have power and love and discipline" or 2) "spirit" refers to a characteristic. Alternate translation: "God does not cause us to be afraid but to have power and love and discipline"

discipline

Possible meanings are 1) the power to control ourselves or 2) the power to correct other people who are doing wrong.

2 Timothy 1:8

of the testimony

"of testifying" or "of telling others"

his prisoner

"a prisoner for his sake" or "a prisoner because I testify about the Lord"

share in suffering for the gospel

Paul speaks of suffering as if it were an object that could be shared or distributed among people. Alternate translation: "suffer with me for the gospel"

gospel according to the power of God

"gospel, allowing God to make you strong"

2 Timothy 1:9

with a holy calling

"with a calling that set us apart as his people" or "to be his holy people"

He did this

"He saved and called us"

not according to our works

"not because we did anything to deserve it"

but according to his own plan and grace

"but because he planned to show us kindness"

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in Christ Jesus
"through our relationship to Christ Jesus"
before times ever began
"before the world began" or "before time began"
2 Timothy 1:10
God's salvation has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus
Paul speaks of salvation as if it were an object that could uncovered and shown to people. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has shown how he will save us by sending our Savior Christ Jesus"
who put an end to death
Paul speaks of death as if it were an independent process instead of the event of people dying. Alternate translation: "who destroyed death" or "who made it possible for people not to remain dead forever"
brought life and immortality to light through the gospel
Paul speaks of teaching about eternal life as if it were an object that could be brought from darkness into light so that people could see it. Alternate translation: "taught what life that never ends is by preaching the gospel"
2 Timothy 1:11
I was appointed a herald
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God chose me to be a herald"
a herald
a person who proclaims important or official messages
2 Timothy 1:12
For this cause
"Because I am an apostle"
I also suffer these things
Paul is referring to being a prisoner.
to keep that which I have entrusted to him
Paul is using a metaphor of a person leaving something with another person who is supposed to protect it until he gives it back to the first person. Possible meanings are 1) Paul is trusting Jesus to help him remain faithful, or 2) Paul is trusting that Jesus will ensure that people continue spreading the gospel message.
I am convinced
"I am certain" or "I know for sure"
that day
This refers to the day when God judges all people.
2 Timothy 1:13
Keep the example of the truthful words that you heard from me
"Keep teaching the correct ideas I have taught you" or "Use how I taught you as a pattern for what and how you should teach"
truthful words
The Greek word translated "truthful, is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"
with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus
"as you trust in Jesus Christ and love him"
2 Timothy 1:14
The good thing
This refers to the work of proclaiming the gospel correctly.
guard it
Timothy needs to be alert because people will oppose his work, try to make him stop, and distort what he says.
through the Holy Spirit
"with the power of the Holy Spirit"
2 Timothy 1:15
turned away from me
This is a metaphor that means they stopped helping Paul. They abandoned Paul because the authorities had thrown him into prison. Alternate translation: "have stopped helping me"
Phygelus and Hermogenes
These are names of men.
2 Timothy 1:16
Onesiphorus
This is the name of a man.
to the household
"to the family"
was not ashamed of my chain
Here "chain" is a metonym for being in prison. Onesiphorus was not ashamed that Paul was in prison but came to visit him frequently. Alternate translation: "was not ashamed that I was in prison"
2 Timothy 1:18
May the Lord grant to him to find mercy from him
"May Onesiphorus receive mercy from the Lord" or "May the Lord show him mercy"
to find mercy from him
Paul speaks of mercy as if it were an object that could be found.
on that day
This refers to the day when God will judge all people.

2 [1]You therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.[2]The things you heard from me among
many witnesses, entrust them to faithful people who will be able to teach others also.
[3]Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.[4]No soldier serves while entangled in the affairs of this life, so
that he may please his superior officer.[5]Also, if someone competes as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by
the rules.
[6]It is necessary that the hard-working farmer receive his share of the crops first.[7]Think about what I am saying, for the
Lord will give you understanding in everything.
[8]Remember Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, who was raised from the dead. This is according to my gospel message,
[9]for which I am suffering to the point of being bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound.
[10]Therefore I endure all things for those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus,
with eternal glory.
[11]This is a trustworthy saying:
"If we have died with him, we will also live with him.

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12 If we endure, we will also reign with him.
If we deny him, we also will deny us.

13 If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful,
for he cannot deny himself."

14 Keep reminding them of these things. Command them before God not to quarrel about words; it is of no value and only ruins those who listen.[1] 15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a laborer who has no reason to be ashamed, who accurately teaches the word of truth.
16 Avoid profane and empty talk, which leads to more and more godlessness. 17 Their talk will spread like cancer. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18 who have gone astray from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already happened, and they destroy the faith of some.
19 However, the firm foundation of God stands. It has this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his" and "Everyone who names the name of the Lord must depart from unrighteousness." 20 In a wealthy home there are not only containers of gold and silver. There are also containers of wood and clay. Some of these are for honorable use, and some for dishonorable. 21 If someone cleans himself from dishonorable use, he is an honorable container. He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work.
22 Flee youthful lusts. Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a clean heart. 23 But refuse foolish and ignorant questions. You know that they give birth to quarrels.
24 The Lord's servant must not quarrel. Instead he must be gentle toward all, able to teach, and patient, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. Perhaps God may give them repentance for the knowledge of the truth. 26 They may become sober again and leave the devil's trap, after they have been captured by him for his will.

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[1] Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Warn them before the Lord.

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2 Timothy 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set words farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with verses 11-13. Paul may be quoting a poem or hymn in these verses.

Special concepts in this chapter

We will reign with him

Faithful Christians will reign with Christ in the future. (See: faithful)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Analogies

In this chapter, Paul makes several analogies to teach about living as a Christian. He uses analogies of soldiers, athletes, and farmers. Later in the chapter, he uses the analogy of different kinds of containers in a house.

Links:

2 Timothy 2:1 Notes

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2 Timothy 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul pictures Timothy's Christian life as a soldier's life, as a farmer's life, and as an athlete's life.

my child

Here "child" is a term of great love and approval. It is also likely that Timothy was converted to Christ by Paul, and so this is why Paul considered him like his own child. Alternate translation: "who is like my child"

be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks about the motivation and determination that God's grace allows believers to have. Alternate translation: "let God use the grace he gave you through your relationship to Christ Jesus to make you strong"

2 Timothy 2:2

among many witnesses

"with many witnesses there to agree that what I said is true"

entrust them to faithful people

Paul speaks of his instructions to Timothy as if they were objects that Timothy could give to other people and trust them to use correctly. Alternate translation: "commit them" or "teach them"

2 Timothy 2:3

Suffer hardship with me

Possible meanings are 1) "Endure suffering as I do" or 2) "Share in my suffering"

as a good soldier of Christ Jesus

Paul compares suffering for Christ Jesus to the suffering that a good soldier endures.

2 Timothy 2:4

No soldier serves while entangled in the affairs of this life

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"No soldier serves when he is involved in the everyday business of this life" or "When soldiers are serving, they do not get distracted by the ordinary things that people do." Christ's servants should not allow everyday life to keep them from working for Christ.

while entangled

Paul speaks of this distraction as if it were a net that tripped people up as they were walking.

his superior officer

"his leader" or "the one who commands him"

2 Timothy 2:5

as an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules

Paul is implicitly speaking of Christ's servants as if they were athletes.

he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will crown him as winner only if he competes by the rules"

he is not crowned

"he does not win the prize." Athletes in Paul's time were crowned with wreaths made from the leaves of plants when they won competitions.

competes by the rules

"competes according to the rules" or "strictly obeys the rules"

2 Timothy 2:6

It is necessary that the hard-working farmer receive his share of the crops first

This is the third metaphor Paul gives Timothy about working. The reader should understand that Christ's servants need to work hard.

2 Timothy 2:7

Think about what I am saying

Paul gave Timothy word pictures, but he did not completely explain their meanings. He expected Timothy to figure out what he was saying about Christ's servants.

in everything

"about everything"

2 Timothy 2:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives Timothy instructions on how to live for Christ, how to suffer for Christ, and how to teach others to live for Christ.

who was raised from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God caused to live again" or "whom God raised from the dead"

according to my gospel message

Paul speaks of the gospel message as if it were especially his. He means that this is the gospel message that he proclaims. Alternate translation: "according to the gospel message that I preach"

2 Timothy 2:9

to the point of being bound with chains as a criminal

Here "being chained" represents being a prisoner. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to the point of wearing chains as a criminal in prison"

the word of God is not bound

Here "bound" speaks of what happens to a prisoner, and the phrase is a metaphor that means no one can stop God's message. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "no one can put the word of God in prison" or "no one can stop the word of God"

2 Timothy 2:10

for those who are chosen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for the people whom God has chosen"

may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of salvation as if it were an object that could be physically grasped. Alternate translation: "will receive salvation from Christ Jesus"

with eternal glory

"and that they will be forever with him in the glorious place where he is"

2 Timothy 2:11

This is a trustworthy saying

"These are words you can trust"

If we have died with him, we will also live with him

This is most likely the beginning of a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry, you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

died with him

Paul uses this expression to mean that people share in Christ's death when they trust in him, deny their own wants, and obey him.

2 Timothy 2:13

if we are unfaithful ... he cannot deny himself

This is most likely the end of a song or poem that Paul is quoting. If your language has a way of indicating that this is poetry you could use it here. If not, you could translate this as regular prose rather than poetry.

if we are unfaithful

"even if we fail God" or "even if we do not do what we believe God wants us to do"

he cannot deny himself

"he must always act according to his character" or "he cannot act in ways that are the opposite of his real character"

2 Timothy 2:14

General Information:

The word "them" may refer to "the teachers" or "the people of the church"

before God

Paul speaks of God's awareness of Paul as if he is in God's physical presence. This implies that God will be Timothy's witness. Alternate translation: "in God's presence" or "with God as your witness"

not to quarrel about words

Possible meanings are 1) "not to argue about foolish things that people say" or 2) "not to quarrel about what words mean"

it is of no value

"this does not benefit anyone"

2 Timothy 2:15

to present yourself to God as one approved, a laborer who has no reason to be ashamed

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"to present yourself to God as a person who has proven to be worthy and has no cause for shame"

a laborer

Paul presents the idea of Timothy correctly explaining God's word as if he were a skilled workman. Alternate translation: "like a workman" or "like a worker"

accurately teaches the word of truth

Possible meanings are 1) "explains the message about the truth correctly" or 2) "explains the true message correctly."

2 Timothy 2:16

Avoid profane and empty talk

"Do not pay attention to ungodly and useless talk"

which leads to more and more godlessness

Paul speaks of this kind of talk as if it were something that could physically move to another location, and he speaks of godlessness as if it were that new location. Alternate translation: "which causes people to become more and more ungodly"

2 Timothy 2:17

Their talk will spread like cancer

Cancer quickly spreads in a person's body and destroys it. This is a metaphor that means what those people were saying would spread from person to person and harm the faith of those who heard it. Alternate translation: "What they say will spread like an infectious disease" or "Their talk will spread quickly and cause destruction like cancer"

Hymenaeus and Philetus

These are names of men.

2 Timothy 2:18

who have gone astray from the truth

Here "gone astray from the truth" is a metaphor for no longer believing or teaching what is true. Alternate translation: "who have started saying things that are not true"

the resurrection has already happened

"God has already raised dead believers to eternal life"

they destroy the faith of some

"they cause some people to stop believing"

2 Timothy 2:19

General Information:

Just as precious and common containers can be used for honorable ways in a wealthy house, any person who turns to God can be used by God in honorable ways in doing good works.

the firm foundation of God stands

Possible meanings are 1) "God's truth is like a firm foundation" or 2) "God has established his people like a building on a firm foundation" or 3) "God's faithfulness is like a firm foundation." In any case, Paul speaks of this idea as if it were a building's foundation laid in the ground.

this inscription

Possible meanings of "inscription" are 1) words written into stone with a chisel or 2) words impressed in wax by a king's ring.

who names the name of the Lord

"who calls on the name of the Lord." Here "name of the Lord" refers to the Lord himself. Alternate translation: "who calls on the Lord" or "who says he is a believer in Christ"

depart from unrighteousness

Paul speaks of unrighteousness as if it were a place from which one could leave. Alternate translation: "stop being evil" or "stop doing wrong things"

2 Timothy 2:20

containers of gold and silver ... containers of wood and clay

Here "containers" is a general word for bowls, plates, and pots, which people put food or drink into or on. If your language does not have a general word, use the word for "bowls" or "pots." Paul is using this as a metaphor to describe different types of people.

honorable use ... dishonorable

Possible meanings are 1) "special occasions ... ordinary times" or 2) "the kinds of activities people do in public ... the kinds of activities people do in private."

2 Timothy 2:21

cleans himself from dishonorable use

Possible meanings are 1) "separates himself from dishonorable people" or 2) "makes himself pure." In any case, Paul speaks of this process as if it were a person washing himself.

he is an honorable container

Paul speaks about this person as if he were an honorable container. Alternate translation: "he is like the container that is useful for special occasions" or "he is like the container that is useful for activities good people do in public"

He is set apart, useful to the Master, and prepared for every good work

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The Master sets him apart, and he is ready for the Master to use him for every good work"

He is set apart

He is not set apart physically or in the sense of location, but instead to fulfill a purpose. Some versions translate this "sanctified," but the text signals the essential idea of being set apart.

2 Timothy 2:22

Flee youthful lusts

Paul speaks about youthful lusts as if they were a dangerous person or animal that Timothy should run away from. Alternate translation: "Completely avoid youthful lusts" or "Absolutely refuse to do the wrong things that young people strongly desire to do"

Pursue righteousness

Here "Pursue" means the opposite of "Flee." Paul speaks of righteousness as if it were an object that Timothy should run towards because it will do him good. Alternate translation: "Try your best to obtain righteousness" or "Seek after righteousness"

with those

Possible meanings are 1) Paul wants Timothy to join with other believers in pursuing righteousness, faith, love, and peace, or 2) Paul wants Timothy to be at peace and not argue with other believers.

those who call on the Lord

Here "call on the Lord" is an idiom that means to trust and worship the Lord. Alternate translation: "those who worship the Lord"

out of a clean heart

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Here "clean" is a metaphor for something pure or sincere. And, "heart" here is a metonym for "thoughts" or "emotions." Alternate translation: "with a sincere mind" or "with sincerity"

2 Timothy 2:23

refuse foolish and ignorant questions

"refuse to answer foolish and ignorant questions." Paul means that the people who ask such questions are foolish and ignorant. Alternate translation: "refuse to answer the questions that foolish people who do not want to know the truth ask"

they give birth to quarrels

Paul speaks of ignorant questions as if they were women giving birth to children. Alternate translation: "they cause arguments"

2 Timothy 2:25

correcting his opponents with gentleness

"gently correcting those who oppose him"

his opponents

"people who say that what he teaches is not true"

Perhaps God may give them repentance

Paul speaks of repentance as if it were an object that God could give people. Alternate translation: "God may give them the opportunity to repent"

for the knowledge of the truth

"so that they will know the truth"

2 Timothy 2:26

They may become sober again

Paul speaks of sinners learning to think correctly about God as if they were drunk people becoming sober again. Alternate translation: "They may think correctly again"

leave the devil's trap

Paul speaks of the devil's ability to convince Christians to sin as if it were a trap. Alternate translation: "stop doing what the devil wants"

after they have been captured by him for his will

Convincing Christians to sin is spoken of as if the devil had physically captured them and made them his slaves. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after he has deceived them into obeying his will"

3 [1]But know this: In the last days there will be difficult times.[2]For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, and unholy.[3]They will be without natural affection, unable to reconcile, slanderers, without self-control, violent, not lovers of good.[4]They will be betrayers, reckless, prideful, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.
[5]They will have a shape of godliness, but they will deny its power. Turn away from these people.[6]For some of them are men who enter into households and captivate foolish women. These are women who are loaded up with sins and are led away by various desires.[7]These women are always learning, but they are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.
[8]In the same way that Jannes and Jambres stood against Moses, these false teachers also stand against the truth. They are men corrupt in mind, and with regard to the faith they are rejected.[9]But they will not advance very far. For their foolishness will be obvious to all, just like that of those men.
[10]But as for you, you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience,[11]persecutions, sufferings, and what happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. I endured persecutions. Out of them all, the Lord rescued me.[12]All those who want to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.[13]Evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, leading others astray and being led astray.
[14]But as for you, remain in the things that you have learned and have firmly believed. You know from whom you have learned.[15]You know that from childhood you have known the sacred writings. These are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
[16]All scripture has been inspired by God. It is profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, and for training in righteousness.[17]This is so that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The "last days" could mean in the future just before Jesus returns. If so, Paul is prophesying in verses 1-9 and 13 about those days. The "last days" could also mean the Christian age, including Paul's time. If so, what Paul teaches about being persecuted applies to all Christians. (See: prophet and lastday)

Links:

2 Timothy 3:1 Notes

2 Timothy 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul lets Timothy know that in the future people will stop believing the truth, but he should continue trusting God's word even when he is persecuted.

In the last days

Possible meanings are 1) this is a time later than Paul's time. Alternate translation: "in the future just before Jesus returns" or 2) this refers to the Christian age, including Paul's time. Alternate translation: "during this period of time before the end"

difficult times

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These will be days, months, or even years when Christians will endure suffering and danger.

2 Timothy 3:2

lovers of themselves

Here "lovers" refers to brotherly love or love for a friend or family member, a natural human love between friends or relatives. This is not the kind of love that comes from God. Alternate translation: "self-centered"

2 Timothy 3:3

without natural affection

"unloving even to their own families"

unable to reconcile

"unwilling to live peacefully with others"

not lovers of good

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "haters of good"

2 Timothy 3:4

reckless

doing things either without thinking about what bad things could happen or without even knowing that bad things could happen

prideful

thinking they are better than other people

2 Timothy 3:5

They will have a shape of godliness, but they will deny its power

Paul speaks of godliness, the habit of honoring God, as if it were a physical object that had a shape and had physical power. Alternate translation: "They will appear to honor God, but they way they act will show that they do not really believe in God's power"

have a shape of godliness

"appear to have godliness" or "appear to honor God"

Turn away from these people

"Turn away" here is a metaphor for avoiding someone. Alternate translation: "Avoid these people"

2 Timothy 3:6

enter into households and captivate

"enter into houses and greatly influence"

foolish women

"women who are spiritually weak." These women may be spiritually weak because they fail to work at becoming godly or because they are idle and have many sins.

who are loaded up with sins

Paul speaks of the attraction of sin as if sin were loaded on the backs of these women. Possible meanings are 1) "who sin often" or 2) "who feel terrible guilt because they continue to sin." The idea is that these men can easily influence these women because the women are unable to stop sinning.

are led away by various desires

Paul speaks about these various desires as if they could lead another person away. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they desire to sin in various ways rather than obey Christ"

2 Timothy 3:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul gives an example of two false teachers from the time of Moses—men who are not mentioned in the Old Testament—and applies it to the way people will be. Paul encourages Timothy to follow his own example and stay in God's word.

Jannes and Jambres

These are names of men.

stood against

Paul speaks of those who argued against Moses as if they had stood against him. Alternate translation: "opposed"

stand against the truth

"oppose the gospel of Jesus"

They are men corrupt in mind

"Their minds are corrupt" or "They cannot think rightly"

and with regard to the faith they are rejected

Possible meanings are 1) here "the faith" represents the false teachers' personal faith in God. Alternate translation: "and they have shown that their faith is not sincere" or 2) here "the faith" represents the true Christian teachings about God. Alternate translation: "and, according to the true teachings of the Christian faith, God has rejected them"

2 Timothy 3:9

they will not advance very far

Paul uses an expression about physical movement to mean that the false teachers will not have much success among the believers. Alternate translation: "they will not have much success"

obvious to all

"easily seen by all" or "something everyone will see"

of those men

"of Jannes and Jambres"

2 Timothy 3:10

you have followed my teaching

Paul speaks of giving close attention to these things as if one were physically following them as they moved. Alternate translation: "you have observed my teaching" or "you have paid close attention to my teaching"

my teaching

"what I have taught you to do"

conduct

the way a person lives his life

longsuffering

one person being patient with those people who do things of which he does not approve

2 Timothy 3:11

Out of them all, the Lord rescued me

Paul speaks of God having stopped him from suffering these hardships and dangers as if God had carried him out of a physical location.

2 Timothy 3:12

to live in a godly manner in Christ Jesus

"to live godly lives as followers of Jesus"

will be persecuted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will certainly have to endure persecution"

2 Timothy 3:13

impostors

An imposter is a person who wants other people to think he is someone other, usually more important, than who he is.

will go from bad to worse

"will become even more evil"

leading others astray and being led astray

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Here, to lead someone astray is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "deceiving and being deceived" or "teaching lies and believing lies"

2 Timothy 3:14

remain in the things that you have learned

Paul speaks of biblical instruction as if it were a place that Timothy could stay in. Alternate translation: "do not forget what you learned" or "continue doing what you have learned"

2 Timothy 3:15

the sacred writings. These are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus

Paul speaks of the message contained in the sacred writings as if it were the writings themselves and of those writings as if they were a person whose words could make a person wise. Alternate translation: "what is in the sacred writings. When you read the word of God, you can become wise so as to receive salvation from Christ Jesus by faith"

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture has been inspired by God

Some Bibles translate this as "All scripture is God-breathed." This means God produced the scripture through his Spirit by telling people what to write. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has spoken all scripture by his Spirit"

It is profitable

"It is useful" or "It is beneficial"

for conviction

"for pointing out errors"

for correction

"for fixing errors"

for training in righteousness

"for training people to be righteous"

2 Timothy 3:17

the man of God

This means any believer in God whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all believers"

may be competent, equipped

"may be completely prepared"

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4 [1]I give this solemn command before God and Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because of his appearing and his kingdom:[2]Preach the word; be ready when it is convenient and when it is not. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all patience and teaching.
[3]For the time will come when people will not endure sound teaching. Instead, they will heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires, who say what their itching ears want to hear.[4]They will turn their hearing away from the truth, and they will turn aside to myths.[5]But you, be sober-minded in all things. Suffer hardship; do the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.
[6]For I am already being poured out. The time of my departure has come.[7]I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.[8]The crown of righteousness has been reserved for me, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his appearing.

[9]Do your best to come to me quickly.[10]For Demas has left me. He loves this present world and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, and Titus went to Dalmatia.
[11]Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you because he is useful to me in the service.[12]Tychicus I sent to Ephesus.[13]The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring it when you come, and the books, especially the parchments.
[14]Alexander the coppersmith displayed many evil deeds against me. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds.[15]You also should guard yourself against him, because he greatly opposed our words.[16]At my first defense, no one stood with me. Instead, everyone left me. May it not be counted against them.
[17]But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me so that, through me, the proclamation of the message might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.[18]The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[19]Greet Priscilla, Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus.[20]Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.
[21]Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers.
[22]May the Lord be with your spirit. May grace be with you.

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2 Timothy 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

"I give this solemn command"

Paul begins to give personal instructions to Timothy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Crown

Scripture uses different kinds of crowns as images for different things. It appears Christ will award the crown in this chapter to believers as a reward for living rightly.

Links:

2 Timothy 4:1 Notes

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2 Timothy 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues to remind Timothy to be faithful and that he, Paul, is ready to die.

this solemn command before God and Christ Jesus

"this solemn command in the presence of God and Christ Jesus." It is implied that God and Jesus will be Paul's witnesses. Alternate translation: "this solemn command, having as my witnesses God and Christ Jesus"

solemn command

"serious command"

the living and the dead

Here "the living" and "the dead" are used together to mean all people. Alternate translation: "all people who have ever lived"

the dead, and because of his appearing and his kingdom

Here "kingdom" stands for Christ's rule as king. Alternate translation: "the dead when he returns to rule as king"

2 Timothy 4:2

the word

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Alternate translation: "the message about Christ"

when it is not

Here the word "convenient" is understood. Alternate translation: "when it is not convenient"

Reprove

tell someone he is guilty of doing wrong

exhort, with all patience and teaching

"exhort, and teach the people, and always be patient with them"

2 Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when

"Because at some time in the future"

people

The context indicates that these will be people who are a part of the community of believers.

will not endure sound teaching

"will no longer want to listen to true teaching" or "will not want to listen to reliable teaching"

they will heap up for themselves teachers according to their own desires

Paul speaks of people obtaining many teachers as if they were putting them into a heap or pile. Alternate translation: "they will listen to many teachers who assure them that there is nothing wrong with their sinful desires"

who say what their itching ears want to hear

Paul speaks of people strongly wanting to hear something as if their ears itched and could only be satisfied if teachers taught them what they wanted to hear. Alternate translation: "who say only what they want so much to hear"

2 Timothy 4:4

They will turn their hearing away from the truth

Paul speaks about people no longer paying attention as if they were physically turning away so they cannot hear. Alternate translation: "They will no longer pay attention to the truth"

they will turn aside to myths

Paul speaks about people starting to pay attention to myths as if they were physically turning towards them to listen. Alternate translation: "they will pay attention to teachings that are not true"

2 Timothy 4:5

be sober-minded

Paul wants Timothy to think correctly about everything, and he speaks about him as if he wanted him to be sober, that is, not drunk with wine. Alternate translation: "think clearly"

the work of an evangelist

This means to tell people about who Jesus is, what he did for them, and how they are to live for him.

2 Timothy 4:6

I am already being poured out

Paul speaks of his readiness to die as if he were a cup of wine being poured out as a sacrifice to God.

The time of my departure has come

Here "departure" is a polite way of referring to death. Alternate translation: "Soon I will die and leave this world"

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight

Paul speaks of his hard work as if he had been an athlete competing for a prize. Alternate translation: "I have done my best"

I have finished the race

Paul speaks of his life of service to God as if he had been running a race on foot. Alternate translation: "I have completed what I needed to do"

I have kept the faith

Paul speaks of his trust in Christ and his obedience to God as if they were a valuable object that he kept in his possession. Possible meanings are 1) "I have been faithful in doing my ministry" or 2) "I have kept the teachings about what we believe from any error"

2 Timothy 4:8

The crown of righteousness has been reserved for me

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has reserved the crown of righteousness for me"

crown of righteousness

Possible meanings are 1) the crown is the prize that God gives to people who have lived the right way or 2) the crown is a metaphor for righteousness. Just as the judge of a race gives a crown to the winner, when Paul finishes his life, God will declare that Paul is righteous.

crown

a wreath made of laurel tree leaves that was given to winners of athletic contests

on that day

"on the day when the Lord comes again" or "on the day when God judges people"

but also to all those who have loved his appearing

Paul speaks about this event as if it has already happened. It can be stated as a future event. Alternate translation: "but also he will give it to those who are eagerly waiting for him to return"

2 Timothy 4:9

Connecting Statement:

Paul talks of specific people and how they behaved, of God's work for and to him, and then closes with greetings to and from certain people.

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come ... quickly
"come ... as soon as possible"
2 Timothy 4:10
Demas ... Crescens ... Titus
These are names of men.
He loves this present world
Here "world" refers to worldly things as opposed to the things of God. Possible meanings are 1) he loves the temporary comforts of this world or 2) he is afraid he will die if he remains with Paul.
Crescens went ... and Titus went
These two men had left Paul, but Paul is not saying that they also "love this present world" like Demas.
Dalmatia
This is the name of a land region.
2 Timothy 4:11
he is useful to me in the service
Possible meanings are 1) "he can help me in the ministry" or 2) "he can help me by serving me."
2 Timothy 4:13
cloak
a heavy garment worn over clothes
Carpus
This is the name of a man.
the books
This refers to scrolls. A scroll was a type of book made of one long sheet of papyrus or leather. After writing on a scroll or reading it, people rolled it up using rods on the ends
especially the parchments
This may refer to a specific type of scroll. Alternate translation: "especially those made from animal skins"
2 Timothy 4:14
Alexander the coppersmith displayed
"Alexander, who works with metal, displayed"
Alexander
This is the name of a man.
displayed many evil deeds against me
Paul speaks of doing evil deeds as if they were put on display. Alternate translation: "did many evil things to me"
The Lord will repay him according to his deeds
Paul speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "The Lord will punish him for what he has done"
him ... his
Alexander
2 Timothy 4:15
him ... he
Alexander.
opposed our words
Here "words" refers to a message or teaching. Alternate translation: "opposed the message that we teach"
2 Timothy 4:16
At my first defense
"When I first appeared in court and explained my actions"
no one stood with me
"no one stayed with me and helped me"
May it not be counted against them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "May God not count it against them" or "I pray that God does not punish those believers for leaving me"
2 Timothy 4:17
the Lord stood by me
Paul is speaking as if the Lord had physically stood with him. Alternate translation: "the Lord helped me"
so that, through me, the proclamation of the message might be fully accomplished ... the Gentiles might hear
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that I was able to speak all of the Lord's message ... the Gentiles heard"
I was rescued out of the lion's mouth
Paul is speaking about danger as if he had been threatened by a lion. This danger could have been physical, spiritual, or both. Alternate translation: "I was rescued from great danger"
2 Timothy 4:19
house of Onesiphorus
Here "house" stands for the people who live there. Alternate translation: "family of Onesiphorus"
Priscilla
This is the name of a woman.
Aquila
This is the name of a man.
Onesiphorus
This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in 2 Timothy 1:16.
2 Timothy 4:20
Erastus ... Trophimus
These are names of men.
Miletus
This is the name of a city to the south of Ephesus.
2 Timothy 4:21
Eubulus ... Pudens, Linus
These are all names of men.
Do your best to come
"Try hard to come"
before winter
"before the cold season"
greets you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers
This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "greets you. Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers also greet you"
Claudia
This is a female name.
all the brothers
Here "brothers" means all believers whether male or female. Alternate translation: "all the believers here"
2 Timothy 4:22
May the Lord be with your spirit
"I pray that the Lord makes your spirit strong." Here "you" is singular and refers to Timothy.
May grace be with you
"I pray that the Lord shows his grace to all of you there." Here "you" is plural and refers to all the believers there with Timothy.

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Introduction to Titus

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Titus

Paul instructs Titus to appoint godly leaders (1:1-16) Paul instructs Titus to train people to live godly lives (2:1-3:11) Paul ends by sharing some of his plans and sending greetings to various believers (3:12-15)

Who wrote the Book of Titus?

Paul wrote the Book of Titus. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.

What is the Book of Titus about?

Paul wrote this letter to Titus, his fellow worker, who was leading the churches on the island of Crete. Paul instructed him about selecting church leaders. Paul also described how the believers should behave towards each other. And he encouraged them all to live in a way that pleases God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Titus." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to Titus" or "A Letter to Titus."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

In what roles can people serve within the church?

There are some teachings in the Book of Titus about whether a woman or divorced man can serve in positions of leadership within the church. Scholars disagree about the meaning of these teachings. Further study on these issues may be necessary before translating this book.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. Also, the word "you" is almost always singular and refers to Titus. The exception to this is 3:15.

What is the meaning of "God our Savior?"

This is a common phrase in this letter. Paul meant to make the readers think about how God forgave them in Christ for sinning against him. And by forgiving them he saved them from being punished when he judges all people. A similar phrase in this letter is "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

Titus

1 [1]Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's chosen people and the knowledge of the truth that agrees with godliness,[2]with the hope of everlasting life that God, who does not lie, promised before all the ages of time.[3]At the right time he revealed his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted according to the command of God our Savior.

[4]To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.
[5]For this purpose I left you in Crete, that you might set in order things not yet complete and ordain elders in every city as I directed you.
[6]An elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children not accused of being reckless or disobedient.
[7]It is necessary for the overseer, as a manager of the household of God, to be blameless. He must not be arrogant, not be easily angered, not addicted to wine, not a brawler, and not a greedy man.
[8]Instead, he should be hospitable, loving goodness, sensible, upright, holy, and self-controlled.[9]He should hold tightly to the trustworthy message that was taught, so that he may be able to encourage others with truthful teaching and correct those who oppose him.

[10]For there are many rebellious people, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision.[11]It is necessary to stop them. They are upsetting whole families by teaching for disgraceful profit what they should not teach.
[12]One of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."[13]This testimony is true. Therefore, correct them severely, so that they may be truthful in the faith,[14]not paying any attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of people who turn away from the truth.
[15]To those who are pure, all things are pure. But to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their minds and their consciences have been corrupted.[16]They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, and worthless for any good work.

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Titus 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul formally introduces this letter in verses 1-4. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.
In verses 6-9, Paul lists several qualities that a man must have if he is to be an elder in the church. Paul gives a similar list in 1 Timothy 3.

Special concepts in this chapter

Elders

The church has used different titles for church leaders. Some titles include overseer, elder, pastor, and bishop.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Should, may, must

The ULB uses different words that indicate requirements or obligations. These verbs have different levels of force associated with them. The subtle differences may be difficult to translate. The UDB translates these verbs in a more general way.

Links:

Titus 1:1 Notes Titus intro

Titus 1:1

for the faith of

to strengthen the faith of

that agrees with godliness

"that is suitable for honoring God"

Titus 1:2

with the hope of everlasting life

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "with the confidence of receiving everlasting life"

before all the ages of time

"before time began"

Titus 1:3

At the right time

"At the proper time"

he revealed his word

Paul speaks of God's message as if it were an object that could be visibly shown to people. Alternate translation: "He caused people to understand his message"

with which I have been entrusted

This can be translated in active form, and what God trusted Paul to do can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "that he trusted me to deliver"

God our Savior

"God, who saves us"

Titus 1:4

a true son

Though Titus was not Paul's biological son, they share a common faith in Christ. Thus, in Christ, Paul considers Titus as his own son. Alternate translation: "you who are like a son to me"

our common faith

Paul expresses the same faith in Christ that they both share. Alternate translation: "the teachings that we both believe"

Grace and peace

This was a common greeting Paul used. You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "May you experience kindness and peace within"

Christ Jesus our Savior

"Christ Jesus who is our Savior"

Titus 1:5

For this purpose I left you in Crete, that you might set

"This is the reason I left you in Crete: I wanted you to set"

I left you in Crete

"I told you to stay in Crete"

set in order things not yet complete

"finish arranging things that needed to be done"

ordain elders

"appoint elders" or "designate elders"

elders

In the early Christian churches, Christian elders gave spiritual leadership to the assemblies of believers.

Titus 1:6

Connecting Statement:

Having told Titus to ordain elders in every city on the island of Crete, Paul gives the requirements for elders.

An elder must be blameless, the husband

To be "blameless" is to be known as a person who does not do bad things. Alternate translation: "An elder must not have a bad reputation and must be the husband"

the husband of one wife

This means that he has only one wife, that is, he does not have any other wives or concubines. It may also imply that he does not commit adultery and that he has not divorced a previous wife. Alternate translation: "a man who has only one woman" or "a man who is faithful to his wife"

faithful children

Possible meanings are 1) children who believe in Jesus or 2) children who are trustworthy.

Titus 1:7

overseer

This is another name for the same position of spiritual leadership that Paul referred to as "elder" in 1:6.

a manager of the household of God

Paul speaks of the church as if it were God's household and the overseer as if he were a servant in charge of managing

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the household.

not addicted to wine

"not an alcoholic" or "not one who drinks much wine"

not a brawler

"not one who is violent" or "not one who likes to fight"

Titus 1:8

Instead

Paul is changing his argument from what an elder is not to be to what an elder is to be.

Titus 1:9

hold tightly to

Paul speaks of devotion to the Christian faith as if it were grasping the faith with one's hands. Alternate translation: "be devoted to" or "know well"

truthful teaching

The Greek word translated "truthful" is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"

Titus 1:10

Connecting Statement:

Because of those that would oppose God's word, Paul gives Titus reasons to preach God's word and warns him about false teachers.

rebellious people

These are rebellious people who oppose Paul's gospel message.

empty talkers and deceivers

This phrase describes the rebellious people mentioned in the previous phrase. Here "empty" is a metaphor for useless, and "empty talkers" are people who say useless or foolish things. Alternate translation: "people who say useless things and deceive others"

those of the circumcision

This refers to the Christian Jews who taught that men must be circumcised in order to follow Christ.

Titus 1:11

It is necessary to stop them

"They must be prevented from spreading their teachings" or "They must be stopped from influencing others by their words"

what they should not teach

These are things that are not proper to teach regarding Christ and the Law because they are not true.

for disgraceful profit

This refers to profit that people make by doing things that are not honorable.

are upsetting whole families

"are ruining whole families." The issue was that they were upsetting families by destroying their faith. This may have caused the members of the families to argue with one another.

Titus 1:12

One of their own prophets

"A prophet from Crete itself" or "A Cretan that they themselves consider to be a prophet"

Cretans are always liars

"Cretans lie all the time." This is an exaggeration that means that many Cretans lie often.

evil beasts

This metaphor compares the Cretans to dangerous wild animals.

Titus 1:13

Therefore, correct them severely

"You must use strong language that the Cretans will understand when you correct them"

so that they may be truthful in the faith

The Greek word translated "truthful" is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"

Titus 1:14

Jewish myths

This refers to the false teaching of the Jews.

turn away from the truth

Paul speaks of the truth as if it were an object that one could turn away from or avoid. Alternate translation: "reject the truth"

Titus 1:15

To those who are pure, all things are pure

"If people are pure on the inside, everything they do will be pure"

To those who are pure

"To those who are acceptable to God"

to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, nothing is pure

Paul speaks of sinners as if they were physically dirty. Alternate translation: "if people are morally defiled and do not believe, they cannot do anything pure"

Titus 1:16

they deny him by their actions

"how they live proves that they do not know him"

They are detestable

"They are disgusting"

---

2 [1]But you, speak what fits with truthful instruction.[2]Teach older men to be temperate, dignified, sensible, and sound in faith, in love, and in perseverance.
[3]In the same way, teach older women to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or being slaves to much wine, but to be teachers of what is good,[4]and so train the younger women to love their husbands and to love their children,[5]to be sensible, pure, good housekeepers, and to be obedient to their own husbands, so that God's word may not be spoken of as evil.
[6]In the same way, encourage the younger men to use good sense.[7]In all ways present yourself as an example of good works. In your teaching, show integrity, dignity,[8]and a truthful message that is above criticism, so that anyone who opposes you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

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[9]Slaves are to be submissive to their masters in everything, to please them and not argue with them,[10]to not steal from them, but instead to demonstrate all good faith, so that in every way they may bring credit to the teaching about God our Savior.
[11]For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all people.[12]It trains us to reject godlessness and worldly desires, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this age,[13]while we look forward to receiving our blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.
[14]Jesus gave himself for us in order to redeem us from all lawlessness and to make pure for himself a special people who are eager to do good works.

[15]Speak of these things, encourage people to do them, and give correction with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Titus 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Gender roles

Scholars are divided over how to understand this passage in its historical and cultural context. Some scholars believe men and women are perfectly equal in all things. Other scholars believe God created men and women to serve in distinctly different roles in marriage and the church. Translators should be careful not to let how they understand this issue affect how they translate this passage.

Slavery

Paul does not write in this chapter about whether slavery is good or bad. Paul teaches slaves to faithfully serve their masters. He teaches all believers to be godly and live rightly in every situation.

Links:

Titus 2:1 Notes

Titus 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving Titus reasons to preach God's word, and explains how the older men, older women, young men, and slaves or servants should live as believers.

But you, speak what fits

Paul implies what is in contrast. Alternate translation: "But you, Titus, in contrast with the false teachers, be sure to say those things that fit"

truthful instruction

The Greek word translated "truthful" is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"

Titus 2:2

to be temperate

"to be sober-minded" or "to be self-controlled"

temperate, dignified, sensible

"temperate and dignified, to control their desires

and sound in faith, in love, and in perseverance

The word "sound" means to be firm and unwavering. The abstract nouns "faith," "love," and "perseverance" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "and they must firmly believe the true teachings about God, truly love others, and continually serve God even when things are difficult"

Titus 2:3

slanderers

This word refers to people who say bad things about other people whether they are true or not.

or being slaves to much wine

People who cannot control themselves and who drink too much wine are spoken of as if they were slaves to the wine. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and not drinking too much wine" or "and not addicted to wine"

Titus 2:5

so that God's word may not be spoken of as evil

"Word" here is a metonym for "message," which in turn is a metonym for God himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that no one insults God's word" or "so that no one insults God by saying bad things about his message"

Titus 2:6

In the same way, encourage

"Also be sure to encourage"

Titus 2:7

present yourself as

"show yourself to be"

an example of good works

"an example of one who does right and proper things"

Titus 2:8

a truthful message

The Greek word translated "truthful, is a word meaning "healthy" and here is a dead metaphor for true, trustworthy, and morally good. Alternate translation: "trustworthy words"

Titus 2:9

their masters

"their own masters"

in everything

"in every situation" or "always"

please them

"make their masters happy" or "satisfy their masters"

Titus 2:10

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demonstrate all good faith
"show that they are worthy of their masters' trust"
in every way
"in everything they do"
they may bring credit to the teaching about God our Savior
"they may make the teaching about God our Savior attractive" or "they may cause people to understand that the teaching about God our Savior is good"
God our Savior
"our God who saves us"
Titus 2:11
Connecting Statement:
Paul encourages Titus to look for Jesus's coming and remember his authority through Jesus.
the grace of God has appeared
Paul speaks of the grace of God as if it were a person who goes to other people.
Titus 2:12
trains us
Paul speaks of the grace of God
trains us to reject godlessness
"teaches us not to dishonor God"
worldly desires
"strong desires for the things of this world" or "strong desires for sinful pleasures"
in this age
"as we live in this world" or "during this time"
Titus 2:13
we look forward to receiving
"we eagerly wait to receive" or "we eagerly wait to welcome"
our blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ
Here "glory" represents Jesus himself, who will appear gloriously. Here "hope" means "confidently expectation." Alternate translation: "the good thing for which we confidently wait, that is, the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ"
Titus 2:14
gave himself for us
This refers to Jesus dying willingly. Alternate translation: "gave himself to die for us"
to redeem us from all lawlessness
Paul speaks of Jesus as if he were setting slaves free from their evil master.
a special people
A group of people that he treasures.
are eager
"have a strong desire"
Titus 2:15
give correction with all authority
This statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "correct with all authority those people who do not do these things"
Let no one
"Do not allow anyone to"
disregard you
This statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "refuse to listen to your words" or "refuse to respect you"

3 [1]Remind them to submit to rulers and authorities, to obey them, to be ready for every good work,[2]to insult no one, to not be eager to fight, and to be gentle, showing all humility toward everyone.
[3]For once we ourselves were thoughtless and disobedient. We were led astray and enslaved by various desires and pleasures. We lived in evil and envy. We were detestable and hated one another.
[4]But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared,[5]it was not by works of righteousness that we did, but by his mercy that he saved us, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
[6]whom God richly poured on us through our Savior Jesus Christ,[7]so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.
[8]This message is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to engage themselves in good works. These things are good and useful for everyone.
[9]But avoid foolish debates and genealogies and strife and conflict about the law. Those things are unprofitable and worthless.[10]Reject anyone who is causing divisions among you, after one or two warnings,[11]knowing that such a person has turned from the right way and is sinning and condemns himself.

[12]When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, hurry and come to me at Nicopolis, where I have decided to spend the winter.
[13]Do everything you can to send on their way Zenas the lawyer and Apollos, so that they lack nothing.
[14]Our people must learn to engage themselves in good works that provide for urgent needs, and so not be unfruitful.

[15]All those who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with all of you.

Titus 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Paul gives Titus personal instructions in this chapter.
Verse 15 formally concludes this letter. This is a common way of ending a letter in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Genealogies

Genealogies are lists that record a person's ancestors or descendants. Jews used genealogies to choose the right man to

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become king. They did this because only a son of a king could normally become king. They also showed from what tribe and family they came. For example, priests came from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron.

Links:

Titus 3:1 Notes

Titus 3:1

Connecting Statement:

Paul continues giving Titus instructions on how to teach the elders and people under his care in Crete.

Remind them to submit

"Tell our people again what they already know, to submit" or "Keep reminding them to submit"

submit to rulers and authorities, to obey them

"do as the political rulers and government authorities say by obeying them"

rulers and authorities

These words have similar meanings and are used together to include everyone who holds authority in the government.

be ready for every good work

"be ready to do good whenever there is opportunity"

Titus 3:2

to insult no one

"to speak evil of no one"

Titus 3:3

For once we ourselves

"This is because we ourselves were once"

once

"formerly" or "at some time" or "previously"

we ourselves

"even we" or "we also"

were thoughtless

"were foolish" or "were unwise"

We were led astray and enslaved by various desires and pleasures

Desires and pleasures are spoken of as if they were masters over people and had made those people into slaves by lying to them. This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Various desires and pleasures had lied to us and so led us astray" or "We had allowed ourselves to believe the lie that various desires and pleasures could make us happy, and then we were unable to control our feelings or stop doing things we thought would give us pleasure"

We lived in evil and envy

"We were always doing evil things and not wanting others to have good things"

We were detestable

"We caused others to hate us"

Titus 3:4

when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared

Paul speaks of God's kindness and love as if they were people that came into our sight.

Titus 3:5

by his mercy

"because he had mercy on us"

washing of new birth

Paul is probably speaking of God's forgiveness for sinners as if God were physically washing them. He is also speaking of sinners who become responsive to God as if they had been born again.

Titus 3:6

whom God richly poured on us

It is common for New Testament writers to speak of the Holy Spirit as a liquid that God can pour out in large amounts. Alternate translation: "whom God gave to us generously"

through our Savior Jesus Christ

"when Jesus saved us"

Titus 3:7

having been justified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "since God has declared us to be without sin"

we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were heirs, inheriting property and wealth from a family member. Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "we might become like God's heirs, confidently waiting to inherit eternal life" or "we might have the confident expectation that God will cause us to live forever"

Titus 3:8

This message

This refers to God giving the believers the Holy Spirit through Jesus in Titus 3:7.

may be careful to engage themselves in good works

"may seek to do good works"

Titus 3:9

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains what Titus should avoid.

But avoid

"So avoid" or "Therefore, avoid"

foolish debates

"arguments concerning unimportant matters"

genealogies

This is the study of family kinship relationships.

strife

arguments or fights

the law

"the law of Moses"

Titus 3:10

Connecting Statement:

Paul explains how Titus should treat those who cause contention among the believers.

Reject anyone

"Have everyone stay away from anyone"

after one or two warnings

"after you have warned that person once or twice"

Titus 3:11

such a person

"a person like that"

has turned from the right way

Paul speaks of someone who has rejected the truth as if he

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had left the correct path on which he had been walking.
condemns himself
"brings judgment on himself"
Titus 3:12
Connecting Statement:
Paul closes the letter by telling Titus what to do after he appoints elders in Crete and by giving greetings from those with him.
When I send
"After I send"
Artemas ... Tychicus
These are men's names.
hurry and come
"come quickly"
spend the winter
"stay until winter has ended"
Titus 3:13
Zenas ... Apollos
These are men's names.
Titus 3:14
Connecting Statement:
Paul explains why it is important to provide for Zenas and Apollos.
Our people
Paul is referring to the believers in Crete.
that provide for urgent needs
"that help people who need important things immediately"
needs, and so not be unfruitful
Paul speaks of people doing good work as if they were trees bearing good fruit. This double negative means they should be fruitful or productive. Alternate translation: "needs; in this way they will be fruitful" or "needs, and so they will do good works"
Titus 3:15
General Information:
Paul ends his letter to Titus.
All those
"All the people"
those who love us in faith
Possible meanings are 1) "the believers who love us" or 2) "the believers who love us because we share the same belief."
Grace be with all of you
This was a common Christian greeting. Alternate translation: "May God's grace be with you" or "I ask that God will be gracious to all of you"

Introduction to Philemon

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Philemon

Paul greets Philemon (1:1-3) Paul makes requests of Philemon about Onesimus (1:4-21) Conclusion (1:22-25)

Who wrote the Book of Philemon?

Paul wrote Philemon. Paul was from the city of Tarsus. He had been known as Saul in his early life. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He persecuted Christians. After he became a Christian, he traveled several times throughout the Roman Empire telling people about Jesus.
Paul was in a prison when he wrote this letter.

What is the Book of Philemon about?

Paul wrote this letter to a man named Philemon. Philemon was a Christian who lived in the city of Colossae. He owned a slave named Onesimus. Onesimus had run away from Philemon and possibly stole something from him as well. Onesimus went to Rome and visited Paul in prison.
Paul told Philemon that he was sending Onesimus back to him. Philemon had the right to execute Onesimus according to Roman law. But Paul said that Philemon should accept Onesimus back as a Christian brother. He even suggested that Philemon should allow Onesimus to come back to Paul and help him in prison.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Philemon." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "Paul's Letter to Philemon" or "The Letter Paul wrote to Philemon."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Does this letter approve of the practice of slavery?

Paul sent Onesimus back to his former master. But that did not mean Paul thought slavery was an acceptable practice. Instead, Paul was more concerned with people serving God in whatever situation they were in.

What does Paul mean by the expressions "in Christ," "in the Lord," and others like them?

Paul used these phrases to express the idea of a very close union between Jesus Christ and believers--that believers belong to Christ. Belonging to Christ means the believer is saved and is made a friend with God.
These phrases also have specific meanings that depend on how Paul used them in a particular passage. Depending on the the context, the word “in” can mean “because of,” “by means of,” “that agrees with,” “in submission to,” “in the manner of,” or “in regard to.” The translator may represent those more immediate senses. But, if possible, it would be good for the translator to choose a word or phrase that represents both the immediate sense and the sense of “in union with.” (See: inchrist)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"
In this book, the word "I" refers to Paul. The word "you" is almost always singular and refers to Philemon. The two exceptions to this are 1:22 and 1:25. There "you" refers to Philemon and the believers that met at his house.

Philemon

1 [1]Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and the brother Timothy, to Philemon, our dear friend and fellow worker,[2]and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets in your home:

[3]May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4]I always thank my God when I mention you in my prayers,[5]because I hear about the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and the love you have for all his holy people.[6]I pray that the sharing of your faith may be effective, so you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.[7]For I have had much joy and comfort because of your love, because the hearts of God's holy people have been refreshed by you, brother.

[8]Therefore, although I have all the boldness in Christ to command you to do what you should do,[9]yet because of love, I appeal to you instead—I, Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner for Christ Jesus.
[10]I am appealing to you concerning my child Onesimus, whom I have fathered in my chains.[11]For he once was useless to you, but now he is useful both to you and to me.[12]I have sent him back to you, he who is my very heart.[13]I wish I could have kept him with me so he could serve me for you while I am in chains for the sake of the gospel.
[14]But I did not want to do anything without your consent. I did not want your good deed to be from necessity but from good will.[15]Perhaps for this he was separated from you for a time, so that you might have him back forever.[16]No longer would he be a slave, but better than a slave, a beloved brother. He is beloved especially to me, and much more so to you, in both the flesh and in the Lord.
[17]So if you have me as a partner, receive him as me.[18]If he has wronged you or owes you anything, charge that to me.[19]I, Paul, write this with my own hand. I myself will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your own self![20]Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

[21]Confident about your obedience, I am writing to you. I know that you will do even more than I ask.[22]At the same time, prepare a guest room for me, for I hope that through your prayers I will be returned to you.

[23]Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you.[24]So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.
[25]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Philemon 1:1

General Information:
Three times Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter. Evidently Timothy was with him and probably wrote the words down as Paul said them. Paul greets others who meet for church at Philemon's house. All instances of "I," "me," and "my" refer to Paul. Philemon is the main person to whom this letter is written. All instances of "you" and "your" refer to him and are singular unless otherwise noted.

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and the brother Timothy, to Philemon
Your language may have a particular way of introducing the authors of a letter. Alternate translation: "I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy, our brother, are writing this letter to Philemon"

a prisoner of Christ Jesus
"a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus." People who opposed Paul's preaching had punished him by putting him into prison.

brother
Here this means a fellow Christian.

our dear friend
The word "our" here refers to Paul and those with him but not to the reader.

and fellow worker
"who, like us, works to spread the gospel"

Philemon 1:2

our sister ... our fellow soldier
The word "our" here refers to Paul and those with him but not to the reader.

Apphia our sister
Here "sister" means she was a believer, and not a relative. Alternate translation: "Apphia our fellow believer" or "Apphia our spiritual sister"

Archippus our fellow soldier
Paul speaks here of Archippus as if they were both soldiers in an army. He means that Archippus works hard, as Paul himself works hard, to spread the gospel. Alternate translation: "Archippus our fellow spiritual warrior" or "Archippus, who also fights the spiritual battle with us"

Archippus
This is the name of a man in the church with Philemon.

Philemon 1:3

May grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
"May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace." This is a blessing.

God our Father

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The word "our" here refers to Paul, those with him, and the reader.

our Father

This is an important title for God.

Philemon 1:6

the sharing of your faith may be effective

Possible meanings are 1) "the way you tell others what you believe may cause them to believe also" or 2) "the way you believe the same way we do will cause good things to happen."

be effective, so you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have

"have a good result, and you will completely understand all the good things we have"

in Christ

"because of Christ" or "because we are Christ's people"

Philemon 1:7

the hearts of God's holy people have been refreshed by you

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's emotions or inner being. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have encouraged believers" or "you have helped the believers"

you, brother

"you, dear brother" or "you, dear friend." Paul called Philemon "brother" because they were both believers and he was emphasizing their friendship.

Philemon 1:8

Connecting Statement:

Paul begins his plea and the reason for his letter.

all the boldness in Christ

Possible meanings are 1) "authority because of Christ" or 2) "courage because of Christ." Alternate translation: "courage because Christ has given me authority"

Philemon 1:9

yet because of love

Possible meanings: 1) "because I know that you love God's people" 2) "because you love me" or 3) "because I love you"

Philemon 1:10

General Information:

Onesimus is the name of a man. He was apparently Philemon's slave and had stolen something and run away.

my child Onesimus

"my son Onesimus." Paul speaks of the way he is friends with Onesimus as if it were the way a father and his son love each other. Onesimus was not Paul's actual son, but he received spiritual life when Paul taught him about Jesus, and Paul loved him. Alternate translation: "my spiritual son Onesimus"

Onesimus

The name "Onesimus" means "profitable" or "useful."

whom I have fathered in my chains

Here "fathered" is a metaphor that means Paul converted Onesimus to Christ. Alternate translation: "who became my spiritual son when I taught him about Christ and he received new life while I was in my chains" or "who became like a son to me while I was in my chains"

in my chains

Prisoners were often bound in chains. Paul was in prison when he taught Onesimus and was still in prison when he wrote this letter. Alternate translation: "while I have been in prison" or "while I was in prison"

Philemon 1:12

I have sent him back to you

Paul was probably sending Onesimus with another believer who carried this letter.

who is my very heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions. The phrase "who is my very heart" is a metaphor for someone whom the speaker loves dearly. Paul was saying this about Onesimus. Alternate translation: "whom I love dearly"

Philemon 1:13

so he could serve me for you

"so that, since you cannot be here, he might help me" or "so that he could help me in your place"

while I am in chains

Prisoners were often bound in chains. Paul was in prison when he taught Onesimus and was still in prison when he wrote this letter. Alternate translation: "while I am in prison"

for the sake of the gospel

Paul was in prison because he preached the gospel publicly. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "because I preach the gospel"

Philemon 1:14

But I did not want to do anything without your consent

Paul states a double negative to mean the opposite. Alternate translation: "But I wanted to make sure that you approved of everything I did"

I did not want your good deed to be from necessity but from good will

"I did not want you to do this good deed because I commanded you to do it, but because you wanted to do it"

but from good will

"but because you freely chose to do the right thing"

Philemon 1:15

Perhaps for this he was separated from you for a time, so that

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Perhaps the reason God took Onesimus away from you for a time was so that"

for a time

"during this time"

Philemon 1:16

better than a slave

"more valuable than a slave"

a beloved brother

"a dear brother" or "a precious brother in Christ"

much more so to you

"he means even more to you"

in both the flesh

"both as a man." Paul is referring to Onesimus' being a trustworthy servant.

in the Lord

"as a brother in the Lord" or "because he belongs to the Lord"

Philemon 1:17

if you have me as a partner

"if you think of me as a fellow worker for Christ"

Philemon 1:18

charge that to me

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"say that I am the one who owes you"

Philemon 1:19

I, Paul, write this with my own hand

"I, Paul, write this myself." Paul wrote this part with his own hand so that Philemon would know that the words were really from Paul. Paul really would pay him.

not to mention

"I do not need to remind you" or "You already know." Paul says he does not need to tell Philemon this, but then continues to tell him anyway. This emphasizes the truth of what Paul is telling him.

you owe me your own self

"you owe me your own life." Paul was implying that Philemon should not say that Onesimus or Paul owed him anything because Philemon owed Paul even more. The reason Philemon owed Paul his life can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "you owe me much because I saved your life" or "you owe me your own life because what I told you saved your life"

Philemon 1:20

refresh my heart in Christ

Here "refresh" is a metaphor for comfort or encourage. Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's feelings, thoughts, or inner being. How Paul wanted Philemon to refresh his heart can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "encourage me in Christ" or "comfort me in Christ" or "refresh my heart in Christ by accepting Onesimus kindly"

Philemon 1:21

General Information:

Here the words "your" and "you" are singular and refer to Philemon.

Connecting Statement:

Paul closes his letter and speaks a blessing on Philemon and the believers that meet for church in Philemon's house.

Confident about your obedience

"Because I am sure that you will do what I ask"

Philemon 1:22

At the same time

"Also"

prepare a guest room for me

"make a room in your house ready for me." Paul is addressing Philemon here, so the word "prepare" is singular.

for I hope that through your prayers I will be returned to you

Paul is confident that he will return to Philemon and the other Christians there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for I confidently expect that God will answer your prayers and send me back to you"

your ... you

These words are plural and refer to Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and the other Christians that meet in their home.

Philemon 1:23

Epaphras

This man is a fellow believer and prisoner with Paul.

my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus

"who is in prison with me because he serves Christ Jesus"

Philemon 1:24

So do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers

"Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers, also greet you"

Mark ... Aristarchus ... Demas ... Luke

These are names of men.

my fellow workers

"the men who work with me" or "who all work with me."

Philemon 1:25

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit

The word "your" here refers to Philemon and all who met in his house and so is plural. The words "your spirit" are a synecdoche and represent the people themselves. Alternate translation: "May our Lord Jesus Christ be kind to you"

Introduction to Hebrews

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Hebrews

Jesus is superior to God's prophets and angels (1:1-4:13) Jesus is superior to the priests who serve in the temple in Jerusalem (4:14-7:28) Jesus's ministry is superior to the old covenant that God made with his people (8:1-10:39) What faith is like (11:1-40) Encouragement to be faithful to God (12:1-29) Concluding encouragements and greetings (13:1-25)

Who wrote the Book of Hebrews?

No one knows who wrote Hebrews. Scholars have suggested several different people who could possibly be the author. Possible authors are Paul, Luke, and Barnabas. The date of writing is also not known. Most scholars think it was written before A.D. 70. Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70, but the writer of this letter spoke about Jerusalem as if it had not yet been destroyed.

What is the Book of Hebrews about?

In the Book of Hebrews, the author shows that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. The author did this in order to encourage the Jewish Christians and to explain that Jesus is better than anything that the old covenant had to offer. Jesus is the perfect High Priest. Jesus was also the perfect sacrifice. Animal sacrifices became useless because Jesus's sacrifice was once and for all time. Therefore, Jesus is the one and only way for people to be accepted by God.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Hebrews." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Letter to the Hebrews" or "A Letter to the Jewish Christians."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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Can readers understand this book without knowing about the sacrifices and the work of the priests required in the Old Testament?

It would be very difficult for readers to understand this book without understanding these matters. Translators might consider explaining some of these Old Testament concepts in notes or in an introduction to this book.

How is the idea of blood used in the Book of Hebrews?

Beginning in [Hebrews 9:7]
Beginning in [Hebrews 9:19]

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in Hebrews in the ULB?

The scriptures use such words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

Sometimes the meaning in a passage implies moral holiness. Especially important for understanding the gospel is the fact that God views Christians as sinless because they are united to Jesus Christ. Another related fact is that God is perfect and faultless. A third fact that Christians are to conduct themselves in a blameless, faultless manner in life. In these cases, the ULB uses "holy," "holy God," "holy ones," or "holy people." Sometimes the meaning indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 6:10; 13:24) Sometimes the meaning implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "sanctify," "set apart," "dedicated to," or "reserved for." (See: 2:11: 9:13; 10:10, 14, 29; 13:12)
The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Hebrews?

For the following verses, modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"you crowned him with glory and honor" (2:7). Some older translations read, "you crowned him with glory and honor and you have put him over the works of your hands." "those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed" (4:2). Some older translations read, "those who heard it without joining faith to it." "Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come" (9:11). Some modern versions and older translations read, "Christ came as a high priest of the good things that are to come." "on those who were prisoners" (10:34). Some older translations read, "of me in my chains." "They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword" (11:37). Some older translations read, "They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were tempted. They were killed with the sword." "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned" (12:20). Some older translations read, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned or shot with an arrow."

Hebrews

1 [1]Long ago God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in many ways.[2]But in these last days, he has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. It is through him that God also made the universe.[3]He is the brightness of God's glory, the exact representation of his being. He even holds everything together by the word of his power. After he had made cleansing for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.
[4]He has become just as superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than their name.[5]For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son,
today I have become your Father"?

Or to which of the angels did God ever say,

"I will be a Father to him,
and he will be a Son to me"?

[6]But again, when God brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
"All God's angels must worship him."

[7]About the angels he says,
"He is the one who makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire."

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[8]But to the Son he says,
"Your throne, God, is forever and ever.
The scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom.
[9] You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of joy more than your companions."

[10] "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the earth's foundation.
The heavens are the work of your hands.

[11] They will perish, but you will continue.
They will all wear out like a piece of clothing.

[12] You will roll them up like a cloak,
and they will be changed like a piece of clothing.
But you are the same,
and your years do not end."

[13]But to which of the angels has God said at any time,
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

[14]Are not all angels spirits who serve, and who are sent to care for those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter describes how Jesus is more important to us than the angels are.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 1:5, 7-13, which is from the Old Testament.
"Our ancestors"
The writer wrote this letter to Christians who had grown up as Jews. This is why the letter is called "Hebrews."

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical questions
The author uses rhetorical questions as a way of proving Jesus is better than the angels. Both he and the readers know the answers to the questions, and the writer knows that as the readers think about the answers to the questions, they will realize that God's Son is more important than any of the angels.
Poetry
Jewish teachers, like the Old Testament prophets, would put their most important teachings in the form of poetry so that the hearers would be able to learn and remember them.

Links:

Hebrews 1:1 Notes Hebrews intro

Hebrews 1:1
General Information:
Although this letter does not mention to whom it was sent, the author wrote particularly to Hebrews (Jews), who would have understood the many Old Testament references. This prologue provides the background for the whole book: the unsurpassing greatness of the Son, who is greater than all. The book begins by emphasizing that the Son is better than the prophets and the angels.
Hebrews 1:2
in these last days
"in these final days." This phrase refers to the time when Jesus began his ministry, extending until God establishes his complete rule in his creation.
through a Son
"Son" here is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
to be the heir of all things
The author speaks of the Son as if he will inherit wealth and property from his Father. Alternate translation: "to possess all things"
It is through him that God also made the universe
"It is through the Son that God also made all things"
Hebrews 1:3
the brightness of God's glory

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"the light of his glory." God's glory is associated with a very bright light. The author is saying that the Son embodies that light and fully represents God's glory.

glory, the exact representation of his being

"glory, the image of God's being." The phrase "the exact representation of his being" is similar in meaning to "the brightness of God's glory." The Son embodies the character and essence of God and fully represents everything that God is. Alternate translation: "glory and is just like God" or "glory, and what is true about God is true about the Son"

the word of his power

"his powerful word." Here "word" refers to a message or command. Alternate translation: "his powerful command"

After he had made cleansing for sins

The abstract noun "cleansing" can be expressed as a verb: "making clean." Alternate translation: "After he had finished making us clean from sins" or "After he had finished purifying us from our sins"

he had made cleansing for sins

The author speaks of forgiving sins as if it were making a person clean. Alternate translation: "he had made it possible for God to forgive our sins"

he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "he sat down at the place of honor and authority beside the Majesty on high"

the Majesty on high

Here "Majesty" refers to God. Alternate translation: "God Most High"

Hebrews 1:4

He has become

"The Son has become"

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than their name

Here "name" refers to honor and authority. Alternate translation: "as the honor and authority he has inherited is superior to their honor and authority"

he has inherited

The author speaks of receiving honor and authority from his father as if it were inheriting wealth and property from his father. Alternate translation: "he has received"

Hebrews 1:5

General Information:

The first prophetic quotation (You are my Son) comes from the Psalms. The prophet Samuel wrote the second one (I will be a Father to him). The words "You" and "he" refer to Jesus, and the words "I" and "me" refer to God the Father.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son ... a Son to me"?

This question emphasizes that God does not call any angel his Son. Alternate translation: "For God never said to any of the angels, 'You are my Son ... a Son to me.'"

You are my Son ... I have become your Father

These two phrases mean essentially the same thing.

Hebrews 1:6

General Information:

The quotation, "All God's angels ... him," comes from one of the books that Moses wrote.

the firstborn

This means Jesus. The author refers to him as the "firstborn" to emphasize the Son's importance and authority over everyone else. It does not imply that there was a time before Jesus existed or that God has other sons like Jesus. Alternate translation: "his honored Son, his only Son"

he says

"God says"

Hebrews 1:7

General Information:

The quotation, "He is the one who makes ... fire," is from the Psalms.

He is the one who makes his angels spirits, and his servants flames of fire

Possible meanings are 1) "God has made his angels to be spirits who serve him with power like flames of fire" or 2) God makes the wind and flames of fire his messengers and servants. In the original language the word for "angel" is the same as "messenger," and the word for "spirits" is the same as "wind." With either possible meaning, the point is that the angels serve the Son because he is superior.

Hebrews 1:8

General Information:

This scriptual quotation comes from the Psalms.

But to the Son he says

"But God says this to the Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Your throne, God, is forever and ever

The Son's throne represents his rule. Alternate translation: "You are God, and your reign will last forever and ever"

The scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom

Here "scepter" refers to the Son's rule. Alternate translation: "And you will rule over your kingdom with justice" or "And you will rule over the people of your kingdom justly"

Hebrews 1:9

has anointed you with the oil of joy more than your companions

Here "oil of joy" refers to the joy that the Son felt when God honored him. Alternate translation: "has honored you and made you more joyful than anyone else"

Hebrews 1:10

General Information:

This quotation comes from another Psalm.

Connecting Statement:

The author continues explaining that Jesus is superior to the angels.

In the beginning

"Before anything existed"

you laid the earth's foundation

The author speaks of God creating the earth as if he built a building on a foundation. Alternate translation: "you created the earth"

The heavens are the work of your hands

Here "hands" refer to God's power and action. Alternate translation: "You made the heavens"

Hebrews 1:11

They will perish

"The heavens and earth will disappear" or "The heavens

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and earth will no longer exist"

wear out like a piece of clothing

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were a piece of clothing that will get old and eventually become useless.

Hebrews 1:12

roll them up like a cloak

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were a robe or another kind of outer garment.

they will be changed like a piece of clothing

The author speaks of the heavens and earth as if they were clothing that could be exchanged for other clothing.

they will be changed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you will change them"

your years do not end

Periods of time are used to represent God's eternal existence. Alternate translation: "your life will never end"

Hebrews 1:13

General Information:

This quotation comes from another Psalm.

But to which of the angels has God said at any time ... feet"?

The author uses a question to emphasize that God has never said this to an angel. Alternate translation: "But God has never said to an angel at any time ... feet.'"

Sit at my right hand

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. Alternate translation: "Sit in the place of honor beside me"

until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet

Christ's enemies are spoken of as if they will become an object on which a king rests his feet. This image represents defeat and dishonor for his enemies.

Hebrews 1:14

Are not all angels spirits ... inherit salvation?

The author uses this question to remind the readers that angels are not as powerful as Christ, but they have a different role. Alternate translation: "All angels are spirits who ... inherit salvation."

for those who will inherit salvation

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "for those whom God will save"

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2 [1]Therefore, we must give far more attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.
[2]For if the message that was spoken through the angels proved to be so reliable, and every transgression and disobedience receives just repayment,[3]how then can we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This is salvation that was first announced by the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard it.[4]At the same time God testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and by distributing the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

[5]For it was not to the angels that God subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking.[6]But someone has somewhere testified, saying,

"What is man, that you are mindful of him?
Or a son of man, that you care for him?
[7] You made man a little lower than the angels;
you crowned him with glory and honor.[1]

[8] You put everything in subjection under his feet."For it was to him that God has subjected all things. He did not leave anything not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see everything subjected to him.

[9]But we see him who was made lower than the angels for a little while, Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of his suffering and death, so that by God's grace he might taste death for everyone.[10]For it was proper for God, because everything exists for him and through him, to bring many sons to glory. It was proper for him to make the founder of their salvation complete through his sufferings.
[11]For both the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have one source. So he is not ashamed to call them brothers.[12]He says,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers,
I will sing about you from inside the assembly."

[13]And again,

"I will trust in him."

And again,

"See, here am I and the children whom God has given me."

[14]Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he shared in those things in the same way, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.[15]This was so that he would free all those who through fear of death lived all their lives subject to slavery.
[16]For surely it is not the angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.[17]So it was necessary for him to become like his brothers in all ways, so that he could be a merciful and faithful high priest in relation to the things of God, and so that he

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could make atonement for the sins of the people.[18]Because Jesus himself has suffered and was tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies add and you have put him over the works of your hands.

Hebrews 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 2:6-8, 12-13, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers

The author probably uses the term "brothers" to refer to Christians who grew up as Jews.

Hebrews 2:1 Notes

Hebrews 2:1

Connecting Statement:

This is the first of five urgent warnings the author gives.

we must

Here "we" refers to the author and includes his audience.

so that we do not drift away from it

Possible meanings for this metaphor are 1) people who stop believing in God's word are spoken of as if they were drifting away, like a boat drifts from its position in the water. Alternate translation: "so that we do not stop believing it" or 2) people who stop obeying God's words are spoken of as if they were drifting away, like a boat drifts from its position in the water. Alternate translation: "so that we do not stop obeying it"

Hebrews 2:2

For if the message that was spoken through the angels

The Jews believed that God spoke his law to Moses through angels. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For if the message that God spoke through the angels"

For if the message

The author is certain that these things are true. Alternate translation: "Because the message"

every transgression and disobedience receives just repayment

Here "transgression" and "disobedience" stand for the people who are guilty of these sins. Alternate translation: "every person who sins and disobeys will receive just repayment"

transgression and disobedience

These two words mean basically the same thing.

repayment

This is a general term, but you may need to make explicit that the "repayment" here is just punishment. Alternate translation: "punishment"

Hebrews 2:3

how then can we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?

The author uses a question to emphasize that the people will certainly receive punishment if they refuse God's salvation through Christ. Alternate translation: "then God will certainly punish us if we do not pay attention to his message about how God will save us!"

ignore

"pay no attention to" or "consider unimportant"

This is salvation that was first announced by the Lord and confirmed to us by those who heard it

This can be stated in active form. The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "The Lord himself first announced the message about how God will save us and then those who heard the message confirmed it to us"

Hebrews 2:4

according to his will

"in just the way he wanted to do it"

Hebrews 2:5

Connecting Statement:

The writer reminds these Hebrew believers that the earth will one day be under the rule of the Lord Jesus.

For it was not to the angels that God subjected

"For God did not make the angels rulers over"

the world to come

Here "world" refers to the people who live there. And "to come" means that this is the world in the next age after Christ returns. Alternate translation: "the people who will live in the new world"

Hebrews 2:6

General Information:

The quotation here is from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament. It continues on through verse 8.

What is man, that you are mindful of him?

This rhetorical question emphasizes the insignificance of humans and expresses surprise that God would pay attention to them. Alternate translation: "Humans are insignificant, and yet you are mindful of them!"

Or a son of man, that you care for him?

The idiom "son of man" refers to human beings. This rhetorical question means basically the same thing as the first question. It expresses surprise that God would care for humans, who are insignificant. Alternate translation: "Human beings are of little importance, and yet you care for them!"

Or a son of man

The verb may be supplied from the previous question. Alternate translation: "Or what is a son of man"

Hebrews 2:7

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a little lower than the angels
The author speaks of people being less important than angels as if the people are standing in a position that is lower than the angels' position. Alternate translation: "less important than the angels"
made man ... crowned him
Here, these phrases do not refer to a specific person but to humans in general, including both males and females. Alternate translation: "made humans ... crowned them"
you crowned him with glory and honor
The gifts of glory and honor are spoken of as if they were a wreath of leaves placed on the head of a victorious athlete. Alternate translation: "you have given them great glory and honor"
Hebrews 2:8
his feet ... to him
Here, these phrases do not refer to a specific person but to humans in general, including both males and females. Alternate translation: "their feet ... to them"
You put everything in subjection under his feet
The author speaks of humans having control over everything as if they have stepped on everything with their feet. Alternate translation: "You have given them control over everything"
He did not leave anything not subjected to him
This double negative emphasizes the positive. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "God made everything subject to him"
we do not yet see everything subjected to him
"we know that humans are not in control of everything yet"
Hebrews 2:9
Connecting Statement:
The writer reminds these Hebrew believers that Christ became lower than the angels when he came to earth to suffer death for forgiveness of sins, and that he became a merciful high priest to believers.
we see him
"we know there is one"
who was made
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God made"
lower than the angels ... crowned with glory and honor
See how you translated these words in Hebrews 2:7.
he might taste death
The experience of death is spoken of as if it were food that people can taste. Alternate translation: "he might experience death" or "he might die"
Hebrews 2:10
bring many sons to glory
The gift of glory is spoken of here as if it were a place to which people could be brought. Alternate translation: "save many sons"
many sons
Here this refers to believers in Christ, including males and females. Alternate translation: "many believers"
the founder of their salvation
Possible meanings of this metaphor are 1) the author speaks of Jesus as the one who establishes salvation, or makes it possible for God to save people. Alternate translation: "the one who makes their salvation possible" or 2) the word translated here as "founder" can mean "leader" and the writer speaks of salvation as if it were a destination and of Jesus as the person who goes before the people on the road and leads them to salvation. Alternate translation: "the one who leads people to salvation"
complete
Becoming mature and completely trained is spoken of as if a person were made complete, perhaps complete in all his body parts.
Hebrews 2:11
the one who sanctifies
"the one who makes others holy" or "the one who makes others pure from sin"
those who are sanctified
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom he makes holy" or "those whom he makes pure from sin"
have one source
Who that source is can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "have one source, God himself" or "have the same Father"
he is not ashamed
"Jesus is not ashamed"
is not ashamed to call them brothers
This litotes means that he will claim them as his brothers. Alternate translation: "is pleased to call them brothers"
brothers
Here this refers to all who have believed in Jesus, including both men and women.
Hebrews 2:12
General Information:
This prophetic quotation comes from a Psalm of King David.
I will proclaim your name to my brothers
Here "name" refers to the person's reputation and what they have done. Alternate translation: "I will proclaim to my brothers the great things you have done"
from inside the assembly
"when believers come together to worship God"
Hebrews 2:13
General Information:
The prophet Isaiah wrote these quotations.
And again,
"And a prophet wrote in another scripture passage what Christ said about God:"
the children
This speaks about those who believe in Christ as if they were children. Alternate translation: "those who are like my children"
Hebrews 2:14
the children
This speaks about those who believe in Christ as if they were children. Alternate translation: "those who are like his children"
share in flesh and blood
The phrase "flesh and blood" refers to people's human nature. Alternate translation: "are all human beings"
he shared in those things in the same way

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"Jesus in the same way shared in flesh and blood" or "Jesus became human in the same way they did"

through death

Here "death" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "by dying"

has the power of death

Here "death" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "has the power to cause people to die"

Hebrews 2:15

This was so that he would free all those who through fear of death lived all their lives subject to slavery

The fear of death is spoken of as if it were making people live as slaves. Taking away someone's fear is spoken of as it were freeing that person from slavery. Alternate translation: "This was so he might free all people. For we lived like slaves because we were afraid of dying"

Hebrews 2:17

it was necessary for him

"it was necessary for Jesus"

like his brothers

Here "brothers" refers to people in general. Alternate translation: "like human beings"

he could make atonement for the sins of the people

Christ's death on the cross means that God can forgive sins. Alternate translation: "he could make it possible for God to forgive people's sins"

Hebrews 2:18

was tempted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Satan tempted him"

who are tempted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom Satan is tempting"

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3 [1]Therefore, holy brothers, you share in a heavenly calling. Think about Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our
confession.[2]He was faithful to God, who appointed him, just as Moses was also faithful in all the house of God.[3]For Jesus has been considered worthy of greater glory than Moses, because the one who builds a house has more honor than the house itself.[4]For every house is built by someone, but the one who built everything is God.
[5]For Moses was faithful as a servant in God's entire house, bearing witness about the things that were to be spoken of in the future.[6]But Christ is faithful as a Son who is in charge of the house of God. We are his house if we hold firmly to our courage and the hope of which we boast.
[7]Therefore, it is just as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you hear his voice
[8] do not harden your hearts
as in the rebellion,
in the time of testing in the wilderness.

[9] This was when your ancestors rebelled by testing me,
after they had seen my deeds for forty years.

[10] Therefore I was angry with that generation.
I said, 'They have always gone astray in their hearts.
They have not known my ways.'

[11] It is just as I swore in my wrath:
'They will never enter my rest.'"

[12]Be careful, brothers, that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief, a heart that turns away from the living God.[13]But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "today," so that no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
[14]For we have become partners of Christ if we firmly hold to our confidence in him from the beginning to the end.[15]About this it has been said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts,
as in the rebellion."

[16]Who was it who heard God and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt through Moses?[17]With whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?[18]To whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if it was not to those who disobeyed him?[19]We see that they were not able to enter his rest because of unbelief.

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Hebrews 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is about how Jesus is better than Moses, the greatest Israelite in the Old Testament.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 3:7-11,15, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Brothers
The author probably uses the term "brothers" to refer to Christians who grew up as Jews.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Harden your hearts
A person who hardens his heart is a person who will not listen to or obey God.
Rhetorical questions
The author uses rhetorical questions as a way of warning his readers. Both he and the readers know the answers to the questions, and the writer knows that as the readers think about the answers to the questions, they will realize that they need to listen to God and obey him.

Links:

Hebrews 3:1 Notes

Hebrews 3:1
Connecting Statement:
This second warning is longer and more detailed and includes chapters 3 and 4. The writer begins by showing that Christ is better than his servant Moses.
holy brothers
Here "brothers" refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women. Alternate translation: "holy brothers and sisters" or "my holy fellow believers"
you share in a heavenly calling
Here "heavenly" represents God. Alternate translation: "God has called us together"
the apostle and high priest
Here the word "apostle" means someone who has been sent. In this passage, it does not refer to any of the twelve apostles. Alternate translation: "the one whom God sent and is the high priest"
of our confession
This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "confession" is expressed as the verb "confess." Alternate translation: "whom we confess" or "in whom we believe"
Hebrews 3:2
in all the house of God
The Hebrew people to whom God revealed himself are spoken of as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "to all of God's people"
Hebrews 3:3
Jesus has been considered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has considered Jesus"
Hebrews 3:4
the one who built everything
God's acts of creating the world are spoken of as if they were the actions of building a house.
every house is built by someone
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "every house has someone who built it"
Hebrews 3:5
in God's entire house
The Hebrew people to whom God revealed himself are spoken of as if they were a literal house. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:2]
house, bearing witness about the things
This phrase probably refers to all of Moses's work. This can be stated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "house. Moses's life and work pointed to the things"
were to be spoken of in the future
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God would speak about in the future"
Hebrews 3:6
Son
This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.
who is in charge of the house of God
This speaks about God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "who rules over God's people"
We are his house
This speaks of God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "We are God's people"
if we hold firmly to our courage and the hope of which we boast
Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Here "courage" and "hope" are abstract nouns and can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "if we continue to be courageous and joyfully expect God to do what he has promised"
Hebrews 3:7
General Information:
This quotation comes from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament.
Connecting Statement:
The warning here is a reminder that the Israelites' unbelief kept almost all of them from entering into the land that God had promised them.
if you hear his voice
God's "voice" represents him speaking. Alternate translation: "when you hear God speak"
Hebrews 3:8

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do not harden your hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "harden your hearts" is a metaphor for being stubborn. Alternate translation: "do not be stubborn" or "do not refuse to listen"
as in the rebellion, in the time of testing in the wilderness
Here "rebellion" and "testing" can be stated as verbs. Alternate translation: "as when your ancestors rebelled against God and tested him in the wilderness"
Hebrews 3:9
General Information:
This quotation is from the Psalms.
your ancestors
Here "your" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.
by testing me
Here "me" refers to God.
Hebrews 3:10
forty years
"40 years"
I was angry
"I was greatly unhappy"
They have always gone astray in their hearts
Here "gone astray in their hearts" is a metaphor for not being loyal to God. Here "hearts" is a metonym for minds or desires. Alternate translation: "They have always rejected me" or "They have always refused to obey me"
They have not known my ways
This speaks of a manner of conducting one's life as if it were a way or a path. Alternate translation: "They have not understood how I want them to conduct their lives"
Hebrews 3:11
They will never enter my rest
The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "They will never enter the place of rest" or "I will never allow them to experience my blessings of rest"
Hebrews 3:12
brothers
Here this refers to fellow Christians, including males and females. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers"
that none of you has an evil heart of unbelief, a heart that turns away from the living God
Here "heart" is a metonym that represents a person's mind or will. Refusing to believe and obey God is spoken of as if the heart did not believe and it physically turned away from God. Alternate translation: "that none of you refuses to believe the truth and stops obeying the living God"
the living God
"the true God who is really alive"
Hebrews 3:13
as long as it is called "today,"
"while there is still opportunity,"
no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the deceitfulness of sin will not harden any of you"
no one among you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin
Being stubborn is spoken of as being hard or having a hard heart. The hardness is a result of being deceived by sin. This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "deceitfulness" is expressed as the verb "deceive." Alternate translation: "no one among you will be deceived by sin and become stubborn" or "you do not sin, deceiving yourselves so that you become stubborn"
Hebrews 3:14
For we have become
Here "we" refers to both the writer and the readers.
if we firmly hold to our confidence in him
"if we continue to confidently trust in him"
from the beginning
"from when we first began to believe in him"
to the end
This is a polite way of referring to when a person dies. Alternate translation: "until we die"
Hebrews 3:15
General Information:
This continues the quotation from the same psalm that was also quoted in Hebrews 3:7.
it has been said
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the writer wrote"
if you hear his voice
God's "voice" represents him speaking. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:7]
as in the rebellion
Here "rebellion" can be stated as a verb. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:8]
Hebrews 3:16
Who was it who heard God and rebelled? Was it not all those who came out of Egypt through Moses?
The author uses questions to teach his readers. These two questions can be joined as one statement, if needed. Alternate translation: "All those who came out of Egypt with Moses heard God, yet they still rebelled."
Hebrews 3:17
With whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness?
The author uses questions to teach his readers. These two questions can be joined as one statement, if needed. Alternate translation: "For forty years, God was angry with those who sinned, and he let them die in the wilderness."
forty years
"40 years"
Hebrews 3:18
To whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if it was not to those who disobeyed him?
The author uses this question to teach his readers. Alternate translation: "And it was to those who disobeyed that he swore they would not enter his rest."
they would not enter his rest
The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "they would not enter the place of rest" or "they would not experience his blessings of rest"
they
The word "they" refers to the disobedient Israelites.

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Hebrews 3:19
General Information:
Here "we" refers to the author and readers.
because of unbelief

The abstract noun "unbelief" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because they did not believe him"

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4 [1]Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest is still allowed to stand, let us fear, so that none of you may seem to
have fallen short of it.[2]For we were told the good news just as they were. But that message did not benefit those who
did not unite in faith with those who obeyed.[1]
[3]For we who have believed enter that rest, just as he said,

"As I swore in my wrath,
They will never enter my rest."

Even so, his works were finished from the foundation of the world.
[4]For he has somewhere spoken about the seventh day:
"And God rested on the seventh day from all his works."
[5]And again in this same passage he said,
"They will never enter my rest."

[6]Therefore, it remains for some to enter that rest, and those who previously had the good news proclaimed to them did
not go in because of their disobedience.[7]So God again appointed a certain day, calling it "Today," when he spoke through
David much later in words already quoted:

"Today if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."

[8]For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken about another day.[9]So there remains a Sabbath rest
reserved for God's people.[10]For he who enters into God's rest has himself also rested from his deeds, just as God did from
his.[11]Therefore let us be eager to enter that rest, so that no one will fall into the kind of disobedience that they did.
[12]For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. It pierces even to the dividing of soul
and spirit, of joints and marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.[13]No thing that has been
created is hidden before God, but everything is bare and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give an account.

[14]Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us firmly hold
to our confession.[15]For we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. Rather, we have
someone who has in all ways been tempted as we are, except that he is without sin.[16]Let us then go with confidence to the
throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

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[1]Some important and ancient copies read, But that message did not benefit those who heard it without joining faith to it.

Hebrews 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter tells why Jesus is the greatest high priest.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 4:3-4, 7, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's rest
The word "rest" seems to refer to at least two things in this chapter. It refers to a place or time when God will allow his people to rest from their work (Hebrews 4:3), and it refers to God resting on the seventh day (Hebrews 4:4).

Links:

Hebrews 4:1 Notes

Hebrews 4:1
Connecting Statement:
Chapter 4 continues the warning to believers starting in

Hebrews 3:7.
Therefore
"Because what I have just said is true" or "Since God will

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certainly punish those who do not obey"

let us fear

This is probably a hyperbole that refers to being very careful. Alternate translation: "we must be very careful"

entering his rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "to enter the place of rest" or "to experience God's blessings of rest"

none of you may seem to have fallen short of it

God's promise is spoken of as if it were a place to which people were trying to go. Alternate translation: "none of you fail to enter into God's rest, which he promised to us" or "God allows you all to enter into his rest as he promised us"

Hebrews 4:2

For we were told the good news just as they were

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For we heard the good news just as they did"

as they were

Here "they" refers to the Hebrews' ancestors who were alive during the time of Moses.

But that message did not benefit those who did not unite in faith with those who obeyed

The author is talking about two groups of people, those who received God's covenant with faith, and those who heard it but did not believe. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "But that message benefited only those who believed and obeyed it"

unite

join

Hebrews 4:3

General Information:

Here the quotation, "As I swore ... rest," is from a psalm.

we who have believed

"we who believe"

we who have believed enter that rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "we who have believed will enter the place of rest" or "we who have believed will experience God's blessings of rest"

just as he said

"just as God said"

As I swore in my wrath

"As I swore when I was very angry"

They will never enter my rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. Alternate translation: "They will never enter the place of rest" or "They will never experience my blessings of rest"

his works were finished

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he finished creating" or "he finished his works of creation"

from the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "at the beginning of the world" or "from the time he created the world"

Hebrews 4:4

General Information:

The quotation, "God rested on ... works," is from Moses's writings.

the seventh day

The word "seventh" is the ordinal number for "seven."

Hebrews 4:5

General Information:

This quotation, "They will never enter ... rest," is from a psalm.

Hebrews 4:6

it remains for some to enter that rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were rest that he can give, and as if they were a place to which people could go. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God still allows some people to enter his place of rest" or "God still allows some people to experience his blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:7

General Information:

Here we find out that this quotation from the Psalms was written by David (Hebrews 3:7-8).

if you hear his voice

God's commands to Israel are spoken of as if he had given them in an audible voice. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:7]

do not harden your hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's mind. The phrase "harden your hearts" is a metaphor for being stubborn. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 3:8]

Hebrews 4:8

Connecting Statement:

Here the writer warns believers not to disobey but to enter into the rest God offers. He reminds them that God's word will convict them and that they can come in prayer with the confidence that God will help them.

if Joshua had given them rest

A person causing someone to rest is spoken of as if the person were giving someone rest. Alternate translation: "if Joshua had been able to cause the people to rest" or "if the Israelites during the time of Joshua had experienced God's blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:10

he who enters into God's rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they are a place to enter. Alternate translation: "the person who enters into God's place of rest" or "the person who experiences God's blessings of rest"

Hebrews 4:11

let us be eager to enter that rest

The peace and security provided by God are spoken of as if they were a place to enter. Alternate translation: "we should also do everything we can to rest with God where he is"

will fall into the kind of disobedience that they did

Disobedience is spoken of as if it were a hole that a person could physically fall into by accident. This passage can be reworded so that the abstract noun "disobedience" is expressed as the verb "disobey." Alternate translation: "will

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disobey in the same way as they did"

that they did

Here "they" refers to the Hebrews' ancestors during the time of Moses.

Hebrews 4:12

the word of God is living ... It pierces ... is able

Here "word of God" refers to anything that God has communicated to humanity, whether through speech or through written messages. Alternate translation: "the words of God are living ... They pierce ... are able"

living and active

This speaks about God's word as if it were alive. It means when God speaks, it is powerful and effective.

sharper than any two-edged sword

A two-edged sword can easily cut through a person's flesh. God's word is very effective in showing what is in a person's heart and thoughts.

two-edged sword

a sword with a blade that is sharp on both edges

It pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow

This continues speaking about God's word as if it were a sword. Here the sword is so sharp that it can cut through and divide parts of the human that are very difficult or even impossible to divide. This means that there is nothing inside us that we can hide from God.

soul and spirit

These are two different but closely related nonphysical parts of a human. The "soul" is what causes a person to be alive. The "spirit" is the part of a person that causes him to be able to know and believe in God.

joints and marrow

The "joint" is what holds two bones together. The "marrow" is the center part of the bone.

is able to discern

This speaks about God's word as if it were a person who could know something. Alternate translation: "exposes"

the thoughts and intentions of the heart

"Heart" here is a metonym for "inner self." Alternate translation: "what a person is thinking and intends to do"

Hebrews 4:13

No thing that has been created is hidden before God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Nothing that God has created can hide from him"

everything is bare and open

This speaks about all things as if they were a person standing bare, or a box that is open. Alternate translation: "everything is completely exposed"

bare and open

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that nothing is hidden from God.

to the eyes of the one to whom we must give an account

God is spoken of as if he had eyes. Alternate translation: "to God, who will judge how we have lived"

Hebrews 4:14

who has passed through the heavens

"who has entered where God is"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus.

let us firmly hold to our confession

The word "confession" is a metonym for what a person believes and confesses. This is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could grasp firmly. Alternate translation: "let us continue to believe confidently in him, as we say that we do"

Hebrews 4:15

we do not have a high priest who cannot feel sympathy ... Rather, we have

This double negative is used to correct an incorrect idea that the reader might have, that the high priest cannot feel sympathy. Alternate translation: "we have a high priest who can feel sympathy ... Rather, we have"

who has in all ways been tempted as we are

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who has endured temptation in every way that we have" or "whom the devil has tempted in every way that he tempts us"

he is without sin

"he did not sin"

Hebrews 4:16

to the throne of grace

"to God's throne, where there is grace." Here "throne" refers to God ruling as king. Alternate translation: "to where our gracious God is sitting on his throne"

we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need

Here "mercy" and "grace" are spoken of as if they were objects that can be given or can be found. Alternate translation: "God may be merciful and gracious and help us in time of need"

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5 [1]For every high priest, chosen from among people, is appointed to act on the behalf of people in the things concerning
God, so that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.[2]He can deal gently with those who are ignorant and who
have been deceived, because he himself is subject to weakness.[3]Because of this, he also is required to offer sacrifices for
his own sins, just as he does for the people's sins.
[4]No one takes this honor for himself. Rather, he is called by God, just as Aaron was.[5]In the same way, neither did Christ
glorify himself by making himself high priest. Instead, the one speaking to him said,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father."

[6]It is just as he also says in another place,

"You are a priest forever
after the manner of Melchizedek."

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[7]During the days of his flesh, Christ offered up both prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God, the one able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his godly life.[8]Even though he was a Son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.
[9]He was made perfect and became, for everyone who obeys him, the cause of eternal salvation.[10]He was designated by God as high priest after the manner of Melchizedek.
[11]We have much to say about Jesus, but it is hard to explain since you have become dull in hearing.
[12]For though by this time you should be teachers, you still have need for someone to teach you the elementary principles of God's messages. You need milk, not solid food![13]For anyone who only takes milk is inexperienced with the message of righteousness, because he is still a little child.[14]But solid food is for the mature. These are those who, because of their maturity, have their understanding trained for distinguishing good from evil.

Hebrews 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a continuation of the teaching of the previous chapter.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 5:5-6.

Special concepts in this chapter

High priest
Only a high priest could offer sacrifices so that God could forgive sins, so Jesus had to be a high priest. The law of Moses commanded that the high priest be from the tribe of Levi, but Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. God made him a priest like the priest Melchizedek, who lived at the time of Abraham, before there was a tribe of Levi.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Milk and solid food
The writer speaks of Christians who are only able to understand simple things about Jesus as if they were babies, who drink only milk and cannot eat solid food.

Links:

Hebrews 5:1 Notes

Hebrews 5:1
Connecting Statement:
The writer describes the sinfulness of the Old Testament priests, and then he shows that Christ has a better kind of priesthood, one not based on Aaron's priesthood but on the priesthood of Melchizedek.
chosen from among people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God chooses from among the people"
is appointed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God appoints"
to act on the behalf of people
"to represent the people"
so that he may offer
The word "he" refers to a high priest.
Hebrews 5:2
He can deal gently
"The high priest can deal gently"
those ... who have been deceived
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those ... whom others have deceived" or "those ... who believe what is false"
who have been deceived
"who believe false things and so behave badly"
is subject to weakness
The high priest's own weakness is spoken of as if it were a another person who rules over him. Alternate translation: "is spiritually weak" or "is weak against sin"
weakness
the desire to sin
Hebrews 5:3
he also is required
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God also requires him"
Hebrews 5:4
takes this honor
Honor is spoken of as if it were an object that a person could grasp in his hands.
takes this honor
The "honor" or praise and respect that people gave to the high priest stand for his task.
he is called by God, just as Aaron was
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God calls him, just as he called Aaron"
Hebrews 5:5
General Information:
This quotation is from the Psalms in the Old Testament.
the one speaking to him said
"God said to him"
You are my Son; today I have become your Father
These two phrases mean essentially the same thing. See

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how you translated them in [Hebrews 1:5]

Son ... Father

These are important titles that describe the relationship between Jesus and God the Father.

Hebrews 5:6

General Information:

This prophecy is from a Psalm of David.

he also says

To whom God is speaking can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "he also says to Christ"

in another place

"in another place in the scriptures"

after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

Hebrews 5:7

During the days of his flesh

Here "the days" stands for a period of time. And, "flesh" stand for Jesus's earthly life. Alternate translation: "While he lived on earth"

prayers and requests

Both of these words mean basically the same thing.

the one able to save him from death

Possible meanings are 1) God was able to save Christ so that he would not die. Alternate translation: 'to save him from dying" or 2) God was able to save Christ after Christ's death by making him alive again. If possible, translate this in a way that allows both interpretations.

he was heard

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God heard him"

Hebrews 5:8

a Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

Hebrews 5:9

He was made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God made him perfect"

made perfect

Here this means being made mature, able to honor God in all aspects of life.

became, for everyone who obeys him, the cause of eternal salvation

The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "now he saves all who obey him and causes them to live forever"

Hebrews 5:10

He was designated by God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God designated him" or "God appointed him"

as high priest after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "to be the sort of high priest that Melchizedek was"

Hebrews 5:11

Connecting Statement:

Here the writer begins his third warning. He warns these believers that they are still not mature and encourages them to learn God's word so they can understand right from wrong.

We have much to say

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I have much to say"

you have become dull in hearing

The ability to understand and obey is spoken of as if it were the ability to listen. And the ability to listen is spoken of as if it were a metal tool that becomes dull with use. Alternate translation: "you have trouble understanding it"

Hebrews 5:12

elementary principles of God's messages

Here "elementary principles" refers to the first things people should be able to understand. Alternate translation: "basic truths of God's messages" or "beginnning lessons of God's word"

You need milk

Truths about God that are easy to understand are spoken of as if they were milk, the only food that infants can take. Alternate translation: "You have become like babies and can drink only milk"

milk, not solid food

Truths about God that are difficult to understand are spoken of as if they were solid food, suitable for adults. Alternate translation: "milk instead of solid food that adults can eat"

Hebrews 5:13

takes milk

Here "takes" stands for "drinks." Alternate translation: "drinks milk"

because he is still a little child

Spiritual maturity is compared with the kind of food that a growing child eats. Solid food is not for a tiny baby, and that is a figure describing a young Christian who only learns simple truths; but later, more solid food is given to the little child, just as when a person matures he can learn about matters that are more difficult.

Hebrews 5:14

who because of their maturity have their understanding trained for distinguishing good from evil

People trained to understand something are spoken of as if their ability to understand had been trained. Alternate translation: "who are mature and can distinguish between good and evil"

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6 [1]So then, let us leave the beginning of the message of Christ and move forward to maturity. Let us not lay again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith in God,[2]nor the foundation of teaching about baptisms, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.[3]We will also do this if God permits.
[4]For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who tasted the heavenly gift, who were sharers of the Holy Spirit,[5]and who tasted God's good word and the powers of the age to come,[6]but who then fell away—it is impossible to

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restore them again to repentance. This is because they crucify the Son of God for themselves again, and publicly shame him.
[7]For the land that drinks in the rain that often comes on it, and that gives birth to the plants useful to those for whom the land was worked—this is the land that receives a blessing from God.[8]But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and is near to a curse. Its end is in burning.

[9]But we are convinced about better things concerning you, beloved ones—things that concern salvation—even though we speak like this.[10]For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you showed for his name, because you served his holy people, and you are still serving them.
[11]We greatly desire that each of you may show the same diligence to the end, in order to make your hope certain.[12]This is so that you will not become lazy, but imitators of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises.

[13]For when God made his promise to Abraham, he swore by himself, since he could not swear by anyone greater.[14]He said, "I will certainly bless you and give you many descendants."[15]In this way, Abraham obtained what was promised after he had patiently waited.
[16]For people swear by someone greater than themselves. At the end of each of their disputes, an oath serves as confirmation.[17]When God decided to show more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable quality of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath.[18]He did this so that by two unchangeable things—with which it is impossible for God to lie—we, who have fled for refuge, will have a strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us.
[19]We have this as a secure and reliable anchor for the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain,
[20]where Jesus, who went before us, has entered into that place on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Abrahamic Covenant

In the covenant that God made with Abraham, God promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation. He also promised to protect Abraham's descendants and to give them land of their own. (See: covenant)

Links:

Hebrews 6:1 Notes

Hebrews 6:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer continues with what immature Hebrew believers need to do to become mature Christians. He reminds them of the foundational teachings.

let us leave the beginning of the message of Christ and move forward to maturity

This speaks about the basic teachings as if they were the beginning of a journey and the mature teachings as if they were the end of a journey. Alternate translation: "let us stop only discussing what we first learned and start understanding more mature teachings as well"

Let us not lay again the foundation

The teachings of the faith are spoken of as if they were a building, and the basic, elementary teachings are the foundation. Alternate translation: "Let us not repeat the basic teachings"

dead works

Sinful deeds are spoken of as if they belonged to the world of the dead.

Hebrews 6:2

nor the foundation of teaching

The teachings of the faith are spoken of as if they were a building, and the basic, elementary teachings are the foundation. Alternate translation: "nor the basic teachings"

laying on of hands

This practice was done to set someone apart for special service or position.

Hebrews 6:4

those who were once enlightened

Understanding is spoken of as if it were illumination. Alternate translation: "those who once understood the message about Christ"

who tasted the heavenly gift

Experiencing salvation is spoken of as if it were tasting food. Alternate translation: "who experienced God's saving power"

who were sharers of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, who comes to believers, is spoken of as if he were an object that people could share. Alternate translation: "who received the Holy Spirit"

Hebrews 6:5

who tasted God's good word

Learning God's message is spoken of as if it were tasting food. Alternate translation: "who learned about God's good message"

the powers of the age to come

This means the power of God when his kingdom is fully present in all the world. In this sense, "the powers" refer to God himself, who holds all power. Alternate translation:

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"how God will work powerfully in the future"
Hebrews 6:6
it is impossible to restore them again to repentance
"it is impossible to bring them back to repent again"
they crucify the Son of God for themselves again
When people turn away from God, it is as though they crucify Jesus again. Alternate translation: "it is like they crucify for themselves the very Son of God again"
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
Hebrews 6:7
the land that drinks in the rain
Farmland that benefits from much rain is spoken of as if it were a person who drinks in the rainwater. Alternate translation: "the land that absorbs the rain"
that gives birth to the plants
Farmland that produces crops is spoken of as if it gives birth to them. Alternate translation: "that produces plants"
the land that receives a blessing from God
Rain and crops are seen as proof that God has helped the farmland. The farmland is spoken of as if it were a person who could receive God's blessing.
a blessing from God
Here "blessing" means help from God, not spoken words.
Hebrews 6:8
is near to a curse
This speaks of "curse" as if it were a place to which a person could draw near. Alternate translation: "is in danger of God cursing it"
Its end is in burning
The farmer will burn everything in the field.
Hebrews 6:9
we are convinced
Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I am convinced" or "I am certain"
about better things concerning you
This means they are doing better than those who have rejected God, disobeyed him, and now can no longer repent so that God will forgive them (Hebrews 6:4-6). Alternate translation: "that you are doing better things than what I have mentioned"
things that concern salvation
The abstract noun "salvation" can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "things that concern God saving you"
Hebrews 6:10
For God is not unjust. He will not forget
This double negative can mean that God in his justice will remember what good things his people have done. Alternate translation: "For God is just. He will certainly remember"
for his name
God's "name" is a metonym that stands for God himself. Alternate translation: "for him"
Hebrews 6:11
We greatly desire
Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "I greatly desire"
diligence
careful, hard work
to the end
The implicit meaning can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "to the end of your lives"
in order to make your hope certain
Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "in order to have complete certainty that you will receive what God has promised you"
Hebrews 6:12
imitators
An "imitator" is someone who copies the behavior of someone else.
inherit the promises
Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "receive what God promised them"
Hebrews 6:14
He said
God said
Hebrews 6:15
what was promised
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God promised him"
Hebrews 6:17
to the heirs of the promise
The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "to those who would receive what he promised"
the unchangeable quality of his purpose
"that his purpose would never change" or "that he would always do what he said he would do"
Hebrews 6:18
we, who have fled for refuge
Believers, who trust in God for him to protect them, are spoken of as if they were running to a safe place. Alternate translation: "we, who have trusted him"
will have a strong encouragement to hold firmly to the hope set before us
The phrase "to hold firmly to the hope set before us" is a metaphor meaning to continue to hope in what God has promised to do. Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "will continue to trust in God just has he encouraged us to do"
set before us
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has placed before us"
Hebrews 6:19
Connecting Statement:
Having finished his third warning and encouragement to the believers, the writer of Hebrews continues his comparison of Jesus as priest to Melchizedek as priest.
as a secure and reliable anchor for the soul
Just as an anchor keeps a boat from drifting in the water, Jesus keeps us secure in God's presence. Alternate translation: "that causes us to live securely in God's

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presence"
a secure and reliable anchor
Here the words "secure" and "reliable" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the complete reliability of the anchor. Alternate translation: "a completely reliable anchor"
hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain
Confidence is spoken of as if it were a person who could go into the most holy place of the temple.
the inner place
This was the most holy place in the temple. It was thought to be the place where God was most intensely present among his people. In this passage, this place stands for heaven and God's throne room.
Hebrews 6:20
after the order of Melchizedek
This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

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7 [1]It was this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.[2]It was to him that Abraham gave a tenth of everything. First, the translation of his name means "king of righteousness"; then he is also "king of Salem," that is, "king of peace."[3]He is without father, without mother, without ancestors, with neither beginning of days nor end of life. And resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

[4]See how great this man was to whom the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the things that he had taken in battle.[5]The descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a command according to the law to collect tithes from the people, that is, from their brothers, even though they, too, are descended from Abraham.[6]But Melchizedek, whose descent was not traced from them, received tithes from Abraham, and blessed him, the one who had the promises.
[7]There is no denying that the lesser person is blessed by the greater person.[8]In this case, mortal men receive tithes, but in that case, it is testified that he lives on.[9]And, in a manner of speaking, Levi, who received tithes, also paid tithes through Abraham,[10]because Levi was in the body of his ancestor when Melchizedek met Abraham.

[11]Now if perfection were possible through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the manner of Melchizedek, and not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron?[12]For when the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed.
[13]For the one about whom these things are said belongs to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.
[14]Now clearly it is from Judah that our Lord was born, a tribe that Moses never mentioned concerning priests.
[15]What we say is even clearer when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek.[16]This one became a priest, not based on a law of physical requirement, but by the power of an everlasting life.[17]For scripture witnesses about him:

> "You are a priest forever
> according to the order of Melchizedek."

[18]For not only has the former command been set aside because it is weak and useless—[19]for the law made nothing perfect—but also a better hope is introduced, through which we come near to God.
[20]And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath,[21]but he became a priest with an oath by the one who said to him,

> "The Lord has sworn and he will not change his mind:
> 'You are a priest forever.'"

[22]By this also Jesus has given the guarantee of a better covenant.[23]The former priests were many in number, since death prevented them from continuing in office.[24]But because Jesus continues to live forever, he has a permanent priesthood.
[25]Therefore he is also able to save completely those who approach God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.[26]For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, who is holy, innocent, pure, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
[27]He does not need, unlike the high priests, to offer up daily sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He did this once for all when he offered himself.[28]For the law appoints as high priests men who have weaknesses. But the word of the oath, which came after the law, appointed a Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Hebrews 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 7:17, 21, which is from the Old Testament.

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Special concepts in this chapter

High priest

Only a high priest could offer sacrifices so that God could forgive sins, so Jesus had to be a high priest. The law of Moses commanded that the high priest be from the tribe of Levi, but Jesus was from the tribe of Judah. God made him a priest like the priest Melchizedek, who lived at the time of Abraham, before there was a tribe of Levi.

Links:

Hebrews 7:1 Notes

Hebrews 7:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer of Hebrews continues his comparison of Jesus as priest to Melchizedek as priest.

Salem

This is the name of a city.

Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings

This is refers to when Abraham and his men went and defeated the armies of four kings in order to rescue his nephew, Lot, and his family.

Hebrews 7:2

It was to him

"It was to Melchizedek"

king of righteousness ... king of peace

"righteous king ... peaceful king"

Hebrews 7:3

He is without father, without mother, without ancestors, with neither beginning of days nor end of life

It is possible to think from this passage that Melchizedek was neither born nor did he die. However, it is likely that all the writer means is that the Scriptures provide no information about Melchizedek's ancestry, birth, or death.

Hebrews 7:4

Connecting Statement:

The writer states that the priesthood of Melchizedek is better than Aaron's priesthood and then reminds his readers that the priesthood of Aaron did not make anything perfect.

this man was

"Melchizedek was"

Hebrews 7:5

The descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office

The author says this because not all of Levi's sons became priests. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Levi who become priests"

from the people

"from the people of Israel"

from their brothers

Here "brothers" means they are all related to each other through Abraham. Alternate translation: "from their relatives"

Hebrews 7:6

whose descent was not traced from them

"who was not a descendant of Levi"

the one who had the promises

The things that God promised to do for Abraham are spoken of as if they were objects that he could possess. Alternate translation: the one to whom God had spoken his promises"

Hebrews 7:7

the lesser person is blessed by the greater person

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the more important person blesses the less important person"

Hebrews 7:8

In this case ... in that case

These phrases are used to compare the Levite priests with Melchizedek. Your language may have a way to emphasize that the author is making a comparison.

is testified that he lives on

It is never explicitly written in scripture that Melchizedek dies. The author of Hebrews speaks of this absence of information about Melchizedek's death in scripture as if it were a positive statement that he is still alive. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "scripture shows that he lives on"

Hebrews 7:9

Levi, who received tithes, also paid tithes through Abraham

Since Levi had not been born yet, the author speaks of him as still being in Abraham's body. In this way, the author argues that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.

Hebrews 7:10

Levi was in the body of his ancestor

Since Levi had not been born yet, the author speaks of him as still being in Abraham's body. In this way, the author argues that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham.

Hebrews 7:11

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the manner of Melchizedek, and not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron?

This question emphasizes that it was unexpected that priests come after the order of Melchizedek. Alternate translation: "no one would have needed another priest, one who was like Melchizedek and not like Aaron, to arise."

to arise

"to come" or "to appear"

after the manner of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

not be considered to be after the manner of Aaron

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "not be after the manner of Aaron" or "who is not a priest like Aaron"

Hebrews 7:12

For when the priesthood is changed, the law must also be changed

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This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For when God changed the priesthood, he also had to change the law"

Hebrews 7:13

For the one

This refers to Jesus.

about whom these things are said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about whom I am speaking"

Hebrews 7:14

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

it is from Judah that our Lord was born

The words "our Lord" refer to Jesus.

from Judah

"from the tribe of Judah"

Hebrews 7:15

when another priest arises

"when another priest comes"

in the likeness of Melchizedek

This means that Christ as a priest has things in common with Melchizedek as a priest. Alternate translation: "in the same way that Melchizedek was a priest"

Hebrews 7:16

This one became a priest

The words "This one" refer to the one who became priest in the likeness of Melchizedek.

not based on a law of physical requirement

He became priest, but it was not because he met the physical requrement.

a law of physical requirement

This physical requirement is that only the descendants of priests could become priests. Alternate translation: "a law of human descent" or "a law that required priests to be descendants of priests"

Hebrews 7:17

General Information:

This quote comes from a psalm of King David.

For scripture witnesses about him

This speaks about scripture as if it were a person who could witness about something. Alternate translation: "For God witnesses about him through the scriptures" or "For this is what was written about him in the scripture"

according to the order of Melchizedek

There were two groups of priests. One was made up of the descendants of Levi. The other was made up of Melchizedek and Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "according to the line of Melchizedek" or "according to the priesthood of Melchizedek"

Hebrews 7:18

Connecting Statement:

The writer gives the first of two statements that explain Hebrews 7:17.

has the former command been set aside

Here "set aside" is a metaphor for making something invalid. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "has God made the commandment invalid"

Hebrews 7:19

Connecting Statement:

After a short statement that explains Hebrews 7:18, the writer gives the second of two statements that explain Hebrews 7:17.

the law made nothing perfect

The law is spoken of as if it were a person who could act. Alternate translation: "no one could become perfect by obeying the law"

a better hope is introduced

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has introduced a better hope" or "God has given us reason for a more confident hope"

through which we come near to God

Worshiping God and having his favor are spoken of as coming near to him. Alternate translation: "and because of this hope we approach God" or "and because of this hope we worship God"

Hebrews 7:20

And it was not without an oath!

The word "it" refers to the act of God choosing Jesus to be the eternal priest. This can be stated in positive form, and it can be stated clearly who made the oath. Alternate translation: "And God did not choose this new priest without swearing an oath!" or "And God showed how important it was by swearing an oath!"

Hebrews 7:21

General Information:

This quote comes from the same psalm of David as Hebrews 7:17.

Hebrews 7:22

has given the guarantee of a better covenant

"has told us that we can be sure that there will be a better covenant"

Hebrews 7:23

Connecting Statement:

The writer then assures these Jewish believers that Christ has the better priesthood because he lives forever and the priests that descended from Aaron all die, stopping them from continuing to be priests.

Hebrews 7:24

he has a permanent priesthood

A priest's work is spoken of as if it were an object that the priest possesses. This can be worded to avoid the abstract noun. Alternate translation: "he is a priest permanently"

Hebrews 7:25

Therefore he

You can make explicit what "Therefore" implies. Alternate translation: "Because Christ is our high priest who lives forever, he"

those who approach God through him

"those who come to God because of what Jesus has done"

Hebrews 7:26

exalted above the heavens

"whom God has raised up to the highest heavens." The author speaks of possessing more honor and power than anyone else as if it were a position that is up above all things. Alternate translation: "whom God has given more honor and power than anyone else"

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Hebrews 7:27

General Information:

Here the words "He," "his," and "himself" refer to Christ.

Hebrews 7:28

the law appoints as high priests men who have weaknesses

Here "the law" is a metonym for the men who appointed the high priests according to the law of Moses. The focus is not on the men who did this, but on the fact that they did this according to the law. Alternate translation: "according to the law, men appoint as high priests men who have weaknesses" or "for according to the law, men who have weaknesses are appointed as high priests"

men who have weaknesses

"men who are spiritually weak" or "men who are weak against sin"

the word of the oath, which came after the law, appointed a Son

The "word of the oath" represents God, who made the oath. Alternate translation: "God appointed a Son by his oath, which he made after he gave the law, a Son" or "after he had given the law, God swore an oath and appointed his Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

who has been made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who has completely obeyed God and become mature"

8 [1]Now the point of what we are saying is this: We have a high priest who has sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.[2]He is a servant in the holy place, the true tabernacle that the Lord, not a man, set up.
[3]For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary to have something to offer.
[4]Now if Christ were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law.
[5]They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. It is just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to construct the tabernacle: God said, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mountain."
[6]But now Christ has received a much better ministry, just as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which is based on better promises.[7]For if that first covenant had been faultless, no occasion for a second would have been sought.
[8]For when God found fault with the people, he said,

"See, the days are coming—says the Lord—
when I will make a new covenant
with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah.
[9] It will not be like the covenant
that I made with their ancestors
on the day that I took them by their hand
to lead them out of the land of Egypt.
For they did not carefully obey my covenant,
and I disregarded them—
says the Lord.

[10] This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, says the Lord.
I will put my laws into their minds,
and I will also write them on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

[11] They will not teach each one his fellow citizen
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'
For they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

[12] For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds,
and their sins I will not remember any longer."

[13]By calling this covenant "new," he declared the first covenant to be obsolete, and what has become obsolete and old will soon disappear.

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Hebrews 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author finishes describing how and why Jesus is the most important high priest. Then he begins to speak about how the new covenant is better to the covenant God made with Moses. (See: covenant)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 8:8-12, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

New covenant

The author tells how Jesus has established a new covenant that is better than the covenant that God established with the Israelites. (See: covenant)

Links:

Hebrews 8:1 Notes

Hebrews 8:1

Connecting Statement:

The writer, having shown that Christ's priesthood is better than the earthly priesthood, shows that the earthly priesthood was a pattern of heavenly things. Christ has a superior ministry, a superior covenant.

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

we are saying

Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Because the writer does not include his readers here, the word "we" is exclusive. Alternate translation: "I am saying" or "I am writing"

We have a high priest

The author is including the readers here, so the word "we" is inclusive.

sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]

Hebrews 8:2

the true tabernacle that the Lord, not a man, set up

People built the earthly tabernacle out of animal skins fastened to a wooden framework, and they set it up in the manner of a tent. Here "true tabernacle" means the heavenly tabernacle that God created.

Hebrews 8:3

For every high priest is appointed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For God appoints every priest"

Hebrews 8:4

Now

This does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

according to the law

"as God requires in the law"

Hebrews 8:5

They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things

The words "copy" and "shadow" have similar meanings and are metaphors meaning that something is not the real thing but it is similar to the real thing. These words emphasize that the priesthood and the earthly temple were images of Christ, the true high priest, and the heavenly temple. Alternate translation: "They serve what is a vague image of the heavenly things" or "They serve what is only similar to the heavenly things"

It is just as Moses was warned by God when he was

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It is just as God warned Moses when Moses was"

was about to construct the tabernacle

Moses did not construct the tabernacle himself. He ordered the people to construct it. Alternate translation: "was about to command the people to construct the tabernacle"

See that

"Make sure that"

to the pattern

"to the design"

that was shown to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I showed you"

on the mountain

You can make explicit that "mountain" refers to Mount Sinai. Alternate translation: "on Mount Sinai"

Hebrews 8:6

Connecting Statement:

This section begins to show that the new covenant is better than the old covenant with Israel and Judah.

Christ has received

"God has given Christ"

mediator of a better covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist.

covenant, which is based on better promises

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "covenant. It was this covenant that God made based on better promises" or "covenant. God promised better things when he made this covenant"

Hebrews 8:7

first ... second

The words "first" and "second" are ordinal numbers. Alternate translation: "old covenant ... new covenant"

had been faultless

"had been perfect"

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no occasion for a second would have been sought
The word "second" also describes a "covenant." Alternate translation: "no one would have sought a way to establish a second covenant" or "there would have been no reason to establish a second covenant"
Hebrews 8:8
General Information:
In this quotation the prophet Jeremiah foretold of a new covenant that God would make.
with the people
"with the people of Israel"
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
the house of Israel and with the house of Judah
The people of Israel and Judah are spoken of as if they were houses. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel and with the people of Judah"
Hebrews 8:9
I took them by their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt
This metaphor represents God's great love and concern. Alternate translation: "I led them out of Egypt like a father leads his young child"
Hebrews 8:10
General Information:
This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah.
the house of Israel
The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were a house. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"
after those days
"after that time"
I will put my laws into their minds
God's requirements are spoken of as if they were objects that could be placed somewhere. People's ability to think is spoken of as if it were a place. Alternate translation: "I will enable them to understand my laws"
I will also write them on their hearts
Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "write them on their hearts" is a metaphor for enabling people to obey the law. Alternate translation: "I will also put them in their hearts" or "I will enable them to obey my law"
I will be their God
"I will be the God they worship"
they will be my people
"they will be the people for whom I care"
Hebrews 8:11
General Information:
This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah.
They will not teach each one his fellow citizen and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'
This direct quotation can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: "They will not need to teach their neighbors or brothers to know me"
citizen ... brother
Both of these refer to a fellow Israelite.
Know the Lord ... will all know me
"Know" here stands for acknowledge.
Hebrews 8:12
toward their evil deeds
This stands for the people who committed these evil deeds. Alternate translation: "to those who did evil deeds"
their sins I will not remember any longer
Here "remember" stands for "think about."
Hebrews 8:13
he declared the first covenant to be obsolete
"he declared that the first covenant was no longer useful"
what has become obsolete
"what is no longer useful"
obsolete
Something that is obsolete is no longer useful because people can now use something better.

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9 [1]Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary.[2]For a tabernacle was prepared. The first room, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the presence, was called the holy place.
[3]Behind the second curtain was another room in the tabernacle, called the most holy place.[4]It had a golden altar for incense. It also had the ark of the covenant, which was completely overlaid with gold. Inside it was a golden jar that held the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant.[5]Above the ark of the covenant, glorious cherubim overshadowed the atonement lid, which we cannot now talk about in detail.
[6]After these things were prepared, the priests always entered the outer room of the tabernacle to perform their services.
[7]But only the high priest entered the second room, once each year, and not without blood that he offered for himself and for the people's unintentional sins.
[8]The Holy Spirit showed that as long as the first tabernacle was still standing, the way into the most holy place had not yet appeared.[9]This was an illustration for the present time. Both the gifts and sacrifices that are now being offered are not able to perfect the worshiper's conscience.[10]They are only concerned with food and drink and various ceremonial washings, regulations for the body until the time of the new order.

[11]Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come. He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that was not made by human hands, one not belonging to this created world.[1][12]It was not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood that he entered into the most holy place once for all and secured our eternal redemption.
[13]For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of a heifer's ashes on those who have been defiled sanctifies them for the cleansing of their flesh,[14]how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?[15]For this reason, he is the mediator of a new covenant. This is so that, since a death has taken place to redeem those under the first covenant from their transgressions, those who are called will receive the promise of an eternal inheritance.

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[16]For where there is a will, the death of the person who made it must be proven.[17]For a will is only valid when there has been a death, because it has no force while the one who made it is still alive.
[18]So not even the first covenant was established without blood.[19]For when Moses had given every command in the law to all the people, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water, red wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people.[20]Then he said, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has commanded for you."
[21]In the same manner, he sprinkled the blood on the tabernacle and all the containers used in the ministry.[22]According to the law, almost everything is cleansed with blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

[23]Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in heaven should be cleansed with these animal sacrifices. However, the heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with much better sacrifices.[24]For Christ did not enter into the most holy place made with hands, which is only a copy of the true one. Rather, he entered into heaven itself, to appear now in God's presence for us.
[25]He did not go there in order to offer himself many times, as does the high priest, who enters the most holy place year by year with the blood of another.[26]If that had been the case, then he would have had to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. But now he has appeared at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.
[27]Just as man is appointed to die once, and after that comes judgment,[28]so also, Christ was offered once to take away the sins of many, and will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but for the salvation of those who are waiting for him.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Christ came as a high priest of the good things that are to come.

Hebrews 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter describes how Jesus is better than the tabernacle and all its laws and rules. This chapter will be difficult to understand if the first five books of the Old Testament have not yet been translated.

Special concepts in this chapter

Will

A will is a legal document that describes what will happen to a person's property after he dies.

Blood

In the Old Testament, God had commanded the Israelites to offer sacrifices so that he would forgive their sins. Before they could offer these sacrifices, they had to kill animals and then offer not only the animal's body but also its blood. Shedding blood is a metaphor for killing an animal or person. Jesus offered his life, his blood, as a sacrifice when he allowed men to kill him. The writer of the Book of Hebrews is saying in this chapter that this sacrifice is better than the sacrifices of the Old Testament. (See: and covenant)

Return of Christ

Jesus will return to finish the work that he began when he died so that God would forgive his people's sins. He will finish saving those people who are waiting for him. (See: save)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

First covenant

This refers to the covenant that God made with Moses. However, before he made this covenant, God had made a covenant with Abraham. But this was the first covenant that God had made with the people of Israel. You may decide to translate "the first covenant" as "the earlier covenant."

Links:

Hebrews 9:1

Hebrews 9:1

Connecting Statement:

The author begins a description of the place in which God's faithful people worshiped during the time of the old covenant. He is describing a "tabernacle," a place where people dwell, in which there are two sections, each of which he also calls a tabernacle.

General Information:

The writer makes clear to these Jewish believers that the laws and the tabernacle of the old covenant were only pictures of the better, new covenant.

Now

This word marks a new part of the teaching.

first covenant

See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7.

had regulations

"had detailed instructions" or "had rules"

Hebrews 9:2

For

The author is continuing the discussion from Hebrews 8:7.

a tabernacle was prepared

A tabernacle was constructed and made ready for use. This idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Israelites prepared a tabernacle"

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tabernacle
Or "tent." This is perhaps a metaphor for a place in which the priests set the lampstand and other items.
The first room
"The first room." Some modern translations read the ellipsis as "The first room in the tabernacle" or "The first section of the tabernacle."
the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the presence
These objects are all accompanied by the definite article "the," because the author assumes that his readers already know about these things.
bread of the presence
This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "presence" is expressed as the verb "display" or "present." Alternate translation: "bread on display before God" or "bread the priests presented to God"
Hebrews 9:3
Behind the second curtain
The first curtain was the outer wall of the tabernacle, so the "second curtain" was the curtain between the "holy place" and the "most holy place."
second
This is the ordinal word for the number two.
Hebrews 9:4
Inside it
"Inside the ark of the covenant"
Aaron's rod that budded
This was the rod Aaron had when God proved to the people of Israel that he had chosen Aaron as his priest by making Aaron's rod bud.
that budded
"from which leaves and flowers had grown"
tablets of the covenant
Here "tablets" are flat pieces of stone that had writing on them. This refers to the stone tablets on which the ten commandments were written.
Hebrews 9:5
glorious cherubim overshadowed the atonement lid
When the Israelites were making the ark of the covenant, God commanded them to carve two cherubim facing each other, with their wings touching, over the atonement lid of the ark of the covenant. Here they are spoken of as providing shade for the ark of the covenant. Alternate translation: "glorious cherubim covered the atonement lid with their wings"
cherubim
Here "cherubim" means figures of two cherubim.
which we cannot
Even though the author uses the plural pronoun "we," he is most likely referring only to himself. Alternate translation: "which I cannot"
Hebrews 9:6
After these things were prepared
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "After the priests prepared these things"
Hebrews 9:7
not without blood that he offered
Another possible meaning is "not without blood, which he offered."
not without blood
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "always with blood"
blood
This is the blood of the bull and goat that the high priest had to sacrifice on the Day of Atonement.
Hebrews 9:8
the most holy place
Possible meanings are 1) the inner room of the tabernacle on earth or 2) God's presence in heaven.
the first tabernacle was still standing
Possible meanings are 1) "the outer room of the tabernacle was still standing" or 2) "the earthly tabernacle and the sacrificial system still existed."
Hebrews 9:9
This was an illustration
"This was a picture" or "This was a symbol"
for the present time
"for now"
that are now being offered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that the priests now offer"
are not able to perfect the worshiper's conscience
The writer speaks of a person's conscience as if it were an object that could be made better and better until it was without fault. A person's conscience is his knowledge of right and wrong. It is also his awareness of whether or not he has done wrong. If he knows he has done wrong, we say that he feels guilty. Alternate translation: "are not able to make the worshiper free from guilt"
the worshiper's conscience
The writer appears to refer to only one worshiper, but he means all those who go to worship God at the tabernacle.
Hebrews 9:10
until the time of the new order
"until God creates the new order"
new order
"new covenant"
Hebrews 9:11
Connecting Statement:
Having described the service of the tabernacle under God's law, the writer makes clear that Christ's service under the new covenant is better because it is sealed with his blood. It is better also because Christ has entered the true "tabernacle," that is, God's own presence in heaven, instead of entering, as other high priests, into the earthly tabernacle, which was only an imperfect copy.
good things
This does not refer to material things. It means the good things that God promised in his new covenant.
the greater and more perfect tabernacle
This refers to the heavenly tent or tabernacle, which is more important and more perfect than the earthly tabernacle.
that was not made by human hands
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that humans hands did not make"
human hands
Here "hands" refers to the whole person. Alternate

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translation: "humans"

Hebrews 9:12

most holy place

This means the most holy place in the heavenly tabernacle. It is most holy because God himself lives there.

Hebrews 9:13

sprinkling of a heifer's ashes on those who have been defiled

The priest would drop small amounts of the ashes on the people who were defiled.

for the cleansing of their flesh

Here "flesh" refers to the entire body. Alternate translation: "for the cleansing of their bodies"

Hebrews 9:14

how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The author uses this question to emphasize that Christ's sacrifice was the most powerful. Alternate translation: "then certainly Christ's blood will cleanse our conscience even more from dead works to serve the living God! Because, through the eternal Spirit, he offered himself unblemished to God."

the blood of Christ

The "blood" of Christ stands for his death.

unblemished

A small, unusual spot or defect on a person's body is a metaphor for a small sin or moral fault. Alternate translation: "without even the smallest fault"

cleanse our conscience

Here "conscience" refers to a person's feeling of guilt. Believers no longer have to feel guilty for the sins they have committed because Jesus sacrificed himself and has forgiven them.

cleanse

Here "cleanse" stands for the action of relieving our consciences from guilt for the sins we have committed.

dead works

Sinful deeds are spoken of as if they belonged to the world of the dead.

Hebrews 9:15

For this reason

"As a result" or "Because of this"

he is the mediator of a new covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist. See how you translated a similar phrase in Hebrews 8:6.

first covenant

See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7.

to redeem those under the first covenant from their transgressions

"to take away the transgressions of those who were under the first covenant." The abstract noun "transgressions" can be translated using the verb "transgress." Possible meanings are 1) here "their transgressions" is a metonym for the guilt of their transgressions. Alternate translation: "to take away the guilt of those who were under the first covenant." Or 2) here "their transgressions" is a metonym for the punishment for their transgressions. Alternate translation: "to take away the punishment that those who were under the first covenant deserved because they had transgressed"

those who are called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God has called" or "those whom God has chosen to be his children"

inheritance

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

Hebrews 9:16

will

a legal document in which a person states who should receive his possessions when he himself dies

the death of the person who made it must be proven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone must prove that the person who made the will has died"

Hebrews 9:18

So not even the first covenant was established without blood

This can be stated in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "So God established even the first covenant with blood"

first covenant

See how you translated this in Hebrews 8:7.

blood

The death of animals sacrificed to God is spoken of as if it were nothing but blood. Alternate translation: "the death of animals sacrificed to God"

Hebrews 9:19

took the blood ... with water ... and sprinkled ... the scroll ... and all the people

The priest dipped the hyssop in the blood and the water and then shook the hyssop so drops of blood and water would fall on the scroll and on the people. Sprinkling was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. Here the scroll and the people's acceptability to God are renewed.

hyssop

a woody shrub with flowers in summer, used in ceremonial sprinkling

Hebrews 9:20

the blood of the covenant

Here "blood" refers to the death of the animals sacrificed to carry out the covenant's requirements. Alternate translation: "the blood that brings into effect the covenant"

Hebrews 9:21

he sprinkled

"Moses sprinkled"

sprinkled

Sprinkling was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 9:19]

all the containers used in the ministry

A container is an object that can hold things. Here it may refer to any kind of utensil or tool. Alternate translation: "all the utensils used in the ministry"

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used in the ministry
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests used in their work"
blood
Here the animal "blood" represents the animal's death.
Hebrews 9:22
almost everything is cleansed with blood
Making something acceptable to God is spoken of as if it were cleansing that thing. This idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests use blood to cleanse almost everything"
Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness
Here "shedding of blood" refers to something dying as a sacrifice to God. This double negative can mean that all forgiveness comes through the shedding of blood. Alternate translation: "Forgiveness only comes when something dies as a sacrifice" or "God only forgives when something dies as a sacrifice"
forgiveness
You can state explicitly the implied meaning. Alternate translation: "forgiveness of the sins of the people"
Hebrews 9:23
the copies of the things in heaven should be cleansed with these animal sacrifices
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the priests should use these animal sacrifices to cleanse what are copies of things that are in heaven"
the heavenly things themselves had to be cleansed with much better sacrifices
That is, better than the sacrifices used to cleanse the earthly copies. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as for the heavenly things themselves, God had to cleanse them with much better sacrifices"
Hebrews 9:24
the most holy place made with hands, which
Here "with hands" means "by humans." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the most holy place, which humans made, and which"
of the true one
"of the true most holy place"
Hebrews 9:25
Connecting Statement:
The writer emphasizes that Christ (now in heaven interceding for us) had to die only once for sins and that he will return to earth a second time.
He did not go there
"He did not enter heaven"
year by year
"every year" or "each year"
with the blood of another
This means with the blood of an animal victim, not with his own blood.
Hebrews 9:26
If that had been the case
"If he had had to offer himself often"
since the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"
to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself
Doing away with sin represents having God forgive it. Alternate translation: "to cause God to forgive sins by sacrificing himself" or "to sacrifice himself so that God can forgive sin"
Hebrews 9:28
Christ was offered once
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ offered himself once"
to take away the sins
The act of making us innocent rather than guilty for our sins is spoken of as if our sins were physical objects that Christ could carry away from us. Alternate translation: "so that God would forgive the sins"
the sins
Here "sins" mean the guilt that people have before God because of the sins they committed.

10 [1]For the law is only a shadow of the good things to come, not the real forms of those things themselves. Those who approach God can never be made perfect by the same sacrifices that the priests continually bring year after year.
[2]Otherwise, would the sacrifices not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed one time and would no longer have any consciousness of sin.[3]But with those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year.
[4]For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
[5]When Christ came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you did not desire,
but a body you have prepared for me;
[6] with burnt offerings and sin offerings
you did not take pleasure.

[7] Then I said, 'See, here I am—as it is written about me in the scroll—
to do your will, God.'"

[8]First he said, "It was neither sacrifices, nor offerings, nor whole burnt offerings, nor sin offerings that you desired. Nor did you take pleasure in them." These are sacrifices that are offered according to the law.[9]Then he said, "See, here I am to do your will." He takes away the first practice in order to establish the second practice.[10]By that will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

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[11]Day after day every priest stands and ministers, offering the same sacrifices again and again—sacrifices that can never take away sins.[12]But when Christ offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.[13]He is waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.[14]For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.
[15]The Holy Spirit also testifies to us. First he says,

[16] "This is the covenant that I will make with them
after those days, says the Lord.
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on their minds."

[17]Then he adds,
"Their sins and lawlessness
I will remember no longer."

[18]Now where there is forgiveness for these, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

[19]Therefore, brothers, we have confidence to enter into the most holy place by the blood of Jesus.[20]That is the new and living way that he has established for us through the curtain, that is, by means of his flesh.[21]Because we have a great priest over the house of God,[22]let us approach with true hearts in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.
[23]Let us also hold firmly to the hope we confess, for he who promised is faithful.[24]Let us think carefully about how to motivate one another to love and good deeds.[25]Let us not abandon meeting together, as some have done. Instead, encourage one another, and all the more as you see the day coming closer.

[26]For if we deliberately go on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, a sacrifice for sins no longer remains.[27]Instead, there is only a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies.
[28]Anyone who has rejected the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses.[29]How much worse punishment do you think one deserves who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, who has regarded the blood of the covenant as unholy—the blood by which he was sanctified—and has insulted the Spirit of grace?
[30]For we know the one who said, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will pay back." And again, "The Lord will judge his people."[31]It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

[32]But remember the former days, after you were enlightened, how you endured a great struggle in suffering.[33]Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution, and other times you shared with those who were so treated.[34]For you had compassion on those who were prisoners, and you accepted with joy the seizure of your possessions. You knew that you yourselves had a better and everlasting possession.[1]
[35]So do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.[36]For you need perseverance so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

[37] "For in a very little while,
the one who is coming will indeed come and not delay.

[38] My righteous one will live by faith.
If he shrinks back, my soul will not be pleased with him."

[39]But we are not any of those who turn back to destruction, but we are among those who have faith and preserve their souls.

[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, For you had compassion on me in my chains.

Hebrews 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, the writer finishes describing how Jesus's sacrifice was better than the sacrifices offered in the Temple.

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(See: lawofmoses)
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 10:5-7, 15-17, 37-38, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

God's judgment and reward
Holy living is important for Christians. God will hold people accountable for how they lived their Christian lives. Even though there will not be eternal condemnation for Christians, ungodly actions do and will have consequences. In addition, faithful living will be rewarded. (See: holy, godly and faithful and reward)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins"
The sacrifices themselves had no redeeming power. They were effective because they were a display of faith, which was credited to the person offering the sacrifice. It is ultimately the sacrifice of Jesus that "takes away sins." (See: redeem and faith)
"The covenant that I will make"
It is unclear whether this prophecy was being fulfilled as the author was writing or whether it was to occur later. The translator should try to avoid making a claim about the time this covenant begins. (See: prophet and covenant)

Links:

Hebrews 10:1 Notes

Hebrews 10:1
Connecting Statement:
The writer shows the weakness of the law and its sacrifices, why God gave the law, and the perfection of the new priesthood and Christ's sacrifice.
the law is only a shadow of the good things to come
This speaks about the law as if it were a shadow. The author means the law is not the good things that God had promised. It only hints at the good things that God is going to do.
not the real forms of those things themselves
"not the real things themselves"
year after year
"every year"
Hebrews 10:2
would the sacrifices not have ceased to be offered?
The author uses a question to state that the sacrifices were limited in their power. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they would have ceased offering those sacrifices."
ceased to be
"stopped being"
the worshipers would have been cleansed one time and would
Here being cleansed represents no longer being guilty of sin. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices would have taken away the worshipers' sin once, and they would" or "God would have made the worshipers no longer guilty of sin once, and they would"
would no longer have any consciousness of sin
"would no longer think that they are guilty of sin" or "would know that they are no longer guilty of sin"
Hebrews 10:4
For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins
Sins are spoken of as if they were objects that animal blood could sweep away as it flowed. Alternate translation: "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to cause God to forgive sins"
the blood of bulls and goats
Here "blood" refers to these animals dying as sacrifices to God.
Hebrews 10:5
General Information:
Christ's words when he was on earth were foretold in this quotation from a psalm of David.
you did not desire
Here "you" is singular and refers to God.
a body you have prepared
"you have made a body ready"
Hebrews 10:7
Then I said
Here "I" refers to Christ.
Hebrews 10:8
General Information:
Though changing the wording slightly, the author repeats these quotations from a psalm of David for emphasis.
sacrifices ... offerings
See how you translated these words in Hebrews 10:5.
whole burnt offerings ... sin offerings
See how you translated similar words in Hebrews 10:6.
that are offered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that priests offer"
Hebrews 10:9
See
"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
He takes away the first practice in order to establish the second practice
The abstract noun "practice" here refers to a way of atoning for sins. Stopping doing it is spoken of as if it were an object that could be taken away. Starting the second way of atoning for sins is spoken of as establishing that practice. Alternate translation: "He stops people atoning for sins the first way in order to atone for sins the second way"
first practice ... the second practice
The words "first" and "second" are ordinal numbers. Alternate translation: "old practice ... the new practice"

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Hebrews 10:10

we have been sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has sanctified us" or "God has dedicated us to himself"

through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ

The abstract noun "offering" can be expressed with the verb "offer" or "sacrifice." Alternate translation: "because Jesus Christ offered his body as a sacrifice" or "because Jesus Christ sacrificed his body"

Hebrews 10:11

Day after day

"Day by day" or "Every day"

can never take away sins

This speaks of "sins" as if they are an object that a person can take away. Alternate translation: "can never cause God to forgive sins"

Hebrews 10:12

he sat down at the right hand of God

To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]

Hebrews 10:13

until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet

Christ's enemies being humiliated is spoken of as if they were made a place for him to rest his feet. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until God humiliates Christ's enemies and they become like a footstool for his feet"

Hebrews 10:14

those who are being sanctified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God is sanctifying" or "those whom God has dedicated to himself"

Hebrews 10:16

General Information:

This is a quotation from the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

with them

"with my people"

after those days

"when the time of the first covenant with my people has finished"

I will put my laws in their hearts

Here "hearts" is a metonym for a person's inner being. The phrase "put my laws in their hearts" is a metaphor for enabling people to know his laws. Alternate translation: "I will enable them to know my laws"

I will write them on their minds

The phrase "write them on their minds" is a metaphor for causing people to remember his laws. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to remember my laws"

Hebrews 10:17

General Information:

This continues the quotation from the prophet Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

Their sins and lawlessness I will remember no longer."

"I will no longer remember their sins and lawlessness.'" or "I will no longer think about their sins and lawlessness.'"

This is the second part of the Holy Spirit's testimony

Their sins and lawlessness

The words "sins" and "lawlessness" mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize how bad the sin is. Alternate translation: "The things they did that were forbidden and how they broke the law"

Hebrews 10:18

Now

This is used to draw attention to the important point that follows. It does not mean "at this moment."

where there is forgiveness for these

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "forgiveness" is expressed as the verb "forgive." Alternate translation: "when God has forgiven these things"

there is no longer any sacrifice for sin

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "sacrifice" is expressed as the verb "make offerings." Alternate translation: "people no longer need to make offerings for sin"

Hebrews 10:19

Connecting Statement:

Having made it clear that there is only one sacrifice for sin, the writer continues with the picture of the most holy place in the temple, where only the high priest could enter each year with the blood of the sacrifice for sins. He reminds the believers that they now worship God in his presence as if they were standing in the most holy place.

brothers

Here this means all believers in Christ, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers"

the most holy place

This means the presence of God, not the most holy place in the old tabernacle.

by the blood of Jesus

Here "blood of Jesus" refers to the death of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:20

living way

Possible meanings are 1) this new way to God that Jesus has provided results in believers living forever or 2) Jesus is alive, and he is the way believers enter into the presence of God.

through the curtain

The curtain in the earthly temple represents the separation between people and God's true presence.

by means of his flesh

Here "flesh" stands for the body of Jesus, and his body stands for his sacrificial death. Alternate translation: "by means of his death"

Hebrews 10:21

we have a great priest over the house of God

This must be translated in such a way as to make it clear that Jesus is this "great priest."

over the house

"in charge of the house"

the house of God

This speaks about God's people as if they were a literal house. Alternate translation: "all the people of God"

Hebrews 10:22

let us approach

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Here "approach" stands for worshiping God, as a priest would go up to God's altar to sacrifice animals to him.
with true hearts
"with faithful hearts" or "with honest hearts." Here "hearts" stands for the genuine will and motivation of the believers. Alternate translation: "with sincerity" or "sincerely"
in the full assurance of faith
"and with a confident faith" or "and trusting completely in Jesus"
having our hearts sprinkled clean
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if had he made our hearts clean with his blood"
hearts sprinkled clean
Here "hearts" is a metonym for the conscience, the awareness of right and wrong. Being made clean is a metaphor for being forgiven and being given the status of righteousness.
sprinkled
Sprinkling blood of a sacrifice was a symbolic action done by the priests by which they applied the benefits of the covenant to people and to objects. See how you translated this in [Hebrews 9:19]
having our bodies washed with pure water
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if he had washed our bodies in pure water"
our bodies washed with pure water
Possible meanings are 1) "bodies" is a metonym that represents peoples' entire beings, and "washed with pure water" is a metaphor representing Christ making a person spiritually pure or 2) this is literal and it refers to Christian baptism.
Hebrews 10:23
Let us also hold firmly to the hope we confess
Here "hold firmly" is a metaphor that refers to a person determining to do something and refusing to stop. Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." The abstract noun "hope" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Let us be determined to continue confessing the things that we confidently expect from God"
Hebrews 10:25
Let us not abandon meeting together
You can make explicit that the people met to worship. Alternate translation: "Let us not stop coming together to worship"
as you see the day coming closer
A future time is spoken of as if it were an object coming closer to the speaker. Here "the day" refers to when Jesus will return. Alternate translation: "as you know that Christ will return soon"
Hebrews 10:26
Connecting Statement:
The writer now gives his fourth warning.
we deliberately go on sinning
"we know we are sinning but we do it again and again"
after we have received the knowledge of the truth
Knowledge of the truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be given by one person to another. Alternate translation: "after we have learned the truth"
the truth
The truth about God.
a sacrifice for sins no longer remains
No one is able to give a new sacrifice because Christ's sacrifice is the only one that works. Alternate translation: "no one can offer a sacrifice for which God will forgive our sins"
a sacrifice for sins
Here "sacrifice for sins" stands for "an effective way to sacrifice animals to take away sins"
Hebrews 10:27
of judgment
Of God's judgment, that is, that God will judge.
a fury of fire that will consume God's enemies
God's fury is spoken of as if it were fire that would burn up his enemies.
Hebrews 10:28
of two or three witnesses
It is implied that this means "of at least two or three witness."
Hebrews 10:29
How much worse punishment do you think one deserves ... grace?
The author is emphasizing the greatness of the punishment for those who reject Christ. Alternate translation: "This was severe punishment. But the punishment will be even greater for anyone ... grace!"
who has trampled underfoot the Son of God
Someone who has disregarded Christ and scorned him is spoken of as if that person had walked on him. Alternate translation: "who has rejected the Son of God"
the Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
who has regarded the blood of the covenant as unholy
This shows how the person has trampled the Son of God. Alternate translation: "by regarding the blood of the covenant as unholy"
has regarded
or "has treated"
the blood of the covenant
Here "blood" stands for Christ's death, by which God established the new covenant.
the blood by which he was sanctified
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the blood by which God sanctified him"
the Spirit of grace
"the Spirit of God, who provides grace"
Hebrews 10:30
General Information:
The word "we" here refers to the writer and all believers. These two quotations come from the law that Moses gave in the Old Testament.
Vengeance belongs to me
Vengeance is spoken of as if it were an object that belongs to God, who has the right to do as he wishes with what he owns. God has the right to take vengeance on his enemies.
I will pay back
God taking vengeance is spoken of as if he were paying back the harmful things that someone has done to others.
Hebrews 10:31
to fall into the hands

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Receiving God's full punishment is spoken of as if the person falls into God's hands. Here "hands" refers to God's power to judge. Alternate translation: "to receive the full punishment"

Hebrews 10:32

the former days

"the time in the past"

after you were enlightened

Learning the truth is spoken of as if God shined a light on the person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "after you learned the truth about Christ"

how you endured a great struggle in suffering

"how much suffering you had to endure"

Hebrews 10:33

Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People ridiculed you by insulting you and persecuting you in public"

you shared with those

"you joined those"

Hebrews 10:34

a better and everlasting possession

God's eternal blessings are spoken of as a "possession."

Hebrews 10:35

do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward

A person no longer having confidence is spoken of as if the person were to throw confidence away, like a person would discard something worthless. The abstract noun "confidence" can be translated with the adjective "confident" or the adverb "confidently." Alternate translation: "do not stop being confident, because you will receive a great reward for being confident" or "do not stop confidently trusting in God, who will reward you greatly"

Hebrews 10:37

General Information:

This is a quotation from the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament.

For in a very little while

You can make this explicit. Alternate translation: "As God said in the scriptures, 'For in a very little while"

in a very little while

"very soon"

Hebrews 10:38

General Information:

Here the author quotes from the prophet Habakkuk. This directly follows the quotation from the prophet Isaiah in the previous verse.

My righteous one ... If he shrinks ... with him

These refer to any of God's people in general. Alternate translation: "My faithful people ... If any one of them shrinks ... with that person" or "My faithful people ... If they shrink ... with them"

My righteous ... my soul will

Here "My" and "my soul" refer to God.

my soul

The soul is a metonym for the whole being.

shrinks back

stops doing the good thing he is doing

Hebrews 10:39

who turn back to destruction

A person who loses courage and faith are spoken of as if he were stepping back in fear from something. And "destruction" is spoken of as if it were a destination. Alternate translation: "who stop trusting God, whom God will destroy"

who have faith and preserve their souls

Living eternally with God is spoken of as if it were preserving one's soul. Here "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "who have faith, which will result in our living with God forever"

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11 [1]Now faith is being sure of the things hoped for and certain of things that are not seen.[2]For because of this the ancestors were approved for their faith.[3]By faith we understand that the universe was created by God's command, so that what is visible was not made out of things that were visible.

[4]It was by faith that Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he was attested to be righteous, and God spoke well of him because of his offerings, and by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

[5]It was by faith that Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death. "He was not found, because God took him away." For before he was taken up, it was testified that he had pleased God.[6]Now without faith it is impossible to please him. For it is necessary that anyone coming to God must believe that he exists and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him.

[7]It was by faith that Noah, having been given a divine message about things not yet seen, with godly reverence built an ark to save his household. By doing this, he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith.

[8]It was by faith that Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and went out to the place that he was to receive as an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he was going.[9]It was by faith that he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise.[10]For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.
[11]It was by faith, even though Sarah herself was barren, that she received ability to conceive. This happened even though she was too old, since she considered as faithful the one who had given the promise.[12]Therefore, from this one man—and he was almost dead—were born descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as countless as sand by the seashore.

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[13]It was in faith that all these died without receiving the promises. Rather, they saw and greeted them from far off, and they acknowledged that they were foreigners and exiles on earth.[14]For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.
[15]If they had been thinking of the country from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return.[16]But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, since he has prepared a city for them.

[17]It was by faith that Abraham, when he was tested, offered Isaac. It was his only son whom he offered, he who had received the promises.[18]It was Abraham to whom it had been said, "It is through Isaac that your descendants will be named."[19]Abraham reasoned that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead, and figuratively speaking, it was from them that he received him back.
[20]It was also by faith about things to come that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau.[21]It was by faith that Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons. Jacob worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.[22]It was by faith that Joseph, when his end was near, spoke of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt and instructed them about his bones.

[23]It was by faith that Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents because they saw he was a beautiful child. They were not afraid of the king's command.[24]It was by faith that Moses, after he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.[25]He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a while.[26]He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to his reward.
[27]It was by faith that Moses left Egypt. He did not fear the king's anger, for he endured as if he were seeing the one who is invisible.[28]It was by faith that he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn should not touch the Israelites' firstborn sons.

[29]It was by faith that they passed through the Sea of Reeds as if over dry land. When the Egyptians tried to do this, they were swallowed up.[30]It was by faith that Jericho's walls fell down, after they had been circled around for seven days.[31]It was by faith that Rahab the prostitute did not die with those who were disobedient, because she had received the spies in peace.

[32]What more can I say? For the time will fail me if I give a full account of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and about the prophets.[33]It was through faith that they conquered kingdoms, committed righteousness, and received promises. They stopped the mouths of lions,[34]quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong when they were weak, became mighty in battle, and defeated foreign armies.
[35]Women received back their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting release, so that they might experience a better resurrection.[36]Others experienced mocking and whippings, and even chains and imprisonment.[37]They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins. They were destitute, oppressed, mistreated.[1][38]The world was not worthy of them. They were always wandering about in the deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

[39]Although all these people were approved by God because of their faith, they did not receive the promise.[40]God planned something better for us, so that without us, they would not be made perfect.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were put to the test. They were killed with the sword.

Hebrews 11 General Notes

Structure

The writer begins this chapter by telling what faith is. Then he gives many examples of people who had faith and how they lived.

Important concepts in this chapter

Faith

In both the old and new covenants, God required faith. Some people with faith performed miracles and were very powerful. Other people with faith suffered greatly.

Links:

Hebrews 11:1 Notes

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Hebrews 11:1

Connecting Statement:

The author tells three things about faith in this brief introduction.

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here the author starts to explain the meaning of "faith."

faith is being sure of the things hoped for

Here "hope" refers to having the confident expectation that God will do what he promised to do. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "faith is being sure of the things we hope for" or "when we have faith, we are sure that we will receive from God the things we confidently wait for"

that are not seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that we still have not seen" or "that still have not happened"

Hebrews 11:2

For because of this

"Because they were certain about events that had not happened"

the ancestors were approved for their faith

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God approved of our ancestors because they had faith"

the ancestors

The author is speaking to the Hebrews about Hebrew ancestors. Alternate translation: "our ancestors"

Hebrews 11:3

the universe was created by God's command

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God created the universe by commanding it to exist"

what is visible was not made out of things that were visible

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God did not create what we see out of things that were visible"

Hebrews 11:4

Connecting Statement:

The writer then gives many examples (mostly from Old Testament writings) of people who lived by faith even though they did not receive what God had promised while they lived on the earth.

he was attested to be righteous

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God declared him to be righteous" or "God declared that Abel was righteous"

Abel still speaks

Reading the scriptures and learning about Abel's faith is spoken of as if Abel himself were still speaking. Alternate translation: "we still learn from what Abel did"

Hebrews 11:5

It was by faith that Enoch was taken up so that he did not see death

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "It was by faith that Enoch did not die because God took him"

see death

This speaks of death as if it were an object that people can see. It means to experience death. Alternate translation: "die"

before he was taken up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "before God took him"

it was testified that he had pleased God

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God said that Enoch had pleased him" or 2) "people said that Enoch pleased God."

Hebrews 11:6

Now without faith

Here "Now" does not mean "at this moment," but is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

without faith it is impossible to please him

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "a person can please him only if he has faith"

that anyone coming to God

Wanting to worship God and belong to his people is spoken of as if the person is literally coming to God. Alternate translation: "that anyone who wants to belong to God"

he is a rewarder of those

"he rewards those"

those who seek him

Those who learn about God and make an effort to obey him are spoken of as if they were seeking to find him.

Hebrews 11:7

having been given a divine message

This can be stated in active form and in other terms. Alternate translation: "because God told him"

about things not yet seen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "about things no one had ever seen before" or "about events that had not happened yet"

the world

Here "world" refers to the world's human population. Alternate translation: "the people living in the world at that time"

became an heir of the righteousness

Noah is spoken of as if he were to inherit property and wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: "received from God the righteousness"

that is according to faith

"that God gives to those who have faith in him"

Hebrews 11:8

when he was called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when God called him"

went out to the place

"left his home to go to the place"

that he was to receive as an inheritance

The land that God promised to give Abraham's descendants is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Abraham was to receive. Alternate translation: "that God would give him"

He went out

"He left his home"

Hebrews 11:9

he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner

This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "promise" is expressed as the verb "promised." Alternate translation: "he lived as a foreigner in the land God had promised to him"

fellow heirs

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"heirs together." This speaks about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as if they were heirs that would receive an inheritance from their father.

Hebrews 11:10

the city with foundations

"the city that has foundations." Having foundations indicates that the city is permanent. Alternate translation: "the eternal city"

whose architect and builder is God

"which is designed and built by God" or "which God would design and build"

architect

a person who designs buildings and cities

Hebrews 11:11

General Information:

Many versions interpret this verse as referring to Sarah, and others interpret it as referring to Abraham.

It was by faith

The abstract noun "faith" can be expressed with the verb "believe." Possible meanings are 1) it was by Sarah's faith. Alternate translation: "It was because Sarah believed God ... she" or 2) it was by Abraham's faith. Alternate translation: "It was because Abraham believed God ... he"

Sarah herself was barren

Sarah was not able to have children.

she received ability to conceive

Possible meanings are 1) Sarah received the ability to conceive a child. Alternate translation "she became able to bear a child" or 2) Abraham received the ability to father a child. Alternate translation: "he became able to have a child"

even though she was too old

Possible meanings are that 1) Sarah was too old or 2) Abraham was too old.

since she considered as faithful the one who had given the promise

"because she believed God, who had given the promise, to be faithful." Possible meanings are 1) Sarah considered God to be faithful or 2) Abraham considered God to be faithful.

Hebrews 11:12

descendants as many as the stars in the sky and as countless as sand by the seashore

This simile means that Abraham had very many descendants.

as countless as sand by the seashore

This means that just as there are so many grains of sand on the seashore that no one can count them all, Abraham had so many descendants that no one can count them all.

Hebrews 11:13

without receiving the promises

This speaks of promises as if they are objects that a person receives. Alternate translation: "without receiving what God had promised them"

they saw and greeted them from far off

Future promised events are spoken of as if they were travelers arriving from far away. Seeing and greeting the promised events is a metaphor for believing and being glad that the events will happen. Alternate translation: "they believed and were glad about what God would do in the future"

they were foreigners and exiles on earth

Here "foreigners" and "exiles" mean basically the same thing. This emphasizes that this earth was not their true home. They were waiting for their true home that God would make for them.

Hebrews 11:14

a homeland

"a country for them to belong to"

Hebrews 11:16

heavenly one

"heavenly country" or "country in heaven"

God is not ashamed to be called their God

This can be expressed in active and positive form. Alternate translation: "God is happy to have them call him their God" or "God is proud to have them say that he is their God"

Hebrews 11:17

when he was tested

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when God tested him"

Hebrews 11:18

to whom it had been said

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "to whom God said"

that your descendants will be named

Here "named" means assigned or designated. This sentence can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that I will designate your descendants"

Hebrews 11:19

God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead

"God was able to cause Isaac to live again"

to raise up ... the dead

In this verse, "to raise up" is to make alive again. The words "the dead" speak of all dead people together in the underworld.

figuratively speaking

"in a manner of speaking." This means that what the author says next is not to be understood literally. God did not bring Isaac back from death literally. But because Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac when God stopped him, it was as if God brought him back from the dead.

it was from them

"it was from the dead"

he received him back

"Abraham received Isaac back"

Hebrews 11:21

Jacob worshiped

"Jacob worshiped God"

Hebrews 11:22

when his end was near

Here "his end" is a polite way of referring to death. Alternate translation: "when he was about to die"

spoke of the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt

"spoke of when the children of Israel would leave Egypt"

the children of Israel

"the Israelites" or "the descendants of Israel"

instructed them about his bones

Joseph died while in Egypt. He wanted his people to take his bones with them when they left Egypt so they could bury his bones in the land that God promised them.

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Hebrews 11:23
Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses's parents hid him for three months after he was born"
Hebrews 11:24
had grown up
"had become an adult"
refused to be called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "refused to allow people to call him"
Hebrews 11:26
disgrace for the sake of Christ
This can be reworded so that the abstract noun "disgrace" is expressed as the verb "disrespect." Alternate translation: "being disrespected for the sake of Christ" or "the experience of people disrespecting him because he did what Christ would want"
he was looking ahead to his reward
Thinking about something that will happen in the future is spoken of as looking ahead to it. Alternate translation: "he was thinking about the reward he would receive"
Hebrews 11:27
he endured as if he were seeing the one who is invisible
Moses is spoken of as if he saw God, who is invisible.
the one who is invisible
"the one no one can see"
Hebrews 11:28
he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood
This was the first Passover. Moses kept it by obeying God's commands concerning the Passover and by commanding the people to obey them every year. Alternate translation: "he commanded the people to obey God's commands concerning the Passover and to sprinkle blood on their doors" or "he established the Passover and the sprinkling of blood"
the sprinkling of the blood
This refers to God's command to the Israelites to kill a lamb and spread its blood on the doorposts of every house where Israelites lived. This would prevent the destroyer from harming their firstborn sons. This was one of the Passover commands.
should not touch
Here "touch" refers to harming or to killing someone. Alternate translation: "would not harm" or "would not kill"
Hebrews 11:29
they passed through the Sea of Reeds
"the Israelites passed through the Sea of Reeds"
they were swallowed up
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the water swallowed up the Egyptians"
they were swallowed up
The water is spoken of as if it were an animal. Alternate translation: "the Egyptians drowned in the water"
Hebrews 11:30
they had been circled around for seven days
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Israelites had marched around the walls for seven days"
seven days
"7 days"
Hebrews 11:31
had received the spies in peace
"had peacefully received the spies"
Hebrews 11:32
Connecting Statement:
The writer continues to speak of what God did for the ancestors of the people of Israel.
What more can I say?
The author uses a question to emphasize that there are many examples that he could have quoted. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "And there are many more examples."
the time will fail me
"I will not have enough time"
Barak
This is the name of a man.
Hebrews 11:33
It was through faith that they
Here "they" does not mean that each person listed in 11:32 did all the things the author is about to mention. The author means in general these are the kinds of things that those with faith were able to do. Alternate translation: "It was through faith that men like these"
they conquered kingdoms
Here "kingdoms" refers to the people who lived there. Alternate translation: "they defeated the people of foreign kingdoms"
committed righteousness
Possible meanings are 1) "did righteous deeds" or "did what was right" or 2) "judged others fairly" or "administered justice."
They stopped the mouths of lions
These words begin a list of some of the ways God saved believers from death. Alternate translation: "They kept lions from eating them"
Hebrews 11:34
quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword
These are some of the ways God saved believers from death. Alternate translation: "they kept fire from burning them, they kept their enemies from killing them"
were made strong when they were weak
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they received strength from God when they were weak"
became mighty in battle, and defeated
"and they became mighty in battle and defeated"
Hebrews 11:35
Women received back their dead by resurrection
This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "resurrection." The word "dead" is a nominal adjective. It can be stated as a verb. Alternate translation: "Women received back alive those who had died"
Others were tortured, not accepting release
It is implied that their enemies would have released them from prison under certain conditions. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Others accepted torture rather than release from prison" or "Others allowed their enemies to torture them rather than doing what their enemies required of them in order to release them"

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Others were tortured
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Others allowed those who imprisoned them to torture them" or "Others endured terrible pain"
a better resurrection
Possible meanings are 1) these people will experience a better life in heaven than what they experienced in this world or 2) these people will have a better resurrection than those who did not have faith. Those with faith will live forever with God. Those without faith will live forever separated from God.
Hebrews 11:36
Others experienced mocking and whippings, and even chains and imprisonment
This can be reworded so that the abstract nouns are expressed as verbs. Alternate translation: "People afflicted others by mocking and whipping them and even putting them in chains and imprisoning them"
Hebrews 11:37
They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were killed with the sword
These can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People threw stones at others. People sawed others in two. People killed others with the sword"
went about
"went from place to place" or "lived all the time"
in sheepskins and goatskins
"wearing only the skins of sheep and goats"
They were destitute
"They had nothing" or "They were very poor"
Hebrews 11:38
The world was not worthy
Here "world" refers to the people. Alternate translation: "The people of this world were not worthy"
They were always wandering about
This was because they had no place to live.
in caves and holes in the ground
"some lived in caves or in holes in the ground"
Hebrews 11:39
Although all these people were approved by God because of their faith, they did not receive the promise
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God honored all these because of their faith, but they did not themselves receive what God had promised"
the promise
This expression stands for "what God had promised them."
Hebrews 11:40
so that without us, they would not be made perfect
This can be stated in positive and active form. Alternate translation: "in order that God would perfect us and them together"

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12 [1]Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin. Let us run with perseverance the race that is placed before us.[2]Let us pay attention to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of the faith. For the joy that was placed before him, he endured the cross, despised its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.[3]So think about him, the one who has endured such opposition from sinners against himself, so that you do not become weary and lose heart.

[4]You have not yet resisted or struggled against sin to the point of blood;[5]and you have forgotten the encouragement that instructs you as sons:

"My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline,
nor grow weary when you are corrected by him.
[6] For the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he punishes every son he receives."

[7]Endure suffering as discipline. God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?[8]But if you are without discipline, which all people share in, then you are illegitimate and not his sons.
[9]Furthermore, we had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live![10]Our fathers disciplined us for a short time as they thought best. But God disciplines us for our benefit, so that we can share in his holiness.[11]No discipline at the time seems to give joy, but to give sorrow. But later it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness for those who have been trained by it.
[12]So strengthen your hands that hang down and your weak knees.[13]Make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame will not be sprained but rather be healed.

[14]Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord.[15]Be careful so that no one lacks God's grace, and that no root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble, so that many do not become defiled by it,[16]and that there is no one who is sexually immoral or profane, such as Esau, who for one meal sold his own birthright.[17]For you know that afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, because he found no opportunity for repentance, even though he sought it with tears.

[18]For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched, a mountain of burning fire, darkness, gloom, and storm.[19]You have not come to a trumpet blast, nor to a voice that speaks words whose hearers begged that not another word be

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spoken to them.[20]For they could not endure what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned."[1] [21]So fearful was this sight that Moses said, "I am terrified and am trembling."
[22]Rather, you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels in joyful assembly.[23]You have come to the congregation of the firstborn, who have been registered in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous ones who have been made perfect.[24]And you have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood.
[25]See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we turn away from the one who is warning from heaven.[26]At one time, his voice shook the earth. But now he has promised and said, "One more time I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens."
[27]These words, "One more time," mean the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, of the things that have been created, so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain.[28]Therefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful and in this manner worship God with reverence and awe.[29]For our God is a consuming fire.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned or shot with an arrow.

Hebrews 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

After telling of the value of discipline, the author begins a series of exhortations. (See; exhort)
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 12:5-6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Discipline
God wants his people to do what is right. When they do what is wrong, he needs to correct or punish them. He does this just as earthly fathers correct and punish children whom they love. (See: discipline)

Links:

Hebrews 12:1 Notes

Hebrews 12:1
General Information:
The words "we" and "us" refer to the author and his readers.
Connecting Statement:
Because of this great number of Old Testament believers, the author talks of the life of faith that believers should live.
we are surrounded by such a large cloud of witnesses
The writer speaks about the Old Testament believers as if they were a cloud that surrounds the present-day believers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "such a large cloud of witnesses surrounds us" or "there are so many examples of faithful people about whom we learn in the scriptures"
witnesses
Here "witnesses" refers to the Old Testament believers in chapter 11 who lived before the race of faith that believers now run.
let us lay aside every weight and easily entangling sin
Here "weight" and "easily entangling sin" are spoken of as if a person could take them off himself and put them down.
every weight
Attitudes or habits that keep believers from trusting and obeying God are spoken of as if they were loads that would make it difficult for a person to run while carrying.
easily entangling sin
Sin is spoken of as if it were a net or something else that can trip people up and make them fall. Alternate translation: "sin that makes obeying God difficult"
Let us run with perseverance the race that is placed before us
Following Jesus is spoken of as if it were running a race. Alternate translation: "Let us continue obeying what God has commanded us, just like a runner keeps going until the race is over"
Hebrews 12:2
the founder and perfecter of the faith
Jesus gives us faith and makes our faith perfect by causing us to reach our goal. Alternate translation: "creator and finisher of our faith" or "the one who enables us to have faith from beginning to end"
For the joy that was placed before him
The joy that Jesus would experience is spoken of as if God the Father had placed it before him as a goal to reach.
despised its shame
This means he was not concerned about the shame of dying on a cross.
sat down at the right hand of the throne of God
To sit at the "right hand of God" is a symbolic action of receiving great honor and authority from God. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Hebrews 1:3]
Hebrews 12:3
General Information:
The word "your" is plural and here refers to the readers.
become weary and lose heart
Here "heart" represents a person's thoughts and emotions.

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Alternate translation: "become tired and discouraged"
Hebrews 12:4
Connecting Statement:
The author of Hebrews has been comparing the Christian life to a race.
You have not yet resisted or struggled against sin
Here "sin" is spoken of as if it were a person whom someone fights in a battle. Alternate translation: "You have not yet had to endure attacks of sinners"
to the point of blood
Resisting opposition so much that one dies for it is spoken of as if one reached a certain place where he would die.
of blood
Here "blood" refers to death. Alternate translation: "of death"
Hebrews 12:5
the encouragement that instructs you
Old Testament scripture is spoken of as if it were a person who could encourage others. Alternate translation: "what God has instructed you in the scriptures to encourage you"
as sons ... My son
The word translated "sons" and "son" is specifically the word for a male child. In that culture the family line continued through the sons, not normally through the daughters. However, as stated by the UDB and some English versions, the author is directing his words to both males and females.
My son ... corrected by him
Here the author is quoting from the book of Proverbs in the Old Testament, which was the words of Solomon to his male children.
do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline, nor grow weary
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "take it very seriously when the Lord disciplines you, and do not grow weary"
nor grow weary
"and do not become discouraged"
you are corrected by him
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he corrects you"
Hebrews 12:6
every son he receives
The word translated "son" is specifically the word for a male child. In that culture the family line continued through the sons, not normally through the daughters.
Hebrews 12:7
Endure suffering as discipline
"Understand that during suffering God teaches us discipline"
God deals with you as with sons
The readers are God's sons, and so God deals with them the way a father properly deals with sons.
sons ... son
All occurrences of these words may be stated to include males and females. Alternate translation: "children ... child"
what son is there whom his father does not discipline?
The author makes the point throught this question that every good father disciplines his children. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "every father disciplines his children!"
Hebrews 12:8
But if you are without discipline, which all people share in
You can restate the abstract noun "discipline" as the verb "disciplining." Alternate translation: "So if you have not experienced God disciplining you like he disciplines all his children"
then you are illegitimate and not his sons
Those whom God does not discipline are spoken of as if they are sons born to a man and a woman who are not married each other.
Hebrews 12:9
How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!
The author uses an exclamation to emphasize that we should obey God the Father. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "Therefore even more so, we should obey the Father of spirits and live."
the Father of spirits
This idiom contrasts with "fathers in the flesh." Alternate translation: "our spiritual Father" or "our Father in heaven"
and live
"so that we will live"
Hebrews 12:10
so that we can share in his holiness
This metaphor speaks of "holiness" as if it were an object that can be shared among people. Alternate translation: "so that we may become holy, as God is holy"
Hebrews 12:11
No discipline at the time seems to give joy, but to give sorrow
"At the time, it seems that no discipline brings joy; rather, discipline always brings sorrow"
it produces the peaceful fruit of righteousness
"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "it produces the peaceful result of righteousness" or "it produces righteousness, which results in peace"
who have been trained by it
"who have been trained by discipline." The discipline or correction done by the Lord is spoken of as if it were the Lord himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has trained by disciplining them"
Hebrews 12:12
strengthen your hands that hang down and your weak knees.
Possibly this continues the metaphor about the race in [Hebrews 12:1]
Hebrews 12:13
Make straight paths for your feet
Possibly this continues the metaphor about the race in [Hebrews 12:1]
straight paths
Living so as to honor and please God is spoken of as if it were a straight path to follow.
what is lame will not be sprained
In this metaphor of running a race, "lame" represents another person in the race who is hurt and wants to quit. This, in turn, represent the Christians themselves. Alternate translation: "whoever is weak and wants to quit will not sprain his ankle"
will not be sprained

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Someone who stops obeying God is spoken of as if he injured his foot or ankle on a path. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "will not sprain his ankle"

rather be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "instead become strong" or "instead God will heal him"

Hebrews 12:14

Pursue peace with everyone

Here the abstract noun "peace" is spoken of as if it were something that a person must chase after and can be translated with an adverb. Alternate translation: "Try to live peacefully with everyone"

and holiness, for without it no one will see the Lord

This can be expressed as a positive encouragement. Alternate translation: "and work hard to be holy, because only holy people will see the Lord"

and holiness

You can state clearly the understood information. Alternate translation: "and pursue holiness"

Hebrews 12:15

no one lacks God's grace

"no one receives God's grace and then lets go of it" or "no one rejects God's grace after first trusting in him"

that no root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble, so that many do not become defiled by it

Hateful or resentful attitudes are spoken of as if they were a plant bitter to the taste. Alternate translation: "that no one becomes like a bitter root, which when it grows causes trouble and harms many people"

Hebrews 12:16

General Information:

The man Esau, who was told about in the writings of Moses, refers to Isaac's first son and Jacob's brother.

Hebrews 12:17

he was rejected

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his father, Isaac, refused to bless him"

because he found no opportunity for repentance

The abstract noun "repentance" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "because it was not possible for him to repent" or "because it was not possible for him to change his decision"

even though he sought it with tears

Here "he" refers to Esau.

Hebrews 12:18

General Information:

Here "you" and refers to the Hebrew believers to whom the author wrote.

Connecting Statement:

The author gives a contrast between what believers in Moses's time had while living under the law and what present day believers have after coming to Jesus under the new covenant. He illustrates the experience of the Israelites by describing how God appeared to them at Mount Sinai.

For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched

The implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "For you have not come, as the people of Israel came, to a mountain that can be touched"

that can be touched

This means that believers in Christ have not come to a physical mountain like Mount Sinai that a person can touch or see. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that a person can touch" or "that people can perceive with their senses"

Hebrews 12:19

You have not come to a trumpet blast

"You have not come to a place where there is the loud sound of a trumpet"

nor to a voice that speaks words whose hearers begged that not another word be spoken to them

Here "voice" refers to someone speaking. The phrase "be spoken" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "or where God was speaking in such a way that those who heard him begged him not to speak another word to them"

Hebrews 12:20

General Information:

The quotation comes from the writings of Moses.

For they could not endure

"For the Israelites could not endure"

what was commanded

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "what God commanded"

it must be stoned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you must stone it"

Hebrews 12:21

General Information:

God reveals in this passage in Hebrews that Moses said he shook at seeing the mountain.

Hebrews 12:22

Mount Zion

The writer speaks of Mount Zion, the temple mount in Jerusalem, as if it were heaven itself, the residence of God.

tens of thousands of angels

"an uncountable number of angels"

Hebrews 12:23

the firstborn

This speaks of believers in Christ as if they were firstborn sons. This emphasizes their special place and privilege as God's people.

who have been registered in heaven

"whose names are written in heaven." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose names God has written in heaven"

who have been made perfect

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has made perfect"

Hebrews 12:24

General Information:

The man Abel was the son of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve. Cain, also their son, murdered Abel.

the mediator of a new covenant

A mediator is a person who helps two parties come to an agreement. Christ, as mediator, made it possible for a better covenant between God and humans to exist. See how you translated this phrase in Hebrews 9:15.

the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's blood

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The blood of Jesus and the blood of Abel are spoken of as if they were people calling out. Alternate translation: "the sprinkled blood of Jesus that says better things than the blood of Abel"

the sprinkled blood

Here "blood" stands for Jesus's death, as Abel's blood stands for his death.

Hebrews 12:25

General Information:

The word "you" continues to refer to believers. The word "we" continues to refer to the writer and the readers who are believers.

Connecting Statement:

Having contrasted the Israelites' experience at Mount Sinai with the believers' experience after Christ died, the writer reminds believers that they have the same God who warns them today. This is the fifth main warning given to believers.

you do not refuse the one who is speaking

"you pay attention to the one who is speaking"

if they did not escape

The implicit information can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "if the people of Israel did not escape judgment"

the one who warned them on earth

Possible meanings are 1) "Moses, who warned them here on earth" or 2) "God, who warned them at Mount Sinai"

if we turn away from the one who is warning

Disobeying God is spoken of as if it were changing direction and walking away from him. Alternate translation: "if we disobey the one who is warning"

Hebrews 12:26

General Information:

This quotation is from the prophet Haggai in the Old Testament.

his voice shook the earth

"when God spoke, the sound of his voice caused the earth to shake"

shook ... shake

Use the word for what an earthquake does in moving the ground. This refers back to Hebrews 12:18-21 and what happened when the people saw the mountain where Moses received the law from God.

Hebrews 12:27

General Information:

Here the quotation from the prophet Haggai is repeated from the previous verse.

mean the removal of those things that can be shaken, that is, of the things

The abstract noun "removal" can be translated with the verb "remove." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "mean that God will remove the things that he can shake, that is, the things"

shaken

Use the word for what an earthquake does in moving the ground. This refers back to Hebrews 12:18-21](./18.md) and what happened when the people saw the mountain where Moses received the law from God. See how you translated "shook" and "shake" in [Hebrews 12:26.

that have been created

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God has created"

the things that cannot be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the things that do not shake" or "the things that cannot shake"

that cannot be shaken

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that do not shake"

Hebrews 12:28

receiving a kingdom

You can add the words "because we are" to make clear the logical connection between this statement and the next statement. Alternate translation: "because we are receiving a kingdom" or "because God is making us members of his kingdom"

let us be thankful

"let us give thanks"

with reverence and awe

The words "reverence" and "awe" share similar meanings and emphasize the greatness of reverence due to God. Alternate translation: "with great respect and dread"

Hebrews 12:29

our God is a consuming fire

God is spoken of here as if he were a fire that can burn up anything.

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13 [1]Let brotherly love continue.[2]Do not forget hospitality for strangers. For through this, some have shown hospitality to
angels without knowing it.
[3]Remember prisoners as if you were bound with them. Remember those who are mistreated since you yourselves also are
in the body.[4]Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept pure, for God will judge sexually
immoral people and adulterers.
[5]Let your conduct be free from the love of money. Be content with the things you have, for God himself has said,

> "I will never leave you,
> nor will I abandon you."

[6]Let us be content so that we may have courage to say,

> "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.
> What can a man do to me?"

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[7]Consider your leaders, those who spoke God's word to you, and consider the result of their conduct. Imitate their faith.
[8]Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.
[9]Do not be carried away by various strange teachings. For it is good that the heart should be strengthened by grace, not by foods that do not help those who walk by them.[10]We have an altar from which those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat.[11]For the blood of the animals killed for sins is brought by the high priest into the holy place, while their bodies are burned outside the camp.
[12]So Jesus also suffered outside the city gate, in order to sanctify the people through his own blood.[13]Let us therefore go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he endured.[14]For we do not have a permanent city here. Rather, we are looking for the one that is to come.
[15]Through him, then, let us always offer up sacrifices of praise to God, praise that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.[16]Let us not forget doing good and sharing, for it is with such sacrifices that God is very pleased.[17]Obey and submit to your leaders, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give account. Obey so that your leaders will do this with joy, and not with groaning, which would be useless to you.

[18]Pray for us, for we are convinced that we have a good conscience and that we desire to live rightly in all things.[19]I encourage you even more to do this, so that I will be returned to you sooner.

[20]Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, by the blood of the eternal covenant,[21]equip you with everything good to do his will, working in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[22]Now I encourage you, brothers, to bear with the word of encouragement that I have briefly written to you.[23]Know that our brother Timothy has been set free, with whom I will see you if he comes soon.

[24]Greet all your leaders and all God's holy people. Those from Italy greet you.
[25]May grace be with you all.

Hebrews 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author finishes the list of exhortations he began in chapter 12. Then he asks the readers to pray for him and ends the letter.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in 13:6, which is from the Old Testament.

Special concepts in this chapter

Hospitality
God wants his people to invite other people to come to their homes to eat food and even to sleep. His people should do this even if they do not know well the people they are inviting. In the Old Testament, Abraham and his nephew Lot both showed hospitality to people they did not know. Abraham served a costly meal to them, and then Lot invited them to sleep in his house. They learned later that those people were actually angels.

Links:

Hebrews 13:1 Notes

Hebrews 13:1
Connecting Statement:
In this closing section, the author gives specific instructions to believers on how they are supposed to live.
Let brotherly love continue
"Continue to show your love for other believers as you would for a member of your family"
Hebrews 13:2
Do not forget
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Be sure to remember"
hospitality for strangers
"to welcome and show kindness to strangers"
Hebrews 13:3
as if you were bound with them
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "as if you were tied up along with them" or "as if you were in prison with them"
who are mistreated
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom others are mistreating" or "who are suffering"
since you yourselves also are in the body
Possible meanings are 1) because you are human and can suffer likewise, or 2) as if you too were being mistreated.
Hebrews 13:4
Let marriage be held in honor by all
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Everyone should hold marriage in honor"
let the marriage bed be kept pure
This refers to the act of sexual union as if it were the bed on

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which that act takes place. Alternate translation: "Let husbands and wives honor their marriage relationship to one another and engage in sexual activity with other people"

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conduct be free from the love of money

Here "conduct" refers to a person's character or the way he lives, and "free from the love of money" refers to not greatly desiring to have more money. A person who loves money is not content with the amount of money he has. Alternate translation: "Let your conduct not be affected by the love of money" or "Do not greatly wish to have more money"

Be content

"Be satisfied"

Hebrews 13:6

The Lord is my helper ... do to me

This is a quotation from the book of Psalms in the Old Testament.

I will not be afraid. What can a man do to me?

The author uses a question to emphasize that he does not fear people because God is helping him. Here "man" means any person in general. Alternate translation: "I will not fear what any person can do to me!"

Hebrews 13:7

spoke God's word to you

"told you what God has said"

the result of their conduct

"the outcome of the way they behave"

Imitate their faith

Here the trust in God and the way of life led by these leaders are spoken of as "their faith." Alternate translation: "Trust and obey God in the same way they do"

Hebrews 13:8

is the same yesterday, today, and forever

Here "yesterday" means all times in the past. Alternate translation: "is the same in the past, the present, and in the future forever"

Hebrews 13:9

Do not be carried away by various strange teachings

Being persuaded by various teachings is spoken of as if a person were being carried away by a force. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Do not let others persuade you to believe their various strange teachings"

various strange teachings

"many, different teachings that are not the good news we told you"

it is good that the heart should be strengthened by grace, not by foods that do not help those who walk by them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "we become stronger when we think of how God has been kind to us, but we do not become stronger by obeying rules about food"

the heart should be strengthened

Here "heart" is a metonym for the "inner being." Alternate translation: "we should be strengthened inwardly"

foods

Here "foods" stands for rules about food.

those who walk by them

Living is spoken of as if it were walking. Alternate translation: "those who live by them" or "those who regulate their lives by them"

Hebrews 13:10

We have an altar from which

Here, "altar" is a metaphor. The Christians did not literally have an altar, nor did they offer animal sacrifices. The author means that Christians have a relationship with God that the Jews who work in the tabernacle do not know about. Alternate translation: "We have an altar, so to speak, from which" or "What we have is like an altar from which"

Hebrews 13:11

General Information:

This verse refers to animal sacrifices made by believers in God in Old Testament times, which covered their sins temporarily until the death of Christ came about.

the blood of the animals killed for sins is brought by the high priest into the holy place

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the high priest brings into the holy place the blood of the animals that the priests killed for sins"

while their bodies are burned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "while the priests burn the animals' bodies"

outside the camp

"away from where the people live"

Hebrews 13:12

Connecting Statement:

There is a comparison here between Jesus's sacrifice and the tabernacle sacrifices of the Old Testament.

So

"In the same way" or "Because the bodies of the sacrifices were burned outside the camp" (Hebrews 13:11)

outside the city gate

This stands for "outside the city."

Hebrews 13:13

Let us therefore go to him outside the camp

Obeying Jesus is spoken of as if a person were leaving the camp to go out where Jesus is.

bearing the disgrace he endured

Reproach is spoken of as if it were an object that has to be carried in one's hands or on one's back. Alternate translation: "while allowing others to treat us with disgust just like people insulted him"

Hebrews 13:14

looking for

"waiting for"

the one that is to come

"for the city that will come" or "the permananent city that will come"

Hebrews 13:15

sacrifices of praise

Praise is spoken of as if it were incense or sacrifices of animals.

praise that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name

Praise is spoken of as if it were fruit produced by the lips of people. Alternate translation: "praise that is produced by the lips of those who acknowledge his name"

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lips that acknowledge his name
Here "lips" represents people who speak. Alternate translation: "the lips of those who acknowledge his name" or "those who acknowledge his name"
his name
A person's name represents that person. Alternate translation: "him"
Hebrews 13:16
Let us not forget doing good and sharing
This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "Let us always remember to do good and share our goods with one another"
with such sacrifices
Doing good and helping others is spoken of as if they were sacrifices on an altar.
Hebrews 13:17
keep watch over your souls
The believers' souls, that is, the believers' spiritual well-being, are spoken of as if they were objects or animals that guards could keep watch over.
not with groaning
Here "groaning" stands for sadness or grief.
Hebrews 13:18
Pray for us
Here "us" refers to the author and his companions, but not to the readers.
we are convinced that we have a good conscience
Here "good" stands for being free from guilt. Alternate translation: "we are certain that we have no guilt"
Hebrews 13:19
that I will be returned to you sooner
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God will return me to you sooner" or "that God will quickly remove the things that stop my coming to you"
Hebrews 13:20
Connecting Statement:
The author closes with a blessing and greetings.
Now
This marks a new section of the letter. Here the author praises God and gives a final prayer for his readers.
brought back from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus
"raised the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, to life"
from the dead
"from among all those who have died." The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To raise someone from among them speaks of causing that person to become alive again.
the great shepherd of the sheep
Christ in his role of leader and protector of those who believe in him is spoken of as if he were a shepherd of sheep.
by the blood of the eternal covenant
Here "blood" stands for the death of Jesus, which is the basis for the covenant that will last forever between God and all believers in Christ.
Hebrews 13:21
equip you with everything good to do his will
"give you every good thing you need in order to do his will" or "make you capable of doing every good thing according to his will"
working in us
The word "us" refers to the author and the readers.
to whom be the glory forever
"whom all people will praise forever"
Hebrews 13:22
Now
This marks a new section of the letter. Here the author gives his final comments to his audience.
brothers
This refers to all the believers to whom he is writing, whether male or female. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"
to bear with the word of encouragement that I have briefly written to you
"to patiently consider what I have just briefly written to encourage you"
the word of encouragement
Here "word" stands for a message. Alternate translation: "the encouraging message"
Hebrews 13:23
has been set free
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "is no longer in prison"
Hebrews 13:24
Those from Italy greet you
Possible meanings are 1) the author is not in Italy, but there is a group of believers with him who have come from Italy or 2) the author is in Italy while writing this letter.
Italy
This is the name of a region at that time. Rome is the capital city of Italy.

Introduction to James

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of James

Greetings (1:1) Testing and maturity (1:2-18) Hearing and doing the Word of God (1:19-27) True faith seen in works Word of God (1:19-27) Royal law of love (2:1-13) Works (2:14-26) Difficulties in community Dangers of the tongue (3:1-12) Wisdom from above (3:13-18) Worldly desires (4:1-12) God's perspective on your decisions Boasting about tomorrow (4:13-17) Warning about riches (5:1-6) Suffering with patience (5:7-11) Closing exhortations Oaths (5:12) Prayer and healing (5:13-18) Care for one another (5:19-20)

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Who wrote the Book of James?

The author identified himself as James. This was probably James, the half-brother of Jesus. James was a leader in the early church and was part of the Jerusalem council. The Apostle Paul also called him a "pillar" of the church.
This is not the same man as the Apostle James. The Apostle James was killed before this letter was written.

What is the Book of James about?

In this letter, James encouraged believers who were suffering. He told them know that God uses their suffering to help them become mature Christians. James also told them of the need for believers to do good deeds. He wrote much in this letter about how believers should live and treat one another. For example, he commanded them to treat one another fairly, to not fight with one another, and to use riches wisely.
James taught his readers by using many examples from nature such as in 1:6, 11 and 3:1-12. Also, many parts of this letter are similar to what Jesus wrote in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat 5-7).

Who were the "twelve tribes in the dispersion"?

James said he was writing to the "twelve tribes in the dispersion" (1:1). Some scholars think that James was writing to Jewish Christians. Other scholars think that James was writing to all Christians in general. This letter is known as one of the "General Epistles" since it was not written to a specific church or individual.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "James." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "A Letter from James" or "The Letter James Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

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

Paul taught in Romans that Christians are justified by faith and not by works. James seems to teach that Christians are justified by works. This can be confusing. But a better understanding of what Paul and James taught shows that they agree with one another. Both of them taught that a person needs faith in order to be justified. And they both taught that true faith will cause a person to do good works. Paul and James taught about these things in different ways because they had different audiences who needed to know different things about being justified. (See: justice and faith and works)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

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

The letter quickly changes topics. Sometimes James does not tell the readers that he is about to change topics. It is acceptable to allow the verses to appear disconnected from each other. It may make sense to set the passages apart by starting a new line or putting a space between topics.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of James?

"Do you want to know, foolish man, that faith without works is useless?" (2:20). The ULB and modern translations read this way. Some older translations read, "Do you want to know, foolish man, that faith without works is dead?" If a translation of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the reading found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

James

1 [1]James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion: Greetings![2]Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you experience various troubles.[3]You know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
[4]Let endurance complete its work so that you may become fully developed and complete, not lacking anything.[5]But if any of you needs wisdom, let him ask for it from God, the one who gives generously and without rebuke to all who ask, and he will give it to him.
[6]But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing. For anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed around.[7]For that person must not think that he will receive anything from the Lord;[8]he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
[9]Let the lowly brother boast of his high position,[10]but the rich man of his low position, because he will pass away as a wild flower in the grass.[11]For the sun rises with burning heat and dries up the grass. The flower falls off, and its beauty perishes. In the same way, the rich man will fade away in the middle of his journey.
[12]Blessed is the man who endures testing. For after he has passed the test, he will receive the crown of life, which has been promised to those who love God.[13]Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God," because God is not tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone.
[14]But each person is tempted by his own desire, which drags him away and entices him.[15]Then after the desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and after the sin is full grown, it gives birth to death.[16]Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.
[17]Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. It comes down from the Father of lights. With him there is no changing or shadow because of turning.[18]God chose to give us birth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all his creatures.

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[19]You know this, my beloved brothers: Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.[20]For the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God.[21]Therefore, take off all sinful filth and abundant amounts of evil. In humility receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.
[22]Be doers of the word and not only hearers, deceiving yourselves.[23]For if anyone is a hearer of the word but not a doer, he is like a man who examines his natural face in a mirror.[24]He examines himself and then goes away and immediately forgets what he was like.[25]But the person who looks carefully into the perfect law of freedom, and continues to do so, not just being a hearer who forgets, this man will be blessed in his actions.
[26]If anyone thinks he is religious and does not control his tongue, he deceives his heart and his religion is worthless.
[27]Religion that is pure and unspoiled before our God and Father is to help the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

James 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

James formally introduces this letter in verse 1. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Testing and temptation

These two words occur together in (James 1:12-13). Both words speak of a person who is able to choose between doing something good and doing something evil. The difference between them is important. God is testing the person and wants him to do what is good. Satan is tempting the person and wants him to do what is evil.

Crowns

The crown that a man who passes the test receives is a reward, something that people who do something especially good receive. (See: reward)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

James uses many metaphors in this chapter, and you will need to understand the material on the metaphor page before you can translate them well.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"To the twelve tribes in the dispersion"

It is not clear to whom James wrote this letter. He calls himself a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, so he was probably writing to Christians. But he calls his readers "the twelve tribes in the dispersion," words which usually refer to Jews. It is possible that he is using the words as a metaphor for "all people whom God has chosen" or that he wrote the letter at a time when most Christians had grown up as Jews.

Links:

James 1:1 Notes James intro

James 1:1

General Information:

The apostle James writes this letter to all the Christians. Many of them were Jews, and they lived in many different places.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ

The phrase "this letter is from" is implied. Alternate translation: "This letter is from James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ"

to the twelve tribes

Possible meanings are 1) this is a synecdoche for Jewish Christians, or 2) this is a metaphor for all Christians. Alternate translation: "to God's faithful people"

in the dispersion

The term "dispersion" normally referred to the Jews who were scattered in other countries, away from their homeland, Israel. This abstract noun can be expressed with a phrase with the verb "scattered." Alternate translation: "who are scattered around the world" or "who live in other countries"

Greetings!

This is a basic greeting, such as "Hello!" or "Good day!"

James 1:2

Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you experience various troubles

"My fellow believers, think of all your different kinds of troubles as things to celebrate"

James 1:3

the testing of your faith produces endurance

The expressions "the testing," "your faith," and "endurance" are nouns that stand for actions. God does the testing, that is, he finds out how much the believers trust and obey him. Believers

James 1:4

Let endurance complete its work

Here endurance is spoken of as if it were a person at work. Alternate translation: "Learn to endure any hardship"

fully developed

able to trust in Christ and obey him in all circumstances

not lacking anything

This can be stated in the positive. Alternate translation:

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"having all that you need" or "being all that you need to be"
James 1:5
ask for it from God, the one who gives
"ask God for it. He is the one who gives"
gives generously and without rebuke to all
"gives generously and does not rebuke any"
he will give it to him
"God will give it to him" or "God will answer his prayer"
James 1:6
in faith, doubting nothing
"with complete certainty that God will answer"
For anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven by the wind and tossed around
Anyone who doubts that God will help him is said to be like the water in the ocean or in a large lake, which keeps moving in different directions.
James 1:8
is a double-minded man, unstable
The word "double-minded" refers to a person's thoughts when he is unable to make a decision. Alternate translation: "cannot decide if he will follow Jesus or not and is unstable"
unstable in all his ways
Here this person is spoken of as if he cannot stay on one path but instead goes from one to another.
James 1:9
the lowly brother
"the believer who does not have much money" or "the believer whom other people consider unimportant"
boast of his high position
Someone whom God has honored is spoken of as if he were standing in a high place.
James 1:10
but the rich man of his low position
The words "let" and "boast" are understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "but let the rich man boast of his low position"
but the rich man
"but the man who has a lot of money"
of his low position
A rich believer should be happy if God causes him to suffer. Alternate translation: "should be happy that God has given him difficulties"
he will pass away as a wild flower in the grass
Rich people are spoken of as being similar to wild flowers, which are alive for only a short time.
James 1:11
its beauty perishes
A flower that is becoming less beautiful because it is decaying is spoken of as if its beauty were dying. Alternate translation: "it is no longer beautiful"
the rich man will fade away in the middle of his journey
Here the flower simile is probably continued. As flowers do not die suddenly but instead fade away over a short time, so also the rich people may not die suddenly but instead take a little time to disappear.
in the middle of his journey
A rich man's activities in daily life are spoken of as if they are a journey that he is making. This metaphor implies that he is giving no thought to his coming death, and that it will takes him by surprise.
James 1:12
Connecting Statement:
James reminds the believers who have fled that God does not cause temptation; he tells them how to avoid temptation.
Blessed is the man who endures testing
"The man who endures testing is fortunate" or "The man who endures testing is well off"
endures testing
remains faithful to God during hardships
passed the test
he has been approved by God
receive the crown of life
Eternal life is spoken of as if it were a wreath of leaves placed on the head of a victorious athlete. Alternate translation: "receive eternal life as his reward"
has been promised to those who love God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has promised to those who love him"
James 1:13
when he is tempted
"when he desires to do something evil"
I am tempted by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is trying to make me do something evil"
God is not tempted by evil
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one can make God desire to do evil"
nor does he himself tempt anyone
"and God himself does not try to persuade anyone do evil"
James 1:14
each person is tempted by his own desire
A person's desire is spoken of as if it were someone else who was tempting him to sin.
which drags him away and entices him
Evil desire continues to be spoken of as if it were a person who could drag away someone else.
entices
attracts, persuades someone to do evil
James 1:15
Then after the desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and after the sin is full grown, it gives birth to death
Desire continues to be spoken of as a person, this time clearly as a woman who becomes pregnant with a child. The child is identified as sin. Sin is a female baby that grows up, becomes pregnant, and gives birth to death. This chain of metaphors is a picture of someone who ends up dying both spiritually and physically because of his evil desires and his sin.
James 1:16
Do not be deceived
"Do not let anyone deceive you" or "Stop deceiving yourselves"
James 1:17
Every good gift and every perfect gift
These two phrases mean basically the same thing. James uses them to emphasize that anything good that a person

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has comes from God.
the Father of lights
God, the creator of all the lights in the sky
With him there is no changing or shadow because of turning
This expression pictures God as an unchanging light. This is in contrast to the sun, moon, and stars that appear to move in the sky and sometimes are darkened. Alternate translation: "God always stays the same. He does not change like shifting shadows"
James 1:18
to give us
The word "us" refers to James and his audience.
give us birth
God, who brought us eternal life, is spoken of as if he had given us birth.
the word of truth
Possible meanings are 1) "the message about the truth" or 2) "the true message."
so that we would be a kind of firstfruits
James is using the traditional Hebrew idea of firstfruits as a way to describe the value of the Christian believers to God. He implies that there will be many more believers in the future. Alternate translation: "so that we would be like an offering of firstfruits"
James 1:19
You know this
Possible meanings are 1) "Know this" is a command to pay attention to what I am about to write or 2) "You know this" is a statement saying that I am about to remind you of something that you already know.
Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak
These sayings are idioms that mean people should first listen intently, and then consider carefully what they say. Here "slow to speak" does not mean speaking slowly.
slow to anger
"not get angry quickly"
James 1:20
the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God
When a person is always angry, he cannot do God's work, which is righteous.
James 1:21
take off all sinful filth and abundant amounts of evil
Sin and evil are spoken of here as if they were clothing that could be taken off. Alternate translation: "stop doing all filthy sins and stop doing abundant amounts of evil"
take off all sinful filth and abundant amounts of evil
Here the expressions "sinful filth" and "evil" share similar meanings. James uses them to emphasize how bad sin is. Alternate translation: "stop doing every kind of sinful behavior"
sinful filth
Here "filth," that is, dirt, stands for sin and evil.
In humility
"Without pride" or "Without arrogance"
receive the implanted word
The expression "implant" means to place one thing inside of another. Here God's word is spoken of as if it were a plant made to grow inside believers. Alternate translation: "obey the message God has spoken to you"
save your souls
What a person is saved from can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "save you from God's judgment"
your souls
Here the word "souls" refers to persons. Alternate translation: "yourselves"
James 1:22
Be doers of the word
"Be people who follow God's instructions"
deceiving yourselves
"fooling yourselves"
James 1:23
For if anyone is a hearer of the word but not a doer
In the phrase "but not a doer" the words "is" and "of the word" are understood from the previous phrase. The noun "doer" can also be expressed with the verbs "do" or "obey." Alternate translation: "For if anyone listens to God's word in the scriptures but does not obey the word"
the word
"the message"
he is like a man who examines his natural face in a mirror
A person who hears God's word is like someone who looks in the mirror.
his natural face
The word "natural" clarifies that James is using the ordinary meaning of the word "face." Alternate translation: "his face"
James 1:24
then goes away and immediately forgets what he was like
It is implied that though he may see that he needs to do something, such as wash his face or fix his hair, he walks away and forgets to do it. This what a person who does not obey God's word is like. Alternate translation: "then goes away and immediately forgets to do what he saw he needed to do"
James 1:25
the person who looks carefully into the perfect law
This expression continues the image of the law as a mirror.
the perfect law of freedom
The relationship between the law and freedom can be expressed clearly. Here "freedom" probably refers to freedom from sin. Alternate translation: "the perfect law that gives freedom" or "the perfect law that makes those who follow it free"
this man will be blessed in his actions
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless this man as he obeys the law"
James 1:26
thinks he is religious
"thinks he worships God correctly"
his tongue
Controlling one's tongue stands for controlling one's speech. Alternate translation: "what he says"
deceives
gets someone to believe something that is not true
his heart
Here "heart" refers to his belief or thoughts. Alternate translation: "himself"
his religion is worthless

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"he worships God uselessly"
James 1:27
pure and unspoiled before our God and Father
James speaks of religion, the way one worships God, as if it could be physically pure and unspoiled. These are traditional ways for Jews to say that something is acceptable to God. Alternate translation: "completely acceptable to our God and Father"
the fatherless
"the orphans"
in their affliction
The fatherless and widows are suffering because their fathers or husbands have died.
to keep oneself unstained by the world
Sin in the world is spoken of as something dirty that can stain a person. Alternate translation: "to not allow the evil in the world to cause oneself to sin"

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2 [1]My brothers, do not hold to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality toward certain people.
[2]Suppose that someone enters your meeting wearing gold rings and splendid clothes, and there also enters a poor man in dirty clothes.[3]If you look at the person wearing fine clothes and say, "You sit here in a good place," but you say to the poor man, "You stand over there" or "Sit by my footstool,"[4]are you not judging among yourselves? Have you not become judges with evil thoughts?
[5]Listen, my beloved brothers, did not God choose the poor of the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?[6]But you have dishonored the poor! Is it not the rich who oppress you? Are they not the ones who drag you to court?[7]Do they not insult the good name by which you have been called?
[8]If, however, you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you do well.[9]But if you favor certain people, you are committing sin, and you are convicted by the law as transgressors.
[10]For whoever obeys the whole law, except that he stumbles in just a single way, has become guilty of breaking the whole law.[11]For the one who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery, but if you do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.
[12]So speak and act as those who will be judged by means of the law of freedom.[13]For judgment comes without mercy to those who have shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

[14]What profit is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?[15]Suppose that a brother or sister is badly clothed and lacks food for the day.[16]Suppose that one of you says to them, "Go in peace, stay warm and be filled." If you do not give them the things necessary for the body, what profit is that?[17]In the same way faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
[18]Yet someone may say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works.[19]You believe that there is one God; you do well. But even the demons believe that, and they tremble.
[20]Do you want to know, foolish man, that faith without works is useless?[1]
[21]Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?[22]You see that faith worked with his works, and that by works his faith was completed.[23]The scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness," and he was called a friend of God.[24]You see that it is by works that a man is justified, and not only by faith.
[25]In the same way also, was not Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them away by another road?[26]For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, Do you want to know, foolish man, how it is that faith without works is dead?

James 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Favoritism

Some of James's readers treated rich and powerful people well and treated poor people badly. This is called favoritism, and James tells them that this is wrong. God wants his people to treat both rich people and poor people well.

Justification

Justification is what happens when God makes a person righteous. James says here that God makes righteous or justifies people who do good works along with having faith. (See: justice and righteous and faith)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Quotation marks

The words "Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works" are hard to understand. Some people think that they are what "someone may say," like the words in the quotation marks. Most versions translate them as words that James is saying back to that "someone."

"You have ... I have"

Some people think that the words "you" and "I" are metonyms for "some people" and "other people." If they are correct,

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verse 18 could be translated, "Someone may say, 'Some people have faith and other people have works. Not everyone has both.'" If the next sentence is also what "someone may say," it could be translated "Some people show their faith without works, and other people show their faith by their works. Both have faith." In both cases, the reader will understand only if you add the extra sentence. It is probably best to translate as the ULB does.

Links:

James 2:1 Notes

James 2:1

Connecting Statement:

James continues to tell the scattered Jewish believers how to live by loving one another and reminds them not to favor rich people over poor people.

My brothers

James considers his audience to be Jewish believers. Alternate translation: "My fellow believers" or "My brothers and sisters in Christ"

do not hold to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ ... with partiality toward certain people

James wanted them to hold to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but he did not want them to show partiality to people. Alternate translation: "as you hold to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ ... do not show partiality toward certain people"

hold to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ

Believing in Jesus Christ is spoken of as if it were an object that one could hold onto.

our Lord Jesus Christ

The word "our" includes James and his fellow believers.

partiality

the act of treating some people better than others

James 2:2

Suppose that someone enters your meeting

James starts to describe a situation where the believers might give more honor to a rich person than to a poor person.

wearing gold rings and splendid clothes

"dressed like a wealthy person"

James 2:3

sit here in a good place

sit in this place of honor

stand over there

move to a place with less honor

Sit by my footstool

move to a humble place

James 2:4

are you not judging among yourselves? Have you not become judges with evil thoughts?

James is using rhetorical questions to teach and possibly scold his readers. Alternate translation: "you are making judgments among yourselves and becoming judges with evil thoughts."

James 2:5

Listen, my beloved brothers

James is exhorting his readers as if they were his family. Alternate translation: "Pay attention, my dear fellow believers"

did not God choose ... love him?

Here James uses a rhetorical question to teach his readers not to show favoritism. It can be made a statement. Alternate translation: "God has chosen ... love him"

the poor

This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: "poor people"

be rich in faith

Having much faith is spoken of as being wealthy or rich. The object of faith may have to be specified. Alternate translation: "have strong faith in Christ"

heirs

The people to whom God has made promises are spoken of as if they were to inherit property and wealth from a family member.

James 2:6

But you have

James is speaking to his whole audience.

have dishonored the poor

"you have shamed poor people"

Is it not the rich who oppress you?

Here James uses a rhetorical question to correct his readers. Alternate translation: "It is rich people who oppress you."

the rich

This refers to rich people in general. Alternate translation: "rich people"

who oppress you

"who treat you badly"

Are they not the ones ... to court?

Here James uses a rhetorical question to correct his readers. It can be made a statement. Alternate translation: "The rich people are the ones ... to court."

drag you to court

"forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges"

James 2:7

Do they not insult ... have been called?

Here James uses a rhetorical question to correct and teach his readers. It can be made a statement. Alternate translation: "The rich people insult ... have been called."

the good name by which you have been called

Here "name" represents "Christ." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ, who called you" or "Christ, to whom you belong"

James 2:8

you fulfill

The word "you" refers to the Jewish believers.

fulfill the royal law

"obey God's law." The law is "royal" becuase God, the true king, is the one who gave it to people.

Love your neighbor as yourself

James is quoting from the book of Leviticus.

your neighbor

"all people" or "everyone"

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you do well
"you are doing well" or "you are doing what is right"
James 2:9
if you favor
"give special treatment to" or "give honor to"
committing sin
"sinning." That is, breaking the law.
you are convicted by the law as transgressors
Here the law is spoken of as if it were a human judge. This can be translated using an active verb. Alternate translation: "the law itself convicts you of transgressing it" or "you are guilty of breaking God's law"
James 2:10
For whoever obeys
"For anyone who obeys"
except that he stumbles ... the whole law
Stumbling is falling down while one is trying to walk. Disobeying one point of the law is spoken of as if it were stumbling while walking.
in just a single way
because of disobedience to just one requirement of the law
James 2:11
For the one who said
This refers to God, who gave the law to Moses.
Do not commit
To "commit" is to do an action.
If you ... but if you ... you have
Here "you" means "each one of you." Although James was writing to many Jewish believers, in this case, he used the singular form as if he was writing to each person individually.
James 2:12
So speak and act
"So you must speak and obey." James commands the people to do this.
who will be judged by means of the law of freedom
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who know that God will judge them by means of the law of freedom"
by means of the law
This passage implies that it is God who will judge according to his law.
the law of freedom
"the law that gives true freedom"
James 2:13
Mercy triumphs over
"Mercy is better than" or "Mercy defeats." Here mercy and justice are spoken of as if they were persons.
James 2:14
Connecting Statement:
James encourages the scattered believers to show their faith before others, just as Abraham showed others his faith by his works.
What profit is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works?
James is using a rhetorical question to teach his audience. Alternate translation: "Fellow believers, if someone says he has faith but he has no works, that does him no good at all." or "Fellow believers, someone who has no works is no better if he says he has faith than someone who does not say he has faith."
he has faith, but he has no works ... that faith
Here, it is implied that "works" refers to things people do because they believe in God, such as obeying God and doing good to others. The abstract nouns "faith" and "works" can be expressed with the verbs "believe" and "do." Alternate translation: "he believes in God but does not do anything ... what he believes" or "he believes in God but does not do anything as a result of his belief ... that belief"
Can that faith save him?
James is using a rhetorical question to teach his audience. This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "faith." Alternate translation: "That faith cannot save him." or "Just saying he believes in God will not save him."
save him
"spare him from God's judgment"
James 2:15
brother or sister
a fellow believer in Christ, whether male or female
James 2:16
stay warm
This means either "have enough clothes to wear" or "have a place to sleep."
be filled
The thing that fills them is food. This can be stated explicitly. Alternate translation: "be filled with food" or "have enough to eat"
for the body
to eat, to wear, and to live comfortably
what profit is that?
James uses a rhetorical question to teach his audience. Alternate translation: "how does that help them?" or "that does nothing good for them." or "your speech by itself does not help them."
James 2:17
faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead
Here, it is implied that "works" refers to things people do because they believe in God, such as obeying God and doing good to others. James speaks of faith as if it were alive if one does good works, and of faith as if it were dead if one does not do good deeds. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "faith" and "works." Alternate translation: "a person who says he believes in God but does not do anything, does not really believe in God" or "a person who says he believes in God but does not do anything as a result of his belief, does not really believe in God"
James 2:18
Yet someone may say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works.
Possible meanigs are 1) James describes how someone might argue against his teaching and how he would respond to that person or 2) James describes how someone might support his teaching. If the speaker is supporting James, then the quotation would end at the end of the verse.
"You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith by my works
The meanings in the abstract nouns "faith" and "works" can

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be expressed with "believe in God" and "do good things." Alternate translation: "'You believe in God and I do good things.' Prove to me that you can believe in God without doing anything, and I will prove to you that I believe in God by what I do"

James 2:20

Do you want to know, foolish man, that faith without works is useless?

James uses this question to introduce the next part of his teaching. Alternate translation: "Listen to me, foolish man, and I will show that faith without works is useless."

that faith without works is useless

The meanings in the abstract nouns "faith" and "works" can be expressed with "believe in God" and "do good things." Alternate translation: "that saying that you believe in God without doing good things is useless" or "that if you do not do good things, it is useless to say that you believe"

James 2:21

General Information:

Since these are Jewish believers, they know the story of Abraham, about whom God had told them long ago in his word.

Was not Abraham our father justified by works ... on the altar?

This rhetorical question is used to rebut the foolish man's arguments from [James 2:18]

Was not Abraham our father justified by works ... on the altar?

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "works." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Did not God justify Abraham our father because of what he did ... on the altar?" or "God certainly justified Abraham our father because of what he did ... on the altar."

father

Here "father" is used in the sense of "ancestor."

James 2:22

You see

The word "see" is a metonym. Alternate translation: "You understand"

that faith worked with his works, and that by works his faith was completed

James speaks as if "faith" and "works" were things that can work together and help each other. The meanings in the abstract nouns "faith" and "works" can be expressed with "believe God" and "do what God commanded." Alternate translation: "that because Abraham believed God, he did what God commanded him to do. And Abraham doing what God commanded showed that he truly believed"

You see

James again addresses his audience directly by using the plural form of "you."

James 2:23

The scripture was fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This fulfilled the scripture"

it was counted to him as righteousness

"God regarded his faith as righteousness." Abraham's faith and righteousness were treated as if they were able to be counted as having value.

James 2:24

it is by works that a man is justified, and not only by faith

Here, it is implied that "works" refers to things people do because they believe in God, such as obeying God and doing good to others. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "faith" and "works." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God justifies a man because of what he does, and not just because he believes in God" or "God justifies a man because of what he does as a result of his belief, and not just because he believes in God"

James 2:25

In the same way also ... justified by works

James says that what was true of Abraham was also true of Rahab. Both were justified by works.

was not Rahab the prostitute justified by works ... another road?

James is using this rhetorical question to instruct his audience. Alternate translation: "it was what Rahab the prostitute did that justified her ... another road."

was not Rahab the prostitute justified by works ... another road?

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "works." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "did God not justify Rahab the prostitute because of what she did ... another road?" or "God justified Rahab the prostitute because of what she did ... another road."

Rahab the prostitute

James expects his audience to know the Old Testament story about the woman Rahab.

messengers

people who bring news from another place

sent them away by another road

"then helped them escape and leave the city"

James 2:26

For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead

James is speaking of faith without works as if it were a dead body without the spirit. Here, it is implied that "works" refers to things people do because they believe in God, such as obeying God and doing good to others. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "faith" and "works." Alternate translation: "For just as the body is useless without the spirit, even so it is useless for a person to believe in God if he does not do anything" or "For just as the body is useless without the spirit, even so it is useless for a person to believe in God if he does not do anything as a result of his belief"

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3 [1]Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.
[2]For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in words, he is a perfect man, able to control even his whole body.
[3]Now if we put bits into horses' mouths for them to obey us, we can also direct their whole bodies.[4]Notice also that ships, although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, are steered by a very small rudder to wherever the pilot desires.

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[5]In this way, the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts great things. Notice also how small a fire sets on fire a large forest.
[6]The tongue is also a fire, a world of evil set among our members. The tongue defiles the whole body, sets on fire the course of life, and is itself set on fire by hell.
[7]For every kind of wild animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is being tamed and has been tamed by mankind.[8]But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.
[9]With it we praise the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness.[10]Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things should not happen.
[11]Does a spring pour out from its opening both sweet and bitter water?[12]Does a fig tree, my brothers, make olives? Or a grapevine, figs? Neither can salty water produce sweet water.

[13]Who is wise and understanding among you? Let that person show a good life by his works in the humility of wisdom.
[14]But if you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth.
[15]This is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Rather, it is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.[16]For where there are jealousy and ambition, there is confusion and every evil practice.[17]But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peace-loving, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.[18]The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace among those who make peace.

James 3 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

James teaches his readers that they should live to please God by reminding them of things that they know from everyday life.

Links:

James 3:1 Notes

James 3:1

Not many of you

James is making a generalized statement.

my brothers

"my fellow believers"

we who teach will be judged more strictly

"God will judge us who teach more severely." This probably because those whom they teach trust them to know the truth and teach it correctly.

we who teach

James includes himself and other teachers, but not the readers, so the word "we" is exclusive.

James 3:2

we all stumble

James speaks of himself, other teachers, and the readers, so the word "we" is inclusive.

stumble

Sinning is spoken of as if it were stumbling while walking. Alternate translation: "fail" or "sin"

does not stumble in words

"does not sin by saying wrong things"

he is a perfect man

"he is spiritually mature"

control even his whole body

James is referring to one's heart, emotions, and actions. Alternate translation: "control all his behavior" or "control all his actions"

James 3:3

General Information:

James is developing an argument that small things can control big things.

Now if we put bits into horses' mouths

James speaks about horses' bits. A bit is a small piece of metal that is placed into a horse's mouth to control where it goes.

Now if

"If" or "When"

horses

A horse is a large animal used to carry things or people.

James 3:4

Notice also that ships ... are steered by a very small rudder

A ship is like a truck that floats on water. A rudder is a flat piece of wood or metal at the back of the ship, used to control where it goes. The word "rudder" could also be translated as "tool."

are driven by strong winds,

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "strong winds push them, they"

are steered by a very small rudder to wherever the pilot desires

"have a small tool that a person can use to control where the ship goes"

James 3:5

the tongue is a small member

It can be stated explicitly what the tongue is a member of. Alternate translation: "the tongue is a small member of the body" or "the tongue is a small part of the body"

boasts great things

Here "things" is a general word for everything about which these people are proud.

Notice also

"Think about"

how small a fire sets on fire a large forest

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In order to help people understand the harm that the tongue can cause, James speaks of the harm that a small flame can cause. Alternate translation: "how a small flame can start a fire that burns many trees"

James 3:6

The tongue is also a fire

The tongue is a metonym for what people say. James calls it a fire because of the great damage it can do. Alternate translation: "The tongue is like a fire"

a world of evil set among our members

The enormous effects of sinful speaking are spoken of as if they were a world by themselves.

our members

"the members of our bodies" or "the parts of our bodies"

The tongue defiles the whole body

The tongue here is a metonym for the words of the person whose tongue it is, and the body is a synecdoche for the whole person. The words defiling the person is a metaphor for God rejecting a person who speaks evil words.

sets on fire the course of life

The phrase "course of life" refers to a person's entire life. Alternate translation: "it ruins a person's entire life"

life, and is itself set on fire by hell

The word "itself" refers to the tongue. Also, here "hell" refers to the powers of evil or to the devil. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "life because the devil uses it for evil"

James 3:7

For every kind of ... mankind

The phrase "every kind" is a general statement referring to all or many kinds of wild animals. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People have learned to control many kinds of wild animals, birds, reptiles, and sea creatures"

reptile

This is an animal that crawls on the ground.

sea creature

an animal that lives in the sea

James 3:8

But no human being can tame the tongue

James speaks of the tongue as if it were a wild animal. Here "tongue" represents a person's desire to speak evil thoughts.

It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison

James speaks of the harm that people can cause by what they say as if the tongue were an evil and poisonous creature that can kill people. Alternate translation: "It is like a restless and evil creature, full of deadly poison" or "It is like a restless and evil creature that can kill people with its venom"

James 3:9

With it we

"We use the tongue to say words that"

we curse men

"we ask God to harm men"

who have been made in God's likeness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God made in his likeness"

James 3:10

Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing

The nouns "blessing" and "cursing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "With the same mouth, a person blesses people and curses people"

My brothers

"Fellow Christians"

these things should not happen

"these things are wrong"

James 3:11

Connecting Statement:

After James stresses that the words of believers should not both bless and curse, he gives examples from nature to teach his readers that people who honor God by worshiping him should also live in right ways.

Does a spring pour out from its opening both sweet and bitter water?

James uses a rhetorical question to remind believers about what happens in nature. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know that a spring does not pour out both sweet water and bitter water."

James 3:12

Does a fig tree, my brothers, make olives?

James uses another rhetorical question to remind the believers about what happens in nature. Alternate translation: "Brothers, you know that a fig tree cannot grow olives."

my brothers

"my fellow believers"

Or a grapevine, figs?

The word "make" is understood from the previous phrase. James uses another rhetorical question to remind the believers about what happens in nature. Alternate translation: "Or does a grapevine make figs?" or "And a grapevine cannot grow figs."

James 3:13

Who is wise and understanding among you?

James uses this question to teach his audience about proper behavior. The words "wise" and "understanding" are similar. Alternate translation: "I will tell you how a wise and understanding person is to act."

Let that person show a good life by his works in the humility of wisdom

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "humility" and "wisdom." Alternate translation: "That person should live a good life by doing the kind of deeds that come from being humble and wise"

James 3:14

if you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's emotions or thoughts. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "jealousy" and "ambition." Alternate translation: "if you are jealous and selfish" or "if you desire what other people have and you want to succeed even if it harms others"

do not boast and lie against the truth

The abstract noun "truth" can be stated as "true." Alternate translation: "do not boast that you are wise, because that is not true"

James 3:15

This is not the wisdom that comes down from above

Here "This" refers to the "bitter jealousy and strife" described in the previous verses. The phrase "from above" is a metonym that represents "heaven" which represents

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God himself. Alternate translation: "This is not the kind of wisdom that God teaches us from heaven"

This is not the wisdom that comes down from above. Rather, it is earthly, unspiritual, demonic

The abstract noun "wisdom" can be stated as "wise." Alternate translation: "Whoever acts like this is not wise according to what God in heaven teaches us. Rather, this person is earthly, unspiritual, and demonic"

earthly

The word "earthly" refers to the values and behaviors of the people who do not honor God. Alternate translation: "not honoring to God"

unspiritual

"not from the Holy Spirit" or "not spiritual"

demonic

"from demons"

James 3:16

For where there are jealousy and ambition, there is confusion and every evil practice

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "jealousy," "ambition," and "confusion." Alternate translation: "For when people are jealous and selfish, this causes them to act in disorderly and evil ways"

there is confusion

"there is disorder" or "there is chaos"

every evil practice

"every kind of sinful behavior" or "every kind of wicked deed"

James 3:17

But the wisdom from above is first pure

Here "from above" is metonym that represents "heaven," which represents God himself. The abstract noun "wisdom" can be stated as "wise." Alternate translation: "But when a person is wise according to what God in heaven teaches, he acts in ways that are first pure"

is first pure

"is first holy"

full of mercy and good fruits

Here "good fruits" refer to kind things that people do for others as a result of having wisdom from God. Alternate translation: "full of mercy and good deeds"

and sincere

"and honest" or "and truthful"

James 3:18

The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace among those who make peace

Making peace is spoken of as if they were sowing seeds, and righteousness is spoken of as if it were the fruit that grows up as a result of making peace. Alternate translation: "The result of making peace is righteousness" or "Those who work peacefully to help people live in peace produce righteousness"

make peace

The abstract noun "peace" can be expressed by using the word "peacefully." Alternate translation: "cause people to live peacefully" or "help people not to be angry with each other"

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4 [1]Where do quarrels and disputes among you come from? Do they not come from your desires that fight among your members?[2]You desire, and you do not have. You murder and covet, and you are not able to obtain. You fight and quarrel. You do not possess because you do not ask.[3]You ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly, in order that you may use it for your desires.
[4]You adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility against God? So whoever desires to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.[5]Or do you think the scripture says in vain, "The Spirit he caused to live in us is deeply envious"?
[6]But God gives more grace, so the scripture says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
[7]So submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
[8]Come close to God, and he will come close to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded people.[9]Grieve, mourn, and cry! Let your laughter turn into mourning and your joy into gloom.[10]Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

[11]Do not speak evil about another, brothers. The person who speaks evil about a brother or judges his brother speaks evil about the law and judges the law. If you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.[12]Only one is the lawgiver and judge. He is the one who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you, you who judge your neighbor?

[13]Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, spend a year there, trade, and make a profit."[14]Who knows what will happen tomorrow, and what is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears.
[15]Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that."[16]But now you are boasting about your arrogant plans. All such boasting is evil.[17]So for anyone who knows to do good but does not do it, for him it is sin.

James 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Adultery

Writers in the Bible often speak of adultery as a metaphor for people who say they love God but do things that God hates.

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(See: and godly)

Law

James probably uses this word in James 4:11 to refer to "the royal law" (James 2:8).

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

James asks many questions because he wants his readers to think about how they are living. He wants to correct and teach them.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Humble

This word probably usually refers to people who are not proud. James uses the word here to refer to people who are not proud and who also trust in Jesus and obey him.

Links:

James 4:1 Notes

James 4:1

General Information:

In this chapter, the words "yourselves," "your," and "you" are plural and refer to the believers to whom James writes.

Connecting Statement:

James rebukes these believers for their worldliness and their lack of humility. He again urges them to watch how they speak to and about each other.

Where do quarrels and disputes among you come from?

The abstract nouns "quarrels" and "disputes" mean basically the same thing and can be translated with verbs. Alternate translation: "Why do you quarrel and dispute among yourselves?" or "Why do you fight among yourselves?"

Do they not come from your desires that fight among your members?

James uses this question to rebuke his audience. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "They come from your evil desires for things, desires that fight among your members." or "You quarrel and have disputes because of your desires that fight among your members."

Do they not come from your desires that fight among your members

James writes of the tension or conflict that people feel because of their different desires as if those desires were fighting. Alternate translation: "Do they not come because of the conflict you feel because of your different desires? " or "You quarrel and argue because of the tension caused by your different desires."

your desires that fight among your members

Possible meanings are 1) "members" refers to the parts of a person: his body, feelings, and thoughts. Each person wants more than one thing, but he cannot have them all. Alternate translation: "your conflicting desires within you" 2) "members" refers to the individual people in the church. Different members want different things. Alternate translation: "the conflicting desires among you all"

James 4:2

You murder and covet, and you are not able to obtain

The phrase "You murder" is probably a hyperbole. The words "murder" and "covet" are used to express how badly the people behave in order to get what they want. Alternate translation: "You do all kinds of evil things to get what you cannot have"

You fight and quarrel

The words "fight" and "quarrel" mean basically the same thing. James uses them to emphasize how much the people argue among themselves. Alternate translation: "You constantly fight"

James 4:3

you ask wrongly

Possible meanings are 1) "you ask with wrong motives" or "you ask with bad attitudes" or 2) "you are asking for wrong things" or "you are asking for bad things"

James 4:4

You adulteresses!

James speaks of believers as being like wives who sleep with men other than their husbands. Alternate translation: "You are not being faithful to God!"

Do you not know ... God?

James uses this question to teach his audience. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You know ... God!"

friendship with the world

This phrase refers to identifying with or participating in the world's value system and behavior.

friendship with the world

Here the world's value system is spoken of as if it were a person that others could be friends with.

friendship with the world is hostility against God

One who is friends with the world is an enemy of God. Here "friendship with the world" stands for being friends with the world, and "hostility against God" stands for being hostile against God. Alternate translation: "friends of the world are enemies of God"

James 4:5

Or do you think the scripture says in vain ... envious"?

This is a rhetorical question James uses to exhort his audience. To speak in vain is to speak uselessly. Alternate translation: "There is a reason that scripture says ... envious.'"

The Spirit he caused to live in us

Some versions, including the ULB and UDB, understand this as a reference to the Holy Spirit. Other versions translate this as "the spirit" and mean by it the human spirit that each person has been created to have. We suggest that you use the meaning that is presented in other translations used by your readers.

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James 4:6
But God gives more grace
How this phrase relates to the previous verse can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But, even though our spirits may desire what we cannot have, God gives us even more grace if we will humble ourselves"
so the scripture
"that is why the scripture"
the proud
This refers to proud people in general. Alternate translation: "proud people"
the humble
This refers to humble people in general. Alternate translation: "humble people"
James 4:7
So submit
"Because God gives grace to the humble, submit"
submit to God
"obey God"
Resist the devil
"Oppose the devil" or "Do not do what the devil wants"
he will flee
"he will run away"
you
Here this pronoun is plural and refers to James's audience.
James 4:8
General Information:
The word "you" here is plural and refers to the scattered believers to whom James writes.
Come close to God
Here the idea of coming close stands for becoming honest and open with God.
Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded
These are two phrases in parallel with each other.
Cleanse your hands
This expression is a command for people to do righteous acts instead of unrighteous acts. Alternate translation: "Behave in a way that honors God"
purify your hearts
Here "hearts" refers to a person's thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: "make your thoughts and intentions right"
you double-minded people
The word "double-minded" refers to a person who cannot make a firm decision about something. Alternate translation: "you people who cannot decide if you want to obey God or not"
James 4:9
Grieve, mourn, and cry
These three words have similar meanings. James uses them together to emphasize that the people should be truly sorry for not obeying God.
Let your laughter turn into mourning and your joy into gloom
This is saying the same thing in different ways for emphasis. The abstract nouns "laughter," "mourning," "joy," and "gloom" can be translated as verbs or adjectives. Alternate translation: "Stop laughing and mourn. Stop being joyful and be gloomy"
James 4:10
Humble yourselves before the Lord
"Be humble toward God." Actions done with God in mind are often spoken of as being done in his physical presence.
he will exalt you
James indicates that God will honor the humble person by saying God will pick that person up off the ground physically from where that person had prostrated himself in humility. Alternate translation: "he will honor you"
James 4:11
brothers
James speaks of the believers as if they are biological brothers. The term here includes women as well as men. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"
but a judge
"but you are acting like the person who gives the law"
James 4:12
Only one is the lawgiver and judge
This refers to God. "God is the only one who gives laws and judges people"
Who are you, you who judge your neighbor?
This is a rhetorical question James uses to scold his audience. This can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "You are just a human and cannot judge another human."
James 4:13
spend a year there
James speaks of spending time as if it were money. "stay there for a year"
James 4:14
Who knows what will happen tomorrow, and what is your life?
James uses these questions to correct his audience and to teach these believers that physical life is not that important. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "No one knows what will happen tomorrow, and your life does not last very long!"
For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears
James speaks of people as if they were a mist that appears and then quickly goes away. Alternate translation: "You live for only a short amount of time, and then you die"
James 4:15
Instead, you should say
"Instead, your attitude should be"
we will live and do this or that
"we will live long enough to do what we have planned to do." The word "we" does not directly refer to James or his audience but is part of the example of how James's audience should consider the future.
James 4:17
for anyone who knows to do good but does not do it, for him it is sin
Anyone who fails to do the good he knows he should do is guilty of sin.

[1]Come now, you who are rich, weep and wail because of the miseries coming on you.[2]Your riches have rotted, and your clothes have become moth-eaten.[3]Your gold and your silver have become tarnished and their rust will be a witness against you. It will consume your flesh like fire. You have stored up your treasure for the last days.
[4]Look, the wages you kept back from the laborers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.[5]You have lived in luxury on the earth and indulged yourselves. You have fattened your hearts for a day of slaughter.[6]You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not oppose you.

[7]Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit from the ground and he is patient about it, until it receives the early and late rains.[8]You, too, be patient. Strengthen your hearts because the Lord's coming is near.
[9]Do not complain, brothers, against one another, so that you will not be condemned. See, the judge is standing at the door.
[10]Take an example, brothers, from the suffering and patience of the prophets, those who spoke in the name of the Lord.
[11]See, we regard those who endured as blessed. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you know the purpose of the Lord, how he is very compassionate and merciful.

[12]Above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by the earth, or by any other oath. Rather, let your "Yes" mean "Yes" and your "No" mean "No," so you do not fall under judgment.

[13]Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.[14]Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him. Let them anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.[15]The prayer of faith will heal the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed sins, God will forgive him.
[16]So confess your sins to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very strong in its working.[17]Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain in the land for three years and six months.[18]Then Elijah prayed again. The heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

[19]My brothers, if anyone among you strays from the truth, and someone brings him back,[20]that person should know that whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and will cover over a great number of sins.

James 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Eternity

This chapter contrasts living for things of this world, which will not last, with living for things that will last for eternity. It is also important to live with the expectation that Jesus will return soon. (See: eternity)

Oaths

Scholars are divided over whether this passage teaches all oaths are wrong. Most scholars believe some oaths are permissible and James instead is teaching Christians to have integrity.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Elijah

This story will be difficult to understand if the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles have not yet been translated.

"Save his soul from death"

This probably teaches that the person who stops their sinful lifestyle will not be punished with physical death as a consequence of their sin. On the other hand, some scholars believe this passage teaches about eternal salvation. (See: sin and death and save)

Links:

James 5:1 Notes

James 5:1

Connecting Statement:

James warns rich people about their focus on pleasure and riches.

you who are rich

Possible meanings are 1) James is giving a strong warning to wealthy believers or 2) James is talking about wealthy unbelievers. Alternate translation: "you who are rich and say you honor God"

because of the miseries coming on you

James states that these people will suffer terribly in the future and writes as if their sufferings were objects that were coming toward them. The abstract noun "miseries" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "because you will suffer terribly in the future"

James 5:2

Your riches have rotted, and your clothes have become moth-eaten.

Earthly riches do not last nor do they have any eternal

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value. James speaks of these events as if they had already happened. Alternate translation: "Your riches will rot, and your clothes will be eaten by moths."

riches ... clothes

These things are mentioned as examples of things that are valuable to wealthy people.

James 5:3

Your gold and your silver have become tarnished

Earthly riches do not last nor do they have any eternal value. James speaks of these events as if they had already happened. Alternate translation: "Your gold and silver will become tarnished"

gold ... silver

These things are mentioned as examples of things that are valuable to wealthy people.

have become tarnished ... their rust

Gold does not actually tarnish, and gold and silver do not actually rust. James wants to emphasize that these precious metals will be ruined. Alternate translation: "are ruined ... their ruined condition"

their rust will be a witness against you. It

James wrote of their valuable things being ruined as if they were a person in a courtroom accusing the wicked of their crimes. Alternate translation: "and when God judges you, your ruined treasures will be like someone who accuses you in court. Their corrosion" (See: and)

will consume ... like fire

Here the corrosion is spoken of as if it were a fire that will burn up their owners.

your flesh

Here "flesh" stands for the physical body.

fire

The idea of fire here is meant to lead people to remember that fire often stands for God's punishment that will come on all the wicked.

for the last days

This refers to the time right before God comes to judge all people. The wicked think they are storing up riches for the future, but what they are doing is storing up judgment. Alternate translation: "for when God is about to judge you"

James 5:4

Connecting Statement:

James continues to warn rich people about thier focus on pleasure and riches.

the wages you kept back from the laborers who mowed your fields are crying out against you

The money that should have been paid is spoken of as a person who is shouting because of the injustice done to him. Alternate translation: "God can see that you kept back the wages you should have given to those who mowed your fields"

The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts

The shouts of the harvesters are spoken of as if they could be heard in heaven. Alternate translation: "The Lord of hosts has heard the cries of the harvesters"

the ears of the Lord of hosts

God is spoken of as if he had ears as humans have.

James 5:5

You have fattened your hearts for a day of slaughter

Here people are viewed as if they were cattle, luxuriously fed on grain so they would become fattened to be slaughtered for a feast. However, no one will feast at the time of judgment. Alternate translation: "Your greed has only prepared you for harsh eternal judgment"

your hearts

The "heart" was considered to be the center of human desire, and here stands for the entire person.

James 5:6

You have condemned ... the righteous person

This is probably not "condemned" in the legal sense of a judge passing a sentence of death on a criminal. Instead, it probably refers to the wicked and powerful people who decide to mistreat the poor until they die.

the righteous person. He does not

"the people who do what is right. They do not." Here "the righteous person" refers to righteous people in general and not to a specific person. Alternate translation: "righteous people. They do not"

James 5:7

General Information:

In closing, James reminds the believers about the Lord's coming and gives several short lessons on how to live for the Lord.

Connecting Statement:

James changes topics from a rebuke of the rich people to an exhortation to the believers.

Be patient, then

"Because of this, wait and be calm"

until the Lord's coming

This phrase refers to the return of Jesus, when he will begin his kingdom on the earth and judge all people. Alternate translation: "until Christ's return"

the farmer

James makes an analogy using farmers and believers to teach what it means to be patient.

James 5:8

Strengthen your hearts

James is equating the believers' hearts to their will to remain committed. Alternate translation: "Stay committed" or "Keep your faith strong"

the Lord's coming is near

"the Lord will return soon"

James 5:9

Do not complain, brothers ... you

James is writing to all the scattered Jewish believers.

against one another

"about each other"

you will not be condemned

This can be stated in the active. Alternate translation: "Christ will not condemn you"

See, the judge

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: the judge"

the judge is standing at the door

James compares Jesus, the judge, to a person about to walk through a door to emphasize how soon Jesus will return to judge the world. Alternate translation: "the judge is coming soon"

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James 5:10

the suffering and patience of the prophets, those who spoke in the name of the Lord

"how the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord suffered persecution with patience"

spoke in the name of the Lord

"Name" here is a metonym for the person of the Lord. Alternate translation: "spoke by the authority of the Lord" or "spoke for the Lord to the people"

James 5:11

See, we regard

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important: we regard"

those who endured

"those who continued obeying God even through hardship"

James 5:12

Above all, my brothers,

"This is important, may brothers:" or "Especially, my brothers,"

my brothers

This refers to all believers including women. Alternate translation: "my fellow believers"

do not swear

To "swear" is to say that you will do something, or that something is true, and to be held accountable by a higher authority. Alternate translation: "do not make an oath" or "do not make a vow"

either by heaven or by the earth

The words "heaven" and "earth" refer to the spiritual or human authorities that are in heaven and earth.

let your "Yes" mean "Yes" and your "No" mean "No,"

James is telling people to speak the truth without making an oath. Alternate translation: "If you say "Yes" or "No," say it truthfully"

so you do not fall under judgment

Being condemned is spoken of as if one had fallen, crushed by the weight of something heavy. Alternate translation: "so God will not punish you"

James 5:13

Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray

James uses this question to cause the readers to reflect on their need. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If anyone is enduring troubles, he should pray"

Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise

James uses this question to cause the readers to reflect on their blessings. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If anyone is happy, he should sing songs of praise"

James 5:14

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call

James uses this question to cause the readers to reflect on their need. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "If anyone is sick, he should call"

in the name of the Lord

"Name" is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "by the authority of the Lord" or "with the authority that the Lord has given hthem"

James 5:15

The prayer of faith will heal the sick person

The writer speaks of God hearing believers pray for sick people and healing those people as if the prayers themselves healed the people. Alternate translation: "The Lord will hear the prayer of faith and will heal the sick person"

The prayer of faith

"The prayer made by believers" or "The prayer that people pray believing God will do as they ask"

the Lord will raise him up

"the Lord will make him well" or "the Lord will enable him to resume his normal life"

James 5:16

General Information:

As these are Jewish believers, James reminds them to pray by recalling one of the prophets of old and that prophet's practical prayers.

So confess your sins

Admit to other believers things you did wrong so that you can be forgiven.

to one another

"to each other"

so that you may be healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that God may heal you"

The prayer of a righteous person is very strong in its working

Prayer is presented as if it were an object that was strong or powerful. Alternate translation: "When the person who obeys God prays, God will do great things"

James 5:17

prayed earnestly

"prayed eagerly" or "prayed passionately"

in the land

There may have been rain in lands other than Israel, but it did not rain in Israel.

three ... six

"3 ... 6"

James 5:18

The heavens gave rain

"The heavens" probably refers to the sky, which is presented as the source of the rain. Alternate translation: "Rain fell from the sky"

the earth produced its fruit

Here the earth is presented as the source of the crops.

fruit

Here "fruit" stands for all the crops of the farmers.

James 5:19

brothers

Here this word probably refers to both men and women. Alternate translation: "fellow believers"

if anyone among you strays from the truth, and someone brings him back

A believer who stops trusting in God and obeying him is spoken of as if he were a sheep that wandered away from the flock. The person who persuades him to trust in God again is spoken of as if he were a shepherd who goes to search for the lost sheep. Alternate translation: "whenever anyone stops obeying God, and another person helps him start obeying again"

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James 5:20

whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way ... will cover over a great number of sins

James means that God will use the actions of this person to persuade the sinner to repent and be saved. But James speaks as if it were this other person who actually saved the sinner's soul from death.

will save him from death and will cover over a great number of sins

Here "death" refers to spiritual death, eternal separation from God. Alternate translation: "will save him from spiritual death, and God will forgive the sinner for all of his sins"

will cover over a great number of sins

Possible meanings are 1) the person who brings back the disobedient brother will have his sins forgiven or 2) the disobedient brother, when he returns to the Lord, will have his sins forgiven. Sins are spoken of as if they were objects that God could cover so that he would not see them, so that he would forgive them.

Introduction to 1 Peter

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Peter

Introduction (1:1-2) Praise for God's salvation of the believers (1:3-2:10) Christian living (2:11-4:11) Encouragement to persevere when suffering (4:12-5:11) Closing (5:12-14)

Who wrote the Book of 1 Peter?

The Book of 1 Peter was written by the apostle Peter. He wrote the letter to Gentile Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor.

What is the Book of 1 Peter about?

Peter stated that he wrote this letter for the purpose of "encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God" (5:12). He encouraged Christians to continue obeying God even when they were suffering. He told them to do this because Jesus would return soon. Peter also gave instructions about Christians submitting to persons in authority.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title "1 Peter" or "First Peter." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The First Letter from Peter" or "The First Letter Peter Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How were Christians treated in Rome?

Peter probably was in Rome when he wrote this letter. He gave Rome the symbolic name of "Babylon" (5:13). It appears that when Peter wrote this letter, Romans were badly persecuting Christians.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Peter, except in two places: [1 Peter 1:16]

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 Peter?

"You made your souls pure by obedience to the truth. This was for the purpose of sincere brotherly love; so love one another earnestly from the heart" (1:22). The ULB and most other modern translations read this way. Some older translations read, "You made your souls pure by obedience to the truth through the Spirit for the purpose of sincere brotherly love, so love one another earnestly from the heart."

If translations of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the readings found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

1 Peter

1 [1]Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the foreigners of the dispersion, the chosen ones, throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.[2]This is according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience and for the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. May grace be to you, and may your peace increase.

[3]May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be praised! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.[4]This is for an inheritance that will not perish, will not become stained, and will not fade away. It is reserved in heaven for you.[5]You are protected by God's power through faith for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.
[6]In this you greatly rejoice, even though now, for a little while, you may have to suffer all kinds of trials.[7]This is for the proving of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes, even though it is tested by fire. This happens so that your faith will be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revealing of Jesus Christ.

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[8]You have not seen him, but you love him. You do not see him now, but you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.[9]You are now receiving for yourselves the result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.[10]Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to come to you searched diligently and examined carefully,
[11]inquiring into what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he testified beforehand about the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.[12]It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told to you by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

[13]So gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober. Put your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.[14]As obedient children, do not conform yourselves to the desires that you followed when you were ignorant.
[15]But as the one who called you is holy, you too be holy in your whole behavior.[16]For it is written, "Be holy, because I am holy."[17]So if you call "Father" the one who judges impartially and according to each person's work, conduct yourselves in fear during your time here as foreigners.
[18]You know that it was not with perishable silver or gold that you have been redeemed from the futile behavior that you inherited from your ancestors,[19]but by the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.
[20]Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but now he has been revealed to you in these last times.
[21]Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
[22]You made your souls pure by obedience to the truth. This was for the purpose of sincere brotherly love; so love one another earnestly from a pure heart.[1][23]You have been born again, not from perishable seed, but from imperishable seed, through the living and remaining word of God.
[24]For

"All flesh is like grass,
and all its glory is like the wild flower of the grass.
The grass dries up, and the flower falls off,
[25] but the word of the Lord remains forever."

This word is the gospel that was preached to you.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, You made your souls pure by obedience to the truth through the Spirit.

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1 Peter 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Peter formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 1:24-25.

Special concepts in this chapter

What God reveals

When Jesus comes again, everyone will see how good God's people were to have faith in Jesus. Then God's people will see how gracious God has been to them, and all people will praise both God and his people.

Holiness

God wants his people to be holy because God is holy. (See: holy)

Eternity

Peter tells Christians to live for things that will last forever and not to live for the things of this world, which will end. (See: eternity)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Peter writes that his readers are glad and sad at the same time (1 Peter 1:6). He can say this because they are sad because they are suffering, but they are glad because they know that God will save them "in the last time" (1 Peter 1:5)

Links:

1 Peter 1:1 Notes 1 Peter intro

1 Peter 1:1

General Information:

Peter identifies himself as the writer and identifies and greets the believers to whom he is writing.

the foreigners of the dispersion

Peter speaks of his readers as people who live away from their homes in many different countries.

Cappadocia ... Bithynia

Along with the other places that Peter mentions, "Cappadocia" and "Bithynia" were Roman provinces located in what is now the country of Turkey.

the chosen ones

"the ones whom God the Father has chosen." God has chosen them according to his own foreknowledge.

1 Peter 1:2

the foreknowledge of God the Father

The abstract noun "foreknowledge" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Possible meanings are 1) God had determined what would happen ahead of time. Alternate translation: "what God the Father decided previously" or 2) God knew what would happen ahead of time. Alternate translation: "what God the Father knew beforehand"

for the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ

Here "the blood" refers to the death of Jesus. Just as Moses sprinkled blood on the people of Israel to symbolize their covenant with God, believers are in covenant with God because of Jesus's death.

May grace be to you, and may your peace increase

This passage speaks of grace as if it were an object that believers could possess, and of peace as if it were something that could increase in amount. Of course, grace is in reality the kind way God acts toward believers, and peace is how believers live in safety and joy with God.

1 Peter 1:3

General Information:

Peter begins to talk about the believers' salvation and faith.

our Lord Jesus Christ ... has given us new birth

The words "our" and "us" refer to Peter and those to whom he is writing.

he has given us new birth to a living hope

Here "new birth" is a metaphor meaning that God has changed people so that they live their lives in a new way. Here "living hope" is a metaphor meaning an enduring, confident expectation." Alternate translation: "he has caused us to live in a new way, having an enduring, confident hope"

he has given us new birth

"he has caused us to be born again"

1 Peter 1:4

This is for an inheritance

You can translate this using a verb. Alternate translation: "We confidently expect to receive an inheritance"

inheritance

Receiving what God has promised believers is spoken of as if it were inheriting property and wealth from a family member.

will not perish, will not become stained, and will not fade away

Peter uses three similar phrases to describe the inheritance as something that is perfect and eternal.

It is reserved in heaven for you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is reserving it in heaven for you"

1 Peter 1:5

You are protected by God's power

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God is protecting you"

by God's power

Here "power" is a way of saying that God is strong and able to protect believers.

through faith

Here "faith" refers to the fact that the believers trust in Christ. Alternate translation: "because of your faith"

that is ready to be revealed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God is ready to reveal"

in the last time

This refers to a particular time, not to an extended period of time. This particular time is as the world as we know it is ending, before the age to come begins.

1 Peter 1:6

In this you greatly rejoice

The word "this" refers to all the blessings that Peter mentions in the previous verses.

1 Peter 1:7

This is for the proving of your faith

In the same way in which fire refines gold, hardships test how well believers trust in Christ.

the proving of your faith

God wishes to test how well believers trust in Christ.

faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes, even though it is tested by fire

Faith is more valuable than gold, because gold does not last forever, even if it is refined in fire.

your faith will be found to result in praise, glory, and honor

Possible meanings are 1) that "God will honor you very highly" because of your faith or 2) that "your faith will bring praise, glory, and honor" to God.

at the revealing of Jesus Christ

"when Jesus Christ is revealed." This refers to the return of Christ. This can also be expressed with an active form. Alternate translation: "when Jesus Christ appears to all people"

1 Peter 1:8

joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory

"wonderful joy that words cannot describe"

1 Peter 1:9

the salvation of your souls

Here "soul" refers to the whole person. The abstract noun "salvation" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "your salvation" or "God saving you"

1 Peter 1:10

salvation ... grace

These words present two ideas as if they were things or objects. In reality, "salvation" refers to the action of God saving us, or to what happens as a result. Similarly, "grace" refers to the kind way in which God deals with believers.

searched diligently and examined carefully

The words "searched diligently" and "examined carefully"

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mean basically the same thing. Together these words emphasize how hard the prophets tried to understand this salvation. Alternate translation: "carefully searched to know all about this salvation" or "carefully examined everything about this salvation"

1 Peter 1:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues talking about the prophets' search for salvation.

inquiring into

Possible meanings are 1) "trying to learn" or 2) "trying to make known."

the Spirit of Christ

This is a reference to the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 1:12

It was revealed to them

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God revealed to the prophets"

into which angels long to look

"that angels want to understand"

1 Peter 1:13

So gird

"Because of this, gird." Peter uses the word "So" here to refer back to everything he has said about salvation, their faith, and the Spirit of Christ giving revelations to the prophets.

gird up the loins of your mind

Girding up the loins refers to preparing to work hard. It comes from the custom of tucking the bottom of one's robe into a belt around the waist in order to move with ease. Alternate translation: "get your minds ready"

Be sober

Here the word "sober" refers to mental clarity and alertness. Alternate translation: "Control your thoughts" or "Be careful about what you think"

Put your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you

Peter tells Christians to confidently wait to receive God's grace. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Confidently wait for the grace that God will bring to you" or "Fully trust in the grace that God will bring to you"

the grace that will be brought to you

God's way of dealing kindly with believers is spoken of as if it were an object that he will bring to them. Alternate translation: "the good things that God will kindly give to you"

when Jesus Christ is revealed

This refers to when Christ returns. This can also be expressed with an active form. See how you translated this in 1 Peter 1:7. Alternate translation: "when Jesus Christ appears to all people"

1 Peter 1:14

do not conform yourselves to the desires

"do not desire the same things" Alternate translation: "do not live to gratify the desires"

1 Peter 1:16

For it is written

This refers to God's message in the scripture. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For as God said"

Be holy, because I am holy

Here the word "I" refers to God.

1 Peter 1:17

conduct yourselves in fear during your time here as foreigners.

Christians living their lives on earth is spoken of as if they were living in a land far away from their home. Alternate translation: "be reverent while you are living your life on earth"

1 Peter 1:18

you have been redeemed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has redeemed you"

1 Peter 1:19

the precious blood of Christ

Here "blood" stands for Christ's death on the cross.

like that of a lamb without blemish or spot

Jesus died as a sacrifice so that God would forgive people's sins. This phrase shows that Jesus was perfect by comparing his blood to the blood of a spotless lamb. Alternate translation: "like the blood of the spotless lambs that the Jewish priests sacrificed"

without blemish or spot

Peter expresses the same idea in two different ways to emphasize Christ's purity. Alternate translation: "with no imperfections"

1 Peter 1:20

Christ was foreknown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God knew Christ" or "God chose Christ"

before the foundation of the world

You can translate this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "before God created the world"

he has been revealed to you

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has revealed him to you"

he has been revealed to you

Peter does not mean that his readers have actually seen Christ, but that they have learned the truth about him.

1 Peter 1:21

who raised him from the dead

Here to raise up is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. Alternate translation: "who caused him to live again so that he was no longer among the dead"

and gave him glory

"and glorified him" or "and showed that he is glorious"

your faith and hope are in God

Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "your faith and trust are in God" or "you believe in God and trust him"

1 Peter 1:22

You made your souls pure

Here the word "soul" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "You made yourselves pure"

pure

Here the idea of cleanliness refers to being acceptable to God.

by obedience to the truth

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You can translate this using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "by obeying the truth"

brotherly love

This refers to love between fellow believers.

love one another earnestly from a pure heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's thoughts or emotions. To love someone "from a pure heart" means to love some one completely with total commitment. Alternate translation: "love one another earnestly and completely"

1 Peter 1:23

born again, not from perishable seed, but from imperishable seed

Possible meanings are that Peter speaks of the word of God either 1) as the seed of a plant that grows and produces new life in believers or 2) as the tiny cells inside a man or woman that combine to cause a baby to grow inside the woman.

imperishable seed

seed that will not rot or dry up or die

through the living and remaining word of God

Peter speaks of God's word as if it were alive forever. In reality, it is God who lives forever, and whose instructions and promises last eternally.

1 Peter 1:24

General Information:

In these verses Peter quotes a passage from the prophet Isaiah relating to what he has just said about them being born of imperishable seed.

All flesh is like grass, and all its

The word "flesh" refers to humanity. The prophet Isaiah compares humanity to grass that grows and dies quickly. Alternate translation: "All people will die like grass dies, and all their"

glory is like the wild flower of the grass

Here the word "glory" refers to beauty or goodness. Isaiah compares the things that people consider to be good or beautiful about humanity to flowers that die quickly. Alternate translation: "goodness soon stops, just as flowers soon die"

1 Peter 1:25

the word of the Lord

"the message that comes from the Lord"

the gospel that was preached

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the gospel that we preached"

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2 [1]Therefore, put aside all evil, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander.[2]As newborn infants, long for pure spiritual
milk, so that through it you may grow in salvation,[3]if you have tasted that the Lord is kind.
[4]Come to him who is a living stone that has been rejected by people, but that has been chosen by God as valuable to him.
[5]You also are like living stones that are being built up to be a spiritual house in order to be a holy priesthood that offers
the spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
[6]Scripture contains this:

> "See, I am laying in Zion a cornerstone,
> chosen and valuable.
> Whoever believes in him
> will not be ashamed."

[7]The value, then, is to you who believe. But to those who do not believe,

> "The stone that was rejected by the builders,
> this has become the head of the corner,"

[8]and

> "A stone of stumbling
> and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word—which is what they were appointed to do.
[9]But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession, so that you would announce the wonderful actions of the one who called you out from darkness into his marvelous light.[10]Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. You did not receive mercy, but now you have received mercy.

[11]Beloved, I exhort you as foreigners and exiles to abstain from fleshly desires, which fight against your soul.[12]Your conduct among the Gentiles should be honorable, so that when they slander you as evildoers, they may be eyewitnesses of your good deeds and give glory to God on the day when he appears.

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[13]Be subject to every human authority for the Lord's sake. Obey both the king as supreme[14]and also the governors, who are sent for the punishment of evildoers and to praise those who do good.[15]For this is God's will, that in doing good you silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.[16]As free people, do not use your freedom as a covering for wickedness, but be like servants of God.[17]Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

[18]Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect. Be subject not only to the good and gentle masters, but also to the malicious ones.[19]For it is praiseworthy if, because he is conscious of God, a person endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.[20]For how much credit is there if you sin and then endure while being afflicted? But if you have done good and then you suffer while being punished, this is worthy of praise from God.
[21]For it is to this that you were called, because Christ also suffered for you. He left an example for you to follow in his steps.

[22] "He committed no sin,
neither was any deceit found in his mouth."

[23]When he was insulted, he gave no insult in return. When he suffered, he did not threaten back, but he gave himself over to the one who judges justly.
[24]He himself carried our sins in his body on the tree so that we would die to sin and live for righteousness. By his bruises you have been healed.[25]All of you had been straying like lost sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.

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1 Peter 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 2:6, 7, 8, and 22.

Special concepts in this chapter

Stones

Peter uses a building made of large stones as a metaphor for the church. Jesus is the cornerstone, the most important stone. The apostles and prophets are the foundation, the part of the building on which all the other stones rest. In this chapter, Christians are the stones that make up the walls of the building. (See: and cornerstone and foundation)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Milk and babies

When Peter tells his readers to "long for pure spiritual milk," he is using the metaphor of a baby craving his mother's milk. Peter wants Christians to crave God's word the same way a baby craves milk.

Links:

1 Peter 2:1 Notes

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1 Peter 2:1

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues teaching his readers about holiness and obedience.

Therefore, put aside all evil, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander

These sinful actions are spoken of as if they were objects that people could throw away. The word "Therefore" here refers back to everything that Peter has said about being holy and obedient. Alternate translation: "So then, stop being evil, deceptive, hypocritical, envious, and slanderous"

1 Peter 2:2

As newborn infants, long for pure spiritual milk

Peter speaks of his readers as if they were babies. Babies requires very pure food that they can digest easily. In the same way, believers need pure teaching from God's word. Alternate translation: "Just as babies long for their mother's breast milk, so you must yearn for pure spiritual milk"

long for

"desire intensely" or "yearn for"

pure spiritual milk

Peter speaks of the word of God as if it were spiritual milk that nourishes children.

you may grow in salvation

Here the word "salvation" refers to when God brings the salvation of his people to completion when Jesus returns

grow

Peter speaks of believers advancing in knowledge of God and faithfulness to him as if they were children growing

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up.
1 Peter 2:3
if you have tasted that the Lord is kind
Here to taste means to experience something personally. Alternate translation: "if you have experienced the Lord's kindness toward you"
1 Peter 2:4
General Information:
Peter begins to tell a metaphor about Jesus and the believers being living stones.
Come to him who is a living stone
Peter speaks of Jesus as if he were a stone in a building. Alternate translation: "Come to him who is like a stone in a building, but alive, not a dead stone"
who is a living stone
Possible meanings are 1) "who is a stone that is alive" or 2) "who is a stone that gives life."
that has been rejected by people
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that people have rejected"
but that has been chosen by God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but that God has chosen"
1 Peter 2:5
You also are ... being built up to be a spiritual house
Just as people used stones to build the temple in the Old Testament, believers are the materials that God is using to build a house in which he will live.
You also are like living stones
Peter compares his readers to stones that are alive.
that are being built up to be a spiritual house
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that God is building into a spiritual house"
a holy priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices
Here the position of priesthood stands for the priests who fulfill its duties.
1 Peter 2:6
Scripture contains this
The scriptures are spoken of as if they were a container. This passage refers to the words that a person reads in scripture. Alternate translation: "This is what a prophet wrote in the scriptures long ago"
See
The word "see" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.
a cornerstone, chosen and valuable
God is the one who chose the stone. Alternate translation: "a most important cornerstone, which I have chosen"
a cornerstone
The prophet speaks of the Messiah as the most important stone in a building.
1 Peter 2:7
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues quoting from the scriptures.
The value, then, is to you who believe
You may need to make explicit that the value is of the "cornerstone"
The stone that was rejected ... has become the head of the corner
This is a metaphor that means people, like builders, rejected Jesus, but God has made him the most important stone in a building.
The stone that was rejected by the builders
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The stone that the builders rejected"
the head of the corner
This refers to the most important stone in a building and means basically the same thing as "cornerstone" in 1 Peter 2:6.
1 Peter 2:8
A stone of stumbling and a rock that makes them fall
These two phrases share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that people will take offense at this "stone," which refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "a stone or a rock over which people will stumble"
stumble because they disobey the word
Here "the word" refers to the gospel message. To disobey means to not believe. Alternate translation: "stumble because they do not believe the message about Jesus"
which is what they were appointed to do
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for which God also appointed them"
1 Peter 2:9
a chosen people
You can clarify that God is the one who has chosen them. Alternate translation: "a people whom God has chosen"
a royal priesthood
Possible meanings are 1) "a group of priests who are also kings" or 2) "a group of priests who serve the king."
a people for God's possession
"a people who belong to God"
who called you out
"who called you to come out"
from darkness into his marvelous light
Here "darkness" refers to their condition as sinful people who did not know God, and "light" refers to their condition as people who do know God and practice righteousness. Alternate translation: "from a life of sin and ignorance of God to a life of knowing and pleasing him"
1 Peter 2:10
General Information:
Here Peter quotes a verse from the prophet Hosea. Some modern versions do not format this as a quote, which is also acceptable.
1 Peter 2:11
General Information:
Peter begins to talk about how to live Christian lives.
foreigners and exiles
These two words mean basically the same thing. Peter speaks of his readers as people who are living in foreign lands away from their home. See how you translated "foreigners" in [1 Peter 1:1]
to abstain from fleshly desires
Here the idea of flesh refers to the sinful nature of humanity in this fallen world. Alternate translation: "to not to give in to sinful desires"
fight against your soul
Here the word "soul" refers to a person's spiritual life. Peter speaks of sinful desires as soldiers that are trying to destroy

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the spiritual life of believers. Alternate translation: "seek to destroy your spiritual life"

1 Peter 2:12

Your conduct among the Gentiles should be honorable

The abstract noun "conduct" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "When you are with the Gentiles, you should always act in an honorable way"

honorable

morally good

they may be eyewitnesses of your good deeds

The abstract noun "deeds" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "they may be eyewitnesses of the good things that you do"

on the day when he appears

"on the day when he comes." This refers to the day when God will judge all people. Alternate translation: "when he comes to judge everyone"

1 Peter 2:13

every human authority

"every person who is in authority" or "everyone who has authority"

for the Lord's sake

Possible meanings are 1) that by obeying human authorities, they are obeying the Lord who established those authorities or 2) that by obeying human authorities, they will honor Jesus who also obeyed human authorities.

the king as supreme

"the king as the highest human authority"

1 Peter 2:14

who are sent for the punishment

The abstract noun "punishment" can be translated using the verb "punish," and the idea can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the king has sent to punish"

1 Peter 2:15

in doing good you silence the ignorant talk of foolish people

"by doing good you stop foolish people from speaking about things that they do not know"

1 Peter 2:16

as a covering for wickedness

Peter speaks of their condition as free people as something that they should not use to hide sinful behavior. Alternate translation: "as an excuse to do wicked things"

1 Peter 2:17

the brotherhood

This refers to all Christian believers.

1 Peter 2:18

General Information:

Peter begins to speak specifically to people who are servants of other people.

the good and gentle masters

Here the words "good" and "gentle" share similar meanings and emphasize that such masters treat their servants kindly. Alternate translation: "the very kind masters"

the malicious ones

"the cruel ones" or "the mean ones"

1 Peter 2:19

it is praiseworthy

"it is deserving of praise" or "it is pleasing to God"

because he is conscious of God, a person endures sorrows while suffering unjustly

This person accepts unjust suffering because he knows that he is obeying God.

1 Peter 2:20

For how much credit is there ... while being afflicted?

Peter asks this question to emphasize that there is nothing praiseworthy about suffering for doing something wrong. Alternate translation: "For there is no credit ... while being afflicted."

while being afflicted

Here the word "afflicted" is a metonym for "punished." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "while someone afflicts you" or "while someone punishes you"

1 Peter 2:21

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues speaking to people who are servants of other people.

it is to this that you were called

Here the word "this" refers to believers enduring while suffering for doing good, as Peter has just described. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has called you to this"

for you to follow in his steps

"so that you would follow his footprints." Peter speaks of following Jesus's example in the way that they suffer as if one were walking on the same path that Jesus had taken. Alternate translation: "so that you would imitate his behavior"

1 Peter 2:22

neither was any deceit found in his mouth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "neither did anyone find deceit in his mouth"

neither was any deceit found in his mouth

Here "deceit" refers to words that a person speaks that are intended to deceive other people. Alternate translation: "neither did he speak any lies"

1 Peter 2:23

When he was insulted, he gave no insult in return

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When people insulted him, he did not insult them back"

he gave himself over to the one who judges justly

"he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly." This means that he trusted God to take away his shame, which had been put on him by those who treated him harshly.

1 Peter 2:24

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues talking about Jesus Christ. He is still speaking to people who are servants.

He himself

This refers to Jesus, with emphasis.

carried our sins in his body on the tree

Here "carried our sins" means he suffered the punishment for our sins. Alternate translation: "suffered the punishment for our sins in his body on the tree"

the tree

This is a reference to the cross on which Jesus died, which was made of wood.

By his bruises you have been healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"God has healed you because people bruised him"
1 Peter 2:25
you had been straying like lost sheep
Peter compares his readers' actions before they had believed in Christ to the way lost sheep wander away from their shepherd.
the shepherd ... of your souls
The word "shepherd" is a metaphor for a person who protects another, and the word "souls" is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "your shepherd..."

3 [1]In the same way, you who are wives should submit to your own husbands. Do this so that even if some men are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word, through their wives' behavior,[2]having been eyewitnesses of your respectful, pure behavior.
[3]Do not let your adornment be outward—the braiding of hair and putting on of gold ornaments, or the clothing you wear.
[4]Instead, let your adornment be the inner person of the heart with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious before God.
[5]For this is how holy women long ago who hoped in God adorned themselves, by submitting to their husbands.[6]In this way Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are now her children if you do what is good and if you are not afraid of trouble.

[7]In the same way, you husbands should live with your wives according to understanding, as with a weaker container, a woman. You should give them honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life. Do this so that your prayers will not be hindered.

[8]Finally, all of you, be like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, and humble.[9]Do not pay back evil for evil or insult for insult. On the contrary, continue to bless, because for this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.
[10] "The one who wants to love life
and see good days
should stop his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit.

[11] Let him turn away from what is bad and do what is good.
Let him seek peace and pursue it.

[12] The eyes of the Lord see the righteous,
and his ears hear their prayers.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

[13]Who is the one who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good?[14]But even if you suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats. Do not be troubled.
[15]Instead, set apart the Lord Christ in your hearts as holy. Always be ready to give an account to anyone who asks about the hope you have—[16]however, with meekness and respect. Have a good conscience so that, in whatever you are spoken of as evil, the people who slander your good life in Christ may be put to shame.[17]It is better, if it should be God's will, that you suffer for doing good than for doing evil.
[18]Christ also suffered once for sins. He who is righteous suffered for us, who were unrighteous, so that he would bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but he was made alive by the Spirit.[19]By the Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits who are now in prison.[20]They were disobedient when the patience of God was waiting in the days of Noah, in the days of the building of an ark, and God saved a few people—eight souls—by means of the water.
[21]This is a symbol of the baptism that saves you now—not as a washing away of dirt from the body, but as the appeal of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.[22]Christ is at the right hand of God. He went into heaven. Angels, authorities, and powers must submit to him.

1 Peter 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 3:10-12.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Outward ornaments"
Most people want to look good so other people will like them and think they are good people. Women are especially

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careful to look good by wearing nice clothes and jewels. Peter is saying that what a woman thinks and says and does are more important to God than how she looks.

Unity

Peter wanted his readers to agree with each other. More importantly, he wanted them to love each other and be patient with each other.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

Peter quotes a psalm that describes God as if he were a person with eyes, ears, and a face. However, God is a spirit, so he does not have physical eyes or ears or a physical face. But he does know what people do, and he does act against wicked people.

Links:

1 Peter 3:1 Notes

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1 Peter 3:1

General Information:

Peter begins to speak specifically to women who are wives.

In the same way, you who are wives should submit to your own husbands

Just as believers are to "Obey every human authority" (1 Peter 2:13) and servants are to "be subject" to their masters (1 Peter 2:18), wives are to submit to their husbands. The words "Obey," "be subject," and "submit" translate the same word.

some men are disobedient to the word

Here "the word" refers to the gospel message. To disobey means that they do not believe. See how you translated a similar phrase in [1 Peter 2:8]

they may be won

"they may be persuaded to believe in Christ." This means that the unbelieving husbands will become believers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they may become believers"

without a word

"without the wife saying a word." Here "a word" refers to anything the wife might speak about Jesus.

1 Peter 3:2

having been eyewitnesses of your respectful, pure behavior

The abstract noun "behavior" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "having seen for themselves that you behave sincerely and respectfully"

your respectful, pure behavior

Possible meanings are 1) "your sincere behavior toward them and the way that you honor them" or 2) "your pure behavior toward them and the way that you honor God."

1 Peter 3:3

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues speaking to women who are wives.

your adornment

"the things that make you beautiful" or "your beauty"

1 Peter 3:4

the inner person of the heart

Here the words "inner person" and "heart" refer to the inward character and personality of a person. Alternate translation: "what you really are on the inside"

a gentle and quiet spirit

"a gentle and peaceful attitude." Here the word "quiet" means "peaceful" or "calm." The word "spirit" refers to a person's attitude or temperament.

which is precious before God

Peter speaks of God's opinion of a person as if that person were standing directly in front of him. Alternate translation: "which God considers to be precious"

1 Peter 3:5

who hoped in God

The holy women confidently expected that God would do what he promised to do. Alternate translation: "who fully trusted God"

1 Peter 3:6

called him her lord

said that he was her lord, that is, her master

You are now her children

Peter says that believing women who act as Sarah acted can be thought of as if they were her actual children.

1 Peter 3:7

General Information:

Peter begins to speak specifically to men who are husbands.

In the same way

This refers back to how Sarah and other godly women obeyed their husbands in 1 Peter 3:5 and 1 Peter 3:6.

wives according to understanding, as with a weaker container, a woman

Peter speaks of women as if they were containers, as men are sometimes also spoken of. The abstract noun "understanding" can also be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "wives, understanding that the woman is the weaker partner"

give them honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life

You can translate this using verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "honor them because they will also receive by grace the eternal life that God gives"

heirs of the grace of life

Eternal life is often spoken of as if it were something that people inherit.

Do this

Here "this" refers to the ways husbands should treat their wives. Alternate translation: "Live with your wives in this way"

so that your prayers will not be hindered

To "hinder" is to prevent something from happening. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that nothing will hinder your prayers" or "so that nothing will keep you from praying as you should"

1 Peter 3:8

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General Information:
Peter begins to speak again to all of the believers.
be like-minded, compassionate
"have the same opinion and be compassionate" or "have the same attitude and be compassionate"
tenderhearted
being gentle and compassionate towards others
1 Peter 3:9
Do not pay back evil for evil or insult for insult
Peter speaks of responding to the actions of another person as remitting payment for those actions. Alternate translation: "Do not do evil to someone who does evil to you or insult someone who insults you"
continue to bless
You can clarify the object of blessing. Alternate translation: "continue to bless those who do evil to you or insult you"
for this you were called
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God called you for this"
that you might inherit a blessing
Peter speaks of receiving God's blessing as receiving an inheritance. Alternate translation: "that you might receive God's blessing as your permanent possession"
1 Peter 3:10
General Information:
In these verses Peter quotes from the Psalms.
to love life and see good days
These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the desire to have a good life.
see good days
Here experiencing good things is spoken of as seeing good days. The word "days" refers to one's lifetime. Alternate translation: "experience good things during life"
stop his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit
The words "tongue" and "lips" refer to the person who is speaking. The phrases "his tongue from evil" and "his lips from speaking deceit" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the command not to lie. Alternate translation: "stop himself from saying evil and deceitful things"
1 Peter 3:11
Let him turn away from what is bad
Here "turn away" is a metaphor that means to stop doing something. Alternate translation: "Let him stop doing what is bad"
1 Peter 3:12
The eyes of the Lord see the righteous
The word "eyes" refers to the Lord's ability to know things. The Lord's approval of the righteous is spoken of as his seeing them. Alternate translation: "The Lord sees the righteous" or "The Lord approves of the righteous"
his ears hear their prayers
The word "ears" refers to the Lord's awareness of what people say. That the Lord hears their prayers implies that he also responds to them. Alternate translation: "he hears their prayers" or "he grants their prayers"
the face of the Lord is against
The word "face" refers to the Lord's will to oppose his enemies. Opposing someone is spoken of as setting one's face against that person. Alternate translation: "the Lord opposes"
1 Peter 3:13
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues teaching the believers how to live Christian lives.
Who is the one who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good?
Peter asks this question to emphasize that it is unlikely that someone would harm them if they do good things. Alternate translation: "No one will harm you if you do good things."
1 Peter 3:14
suffer because of righteousness
You can translate this with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "suffer because you do what is right"
you are blessed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will bless you"
Do not fear their threats. Do not be troubled
These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that believers should not be afraid of those who persecute them. Alternate translation: "Do not be afraid of what people might do to you"
their threats
Here the word "their" refers to anyone who might try to harm those to whom Peter is writing.
1 Peter 3:15
Instead, set apart
"Instead of being troubled, set apart"
set apart the Lord Christ in your hearts as holy
The phrase "set apart the Lord Christ ... as holy" is a metaphor for acknowledging Christ's holiness. Here "hearts" is a metonym for the "inner person." Alternate translation: "acknowledge within yourselves that the Lord Christ is holy" or "honor the Lord Christ as holy within yourselves"
about the hope you have
Here "hope" means "a confident expectation." Alternate translation: "about why you have confidence in God" or "about what you are confidently expecting God to do for you"
1 Peter 3:16
however, with meekness and respect
This describes how Christias should answer people who ask about their hope. Alternate translation: "but do this with gentleness and respect"
1 Peter 3:17
if it should be God's will
This statement is hypothetical. Peter is saying that it is sometimes God's will that his people suffer, but it is not always God's will.
1 Peter 3:18
Connecting Statement:
Peter explains how Christ suffered and what Christ accomplished by suffering.
suffered for us
The word "us" includes the people Peter was writing to.
so that he would bring us to God
Peter probably means here that Christ died in order to create a close relationship between us and God.

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He was put to death in the flesh
Here "flesh" refers to Christ's body; Christ was physically put to death. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "People put Christ to death physically"
he was made alive by the Spirit
Possible meanings are 1) the Holy Spirit made Jesus alive. Alternate translation: "the Spirit made him alive" or 2) Jesus now had a spiritual body that would never die. Alternate translation: "he was made alive in the spirit" or "he was made alive with a spiritual body"
1 Peter 3:19
By the Spirit, he went
Possible meanings are 1) "By the Holy Spirit's power, he went" or 2) "In his spiritual existence, he went."
the spirits who are now in prison
Possible meanings of the word "spirits" are 1) "evil spirits" or 2) "spirits of the dead people."
1 Peter 3:20
when the patience of God was waiting
God's patience is a metonym for God himself. Peter writes of God's patience as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "when God was waiting patiently"
in the days of Noah, in the days of the building of an ark
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "during the time of Noah, when he was building an ark"
1 Peter 3:21
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
"because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This phrase completes the thought, "This is a symbol of the baptism that saves you now."
1 Peter 3:22
Christ is at the right hand of God
To be at the "right hand of God" is a symbol that God has given Jesus the greatest honor and authority over all others. Alternate translation: "Christ is beside God in the place of honor and authority"
submit to him
"submit to Jesus Christ"

4 [1]Therefore, because Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same intention. For whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.[2]As a result, such a person, for the rest of his time in the flesh, no longer lives for men's desires, but for God's will.
[3]For the time that has passed is enough for you to do the desire of the Gentiles, living in sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, having wild parties, and committing lawless acts of idolatry.[4]They think it is strange that you do not join with them in these floods of reckless behavior, so they speak evil about you.[5]They will give an account to the one who is ready to judge the living and the dead.[6]For this purpose the gospel was preached also to the dead, so that, although they have been judged in the flesh as humans, they may live in the spirit the way God does.

[7]The end of all things is coming near. Therefore be of sound mind, and be sober in your thinking for the sake of prayers.
[8]Above all things, have fervent love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins.[9]Be hospitable to one another without complaining.
[10]As each one of you has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's grace in its various forms.[11]If anyone speaks, let it be with God's words. If anyone serves, let it be from the strength that God supplies. Do these things so that in all ways God would be glorified through Jesus Christ. May there be to Jesus Christ glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

[12]Beloved, do not regard as strange the testing in the fire that has come upon you, as if something strange were happening to you.[13]Instead, however much you experience the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, so that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.[14]If you are insulted for Christ's name, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.
[15]But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or a meddler.[16]Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; instead, let him glorify God with that name.
[17]For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God. If it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who disobey God's gospel?
[18]And

> "If it is difficult for the righteous to be saved,
> what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

[19]Therefore, let those who suffer because of God's will commit their souls to the faithful Creator in well-doing.

1 Peter 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with

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the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 4:18.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ungodly Gentiles

This passage uses the term "Gentiles" to refer to all ungodly people who are not Jews. It does not include Gentiles who have become Christians. "Sensuality, passion, drunkenness, drunken celebrations, having wild parties, and committing disgusting acts of idolatry" were actions that characterized or typified the ungodly Gentiles. (See: godly)

Martyrdom

It is apparent that Peter is speaking to many Christians who are experiencing great persecution and are facing death for their beliefs.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Let it" and "Let none" and "Let him" and "Let those"

Peter uses these phrases to tell his readers what he wants them to do. They are like commands because he wants his readers to obey. But it is as if he is telling one person what he wants other people to do.

Links:

1 Peter 4:1 Notes

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1 Peter 4:1

Connecting Statement:

Peter continues to teach the believers about Christian living. He begins by giving a conclusion to his thoughts from the previous chapter about Christ's sufferings.

in the flesh

Here "flesh" means "body." Alternate translation: "in his body" or "while here on earth"

arm yourselves with the same intention

The phrase "arm yourselves" makes readers think of soldiers who get their weapons ready for battle. It also pictures "the same intention" as a weapon or perhaps as a piece of armor. Here this metaphor means that believers should be determined in their mind to suffer as Jesus did. Alternate translation: "prepare yourselves with the same thoughts that Christ had"

has ceased from sin

"has stopped sinning"

1 Peter 4:2

for men's desires

for the things that sinful people normally desire

1 Peter 4:3

the time that has passed is enough for you to do the desire of the Gentiles

Peter wanted the believers to stop doing the sinful things the Gentiles did. He was not praising them for doing those things enough. Alternate translation: "you have been doing for too long the things that the Gentiles like to do"

drunken celebrations, having wild parties

These terms refer to activities in which people gather to drink too much alcohol and behave in a shameful manner.

1 Peter 4:4

floods of reckless behavior

These examples of wild, boundless sin are spoken of as if they were great floods of water that sweep over people.

reckless behavior

doing everything they can to satisfy the desires of their bodies

1 Peter 4:5

the one who is ready to judge

Possible meanings are 1) "God, who is ready to judge" or 2) "Christ, who is ready to judge"

the living and the dead

This means all people, whether they are still alive or have died. Alternate translation: "every person"

1 Peter 4:6

the gospel was preached also to the dead

Possible meanings are 1) "the gospel was preached also to people who had already died" or 2) "the gospel was preached also to those who were alive but are now dead"

the gospel was preached

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) Christ preached. Alternate translation: "Christ preached the gospel" or 2) men preached. Alternate translation: "men preached the gospel"

they have been judged in the flesh as humans

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) God judged them in this life on earth. Alternate translation: "God judged them in their bodies as humans" or 2) men judged them according to human standards. Alternate translation: "men judged them in their bodies as humans"

judged in the flesh as humans

This is a reference to death as the ultimate form of judgment.

live in the spirit the way God does

Possible meanings are 1) "live spiritually as God lives because the Holy Spirit will enable them to do so" or 2) "live according to God's standards by the power of the Holy Spirit"

1 Peter 4:7

The end of all things

This refers to the end of the world at Christ's second coming.

is coming

The end that will happen soon is spoken of as if it is physically coming closer in distance. Alternate translation: "will soon happen"

be of sound mind, and be sober in your thinking

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Peter uses them to emphasize the need to think clearly about life since the end of the world is near.

be sober in your thinking

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Here the word "sober" refers to mental clarity and alertness. See how you translated this in [1 Peter 1:13]

1 Peter 4:8

Above all things

"Most importantly of all"

for love covers a multitude of sins

Peter describes "love" as if it were a person who places a cover over the sins of others. Possible meanings are 1) "for a person who loves will not try to find out if another person has sinned" or 2) "for a person who loves will forgive the sins of other people, even if those sins are many"

1 Peter 4:9

Be hospitable

Show kindness to and welcome guests and travelers

1 Peter 4:10

As each one of you has received a gift

This refers to special spiritual abilities that God gives to believers. Alternate translation: "Because each one of you has received a special spiritual ability as a gift from God"

1 Peter 4:11

so that in all ways God would be glorified

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that in all ways you will glorify God"

glorified

praised, honored

1 Peter 4:12

do not regard as strange the testing

"do not be surprised by the testing"

the testing in the fire that has come upon you

In the same way that fire refines gold, trials test and refine a person's faith. Alternate translation: "the difficult trial that you are experiencing" or "your troubles that are like a test by fire"

1 Peter 4:14

If you are insulted for Christ's name,

Here the word "name" refers to Christ himself. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If people insulted you because you believe in Christ"

the Spirit of glory and of God

This refers to the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "the Spirit of glory, who is the Spirit of God," or "the glorious Spirit of God"

rests on you

"is with you" or "stays with you" or "lives with you"

1 Peter 4:15

a meddler

This refers to a person who gets involved with the affairs of others without having a right to do so.

1 Peter 4:16

with that name

"because he bears the name Christian" or "because people have recognized him as a Christian." The words "that name" refer to the word "Christian."

1 Peter 4:17

household of God

This phrase refers to believers, whom Peter speaks of as God's family.

If it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who disobey God's gospel?

Peter use this question to emphasize that God's judgment will be more severe for people who reject the gospel than for believers. Alternate translation: "If it begins with us, the outcome for those who do not obey God's gospel will be much worse."

what will be the outcome for those

"what will happen to those"

those who disobey God's gospel

"those who do not believe God's gospel." Here the word "disobey" means to not believe.

1 Peter 4:18

the righteous ... what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?

Peter use this question to emphasize that sinners will suffer much more than believers do. Alternate translation: "the righteous man ... the outcome will be much worse for the ungodly and the sinner."

If it is difficult for the righteous to be saved

Here the word "saved" refers to final salvation when Christ returns. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If the righteous person experiences many difficulties before God saves him"

what will become of the ungodly and the sinner

"what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner"

the ungodly and the sinner

The "the ungodly" is a nominal adjective that means "the ungodly person." The words "ungodly" and "sinner" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the wickedness of these people. Alternate translation: "ungodly sinners"

1 Peter 4:19

commit their souls

Here the word "souls" refers to the whole person. Alternate translation: "commit themselves" or "commit their lives"

in well-doing

The abstract noun "well-doing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "while they do good" or "while they live rightly"

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5 [1]I am exhorting the elders among you—I, who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and am also one who will share in the glory that will be revealed:[2]Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God would have you serve—not for shameful profit but eagerly.[3]Do not act as lords over those allotted to you. Instead, be examples to the flock.[4]Then when the Chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive an unfading crown of glory.
[5]In the same way, you younger men, submit to the older men. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility and serve one another.

"For God is opposed to the proud,

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but he gives grace to the humble."

[6]Therefore humble yourselves under God's mighty hand so that he may exalt you in due time.[7]Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
[8]Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil is walking around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.
[9]Stand against him. Be strong in your faith. You know that your brotherhood in the world is enduring the same sufferings.
[10]After you suffer for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will perfect you, confirm you, strengthen you, and establish you.[11]To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

[12]I regard Silvanus as a faithful brother, and I have written to you briefly through him. I am exhorting you and I am testifying to you that what I have written is the true grace of God. Stand in it.[13]The woman who is in Babylon, who is chosen together with you, greets you. Also Mark, my son, greets you.[14]Greet one another with a kiss of love.May peace be to you all who are in Christ.

1 Peter 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Most people in the ancient Near East would end a letter the way Peter ends this one.

Special concepts in this chapter

Crowns

The crown that the Chief Shepherd will give is a reward, something that people who do something especially good receive. (See: reward)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Lion

All animals are afraid of lions because they are fast and strong, and they eat almost every other kind of animal. They also eat people. Satan wants to make God's people afraid, so Peter uses the simile of a lion to teach his readers that Satan can harm their bodies, but if they trust in God and obey him, they will always be God's people, and God will care for them.

Babylon

Babylon was the evil nation that in Old Testament times had destroyed Jerusalem, taken the Jews away from their homes, and ruled over them. Peter uses Babylon as a metaphor for the nation that was persecuting the Christians he was writing to. Many scholars think that Peter was referring to Rome because the Romans were persecuting the Christians.

Links:

1 Peter 5:1 Notes

1 Peter 5:1

General Information:

Peter speaks specifically to men who are elders.

the glory that will be revealed

This is a reference to Christ's second coming. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the glory of Christ that God will reveal"

1 Peter 5:2

Be shepherds of God's flock

Peter speaks of the believers as a flock of sheep and the elders as the shepherds who care for them.

1 Peter 5:3

Do not act as lords over those allotted to you. Instead, be examples

Elders are to lead by example and not act toward the people as a harsh master would toward his servants.

those allotted to you

You can translate this in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom God has placed in your care"

1 Peter 5:4

Then when the Chief Shepherd is revealed

Peter speaks of Jesus as if he were a shepherd who has authority over all other shepherds. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "When Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, appears" or "When God reveals Jesus, the Chief Shepherd"

an unfading crown of glory

Here the word "crown" represents the reward that someone receives as a symbol of victory. The word "unfading" means that it is eternal. Alternate translation: "a glorious prize that will last forever"

1 Peter 5:5

General Information:

Peter gives an instruction specifically to younger men and then continues to instruct all of the believers.

In the same way

This refers back to the way the elders were to submit to the Chief Shepherd as Peter described in 1 Peter 5:1 through 1 Peter 5:4.

All of you

This refers to all believers, not just the younger men.

clothe yourselves with humility

Peter speaks of the moral quality of humility as if it were

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clothing that people could put on. Alternate translation: "act humbly toward each other" or "act with humility"
1 Peter 5:6
under God's mighty hand so
Here the word "hand" refers to God's power to save the humble and punish the proud. Alternate translation: "under God's great power so" or "before God, realizing that he has great power, so"
1 Peter 5:7
Cast all your anxiety on him
Peter speaks of anxiety as if it were a heavy burden that a person places on God, rather than carrying it himself. Alternate translation: "Trust him with everything that worries you" or "Let him take care of all the things that trouble you"
1 Peter 5:8
Be sober
Here the word "sober" refers to mental clarity and alertness. See how you translated this in [1 Peter 1:13]
the devil is walking around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour
Peter compares the devil to a roaring lion. Just as a hungry lion completely devours its prey, the devil is seeking to completely destroy the faith of believers.
walking around
The context indicates that this is part of the simile of the "roaring lion," so if your language has a word for the way an animal walks when it is hunting, you may use it here.
1 Peter 5:9
Stand against him
Standing is a metonym for fighting. Alternate translation: "Fight against him"
your brotherhood in the world is enduring
Peter speaks of fellow believers as members of the same family. Alternate translation: "your fellow believers who are in the world are enduring"
in the world
"in various places throughout the world"
1 Peter 5:10
for a little while
"for a short time"
the God of all grace
Here the word "grace" may refer either to the things that God gives or to God's character. Possible meanings are 1) "the God who always gives us what we need" or 2) "the God who is always gracious."
who called you to his eternal glory in Christ
"who chose you to share his eternal glory in heaven because you are joined to Christ"
perfect you
"make you perfect" or "restore you" or "make you well again"
confirm you, strengthen you
These two expressions have similar meanings, that is, that God will enable the believers to trust in him and to obey him regardless of any suffering they may experience.
1 Peter 5:12
General Information:
This is the end of Peter's letter. Here he gives his final remarks about his letter and his closing greetings.
I have written to you briefly through him
Silvanus wrote the words that Peter told him to write in the letter.
what I have written is the true grace of God
"I have written about the true grace of God." Here the word "grace" refers to the gospel message, which tells of the kind things that God has done for believers.
Stand in it
The word "it" refers to "the true grace of God." Being strongly committed to this grace is spoken of as standing firmly in one place, refusing to move. Alternate translation: "Remain strongly committed to it"
1 Peter 5:13
The woman who is in Babylon
Here "The woman" probably refers to the group of believers who live in "Babylon." Possible meanings for "Babylon" are 1) it is a symbol for the city of Rome, 2) it is a symbol for anywhere that Christians are suffering, or 3) it refers literally to the city of Babylon. It most likely refers to the city of Rome.
who is chosen together with you
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God has chosen as he has chosen you"
my son
Peter speaks of Mark as if he were his spiritual son. Alternate translation: "my spiritual son" or "who is like a son to me"
1 Peter 5:14
a kiss of love
"a loving kiss" or "a kiss to show your love for each other"

Introduction to 2 Peter

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 Peter

Introduction (1:1-2) Reminder to live good lives because God has enabled us to (1:3-21) Warning against false teachers (2:1-22) Encouragement to prepare for the second coming of Jesus (3:1-17)

Who wrote the Book of 2 Peter?

The author identified himself as Simon Peter. Simon Peter was an apostle. He also wrote 1 Peter. Peter probably wrote this letter while in a prison in Rome just before he died. Peter called this letter his second letter, so we can date it after 1 Peter. He addressed the letter to the same audience as his first letter. The audience probably was Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor.

What is the Book of 2 Peter about?

Peter wrote this letter to encourage believers to live good lives. He warned them about false teachers who were saying Jesus was taking too long to return. He told them that Jesus was not slow in returning. Instead, God was giving people time to repent so that they would be saved.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "2 Peter" or "Second Peter." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Second Letter from Peter" or "The Second Letter Peter Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who were the people Peter spoke against?

It is possible that the people Peter spoke against were those who would become known as Gnostics. These teachers distorted the teachings of scripture for their own gain. They lived in immoral ways and taught others to do the same.

What does it mean that God inspired Scripture?

The doctrine of scripture is a very important one. 2 Peter helps readers to understand that while each writer of scripture had his own distinct way of writing, God is the true author of scripture (1:20-21).

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural "you"

In this book, the word "I" refers to Peter. Also, the word "you" is always plural and refers to Peter's audience.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 2 Peter?

For the following verses, some modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If translations of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the readings found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"to be kept in chains of lower darkness until the judgment" (2:4). Some modern versions and older versions have, "to be kept in pits of lower darkness until the judgment." "They enjoy their deceitful actions while they are feasting with you" (2:13). Some versions have, "They enjoy their actions while they are feasting with you in love feasts." "Beor" (2:15). Some other translations read, "Bosor." "The elements will be burned with fire, and the earth and the deeds in it will be revealed" (3:10). Other versions have, "The elements will be burned with fire, and the earth and the deeds in it will be burned up."

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2 Peter

1 [1]Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received the same precious faith as we have
received, faith in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

[2]May grace and peace increase in measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.
[3]By his divine power, all things for life and godliness have been given to us through the knowledge of him who called us through his own glory and excellence.[4]Through these he gave us precious and great promises, so that you might be sharers in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world that is caused by evil desires.
[5]For this reason, do your best to add goodness to your faith, and to goodness add knowledge,[6]to knowledge add self-control, to self-control add endurance, to endurance add godliness,[7]to godliness add brotherly love, and to brotherly love add love.
[8]If these things are in you and grow in you, they will keep you from being barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.[9]But whoever lacks these things is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten he has been cleansed from his past sins.
[10]Therefore, brothers, do your best to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, you will not stumble.
[11]In this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[12]Therefore I will always be ready to remind you of these things, although you know them, and although you are strong in the truth you now have.[13]I think it is proper for me, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by way of reminder.[14]For I know that the putting off of my tent will be soon, because our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed this to me.[15]I will make every effort to see that after my departure you may always be able to remember these things.
[16]For we did not follow cleverly invented myths when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.[17]For he received honor and glory from God the Father when a voice was brought to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with him I am well pleased."[18]We ourselves heard this voice brought from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.
[19]For we have the prophetic word made more certain, to which you would do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.[20]Above all, you must understand that no

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prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.[21]For no prophecy was ever brought by the will of man, but men spoke from God when they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Peter formally introduces this letter in verses 1-2. Writers often began letters in this way in the ancient Near East.

Special concepts in this chapter

Knowledge of God

To have knowledge of God means to belong to him or to have a relationship with him. Here, "knowledge" is more than just mentally knowing about God. It is a knowledge that causes God to save a person and to give him grace and peace. (See: know)

Living godly lives

Peter teaches that God has given believers all that they need for living godly lives. Therefore, believers should do everything they can to obey God more and more. If believers continue to do this, then they will be effective and productive through their relationship with Jesus. However, if believers do not continue living godly lives, then it is like they have forgotten what God did through Christ to save them. (See: godly and save)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The truth of Scripture

Peter teaches that the prophecies in Scripture were not made up by men. The Holy Spirit revealed God's message to the men who spoke them or wrote them down. Also, Peter and the other apostles did not make up the stories they told people about Jesus. They witnessed what Jesus did and heard God call Jesus his son.

Links:

2 Peter 1:1 Notes 2 Peter intro

2 Peter 1:1

General Information:

Peter identifies himself as the writer and identifies and greets the believers he is writing to.

slave and apostle of Jesus Christ

Peter speaks of being Jesus Christ's servant. He also was given the position and authority of being Christ's apostle.

to those who have received the same precious faith

That these people have received faith implies that God has given that faith to them. Alternate translation: "to those to whom God has given the same precious faith"

to those who have received

"to you who have received." Peter addresses all believers who may read this letter.

we have received

Here the word "we" refers to Peter and the other apostles, but not to those to whom he is writing. Alternate translation: "we apostles have received"

2 Peter 1:2

May grace and peace increase in measure

God is the one who will give grace and peace to believers. Alternate translation: "May God increase your grace and your peace"

May grace and peace increase

Peter speaks of peace as if it were an object that could increase in size or numbers.

in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

You can translate "knowledge" using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "through your knowing God and Jesus our Lord"

2 Peter 1:3

General Information:

Peter begins to teach the believers about living godly lives.

for life and godliness

Here "godliness" describes the word "life." Alternate translation: "for a godly life"

through the knowledge of him who called us

You may need to make specific that it is Peter and his readers who know God. Alternate translation: "through our knowledge of God, who called us" or "because we know God, who has called us"

who called us

Here the word "us" refers to Peter and his audience.

through his own glory and excellence

Possible meanings are 1) "by showing us his own glory and greatness" or 2) "to share his own glory and excellence."

2 Peter 1:4

Through these

Here "these" refers to "his own glory and virtue."

you might be sharers

"you might share"

the divine nature

what God is like

having escaped the corruption in the world that is caused by evil desires

Peter speaks of people not suffering from the corruption that wicked desires cause as if they were escaping from that corruption. The word "corruption" is an abstract noun that can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "and so that the wicked desires in this world will no longer corrupt you"

2 Peter 1:5

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For this reason
This refers to what Peter has just said in the previous verses. Alternate translation: "Because of what God has done"
2 Peter 1:7
brotherly love
This refers to love for a friend or family member and likely means love for one's spiritual family.
2 Peter 1:8
these things
This refers to faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love, which Peter mentioned in the previous verses.
they will keep you from being barren or unfruitful
Peter speaks of these qualities as if they were people who could change his readers, and he speaks of his readers as if they were cattle or a food crop. This can be translated using the opposites of "barren" and "unfruitful." Alternate translation: "because you have them you will not be barren or unfruitful" or "they will enable you to do much valuable work"
barren or unfruitful
A "barren" animal is one that cannot bear offspring, and an "unfruitful" plant is one that cannot bear food. These are metaphors that describe people who do not do valuable work. If your language has only one word for these two ideas, you can treat them as a doublet and combine them. Alternate translation: "unproductive"
in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ
You can translate "knowledge" using a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "through your knowing God and Jesus our Lord"
2 Peter 1:9
whoever lacks these things
any person who does not have these things
is so nearsighted that he is blind
Peter speaks of a person who does not possess these qualities as if he were a nearsighted or blind person because he does not understand their value. Alternate translation: "is like a shortsighted person who cannot see their importance"
he has been cleansed from his past sins
You can use a verb to translate this. Alternate translation: "that God has cleansed him from his old sins"
2 Peter 1:10
make your calling and election sure
The words "calling" and "election" share similar meanings and refer to God's choosing people to belong to him. Alternate translation: "make sure that God has really chosen you to belong to him"
you will not stumble
Here the word "stumble" refers either to 1) committing sin. Alternate translation: "you will not practice sinful behavior" or 2) becoming unfaithful to Christ. Alternate translation: "you will not become unfaithful to Christ"
2 Peter 1:11
there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will richly provide for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom"
an entrance
the opportunity to enter
2 Peter 1:12
Connecting Statement:
Peter tells the believers about his obligation to continue reminding them and teaching them.
you are strong in the truth
"you strongly believe the truth of these things"
2 Peter 1:13
to stir you up by way of reminder
Here the word "stir" means to awaken someone from sleep. Peter speaks of causing his readers to think about these things as if he were waking them from sleep. Alternate translation: "to remind you of these things so that you will think about them"
as long as I am in this tent
Peter speaks of his body as if it were a tent that he is wearing and will take off. Being in his body represents being alive, and taking it off represents dying. Alternate translation: "as long as I am in this body" or "as long as I am alive"
2 Peter 1:14
the putting off of my tent will be soon
Peter speaks of his body as if it were a tent that he is wearing and will take off. Being in his body represents being alive, and taking it off represents dying. Alternate translation: "I will soon take off this body" or "I will die soon"
2 Peter 1:15
you may always be able to remember these things
Here the words "these things" refers to everything that Peter has said in the previous verses.
after my departure
Peter speaks of his death as if he were leaving one place to go to another. Alternate translation: "after my death" or "after I die"
2 Peter 1:16
Connecting Statement:
Peter continues to explain his teachings to the believers and explains why they are trustworthy.
For we did not follow cleverly invented myths
Here the word "we" refers to Peter and the other apostles, but not to his readers. Alternate translation: "For we apostles did not follow cleverly made-up stories"
the power and the coming
These two phrases may refer to the same thing and be translated as a single phrase. Alternate translation: "the powerful coming"
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ
Possible meanings are 1) the future second coming of the Lord Jesus or 2) the first coming of the Lord Jesus.
our Lord Jesus Christ
Here the word "our" refers to all believers.
2 Peter 1:17
when a voice was brought to him by the Majestic Glory
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "when he heard a voice come from the Majestic Glory" or

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"when he heard the voice of the Majestic Glory speak to him" or "when the Majestic Glory spoke to him"

the Majestic Glory, saying

Peter refers to God in terms of his glory. This is a euphemism that avoids using God's name, out of reverence for him. Alternate translation: "God, the Supreme Glory, saying"

2 Peter 1:18

We ourselves heard this voice brought from heaven

With the word "We," Peter is referring to himself and to the disciples James and John, who heard the voice of God. Alternate translation: "We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven"

heard this voice brought from heaven

"heard the voice of the one who spoke from heaven"

we were with him

"we were with Jesus"

2 Peter 1:19

General Information:

Peter begins to warn the believers about false teachers.

For we have the prophetic word made more certain

The things that Peter and the other apostles saw, which he described in the previous verses, confirm what the prophets spoke. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For the things that we saw make this prophetic message more sure"

For we have

Here the word "we" refers to all believers, including Peter and his readers.

the prophetic word made

This refers to the Old Testament. Alternate translation: "the scriptures, which the prophets spoke, made"

to which you would do well to pay attention

Peter instructs the believers to pay close attention to the prophetic message.

as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns

Peter compares the prophetic word to a lamp that gives light in the dark until light comes in the morning. The coming of morning is a reference to Christ's coming.

the morning star rises in your hearts

Peter speaks of Christ as the "morning star," which indicates that daybreak and the end of darkness is near. Christ will bring light into the hearts of believers, ending all doubt and bringing full understanding of who he is. Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's minds. Alternate translation: "Christ shines his light into your hearts like the morning star shines its light into the world"

the morning star

The "morning star" refers to the planet Venus, which sometimes rises just before the sun and indicates that daybreak is near.

2 Peter 1:20

Above all, you must understand

"Most importantly, you must understand"

no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation

Possible meanings are 1) the prophets did not make their prophecies on their own or 2) people must rely on the Holy Spirit to understand the prophecies or 3) people must interpret the prophecies with the help of the entire Christian community of believers.

2 Peter 1:21

men spoke from God when they were carried along by the Holy Spirit

Peter speaks of the Holy Spirit helping the prophets to write what God wanted them to write as if the Holy Spirit were carrying them from one place to another. Alternate translation: "men spoke from God as the Holy Spirit directed them"

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2 [1]False prophets came to the people, and false teachers will also come to you. They will secretly bring with them destructive heresies, and they will deny the master who bought them. They are bringing quick destruction upon themselves.[2]Many will follow their sensuality, and through them the way of truth will be slandered.[3]In their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation has been coming for a long time, and their destruction is not asleep.

[4]For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but delivered them into hell to be kept in chains of darkness until the judgment,[1][5]and if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, along with seven others when he brought a flood on the world of the ungodly,[6]and if he reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes and condemned them to destruction as an example of what is to happen to the ungodly,

[7]but delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the sensual behavior of lawless people—[8]for that righteous man, who was living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds—[9]if the Lord did these things, then he knows how to rescue godly men out of trials and how to hold unrighteous men in custody so they can be punished on the day of judgment.

[10]This is especially true for those who walk after the corrupt desires of the flesh and who despise authority. Bold and self-willed, they do not tremble when they blaspheme the glorious ones.[11]Angels have greater strength and power, but they do not bring insulting judgments against them to the Lord.

[12]But these people are like unreasoning animals, born for capture and destruction. They do not know what they insult. In destruction they also will be destroyed,[13]suffering harm as a reward for doing harm. They think that luxury during the day is a pleasure. They are stains and blemishes. They enjoy their deceitful actions while they are feasting with you.[2][14]They have eyes full of adultery; they are never satisfied with sin. They entice unstable souls into wrongdoing, and they have their hearts trained in greed. They are cursed children!

[15]They have abandoned the straight way and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to receive payment for unrighteousness.[3][16]But he obtained a rebuke for his own transgression—a mute donkey speaking in a human voice stopped the prophet's insanity.

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[17]These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. The gloom of thick darkness is reserved for them.
[18]They speak with vain arrogance. Through the lusts of the flesh, through sensuality, they entice people who are trying to escape from those who live in error.[19]They promise freedom to them, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For a man is a slave to whatever overcomes him.
[20]If they have escaped the corruptions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.[21]It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.[22]This proverb is true for them: "A dog returns to its own vomit, and a washed pig returns to the mud."

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, to be kept in pits of darkness until the judgment,
[2]Some ancient copies of the Greek text read, They enjoy their actions while they are feasting with you in love feasts.
[3]Many modern translations read Balaam son of Beor in order to be consistent with the Old Testament spelling of the name. Some modern translations choose to follow the spelling of the Greek text, which reads, Balaam son of Bosor.

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2 Peter 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Flesh

"Flesh" is a metaphor for a person's sinful nature. Here it does not represent the physical part of man. "Flesh" represents the human nature that rejects all things godly and desires what is sinful. This is the condition of all humans before they receive the Holy Spirit by believing in Jesus. (See: flesh)

Implicit information

There are several analogies in 2:4-8 that are difficult to understand if the Old Testament has not yet been translated. Further explanation may be necessary.

Links:

2 Peter 2:1 Notes

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2 Peter 2:1

General Information:

Peter begins to warn the believers about false teachers.

False prophets came to the people, and false teachers will also come to you

Just as false prophets came deceiving Israel with their words, so will false teachers come teaching lies about Christ.

destructive heresies

The word "heresies" refers to opinions that are contrary to the teaching of Christ and the apostles. These heresies destroy the faith of those who believe them.

the master who bought them

The word "master" here refers to a person who owns slaves. Peter speaks of Jesus as the owner of people whom he has bought, the price being his death.

2 Peter 2:2

sensuality

immoral sexual behavior

the way of truth will be slandered

The phrase "way of truth" refers to the Christian faith as the true path to God. This can be stated in active form.
Alternate translation: "unbelievers will slander the way of truth"

2 Peter 2:3

exploit you with deceptive words

"convince you to give them money by telling you lies"

Their condemnation has been coming for a long time, and their destruction is not asleep

Peter speaks of "condemnation" and "destruction" as if they are persons who act. These abstract nouns can be expressed with the verbs "condemn" and "destroy".
Alternate translation: "It was decided long ago that they would be condemned; they will surely be destroyed" or "God said long ago that he would condemn them; he is ready to destroy them"

Their condemnation has been coming for a long time, and their destruction is not asleep

Possible meanings are 1) the false teachers will be condemned, and as a result they will be destroyed, or 2) the two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize how soon or how certainly the false teachers will be condemned.

2 Peter 2:4

Connecting Statement:

In verses 4-9, Peter gives three examples of times that God punished sinners. Two of these times there were also some righteous people whom God did not punish.

did not spare

"did not refrain from punishing" or "punished"

but delivered them into hell

This tells how God punished the angels who sinned.
Alternate translation: "but threw them down into hell" or "but sent them to hell"

to be kept in chains of darkness

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where he keeps them in chains of darkness"

in chains of darkness

Possible meanings are 1) "in chains in a very dark place" or 2) "in darkness that imprisons them like chains."

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until the judgment
This refers to the day of judgment when God will judge every person.
2 Peter 2:5
Connecting Statement:
Verse 5 is Peter's second example of a time that God punished sinners. This time there was a righteous man whom God did not punish.
and if he did not spare the ancient world
Here the word "world" refers to the people who lived in it. Alternate translation: "and if God did not refrain from punishing the people who lived in the ancient world"
but preserved Noah ... along with seven others
"But protected Noah ... along with seven others." God did not destroy Noah and seven other people when he destroyed the rest of the people who lived in the ancient world.
Noah, a herald of righteousness
"Noah, a preacher of righteousness." Possible meanings are 1) Noah taught people that they should live righteous lives, or 2) Noah warned people that the righteous God would judge them.
when he brought a flood on the world of the ungodly
God punished ungodly people by sending a flood that killed them.
2 Peter 2:6
Connecting Statement:
Verses 6-8 are Peter's third example of a time that God punished sinners. Again, there was a righteous man whom God did not punish.
and if he reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes
"and if God burned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire until only ashes remained"
condemned them to destruction
Here the word "them" refers to Sodom and Gomorrah and the people who lived in them.
as an example of what is to happen to the ungodly
Sodom and Gomorrah serve as an example and a warning of what will happen to others who disobey God.
2 Peter 2:7
Connecting Statement:
Verses 6-8 are Peter's third example of a time that God punished sinners. Verses 7-8 tell about a righteous man whom God did not punish with the sinners.
but delivered righteous Lot
Lot was righteous, and God rescued him from the punishment he sent on Sodom and Gomorrah.
the sensual behavior of lawless people
"the immoral behavior of people who broke God's law"
2 Peter 2:8
that righteous man
This refers to Lot.
was tormented in his righteous soul
Here the word "soul" refers to Lot's thoughts and emotions. The immoral behavior of the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah disturbed him emotionally. Alternate translation: "was greatly disturbed"
2 Peter 2:9
Connecting Statement
In this verse Peter tells us what we can know about God because of what God did in verses 4-8.
if the Lord did these things
The words "these things" refer to what God did in verses 4-8.
rescue ... out of trials
Possible meanings of the word "trials" are 1) tests or temptations, "enable ... to resist temptation" or "enable ... to pass the test," or 2) suffering, "bring ... through suffering."
2 Peter 2:10
Connecting Statement:
Peter begins describing the characteristics of unrighteous men.
This is especially true
The word "this" refers to God keeping unrighteous men in prison until judgment day in 2 Peter 2:9.
those who walk after the corrupt desires of the flesh
The word "flesh" here is a metonym for the body and for selfish desires, and to "walk after" or pursue its "corrupt desires" is a metaphor for those people doing whatever they want to do to satisfy those desires. Alternate translation: "those who continue to indulge their corrupt, sinful desires"
despise authority
"refuse to submit to God's authority." Here the word "authority" probably refers to God's authority.
authority
Here "authority" stands for God, who has the right to give commands and to punish disobedience.
self-willed
"doing whatever they want to do"
the glorious ones
This phrase refers to spiritual beings, such as angels or demons.
2 Peter 2:11
greater strength and power
"more strength and power than the false teachers"
they do not bring insulting judgments against them
The word "they" refers to angels. Possible meanings for the word "them" are 1) the glorious ones or 2) the false teachers.
bring insulting judgments against them
The idea that angels could accuse them is spoken of as if they could attack them using accusations as weapons.
2 Peter 2:12
these people are like unreasoning animals, born for capture and destruction
Just as people cannot reason with animals, no one can reason with these men. Alternate translation: "these false teachers are like unreasoning animals whose nature is to be born for capture and destruction"
for capture and destruction
These abstract nouns can be translated as verbs. The author has not stated the actor in these cases, so it is best if you can leave it unstated. Alternate translation: "so that people can capture and destroy them" or "so that other animals can capture and destroy them" or "so that people can capture them or other animals can destroy them" or "and they become prey or die"

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They do not know what they insult

They speak evil of what they do not know or understand.

In destruction they also will be destroyed

This emphasizes that God will destroy them and can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will completely destroy them"

2 Peter 2:13

suffering harm as a reward for doing harm

Peter speaks of the punishment that the false teachers will receive as if it were a reward. Alternate translation: "receiving what they deserve for the harm they have done"

luxury during the day

Here the word "luxury" refers to immoral activity that includes gluttony, drunkenness, and sexual activity. Doing these things during the day indicates that these people are not ashamed of this behavior.

They are stains and blemishes

The words "stains" and "blemishes" share similar meanings. Peter speaks of the false teachers as if they were stains on a garment that cause shame for those who wear it. Alternate translation: "They are like stains and blemishes on clothes, which cause disgrace"

2 Peter 2:14

They have eyes full of adultery

Here the "eyes" represent their desires and "eyes full" means they constant want something. Alternate translation: "They constantly want to commit adultery"

they are never satisfied with sin

Although they sin in order to satisfy their lusts, the sin that they commit never satisfies.

They entice unstable souls

Here the word "souls" refers to persons. Alternate translation: "They entice unstable people"

hearts trained in greed

Here the word "hearts" refers to the thoughts and emotions of the person. Because of their habitual actions, they have trained themselves to think and act out of greed.

2 Peter 2:15

the straight way

Behavior that honors God is spoken of as if it were a path to follow.

have gone astray

People who commit evil behavior that displeases God are spoken of as if they were animals like cows or sheep who go away from the people who take care of them.

to receive payment for unrighteousness

"to receive money for doing things that are not righteous"

2 Peter 2:16

he obtained a rebuke

You can specify it was God who rebuked Balaam. Alternate translation: "God rebuked him"

a mute donkey speaking in a human voice

A donkey, which is naturally unable to speak, spoke with a voice like a human.

stopped the prophet's insanity

God used a donkey to stop the prophet's foolish action.

2 Peter 2:17

These men are springs without water

Springs flowing with water promise refreshment for thirsty people, but "springs without water" will leave the thirsty disappointed. In the same way, false teachers, although they promise many things, are unable to do what they promise.

mists driven by a storm

When people see storm clouds, they expect rain to fall. When the winds from the storm blow the clouds away before the rain can fall, the people are disappointed. In the same way, false teachers, although they promise many things, are unable to do what they promise.

The gloom of thick darkness is reserved for them

The word "them" refers to the false teachers. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has reserved the gloom of thick darkness for them"

2 Peter 2:18

They speak with vain arrogance

They use impressive but meaningless words.

Through the lusts of the flesh, through sensuality, they entice people

"They appeal to people's fleshly lusts and desire for sensuality. This is how they entice people"

people who are trying to escape from those who live in error

This phrase refers to people who recently became believers. The phrase "those who live in error" refers to unbelievers who still live in sin. Alternate translation: "people who try to live rightly, instead of living sinfully as they used to and as other people do"

people who are trying to escape

Peter speaks of people who live sinfully as if they are slaves to sin who need to be released from their captivity.

2 Peter 2:19

They promise freedom to them, but they themselves are slaves of corruption

"Freedom" here is an idiom for the ability to live exactly as one wants. Alternate translation: "They promise to give them the ability to live exactly as they want to live, but they themselves cannot escape their own sinful desires"

promise freedom ... slaves of corruption

Peter speaks of people who live sinfully as if they were slaves to sin and need to be released from their captivity.

For a man is a slave to whatever overcomes him

Peter speaks of a person as a slave when anything has control over that person, and that thing as the master of that person. Alternate translation: "For if something has control over a person, that person becomes like a slave to that thing"

2 Peter 2:20

Connecting Statement:

The words "they" and "them" refer to the false teachers Peter speaks of in verses 12-19.

If they have escaped the corruptions ... and are again entangled in them and overcome

The events in this conditional statement have happened. The false teachers had at one time escaped, but they became entangled and were overcome. Alternate translation: "Since they have escaped ... and are again entangled in them and overcome"

the corruptions of the world

The word "corruptions" refers to sinful behavior that makes one morally impure. The "world" refers to human

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society. Alternate translation: "the corrupting practices of sinful human society"

through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

You can translate "knowledge" using a verbal phrase. See how you translated similar phrases in [2 Peter 1:2]

the last state has become worse for them than the first

"their condition is worse than it was before"

2 Peter 2:21

the way of righteousness

Peter speaks of life as a "way" or path. This phrase refers to living a life that is according to God's will.

turn away from the holy commandment

Here "turn away from" is a metaphor that means to stop doing something. Alternate translation: "stop obeying the holy commandment"

the holy commandment delivered to them

This can be stated in active terms. Alternate translation: "the holy commandment that God delivered to them" or "the holy commandment that God made sure that they received"

2 Peter 2:22

This proverb is true for them

"This proverb applies to them" or "This proverb describes them"

A dog returns to its own vomit, and a washed pig returns to the mud

Peter uses two proverbs to illustrate how the false teachers, although they have known "the way of righteousness," have turned back to the things that make them morally and spiritually impure.

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3 [1]Beloved, this is now the second letter that I have written to you, and in both of them they are reminders to stir up your sincere mind[2]so that you will recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command of our Lord and Savior given through your apostles.
[3]Know this first, that mockers will come in the last days. They will mock and proceed according to their own desires.[4]They will say, "Where is the promise of his return? From when our fathers fell asleep, all things have stayed the same, since the beginning of creation."
[5]They deliberately forget that long ago by the word of God the heavens and the earth came to exist out of water and through water,[6]through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.[7]By the same word the heavens and the earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

[8]It should not escape your notice, beloved, that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.[9]The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some consider slowness to be. Rather, he is patient toward you. He does not desire for any of you to perish, but for everyone to come to repentance.
[10]However, the day of the Lord will come as a thief. The heavens will pass away with a loud noise. The elements will be burned with fire, and the earth and the deeds in it will be laid bare.[1]
[11]Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? You should live holy and godly lives.[12]You should expect and hasten the coming of the day of God. On that day, the heavens will be destroyed by fire, and the elements will be melted in great heat.[13]But according to his promise we are waiting for the new heavens and the new earth, where righteousness will dwell.

[14]Therefore, beloved, since you expect these things, do your best to be found spotless and blameless before him, in peace.
[15]Also, consider the patience of our Lord to be salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul wrote to you, according to the wisdom that was given to him.[16]Paul speaks of these things in all his letters, in which there are things that are difficult to understand. Ignorant and unstable men distort these things, as they also do the other scriptures, to their own destruction.
[17]Therefore, beloved, since you know about these things beforehand, guard yourselves so that you are not led astray by the deceit of lawless people and lose your own faithfulness.[18]But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the glory be to him both now and to the day of eternity. Amen!

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[1]It is uncertain which Greek word is intended for the last word of verse 10, either laid bare or burned up are the choices. There is uncertainty about which word should be chosen. The second choice would be, The elements will be burned with fire, and the earth and the deeds in it will be burned up.

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2 Peter 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Fire

People often use fire to destroy things or to make something pure by burning off the dirt and worthless parts. Therefore when God punishes the wicked or purifies his people, it is often associated with fire. (See: fire)

Day of the Lord

The exact time of the coming day of the Lord will come as a surprise to people. This is what the simile "like a thief in the night" means. Because of this, Christians are to be prepared for the coming of the Lord.

Links:

2 Peter 3:1 Notes

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2 Peter 3:1

General Information:

Peter begins to talk about the last days.

to stir up your sincere mind

Peter speaks of causing his readers to think about these things as if he were waking them from sleep. Alternate translation: "to cause you to think pure thoughts"

2 Peter 3:2

the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the words that the holy prophets spoke in the past"

the command of our Lord and Savior given through your apostles

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the command of our Lord and Savior, which your apostles gave to you"

2 Peter 3:3

Know this first

"Know this as the most important thing." See how you translated this in 2 Peter 1:20.

proceed according to their own desires

Here the word "desires" refers to sinful desires that are opposed to God's will. Alternate translation: "live according to their own sinful desires"

proceed

act, behave

2 Peter 3:4

Where is the promise of his return?

The mockers ask this rhetorical question to emphasize that they do not believe that Jesus will return. The word "promise" refers to the fulfillment of the promise that Jesus will return. Alternate translation: "The promise that Jesus would return is not true! He will not return!"

our fathers fell asleep

Here "fathers" refers to ancestors who lived long ago. Falling asleep is a euphemism for dying. Alternate translation: "our ancestors died"

all things have stayed the same, since the beginning of creation

The mockers exaggerate with the word "all," and they argue that since nothing in the world has ever changed, it cannot be true that Jesus will return.

since the beginning of creation

This can be translated as a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "since God created the world"

2 Peter 3:5

by the word of God the heavens and the earth came to exist

"God spoke and the heavens and the earth came to exist"

came to exist out of water and through water

This means that God caused the land to come up out of the water, gathering the bodies of water together to make the land appear.

2 Peter 3:6

through which

Here "which" refers to God's word and water.

the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God flooded the world that existed at that time with water and destroyed it"

2 Peter 3:7

By the same word the heavens and the earth are reserved for fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God, by that same word, has reserved the heavens and the earth for fire"

the same word

"that same command"

fire, being kept for the day of judgment

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "fire. God is reserving them for the day of judgment"

for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people

This can be stated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "for the day when he judges and destroys ungodly people"

2 Peter 3:8

It should not escape your notice

"You should not fail to understand this" or "Do not ignore this"

that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years

"that from the Lord's point of view, one day is like a thousand years"

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow concerning his promise

"The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise." The noun "promise" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "The Lord will not delay in doing what he promised to do"

his promise

This is the Lord's promise to return.

as some consider slowness to be

Some people think that the Lord is slow to fulfill his promise because their perspective of time is different from God's.

2 Peter 3:10

However ... laid bare

Although the Lord is being patient and wants people to repent, he will indeed return and bring judgment.

the day of the Lord will come as a thief

Peter speaks of the day when God will judge everyone as if it were a thief who will come unexpectedly, and the people will be surprised when it happens.

The heavens will pass away

"The heavens will disappear"

The elements will be burned with fire

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will burn the elements with fire"

The elements

Possible meanings are 1) the heavenly bodies, such as the sun, moon, and stars or 2) the things that make up heaven and earth, such as soil, air, fire, and water.

the earth and the deeds in it will be laid bare

God will see all the earth and all the deeds of everyone, and he will then judge everything. This can be stated in active terms. Alternate translation: "God will expose the earth and everything that people have done on it"

2 Peter 3:11

Connecting Statement:

Peter begins to tell the believers how they should live as they wait for the day of the Lord.

Since all these things will be destroyed in this way

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Since God will destroy all these things in this way"

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what kind of people should you be?

Peter uses this rhetorical question to emphasize what he will say next, that they "should live holy and godly lives." Alternate translation: "you know what kind of people you should be."

2 Peter 3:12

the heavens will be destroyed by fire, and the elements will be melted in great heat

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will destroy the heavens by fire, and he will melt the elements in great heat"

the elements

Possible meanings are 1) the heavenly bodies, such as the sun, moon, and stars or 2) the things that make up heaven and earth, such as soil, air, fire, and water. See how you translated this in 2 Peter 3:10.

2 Peter 3:13

where righteousness will dwell

Peter speaks of "righteousness" as if it were a person. This is a metonym for people who are righteous. Alternate translation: "where righteous people will dwell" or "where people will live righteously"

2 Peter 3:14

do your best to be found spotless and blameless before him, in peace

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "do your best to live in such a way that God will find you spotless and blameless, and be at peace with him and each other"

spotless and blameless

The words "spotless" and "blameless" mean basically the same thing and emphasize moral purity. Alternate translation: "completely pure"

spotless

Here this stands for "faultless."

2 Peter 3:15

Also, consider the patience of our Lord to be salvation

Because the Lord is patient, the day of judgment has not yet happened. This gives people an opportunity to repent and be saved, as he explained in [2 Peter 3:9]

according to the wisdom that was given to him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "according to the wisdom that God gave to him"

2 Peter 3:16

Paul speaks of these things in all his letters

"Paul speaks of the patience of God leading to salvation in all his letters"

in which there are things that are difficult to understand

There are things in Paul's letters that are difficult to understand.

Ignorant and unstable men distort these things

Ignorant and unstable men misinterpret the things that are difficult to understand in Paul's letters.

Ignorant and unstable

"Unlearned and unsteady." These men have not been taught how to properly interpret scripture and are not well established in the truth of the gospel.

to their own destruction

"resulting in their own destruction"

2 Peter 3:17

Connecting Statement:

Peter finishes instructing the believers and ends his letter.

since you know about these things

"These things" refers to the truths about the patience of God and the teachings of these false teachers.

guard yourselves

"protect yourselves"

so that you are not led astray by the deceit of lawless people

Here "led astray" is a metaphor for being persuaded to do something wrong. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that lawless people do not deceive you and cause you do something wrong"

and lose your own faithfulness

Faithfulness is spoken of as if it were a possession that believers could lose. Alternate translation: "and stop being faithful"

2 Peter 3:18

grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Here growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord represents experiencing his grace more and knowing him more. The abstract noun "grace" can be expressed with the phrase "act kindly." Alternate translation: "receive more of the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and know him more" or "be more aware of how our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ acts kindly toward you, and know him better"

Introduction to 1 John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 1 John

Introduction (1:1-4) Christian living (1:5-3:10) The command to love one another (3:11-5:12) Conclusion (5:13-21)

Who wrote the Book of 1 John?

This book does not name the author. However, since early Christian times, most Christians have thought that the Apostle John was the author. He also wrote of the Gospel of John.

What is the Book of 1 John about?

John wrote this letter to Christians at a time when false teachers were troubling them. John wrote this letter because he wanted to prevent believers from sinning. He wanted to protect believers from false teachings. And he wanted to assure believers that they were saved.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "1 John" or "First John." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The First Letter From John" or "The First Letter John Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who were the people that John spoke against?

The people John spoke against were possibly those who would become known as Gnostics. These people believed that the physical world was evil. Since they believed Jesus was divine, they denied that he was truly human. This is because they thought God would not become human since the physical body is evil. (See: evil)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What do the words "remain," "reside," and "abide" mean in 1 John?

John often used the words "remain," "reside," and "abide" as metaphors. John spoke of a believer becoming more faithful to Jesus and knowing Jesus better as if Jesus's word "remained" in the believer. Also, John spoke of someone being spiritually joined to someone else as if the person "remained" in the other person. Christians are said to "remain" in Christ and in God. The Father is said to "remain" in the Son, and the Son is said to "remain" in the Father. The Son is said to "remain" in believers. The Holy Spirit is also said to "remain" in the believers.

Many translators will find it impossible to represent these ideas in their languages in exactly the same way. For example, John intended to express the idea of the Christian being spiritually together with God when he said, "He who says he remains in God" (1 John 2:6). The UDB says, "If we say that we are in union with God," but translators will often have to find other expressions that communicate these ideas well.

In the passage "the word of God remains in you" (1 John 2:14), the UDB expresses this idea as "you are living by the commands of the word of God." Many translators will find it possible to use this translation as a model.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of 1 John?

For the following verses, some modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If translations of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the readings found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"And we are writing these things to you so that our joy may be complete" (1:4). Some older versions have, "And we are writing these things to you so that your joy may be complete." "And you all know the truth" (2:20). Other modern versions have, "And you all have knowledge." Some older versions have, "and you know all things." "and this is what we are!" (3:1). The ULB and most modern translations read this way. Some older versions omit this phrase. "and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God" (4:3). The ULB and most modern versions have this reading. Some older translations read, "and every spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God."

For the following passage, translators are advised to translate this as the ULB does. However, if in the translators' region there are older versions of the Bible that include this passage, the translators can include it. If it is included, it should be put inside square brackets ([]) to indicate that it was probably not in the original version of 1 John.

"For there are three who bear witness: the Spirit, the water, and the blood. These three are in agreement." (5:7-8) Some older versions have, "For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three are as one."

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1 John

1 [1]That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched, concerning the Word of life—[2]the life was made known, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to us.
[3]That which we have seen and heard we declare also to you, so you also will have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.[4]Also, we are writing these things to you so that our joy will be complete.[1]

[5]This is the message that we have heard from him and are proclaiming to you: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.[6]If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth.[7]But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin.
[8]If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.[9]But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.[10]If we say that we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar, and his word is not in us.

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[1]Some important ancient Greek copies read, And we are writing these things to you so that your joy will be complete.

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1 John 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This is a letter that John wrote to Christians.

Special concepts in this chapter

Christians and sin

In this chapter John teaches that all Christians are still sinners. But God continues to forgive a Christian's sins. (See: sin and faith and forgive)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

In this chapter John writes that God is light. Light is a metaphor for understanding and righteousness. (See: and righteous)

John also writes about people walking in the light or in the darkness. Walking is a metaphor for behaving or living. People who walk in the light understand what is righteous and do it. People who walk in the darkness may not understand what is righteous, and they do what is sinful.

Links:

1 John 1:1 Notes 1 John intro

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1 John 1:1

General Information:

The apostle John wrote this letter to believers. All instances of "you," "your," and "yours" include all believers and are plural. Here the words "we" and "us" refer to John and those who had been with Jesus. In verses 1-2 many pronouns like "that," "which," and "it" are used. They refer to "the Word of life" and "the eternal life." But, since these are names for Jesus, you can use pronouns that refer to a person like "who," "whom" or "he."

which we have heard

"which we have heard him teach"

which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at

This is repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "which we ourselves have seen"

the Word of life

This refers to Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "the one who gives life" or "the one who causes people to live forever"

life

The word "life" throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. Here "life" refers to being alive spiritually.

1 John 1:2

the life was made known

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God made the eternal life known to us" or "God made us able to know him, who is eternal life"

we have seen and testify

"we have seen it and testify about it" or "we have seen him and testify about him"

the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to us

Here, "the eternal life" refers to the one who gives that life, Jesus. Alternate translation: "the one who enables us to live forever, who was with God the Father, and who has been made known to us"

and which has been made known to us

This was when he lived on earth. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and which the Father has made known to us" or "and who came to live among us"

1 John 1:3

General Information:

Here the words "we," "us," and "our" refer to John and those who had been with Jesus.

That which we have seen and heard we declare also to you

"We say to you also what we have seen and heard"

have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father

"be our close friends. We are friends with God the Father"

Our fellowship

It is not clear if John is including or excluding his readers. You may translate this either way.

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

1 John 1:4

so that our joy will be complete

"to make our joy complete" or "to make ourselves completely happy"

1 John 1:5

General Information:

Here the words "we" and "us" refer to all believers, including the people to whom John was writing. Unless otherwise stated, that is the meaning for the remainder of this book.

Connecting Statement:

From here into the next chapter, John writes about fellowship—close relationships with God and other believers.

God is light

This is a metaphor that means that God is perfectly pure and holy. Cultures that associate goodness with light may be able to keep the idea of light without explaining the metaphor. Alternate translation: "God is purely righteous like pure light"

in him there is no darkness at all

This is a metaphor that means that God never sins and is not evil in any way. Cultures that associate evil with darkness may be able to keep the idea of darkness without explaining the metaphor. Alternate translation: "in him there is nothing that is evil"

1 John 1:6

walk in darkness

Here "walk" is a metaphor for how a person lives or behaves. Here "darkness" is a metaphor for "evil." Alternate

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translation: "do what is evil"

1 John 1:7

walk in the light as he is in the light

Here "walk" is a metaphor for how a person lives or behaves. Here "light" is a metaphor for "good" or "right." Alternate translation: "do what is good as God is perfectly good" or "do what is right as God is perfectly right"

the blood of Jesus

This refers to the death of Jesus.

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

1 John 1:8

have no sin

"never sin"

are deceiving

"are tricking" or "lying to"

the truth is not in us

The truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be inside believers. Alternate translation: "we do not believe what God says is true"

1 John 1:9

he is faithful

"God is faithful"

to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. John uses them to emphasize that God will surely forgive our sins. Alternate translation: "and will completely forgive us for what we have done wrong"

1 John 1:10

we make him out to be a liar

It is implied that a person who claims to be without sin would be calling God a liar since he said that everyone is a sinner. Alternate translation: "it is the same as calling God a liar, because he said we have all sinned"

his word is not in us

"Word" here is a metonym for "message." Obeying and honoring God's word is spoken of as if his word were inside the believers. Alternate translation: "we do not understand God's word and do not obey what he says"

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2 [1]Children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the
Father, Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous.[2]He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for
the whole world.[3]We know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments.
[4]The one who says "I know God" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.[5]But whoever
keeps his word, in him truly the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him:[6]whoever says that he
remains in God should himself also walk just as he walked.

[7]Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning.
The old commandment is the word that you heard.[8]Yet I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Christ
and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.
[9]The one who says that he is in the light and hates his brother is in the darkness until now.[10]The one who loves his brother
remains in the light, and there is no occasion for stumbling in him.[11]But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness
and walks in the darkness; he does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

[12]I am writing to you, children, because your sins are forgiven because of his name.[13]I am writing to you, fathers, because
you know the one who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I
have written to you, children, because you know the Father.
[14]I have written to you, fathers, because you know the one who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men,
because you are strong, and the word of God remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.
[15]Do not love the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
[16]For everything that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the arrogance of life—is not from the
Father but is from the world.[17]The world and its desire are passing away. But whoever does the will of God will remain
forever.

[18]Children, it is the last hour. Just as you heard that the antichrist is coming, now many antichrists have come. By this we
know that it is the last hour.[19]They went out from us, but they were not from us. For if they had been from us, they would
have remained with us. But when they went out, that showed they were not from us.
[20]But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.[21]I did not write to you because you do not know the
truth, but because you know it and because no lie is from the truth.
[22]Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? That person is the antichrist, since he denies the Father
and the Son.[23]No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son also has the Father.
[24]As for you, let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in
you, you will also remain in the Son and in the Father.[25]This is the promise he gave to us—eternal life.[26]I have written
these things to you about those who would lead you astray.
[27]As for you, the anointing that you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as
his anointing teaches you everything and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him.
[28]Now, children, remain in him so that when he appears we will have boldness and not be ashamed before him at his
coming.[29]If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born from him.

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1 John 2 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Antichrist

In this chapter John writes about both a specific antichrist and many antichrists. The word "antichrist" means "opposed to Christ." The antichrist is a person who will come in the last days and imitate Jesus's work, but he will do it for evil. Before this person comes, there will be many people who work against Christ; they too are called "antichrists." (See: antichrist and lastday and evil)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

There are several groups of similar metaphors that are used throughout this chapter.

Being in God is a metaphor for having fellowship with God, and God's word and truth being in people is a metaphor for people knowing and obeying God's word.

Walking is a metaphor for behaving, not knowing where one is going is a metaphor for not knowing how to behave, and stumbling is a metaphor for sinning.

The light is a metaphor for knowing and doing what is right, and darkness and blindness are metaphors for not knowing what is right and doing what is wrong.

Leading people astray is a metaphor for teaching people things that are not true.

Links:

1 John 2:1 Notes

1 John 2:1

General Information:

Here the word "we" refers to John and all believers.

Connecting Statement:

John continues to write about fellowship and shows that it is possible because Jesus goes between believers and the Father.

Children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. Alternate translation: "You who are as dear to me as my own children"

I am writing these things

"I am writing this letter"

But if anyone sins

"But when anyone sins." This is something that is likely to happen.

we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous

The word "advocate" here refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "we have Jesus Christ, the one who is righteous, who speaks to the Father and asks him to forgive us"

1 John 2:2

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins

"God is no longer angry with us because Jesus sacrificed his own life for our sins"

1 John 2:3

We know that we have come to know him

"We know that we know him" or "We know that we have a good relationship with him"

if we keep his commandments

"if we obey what he commands"

1 John 2:4

The one who says

"Anyone who says" or "The person who says"

I know God

"I have a good relationship with God"

does not keep

"does not obey" or "disobeys"

his commandments

"what God tells him to do"

the truth is not in him

The truth is spoken of as if it were an object that could be inside the believers. Alternate translation: "he does not believe what God says is true"

1 John 2:5

keeps his word

To keep someone's word here is an idiom for to obey. Alternate translation: "does what God tells him to do"

in him truly the love of God has been perfected

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "the love of God" refers to a person loving God, and "perfected" represents completely or fully. Alternate translation: "it is that person who loves God completely" or 2) "the love of God" refers to God loving people, and "perfected" represents completing its purpose. Alternate translation: "God's love has achieved its purpose in that person's life"

By this we know that we are in him

The phrase "we are in him" means that the believer has fellowship with God. Alternate translation: "When we obey what God says, we can be certain that we have fellowship with him" or "By this we know that are joined to God"

1 John 2:6

remains in God

To remain in God means to continue to have fellowship with God. Alternate translation: "continues to have fellowship with God" or "stays joined to God"

should himself also walk just as he walked

Conducting one's life is spoken of as if it were walking on a path. Alternate translation: "must live as he lived" or

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"should also obey God just as Jesus Christ did"
1 John 2:7
Connecting Statement:
John gives believers basic principles of fellowship—obedience and love.
Beloved, I am
"You people whom I love, I am" or "Dear friends, I am"
I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment that you have had
"I write to you to love one other, which is not a new thing to do but an old commandment that you have heard." John refers to Jesus's command to love one another.
from the beginning
Here, "beginning" refers to when they decided to follow Christ. Alternate translation: "from when you first believed in Christ"
The old commandment is the word that you heard
"The old commandment is the message that you heard"
1 John 2:8
Yet I am writing a new commandment to you
"But in one way the commandment I write to you is a new commandment"
which is true in Christ and in you
"which is true, as shown in Christ's deeds and your deeds"
the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining
Here "darkness" is a metaphor for "evil," and "light" is a metaphor for "good." Alternate translation: "you are ceasing to do evil and you are doing more and more good"
1 John 2:9
General Information:
Here the word "brother" refers to a fellow Christian.
The one who says
"Anyone who says" or "Someone who claims." This does not refer to a specific person.
he is in the light
Here to be "in the light" is a metaphor for doing what is right. Alternate translation: "he does what is right"
is in the darkness
Here to be "in the darkness" is a metaphor for doing what is evil. Alternate translation: "does what is evil"
1 John 2:10
there is no occasion for stumbling in him
"nothing will cause him to stumble." The word "stumbling" is a metaphor that means to fail spiritually or morally. Alternate translation: "nothing will cause him to sin" or "he will not fail to do what is pleasing to God"
1 John 2:11
is in the darkness and walks in the darkness
Here "walk" is a metaphor for how a person lives or behaves. Here to be "in the darkness" and "walks in the darkness" mean the same thing. This brings attention to how evil it is to hate a fellow believer. Alternate translation: "does what is evil"
he does not know where he is going
This is a metaphor for the believer who is not living as a Christian should be living. Alternate translation: "he does not know what he should do"
the darkness has blinded his eyes
"the darkness has made him unable to see." Darkness is a metaphor for sin or evil. Alternate translation: "sin has made it impossible for him to understand the truth"
1 John 2:12
General Information:
John explains why he is writing his letter either to different age groups or to believers with differences in maturity. Try to use similar wording for these sentences, as they are written poetically.
you, children
John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]
your sins are forgiven
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God forgives your sins"
because of his name
"his name" refers to Christ and who he is. Alternate translation: "because of what Christ has done for you"
1 John 2:13
I am writing to you, fathers
The word "fathers" here is possibly a metaphor referring to mature believers. Alternate translation: "I am writing to you, mature believers"
you know
"you have a relationship with"
the one who is from the beginning
"the one who has always lived" or "the one who has always existed." It refers either to "Jesus" or to "God the Father."
young men
This possibly refers to those who are no longer new believers but are growing in spiritual maturity. Alternate translation: "young believers"
overcome
The writer is speaking of the believers' refusal to follow Satan and of their frustrating his plans as if it were a matter of conquering him.
1 John 2:14
you are strong
Here "strong" refers not to believers' physical strength, but to their faithfulness to Christ.
the word of God remains in you
"Word of God" here is a metonym for the message from God. The writer refers to the believers' increased faithfulness to Christ and knowledge of him as if he were speaking of God's word existing in them. Alternate translation: "God's message continues to teach you" or "you know the word of God"
1 John 2:15
Do not love the world or
In 2:15-17 the word "world" refers to all the things people want to do that do not honor God. Alternate translation: "Do not behave like the people in the world who do not honor God, and do not love"
the things that are in the world
"the things that those who dishonor God want"
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him
A person cannot love this world and all that dishonors God and love the Father at the same time.
the love of the Father is not in him

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"he does not love the Father"
1 John 2:16
the lust of the flesh
"the strong desire to have sinful physical pleasure"
the lust of the eyes
"the strong desire to have things that we see"
is not from the Father
"does not come from the Father" or "is not how the Father teaches us to live"
1 John 2:17
are passing away
"pass away" or "will one day not be here"
1 John 2:18
Connecting Statement:
John warns about those who are against Christ.
Children
John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]
it is the last hour
The phrase "the last hour" refers to the time just before Jesus returns. Alternate translation: "Jesus will return soon"
many antichrists have come
"there are many people who are against Christ"
have come. By this we know
"have come, and because of this we know" or "have come, and because many antichrists have come, we know"
1 John 2:19
They went out from us
"They left us"
but they were not from us
"but they did not really belong to us anyway" or "but they were not really part of our group in the first place." The reason they were not really part of the group is that they were not believers in Jesus.
For if they had been from us, they would have remained with us
"We know this because they would not have left us if they really had been believers"
1 John 2:20
General Information:
In the Old Testament the word "anointing" referred to pouring oil on a person to set him apart to serve God.
But you have an anointing from the Holy One
John speaks of the Holy Spirit as if he were "an anointing" that the people have received from Jesus. The abstract noun "anointing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "But the Holy One has anointed you" or "But Jesus Christ, the Holy One, has given you his Spirit"
the Holy One
This refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "Jesus, the Holy One"
you all know
Your language might allow you to use the abstract noun "knowledge" here. If your language requires you to state what it is that the readers know, be as general as possible. Alternate translation: "you all have knowledge" or "you all know what is true"
1 John 2:21
the truth ... no lie is from the truth
The abstract noun "truth" can be translated as an adjective. Alternate translation: "what is true ... no lie comes from what is true"
1 John 2:22
Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?
"Who is the liar? Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ." John used a question to emphasize who liars are. Alternate translation: "The one who denies that Jesus is the Christ is the liar"
denies that Jesus is the Christ
"refuses to say that Jesus is the Christ" or "says that Jesus is not the Messiah"
denies the Father and the Son
"refuses to say the truth about the Father and the Son" or "rejects the Father and the Son."
Father ... Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
1 John 2:23
has the Father
"belongs to the Father"
confesses the Son
"speaks the truth about the Son"
has the Father
"belongs to the Father"
1 John 2:24
General Information:
Here the word "you" is plural and refers to the people to whom John wrote, as well as all believers. The word "he" is emphatic and refers to Christ.
Connecting Statement:
John reminds believers to continue in what they have first heard.
As for you
This marks John's telling them how they should live as followers of Jesus instead of how those against Christ live.
let what you have heard from the beginning remain in you
"remember and believe what you have heard from the beginning." How they heard it, what they heard, and what "the beginning" means can be made explicit: Alternate translation: "continue to trust what we have taught you about Jesus just as you have trusted since you first became believers"
what you have heard from the beginning
"what we taught you about Jesus when you first became believers"
If what you heard from the beginning remains in you
The word "remains" is talking about relationship, not salvation. Alternate translation: "If you continue to trust what we first taught you"
also remain in the Son and in the Father
To "remain in" means to continue to have fellowship with. See how you translated a similar phrase to "remain in" in [1 John 2:6]
1 John 2:25
This is the promise he gave to us—eternal life.
"This is what he promised to give us—eternal life" or "He has promised to cause us to live forever"
life

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The word "life" throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. Here "life" refers to being alive spiritually. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1]

1 John 2:26

those who would lead you astray

Here "lead you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "those who want to deceive you" or "those who want to make you believe lies about Jesus Christ"

1 John 2:27

Connecting Statement:

Starting in verse 29, John introduces the idea of being born into God's family. The previous verses show that believers continue to sin; this part shows that believers also have the new nature, which cannot sin. It continues to show how believers can recognize each other.

As for you

This marks John's telling them something else about how they should live as followers of Jesus instead of following those who are against Christ.

the anointing that you received from him remains in you

John speaks of the Holy Spirit as if he were "the anointing" that the people have received from Jesus and remains in them. The abstract noun "anointing" can be translated with a verbal phrase. See how you translated "anointing" in [1 John 2:20]

as his anointing teaches you everything

Here the word "everything" is a generalization. Alternate translation: "because his anointing teaches you everything that you need to know" or "because his Spirit teaches you everything that you need to know"

1 John 2:28

Now

This word is used here to mark a new part of the letter.

Now, children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]

he appears

"we see him"

boldness

having no fear

not be ashamed before him

"not be ashamed in his presence"

at his coming

"when he comes again"

1 John 2:29

has been born from him

"has been born of God" or "is God's child"

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3 [1]See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and this is what we are. For this reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know him.[1][2]Beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. We know that when Christ appears, we will be like him, for we will see him just as he is.[3]Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself just as he is pure.
[4]Everyone who sins is committing acts of lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness.[5]You know that Christ was revealed in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.[6]No one who remains in him will keep on sinning. No one who continues to sin has seen him or known him.
[7]Children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does righteousness is righteous, just as Christ is righteous.[8]The one who commits sin is from the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this reason the Son of God was revealed, so that he would destroy the devil's works.
[9]Whoever has been born from God does not continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him. He cannot continue to sin, because he has been born of God.[10]In this the children of God and children of the devil are revealed: Whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God, neither is the one who does not love his brother.
[11]For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another.[12]We should not be like Cain, who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

[13]Do not be amazed, my brothers, if the world hates you.[14]We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.[15]Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. You know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.
[16]By this we know love, because Christ laid down his life for us. We also ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.[17]But whoever has the world's goods, sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart of compassion from him, how does the love of God remain in him?[18]My children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in actions and truth.
[19]It is by this we know that we are from the truth, and we assure our hearts before him.[20]For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows all things.[21]Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.[22]Whatever we ask we will receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing before him.
[23]This is his commandment: that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he gave us this commandment.[24]The one who keeps God's commandments remains in him, and God remains in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit whom he gave to us.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies leave out, and this is what we are.

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1 John 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Children of God

God created all people, but people can only become children of God by believing in Jesus. (See: believe)

Cain

Cain was a son of the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve. He was jealous of his brother and murdered him. Readers may not know who Cain was if they have not read Genesis. It may help them if you explain this to them.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"To know"

The verb "to know" is used in two different ways in this chapter. Sometimes it is used about knowing a fact, as in 3:2, 3:5, and 3:19. Sometimes it means to experience and understand someone or something, as in 3:1, 3:6, 3:16, and 3:20. Some languages have different words for these different meanings.

"He who keeps God's commandments remains in him, and God remains in him"

Many scholars believe this is about remaining in God's will and is not about being saved. (See: eternity and save)

Links:

1 John 3:1 Notes

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1 John 3:1

Connecting Statement:

In this part John tells the believers about their new nature, which cannot sin.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us

"Think about how our Father loves us so much"

we should be called children of God

"the Father called us his children"

children of God

Here this means people who belong to God through faith in Jesus.

For this reason, the world does not know us, because it did not know him

Possible meanings are 1) "Because we are the children of God and because the world did not know God, it does not know us" or 2) "Because the world did not know God, it does not know us."

the world does not know us, because it did not know him

Here "the world" refers to people who do not honor God. What the world did not know can be made explicit: Alternate translation: "those who do not honor God do not know that we belong to God, because they did not know God"

1 John 3:2

Beloved, we are

"You people whom I love, we are" or "Dear friends, we are." See how you translated this in 1 John 2:7.

it has not yet been revealed

This can be stated in active form: Alternate translation: "God has not yet revealed"

revealed

This can mean here either "told," "demonstrated," or "shown."

1 John 3:3

Everyone who has this hope in him

The word "him" refers to Christ. Having hope in Christ means expecting that because of Christ, what is hoped for will happen. Alternate translation: "Everyone who has this hope because of Christ" or "Everyone who trusts Christ to fulfill this hope"

who has this hope in him

The phrase "this hope" refers to the hope of being like Christ, as mentioned in the previous verse. Here to have hope is to confidently expect something good. Alternate translation: "who confidently expects in Christ to become like Christ" or "who confidently waits for Christ to cause him to become like Christ"

purifies himself just as he is pure

"keeps himself pure because Christ is pure"

1 John 3:5

Christ was revealed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Christ appeared" or "the Father revealed Christ"

1 John 3:6

remains in him

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

No one ... has seen him or known him

John uses the words "seen" and "known" to say that the person who sins has never met Christ in a spiritual sense. A person behaving according to his sinful nature cannot know Christ. Alternate translation: "No one ... has ever truly believed in him"

1 John 3:7

Children, do not let

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]

do not let anyone lead you astray

Here "lead you astray" is a metaphor for persuading someone to believe something that is not true. Alternate translation: "do not let anyone fool you" or "do not let anyone deceive you"

The one who does righteousness is righteous, just as Christ is righteous

"He who does what is right is pleasing to God just as Christ is pleasing to God."

1 John 3:8

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is from the devil
"belongs to the devil" or "is like the devil"
from the beginning
This refers to the very earliest time of creation before humans first sinned. Alternate translation: "since the earliest time of creation"
the Son of God was revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God revealed his Son"
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
1 John 3:9
Connecting Statement:
For now John ends this section on the new birth and the new nature which cannot sin.
Whoever has been born from God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Whoever God has made his child"
God's seed
This speaks of the Holy Spirit, whom God gives to believers and who makes them able to resist sin and do what pleases God as if he were a physical seed that is planted in the earth and grows. Alternate translation: "the Holy Spirit"
he has been born of God
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has given him new spiritual life" or "he is a child of God"
1 John 3:10
In this the children of God and children of the devil are revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are"
Whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God, neither is the one who does not love his brother
"whoever does not do what is righteous is not from God; whoever does not love his brother is also not from God" or "those who are from God do what is right, and those who are from God love their brothers"
his brother
Here "brother" means fellow Christians.
1 John 3:12
General Information:
Cain and Abel were the first sons of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman.
We should not be like Cain
"We should not do as Cain did"
brother
This refers to Cain's younger brother Abel.
Why did he kill him? Because
John uses a question to teach his audience. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "He killed him because"
his works were evil and his brother's righteous
The words "works were" are also understood in the second phrase. Alternate translation: "Cain's works were evil and his brother's works were righteous" or "Cain did evil things and his brother did what was right"
1 John 3:13
my brothers
"my fellow believers." John's readers were both male and female.
if the world hates you
Here the word "world" refers to the people who do not honor God. Alternate translation: "if those who do not honor God hate you who do honor God"
1 John 3:14
we have passed out of death into life
The conditions of living and of being dead are spoken of as if they were physical locations that a person could leave from and go to. The abstract nouns "life" and "death" can be translated with verbal phrases. Alternate translation: "we are no longer spiritually dead but are spiritually alive"
life
The word "life" throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. Here "life" refers to being alive spiritually. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1]
remains in death
"is still spiritually dead"
1 John 3:15
Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer
John speaks of a person who hates another believer as if he were a murderer. Since people commit murder because they hate other people, God considers anyone who hates to be as guilty as someone who kills a person. Alternate translation: "Whoever hates another believer is as guilty as someone who kills a person"
no murderer has eternal life residing in him
"Eternal life" does refer to believers living forever after they have died, but it is also the power that God gives believers in this life to help them to stop sinning and to do what please him. Here eternal life is spoken of as if it were a person that could live in someone. Alternate translation: "a murderer does not have the power of spiritual life"
1 John 3:16
Christ laid down his life for us
This expression means "Christ willingly gave his life for us" or "Christ willingly died for us"
1 John 3:17
the world's goods
material possessions like money, food, or clothing
sees his brother in need
"realizes a fellow believer needs help"
shuts up his heart of compassion from him
Here "heart" is a metonym for "thoughts" or "emotions." Here "shuts up his heart of compassion" is a metaphor for no longer showing someone compassion. Alternate translation: "does not show him compassion" or "does not willingly help him"
how does the love of God remain in him?
John uses a question to teach his audience. Alternate translation: "God's love is not in him"
1 John 3:18
My children
John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]
let us not love in word or in tongue, but in actions and truth

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The phrases "in word" and "in tongue" both refer to what a person says. Alternate translation: "do not just say that you love people, but show that you truly love people by helping them"

in actions and truth

The words "let us love" are understood here. Alternate translation: "let us love in actions and truth"

1 John 3:19

Connecting Statement:

Here John probably means that believers' ability to love God and each other sincerely (1 John 3:18) is a sign that their new life has indeed originated from the truth about Christ.

we are from the truth

People living according to the truth is spoken of as they were "from the truth." Alternate translation: "we are living according the way Jesus taught us" or "we belong to him who is true"

we assure our hearts

The word "heart" here refers to feelings. Alternate translation: "we do not feel guilty"

1 John 3:20

if our hearts condemn us

Here "hearts" is a metonym for people's thoughts or consciences. Here "hearts condemn us" is a metaphor for feeling guilty. Alternate translation: "if we know that we have sinned and as a result feel guilty"

God is greater than our hearts

Here "hearts" is metonym for people's thoughts or consciences. For God to be "greater than our hearts" means that God knows more than a person. Therefore he can judge things better than a person can. The effect of this truth is probably that God is more merciful than our consciences would suppose. Alternate translation: "God knows more than we do"

1 John 3:21

Beloved, if

"You people whom I love, if" or "Dear friends, if." See how you translated this in 1 John 2:7.

1 John 3:22

do the things that are pleasing before him

Here "before him" represents God's opinion or what he thinks about something. Alternate translation: "do the things that are pleasing to him" or "do what pleases him"

1 John 3:23

This is his commandment: that we should believe ... just as he gave us this commandment

The abstract noun "commandment" can be stated as "command." Alternate translation: "This is what God commands us to do: Believe ... just as he commanded us to do"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

1 John 3:24

remains in him, and God remains in him

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

he remains in us

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. Alternate translation: "God continues to have fellowship with us"

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4 [1]Beloved, do not believe every spirit. Instead, test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.[2]By this you will know the Spirit of God—every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,[3]and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world.[1]
[4]You are from God, children, and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.[5]They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them.[6]We are from God. Anyone who knows God listens to us. He who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

[7]Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God.[8]The person who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
[9]Because of this the love of God was revealed among us, that God has sent his only Son into the world so that we would live because of him.[10]In this is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and that he sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.
[11]Beloved, if God so loved us, we also should love one another.[12]No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is perfected in us.[13]By this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us some of his Spirit.[14]Also, we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.
[15]Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God.[16]Also, we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in this love remains in God, and God remains in him.
[17]Because of this, this love has been made perfect among us, so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because as he is, just so are we in this world.[18]There is no fear in love. Instead, perfect love throws out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. But the one who fears has not been made perfect in love.
[19]We love because God first loved us.[20]If anyone says, "I love God" but hates his brother, he is a liar. For the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.[21]Also, this is the commandment we have from him: Whoever loves God must also love his own brother.

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, and every spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world.

1 John 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Spirit

This word "spirit" is used in different ways in this chapter. Sometimes the word "spirit" refers to spiritual beings. Sometimes it refers to the character of something. For example "the spirit of the antichrist," "the spirit of truth," and "the spirit of error" refer to what is typical of the antichrist, truth, and error. "The Spirit" (written with a capital "S") and "the Spirit of God" refer to God. (See: antichrist)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Loving God

If people love God, they should show it in the way they live and the way they treat other people. Doing this may assure us that God has saved us and that we belong to him, but loving others does not save us. (See: save)

Links:

1 John 4:1 Notes

1 John 4:1

General Information:

John gives a warning against false teachers who teach against Christ's having had a human body and teachers who talk the way those who love the world talk.

Beloved, do not believe

"You people whom I love, do not believe" or "Dear friends, do not believe." See how you translated this in 1 John 2:7.

do not believe every spirit

Here, the word "spirit" refers to a spiritual power or being that gives a person a message or prophecy. Alternate translation: "do not trust every prophet who claims to have a message from a spirit"

test the spirits

Here, the word "spirits" refers to a spiritual power or being that gives a person a message or prophecy. Alternate translation: "think carefully about what the prophet says"

1 John 4:2

has come in the flesh

Here "flesh" represents the human body. Alternate translation: "has come as a human being" or "has come in a physical body"

1 John 4:3

This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now is already in the world

"These are prophets opposed to Christ, whom you have heard are coming, and now are already in the world"

1 John 4:4

God, children

John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]

have overcome them

"have not believed the false teachers"

the one who is in you is

"God, who is in you, is"

the one who is in the world

Here "the one" refers to the devil. Here "the world" represents the people of the world. Alternate translation: "the devil who is in the people of the world"

1 John 4:5

They are from the world

"They" refers to the false teachers. "From the world" is in contrast to being from God. "The world" represents all things that oppose God. Alternate translation: "They are of the world"

therefore what they say is from the world

Here "from the world" is in contrast to being from God. Here "the world" represents all things that oppose God. Alternate translation: "therefore what the false teachers say is of the world"

and the world listens to them

The words "the world" are a metonym for people who do not obey God. Alternate translation: "so the people who do not obey God listen to them"

1 John 4:7

General Information:

John continues to teach about the new nature. He teaches his readers about God's love and loving one another.

Beloved, let us love

"You people whom I love, let us love" or "Dear friends, let us love." See how you translated "Beloved" in 1 John 2:7.

let us love one another

"believers are to love other believers"

and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God

"and because those who love their fellow believers have become God's children and know him"

for love is from God

"because God causes us to love each other"

born from God

This is a metaphor which means someone has a relationship to God like a child to his father.

1 John 4:8

The person who does not love does not know God, for God is love

The phrase "God is love" a metaphor which means "the character of God is love." Alternate translation: "Those who do not love their fellow believers do not know God, because the character of God is to love people"

1 John 4:9

Because of this ... among us, that God has sent his only Son

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"Because of this ... among us: God has sent his only Son." The phrase "Because of this" refers to the phrase "that God has sent his only Son."

the love of God was revealed among us

The noun "love" can be translated as a verb. This phrase can be made active. Alternate translation: "God showed that he loves us"

so that we would live because of him

"to enable us to live eternally because of what Jesus did"

1 John 4:10

In this is love: not that

"The true demonstration of love was not that" or "This is true love: not that

he sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins

By dying on the cross as a sacrifice, Christ satisfied God's wrath against our sin. The phrase "atoning sacrifice" can translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that satisfied his wrath against our sins"

1 John 4:11

Beloved, if

"You people whom I love, if" or "Dear friends, if." See how you translated this in 1 John 2:7.

if God so loved us

"since God loved us in this way"

we also should love one another

"believers are to love other believers"

1 John 4:12

God remains in us

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

his love is perfected in us

"God's love is complete in us"

1 John 4:13

we remain in him and he in us

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

and he in us

The word "remains" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and he remains in us"

By this we know ... us, because he has given

Your translation may be clearer if you omit either "by this" or "because." Alternate translation: "We know ... us because he gave" or "By this we know ... us: he gave"

because he has given us some of his Spirit

"because he gave us his Spirit" or "because he has put his Holy Spirit in us." This phrase, however, does not imply that God has less of his Spirit after he has given us some.

1 John 4:14

Also, we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world

"And we apostles have seen the Son of God and tell everyone that God the Father has sent his Son to save people on this earth"

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

1 John 4:15

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God

"Anyone who says the truth about Jesus, that he is the Son of God"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

God remains in him and he in God

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

and he in God

The word "remains" is understood from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "and he remains in God" (See: Ellipsis)

1 John 4:16

God is love

This is a metaphor which means "the character of God is love." See how you translated this in [1 John 4:8]

the one who remains in this love

"those who continue to love others"

remains in God, and God remains in him

To remain in someone means to continue to have fellowship with him. See how you translated "remains in God" in [1 John 2:6]

1 John 4:17

Because of this, this love has been made perfect among us, so that we will have confidence

This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "Because of this" refers back to [1 John 4:16]

this love has been made perfect among us

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God has made his love for us complete"

because as he is, just so are we in this world

"because the relationship that Jesus has with God is the same relationship we have with God in this world"

1 John 4:18

Instead, perfect love throws out fear

Here "love" is described as a person with the power to remove fear. God's love is perfect. Alternate translation: "Instead, when our love is complete, we are no longer afraid"

because fear has to do with punishment

"because we would be afraid only if we thought that he would punish us"

But the one who fears has not been made perfect in love

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "But when a person is afraid that God will punish him, his love is not complete"

1 John 4:20

hates his brother

"hates a fellow believer"

the one who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen

If two negative statements in a row are confusing, this can be translated differently. Alternate translation: "the one who hates his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen"

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5 [1]Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born from God, and whoever loves a father also loves the child born from him.[2]This is how we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and obey his commandments.[3]For this is love for God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.
[4]For everyone who is born from God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.[5]Who is the one who overcomes the world? The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.
[6]This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ. He came not only by water, but also by water and blood. The Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.[7]For there are three that testify:[8]the Spirit, the water, and the blood. These three are in agreement.[1]
[9]If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God that he has testified concerning his Son.[10]Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given concerning his Son.
[11]And the testimony is this: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.[12]The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

[13]I have written to you these things so that you will know that you have eternal life—to you who believe in the name of the Son of God.[14]Also, this is the confidence we have before him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.
[15]Also, if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask of him—we know that we have whatever we have asked of him.
[16]If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not result in death, he must pray, and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not result in death. There is a sin that results in death; I am not saying that he should pray about that.[17]All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin that does not result in death.

[18]We know that whoever has been born from God does not sin. But the one who was born from God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.[19]We know that we are from God, and we know that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.
[20]But we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true. Also, we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life.[21]Children, keep yourselves from idols.

[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, For there are three that testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one; and there are three that testify on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three are as one. However, the best copies do not have this reading.

1 John 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Children born from God
When people believe in Jesus, God makes them his children and gives them eternal life. (See: believe)
Christian living
People who believe in Jesus should obey God's commands and love his children.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

A sin that results in death
This seems to refer to behaviors that will result in a person experiencing spiritual death, that is, to be separated from God forever. (See: death)
"the whole world lies in the power of the evil one"
The phrase "the evil one" refers to Satan. God has allowed him to rule the world, but ultimately God is in control over everything. God keeps his children safe from the evil one. (See: satan)

Links:

1 John 5:1 Notes

1 John 5:1
General Information:
John continues to teach his readers about God's love and the love believers are to have because they have this new nature from God.
is born from God
"is a child of God"
1 John 5:2
This is how we know that we love the children of God: when we love God and obey his commandments.
"When we love God and do what he commands, then we know that we love his children"
1 John 5:3
For this is love for God: that we keep his commandments
"Because when we do what he commands, that is true love for God"
his commandments are not burdensome
"what he commands is not difficult"
burdensome
"heavy" or "crushing" or "difficult"
1 John 5:4
everyone who is born from God overcomes

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"all children of God overcome"

overcomes the world

"has victory over the world," "succeeds against the world," or "refuses to do the evil things unbelievers do"

the world

This passage uses "the world" to refer to all the sinful people and the evil systems in the world. Alternate translation: "everything in the world that is against God"

And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith

"And this is what gives us the power to resist whatever would lead us to sin against God: our faith" or "And it is our faith that gives us the power to resist whatever would lead us to sin against God"

1 John 5:5

Who is the one who overcomes the world?

John used this question to introduce something he wanted to teach. Alternate translation: "I will tell you who overcomes the world:"

The one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God

This does not refer to a specific person but to anyone who believes this. Alternate translation: "Anyone who believes that Jesus is the Son of God"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

1 John 5:6

Connecting Statement:

John teaches about Jesus Christ and what God said about him.

This is the one who came by water and blood: Jesus Christ

"Jesus Christ is the one who came by water and blood." Here "water" is probably a metonym for the baptism of Jesus, and "blood" stands for Jesus's death on the cross. Alternate translation: "God showed that Jesus Christ is his son at Jesus's baptism and his death on the cross"

He came not only by water, but also by water and blood

Here "water" is probably a metonym for the baptism of Jesus, and "blood" stands for Jesus's death on the cross. Alternate translation: "God did not show us Jesus was his son just through his baptism, but through his baptism and his death on the cross"

1 John 5:9

If we receive the testimony of men

The idiom to "receive the testimony" means to believe what another person testifies concerning something that he has seen. The abstract noun "testimony" can be translated with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: "If we believe what men testify" or "If we believe what men say about what they have seen"

the testimony of God is greater

the testimony of God is more important and more reliable

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

1 John 5:10

Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself

"Whoever believes in Jesus knows for sure Jesus is the Son of God"

has made him out to be a liar

"has called God a liar"

because he has not believed the testimony that God has given concerning his Son

"because he has not believed that God has told the truth about his Son"

1 John 5:11

And the testimony is this

"This is what God says"

life

The word "life" throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. Here "life" refers to being alive spiritually. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1]

this life is in his Son

"this life is through his Son" or "we will live forever if we are joined with his Son" or "we will live forever if we are united with his Son"

Son

This is an important title for Jesus, the Son of God.

1 John 5:12

The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life

Being in a close relationship to the Son is spoken of as having the Son. Alternate translation: "He who believes in the Son of God has eternal life. He who does not believe in the Son of God does not have eternal life"

1 John 5:13

General Information:

This begins the end of John's letter. He tells his readers the last purpose for his letter and gives them some final teachings.

these things

"this letter"

to you who believe in the name of the Son of God

Here "name" is a metonym for the Son of God. Alternate translation: "to you who trust in the Son of God"

Son of God

This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.

1 John 5:14

this is the confidence we have before him, that

The abstract noun "confidence" can be stated as "confident." Alternate translation: "we are confident in God's presence because we know that"

if we ask anything according to his will

"if we ask for the things that God desires"

1 John 5:15

we know that we have whatever we have asked of him

"we know that we will receive that for which we have asked God"

1 John 5:16

his brother

"a fellow believer"

life

The word "life" throughout this letter refers to more than physical life. Here "life" refers to being alive spiritually. See how you translated this in [1 John 1:1]

death

This refers to eternal death, that is, eternity spent away from God's presence.

1 John 5:18

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Connecting Statement:
John closes his letter, reviewing what he has said about the new nature of believers, which cannot sin, and he reminds them to keep themselves from idols (5:21).
the evil one cannot harm him
The phrase "the evil one" refers to Satan, the devil.
1 John 5:19
the whole world lies in the power of the evil one
Lying in someone's power represents being controlled or ruled by him. Alternate translation: "the whole world is controlled by the evil one"
the whole world lies in the power
Here "world" represents all the people who rebel against God. Alternate translation: "all the people of the world are under the power"
1 John 5:20
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus that describes his relationship to God.
has given us understanding
"has enabled us to understand the truth"
we are in him who is true
Being "in" someone represents having a close relationship with him, that is being united to him or belonging to him. The phrase "him who is true" refers to the true God, and the phrase "in his Son Jesus Christ" explains how we are in him who is true. Alternate translation: "we are united to him who is true by being united to his Son Jesus Christ"
him who is true
"the true one" or "the real God"
This one is the true God
Possible meanings are 1) "This one" refers to Jesus Christ, or 2) "This one" refers to the one true God.
and eternal life
He is called "eternal life" becasue he gives us eternal life. Alternate translation: "and the one who gives eternal life"
1 John 5:21
Children
John was an elderly man and their leader. He used this expression to show his love for them. See how you translated this in [1 John 2:1]
keep yourselves from idols
"stay away from idols" or "do not worship idols"

Introduction to 2 John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 2 John

Greeting (1:1-3) Encouragement and the greatest commandment (1:4-6) Warning about false teachers (1:7–11) Greetings from fellow believers (1:12-13)

Who wrote the Book of 2 John?

The letter does not give the name of the author. The author only identified himself as "the elder." The letter was probably written by the Apostle John near the end of his life. The content of 2 John is similar to the content in John's Gospel.

What is the Book of 2 John about?

John addressed this letter to someone he called "the chosen lady" and to "her children"

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "2 John" or "Second John." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Second Letter from John" or "The Second Letter John Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is hospitality?

Hospitality was an important concept in the ancient Near East. It was important to be friendly towards foreigners or outsiders and provide help to them if they needed it. John wanted believers to offer hospitality to guests. However, he did not want believers to offer hospitality to false teachers.

Who were the people John spoke against?

The people John spoke against were possibly those who would become known as Gnostics. These people believed that the physical world was evil. Since they believed Jesus was divine, they denied that he was truly human. This is because they thought God would not become human since the physical body is evil. (See: evil)

2 John

1 [1]From the elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth—and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth—[2]because of the truth that remains in us and will be with us forever:

[3]Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

[4]I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received this commandment from the Father.[5]Now I plead with you, lady—not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but one that we

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have had from the beginning—that we should love one another.[6]This is love: that we should walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.
[7]For many deceivers have gone out into the world, and they do not confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.[8]Look to yourselves, that you do not lose the things for which we have labored, but so that you may receive a full reward.
[9]Whoever goes on ahead and does not remain in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in the teaching, this one has both the Father and the Son.[10]If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not greet him.[11]For the one who speaks a greeting to him participates in his evil deeds.

[12]I have many things to write to you, but I did not wish to write them with paper and ink. However, I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that our joy will be complete.
[13]The children of your chosen sister greet you.

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2 John 1:1

General Information:

Tradition identifies the apostle John as the writer of this letter. Though possibly addressed to an individual woman, because he writes that they should "love one another," this is probably to a church. All instances of "you" and "your" in this letter are plural unless noted otherwise. In this letter, John includes himself and his readers by using the word "us" and "our."

From the elder to the chosen lady and her children

This is how letters were started. The name of the author can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "I, John the elder, am writing this letter to the chosen lady and her children"

the elder

This refers to John, the apostle and disciple of Jesus. He refers to himself as "elder" either because of his old age or because he is a leader in the church.

to the chosen lady and her children

This probably refers to a congregation and the believers that belong to it.

2 John 1:3

Father ... Son

These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.

in truth and love

The word "truth" describes "love." Possibly the phrase means "in true love."

2 John 1:4

your children

The word "your" is singular.

just as we have received this commandment from the Father

"just as God the Father commanded us"

2 John 1:5

you, lady ... writing to you

These instances of "you" are singular.

I were writing to you a new commandment, but one that we have had from the beginning

Here, "beginning" refers to "when we first believed." Alternate translation: "I were commanding you to do something new, but what Christ commanded us to do when we first believed"

beginning—that we should love one another

This can be translated as a new sentence. Alternate translation: "beginning. He commanded that we should love one another"

2 John 1:6

This is the commandment, just as you heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it

Conducting our lives according to God's commands is spoken of as if we were walking in them. The word "it" refers to love. "And he has commanded you, since you first believed, to love one another"

2 John 1:7

Connecting Statement:

John warns his readers of deceivers, reminds them to remain in Christ's teaching, and warns them to stay away from those who do not remain in Christ's teaching.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world

"For many false teachers have left the congregation" or "For many deceivers are in the world"

many deceivers

"many false teachers" or "many imposters"

Jesus Christ came in the flesh

Coming in the flesh is a metonym for being a real person. Alternate translation: "Jesus Christ came as a real human"

This is the deceiver and the antichrist

"They are the ones who deceive others and oppose Christ himself"

2 John 1:8

Look to yourselves

"Watch out" or "Pay attention" or "Be on guard"

lose the things

"lose your future rewards in heaven"

the things for which we have labored

Another possible meaning is, "the things that we have accomplished."

full reward

"complete reward in heaven"

2 John 1:9

Whoever goes on ahead

This refers to a person who claims to know more about God and truth than everyone else. Alternate translation: "Whoever claims to know more about God" or "Whoever disobeys the truth"

goes on ahead

Some modern translations read, "transgresses."

does not have God

"does not belong to God"

The one who remains in the teaching, this one has both the Father and the Son

"Someone who follows Christ's teaching belongs to both the

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Father and the Son"
the Father and the Son
These are important titles that describe the relationship between God and Jesus.
2 John 1:10
receive him into your house
Here this means to welcome him and treat him with honor in order to build a relationship with him.
2 John 1:11
participates in his evil deeds
"shares with him in his evil deeds" or "helps him in his evil deeds"
2 John 1:12
General Information:
The words "you" in verse 12 are singular.
Connecting Statement:
John's letter closes with his desire to visit his readers and gives greetings from another church.
I did not wish to write them with paper and ink
John does not wish to write these other things but would like to come say the words to them. He is not saying that he would write them with something other than paper and ink.
I hope to come to you
John wants to visit his readers but he does not know with certainty that he would be able to visit them. Alternate translation: "I plan to come to you" or "I want to come to you"
speak face to face
"Speak face to face" here is an idiom, meaning "to speak in their presence." Alternate translation: "speak in your presence" or "speak to you in person"
2 John 1:13
General Information
The word "your" in verse 13 is plural.
The children of your chosen sister
Here John speaks of this other church as if it were a sister to the readers' church and the believers that are a part of that church as if they were that church's children. This emphasizes that all believers are a spiritual family.

Introduction to 3 John

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of 3 John

Introduction (1:1) Encouragement and instructions to show hospitality (1:2-8) Diotrephes and Demetrius (1:9-12) Conclusion (1:13-14)

Who wrote the Book of 3 John?

The letter does not give the name of the author. The author only identified himself as "the elder" (1:1). The letter was probably written by the Apostle John near the end of his life.

What is the Book of 3 John about?

John wrote this letter to a believer named Gaius. He instructed Gaius to be hospitable to fellow believers who were traveling through his area.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "3 John" or "Third John." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Third Letter from John" or "The Third Letter John Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

What is hospitality?

Hospitality was an important concept in the ancient Near East. It was important to be friendly towards foreigners or outsiders and provide help to them if they needed it. In 2 John, John discouraged Christians from showing hospitality to false teachers. In 3 John, John encouraged Christians to show hospitality to faithful teachers.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the author use family relationships in his letter?

The author used the terms "brother" and "children" in a way that can be confusing. The scriptures often used the term "brothers" to refer to Jews. But in this letter, John used the word to refer to Christians. Also, John called some believers his "children." These are believers he taught to obey Christ.

John also used the term "Gentile" in a way that could be confusing. The scriptures often used the term "Gentile" to refer to people who are not Jews. But in this letter, John used the word to refer to those who did not believe in Jesus.

3 John

1 [1]The elder to beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth:

[2]Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be healthy, just as it is well with your soul.[3]For I rejoiced greatly when brothers came and bore witness to your truth, just as you walk in truth.[4]I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children walk in the truth.

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[5]Beloved, you practice faithfulness whenever you labor for the brothers and for strangers[6]who have borne witness of your love in the presence of the church. You do well to send them off on their journey in a manner worthy of God, [7]because it was for the sake of the name that they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles.[8]We therefore should welcome such as these so that we will be fellow workers for the truth.

[9]I wrote something to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not receive us.[10]So if I come, I will call attention to the deeds he is doing, falsely accusing us with wicked words. Not satisfied with that, he not only refuses to welcome the brothers himself, but he also stops those who want to welcome them and drives them out of the church.
[11]Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the evildoer has not seen God.
[12]Demetrius received a good testimony from everyone and by the truth itself. We also testify about him, and you know that our testimony is true.

[13]I had many things to write to you, but I do not wish to write them to you with pen and ink.[14]But I hope to see you soon, and we will speak face to face.[15]May peace be with you. The friends greet you. Greet our friends there by name.

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3 John 1:1
General Information:
This is a personal letter from John to Gaius. All instances of "you" and "your" refer to Gaius and are singular.
The elder
This refers to John, the apostle and disciple of Jesus. He refers to himself as "elder" either because of his old age or because he is a leader in the church. The name of the author can be made explicit: "I, John the elder, am writing."
Gaius
This is a fellow believer to whom John is writing this letter.
whom I love in truth
"whom I truly love"
3 John 1:2
all may go well with you and that you may be healthy
"you may do well in all things and be healthy"
just as it is well with your soul
"just as you are doing well spiritually"
3 John 1:3
brothers came
"fellow believers came." These people were probably all male.
you walk in truth
Walking on a path is a metaphor for how a person lives his life. Alternate translation: "you are living your life according to God's truth"
3 John 1:4
my children
John speaks of those he taught to believe in Jesus as though they were his children. This emphasizes his love and concern for them. It could also be that he himself led them to the Lord. Alternate translation: "my spiritual children"
3 John 1:5
Connecting Statement:
John's purpose in writing this letter is to compliment Gaius in the way he took care of traveling Bible teachers; then he talks about two people, one evil and one good.
Beloved
Here this is used as a term of endearment for a fellow believer.
you practice faithfulness
"you are doing what is faithful to God" or "you are being loyal to God"
labor for the brothers and for strangers
"help fellow believers and those you do not know"
3 John 1:6
You do well to send them
John is thanking Gaius for his normal practice of helping these believers.
3 John 1:7
because it was for the sake of the name that they went out
Here "the name" refers to Jesus. Alternate translation: "for they have gone out to tell people about Jesus"
taking nothing
receiving no gifts or help
the Gentiles
Here "Gentiles" means non-Jews who do not believe in Christ.
3 John 1:8
General Information:
Here the word "we" refers to John and those with him, and possibly includes all believers.
so that we will be fellow workers for the truth
"so that we will cooperate with them in announcing God's truth to people"
3 John 1:9
General Information:
The word "us" refers to John and those with him and does not include Gaius.
congregation
This refers to Gaius and the group of believers who met together to worship God.
Diotrephes
He was a member of the congregation.
who loves to be first among them
"who loves to be the most important one among them" or "who loves to act as though he's their leader"
3 John 1:10
falsely accusing us with wicked words
"and how he says evil things about us that certainly are not true"
refuses to welcome the brothers
"does not welcome the fellow believers"
stops those who want to welcome them

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"stops those who want to welcome the believers"

drives them out of the church

"he forces them to leave the congregation"

3 John 1:11

Beloved

Here this is used as a term of endearment for a fellow believer. See how you translated this in 3 John 1:5.

do not imitate what is evil

"do not copy the evil things that people do"

but what is good

There are words left out but they are understood. Alternate translation: "but imitate what is good" or "but imitate the good things that people do"

is of God

"belongs to God"

has not seen God

"does not belong to God" or "does not believe in God"

3 John 1:12

General Information:

Here "we" refers to John and those with him and does not include Gaius.

Demetrius received a good testimony from everyone

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "All who know Demetrius testify that he is a good man" or "Every believer who knows Demetrius speaks well of him"

Demetrius

This is probably a man whom John wants Gaius and the congregation to welcome when he comes to visit.

by the truth itself

"the truth itself speaks well of him." Here "truth" is described as a person speaking. Alternate translation: "everyone who knows the truth knows he is a good person"

We also testify about him

What John is confirming is implied and can be made specific here. Alternate translation: "We also testify about Demetrius" or "We also speak well of Demetrius"

3 John 1:13

General Information:

This is the end of John's letter to Gaius. He gives some final remarks and closes with a greeting.

I do not wish to write them to you with pen and ink

John does not wish to write these other things at all. He is not saying that he would write them with something other than pen and ink.

3 John 1:14

I hope to see you soon

John wants to visit him, but he does not know with certainty that he would be able to visit him. Alternate translation: "I plan to come to you" or "I want to come to you"

face to face

"Face to face" here is an idiom, meaning "in person." Alternate translation: "in person"

3 John 1:15

May peace be with you

"May God give you peace"

The friends greet you

"The friends here greet you"

Greet our friends there by name

"Greet each of the believers there for me"

Introduction to Jude

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Jude

Introduction (1:1-2) Warning against false teachers (1:3-4) Old Testament examples (1:5-16) Proper response (1:17-23) Praises to God (1:24-25)

Who wrote the Book of Jude?

The author identified himself as Jude the brother of James. Both Jude and James were half-brothers of Jesus. It is unknown whether this letter was intended for a specific church.

What is the Book of Jude about?

Jude wrote this letter to warn believers against false teachers. Jude often referred to the Old Testament. This may suggest that Jude was writing to a Jewish Christian audience. This letter and 2 Peter have similar content. They both speak about angels, Sodom and Gomorrah, and false teachers.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "Jude." Or they may choose a clearer title, such as "The Letter from Jude" or "The Letter Jude Wrote."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Who were the people Jude spoke against?

It is possible that the people Jude spoke against were those who would become known as Gnostics. These teachers distorted the teachings of scripture for their own gain. They lived in immoral ways and taught others to do the same.

Jude

1 [1]Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

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[2]May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

[3]Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I had to write to you to exhort you to struggle earnestly for the faith that was entrusted once for all to God's holy people.[4]For certain men have slipped in secretly among you. These men were marked out for condemnation. They are ungodly men who have changed the grace of our God into sensuality, and who deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

[5]Now I wish to remind you—although once you fully knew it—that the Lord saved a people out of the land of Egypt, but that afterward he destroyed those who did not believe.[6]Also, angels who did not keep to their own position of authority, but who left their proper dwelling place—God has kept them in everlasting chains, in utter darkness, for the judgment on the great day.
[7]So also Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them gave themselves over to sexual immorality and perverse sexual acts. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.[8]Yet in the same way, these dreamers also defile their bodies. They reject authority and they slander the glorious ones.
[9]But even Michael the archangel, when he was arguing with the devil and disputing with him about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous judgment against him, but he said, "May the Lord rebuke you!"[10]But these people insult whatever they do not understand; and what they do understand naturally, like unreasoning animals, these are the very things that destroy them.[11]Woe to them! For they have walked in the way of Cain and have plunged into Balaam's error for profit. They have perished in Korah's rebellion.
[12]These people are dangerous reefs at your love feasts, feasting with you fearlessly—shepherds who only feed themselves. They are clouds without rain, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit—twice dead, uprooted.[13]They are violent waves in the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of complete darkness has been reserved forever.
[14]Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord is coming with thousands and thousands of his holy ones.[15]He is coming to execute judgment on everyone. He is coming to convict all the ungodly of all the works they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the bitter words that ungodly sinners have spoken against him."[16]These are grumblers, complainers, following their evil desires. Their mouths speak loud boasts, flattering others for profit.

[17]But you, beloved, remember the words that were spoken in the past by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.[18]They said to you, "In the last time there will be mockers who will follow their own ungodly desires."[19]It is these who cause divisions; they are worldly, and they do not have the Spirit.
[20]But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith, and pray in the Holy Spirit.[21]Keep yourselves in God's love, and wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that brings you eternal life.
[22]Be merciful to those who doubt.[23]Save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

[24]Now to the one who is able to keep you from stumbling and to cause you to stand before his glorious presence without blemish and with great joy,[25]to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time, now, and forever. Amen.

Jude 1:1
General Information:
Jude identifies himself as the writer of this letter and greets his readers. He was probably the half-brother of Jesus. There are two other Judes mentioned in the New Testament. The word "you" in this letter refers to the Christians to whom Jude was writing and is always plural.
Jude, a servant of
Jude is the brother of James. Alternate translation: "I am Jude, a servant of"
brother of James
James and Jude were half brothers of Jesus.
Jude 1:2
May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you
"may mercy, peace, and love be increased many times for you." These ideas are spoken of as if they were objects that could grow in size or number. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "mercy," "peace," and "love." Alternate translation: "May God continue to be merciful to you so that you live peacefully and love one another more and more
Jude 1:3
General Information:
The word "our" in this letter includes both Jude and believers.
Connecting Statement:
Jude tells the believers his reason for writing this letter.
our common salvation
"the salvation we share"
I had to write
"I felt a great need to write" or "I felt an urgent need to write"
to exhort you to struggle earnestly for the faith
"to encourage you to defend the true teaching"

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once for all
"finally and completely"
Jude 1:4
For certain men have slipped in secretly among you
"For some men have come in among the believers without drawing attention to themselves"
These men were marked out for condemnation
This can also be put into the active voice. Alternate translation: "These were men whom God chose to condemn"
who have changed the grace of our God into sensuality
God's grace is spoken of as if it were a thing that could be changed into something horrible. Alternate translation: "who teach that God's grace permits one to continue to live in sexual sin"
deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ
Possible meanings are 1) they teach that he is not God or 2) these men do not obey Jesus Christ.
Jude 1:5
Connecting Statement:
Jude gives examples from the past of those who did not follow the Lord.
the Lord saved a people out of the land of Egypt
"the Lord rescued the Israelites long ago from Egypt"
the Lord
Some texts read "Jesus."
Jude 1:6
their own position of authority
"the responsibilities God entrusted to them"
their proper dwelling place
The proper dwelling place of angels is heaven.
God has kept them in everlasting chains, in utter darkness
"God has put these angels in a dark prison from which they will never escape"
utter darkness
Here "darkness" is a metonym which represents the place of the dead or hell. Alternate translation: "in utter darkness in hell"
the great day
the final day when God will judge everyone
Jude 1:7
Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them
Here "Sodom," "Gomorrah," and "cities" represent the people who lived in them. Alternate translation: "the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and the people in the cities around them"
gave themselves over to sexual immorality and perverse sexual acts
"engaged in every kind of sexual immorality and all of the perverse sexual acts they desired." The sexual sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were the result of the same kind of rebellion as the angels' evil ways.
as an example of those who suffer the punishment
The destruction of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah became an example of the fate of all who reject God.
Jude 1:8
these dreamers
These are the people who disobey God, probably because they claim to have seen visions that gave them authority to do so.
defile their bodies
The people sinning is spoken of as if they were making their bodies unclean. Alternate translation: "sin and defile themselves"
they slander
"they speak insults about"
glorious ones
This refers to spiritual beings, such as angels.
Jude 1:9
General Information:
Balaam was a prophet who refused to curse Israel for an enemy but then taught that enemy to get the people to marry unbelievers and become idol worshipers. Korah was a man of Israel who rebelled against Moses's leadership and Aaron's priesthood.
did not dare to bring a slanderous judgment against him
"did not dare to speak anything evil against him" or "did not dare to insult or condemn him"
Jude 1:10
these people
the ungodly people
whatever they do not understand
"anything of which they do not know the meaning."
Possible meanings are 1) "everything good that they do not understand" or 2) "the glorious ones, which they do not understand" (Jude 1:8).
Jude 1:11
walked in the way of Cain
"Walked in the way" here is a metaphor for "lived in the same way as." Alternate translation: "lived the same way Cain lived"
Jude 1:12
Connecting Statement:
Jude uses a series of metaphors to describe the ungodly men. He tells the believers how to recognize these men when they are among them.
These people
The word "These" refers to the "ungodly men" of Jude 1:4.
dangerous reefs
Reefs are large rocks that are very close to the surface of water in the sea. Because sailors cannot see them, they are very dangerous. Ships can easily be destroyed if they hit these rocks.
autumn trees without fruit—twice dead, uprooted
These words contain two metaphors for dead people and apply them both to "these people."
autumn trees without fruit
This is the first metaphor for dead people. Trees in autumn look dead because their leaves have all fallen off, as has the fruit of fruit trees.
twice dead, uprooted
This is the second metaphor for dead people. After these "autumn trees" have lost their leaves and fruit, they die their first metaphorical death. Then people uproot them, and they die their second metaphorical death.
uprooted
completely pulled out of the ground so their roots dry out
Jude 1:13
violent waves in the sea

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As the sea's waves are blown by a strong wind, so the ungodly people are easily moved in many directions.
foaming up their shame
As wind causes wild waves to stir up dirty foam—so these men, through their false teaching and actions, shame themselves. Alternate translation: "and just as waves bring up foam and dirt, these men pollute others with their shame"
wandering stars
Those who studied the stars in ancient times noticed that some "stars,"—what we call planets—do not move the way that stars do, so they called them "wandering stars." Alternate translation: "They are like moving stars"
for whom the gloom of complete darkness has been reserved forever
Here "darkness" is a metonym that represents the place of the dead or hell, and "the gloom of complete darkness" is an idiom that means "a totally dark place." The phrase "has been reserved" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and God will put them in the gloom and complete darkness of hell forever"
Jude 1:14
the seventh from Adam
If Adam is counted as the first generation of mankind, Enoch is the seventh. If Adam's son is counted as the first, Enoch is sixth in line.
Look
"Listen" or "Pay attention to this important thing I am going to say"
holy ones
Possible meanings are 1) "angels" or 2) "saints" or 3) "angels and saints"
Jude 1:15
to execute judgment on
"to make judgment on" or "to judge"
Jude 1:16
grumblers, complainers
People who do not want to obey and speak against godly authority. "Grumblers" tend to speak quietly, while "complainers" speak openly.
Their mouths speak loud boasts
They praise themselves so that others can hear.
flattering others
"giving false praise to others"
Jude 1:18
mockers who will follow their own ungodly desires
Ungodly desires are spoken of as if they were a path that a person will follow. Alternate translation: "mockers who will continue to dishonor God by doing the evil things they wish to do"
Jude 1:19
It is these
"It is these mockers" or "These mockers are the ones"
they are worldly
Here "worldly" describes someone who is concerned with things of the world rather than things of God. Often in the Bible "world" represents all things opposed to God. Alternate translation: "they are only concerned with doing what is evil"
they do not have the Spirit
The Holy Spirit is spoken of as if he were something that people can possess. Alternate translation: "the Spirit is not within them"
Jude 1:20
Connecting Statement:
Jude tells the believers how they should live and how they should treat others.
But you, beloved
"Do not be like them, beloved. Instead"
build yourselves up
Becoming increasingly able to trust in God and obey him is spoken of as if it were the process of constructing a building.
Jude 1:21
Keep yourselves in God's love
Remaining able to receive God's love is spoken of as if one were keeping oneself in a certain place.
wait for
"eagerly look forward to"
the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that brings you eternal life
Here "mercy" stands for Jesus Christ himself, who will show his mercy to the believers by making them live forever with him.
Jude 1:22
those who doubt
"those who do not yet believe that Jesus is God"
Jude 1:23
snatching them out of the fire
The picture is that of pulling people from a fire before they start to burn. Alternate translation: "doing for them whatever needs to be done to keep them from dying without Christ. This is like pulling them from the fire"
to others show mercy with fear
"be kind to others, but be afraid of sinning the way they do"
hating even the garment defiled by the flesh
Jude exaggerates to warn his readers that they can become like those sinners. Alternate translation: "treating them as though you could become guilty of sin just by touching their clothes"
Jude 1:24
Connecting Statement:
Jude closes with a blessing.
to cause you to stand before his glorious presence
His glory is brilliant light that represents his greatness. Alternate translation: "and to allow you to enjoy and worship his glory"
glorious presence without blemish and with
Here sin is spoken of as if it were dirt on one's body or a flaw on one's body. Alternate translation: "glorious presence, where you will be without sin and have"
Jude 1:25
to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord
"to the only God, who saved us because of what Jesus Christ did." This emphasizes that God the Father as well as the Son is the Savior.
be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time, now, and forever
God has always had, now has, and always will have glory, absolute leadership, and complete control of all things.

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Introduction to Revelation

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Revelation

Opening (1:1-20) Letters to the seven churches (2:1-3:22) Vision of God in heaven, and a vision of the Lamb (4:1-5:14) The seven seals (6:1-8:1) The seven trumpets (8:2-13:18) Worshipers of the Lamb, the martyrs, and the harvest of wrath (14:1-20) The seven bowls (15:1-18:24) Worship in heaven (19:1-10) The Lamb's judgment, the destruction of the beast, the thousand years, the destruction of Satan, and the final judgment (19:11-20:15) The new creation and the new Jerusalem (21:1-22:5) Jesus's promise to return, the witness from the angels, John's closing words, Christ's message to his church, and the invitation and the warning (22:6-21)

Who wrote the Book of Revelation?

The author identified himself as John. This was probably the Apostle John. He wrote the Book of Revelation while on the island of Patmos. The Romans exiled John there for teaching people about Jesus.

What is the Book of Revelation about?

John wrote the Book of Revelation to encourage believers to remain faithful even when they are suffering. John described visions he had of Satan and his followers fighting against and killing believers. In the visions God causes many terrible things to happen on the earth to punish wicked people. In the end, Jesus defeats Satan and his followers. Then Jesus comforts those who were faithful. And the believers will live forever with God in the new heavens and earth.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by one of its traditional titles, "Revelation," "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," "The Revelation to Saint John," or "The Apocalypse of John." Or they may choose a possibly clearer title, such as "The Things that Jesus Christ Showed to John."

What type of writing is the Book of Revelation?

John used a special style of writing to describe his visions. John described what he saw by using many symbols. This style of writing is called symbolic prophecy or apocalyptic literature.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Are the events of Revelation past or future?

Since early Christian times, scholars have interpreted Revelation differently. Some scholars think John described events that happened during his time. Some scholars think John described events happening from his time until the return of Jesus. Other scholars think John described events that will happen in a short period of time just before Christ returns. Translators will not need to decide how to interpret the book before they translate it. Translators should leave the prophecies in the tenses that are used in the ULB.

Are there any other books in the Bible like Revelation?

No other book of the Bible is like the Book of Revelation. But passages in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and especially Daniel are similar in content and style to Revelation. It may be beneficial to translate Revelation at the same time as Daniel since they have some imagery and style in common.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Does one need to understand the Book of Revelation to translate it?

One does not need to understand all of the symbols in the Book of Revelation to translate it properly. Translators should not give possible meanings for the symbols or numbers in their translation.

How are the ideas of "holy" and "sanctify" represented in Revelation in the ULB?

The scriptures use these words to indicate any one of various ideas. For this reason, it is often difficult for translators to represent them well in their versions. In translating Revelation into English, the ULB uses the following principles:

The meaning in two passages indicates moral holiness. Here, the ULB uses "holy." (See: 14:12; 22:11) Usually the meaning in Revelation indicates a simple reference to Christians without implying any particular role filled by them. In these cases, the ULB uses "believer" or "believers." (See: 5:8; 8:3, 4; 11:18; 13:7; 16:6; 17:6; 18:20, 24; 19:8; 20:9) Sometimes the meaning implies the idea of someone or something set apart for God alone. In these cases, the ULB uses "sanctify," "set apart," "dedicated to," or "reserved for."

The UDB will often be helpful as translators think about how to represent these ideas in their own versions.

Periods of time

John referred to various periods of time in Revelation. For example, there are many references to forty-two months, seven years, and three and a half days. Some scholars think these time periods are symbolic. Other scholars think these are actual time periods. The translator should treat these time periods as referencing actual periods of time. It is then up to the interpreter to determine their significance or what they may represent.

What are the major issues in the text of the Book of Revelation?

For the following verses, some modern versions of the Bible differ from older versions. The ULB text has the modern

reading and puts the older reading in a footnote. If translations of the Bible exists in the general region, translators should consider using the readings found in those versions. If not, translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

"'I am the alpha and the omega,' says the Lord God, 'the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty'" (1:8). Some versions add the phrase "the Beginning and the End." "the elders prostrated themselves and worshiped" (5:14). Some older translations read, "the twenty-four elders prostrated themselves and worshiped the one who lives forever and ever." "so that a third of it [the earth] was burned up" (8:7). Some older versions do not include this phrase. "the one who is and who was" (11:17). Some versions add the phrase "and who is to come." "they are blameless" (14:5). Some versions add the phrase "before the throne of God" (14:5). "the one who is and who was, the Holy One" (16:5). Some older translations read, "O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be." "The nations will walk by the light of that city" (21:24). Some older translations read, "The nations that are saved will walk by the light of that city." "Blessed are those who wash their robes" (22:14). Some older translations read "Blessed are those who do his commandments." "God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city" (22:19). Some older translations read, "God will take away his share in the book of life and in the holy city."

Revelation

1 [1]This is the revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,[2]who testified about the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, all the things that he saw.[3]Blessed is the one who reads aloud this prophecy and those who listen to the words of this prophecy and who obey what is written in it, because the time is near.

[4]John, to the seven churches in Asia: May grace be to you and peace from the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,[5]and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood—[6]he has made us a kingdom, priests for his God and Father—to him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

[7] Look, he is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
including those who pierced him.
All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him.
Yes, Amen.

[8]"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."[1]

[9]I, John—your brother and the one who shares with you in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Jesus—was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony about Jesus.[10]I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.[11]It said, "Write what you see in a book, and send it to the seven churches—to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
[12]I turned around to see whose voice was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw seven golden lampstands.[13]In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a son of man, wearing a long robe that reached down to his feet and a golden sash around his chest.
[14]His head and hair were as white as wool—as white as snow—and his eyes were like a flame of fire.[15]His feet were like polished bronze, like bronze that had been refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many rushing waters.
[16]He had seven stars in his right hand, and a sword with two sharp edges was coming out of his mouth. His face was shining like the sun at its strongest.
[17]When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right hand on me and said, "Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last[18]and the one who lives. I was dead, but look, I live forever and ever! And I have the keys of death and of Hades.
[19]Therefore write down what you have seen, what is now, and what will take place after this.[20]As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord God.

Revelation 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

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This chapter explains how the Book of Revelation records the vision John received on the island of Patmos.
Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page to make them easier to read. The ULB does this with the quoted words in verse 7.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven churches
John wrote this book to seven actual churches in Asia Minor, which is now the country of Turkey.
White
The Bible often speaks of something that belongs to a person as being "white." This is metaphor and metonym for that person living rightly and pleasing God. (See: and and righteous)
"the one who is, and who was, and who is to come"
God exists now. He has always existed. He will always exist. Your language may have a different way of saying this.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Blood
Blood is a metonym for death. Jesus "has released us from our sins by his blood." John means that Jesus saved us from our sins by dying for us.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"He is coming with the clouds"
Jesus went into the clouds when he went up to heaven after God raised him from the dead. When Jesus returns, he will also be "with the clouds." It is not clear whether he will be sitting or riding on clouds or coming in the clouds or "with the clouds" in some other way. Your translation should express this in a way that is natural in your language.
"One like a son of man"
This refers to Jesus. You should translate the words "son of man" using the same words as you did in the Gospels for when Jesus called himself the "Son of Man."
"The angels of the seven churches"
The word "angels" here can also mean "messengers." This might refer to heavenly beings, or to the messengers or leaders of these seven churches. John uses the same word "angel" (singular) in verse 1 and in many other places throughout the book. Your translation should also use the same word.

Links:

Revelation 1:1 Notes Revelation intro

Revelation 1:1
General Information:
This is an introduction to the book of Revelation. It explains that it is a revelation from Jesus Christ and it gives a blessing to those who read it.
his servants
This refers to people who believe in Christ.
what must soon take place
"the events that must happen soon"
made it known
"communicated it"
to his servant John
John wrote this book and was referring to himself here. Alternate translation: "to me, John, his servant"
Revelation 1:2
who testified about ... all the things that he saw
The word "who" refers to John. This tells what John did after he learned about the revelation. Alternate translation: "And John testified about ... all the things that he saw"
the word of God
"the message that God spoke"
the testimony of Jesus Christ
These words could refer to 1) the testimony that John has given about Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "he has also given testimony about Jesus Christ" Or 2) the testimony that Jesus Christ has given about himself.
Revelation 1:3
the one who reads aloud
This does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone who reads it aloud. Alternate translation: "anyone who reads aloud"
obey what is written in it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "obey what John has written in it" or "obey what they read in it"
the time is near
"the things that must happen will soon happen"
Revelation 1:4
General Information:
This is the beginning of John's letter. Here he names himself as the writer and greets the people he is writing to.
May grace be to you and peace
"May you receive grace and peace" or "May you experience grace and peace." This is a wish or blessing.
from the one who is
"from God, who is"
who is to come
Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.
seven spirits
The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God.
Revelation 1:5
and from Jesus Christ

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This continues the blessing from Revelation 1:4. Alternate translation:"and may grace be to you and peace also from Jesus Christ" or "and may Jesus Christ treat you kindly and enable you to live peacefully and securely"

the firstborn from the dead

"the first person to be raised from death, never to die again"

from the dead

The expression "the dead" describes all dead people together in the underworld. To come back from among them speaks of becoming alive again. Alternate translation: "from among all those who have died"

has freed us from our sins

"has released us from our sins"

Revelation 1:6

has made us a kingdom, priests

"has set us apart and begun to rule over us and he has made us priests"

his God and Father

This is one person. Alternate translation: "God, his Father"

Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

to him be the glory and the power

This is a wish or prayer. Possible meanings are 1) "May people honor his glory and power" or 2) "May he have glory and power." John prays that Jesus Christ will be honored and will be able to rule completely over everyone and everything.

the power

This probably refers to his authority as king.

Revelation 1:7

General Information:

Here John quotes from Daniel and Zechariah.

every eye

Since people see with the eyes, the word "eye" is used to refer to people. Alternate translation: "every person" or "everyone"

including those who pierced him

"even those who pierced him will see him"

pierced him

Jesus's hands and feet were pierced when he was nailed to the cross. Here it refers to people killing him. Alternate translation: "killed him"

pierced

made a hole in

Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "the one who is ... the Almighty."

This can be restated so that the quotation is not split. Alternate translation: "The Lord God says, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the one who is ... the Almighty.'" or "'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the one who is ... the Almighty,' says the Lord God."

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If the meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first and last letters of your alphabet. Alternate translation: "the A and the Z" or "the first and the last"

who is to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 1:9

General Information:

John explains how his vision began and the instructions the Spirit gave him.

your ... you

These refer to the believers in the seven churches.

I, John—your brother and the one who shares with you in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are in Jesus—was

This can be stated as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "I, John, am your brother who shares with you in God's kingdom and also suffers and patiently endures trials along with you because we belong to Jesus. I was"

because of the word of God

"because I told others the word of God"

the word of God

"the message that God spoke." Translate as in Revelation 1:2.

the testimony about Jesus

"the testimony that God has given about Jesus." Translate as in Revelation 1:2.

Revelation 1:10

I was in the Spirit

John speaks of being influenced by God's Spirit as if he were in the Spirit. Alternate translation: "I was influenced by the Spirit" or "The Spirit influenced me"

the Lord's day

the day of worship for believers in Christ

loud voice like a trumpet

The voice was so loud it sounded like a trumpet.

trumpet

This refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

Revelation 1:11

Smyrna ... Pergamum ... Thyatira ... Sardis ... Philadelphia ... Laodicea

These are names of cities in the region of western Asia that today is modern Turkey.

Revelation 1:12

Connecting Statement:

John begins to explain what he saw in his vision.

whose voice

This refers to the person speaking. Alternate translation: "who"

Revelation 1:13

son of man

This expression describes a human figure, someone who looks human.

a golden sash

a piece of cloth worn around the chest. It may have had golden threads in it.

Revelation 1:14

His head and hair were as white as wool—as white as snow

Wool and snow are examples of things that are very white. The repetition of "as white as" emphasizes that they were very white.

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wool
This is the hair of a sheep or goat. It was known to be very white.
his eyes were like a flame of fire
His eyes are described as being full of light like fire flames. Alternate translation: "his eyes were glowing like a flame of fire"
Revelation 1:15
His feet were like polished bronze
Bronze is polished to make it shine and reflect light. Alternate translation: "His feet were very shiny like polished bronze"
like polished bronze, like bronze that had been refined in a furnace
The bronze would be refined first and then polished. Alternate translation: "like bronze that has been purified in a hot furnace and polished"
furnace
a strong container for holding a very hot fire. People would put metal in it, and the hot fire would burn away any impurities that were in the metal.
the sound of many rushing waters
This is very loud, like the sound of a large, fast flowing river, of a large waterfall, or of loud waves in the sea.
Revelation 1:16
a sword ... was coming out of his mouth
The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion.
a sword with two sharp edges
This refers to a double-edged sword, which is sharpened on both sides to cut both directions.
Revelation 1:17
fell at his feet like a dead man
John lay down facing the ground. He was probably very frightened and was showing Jesus great respect.
He placed his right hand on me
"He touched me with his right hand"
I am the first and the last
This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus.
Revelation 1:18
I have the keys of death and of Hades
Having the power over something is spoken of as having the keys to it. The implied information is that he can give life to those who have died and let them out of Hades. Alternate translation: "I have the power over death and over Hades" or "I have the power to give life to people who have died and to let them out of Hades"
Revelation 1:19
Connecting Statement:
The Son of Man continues to speak.
Revelation 1:20
stars
These stars are symbols that represent the seven angels of the seven churches.
lampstands
The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:12.
the angels of the seven churches
Possible meanings are that these "angels" are 1) heavenly angels who protect the seven churches or 2) human messengers to the seven churches, either messengers who went from John to the churches or the leaders of those churches.
seven churches
This refers to seven churches that actually existed in Asia Minor at that time. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:11.

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2 [1]"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:
'The words of the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands,
[2]"I know your deeds, your hard labor, and your patient endurance, and that you cannot tolerate those who are evil, but you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and you have found them to be false.
[3]You are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name, and you have not grown weary.[4]But I have against you the fact that you have left behind your first love.[5]Remember therefore from where you have fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first. Unless you repent, I will come to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place.
[6]But you have this: You hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.[7]Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."'

[8]"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:'The words of the one who is the first and the last, the one who was dead and who became alive again:
[9]"I know your sufferings and your poverty, but you are rich. I know the slander of those who say they are Jews, but they are not. They are a synagogue of Satan.
[10]Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Look! The devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you will be tested, and you will suffer for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.[11]Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death."'

[12]"To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:'The words of the one who has the sword with two sharp edges:
[13]"I know where you live, there where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold on tightly to my name. I know that you did not deny your faith in me, even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, there where Satan lives.

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[14]But I have a few things against you: You have there some who hold tightly to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel so they would eat food sacrificed to idols and be sexually immoral.[15]In the same way, you even have some who hold tightly to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.
[16]Repent, therefore! If you do not, I will quickly come to you, and I will wage war against them with the sword in my mouth.[17]Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone with a new name written on the stone, a name which no one knows but the one who receives it.'"

[18]"To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:'These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire and feet like polished bronze:
[19]"I know your deeds: your love and faith and service and your patient endurance. I know that what you have done recently is more than you did at first.
[20]But I have this against you: You tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she deceives my servants to commit sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.[21]I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her immorality.
[22]Look! I will throw her onto a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great suffering, unless they repent of her deeds.[23]I will strike her children dead, and all the churches will know that I am the one who searches out thoughts and hearts. I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.
[24]But to the rest of you in Thyatira, to everyone who does not hold this teaching and does not know what some call the deep things of Satan—to you I say, 'I do not put any other burden on you.'[25]In any case, you must hold on tightly until I come.
[26]The one who conquers and does my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations.
[27] 'He will rule them with an iron rod,
like clay jars he will break them into pieces.'

[28]Just as I have received from my Father, I will also give him the morning star.[29]Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.'"

Revelation 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 2 and 3 together are usually called the "seven letters to the seven churches." You may wish to set each letter apart. The reader can then easily see that they are separate letters.
Some translations set quotations from the Old Testament farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text. The ULB does this with the quoted words of verse 27.

Special concepts in this chapter

Poverty and wealth
The Christians in Smyrna were poor because they did not have much money. But they were rich spiritually because God would reward them for their suffering. (See: spirit)
"The devil is about to"
Some authorities were about to take some of the Christians in Smyrna and throw them into prison and even kill some of them
Balaam, Balak, and Jezebel
Balaam, Balak, and Jezebel were people who lived long before Jesus was born. They all tried to harm the Israelites either by cursing them or by making them want to stop obeying God.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

"Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches"
The writer knew that almost all of his readers had physical ears. The ear here is a metonym for hearing what God says and desiring to obey him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The angel of the church"
The word "angel" here can also mean "messenger." This might refer to the messenger or leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.
"The words of the one who"
The verses with these words can be difficult to translate. They do not make complete sentences. You may need to add "These are" to the beginning of these verses. Also, Jesus used these words to speak of himself as if he were speaking of another person. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking of other people. Jesus began speaking in Revelation 1:17. He continues to speak through the end of Chapter 3.

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Links:

Revelation 2:1 Notes

Revelation 2:1
General Information:
This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Ephesus.
the angel
Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.
stars
These stars are symbols. They represent the seven angels of the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:16]
lampstands
The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:12]
Revelation 2:2
I know ... your hard labor, and your patient endurance
"Labor" and "endurance" are abstract nouns and can be translated with verbs "work" and "endure." Alternate translation: "I know ... that you work very hard and that you endure patiently"
but are not
"but are not apostles"
you have found them to be false
"you have recognized that those people are false apostles"
Revelation 2:3
for my name
"Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "because of me" or "because you believe in my name" or "because you believe in me"
you have not grown weary
Being discouraged is spoken of as being tired. Alternate translation: "you have not become discouraged" or "you have not quit"
Revelation 2:4
I have against you the fact that
"I disapprove of you because" or "I am angry with you because"
you have left behind your first love
To stop doing something is spoken of as leaving it behind. Love is spoken of as if it is an object that can be left behind. Alternate translation: "you have stopped loving me as you did at the beginning"
Revelation 2:5
from where you have fallen
No longer loving as much as they used to is spoken of as haven fallen. Alternate translation: "how much you have changed" or "how much you used to love me"
Unless you repent
"If you do not repent"
remove your lampstand
The lampstands are symbols that represent the seven churches. See how you translated "lampstand" in [Revelation 1:12]
Revelation 2:6
Nicolaitans
people who followed the teachings of a man named Nicolaus
Revelation 2:7
Let the one who has an ear, hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. Alternate translation: "Let the one who is willing to listen, listen to" or "The one who is willing to understand, let him understand and obey"
Let the one ... hear
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. Alternate translation: "If you are willing to listen, listen to" or "If you are willing to understand, then understand and obey"
the one who conquers
This refers to anyone who conquers. Alternate translation: "anyone who resists evil" or "those who do not agree to do evil"
the paradise of God
"God's garden." This is a symbol for heaven.
Revelation 2:8
General Information:
This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Smyrna.
the angel
Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.
Smyrna
This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]
the first and the last
This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:17]
Revelation 2:9
I know your sufferings and your poverty
"Sufferings" and "poverty" can be translated as verbs. Alternate translation: "I know how you have suffered and how poor you are"
I know the slander of those who say they are Jews
"Slander" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "I know how people have slandered you—those who say they are Jews" or "I know how people have said terrible things about you—those who say they are Jews"
but they are not
"but they are not real Jews"
a synagogue of Satan
People who gather to obey or honor Satan are spoken of as

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if they were a synagogue, a place of worship and teaching for the Jews.

Revelation 2:10

The devil is about to throw some of you into prison

The words "The devil" here are a metonym for the people who obey the devil. Alternate translation: "The devil will soon cause others to put some of you in prison"

Be faithful until death

"Be faithful to me even if they kill you." The use of the word "until" does not mean that you should stop being faithful at death.

the crown

"the winner's crown." This was a wreath, originally of olive branches or laurel leaves, that was put on the head of a victorious athlete.

the crown of life

Possible meanings are 1) "a crown that shows that I have given you eternal life" or 2) "true life as a prize like a winner's crown"

Revelation 2:11

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

will not be hurt by the second death

"will not experience the second death" or "will not die a second time"

Revelation 2:12

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Pergamum.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Pergamum

This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

the sword with two sharp edges

This refers to a double-edged sword, which is sharpened on both sides to cut both directions. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:16

Revelation 2:13

Satan's throne

Possible meanings are 1) Satan's power and evil influence on people, or 2) the place where Satan rules.

you hold on tightly to my name

"Name" here is a metonym for the person. Firmly believing is spoken of as holding on tightly. Alternate translation: "you firmly believe in me"

you did not deny your faith in me

"Faith" can be translated with the verb "believe." Alternate translation: "you continued to tell people that you believe in me"

Antipas

This is the name of a man.

Revelation 2:14

But I have a few things against you

"I disapprove of you because of a few things you have done" or "I am angry with you because of a few things you did." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 2:4.

who hold tightly to the teaching of Balaam, who

Possible meanings are 1) "who teach what Balaam taught; he" or 2) "who do what Balaam taught; he."

Balak

This is the name of a king.

who taught Balak to throw a stumbling block before the sons of Israel

Something that leads people to sin is spoken of as a stone in the road that people stumble on. Alternate translation: "who showed Balak how to cause the people of Israel to sin"

be sexually immoral

"sin sexually" or "commit sexual sin"

Revelation 2:15

Nicolaitans

This was the name for a group of people who followed the teachings of a man named Nicolaus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:6]

Revelation 2:16

Repent, therefore

"So repent"

If you do not, I

The verb can be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "If you do not repent, I"

wage war against them

"fight against them"

with the sword in my mouth

This refers to the sword in [Revelation 1:16]

Revelation 2:17

Let the one who has an ear hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

To the one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 2:18

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Thyatira.

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the angel
Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.
Thyatira
This is the name of a city in a part of western Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]
Son of God
This is an important title for Jesus.
who has eyes like a flame of fire
His eyes are describes as being full of light like a flame of fire. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:14]
feet like polished bronze
Bronze is polished to make it shine and reflect light. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:15]
Revelation 2:19
your love and faith and service and your patient endurance
The abstract nouns "love," "faith," "service," and "endurance" can be translated with verbs. Alternate translation: "How you have loved, trusted, served, and endured patiently"
your love and faith and service and your patient endurance
The implied objects of these verbs can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "How you have loved me and others, trusted me, served me and others, and endured troubles patiently"
Revelation 2:20
But I have this against you
"But I disapprove of some of the things you are doing" or "But I am angry with you because of something you are doing." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 2:4.
the woman Jezebel, who
Jesus spoke of a certain woman in their church as if she were Queen Jezebel because she did the same kinds of sinful things that Queen Jezebel had done long before that time. Alternate translation: "the woman who is just like Jezebel and"
Revelation 2:21
I gave her time to repent
"I gave her opportunity to repent" or "I waited for her to repent"
Revelation 2:22
I will throw her onto a sickbed ... into great suffering
Her having to lie in bed would be the result of Jesus making her very sick. Alternate translation: "I will make her lie sick in bed ... I will make suffer greatly" or "I will make her very sick ... I will make suffer greatly"
those who commit adultery with her into great suffering
Jesus speaks of causing people to suffer as throwing them into suffering. Alternate translation: "I will make those who commit adultery with her to suffer greatly"
commit adultery
"practice adultery"
unless they repent of her deeds
This implies that they have participated with her in her wicked behavior. By repenting of her deeds, they also repent of participating in her behavior. Alternate translation: "if they do not repent from doing the evil that she does" or "if they do not repent of participating in her deeds"
Revelation 2:23
I will strike her children dead
"I will kill her children"
her children
Jesus spoke of her followers as if they were her children. Alternate translation: 'her followers" or "the people who do what she teaches"
thoughts and hearts
The term "heart" a metonym that represents feelings and desires. Alternate translation: "what people think and want"
I will give to each one of you
This is an expression about punishment and reward. Alternate translation: "I will punish or reward each one of you"
Revelation 2:24
everyone who does not hold this teaching
Believing a teaching is spoken of as holding the teaching. Alternate translation: "everyone who does not believe this teaching"
does not hold this teaching
The noun "teaching" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "does not hold to what she teaches" or "does not believe what she teaches"
deep things
Secret things are spoken of as if they were deep. Alternate translation: "secret things"
Revelation 2:26
The one who conquers
This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]
does my works
"does what I command him to do"
Revelation 2:27
He will rule ... break them into pieces
This is a prophecy from the Old Testament about a king of Israel, but Jesus applies it here to those to whom he gives authority over the nations.
He will rule them with an iron rod
Ruling harshly is spoken of as ruling with an iron rod. Alternate translation: "He will rule them harshly as if striking them with an iron stick"
like clay jars he will break them into pieces
Breaking them to pieces is an image that represents either 1) destroying evildoers or 2) defeating enemies. Alternate translation: "He will defeat his enemies completely as if breaking clay jars into pieces"
Revelation 2:28
Just as I have received from my Father
Some languages may need to tell what was received. Possible meanings are 1) "Just as I have received authority from my Father" or 2) "Just as I have received the morning star from my Father."
my Father

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This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

I will also give him

Here "him" refers to the one who conquers.

morning star

This is a bright star that sometimes appears early in the morning just before dawn. It was a symbol of victory.

Revelation 2:29

Let the one who has an ear hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

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3 [1]"To the angel of the church in Sardis write:
'The words of the one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your deeds. You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.
[2]Wake up and strengthen what remains but is about to die, because I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.
[3]Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard. Obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come against you.[4]But you have a few names in Sardis who have not stained their clothes, and they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.
[5]The one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never wipe his name out of the Book of Life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.[6]Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."'

[7]"To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:
'The words of the one who is holy and true—
he holds the key of David,
he opens and no one shuts,
he shuts and no one can open.

[8]"'I know your deeds. Look, I have put before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have obeyed my word and have not denied my name.
[9]Look! I will cause those who belong to the synagogue of Satan, those calling themselves Jews but are not, but rather liars —I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will know that I love you.[10]Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of testing that is coming on the whole world, to test those who live on the earth.[11]I am coming soon. Hold to what you have so no one can take away your crown.
[12]The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, the name of the city of my God (the new Jerusalem, that comes down out of heaven from my God), and my new name.[13]Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."'

[14]"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:'The words of the Amen, the reliable and true witness, the ruler over God's creation.
[15]"I know your deeds and that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot![16]So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to vomit you out of my mouth.
[17]For you say, 'I am rich, I have had many material possessions, and I need nothing.' But you do not know that you are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.[18]Listen to my advice: Buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and brilliant white garments so you may clothe yourself and not show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to anoint your eyes so you will see.
[19]I rebuke and discipline everyone whom I love. Therefore, be earnest and repent.[20]Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his home and will eat with him, and he with me.
[21]The one who conquers I will give him the right to sit down with me on my throne, just as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.[22]Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches."""

Revelation 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Chapters 2 and 3 together are usually called the "seven letters to the seven churches." You may wish to set each letter apart. The reader can then easily see that they are separate letters.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with

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verse 7.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven spirits of God

These spirits are the seven spirits of Revelation 1:4.

Seven stars

These stars are the seven stars of Revelation 1:20.

Important metaphors in this chapter

Look, I am standing at the door and am knocking

Jesus speaks of his desire to have the Christians in Laodicea obey him as if he were a man asking people in a house to allow him to enter and eat with them

"Let the one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches"

The speaker knew that almost all of his readers had physical ears. The ear here is a metonym for hearing what God says and desiring to obey him.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The angel of the church"

The word "angel" here can also mean "messenger." This might refer to the messenger or leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

"The words of the one who"

The verses with these words can be difficult to translate. They do not make complete sentences. You may need to add "These are" to the beginning of these verses. Also, Jesus used these words to speak of himself as if he were speaking of another person. Your language may not allow people to speak of themselves as if they were speaking of other people. Jesus began speaking in Revelation 1:17. He continues to speak through the end of Chapter 3.

Links:

Revelation 3:1 Notes

Revelation 3:1

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Sardis.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Sardis

This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

the seven spirits

The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:4]

the seven stars

These stars are symbols that represent the seven angels of the seven churches. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:16]

You have a name that you are alive

The word "name" here is a metonym for a reputation. Alternate translation: "You have a reputation for being alive" or "People think that you are alive"

alive ... dead

Obeying and honoring God is spoken of as being alive; disobeying and dishonoring him is spoken of as being dead.

Revelation 3:2

Wake up and strengthen what remains but is about to die

The good deeds done by the believers in Sardis are spoken of as if they were alive but in danger of dying. Alternate translation: "Wake up and complete the work that remains; otherwise what you have done will become worthless" or "Wake up. If you do not finish what you have started to do, your previous work will have been useless"

Wake up

Being alert to danger is spoken of as waking up. Alternate translation: "Be alert" or "Be careful"

Revelation 3:3

what you have received and heard

This refers to God's word, which they believed. Alternate translation: "God's word that you heard and the truth that you believed"

if you do not wake up

Being alert to danger is spoken of as waking up. See how you translated "wake up" on [Revelation 3:2]

I will come as a thief

Jesus will come at a time when people do not expect him, just as a thief comes when not expected.

Revelation 3:4

a few names

The word "names" is a metonym for the people themselves. Alternate translation: "a few people"

have not stained their clothes

Jesus speaks of sin in a person's life as if it were a stain on clothes. Alternate translation: "have not made their lives sinful"

will walk with me

People commonly spoke of living as "walking." Alternate translation: "will live with me"

dressed in white

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White clothes represent a pure life without sin. Alternate translation: "and they will be dressed in white, which shows that they are pure"
Revelation 3:5
The one who conquers
This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]
will be clothed in white garments
This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "will wear white garments" or "I will give white clothes"
I will confess his name
He would announce that the person belongs to him, not simply say the person's name. Alternate translation: "I will announce that he belongs to me"
before my Father
"in the presence of my Father"
my Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Revelation 3:6
Let the one who has an ear hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]
Let the one ... hear
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]
Revelation 3:7
General Information:
This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Philadelphia.
the angel
Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.
Philadelphia
This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]
key of David
Jesus speaks of his authority to decide who may go into his kingdom as if it were King David's key.
he opens and no one shuts
"he opens the door to the kingdom and no one can close it"
he shuts and no one can open
"he closes the door and no one can open it"
Revelation 3:8
I have put before you an open door
"I have opened a door for you"
you have obeyed my word
Possible meanings are 1) "you have followed by teachings" or 2) "you have obeyed my commands"
my name
The word "name" here is is a metonym for the person who has that name. Alternate translation: "me"
Revelation 3:9
General Information:
The writer begins his sentence with "I will cause," but he does not finish the sentence by telling what he will cause "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan" to do. He begins the sentence again with "I will make them," where "them" refers to "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan."
synagogue of Satan
People who gather to obey or honor Satan are spoken of as if they were in a synagogue, a place of worship and teaching for the Jews. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:9]
those calling themselves Jews but are not, but rather liars
"those calling themselves Jews when they are not Jews: instead, they are liars." These words further describe "those who belong to the synagogue of Satan."
bow down
This is a sign of submission, not worship. Alternate translation: "bow down in submission"
before your feet
Here the word "feet" represent the person before whom these people bow down. Alternate translation: "before you" or "to you"
they will know
"they will learn" or "they will admit"
Revelation 3:10
will also keep you from the hour of testing
"will also prevent the hour of testing from happening to you" or "will protect you so you do not enter the hour of testing"
hour of testing
"time of testing." This probably means "the time when people try to make you disobey me."
is coming
Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.
Revelation 3:11
I am coming soon
It is understood that he is coming in order to judge. Alternate translation: "I am coming to judge soon"
Hold to what you have
Continuing to believe firmly in Christ is spoken of as if it were holding something tightly. Alternate translation: "Continue to believe firmly"
crown
A crown was a wreath, originally of olive branches or laurel leaves, that was put on the head of a victorious athlete. Here "crown" stands for a reward. See how you translated "crown" in Revelation 2:10.
Revelation 3:12
The one who conquers I will make a pillar in the temple of my God
Here "The one who conquers" refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]
Revelation 3:13
Let the one who has an ear, hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into

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practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Revelation 3:14

General Information:

This is the beginning of the Son of Man's message to the angel of the church in Laodicea.

the angel

Possible meanings are that this "angel" is 1) a heavenly angel who protects this church or 2) a human messenger to the church, either a messenger who went from John to the church or the leader of the church. See how you translated "angel" in Revelation 1:20.

Laodicea

This is the name of a city in the western part of Asia that today is modern Turkey. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:11]

The words of the Amen

Here "the Amen" is a name for Jesus Christ. He guarantees God's promises by saying amen to them.

the ruler over God's creation

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who rules over everything that God created" or 2) "the one through whom God created everything."

Revelation 3:15

you are neither cold nor hot

The writer speaks of the Laodiceans as if they were water. Possible meanings are 1) "cold" and hot" represent two extremes of spiritual interest or love for God, where "cold" is to be completely against God, and to be "hot" is to be zealous to serve him, or 2) "cold" and "hot" both refer to water that is useful for drinking or for cooking or healing, respectively. Alternate translation: "you are like water that is neither cold nor hot"

Revelation 3:16

I am about to vomit you out of my mouth

Rejecting them is spoken of as vomiting them out of the mouth. Alternate translation: "I will reject you as I would spit out lukewarm water"

Revelation 3:17

you are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked

Jesus speaks of their spiritual condition as if he were speaking about their physical condition. Alternate translation: "You are like people who are most miserable, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked"

Revelation 3:18

Buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and brilliant white garments so you may clothe yourself and not show the shame of your nakedness, and salve to anoint your eyes so you will see

Here to "buy" represents receiving things from Jesus that have true spiritual value. The "gold refined by fire" represents spiritual wealth. The "brilliant white garments" represents rightousness. And the "salve to anoint your eyes" represents the ability to understand spiritual things. Alternate translation: "Come to me and receive spiritual wealth, which is more valuable than gold that is refined by fire. Receive from me righteousness, which is like brilliant white garments, so that you will not be ashamed. And receive from me wisdom, which is like salve for the eyes, so that you may understand spiritual things"

Revelation 3:19

be earnest and repent

"be serious and repent"

Revelation 3:20

I am standing at the door and am knocking

Jesus speaks about wanting people to relate to him as if he wanted them to invite him into their home. Alternate translation: "I am like one standing at the door and knocking"

am knocking

When people want someone to welcome them into their home, they knock on the door. Alternate translation: "I want you to let me come inside"

hears my voice

The phrase "my voice" refers to Christ speaking. Alternate translation: "hears me speak" or "hears me call"

I will come into his home

Some languages might prefer the verb "go" here. Alternate translation: "I will go in to his home"

and will eat with him

This represents being together as friends.

Revelation 3:21

The one who conquers

This refers to anyone who conquers. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:7]

to sit down with me on my throne

To sit on a throne means to rule. Alternate translation: "to rule with me" or "to sit down on my throne and rule with me"

my Father

This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.

Revelation 3:22

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of the Son of Man's messages to the angels of the seven churches.

Let the one who has an ear, hear

Jesus is emphasizing that what he has just said is important and may take some effort to understand and put into practice. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

Let the one ... hear

Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]

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4 [1]After these things I looked, and I saw an open door in heaven. The first voice that I had heard was speaking to me like a trumpet, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after these things."[2]At once I was in the Spirit,

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and I saw there a throne placed in heaven, with someone sitting on it.[3]The one who was sitting on it looked like jasper and carnelian. There was a rainbow around the throne. The rainbow was like an emerald in appearance.
[4]Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, dressed with white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.[5]From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and crashes of thunder. Seven flaming lamps were burning in front of the throne, lamps that were the seven spirits of God.
[6]Before the throne was a sea of glass, like crystal. In the middle of the throne and around the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes, front and back.
[7]The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.[8]The four living creatures each had six wings, full of eyes on top and underneath. Night and day they do not stop saying,

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and who is, and who is to come."

[9]Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever,[10]the twenty-four elders fall down before the one seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne, saying,

[11] "Worthy are you, our Lord and our God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created."

Revelation 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with verses 8 and 11.
John has finished describing the letters to the churches. He now begins to describe a vision that God showed him.

Special concepts in this chapter

Jasper, carnelian, and emerald
These words refer to kinds of special stones that the people in John's day considered valuable. It may be difficult for you to translate these words if people in your culture do not value special kinds of stones.
Twenty-four elders
Elders are church leaders. Twenty-four elders may be symbolic of the whole church through the ages. There were twelve tribes in Old Testament Israel and twelve apostles in the New Testament church.
Seven spirits of God
These spirits are the seven spirits of Revelation 1:4.
Giving glory to God
God's glory is the great beauty and radiant majesty that God has because he is God. Other Bible writers describe it as if it were a light so bright that no one can look at it. No one can give God this kind of glory, because it is already his. For people "to give glory" to God and for God "to receive glory" means that people are praising and worshiping God because of the glory he already has. (See: glory and worthy and worship)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Difficult images
Such things as bolts of lightning coming from the throne, lamps that are spirits, and a sea in front of the throne may be difficult to imagine, and so the words for them may be difficult to translate.

Links:

Revelation 4:1 Notes

Revelation 4:1
General Information:
John begins to describe his vision of the throne of God.

After these things
"Just after I had seen these things." Here "these things" refers to what John saw in (Revelation 2:1-3:22)

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an open door in heaven
This expression stands for the ability that God gave John to see into heaven, at least by means of a vision.
speaking to me like a trumpet
How the voice was like a trumpet can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "speaking to me loudly like the sound of a trumpet"
trumpet
This refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:10.
Revelation 4:2
I was in the Spirit
John speaks of being influenced by God's Spirit as if he were in the Spirit. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:10]
Revelation 4:3
jasper and carnelian
These are valuable stones. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal, and carnelian may have been red.
emerald
a green, valuable stone
Revelation 4:4
twenty-four elders
"24 elders"
golden crowns
These were likenesses of wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Such crowns, made of leaves, were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.
Revelation 4:5
flashes of lightning
Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears.
rumblings, and crashes of thunder
These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder.
seven spirits of God
The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:4]
Revelation 4:6
a sea of glass
How it was like glass or a sea can be stated clearly. Possible meanings are 1) a sea is spoken of as if it were glass. Alternate translation: "a sea that was as smooth as glass" or 2) glass if spoken of as if it were a sea. Alternate translation: "glass that was spread out like a sea"
like crystal
How it was like crystal can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "clear as crystal"
In the middle of the throne and around the throne
"Immediately around the throne" or "Close to the throne and around it"
four living creatures
"four living beings" or "four living things"
Revelation 4:7
The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature was like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle
How the head of each living creature appeared to John is expressed as a comparison with something more familiar.
living creature
"living being" or "living thing." See how you translated this in Revelation 4:6
Revelation 4:8
full of eyes on top and underneath
The top and bottom of each wing was covered with eyes.
who is to come
Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.
Revelation 4:9
the one who sits on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever
This is one person. The one who sits on the throne lives forever and ever.
forever and ever
These two words mean about the same thing and are repeated for emphasis. Alternate translation: "for all eternity"
Revelation 4:10
twenty-four elders
"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]
fall down
They purposely lie down facing the ground to show that they are worshiping.
They lay their crowns before the throne
These crowns looked like wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. The elders were respectfully placing the crowns on the ground, showing that they were submitting to God's authority to rule. Alternate translation: "they lay their crowns before the throne to show that they are submitting to him"
lay
Possible meanings are 1) to place or 2) to throw down forcibly, as of something worthless ("throw," Revelation 2:22). The reader should understand that the elders are acting respectfully.
Revelation 4:11
our Lord and our God
"our Lord and God." This is one person, the one sitting on the throne.
to receive glory and honor and power
These are things that God always has. Being praised for having them is spoken of as receiving them. Alternate translation: "to be praised for your glory, honor, and power" or "for everyone to praise you because you are glorious, honorable, and powerful"

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5 [1]Then I saw in the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne a scroll written on the front and on the back,
sealed with seven seals.[2]I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and
break its seals?"

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[3]No one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to read it.[4]I wept bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to read it.[5]But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."
[6]I saw a Lamb standing in the middle of the throne area and among the four living creatures and among the elders. He looked as though he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.[7]He went and took hold of the scroll out of the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne.
[8]When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of them had a harp and a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people.
[9]They sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals.
For you were slaughtered,
and with your blood you purchased people for God
from every tribe, language, people, and nation.
[10] You made them a kingdom and priests to serve our God,
and they will reign on the earth."

[11]Then I looked and heard the sound of many angels who encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. Their total number was ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands.[12]They said in a loud voice,

"Worthy is the Lamb, who has been slaughtered,
to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength,
honor, glory, and praise."

[13]I heard every created thing that was in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea—everything in them—saying,

"To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise, honor, glory, and dominion
forever and ever."

[14]The four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped.[1]

[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies read, the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the one who lives forever and ever.

Revelation 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 9-13.

Special concepts in this chapter

Sealed scroll

Kings and important people in John's time wrote important documents on large pieces of paper or animal skin. They then rolled them up and sealed them with wax so they would stay closed. Only the person to whom the document was written had the authority to open it by breaking the seal. In this chapter, "the one who was seated on the throne" had written the scroll. Only the person called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David" and "the Lamb" had the authority to open it. (See: scroll and authority)

Twenty-four elders

Elders are church leaders. Twenty-four elders may be symbolic of the whole church through the ages. There were twelve tribes in Old Testament Israel and twelve apostles in the New Testament church.

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Christian prayers
The prayers of Christians are described as incense. Christian prayers have a good smell to God. He is pleased when Christians pray.
Seven spirits of God
These spirits are the seven spirits of Revelation 1:4.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors
The "Lion of the tribe of Judah" and the "Root of David" are metaphors that refer to Jesus. Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah and the family of David. Lions are fierce, and all animals and people are afraid of them, so they are a metaphor for a king whom everyone obeys. The words "Root of David" speak of Israel's King David as if he were a seed that God had planted and of Jesus as if he were a root growing from that seed.

Links:

Revelation 5:1 Notes

Revelation 5:1
Connecting Statement:
John continues to describe what he saw in his vision of the throne of God.
Then I saw
"After I saw those things, I saw"
the one who was seated on the throne
This is the same "one" as in Revelation 4:2-3.
a scroll written on the front and on the back
"a scroll with writing on the front and the back"
sealed with seven seals
"and it had seven seals keeping it closed"
Revelation 5:2
Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?
The person would need to break the seals in order to open the scroll. Alternate translation: "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"
Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?
This can be translated as a command: "The one who is worthy to do this should come to break the seals and open the scroll!"
Revelation 5:3
in heaven or on the earth or under the earth
This means everywhere: the place where God and the angels live, the place where people and animals live, and the place where those who have died are. Alternate translation: "anywhere in heaven or on the earth or under the earth"
Revelation 5:5
Look
"Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"
The Lion of the tribe of Judah
This is a title for the man from the tribe of Judah that God had promised would be the great king. Alternate translation: "The one who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah" or "The king who is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah"
The Lion
The king is spoken of as if he were a lion because a lion is very strong.
the Root of David
This is a title for the descendant of David that God had promised would be the great king. Alternate translation: "the one who is called the Root of David"
the Root of David
The descendant is spoken of as if David's family were a tree and he were a root of that tree. Alternate translation: "the Descendant of David"
Revelation 5:6
General Information:
The Lamb appears in the throne room.
a Lamb
A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ.
seven spirits of God
The number seven is a symbol of completeness and perfection. The "seven spirits" refers either to the Spirit of God or to seven spirits who serve God. See how you translated this in Revelation 1:4.
sent out into all the earth
This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "which God sent out over all the earth"
Revelation 5:7
He went
He approached the throne. Some languages would use the verb "come." Alternate translation: "He came"
Revelation 5:8
the Lamb
A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]
twenty-four elders
"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]
fell down
"lay down on the ground." Their faces were toward the ground to show that they were worshiping the Lamb. They did this on purpose; they did not fall accidentally.
Each of them
Possible meanings are 1) "each of the elders and living creatures" or 2) "each of the elders."
a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people
The incense here is a symbol for the believers' prayers to God.
Revelation 5:9
For you were slaughtered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "For they slaughtered you" or "For people killed you"

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slaughtered
If your language has a word for killing an animal for a sacrifice, consider using it here.
with your blood
Since blood represents a person's life, losing the blood represents dying. This probably means "by your death" or "by dying."
you purchased people for God
"you bought people so that they could belong to God" or "you paid the price so that people could belong to God"
from every tribe, language, people, and nation
This means that people from every ethnic group are included.
Revelation 5:11
ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands
Use an expression in your language that shows that it is a huge number. Alternate translation: "millions" or "too many thousands to count"
Revelation 5:12
Worthy is the Lamb, who has been slaughtered
"The Lamb, who has been slaughtered, is worthy"
to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise
These are all things that the Lamb has. Being praised for having them is spoken of as receiving them. This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns. See how you translated a similar sentence in [Revelation 4:11]
Revelation 5:13
in heaven and on the earth and under the earth
This means everywhere: the place where God and the angels live, the place where people and animals live, and the place where those who have died are. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:3]
To the one who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be
"May he who sits on the throne and the Lamb have"

6 [1]I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice that sounded like thunder, "Come!"[2]I looked and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown. He came out as a conqueror in order to conquer.

[3]When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!"[4]Then another horse came out—fiery red. To its rider was given permission to take peace away from the earth, so that its people would slaughter one another. This rider was given a huge sword.

[5]When the Lamb opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I saw a black horse, and its rider held a pair of scales in his hand.[6]I heard what seemed to be a voice among the four living creatures say, "A choenix of wheat for one denarius, and three choenices of barley for a denarius. But do not harm the oil and the wine."

[7]When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!"[8]Then I saw a pale horse. The rider on it was named Death, and Hades was following him. They were given authority over one-fourth of the earth, to kill with the sword, with famine and disease, and with the wild animals of the earth.

[9]When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God and the testimony which they held.[10]They cried out with a loud voice, "How long, Ruler over all, holy and true, until you judge those who live on the earth, and until you avenge our blood?"[11]Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told that they should wait a short time longer until the full number of their fellow servants and their brothers who were to be killed, just as they had been killed, was made complete.

[12]When the Lamb opened the sixth seal, I watched and there was a great earthquake. The sun became as black as sackcloth, and the full moon became like blood.[13]The stars in the heavens fell to the earth, just as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a stormy wind.[14]The sky vanished like a scroll that was being rolled up. Every mountain and island was moved out of its place.
[15]Then the kings of the earth and the important people, and the commanders, and the rich, and the powerful, and everyone else, slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains.[16]They said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us! Hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the Lamb's wrath.[17]For the great day of their wrath has come. Who is able to stand?"

Revelation 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The author describes what happened after the Lamb opens each of the first six seals. The Lamb does not open the seventh seal until Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven Seals

Kings and important people in John's time wrote important documents on large pieces of paper or animal skin. They then rolled them up and sealed them with wax so they would stay closed. Only the person to whom the document was written

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had the authority to open it by breaking the seal. In this chapter, the Lamb opens the seals.

The Four Horsemen

As the Lamb opens each of the first four seals, the author describes horsemen riding different colored horses. The colors of the horses seem to symbolize how the rider will affect the earth.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The Lamb

This refers to Jesus. In this chapter, it is also a title for Jesus.

Similes

In verses 12-14, the author uses several similes to try to describe the images he sees in the vision. He compares the images to everyday things.

Links:

Revelation 6:1 Notes

Revelation 6:1

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the events that happened before the throne of God. The Lamb begins to open the seals on the scroll.

Come!

This is a command to one person, apparently the rider of the white horse who is spoken of in verse 2.

Revelation 6:2

he was given a crown

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "he received a crown" or "God gave him a crown"

a crown

Crowns were wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves and were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads. The crown given to rider may have been hammered out in gold in the likeness of wreaths of olives branches or laurel leaves.

Revelation 6:3

the second seal

"the next seal" or "seal number two"

the second living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number two"

Revelation 6:4

came out—fiery red

This can the stated as a second sentence. Alternate translation: "came out. It was red like fire" or "came out. It was bright red"

To its rider was given permission

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "God gave permission to its rider" or "Its rider received person"

This rider was given a huge sword

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "This rider received a huge sword" or "God gave this rider a huge sword"

a huge sword

"a very large sword" or "a great sword"

Revelation 6:5

the third seal

"the next seal" or "seal number three"

the third living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number three"

a pair of scales

a tool used for weighing things

Revelation 6:6

A choenix of wheat for one denarius

Some languages might want a verb such as "cost" or "buy" in the sentence. There was very little wheat for all the people, so its price was very high. Alternate translation: "A choenix of wheat now costs one denarius" or "Buy a choenix of wheat with one denarius"

A choenix of wheat ... three choenices of barley

A "choenix" was a specific measure that was about one liter. The plural of "choenix" is "choenices." Alternate translation: "One liter of wheat ... three liters of barley" or "One bowl of wheat ... three bowls of barley"

one denarius

This coin was worth a day's wages. Alternate translation: "one silver coin" or "the pay for one day of work"

But do not harm the oil and the wine

If the oil and wine were harmed, there would be less of them for people to buy, and their prices would go up.

the oil and the wine

These expressions probably stand for the olive oil harvest and the grape harvest.

Revelation 6:7

the fourth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number four"

the fourth living creature

"the next living creature" or "living creature number four"

Revelation 6:8

pale horse

"grey horse." This is the color of a dead body, so its color is a symbol of death.

one-fourth of the earth

Here "the earth" represents the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "one-fourth of the people on the earth"

the sword

A sword is a weapon, and here it represents war.

with the wild animals of the earth

This means that Death and Hades would cause the wild animals to attack and kill people.

Revelation 6:9

the fifth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number five"

under the altar

This may have been "at the base of the altar."

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those who had been killed

This can be translated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "those whom others had killed"

because of the word of God and the testimony which they held

Here "word of God" is a metonym for the message from God and "held" is a metaphor. Possible meanings are 1) holding the testimony refers to believing God's word and testimony. Alternate translation: "because of the teachings of scripture and what they taught about Jesus Christ" or "because they believed the word of God, which is his testimony" or 2) holding the testimony refers to testifying about the word of God. Alternate translation: "because they testified about the word of God"

Revelation 6:10

avenge our blood

The word blood here represents their deaths. Alternate translation: "punish those who killed us"

Revelation 6:11

Then each of them was given a white robe

Either God or an angel gave them a white robe. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then each of them received a white robe"

they were told

Either God or an angel is speaking. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God told them" or "an angel told them"

until the full number of their fellow servants and their brothers who were to be killed, just as they had been killed, was made complete

Here "servants" and "brothers" refer to the same group. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until enemies have killed all of Christ's servants whom God had determined would die, just as those under the altar had died"

brothers

Christians are often spoken of as being one another's brothers. Females were among those spoken of here. Alternate translation: "fellow Christians" or "fellow believers"

Revelation 6:12

the sixth seal

"the next seal" or "seal number six"

as black as sackcloth

Sometimes sackcloth was made of black hair. People would wear sackcloth when they were mourning. The image of sackcloth is meant to lead people to think of death and mourning. Alternate translation: "as black as mourning clothes"

like blood

The image of blood is meant to lead people to think of death. How it was like blood can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "red like blood"

Revelation 6:13

just as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when shaken by a stormy wind

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: ""just as figs do when a stormy wind shakes a fig tree and causes it to drop its unripe figs"

Revelation 6:14

The sky vanished like a scroll that was being rolled up

The sky was normally thought of as being as strong as a sheet of metal, but now it had become as weak as a sheet of paper and was easily torn and rolled up.

Revelation 6:15

the commanders

soldiers who command warriors during battle

caves

large holes in the sides of hills

Revelation 6:16

the face of the one

Here "face" represents "presence." Alternate translation: "the presence of the one" or "the one"

Revelation 6:17

the great day of their wrath has come

The day of their wrath refers to the time when they would punish wicked people. Alternate translation: "this is the terrible time when they will punish people"

has come

Existing now is spoken of as having come.

their wrath

"Their" refers to the one on the throne and the Lamb.

Who is able to stand?

Surviving, or staying alive, is spoken of as if it were standing. This question is used to express great sadness and fear that no one will be able to survive when God punishes him. Alternate translation: "No one can survive."

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7 [1]After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, tightly holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind should blow on the earth, on the sea, or against any tree.[2]I saw another angel coming up from the east, who had the seal of the living God. He cried out with a loud voice to the four angels who were given permission to harm the earth and the sea:[3]"Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees until we have put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

[4]I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000, who were sealed from every tribe of the people of Israel:

[5] twelve thousand from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Reuben,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Gad,

[6] twelve thousand from the tribe of Asher,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Naphtali,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Manasseh,

[7] twelve thousand from the tribe of Simeon,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Levi,

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twelve thousand from the tribe of Issachar,

8 twelve thousand from the tribe of Zebulun,
twelve thousand from the tribe of Joseph, and
twelve thousand from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.

9 After these things I looked, and there was a huge multitude that no one could count—from every nation, tribe, people, and language—standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands, 10 and they were crying out with a loud voice:

"Salvation belongs to our God,
who is seated on the throne,
and to the Lamb!"

11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne. They worshiped God, 12 saying,

"Amen!
Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength
be to our God forever and ever!
Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders asked me, "Who are these, clothed with white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 I said to him, "Sir, you know," and he said to me, "These are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
15 For this reason,

they are before the throne of God,
and they worship him day and night in his temple.
The one who is seated on the throne
will spread his tent over them.

16 They will not be hungry again,
nor will they be thirsty again.
The sun will not beat down on them,
nor any burning heat.

17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will shepherd them,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Revelation 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Scholars have interpreted parts of this chapter in many different ways. Translators do not need to fully understand what this chapter means to accurately translate its contents.
It is important to accurately translate the large numbers in this chapter. The number 144,000 is twelve times twelve thousand.
Translators should be aware that the tribes of the people of Israel are not listed in this chapter the same as they are generally listed in the Old Testament.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with

the poetry in verses 5-8 and 15-17.

Special concepts in this chapter

Worship

God saves his people and keeps them through times of trouble. His people respond by worshipping him. (See: worship)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

The Lamb

This refers to Jesus. In this chapter, it is also a title for Jesus.

Links:

Revelation 7:1 Notes

Revelation 7:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a vision of 144,000 servants of God who become marked with seals. Their marking takes place after the Lamb opens the sixth seal and before he opens the seventh seal.

the four corners of the earth

The earth is spoken of as if it were flat and square like a sheet of paper. The phrase "the four corners" refers to the north, south, east, and west.

Revelation 7:2

the seal of the living God

The word "seal" here refers to a tool that is used to press a mark onto a wax seal. In this case the tool would be used to put a mark on God's people. Alternate translation: "the marker of the living God" or "the stamp of the living God"

Revelation 7:3

put a seal on the foreheads

The word "seal" here refers to a mark. This mark shows that the people belong to God and that he will protect them. Alternate translation: "put a mark on the foreheads"

foreheads

The forehead is the top of the face, above the eyes.

Revelation 7:4

those who were sealed

This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "those whom God's angel marked"

144,000

"one hundred forty-four thousand people"

Revelation 7:5

twelve thousand from the tribe

"12,000 people from the tribe"

twelve thousand from ... Judah were sealed

This can be translated in active form. See how you translated similar words in [Revelation 7:4]

Revelation 7:7

Connecting Statement:

This continues the list of the people of Israel who were sealed.

Revelation 7:9

General Information:

John begins to describe a second vision about a multitude praising God. This vision also takes place after the Lamb opens the sixth seal and before he opens the seventh seal.

a huge multitude

"a huge crowd" or "a great number of people"

white robes

Here the color "white" represents purity.

Revelation 7:10

Salvation belongs to

"Salvation comes from"

Salvation belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!

They were praising God and the Lamb. The noun "salvation" can be expressed with the verb "save." Alternate translation: "Our God, who sits on the throne, and the Lamb have saved us!"

Revelation 7:11

the four living creatures

These are the four creatures mentioned in Revelation 4:6-8.

they fell on their faces

Here "fell on their faces" is an idiom that means they lay down facing the ground. See how you translated "prostrated themselves" in [Revelation 4:10]

Revelation 7:12

Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and strength be to our God

"Our God is worthy of all praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power and strength" or "We must give praise, glory, thanks, and honor to our God"

forever and ever

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the praise will never end.

Revelation 7:13

these, clothed with white robes

The white robes showed that these people were righteous.

Revelation 7:14

have come out of the great tribulation

"have survived the great tribulation" or "have lived through the great tribulation"

the great tribulation

"the time of terrible suffering"

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb

People who have been made righteous by the blood of the Lamb are spoken of as if they have washed their robes in his blood. Alternate translation: "They have been made righteous by washing their robes white in his blood"

the blood of the Lamb

The word "blood" is used to refer to the death of Lamb.

Revelation 7:15

Connecting Statement:

The elder continues to speak to John.

they ... them

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These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

day and night

These two parts of the day are used together to mean "all the time" or "without stopping"

will spread his tent over them

"will put his tent up over them." Protecting them is spoken of as if it were giving them shelter to live under. Alternate translation: "will shelter them" or "will protect them"

Revelation 7:16

They ... them

These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

The sun will not beat down

The sun's heat no longer causing people to suffer is spoken of as if the sun would not beat down on them. Alternate translation: "The sun will not burn them" or "The sun will not make them weak"

Revelation 7:17

them ... them ... their

These words refer to those people who have come through the great tribulation.

the Lamb at the center of the throne will

"the Lamb, who is standing in the middle of the area around the throne, will be"

For the Lamb ... will shepherd them

The elder speaks of the Lamb's care for his people as if it were a shepherd's care for his sheep. Alternate translation: "For the Lamb ... will be like a shepherd to them" or "For the Lamb ... will care for them as a person cares for his animals"

he will guide them to springs of living water

The elder speaks of what gives life as if it were springs of fresh water. Alternate translation: "he will guide them like a shepherd guiding his sheep to fresh water" or "he will guide them to life like a shepherd guiding his sheep to living water"

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes

Tears here represent sadness. Alternate translation: "God will wipe away their sadness, like wiping away tears" or "God will cause them to not be sad anymore"

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8 [1]When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was a silence in heaven for about half an hour.[2]Then I saw the seven
angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

[3]Another angel came, holding a golden incense bowl, standing at the incense altar. Much incense was given to him so that
he would offer it with the prayers of all God's holy people on the golden incense altar before the throne.[4]The smoke of the
incense—with the prayers of God's holy people—rose up before God from the angel's hand.[5]The angel took the incense
bowl and filled it with fire from the altar. Then he threw it down to the earth, and there were crashes of thunder,
rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

[6]The seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.
[7]The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there was hail and fire mixed with blood. It was thrown down onto the earth so
that a third of it was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.[1]

[8]The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea.
A third of the sea became blood,[9]a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

[10]The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a huge star fell from the sky, blazing like a torch, on a third of the rivers and
springs of water.[11]The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died
from the waters that became bitter.

[12]The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, as well as a third of the moon and a third of the
stars. So a third of them turned dark; a third of the day and a third of the night had no light.

[13]I looked, and I heard an eagle[2] that was flying overhead calling out with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to those who live
on the earth, because of the remaining trumpet blasts that are about to be sounded by the three angels."

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[1]Some important and ancient Greek copies leave out, so that a third of it was burned up.
[2]Some copies have the word angel instead of eagle.

Revelation 8 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven seals and seven trumpets

This chapter begins to show what happens when the Lamb opens the seventh seal. God uses the prayers of all believers to cause dramatic things to happen on earth. John then describes what happens when angels sound the first four of seven trumpets.

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Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes

In verses 8 and 10, John uses similes to try to describe the images he sees in the vision. He compares the images to everyday things.

Links:

Revelation 8:1 Notes

Revelation 8:1

Connecting Statement:

The Lamb opens the seventh seal.

the seventh seal

This is the last of the seven seals on the scroll. Alternate translation: "the next seal" or "the final seal" or "seal number seven"

Revelation 8:2

seven trumpets were given to them

They were each given one trumpet. This can be stated in active form. Possible meanings are 1) "God gave them seven trumpets" or 2) "the Lamb gave them seven trumpets"

Revelation 8:3

he would offer it

"he would offer the incense to God by burning it"

Revelation 8:4

the angel's hand

This refers to the bowl in the angel's hand. Alternate translation: "the bowl in the angel's hand"

Revelation 8:5

filled it with fire

The word "fire" here probably refers to burning coals. Alternate translation: "filled it with burning coals" or "filled it with coals of fire"

Revelation 8:6

General Information:

The seven angels sound the seven trumpets, one at a time.

Revelation 8:7

It was thrown down onto the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The angel threw the hail and fire mixed with blood down onto the earth"

a third of it was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "it burned up a third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass"

a third

"A third" is a fraction.

Revelation 8:8

The second angel

"The next angel" or "Angel number two"

something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angel threw something like a great mountain burning with fire"

A third

"A third" is a fraction.

became blood

Possible meanings are it 1) "became red like blood" or it 2) really became blood.

Revelation 8:9

the living creatures in the sea

"the things living in the sea" or "the fish and other animals that lived in the sea"

Revelation 8:10

a huge star fell from the sky, blazing like a torch

"a huge star that was blazing like a torch fell from the sky." The fire of the huge star looked similar to the fire of a torch.

torch

a stick with one end lit on fire to provide light

Revelation 8:11

The name of the star is Wormwood

Wormwood is a shrub that tastes bitter. People made medicine out of it, but they also believed that it was poisonous. Alternate translation: "The name of the star is Bitterness" or "The name of the star is Bitter Medicine"

became wormwood

The bitter taste of the water is spoken of as if it were wormwood. Alternate translation: "became bitter like wormwood" or "became bitter"

died from the waters that became bitter

"died when they drank the bitter water"

Revelation 8:12

a third of the sun was struck

Causing something bad to happen to the sun is spoken of as striking, or hitting, it. This can be stated with an active verb. Alternate translation: "a third of the sun changed" or "God changed a third of the sun"

a third of them turned dark

Possible meanings are 1) "one third of the time they were dark" or 2) "one third of the sun, one third of the moon, and one third of the stars became dark"

a third of the day and a third of the night had no light

"there was no light during one third of the day and one third of the night" or "they did not shine during one third of the day and one third of the night"

Revelation 8:13

because of the remaining trumpet blasts that are about to be sounded by the three angels

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "because the three angels who have not yet sounded their trumpets are about to sound them"

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[1]Then the fifth angel sounded his trumpet. I saw a star from heaven that had fallen to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.[2]He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the shaft like smoke from a huge furnace. The sun and the air were turned dark by the smoke from the shaft.
[3]Out of the smoke locusts came on the earth, and they were given power like that of scorpions on the earth.[4]They were told not to damage the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree, but only the people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
[5]They were not given permission to kill those people, but only to torture them for five months. Their agony would be like the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a person.[6]In those days people will seek death but will not find it. They will greatly desire to die, but death will flee from them.
[7]The locusts looked like horses prepared for war. On their heads were something like crowns of gold, and their faces were like human faces.[8]They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth.[9]They had breastplates like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like the sound made by many chariots and horses running into battle.
[10]They had tails with stingers like scorpions; in their tails they had power to harm people for five months.[11]They had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew was Abaddon, and in Greek he had the name Apollyon.
[12]The first woe is past. Look! After this there are still two disasters to come.

[13]The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is present before God,[14]saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who had been bound at the great Euphrates River."[15]The four angels who had been prepared for that hour, that day, that month, and that year were released to kill a third of mankind.
[16]The number of the soldiers on horseback was 200,000,000. I heard their number.[17]This is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode on them: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur.
[18]A third of the people were killed by these three plagues: the fire, smoke, and sulfur that came out of their mouths.[19]For the power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails—for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflicted wounds on people.
[20]The rest of mankind, those who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, nor did they stop worshiping demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—things that cannot see, hear, or walk.[21]Neither did they repent of their murders, their sorcery, their sexual immorality, or their acts of theft.

Revelation 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter, John continues to describe what happens when angels sound seven trumpets.

Woe

John describes several "woes" in the Book of Revelation. This chapter begins to describe three "woes" announced at the end of Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Animal imagery

This chapter includes several animals: locusts, scorpions, horses, lions, and snakes. These animals represent different qualities or traits. For example, a lion is powerful and dangerous. Translators should use the same animals in their translation if possible. If the animal is unknown, one with similar qualities or traits should be used.

Bottomless pit

This image is seen several times in the Book of Revelation. It is a picture of hell as being inescapable and the opposite direction as heaven. (See: hell)

Abaddon and Apollyon

"Abaddon" is a Hebrew word. "Apollyon" is a Greek word. Both words mean "Destroyer." John used the sounds of the Hebrew word and wrote them with Greek letters. The ULB and UDB write the sounds of both words with English letters. Translators are encouraged to transliterate these words using the letters of the target language. The original Greek readers would have understood "Apollyon" to mean "Destroyer." So translators may also supply what it means in the text or in a footnote.

Repentance

Despite great signs, people are described as not repenting and so remain in their sin. People refusing to repent are also mentioned in Chapter 16. (See: repent and sin)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile

John uses many similes in this chapter. They help to describe the images that he sees in his vision.

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Links:

Revelation 9:1 Notes

Revelation 9:1

Connecting Statement:

The fifth of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.

I saw a star from heaven that had fallen

John saw the star after it had fallen. He did not watch if fall.

the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit

"the key that unlocks the shaft of the bottomless pit"

the shaft of the bottomless pit

Possible meanings are 1) "shaft" is another way of referring to the pit and describes it as long and narrow, or 2) "shaft" refers to the opening of the pit.

the bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom.

Revelation 9:2

like smoke from a huge furnace

A huge furnace gives off a great amount of thick, dark smoke. Alternate translation: "like the great amount of smoke that comes from a huge furnace"

turned dark

"became dark"

Revelation 9:3

locusts

insects that fly together in large groups. People fear them because they can eat up all the leaves in gardens and on trees.

power like that of scorpions

Scorpions have the ability to sting and poison other animals and people. Alternate translation: "the ability to sting people as scorpions do"

scorpions

small insects with poisonous stingers on their tails. Their sting is extremely painful and the pain lasts a long time.

Revelation 9:4

They were told not to damage the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree

Ordinary locusts were a terrible threat to people because when they swarm, they can eat up all the grass and all the leaves on plants and trees. These locusts were told not to do this.

but only the people

The phrase "to damage" or "to harm" is understood. Alternate translation: "but only to harm the people"

the seal of God

The word "seal" refers a mark that would be left by a tool being pressed into a a wax seal. In this case it refers to mark that God would place upon the foreheads of his people. The people who do not have this mark do not belong to God. See how you translated "seal" in [Revelation 7:3]

foreheads

The forehead is the top of the face, above the eyes.

Revelation 9:5

They were not given permission

"They" refers to the locusts. (Revelation 9:3)

those people

the people whom the locusts were stinging

but only to torture them

Here the words "given permission" are understood. Alternate translation: "but only given permission to torture them"

to torture them for five months

The locusts would be allowed to do this for five months.

to torture them

"to make them suffer terrible pain"

the sting of a scorpion

A scorpion is a small insect with a poisonous stinger at the end of its long tail. The sting can cause severe pain or even death.

Revelation 9:6

people will seek death but will not find it

This can be restated to remove the abstract noun "death." Alternate translation: "people will try to find a way to die but will not find it" or "people will try to kill themselves but will not find a way to die"

will greatly desire to die

"will want very much to die" or "will wish that they could die"

death will flee from them

John speaks of death as if it were a person or animal that could run away. Alternate translation: "they will not be able to die" or "they will not die"

Revelation 9:7

General Information:

These locusts did not look like ordinary locusts. John describes them by telling how parts of them looked like other things.

crowns of gold

These were likenesses of wreaths of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Examples actually made of leaves were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.

Revelation 9:10

They had tails

The word "They" refers to the locusts.

with stingers like scorpions

A scorpion is a small insect with a poisonous stinger at the end of its long tail. Its sting can cause severe pain or even death. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 9:3]

in their tails they had power to harm people for five months

Possible meanings are 1) they had power for five months to harm people or 2) they could sting people and the people would be in pain for five months.

Revelation 9:11

the bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further

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forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Abaddon ... Apollyon

Both names mean "Destroyer."

Revelation 9:12

there are still two disasters to come

Existing in the future is spoken of as coming.

Revelation 9:13

Connecting Statement:

The sixth of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.

I heard a voice coming

The voice refers to the one who was speaking. John does not say who the speaker was, but it may have been God. Alternate translation: "I heard someone speaking"

horns of the golden altar

These are horn-shaped extensions at each of the four corners of the top of the altar.

Revelation 9:14

the four angels who had been bound

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "the four angels whom God had commanded someone to bind" or "the four angels whom God bound"

Revelation 9:15

The four angels who had been prepared for ... that year were released

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "The angel released the four angels who had been prepared for ... that year"

The four angels who had been prepared

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: "The four angels whom God had prepared"

for that hour, that day, that month, and that year

These words are used to show that the time to release the angels is a specific, chosen time and not just any time. Alternate translation: "for that exact time"

Revelation 9:16

General Information:

Suddenly, 200,000,000 soldiers on horseback appear in John's vision. John is no longer speaking about the four angels mentioned in the previous verse.

200,000,000

Some ways to express this are: "two hundred million" or "two hundred thousand thousand" or "twenty thousand times ten thousand." If your language does not have a specific number for this, you could also see how you translated a similar large number in [Revelation 5:11]

Revelation 9:17

fiery red

"red like fire" or "bright red." See how you translated this in Revelation 6:3.

out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur

"fire, smoke, and sulfur came out of their mouths"

Revelation 9:18

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the horses and the plagues brought upon humanity.

A third of the people

"One third of the people." See how you translated "A third" in [Revelation 8:7]

Revelation 9:20

those who were not killed by these plagues

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whom the plagues had not killed"

the works of their hands

The word "hand" here is a metonym for the person whose hands they are. Alternate translation: "the deeds they had done"

things that cannot see, hear, or walk

This phrase reminds us that idols are not alive and do not deserve to be worshiped. But the people did not stop worshiping them. Alternate translation: "even though idols cannot see, hear, or walk"

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10 [1]Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was clothed in a cloud, and there was a rainbow above his head. His face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire.[2]He held a little scroll, which was opened in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land.
[3]Then he shouted in a loud voice like a roaring lion. When he shouted, the seven thunders spoke out with their sounds.
[4]When the seven thunders spoke out, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders said. Do not write it down."
[5]Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and the earth raised his right hand to heaven.[6]He swore by the one who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and all that is in it, the earth and all that is on it, and the sea and all that is in it, and the angel said, "There will be no more delay.[7]But on the day when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, then the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he proclaimed the good news to his servants the prophets."
[8]The voice I heard from heaven spoke to me again: "Go, take the open scroll that is in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land."[9]Then I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take the scroll and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey."
[10]I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but after I ate it, my stomach became bitter.[11]Then someone said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

Revelation 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Seven thunders

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John here describes the seven thunders as making sounds that he could understand as words. However, translators should use their normal word for "thunder" when translating these verses.
"The mystery of God"
This refers to some aspect of the hidden plan of God. It is not necessary to know what this mystery is to translate it. (See: reveal)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Simile
John uses similes to help him describe the face, legs, and voice of the mighty angel. Translators should understand other objects in this chapter, such as the rainbow and the cloud, with their normal meanings.

Links:

Revelation 10:1 Notes

Revelation 10:1
General Information:
John begins to describe a vision of a mighty angel holding a scroll. In John's vision he is viewing what is happening from earth. This takes place between the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.
He was clothed in a cloud
John speaks of the angel as if he were wearing a cloud as his clothing. This expression may be understood as metaphor. However, because very unusual things were often seen in visions, it might be understood as a literally true statement in its context.
His face was like the sun
John compares the brightness of his face with the brightness of the sun. Alternate translation: "His face was bright like the sun"
his feet were like pillars of fire
The word "feet" here refers to the legs. Alternate translation: "his legs were like pillars of fire"
Revelation 10:2
He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land
"He stood with his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land"
Revelation 10:3
Then he shouted
"Then the angel shouted"
the seven thunders spoke out
The thunder is described as if it were a person who could speak. Alternate translation: "the seven thunders made a loud noise" or "the thunder sounded very loudly seven times"
seven thunders
Thunder occurring seven times is spoken of as if it were seven different "thunders."
Revelation 10:4
but I heard a voice from heaven
The word "voice" refers to words spoken by someone other than the angel. Alternate translation: "but I heard someone speaking from heaven"
Seal up
People in John's day would write a message on a scroll and then seal the scroll so that only the person whom the writers wanted to open it were able to open it. This is a metaphor for keeping something secret. Alternate translation: "Keep secret"
Revelation 10:5
raised his right hand to heaven
He did this to show that he was swearing by God.
Revelation 10:6
He swore by the one who lives forever and ever
"He asked that what he was going to say would be confirmed by the one who lives forever and ever"
the one who lives forever and ever
Here "the one" refers to God.
There will be no more delay
"There will be no more waiting" or "God will not delay"
Revelation 10:7
the mystery of God will be accomplished
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will accomplish his mystery" or "God will complete his secret plan"
Revelation 10:8
Connecting Statement:
John hears the voice from heaven, which he had heard in Revelation 10:4, speak to him again.
The voice I heard from heaven
The word "voice" refers to the speaker. Alternate translation: "The one I heard speak from heaven" or "The one who had spoken to me from heaven"
I heard
John heard
Revelation 10:9
He said to me
"The angel said to me"
make ... bitter
"make ... sour" or "make ... acid." This refers to a bad taste from the stomach after eating something that is not good.
Revelation 10:11
languages
This refers to the people who speak the languages. Alternate translation: "language communities" or "groups of people who speak their own languages"

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11 [1]A reed was given to me to use like a measuring rod. I was told, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it.[2]But do not measure the courtyard outside the temple, for it has been given over to the Gentiles. They will trample the holy city for forty-two months.

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[3]I will give my two witnesses authority to prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."[4]These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth.[5]If anyone chooses to harm them, fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies. Anyone who wishes to harm them must be killed in this way.
[6]These witnesses have authority to close up the sky so that no rain will fall during the days that they prophesy. They have power to turn the waters to blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague whenever they wish.[7]When they will have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will wage war against them. He will conquer them and kill them.
[8]Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city (which is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt) where their Lord was crucified.[9]For three and a half days some from every people, tribe, language, and nation will look at their bodies. They will not permit them to be placed in a tomb.
[10]Those who live on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate. They will even send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented those who lived on the earth.[11]But after three and a half days a breath of life from God will enter them, and they will stand on their feet. Great fear will fall on those who see them.[12]Then they will hear a loud voice from heaven say to them, "Come up here!" Then they will go up into heaven in a cloud, while their enemies look on.
[13]At that hour there will be a major earthquake, and a tenth part of the city will collapse. Seven thousand people will be killed in the earthquake, and the survivors will be terrified and give glory to the God of heaven.
[14]The second woe is past. Look! The third woe is coming quickly.

[15]Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and loud voices spoke in heaven and said,

"The kingdom of the world has become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,
and he will reign forever and ever."

[16]Then the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones in the presence of God, fell upon their faces and worshiped God.
[17]They said,

"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
the one who is and who was,
because you have taken your great power
and have begun to reign.[1]
[18] The nations were enraged,
but your wrath has come.
The time has come for the dead to be judged
and for you to reward your servants the prophets
and God's holy people, and those who feared your name,
both the unimportant and the mighty.
The time has come
for you to destroy those who are destroying the earth."

[19]Then God's temple in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.

[1]The best copies of the ancient Greek text have the phrase who was, and who is, but some later copies of the Greek add the phrase: and who is to come.

Revelation 11 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 15 and 17-18.

Woe

John describes several "woes" in the book of Revelation. This chapter describes a second and third "woe" announced at the end of Chapter 8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Gentiles

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The word "Gentiles" here refers to ungodly people groups and not Gentile Christians. (See: godly)
Two witnesses
Scholars have suggested many different ideas about these two witnesses. Translators do not need to understand this passage to accurately translate it. (See: prophet)
Bottomless pit
This image is seen several times in the Book of Revelation. It is a picture of hell as being inescapable and the opposite direction as heaven. (See: hell)

Links:

Revelation 11:1 Notes

Revelation 11:1
General Information:
John begins to describe a vision about receiving a measuring rod and about two witnesses that God appointed. This vision also takes place between the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.
A reed was given to me
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone gave me a reed"
given to me ... I was told
The words "me" and "I" refer to John.
those who worship in it
"count those who worship in the temple"
Revelation 11:2
trample
to treat something as worthless by walking on it
forty-two months
"42 months"
Revelation 11:3
Connecting Statement:
God continues speaking to John.
for 1,260 days
"for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" or "for twelve hundred and sixty days"
days, clothed in sackcloth
Why they will wear sackcloth can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "days, wearing rough mourning clothes" or "days. They will wear scratchy clothes to show that they are very sad"
Revelation 11:4
These witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth
The two olive trees and the two lampstands symbolize these people, but they are not literally the people. Alternate translation: "The two olive trees and the two lampstands that have stood before the Lord of the earth represent these witnesses"
the two olive trees and the two lampstands that
John expects his readers to know about them because many years earlier another prophet had written about them. Alternate translation: "the two olive trees and the two lampstands, told about in scripture, that"
Revelation 11:5
fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies
Because this is about future events, it can also be stated in the future tense. Alternate translation: "fire will come out of their mouth and devour their enemies"
fire comes ... and devours their enemies
Fire burning and killing people is spoken of as if it were an animal that could eat them up. Alternate translation: "fire will come ... and destroy their enemies" or "fire will come ... and completely burn up their enemies"
Revelation 11:6
to close up the sky so that no rain will fall
John speaks of the sky as if it had a door that can be opened to let rain fall or closed to stop the rain. Alternate translation: "to keep rain from falling from the sky"
the days that they prophesy
"the time that they prophesy." The word "days" here can refer to weeks, months, or years.
to turn
"to change"
to strike the earth with every kind of plague
John speaks of the plagues as if they were a stick that someone could hit the earth with. Alternate translation: "to cause all kinds of trouble to occur on earth"
Revelation 11:7
bottomless pit
This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.
Revelation 11:8
Their bodies
This refers to the bodies of the two witnesses.
in the street of the great city
The city had more than one street. This was a public place where people could see them. Alternate translation: "in one of the streets of the great city" or "in the main street of the great city"
their Lord
They served the Lord, and, like him, would die in that city.
Revelation 11:9
three and a half days
"3 full days and one half day" or "3.5 days" or "3 1/2 days"
They will not permit them to be placed in a tomb
This will be a sign of disrespect.
Revelation 11:10
will rejoice over them and celebrate
"will rejoice that the two witnesses have died"
even send gifts to one another
This action shows how happy the people were.
because these two prophets tormented those who lived on the earth
This is the reason that the people will be so happy that the witnesses have died.
Revelation 11:11

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three and a half days
"3 full days and one half day" or "3.5 days" or "3 1/2 days." See how you translated this in [Revelation 11:9]
a breath of life from God will enter them
The ability to breathe is spoken of as if it were something that can go into people. Alternate translation: "God will cause the two witnesses to breathe again and live"
Great fear will fall on those who see them
Fear is spoken of as if it is a object that can fall on people. Alternate translation: "Those who see them will be extremely afraid"
Revelation 11:12
Then they will hear
Possible meanings are 1) the two witnesses will hear or 2) the people will hear what is said to the two witnesses.
a loud voice from heaven
The word "voice" refers to the one who speaks. Alternate translation: "someone speak loudly to them from heaven and"
say to them
"say to the two witnesses"
Revelation 11:13
Seven thousand people
"7,000 people"
the survivors
"those who do not die" or "those who are still living"
give glory to the God of heaven
"say that the God of heaven is glorious"
Revelation 11:14
The second woe is past
"The second terrible event is over." See how you translated "The first woe is past" in Revelation 9:12.
The third woe is coming quickly
Existing in the future is spoken of as coming. Alternate translation: "The third woe will happen soon"
Revelation 11:15
Connecting Statement:
The last of the seven angels begins to sound his trumpet.
the seventh angel
This is the last of the seven angels. See how you translated "seventh" in [Revelation 8.1]
loud voices spoke in heaven and said
The phrase "loud voices" represents speakers who spoke loudly. Alternate translation: "speakers in heaven spoke loudly and said"
The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ
Here "kingdom" refers to the authority to rule the world. Alternate translation: "The authority to rule the world now belongs to our Lord and his Christ" or "Our Lord and his Christ are now the rulers of the world"
the world
This refers to everyone in the world. Alternate translation: "everyone in the world"
Revelation 11:16
twenty-four elders
"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]
fell upon their faces
This is an idiom that means they lay down facing the ground. See how you translated "prostrated themselves" in [Revelation 4:10]
Revelation 11:17
you, Lord God Almighty, the one who is and who was
These phrases can be stated as sentences. Alternate translation: "you, Lord God, the ruler over all. You are the one who is, and you are the one who was"
the one who is
"the one who exists" or "the one who lives"
who was
"who has always existed" or "who has always lived"
you have taken your great power
What God did with his great power can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "you have defeated with your power everyone who has rebelled against you"
Revelation 11:18
General Information:
The words "you" and "your" refer to God.
Connecting Statement:
The twenty-four elders continue praising God.
were enraged
"were extremely angry"
your wrath has come
Existing in the present is spoken of as having come. Alternate translation: "You are ready to show your anger"
The time has come
Existing in the present is spoken of as having come. Alternate translation: "The time is right" or "Now is the time"
for the dead to be judged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for God to judge the dead"
the dead
This nominal adjective can be stated as a verb or adjective. Alternate translation: "Those who have died" or "the dead people"
the prophets, those who are believers, and those who feared your name
This list explains what "your servants" means. These were not three completely different groups of people. The prophets also were believers and feared God's name. "Name" here is a metonym for the person of Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "the prophets, those who are believers, and those who fear you" or "the prophets and the others who are believers and fear your name"
Revelation 11:19
Then God's temple in heaven was opened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Then someone opened God's temple in heaven"
the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "I saw the ark of his covenant in his temple"
flashes of lightning
Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.
rumblings, crashes of thunder
These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

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12 [1]A great sign was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve
stars on her head.[2]She was pregnant, and she was crying out in birth pains, in the anguish of childbirth.
[3]Then another sign was seen in heaven: Look! There was a huge red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and
there were seven crowns on his heads.[4]His tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven and hurled them down to the
earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth, he would devour her
child.
[5]She gave birth to a son, a male child, who would rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her child was snatched away to
God and to his throne,[6]and the woman fled into the wilderness, where God had prepared a place for her, so she could be
taken care of for 1,260 days.

[7]Now there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought
back.[8]But the dragon was not strong enough to win. So there was no longer any place in heaven for him and his angels.
[9]The great dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan, who deceives the whole world—was thrown down to the
earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.
[10]Then I heard a loud voice in heaven:

"Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Christ.
For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accused them before our God day and night.
[11] They conquered him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
for they did not love their lives
even to death.

[12] Therefore rejoice, you heavens
and all who reside in them!
But woe to the earth and to the sea,
because the devil has gone down to you!
He is filled with terrible anger
and knows that he has only a little time!

[13]When the dragon realized he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the
male child.[14]But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so that she would flee to the place prepared for her
in the wilderness. This was the place where she would be taken care of, for a time, times, and half a time—out of the
serpent's presence.
[15]The serpent poured water out of his mouth like a river so that he might make a flood to sweep her away.[16]But the earth
helped the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon was pouring out of his mouth.
[17]Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war with the rest of her descendants, those who obey
God's commandments and hold to the testimony about Jesus.[18]Then the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore.

Revelation 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 10-12.

Special concepts in this chapter

Serpent

The Book of Revelation uses imagery from the Old Testament. For example, John refers to Satan as the serpent. This image comes from the account of the Garden of Eden when Satan tempted Eve.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"A great sign was seen in heaven"

By using the passive voice here, John does not say who saw this great sign in heaven. The translation may be difficult when the subject is unclear, if your language does not have a passive voice. Many English translations use the past tense here and say "A great sign appeared in heaven."

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Links:

Revelation 12:1 Notes

Revelation 12:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a woman who appears in his vision.

A great sign was seen in heaven

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "A great sign appeared in heaven" or "I, John, saw a great sign in heaven"

a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "a woman who was wearing the sun and had the moon under her feet"

a crown of twelve stars

This was apparently a likeness of a wreath made of laurel leaves or olive branches, but with twelve stars included in it.

twelve stars

"12 stars"

Revelation 12:3

Connecting Statement:

John describes a dragon that appears in his vision.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos.

Revelation 12:4

His tail swept away a third of the stars

"With his tail he swept away a third of the stars"

a third

"one third." See how you translated this in [Revelation 8:7]

Revelation 12:5

rule all the nations with an iron rod

Ruling harshly is spoken of as ruling with an iron rod. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 2:27]

Her child was snatched away to God

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God quickly took her child to himself"

Revelation 12:6

for 1,260 days

"for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" or "for twelve hundred and sixty days"

Revelation 12:7

Now

John uses this word to mark a shift in his account to introduce something else happening in his vision.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:8

So there was no longer any place in heaven for him and his angels

"So the dragon and his angels could no longer stay in heaven"

Revelation 12:9

dragon—that old serpent called the Devil or Satan, who deceives the whole world—was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him

The information about the serpent can be given in a separate sentence after the statement that it was thrown down to the earth. Alternate translation: "dragon was thrown down to earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. He is the old serpent who deceives the world and is called the Devil or Satan"

The great dragon ... was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the great dragon ... and his angels out of heaven and sent them to the earth"

Revelation 12:10

I

The word "I" refers to John.

I heard a loud voice in heaven

The word "voice" refers to someone who speaks. Alternate translation: "I heard someone saying loudly from heaven"

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ

God saving people by his power is spoken of as if his salvation and power were things that have come. God's ruling and Christ's authority are also spoken of as if they have come. Alternate translation: "Now God has saved his people by his power, God rules as king, and his Christ has all authority"

have come

"have begun to really exist" or "have appeared" or "have become real." God is revealing these things because their time to occur has "come." It is not that they did not exist before.

the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down

This is the dragon that was thrown down in Revelation 12:9.

our brothers

Fellow believers are spoken of as if they were brothers. Alternate translation: "our fellow believers"

day and night

These two parts of the day are used together to mean "all the time" or "without stopping"

Revelation 12:11

Connecting Statement:

The loud voice from heaven continues to speak.

They conquered him

"They conquered the accuser"

by the blood of the Lamb

The blood refers to his death. Alternate translation: "because the lamb had shed his blood and died for them"

by the word of their testimony

The word "testimony" can be expressed with the verb "testify." Also, whom they testified about can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "by what they said when they testified to others about Jesus"

even to death

The believers told the truth about Jesus, even though they

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knew that their enemies might try to kill them because of it. Alternate translation: "but kept testifying even though they knew that doing so might cause their death"

Revelation 12:12

He is filled with terrible anger

The devil is spoken of as if he were a container, and anger is spoken of as if it were a liquid that could be in him. Alternate translation: "He is terribly angry"

Revelation 12:13

the dragon realized he had been thrown down to the earth

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the dragon realized that God had thrown him out of heaven and sent him to earth"

he pursued the woman

"he chased after the woman"

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:14

the serpent's presence

This is another way of referring to the dragon. Alternate translation: "the dragon's presence"

Revelation 12:15

serpent

This is the same being as the dragon mentioned earlier in Revelation 12:9.

poured water out of his mouth like a river so that

The water flowed from his mouth like a river flows. Alternate translation: "poured a very large amount of water out of his mouth so that"

river so that he might make a flood to sweep

"river; he was trying to make a flood that would sweep"

to sweep her away

"to wash her away"

Revelation 12:16

The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon was pouring out of his mouth

The earth is spoken of as if it were a living thing, and a hole in the earth is spoken of as if it were a mouth that could drink up the water. Alternate translation: "A hole in the ground opened up and the water went down into the hole"

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in verse 9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 12:17

hold to the testimony about Jesus

The word "testimony" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "continue to testify about Jesus"

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13 [1]Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads. On its horns were ten crowns, and on each of its heads was a blasphemous name.[2]This beast I saw was like a leopard. Its feet were like a bear's feet, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave it his power, his throne, and his great authority to rule.
[3]One of the beast's heads seemed to have a fatal wound, but that fatal wound had been healed. The whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.[4]They also worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast. They worshiped the beast, too, and kept saying, "Who is like the beast?" and "Who can fight against it?"
[5]The beast was given a mouth that could speak proud words and blasphemies. It was permitted to exercise authority for forty-two months.[6]So the beast opened its mouth to speak blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven.
[7]The beast was permitted to wage war with God's holy people and to conquer them. Also, authority was given to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation.[8]All who live on the earth will worship it, everyone whose name was not written in the Book of Life, which belongs to the Lamb who had been slaughtered from the foundation of the world.
[9]If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

[10] If anyone is to be taken into captivity,
into captivity he will go.
If anyone is to be killed with the sword,
with the sword he will be killed.

Here is a call for the patient endurance and faith of God's holy people.

[11]Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, and it spoke like a dragon.[12]He exercised all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and he made the earth and those who live on it worship the first beast—the one whose lethal wound had been healed.
[13]He performed mighty miracles. He even made fire come down on the earth from heaven in front of people.[14]By the signs he was given power on behalf of the beast, he deceived those who live on the earth, telling them to set up an image for the beast—who was wounded by the sword, but he still lived.
[15]He was permitted to give breath to the beast's image so that the image would even speak and cause all who refused to worship the beast to be killed.[16]He also forced everyone, unimportant and mighty, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive

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a mark on the right hand or on the forehead.[17]It was impossible for anyone to buy or sell unless he had the mark of the beast, that is, the number representing its name.
[18]This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast. For it is the number of a human being. His number is 666.

Revelation 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verse 10, which is from the Old Testament.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Similes

John uses many similes in this chapter. They help to describe the images that he sees in his vision.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Unknown animals

John uses different animals to try to describe what he saw. Some of these animals may not be known in the target language.

Links:

Revelation 13:1 Notes

Revelation 13:1

General Information:

John begins to describe a beast who appears in his vision. The word "I" here refers to John.

Revelation 13:2

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

The dragon gave it his power

The dragon made the beast as powerful as he was. He did not lose his power, however, by giving it to the beast.

his power ... his throne, and his great authority to rule

These are three ways of referring to his authority, and together they emphasize that the authority was great.

his throne

The word "throne" here refers to the dragon's authority to rule as king. Alternate translation: "his royal authority" or "his authority to rule as king"

Revelation 13:3

but that fatal wound had been healed

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but that fatal wound had healed"

fatal wound

"deadly wound"

The whole earth

The word "earth" refers to the people on it. Alternate translation: "All the people on the earth"

followed the beast

"obeyed the beast"

Revelation 13:4

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

he had given his authority to the beast

"he had caused the beast to have as much authority as he had"

Who is like the beast?

This question shows how amazed they were about the beast. Alternate translation: "No one is as powerful as the beast!"

Who can fight against it?

This question shows how much the people feared the power of the beast. Alternate translation: "No one could ever fight against the beast and win!"

Revelation 13:5

The beast was given ... It was permitted

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave the beast ... God permitted the beast"

The beast was given a mouth that could speak

Being given a mouth refers to being allowed to speak. Alternate translation: "The beast was allowed to speak"

forty-two months

"42 months"

Revelation 13:6

to speak blasphemies against God

"to say disrespectful things about God"

blaspheming his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven

The words "those who live in heaven" describe "his tabernacle." John is speaking as though God's people were a tabernacle in which God dwells. Alternate translation: "blaspheming his name and those who live in heaven, who are like a tabernacle for him"

blaspheming his name

God's name is a metonym for God himself. Alternate translation: "blaspheming God"

his name and his tabernacle, those who live in heaven

Some modern translations read, "his name, his tabernacle, and those who live in heaven."

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Revelation 13:7
authority was given to it
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God gave authority to the beast"
every tribe, people, language, and nation
This means that people from every ethnic group are included. See how you translated a similar list in Revelation 5:9.
Revelation 13:8
will worship it
"will worship the beast"
everyone whose name was not written ... in the Book of Life
This phrase clarifies who on the earth will worship the beast. It can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whose names the Lamb did not write ... in The Book of Life" or "those whose names were not ... in the Book of Life"
from the foundation of the world
The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "from the time that God created the world"
the Lamb
A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]
who had been slaughtered
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom the people slaughtered"
Revelation 13:9
General Information:
These verses are a break from John's account of his vision. Here he give a warning to the people reading his account.
If anyone has an ear, let him hear
Jesus is emphasizing that what he is about to say is important. The phrase "has an ear" here is a metonym for the willingness to understand and obey. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 2:7]
If anyone ... let him hear
Since Jesus is speaking directly to his audience, you may prefer to use the second person here. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 2:7]
Revelation 13:10
If anyone is to be taken
This expression means that someone has decided who should be taken. If needed, translators may state clearly who decided it. Alternate translation: "If God has decided that someone should be taken" or "If it is God's will that someone should be taken"
If anyone is to be taken into captivity
This can be stated in active form. The noun "captivity" can be stated with the verb "capture." Alternate translation: "If it is God's will for the enemy to capture a certain person"
into captivity he will go
The noun "captivity" can be stated with the verb "capture." Alternate translation: "he will be captured" or "the enemy will capture him"
If anyone is to be killed with the sword
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If it is God's will for the enemy to kill a certain person with a sword"
with the sword
The sword represents war. Alternate translation: "in war"
he will be killed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the enemy will kill him"
Here is a call for the patient endurance and faith of God's holy people
"God's holy people must endure patiently and be faithful"
Revelation 13:11
Connecting Statement:
John begins to describe another beast who appears in his vision.
it spoke like a dragon
Harsh speech is spoken of as if it were the roar of a dragon. Alternate translation: "it spoke harshly like a dragon speaks"
dragon
This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]
Revelation 13:12
the earth and those who live on it
"everyone on the earth"
the one whose lethal wound had been healed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the one who had a lethal wound that healed"
lethal wound
"deadly wound." This was an injury that was serious enough that it could have made him die.
Revelation 13:13
He performed
"The beast from the earth performed"
Revelation 13:15
He was permitted
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God permitted the beast from the earth"
to give breath to the beast's image
Here the word "breath" represents life. Alternate translation: "to give life to the beast's image"
the beast's image
This is the image of the first beast that had been mentioned.
cause all who refused to worship the beast to be killed
"put to death anyone who refused to worship the first beast"
Revelation 13:16
He also forced everyone
"The beast from the earth also forced everyone"
Revelation 13:17
It was impossible for anyone to buy or sell unless he had the mark of the beast
"People could buy or sell things only if they had the mark of the beast." The implicit information that the beast from the earth commanded it can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "He commanded that people could buy or sell things only if they had the mark of the beast"
the mark of the beast
This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast.

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Revelation 13:18

General Information:

This verse is a break from John's account of his vision. Here he gives another warning to the people reading his account.

This calls for wisdom

"Wisdom is needed" or "You need to be wise about this"

If anyone has insight

The word "insight" can be translated with the verb "understand." Alternate translation: "If anyone is able to understand things"

let him calculate the number of the beast

"he should discern what the number of the beast means" or "he should figure out what the number of the beast means"

is the number of a human being

Possible meanings are 1) the number represents one person or 2) the number represents all of humanity.

14 [1]I looked and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. With him were 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.[2]I heard a voice from heaven sounding like a roar of many waters and loud thunder. The sound I heard was also like harpists playing their harps.
[3]They sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except for the 144,000 who had been bought from the earth.[4]These are the ones that have not defiled themselves with women, for they have kept themselves sexually pure. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits for God and for the Lamb.[5]No lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

[6]I saw another angel flying in midair, who had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.[7]He called out with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory. For the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him, the one who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water."

[8]Another angel—a second angel—followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, who persuaded all the nations to drink the wine of her immoral passion."

[9]Another angel—a third angel—followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,[10]he will also drink some of the wine of God's wrath, the wine that has been poured undiluted into the cup of his anger. The person who drinks it will be tormented with fire and sulfur before God's holy angels and before the Lamb.
[11]The smoke from their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night—these worshipers of the beast and his image, and everyone who receives the mark of his name.[12]Here is a call for the patient endurance of God's holy people, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus."

[13]I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.""Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them."

[14]I looked, and there was a white cloud. Seated on the cloud was one like a son of man. He had a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.[15]Then another angel came out of the temple and called with a loud voice to the one sitting on the cloud: "Take your sickle and start to reap. For the time to reap has come, since the harvest of the earth is ripe."[16]Then the one who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

[17]Another angel came out from the temple in heaven; he also had a sharp sickle.[18]Still another angel came out from the incense altar, who had authority over the fire. He called out with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather in the clusters of grapes from the vines of the earth, for their grapes are now ripe."
[19]The angel swung his sickle to the earth and harvested the grapevine of the earth. He threw it into the great winepress of God's wrath.[20]The winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood poured out from it up to the height of a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

Revelation 14 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Harvest

Harvest is when people go out to gather ripe food from plants. Jesus used this as a metaphor to teach his followers that they need to go and tell other people about him so those people can be part of God's kingdom. This chapter uses the metaphor of two harvests. Jesus gathers in his people from the whole earth. Then an angel gathers in wicked people whom God will punish. (See: and harvest and faith)

Links:

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Revelation 14:1
General Information:
The word "I" refers to John.
Connecting Statement:
John begins to describe the next part of his vision. There are 144,000 believers standing before the Lamb.
Lamb
A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]
144,000
"one hundred forty-four thousand." See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:4]
who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on whose foreheads the Lamb and his Father had written their names"
his Father
This is an important title for God that describes the relationship between God and Jesus.
Revelation 14:2
a voice from heaven
"a sound from heaven"
Revelation 14:3
They sang a new song
"The 144,000 people sang a new song." This explains what the sound was that John heard. Alternate translation: "That sound was a new song that they sang"
the four living creatures
"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated "living creature" in Revelation 4:6
elders
This refers to the twenty-four elders around the throne. See how you translated "elders" in Revelation 4:4.
No one could learn the song except for the 144,000
This double negative emphasizes that the 144,000 were unique. Alternate translation: "The only ones who could learn the song were the 144,000"
144,000
"one hundred forty-four thousand." See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:4]
Revelation 14:4
have not defiled themselves with women
Possible meanings are 1) "have never had immoral sexual relations with a woman" or 2) "have never had sexual relations with a woman." Defiling oneself with women may be a symbol of worshiping idols.
they have kept themselves sexually pure
Possible meanings are 1) "they have not had sexual relations with a woman who was not their wife" or 2) "they are virgins."
follow the Lamb wherever he goes
Doing what the Lamb does is spoken of as following him. Alternate translation: "they do whatever the Lamb does" or "they obey the Lamb"
redeemed from among mankind as firstfruits
"Firstfruits" here is a metaphor for the first offering to be made to God in celebration of harvest. Alternate translation: "purchased out of the midst of the rest of mankind as a special celebration of salvation"
Revelation 14:5
No lie was found in their mouth
Their "mouth" refers to what they said." Alternate translation: "They never lied when they spoke"
Revelation 14:6
Connecting Statement:
John begins to describe the next part of his vision. This is the first of three angels who proclaim judgment on the earth.
every nation, tribe, language, and people
This means that people from every ethnic group are included. See how you translated a similar list in Revelation 5:9.
Revelation 14:7
the hour of his judgment has come
Here "the hour" represents the time that has been chosen for something, and the hour having "come" is a metaphor for now being the chosen time. The idea of "judgment" can be expressed with a verb. Alternate translation: "now is the time that God has chosen for judgment" or "it is now the time for God to judge people"
Revelation 14:8
Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great
The angel speaks of Babylon having been destroyed as if it had fallen. Alternate translation: "Babylon the great has been destroyed"
Babylon the great
"Babylon the large city" or "the important city of Babylon." This was probably a symbol for the city of Rome, which was large, wealthy, and sinful.
who persuaded
Babylon is spoken of as if it were a person, instead of a city filled with people.
to drink the wine of her immoral passion
This is a symbol for participating in her sexually immoral passion. Alternate translation: "to be sexually immoral like her" or "to get drunk like her in sexual sin"
her immoral passion
Babylon is spoken of as if it were a prostitute who has caused other people to sin along with her. This may well have a double meaning: literal sexual immorality and also the worship of false gods.
Revelation 14:9
with a loud voice
"loudly"
Revelation 14:10
will also drink some of the wine of God's wrath
Drinking the wine of God's wrath is a symbol for being punished by God. Alternate translation: "will also drink some of the wine that represents God's wrath"
that has been poured undiluted
This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation:

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"that God has poured full strength"

that has been poured undiluted

This means that the wine has no water mixed into it. It is strong, and a person who drinks much of it will get very drunk. As a symbol, it means that God will be extremely angry, not just a little angry.

cup of his anger

This symbolic cup holds the wine that represents God's anger.

Revelation 14:11

Connecting Statement:

The third angel continues to speak.

The smoke from their torment

The phrase "their torment" refers to the fire that torments them. Alternate translation: "The smoke from the fire that torments them"

they have no rest

"they have no relief" or "the torment does not stop"

Revelation 14:12

Here is a call for the patient endurance of God's holy people

"God's holy people must endure patiently and be faithful." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 13:10.

Revelation 14:13

the dead who die

"those who die"

who die in the Lord

"who are united with the Lord when they die." This may refer to people who are killed by their enemies. Alternate translation: "who die because they are united to the Lord"

labors

difficulties and sufferings

their deeds will follow them

These deeds are spoken of as if they were alive and able to follow those who did them. Possible meanings are 1) "others will know the good deeds these people have done" or 2) "God will reward them for their deeds"

Revelation 14:14

Connecting Statement:

John begins to describe the next part of his vision. This part is about the Son of Man harvesting the earth. Harvesting the grain is a symbol of God's judging people.

one like a son of man

This expression describes a human figure, someone who looks human. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:13]

golden crown

This was the likeness of a wreath of olive branches or laurel leaves, hammered out in gold. Examples actually made of leaves were given to victorious athletes to wear on their heads.

sickle

a tool with a curved blade used for cutting grass, grain, and vines

Revelation 14:15

came out of the temple

"came out of the heavenly temple"

the time to reap has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

Revelation 14:16

the earth was reaped

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "he reaped the earth"

Revelation 14:17

Connecting Statement:

John continues describing his vision about the earth being harvested.

Revelation 14:18

who had authority over the fire

Here "authority over" refers to responsibility to tend the fire.

Revelation 14:19

harvested the grapevine of the earth ... threw it

John describes the earth as a grapevine full of ripe grapes that the angel is harvesting. The grapevine is a metonym for the grapes on the vine, and the grapes are a metaphor for the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "harvested the earth as if he were a person harvesting grapes ... threw the harvest" or "took away the people of the earth as if he were a person harvesting grapes ... threw them"

threw it

"threw the grapevine," a metonym for the harvest from the grapevine, or "threw the harvest from the grapevine"

the great winepress of God's wrath

"the large winepress where God will show his wrath." A winepress is a large container in which people put grapes and then crush them to get the juice out. John is saying that the angel will take the people of the earth and put them where God will punish or destroy them because he is angry with them.

Revelation 14:20

winepress

This is "the great wine vat" of Revelation 14:19.

up to the height of a horse's bridle

"as high as the bridle on a horse's head"

bridle

a device made of leather straps that goes around a horse's head and is used for directing the horse

1,600 stadia

"one thousand six hundred stadia" or "sixteen hundred stadia." A "stadium" is 185 meters. In modern measures this would be about "300 kilometers" or "200 miles."

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15 [1]Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: There were seven angels with seven plagues, which are the final plagues, for with them the wrath of God will be completed.

[2]I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire. Standing beside the sea were those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number representing his name. They were holding harps given to them by God.

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[3]They were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

"Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God, the Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.
[4] Who will not fear you, Lord,
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you
because your righteous deeds have been revealed."

[5]After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of witness was open in heaven.[6]Out of the temple came the seven angels holding the seven plagues. They were clothed with pure, bright linen and had golden sashes around their chests.
[7]One of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever.[8]The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. No one could enter it until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

Revelation 15 General Notes

Structure and formatting

In this chapter John describes events and pictures that occur in heaven.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 3-4.

Special concepts in this chapter

"Victorious over the beast"
Those who are "victorious over the beast" are spiritually victorious. While most spiritual battles cannot be seen, the Book of Revelation pictures spiritual battles as openly occurring.
"The temple having the tent of witness was open in heaven"
Scripture elsewhere indicates the earthly temple copied God's perfect dwelling place in heaven. Here John seems to refer to God's heavenly dwelling place or temple.
Songs
The Book of Revelation often describes heaven as a place where people sing. They worship God with songs. This illustrates that heaven is a place where God is always worshiped.

Links:

Revelation 15:1 Notes

Revelation 15:1
General Information:
This verse is a summary of what will happen in 15:6-16:21.
great and marvelous
These words have similar meanings and are used for emphasis. Alternate translation: "something that greatly amazed me"
seven angels with seven plagues
"seven angels who had authority to send seven plagues on the earth"
which are the final plagues
"and after them, there will not be any more plagues"
for with them the wrath of God will be completed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "for these plagues will complete the wrath of God"
for with them the wrath of God will be completed
Possible meanings are 1) these plagues will show all of God's anger or 2) after these plagues, God will no longer be angry.
Revelation 15:2
General Information:
Here John begins to describe his vision of the people who had been victorious over the beast and who were praising God.
sea of glass
How it was like glass or a sea can be stated clearly. Possible meanings are 1) a sea is spoken of as if it were glass. Alternate translation: "a sea that was as smooth as glass" or 2) glass if spoken of as if it were a sea. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:6]
who had been victorious over the beast and his image
How they were victorious can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "who had been victorious over the beast and his image by not worshiping them"

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over the number representing his name
How they were victorious over the number can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "over the number representing his name by not being marked with that number"
the number representing his name
This refers to the number described in Revelation 13:18.
Revelation 15:3
They were singing
"Those who had been victorious over the beast were singing"
Revelation 15:4
Who will not fear you, Lord, and glorify your name?
This question is used to show their amazement at how great and glorious the Lord is. It can be expressed as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Lord, everyone will fear you and glorify your name!"
glorify your name
The phrase "your name" refers to God. Alternate translation: "glorify you"
your righteous deeds have been revealed
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you have made everyone know about your righteous deeds"
Revelation 15:5
Connecting Statement:
The seven angels with the seven plagues come out of the most holy place. They were spoken of previously in Revelation 15:1.
After these things
"After the people finished singing"
the temple of the tabernacle of witness
The words "the temple" seem to refer either literally to a solid building or metaphorically to a tent or tabernacle. Possible meanings of "tabernacle of witness" are 1) "the tabernacle" is the place where the priests had set the "witness," also called "the ark of the testimony," or 2) the "tabernacle of witness" is another name for "the ark of the testimony."
Revelation 15:6
Out of the temple
This is the "temple" spoken of in Revelation 15:5.
the seven angels holding the seven plagues
These angels were seen as holding seven plagues because in Revelation 17:7 they are given seven bowls full of the wrath of God.
linen
a fine, expensive cloth made from flax
sashes
A sash is a decorative piece of cloth worn on the upper body.
Revelation 15:7
the four living creatures
"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated "living creatures" in Revelation 4:6
seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God
The image of the wine in the bowls can be stated clearly. The word "wrath" here refers to punishment. The wine is a symbol for punishment. Alternate translation: "seven gold bowls full of the wine that represents the wrath of God"
Revelation 15:8
until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed
"until the seven angels finished sending the seven plagues to the earth"

16 [1]I heard a loud voice call out of the temple and say to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls
of God's wrath."

[2]The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; ugly and painful sores came on the people who had the mark
of the beast, those who worshiped his image.

[3]The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. It became blood, like the blood of a dead person, and every living
thing in the sea died.

[4]The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood.[5]I heard the angel of
the waters say,

"You are righteous—the one who is and who was, the Holy One—
because you have judged these things.
6 Because they poured out the blood of God's holy people and prophets,
you have given them blood to drink;
it is what they deserve."

[7]I heard the altar reply,

"Yes, Lord God Almighty,

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your judgments are true and righteous."

[8]The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch the people with fire.[9]They were scorched by the terrible heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has the authority over these plagues. They did not repent or give him glory.

[10]Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and darkness covered its kingdom. They chewed on their tongues because of the pain.[11]They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and sores, and they still refused to repent of their deeds.

[12]The sixth angel poured out his bowl into the great river, the Euphrates. Its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings that would come from the east.[13]I saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouths of the dragon, of the beast, and of the false prophet.[14]For they are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs. They were going out to the kings of the whole world in order to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.
[15]("Look! I am coming as a thief! Blessed is the one who keeps watching, keeping his garments on so that he does not walk around naked and so that they do not see his shameful condition.")
[16]They brought them together at the place that is called Armageddon in Hebrew.

[17]Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. Then a loud voice came out of the temple and from the throne, saying, "It is done!"[18]There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, crashes of thunder, and a terrible earthquake—an earthquake greater than any that has ever happened since human beings have been on the earth, so great was this earthquake.[19]The great city was split into three parts, and the nations' cities collapsed. Then God called to mind Babylon the great, and he gave that city the cup filled with the wine made from his furious wrath.
[20]Every island disappeared, and the mountains were no longer found.[21]Great hailstones, weighing about a talent, came down from the sky upon the people. They blasphemed God for the plague of hail because that plague was so terrible.

Revelation 16 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the vision of chapter 15. Together they give the seven plagues that complete the wrath of God. (See: wrath)
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 5-7.

Special concepts in this chapter

"I heard a loud voice call out of the temple"
This is the same temple that was mentioned in chapter 15.
Seven bowls of God's wrath
This chapter reveals severe judgments. They are pictured as angels pouring out seven bowls of God's wrath.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

The tone of this chapter is meant to astonish the reader. Translations should not minimize the vivid language expressed in this chapter.
Armageddon
This is a Hebrew word. It is the name of a place. John used the sounds of the Hebrew word and wrote them with Greek letters. Translators are encouraged to transliterate it using the letters of the target language.

Links:

Revelation 16:1 Notes

Revelation 16:1
Connecting Statement:
John continues to describe the part of the vision about the seven angels with the seven plagues. The seven plagues are the seven bowls of God's wrath.
I heard
The word "I" refers to John.
bowls of God's wrath
The image of the wine in the bowls can be stated clearly. The word "wrath" here refers to punishment. The wine is a symbol for punishment. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 15:7]

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Revelation 16:2

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. Alternate translation: "poured out the wine from his bowl" or "poured out God's wrath from his bowl"

painful sores

"painful wounds." These could be infections from diseases or injuries that have not healed.

mark of the beast

This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast. See how you translated this in Revelation 13:17.

Revelation 16:3

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the sea

This refers to all the salt water lakes and oceans.

Revelation 16:4

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

rivers and the springs of water

This refers to all bodies of fresh water.

Revelation 16:5

the angel of the waters

These words could be a reference to 1) the third angel who was in charge of pouring out God's wrath on the rivers and springs of water or 2) another angel who was in charge of all the waters.

You are righteous

"You" refers to God.

the one who is and who was

"God who is and who was." See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:4.

Revelation 16:6

they poured out the blood of God's holy people and prophets

Here "poured out the blood" means killed. Alternate translation: "they murdered God's holy people and the prophets"

you have given them blood to drink

God will make the evil people drink the waters that he turned to blood.

Revelation 16:7

I heard the altar reply

The word "altar" here refers perhaps to someone at the altar. "I heard someone at the altar reply"

Revelation 16:8

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

on the sun, and it was given permission to scorch the people

John speaks about the sun as if it were a person. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "on the sun and caused it to severely burn the people"

Revelation 16:9

They were scorched by the terrible heat

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The extreme heat burned them badly"

they blasphemed the name of God

Here the name of God represents God. Alternate translation: "they blasphemed God"

God, who has the authority over these plagues

This phrase reminds readers of something they already know about God. It helps to explain why the people were blaspheming God. Alternate translation: "God because he has the authority over these plagues"

the authority over these plagues

This refers to the power to inflict these plagues on people, and the power to stop the plagues.

Revelation 16:10

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the throne of the beast

This is where the beast reigns from. It may refer to the capital city of his kingdom.

darkness covered its kingdom

Here "darkness" is spoken of as if it were something like a blanket. Alternate translation: "it became dark in all his kingdom" or "all of his kingdom became dark"

They chewed

The people in the beast's kingdom chewed.

Revelation 16:11

They blasphemed

The people in the beast's kingdom blasphemed.

Revelation 16:12

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

the Euphrates. Its water was dried up

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the Euphrates. Its water dried up" or "the Euphrates, and caused its water to dry up"

Revelation 16:13

looked like frogs

A frog is a small animal that lives near water. Jews considered them unclean animals.

dragon

This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos. The dragon is also identified in 12:9 as "the devil or Satan." See how you translated this in [Revelation 12:3]

Revelation 16:15

Look! I am coming ... his shameful condition

This is in parentheses to show that it is not part of the vision about the spirits. Rather, this is something that the Lord Jesus said. It can be stated clearly that the Lord Jesus said this, as in the UDB.

I am coming as a thief

Jesus will come at a time when people do not expect him, just as a thief comes when not expected. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 3:3]

keeping his garments on

Living the right way is spoken of as keeping one's clothes on. Alternate translation: "doing what is right, like keeping his clothes on"

keeping his garments on

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Some versions translate this as, "keeping his garments with him."

does not walk around naked

Walking around naked is a metaphor for living foolishly without knowing it. Alternate translation: "does not live foolishly"

they do not see his shameful condition

Here the word "they" refers to other people.

his shameful condition

This is a general term for anything of which a person should be ashamed. Here the shame is from living foolishly. Alternate translation: "those things of which he should be ashamed"

Revelation 16:16

They brought them together

"The spirits of the demons brought the kings and their armies together"

the place that is called

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the place that people call"

Armageddon

This is the name of a place.

Revelation 16:17

Connecting Statement:

The seventh angel pours out the seventh bowl of God's wrath.

poured out his bowl

The word "bowl" refers to what is in it. See how you translated this in [Revelation 16:2]

Then a loud voice came out of the temple and from the throne

This means someone sitting on the throne or someone standing near the throne spoke loudly. It is unclear who is speaking.

Revelation 16:18

flashes of lightning

Use your language's way of describing what lightning looks like each time it appears. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

rumblings, crashes of thunder

These are the loud noises that thunder makes. Use your language's way of describing the sound of thunder. See how you translated this in Revelation 4:5.

Revelation 16:19

The great city was split

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The earthquake split the great city"

Then God called to mind

"Then God remembered" or "Then God thought of" or "Then God started to pay attention to." This does not mean that God remembered something he had forgotten.

he gave that city the cup filled with the wine made from his furious wrath

The wine is a symbol of his wrath. Making people drink it is a symbol of punishing them. Alternate translation: "he made the people of that city drink the wine that represents his wrath"

Revelation 16:20

Connecting Statement:

This is part of the seventh bowl of God's wrath.

the mountains were no longer found

The inability to see any mountains is metonymy expressing the idea that no mountains existed any longer. Alternate translation: "there were no longer any mountains"

Revelation 16:21

a talent

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: "33 kilograms"

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17 [1]One of the seven angels who had been holding the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the condemnation of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters,[2]with whom the kings of the earth committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of her sexual immorality the inhabitants of the earth became drunk."
[3]Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names. The beast had seven heads and ten horns.[4]The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and was adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She was holding in her hand a golden cup full of detestable things and the impurities of her sexual immorality.[5]On her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the great, the mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth."

[6]I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people and with the blood of the martyrs for Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.[7]But the angel said to me, "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that is carrying her, the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns.
[8]The beast you saw existed, does not exist now, and is about to come up from the bottomless pit. Then he will go on to destruction. Those who live on the earth, those whose names have not been written in the Book of Life since the foundation of the world—they will be astounded when they see the beast, because he once was, and now is not, and yet will come.
[9]This calls for a mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated.[10]They are also seven kings. Five kings have fallen, one exists, and the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain for a little while.
[11]The beast that once was, and now is not, yet he is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.
[12]The ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings for one hour together with the beast.[13]These are of one mind, and they give over their power and authority to the beast.
[14]They will wage war against the Lamb. But the Lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and those with him are the called, chosen, and faithful ones."

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[15]The angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages.
[16]The ten horns that you saw—they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, they will devour her flesh, and they will burn her completely with fire.[17]For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their power to rule to the beast until God's words are fulfilled.
[18]The woman you saw is the great city that has power to rule over the kings of the earth."

Revelation 17 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins to describe how God will destroy Babylon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prostitute

Scripture often pictures idolatrous Jews as adulterous people and sometimes as prostitutes. This is not the reference here. The translator should allow this illustration to be vague.

Seven hills

This possibly refers to the city of Rome, which was known as the city on seven hills. However, the translator should not attempt to identify Rome in the translation.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

John uses many different metaphors in this chapter. He explains some of their meanings, but allows them to remain relatively unclear. The translator should attempt to do the same.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"The beast you saw existed, does not exist now, but is about to come up "

This and similar phrases in this chapter contrast the beast with Jesus. Jesus is called "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come" elsewhere in the Book of Revelation.

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. This sentence in 17:11 is a paradox: "the beast ... is itself also an eighth king; but it is one of those seven kings." The translator should not attempt to resolve this paradox. It should remain a mystery. (Revelation 17:11)

Links:

Revelation 17:1 Notes

Revelation 17:1

General Information:

John begins to describe the part of his vision about the great prostitute.

the condemnation of the great prostitute

The noun "condemnation" can be expressed with the verb "condemn." Alternate translation: "how God will condemn the great prostitute"

the great prostitute

"the prostitute that everyone knows about." She represents a certain sinful city.

on many waters

If you need to, you can use a more specific word for the kind of water. Alternate translation: "on many rivers"

Revelation 17:2

with the wine of her sexual immorality the inhabitants of the earth became drunk

The wine represents sexual immorality. Alternate translation: "the people of the earth became drunk by drinking her wine, that is, they were sexually immoral"

her sexual immorality

This may well have a double meaning: sexual immorality among people and also the worship of false gods.

Revelation 17:3

carried me away in the Spirit to a wilderness

The setting changes from John being in heaven to being in a wilderness.

Revelation 17:4

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean.

Revelation 17:5

On her forehead was written a name

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had written on her forehead a name"

Babylon the great

If it needs to be made clear that the name refers to the woman, it can be put in a sentence. Alternate translation: "I am Babylon, the powerful one"

Revelation 17:6

was drunk with the blood ... and with the blood

"was drunk because she had drunk the blood ... and had drunk the blood"

the martyrs for Jesus

"the believers who have died because they told others

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about Jesus"

astonished

amazed, surprised

Revelation 17:7

General Information:

The angel begins to explain to John the meaning of the prostitute and the red beast. The angel explains these things through verse 18.

Why are you astonished?

The angel used this question to gently scold John. Alternate translation: "You should not be astonished!"

Revelation 17:8

the bottomless pit

This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.

Then he will go on to destruction

The noun "destruction" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "Then he will be destroyed" or "Then God will destroy him"

he will go on to destruction

The certainty of what will happen in the future is spoken of as if the beast were going to it.

those whose names have not been written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "those whose names God did not write"

since the foundation of the world

The author speaks of the world as if it were a building set on a foundation. Alternate translation: "since the creation of the world" or "since God created the world"

Revelation 17:9

Connecting Statement:

The angel continues speaking. Here he explains the meaning of the seven heads of the beast that the woman is riding.

This calls for a mind that has wisdom

The abstract nouns "mind" and "wisdom" can be expressed with "think" and "wise" or "wisely." Why a wise mind is needed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "A wise mind is needed in order to understand this" or "You need to think wisely in order to understand this"

This calls for

"This makes it necessary to have"

The seven heads are seven hills

Here "are" means "stand for" or "represent."

Revelation 17:10

Five kings have fallen

The angel speaks of dying as falling. Alternate translation: "Five kings have died"

one exists

"one is king now" or "one king is alive now"

the other has not yet come, and when he comes

Not having existed yet is spoken of as not yet having come. Alternate translation: "the other has not yet become king; when he becomes king"

he must remain for a little while

The angel speaks of someone continuing to be king as if he were remaining in a place. Alternate translation: "he can be king only for a little while"

Revelation 17:11

He belongs to the seven

Possible meanings are 1) the beast rules twice: first as one of the seven kings, and then as the eighth king or 2) the beast belongs to that group of seven kings because he is like them.

and is going to his destruction

The certainty of what will happen in the future is spoken of as if the beast were going to it. Alternate translation: "and will certainly be destroyed" or "and God will surely destroy him"

Revelation 17:12

Connecting Statement:

The angel continues speaking to John. Here he explains the meaning of the ten horns of the beast.

for one hour

If your language does not divide the day into 24 hours, you may need to use a more general expression. Alternate translation: "for a very short time" or "for a very small part of a day"

Revelation 17:13

These are of one mind

"These all think the same thing" or "These all agree to do the same thing"

Revelation 17:14

the Lamb

A "lamb" is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

the called, chosen, and faithful ones

This refers to one group of people. The words "called" and "chosen" can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "the ones whom God has called and chosen, who are faithful to him"

Revelation 17:15

The waters you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages

Here "are" stands for "represent."

The waters

If you need to, you can use a more specific word for the kind of water. See how you translated "many waters" in [Revelation 17:1]

multitudes

large groups of people

languages

This refers to people who speak the languages. See how you translated this in [Revelation 10:11]

Revelation 17:16

make her desolate and naked

"steal everything that she has and leave her with nothing"

they will devour her flesh

Destroying her completely is spoken of as eating all her flesh. "They will destroy her completely"

Revelation 17:17

For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give ... until God's words are fulfilled

They would agree to give their power to the beast, but it would not be that they want to obey God. Alternate

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translation: "For God has put it into their hearts to agree to give ... until God's words are fulfilled, and by doing this, they would carry out God's purpose"

God has put it into their hearts

Here "heart" is a metonym for desires. Making them want to do something is spoken of as putting it in their hearts to do it. Alternate translation: "God has made them want"

power to rule

"authority" or "kingly authority"

until God's words are fulfilled

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "until God fulfills what he said will happen"

Revelation 17:18

Connecting Statement:

The angel finishes speaking to John about the prostitute and the beast.

is

Here "is" stands for "represents."

the great city that has power to rule

The city having power to rule is a metonym for the leader of the city having power to rule. Alternate translation: "the great city whose leader has power to rule"

---

18 [1]After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was
illumined by his glory.[2]He cried out with a mighty voice, saying,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
She has become a dwelling place for demons,
a prison for every unclean spirit,
a prison for every unclean bird,
a prison for every unclean and detestable animal.
[3] For all the nations have drunk
the wine of her immoral passion.
The kings of the earth have committed immorality with her.
The merchants of the earth have become rich from the power of her sensual way of living."

[4] Then I heard another voice from heaven say,

"Come out from her, my people,
so that you will not share in her sins,
and so that you will not receive any of her plagues.

[5] Her sins have piled up as high as heaven,
and God has remembered her evil actions.

[6] Pay her back as she has paid others back,
and repay her double for her deeds;
in the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her.

[7] As she glorified herself and lived in luxury,
give her just as much torture and grief.
For she says in her heart,
'I am seated as a queen;
I am not a widow,
and I will never see mourning.'

[8] Therefore in one day her plagues will come:
death, mourning, and famine.
She will be consumed by fire,
for the Lord God is mighty, and he is her judge."

[9]The kings of the earth who committed sexual immorality and went out of control with her will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning.[10]They will stand off at a distance, afraid of her torment, saying,
"Woe, woe to the great city,
Babylon, the powerful city!

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For in a single hour your punishment has come."

[11]The merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her since no one buys their merchandise anymore—[12]merchandise of
gold, silver, precious stone, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, every vessel of ivory, every
vessel made of most precious wood, bronze, iron, marble,[13]cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine
flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of people.
[14]The fruit that you desired with all your might is gone from you. All your luxury and splendor have vanished, never to be
found again.
[15]The merchants of these goods who became rich by her will stand away from her at a distance because of the fear of her
torment, weeping and mourning loudly.
[16]They will say,

"Woe, woe to the great city
that was dressed in fine linen, in purple, and in scarlet,
and was adorned with gold, precious jewels, and pearls!
[17] In a single hour all that wealth has been laid waste."

Every ship's captain, every seafaring man, sailors, and all who make their living from the sea stood off at a distance.

[18]They cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning. They said, "What city is like the great city?"[19]They threw dust on
their heads, and cried out, weeping and mourning,

"Woe, woe to the great city
where all who had their ships
at sea became rich from her wealth.
For in a single hour she has been laid waste."
[20] "Rejoice over her, heaven,
you holy people and apostles and prophets,
for God has brought your judgment on her!"

[21]A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

"In this way, Babylon, the great city,
will be thrown down with violence
and will not be seen anymore.
[22] The sound made by harpists, musicians,
flute players, and trumpeters
will not be heard anymore in you.
No craftsman of any kind
will be found in you.
No sound of a mill
will be heard anymore in you.

[23] The light of a lamp
will not shine in you anymore.
The voices of the bridegroom and the bride
will not be heard in you anymore,
for your merchants were the princes of the earth,
and the nations were deceived by your sorcery.

[24] In her the blood of prophets and of God's holy people was found,
and the blood of all who have been killed on the earth."

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Revelation 18 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 2-8, 10, 16-17, and 19-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Prophecy

The angel prophesies about Babylon falling, which here means being destroyed. It is spoken of as having already happened. This is common in prophecy. It emphasizes that the coming judgment will certainly happen. The angel also prophesies that the people will lament over Babylon falling.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphors

Prophecy frequently uses metaphors. This chapter has an apocalyptic style that is slightly different from that of the rest of the Book of Revelation.

Links:

Revelation 18:1 Notes

Revelation 18:1

Connecting Statement:

Another angel comes down from heaven and speaks. This is not the angel mentioned in the previous chapter who spoke about the prostitute and the beast.

Revelation 18:2

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great

The angel speaks of Babylon having been destroyed as if it had fallen. See how you translated this in [Revelation 14:8]

She has become

The pronoun "she" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

a prison

The word "prison" here is a metaphor for a secure place. This was probably a secure place where the unclean spirits feel safe, such as a refuge or hideout. Alternate translation: "a hideout"

Revelation 18:3

all the nations

The nations is a metonym for the people of those nations. Alternate translation: "the people of all the nations"

have drunk the wine of her immoral passion

This is a symbol for participating in her sexually immoral passion. Alternate translation: "have become sexually immoral like her" or "have become drunk like her in sexual sin"

her immoral passion

Babylon is spoken of as if it were a prostitute who has caused other people to sin along with her. This may well have a double meaning: literal sexual immorality and also the worship of false gods.

merchants

A merchant is a person who sells things.

from the power of her sensual way of living

"because she spent so much money on sexual immorality"

Revelation 18:4

General Information:

The pronouns "she" and "her" refer to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

Connecting Statement:

Another voice from heaven begins to speak.

another voice

The word "voice" refers to the speaker, which is probably either Jesus or the Father. Alternate translation: "someone else"

from her

The pronoun "her" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

Revelation 18:5

Her sins have piled up as high as heaven

The voice speaks of Babylon's sins as if they were objects that could form a pile. Alternate translation: "Her sins are so many they are like a pile that reaches heaven"

has remembered

"has thought of" or "has started to pay attention to." This does not mean that God remembered something he had forgotten. See how you translated "called to mind" in Revelation 16:19.

Revelation 18:6

Pay her back as she has paid others back

The voice speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "Punish her as she has punished others"

her ... she

The pronouns "her" and "she" refer to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute.

repay her double

The voice speaks of punishment as if it were payment. Alternate translation: "punish her twice as much"

in the cup she mixed, mix double the amount for her

The voice speaks of causing others to suffer as preparing strong wine for them to drink. Alternate translation: "prepare for her the wine of suffering that is twice as strong as what she made for others" or "make her suffer twice as much as she made others suffer"

mix double the amount

Possible meanings are 1) "prepare twice the amount" or 2) "make it twice as strong"

Revelation 18:7

Connecting Statement:

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The same voice from heaven continues speaking about Babylon as if it were a woman.

she glorified herself

"the people of Babylon glorified themselves"

For she says in her heart

Here "heart" is a metonym for a person's mind or thoughts. Alternate translation: "For she says to herself"

I am seated as a queen

She claims to be a ruler, having her own authority.

I am not a widow

She implies that she will not be dependent on other people.

I will never see mourning

Experiencing mourning is spoken of as seeing mourning. Alternate translation: "I will never mourn"

Revelation 18:8

her plagues will come

Existing in the future is spoken of a coming.

She will be consumed by fire

Being burned up by fires is spoken of as being eaten up by fire. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Fire will completely burn her up"

Revelation 18:9

General Information:

In these verses the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

committed sexual immorality and went out of control with her

"sinned sexually and did whatever they wanted just as the people of Babylon did"

Revelation 18:10

Connecting Statement:

John tells what people say about Babylon.

afraid of her torment

The abstract noun "torment" can be translated as a verb. Alternate translation: "afraid that they will be tormented as Babylon is" or "afraid that God will torment them as he torments Babylon"

Woe, woe

This is repeated for emphasis.

your punishment has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

Revelation 18:11

mourn for her

"mourn for the people of Babylon"

Revelation 18:12

precious stone, pearls

"many kinds of expensive stones." See how you translated these in Revelation 17:4.

fine linen

expensive cloth made from flax. See how you translated "linen" in Revelation 15:6.

purple, silk, scarlet

Purple is a very dark red cloth that is very expensive. Silk is a soft, strong cloth made from the fine string that silkworms make when they make their cocoons. Scarlet is an expensive red cloth.

every vessel of ivory

"all kinds of containers made of ivory"

ivory

a beautiful hard, white material that people get from the tusks or teeth of very large animals such as elephants or walruses. Alternate translation: "tusks" or "valuable animal teeth"

marble

a precious stone used for building

Revelation 18:13

cinnamon

a spice that smells nice and comes from the bark of a certain kind of tree

spice

a substance used to add flavor to food or a good smell to oil

bodies and souls of people

Possible meanings are 1) the parts of people are used figuratively to refer to people who are sold as slaves. Alternate translation: "slaves" or 2) the word "bodies" refers to slaves, and the phrase "souls of people" expresses the truth that slaves are real people. Alternate translation: "slaves, that is human souls"

Revelation 18:14

The fruit

"Fruit" here is a metaphor for "result" or "outcome." Alternate translation: "The result"

desired with all your might

"wanted very much"

vanished, never to be found again

Not to be found stands for not existing. This figure of speech can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "vanished; you will never have them again"

Revelation 18:15

General Information:

In these verses, the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

because of the fear of her torment

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "fear" and "torment." Alternate translation: "because they will be afraid of God tormenting them they way he torments her" or "because they will be afraid of suffering the way she is suffering"

weeping and mourning loudly

This is what the merchants will be doing. Alternate translation: "and they will weep and mourn loudly"

Revelation 18:16

the great city that was dressed in fine linen

Throughout this chapter, Babylon is spoken of as if it were a woman. The merchants speak of Babylon as being dressed in fine linen because its people were dressed in fine linen. Alternate translation: "the great city, which was like a woman dressed in fine linen" or "the great city, whose women were dressed in fine linen"

that was dressed in fine linen

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "that wore fine linen"

was adorned with gold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "adorned herself with gold" or "adorned themselves with gold" or "wore gold"

precious jewels

"valuable gems" or "treasured gems"

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the

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ocean. See how you translated this in [Revelation 17:4]

Revelation 18:17

who make their living from the sea

The phrase "from the sea" refers to what they do on the sea. Alternate translation: "who travel on the sea to make their living" or "who sail on the sea to different places in order to trade things"

Revelation 18:18

General Information:

In these verses the word "they" refers to the sailors and seafarers, and the word "her" refers to the city of Babylon.

What city is like the great city?

This question shows that the merchants thought the city of Babylon was very important. Alternate translation: "No other city is like the great city, Babylon!"

Revelation 18:20

God has brought your judgment on her

The noun "judgment" can be expressed with the verb "judge." Alternate translation: "God has judged her for you" or "God has judged her because of the bad things she did to you"

Revelation 18:21

Connecting Statement:

Another angel begins to speak about Babylon. This angel is not one of those who has spoken previously.

millstone

a large round stone used to crush grain

Babylon, the great city, will be thrown down with violence and will not be seen anymore

God will completely destroy the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will violently throw down Babylon, the great city, and it will no longer exist"

will not be seen anymore

"no one will see it anymore." Not being seen here means that it will not exist. Alternate translation: "it will not exist anymore"

Revelation 18:22

The sound made by harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will not be heard anymore in you

Not being heard here means that they will not be there. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Harpists, musicians, flute players, and trumpeters will no longer make a sound in your city"

in you

The angel speaks as if he were talking to Babylon. Alternate translation: "in Babylon"

No craftsman ... will be found in you

Not being found there means that they will not be there. Alternate translation: "No craftsman ... will be in your city"

No sound of a mill will be heard anymore in you

The sound of something not being heard means that no one will make that sound. Alternate translation: "No one will use a mill in your city anymore"

Revelation 18:23

General Information:

The words "you" and "your" refer to Babylon.

Connecting Statement:

The angel who threw the millstone finishes talking.

The voices of the bridegroom and the bride will not be heard in you anymore

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will ever again hear in Babylon the happy voices of a bridegroom and a bride"

will not be heard in you anymore

Not being heard here means that they will not be there. Alternate translation: "will not be in your city anymore"

your merchants were the princes of the earth

The angel speaks of important and powerful people as if they were princes. Alternate translation: "your merchants were like princes of the earth" or "your merchants were the most important men in the world"

the nations were deceived by your sorcery

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "you deceived the people of the nations with your magic spells"

Revelation 18:24

General Information:

The word "her" refers to Babylon.

In her the blood of prophets and of God's holy people was found, and the blood of all who have been killed on the earth

Blood being found there means that the people there were guilty of killing people. Alternate translation: "Babylon is guilty of killing the prophets and believers and all the other people in the world who were killed"

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19 [1]After these things I heard what sounded like a loud voice of a large number of people in heaven calling out,

"Hallelujah!
Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God.
[2] His judgments are true and just,
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality.
He has avenged the blood of his servants
from her hand."

[3]They spoke a second time:

"Hallelujah!

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The smoke rises from her forever and ever."

4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. They were saying,

"Amen. Hallelujah!"

5 Then a voice came out from the throne, saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
both the unimportant and the powerful."

6 Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great number of people, like the roar of many waters, and like mighty crashes of thunder, saying,

"Hallelujah!
For the Lord reigns, our God, the Almighty.
7 Let us rejoice and be glad
and give him the glory!
For the wedding celebration of the Lamb has come,
and his bride has made herself ready.

8 She was permitted to be dressed
in bright and clean fine linen"

(for fine linen is the righteous acts of God's holy people).

9 The angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." He also said to me, "These are true words of God."10 I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Do not do this! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold the testimony about Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

11 Then I saw heaven open, and I looked and there was a white horse. The one riding it is called faithful and true. It is with justice that he judges and wages war.12 His eyes are like a fiery flame, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but himself.13 He is clothed with a robe that was dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.
14 The armies of heaven were following him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.15 Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword with which he strikes down the nations, and he will rule them with an iron rod. He tramples in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.16 He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: "King of kings and Lord of lords."

17 I saw an angel standing in the sun. He called out in a loud voice to all the birds flying overhead, "Come, gather together for the great feast of God.18 Come eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, the unimportant and the powerful."

19 I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies. They were assembling in order to wage war with the one who rode the horse and with his army.20 The beast was captured and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence. With these signs he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

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[21]The rest of them were killed by the sword that came out of the mouth of the one who rode on the horse. All the birds ate their dead flesh.

Revelation 19 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The beginning of chapter 19 concludes the topic of Babylon falling.
Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetry in verses 1-8.

Special concepts in this chapter

Songs
The Book of Revelation often describes heaven as a place where people sing. They worship God with songs. This illustrates that heaven is a place where God is always worshiped. (See: heaven)
Wedding celebration
The wedding celebration or feast is an important image in Scripture. Jewish culture often pictured paradise, or life with God after death, as a feast. Here, the wedding feast is for the Lamb, who is Jesus, and his bride, who is all his people.

Links:

Revelation 19:1 Notes

Revelation 19:1
General Information:
This is the next part of John's vision. Here he describes the rejoicing in heaven over the fall of the great prostitute, who is the city of Babylon.
I heard
Here "I" refers to John.
Hallelujah
This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord."
Revelation 19:2
the great prostitute
Here John refers to the city of Babylon whose wicked people rule over all the people of the earth and lead them to worship false gods. He speaks of the wicked people of Babylon as if they were a great prostitute. Alternate translation: "that wicked city that was like a prostitute
who corrupted the earth
Here "the earth" is a metonym for its inhabitants. Alternate translation: "who corrupted the people of the earth"
He has avenged the blood of his servants from her hand
Here "the blood ... from her hand" is a metonym for her murdering people. The word "her" refers to the "prostitute," the city of Babylon. Alternate translation: "He has punished her for murdering his servants"
Revelation 19:3
They spoke
Here "They" refers to the crowd of people in heaven.
Hallelujah
This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.
smoke rises from her
The word "her" refers to the city of Babylon, which is spoken of as if it were a prostitute. The smoke is from the fire that destroys the city. Alternate translation: "smoke rises from that city"
Revelation 19:4
twenty-four elders
"24 elders." See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:4]
the four living creatures
"the four living beings" or "the four living things." See how you translated this in Revelation 4:6
who was seated on the throne
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "who sat on the throne"
Hallelujah
This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.
Revelation 19:5
a voice came out from the throne
Here John speaks of the "voice" as if it were a person. Alternate translation: "someone spoke from the throne"
Praise our God
Here "our" refers to the speaker and all God's servants.
you who fear him
Here "fear" does not mean to be afraid of God, but to honor him. Alternate translation: "all you who honor him"
both the unimportant and the powerful
The speaker uses these words together to mean all of God's people.
Revelation 19:6
Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great number of people, like the roar of many waters, and like mighty crashes of thunder
John speaks of what he is hearing as if it were like the sound made by a very large crowd of people, a large body of rushing water, and very loud thunder.
Hallelujah
This word means "Praise Yahweh." Some modern versions translate it as "Praise the Lord." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:1.
For the Lord
"Because the Lord"
Revelation 19:7
Connecting Statement:

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The voice of the crowd from the previous verse continues speaking.

Let us rejoice

Here "us" refers to all of God's servants.

give him the glory

"give God the glory" or "honor God"

wedding celebration of the Lamb ... his bride has made herself ready

Here John speaks of the joining of Jesus and his people together forever as if it were a wedding celebration.

Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

has come

Existing in the present is spoken of as having come.

his bride has made herself ready

John speaks of God's people as if they were a bride who has gotten ready for her wedding.

Revelation 19:8

She was permitted to be dressed in bright and clean fine linen

Here "she" refers to the people of God. John speaks of the righteous acts of God's people as if they were a bright and clean dress that a bride wears on her wedding day. You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "God allowed her to wear a dress of bright and clean fine linen"

Revelation 19:9

General Information:

An angel begins to speak to John. This is likely the same angel who began to speak to John in Revelation 17:1.

those who are invited

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "the people whom God invites"

the wedding feast of the Lamb

Here the angel speaks of the joining of Jesus and his people forever as if it were a wedding feast.

Revelation 19:10

I fell down at his feet

This means that John purposely lay on the ground and stretched himself out in reverence or submission. This action was an important part of worship, to show respect and willingness to serve. See how you translated "fell down" in Revelation 5:8.

your brothers

The word "brothers" here refers to all believers, male and female.

who hold the testimony about Jesus

Here holding stands for believing in or announcing. Alternate translation: "who speak the truth about Jesus"

for the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy

Here "spirit of prophecy" refers to God's Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "for it is the Spirit of God who gives people the power to speak the truth about Jesus"

Revelation 19:11

General Information:

This is the beginning of a new vision. John begins to describe a rider on a white horse.

Then I saw heaven open

This imagery is used to signify the beginning of a new vision. See how you translated this idea in Revelation 4:1 and Revelation 11:19 and Revelation 15:5.

The one riding it

The rider is Jesus.

It is with justice that he judges and wages war

Here "justice" refers to what is right. Alternate translation: "He judges all people and wages war according to what is right"

Revelation 19:12

His eyes are like a fiery flame

John speaks of the rider's eyes as if they shone like a flame of fire.

He has a name written on him

You can state this in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has written a name on him"

on him that no one knows but himself

"on him, and only he knows the meaning of that name"

Revelation 19:13

He is clothed with a robe that was dipped in blood

You can state this in an active form. Alternate translation: "He wears a robe that has blood on it"

his name is called the Word of God

You can state this in active form. "Word of God" here is a metonym for Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: "his name is called the Message of God" or "his name is also the Word of God"

Revelation 19:15

Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword

The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion. See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:16.

strikes down the nations

"destroys the nations" or "brings the nations under his control"

rule them with an iron rod

John speaks of the rider's power as if he were ruling with an iron rod. See how you translated this in [Revelation 2:27]

He tramples in the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty

John speaks of the rider's destroying his enemies as if they were grapes that a person tramples in a winepress. Here "wrath" refers to God's punishment of evil persons. Alternate translation: "He crushes his enemies according to the judgment of God Almighty, just as a person crushes grapes in a winepress"

Revelation 19:16

He has a name written on his robe and on his thigh:

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone has written a name on his robe and thigh:"

Revelation 19:17

I saw an angel standing in the sun

Here "the sun" is a metonym for the light of the sun. Alternate translation: "Then I saw an angel standing in the light of the sun"

Revelation 19:18

both free and slave, the unimportant and the powerful

The angel uses these two sets of opposite-meaning words together to mean all people.

Revelation 19:20

The beast was captured and with him the false prophet

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The rider on the white horse captured the beast and the

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false prophet"

the mark of the beast

This was an identifying mark that indicated that the person who received it worshiped the beast. See how you translated this in Revelation 13:17.

The two of them were thrown alive

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the beast and the false prophet alive"

the fiery lake of burning sulfur

"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur"

Revelation 19:21

The rest of them were killed by the sword that came out of the mouth of the one who rode on the horse

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The rider of the horse killed the remainder of the beast's armies with the sword that extended from his mouth"

the sword that came out of the mouth

The sword blade was sticking out of his mouth. The sword itself was not in motion. See how you translated a similar phrase in Revelation 1:16.

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20 [1]Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had the key to the bottomless pit, and he had a great chain in his hand.[2]He took hold of the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.
[3]He threw him into the bottomless pit. He shut it and sealed it over him. This was so that he would not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were over. After that, he must be set free for a short amount of time.

[4]Then I saw thrones. Seated on them were those who had been given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony about Jesus and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, and they had refused to receive the mark on their forehead or hand. They came to life, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
[5]The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.[6]Blessed and holy is anyone who takes part in the first resurrection! Over these the second death has no power. They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

[7]When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be released from his prison.[8]He will go out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to bring them together for the battle. They will be as many as the sand of the sea.
[9]They went up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's holy people—the beloved city. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.[10]The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[11]Then I saw a great white throne and the one who is seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled away from his presence, but there was no place for them to go.[12]I saw the dead—the mighty and the unimportant—standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Then another book was opened—the Book of Life. The dead were judged by what was recorded in the books, according to their deeds.
[13]The sea gave up the dead who were in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and the dead were judged according to their deeds.[14]Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire.[15]If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

The thousand-year reign of Christ

In this chapter, Jesus is said to reign for a thousand years, at the same time that Satan is bound. Scholars are divided over whether this refers to a future period of time or to Jesus reigning now from heaven. It is not necessary to understand this passage in order to translate it accurately. (See: prophet)

Final rebellion

This chapter also describes what happens after the thousand years are ended. During this time, Satan and many people will attempt to rebel against Jesus. This will result in God's ultimate and final victory over sin and evil. (See: sin and evil and eternity)

Great white throne

This chapter ends with God judging all people who ever lived. God separates people who believe in Jesus from those who do not believe in him. (See: judge and heaven and faith)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Book of Life

This is a metaphor for eternal life. Those possessing eternal life are said to have their names written in this Book of Life.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

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Hades and the lake of fire
These appear to be two distinct places. The translator may wish to do further research to determine how to translate these two places differently. They should not be made the same as each other in translation. (See: hell)

Links:

Revelation 20:1 Notes

Revelation 20:1
General Information:
John begins to describe a vision of an angel throwing the devil into the bottomless pit.
Then I saw
Here "I" refers to John.
bottomless pit
This is an extremely deep, narrow hole. Possible meanings are 1) the pit has no bottom; it continues to go down further forever or 2) the pit is so deep that it is as if it had no bottom. See how you translated this in Revelation 9:1.
Revelation 20:2
dragon
This was a large, fierce reptile, like a lizard. For Jewish people, it was a symbol of evil and chaos.
Revelation 20:3
sealed it over him
The angel sealed the pit to keep anyone from opening it. Alternate translation: "sealed it to prevent anyone from opening it"
deceive the nations
Here "nations" is a metonym for the people of the earth. Alternate translation: "deceive the people-groups"
the thousand years
"1,000 years"
he must be set free
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will command the angel to free him"
Revelation 20:4
General Information:
This is the next part of John's vision. He describes suddenly seeing thrones and the souls of believers.
who had been given authority to judge
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whom God had given authority to judge"
who had been beheaded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "whose heads others had cut off"
for the testimony about Jesus and for the word of God
"because they had spoken the truth about Jesus and about the word of God"
for the word of God
These words are a metonym for the message from God. Alternate translation: "for what they taught about the scriptures"
They came to life
"They came back to life" or "They became alive again"
Revelation 20:5
The rest of the dead
"All of the other dead people"
the thousand years were ended
"the end of the 1,000 years"
Revelation 20:6
Over these the second death has no power
Here John describes "death" as a person with power. Alternate translation: "These people will not experience the second death"
the second death
"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]
Revelation 20:7
Satan will be released from his prison
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will release Satan from his prison"
Revelation 20:8
They will be as many as the sand of the sea
This emphasizes the extremely large number of soldiers in Satan's army.
Revelation 20:9
They went
"Satan's army went"
the beloved city
This refers to Jerusalem.
fire came down from heaven and devoured them
Here John speaks of fire as if it were alive. Alternate translation: "God sent fire from heaven to burn them up"
Revelation 20:10
The devil, who deceived them, was thrown into
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw the devil, who had deceived them, into" or "God's angel threw the devil, who had deceived them, into"
lake of burning sulfur
"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:20.
where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "where he had also thrown the beast and the false prophet"
They will be tormented
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God will torment them"
Revelation 20:11
General Information:
This is the next part of John's vision. He describes suddenly seeing a great white throne and the dead being judged.
The earth and the heavens fled away from his presence, but there was no place for them to go
John describes heaven and earth as if they were people who were trying to escape God's judgment. This means that God completely destroyed the old heaven and earth.
Revelation 20:12
the books were opened
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone opened the books"

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The dead were judged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God judged the people who had died and now lived again"
by what was recorded
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "by what he had recorded"

Revelation 20:13

The sea gave up the dead ... Death and Hades gave up the dead
Here John speaks of the sea, death, and Hades as if they were living persons.
the dead were judged
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God judged the dead people"
Hades
Here "Hades" is a metonym that represents the place where unbelievers go when they die, to wait for God's judgment.

Revelation 20:14

Death and Hades were thrown
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "God threw Death and Hades" or "God's angel threw Death and Hades"
the second death
"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]

Revelation 20:15

If anyone's name was not found written
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "If God's angel did not find a person's name"
he was thrown into the lake of fire
This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the angel threw him into the lake of fire" or "the angel threw him into the place where fire burns forever"

21 [1]Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was
no more.[2]I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, that came down out of heaven from God, prepared like a bride adorned
for her husband.
[3]I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Look! The dwelling place of God is with human beings, and he will live
with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and he will be their God.[4]He will wipe away every
tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, or grieving, or crying, or pain. The former things have passed away.
[5]The one who was seated on the throne said, "Look! I make all things new." He said, "Write this down because these words
are trustworthy and true."[6]He said to me, "These things are done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the
end. To the one who thirsts I will give drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.
[7]The one who conquers will inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he will be my son.[8]But as for the cowards, the
faithless, the detestable, the murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the
fiery lake of burning sulfur. That is the second death."

[9]One of the seven angels came to me, the one who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and he said, "Come
here. I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."[10]Then he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high
mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.
[11]Jerusalem had the glory of God, and its brightness was like a very precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper.[12]It
had a great, high wall with twelve gates, with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the
twelve tribes of the sons of Israel.[13]On the east were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on
the west three gates.
[14]The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
[15]The one who spoke with me had a measuring rod made of gold to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.
[16]The city was laid out in a square; its length was the same as its width. He measured the city with the measuring rod,
twelve thousand stadia in length (its length, width, and height were the same).[17]He also measured its wall, 144 cubits thick
by human measurement (which is also the angel's measure).
[18]The wall was built of jasper and the city of pure gold, like clear glass.[19]The foundations of the wall were adorned with
every kind of precious stone. The first was jasper, the second was sapphire, the third was agate, the fourth was emerald,
[20]the fifth was onyx, the sixth was carnelian, the seventh was chrysolite, the eighth was beryl, the ninth was topaz, the
tenth was chrysoprase, the eleventh was jacinth, and the twelfth was amethyst.
[21]The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each of the gates was made from a single pearl. The streets of the city were pure
gold, like transparent glass.[22]I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
[23]The city had no need of the sun or the moon in order to shine on it because the glory of God shone on it, and its lamp is
the Lamb.[24]The nations will walk by the light of that city. The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.[25]Its gates will
not be shut during the day, and there will be no night there.
[26]They will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it,[27]but nothing unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone
who does what is detestable or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Revelation 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter gives a detailed picture of the new Jerusalem.

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Special concepts in this chapter

Second death

Death is a type of separation. The first death is physically dying, when the soul is separated from the body. The second death is being eternally separated from God. (See: death and soul and eternity)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Book of Life

This is a metaphor for eternal life. Those possessing eternal life are said to have their names written in this Book of Life.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

New heaven and new earth

It is unclear whether this is an entirely new heaven and earth or if it is remade out of the present heaven and earth. The same is also true of the new Jerusalem. It is possible this will affect translation in some languages. The word "new" in the original language means different and better than the old. It does not mean new in time.

Links:

Revelation 21:1 Notes

Revelation 21:1

General Information:

John begins to describe his vision of the new Jerusalem.

I saw

Here "I" refers to John.

Revelation 21:2

like a bride adorned for her husband

This compares the new Jerusalem to a bride who has made herself beautiful for her bridegroom.

Revelation 21:3

a great voice from the throne saying

The word "voice" refers to the one who speaks. Alternate translation: "someone speak loudly from the throne saying"

Look!

The word "Look" here alerts us to pay attention to the surprising information that follows.

The dwelling place of God is with human beings, and he will live with them

These two phrases mean the same thing and emphasize that God will, indeed, live among men.

Revelation 21:4

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes

Tears here represent sadness. See how you translated this in [Revelation 7:17]

Revelation 21:5

these words are trustworthy and true

Here "words" refers to the message that they formed. Alternate translation: "this message is trustworthy and true"

Revelation 21:6

the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize God's eternal nature.

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If the meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first and last letters of your alphabet. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:8]

the beginning and the end

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and the one who will cause all things to end" or 2) "the one who existed before all things and who will exist after all things."

To the one who thirsts ... water of life

God speaks of a person's desire for eternal life as if it were thirst and of that person receiving eternal life as if he were drinking life-giving water.

Revelation 21:7

Connecting Statement:

The one seated on the throne continues to speak to John.

Revelation 21:8

the cowards

"those who are too afraid to do what is right"

the detestable

"those who do terrible things"

the fiery lake of burning sulfur

"the lake of fire that burns with sulfur" or "place full of fire that burns with sulfur." See how you translated this in Revelation 19:20.

the second death

"dying a second time." This is described as eternal punishment in the lake of fire in [Revelation 20:14]

Revelation 21:9

the bride, the wife of the Lamb

The angel speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a woman who is about to marry her groom, the Lamb. Jerusalem is metonymy for those who believers who will inhabit it.

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

Revelation 21:10

carried me away in the Spirit

The setting changes as John is taken to a high mountain where he can see the city of Jerusalem. See how you translated this phrase in [Revelation 17:3]

Revelation 21:11

Jerusalem

This refers to the "Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven" that he described in the previous verse and not to the physical Jerusalem.

like a very precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The

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second emphasizes the brilliance of Jerusalem by naming a specific jewel.

crystal-clear

"extremely clear"

jasper

This is a valuable stone. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:12

twelve gates

"12 gates"

were written

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had written"

Revelation 21:14

Lamb

This refers to Jesus. See how you translated this in Revelation 5:6.

Revelation 21:16

twelve thousand stadia

"12,000 stadia." You may convert this to modern measures. Alternate translation: "2,200 kilometers"

Revelation 21:17

144 cubits

"one hundred forty-four cubits." You may convert this to modern measures. Alternate translation: "66 meters"

Revelation 21:18

The wall was built of jasper and the city of pure gold

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone had built the wall with jasper and the city with pure gold"

pure gold, like clear glass

The gold was so clear that it is spoken of as if it were glass.

jasper

This is a valuable stone. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated this in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:19

The foundations of the wall were adorned

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Someone adorned the foundations of the wall"

jasper ... sapphire ... agate ... emerald

These are valuable stones. Jasper may have been clear like glass or crystal. See how you translated it in [Revelation 4:3]

Revelation 21:20

onyx ... chrysolite ... beryl ... topaz ... chrysoprase ... jacinth ... amethyst

These are all valuable gems.

Revelation 21:21

pearls

beautiful and valuable white beads. They are formed inside the shell of a certain kind of small animal that lives in the ocean. See how you translated this in [Revelation 17:4]

each of the gates was made from a single pearl

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "someone had made each of the gates from a single pearl"

pure gold, like transparent glass

The gold was so clear that it is spoken of as if it were glass. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Revelation 21:18]

Revelation 21:22

Lord God ... and the Lamb are its temple

The temple represented God's presence. This means the new Jerusalem does not need a temple because God and the Lamb will live there.

Revelation 21:23

its lamp is the Lamb

Here the glory of Jesus, the Lamb, is spoken of as if it were a lamp that gives light to the city.

Revelation 21:24

The nations will walk

The words "the nations" are a metonym for the people who live in the nations. "Walk" here is a metaphor for "live." Alternate translation: "The people from all the different nations will live"

Revelation 21:25

Its gates will not be shut

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "No one will shut the gates"

Revelation 21:26

They will bring

"The kings of the earth will bring"

Revelation 21:27

nothing unclean will ever enter into it, nor anyone

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "only what is clean will ever enter, and never anyone"

but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "but only those whose names the Lamb wrote in his Book of Life"

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

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22 [1]Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal. It was flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb[2]through the middle of the city's street. On each side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, and it bears its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
[3]There will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.
[4]They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.[5]There will be no more night; they will have no need for the light of a lamp or sunlight because the Lord God will shine on them. They will reign forever and ever.

[6]The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon."[7]"Look! I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who obeys the words of the prophecy of this book."

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[8]I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing me these things.[9]He said to me, "Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you, with your brothers the prophets, and with those who obey the words of this book. Worship God!"

[10]Then he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.[11]The one who is unrighteous, let him continue to do unrighteousness. The one who is morally filthy, let him continue to be morally filthy. The one who is righteous, let him continue to do what is righteous. The one who is holy, let him continue to be holy."

[12]"Look! I am coming soon. My reward is with me, to pay back each one according to his deeds.[13]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.
[14]Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they will have the right to eat from the tree of life and to enter the city through the gates.[1][15]Outside are the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

[16]I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

[17]The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come, and whoever desires it, let him freely have the water of life.

[18]I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues that are written about in this book.[19]If anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city that are written about in this book.[2]

[20]The one who testifies to these things says, "Yes! I am coming soon." Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!
[21]The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.[3]

[1]Instead of, Blessed are those who wash their robes, some ancient copies of the Greek text read, Blessed are those who do his commandments.
[2]Some older copies read God will take away his share in the Book of Life and in the holy city that are written about in this book.
[3]Some ancient copies of the Greek text or ancient translations of the Greek text add the phrase: be with you holy people or be with all you holy people or be with all of his holy people.

Revelation 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter emphasizes that Jesus is coming soon.

Special concepts in this chapter

Tree of life

There is probably an intended connection between the tree of life in the Garden of Eden and the tree of life mentioned in this chapter. The curse that began in Eden will end at this time.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Alpha and omega

These are the names of the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet. The ULB spells out their names in English. This strategy can serve as a model for translators. Some translators, however, may decide to use the first and last letters in their own alphabet. This would be "A and Z" in English.

Links:

Revelation 22:1 Notes

Revelation 22:1

Connecting Statement:

John continues to describe the new Jerusalem as the angel shows it to him.

showed me

Here "me" refers to John.

the river of the water of life

"the river flowing with life-giving water"

the water of life

Eternal life is spoken of as if it were provided by life-giving water. See how you translated this in [Revelation 21:6]

the Lamb

This is a young sheep. Here is it used symbolically to refer to Christ. See how you translated this in [Revelation 5:6]

Revelation 22:2

the nations

Here "nations" refers to the people who live in every nation. Alternate translation: "the people of all nations"

Revelation 22:3

There will no longer be any curse

Possible meanings are 1) "There will never be anyone there that God will curse" or 2) "There will not be anyone there

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who is under God's curse"

his servants will serve him

Possible meanings of "his" and "him" are 1) both words refer to God the Father, or 2) both words refer to both God and the Lamb, who rule together as one.

Revelation 22:4

They will see his face

This is an idiom, meaning to be in God's presence. Alternate translation: "They will be in God's presence"

Revelation 22:6

General Information:

This is the beginning of the end of John's vision. In this versethe angel is speaking to John. This can be shown clearly as it is in the UDB.

These words are trustworthy and true

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 21:5]

the God of the spirits of the prophets

Possible meanings are 1) the word "spirits" refers to the inward disposition of the prophets and indicates that God inspires them. Alternate translation: "God who inspires the prophets" or 2) the word "spirits" refers to the Holy Spirit who inspires the prophets. Alternate translation: "God who gives his Spirit to the prophets"

Revelation 22:7

General Information:

This is the beginning of the end of John's vision. Jesus is speaking. This can be shown clearly as it is in the UDB.

Look!

Here Jesus begins to speak. The word "Look" adds emphasis to what follows.

I am coming soon!

It is understood that he is coming in order to judge. See how you translated this in Revelation 3:11. Alternate translation: "I am coming to judge soon!"

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. Alternate translation: "the prophetic message of this book"

Revelation 22:8

General Information:

John tells his readers about how he responded to the angel.

I fell down to worship at the feet

This means that John purposely lay on the ground and stretched himself out in reverence or submission. This action was an important part of worship, to show respect and willingness to serve. See how you translated similar words in Revelation 19:10.

Revelation 22:10

Connecting Statement:

The angel finishes speaking to John.

Do not seal up ... this book

To seal a book was to keep it closed with something that makes it impossible for anyone to read what was inside without breaking the seal. The angel is telling John not to keep the message a secret. Alternate translation: "Do not keep secret ... this book"

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 22:7]

Revelation 22:12

General Information:

As the book of Revelation is ending, Jesus gives a closing greeting.

Revelation 22:13

the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end

These three phrases share similar meanings and emphasize that Jesus has existed and will exist for all time.

the Alpha and the Omega

These are first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and who ends all things" or 2) "the one who has always lived and who always will live." If these meanings are unclear to readers, you may consider using the first and last letters of your alphabet. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:8]

the first and the last

This refers to the eternal nature of Jesus. See how you translated this in [Revelation 1:17]

the beginning and the end

Possible meanings are 1) "the one who began all things and the one who will cause all things to end" or 2) "the one who existed before all things and who will exist after all things." See how you translated this in Revelation 21:6.

Revelation 22:14

Connecting Statement:

Jesus continues giving his closing greeting.

those who wash their robes so that

Becoming righteous is spoken of as if it were washing one's clothing. See how you translated as similar phrase in [Revelation 7:14]

Revelation 22:15

Outside

This means they are outside the city and not allowed to enter.

are the dogs

In that culture the dog was an unclean, despised animal. Here the word "dogs" is derogatory and refers to people who are wicked.

Revelation 22:16

to testify to you

Here the word "you" is plural.

the root and the descendant of David

The words "root" and "descendant" mean basically the same thing. Jesus speaks of being a "descendant" as if he were a "root" that grew out of David. Together the words emphasize that Jesus belongs to the family of David.

the bright morning star

Jesus speaks of himself as if he were the bright star that sometimes appears early in the morning and indicates that a new day is about to begin. See how you translated "morning star" in [Revelation 2:28]

Revelation 22:17

Connecting Statement:

This verse is a response to what Jesus said.

the Bride

Believers are spoken of as if they were a bride about to be married to her groom, Jesus.

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Come!

Possible meanings are 1) that this is an invitation for people to come and drink the water of life. Alternate translation: "Come and drink!" or 2) that this is a polite request for Jesus to return. Alternate translation: "Please come!"

Whoever is thirsty ... the water of life

A person's desire for eternal life is spoken of as if it were thirst and of that person receiving eternal life as if he were drinking life-giving water.

the water of life

Eternal life is spoken of as if it were provided by life-giving water. See how you translated this in Revelation 21:6.

Revelation 22:18

General Information:

John gives his final remarks.

I testify

Here "I" refers to John.

the words of the prophecy of this book

Here "words" refers to a message. See how you translated this in [Revelation 22:7]

If anyone adds to them ... God will add

This is a strong warning to not change anything about this prophecy.

that are written about in this book

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "which I have written about in this book"

Revelation 22:19

If anyone takes away ... God will take away

This is a strong warning to not change anything about this prophecy.

Revelation 22:20

General Information:

In these verses John gives his and Jesus's closing greetings.

The one who testifies to these things says

"Jesus, who testifies to these things, says"

Revelation 22:21

with all

"with every one of you"

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